GUIDE TO THE FT6 THONGA FILE

/The FT6 Thonga File contains information on the Bantu-speaking Thonga of Mozambique. There are three sources in the file, two of which are different volumes of the same monograph. 1: Junod and 2: Junod, by a trained anthropologist-missionary, are the basic sources. 3: Rita-Ferreira is a bibliography of the Thonga by a Portuguese anthropologist. The volumes by Junod form one of the classics of descriptive ethnography and give a well-rounded picture of Thonga culture. The file as a whole is adequate for cross-cultural purposes, although material in depth will not be found as a general rule./

Processed in 1954-1967.

PRELIMINARY CHAPTER

THE THONGA TRIBE

1. *Geographical delimitation of the tribe.*

101 The Thonga tribe is composed of a group of Bantu peoples
131 settled on the eastern coast of South Africa, extending from the neighbourhood of St Lucia Bay (28° Lat. S.) on the Natal Coast up to the Sabie River on the north (1). Thongas are to be found therefore in four of the present South African states : in Natal (Amatongaland), the Transvaal (Leydenbourg, Zoutpansberg and Waterberg districts), in Rhodesia, and chiefly in Portuguese East Africa (Lourenço Marques, Inhambane and Mozambique Company districts). The Thongas border on the Zulus and the Swazis southwards ; westwards on the Ba-Mbayi, Ba-Lauti and other Suto-Pedi clans in the Transvaal ; northwards on the Vendas and Ba-Nyai in the Zoutpansberg and Rhodesia, and on the Ndjaos near the Sabie ; and eastwards on the Thongas near Inhambane and on the Ba-Chopi, north of the mouth of the Limpopo.

101 The tribe comprises a certain number of clans. These clans form six groups, which speak the various dialects of the Thonga language.

133 (1) There are two rivers called Sabie in the Thonga Territory ; one is the Sabie of the South, which flows in the Leydenburg district and joins the Nkomati not far from Kil. 53 of the Lourenço Marques-Transvaal line, and the other, that here referred to, which comes from Rhodesia and flows into the Indian Ocean not far from the 21° lat. South.

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II. *Tribe, Groups and Clans.*

101/618 It is necessary first of all to define clearly the precise meaning of these three terms.

We reserve the term *tribe* for the totality of the Thonga nation. This word is frequently used to designate the smaller national units, which are called after some old chief whose descendants are still reigning, like Tembe, Khosa, Nkuna, etc. We prefer for the sake of clearness to call these small units *clans*, as there is certainly a great resemblance between them and the Scottish clans. As a rule all men belonging to a clan bear the name of the old chief, who is more or less considered the ancestor of them all. In the Tembe country, most of the inhabitants will salute each other with these words : "Shawan Tembe, good morning, Tembe" ! But Tembe, the name of the clan, means not only a group of people, but a certain part of the country south of Delagoa Bay. In that country men of other clans have settled. There are also sub-clans of the Tembe clan which have already adopted special salutations, because they have formed collateral branches of the big Tembe family. However the term *clan* is the best, I think, to designate this kind of national unit, as its origin is essentially familial. Now some of these clans, those which occupy the same tract of country, form *groups* because they speak the same dialect of the Thonga language.

III. *The generic Name of the Tribe.*

101/619 As we shall see, there is no true national unity amongst the Thongas (1). They are hardly conscious that they form a definite

193 (1) What orthography are we to adopt when using the Bantu proper names in the plural? Different systems are used in ethnographic books, but the following appears to me the most rational. When a Bantu proper name is used with its plural prefix, the addition of a final *s* is not justified ; but in that case the prefix ought to be separated from the root by a hyphen, in order that the uninitiated reader may understand at once that he is dealing with a plural. Thus I would write : Ama-Zulu, Ba-Ronga, etc.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

101/619 nation, and therefore they possess no common name for it. The name *Thonga* (pronounce *t* + aspirated *h*, not the English *th*) was applied to them by the Zulu or Ngoni invaders, who enslaved most of their clans between 1815 and 1830. The origin of this Zulu name is probably the term *Ronga*, which means Orient (buronga = dawn) and by which the clans round Lourenço Marques used to call themselves. According to the phonetic laws of the two languages *R* in Ronga becomes *Th* when pronounced by the Zulus. (Ex. Randja, to love, in Ronga, is thanda in Zulu; raru, three, thathu.) This word Thonga became a nickname which, in the mouth of the Zulus, was almost the equivalent of slave, and they applied it to the whole Thonga stock; the appellation is not liked by the Thongas, but I know of no other which would be preferable to it.

Strange to say, the Thongas of the Northern Clans, especially those of the Bilen and Djonga groups, like to call themselves *Tjongas*, the Hlengwes *Tsongas*. This word is perhaps originally the same as Ronga and may have meant also people of the East, although the *R* of the Ronga dialect does not permute regularly into *Tj* and *Ts* in the Northern clans; but this meaning is doubtful, and has at any rate been forgotten. Another name, which is much used amongst white people to designate the Thongas, is the word *Shangaan*. Shangaan or Tshangaan was one of the surnames of Manukosi, the Zulu chief who settled on the East Coast and subjugated most of the Thongas at the time of Chaka. It is possible that this name was even older, and that it belonged to a chief who lived in the valley of the Lower Limpopo before Manukosi. At any rate, this valley was called Ka Tshangaan and its inhabitants Matshangaan. But this term was never accepted by the Ba-Ronga, who consider it as an

123 (in the singular: Mu-Ronga, Mu-Sutho), but never Ama-Zulus, Ba-Rongas. As however ordinary readers are not acquainted with Bantu grammar, I think it is more advisable to use these Bantu proper names without their prefixes, treating them as if they were English words, and, in that case it is necessary to add the final *s*, as we generally do according to the rules of European spelling. Many writers do not adopt this system in their books; but write the plural in exactly the same form as the singular, and it is therefore impossible to distinguish between the two. This may lead to confusion. I therefore propose to write: a Thonga, the Thongas, one Hlengwe, two Hlengwes, but it should be remembered that the final *s* must not be pronounced.

101 insult. It is applied in Johannesburg roughly to all the East
619 Coast "boys," even to the Ba-Chopi, who are considered by the Ba-Ronga of Delagoa Bay as much inferior to them. Its adoption would be objectionable on that account. I recognise that the word Ba-Thonga does not enjoy much more favour and is not quite satisfactory ; however considering that it means originally "people of the East" and that the tribe is indeed living in the eastern part of South Africa, it ought to be accepted in the course of time without much difficulty.

Let us remark that another tribe, quite different in language and ethnographic features, dwelling near Inhambane, quite close to our Thonga tribe, calls itself Ba-Tonga. But there is no aspirate after the *T* and this is enough to distinguish it from the Ba-Thonga.

IV. *The six Groups of the Thonga Clans.*

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187 Let us consider briefly, with the aid of the accompanying map, these six main groups.
131 1. All round the Bay of Delagoa, we find the *Ronga group*. This word Ronga is a very old one and very convenient, as all these clans consent to be called by it. The real Rongas are, I think, the Mpfumo and the Matjolo clans, who are settled on the west of the Bay. South of the Bay is the Tembe clan and its two sub-clans, which have become independent : Matutwen and Maputju. North of Lourenço Marques are the Mabota and Mazwaya clans, the country of the latter, which extends on both sides of the estuary of the Nkomati, being called Nondwane. Further north are the two clans of Shirindja and Manyisa which form the transition to the following group. The new generation speaks a purer Ronga dialect, the old one more the Djonga.

Continuing our survey in a northerly direction, we cross two rivers : the Nkomati and the Olifant. From the Nkomati to the Olifant we meet with the Djonga group, and from the Olifant northward with the Nwalungu group. Djonga means

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101/197 131 South, Nwalungu means North. The Ba-Djonga are the clans south of the Olifant, the Ba-Nwalungu north of it. Such designations have therefore only a relative value and have been evidently invented by people dwelling on the borders of the Olifant. But they are used in some places, and I do not find any better ones to designate the two dialects of the Thonga spoken south and north of the river.

2. *The Djonga group* includes the Khosa (in the Khosen or Cossine country) the Rikotjo, the Shiburi and the Mathiye clans, if we go directly north. To the east of the Djonga clans proper, we find a number of clans settled on both sides of the Limpopo, in the triangle formed by the Limpopo, the Shengan and the line of the 24° parallel and calling themselves the Ba-Hlabi. They speak a dialect very similar to the Djongas. Their names are as follows, from the confluence of the Olifant and the Limpopo to the south: Mapsanganyi, Tsungu, Mavundja, Nkwinika and Makamo. The Nkuna clan was settled not far from this confluence. It migrated into the Transvaal in great numbers, together with Mavundja and other Hlabis during the wars of Manukosi.

3. *The Nwalungu group* includes two different elements: first the Ba-Loyi or Ba-ka-Baloyi, in the triangle formed by the two rivers northward of their confluence, and the Maluleke further north, extending all along the Limpopo as far as its confluence with the Lebvubye River and further along the Lebvubye itself. They occupy there a part of the Low Country of the Transvaal, being more or less mixed with the Venda and Nyai population. The Malulekes, according to the Native historians, are one half of a larger clan called the Nwanatis, whose second half is settled near the mouth of the Limpopo under the name of the Makwakwas of Khambane and Ndindane.

These three groups are to be found on the central line, on the axis of the tribe. On the west we meet with the Hlanganu group and on the east with the Bila and Hlengwe groups.

4. *The Hlanganu group* is the smallest of all, including the Nwamba clan in the plain of Delagoa Bay, and the Mabila and Hlanganu clans in the Lebombo hills. The Hlanganus overflow

101 into the Transvaal territory and are scattered in the large desert
197 of the Low Country of the Leydenburg district, together with
131 clans of Sutho (Pedi) and Swazi (Mbayi) origin. The Hlanganu dialect is very much akin to the Djonga.

5. *The Bila group*, called after the name of Bila, the great and fruitful plain of the Lower Limpopo valley, includes the clans living on both banks of the river. They have suffered very much at the hands of the Zulu invaders who made their home in that fertile country, but their dialect has kept some very peculiar traits.

101 6. *The Hlengwe group*. In the Djonga dialect, *hlengwe* means
131 wealth. I do not know if this be the etymology of the name Hlengwe as designating all the Thonga population of the east and north-east, from the Limpopo to Inhambane and to the Sabie of the north. The name Hlengwe applies properly only to the northern part of the eastern clans. I retain it however provisionally. It seems that this group, which forms perhaps half of the tribe, includes at least three great subdivisions : 1) The *Hlengwes proper*, facing the Malulekes and the Ba-Loyi on the west and extending as far as the Sabie to the north. Their main clans are Tshauke, Mbenzane, Mavube, Magwinyane. 2) *The Ba-Tswa* (1) of Inhambane with the Hlenbengwanes, Yingwanes, Nkumbis. 3) *The Nwanatis* with the Makwakwas, Khambanes, Ndindanes, bordering on the Chopis to the north and the west.

101 Outside of the proper area of the tribe, we find *colonies of*
167 *emigrated* Thongas in many parts of the Transvaal. The largest is in the Spelonken district, north of the Zoutpansberg, where they form the majority of the population. There they were called

(1) This name Ba-Tswa, is the Hlengwe form of Ba-Tjwa, a term by which the Zulus have been commonly designated amongst the Thongas. Ba-Tjwa is probably the corresponding form for Ba-Rwa, an appellation by which the Suthos of the Zoutpansberg plains used to call the tribes of the mountains, whence comes the wind called Bu-rwa. The Ba-Rwa are properly the Bushmen, as one knows, but under that name were included Bantus of a quite different type. This shows that the Natives, in naming foreign tribes, consider the geographical relation between themselves and these tribes much more than their ethnic characteristics : so one very often meets with the word "Bakalanga" which means people of the north. The Bakalanga proper are in Rhodesia, but in Lourenço Marques the Khosa tribe is called Bakalanga.

The term Ba-Ngoni is applied to the Zulus, as well as Ba-Tjwa, but it is restricted to that clan of the Zulus which was under Manukosi.

101/167 131 *Ma-Gwamba* by the Vendas and Bveshas who possessed the country before them. These Ma-Gwamba are made up mostly of Hlengwe, Maluleke and Djonga refugees. In the Modjadji country, we find two colonies of Ba-ka-Baloyi with their own chiefs. Near Leydsdorp, a more considerable clan, numbering about 6000, is the Nkuna clan under Muhlaba. On the Sabie of the south, in the plain of the Leydenburg district, another colony has been founded more recently, since the war of the Portuguese against Gungunyane, by the Ngonis and Bilas who did not accept the new rule. They remain under Mpisane, a near relative of the late Ngoni potentate.

In the Orichstadt valley, and in many other parts of the Leydenburg mountains, little colonies of Thongas are met with, as well as in the Waterberg district (especially near Nilstrom) and in the towns of Pretoria and Johannesburg. A good many of the thousands of Shangaanes coming every year to the mines settle down definitively in the Town Locations of these great centres.

During the last twenty years the number of these emigrants has certainly increased. It was not possible to indicate on the map all their settlements between the Hlanganu domain proper, the Drakensberg Mountains and the Olifant River. On the farms of the Zoutpansberg and Pietersburg Districts they also form a notable portion of the Native population.

V. *The numerical strength of the Thonga Tribe.*

161 It is very difficult to ascertain the numbers of the Thongas. The census of the Transvaal taken on the 17th of April 1904 gives 82,325 as being the total Thonga population of that colony; of these, 48,117 are located in the Zoutpansberg. This is a minimum, as it has been recognised that at least 10 % ought to be added to these figures; there were scarcely any young men in the kraals when the census was taken. Let us estimate at 100,000 the numerical strength of that part of the tribe which is located in the Transvaal.

As regards Portuguese East Africa, we find some interesting

618 movement of amalgamation would probably not have taken place,
175 and I think we may consider the clan life, as it is still met with
643 amongst the Rongas, (who were never subject to the Ngoni chief), as the typical Bantu political state (1).

B. THE LAUDATORY NAME OF THE CLANS AND TOTEMISM.

618 Each clan is known by the name of the old chief who is believed
551 to have been its original ancestor. So the Nkuna clan comes
101 from Nkuna, who lived four or five hundred years ago, and left Zululand for the Bilen country. The Mazwaya clan descends from Mazwaya, grandfather of Masinga and ancestor of all the heads of the sub-clans, Makaneta, Hlewane, etc. This name is a kind of *family name* for all the members of the clan. In the course of time, when sub-clans begin to aspire to independence, the first ancestor tends to fall into oblivion and is supplanted by the ancestor of the sub-clan. This process is easily noticeable at the present moment in Nondwane, where Mboza, for instance, calls himself a Makaneta. He says : "I am wa ka Makaneta," — "a man of the Makaneta house ;" but if he wants to be more precise, he will say : "I am a Mazwaya Makaneta." — "Shibongo a shi diwi," "the family name is never eaten, it is eternal!" (Mboza.)

618 This old name is called *shibongo* from *ku bonga*, to laud, to
551 praise. It is a *laudatory name*. It is used as such on two diffe-
576 rent occasions : 1) *When people salute each other*. A friend who meets Mboza on the road will say to him : "Shawan, Makaneta," "Good morning Makaneta!" But also : "Shawan Makhetshe!" (Makhetshe is the grandfather of Makaneta) ; or : "Shawan Mazwaya" or "Shawan Nwamasuluke." (Masuluke is the true father of Mboza.)

(1) The objection might be raised that, in former centuries, the celebrated Monomotapa founded a great kingdom. But what this exactly was, nobody knows. The descriptions of the chroniclers of those times are not very trustworthy, as we shall see from a quotation which will be made later on.

Gwambe and Dzabana. No special story is told of these ancestors of mankind, but their names are still used under certain circumstances. When expelling a disease, in the *hondlola* rite, the medicine man says : "Go away to Gwambe and Dzabana," an expression used concurrently with this : "Go away to Shiburi and Nkhabelane," viz., to the extremity of the land, a long way off ; again, when many tales have been told and folks are going to sleep, these tales are also sent away back to Gwambe and Dzabana (p. 212). Why? Perhaps because they are the old, old people, and the tales which are so ancient belong to them! At any rate, by this kind of incantation story-tellers aim at preventing the hearers' sleep from being disturbed by the remembrance of the marvellous things they have been told. In the legends relating to old migrations the "Road of Gwambe" (1) is mentioned. When the ancient peoples passed along it, the earth was not yet solid, so they left the print of their feet, of their mortars, etc., in the rocks, where they are still to be seen on the edge of a river called Hlantsabuhlalu. (Nyai idea? I. p. 22.) 773

In the Ronga clans, these two ancestors of mankind are called *Likalahumba* and *Nsilambowa.* The first name means : the one who brought a glowing cinder in a shell, viz., the originator of fire, (Compare the Hlengwe tradition, I. p. 24). Nsilambowa, the name of the woman, means the one who grinds vegetables. The first human beings, according to these names, were those who 773 825

(1) What is the connection between this *Gwambe* and the name of *Ma-Gwamba* commonly given to the Thongas of Spelonken (I. p. 19)? It is difficult to say. According to some, there is still a clan descended from Gwambe, the first man, whose chief calls himself Gwambe. The Ba-Venda, when they saw the Thonga merchants bringing their goods from Delagoa Bay or Inhambane, called them Makwapa, Balungwana ba Kwapen, the little White people from Kwapa or Gwamba country, viz., those who bring clothes, beads bought from the Whites. It seems certain that there exists a Gwamba clan somewhere in Gazaland, not far from the Chapi border. A story is told of this Gwamba chief, who sent messengers to Modjadji to obtain rain from her. On their return they refused to cooperate in gathering fuel for their fire and died on the road, where their graves are still to be seen. Other informants give a totally different version of the origin of the term Ma-Gwamba : Gwambe was a chief dwelling on the banks of the Oliphant, near the Dunduli villages; his men, while on a journey, said to the Vendas : "We people of Gwambe even accept old women," viz., if they receive us well, we call them our wives to please them ! Hence the name they were given. Still other explanations might be found and I think there is no real connection between Gwambe, the first man, and the Ma-Gwamba. 101

then in force, as they are found almost identical amongst Semitic peoples, as shown in Leviticus. The hierarchy must have soon followed the institution of patriarchism, and of the clan. Witchcraft probably existed ; it must have been a belief of primitive humanity, as it is still present in a very similar form amongst peasants and uncultured people in civilised lands. We have the right to suppose also that astragalomancy was practised. Some features of the Thonga language show that mythological conceptions then prevailed which seem to have almost entirely disappeared at the present time (I. p. 36, II. p. 306). This period must have lasted for tens, perhaps hundreds of centuries, until the South African tribes, after endless migrations, reached their present abode, probably pushing the early occupants towards the South ; at the end of the XVth century we find the Thonga tribe located near Delagoa Bay (1).

The third period is inaugurated by the invasion by the clans mentioned in our Introduction. White men appear, trade begins, stuffs are adopted by women, the men retaining their mbaya. Iron is introduced both by these invaders and by the White whale-fishers and traders. Agriculture undergoes a new development ; so also do military tactics,

Transvaal, in the beginning of the XVIIIth century, having been introduced by the Ma-Lemba about 1750. In spite of this, the Pedis call it *khuga*, the same word as *huku* in Thonga, Ur-Bantu *kuku*. The name of the thing may have been introduced at the same time as the thing itself, and incorporated by undergoing the phonetic permutations required by the dialect (Compare *Folklore*, Sept. 1908, The Balemba).

(1) The *Lourenço Marques Guardian*, in a very favourable review of Vol. I (Oct. 7, 1912), expresses the regret that I have not dwelt at greater length on the first origin and migrations of the Thonga tribe. The writer thinks that this was formerly a much larger tribe "the basic element in the Hamitic invasion of the coastal region." As far as I know, no document exists on which evidence on such questions could be based. The Portuguese chronicles of the XVIth and XVIIth centuries describe a state of things which is quite modern compared with the first Bantu invasion of South Africa, that of the *Zinji*, to which Masoudi's "Golden Meadows" makes an allusion, A. D. 943. When the Portuguese travellers reached the shore of Delagoa Bay, the stream of migration had already taken an Eastern or North-Eastern direction (I. p. 23). — As regards inferences drawn from the wide-spread term *Thonga* (Ronga, Tonga), I think they have very little value ; this word probably means "people of the East," as *Kalanga* means people of the North. It is applied by Natives to those tribes which dwell eastwards of them, whatever their origin may be. It is a geographical designation, like the term Orientals, and discloses nothing as regards the ethnological features of the tribes to which it is applied. In fact, as regards language, customs, folklore, there is much less affinity between our Thongas, the Tongas of Inhambane, and the Tongas of Zambesi than between them and the Zulus.

We must be content to remain ignorant of facts as to which there exists no reliable record.

3: Krige, E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14
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THE PLACE OF THE NORTH-EASTERN TRANSVAAL SOTHO IN THE SOUTH BANTU COMPLEX

EILEEN JENSEN KRIGE

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THE Sotho of the North-Eastern Transvaal Lowveld occupy an area with fairly well-marked geographical boundaries. To the east, the Game Reserve, low-lying, unhealthy, very sparsely populated even in the old days, remains an effective barrier to contact with and further migrations from the Shangana-Tonga of Portuguese East Africa. South are the Olifants River and the towering Drakensberg range curving north-west then northwards to merge into the well-marked escarpment on the west dividing Lowveld from Highveld. On the north the Klein Letaba river roughly demarcates our area from the Venda and the Shangana-Tonga of the Knobnose Location. The Sotho-speaking Venda of Tswale and Moila, who fall well within this area, resemble in culture their Sotho-ized neighbours more than their own Venda kin to the north; but the Shangana-Tonga, who occupy most of the lower-lying eastern and north-eastern portion of the area and comprise at least one-third of its total population, are unassimilated strangers of different stock coming from the north-east and east. They have been entering since about 1840, usually in small bands, at first seeking the protection of and subjecting themselves to the Sotho owners of the land. On the arrival

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3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14
Thonga FT6

of the white man, some of their headmen were granted independent locations which have served as nuclei for the building up of more united tribal groups. (See accompanying map.)

The most important Sotho tribes of this area are the Lobedu, the Narene and the Khaha who together comprise about three-quarters of the total Sotho population.[1] The outstanding demographical feature is, however, the numerical predominance of the Lobedu who, with a population of well over 40,000, are not only the greatest tribe, but outnumber all the other Sotho-speaking tribes put together.[2] The pre-eminence and cultural influence of the Lobedu in this area does not rest solely upon their numerical preponderance. It is based largely upon the fame of their queen, Modjadji, who, as the greatest rain-maker in the Northern Transvaal, is not only regularly approached with gifts by other chiefs but also sometimes places them on the throne (*ho bea bohosi*) and is appealed to in cases of disputed succession.

This area, though forming part of a greater cultural whole including the Northern Transvaal Highveld and probably Pediland to the south, is, however, sharply characterized by distinctive features, such as ritual suicide of the chief and recognition of women as rulers in their own right, that are not found elsewhere. These are sufficient to form a fairly well-defined culture pattern, which, owing to the overwhelming numerical preponderance of the Lobedu, if for no other reason,

[1] The Sotho population of our area is made up as follows, according to van Warmelo:

Lobedu	8237 taxpayers.		
Narene	2521	,,	(Mahlo 1332, Letswalo 1189).
Khaha	1608	,,	
Thabina (Mozoboya)	1088	,,	
Phalaborwa	332	,,	
Makxoba	700	,,	
Baha Mamidja	413	,,	
Shai or Tsubye	256	,,	
Tswale	357	,,	Sotho-speaking Venda.
Moila	260	,,	Sotho-speaking Venda.

The only large tribal groups among Shangana-Tonga are

Mohlaba	2918 taxpayers.	
Nwamitwa	1347	,,

[2] The proportion is Lobedu 8237 taxpayers.
rest 7535 ,,

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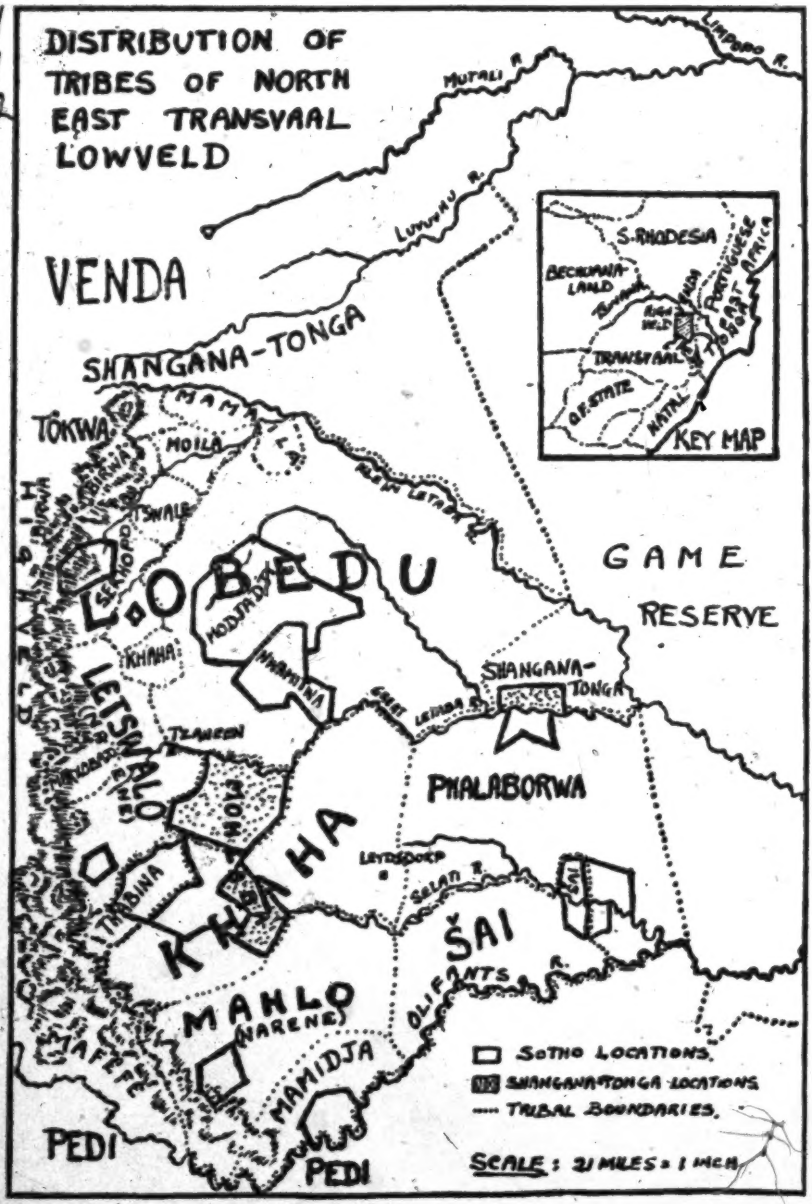

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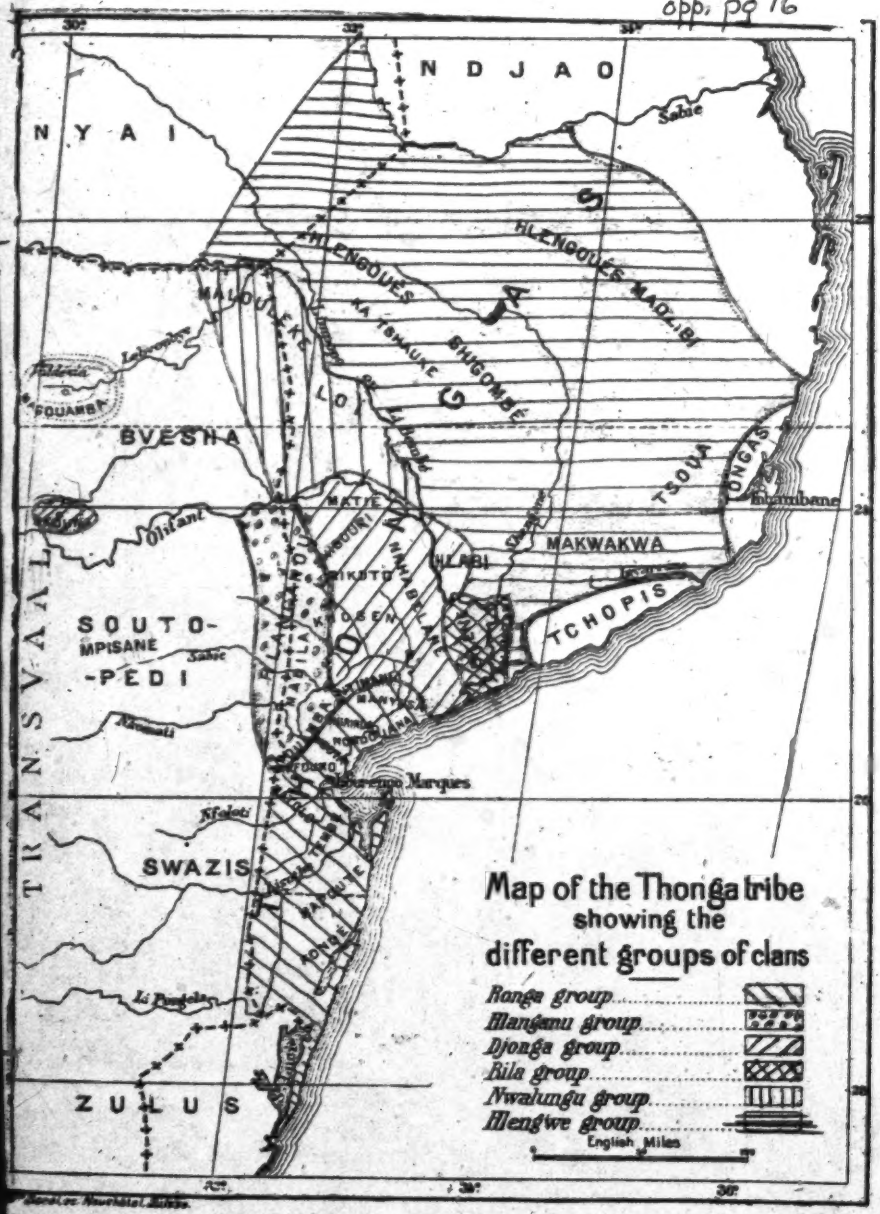

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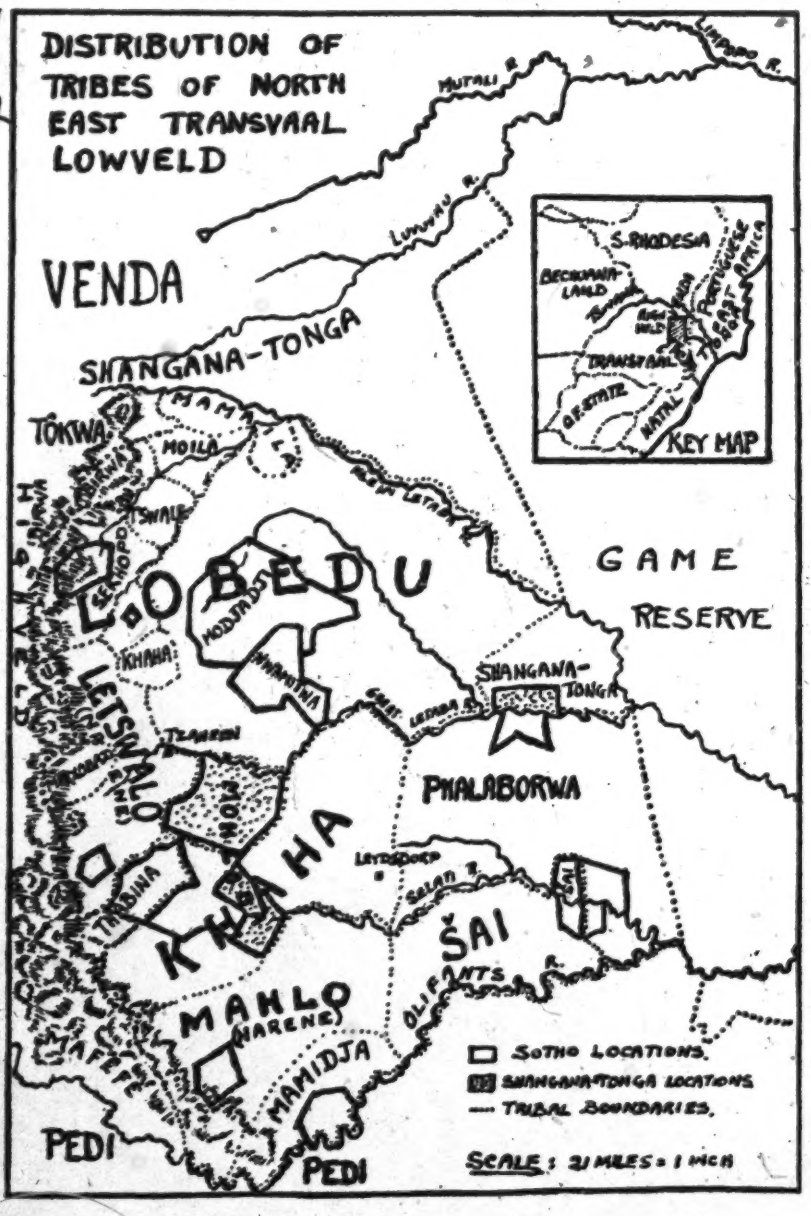

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[The following native words appear frequently in 1: Junod and 2: Junod in this file:

bakhili:	married people.
bakweru: (Ronga)	relatives on father's side.
badyi ba ndjaka	heirs of the deceased.
bahlomuri:	soldier who mutilates an enemy already struck down by another soldier.
bakulu:	elders.
bakokwana:	widow of a malume's father; widow of father's brother; maternal relatives.
baloyi:	wizards (pl. of nogi).
balungu:	white people.
bana:	sons.
bandla:	village square.
barikweru: (Djonga)	relatives on father's side.
batukulu:	pl. of ntukulu.
bekisa:	the dead.
biha:	a bad action.
biyeketa:	medical practice.

biyeketa: medicine added to milombyana after the yandla.
boha muti: sexual rite of purification after a village has been moved.
boha puri: a rite of passage during childhood.
bowumba: a woman who has lost many children.
bugango: sexual relations between boys and girls.
buhimbi: strong drink made from mphimbi fruit.
buhlapfa: taboo period after village has moved.
buhosi: chieftainship.
bukanye: liquor brewed from a species of nkanye.
bukoñwana: wife's relatives, relationship between a man and his relative-in-law.
bukosi: lobolo money.
bukwele: jealousy between co-wives; court in village where they insult each other.
bukwera: uncircumcised boys.
bula: divinatory bones.
buloyii: witchcraft.
buñanga: medico-magical art.
bupsa: flour.
buputju: light beer made of mealies.

busahana:	period of confiement for mother and child.
bushaka:	blood relatives.
bushika:	winter.
buta:	betrothal.
butomi:	life.
buwumba:	state of destitution.
byala	strong beer made from mealies and Kafir corn.
dlaya nkosi:	ceremony of "killing" a mourning.
fuya muri: (Ronga)	sexual act by the headman of a village after it has been moved.
fuya ñwana:	rite by which parents take possession of a child.
gandjelo:	big pot used for storing strong drinks; also an altar.
gangisa:	premarital sexual relations between young boys and girls.
gila:	war dance.
gobela:	exorciser.
guba:	war songs.
hahla:	sacrifice.
hakati:	stones of a desert fruit used for divination purposes.

hlamba ndjaka:	purification rites.
hlobo:	summer.
hondlola (hondla or horola):	ceremony of purification after an illness, after weaning etc.
hosi:	chief.
hubo:	village square; council of the men of the village.
khana:	special dance performed on several occasions.
hula:	threshing.
khangula:	ceremony celebrating the construction of a new village.
khehla:	ceremony of crowning mature men with wax crowns.
khombo:	danger, connected with impurity of death uncircumcised boys.
kokotela muti:	sexual ceremony connected with the building of a village.
kokwa:	grandfather.
kokwane:	maternal uncle or grandfather.
kopola:	covering floor with layer of clay
kubuta:	betrothal visit among Northern Clans.
kula kulisa:	ceremony for a child performed by a family friend.

kunga:	rite of breaking a silence; rite connected with ciecumcision.
kunga:	rite performed for the firstborn child.
kunga:	a betrothal custom.
lahla khombo:	sexual rite of purification among southern clans.
lao:	special huts for unmarried boys.
lobolo:	sum paid for a wife.
luba: (Djonga)	the duty of citizens to pay taxes.
lurulula:	great hunter's rite.
luma:	removing injurious character of a given food by a certain ceremony (1st fruits rite etc.).
mabele:	Kafir corn.
madleko:	light beer made from mealies.
mahosi:	hut; place between huts.
mahungulo:	vapor baths for purification of widows and grave-diggers.
makhehla:	mature men who wear black wax crowns.
makwabu:	brother or sister; cousin.
malao:	largest hut of head of family.
malopa:	mourning dress.

malume:	maternal uncle.
mamana:	mother.
maphisa (sing. phisa):	professional hunters.
matululana:	sin of intercourse committed by a man with the wife of his elder brother.
mbelele:	rain rite.
mbongi:	beggar.
mhala:	antelope; shed for implements.
mhamba:	offering.
mhamba:	any object, act or person used to establish a bond between the gods and their worshippers, an offering.
mhula:	medicinal pills for children.
milombyana:	medicine given a child soon after birth to protect him.
minkhubi:	calabash to carry milombyana.
mintcheko:	long-handled calabash for drinking.
miri:	drugs thought to possess special powers.
mondjo:	any magical means of divination.
moya:	wind; human breath; spirit.
mpashu:	an individually-owned field.
mpheka:	strong form of byala.

mphulo: (Ronga)	special charm of each clan which has the power to make warriors and the country unconquerable.
mukhumbi:	circle of warriors.
mukoñwana:	relative-in-law.
mungoma:	magician.
murumelo:	medicine made from the body of an enemy.
muti:	the village.
ñanga:	medicine-man.
nau:	a law.
ndangu:	fire-place.
ndjaka:	inheritance; defilement of death.
ndjao:	charm made of root of a juncus.
ndjoba:	objects which are dangerous to use in graves.
ngiyana:	black wax crown worn by mature men.
ngoma:	generic term for all customs connected with circumcision.
ngula:	large basket.
nhanga:	special huts for unmarried girls.
nhlampsa:	relationship between potential co-wives.
ñhwanin:	girl.

nkanye:	tree from which the bukanye is made.
nkata:	husband.
nkhwenda:	single man.
nkombe:	cooking spoon.
nkosi:	mourning.
nkulu:	child for whom the boka puri has been performed.
nkulukumba:	headman.
noyi:	witch or wizard.
nsati:	wife, daughter of wife's brother.
ntehe:	softened skin in which mother carries her child.
ntimu:	sacred wood.
ntjumi:	suitor's go-between in the Northern Clans.
ntsindja:	village in which the chief resides.
ntukulu:	uterine nephew.
numzane:	headman of the village.
nuru:	"spiritual principle which emerges from men and and animals after death".
ñwandjise:	boy.
ñwingi:	husband's relatives.
phisa:	professional hunters.
psanyi:	half-digested grass from the stomach of a goat which is often used as medicine.

psigango:	unmarried girls.
psikwembu:	ancestor gods.
psisiwana:	the poor.
puri:	cotton string tied around a child's waist when he begins to crawl.
rarana:	paternal aunt.
sala:	a fruit.
shangwane:	best friend of bride or bridegroom who accompanies them on visits to each other's homes.
shibalu:	compulsory labor.
shibongo:	laudatory name; family name.
shidlodlo: (Djonga)	black wax crown worn by mature men.
shifado:	penis shield.
shigango:	lover.
shigiyane:	wood pile.
shikoñwana:	rite of "killing" the bukoñwana relationship.
shikomo:	hoe.
shikwembu:	ancestor god.
shimhimbi:	special dish of Kafir corn given mother at child-birth.

shimusi:	days on which no soil may be tilled.
shira:	grave.
shirwalo:	beer brought as a present.
shirungulo:	sacrificial act of tying a newly-built village together.
shirwalo:	custom of bringing beer to parents of the betrothed.
shitale (sha tiko):	the public vituperator
shitjungulu:	amulet.
shitlanta:	storehouses for grain.
shuba:	day of purification after a death.
singita:	bad luck.
sungi:	lodge in which circumcised boys are secluded for 3 months.
tala:	ash-heap behind the hut.
tatana:	father.
thwaza:	rite of exorcism.
tihambela muti:	founding of a village by a younger brother or son
tihuhlu:	seed of nkuhlu tree used as medicine, especially for newborn child.
tiko:	the nation or the special clan.

tilo:	heaven.
timbila:	type of xylophone.
timbeleko:	an unfortunate birth.
tinamu:	a man's potential wives among his relatives-in-law.
tinduna:	councillors.
tingoya:	hairstyle of nursing women and magicians.
tinhungubane	small calabash used for carrying medicines.
tjekela:	visit of a betrothed girl to her fiancé's home.
tjeba:	fishing with baskets.
tjhumba:	the right claimed to part of lobolo by the maternal uncle of bride with whom she has lived.
tlhoma:	bringing of the bride to her new home.
tshuba:	a game.
tsu	a sacramental utterance.
yandla:	ceremony of giving a child "his month".
yindlu:	house.
yila:	taboo.
yimpi:	warring party or army.]

APPENDIX II (See p. 332).

List of Thonga botanic names with their scientific equivalents.

According to the publication of Hans Schinz and Henri-A. Junod:
"Zur Kenntnis der Pflanzenwelt der Delago-Bay."
"Bulletin de l'Herbier Boissier," Tome VII. N° II, 1899.

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Pteridophyta.	Tsuna.	Acrostichum tenuifolium (and other fern
Typhaceae.	Papala.	Typha australis (Used to make mats).
Pandanaceae.	Shihlowa.	Pandanus.
Aponogetonaceae.	Fenyana.	Aponogeton spathaceus (1).
Hydrocharitaceae.	Nkushe.	Lagarosiphon muscoides (2).
Gramina.	Luhlwa.	Imperata cylindrica (Used as thatch).
»	Byanyi.	Andropogon (and all the other grasses).
»	Litlange. Ntlangi.	Cynodon dactylon.
Cyperaceae.	Nhlale.	Cyperus flabelliformis.
»	Bungu.	Cyperus prolifer (?) (Papyrus).
Commelinaceae.	Nkompfana.	Commelina africana, Forskalei, etc.
Liliaceae.	Gothwa.	Crinum Forbesii, etc.
Orchidaceae.	Shishengane.	Eulophia papillosa.
Olacaceae.	Psautemu.	Opilia tomentella (3).
Amaranthaceae.	Shinghalafumane.	Hermbstaedtia elegans.
»	Thabatlabane.	Cyphocarpa Zeyheri (4).
Nymphaeaceae.	Tibu.	Nymphaea caerulea (Bulb edible).
Menispermaceae.	Shimbyati.	Cissampelos Pareira (5).
»	Shikumbula.	Synclisia Junodi.
Anonaceae.	Nuti.	Artabotrys brachypetala.
»	Shintitana.	Artabotrys Monteiroae.
Leguminosae.	Gowana.	Albizzia fastigiata.
»	Khawa.	Accacia kraussiana.
»	Ndjiba.	Apalatos delagoensis.
»	Ntjenge.	Dichrostachys nutans.
»	Nembe-nembe.	Cassia petersiana.
»	Hlapfuta (Ro).	Afzelia Cuanzensis. (6)
»	Shene (Dj).	» »
»	Shirimbyati sha mutju.	Indigofera podophylla.
»	Shiringati sha tchune.	Indigofera sp ?
»	Lisekeseka.	Sesbania aculeata.
»	Shekane.	Desmodium incanum.
»	Nwamahlanga.	Canavalia obtusifolia,
»	Rongolo ra shlobe.	Eriosema cajanoides (The white Rongolo)
Meliaceae.	Nyamari.	Ekebergia Meyeri.
Euphorbiaceae.	Midyanhwari.	Flugges obovata.
»	Shinyandjana.	Phyllanthus pentandrus.
Anacardiaceae.	Nkanye.	Sclerocarya caffra (King of trees!) (p. 17)
Hippocrateaceae.	Shikokombela.	Hippocratea sp.
»	Mphyinsha.	Salacia Kraussii (Fruit edible).
Sapindaceae.	Buputwane.	Cardiospermum halicacabum.
Malvaceae.	Ntjinsi.	Hibiscus surattensis, Trionum, etc.
»	Shintjincana.	Sida cordifolia.
»	Bunkale.	Gossypium herbaceum (Cotton).

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Sterculiaceae.	Muhlwadambu.	Melhania Forbesii.
»	Nkondlwahari.	Waltheria americana.
Ochnaceae.	Kelekele.	Ochna arborea.
Flacourtiaceae.	Psekamafura.	Casearia Junodii (Schinz).
»	Nhlungunu.	Flacourtia Ramontoli.
Passifloraceae.	Menyamamba.	Modecca Kirkii.
Thymelaeaceae.	Shindjibane.	Synaptolepis Oliveriana.
Combretaceae.	Balekanhloko.	Combretum Gueinzii.
»	Nkonono.	Terminalia sericea (Used for handles, etc.).
Ebenaceae.	Nhlangulane.	Euclea natalensis.
»	Shirole.	Royena pentandra.
Sapotaceae.	Ndjole.	Mimusops caffra (Fruit edible).
Leguminosae.	Nsala.	Strychnos spinosa (p. 16).
»	Nkwakwa.	Strychnos Ungasha (p. 17).
Apocynaceae.	Nulu.	Carissa Arduina.
»	Ntamunga.	Carissa sp. (Fruit edible).
»	Mbungu.	Landolphia Kirkii (7)
»	Nkahlu.	Tabaernaemontana ventricosa (Styptic).
»	Nkahlu-tjhobo.	Vocanga Dregei.
»	Ntjulu.	Strophanthus Petersianus (p. 58).
Asclepiadaceae.	Muhlu-tjhobo.	Secamone sp.
»	Ndjutlwane.	Sarcostoma viminale.
Convolvulaceae.	Nkaka-wa-tjhobo.	Ipomoea cairica.
»	Masinga.	Stictocardia Woodii.
Scrophulariaceae.	Shitsinyambita.	Striga orobanchoïdes.
»	Murilwane (Dj).	Striga lutea.
Solanaceae.	Rulane.	Solanum panduraeforme.
»	Mondjo.	Datura fastuosa (?) (8).
Bignoniaceae.	Mpfungura.	Kigelia aethiopica.
Pedaliaceae.	Hlehlwa.	Pretrea Forbesii.
Lentibulariaceae.	Nkushe.	Utricularia stellaris.
Rubiaceae.	Ngalangala.	Tricalysia Kraussiana.
Cucurbitaceae.	Nkaka.	Momordica Balsamina (Edible).
»	Shirakarana.	Citrullus Naudinianus.
»	Nkaka wa Batshopi.	Coccinia jatrophaefolia (Eaten by Chopis).
Campanulaceae.	Shihlangwana.	Wahlenbergia arenaria.
»	Shilawana.	Lobelia chilawana (Schinz).
Compositae.	Ntshontshengori.	Vernonia Cinerea.
»	Nkukala-shibuya.	» Perotteti.
»	Hlanguhlungu.	» tigna.
»	Shifodyane.	Ageratum conyzoides.
»	Kamele.	Mikania scandens (Medicinal).
»	Shirimbyati sha tchune.	Gnaphalium stenophyllum.
»	Shirimbyati.	Helichrysum pervifloruin.
»	Mushidji.	Bidens africana.
»	Nhlangula-batjongwana.	Helichrysum damarense.

This list might be greatly extended by any one devoting more time to the study of Thonga botany. Though it is not complete, I publish it, knowing by experience how difficult accurate botanic classification is in South African flora. It may be used as a starting point.

(1) Dancers make crowns of it. (2) All the algae and generally plants growing in water are called Nkuale. (3) Bantus are said to use it to clean their teeth. (4) Used for rheumatism (5) Medicine for bowel complaints. (6) Used to manufacture canoes. (7) Indiarubber, Kafir orange, p. 19. (8) This plant, used as a means of divination, is a Datura, subspontaneous or cultivated in various spots. I cannot guarantee the name of the species (p. 530).

2: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

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and

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Balungu, White people
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Shitjhuti, shadow
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Yimba, to circumcise
Yindlu, house
» *ya nwana*, placenta

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Identification

The Thonga (Bathonga, Batonga, Tonga), often called Shangana (Amashangana, Shangaan, Tshangaan), are included with the Hlengwe and the Ronga in the great Shangana-Tonga nation, with a total population in excess of one million. The languages of these tribes, with those of the Nguni and Sotho nations, form the Southeastern Bantu division of the Bantu linguistic family. The component tribal and sub-tribal divisions of the Thonga proper are as follows:

1. Djonga or Khosa division--Hlavi (Bahlabi, Vahlavi), Khosa (Cossine, Khosen, Makhosa), Rikotjo (Rikoto), and Shiwuri (Shibouri, Shiburi).
2. Nwalungu division--Loyi (Baloyi, Loi, Valoyi) and Maluleke (Malouleke),
3. Hlanganu division--Hlanganu (Hlanganou, Vahlanganu), Mabila, Nwamba, and remnants of the true Shangana (of Nguni origin).
4. Bila or Mvanati division--Bila (Bilene) and Khambana.
5. Bvesha (Magwamba) and other emigrants into the Transvaal, mainly of Thonga but partly also of Hlengwe origin.

Basic Economy

Primarily agricultural. The staple is maize, followed by "Kafir corn" (a millet called mabele, which is the oldest cereal and the most heavily incrusted with ritual). Sorghum, groundnuts, manioc, and pumpkins are also important crops; sweet potatoes, beans, 'Kafir peas' (an earth fruit like groundnuts), and a little rice and eleusine are also grown. No manure or fertilizer is used. Goats are the oldest and most numerous animals; they are used mainly for sacrifices and hospitality. Cattle, numerous before the Nguni invasions when they were plundered, have since recovered; they are socially important (for bride-prices) but not ritually significant like goats. Chickens are common and old rather than recent; eggs are eaten. Sheep are rare and pigs recent. Hunting is important, fishing moderately so. Caterpillars, locusts, termites, and larvae are collected for food. The Thonga are addicted to barter and trade.

Sex Division of Labor

Young men herd and milk the cattle, which are taboo to women. Boys herd and milk the goats. The men hunt and fish. The women do most of the agricultural work, including even land clearance and

threshing. However, each man has a private garden; he plants it and harvests from it, but his wife weeds it. Women gather.

Property

Cattle constitute the chief wealth. Iron hoes once used for bride-price. Land belongs to paramount chiefs; local headmen allocate hereditary usufruct to individuals.

Patrilineal inheritance prevails for cattle and all other property. These, together with widows, are distributed among younger brothers and sons--usually with one as trustee, obligated to provide bride-prices for the others. In default of immediate patrilineal heirs, sisters' sons rather than remoter patrilineal kinsmen inherit. In any event, sisters' sons exercise their property privilege against their maternal uncle to claim a few objects from the estate, e.g., spears.

Social Stratification

No slavery.

Marriage

A substantial bride-price (of lobola type) is paid to WiFa--preferably in cattle, though iron hoes, brass rings, and trade beads (but never goats) have been used in the past, and money oftentimes today. The bride-price received for a sister is commonly used to secure a wife for her brother, but a man without sisters may work and accumulate cattle and is usually helped by his Fa, FaBr's, Br's, and FaSo's. The recipient is the WiFa, but a definite share always goes to the bride's MoBr. An alternative mode for a man without property or prospects of obtaining enough for a bride-price is to elope with a girl to the village of the latters MoBr; since no bride-price is paid, their children belong to the mother's patrilineal kin; usually, however, the husband attempts to assemble a bride-price later to regularize his marriage, or in lieu thereof uses the bride-price of a Da for his Wi.

Polygyny is general and preferred, and is preferentially though by no means exclusively sororal. The first wife is the "great wife." Each co-wife has her own hut.

Family

The nuclear family is the hosehold group. Polygynous families,

though strongly functional, are united into a large patrilocal extended family, which is coextensive with the settlement or "kraal."

Residence

The patrilocal rule is the norm. Except occasionally for older men, whose children have grown up, residence is never matrilocal, for it is taboo for a girl to remain in her own village after her bride-price is received. However, a man with no patrilineal heirs to carry on his line may require a sister to remain in his village with him. She does not marry or receive a bride-price, but she takes lovers; her children belong to and live with her brother, and the males continue his village and line. Avunculocal residence is normal in childhood; boys and girls, when weaned, go to live in the village of their MoBr for several years, girls sometimes until they are full-grown. A form of avunculocal residence also occurs in cases of elopement when no bride-price is paid.

Kin Groups and Exogamy

Marriage is always exogamous with respect to the settlement or "kraal."

Kindreds and bilinear kin groups are almost certainly absent. Marriage is forbidden with any first cousin, cross or parallel.

There are agamous, non-totemic patri-sibs, each with an hereditary chief and bearing the name of its male founder [sibs are really greatly expanded patri-families]. They are divided into patri-lineages, which (or parts of which) are localized as clans. Even the patri-lineage is not fully exogamous [except for the minor patri-lineage which is localized], for marriage is permitted with a third cousin in the paternal line, and even with a second cousin after a special ban-breaking ceremony. There is no exogamy with respect to the mother's patri-lineage.

Junod, effectively countering Radcliffe-Brown's interpretation of the avunculate, cites the following probable survivals of former matrilineal descent:

a. Avunculocal residence of a child after weaning.
b. Raising heirs by an unmarried sister in default of patrilineal heirs.
c. Avunculocal residence in cases of elopement without bride-price.
d. The sharing of the MoBr of a woman in her bride-price.
e. The partial claim of sisters' sons in a man's estate.

f. Assignment of district chiefships by paramount chiefs to sisters' sons.

g. The fact that the officiant at all important sacrifices for a man, including those at his funeral, is regularly his MoBr (or MoBrSo in his stead).

Kinship Terminology

Fa--tanana, rara, baba. Mo--manana, Ch--ngwana. Hu--nuna. Wi--nsati.

Avuncular and nepotic terminology is usually of bifurcate merging type, but is lineal for FaSi-BrCh terms. There is especially strong avoidance with WiBrWi. She cannot be married except under highly special conditions, namely, if Ego's wife dies and his wife's male relatives are unable either to refund the bride-price or supply a substitute; Ego may then take his WiBrWi away from his WiBr as his own wife, since she was bought with his cattle.

Cousin terms conform to the Omaha pattern.

Settlement Pattern

There are settled communities--small villages or hamlets called "kraals." A kraal is composed of round huts with wattle-and-daub walls and low, conical, grass-thatched roofs. These are arranged at first in an arc, and grow in time into a complete circle (every man's ambition). They are surrounded by a circular fence of thorny branches (not a stockade). The headman's hut stands opposite the main gate. In the very center is a circular cattle corral, and there are smaller corrals for goats, pigs, and calves, chicken houses, sheds, and special huts for unmarried men and for unmarried girls. Near the entrance is an enclosed meeting place for the men.

Community Organization

The "kraal" is a large patrilocal extended family and constitutes a patrilocal clan-community. Its constituent huts are occupied by the wives and children of the headman, his younger brothers, and his married sons. When its founder dies, and his estate is distributed, his successor establishes a new kraal.

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Local Government

The headman of the kraal is the patriarch of the resident patri-family. Succession is patrilineal--by a YoBr, then a So, then a SiSo (if no patrilineal heirs).

State

Kraals are politically aggregated into districts with appointive sub-chiefs, who are usually the sons, sisters' sons, or other relatives of the paramount chief. The latter is a powerful ruler (over a tribe rather than the entire Thonga nation) with many of the attributes of a divine king; he is surrounded by taboos and possesses special regalia. He lives in a capital village, and is advised by a council consisting of his elder male kinsmen, military leaders, agents, and district chiefs. His court also includes favorites or messengers, a herald, and a Public Vituperator or court jester. He receives tribute in kind (agricultural products and a share of game killed), in money, and in labor. He is ultimately succeeded by his ElSo, but apparently not until after his younger uterine brothers have ruled. The heir apparent is born and reared in secrecy, and is not allowed to marry. When the king dies, this fact is kept secret for a year or more. Then an elaborate installation ceremony is held; the new king marries (his great wife will bear the heir presumptive), usually a member of the royal family of a neighboring tribe; when she arrives at the capital, the king sets his young men to work building him a new capital village.

Warfare

The Thonga are not particularly warlike.

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1: Junod, Henri A. The Life of A South African Tribe, Vol. I. London: Macmillan and Company, 1927.

Pp. 559; 54 illustrations; 1 map; tables.

Yale: Nkd85. T5.912 jb.v.1.

Omitted: Pp. 290-309 inclusive, dealing with kinship systems of other tribes.

[The author, a missionary and head of the Swiss Romande Mission at Lourenco Marques, lived for many years among the Thonga and knew them intimately. Suggestions for reform of Thonga customs and beliefs have been kept to a minimum and appear for the most part at the ends of chapters. In this study Junod made use not only of his own knowledge and observations of the Thonga but also of Thonga informants, whose names are indicated in parentheses in the text.
Note: Frequent references are made in the text to the Latin notes which appear on pages 516-520. Translation of these notes was made into English for HRAF by Richard Neuse, and the translation appears in brackets along with the Latin text. -- Analyst]

Field date: 1895-1909
Analyst: Ruth Heffner

Evaluation: Missionary-5
Processed in 1953

2: Junod, Henri A. The Life of a South African Tribe, Vol. II. London: Macmillan and Co., 1927.

Pp. 660; 67 illustrations; index and glossary.

Yale: Nkd85. T5. 912jb. v. 2.

[This is the second volume of Junod's definitive work on the Thonga tribe, the first volume of which may be found as source number 1 in this file. This volume is divided into three general parts: the first deals with the agricultural and industrial life of the people, the second with their literary and artistic life, and the third with religion and superstitition. The first section contains a good deal of information on the material culture of the Thonga--their food and drink, their clothing and ornamentation, and their utensils--as well as material on their agricultural customs and techniques, food-getting activities and commerce. The second division includes valuable information on their language, folklore and music, and texts of songs, proverbs, riddles and folktales are provided. The last and longest section covers the entire gamut of Thonga religious life and superstitions, emphasizing, for example, the native conceptions of nature and man; ancestrolatry and concepts of heaven; magic, including medical art, spirit possession, witchcraft and divination; taboos and

2: Junod, Henri A.

conceptions of morality. Pp. 585-633 contain appendices, some of which have not been marked for categories since the information provided applies to the Bantu in general and only incidentally to the Thonga. The index and glossary of native terms for both volumes I and II will be found in category 104 or category 116, pp. 645-660. --Analyst]

Field date: 1895-1909
Analyst: Ruth Heffner

Evaluation: Missionary-5
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111 FT6 Thonga

3: Rita-Ferreira, Antonio. Bibliografia Etnológica de Moçambique (das Origens a 1954) [Ethnological Bibliography of Mozambique (Its Origins to 1954)]. Lisboa: Junta de Investigações do Ultramar, 1961 (1962).

Pp. xiii, 254.

Yale: Xn60 A5 962F. DLC: Z3884.E7R5. DLC card no.: 64-33472.

(Only pp. 122-142 were processed for the Thonga file.)

[The Thonga section of this bibliography includes numerous references on the general features and properties of this Bantu-speaking tribal entity in South Africa. In addition bibliographic notation is made of the Rongas, Changanas, and Tsuas -- some tribal subdivisions of the Thonga. The author's annotations of the sources are succinct and concise. Both English and foreign language sources are found. The annotations were not translated.]

Field date: none
Analyst: Gilbert Winer

Evaluation: Social Anthropologist-4
Processed in 1967

3: Rita-Ferreira E-4 (no date) 1962
FT6 Thonga FT6

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GRUPO TONGA

1. TONGAS EM GERAL

510 BASTOS, M. H. Calçada — Da música e cantares indígenas — Três canções do Maputo

Moçambique (2): 29-44, 1935

1. Cântico de aclamação.
2. Cântico do *Mukhumbi* (disposição do exército em círculo à maneira angune).
3. Canção da machamba e dos gafanhotos.

Os tongas da região são considerados pela autora como fortemente influenciados por zulos.

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511 BASTOS, M. H. Calçada; MONTEZ, Caetano — Da música e cantares indígenas — Canções djongas (Magude)

Moçambique 3: 17-29, 1935

Inhacuobe — cantiga de amor.
Inhacuabane — cantiga de escárnio.

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512 * BENTHOUD, H. — Thonga-Märchen aus Transvaal

Z. Eingeborenen-Sprachen 20: 241-256, 1929; 21: 54-74, 122-158 e 310-319, 1930; 22: 114-120, 1932

[pp. 1-121 not processed]

3: Rita-Ferreira E-4 (no date) 1962
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113

513 DICKE, B. H. **Notes on some customs arising out of the Bantu marriage**

South Afr. J. Sci. 27: 549-556, 1930

As viúvas fictícias entre os Sutos do Nordeste do Transval. Os Tongas não conheciam tal costume porque, originalmente, não usavam gado nas transacções matrimoniais. Diferenças tribais quanto ao costume do *lobolo*. Liberdade sexual antenupcial concedida às raparigas tongas.

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514 GOLDMAN, Irving **The Bathonga of South Africa**

In MEAD, Margaret ed. *Cooperation and competition among primitive peoples*. Nova Iorque. McGraw-Hill Book Coy. 1937. Pp. 354-381

Baseado na obra de Junod, o autor fornece um resumo da vida económica, da estrutura social e do sistema educativo dos Tongas. Alude, em especial, ao papel desempenhado pelo indivíduo e respectivo grau de integração na cultura.

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515 GUYE, H. **Recrudescence paienne: le culte de Mourimi**

Bull. Mission Suisse Romande 28: 165-171, 1916

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516 GUYE, H. **Bouloyi**

Bull. Mission Suisse Romande 32: 104-109, 1921

Ambos estes artigos se referem à feitiçaria e meios utilizados entre os Tongas para a combater.

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517 JAQUET, A. A. **Terms of kinship and corresponding patterns of behaviour among the Thonga**

Bantu Stud. 3 (4): 327-348, 1929

Termos de parentesco e sua relação com os padrões de comportamento social entre os Tongas.

3: Rita-Ferreira E-4 (no date) 1962
FT6 Thonga FT6

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518 JEANNERET, Philippe — **Les Ma-Khoga**

Bull. Soc. neuchâtel. Géogr. 8: 126-155, 1894-95

Notas gerais sobre a cultura material, as cerimónias fúnebres e a magia. Refere-se ao despotismo dos conquistadores angunes. Ilustrado.

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519 JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **La tribu et la langue Thonga avec quelques échantillons du folklore Thonga**

Lausana. B. Bridel. 1896. 40 pp.

Contém um resumo da cultura tonga, mas é sobretudo linguístico.

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520 JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **Some remarks on the folklore of the Ba-Thonga**

Folk-Lore 14: 116-124, 1903

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521 JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **The Ba-Thonga of the Transvaal**

Adresses Pap. Brit. South Afr. Assoc. Advanc. Sci. 3: 222-262, 1905

Esta monografia respeita sobretudo à história da migração dos Tongas do Sul de Moçambique para o Transvaal Norte, à língua, ao folclore e às concepções morais e religiosas.

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522 JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **Zidji: étude de mœurs sud-africaines**

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Novela sobre a vida de um jovem tonga. Contém grande cópia de informes etnográficos.

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523 JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **A Vida de uma Tribo Sul-Africana — I — Vida Social**

Lisboa. Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa. 1917. XIII + 469 pp.

Primeira tradução, por Carlos Bivar, do vol. I da 1.ª ed. da grande monografia de Junod sobre os Tongas.

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524 JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **The magic conception of nature among the Bantus**

South Afr. J. Sci. 17: 76-86, 1920

Concepções mágicas dos Tongas sobre a natureza.

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525 JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **Bantu heathen prayers**

Internat. Rev. Missions 11 (44): 561-571, 1922

As preces pagãs dos Tongas têm acentuado carácter litúrgico: são actos rituais realizados por certos agentes em relação às circunstâncias familiares e nacionais.

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526 JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **Le totemisme chez les Thongas, les Pédis et les Venda**

Globe 63: 1-22, 1924

Interessante estudo comparativo sobre as crenças e estruturas totémicas entre os três grupos étnicos referidos.

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527 JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **La genèse des contes africains**

Folk-Lore 35: 324-345, 1924

Modo como os contos são modificados à medida que são transmitidos de boca em boca.

3: Rita-Ferreira E-4 (no date) 1962
FT6 Thonga FT6

113

528 JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **Les rites de défensive et les rites d'évitement dans les coutumes matrimoniales des Bantous sud-africains**

Bull. Schweiz. Ges. Anthropol. Ethnol. 1926-27: 6-7

Ritos defensivos e evitativos no casamento tonga.

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529 JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **Les coutumes matrimoniales des Thongas**

Bull. Mission Suisse Romande 36: 135-141 e 192-197, 1926-27

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530 JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **Moral sense among the Bantu**

Internat. Rev. Missions 16 (61): 85-90, 1927

Depois de estudar alguns costumes tongas, o autor conclui por afirmar o seu elevado sentido moral.

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531 JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **The life of a South African tribe**

2.ª ed. Londres. Macmillan. 1927. Vol. I, 660 pp.; vol. II, 559 pp.

Segunda edição, revista e aumentada, da magnífica monografia do autor sobre os Tongas. O relato exaustivo que faz da cultura tonga é ilustrado com casos individuais e com observações sobre as transformações introduzidas pelo contacto com a cultura ocidental.

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532 JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **Le sacrifice dans l'ancestrolatrie sud-africaine**

Arch. Psychol. 23: 305-335, 1932

Aspectos psicológicos da ancestrolatria tonga.

3: Rita-Ferreira E-4 (no date) 1962
FT6 Thonga FT6

113

533 Junod, H. Alexandre — **Vier afrikanische spiele**

Zurique. Wanderer-Verlag. 1934. 56 pp.

Versões dramatizadas de temas nativos: a vida de uma feiticeira, uma época de fome, diversos contos. Ilustrado.

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534 Junod, H. Alexandre — **Mœurs et coutumes des Bantous. La vie d'une tribu sud-africaine**

Paris. Payot. 1936. Vol. I, 513 pp.; vol. II, 580 pp.

Edição francesa da monumental obra de Junod (pai) sobre os Tongas.

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535 Junod, H. Alexandre — **Usos e Costumes dos Bantos. A Vida duma Tribo Sul-Africana**

Lourenço Marques. Imprensa Nacional. 1944, vol. I, 556 pp.; 1946, vol. II, 634 pp.

Única edição completa, em língua portuguesa, da monumental obra do missionário suíço sobre os Tongas. Versão da edição francesa.

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536 Junod, H. Philipe — **The Va-Thonga (The Thonga-Shangaan people)**

In Duggan-Cronin, A. M. ed. *The Bantu tribes of South Africa.* Cambridge. Deighton, Bell & Coy. Sect. 1. Vol. IV. 1935. Pp. 9-32

Tem especial interesse pelos estudos fotográficos que apresenta. A introdução especialmente consultível, no entanto, um bom resumo da divisão étnica e da cultura dos Tongas do Sul de Moçambique.

3: Rita-Ferreira E-4 (no date) 1962
FT6 Thonga FT6

●113

537 JUNOD, H. Philipe — **NwaMpfundla-NwaSiesna (The romance of the hare)**

Pretória. Wallachs'. 1940. 172 pp.

Cinquenta fábulas sobre a lebre escritas em verso *tsonga*. Cada fábula termina com um ditame moral, ainda que nem todas as astúcias da lebre tenham valor ético.

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538 JUNOD, H. Philipe
JAQUET, A. A. — **Vutlhari bya Vatsonga (Machangana). The wisdom of the Tsonga-Shangana people**

Cleveland (Transval). The Central Mission Press. 1935. 285 pp.

Compilação de algumas centenas de provérbios e enigmas, com tradução em inglês e notas explicativas.

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539 KHAMBANE, Chitlangou
CLERC, André — **Chitlangou, fils de chef**

Lausana. Mission Suisse dans l'Afrique du Sud. 1946. 258 pp.

Relato vivido e romanceado das aventuras do filho de um chefe tonga. Contém bastantes informações etnográficas e vários anexos sobre a construção de palhotas no litoral, o clã dos Khambanes, os cuículos divinatórios, os médicos-mágicos, etc.

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540 KIRBY, Percival R. — **A note on the shipalapala of the Tsonga**

South Afr. J. Sci. 35: 361-363, 1938

Pequeno estudo sobre a trombeta normalmente confeccionada com um chifre do antílope *Hippotragus niger*.

3: Rita-Ferreira E-4 (no date) 1962
FT6 Thonga FT6

113

541 KRIGE, J. D. — **Traditional origins and tribal relationships of the Sotho of northern Transvaal**

Bantu Stud. 11 (4): 321-356, 1937

Contém um capítulo dedicado às infiltrações tongas no Norte do Transvaal, entre os Sothos.

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542 LONGMORE, L. — **The A. A. Jaques collection of native head-rests**

Afr. Mus. Soc. Newsletter 1 (4): 26-28, 1951

Descrição da colecção de travesseiros tongas de madeira que foi exposta em Johannesburg em 1950.

MARQUES, Belo

(V. ref. 199)

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543 NUNES, Joaquim — **Apontamentos sobre a tribo dos Ba-Thonga**

Bol. Soc. Estud. Moçambique 1 (3): 25-36, 1932

Divisão étnica dos Tongas. Considerações gerais sobre a origem dos Tongas. Invasões angunes. Identidade e não diversidade entre Tongas e Bitongas (do Inhambane). Origem dos Chopes e tácticas que lhes permitiram sobreviver aos ataques dos Angunes: refúgio nas dunas entre as lagoas e o mar, povoações lacustres, grandes povoações fortificadas. Gosto pela agricultura e práticas agrícolas dos Chopes especialmente adequadas aos terrenos arenosos em que vivem. Indica a existência de 100 000 chopes em Zavala, em 1912, população que em 1927 se achava reduzida a 40 000.

3: Rita-Ferreira E-4 (no date) 1962
FT6 Thonga FT6

● 113

544 RAMSAY, T. D. **Tsonga law in the Transvaal**

Pretória. Government Printer. 1941. Segunda publicação actualizada em Afr. Stud. 5 (3): 143-156, 1946

Pequeno mas útil resumo do direito consuetudinário entre os Tongas do Transval. O material foi recolhido entre os chefes e indunas do distrito de Pilgrim's Rest.

São versados, em especial, os seguintes pontos:

Casamento (requisitos, *lobolo*, poligimia, posição das diversas mulheres, sororato e levirato);

Adultério (danos, filhos adulterinos, reincidência);

Sedução (danos, filhos nascidos, etc.);

Responsabilidade do chefe pelas infracções cometidas pelos membros da sua povoação.

Aluguer de gado. Alimentos devidos. Propriedade e herança.

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545 SELIGMAN, Brenda Z. **The relationship systems of the Nandi, Masai and Thonga**

Man 17, art. n.º 46: 62-66, 1917

Estudo comparativo entre os sistemas de classificação do parentesco dos Nandis, Masais e Tongas.

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546 STEVENSON-HAMILTON, J. **The Low-Veld: its wild life and its people**

Londres. Gassell & Coy. 1929. XII + 288 pp.

Descrição popular da história, da vida social, da religião e das práticas mágicas dos Tongas do Transval.

Nota. — Também contém informações importantes sobre os Tongas as seguintes referências: 8, 11, 16, 27, 30, 51, 68, 95, 109, 105, 112, 115, 117, 118, 126, 198, 222, 228, 231 e 237.

3: Rita-Ferreira E-4 (no date) 1962
FT6 Thonga FT6

2. RONGAS

547 • BISHOP, H. L. — Recent works on the Ba-Ronga

London quart. I rv. Julho 1907: 74-86

(Não consultado. Referência recolhida indirectamente.)

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548 • BISHOP, H. L. — Social conditions among a Bantu people

Geogr. Teacher 9: 146-157, 1918

(Não consultado. Referência recolhida indirectamente.)

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549 BISHOP, H. L. — A selection of Sironga folk-lore

South Afr. J. Sci. 19: 383-400, 1922

Contos narrando as aventuras do coelho. Texto apenas em inglês.

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550 BISHOP, H. L. — A selection of Sironga proverbs

South Afr. J. Sci. 19: 401-415, 1922

94 provérbios rongas com tradução em inglês e notas explicativas.

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551 CARDOSO, J. Serra — O simba (gato bravo) (Um conto do Maputo)

Moçambique (4): 77-84, 1935

3: Rita-Ferreira E-4 (no date) 1962
FT6 Thonga FT6
Ronga

113

552 CLERC, André — **Marriage laws of the Ronga tribe**

Bantu Stud. **12** (2): 75-104, 1938

Importante estudo dedicado às leis matrimoniais dos Rongas do Maputo. Capacidade para contracção do matrimónio. Condições físicas e impedimentos. Relações ilícitas. Noivado e cerimoniais do casamento. Dissolução, separação, divórcio e seus efeitos. Posição do marido e da mulher perante as respectivas famílias. Regime do *lobolo*.

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553 * FALCÃO, J. B. — **Usos e costumes nas terras da coroa de Lourenço Marques**

Revista Portuguesa **24**: 151-163, 1909

(Referência recolhida indirectamente.)

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554 JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **L'art divinatoire ou la science des coquillages chez les Rongas de la Baie de Delagoa.**

Bull. Soc. neuchâtel. Géogr. **9**: 57-83, 1896-97.

Descrição pormenorizada e com ilustrações da astragalomancia entre os Rongas.

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555 JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **Les chants et les contes des Ba-Ronga de la Baie de Delagoa**

Lausana. G. Bridel. 1897. 327 pp.

Os cânts rongas, seus instrumentos e sistema musical. Cantos de amor, de núpcias, de luto, de exorcistas, de carregadores, de caça e de guerra.

Lugar dos contos na vida ronga e seu valor filosófico. Divide os contos nas seguintes categorias: de animais, de ogres, contos exaltando a astúcia dos humildes e pequenos, contos com intuitos morais e contos de origem estrangeira.

3: Rita-Ferreira E-4 (no date) 1962
FT6 Thonga FT6
Ronga

556 • JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **Nouveaux contes ronga transcrits dans la langue indigène avec traduction française**

Neuchâtel. P. Attinger. 1898. 91 pp.

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557 JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **Les Ba-Ronga: étude ethnographique sur les indigènes de la Baie de Delagoa**

Bull. Soc. neuchâtel. Géogr. 10: 5-500. 1898

Primeiro esboço da sua grande monografia sobre os Tongas. Respeita, em especial, ao direito consuetudinário, à vida nacional, à indústria, a tradições, usos e costumes e às superstições e religião.

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558 JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **The fate of the widows amongst the Ba-Ronga**

Rep. South Afr. Assoc. Advanc. Sci. 5: 363-375. 1908

Ritos de luto e de purificação. Herança das viúvas pelos parentes do defunto.

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559 JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **Um conto ronga inédito: o anel de Boa**

Bol. Soc. Geogr. Lisboa. 27.ª série (2): 78-80. 1909

Texto únicamente em português.

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560 JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **Deux cas de possession chez les Ba-Ronga**

Bull. Soc. neuchâtel. Géogr. 20: 387-402. 1909-10

Descrição de dois casos de possessão em mulheres, sendo um espontâneo e um provocado. Não se trataria de espíritos «elementares», mas dos próprios espíritos «dos antepassados».

3: Rita-Ferreira E-4 (no date) 1962
FT6 Thonga FT6
Ronga

113

561 JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **The sacrifice of reconciliation amongst the Ba-Ronga**

Rep. South Afr. Assoc. Advanc. Sci. 7: 179-182, 1910

Cerimónia efectuada por ocasião da reconciliação de dois irmãos desavindos.

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562 JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **Deux enterrements à 20.000 ans d'intervalle**

Anthropos 5 (5-6): 957-968, 1910

Comparações entre uma sepultura ronga e uma sepultura pré-histórica, conforme elementos recolhidos em pesquisas arqueológicas.

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563 JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **Native customs in relation to small-pox amongst the Ba-Ronga**

Rep. South Afr. Assoc. Advanc. Sci. 15: 694-702, 1918

Costumes seguidos durante as epidemias de varíola: a proclamação inicial, o processo de inoculação, tabos a observar durante o período de margem, actos religiosos, ritos conclusivos.

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564 KÖHLER, J. — **Das Recht der Ba-Ronga**

Z. vergleichende Rechtswiss. 14: 456-472, 1900

Estudo do direito consuetudinário ronga, baseado em Junod. Sistema e termos de parentesco. Casamento, compensação nupcial, levirato e comportamento sexual. Tabo da sogra. Adopção. Gémeos. Chefes. Lei penal.

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565 MONTEIRO, Rose — **Delagoa Bay — Its natives and natural history**

Londres. George Philip & Son. 1891. XII + 274 pp.

Contém algumas informações etnográficas sobre os Rongas da baía do Espírito Santo, mas é, sobretudo, de interesse para botânicos e zoólogos.

3: Rita-Ferreira E-4 (no date) 1962
FT6 Thonga FT6
Ronga
changana

113

566 TRIBOLET, Georges de — **Le ronga d'hier et d'aujourd'hui (une page d'histoire de la civilisation)**

Bol. Soc. Geogr. Lisboa, 33.ª série (3): 108-112, 1915

Considerações gerais sobre os Rongas e a colonização europeia.

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3. CHANGANAS

567 BOAVIDA, Joaquim — **O romance do coelhinho — O coelho e a gazela**

Moçambique (2): 81-86, 1935

Recolhido entre os Changanas de Maisice.

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568 CASTELO BRANCO, A. dos S. Ferrão — **A vida duma tribo vátua. Suas origens e seus costumes**

Bol. Soc. Geogr. Lisboa, 64.ª série (5-6): 275-276, 1946

Resumo duma comunicação lida na Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa. Refere-se aos Changanas.

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569 CLEMENTE, F. de Assis — **Le droit Vatoua**

Mémoire présenté à la 10ª session du Congrès International des Orientalistes. Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa. 1892. 14 pp.

Os angunes (vátuas) que ocupavam o Sul de Moçambique dividiam os crimes em três categorias, de harmonia com a sua gravidade. O adultério consumado ou não, a tentativa de homicídio contra qualquer membro da casa real e a traição e fuga para país ou tribo inimiga eram punidos com a morte. Constituição do tribunal, normas observadas no seu funcionamento e honorários devidos. Carácter público das audiências.

Formalidades e regras observadas na distribuição das heranças.

3: Rita-Ferreira E-4 (no date) 1962
FT6 Thonga FT6
Changana

113

570 CAUZ, P.e Daniel da — **Em Terras de Gaza**

Porto. Bibliotheca Geographica e Colonial. 1910. 317 pp.

O cap. II é assim dividido:
História dos povos de Gaza; raças e caracteres físicos; demografia; língua, numeração, moeda e cronologia. Instituições sociais: casamento, iniciação de filhos, realeza, justiça, crenças religiosas, ritos fúnebres, feitiçaria. Costumes indígenas: habitação, ocupações domésticas, refeições, misteres da mulher, danças e instrumentos, jogos, vestuário e ornamentos, saudações e cumprimentos. Emigração. Agricultura indígena: machambas, culturas de cereais, de leguminosas, de tubérculos e raízes, árvores e plantas frutíferas e industriais. Animais domésticos, caça e pesca. Artes indígenas.
Profusamente ilustrado.

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571 E. A. M. — **Cantos guerreiros indígenas**

Bol. Soc. Estud. Moçambique 1 (6): 43-46. 1932

Referência ao canto guerreiro dos Changanas, entoado por ocasião da inauguração, a festa real.

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572 ELTON, F. — **Journal of an exploration of the Limpopo river**

J. roy. geogr. Soc. 42: 1-49. 1872

Útil para o estudo da distribuição étnica e da divisão tribal no tempo dos Anguns. Mapa.

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573 * ERSKINE, St. Vincent — **Journey of exploration to the mouth of the river Limpopo**

J. roy. geogr. Soc. 39: 233-276. 1869

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574 * ERSKINE, St. Vincent — **Journey to Umzila's S.-E. Africa, in 1871-72**

J. roy. geogr. Soc. 45: 45-128. 1875

3: Rita-Ferreira E-4 (no date) 1962
FT6 Thonga FT6
Changana

575 • ERSKINE, St. Vincent — **Third and fourth journey in Gaza or southern Mozambique, 1873-1874 and 1874-1875**

J. roy. geogr. Soc. 48: 25-56, 1878

Juntamente com os antecedentes, este trabalho constitui, talvez, a fonte mais idónea e completa para o estudo do império angune no Sul de Moçambique.

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576 FERREIRA, Cláudio — **O nativo de Bilene**

An. Inst. Med. trop. 10 (4, II): 3507-3540, 1953

Ecologia. Demografia. Regime alimentar. Nosonecrologia.
Considera a existência de duas «tribos» distintas no Bilene: tonga, que dá origem aos Bila, Mabuingelas e Mundaua, e zulo, que dá origem aos Mungunos.

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577 HEMANS, T. J. — **Nyamkungangodzi and his weapons**

Nada (26): 66-67, 1949

Descrição, com ilustrações, das armas dum velho guerreiro changana. Considerações sobre o seu valor espiritual.

---

578 JACKSON, A. P. — **Ample food without ploughing**

Nada 31: 62-66, 1954

Recursos alimentares dos Changanas da Rodésia do Sul, obtidos por meio da caça e da colecta. Ervas, frutos silvestres, raízes, gafanhotos, ratos, larvas, etc. Tais recursos não só constituem uma reserva para as épocas de escassez, como também são utilizados para variar a dieta ordinária e para fornecer vitaminas, proteínas e gorduras.

3: Rita-Ferreira E-4 (no date) 1962
FT6 Thonga FT6
Changana

113

579 LEWIN, J. — Some cases of inheritance in native law

Afr. Stud. 4 (2): 70-87, 1945

Quatro casos de herança entre Zulos e Changanas.

580 LIENHME, G. — Un potentat africain: Gouzgouzyane et son règne

Bull. Soc. neuchâtel. Géogr. 13: 99-135, 1901

Descrição do *kraal* real, coroação, instalações do rei, exército, ritos bélicos, primícias, sistema político, vida privada.

581 LIENHME, G. — The last South African potentate: Gungunhana, his court and national rites

Adresses Pap. Brit. South Afr. Assoc. Advanc. Sci. 3: 300-307, 1905

Descreve em especial a festa das primícias e a medicação ritual do exército.

MHLANGA, Wilson

(V. ref. 770)

582 MONTEZ, Caetano — As invasões dos Mangunis e dos Mashanganas — Zungundabe e Naba: 1830-1833 — Gaza e Manicusse: 1830-1840

Moçambique (10): 25-55, 1937

História das conquistas angunas entre os Tsongas, até à morte de Manicusse, que teve lugar em 1879.

3: Rita-Ferreira E-4 (no date) 1962

FT6 Thonga FT6

Changana

113

583 MONTEZ, Caetano
BASTOS, M. H. Calçada

Kossi N'quale!... A grande festa do rei Gungunhana

Moçambique (4): 5-24, 1935

Esta cerimónia era realizada em Janeiro e prolongava-se por 25 ou 30 dias. Incluía sacrifícios humanos, sendo a carne ingerida pelos rapazes que atingiam a idade do serviço militar, constituía uma exaltação do rei, do seu poderio e da guerra.

Seria uma adaptação da festa das primícias dos Tongas, *hama hukanya*, ao génio imperialista e bélico dos Angunes.

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584 NEVES, Diocleciano Fernandes das

Exploração do rio Bembe

Bol. Soc. Geogr. Lisboa, 3.ª série (6): 336-347, 1882

Bastantes informes sobre a invasão zulu, o império fundado por Manicusse e as lutas de sucessão que se seguiram à sua morte.

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585 TRACEY, Hugh

Marimbas, os xilofones dos Changanas

Moçambique (31): 49-61, 1942

Estudo baseado em oito marimbas: confecção das teclas, das caixas de ressonância e das maçanetas. Afinação.

(Há, provàvelmente, confusão na designação do grupo étnico, visto fazer-se referência à região de Mambona, situ na foz do rio Save.)

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586 XAVIER, A. A. Caldas

Reconhecimento do Limpopo — Os territórios ao sul do Save e os Vátuas

Bol. Soc. Geogr. Lisboa, 13.ª série (3): 127-176, 1894

Algumas observações sobre os invasores angunes: marcas tribais, tongas angunizados, tabos alimentares em relação ao prato e à carne de porco, sistema de dominação política.

Nota. — Também contém informações importantes sobre os Changamas (Shangana) as seguintes referências: 8, 90, 171, 186, 188 e 191.

3: Rita-Ferreira E-4 (no date) 1962
FT6 Thonga FT6
Changana
Tsua

113

4. TSUAS

587 MBANZE, Neftali J. **A Ngango wa muTshwa**

Cleveland (Transval). The Central Mission Press. S. d. 111 pp.

Monografia sobre os costumes *tsuas*, especialmente os relacionados com o casamento, as relações de parentesco e o papel atribuído às mulheres. Escrito em *chitsua*.

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588 MUCAMBE, Elias S. **Tikaringani ta vanhu va waTshwa**

Cleveland (Transval). The Central Mission Press. S. d. 51 pp.

Colectânea de folclore *tsua*. Escrito em *chitsua*.

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589 MUCAMBE, Elias S. **A mahingu ya baTswa ni titshakalani**

Cleveland (Transval). The Central Mission Press. 1945. 56 pp.

Colectânea de provérbios e enigmas *tsuas*. Escrito em *chitsua*.

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590 MUCAMBE, Elias S. **A matimu ya baTswa**

Cleveland (Transval). The Central Mission Press. 1948. 54 pp.

Tradições dos clãs *tsuas*. Escrito em *chitsua*.

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591 MUCAMBE, Elias S. **Munghana wa zivanana**

Cleveland (Transval). The Central Mission Press. 1950. 64 pp.

Diversos contos de animais. Escrito em *chitsua*.

3: Rita-Ferreira E-4 (no date) 1962
FT6 Thonga FT6
Changana
Tsua

113

592 MUKHOMBO, Aron S. **Hwavunddlani ni bangana bakwe**

Cleveland (Transval). The Central Mission Press. 1938. 79 pp.

Colectânea de contos de animais recolhidos da tradição oral. Escrito em *chitsua*.

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593 MUKHOMBO, Aron S. **A nkutsulani wa matimu ya baTswa**

Cleveland (Transval). The Central Mission Press. 1945. 111 pp.

Tradições, costumes, provérbios *tsuas*. Escrito em *chitsua*.

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594 MUKHOMBO, Aron S. **Tikaringani ta nwavundlani ni vanghana vakwe**

Cleveland (Transval). The Central Mission Press. 1949. 64 pp.

Contos *tsuas* sobre o coelho e seus amigos. Escrito em *chitsua*.

---

595 MUKHOMBO, Aron S. **A mulaveteli wa ntumbuluku wa vaTshwa**

Cleveland (Transval). The Central Mission Press. 1954. 77 pp.

Lendas e tradições *tsuas*. Escrito em *chitsua*.

---

596 RODRIGUES, Francisco Castelo **A alimentação do indígena de Vilanculos**

An. Inst. Med. trop. 10 (3, n): 1129-1155. 1953

Breve revisão dos princípios fundamentais sobre nutrição e das necessidades individuais normais. Resultados de um inquérito realizado em Vilanculos: recursos locais, causas que influenciam a sua falta e contribuem para as deficiências da dieta, principais alimentos e seu valor nutritivo, dieta diária e seus inconvenientes.

3: Rita-Ferreira E-4 (no date) 1962
FT6 Thonga FT6
Tsua

113

597 SEQUEIRA, A. de Melo **Vilanculos**

Bol. Soc. Estud. Moçambique 2 (8): 37-64, 1933; 2 (9): 41-61, 1933; 2 (11): 33-63, 1933; 2 (12): 17-59, 1933.

Fisiografia, orografia, hidrografia e meteorologia. Fauna e flora. História. Calendários e numeração. Armas e antigas actividades bélicas. Marcas tribais. Indumentária. Exercício da autoridade. Regime tributário. Instabilidade da população. Homenagens e saudações. Constituição da família e nascimentos. Casamentos e divórcios. Sistema de parentesco. Óbitos. Testamentos, heranças, sucessões e outros aspectos do direito consuetudinário. Caça e pesca. Agricultura e pecuária.

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598 SEQUEIRA, A. de Melo **O totemismo nas tribos do distrito de Inhambane**

Bol. Soc. Estud. Moçambique 3 (23): 427-439, 1934; 3 (24): 460-472, 1934

Na primeira parte, exposição de três das correntes teóricas que procuram explicar o totemismo (nominalista, sociológica e psicológica). Na segunda parte, estudo sobre o totemismo em Vilanculos e no arquipélago do Bazaruto. Clãs e interdições alimentares. Outros ritos e crenças mágicas.

[pp. 143 ff. not processed]

Nota. — Também contém informações importantes sobre os Tonga (Tswa) nas seguintes referências: 164, 209, 210 e 219.

114 In a paper published in the *South African Journal of Science*, 1925, under the title "The Mother's Brother in South Africa," Professor R. Brown deals at length with the facts related above and strongly opposes the matriarchy hypothesis. In his opinion the peculiar relation of a nephew with his maternal uncle is the result of the natural tenderness and indulgence which characterises the relation of a mother and her child. The feelings of the child towards its mother are extended to all the relatives of the mother, and a certain pattern of behaviour is thus created, the behaviour of a ntukulu towards all his bakokwana.

I cannot here enter upon a full discussion of Mr. Brown's theory, but I must confess that it does not seem to me entirely satisfactory. I will mention only three reasons why I find myself unable to accept it :

1) If the peculiar relation existing between a child and his bakokwana really originated from the feelings of that child towards his mother, feelings which are extended to all her relatives, why should the *paternal* grandfather and grandmother be classified amongst the bakokwana as well as the maternal relatives ? (See p. 227, 235.)

604 2) There is a term which Mr. Brown's theory does not explain, the word *nyiketa*, which is the technical expression used by the Thongas to describe the part played by the uterine nephew in the ceremonies connected with the adjudication of the inheritance. My distinguished opponent, summing up what I wrote on the subject, says: "The nephew claims some of the property of his mother's brother when the latter dies, and may sometimes claim one of the widows." There is much more than that in the Thonga custom. The nephew *nyiketa* the inheritance to the sons of his mother's brother, who are the actual legal heirs. Nyiketa comes from nyika, to give. It is a derivative which reinforces the meaning of the simple form nyika, and may be translated by the English word *surrender* or *transmit*. What does it mean in this connection ? It means that, consciously or unconnsciously, the nephew considers himself as the legitimate heir; but on account of a change which has taken place in the laws of the tribe, as the recognised heirs are now the sons, he gives up his right and transmits it to the sons. The fact that he does so is best explained by the supposition that he possessed that right in a previous phase of family relations. I do not see how this "nyiketa" could be accounted for if these customs were dictated only by the natural feelings of a child towards his mother, feelings which nad been extended to the mother's brother.

3) In the Rev. Ed. W. Smith's book on the Ba-Ila speaking people (Vol. I, p. 317) we see that amongst the Ba-Ila the mother's brother "is

2: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga
p 622

CONCLUSION

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121 I have reached the end of my study of the Life of a South African
114 tribe in its principal manifestations, social, mental and spiritual. In
order to write a complete anthropological monograph, I ought to have
174 also dealt at length with the physical features of the Thongas. This
would have led me too far. However I have taken a few anthropometric
measurements, which have been published in the *Bulletin de la Société neuchâteloise de Géographie* of 1917, together with an explanation kindly written by Dr. E. Pittard of Geneva, whose competency in this domain is well-known. I now come to my conclusion. The aim of this book being twofold, scientific and practical, I shall try in these final pages to answer two great questions, one appertaining to Science: How far can the present-day South Africans be described as Primitives? the other, of greater practical importance: How far can the South African tribe withstand the new condition of things brought about by twentieth-century civilisation?

123 115 intimate relations with some of them. The adults in our congregations have been heathen themselves and have practised the rites on which I questioned them. They can describe them better than raw heathens, as they now stand at a certain distance from their old life and can judge of it more independently. They possess what our French historians call *le recul nécessaire*. Enjoying their full confidence, having learned by long practice how to put questions in order to get impartial answers, I think that their testimony can be considered as scientifically reliable. Of course errors are always possible. But science proceeds by successive approximations. I dare say the present monograph of the Thonga tribe, compared with my book *Les Ba-Ronga*, will be a nearer approach to the truth, and it is quite possible that later on a more perfect account will be given by somebody who has had more time to spare and more insight than myself into this delicate work.

* * *

115 When a historian publishes a monograph, he first gives a list of his sources of information. He vindicates the truth of his results by showing that they are based on trustworthy documents. My documents are not books. They are living witnesses, and I beg to introduce some of them to my readers, as they have been my faithful collaborators and I owe to them most of my knowledge.

The first man whom I questioned systematically was a Ronga of Nondwane (North of Lourenço Marques) named *Spoon*. He had been my butterfly catcher and I had often admired his skill and his powers of observation. He became my instructor in the art of bone throwing. He had been more or less a diviner, using his dice when going to hunt ; but after the war of the Natives against the Portuguese (1894-1895) he lost confidence in his divinatory bones as well as in his gods, and became a Christian. He always had a great deal of imagination. I was often obliged to verify his explanations. Spoon certainly had the mythological sense more developed than any of my other informants ; however he was through and through a Bantu and whatever he said was always picturesque and striking. He died in 1924.

After him, I undertook to gather all the knowledge possessed by *Tobane*. Tobane was a splendid man when I knew him in Lourenço Marques, in the years 1895 and 1896. Tall, of a remarkably light complexion, his eyes very clear and bright, he was a man of mark in the

115 Mpfumo clan. From his youth he had been in relation with the leading families of the tribe, being himself the son of Magugu, the Native general who brought to an end the long war of succession of the Shangaan in 1856-1862. He had been mixed up in all the political affairs of the country for a long time and had a profound knowledge of the customs of the court and of the tribunal amongst his people. He was a patriot, and when he became a Christian he did his best to bring his brethren to his new faith. When he understood what I wanted, he at once did his best to satisfy me and sometimes even anticipated my questions: "*Tjika, ndi ku byela*... Keep quiet, I am going to tell you", he would say eagerly! I owe him most of what I know about the tribal system of the Rongas.

Phot. P. Berthoud.
Spoon
as bone-thrower in 1894.

Tobane

Having then been called by the development of the Mission to leave Lourenço Marques to start a training school amongst the Thongas of the Transvaal, I met in Shiluvane near Leydsdorp with a man who was, as regards the Northern clans of the tribe, an authority as excellent as *Tobane* for the Southern Ronga clans. His name was *Mankhelu*. He was an elder son of Shiluvane, the late chief of the Nkuna clan, and had been for many years the prince-regent of the Ba-Nkuna, till the actual chief Muhlaba came of age. Mankhelu was the General of the army, the great doctor of the royal kraal, one of the main councillors, an entirely convinced bone-thrower, a priest in his family, a Bantu so deeply steeped in the obscure conceptions of the Bantu

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mind that he never could get rid of them and remained a heathen till his death in 1908. Very kind hearted, very devoted to the missionaries, he was a true friend to me and willingly disclosed to me the secrets of his medical and divinatory science. I owe to him an account of his bone-throwing system, which was much more elaborate

Phot. H. A. Junod.

Mankhelu

standing in his village by the magic footed pole.

than the one Spoon had given me in Rikatla, though the two agree on the main points. Mankhelu had many dealings with the Suto or Podi class of the N. E. Transvaal. He was a celebrated rainmaker and had the greater credit amongst them as he was a foreigner. I have been on my guard carefully to differentiate what is of Sutho origin and what is purely Thonga in the information he gave me.

115 In my congregation at the station of Shiluvane was an old convert baptised, odd to relate, by the name of a professor of divinity of Lausanne, *Viguet*. He was a clever man, but not always a very good Christian, I must confess. He possessed a splendid memory. Having been headman in a village of Thonga refugees in the Spelonken, he gave me valuable information regarding the mysteries of family life as well as about the initiation ceremonies. His home was Tsungu on the Limpopo but he had moved to the Transvaal during the succession war of 1862. He was certainly a first-rate informant, possessing a clear head, always using the technical expressions and illustrating his points with great skill. He and Mankhelu have taught me most of what I know about the Northern clans. I learned however many other facts from *Mauewe*, the poet-laureate of the Nkuna court and from *Simeon Gana*, one of my pupils who belonged to an old and important family, and also from others.

115 In 1907 I came back to the coast to start in Rikatla (18 miles North
124 of Lourenço Marques) a Training Institution for our work in Portuguese Territory. There I again found my old friend Spoon, who had been baptised Elias and was one of the elders of the little Church; he had grown old, but was still of the same merry character and disposed to communicate anything he knew. Another man was his co-elder there, a Ronga of the Mazwaya family called *Mboza*. I found him to be a very intelligent man, quite an authority on the rites of the clan. He had been "possessed" and had gone through all the initiation ceremonies of the Ngoni possession, having become an exorciser himself. So he was able to give me new information on this mysterious subject. I undertook a systematic investigation with these two men in 1909, taking as a guide the set of questions prepared by Prof. J. Frazer for people collecting ethnographical material, and giving special attention to the question of the taboo. During this study, which took me many months, I was more than ever impressed with the immense complexity of the life of a South African tribe!

115 In quoting my sources of information I must also mention the
126 pupils of my school. Every Tuesday night we had a meeting in which one of them had to relate a story, to describe a custom, to tell a Native tale... His companions then added what they knew, and as some of them were grown up men, these debates were often very instructive.

I was able to collect in all more than one hundred tales; most of them have been published in my *Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga* and

5) THE TYING OF THE COTTON STRING.

854 When the child "tiyelanyana" viz. "becomes a little firm,"
857 the mother, having to plough her fields and to cook the food, begins to seat him on the sandy soil, after having made a kind of hole of about five inches in depth. We have seen Thonga babies already sitting at the age of two months. But this "dumping" hardly meets all the requirements, and the mother looks for a girl to help her to take care of the baby (wa ku tlanga na ye, to play with him). She puts the child in the charge of an elder sister or a cousin ; a girl of five to ten is quite strong enough for the purpose. I have often admired the patience of these miniature nurses, sometimes not very much bigger, than the child they carry, with their very troublesome babies.

852 But very soon the child begins to crawl (kasa) and this is the
715 time when a very striking rite is performed. This rite seems to be practised all over the tribe, but it has more importance in the Northern clans than amongst the Ba-Ronga. I shall here give the description of Viguet, who belonged to the Tsungu clan and had emigrated to the Spelonken. My readers must forgive me if I cannot tell the story with all its details and if I am obliged to write some of them in Latin (1).

851 These are the ipsissima verba of my informant : "This is a
833 great law amongst the Thongas. When a child begins to crawl,
766 even before, the *puri* is tied round his waist. The *puri* is a
842 cotton (2) string. Father and mother fix the day ; if they forget to do so, their parents, (the grandparents) will remind them of the law. They must have sexual intercourse, but in such a way that the mother will not become pregnant, s. n. i. (Annotatio 2).[1] The mother will have to take in her hands "their filth" (thyaka ra bona) smear the string with it and tie it round the child. It will

(1) A more complete description of this rite and of some others related to the taboos of the Thongas will be found in the Revue d'Ethnographie et de Sociologie, Oct. 1910, Paris.

(2) There are plants of cotton probably subspontaneous in the Low Country of the Transvaal of Delagoa Bay.

1 [See p. 676 in these categories or in 116--Analyst]

1: Junod M-5 .(1895-1909)1927 Thonga

881 177 663 the metallurgic art and introduced domestic fowls into the country. All these facts tend to show that they have had intimate relations with Semitic peoples, and they themselves declare that they came from the North by sea and reached the coast after shipwreck. Now they practise circumcision with great assiduity and hold a special position in the lodges of the Spelonken. They are called there the masters of the Ngoma (1). Circumcision is wide-spread amongst Semitic nations, and one might be tempted to infer from these remarks that the custom has been taught to the Bantus by Semitic masters. This is certainly true as regards the Ba-Venda in the Spelonken (2).

In South Africa the Ngoma is much older than the arrival of the Ma-Lemba (which can be fixed some time during the XVIIIth century). What happened in Spelonken, through the agency of the Ma-Lemba, during the XIXth century, may have taken place at some earlier date in the case of other South African tribes, and the Semitic origin of the Ngoma is quite possible, though there is no proof at present extant.

2) General characteristics of the circumcision rites.

881 115 I am treating here of the rites as they are met with amongst the Thongas of Spelonken especially ; my informants on this point have been Viguet, who was initiated some 60 years ago, and Valdo, a much younger man, who went through the rites 30 years ago; both are from Spelonken. There Thonga and Bvesha (Sutho) candidates enter the same lodges. A boy named Pikinini revealed to me the secret formulae as they are recited amongst the Nkunas (Leydsdorp). The rites certainly vary amongst the tribes and they 881 seem to have been simplified in late years, but there is a general resemblance between them all. Pedis have two circumcision

(1) I note in a paper by the Rev. W. A. Norton on the puberty rites of the Basuto (S. A. *Journal of Science* March 1910) that, if a Bushman is in a lodge, he takes precedence amongst the Suthos and that there circumcision is derived from the Bushmen just as it is from the Ma-Lembain the Zoutpansberg.

(2) See my paper on the "Balemba of the Zoutpansberg" *Folklore*, Sept. 1908 and also, "*Zidji*," my South African novel. Chap. II. (Saint-Blaise, Foyer Solidariste).

IV. *Marriage ceremonies in the Northern clans.*

115/584 I have succeeded in getting the whole description of the Nkuna marriage from a very good and clear-headed informant, Simeon Gana. It is somewhat different from that of the Rongas.

584 Here is the resumé (1) of the whole sequence of these rites :

The betrothal visit. (Ku buta). The suitor arrives with his shangwane and an old man who will act as his official representative or go-between (ntjumi). He has already made his choice, and the *ntjumi* at once woos the girl in his name. Her father calls her apart and asks her if she consents. If she is disposed to say yes, she begs to speak with the boy. She chooses a provisional shangwane. They are both shown into the hut of the girl's mother with their respective shangwane. Let us suppose they come to an understanding ; the suitor announces his success to his ntjumi, who goes to the girl's father and informs him that she has consented. But the father refuses to accept this notification ; he must also choose a ntjumi. This is done the same day. The following day, the two parties meet each in a different hut and the first ntjumi again comes and repeats the whole story, the second ntjumi being present.

Then a long discussion takes place (between the grown up people) as to the lobolo. This discussion is conducted by the two ntjumi, who go constantly from one hut to the other, the one conveying the questions: "How many oxen do you claim, etc", the other going in his turn to give an answer. So the two parties never see each other during this disagreeable debate about money. When they are agreed, the suitor and his friends return home and the ntjumi receives £ 1 for his assistance. There is no other *tjekela* than this. The word tjekela is unknown in Nkuna.

The fiancée's visit. As soon as they have gone, the women of the village begin to prepare pots of beer for the lobola feast. But

(1) I have explained these rites in detail in a novel entitled *Fazana*, published in *La Semaine Littéraire*, Geneva, Nov. & Dec. 1910.

765 A man who transgresses the law of continence before the lahla
783 khombo is said in Ronga to have "crossed the village" (a
834 tjemakanya muti). He has taken the mourning (nkosi), the misfortune (khombo) upon himself. He will have sores all over his body and will begin to cough (consumption).

Amongst the Rongas, it seems also that the *bugango* is prohibited in mortuary villages during the marginal period. The men even
[115] prevent boys going to the villages to see their girls, says Mbekwa, an old inhabitant of Nondwane.

VI. *Family rites.*

765 After two or three months, a first gathering of the whole family of the deceased takes place. Amongst the Ba-Ronga its function is to close or break down the mortuary hut. Amongst the Northern clans, no relation is established between this family gathering and the fate of the hut. But everywhere its principal aim seems to be to restore the family whose head has been removed by death, and which must be reorganised.

1) Amongst the Ba-Ronga.

For the Ba-Ronga the habitation of the deceased is tabooed. It is a *shira* (grave), as well as the place in which he has been buried and, for this reason, it must be destroyed. But this destruction is not accomplished at once. Some time must elapse (1), two, three, nine months, before the family gathering takes place. I witnessed it near Rikatla on December 15th 1907 and can therefore describe this rite in detail.

Manyibane had died five or six months previously. He was

(1) At any rate, such is the old law. But nowadays the Rongas sometimes crush the hut at once during the five days to save trouble. This was done in the case of Sekin.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

A. REMARKS ON THE TABLE OF TERMS OF RELATIONSHIP IN TEN SOUTH AFRICAN TRIBES OR SUB-TRIBES (APP. IV)

115 Some particulars as to the way I obtained the lists contained in this Table may interest my readers.

First of all I would express my gratitude towards the late and much regretted Rev. F. Bridgeman, who compiled the *Zulu list*, and to the Rev. R. Godfrey, to whom I owe the *Xosa list*. I could hardly have found more competent collaborators for the Zulu-Xosa group.

The *Chopi tribe* is settled on the border of the Indian Ocean, from the mouth of the Limpopo up to Inhambane. A considerable number of its members have emigrated into the Lourenço Marques district. One of them, belonging to the Zandamelan clan, gave me his genealogy and explained to me the Chopi system of relationship.

As regards the *Suthos of Basutoland*, my informant was Neftali Motswenen, the assistant of Dr. Hertig, in Morija, in 1915, and the list was kindly revised by my friend the late Rev. E. Jacottet and by the Rev. P. Ramseyer.

The *Khaha* tribe is a portion of the Pedi population of the Northern Transvaal. I spent some years in the neighbourhood of its chief, Maaghe, who was staying near the Mission Station of Shiluvane, and owe my information chiefly to a young Khaha named Malupi, who was one of my pupils (in 1906).

During a prolonged visit to the *Venda country* in 1920 I met an intelligent Native called Shifaladzi who did his best to disclose to me all the mysteries of the customs of this interesting tribe, especially its kinship system.

As regards the *Tongas* in the neighbourhood of Inhambane, I got my first information from one of them living near Rikatla ; the list was later on submitted to Mrs. Keys, the wife of an American missionary, who kindly completed it as far as possible.

The *Ndjaos*, also called Ba-Nyai, live further north, between the Sabie River and Beira. One of my neighbours in Rikatla belonged to that tribe and gave me an intelligent account of their family life.

I cannot guarantee the absolute completeness of all these lists. There are blanks in some of them, either because my informants failed to find the proper term or because that term does not exist or has been

115 forgotten (especially in Basutoland). It may also be that some mistakes have been made, and I must apologize if such is the case. However I give this table as it is, after having done the best I could, knowing, as I said in my introduction, that Science proceeds by successive approximations and hoping that it will be a useful stone in the building up of African ethnological Science.

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194 As regards the spelling of all these words, I have followed as well as I could the system used in the books of the different languages. As, however, there is a deplorable multiplicity in the orthographic systems of South Africa, certain signs have not exactly the same value in all the columns. It is impossible to avoid this drawback, but it is of minor importance, my first aim being ethnographic and not linguistic. In Thonga I render by *ps* the sibilant *s* which is represented by *s* with a circumflex in the Thonga-Ronga books, and by *tj* and *dj* the cerebral *t* and *d*. I employ undiscriminately *b* for the strong *b* which is more common in Ronga and for the soft *b*, represented by *ṽ* in Thonga-Djonga books.

The Rev. P. Schwellnus has kindly transcribed most of the Khaha terms collected by me in the orthography recently adopted for Pedi books. Thus the letter *g*, when found alone or after *k*, represents the greek *γ*, a hard fricative guttural, whilst *g* associated with *n* corresponds to the nasal guttural *ng* in the English "singing" (*ñ* in Thonga). The cerebral *t* (*tj* in Thonga) is represented by *c*. In this form the kinship terms do not entirely agree with the Khaha pronunciation. The Khahas have a tendancy to soften many sounds (*dz* instead of *ts*, a kind of *d* instead of *tl*). I have adopted, however, the official Pedi orthography, as it is inadvisable, from a practical point of view, to preserve all the peculiarities of less important dialects or semi-dialects.

In the Sutho orthography *kh* corresponds to the Pedi *kg* ; *l* before *i* and *u* represents a sound intermediary between *l* and *d*, also present in Chopi, a soft cerebral *d* ; in Pedi it is written *d*. This sound occurs in the feminine suffix *ali* (Sutho), *adi* (Pedi) often met with in kinship terms (*ati* in Thonga, *azi* in Zulu, *adzi* in Venda). *O* and *u* are used both in Sutho and Pedi for the semi-vowels *w* and *y*. *Ch* in Sutho is pronounced like *tsh* in Thonga and Zulu.

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of its meat with all his relatives-in-law. Then both will be allowed to eat together. Until that present was made, it would have been impossible. In this clan, a future son-in-law does not eat at all with his bakoñwana until the marriage is concluded, and this rule is sometimes observed till he has given "the ox for communicating together." Amongst the Zulus it is said that a mother-in-law will never eat with her daughter's husband. In the Khosa clan the custom of lessening the avoidance taboo by offering a present to the mother-in-law also exists. The son-in-law will one day bring a plate of food to her with his gift put on top of it. She will accept it and eat together with him. Then it will be possible for these two persons to "djungulisana" i. e. to tell each other the news of the day when visiting each other's village. But when this monotonous recital is finished and concluded, as is customary, by clapping both hands, this must be done with care, and not in a hurried fashion, as when speaking to an ordinary person, but slowly and respectfully.

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What is the reason of this extraordinary conduct of the son-in-law towards his wife's mother ? The Khosa Native who gave me this last information said : "A wise man will carefully observe the bukoñwana rules, because, if he hurts his parents-in-law by infringing them, they will not give him his tinamu as wives." This is true, but the same may be said of all the taboos of the bukoñwana, and the mother-in-law is not the principal person to be consulted on the question. Another more profound reason was once alluded to by an old Thonga, of Spelonken, Abraham Mabanyisi, who said to me : "I fear my mother-in-law because I shall never marry her : Such a thing has never been seen." This statement has been confirmed since by information gathered in the Maputju clan. Notice the almost reflex action of the mother-in-law in covering her breasts when she sees her son-in-law coming unexpectedly. It shows that there is a sexual element in the behaviour of the woman and also in that of the man, who hides his face in order not to see her in her half nakedness. Dr. Rivers, who has met exactly the same rites of avoidance amongst the Melanesians, supposes that they are dictated by a more or less unconscious desire on the part of both these persons to fight against the temptation to have sexual relations with each other. Bantus also, in the course of the evolution of the family, have come to the deep conviction that such intercourse is bad and must

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

APPENDIX I (See p. 31)

Characteristics of the six dialects of the Thonga language.

197 In the accompanying table I have compiled a list of characteristic words
113 in the six main dialects of the Thonga language. The Ronga and Djonga lists have been made by myself, and represent those dialects as spoken in the Mpfumo and Nkuna clans. The population south of Delagoa Bay speaks a kind of sub-dialect of the Ronga, the Lwandle or Maputju. (Abbr. Map.). I owe to the Rev. L. Perrin the peculiar forms found in that district. The Rev. P. Loze of Lourenço Marques compiled for me the list of the Hlanganu equivalents, as they are met with in the Ñwamba clans. They are not very different from the Djonga. Probably the dialect of Hlanganu proper, in the Lebombo Hills, would show greater differences. The Rev. H. Guye, who resided in Khosen and in Shikhumbane (Lower Limpopo Valley), provided me with a Djonga-Khosa list, very similar to the Nkuna and with the characteristic forms of the Bila dialect (Station of Shikhumbane, 15 miles west of Chai-Chai), also of the Hlengwe as spoken in the Khambana District, on the eastern border of the Lower Limpopo (Kh.). The Hlengwe, being so extensively spoken, possesses many sub-dialects. The Rev. S. Malale, a Native minister, compiled the characteristic forms of the Tshauke (Tsh.) region and those of the Madzibi tribe (Madz.) dwelling in the hinterland of Inhambane. The American missionaries have already published many books in the Tswa sub-dialect spoken in the vicinity of Inhambane, so I have also been able to mention a few Tswa forms. Lastly I owe to the same Rev. S. Malale the Ñwalungu forms, those of Maluleke as well as those of the Ba-ka-Baloyi (Bal.) proper, and, in addition, those of the Hlabi (Hl.), which are very similar to the Djonga.

197 The orthography employed in these lists is that which the Swiss missionaries adopted for the Vocabulary and Grammar of the Thonga-Shangaan language. (Bridel, Lausanne 1908.) For our missionary books, we have always used the excellent and scientific system of Lepsius, with its two main principles : a letter must always have the same value, and a single sound must be represented by a single letter.

524 Here is one more which has a more philosophical character and which may be of later origin.

Leshi nga hamba Tilo ni Misaba, hi tshini ? — Ntumbuluko !
The thing which made Heaven and Earth, what is it ? — Nature !

Ntumbuluko comes from ku tumbuluka, to be created, to appear, and is well translated by the word Nature (See Part VI, Chapter I).

The Thongas possess a plentiful supply of *riddles containing two statements*, which they call *psitekatekisana* and of which I have collected about a hundred. I could easily have found ten times as many. One of our female neighbours (Lishanyi) knew a great number of these and could pour them forth without stopping well on into the night.

Whoever is most expert at asking questions takes the lead, and commences with a kind of invocation of which I have not been able to discover the meaning : Ñwanyanga mintjuti, lit. son of the moon, shadows. Then addressing one of the other players, and speaking very rapidly, he (or she) will say : "Teka, teka, teka (take, guess) heeee...!" following this up with the question to be asked, which forms the first part of the riddle ; the person addressed must immediately reply with the phrase forming the second part. If he is unable to answer, or gives a wrong reply, the questioner says : "Psi ku hlulile" — "you are beaten," and passes on to another player, again beginning with "teka, teka, teka" and asking the same question until some one is able to give the correct rejoinder. Hence the name of this game, psitekatekisana, i. e. things which you make others guess.

It will be seen that we are not here dealing with riddles in the true sense of the word, with solutions only to be arrived at by keenness of thought and reflection ; the answers to these must be learnt by heart, and it only requires a good memory to become an adept at the game. The ancestors, however, who composed the riddles, and handed them down to posterity, were by no
115 means lacking in wit and ingenuity. The examples given below I
524 owe mostly to Timotheo Mandlati, a Nkuna of Shiluvane, who wrote them down for me in the dialect of his own tribe ; some of

them are in Hlengwe. I also obtained a good many from my 115
Ronga informants, Spoon and Galu of Libombo, Titus, and 524
Shilati, a blind man who thought himself very learned in the "riddling art," but understood very little of what he was talking about, and, in any case, was quite unable to give any explanation of his riddles. Some are the common property of both Ba-Ronga 524
and Ba-Nkuna ; they seem to be very popular throughout the Thonga tribe.

To begin with, here are some examples of which *the inner meaning is not difficult to discover* :

> Teka-teka-teka-he! Tiba ro pshya hi matlhelo? — Ndlopfu yi fa hi tshembeti.
> The lake dries up at the edges? — The elephant is killed by a small arrow.

A great result (the drying up of a lake, the death of an elephant) is often produced by a very small cause (the gradual evaporation of water at the edges, a little arrow). The idea is similar to that expressed in the proverb : "Il ne faut pas mépriser les petits commencements," or "small beginnings make great endings."

> Ndja ha batla mpalala? — Ndja ha hleketela...
> I am still carving an iron wood stick? — I am still thinking about it.

An undecided man might reply thus to those urging him to immediate action. The wood of the *mpalala* is extremely hard. "It is a long business to carve a figure of this wood" says the cunning fellow ; "I am not going to make up my mind about it in a hurry!"

> Ndji pfumala tshati; nha ndji ya tjhema nhonga?
> — Ndji pfumala ntlhambi; nha ndji ya lobola munhu lweyo.
> I have no axe, or I would go and cut a stick?
> — I have no oxen, or I would go and lobola this girl.

This is the sigh of the impecunious lover. In the first sentence he laments the want of an ordinary every-day object (an axe) which prevents his obtaining something he wishes for (a stick) ; he lets it be understood that a much more precious article is lacking (oxen, money, a lobolo) which would enable him to obtain something infinitely more to be desired (the girl he loves).

Hlangwini wa ka Shitlhelane; hi ba ka Nkandamuri; hi ba ka Manyubele ni Mbowo; hi ba ka Gidjigidji, ba tilo. —. Akane ka peitjunga! Lomu nkobeni mi ta muka hi kona... 614 553

Hlangwini of (the house of) Shitlhelane; we are of (the house of) Nkandamuri; we are of (the house of) Manyubele and Mbowo; we are of (the house of) Gidjigidji, the people of Heaven. —. Build (your huts) on the hills. In the valley you will have to leave (?)

It would seem that these Hlangwinis are a clan of rain-makers, people having the power of Heaven. They advise others to settle on the hills and not in the valleys, because otherwise their huts would be swept away by the floods, owing to the terrible rains which the Hlangwinis have the power of causing to fall.

The second is not very refined, but is characteristic. Erotic allusions are frequent in those formulae :

Nkuna wa Mabutane; mabuta, ba yi bonile ku basa ka yona.
Nkuna of Mabutane; when wooing a girl, he has seen that she was pure.

Mabutane is probably a surname of Nkuna. There is in this 553
formula a play on the word buta which means to woo (I. p. 101). Before choosing a girl, the ancestor first made sure that she was untouched ; this denotes a species of wisdom which his descendants still boast of to-day!

In epic poetry may be included also the *pshiphato*, a Zulu expression which means the laudatory sentence with which warriors praise themselves according to the Zulu fashion. Private individuals, and even women sometimes have their shiphato ; for instance a girl bearing the name of Yandea will glorify herself in these words : Yendea, madjaha! Yendea, the young men! This formula does not throw a very favourable light on the habits of the girl, and scarcely belongs to literature!

A more elaborate product of Thonga poetry is found in the 533
hunting songs. I have already mentioned these (p. 60) and here 224
give as a typical example the Elephant's song. I have been told 1150
by my informant, Zebedea Mbenyana, a Native of Bilen, that the 539
hunters performed it whilst dancing on the body of the enormous beast, after having transfixed it.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

The Life of a South African Tribe

BY

HENRI A. JUNOD, D. LITT.

OF THE

Swiss Romande Mission

SECOND EDITION REVISED AND ENLARGED

I. SOCIAL LIFE

MACMILLAN AND CO. LIMITED
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1927

l: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

[p. 1]

INTRODUCTION

121 In the year 1895, I had the great pleasure of receiving a visit from Lord Bryce in Lourenço Marques where I was staying at the head of the Swiss Romande Mission. This distinguished statesman, in the course of his travels through South Africa, had devoted considerable attention to the Native tribes throughout the country, endeavouring to understand them and to foresee their future. He had soon noticed however how scant is our knowledge about them, and was trying to stimulate men on the spot to undertake a scientific study of their primitive life. In the course of our conversation, I was struck by the following remark which he made to me: "How thankful should we be, we men of the XIXth century, if a Roman had taken the trouble fully to investigate the habits of our Celtic forefathers! This work has not been done, and we shall always remain ignorant of things which would have interested us so much!"

The observation was quite a revelation to me. It was possible then, that these Natives, for whose sake we went to Africa, would themselves benefit by such a study, and that, in the course of time, they would be grateful to know what they had been, when they were still leading their savage life... This argument, in addition to so many others, had never occurred to me. Up to that date I had already collected some Ronga tales and studied some curious customs of the tribe. But the science which I was pursuing as a favourite pastime was Entomology. Delagoa Bay is a splendid place for beeties and butterflies. I had come across a wonderful forest near Morakwen where I had been fortunate enough to discover a new kind of Papilio! Since that time Ethnography has more or less supplanted Entomology. I started on the systematic and thorough investigation which Lord Bryce recommended to me, and I very soon found out that, after all, Man is infinitely more interesting than the insect! The material which I gathered amongst

121 the Ba-Ronga of Delagoa Bay was first published in my French book *Les Ba-Ronga* with the kind help of the Geographical Society of Neuchâtel in 1898. Since then I have pursued my studies amongst the Northern Clans of the Thongas of the Transvaal and, if I am able to undertake this publication, in which I hope to give a more complete description of the life of a South African tribe, I feel that I owe to my distinguished visitor the generating idea, the decisive impulse.

*
* *

000 This was the right moment to undertake this enquiry, as the following sad experience will plainly show. Coming home in 1909, I met, on board the splendid U. C. Steamer on which we were travelling, three well known Native gentlemen who were, I think, going to England for political reasons. I had great pleasure in speaking with them. One of them was the editor of a Native paper; another was a Christian chief, the third was at the head of a Training Institution which he had founded himself. One day I made up my mind to gather some ethnographical facts from them. They were Zulus, and I wanted to know for purposes of comparison what were the precise ideas of their tribe about witchcraft. Never in my scientific career did I meet with a more complete failure! The editor had been born in a Wesleyan family, and never lived amongst heathen. The chief knew much more on the subject but, for some obscure reason, was not inclined to disclose his knowledge. The Principal of the Institution was a very clever man; he first declared that witchcraft was met with amongst white people just the same as amongst South African Natives, and that it was only a form of mesmerism; and, as he was always anxious to get more knowledge himself, he proceeded to question me about mesmerism; the whole interview ended therefore in a lesson which I was obliged to give him on that mysterious subject, and I did not learn anything new from my three friends... I left them in quite a melancholy mood, thinking how different it was with my Thonga informants, Mboza, Tobane and even Elias!

123 In fact, the circumstances in which I found myself amongst the Thongas, were the most favourable imaginable for such an investigation. The great bulk of the tribe is still absolutely savage. We have mastered its language and can understand all they tell us. On the other hand we have founded a Church amongst them and have

123 intimate relations with some of them. The adults in our congregations
115 have been heathen themselves and have practised the rites on which I questioned them. They can describe them better than raw heathens, as they now stand at a certain distance from their old life and can judge of it more independently. They possess what our French historians call *le recul nécessaire*. Enjoying their full confidence, having learned by long practice how to put questions in order to get impartial answers, I think that their testimony can be considered as scientifically reliable. Of course errors are always possible. But science proceeds by successive approximations. I dare say the present monograph of the Thonga tribe, compared with my book *Les Ba-Ronga*, will be a nearer approach to the truth, and it is quite possible that later on a more perfect account will be given by somebody who has had more time to spare and more insight than myself into this delicate work.

* * *

115 When a historian publishes a monograph, he first gives a list of his sources of information. He vindicates the truth of his results by showing that they are based on trustworthy documents. My documents are not books. They are living witnesses, and I beg to introduce some of them to my readers, as they have been my faithful collaborators and I owe to them most of my knowledge.

The first man whom I questioned systematically was a Ronga of Nondwane (North of Lourenço Marques) named *Spoon*. He had been my butterfly catcher and I had often admired his skill and his powers of observation. He became my instructor in the art of bone throwing. He had been more or less a diviner, using his dice when going to hunt; but after the war of the Natives against the Portuguese (1894-1895) he lost confidence in his divinatory bones as well as in his gods, and became a Christian. He always had a great deal of imagination. I was often obliged to verify his explanations. Spoon certainly had the mythological sense more developed than any of my other informants; however he was through and through a Bantu and whatever he said was always picturesque and striking. He died in 1924.

After him, I undertook to gather all the knowledge possessed by *Tobane*. Tobane was a splendid man when I knew him in Lourenço Marques, in the years 1895 and 1896. Tall, of a remarkably light complexion, his eyes very clear and bright, he was a man of mark in the

115 Mpfumo clan. From his youth he had been in relation with the leading families of the tribe, being himself the son of Magugu, the Native general who brought to an end the long war of succession of the Shangaan in 1856-1862. He had been mixed up in all the political affairs of the country for a long time and had a profound knowledge of the customs of the court and of the tribunal amongst his people. He was a patriot, and when he became a Christian he did his best to bring his brethren to his new faith. When he understood what I wanted, he at once did his best to satisfy me and sometimes even anticipated my questions: "*Tjika, ndi ku byela*... Keep quiet, I am going to tell you", he would say eagerly! I owe him most of what I know about the tribal system of the Rongas.

Phot. P. Berthoud.

Spoon
as bone-thrower in 1894.

Tofana

Having then been called by the development of the Mission to leave Lourenço Marques to start a training school amongst the Thongas of the Transvaal, I met in Shiluvane near Leydsdorp with a man who was, as regards the Northern clans of the tribe, an authority as excellent as Tobane for the Southern Ronga clans. His name was *Mankhelu*. He was an elder son of Shiluvane, the late chief of the Nkuna clan, and had been for many years the prince-regent of the Ba-Nkuna, till the actual chief Muhlaba came of age. Mankhelu was the General of the army, the great doctor of the royal kraal, one of the main councillors, an entirely convinced bone-thrower, a priest in his family, a Bantu so deeply steeped in the obscure conceptions of the Bantu

115

mind that he never could get rid of them and remained a heathen till his death in 1908. Very kind hearted, very devoted to the missionaries, he was a true friend to me and willingly disclosed to me the secrets of his medical and divinatory science. I owe to him an account of his bone-throwing system, which was much more elaborate

Phot. H.-A. Junod.

Mankhelu

standing in his village by the magic forked pole.

than the one Spoon had given me in Rikatla, though the two agree on the main points. Mankhelu had many dealings with the Suto or Pedi clans of the N. E. Transvaal. He was a celebrated rainmaker and had the greater credit amongst them as he was a foreigner. I have been on my guard carefully to differentiate what is of Sutho origin and what is purely Thonga in the information he gave me.

115 In my congregation at the station of Shiluvane was an old convert baptised, odd to relate, by the name of a professor of divinity of Lausanne, *Viguet*. He was a clever man, but not always a very good Christian, I must confess. He possessed a splendid memory. Having been headman in a village of Thonga refugees in the Spelonken, he gave me valuable information regarding the mysteries of family life as well as about the initiation ceremonies. His home was Tsungu on the Limpopo but he had moved to the Transvaal during the succession war of 1862. He was certainly a first-rate informant, possessing a clear head, always using the technical expressions and illustrating his points with great skill. He and Mankhelu have taught me most of what I know about the Northern clans. I learned however many other facts from *Mauwe*, the poet-laureate of the Nkuna court and from *Simon Gama*, one of my pupils who belonged to an old and important family, and also from others.

115 In 1907 I came back to the coast to start in Rikatla (18 miles North
124 of Lourenço Marques) a Training Institution for our work in Portuguese Territory. There I again found my old friend Spoon, who had been baptised Elias and was one of the elders of the little Church; he had grown old, but was still of the same merry character and disposed to communicate anything he knew. Another man was his co-elder there, a Ronga of the Mazwaya family called *Mkoza*. I found him to be a very intelligent man, quite an authority on the rites of the clan. He had been "possessed" and had gone through all the initiation ceremonies of the Ngoni possession, having become an exorciser himself. So he was able to give me new information on this mysterious subject. I undertook a systematic investigation with these two men in 1909, taking as a guide the set of questions prepared by Prof. J. Frazer for people collecting ethnographical material, and giving special attention to the question of the taboo. During this study, which took me many months, I was more than ever impressed with the immense complexity of the life of a South African tribe!

115 In quoting my sources of information I must also mention the
126 pupils of my school. Every Tuesday night we had a meeting in which one of them had to relate a story, to describe a custom, to tell a Native tale... His companions then added what they knew, and as some of them were grown up men, these debates were often very instructive.

I was able to collect in all more than one hundred tales; most of them have been published in my *Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga* and

126 in the book on *Les Ba-Ronga*. I have still a good many in manuscript, some of which will be found in the second volume of the present work.

* * *

121 My aim in collecting all this material has been twofold ; scientific and practical.

Spoon-Ellen
an Church elder in 1907.

First of all scientific. The life of a South African tribe is a collection of biological phenomena which must be described objectively and which are of great interest, representing, as they do, a certain stage of human development. These biological phenomena are sometimes at first of a repulsive character. The sexual life of the Bantus especially shocks our moral feelings. I did not think however that I could entirely leave out this subject in a scientific book, and the more I studied it, the more I saw that these strange rites have a much deeper meaning than at first appears, and that we could not pretend to know Natives if we remained ignorant of these facts. But while trying to give a full account, I am convinced, on the other hand, that, to be truly scientific, such a description must be limited to one well defined tribe. I go even further : all the data must be localised ; in the tribe itself there are different clans ; customs vary from one to another. It is of the greatest importance that all the facts be classed geographically. A similar work can be done later for other tribes, and it is only when a sufficient number of trustworthy monographs have been written that a comparative study on Bantu ethnography can be undertaken. The "Essential Kafir" of Dudley Kidd is very interesting and full of useful remarks, but the essential Kafir will not be known till a scientific and thorough study of all the tribes has been completed. My aim has been to submit the Thonga tribe to such a study and I shall be most gratified if it leads other observers to undertake the same investigation with regard to other African tribes.

121

Though I do not pretend to prejudge anything about any other South African tribe, it will soon be seen that many of the customs here described are spread more or less over the whole of the Sub-Continent, and that what I write about the Thongas applies more or less to the Suthos, the Zulus, even to the Nyandjas of Lake Nyassa and to tribes in Central Africa. I think therefore that the conclusions reached by this study may be of use not only to those interested in the Thonga tribe itself but to all Africanists or Bantuists.

* * *

000 There are two classes of men to whom I should like to bring some practical help in their work: the Native Commissioners and the Missionaries.

It is absolutely necessary that Native Commissioners should have a better knowledge of the tribe which they administer in the name of civilised Governments. They are apt to make the most dangerous mistakes from mere ignorance of the true nature of rites or superstitions which they do not understand. I have heard of colonial authorities receiving witchcraft accusations, believing that the pretended wizards were real murderers and anthropophagists and condemning them as such! To govern savages, you must study them thoroughly in order both to recognise the wrong ideas against which you have to contend and to avoid hurting their feelings unnecessarily. This is imperative if you wish to win their confidence and maintain a friendly understanding between them and the alien European Government. How many Native wars might have been avoided if the Native Commissioner had had a better knowledge of Bantu ethnography, and, on the other hand, how much good has been done by those who have taken the trouble to study the Natives with sympathy in order to be just to them!

And this is equally true of Missionaries.

Missionary work is much better understood now than it was formerly. The Edinburgh Conference of 1910 proclaimed the necessity for Missionaries of a sympathetic study of Native beliefs and social customs. One of the eight Commissions which prepared that wonderful Congress devoted considerable time to this subject, and issued a remarkable report, whose conclusions are worth reading. It urges that in each field a thorough investigation be undertaken, in

000 order that the message of the Gospel may be presented in such a way as will appeal to those aspirations after the truth which reveal themselves in the religion and social rites of the Natives. How superior is this conception to that of former times, when heathenism was looked on as a creation of the devil through and through! We see better now that, amidst darkness and sin, the heathen mind is often seeking light and righteousness, and that these rays of truth, these presentiments of a higher life, must be infinitely respected and utilised in the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. For instance, see how seriously savages keep their taboo!... This taboo—as we shall see—is inspired by strange, unscientific physiological ideas regarding defilement and contagion, which will disappear when scientific knowledge has spread amongst them. But let these ideas be somewhat amended, let the Natives understand that what is taboo is not physical uncleanness but moral evil, and their strong aversion to the act tabooed may become a powerful moral impulse for good.

* * *

128 Here is the plan which I mean to adopt. After having briefly
121 explained in a preliminary chapter what the Thonga tribe is, I shall take an individual and follow him in his career from birth to death; the story of the evolution of a man and of a woman will constitute the first part of the book.

Then I shall pass on to the first social organism formed by these individuals, and study the life of the family and of the village, which is but an enlarged family.

The villages make up the clan and the tribe. The national life will constitute my third part, where I shall deal especially with the Chief, the Court and the Army.

Agricultural and industrial life and literary and artistic life will then be studied (as collective manifestations of the life of the tribe) and last but not least, I shall devote a considerable amount of time to the religious life and superstitions, trying to penetrate into the soul of the tribe, and to understand the manifold manifestations of its psychic life, which have always had a special interest for me.

128 It would have been safer for me to write this new and enlarged edition of *Les Ba-Ronga* in French, my native tongue. I decided to attempt it in English, as the public interested in South African affairs

128 is essentially an English-speaking public and as a great portion of the Thonga tribe is settled in British Territory. I know that I can rely on the indulgence of the English public... When my readers notice that the book has been written by a foreigner—I am afraid they will often make that observation—I beg them kindly to remember that, for me, it would have been much more agreeable to write it in French...

* * *

121 To work for Science is noble ; but to help our fellow men is nobler still.

In the difficult undertaking which lies before me, I shall feel immensely gratified if scientists find useful material for their studies amongst my observations. Anthropologists try to throw some light on the dark problem of the origin of the psychic life in mankind; may the picture of a South African primitive tribe bring them some valuable information. But I should feel even deeper satisfaction if my work could help my South African brethren, and contribute to the peaceful solution of our great practical problem there, the Native problem. White men soon tire of the Native when they only see the badly brought up youths who walk about the streets of our colonial towns. They despise them, find them "cheeky" and very soon come to the conclusion : "Natives are no good !" Who can deny that this attitude, adopted by so many South Africans, is as dangerous for the peace of the country as are the very defects with which they reproach the Natives, and which often come from contact with a depraved and unscupulous civilisation ? Let those who are prejudiced against the black race study more carefully its customs, its mind, such as it reveals itself in the old rites of the Bantu tribes. They will see that these Natives are much more earnest than they thought and that in them beats a true human heart. If, in their ignorance of true morality and of true religion, they have submitted themselves willingly to the sufferings of initiation, to the painful rites of purification, in order to reach what they thought to be a higher level of human righteousness, are we not entitled to hope that we shall be able to build up true character in them when we bring them under the moralising influence of Christianity, and teach them to understand the religion which has saved the world ?

Should I succeed in eliciting new and more enlightened sympathy

121 amongst the Whites for our Native brethren, should this book prevent the gulf which separates the races from becoming wider, I think it will have been worth while writing it.

May I be allowed one final comment ? Colossal changes are now taking place amongst the South African tribes. Civilisation has taken fast hold not only of the coast but of the interior. It has exercised a marvellous influence on the High Velt of Johannesburg and is spreading to the borders of the desert. Amongst those races so long stagnant, an evolution has started which is proceeding with great rapidity and a kind of fatality. What will be its ultimate result ? The ethnographer does not generally trouble himself with such questions. It is enough for him to note the facts carefully and to describe them accurately. I aim at being a faithful and impartial ethnographer in the study of customs which still exist but will soon have passed away, but I cannot forget that I am also a Missionary. I belong to that body of men who, with Native Commissioners and liberal minded Colonists, feel they have a sacred duty to perform towards the weaker race. In this most tempting basket of varied fruits which civilisation offers to the Native, we feel we must guide his inexperienced hand, pointing out to him those which conduce to his happiness and progress and those which are poisonous and might be fatal to him. This book is addressed to those who can influence this evolution, be they the Authorities puzzled by the Native problem, or be they educated Natives who
121 are perplexed regarding the future of their race. I will endeavour to
128 indicate the lines along which it appears to me we ought to direct the tribe in order that it may escape shame and destruction. But these suggestions will be given at the end of the volume, in special paragraphs, carefully separated from the scientific treatise. I have enough respect for science to avoid mixing the two subjects. On the other hand, I trust those of my readers who do not share my religious faith or my philanthropic hopes will not blame me for here touching upon the important problems of Native policy. Science has never opposed the betterment and ennoblement of humanity ! If this book can in the slightest degree help towards this end, such help will be its best and most precious justification.

* * *

128 Since the first edition was published, I have spent seven years more in Rikatla and gathered a considerable amount of new information,

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especially about the kinship system, hunting rites and ancestor worship. I intend to introduce this new material in the present second edition. I had also the opportunity of sojourning in Basutoland and amongst the Ba-Venda of the Northern Transvaal, and of collecting data which are valuable for a comparison of the customs of the various Bantu tribes of South Africa. I shall refer to these occasionally, without however abandoning my original plan, which is the description of the Thonga tribe.

Geneva, June 1926. Henri Junod.

PRELIMINARY CHAPTER

THE THONGA TRIBE

1. *Geographical delimitation of the tribe.*

101 The Thonga tribe is composed of a group of Bantu peoples
131 settled on the eastern coast of South Africa, extending from the neighbourhood of St Lucia Bay (28° Lat. S.) on the Natal Coast up to the Sabie River on the north (1). Thongas are to be found therefore in four of the present South African states : in Natal (Amatongaland), the Transvaal (Leydenbourg, Zoutpansberg and Waterberg districts), in Rhodesia, and chiefly in Portuguese East Africa (Lourenço Marques, Inhambane and Mozambique Company districts). The Thongas border on the Zulus and the Swazis southwards ; westwards on the Ba-Mbayi, Ba-Lauti and other Suto-Pedi clans in the Transvaal ; northwards on the Vendas and Ba-Nyai in the Zoutpansberg and Rhodesia, and on the Ndjaos near the Sabie ; and eastwards on the Thongas near Inhambane and on the Ba-Chopi, north of the mouth of the Limpopo.

101 The tribe comprises a certain number of clans. These clans form six groups, which speak the various dialects of the Thonga language.

133 (1) There are two rivers called Sabie in the Thonga Territory ; one is the Sabie of the South, which flows in the Leydenburg district and joins the Nkomati not far from Kil. 53 of the Lourenço Marques-Transvaal line, and the other, that here referred to, which comes from Rhodesia and flows into the Indian Ocean not far from the 21° lat. South.

II. *Tribe, Groups and Clans.*

101 618 It is necessary first of all to define clearly the precise meaning of these three terms.

We reserve the term *tribe* for the totality of the Thonga nation. This word is frequently used to designate the smaller national units, which are called after some old chief whose descendants are still reigning, like Tembe, Khosa, Nkuna, etc. We prefer for the sake of clearness to call these small units *clans*, as there is certainly a great resemblance between them and the Scottish clans. As a rule all men belonging to a clan bear the name of the old chief, who is more or less considered the ancestor of them all. In the Tembe country, most of the inhabitants will salute each other with these words: "Shawan Tembe, good morning, Tembe"! But Tembe, the name of the clan, means not only a group of people, but a certain part of the country south of Delagoa Bay. In that country men of other clans have settled. There are also sub-clans of the Tembe clan which have already adopted special salutations, because they have formed collateral branches of the big Tembe family. However the term *clan* is the best, I think, to designate this kind of national unit, as its origin is essentially familial. Now some of these clans, those which occupy the same tract of country, form *groups* because they speak the same dialect of the Thonga language.

III. *The generic Name of the Tribe.*

101 619 As we shall see, there is no true national unity amongst the Thongas (1). They are hardly conscious that they form a definite

193 (1) What orthography are we to adopt when using the Bantu proper names in the plural? Different systems are used in ethnographic books, but the following appears to me the most rational. When a Bantu proper name is used with its plural prefix, the addition of a final *s* is not justified; but in that case the prefix ought to be separated from the root by a hyphen, in order that the uninitiated reader may understand at once that he is dealing with a plural. Thus I would write: Ama-Zulu, Ba-Ronga, etc.

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101
619 nation, and therefore they possess no common name for it. The name *Thonga* (pronounce *t* + aspirated *h*, not the English *th*) was applied to them by the Zulu or Ngoni invaders, who enslaved most of their clans between 1815 and 1830. The origin of this Zulu name is probably the term *Ronga*, which means Orient (buronga = dawn) and by which the clans round Lourenço Marques used to call themselves. According to the phonetic laws of the two languages *R* in Ronga becomes *Th* when pronounced by the Zulus. (Ex. Randja, to love, in Ronga, is thanda in Zulu ; raru, three, thathu.) This word Thonga became a nickname which, in the mouth of the Zulus, was almost the equivalent of slave, and they applied it to the whole Thonga stock ; the appellation is not liked by the Thongas, but I know of no other which would be preferable to it.

Strange to say, the Thongas of the Northern Clans, especially those of the Bilen and Djonga groups, like to call themselves *Tjongas*, the Hlengwes *Tsongas*. This word is perhaps originally the same as Ronga and may have meant also people of the East, although the *R* of the Ronga dialect does not permute regularly into *Tj* and *Ts* in the Northern clans ; but this meaning is doubtful, and has at any rate been forgotten. Another name, which is much used amongst white people to designate the Thongas, is the word *Shangaan*. Shangaan or Tshangaan was one of the surnames of Manukosi, the Zulu chief who settled on the East Coast and subjugated most of the Thongas at the time of Chaka. It is possible that this name was even older, and that it belonged to a chief who lived in the valley of the Lower Limpopo before Manukosi. At any rate, this valley was called Ka Tshangaan and its inhabitants Matshangaan. But this term was never accepted by the Ba-Ronga, who consider it as an

193 (in the singular : Mu-Ronga, Mu-Sutho), but never Ama-Zulu, Ba-Rongas. As however ordinary readers are not acquainted with Bantu grammar, I think it is more advisable to use these Bantu proper names without their prefixes, treating them as if they were English words, and, in that case it is necessary to add the final *s*, as we generally do according to the rules of European spelling. Many writers do not adopt this system in their books ; but write the plural in exactly the same form as the singular, and it is therefore impossible to distinguish between the two. This may lead to confusion. I therefore propose to write : a Thonga, the Thongas, one Hlengwe, two Hlengwes, but it should be remembered that the final *s* must not be pronounced.

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opp. pg 16

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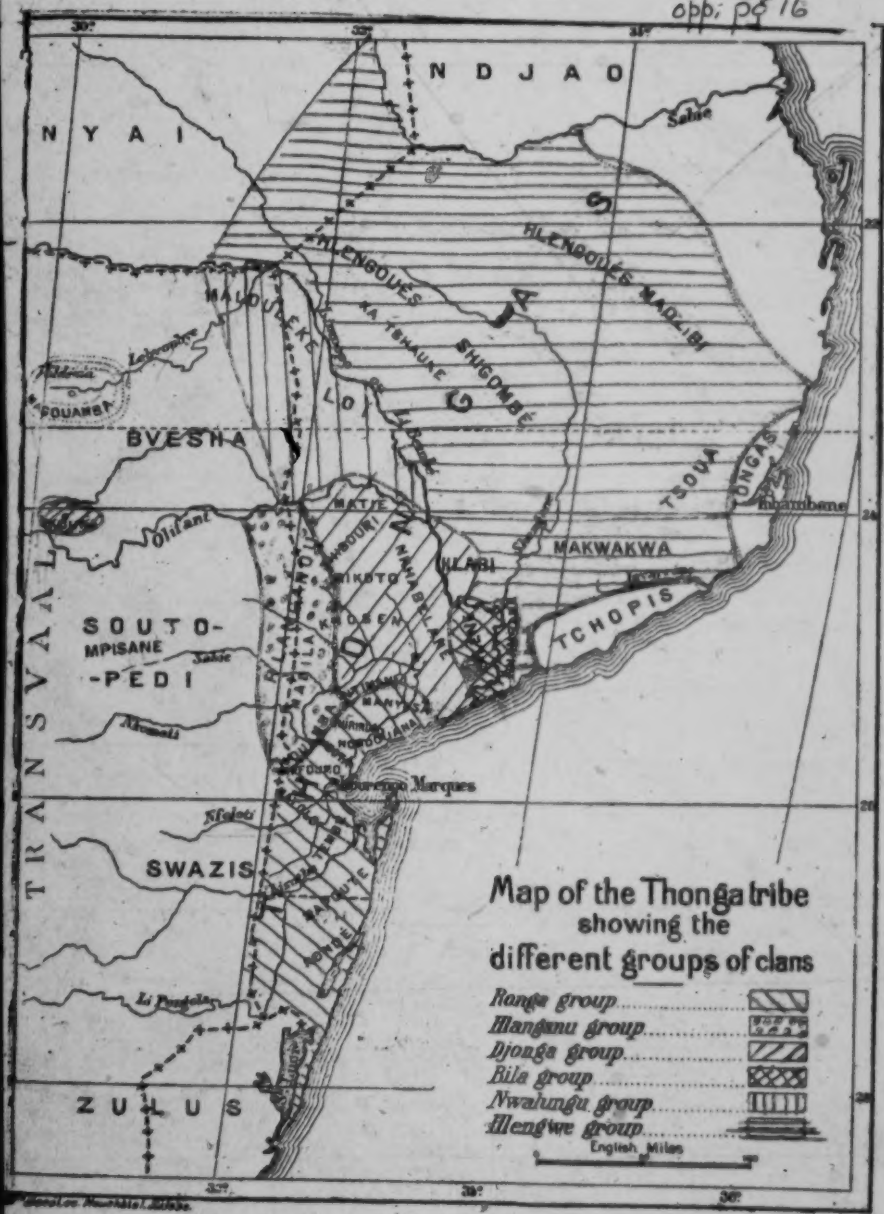

I: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

101 insult. It is applied in Johannesburg roughly to all the East
619 Coast "boys," even to the Ba-Chopi, who are considered by the Ba-Ronga of Delagoa Bay as much inferior to them. Its adoption would be objectionable on that account. I recognise that the word Ba-Thonga does not enjoy much more favour and is not quite satisfactory ; however considering that it means originally "people of the East" and that the tribe is indeed living in the eastern part of South Africa, it ought to be accepted in the course of time without much difficulty.

Let us remark that another tribe, quite different in language and ethnographic features, dwelling near Inhambane, quite close to our Thonga tribe, calls itself Ba-Tonga. But there is no aspirate after the *T* and this is enough to distinguish it from the Ba-Thonga.

IV. *The six Groups of the Thonga Clans.*

101
Let us consider briefly, with the aid of the accompanying map, these six main groups.
131 1. All round the Bay of Delagoa, we find the *Ronga group*. This word Ronga is a very old one and very convenient, as all these clans consent to be called by it. The real Rongas are, I think, the Mpfumo and the Matjolo clans, who are settled on the west of the Bay. South of the Bay is the Tembe clan and its two sub-clans, which have become independent : Matutwen and Maputju. North of Lourenço Marques are the Mabota and Mazwaya clans, the country of the latter, which extends on both sides of the estuary of the Nkomati, being called Nondwane. Further north are the two clans of Shirindja and Manyisa which form the transition to the following group. The new generation speaks a purer Ronga dialect, the old one more the Djonga.

Continuing our survey in a northerly direction, we cross two rivers : the Nkomati and the Olifant. From the Nkomati to the Olifant we meet with the Djonga group, and from the Olifant northward with the Nwalungu group. Djonga means

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

101 South, Nwalungu means North. The Ba-Djonga are the clans
197 south of the Olifant, the Ba-Nwalungu north of it. Such
designations have therefore only a relative value and have been
131 evidently invented by people dwelling on the borders of the Olifant. But they are used in some places, and I do not find any better ones to designate the two dialects of the Thonga spoken south and north of the river.

2. *The Djonga group* includes the Khosa (in the Khosen or Cossine country) the Rikotjo, the Shiburi and the Mathiye clans, if we go directly north. To the east of the Djonga clans proper, we find a number of clans settled on both sides of the Limpopo, in the triangle formed by the Limpopo, the Shengan and the line of the 24° parallel and calling themselves the Ba-Hlabi. They speak a dialect very similar to the Djongas. Their names are as follows, from the confluence of the Olifant and the Limpopo to the south: Mapsanganyi, Tsungu, Mavundja, Nkwinika and Makamo. The Nkuna clan was settled not far from this confluence. It migrated into the Transvaal in great numbers, together with Mavundja and other Hlabis during the wars of Manukosi.

3. *The Nwalungu group* includes two different elements: first the Ba-Loyi or Ba-ka-Baloyi, in the triangle formed by the two rivers northward of their confluence, and the Maluleke further north, extending all along the Limpopo as far as its confluence with the Lebvubye River and further along the Lebvubye itself. They occupy there a part of the Low Country of the Transvaal, being more or less mixed with the Venda and Nyai population. The Malulekes, according to the Native historians, are one half of a larger clan called the Nwanatis, whose second half is settled near the mouth of the Limpopo under the name of the Makwakwas of Khambane and Ndindane.

These three groups are to be found on the central line, on the axis of the tribe. On the west we meet with the Hlanganu group and on the east with the Bila and Hlengwe groups.

4. *The Hlanganu group* is the smallest of all, including the Nwamba clan in the plain of Delagoa Bay, and the Mabila and Hlanganu clans in the Lebombo hills. The Hlanganus overflow

101 into the Transvaal territory and are scattered in the large desert
197 of the Low Country of the Leydenburg district, together with
131 clans of Sutho (Pedi) and Swazi (Mbayi) origin. The Hlanganu dialect is very much akin to the Djonga.

5. *The Bila group*, called after the name of Bila, the great and fruitful plain of the Lower Limpopo valley, includes the clans living on both banks of the river. They have suffered very much at the hands of the Zulu invaders who made their home in that fertile country, but their dialect has kept some very peculiar traits.

101 6. *The Hlengwe group*. In the Djonga dialect, *hlengwe* means
131 wealth. I do not know if this be the etymology of the name Hlengwe as designating all the Thonga population of the east and north-east, from the Limpopo to Inhambane and to the Sabie of the north. The name Hlengwe applies properly only to the northern part of the eastern clans. I retain it however provisionally. It seems that this group, which forms perhaps half of the tribe, includes at least three great subdivisions : 1) The *Hlengwes proper*, facing the Malulekes and the Ba-Loyi on the west and extending as far as the Sabie to the north. Their main clans are Tshauke, Mbenzane, Mavube, Magwinyane. 2) *The Ba-Tswa* (1) of Inhambane with the Hlenbengwanes, Yingwanes, Nkumbis. 3) *The Nwanatis* with the Makwakwas, Khambanes, Ndindanes, bordering on the Chopis to the north and the west.

101 Outside of the proper area of the tribe, we find *colonies of*
167 *emigrated* Thongas in many parts of the Transvaal. The largest is in the Spelonken district, north of the Zoutpansberg, where they form the majority of the population. There they were called

(1) This name Ba-Tswa, is the Hlengwe form of Ba-Tjwa, a term by which the Zulus have been commonly designated amongst the Thongas. Ba-Tjwa is probably the corresponding form for Ba-Rwa, an appellation by which the Suthos of the Zoutpansberg plains used to call the tribes of the mountains, whence comes the wind called Bu-rwa. The Ba-Rwa are properly the Bushmen, as one knows, but under that name were included Bantus of a quite different type. This shows that the Natives, in naming foreign tribes, consider the geographical relation between themselves and these tribes much more than their ethnic characteristics : so one very often meets with the word "Bakalanga" which means people of the north. The Bakalanga proper are in Rhodesia, but in Lourenço Marques the Khosa tribe is called Bakalanga.

The term Ba-Ngoni is applied to the Zulus, as well as Ba-Tjwa, but it is restricted to that clan of the Zulus which was under Manukosi.

101 *Ma-Gwamba* by the Vendas and Bveshas who possessed the country
167 before them. These Ma-Gwamba are made up mostly of Hlengwe,
131 Maluleke and Djonga refugees. In the Modjadji country, we find two colonies of Ba-ka-Baloyi with their own chiefs. Near Leydsdorp, a more considerable clan, numbering about 6000, is the Nkuna clan under Muhlaba. On the Sabie of the south, in the plain of the Leydenburg district, another colony has been founded more recently, since the war of the Portuguese against Gungunyane, by the Ngonis and Bilas who did not accept the new rule. They remain under Mpisane, a near relative of the late Ngoni potentate.

In the Orichstadt valley, and in many other parts of the Leydenburg mountains, little colonies of Thongas are met with, as well as in the Waterberg district (especially near Nilstrom) and in the towns of Pretoria and Johannesburg. A good many of the thousands of Shangaanes coming every year to the mines settle down definitively in the Town Locations of these great centres.

During the last twenty years the number of these emigrants has certainly increased. It was not possible to indicate on the map all their settlements between the Hlanganu domain proper, the Drakensberg Mountains and the Olifant River. On the farms of the Zoutpansberg and Pietersburg Districts they also form a notable portion of the Native population.

V. *The numerical strength of the Thonga Tribe.*

161 It is very difficult to ascertain the numbers of the Thongas. The census of the Transvaal taken on the 17th of April 1904 gives 82,325 as being the total Thonga population of that colony; of these, 48,117 are located in the Zoutpansberg. This is a minimum, as it has been recognised that at least 10 % ought to be added to these figures; there were scarcely any young men in the kraals when the census was taken. Let us estimate at 100,000 the numerical strength of that part of the tribe which is located in the Transvaal.

As regards Portuguese East Africa, we find some interesting

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161 figures in the Mozambique Year Book. The Black population of the Lourenço Marques District is estimated at 99,698, distributed as follows :

Circumscription of	Morakwen (1)	21,510
	Manyisa	24,183
	Sabi	12,960
	Magudju (Khosen)	18,197
	Maputju	22,848
	Total	99,698

The population of the old region of Gaza which includes Bilen, the Makwakwas, the Ba-Loi, the Hlabis and part of the Hlengwe clans, is estimated at 147,995. Gaza having now been incorporated with the Lourenço Marques district; the latter has a Native population of 257,693. However the Year Book declares that this is a minimum, and states that at least 13,000 ought to be added to this number. Let us take 270,000 for the Lourenço Marques district. As regards the Inhambane district, the Year Book estimates the total population at 750,088 ; a very small percentage ought to be deducted for the White and Asiatic population, not more than 1 to 2,000. How many of the remaining thousands belong to our tribe ? There are numerous clans of Ba-Chopi on the coast and of Ba-Tonga round Inhambane. These two tribes however occupy but a small area of this large district, the interior of which is inhabited by the various Hlengwe clans. So we may admit that at least half of these 750,000 Natives are Thongas. If we are correct in this estimate, the total numerical strength of the Thonga tribe would be about 750,000.

VI. *The History of the Thonga tribe*

153 Everyone who has had to teach South African Natives has been astonished at their memory. It is so good that it sometimes prevents the reasoning faculty from developing as it ought to.

(1) I have adopted the Native pronunciation of Native names and the orthography explained in my Elementary Grammar of the Thonga-Shangaan Language. (Lausanne, Bridel.)

153 Some of these people are able to repeat a tale lasting five or ten
173 minutes after having heard it twice or thrice only. It is to be wondered at therefore that they have so few traditions, or rather that these traditions do not reach further back in history. In fact, when you inquire into what they know of the past, you find first, a story about their origin which bears a strongly mythical character ; secondly, traditions more or less legendary about the migrations of the various clans ; thirdly, genealogies of the royal family containing eight to ten names, and fourthly, historical narratives which go back as far as the beginning of the 19th century, and which give the impression of true historical facts. History, amongst the Thongas, begins only one hundred years ago. What took place before that is almost entirely forgotten. This fact shows that, even amongst races possessing a good memory, before the introduction of a system of writing traditions regarding the ancient past can hardly be relied upon.

A. Prehistoric Period.

773 1) *The story of man's origin* is this. The first human beings emerged from reeds. Each tribe came into this world with its present characteristics. For instance the Ba-Bvesha, who are great blacksmiths, knew how to forge their iron picks from the first day. They "came out" holding them. The Ba-Ronga group calls the first ancestors of humanity Likalahumba and Nsilambowa, viz. the one who brings a glowing cinder in a shell (the man) and the one who grinds vegetables (the woman). The Ba-Djonga call them Gwambe and Dzabana. Another story universally believed tells us how death came amongst men by the fault of the chameleon (See Part VI). All these stories are purely mythical and form part of the African Genesis which is met with in most tribes.

173 2) *Legends about the ancient migrations* of the various clans. Almost every clan pretends to have come from afar and, strange to say, they came from all the points of the compass. Two of their clans, without doubt, come from the north, the Ba-ka-

173 Baloyi and the Tembe. The Ba-ka-Baloyi, they say, came down the valley of the Limpopo in very remote times; they came in such numbers that they opened out a wide track as wide as a wagon road: "It is the old, old road of Gwambe, the first man on earth who emerged from the reed. So well was the road trodden that to this day the grass has not grown over it." Many Thongas pretend to have seen it, white and straight, stretching from the northern bank of the Limpopo and going southwards through the desert, just like the road over which Attila passed! At a certain place, near a rivulet where the Ba-Loyi rested, one can still see in the rock the print of the mortars of the women. "The stones at that time were not yet hardened, and they retained the marks made by the mortars in that old expedition, the marks also of the hemp pipes of the men and of their *matshuba*." (The *matshuba* are the little holes hollowed out by the Natives in four rows, as required in their favourite game called *tshuba*. See Part II, Chap. II.)

According to some of the Native historians, the Ba-Loyi came from the Ba-Nyai country along with the Ba-Nwanati, who also belonged to the Nyai or Kalanga race. They went southwards by that wonderful old road till they reached the sea coast not far from the mouth of the Limpopo. The sight of the sea, that broad unknown river, filled them with great fear. The Ba-Loyi felt they could not remain in such a dangerous neighbourhood and advised the whole party to go back to the north. In the meantime, however, their Nwanati friends had discovered a fruit not common on the African high veld, but very common on the sandy plains of the coast. In shape it was round, about the size of an orange, with a hard outer shell. When broken it was found to contain a number of stones, each wrapped in a delicate, strongly scented pulp, of which the Natives prepare an excellent dish. This fruit is called *makwakwa*. "We shall remain here to break open our *makwakwa*" said the Ba-Nwanati, and they bade farewell to the Ba-Loyi, who started back to their present abode. Hence the name Makwakwa now given to those Nwanatis.

173 The Nwanatis included the Makwakwas of Khambane and the
773 Malulekes. These latter separated from their brethren and

173 returned north, to the country of the Ba-Loyi, led by their ancestor,
173 Mashakatsi. This man, who was a great hunter, saw that he could easily defeat the Ba-Nyai who were settled in those parts, and brought back his followers with him. He became the founder of the dynasty of Maluleke. (For further details about these legends, see Addresses and Papers of the Joint Meeting of British and South African Associations for the Advancement of Science, Johannesburg 1905.)

As regards the Tembe clan, it is said to have come down as far as Delagoa Bay from the Kalanga country by the Nkomati river on a floating island of papyrus, and to have crossed the Tembe river and settled to the south of the Bay. An old saying alludes to this arrival and to the conquest of the country:

Phandje, phandje ra nala—Tembe kulu a wela.

As the palm leaf with its numerous feelers—so did the ancestor Tembe when he crossed.

He placed his sons in all the districts of the plain to govern in his name. The Tembe people, when they greet each other, sometimes use the salutation Nkalanga, i. e. man of the north or of the Kalanga country, and there is little doubt that, notwithstanding the legendary traits in this tradition, the fact itself of the northern origin of these clans is true. In the course of time the chiefs of Matutwen and Maputju, descendants of Tembe, became independent.

173 Most of the other clans point to Zululand or to Swaziland as having been their first abode, which they left to invade the low country of the coast. Mpfumu and Matjolo are both sons of Nhlaruti, who is said to have been the first invader; from him sprang their two clans which have become independent of and even hostile to each other. The Nondwane families point to the
[764] neighbourhood of Komati Port as being the place from which they came. There were successive invasions of a peaceful character. These people still turn the face of their dead to the west, because the clan came from the Lebombo hills, and this rite proves that the tradition is well founded. The Nkuna, Khosa, and Hlabi clans also claim the same western or south-western origin. Amongst the Ba-Nkuna, some old men say they know

173 the precise place in Zululand whence their forefather Nkuna started and declare that they still have relatives there.

The Hlanganus and Hlengwes seem to have no tradition of
173 this kind. The only one I heard about the Hlengwes is this.
372 Tshauke, their first king, took as his wife the daughter of another
773 chief belonging to the Sono tribe. The Sonos knew how to cook their food, the Hlengwes did not: they were still ignorant of fire and used to eat their porridge raw. The son of Tshauke stole a glowing cinder from the Sonos and brought it home in a big shell. The Sonos were angry and declared war on the Hlengwes; but these latter, having gained new strength because they had been eating cooked food, won the victory. The son of Tshauke was then named Shioki-sha-humba-he who brings fire in a shell. This tradition is connected with the name of the first man, Likala-humba, which we have just explained, and it evidently bears a legendary character.

A similar story is told about the Shiburi clan (between the Olifant and Nkomati rivers). The old inhabitants of that country were the Masilanes and Nshongos. Once, at a very remote period, a man of the Shiburi clan, who was a Pedi and dwelt in Mabulanen, at the foot of the Drakensberg Mountains, pursued an eland which he had wounded and killed it in the territory of the Masilanes. He returned home to call his countrymen to cut it in pieces and to eat it according to the custom of hunters. These people then roasted the meat and handed over some of it to the Masilanes. The Masilanes used to eat meat raw as they did not know the use of fire. They found that cooked meat was much better than raw meat and told the Shiburis: "You are more intelligent than we are; we will serve you henceforth!" They therefore decided to get rid of their own chief. The Shiburis lighted a big fire, dug a hole and put the glowing embers into it. Then a mat was spread over the mouth of the hole and the chief was asked to sit upon it. He fell into the pit and died, and the Shiburis became the masters of the country. They abandoned their costume (the musubelo, viz. the piece of skin fastened between the legs as used by the Pedis) their language and their marriage laws, married Masilane girls and became true Thongas (Mabuyandlela).

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173 If these stories had a historical foundation, it would prove that
372 there was a time when the use of fire was unknown to certain Thonga clans. This, however, is hardly admissible. Fire has been used by human beings from the remotest antiquity, even in the paleolithic age, as far back as the Mousterian period, 20,000 years ago or more. It is probable that even before that time the dry velt of South Africa was often set on fire by lightning. But the recurrence of these legends, which remind one of the Greek myth of Prometheus, shows at any rate the immense value which the Thongas attach to the use of fire.

173 What were the races that the invaders found in the country ? Their name is still known in some places. In the Khosen Country, they were the Ntimbas and Shibambos. In the Nondwane, the Honwanas, Mahlangwanas and Nkumbas. All agree in saying that they were on a lower scale of civilisation (See Part IV) and that the new comers overcame them easily because they were more intelligent and possessed better weapons.

3) A third source of information regarding prehistoric times is to be found in the *genealogies of the royal families* which each clan has preserved more or less completely. I have gathered the following (1) :

Mpfumu : Nhlaruti, Mpfumu, Fayi, Maromana, Shilupane, Hasana (who attacked Lourenço Marques in 1868, was banished but received back his country in 1875 ; he died in 1878), Hamule, Zihlahla, Nwamantibyane (banished in 1896 to Western Africa where he died).

Tembe : Tembe, Nkupu, Nwangobe, Silambowa, Muhari (1781-1795), Mayeta (1823), Bangwana, Bukutje (1857), Mabayi (banished in 1890), Bukutje II.

Maputju : Maputju was the younger brother of Muhari and made himself independent of him. Muwayi, Makasana (1800-1850), Tihuma, Musongi or Nozililo (1850), Ngwanazi (who fled to British Amatongaland after the Gungunyana war in 1895).

Nondwana : Libombo (probably reigning before the invasion),

(1) Compare E. Torre do Valle. Diccionario shironga-portuguez. Lourenço Marques. Imprensa Nacional 1906.

173 Masinga, Ngomana, Matinana, Makwakwa, Papele, Khobete (who rebelled against the Portuguese in 1859), Mapunga, Mahazule.

Mabota : Mabota, Magwenyana, Lawulana, Magumbin, Mbakana, Nwatjonga.

Nwamba : Kopo-Nwamba, Rihati, Sindjini, Malengana, Nkolele, Mangoro, Mudlayi, Nwangundjuwana.

Khosa : Khosa, Ripanga, Mabone, Molelemane, Ripindje, Magudjulane, Nshalati Pukwana, Magudju, Shongele.

Nkuna : Nkuna, Shitlhelane, Rinono, Kulalen, Nwarinyekana, Muhlari, Ribye-ra ku-tika, Shiluvane, Muhlaba.

Mahuleke : Mashakatsi, Dlamana, Shitanda, Shihala, Nkuri, Mhinga, Sanduza.

173 These genealogies, as one can see, generally contain eight to ten
643 names. The list of Maputju chiefs has six only, because this dynasty is not so old and did not begin before the end of the XVIIIth century. But all the others are longer. I do not pretend that they are absolutely correct ; in the same clan, there are sometimes variations according to the informants. There may have been links omitted in the chain because, to the Natives, a grandson is a son, just like a real son. On the other hand, the law of succession amongst the Thongas calls to the chieftainship the younger brothers of the deceased chief ; so some of these names may very well belong to brothers. Therefore it does not at all follow that eight names correspond to eight different generations. If that were so, estimating a generation at 30 years, we should conclude that the first chief lived some 250 years ago, viz. in 1650 ; but I have found conclusive proof that, for some of these genealogies, the first name in the list was already known in 1550. So we must consider these genealogies as being in fact too short. Many names must have been dropped out in the course of time.

173 The proof to which I allude has been afforded by the Portuguese reports published in the Mémoire addressed in 1873 to the President of the French Republic, who was called to act as mediator in the conflict between England and Portugal about the right of possession of the southern part of the Bay (Lisboa.

173 Imprensa Nacional). In this interesting publication we find the oldest documents relative to the Bay and, amongst others, we read the following account in a Report of the Portuguese chronicler Perestrello, written in 1554 : "Into the Bay flow three rivers... The first one to the south, is called Zembe. It separates the land of a king of that name from the dominion of the king Nyaka... The second is the river of the Holy Spirit or of Lourenço Marques. It separates the land of Zembe from the land of two other chiefs whose names are Rumu and Mina Lebombo. The third and last is the Manhisa, so called after a Kafir of that name who governs there." In these statements we can easily recognize the names of the actual clans of Tembe (Zembe), Mpfumu (Rumu), Lebombo and Manyisa. These names were already known at that time and the chiefs to whom they apply were settled in the same country where they now are or not far from it. The chief Nyaka has left his name to the Inyak Island. It seems that his dynasty was then reigning over a larger tract of country than now. It is possible that he was confined to the island where his descendants now live, by the military operations of Maputju. Let us remark moreover that Zembe and Manhisa were names applied not only to those two chiefs, but to *rivers*. Zembe is the actual Mi-Tembe which flows between the Tembe and Matjolo countries, and Manhisa is evidently the Nkomati which crosses the Manhisa country some fifty kilometers higher than the estuary. If the Natives already called rivers after the name of these chiefs, it is probable that the chiefs themselves were already dead, and had lived in a more or less remote past. All these arguments tend to show that four or five hundred years ago at least the chiefs Tembe, Mpfumu, Manhisa, Libombo, all of whom still have descendants, were already in the country round Delagoa Bay. I do not think any scientifically accurate statement could be made with regard to so remote a period and I propose this as a landmark in the history of South African Natives (1).

(1) For more details about the history of the Thongas and of the neighbouring tribes, see my article in the "South African Journal of Science", 1914: *The condition of the Natives of South East Africa in the XVIth Century according to the early Portuguese documents.*

B. Historic Period.

175 167 Having tried to fix what is historical in the prehistoric period, we now come to the XIXth century ; and here we find a great amount of detailed information in which there may be some legendary traits, but which as a whole seems to be entirely trustworthy. It does not suit our plan to narrate here all these facts. To do so would lead us much too far. Let us only say that the history of the Thonga tribe during the whole of the XIXth century was dominated by the invasion and migrations of the Zulu conquerors, who left Chaka and for their own sake enslaved the poor Ama-Thonga of the coast, just as Mosilekatsi did among the Mashonas. These Ba-Ngoni were led by Manukosi ; he found all the Thonga clans living according to the old Bantu style, each for itself, without national unity ; he easily conquered them and tried to impose on them the military system of dominion created by Dingiswayo and Chaka. Many of the Thonga clans emigrated into the Transvaal at that time (between 1835-1840) rather than submit to Manukosi ; as the Boers had settled in the country and as the Ngoni chiefs always feared a war with the Whites more than anything else, these Thongas were left undisturbed by Manukosi. They belonged to the Nkuna, Ba-Loyi and Mavundja clans, and founded numerous colonies in the Transvaal.

175 Manukosi reigned quietly for more than twenty years in the Limpopo valley and as far as the Mosapa (Ba-Ndjao country, north of the Sabie). His death took place in 1856. Then a dreadful war of succession still known as "the war" (mubango) raged for more than six years over the whole area of the Thonga tribe. Two brothers disputed the chieftainship. According to the Thonga law of succession, Muzila was the legal heir ; but the Ngoni law was against him and in favour of his younger brother Mawewe. Mawewe was then proclaimed chief and Muzila's followers fled to the Spelonken ; the new king however behaved as a cruel despot and, with the help of the Portuguese and of the Ronga warriors, Muzila defeated him decisively on the Sabie River, August 17-20 1862. The Ba-Ronga always remained

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175 independent of the Ngoni chiefs, being directly under the Portuguese authorities.

A Portuguese called Albasini, who acted during all that time as a chief of the Thongas of the Spelonken, played a considerable part in these events.

When Muzila died, his son Gungunyane succeeded him. The Ba-Ngoni had greatly diminished in number. In 1890 there were not more than a few hundred of them in the whole country. However they held it very firmly and the Thongas hated them. Therefore when the war between the Portuguese and some Ronga clans in 1894 led to difficulties between the Whites and Gungunyane, the Ngoni chief was abandoned by most of his people, even by his uncle Nkuyu : his capital Mandlakasi was burnt and he himself was captured by Musinho d'Albuquerque at the end of the year 1895 ; the despotic rule of the Zulus came to an end, and has been replaced by the Portuguese administration, much to the advantage of the Thonga tribe.

VII. *Ethnic characteristics of the Thonga tribe.*

197 What are the characteristic features of our tribe in relation to the other ethnic groups of South African Bantus, especially to the Zulus and Suthos ? We shall try to sketch them briefly as regards three main points : language and mental and physical character.

1) *The Language of the Thongas.* It would be useless to give here an elaborate description of the Thonga language : this has already been done for the Ronga dialect in my "Grammaire Ronga" published with the help of the Portuguese Government in 1896 (Bridel, Lausanne) and for the Djonga dialect in my Elementary Grammar of the Thonga-Shangaan language, which I published at the beginning of the Thonga-English Pocket Dictionary compiled by my colleague the Rev. Ch. Châtelain (Bridel, Lausanne 1908). I shall consider the language here only from an ethnological point of view, that is to say only to ascertain the proper place of the Thongas amongst the Bantus.

197 The Thonga idiom belongs to the *South-Eastern group of the*
193 *Bantu languages* and is related both to Sutho and Zulu. All these languages have in common certain grammatical features which distinguish them from other groups. Amongst them I may mention the frequent use of the lateral sounds *hl*, *dl*, *tl*, the presence of seven or eight distinct classes of nouns, recognizable by prefixes which correspond to each other in these three languages, the formation of the locative by a suffix *ini* or *ng* and not by prefixes, the consequent absence of the three locative classes pa, ku, mu, etc. It has been asserted by people who have not studied Thonga carefully that it is merely a dialect of Zulu. This is not true (1). Thonga is altogether different from Zulu and Sutho, though it closely resembles both, especially Zulu.

194 *Relation to Sutho.* As regards Sutho, its phonetic system is
197 characterised by the absence of a certain phenomenon common to most Bantu languages, to Thonga and Zulu especially. The Bantu phonology is dominated by a peculiar nasalisation of certain consonants when prefixed by an *n* or an *m*. This *n* or *m* is generally the prefix of the class mu-ba, mu-mi or in-tin (zin), and has the power of producing marvellous changes in this initial consonant. But, in Sutho, this prefix is dropped altogether except in a few cases, and these nasalised sounds are almost entirely lacking. As regards some other grammatical features, Sutho, especially the Pedi dialect of Sutho, is not so far from Thonga. It is not possible to quote many instances; let us only remark that Sutho possesses the roots *loya* for witchcraft and *yila* for taboo which are also present in Thonga and are lacking in Zulu.

Relation to Zulu. The great difference between Thonga and Zulu as regards phonetics is the complete absence of the three characteristic Zulu clicks (2) in Thonga. The Thongas have no

(1) Thongas and Zulus *do not understand* each other. In linguistic terminology, I think one ought never to designate as a dialect of a language an idiom which people speaking that language cannot understand at all. It is then a different language altogether, and we ought to keep the term dialect for the various forms of a single language which are of such a nature that people speaking them can understand each other more or less perfectly.

(2) The Zulu clicks are, as is generally believed, of Hottentot origin. It is not surprising therefore that they were not adopted by the Thongas, who do not seem to have had any contact with Hottentots.

194 clicks at all except in a few words borrowed from the Zulu like
197 nqolo, wagon. Certain letters regularly permute from one language into the other: *Z* of the Zulu is *t* in Thonga; *r* of the Thonga is generally replaced by *l* or *th* in Zulu.

Originality of Thonga. But though Thonga and Zulu resemble each other in many respects, Thonga possesses some peculiar features which prove its originality. As regards its sounds, it is characterised by the frequent occurrence of a labial sibilant sound, a little like *ps* pronounced with a kind of whistling, which corresponds to the Zulu *z* in the plural of the class isi-izi. It is further characterised by some special nasalisations of initial consonants. *N+k*, which remains *nk* in Zulu, becomes *h* in Thonga: for instance the Zulu *nkosi*, chief, is *hosi* in Thonga. (It is *Khushi* in Sutho-Pedi where the initial *n* has been dropped). There is a long list of words of the in-tin class which show this phenomenon (homu, ox; huku, hen, etc.). The initial *r* when preceded by *n* becomes *nh* (*nh*ena, warrior; tin*h*aru, three; cf. *r*aru, three, bu*r*ena, bravery, mo*r*ena, in Sutho, chief). This seems to be the primitive combination. In some other cases it becomes *ntjh* in Ronga and *ndj* in Djonga (*r*ako, behind, *ntjh*ako, *ndj*ako). These two *r* have probably a different origin in the Ur-Bantu. These transformations are peculiar to Thonga.

193 As regards morphology, Thonga has some striking peculiarities: a great variety of demonstrative forms due to the presence of a kind of demonstrative particle *le* or *la* and also a great development of the participial forms of the verbs. In its conjugation, the verb is quite as well provided with auxiliaries as in any other South African language and we could easily discover in Thonga the one or two thousand combinations which have been counted in the Zulu conjugation.

Thonga, for all these reasons, is a language apart which has developed with its different dialects.

197 *The six dialects.* We have tried to classify them under six names, but this classification is, of course, purely formal: in fact each of them presents transition forms, and they coalesce with each other through a great number of intermediary

197 forms (1). This is a very striking fact. I take for instance the word *ririmi*, which means tongue in Djonga, north of the Nkomati River. Here we find two *r* pronounced more or less as rolled *r*, never gutturally. If we go somewhat further South, to the Nondwane, ririmi becomes *rjirjimi*. The *r* becomes more palatal. We reach Mpfumu : there the word has changed into *lidjimi*. The first *r* has become a pure dental, the second a palato-dental (with a kind of cerebralisation). There is a regular evolution of the sound from one dialect to the other. The same process might be followed for *b* which is a true explosive *b* to the south of the Bay and becomes *v*, a fricative labial and sometimes almost *w*, a semivowel, when we go to the north. This regularity in the geographical relation of the sounds is very clear, and it shows that the language must have developed undisturbed like a tree putting forth branches, these branches separating more and more from each other till the dialects are formed, each with its peculiar sounds.

This fact is all the more marvellous when we remember that the Thonga tribe has been made up of peoples of various origin which have invaded the country, coming from different parts. The only explanation which accounts for these two apparently contradictory facts is that these invaders adopted the language of the primitive population and did not influence it enough to prevent its following its natural evolution... If this be true, the Thonga language ought to be considered as the oldest element in the life of the tribe, and we can then understand how it has given it its unity.

It is true that the course of events, from a linguistic point of view, has been totally different since the Zulu invasion of the XIXth century. The Ba-Ngoni of Manukosi did not adopt the Thonga as their language : they kept their Zulu dialect ; and most men of the Thonga clans knew and used it also together with their own national tongue. But this difference can easily be explained. The Zulu generals who followed the example of Chaka, Manukosi

1) In Appendix N° 1, I give a list of the most interesting words, showing how they are pronounced in all parts of the tribe, in order to characterise the various dialects.

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197 and Moselekatsi amalgamated clans and tribes under their military rule, and could not subsist unless they maintained a despotic domination over them ; they were an aristocratic race and considered their language as superior. Ruling by fear and by the sword, they purposely remained aliens amongst the enslaved tribes. Quite different was the spirit of the ancient invaders of 1400 or 1500 A. D. They had not such an ideal of vast domination ; they operated on a much smaller scale : they were satisfied to take the chieftainship from the aborigines, and quickly mingled with them, married their daughters (as they still do) and so became one with them.

Would the Ba-Ngoni have been able, in course of time, to establish their Zulu dialect instead of the Thonga, if the Portuguese had not broken their power ? It is impossible to say. They had succeeded in imposing all their Zulu terminology in military matters. Meanwhile the women were not learning Zulu and the women are the best safeguards of the purity of the language amongst primitive peoples. Therefore I do not think they would have been able to uproot the old language, which must have been spoken for many centuries in Thonga territory.

My conclusion is then that the Thonga language was already spoken by the primitive occupants of the country more than 500 years ago and that, together with a certain number of customs, it formed the great bond which bound the Thonga clans together in past centuries.

181 703 2) *Mental characteristics of the Thongas.* We shall only ask how the Thongas compare with the Zulus or Suthos as regards character, and especially from a military point of view.

Having had the opportunity to witness a war in which the Nkuna chief Muhlaba was allied with the Pedi chief Maaghe, in the Zoutpansberg, I can testify that the Thongas had ten times as much military spirit

Phot. G. Lamplu

"Indaba" Thonga warrior.

181 as the Pedis. I saw the two armies, the same day, preparing
703 for the same battle. The Thongas were armed to the teeth, forming a great circle, all standing, shouting their war songs, gesticulating, jumping, imploring their chief to allow them to start. The Pedi warriors were sitting under trees, taking their snuff and apparently as calm as any other day.

During the Gungunyane war, the Thongas were brave, at least those not entirely dependent on the Ngoni king, who had not allowed his warriors to kill white men. The Rongas of Mpfumu especially showed great courage and endurance, and those who served the Portuguese in their Angola war have been praised as being very steady and reliable.

177 On the other hand everything seems to prove that military
181 ability is not an ancient feature of the Thonga character, and
725 that it has been imparted to them by the Zulus, who taught them
721 the art of fighting during the last century, pushing them to the front in their battles and calling them "Mabuyandlela," "those who open the way." Before the Ngoni invasion, the Thonga armies were ignorant of the *mukhumbi* viz. the armed circle of warriors which is the basis of the Zulu military system; (See Part IV) : they used to form themselves into a straight line and, in their battles, very few men were killed. They were normal Bantu clans, viz. people living peacefully, occasionally quarrelling with their neighbours. The idea of conquest, of vast dominion, the system of an armed nation which Chaka and his followers pursued, was something new amongst South African Natives and was probably borrowed by Dingiswayo from the Whites. This fact ought not to be ignored.

Under a just European supervision, there is no probability that the Thonga tribe will change its peaceful and mild charcter.

3) *Physical characteristics of the Thongas.* It cannot be said
142 that the Thongas possess a very distinct and unique physical type. They are generally of a dark brown colour, sometimes purely black, much darker than the Suthos. As a whole, their external appearance bears a much closer resemblance to that of the Zulus, but, as regards face and stature, they vary very much. You may meet Thongas with typical negro faces, broad lips, flat

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noses, prominent cheek bones, and the same day, at the same place, other men of the same clan with a much narrower face, thin lips and pointed noses. It seems that there are two different types amongst them, the coarse type which was perhaps more wide-spread amongst the primitive populations, and which has been kept very distinct by the Ba-Chopi of the Coast, and the finer, which belonged perhaps to the invaders, and both types have inter-crossed in all possible ways. There seems also to have been an Arabic influence in some of the clans. A Native Commissioner in the Zoutpansberg has noticed amongst some of the Thonga settlements striking Semitic features, arched noses, thin lips. Has there been any intermarriage between the Thongas and those Arabs who settled on the East Coast long before it was discovered by Vasco de Gama ? Who can say ?

FIRST PART

THE LIFE OF THE INDIVIDUAL

CHAPTER I

THE EVOLUTION OF A MAN FROM BIRTH TO DEATH

A. INFANCY

1. *The day of Birth.*

844 When a new member of the tribe is expected, when the mother begins to feel the pangs of childbirth (ku luñwa), the father sends word to the midwives of the neighbourhood and all of them come at once. They are called *tinsungakati* (1). Every woman having some experience in this department is a midwife, no special training being required for the qualification (2).

The *place chosen* for the delivery (phuluka) is generally the back of the hut (mahosi) where the pregnant woman lives. Some mats are brought and hung up in such a way as to form a smal

193 (1) This word is interesting. Its termination *ati* is the proper feminine suffix wh is found in nati, wife, hulukati, female elephant, Nkomati, the river of that nam the rivers being considered as female by the Thongas.

(2) Amongst certain Thonga clans, especially the Khosas of Magude, there is a person who is bound to come and assist the woman in childbirth : this is the mukoñwana lo' nkulu of her husband i. e. the woman who has been bought with her husband's oxen. The woman in labour leans her head on this woman's chest, whilst the other midwives help her in parturition. When the Rev. F. Paillard went to assist a woman during labour, the "mukoñwana lo' nkulu" told him : "You have taken my place." See Part II. Ch. I. B. 3).

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844 enclosure. This is done to protect the woman from indiscreet
787 onlookers. Should there be enough bush to hide her, mats are
845 not used. A big wooden mortar is given to her to lean against during her pains. The whole place is called by a special term *fukwen* or *busaken* (the nest). Should the birth be difficult, the divinatory bones will probably be consulted and the woman will be removed to another place, inside the hut or somewhere else.

844 The baby may be born without any help, but as a rule the midwives consider it their duty to submit their patient to a *long and painful manipulation*, to a regular kneading, performed with the hands, sometimes even with the feet, in order, as they say, to obtain the expulsion of the child and of the after-birth all at once. They sometimes succeed in this feat ! They also often hurt the mother severely. The midwives think that they must be very rough, and have no pity at all on the poor woman. Sometimes the mother loses all her natural feelings in this painful process. I have heard of cases of her refusing to let the child come to the light, biting her helpers, running away. Hence perhaps the attitude adopted by the midwives. The mother must not *fahla ñwana*, viz. break down the child, a technical expression to designate unhappy births.

During the whole labour, it is taboo (1) for the mother to eat or to drink anything ; she would kill the child if she did so. Of course no man must attend the birth ; neither must girls come near. A newly married woman may be allowed to enter the enclosure in order to "be taught." It is also forbidden for the female relations of the woman, her sisters, even her mother to come *fukwen* ; they might be ashamed if their relative behaved badly and "broke her child." They will not come till the following day, when they hear that everything has gone smoothly ; then the father will kill a hen for them.

(1) We translate by taboo the Thonga word *yila* which means everything prohibited. I beg to give the following provisional definition of this term, which will be found from the first to the last page of this book : Any object, any act, any person that implies a danger to the individual or to the community and that must consequently be avoided, this object, act or person being under a kind of ban. As often as possible, I shall add the explanation which Natives give of these taboos.

844 As soon as the child has made his appearance one of the
846 midwives ties the *umbilical cord* (likabana) near the navel and cuts it about three inches from it. The little sore is anointed with a kind of fat ; the bit of cord remaining with the baby is attended to with great care : it generally falls off at the end of the first week, and this is the signal for the end of the period of confinement.

The after-birth, the *placenta*, is also looked for with much anxiety : it is called *yindlu ya ñwana*, the "house of the child," or *hlalu*. When it is delayed too long, the midwives begin to fear "because the blood which is inside has not all come out and will kill the mother." In the Khosa clan, should the placenta not come at once, the woman is told to stand on her feet, her body half bent forward, and all the midwives begin to move their index fingers from right to left, emitting at the same time the following sound : tswi-tswi-tswi-tswi. This is said to help the placenta to come. The placenta is generally buried deep behind the hut on the spot where the birth has taken place ; but some prefer to bury it inside the house, fearing the dogs might unearth it, which is taboo.

The child is then washed with water. This water is thrown away as being polluted by the blood of the birth, which is taboo.

553 *Naming the child*. On the day of birth or on one of the following
787 days the child receives his name (bito). There are four principal ways of choosing this.

1) Often the parents give their offspring *the name of a chief* as Musongi, Makasana, Muzila, etc. It flatters their vanity !

2) But frequently the parents like to recall a name of the old times (pfusha bito dja khale), the name of one of the ancestors, because it is a good thing to remember them. They go so far as to consult the bones. A name is proposed, and if the bones in falling do not give a favourable indication, another is tried till they feel sure that the die "has spoken" (1).

553 3) Or it may be that somebody asks the favour of giving his
608

(1) The Christian Natives like to ask their missionary to choose the name, perhaps for a similar reason.

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553 name to the new-born child ; a friend of the family may do so,
608 but it is also often a traveller who happens to be in the village to whom this privilege is accorded. He will "*name himself in the child*" (ku titshula ka ñwana). This fact will establish a special relation between this person and the child, a relation which bears some resemblance to that of a godfather to his godson. Once a year he will come and give "his name" (viz. the child) presents. When the child is able to travel, the mother will go with him to pay a visit to his "friend in name" (mabitokulobye).

553 4) A fourth way of naming new-born children is to choose a name having some connection with the *circumstances of the birth*. Should a child have seen the light when his mother was travelling, he will be called *Ndlelen* viz. "on the way," "on the road ;" should the birth have taken place under a tree, the name of that tree will be chosen, put in the locative case, and you will meet many Thongas called Nkanyen (under the terebinth), Nkwakwen (under the Strychnos), Nkuwen (under the fig-tree), etc. ; or Mpfulen (in the rain), Marumbin (in the ruins), Mawewe, if the child is born during the war waged by the chief of that name, etc. When General Beyers was over-running Zoutpansberg with his commando, the Natives, admiring the swiftness of his movements, named many children after him (1).

551 The names of the Thongas are the same for the two sexes. There are only two which cannot be employed indiscriminately

553 (1) In the case of *bosumba*, viz. if a woman has lost many children (see Part. I.
789 Ch. II. 8), should she give birth to a new one, a name will be chosen which will protect the new-born infant against the fate of his elder brothers and sisters. I know a boy who was born under such circumstances. His grandfather *Shona* named him after himself in order to bring him good luck. The Rev. H Guye, in an article entitled : "Des noms propres chez les Ba-Ronga" (*Bulletin de la Société Neuchâteloise de Géographie*, 1920) quotes an interesting instance of such a name. A boy was called *Nyamayabu*, viz. their meat. His elders had died and it was thought that they had been eaten by wizards. When this boy came into the world, his parents had abandoned all hope of keeping him alive and said : "It is their meat, the meat which the wizards will eat!" But they evidently thought that this name would be a protection to the child, perhaps because wizards would see that their evil tricks were known, and would fear to be discovered, if they killed it. Such names are called : "names of misery" (mabito ya buriwana, ya ku titjetja), as Bisana or Bisalifu, "the one who hiccoughs death :" wherever he sends his hiccoughs, he spreads death.

551 for girls and boys. *Nhwanin* is a girl's name, as it means "girl" and *Nwandjise* a boy's name as it means "boy" (1).

553 All these birth-names are abandoned later on, generally at
881 the circumcision school, or at the age of puberty, in the clans
787 where the custom of circumcising has disappeared; boys and girls then choose new names. Men and women who undergo initiation adopt a new name. So do those subjected to the treatment for possession; these take the name of their pretended possessor when he has made himself known. I refer the reader to Appendix II for further information regarding Thonga names.

845 *Premature Birth.* When a child is born prematurely and is very small and delicate, he is wrapped in the leaves of the castor-oil plant and put into a big pot, which is then exposed to the heat of the sun. This is a true incubator, and the treatment is said to be attended with success (Tobane).

845 *Protracted Births and Illegitimate Births.* There would seem to be
848 no relation between these; but to the Thonga mind, on the contrary, a protracted and difficult birth proves that the child is not legitimate. This conviction is so strong that when a woman knows that the child which she is going to bear is not the son of her husband (nuna) but of a lover (mbuye), she will admit this secretly to the principal midwife, in order to spare herself the pains of a difficult birth, as it is taboo to bear a "child of adultery" hiding the fact:— it would cause the mother untold suffering.

Therefore, if the delivery lasts too long, the midwife will begin to have doubts as to the legitimacy of the child. The first thing she will do is to send word to the husband. He knows
845 what it means. He takes in his *shifado* (2) a little of his *semen*,
848 mixes it with water in a shell of sala (the big round fruit of the
291 Strychnos) and the woman drinks it. It may be that then the child will "feel his father," if the husband is really his father, and that this will bring the birth to a prompt conclusion; but

(1) I know of an exception to this rule. The son of the Mabota chief was named Nhwanin, a girl's name, in order to deceive the malevolent powers which had killed his brothers and sisters.

(2) See Annotatio I at the end of the volume in the collection of Latin notes written for medical men and ethnographers.

1 [see p. 816 in these categories or IN 116 -- Analyst]

845 If this result is not attained, it is a proof that the child is really
848 illegitimate and the midwife will force the woman to confess her guilt and the name of her lover. Should she have had many and hide the names of some of them "the womb will refuse" (khuri dji ta yala) and the birth will be possible only when the confession is complete.

848 Should an illegitimate child be born without this delay, he
787 will come to the light with his hands closed and refuse to take the breast. This will give the midwife an opportunity of extorting a confession from the mother. These women practise a special kind of divination : they take a broken pot, put pumpkin seeds into it and place it on the fire. If the seeds, instead of burning to a cinder, explode with a noise, it is a proof that the woman is guilty. Each explosion means a lover, and all their names must be revealed. (Tobane.) This confession is strictly private. The midwives will consider it a professional duty not to divulge the secret to anyone, even the father. But the mother must confess, as it is absolutely necessary that the true father of a child be known on the day of its birth.

848 It is taboo for the lover of the woman to come to the door
837 of the hut after the birth of the illegitimate child as long as the
789 umbilical cord has not fallen off. The child would die. Even later on, should the mother be sitting on the threshold of the hut with the baby in her arms, and the man pass along the street in front of them, one of the midwives will go (has she not heard the confession ?) and take between her fingers a pinch of sand from the footprints of the lover, and, without a word, will throw it on the fontanella of the baby. If the husband happens to be present, he will know by witnessing this act that he is not the true father. I do not think he will be very angry. The child is his and, if it is a girl, nobody else will "eat the oxen !" For him this is the main consideration !

845 As regards the birth of twins, we shall study later on the
847 strange customs which accompany it : in olden times one of the children was killed ; except in such a case, no child is ever put to death wilfully on the day of its birth.

II. *The first week ; Confinement Period.*

846 From the day of birth till the moment when the umbilical
753 cord falls, seven days may elapse : this forms a special period
853 called *busahana*, which is the period of confinement for both mother and child. It will be concluded by the special ceremony of the child's first outing, marked by the rite of the broken pot. During these seven or eight days, *the mother* is restricted to a special diet, and this is a true "marginal period" for her. She is absolutely outside the pale of society. The diet is prescribed by the family doctor, who knows how to treat children, and consists of a special dish prepared with Kafir corn (1) (mabele) and called *shimhimbi*, with which special medicines have been mixed. The aim of this medication (khwebela busahana) is twofold : first to expel the unclean blood which follows the birth, and which is a very great taboo, and secondly to stimulate the production of the milk. This food is cooked in a special pot (shikhwebelo sha busahana) and is eaten not with the hands, as some particles of the unclean blood might enter it and cause the mother to become phthisic, but with a special spoon.

846 Both the pot and the spoon will be fastened over the entrance of the hut, inside (shirangen sha nyangwa), at the end of this period of seclusion.

A fowl is also killed during these first days, a hen if the child is a girl, a cock if it is a boy. Some medicinal powder is poured into the broth, and the mother drinks it and eats part of the meat, the husband eating the remainder. This little luxury is indulged in as it helps the mother to recover her strength sooner ; she is attended to by her own mother, who has been summoned as soon as the birth has been satisfactorily effected, and who helps her to feed the child.

262 (1) This use of Kafir corn in this and other old rites proves the antiquity of this cereal. It is probably the first which was known to the Natives. Maize is quite a modern food amongst the Thongas, though the time of its introduction is not known. See Part IV.

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846 As regards *the child*, the umbilical cord is anointed every day ;
853 he begins to take the breast and drink the "*milombyana*," the great medicine which we shall describe later on.

During these days many taboos must be observed :

The *husband* is not allowed to enter the hut on any pretext ; this is not on account of his being unclean, quite the contrary. A birth does not contaminate the father amongst the Ba-Thonga as it does in other tribes. He is not obliged to undergo any medication. His exclusion from the conjugal hut is due entirely to the fact that his wife is polluted by the blood of the lochia, and he would run the greatest danger to himself if he came near.

846 *All married people* are also excluded (bakhili) viz. all those
854 who have regular sexual intercourse. Should they touch the child, he would die. If however a woman wishes very much to go and see the new-born, she must abstain from relations with her husband during two days. Then she can be admitted into the hut. On the other hand young girls are welcome in the hut, but they must not kiss the baby during these first days. "It is not yet firm ; it is only water," as they say ; later on, when it begins to laugh and to play, they may kiss it. Even the father may do so then ; when he comes back from a journey, he holds it in his arms and kisses it on the temple. Supposing that the
846 umbilical cord has now fallen off normally, the confinement period will be at an end. This termination is marked by two rites.

The mother of the delivered woman will have *to smear with clay the floor of the hut*. This is the great cleansing act which brings to an end a marginal period. It takes away all the dangerous blood, and the husband as well as all the other dwellers in the village will be allowed to enter the hut.

846 The second act is *the rite of the broken pot* (ku tjibelela shi-
751 rengelen, viz. to make fire under the shirengele, the bit of broken
278 pot used for the purpose). This is a medical treatment and a
825 religious ceremony combined. It is performed by the family doctor on the threshold of the hut in the following way : he puts into this piece of broken pottery pieces of skin of all the beasts of the bush : antelopes, wild cats, elephants, hippopotami, rats, civet cats, hyenas, elands and snakes of dangerous kinds, and roasts

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846 them till they burn. The smoke then rises, and he exposes the
751 child to it for a long time : the body, face, nose and mouth. The
825 baby begins to cry ; he sneezes, he coughs : this is just what is
278 wanted. Then the doctor takes what remains of the pieces of
856 skin, grinds them, makes a powder, mixes it with *tihuhlu* (1) grease of the year before last and consequently hard enough to make an ointment. With this ointment he rubs the whole body of the child, especially the joints, which he extends gently in order to assist the baby's growth.

846 All this fumigation and manipulation is intended to act as a
751 preventive. Having been thus exposed to all external dangers,
853 dangers which are represented by the beasts of the bush, the child may go out of the hut. He is now able "to cross the foot prints of wild beasts" (tjemakanya mitjla) without harm. Snakes will not bite him, at any rate their bite will not hurt him ; lions will not kill him. The remainder of the powder is put into a little bit of reed closed at both ends, which the mother has to carry with her during the whole nursing period in order to continue the treatment.

846 This rite of the broken pot is also the great preventive remedy
755 against the much dreaded ailment of babies, *convulsions*. If a
753 child suffers from this, they will say : "a tlalile shirengelen,"
821 viz. "he did not find any help in the broken pot" and the parents will go to another doctor whose drugs are more powerful, to have the child once more exposed to the smoke. It may even be that a grown-up man will undergo this treatment again, if he has been ill with convulsions, but, in this case, the broken pot with its pieces of skin is put on the head of the patient, which has been first covered with a wisp of cuscuta (hare dja yendjeyendje). The great aim of all the medication of children by the "milombyana" is also to fight against convulsions, as we shall see (2).

(1) The tihuhlu are the seeds of the tihuhlu tree known under the name of mafureira. They are oleaginous and the fat (mafura) obtained from them is very much used for external applications amongst the Thongas.

(2) In *Savage Childhood* p. 12, Dudley Kidd describes this "baptism of smoke" amongst Zulus. Some dirt is scraped from the father's body and is mixed with other drugs in order to impart to the child his ancestral spirit. Another ingredient

842 The Thonga child is always received into this world with great joy by the whole family. If it is a girl, it means oxen to buy a wife for one of the sons later on ; therefore it means increase not only in the wealth but in the number of the members of the family. If it is a boy, there is no direct material enrichment, but the clan has been strengthened and the name of the father is
846 glorified and perpetuated. In the case of the birth of a first-born
539 child (ñwana wa matibula), a special ceremony is performed at the
851 end of the first week. When the grandmother has smeared the
603 hut, she goes home, summons all the female relatives, sometimes as many as ten or fifteen ; they take with them food, ochre and fat prepared for this purpose. Two or three men accompany them. They enter the village of the child executing a special dance called *khana*, and singing the following song (which is the proper song to glorify a first-born) :

I celebrate my pot which has done *ngelebendje*...

They compare the child with a pot of clay which has gone through the firing process. It has been tried as one always tries a pot by letting it fall to the ground ; but it is not shattered, because it has not cracked in the furnace, it has kept intact ! This is what is meant by the descriptive adverb ngelebendje.

846 Then they smear the baby, the mother, the father, everybody
851 in the village with ochre. It is a great feast. A goat will be
603 killed, if possible, because the father and mother have "found a village" (kuma muti) by the child, they have "grown roots" (mila mitju). This is a law, but its omission is not taboo. When the grandparents do not perform this ceremony, it is an insult to the parents of the child, but no evil consequence will follow.

765 is a meteorite ground to fine powder. It is interesting to compare this use of the
753 meteorite with the fact that, amongst the Thongas, this fumigation is intended to prevent convulsions. Convulsions, as we shall see (Part VI. Chap. II. B) are caused by the
821 mysterious power of Heaven. The meteorite has fallen from Heaven. Thus the baptism of smoke aims at bringing the child under the influence of the two main elements of Bantu religion : the ancestor gods and Heaven.

846 For any subsequent children, the feast will be reduced to the
851 presentation by the grandmother of a basket of food to "*tlangela*
603 *ñwana*," viz. to "celebrate the child."

III. *The Nursing Period.*

853 The little child has been taken out of the confinement hut (humesha busahanen). He is now allowed to go outside. The nursing period then begins and will last two and a half or three years; but before we study the rites which mark it, let us consider the manner in which the baby is carried and his diet during this period.

1) The Ntehe.

854 A little child is not carried by his mother in her arms, but in a softened skin which is called *ntehe*. The preparation of the ntehe is subject to many prescribed customs.

The first of these is this: the ntehe must not be looked out before the birth of the child, or it would bring misfortune. This is a taboo which I might call a "taboo of prevision." Some other taboos of this kind are met with in our tribe.

[604] For a first-born child, the skin must be provided by the maternal uncle. This is a rule, but the custom is not tabooed (1). The father may also prepare it, if necessary.

A South-African woman with her child in the ntehe.

The ntehe must not be a sheep skin.
825 That is taboo. Let them take the skin of a duiker (blue
854 antelope), of a goat or of a mhala (impala). Sheep skins are

(1) Though the term taboo generally means a prohibition, I take the liberty of using it in a positive sense: A custom is taboo or is tabooed when its transgression is a taboo.

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854 only employed when three or four children have died in previous
825 years and the mother is in the state of destitution called *buwumba*. (Chap. II.)

854 The ntehe is arranged in such a way that the legs of the animal are used as straps, the forelegs are tied around the neck, the hindlegs around the waist and the child is in that way held well against his mother's shoulders. He can either show his head outside his ntehe or be entirely covered by it. This way of carrying babies is very convenient : mother and child get so accustomed to it that a baby, when you lift it, stretches out its legs at once at right angles with its body in order to sit on its mother's back ; and the mother can easily do all her work, even till her fields with the baby on her back in its ntehe !

853 ## 2) The diet during the nursing period.

The child is nursed by the mother. He is allowed to take the breast at any time. There is nothing like a diet regulation amongst Natives and they would deem it cruelty to refuse the breast to a crying child.

There are some customs relating to the *milk*. When a mother has to leave her child for a short time, she squeezes a few drops of her milk on his neck in order to prevent him feeling thirsty. When she has been absent for more than one day (this can only happen when the child is able to eat some solid food) and returns home, before nursing the child again she heats a bit of broken pot in the fire and squeezes into it a little milk from each breast. The liquid evaporates. The reason of the custom is this : the mother's milk has grown cold ; it must be warmed again ; otherwise the child will be constipated. This is a taboo (1). When a baby bites the teat, it is regarded as naughtiness and the mother scratches its forehead as a punishment.

853 Mothers not having enough milk use a kind of shrub called
824

(1) Compare with the Zulu milk charms described by D. Kidd, *Savage Childhood*, page 38.

853 *neta* as a medecine. The shrub, which is an Euphorbiacea,
824 contains milky sap. It is a treatment based on the principle : Similia similibus curantur.

751 The Thongas believe that milk alone would never suffice to
278 make a child grow : *Ñwana a ku̱la hi miri, the child grows by*
753 *medicine*, such is the adage which is universally met with. When
854 you see a woman carrying a child on her back, you will notice hanging to the *ntehe* the reed (lihlanga) containing the black powder which protects against the dangers of the bush, and a little calabash half filled with water. This water is not pure water, it is the medicine called *milombyana*. This word is the plural and diminutive form of *nombo*, which means baby's ailment. There is a great *nombo*, convulsions, also called *tilo*, heaven, because this complaint is brought into a mysterious connection with the influence of Heaven (See Part VI). There is a small *nombo* ; this is the infantile diarrhea which so often troubles little children ; but both diseases are supposed to be caused by the *nyoka*, the intestinal parasite, the worm or snake (nyoka means both) which is in every child and must always be combated because, if unchecked, it will pass from the bowels to the stomach ; it will come and beat the fontanella (1) and will finally penetrate the chest. Then the little one will turn up his eyes, be seized by
278 convulsions and die. Happily there are some drugs which have a
751 wonderful effect on this dangerous guest ! One of my neighbours,
757 who was a convert in Rikatla, gave me their names. The first is a
854 very common Protacea (?) with large husks called the Dlanyoka, "the one which kills worms." Mixed with the roots of a Leguminacea called *Ñwamahlanga* and with two other plants found near the sea, it forces the worm to keep quiet. These drugs are boiled and the decoction is carefully poured into a special little pot called *hlembetwana ya milombyana* which will be kept in the hut. Every morning the mother will warm the pot a little, pour some of its contents into a shell of sala and give the child a

757 (1) Tjaba-tjaba, the fontanella, plays a great part in the diagnosis of children's
826 doctors and they often cover it with black wax. When the child hiccoughs, his mother or somebody else will blow on the fontanella to prevent vomiting. This will "make his heart stand" (yimisa nhilu).

856 mouthful to drink, then dip her finger into the medecine and let
751 two or three drops fall from it on the fontanella ; then she spits on
757 the lower part of the shell and presses it all along the sternum
854 of the baby as far as the navel. This is said to "nurse the child, to make him grow." Should he be sick, this treatment will be repeated many times a day. If he is well and goes about with his mother, she will pour the *milombyana* into the small calabash and give him a few sups from it from time to time.

The child must never drink ordinary water, but only the
853 *milombyana* decoction. It is a taboo. Should the mother travel
271 far from home and leave behind her the *milombyana* pot, she is
2/84 allowed to add some water to the calabash, but she must always leave a little of the decoction in the calabash before doing so. The mother herself is not allowed to drink the water of another country. She must only drink water from home and, if she is forced to travel, she must take a little powder from the reed each time she drinks, so that the child may become familiarised with that country (1). These laws must be kept during all the nursing period.

862 The child begins to eat *solid food* as soon as his teeth are cut, and when he is able to take it with his own hands. But some people do not like to give it to him too soon, as they say his stools become fetid. When later on he is able to go outside and to take care of himself, then he can eat any ordinary food.

853 If the mother dies during the nursing period, the little one is almost sure to follow her. The baby is fed with goat's or cow's milk, but the Natives do not know that they must add water to it ; sooner or later therefore the child dies of enteritis.

I have heard of some cases in which another woman has taken charge of the child, nursed him with her own milk and weaned him successfully ; her own child being older, she weaned him earlier than the usual time and nursed the other child in his

261 (1) A similar custom is observed in the case of moving from one country to another.
2/84 When a Ronga comes back from Kimberley having found a wife there, both bring with them a little of the earth of the place they are leaving, and the woman must eat a little of it every day in her porridge in order to accustom herself to her new abode. This earth provides the transition between the two domiciles !

853 place. These women were wives of the same husband at Libombo near Rikatla and the foster mother claimed compensation for her deed. Another wonderful case is the following : a woman died shortly after the birth of her boy called Mayimbule ; the

415

Thonga calabashes

The smaller one used for tobacco, medicinal powders (tshungulwane). The next in size (mukhubi) are employed for the mikhubwane. These with the long neckles are the mikhubwane, used as bottles or for drinking.

853 grandmother, by name Mishidohi, who had an adult son and had had no other child since, prepared light beer and other appropriate food and succeeded in secreting milk in her own breast ; so the child was saved !

856 826 A child during these first months of its existence is regarded as a very weak creature. "I mati !" i. e. "It is nothing but water !" Hence perhaps the curious idea that a baby, just like a new born animal, is able to swim, at any rate it cannot be drowned : it floats on the water. When a woman carrying a little child on her back crosses a river and is in danger of being swept away by the stream, people shout to her from the shore : "Untie the 'ntehe' and let the baby cross. Think of yourself, the little one will follow all right." They say: "Psa yila, it is taboo that a baby should sink." Note the curious use of the word "yila" in this sentence.

3). Dentition.

856 364 351 As soon as the child has cut the two lower and upper incisors, the mother takes a white bead (tjambu) and ties it to one of the child's hairs above the forehead. This white bead is said to help the other teeth to come out normally. If this precaution were not taken, the child would not become intelligent ; he would shiver instead of smiling ; he would bring forward his lips and his tongue to prevent the air from getting into his mouth ! When all the teeth are duly cut, the bead is removed and thrown away *talen*, viz. on the *tala*. The *tala* is the ash-heap, the place behind the hut on which everyone throws ashes and dirt. It plays a great part in the customs of the Thongas and other South African Bantus.

195 The teeth (tinyo-menyo) of the children are called figuratively *hobe*. The *hobe* (pl. *tihobe*) means the grain of pounded maize which is white and very similar to a tooth. Hence the expression : "A humi hobe," "he has got out a grain of maize," employed to indicate the cutting of the teeth.

787 766 856 When a child cuts his upper teeth first, it is a bad omen. In the Northern clans and especially amongst the Ba-Pedi, it is a great taboo. At his death the child must be buried in wet soil.

787 Amongst the Ba-Ronga the ill-omen is not considered so serious.
782 Later on, when the child loses his first teeth, he must not
856 let them fall out hap-hazard anywhere. He must take the fallen tooth, go to the ash-heap, put his finger into the hole and say : "Kokwa, kokwa, ndji hwe hobe !" (Grandfather, grandfather, give me a grain of maize !) Then he throws the tooth over his shoulder on to the ashes and goes home without looking backward. Should he look backward, his grandfather (the spirit of the departed ?) would not give him a new tooth (1). This custom is no longer taboo and is disappearing.

856 When a younger brother cuts his teeth, they are considered
163 as pushing away or pulling out the teeth of the elder, as the younger brother comes into the world, as a rule, three years after the elder.

As regards *hair*, the first cutting is accompanied by the following
302 custom : the mother sprinkles some drops of her milk on the
856 forehead and on the occiput of the child ; then she cuts his hair and throws it away in the midst of thick grass. When she cuts her own hair, she always leaves a lock on both sides of the head for the amusement of the child, till he is able to walk.

853 Nursing women very often anoint themselves with ochre. This is said to be in order to prevent their husbands from having relations with them.

These rites are not considered as very important. But there are three others which are most punctiliously observed, and which divide the nursing period into three subperiods : the presentation to the moon, after three months, the tying of the cotton string, after one year, and the weaning ceremonies at the close of the period.

4) The presentation to the moon (ku yandla).

821 The appearance of the new moon is always received with cheers by the Ba-Ronga. The first person who sees it shouts :

(1) Comparative Ethnography : I remember quite well that, when I was a boy, we were told in Neuchâtel that we must not let a broken tooth get lost, lest it should be found by a dog and a dog's tooth would grow in its stead !

821 "Kengelekezeeeee !" and this exclamation is repeated from one village to another. *Kenge* is the descriptive adverb which means the form of the crescent of the moon. Each "moon," or month, is considered as being a new one, the old one having died, and there were special names for each month of the year (See Part VI).

[841] 856 828 821 852 As soon as the mother of the child has resumed her menses (the menses are called tinwheti, months) and this happens as a rule on the third month after the delivery amongst Thonga women, she takes her garments, washes them, puts on new clothing and then proceeds to the ceremony of the *yandla*. The child must be "given his month." This is done in the following way. The day the new moon appears, the mother takes with her a torch or merely a brand from the fire and the grandmother follows her carrying the child : both go to the ash-heap behind the hut. There the mother throws the burning stick towards the moon and the grandmother flings the child into the air saying : "This is your moon !" (hweti ya ku hi yoleyo) : then she puts the child on to the ashes. The little one cries and rolls over in the dirt on the ash-heap. Then his mother snatches him up (wutla), nurses him, and they go home.

This ceremony, which is certainly a rite of passage, is said to "open the chest of the child" otherwise "his ears would die," he would remain stupid. When a child is not intelligent, it is usual to say to him : You have not been shown your moon ! (1).

852 846 854 Therefore the *yandla* means a progress made by the child, the entrance into a new phase of his existence. The fact is emphasised by the three following changes which take place on the day of the yandla : 1) Henceforth his father is allowed to take the child in his arms. Up to that day, this was taboo, as the child being continually with his mother was perhaps polluted by the dangerous blood following the birth ; but now she has washed her clothing and has been purified by the reappearance of the menses ; so the danger no longer exists. 2) It is now

(1) However the name of the child's month is soon forgotten and is never afterwards recalled. This seems to show that the custom is dying out, as well as the knowledge of the names of the various months.

852 permissible to push him gently by his elbows and 3) to sing him
[854] songs to console him (khongota) when he cries. This was taboo before the presentation to the moon.

There is another custom which seems to be confounded sometimes with the yandla. It is also performed for small children and is called : *kulakulisa*. When a friend of the family passes through the village coming from afar, from Johannesburg for instance, he takes the new-born child in his arms, throws him up and says : "Kula-kula-kula, u ya tlhasa Johan." (Grow, grow, grow and reach Johannesburg.) This is a minor custom (nau nyana) ; it is more or less play and is not tabooed like the yandla.
854 After the yandla, a new therapeutic agent is added to the decoction
278 of milombyana, the *biyeketa*. *Ku biyeketa* means : "to put inside
751 an enclosure." Twice a month during the afternoon, when the
852 moon is new and when it is full, the family doctor goes to the kraal of the baby, he lights a fire before the door of the hut and cooks his medicines with water in a pot till they boil. Then he draws the embers to one side of the pot and lays on them a big pill, a *mhula*. The *mhula* is made of fat from an ox paunch or from a goat's paunch mixed with medicinal powder. Then he places a mat on end so as to make a small round enclosure : mother and baby enter it, and he covers them with a piece of cotton cloth. They expose themselves to the steam which comes from the pot and to the smoke which emanates from the mhula. When both have copiously perspired and the emanation has come to an end, the mother tells the doctor to uncover them, and they emerge from the vapour bath. Then the doctor cuts both of them with a razor on the forehead, on the sternum, on the spine between the shoulders, on the elbow, on the wrist, on the knees and introduces a little of his medicinal powder into the small wounds. The pot with the hot decoction is then taken by the doctor behind the hut, the mother accompanying him. She pours a little of the water into his hands : he spits into it, uttering the sound *tsu* (which is the sacramental act in ordinary worship) and throws it on the child. The mother rubs the whole body of the little one with it ; in the meantime the doctor prays to his gods, viz. the spirits of his ancestors. Begining with the formula of invocation which doctors

852 always use, he says: "Abušayi, akhwari! This is the child!
854 May he grow! May he become a man by means of this medicine
751 of mine! May his perspiration be good; may the impurity go away; may it go to Shiburi, to Nkhabelane! (1) May the child play well, be like his companions. This is not my first attempt! You have given me these drugs; may they protect him against disease so that nobody may say there is no power in them, etc." After this prayer the doctor takes the little child and goes back to the central place of the village. The mother stays and washes her own body with the decoction, praying also to her gods (but without the *tsu*, as this has been uttered by the "master of the drugs").

751 The treatment of the biyeketa is also called "hungulo dja
854 milombo," "the vapour bath for infantile diseases;" it is not a
177 curative, but a preventive; it aims at ascertaining if the child is
757 all right. If he has bad stools (a nga tlambi psinene) the mother will perhaps remember that she has forgotten to enclose him and she will call the doctor in at once. Should he fall sick, the biyeketa will not be performed again but the milombyana will be administered more frequently. However, it is of importance for the growth of the child. To neglect it is taboo! (2)

757 As for the cuts, sometimes they are followed by a second vapour
854 bath, as if the doctor wished to cause the medicine contained in the smoke to penetrate through them into the body, in which case he will only "close" them later on by introducing a healing powder into them. Children generally cry when they see the physician... They dread the pain of the cuts. When the mother goes to the doctor's village, she takes with her the wood, the mat and a pot of beer or a fowl in payment. The physician's charge for a biyeketa is sixpence to one shilling or a hen or a pot of beer.

(1) Viz. to the end of the world. These clans are far away to the north, outside the Ronga country.

(2) I hear that the converts generally have not abandoned the biyeketa, but they do not allow the doctor to perform the sacrificial act and to pray to the spirits. Sam Ngwetsa, the children's physician of Rikatla used to pray thus: "O Father of mercy! I pray thee! I do not pray the dead but thee only who art in heaven! Grant us to see this child in good health, standing firm, this little lamb!"

5) The tying of the cotton string.

854 When the child "tiyelanyana" viz. "becomes a little firm,"
857 the mother, having to plough her fields and to cook the food, begins to seat him on the sandy soil, after having made a kind of hole of about five inches in depth. We have seen Thonga babies already sitting at the age of two months. But this "dumping" hardly meets all the requirements, and the mother looks for a girl to help her to take care of the baby (wa ku tlanga na ye, to play with him). She puts the child in the charge of an elder sister or a cousin; a girl of five to ten is quite strong enough for the purpose. I have often admired the patience of these miniature nurses, sometimes not very much bigger than the child they carry, with their very troublesome babies.

852 But very soon the child begins to crawl (kasa) and this is the
115 time when a very striking rite is performed. This rite seems to be practised all over the tribe, but it has more importance in the Northern clans than amongst the Ba-Ronga. I shall here give the description of Viguet, who belonged to the Tsungu clan and had emigrated to the Spelonken. My readers must forgive me if I cannot tell the story with all its details and if I am obliged to write some of them in Latin (1).

851 These are the ipsissima verba of my informant: "This is a
833 great law amongst the Thongas. When a child begins to crawl,
766 even before, the *puri* is tied round his waist. The *puri* is a
842 cotton (2) string. Father and mother fix the day; if they forget to do so, their parents, (the grandparents) will remind them of the law. They must have sexual intercourse, but in such a way that the mother will not become pregnant, s. n. i. (Annotatio 2). The mother will have to take in her hands "their filth" (thyaka ra bona) smear the string with it and tie it round the child. It will

(1) A more complete description of this rite and of some others related to the taboos of the Thongas will be found in the Revue d'Ethnographie et de Sociologie, Oct. 1910, Paris.

(2) There are plants of cotton probably subspontaneous in the Low Country of the Transvaal of Delagoa Bay.

1 [See p. 516 in these categories or in 116--Analyst]

851 remain there till it falls to pieces. After this operation the
766 child is "grown up" and three things are allowed which were
833 taboo before :

1) The child, if he dies, can be buried on the hill, in dry soil. Before the *boha puri* he would have been buried in wet soil, near the river, as is customary with twins and children who have cut their upper teeth first.

2) He can participate in the strange purification called *hlamba ndjaka* which takes place after the death of one of the inhabitants of the village (See ceremonies of death).

852 3) The parents can again have conjugal intercourse, though
766 they must avoid conception till the child is weaned. Before this
833 ceremony it was absolutely prohibited, and should they have
821 sinned in this respect and the mother have conceived, they would
842 be very guilty! It is a dangerous taboo! They would have "stolen" the child, stolen it from the law (yiba nawen). The child would not have "entered the law." It would be useless to tie the string round him in order to repair the evil done. Should he live long, should he even become an old man, he will have to be buried in wet soil, otherwise the rain would be prevented from falling.

Amongst the Malulekes and the Hlengwes such children are even burnt after their death. We shall speak later on about the mysterious relation established by the Thongas between these children, their burial, and the rain.

852 Amongst the Ba-Ronga this rite is called *boha nshale* (to tie
854 the cotton) and can be performed in the same way or even more simply by the father (Annotatio 3).[2] Parents, when they have duly tied the string on the little one, are said to have *fuya nwana*, viz. taken possession of the child.

Amongst them again, another thing is then allowed which was taboo before. The child can be carried on the shoulders without ntehe by the arms alone (hi minkono).

851 It is clear that the tying of the cotton string means the official reception of the child into the family, even into human society. Before that, he was hardly considered as a human being, he was *shilo* (a thing), *khuna* (an incomplete being). Now he is *nkulu*,

2 [See p. 516 in these categories or in 116 - Analyst]

851 a grown up child (1). The expression *fuya ñwana* confirms our explanation. This custom is not a protective rite : the physician has nothing to do with it ; it is really an act by which the new-born child becomes a regular member of the community. The strict prohibition of renewed conception before this rite has been accomplished is evidently dictated by the feeling that another child must not appear before this one has been duly received into the family.

6) The weaning.

862 A whole year, even more, will elapse after the *boha puri* before
856 the little one can be weaned. He will learn to speak and to walk, and it is only when his intelligence is sufficiently developed to allow him to run small errands that the date of the weaning will be fixed. When his parents can send him to the next hut to ask for snuff and see him coming back holding the tobacco, they say : "Now the time has come !"

The rite of weaning is accomplished in the following manner in Nondwane. (Mboza).

862 First of all, the father looks for a young *ntjopfa* tree which
824 has only one root. The ntjopfa is an anonacea bush, which colonists sometimes call the wild custard. (Its fruit is very much like custard fruit and it is said that the true cultivated custard can be grafted on it). The root of this tree is said to have the property of making people forget. The mother cooks a pot of Kafir corn in which she has put the medicine. This
862 will help the child to forget the breast. But the great act is the
782 *hondlola* which takes place under the direction of the physician.
755 The mother pounds some mealies, pours water on them and adds some leaven ; in this way she makes a little light beer (buputju). She keeps a little of the bran of the pounded mealies. The doctor comes, kills a chicken and sprinkles this bran with the blood and *hahla*, viz. offers a regular sacrifice. He prays to the spirits of his own family and asks those of the child's family to

(1) This word *khuna* is also employed to designate boys who have not yet gone through the circumcision school. *Bukhuna* is the despicable state of uncircumcision. The state of a child before the ceremony of *boha puri* is another kind of bukhuna.

862 join with them in blessing the little one. The beak of the sacrificed
782 hen, one of the claws and one of the feathers (psirungulo) will be
755 tied together round the child's neck. A mat is spread on the ground ; the child is laid on it and greased with oil and powder brought by the physician. Then he is smeared and rubbed with the bran. The particles which fall on the mat are called *timhore*. They are gathered by the mother who makes a ball of them. In the meantime the father looks for the nest of a certain kind of large ant which is common in the bush. It lives in the earth, but the opening of its hole is tolerably large. There the mother goes at sunset. She introduces the ball into the hole so that the ant will be obliged to take all the *timhore* into the nest. Then she returns home without looking behind her. It is taboo ; should she transgress this rule, she would bring back disease to her child.

This rite is the ordinary *hondlola rite* which is performed in this or in a similar way at the close of any serious disease as the conclusion of the treatment, with the view of taking away the defilement of disease. After having *hondlola*, the physician asks for the payment of his fees. For a child he will ask ten shillings or five coins of five hundred reis (1).

854 This hondlola reveals to us the true conception of the nursing period held by the Natives. For them these three first years of the child's life are a period of disease ; so many perils threaten the little one's well-being that he can hardly be considered healthy. He is during the whole time under the supervision of the physician, who takes leave of the little patient on the day of the weaning.

854 This view of infancy accounts also for some other taboos. It
789 is *yila* for instance to say of a child who is particularly fat : Wa tika, he is heavy : this would bring mishap to him. One must say : A kota ribye, he is like a stone! It is taboo also in Shiluvane to make use before a child of the word *mfene*, baboon. There is a disease which is called by that name and it would come upon him. One must say : the thing which inhabits the hills, and so on...

(1) In the Mpfumu clan the rite of weaning is somewhat different. I have published in "Les Ba-Ronga" a description of it given by Tobane. It seems that the elements of the cotton string rite and of the broken pot rite are mixed with the proper weaning rite. I think that the description of Mboza is more trustworthy.

862 The very day of his weaning, the child must leave the village
603 of his parents and go to stay with his grandparents. A little mat and a few clothes have been prepared for him and the grandmother comes to take him. If he is the first-born, he must go to the parents of the mother ; the second child will be received by the parents of the father. Sometimes father and mother accompany their offspring themselves, during the night, to make the separation easier. It is a sad day for them as well as for the child! The following day the parents go again to see how the little one has stood their absence. They do not enter the village. They remain hidden in the little copse and look at their child through the branches! He must not see his mother, otherwise he would cry... A touching scene indeed!

862 Should the weaned child be obliged to stay with his parents, the mother will smear her breast with Jamaica pepper (biribiri) so that he may lose his taste for the maternal milk as quickly as possible.

862 The act of weaning is called *lumula*. It comes from the verb
842 *luma* to bite, followed by the reversive suffix *ula* which means
753 to take away, to undo (like *un* in undo). The mother as well as the child are said to have *lumuka* viz. to be in that state when weaning has been accomplished. This word is pronounced with a curious smile, because the act of weaning is in direct relation with the sexual life. As we have seen, sexual intercourse is absolutely prohibited before the tying of the cotton string, viz. for one year after the birth. Afterwards it is allowed, but the mother must not conceive another child before she has weaned the one she is nursing. The law is even more stringent : she must not conceive before her milk has entirely passed away (phya mabelen), after the weaning ceremony, because if she became pregnant, that would "cross the way of the weaned child" (tjemakanya ñwana), cut "his road" (tjemela), "go beforehand" (rangela) ; he would become thin, paralysed, with big holes below the shoulders. He must first be firm (tiyela), then a new pregnancy will not be able to cause him to suffer from dysentery or other ailments!

Often the parents do not observe this very hard law! If they

862 see that conception has taken place before the child is weaned,
842 they will hasten the ceremony. But they will be severely judged by the old people. Should the little one be sick, the husband will be scolded by the parents of the mother. They will say : "A djambeli ñwana," he has caused damage to the child! If a man forces his wife to transgress the law, she will run during the night to the hut of her husband's father to tell him. Actually this is a very rare occurrence. Children follow each other regularly at an interval of two and a half or three years, and seldom is the law transgressed which says : A mother must nurse her child during three "hoes," viz. three ploughing seasons.

B. CHILDHOOD

591 The infant, shiputja (Ro.) shihlangi (Dj.) is on the way to
861 become a boy, mufana. During the first years of this period,
857 which extends from the third to the fourteenth year, he stays with his grandparents. They do not give him much "education." He grows at Mother Nature's good pleasure. And as Nature is not always synonymous with morality, he sometimes commits bad actions. Sometimes also, fearing chastisement for a particularly wicked deed, he flees from the kraal of the grandparents and goes home, where the paternal hand will hold him a little more firmly. But the father does not bother much with these little boys and they enjoy an immense amount of liberty. These years are perhaps the happiest of their whole life. They spend their time in the following occupations : herding the goats, stealing, catching game, learning the science of the velt, playing.

1) Herding the goats.

231 Just as the Kaffir corn is the old Thonga cereal which is used alone in the rites, so the goat is the domestic animal par excellence, no doubt the first which the tribe knew and that which is always employed in the sacrifices. Goats are very common ; everybody

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

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857

possesses one or two. They are kept together in one of the villages and the sons of the master of the village or of the other proprietors must tend them. They "stay with the goats" (tjhama timbutin) till their tenth or eleventh year and afterwards they are promoted to the care of the oxen, supposing there are oxen in the village.

The young goatherds, with hardly anything on a meagre

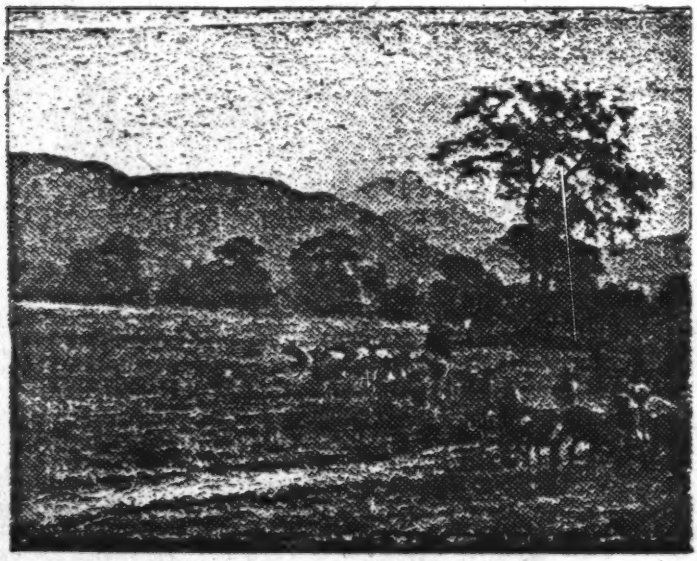


Photo. H.-A. Junod.

Boys herding goats on the Shilouane plain

(In the background, the Mananwili mountain).

belt of tails or bits of skin hanging from their loins, sometimes only in front, nothing behind,—go to the veld playing on their little trumpets, made of a bone or a reed. They pass by the gardens, and the goats look with one eye at the green mealies, the fresh leaves of the sweet potatoes which are not protected by stone walls, (there is hardly a stone all over the Thonga country) nor by barbed wire fences. But the boys are on the watch and

231 "cut the road" from the goats (tjemetela) to keep them away
857 from the gardens. They safely reach the little plain where
867 nothing but hard Gramineae grow. There the boys begin to play, having handed over the charge of the goats to the youngest of the party. The little chap gets tired of watching; little by little the whole herd goes back to the forbidden garden and eats greedily of the savoury stems of the mealies! After a while, the boys discover that the goats are gone. They run after them, and bring them back. But the mistress of the garden passes near by, coming back from the well with her pitcher on her head. She sees the harm done, inspects the traces of the goats, knows by them which herd has plundered her field, uproots some of the spoiled stems and with great clamour goes to the village of the guilty boys and throws down the mealies right before the hut of the father. No compensation is claimed in such a case, generally, but the father will thrash the boys when they come back; or should there be a recurrence of the offence, the husband of the owner of the garden will himself administer a correction to the careless goatherds.

827 Boys herding the goats have certain customs. When one of
857 them emits a certain unseemly sound from the rectum, the others say to him: "Fakisa!" He must answer: "Cita munyakanya goben." (I have let out my wind by the rectum). This formula, which is Zulu, is secret. If he does not know it, they beat him and make him look after the goats till the end of the day. Should another boy reveal the answer to the uninitiated, they will punish him in the same way.

2) Stealing.

685 What were they doing when the goats escaped? They had
857 probably themselves succeeded in stealing some sweet potatoes and were roasting them on a little fire, well hidden in the velt. Or they had discovered in the bush a broken pot, an old disused and perforated mortar, which some one had placed there to attract bees. And indeed there was honey inside. They had stolen it.. Goatherds are regular thieves and known as such.

685 Generally speaking the elder boys send the younger to commit
857 these thefts, and the plunder is enjoyed by the whole company. They threaten to beat them if they return empty-handed. A sad fate for the youngsters—blows on all sides ; blows from the owners of the fields if they are caught, blows from their comrades if they bring nothing back with them!

Here are one or two tricks employed by the little thieves. In order to take a water-melon (khalabatla) out of a field without being noticed by the women who are busy pulling up their ground nuts, they cut the stalk and fasten it to a piece of string. The other end of this is attached to the leg of the thief, who moves away slowly, drawing the water-melon after him. When he is out of reach of the women, he hastily puts it under his arm and makes off at top speed.

To catch a hen without its making a sound, they dig a little hole behind the huts of the village, and put a few grains of maize in it. The fowl puts its head into the hole to eat the grains, and immediately the little rascal who was watching from behind a bush, rushes out, seizes it by the neck and carries it off before it can utter a single cry!

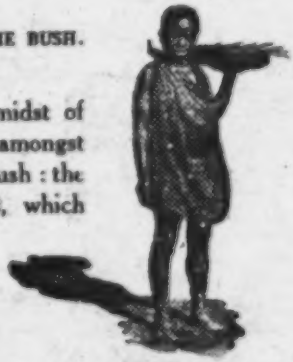
672 The penalty when a boy is caught is a good whipping without a
685 fine. "Psa batjongwana ! It is an action of little boys !" These minor thefts are not considered serious.

3) Catching game.

262 Hunger is the constant companion of these boys, who do not
223 get enough to eat at home. It is true they ate to their heart's
857 content (shura) yesterday evening, but this morning they had only a very scanty breakfast (fihluta). They try to satisfy their never satisfied appetite by catching game : not big game of course, as they have no real weapons, but birds, field-mice, eggs in the nests (the less fresh they are, the better, because there is more meat inside!) etc.. To get birds they throw their sticks at them, and are very clever at killing a partridge as it rises heavily from the grass ; or they make traps with a flexible stick to which they tie a string with a bait. They bend the stick, set the trap by means

223 of a little bit of wood, and when the bird puts its beak into the bait,
857 it is caught round the neck by the string. On the borders of the lake of Rikatla, boys used to catch even big birds with these traps. They set many kinds of snares. One is a cage made of sticks of palm marrows which shuts automatically when a bird enters and eats the grain by which it has been attracted. They sometimes build two walls of sticks planted in the soil and converging to the same point, where they reach a little door provided with the trap. Hares are sometimes caught in this way. They follow the wall, and when they go through the door, they tread on a hurdle which is connected with a bent rod : the rod springs back and the hare is caught.

4) Learning the science of the bush.



Phot. G. Liengme.
A Thonga boy.

136 This life in the velt, always in the midst of
857 Nature, develops the power of observation amongst the boys. They know everything in the bush : the
151 big Psyche caterpillar (Eumeta cervina), which hangs from the nembe-nembe shrub (Cassia petersiana) like a little bundle of sticks, and which they call *mahambanindlwane*, "the one who walks with his house;" the big Carabid beetle which appears with the first rain, the Anthia alveolata, marked with large hollows on the elytra and which is therefore named "the son of the smallpox." Indeed I found in Rikatla a boy who knew that a certain white cocoon found on the branches of the nkanye tree (Sclerocarya caffra) gives birth to the splendid green Queen Moth (Argema Mimosae).
[262] Having collected beetles and butterflies extensively for years, I have had an opportunity of recognizing the power of observation of these boys, who were my best hunters! Of course they particularly appreciate things edible... especially the *shitambela*, a big Bupresta beetle which they roast and suck.

857 Learning, as they do, the native names of all these creatures and their habits, they certainly acquire a great amount of knowledge during these years.

5) PLAYING.

857 Sometimes the weather is bad ; it rains or it is dreadfully hot.
599 Then the goatherd suffers, and his elder brother comfortably sitting in the hut trills this song :

> Far away, there where he is, he weeps, the little boy.
> The keeper of the goats and of the calves !

But the bad days are rare and the boys play more than they cry!
524 The *games* of the Thongas are very numerous and are played either during the day or in the evening, especially when the moon shines. I shall here only consider the boys' games, and speak of the girls' later on.

Ngulube yi da mimphobo. (The pig eats mealie cobs). One child plays the part of the pig ; crawling along, covered with a mortar and a piece of cloth, he goes from one hut to another followed by a troup of his friends, who clap their hands and sing the foregoing words. People give food to the pig. It is received by its friends. When they have visited all the yards, they assemble on the central place of the village and eat the food together. Sometimes the pig suddenly turns round and attacks his followers, who flee in terror.

The game of *nsema.* This is a disk of woven grass made by boys. They pick up sides. The nsema is set rolling by one side and the opponents must run towards it and pierce it with their sticks before it falls to the ground. It is not allowable to touch it when it has fallen (yi holile). This game goes on till the disk is quite spoilt (yi bolile). Then the two sides rush upon each other and exchange a sound cudgelling, after which they all go and bathe in the nearest pool without any ill-feeling.

There is another game played with this disk, the game of the *ndlopfa-ndlopfana* (that is to say " the little elephant"). A boy

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

524 makes a nsema, ties it to a string made of the fibres of certain palm-trees, and hides. His comrades try to pierce his grass disk. But he watches. He has the right to chase them and to beat them with his stick. If the opponent succeeds in piercing the disk, in pulling it and tearing it from the string, ndlopfa-ndlopfana is vanquished.

The game of *homane* is very similar to English hockey. The fruit of a palm tree, which is round and very hard, is used as a ball, and hit with a stick into the opposite camp. If the *homane* falls between the two camps, the players rush upon it and, with their sticks, try to send it into their opponents' quarters.

In another boys' game, the *tlhuba holwane*, which is played mostly by moonlight, they also take two sides. A stick is planted in the earth by one side and a piece of charcoal placed upon it. One of the opponents comes, hopping like a frog, takes out the stick and, still hopping, goes and plants it in his own ground. If he reaches the goal without falling, he has won. An opponent will take his turn, pull out (tlhuba) the stick and bring it back to his partners. Evidently the Ronga children find this amusing!

The game of the *beetle* (shifufunu) is played as follows : one child is the beetle, and, as a distinguishing mark, he puts a handkerchief round his head. A hole is dug in the sand; he enters it and nestles in it as do some insects, until he is nearly covered with earth. He remains there perfectly still whilst his comrades sing to him the following song :

Beetle of mine...
I will marry thee...
For the price of an ox...
} Say "yes" to your brother.

There is another game of the same kind : *the honey pitcher is stirred* (mbita ya bulombe ya reka-reka). The children face each other in two rows and clasp hands. One of them lays himself on their arms, and all swing him, singing the same song.

The boys also play the game of *the man with the huge back who could not get out* (shikulukukwana sha ku ka buhumo). They form a circle, one standing in the centre. He hunches his back

524 and rushes forward, head foremost, trying to break the circle and to get out either between their legs or otherwise. If he does not succeed they give him this long and comical name : shikulukukwana sha ku ka buhumo.

533 Quite a number of little melodies are sung by children to certain animals. When we came back in the evening to the plain of Rikatla with our ox-drawn waggon, all the goatherds used to meet us and to accompany us a long stretch of the road, shouting in honour of the oxen : " Gweymanaô, Gweymanaô (1) "! Girls joined in the demonstration, pointing out the strange machine to the babies carried on their shoulders (2).

524 *Nkwama wa ku.* (Your purse)... When they eat green mealies, one of the older goatherds gives to another some of the leaves covering the cob and tells him to go and throw them away. He refuses to do so. Then the elder one collects all these leaves, rolls them up in a ball and throws them to the boy who refused, saying to him : " Your purse ". The boy answers : " It is not mine! " They all run away. He picks up the ball and tries to throw it to another, saying the same thing. Should he miss him, they will mock him and say : " You are not a man, you are but a little boy! "

Shifufumu sha paripari. This is a kind of big Tenebrionida beetle which beats the ground with its abdomen (Psammodes Bertoloni). Groups of children, boys together or girls together, play two by two. One of the two lies down facing the ground and the other sits on his back, looking forwards, to guard the head of the one who is prone. He sings while beating the other's back : " Shifufumu sha paripari ndjuluka hi yetlele!... Beetle turn up that we may lie down! " At once all the children who were sitting throw themselves down and those who were lying down sit on their backs, and so on...

To develop their courage, boys have another more dangerous game ; this is *the war on the wasps* (mipfi). In their country there

(1) See for the tunes of these and other songs *Les Chants et les Contes des Ba-Ronga* pages 34 to 64, and also Vol. II. Part V. Ch. III.

(2) It is customary to show to babies extraordinary and fearful sights, a white man passing, for instance, in order to " open their minds. "

In their country there

524 are big nasty yellow-brown hornets (a kind of Belonogaster)
136 which build more or less circular nests, sometimes attaining to the size of a man's head. On a certain day the boys decide to make war on these enemies. They make shields with the leaves of the *nala* palm tree which they plait together.

524 They cut down branches, which they wave to protect themselves, and one of them goes and strikes a heavy blow on the wasps' nest! The irritated insects rush out on their assailants and sting them. The boys try to kill the wasps with their sticks or to crush them when they light on them. Sometimes, overcome by the pain, they run away; sometimes, resisting to the last, they kill and exterminate their winged enemies.

Besides this there are also *big battles between the shepherds* of the different flocks. The shepherds amuse themselves by taking one another's cattle. Those who are the strongest bring the stolen herd triumphantly back to the neighbourhood of their village, but they would never let it enter the kraal. The vanquished call to their help their elder brothers, who come to recover their property and, if they can, give the thieves a sound thrashing!

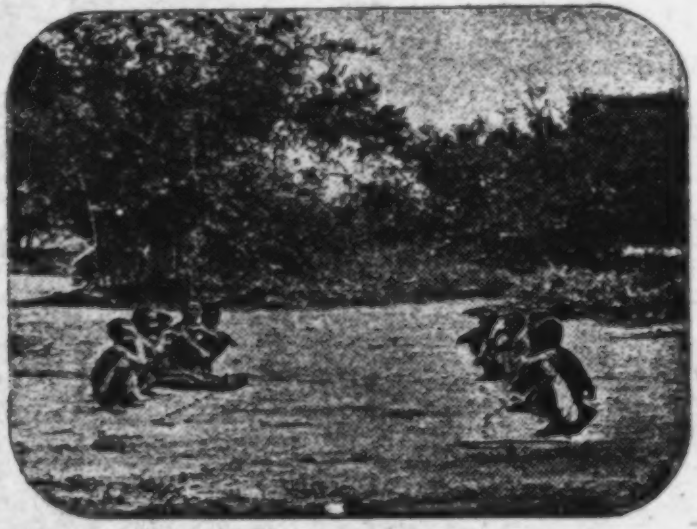
578 Insults and fights are frequent between the clans. The boys
262 of Mpfumu call out to those of Matjolo: " Forest gadders! Eaters
291 of snails and boas, of lizards and tortoises " (all of which are questionable food!) (In Ronga: Balala! Badi ba tihumba ni tinhlaru ni makhwahle ni tinfutchu). Those of Matjolo answer them: " Crowd of women that you are, clad in cotton material! " (Babasati! Matchimbamphela!), in reference to the fact that the inhabitants of Mpfumu, living near the town, some time ago replaced the belt of skins worn by the savages by a piece of cotton tied to the waist and hanging down to the knee (ladula).

855 The custom of frightening children with imaginary beasts is
857 wide spread amongst the Thongas. The bogey man is called
538 *Shingomu-Ngomu* or else *Shikunkunumu*, and by this very expressive
861 word they designate a huge and mighty being who walks, swaying his big body from right to left, with a sound like *ngomu-ngomu*. The ogre is *Shitukulumukumba*, a word coming originally from the Zulus, which corresponds to the Ronga *Ñwambilutimhokora*, that is to say: " the one who has scales on the heart. " He eats

855 human beings. These imaginary creatures play a large part in
538 the native tales, especially the one who " has scales on the heart. "
He feeds on vermin, lice and big white beetle larvae, which are his almonds (1).

855 When a child cries and cannot be comforted, someone goes and hides behind the hut and slaps his neck saying: "U-u-u," while

[524]



Boys trying to play Billiards
at Magaliesberg, near Antioka Station.

those remaining with the lamenting little one say to him: " Be quiet, listen! Shikunkununu is coming! "

857 There are also the *timbelembele*, a kind of terrible wasp which only exists in the imagination of children. When a boy does not dare to follow his companions up a tree which they have climbed, they shout to him: " Make haste! Here are the timbelembele coming to bite you! " And he is so frightened that he at once finds strength to climb.

(1) We shall give complete ogre tale in Part V.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

524 Thonga boys are so fond of games that they even try to imitate
177 those of the Europeans. In the accompanying illustration, they are seen sitting in two rows throwing some projectiles along the ground. I wondered what game this was, and was informed that these boys, having seen Portuguese officials playing billiards at the camp, had attempted to do the same, and this was the result!

C. THE AGE OF PUBERTY

I. *Circumcision rites.*

1) Spread and origin of circumcision amongst the Thongas.

857 As he grows up, the Thonga boy leaves the flock of goats
and is entrusted with the care of the big cattle, oxen and cows,
881 when his father owns any. He becomes very proud, and tyran-
882 nises over his younger brothers; he calls himself their "hosi,"
866 their chief, and sends them to work for him; in Maputju, big boys went so far as to scorn water brought from the pool by women, and only to use water specially fetched by small boys. If they grow so important in their own eyes, the reason is that special rites are performed on them during this period, rites which are calculated to give them great self-confidence. Amongst these rites, some have a direct relation with the sexual life and some represent only the entrance upon manhood. Let us begin with a study of circumcision, then we will take the other puberty rites and the habit of *gangisa*.

881 In a great many Bantu tribes, the age of puberty is marked
304 by ceremonies of initiation, often accompanied by circumcision. There is little doubt that circumcision was practised throughout the Thonga tribes in former times. It is still current with those Thongas who emigrated into the Transvaal, and this is not a custom borrowed from the Pedi clans, which have all preserved circumcision. Though the Thongas often receive initiation in Pedi schools, in the Spelonken, they possess their own schools

881 for the Nkunas near Leydsdorp. They have a special word for
304 the physical operation, *yimba*, (in Ronga *soka*) which is used together with *ngoma* (Sutho *goma*), the generic term for all the customs connected with it. (It must not be forgotten that the word *ngoma* is also used for other initiations, especially for the initiation of widows, as will be seen in Chap. II.)

881 Amongst the Ba-Ronga, circumcision was abandoned more
175 than a hundred years ago, before the arrival of Manukosi, and
304 they were called *Ba-butoya*, the cowards, by other Northern clans, who said they feared the sufferings of that cruel school. Mboza has seen some old Ronga men who had been circumcised probably at the begining of the XIXth Century. It is well known that somewhat later Chaka put a stop to the custom amongst the Zulus; it did not fit in with the new military system inaugurated by him. When the Ngoni general Manukosi invaded the plains of the Low Country, it is not surprising that circumcision disappeared in those clans also. The constant fighting which prevailed in those troubled times did not allow men to stay three consecutive months in a circumcision lodge. It was feared also that circumcised boys would be killed by the enemy, being unable to run away in case of an invasion.. But old men in the Bilen country assert that the *Ngoma* is a very old custom amongst the Thongas, and that it has long been practised by all their clans.

881 Is it possible to ascertain its *true origin* ? My informants,
177 Viguet especially, were convinced that the Ngoma was brought
563 to the tribes of the Northern Transvaal by the *Ma-Lemba*, and it
304 is a historical fact that, as regards the Ba-Venda of that country, the rite was adopted quite recently under the influence of the Ma-Lemba. These Ma-Lemba are a very curious people, living amongst the Thongas and the Suthos of Zoutpansberg, just like the Jews amongst the European nations, without a chief, without national unity, but with characteristic customs to which they adhere from generation to generation... They resemble the Jews in the fact that they do not eat flesh unless all the blood has been first carefully drained away. They dread eating blood above all else, and they shave at each new moon. They brought with them

1: Junod M-5 .(1895-1909)1927 Thonga

881 the metallurgic art and introduced domestic fowls into the country.
177 All these facts tend to show that they have had intimate relations
563 with Semitic peoples, and they themselves declare that they came from the North by sea and reached the coast after shipwreck. Now they practise circumcision with great assiduity and hold a special position in the lodges of the Spelonken. They are called there the masters of the Ngoma (1). Circumcision is wide-spread amongst Semitic nations, and one might be tempted to infer from these remarks that the custom has been taught to the Bantus by Semitic masters. This is certainly true as regards the Ba-Venda in the Spelonken (2).

In South Africa the Ngoma is much older than the arrival of the Ma-Lemba (which can be fixed some time during the XVIIIth century). What happened in Spelonken, through the agency of the Ma-Lemba, during the XIXth century, may have taken place at some earlier date in the case of other South African tribes, and the Semitic origin of the Ngoma is quite possible, though there is no proof at present extant.

2) General characteristics of the circumcision rites.

881 I am treating here of the rites as they are met with amongst
115 the Thongas of Spelonken especially ; my informants on this point have been Viguet, who was initiated some 60 years ago, and Valdo, a much younger man, who went through the rites 30 years ago; both are from Spelonken. There Thonga and Bvesha (Sutho) candidates enter the same lodges. A boy named Pikinini revealed to me the secret formulae as they are recited amongst the Nkunas
881 (Leydsdorp). The rites certainly vary amongst the tribes and they seem to have been simplified in late years, but there is a general resemblance between them all. Pedis have two circumcision

(1) I note in a paper by the Rev. W. A. Norton on the puberty rites of the Basuto (S. A. *Journal of Science* March 1910) that, if a Bushman is in a lodge, he takes precedence amongst the Suthos and that there circumcision is derived from the Bushmen just as it is from the Ma-Lembain the Zoutpansberg.

(2) See my paper on the "Balemba of the Zoutpansberg" *Folklore*, Sept. 1908 and also, "*Zidji*," my South African novel. Chap. II. (Saint-Blaise, Foyer Solidariste).

881 schools during two consecutive years. The first is called *bulika*,
561 the second *buhwira*. Thongas have only the first, and it is the one described in the following pages.

I was never fortunate enough to penetrate into a lodge, as it is a great taboo. I tried once to obtain admittance, near Shiluvane, but in vain. But the rites have been described to me with such a wealth of detail that I seemed to have lived for three months with the candidates ! (1)

A French anthropologist, Mr A. van Gennep, published some years ago a book on *Les Rites de Passage* (Paris. Nourry 1909) which throws a great deal of light on these mysterious customs. He shows that a great number of rites have been inspired by the idea of passage from one place to another, and that all the rites belonging to this category present the same general features : in the first place the separation from the old state of things is symbolised by certain rites which he calls separation rites ; then begins a period of margin, where the individual or the group concerned is secluded from society and submitted to a number of taboos or rites ; thirdly, at the close of this period, the persons who have been tabooed are again received into the community as regular members by the aggregation rites. This classification applies perfectly to the Circumcision rites, which are a Rite of Passage par excellence, and I shall now try to explain them briefly in their natural sequence. For more details see *Zidji*, a South African novel which I published in 1910 (Foyer solidariste, Saint-Blaise, Switzerland) where a more elaborate description will be found.

3) THE THREE SERIES OF RITES OF CIRCUMCISION.

a) Separation rites.

821 The circumcision school (Ngoma) is held every fourth or fifth
881 year, and all the boys from ten to sixteen are sent to it by their

(1) A young colleague of mine, the Rev. A. Jaques was more fortunate than I and even succeeded in taking some photographs in the Masume Valley, near Shiluvane, This was a Pedi school, but, as stated above, there is no great difference between Pedi and Thonga " Sungi. " These pictures are of great interest, and I am grateful to my friend for allowing me to reproduce them here.

821 parents. Some may escape, but if they happen to be at hand on
881 the next occasion, they will be included by consent or by force.
304 Even an adult member of the tribe can be compelled to go through the initiation, if he is found in the country in an uncircumcised state. The *time of year* chosen for the opening of the school is a month during which the morning star appears, in winter. *Ngongomela*, Venus, is the herald of the day. She precedes the sun, so she must lead the boys to their new life, from darkness to the light! (Valdo)

643 One day all the candidates are gathered in the capital ; for this
881 school is the business of the chief, and has been arranged by the council of the headmen (tinduna) over which he presides ; he has the supervision of it, and will receive the fees from the initiated later on. Boys circumcised four years ago must also attend the whole school as shepherds (barisi, psitjiba), namely as servants of the men and watchers over the candidates. They have already partly built the lodge outside the village, in a remote place, not too far away however, because the women must bring food each day for all the inmates of the " yard of mysteries ".

881 After having slept in the capital, early in the morning, when Ngongomela rises in the East, the band of the uncircumcised *goes out* from the inhabited world to the wilderness, to the lodge. This is the first separation rite. The second is this : they find on the road a fire made of strongly scented wood ; when they smell the smoke, they must jump over it. This rite is called : Tlula ritsa, to jump over the firebrand.

533 Later on, when still at some distance from the newly built
881 lodge, they hear a great noise, a song accompanied by the beating of drums and blowing of antelope horns. They must not understand the meaning of the words which are sung by the host of shepherds and the men, as it would frighten them too much :

The little boy cries ! Bird of the winter !

881 Here they are halted. Eight of them are chosen and told to go forward. Each one is given an assagai, and they are pushed between the singers, who hold sticks and stand facing each other

752 in two rows, leaving a passage between them. They thus run the
881 gauntlet and receive a good whipping ; (the flagellation is often also a separation rite) ; having gone through this unexpected experience they are caught at the other end by four men and deprived of all their clothing. Their hair is also cut, (they must evidently sever themselves from all their past), and they are brought to eight stones and seated on them. These eight stones are not far from the entrance of the yard, in a spot called " the place of the crocodile ". Opposite them are eight other stones on which eight men are sitting. These men are called *Nyahambe*, the Lion-men. They have a fearful appearance, their heads being covered with lions' manes. As soon as the boy is seated on the stone facing the Lion-man, he receives a severe blow from behind ; he turns his head to see who struck him, and sees one of the shepherds laughing at him. The operator snatches his opportunity ; while the attention of the boy is diverted, he seizes the foreskin and cuts it in two movements, first the upper part (this is quickly done and does not cause very much pain), secondly the lower part and the string, a longer and much more painful operation. The surgeons now use an ordinary European knife ; formerly they had only native-made knives. Often the boy falls down unconscious ; they then throw a jar of cold water over him. All the circumcised receive rings of woven, very soft grass which they put on their wounds, tying them round the loins with a string (shondlo). Formerly they did not anoint the sore with medicaments : the boys used only to drink a decoction which is said to stop hemorrhage ; now they use paraffin externally.

881 The boy has now *crossed* (*wela*, like a boat across a river), a technical expression which shows clearly the character of this rite of passage. He is introduced into the lodge.

The removal of the foreskin, though it cannot have the high spiritual meaning of the Jewish circumcision, seems to me also distinctly a separation rite, this part of the body representing the ancient contemptible childish life from which the initiated emerges to-day.

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b) Marginal rites.

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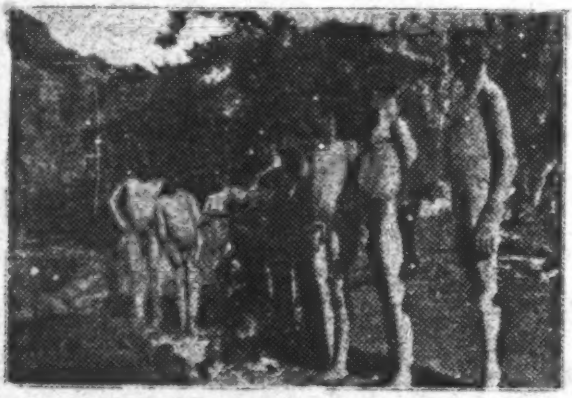
The newly circumcised boy is now to be three months secluded from society in the "yard of mysteries" called *sungi*. Let us first describe this lodge, and we shall see what his occupations will be during this time of trial.

1. *The Sungi.*

(See the accompanying plan of the lodge).

The whole sungi is surrounded by a high fence of thorny branches. This is a sign that all that goes on inside must be



Circumcised boys near Shilovane. *Photo A. Jaquet.*

kept secret. No one who is not initiated can be allowed to see it, especially women. This fence is extended at the entrance so as to form a long avenue by which one penetrates into the yard. Then the way of access continues between twelve poles arranged in pairs (2). The inmates alone have the right to take the road between the poles. Circumcised visitors (uncircumcised would not be admitted) go round them and cross the road five times so as to reach the men's entrance at the end (3),

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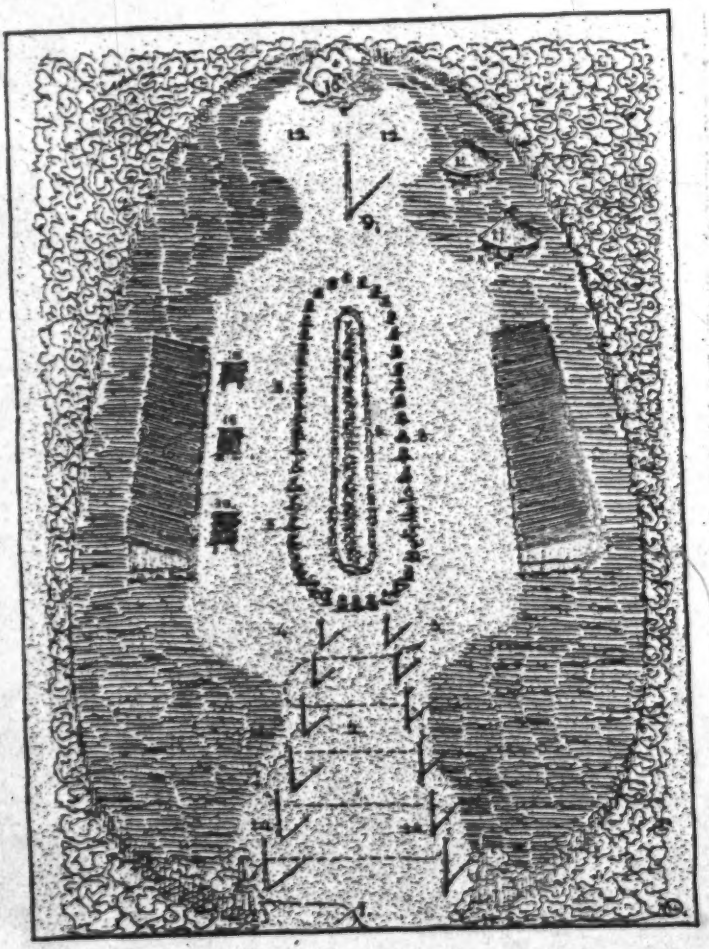
and not the candidates' gate, which is on the opposite side (4). Further on is the central court of the sungi, with the long fireplace built with stones and called the Elephant (5) round which the boys must sit (8), warming their right hips at the fire. The uterine



Plan of the circumcision lodge. *Drawn by J. Waters.*

[644] nephew of the chief, the son of his sister, who takes precedence
881 in all the rites, and who is the first to be circumcised, sits on a
349 special stone with the others behind him. He is called the *Hwatye*. Near the fireside are the tables made of hurdles of reeds on which the porridge of the boys is served every day (15). The central court is occupied on both sides by two square sheds hastily and roughly built, the one on the right (7) being the hut of the shepherds and of the men, the one on the left (6) the hut of the circumcised. The soil is not smeared in these houses. Some of the men also sleep in separate huts behind (11). It is behind the Elephant that the big Mulagaru pole will be raised at the close of the school (9). Further at the back of the sungi is the place of the formulae where the boys are taught (12). A tree sometimes grows in the middle and the instructor climbs up it to impart his teaching (10)!

I have drawn this plan of the sungi with the help of Viguet. Having never seen it with my own eyes, I cannot guarantee that it does not omit many details... But it is correct as a whole.

881 The inmates of the lodge fall into three categories : 1. the " bukwera " viz. the troop of candidates who are to be initiated ; 2. the shepherds (barisi or psitjiba, the boys who light (tjibela) the fire of the Elephant) who waken the circumcised in the morning, accompany them on their hunting trips, watch them when they eat, etc. 3. The grown up men who have volunteered to come and stay in the sungi during the whole school. They eat the flesh of the animals killed by the bukwera, carve pestles, weave baskets, enjoy themselves, and form the council which looks after the well-being of the school. Amongst them are the so-called father and mother of the Ngoma, two men who are specially in charge of the school. The " father " has a difficult task ; he must keep discipline, administer punishment, etc. These two men are paid, as are also the Lion-men and the Manyabe. The Manyabe is the great doctor of the school. He has poured his charms on the fence to protect the lodge against wizards. He does not stay in the sungi, but can be called at any time to administer medicine to the boys who are unwell or whose wounds do not heal properly.

II. *The sexual and language taboos of the sungi.*

881 The whole sungi is taboo to every uninitiated person and
831 especially to women. A woman who has seen the " shondlo ",
834 viz. the leaves which the circumcised put over their wound,
784 and which form their only clothing, must be killed. But taboos abound for everybody. The sexual taboos are most noteworthy. Sexual intercourse is strictly prohibited to all inmates, men as well as shepherds ; breaking this law would kill the circumcised. Therefore the men must not go home, or at least as seldom as possible, during these three months. Married people in the village may have sexual relations ; but there must be no noise, no quarrels between jealous co-wives ; because, if they insult each other and if this is known in the sungi, the shepherds will come one evening and plunder that village. Strange to say, in the meantime obscene language is permitted and even recommended— a contrast which we shall often meet with during the marginal periods. Some of the formulae contain expressions which are taboo at other times ; when the women bring the food to the sungi, the shepherds who receive it from their hands are allowed to address them with as many unchaste words as they like. The mothers themselves have the right of singing obscene songs when they pound the mealies for the sungi.

192 As regards language, there are also special expressions used during the school which are either archaic or foreign ; for instance,
881 all orders are given in a tongue which is neither Thonga nor Sutho: Tshai goma, Go to the table ; Thari, Eat ; Khedi, Smear with white clay, etc. Often actions are not designated by the ordinary word, but by unusual terms. For instance, the daily smearing of the bodies with clay is called : " to eat sheep's fat. " To put on the leaves of the shondlo is " to eat sheep's flesh. " To be beaten with the mbuti sticks is " to drink goat's milk. " Evidently the aim of this terminology is to increase the impression of mystery which the rites must convey to the uninitiated.

866 As regards the rites of the marginal period, they are calculated
881 to give the candidates the impression that they are new men,

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Photo H. Gros

Dance of the shepherds and men of the Circumcision school. (Spelonken, 1886.)

866 and that they must prove it by submitting manfully to all the
881 trials of this hard and sometimes cruel initiation.

Every morning they smear their bodies with white clay. They are shining ; they have abandoned the darkness of childhood. When they have eaten their food they must pick up the crumbs which fall on the ground and throw them away in the pit near the fence, shouting some name in disdain, in an insulting manner, the name of one of the uncircumcised, of a *shuburu* (a term of contempt applied to boys before they pass through the school). This makes them realise their new position.

But the Ngoma " is the shield of buffalo's hide! It is the crocodile which bites !" The candidates must accept all the hardships of initiation. They are taught to suffer.

III. *The trials.*

881 There are six main trials : blows, cold, thirst, unsavoury food, punishment, death.

Blows. On the slightest pretext, they are severely beaten by the shepherds at the order of the men of the sungi. Every day they must sit round the Elephant and, holding a stick in their hands, lunge at it as if to pierce it, for more than an hour. They sing the following words :

Elephant keep still !

Men and shepherds dance round them singing :

The black cow kicks ! It kicks against the jug of the baboon !

They themselves represent the black cow which the boys are trying to milk, and kick the boys! In fact during this daily exercise round the Elephant—a rite which is considered as one of the most important of the Ngoma—, they beat the naked shoulders of the initiated as much as they like, not so as to bruise them, but quite enough to cause them pain.

When the boys do not eat quickly enough, they are beaten. Sometimes they are sent to catch certain birds of the size of sparrows which they must wrap in leaves, tying them in such

881 a clever way that the men will be unable to untie them. Should one of the men succeed in undoing the knots, the boy will get a good thrashing during the meal, and so on.

The unhappy boys who are ill and cannot take part in the hunting trips must be on their guard; when their comrades come back, much excited, they fall upon them with sticks and are allowed to beat them for not having come to help them.

[132] *Cold.* The months of June to August are the coldest of the South African winter and, during the night, the temperature falls to 41 Fah., or even lower. The boys lie naked in their shed,

Photo A. Junod.

Circumcised boys sitting near the fire of "the Elephant"

heads turned towards the central court, and suffer bitterly from the cold. They are allowed to light fires in the court, but not near their feet, and it is said that one of the greatest trials of the Ngoma is that the head is warm and the feet cold. Moreover, they must always lie on their backs. Shepherds keep watch during the night and beat them if they lie on their side. No blanket is allowed, only light grass covers. The soil, not being smeared, swarms with a kind of white worm which bites severely during the night. Ashes are poured on the ground to kill them, but this is of but little use. In certain lodges, when there is a pool in the neighbourhood, the boys are led early in the morning into

881 the water and must remain in it a long time till the sun appears.
271 The shepherds prevent them from coming out. This is also said to help the wound to heal. (Valdo).

Thirst. It is absolutely forbidden to drink a drop of water during the whole initiation, and this taboo is said to be very painful. Boys sometimes succeed, during their hunting trips, in enticing their shepherds in one direction and in the meantime some of them escape and go to the river to drink. They will be severely punished if caught!

522 *Unsavoury food.* The law is that women, the mothers of the
881 circumcised, must bring plenty of porridge, twice as much as is required for the boys. Should one of them fail to do this she will be punished at a given time. They deposit their pots at some distance, so that they cannot catch any glimpse of the Ngoma, and shout : "Ha tsoo! We are burning." This means : "Our heads are sore from having carried our pots such a long way." Shepherds run to meet them and answer with a great many jokes in rather dubious taste : "We know what is burning with you, etc." Is not this the rule of the Ngoma ? The shepherds bring back with them the empty pots of the day before which the women take back to their homes. Should one of them have provided too little food, her pot will be filled with long grass, and when she goes home with her comrades, they will make fun of her. If she does not learn to do better, the "Mother of the Ngoma" will organise a punitive expedition to her village, and kill goats and fowls, and thus make her obey.

881 All the food is placed on the reed tables, and must be eaten by the boys without any seasoning. Should the indulgent mothers have brought some ground nut sauce, it will be confiscated and eaten by the men. When they hear the order : "Tshai goma," the candidates must rush to the tables, kneel down, and, at the word "Thari," seize the food with both hands and swallow it as quickly as possible. If they delay, they are beaten by the shepherds who superintend the meal. When one batch of boys has finished, they must rush to another table where other boys are still struggling with their heap of porridge and help them to finish their portions. Owing to this emulation, the meal does not last

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881 long. Sometimes, when game has been plentiful, one of the men comes and squeezes the half-digested grass found in the bowels of an antelope over the porridge, saying to the boys : " You must have something of the results of your hunting too! "

This diet nauseates them at first. They sometimes vomit right on the table. No matter, every particle of the porridge must be eaten all the same. When they are accustomed to the diet, they grow fat; and it is wonderful how their physical appearance sometimes improves during these few months.

Punishments. Blows are punishments for minor offences. Should some more serious fault have been committed, the father of the circumcision condemns the boy to "drink goat's milk." There is a shrub called " mbuti ;" the same word also means goat. Three sticks of it are taken. The boy must present his hands, put them against each other and separate the fingers. The sticks are introduced between the fingers and a strong man, taking both ends of the sticks in his hands, presses them together and lifts the poor boy, squeezing and half crushing his fingers.

[678] In former times, the boys who had tried to escape or who had revealed the secrets of the sungi to women, or to the uninitiated, were hanged on the last day of the school and burnt to ashes, together with all the contents of the lodge.

766 *Death.* The circumcised must also be prepared to die if their
881 wound does not heal properly and if the Manyabe's medicine is not successful. Many of them have actually died. It is absolutely forbidden to mourn over them. The mother of the deceased is informed of his death by a notch cut in the edge of the pot in which she brings the food. She must not cry. The corpse is buried in a wet place, in a grave dug with sticks, as it would make people suspicious if the shepherds were to go to the village and fetch spades for this work.

IV. *The teaching of formulae.*

881 So the boys are taught endurance, obedience, manliness. But there is another side to the training of the Ngoma. It has sometimes been compared to a school, and it is true that there is some

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intellectual learning in it, though very scanty and insignificant. Every morning the candidates are brought together to the place of the formulae (nau-milau, law, prescription). There is a tree in the midst of this square. A special instructor, whose father has already exercised this function, climbs up the tree and begins to teach the boys. He says :

Little boys, do you hear me. I say...

Then come the words of the secret formulae which are a great taboo and which they must learn by heart, sentence after sentence. I have collected some of them, Thonga and Pedi. Here I will reproduce only the Thonga. They are partly incomprehensible, even to the initiated. The first is called *Manhengwana*. It is the name of a bird.

Masumasyana a nga suma...
The little bird has sung.
A nga suma tinghala ta timhingo...
It has stirred the handles of the lances which are like lions...
T'entsha ku ya tihabana...
They pierce each other...
Manhengu. Manhengu bentshile. Bentsha tirula...
The bird... ? ?
Fula ngoma... Mukhubela wa hantana...
Forged at the lodge. Clouds come from all parts.
Mihumbyana saben. Sabe khulu ra barimi.
Rivulets in the sand, forming the great Sabi.
Ntje-ntje bya agulube... Bya shinana sha rila...
The running of the wild pig... Of the frog which cries...
Byi longolokile byi ya kamba ntjonga wa mbila.
They are walking in good order, they go to visit the mysterious hut.
Ba kuma byi ri busonga, songa bya timhiri ni timhamba...
They find it like the twisted rings of the adder.

These words, so far as they have a sense, seem to extol the Ngoma and its lodge. These assagais, which are like lions which are going to tear each other, represent the school which is starting, awakened by the bird of the winter. The clouds coming from all directions are the boys converging on the sungi from all parts of the country, like rivulets which join together to form a great river. The running of the wild pig is the life of the boy who was idling away his time till initiation made a man of him. The croaking of the frog (shinana) is his childish stupidity. The

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

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shinana is a strange animal indeed, a small Batracian which is able, when attacked, to swell considerably : then it becomes so hard that its enemies, even a cock with a sharp beak, cannot pierce it. The circumcised boy, before initiation, was a shinana before it swelled up. By the trials of the Ngoma, he will become like this frog, an invulnerable and untamable adversary. (1) In the last sentences we see the bukwera, the troup of the circumcised, penetrating into the mysterious hut, into the Ngoma, and wondering at the extraordinary wisdom which is found there. The laws, rites and trials are like the inextricable intermingling of many snakes.

The sungi is then celebrated again in the following sentences :

A mi ri i sungi...
Say, it is the lodge.
Hansi ka rona, i tleketleka,
On the ground, there is a disgusting smell,
Henhla ka rona i thulawula...
On the roof, it is elevated and beautiful...
Makomole i mhandje...
Its supports are poles...
Tinga hi hala n'djibalelo...
Long rods unite the poles... etc.

Nwatjabatjabane a nga tjabatjaba...
The heavy body which goes on heavily...
Shikari ka mipungu ni mhlanga...
Through the drifts and the reeds...
Masheka ya le ndjako, marumbu a wela ndjen,
Which must be cut open from behind, because its bowels fall down inside its body.
I ngwenya.
It is the crocodile.

Shiborekeketa mahlaluku makambaku...
The beast which opens the road to the drifts for the elephants...
A ta hi ku nwa ni ku hlamba...
It goes to drink and to bathe...
A mi ri mfubu ?
Do you not say, it is the hippopotamus ?

Nwatjabatjabane makandjya ka ku oma...
The beast which marches slowly on the dry ground...
Ku se ku baleka nhlangasi,
And a marsh is formed by its heavy footsteps,
Ndlopfu, shibangamaphesa a nga riphembe, hi yona...
It is the elephant, the one who provides clothing (by the sale of its teeth) the one who brings wealth, it is he !

(1) Another explanation : The running to and fro of the wild pig describes the coming and going of the men who bring the boys to the "place of the crocodile," like pigs searching for their prey. The "Shinana" which cries is the little circumcised boy whose voice is hardly heard amidst all the noise of that terrible day. He is a small powerless thing, like the frog.

192 These formulae are so characteristic that they provide the
881 principal pass words by which the circumcised recognize each other. Should I want to know if a man is initiated, I should say to him : " *Mashindla bya ndjako*, the beast which must be opened from behind. " If he answers at once : " Ngwenya, the

Phot. A. Eusel

Cutting open a crocodile near the Nhanati river.

crocodile," I know that he has been circumcised. But he must add the following words : " khekeretana wa mufagu " i. e. " the knife which circumcises."

831 There are also some obscene formulae which refer to certain
881 diseases of women, of which not a word is told outside the Ngoma. Some others are so ugly that I can give them only in Latin (Annotatio quarta).[1] Even the formulae of the crocodile

[1] [See p. 516 in these categories or in 116 -- analyst]

831 and of the hippopotamus are by no means poetic descriptions of
881 these big animals similar to those contained in the book of Job. The first alludes to the manner in which the male crocodile copulates with his female. And the second tells the story of a virgin girl whom the young boys violate in order to open the way to the grown up men who will follow them. Impure allusions are found everywhere in this teaching of the circumcision school.

When the instructor has finished, he lifts his stick with a certain gesture and all the boys shout at once: "Zithari!" Viguet told me that that exclamation meant: "They are as long as that" and that it was an obscene allusion. The old men take great delight in being flattered and, if the boys wish to add to their pleasure, they will say: "When you spit, the wind from your mouth would kill enemies at the other end of the country!"

As is plain from these quotations, the teaching of the Ngoma is quite trivial, and the formulae are rather a collection of esoteric words than a true intellectual training.

533 *The songs* of the Ngoma have no deeper meaning. We have
881 seen already the song of the Elephant and of the Winter-bird... Every morning, just after they wake, the circumcised sing for a long time the following words, which they repeat also when coming back from hunting trips.

Sing your song, bird of the morn
Mafé-é-é-é!

The melody is rude, wild but very impressive. Mafé-é-é-é must mean: "We are the initiated, we are the men!"

224 *Hunting*. Hunting is the only useful thing taught in the
881 Ngoma. Boys go almost every day to the velt and become very
868 clever in catching game. They beat the bush, sometimes climb hills and chase all the game to the top, killing it there with their assagais, knobkerries, etc. Near Shiluvane they even attack the Mamotsuiri mountain once during their three months. All the men of the country are summoned to take part in the big expedition, which requires real strategic skill.

881 To sum up the rites of this marginal period of the Circumcision school, this is the programme of a day in the sungi. The shepherds

881 awaken the boys very early. They sing for one hour the Winter-bird. Then they learn the formulae for one or two hours. Afterwards the order : "Tshayi goma" is given and they throw away the leaves of the day before and put on a new "shondlo." They go and sit round the Elephant and stab him for two hours till a shout is heard : the women bringing the food announce that they have come. The boys eat for the first time, and sing again to help digestion. At the command : "Khedi goma," they smear their bodies with white clay. The sun is already high in the sky when they start for their hunting trip. They come back at sunset, eat for the second time, stab the Elephant again for one hour and at the command "Khwerere, Mayise, Mafefo," they go to their beds on the dirty soil of their but.

c) Aggregation Rites.

1. *The Mulagaru.*

769 The first aggregation rite takes place many days before the
881 conclusion of the school. One morning, very early, the men and the shepherds raise a very big pole in the yard of the formulae and fix it into a hole. At its extremity is a man, half hidden in white hair (1). The boys are awakened and led by the shepherds into the yard. They are told to lie down on their backs, all their heads turned towards the pole, which is called *mulagaru*, and to say : "Good morning, grandfather." Then a voice comes from the top of the pole and says : "I greet you, my grand-children." They must remain a long time in that position in the biting cold of the morning, talking with the "grand-father." They are allowed even to complain of their sufferings and to ask permission to return home. But they still have to stay some days in the sungi. Every morning this ceremony will be repeated. It clearly means that the boys are being put into communication with the ancestor who represents the clan, that they are beginning to be admitted to the adult life of the tribe.

(1) In some circumcision schools this man is called kokwana Masinde, a name which is applied to old women.

881 A few days later, the great doctor administers to the boys a purifying medicine which they drink in a mouthful of beer. This rite seems to be rather a separation than an aggregation rite. We often find, when a marginal period comes to an end, separation rites taking place. They mean separation from the *marginal period* itself; for this also involved a kind of pollution which must be removed. Such is probably the aim of the medicine given by the Manyabe. On the other hand, this is also an aggregation rite, as the boys are allowed to drink again for the first time.

II. *The Mayiwayiwane dance.*

532 The second true aggregation
535 rite is called the Mayiwayiwane dance. The *Mayiwayiwane* are
881 a sort of masks which cover the whole of the upper part of the body, a kind of armour made of woven palm leaves; on the head, they are like a very high helmet protruding in front like a beak. The boys make these masks with the help of the shepherds and of the men and, in this disguise, must perform a special dance with high jumps before the women summoned on a certain day to attend. The boys must not be recognized. Should one of them let the mask fall, it would be a great misfortune, because women must not know who is dancing.
535 Moreover the initiated must appear before them as a kind of
581 supernatural beings and fill them with respect and awe. Therefore they must not fall when they dance. Should one of them totter and lose his equilibrium, the shepherds cover him

A Mayiwayiwane mask (1).

(1) This mask is that worn by Pedi boys during the second circumcision school. I cannot guarantee that the Mayiwayiwane mask is of exactly the same pattern.

535 with a heap of grass and the men say : " He is dead !," because
881 a circumcised boy cannot fall and live. One of the shepherds goes in haste to a village of the neighbouring tribe and buys a fowl ; this is killed and its blood is sprinkled over the grass ; the boy who fell escapes when the women have gone home, but the next day, when they come back to the spot, they see the blood and are convinced that, in very truth, one of the circumcised dies when he falls!

Sometimes a little child is taken from the arms of its mother and brought to the place where the boys are sitting hidden during the dance. They kiss him and smile at him, because he is innocent; he may see what women are not allowed to contemplate!

III. *The last day.*

881 The last day is marked by the greatest and most difficult trial. During the whole preceding night, the boys are not allowed to sleep. Sleep is the last enemy they must overcome. They stab the Elephant and repeat the formulae till the morning. Then all the bits of skin remaining from the circumcising are picked up by the Manyabe ; he burns them, and makes them into a powder with which he smears the mulagaru pole. All the masks and grass mats are thrown on to the roof of the shed and, at dawn, the troop of circumcised, surrounded by the shepherds and men, is directed towards a pool and made to run to it without looking backwards ; (separation from the sungi, from the seclusion period). If they were to look at what is taking place behind them, their eyes would be pierced, and they would be blind for ever! Fire is set to the whole establishment by some of the men, and all the filth and ignorance of childhood is burnt in this great conflagration. The boys are led into the water, wash away the
[302] white clay shouting : " I am a man," cut their hair (separation rite), anoint themselves with ochre, put on new clothing and are addressed by the father of the circumcision :

" You are no longer *shaburu*! Try now to behave like men. It would be unworthy of you to steal sweet potatoes in the fields as you used to do before. Now the Ngoma is closed and it is taboo

881 to pronounce the formulae or to sing the songs of the sungi. Don't reveal a word of them to anybody ; if a boy does so he will be strangled! " etc.

That same day the women bring porridge with sauce flavourings and the shepherds are no longer allowed to use insulting words when they receive the pots from their hands.

IV. *The Chameleon procession.*

553 881 All these are evidently aggregation rites. But the greatest of all is the procession of the initiated into the capital of the chief which takes place on the day of the closing of the sungi and on the following day. Covered with ochre, marching on mats which have been spread on the ground so that they do not touch the dust with their feet, they advance slowly, bowed to the ground, stretching out first one leg and then the other, with a sudden brisk motion, trying to imitate the gait of the chameleon, the wise, the prudent. They are men who think, and no longer boys without intelligence! Then they all sit in the central place of the capital, silent, with their heads still bent, and the sisters and mothers who have come from all the different villages must go and recognize them. Each woman brings with her a bracelet or a shilling or any small present and searches for her boy amongst the throng. When she thinks she has found him, she kisses him on the cheek and gives him the present. The boys have two sticks in their hands. One stick bears some short lateral branches on which the boys will hang the bracelets (busenga). The other is smaller and, when the mother has discovered her son and has kissed him, he strikes her, a soft blow if it is his mother or his grandmother, a much harder one if it is his sister, and utters the new name which he has chosen.

In answer to this demonstration, the mother begins to dance and to sing the praises of her son! This is the typical aggregation rite called *kunga*, the breaking of silence, which we shall meet with more than once in the passage rites of the tribe. These bracelets [843 388] are all given in to the chief, who will distribute them amongst the old women. It would be taboo to give them to childbearing women. According to the same idea the fees paid by the boys to

881 the chief must not be used by him to buy a wife. This would pollute the village (makhuma). It would cause unfortunate births (timbeleko) and ruin the life of the people.

The chameleon procession is performed in the villages of the main headmen of the tribe during the few following days till, at last, the ochre of the initiated is removed and they return home definitely.

SOME REMARKS ON THE CIRCUMCISION SCHOOL

177 The square form of the sungi sheds, so different from the circular form
881 adopted by the Bantus for their homes and implements, might be the
341 trace of a Semitic influence. But, on the whole, all these rites are closely
822 connected together and their sequence is quite easy to understand.

The Ngoma is truly a puberty rite, but not a sexual initiation. The
881 suspension of conjugal relations, and the prevalence of licentious language might give the idea that it is in direct relation with the sexual life. But these two phenomena are met with on other occasions, as we shall see, and seem to be characteristic occurrences in most of the marginal periods. Moreover boys of ten and twelve and men of twenty-five or more can occasionally be admitted to the sungi, and this proves that the school has nothing to do with marriage, properly speaking. Neither is the Ngoma a pure act of aggregation to a definite clan. Boys of one clan often go to the sungi of another chief to be initiated ; they do not become his subjects by so doing. Even Thongas sometimes enter into Sutho lodges and Ma-Lemba have a special place in them. It is true that the Ngoma is the business of the chief. Only those who are really chiefs have the right to build a lodge. But though the initiated are exhorted to become good subjects of their chief, the intention of the circumcision school is rather to introduce the little boy *into manhood*, to cleanse him from the *bukhuma* (p. 58) to make him a thoughtful adult member of the community.

(See practical conclusion on Circumcision Rites at the end of Vol. I.)

II. *Other Puberty Rites.*

881 The Ngoma has disappeared in most of the Thonga clans, but
178 there are a few other puberty rites which have been preserved all through the tribe.

1) THE CUSTOM OF THE EROTIC DREAM (Tilorela).

881 When a young man has noticed for the first time an emissio
195 seminis, he is said to have become an adult (a kulile, a thombile)
751 to have "drunk the nkanye." The nkanye is the tree from which the bukanye is made. It is prepared for the great feast of the new year. *To drink the nkanye* is an euphemism to designate the entrance into a new phase of life, into the age of puberty. According to Mboza, the lad must go early in the morning to wash his body, and that is all. But Tobane says that, in the Mpfumo clan, the family doctor is called; in a broken pot, he roasts pieces of skin of all the beasts of the veldt, together with some half digested grass taken from the stomach of a goat (psanyi). The boy must eat a little of this medicine and rub all his joints with it. This will strengthen him so that, when he has relations with girls, he will not be overcome (gemiwa) by them. This rite, which is very similar to the rite of the broken pot performed for infants, is connected with the "gangisa," the sexual habits of young people which begin at the time of puberty, as we shall see later on.

881 At this time also, the boy begins to wear the very primitive
291 clothing called *shifado* (sha ku siba, the thing with which one
177 closes, see Annotatio I)[1]. In former times they wore only the *mbayi*,
789 a small cylindrical or conical object of woven palm leaves, which
832 was the national dress of the Thongas; the *shifado* seems to be of Zulu origin. It is very much valued as preventing contact with the earth, as a protection against ants and an aid to continence; the lads who do not wear it are blamed and accused of being *ba-nato*. The word *nato* means a magical medicine by means of which men of low morals throw men or women into a deep sleep during the night, enter the huts of other people and commit adultery with their wives.

2) THE PIERCING OF THE EARS (Ku tjunya, (Ro.), boshela. (Dj.).

881 This also takes place at this period. There are two ways of
304 performing it, either by an actual piercing of the lower lobe
177 with a thorn, or by cutting it with a knife. The first method

1 [See p. 516 In these categories or in 116 -- Analyst]

881 is the old Thonga custom, and has been preserved by the women
304 in its original form, at least amongst the Ba-Ronga ; they frequently
177 pass a ring through the small opening thus produced. The second was practised by the Zulu-Ngonis, and was adopted by the Thonga men in order to resemble their conquerors. The result is an ugly hole. This is not a law imposed by the chief ; it is however universally observed. When a lad does not pierce his ears, his comrades mock him, saying. " U toya ! " " You are a coward! We shall put a spoonful of porridge in this big ear of yours! " (Viz. It will hold food because it is not pierced!)

881 The operation is performed in the winter by a man who
304 knows how to do it. Before it is begun, the boy bites the *ndjao*,
824 the root of a kind of juncus which is considered the best means of strengthening the virile force. The doctor introduces into
833 the hole a small piece of reed ; he takes it out every day to wash the wound and puts it in again to keep the hole open. As long as the ear is not healed, the lad must eat his food without salt : he must not go about in the kraals and partake of the porridge of other people, because this food might have been prepared by women having intercourse with their husbands (ba ku khila) and this would make him very ill (1). He must also keep away from girls. When he is healed, he takes away the piece of hard reed and replaces it by a pretty white object.

304 Some Thongas tatoo themselves, or used to do so formerly,
178 but this custom is disappearing and is now preserved only by women. We shall describe it in the chapter on the evolution of the woman, as well as the *hleta* custom, the pointing of the teeth.

It is probable that in former times the taboo character of these various ceremonies was more marked that now. At present they are merely a *shihila sha tiko*, a custom of the country.

(1) This alimentary taboo, as well as the interdiction of sexual relations, sign of intercourse with married people, clearly shows that the piercing of the ears is a rite of passage. (p. 74).

3) The Gangisa.

832 When a boy has gone through the puberty rites, he is grown
836 up and is allowed to practise the *gangisa*. This word comes
882 from *ganga*, which means " to choose a lover." Each girl is asked by the boys to choose one of them ; they *make them choose* (gangisa, factitive derivative). I once observed some boys—they were still very young—flirting round three or four girls just like bees round ripe plums, running after them, and saying repeatedly : " Choose me! Choose me! " There is a special blue cotton print with a large white pattern which is called " gangisa ntombi " viz. to make a girl choose, as it is offered by the lover to the damsel of
836 his choice in order to obtain her favour. When a girl has made
848 her choice, her boy plays with her like husband and wife, first
684 building little huts, etc. but later on in a less platonic fashion. In fact nothing is prohibited in the relations between young people
[837] of the two sexes. A married woman is sacred amongst the Thongas, but an unmarried girl is not. However, she must not become pregnant. (1) If this happens, the parents will say to the lover : "You have spoiled our daughter, you must buy her in marriage." If he refuses, the child will belong to the family of the girl. Excesses in gangisa are condemned. A boy who commits them is said to be an adulterer (a ni bupse) ; of a girl they say : " She will lose her head (a ta ba singe). "

882 As the unmarried boys and girls live in special huts, the *lao*
836 of the boys and the *nhanga* of the girls, at the entrance of the village, it is easy for them to meet during the night. During the day, they generally behave themselves becomingly. But when the lads pay visits to their girls, who sing to the accompaniment

(1) When a girl becomes pregnant, having had relations with her lover inside her parents' village, it is very serious; it is taboo. The boy will have to find a goat, to kill it during the night in the girl's kraal, and to rise very early; then both the boy and the girl, quite naked, must go round the village and sprinkle the fence from inside with a special decoction. None must come out of the huts to look at them. This will prevent the inhabitants from contracting the disease called mukuhlwane (cough, lung complaint) which would otherwise attack them. Moreover the guilty boy will have to pay a fine of £ 5 in cows of the sum of the lobolo.

836 of rattles, they sometimes stay with them till late in the night.
832 They bring them small presents, articles of clothing or other things, and thus obtain permission to have intercourse with them. Mboza described to me a very immoral meeting which sometimes takes place in these huts in connection with the *milebe* habit, and which is connected with this gangisa. It is impossible to give the details here. (Annotatio 5.)[1]

836 The gangisa custom is, from our point of view, very immoral.
831 Amongst Natives it is not censured at all, and it would be more accurate to speak of *amorality* then of *immorality*, amongst them, on this particular point. A boy who has no such flirt, no *shigango*, is laughed at as a coward; a girl who refuses to accept such advances is accused of being malformed. However Mboza told me he had never had a shigango himself and the abuse in this respect is not approved of by old people. In Manyisa, I heard of a young chief who was leading all the lads to gangisa and forcing the girls to accept them. The extent of this evil depends very much
[644] on the character of the boys and girls. I may add that, as regards the young people of the capital, they are not allowed to practise the gangisa because they belong to the royal family and are closely watched.

When they become Christians, Natives readily accept our standard of morality, but cases of fornication are very frequent amongst converts, so much so that this has been rightly called the African sin! I mention this fact, but I must say on the other hand that thousands of pupils in our Native Institutions lead a very moral and continent life and do not seem to find any great difficulty in doing so.

839 If the gangisa spoils the whole life of the young heathen, it is
177 only just to add that they do not practise two vices which are prevalent amongst certain civilised nations, onanism and sodomy. These immoral customs were entirely unknown in the Thonga tribe before the coming of civilisation. Unhappily it is no longer so now, as we shall see in Appendix III on unnatural vice in Johannesburg.

836 Comparing the habits of the Pedis and the Thongas we observe
837 this strange fact: amongst the Thongas the unmarried girl is

1 [see p.517 in these categories or in 116 --Analyst]

836 quite free and the married woman is taboo. Amongst the Pedis
837 it is just the reverse ; girls are absolutely prohibited from having any sexual relation before their marriage and, on the contrary, after marriage a woman who has had children can have intercourse with other men than her husband. I shall try to explain this difference when dealing with Pedi customs. (Part II. Chap. I. G.)

* * *

000 In his book on Kafir Socialism, Dudley Kidd has laid great stress on the fact that the mental development of the African Native is arrested at the time of puberty, and has tried to find remedies for this inferiority. It may be said that the vivacity of mind, the rapidity of comprehension, which is sometimes wonderful amongst the younger boys, decreases when they reach the age of fifteen or sixteen. Cases can even be recorded amongst them of an arrest or slackening in the development of the psychical faculties at the period of puberty. But this is by no means the rule. In all our Institutions we have pupils who show great zeal for study and increased intellectual power between sixteen and twenty. I may say that Dr Mac Vicar of Lovedale concluded as I do, that this assertion of D. Kidd is very much exaggerated.

D. MARRIAGE

582 According to the old Thonga idea it was only when a boy was
[178] fully grown that he could think of marriage. In former times lads used to enjoy their youth in carelessness and pleasure, going to dance in all the villages, till they were twenty five years old. Nowadays boys marry very early. Money to lobola is obtained more readily and " gangisa " is not as easy as it used to be, two reasons which have advanced the marriage age in the present generation.

I. *Love charms.*

832 If a boy has not been successful in his " gangisa ", if he is
584 despised by the girls and has no chance of being accepted, a special rite is performed to help him to find a wife. The Ba-Ronga do not know the love-philter as such, but they have a substitute for it ; the old village cock is put on the lad's head and kept there for a long time ; the cock scratches him with his claws ; he is then allowed to go. The boy will now succeed ; he will be like the cock, who never lacks spouses! (Mboza).

Other charms are used for girls, especially a certain medicine which produces an abundant lather when boiled in water. The physician washes the girl's body with it, after which she will " appear " (a ta boneka) to the eyes of would-be suitors (Tobane).
755 Should however a girl not find a husband in the lawful way,
832 she has another means at her disposal—marriage by abduction,
584 and thus no one, or hardly any one, remains unmarried amongst the Thongas. Mankhelu, who was a great doctor, treated this " complaint of singleness " with more seriousness! He used his strongest medicines to heal the boy or the girl who was unable to find a partner in life. This is the treatment followed by him. He takes a she-goat, in the case of a boy, a he-goat in that of girl, and anoints it with fat mixed with his precious medicinal powder ; he rubs the animal (hondla) from the mouth to the tail, stretches out all its limbs and kills it. No prayer is offered, but the *psanyi* (the half digested grass which is found in the stomach) is carefully collected. The boy is then called, enters his own hut, spreads a mat on the ground, sits on it quite naked and rubs his whole body with this substance. " A tihorola, a tilurulula " says Mankhelu. He rubs away from himself all his filth. When he has finished, he coughs to call the doctor, who comes and gathers into a pot all the " timhorola," the particles which have fallen on the mat ; he takes a portion of this and squeezes it into a small bag of lizard-skin so as to make a *shitjungulu* or amulet. The sister must come after sunset without any clothing into the boy's

832 hut and tie the bag round his neck. What remains of the *timhorola*
755 will be used to smear the hut. Then all the girls will love him ;
783 or in the case of a girl, she will soon be asked in marriage.
584 This ceremony is a characteristic *hondlola*, the same which is performed on the weaning day (see page 59) and after any serious disease ; it is a rite of removal of impurity. (Notice the termination ola, ula, ulula in these verbs ; it means generally to undo, to take away).

832 If the love charms do not obtain the desired result, the angry
754 boy will perhaps try to avenge himself. He will take a fowl, or
262 perhaps only an egg, treat it with special drugs and give it to the girl in order to bewitch her. This kind of witchcraft is called *ku dambikela*. (See the Chapter on Witchcraft, Part VI). The girl will give birth not to a child, but to an animal, a pigeon, or a snake. Or her genitalia will be changed and take the appearance of the male organ. This is one of the causes why eggs and fowls are taboo for girls.

Let us now hear from Tobane the description of the marriage rites amongst the Mpfumo clan. We shall afterwards see how the customs differ in other Ronga and Thonga clans.

II. *Marriage ceremonies of the Mpfumo clan.*

1) The betrothal (Buta).

584 When a young man has made up his mind to get married, and when he is in possession of the necessary lobola (1) cattle, he starts, one fine day, with two or three of his friends to look for a wife in the villages. He puts on his most brilliant ornaments and his most precious skins. Here they are, arriving in the village

583 1) *Ku lobola* means to buy in marriage. *Ku lobola* (a factitive derivative of the verb) is said of a father who claims a sum of money from his daughter's suitor. *Lobolo* or *ndjobolo* or *bukosi* (wealth) is the sum paid, the oxen, the hoes, or the pounds sterling. We shall use these words, which are employed in Thonga as well as in Zulu and ought to be adopted as technical ethnographic terms. I use the verb for the act of paying and the noun for the sum itself.

584 square ; they sit down in the shade. They are asked : " What do you want ? " " We have come to see the girls ", they answer bluntly. And the reply is : " All right. Look at them. "

584 Of course the girls do their very best to be as pleasing as
292 possible, as the mother has told them that these are suitors.
361 The suitor is easily known by his special attire, a belt of skins either of leopard or tiger-cat. He goes from one yard to the other, and talks with the cooks, inquiring their names, and looking at them as, with vigourous and graceful movements of the body, they crush the mealies in their mortar. If the seekers find what they want, they return home, if not, they go to the next hamlet. (Let us say here that each village consists of not more than six to twelve huts built in a circle, leaving a central circular place, the shaded " square ", of which the oxen kraal occupies the middle.) (See Part II.)

584 When he is satisfied, the suitor goes home and says to his parents : "So and so pleases me. Go and woo her. (Ku buta)." Then a middle aged man of the village is sent to the parents of the young girl. He is received in the father's hut and, with all the circumlocutions required by etiquette, he discharges his errand. The girl is called and told that the visitor who came the other day has chosen her ; she is asked if she also loves him (or if she wants him... for there is only one word in Ronga to express these two kindred notions, ku randja). " Oh! is it the one who looked thus and so and who wore this and that ? Yes, I consent to accept (to eat) the money out of his hands (ku da bukosi ku yene). " If she does not care for him, she will declare it quite as plainly : the suitor will have to seek elsewhere. It is a fact worth noting that, amongst these so-called savages, a father very seldom obliges his daughter to accept a husband whom she dislikes, except in the case of debt. If the matter is arranged to the satisfaction of all parties the buta (1) or betrothal is concluded and the messenger is feasted, while he, on his part, gives a present (shihlengwe) to the girl's parents of the value of a hoe or ten

(1) *Buta* may be a factitive derivative of the verb *bula*, to speak : to cause somebody to speak, to give an answer.

584 shillings ; this present " strengthens their bones " (ba tiya marambo) and nothing further remains to be done but to choose the day on which the betrothal visit shall take place. (1)

2) THE BETROTHAL VISITS (Tjekela and koroka).

584 301 This visit (ku ya ku tjekelen) is paid in the following manner. The fiancé chooses his best friend to be his " shangwane " ; the fiancée does the same on her side, and these two " shangwane " must do their best to help them both during the whole of these complicated ceremonies. Then the bridegroom summons, together with his shangwane, three or four other friends of his own age, and a little lad to carry their mats. They go and bathe and put on their finest attire : rich skins, bracelets hung to their belts, horse-hair necklaces with white beads threaded here and there which swing to and fro on neck and breast. Neither do they forget their small shields of skin, which give them a martial appearance without, however, suggesting any thought of war or strife. Before starting they take a good meal cooked at home. In the evening, after sunset, they reach the village of the fiancée. They sit down outside the gate and cough to make known that they have arrived. Then the inhabitants, who were expecting them, come out to meet them and beg them to enter. The visitors make difficulties. They pretend not to wish to do so. The people of the village insist. At last, with apparent reluctance, they advance into the central square. A hut is prepared for them, and they are invited to go and rest there. They begin by refusing. But the young girls take out of their hands their sticks and their miniature shields and carry them into the hut. At last, with a

[593] 584 574

(1) Amongst the Wa-Nyika (a tribe dwelling between the Nyassa and Tanganyika lakes) the betrothal takes place as follows : A female messenger is sent by the suitor's parents to the girl's parents. She brings with her a hoe. The father calls the girl and shows her the tool saying : " This is your hoe ; it comes from so and so. " If the girl looks at the hoe with a gloomy expression and leaves the hut slowly, still looking at it, it is a sign that she does not accept the proposal. Should she on the contrary cover her face with her hands and run away without looking at the hoe, she thus declares that she consents to become the wife of the boy. (*Journal de l'Unité des Frères*. January 1926).

584 bored air, they enter. Mats are brought and unrolled before
574 them ; this is the act of hospitality par excellence. They remain
836 standing as if they had no wish whatever to sit down. The girls entreat them to rest, and finally they consent to accept the hospitality offered them with such insistence.

The parents of the fiancée then come, squat near them and ask news of their home. They answer, and inquire about the health of their hosts. This is the *djungulisana*, the exchange of greetings which always takes place when a visitor is received. Soon however large pots of well prepared food are brought. "No", say the young men. "We have eaten at home, we are not hungry." The same comedy is gone through again ; the masters of the place insist, the guests refuse systematically according to the Native laws of civility—or incivility! The night, however, has come ; the young men have consented after all to partake of the feast. The old people retire to their huts to sleep ; the young girls remain. The custom requires them to spend the whole night with the young men, according to the law of the *shigango* previously spoken of. The bridegroom's shangwane chooses the bride's shangwane and all the other boys choose their girl. But the fiancée hides behind her friends and takes no part in these games.

584 In the early morning the young men go to bathe and the girls,
574 their amphoras on their heads, go to fetch water from the lake. On their return they perform another act of hospitality towards their visitors, namely, they throw water down their backs. The boys wash the whole of their bodies, after which the girls anoint them with fat. The day is spent in a pleasant *far niente*. The fiancé and his friends sit in the shade in the square, clad in all their ornaments. They hum songs, they amuse themselves by swaying to and fro as they sit ; the little girls keep them company. Meanwhile the elder girls prepare savoury food for them and go to the fields. Towards evening, the visitors ask to see the parents, to take leave of them ; but the old people send the following message : "No, you shall not see us. We cannot consent to your going away, we have hardly seen you. Spend another night with us." They must make up their mind to stay a little longer.

584 In fact this is exactly what the young men want, and the second night is spent like the first.

The third day they go away. All the young girls accompany them along the paths, for a long distance, and, when they part, boys and girls tie together the high standing grasses on the veldt (ku ba mafundju hi byanyi), a touching symbol of their loves! Seeing these knots during the whole season at a crossroads,

Phot. A. Burd

Drawing water from the Mapotje river.

passers-by will know that lovers parted there. On taking leave, the young people arrange another meeting. The girls will go after a week or two to return the visit.

292 In fact, to the *tjekela* of the boys corresponds the *koroka* of the
301 girls. " They make the betrothal visit to see the husband (ba ya
584 ku koroken, ku ya bona muna) ". They also put on their finest attire ; red and white cloth, in their curled hair a small crown of blue and red beads, looking really pretty, on ankles and wrists bracelets of twisted iron wire.

584 On the appointed day, they go and sit outside the village of
574 the fiancé and cough to announce their presence. The same strange proceedings begin, but this time it is the damsels who make difficulties and the young men must beg and entreat them to enter first the village, then the hut, and then to sit on the mats and to accept food. Each of the groomsmen is most attentive to the girl he chose at the preceding meeting and, to obtain her good will, he generally gives her a fowl or the equivalent in money. In the early morning the visitors rise, go and get water, warm it a little and pour it into basins before the doors of the huts, so that, on that day, the inhabitants of the village will make their ablutions with water fetched by them. Then they go and do feminine work, acting as servants of the fiancé's parents. Thus they remove the ashes from the fire-place and throw them on the ash-heap close by; they cut the wood for the young men's mothers and light the several fires of the village. They pretend to leave when the sun sets, but no one will hear of it, and they must spend another night. At last, on the following day, they go home, accompanied by the young men and again, at parting, knot grasses together. On the day of the *koroka* definite arrangements are made for the wedding.

3) Taboos of the betrothal period.

584 The two families which enter into relation with each other by
574 marriage must observe many taboos (See Part II). Here are some
784 of those which are enforced during the visits of *tjekela* and *koroka* :

1) The visitors must not eat all the mealie corn on the spike ;
262 they must leave a few grains on it.

2) They must not tear off the leaves which are round the spike. When they have eaten all the corn, they rearrange these leaves in such a way that the cob seems not to have been touched.

3) They must not " make a hole in the pot " (bobota hotjo), viz. they leave a portion of the liquid in the beer pot, they do not empty it entirely.

4) It is forbidden to return home in rain when one has gone

584 to *tjekela*. You must wait for fine weather, otherwise it is an
574 insult to the future father-in-law.
784 5) If, during the visit, you eat monkey nuts, you must not
262 take off the thin skin which covers the kernel.

6) The suitor—the owner of the oxen—must not eat black fish that day. Only his friends have the right to do so. These fish, a kind of barbel, are to be found in the lakes (as that of Rikatla) and in the Nkomati river. The suitor will not partake of them for fear lest the girl he wishes to marry should slip through his hands like a fish. Moreover this fish is black: it might bring darkness, unhappiness.

7) Neither must he eat honey during his visit, because honey like the black fish, is slippery... Honey flows...

8) He is also forbidden to eat fowls, because cocks and hens scratch the soil with their claws, scattering it about; thus the marriage "might be scattered (hangalasa bukati) before it is ripe". In the Tembe clans, formerly, any solid food was taboo until the families had killed an ox for the feasts.

These taboos are not the proper taboos of a marginal period, as if the betrothal were considered as one of these periods. They are family taboos, belonging to the category of those dictated by the mutual distrust of two allied families.

585 The wedding feast consists of two parts: the *lobola feast*, viz. all the ceremonies connected with the remittance of the lobolo which takes place at the bride's village, and the *tlhoma*, viz. the bringing the bride to the bridegroom's village. Should the lobolo have been entirely paid at once, these two ceremonies will follow each other without much delay. If the sum of money or the number of oxen is not complete, the *tlhoma* will very probably be postponed.

4) Lobola feast.

a) Preparations.

585 On both sides, the friends are informed that the feast is close
273 at hand. The bride's family in particular must prepare in good time, as they have to provide the beer which will be consumed in

585 great quantities. The brewing requires several days. All the
273 relations of the young girl agree on a day to begin operations in the several villages they inhabit. First of all the grains must be taken out of all the mealie spikes which were kept in the small cellar huts (ku hula). The following day these mealie seeds are steeped in cold water, in large pots. When they have become sufficiently soft, they are pounded (kandja) in wooden mortars, the yeast of millet is added (kandela) and the preparation is then boiled (pseka). On the day of the boiling, the family of the fiancé is informed that the next day the beer will be drained off and that on the following day the wedding will begin.

585 That same day the bridegroom with his friends goes to his future parents-in-law. He does not find his sweetheart there; she has wisely been hidden in the neighbourhood. He brings with him a goat which will subsequently play an important part in the proceedings. The next day the whole family of the fiancé assembles and makes sure that the provision of hoes or the number of pounds sterling for the lobolo is complete. The third day they all start.

b) The assault of the village.

Let us describe this most curious feature of the feast as it took place forty years ago, when English gold was not yet known in the country, and when the price of a wife was paid in hoes. These hoes, to the number of forty or fifty, were distributed among the relatives, who carried them on their heads. In a long row, they wind along the path. When they approach close to the bride's village, most of them sit down in the shade, whilst a few young men go on before to make the assault. The bride's brothers guard the doors of the circular thorny fence which generally surrounds the villages. Provided with their sticks, they try to prevent the aggressors from entering. In vain! The assailants leap here and there in the bush, hurl themselves over the barriers, are pursued by the sentinels, run across the square, and try to steal pitchers of beer, whilst the boys of the village hit them as hard as they can.

Taking advantage of this tumult the older men arrive, and

585 pointing with their fingers to the hoes they carry on their heads, they murmur the following words : " Here is our ox! It does not know how to drink! It does not know how to drink! (Homu a yi nwi! a yi nwi!)" The others rush towards them, and try to steal their burdens and to bar the way ; all this goes on amidst laughter, and until one of the old people of the bride's village says : " Let us leave them! (A hi ba tjikene!)" Then the company enters, laden with the precious hoes.

c) The counting of the lobolo.

585 The implements are deposited in the centre of the square and
4/12 fixed into the ground by tens. The hoes used by the Thongas, whether of Native or European make, are lengthened and pointed in such a way that they can be introduced into a wooden handle, something like the tools of the lake dwellers. They have a very remote resemblance to an ace of spades with a pointed shaft.

585 The bride's family gathers to ascertain if the number agreed upon is there. They remark to one another that there are so and so many of them. " Look, they say, they have paid such and such a lobolo. (Labisan ba lobolile ha kukari.) " It is very important that there should be a large number of witnesses, for who knows to how many discussions and quarrels these hoes will give rise if the marriage turns out badly ? When this counting is done, all hearts being gladdened by the sight of the wealth which will eventually allow the bride's brother to get married himself, the jugs of beer, which were brought the day before by the aunts, sisters, and relations of the bride, are fetched in. They pass from one hand to another ; the old people, and the men, prefer going into a hut, where they talk over the latest news whilst they quench their thirst.

d) The wedding procession.

Whilst the old people rest, a goat is taken for the sacrifice and slaughtered at the door of the hut of the bride's mother. Whilst the goat is being cut into pieces, the bridegroom's sisters, the big

585 girls, the stout women with strong arms, go and look for the
578 heroine of the day, who is hidden in a hut in one of the neighbouring villages, and who has not yet been seen. At last they succeed in finding her. She refuses to come. The viragos seize her and pull her out by force. Everybody assembles. She is covered with a large cloth which hides her from the gaze of the bystanders. Surrounded on all sides, she sets forward to the village, the crowd forming a kind of procession. " Let us accompany her, then we shall return home " sing the women who bring her. (A hi mu tjekeleni, hi ta muka). This song of the *tjeka*, the only one which is peculiar to the wedding day, is the prelude to a most strange duel.

The bridegroom's family stands on one side, that of the bride on the other, and then begins the exchange of equivocal compliments.

"Ha!" cry the groomsmen to the bride, "as you are becoming the wife of our brother and coming into our village, try and leave all your vices outside. Do not steal any longer! Forsake your bad ways and become a good girl! "

To this the bride's relatives shout in return :

" You have nothing to boast about! Stop wearying the people! She is far too good for you! Does not everybody know the wild pranks of your son and the dishonour of your family! "

And they go on in this way, at first in joke, but often speaking seriously. They sometimes even go so far as to bombard each other with the half digested matter which has been extracted from the goat's stomach, but, if any one goes too far and exceeds the recognized limit of insult, the old people will tell him to be quiet.
585 These proceedings however are looked upon as a game and are
535 accompanied with a particular dance called *khana* which consists in jumping first on one leg and then on the other, gesticulating at the same time.

e) The religious act.

585 The procession reaches the hut of the bride's mother, where
782 the goat was killed. Mats are stretched outside. The bride and
769 groom sit down on the finest of these. It is now that the father

585 performs the religious rite (hahla). He takes between his first
782 finger and thumb a small quantity of the half digested grass which
769 has been taken from the paunch of the animal, makes a little ball of it, touches his tongue with it and emits a sound resembling " tsu "... as if he were slightly spitting. This is the customary sacramental act in most of the sacrifices. (See Part VI.) He stands behind the wedding pair and, looking straight in front of him towards them, speaks to the gods, that is to say to the spirits of his ancestors, and says : " My fathers, my grandfathers (he calls them by their names) look! To-day my child is leaving me. She enters the wedded life (bukatin). Look at her, accompany her where she will live. May she also found a village, may she have many children (mu nyikan timbeleko), may she be happy, good and just. May she be on good terms with those with whom she will be ". Here it may happen that a brother of the bridegroom will interrupt and say : " Yes, we will live peacefully with her if she does her duty well and does not worry her husband ". The old man goes on with his patriarchal prayer without taking any notice of the interruption and everybody listens quietly and attentively. This prayer which he pronounces with his eyes wide open and in a most natural manner is sometimes very long. When the people have had enough of it and wish him to stop, they send a young man to cut a piece of meat and to put it into the old man's mouth. Thus they " cut " his prayer and he keeps still. The person officiating must be the first to partake of the meat of the sacrifice.

f) The symbolical belt.

585 The astragalus (nhlolo) of the right leg of the sacrificed goat
777 has been carefully kept. All along the belly they cut a strip
825 of skin reaching as far as the neck and up to the chin, which is cut so as to form a kind of pocket at the end of the strip. The astragalus is put into this pocket and the father ties the belt around the waist of the young woman. He must not look at her face to face in doing this. On the contrary, she must turn her

585 back to him. This is doubtless done to wish her good luck and
777 so that she may have many descendants. Natives have a special
825 veneration for the astragalus bone which is also used in the divinatory system.

5) The tlhoma, departure of the bride for the conjugal dwelling.

585 If the lobolo business has been duly concluded, the bride will start on the following day for the conjugal dwelling, accompanied by her friends. (1) The next day, she will be joined by the women of her village, who will help her to erect the wood pile (ku koroka shigiyane). They will all go together into the bush to cut a large quantity of branches, and will pile them up between two poles covered with ochre in the bride's village. Each of the husband's relations will take one of these logs during the following months. It is, it seems, a symbolic present from one family to the other.

As for the wood cutters, they take their leave and go home. But what a surprise! Here is the bride going with them! Her sisters are taking her home again! The husband entreats, but in vain! He pursues the woman who, two days before, became his legal wife. To no purpose! He offers her a present to induce her to stay with him. She refuses... This was foreseen ; she must go to her mother to fetch her basket (shihundju), her mat, her spoon and other utensils which make up her small trousseau. A last lesson must also be given to the husband : " If we have given you our daughter, do not believe that we have had enough of her! (hi kolile). She is very precious to us and we take her back! "

Patience! To morrow she will come back accompanied by one young girl only who helps to carry her furniture. This

(1) It is taboo for the bride's parents to keep their daughter in their village when the lobolo has been entirely delivered ; because, should the bride die with them, they would have to return all the cattle, whilst if she dies in the husband's village, the consequences will not be so dreadful (See Part I. Ch. II. C.).

585 time it is for good! At last! "Ba mu tlhomile!" that is to say: her parents have duly settled her in her home.

In Nondwane this last surprise is spared the bridegroom. The bride comes to his home on the day of the marriage with her two mats, accompanied by a young girl only, and some days later the mother and female relations bring the rest of her trousseau and erect the wood pile. The young bride, when she has definitely accepted her fate and consented to stay, is called *ntlhoñwa* (Ro.) *nhlomi* (Dj.) (the one who has been brought to her husband). During the first week, she will fill all the pots of the people of the village so that when they awake they will find water for their ablutions and say: "We have found a bride! (He kumi ntlhoñwa!)"; she will remove all the ashes from the fire-places, and smear all the huts.

The first night when she sleeps in the hut with her husband, she may refuse to allow him his conjugal rights. The bridegroom then goes to his father and asks him what he ought to do under the circumstances. The father says: "Give her sixpence or a shilling." Then she consents! (Mboza).

III. *Marriage customs in other Ronga clans.*

The description which we have just given may be considered as typical, but there are many variations to be noticed amongst the clans.

584 In the *Mapatju* country, South of Delagoa Bay, there are two
836 informal visits, one of the fiancé, one of the fiancée, to each
574 other's village (ku bona muti). This visit is very short, and they do not accept any food from their hosts. Then the *tjekela* of the boys (the betrothal visit) takes place. They behave in a very dignified manner, do not accept any food the first day and consent to eat on the following day only after having been presented with a gift of 10/ or £ 11 During this visit the girls put 500 reis or sixpence at the bottom of the pots which they fill with water for the ablutions of the boys, otherwise the visitors would say: "The water is too cold. We cannot use it." Sexual

584 relations between boys and girls during these visits were not
836 allowed in former times. Nowadays they are indulged in, and it
574 may be that the fiancé will ask his fiancée to give herself to him
" to test her love " (ku kamba lirandju). If she refuses, the whole
affair may be compromised.

When the girls go to *tjekela* in their turn, they also observe
584 great formality. Money must be given at least ten times to
574 obtain their consent :

1) They refuse to enter the village.
2) To leave the square and go to the hut.
3) To cross the door of the hut.
4) To sit down on the mats. When the other girls consent, the fiancée remains standing.
5) She consents to sit down when given a shilling.
6) They refuse to answer the greetings.
7) When the others have answered, the fiancée still refuses to do so.
8) They do not consent to give news of their home.
9, 10) They still make difficulties about accepting food.

It may be that the fiancé goes to work in the mines during this period, probably in order to complete his lobolo. When he comes back, a special ceremony is performed which is called *hlomula mutwa*, to remove the thorn. The girls pay him a visit. He sits down amidst his companions, having fixed in his hair a long white thorn made of bone. The shangwane of the fiancée (chief bridesmaid) approaches him, dancing, and removes it. This is a way of saluting him on his return, it means the removal of the fatigue and the sufferings he has undergone, of the thorns which have wounded him.

585 The concluding ceremonies of *thloma* and of the *shigiyane* are also more developed in the Maputju country and in Nondwane.

This is the custom in *Nondwane*. Girls accompany the new bride to the conjugal home. They go to the bush to which she has fled, capture her there, and bring her to her husband with songs of mourning (hi ku djila nwana). " Where are you going ? You go to a husband whose heart is jealous! You will bring a

585 basket full of mealies to crush : they will say it is but a handful! You will learn to steal and to bewitch (viz. they will accuse you of doing it). " The bride covers her head with a piece of clothing and weeps. So the sad procession reaches the door of the hut of the husband's mother. There the bride sits down. The husband sits near her, but she withdraws from him. Then the men of the village insult her and say : " Come near him "! The old women, the husband's aunts, come and try to remove the veil from her head : " Take it away that we may see you " they say! Two days later they will come again and give her sixpence to take away the clothing with which she has covered her breast, and then she will go about the village in the ordinary dress—or undress.

The building of the wood pile in *Maputju* is also very characteristic. The ceremony takes place on the day of the *tlhoma*. When the procession is heard coming, far away, the friends of the new husband go to meet it. But the girls who accompany the bride refuse to approach the village. They must be enticed by money ; money at each crossway, at the door, in the village square, at the entrance of the hut, etc., money to put down the logs they bring, the pots of beer they carry... And when all the women have consented to unload themselves, the chief bridesmaid still refuses to do so, and must be induced to by a larger sum of money! When they have arranged the wood pile, they dance behind it, hiding the bride in their midst. The husband and his friends are sitting on the other side of the pile. Three girls come closer to them, always dancing. One of them is the shangwane. She puts tobacco into the hand of the bride. Then the bride kneels down before her husband at a little distance and stretches out her hand to offer him snuff. He rises to receive it, but, when he has approached quite close to her and has taken a little of the tobacco between his fingers, she throws the remainder of the snuff into his eyes ; then she runs away pursued by the husband's friends. If she is swift enough, she succeeds in taking hold of a tuft of grass outside the village. Then no one dares to catch her. It will be necessary to bring more money to induce her to relinquish her hold on the grass. After this, she re-enters the village which will be her new abode, and this is really the end!

IV. *Marriage ceremonies in the Northern clans.*

115 I have succeeded in getting the whole description of the Nkuna
584 marriage from a very good and clear-headed informant, Simeon Gana. It is somewhat different from that of the Rongas.

584 Here is the resumé (1) of the whole sequence of these rites :

The betrothal visit. (Ku buta). The suitor arrives with his shangwane and an old man who will act as his official representative or go-between (ntjumi). He has already made his choice, and the *ntjumi* at once woos the girl in his name. Her father calls her apart and asks her if she consents. If she is disposed to say yes, she begs to speak with the boy. She chooses a provisional shangwane. They are both shown into the hut of the girl's mother with their respective shangwane. Let us suppose they come to an understanding ; the suitor announces his success to his ntjumi, who goes to the girl's father and informs him that she has consented. But the father refuses to accept this notification ; he must also choose a ntjumi. This is done the same day. The following day, the two parties meet each in a different hut and the first ntjumi again comes and repeats the whole story, the second ntjumi being present.

Then a long discussion takes place (between the grown up people) as to the lobolo. This discussion is conducted by the two ntjumi, who go constantly from one hut to the other, the one conveying the questions : "How many oxen do you claim, etc", the other going in his turn to give an answer. So the two parties never see each other during this disagreeable debate about money. When they are agreed, the suitor and his friends return home and the ntjumi receives £ 1 for his assistance. There is no other *tjekela* than this. The word tjekela is unknown in Nkuna.

The fiancée's visit. As soon as they have gone, the women of the village begin to prepare pots of beer for the lobola feast. But

(1) I have explained these rites in detail in a novel entitled *Fazana*, published in *La Semaine Littéraire*, Geneva, Nov. & Dec. 1910.

584 before this feast takes place, six days later, the girl and her friends go to the young man's village to return the visit. The fiancée has been warned by her mother to be very cautious, not to accept the proposals of her suitor too readily. Boys and girls enjoy themselves thoroughly. A goat is killed for them, a goat called *the feather* because it is as it were a feather in the fiancée's hair, "a feather in her cap"!

The action of lobola follows immediately. The girls have stayed three days and gone home. Six had elapsed before they came. This makes nine days, just enough for the brewing of the beer. It is prepared in the girl's village. All the suitor's family make for it, driving the herd of cattle, fifteen head strong, which is the lobola money. The sham-fight takes place, some of the invaders, the young ones, going steadily forward, the others, the adults, hiding behind the oxen and urging them on under a shower of blows. Huts are offered to the visitors. One is especially reserved for the great *mukoñwana*, the man who has married the fiancé's sister, and whose oxen are used to buy the bride of the day. He has come to see where *his* oxen go. In the evening the girls choose their *shigango*. The next morning they will fetch water for their ablutions. This is the day when the lobolo is officially remitted by one family to the other. Long discussions take place through the intermediary of the two ntjumi, at the end of which the male relations of the bride leave their hut to inspect the cattle and criticise them, the others endeavouring to emphasise their beauty. Two oxen have been killed for the feast, one brought by the fiancé, another provided by the father of the fiancée. Dancing and singing goes on the whole afternoon; the visitors go home at sunset; the girls accompany them and tie knots of grass where they part.

585 A month after the lobola ceremony[1] a new feast takes place, called *the beer which washes the hoofs of the oxen*. The fiancée, together with the women of the family, (not only the girls), bring pots of beer to the husband's village. They stay outside. When the inhabitants ask them to enter, they run back some distance and only consent on being urged... and so on! The fiancée does not put down the pot she carries until her suitor has brought a

1 [among the Northern clans--Analyst]

585 goat. Shillings must be given to induce her to enter the hut, to
578 sit down, to accept water for washing her hands and food, to eat. Another ox is killed and the meat is divided as follows : the liver and the heart are for the bride's father, the leg for her mother, the *nyimba*, viz. the womb, which includes the ribs, sternum etc. for the maternal uncle. The women, when they return home, take all these pieces of meat to their several destinations. They put a skewer through the heart and liver and stick it into the ground before the bride's father's hut saying : " This is the notification of the husband's people. "

If the total number of the oxen has been remitted on the lobolo day, *the departure of the new wife* for the husband's kraal (thloma) will not be long delayed. But should there be some oxen wanting, a wise father will not allow her to go until the whole lobolo has been paid. The husband works hard to get together the other oxen. He brings them, without ceremony, together with a sovereign, which he places before the bride's father as a present, saying : " This is my spitting for you, my father ! " He does the same for the mother. He now feels the right to claim his wife. They answer : " Give us time to prepare her trousseau." The trousseau consists of two mats, two or three big spoons, some pots, a wooden platter, a pestle and a mortar, and one hoe provided by the maternal uncle, which make up all the equipment of a Nkuna bride. All her female relations meet and, after having exhorted (1) her to be obedient, to accept all the hardships she will find in her new home, they accompany her to her husband's village. This is the *hloma*. The men do not go, except the ntjumi of the bride's family. The father, on the morning before they leave, kills a fowl and *hahla*, viz. makes a sacrifice, telling his ancestors that his daughter goes to be married, and praying for her. The ntjumi,

585 (1) " Hear ! " the old women say to the bride, " you have been a good girl, so
562 far, henceforth you will be treated as a slave ! You will be accused of adultery and
593 of witchcraft. You will have no more happiness. But accept all that ! They will beat you, kill you and we shall not be able to deliver you, because we have eaten their oxen. " These exhortations are worth reproducing, as they show clearly the conditions under which the girl goes to her husband. She is not protected by the lobolo. On the contrary, the lobolo has made her the possession of the husband's family, from whom she must now accept any treatment. (See Part II).

585 immediately after his arrival, goes to the husband and to his
578 assembled relatives and tells them roughly : " Here we are ; we bring you your dog. Here it is. With us, she was reputed to be a good girl. Now we shall hear you every day say that she is lazy, does not know how to cook, has a host of lovers... All right! Kill her! Kill your dog! Have you not bought it ? She is a witch! Let her drink the magic philter, etc. " The men keep silent... " Yes, you are right. We shall beat her. But if her husband is too hard on her, we shall try to deliver her. We shall do our best to protect her ".

In the meantime the women cut the logs of the *shigiyane*, and fill the pots with water, and the feast goes on, another ox having been killed by the husband. The married pair sit on a mat and the women of the two families begin the mutual exchange of insults which are never wanting on this day! " You dogs! " one of the aunts of the girl will say, " people of no consequence! You have not even a broken pot to remove the ashes from the fireplace. You can congratulate yourselves on getting such a good wife as this, a hard worker, a splendid cook, a nice and honest girl. " An old woman of the other party answers : " Yes! If you have exhorted her sufficiently! Perhaps she will give up her bad ways, her laziness, etc... "—" Bad ways ? You may well speak of that! Look at your son! What was he? A wild beast! We have come to cut off his tail and make a man of him! "

V. *Marriage by abduction.*

588 The ~~several~~ ceremonies which we have described belong to
583 the legal marriage (ku teka, ku lobola). But there exists another way of getting a wife, and the poor (psisiwana), those who have no oxen, no pounds sterling for lobola, especially if they have no energy, have recourse to this method. It is called *ku tlhuba*. A young man in such a position, wishing to marry such and such a girl, will send a friend to her and propose a rendez-vous in the

588 bush. If she agrees to become his wife in this irregular manner,
583 she goes there and meets him. They have relations together and run to one of the relatives of the girl's mother. The family of the mother will be more lenient than the family of the father, having no right to the lobolo. The transgressors of the law will probably choose the village of the maternal uncle and settle there. The parents look everywhere for their daughter and try to get her to return home. If she is quite determined to remain with her ravisher, they let her go free, deploring their misfortune and their shame. But it is rare in the primitive state of the tribe for such a marriage not to be regularised. The thief, if he has retained any feeling of decency, will try to collect the lobolo. One morning he goes to the village of his wife's parents, and deposits a sovereign or a goat or a cock on the threshold of the hut of the girl's mother ; or he hangs a half-sovereign on the goat's neck, rubs its lips with salt to prevent it from bleating, and then shouts loudly : " We have stolen, we of such and such a clan "... People wake from their sleep, not knowing what animal has made such a noise, come out of their huts and see the culprit standing outside the fence. When he has been duly recognised, he runs away. He will perhaps bring some other presents till he has definitely
588 " lobola " his wife. This is called the *nshonshonela*. Should he
611 not succeed in bringing the regular payment, the first girl born
597 of that marriage will be the lobolo. " Nwana a ta lobola mamana wa kwe " : the child will pay for her mother. In law, all the children of such a union belong to the girl's family : a man who has not lobola has no right of property in his children. (See Part III.)

Should the woman who has been stolen by *tlhuba* go at once to live with her irregular husband in his village, her parents will arrange matters in another way. They will " go as enemies " (hi bulala), make a regular descent on the village of the thief, kill a pig, threaten to take all the furniture. The men of that village will then intercede and, in the course of time, the lobolo will be paid. (See App. VIII.)

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

SOME REMARKS ON THE MARRIAGE CUSTOMS OF THE THONGAS

583 Though somewhat different in the various clans, the marriage customs show a strong resemblance in them all and differ only in details. There are three great "moments" to be distinguished in the sequence of the rites: 1) the *buta*, betrothal, with the two official visits of the fiancé and the fiancée. 2) The *lobola*, remittance of the purchase money on which the two families have agreed and 3) the *hloma*, the ceremony of taking the bride to her husband's home. Some of the customs accompanying these principal acts are very strange and seem at first quite incomprehensible.

1) To understand them, we must observe that marriage in primitive or semi-civilised tribes is not an individual affair as it has become with us. It is an affair of the community. It is a kind of contract between two groups, the husband's family and the wife's family. What is the respective position of the two groups or families ? One of the groups loses a member, the other gains one. To save itself from undue diminution, the first group claims compensation, and the second grants it under the form of the lobolo. This remittance of money, oxen or hoes, will allow the first group to acquire a new member in place of the one lost, and so the balance will be kept. This conception of the lobola as a compensation, a means of restoring the equilibrium between the two groups, is certainly the right one.

This need of maintaining the importance of a group, the tendency to resist a lessening of that group, accounts also for some of the other customs ; all the rites which emphasise the value of the bride find their explanation there. "A hi si kola ha yene", "we are not tired of her, we would gladly keep her", say her parents by means of these rites. The reciprocal insults which take place on the day of the hloma have the same origin. The relatives of the bride do their best to show the immense superiority of their own family over the other and of their daughter over her husband. The second group defends itself as well as it can ; hence the challenges which sometimes end in a real fight.

The sham fight is probably to be explained in the same way. The boys, the brothers of the bride, soundly thrash the brothers of the husband who dare to come and take away one of the girls of the kraal. They do not like to see their family impoverished, diminished. The

583 old men carry the hoes and show them to the defenders of the kraal saying: "This is our ox!" Or they hide themselves amidst the cattle as claiming their protection, because this is certainly the only condition upon which the bride's clan would consent to receive the invaders. Mr. van Gennep is right, I think, in rejecting the old explanation of the sham fight as being a remnant of the marriage by capture, which would have been the primitive form of marriage amongst these tribes. The Thongas possess the marriage by abduction, but this is quite another thing, as we have seen.

583 591 178 2) But it is probable that some of the rites of the Thonga marriage must be explained by an older form of marriage. The Rev. W. C. Willoughby in this book on *Race Problems in the New Africa* calls the type of marriage which we have described, and which is met with in all the South African tribes, *marriage of dominion*. The system of family life which results from the marriage of dominion is patrilineal :— children will trace their descent through their father and inherit his property,— patrilocal—the mother lives in the village of the father— patripotestal—the father possesses the children and has full power over them. But in other Bantu tribes, especially in Central Africa, the system is different. There we meet with what the same author calls the *matrilineal theory of marriage*. This system is matrilocal—the wife remains in the village of her group ; matrilineal—children trace their descent through their female ancestors ; avunculipotestal—the mother's brother has power over them, not the father. They belong to the mother's group and inherit its property. Under this system, the hloma, viz. the third "moment" of the marriage of dominion, does not take place, and the lobola, the bride-price, is not so important. The husband is only a lodger or a frequent visitor in his wife's village: he is a mere begetter of other people's children, and pays for this privilege by working for his wife's group or occasionally presenting it with gifts.

It is probable that this matrilineal theory of marriage is the older and that it has developed, under various influences, into the marriage of dominion. Mr. Willoughby supposes that men having captured women in raids and brought them to their homes found that system more convenient for them, and wished to possess their regular wives in the same manner. Change in the economic conditions must have had the same result. When, owing to a more settled way of living, property increased and cattle became plentiful, it is easy to conceive that the men of the husband's group made a kind of social contract with the men of

583 the wife's group, offering a higher bride-price in order to obtain the
591 transfer of the bride to her suitor's home.

178 Now, if this is the history of the evolution of the Bantu marriage (and we shall see later on, in studying the relation of the uterine nephew with his mother's brother, that it is quite probable that it is), we may find, in comparing these two forms of marriage, the explanation of some of the Thonga rites. The position of the wife was certainly much more satisfactory, from her point of view, under the old system. She could remain with her people and her husband had but little power over her, whilst, in the marriage of dominion, she must stay in the village of another group, work for it, and perhaps be ill-treated. Does this fact not account for her flight to the bush or to another village the day before hloma, when the female relatives of the husband go and seize her by force ? She tries to hide herself under a veil, as if she wished not to be recognised; but the husband's aunts remorselessly take it from her, and as she goes to the conjugal dwelling, her friends accompany her, singing songs of mourning. These rites are certainly more readily explained if there was, in a remote past, entirely forgotten by individuals, yet still influencing the mind of the community, another state of things, when the married woman was much freer and more happy.

585 3) We find the explanation of some other ceremonies when we apply to them the theory of the *Rites of passage*. For both bridegroom and bride, there is in fact passage to a new condition of life. They pass from the position of single to that of married persons. Hence the part taken by their best friends and by the bridesmaids, from whom they are separated by their marriage. For the bride there is passage from one family to another, from one village to another.

I cannot say that I have found distinct *separation* and *marginal* rites, but aggregation rites are numerous. The *aggregation rites* are first of all the common participation in the flesh of the oxen during the feasts. Nothing makes Natives more friendly towards each other than to eat meat together. Then come the building of the wood pile, the girl's acts of civility to the husband's friends during the *tjekela* and the day after the *hloma*. These rites being collective seem to represent the union of the two families. The new wife performs them herself individually during the first week of her marriage.

584 How is it possible to explain the calculated resistance to acts of politeness on the part of both male and female visitors during the betrothal ceremonies, and even later on ? If the girls alone made a difficulty about entering the village, the hut, and sitting down on the

584 mats, drinking, eating, etc. we should say : This rite is also, on the part of the diminished group, a means of asserting its importance, of saving its dignity. But the boys do the same thing on their visit. They maintain the same disdainful attitude... This certainly arises from the fact that the two social groups look upon each other with some distrust, not yet being fully acquainted, and consequently observing a mutual reserve. But further information and a closer comparative study of Thonga rites enables me to give still another explanation.

561 The term employed to designate this rite is *kunga*. This verb is of
4/31 Ngoni (Zulu) origin. Used in a general way, it means to remit a present to a chief who has sent his emissaries to claim it. The chief "*kungisa*" viz. orders to kunga. In its ritual sense, it means to give a present to a person who refuses to do something for ritual reasons. The old Thonga expression is *alula*. This word is the reversive derivative of the verb *ala*, to refuse ; it therefore means to remove the refusal, to overcome it, to cause somebody to yield. The Kunga rite is performed on at least five different occasions : 1) for the circumcised boy on the day when he is received into the community of adults (page 93) ; 2) for the girl who has passed through the khomba initiation ; 3) for the boy who has wooed a girl, when he pays his official visit to her and to her family, and for the girl, when she returns the visit with her maids, but especially when she goes to the domicile of her husband and thus enters the married state ; 4) for the first-born child ; 5) for the woman who has lost many children and consequently is in a state of bereavement (bowumba) when she again gives birth to a child. In all these cases, the person concerned passes from one condition to another ; the circumcised from the childish to the adult stage, the suitor and his bride from the unmarried to the married state, the woman who has had her first child from the state of womanhood to that of motherhood and the bereaved woman from the state of bereavement to the normal position of a mother carrying a child on her shoulders. And here we meet with the old Bantu conception of life. This passage, in the evolution of human life, is fraught with danger. The person concerned stands on the defensive. He or she refuses to speak, to look at other people, to enter their village, or, in the case of the newly married girl, to perform her conjugal duty. Those who wish them to accept their new condition must persuade them to do so by giving them presents, generally presents of little importance, a wire bracelet, a small coin, etc. This will remove the danger.

This rite, which might be called a *defensive rite*, is therefore certainly

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561 a rite of passage and this is also proved by the fact that the money or the
431 bracelets given to the persons concerned do not remain their property. As regards the circumcised, they remit them to the chief, and the chief distributes them to the old women who are no longer able to bear children. The girl who has passed through the khomba gives them to her adopted mother, who will use them in the same way. All the money remitted to the bride will go to the master of the village, for the old women and the children. *Married people must have no share in it,* as these presents are taboo. Why ? Because they are connected with a passage, and people who have sexual relations are considered as increasing the dangers connected with these critical phases of human development, when the heart is troubled by a half-conscious fear of a new and unknown future. Amongst civilised people who have reached the era of individualism, these fears find their expression in songs and poetry. In the communistic society they express themselves by means of rites.

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541 Here are some answers to the questions of Professor Frazer on
587 marriage.
611 A man always brings his wife to his own home. This is the *tlhoma,* and it is a law. It is taboo for him to go and live with his parents-in- law, at any rate when he marries his first wife. In the course of time, when the children have grown up, when the *bukoñwana,* viz. the relations with parents-in-law, are of old standing, a man can go and live in his wife's village (See Part II). Another case in which this can be done is when a widow refuses to marry the man who legally inherits her, and gives herself to a stranger, a man of Inhambane, for instance. He does not pay the lobolo, and lives with her in her village ; but the children born of that union will belong to the family of the deceased husband.
585 There is no preparation for marriage amongst the Thongas by fasting, bleeding or keeping awake the night before. No corn or rice is thrown at the bridal pair. The bride or bridegroom is never represented at the marriage by a proxy or dummy. Conjugal relations begin immediately after marriage (see page 113), but the wife does not possess her home and her kitchen for the first year ; during that period she must cook for her mother-in-law.
583 There are no occasions on which men exchange their wives.
See practical conclusions on Marriage Rites at the end of Vol. I.

E. MATURE AGE

I. *The Bantu Ideal.*

581 The married man is called " he who has his home " (a ni le
554 kwakwe) in opposition to the single man (nkhwenda). But let
562 us say at once that the kind of individual called bachelor does
885 not abound amongst the Bantus. Only the utterly wretched, invalids, and the weak-minded, are deprived of legal marriage, which for the black man is and remains the one object in life. It is through his wife and children that he becomes somebody in society. This fact does not appear during the first year of wedlock, for the newly married woman must cook at the fireplace of her mother-in-law. She is hardly more than a servant during a whole year ; she does not possess her own pot ; and this must be so because she does not yet eat the mealies of her own garden, having ploughed her fields in her former domicile the previous year. Her husband eats with her. He is not yet
595 a lord. But if he is rich, if he is the heir of an important man, he will not be long in buying a second and third wife.

These new marriages will be contracted like the first, but with less pomp. It may even happen that the feast is held in the husband's village, if he is middle-aged and is celebrating his fifth or sixth wedding.

595 For each new wife, he will build a hut. He has begun his
342 village when building the house of his first wife, the great wife,
556 (nati lwe nkulu) as she is called, who will remain the principal
592 one whatever may happen. While, without compass, he was
361 drawing on the ground, with the marvellous instinct of the South African Native, the circumference of the circle on which the patched reed walls of his dwelling were to rise, while he was covering this circular wall with a conical roof, he was saying to himself : " I establish my home ; I inaugurate my village ". During the following years, the aim of his life will be to complete little by little another wider circle... When he has bought his

596 second wife, he will build for her also a hut of the same type.
556 But this second hut, the third, and the fourth which may come
592 afterwards, will not be erected in a straight row like a street.
231 They will form an arc, which will be prolonged so as to constitute
361 first a semi-circle and then a complete circle, if a sufficient number
815 of buildings are added. This is the ideal of the black man, to

Phot. H. Gouz

Ndjakandjala, a headman of Spilembe, with his men.

become the lord and master of a complete circular village. Most of the men do not realise this ideal. Three or four huts, a wretched quarter of a circle is all that they attain to! Some, better armed for the struggle of life, or more favoured by circumstances, succeed in closing their circle. Their cattle, for which they have also built a circular enclosure right in the middle of the square of the village, multiply and are not carried off by peripneumonia and hematuria,

595 which, in this country, decimate so many herds! Every three
592 years, theirs wives bear children. If they are boys, it is an
361 honour; the village will not lack heirs, neither will the father
556 lack arms to help and to defend him! If they are girls, it means
842 wealth; oxen will come to the family! Their brothers will not lack wives, for the sisters will be sold to provide for the brothers. Meanwhile, the huts are erected, large and small, that of the head of the family being the largest, the *malao*, those of the boys the least well kept.

Let us consider a Ronga favoured by fate, as was Gidja, of the country of Libombo, near Rikatla. His village numbered not less than twenty-four huts, with beautiful shady trees behind; notice the enclosure for the cattle and for the goats on the central place, that for the pigs behind the houses... There are cocks and hens pecking about everywhere, dogs wandering around in search of something to steal, for they receive hardly any food; a crowd of youngsters leading the cattle, and everywhere the noise of the pestles crushing the daily mealies in the large mortars. He walks about proudly in his favoured enclosure, contemplating his prosperity with pleasure. Young men are ready to do the work he gives them to do. He will treat them with beer brewed by his wives. And often the people of the neighbouring villages will join his people for dances and games on the fine square, which is surrounded and enclosed on all sides by huts.

595 And, above all things, in the evening, each of his wives will
556 bring him the pot which she has cooked for him. This is the
574 essential matrimonial duty of the wife. Not one will fail in it. Gidja, the lord of six or seven pots of mealies seasoned with a sauce of monkey nuts, will feast and be satiated (shura) every day, and that means much, for the inner capacity of a Thonga is something wonderful.

He will become large and stout, and shining, which in South Africa is a sure sign of wealth and nobility. The stouter he gets the more will he be respected. But it can easily be imagined that he cannot alone empty all these pots over which he reigns supreme. He feasts his children, but others too come to pay him visits at the evening hour when they know him to be surround-

556 ed by so many good things! Sycophants are not lacking, "Good
595 evening, son of so and so!" they say. "You are one of the
574 great men of the country." And in return for these and other compliments, the magnanimous Gidja shares his feast with his admirers!

Strangers are crossing the country and inquire where they can be received. "Go to Gidja" they are told. "A ni tshengwe, a fuya tshengwe" viz. "he is the possessor of a harem! He is not killed by famine! He has beer to drink every day! He can give food to poor people. Even then, some of it remains on the plate and is eaten by little boys and dogs in the square. There is always abundance there." And the travellers come and enter (khuleka) his village, after which they will tell in their homes the story of the magnificence of Gidja and extol his hospitality.

Thus the man who has succeeded in life becomes famous, his advice will carry weight in the discussions in which he takes part; he will perhaps be even more esteemed than the chief himself, though he does not enjoy the special prestige which the royal family owes to the blood running in its veins.

Conclusion: the greatness of an African is before all else a matter of pots, and the matter of pots is closely connected with polygamy!

885 During these years of mature age the evolution of a man is not
554 marked by special ceremonies. There is one custom however which is common to all, and which marks an advance in their social position. It is that of fixing the wax ring.

II. *Fixing the wax ring.*

885 Amongst the South Africans, the crown is not the appanage of
177 royalty. All men having reached mature age have the right to
554 adorn themselves with it. It is true, it is not a diadem of precious
301 stones, but a large ring of wax. This custom seems to have a Zulu origin. The Ba-Sutho do not know it and the Ba-Thonga, who all practise it, have taken it from the conquering tribe which owes its fortune to the famous Chaka. This habit has spread all

885 over the country from Maputju to the borders of Gaza, but only
177 during the last hundred years. This black crow[illegible] called
554 *ngiyana* (Ro.) or *shidlodlo* (Dj.), and the crowning ce[illegible]ony is called *khehla*. From this verb has come the term *makhehla*, a name given to all those who wear this ornament.

885 This ceremony is accomplished in the following way. At a
301 given time, the chief informs all the men of a certain age that
527 they must prepare their rings. The counsellors and the sons of the royal family who belong to this "class" must go to the capital. Several oxen are killed; the back tendons are carefully preserved and made into strings. This being done, the master hairdressers, that is to say those who know how to fix these strange appendages, are called in.

They come, supplied with small sticks (tinhlamalala, the central nervures of the leaves of the milala palm-tree) which they plait together with these strings made of tendons so as to form the skeleton, the circular frame of the crown. These strings are drawn through the curly hair, all round the head, so as to fix the frame of the crown above the temples. The remaining hair on the sides and behind has been previously shaven. The chief possesses a provision of wax; the wax which is preferred is not that of bees, but the rosy secretion of certain grubs which is found on some bushes, and which the young boys of the capital go and collect. This wax is mixed with different ingredients to make it black. It is fixed on the frame of sticks and shaped into a large round or oval ring, as black as jet, which can be made to shine brightly. When all is finished, they eat the flesh of the oxen, enjoy themselves, dance and celebrate this great occasion!

885 The more humble subjects crown themselves in their own
301 villages, where tonsorial artists come to adorn them. The poor go to the hairdresser, and do not use strings made of tendons (they have no ox to kill), but strings made of the fibres of a palm-tree, which are cheaper. It is said that nowadays palm-tree strings (bukuha) have almost entirely supplanted the others, the more so as they are not spoilt by the washing of the crown; whilst, if the *ngiyana* is fixed with tendons, no water must fall on it, or it would soften.

Moreover the crown must be taken care of; it can be spoilt

301 and knocked out of shape by a blow or if its owner goes through
885 thorny bushes. A *khehla* who has some self-respect will frequently
554 polish and repair this valuable ornament, for it is a sign of mature
482 age. He who has been ordered by the chief to wear it no longer
645 carries burdens on his head; his crown would be spoilt! He will
461 be accompanied by a boy who carries his parcels; he himself will only carry his stick or his assagai. He will at once be known as one of the mature men of the tribe. This is not to say that the mere fact of wearing the *ngiyana* gives the right of taking part in the important affairs of the country; the counsellors alone possess this right; but from amongst the "crowned," will be chosen the man who is sent to another chief to treat of political questions, for instance.

301 When the hair grows (for, though it is curly, it may become long), the crown rises with it and becomes more or less unsteady, which must be most uncomfortable! The best thing would be to cut the ornament off and then replace it. Mr. Mandjia, one of our neighbours at Rikatla, was probably too lazy to undertake this job, so he put a small red handkerchief between his skull and the crown to prevent it from wobbling.

765 At a certain time all the *ngiyana* disappeared from the land of
643 Nondwane. The chief Mapunga was dead! The loss, kept
554 secret for a year, had been made public, and the law requires all the
885 mature men to take off their crowns when the sovereign of the country is dead. They take the wax from the frame, and make a ball of it; this they fix on a little stick, and place this stick in the roof of their hut above the door. The frame is hung up quite close by, and they leave these objects there till the new chief orders his subjects to re-make their crowns. This shows clearly that the crowning custom is in close relation with the national life of the tribe. The "makhehla" also form special battalions in the army.

178 Nowadays, however, this custom is not observed as religiously
854 as in bygone times. Life is harder, one must go and earn pounds sterling in the port of Lourenço Marques, or in the gold mines, and one can no longer indulge in a lazy life! It may therefore happen that a poor man will refuse to wear the crown, and say to

178 his chief : " What shall I eat ? Will you feed me ? Must I not
554 carry burdens on my head ? I do not know what to do with the ngiyana. " — " Tiko dji bolile, " say the old people shaking their heads, " A ke he na nao, " that is to say : " The country is falling into decay, going to the dogs. There is no longer any law... " Oh! the good old times!

F. OLD AGE

888 The man however grows older, older. His hair and his beard turn white, the wrinkles deepen on his face. He stoops. His skin no longer shines with health and corpulence. His wives die and his glory fades. His crown loses the lustre of bygone times. If a branch scratches it, if a knock spoils it, he has not a shilling to pay the repairer! He is forsaken. He is less respected and often only a burden unwillingly supported. The children laugh at him. If the cook sends them to carry to the lonely grandfather his share of food in his leaky old hut, the young rascals are capable of eating it on the way and of depriving the old man of his meal, afterwards pretending that they have done what they were told! And when, between two huts, under shelter of the hedge of reeds, he warms his round-shouldered back in the rays of the setting sun, huddled there, quite weighed down by his years, lost in some senile dream, they point to the decrepit form and say to each other : " He! Shikhunkununu! " — " It is the bogey-man, the ogre! "

People of mature age show scarcely more consideration for old people than do the young ones. Lately in the district of Matjolo, an old man and an old woman, Kobole and Minyokwana, were forsaken by their children, who were moving to another part of the country. They were left in a miserable shed, merely a roof supported by some poles without any reeds to close in the wall. Some compassionate souls took pity on this poor wretched couple, who had fallen into second childhood and did not even know what they were saying.

888 In time of war, old people die in great numbers. During moments of panic, they are hidden in the wood, in the palm-tree swamps, while all the able-bodied population run away. They are killed by the enemy, who spares no one (it is the law of war), or they die in their hiding-places of misery and hunger!

As may be seen, the eve of life is very sad for the poor Thonga. There are however children who, to the end, show much devotion to their parents. The most to be pitied are those who fall to the charge of remote nephews or cousins. They can only repeat in a broken voice the sad refrain : " Ba hi shanisa! " — " They treat us very badly! "

G. DEATH

1. *The last days.*

763 Manyibane, the headman of a big village near Rikatla, is
513 dangerously ill. The men of his kraal, his friends, have come
834 to inquire about the illness (kamba shinyonga) and have learned
761 that it is serious. They issue this order to all the inhabitants : " Tlulan psilawen! " — " Keep each of you in his sleeping place, (viz. the men to the right of the hut, the women to the left) and have no more relations. It is taboo! The man would die! " Should visitors come, they are not allowed to enter the village. They must have kept " pure " for two days at least. Two sticks are planted on either side of the door of the hut, and a third is put over them so as to close the entrance. " It is the way black people have of making their proclamation, " says Mboza. " Everybody will know that a dying man is there and nobody will come in. " Should another man of the village have had relations with the same woman as the patient, he is doubly prohibited from seeing him, because the patient would break out into perspiration and die immediately. This is the great law of *matlulana*, as we shall see.

754 Of course the *ñanga* (doctor) has been called already. He

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754 has tried his best. The bone-thrower also! He has perhaps discovered that the disease was due to a wizard. He has found him out by his art. The suspected one is called and solemnly ordered to heal the patient. He is shut up in the hut with him, and he must recall his deadly spells and restore the man to health. But this has not succeeded, any more than the doctor's drugs!

The dying man calls together all his relations, and utters his last wishes before them : " Somebody has not come ; go and fetch him " he says. When they are all present, he says to them : " All right, my brethren, my children. I wanted to see you before dying. I wanted you, especially so and so, who has been so good to me. The others hated me ; you always showed me love. Henceforth I entrust to you the care of my people. " He will probably designate his successor, who is to be the great one (nkulukumba), and recommend the others to obey him.

763 Then he reminds them of his debts, those he owes and those which are owing to him. " So and so has lobola our daughter and has not paid all the oxen... " He reveals to them also the place where he has buried some treasure. " Go to such a place, in such a hut, and you will find it. " He does not say a word about his wives and about their future, as such questions will be settled according to the laws relating to widows, which are well known.

When the breathing becomes shorter, those who watch over him begin to *bend his limbs* (ku khondla psiro (Ro.) ; ku putju (Dj.).) This is a very old custom, and is deemed so important that the operation begins before death, lest the rigidity of the body should prevent its being accomplished. When the bending of the limbs had been too long delayed, it has sometimes been necessary to break them. To avoid this disagreeable possibility, one may see those attending to the dying man take his hands gently and bring them close up to his chin, and fold his legs against his body. When asked why they do so, they will say : " It is the law. This is the way of caring for the dead (bekisa). " Or : " It is in order to have smaller graves to dig... " But I do not think this utilitarian reason to be the true one. Amongst the Ba-Ronga, where graves are dug in the soft sand, there would not be the least difficulty in making a larger hole.

763 Some ethnographers have adopted the "embryonic explanation" to account for this custom, which is found all through primitive humanity, from the Mousterian age down to the first inhabitants of Egypt, and amongst a great many uncivilised tribes all over the earth (1). They say: "Primitive man placed the corpse in the attitude of the child before birth because he believed that death is but a new birth, the beginning of a new life..." I asked Viguet if he thought this to be the true original [843] explanation. He told me he did not know ; he would not deny it. But there is one fact which prevents its acceptance ; the Thongas have never done any dissection, and are ignorant of the position of the foetus in the womb. So probably are all primitive peoples. This kind of knowledge came much later in the evolution of mankind. The intention of this rite is more probably to place a dying man in the sitting position which a Thonga generally adopts when in his hut, as the grave is *but a hut in the earth* and he is meant to continue his life in it exactly as before. All the other burial rites confirm this explanation, as we shall see.

Manyibane is dead... In somé districts they see that he does not die with *closed hands*. It is taboo, because then the children of the dead will quarrel (Viguet). They close his eyes and take away all his clothes. In the Mpfumo clan, they *wash the body*. Afterwards they cover him with an old rug. No one cries. Lamentations are absolutely prohibited before the burial is over ; it is taboo. It would " break the back " of the men who have to perform the funeral rites.

764 Should there be *strangers* in the village when the death takes
761 place, they will run away quickly to avoid defilement ; otherwise
783 they would have to take part in all the purifying ceremonies of the following days.

372 Without delay, the *fire* which was burning in the funeral hut is removed and carried out into the square. It must be carefully kept alight. This is a taboo. Should there be rain, it must be protected. All the inhabitants must use this fire during the next five days. It will be put out by the doctor, with sand or water, on the day of the dispersion of the mourners. He will then

(1) See my paper in *Anthropos* Sept. 1910 : " Two burials at twenty thousand years distance."

764 light a new one, and everyone will take from it embers to kindle
761 his own fire in the different huts. It is one of the conditions of the purification of the village.

783 The same day young people are sent to all the relatives in
202 the neighbourhood to announce the death. Even the relations who are absent far away, in Johannesburg, must be informed; this is done in the following way. Someone takes a handful of grass, lights it and, when it is on fire, throws it in the direction of the absent one, saying: "Your brother, here, is dead. Do not fear. May your enemies (viz. your white employers) have consideration and love for you, that you may find sleep and health."

II. *The grave.*

764 The men of the village then go out to dig the grave. They choose a place behind the hut of the deceased or somewhere further off in the little forest which generally surrounds the village; or in the *ntimu*, the sacred wood, if he were one of the guardians of the forest (1), one belonging to the elder branch of the family.

First of all the diggers see that a tree is near the grave on which to hang some of the belongings of the deceased (those which will be kept but will have to be purified); they dig a hole of about six feet in length, four in width, and two and half or three deep. This first hole can be dug with ordinary hoes. Then, at the side of it, they excavate a second hole, more or less circular in form, using for this a light wooden board, generally the rim of an old basket. The sides of the hole are well smoothed by means of this instrument. In the Northern clans they sometimes smear it with mud taken from the river; they also put a reed beside the corpse, and grass, which grew in water, is spread at the bottom of the grave (2). So the grave, is in a way, double. It presents

(1) In the Southern clans the grave of the husband or the wife is dug in front of the hut in which they were living (as this hut is to be abandoned); in the case of a child, he will be buried at the side of the hut (as, in this case, the hut will not be destroyed.) The grave is surrounded by a fence made of sticks and plastered with clay. Thus people will remember where the corpse has been buried.

(2) Compare this custom with the rite of burying little children and twins in wet soil.

764 two levels, the higher, the large hole, gives access to the smaller,
775 the circular ovoid grave. The first is called *the square* (hubo) of the deceased, the second is *his hut* (yindlu or shinyatu). He will dwell in the hut, but come out from it and sit in his square underground, just as he did when living in his village (1). (Elias.)

764 When the grave has been duly dug, the diggers call the relatives
787 to inspect their work, and show them that their deceased relation has been well cared for. The lower grave, being excavated in the wall of the higher, forms a kind of vault. It seems as if it were considered necessary that the earth which will protect the head should not be disturbed. When all the mourners have come at the call of the diggers, it sometimes happens that the vault of the grave falls in. This is a very bad sign. The cause of the accident is this ; either the person who has bewitched the deceased is present or, amongst the assistants, there is one who has been guilty of " matlulana " against him (2)! The grave is a *mondjo*, a magical means of divination

III. *The burial.*

764 The diggers may be four in number, but they are generally
761 only two ; the master of the mourning (nwinyi wa nkosi), who is the brother next to the deceased, and another younger near relative, for instance a son. Both must be married, because married people alone can get rid of the defilement of death by the " lahla khombo, " which we shall explain later. Should an unmarried son be asked to undertake the work of burial, he-

(1) In some clans of the North there is only one hole and no excavation at the side. But what I have described here is the rule amongst the Ba-Ronga, except where civilisation has already modified the old custom.

(2) On this point Mboza and Elias did not agree. Mboza said that the falling in of the grave can only be caused by the presence of the wizard who killed the deceased. Elias asserts that the same accident happens if one of those present has *tjemakanya* the deceased, viz. crossed his way, that is to say has had sexual relations with the same woman as the deceased. (This is matlulana). As the hut of the deceased knew this man, so his new hut in the ground recognises and reveals him !

764 would answer : " How can you propose such a thing to me ?
761 Am I not immature (mbisi, properly raw) ? I am not yet ripe! Is defilement of death not there ? With whom could I wash it away ? " (Viguet). The first digger is also called " the one of the head, " the second, " the one of the feet, " because one of them will carry the corpse by the head, the other by the feet. Women may also bury a corpse upon occasion.

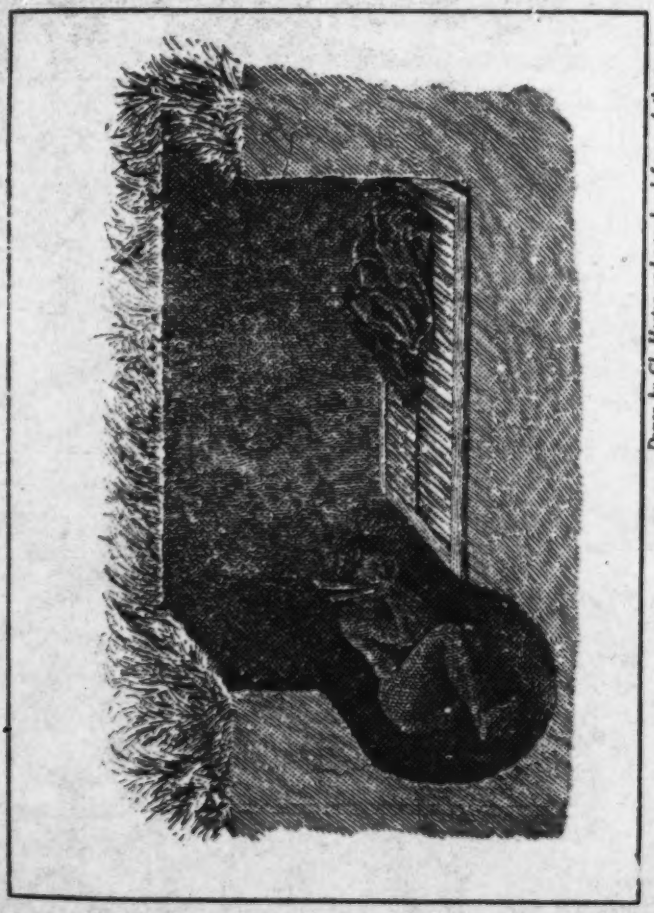
764 So the grave-diggers go back to the hut and begin to wrap the corpse in his rugs and in his mat (ku tjimba). They stitch the mat twice (to prevent it from slipping ?) (Viguet). They generally wait till sunset to perform the burial. When the time has come, they make a hole in the wall of the hut on the right side, as the husband dwells in the right half of the house, the wife in the left half. The corpse must not be carried out of the hut by the door, but by that artificial opening (1). So he leaves the hut head foremost (2). They sometimes stop up their noses with the leaves of a bush called ngupfana, which has a strong scent, in order not to perceive the smell of death (moya wa lifu). They march slowly, without a word, men and women following them silently. The " one of the head " goes down to the first level,
764 the one of the feet follows him. They have already put in the
778 place for the head a piece of wood, a piece of a branch of *nkanye*,
769 their sacred tree, one foot long and three inches broad, to be used as a pillow. At the bottom, on the soil, they stretch some old rugs. They lay the corpse down (3) on its left side, the head on the pillow. The grave has been dug in such a way that its long axis is directed towards that cardinal point whence the ancestors came, so that the deceased, having his head slightly

(1) In the Hlabi clans, the corpse is carried through the door, but the plaster on both sides of the door (marimba) is beaten and falls down. It will be repaired later on. In the Northern clans the hut of the deceased is not so strongly tabooed as amongst the Ba-Ronga. When it has been purified it will be used again.

(2) Comparative Ethnography : In Switzerland it is a common saying that a corpse must leave the house feet foremost.

764 (3) The Ba-Ngoni place their dead in the grave in the sitting position, a knife in
513 their hands, as they are a race of murderers! (Viguet). It may be that the reclining position given to the corpse by the Ba-Ronga, is the result of an evolution. At any rate, this is not the true sleeping position, as Natives generally do not bend their limbs when sleeping.

764 bent backwards, is intended to look in that direction (1). Now
769 they take away from the deceased all those rugs in which they



Drawn by Cl. Heaton and reproduced from « Anthropos ».
A Ronga in his grave.

had wrapped him, and cut them through the middle with a knife, making a large opening in each of them as well as in the mats, also

(1) I attended on December 17th 1908, the burial of one of my neighbours at Rikatla, called Sokis, and described the rites which I witnessed that day in the paper already quoted, published by *Anthropos*, September 1910.

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764 in the pieces of clothing which have all been brought and which
823 must be thrown into the grave. "Everything must *hefemula*, breathe its last, just the same as the deceased," said Spoon. "It is taboo." No iron must be put into the grave. Iron, black iron, is *ndjoba* ; it is dangerous to the deceased, because it does not decay as quickly as the corpse, the rugs and the mats... It must not be buried. Copper and brass still less! Because they do not even change colour. "These would call Death to the village because they remain shining ; they would shine for Death and point out other people of the kraal saying : Kill!" (Viguet) Copper and brass bracelets as well as white snuff boxes are called *nhlale*, not *ndjoba* (1).

It is interesting to notice how the different belongings of the dead are dealt with, and where they are put. There are two categories. Some must disappear with the deceased, some will be kept.

To the first category belong above all his rugs ; they are wrapped round his body. He sleeps in them ; they must not be tied, however, because it is taboo to tie a corpse ; the spirit, *shikwembu*, would become angry at being imprisoned and would cause evil (2). The mats are spread in the first hole, as well as the old jackets and trousers, because there the deceased will come and sit on them, when he goes out of his hut to rest in his square. The earthen pots, especially the old ones, are broken on the grave afterwards "to show anger against death" (Elias). The mug, which is one of them, may be occasionally put on the grave, pierced at the bottom, and offerings of beer will be poured into it later on for the dead. All these perishables are to die with him. They are called his filth (thyaka ra yena). Objects of the first category are sometimes burnt in the Northern clans.

(1) It is sometimes a matter of discussion to know what is *ndjoba* and what is not. I saw the digger tear off the buttons from the trousers of Sokis, when he was cutting them through, and throw them out of the grave. An old woman, thinking perhaps that they were not of such an incorruptible nature as iron, put them in again, and again he threw them out.

(2) It would even seem that no knot must enter a grave. Two bits of skin tied together and forming the clothing of Sokis round the loins were first untied and then thrown into the grave.

764 *The second category* includes the articles which are preserved as having still some value ; they will be hung on the tree, or placed at the foot of the tree near the grave, or in front of the abandoned hut, and will be duly purified during the next few days, as we shall see. Good baskets, new pots, assagais (1), knives, hoes etc., belong to the second category. They will afterwards be distributed amongst

Drawn by Cl. Heaton from a photo of H. A. Junod and reproduced from "Anthropos".

The grave of Sokis, a man of Rikatla.

(Sokis being an exorcist, a little hut has been built on his grave).

the heirs. In the Northern clans, seeds taken from the store of the deceased are sometimes also thrown into the grave with the words : " Go with your seeds. "

764 But let us return to the burial. The " one of the head " officiates
769 in the grave ; then all the relations help him to fill the hole. They

(1) The blade but not the handle, which is included in his " filth " and which is broken. " The handle is *he*, the blade is not *he*. "

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764 push the sandy soil with their hands. With great care they
769 remove every piece of root, as if to make the sand perfectly clean. This is a taboo dictated by respect for the deceased. To do otherwise would mean "to throw him away" (tshukumeta). The head has been covered with a towel and the earth is brought near it very gently. Now the digger takes two twigs from the branch of a male nkanye (the nkanye is a dioecious vegetable) and puts them into the right hand of the deceased, which is seen emerging from the rugs near his cheek. When the earth reaches the level of this arm, the latter is stretched out slowly so as to cause the two twigs to emerge. This stretching process goes on as long as it is possible to draw the arm outwards, the hole being gradually filled in. When the arm is fully extended, the digger clutches (wutla) one of the twigs and gives it to one of his helpers, who keeps it; the second remains in the hand of the deceased. Such is, at any rate, the regular way of performing the *rite of the twig*. But often one twig only is put in the hand and it is taken away as soon as the earth reaches it, without any stretching out of the arm; or it is made to emerge from the sand by gently pulling all the time, till the grave is filled in, so that, when the tumulus is formed, the end of the twig is still to be seen. The younger brother will then take it to perform the religious rite. The twig is called the *mhamba*, a word which we translate generally by offering, but which designates any object by means of which men enter into relation with the spirits of the ancestors. The officiating person sits at the foot of the tumulus. All the people sit round the grave silently, the men nearer, the women farther off. He holds the twig with the right hand and turns it round his head, making circular figures in the air (1). Then he pronounces the sacramental syllable *Tsu, tsu, tsu*, two or three times, prolonging the sound; he has called the spirits. He prays: "You, my ancestors, who are assembled to day... Do you not see this? You have taken him. I am alone now. I am dead! I pray you, who are yonder (kolaho), as he has gone back to you, that

(1) This is the kind of sacrifice called *litsañwa*, explained in Part VI, Chap. II. Its aim is to secure a good reception for the deceased on the part of the paikwemba, viz. the ancestor gods.

764 we may remain in peace. He did not leave us in anger. Let
769 us mourn him gently, in peace. Let us help each other to mourn him well, even our parents-in-law from amongst whom he has taken his wife." It may be that he forgets to say something which ought to be said; then some of his hearers remind him quietly of the omission and he adds the words to his prayer.

764 *The wailing* (ku djila nkosi). As soon as he has finished praying, those present commence crying; the wailing begins. The women get to their feet and shout loudly, throwing themselves on the ground. The wife of the deceased cries more than any one else: "I remain alone in the lonely plain (libalen). Where have you gone? You have left me." The wailing generally starts on a very high note and finishes a little lower, expressing the pain of the heart in a touching, penetrating manner. Here is one of these sentences, which can hardly be called a song. I heard it in 1893 at the burial of a young woman who was found drowned in the lake of Rikatla.

O my mother! O my mother! You have left me, where have you gone?! (1)

The parents-in-law lament over their daughter, the new widow. Everyone then begins to lament over his own relations who have recently died. The brothers weep together without shouting. They say: "You have gone first. We shall soon follow you, because there is attraction in death."

It is during the mourning that pots, handles of assagais, etc. are broken over the grave.

761 Let us stop a little while at this point.

783 We have seen enough already to observe that, for the Thongas, death
765 (lifu) is not only a sad event, a great cause of pain on account of the bereavement, but a dreadful contaminating power which puts all objects and people in the neighbourhood of the deceased, all his relatives, even those dwelling far away, working in Johannesburg for instance, into a state of uncleanness. This uncleanness is very dangerous indeed. It kills, if not properly treated. All are not affected in the same way. There are concentric circles round the deceased: the widows are the

(1) See for the notes of this song Part V. Ch. III. B.

765 inner circle and will undergo a very rigorous purification ; the grave
783 diggers come next ; then the inhabitants of the bereaved village, the
relations residing in other villages, even the relatives of the wives of the
761 deceased. All these being unclean are placed beyond the pale of
834 society : "Muti wu tjumile," "the village is dark," is the technical
expression. This marginal period lasts longer for those who are
839 most affected ; one year and more for the widows, one month for the village, five or six days only for the mourners from outside. But there are many taboos in connexion with this period. Sexual relations are severely prohibited amongst married people, but the *gangisa* is not so strongly objected to, at any rate in some districts. We shall also meet with the aggregation rites by which re-entry into the ordinary mode of life is secured. The funeral rites may last for one year and are very complex. There are three great moments in the sequence of these rites : 1) *The Great Mourning* which lasts a few days, just after the burial, generally only five days. Here the purification is essentially medical and aims at cleansing the persons and the objects which were directly in contact with the deceased. 2) *The sexual rites* which tend to purify the collective life of the village by the removal of its defilement. 3) *The family rites*, consisting in gatherings of all the relatives, and accompanied by religious ceremonies. These seem to aim at restoring the life of the family, viz. of the social group, which has been diminished by the death of one of its members.

768 This general sequence is found in all the clans. But the rites themselves differ greatly ; I shall try to depict these differences clearly. My information is more complete as regards the Ronga clans, but I owe to Viguet some entirely new and very interesting material regarding the Hlabi rites.

IV. *The Great Mourning of the first five days.*

1) The Great Mourning amongst the Ba-Ronga.

764 Just after the burial, all the inhabitants of the village go to
783 the lake or the river to bathe. The grave-diggers nibble a
[824] *ndjao*, the root of a juncus which has magical power. Special rites will then be performed for the widows. We shall describe

764 them in the next chapter. When they come back from the
783 pool, one of the men climbs on the hut and removes from its top the crown of woven grass, which was its glory during the life of its master. The hut participates in the general state of uncleanness of all his belongings. This crown will be put before the door to close it, and no one will dare to enter any more till the day of the crushing of the hut.

In the Mpfumo clans, that first evening, the grave diggers have some preliminary purification rites to go through: 1) a *hondla*, viz. an ablution with leaves of the nkuhlu tree which have been crushed in a mortar with some water; 2) in former times they used to make a pipe with the shell of a raw sala, place in it an ember and a little hen's dung, and *smoke* this disgusting mixture.

765 From the first day, the grave diggers and the widows, when
783 eating, must use special spoons *(psihanti)* made from old broken calabashes. It is taboo for them to take food with their fingers from the common plate during the five days of the Great Mourning.

The night comes. All the widows sleep in the open, their huts, which belonged to the deceased, being taboo. If it rains, they sleep in the other huts of the village.

765 On the following day, the *doctor* comes and proceeds to
755 the medical purification of the widows and of the grave-diggers. This will consist in three successive *vapour baths*, on
783 the first, third and fifth day after death. These *mahungulo* are administered in the same way as the one I have already described in connection with the infantile rites (p. 55). But the drugs boiled in the pot and the pills burnt in the fire are considered very powerful, especially those of the first day, so much so that the pot in which they have been prepared must be broken on the grave. The two grave-diggers and the first widow must be exposed together to this particularly powerful disinfectant, the widow keeping on her old clothing during the operation. The second and third bath, those provided for the other widows, are not so strong, and the pot can be kept. In the case of these the widow does not enter together with the grave-diggers. These rites, as

765 well as the obligation of using special spoons, refer only to the
783 diggers and the widows.

Other rites must be performed by the whole community.

302 First the *cutting of the hair*, which must be complete for the widows and the near relations. Men sometimes cut only one strand on each side, women cut from the forehead to the nape of the neck. The operation is performed either by the doctor or by anybody who is familiar with it, and the instrument used is either an iron razor or a bit of glass. They say this shaving is an act of respect for the dead, also a sign of sadness and a means of preventing the *mayiha*, the impression of the hair standing on end from fear of death. Should mourners forget to cut their hair, they might lose their senses, and become delirious (hahama).

765 Then they put on *malopa*, viz, pieces of dark blue cotton
783 cloth which have been used for a long time amongst the Ba-Ronga.
604 The first widow must have them before she enters the enclosure of the second vapour bath.

A third general rite is the *luma milomo*, the purification of the food of the deceased. This is not a medicinal operation, but it seems that, by this act, every relative removes from himself the danger which is in the contaminated food. The word *luma*, which we shall often find in the Thonga ritual, means originally to bite (like a dog) or to cause violent, internal pain (colic or pains of labour). But in the ritual terminology it means to accomplish certain rites in relation to some given food in order to remove the danger which is attached to it. The *milomo* are seeds of each kind of cereal which the deceased had in his storehouses. Some beans, grains of maize, kaffir corn, kaffir peas, etc., are cooked and poured into one of the baskets (lihlelo) of the deceased. The *ntukulu*, viz. the uterine nephew, the son of the sister of the deceased, is first called. It is he who must begin the rite and this is so important that, when people go to pay their mourning visit, they always take with them a girl or a boy who is a " ntukulu " of the one they mourn. The child stands before the pot, his feet together. The master of the mourning, (in this case, the first widow) kneels before him, takes a few drops from the pot, and some of the cooked food which remains at the bottom, and ppurs

765 this between his great toes. He bends his body and rubs the
783 two great toes against one another. Then he turns his back to
604 the place and goes away. He must not look behind : it is taboo. Then the other relatives say : " Let us all go and *luma milomo*. " He has given them the right to do so.

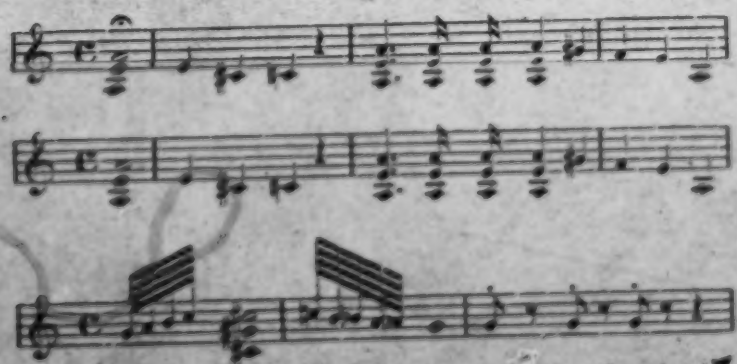
765 A little of the *milomo* is carefully kept in a pot for months.
783 When relatives who were absent on the day of the death come back from Johannesburg or from elsewhere, they must perform this ceremony before entering the village and eating any food in it. " Ba yila muti " — " they are taboo to the village." The rule applies only to relatives. Other people may very well eat from the deceased's store of food without any harm, as its contamination is dangerous only to his family. Another variety of this rite consists in preparing light beer with the mealies of the dead and taking first one mouthful which must be spat out on the right side, then a second one on the left side, after which one is allowed to drink.

765 The *gardens* of the deceased must also be purified, and this is
783 done by the rite called *baninga mabele*, to give light to the mealies.
415 The widows and all the female relatives go to his fields holding an old and empty *shikutja*. The shikutja is the hard shell of a sala fruit, the size of an orange, in which has been kept the provision of vegetable *tihuhlu* fat (see Part IV) and which is still impregnated with it. The women set fire to it and walk through the gardens holding it up and illuminating the fields. This is perhaps in relation to the idea that death means darkness, and that its contamination is " black " (ntima) so long as the cleansing has not taken place.

765 During the five days of the Great Mourning, relatives and
574 friends come to pay the *official mourning visit* (1). They enter the village, the women shouting their lamentations (mikulungwana). Some one leads them to the grave and they walk round it uttering cries of mourning, taking leave of the deceased. At the burial of Sokin, I heard a woman saying with a trembling voice : " Goodbye! You have gone! Do not forget us. Remember Mulalen."

(1) This visit can be paid one, two, or three months later on, because, as they say, " about a pot boil," — " the mourning does not get rotten." But it is only during the five days that dances take place.

765 Mulalen was Sokis' little daughter. They bring with them
574 presents, five hundred reis, a hen, a goat, some light beer, perhaps
177 a mat for the widow because hers has been thrown away or a piece
273 of mourning cloth. The inhabitants receive them politely, and spread mats on the ground for them.. They tell each other the news (djungulisana). Then after having *luma*, they eat and drink. The Ba-Ronga have their drink already prepared: it is the red wine
765 which Banyan merchants sell to them all over the country. The
539 visitors get drunk. They dance, and the mourning ceremony turns into an orgy with dances and songs of all kinds. The singing during this Great Mourning consists either of war songs executed by the men, which are very impressive, or of ordinary dancing songs, the licentious ones being particularly appropriate and being performed by women. (Annotatio 9)[1]. In fact they are the proper mourning songs, those which are specially chosen when it is wished duly to lament a great man. I have witnessed these performances at a mourning ceremony of the " breaking of the hut " and shall refer to this subject again. In Vol. II. Part V Ch. II. B. I shall quote some of the mourning songs which have a peculiar stoic character. Here are two others from a collection made by Mrs Audéoud, the wife of one of our missionaries. They were sung at the death of the chief Tshutsha, near Makulane in the Maputju country. One of these was a war song accompanied with drums. It sounded as follows :



1 [see p. 511 in these categories or in 116--Analysis]

765 533 The other is a curious apostrophe to the wizards who were believed to have bewitched the deceased, and means : " Good bye, wizard! Good bye, wizard! You will kill people. You come to kill people, you come during the night. "

765 783 But the *closing day* arrives at last, the *day of the sprinkling* (shuba). When the grave-diggers have well perspired in their vapour bath, the doctor takes the pot in which the medicine is still boiling. All the women sit down with their children on their backs, the men stand in a line, holding their assagais and sticks in their hands. The doctor sprinkles his decoction over them all with a branch covered with leaves. The children cry because the burning drops hurt them. The women try to hide behind each other. The men gesticulate as if striking enemies with their assagais ; this is to show that their arms are strong and that they can now go to the war, as it would have been taboo for them to join the army before this purification had taken place. Should a man be absent from home, his sticks are also brought to the sprinkling to be purified (1). Then the doctor goes with his pot, sprinkling all the village, the huts, the doors, the backs of the roofs, the fence, the belongings of the deceased which are kept to be distributed amongst the heirs. After this operation, the village is pure as far as material things are concerned. The contamination which had fallen on all of them by reason of their owner's death is removed. Before the sprinkling it would have been dangerous to remove anything. Now if any one should have left anything in the kraal before the death, he can come and recover it. This is the act by which " the mourning is scattered " (hangalasa nkosi).

765 292 Visitors go home, having put on their *malopa*, if they are Ba-Ronga ; strings of milala palm leaves round their heads, their necks, arms, and legs, if they belong to Northern clans. The custom of wearing a white handkerchief round the head is spreading. If a goat is killed, every one wears a bracelet made of its skin round the wrist, and the widow and the principal grave-digger

(1) In the Northern clans, says Viguet, a little of this mixture is kept to sprinkle, visitors during the following days, because " they are taboo for the things of the village, not having been cleansed ; " (ba yila pea la matin, hikuba a ba basiwanga.)

765 put strings, made from the same skin, over their breasts. The
292 widow adds new strings when other goats are killed during the mourning visits which will take place later on, and until the adjudication of the inheritance. It is a sign that her husband is dead (a feliwile).

2) The Great Mourning in the Northern clans.

765 The foregoing is the sequence of the rites of the Great Mourning
783 in the Ronga clans. In the Northern clans, according to Viguet, the same elements are found, but in another form.

825 As soon as the mourning lamentations begin, the grave-diggers
278 send some men to fetch the *tinyele*, which are bits of skin taken from the soles of elephants' feet. These are burnt on charcoal, together with cocks' dung, and the mourners come and inhale the smoke with reeds, when they are tired of wailing. The *tinyele* are considered to be a powerful medicine. It is taboo to eat or even to snuff before having inhaled this smoke.

765 That first night, everyone sleeps in the open, and the
783 grave-diggers are not allowed to use their mats. They must cut grass to cover them for fear that their impurity might contaminate the mats. As usual, sexual relations are suspended between married people, but the *bugango* is not taboo in the Northern clans, as girls (psigango) are not wives (basati). When, on the following days, visitors come to the mourning, they go straight to the grave with a small basket of mealies and spread them over it saying. "Go! Die! You have left us." This spreading of mealies is a *mhamba*, an offering. Then the doctor comes. It seems that his operations last only three days. There are no vapour baths properly speaking, but the doctor burns his powders together with bits of bark in broken pots, and all the mourners come and inhale the smoke through reeds, as they did on the first day.

The *purification of the food* is performed by a rite which corresponds with the *lumisa milomo* of the Rongas. The doctor

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783

cooks the mealie pap together with a certain drug. He prepares "bupsa bya muri," the medicinal porridge. The grave-diggers make a ball of this food, while it is still hot, and act as if they were throwing some of it into their mouths, but in reality they throw it over their shoulders. Then they put some more porridge into their mouths and eat it. The master of the mourning then takes the food and goes all over the village to perform this ceremony for all present. This is done also for the visitors arriving during the following days. Under no other condition would they be allowed to eat food in the village!

As regards the purification of the food for relatives who may come for a visit later on, after the Great Mourning, it is obtained by the rite called *mafularela*. "Fularela" means to turn one's back to another person. The day the absent one comes back to the mortuary village, the master of the mourning, the woman who has begun the *hlamba ndjaka* (see later on), takes one of the big wooden spoons which are used to distribute the porridge; she pours water into it and puts salt into the water. Then she puts into it a glowing cinder. The water partly evaporates. She then kneels down in front of the new comer, turning her back to him, passes the spoon round her waist from left to right and afterwards gives it to him to drink; this ceremony removes the *yila* of the food. Should it not be performed the food would cause disease or even death to the returning relative.

The master of the mourning, or of the death (ñwinyi wa rifu), the wife of the deceased or the grave-digger who held the head in the burial, accomplishes a second act of purification or of strengthening for all the mourners; it is called the *nganganyu*. The doctor takes a bulb of a big Lilliacea called *gonu'a* (Crinum Forbesii), crushes it, adds to it some medecine and warms it on a stone which has been heated in the fire. The operation then begins with the infants. The grave-digger covers his fingers with this substance and, standing behind the child, puts the fingers of both hands into its umbilicus and brings them round its waist, pressing them firmly against the skin until they meet again on the spine. Should a child not yet have had the string tied round his 'ains (boha puri, see page 56), the strap of its ntehe alone will be

765 anointed with the medicine. As regards adults, the operation of
783 *maganyo* is performed as follows ; the master of the mourning
passes his hand down from the knee to the toes. This rite[1] is
516 evidently in connexion with the act of walking, which is thus purified, and with standing upright (yima), which means health and strength.

765 *Cutting the hair* is also a medicinal act amongst the Hlabis.
783 The physician takes a broken pot, pours into it water and a purifying powder, washes the head of the deceased's wife with
302 this preparation and cuts her hair with a razor. Everyone takes a little of the mixture and washes his own head, and they then shave each other. The hair is thrown away into the bush, not on the grave.

765 The Great Mourning is concluded by the *phunga*, the sprinkling,
783 corresponding to the Ronga *shuba*, which is performed exactly in the same way while the water is still boiling. The doctor sprinkles
177 a whole potful on the people ; then he pours fresh water into the
231 pot and sprinkles the doors, the back part of the kraals of the oxen and of the goats. —"How about the pigs ?" I asked Viguet. He laughed heartily! —"The pigs? They are nothing ! They have come from the White people They are so new to the country that lately the Pedis killed them outside the villages and the men only ate their flesh!" The pig has no part in the Bantu ritual!

V. *Sexual rites of purification.*

765 This is a most curious and mysterious subject and, to understand
783 it thoroughly, it is necessary to penetrate deeply into the Bantu mind and to forget our own conceptions of conjugal life. I hope
834 none of my readers will be shocked by ceremonies which are evidently performed with the greatest earnestness and are a real aspiration toward purity, purity as it is conceived by a tribe still plunged in the dim notions of collective morality.

1 [among the Northern clans --Analyst]

765 These rites are somewhat different in the Hlabi and Ronga clans.
783 They are called in the Northern clans *hlamba ndjaka*, in the
834 Southern *lahla khombo*. I will begin with the description of the first, as being the most characteristic. Viguet, who has seen them practised, and who took part in them himself, gave me a graphic description of them.

Ndjaka means two things. Firstly, the objects left by the deceased, which will pass to his heirs in the course of time. The heirs are called *badyi ba ndjaka*, the eaters of the ndjaka. But *ndjaka* also signifies the frightful malediction accompanying death: "it is something which kills a great many men." Therefore the *ndjaka* must be washed away; *hlamba* means precisely to wash away.

This malediction or dangerous impurity contaminates objects, which must be cleansed by the sprinkling (phunga) as we have seen; but it affects still more deeply the village as a whole, the *muti*, the organism which is at the base of all Thonga society, and which has a life of its own, a collective life. That life must be purified. During the whole mourning, and even during the last days of the deceased, when death was threatening, all sexual relations have been forbidden. Why? Because the village was in a state of contamination... "Muti wu tjumile." It cannot return to the ordinary course of life without a special collective purification.

765 Let us see how this is managed on a particularly serious occasion,
783 when the headman or other great personage dies. Some weeks after the burial, all the married people of the village assemble, the men apart, the women apart. They discuss in what order the different couples must proceed to the purifying act. They question each other to know if each one has duly observed the law of continence. Should one of them confess that he has sinned (dyoha), he will have to take the lead. Should he have sinned and not confess it, he will be very guilty. But he himself will suffer for his bad action; he has stolen the inheritance (a yibe ndjaka), and it will not be wonderful if he begins to cough, grows thin and dies of consumption! If there has been no transgression of the law, then the master of the mourning will have to begin. He goes out of the village with his wife

765 to the bush. There they have sexual relations in the ritual
783 fashion, viz. s. n. i. (See Annotatio 2)[1] They come back by
833 separate ways. The woman has taken with her a pot full of water ; she goes straight with it to a certain spot, which has been decided upon during the discussion, either in front of the main entrance of the village or at the door of the hut. There she washes her hands which contain "their impurity" (thyaka ra bona). All the other couples do the same, each woman coming in her turn to cleanse her impurity at the same place. When this is over, the men also come to this spot and stamp on the ground. Sticks belonging to absent young men, or a piece of clothing of a girl who happens to be away from home, are also brought to this spot and are purified. The same is done to the straps of the ntehe of the infant, as we have seen, but he is not allowed to be present, as it might cause his death. When the purifying act is finished in all its phases, men and women go to the river and bathe; the men higher up, the women lower down. (Annotatio 6)[2]

Such is the *hlamba ndjaka* amongst the Thongas of the North, when the life of the village has been deeply affected by the death of an important member of the community. The rite is performed with less publicity when a child dies. Then the act takes place, not outside, in the bush, but inside the hut, as it is a private mourning. Should the husband have had regular intercourse with his wife before this purification has been carried out, it is a very great sin. His wife will go and confess their fault to one of the women of the village. This woman will tell it to her husband's mother, who will have to find the remedy. The guilty husband must not eat at all... If he eats, he will have eaten the contamination of death (u mitile rifu). The *hlamba ndjaka* of the whole village will have to take place. (Annotatio 7)[1]

765 The hlamba ndjaka concerns first of all the inhabitants of the
783 mortuary village, but it sometimes extends to the parents of the
595 women of that village, who dwell, of course, in other places. If the first wife of a man dies, his second wife, the one with whom the widower has begun the purifying operation at home, will have to go to her own parents *to give them water* (ku ha mati), as they say, viz, to cleanse them. She takes with her in a pot a portion of the

1 [See p. 516 in these categories or in 116--Analyst]
2 [See p. 677 in these categories or in 116--Analyst]

765 water used for the purification, arriving early in the morning in the
783 neighbourhood of the paternal kraal, and calls her mother. Then
595 she washes her hands on the spot and all her relatives will come and stamp on the ground. This is considered a great duty which a married daughter ought never to forget, otherwise she is said to have turned her back on her parents (a ba fularelile). They will be angry with her and not visit her for at least a year (Annotatio 8). The woman who has done this is called "the one who has cleansed the inheritance" (muhlantsi wa ndjaka). She has taken upon her the contamination, but she will not suffer from it, because she belongs to another family, and the contamination of death is dangerous more especially to the people who are of the same blood as the deceased. This woman will assuredly be praised and even rewarded with two hoes. When she goes to her relatives "to give them water," she will make a present of these two hoes to her father, who will say: "All right! You have cleansed those people." Then she will have the right of adorning herself with the bracelets of her deceased co-wife! Old women no longer having sexual intercourse are allowed to appropriate the old clothing of a deceased woman.

765 The Ba-Ronga do not know the expression hlamba ndjaka.
783 They have a corresponding rite, performed in the same manner,
833 which they call *lahla khombo*. *Khombo* means misfortune, *lahla* to throw away. It is the medicine of death (muri wa lifu), said Magingi, an old heathen of Rikatla. It is also said "to heal the mourning" (daha nkosi). This rite more especially concerns the grave-diggers. The one who carried the legs of the deceased begins. The sexual relations take place very early in the morning. When his wife comes back, she washes her hands at the door of her hut, and all the inhabitants of the village come and stamp on the wet place; then they enter the hut. The doctor comes and prepares a steam bath for the man. Then the second grave-digger performs his *lahla khombo*, and the same gathering of all the members of the community takes place before his hut. Afterwards the village is pure. But if the grave-diggers are cleansed, the widows are not yet purified, and we shall see that, for them, the *lahla khombo* will last much longer.

1 [See p. 677 In these categories or in 116 - Amethyst]

765 A man who transgresses the law of continence before the lahla
783 khombo is said in Ronga to have "crossed the village" (a
834 tjemakanya muti). He has taken the mourning (nkosi), the misfortune (khombo) upon himself. He will have sores all over his body and will begin to cough (consumption).

Amongst the Rongas, it seems also that the *bugango* is prohibited in mortuary villages during the marginal period. The men even
[115] prevent boys going to the villages to see their girls, says Mbekwa, an old inhabitant of Nondwane.

VI. *Family rites.*

765 After two or three months, a first gathering of the whole family of the deceased takes place. Amongst the Ba-Ronga its function is to close or break down the mortuary hut. Amongst the Northern clans, no relation is established between this family gathering and the fate of the hut. But everywhere its principal aim seems to be to restore the family whose head has been removed by death, and which must be reorganised.

1) Amongst the Ba-Ronga.

For the Ba-Ronga the habitation of the deceased is tabooed. It is a *shira* (grave), as well as the place in which he has been buried and, for this reason, it must be destroyed. But this destruction is not accomplished at once. Some time must elapse (1), two, three, nine months, before the family gathering takes place. I witnessed it near Rikatla on December 15th 1907 and can therefore describe this rite in detail.

Manyibane had died five or six months previously. He was

(1) At any rate, such is the old law. But nowadays the Rongas sometimes crush the hut at once during the five days to save trouble. This was done in the case of Sokia.

765 the headman of a large village in the Shifimbatlelo district (18 miles North of Lourenço Marques). His son Mugwanu had been chosen to take his place, but Manyibane had a younger brother, called Fenis, who had taken care of the village in the meantime. All the relatives were assembled. Groups were formed under all the trees. At 4. 30 p. m. the men began to gather near the old black-roofed hut ; one of them, an elderly man, took between [324] his teeth a piece of a root of a special juncus, called *sungi*, bit off a little of it and, after having chewed this substance, rubbed both his legs with it (evidently to find courage and strength for the work he was undertaking) and penetrated into the old hut. He came back bringing with him a dozen beautiful white eggs!.. The hen did not know that the habitation of the deceased was a tabooed grave, and had laid her eggs in this convenient refuge! Then all the men approached and began to pull out the poles of the wall, digging on both sides of each pole ; some of them lifted the roof so as to make room enough for the poles to be pulled out. This work was accomplished with great care ; the earth was carefully placed in a pot and slowly poured out some distance away ; the poles were gently laid down in front of the entrance, on the top of the door, which had been previously placed there, thus forming a regular heap. These precautions are taken out of respect for the deceased. It would be an insult to him to do otherwise, and a relation guilty of such an offence "would at once be seized by colic, the disease of the wolves (masule)." Some boys, clad in European dress, threw the poles violently on the ground. Spoon laughed : "They know the *shilungo*, the ways of the White men," he said. "They have lost their respect!"

765 When all the poles were removed and there remained only 342 the reeds of the wall, the men jumped on the roof. The roof is a big conical basket made of sticks tied together and covered with grass. It at once sank down under their weight. But they wished to flatten the cone, to crush it down to the level of the 765 soil. Therefore some of the men pulled the sticks out of the roof to lessen the resistance ; some kicked it in order to break the sticks. They could not succeed ; the cone was still there more or

765 less out of shape. In the end they brought axes and chopped all round, about half way up the cone, and with loud shouts brought the destroyed hut level with the ground. Everything belonging to it will be left there to rot. No one dares to remove or to burn this ruin. It is a taboo (1).

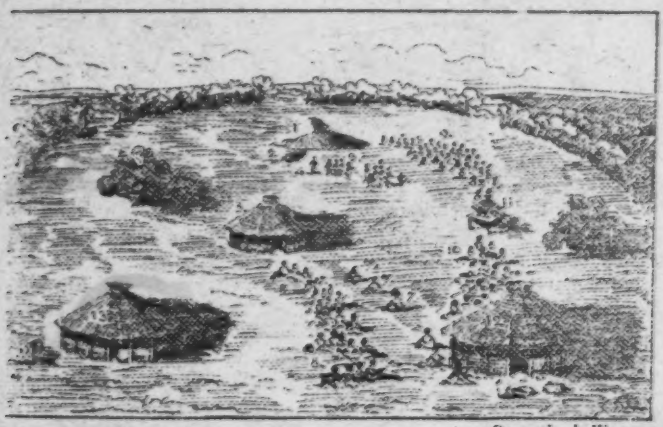
The men were satisfied. They had succeeded : "The mourning had not overcome them," (nkosi a wu ba hlulanga), as would have been the case had one of them met with an accident during the operation. Some pots full of water were brought and they washed their hands and their faces conscientiously. They retired a while and all the members of the family, the women included, came and settled themselves as shown on the accompanying illustration of the scene. In front of the crushed hut *(1)*, in the space between it and the small hut of the first widow *(3)*, the old men sat down *(4)*, near them the *batukulu*, viz. the uterine nephews of the deceased *(5)*, their wives, and a few old women *(6)*. The other men *(10)* and women of mature age *(9)* took their places between the neighbouring huts, leaving a wide place for the dance.

765 The brother of the deceased, Fenis, brought on his shoulders a
782 young goat. Two hens and a cock were provided, in all two male and two female offerings. Some branches covered with leaves were spread before the heaps of poles *(2)*, and the *batukulu* began to kill the victims. One of them took the cock by the legs, his brother held the head and cut the neck half through. At each cut of the knife, all the women uttered their *mikulungwana* (piercing cries). He threw the fowl down, still alive and panting. They did the same with the three fowls, everybody laughing and amused at seeing them jump before they died. Then one of the *batukulu* seized the goat by one of the forelegs, lifted it up as high as he could, and planted an assagai under its shoulders, trying to reach the heart. The face of the goat was turned towards the North (2). At once more mikulugwane! The animal was crying

(1) In a neighbouring district, one of our evangelists built a chapel near the ruin of the chief Gwaba. For months it was impossible to remove that ugly decaying roof; those on the spot were opposed to it and the chieftainess of the Mabota district gave permission only because the evangelist was connected with White people.

(2) I suppose the Manyibane family came from the North, and they wanted the goat to cry in this direction to call the spirits of the ancestors to the sacrifice.

765 pitifully ; its agony lasted five minutes at least and the whole time
782 the women were shouting with pleasure, because it is necessary that a victim should cry! In the groups, men and women were discussing where and how the sacrificer ought to introduce the blade in order to kill the goat more quickly. His wife came and



Drawn by J. Wacre.

The ceremony of crushing down the hut.

1. Deceased's hut, crushed down. 2. Heap of poles. 3. Provisional hut of the widow. 4. Sacrificer. 5. Uterine nephews. 6. Wives of the uterine nephews. 7. Dancers. 8. Women clapping their hands. 9. Other women. 10. Men. 11. Henhouse. 12. Hut of the younger brother. 13. Hut of the tall woman who danced. 14. A "shigiyane", wood pile built by her daughter-in-law's relatives.

helped him, and not until after ten minutes, at least, did they succeed.

765 Then, while the batukulu and the old men were busy with
535 the victims, cutting them up and squeezing the psanyi (half digested grass) out of the bowels, the other mourners began to
831 sing and to dance. First an elderly woman, of a very clear complexion and a mephistophelean face, very tall, with a curiously licentious smile, came into the middle of the place, opened her arms wide and *suma*, began to sing. Together with her song she performed a strange mimicry with her thighs. This mimicry took on a more and more lascivious character ; it became a regular

765 womb dance, so immoral (Annotatio 9)[1] that the men dropped
535 their eyes, as if they feared that she would take off all her clothing.
831 But the other women seemed thoroughly to enjoy this horrible performance, and encouraged her by clapping their hands and beating their drums. The words of her songs were also of a very questionable character. She described an adulterous woman going during the night from one hut to another, seeking for lovers, knocking on the walls (to attract the notice of the men ?).

> The walls of the huts have deceived her fellow-women when she goes knocking on them...

Another old woman, of at least seventy years of age, followed her, and running with a mincing gait through the place, uttered words of the same kind.

This seems very immoral indeed. Let us remember however that, in the opinion of the Thongas, these songs, which are taboo in ordinary life, are specially appropriate to the mourning period "These women have been uncovered by the death of their husband," said Mboza. "There is no longer any restraint on them. They are full of bitterness when they perform these lascivious dances." The reason is perhaps deeper, as it is not only the widows who sing these words ; we are still in a marginal period, the period of mourning, and these phases of life are marked for the Bantus by this strange contrast : prohibition of sexual intercourse and a shameless outpouring of impure words and gesticulations (Annotatio 10).[2]

765 But in the meantime the *batukulu* had finished their work.
782 They had already distributed the various parts of the victim according to rule, to the visitors, who would eat them on their way home, not in the village ; it is taboo. They had put aside *one shoulder*, the lungs and one of the hoofs for the sacrifice. Relatives had made a provision of *psanyi*. An old man then took a pill made of the *psanyi*, that found in the smallest stomach, called shihlakahla. He pressed it against his lips, took into his mouth a little of the liquid squeezed from it and spit it out again with the sacramental *tsu*. He then proceeded to pray : "You, Manyiban, you have left us. People used to say you were a

1 [See p. 517 in these categories or in 116--Analyst]

2 [See pp. 517-518 in these categories or in 116--Analyst]

765 wizard (a clever man who could overcome death). In what has
782 your witchcraft resulted ? Are you not dead! You have left us in peace. Go to Tlotlomane ; let Tlotlomane go to X ; let X go to Y, etc. (He utters the names of the ancestors.) Call each other to come here and look. Are we not gathered together ? Here is so and so. The batukulu also are here. Accept this offering and may we live peacefully together ; visit each other (Annotatio 11)[1]. Even if they do not come to pay me visits, let them come to Fenis ; he is their father now. And you, Mugwanu, you remain at the head of the village. You are their headman now. Do not scatter your people. Cultivate good relations with each other."

765 But a woman suddenly stands up and interrupts him : "Bring
593 everything to the light," she says! The old priest stops. She
578 goes on : "They say I am a Muchopi" (a woman of dissolute manners). The mikulungwane are heard on all sides. It is a family drama which we are attending! This woman is the daughter of the deceased ; Manyibane has sold her to pay off his debts ; he has not kept the lobola money to buy a wife for one of her brothers ; that is the reason why they hate her. They do not receive her in the village. She pours out her grievances before them in this family gathering, when they are praying to their ancestors. It is the favourable time! She goes on : "Is it my fault ? Did I not obey our father ? I have not fled away. Now what am I to do ? He alone received me here! You despise me. Say everything! Do not hide it!"

Her interruption has lasted five minutes at least and she goes back to her place very angry. Sometimes relatives who have serious complaints to make against their kinsfolk choose this precise moment to vent their anger and leave the gathering with violent words. In such a case, it is said : "The mourning has overcome this family."

765 The old priest is a little disconcerted. He speaks at random,
782 always calling his Tlotlomane. The whole scene is perfectly natural, but the participants do not show the slightest religious awe. Suddenly one of the batukulu rises, takes a bottle of wine which has been also brought there as an offering, pours a

[1] [See p. 518 in these categories or in 46 - Analyst]

765 little of it into a glass and raises it to the lips of the old man. "He
782 cuts his prayer" and while all the attention of the public is
604 concentrated upon this act (which belongs also to the ritual, as the priest must be the first to partake of the offering), the wives of the batukulu rush towards the shoulders, lungs and hoofs of the goats and the bottle of wine, seize them and run away towards the west. They have stolen the meat of the sacrifice! At once all stand up and follow them laughing, shouting and pelting them with the *psanyi*, which they had kept for this purpose. The thieves hide themselves behind some bush and eat the meat. Uterine nephews are representatives of the gods, as we shall see later on, and they assert their right by stealing the offering and eating it up.

This ceremony is highly characteristic as it embodies some of the principal ideas of the Thongas in the domain of religion, social life and taboo. It was worth while describing it, and we shall refer to it later on, when dealing with sacrifices and the position of the uterine nephews in the family.

765 The crushing down of the hut is not performed in exactly
292 the same manner amongst the Ba-Ronga. In the clans *South of*
554 *the Bay*, they only *close* it (pfala yindlu). They dig holes in
825 front of the door, into which they insert poles of the bush called *nhleha*, tying thorny branches horizontally to them. The shield of the deceased is placed against the door. The religious rite then takes place and from the skins of the sacrificed goats strips are cut, which the widows will have to wear *en bandoulière* during the following months of their widowhood. The astragalus bones are kept and hung round the neck. The gall-bladder is also preserved and fixed in the hair of the new master of the village as a sign of his new position.

765 In the *district of Makaneta*, on the estuary of the Nkomati,
596 the ceremony comprises two successive acts. First there is also a *provisory closing* of the hut, which can take place one month after the death and is accompanied by the family gathering and the religious ceremony. One year later, when the inheritance is adjudicated, the hut is crushed down, but only if it belonged to a headman of the village and if the kraal is obliged to move in

[765] consequence of the death. If it be the hut of one of the subor-
596 dinates, the roof is simply lifted off and thrown away into the
787 bush.

Another very significant rite in connexion with the closing of
766 the hut is accomplished on the death of the master of the village. A branch is cut from the tree of the village, the tree which was revealed by the divinatory bones as the one near which the headman had to build (See Part II Ch. II) ; half of the branch is placed across the great gate of the village, which is then closed and another gate opened, at some distance, in the fence ; the other half is put over the door of the crushed hut.

765 There seem to be great variations in the performance of these
428 ceremonies everywhere. I believe, without being able to vouch for it, that when two family gatherings take place during this last period of the mourning, the first is held to proclaim the new master of the village and the second to distribute the inheritance amongst the heirs-at-law. At any rate these two important acts take place at the gatherings. As the inheritance consists mainly of live stock — human stock, the wives of the deceased, I shall describe the adjudication when treating of the fate of widows.

2) Family rites in the Northern clans.

765 A month after the burial, there is a first gathering of the grave-
574 diggers. They are invited by the widows to a beer-feast. This beer is called : "the beer of the hyenas," as the hyenas also dig graves! No equivocal compliment is intended, the widows merely meaning to thank these men for their services.

765 In the northern clans, *yindlu a yi yili*, the hut is not taboo.
782 It can be slept in again after the five days of the Great Mourning. The plaster of the doorposts is repaired, and a new crown is put on the top when the hut again finds an owner (1). The [illegible] of the

766 (1) The hut of a leper alone is considered irremediably tabooed as the sufferer is buried in it. They dig a hole into which he is pushed by means of sticks. The roof is crushed down over him.

765 closing of the hut is therefore replaced by what is called the *beer of*
782 *the mourning* (byala bya nkosi). All the relatives, brothers, brothers-in-law, nephews, etc., bring a goat, or half a sovereign, or a sovereign, to the master of the mourning, the heir of the village. That individual must give them back as much as he receives from them, a goat for a goat, (timbuti ti labana), a sovereign for a sovereign, and all the animals are killed according to rule. There were fourteen of them at a certain gathering held in the Nkuna capital to mourn one of the wives of the chief Shiluvane in 1905. A sacrifice is offered ; the men sit on one side, the women on the other ; the *kokuvane*, viz. the maternal uncle of the deceased, takes the *psanyi* and squeezes it on them all while praying, or rather insulting the gods who have afflicted them with such a bereavement. All rub their chests with this green liquid and add their insults to those of the priest.

[775] According to Viguet, this is the first occasion on which the deceased is treated as a god and prayed to : "Look! You have left the village without a head to lead it! Keep them! Bless them and increase them." The *batukulu* then come to take that portion of the victim which has been put aside for the gods. It does not appear that they steal it, as is the case amongst the Ba-Ronga.

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765 Such is the story of the mourning. Here are some technical expressions in connexion with it : Hamba nkosi, to conduct the mourning. Djila nkosi, to utter mourning lamentations. Daha nkosi, to treat it by purification ceremonies. Kota nkosi, to cope with it. Nkosi wu wupfa, it ripens. Nkosi wu hela, it comes to an end. A wu boli, it does not get rotten, viz. it is always possible to pay a mourning visit.

The name of the deceased when quoted is often preceded by the word "Matjuwa," exactly as with *feu* in French and *late* in English. In the Northern clans the expression employed is "Sira" which means grave : Grave so and so.

VII. *Various cases of death.*

766 So far I have treated specially of the death of a headman, who had reached adult age, and died at home. There are a few other cases to describe.

Should the man *have died far away from home*, in Johannesburg for instance, no ceremony will take place before the news is entirely confirmed. Then all the relatives assemble. A grave is dug and all his mats and his clothing are buried in it. These objects which he was in the habit of using every day, and which have been soiled by the exudations from his body, are *himself*. A sacrifice will be made over the grave, not by means of the nkanye twig but with a fowl which is thrown on the grave. Formerly the fowl was left on the ground, but nowadays the uterine nephews steal it. The widow will eat with her hands till the burial, though death took place long before and was already publicly known ; she will begin to use a spoon only after the burial has taken place. This fact illustrates strangely the ritualistic notion which is at the base of all these mourning customs! The steam baths, the sprinkling on the fifth day, the singing, dancing and condolence visits take place just the same as in ordinary mourning.

In the Northern clans, the belongings of a man who dies far away (matikwen, in the lands) are burnt. The purifying sprinklings are performed. The same is done for relatives who die accidentally and whose corpses have not been buried ; for instance, if they were killed by a wild beast or in battle.

When a *stranger* dies in a Thonga village, and no one knows him, "*a nga na ntshumu*"—"he does not matter," says Viguet. The grown-up men will bury him. They dig a hole and drag the corpse into it with a rope. They do not touch it. There is no contagion, therefore no ceremony of purification. Amongst the Malulekes and Hlengwes, such a corpse is burnt. They attend to the cremation and do not leave the spot till they hear an explosion (boom!), which shows that all danger (khombo) has departed.

766 When an *infant* dies, it must be buried in a broken pot. The

766 pot is placed in the earth, the opening being half covered with a layer of ashes, in such a way that there remains a passage for the air. It is taboo to bury it otherwise, until it has passed through the rite of presentation to the moon (page 53). *An older child* is buried in the ordinary way, but with very few ceremonies. There is no religious act. The mother alone attends the funeral. The father digs the grave, but he does nothing else. He says : "We, holders of the assagai, do not bury such little ones. They are but water, they are but a womb, (nyimba) they are but a *ntehe*."
854 A father pays very little attention to little children. It is only when they begin to smile that he will show them some affection. Then it may be that he will press his little one against his breast and kiss its temple, especially when he returns home from a journey.

766 *In the case of suicide*, the corpse is buried according to ordinary rules. But the tree on which the man hanged himself is cut down. It is taboo : other people might commit suicide at the same place. Its wood is not used for fuel.

If a woman dies during pregnancy, she must be cut open to see what the sex of her child is. This must be done inside the grave, before the earth is covered in. As Mboza said : "The air (moya) must come out." He told me the story of a husband in the Mabota country who nearly fainted when obliged to perform this painful operation. But it is a great taboo, as the woman might become a god of bitterness (shikwembo sha shibiti), if buried without this precaution (See Part VI). In the Maluleke clan women who die pregnant, or in confinement, are cremated.

Lepers alone are buried in the hut. In Maputju the father and the mother are buried in front of the hut whilst the regular place in other parts of the Ronga territory is behind the hut, *mahosi*. The members of the reigning family are buried in the *ntimu*, the sacred wood which belongs to them. Every big family may have its *ntimu* and the men are buried there according to their villages; each village has its place and the place is called after the name of the headman of the village. So in the Lebombo sacred wood, there was "the village of Nkolele, to the south, the village of Shihubane, to the north, etc."

769 The bones of the dead are never disinterred. It is a taboo; grave is respected and women do not dare to till the ground over it. Often one comes across a small thick bush in the midst of mealie gardens, and one sees broken pots under the branches. It is an old grave. Later on, when no one remembers who has been buried there, agriculture regains its sway. If a bush fire has reached the sacred wood and damaged it, the person who lit it must atone by sacrificing a fowl in order to "quench" (timula) it.

REMARKS ABOUT DEATH AND BURIAL.

761 These very complicated funeral rites of the Thongas clearly show the
783 existence of three great intuitions in their minds:

1) Man is immortal and becomes a god through death.

775 2) There is extreme danger attached to the defilement which accompanies death. This uncleanness contaminates the community and can only be removed by collective purification.

3) The social group, being diminished by death, must be reinforced by special means (family gatherings, choice of a successor, etc.). Hence three categories of rites: *religious, purificatory* and *social*.

On the other hand some of the rites we have described present unmistakably the character of *passage rites*, because death also means a passage: for the deceased, passage from the world of the living to the world of the dead; for his relations, passage from one phase of life to another.

764 Separation from terrestrial life is symbolised for the deceased by the
775 rite of piercing the wall of the hut in order to solemnise, as it were, his official departure from his former dwelling. I should consider also as a separation rite the custom of cutting through all his garments and mats, in order to make them "draw the last breath." To effect aggregation to the new world, the grave-diggers prepare for him an underground hut and square place, they place him in his new dwelling in a sitting position (if such is the true explanation of the folding of the limbs), they direct his eyes towards the cardinal point whence his
765 ancestors have come. I have sometimes had the impression that even
775 in these rites, the idea of a marginal period, or of a period of transition, was not lacking; the deceased is not prayed to prior to the great family gatherings, which take place three, six, or twelve months after the death. Then his hut is crushed or closed. It would seem that he has gone

775 through an evolution towards deity, as his corpse was decaying in the
765 grave, and the closing of his hut, with the placing of his shield before the door, might well mean his definite incorporation into the world of the dead, and also a means of preventing him from returning to this world and bringing misfortune to his relatives.

765 As regards the relatives, they separate from the former phase by the
783 cutting of the hair, putting out the old fire, leaving off their clothing and wearing mourning attire. A very distinct period of margin then begins, marked by the sexual taboos accompanying it, and they are aggregated again to the ordinary world and to the new phase of their life by all the ceremonies which I have explained at length. Here, however, as the seclusion was caused by a certain most dreaded defilement, the aggregation rites all bear the character of removal of uncleanness: uncleanness of the food, of the gardens, of the bereaved, chiefly grave-diggers and widows, of the whole community, which is cleansed by the sexual rite of hlamba ndjaka, etc.

797 If classification were equivalent to understanding, we might say that
761 we have fairly well understood the complicated Thonga rites which accompany death... But who can boast of having fully understood so profound and mysterious a subject? Death is the great shadow which hovers over life and chills the human heart. Outside of an enlightened faith, it is, and remains, the King of Terrors. Never more than at the graveside did I pity my poor black brethren, wondering how they tried to calm their hearts and overcome their sorrow. There is something profoundly touching in their most absurd rites, because, after all, they are all imposed by a craving for life and purity. Will my readers allow me to conclude this subject by a personal reminiscence? The day I attended the burial of Sokis, when his relatives had finished filling in the grave, they asked me to lead them in worship. Bantu heathenism is so poor, it feels itself so weak that it readily accepts the help of a higher religion. So I tried to turn the eyes of my hearers away from the underground hut, and to fix them on the eternal dwellings of the Father's house. Then Sokis's youngest brother took the nkanye twig and performed the heathen religious ceremony, calling his ancestors to come and bless them and entreating the deceased to leave them in peace. The contrast between these two prayers made at the same grave was indeed striking. And, whatever we may think, even if we had no religious convictions at all, should we not earnestly desire that, for these people, the bright comforting Christian hope may dispel the darkness of their thoughts and the sufferings involved in their rites?

l: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

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CHAPTER II

The evolution of a woman from Birth to Death

Essay of a Ronga girl on the subject.

124 In July 1897, the School Inspector gave to the big girls of the Swiss Mission school at Lourenço Marques the following subject for an examination in composition: "The life of a Ronga woman." This is the translation of one of the pupils' essays on the life of their country women:

846 302 854 "When a girl is born amongst the Ba-Ronga, people come and congratulate the mother and say: "A ma buyeni mati," that is to say: "Let the water come!" When the time is at hand when she will come out of the hut, ochre is crushed for her and a calabash full of the fat of *nkuhlu* almond is prepared, and the two ingredients are mixed and smeared over her.

"Her curly hair is stretched out in corkscrew fashion, and ochre is put on it to transform it into a kind of rats' tails. (This is the operation called *hova ngoya*.) The mother also smears herself with ochre, and puts on her head a crown of small strings (shikupu) (1). Then, when the child lets her head fall on account of the weakness of her neck, a plaited string, which is just the right size for a necklace, is tied round her throat. 'Thus,' they say, 'her nape will be strengthened.'

854 "A small calabash with medicine is given her to drink; they also prepare for her a small pot of the medicine, and they say it

(1) I have heard this custom explained as follows: the mothers amuse the children by shaking their heads; the small strings dance about and make the babies laugh. This can only be true of infants already two or three months old.

854 is to lessen the dangers of growth (pumba nombo), so that the sickness should not be too bad. (These are the milombyana,

[142]

Phot. A. Burt

Girls with babies at Mahulane
(Magwaja country.)

954 (See page 48.) After her birth she is carried in the skin of a
862 gazelle (mhunti) which her mother ties round her neck and loins. When that skin has become too small, they get one of an antelope (mhala). She begins to walk; when her mother sends her on an errand she is able to do it. She also begins to talk, and to know her father and mother. Then, when she has grown, they prepare for her a small pot of pounded and cooked mealies so that she may eat of it. After three years she is weaned and goes to stay for a time with her grandmother. After that she returns home.

857 "When she has learnt to walk, she is very fond of playing with
868 the shells of the sala. She cooks in them. Then, when she has done with them, she takes small pots and cooks little dinners. She also gets a small calabash, she goes to the lake to draw water and, on coming back, she gives it to her father so that he may wash his face. Here she is now gathering small bits of wood; she makes small bundles of them and brings them home. Later on she will make heavier bundles.

"When she has grown up more, she will take charge of the work of her mother. She will do the work. But if the mother sees that she cannot do it all, she will help her. It may however be said that the mother needs no longer to crush her mealies,
583 neither to go to the well nor to the fireplace. When she is quite a grown up girl, the suitors come. If they are accepted, they bring the purchase money. They buy her (lobola) and do all they like. If she is prolific, she will bear many children. Now and then she returns to her parents' village, then she comes back to her husband. Her children grow. They go to get water, to cut her wood, to plough her fields. She goes with them. When they are
462 grown up, they get married. If amongst them there is a son, he goes to buy his wife. Thus she looks for a mother-in-law for her son. He will then be truly a man because he has got a mother-in-law! When her children are married, the mother again begins to do all her work. She steeps her mealies, crushes them to make flour, she cuts her wood, cooks her beer; she prepares the light beer; she smears the floor of her hut; this is what she does till she is quite old.

888 "When she is quite old, they feed her. Her grandchildren are

1 [The following page is quoted from an essay by a native girl at the Swiss Mission school at Lourenço Marques -- Analyst]

888 sent to bring her food. When they are hungry, they stop on the way and eat it themselves. On their return they say: 'We have indeed given it to her.' In the morning they put a stick in her hand and help her to get out of her hut, so that she can warm herself in the sun.

"Then when the Ronga woman is quite old she begins to see no more and to hear no more. She falls into second childhood. All she does is to complain and to say, crying, that she is ill treated. And this is the end!"

The girl who wrote this essay was but emerging from childhood, and has consequently enlarged more especially upon the first phase of the life. The life of a woman is not very different from that of a man at that stage. Differences however come in later on, and we shall have to add some important facts relating to the fate of women before marriage, during the conjugal life, and in widowhood.

A. BEFORE MARRIAGE

I. *The Girls' games.*

857 As we have seen from the essay of the schoolgirl, Ronga girls
524 imitate the doings of their mothers, their cooking, their gathering
[868] of fuel, etc., just as the boys imitate the fighting and hunting of the
864 men. They also play with *dolls*, nursing them as they see the women nursing babies. These dolls are called *vule*. The origin of the game is as follows. A little girl asks her mother who is carrying a younger child on her shoulders: Mother, where did you find your baby? — Oh! I found it in the bush (ntlhaben). — Please bring me one also, mother. — All right! — Next day the mother plucks a sala in the bush, removes all the stones inside it, lets it dry and fixes it to the end of a stick. She pierces the upper part of the sphere, passes bits of string through the holes to imitate hair, smears them with ochre, ties a little clothing round

857 the stick and gives it to the girl! Or if the mother says : "I found
524 the baby in the banana grove," the father will cut a banana stem,
864 take the heart of the bulb and beat it so as to separate the fibres, which will then represent the hair of the baby ; the girl will then play with it for a time.

Girls, like boys, have also special games.

524 First the *ntshengu -ntshengu*. A big girl takes the part of the mother and all the little ones hide behind her. She stretches out her arms to protect them against another girl, who is the thief and tries to take the children away. Notwithstanding the mother's efforts, all are taken one by one, and the stealing is done whilst they sing :

> Alack! Mother! Protect us, protect us!

The mother answers :

> All my children are taken, all will soon be taken,
> All will soon be taken, there, behind me.
>
> (Yo! Mamana! ntshengu-ntshengu! ba hela hi shiulo.

The capture being effected, all the children sit down in a row and cross their legs. To their right and left they dig small holes which represent wells or pots. The mother passes. She stretches out their legs and they allow her do this. Then she pretends to drink water from their pitchers and says: "My child, where did you find this water ?" The child says : "Oh! I have drawn it over there, at the spring, under the banana trees, in the cool shade." Then comes the girl who plays the part of the thief. She tries to stretch out their legs. But the children refuse ; they stiffen themselves. She tastes their water and enquires where they brought it from. "I drew it in a nasty hole full of frogs, mud and dirt." They add all the different remarks they can think of.

524 As the boys sing to the transport oxen when a wagon comes
136 along the road, so the girls address a kind of *incantation to a big*
533 *grey lizard* called *galagala*, which can turn its head blue at will. The lizard is found lying on a branch, warming itself in the rays

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

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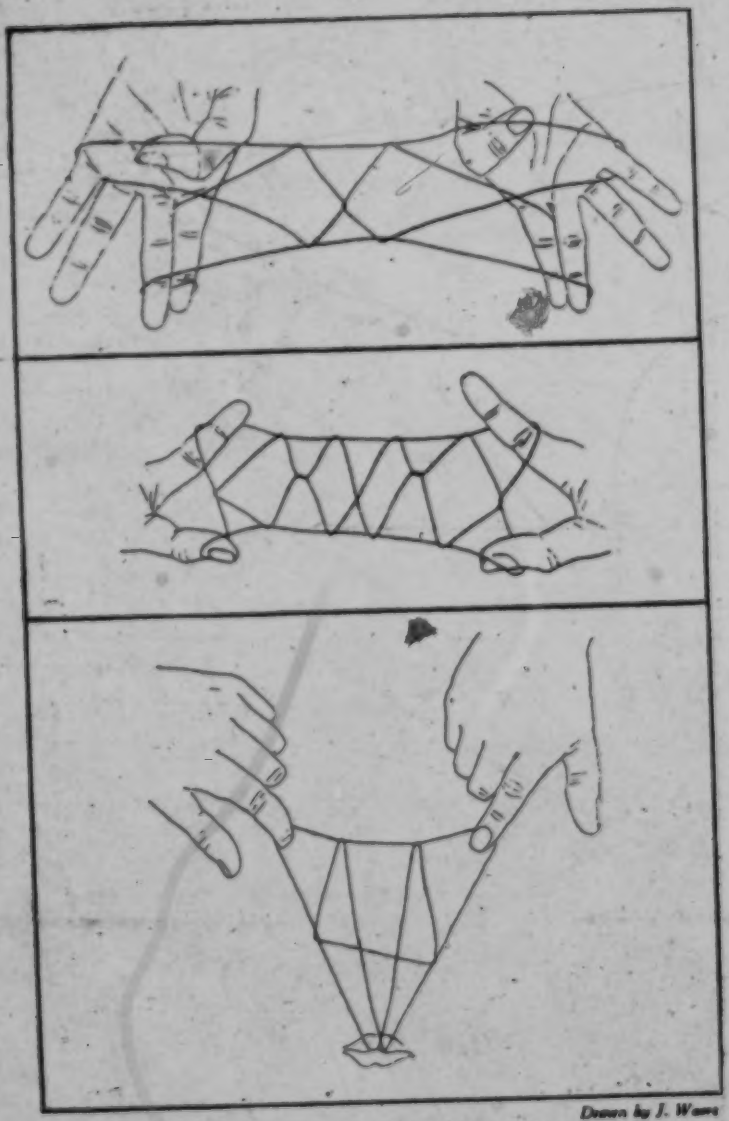

Drawn by J. Weare

Various forms of buhlolo (string game.)

524 of the sun. One girl approaches it, and claps her hands under its nose, singing in a monotonous tone :

> Gala-gala, hana-hana nhloko !
> Big lizard, lift up, lift up your head !

It seems that the lizard is so fascinated by the song that he stretches his neck and swings his head to and fro during the whole time that the girl claps her hands.

524 To the *crabs*, which are very numerous in the slime on the
136 sea-shore, and have only one claw, coloured green, violet or enamel
226 blue, they sing :

> Ba ka mphembemuówe, tlakula silawuto !
> Come along, you animals with only one claw ! Lift it up and bring it down again.

The little girls who go hunting crabs as a condiment for their food assured me that, on hearing this song, the crustaceans do come out of their holes, and that the harvest is then a large one.

When an *owl*, mistaking the time, comes out of her hiding place at noon, she is received with applause, and they sing to her :

> Shikotana, gaulela fole !
> Owl ! flap your wings ! You will find tobacco !

524 Another girls' game, which is wide-spread, and in which the young Thongas acquire great proficiency is called : *ku tha buhlolo*. They take a string tied at both ends so as to form a large ring, and make all kinds of complicated figures by twisting it with their fingers and even with their lips. I have made a drawing of some of them. Girls compete together and try to surpass each other in inventing new figures. They teach each other this *buhlolo*.

Another old game, which is found under various forms in a great number of countries, is the *mathakisana*, knuckle bones. Girls gather stones of the nkanye fruit (tinfula), dig a hole, and put them into it. One of them takes a kind of ball (shigungu), perhaps a small sala fruit or any other fruit. She throws it in the air and, in the meantime, takes out of the hole four or five stones and puts them back, leaving only one outside. This stone is then

524 put aside. She must be very clever and very quick in removing and replacing all the stones except one, because the ball will soon fall down and she must catch it in her hands. Should she take only one stone out of the hole, she has failed (a tjongolile); should she leave more than one stone outside of it, she has again failed (a hoshile). Should the ball fall to the ground, it is taboo. (psa yila)! She has lost her turn. If the ball falls on her body, it is not so bad. Her companions will say to her: "Gangasheta." Then she must throw the ball and catch it two or three times on the upper part of her hand, then again in her hand, and if she succeeds in this, she is allowed to go on. When she has been able to take all the stones from the hole without making any mistake, she has beaten her co-players (a ba mphyinshile).

525 Natives do not play for stakes as a rule, but, if two of them challenge each other, each claiming to be the best at the game, they may arrange that the one who loses must give a fowl to the winner.

The ordinary word for *play* is *ku tlanga*. But there is another word *ku tha*, which is used for the more refined games, the buhlolo, the mathakusana, the tshuba, the reciting of tales, riddles or proverbs (psitekatekisa) and guessing games (mhumhana). We shall describe these four last games when treating of the life of the village and literary life.

II. *Nubility customs.*

1) The Khomba rite.

881 When a girl comes of age, no special ceremony is performed amongst the Ba-Ronga. She is said, just like the boy, to have "drunk the nkanye" (page 95). She confesses to her mother that her menses *(tinwheti, viz. months)* have appeared for the first time, and the mother simply answers: "Hi ku kula"— "this means growth."

881 But in the Northern clans a characteristic rite has been preserved, or borrowed from the Sutho-Pedis, who attach great importance to it. It is called *khomba*, or *yisa matin*, to lead to the water, and is performed in the following manner. The girl, when she thinks that the time of nubility is near, chooses an adoptive mother, possibly in a neighbouring village. She works for her, and helps her in gathering her fuel. When the day has come, she runs away from her village and goes to this adoptive mother "to weep near her" (a rilela ka yena). These are distinct separation rites. She says : "Ndji khombile" — "I am of age." Then will begin a *seclusion period* of one month. Three or four girls receive the initiation together. They are shut up in a hut, and when they come out, must always wear over their face a veil consisting of a very dirty and greasy cloth. Every morning they are led to the pool, and their whole body is immersed in the water as far as the neck. Other initiated girls or women accompany them singing obscene songs, and drive away with sticks any man who happens to be on the road, as no man is allowed to see a girl during this period. If a man happens to come near the group, the women ask him the secret formulae of the circumcision school, not the long ones but the short ones, probably those which contain licentious words. Should he be unable to answer, they beat him. It is said that a man who sees a girl during this month becomes blind! When the cortege of women accompanying the initiated has returned home, the nubile girls are imprisoned in the hut. They are teased, pinched, scratched by the adoptive mothers or by other women ; they must also listen to the licentious songs which are sung to them. Though they are trembling from cold, being
831 still wet, they are not allowed to come near the fire. They are
841 also instructed in sexual matters, and told that they must never reveal anything about the blood of the menses to a man. They are also exhorted to be very polite to every grown up person, and must salute everybody entering the hut, even those passing before the door, by clapping their hands. Sometimes the wind moves some dead leaves ; they mistake this noise for the sound of steps and salute reverently!

881 At the end of the month the adoptive mother brings the girl

881 home to her true mother. She also presents her with a pot of beer. A feast takes place on this occasion and the kunga rite is performed, just as for the circumcised boy on the day of his aggregation (page 93). Little presents will be brought by the girl to her adoptive mother who will distribute them to old women. If the initiated girl has been already bought by lobola, the mother goes with her to her future husband and says to him: "She is grown up." He will give her a present of £ 1., and the veil will be taken away. These last rites distinctly mean the aggregation of the girl to adult society, and all this khomba custom is a very good example of a passage rite, the passage being from the asexual to the sexual group.

881 178 The Pedi-Sutho clans of the Transvaal also practise this rite, which they call *khoba*. In addition they have the *bale*, the initiation school for girls, corresponding to the circumcision school of the boys. The Nkuna clan of the Thongas is said to have practised it also in former times, but the *bale* has entirely disappeared all through the Thonga tribe.

There are three other customs more or less related to nubility: tattooing, the pointing of the teeth and the milebe custom.

2) Tattooing (Tlhabela tinhlanga).

304 There have been different methods of tattooing amongst the Thongas. In former times, in the Northern clans, the Ba-Thonga used to disfigure themselves by making very big black pimples on the forehead, the nose, and the cheeks. Hence the name of *Knobneusen* which they received from the Boers in Spelonken. Even the men were tattooed, but they shewed only one line of pimples down the middle of the face, from the forehead to the chin. Women had, in addition, two horizontal lines on the forehead and three on each cheek. It was a custom of the primitive population and is still observed by the Ba-Chopi. The invaders of the XVth or XVIth century adopted it because they were mocked by their subjects, who said: "Flat noses are not

304 right!" When the Ba-Ngoni of the XIXth century came, they submitted themselves to the custom, not from fear of mockery, but to hide their Zulu nationality. Chaka had sent his impis to kill them and, as they were recognised by the absence of pimples, they began to tattoo themselves. When the danger was passed,

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Phot. H.-A. Junod.
Tattooed women of the Nkuna clan.

they ceased to perform the operation. They began in their turn to mock the Thongas who had followed their example.

304 - 881 Amo gut the Ba-Ronga it is not certain that the big black pimples ever existed. In former times men used to make two lines of small pimples on both sides of the body, extending from the nipple and from the shoulders downwards. Now the custom

l: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

304 881 is dying out ; it is practised only by women, undoubtedly in connection with nubility or with marriage. But the tattooing of the face has disappeared almost entirely. What remains is the tattooing of the shoulders and of the epigastric and hypogastric regions.

The operation is painful ; girls sometimes cry and must be forced to submit to it. The patterns are triangular. Four triangles are first drawn on the shoulders on both sides ; the upper triangles meeting with the lower ones at their apex, so as to leave a square place, not tattooed, in the middle of the back. This drawing is made with ochre ; the skin is caught up and lifted with a little iron hook all along the line and slightly cut with a razor All the incisions must be of the same size. The blood oozes out and is stopped by the ochre, which is profusely spread over the small wounds. Tattooing of the back is not very painful. It is more so on the anterior part of the body. These four triangles are also drawn under the breasts, leaving a square place of which the navel occupies the exact centre. But between the two upper triangles two others are introduced, forming a conical shaped pyramid whose point comes between the breasts.

Such is the ordinary arrangement of the tattoo pimples in Nondwane, but it varies considerably according to the clans, as the two adjoining plates clearly show. The two Nkuna women whom I photographed at Shiluvane in 1900, have only two lines of pimples, forming a right angle under their right breast. The Rev. Alex. Jaques has kindly sent me two other photographs of tatooed Tembe girls taken in August 1926 and Mrs. Jaques has drawn an enlarged figure of the marks which shows plainly the patterns adopted in that part of the country. I reproduce them in a second illustration. Here the four triangles are distinctly seen.

304 881 178 The freshly tattooed girl hides herself for a week, after which she shows herself to her boy (shigango), who will kill a fowl for her to congratulate her. He says : "It is pretty to tattoo yourself. Otherwise your belly would be like the belly of a fish, or of a white person!" The time of healing is considered as a disease (perhaps as a marginal period). It is taboo to put salt in the food during

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

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these days, or to go to the village to eat the food of other people (just as it is for boys who pierce their ears). Girls prepare themselves for the operation by eating a special food which soften-

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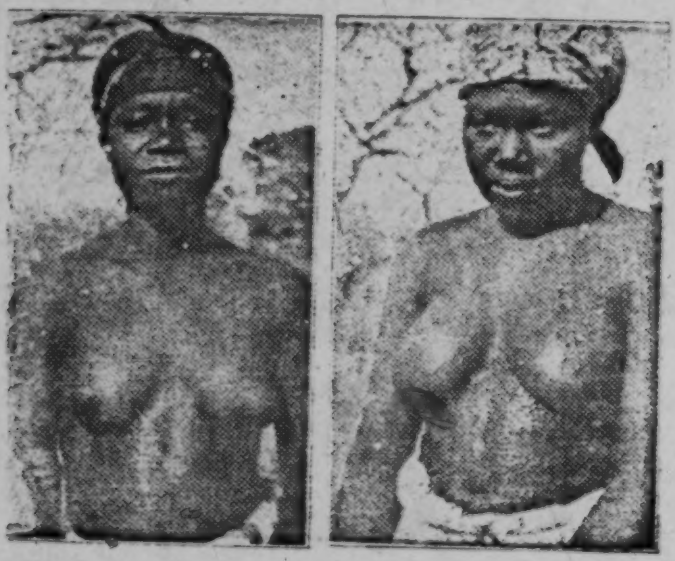

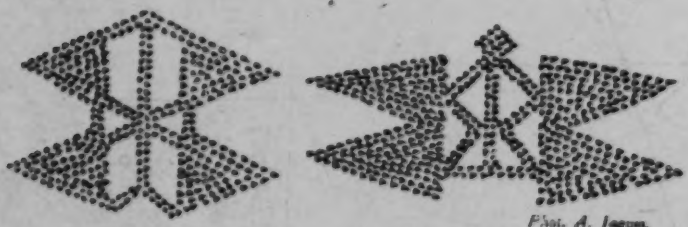

Phot. A. Jaquet.

Tattooed women of the Tembe clan.

the skin of the belly (nabyala khuri). All these rules tend to show that, in former times, tattooing had a deep meaning, a ritual value which has more or less disappeared. Mboza told me : "It is not a regular taboo (yila), but only a custom (shihila) of the country."

3) Pointing of the teeth (Ku hleta).

304 This custom is also dying out. It used to be incumbent on
881 all the girls. Now many do not observe it. They have seen that teeth deformed in this way decay more quickly. The operation is performed on the incisors, and girls must keep their mouths closed for two or three days, not showing their teeth to anybody.

Near Rikatla, the hleta custom was still in force in the heathen villages in 1910. It gives the girls a kind of canine aspect.

4) The milebe custom.

304 This is very wide-spread all over South Africa. Though it has
881 disappeared now amongst most of the Ronga clans, it is still
832 practised in the Manyisa country, over the whole of Bilen and
171 in the Northern clans, amongst the Zulus, the Pedi-Suthos, etc. It is probably the origin of the famous "Hottentot apron," which some ethnographers thought to be a congenital malformation, and which is merely the result of this custom (Annotatio 5).[1] It is a very ugly habit, very immoral from our point of view, fixing the imagination of the girl on sexual relations, but amongst the Thongas it is upheld as being quite the right thing.

B. MARRIAGE AND CONJUGAL LIFE

1) Conditions of Marriage

581 In the primitive Bantu tribe every girl gets married, some,
832 however, sooner than others. Suitors prefer pretty girls to ugly ones! But what is their standard of beauty ? The ideal is tall stature, strong limbs and well developed breasts. A proverb

1 [See p. 517 in these categories or in the Analysis]

581 says : "Nsati wa mabele u nga nabele loko u nge na bukosi."
832 — "Do not covet a woman with large breasts if you have no money..." This does not mean that she will cost more, but her father, knowing that she will not want for suitors, will not consent to let her go unless the full lobolo is paid at once. On the other hand a girl with an elongated face is admired more than one who is too broad-faced. Of the first they say : "She is pretty, she resembles an antelope" (a kota mhala) ; of the second : "She is
832 chubby-cheeked, she is like a sow." A light complexion is preferred
186 to a very dark one, because the white or yellow races are regarded
754 as superior, and a Native laying claim to any European or Asiatic blood is proud of it. Parents, who also have their say in the
581 question of marriage, insist on two other points ; the working
829 capacity of the girl, and the absence of any witchcraft blot in the family. Should her mother have been convicted of being a witch,
581 the girl will be feared. However, every girl finds a husband in the
583 land where polygamy flourishes. If he be slow in coming, she will apply to her doctor, who will prepare the *love charms*, which will make her "appear," so that she will be noticed by the boys (See page 100). If even that does not succeed, she has other means at her disposal and may go herself to make proposals to a man (wopsana). He is seduced by her, and constitutes himself a thief who has *tlhuba*, viz. "taken in marriage by abduction" (See page 119). The parents will claim the lobolo and he must pay it. Marriage and childbearing remain the only carreer to which a Thonga woman can look forward. Hence a number of special feminine taboos which are very curious.

2) Special feminine taboos.

262
845 Some of them concern girls *before childbearing* and cease after
784 parturition. In the Tembe and Maputju clans, girls must not eat
562 pork, because pigs root nervously with their noses ; the future child
825 would also move its head from one side to the other, when on the verge of birth, and this would make delivery difficult. Other

Other

animals are taboo for girls : the *hare* because it is too cunning ;
262 and the antelope *nhlengane*. This antelope raises the foot when
825 it hears a noise ; hence the idea that its leg is hollow and that
784 it perceives the sound through it. The child would do the same,
562 if its mother were to eat the meat of the nhlengane. It would be unable to hear with its ears, only with its hands!

The *legs* of fowls (tibias) are also taboo for all women, because the hen scatters the sand... So are the *hoofs of oxen*, and *pigs' feet*. A woman eating them would walk too much... She would go everywhere to look for husbands!

784 It is taboo for a girl to *walk amongst pumpkin plants* (maranga),
562 to pluck the fruits. She is only allowed to pluck those which can
824 be reached from outside. Were she to transgress this law, she
751 would emit a bad odour, and no boy would court her. Her mother, having no fear of being despised, can walk amongst the pumpkins. A second taboo relative to pumpkins is this : unmarried women must cut a "pumpkin nose" (nhompfu) viz. the end of the stem, and fix it at their waist when plucking the pumpkins, lest they get abcesses in certain regions of their body.

784 It is taboo for them to eat cooked *oxen blood* (bubendje).
262 The following taboos apply also to *married women*. They are
562 not allowed to eat what is called *nkopfu*, viz. some parts of the
843 bowels which are cooked together with the stomach of the ox. "It would spoil the child inside." The *testicles*, which are generally given to the uterine nephew when the meat is distributed according to the laws, and the *underlip* of any animal are also forbidden to them. So is also the *tongue*... because it is reserved for old people as a mark of respect! The *rectum* (gobana) is taboo for women and children. Children might make unseemly noises from the rectum! Women must abstain from *porcupine* and *monkeys' flesh* ; all their offspring would resemble these animals. Such cases have happened, it is said! Women must not eat *eggs* ; they would run a double danger : their child might be born bald and remain so ; or they might be like a hen, which runs in all directions when laying an egg. They would have no peace in child bearing! (See also page 101.)

Nubile girls, during their "tiwheti," must not *approach the*

Nubile girls during their "tiwheti" must approach the oxen kraal and look at them. The cattle might suffer, be attacked
784 by a bad cough (mukhulwane), get thin! This taboo is instituted
825 to protect the oxen, not the human inhabitants of the village, as D.
562 Kidd says is the case amongst the Zulus. (Part IV. Ch. I. E.)
262 When women have passed the time of child-bearing, most of
[886] the taboos cease, and they can eat monkeys and porcupine if they wish!

3) The first year of married life.

581 I shall not return to the subject of marriage rites, which have
562 been fully explained in the preceding chapter. Let me say that, though a Thonga woman cannot imagine life without marriage (ku kandja bukati), she does not enter on the new state with any enthusiasm. Her parents have warned her that she will be illtreated, accused of witchcraft and adultery, etc. Her sisters bewail her fate on her wedding day in song. The fact that she has been paid for, though it does not constitute an actual sale, puts her in an inferior position (See Part II).

562 During the first year, she has no *ndangu*, viz. no fire-place of
264 her own. She cooks for her mother-in-law. During the three
585 first weeks the husband eats with her and with the girl who accompanied her to her new home. Afterwards, he goes back to eat with the men. In some places it would seem that the husband eats with her the whole year, until she has her own po (hlembeto).

4) Husband and wife.

593 What are the relations between husband and wife after the
571 honey-moon? Of course they vary very much according to
517 the character of both. As a rule however, the married people have very little intimacy with each other; the man remains with his companions on the "bandla," the village square where they meet, and only occasionally comes into the "ndangu," the reed enclosure of the fire-place, which is the true domain of the

595 lady of the hut. The first wife is certainly the most respected; she is called the "great one" (nsati lwe' nkulu); those who are taken in marriage afterwards being the "little wives." She is the true wife and acts as such in some old rites, those which accompany widowhood and the foundation of the village, as we shall see.

When speaking of divorce, we shall notice the principal causes of quarrel between married people and how they are dealt with.

As regards conjugal relations, I have explained them as fully as was possible to me in the paper already quoted (*Revue d'ethnologie et de sociologie*, Paris. Ernest Leroux, 1910, p. 143-151). This paper however being now very difficult to obtain, I am obliged to treat this subject here also, as it is of paramount importance. No one could pretend to know the life of an African tribe if he were ignorant of these facts. I do not give them to satisfy mere curiosity, but because they play an immense part in the social life of the Bantus and reveal to us some of their most characteristic physiological ideas.

833 It is generally asserted that Bantus, especially the men, have the sexual instinct very strongly developed. This is true to a certain extent. Polygamy has increased it enormously. In a royal kraal like that of Gungunyana, the excesses were awful. (See Annotatio 14). But even amongst monogamists the indulgence in sexual relations is sometimes very great. We often heard women pounding their mealies in the middle of the night in order to escape from the assiduities of their husbands. However this statement must not be exaggerated. Amongst Bantus as amongst other races there are great differences between individuals in this domain and I have already pointed to the fact that hundreds, and even thousands of young and grown up men can remain continent for months and years in the Institutions and the Compounds of South Africa.

The fact that heathens also submit themselves readily to the prohibition of sexual intercourse during more or less protracted periods for the welfare of the community shows that even in the primitive state Bantus are capable of exercising control over themselves in that domain.

1 [See p. 519 in those categories or in 116--Analyst]

* * *

841 Let us consider first how conjugal relations are regulated in normal circumstances.

Every month during her "tihweti" the woman is taboo and no intercourse is allowed. This is one of the severest taboos. Should a husband infringe this law, his health would fail, and, should he be called to go to war, "his knees would shake," he would tremble and be unable to fight (1). As regards the woman, these days constitute a real marginal period during which she is absolutely secluded from her husband. She must keep to the left half of the hut and not trepass across the centre line. If she wants snuff, she is not allowed to go to her husband in the part in which he lies; she must send a child to fetch the tobacco she wants! During these days she sleeps on a special mat and puts on special clothes, the old ones which she brought with her for this purpose on the day she first came to the conjugal dwelling. When cooking, she must not touch the mealie meal with her hands, but with a spoon. A rich man who has plenty of spouses, and therefore plenty of food, will not touch the pot of the tabooed wife! At the end of the period, she smears the floor of the hut and puts on her ordinary clothing. (Annotatio 12)[1]. This is evidently the aggregation rite by which the woman returns to everyday life.

843 754 Normal relations continue during the first year of married life. Should the wife become pregnant, they are not suspended. It would even seem that they are rather recommended, as is shown by the following story: A young man once complained to me that he had been bewitched by his maternal aunt. The result of the spell she had cast over him was that he was no longer able to have sexual intercourse with his wife; and he was very angry, as he asserted that the aim of his aunt, in doing this, had been to prevent the successful issue of the pregnancy. She wanted

(1) The woman during her tihweti is also taboo for other persons. I heard of the case of a child who suffered from a hernia in the scrotum five days after birth. People said that it was the fault of certain women who had taken it in their arms during menstruation.

1 [See p.618 in these categories or in 116 — Analyst]

843 754 to hinder the child from growing and to put in its place, by means of her enchantments, a snake, a hare, a quail or an antelope!

834 846 [886] After the birth, owing to possible contamination by the lochia, sexual intercourse is prohibited till the rite of tying the cotton string (p. 56) has taken place. It is then allowed, but conception must be avoided till weaning, when relations are resumed in the normal way, and this goes on till the time when the woman is no longer able to bring forth children. I know of no special rules in connection with the menopause.

*

* *

831 But, amongst Bantus, sexual relations are not an individual affair, as amongst nations more advanced in evolution. There is a mysterious relation between them and the collective life of the community. Hence the fact that, on certain given occasions, they are recommended, even ordered, or prohibited.

1) Cases of recommendation.

833 783 587 829 Sexual relations must take place on two principal occasions: when the inmates of a village abandon it and go elsewhere to found a new one, and when the widows perform the painful rite of "lahla khombo" (to cast away misfortune). We shall see, when studying these customs, that sexual relations have here a twofold signification: 1) they "consolidate" the little community in its new abode, viz. they strengthen its structure by confirming the authority of its chief; 2) they provide the principal means of getting rid of all contamination, especially of the defilement connected with death. (Annotatio 13.)[1]

2) Cases of prohibition.

834 784 581 829 753 Married people are not considered as being in a state of defilement, as mourners are, for example. Yet this class of persons, called "ba-ku-khila," constitute a danger for those members of the community who are in a weak state of health. They must not come in contact with the circumcised, because in that case their wounds would not heal properly.

1 [See pp. 518-519 in these categories or in V6--Analyst]

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

834 They must not enter the hut of a person dangerously ill ; this would
784 hasten his death. People who are just recovering from a disease, when
581 they walk about on the paths, must tie around their ankles the root
829 called sungi, which will protect them against the perspiration or
753 emanation left by married people in their footprints, because, as one of my informants said, "ba-ku-khila ba hisa," viz. married people are hot.

834 Moreover not only individuals but the whole social life would be
836 endangered if sexual relations took place when the community itself is
581 in a critical position. They are prohibited therefore in wartime, during
829 the whole duration of hunting parties, and also during the marginal periods. Strange to say, this law does not apply so severely to unmarried boys and girls amusing themselves according to the "shigango" custom (p. 97). It seems that it is not the act in itself which is tabooed, but the act in as much as it is accomplished by regularly married people ; in this case only has it a bearing on the life of the community.

What is the reason of these prohibitions ? "Married people are hot." What does this aphorism mean ? The following rite may help us to understand it.

831 In the Malulcke country, when the whole population enters a lake
834 to kill fish according to the tjeba custom (Part IV. Chap. I), a little boy
226 and a little girl are chosen and laid down under a lion's skin, as if they
829 were husband and wife, and told to remain very quiet during all the time the grown up people are fishing. Not knowing anything about sexual
789 intercourse, they will obey ; then the fish also will keep quiet and
771 will be killed easily. Why ? Because there is in the sexual act something wild, fierce, passionate which, according to the law of correspondance which is at the base of all Bantu magic, has an influence on the hostile forces ; these will be excited and more difficult to overcome : enemies in battle, the animals of the bush during hunting and fishing parties, disease, danger of contamination at death and during the marginal periods. Life is, so to speak accelerated by the sexual act, and this acceleration is communicated to the whole of Nature. Therefore : Keep quiet, be continent!

This profound conception of life also explains why so often certain actions must be accomplished by children, not yet able to have sexual relations, or by old women who no longer practise them.

Let us remark that all these rites do not belong to Animism, properly speaking, but to Dynamism (Part VI. Chap. I), which plays a part almost as important as Animism in Bantu primitive philosophy.

5) Sterility.

842 782 In the Northern clans, when a woman does not conceive, a special sacrifice is offered, very similar to the one made by the Rongas on the day of the conclusion of the marriage. A goat is killed; a long piece, one foot in width, is cut from the skin of the animal in the ventral region, and three openings are made, one for the head and the two others for the arms. The three openings converge to a point where the astragalus bone of the goat is fixed to a strap. The sterile woman puts on this skin; the astragalus will be seen on her breast. She will also fix the gall-bladder in her hair and wear these ornaments for a time. To the mind of the Thongas, it seems evident that children are given by the gods; hence the idea of a sacrifice in case of sterility. But in addition to the religious rite, native doctors have many drugs to militate against this misfortune (1). The special porridge cooked for a sterile woman (mhika, shimhiko) is called *shibolelo* amongst the Ba-Ronga. The poor woman is despised.

586 Sterility can be a cause of divorce; the husband has the right of sending his wife home. But generally the parents of the woman find a *nhlampsa*, viz. a younger girl, and give her to the husband as a second wife.

6) Pregnancy and Miscarriage.

843 A special treatment is followed for the first pregnancy when the breasts begin to swell, a condition which is called *munyama* (darkness). The physician makes small incisions near the breast and on the legs, and draws out a little blood. The pregnant woman also drinks a decoction for the same purpose, i. e. to

(1) A Pedi man told me that in his tribe the first thing to do was to ascertain if sterility were due to the husband or to the wife. For this purpose a little bit of the clothing of the husband and of the wife was cut off and placed near a spider's nest. This spider is a kind of nyapla of enormous size. If the spider took the piece of the husband's clothing down to its nest, it meant that he was in fault, and vice versa.

843 remove the blood. The Thongas think that, as the menses are suspended, the blood accumulates in the body and must be taken away.

Pregnancy is not considered as a tabooed period. As we have just seen, sexual relations are allowed during that time, even recommended as favourable to the growth of the child. However, in view of the impending birth, some special taboos have been added to those which apply to all women.

A pregnant woman *must not drink water when standing up*. She must kneel down, otherwise the water would fall violently on the head of the child and hurt it!

843 It is taboo for her to *wrap her body* in too much clothing.
845 She must keep her belly bare and never throw her dress (kapulane) over her shoulders, lest the baby come to the light with its head covered with membranes, a complication which is very much dreaded by Thonga women.

She must not take *the sauce* of her porridge *too hot*. The child might be scalded inside and have black spots when born.

It is also taboo to *prepare the ntehe before the birth*, as no one knows what will happen. The child might die!

843 The future mother must not eat *pigeon's meat*, because pigeons
825 have no blood in the muscles of their breast. She would have no milk herself wherewith to nurse the baby. Nor must she even *look at a monkey*, lest she "take to herself" (tekela) the form of the animal and the child be like it!

A woman, in the beginning of pregnancy, must not visit a sick person. The latter might die.

843 As regards women dying during pregnancy, see page 166.
766 *Miscarriages* are very much feared amongst South Africans,
731 not for themselves, but because they are accompanied by an
789 uncontrolled effusion of a blood which is a terrible taboo. The discharged foetus must be buried in wet soil, otherwise the rain
826 will not fall; the country having been polluted will be dried up by hot winds. A strange rite called *mbelele* is performed in times of drought, when all the graves of children born prematurely and buried on the hill are searched, and their contents thrown into the mud, near the river. We shall discuss in Part VI the

we shall discuss in Part VI the

843 origin of this extraordinary idea. A woman who has had a
834 miscarriage is impure for three months at least. Menstruation
841 must have taken place two or three times and have cleansed her before her husband can have any sexual relation with her. (Compare Annotatio 7,[1] which applies to the transgression of this rule.)

7) Parturition.

846 We have described, when treating of birth, the many taboos
753 which accompany parturition. The *busahana* period, from the moment of delivery till the fall of the umbilical cord, is very much dreaded. When a woman is suffering from *shilumi* (a disease which sometimes follows delivery, probably owing to a displacement of the organs) she must not enter the hut of a woman who has been confined. The ailment would "jump over to her" (tlulela). There is however a way of preventing contagion. The visitor must take the piece of clothing which she uses as a girdle and throw it to the patient, and the patient throws back her own girdle to the visitor. Then she can enter : "They have acted according to the law, there is no more *yila*."

846 A mother must not drink any milk from the birth of the child
851 until its presentation to the moon. Afterwards she is allowed to drink only milk from cows which have calved many times.

The rite of *kunga* is performed in the case of a first-born child. This child is called *ñwana wa matibula*, the child by which the woman has *tibula*, viz. has become a mother. The etymology of this word *tibula* (Zulu zibula) is not known. When people come to greet the baby, its parents will not allow them to take it in their arms. They must pay something for permission to do so, even a brother, a sister, or a grandmother. The father is not subject to this rule ; "the child is his, belongs to him." Nowadays this ceremony means only that these people are happy to receive the new born child amongst them. There is no taboo in it. But it is certainly related to the fact that in giving birth to a child for the first time, the woman has passed from womanhood to motherhood.

1 [See p. 517 in these categories or in 116 - Analysis]

846 A demonstration of joy takes place at the birth of any subsequent
851 child, but the kunga is only performed for the first-born. It does not seem that in the case of the first-born child, as in the case of bowumba (see p. 125) the gifts of kunga are subject to any taboo.

8) Loss of children.

766 A woman who loses an infant (wa ku felwa) is deeply contam-
783 inated with the defilement of death. She must bury it herself
834 without aid from her husband. Next day, she goes behind the
853 hut, kneels down and draws off her own milk on to the ground. She does this until the secretion has ceased. This is taboo ; her milk is polluted ; no drop of it must fall in the gardens. She must avoid crossing the fields and going to the storehouses to fetch food.
[864] Until she has been "put right again (busetela)," she eats with a spoon. To use a spoon is a bad omen for a woman, because it reminds her of death. That is the reason why men adopt this civilized custom more readily than women. During her mourning, no sexual relations are allowed. When menstruation begins again, she first keeps silent, and does not tell her husband. Only on the second or third occasion does she inform him of the fact. He can then purify her ; this is done in the same way as in the case of widows. (See p. 154.) Then he buys new clothing for her and she resumes her ordinary mode of life. Everybody seeing her with this new attire will know that "she has been repaired." Should any one else than the husband give her this clothing, the latter will be greatly offended and accuse her of having relations with a lover.

765 A man does not put on *malopa*, mourning clothing, for a child
586 who was not yet of age. The woman alone does so. However a husband is always grieved at the death of his child and a sad event like this often leads to dreadful results. He will begin to think that his wife is a witch and has eaten her own child by her magical powers. Such an accusation is almost sure to end in a divorce.

A woman who has *lost many children*, three or four, is considered

A woman who has lost many children, three or four, is considered as being in a special position, called *bowumba*, and there are many rules to be observed in order to deal with this "state of bereavement." Should a child be born after the death of many elder brothers, he must be carried in a *ntehe* made of a sheep's skin instead of an antelope or goat skin. (See p. 46.) To carry him in an ordinary ntehe is taboo. Should it be a boy, the mother will put girl's clothing on it, and vice-versa. The mother's breast will be smeared with a special medicine, because they are "breasts of the dead (mabele ya bafi)." The child, if it lives, will be weaned as early as possible and be taken to its grandmother. Two curious rites are also practised to protect it against bad luck. The first is the *kunga* ; the second, *rangela bowumba*, seems to belong rather to the Northern clans.

765 854 761 844 [862]

The *kunga* rite which we have already met many times (see p. 124) is also performed in the case of a mother who has given birth to a new child whilst in the state of bowumba. To neglect it is a taboo. The bereaved mother keeps silent before her visitors until they have deposited their gifts at her feet and have thus "opened her mouth." Old women having no means to buy a present take a bit of grass and fix it in her hair. Then she consents to speak. She gathers all the bracelets thus obtained and puts them on the ntehe, carrying them everywhere with her.

789 761 854 844

Another rite is observed in the Northern clans. The child whose elder brothers and sisters have died is taken by the mother to the village of her own parents. There it is buried in the ash-heap up to its neck. Then somebody runs to the village, takes a handful of grains of maize and throws them on the child. Afterwards it is dug up, washed, smeared with ochre and brought home. This rite is called *rangela bowumba*, viz. to *precede* bowumba, to cut it, to treat it : the bowumba will not now come as it has been "preceded". It will be deceived, it will no longer desire the baby, as the baby has been thrown away together with all the refuse of the village on to the ash-heap. It is no longer able to eat mealies, even if it is given grains of mealies ; it is dead! Let the bowumba take no notice of it! (This description of the "rangela bowumba" was given to me by an old Thonga from Spelonken. Mankhelu, my Nkuna informant, called this rite

789 761

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga
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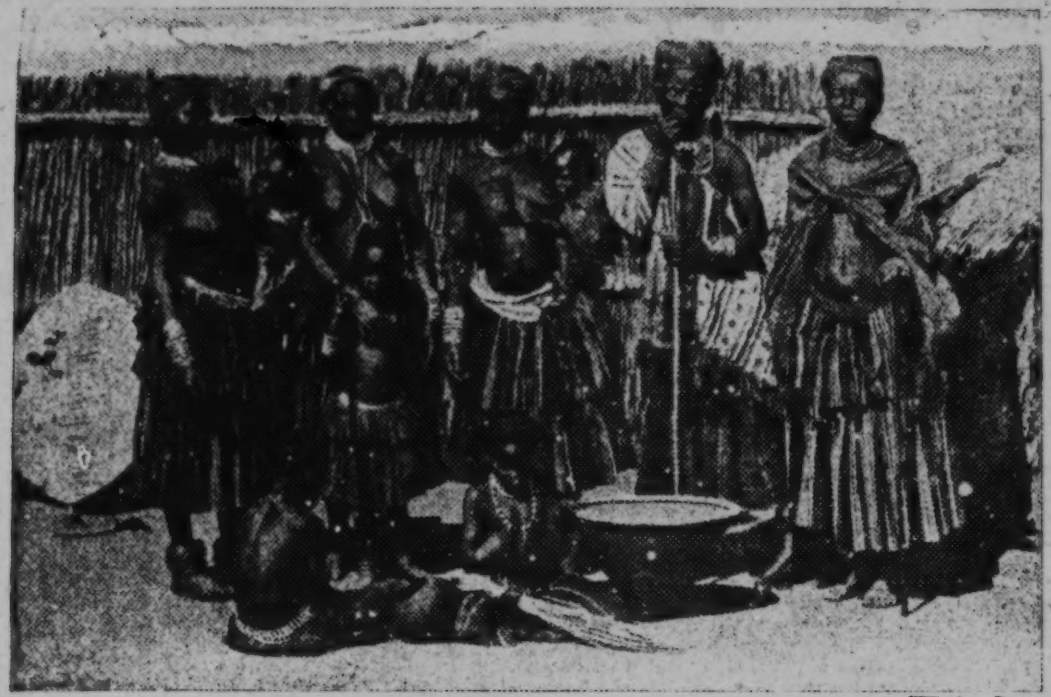

Phot. from Pretoria

Thonga women of the Transvaal.

789 "*ringela bowumba*," from the verb ringa, to try ; it is the attempt
761 to bring some influence to bear on the misfortune of the bereaved mother.)

9) ADULTERY.

837 Amongst the Thongas *true* adultery for a *man*, married or
595 unmarried (bumbuye), consists in committing sin with a married woman. Should he have relations with a girl, it leads to no consequences at all. Nobody will blame him, if the girl does not conceive. Should she have a child, he will only be forced to marry her ; she will become his second wife. His first wife will not at all resent his bad conduct. Sometimes she will herself get him the girl he wants. There is nothing in her heart like the jealous dignity of a European spouse! She will keep all her capacity for jealousy (bukwele) for the time when the second wife comes to the village, and shares with her the affection of their common husband! Adultery with an unmarried woman is nothing more than "gangisa."

837 But should a man have abducted a *married woman*, a woman
684 who has a master (ñwinyi), who has been paid for, then the
692 matter becomes very serious. The husband is very skilful at discovering her misdoing. As soon as he begins to have doubts about the fidelity of his wife, he chooses a friend and asks him to watch her. She is very cunning, her lover also ; but the friend is on the watch and some time perhaps, catches them in the bush, when she goes to gather fuel, or near the pool, where she draws her water. He comes back to the husband and informs him that he has caught them in the very act. Then the husband tells his wife that proof has been obtained and that she had better go at once to her lover and take something from his hut ; she obeys, and comes back with his blanket or any other object. This is "la pièce à conviction." The husband goes with it to the counsellor who is in charge of his village ; together they apply to the chief. The chief sends the counsellor who is responsible for the village of the lover to summon him. The confrontation takes place and the story of the case is investigated.

837 The woman is questioned, and confesses when, where, and how
684 many times he has sinned with her. If he denies this, the object
692 taken from the hut is exhibited. The adulterer is condemned by the chief to pay a *whole lobolo*, £ 15 to £ 20, as much as is necessary to buy a wife. He is rebuked before the whole assembly. "If you had taken a girl, it would not have mattered at all. Why did you abduct a married woman ? Do you not know that it breeds endless trouble at court (tindaba) ?"

The counsellor of the deceived husband goes to the counsellor of the lover to claim the money. The latter must go to the guilty man. The parents of the adulterer insult their son : "You see! All this money lost now! If only you had lobola a wife with it!" They must help him to find it at once, because this is a law universally recognised : the price of adultery must be forthcoming. (Nandju wa bumbuye a wu pfumali). The poor man will have to pay ; he will even have to add a hoe to "drive away" (hlongola) the counsellor, who keeps it for his reward!

837 Why is adultery so strongly prohibited and punished ? Not
684 at all from any moral consideration of purity or chastity, but for
783 two other reasons. First a social one. Adultery with a married
753 woman is a theft, because she is owned by a master. She is not
608 punished herself, except when the watcher finds her out and gives himself the pleasure of thrashing her to his heart's content. The whole punishment falls on the man ; he is the thief. But there is also a physical reason for it : the *matlulana*! We have already met with this word. *Tlulana* means to jump over each other, to compete with each other. In the sexual domain it is said of two men who have relations with the same woman. "They have met
[826] together in one life through the blood of that woman ; they have drunk from the same pool" (Viguet). This establishes between them a most curious mutual dependence : should one of them be ill, the other must not visit him ; the patient might die. If he runs a thorn into his foot, the other must not help him to extract it ; it is taboo ; the wound would not heal. If he dies, his rival must not be present at his mourning or he would himself die (See page 137). Should he even be the actual son (sometimes it happens that a son commits adultery with one of the younger wives

837 of his father, which is considered as *biha*, very bad), he must not
684 take any part in the burial, though he might be the regular "master
783 of the mourning." Relatives will drive him away because they
578 have pity on him, they know what misfortune threatens him. It is
182 a terrible taboo! There are medicines to remove this contamin-
626 ation ; the *yila* is removed by them, but the *biha* (bad action)
753 remains! However in the case of the disease called *mpondjo*, (which I believe to be the lupus), medicines are of no avail ; should a man visit his rival, who is suffering from it, he will die. We have also seen the terrible complications which are believed to take place at the birth of children, when there has been a question of adultery. (P. 40.)

836 These great taboos show that there is a deep feeling amongst the Thongas that promiscuity of any kind is a bad and a dangerous thing. Even in the case of *gangisa*, boys are censured when two of them court the same girl.

10) Divorce.

586 Adultery is one of the causes of divorce. The guilty woman, instead of obeying her legitimate husband and helping him to get his compensation, may choose to go to her lover and live with him. This leads to an immediate divorce. The husband goes to the parents of the unfaithful wife and claims his lobolo. They have perhaps no money to give. However they will try to get it as soon as possible, even if it is by the dissolution of the marriage of their own son ; they will perhaps send back his young wife to her parents and claim the lobolo paid for her, in order to meet the claim of the angry husband (See Part II). It would seem easier to go to the thief and claim from him the lobola for the adulteress whom he has stolen (tlhuba). But a thief is not a reliable man! If he has stolen, it proves that he had nothing (1). (See Appendix VIII.)

Divorce frequently takes place for more trivial reasons, for

548 (1) Women of low morals are called in Ronga gwababana, prostitute. There are plenty of them all round Lourenço Marques, where morality has sunk to a very low level; but this is the result of degeneration.

586 mere incompatibility of temper. Heathen men are often hard
562 to their wives. They refuse to give them money to buy
578 clothing. "They are stones," said one of these men to me. "Though you scratch a stone with your nail, the nail will break and the stone will remain!" On the other hand, the women are by no means sweet, obedient creatures ; therefore quarrelling often takes place. When she thinks she is persecuted (shanisa), the wife *runs home*. This is her great weapon. The husband heaves a sigh of relief... But very soon he becomes aware of his misfortune. No food, no cooked meal in the evening! His companions share their own food with him for some days, but they will not consent to feed him long. He will have to go modestly, humbly to his parents-in-law and ask his wife to return. Then they enquire into the matter, and he perhaps receives a good scolding. It may be that the domestic life will improve, both fearing the renewal of the conflict. It may however be that the situation will grow worse and worse, and then it will lead to divorce, viz. the husband will claim his money and, when he gets it back, the marriage is dissolved (ku dlawa ka bukati).

An accusation of witchcraft may also cause divorce, especially after the death of a child ; so also can sterility, as we have seen, p. 190. Gross selfishness on the part of the husband may lead to it ; many tales tell the story of a man who in time of famine succeeded in killing an antelope, kept the meat for himself and did not give any to his wife and children. The wife noticed it and, when the famine came to an end, she invited all her relatives to a beer feast. Then she shewed them the bones of the antelope, telling them how badly her husband had treated her ; her parents took her home together with the children. Sometimes the conclusion of the tale is that the man even lost his lobolo money, as a punishment for his evil deed! (See *Grammaire Ronga*, page 202. *Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, page 260.)

11) Widowhood.

783 When a man dies all his relatives are contaminated by the
765 defilement of death, as we have seen (Page 143). There are concentric circles around him, some people being more affected

783 than others. The wives form the first circle, especially the first
765 wife. They have therefore to perform peculiar purifying cerem-
562 onies which throw great light on the profound feelings of the Thongas regarding life and nature. On the other hand they are the property of the husband's family and they are part of his belongings. How are they to be distributed amongst his heirs ? This is a very delicate matter. It is more or less regulated by the tribal law. Hence there are two series of rites to consider, in the customs relating to widows : 1) The rites of purification, 2) the laws of distribution.

783 Let us describe first the fate of the great wife amongst the
765 Rongas (See for supplementary details : The fate of widows amongst the Ba-Ronga. S.A.A.A.S. 1909).

a) *The first day*. Manyibane is dead! — a sad event for his wife. She is called to inspect his grave. She assists silently at his funeral. But as soon as the younger brother of the deceased has finished praying, she bursts into tears and cries aloud! Her parents cry also : "Our child has fallen into misfortune! Now the cold has come for her! She will learn to know the cold water!" This is an allusion to the kind of life which the new widow will have to lead. Every morning she must go to the lake or the pool, with her companions, to have her whole body washed till the days of purification are completed.

783 The first of these purifying rites is performed just after the
765 burial. The widow, surrounded by other women, goes to the
575 pool and there all must wash their bodies. Most of them return home at once. But the widow remains there with *other widows* who have lost their husbands in former years. They form a *secret society* which assembles only to receive new members into its ranks. Nobody must see the strange rites performed by them. It is a *Ngoma* (the same word as for the circumcision school). However, the mysterious company takes possession of the great road (gondjwen), and every one must take care not to pass along it at that time, for great misfortune might overtake the imprudent one who should approach too near and catch a glimpse of the proceedings. A wise man, on seeing the suspicious group

783 of mourning women sitting on the main road, prudently stops and
765 makes a long detour to avoid the place... What is done at this
575 meeting ? One of the widows makes an incision with a knife or a
787 bit of glass in the skin of the new member of the society, in the inguinal region on the left side, "where the husband was resting." If the blood flows freely, it is a good sign. The women are satisfied ; they say there was a good understanding between husband and wife ; if the blood does not flow it is a bad omen. Then one of them lights a little fire with a handful of dry grass ; this grass has been torn from the roof of the deceased's hut. A little excrement from a cock (not a hen!) is then thrown into the fire, and the widow must expose both hands to the smoke. Afterwards she must extinguish the fire with her own water. Should she be unable to do this, it is a further proof that she has not been faithful to her husband and that she has killed him by her adulteries. These rites are very similar to the first circumcision rites, the incision performed recalling the ablation of the foreskin, and the exposure to the smoke, the jumping over the fire. These are great taboos. Evidently they are initiation rites, accompanying the passage from one condition to another. Why does the ceremony take place on the main road ? Because later on the contamination of death will attach itself to travellers passing that spot, and the mourners themselves will get rid of it in this way.

783 After that, the company returns home. The other widows
765 take every bit of clothing from their companion, and tie a reed or a
575 palm thread around her waist with some broad leaves attached
292 to it. With this scanty garment, they bring her home. She walks surrounded by them. Someone warns the men to leave the road as they are not allowed to see the procession. They hide themselves in their huts. The widow is led to her hut, the hut of the great wife which has now been uncrowned. She must accomplish *the last crossing of the hut*. Entering through the door, she shouts loudly : "My husband! My husband! You have left me alone! What am I to do ?" Then she goes out, not by the door but by the hole which has been made in the wall to carry the corpse to the grave. Behind the hut her friends are waiting for her and give her back her old clothing, which has been

783 washed in the pool and which she will wear again for two days (1).

765 b) *The following days of the Great Mourning.* Without delay a new hut, a small provisional hut, is built in front of the mortuary one. Here the great wife will stay during the whole of her widowhood; the space between this and the old hut is more or less taboo and most of the possessions of the deceased are placed there, under the roof near the door on the outside. (See illustration p. 159.)

The other widows do not leave their huts, but they participate in the other purifying acts, the vapour baths and the general sprinkling of the fifth day. As regards the vapour baths, however, the first wife is associated with the grave-diggers, viz. she must be exposed to the strongest medicinal smoke, while the inferior wives are cleansed with weaker drugs. They all put on the *malopa* and eat with spoons during the whole year of widowhood.

587 c) *Provisional decision regarding the fate of the widows.* A few
595 days after the Great Mourning, a fresh gathering takes place, not
128 in connection with the defilement of death, which is now provision-
768 ally cleansed, but *to settle provisionally the fate of the widows.* The
604 sisters of the deceased have to play a special part in this gathering. They will lead the discussion with the widows about their new husbands. It is indeed a happy custom to let women decide on the subject. Not that they have unrestricted power in the matter. The law has provided a certain rule for the distribution and this is seldom departed from. However, some liberty is allowed in its application, and modifications can better be made if proposed by female intermediaries. Should the husband possess a harem (tshengwe), that is at least five wives, they will most likely be given to the following heirs. The great wife, being "the pole of the

575 (1) *Widowers* also form a similar society and undergo the same rites; but just as it
783 was only the great wife who was subject to these laws, to the exclusion of the little wives, so it is only when he has lost his first wife that a man is initiated into the
765 widowers' society. After having buried her (he holds her head) he goes to the pool, washes himself, and another widower comes and makes the incision in him in the inguinal region. Then he throws aways his *shifado* (Annotatio 1.) and also carries out the same crossing of the hut in tears. These three acts constitute the actual widower's mourning; the vapour baths and *tshla khombo* are part of his purification as being the principal grave-digger.

1 [See category 116 --Analyst]

787 village," must remain in it and belongs to the younger brother (1)
595 who becomes the master of the kraal. The second goes to the
428 second brother, the third to the third, the fourth to the *ntukulu*,
768 viz. to the son of the sister of the deceased. The fifth will then
604 become the wife of one of the sons of the deceased. This may appear shocking, and is really shocking even to the ideas of the Natives ; but let it be remembered that she is the youngest of all ; she was taken when the father was already old, and the first son is perhaps older than she. As regards the elder wives, the first and second especially, no one would think of keeping them for the son! Incestuous relations are very rare amongst the
[823] Ba-Ronga. Even in this case, the feelings of both parties are more or less respected. The men advise the son to begin to play with the young widow, to ask her jocularly for tobacco, and he gradually accustoms himself to consider her no longer as a mother (mamana) but as a wife (nsati).

587 Of course the general rule is apt to be very much altered
595 according to circumstances. Should the deceased be the youngest
428 of the family, his elder brother may inherit the first wife. But
768 this is not the regular procedure.

The distribution having thus been decided on, the sisters of the deceased call the widows and say to them : "You so and so, you shall give food to so and so (phamela manyana)." But then the struggle begins. One of the widows, being old, may altogether refuse to have anything to do with any of her brothers-in-law. She may say : "I am taking my young son as a husband" which means : I do not want to be the wife of anybody. Or she will say : "I choose the big tree of the village where my late husband has built his hut." This answer may mean two things. Either : I do not leave this kraal and I will stay here without a husband ; or, on the contrary : I consent to be the wife of the man who becomes the headman of the village, viz. the eldest of the younger brothers. Another will say : "I love my *ntukulu* so and so." Should, however, the first wife desire to go to a man who does not

(1) Amongst the Ba-Ronga, an elder brother of the deceased cannot inherit a widow. It is taboo. He is a father to her, not a husband. He sometimes takes the lead in the discussion, having no personal interest in the matter. (See Part II).

587 live in the village, the family council will certainly object strongly
595 to her wish, as her departure would mean that the village would
428 cease to exist. But in the case of the younger widows it is quite
768 possible that an exception to the ordinary law would be allowed if they insisted upon choosing another husband (1).

After all, this is but a preliminary consultation, and the men who are rejoicing at the idea of getting new wives will perhaps be badly deceived later on, as we shall see. However the man provisionally chosen as the future husband of a widow, will at once pay visits to her, "march to her" (ku mu fambela), according to the technical expression.

765 d) *The casting away of misfortune.* But before any new and
783 happy life can begin for the widows, they have still to go through a
833 very hard trial. They must perform the *lahla khombo*, the throwing away of the malediction of death, and this is much more difficult for them than for the grave-diggers or the other members of the village. The main point in this strange act of purification is this ; before a widow can become the wife of her new husband, she must have sexual intercourse with another man whom she deceives. Should she succeed in freeing herself from him so that the act keeps its ritual character, s. n. i. (see Annotatio 2), this man will take on himself the malediction of death, and she will be purified. On the contrary, should the man accomplish the whole act, the widow has failed and will return home with shame and in despair! Here is a description of this sad expedition of the widows. It takes place a few days after the gathering just described. The men of the village send the widows away, telling them : "Go and scatter (hangalasa) the malediction through the country and get rid of it before some other misfortune happens to us."

(1) What would happen should the widow choose a husband outside her husband's family? To the mind of a heathen woman the idea would never occur. But suppose a Christian widow, having only married sisters, refuses to become their wife, her conscience forbidding her to contract a polygamic union. Her case would be very hard indeed, as I do not think her wish would be taken into consideration by heathen relatives. It would have to be brought before the White magistrate, who would probably try to help the widow. I think that, even if the woman consented to submit such family matters to the European court, she would have to give the lobolo or her children back to her brothers-in-law, and that might be an impossibility for her. It would be interesting to know how Native Commissioners proceed in such cases.

2 [See p. 516 in these categories or in 1K -- Analyst]

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

765 With their conical baskets on their heads they all go, each accom-
783 anied by a friend who will act as witness. They pay a visit to
833 some distant relative and try to flirt with the men of the village. Their aim is clearly understood ; morals are so dissolute that it is not difficult for them to attain their desire. (But the purifying act is useless unless interrupted abruptly before its completion). If the widow succeeds, she is full of joy, and comes back saying : "I have coped with the mourning, I have overcome it." Should she not succeed, she has then been "overcome by the mourning." This is a serious condition, which can only be dealt with by special medicines. The man who has unconsciously purified a widow and who becomes aware of it, will also have recourse to the *ñanga* to get rid of the pollution of death (1). The widows endeavour to come back all together ; they stand by the main entrance of the village and announce their success with the *mikulungwana* shouts, which mean at the same time joy and sorrow. Everyone meets them there, and they form a procession to the grave to tell the deceased what has happened : "You have left us in the open field ; we have had to go through a painful trial ; it would not have been so if you had not left us!" But, after all, this is a day of rejoicing, and the men, the heirs to the widows, are particularly pleased. The same day the widows put on a new undergarment and complete their purification by another steam bath.

At this time the mourning is said *to have ripened* (wupfile). The widow's hair has grown again. What remains is to *kill the mourning* (dlaya nkosi). This is done by the man who "marches to" or visits the widow. In the evening, he is allowed into her hut : they make a fire in it, put into the fire two pills of a purifying medicine, and expose their limbs to the smoke. Then they put it out with their own water, after which they can have sexual relations without harm. A certain time must, however, elapse before the adjudication of the inheritance takes place.

(1) He may also avoid the danger of being killed by the contamination of death in the following manner : Supposing that the woman who tries to seduce him is a widow, he tears off a little piece of her most intimate undergarment before the act. Later on he asks a *ñanga* to prepare a medicine into which this bit of clothing will be introduced. Then he covers himself with a blanket, burns the medicinal pill on a live charcoal and inhales the smoke. He is safe, and the woman also has been cleansed.

124 The description I have given of the *lahla khombo*, translating
178 exactly the narratives of Mbozá, Elias, and an old widower called
164 Magingi, refers to the rite as it was performed in the normal
783 fashion some twenty years ago amongst the Ba-Ronga. Now
765 customs are changing. There is, all around the town of Lourenço Marques, an agglomeration of Natives coming from many tribes. Immorality there has become terrible owing especially to alcoholic excesses, a free and enormous sale of adulterated wine taking place in this region. The widows are sure to find there a hundred men for each of them, when they wish to cast away their defilement. But in this promiscuity the poison of syphilis makes terrible ravages. According to our medical missionary, 90 % of the
783 Natives are contaminated by this disease. When the men up
765 country saw that their wives came back ritually purified but
178 physically contaminated, they began themselves to accomplish the necessary act. This has become the general custom to such an
833 extent that, when a widow goes to Majlangalen, (such is the name of that hell of drunkenness and immorality), it is now said of her : "She will refuse to stay with her legal heirs!" However the law of the *lahla khombo nhoben*, to cast away the malediction in the bush, remains inexorable in the three cases where the defilement is considered as being of the worst kind : if the
[845] husband died of phthisis or of leprosy, or if the woman has had twins.

Old widows who can find no lovers may be purified by means of drugs.

765 e) *The year of widowhood*. Though the widows have found
587 new husbands, they still remain in the old kraal. They must accomplish there "a full hoe," viz. a whole year of ploughing. In their new fields they leave the dry sticks of the mealies of the year before, in such a way that everybody passing by will know at once that this is the field of a widow. But what they harvest this year will belong to the new husband. They have now the right to *fambelana*, viz. to go to each other. The suitor brings clothing to the woman, and the woman pays him visits with jars of beer. They belong more or less to each other. But the marriage of the inherited woman is not absolutely settled. Her

final fate will not be known before the last and most important act : the adjudication of the inheritance.

f) *The day of the adjudication of the inheritance.* This is a most typical ceremony prepared for with great care, because the day is full of surprises and dangers. Every precaution is taken to avoid misunderstanding, and to bring the mourning to a peaceful and satisfactory conclusion. It is winter time ; the mealies have been collected from the fields of the widows, the small cobs called *makumula* have been set carefully apart, as they have to be used especially to prepare the beer for the feast. The council of the family is again assembled and decides that the time has come. The divinatory bones are consulted. Should they be favourable, the ceremony can take place. The bones are again asked a number of questions : Who must take the mealies from the granary and put them in the pot to soften them in water ? (first operation of native beer making). A newly married woman who has had only one child is chosen by preference. Then it is asked how long this softening must continue ; who is to shout her *mikulungwane* to accompany the work ; who will have to get the mealies out ; which woman must give the first blow in the mortar to pound the softened mealies, etc.

All the relatives assemble in the mortuary village. One year has elapsed since the death, and the bitter feelings of mourning have passed. Nobody will miss the feast, certainly not the *batukulu*, viz., the nephews, sons of the sisters of the deceased. Some may be disappointed this day, but one of these nephews may return home richer than when he left! Most of the relatives arrive before the great day, to help in the preparation of the beer. When the woman designated by the bones has given the first blow, all her companions start at once pounding with vigour : "Che-ghe-ghe-ghe," and they sing songs of mourning. This is one of these songs, and a very significant one :

> Hi rilo, hi rilo! Hi ta ku yini ku we, Hosi ndjina ?
> We are weeping, we are weeping! What shall we say to thee, King!

This king is without doubt Heaven, the more or less personal being who kills or gives life, and whom we shall often meet with in these pages.

768 The first of the ceremonies of this day[1] is the sacrifice on the
782 grave. The master of the mourning takes a pot of beer, and followed by the crowd, especially by the *batukulu*, goes to the place where the deceased has been buried. He stops there and prays : "See this jar of beer! We bring it to thee ; we have gathered to tear to pieces the mourning. We beseech thee that this ceremony may be performed in peace and good understanding." Then he pours a little of the drink into the cup which is on the grave, the same which the deceased used when alive. One *ntukulu* then takes the jar, which is still almost full, and drinks the contents with the other *batukulu*. This has been done calmly. But this act has made the *batukulu* bolder. They become troublesome. As soon as the crowd has come back from the grave, they steal another pot of beer. They insult the masters of the village. They say : "Why! You have never sent us any notice about the decisions concerning the mourning! We are tired! We will go and take our wives with us!" But some of the old men go to them and say : "Be good! Do not spoil the feast!"

By the end of the afternoon all the relatives assemble near the door of the mortuary hut, and bring the goats which they have given for the feast. Here the true sacrifice, the living offering, is made, very much in the same style as that described when treating of the crushing down of the hut (p. 158). The old man who prays, says : "See us here! We have come together to conclude our mourning. May there be no noise, no misunderstanding, no anger amongst the *batukulu*! This is our ox (the goat). It has been provided by so and so. Many others have been brought. See! You have died as a great chief!" At this very moment a *ntukulu* rises and begins to insult the old man who is praying : "You have no concern for us! Why do you leave us out ? You do not give us our wives! You are killing us!" And the other *batukulu* join in chorus. The end of the sacrifice and of the prayer is always the same in these big, religious, family gatherings of the Ba-Ronga : the *batukulu* steal the part of the victim set apart for the gods. The throng pursues them laughing, and pelts them with balls of *psanyi*.

1 [i.e., the day of the adjudication of the inheritance -- Analyst]

768 The sun is now setting. All the men go to the central place of
575 the village and sit round the fire. The widows remain on the
533 spot, between the deceased's hut and the new hut of the great wife, where all the belongings of the late husband have been kept during the whole year. The other widows of the family surround them once more ; no other woman is allowed to approach. The present ceremony is another secret rite of the company of widows. They sing the following mourning song to recall all the sufferings of the year of widowhood :

> Angoma nkulukumba ! Tatana a nga fa, a ba siya
> Na ngoma a nga si ba byela !
> Our secret law is a great law ! Our father has gone, he has left them,
> And he had not told them about that law !

768 During this song the old women take away all the clothing of
587 the widows, and wash their bodies. Then they lead them into the hut of the great wife and put on them new clothing, the clothes which their suitors and other relatives have brought for them. When they are all seated, the sisters of the deceased proceed to the last distribution. They first ask the great wife : "You, to whom do you belong ?" She answers : "Do you not know him ? It is the man who has taken care of me, who has been visiting me! I choose so and so!" She may also say : "I kill so and so!" *(Ndji dlaya man)*. That means : "As I have killed my first husband, I might do the same for the second," a very promising declaration! As soon as the widow has given her answer, the women in the hut begin shouting loudly, and one of them goes out to the men, and cries : "So and so says she kills so and so !" They proceed to ask another : "You, whom do you choose ?" The woman remains silent. "What do you mean?" — "I do not choose anybody." — "How is that? Be sensible!" — "No! I do not want anybody!" — "Why ?" They begin to press her : "You know well who has taken care of you, who has visited *(hambela)* you the whole year." — "I do not want him!" — "How is that possible ?" — "No, I do not want him. I want the *ntukulu* so and so." A frightful noise is heard in the hut ; they are all shouting together. What has happened ?

587 768 Probably this widow was not pleased with the man to whom they had destined her. Seeing more of him during the year, her affection had not increased. On the other hand, she had some liking for one of the *batukulu*, and she arranged secretly with him, and perhaps also with his mother, that she would keep silent till this day and then choose her nephew. It is quite possible that the mother of the *ntukulu* will say in that case: "Has this widow not been bought with the money which I secured for the family by my marriage?" Of course the official suitor objects strongly to this spoliation. He becomes angry. During a whole year he has given clothing to the ungrateful one. Things may grow so bad that the *ntukulu* carries off the fractious widow at once, saying: "Good-bye! I go with my wife!" The old men will then follow him and implore him to come back. If they see that the woman is quite decided, they will allow her to go to the husband of her choice. They had better consent to it at once, because it not infrequently happens that the *ntukulu*, if repulsed that day, will go to the family of the woman and claim the money *(lobola)* paid for her by her late husband, saying: "That *lobola* comes from my mother. If you do not give us our wife, if you allow her to stay with another man, then give us back the money." Or it may happen also that the widow, brought perforce to the house of a younger brother-in-law, will run away to the *ntukulu*, and the rightful husband will be helpless. There is a saying to this effect: "A woman inherited cannot be forced." Of course 587 such cases of conflicting interests cause a great deal of friction 578 between members of the family, and the Natives are much distress- 768 ed about it; they try to avoid it as much as possible. But the 428 desire of getting one more wife is so strong in the heart of a Ronga that such disputes are by no means rare, and the day of the adjudication of the inheritance is universally dreaded. However, they never go as far as fighting, and if an uncle and a nephew have parted from each other on bad terms, they will very likely try to mend matters by the sacrifice of reconciliation *(hahlelana madjieta)*, which is one of the admirable features of the Ronga religion (See Part VI).

The widows are truly the most important part of the property

768 left by a man. When they have been distributed, the minor
428 possessions of the deceased are adjudicated. As regards *oxen,*
604 *money*, these have been already remitted to the younger brother or, in his absence, to the sons. The younger brother will use them as family property to buy a wife for his son or for the son of the deceased, when he comes of age. In the distribution of the implements which have been cleansed, but left lying on the ground in front of the hut up to this day, the *ntukulu*, viz. the principal uterine nephew again plays an important part. He has the right of *tjhumba*, viz. of picking out for himself one of the assagais of his uncle, just as the maternal uncle takes (tjhumba) one pound from the lobola money (See Part II). Every warrior possesses at least two assagais ; the big one belongs in principle to the chief, and must be inherited by the eldest son. The nephew takes the smaller one, but he must precede his cousin in choosing ; in appropriating this weapon, he *surrenders* or transmits (nyiketa) the inheritance to the true heirs. This is a very characteristic expression. It seems as if he wished to assert his right ; but he takes the less valuable weapon and leaves the better one to the son. The explanation of this custom is probably to be found in the evolution of the family system which must have taken place amongst the Thongas (See Part II). In fact all the *batukulu* stand in a line and receive a portion of the property of the deceased, a knife, an axe, a small punch, etc. Women never inherit (a ba di
562 pfindla). When no heir exists except females, they may receive
428 something, but the valuable property must be kept by them for their sons, the uterine nephews of the deceased. Why ? Because, in the mind of the Thongas, a woman is not capable of possessing ; she is not able to build an oxen kraal and repair it ; how could she possess oxen ? The only thing she can do is to arrange a pig's kraal. Therefore she can own pigs, but nothing else!

768 The end of the feast of the adjudication of the inheritance is the distribution of the flesh of the victims. The company breaks up, each party having received one of the limbs. They must eat it on their way home, somewhere under a tree, on the road ; neither in the mortuary village, nor in their own kraal. It is

768 taboo. Those who have received a wife go home rejoicing. When he has reached home, the fortunate husband kills a fowl or even a goat to make a fitting reception for his new wife. This is the end of the long period of widowhood, in which it is easy to discover the whole sequence of the passage rites.

783 Such is the old normal way of reinstating a widow in society.
765 But there are special cases where the rites are slightly different. If a widow is old and cannot expect to deceive a man, she simply buys medicines which are supposed to cleanse her.

The case of the wife of Sokis (see page 139, footnote) was more difficult. She had a baby, and sexual relations were consequently prohibited. Moreover the man who legally inherited her was in Johannesburg and could not provide for her purification. One of the grave-diggers took his place and "ran for her" (tjutjumela). This is a different expression for *fambela*. As far as I could understand, this man had ritual relations with his own wife in order to *lahla khombo*, to be purified himself. Then he tied the cotton string (boha nshale) round the waist of the widow. A sick widow will also be treated by *tjutjumela*. The grave-digger possesses the means of cleansing them, having gone through the mourning together with them.

These attenuated processes of purification seem the rule amongst the *Northern clans*. According to Viguet, the widows must also go to the bush (hula ni nhoba) to meet with a man who will free them of the defilement of death. The man who performs this act is called the *shikomho* of the widows. There are certain individuals who make a real business of this. Knowing drugs with which to cleanse themselves (ku tirulula), they claim a reward for their help... The widows remove their mourning attire (bracelets of strings on that occasion), and return home adorned with beads.
768 In the Djonga dialect the adjudication of the inheritance is called
783 *pandja ndjaka*. It is not accompanied by a sacrifice. There seem to be some differences in the ideas of the Rongas and of the Northern clans. For the former the defilement of death contaminates the hut to a greater extent. This must be destroyed, and the widow has to undergo the very hard casting away of misfortune (lahla khombo). For the latter the impurity rests more on the

783 village itself, which must carry out the collective purification of
768 *hlamba ndjaka*.

I must further mention a new custom which is spreading
587 amongst the Ba-Ronga in the neighbourhood of Lourenço
609 Marques. When a widow objects to becoming the wife of the legal
611 inheritor, she goes home and adopts another husband. There are plenty of men of other tribes, coming from Inhambane, Quelimane, Mozambique, who have no wife. They accept the proposal of the widow and go to live in her village. They are generally despised and called by the insulting name of *mugomo*, a Zulu word meaning an empty iron oil-tin. They are as hard and unfeeling as such a tin! If children are born, they belong to the family of the deceased husband, who paid the lobolo.

587 Sometimes also a widow chooses a nephew who is still a child. She gives him food as if she were his wife, but she lives with another man whom she loves. It even happens that she may choose a girl, the daughter of another wife of the deceased. (Annotatio 13.)[1]

C. OLD AGE AND DEATH

888 An old woman, having in some sort gone out from the sexual
782 community, enjoys some privileges which are taboo for her sisters who are still capable of childbearing. She is allowed to put on the clothing of the widows ; contamination of death is not so dangerous for her. She can proceed to the purification of the village, in certain cases of epidemic, and of the weapons of the warriors in war time (Part III). After the sacrifice of the black ram for rain, old women and small girls alone are allowed to eat the flesh of the victim.

462 But old and decrepit women are despised. As long as they
888 can still till their land, they are treated with consideration, but when they have lost all their strength and must be fed by their children, they are looked upon as troublesome burdens. I must say that, as long as she still has an atom of vigour, a Thonga woman goes to her field and tills it. During all her life time

1 [See pp. 518-519 in these categories or in 116 — Analyst]

462 she has contracted such an intimate union with Mother Earth
888 that she cannot conceive existence away from her gardens, and she crawls to them with her hoe, by a kind of instinct, till she dies.

764 The death of the woman is accompanied by the same rites as the death of a man. I must mention, however, the custom of *mahloko*, which takes place when a woman dies while still in her prime. Mahloko comes from *nhloko*, head. The explanation of this technical word is this : the parents of the woman say : "Our head (viz. a person belonging to us) has died ; let us go to mourn her."

587 Let us first see how this mourning takes place *in the Ronga clans.*
578 If the two families were very friendly, the parents of the deceased will probably bring with them a little girl, saying : "This is our little green meat (mbuti), our little orange (rather sala, fruit of the nsala tree)." They offer her to the husband to take the place of the deceased wife, and a new contract will be made. The widower will then at once pay a first part of the lobolo, £ 5 for instance, and, in the course of time, he will marry his sister-in-law. But generally the visitors are angry, and the mahloko ceremony is very unpleasant. It may be that the deceased wife had not been entirely paid for. In that case her parents will come at the end of the mourning to "claim the herd" (ramela ntlhambi).

764 But though there may be no difficult lobola question in the
578 way, uneasiness is felt, because the brothers of the deceased
754 cannot help thinking that their sister has been killed by witchcraft. It was not yet time for her to die ; so she must have been bewitched by the husband's family, probably by her co-wives, who were jealous of her. When the Great Mourning took place, they hardly came to the mortuary village. One or two went to see their "head," and mourned her in their own kraal. To day, the day of mahloko, they assemble, and throw bones in order to know who will have to speak, who will receive the mahloko money, whether the money has been bewitched ? The whole company starts for the mortuary village, driving a goat before them. They sit down outside in the bush with dark looks ; there is no longer any hut to receive them... They have been noticed by the

764 inhabitants of the kraal. One of them, the saluter (mulosi), goes
604 to meet them and offers them a shilling. They keep silence.
578 He tells them the news of the village. They do not answer.
754 He leaves them and comes a second time with a fresh present. Then they consent to tell the news of their home, but they do not enter the village. The same man returns to them a third time with £ 1 ; they refuse to accept it. He adds 10/. (£ 1.10 is considered the normal sum to be paid as a kind of fine by the widower to the parents of the deceased.) They refuse again : this is an insult! Happily the *ntukulu* is there ; he will act as mediator between the two families. The visitors summoned him on their arrival and he has been sitting with them the whole time ; is he not the son of their sister ? But before he went to them, his father has given him his instructions : "Tell them that I have not eaten your mother." The *ntukulu*, as we shall see, is very free with his maternal uncles. He has the right of teasing them, even insulting them. Seeing that they do not accept the money, he stands and gives vent to his grief, throws sand at them, tries to drive them away, weeps. "No! Father has not killed mother! He is not a wizard! She died a natural death!" They see his tears, and then consent to enter the village.

764 In front of the mortuary hut, all the belongings of the deceased
768 wife have been piled up, together with the straw crown of the hut :
595 her pots, plates, baskets, spoons, mortars, etc. The brothers
782 break everything. Should there be any new implements amongst
[578] them, they will perhaps give them to their nieces. Then they lift up the roof of the hut and throw it into the bush. They pick all the plaster from the walls and throw it away where they threw the roof. The sacrifice is then accomplished amidst the ruins of the destroyed hut. Whilst it is being prepared, the women of both families insult each other. The female relatives of the deceased say to the women of the village : "You have killed her because she was a splinter in your eyes" (shilabi). The others answer : "Have you seen us kill her ? Perhaps people do not die with you ?" The *bukwele*, the special jealousy which almost always exists between co-wives, explains how it is possible for them to address such amenities to each other. But the victim is

764 prepared, all the limbs cut off, the portion of the gods set apart.
782 The elder brother of the deceased woman prays in these words :
768 "My sister, go in peace, be not angry ; because we love you, we
595 have come to mourn you to-day. Do not say we have not mourned you. Go to so and so (father, grandfather, etc.), call them here, give us good sleep and good health, etc." The batukulu appropriate the offering and the mourning ends in laughter, dancing and drinking. The neighbours come and take part in the rejoicings.

When they return home, the mourners spend all the mahloko money in buying wine. They sometimes become quite intoxicated. Afterwards both families begin to visit each other again.
764 This custom of the mahloko fine is so strong that converts
768 still adhere to it. But they usually send the money to the wife's family when informing them of the death, and no other ceremony is performed.

In the Northern clans the mahloko are also paid, but it seems that the family of the widower considers that it has the right to claim the repayment of the whole lobolo, when the deceased wife has left no child to compensate for the loss. In Nondwane, though we are still in Ronga territory, when the woman dies
765 shortly after marriage the lobolo must be repaid. Further north
782 the procedure is as follows : the deceased woman is buried by her husband according to the ordinary rules ; one year elapses and a special feast is celebrated, similar to the "beer of mourning" (page 164), in the village of the wife's parents, where both families gather together and provide the necessary victims. It commences with a sacrifice in which the father of the deceased wife squeezes the *psanyi* of the goat on to those present, all the time insulting the gods who have killed his child and made trouble between the two families. He ends with words addressed to the widower's relations : "I cleanse you from your misfortune." The widower's father does the same thing, insulting also his own gods, and every one rubs his body with the green liquid squeezed from the *psanyi*. Then prayer for new blessings is offered and the sacrifice is made, as
765 customary, and the actual discussion as to claims takes place. Each family takes possession of a hut, the widower's family assembling

765 as usual in the house of the deceased wife's mother, and the parley takes place through the go-between (tintjumi), as in the discussions which precede marriage. Let us call the husband's family A and that of the wife B. A sends two hoes to B as a notification : "Your child died with us last year." B answers "All right! Then pay the fine for her head (nhloko). Because you had only bought her legs. Her brain, her head, her name was still ours." A sends five hoes to B, to pay for the brains of the deceased. B takes two of the five and sends them back to A, saying : "One of them is to cleanse you from the misfortune, and we shave your head with the second." A accepts the two hoes and returns home. Should the wife have died childless, there will be a second act to the procedure: A has "opened the door of the claim" (a pfurile nyangwa wa nandju). He will come back shortly to lodge it with B.

587 768 Here he comes. Using his go-between (ntjumi) as a mouth piece, he says to B : "Look at us! We gather our ashes with our own hands and we dig water in small shells of sala,— viz. we have no wife to do this feminine work for us!" It means : "Please give us another wife or repay the money to buy one." If B happens to have a girl of marriageable age, he will say : "Do not kill us ; we put a log of wood across the road" (hi hingakanya ntjandja). This means : "We have put something to prevent you from coming to us as enemies. Here is a new wife for you." A understands quite well and goes home satisfied. He comes back without delay and brings twenty or thirty hoes, which is a beginning of lobola payment. He says : "We thank you for the wife." The girl then follows him at once, if she is of marriageable age ; if not, she stays at home until she is grown up, and during all this time her new husband provides her with clothing. When, having gone to live with him, she gives birth to a child, B comes to A and says : "Nwombekazi a yi ambi nandju," viz. "A cow which has calved is not used to pay a debt," that is to say : she must be paid for herself. This technical expression means therefore : As our daughter has given you posterity, pay the full lobolo for her! A will certainly do it "hi bushaka," on account of the friendly relation existing between B and himself. But if B has no girl to give in compensation, if he has no money, what will happen ? A will

587 follow his oxen where they have gone, namely into the family
768 of the girl who has been bought by B for one of his sons. This woman is for the widower his great *mukoñwana*, the woman he fears the most in all the tribe. We shall see what will then happen when treating of the extraordinary relations existing between these two individuals. This wonderful story of the consequences of the death of a wife, so characteristically told by Viguet, provides us with an excellent opportunity for transition to Part II of this work, which will explain the relations between all the members of the Thonga family.

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SECOND PART

THE LIFE OF THE FAMILY AND OF THE VILLAGE

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621 Having followed a man and a woman from the beginning to
592 the end of their existence, I now come to the Life of the Family and of the Village. Both subjects are in close connexion. As a rule, a village is but a family composed of the headman, the father, his wives, his children and the old folk who depend upon him ; but in many cases his younger brothers live with him, sometimes a son-in-law, or even a stranger, and all these inmates compose the village, *muti* (1). In the first chapter we shall consider the family itself, its constitution, the system of relationship, and in the second, the village, the concrete embodiment of the family, its foundation, its main laws and the respective occupations of its members.

CHAPTER I

THE LIFE OF THE FAMILY

121 The kinship system of the Thongas and, I suppose, of all the
601 Bantus is widely different from ours, and greatly surprises the

(1) Native villages are generally called *kraals* by South African colonists. This expression comes from the Portuguese word *curral* which means properly stable. I shall employ it to designate the enclosure where oxen are kept, the cattle-kraal, but it does not seem right to apply it to the *muti* which is a *village*, however small and poor it may be. The Portuguese call native villages *povoação*.

121 601 uninitiated student who tries to understand it. It is a very complicated matter indeed. In *Les Ba-Ronga* I have given the genealogy of Tobane and tried to sketch the system, and even to explain it. I cannot say that I was altogether satisfied with this first attempt. When later on I had an opportunity of studying the subject in the Northern clans, I found that a comparison between the customs of the different parts of the tribe helped greatly to an understanding of the whole matter. This led me to extend my investigation to neighbouring tribes, and, after the publication of the first edition of this book, I made inquiries amongst the Vendas, Pedi-Khahas, Suthos, Chopis, Ndjaos and Tongas. I then conceived the ambitious plan of drawing up a table of the terms of relationship in all these tribes or sub-tribes, being convinced that it would be of great interest, both from the linguistic and from the ethnographic point of view. I publish it in Appendix IV, at the end of this Volume. My chief concern remains with the Thonga tribe, but after having described in detail the kinship system amongst the Thongas, I intend to sketch some of the most characteristic customs met with amongst their fellow Bantus in South Africa.

May I add that though it is comparatively easy to discover the main ideas in relation to the family in the Thonga tribe, yet the whole tangle is extraordinarily difficult to unravel. I had believed that it was composed of two threads only, twisted together and knotted a hundred times : the lobola and polygamy customs. But I saw that many other threads were entwined with these : remnants of an ancient state of society where the mother-right prevailed, and perhaps traces of the old group-marriage system which is still extant amongst Australian natives. My aim is more modest to-day. I do not claim to explain everything, but to present a wider, more complete statement of facts, which I offer to professional anthropologists in order that they may fix the place of the present Thonga system of relationship in the evolution of the human family.

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A. REMARKS ON THE TABLE OF TERMS OF RELATIONSHIP IN TEN SOUTH AFRICAN TRIBES OR SUB-TRIBES (APP. IV)

115 Some particulars as to the way I obtained the lists contained in this Table may interest my readers.

First of all I would express my gratitude towards the late and much regretted Rev. F. Bridgeman, who compiled the *Zulu list*, and to the Rev. R. Godfrey, to whom I owe the *Xosa list*. I could hardly have found more competent collaborators for the Zulu-Xosa group.

The *Chopi tribe* is settled on the border of the Indian Ocean, from the mouth of the Limpopo up to Inhambane. A considerable number of its members have emigrated into the Lourenço Marques district. One of them, belonging to the Zandamelan clan, gave me his genealogy and explained to me the Chopi system of relationship.

As regards the *Suthos of Basutoland*, my informant was Neftali Motswenen, the assistant of Dr. Hertig, in Morija, in 1915, and the list was kindly revised by my friend the late Rev. E. Jacottet and by the Rev. P. Ramseyer.

The *Khaha* tribe is a portion of the Pedi population of the Northern Transvaal. I spent some years in the neighbourhood of its chief, Maaghe, who was staying near the Mission Station of Shiluvane, and owe my information chiefly to a young Khaha named Malupi, who was one of my pupils (in 1906).

During a prolonged visit to the *Venda country* in 1920 I met an intelligent Native called Shifaladzi who did his best to disclose to me all the mysteries of the customs of this interesting tribe, especially its kinship system.

As regards the *Tongas* in the neighbourhood of Inhambane, I got my first information from one of them living near Rikatla ; the list was later on submitted to Mrs. Keys, the wife of an American missionary, who kindly completed it as far as possible.

The *Ndjaos*, also called Ba-Nyai, live further north, between the Sabie River and Beira. One of my neighbours in Rikatla belonged to that tribe and gave me an intelligent account of their family life.

I cannot guarantee the absolute completeness of all these lists. There are blanks in some of them, either because my informants failed to find the proper term or because that term does not exist or has been

115 forgotten (especially in Basutoland). It may also be that some mistakes have been made, and I must apologize if such is the case: However I give this table as it is, after having done the best I could, knowing, as I said in my introduction, that Science proceeds by successive approximations and hoping that it will be a useful stone in the building up of African ethnological Science.

*

* *

194 As regards the spelling of all these words, I have followed as well as I could the system used in the books of the different languages. As, however, there is a deplorable multiplicity in the orthographic systems of South Africa, certain signs have not exactly the same value in all the columns. It is impossible to avoid this drawback, but it is of minor importance, my first aim being ethnographic and not linguistic. In Thonga I render by *ps* the sibilant *s* which is represented by *s* with a circumflex in the Thonga-Ronga books, and by *tj* and *dj* the cerebral *t* and *d*. I employ undiscriminately *b* for the strong *b* which is more common in Ronga and for the soft *b*, represented by *ṽ* in Thonga-Djonga books.

The Rev. P. Schwellnus has kindly transcribed most of the Khaha terms collected by me in the orthography recently adopted for Pedi books. Thus the letter *g*, when found alone or after *k*, represents the greek *γ*, a hard fricative guttural, whilst *g* associated with *n* corresponds to the nasal guttural *ng* in the English "singing" (*ñ* in Thonga). The cerebral *t* (*tj* in Thonga) is represented by *c*. In this form the kinship terms do not entirely agree with the Khaha pronunciation. The Khahas have a tendancy to soften many sounds (*dz* instead of *ts*, a kind of *d* instead of *tl*). I have adopted, however, the official Pedi orthography, as it is inadvisable, from a practical point of view, to preserve all the peculiarities of less important dialects or semi-dialects.

In the Sutho orthography *kh* corresponds to the Pedi *kg* ; *l* before *i* and *u* represents a sound intermediary between *l* and *d*, also present in Chopi, a soft cerebral *d* ; in Pedi it is written *d̯*. This sound occurs in the feminine suffix *ali* (Sutho), *adi* (Pedi) often met with in kinship terms (*ati* in Thonga, *azi* in Zulu, *adzi* in Venda). *O* and *u* are used both in Sutho and Pedi for the semi-vowels *w* and *y*. *Ch* in Sutho is pronounced like *tsh* in Thonga and Zulu.

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* *

601 Grammatically speaking, most of the Thonga terms of kinship belong
193 to the class mu-ba, the personal class. They form their plural in *ba* (batatana, bana, bamakwabu, batukulu). Some however are of the class yin-tin which comprises mostly animals, but also names of trades and of family relations : Ndjisana, nhondjwa, namu, nhombe, nhlantsa forming their plural in *ti*. The five following terms, Tatana, Mamana, Rarana, Malume, Kokwana, are treated as proper nouns when they are used as such. For instance when I say Tatana, it means *my* father, the one to whom this term applies par excellence. In this case Tatana is not preceeded by the initial vowel *a* or *e*, which is always prefixed to the common nouns (See Elementary Grammar ot the Thonga-Shangaan Language, page 26 § 65). If I wish to say "his father," I should say : Atatana wa kwe (Ro.), or Etata wa yena (Dj.) etc.

B. EXPLANATION OF THONGA TERMS OF RELATIONSHIP

602 Let us go deeper into the study of each of these terms, trying to ascertain their principal and derivative meanings. We shall consult the three genealogies here given, those of Tobane (A), of Mboza (B) and of his wife Nsabula (C), endeavouring to ascertain not only the social but also the moral relation existing between these several people. There are two kinds of relationship : blood relationship or consanguinity and marriage relationship, relationship on the wife's side or affinity. Amongst blood relatives, there are two categories which differ more from each other amongst the Bantus than amongst us, relatives on the father's side and on the mother's side. On the father's side, the relatives are called bakweru (Ro.), barikweru (Dj.), those of our home ; and on the mother's side, bakokwana, the ancestors.

We shall consider each of these three relationships separately, though it will be found impossible to isolate them entirely from each other. In each of them, we shall find two sets of terms : terms of correspondence and of reciprocity. We shall see also

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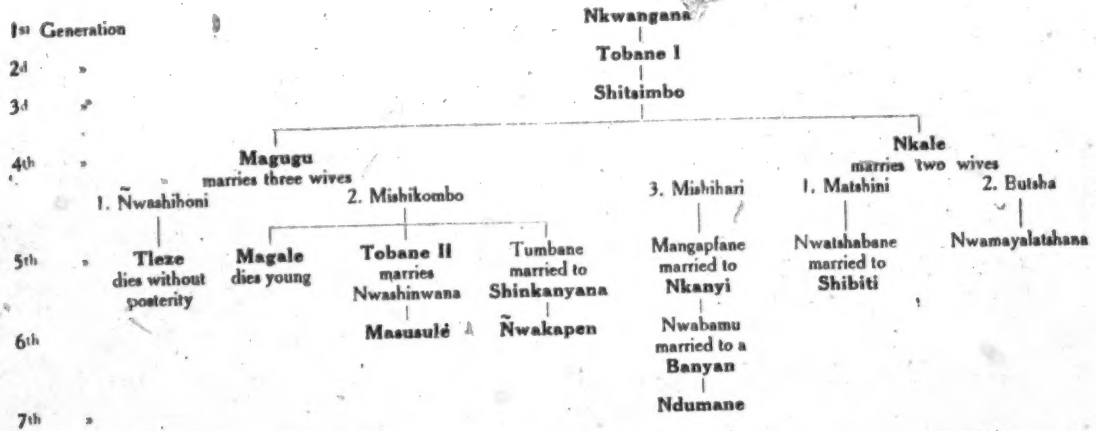
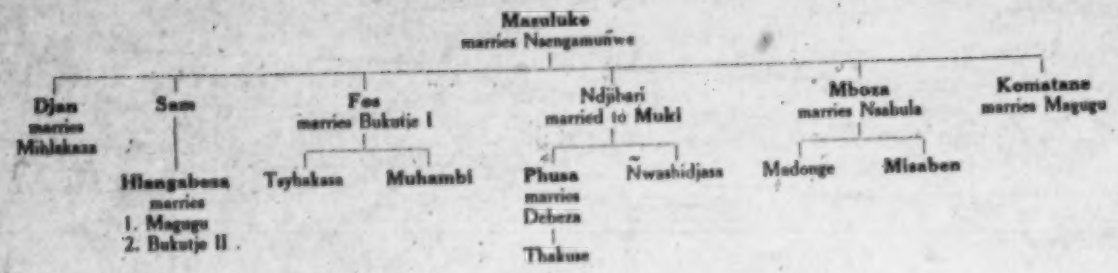
A. Genealogy of Tobane



Mishikombo has two brothers, **Shigwalati** and **Mahwayi** and one sister Budiulu, **Shigwalati** has one daughter, Mintshale.
Ñwashihoni has a brother, **Madyondjo** and a sister, Ntungwen.

B. Near Relatives of Mboza



C. Near Relatives of Nsabula Migogwe, wife of Mboza

N. B. The names of the male members of the family are printed in dark type.

602 that these appellations are expressive of many different things, one of the main considerations dictating them being the right of a man to marry his wife's relatives, or to inherit the women belonging to his own family.

I. *Blood relationships.*

601 The general term to indicate this relationship is *bushaka* (from *shaka, mashaka*), relatives.

1) Relatives on the father's side.

(Bakweru : *ba*, those, *ku*, at, *eru* possessive pronoun of the first person plur. means those *with us*, in our home.)

Let us first consult Tobane, called Tobane II in the genealogy.

601 He calls Magugu his father, *tatana*. The relation implies
593 respect and even fear. The father, though he does not take much
611 trouble with his children, is nevertheless their instructor, the one who scolds and punishes. Absolute obedience is due to him on the part of his sons and daughters (App. V). So also in the case of the *father's brothers*, who are also called "batatana ba shirare :" the elder brother who is a "great father" to Tobane, and the younger
601 brother Nkale, "tatana lwe'ntjongo", a "little father." Their
611 wives, Matshini for instance, are mothers to him, though he can in certain cases marry them by inheritance. The cousins of the father are also fathers (Muhambi to Thakusa, for instance, Gen., B.), provided the father calls them brothers.

There is another term for father, *rara* in Djonga, *roro* in Ronga ; roro is only employed with the possessive pronoun in the three following forms : rorwa'nga, my father, rorwa'ku, your father, rorwa'bu, their father. The correlative of tatana is *ñwana*, son or daughter.

Tobane II calls Shitsimbo *kokwana*, grandfather, Tobane I kokwane wa tatana, grandfather of father, and Nkwangana kokwana wa kokwana, grandfather of grandfather. The expressions

601 tatana wa kokwana, father of grandfather, is never employed.
611 The great-grandfather and the great-great-grandfather are sometimes designated as follows: he who does not see his grandson when he has been sent by the women to bring him food; the boy eats it on the way and the old man does not notice it! (Page 132). These progenitors call Tobane *ntukulu*, grandson. He is the true ntukulu of Shitsimbo; to Tobane I, he is the *ntukulu wa shikandjatjolo*, "the one who sits on the knees;" to Nkwangwana, the *ntukulu wo shikandjamirombo*, a word which seems to mean "the one who sits on the toes." In Djonga there is one more of these curious expressions applied to batukulu, *ntukulu wa shinguhe*. "When he pronounces that name," says Gana, "my great-grandfather points near by; when he says *ntukulu wa shikandjatjolo*, he points further down." To understand this properly, we must imagine the following patriarchal scene: a very, very old man is sitting on the ground, holding his son (ñwana) in his arms, and with his grandson (ntukulu) on his thigh, his great-grandson (wa shikandjatjolo) on his knees and his great-great-grandson on his toes (1). The fact that these terms have become almost obsolete shows that the system of counting descent from the father is at any rate very old in our tribe. There must even have been a time when the ancestors in the paternal line were better known than now. The wives of these bakokwana are also bakokwana, in the same way as their husbands.

601 The father's sister is *rarana* (Ro.) *hahane* (Dj.). The two
604 words are the same, as *r* often changes into *h* in Thonga phonetics; the prefix of the first class, *mu* or *n*, now dropped, may have caused this change. Rarana approaches very closely to rara, father. It is employed in this form when it means *my* aunt. When we wish to say your aunt, his aunt, rarana becomes rarakati wa ku, rarakati

601 (1) There is another interpretation of these terms as applied to the grandparents:
888 *kokwana wa shinguhe*: he is poor, miserable! When an ox is killed in the village, they do not even send him his share; he is far away. *Kokwana wa shikandjatjolo*: he is almost blind. When he wants to see his great-grandson he calls him and tells him: "Sit down on my knees." *Kokwana wa shikandja-mirombo*: mirombo or mitjombo means the small ears of mealies used to prepare the beer of the offerings. This kokwana, the great-great-grandfather, is already almost like one of the ancestor-gods to whom sacrifices are made!

601 wakwe. This word means exactly female father. (See the meaning
604 of this suffix *ati*, page 36, foot note.) Tumbane is rarana of Masusule. Masusule, to her, is also ñwana. He shows her great respect. However, she is in no way a mother (mamana). Yet, amongst the paternal relatives, she is the one to whom a boy or a girl will tell their secrets; her nephew or niece will go to her in order to get advice and help in their difficulties. Occasionally she will intercede for them with their father and her influence may be decisive. The rarana may be called on to officiate in a sacrifice offered on behalf of her nephews, the children of her brothers, if the latter are all dead.

Any female who is a near relation of my father or of my paternal ancestors, is also by extension a rarana: the daughters of my paternal grand-uncle, for instance, who are like sisters to my father, etc.

The husband of my paternal aunt is neither a father nor an uncle, but a *mukoñwana* or *namu*, brother-in-law, because, as we shall see, he has a kind of prior right to marry my sister (1). (Shinkanyana versus Masusule, Gen.A; or Muki versus Muhambi, Gen. B.), To Madonge, Muki is *nkata*, husband, on account of this possibility. He is a potential husband for her. Consequently Madonge is a potential co-wife of her paternal aunt, a co-wife of a particular kind, and the term used to indicate that relation is *nhlampsa*. We shall explain this term more fully by and by.

601 Tobane II calls Tumbane *makwabu*; this term, which is

(1) Though the husband of the paternal aunt is a mukoñwana, a term which implies respect, the respect shown to him is not great. Gana says: "When he passes through our village, I shall say to him: Good morning, namu! We tell each other freely the news of the day (djungulisana). He eats with us. We buy for him a little rice, a fowl. If I go to his village, I open the door of his hut and put my stick inside without asking permission... a thing which I would never do in the village of my wife's parents, who are my true bakoñwana. I sit down and say to him: 'Give me this or that..., for instance your hat.' He may refuse, but if he possesses two hats of the same shape, I insist and say: 'Give me one! We shall be like each other.' Thus we make fun together, we jest together (mpfhabelana)." — Would the uterine nephew behave in the same way towards his maternal uncle? — Not at all! The behaviour of the uterine nephew is called nyenyela. He shows no restraint at all; he comes and catches a fowl, a goat; he steals a pot of beer. When they see him coming, they say: "Here is the wizard, etc." (See later on, p. 232).

601 reciprocal, means brothers as well as sisters. If he wishes to specify, he adds to makwabu : "of the assagai," or "of the basket." It is never employed except when united with the possessive pronoun : *makweru* means my brother, *makwenu* your brother, *makwabu*, his brother or sister. The elder brother is called *nhondjwa* (plur. tinhondjwa). The nhondjwa is also called *hosi* (plur. tihosi) chief. The hierarchy of age is very strictly
601 observed amongst the Thongas. The elder brother is treated
593 with great respect and gives orders to his younger brothers with
595 almost the same authority as the father. It must be noticed also that the position of elder brother is not only a matter of age, but, in the polygamic family, all the children of a first wife, or of the first house, are *tihosi* to the children of secondary or posterior wives or houses, though they may have been born after them. They take precedence of them. Amongst girls, an elder sister is often called *mamana*, mother, whilst an elder brother is never a tatana (father) but a hosi (chief).

601 The term *makwabu* is applied to all my first and second cousins
428 who have the same paternal grandfather, or great-grandfather,
605 as I have. Cousins on my mother's side are also bamakwabu, some of them at least, those who are my maternal aunt's children. But cousins on the father's side are more fully bamakwabu than those on the mother's side : Muhambi is more so to Hlangabeza than to Mahlobo, because the two former belong to the same shibongo, family name ; they are men of the Makaneta clan and Muhambi could therefore inherit Hlangabeza's wives ; Muhambi and Mahlobo are not of the same clan, and could not inherit from each other. From this fact we begin to see that the laws of inheritance, and especially the laws of the distribution of the widows amongst the family which has bought them, are closely connected with the system of relationship.

601 The man who has married my wife's sister is also a makwabu to me, a nhondjwa if he has married her elder sister (Phayindi to Mboza), a ndjisana if the younger (Magwazizen to Mboza). The brothers of Phayindi and Magwazizen are also called brothers by Mboza.

There is a special term in the Northern clans to indicate the

There is a special term in the Northern clans to indicate the relationship of two men who have married two sisters born of the
601 same mother. They are called : bamakwabu ba shinauma, an
177 expression which is the simplification of the following sentence : shi na wuñwe mamana, i. e. there is only one mother. This term seems to have been borrowed from the Pedis.

2) Relatives on the mother's side.

601 Tobane II calls Mishikombo *mamana*, mother. She is his
593 true mamana and this relation is very deep and tender, combining respect and love. Love however generally exceeds respect. The proper word for tenderness is *timpsalu*, which comes from *psala*, to beget, and the mother is often called *mpsele* (a term which is applied also to the female of all animals). It is the word which answers best to the feelings of a mother for her children. She is generally weak with them and is often accused by the father of spoiling them.

601 The mother's sisters are *bamamana* in the second degree,
604 because, if the true mother dies, one of them will probably take care of the children. Their husbands are *batatana* : Phayindi is tatana to Madonge and Muhambi. He calls them *bana*, children. Mboza is also a tatana to Mahlobo and Mathamba, being a makwabu, brother of their father, owing to the fact that he and Phayindi have married sisters.

601 All the co-wives are also *bamamana*, mothers by polygamy,
578 (Ñwashihoni and Mishihari to Tobane). They are *bamamana*
595 *ba shitshengwe*, harem mothers. I respect them but they are further from me than my mother's sisters. A more familiar term for mother, corresponding to roro, father, is *ñwa*, a word always used with the possessive pronoun and only in the second and third person : ñwaku, your mother, ñwakwe, his mother. Ñwaku is employed in certain insults and oaths, and is to be avoided as being vituperative.

601 Many other women are mamana : the wife of my paternal uncle (Magugu for Muhambi), though I can inherit her in certain cases ; the daughter of my maternal uncle, because she is the

601 potential wife of my father (Shaputa to Misaben), not to mention those women of my wife's family who can be so called. An elder sister is also mamana to her younger sister, and sometimes a husband calls his wife mamana (1).

If the mother's sister is a mother, the mother's brother is by no means a father. He is called *malume* or *kokwana*, and here we meet with one of the most characteristic features of the Thonga, and even Bantu, system of relationship. The term kokwana means first the paternal grandfather and all the ancestors on the father's side, and this is its proper essential meaning. The bakokwana are also all my mother's male relatives: her brothers, fathers, uncles, etc. They form a group which I call "ka bakokwana" which means "my mother's home," just as *kweru* means my father's home, my official home. Kweru comes first; ka bakokwana next. "The bushaka on the father's side is the head; on the mother's side, only the legs" (Mboza).
593 Let us remember that a child lives at his father's home and only
602 goes on a visit to his mother's village. He may stay there for
[591] years after the weaning, but if he chose to settle there, he would be made fun of and severely censured by his father and his paternal uncles. "You are stupid," they would say, "you leave your own village, you go to the village of your bakokwana to increase it! This is true folly. Has not your mother been bought with money? The children she bore belong to your father, just like the calves of his cows." (Mboza.) But if the home of the mother cannot become the home of the children, the relations they maintain with

601 (1) The term mamana is frequently used by an interlocutor, without any idea of
576 relationship, when speaking to married women of a more advanced age than himself. Such an extented meaning is also frequent with tatana, kokwana, ñwana. Any man older than I am can be addressed by me as tatana and will answer by calling me ñwana. If the difference of age is greater, we shall treat each other as kokwana and ntukulu. Speaking in the third person a child will always put tatana before the name of any grown up man, though he belong to a totally different clan. Women round Lourenco Marques often call a White man nkata, husband. This shows that kinship terms are employed as expressing moral relations as well as blood or family relations, and we must not draw hasty conclusions from the way in which these terms are applied, or necessarily see in them the traces of a previous social state in which every grown up man or woman was looked on as a true father or mother. The Thongas may give to these terms an extended meaning. Nevertheless they differentiate perfectly between their technical and their derived sense.

602 their bakokwana are of a much freer, more agreeable and kindlier
593 nature than those with their father's relatives.

Amongst the Thongas of the North the maternal grandfather and the maternal uncles are called indiscriminately kokwana. The Ronga dialect makes a distinction between kokwana, maternal grandfather, and malume, mother's brother; but the malume is often
601 called kokwana. In the Northern clans the *uterine nephews*, viz. the sons of my sister, are always called *ntukulu*, which is the term corresponding to kokwana, as we have seen; amongst the Ba-Ronga, they bear a special name, *mupsyana*, which seems to be becoming obsolete, being often replaced by ntukulu (1).

Let us consider these various relatives on the mother's side.
603 The maternal grandfather is the great, the true kokwana. He is respected for his age. He is however more lenient to his grandson by his daughter than to his grandson by his son. If the first damages anything, he will say: "That is no business of mine. Let the father of the child scold him, as he does harm to his property. I have nothing to do with their affairs. It is not my village." But if it were his grandson by his son, it would be a totally different matter, and he would be hard on him. However, should a child take too great a liberty with his kokwana, the old man will say to him: "Go and play with your malume."
604 The malume, indeed, for his uterine nephew, is quite different from any other relative. No respect at all is necessary towards him! "You go to *bombela* in his village; you do what you please. You take all the food you want without asking permission. If you are ill, he will take special care of you and will sacrifice for you" (Viguet). In the Ronga dialect this bombela is called *nyenyela*. When the mupsyana goes to his maternal uncle, accompanied by his comrades who scent a good meal, the wives of the malume call to him: "Come along, husband (nkata)! Look here, your malume has hidden some food in the back part of the hut (mfungwe), behind the large basket (ngula). Go and take it." The boy steals the food, runs away with it and eats it up to the last morsel

(1) This is one of many proofs that the Ronga clans have preserved some old customs better than their Northern compatriots. Their language also possesses certain archaic features which are wanting in the Northern dialects.

604 with his friends. The malume comes back and is angry. But when he hears that the trick has been played by his mupsyana, he shrugs his shoulders and says : "Oh it is all right if it is the ntukulu who has done it ! A shi biwi ntukulu! The nephew must never be beaten!" When another day the nephew comes again, the malume says : "You starved us to death the other day!" — "Is there any more food handy that I may do it again ?" answers the boy. The sons of the malume seem to have
605 less patience with their cousin than their father has. When the cousin goes definitely beyond the limits of their endurance, they will chase him out of the village saying : "Go away, you dog!" The niece is sometimes as troublesome as the nephew. If she is married and pays a visit to her malume with her husband, she will leave the latter comfortably settled in the malume's hut and search the whole village to discover pots of beer, which she will bring to him as if she were the mistress of the home. She may even catch a fowl and give it to him.

604 Sometimes the malume himself points to one of his wives and
837 says to the ntukulu : "This is your wife. Let her feast you
587 well!" The woman much enjoys the situation, which she finds quite entertaining. She makes a feast for the ntukulu and calls him *nkata*, husband. It will sometimes go so far that the nephew will say to the uncle : "Please make haste and die that I may have your wife!" — "Do you intend to kill me with a gun ?" says the malume... But all this talking is a mere joke. The nephew can take many liberties with this aunt, especially in the Ronga clans. He will never however have relations with her during the life of her husband. Should he do so, he will have to pay the high fine due for a true adultery. Possibly he will inherit her when the malume dies, but she will not be his full property : she will only be given (nyika) to him, and the children will eventually belong to the malume's male relatives. All over the tribe this right of inheriting a malume's wife is recognized. In the Northern clans she is called *kokwana* ; in Ronga territory she is called kokwana by her nieces only, but her nephews call her *nsati* (wife), and this term seems also to be an old feature of the relationship system. This relation of malume and mupsyana is so important

604 that I intend to treat it more fully later on in a special paragraph, when considering the traces of older forms of family life amongst the Thongas.

601 The true malume is the mother's full brother. But all her half brothers are also bamalume in the second degree ; so are also the brothers of the true malume.

605 What about the *children of the malume*, my cousins, or rather my
835 cross-cousins, sons and daughters of my mother's brothers, viz.
582 Shaputa and Marangen as opposed to Madonge and Misaben ? In Zulu, Sutho, Pedi there is a special term to indicate this relation, (mzala, motsoala, mudzwala, muzwala). And the main feature of the family system in those tribes is that a cousin has a prior right to marry the daughter of his maternal uncle, his mzala. Amongst the Thongas there is nothing of the kind. The special term does not exist except in the Maputju clan, at the Southern extremity of Thonga territory, where it is met with in the form of *ntale* (corresponding to mzala, according to the law of phonetic permutation) (1) or *shitale* (when preceded by the prefix shi).
605 But the right of marrying this cousin is not recognized in the
835 Thonga tribe. One can play with her, steal some object from
582 her in fun, but never take her as a wife. Such a breach of the
602 custom would be punished by the chief. Later on, when the special relation of cross-cousins has been more or less forgotten, marriage could take place between them, but, at any rate, the ceremony of dlaya shilongo (see p. 256) would be performed, in order to "kill" the previous relationship and to replace it by the new relation of husband and wife.

This being so, how do cross-cousins behave towards each other in the Thonga system ? As regards the daughter of their maternal uncle, the relationship is somewhat different for Misaben, a boy, and for Madonge, a girl. To Misaben the boy, Shaputa, his cousin, is mamana and she will call him son, ñwana, because, as we have seen, Shaputa is a potential wife for Mboza, father of Misaben, and Mboza calls her nkata, nsati, namu. To Madonge,

605 (1) They also employ the cognate form *muzali*, which is more akin to the Zulu regular term, and this tends to show that the Maputjus have borrowed this expression from their Zulu neighbours of Northern Amatongaland.

605 the girl, Shaputa is also a mamana ; but the term makweru, my sister, is more frequently used. So we find this strange fact : Maphunga, the mother of Shaputa is a wife to Misaben, while her daughter, Shaputa, is a mother to him!

As regards the son of my malume, he is also a malume or a kokwana, though he may be of the same age or even younger than I, because he belongs to the family from which we take wives and also because he has a kind of right to offer sacrifices for his ntukulu, as we shall see. Totally different is the relationship between Misaben and Mahlobo and Mathamba, *children of his mother's sister*. They are *bamakwabu* as truly as the children of rarana, the paternal aunt, because they have sucked from the same breast (ba yanwele bele djinwe).

601 At this point of my treatise I must stop for a moment to consider more closely the use of these two terms, *kokwana and ntukulu*, which are so widely employed in the Thonga kinship system. They are applied first to the relation between a grandson and his grandparents on the father's side, i. e. his paternal grandfather and his paternal grandmother; secondly to the relation between that same grandson and his maternal grandfather and grandmother and to the relation of a nephew to his maternal uncle and to all the male members of his mother's family. Now my informants point out very decidedly that these two relations are very different from each other, and they call the bakokwana on the father's side *bakokwana ba shinene* (the true bakokwana), whilst the bakokwana on the mother's side are *bakokwana ba shisati* (the bakokwana on the female side) ; one also speaks of *batukulu ba shinene*, the real batukulu and of *batukulu ba shisati*, the batukulu by females. How is it possible for them to make such an identification, an identification which we find in almost all the South African tribes (See Table. App. IV) ? They recognize that the two relations are not the same, and the description which we have just given clearly shows the difference.

It would be useful to know the etymology of these two terms. Unhappily my informants could not ascertain it. Kokwana is the diminutive of koko, which has been preserved in its original form in the Zulu word gogo and in the Khosa koko. This root, associated with prefixes which are not those of the personal class, means either the dried carcase of a dead animal, or a person with stiff limbs, who cannot

601 stretch them out. I must leave Zulu linguists to decide if it is really the same root. If so, the etymological idea would be that of a person worn out and paralyzed by old age.

The only explanation that I can give of the common use of the terms kokwana-ntukulu for both relations is this. Both the paternal grandparents and the mother's relatives are similar in their dealings with a child in the fact that they are more lenient towards him than his father. The two grandmothers are equally kind to him. The maternal grandfather is more lenient than the paternal grandfather ; but, according to the explanation given above, it is because the latter belongs to the same family (shibongo) as his grandchild and may be called on to scold him if his conduct is prejudicial to the interests of their common village, whilst the maternal grandfather does not worry himself if the child damages the property or the good reputation of his parents. It is not his business.

The malume is the most indulgent of all. We shall see how this fact can be explained by the matriarchy hypothesis.

Another connotation of these two terms, when applied to social groups, i. e. to two different families, is this. The bakokwana are those from whose family the batukulu have the right of taking their wives. As we shall see, this meaning is much more marked in the category of tribes which belong to the Pedi-Venda group than amongst the Thongas and other tribes of the same category.

II. *Relations with parents-in-law.*

1) Relationship on the Wife's side.

a) General characteristics.

606 Once, when speaking on this subject, old Viguet told me
593 solemnly : "By your betrothal, as soon as you have been accepted, you enter into a new kind of respect and must remain in it till your death." This relationship is called *bukonwana*, a word that is generally pronounced with a peculiar feeling of uneasiness. Why is this? On account of the relations of husband and wife. Mboza calls

606 Nsabula *nsati* (a term corresponding to *nuna*, husband) or *nkata*,
593 a reciprocal term, or *nkosikazi*, a Zulu word which means queen, or *ntjibeli*, cook, even *mamana*. I have already described the moral relation which the word nsati implies : no very great tenderness, not much intimacy, but a certain amount of love mingled with respect, and even fear, because a wife can get her husband into endless trouble if she begins to quarrel and runs home ; then all the bukoñwana relations will be spoilt by interminable discussions.

The word bukoñwana is composed of three elements : the root *ko*, which is an ancient Bantu root, found also in Zulu-Xosa (kwe), in Sutho (hoe) and Pedi (γwe). Its meaning is etymologically unknown. To it is added a suffix, *ñwana*, and a prefix *bu*. The prefix bu has a double meaning ; the meaning of abstraction (and then bukoñwana indicates the relationship between a man and his relatives-in-law) and the meaning of place (when bukoñwana indicates the village where relatives-in-law dwell). They say, employing this word in the locative case : To go bukoñwanen, or in an abbreviated form : bukwen.

601 I have been fortunate enough to obtain from Mboza the full
607 nomenclature of his wife's relatives. It so happens that the Gogwe family is extraordinarily complete. Nsabula has both an elder brother and elder sister, a younger brother and a younger sister. Owing to this, I have been able to study all the possible kinds of relationship of Mboza with his wife's relatives.

The terms used to express these kinds of relationship fall into two categories, which present a striking contrast. On the one hand a man, when he goes to his wife's village, meets with the persons he fears most in the world : these are his *bakoñwana*, properly speaking ; on the other hand he finds there the women towards whom he behaves with the greatest liberty ; these are the *tinamu*. Describing these two sets of relatives-in-law, one of my informants said : "Bakoñwana are those persons who produce wives for you ; tinamu are those persons who produce children for you, because they are your presumptive wives. Even if you do not marry them, their children will call you father."

Let us study these two categories in detail.

b: The bakoñwana.

606 First of all, *the wife's father*. There is a great respect in the heart of his son-in-law towards him, even a certain amount of fear, because, should a quarrel arise between a man and his wife, the father-in-law will preside over the painful discussions which will take place, he being the natural protector of his daughter. However, in normal cases, the two men live on good terms with each other, and very soon the son-in-law calls his father-in-law tatana, father ; of course the word tatana is not used here in its technical sense, but only by extension.

607 Secondly the bakoñwana are *the wife's brothers*. When their
192 father dies, they take his place as protectors of their sister. Hence the uneasiness and fear with regard to them, which is, however, less marked in their case. The wife's brothers will never be called bamakweru (as they will never be ba-kweru, those of my house) but they are frequently designated by the term *soar*, or *sibar*, which is merely a corruption of the Dutch word zwager. This curious adoption of a foreign term is modern ; it is spreading more and more amongst the Zulus, Xosas and Suthos of Basutoland. Amongst the Thongas I only once heard the word soar used. The tendency to assimilate that kind of relationship to the European conception is a proof that the old fear of brothers-in-law is disappearing in the new generation.

606 But it is in the relation with two women of the wife's family that the respect of bukoñwana is pushed to the greatest extent : the wife's mother and the wife of the brother-in-law. In these cases there is not only respect but *avoidance*

The wife's mother.

606 Let us listen to Viguet telling the story of a man meeting his
576 mother-in-law in the bush. "If one of the two sees the other coming a long way off, soon enough to escape without being noticed, he will speedily hide himself and reach his destination by making a long circuit, half a mile if necessary. But if they have come too near to have recourse to flight, this is what will happen. You leave the road ; you enter the bush on your right

l: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

606 side. She does the same. Then you sit down according to
[516] men's fashion, crossing your legs. She also sits down bending
her legs, and putting one knee over the other as women do; then
834 both parties salute each other, you, as a man, clapping your hands
576 against each other, holding them parallel, and the woman holding
hers at right angles. Then you begin to talk..."

Suppose the son-in-law has had the good luck to reach the village of his wife's relatives without having met his mother-in-law, but sees her sitting somewhere near a hut. This is dreadful. She looks at him and at once covers her breasts with her cloth. He himself turns his eyes aside. I saw in Natal a curious photograph representing the scene. Amongst the Zulus the avoidance of the mother-in-law is perhaps more marked than in any other tribe; the man is shown in the picture hiding his face
606 with his shield. Should the mother-in-law be taking her meal
576 when her son-in-law arrives unexpectedly, she throws away the mouthful she was eating, and he does the same.— Suppose then that he has entered the village without seeing her; then the tinamu, his wife's sisters, come hastily to meet him. They take his sticks, joking with him meanwhile and put them in his mother-in-law's hut. This hut is his; he has the right of staying in it during his whole visit. They spread a mat on the ground, and bring him food. They chat with him. Then the mother-in-law comes in her turn, but she dares not enter the hut. She sits down outside and, without seeing him, salutes him, saying: "Good morning, son of so and so." She must not pronounce his name. He answers in the same style, and must also say: "Daughter of so and so." Should he call her by her name it would be a breach of etiquette and his wife would be angry and say: "How dare you? Did she not bring me forth? Rather say: Mother!" During the first years of his married life, the son-in-law never eats with his wife's mother.

607 This peculiar behaviour is the rule, not only towards the wife's mother, but also towards her sisters.

606 In the course of years there is a *lessening* of this terrible taboo.
4/31 In the Maputju clan, the son-in-law will provide an ox as soon as
576 possible and he will "communicate" (tlhangana) with her, partaking

606 of its meat with all his relatives-in-law. Then both will be
431 allowed to eat together. Until that present was made, it would
576 have been impossible. In this clan, a future son-in-law does not eat at all with his bakoñwana until the marriage is concluded, and this rule is sometimes observed till he has given "the ox for communicating together." Amongst the Zulus it is said that a mother-in-law will never eat with her daughter's husband. In the Khosa clan the custom of lessening the avoidance taboo by offering a present to the mother-in-law also exists. The son-in-law will one day bring a plate of food to her with his gift put on top of it. She will accept it and eat together with him. Then it will be possible for these two persons to "djungulisana" i. e. to tell each other the news of the day when visiting each other's village. But when this monotonous recital is finished and concluded, as is customary, by clapping both hands, this must be done with care, and not in a hurried fashion, as when speaking to an ordinary person, but slowly and respectfully.

115 What is the reason of this extraordinary conduct of the son-in-law
606 towards his wife's mother ? The Khosa Native who gave me this last
835 information said : "A wise man will carefully observe the bukoñwana rules, because, if he hurts his parents-in-law by infringing them, they will not give him his tinamu as wives." This is true, but the same may be said of all the taboos of the bukoñwana, and the mother-in-law is not the principal person to be consulted on the question. Another more profound reason was once alluded to by an old Thonga, of Spelonken, Abraham Mabanyisi, who said to me : "I fear my mother-in-law because I shall never marry her : Such a thing has never been seen." This statement has been confirmed since by information gathered in the Maputju clan. Notice the almost reflex action of the mother-in-law in covering her breasts when she sees her son-in-law coming unexpectedly. It shows that there is a sexual element in the behaviour of the woman and also in that of the man, who hides his face in order not to see her in her half nakedness. Dr. Rivers, who has met exactly the same rites of avoidance amongst the Melanesians, supposes that they are dictated by a more or less unconscious desire on the part of both these persons to fight against the temptation to have sexual relations with each other. Bantus also, in the course of the evolution of the family, have come to the deep conviction that such intercourse is bad and must

606 be banished from their thoughts. They obey that conviction when
835 practising the avoidance rites.

The wife of the brother-in-law, the Great Mukōnwana.

607 This particular respect is even more marked in the relations of a man with the wife of his wife's brother. Indeed the avoidance is pushed further than with the mother-in-law. A Native of the Ndjao tribe (which has the same customs as the Thonga tribe in this respect) described to me vividly the extraordinary marks of fear that these two persons show each other when they meet on the road. The story will be told when speaking of the Ba-Ndjao. Here are some other marks of this extraordinary respect.

607 The wife's brother's wife must always keep her breasts covered
834 in the village of her husband's sister's husband. Only when she has had a child is she permitted to "open her clothing;" but then she must fix a leaf in her hair (as if to show that she does not forget the special reserve which she is bound to maintain). (Khosen region.)

607 When a man travels with his great mukōnwana and they have to
836 cross a river, they will avoid entering the same boat. It may
827 happen to anyone to emit an unseemly sound from the rectum; but if the great mukōnwana is present, she looks on this as a grave offence. A fine must be paid to her, a hoe, for instance. If the guilty man has nothing to give her, he at once breaks a twig from a tree and presents it to her as a token that the proper fine will be forthcoming in due time! He must never use words of insult in her presence, even if he addresses them to another person.

607 If he loses his temper before her she will go to the old people of
844 her husband's village and tell them: "He has insulted me." On the other hand the great mukōnwana is bound to go and assist the wife of this man when she gives birth to a child. At least this is the rule in the Khosa clan and also in Maputju. The two women live on very good terms with each other; they are

607 *tinhombe*. The man himself, when he visits his relatives-in-law, has the right of sleeping in the hut of the great mukōnwana. We have seen that, during the first months after his marriage, he is received in the hut of his mother-in-law. Why is this? Because the oxen

607 of the lobolo are still in the hands of the father-in-law. But later on these oxen are used to provide a wife for one of the sons, and the woman thus obtained is the great mukoñwana; therefore her hut belongs in a certain sense to the man with whose oxen she was bought. When he arrives, he may first be "shown" (komba) the mother-in-law's hut and rest there for a while, but at once the hut of the great mukoñwana will be prepared and he will move into it for the night; of course the mistress of the house has gone elsewhere, and it is the tinamu who will sleep in her hut to keep him company. (However should the visitor have not yet paid the lobolo, he will not be received in this hut. It may happen that his bakoñwana will say to him: "Where is your hut? Sleep outside!")

607 835 582 Why do the relations of a man with the wife of his brother-in-law resemble so greatly his relations with his wife's mother? Let us remember that this man is the potential husband of the daughter of the first, just as he is the actual husband of the daughter of the second. It is probable that the great principle that "a man must not marry a woman and her mother" dictates this extraordinary fear and avoidance in both cases. But, in the case of the wife of the brother-in-law, there is still another élement: "The oxen!" This woman has been acquired by the oxen paid by the man to obtain his wife, and this explains the uneasiness which characterises their relation.

This second reason is perhaps more readily recognised by the Thongas than the first; they sometimes tell you that it is the only reason. But I think they are wrong, and that the same deep feeling that to marry a woman and her mother is incestuous is certainly at the base of these taboos. I may mention two facts in proof of this:

a) Once when I asked a woman of the Maputju country if her husband would be allowed to marry the wife of his brother-in-law, she seemed extremely shocked by the idea and exclaimed: "What are you thinking of? Marry his mother!" To her it would be incest, as much so as if the man had sexual relations with his own mother.

b) The wife of the brother-in-law is not the only great mukoñwana. The wives of his brothers, and of his sons and grandsons are all classed under that term. Why is this? Because a man has a prior right to marry not only the daughter of this special woman but all the daughters of his bakoñwana, and all these women, who are their mothers, are conse-

607 quently his potential mothers. He avoids them all, not on account
835 of the lobolo oxen, which he did not actually pay for their daughters,
582 but because it is intolerable to think that he might have relations with a woman and her mother.

607 But no doubt the fact that oxen have been paid by the man,
586 oxen by means of which his great mukoñwana was bought, is
835 the principal cause of the fear which they both feel towards each other. These oxen have created a sort of interdependence between them. Mboza says : "Should my home be disturbed by quarrels, should my wife Nsabula leave me and run away to her parents, or should she die without children, I shall go and claim my oxen... But the oxen have been employed to buy a wife for my brother-in-law, (Maphunga for Mahangale). If Gogwe has no other means at his disposal he must separate the pair Maphunga-Mahangale, cancel their marriage, send Maphunga home and claim the money from her parents. Or I might myself take Maphunga as my wife, and in either of these cases the marriage Maphunga-Mahangale would be annulled."

Thus it may happen that Mboza may marry his great mukoñwana, though such a union is really incestuous, according to the deep moral feeling of the tribe. This is truly terrible!

587 But does this ever really happen ? I have put this question to
607 many Thongas, in the various clans of the tribe, and remarked that there are differences amongst them.

Amongst the Nkunas of Shiluvane it is an absolute impossibility. Another woman is offered to meet the claim of the son-in-law who has lost his wife. This is called : "Ku hingakanya ntjandja", i. e. "to put a log across the road." The woman offered may be a little girl, still at the breast of her mother, or even a little boy. This is your wife, his parents will say to the son-in-law, and he must be content to know that, as this male baby will no doubt have a sister in the course of the two following years, the girl to be born will replace his wife. "Ntjandja a ba tluli" i. e. "One does not jump over the log." The man will not persist in his claim, and will not insist on taking the great mukonwana to replace his wife.

Amongst the Khosas and Bilas, such a marriage can take place

587 607 if there is really no means of avoiding it. In the Maputju clan, it is also prohibited ; but "owing to the Whites," owing to civilisation, which alters the old, sound laws of the tribe, it sometimes occurs. Everywhere such an occurence is looked on as a great misfortune.

It is in the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques, ka Mpfumo, that the reluctance is least pronounced. I have from Mboza the description of what will happen in that part of the tribe when a woman dies without children. Viguet has told us the first half of the story (p. 217). The husband has paid the *mahloko* ; the mourning is over ; but the parents of the deceased wife have no money, no young girl to give as compensation. Here is the second part of this family drama. The father of the deceased wife having no other resource "opens the way of bukoñwana to his son-in-law, the widower." Let us suppose it is Nsabula who has died. Gogwe goes, together with Mboza and his official go-between, to the father of Maphunga. Let us call him Mbekwa. He gives him two hoes and says : "We have brought your mukoñwana (Mboza) because we have had a sad affair (hi humele)." Mbekwa asks Mboza : "How many hoes did you pay for your deceased wife" ? — "Fifty," says Mboza. — "Well, we have received from Gogwe as yet only thirty for Maphunga!" Gogwe acknowledges that it is so. He must at once find the missing twenty hoes and give them back to Mboza, who returns to Mbekwa taking them with him, so as to complete the lobola. All this was only preparatory. Now Gogwe has no further interest in the matter, and returns home. It concerns Mboza alone. Mbekwa calls Maphunga and says : "Look ! this is your great mukoñwana ! Now he is your husband." She may say : "Yes, very well." Then Mboza fetches a goat, and a most curious ceremony takes place, which we shall describe later on, the rite of *killing bukoñwana* or *shikoñwana*, the aim being to kill a certain kind of relationship which must be replaced by another, after which Mboza can marry Maphunga. But most probably Maphunga will say : "No! I fear him too much! It is taboo!" Her feelings cannot accept such a change in their relations. Viguet does not say : "She loves her own husband too much to go willingly to another!" This seems to be a minor consideration. If she definitely refuses, Mbekwa will try

587 to find another woman. Maphunga may perhaps have a daughter
607 who will do. Or Mbekwa may have a married son whose daughter can also be offered. If the great mukoñwana is only pregnant, the child about to be born is quite enough *ku hingakanya ntjandja*, to put a log across the road and an end to the claim. But the child will perhaps be a boy... not a girl. Never mind! Mboza will wait patiently for a girl ; Shaputa will be born ; he will wait again until she is of age, then he will marry her and she will *pfusha yindlu ya rarana*, viz. raise up the house of her aunt Nsabula (1). Naturally if matters take this course, Gogwe will have to pay the lobola of the girl who has taken the place of the deceased. Nowadays it is not very difficult : he will work, or send one of his sons to work, for the money.

c) The tinamu.

607 When a man goes bukoñwanen, his heart is full of mixed feelings. He trembles lest he may meet the two terrible bakoñwana whom he wishes to avoid ; but, on the other hand, he is greatly rejoiced at the idea that his *tinamu* will welcome him with hearty laughter and jokes and make much of him. Who are these tinamu ? They belong to three categories, which correspond to three kinds of *bulamu*. First of all *the younger sisters of the wife*.
607 *Namu*, plur. *tinamu*, in Ronga, *balamo* in Djonga, comes from the
835 archaic verb *yalama*, which means to *follow*, to come after. My tinamu are those who follow my wife, who have been born after her, her younger sisters in particular. They are my *presumptive wives*, therefore I can play with them with the greatest freedom ; I eat together with them from the same plate. They go so far as to smear my face with ashes (tota hi nkuma) and afterwards wash it with water. I have the right to pat their shoulders gently, to snatch something from their hands, to force them to give me something to eat ; and, if they refuse, I will say to them : "How dare you stint me, you, my wives!" They go

(1) One more fact. If Mahangala has taken another wife besides Maphunga, his daughter born of this second wife cannot be used to meet the claim of the widower.

607 so far as to sleep in the hut of my great mukonwana together with
835 me (p. 242). Nevertheless sexual relations are not allowed.
595 Should a man commit this sin, and should his sister-in-law
582 become pregnant, he will have to pay a fine, or rather he will go to his father-in-law and say : (Viguet) "Ndi dlele ku dya"-"I have killed in order to eat" which means : I have committed a bad action but with the intention of repairing my wrong by marrying the girl. He brings five hoes when he makes the announcement and will remit the remainder of the lobolo later on. A younger sister when married to the same husband as the elder, is called *nhlampsa* of the latter. This term comes probably from hlampsa, to wash, because she washes the dishes of her sister and works more or less as her servant.

607 The right of marrying one's wife's sisters is by no means an
582 obligation. I am not in any way forced to do so, if I do not like
595 them. Most probably, even if I wished to marry them all, I should not have enough oxen to "lobola" them all. On the other hand, the bakoñwana are not obliged to give them to me. If I am not a good husband to my wife, if she complains that I illtreat her, her parents will not consent to receive my oxen for her sisters. Should my tinamu marry other men, of course the peculiar bulamu relations will cease. I can no longer allow myself the intimacy I previously had with them. But if they have children by these men, they will call me tatana and I shall call them bana, because I might have been their father, having a prior right of marrying their mothers.

607 My wife's elder sisters are not tinamu to me ; they are
582 bakoñwana. Why so ? Because when I married my wife, her elder sisters were already married, according to the law that an elder sister must always marry before the younger. A father would never consent to give away the younger before the elder. Therefore I have never had the opportunity of playing with my wife's elder sisters and considering them as possible wives.

607 By extension the term namu is also applied to my wife's
595 younger brothers. They are bakoñwana, in fact (p. 238). Their daughters are my potential wives. However, the relations I have with them are easier than with the elder brothers and

607 with the father of my wife, as these are her natural protectors.
835 In this first category is included the daughter of my wife's
595 brother (Shaputa versus Mboza). With her the relations are perhaps even more free than with my wife's younger sisters. I call her *nsati*. The intimacy is so great that I can hold her breasts (tamele mabele). I can do so even in the presence of my wife, who is her paternal aunt. She will be pleased to see that I am disposed to avail myself of my right to marry her, because her niece will thus become her nhlampsa, she will hlampsela rarana, i. e. become a second wife by the side of her father's sister. But I dare not take such a liberty with the girl if her father is on the spot and sees me. I probably do not possess the oxen to pay for her, and the father looks chiefly to the oxen.

As already pointed out, all the girls belonging to my bakoñwana are in the same position towards me. I can marry them all... if I am rich enough to "lobola" them. The grand-daughter of my wife's brother is a namu, a nsati. She will probably be a baby whilst I am a grown-up man. Never mind! If I meet her, a little girl on her mother's back, I go and take her in my arms, and
602 say to her : "Good morning, my wife!" As regards my wife's
607 cousins, those whose father is a brother of my wife's father and
835 who bear the same family name as my wife, they are also tinamu,
595 but here a distinction must be made. Should the father of one of these girls be younger than my wife's father, I can marry her ; but should he be older I must not do so. Why is this? Because the girl, belonging to an elder branch of my wife's family, takes precedence of my wife ; she is her "hosi", her chief. On the other hand my wife, being my first wife, is the mistress of the house ; this cousin of hers ought therefore to obey her. But she is her chief! That would not be right. The natural family relations would be disturbed.. Such a union is not taboo (a psi yili) but it must be avoided.
835 The *second category of tinamu* includes those women whom I
595 might marry, not on account of the prior right of a group to the
607 women of another group, but because I might *inherit them*. They are the wives of my elder brothers. If their husbands die, I am their legal heir. Relations with them are easy. We joke together, but there is more reserve towards these tinamu than towards those

835 of the first category. Sexual intercourse with them is a great taboo,
595 and a man daring to commit such a sin would be likened to a
607 wizard : he has killed his brother. This is the sin called matlulana (App. VI). My younger brother's wives are not tinamu ; we call each other ñwingi. I do not inherit them except in extraordinary cases when the deceased has no brother younger than himself.

602 There is still a *third kind of bulamu*. I also call tinamu the
835 cousins of my wife who are the daughters of my wife's mother's
582 sisters. These girls do not belong to my wife's clan ; they bear the family name of their father. Therefore I have no right to inherit them : "A hi delani ndjaka," i. e. "we do not inherit from each other." The relations with these tinamu are agreeable, but there is no hope of marriage between us.

2) Relations on the Husband's side.

607 So far we have considered the relation of Mboza with his wife's family. But what about Nsabula and her position towards her husband's relatives ? Nsabula calls Masuluke and Nsengamuñwe *ñwingi*, and the term is reciprocal. It implies great respect. As we saw, the young bride must work a whole year for her mother-in-law. The same respect is shown by Nsabula to Djan, Sam, Fos, her husband's elder brothers. They are also *ñwingi* to each other. "Should I send her to call Djan," says Mboza, "she will kneel down before him and say : 'My father! Mboza calls you!' or : 'Ñwamasuluke (Masuluke's son), you are wanted with us." She will not dare to address him by name. This extraordinary respect is reciprocal. Djan will consider Nsabula as his inferior, but he will never play with her. On the other hand, Komatane, Mboza's younger brother, is only a *namu* to Nsabula. Both will joke together and even occasionally smear each other with ashes. So will Sam, Fos, Mboza and Komatane with Mihlakaza, the wife of their elder brother. Thus we note
607 this law : a woman will generally respect the elder brothers of her
835 husband (beñgi), and hold very free intercourse with his younger
595 brothers (tinamu), and vice-versa. A man will keep away from

607 his younger brother's wives (bengi) and play with those of his elder
835 brothers (tinamu). Why tis here this difference ? Because, as
595 we saw, the wife of an elder brother is a possible wife for all
582 his younger brothers, as they have the right of inheriting her, should this man die. On the contrary, an elder brother inherits his younger brother's wife only under quite exceptional circumstances. One does not marry a ñwingi! This would be an insult to one's wife. Nsabula would leave Mboza if Mboza were to marry Magugu, Komatane's wife, because they have been accustomed to call each other ñwingi.

607 To a wife, her husband's elder sister is also a ñwingi (Ndjibari to Nsabula). The husband's younger sister is a namu or *nhombe*, and two tinhombe have very free relations, just as in the case of the tinamu. This freedom exists between female tinamu as well as between tinamu of different sexes.

606 There is a final term to be mentioned : *bakhoti* or *bakhoti-kulobye*, in Ronga, *basevele* in Djonga, a reciprocal term by which the parents of a husband and wife call each other.

593 How far is a woman incorporated in her husband's family ?
769 She belongs to it till her death, provided the lobolo oxen have been paid, but she does not accept the ancestor-gods of her parents-in-law as being her gods. She keeps her own gods, and prayers are frequently addressed to them by her father or by her brothers in favour of her children. In this respect Thongas differ widely from the old Aryan peoples, where a woman had to adopt the religion of her husband's clan when she married.

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606 Before leaving the subject of relations with parents-in-law, and in order to show to what extent the uneasiness and fear which characterises them are carried, I will briefly mention the taboos of the bukoñwana, which play such a great part in Bantu family life. Let me say that most of these taboos (psiyilayilana, small prohibitions), are not so severe as those connected with sexual relations, disease and death. It is not believed that a breach of

606 these bukoñwana rules would cause death. Yet they are religiously kept as necessary to ensure normal relations between the two families.

We have already seen the taboos which must be observed during the betrothal period (p. 106). Later on, during the gatherings which take place *before marriage*, other taboos are imposed.

606 1. In the discussion concerning the lobola, when oxen are counted,
802 the bridegroom's parents must never offer eight head of cattle,
201 because one of them will be killed for the feast, and so eight means
584 only seven. *Seven* is counted by raising, one after the other, the
784 five fingers of the left hand and the thumb and index-finger of the right. In raising the index-finger, they might point it at the bakoñwana, and this would be a mortal offence. To point at anyone with the index-finger is as bad as bewitching him. It is done only in anger, and all the preceding discussions might be nullified if such an imprudence were committed.

2. Should one of the oxen be frightened by the shouts of joy with which the arrival of the herd is greeted and by the sham-fight of the lobola day, and run away home, it is taboo. The ox has seen that something is wrong and has consequently fled. Even should they succeed in bringing it back, "timpfalo ti tjukile," the conscience (or the diaphragm) has been stirred!

584 3. If one of the oxen has no horns (homu ya mhulu), or only
825 abortive horns, psa yila : *bukoñwana byi ta pfumala timpsalu*,
777 viz., the relations with relatives-in-law will have no tenderness,
784 because such an ox moves its head to and fro as it wanders in the night ; it is abnormal. The bride's family will not accept it.

4. Should the lobolo consist of hoes, and should the rain fall on them while they are being carried to the bakoñwana, it is taboo. The lobolo must not be brought in a wet condition, otherwise the new relations will be spoilt (bukoñwana byi ta tshipa) ; the young people will not be able to marry.

5. Do not bring with you tobacco in the leaf when going *bukwen* as a fiancé, bring only ground tobacco, or misfortune will happen. Later on, when you have married your wife, it is allowable.

6. Never eat zebra or reedbuck's meat when staying with your parents-in-law. Should they kill one of these animals while

584 you are there, or on the road, have nothing to do with it. The
825 zebra is *mbalamberi*, an animal of two colours; moreover it has no
777 horns. The same holds good for the giraffe. It has two colours,
784 it has too long bowels. Psa yila! The reedbuck cries: "Dzoo."
It is a witch: a mukoñwana must not eat it. For the same reason
a sheep without horns is never given to bakoñwana.

7. When you go with women to the parents of your fiancée for a *shirwalo*, viz., to bring them beer, should one of the jugs fall to the ground, psa yila! Return home!

606 8. From a Thonga of the Maputju country I once heard that it
609 was a great taboo in that district for a man to drink milk with
784 his parents-in-law; let us say rather to *eat* milk, as Natives
618 always take it in its solid form, i. e. curdled. This man was a
825 Christian; he had given up many heathen customs and had gone
177 so far as to partake of milk with his mother-in-law, but, the people all round were very much shocked at his conduct. Pushing my inquiry further, I heard that the milk taboo was observed not only with bakoñwana, but with all the inhabitants of the country who did not belong to one's clan; curdled milk was to be eaten only with people bearing the same family name. In other words, it is forbidden to eat milk *in any village where one can take a wife*. In a very interesting paper published in the *South African Journal of Science*, 1925, p. 481, Mrs A. W. Hoernlé says that this custom is wide-spread amongst many Bantu tribes of Central and South Africa, and explains it by the very intimate relationship which is thought to exist between human beings and cattle. The oxen are one with the clan to which they belong, and only members of that clan can partake of the milk of their cows. I never met with this idea in the other parts of the Thonga tribe, and I may remark that, as the Maputju clan is settled very near to the Zulus and has been more or less "zuluised", this custom might very well have been borrowed from its neighbours. Further researches will show whether the other Thonga clans have preserved what seems to be a very old Bantu idea, or at any rate traces of it. This is quite possible.

584 9. Do not build a hut for your wife before you have married
777 her. Mankhelu says: "Even if you have plenty of money
784 to lobola, if you make such a blunder your wife will be taken
from you.

777 from you... In the same manner, do not prepare the skin for
784 the child before it is born. Your wife would not bring forth a human being. Should you transgress this rule, you would bring misfortune on yourself (wa tihlolela, wa singita), and on your family. If you go to Moneri (the missionary) and ask him for a skin for this purpose before the birth of your child, he will tell you it is so." Note the deep-rooted conviction of the old heathen, who appeals to the authority of the missionary to strengthen the taboo!

585 10. Later on, when you are married, you must avoid eating
784 honey with your wife for a whole year, till she has had a child.
777 The bride is allowed to eat honey at her parent's home, but not in
262 her new domicile and with her husband. The husband can eat it in the bush, but he must wash his hands when he comes back, lest his wife should notice it. She would run home if she knew of it. We have already met with this prohibition in the tjekela visit, and heard the reason for it : honey flows ; the bride would go! The explanation now given is this : honey is too sweet, and your bride is too sweet also. (Is it not your honey-moon or honey-year ?) The two things do not go together. (Psa yalana, they hate each other.) A third reason is this : Bees, when they have eaten their honey, fly away from the hive. So would your wife do... After a year this misfortune is no longer to be feared.

606 This last idea is very curious. It shows that the bukoñwana
581 taboos *decrease in severity as time passes*. The strained relations between the son-in-law and his wife's mother also become easier. He begins to call her mamana, and she calls him ñwana. This transformation even goes so far that in some cases a mukoñwana can go and dwell in his parents-in-law's village, especially if he has children and if the children are grown up. And this fact gives us the natural explanation of these curious rules.

Marriage, as we have seen, is not an individual affair in the collective stage of family life. It is a contract made between two groups, which enter by it into a special relation towards each other. This relation is fraught with danger, because the interests of both groups are involved ; a bride and bridegroom are inspired with a mutual feeling of fear, knowing that an

606 eventual misunderstanding between them will have its "contre
581 coup" throughout the two groups. The two families regard each other with mistrust, especially the two married couples who depend so closely upon each other, owing to the lobola ; but when they have become acquainted, when they are assured that common life is possible and even agreeable, when the first alliance has been strengthened by others amongst the tinamu, then the bukonwana taboos more or less *fall off*. This is an explanation of these strange relations between relatives-in-law ; I do not pretend that it is absolutely adequate. There may also be in this domain some remains of previous customs which have now disappeared, and Comparative Ethnography will probably throw more light on this problem in the course of time.

C. MARRIAGE RULES

582 The study of the terms of relationship has shown us the constitution of the Thonga family. We have seen that they are often dictated by the possibility or non-possibility for a man of marrying certain women. There exist distinct marriage rules, and I propose to recapitulate them here, at the risk of some repetition, in order to throw as much light as possible on this difficult but very important subject.

Generally speaking it may be said that the Thongas are *endogamic* as regards the tribe and the clan, and *exogamic* as regards the family. They are *endogamic* as regards the tribe, that is to say
582 they marry within it. Members of clans very remote from each
178 other may find it difficult to contract unions, (see later on), but they do so, especially in Spelonken, where representatives of many different parts of the tribe have met by force of historical circumstances. In the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques you may find Thonga women married to men of other tribes and even to white people. But this is the result of a new state of things, which the old Thongas did not foresee ; nor would they have approved of it, I am sure. In Shiluvane, I was in a very favourable

In Shiluvane, I was in a very favorable
582 position to judge of the real feelings of the Thongas. There
177 were two tribes there, which had been living side by side for
609 more than seventy years, tribes united by old friendship and
648 military alliance, viz., the Nkuna clan of the Thongas and the Khaha clan of the Pedis. I did not see a single case of intermarriage between them. The difference of language could not account for the fact, because generally speaking, all the men could speak both Thonga and Pedi. When asked why they did not contract unions with the Pedis, the Nkunas answered : "Their customs are too disgusting for us." They meant more especially the freedom with which Khaha women commit adultery. Pedis would probably have made the same objection to the immorality of Thonga boys and girls. Whatever may be the cause, they have not intermarried up to this day.

582 On the other hand the Thongas are *exogamic* as regards the family. To understand properly these exogamic rules, let us classify the cases in the four following categories : Cases of absolute prohibition of marriage ; of conditional permission ; of unconditional permission, and cases in which marriage is recommended.

I. *Cases of absolute prohibition.*

582 As a rule marriage is prohibited between a tatana, mamana,
605 rarana and a ñwana, and between bamakwabu.

On the father's side the prohibition is particularly severe. Amongst the Ba-Ronga, it is taboo for a boy to marry a girl when both can lay claim to a common ancestor in the paternal line. It seems that the rule is not so stringent in the Northern clans. According to Mankhelu, marriage is absolutely prohibited between all the descendants of a grandfather, viz., between first cousins. Between second cousins it is permitted conditionally, "by killing the family tie," and between third cousins it is allowed. "Third cousins" as Mankhelu says, "are *batlandlamani ba tolo* ; they belong to families which were relatives yesterday. We are

582 605 no longer taboo for them, we can go and take a wife amongst them."

On the mother's side, this absolute prohibition extends to first cousins when the mothers are sisters. They are true bamakwabu ; they have been nursed at the same breast. But more remote cousins marry more easily when their relationship is on the mother's side. The bakokwana do not marry their batukulu, owing to their duty of sacrificing for them, but the batukulu have a kind of preferential right to women related to their mother : "Where father has married, I may also go to find my wife," said Gana. However the rule remains that bamakwabu must not intermarry.

When asked : "Why?" the Thongas generally say : "Because it is so. Psa yila. It is our law." It is however possible to find some more satisfactory reasons ; for these prohibitions are dictated to a certain extent *by fear of consanguinity*. Natives have probably noticed that the offspring of such unions are sometimes weak in intellect or altogether wanting. Therefore, in this polygamic family system, they make a careful distinction between relatives who are of the same mother and of the same father, and those whose mothers are different. When a cousin is by another grandmother, though I call her makwabu just as I do my true sister or first cousin, I may contemplate marrying her. She is my half first cousin only. However the fear of consanguinity is not the only nor perhaps the strongest reason for these exogamic rules. If it were so, why should relatives on the father's side be more taboo than those on the mother's side ? Moreover it is strange to see that in the royal families the same prohibitions are not maintained. Ñwamantibyana, chief of Mpfumo, married Mimalengane, his rarana, his first cousin once removed on the father's side. If the physical dangers alone arising from consanguinous unions were thought of, such marriages ought to be doubly feared in the royal family!

It seems to me that there are two other reasons :

582 In the Thonga mind there is *a natural repulsion to confounding and intermingling bushaka and bukoñwana*, relationship by blood and by marriage. Bushaka is a kind of relation which they do not deem compatible with bukoñwana, as we shall presently see.

582 To the Northern clans this is not so repugnant : with them, it is a current saying that bukoñwana revives bushaka when bushaka has become weaker in the course of generations (1).

A third reason for these strong taboos, a reason which explains also why the prohibition is stronger on the father's side than on the mother's, is found in *the lobola custom*. Should a woman who is a relative on my father's side become my wife and should our union be put an end to by quarrels, I should go to her father to claim the lobolo. If her father happens to possess no oxen to return to me, he will have to go to his relatives to get them... He may have to come to my own father, who is his brother and belongs to the same family, a consequence which would be indeed absurd, because then I should myself pay the debt due to me!

On his wife's side, a man cannot marry the elder sister of his wife, who is mukoñwana to him, nor the daughters of his wife's sisters, who are *bana* to him, as we have seen.

II. *Marriages conditionally permitted.*

582 602 588 In some cases a marriage which ought not to take place may be allowed on condition that the whole family will perform the rite called *dlaya shilongo*. This is a most curious custom, and is found all through the tribe. I know of two cases in which it has been resorted to: a certain Mkili, of the Makaneta sub-clan (Nondwane) wished to marry Minsabula, his makwabu. Both had a common ancestor Muwayi. Muwayi had by a first wife a son called Basana, and by a second wife another son called Nsabula. Basana was the father of Mungobo, father of Mkili, and Nsabula

(1) It is also very much against the feeling of the tribe to confound *bukoñwana* and *bulamo*. A man named Filemon had married the daughter of a woman of dissolute habits, and the woman had given herself to a man who was the brother of Filemon's maternal grandmother. This man was therefore a malume for Filemon, and his wives were balamo, even basati, possible wives for him, as he had the right to inherit them (p. 233). For this reason he said : "My wife's mother cannot marry that man, not only because of the Christian law which we have accepted, but also because of our own old customs. Why? Because she is my mother in-law, my mukoñwana, and by her marriage she would become my nama and I might inherit her. That is impossible."

582 was the father of Minsabula. Mungobo and Nsabula were first
602 cousins or half first cousins (as their grandmothers, wives of
588 Muwayi, were different). Therefore Mkili was the first cousin once removed of Minsabula. Both were ba ka Makaneta. Another case was that of Michel, son of Gana and Ñwashiluvane, who married Djamela, daughter of Mankhelu, who was Ñwashiluvane's brother. Mankhelu was the malume of Michel and Djamela was his mamana, being the possible wife of Gana (See page 233). For a Thonga to marry her malume's daughter, *psa yila*, (See p. 234) whilst for a Pedi it is the proper thing. This is one of the great differences between the law of the two tribes. A Pedi has a real right of pre-emption on his *mudzwala*, whilst amongst the Thongas it is the father who possesses that right. (See later on G.) Possibly this Pedi custom encouraged Michel to entertain an idea which is repulsive to the Thonga mind. But the official *dlaya shilongo* took place in his case also.

I tried to discover in what other cases such a prohibited marriage was rendered possible by the performance of the rite, and found the following.

Conditional marriage is permissible with the daughter of my great-uncle, the younger brother of my grandfather ; and with the daughter of my grandfather by a wife other than my grandmother. Both are rarana. According to Mankhelu, it might also take place between himself and Shiluvane. This Shiluvane (who is not the chief Shiluvane, of course, but an entirely different person), is the daughter of the maternal great-uncle of Mankhelu, brother of Shidyele, who is his true grandfather, the father of his mother. Shiluvane is therefore the first cousin once removed of Mankhelu on his mother's side. She is a mamana.

But what is this rite of *dlaya shilongo* which has such power that it removes the taboo character of such marriages ? *Shilongo* or *mulongo* is an archaic word retained only in this expression and which corresponds to bushaka, blood relationship. This root exists also with that meaning in the Sutho word *seloko*. The relation by blood must be killed in order that the relation by marriage may be substituted for it.

Let us first see how this is done *in the Northern clans*.

588 A young man who has the courage to think of marrying a near relation is regarded as a wizard. *A lowa*, he bewitches! This term, which is applied only to actual witches, is not too strong to designate his action. He was not allowed to *gangisa* her, and now he wants to take her as his wife! But this word lowa, or loya, is used here in another sense: "Bushaka byi lowa hi tihomu" (the blood relationship is bewitched by the oxen). "Bumamana byi lowa" (the mother relationship is bewitched). (Viguet.) Those who consent to such an act must be prayed for publicly and anointed with psanyi (the grass found in the bowels of a sacrificed goat.)

588 782 So the young man goes to his uncle, the father of the girl, to announce his intention of marrying her; he must *be homu*, beat an ox, viz. bring an ox with him as a first step to appease his uncle. This ox is said to "open the hut." The ox may be only a goat, the goat which will be used for the sacrifice, — because a religious ceremony is necessary. All the relatives assemble on a certain day in the girl's village. The wedding pair are inside the hut, the goat is killed, the offering prepared, the psanyi put aside. Then the bridegroom and the bride are called outside and made to sit on the same mat; the man's leg is passed over the girl's leg; (this is done to "kill the shame" *ku dlaya tingana*); they are both anointed with the green liquid of the psanyi; the skin of the goat is then taken, a hole is cut in its middle and it is put on the heads of the two cousins. Through the opening the liver of the animal is handed down to them, quite raw. They must tear it with their teeth. It must not be cut with a knife; this is taboo. They have to bite it, to pull vigourously on both sides so as really to tear it, and then they must eat it. Shibindji, liver, means also patience, determination. "You have acted with strong determination! Now eat the liver! Eat it in the full light of day, not in the dark! It will be a mhamba, an offering to the gods (Gana)." The priest of the family will then say: "You, our gods, so and so, look! We have done it in the daylight. It has not been done by stealth. Bless them, give them children." Should this sacrifice not be made, misfortune would indeed come upon them and the woman would remain childless. When the prayer is ended, those present take all the solid psanyi, put

588 it on the wife's head and say to her : "Go and bear children."
782 *In the Ronga clans* the *dlaya shilongo* is somewhat different. The bridegroom must first give £ 1 to the father ; this is over and above the lobolo, of course. Both families provide a goat. These goats are killed without the assistance of the uterine nephews, in front of the hut of the girl's mother. The grandfather prays to the gods of the girl's father : "So be it! They have decided to marry each other ; you, gods of the boy and the girl, unite them together so that they do not hate each other ; let them not remind each other that they are brother and sister ; let their union not be spoilt by such remembrances, nor by other people saying to them : "You have been guilty of witchcraft! You have married your relative!" By this prayer a general notification is given to everybody, and the feeling of shame is removed. Afterwards the officiating relative continues, exhorting the new wife, telling her all that she must do for her husband, mentioning all the details of her conjugal duties with such realism that she begins to cry. The bridegroom bows his head in shame. The preacher goes on till somebody puts a piece of meat into his mouth to stop the exhortation!

The whole country has gathered to see the proceedings and to eat the meat. The wedding pair do not partake of it, because *the goats have been sacrificed for them* (ba hahlela bone). The relatives go home, roasting on the way the joint of meat they have received so as to eat it before reaching their village.

602 The aim of the *dlaya shilongo* is lawfully to kill one kind of relationship and to replace it by another, because the two are not compatible. However, in the case of inheritance of a rarana, for instance, when a blood relative has to change his relationship and to become a relative by marriage, he can inherit without any rite being performed, if there is no nearer legal heir ; in this case it is said : "Bushaka byi ta pfuka — the blood relationship will be revived." It will be strengthened by the new marriage relationship.

588 In the case of marriage with the great mukoñwana, this rite
607 is also performed, as previously mentioned (p. 244). The wedding pair are also covered with the goat's skin. This goat is

588 called *the cat*, because it is like a cat which is put on their shoulders
607 and scratches them. It scratches away the bukoñwana which prevented their marriage. (Viguet.) In this case it is the *shikoñwana* which is killed. So the taboo is removed and they can marry.

III. *Marriages permitted.*

582 Relatives from the eighth degree of relationship can marry
609 unconditionally (Mankhelu). The choice of a boy is unlimited
618 within the clan and even within the tribe. However, marriages into a *too far distant clan* are not recommended, according to Viguet, for the following reasons: 1) If the marriage were unsuccessful, the parents-in-law against whom the claim would be brought might run away with wife and oxen, and we should lose our herd. 2) If our oxen multiplied in the other clan, we might be tempted to go and make war on our parents-in-law in order to appropriate the cattle. So blood would be shed on account of our own oxen! This would bring shame upon us! Whilst if we marry amongst friends, even amongst remote relatives, should a quarrel occur, we shall try to settle it peacefully. These people are amongst those with whom we discuss in the hut. With strangers we discuss outside, on the square, and we occasionally fight with them and drive them away. So a difficulty can better be dealt with when our bukoñwana are people living close by.

IV. *Marriages recommended.*

582 Here we must take into account two different cases: some
607 marriages are contracted on account of a kind of right of pre-emption, others on account of a right of inheritance.

1) Right of pre-emption.

There are amongst the relatives of a man certain women on whom he has a kind of preferential claim, or a right of pre-emption,

582 and whom he calls spouses, because he would be welcomed if he
607 were able to lobola them. They are his *tinamu* or *tinhlampsa*, viz., his wife's younger sisters or the daughters of his wife's brother. These marriages are considered as peculiarly appropriate. This does not however constitute an absolute right for the man. Should he not prove a good husband, his parents-in-law will not let him have their other daughters (p. 240).

582 As regards marriage with the wife's brother's daughter, who is the
607 nhlampsa proper, there are different possibilities to be considered.
595 It may very well happen that a man's wife, wishing to have a young girl to help her in her domestic work, approaches her brother and asks him to lend her his daughter, the woman's niece, to stay in her village for this purpose. He consents, and she grows up there. Later on however the girl's parents say to their sister : If your husband has oxen, he may take her as a wife. She returns home and discusses the matter with her husband. Should the latter be agreed, he will send his wife with £ 1.10.—to make a proposal to the girl's parents, and he will take the girl at once without much ceremony. The remainder of the lobolo will perhaps be paid afterwards. If a son wants to marry and has no means of buying his wife, then the girl's parents will say to their sister : "Please remind your husband that he has not yet given the oxen." But they will not urge this too strongly as it is their sister who arranged the marriage in order to secure help for herself. On the contrary should the husband have taken the initiative, and sent his wife to ask her parents to give him the girl because he wanted her, then the lobolo oxen will be claimed at once, or at any rate the bakoñwana will be in a position to insist on a speedy remittance of the bride-price. But as my informant says : "Psi ya hi bhanu," i. e. "it goes according to the people." It depends on their character.

586 However there is a reason which militates against such
582 marriages. If I quarrel with my first wife, who may have a
607 particularly difficult character, and she goes home, her younger
595 sisters or nieces, who are her tinhlampsa, will certainly follow her, and I shall remain quite alone without a single dish to eat in the evening. Should the quarrel end in a divorce, I shall lose all my

586 wives at once. The custom of marrying a wife's tinhlampsa is
582 approved of; it is however not very frequently observed in Thonga
607 families at the present time.

595 Other women to whom a man has a special right are his relatives on the mother's side, as we have seen; to take a wife from the family in which the father found the mother is recommended and approved of as long as she is not too near a relative.

2) The right of inheritance.

587 The second class of cases does not concern unmarried women
835 whom I mean to lobola, but widows whom I may inherit after
768 the death of their husband. Those whom I may eventually inherit
595 are generally called by me *namu* or *nsati*, and I have very free
582 relations with them, but as already pointed out this liberty never goes so far as to allow of sexual intercourse (p. 247). "Ndi nga da," viz. "I can eat, inherit by prior right" *my elder brother's widow*: she is my regular legacy. As regards my younger brother's widow, I can only marry her if she is old and no longer able to bear children. But if she is still a childbearing woman, to take her is very much against the feelings of the tribe. The reason of the prohibition is this, says Viguet: suppose that this widow of my younger brother already has children. I take her, and have a child by her. The child takes precedence of the first children of its mother: he is their *hosi*, because I, myself, the father, am the elder brother of the deceased. On the other hand, he is *ndjisana* of his other brothers, because he was born after them by the same mother. This is impossible; it runs counter to the most elementary notions of the family. In exceptional cases, however, when no one else can claim my younger brother's widow, I may take her.

587 Next to my true tinamu comes *the widow of my maternal uncle*.
768 If he had many, one might be alloted to me in the distribution.
595 But of course, in this as in all other cases of inherited women, the
582 children born of our union would belong to the family who paid the lobolo, and not to me. I have, in a sense, only the usufruct of the property. She will till the fields for me and serve me with

587 my daily plate of porridge, but she is not really mine. She is given
768 (nyika) to me by favour, and only under specified conditions.
595 I can also inherit *bakokwana*, the widow of my malume's father
582 (not my true grandmother, of course, but her co-wife), the widow of my father's brothers.

Muhambi can inherit Magugu, *the widow of his cousin* Hlangabeza. This cousin is a brother (makwabu) and the two fathers are brothers. But he could not inherit Debeza, wife of Phusa. Why so? Because Phusa, being a cousin by the father's sister, belongs to another *shibongo*, the shibongo of his own father Muki and not to that of his mother. Should Muhambi lay claim to Debeza, the men of Mashabane (the name of Phusa's clan) would say : "We are opposed to it, because your doing so would in fact mean that you *eat two herds*. You have eaten one herd when we bought Ndjibari from your people. Ndjibari has had two children ; we have sold her daughter Ñwashidjasa to lobola Debeza for Phusa. The oxen were ours. If Phusa dies, Debeza belongs to us and not to you." So Muhambi can inherit the widow of his cousin, the son of his paternal uncle, but not the widow of his cousin, the son of his paternal aunt.

A man can inherit also *one of his father's wives*, as we have seen (page 203), but only under certain circumstances. The dlaya shilongo is never performed in the case of inherited women.

A rule on which Viguet insisted, but which is disappearing, is this : women, when their husband had no younger brothers, must be inherited by *batukulu* and not by *bana* ; batukulu, i. e. either true grandsons, sons of the son, or uterine nephews, sons of the sister of the deceased. The reasons for this law are : 1) Bana, sons, would take liberties with their father's wives and make balamo of them, if they could inherit them regularly. This would spoil the life of the village. 2) If I, being ñwana, a son, inherit my father's wife and have a child by her, this child is ñwana, a son, to me. On the other hand, this inherited woman may have had children by my father, and they are my brothers. So, one of this woman's children is my son, the other my brother ! "A beleki tinshaka timbiri." — "She has had children of two generations!" This must not be.

000 These marriage regulations show us plainly how the family is constituted amongst the Thongas. A glimpse at the system of relationship of the primitive tribes will help us to understand something more of the strange features of this family law.

D. REMNANTS OF PREVIOUS SYSTEMS OF RELATIONSHIP.

582 Modern ethnographers have tried to ascertain how the human family has evolved through the ages, and this is, roughly speaking, the theory adopted by some of them. The first stage was marked by universal promiscuity; there was no family. Then, in a second period, restriction began to be enforced as regards marriage. Definite groups formed; all the women of one group were the regular wives of all the men of another group. This system still prevails in some Australian tribes. It is called *group marriage*. In a third phase, the family constituted itself round the mother. She was the owner of the children, who traced their descent through her and her female ancestors. In this form, which is called the *uterine family*, or matriarchy, the mother's brothers bore a special relation to the children: the father being hardly known or without authority, these male relatives of the mother had to defend the offspring of their sisters. In the end, the uterine family passed into the *patriarchal or agnatic family*. The father became the head, and descent was traced through the males. The development of property seems to have favoured this last evolution. The husband, who owned the property, became the master of the family, and he therefore took his wife to himself and made a home. (Compare p. 122.)

593 Whatever may be the truth of this theory, we must recognise
582 the fact that the Thongas have now reached this fourth stage. The family is definitely agnatic. The father's right is paramount. However, there are in this family system some features which appear to be a relic of former periods.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

I. *Original promiscuity.*

582 As regards the idea that promiscuity prevailed originally—a supposition which is combated by some scientists (see W. H. R. Rivers, "On the origin of the classificatory system of relationship," Anthropological Essays), I see no trace of it amongst the Thongas. Amongst the Pedis, there is one day when free intercourse is allowed all through the clans ; it is the closing day of the second circumcision school. But this custom can be explained on a totally different basis.

II. *Group marriage.*

178 As regards *group marriage*, we may see a remnant of the system
582 in the fact that a man has a special preferential right to certain
595 women of his wife's family, the tinamu. His son will also consider
837 it peculiarly appropriate to take a wife from his mother's clan, the one into which his father married.

The tinamu custom might be explained in that way. There is however a very marked difference between the group-marriage system and the Thonga family law. Amongst Australian aborigenes, whilst a man of a group has the right of marrying all the women of the other group, a woman of the other group has the same right to marry all the men of the first. Amongst the Thongas it is absolutely taboo for a married woman to have relations with anybody except her own husband. Polygamy exists and is approved of, but polyandry is strongly censured and considered a disgusting custom. The main reason for this is no doubt the *matlulana* superstition, which bears all the character of a very ancient idea in the Thonga system. The story of P. K. which I relate in Appendix IV, will show how deeply the sin of polyandry is felt (1).

(1) It is true that the Ba-Pedi who are neighbours of the Thongas, have a kind of polyandry (See page 99). But this has nothing to do with group marriage, and the wives of a rich man whom he allows to have intercourse with other men, choose their lovers as they like and not according to a law of preferential right binding two groups.

582 Though laying much stress on this very important difference
595 we must notice, nevertheless, that there is a certain correspondence
835 between the rights of men and women in this respect. A man has a preferential right to his wife's younger sisters, and to the daughters of his wife's brothers, be these men younger or older than his wife. He is a potential husband for all these tinamu. It results from this fact, that, as regards a woman, she is also a potential wife for all her husband's younger brothers, who can inherit her and are also called tinamu by her, and for the sons of her husband's sisters, be they older or younger than her husband.

601 Another feature of these early Australian forms of society
582 is that all the persons belonging to a given generation call each other brothers (or sisters), and call the preceding generation fathers and mothers and the following generation sons indiscriminately. We may compare with this classificatory system the Thonga custom of calling all the father's wives and all the mother's sisters mothers; and all the father's brothers fathers. But this is not necessarily a trace of group marriage. As we have seen before, the meaning of kinship terms is very often extended to other people as a sign of respect or of love; the Thongas, nevertheless, know perfectly well the difference existing between the technical use of these terms and their wider connotation. There is something natural in these appellations. When we call such and such a person Father Morton, Mother Fuller, Brother James or Sister Agnes, no one would take this to be a relic of the group marriage phase! On this point my conclusion would therefore be: certain customs may be considered as traces of this old system, but it is not absolutely necessary to explain them by this hypothesis. The preference accorded to a wife's sisters, or nieces, may very well owe its origin to the following cause: when a group has ascertained that its women are well treated in another group, it welcomes new alliances with that group, thinking that, in this dreadful lottery of marriage, the guarantee given by a previous happy union is not to be despised!

III. *Matriarchy*.

178 But as regards *mother-right* and the *uterine family*, I must confess
602 that I have altered my views since writing Les Ba-Ronga, and would testify my gratitude to Mr. S. Hartland, who encouraged me to study this subject more attentively. I had not then gathered all the facts, and the identity of the *ntukulu* and the *mupsyana* only became clearly apparent to me when studying the Northern clans. Now, having inquired with special care into this most curious feature of the Thonga system, I have come to the conclusion that the most probable explanation is that, in former and very remote times, our tribe passed through the matriarchal stage. Let us carefully consider the relation of a malume with his uterine nephews, recapitulating all the facts.

1) Duties and rights of the maternal uncle.

604 As we have seen, the uterine nephew all through his career
591 is the object of special care on the part of his uncle : if he is a first-born child, the malume prepares his ntehe. (See page 46.) When weaned, he goes to stay in the village of his mother's relatives for many years, a girl sometimes till she is grown up.
604 Later on, when she marries, the maternal uncle claims a right
583 called *tjhumba*, £ 1, on the total amount of the lobolo. It is taboo to refuse it ; should a father dare to keep that £ 1, his brothers will say to him : "Do you not fear the gods ? The mother's gods will kill you! Your daughter will have no children. Did you alone bring her into the world ? Did not these people help you in bringing her forth ? And has not your wife grown with the assistance of those gods ? Her brother must be allowed to have his *tjhumba*" (Mboza).

585 On the day of the remittance of the lobolo, the maternal uncle
604 and all the mother's relatives are invited to the feast, and for them a special part of the festal ox is reserved, called *nyimba*, viz. the

604 womb, the uterus ; this consists not only of that organ, but of the
585 whole belly, from the sternum to the hind legs ; the bride's mother eats the *mbata* and *khondjo*, viz. the extremity of the spine (Mboza).

585 On the day of hlomisa, when the bride is led to her husband's
431 village, her maternal relatives receive a special gift, a young cow called *mubya wa mana wa yena*, i. e. the skin in which her mother carried her on her shoulders when she was a baby. This cow will be sent to the family when the first and the third daughter marry. In the case of a second and fourth girl, the nyimba alone is sent.

585 In the *equipment of the bride*, the mother's relatives provide
604 her with a hoe, with fat to anoint her body, with a mat and clothing and sometimes with bracelets. The paternal aunt (hahana) does not give anything, neither does the paternal uncle, the latter only helping the father occasionally. Should the mother's relatives not fulfil this duty of providing part of the trousseau, next time they will not be given the *nyimba* to which they were entitled (Viguet).

593 But the most characteristic prerogative of the bamalume or
602 bakokwana, is *their special right of intercession* on behalf of the
604 uterine nephews. In fact, as Mankhelu said in his picturesque language, "as regards sacrifices (timhamba), the mother's relatives mostly perform them. They are the stem. My father is the stem as regards the oxen, but my mother is the true stem ; she is the god ; she makes me grow. Should she die when I am an infant, I shall not live. The village of my mother is as the home of the gods (ka mamana hi ko psikwembyen)." Simeon Gana added : "We have the special charge of sacrificing for our batukulu ; our sons also are priests to them, and can officiate in our place, even should they be younger than our batukulu. That is the reason why we do not marry them. We are their elders (bakulu)." Of course the bones will always be consulted and they will tell if a sacrifice must be offered to the gods of the mother or to those of the father, but a kokwane will preferably be called upon to sacrifice for a sick child. (See Part VI. Chap. II, II.)

604 In the ceremonies following death, especially in the feast of
611 the mourning beer (page 164), the malume will be the officiating person and squeeze the *psanyi* over his batukulu to cleanse them.

A last right possessed by the malume is that *of raising his village*

604 611 597 *(pfusha muti) by means of a ntukulu.* Should he see that he has no children, that his village is in danger of "dying," he will take his unmarried sister to his village and refuse to accept the lobolo for her. He will say to her : "Do not fear! If you die, I will bury you!" This duty falls in the first place to the husband; but the brother is ready to fulfil it. She will have lovers, and perhaps give birth to a son. As she has not been lobola, this child belongs to the mother's family, according to the great rule of Native law. The uncle will appropriate this male offspring of his family, who will bear the *shibongo* of his kokwana. A uterine nephew, adopted under these circumstances, can save the family of his mother from extinction.

2) Rights of the uterine nephew.

604 782 The attitude of the ntukulu wa shisati (the uterine nephew) to his malume is quite peculiar. "Ntukulu i hosi, a nyenyela hikwapsu ku malume." — "The uterine nephew is a chief! He takes any liberty he likes with his maternal uncle" (Mboza). These prerogatives of uterine nephews with regard to relatives on their mother's side, their bamalume and bakokwana, appear clearly in the religious ceremonies. We have seen the prominent part which batukulu take in these rites. "Ba yima mahlwen ka psikwembu" — "they stand before the gods, in their stead" (Viguet). They must be the servants of the altar, and the consumers of the offering. In the great sacrifice for rain, as accomplished in the Northern clans, an offering of beer is made, together with the sacrifice of the black victim. (See Part VI.) It is the uterine niece of the chief who must fetch the mealies from the granary, pour them into the pot, take the first handful to crush it in the mortar, give the first blow with the pestle, and begin each of the complicated acts of the brewing. When the black victim is brought, some one puts an assagay into her hand and helps her to stab the animal. She it is who "gives over to the gods" (nyiketa psikwembu). The same thing happens in the great family gatherings : one ntukulu holds the leg, another the

604 assagay. The batukulu dispose of the portion of the limbs offered
782 to the gods. They *cut* the prayer and, at that moment they steal the meat or the beer of the sacrifice and run away with them. Why is this? "Because a ntukulu does not fear the saliva of his malume" (Mboza). They live in such intimacy with them that they can eat that which was reserved for the gods (1) (See p. 162).

604 The ntukulu *also takes precedence* in some other rites ; in the circumcision school the uterine nephew of the chief is at the head of the circumcised. In the *luma milomo* (page 146) he starts the purifying ceremony, and "gives to the others" (nyiketa) the use of the food of the deceased.

604 But it is especially in the question of the inheritance that he
428 shows himself in his characteristic aspect. Father-right has
178 set in and is strongly supported by the lobola custom. Therefore the sons of the deceased have the sole right to the property of their father, wives as well as implements. The batukulu, however, the uterine nephews, refuse to be left out! You will find them everywhere, trying to get something for themselves. They were already planning with the malume's wives to take them as spouses after the death of their husband. Remember how they teased the whole family, on the day of the distribution of the widows (page 208). When the implements were distributed, they came and claimed their *tjhumba* (a technical expression, it would seem, which means precisely this kind of claim lodged by a malume or a ntukulu). They were given the small assagay, the big one remaining for the son. In this way *ba nyiketa pfindla, they give over the inheritance to the legal heirs.* This is a most vivid representation of a right which no longer exists, having in fact become

769 (1) Some ethnographers have supposed that ancestral worship only began when the
602 father took command of the family and consequently did not exist in the period of mother-right. This seems to me absolutely false. The spirits of the mother's family are invoked as well as the father's ancestors, and the special place of the uterine nephews in worship down to this day is best explained in this way: before the gods of the father were known and prayed to, those of the mother were worshipped, and consequently the batukulu held a special position in the ritual. When the ancestors on the father's side made their appearance in the Bantu Pantheon, beside those on the mother's side, or after the institution of father right, the batukulu preserved that special position.

604 obsolete, but which asserts itself in virtue of the survival of an old
178 custom. I have often been struck by the unconscious way in
428 which they act on all these occasions! They give the impression of people who have been hypnotised and ordered to do something next day, when no longer in the mesmeric sleep. You see them carrying out the act, constrained by a mysterious necessity and without knowing why they do so. The hypnotising factor here is the weight of heredity, of all this hoary antiquity, which belongs indeed to the past, but still influences the subliminal life of the tribe...

643 As regards the chiefs, I may add that the uterine nephew may
604 be given the chieftainship over a certain part of the country. He is well received at the Court, better than the nephews on the brother's side, because, with these, there is always the risk that they may become usurpers. This also explains why a chief, when in danger, will ask help from his bakokwana rather than from the relatives of his own family. The latter may seize the opportunity for "bangana buhosi", i. e. to dispute the chieftainship with him.

611 Mother-right most probably existed amongst the ancestors of
178 the Thongas, whatever may be the country in which they then lived
602 and the name by which they were called. But everything seems to prove that this phase has long ago passed away. No one remembers anything of the kind. Genealogies, which are the oldest records of the tribe, mention only the ancestors of the father. They are recalled much better than those of the mother. The lobola custom, which is the strongest support of the paternal right at the present time, has been practised since time immemorial (1). See also the special names of the great-grandfathers in the paternal line (p. 227).

000 (1) Lobola is however not incompatible with the uterine form of the family. I have been informed by the Rev. E. Allégret, working in the French Congo, that the Mpongwe and Galoa of the Lower Ogowe have still partly preserved the mother-right. But lobola exists. The first lobola is payed indifferently to the father or the mother of the bride, and the choice is made according to the personal relations existing between the husband's family and the families of the bride's parents. When a second daughter marries, half the lobola is given to the maternal uncle. The children stay in the father's village, but they are under the guidance of the mother and of her family. They belong to the mother's clan. This system evidently denotes a less advanced stage of evolution. However matriarchy is passing into patriarchy, and the lobola custom will probably hasten the process.

114 In a paper published in the *South African Journal of Science*, 1925, under the title "The Mother's Brother in South Africa," Professor R. Brown deals at length with the facts related above and strongly opposes the matriarchy hypothesis. In his opinion the peculiar relation of a nephew with his maternal uncle is the result of the natural tenderness and indulgence which characterises the relation of a mother and her child. The feelings of the child towards its mother are extended to all the relatives of the mother, and a certain pattern of behaviour is thus created, the behaviour of a ntukulu towards all his bakokwana.

I cannot here enter upon a full discussion of Mr. Brown's theory, but I must confess that it does not seem to me entirely satisfactory. I will mention only three reasons why I find myself unable to accept it :

1) If the peculiar relation existing between a child and his bakokwana really originated from the feelings of that child towards his mother, feelings which are extended to all her relatives, why should the *paternal* grandfather and grandmother be classified amongst the bakokwana as well as the maternal relatives ? (See p. 227, 235.)

604 2) There is a term which Mr. Brown's theory does not explain, the word *nyiketa*, which is the technical expression used by the Thongas to describe the part played by the uterine nephew in the ceremonies connected with the adjudication of the inheritance. My distinguished opponent, summing up what I wrote on the subject, says: "The nephew claims some of the property of his mother's brother when the latter dies, and may sometimes claim one of the widows." There is much more than that in the Thonga custom. The nephew *nyiketa* the inheritance to the sons of his mother's brother, who are the actual legal heirs. Nyiketa comes from nyika, to give. It is a derivative which reinforces the meaning of the simple form nyika, and may be translated by the English word *surrender* or *transmit*. What does it mean in this connection ? It means that, consciously or unconnsciously, the nephew considers himself as the legitimate heir; but on account of a change which has taken place in the laws of the tribe, as the recognised heirs are now the sons, he gives up his right and transmits it to the sons. The fact that he does so is best explained by the supposition that he possessed that right in a previous phase of family relations. I do not see how this "nyiketa" could be accounted for if these customs were dictated only by the natural feelings of a child towards his mother, feelings which had been extended to the mother's brother.

3) In the Rev. Ed. W. Smith's book on the Ba-Ila speaking people (Vol. I, p. 317) we see that amongst the Ba-Ila the mother's brother "is

604 very highly respected, that he has the right of life and death over his nephews." The relation between a maternal uncle and his nephews is totally different in that Central African tribe from what it is amongst our South African tribes. There, at any rate, the pattern of behaviour inspired by the mother does not apply to her brother, and Mr. Brown's theory is at fault. On the matriarchy hypothesis, on the contrary, it is not impossible to explain this fact. There has been an evolution (whilst there has probably been no change in the feelings of a mother towards her child from the beginning of the human race up to the present day). If, in the course of this evolution, there was a time when the family system was matrilocal, a time when a child dwelt in its mother's village, close to its mother's brother, one can understand that the latter, at that time, took upon himself the duty of educating the child, of reproving him. His attitude, in such circumstances, was more severe, more dominating than now. As the Ba-Ila have preserved a kind of matriarchy, possessing, as they do, totemic clans in which matriarchal customs prevail, we ought not to be astonished if the relations of uncle and nephew are so different amongst them. In the South African tribes the authority has completely passed to the father. Hence the great respect shown to him by the children ; hence also the want of respect and the great ease in the relations with the maternal uncle.

603 At the end of this argument, may I allow a Native to give his opinion ?
611 Natives often refuse if asked to explain these mysterious customs of theirs. Yet when we have the chance of hearing an intelligent Bantu formulate a reason for one of them, we are bound to consider such testimony as very valuable. Natives feel what we, Europeans, can only guess, and they have actual experience of the Bantu kraal life... Speaking on this very subject of the mode of behaviour of a Thonga toward his father's and mother's family my informant said : "If the paternal grandfather is less lenient with his grandson than the maternal grandfather, it is on account of property" (p. 232). The paternal grandfather and his grandson belong to the same clan, or sib, or family. They bear the same name (shibongo). They possess in common certain property, oxen, implements, etc, which all of them have the duty of preserving, increasing, defending. If a child spoils or destroys this property, he commits a wrong which is resented by all the other members of the clan. His paternal grandfather will reprove him. He will do so also if the honour, the good reputation of the clan is at stake. But the maternal grandfather has nothing to do with such matters. The spoiled property

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

603 611 does not belong to him, and, whatever the child may do in this respect, the ease and indulgence which characterises his relations with his nephew will not be altered. Thus whatever influence the natural feelings of tenderness of the mother towards her children may have had on the special mode of behaviour of the batukulu towards their bakokwana, they are not the only factor, nor perhaps the most important factor to be considered: Property plays a greater part in the determination of that kind of relationship in the present circumstances, and as regards its first origin, the matriarchy hypothesis goes a long way to explain its characteristics.

602 611 178 But let me frankly recognise that the matriarchy theory is but a hypothesis. As Mr. Brown rightly shows, there is not a tribe amongst the Bantus, as far as we know, where that family system exists in its integrity, i. e. matrilineal, matrilocal, mātripotestal. Everywhere there seems to prevail a mixture of the two systems. However if there has been an evolution (and an evolution has certainly taken place) and if one system preceded the other, it must certainly have been matriarchy, as its traces, in the present patriarchal system, bear all the character of relics of a former period.

000 I have tried to look far back into the past of the Thonga family system. Now I would ask: What about its future ? The question must be asked, because we are not considering the South African tribe only as a subject of scientific study. We are deeply interested in its welfare and in its destiny. New forces have appeared which act in a new way on primitive society.

What will be, what must be the nature of the evolution ? How must it be directed by those who have a responsibility for the shaping of the future Bantu society ?

We shall answer this question in our Practical Conclusions, at the end of this Volume. For the present we shall be satisfied with a scientific collection of the facts in relation to the two great customs which lie at the base of the whole family system of the Bantus : Lobola and Polygamy.

E. THE LOBOLA CUSTOM.

I. *The History of the Custom. How it is practised.*

436 As far back as Natives can remember, lobola has always been
583 practised. First it consisted of *mats* and *baskets*, in those remote
439 times when white people had not yet made their appearance. *Large iron rings* were procured by barter from sailors who anchored off the shore (see Part IV), and were employed for the purpose. Later on white traders settled in the country. *Beads* were bought from them (nkarara), especially large ones (mubatlwana). A chief used to lobola with ten handfuls of these, a subject with only five. Large *brass rings* were also used in old times. Two of them have been found lately in the Maputju country, and one came into my possession. It weighs more than two pounds. They were called *litlatla* and were very much sought after. One was enough to buy a wife.

436 *Oxen* have also been used for a very long time for lobola.
583 Some say that they were the regular means of getting a wife in the 18th century. When Manukosi came, in 1820, he appropriated all the cattle, and the Thongas were obliged to use beads and hoes for that reason. At any rate the Nkunas, when they emigrated into the Transvaal in 1835, were paying lobolo in oxen. A father claimed ten for his daughter. The Pedis of the country claimed only two or three, and this was one of the reasons why
436 the two tribes did not intermarry. Strange to say, I never heard
583 goats mentioned as having served for this purpose, though the
231 goat is certainly the oldest domestic animal of the South African Bantus! Whatever may have been the objects first used, sooner or later oxen, live stock, became the usual means of lobola. This appears plainly in the technical expressions : to go out with a herd (ntlhambi), viz., to go to lobola,—to eat the oxen, viz., to accept a lobolo,—the woman of my oxen, viz., the one bought with the oxen given by me for my wife, etc.

231 The scarcity of oxen, probably caused by the wars with
436 the Zulus, was no doubt the reason why they were replaced by
583 hoes. *Hoes* were universally employed from 1840-1870, together
177 with oxen, when available. Ten was the regular price for lobola. Later on fathers asked twenty, thirty, fifty. They were first of native make ; the Vendas of Spelonken, near the Iron Mountain, provided the whole tribe for a time with that heavy currency, until the Europeans saw that there was good business to be done by supplying them. (See Part IV). Portuguese traders of Delagoa Bay began to send Natives to Gaza with guns and powder to hunt elephants, and paid them in hoes : twenty, fifty, one hundred hoes for a tusk, according to its size.

436 But hoes have also been superseded by the universal power
177 of the *pound sterling*. After the death of Manukosi (1858), early
583 in the sixties of the last century, some Zulus came to Delagoa Bay
464 from Natal, sent by Englishmen to hunt elephants in Gaza. They told the people of the country that money could be obtained in Pietermaritzburg (Umgundhlovo) by working, and the first Ba-Ronga went *ku berengen*, viz., to serve white people there. In 1870, in the year still called Daiman by the chroniclers of the tribe, many more went to Kimberley, especially from the Transvaal colonies of Thongas, and gold coin began to spread amongst the tribe with all its usefulness and all its dangers. It is now becoming more and more current, as from 50,000 to 70,000 Natives of the Thonga tribe are working in the Johannesburg mines. First
436 of all £ 1 was worth ten hoes, and the lobolo money was fixed at
177 £ 8 by the chiefs. But this price was soon considered insufficient
583 by the parents. They wanted £ 10.10.0, ten guineas! They had already learned that, amongst cultivated people and in refined transactions, we talk of guineas and not of pounds! Later on it rose as high as £ 20 for an ordinary girl, £ 30 for a chief's daughter. The average round Lourenço Marques was £ 18 at the beginning of this century and in the Transvaal £ 25 (1). When a

(1) There is a tendancy constantly to increase the amount of the lobolo. Nowadays it is nearer £ 30 than £ 20. In this connection I may mention the following fact. A man named Mpunzi had payed £ 28 for his wife, and the matter was looked on as concluded ; but later on his parents-in-law came to claim £ 2 more. Why? They had purchased a wife for their son and had obtained her for £ 28 ; it was all right so

when a

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583
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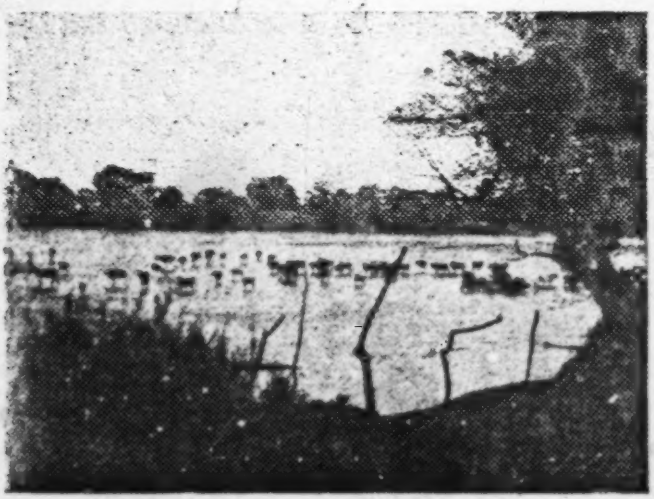
Banyan takes a native wife (or rather a concubine), he can get her for £ 10, and the father consents to this lower price, first because a "white man's" wife is better treated and fed than ordinary native women, and secondly because the Banyan will soon go home, to India, and this kind of marriage is tacitly looked upon as temporary. The influx of money had also the following unexpect-



Cattle in the Nkomati River near Antioka.

ed effect on the native custom. There are two kinds of lobolo: 1) the lobolo which a boy obtains from his sister's marriage, and which he employs with the consent of the family to buy a wife for himself; this is the true old-fashioned way for him to contract a marriage; 2) the acquired lobolo won by a boy who has worked for it, and who has *started a herd for himself* (tisungulela ntlhambi). This second kind of lobolo became much easier to procure under

for. But the people who had given their daughter for that sum wanted to lobola a girl and were asked £ 30. Therefore they claimed £ 2 from the bakoñwana of Mpunzi and these, in their turn, came to him asking for £ 2 more. And it was so arranged. This story fittingly illustrates the explanation of the lobolo which I set forth below: it is a compensation.

583 the new conditions, especially when a stay of a year or two in
177 Johannesburg was long enough to save the necessary sum. Boys who had no sister, and who would have been destitute in former times, could then dream of a *tshenwge* viz., of marrying three or four wives! And they had this advantage that, their wives not having been bought with family property (their sister's oxen), no bakonwana could disturb them in their domestic happiness, as may happen to those who marry by means of the first-mentioned lobolo.

This leads us to consider :

583 II: *The original meaning and the consequences of the lobola.*

As we have said previously, the only way of understanding the lobola, as well as other similar payments in kind which we meet with amongst a great number of uncivilized or half civilized nations, (1) is to consider it as *a compensation given by one group to another group*, in order to restore the equilibrium between the various collective units composing the clan. The first group acquires a new member : the second feels itself diminished, and claims something which permits it to reconstitute itself, in its turn, by the acquisition of another woman. This collectivist conception alone explains all the facts.

583 In this way, the acquired wife, though she keeps her shibongo
562 (clan name), becomes the property of the first group. She is
593 aggregated to it by complicated marriage ceremonies, representing
618 the passage from one family to another. She is owned by the new family, herself and the children who will be born of her. She is not in any way a slave, but she is nevertheless owned. She is not the individual property of one man, but the collective property of a group. Hence the following facts :

1) Her whole family take part in the marriage ceremonies, especially on the day when the lobola is brought by the bridegroom

(1) See A. van Gennep, *Les Rites de passage*, p. 170. The *Kalym* of the Turko-Mongolians, the *Nyen* of Southern Thibet, etc., correspond to the Bantu lobola.

583 (See page 109). Every male member of the group has his say in
835 the matter.

593 2) Brothers will always be ready to help a poor relative to
618 lobola : they work for their group.

3) The acquired wife is their presumptive spouse, though they cannot have sexual relations with her (matlulana). They will inherit her if the husband dies, according to the laws which I have explained in the preceding paragraphs.

583 4) Children will belong to the father, live with him, bear his
593 shibongo (family name), and owe him obedience : boys will
611 strengthen this group, girls will be lobota (factitive of lobola—
618 sold in marriage) for his profit. Father-right rests on the lobola. This is so plain that any child born of a woman who has not been paid for belongs to the mother's family, bears her shibongo name and will live in the malume's village. In Appendix VII, I relate the story of Spoon Libombo as an instance of this primordial law. This is the reason why, when the question is discussed, men insist so much on the preservation of the lobola. They say : "Who will guarantee us the possession of our children if lobola is suppressed ?"

So the lobola is by no means a purchase made by the husband, and still less a present given to the wife's parents.

1) Advantages of the lobola custom.

583 In the primitive collective stage of society the custom has
593 certainly *great advantages* : 1) It strengthens the family, I mean
586 the patriarchal family, the right of the father. 2) It marks the difference between a legitimate and an illegitimate marriage and, in this sense, takes the place of an official marriage register. 3) It puts hindrances in the way of dissolving the matrimonial union, as a wife cannot definitely leave her husband without her group returning the lobola. Therefore it obliges the married pair to have a certain regard one for the other.

However, these advantages must not be exaggerated. Marriages

583 concluded on the lobola basis, are frequently dissolved (1). The
586 tie being purely material, it is easy to sever it. When the husband
562 "bitana tihomu," claims his oxen, who could refuse to return
593 them ? It is certainly ertoneous to say that the lobola is a contract made between two families in order to guarantee the good treatment of the wife by her husband and vice versa, to prevent the husband beating his wife or the wife deserting the conjugal home from mere caprice. It has even been asserted that this sum of money was a pledge, a security, claimed by the wife's parents for the protection of their daughter! There is nothing of the kind in this institution. The exhortations addressed to the bride on the day of her *hloma* (page 118) prove clearly enough that, on the contrary, owing to the lobola, the husband has every right over her, and that she has no right to protest if he uses or abuses this right.

2) Bad consequences of the lobola custom.

583 1) And this is the first *regrettable consequence of the lobolo* : the
562 woman is undoubtedly reduced to an *inferior position* by the fact that she has been lobola. *a)* This appears clearly in the fact that, though she is not looked upon exactly as a head of cattle, a marriageable girl is in principle entirely at the mercy of her family as regards the choice of her husband. In the same way a widow to be inherited is in the hands of her deceased husband's family.

586 (1) I will give only one example which I witnessed amongst my neighbours and
548 which shows that, with women of loose character, at any rate, the payment of lobolo helps very little to strengthen the matrimonial tie. A girl named Hlapfuta, daughter of Bandi, married a first husband. The "bukosi" (name commonly given to the lobolo money) was used to procure a wife for her brother. But she left her husband and was married by Nwamusi. This second husband paid the lobolo, which was then returned to the first. But Hlapfuta ran away a second time and joined a man called Matshubele. She did the same thing five consecutive times, and finally she moved to Majlangalen, to the suburbs of Lourenzo Marques, the favourite quarter of the prostitutes. There she was lost, and the "bukosi" also. Her paternal uncle, who had been put to any amount of trouble to recover the "bukosi" in order to give it back to the five abandoned husbands, seeing that it would be impossible to satisfy the last, could no longer bear the strain and committed suicide by hanging himself from a tree not far from my house in Rikatla. The debt remained with the girl's brother who "had eaten the bukosi."

583 Men are often better than their principles, and we have seen in
562 the study of marriage and inheritance customs that the consent
593 of a girl, and of a widow, is generally asked before any decision takes place. This is done as long as the male masters of the woman have no special interest in the choice. But should they have reason to impose a certain husband upon her, they will not hesitate to force her to accept him ; a young girl will be given up to a dirty old man, for whom she has no liking, on account of a lobola debt of twenty years standing! The lobola hardens the heart and the woman is unable to defend herself. She can always run away. But where will she hide, if all her relatives agree on her being sacrificed to the interest of the family ? Or she can threaten to commit suicide, and she occasionally does so. *b)* She must work for her husband, who gives her very little in return. It is true that she is not a *slave*. She is however *owned*. *c)* This is partly the cause of the shocking difference established between a husband and his wife. The married woman is henceforth absolutely prohibited from adulterous relations — which is a very admirable provision — but her husband is quite free in this respect : he has not been bought.
593 *d)* As regards her children, whatever may be her love for them,
562 she does not in fact possess them. They belong to the father.
586 If divorce takes place and the lobolo is not returned to the husband, he keeps them and the mother will be separated from them for ever (1).

583 2) A second series of consequences arising from this custom
606 are the *strained relations* between the two contracting groups.
578 We have sufficiently insisted on this subject. What makes dealings with parents-in-law so difficult ? It is the lobolo, the sum of money which has perhaps not been Fully paid, and

(1) The Rev. H. Disterlen, of Basutoland, in a paper on the lobola, wrote the following words, which apply to the Thongas as well as to the Ba-Sutho: "A woman married under lobola bears children but possesses none. The children belong to those who gave the cattle. Whatever may be her own merits, she can see her children pass into the hands of the rawest heathen and be given over to the cupidity of rapacious and rascally relatives. She can be illtreated, driven away, abandoned, repudiated : she will have to live without children ; she will resemble a woman who has never had any. She is not supposed to have the heart and the feelings of a mother. And her children are treated as if they had no filial affection."

583 the debt remains as a permanent cause of irritation. If there
606 is no reason for friction on that point, the threat of quarrels
586 ending in divorce is always impending like the sword of Damo-
578 cles. If this takes place, the sad event will be made ten times more painful by the terrible dispute which will arise by reason of the lobola being claimed back. And the contending couple will not suffer alone. It may be that another marriage, that of the great mukonwana, which was perhaps a happy one, will be destroyed in consequence of the divorce. (p. 243) "A ba ruli timbilwin," remarked Mboza. "They don't find peace in their hearts."

These complicated relations due to the lobola poison the whole of native life. Life should be easy for South African Natives. Their wants are few and they have enough to satisfy them under their invariably blue sky. They are generally speaking mild and good-natured. But the lobola question fills the African village with hatred and bitterness. *The milandju*, the debts! Milandju comes from landja, to follow, and this etymology is very instructive. A husband whose wife has gone away must *landja* his wife or rather his money. His whole family will help him in following this property until it has been recovered. Natives will go from one end of the country to the other to follow a few pounds, and at least three quarters of the cases which are brought before the Courts are lobola cases.

As regards the attitude to be adopted towards the Lobola custom, see Practical Conclusions. III.

F. POLYGAMY.

I. *Origin and spread of Polygamy amongst the Thongas.*

595 Polygamy is uniformly practised all through the tribe. This is not to say that every man has many wives; the automatic rule, by which the number of males is always about equivalent to

595 that of females and which has been recognised by physiology, has
622 its effect also amongst Natives, and, in ordinary circumstances,
643 women are not more numerous than men in Bantu tribes. Many men are monogamists, not from choice, but by force of circumstances. Others are wandering about in Johannesburg, or Kimberley, and marry later in life, whilst girls marry much earlier. In the villages round Lourenço Marques the headman often has two or three wives. Three is however an unusual number. The chiefs, of course, take more, and Mubvesha, for instance, the chief of Nondwane, had as many as thirty. In the Gaza country chiefs go even further, at least they used to do so in the good old times, under Gungunyane. Bingwane, the chief of the Ba-Tswa, had so many wives that he hardly knew them and at any rate did not know all his children.

595 What is the origin of the custom? It might be assumed to be a remnant of the old system of group marriage, supposing the Bantus to have also passed through that stage of family evolution. At one time all the men of a group would have considered as their wives all the women of another group, and vice versa. It was a state of polygamy and polyandry at the same time. The fear of the matlulana (page 265) put a stop to polyandry, and polygamy alone survived. Or it might be supposed that monogamy existed first and that polygamy appeared later, owing to the following reasons: 1) *Wars* diminished the number of men. As women were not anxious to remain "old maids," and as the tribe wanted to make the most of them, in order to increase and strengthen itself, the unmarried ones were taken by married men and so the polygamic family arose. In fact polygamy was very much fostered by the Gungunyane wars, during the historic
595 period. Every year the Ngoni chief planned expeditions against
567 his Ba-Chopi enemies on the coast, north of the mouth of the Limpopo. Men were killed and women enslaved, and each of these became the wife of her capturer. The position of these slaves was not very bad: however they were called *tinhloko*, heads, (a word which has the same meaning as heads of cattle), and could be sold by their owner. A great many of these Chopi women were bought in and round Lourenço Marques, before the suppression

567 of slavery. Hundreds of them still live there and are recognisable by their very broad, coarse features. 2) The *laws of succession*
595 which regulate the present agnatic Thonga family also lead to
556 polygamy as a necessary consequence. A young brother inherits the widow of his elder brother, be he married or not. If polygamy began in this second way, its increase in later times is not to be wondered at. It answers admirably to the Bantu ideal of life. As we saw, a man who has a harem, tshengwe (page 126), is a man who has succeeded in his career! This is the regular method of becoming a rich man, an ideal which is by no means confined to the black race! On the other hand sensuality develops very quickly in the polygamic family and its very development reacts on the custom and tends to foster it.

595 I do not think the origin of polygamy can be traced with
764 certitude. However, there are amongst the Thongas some striking customs, giving to the "first" or "great wife" a special position, which seem to confirm the hypothesis of a primitive monogamy. The first of these is the ritual incision made by the first wife in the inguinal region after the death of the husband; it is not performed by the other widows (p. 200). In the same way the widower carries out this rite only after the death of the first wife and not when "little wives" die. The second is to be found in the rites of the foundation of the village; as we shall see in the next chapter, the first wife has a special part to play in these significant ceremonies. When I asked Magingi, an old Rikatla heathen, why such a difference was made between the first wife and her co-wives, he told me: "The first is the true wife and the others are but thieves. That is why it is said at the death of the first wife: the house of the husband has been crushed (a tjhobekelwi hi yindlu ya kwe). When another dies, it is only said: he has lost a wife (a felwi hi nsati)"...

595 The species of sacredness which surrounds the first wife appears
643 even more plainly in the case of the marriages of chiefs. The principal wife of the chief is in one sense not the actual first wife, but the woman who has been bought with the money collected by his subjects and whose son will be the heir to the chieftainship (See Part III). Generally the "wife of the country" is not the first

595 in date. At her death the chief does not perform the incision; the
643 first in date remains the first from the ritual point of view. All these facts show that, for the Thongas, there is a deeper, more mystical conception of matrimony than at first appears, when we consider their present polygamic family. For them, true, complete matrimony is the union of two persons, not of three or ten, and little wives are not much more than concubines. This feeling may very well be explained by the supposition that the race has passed through a previous monogamic phase.

II. *Consequences of polygamy.*

595 A happy consequence of the custom is that, in the primitive Bantu tribe, no disconsolate old maid is to be found. This is no doubt an advantage. I fear, however, that when monogamy sets in, this unblessed singleness will follow in its train.

But the evils of polygamy by far exceed its few advantages!

1) The first is the dreadful development of sexual passion which occurs amongst polygamists. White people who have lived in close touch with Natives in a head kraal where men have many wives, can bear testimony to the frightful excesses in which they indulge. See Annotatio 14,[1] the observations of Dr. Liengme at Gungunyana's residence.

595 2) A second evil resulting from the custom is the domestic
578 quarrelling which prevails in the villages of polygamists. There
351 is a special term which indicates the peculiar jealousy of a wife towards her co-wives, *bukwele*. The prefix *bu*, in Bantu languages, designates abstract things, ideas, feelings. It is also an indication of place. *Bukwele* therefore also means the special spot between the court yards, where the wives of one man go to insult each other (rukutelana). The story of Leah and Rachel, in the book of Genesis, may give some idea of the reason of such quarrels!

595 Sometimes the husband amuses himself by fostering these by no
578 means edifying feelings amongst his spouses. Tobane says: "He will say bad things (psitokoro) to one of his wives, his

1 [See pp. 519-520 in these categories of in 116 - Analyst]

595 favourite, about another who is perhaps superior to her. He says
578 to her : 'You are much nicer than so and so! She is not like a woman (A nga twali lepsaku i wansati).' The favourite will make haste to report to her superior what she has heard. She will draw her attention to the fact that the husband calls at her hut more frequently than at the others... The superior becomes angry, and people say of the husband : 'A ni gudjulisana, a ni bandjisana,' 'he makes his wives hit each other.' He himself, after a time, will try to regain the goodwill of the despised one (a ta mu batela). She will violently repel him. He may even kill a chicken to bring about a reconciliation!" One can easily imagine the jealous scenes which occur in the village of a polygamist (1)!

595 3) Polygamy, when practised on a large scale, even brings about *the ruin of the family*. Two examples show this clearly. First the case of Bingwana, to which I have already alluded. He had a great number of wives and used to place them in his various villages, viz., in the capital itself and in all the districts of his kingdom, going round from place to place to visit them. But they were so numerous that he could not visit them Frequently enough and they committed adultery wholesale with the men of these villages. The result was that Bingwana had hundreds of children and that, in the end, he married his own daughters without knowing it. He died tragically. The Gungunyana's yimpis surrounded his fortress (hkokholo). His son, Sipenenyana, fled during the night and he remained alone. He then shut himself up in a hut where he had gathered together his treasures and his gunpowder, set fire to it and died amidst the flames.

The second example is that of Mubvesha who died on Nov. 5th 1910, a man of weak character, whose intrigues caused the war of 1894-1896 and who was installed by the Portuguese as Chief of the Nondwana country at the close of that war. (See

533 (1) Here is a pretty little Nkuna song about bukwela. A despised wife sings :
5[illegible] Rirakara ra mina ri khela hi wanuna,
578 Wanuna a nyika dokori ya kwe !
My nice little pumpkin has been plucked by my husband !
My husband has given it to his favourite !

She sings this song to excite a quarrel... after which she hopes that she will obtain her rights.

595 Appendix X.) He used to lobola the younger sisters of his wives (tinhlampsa) when they were still little girls, and had between thirty and fifty spouses. But he was terribly jealous, keeping them in their villages, away from all the world, under the supervision of a trustworthy induna. All the men were forbidden to cross the large road which separated this

Phot. A. Burel.

Chief Mabvuka with some of his wives (Nondwane 1908).

district from the rest of the country. The result is to be seen in the photograph taken in 1908, when I paid him a visit in his kraal. He was a man of sixty-five or seventy. His younger wives were over thirty; I saw one child only, called Ñwadambu, after the surname of the Nondwane Portuguese Administrator. One child and thirty wives! This shows the result of polygamy when practised under such conditions. It ruins the family.

What is the opinion of Christianised and civilised Natives about Polygamy? I made an inquiry amongst the pupils of the Rikatla

595 Training Institution, asking them to set forth their views frankly on the subject. Most of them were full grown men, some were married, some had been polygamists themselves. I obtained about twenty written answers, and this is the summary of these little essays :

Reasons for :

595 1) A Native proverb says : Wansati muñwe a nga yaki muti, i. e.
538 One woman does not build (constitute) a village. This proverb is confirmed by two others : Litiho liñwe a li nusi hobe, i. e. One finger does not bring the cooked grains of maize to the mouth ; and : One single arrow is not able to kill a snake (Ntumbana muñwe a wu psi koti ku dlaya nyoka).

595 2) To have many wives is the glory of the headman of a village. He is honoured in proportion to the number of his wives.

3) The polygamist can thus practise a generous hospitality, each wife bringing her plate of food for the evening meal.

4) If the first wife dies, he is not left alone.

5) If she is ill, he does not want for food.

6) There are many hands to perform the village duties : his many wives help each other.

7) The polygamist has many children.

8) No woman is left unmarried, which is a good thing, because how could the unmarried ones find money to buy their clothing ?

Reasons against :

1) Tshengwe dja kajata, i. e. Polygamy is troublesome... on account of bukwele, jealousy.

What is the source of this feeling ? A husband shows his preference for one of his wives, either by giving her a more valuable present than he gives the others, by visiting her on two consecutive nights in her hut, or, when he returns from a hunting trip, by giving her a better piece of meat, the leg, for instance. This arouses bukwele in the heart of the others, and, when this has once been the case, a trifle will suffice to kindle the fire anew. And how does this feeling manifest itself ? By mutual insults of these women to each other, going as far as accusations of witchcraft. (One of them will exclaim : "O! May my rival die and I remain alone in possession of everything!" This is almost equivalent to an act of witchcraft) ; by insults and menaces to the husband ; by the refusal on the part of the despised one to cook his food and to get in his harvest ; by deeds of violence against his person : (One of the wives of one of the witnesses went so far as to drag him out of the hut of her rival, and they made life so intolerable to him that he

595 fled from his village and went to Johannesburg to find rest) ; by criminal attempts on his life ; by hatred manifested to the children of the co-wives. (These children are called *mabokonyo*, which is a term of contempt. They are taught to hate each other and to hate their father, as the angry mothers give vent to their grievances before them without 762 shame.) Finally bukwele sometimes ends in the suicide of the despised wife.

595 2) Polygamy encourages drunkenness on account of the great abundance of corn harvested and of beer brewed by so many hands.

3) It develops pride in the heart of the polygamist.

4) It is expensive, as the husband must pay £ 1, the hut tax, for each wife.

5) It destroys the man's strength owing to sexual excesses. (However this reason put forward by one of the witnesses seemed to have little weight in the eyes of the others. It rather made them laugh.)

On the attitude to be adopted towards Polygamy see Practical Conclusions IV. I shall there add some remarks about this interesting inquiry.

G. SOME FEATURES OF THE RELATIONSHIP SYSTEM AMONGST OTHER SOUTH AFRICAN TRIBES.

000 The tribes that I have studied can be classified into two categories as regards their relationship system : those in which a man has the right of marrying the daughter of his wife's brother, and those in which it is his son who marries the girl, who is his cross-cousin, the daughter of his maternal uncle. This difference is absolute as regards marriage between cross-cousins. In the first category such a marriage is taboo and never happens unless the rite of *dlaya shilongo* is performed, an exception which confirms the rule. As regards marriage of the uncle with his wife's niece, it is prohibited in the second category, but may eventually take place, at least amongst the Pedis and Vendas, if the man has no son to marry the girl. This difference is deep enough to provide a principle of classification, as it has important consequences in the respective life of the two allied groups. However both customs are manifestations of the same general law existing in all the South African tribes, i. e. the right of a family which has taken a wife in another family to marry more wives belonging to the allied family.

[p. 290- 309 omitted]

CHAPTER II

THE LIFE OF THE VILLAGE.

621 596 The Thonga village (muti) is not a hap-hazard agglomeration of people. It is a social organism with a well-defined construction and is regulated by strict laws. After all, it is merely an enlarged family: the headman and the old people who have fallen to his charge, his wives, his younger brothers and their wives, his married sons, his unmarried sons and daughters. All these people form a community whose life it is most interesting to study.

Let us describe its outward appearance, the laws of its "foundation" and "moving", its organisation under the headman, the doings of its different members and the rules of etiquette which are observed. While our first chapter gave us an insight into the internal constitution of the Thonga family, this will show us how the social organism, which is at the base of all the tribal life, manifests itself outwardly in the village.

A. THE THONGA VILLAGE.

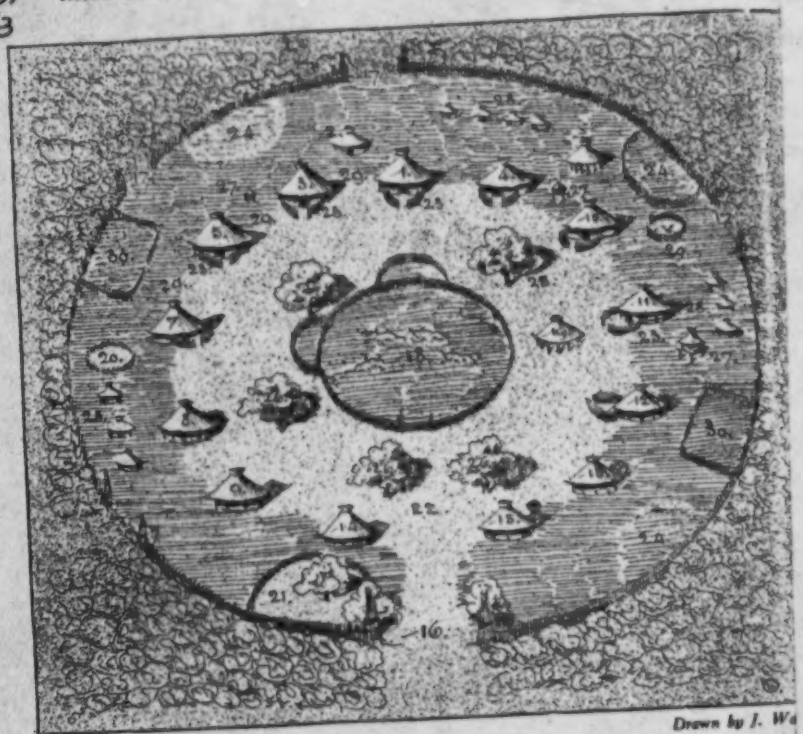
361 We have already caught a glimpse of it, from the inside, through the eyes of the headman Gidja (p. 128). Now we enter it from outside, as foreigners, with the curiosity of the ethnographer and the philosophical interests of the sociologist.

The Thonga villages present a remarquable uniformity all through the tribe. The same laws regulate their construction in the Ronga as in the Northern clans. Let us suppose that we have left Lourenço Marques and reached the Mabota and Nondwane

361 district, fifteen miles to the north, far enough from the town, where the ugly galvanised iron sheds have not yet supplanted the old typical hut. We see, in the bush, on the slope of the sandy dune, a little forest of mimosa, *minkanye*, *mikawakwa* (Strychnos). In its midst nestles a village. Thongas like to build amongst trees, to protect themselves against the terrible south winds which frequently blow across the plain, and perhaps also to shield themselves from the inquisitive eyes of people passing along the road. The little community prefers to live by
361 itself, as it is entirely self-sufficing. This small wood is also used
514 for other purposes. Thongas have not yet learned to build the kind of outhouse which is described in English by two letters (W. C.), and they "go outside" (humela handle) into the little copse. The air is not very pure when we cross it, so we hasten to reach the village. The accompanying plan (p. 312) represents a combination of features observed in many Thonga kraals; it is rare to find a "muti" as complete as this.

361 We first note the external circular fence *(lihlampfu)*. It is
712 made of branches, thorny or otherwise, one and a half to two feet
417 high, more or less rotten. It is not built as a protection against
351 enemies. In this tribe, villages are not fortified, and, in case of war, the only resource is flight. The fence protects against
361 spiritual enemies, witches, as we shall see later on. The path
351 leads us straight to the main entrance (16) the *mharana*, which is three or four feet wide. But the fence is open in some other places for narrower passages called *psiruba* (17), one for about every three huts; these smaller openings lead to the wood and are used only by the inhabitants to "humela handle." Passers by, as a rule, do not enter by such back gates. They are private. On either side of the large gate is often seen a growing tree and some poles, which clearly show the entrance. This is never closed during the day. On our right, a little court with some broken pots which denote a fire-place, is the *bandla* (21), the place where the men congregate. In front of us, at the other extremity of the circle, is the headman's hut (1) or rather the hut of his principal wife. On the way to it, we cross the *hubo* (22) the central square and pass round the *ranga*, (Ro.), *shibaya*.

361 or *shibala* (Dj.) (18), the oxen kraal, when the village possesses
231 oxen. They are rare now, plague and Texas-fever having
351 more than decimated the herds. Small enclosures at the sides
343



Drawn by J. Wa

Plan of the Thonga village.

1. Hut of the headman's first wife. 2. Headman's private hut. 3. Hut of the headman's second wife. 4. Of the third; 5. Of the fourth. 7 and 8. Huts of the two wives of the headman's younger brother. 9. Wife of third brother. 10. Wife of fourth brother. 11. Headman's son. 12. Headman's nephew. 13. Hut of a stranger. 14. Lao of the boys. 15. Nhanga of the girls. 16. Main entrance. 17. Back gates. 18. Oxen kraal. 19. Goats' kraal. 20. Pigs' kraal. 21. Square of the men (bandla). 22. Square of the village (hebel). 23. Fire-places. 24. Ash-heaps. 25. Tree of the village. 26. Shade-trees of the hebe. 27. Henhouse. 28. Storehouse. 29. Place of jealousy. 30. Tobacco-gardens.

are reserved for the calves, which are kept there when the cows go to feed during the afternoon. On the right a small hut, a conical roof supported by poles without a wall so as to let the

361 air circulate, is the goats' kraal (19). It may be placed somewhere
231 else, behind the huts, for instance ; or sometimes goats are tethered
351 every night by the leg to sticks round the hubo. The pigs are
343 never kept on the hubo, but always behind the hut : they are newcomers in the Thonga village and have hardly yet won their "droit de cité." Let us salute, as we pass by, the tree (25) which
361 is, as we shall see, the mystical stem of the village. We may perhaps
824 see, hanging upon it, a piece of clothing offered to the gods, or at its
782 base a broken pot which is the *gandjelo*, the altar of the village.
351 The gandjelo is often placed, by preference, among the poles of the main entrance on the right. The village tree, which has a ritual significance, is not to be confounded with the trees of the hubo (26), which are but *mindjuti*, shade-trees, under which the inhabitants are fond of sitting.

361 So we reach the main hut which faces the gate. This is the
595 dwelling of the headman. In hut 3 lives his second wife, in 4, his third and in 5 his fourth. 2 is called *shilubelo*. Great personages, men owning a large kraal, like to build such a hut, which is smaller than the ordinary ones and where no woman sleeps. It is the headman's own hut, where people *luba*, viz., pay their homage to him; a kind of office of the master of the village! He may sleep in it and summon his wives to come to him there. But he generally prefers to sleep in his wives' huts, one month in each, according to the polygamic custom.

361 Behind 4 and 10 is a *mhala*, a shed for the implements. It is
343 built, like the goats' kraal, without plaster walls, and is smaller
351 than a hut. There may be three or four of these in the village.
596 The headman and his wives occupy the back of the village. At the sides live his younger brothers, one, who has two wives, in 7 and 8, two others, those who have but one wife each, in 9 and in 10 respectively. In 11 lives a married son; in 12 it may be a nephew, son of the headman's sister, or a son-in-law; (see page 252). 13 might be the hut of a stranger (mulubeti), who has
361 asked permission to stay with the headman of the village, as he
574 wished to be under his protection. The case is not frequent, but
783 may occur, and in order to be received into the mystic unity of the community, this man will have to "hlamba ndjaka" (See page 153), together with all the inhabitants of the kraal.

361 together with all the inhabitants of the kraal. The two huts near
513 the entrance are, on the left, the *lao*, where unmarried boys sleep
596 (14) and on the right (15) the *nhangu* where the girls live. Often
356 the nhangu is built behind the huts of the mothers, near the mhala ; in this way the girls are kept under more effective watch. The boys of the *lao* have to guard the door, which they close at night where it is the custom to do so. The *hubo* and the *bandla*, the squares, are generally kept quite clean.

361 In front of each hut is a *yard* (*ndangu* pl. *mindangu*, 23) which
372 is also generally well swept. In the centre of each of these are
417 some broken pots (mapseko), or pieces of hard clay taken from
351 ant-hills (psirubu) ; this is the *fireplace (shitiko)*, where the mistress of the hut cooks her food. The fence round the yard used, as a rule, to be made of poles or even trunks of trees planted near each other and forming a circular wall. Nowadays, especially amongst the Rongas, these yards are enclosed with reeds and may be built square, a single wall fencing off as many as three or four huts. The top of this wall is sometimes crenelated. I rather think this arrangement is modern ; the circular wall of the ndangu
585 is an old custom, as is proved by the following fact. On the day of
538 *hloma*, when the bride's-maids and female relatives bring the bride to her husband, they not only build up the woodpile (shigiyane, see page 112), but, in the northern clans, they must also erect a new ndangu which will be called *tsandana*, and so people will know that in the yard there is a *nhlomi*, a bride, working for her mother-in-law! The ndangu is the place where women tell folk-tales of the tribe to the children and to each other, whilst they attend to their cooking, or after the evening meal.

361 If cleanliness prevails on the square and in the yards, the
356 same cannot be said of the region between the huts and the
235 fence. This is called *mahosi* or *makotini*. It is the place where
351 old baskets and broken pots are kept. The chicken houses
343 (*shihahlu*, 27) are built there ; these are generally little huts, with reed walls, placed on a floor of palmtree boards, supported by four poles forked at their upper extremities. The *ash-heaps* are somewhat further on (24). They are called *tala*, and play a part in certain rites, representing, as it would seem, the place of desolation and of sorrow.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

of desolation and of sorrow. (Remember Job and compare the rite of rangela bowumba, page 194.) The *store houses*, *paitlanta* (Ro.), *paitlati* (Dj.), 28) are close by and are built in various forms; little huts with reed walls, when intended for the mealies, with plastered walls, when built to contain ground nuts or sorgho (*maduhu* (Dj.). They are sometimes placed on a palm-tree floor resting on short poles, or they are suspended to the boughs of a 343 351 361

Phot. A. Bond.

The interior of a Ronga village. (Nondwane).

tree. *Pigs' kraals* (*hoko* 20) are to be found in the same region: sometimes they are placed even further in the forest on account of their offensive smell. 231 351

Mealie leaves, heaps of makanye stones, broken mortars and discarded pestles lie about behind the huts. If anyone wants to keep the place tidy, he can plant pine apples there (30), or tobacco, or Chili-pepper (biribiri). Pumpkin plants often creep over all this disorder. Flowers of European origin are sometimes seen on the hubo in the neighbourhood of Lourenco Marques, especially "everlastings", or the tropical periwinkle, Vinca rosea 356 247 351

247 (L.), with its white or pink blossoms, which have spread all over
351 the coast.

Having now finished our first general inspection, let us add some details about the huts and the open places in the village.

342 The hut, the construction of which we shall describe later on,
784 (Part IV) has an opening (nyangwa) of variable dimensions closed by a door. In some parts of the Gaza country it is so small that one must positively crawl to enter it. Everywhere one must at any rate stoop low (korama). As regards the *threshhold* (ntjandja wa shipfalo), it is not taboo to step over it. The headman's threshhold however is dreaded because it was treated with medicines when the hut was built, so it is taboo to sit on it ; these powerful medicines might do harm and
342 even cause death. In the middle of the black clay floor is a
354 kind of raised circle, in the centre of which fire is occasionally lighted in winter on account of the cold. It is the interior *shitiko*. Cooking may be done here if it rains ; glowing embers sometimes remain on it during the night and numberless babies have been burnt to death by falling into the fire while their mothers were
513 sleeping. On the left, on entering, is the sleeping place (shilawo)
853 of the wife, on the right that of the husband. They both however
841 generally spread their mats on the right and sleep beside each other. It is only during the tabooed periods (menses, nursing), that the husband must keep to his own particular side (p. 188).

353 The back of the hut is generally occupied by the big basket (ngula) in which clothing and seeds are kept. This spot is called *mfungwe*. In the roof *(lwangu)* are fixed or suspended various articles : ears of sorghum or millet, cobs to be used as seed at the next sowing, assagais, sticks and knobkerries etc., and against the walls one frequently observes rough drawings made with white clay, or, in the vicinity of towns, chromos of Queen Victoria, Edward VII, or Don Carlos, as the case may be!

361 The hubo and the bandla differ from each other. *Bandla* is
351 a Zulu word which has supplanted the Ronga term *shisiso*, viz.,
562 "the place where one finds shelter from the wind." Men light a small fire there to warm themselves. They also eat together

361 in the bandla, and it is strictly reserved for them. Women are
351 allowed to penetrate into it only when they bring food. Boys
562 must remove the ashes from the fireplace, not women. The *hubo*, on the contrary, is open to all. A shed is sometimes built on it to afford shelter during the rainy days. There are special acts always performed on the hubo : the cutting up (shindla), the slaughtering and butchery of animals and the feast of "eating the head." The head of any slaughtered ox belongs to the men, and they eat it together on the hubo (See letter C.). It is the business of the young men to keep the hubo clean, and they sometimes assemble to pull up the grass which may have grown on it. In former times it was taboo to come to the hubo with
292 sandals. Sandals are used for hunting and must be taken off before entering the village.

Another place to which I have already alluded is the *bukwele*,
361 the "place of jealousy," where angry co-wives insult each other!
351 On our diagram it would be located between 5 and 4, for the
595 wives of the headman.

The Thonga village, this closed circle of huts, is a living
361 organism. All its members form a whole whose unity is remark-
596 able. This common life never appears in a more striking form
264 than at the evening meal. Let us look at our diagram. In every
476 yard the mistress of the hut has cooked her mealies and her sauce in different pots, and, when the sun sets, she distributes the contents (phamela) in wooden or earthen plates. The largest is for the husband. He sits on the bandla with his companions, the other men of the village, and the youths waiting for the meal. All these plates, generally carried by small girls or boys, are brought from all sides to the men's gathering. All do not necessarily contain the ordinary mealies pap ; some are filled with manioc, some with sweet potatoes, etc. The men attack the first plate, all of them taking the food with their fingers. They pass on to the second and so on to the last. Meanwhile each mother has filled other smaller plates, one for the girls, one for the boys, one for herself. She has even sent to each of the other women of the village a little of her cooking, and the others have done the same to her ; so each member of the community, when

361 he or she has finished the meal, will have eaten a little of all
596 that has been cooked on all the fires. It is impossible to
264 imagine a more perfect communism than this as regards food!
476 I myself witnessed this custom of the evening meal in Spoon Libombo's village in Rikatla. Amongst the inhabitants of the kraal there were two blind male adults, the wife of one of them being half blind herself ; the wife of the other was an old woman who could hardly till a few square yards of mealies and groundnuts, and keep the birds and the hens away from them. Spoon's wife and the wife of another man of the village alone were healthy and able to work normally. So the whole burden rested on their shoulders, as the share the other women could take in the feeding of the men was necessarily small. However I never heard Spoon grumble ; being the headman, he made it a point of honour that all the people dwelling with him should have enough to eat. Everybody who has lived with South African Natives has admired their wonderful readiness to share any food they may have with those present. Even children are much superior in this respect to White children. I attribute this virtue to the community of food which reigns in the Bantu village, and which is certainly one of the most attractive features of Kafir socialism. Village life has not taught the Thongas merely bad habits.

B. MOVING A VILLAGE AND FOUNDING A NEW ONE.

621 Large kraals similar to the one shown in our illustration
754 were more numerous in former times than now. It is rare to
596 meet with such a number of huts and so many people under one headman. Why ? Because, say my informants, the superstition of witchcraft has considerably increased in later times. Suppose the wife of one of the younger brothers should
[787] die ; the divinatory bones reveal that this death is due to a witch ; they go so far as to designate one of the wives of the headman as guilty. No common life is any longer possible. The widower will move elsewhere and build a fence around his

621 754 596 own huts to protect them against would-be-witches. In this way many villages are broken up by fear of witchcraft. Generally speaking the Thonga village cannot long remain of any considerable size ; it tends to fall to pieces.

But there are other causes which may destroy the village and the idyllic life of the small community. The death of the headman, and lightning striking the village, are the two main causes which may bring about this event.

765 596 621 787 *Death of the headman.* There is a mystic tie between this man and the social organism which is under him. Should he die, the village dies also... It is not abandoned at once. The whole year of mourning will elapse before the moving. But as soon as the widows and property have been distributed, the successor of the deceased will go and found his own village and the old one will remain a ruin (rumbi). Should any one else die, his hut will merely be thrown into the bush and the village will not be abandoned. But should these deaths increase, then the divinatory bones may order the place to be deserted, as it is defiled and dangerous.

821 756 787 621 If *lightning* strikes the hubo, it is a very bad omen. The medicine man who has the power to "treat the place struck by lightning" is called in. Should he be able to exhume from the ground the mysterious bird which causes lightning, or at least the coagulated urine which it has deposited, and which is called Heaven (See Part VI), the people are allowed to stay. But if he does not discover it deep down in the soil, the village must move, as the presence of the mysterious power of Heaven inside the circle of huts would bring disaster. This is a taboo.

621 787 596 Another cause of moving is the *exhaustion of the gardens.* When the fields are "tired" (karala) and do not produce sufficient food for the inhabitants, they leave the place and look for pastures new. In that case the bones will be consulted. Sometimes, even, the village may be transported elsewhere for the sole reason that the people are tired of the place and want to change. If the bones confirm their wishes, they will move.

621 596 *The founding of a new village* is the occasion of most interesting and characteristic rites, which afford us a new [illegible]

621 596 nature of that social unit, the Thonga *muti*. I shall give the sequence of these rites first in the Northern clans, according to the description of Viguet, and secondly amongst the Ba-Ronga, according to Mboza.

I. *In the Northern clans.*

621 787 784 1) The headman goes first to examine some spots where he would like to build. He *breaks small twigs* from various trees and brings them home.

833 2) The bones are consulted and help in *making a choice*. The twigs are placed on a mat one after the other. When the stone of the *kanye* (see Part VI) falls in a certain way in front of one of the twigs, this shows that the tree from which it has been broken is the one near which the hut of the headman must be built.

3) Building material is collected. When everything is ready to proceed to the construction of the huts, the headman goes with his principal wife to the spot chosen. They leave the old village for ever ; they must not return to it any more. In the evening they have *sexual relations* in the new place and in the morning they tie together some tufts of living grass. Next day all the people of the old village must come and step upon this grass. This rite is called to *tie the village* (boha muti).

621 595 784 834 4) Then begins the period, of about one month, called *buhlapfa*, time of moving, which has its laws. Two great taboos dominate it : 1) Sexual relations are absolutely prohibited. Should any one transgress this law, he has sinned gravely against the headman ; he has stolen the village (yiba muti). The headman will be ill, perhaps paralysed. The guilty woman will also be punished : she will not be able to bear children again ; she will be "tied by the village" (Bohiwa hi muti). The culprits have "crossed the way of the master of the village" (tjemakanya). Strange to say, the headman himself is bound by this law. He must have no relations *with his younger wives*, because the village belongs to the principal spouse. Should such a transgression be discovered, the work

595 515 784 821 621 342 482 831 462

of building will be stopped at once and the little community will find another place to which to move! Moreover the guilty woman will have to ask the principal wife for forgiveness. 2) A second great taboo is this : — No one must wash his body during the whole "buhlapfa", as this might cause the rain to fall and it would interfere with the building operations.

5. The building of the huts begins immediately, each man making the circular wall first. When all the walls are ready,

Carrying a roof.

the *roofs are carried* from the old village to the new by all the men together. They lift each roof on to their shoulders, after having removed the old grass, and go out of the village, not by the main entrance, but by one of the back gates which has been widened for the purpose. A broad road has been prepared through the bush. They follow it, marching as fast as they can, and singing the obscene songs which are reserved for special occasions (see Part VI). In these they insult the women who accompany them, carrying the baskets, the mortars, the pestles. "The village is broken in pieces, so are the ordinary laws. The insults which are taboo are now allowed" (Mboza). This suspension of morality in speech is only allowed on the day when roofs are carried to the new village. Some days later, again, the women will take their revenge when they smear the floor of the huts ; then they too will sing their songs, insulting the men. But

621 all this is done in fun. It is a great day of rejoicing for the
831 "tinamu", who tease each other as much as they like. A man may be wanting in respect even to his great mukoñwana on these days!

621 6) When the huts are ready, the *fence* is built. The family
756 doctor is summoned. The medicine man throws leaves or
351 stones treated with his drugs along the circular line, where the headman intends to place the branches which will form the future
789 fence of the village. This being done, the men erect the fence.

7) Special precautions are taken for *the main entrance*. Poles are erected on both sides, but before they are put in place, the doctor pours medicine into the holes in the ground and also smears the poles with it at the bottom and at the top. Mankhelu used to bury a black stone, taken out of the river, at the gate. This stone had also been smeared with drugs. "In this way, I prevent enemies from entering. Those who come to try their charms against us (ku hi ringa hi maringo) will be attacked by disease and go and die in their houses."

783 8) The building is finished. Nothing remains to be done
834 but to *ripen the village* (wupfisa muti). Men and women assemble
621 in two separate groups and ask each other if they have been continent during the whole "buhlapfa". If one of them confesses to having sinned, he has stolen the village from the headman; the whole work is spoiled and must be recommenced elsewhere. If all the members of the community have behaved well, they proceed to a purifying ceremony exactly similar to the *hlamba ndjaka* which takes place during the mourning ceremonies. Each couple has sexual relations according to a fixed order of precedence, one every night, and they all go to trample on the spot where the women wash their hands. The principal wife is the last to perform these rites.

621 9) Then comes the *drawing to himself of the village by the headman*
595 (kokotela muti). At dawn, after the night when she has had her ritual sexual relations with the headman, his principal wife takes his shield and his assagais and stands at the main entrance, everyone being present. Outside is a thorny branch prepared for the occasion. In her martial attire, she drags this branch to the entrance and closes it.

621 10) Having closed the village in this way, she *performs a sacrifice.*
595 She sips a mouthful of water from a tumbler, spitting out a
782 portion of it (phahla) towards the people ; then she washes her hands, and throws a little of the water towards them in order *to give them* the village. This act is accompanied by the following words : "Be not tied by the village! Bring forth children ; live and be happy and get everything. You gods, see! I have no bitterness in my heart. It is pure. I was angry because my husband abandoned me, he said I was not his wife ; he loved his younger wives. Now, this is finished in my heart. We shall have friendly relations together..." The prayer being concluded, the headman goes to the main entrance, pushes the thorny branch aside, and opens the village.

621 11) The last act is the *khangula*, the *inauguration ceremony.*
574 Beer is prepared, neighbours are invited and they all drink together, the neighbours coming *to see the new village* (ku bona muti).

As regards the old one, when the moving has been accomplished through the back door widened for the purpose, one of the inhabitants closes the main entrance with a branch. Hence comes the expression which is applied to a village all of whose inmates have died, and which has, on that account, disappeared : "Those people have all died and there was not even one left to close the gate."

II. *In the Ba-Ronga Clans.*

621 The sequence of rites for the removal of a village is very
787 much the same as in the Northern clans.

824 1) The headman examines some spots and consults the bones :
765 "Must I built at such and such a tree ?"

2) When the tree has been designated, he goes to it and places at its foot his furniture (nyundju) and his instrument of worship, his altar, (a pot, a jar, see Part VI). The altar may be placed at the main entrance later on, if the bones so order it. As already mentioned, there will be a mystic relation between him and that tree. He must never cut it down. If any of the branches should be

621 824 765 troublesome and he should wish to remove them, he must ask some one else to do it. On the day of his death, or rather when his hut is crushed down, a branch of that tree will be put on the place where the threshhold was, and another used to close the main entrance of the village, a new entrance being then made through the fence and used as the gate during the rest of the mourning period.

621 833 3) He has sexual relations on the new spot on the first night with his principal wife ; in this way he will *fuya muri*, viz. "possess this tree," and also *fuya muti*, "possess the village." The Ronga *fuya* corresponds here also to the *boha* of the Northern clans (Compare boha puri and fuya ñwana, page 57). If someone precedes him in sexual intercourse, he is guilty ; he has "preceded the village" (rangela muti). By this act the headman has definitely left the old village. The others can go back to it to fetch what remains ; for him it is taboo.

621 831 834 342 4) The same day, all the inhabitants come and move all the roofs, if it is possible to do this in one day. One hut is rapidly built to afford shelter to the inhabitants, in case of rain. The first roof to be transported is that of the hut of the principal wife. This is also done to the accompaniment of obscene songs. These songs are not allowed when only one hut is transported, which may happen when some one goes to live in another village.

It is definitely a custom which goes with the moving of a whole village.

5) The following day two huts are erected, one for the men, the other for the women, because they must not sleep together. "They are still in the bush ; it is buhlapfa ; the village is not yet firm." Those who break this law cause injury to the headman. The bones will soon reveal that "he has been preceded as regards the village ; (a rangeliwile muti)." All the huts are smeared twice ; the women begin to sleep in them, but not the men. The fence and the main entrance must first be prepared.

621 789 6) The *main entrance* (mharana). The men pull up the grass all the way from the back hut to the place where the main entrance must be, so as to make a road all through the village. All the dried plants weeded out during this operation are carefully

621 gathered in a heap. The headman, on the advice of the medicine
789 man, cuts from certain very vigorous trees such as the nkanya
824 and the ntjondjo, two branches which can live when transplanted. He digs holes on both sides of the entrance and puts the branches into them. Across the gateway, he buries a third branch of the ntjopfa tree, "which causes oblivion" (p. 58): this will be smeared with special drugs in order to increase its efficacy ; it is intended to prevent the baloyi, witches and people speaking bad words. (lit "with bad lips"), from thinking about the village and spoiling it.

621 7) On the evening of that day, the headman and his principal
833 wife have intercourse in their hut and, at dawn, while it is still
789 dark, they go and wash their hands at the main entrance. Mboza does not say that all the other couples must do the same, or trample on the spot. In Nondwane this is sufficient and the rite does not apply to the other couples. But at Manyisa, midway between Lourenço Marques and Khosen, where the Djonga customs are sometimes met with, all the couples must have relations, one after the other, according to order of precedence. It is deemed so important to keep the due order in this "giving to each other the right of resuming sexual life" that, should an elder brother have been absent when the village moved, on his return he must undergo a special treatment in a neighbouring village, during a few days, to avoid any bad consequences resulting from having been unlawfully "preceded" (rangeliwa).

621 8) After the night during which this sexual rite has taken
789 place, at daybreak, all the dried grass is piled in front of the main hut and burnt ritually. The headman throws into the
782 fire a special medicinal pill in order to *give the village over* to his
756 people (nyiketa muti). They all warm their bodies at the blaze, and go and set fire to all the other heaps of dried grass which they made when clearing the soil.

9) The medicine man comes on that same day, and sprinkles the fence with his drugs, in order to protect the village against bush fires, wizards and disease. He walks all round the fence saying : "Happy village! May misfortune not enter here! These are my drugs!" — He starts from one of the poles of the main

621 entrance and finishes his walk at the other, hanging upon it the
789 branch with which he has been sprinkling.

782 10) Then he sacrifices a hen. A young man accompanying
him cuts its throat ; the doctor plucks some feathers from the
756 neck, sacrifices in the ordinary way and invokes his gods : "You
used to treat villages (daha miti) with these drugs and I do the
same. I do not act of my own wisdom ; you have given it to me.
Bless this place, etc." Then he plucks a feather from the hen's
right wing, and suspends it at the main entrance or in the main hut,
inside, over the door, according to the directions given by the
bones. This is the *shirungulo* (see Part VI) and the act is called :
"to tie the village" (tjimba muti).

621 Amongst the Rongas, there are some other *buhlapfa taboos*. It
372 is not allowable to light any fire in a village until it is completely
784 built. During the whole building period, cooking is done outside
the fence ; crushing mealies in the mortars and dancing are also
789 prohibited. Whistling (ku ba noti) is forbidden, as it might call
198 the wizards inside the village before it has been protected by the
charms.

621 If a man has many wives, he may build a second village for
595 himself and establish one of them there. A grown-up son,
the son of the woman, will represent the headman in that village,
but the law of "tying the village" will also be observed in this
case. The headman will perform the act with this woman, and
preside at the burning of the dried grass and of the medicinal
pill, by which he *gives* the village to the inhabitants.

When a younger brother, or a son, leaves the headman and
founds a village for himself (tiham[illegible] muti), he does it according
to the same laws as those observed at the regular moving of a
village.

III. *Some remarks on the rules of moving.*

621 Let us now analyse the two parallel sequences of rites which we
have just described, and which complete each other. It is easy to
discover amongst them three series of rites, social, protective and
passage rites.

621 1) *Social rites.* The muti, as we have seen, is a little organised
596 community having its own laws, amongst which the most important
833 seems to be the law of hierarchy. The elder brother is the undisputed
768 master and no one can supersede him. He is the owner of the village. No one must "steal it" from him. Should any one do so, the whole community would suffer and no children would be born ; the life of the organism would be deeply affected. That is the reason why the headman must go first with his principal wife to have relations with her in the new village, and thus *take possession* of it or *tie* it. For this same reason, when the headman dies, the village *must* move. It is taboo to remain in it. Until the inheritance has been distributed, it is still *his home* (kwa kwe) ; but as soon as this ceremony has taken place, the villagers must go away, and close the door with a thorny branch. The part played by the
621 principal wife in all these ceremonies is most remarkable. It is
595 absolutely imperative that the headman should "tie the village" with her,
562 and not with another of his spouses. Should she be very old, the law
768 must be observed all the same ; should she be ill, and unable to have sexual
764 relations, the village simply cannot be moved. In the Northern clans we see her taking the shield and the assagai, closing the village and "giving it" to the inmates, even performing a sacrifice and praying to the gods. It is very rare to see a woman presiding at a public religious ceremony ; but she is the owner of the village as well as the headman. Moving is imperative when she dies as well as after the death of the headman. The main gate must also be closed and a new entrance made in the fence to be used during the year of mourning ; in the case of her death, this opening must be made on the left of the regular *mharana*, whilst, when the husband dies, it is made on the right side ; just as in the hut, when the corpse is removed for burial. (See page 138.)

351 2) *Protective rites.* These are those which concern the fence. This
789 fence does not afford material protection. The branches dry up very
621 soon and, in the case of a bush-fire, for instance, they would do more harm than good. It is a spiritual protection, a barrier of charms, of magic influences, to prevent the entrance of wizards and of all the hostile powers of the bush. We shall understand this better when treating of witchcraft superstitions. (Part VI.)

182 3) *Passage rites.* The reader will have been surprised to observe
621 amongst the ceremonies of the moving of villages, many features
829 which we have already met with in the circumcision school, or in the mourning customs. At first sight there seems to be no relation whatever between the moving of a village, the initiation of boys and the

182 mourning over the dead. The inner connexion existing between these
621 three events is that, in all of them, there is a passage. Hence the
783 resemblance of the rites. This striking similarity is, to my mind, the
829 best proof that the passage rites constitute a peculiar category. When a headman has decided to move, he leaves his old kraal, he *separates* from it, not by the ordinary gate, but by a special opening made at the back of the village. He is not allowed to return to it again. Then, for him and for all his people, begins a *marginal period* of one month or more, the buhlapfa (notice the prefix *bu* which indicates a period here, as in busahana [page 42]). We see the village, during these few weeks, put beyond the pale of society. The ordinary laws are suspended, (licencious songs), and many special taboos are enforced (prohibition of sexual relations, fire taboo, water taboo, etc.), just as in the period of mourning; at last the village returns to the ordinary course of life by a final act of purification, the mysterious *hlamba ndjaka*, which seems to be the most powerful means of cleansing the collective life. This last ceremony shows that, here, the marginal period has been instituted on account of the uncleaness, the impurity of the old village. Let us remember that in most cases the village has been moved on account of death! All the adult members of the social organism take part in the cleansing (at least in the Northern clans) and so the village begins a new and purified life. No one can deny the deep significance of all these rites and the mystic conception of the Thonga village.

C. THE HEADMAN AND THE ORGANISATION OF THE VILLAGE.

596 Each village thus possesses its superior (hosi), its master. He
576 is called *mumuntane* or *nuntane*, a curious expression which is
621 also employed in Zulu; it means owner of a kraal, gentleman,
618 and is often used in saluting grown up men. We have seen the mystic relation between the headman and his *muti*. The village, the muti, is the primitive social organism. The clan (tiko), which is the gathering of all the *miti*, reproduces all the features of the
622 village life on a large scale. So the *nuntane* corresponds to the
596 *hosi*, chief of the tribe. Both certainly possess great authority,

622 but it must not become tyrannical. They must govern for the
596 benefit of their subordinates.
264 This peculiar position of the numzane amongst his people is
554 illustrated, in a striking way, by the laws of distribution of the joints of meat on the day when the headman kills an ox to feast them. The various portions must be distributed to the relatives according to the place which they occupy in the family. The headman, nominal proprietor of the ox, will keep the breast (shifuba). This is not only the sternum and the ribs, but most of the viscera which are contained in them. The tripe, the heart, the kidneys will be put all together inside the stomach, and constitute what is called *nkopfu wa homu*. The headman will probably send the heart and the kidneys to his wives (tinkosikazi, his queens!). The brother who comes next will receive one of the hindlegs ; the third in rank one of the forelegs. The elder son will eat the second hindleg, and the younger son the second foreleg. They will eat this meat with their families, or houses (tiyindlu). This custom is very old (1).

Let us continue with the distribution. To the brothers-in-law, or to the relatives-in-law generally, the tail is sent. It is the portion of the sister. But it does not consist only of the tail properly so-called ; it comprises all the hind parts of the animal, especially the rump (kondjo). The malume (maternal uncle) receives part of the loins (muhlubula). The liver is put aside for the grandfather and the old people generally, because it is soft and they have no teeth to gnaw the bones. The head belongs to all the men of the village, who must eat it on the hubo, as we have seen. They may give the tongue (ndjaka) to the old men. It

622 (1) This custom is illustrated in a very interesting manner by the relative position
596 of the three clans occupying the South of the Bay. They are all descended from
264 Tembe (See page 23). *Tembe*, the ancestor, representing the elder branch of the
554 royal family, ate the chest. He was the superior (hosi), and this rank is still held by
618 his descendants in the direct line. *Sabi* or Mpanyele, the second brother, or son of the second brother, ate the hindleg ; he was established later on in the Machutchwani district, between Tembe and Maputja. *Maputja*, the younger brother, head of the third branch, ate the foreleg. But he revolted against his elder brother and carved out for himself a kingdom which very soon became stronger than those of Tembe and Machutchwani. Machutchwani became more or less independent. But when people wish to remind the Maputja people of their inferior origin, they say to them : "Tembe ate the breast, Sabi the hindleg and Maputja the foreleg !"

622 is taboo for the women to eat it, or the under lip (See p. 184).
596 From each limb a small piece is taken (tshumbuta) and
264 placed on a skewer ; it is the portion of the shepherds and of
554 the butchers, (makotjo ya babyisi). (See the tale of Piti, *Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, page 152). Sometimes the shepherds also receive the lungs and the spleen.

This way of distributing ox meat is called "ku tlhaba homu ba hamba milao," viz., "to kill an ox according to rule." Should a younger brother or a son kill an ox, he will send the breast to the master of the village, but he keeps all the limbs and does not observe the rules because, as he says : "It is enough to pay taxes to the chief of the country." Often one of the legs is sent to the chief of the clan.

Strange to say when a goat is killed none of these prescribed rules are followed, as they only concern the oxen.

622 These customs show clearly the position of the headman ;
596 he is the master but also the father of his subordinates, and their provider.

1) He must *watch* over the village (basopa, Dutch word passop, universally adopted by the Natives). During the night, if his son is away working in Johannesburg, he takes care that no lovers come into the huts of his daughters-in-law, (a langusa bumbuye), and if he happens to catch one, he will make him pay the fine.

622 2) He is a true *justice of peace* amongst the inmates of the
692 village, doing his best to maintain good relations amongst them.
578 Suppose for instance that the pigs belonging to one of the inhab-
685 itants come out of their enclosure and over-run the gardens of another man. This man will go and say to the owner of the pigs :
643 "Such and such a thing has happened, please close the pigs' kraal more carefully." Should the same thing happen a second time, he will complain to the *numzane*. The headman will then go to the culprit and say : "You have not heeded the warning ; you must pay compensation (djiha)." If the culprit listens to the "voice of the blood" (bushaka), he will obey and the matter will end smoothly ; if not, the headman can only keep silent : he has no soldiers, no means of enforcing his judgment ; the plaintiff will then go to the chief of the tribe to complain. The case will be

judged before the Court, in the capital, because the offender has refused to follow the way of persuasion, he has "mocked the family love" (a yalile bushaka). Such misdemeanours are very frequent in the life of the village. Most of the Natives bear philosophically with these annoyances. Should some one, however, be really ill-natured, and wear out their patience (wa ku karata), he will be forced to build a hut for himself, alone, outside the village. If the damage is done by *children*, if they have stolen sweet potatoes, as we have seen, the wronged proprietor gives them a good thrashing but does not claim a fine. Occasionally the headman himself thrashes them in presence of their father, and the father will say to them: "You see the numzane will beat you if you are not good." Children who mock at cripples are also severely beaten by him, all the more so as, in this case, the offended party has the right of claiming a fine.

3) The headman also possesses *authority over his younger brothers and his children*. He can even confiscate their money if one of them is addicted to drinking and ruins his property. However his authority in this respect must not be overstepped, and the headman must take care how he exercises it, as it is based more or less on sufferance. The younger brothers, for instance, maintain the right of making contracts, especially lobola contracts. Should the numzane restrict their liberty too much, they will leave him and found their own villages. A successful headman is he who knows how to keep the whole family together to the general satisfaction.

4) The headman has also the right of imposing *statute labour*, especially when the oxen kraal must be rebuilt, or when the weeds must be removed from the hubo; he sends his young men to do the work. But he must not exact too much from his people or forget to feast them with beer or with meat when the work is finished.

5) Lastly the headman *presides over all the discussions* which take place in the village. He is the master of the hubo. The discussion can be conducted in three different places; when it deals with a secret matter, the men go *inside the hut*: they debate the matter indoors (ba bulabula ndlwen). Private questions

622 affecting the life of the village are generally settled there.
596 Questions discussed with strangers and those regarding which there is no secrecy, and in which every one can take part, are discussed *on the central square*, on the "hubo". *Hubo* means the square, and also the council of the men of the village which the headman summons there to settle matters (ku khanela timhaka). Should they be able to come to an agreement together or with their visitors who have come to bring a claim, the matter is "cut" (ba tjema mhaka), viz., "ended". In the opposite case, when they disagree altogether, the question will be carried to a third place, before the *hubo of the chief*, in the capital. (See Part III).

562 Every one is welcome to take part in the discussions except women. As a rule men speak as little as possible with women on these matters. If a husband has a sensible, discreet wife, he may ask her advice. But if he has agreed with his companions on a point and changes his mind after having spoken with his wife, he will be severely blamed and accused of "spoiling the village" (hona muti).

622 The headman is more or less *responsible for all the claims*
596 lodged against his subordinates. Should one of his younger
672 brothers be prosecuted for a debt, the creditors will go to the numzane, and he cannot say: "This matter does not concern me." He will say to his brother: "Pay your debt," and, if the brother has no funds, he will help him, if possible, but it is only a loan, and the younger brother will pay back the money. As a rule members of the same family help each other in these matters. This is so much the custom that children are expected to pay the debts of their deceased parents, even if they have not inherited anything from them. This does not however procede from a moral sense of family dignity. They do it because the native authorities hold them responsible. They might be "arrested". In the case of a father who has died still owing some lobola money, the children will try to pay, but they will do it in order to obtain possession of the woman. Should a father have committed adultery with a married woman, and die without having paid the fine, his heirs are not considered responsible. On the other hand, if the father has been condemned as a wizard

622 by the chief, and dies, his heirs must pay the compensation
596 claimed. All these rules clearly illustrate the communism of
672 family life and family property, under the supervision of the headman.

Should a numzane be absolutely unable to govern his village,
622 *the family council can depose him* and put another man in his
596 place. This council will be formed of old relatives, especially the paternal uncles to whom the younger brothers will go and complain of the misbehaviour of their headman. A younger brother will then be proclaimed and the elder will be despised. They will say : "Hi singe! A fahla muti, a hluli hi muti!" "He is a fool! He breaks the village ; he is overcome by the village," viz., not able to keep up his position.

As regards the *law of succession* to the headmanship, the second brother takes the place of the elder, and so on. The son of the elder cannot become headman until all his paternal uncles are dead. We shall find this principle also observed in the succession of the chiefs. (Part III.)

D. DAILY LIFE IN THE VILLAGE.

461 From the oxen kraal to the huts, from the square to the little wood, through the doors and in the reed yards, black forms are moving to and fro. Everybody seems busy. There is talking, laughing, playing and working. The expression "working like a nigger" is hardly applicable, for they do not kill themselves with work. It would, however, be quite as great a mistake to believe that the Natives spend all their time in loafing about. Far from it!

I. *Women's occupations.*

462 Women, especially, are very busy. When the sun rises, they
511 emerge from their huts, wash their faces, and light a little fire to warm the mealie pap which was left from the evening meal.

462 In a small pot they prepare a fresh sauce of monkey nuts to season
511 it. The family takes its *morning meal* (fihhula) ; then, if it is the
482 season of tillage, *they go to the fields*, with hoes on their shoulders, the shihundju (conic baskets) on their heads, and sometimes their babies on their backs. The whole morning they will dig up sweet potatoes, grub up their future plantation, or weed their

[E 52]

Phot. H. Gr

Spelonken women preparing the evening meal after their return from the fields.

mealies. In the heat of the day they come back in order to prepare the evening meal. Sometimes, if the gardens are far away, or when they are employed in scaring the birds from their sorghum plantation, they remain the whole day in their fields, and cook their evening food there, bringing it back to the village at sunset quite hot (1).

(1) I saw a Rikatla woman coming home under such conditions, carrying her child on her shoulders and the burning monkey-nut sauce in the shihundju on her head. Her feet caught in a root ; she tottered ; the pot fell on the baby, which was scalded to death.

462 Many other home duties may oblige the woman to leave the
511 fields at noon; her head still laden with her basket, she may
356 go to the swamps, near by, and dig out a store of black clay
317 (bompfi). She comes back, mixes the clay with the fresh dung which she has taken from the oxen kraal, and, spreading this mixture with her hands, smears the floor of the hut. This work is called *sindja* (Ro) or *kopola* (Dj.). Dust and vermin will at once disappear under this plaster of black earth, which will dry in a few hours time. Woe to the woman who has not put enough dung in this novel kind of cement! The floor will crack. The clay will shrivel and, when people walk on it, it will crumble into dust! The work will have to be done all over again two or three days later. But if the clay is of good quality, it will harden and last at least a week, the more so as neither wooden shoes nor nailed boots will spoil it.

462 Another woman will go with her primitive axe in search of
511 dead wood. She makes a bundle which she ties with grasses,
213 strengthening these grasses by entwining them with small
284 twigs (1). On returning to the village, she throws her burden on to the ground, before the door of her hut, with the exclamation: "Hu!"

462 Others go to their storehouses, the small huts on poles, where
511 mealies, monkey nuts in their husks, millet and sorghum are kept.
343 They take what they need from these stores (tshaha) by lifting up
252 the roof of the little hut, come back and empty the mealies into the
516 mortar, whilst a friend rubs off the grains from the ears of millet or shells the monkey nuts. Two or three women seize their pestles and begin to pound, in measured time, the bottom of their mortars: Gu-gu-gu-gu. Quite a long way off, on the other side of the copse, this pestle song can be heard, resembling the noise of the flails when corn is threshed in the barn. And the busy women stream with perspiration! This method of crushing the mealies in an erect position, by a vigorous up and down movement of the pestle in

284 (1) Men, when they fasten a bundle with a string, make a knot (ba fundju) whilst
313 women twist it with a little stick (sulela hi linhi); when a woman ties a knot, the two ends of the string will be at right angles to the string, whilst when a man makes it, the ends will be parallel with it. (Mbeza).

516 the mortar, is a very healthy one and gives the Thonga women a straight and slender figure. In the tribes where the millet is mostly ground between stones, the women who do this work kneeling are shorter and stouter.

462 511 312 Before putting the mealies on the fire, the women go down to the village well, their round pitchers on their heads, to fetch the water they need. In the Ronga country these wells are simple holes dug in the sand, in the centre of the hollows (1). Wells are generally surrounded by thorny branches so as to prevent the cattle from coming to drink and fouling the water. It must be observed that it is not a spring which feeds the well; it is the underground layer of water which has been reached, and which always maintains the same level except in times of drought.

[415]

Phot. A. de Mauron.

Shilovane girls returning from the well.

462 511 372 252 The sun goes down on the horizon. The long shadows of the trees round the village lengthen on the square. Through the leaves, a few rays still reach the fireplaces and traverse the smoke which rises peacefully from the various kitchens. Between broken pots, or between the pieces of termitine clay which constitute the hearth on which the pots rest, the women place some pieces of dead wood; when these burn away in the centre, they push them further under the pot where the flour is cooking (ba hlanganyeta ndjilo). Evening has come. The men have arrived. With a large spoon (nkombe) the lady of the house

(1) In the Transvaal, where there are rivers, water is taken from them, or from wells dug near the spruit into which the water leaks through the soil, being more or less filtered by this process.

462 places the food (phamela) on plates of the size of small basins or
511 dishes (mbenga). We have seen how she distributes it amongst
264 the inhabitants of the village. When all have finished eating, the women wash the plates, put aside the pots which contain the food left for the next morning, and tidy up the yards.

517 Whatever we may say, the day has been a well-filled one for the women. They are very rarely seen playing in the day time. We shall see how they recuperate themselves in the evening.

II. *Men's occupations.*

462 As for the men, their life is far from being as active as that
517 of the women. They have not, like their diligent wives, the regular continuous work of preparing the food, not to mention the care of the children. The duties which fall on them, and which they are willing to perform, only require of them isolated efforts from time to time.

462 As regards *agricultural work*, it is generally believed that
241 men leave this entirely to the women. This is exaggerated. Amongst the Rongas each man possesses his own field which he himself tills, and this is an old custom, a special term even being applied to the field thus tilled: it is called *mpashu*. He may sow seeds in it, but he does not weed it, leaving his wife to do this troublesome work for him and also to reap it. He makes only one exception in the case of the sorghum, of which he consents to go and cut the ears. But he helps his wife in other ways, for ins-
462 tance in the storing of the food; he builds the little huts used as
251 storehouses, prepares the *tjala*, viz., the mat stretched on four poles on which ground nuts are dried in the field, digs holes for the *buhiri*, the shelf at the back of the hut where the basket containing the seeds is placed. His wife does not think him a lazy fellow at
462 all. When the harvest is finished, she takes the smaller cobs of
273 mealies (makunkula), those which will not be kept, or the grains of millet and sorghum which are found on the threshing floor after the threshing, and with them she prepares a special beer to

462 thank (tlangela) her husband for his kind help! This is her
273 method of notifying him that all the grain has been harvested, as, whatever the man's share of the work may have been, the mealies belong to him.

462 The main work of the man is the *building and repairing of the*
356 *huts*. This is truly an arduous job, but it is not of yearly recur-
342 rence. Every third or fourth year they are obliged to re-thatch the roof. The huts are built and repaired during the winter, from May to September.

A second domain, which is exclusively man's, is the *care of the cattle*; the boys milk the cows, construct and repair the kraal: the little boys herd the goats, and the young men the oxen, as has already been mentioned.

462 It is also the men who *make all the utensils and tools* used in the
411 village, pots and other crockery excepted; mortars, pestles,
294 handles for axes or hoes (mimphinyi), wooden platters, carved or forged articles, all this work pertains to them. They must also make the *ntehe* for their wives, or sisters, after the birth of the babies. This is probably the explanation of the curious fact noticed amongst Native Christians, namely that they are much more clever at needlework than their wives. Big fellows are often seen forsaking the hoe to work with the needle, and there are fathers who make their own clothing as well as the dresses for their wives and children!

462 *Hunting and fishing* are, of course, also men's work... or pastime.
224 For some of them hunting is an actual trade, at least such was the case in former times, before the White Governments imposed strict regulations and levied heavy licences on that sport. We shall study, in Part IV, the curious customs relating to these two favourite occupations of the Natives.

574 A great part of their time is devoted by the men to *paying*
517 *visits*. They are very fond of calling on each other, and sometimes
484 they go great distances to see relatives or friends. They do not travel to pay visits only, but they frequently journey to claim payment of their debts (milandju). To regain the possession of a miserable head of cattle they willingly lose whole weeks! And what endless discussions in the *hubo*, when an unfortunate visitor

484 comes to ask for his property! What cunning displayed in confusing the real issue and evading payment! (1)

Travelling consequently plays a great part in the life of these tribes, and it is no wonder that it is subject to many rules and that many taboos must be observed on the road in order to succeed in these expeditions.

I may mention first the four following taboos.

484 A traveller must not *take salt* with him when he goes either to
777 pay a visit, or to hunt, or on a business trip, or else he will not succeed in his object ; he must avoid *sharpening assagais* on the
784 road ; this would rouse his enemies and "awaken thorns" on the path ; he must take care *not to pluck milala leaves*, those used for weaving baskets : it would be an insult to the people on whom he is calling. Let him cut these leaves when returning, or else he will find trouble in the village to which he goes, lamentations, shoutings, disgusting sights. When he finds on the road people occupied in *digging a grave*, he must go at once and help them for a while. If he neglects this duty, he will take upon himself the misfortune (titekela khombo). He will not succeed in his purpose. Should he be in the village when some person dies, he must take part in the purification of the inmates.

825 There are some kinds of animals which bring bad luck to the
777 traveller. In order to "keep the road clean" (basisa ndlela), he
484 must beware of the *mampfana bird*, a kind of crane called "the preventer of the journey" (sibaliyendjo (Ro) shitsinyariendjo (Dj). Should this bird fly across the road, with wide-spread wings, it would be enough to make the party return home : there is danger of death before them and the "mampfana" comes to warn them

609 (1) One day one of my neighbours, named Mandjia, was arranging to start for Bilene to "follow his goods" (landja bukosi) ; he came and requested me to give him
484 a letter. "What for? Your debtors do not know how to read and I do not know anything about your affairs." — "It does not matter," said he. "The important point is that I should have a paper in my hand. They will be afraid. They will think that I come from the White people with their authority." I did not like to refuse a small favour to a neighbour; on the other hand I was somewhat reluctant to help him in a none too moral plan, so I gave him a letter addressed to the Portuguese Intendant of those countries in which I stated that I knew him. It was a kind of pass... What use did he make of it? The fact remains that he came back with his oxen, and I believe the sight of the mysterious paper was not without influence in the transactions which ended in the recovery of his property!

825 that the road is not "clean" (Viguet). The flesh of this bird is
777 used in the preparation of the charms carried by travellers. There
484 are also two mammals which give the same warning : the duyker
782 antelope (mhunti) and the polecat (mangobo). Should a boy going to Johannesburg meet with any of these three animals, he will go to his kokwana (grandfather) and ask him for help ; the old man will then take a mouthful of beer or water and project it towards the traveller (to make "phaa") with the following prayer addressed to the ancestor-gods : "You, so and so, look to this child who wants to travel! Bless him in his journey! May the Spirit of the bush (Shikwembo sha nhoba) remain asleep."

577 The *discussion of affairs* (ku khanela timhaka) on the square of
461 the village also fills many an hour in a man's life.

On the whole, men have but little to do. We can fairly estimate at three months the time required for the work which they have to do for the village and for the community. The remaining months are devoted to pastimes and pleasure (!).

III. *Games of adults.*

000 Having already described boys' and girls' games (p. 66 and 172), I now proceed to those of the adults, as forming an important part of the Life of the Village.

462 (1) Much has been said and written about the division of village work between men and women in the Bantu kraal. I shall try to show in the Practical Conclusions, No. V that civilisation is bound to produce great changes in this region. But, as already pointed out, it is certain that to the Natives themselves their system appears perfectly natural and that the women do not at all complain of their fate. The following charming story which is told by a Moravian missionary, The Rev. Th. Bachmann, who lived for a long time amongst the Wa-Nika, between Lake Tanganyika and Nyassa gives fresh proof of this assertion :

000 One day, as the rain was pouring down, I saw Walusangano returning from his garden with his wife, Leya. The wife was walking in front with a big bundle of wood on her head. On the wood was a basket containing maize, cucumbers and beans, as well as the hoe. On her back Leya was carrying her youngest child. The other children followed and the father brought up the rear-guard, carrying only an open umbrella. We were greatly shocked at this sight, and I thought it my duty to intervene on behalf of the women. On Sunday night, at public worship, I spoke of what I had seen in the most expressive terms possible. But my speech did not make the impression I expected. The men looked very much embarrassed ; the women indignant.

The following week, at sunset, I was under my veranda, watching the lightning and

273 1) Men's favourite pastime in South Africa is *drinking beer*.
275 There are no bars on the velt... But every village is from time
574 to time a brewery and a drinking place. Beer is prepared in large
596 quantities. As we shall see, the brewing lasts about nine days. Near Lourenço Marques, Natives fill not only pots but big casks with it! One of the jugs is put aside for the headman to try it. He must pour a little of it into the *gandjelo* ; this religious act is obligatory. Next day the men of the village assemble in the morning to sample it also, and, at noon, all the friends from the
273 neighbouring villages arrive. Everybody is welcome. Even a
574 leper can take part in the beer-drinking ; but he will come with
596 his own calabash and they will fill it with a special ladle. As a rule near neighbours also bring their calabashes, but people coming from afar are not expected to do so. The beer is drunk with great haste. Before it is all finished, the headman puts aside a pot for his father-in-law, his uterine nephew, and the friend who invited him on a previous occasion... Of course after having filled their stomachs, men and women dance on the hubo in the afternoon, and especially in the evening, when the moon shines ; the shouting sometimes becomes dreadful when drunkenness has overcome all

000 the rain which was pouring down. Suddenly I noticed the Walusangano family returning from the garden in the same order as the week before : in front Leya with the bundle of wood, the basket of vegetables, the hoe and the baby on her back, followed by the children, and behind, the father with the protective umbrella. "Such are the fruits of my efforts." I thought! But I refused to consider myself beaten. I said to myself : "I will speak to them once more! The women will certainly be on my side, these poor overworked women!"

On the following Sunday Neabeye (one of the best Christian women of the congregation) came to see me after the sermon. She had something to tell me... She said : "You observe us, and you wonder at certain things. We also, on our side are observing you, and we see things which we also do not understand. When your wife does the washing, you remain standing by and do not help her. With us it is the men who do the washing. Again, we have seen your wife sewing and mending your clothes and the clothes of the children, and you beside her, not thinking of helping her. With us it is the men who mend the clothes."

Having spoken thus, Neabeye put her two hands joined together on the mat, then separated them as if she were cutting something in two, and said to me : "That is the way your forefathers distributed the work, a little heap here and another little heap there ; and they said : This is the work of men and that the work of women. Our forefathers proceeded in the same way, and said : This is men's work and that is women's work... We must leave it so. The Gospel has not to concern itself with these matters. We do not wish to have the reputation of being lazy and you do not wish it either."

(From the *Journal de l'Unité des Frères*, January 1926.)

273 musical instinct. Some days later, another headman invites his
574 neighbours to another beer-drinking, and so they eat and drink
622 together (ba delana, ba nwelana) as long as there is plenty in
595 the storehouses. When provisions become scarce, they begin to spare the mealies. But the advantage of the polygamist becomes apparent here ; his storehouses are many and he can feast his friends for many months.

These beer-drinking customs are essentially demoralising ; they

[273]

Phot. A. Bard.

Beer-drinking party in Maputju country.

are one of the curses of primitive Native life. But let me remark that, as the making of the beer takes nine days, these excesses cannot be very frequent, and the habit of drinking wine at the White man's store is ten times more harmful, as in this case alcohol is never lacking. We shall speak later on of alcoholism amongst Natives. (See Part IV.)

276 Another pastime, very much appreciated by some, but not so
248 general, is *hemp smoking* and the accompanying *saliva contest*. Hemp (mbange) has been cultivated for a considerable time amongst the Thongas, especially on the coast, not to make ropes, but for smoking.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

276 smoking. The date of its introduction and its origin are unknown. The pipe used for smoking is made of a reed (lihlanga) with a small pierced wooden or stone ball (mbiza) fixed at its upper extremity. In the ball the hemp is placed and lit. The lower

Phot. A. Bard.

Hemp-smoker.

extremity of the reed is introduced into a horn half filled with water. The reed soaks in this water. With one hand, the smoker closes the horn, leaving only a narrow opening through which he sucks vigorously so as to form a vacuum. The smoke is thus drawn through the reed and the water into the mouth of the smoker. Its passage through the water cools it. Without this precaution the smoke would be too strong, stop the saliva, and

276 524 517 make the man drunk at once. It is called *shingwandja*, when pure, and is not liked, whilst they say that when it has gone through water, it has an agreeable taste. It makes the smokers cough terribly, but they thoroughly enjoy this exercise.[1] Moreover it excites an abundant flow of saliva which is the chief requisite for their favourite game. They take a hollow grass, called *shenga*, and begin the fight by blowing their saliva through it on to the ground. The simplest form of the game consists in squirting as

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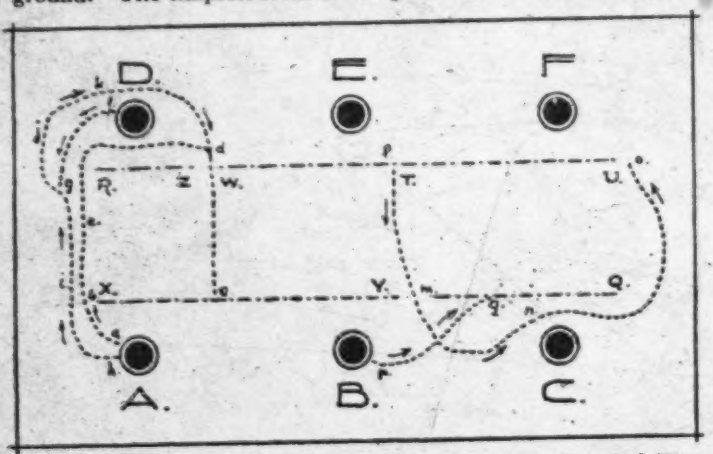


Drawn by J. Weare.

Illustration of the saliva contest of hemp-smokers.

long streams of saliva as possible. He who squirts the furthest wins. But it is sometimes much more complicated. In the accompanying diagram the reader can follow the wonderful combinations of this game, called *ku tjhuma* or *hlazelana*. There are two sides, each with its pipe. Three men, A. B. C. oppose three others, D. E. F. First of all, each side protects itself by making a saliva fence, line X. Q. for the first side, R. U. for the second. Unhappily for D. E. F. the saliva dries up on the point Z. W. and so their fence is broken. A takes his advantage. He begins to squirt out his saliva on the line *a, b, c, d...*, passes through the opening Z. W., and, having come back victoriously to [illegible] has destroyed all the fortifications R. Z. Suppose D. [illegible] to

1 [i.e., hemp smoking--Analyst]

524 protect himself. He tries to close the access to his position by drawing the line *f, g*. But, arrived at *g*, he comes to the end of his saliva (a helela), and A. who started at *h*, having arrived at *i*, turns round the point *g*, where his enemy has stopped miserably, and, going on, *j, k*, reaches the opening *d* and triumphantly ends his campaign in *e*!

But E. of the opposite camp has noticed a gate in the barrier X. Q. The saliva has dried there. He quickly carries his blow-pipe across the battle field, squirting all the time, and passes through the opening Y. He draws the line *l, m, n, o* and so destroys the part Q. Y. of the fortification X. Q. Should B. be quick enough, he might prevent him accomplishing his plan by drawing the line *p, q*... And so on! Young men, even men of ripe age, take an immense delight in these saliva battles. But the saliva must be blackish... It must be *ntjutju* saliva, viz., saliva produced by hemp, and not the ordinary white saliva, called *matjafula*. Should one of the players try to supplement the blackish by the white, he would be disqualified... His enemy would seize him by the forehead, and force him to lift his head and stop his attack. Should he go on, however, the other would say: "What? You come to me with matjafula!" This may lead to quarrels, even to blows... The hemp-pipe falls down and it all ends in cordial laughter.

276 This hemp-smoking custom becomes a passion with many
861 young men. To cure them their parents break the pipe, take
789 a little of the soot which is found inside, and mix it with their food without their being aware of it. When this has been done three times, it is said to fill them with disgust for hemp... Similia similibus curantur... We shall often meet with this medical principle in the Thonga superstitions.

524 The most interesting game played by men, a game which
171 fascinates them and which is certainly more refined than hemp-smoking, is the *tshuba*. It is at the same time one of the most widespread games of mankind. Mr. Stewart Culin says, in the Report of the Smithsonian Institute for 1893 and 1894, that it is played under the same name by the American Negroes, and that it is but a variety of the *mancala*, the national game of Africa.

524 which is found in many other countries, Ceylon, Indo-China,
171 Bombay, Java, Jerusalem, Liberia, Abyssinia, Cairo, Gabon, Angola and amongst the Central African tribes. From the ethnographic point of view and for purposes of comparison it is, therefore, very interesting to note its rules all over the world.
524 I tried (and I think successfully), to discover those of the Thongas, which at first seemed to me incomprehensible. The accompany-

Phot. A. Boc

Men playing tshuba naer Rikatla.

ing illustration will help to explain them. The apparatus required is most simple. Let us imagine it played in its most elementary form, when two men only are engaged in it. Each of them digs two rows of four little holes, behind which he squats. They face each other. So there will be sixteen holes, eight belonging to *A* and eight to *B*. In each hole they put two stones, either real stones or fruit stones. Those of the kanye fruit are mostly used, but, by preference, Natives play with the pretty shining grey seeds of a shrub found near the sea, which resemble the marbles used by European boys.

No. I shows two players ready to commence, with the sixteen

524 holes filled. *A* must always follow the course 4, 3, 2, 1, 5, 6, 7, 8 and *B* 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 7, 6, 5.

II. *B* starts. He takes the two stones out of hole 6 and puts one in 5, one in 1.

III. He goes on taking the stones out of one hole and putting them, always one at a time, into the following holes, till his last stone reaches an empty hole So he chooses three which are in 1 and puts them, one in 2, one in 3, one in 4.

IV. He chooses the three which are in hole 4 and distributes them in 8, 7, 6. The last one having reached an empty hole, he has succeeded ; he wins and takes the stones of *A* in holes 6 and 2, which are opposite the hole he has reached. This taking is called *ku tha*. Moreover he has the right to *kill* (dlaya) another hole by taking its contents. He chooses hole 1. I represent the regular taking (winning) by a black dot, and the supplementary killing by a cross in the hole. Having *beaten* (ku ba, such is the technical word employed when a player has succeeded in taking his enemy's stones), he stops and *A* starts.

V. A starts from hole 5, takes the two stones, and puts one in 6, one in 7.

VI. He takes the three stones in 7 and distributes them in 8, 4 & 3.

VII. He takes the three stones of 3 and puts them in 2, 1, 5 : "A bile!"—"He has beaten." He wins the three stones of hole 5 of *B*, opposite hole 5 which he has reached. Moreover he takes and "kills" the three which are in hole 8.

VIII. *B* takes his turn. He starts from 2 and reaches with his last stone 8 : "A bile" : 8 was empty. So he picks up the three stones in his enemy's hole 8 and the three in hole 4. He kills moreover the single stone in 2.

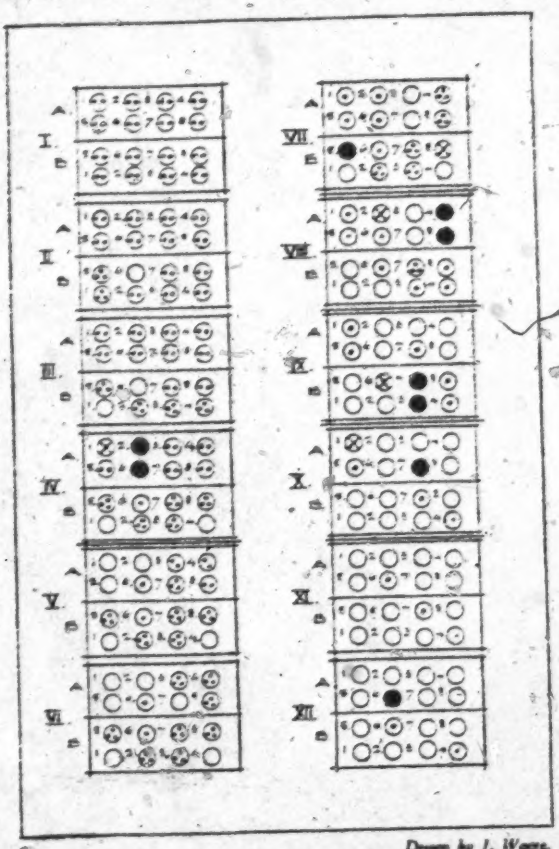
IX. *A* who has now only three stones left, one in 1, one in 5 and one in 6, starts from 6, puts his single stone in 7 and picks up those of holes 7 and 3 of *B*. He moreover "kills" 6.

X. *B* moves his stone from 8 to 7 ; he picks up 7 and in addition he "kills" 11

l: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

524 XI. *A* starts with his last stone from 5 to 6. But there is nothing opposite to him, nothing to pick up, nothing to kill!

XII. *B* moves from 7 to 6. He picks up the last stone of *A*



Drawn by J. Weave.

The tshuba game and its laws.

who is thus beaten (a mphile). He has vanquished him! (A mu mphyinshile!)

The rules are clear enough and this game does not seem to be very difficult. It is, however, most complicated, and I do not

524

wonder that men sometimes spend half the day, bending down over the ground, talking with animation and sometimes fighting when they think that one of them has transgressed the rules.

When the tshuba has only four holes in a row, it is called *shiwanana* (from *nane*, four) and is not very exciting. But it can also be played with 8, 10, 16, or even 22 holes, and then it becomes very complicated. Six holes will not do (a psi thi), because successful combinations are impossible. I have also learned the tshuba of 16 holes. Let us suppose our two players to be *A* & *B*; we number their 16 holes from left to right, the outer and inner rows bearing the same numbers. *A* will start from hole 12 outer row, and will follow the prescribed course all round his holes, going from left to right, until he comes back successfully to the same hole. He will shout: "tsheun!", imitating the noise of a gun, and pick up his enemy's stone in holes 12 of the outer and inner row, and "kill" in *B*'s outer row holes 15 & 13. *B* will start from hole 14 of the inner row and reach 12 of the same row. He picks up the stones in the two holes 12 of *A* and "kills" hole 3 in the outer row, etc. etc... Hours will sometimes elapse before one player has beaten the other.

A single stone in a hole is called *tshonga*. Two stones are called *mbiri*. If the following holes are empty, and if these stones cannot lead the players further, *mbiri* takes the name of *mpalati*. It is bad luck! (Compare No. IX, on the drawing.) When you arrive with your last stone opposite two full holes, and consequently pick up 4, 5, 6 stones at a time, it is luck! It is *mulu*. When only one hole is occupied and you win only one or two stones, it is *muhaha*. You have beaten in a "muhaha". (U bila muhaben.) When you do not reach the place you aimed at, not having had enough stones, you are said "to sleep on the road." When you start, full of courage, hoping to succeed, you say: "I go to kill meat" (ndji ya dlaya nyama), and this expression shows that the game represents two hunting parties. But it evidently also represents a fight, as do most of the games; hence the cries of triumph which accompany it. When one of the players happens to empty two holes with three stones in each, he says: "The fight is hot! (sha lwa). I have captured warriors!" If they contain

524 but one stone, a poor *tshonga*, he says: "I have only caught women!"

524 Fighting and hunting are great sports for Natives; hence the
177 popularity of the tshuba game. It has become such a passion
461 with the men that they neglect all their duties to indulge in it, and it has been necessary, in certain Christian villages, to prohibit the tshuba altogether, as the whole male population was abandoning its work for the game!

461 The *evening games* are happily not so dangerous for the moral
538 well-being of the village. Women who have worked the whole
517 day now have their innings. This is the *tha* par excellence, the
826 most refined amusement, the story telling. It takes place at eventide. It is taboo to *tha* in the middle of the day. Those who should transgress the law would become bald (!), and persons affected with loss of hair are commonly and jocosely accused of having told tales at midday. So, when the moon shines, when all the work of the day is ended, all the inhabitants assemble at one of the firesides to amuse themselves. They rarely gather together on the hubo for that purpose, as the square is reserved
524 for the discussion of matters of importance or for dances. The diversions at first consist of a parlour game, which is also known amongst Europeans, *guessing the charcoal piece (mhumhana)*. Two sides are formed opposite each other, women on one side, men on the other. One of the women, holding a piece of charcoal, puts it into the hands of one of the other partners, saying: "Dana, u shura ñwanaaa'nga," (eat and be satisfied, my child). Then both present their closed hands to the other side saying: "Mhumha!" The man opposite must guess in which hand the charcoal is hidden. He flips one of the four hands with his finger saying: "Give me! Here it is!" If he has guessed rightly, he has won, and then proceeds in his turn to hide the charcoal in the hand of one of his own side. When they have had enough of this game and wish to finish it in the proper manner, *they pull their fingers* and make them crack *(ku ba tindjwati)*. Each of them pulls a finger in turn. The first who is unable to produce a sound is expelled from his side. Then those who have been beaten make faces, as ugly or funny as they can, at their victors; these must

524 keep serious and not laugh. Should they be unable to keep their countenances, their victory is lost!

538 But these games are only a preliminary. The farther we go, the nearer we get to true literature! Now they ask each other *riddles (psitekatekisa)*, simple and antiphonic. We shall study this form of folklore later on... If the second side is unable to give the right answer to the riddle, it asks permission to propose one in its turn and so the intellectual combat goes on until they have exhausted the series of riddles they know. Those who have had the worst of the duel must pay the forfeit by *telling tales (tha psihetana)*. A woman may be present who is a renowned story-teller and she holds the whole company under the charm of her tale for half an hour, perhaps longer.... Children shudder when they hear the terrible story of the bogey man! They burst into laughter when she describes the funny tricks of the Hare, or of the frog *Shinana*. They heartily approve when the younger brother, despised by his elders, becomes their saviour and teaches them a good lesson... Thonga folk-lore is very rich; it is one of the most interesting manifestations of the psychic life of the tribe. We shall study it with the attention it deserves in Part V of this work. Here it is sufficient to show what a great and happy part it plays in the life of the village.

E. RULES OF POLITENESS AND HOSPITALITY.

576 The village life is dominated by the *respect for hierarchy*. I do
769 not think this term is exaggerated. Etymologically hierarchy
593 conveys not only a moral but a religious idea. This religious feeling is not absent in the fear felt by a younger brother for his elder, because the elder member of the family is its priest, the only possible intermediary between the family and its gods (See Part VI). So no wonder if, in their relations with each other, though these are extremely free and natural, Natives follow strict rules of etiquette.

576 In *addressing* an elder person, it is not becoming to call him
551 by his name. You will say to him: "Tatana," father, or "mamana," mother, as the case may be. Or you address him by the name of his father preceded by Ñwa, if it is a man, Mi, if it is a woman. So Mboza was called Ñwamasuluke, and Nsabula Migogwe. You may also say to a counsellor: "Ndjuna," to the chief: "Hosi," to the headman: "Numzana," to any grown-up man: "Wa-ka-Manyana," viz., man of such a clan, or descendant of such a man. Even speaking of an adult in the third person, you will not use his name but employ similar respectful expressions.
576 After the birth of her first child, the mother is generally called after
553 it, not so universally, however, as amongst the Ba-Sutho. So
551 Magugu, the wife of Spoon, became Mamana wa Modjadju, especially when spoken of in the third person. The names which are the most taboo are those of the mother-in-law, and of the "woman bought with my oxen." Speaking of a deceased person, one puts before his name the expression "*Matjuwa*," which corresponds to our: "late." In the Northern clans, the word *shira*, grave, is employed for "late".

576 The principle *salutations* are: *Shawan*: Be saluted, said by the arriving guest, to which you reply also: *Shawan*. *Hamban*: Good-bye or *Salan*: Remain, is said on leaving, and you answer: *Famban*: Go, or *Famban kahle* (Zulu): Go happily. Other greetings are employed only at certain times of the day: *Avushen*! a kind of locative, "at the dawn," equivalent to "Good morning." (Vusha means dawn). *Hi nhlekanhi*: It is midday! *A dji pelen*: or *a dji hlwen*: At sunset, properly: time when the sun sets. When retiring to sleep: *Yetlelan* (Ro.): Sleep! or *sibaman* (Dj.): lie on your belly; or *hi ta pfushana*: we shall say to each other good morning to-morrow! A curious salutation addressed to people working is: *A psi fen* (Ro.): Let it die. Its origin is as follows. When a man had killed a large animal, a hippopotamus or an antelope, his companions are in the habit of saluting him thus, hoping to share the meat with him. Now it is said to anybody working in the fields; it then means: "Let your work die." The
576 word "Nkosi," with which Natives salute white men, means
609 Chief in Zulu. They lift up their hand when pronouncing it. It

576 is not as if they were trying to raise their hats, as they do not wear
609 any. The explanation of the gesture is this, according to a Transvaal Native : the Boers taught black people to point to heaven, when saluting a white man, with this meaning : I compare you with the One who is above!

576 In the Northern clans, salutations are generally accompanied
201 by a clapping of hands (omba mandla). Men beat their hands against each other, placing them parallel to each other ; women do the same, placing them crosswise or at right angles. Amongst the Ba-Pedi this salutation with the hands is performed in a somewhat different manner ; when a Pedi enters the hubo, and wishes to greet a gathering of men, he claps his hands before his breast ; but when he salutes only one person, he bows down and claps his hands at the height of his knees, either on the right side or on the left. Amongst the Ba-Ronga, clapping the hands is a sign of thankfulness ; they say as they do so : *I khani mambo*, which probably means : "I dance before you, Sir." ("Mambo"
576 means chief in the Ndjao language.) In Djonga the proper word for thanking is *nkomo*. The etymology of this word seems to be : "I homu," "it is an ox." If anyone gives me a hen, he presents it to me saying : "Take my chick." When he brings a goat he says : "This is my hen." In both cases I answer : "Nkomo," "it is an ox!" The Thonga etiquette requires that the giver depreciate his gift and that the receiver magnify it! Another less polite way of thanking is this : *Yengetan*!, — "do it again," or *ni mundjuku*, — "and also to-morrow!"

576 Thongas used not to *shake hands* in former times. Now-a-days
177 the civilised Natives have adopted the European fashion, but this kind of familiarity is not approved of by the old folks, especially by the chiefs. Natives, when they shake hands, often do it in two movements : first they catch the four fingers and then slide on to the thumb. I do not know where they have
832 learnt to do this! *Kissing* was formerly entirely unknown. A good mother would occasionally wipe her baby's nose, but this can hardly be called a kiss. When they saw the custom adopted by the Europeans, they said laughingly : "Look at these people! They suck each other! They eat each other's saliva and dirt!"

832 Even a husband never kissed his wife. On coming back from
576 a journey, a man would hardly greet his wife; she would see
593 him passing through the village, prepare food for him, and when
152 it was cooked, she would come and salute him by presenting it
572 to him. But if he has a good friend in the village, and if this friend sees him coming back after a long absence, their meeting will be much more touching. The friend will go to the main entrance of the village, exclaim: "Ha-Ha," take his parcel from his hands, put his arms round his shoulders (a ku mu buso hi mandla), remove the perspiration from his face, and pat him gently, saying: "Your ancestor-gods have their eyes open! They have worked well! They have brought you back."

574 *Hospitality*. When strangers enter a village, men sit on the
609 *bandla*, and women go further on and sit on the *hubo*; they remain
622 quietly there till the people of the village come and salute them (losa). Should the inhabitants delay too long, the visitors move on, saying: "These people are not good." But this is very rare. Generally the master of the village comes to them, inquiring who they are, whence they come, where they are going, and asks them: "Do you wish to spend the night here?" If they say: "Yes," the headman will empty one of his huts by putting two of his wives together, and will himself sleep with the visitors. Should there still be food, he will give them some. If not, he says:
574 "*Ndlala*!" "Starvation!" After a little while, a mat is unrolled
609 and the official ceremony of "djungulisana" takes place. This is a
622 very amusing custom. The headman sits together with his hosts and enquires about the news of their home. One of the
203 visitors begins in a monotonous tone and pours forth volubly
195 a flow of words with a peculiar cadence and almost without taking breath. His interlocutor interrupts him after each sentence, with "Ahina, hina," that is to say "Indeed, indeed!" till the whole skein is unwound; the two men finish with a longer "*Hina*," the inhabitants of the hut adding an emphatic "*khani*," a heartfelt "thank you;" then the master of the village begins to relate his own news in the same tone. It is impossible to
574 imagine anything more curious than this "mélopée" in two parts.
609 This law of hospitality is general all over the tribe. Should

574 travellers be refused the customary hospitality in a village and
609 incur misfortune later on, the chief will make the people of that village responsible and they will have to pay a fine. In Gungunyana's country, warriors were sent to plunder such a village. Lack of hospitality, however, is not considered as a taboo (yila), because "it does not kill ;" it is a bad action (biha).

Now-a-days, customs are beginning to change ; hundreds of young men (magaisa) coming from the towns after working there, pass through the country, and it would be impossible to put them up and feed them all. They sleep on the *bandla* and cook food for themselves, occasionally buying some mealies or a hen from the inhabitants. Moreover they have plenty of money and they can pay !

609 It must also be added that, if they dispense hospitality liberally,
618 the Thongas can be very hard on people who do not belong to
761 their special clan. Feelings of humanity are sometimes strangely deficient. I heard of a boy of the Manyisa district who had fallen down near the lake of Rikatla, unable to proceed further on account of a bad wound received while working on the railway at Lourenço Marques. Nobody took pity on him because he was of another clan, and he would have died there if a Christian woman, named Lois, had not received him in her village and nursed him. Fear of death and its contamination may partly explain this want of compassion for strangers.

784 As already mentioned, it was formerly taboo to enter the village square wearing boots. These boots consist of sandals
643 made by the hunters for their long trips through the thorny
677 bush. They were not allowed on the hubo. A subject was not permitted to sit on a mortar or on anything else ; the chief alone could do so, and it was considered a sign of pride to sit on anything but the bare ground!

609 The habit of offering a concubine to passers-by is never met with amongst the Rongas as it is in other tribes. Now-a-days
177 dissolute women may offer themselves. But they have learnt
574 from white men this new kind of immorality.

On the fate of the Thonga Village, see Practical Conclusions. V.

l: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

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THIRD PART

NATIONAL LIFE.

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618 Having sketched the Individual and Communal life of the
619 Thongas, we will now consider the National life. We have seen
186 what the *muti*, the Village, means to a Thonga. What does the Nation, *tiko* mean to him ? As we have already pointed out, what we call the nation, tiko, is not the big tribe, numbering many hundred thousand people, but the special clan to which this Thonga belongs. There is no feeling of national unity in the tribe as a whole ; its unity consists only in a language and in certain customs which are common to all the clans. So the true national unit is the clan.

CHAPTER I

THE CLAN.

A. THE ACTUAL ORGANISATION OF THE CLAN.

618 Whatever may have been the social system of the Bantus in past ages, the existing clan can be directly traced from the patriarchal family. I have particularly studied the composition of two of the Thonga clans, the Nkunas of Zoutpansberg and the Mazwayas of the estuary of the Nkomati. Let us see how the clan is composed in both these instances.

618 175 The *Nkuna clan*, which migrated from the confluence of the Oliphant and the Limpopo to the country round Leydsdorp, in or about 1835, is certainly of purer descent than most of the other Thonga clans, owing to its disturbed history, and its numerous migrations, which prevented other people from joining it, and strengthened the national tie. The common ancestor is Nkuna who, some centuries ago, left Zululand to settle in the plain of the Lower Limpopo. His son was Shitlhelana, his grandson Rinono. All the sons of Rinono are still known. One of them was the founder of the present royal family, and the present *hosi*, or chief, Muhlaba, is descended from him. The descendants of the others, who call themselves by their names, are the Mhuntanyanas, the Mashonganas, the Mbhalatis, the Kulalas, the Mushwanas, etc ; they form what is called the *doors* (tinyangwa) of the clan, each of these districts being under a petty chief, who is *hosana* (diminutive of hosi). So the nation is but an enlarged family, and everyone depends on his *hosana* and his *hosi*, the members of the royal family alone having only a *hosi*.

In the *Nondwane country*, on either side of the estuary of the Nkomati river, the situation is somewhat different. The whole land was first occupied in the XIIth and XIIIth centuries by three independant clans, the Mahlangwan, Honwana and Nkumba, which were on a lower scale of civilisation, having no iron weapons nor oxhide shields. They were scattered as far as the Mabota country and their numbers must have been very small. The first invasion took place before 1500, when a chief of the Lebombo hills, called Libombo, settled almost without fighting on the Western part of the estuary. This is the chief whom the old Portuguese chronicler Perestrello met in 1554, and who said to him : "Mena Libombo," — "I am Libombo." The original clans submitted to the invaders who mixed with them, being of a race not very different from them. Then, later on, came the clan now reigning, the Mazwaya, which conquered the whole country. According to the custom generally observed, the Mazwaya chief placed his relatives and his sons in the various parts of the land as petty chiefs (tihosana), retaining the old Libombo chiefs as counsellors (tindjuna) to watch over them and assist them.

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This is a wise method of procedure; the old deposed chief becomes responsible for the welfare of the new one! Thus many *doors*, or provinces, were formed, and each of the petty chiefs founded a house and had his *shibongo*, his laudatory name. There were the Mazwayas Masinga, the main branch, near Morakwen; the Mazwayas Tjakame, not far from them; the Mazwayas Hlewane, Mazwayas Matinana, Mazwayas Makaneta, etc. As the complicated law of succession frequently leads to disorders, as we shall see, the main branch lost its paramount power and became secondary. The kingship passed to the Matinana branch. However the Masingas retained their authority in their own jurisdiction, and it would be taboo to place a member of a younger branch over them. The religious regard for hierarchical order prevents such an offence from being committed. Lately, as a consequence of the war of 1904, the Hlewane branch has in its turn supplanted the Matinana. Thus, from all these facts, it appears that two hundred years ago the population of Nondwane was already composed of three different and successive strata. Since then, the situation has become even more complex. A great number of immigrants has settled in the country during the last century, coming in groups and asking the Mazwaya chiefs and headmen to receive them. This is a very frequent occurrence amongst Thongas. They leave their clan, either because they want change, or because an accusation of witchcraft has induced them to flee, and they settle in another country. When I was living in Rikatla, one of the outside districts of the Mazwaya country, before the war of 1894, the hosana was Muzila, a young man of the reigning family; but there were very few Mazwayas under him. He had as induna a Tembe man, called Mandjia, whose father, Mankhere, had come long ago to Rikatla and was so well known that people used to call the district: "Ka Mankhere," "at Mankhere's." Another village belonged to Hamunde, a Djonga from the Shiburi country. A third had been built by people from the Manyisa clan, Ñwamangele being their headman. So the population of the estuary of the Nkomati, which, at that time, had reached the number of six to eight thousand, became very mixed. However the country continued to be called

618 "At Mazwaya's." It belongs to the Mazwaya clan. Such is the
175 composition of most of the Thonga clans. Though their origin is
643 certainly the patriarchal family, they are far from being of pure descent.

I am under the impression that this is the old, normal political state of the Bantus; small tribes of some thousand persons with a tendency to break up when they become too numerous, as happened in the cases of the Tembe-Mapute and also with the Mpfumo-Matjolo, who were first united under Nhlaruti. (See p. 23.) During the first half of the XIXth century, South Africa witnessed the birth of many great Native kingdoms, in which a large number of tribes were amalgamated, thus forming much larger political units. This process began in the country now called Zululand, in 1800. There were then ninety-four different small tribes comparable with our Thonga clans, that of the Zulus numbering only 2000. They were amalgamated from 1818 to 1820, by the well-known military raids of Chaka, to such an extent that, in 1820, this terrible despot had more than 100,000 warriors, and had added half a million people to his tribe, having deprived three hundred clans of their independance. Two Zulu generals followed the exemple of Chaka; Moselekatsi amalgamated the tribes of Mashonaland, and Manukosi the Thonga clans, not to mention Songandaba and the Angoni of Nyassa. The same process was accomplished more or less peacefully for the Bantus of Basutoland by Moshesh, and for the Ba-Pedi by Sekukuni, so that the original state of autonomy of the South African clans was generally replaced by large kingdoms in the greater part of South Africa.

Was this development a natural evolution of the Bantu clan? I do not think so. We must not forget that the first idea of transforming the clan into a conquering army, the idea which inspired Chaka, was brought to Zululand by the Umtetwa chief Dingiswayo, and that he conceived it on seeing an English regiment in Cape Town. The military spirit of the Bantus, which might have remained quiescent for a few more centuries, was awakened or stirred up by this sight. The seed found a wonderfully well-prepared soil, I confess. But without that seed, this terrible

618 movement of amalgamation would probably not have taken place,
175 and I think we may consider the clan life, as it is still met with
643 amongst the Rongas, (who were never subject to the Ngoni chief), as the typical Bantu political state (1).

B. THE LAUDATORY NAME OF THE CLANS AND TOTEMISM.

618 Each clan is known by the name of the old chief who is believed
551 to have been its original ancestor. So the Nkuna clan comes
101 from Nkuna, who lived four or five hundred years ago, and left Zululand for the Bilen country. The Mazwaya clan descends from Mazwaya, grandfather of Masinga and ancestor of all the heads of the sub-clans, Makaneta, Hlewane, etc. This name is a kind of *family name* for all the members of the clan. In the course of time, when sub-clans begin to aspire to independence, the first ancestor tends to fall into oblivion and is supplanted by the ancestor of the sub-clan. This process is easily noticeable at the present moment in Nondwane, where Mboza, for instance, calls himself a Makaneta. He says : "I am wa ka Makaneta," — "a man of the Makaneta house ;" but if he wants to be more precise, he will say : "I am a Mazwaya Makaneta." — "Shibongo a shi diwi," "the family name is never eaten, it is eternal!" (Mboza.)

618 This old name is called *shibongo* from *ku bonga*, to laud, to
551 praise. It is a *laudatory name*. It is used as such on two diffe-
576 rent occasions : 1) *When people salute each other*. A friend who meets Mboza on the road will say to him : "Shawan, Makaneta," "Good morning Makaneta!" But also : "Shawan Makhetshe!" (Makhetshe is the grandfather of Makaneta) ; or : "Shawan Mazwaya" or "Shawan Nwamasuluke." (Masuluke is the true father of Mboza.)

(1) The objection might be raised that, in former centuries, the celebrated Monomotapa founded a great kingdom. But what this exactly was, nobody knows. The descriptions of the chroniclers of those times are not very trustworthy, as we shall see from a quotation which will be made later on.

854 2) *To soothe babies.* Should Mboza's son cry, his nurse will say :
551 "Miyela, Makaneta ñwa yindlu ya ntima," "Keep quiet Makaneta,
618 of the black hut." It may also happen that some one wishing to console himself in affliction will do the same. Notice these last words : "of the black hut." They mean : "You who belong to a village where the huts have had time to become black ; they have never been destroyed by enemies, as no enemy dares to attack your clan! So the roofs have blackened inside from the effects of the smoke and outside from those of the rain!" It is customary to add to the name of the ancestor words such as these, in order to flatter more highly the man you salute, or the baby you console.

551 Thus each clan has a *laudatory phrase* which is sometimes much
618 longer than the Makaneta one. Masinga is called "wa le hondjo-
576 sin," "the one who reigns over the red earth," (more fertile than the sand). The Matinanas or Ngomanes are lauded thus : "Nkandjetele wa ku woma, ku baleka minambyana" — "the one who tramples on a dry place, and rivers begin to flow," because he is so heavy, so powerful! (Compare p. 87.) A Ngomane man will address his paternal aunt with the same words, when offering her a present.

Here are some of the best known shibongo. Their meaning is sometimes unknown, as they often contain ancient and obsolete expressions :

Hoñwana : Ñwahomu ya ntima ñwa mu-Nondjwana, — The black ox of Nondjwana (or Nondwane).

Shirindja : Mudzunga ntima wa le dzungen, — Black South of the South ?

Mpfumo : Ba hlela misaba ba khabuta, — They winnow the sand ; they eat it. (The sand is so white in their country that it resembles mealies flour : they never lack food.)

Libombo : Libombo la Ndlopfu, — Elephant's face.

Nkuna : Ba homu! Ba nyari! ya makhwiri, Ñwashitjimba buraka, ba mahlwen ka ntima. — Those of the ox! Those of the buffalo, the buffalo with the large belly which rolls in the mud, the one with a black spot on the forehead!

Rikotjo : Ba Nyamasi, — Those of the nyamari tree.

Khosa : Ba ripanga ro sheka ba ntsindja, — Those of the keen

551 edged sword which "cuts" disputes brought to the capital. (The
618 Khosa chiefs were reputed for their wisdom in deciding judicial
576 or political matters.)

Hlabi: Ba Nhlabi ba ku bengwa, Nhlabi ya Makamu ya Mavuse ya nkoñwana, — The Hlabi who are hated, sons of Makamu, of Mavuse, of the calf (?)

Hlengwe: Shikobela sha Matsheme, Tshauke wa Matsheme (names of old chiefs).

551 *Tembe*: Mulao Ngolanyama madlaya a nga di, makhama a
618 nga di, a dlayele bahloti: — Muiao (son of Tembe ?), the lion
643 which kills and does not eat, the hawk which kills, it kills for
576 the hunters, viz., it is so well fed itself, so rich that it can leave the meat for others. Such a sentence was pronounced in former times by subjects entering the royal kraal, crawling on their knees, when they wished to receive food from the chief.

Nhlanganu: Ba ku hlomula fumo, ba renga ndlela: — Those who unsheath the sword in order to buy the road, (the right of passing through a foreign country) (1).

551 In addition to these laudatory phrases of clans, each individual has his own sentence or sentences by which he praises himself or by which others praise his qualities. They are specially common in the case of boys, but even girls possess them. In the case of chiefs, such praises are much longer. See for instance the praise of the Nkuna chief Muhlaba (Part III, Ch. III, III).

* * *

171 If we cross the plain of the Sabi and reach the Drakensberg, we find that all the Pedi tribes dwelling together with the Thongas in the Leydenburg and Zoutpansberg district, possess laudatory

551 (1) This custom of praising the various tribes in such terms is so familiar to the
609 Thongas that they have invented similar expressions for the white people. The Portuguese are: Ba ka nãofazmalo, — the Sons of Never mind, because they seem to the Natives to be somewhat careless or indifferent. The English are: Bana ba Nhluleki, a hluleka ku hleka, a tiba ku lwa, — the sons of the one who cannot, he cannot laugh, he knows how to fight! Perhaps Natives consider them, on the contrary, somewhat too earnest, too keen!

171 names which they also call *seboko*, the same word as shibongo; but most of these names are names of animals, and are called by the technical term *muthupu*, totem; the animal is the emblem 000 or totem of the group. The Pedi clans are totemic. This means that, not only do they glorify themselves by comparing themselves with an animal and taking its name, but they think that there is a mysterious vital connection between it and their social group. I cannot give here all the facts I collected amongst them on the subject. They were published in *Le Globe*, the organ of the Geneva Geographical Society, Volume LXIII, under the following title: *Le Totemisme chez les Thongas, les Pédis et les Vendas*. Let me merely mention the following details. The Khahas of the Shiluvane valley have the small grey antelope, called duyker, as totem. They salute each other in these words: "Goni! Phudi!" *Goni* is probably the name of an old ancestor, the same as Nkuna for the Ba-Nkuna; but *phudi* means duyker. They consider it taboo to make a *ntehe* of its skin for their children. Some of them do not eat the flesh of that antelope, fearing that their children would become idiotic, or be covered with boils. They will not sit near a man of another clan who is handling the skin of a duyker. The Mashilas (Sekukuni's people), who have the porcupine as totem, say: "It is taboo even to tread on its dung; the soles of the feet would become sore." Many clans are afraid to kill the animal which is their totem; this is not a law enforced by the chiefs; the totem itself punishes them if they trangress it. However, nowhere did I find the idea that they are descended from the totem. They say: "The old people noticed that the flesh of such and such an animal made the people of their clan ill; so they proclaimed it taboo." Amongst the Vendas, or at any rate amongst certain Venda clans (Ba-Laudzi, Ba-Ngwe, Ba-Shidzibe) the totem is connected with the ancestor-gods. At his death, each member of the clan is transformed into the animal venerated by his clan and joins his congeners in the sacred wood where they live.

618 Nothing of this kind is met with amongst the Thongas. The 551 Thonga clans are *atotemic*. [1]Many men bear the name of animals, [825] but this is merely a means of glorifying themselves; there is no taboo with regard to the flesh, skin, or dung of that animal. I have

551 come to this conclusion after a careful investigation. Here are
618 the only facts that I have discovered which may be said to
522 be connected with totemic customs.

The first is that the shibongo sometimes gives an opportunity for *more or less witty jokes*. There is, near Rikatla, a clan called *Shibindji*. Shibindji means liver. When a man of this group meets with others who eat liver, they say to him : "Come along, we are going to run this skewer through you and roast you!" Another clan is the *Ntcheko*; this word means a tumbler or a small calabash with an elongated handle used for drinking purposes (p. 50). At the bukanye time, when everyone is getting these calabashes ready for the feast, they say : "Alas! poor creatures that we are! People are going to carry us from one end of the country to the other, to dip us into their pots and drink out of us!.." And so on. This is not totemism. I have however met with four more facts which must be mentioned, and which are very interesting.

618 1) In the neighbourhood of Pietersburg a Thonga who belongs
551 to the Rikotcho clan, but whose shibongo is *Ñwangwenya*, the son
177 of the crocodile, is said to "dance the crocodile" (tshina ngwenya). These Thonga words are the expression used by the Pedis to indicate their totemic customs, (ho bina kwena), not that there is any special dance or song performed in honour of the sacred animal ; this may have been the case formerly, but is not so now.

2) The laudatory name of the Nkuna clan is also said to be a *ntshupu*, though it does not imply any taboo. This word, which is unknown in other parts of Thongaland, corresponds to the Pedi *muthupu*, which indicates totemic animals. The Nkuna men like to be saluted by these words : "Nkuna! Homu (ox)! Nyari
618 (buffalo)!" There are a number of Pedi tribes who "dance to the
551 buffalo." Mankhelu assured me that, as the Nkunas have the
177 same totem as these tribes, they have a common origin, and have come from the same place in Zululand. This assertion is so evidently erroneous that he could not maintain it. The old man had not the slightest idea of historical accuracy: he had only unconsciously drawn the conclusion of a common origin from a similarity of totem. Moreover, in his set of divinatory bones, he used to represent his own tribe by a small piece of ox bone, just in

618 the same way as Pedi diviners do for their various tribes, represent-
551 ing them by the astragalus of their totems.
177 As regards these two incidents, they are easily explained by the influence of the Sutho tribes amongst which these Thongas have been living for a long time. Nothing of the kind is met with amongst the Thongas who have remained in their own country, and Maaghe, the Pedi-Khaha chief, assured me that this appellation of the Nkunas, Nyari, buffalo, is modern and borrowed from the Pedis. The Nkunas do not observe any taboo in connexion with the ox, and this shows that their totemic custom is a mere external imitation of that of the Suthos. These two instances might be called cases of *secondary* or *adopted totemism*.
618 Considering only the Thongas as compared with the Pedis, we
551 might be tempted to conclude that the Thongas had preserved
178 the old Bantu custom of naming themselves after their ancestor; just as the Thongas used to add to that name other laudatory expressions, we might suppose that the Pedi tribes had adopted names of animals to glorify themselves; in the course of time, the essentially totemic fears and taboos may have been introduced into the customs, owing to the importance given to the shibongo. This would be a rationalistic explanation of totemism. *A priori* it could not be said to be impossible. Though totemism appears to be a very old custom of humanity, it is not necessary, *per se*, that the Bantu tribes should have all passed through that phase of primitive belief.
618 3) I must, however, mention a third instance which shows
539 that this notion of a community of life between an animal and
178 a human group must have existed also amongst the ancient Thongas. There are, *in their folklore*, tales which seem to have been inspired by such old ideas now lost, especially the tale of Titishan, which I have published in "Les chants et contes des Ba-Ronga," page 253. A girl named Titishan marries a man. When she goes to her husband's home, she asks her parents to give her their cat. They refuse, saying: "You know that our life is attached to it." She insists, and they at last consent. She shuts the animal up in a place where nobody sees it. Her husband even ignores its existence. One day,

618 539 178 when she goes to the fields, the cat escapes from its kraal, enters the hut, puts on the war ornaments of the husband, dances and sings. Children, attracted by the noise, discover it and inform the master of the village of the strange dancer they have seen... He goes and kills it. At that very moment Titishan falls to the ground, in her garden. She says : "I have been killed at home." She asks her husband to accompany her, with the corpse of the cat wrapped in a mat, to her parents' village. All her relatives attend. They severely reproach their daughter for having insisted on taking the animal. The mat is unrolled and, as soon as they see the dead cat, they all fall lifeless to the ground, one after the other. The Clan-of-the-Cat is destroyed and the husband returns home after having closed the gate of the village with a branch (See Page 323) : "Their life was in the cat."

Folk-tales are very ancient, and this one is by no means unique of its kind. (Compare Jacottet's "Treasury of the Ba-Sutho Lore," Morija 1908, Masilo punished for having eaten zebra's meat.) It shows that the totemic idea existed in former times, in those primitive periods of evolution which some Bantu tribes have now outgrown.

618 178 825 4) A fourth fact tends to show that a mystic relation between an animal and a clan existed in former times. There is, in the north of the Transvaal, a kind of antelope called by the Natives *Shidyanaman*. It is taboo to kill it : "If a Nkuna does so, his family will die during the year, his wife, his children, his own head. Should he kill one by mistake, he must cry with a loud voice and shout : — Yoo! Shana n'ta da na mane! Alack! with whom shall I eat it ?" Mankhelu says it is taboo to eat its flesh, but the taboo is removed by this formula. The Ba-Nkuna do not know how to explain this custom. It may be a relic of former totemic ideas. However Mankhelu does not call the shidyanaman a ntshupu, a totem, and these customs may perhaps be connected with the *nuru* superstition (Comp. Ch. IV and Part IV, hunting customs). But even supposing that the Thongas have gone through the totemic phase, the present clans have entirely forgotten these ancient beliefs.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

618 My aim in the following chapter is to describe the typical
631 Bantu clan, that small community of some hundreds or thousands of souls, with its hereditary chief, and not the larger tribe, formed by the amalgamation of many clans by a military despot (Chaka), or a cunning diplomat (Moshesh). Some of us have seen the court of Gungunyana at Mandlakazi, before this last South African military Empire was destroyed by the Portuguese in 1895 and 1896. Dr. Liengme, one of my colleagues, has described some of the striking customs of this court in the Report of the S. A. A. A. S. of 1904 and in the *Bulletin de la Société Neuchâteloise de Géographie*, of 1901. I refer the reader to these publications and shall be satisfied with the more modest, but not less interesting life, of the old Thonga clan.

In this small community the *Chief* forms the centre of national life. It is in him that the clan becomes conscious of its unity. Without him it loses its bearings ; it has lost its head. The republican conception is as far removed as possible from the ideas and instincts of these people! So it will be necessary to study first the customs relating to the chief. Then we shall see the part played by the *Counsellors*, a second institution which strengthens and limits the first. The political system of these tiny kingdoms having been sketched, we shall consider the *Court* and the *Army*, these being the two domains in which national life chiefly manifests itself.

CHAPTER II

THE LIFE HISTORY OF THE CHIEF.

A. BIRTH AND YOUTH.

(Information received from Tobane, and applying specially to Ronga clans).

643 844 When the principal wife of a reigning chief, she who is called "the wife of the country" (nsati wa tiko), perceives that she will in due course present her lord with an heir, she is sent away from the capital into one of the provinces, under pretext of illness. It must not be whispered abroad that she is pregnant, for, from this moment, every precaution must be taken to hide the future chief. Thus, should the event occur in the country of Mpfumo, the expectant mother might be sent into the province of Phulane.

The infant comes into the world ; should it prove to be a boy, the fact is kept a secret. Only the most renowned doctors of the country, those attached to the royal family, those who are "the strength of the land" (le' ti yimisaka tiko), are assembled to watch the birth ; they prepare, with special care, the *milombyana* (p. 48). When the queen goes out carrying her child on her back, she covers it with a piece of cloth to prevent anyone seeing whether it is a boy or a girl! She even dresses it in girl's clothing, because it is dangerous (psa henyanya), it is taboo to say in a loud voice : "This child will be a chief." Such an imprudent declaration would bring him bad luck (singita), just in the same way as would male clothing. (Mankhelu.)

643 777

The royal offspring grows, unrecognised, and is weaned in the same way as other children. The mother returns to the capital, the child remaining in the village where it was born.

643 857 However, specially appointed persons watch over him and report of his well being to his father. His youthful playmates are taught to respect him ; he is surrounded in his games by a miniature court, from which he chooses his favourites (tinxekwa) ; some of his companions act as counsellors and reprimand those who do not treat him with due respect. They play at court... also at soldiers ; the juvenile troop wage war with the wasps, and also with the boys of the adjoining villages.

643 787 777 751 782 When the child reaches boyhood, the bones are consulted, and sacrifices offered in order to ascertain from the gods whether it be well to take him to the capital. Should the answer be in the negative, there is nothing to do but wait. When the dice declare the propitious moment to have arrived, the transfer is effected and the boy taken to his father. This is a great occasion for the counsellors who have watched over the boy and who thenceforward supervise his education. They feast themselves well (ba fumisana), kill goats, perhaps even an ox, and offer a sacrifice to proclaim to the gods the return to the capital of the heir to the throne ; to his ankle is tied the astragalus of a slaughtered goat, as a protective amulet.

643 881 836 At puberty the boy undergoes, in the same manner as his companions, all the ceremonial rites usual at that period. The principal doctors of the country treat him, in order that henceforth he may be a man (ba mu yimisa a ba wanuna), having full right to enter into the sexual relations of gangisa (p. 97). Care is taken, however, to attach to his person comrades of riper age, who will prevent him giving way to excesses, (suka banhwanyana la bakulu ba ta mu gema, ba mu sibela ku kula), which would arrest his growth and render him small and feeble. He thus lives in relative continence, participating in the play and in the work of boys of his own age, and looking after the herds. At times he gives a feast, when his father happens to have presented him with an ox with which to make merry.

643 588 595 Now we see him arrived at manhood, at the age when the Blacks take a wife. If his father is still living, the young man is not allowed to marry officially. He may certainly lobola, viz., contract regular marriage in the usual way, and possibly

643 some woman may come and live with him (titlhuba), as in cases of
588 elopement — in which case he must go, according to the law,
595 early in the morning to the parents of the girl and denounce himself as the abductor (p. 119); but none of these women can be his official wife; they may bear him children, but these will be *makohlwa*, those who have no right to royalty; the young chief may not wed his official wife, she who is to become the mother of the heir to the throne, until after the death of his father.

643 There is a saying, a precept of the royal code as follows:
603 "Hosi a yi faneli ku bona ntukulu," a chief must never see his
595 grandson, i. e. the one who will eventually succeed his son in the royal line. The Ba-Ngoni of Gungunyana (in Gaza) have the same custom; but with them things are arranged differently. The eldest son of the chief's principal wife, when at the requisite age for marriage, takes a wife and loses the right of succession; it is the youngest son, still young at the time of his father's death, who inherits the throne, because he has no children of his own. This leads to jealousy and civil war between brothers; it has brought numberless misfortunes to the royal family of Gaza, and it was one of the causes of the downfall of Gungunyana. The Thonga custom is much more simple and less dangerous to the maintenance of peace; the chief must not see his grandson, therefore his son will not be officially married until after his father's death. Any wives he may previously have taken will be morganatic and their children are not entitled to inherit.

I have been told by Mankhelu that when a chief lives to be very old and does not wish to delay the marriage of his son and heir, he can himself pay the lobolo and acquire, for his son, the official wife who will be considered as being "the wife of the country." But this seems to be an exceptional occurrence.

B. CORONATION OF THE CHIEF.

643 In all Thonga clans the death of a chief is kept secret for one
year or more, as we shall see. Amongst the Nkunas the official mourning for the deceased takes place the same day as the coron-

643 ation of his successor. All the regiments of the army are summon-
766 ed, together with groups of warriors delegated by foreign clans.
701 The mourning ceremonies are first performed. (See later on).
Then, at the end of the afternoon, says Mankhelu, the great
counsellors send a herald to the circle of warriors. He shouts:
"Khaula!" viz., "keep silent!" The new chief comes out of the
hut and stands alone in the midst of the circle. "Do you see
him," says the herald... "It is the chief!" — "Who is he?" ask
the warriors, who wish to know his new name. — "It is Muhlaba
Dabuka," he answered, when the present Nkuna chief was proclaim-
ed. Formerly his name was Shikuna. Now he adopted this new
name, borrowed from one of the Ngoni chiefs of Bilen. "He who
wants to fight, can fight," he adds. This is an invitation to
those who wish to protest against the coronation to state the fact
plainly. When Muhlaba was proclaimed, the Masakomo family
left the capital in anger, as they thought they were deprived of their
right. (See later on.) Such an occurrence is not rare owing to the
irregularities which so frequently take place in the succession.

If the chief is still a child he is carried on a shield, or put on
the roof of a hut, so that everybody may see him.

In the Ronga clans the ceremony is conducted as follows. Let
me describe it with all the details supplied by Tobane.

643 First of all sacrifices are made to the gods to ask that this
609 ceremony may pass off quietly, happily, without quarrelling, and
648 then the date is fixed. Invitations are sent to the surrounding
little kingdoms, or at least to all those who are on friendly relations
with the tribe. For instance, supposing the installation to be
that of the chief of Mpfumo, invitations would be sent to Maputju,
Tembe, Matjolo, Nondwane, Ñwamba and Shirinda. Manyisa
and Ntimane are regarded as "being of a different mind" (moya
muñwana), and "good will only reaches as far as the river
Nkomati," to give a literal translation of the expression used by
my informant; this means that relations with the more distant
countries are hardly those of even ordinary civility. The warriors
of the invited tribes assemble, in greater or smaller numbers;
sometimes only a few delegates attend, but they do not proceed
at once to the capital. Etiquette requires that each one should

643 first go to the Mpfumo Counsellor, who now acts as an Agent
609 General for his own tribe ; they are well received by him and fed while waiting for the day of the coronation.

643 When it is known that all the foreign military contingents
701 have arrived,[1] then the Mpfumo army is also assembled and all together march to the capital. The royal family council, composed of uncles and the older relatives of the new chief, meets in a separate hut. The presiding member opens the proceedings as follows : "Si hi humeliliki ; si hi humililiki, hi fanela ku beka hosi kutani! (See what has happened! This having happened to us we must install a new chief!)" The rest approve and reply according to etiquette. On an immense open space, all the warriors form a circle (biya mukhumbi). Battalion after battalion
643 takes up its position within this living enclosure. An opening is
714 left in this otherwise perfect circle, and through it enters the bodyguard, composed of young men of the same age as the new chief, with the chief himself hidden in their midst, wearing his full military uniform and accoutrements : ostrich feathers on his head, strands of hair from cow's tails on his biceps and the calves of his legs, etc.

643 A specially appointed functionary, the bearer of the chiefs
701 (mutlakuli wa tihosi), penetrates into the middle of the bodyguard and raises the young chief on his shoulders in the presence of the assembled armies. The great counsellors, the secondary chiefs, and all the young men of the royal family, then accompany the bearer of the king and with him march round the inner side of the circle of warriors, shouting as they go :

Hosi hi leyi ! Dlayan ! Dlayan !
Behold the chief ! Kill him ! Kill him !
A ku na yimbeni !
There is no other than he !
Hi tiba yoleyi.
We recognise none other.
Dlayan ! Lwa nga ni yimpi !
Kill him ! if there be any here who can raise an army (to oppose him).

To these shouts of defiance the several battalions reply consecutively as the procession passes them : "Bayete! Bayete! Ndjao!" These words form the royal salute, to which all the independent chiefs are entitled (1).

1 [for the coronation of a chief --Analyst]

643 chiefs are entitled (1). The *elevation and the presentation* ended,
535 the next proceeding is the *gila* or war dance. The heroes of the army (batlhabani ba fumo), and the young men of blood royal rush one after the other into the enclosure brandishing their weapons, jumping as high as they possibly can, imitating acts of prowess on the battle field and simulating the transfixion of their enemies. The *gila* continues until the cry is heard : "Ye-yi, yé-yi, ye-yi." This murmuring sound uttered by the whole army marks the end of the jumping, and all re-form into line. All the shields must now touch one another, forming an immense unbroken circle, and then comes the *guba*, the intonation of the
643 solemn chant which is at once the principal patriotic song of the
533 tribe, the coronation hymn, the dirge of mourning, the war-song,
539 and the sacred melody par excellence :

> Sabela ! Sabela nkosi ! Ji ! Ji !
> Answer us ! Answer us, O chief ! Ji ! Ji !
> Si ya ku wela mulambu mkulu wa ka nkosi.
> Yes, we will cross the great river, the river of the chief.

This chant, which is in the Zulu language, is difficult to understand. The soloist commences with : "Sabela nkosi" which may be translated "Obey the chief ;" but the meaning would rather seem to be : "Reply to us, chief!" and, if taken in this sense, these words would be a request made by the army

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(1) The word *Bayete* is said to be of Zulu origin and to convey the following meaning : bring thine enemies hither and destroy them ! *Ndjao* means lion. The warriors employ these terms to extol the power of their chief and, at the same time, to express their allegiance to him. There is a modern tendency to use this solemn salutation in a more general manner : for instance it is addressed to the Whites and not only to those in authority, but more or less to every one, even, in certain cases, to missionaries ! I always remember my arrival at the village of Shirinda, when I went to call on the chief Mahatlane, then unknown to me. I arrived at the gate of the kraal mounted on a most unpretentious little donkey and enquired of two young men who were there, where I could find the chief. "Bayete !" was the salutation I received and there was certainly nothing very regal either in my appearance or my "mount." One of these young men proved to be Mahatlane himself ! *Bayete* is also frequently used in acknowledging a gift from a superior and would then be merely the equivalent of "thank you." In Gaza, Gungunyana would not allow Bayete to be said to any one but himself. All the petty chiefs of the Ba-Ronga insisted on their royal salutation and the Ngoni king could not put a stop to it, as they were direct dependencies of the Whites and did not derive their authority from him.

1 [For the coronation of a chief--Analyst]

643 to the chief, to which he will reply by executing the dance which
533 follows. To this exclamation of the soloist the warriors respond
539 by striking their shields with their assagais, producing a hard sharp sound, which the chant tries to render by the syllable "Ji! Ji!" Then they stamp their feet, saying: "Vu! Vu!" and this enigmatic sentence follows: "Yes, we will cross the great river, the river of the chief." What is this river? Can it be that which separates the Mpfumo country from Khosen, namely the Nkomati? Or the Mitembe, marking the frontier between the Northern and the Southern Ba-Ronga? Or do not these mysterious words rather refer to the river of death, which the entire host should cross without hesitation if called to do so by their chief? Whatever the exact meaning may be, this chant must be an assurance of loyalty on the part of the warriors to their king and probably also an appeal to his valour.

643 The chant ended, no one is allowed to leave the ranks. The
535 chief alone rushes into the enclosure; every warrior holds his
701 shield in his hand and strikes it with hard sharp blows (ku ba ngomana); on hearing these, the chief begins to *gila* in his turn. He executes the war-dance brandishing his assagai, as if killing invisible enemies. The crowd encourages him, inciting him to still further efforts, crying: "Silo! Silo! Silo! Beast of the fields! Lion!" Volleys are fired. The chief redoubles his exertions, gesticulating furiously, perspires profusely, is well nigh exhausted and finally stops! The whole army sits on the ground and the young king is supplied with a jug of beer to quench his thirst.

When the ceremony has lasted long enough, and the warriors have enjoyed at their ease the spectacle of their chief's prowess, the Commander-in-chief dismisses the battalions, one after the other. The circle (mukhumbi) breaks up and all rush to the residence of their respective counsellors, singing as they go the praises of the particular army-corps to which they belong. The members of the royal family return to the capital, where they remain. A counsellor presents each group or regiment with the ox which has been allotted to it; this is accepted with shouts of "bayete." The men cut up the animal, divide the meat and eat it in their respective quarters.

643 It is worthy of notice that no sacrifice is offered on this day, neither is any religious ceremony whatsoever performed. The coronation appears to be a purely military affair, a sort of oath of loyalty taken by the people to their chief and by the chief to his people.

C. THE OFFICIAL MARRIAGE OF THE CHIEF.

643 584 The chief being duly installed, the next thing to do is to provide him with his officially recognised wife, *the wife of the country*, she who is to become the mother of the future king. This wife must be bought with the pennies of the people : a characteristic custom demonstrating forcibly to how great an extent the royal family is at once the property and the pride of the nation.

643 584 521 One fine day, says Tobane, when the counsellors go to visit the new chief, they meet with a very cold reception : "Who do you suppose is going to feed you ? Who will cook the meat ? Who is going to brew the beer ?" They return quite crestfallen, but having perfectly understood the allusion. The chief wishes to remind them that the time has arrived for them to find him a wife. This roundabout way of coming to the point is much in vogue with the Blacks. The matter is at first discussed in secret by the brothers and sisters of the deceased ruler, a family council which holds its conclave "in the hut," i. e. privately. After due consultation, a messenger is dispatched to the principal men of the country, to the heads of the younger branches of the royal family (to Khobo, Pulane, Kupane, if Mpfumo be the clan in question) with the following message : "Has not the moment arrived to set up the chief, to cause him to grow, to increase properly ? For the country is sustained by its cock! (1)" The great ones discuss the affair, each in his own village, and a

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(1) *Djl yima ni nkuku*, a proverbial expression meaning : as the poultry-yard cannot flourish without a cock, so must care be taken of the chief of the country, in order that he may be able to perpetuate the race and secure the succession.

643 584 day is fixed for a visit to the capital where it will be concluded.

Let us consider the procedure in the case of the marriage of Ñwamantibyane, the youthful chief of Mpfumo, who has since been exiled. The following account of the discussion preparatory to the marriage is given on the authority of Tobane, a witness of the proceedings, and will aptly illustrate the etiquette observed on such occasions.

643 584 651 622 The dignitaries are assembled, and one of them, the brother of the deceased chief, commences thus : "Well, you the chiefs of Mpfumo! In truth! If we are assembled here to-day, is it not that we have truly seen that we must, in fact, increase the chief, and give him the wife of the country ? This is all the business, you, the chiefs." One of those addressed replies : "In putting the matter before us, hast thou been unequal to the task ? (No! understood.) And we, what further words could we add ? Nothing remains to be said... You then tell us what we shall have to give you, dwellers in the capital!" Then the secondary chiefs say : "For our part, we will give each one pound sterling or an ox, as you may prefer." The headmen of the villages will each contribute ten shillings and each village one shilling besides. In former times, before the circulation of money in the country, each one gave a hoe.

The secondary chiefs go back to their own districts and get together the money or the oxen as the case may be. This done, the fact is duly notified to the capital and all the contributions are conveyed to the chief. An account is kept of all monies or cattle contributed. When Ñwamantibyane was married the special subscription amounted to thirty pounds sterling and twenty oxen.

643 582 The future queen was chosen from the royal family of Matjolo ; her name was Mimalengane. The young chief had only seen her on one occasion, when she was returning from Gaza. Nevertheless she was his first cousin once removed ; Hamule, father of Zihlala and grandfather of Ñwamantibyane, married the sister of Malengane, chief of Matjolo, and his daughter was Mimalengane (the prefix *mi* signifies daughter of), who was now

643 to become Ñwamantibyane's wife. We have already mentioned
582 the fact that marriages between relatives are sanctioned in the royal families. The chiefs of Mpfumo generally marry into the reigning families of Mabota and Matjolo, and these latter seek their wives at the court of Maputju.

643 All the preliminaries being settled, the purchase money
584 collected, the young girl chosen, Matshibi, the Mpfumo counsellor acting as Agent General for Matjolo, sent Ñwamatshabane, the boy who was his messenger, to Sigaolé, chief of Matjolo, to make the actual proposals for the marriage. The messenger did not address himself directly to the chief, but made his approach through the Matjolo Counsellor in charge of Mpfumo's affairs, whose name was Mambene. The request was made thus : "We have come to ask our *kokwana*, (that is to say our relative on the mother's side, p. 231) in marriage." — "It is well," replied Sigaole, when Mambene had transmitted to him the honourable proposal. — "Go home again, thou shalt come for our reply." A meeting of the members of the Matjolo royal family was then convened, matters discussed, the demand agreed to and the same envoy, attended by a companion, came, as arranged, to receive the reply. The hut was carefully swept and the enquirers renewed their message : "Our chief is still celibate... He sleeps in his bachelor's quarters" (This was not true, as he had already several wives, but they did not count!) "He is anxious to get married. Make haste to give him Mimalengane." — "It is well," said the others, "on one of these days we will go and discuss the affair at your place. When will you expect us ?"

A day is fixed and the great ones of Matjolo go to see Ñwamantibyane. A gorgeous reception has been prepared for them : an ox has been killed in their honour, but they are at first treated in a niggardly manner, and are given very short commons for breakfast ; for, before anything else can be done, the tiresome money question must be settled.

In the large hut all these important personages take their places with some constraint... The suitor is not present. The real business of the purchase money is not immediately referred to ; endless compliments, all sorts of circumlocutions are indulged

643 in, of which the following is a resumé. One of the chief men
584 of Matjolo commences by saying :
595 "It is quite right that you of Mpfumu have desired to renew today the old ties of relationship... Hamule your grandfather took his wife from Matjolo. Well! we are obliged to you. Nevertheless Sigaole has sent us to enquire how you intend to make payment for her ?"

— "We have thirty pounds sterling" reply the representatives of Mpfumo.

— "Ah! Thirty pounds ? That means that Mimalengane will have to chop her own wood and draw her own water ?" (That is to say: Thirty pounds suffice for the princess... but payment must also be made for two girls, the younger sisters (tinhlampsa), who must accompany her, to help her in the household duties, as is customary.)

— "We will ask Nwamantibyane what he has to say to this" continues the headman of Mpfumo.

— "How about those twenty oxen ?" says the chief to his representatives, when the matter is put before him. The envoy returns to the hut and announces : "There are also twenty oxen!"

— "It is well," say the men of Matjolo, "that will do for two girls to help in the work of the household."

643 Thus this delicate business is transacted without any great
584 difficulty. The feasting then begins in earnest. All eat until
261 they *shura*, that is until satiated, the stomach protruding in a gentle curve beneath the sternum, which is the black man's idea of a thoroughly satisfactory meal!

The betrothal being duly arranged, there still remain the betrothal visits to be paid and the wedding to be celebrated. Strange to say the chief, in these ceremonies, is conspicuous by his absence! His male friends alone go to see the betrothed, mainly with a view to reporting on her appearance, etc., to their royal master. Moreover when a chief is concerned, the betrothal visit of the suitor's friends is not returned by the girls, as in the case of ordinary mortals.

643 The marriage feast takes place, of course, at the bride's home.
585 In Matjolo quantities of beer have been prepared, and the people

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

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of Mpfumo are notified when it is sufficiently fermented ; the latter then mobilise their military contingent, consisting of a picked battalion of youths and men wearing the wax-crown. They are magnificently attired in skins of civet-cat and other warlike apparel, but carry sticks only and small toy shields (mahahu), as the object of the expedition is eminently peaceful and entirely actuated by friendship. They go first to the house of their Agent General, Mambene, where they are met and conducted to the capital, taking with them the money and oxen which must be handed over to the parents of the princess. The curious sham-fight, details of which we have already given when describing ordinary marriages, also takes place on this occasion, the Matjolos trying to carry off the oxen and the Mpfumos defending themselves and endeavouring to appropriate the jugs of beer which are in the capital. This mock engagement is fairly lively, sticks are wielded with some force and the blows fall heavily until a few wounds are apparent and a little blood is let, when hostilities are at once stopped and friendship reigns supreme.

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The money and oxen are given to Sigaole, chief of Matjolo, in the presence of witnesses. Mpfumo kills a bull for Matjolo and Matjolo slaughters a cow for Mpfumo, without any kind of religious ceremony : a sacrifice has previously been offered in Matjolo to propitiate their gods in favour of Mimalengane. On the other hand the young folks of the two countries execute the dances peculiar to each clan, trying to outrival one another, for the honour of their country. The guests pass one night at the capital of Matjolo and return to their homes the following day.

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The relatives of the bride prepare her trousseau, which is not much richer than in the case of ordinary people ; a *ngula*, large basket, in which are placed some maize and other cereals which she will plant in her new home, sundry cooking utensils, saucepans, winnowing baskets, a hoe, an axe ; on the subsequent day, all the women accompany her to her husband's dwelling and then go to perform the ceremony of building the wood pile (p. 112). They are regaled with a couple of oxen and return to their home.

The chief's wife is not compelled, as are young married women generally, to live with the mother-in-law and to wait upon her

643 585 644 during the whole of the first year of married life. The chief, immediately on the home-coming of his bride, calls together his young men, who rapidly build for him a new village, his village, which will henceforth become the capital of the country and will be given a distinctive name.

Ñwamantibyane's royal kraal was known as Hlanzini, and he had chosen a site for it on the confines of the Ñwamba country in order to avoid a too close proximity to the Portuguese Commandant living at Hangwana.

Crowned, married, installed in his new residence, the chief has now nothing to do but reign.

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643 584 622 Mankhelu relates the proceedings of the official marriage amongst the Ba-Nkuna in the following manner : — All the principal headmen send an ox to the capital, assemble there, kill one of the oxen, eat it and discuss who shall be the "wife of the country (1)." They ask the chief : "Whom do you love ?" He answers : "The daughter of such and such a chief." They go to the father of this girl and say : "Eat the lobolo and give your daughter to the chief." The man may refuse. Should he consent, the girl will become the wife of the country : "the earth has bought her ;" she will give birth to the future chief.

Should a great number of oxen be provided by the country, those which are in excess of the lobola price will go with the chief and princess to their new village "in order to provide milk for them."

(1) In the case of Muhlaba, Mankhelu himself received the fifteen oxen of the lobolo of the village and kept them for a time. Other subjects had given £ 1, a hoe, a goat, or nothing, if they could not afford to contribute. Nobody refused, but some had nothing to give ! No matter ! In the meantime one of the oxen broke its leg. The mother of Muhlaba said to Mankhelu : "See ! the oxen of the lobolo die. Take a wife for the chief." Muhlaba was consulted and chose a girl from the Makaringe clan. Mankhelu had already taken a wife amongst these people, who were consequently his bakokwana. He went to them with the proposal ; they consented. Then Muhlaba accompanied Mankhelu on a second visit to the Makaringe people, who killed an ox for him and helped him to eat it !

64/3 The reason why it is not taboo for a chief to marry a near
582 relative is this, according to Mankhelu : "Nothing is taboo for him because he is the earth (hosi i misaba, a yi yili ntshumu). He may even take a girl from the houses of his younger brothers because everything is allowable for him. He has no sin. He is the one who makes the laws. Even if they are bad, people must accept them..." This identification of the chief with the earth is most curious and we shall speak of it again when treating of the sacred character of the chief.

64/3 The wife paid for by the money of the country, though on the
595 one hand she is the official wife, is on the other hand inferior to the first wife married by the chief. He does not perform the rites of widowhood when she dies (See page 202).

A chief, when he travels, always takes his wives with him.

D. THE REIGN.

1. *The sacred character of the Chief.*

64/3 Let me say at once that, amongst the Ba-Ronga, the paraphernalia of royalty are reduced to a minimum. The chief is as scantily attired as are his subjects ; possibly his belt of tails may be more plentifully garnished with these appendages. His huts are built on the same lines as the others ; his village may be larger, but is sometimes smaller (1).

(1) "One day when taking a walk on the hill of Rikatla, I came to a field where, in the shade of a magnificent tree, I found three individuals — the three most powerful personages of the country — modestly squatting on their haunches and scaring the sparrows from their plantation of sorghum. The trio consisted of Muzila, the young chief, his brother and Makhani, his chief counsellor, who were devoting themselves to this tiresome occupation in the same way as the meanest of their subjects !

This same Muzila had several younger brothers, one of whom was engaged to look after our oxen, at a salary of ten shillings a month. One day the boy was ill. It happened to pour in torrents on that particular day, and whom should I see about ten o'clock in the morning, coming along absolutely drenched through and through, but the chief Muzila ! "I am looking after your oxen to day" said he "in place of my brother... Here I am, and I have just come to let you know that I am going to water them !"

643 In the old Portuguese documents, and in particular in an account written by a military commandant to the prelate of Mozambique, at the end of the XVIIIth century, the chiefs of the countries in the vicinity of the Bay were described in grandiloquent terms : "They are very powerful, very rich, most honourable, generous and respected." The Chief of Khosen is called the Grand Cacha, and is described as "a kind of Emperor." Though it is probable that, in former times, the regal paraphernalia of the Thonga chiefs were more brillant than now, these are manifest exaggerations, such as are often met with in the tales of the old explorers ; nevertheless there is a good deal of truth in these accounts. "Royalty," in the mind of the Native, is a venerable and sacred institution ; respect for the Chief, and obedience to his commands are universal ; his prestige is maintained, not by a great display of riches and of power, but by the mystical idea that, as the body lives by nourishment taken through its head, so the life of the nation is sustained through its chief.

The Thongas do not explain this in abstract words, but by images which are very striking. The chief is the Earth, as we have seen. He is the cock by which the country is sustained. (Tobane.) Mankhelu adds : "He is the bull ; without him the cows cannot bring forth. He is the husband ; the country without him is like a woman without a husband. He is the man of the village. Should a dog bark, if there is no man, nobody will dare to go out of the hut and ascertain the danger that threatens, nobody will have the courage to chase away the hyena. A clan without a chief has lost its reason (hungukile). It is dead. Because who will call the army together ? There is no longer any army! The chief is our great warrior (nhena), he is our forest where we hide ourselves and from whom we ask for laws. The counsellors (tinduna) cannot proclaim laws."

Conscious of this position, the chief does his best to maintain and to increase his prestige. He must not be too familiar. He does not eat with his subjects, except with certain favourites. Sometimes he eats alone in his hut. Or, when he has slaughtered an ox, he chooses amongst the various joints those he prefers, and feasts before his subjects, who look on respectfully, "swallowing

64/3 their own saliva," (viz., their mouths watering the while). He sometimes throws a piece of meat to one of his favourites, who accepts it with both hands, shouting : "Bayete!" In the Tembe capital, men crawled on their knees before the chief, shouting: "Ngolanyama" "Lion!". Ñwangundjuwana, the chief of Ñwamba, was known for his more democratic ways. He used to eat with his men.

To shake hands with a chief was also considered as taboo before the days of Christianity. Now Muhlaba somewhat reluctantly accepts the hand which is extended to him by the most modest of his subjects, even by children on Christmas Day. The idea which is at the bottom of the fear is that the chief is a magical being. He possesses special medicines with which he rubs himself or which he swallows, so that his body is taboo (ntjumbu wa hosi wa yila). He is dangerous. "When he points at you with his finger, you are a dead man" (Mboza). Owing to the charms with which he had smeared his body, Maphunga, the chief of Nondwane, made those who discussed State affairs with him, even White people, "unable to answer him or to resist
64/3 his will" (Mboza). In order to increase this salutary fear, some
171 chiefs had the curious custom of *disappearing for a time* (tumba) "just like a big caterpillar when it enters the ground and becomes a chrysalis." The same Maphunga used to remain invisible during one week each year before the great bukanye feast (1). We shall see the same rite practised by the great magicians, who also aspire to create a deep impression on the
64/3 imagination of the people. (See Part VI.) As already mentioned, the chief alone must be addressed by the royal salutation "Bayete"
576 or "Baheti." The hosana has no right to it legally, and must be addressed by the term "Baba," "Father." As regards subjects, they are called *malandja*, from the verb ku landja,

(1) This custom is met with amongst the Pedis, where old chiefs abandon their kraals and go to live in the desert for years, leaving a prince regent in their stead. This kind of hermit life gives them great prestige. The Pedi chief Sikororo, near Shiluvane, is the best-known case of such a disappearance. Sexual continence, even repugnance to women, was one of his reasons for this seclusion, which lasted until his death. (1903 or 1904).

643 to follow, the followers. The Chief is the one who walks in front, whom the malandja, the ordinary folk, follow from motives of submission and fidelity, much as a dog follows his master from attachment, but is ready to fight for him should occasion arise.

643 551 The *name of the chief* must not be pronounced on any and every occasion. Should it contain a word which designates another object, the name of this object must be changed. So the Mpfumu chief *Ñwamantibyane* felt that his name was too similar to *ntibu* (diminutive *ntibyane*),a certain antelope. It was henceforth taboo to call this animal ntibu in his territory. It had to be called nguya. Zihlahla, the father of Ñwamantibyane, had gone even further than his son ; his counsellors complained that he gave them no meat to eat, keeping all for himself. "He is a dog," they said. The chief overheard the remark and took action in the following decree : "Let it be know all over the country that *mbyana*, the dog, is I. When you pronounce this word, you will be referring to your chief. I therefore command you hereafter to call real dogs *kalawana*." And this was done for some time. So, in Nondwane, people proclaimed as taboo the verb *ku phunga*, to sprinkle, and replaced it by *ku kweba*, which means to drink, in order not to offend *Maphunga*. This custom of showing respect by avoiding the use of the name of a chief in connexion with ordinary objects, is even extended to other men, if they are of particular note. So a great personage of the Maputju clan having been named Mahlahla, which means small branches, these had to be called mavinda. The prohibition to pronounce the name of the chief can go so far that even names of deceased chiefs are taboo, at least in the Bilen region. So the petty chief of Rikatla had been called *Muzila* after the great Ngoni chief, son of Manukosi and father of Gungunyana. But people used to call him *Mbozin*, fearing lest the warriors of Bilen might say : "What is this ? Where have you hidden him ? Show us Muzila. We assert that he died long ago!"

171 These are traces of the *hlonipha* custom, which is, however, not so much developed amongst Thongas as amongst Zulus.

6

643 The name of the chief is sacred in so far as it is generally used
695 in oaths. When asked to swear, a Nondwane man will say :
551 "Maphunga!" (1)

II. *The Regalia.*

643 Kings everywhere like to adorn themselves with specially imposing objects, insignia of their office, which differentiate them from their subjects. The Thonga chiefs have no peculiar crown — the shidlodlo belonging to all adults (p. 129)—, no special garment, no sceptre and no throne. We sometimes translate by the word throne *shilubelo* viz., the place where one *luba*, pays the tax; but this is only a hut smaller than the others and subjects can also possess it. (See page 313). However there are, in some of these small kingdoms, royal objects which may be called regalia (bukosi bya hosi).

643 Amongst the Nkunas, the chief possesses a large copper bracelet
301 called *ritlatla*, which was bought a very long time ago, in Lourenço Marques, by the Nkuna clan in exchange for tusks of elephants, says Mankhelu. According to others, the ritlatla was made in old times by Natives from the copper, or perhaps from the gold dug by them. The ritlatla was in the hands of the elder branch of the Nkuna clan; Hoshana was its headman, but he had fled into the Ñwamba country during the troubled period of 1855 to 1860. When he died, his people brought the ritlatla to the chief Shiluvane who belonged to a younger branch, thinking that, at his death, the ritlatla together with the chieftainship would be given back to

643
681 (1) Kidd, in his *Kafir Socialism*, has asserted that Bantu chiefs are very jealous and kill their subjects when they become too rich and thus overshadow them. This may be the case in other tribes or when a military government has taken the place of the old patriarchal system. Amongst the Thongas it is not true. My informants could not quote a single instance of a murder committed by a chief for that reason alone. I heard of Shiluvane kilfing a subject called Muhluhluni who had acquired too much power; but Muhluhluni had declared that he wanted to usurp the chieftainship; so it was a case of high treason! A rich nduna, in the territory of Nhandja (Nondwane), was also killed and his oxen taken by the chief because he had tried to abduct one of the chief's wives. But many headmen had as many oxen as Maphunga and were not troubled by him on that account: "Why should he hate them? They could not harm him, as he was protected by the supernatural powers, and they brought him all the more beer as they had plenty of wives and consequently of mealies!"

643 them. But they were disappointed in their hope : Shiluvane kept
301 both the ritlatla and the power and bequeathed them to his son, Muhlaba, as we shall see. Legends are current about the ritlatla. It is said to be able to move of its own will. "This piece of metal is indeed a wonderful thing," wrote a young Nkuna, to me "because when it is buried in the soil, as black people are in the habit of doing with their treasures, a piece of iron must be put inside it to prevent it from going away; if this precaution is not taken, the ritlatla may leave the place where it was and go somewhere else. In the space of one year, it may go as far as the Masetana spruit (about one mile)."

643 Another royal property of the Nkuna family was an *elephant's tusk*, which vanquished enemies had brought as a token of their submission.

643 In Nondwana, the old chief Papele who preceded Maphunga
302 and lived in the middle of the last century, wore a *kind of chignon*
787 or bun made by plaiting his hair, which was a sign of royalty (shifoko). But this custom has passed away. There was also *a long stick* which was kept exposed to the smoke of the royal fire in the sacred hut of *nyokwekulu*, which I shall describe presently, and which was called *ntjobo* and also *mhamba*, viz., offering; this was evidently of religious value to the clan, and was taken outside when the army assembled. It possessed the power of becoming invisible to enemies. Moreover this magical stick was very useful because it warned the clan when some danger was threatening. The ntjobo was then put into a fire; if it did not burn, this showed that the clan had nothing to fear from its enemies; if it burned, it meant that the clan would be attacked and defeated. Then another stick would be prepared and put into the fire with the hope that it would resist it.

643 We shall speak in Part VI of another sacred *mhamba* which most
778 of the Thonga clans possessed, made of the nails and hair of the deceased chiefs in the Tembe clan, and of the dried skin of their faces in the Shirindja clan. It was used as a means of propitiation in national calamities. In the Khosen country, the chief also possessed the *mhamba*. This was a mysterious object which the clan had always possessed, from time immemorial, from the beginning

643 "when the Ba-Khosa had emerged from the reed" (See Vol. II,
604 Part VI, III). Nobody might see it except the chief, who kept it
778 hidden somewhere in a hole amongst the rocks. His uterine nephew alone (ntukulu) knew the place, and when it was necessary to use it in order to pray to the deceased chiefs, the chief and his nephew alone were permitted to approach the hiding place ; those
643 who accompanied them had to stop at a distance. This mhamba
778 is lost. Even the chief Ntshongi, who was the paramount chief of
789 the Ba-Khosa at the beginning of this century, had never seen it. It had been taken by his predecessor Mavabaze and had disappeared during the political troubles of the Gungunyana's war. Thus it is impossible to say of what it consisted, and this will probably never be known. There is no doubt however, that it was used for the same purpose as the mhamba of the Tembe and Shirindja. Its magical and religious power came from the fact that it was anointed with the "nsila" of the deceased chiefs. On the death of a chief, his "nsila" i. e. the layer of filth resting on his body, was taken away and the mhamba was rubbed with it. This gave the reigning
[769] chief the power to influence his ancestor-gods, in accordance with the magic principle : the part influences the whole. It is said that in former times the Khosa chief Shihanyisane having ill-treated his two younger brothers, Malashwane and Shalati, these two men succeeded in taking the chieftainship away from him with the aid of the Ñwamba clan. Eventually Shihanyisane made peace with his brothers and gave over the mhamba to Malashwane : a proof that this mysterious object was in truth considered as the most important attribute of chieftainship.

643 These regalia are not indeed very imposing to the eye. Thonga
789 royalty had no brilliant insignia... But it had more than that!
751 Each clan possessed a special medicine whose magical virtues were greatly esteemed ; its possession made the chief invincible, the warriors invulnerable, the country unconquerable. This powerful charm is called *mbhulo* (Dj.), *mphulo* (Ro.).

Amongst the Nkunas, the mbhulo is called *Ñwantikalala*. It is kept by those belonging to the Mushwane house, and a man called Papalati is responsible for it. It consists of four calabashes, two male and two female (medicines are considered as having sex,

643 see Part VI) called Madyakakulu, Ñwahondyane, Mbengatamilomu,
789 Masemane. The bones are always consulted to ascertain which
751 calabash (nhungubane) must be employed. The uses of this medicine are as follows. Every year it is mixed with the first fruits in the ceremony of *luma*, which will be described later on. In war time the mbhulo is employed to "fence the country." Envoys go to all the drifts on the boundary, take stones out of the river, smear them with the magical powder and place them on the roads, at the crossways ; should enemies invade the country, they will be deprived of their strength. The weapons also are sprinkled with a decoction made of this royal medicine, as we shall see, and it
643 is given to the chief to prevent disease. The father of Papalati was
687 accused of having sold some of this powerful national drug to the Pedi chief Sikororo, an act which amounted to high treason.
643 I have been fortunate enough to be informed of all the rites connected with the royal medicine in the Mazwaya clan. There, it is called *nyokwekulu*, a word which is probably derived from the verb ku nyuka, to melt. Let Mboza tell us, with awe and profound conviction, of the marvels of this wonderful drug. He was present at its preparation in the year 1893, before the war scattered the clan and destroyed its military power.

644 Each year the nyokwekulu is renewed. Its exact composition
789 is known only to one man, Godlela, the royal magician and priest, to whom the care of preparing it is entrusted. This man belongs to the house, or sub-clan, of Tlhatlha. He is very much feared. Nobody dares to dispute with him, and he has the right of cursing even the chief. His function is *hereditary*. His father Malubatilo was in charge of the nyokwekulu before him. The law of succession is this ; when the elder brother dies, the position is held by his younger brother. The headmen of the tribe box his ears and say to him : "You will be the master of the medicine! Take great care of it." When all the brothers are dead, it passes to the sons.

So, when the right time of the year has come, the chief consults the bones. The first thing to do is to send messengers all over the country to find a *forked branch*, a "shiphandje," to which the calabash containing the medicines will be hung.

644 When they have chosen it—it must be the stem of a nkonono
789 tree—they cut it and bring it back to the capital. In front walks the master of the ceremonies, Godlela, and behind him four men carrying the shiphandje. Those who accompany them have the right of entering the villages and stealing fowls. Woe to those who meet with this troop! They will be relieved of all they carry, "because the forked branch of the great medicine of the chief is taboo."

644 The sacred branch having duly reached the capital, Godlela
789 proceeds to the second operation, the *burning of the drugs.*
826 Mboza saw the magician take pieces of skin cut from buffaloes,
237 lions, hyenas, elans, panthers, snakes of various kinds and, last but not least, from the bodies of men, enemies killed in the wars: part of the skin of the forehead, the heart, the diaphragm, the nails, a finger, some ears... All these are roasted
644 in a large pot. On some mats are spread various magical roots
789 cut into small pieces; these are also thrown into the pot. The chief and all the sub-chiefs approach and, with hollow reeds, inhale and swallow the vapour and the smoke which emanates from it (1).

The preparation of the great medicine having been sucessfully accomplished, the great drum (nhumburi) of the capital is brought on to the square, and everybody dances, even women, who take assagais in their hands and sing: "We are thankful if we die (hi tlangela ku fa)" viz., "The country is in security, our invincible medicine is ready! We shall not be killed by enemies
644 but will die a natural death." Before extinguishing the fire which
789 was used to roast the medicines, Godlela takes a little water, pours it on the glowing embers and, when it vaporises with the
782 customary sound, he emits the sacramental *tsu* and prays to his gods, the departed spirits of the Tlhaltha family, as doctors always do, in order to obtain their blessing on the nyokwekulu.

618 (1) The Hlewane sub-clan, which revolted many times against the legal chief and succeeded by its intrigues in provoking the war of 1894, after which it became the reigning family of Nondwane, used to abstain from participating in this "swallowing of the smoke," because, in former years, it had been defeated by Maphunga's people and some of its men killed; their flesh had been used in the concoction of the nyokwekulu. So they feared to go and inhale the odour of their fellow clansmen.

643 The royal drug, having been burnt, is reduced to powder and
789 this powder is poured into the calabashes. The forked branch is planted in the sacred hut, which I shall shortly describe, and the calabashes hung upon it. Each sub-chief receives a calabash and takes it to his kraal, where it will help the district in which he reigns to perform the *luma* ceremony. But the greater part of the powder remains at the capital. There it will be used not only for the luma, and for the sprinkling of the warriors (see Chapter IV), but also for two other purposes : 1) for the protection of the country by means of the wooden pegs ; 2) for the filling up of the magical horn.

1) *The wooden pegs* (timhiko). A certain day is fixed for planting the forked branch in the house where the great medicine is kept. Then the doctor, accompanied by some members of the royal family, steals out secretly during the night and goes to the cross-ways, to the strategic points on the borders of the Mazwaya territory. It is taboo for anyone to meet with the party. He plants wooden pegs, and smears them with the powder. As soon as they have been smeared, they become invisible. No one can see them nor tear them out except Godlela. They do not rot. White ants do not attack them. The country is fenced by them.

Should there be any dispute as regards the boundaries of the country, Godhlela will be called. At once the pegs which were invisible appear ; they come out as much as a foot above the ground. If a hostile army was approaching, it will turn back at once, seized with fear at the sight of these pegs.

789 2) *The magical horn.* The remainder of the powder is mixed
825 with a special kind of honey, the honey made by the small black
787 bee called *mbonga*. This bee makes a large spherical nest deep in the ground. Natives have a number of superstitions regarding it. They say the mbonga honey may be eaten by anybody, but it is only members of certain families who can see the nest and dig for it. For other people it is invisible. (See Part VI.) The Ngwetsa family, in Rikatla, was one of the favoured ones! It must be said that the hole through which the mbonga bees penetrate into the soil is in truth very small and escapes the notice

789 of most people! This honey comes from below. It is a hidden,
825 a mysterious thing. A little of it is added to the drug and the
787 mixture is poured into a double horn, viz., two horns whose large ends are firmly fixed to each other, the point where they meet being carefully covered with dung, which acts as glue. A hole has been made in the upper horn and the drug is introduced through this. It is a great means of divination. When war is imminent, the nyokwekulu begins to ferment, and exudes through the hole : "It knows all about war." So the country can prepare for it. No wonder that this powerful medicine is preserved with superstitious awe and the greatest care.

643 A place of honour is reserved for the magical horn in the
595 hut of the first wife of the chief. In the middle of the hearth
372 a perpetual fire burns ; it must never be allowed to go out ; it
824 is taboo. The wood used for it must be that of a tree found on the sea shore, and called ntjobori. The Makaneta sub-clan must furnish it regularly. It is taboo to take embers from this fireplace, which is called the royal fire, the medicinal fire (ndjilo wa buhosi, wa muri). Should the principal wife let the fire go out, then Godlela must be called on to light it again, rubbing together two sticks of a shrub called ntjopfa. The fire produced by burning this shrub is considered dangerous. It is taboo to cut its branches or to use them for the purpose of warming oneself ; the genitalia are said to swell when this law is transgressed (See Part IV). But Godlela does not fear ; has he not his drugs to protect himself ? He can and must use ntjopfa to re-light the nyokwekulu fire, and he will be given a good reward for his work! The ntjobori, in burning, produces an abundant smoke which leaves a deposit on the horn, on the forked branch and on all the calabashes containing the provision of powder.

643 The queen Mimpanyanhoba who was in charge of the
372 nyokwekulu had no sexual relations with the chief on that account.
595 I do not know if absolute continence is always enforced on the
784 keeper of the sacred fire, as was the case for the Roman Vestal Virgins. But I have been told by Mboza that this woman prevented her co-wives from coming near her hut ; it was taboo.

643 The grass of the roof of this hut must never be removed, though
784 it may rot owing to the rains. It is taboo. One simply puts
356 a layer of new grass over the old one, a thing which is rarely done in the case of ordinary roofs.

643 In case of war, should the clan be obliged to leave the country,
789 a special little hut is hastily built in the bush and the precious medicine is deposited therein. There is no fear that the enemy
722 will take it, either Whites or Natives, because this hut also has the attribute of invisibility. This happened during the war of 1894 (1). In the case of the *mhamba* of the Tembe and Zihlahla clans it is different; the man who keeps it must run away with it and with the chief.

643 Such are the laws of the mphulo. This great medicine may
789 certainly be regarded as a part of the regalia, and the most important part. It is, for the chief and sub-chiefs, a means of strengthening their authority, as will be seen in the description of the luma rite. On the other hand the mphulo is a collective possession, the powerful magic means by which the clan resists its enemies or conquers them. It occupies the very centre of the national life.

789 In the Manyisa clan the war-medicine is called *mabophe*, and is
726 kept by a man called Chikiza, who belongs to the Ntjeko clan, not
643 to the royal family. He is said to have inherited it from his
787 forefathers. The medicine however belongs to the chief. It is administered as follows. The *ñanga* prepares small heaps of wood on the road, pours a little of the drug over them, sets fire to them and the warriors tread on the embers and extinguish the fire with their feet. This makes them invulnerable or at least protects them against fatal wounds. When they are ready to start for battle, the bones are thrown, and give the following intimation :
643 "Do not kill the first enemy you meet with, but catch him alive, be
789 it a man or a woman, and bring him to the chief." The chief, accompanied by some indumas, must stab him outside the royal
726 kraal ; the body of the deceased enemy will then be cut open, and

(1) In the Nondwane the nyokwekulu is still kept by the heir of Maphunga, Magomanyana. The new chief, the usurper, tried to find it, but Godlela refused to give it to him. Thus Mubvesha has no *mphulo*.

789 the fat collected in order to mix it with the war medicine, the flesh
726 being left to the dogs to eat and destroy.

In some clans, chiefs possess *other personal charms* which are
643 very much dreaded and called *psitjemba*. So, in the Maluleke
789 clan, each of the children of the ancient chief Mashakadzi received
237 from him one of these psitjemba. It consists of a part of the skull of a child, the top of the head, where the pulse is seen beating at the fontanella. This has been smeared with the vitreous humour taken from the eyes of lions or elephants, and powders made from the skins of wild beasts. The possession of this charm gives the chief a supernatural power. If, being irritated with you, he invokes his gods by sucking it and emits the sacramental tsu, he can call on any wild beast he likes to kill you... He has sacrified with the psitjemba ; you will die!

643 Some chiefs of the Northern clans used to *swallow one of the*
787 *stones* found in the stomach of a crocodile. It is said that
825 crocodiles, when cut open, are found to contain a certain number of stones, as they are supposed to eat one each year, when the rainy season comes on. One of them is chosen and smeared with special medicines and swallowed by the chief. Natives firmly believe that this stone remains in the body of the chief, and that it is "his head, his life" (Viguet). When it is passed in his stools the first time, this is a premonitory warning. When it occurs a second time, it is a clear announcement that the chief is about to die. So chiefs can always know when their time is near. In other clans the crocodile stone is replaced by what is called *ndjalama*. Amongst Nkunas this word designates a kind of bright copper button, which the Pedis of the Palaora mine used to make and sell. But ndjalama also means large sized beads. Whatever it is, some chiefs swallowed the ndjalama and were warned by it of their death. This object, as well as the crocodile stone, is taboo for subjects to swallow. They would die. It is "buloyi bya hosi" — "the magical power of the chief."

643 On account of these powerful and dangerous charms possessed
619 by them, chiefs of different clans regarded it as a taboo to stay in each other's company ; they were afraid lest they might be killed by the magical power of their colleagues. Maphunga

643 seems to have been particularly feared. He had even bought
619 poison from white people and is said to have killed his rival, Musongi, chief of the Maputju clan, with whom he fought the battle of Malangotiba in 1870. He sent a woman of bad life to Maputju. The woman succeeded in winning the confidence of the king and poured this poison into his glass. Nowadays the Ronga chiefs have been taught by the Authorities to sit in council when discussing matters.

643 The two principal prerogatives of the chief are the right of *luma* and taxation.

III. *The right of luma, and the first fruits rites.*

181 We come to a set of rites which might be dealt with when
241 considering the Agricultural life, but I prefer to describe them here, as they provide us with a typical illustration of the constitution of the clan ; they are highly characteristic of the Bantu community, a community which is essentially agricultural in its pursuits, animistic in its beliefs, and hierarchic as regards its social and national life.

643 We have already met with the word *luma* and noticed that
262 its ordinary meaning is *to bite* ; its ritual sense is to *remove the*
784 *injurious character of a given food by a certain ceremony*. The luma
527 is a necessity before eating the flesh of certain wild beasts, as we
241 shall see when studying the laws of hunting (See Part IV). But it is of still more importance, and one of the great laws of the clan, that the official luma shall take place before the subjects eat the products of the new year. There seem to be two ideas at the root of this strange taboo :

1) To eat certain kinds of food is dangerous for one's health, and the first mouthful taken must be seasoned with the royal drug.

2) The gods, the chief, and elder brothers, have a prior right to enjoy the products of the soil. To precede them in doing this is a sin which would bring them misfortune. The hierarchy must be absolutely respected.

643 The law of luma seems to have applied to all kinds of food
262 in former times. Nowadays it is not observed for the following
171 products : maize, Kafir beans and peas, rice, sorghum, water
527 melons (makalabatla) and monkey nuts. It is partly observed
241 for mafureira almonds (tihuhlu), strychnos paste (fuma) and pumpkin leaves (magawane). It is strongly enforced for black Kafir corn and bukanye. Such is at any rate the case in the four clans of Nondwane, Mabota, Ñwamba and Tembe. Amongst the Zulus and Swazis on the contrary, I have been told people luma maize and do not luma kafir corn. Kafir corn is probably the most ancient cereal amongst the Ba-Thonga, and bukanye has always existed in the country. This is perhaps the reason why these luma rites, which bear a very old character, are still applied to these products to the exclusion of other more modern cereals.

I. *The luma without a religious ceremony.*

631 Let us first study the less ritualistic kind of luma, the luma
262 of the *mafureira almond*, for instance. It is practised in each
643 sub-chief's village, and, though it is tending to become obsolete,
527 it is still enforced by some "tihosana." Thus my neighbour in Rikatla, Habele, the hosana placed by Mobvesha over this part of the territory, met some time ago a boy who was eating these almonds, the description of which I shall give later on.— "Who gave them to you ?" asked Habele... The child kept silent.—"Come with me to your parents!" Having found their home, the sub-chief scolded them severely : "You have started sucking (munya) the almonds before us. You wanted to kill my head ? Pay a fine!" They answered : "The birds made them fall from the tree... The children were not guilty!" However they had to pay 500 reis.

262 The luma of almonds, which takes place in December, when
643 they are ripe, is performed in the following way. The almonds
527 are dipped into a small calabash full of water to soften them. Some of the powder of the nyokwekulu is added to them. The headman first takes some for himself and then distributes them to his people. They suck the almonds, take in their hands the part

262 643 527 which is not eaten, and rub their faces with it. But *no religious ceremony is performed.* It is the same for the *fuma*, a paste made with the contents of the kwakwa fruit, a kind of Strychnos very similar to the nsala, but of a different taste. The ceremony was even more simple than with the almonds ; the chief used to send a little of this paste to each village saying : "Let this be the first bite you swallow : the new year has come!" (Luman, ku tlhese nguba.) No powder was used in connexion with it. The magical drug was used, on the other hand, when the luma of pumpkin leaves took place.

II. *The luma of the Kafir corn.*

262 643 782 769 796 The great, the official luma, amongst the Ronga clans, is that performed for the Kafir corn (mabele). The great wife of the chief grinds the first grains of Kafir corn reaped in the fields. She cooks the flour in a pot and pours into it some of the royal powder kept in the calabash, so as to make a *shimhimbi* (See page 42). The chief takes a little of the food and offers it to the spirits of his ancestors, at the main entrance of the royal kraal. He prays to them in the following terms : "Here has the new year come! Precede us, you gods, and luma, so that, for us also, Kafir corn shall help our body, that we may become fat, not thin, that the witches may increase the corn, make it to be plentiful, so that, even if there is only a small field, big baskets may be filled! (Nguba hi yoleyi! Rangan ñwine, mi luma, ñwi Psikwembu! Na hine, mabele ma tjhama amirin yeru psinene, hi kuluka hi nga wondji. Abaloyi ba yandjisa, psi tala ngopfu, nambi shi shisi-ñwanyana shi shiñwe, a ku tale tingula!)"

262 643 796 554 609 After this religious ceremony everyone luma in turn, the chief first, then the sub-chiefs, then the counsellors, then the warriors who have killed enemies in battle, then the headmen of the kraals who have all been summoned to the capital. Should one of the headmen be prevented from coming by illness, his younger brother will not precede him. He will bring him the *shimhimbi* in a leaf ; the elder will take it, and, after him, the other brothers. Women do not eat the magic powder. Neither do strangers,

262 even those who are settled in the clan. They have their own
643 medicine and luma for themselves, though they must not do it
609 before the chief of the country.
796

III. *The luma of bukanye and the great national feast.*

137 The most characteristic of all these ceremonies connected with
273 the first fruits is the luma of bukanyi. Tobane has given me a
796 circumstantial description of this feast and it deserves to be
824 reproduced in all its details, as being a typical manifestation of Bantu national life.

The *nkanye* (1) is a large tree, one of the finest in the country. Its botanical name is Sclerocarya caffra (Sond); it is generally known amongst the English of Natal as the Kafir plum.

It bears fruit of the size of a greengage, which when ripe is a beautiful golden yellow and has a strong flavour of turpentine and a penetrating odour. It is a dioecian tree, the male bearing bunches of flowers while the female has single flowers. The Natives are quite aware of this ; they cut down the male plants but take care to keep a few in each district to fecundate the female. The fruit — the kanye — begins to ripen in the month of January and falls to the ground. The odour is perceptible everywhere, and it is then that the principal men of the country approach the chief and say to him : "The time has come to luma."

In the luma of the bukanye it is easy to discover four consecutive ceremonies :

a) The luma of the gods and of the chief.

262 The first ripe makanye are gathered and pressed at the capital,
782 and the sour liquor thus obtained is poured out on the tomb of the deceased chiefs in the sacred wood ; they are invoked to
273 bless this new year and the feast which is about to be celebrated.
796

(1) Nkanye, plural minkanye, is the tree in question. Kanye, plural makanye, is the fruit of this tree ; bukanye is the drink made from this fruit. In the same way the wild apricot tree is called mphimbi, plural mimphimbi. The fruit himbi, plural mahimbi ; the drink made from the fruit, buhimbi.

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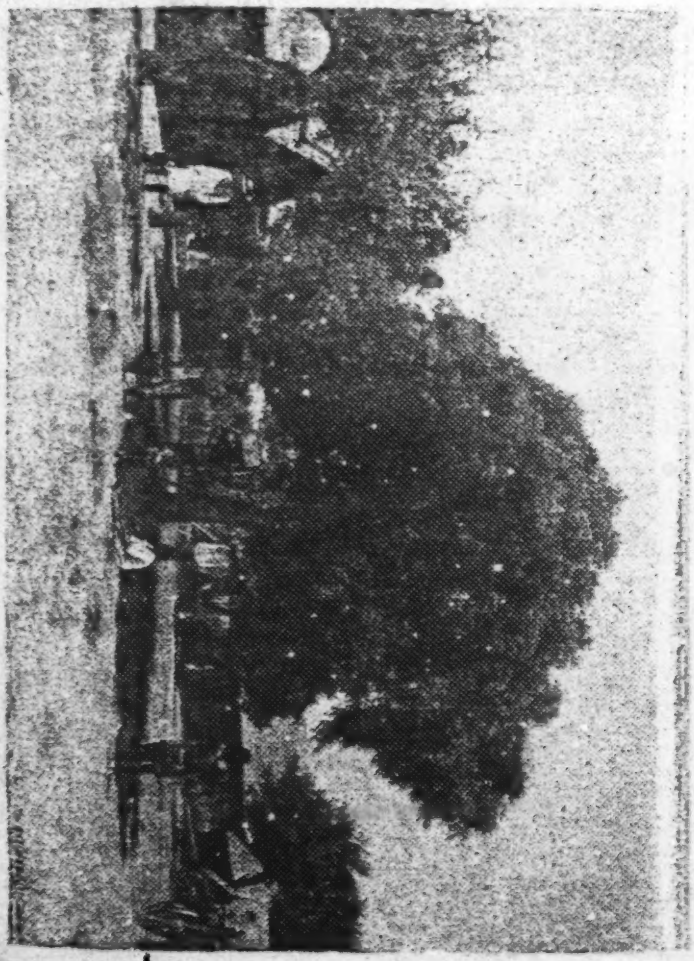
Nkolele, the sub-chief of Libombo, used on this occasion to pronounce the following prayer : "This is the new year. Let us



The "Nkuya" of Rikat', (16 miles North of Lourenço-Marques). Phot. P. Rankord.

not kill each other! Let us eat peacefully! (Hi yo nguba! Hi nga dlayane! A hi nwenen ha hombe!)" Here is another

262 formula : "May this bukanyi do no harm! May we not slay each
782 other under its influence. May it cause no serious quarrels."
796 They are afraid that, during the general intoxication which will
273 shortly prevail, quarrels will arise, some of which may terminate fatally. During the whole month of bukanye drinking, all business is at a standstill, just as with us all bankruptcy proceedings and all prosecutions for debt are held in abeyance for two weeks during the New Year holidays!

The gods having luma first, the bones are consulted. Should the throw be propitious, the chief will luma next ; thus the opening ceremony of the feast is concluded.

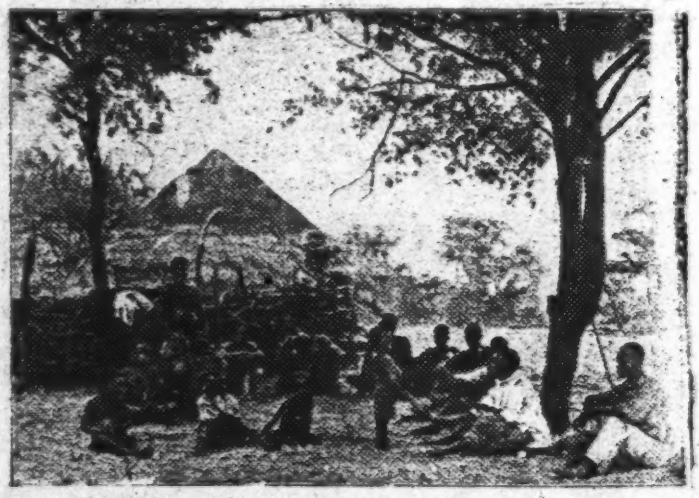
b) The luma of the army.

796 The young people are now assembled to clean up the public
273 square and all the roads ; the ball room must be prepared! The women of the capital start out early in the morning, beating the *psibubutwana*, that is to say sounding the call that is produced by striking the lips (bu-bu-bu-bu), and they go all over the country gathering the golden fruit ; this is piled up in an enormous heap on the public square and the brew is proceeded with in the following manner. The makanye are pierced (tshunya) with a pointed wooden splinter ; the stone falls covered with a transparent white pulp into the jar ; into this jar is also squeezed out with the fingers all the juice which remains in the pulp adhering to the skin ; this is continued until the jar is half full, when the stones are taken out, and on the following day the pressing is resumed until the jar is full. On the third day the beer has sufficiently fermented to be pungent and agreeable to the taste and is ready for consumption. Empty barrels are easily procurable in the environs of Lourenço Marques. The women of the capital brew ten or fifteen huge casks of the precious liquor! This accomplished, the second ceremony begins.

796 A convocation of the entire male portion of the tribe is held in
273 the capital, but the first to respond to the call must be the men,
789 the warriors of the army, who come in full array, with all their
701 ornaments, and carrying their small play shields. One cask of

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

796 beer is selected, into which is thrown the black powder, the
273 great medicine of the land, called in this case *buhlungu bya*
789 *miluru*, the powder of the miluru. The nuru, plur. miluru, is
701 the mysterious spiritual influence which a man or a beast killed
761 by the assagais can exert on the slayer, making him lose his head and commit acts of folly, or, at least, have red eyes (shenga mahlo). We shall again meet with this curious conception when



Bukanye drinking near Antioka. (Portuguese East Africa.) *Phot. A. Bard.*

studying the rites of the army and of hunting. All those who are proudly conscious of having killed a man in war must first drink the new beer which has been medicated to keep them from killing any of their compatriots during the ensuing weeks of the bukanye. They approach one after the other, the chief also, if he be a man-slayer. Each of them receives a small calabash, (ntcheko, p. 50) full of the fermented liquid. He jumps and runs in the direction of the entrance, drinks a mouthful, spits it out with *tsu* and says: "Father and mother! May I live! May I hold the calabash! Even to morrow! For ever!" People laugh. He is very happy! Others sing and dance the war dance:

796 "We drink the bukanye anew! Who would have thought that
273 we should drink again from this cup", viz., "that we should have
789 escaped all the dangers of war" (Hi nwa nkanyi lomu'mpsa! Afa
701 hi nga hlayi epsaku hi ta nwa ntcheko lo kambe).

After this, the casks are distributed to the other warriors, who drink to their hearts' content. The addition of the black powder is not absolutely necessary in their case. They can luma without it. Then the war circle is formed and the principal counsellors harangue the assembled warriors, giving them the following advice: "Drink in peace (ha hombe). Let no one spoil this bukanye by transfixing his brother with his assagai. Go and drink in your villages. Do not pick quarrels with strangers passing through the country, etc." The gathering then disperses.

c) The luma in the village.

796 The preparatory luma is accomplished. The *yila* has been
273 removed. Now comes the third act: the drinking in the villages.
786 The women who remained at home while the men-slayers went to luma at the bidding of the chief, have gathered large quantities of makanye. The tree is to be found extensively all over the country, as no female plant is ever cut down; there is one or more in every field, and every one possesses such a tree, as every one owns a field; when all the trees in the gardens have been stripped of fruit, the women pass to the trees growing in the bush far from the villages.

But here also everything must be done in right order of precedence; the petty chief of such a district must commence to luma in the presence of his subjects, and not until after he has done so can the people drink freely in the villages. From this moment, however, there is no further restriction. Drinking continues day and night, night and day! When the supply is finished in one village, they go to the next. These feasts are the saturnalia, the bacchanalia, the carnival of the tribe! During these weeks some individuals are in a continuous state of semi-intoxication. Orgies on all sides, songs and dances! The younger men run along the paths, with a more or less unsteady

796 gait, brandishing sticks with pieces of red cloth attached as
273 pennants. They are in search of full barrels! It must be said
786 that the inebriety produced by the bukanye is of a rather mild type, as this Native beer contains very little alcohol ; but the quantity absorbed is so enormous that it ends by going to their heads : this is more especially so with the bukanye brewed from a species of nkanye called *nunge*, which appears to be stronger and more intoxicating.

796 How far does sexual licence go during the bukanye ? Not to
273 the point of general promiscuity, as amongst the Ba-Pedi after the circumcision school. However many cases of adultery occur.
833 Men and women forget the elementary rules of condvet. They
786 attend to the wants of nature in the same places, which is taboo under ordinary circumstances : "Nau a wa ha tiyi,"—"the law is no longer in force."

796 Still, in the midst of all this carnival, the payment of the tax
273 must not be forgotten... This is the time to carry to the chief
643 the liquor which is flowing so freely on all sides, but of which
651 he claims the lion's share. Each petty chief sends his people to the capital with brimming jars. This is termed "lumisa hosi," supplying the chief with new wine. The women do not enter the capital at once, but go to one of the counsellors, who promptly abstracts a couple of jars for his own use. The chief returns one or two jars to the carriers, as they have come a long way and are doubtless thirsty ; the remainder will be kept to refresh the very numerous guests at the Court ; any coming from afar will spend the night and not return until the next day. I have seen a company of these women carrying baskets
539 full of makanye to Muzila. How graceful was the Indian file winding its way along the path and singing, amongst others, the following chorus : (See for further particulars *Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, page 46.)

Chwe! Chwe! Hi laba shimungu — Leshi ka — Le tilwen!
Chwe! Chwe! Shimungu hi mani? — Hi Mzila! — Hi Mzila!
Hi! Hi! We seek the hawk! — Who soars — In the sky!
Hi! Hi! Who is the hawk? — It is Mzila! — It is Mzila!

539 There is quite a collection of these carriers' songs praising the chiefs. Mzila (or Muzila), whom we saw a short time back scaring sparrows, is here compared to the mythical lightning bird, to the hawk that swoops down from the clouds. (See Part VI.) Why does he not once for all annihilate the sparrows which pillage his fields of sorghum ? But this is poetry! and there is often a wide gap between poetry and reality!

d) The feasting of the chief in the villages.

796 The fourth and final act of the bukanye feasting in which, as we
273 have seen, the chief plays a prominent part, is the *nsungi* which
643 may be called the "fin de saison" orgy. The chief now returns the visits of his subjects and casks of beer are prepared for him in every village. Dancing and singing are in full swing. He is fêted and acclaimed! But the makanye are getting over-ripe ; a new month, a new moon is at hand, which is called *sibandlela* "she who closes the roads ;" the paths leading to the foot of the trees become almost impassable, owing to the grass which grows to an incredible height during the rains prevailing at this season. The fine weather is over. Winter is knocking at the door.

796 Amongst the Nkunas the luma ceremony called "to eat the
789 new year" (dyaka ñwaka) is performed with a special pumpkin
643 (kwembe) cooked at the capital together with the medicine used for rain-making. The chief first eats of it in the evening and
262 makes the sign of a cross on the big drum, which is then beaten
821 to call the people in his village. Then all the men come, bringing the little horns in which they keep the rain medicine (See Part VI). They eat a little and smear the rim of these horns with the medicine ; the horns also must "eat the new year." Then everybody can enjoy the products of the harvest. Should anyone precede the chief, this would be fatal to the latter or make him ill... Such is the testimony of Mankhelu. I suspect these rites to have been influenced by the proximity of the Ba-Pedi. "Now we have no longer any first fruits' feast (mulumo)," says Mankhelu with some melancholy. "White people have killed it. Everybody

262 eats freely in his house according to his good pleasure. Formerly
821 we used to take the oxen of the man who had dared to steal the
796 new year."

Conclusion on the luma rite.

796 All these luma rites[1] of first fruits seem to have primarily a *religious*
782 *origin*. The Bantus do not feel that they dare enjoy the products of
552 the soil unless they have first given a portion of them to their gods. Is it not these gods who make the cereals grow ? Have they not the power even of controlling the wizards who bewitch the fields ? These rites are also evidently dictated by the *sense of hierarchy*. A subject must not precede his chief nor a younger brother the elder in the use of the new harvest, else they would kill those in authority. Such an act is against order. We shall see that, even when the seeds are sown, the elders must take precedence. But the custom seems also to have been actuated by the idea of *passage*. There is a passage from one year to another. For the Thongas, I think the new year begins
805 twice every year : it begins when tilling recommences, in July, August,
796 when the heat returns. This is the hlobo. It begins a second time at
789 harvest, and then there is passage from the food of the last year to the food of this year. This is the nguba (Ro.) or ñwaka (Dj.). Though the luma rites do not bear all the characteristics of a true passage rite, like those of circumcision or moving, we may observe in the luma of bukanye a kind of marginal period of general licence, when the ordinary laws are more or less suspended. The taking of a first mouthful probably signifies the aggregation to the new period, the magical powder used on this occasion being a protective measure to shield them from the calamities of this unknown year... And after all, is it not that feeling of fear which so easily takes possession of the heart of man when entering on a new state and starting something fresh, which has led the savage to surround the use of the first fruit with so many ritual precautions ?

IV. *Taxation.*

643 The chief governs (fuma). *Fuma* means to command, but also to live in plenty, to be rich. The subject (nandja, follower) obeys ; he follows the chief who marches before him just as the

1 [See pp. 394-404 in these categories c. in 116-Analyst]

643 wife in the path follows her husband who walks at his ease, with
651 his stick in his hand, whilst she carries his belongings in her basket
641 on her head... If the prerogative of the chief is to live in abundance, the duty of the subject is to pay taxes! This duty is expressed by the word *luba* (Dj.), *hlenga* (Ro.). It is so true that this is the principal function of the subject that, when a man leaves his clan and goes to live in another clan, he comes to the chief and says : "I want to *luba* or *nkonza* (a word borrowed by the Rongas from the Zulus), to pay the tax..." This is the proper way of making his submission.

643 The explanation of the rites of the first fruits throws much light on the Bantu conception of the chief's position in respect to his subjects. For them he is certainly endowed with the divine right more fully than the King or the Kaiser in any European country ; he is the *son* of the gods, not only their protégé... The gods are the lords of everything... He shares this lordship with them. Hence his right of taxing his subjects. On the other hand we saw that he is the *soil*! He is more than Lewis XIV, who could say: "L'État c'est moi!" The Bantu chief can say : "I am the earth! — Le sol c'est moi!" Hence, on the part of the subjects, the duty of sharing with him the products of the soil and also of their hunting.

643 The Thonga chief taxes his subjects in four different ways :
651 he takes a regular portion of the harvest ; he claims a part of
241 most of the wild beasts killed ; he makes his people work for him ;
273 he also taxes the revenue of those who go away to work for the Whites. A fifth source of his revenue is found in the fines imposed in judicial cases.

1. As regards *taxation of the products of the soil*, it consists in a basket (shihundju) of mealies contributed by each village at harvest time. This is the regular taxation. Moreover those who brew a great quantity of beer for a feast always send some jars to the chief, especially when the season of tilling the fields or threshing the grain has come. This is not a regular tax, at least amongst the Ba-Ronga, and is considered as *mashobo*, an act of civility, and not as *hlenga* proper. Bukanye must be brought to the capital in great quantities during the great national feast.

643 651 In the Northern clans it seems that these payments in kind called *shirwalo* (carrying of beer, from ku rwala, to carry), are expected from all those who are not hunters and bring no meat to the capital.

643 651 224 825 2. The right of the chief *over wild beasts killed in hunting* is not the same for all game. Rhinoceros is not taxed ; it is even taboo to bring its meat to the chief. On the contrary when a man has killed a wild buffalo, an elan, a giraffe or an antelope, he must first cut some joints for the chief. If it is a panther or a lion, he must give up the skin ; if an elephant, the tusk which scratched the soil when it fell belongs to the chief ; it is "the tusk of the soil," and the chief is "the soil." The other tusk is for the hunter (ndlayi). In the Maputju country, it was even forbidden to kill elephants. Ngwanazi, the chief who was deported in 1896, had reserved the monopoly of elephant hunting for himself and his warriors. The hippopotamus is taxed more heavily than any other beast. The hunter who has succeeded in killing one has not the right of cutting it open. Should he do so, it would be considered a serious offence. He might be put to death. (Mankhelu.) He must at once send word to the capital, and the men of the Court will come immediately and cut up the animal, taking half the joints to the chief. As for the crocodile, it must also be opened by the men of the Court, because it contains many things such as marvellous stones used in magic, and bracelets of the women whom it has devoured. The chief appropriates what he pleases amongst these objects.

643 466 3. *Statute labour* is one of the main revenues of the royal kraal. In some cases, subjects must come to the capital, led by their sub-chiefs, and till a field for the chief or rather for the queen who has been bought with the nation's money. In Nondwane, which is a large country, each of the sub-clans must till a field for the wives of the chief in its own territory. For instance, in each of the districts of Mapulangu, Bandi, Manuel, Maghebeza, Malwan, Hlangunyingin, the chief Mubvesha possessed a royal field which his subjects weeded and harvested every year, and the sub-chief Habele, who was in charge of those districts, had to gather the mealies and carry them to the capital. This official tilling is done

643 in the form of a *djimo*. (See Part IV.) Moreover the young
466 men are always at the disposal of the chief to clean his public square; build his huts, repair the thatched roofs of the royal kraal and organise hunting expeditions for him.

643 4. But the greater part of the royal revenue consists now in
651 *money* which the chief receives from his subjects. Mubvesha taxes each village a sum of 500 reis besides the regular basket of mealies. At the end of the bukanye feast, each village must send him another 500 reis to notify him that the feast is ended. When a young man returns from Johannesburg having made enough money to lobola a wife, he must leave £ 1.10.0 in the hands of the chief. The latter also recruits boys whom he sends to the recruiting agents, getting as much as £ 1 or £ 1.10.0 per head. When a sub-chief dies, his people inform the paramount chief of his death, bringing a sum of money (1500 reis). The chief, however, does not receive any portion of the inheritance in the case of a death. There is no taxation on the succession.

643 5. A great deal of money comes into the hands of the chief
651 *owing to fines which he imposes* when acting as supreme judge.
681 When a plaintiff brings a case and the culprit is condemned to pay him £ 25, Mubvesha keeps £ 10 for himself; he retains £ 5 if the fine is £ 10.

643 Sub-chiefs do not tax their subjects as a rule. They must
631 bring to their superior all the products of taxation. They do
651 not "eat" anything. But in some cases the chief gives them a part of it. Thus Habele, sub-chief of Rikatla, used to "eat" half of the taxes brought to him by young men coming back from Johannesburg.

V. *Dangers and difficulties of the Chieftainship.*

643 Endowed with supernatural power which he owes to his magical
554 medicines, feared and sometimes loved by his subjects, with plenty to eat and richer than any of his people, who readily consent to be taxed, the chief occupies an enviable position. The chieftainship (buhosi), therefore, is very much sought after and no

643 one refuses to be a chief. Thonga tales recounting the story of
538 some one who succeeded wonderfully in life often conclude by
177 saying that this person was given a territory and became a chief...
554 which seems to be the highest reward of virtue or wisdom. Nowadays, however, one may meet with cases where the heir to the chieftainship, having become a Christian, renounces that high position because he feels that there is an incompatibility between the Bantu way of ruling and his new faith.

643 But it would be a great error to think that a Thonga chief is, or can be, an autocratic despot. This may have been the case with Chaka, Lobengula or Gungunyana, when the tribe became an amalgamation of clans held together by military power ; in order to maintain their usurped authority, these chiefs had to be cruel despots. But this is a late development in the Bantu political system. I am now only taking into consideration the primitive form of tribal life, which is the clan life.

For a chief dangers may arise from three sources : from his own character, from the Thonga system of government itself, and from the law of succession.

1) The character of the chief.

A chief who wishes to succeed in his government *must have a good character*. If he imposes taxation, he must not use his wealth in a selfish way. For instance, when women bring him a *shiwalo* of a dozen pots of beer, he must give them back one or two to quench their thirst. Moreover he must distribute most of the remaining pots to his men, who are on the *bandla*, always ready to share with him the advantages of his position.

Should he buy oxen with the product of the fines, he will be wise to slaughter one from time to time for his counsellors and for the whole clan. A chief who is good (a ni timpsalu) is said to *maintain* or to *save the country* (bekisa tiko). If he does not do that, he is severely criticised. Mubvesha, who used all his money to buy wives, and prevented all the men from seeing them, whilst he himself was too old to content them, was considered

643 a bad chief. He did not even allow "bandla," viz, the gathering of men in the capital, because he was full of jealousy (mona). If he had not been placed in the chieftainship and supported by the White Government, he might have been deposed. Cases in which a chief has been deprived of his right and replaced by another man are not wanting (1). I have even heard of a chief in the Shiridja clan who was put to death. Deposal is generally proclaimed by a council of the royal family.

To reign over a Bantu clan requires much tact, ability and patience. The chief must be a father to his people and not a tyrant (2).

2) The system of government.

643 595 In order to keep in touch with his subjects, a chief generally places his wives in the various provinces of his little kingdom

(1) The annals of the Nkuna tribe provide an instance of the deposal not only of a certain chief but of the elder branch of the royal family, owing to an act which hurt the human feelings of the clan. We have already met with the name of Shithlelana, son of Nkuna, who lived at least 300 years ago. His principal wife was Nwahubyana. In his old age he was very ill and the woman, fearing lest he should die in her hut, drove him away; he was obliged to take refuge in the hut of another of his wives, Nwasimba, mother of Rinono, and died there. Then the headmen assembled and said: "As Nwahubyana has driven away her husband from her hut, she has also driven away the chieftainship from her son. He shall not reign. Rinono shall reign because he is the son of the woman who took care of the sick chief." This story, in which we see the sacred law of succession transgressed for a moral reason, is most interesting because it provides a good illustration of the conception of the clan regarding chieftainship, and proves that, even in ancient times, feelings of humanity could have more weight with the tribe than an article of the royal code.

643 524 (2) Two interesting Thonga riddles illustrate this disposition to criticise chiefs. The first riddle enigmatically describes the characteristics of an unworthy chief; it comes from the banks of the Limpopo:

Bupsa ga shinale. — Hosi leyi i ni mona...
Some cyclamen flour. — This chief is full of hatred...

The shinale — a word which I translate by cyclamen — is a plant which grows on the ant-hills, bearing large tubercles; these can be cooked and ground into flour; but it is only good in appearance, the taste is unpleasant and nauseating. This chief is bad! He is like that flour! Corruptio optimi pessima!

Here is another riddle which holds the chiefs up to ridicule rather wittily:

Timindji tihiri ti rendjeleka tchuka. — Tihosi tihiri ti hleba nendja.
Two mice chase one another round an ant-hill (They will never meet)
— Two chiefs malign a subject. (They also will never meet, i. e. agree.)

Each wants to have the last word and will therefore depreciate the arguments of his opponent. He will seek to disprove the statements of the other chief, making fresh ones which the latter will seek to refute in his turn!

643 and pays them regular visits, staying some days in these secondary
595 capitals.

643 But a more effective way of holding the country is to place
631 his son or his near relatives as sub-chiefs in all these districts.
171 If the son is still young, the chief will send along with him a trustworthy counsellor to watch over him. Thus, when he dies, and when the elder son is called to the succession, the new chief will have his brothers as co-chiefs or sub-chiefs. Should they be ambitious, should they have acquired some power during the last years of their father's government, they may refuse to obey and proclaim themselves independent. This has happened many times amongst the Rongas. Let me shortly recapitulate the three instances already mentioned. In the Tembe kingdom Maputju, who "ate the foreleg," made himself king of the greater part of the territory. The separated brothers became fierce enemies and often fought against each other, all the more as Tembe greatly resented the revolt of Maputju, and Maputju knew he had not been fair to his elder brother (p. 329). The same thing happened when Matjolo became independent of Mpfumo, his elder brother ; both were sons of Nhlaruti. The origin of the war of 1894-1896 was the same ; Mubvesha, belonging to the Hlewana branch of the Mazwaya family, wished to become independent... even to take the chieftainship from the elder branch to which Maphunga and his successor Mahazule belonged.

So the Thonga clan has a tendency to fall to pieces, just like the Thonga village, and it requires a good deal of firmness and diplomacy on the part of a chief to keep his kingdom intact.

3) The law of succession.

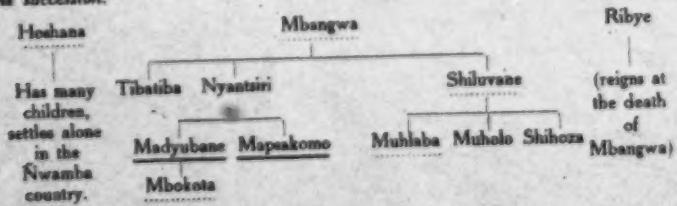
643 Its main provision is this ; when a chief dies, his elder son is the regular heir, but all his younger brothers must reign before the son, the true heir, is crowned. This system attempts to reconcile two principles which we have already met with as governing the family life : 1) the absolute preeminent right of the elder branch, 2) the community of property amongst brothers.

643 But whilst they may be reconciled in ordinary life, these two principles become antagonistic when carried into politics, and this law of succession has been the source of endless disturbances amongst the Thonga clans. It is true that the younger brothers of the chief, when taking his place, are looked on more or less as princes regent, holding office on behalf of their nephew, who is the lawful heir to the throne. They are said to "make him grow" (kurisa) to "keep his tumbler" (hlayisa ndyelo).

But if the former chief died in youth, and if his younger brother has lived and reigned for a long time, and has become very popular, he is very much tempted to appropriate the chieftainship for his own family and to order the tribe to crown his son, to the exclusion of the son of the first chief, who belonged to the elder branch, but who has been more or less forgotten during all these years. This leads to conflicts and fighting. The lawful heir will contest (*banga*, a Zulu word) and a *mubango* (civil war) will follow. Or, if he is not able to fight, he will keep to himself, full of bitterness, and ready to seize the first opportunity of asserting his rights.

643 Such a usurpation has twice taken place in the Nkuna tribe.
175 It is not easy to know exactly what happened, because there
721 are conflicting statements. Those who hold the chieftainship do not tell the story in the same way as those who consider that they were robbed of their right. This is the testimony of one of the latter, Mbokota, son of Madjubane. There were three brothers, Hoshana, Mbangwa and Ribye (1). During

(1) *Genealogy of the Nkuna family showing why and how contests arose for the succession.*



The names of the chiefs who reigned are thus underlined .....
The names of those who were deprived of the chieftainship, thus ———

643 the disturbances caused by the Ngoni invasion, Hoshana fled
175 to the Ñwamba country and lost touch with the main body
721 of the clan which settled in the Transvaal. He however possessed the *ritlatla* (p. 385). On his death the royal appanage was brought to Shiluvane, but it never went back to Hoshana's children, who lost their right for ever. Mbangwa had three children, a daughter, Tibatiba, and two sons, Nyantsiri and Shiluvane. On his death, his younger brother Ribye reigned. He died, and then the chieftainship came back to Mbangwa's children. In the meantime Nyantsiri had died, but he had left two children, Madyubane and Mapsakomo. Madyubane, the elder, was still a child. So Tibatiba, the elder sister, said to Shiluvane : "Take the elephant tusk belonging to the Nkuna royal family and reign in the place of Nyantsiri ; but you have only to 'keep the tumbler' of Madyubane." Shiluvane sold the tusk and bought wives, beads and clothing for himself. Madyubane died some years later ; but he had a younger brother, Mapsakomo, and also a son called Mbokota. The chieftainship ought certainly to have returned to the elder branch. Mbokota told me himself that Shiluvane, before he died, ordered his counsellors to proclaim him as chief. So, on Shiluvane's death, a great contest arose. The headmen came to the capital and asked which son of Shiluvane had been designated by the late chief as his successor. No one dared reply, because there were four men who claimed the chieftainship : Mapsakomo, a younger brother of the legal heir Madyubane, Mbokota the son of Madyubane, Muhlaba and Muholo, both sons of Shiluvane. The great counsellor Shikhibane then said : "I heard Shiluvane say he wished Muhlaba to reign." The headmen accepted this statement, but the other pretenders greatly resented it. Seeing that many Ba-Nkuna were opposed to Muhlaba, Shikhibane assembled the whole tribe in arms to proclaim his protégé. He wanted the army itself to manifest its will. Mbokota, Mapsakomo and Muholo protested. But the warriors took Muhlaba, who was still a young man, and brought him to his new residence in an epic march all through the country during which they sang the war songs. The contest was finally settled by the Boer Authorities ; Captain Dahl, then Native Commissioner for Zoutpansberg,

643 confirmed the choice of Muhlaba. The Pedi queen Magayibia,
175 of the Nyarin clan, also asserted that she had heard Shiluvane designate this young man as his successor, and the other pretenders were obliged to keep quiet. But they remained very discontented (1).

I have seen another similar case of the elder branch losing its right on account of a younger brother placing his son on the throne, to the exclusion of the legal heir. It happened amongst the Ba-ka-Baloyi who took refuge in the Mudjadji country. The sons of Nkami, younger brother of Shitshabe, tried to seize the chieftainship to the detriment of Munyamana, son of Shitshabe, and this gave rise to a war in consequence of which, however, Munyamana regained his right. (See S. A. A. A. S. Report of the Meeting of 1905. Vol. III, page 251.)

All these facts tend to show that the position of the chief is attended with many dangers and difficulties, not to mention those which arise from the presence of the White Government, with which I shall deal later on.

643 So it must be recognised that the Thongas have not been able to discover a political system guaranteeing the peace of the country in a satisfactory way. The habit of dividing the power between brothers who soon become rivals, and of allowing the younger brothers to reign before the legal heir, both tend to destroy the unity of the clan and give rise to quarrels and unrest. Another bad consequence of these features of the royal right is this ; a chief, when he ascends the throne, will do his best to *get rid of troublesome brothers* in order to reign alone and to ensure the chieftainship to his son. This has often happened, especially in the case of Maphunga, chief of Nondwane, who killed as many as four brothers or near relations : Sitjobela, Ñwanambalana, Zulu and

(1) I remember one day paying a visit to Mbokota, and hearing him complain bitterly about his fate. He had tried to show his independence by establishing a separate circumcision school for his people so that they should not go to the "sungi" of Muhlaba. The chief did not prevent him from doing this, but he had just sent a messenger to claim the fees paid by the boys. Mbokota was much grieved at being obliged to remit them, and, if he had had enough men, he would certainly have revolted. But he had but a handful of warriors. He was not popular amongst the tribe, so he did not think it wise to "banga" and eventually submitted to Muhlaba.

643 Gigiseka. The last named was very courageous, and the cunning Maphunga succeeded in poisoning him treacherously, through the agency of a dissolute woman.

E. DEATH.

643 When a chief has grown very old, he no longer goes out of
[763] the royal hut. His counsellors take his place in the management
766 of affairs and he dies surrounded by mystery. It must be so, as his death must remain unknown during a whole year. "We reap and we bow down (korama)" viz. "we till the ground and reap again before the event is made public (palusha)" says Mankhelu.

So the chief is buried during the night ; no lamentations are heard ; his wives and his grave-diggers undergo the purification ceremonies and take the vapour baths in secret. It may be that the wives who dwell in remote places will not hear a word of their husband's death. The fire of the royal hut will not be kindled in the usual and ritual way, but it will be kept burning the whole year. The decease is formally announced to some few individuals, to the White Government officials, to the heir (who views the corpse), and to the counsellors, but the rest of the country is supposed to be in ignorance of the occurrence. Of course the secret will not be kept absolutely. The truth will leak out... But no one will dare to speak openly on the subject (1).

643 A special hut is set apart into which the counsellors enter under
645 pretext of discussing matters of state with the chief, who is said to be very ill and unable to show himself. As a matter of fact, he has been buried for some time.

(1) I was staying at Nondwane when Mapunga, the chief who preceded Mahazule, died, and I heard on several occasions, in June and July 1891, the warriors practising on their antelope horns the airs to be played when the mourning should be made public. The death must have occurred during 1890, but nothing was said about it. After the news had been published, Mangasyele, a young heathen of the district of Libombo, remarked to me one day: "When last season (about Xmas 1890) we saw the miphimbi (trees bearing fruit similar to an apricot) so heavily laden with fruit, (there had been an exceptionally heavy crop), we felt sure the chief must have died and that he had sent us this plentiful supply..." A typical remark, aptly illustrating the semi-ignorance in which the tribe is kept of the death of the chief.

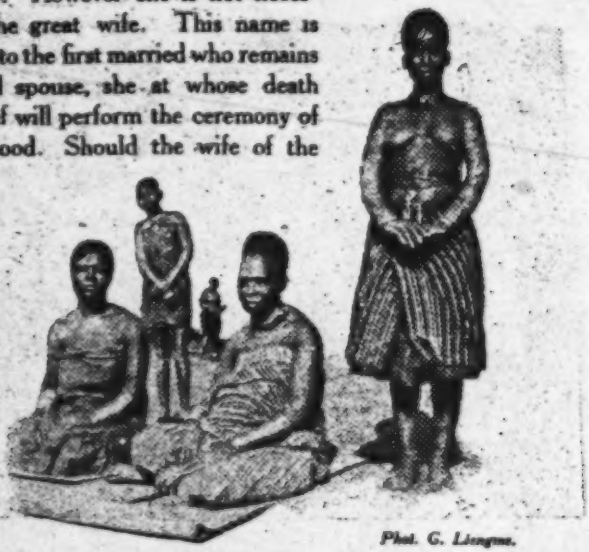
643 What is the reason for this silence ? According to the old
645 men I consulted, it is to prevent enemies taking advantage of the
766 confusion consequent on the death of the chief to attack the country. Undoubtedly this custom is also intended to give the principal counsellors time to prepare for the installation of the new chief and to prevent bloody contests.

643 The grave of the chief does not differ from those of his subjects.
766 As it has been dug secretly in the sacred wood (ntimu), its whereabouts are not known to most of the people. In some clans or sub-clans the earth of the tumulus is levelled, so that no sign whatever remains to show where the body has been buried. This is said to be done in order to prevent enemies from exhuming the corpse and cutting off the ears, the diaphragm and other parts of the body to make powerful war-charms (See Chapter IV). The graves of the chiefs of Nondwane are said to be invisible, just like the hut of the nyokwekulu. They are known by Magomanyana alone (Mboza). (Magomanyana is the nearest relative of the late Maphunga, the only brother whom he spared).

When the year of secrecy is over, the official proclamation of the mourning is made. (Ba palusha nkosi.) The people come to the capital, clan after clan, sounding their fanfares on trumpets of antelope horns (bunanga, see Chapter III), and bringing with them an ox or a goat. These animals are slaughtered and their bladders are presented to the heir, who pins them into his hair, so that, without any official proclamation having been made, every warrior at once recognises the future chief. All heads are shaven in sign of mourning, the adult men remove their wax crown (p. 129) and the people are clothed in *malopa* (a blue cloth) ; but as the death is not of recent date and has been known more or less for some time, the outward manifestations of grief are reduced to a minimum and dances follow in their train. The delegates from the adjoining countries also come to express their condolences. When all have paid their respects, the mourning is really ended (nkosi wu yu l). The King is dead, long live the King!

As we saw, amongst the Nkunas the proclamation of the death of a chief is made on the same day as the installation of his successor.

643 595 As regards the queens (tinkosikazi, a Zulu word), the chief's wives, there is not much to say about them. We have seen that one of them occupies a particularly honourable position, having been bought with the people's money and being "the wife of the country," she whose son will be the heir to the chieftainship. However she is not necessarily the great wife. This name is applied to the first married who remains the real spouse, she at whose death the chief will perform the ceremony of widowhood. Should the wife of the



Phot. G. Liengme.

Ngoni Queens.

country die and should she not be the first married, he will not go through that rite on her account.

643 562 Princesses are lobola with more money than ordinary girls. Except in this, they do not differ from them. It is not common for a woman to be called to the dignity of chieftainship amongst the Thongas; in this respect they differ from the Ba-Pedi, or Transvaal Ba-Sutho, who have had many illustrious reigning queens: Modjadji, Male etc. I only know one such case amongst the Rongas, and the queen was still living in 1912. Her name was Midambuze, daughter of Dambuze. Dambuze was the chief of a part of the Mabota country, northward of Lourenço Marques.

643 On his death, his son Gwaba was put in his place. But he was
562 deported by the Portuguese and his sister, Midambuze, filled the
582 position. Consequently she was not lobola, but chose a husband for herself, a man of common origin (a titlhuba nuna). Her son may succeed her ; in this case only can a uterine nephew of a chief take his place.

643 At Gungunyana's court queens played a great part. This
834 seems to be in accordance with the Zulu custom. After the death
847 of Chaka's mother, sexual relations were taboo for the whole tribe during one year, and children conceived during that time were put to death by order of the chief! (See Colenso : Ten weeks in Natal.)

643 I know of no case in which a foreigner became chief of a clan through having married one of its princesses. He can become hosana, but the true hosana will be his wife and he himself will be but a prince consort. I have heard of two instances in which this happened.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

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CHAPTER III

THE COURT AND TRIBUNAL.

644 Although Royalty makes but little display amongst the Ba-Ronga, still each chief is the centre of a court of more or less brilliancy.

A. THE VILLAGE OF THE CHIEF.

644 466 The village in which he resides is not called *muti* (as is the case with the ordinary hamlets of his subjects), but *ntsindja*, that is "the capital." It is generally larger than the ordinary villages, is built by the young men of the tribe, after the marriage of the chief, and is also kept in repair by them, one of their principal duties being to keep the public square in a state of constant cleanliness and to weed it at certain seasons of the year.

644 One of my countrymen, Dr. J. de Montmollin, visited the capital of the Tembe clan in July 1900 and took some interesting photographs of it. The whole village was surrounded by a high and thorny circular fence, much stronger than is the case with ordinary kraals. The inside of the fence was divided into two parts ; the front part, to which the main entrance gave access, and the back part with the huts of the queens. The front part was the square (hubo and bandla) with shady trees, under which visitors were sitting ; there was only one hut on it, on the left side near the fence ; the back part comprised the huts of the queens, which were separated from the square by a high wall of reeds, carefully built, and in which only a few narrow entrances were left. The traveller was told that access to this kind of gynecium was taboo for all

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

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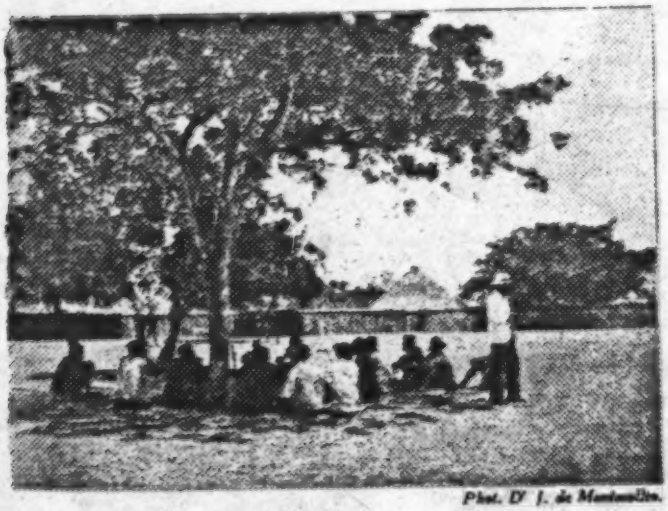
Phot. Dr J. de Montmollin.

Main gate of the Tembe capital.



Phot. Dr J. de Montmollin.

The "hube," square of the Tembe capital
(The huts of the queens in the background, behind the reed wall).

644 the men. However he was allowed to visit it Behind these huts were two passages between poles carefully arranged, one leading to the pig-sties, another to the bush. The photographer was told that this was intended to secure an exit for the queens in case of war... I suppose it had a more common and practical use in every day life! They are the *psiruba* of the queens (p. 311). In the royal kraal these back entrances are taboo.

517 It is on the square that the men of the neighbourhood love

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Phot. Dr J. de Montvoll

Back gate with hen-house.

to meet in the morning, when they come to pay their respects to the chief; they sit down in groups and discuss the news of the day; this is called, as we have seen, "ku ya bandla," "to go to the men's square." Everyone is welcome there, not only members of the reigning family, but also those of the clans conquered by the present chiefs, (as the Hoñwana, Mahlangwane etc., in

273 Nondwane. Page 357). There is no lack of beer, made from

517 maize or millet, when crops have been good, the women frequently bringing brimming jars to the capital; the daily visits

644 of the men are not therefore altogether disinterested.

B. COURT PERSONAGES.

644 Amongst those most frequently seen at the Court, must be mentioned the Counsellors, the Favourites, the Herald and the Official Vituperator.

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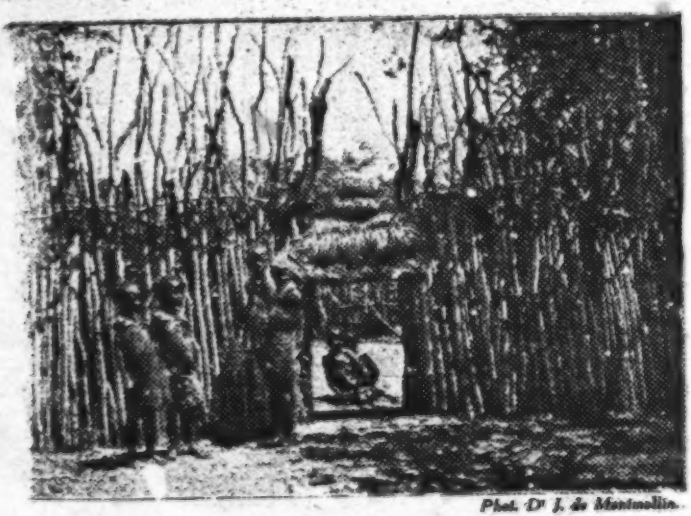


Phot. Dr J. de Montmollin.

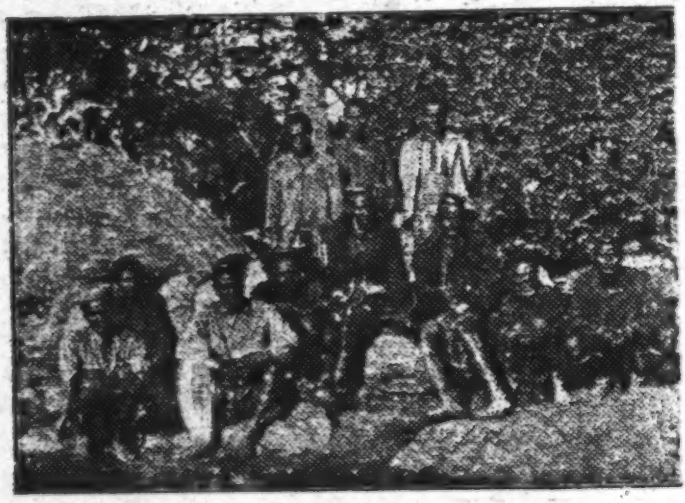
Back gate.

1 *The Counsellors.*

645 The Counsellors, tindjuna (1), constitute a Cabinet which assists the chief in carrying on the functions of Royalty. There are several grades of these functionaries; first the Principal Counsellors (letikulu) whose province it is to discuss and decide

(1) The Zulu word *induna* is well known and has been more or less adopted in current speech in South Africa. The Thonga form is ndjuna, pl. tindjuna. I employ both these forms indiscriminately.

645 the more serious questions which affect the country. These are generally the uncles of the chief, or men of riper age from the collateral branches of his family. In Nondwane, during the war of 1894, it was Magomanyana and Mundulukele, brothers of the late Maphunga, uncles of the then reigning chief Mahazule, and later on Ñwakubyele, who had charge of the interests of the eastern portion of the country, together with Ñwambalane.



Sundusa, Chief of the Malulele clan, with his Counsellors (N.E. Transvaal).

These tindjuna watch over the chief, and have the right of finding fault with him if they are not satisfied with his conduct.

In the second place come the Military Counsellors, the Generals of the army (tindjuna ta yimpi) who direct fighting operations, (Shitleñwana in Nondwane, Mpompi and Mahagane in Zihlahla).

Then there are Counsellors who are especially entrusted with the business of the adjoining countries, whom we might call Agents General, one being appointed to represent each country. We have already seen that these officials form an indispensable link in the diplomatic, and even in the matrimonial relations, between one kingdom and another.

645 If these men are intelligent, they acquire great influence with the chief and may even be able to impose their will upon him. This was the case in September 1894, when the young king Ñwamantibyane was prevented by his counsellors from obeying the summons of the Portuguese Government, who claimed his assistance in fighting Mahazule (See App. XI). They often act as a useful counterpoise to the autocratic power of the chief.

Lastly we find another category of Counsellors, those appointed by the chief in the various districts to act as overseers or magistrates, to adjudicate the petty differences of the people; they must refer to the capital all important affairs (timhaka), the quarrels which the head of the village is unable to settle, and all matters which can only be judged by the chief, to whom they are of the greatest assistance in his decisions, being past masters in the art of Bantu reasoning.

The tindjuna are thus a complete organisation, as necessary to the chief as they are to the orderly development of tribal life.

II. *The Favourites, or Messengers.*

644 177 When the chief is crowned while still young, he gathers around him a circle of personal friends of his own age who are called *tinxekwa*. This is a Zulu word, and it would seem that this custom has been borrowed from the Zulu court procedure. In Ronga they are called *tinyumi*, which means messengers, and they generally build a *lao*, viz., a bachelor's house, near the capital, to be ready to answer any call. They partake in the games of their royal comrade and also in his feasts, but they have no official authority.

III. *The Herald.*

On one occasion I happened to be the guest, together with one of my colleagues, of the chief Ñwamantibyane, long before there was any question of the war of Lourenço Marques. Stretched in

644 our hammocks, which we had fixed to the roof inside a hut placed at our disposal for the night, we were trying to sleep when, about 4 a. m., we were awakened by an extraordinary sound; it was in a very high key, words sung, shouted, volubly and monotonously, in fact a most peculiar and never-to-be-forgotten musical production! Further sleep was impossible, and for more than half an hour we were obliged to submit to this ear-splitting performance:

"Yethi (Bayete), we hosi, wene shitlangu sho ringana tilo, mathathala i tinyeleti, nkungu wa shone i hweti! We! nkandji wa ku wona, ku baleka minambyana!" — "Bahete! O chief! You shield us as heaven! The marks of this shield are like the stars! You who trample dry ground so that rivers at once spring forth!"

644 It was the *mbongi wa ku pfusha*, the herald sounding the reveille;
826 an individual who has "the chest well developed," as they say in Ronga, which does not mean that he is sound in the wind and possesses healthy lungs, but that he is a man of great eloquence. In our tribe the chest (pectus) is held to be the seat of knowledge
644 and of the gift of oratory! Every morning, before sunrise, this royal flatterer comes to the door of the chief's hut and sings the glorious deeds of his ancestors, recalling their names and acts of prowess; to these praises, he adds a general disparagement (sandja) of the chief himself, referring to him as a coward, a child in comparison with his father, his grandfather and all his noble deceased progeniters. "Lead us to battle! Show us what you can do!" And the chief must be awakened every day by this strange concert, which sometimes lasts for hours!

The flatterer likes to accompany his chief when he goes to visit the Whites. In front of the offices of the Municipal Council of Lourenço Marques, I once witnessed the arrival of Sigaole, chief of Matjolo, who came thither to look at Gungunyana, taken prisoner by the Portuguese in January 1896; his *mbongi* was among his following. This was an old man, named Mabobo. Dressed up in a jacket, by no means too clean, and with a cap on his head, he yelled the praises of the royal family of Matjolo; this was in Zuju and doubtless in a special terminology.

644 He shouted like a madman and no one took the slightest notice of him!

When the chief kills an ox and possibly some little delay occurs in distributing the meat, the *mbongi* is the duly qualified beggar who goes to claim the soldiers' share. He addresses the chief much as follows : "Don't you see all those men in your village ? Are they not dogs ? Why do you starve us ? You only give meat to the women... Is it women who will defend you when the enemies attack you ? etc. etc." At the coronation of the chiefs it is this herald who sings their praises in the procession I have already described. Strange to say, the *mbongi* is allowed great licence and may even insult the chief without provoking his anger ; on the contrary, the herald is respected and a special portion of meat is reserved for him. Any one can aspire to the office provided he be sufficiently garrulous.

The most eloquent of the Thonga heralds whom I ever met is Mawewe, the mbongi of the Nkuna clan. He was an elderly man in 1900 and had a long career behind him, having been the mbongi of Manukosi. "I used to praise him from morn to night (ndji peta dambu) and he gave me a heifer as a reward." As the French writer Buffon used to put on his cuffs before writing, so Mawewe, when he intended to praise his chief Muhlaba, adorned himself with the tail of the nsimango antelope, with the feathers of the nkulunkulu (the bird of the chiefs) and of the eagle, with the skins of snakes, of the reed buck, and of the leopard, and with the nails, teeth, or hair of elephants, rhinoceros and hippopotamus ; then he began :

644 539 Muhlaba Shiluvane, (1) you are like the rhinoceros who seizes a man, bites him through and through, rolls him over and cuts him in two! You are like the crocodile which lives in water ; it bites a man! You are like its claws ; it seizes a man by his arms and legs, it drags him into the deep pool to eat him at sunset ; it watches over the entrance to prevent other crocodiles from taking its prey... Muhlaba! You are like the ram ; when it butts with its head, it knocks a man down ; like a goat, like the son of the goat, which is herded by the boys,

(1) Father of Muhlaba.

644 which is very cunning : it pricks up its ears, it prepares itself for
539 defence, when attacked!

Tail of naimango, you are like Muhlaba, you are of a great beauty, you are shining inside the forest, the black forest, you are sparkling, kati-kati-kati, (1) a man may truly fear when he sees you!

Give them meat, that they may all eat! Give your men the foreleg,

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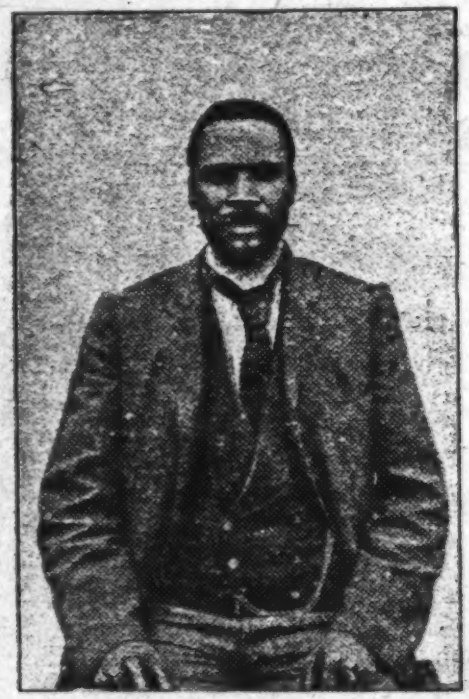

Muhlaba, the Chief of the Nkuna clan. *Phot. A. Boral.*

give them the hindleg, that they may all eat to their hearts' content... Pull their legs forward (ba koke milenge), so that they fall back in terror of you!

Why do you govern them so mildly! Look at them with terrible

(1) Descriptive adverb.

r 644 539 eyes! You are a coward! The Bveshas want to kill you! Act with bravery and defend yourself!

Muhlaba Dabuka! Men are coming, oxen are coming. You are on the top of the hills, you are like heaven which roars... The lightning is like you, it is full of strength, it is terrible! Your saliva is white, your eyes are beaming, your face is elongated, your body is like the stone of gold (auriferous quartz); your fingers are long. You are known in every country. At Gungunyana, they know you. At Ngwana (Swaziland), they know you. The Zulus know you! At Mosilakatse, they know you. You are like the grass on the road; when people trample on it, they crush it to the ground, but when the rain comes, it grows again and covers the earth. You are like the water of the river, how beautiful! The water is clear and pure, though impurities may float upon it, they pass away and the water is pure again!

The Bveshas weep at Sikokoro's kraal! (1) They weep at Sikhukhunu's! You have taken their charms! You have sprinkled your warriors with them. Muhlaba, you have beaten them with the shaft of the assagay, your men crossed the river, they went to kill the enemies in their own kraal!

You are like the ostrich feather, the white one, very white, or the red one of the bird which cries tswe-tswe, the bird called rivi, which adorns the chiefs!

At Nyarin, (2) they dispute chieftainship (banga buhosi); they are going to kill each other. Mapsakomo says: "It is mine!" Muholo says: "It is mine!" Shirundju (3) took him (Muhlaba) in his arms... Mankhelu is like the duiker antelope! They catch him by the ear and he escapes from their hands! He is like the water of the well: they draw it off... it springs up again and fills up the well. (Viz., Mankhelu is never tired when defending the cause of Muhlaba.)

Run, go and tell Mandlamakulu, Shiluvane's brother: "The

(1) In 1901, there was a Native war in which Muhlaba and the Pedi chief Maaghe fought against their neighbour Sikororo and his ally Sikhukhukhu, heir of Sekukuni. On the 7th of November a fierce battle took place in Shiluvane where the assailants were repulsed and more than forty of them were killed. (See App. X)

(2) Here Mawewe makes an allusion to the circumstances in which Muhlaba took over the chieftainship and which have been explained when dealing with the law of succession. The capital of the tribe was still at Nyarin, at that time, viz., in the hills near New Agatha. (See page 413.)

(3) One of the great counsellors who took the part of Muhlaba as did also Mankhelu and Shikhibane.

644 power belongs to me." Run, go and tell Mpapalati : "The power
539 is mine." Run, go and tell Mulondjo : "The power is mine!" (1)

Such is the laudatory song of Mawewe, one of the great men at the Nkuna court. Undoubtedly this is one of the best examples of Thonga poetry and a characteristic piece of primitive literature. In the savage tribe the mbongi is the prototype of the poet laureate of civilised Courts. But there is yet another functionary to be considered, whose dutie sare still more strange than those of the herald.

IV. *The Public Vituperator.*

(Shitale sha tiko.)

644 This is a kind of Court Jester who has the right of casting the
522 vilest insults, the most disgraceful accusations in the teeth of
578 any and all the Natives of the country. He never abuses strangers, but as long as he confines his vituperations to his own countrymen, he enjoys perfect immunity.

Even the chief is not safe from his attacks ; he dares to say anything! "Just see him arriving in your village," said Tobane to me, in his picturesque language. "He begins shouting out the most frightful things. He accuses you of incest, of taking your own sisters as wives! Even if he sees you talking to your 'great sister-in-law,' whom your wife's brother married with your oxen, whom you treat with the greatest respect, he will not hesitate to pass remarks which will make you blush with shame! He will go and take the food you are cooking, will even snatch from the chief's hands the meat he is eating... So, when you see him coming to your village, you hasten to meet him and take him a present to try and avoid having to listen to his horrible insults. Sometimes the *shitale* of the country behaves

(1) Quotation of the words of Muhlaba himself, who sent messengers to all his uncles, to all the petty chiefs under him, to announce officially that he had assumed the chieftainship.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

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himself quite nicely, stays in his own village and attends the national assemblies as quietly as any other person, but, once he begins to rattle off his vituperations, beware! Nothing will stop him! He respects nothing, human or divine!" The Court Jester is of undoubted Thonga origin, as old as the tribe itself, according to Tobane. The position is official and even hereditary. At Zihlahla it was Ñwachapane who held the extraordinary post of Public Vituperator. In Nondwane it was Mutjunkwa of the Shibindji family. He insulted the chief with the word : "Musathanyoko." There was also a woman who dared to do the same to Maphunga.

Phot. P. Berthoud.
Mohwela, the dwarf.

It is difficult to understand the raison d'être of this strange institution. Is the *shitale* a public censor, to whom the tribe entrusts the privilege of calling attention to facts which others would not dare to bring to light ? Is there some analogy between this "fool" of an African Court and Triboulet ? (1) I cannot say.

(1) In this connection I reproduce from a photograph, taken at Shiluvane in 1885, the portrait of a remarkable personage who was not a Thonga but a Pedi, a subject of the chief Maughe. Although this extraordinary dwarf did not act officially as the Vituperator, he was widely famed for his witty sayings and his incomparable mimicry. The Native Commissioner took him to Pretoria and Johannesburg some years ago as a curiosity, and it seems that he was exhibited for money ! The name of this little man is Mohwela, a veritable ethnographic phenomenon, although he is not exactly the Public Vituperator of the country.

C. SUNDRY COURT CUSTOMS

644 The paraphernalia of royalty are very modest in the Thonga courts. However there are some to be mentioned in addition to the regalia which I have described.

I. *The Big Drum* (Muntshintshi).

644 534 237 This is found in every capital, even sometimes in the sub-chief's villages. It is made of a hollowed stem, somewhat like an ordinary mortar; or it may be rounded, and even provided with three legs, as in Nondwane; a piece of skin is stretched over the opening. This may be the skin of an elephant's ear, of a buffalo, of an ox or of an antelope *mangulwe*. This instrument is subject to some taboos; when the skin cracks, it is forbidden to look inside. There is something mysterious about it and nobody must disclose that mystery. People say that a bullet is introduced into it when it is made. In Shiluvane they asserted that the skull of the hostile chief, Sikororo, killed in the battle of Nov. 1901, had been put into the big drum! At any rate, there is a special individual who is summoned to repair it and he receives a fowl as reward.

644 534 731 202 The big drum is beaten on various occasions:

a) To announce a great fatality, especially the death of a chief, or the day of the publication of the mourning; also the approach of the inundation, when the Nkomati river rises, in January or February, and threatens to cover the whole land; again when the bush fire threatens to destroy the capital.

b) To summon warriors to the capital in case of imminent war.

644 534 c) To execute various musical performances. The big drum leads a special dance (nkino), which takes place at the capital during the winter, when the harvest is ended, and the country happy and prosperous. It is accompanied by a smaller drum (shikolombane) which is called the "son" of the big one. The

644 534 *shikolombane* is more elongated and has no legs. Its sound is high and piercing, while the tone of the *muntshintshi* is deep and low. The music proper of this dance is provided by the *bunanga*.

II. *The Bunanga.*

533 644 This is the regular *band*, which is met with in every royal clan. The word comes from *nanga*, trumpet (pl. tinanga). But the trumpets composing the bunanga are not the common pierced tibias of goats used by the herdboys. They are larger horns of the mhalamhala (Hippotragus Niger), or of the mhala (Zulu impala), pierced at their base in such a way that they produce different tones. These instruments are made by specialists, (it was Nwamatshomane in Nondwane), so as to form a kind of orchestra (simo) composed of ten instruments. To play them is a veritable art. The players stand round the two drumbeaters. The big drum gives the time : when it beats slowly, "tu-tu-tu," the ten musicians must dance in a ring, viz., they must march after each other, playing, making certain grimaces and gesticulations. When the drum beats more slowly and more softly, they must retire in a line and march slowly. The drum quickens the time : then they come to the centre once more and dance in a ring, quicker and quicker. The executants follow each other in a given order, the largest and deepest horn being in front, the smallest and highest toned one at the end of the group. Sometimes three or four orchestras perform at the same time (1).

The bunanga is an old Ronga custom and is very picturesque indeed. As for its musical importance, I shall refer to it again in Part V.

533 609 (1) I remember having heard the bunanga practising in the various sub-class of Nondwane in 1891, as each sub-chief had his own. They were preparing to go to the capital to mourn Maphunga whose death had just been announced. I saw the bunanga performing in best melodies before Lord Selborne, when he came to pay a visit to the Portuguese settlement of Morakwena in 1908. The Administrator had organised a "batonga" for him (the name given by the Portuguese to these native dances), and the warriors of Nondwane did their best to interest the White Chiefs!

III. *The shipalapala.*

643 534 202 Speaking of the musical instruments of the Court, I must also mention *the trumpet of assembly, shipalapala,* which is the recognised means of summoning the subjects to the capital. The sound of the big drum, though heard at a great distance, cannot reach to the confines of the country. So, when the chief wants his men to assemble at once, he uses the *shipalapala.* This is a horn of mhalamhala, or of nyala or of phifa antelope, the sound of which is like mpu-ù-u (with an accent on the second syllable). The envoy of the chief runs to the capital of a sub-chief, blowing all the time. When he has reached that village, he transmits his message and a young man starts at once with the shipalapala of the sub-chief to another district. So, in a short time, notice is given to the whole tribe to assemble.

IV. *Visitors.*

643 609 574 When a stranger passes through the capital, he must sit down outside the central square and at some little distance from it. Some one will come and inquire what he wants ; he replies : "I come from such and such a country, and I wish to pay my respects to the chief." Then the counsellor or "Agent General" charged with the affairs of the traveller's country will come and converse with him and announce him (bika) to the chief, who will receive him affably and possibly assign him a hut to sleep in, in case he wishes to stay the night, at the same time providing him with food. Should the chief be particularly well disposed towards his guest, he will kill a calf or even an ox for him ; and he, on his return, will speak in praise of the hospitality he has received, saying : "The chief made me share his reign," literally : "He made me reign, (a ndji fumisile)." Such is the procedure when the respective countries of guest and host are adjoining and the tribes

643 on good and friendly terms. Should relations between them be
609 at all strained, or should war be imminent, all the roads would be
574 closed and no one allowed to enter the capital.

V. *The Kondza custom.*

641 The chief is also approached by those who may wish to become
643 subject to him, to be naturalized ; this is called *kondza*, from a Zulu word conveying this meaning. The chief will assign to the new *nandja* a dwelling place, and he will be incorporated in the nation without further ceremony. By this kondza, he binds himself to pay the taxes (See the story of Mutipi. *Les chants et les contes des Ba-Ronga*, page 164).

Naturalised strangers, however, do not eat the first fruits (luma) with the same drug as the people of the country. They have their own medicine and take it according to their own rules. They are however forbidden to luma before the chief of their adopted land (p. 397).

VI. *Diplomatic relations.*

648 We have seen that these are very carefully conducted, each
202 of the neighbouring clans having one counsellor entrusted with
726 the care of its affairs. In case of war, friendly clans frequently
224 make alliances (shinakulobye). They send messages to each other, or they have special means of communicating news in case of war. Supposing, for instance, Ñwamba and Nondwane should fight against Matjolo. They put two traps at their common boundary, on the side of the road, one on the territory of Ñwamba and one on that of Nondwane. These traps consist of a rod bent by a string fastened to the ground. Should the army of Matjolo have made an invasion during the night into Ñwamba territory and put the people to flight, the men of Nwamba

202 726 will at once go and undo the trap which is on their side ; in the morning, the people of Nondwane will know that they must also fly.

D. THE TRIBUNAL OF THE CHIEF.

642 In the Thonga Court there is no separation of powers. The legislative, executive, and judicial powers are all in the hands of the chief, aided by his counsellors. The chief is the supreme authority and his decisions are without appeal.

1. *Legislative affairs.*

671 643 The *chief* makes the laws (p. 382) and presides at discussions which end in a resolution. But his counsellors assist him.

583 Here is an example of such a decision taken at Maphunga's court. There was no uniformity as to the money to be paid for a lobolo, and some fathers claimed as much as £ 20 or £ 30 for their daughters. The great counsellors of the capital decided (tjimba mhaka, viz., to tie the matter) that a lobolo should be £ 15.10 as the maximum. They "tied the matter" with the assent of the chief. Then all the sub-chiefs and counsellors were summoned to the capital. The chief called the roll to ascertain if they were all present. The great counsellor then said to the assembly : "The herds which people claim are too large. Have you gold mines and do you know how to make coins ? Henceforth do not lobola with too much money. £ 15.10 is quite enough!" Every sub-chief, on his return home, called his men and informed them of the decision : "Hi to timhaka! Such are the matters!" said they. The subjects were disappointed. They wept! But they had to accept the decision. To oppose it is taboo! "Psa yila!"

643 645 671 A *native debate* or discussion is conducted on very different lines from those to which we are generally accustomed, nothing ever being put to the vote. The chief presides. A proposition is

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

643 put forward in short sentences, generally interrogative, by one of
645 the counsellors. The assembly listens in silence until the mover
671 concludes with an energetic "Ahina," being the equivalent of "That's all right." (See p. 354.) Another individual elaborates the matter further, saying: "Did you not hear what he said? He said so and so." This is the way of seconding the motion. The debate proceeds, and, little by little, objections are brought forward and the assembly comes to a decision.

[142]

It often happens that the chief does not say a word; when he see that the counsellors are agreed and if he has no objection, he merely shows his assent by nodding his head. So the decision is arrived at without his intervention and without any vote being taken. The voice of the majority has not been ascertained by any show of hands, but it is generally perceived by intuition in a very remarkable way, and grave counsellors, who have been squatting in a circle all through the discussion, jump to their feet and disperse, knowing perfectly well what has been decided. If however the counsellors do not agree, they put the matter into the hands of the chief, and the chief, after having listened to the arguments pro and con, "cuts the matter" (tjema mhaka) by some short sentences, after which everybody must shout the royal salutation: "Bayete!"

Phot. A. Burel.
An habitué of the Nhuna Court.

643 When there are two parties present, the debate is conducted
609 according to other rules. For instance, if a stranger wishes to
645 have speech with a chief or to proffer some request, he is generally
671 accompanied by a counsellor. The chief, together with some of his men, receives him either in the hut, if the affair must

643 be secret, or on the square, if there is no objection to making it
609 public. The chief and his men sit on one side, the visitor on
645 the other; if he wishes to conform strictly to all the laws of
671 etiquette, he will first explain the matter to his own Agent General, who will communicate with the chief's special counsellor, repeating the words of the visitor, sentence by sentence; the counsellor will, in his turn, communicate with the chief, again telling him the whole story, as if he had not heard a word of it before. The affair will thus have passed through three hands and the answer should, in due formality, be given through the same channels. These precautions, which seem eminently superfluous, even somewhat ridiculous, to a person unacquainted with Bantu etiquette, evidently proceed from the fact that there are no stenographers or secretaries to furnish any written record of the proceedings, so that it is necessary to have as many witnesses as possible and that these should thoroughly understand the matter under consideration.

II. *Judicial Cases.*

1) Sense of justice.

671 As has often been remarked, the Bantus possess a strong sense
183 of justice. They believe in social order and in the observance
641 of the laws and, though these laws are not written, they are
609 universal and perfectly well known. The law is the custom,
554 that which has always been done. The old men, the counsellors and more particularly the counsellors of the capital, are those who can speak authoritatively. But everybody is welcome in the *hubo*, where matters are discussed; even a stranger can take part in the discussion. "No one is excluded, if he speaks rightly; only fools, those who do not know anything" (Mankhelu).

This participation in the discussions of the hubo has developed
671 the sense of law to a wonderful extent amongst the Bantus. They
641 are all born advocates and judges, and take a great interest in this
192 business! No wonder therefore that the Thonga vocabulary

671 possesses a rich store of *judicial expressions*. Here are the most
641 common : *Nau* (pl. milau) means law, custom. *Ku tlula nau*, to
192 jump over the law, means transgression. *Nandju* (pl. *milandju*) means the fault resulting from transgression. This interesting word comes from *ku landja*, to follow. It applies in the first instance to cases which lead to a prosecution, but secondly to any fault. *Ku doha*, is to be wrong and *ku dohela mhunu*, the applicative derivative, to wrong another. *Ku da*, to eat somebody, or *dela*, is also a picturesque expression employed for injury to property. *Ku ramba* (Dj.), *ku rjamela hosin* (Ro.) is the technical expression to designate a complaint lodged before the chief. *Ku riha* (Dj.), *djiha* (Ro.) means to pay a fine, and *rihisa*, *djihisa* (the factitive derivative), to impose a fine.

672 This strong sense of justice however differs from the European
426 on certain points. Owing to their collectivist notions, the Bantus
614 consider relatives as responsible for the debts of their own kin, as we have already seen (p. 332). Another case in which they entertain ideas which seem very strange to us is this ; when anyone has lent you an implement and you make a bad use of it, the fault is as much the lender's as the borrower's. I remember a queer case which took place in my school in Rikatla. Some boys had to go in the afternoon to work in the vegetable garden under the supervision of their overseer. On the way one of them happened to hurt his foot by treading on a thorn. So, when he arrived in the garden, he borrowed a knife from the overseer and began to make sandals of palm-leaf pith. The elder boy entreated him to work. He refused to obey, so the overseer denounced him publicly, when the weekly inquiry into the conduct of the boys was made, on the following Friday. But the temporary shoemaker did not admit to being guilty of anything at all, and his final argument was this : "I cannot understand how Mr. Overseer can accuse me when he himself lent me the knife which I used to carve my sandals!" D. Kidd tells similar stories about Pondos in his "Essential Kafir."

671 So there are differences between Native and European conceptions of justice, and Bantus do not always draw the same conclusions as we do from given premises. Native Commissioners

671 must remember this and, in order to enlighten the Native mind, they must try to find where these differences lie. But these are minor points, and the sense of justice is nevertheless one of the most striking and promising characteristics of the Bantu.

157 674 Before enumerating the various cases which can be brought before the Native Court, let me remark that, generally speaking, Bantus are very peaceful, law-abiding people, under normal circumstances; when protected against alcoholic excesses they are little addicted to crime. In the Blue Book for Native Affairs of Cape Colony, 1908, the Chief Magistrate of the Transkeian Territory comments on "the general docility of the Natives, the perfect immunity from crimes of violence, which the European population, male and female, enjoys amongst them, and the cheapness of police administration." He adds: "The policing of the Territories, including the Detective Force, costs only 7d. per head of the territorial population, or, counting Chiefs and Headmen whose functions are mainly administrative, 10d., against 6s. 3d. per head for policing the Colony proper. Reports from twenty districts comment on the paucity or absence of crime. Kentani, with a population of 34,000 did not furnish a single case for the Circuit Court. The Magistrates of four districts remark on 'the peaceable and law-abiding character of the Native,' the Magistrate of Kentani adding: 'when kept away from the drink curse'." (*Christ. Express*, Aug. 1908.)

I think the same report might be made in most of the districts of South Africa where Natives still live by themselves.

674 177 The state of affairs would be very different in the Town locations, where we meet with a great number of men and women of dissolute morals. They are often backsliders who have left the Mission Stations because they did not like to submit to the Christian rule of morality. So they have freed themselves from all restraints, tribal as well as Christian, and, if they have not entirely lost all sense of justice, they, at any rate, do not walk "in the paths of righteousness." I am here only concerned with clan Natives.

2) Civil cases.

692 I will not assert that Thongas know the exact difference between
622 civil and criminal cases, the same tribunal judging them both and
643 all being called by the same name, milandju.

681 If any distinction is made, it would be between private and official cases, *private cases* being those which are settled by the two parties concerned alone, without the intervention of the chief ; whilst *official cases* are those in which the matter (mhaka) has been brought to the capital. As already explained, the headmen of the village try to settle the difficulties themselves ; if they succeed, all the better, as the fine will be reduced to its minimum, whilst, before the Court, the fine would be doubled and the chief would keep half of it!

691 Ninety per cent of the civil cases are in connection with *lobola*. These are sometimes most intricate and I would refer to the description already given of some of them (p. 282 and Appendix VIII).

691 *Divorce cases* are also common. When a woman has definitely
586 left her husband, her relatives must return the lobolo money.
643 "You must give up to them £ 5 or an ox," says Mankhelu. The
614 chief Mubvesha who was known for his avarice used to arrest the husband and make him pay £ 25 ; he returned £ 15 to the wife's relatives and kept £ 10 for himself.

When money is returned, the children belong to the mother (See page 279).

691 Many cases may occur in connection with *cattle*. The case of
643 *redhibition* is foreseen : when I buy an ox and it dies on my hands
437 from a disease which was not known at the date of my purchase but which already existed, I have the right to go and ask for another in its place. But I bring the skin of the dead ox with me and one hoe inside it for the meat which I have eaten. If the seller refuses to accept my claim, I go to the chief and complain. He will summon the recalcitrant person and say to him : "Did not this man act well when he put a hoe inside the skin ? Give him another ox!" (Mankhelu.)

681 When goats have damaged somebody's garden, there is no
685 fine to pay. The shepherds are whipped and the matter is
643 thus concluded. Should the father of the boys, however, take their part and protect them with his weapons, he will be summoned to the tribunal of the chief and have to pay a fine of £ 5 or two or three goats.

643 Thonga Natives who have but a few head of cattle, are
231 accustomed to entrust them to the care of neighbours possessing
686 a large herd, in order to spare themselves the trouble of finding herding boys. There are some laws regulating this matter. If the owner of the cow, or the pig, or the goat, gives money in advance to the master of the large herd, all the calves, pigs, and kids, which may be born revert to him. But if he has not paid anything, the master of the herd is entitled to choose one pig out of the first litter ; or he can keep the third or fourth calf or kid. If it be a hen, one of its chickens will belong to the man who took care of it. Should the owner forget to remit the due reward, there will be trouble (pongwe). When he goes to take his cattle back, the master of the herd will keep one head for himself, and, if a dispute arises, both will go to the chief, at least if the matter is important, if the animal in question, for instance, is an ox.

If an ox incorporated with another man's herd dies, the master of the herd will inform the owner in order that he may go and dispose of the meat. Should he be living too far off, the ox will be eaten on the spot and the skin will be sent to the owner.
231 Suppose the master of the herd pretends that the ox is dead, but
685 has only put it with another herd, and sent a skin to the owner to deceive him, it is a case of theft, which will be judged as such.

3) Criminal cases.

684 *Adultery*. Our tribe punishes adultery very severely indeed,
787 at least when the woman is married. The fine is a full lobolo.
837 (See page 197.) Amongst the Nkunas if the accused man denies his guilt when questioned indoors, the bones are consulted, or even the magicians who practise the "vumisa" divination. (Part

684 VI.) If found guilty, he will have to pay an extra fine of two
782 oxen (1).

584 When the abducted woman is an unmarried girl, the matter
836 is not serious. No trouble is entailed, provided she does not become pregnant. In the latter case, the seducer can say: "Ndji dlele ku dya: I have killed to eat," viz. "I am ready to lobola the girl" (p. 97). If the girl does not consent, the man is free. But if the man does not wish to marry the girl by paying a full lobolo, whilst the girl and her relatives want him to do so, he will have to pay as much as £ 30 and an ox. "He has spoilt his cause!" His own relatives will be arrested and forced to pay. They are responsible for him and will scold him severely. (Mankhelu).

683 *Fighting ending in blows.* The wounded man runs to the
649 square of the capital and shows himself. The assailants will have to pay a fine of £ 8, three for the chief and five for the victim, or of two oxen, one for the chief and one for the plaintiff. (Mankhelu).

682 *Murder.* A distinction is made between involuntary murder,
672 which is an accident (mhango, Dj.), and a deliberate assassination.

In the case of *involuntary murder*, Mankhelu describes the proceedings as follows: —Should you have killed a man by accident in a hunting trip, for instance, you will try to arrange matters directly with his relatives, if you were good friends; your relatives will give them a girl. You dare not offer your own daughter, because they may refuse her, on account of their bad feelings! The same objection will not be made if your people provide the girl. They will accompany her with ten hoes and an ox, saying: "This is fat to smear our daughter." The notion which is at the base of this custom is not that a human person is the natural compensation for another human person, but that you give the diminished family a means of making good its loss. In fact as soon as the girl has born a child to the relatives of the deceased, she is free. If these men wish to keep her as their wife, they must

(1) The neighbouring Chopi tribe, on the contrary, leaves the husband to arrange matters as he likes. Formerly he used to kill the adulterer. But cases of adultery are never brought before the chief.

682 lobola. Viguet explains that this is done according to the old
538 saying of Native law: "Ñwombekazi a yi ambi nandju" viz. "a
826 cow which has calved is not used to pay a fine; the calf pays it."
672 (See page 217.) He adds that the ten hoes sent with the girl pay for the ribs of the murdered man. (The Ba-Thonga believe that the human body has only ten ribs!) A case of involuntary homicide
682 is generally not brought before the chief, as the law is well known
643 and no one would try to evade his duty. Should however the
672 murderer not have been on good terms with the deceased, the matter will be discussed before the Court.

If the murder was *deliberate*, it is punished by death.
682 At least such was the law in former times, when Natives still
672 possessed the power of condemning to death. Now the fine is also the remittance of a woman. But owing to the existing hatred, and from fear of being obliged to lobola the relative of the murderer, the family of the deceased does not take the girl. She is sold by her parents and only the money is remitted to the plaintiff. (Mankhelu.)

682 Amongst the Ba-Ronga, when a near relative of the murdered
627 man wishes to avenge himself by killing the assassin, his people prevent him from doing so, in order to bring the matter before the chief. When a man called Mashabe was killed by the son of Gigiseka, Maphunga's brother, the murderer, had to pay £ 20. The fine may be as much as £ 25, but the idea is also to help the bereaved family to acquire a new spouse and, through her, new members. As for the murderer, he is regarded with scorn, and despised by the whole community. For a whole week, he must eat apart. He is unclean. So, at the time of luma bukanye, (page 400), he must also take miluru medicine together with the warriors who have killed enemies; but he does not drink it boastfully, extolling his deed! People say of him: "Look at the murderer!" (Mboza.)

The vendetta, the savage custom which makes it incumbent on the relations of a murdered man to avenge his death themselves at all costs and by any means, is absolutely absent from Thonga custom. It may be said that, as regards punishment of murder, they have reached quite a civilised stage in their judicial

682 procedure. They are in advance of many tribes. The same
627 cannot be asserted when dealing with witchcraft!

Witchcraft (Buloyi). To the Thonga mind this is one of the
754 greatest crimes which a man can commit. It is equivalent to
683 assassination, even worse than murder, as a dim idea of anthro-
787 pophagy is added to the simple charge of killing. A wizard
694 kills human beings to eat their flesh. We shall study the conceptions of *buloyi* later on (Part VI) from a psychological point of view. Here it is mentioned only in as far as it gives rise to judicial cases. This particular crime being committed in great secrecy during the night, and in most instances even unconsciously, the Bantu tribunal uses two or three magical methods for discovering it. These *methods of inquiry*, which civilised nations have long ago abandoned, are :

1) *Divination by casting lots*. The objects used in our tribe for this purpose are the magic bones, the astragalus of goats, antelopes, etc, and shells, which I intend to study in a special chapter. When they have designated (ku ba, to beat) the wizard or witch (noyi) who has killed such and such a person, they are consulted a second time. If they confirm their verdict, the relatives of the deceased go to the chief and lodge their complaint. The accusation becomes official and is now in the hands of the tribunal.

2) The chief sends the plaintiff and accused to the magician who proceeds to the *divination by questioning* them and working himself up into an ecstatic condition (vumisa).

683 3) Should the accused be again designated and should he
695 deny his crime, he may request to be submitted to the *ordeal*,
824 viz. the trial by the solaneous plant called mondjo. If the drug
787 intoxicates him, his guilt is confirmed for the third time and the
754 tribunal will condemn him. The punishment for *buloyi* is death, either by hanging, or by empaling, or by drowning in the river, if the wizard was in the habit of perpetrating his murders by sending crocodiles to kill his victims.

[177] Nowadays Native chiefs dare not put to death suspected witches.
[681] Since the Ba-Ronga have been under the jurisdiction of the Whites, the *death penalty* has been abolished. On the other hand, under

627 Gungunyana, executions were of frequent occurrence. When the
683 chief had condemned a man to death, he merely made a sign to
754 one of his executioners, who followed the unfortunate individual, as he went away into the bush, possibly quite unconscious of the fate awaiting him, and dealt him a heavy blow from behind with either club or assagay, killing him on the spot. Chiefs now only expel wizards or witches from the country, accompanying them to the boundary, or impose a high fine on them, keeping half of the amount. However there are still individuals who avenge themselves for the death of a relative on the suspected murderer by killing him. Such cases are not infrequently brought before the Courts of Pretoria and Johannesburg.

177 What is the duty of the civilised tribunal in such instances ? White
681 judges generally condemn to death a man who has killed a "noyi". I know of cases in which even an induna who had hanged a "noyi,"
627 duly condemned by the Native Court, was himself considered a criminal
683 and condemned as such. This happened to our friend Mankhelu, one
754 of the pillars of the Nkuna tribe, the General of the army... He only escaped death owing to petitions sent to the Boer Authorities by both Blacks and Whites. This happened, I think, in 1888. Are European judges right in pronouncing the capital punishment in such cases ? This is questionable. It is certainly erroneous to assimilate Mankhelu's act which, in his own eyes, is an act of justice, to an ordinary murder, and to punish him as an assassin. He did what he thought to be right according to his knowledge. The husband of a bewitched woman who kills the murderer of his wife is more blamable, because his act is not sanctioned by the authority of a regular Court. However neither one nor the other deserves death.

683 I fully recognise that such acts of the Native tribunals must be
754 stopped. A chief who accepts accusations of witchcraft ought to be punished, especially if it has been duly explained to him that a White Government does not allow any such case to be judged in the country. In the course of time Natives will understand this and the witchcraft superstition will dwindle away. But let us be patient with them, remembering that our forefathers of 300 years ago did exactly the same thing and burnt hundreds of suspected witches after having subjected them to horrible tortures.

In an essay on the subject published in the S.A.A.A.S Report of

683 1906, I ventured to suggest certain means of checking the *buloyi*
754 superstition. The Department of Native Affairs might give the following directions to its subordinates, the Native chiefs :

1) The crime of buloyi is not recognised under penal law.

2) The Native chiefs are prohibited from trying any buloyi case.

3) The plaintiff must be reprimanded as disturbing the peace of the country.

4) The witch doctor or mungoma (magician), who pretends to have smelt out a wizard, must be fined as using his authority to deceive people and foster hatred amongst them.

5) No evidence based on the use of divinatory bones must be accepted.

These rules, if strictly enforced and combined with Christian teaching and the progress of civilisation, will in the course of time put an end to the scourge of witchcraft.

683 *Insults*. Ku rukana or ruketela, to hurl insults at each
695 other's head, is very frequent amongst Thongas and does not
578 lead to any judicial case, if not accompanied by assault and bruises (1). There are however insulting deeds which are considered as crimes. To take human blood, or spittle, or excrement with a stick and to push it into the mouth of a child, for instance, is considered a very serious insult which must be judged before the Court. A man who committed such an offence would have to pay a fine amounting to a whole lobola. I heard of a woman, who gave a child a butterfly to eat. The parents of the little one were very angry. She denied having done such a thing. They said to her: "Confess your sin and pay a fine of 5/—." She refused and offered to undergo the ordeal, viz., to drink the mondjo philtre. "If you insist" said they, "you will have to pay £ 10." However she persisted and became intoxicated ; this was a proof of her guilt. She was fined to the amount of £ 40, £ 20 for the child and £ 20 for the chief!

683 To point at any one with the index finger is also a grave insult
201 which may have judicial consequences, because this action is
754 brought into close relation with *buloyi*.

683 (1) The most common insult which women can cast in each other's teeth is
578 nilhaŋhwaku (Ro) or nyaŋhwaku (Nkuna) which means: the genitals of your mother.
695 A scuffle with blows is sure to arise when that word has been pronounced. It is also used when taking an oath. Men swear by the name of their chief.

685 721 *Theft* (ku yiba) is universally condemned, not so much for its immoral character as for the fact that it renders a normal social life impossible. The notion of *individual property*, though it is not developed as in more civilised nations, is nevertheless at the base of the whole Bantu system. The Bantus are agriculturists. They believe that the products of their labour belong to them and that no one else is entitled to appropriate them. The notion of property is in direct relation to work accomplished. (Compare Part IV.)

685 574 202 To steal growing mealies is not usual. A thief breaks off the cob, whilst the master of the field first uproots the stalk and then takes the cobs. If a friend of his who happens to be travelling passes through his gardens and wants to eat a cob, he is quite welcome to do so. He also uproots the stalk, puts it on one side of the road or leans it against a tree and draws a line on the ground from the place where the stalk grew to the spot where he has put it. Perhaps the owner of the field will discover the uprooted stalk after a whole month. If he inquires who has helped himself to his mealies, his friend will say to him : "Did you not see the line ?" And they will laugh over it (hlekelelana). A thief acting hastily would not have had time to draw the line!

685 789 There are certain magical drugs with which people smear mealie stalks (see Part IV) and they assert that, if any one tries to penetrate into their garden to steal, he will have his hand caught and will not be able to get rid of the plant! For some reason or another, these magical methods do not always work. So the injured person has recourse to the tribunal.

685 343 Should the thief be caught in the very act, there is no difficulty! His own field will be taken by the owner of the stolen mealies and he will have to pay a fine of one ox, otherwise the matter will be brought before the Court, and the only difference will be that the fine will be of two or three oxen, one of which will remain in the hands of the chief. (Mankhelu.) If the thief has been clever enough to avoid being caught, if he has stolen from a store hut, Natives are clever detectives and he will probably be discovered. These store huts are generally built in the middle of the field, or in the little bush which surrounds the village ; the grass all around

685 has been pulled up and the sand nicely smoothed down, so that
343 any traces of a thief would easily be seen. He will possibly be
151 recognised at once by the trackers, owing to some peculiarity in the
625 marks on the sand, the foot-print of each individual being more or less known; clever detectives can even ascertain the height and gait of a man from the length of his stride! If there are no peculiar marks in the foot-prints, the trackers will follow them and reach the village where the thief lives. They will perhaps take him by surprise in his hut. If the matter cannot be settled by the headman of the village and has to be brought before the chief, the guilty party will be fined as much as two, three or even five pounds sterling (Tobane) (1).

When detectives have been unable to trace a thief, they assume a philosophical attitude and say: "Only wait. A man who has stolen will steal again, and you will catch him another time!"

643 *Revolt against the decisions of the chief's hubo* is very rare. Should
687 any person take the part of a condemned man and encourage him to oppose the decision of the Court, he will be beaten with a shambock on the square of the capital. "U onhi hubo," "he has spoilt the Court!" Moreover he may have to pay a fine of £2. (Mankhelu)

643 *Answer to some of Professor Frazer's questions on Government.*
835 There are no separate chiefs for war and peace. But in time
224 of war the great induna, who is the Commander-in-chief of the
701 army, directs all military operations. — The chief is never required to marry his own sister or daughter. The only similar case of which I have heard, is that of a hunter who must have sexual relations with his daughter before going on a hunting trip (Part IV).

643 — The king's mother does not hold any special office. —
778 The chief does not keep any portion of his deceased predecessor excepting the nails and hair used for the mhamba (See page 386 and part VI)

538 (1) The following interesting couplet in two sentences aptly describes the thief:
Shihlengwa readjeletane? — The crown on the hut nicely rounded?
Mangathi a paka ritiho... — The hawk burns his claws...
The thief is like a crown on the top of a hut. He is a lazy person, he ainpdinies and will not work. Evil will befall him, as with a hawk who tries to snatch the meat that is roasting and burns his claws!

643 and Part VI). — To protect and to prolong his life, diviners
754 sometimes call together the whole clan in order to discover and
787 eventually arrest those who might bewitch and kill the chief. This
789 gathering is called *nyiwa* (See Part VI). — As for rain making, it is in the hands of the proper rain doctors (Nkuna) or is done by the ceremonies of *mbelele* (Part VI). — He is not held responsible for public calamities. — If his bodily or mental powers fail, the tinduna discuss matters in his stead and he is not deposed.

643 Chiefs are never worshipped during life time. After death,
769 they are deified for their own family, who worship them, but not for their subjects. — They are not supposed to turn into wild beasts after their death. — The custom of appointing mock kings does not exist. Only on the death of a chief can one of his relatives be nominated to take his place, and watch over his property until the adjudication of the inheritance.

CHAPTER IV

THE ARMY.

A. WAR-LIKE PROCLIVITIES OF THE THONGAS.

721 As mentioned in the preliminary chapter (p. 34), in former
726 times the war-like spirit seems to have been but little developed
175 amongst the Thongas. The primitive population possessed no iron weapons, and the invasions which took place from the XVIth to the XVIIIth century seem to have been peaceful. Conquerors and subjects soon intermarried and no recollection of bloody contests remained. When clans fought against each other, in those remote times, namely before the arrival of the Zulus (1820), they thought they had done doughty deeds when two or three warriors had been killed, and the vanquishers returned home saying: "None of the enemy is left!!" The army used to form in a straight line, not in a circle, as was the case later on under Zulu influence.

175 When the cruel hordes of Manukosi subjugated the plain of Delagoa, all that was changed. Of course the Thonga yimpis were defeated very easily. First of all, those of Maputju and Tembe; in the country of Matjolo, which was afterwards invaded, the chief Mashekane was so stout that he had been surnamed "Mitahomu ni timhondjo" — "the one who swallows an ox, horns and all..." He fought bravely but was also defeated. In Khosen, says Hendrick, an old man who stayed for years in Rikatla and who was then a child, the aborigines were deceived by the perpendicular sticks which the Ba-Ngoni invaders had fixed to their ox-hide shields; they mistook them for reeds and thought they could break them easily; but their three united yimpis, that of Khosen under Mbanyele, of Rikotsho under Makwakwa, and of Shiburi under Shitlhama, were repulsed, broken through by the Zulu phalanx.

175 These Zulus or Ngonis taught the tribes of the plain a system
177 of war much more cruel than the old one: "kill everything,"
726 — such is the rule. No exception is made except in the case
703 of women, who are taken prisoners. The Thonga clans readily accepted this new mode of fighting. They adopted the Zulu system wholesale, the proof of which is that all their military terminology is pure Zulu. Their apprenticeship began during the invasion; the Ba-Ngoni seeing that the Thongas had a certain aptness for war, incorporated them into their own regiments and used to send them forward to the attack, as previously mentioned. They praised them by calling them the *Mabuyandlela* — those who prepare the way, — a kind of nickname which the Thongas have kept to this day and of which they were very proud.

721 However I do not think it would be unfair to the Thongas
175 to assert that the old peaceful basis of their character is still
703 preserved, notwithstanding this influence. We have had an opportunity of judging of their warlike capabilities during the war of 1894-1896 with the Portuguese. (See Appendix X, Short account of two South African wars.) The Natives did not fight from choice. While some of them gave proof of great endurance, and the army fought in some cases with a certain tenacity, Thongas and especially Ba-Ronga did not show themselves very able warriors. Want of discipline, mutual distrust, timidity resulting in frequent retreats, inability to follow up their successes, such were the main causes of their defeat. The wild soldiers of Maputju, who considered themselves the equals of the genuine Zulus, showed their courage only when there was no danger!

B. WAR COSTUME AND WEAPONS.

714 One day when we were comfortably seated under the beautiful tree at our station of Rikatla, a strange looking monster suddenly appeared on the scene, running towards us! The children fled and the women hid themselves... It was Charley, our milk-man, who, with some other warriors, was going to a military review, to be

714 held by his chief Mahazule. He approached us, a giant of 6 ft. in height, decked out in a costume which was certainly grotesque, but of which I at once caught the general idea; he had evidently tried to resemble a wild animal and had succeeded admirably in the attempt. Such is most likely the origin of the war costume in mankind! As for Charley, he was thoroughly delighted to note the terrorising effect produced by his appearance on the youngsters and folk of weak nerves.

He was, admittedly, the handsomest warrior in our locality, and condescended on one occasion to allow us to photograph him, when he explained in detail the several component parts of his costume, which, as a whole, was certainly formidable! The photograph was a failure, but the get-up has remained imprinted on my memory.

714 To begin with the top; the head was decorated with three
825 plumes of long slender feathers, taken from a bird called *sakabonyi*, the widow bird, which is only to be found in the mountains; sometimes the feathers of other birds are added (magalu, mafukwana); one of these plumes is worn in the centre, the others one on each side, and all three are fixed on to a conical helmet (shintlontlo) trimmed with ostrich feathers. This helmet is set on a kind of toque of another skin, which is held in place by a chin-strap. This style of head gear makes the head look about twice the natural size, and, to give it a still more ferocious appearance, it is adorned here and there with porcupine quills.

714 Round his neck Charley wore a necklace of plaited thongs
301 of black calf skin (tinkocho). Armlets of long white ox hairs,
825 carefully selected from the tail, orna[illegible] his biceps, and garters of a similar make were on the calves [illegible]gs.

The belt around his loins was very [illegible] the beautiful skin of a civet cat (nsimba), with its fine yellow stripes, hanging down in front to the middle of his thighs, and small antelopes skins behind (madjobo ya nhlenganie). Finally, to complete the wild animal appearance, calves and ankles were covered with bracelets of large black seeds, which come from the North (timbavu), each seed being as large as a cherry. The size of the legs is thus considerably increased and conveys the idea of a pachyderm; when he jumped

714 heavily or stamped his feet on the ground, it sounded like the tread of an elephant.

714 This costume is a warm one, and the warrior carries a sort of
321 bone curry-comb, made of the rib of an ox, shaped and sharpened,
302 which he uses to scrape the perspiration from his face and body, when taking violent exercice or indulging in the dances descriptive of his prowess. Such is the native pocket-handkerchief!

714 The several component parts of the war-dress are kept in a little hut raised on poles, near the owner's dwelling, and are carefully looked after, being frequently dusted and exposed to the sun to preserve them from moths and weevils. A complete uniform is worth several pounds sterling!

713 *Arms* among the Ba-Ronga are of a very primitive kind, those
411 of most ancient date being doubtless the *club* (nhonga) and the *knobkerrie* (gungwe) (1) of which two specimens are given in the accompanying illustration (No. 4). The Native never journeys without his stick, using it to kill snakes, should any cross his path, and should fortune smile on him, to knock over any quail that may rise at his feet. In quarrels or in war time this *nhonga* can be a dangerous weapon. The stick with the fluted head comes, I am told, from Bilen, and it seems that this style is in great favour in Gaza. It may have a phallic significance.

But the most formidable weapon of the South African Black is the *assagai* (tlhari, fumo (No. 2), of which there are two kinds; the larger (likhalo) consisting of a sharp, pointed, double edged steel blade, fixed on to a stick with iron or brass wire, and the smaller (tindjombi) with a blade of the size of our arrow-head, fastened to the handle with strips of bark or of palm leaves. The former is for hand-to-hand combat, and the warrior never releases his hold of it, while the latter—of which three or four may be held in the hand when entering the fight—are thrown at the enemy from a distance (2). The length of the large assagai on the right of the illustration is as follows: Blade 14 inches; binding of iron

797 (1) These sticks were given to me as dentistry fees for the extraction of decayed
713 teeth!

(2) I once had an opportunity to observe the effects of the assagai. A young evangelist of our Mission was surprised on the railway line by some Zihlahla warriors

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

713 wire, 4 ½ inches and handle 34 ½ inches. The small one, on the
2/11 left, measures: blade 7 in., iron stem adjoining blade 7 in., binding

Thonga weapons.

1. Shield; 2. Assagais; 3. Battle axes;
4. Knobkerries; 5. Dagger; 6 and 7. Necklaces
and little horn were by men chiefs.

797 in ambush during the 1894 war, and was transfixed at one blow. (7 th January 1895).
He had fallen on his knees and the wretches struck him in the back; the assagai was
713 only prevented from going right through his body by a note book which he was
carrying in the breast pocket of his coat.

713 of palm leaves 5 in. and handle 35 ½ inches. As previously
411 mentioned, the handle of the large sized assagai is broken at the
595 warriors' death, being "he," or his defilement ; but the blade
643 "never dies." It belongs to the chief, as does also the shield, and the son will inherit it. During the warrior's life, it is kept in the hut of his *first wife*. She is called the owner (ñwinyi) of the assagai. It is taboo for the other wives to touch it ; another fact which shows the special position of the first wife. (Comp. p. 284.)

713 Another weapon in more restricted use and which can also
411 be employed for cutting wood, is the *axe* or *hatchet*, of which I
439 have met with two descriptions (No. 3) ; the blade (mbimbi) may be narrow and elongated—it is then called shingwatane,—or broad and rounded,—when it is the shiyema. These hatchets are firmly inserted in their wooden handles like the axes of the lake-dwellers. European manufacturers now export a considerable number of semicircular hatchets, similar to the one on the right in my illustration, to Delagoa. The one here portrayed will be at once recognised as being of Native make. I may also mention the big *knives* (mikwa), a sort of sword ; one sometimes meets brawny fellows walking along the paths, armed with these dangerous looking implements! However they are quite inoffensive.

713 I managed to obtain from a traveller a beautiful *dagger* which
411 he was carrying slung across his breast ; it is a rare specimen
171 and comes, I am told, from the Ba-Ndjao tribe (No. 5). The sheath is made of two pieces of wood, artistically carved and fastened together with a plait of iron wire ; it is slightly hollowed out to allow the blade to enter ; this is firmly fixed in the handle through which it passes from end to end, coming out at the extremity, where it is bent back and thus held tightly in place. The Ba-Pedi in the Zoutpansberg also make similar knives.

714 Finally, when the warrior holds in one hand his large assagai,
171 in the other will be found his *shield* (shitlhangu) (No. 1), which he grasps by the stick around which this piece of defensive armour pivots. The Thonga shield is made like that of the Zulus, of a piece of ox-hide, oval in shape and of varying size, sometimes all of one colour and sometimes variegated. (The several battalions

714 in the Chaka army were distinguished by differently coloured shields.) On either side of the central line, from top to bottom, two parallel rows of small square incisions are made (magabela) through which are run strips of hide of a different colour, the effect being a series of oblongs. By an ingenious device the ends of these strips are so tied at the back of the shield as to form several sheath-like nooses into which is inserted the stick by which it is held. The space between the two lines of oblongs is called the back (nhlana) of the shield. The nooses or sheaths are four or six in number : two or three at the top, and two or three at the bottom, a space being left in the middle, where the warrior grasps the stick. This stick tends to strengthen the shield, but, being merely passed through the nooses, it acts also as a pivot around which it can turn ; it is this pivoting action which gives to the shield its chief value as a protection. An assagai (usually thrown with considerable strength) would easily penetrate the ox-hide, but when it strikes the shield, the force of the impact causes it to pivot and the weapon is deflected to one side: should it strike exactly in the middle, it would hit the stick, break it and lose all further impetus. It is hardly necessary to add that the *shitlhangu* of the South African Black is absolutely useless when opposed to bullets ; it was invented to protect the warrior against the dreaded assagai, at a time when firearms were not yet thought of.

713 During the last century the Ba-Ronga have begun to use
177 guns for hunting and also for war. Although the sale of firearms to the Natives has often been prohibited, the Ba-Ronga were reported to possess several hundreds of rifles at the commencement of the 1894 war, and also to be fairly proficient in their use... very different from the Madagascans, who removed the sights from their rifles on the score that they were in the way when taking aim!

C. THE MOBILISATION OF THE ARMY.

202 In the Zihlahla country, when the chief wished to muster his
726 forces, he did so by means of the *shipalapala*, the rudimentary
643 trumpet which I described in the preceding chapter. A swift

202 726 643 messenger (shigidjimi) ran from village to village, blowing this instrument ; when he was tired he passed it on to some other good runner, who carried the summons further afield ; he ran and ran until he was exhausted, when he handed the trumpet to a third, and so on until the whole country had been covered.

At the sound of the well-known call of the shipalapala, the warriors shout : "A hi hlomen!" — "to arms!" They at once put on their war costumes and repair to the capital.

In Nondwane all the sub-chiefs possessed their shipalapala, and each of them summoned his own people. There the shipalapala mostly sounded to call for dances and for feasts. When the army was mobilised merely to discuss matters quietly, messengers ran through the country shouting : "Mayivonule!" — "take the shields!"..., to which the warriors answered : "A hi hlomen!" — "to arms!" The messenger had to go quickly. "He did not lose time in grinding tobacco ;" he only indicated the time when the army was expected in the capital.

Should matters be more serious, should a hostile yimpi have invaded the territory, every one can give the alarm (tlhabela mukhosi), shouting : "Yi ngeeneeeeeee!" "It has entered!" (viz., the hostile army has invaded our territory). All the women flee away and the men run to the capital.

D. THE MUKHUMBI, THE CIRCLE OF WARRIORS.

643 701 726 Decked out like wild animals, the warriors hasten with all speed to the chief's village, where the regiments muster. The army (1) is divided into a certain number of *battalions, mabotshu,* or *meboko,* all men of about the same age forming a *botshu.* The *botshu* itself is made up of several *companies, mitlawa* or *mabandla,* and may therefore vary very much in numbers.

(1) Yimpi (pl. tiyimpi) in Thonga corresponds to impi in Zulu.

701 In the army of Matjolo there were nine battalions, commencing
726 with that composed of youths from sixteen to twenty years old, up to that of "crown men" (makehla) and the grey beards who where still capable of handling an assagai ; for every able-bodied man is a soldier and makes it a point of honour to join the army when it is mobilised. In the Zihlahla clan, the battalions of young men were called *Megajlela* and also *Ndumakazulu*, "the one who is celebrated as far as Zululand," surname of the chief Ñwamantibyane. After them came the *Nyomibovu*, *Giva*, *Malwabo*, *Djanungwana*.

Mankhelu, the Commander of the Nkuna yimpi, gave me the names of his battalions and the explanation of them. The old men formed the regiment called *Mamphondo*, those of the horns. Some of them used to tie a horn on their foreheads ; they imitated the rhinoceros or the buffalo. The following regiment was the *Mamphisi* (timhisi), the hyenas ; then the *Machoni*, the sea birds, a kind of duck, very swift ; then the *Timbulwane*, a sort of lynx, the *Mafakubi*, representing the ndakazi antelope and, lastly, the most numerous regiment, the *Dhlanazo*, "those who eat with others (dya na bu)." Each regiment has, as we shall see, its own war-cry, in which it imitates the animal whose name it bears.

701 When all have reached the capital the first procedure is the
726 "formation of the circle," in Thonga *biya mukhumbi*, to fence
202 the circle or *aka mukhumbi*, to build the circle. This is accomplished in the Zihlahla army by a special summons which I might call "the order to fall in." Heralds scatter in all directions, enter the huts, approach the groups encamped around the capital, and shout in a high and monotonous key the following Zulu words. It will be noticed that the formula given is that which was made use of by the heralds in the Mpfumo clan during the war of 1894.

Inwana ! Oyo ndjalo, Muvelu, (1)
Be nga n'thandi ba ka Nkupane,
Uuta'ka Sihlahla, mikulu ai ka Hamale,
Malebola ga dyose a bulandia ka Mbukwana.

(1) Muvelu, the Zulu surname for Ñwamantibyane.

701
726
202

Listen! This is what Nwamantibyane says,
He whom the people of Nkupane do not love, (1)
The son of the Great Forest (Sihlahla) of Hamule, (2)
He who took a wife and used the sword in the country of
his parents-in-law, in Mbukwane's country.

Gwalagwala a lituvu,
Ilihlengo ngo kubekeka,
Umpathi we sibamo,
U za ku debula Mangole ni Maputukiri.

The royal bird with red plumage (3),
Magnificent to contemplate,
He who holds in his hand a gun
With which he will fire on the Angolese and the Portuguese.

Nduma kuti, lo wa khiti,
Mo nga ngailwana,
U ti ka : a yi funule!

He whose fame spreads afar, our chief,
Who is as a wild beast,
It is he who says : "To arms!".

701 This final exclamation, prolonged and finishing abruptly on
726 the last syllable, carries a long distance ; all the warriors jump to their feet and, brandishing their assagais and shields, run to the chief's village, where the circle is to be formed. Each

[614]

(1) The people of Nkupane are one of the younger branches of the royal family of Mpfumo. They lived close to Lourenço Marques, on the other slope of the hill, to the West of the town. They would have liked undoubtedly, in common with many others, to assert their independence by throwing off the yoke of the elder branch, and even attempted to do so when Mabombole tried, in 1867 or in 1869, to overthrow Zihlahla. But the elder branch, whose chiefs were energetic men, succeeded in maintaining its authority over the whole clan. The fact that the people of Nkupane "do not love" Nwamantibyane redounds rather to the credit of the latter.

(2) Nwamantibyane's father was Zihlahla, his grandfather was Hamule. Sihlahla, or Zihlahla, in Zulu means forest, hence the herald's play on the word. The reign of Zihlahla, which we may place at from 1867 to 1883, was very troubled, at least during its first few years. The young chief, on his return from Natal, after the death of his father Hamule, married Mbilwana, a princess of the royal family of Mabota. During the bloody wars then raging, Zihlahla was angry with Mabota (whose chief was Mbukwana), for playing him false, and, one fine day, he made a raid into the country of his parents-in-law, killing many people. To have thus treated his "bakoswana," who are ordinarily held in such great respect, (see Part II) was a proof of valour which is remembered to this day, more than fifty years after the event. It must be said that, after this exploit, Zihlahla left his residence near the town and took refuge in the Nwamba territory; the Whites with whom he was fighting put in his place a certain Nwayeye whose name we shall find in a war song to which we shall have occasion to refer later on.

(3) The nhulumkulu is a bird which is shot in the forest on the borders of the Nkomati; its feathers are red, and only chiefs are allowed to wear them.

761 regiment, with its counsellors at its head, is called in turn by
726 the organisers of the army ; (at Zihlahla they were Mahagane, the chief's uncle, and Mpompi), and the several companies of the regiments form ranks one behind the other. I have already described this imposing circle, when treating of the coronation of the chief. Every warrior can take in at a glance the entire assemblage. Seen from the interior, it is an unbroken circle of shields, resting perpendicularly on the ground, and all touching ; behind, a crowd of men, the greater the number, the deeper the ranks, a forest of feathers waving above their heads.

701 The mukhumbi is not however a perfect circle. It is rather
726 like a *horse shoe*, as there remains an *opening* (nyangwa or sangwa),
561 which gives access into it. On either side of this *door* the regiment
554 of the young men takes up its position ; the Dhlanazo in the
596 Nkuna mukhumbi and the Ndumakazulu in that of Zihlahla. At the opposite end, facing the entrance, is the *chest of the army* (shifuba sha yimpi), where the chief stands surrounded by the men of riper age, the strongest of whom act as a body guard. Between the chest and the opening, on both sides, the middle-aged warriors occupy the wings, the elder ones nearer the chest, the younger nearer the entrance. This disposition is highly significant ; notice that it is exactly the same as that of the village itself, a large door (mharana) ; on both sides of the entrance, the huts of the unmarried inhabitants (lao and nhanga) ; at the back the huts of the headman, and, at the sides, those of his younger brothers. The idea of age and of hierarchy entirely dominates both these social manifestations!

701 As regards the numerical strength of the mukhumbi, one of my informants who belonged to the Ndumakazulu regiment —young men from 19 to 25 years old—told me that he estimated the war strength of his regiment at about 500 men : the entire Zihlahla circle might be put at 2000 strong.

I have often seen the Nkuna mukhumbi assembled. I had even the opportunity of addressing its warriors during the Sikororo war of 1901. They were between five and six hundred in all. But this clan is very much scattered and many warriors were not present.

726 Before going into battle, certain rites have to be accomplished.
703 In order to stimulate a war-like courage and to imbue the warrior's minds with a certainty of victory, it is necessary to proceed to the performance of the war-songs (guba), of the war dances (gila), and to administer the medicine which will render the soldiers invulnerable.

E. WAR SONGS.

533 The performance of war songs is called *guba*. I have already
539 fully described the Mpfumo national song, (p. 373) which would seem to be more adapted to celebrate a coronation than to serve as an incentive to battle ; it is however used indiscriminately for both purposes.

Another war-song which is very popular in the Mpfumo clan is the following :

Zulu : U ngwa ŵi mu thini, Mayeye ?
U banga muhlaba, u bulala bantu !
Ronga : U ta ku mu yini, Ñwayeye ?
U banga ntlhaba, u dlaya bhanu !
What will you succeed in doing to him, Ñwayeye ?
You take the country and slay the people !

This is a question addressed to Ñwayeye, the rival of the chief Zihlahla ; Ñwayeye was placed in authority near Lourenço Marques by the Portuguese between 1860 and 1870. He accepted the position, but was unable to retain it any length of time, and the recollection of his failure is perpetuated in this song which is intended to extol the royal family of Mpfumo.

A third song, also in vogue with the Mpfumo warriors, runs thus :

Zulu : Zi m' thini ? A ba ze zi ba bona, abantu bezirwe !
Ronga : Hi ta ku yini ? A ba te hi ba bona, bhanu ba matiko !
What shall we say ? Let them come and let us see them, the people of the enemy's country !

This is a defiance hurled at the adversaries.

533 In Nondwane, they also sing this last song ; another runs as
539 follows :

Zulu : Ngambala ! ngi file...O..o..o.. Zinkomo zito !
Ronga : Nwamboten, ndji file ! O..o..o.. Tihomu teru !
My friend ! I am killed. Oh ! oh ! oh ! Our oxen !

The warriors doubtless refer to the ruin which would be entailed were the enemy to carry off their cattle, and thus they encourage one another to fight stubbornly!

Another Ronga song performed in the guba ceremony is this :

Zia yi khalelo mahlu ya se mananga
We are weeping for the giraffe of the desert.

The giraffe may be the chief of the clan whom the warriors are determined to protect, or perhaps the enemy's chief whom they will go and kill.

This song is also one of the great guba songs of the Nkuna clan, but the words are slightly different. I have collected two others :

Hi yi kwa makhosi !
Si phuma ka makhosi, Si gambuza !
U mkhonto wa mandhlenzi, Eji ! Eji !
U mkhonto wao gobee...

War comes from the chiefs !
It is ordered by the chiefs ! We go and kill !
The spear is in our hands ! Eji ! Eji !
The spear kills and bends in the wound !

The oldest of the Nkuna guba songs, which was already in use before the arrival of Manukosi, at the begining of the XIXth century, when the army still formed in line and not in circle, runs as follows :

Hi bo yima hi bo yima !
Mi teka bupwa na nyika tinaba (?) ta bambe.
Let us stand fast, let us stand fast !
Do not let your strength go, it would help the enemy to conquer.

The words of this song are Thonga, as the Zulus had not yet imposed their terminology on the Thonga yimpi.

One of the finest war songs is that sung in the armies of Maputju

533 and Tembe, an antiphon seemingly very ancient, which changes
539 from the minor to the major, producing a truly grandiose effect : (For the music of most of these songs, see Vol. II. Part V.)

"At break of day," sings the solist.....
"Who was it that crowned thee, Muwai, king of Maputju?" reply the warriors.

Muwai is the great-great-grandfather of the chief Mabai, deposed in 1896. He reigned at the close of the XVIIIth century, his son Makasana having been chief from 1800 to 1850. Muwai is compared to the rising sun, or at least the song recalls his coronation, which must have taken place very early in the morning, at daybreak. It is evidently in praise of the royal family that the entire army chants this glorious souvenir.

Loko ku ti qa, loko ku ti qa
U bekwe ngubane Muwai?
Muwai, ka Mabudu! Muwai ka Mabudu!
U bekwe ngubane?

At day break — At day break
Who was it that crowned thee, Muwai?
Muwai, king of Maputju! Muwai, king of Maputju
Who was it that crowned thee?

726 As we see, the war songs are tolerably short ; a declamation of three or four words by a soloist (musimi) who dances in the middle of the circle, and a chorus sung by all the warriors, stamping their feet on the ground and striking their shields with their assagais. (Hence the exclamation "Eji" found at the close of some sentences.) Or sometimes the whole throng brandish the assagai in a rythmical fashion, raising it first to the right, then to the left, afterwards inclining it to the side, and lastly downwards as if to pierce...

When the great war-induna wants the song to stop, he gives a signal. At once all the shields are elevated and a sibilant murmur runs through the ranks : shi-shi-shi-shi, or a special click : nqu-nqu-nqu. Hence the verb *nqunquzela*, to stop a war song.

And then the war dance will take place.

F. THE WAR DANCE.

535 The *guba* is itself a kind of war dance, as dancing does not mean a change in the dancer's position. Nodding with the head, gesticulation of the hands and slow motions of the feet constitute a dance (kina). In some guba songs, there may be a backward and forward movement of all the warriors to widen or narrow their circle. I have even seen men crossing the mukhumbi, two by two, or three by three, during the guba.

But the true war-dance is the *gila* (Ro.) or *giya* (Dj.) the representation of deeds of valour by warriors who have killed an enemy in battle. The massed chorus of the guba is most imposing, but still more deeply does the *gila* impress one by its wildness. Look at this elderly man who suddenly detaches himself from the circle, stamping with all his might on the ground. His feet beat the earth in cadence, one blow being long, the three following ones short: -ᴗᴗᴗ. He goes on, making the ground shake, brandishing his weapons with all his might, perspiring from his efforts and pronouncing Zulu words which the throng interrupts by wild shoutings, as if to encourage him... Then he returns to his place, and the whole army concludes the performance by a kind of whistling : zu... iiiiii. ..... prolonged on a high and piercing note, which suddenly descends to a deep and guttural tone : i. aaaaa..... He has hardly resumed his place in the ranks when a young man springs into the circle, jumping like an antelope, holding his assagai and gesticulating all the while, as if transfixing an invisible enemy. His eyes glare like those of a wild beast, and immediately the army entones a song, his song, the one which has been composed to glorify his deed. Possibly his return to the ranks will be greeted by another shout : I..a...Nda-u! — Lion! comparing him to a lion returning to his forest which nobody will dare to attack. The encouragement given by the warriors to the *bagili* and their great final cry are called *khuza* or *khunzela*.

535 703 "At, that very moment," says Mankhelu, "the hearts of the young men tremble in their breasts! Their hair stands on end...

535 An extraordinary war spirit comes over them all..." And every
703 one having witnessed these performances in the Thonga or Zulu mukhumbi will confess that they are wonderfully impressive. It is a mixture of dramatic, epic and lyric poetry, three literary *genres* which are still confounded, the whole being enhanced by a deep, wild music and subject to the laws of a certain artistic style.

703 The fighting instincts are excited to the highest pitch by these
643 patriotic choruses and dramatic representations. Thus should
726 the troops be slow in making a start, the young men go dancing to the chief and beg him to "grant them permission" to go forth and slay, or rather to "give them men" to slaughter (ku nyika). The Native idea appears to be that the chief holds the lives of the enemies in his hands ; without his permission they cannot go forward, but this once given, they rush enthusiastically to the fray. They even go so far as to taunt him with being an old woman, a coward, because he will not let them go at once (1).

When the excitement has reached the culminating point, and it has been definitely decided to fight, the time has arrived for the magic treatment by which the warriors will be rendered invulnerable.

G. ADMINISTERING THE WAR-MEDICINE.

726 This custom is probably of ancient origin, but I have reason
177 to believe that, amongst the Ba-Ronga, it was practised without
789 any great formality until the advent of the Zulu influence, when
751 it was brought into much greater prominence and invested with more solemnity. "Drinking the war-medicine" took place on several occasions during the revolt of 1894 to 1895. At *Zihlahla* this potion was administered to all warriors before the rebel attack

(1) Gungunyana, on one occasion, when his warriors were importuning him with similar requests, sent the more ardent spirits to wage war unarmed against the wild beasts, and I was told they actually succeeded in capturing a leopard alive and brought it back to the chief !

726 on the town of the 14th October 1894 ; also prior to the ambuscade
789 in the outskirts of Lourenço Marques, on the 7th January 1895,
751 and before the battle of Morakwen, the 2nd February following.
According to my informant, the chief doctor of the army prepared the medicine in a huge dish with leaves and roots cut into slices. These ingredients possessed an effervescent quality ; the medicine-man stirred up the decoction and with it sprinkled the whole army formed in a circle. After this every warrior was fully persuaded that he was invulnerable, that the bullets would be deflected on either side of him, or, even should they hit him, they would be flattened against his body and fall harmless to the ground. The charm could only be broken by the warrior turning his back to the foe. Then the bullets might pass through him. I have met with very intelligent Natives who were perfectly convinced of this fact, although open to reasonable argument on all other points. They told me that certain Natives who were bowled over by grapeshot, picked themselves up after the fight, came to life again, or rather regained consciousness and then, with their fingers, extracted the bullets, which had all remained imbedded in the skin!

A *Nondwane* warrior described to me, in the following terms, the administering of the magic potion, as it was done on the 7th January 1895 before the battle of Morakwen. The whole army was assembled at Nkanyen, on the bank of the Nkomati. It was there that the magician prepared the medicine, with two young girls as assistants. While he was brewing the mixture and making it froth, the soldiers, formed in a semi-circle, looked on, standing erect, poising their assagais on a level with their
726 heads. Then a *ntjhopfa* was cut down (the shrub of oblivion,
789 often employed by Native doctors and of which we have already
751 noted the use in other ceremonials) and a branch laid across the
824 road. The several battalions were called up, one after the other, and every man had to jump over the branch and take a mouthful of the medicine, which he spat out again, pronouncing the sacramental *tsu* which accompanies the offerings made to the gods : he subsequently went off, running and dancing and getting ready to go forth and kill. When each one had taken his share of the medicine and it was all finished, the doctor said to them : "Now I

726 have given you all my strength ; go and slay." They crossed the
789 river at night and having reached the left bank, at a point about ten
751 kilometers from the Portuguese camp at Morakwene, they were made to observe the strictest silence for a long time. Then they felt that valour (burena) had taken possession of them!

Amongst the Ba-Nkuna the war-medicine is also administered under the form of *sprinkling*. This sprinkling may take place in time of peace, when danger threatens. The chief kills a black ox and the army, summoned to the capital, is sprinkled and eats the flesh of the ox. This will make the country ready for any eventuality. But the ceremony is much more serious when war is at hand. Then the "great medicine of the country," carefully kept in the calabashes of the Court magicians, is mixed with *psanyi* of slaughtered sheep and with white sand taken from the river. During the night, the mukhumbi is formed and all the men sit down, their heads bowed over their knees,
726 their eyes closed, in perfect silence. Then one of the queens,
789 an old woman who no longer has any sexual relations, enters
751 the circle, absolutely naked. She dips a leafy branch into the
562 magical infusion and marches all round, inside and outside, sprinkling all the warriors and muttering the following words : "Kill them, break their pots, kill their dogs, catch their chief, bring him here, bring so-and-so and so-and-so." The warriors tremble with emotion. They pray to their gods in a low tone : "Save me! Help me!" But none of them dares to raise his eyes! They know quite well that they would die!

It is extremely important that the officiating woman should be old and have had no sexual relations for a long time, or "the assagais would lose their strength ; the masculine weapons would become blind and the feminine weapons alone would see... The woman would have untied the knot of the assagai ; she would cross the way (tjemakanya) of the great medicine... She must be a quiet woman (a rula)". (Mankhelu).

726 Similar customs exist in *Maputju*, where the medicine is called
789 "the medicine of hatred,"—that which dispels all natural feeling
828 and makes a man capable of killing his fellow-man! I give the particulars of this curious medical treatment as I have them from

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one of the Natives of the country : there are no fewer than seven acts in this grand performance of "preparation for battle."

a) In the first place when the chief foresees that a campaign is imminent, he has water drawn, and all the necessary ingredients gathered together : then he goes into retirement for one month, during which he is busy preparing the medicine with the magician who knows all about the recipe.

b) At the end of this time the entire army is summoned to the capital. A bull is brought out before the assembled soldiers and the chief strikes it on the head with a stick : this infuriates the animal, which must be caught and thrown down by the men unarmed ; the chief then approaches and kills it with an axe. They dismember the carcase, cutting off the flesh in strips, which they cook in a large battered pot, stirring it with their assagais and pouring into it at the same time "the medicine of hatred."

c) On this day the army is mustered and formed in a circle. The Commander-in-Chief takes the meat, cuts it into small pieces and mixes with it certain human ingredients : a finger taken from a hostile petty chief killed in battle has been carefully preserved ; the dried up phalange is scraped and the bone-dust thus obtained is mixed with the medicine. This additional ingredient is to prevent any feeling of remorse, any prickings of conscience : "ku susa lipfalo," literally "to remove the diaphragm," the seat of the conscience, according to Ronga ideas. (See later on a more probable explanation of this rite.) The Commander-in-Chief takes the pieces of meat thus seasoned and throws them into the mouths of the soldiers, who must not touch them with their hands. The food must be received between the teeth ; any meat falling to the ground is picked up by the children.

d) On the following day, the whole army proceeds to a large lake (the lake of Shika, near the village of Nhlampfukazi) to be treated with another medicine, an emetic. This is placed on a skin in the middle of the lake : the skin is withdrawn, leaving the particles of the drug floating on the water ; each warrior must stoop down and swallow a mouthful of the emetic. He will vomit yesterday's meat : "fear will be thrown up and valour will remain"

726 (ku hlantiwile butoya, ku sele burena). The chief having mean-
643 while taken up his position on a neighbouring hill, the several regiments rush towards him, surround him and beg to be sent as soon as possible to fight and to slay.

726 *e)* But, before this can be done, the chief returns to the capital,
643 the army following him. A double trial has still to be undergone.
372 A large broom is made of small branches of trees soaked in fat from
789 sheep's tails and is then set on fire. The chief walks round carrying his flaming torch, passing it rapidly before the faces of the warriors formed in a circle. Some of the helmets catch fire and the wearers are promptly ordered to fall out of the ranks. The chief addresses them in angry tones : "Deliver up to me," he says, "the charms you are concealing! 'Tis only I, the chief, who may possess enchanted drugs. You certainly have some, as your plumes took fire... Look at the other warriors ; the feathers on their heads are not burnt!" This trial is probably a means of frightening suspected traitors or of expelling wizards (baloyi).

726 *f)* All shields are now "presented" all round the circle. The
643 chief bends back the point of an assagai and with it strikes each
789 shield, but not with sufficient force to pierce it... This "consecration" of the shields will doubtless make them a more secure protection against the enemy's weapons.

g) Lastly the series is closed by the "aspersion." A mortar is produced in which some leaves are soaking ; these are stirred round in water and the chief sprinkles the whole army. This is the final ceremony. The chief remains at home : the warriors thus fortified and protected against all dangers start on their expedition.

This last act only is performed in the clans of Shirindja, Nwamba and Zihlahla.

H. ON THE WAR PATH. THE BATTLE. STRATEGY. PANICS. RETURN HOME.

726 The *mukhumbi* has been "built" for the last time. Proclamations have all been issued. Nothing remains but to start.

This *starting of the army* (ku thethwa) is also done according to

726 prescribed rites. I once witnessed it, when the Nkuna army went
701 to Sikororo's country on a kind of punitive expedition. The great ndjuna of the army, the Commander-in-Chief, Mankhelu, his stern face grimmer than ever, holding a hyena's tail in his hand, clad in a white shirt which was very little in keeping with the whole appearance of the mukhumbi, stepped inside the large circle and raised his tail... Then the *Dhlanazo*, the young bloods, ran towards him shouting : "Kwe-kwe-kwe!" Their cry is the same as that of the *Timbulwana* (lynx), their elders, who came next. Mankhelu pointed the tail in a certain direction and these two regiments started. The *Mafakubi* came in their turn, imitating the galop of the antelopes : "tshwi-tshwi-tshwi! gwu gwu... hwu, hwu!... eka-ka-ka-ka..." and finally shouting : "N'ta dya na man" — "with whom shall I eat it ?" — a strange sentence which may be, as previously mentioned, a reminiscence of a totemic period! (See page 366)... The *Matsyoni*, the seabirds, followed shouting "tswe-tswe-tswe ;" the *Mamphondo*, those of the horn, came shouting "tshuba-tshuba-tshuba" and imitating buffalos and rhinoceroses. The *Maphisi* started last, howling wildly like hyenas : "hum-hum-hum..."

726 If the field of battle is far away, if there is a long march to
533 be made, special *marching songs* are sung on the road. The
539 most impressive is the following : a soloist sings in a very high key :

Abafo! — The enemy!

and the whole army answers in a rich and tuneful melody :

Enena-a-a! a-a! — Here they are!

All the shields are held straight, ready to meet the foe.
Here are two other marching songs :

Nangu moya wa thistwe!
We are the fire which burns the country!
Inkonyana ya ndlopfu inhlezio baen...
The calf of the elephant is exposed on the plain...

This means the chief who is in danger! Let us protect and deliver him.

726 As regards the *order of the march*, the battalions of the young
701 men, stationed on either side of the entrance, go first ; they
643 form the advanced guard, the post of greatest danger. The scouts, tinhlori (Dj.) tinhloli (Ro.), go in front ; each company has its leader to whom these scouts bring reports. It is the duty of the young men to surround the position to be carried and to make the assault. The two sides of the circle then follow, and lastly the chest of the army, forming the rear guard. The chief thus brings up the rear, protected by the battalions of veterans. But generally the chief does not go to battle ; he remains at home.

726 During the campaign, *the whole clan is subjected to many taboos.*
784 Those who remain at home must *keep quiet* (rula). No noise
777 must be heard in the villages. The women must not close the
722 doors of the huts. It is taboo : their husbands might meet with "bitterness" (shibiti). They might lack strength to run away. Fire must be lit in the huts in the evening, in order that the warriors may "have light" where they are. It is taboo to omit this precaution. Work in the fields must be more or less suspended ; women may attend to it in the morning only, before the heat of the day, while the air is still fresh. "Then, if a warrior has stepped on a thorn, the thorn will be cool (titimeta) ; if he has knocked against a stump, the stump will be quiet and not hurt him. (Mboza.)" Old men who remain at home must keep watch, and if they see a messenger coming, they follow him to the chief.
765 Should he bring bad news, they do not inform the women, as it is
726 taboo to mourn over warriors killed in war before the return of the
834 army. A fine is imposed upon those who contravene this law.
777 It is taboo also to have sexual relations as long as the army is on the
784 war-path. This would cause thorns to hurt the warriors and they would be defeated. (Mankhelu.)

72 According to Mankhelu, the mukhumbi may be again formed after arriving in the proximity of the hostile army. The
643 battalions will be sent one after the other by the great ndjuna who
726 will watch the progress of the fight. If he sees his men giving way, he "pours" (tshelela) new companies to help those who are fighting until they rush the position (gwabula) and put the enemy to flight. Then the pursuit begins. The dust flies up

726 to heaven! The vanquishers follow their enemies until they reach their villages. As a rule, *they kill every one*, women, children, old men and tired warriors who have been unable to run away. They take the oxen and burn the huts. However exceptions are made in some instances: Sigaole, the ally of the Whites, ordered his warriors to spare the lives of the people of Zihlahla, during the expedition of February 1895, and to take them prisoners instead. "If you find any inhabitants remaining in the villages" said he "go into them. Let some one draw a line on the ground around the village and forbid the soldiers to cross it and to massacre the people." Generally speaking, however, the only lives spared are those of the younger women 726 and girls of whom they can hope to make some profit, either 567 by taking them as wives or selling them to others for matrimonial purposes. These prisoners are called "heads" (tinhloko) (1). This is the only kind of slavery practised by our tribe. Such wives are not ill-treated, as a rule.

726 So far I have described the war-customs of the Natives when fighting with each other. Let me add some particulars taken from the Thonga-Portuguese war of 1894-1896 (App. X.) which throw some light on the Native modes of fighting against White people.

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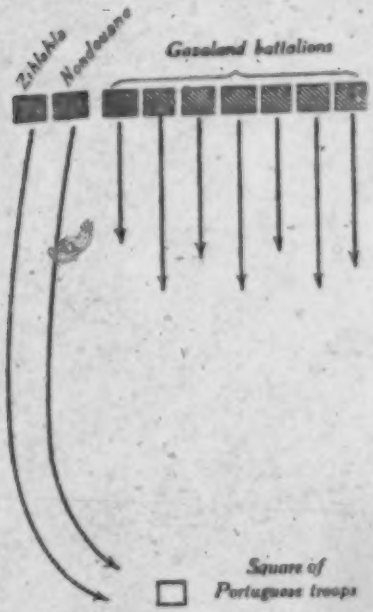
726 When opposed to White troops, the attack en masse would be too 175 dangerous: regiments advancing in serried ranks would offer too good a target to the European artillery. From information I have gathered with reference to the battle of Makupe or Magule (Sept. 8 1895), it would appear that the Ba-Ronga advanced in skirmishing order, those provided with guns approaching very close to the lines of the Whites. During this fight, one of the most important of the whole campaign, the Portuguese Commanding Officer, M. F. d'Andrade, shewed great presence of mind: the Zihlahla and Nondwane

(1) Two women, members of our Church, were carried off in this way by some of the Zihlahla men (6th October 1894), and we had the greatest trouble in finding them. They were seized close to the town, while going to their food-stores and their captors had duly married them with the acquiescence of their chief.

726 warriors came into almost actual contact with the Portuguese square,
175 whilst the Gaza regiments, ~~which were~~ in greatly superior force, remained at a distance and then retreated. They had been told by Gungunyana that they were not to kill White men, so their presence was a mere parade. The Ba-Ronga finding themselves thus deserted followed the same tactics! One of the warriors present on this occasion drew me a plan of the engagement on the floor of a hut! (See accompanying sketch).



On the whole it must be admitted that the Natives of these parts seem greatly to prefer surprise attacks, sudden descents upon peaceful and unsuspecting folk, to any kind of regular pitched battle.

The Swazis used to arrive in the Delagoa plain very early in the morning, surround the villages and massacre indiscriminately all the inhabitants, in the years 1860-1870. The Ngonis of Gungunyana adopted the same method. The Matjolo warriors, whom the Portuguese sent against Zihlahla in February 1895, encamped in perfect silence within one hour's march of the spot where Nwamantibyane had taken refuge (Nhlalalene) and attacked his people when they least expected them. They indulged in the pleasure of killing numbers of women and children, whilst their male enemies fled into the palm marshes, shouting vociferously : "Make ready your rope to climb up to heaven... There will be no more rest on earth for you! Cook three meals : you may eat two but never a third." Empty threats! The greater part of the Native fights during this war consisted in ambuscades and treacherous slaughterings : lots of noise, plenty of bluster, but not much real bravery.

We shall arrive at the same estimate of Native valour if we consider *the great campaign* planned by Gungunyana in concert with Zihlahla

726 and Mahazule, who had taken refuge in Gaza, during July-August 1895.
175 Nine regiments, representing a large effective force, were to start from Manzimehlope, the country beyond the Nkomati River; three of these were to ascend the left bank of the river, to cross it in the neighbourhood of Komati-Poort and to enter Swaziland, the Ngoni chief having made alliance with the Swazis. The other regiments were to cross the Nkomati to the West of the Sabie, and thence to go southward by Moveni. The remaining three, with whom were incorporated Zihlahla and Mahazule, were to ravage Shirindja, Ntimane and Nondwane, passing about one hour's march to the West of Lourenço Marques, exterminating the inhabitants of Matjolo (allies of the Whites), whose retreat to the town would be thus cut off... The nine regiments were to effect a junction at a place called Nkobotlwene, to the South of the Bay, where the forces of Gungunyana would fraternise with those of Maputju, with whom they were on good terms. For the space of seven months, tens of thousands of these warriors were to overrun the country
726 and to annihilate all the tribes opposed to Gungunyana. The chief
609 would not massacre the Whites, nor would he attack their town: he
175 calculated on rendering them powerless by depriving them of the assistance of their Black allies, and expected them thus to sue for peace on honourable terms! Such, at least, was the plan of campaign which transpired after Gungunyana had been made prisoner, in the centre of his own country of Gaza, by a party of about forty White soldiers! The whole thing culminated in a single day's skirmish in the Ntimane country. The petty chiefs quarrelled amongst themselves; only a few hardy warriors dared to cross the Nkomati and slaughtered some women at a short distance from the outpost of Chinabane. Finding themselves discovered, they at once recrossed the river and made off to the Northward.

578 The principal causes of the incapacity in military matters so noticeable amongst the Blacks during the war of 1894-1896, are doubtless the *internal jealousies* between the tribes and also, it must be said, the mysterious dread inspired by the White race, their artillery and their superior discipline.

726 The feeling of mistrust existing between Matjolo and Ñwamba,
175 Nondwane, Zihlahla and Shirindja, also explains the terrible *panics*
703 which occured during the military operations. On several occasions the Native forces were subject to panics which might have entailed the most serious results. As an instance I relate the following, which nearly led to the partial destruction of the Matjolo army. The Matjolo

726 warriors, as also those of Ñwamba, had received orders from the
175 Whites, at the end of January 1895, to attack Zihlahla and Mahazule.
703 One of the young men of Matjolo, who was present during the operations, told me this story : "We were to have joined the men of Ñwamba at a village called Mukapan, but did not find them at the rendez-vous. As they had made common cause with Zihlahla at the beginning of the revolt, we had not much confidence in them. It looked as if they were in hiding and intended to attack us treacherously and kill us. At this time two panics occured. The first was at Hukwen, when a man dreamt that he was being killed, and cried out : "Yo! Uwe! There are people who are killing me!" It was pitch dark. Every one jumped to his feet. Some ran to hide in the forest, but others shouted : "The enemy are here!" Fighting began in the regiment of Geba, (composed of men of the same age as Sigaole, the chief), but no one was killed. A few individuals who kept their presence of mind restored order, but we came very near exterminating each other! The next night a Chopi of our troop had a fright, and cried out : "Why do you want to kill me, you men of Matjolo ? I will tell Sigaole's mother." He was promptly secured and forced to keep quiet for fear that he would rouse the Nondwane people, etc. A similar panic seized the troops of Mahazule, when they went to lay waste the country round Lourenço Marques (October 1894).

726 To avoid these panics, as far as possible, the Ba-Ronga arrange a
192 *password* before starting on an expedition. I was able to learn two of these countersigns, after the war, by questioning some young men who had taken part in certain military operations. On one occasion the pass-word was as follows : "Be ge pi ?" These are Zulu words signifying : "What are you looking at ?" The requisite answer being : "Be ge pezulu"—"We are looking at the sky." In the famous attack made by the Zihlahla warriors on the town of Lourenço Marques, on 14th October 1894, the word was : "U landu bane ?"—"With whom have you a quarrel ?"—and the reply : "Ngi landa Mlungu!"—"I have a quarrel with the white man!"

727 *Return from the battle.* When a yimpi has been defeated in
765 battle, but is not pursued by the enemy, it returns silently and disperses before reaching the capital, each warrior going back ashamed to his village. Mourning takes place in the villages of the deceased. But much lamenting is not allowed. It may be that the chief will prohibit any mourning if many have been

727 killed, "because the whole country would mourn : — they have
765 not been killed by the mat (likuku) at home, but by the assagai on the battle-field! They are men! If any one weeps he will have to pay £ 2." (Mboza.)

726 When the Maputju yimpis fought against Nondwane in 1876,
703 in the battle which took place near Malangotiba, (3 km west of Rikatla), they were decimated and eventually repulsed. Their chief Musongi sent them back to fight again. They refused. Then he punished them in the following way : he condemned them to go and fetch water with pots, like women, but they had to go on their knees to the pool, saying : "It is the result of our cowardice" — (Ngi ndaba ya bugwala). Afterwards they had to extinguish a bush fire with their hands, and came home very much scorched and burnt.

When the yimpi is victorious, the return is marked by important
727 songs called *hubu* (cl. dji-ma). The regiments follow each other,
533 each singing his own *hubu*, and they at once build the mukhumbi
535 when they reach the village of the chief. They dance, dance their doughty deeds. Suddenly silence is required ; the counsellors narrate to the chief how the fighting has proceeded and tell him the names of those who have killed enemies, those who have struck the first blow and their *bahlomuri*, viz., those who transfixed the leg and the arm. After which the heroes "gila" to their heart's content, together with the bahlomuri. They are proud! They are applauded! They are the great men of the day, the *tingwaza*, the saviours of the chief!

This leads me to consider the very curious customs connected with the slayers and the slain on the battle-field.

I. THE FATE OF THE SLAIN AND THE TREATMENT OF THE SLAYERS.

I. *The fate of the slain.*

554 When a man has slain an enemy, he has covered himself with
727 the most enviable glory : he has the right to perform the war-dance before the chief. He takes away all the garments from

727 the dead body, which remains quite naked ; should the slain be a Pedi wearing the piece of skin called nsinde round his genitalia, the slayer takes it with him as a proof that he has killed a man. A second warrior passing the dying or dead enemy will transfix (hlomula) his arm. A third passing will pierce his leg. These two last have not done so meritorious a deed as the first : they have not slain but merely finished off (huhula) the enemy. They act as witnesses to the first man, who is the actual possessor of the corpse ; they acquire, however, an equal right to dance : they are the *bahlomuri* of the real slayer. Should a fourth man pass by and again stab the dead, he is credited with no glory at all.

171 Besides the stabbing in the arm and leg, the dead bodies of
727 enemies are subjected to still further *mutilations* ; they are ripped open and eventually disembowelled, an operation designated by the Zulu word "qanza." This revolting custom seems to be carried out in a more complete way amongst the Ba-Pedi than
000 amongst the Thongas. In the battle of Nov. 6 1901, when the Sikororo and Sekukuni forces were repulsed by Maaghe and Muhlaba at Shiluvane, and forty foes were killed (App. X), their corpses disappeared entirely, cut into pieces by the medicine men of the victorious clan ; magicians from all Zoutpansberg came and asked to buy parts of the slain in order to prepare their powerful charms. In fact, in their opinion, the flesh and blood of an enemy killed in battle is the most efficacious of all charms and makes a *first rate drug* called *marumelo*. This medicine is also used for other purposes : with it the seeds are smeared in order to ensure a good harvest. When the mealies are two feet high, the magician ties together leaves on stems at the four corners of the field, after having treated them with the drug ; the blacksmiths from the Iron Mountain of Zoutpansberg buy it and mix it with their mineral ore, in order to strengthen the iron which they melt in their furnaces (nonisa nsimbi). Without this help they would obtain but slag. The hunters inoculate themselves in the following way with the powder obtained from the tendons and the bones : they make incisions in the skin of their wrists and elbows, draw a little blood, mix it with the drug, cook both in a pot, expose their arrows and assagais to the

000 smoke, and rub the incisions with the powder. They will then be able to aim straight (See Annotatio 15). The powder specially prepared from the tendons of slain enemies will be spread on the paths during future wars ; foes marching on it unknowingly will suddenly become unable to walk and will easily be killed.

The Zulus are said to have the same customs as the Pedis.

726 I cannot guarantee that all the Thonga clans observe all these
789 customs.[1] The Nkuna magicians, in olden times, before they were
278 influenced by their Pedi neighbours, used to dissect the tendons
751 of the back (riringa) of the slain enemy, which they smeared
826 with his medulla and hung to the shields of the warriors... Enemies seeing these shields would "tjemeka nhlana" — "have their backs broken," a figurative expression which means to be terror stricken. A part of the body was also preserved and mixed with the war-medicine ; the idea which underlies this custom being evidently this : when you have eaten the flesh of your enemies, you have absorbed all their strength and they are unable to do you any further harm (1). We have seen that the "mbhulo," the "nyokwekulu," all the powerful "medicines of the country" carefully kept in each clan, contain a little human flesh. These drugs are used as protective war medicines ; most probably owing to the same principle.

II. *The treatment of the slayers.*

727 To have killed an enemy on the battle-field entails an immense
775 glory for the slayers ; but that glory is fraught with great danger.

266 (1) This custom is the only remnant of anthropophagy remaining amongst the Thongas, and I wonder if this superstition is not the true explanation of the origin of cannibalism. Where cannibalism still prevails, as amongst the Fañ of the Congo, I am told that the bodies eaten are generally those of hostile clans, or occasionally that of a wife (who belongs to another clan according to the laws of exogamy). Is it not probable that, in the beginning, these feasts had a ritual and military value similar to that which we find in the administering of the war-medicine in South African tribes? In the course of time, the Fañ acquired a taste for human flesh and ate it for their own pleasure. Dealing with anthropophagy, I must not forget that it occurred in several instances in South Africa after the devastation brought about by the Zulu expeditions of 1820-1830. In Zoutpansberg, in the mountains of Drakensberg, Natives reduced to starvation began to eat their fellow men. This also happened in the Bokhakha during the reign of Queen Male. (See Part IV.)

1[See pp. 476-477 -- Analyst]

727 They have killed... So they are exposed to the mysterious and
775 deadly influence of the *nuru* and must consequently undergo a
828 medical treatment. What is the *nuru* ? *Nuru* is the spirit of the
783 slain which tries to take its revenge on the slayer. It haunts him
789 and may drive him into insanity : his eyes swell, protrude and
761 become inflamed. He will go out of his mind, be attacked by giddiness (ndzululwan) and the thirst for blood may lead him to fall upon members of his own family and to stab them with his assagay. To prevent such misfortunes, a special medication is required : the slayers must *lurulula tiyimpi ta bu*, take away the nuru of their sanguinary expedition. (Lurulula comes from nuru, plur. miluru (1).

In what does this treatment consist ? The slayers must remain for some days at the capital. They are taboo. They put on old clothes, eat with special spoons because their hands are

764 (1) We met with the notion of *nuru* for the first time à propos of the rite of
775 luma (p. 400) ; we shall find it again when dealing with hunting customs (Part IV).
761 The nuru is to be feared not only in the case of slain enemies but in connexion with any human corpse. As a proof, I may quote the following curious story which Spoon told me and of the truth of which he was fully convinced. A traveller died under the great fig-tree of Libombo (near Rikatla). He had climbed on to the tree and fallen on his own stick, which he had planted in the ground. He was not buried, as no one knew him. So his corpse fell into decomposition on the spot; his skull became white. Later on a bush fire burnt all the grass and the skull was
764 seen for years "saying mpha" (it was shining), the teeth "saying bva" (descriptive
775 adverb, same meaning). One day the boys of Libombo went to pick wild figs from the tree and again saw the skull. Spoon was one of them. The fire had just passed
755 by again. "We beat it with our sticks and amused ourselves by rolling it over like a
789 ball. We did not know it was a human skull... When we got home we began to be seized by the drunkenness of nuru, the disease of those who have killed a man. During
761 the night we were delirious (hanta-hanteka), our eyes swelled and were full of exudations (malanga), the four of us, Tsukela, Tlabin, Sibakuze and myself. Next morning my uncle went to the fig-tree and saw that we had killed a man there! The medicine-man who understands the treatment of nuru, Dudela, who had been a slayer in war, called us to his village. We stood in a line before him ; he poured a little of his powder into the hands of each one of us, took a little in his mouth, rubbed his forehead. Then he insulted us saying ; "You will die! Who began beating that skull ?" Each of us denied having given the first blow. Then he said : "Take care! Do not go there any more nor near that nkuhlu tree where another corpse has been burnt under the leaves! Go away."

514 When a man has murdered another in a scuffle, he can replace this nuru medicine
789 by his own urine. He must drink a little of it and rub his forehead with it. The giddiness will pass away. If the murder has been committed from a distance, as with
775 a gun, the nuru is not so much to be feared, as the enemy was far away. A little of the medicine will be sufficient to treat the murderer. Spoon is ignorant of the compo-
626 sition of the nuru drug.
761

727 "hot" and from special plates (mireko) and broken pots. They are
783 forbidden to drink water. Their food must be cold. The chief
834 kills oxen for them (yi ba lumisa hi tihomu); but if the meat
761 were hot it would make them swell internally "because they are hot themselves, they are defiled (ba na nsila)." If they ate hot food, the defilement would enter into them. "They are black (ntima). This black must be removed" (Mankhelu). During all this time sexual relations are absolutely forbidden to them.
727 They must not go home to their wives. In former times the
304 Ba-Ronga used to tatoo them[1] with special marks from one eyebrow to the other. Dreadful medicines were introduced into the incisions and there remained pimples "which gave them the appearance of a buffulo when it frowns" (1).

789 After some days a medicine-man comes to purify them (ku ba
727 phutula), "to remove their black." There seem to be various
783 means of doing it, according to Mankhelu. Seeds of all kinds are put into a broken pot and roasted, together with drugs and *psanyi* of a goat. The slayers inhale the smoke which emanates from the pot. They put their hands into the mixture and rub their limbs with it (ba tilula) especially the joints.

789 Viguet describes this last act thus :—Pieces of medicinal roots
727 are put into the broken pot and roasted. They inhale the smoke.
782 Then cow's milk is poured into the pot on the embers and, when it boils, they have to put their fingers into it, one hand after the other, and pass them across their lips emitting the sacramental : "tsu" (which proves that it is a sacrifice to the gods, a religious act). Afterwards they say : "Phee! phee!" — viz.,
789 phephela phansi, (Dj. tikela hansi), "Go down, sink." This
727 means : "May you go deep into the earth, you, my enemy and
783 not come back to torment me." The last part of the treatment consists in rubbing the biceps, the legs, and the whole body with this milk. The medicinal embers are carefully collected, and reduced to a powder ; this will be put into small bags of skin called *tintebe* which the slayer will wear round his neck. They contain

578 (1) Hence an expression which is still in common use. When a Ronga wants to defy some one he says to him : "You are a coward! If you say you can tackle me come and kiss my forehead."

[Ie., the slayers returned from battle --Analyst]

789 the medicine of the slayers of men. At bukanye time they can
727 use it to *luma*, viz., to season the first calabash they drink (See
828 page 400). For this purpose it is as good as the great mbhulo,
783 "the medicine of the country," provided by the chief, and it will prevent them attacking their own people under the influence of drink. The *tintebe* will also be helpful in future battles. The insanity which threatens those who shed blood might begin early. So, on the battle-field itself, just after their deed, warriors are given a preventive dose of the medicine by those who have killed on previous occasions and who wear tintebe.

789 The period of seclusion having been concluded by the final
783 purification, all the implements (mizilo) used by the slayers
727 during these days, and their old garments, are tied together and hung by a string to a tree, at some distance from the capital, where they are left to rot (1).

Having reached their homes, the slayers have still to complete the cure by chewing a piece of root called monungwane every morning and evening, and spitting it out in the direction of the rising or the setting sun with the same exclamation : "Phee! phee!" — "Go down, sink!" The piece of root is tied to the assagay (2).

727 The description of the rites performed for the treatment of the slayers
828 applies especially to the Northern clans. But the following narrative
789 of an old man named Makhani from the Rikatla region shows that
783 similar customs were also in existence amongst the Ba-Ronga. This man had wounded an enemy in a battle ; the wound proved fatal and the

(1) I had the good luck to find those which were used for the purification of the slayers after the Mooudi fight during the Sikororo war and they are now in the Ethnographical Museum of Neuchâtel. They consist of half a dozen old calabashes, a pair of sandals, etc.

171 (2) Purification customs for the warriors are somewhat different amongst the Pedis. After the Mooudi battle, the slayers of Maaghe's yimpi had to undergo the following medicinal treatment ; the heart of the slain having been torn out, the muscles of their faces sliced off, their limbs amputated, all these portions of human flesh mixed with drugs and ox-flesh were cooked in a pot, the assagais being used to stir the horrible broth. This was poured into a flat basket which it is taboo to touch ; some one drew it with a curved assagay as far as the middle of the square. Then the slayers, having been previously white-washed with clay, advanced on their knees, and, with vociferations or cries imitating vultures, caught a piece of meat in their teeth, not touching it with their hands. Their wives are said to participate in this meal, as being also contaminated by the defilement of their glorious husbands.

727 enemy died later on, after his return to his home. Makhani did not
828 know this. One day he became suddenly delirious and rushed about
789 all over the village trying to stab his own people. "Oho!" said those
783 who saw him, "it is because the man he wounded has died!" They at once called the magician who possessed the nuru medicine, a man of the Mapsanganye clan, who came with his calabash. In this calabash there was a carved stick cut from a tree called shiralala, the extremity of which must always remain plunged in the medicine. The magician dipped this stick into a mixture made of honey and the drug, and passed it over the lips of Makhani, who seized it with his tongue, sucking it as the magician moved it from right to left, and licking his lips. A drop of the medicine was then put into each ear, on each upper eye-lid, and below the sternum. He was then cured and, taking a lighted torch, he threw it in the direction of the enemy's country with threatening words: "A ba fe, bafo, ba bola i. e. Let them die, the enemies, let them rot. I will kill still others!" Every day he had to go to the pool and wash his body, treating himself with the tintebe powder.

727 During the weeks following the battle heroes do not only
301 wear the tintebe, besides these miluru amulets, they have the
703 right to wear certain trophies. These are in the first place
834 antelope or goat's horns pierced at the base; they thread a string through the hole thus made and tie them round their necks (See illustrations, p. 33 and 453). They also make necklaces of small pieces of wood, notched in a peculiar manner and burnt in the fire; a hole is made through these and they are strung together like beads and worn round the neck. Sometimes these necklaces are made so long that they are worn as a bandoleer. I recollect seeing the Matjolo warriors returning from their expedition of February 1895: they came to show themselves off to the Whites at Lourenço Marques, gloriously proud of having massacred defenceless women and children whom they had surprised in the early hours of the morning! People threw them pieces of silver which they converted into brandy! (1)

727 (1) The terrible malediction which rests on those who have killed an enemy
775 is well illustrated by the following story which the Rev. C. Maphophe told me of an
event that had taken place not long ago in the Shishongi country (Manyisa district).
761 A man of the Ndzindzi family had killed a Ndjao during one of Gungunyana's expedi-

J. SOME REMARKS ABOUT WAR RITES.

177 The war rites of the Thongas, whatever may be their origin —
726 and they seem to be a mixture of old Thonga and new Zulu customs, — form a very interesting and complete whole.

The most noticeable are the *national rites*. In war time, the very
643 existence of the clan is threatened, because the chief, the central and
726 vital cell of this organism, is in danger. Hence the readiness of all
829 the warriors to answer to the first call of the *shipalapala*, and to gather round him, "building the circle," which protects him, the whole clan forming a single village and binding itself by the striking ceremonies of *guba* and by patriotic songs, to die for him. Notice that most of the *guba* songs extol the chief. All these customs in which the individual or collective courage is stimulated, the *guba* and the *gila*, are national or social rites directed towards the salvation of the clan. They owe their origin to the national idea.

But war also brings dangers to every warrior. Hence the *protective* rites of sprinkling the mukhumbi with the war-medicine of the clan, or of giving each man some of it to swallow. The rite is inspired by the notion *similia similibus curantur*, the idea being that the warrior, having eaten a small portion of the enemy, will become invulnerable to his blows.

But other rites, especially the war taboos, seem to owe their origin to the *idea of passage*.

726 The *whole clan* enters upon a special phase as soon as war has been
829 decided upon by the chief, "who gives it" to his warriors. Hence the
834 taboos observed at home, many of which are exactly the same as those of the circumcision school and of the period of mourning. We notice the same contrast already so often mentioned : certain sexual prohibitions are removed (e. g. a queen will enter quite naked into the mukhumbi!)

727 tions (before 1890). Three persons of that family died. The bones were consulted
775 and the diviner asked : "Have you not slain a Ndjao?" They answered: "Yes." —
761 "Then," said the bone-thrower "you will all die as this man has followed you." The bones showed that, in order to avoid the destruction of their family, the Ndzindzis had to offer a girl to the ghost of the slain, a living sacrifice. This girl would not be allowed to marry, or even to be courted by boys. Should she have relations with a man it would be necessary to replace her by another. Thus the angry ghost would be propitiated.

726 On the other hand sexual relations, which are allowed in ordinary
829 life, become taboo. This period of fighting seems really to be
834 considered as a marginal period for the whole tribe.

It is so par excellence *for the warriors* and I think that many of the rites imposed upon them are to be explained in this way. As we saw, the period of margin is generally preceded by separation rites. (See page 74.) Some of these, which are very characteristic, are performed when the army starts : the leave-taking from the General with wild shouts, the custom of swallowing a piece of meat without touching it with the hands and taking an emetic afterwards, that of jumping over the ntjhopfa branch, the medicine of oblivion! etc. The triumphant return, the partaking of the meat of the oxen which have been taken, may be the aggregation ceremonies, viz., the acts by which the warriors return to their ordinary life.

726 Passage rites are still more distinct *in the case of the slayers* ; but
829 their condition is worse, as it implies the idea of defilement following
304 upon murder and is attended with the danger proceeding from the *muru*.
182 They are "hot" (an expression which also applies to the tabooed woman
783 during her menses etc.); they are "black" (an epithet which also designates the grave-diggers, the bereaved mother, etc.). Hence a *seclusion* much more complete, a true period of margin with many alimentary and sexual (1) taboos. Possibly the incisions on the brow are an old kind of tatooing in connexion with this marginal period, similar to the inguinal incision of the widows (p. 201). The purification rites are of the same kind as those of the mourners, and particularly of the grave-diggers. The return to society, after their seclusion, is marked by rites of separation from the marginal period, which no doubt aim at getting rid of the defilement connected therewith. (Exposure of the *mizilo* outside the village in the bush.) Is it not striking to notice the correspondence between these rites in their peculiar sequence and those of the circumcision school, of mourning, of moving a village ?

See, as a conclusion to Part III, Practical Conclusions, No. VI : "*The New era and the Future of the South African Tribe.*"

834 (1) The sexual taboos are so severe that, after the Moodi battle, one of the slayers
727 took great offence at a man who dared to touch his food, as the man was living in his home and had relations with his wife. The slayer was afraid that this contact might cause his own death or bring misfortune to his family.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

APPENDIX I (See p. 31)

Characteristics of the six dialects of the Thonga language.

197 In the accompanying table I have compiled a list of characteristic words
115 in the six main dialects of the Thonga language. The Ronga and Djonga lists have been made by myself, and represent those dialects as spoken in the Mpfumo and Nkuna clans. The population south of Delagoa Bay speaks a kind of sub-dialect of the Ronga, the Lwandle or Maputju. (Abbr. Map.). I owe to the Rev. L. Perrin the peculiar forms found in that district. The Rev. P. Loze of Lourenço Marques compiled for me the list of the Hlanganu equivalents, as they are met with in the Ñwamba clans. They are not very different from the Djonga. Probably the dialect of Hlanganu proper, in the Lebombo Hills, would show greater differences. The Rev. H. Guye, who resided in Khosen and in Shikhumbane (Lower Limpopo Valley), provided me with a Djonga-Khosa list, very similar to the Nkuna and with the characteristic forms of the Bila dialect (Station of Shikhumbane, 15 miles west of Chai-Chai), also of the Hlengwe as spoken in the Khambana District, on the eastern border of the Lower Limpopo (Kh.). The Hlengwe, being so extensively spoken, possesses many sub-dialects. The Rev. S. Malale, a Native minister, compiled the characteristic forms of the Tshauke (Tsh.) region and those of the Madzibi tribe (Madz.) dwelling in the hinterland of Inhambane. The American missionaries have already published many books in the Tswa sub-dialect spoken in the vicinity of Inhambane, so I have also been able to mention a few Tswa forms. Lastly I owe to the same Rev. S. Malale the Ñwalungu forms, those of Maluleke as well as those of the Ba-ka-Baloyi (Bal.) proper, and, in addition, those of the Hlabi (Hl.), which are very similar to the Djonga.

197 The orthography employed in these lists is that which the Swiss missionaries adopted for the Vocabulary and Grammar of the Thonga-Shangaan language. (Bridel, Lausanne 1908.) For our missionary books, we have always used the excellent and scientific system of Lepsius, with its two main principles : a letter must always have the same value, and a single sound must be represented by a single letter.

197 Unhappily this system implies the use of special signs which are not found in the ordinary printing establishments, so we have had to adopt another conversational orthography for outside publications.

The *j* added to *t*, *d*, *r* and *sh* is not exactly the French *j*, but indicates a cerebralisation of the preceding sound. *Tj* is a *t* pronounced with the tip of the tongue bent somewhat backward, behind the palatal and towards the cerebral point. It is different from *tsh* which is *t* + *sh*, *sh* being the palatal *sh*, as in shore. *Dj* is not very different from the English *j* in just. *Rj* is a very much rolled *r*, tending towards the French *j* (as in jour); *shj* is a further modification of *r* where all guttural element has disappeared: a palatal *sh* cerebralised. These four sounds are not the pure *cerebral* sounds mentioned by Lepsius. I prefer describing them as *cerebralised*. However, in Malukele, *dj* sometimes becomes *dh*, as in the word mundhuku, and then it is pure cerebral. Besides the lateral sounds *hl*, *dl*, *tl*, very frequent in Thonga, there also occurs in Bila the Zulu *dhl*, which would perhaps be more correctly written *jl*.

Two peculiar sibilant sounds, *ps* and *bz*, (sw and zw in the Grammar) are accompanied by a special whistling noise. The v is not a true *v*, which is very rare in Thonga and is only met with in the combination *bv*, and in the Hlengwe ngovu, vuna, etc. It is a soft *b*, a fricative labial. A strong *b* is rare in all the dialects, except after *m* or before *y*. In the Maputju sub-dialect alone it is frequently used instead of the soft *b*. *Ñ* is the nasal guttural *n* pronounced as *ng* in singing; it is the same sound as *ñ*.

The following comparison bears on three different subjects: the sounds, the grammatical forms and some characteristic words of the vocabulary. As regards sounds, notice especially the very interesting permutations of *r*, which find their explanation in the hypothesis of Meinhof on the Ur-Bantu. (Compare Meinhof, Grundrisse einer Lautlehre der Bantu Sprachen). This table will provide colonists with a shibboleth for the Thonga tribe, viz., with a means of ascertaining the origin of any Thonga with whom they may meet. They will be able to diagnose the clan to which he belongs. To understand it fully, it will be necessary to study the Ronga or Thonga grammars, to which I must refer the reader.

197

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I. Phonetic permutations

		Ronga	Hlanganu	Djonga	Bila	Ñwalungu	Hlengwe
r	Stone	rjibye (Map.) Djibye	ribye	ribye	ribye	ribye	ribye (Madz.) rige
	Three	rjarju (Map.) Shjashju	raru	raru	raru	raru	raru
	To till	djima	rima	rima	rima	rima	rima
	Tongue	lidjimi	ririmi	ririmi	lirimi	lerimi lorimi	lerimi lorimi
	Tongues	tindjimi	tirimi	tindjimi	tirimi	tindimi	tindimi (Madz.) tirimi
	Shadow	ntjhuti	ndjuti ndruti	ndjuti	ndzuti	nduti	ntsuti ndzuti
	Shadows	mintjhuti	mindjuti mindruti	miruti mindjuti	mindzuti	miruti minduti	mintsuti mindzuti miruti
	Ant-hill	rjuka (Map.) Shjuka	ruka	tjhuka	ruka	tshuka	ruka
	Mountain	nhava	nhava	ntjhava	nthava	ntshava ntsava	ntsava
dj	Part	ndjima (Map.) ndima	ndjima	ndjima	ndzima	ndima	ndzima
	I	ndji (Map.) ndi	ndji ndri	ndji	ndzi	ndi	ndzi
	To morrow	Mundjuku (Map.) munduku	mundruku	mundjuku		mundhuku mendhuku	mundzuku
tj	To run	tjutjuma (Map.) tshutshuma	tjutjuma	tjutjuma	tsutsuma	tsutsuma	tsutsuma
	Only	ntsena (Map.) mpsena	ntsena	ntsena (Hlabi) ntjena	ntse	nisena	ntsena (Kh.) ntse
dy	To learn	dondja (Map.) donda	dyondja	dyondja	dyondza	dyonda	gondza
	To eat	da	dya	dya	dhla		ga
	Sun	dambu	dyambu	dyambu	dhlambo		gambo
by	Dog	mbyana	mbyana	mbyana	mbyana		gwana
	This grass	byanyi lebyi	byanhyi lebyi	byanyi lebyi	gwanye leli	byanyi lebyi byosi lebyi	gwanyi legi ganyi legi
	To say	byela	byela	byela	byela		(Kh.) gwela

y	To build	yaka	aka	aka	aka	aka	aka
w	To warm oneself	worja	ora	ora	wora	ora	wora
hw	Moon	hweti	ñhweti	nhweti	ñhweti	ñhweti	ñhweti
hl	To-day	namunhla	namuntlha	namuntlha (Hl.) nyamuntlha	nyamuntlha	nyamunhla	nyamuntlha
	To-meet together	tlhangana	tlhangana	hlangana		hlangana tlhangana	tlhangana
ř	To speak	řulařula (Map.) bulabula	řulařula	řulařula	řulařula	řulařula	řulařula (Madz.) walawula
	To place	řeka (Map.) beka	řeka	řeka	řeka		řeka
	Belly	khurji (Map.) khudji	khuri	khwiri	khwiri	khwiri	(rumbu)
	To have a good taste	nandjika (Map.) nandiha	nandjiha	nandjiha	nandjika	nandiha	nandziha
	To have a bad smell	nuha		nuñhwa	nuñha		nuñha
	Tail	nkila	ntshila	ntshila	ntshila	ntshila (Bal:) ntsila	ntshila ntsila
	To distribute food	khema	khema	phema (Hl.) khema	khema	phema	khema
	To be short	goma	koma	koma	koma	koma	koma
	Much	ngopfu	ngopfu	ngopfu	ngopfu	ngopfu	ngopfu (Tsh.) ngovu
	To help	pfuna	pfuna	pfuna	pfuna	pfuna	pfuna (Tsh.) vuna
	To dry up	phya		phya	khwa		khwa

II. Grammatical forms

cl. mu-řa	man	mhunu	muhu	munhu	munhu	munhu	munhu
	men	řhanu	řahu	řanhu	řanhu	řanhu	řanhu
	stranger	muyeni	ñeni	ñeni		ñweni, ñeni	
cl. mu-mi	handle	mphinyi (Map.) mphinyu	mbhinyi	mbinyi	mbinyi	mbhinyi	mphyinyi
	fig-trees	minkuwa	minkuwa	mikuwa	mikuwa	mikuwa	mikuwa

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	Ronga	Hlanganu	Djonga	Bila	Nwalungu	Hlengwe
this land	tiko ledji	tiko leri	tiko leri	tiko leli	tiko ledyi (Bal.) leli	tiko legi
of mine	dja nga	ra nga	ra mee	la mina	dya mina (Bal.) la mina	ga mina
cl. dji-ma of them	dja ṱu	ra ṱo	ra ṱoo	la ṱona	dya ṱona (Bal.) la vona	ga ṱona
that very one	djoledjo, djodjo	rolero, roro	rolero, rero	lalelo, lalo	dyoledyo, dyodyo lolelo, lolo	golego lolelo, lolo
cl. bu-ma night	ṱusiku	ṱusiku	ṱusiku	wusiku	ṱusiku	wusiku
cl. shi-pai limbs	pairo	pairo	pairo	pairo	pairo	pairo (Tsh.) bziro
goat	ambuti	ambuti	ambuti			ambuti
one man	mhunu muṅwe	muṅwe	uṅwe	muṅwe	muṅwe	
large trees	mirji le'mikulu	le'yikulu	le'yikulu	le'yikulu	le'yikulu	
high trees	ya ku leha	ya ku leha	yo leha	yo leha	yo leha (Bal.) ya ku leha	
a big (or old) man	mhunu lwe'nkulu		lo'kulu (Hl.) lo'nkulu	lwe'nkulu	lo'nkulu	
three oxen	tihonu tirjarju	tiraru	tiraru tinharu	tinharu	tinharu	tinharu
which day?	Siku djini?	rihi?	rihi?	yeshe	rihi? yeshe	gihi? dadane yeshe
the father alone	tatana pwaake (Map.) ha ṱupaakwe	e paakwe	yeshe			(Tsh.) yetshe
he has gone	a fambile	a	u	u	a	a Tsh. u
I have taken him	ndji mu tekile	n'tekile	ṅwe tekile	mu tekile	ṅwe	mu
we have seen him	hi mu ṱonile	m'monile	m'monile	mu ṱonile	mu	mu
I love him	ndji mu rjandja		n'djandja	ndzi mu randza	ndi ṅwe randa	ndza mu randza
the trees are many	mirji mi tele	yi tele	yi	yi	yi	yi
I have not gone	a ndji yanga	yanga	yange	yanga	yangi	yangi
I was going	ala ndji ya	a ndji ya	a ndji ya	a ndzi ya	a ndi ya	a ndzi ya
I would go	anha ndji ta ya	a ndji ta ya amfa ndji te ya	ngi ndji ta ya a ndji ta ya	ana ndzi ya	ingi ndi ta ya	a ndzi ta na ndzi ya
the man who goes	lw'a fambaka (Map.) fambaku	lwe a fambaka	l'a fambaka	lw'a fambaka	l'a fambaka	lw'a fambaka fambaku

who has gone	fambiki	fambiko	fambiko	nga fambiko	fambiko	nga fambiko
who will go	taka famba	nga ta famba	nga famba	nga ta famba	nga famba	(Tsh.) fambidoko
who does not go	nga fambiki	nga fambiko	nga ta famba	nga fambiko	nga ta famba	nga ta famba
who has not gone	(Map.) fambikokoko		nga fambiko		nga fambiko	nga fambiko
	nga fambangiki		nga fambangiko	nga fambangiko	nga fambangiko	(Tsh.) nga fambiko
	(Map.) fambangokoko					nga fambangiko
to be known	tibyiwa		tiviwa	tiviwa		(Tsh.) nga fambangiko
though	nambi	nambi	hambi	hambi	hambi	(Twa.) fambangikako
						tigwa
while	kasi	kasi	kasi	kasi	kasi	hambi
	(Map.) ekasi					(Twa.) hambu
as	pasang'epai	pasanga hepai	tano he hepai	ku kota	tano he	kasi
					ku kota	(Twa.) kanileri
						ku kota

III. Vocabulary differences

To make	yentsha	endla	endla	endla	endla	maha
To kill	dlaya	dlaya	dlaya	dhlaya	yendla	dhlaya
					dlaya	(Tsh.) daya
To hear	yingela	twa	twa	twa	twa	tsaka
To lie happy?	thava	thafa	tafka	tanka	tanka	lafa
To look for	djyala	lafa	la'a	lafa	lafa	shilo
A thing	sha-ntshuma	sha-ntshuma	shilo	shilo	shilo	hlayisa
To care for	lekisa	lekisa	hlayisa	hlayisa	hlayisa	themba
To trust	dumba	djyamba	tjemba	tsamba	themba	(Tsh.) gwandza
				themba	(Bal.) paymba	lwandla
Sea	likhulu	lwandla	lwandla	lwandla	lwandla	(Twa) fimbi
						tatani
Father!	tatana	tatana	tatana	tatana	tatani	
	(Map.) tati					
Mother!	manana	manana	manana	mamani	manani	mamani
	(Map.) mami					
Uterine nephew	mupayana	muphyana	ntukulu	ntukulu	ntukulu	ntukulu
						(Tsh.) nzukulu
Maternal uncle	malume	malume	kokwane	kokwane	kokwani	kokwani
Paternal aunt	rarana	rarana	hahani	hahani	hahani	hahani
	(Map.) rari					
Bed	luni	ku lala	ku lala	ku lala		

APPENDIX II (See p. 40)

On Thonga names, nicknames and surnames.

553 As an illustration of the way in which the Thongas change their names, I give the story of those of Mboza and Elias.

Mboza was called at his birth "Mulamule," after his paternal uncle. The whole name was, in Zulu: "Mulamula nkwinzi izilwako," viz., "the man who calms the bull which fights." At about the age of sixteen, he changed it to Mahubula. At that time he was trying to collect divinatory bones in order to become a diviner. He had called one of these bones "Hubula," and after that his comrades began to apply the name to him. He was seized by the "folly of gods." (Part. VI). When he was cured of this pretended possession, the spirit which made itself known called itself Mboza. This was the name of a man of his village, his own nephew, who had gone to Johannesburg and had died there. When he became a Christian, and was baptised,
177 Mboza kept his name. Most of the Natives like to take another name
553 on that occasion, the name of a disciple or of a prophet. We are not very ready to comply with their wish, as we have already too many Daniels, Jonas and Petros, and Mboza probably yielded to this argument.

551 *Elias* was called "Shifenyo" on the day of his birth, after a man who happened to pass through the village. This visitor was a kind of beggar who used to follow people carrying food to the chief, hoping to get something to eat. The child was of a good family, but they gave him the name of this low and despised individual, a truly democratic act! When he was older, one of his friends said to him: "Your name does not suit you. Call yourself *Spoon*." He adopted the new appellation, and the women of his village used to make fun of him saying: "Come along, we will distribute the food with this spoon!"
177 When baptised a Christian he became Elias, a somewhat onerous
551 name, especially as our Elias is not as strong and perfect as a prophet ought to be... But Natives never shrink from assuming great names. They always feel themselves equal to them!

881 The names adopted at puberty by boys are very often European
177 ones. There are scores of Jims, Sams, Bobs, etc. They also adopt as
551 names European words or words of European origin, as: Spoon, Nglazi (glass) Kamits'hi (cup), Djass (jacket), Fulitshi (forage), Fifteen, etc.

551 The really Native names very often begin with the prefix *mu* which is the personal singular prefix, (Musongi, Muzila, Mungutana, Mukentshe), or *Ñwa* conveying the idea of "son of" (Ñwamitwa, Ñwamashwele Ñwatjubula), or Nya used in the same sense, (Nyakubasa, Nyanise, Nyathi, probably of Zulu origin), or *Ma* which is also a personal prefix, (Manabe, Matende, Mathandana, Makhangala, Makasana, etc.). The prefix *Mi* means "daughter of," and is frequently met with (Misilana, Mintlohen, Mindinyana, etc.). As a rule it is employed only in names of women.

The prefix *Shi* which generally denotes things, objects, and has a neuter significance, is very often found in Ronga names. It is also a diminutive prefix, especially when the word ends in *ana*. So Shiribyana, a very common name, means a small stone (ribye); Shigidana, Shirombe, Shindjubi, etc. belong to the same class.

551 567 Some very curious names begin with the prefix *ba*, the pronoun of the third person plural. These are common amongst girls, generally of Chopi origin, who were slaves of the important Native women of Lourenço Marques and sold by them as concubines. For instance Bamuyeyisa means "they defy her," Bamusonda (Zulu), "they hate her," Batjhamahayena "they gossip about her," etc. In calling themselves by these names the girls express their bitterness.

551 But a great number of names have no prefix at all and often no meaning.

Nicknames are frequent amongst the Thongas and often entirely supplant the regular name. There was in Rikatla an old Mbekwa whom everyone called Nxoko. On inquiring into the origin of this curious name I was told the following story. One day Mbekwa was very happy and expressed his contentment by the exclamation; "Nxoko" (x here denotes a peculiar click of the tongue against the cheek). This interjection was received with favour and he employed it henceforth to manifest his pleasure on other occasions. He even made a regular verb of it, saying: "I go to nxokela in such and such a place," viz. "to enjoy myself there." The word was so fascinating that he was named after it, and I should not be surprised if it were incorporated into the current language, which is enriched every day by new descriptive adverbs like nxoko. (See my Thonga Grammar, p. 84 and Vol. II.)

551 609 Nicknames are more especially applied to white people, as Natives fail to catch their true names. These are very cleverly chosen, being often a verbal description of the chief physical or mental characteristic

551 of the white man. M. Torre do Valle has given a list of nicknames
609 of the merchants and other inhabitants of Lourenço Marques in his Diccionario Shironga-Portuguez. It is well worth consulting, and the only thing wanting is a photograph of the white man and an explanation of the name ; it would be a splendid illustration of Native wit!

551 So far we have spoken only of *personal* names and nicknames. But,
576 beside these, every man possesses his clan name, or surname, viz., the
618 name of the first of his known ancestors. Grown up men prefer being addressed by this name, which is *shibongo*, viz. the name by which they are "glorified." This subject is treated in Part III (p. 360).

APPENDIX III (See p. 98)

Unnatural Vice in the Johannesburg Compounds.

838 In January 1915 one of my colleagues passing near one of the
548 Johannesburg Compounds, saw a big company of Natives singing and
588 walking in the direction of another Compound where a great dance was taking place. Amongst them there were a number of women. My colleague asked his Native evangelist how it was possible that so many women should be walking about in that part of the world, where the feminine element is very small. The man told him : "They are not women! They are *tinkhontshana*, boys who have placed on their chests the breasts of women carved in wood, and who are going to the dance in order to play the part of women. To-night when they return to their dormitories, their 'husbands' will have to give them 10/, and only on that condition will the tinkhontshana remove their breasts and comply with the desire of their husbands." I sent for this evangelist who knew everything about the inner life of the Compounds and asked him about it ; this is the information I received :

Unnatural vice (bukhontshana) has become a regular institution in the Compounds. The word *nkhontshana* seems to come from the Ngoni, a Zulu dialect spoken in the Limpopo plain. The nkhontshana is the boy used by another man to satisfy his lust, and the man is called his *nina*, husband. When a gang of new workers arrives in a Compound, the Native induna, who has the supervision of the Compound, and the Native policemen, who have their rooms at the

838 entrance of the yard, come and "humutsha" i. e. make proposals to the
548 younger ones, not only to little boys (there are only a few of these) but
588 also to boys up to the age of twenty and more. If these lads consent to become their bakhontshana, they will be treated with greater kindness than the others. Their husbands will give them 10/ to woo them (buta) and will choose for them easy occupations, as, for instance, sweeping the dormitories, whilst the others will have to go to the hard underground work. Those who have not been chosen on their arrival by the policemen will probably receive a similar proposal from their older companions in the mine, and these men will then help them in the difficult task of "be hole" i. e. digging their hole. But the "husband" will have not only to woo this peculiar kind of *nsati* (wife) ; he must also *lobola* her, and a feast sometimes takes place when as much as £ 25 is put on the ground, a goat is killed and a real contract made which binds the nkhontshana to his master for the whole time he remains in the Compounds. The elder brother of the boy will receive the money in this disgusting parody of the Bantu marriage.

Sometimes the husband pays his nkhontshana at the end of each month as much as £ 1.10 and this represents a big increase in the earnings of the boy.

What happens when the contract is broken ? The "husband" claims the money remitted by him. If the boy refuses to return it the matter may be brought before the Compound Manager, who generally dismisses the plaintiff, saying : "If the boy does not love you any more, let him go."

839 The cause of the evil is not difficult to detect : it is the segregation
548 of the Native miners in these enormous conglomerations of males, far
588 from home, far from their wives, a most abnormal condition of life for men who have always enjoyed the freedom of the African bush. When prostitutes were allowed to live near the Compounds, unnatural vice was not so common ; when they were driven out, bukhontshana at once increased enormously, and thus the disappearance of one evil brought a new one in its train. On the other hand, my informant asserted that Thongas (Matshanganas, as they are called in Johannesburg) had never much frequented the haunts of prostitution, from fear of venereal diseases. They prefered a nkhontshana ; the danger was not so great! As the word nkontshana comes from the Bilen country, the home of the Matshanganas, it might be thought that this vice was known and practised amongst Natives before it took on such extensive proportions in the Compounds. There is an old Thonga song which

839 says: "You, nkhontshana, get up, the cocks are crowing, be not
177 surprised by the rising sun." This song warns the girl who has gone
548 during the night to sleep in the lao, the boys' hut, that she had better
588 run away at once lest she should be found in a place where she ought not to be. But it is a girl who is meant here and not a Johannesburg nkhontshana! No! Greek heathenism knew this refinement of immorality and indulged in it, but Bantu heathenism, whatever may be its corruption, never dreamed of it. Even to-day, though it is said to have penetrated into some parts (as in the Maputju country), the Native kraal feels a real abhorrence of it. I was told the following story. A man, in Bilen, had married a woman; he came to the Rand and took his wife's brother as his nkhontshana. When he returned home, his parents-in-law were very angry with him; they gave him back the lobolo money and took their daughter from him, saying: "You are a hyena! You are a wizard! You might as well sin with your mother-
839 in-law!"... Unnatural vice was taught to the South African Bantus by
177 men of a foreign race; it first invaded the prisons; now it is raging in these big Native miners' settlements, where it is deflouring the Bantu youth. For if it does not immediately destroy their physical strength, this perversion of one of the most essential functions of man corrupts the sources of moral stamina and endangers the foundations of Bantu social life.

Is there no remedy for this terrible evil?

The worst aspect of the situation is that the immense majority of the Natives themselves do not consider this sin as of any importance
839 at all. They speak of it with laughter. I was told that it is severely
684 prohibited by law and that any boy found guilty of bukhontshana is
548 condemned to twelve months' imprisonment. But it is extremely difficult to bring the evidence necessary for conviction. The indunas and Native policemen enter into a conspiration of silence, being themselves the first and greatest sinners in this respect. Happily the Mission is fighting the evil as energetically as possible and the Compound Managers help its agents to secure separate dormitories, where a certain number of boys can find a refuge against contamination. A few hundreds or thousands escape in this way, but what is that in comparison with the tens of thousands who are exposed to this frightful temptation in the Compounds fittingly spoken of, by a wise South African statesman, as the University of crime?

839 My informant, who was perfectly acquainted with the circumstances
548 of life in the Compounds, mentioned the following measures which he

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thought might be useful in the repression of this vice. Prohibit the use of curtains enclosing two beds, this being an unmistakable sign that bukhontshana is practised behind them. Arrange the beds so that they do not touch each other. (I hear that some Mining Companies have spent and are still spending large sums of money to secure this end, but the actual sleeping accommodation ought to be entirely transformed if the Companies are determined effectively to check the evil.) Introduce a strict watch during the night. Put in electric light everywhere in order to illuminate the dormitories at any time when required. I do not know how far such measures would be effective. The only conclusion I would offer on this painful subject is this. As white civilisation is responsible for the introduction and the frightful development of this vice amongst the Natives, the Whites must not remain indifferent in the face of an iniquity which threatens the very life of the South African Tribe.

APPENDIX IV (See p. 221).

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South African Bantu

I. *Ancestors and Descendants*

	Thonga-Ronga	Thonga-Djonga	Chopi	Zulu
Father	Tata. Rero	Tatana. Rara	Tate	Baba
Mother	Mamana. Ñhwa	Manana. Mana	Mame	Mame. Ma
Father's Father	Kokwana	Kokwana	Kokwana	Baba mkulu
Mother's Father	»	»	»	»
Father's Mother	»	»	»	»
Mother's Mother	»	»	»	»
Great Grandfather & Grandmother	Kokwana wa Tatana	»	»	Gogo
Son	Ñwana (wa ndjisanyana)	Ñwana (wa mufana)	Mwanana	Ndodana
Son's wife	Ñwingi	Ñwingi		Makoti. Malukazane
Daughter	Ñwana (wa washonyana)	Ñwana (wa washwana)	Mwanana	Ndodakazi
Daughter's husband	Mukoñwana	Mukoñwana		Umkwenyane
Grandson, granddaughter	Ntukulu	Ntukulu	Mutukulu	Umzukulu
Grandson's son	Ntukulu wa shi kandjatjolo	Ntukulu shinguhe	Mutukulu wa shinguha	

II. *Brothers and Sisters*

Elder Brother (of a boy)	Nhondjwa. Hosi	Nhondjwa. Hosi	Nkoma	Umnewetu
» » (of a girl)	»	»	Ndi ya ngu. Tate	»
Younger Brother (of a boy)	Ndjisana	Ndjisana	Nanda	Umfowetu
» » (of a girl)	»	»	Ndi ya ngu	»
Elder Sister (of a boy)	Nhondjwa. Hosi	Nhondjwa. Hosi	Ndi ya ngu	Dadewetu
» » (of a girl)	»	»	Nkoma	»
Younger Sister (of a boy)	Ndjisana	Ndjisana	Ndi ya ngu	»
» » (of a girl)	»	»	Nanda	»
Elder Brother's Wife (for a boy)	Namu	Namu	Ndombi	Makoti
» » » (for a girl)	» Nhombe	»	»	»
Younger Brother's Wife (for a boy)	Ñwingi	Ñwingi	Ndombi	»
» » » (for a girl)	Namu. Nhombe			»
Elder Sister's Husband (for a boy)	Namu. Mukoñwana	Mukoñwana	Mukwana	Umkwenyana
Younger Sister's Husband (for a boy)	Namu. Mukoñwana	Mukoñwana	Mukwana	Umkwenyana
General name of Brothers and Sisters	Ba-Makwerju	Ba-Makweru	Ba-Ndi-ya-ngu	

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Kinship System.

in the direct Line.

Xosa	Sutho (Basutoland)	Pedi-Khaha	Venda	Tonga (Inhambane)	Njao
u-Bawo	Ntate. Ra	Baba. Bô-papa	Khotsi	Nyehe. Baba	Baba
u-Ma	'Me (= Mme)	Mma. Bô-mmê	Mme	Mayime. Mayi	Mayi
u-Baw'omkulu	Ntate mohôlô	Kuku. Makgolo	Makhulu	Koko. Kokwe	Tshekulu
»	»	Makgolo	»	»	»
u-Makulu	Nkhônô. 'Me mohôlô	Makgolo	»	»	Mbiya
»	Nkhonô 'Me mohôlô	Kuku	»	»	»
u-Koko	Ntate mohôlô-hôlô	Makgoloko-toane	Makhulukuku	Koko wa baba	
u-Nyana	Mora	Moroa	Mwana	Mwana	Mwana
u-Molokazana	Ngoetsi	Ngoeci	Mazwale	Ngadja mwana	Nyamwana
in-Tombi	Morali	Moradi	Mwana	Mwana	Mwana
um-Kwenyana	Mokhoenyana	Mokgonyana	Muduhulu	Mwane	Mukwambo
um-Zukulwana	Setlôhôlô	Motlogolo	Muduhulu	Ntugulu	Muzukulu
	Setlôhôloana	Motlogolo-tlogolwane		Ntugulu ginguha	Muzukulu shinguha

Their Wives and Husbands.

um-Kakwa	Mohôloane	Mogolo	Mukomana	Nkoma	Mukulu
um-Nakwetu (Buti)	Khaitseli	Kgaecadi	Khaladzi		
um-Ninawe	Moena	Morathô	Murathu	Nanda	Munukuna
um-Nakwetu (Buti)	Khaitseli	Kgaecadi	Khaladzi		
um-Dade (omkulu)	Khaitseli	Kgaecadi	Khaladzi	Ndi ya ngu	Mukulu
u-Dade wetu (Sisi)	Mohôloane	Mogolo	Mukomana		
u-Dade (omcinci)	Khaitseli	Kgaecadi	Khaladzi		Munukuna
um-Sekwetu (Sisi)	Moena	Morathô	Murathu		
um-Kulwakazi	Mohatsi'a mohôloane	Mosadi oa mogolo	Mwane		Mayi
um-Kulwakazi (Sisi)	Molamô	Mogadibo Mmammuea	Mubuye		
um-Ninzwakazi	Mohatsi'a ngoana'esu	Mosadi oa morathô	Musali wa murathu	Ngadja mwana	Nyamwana
um-Ninzwakazi (Sisi)	Molamô	Mogadibo Mmaimuea	Mubuye		
u-Sikazi	Seae. Khaitseli	Mogoê	Mukwasha. Muduhulu	Mwane	Mukwambo
u-Sikazi	Seae. Khaitseli	Mogoê	Mukwasha. Muduhulu	Mwane	Mukwambo
	Bana beau	Bo-ngana'esu			

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III. *Children of*

	Thonga-Ronga	Thonga-Djonga	Chopi	Zulu
Elder Brother's son (for a man) .	Ñwana	Ñwana	Mwana	Ndodana. Mtanami
» » (for a woman)	»	»	Tsandzana	Ndodana. Mtanami
Younger Brother's son (for a man).	»	»	Mwana	Ndodana. Mtanami
» » (for a woman)	»	»	Tsandzana	Ndodana. Mtanami
Sister's son (for a man)	Ntukulu. Mupsyana	Ntukulu	Mutukulu	Ndodana. Mtanami
» (for a woman) . . .	Ñwana	Ñwana	Mwana	Ndodana. Mtanami
Brother's daughter (for a man). .	Ñwana	Ñwana	Mwana	Ndodakazi. Mtanami
» » (for a woman) .	Ñwana. Nhlampsa	Ñwana. Nhlampsa	Tsandzana	Ndodakazi. Mtanami
Sister's daughter (for a man) . .	Ntukulu	Ntukulu	Mutukulu	Ndodakazi. Mtanami
» » (for a woman) .	Ñwana	Ñwana	Mwana	Ndodakazi. Mtanami

IV. *Relatives on*

Father's Elder Brother	Tatana lwe' nkuiu	Tatana lo' nkulu	Tata wa hombe	Baba mkulu
His wife	Mamana	Manana	Mame	Mame
Father's Younger Brother . . .	Tatane lwe' ntjongo	Tatana lo' ntjongo	Tata wa mudoto	Baba m'cane
His wife	Mamana	Manana	Mame	Mame m'cane
Father's Brother's Son.	Makwerju	Makweru	Nkoma. Nanda.	Umfowetu
His wife (for a man)	Namu. Ñwingi	Namu. Ñwingi	Ndombi	Makoti
Father's Brother's Daughter . .	Makwerju	Makweru	Ndi ya ngu	Dadawetu
Her husband (for a boy) . . .	Mukoñwana	Mukoñwana	Mukwana	Umkwenyana
» » (for a girl) . . .	Namu	Namu		
Father's Sister	Rarana. Rarakati	Hahana	Hahani	Babekazi
Her Husband (for a boy) . . .	Namu	Mukoñwana	Mukwana	Baba. Umkwenyane
» » (for a girl). . . .	Nkata. Nuna	Namu. Nuna	Ndombi	Baba
Father's Sister's Son (for a man).	Ntukulu. Shitale	Ntukulu	Mutukulu	Umzala
» » (for a woman)	Ñwana. Shitale	Ñwana	Mwana	»
Father's Sister's Daughter (for a man).	Ntukulu. Shitale	Ntukulu	Mutukulu	»
Father's Sister's Daughter (for a woman)	Ñwana. Shitale	Ñwana		»
The wife of Father's Sister's Son	Ntukulu	Ntukulu	Mutukulu	»
The Husband of Father's Sister's Daughter.	»	»	»	»

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Brothers and Sisters.

Xosa	Sutho (Basutoland)	Pedi-Khaha	Venda	Tonga (Inhambane)	Njao
u-Nyana	Ngoana	Ngoana oa mogolo	Mwana wa mukomana	Mwana	Mwana
»	»	Ngoana oa mogolo	Mwana wa khadzi	»	»
»	»	Ngoana oa morathó	Mwana wa murathu	»	»
»	»	Ngoana oa morathó	Mwana wa khadzi	»	»
u-Nyana. um-Tshana	Mochana	Motlogolo	Muduhulu	Ntugulu	Muzukulu
u-Nyana. um-Tshana	»	»	Mwana	Nyahama	
in-Tombi	Morali		Mwana	Mwana	
	»				
in-Tombi. um-Tshana	Mochana	Motlogolo	Muduhulu	Ntugulu	Muzukulu
in-Tombi. um-Tshana	Ngoana				

the Father's Side.

u-Tata omkulu	Ntate mohölö	Ramogolo	Khotsi muhulu	Baba kongolo	Baba mukulu
u-Ma-omkulu	Nkhönö	Mamogolo	Mme muhulu	Mayi kongolo	Mayi
u-Tata-omcinci	Rangoane	Rangoanê	Khotsi munene	Baba dugwane	Baba muloko
u-Ma-omcinci	Rangoane. Mangoane	Mmanê	Mme munene	Mayi dugwane	Mayi
u-Kayise	Ngoan'esu	Ngoana ramogolo	Mukomana	Nwanduye	Hama
	Mohatsi'a ngoan'esu		Mmane	Namû	
u-Kayise	Khaitseli	Kgaecadi	Khadzi	Gogadji	
u-Sibari	Soar. Khaitseli	Soar. Kgaecadi	Muduhulu	Mwane Nyahama	
»					
u-Dadobawo	Rakhali	Rakgadi	Makhadzi	Hahani	Thethadji
u-Malume	Rakhali (oa monna)	Motlogolo	Mukwasha. Muduhulu	Mwane	Mukwambo
»				Namu	
um-Za	Motsoala	Motsoala	Muzwala	Ntugulu	
»	»	»	»	Nyahama	Muzukulu
»	Motsoala	»	Muzwala	Ntugulu	
»	»	»	»		
»		Mosadi oa motsoala	Muzwala	Ngandja mwana	Nyamwana
»	Motsoala		Mukwasha Muduhulu	Ntugulu	

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V. *Relatives on*

	Thonga-Ronga	Thonga-Djonga	Chopi	Zulu
Mother's Brother	Malume	Malume. Kokwana	Kokwana	Malume
Mother's Brother's Wife (for a man)	Nsati	Kokwana	»	Mamekazi
» » (for a woman)	Malume	»	»	»
Mother's Brother's Son	Malume. Ntale	Kokwana	»	Umzala
His wife	Namu		»	»
Mother's Brother's Daughter	Mamana. Ntale	Manana	Mamanyana	»
Her Husband	Tatana	Tatana	Tate	»
Mother's Brother's Grandchildren	Bakokwana	Bakokwana		Ndodana. Ndodakazi
Mother's Elder Sister	Mamana	Mamana	Mame	Mamekazi
Mother's Younger Sister	»	»	»	»
Mother's Sister's Husband	Tatana	Tatana	Tate	Malume
Mother's Sister's Son (for a boy)	Makwerju	Makwerju	Ndi ya ngu	Umzala
» » » (for a girl)	»	»	»	
His Wife	Namu	Namu	Ndombi	Umzala. Kanina
Mother's Sister's Daughter (for a boy)	Makwerju	Makweru	Ndi ya ngu	»
Mother's Sister's Daughter (for a girl)	»	»	»	»
Her Husband (for a boy)	Namu. Mukoßwana	Mukoßwana	Mwane. Mukwasa	»
» » (for a girl)	Mukoßwana	Namu. Nuna	Ndombi	»

VI. *Relatives on*

Wife	Nsati. Nkata	Nsati	Musikati	Umfazi
Wife's Father	Mukoßwana. Tatana	Mukoßwana. Tatana	Tate	Umkwe
Wife's Mother	Mukoßwana. Mamana	Mukoßwana. Mamana	Mame	Umkwekazi
Wife's Elder Brother	Mukoßwana	Mukoßwana	Musade	Umlama. Sivar
His Wife	Mukoßwana lwe'akulu	Mukoßwana lo'akulu	Nkokati	»
Wife's Younger Brother	Namu	Namu. Mukoßwana	Musade. Ndombi	»
His Wife	Mukoßwana lwe'akulu	Mukoßwana lwe'akulu	Nkokati	»
Wife's Elder Sister	Mukoßwana. Mamana	Namu	Ndombi	»
Her Husband	Makwerju	Makweru wa shinauma	Nkoma	Umnakwetu

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the Mother's Side.

Xosa	Sutho (Basutoland)	Pedi-Khaha	Venda	Tonga (Inhambane)	Ndjao
u-Malume	Malōme	Malome	Malume	Koko	Tabekulu
u-Malume wesifazi	Malōme. Nkhōnō	Makgolo	Makhulu	»	Mbiya nkadji
u-Malume wesifazi	Malōme. Nkhōnō	»		»	
um Za	Motsoala	Motsoala	Murwala	»	
»	Mosali oa motsoala	Makgolo		»	
»	Motsoala	Motsoala	Murwala	Ngadja mwana	Mayi
»	Monna oa motsoala	Mogadjea oa motsoala	Mukwasha	Baba	
	Bana ba motsoala	Bana ba makgolo		Ba mwana mayi	
u-Makazi	Nkhōnō. 'Me	Mmê-mogolo	Mme muhulu	Mayi kongolo	Mayi mukulu
»	Mangoane	Mmê ngoanê	Mmane	Mayi dugwane	Mayi muloko
u-Malume	Rangoane	Ramogolo. Rangoanê	Monna wa mme muhulu	Koko	
u-Kanina	Ngoan'esu	Mogolo. Morathó	Mukomana. Murathu	Wanduye	Hama
»	Khaitseli	Kgaecadi	Khaladzi		
»	Mosali oa ngoan'esu	Mogadjea oa mogolo		Namu. Mayana	
»	Khaitseli	Kgaecadi		Ntugulu	
»	Ngoan'esu	Mogolo. Morathó			
»	Monna oa khaitseli	Mogoê		Ntugulu	
»	Monna oa ngoan'esu	Mokgonyana		Nyahama	Hama

the Wife's Side.

um-Fazi	Mosali	Mosadi	Musadzi	Mwangadji	Mukadji
u-Bawozala	Mohoe. Mokhonyana	Makgolo. Ratsoale	Makhulu	Babe. Sade	Mukwambo. Babe
u-Mazala. um-Kwekazi	Mohoebeli	Mogoêgadi	Makhulu	Mayi	Mukwambo. Ba-Mbiya
um-Kwe. u-Sibazi	Soar. Khaitseli	Mogoê	Malume	Baba	Mukwambo
u-Sibazi	Khaitseli	Makgolo	Makhulu	Mayi gogadji	Ba-Mbiya
um-Kwe. u-Sibazi	Soar. Khaitseli	Mogoê	Malume	Baba. Sadenyana	Mukwambo
u-Sibazi	Khaitseli	Makgolo	Makhulu	Mayi gogadji	Ba-Mbiya
um-Lazyakazi	Melamo	Makgolo. Molamo	Mme muhulu	Mayi gogadji	Mwalamo. Mukadji muhulu
um-Nakwetu	Fube	Makgolo. Molamo	Khotsi muhulu	Ndi ya ngu	Hama

VI. *Relatives on*

	Thonga-Ronga	Thonga-Djonga	Chopi	Zulu
Wife's Younger Sister	Namu. Nhombe	Namu	Ndombi	Umlamu
Her Husband	Makwerju	Makweru wa shinauma	Nanda	Umnakwetu
Wife's Brother's Son	Namu	Mukoñwana	Musade	Ndodane. Mtanami
His Wife	Mukoñwana lwe'nkulu	Mukoñwana	Nkokati	Makoti
Wife's Brother's Daughter	Namu. Nsati	Namu. Nsati	Ndombi	Mtanami
Her Husband		Makweru	Ndi ya ngu	Umkwenyana
Wife's Sister's Son	Ñwana	Ñwana	Mwana	Mtanami
His Wife	Ñwingi	Ñwingi	Mwingi	Makoti
Wife's Sister's Daughter	Ñwana	Ñwana	Mwana	Mtanami
Her Husband	Ñwana	Ñwana	Mwana	Umkwenyana
Daughter of Wife's Brother's Son	Nsati. Namu	Nsati	Musikati	Umzukulu

VII. *Relatives on*

Husband	Nuna. Nkata	Nuna	Mwamna	Ndoda. Umyeni
Husband's Father	Ñwingi	Ñwingi	Mwingi. Tate	Baba
Husband's Mother	Ñwingi	Ñwingi. Manana.	Mwingi. Mame	Mame
Husband's Elder Brother	Ñwingi	Ñwingi. Namu.	Ndombi	Umnewetu
His Wife	Makwerju	Makweru wa shinauma	Ndi ya ngu	Dadewetu
Husband's Younger Brother	Namu	Namu	Ndombi	Umnewetu
His Wife	Makwerju	Makweru wa shinauma	Mnanda	Dadewetu
Husband's Elder Sister	Mamana. Nhombe	Namu	Ndombi	Dadwetu
Her Husband	Mukoñwana lwe'nkulu	Mukoñwana lo'nkulu	Mukwasa	Umkwenyana
Husband's Younger Sister	Namu. Nhombe	Namu	Ndombi	Dadewetu
Her Husband	Mukoñwana lwe'nkulu	Mukoñwana lo'nkulu	Mukwasa	Umkwenyana
Husband's Brother's Son	Ñwana	Ñwana	Mwana	Mtanami
His Wife	Ñwingi	Ñwingi	Mwana	Makoti
Husband's Brother's Daughter	Ñwana	Ñwana	Mwana	Mtanami
Her Husband	Ñwana	Mukoñwana		Umkwenyane
Husband's Sister's Son	Ntukulu. Nkata	Ntukulu. Nkata	Mutukulu	Mtanami
His Wife	Ntukulu	Ntukulu	»	Makoti
Husband's Sister's Daughter	Ntukulu	Ntukulu	»	Mtanami
Her Husband	»	»	»	Umkwenyane

601 *the Wife's Side* (continued).

Xosa	Sutho (Basutoland)	Pedi-Khaha	Venda	Tonga (Inhambane)	Njao
um-Lanyakazi	Molamō	Mogadjea	Murathu wa musadzi	Namu	Mwalamo. Mukadji muloko
um-Nakwetu	Fube	Mokgonyana	Khotsi munene	Ndi ya ngu	Hama
um-Tshana		Ngoana oa mogoê	Malume	Baba. Sade	Mwalamo
		Makgolo		Mayi gogadji	Ba-Mbiya
um-Tshanakazi			Muzwala wa mwana. Musadzi	Namu	Mukadji
				Ndi ya ngu	Hama
um-Tshana		Ngoana	Mwana	Mwana	Mwana
		Ngoeci		Ngadja mwana	Nyamwana
um-Tshanakazi		Ngoana		Ndoni	Mwana
		Mokgonyana		Mwane	Mukwambo
um-Ntana		Ngoana oa makgolo		Namu	

the Husband's Side.

um-Yeni; in-Doda	'Monna	Monna	Munna	Mwama	Mwamuna
u-Bawozala	Matsalè (Ntate)	Matsoale. Rapsale	Mazwale	Babe	Baterala
u-Mazala	Matsalè. 'Me	Matsoale. Ngoeci	Mazwale	Mayi	Mayi
um-Kuluwa	Mohôloane Ntate oa monna	Matsoale omonyane	Khotsi muhulu	Nyahama	Mwalamo
um-Kuluwakazi	'Me		Muhadzinga	Mayi kongolo	
um-Ninawe	Moen'a monna	Morathó oa monna	Khotsi munene	Namu	Mwalamo
um-Ninawekazi	Ngoan'esu		Muhadzinga	Ngadjamwana	
u-Dodakazi. Sisi	Molamō. 'Me	Mogadibo	Mubuye		Mwalamo
u-Sibari	Soar	Mokgonyana	Mukwasha		»
u-Dodakazi. Sisi	Molamō. Mangoane	Mogadibo			Mwalamo
u-Sibari	Soar	Mokgonyana			
u-Nyana	Ngoana	Ngoana		Nyahama	Mwana
in-Tombi. u-Molokazane		Ngoeci		Ngadjamwana	»
in-Tombi	Ngoana	Ngoana		Mwana	Mwana
um-Kwenyane		Mokgonyana		Mwane	Mukwambo
um-Ntana.		Motlogolo		Ntugulu	Muzukulu
um-Ntana. u-Molokazane		Mogadjea oa motlogolo		»	»
in-Tombi		Motlogolo		»	»
um-Ntana				»	»

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APPENDIX V (See p. 226)

593 858 177 797 As an example of *the absolute obedience due to the father*, I may quote the testimony of the Rev. Calvin Maphophe, one of the Native ministers of the Swiss Mission, now living in Lourenço Marques. It illustrates vividly the painful conflict which takes place in the heart of a Bantu boy when he is faced with the dilemma of either obeying a heathen father who forbids him to become a Christian, or going against the paternal will and joining the Church.

One day one of the little shepherds belonging to Maphophe's village in the Spelonken brought to his comrades an astonishing piece of news. He had gone to the missionary station and heard a white man say that there is a God in heaven and that this God created all things. His words were received with absolute incredulity by the company of [773] boys herding the goats ; they answered : "It is an impossibility! Do we not know that the first man and woman came out of a reed ?" However young Matsivi (this was the name of Calvin Maphophe) and his brother Shihosi wished to set their minds at rest about the matter and they began to attend the service on Sundays. They were so struck by the message heard in the little church that they decided to learn more of this extraordinary teaching of the White people, and every Sunday they went to the Station. One of the men of the tribe informed their father that they were assiduous attendants at the Christian services. Maphophe called together all the men of his village and summoned the two boys before this tribunal. Pointing his finger at them he said : "These boys have dared to go to the White people and hear things which are dangerous to us. We do not wish them to become insane! Take it to heart both of you. It is over. Henceforth you must never go again to the village of the Whites. If you disobey, you will be beaten.".

The two boys were terribly moved by their father's words. It is a recognised principle in the Bantu tribe that a child who wishes to do right must obey his father, and they were anxious to behave well... But the attraction they felt for the new teaching was too great. They solved the problem by running away from their home. This is not the place to tell the end of the story. It may be found in a little pamphlet "Le Pasteur Calvin Mapopé" published by the headquarters of the Swiss Romande Mission (2, Chemin des Cèdres, Lausanne).

APPENDIX VI (See p. 265)

The story of Paulus K., illustrating the matlulana superstition and the Thonga horror of polyandry.

607 835 One of my pupils, who was already a married man of, perhaps, thirty-two years of age, once came to me, very much distressed, to confess a fault which seemed to weigh very heavy on his conscience. On a day of feasting he had drunk too freely and had commited adultery with the wife of his elder brother Guga. He fought with himself for years, not daring to avow an action which seemed to him not merely ordinary adultery but an incestuous act. He finally wrote to his brother: "Though I know that we shall not be able to love each other any more as before, though it pains me so much to separate from you, I will confess! Please forgive me, as I intended to commit suicide on account of my fault!"

The special gravity of the fault consisted in two circumstances: 1) She was his brother's wife and he was now unable to visit his brother when ill, to take part in his burial, or to maintain friendly relations with him. 2) Guga was his elder brother. This made the case still worse.

The letter of Paulus to his fellow evangelists is touching: "I have no right to stay in your assembly, because I have been overcome by the Enemy and committed adultery with my elder brother's wife. I have been long prevented (from confessing) by the Enemy's power. Now I have wept before Jesus that He may help me to pierce the abscess... Satan came and said to me: 'Will you not be ashamed to confess such a thing before men?' I nearly retreated. But at sunrise I made haste to write to you, and now I feel peace and joy. It seems to me that I am going to receive the Spirit of God."

APPENDIX VII (See p. 279)

611 597 604 *The story of Spoon Libombo, showing that, when the lobolo has not been paid or has been returned, the children belong to the mother's and not to the father's family.*

Spoon was the son of Shibaninge, a woman of the Libombo family, and of Khobete of the Mazwaya family, who had lobola Shibaninge.

611 This man died during a war with the Portuguese, having been killed
597 on Mbengelen island. The widow was "fambeliwa" (chosen) by
604 Nsiki, Khobete's brother, who was to inherit her. But Nsiki did not really care for the widow. He did not prepare a *ntehe* for the baby nor provide the mother with ochre. Seeing this, Shibaninge went back to her relatives. When the time for the weaning of the little one arrived, a man named Mbobobo had irregular relations with the woman in order to "lumula" the child (See page 60). Mbobobo went so far as to take her to his home, upon which Nsiki claimed the lobolo paid by the Mazwayas and the Libombos gave it back to them. After that, Spoon lived in his mother's family and was called : "wa ka Libombo," "man of Libombo." But he had no real home (a nga na kwakwe). Being on the spot he was always chosen to help in the sacrifices : drinking the beer which remained in the pot after the libations to the gods in the gandelo, near the gate, stealing the offerings when the victims were killed in the sacred bush, etc. He was the "great ntukulu," because his mother belonged to the elder branch or first house of the family. So he took precedence of the other uterine nephews when they had to take part in the sacrifices.

APPENDIX VIII (See p. 281)

The story of Gidhlana Ngwetsa of Rikatla; a typical case illustrating the lobola, divorce, and leper customs of the Ba-Ronga.

587 Gidhlana was the sister of a man named Mubene. Both were the
586 children of a fine old Ronga named Ngwetsa and one of his wives. Gidhlana was bought with lobola by a man named Khandlela (candle), son of Ñwamanghele, a man of the Manyisa clan settled near Rikatla. The marriage took place probably in 1893. The new pair did not live in peace. Gidhlana quarrelled with her husband. "Why ? Nobody knows! Are the affairs of the huts and the villages known to outsiders ?" She returned home to her father Ngwetsa. The husband waited a while. Then he followed her (landjela) and asked her to come back to the conjugal home. Her parents told her to obey. She went. But quarrelling soon recommenced. She fled a second time ; her husband and her parents-in-law did their best to induce her to go back. She refused. An uncle of hers took a stick and thrashed her but nothing could persuade her.

587 her, but nothing could persuade her. She stayed in her parents' village. In a neighbouring village dwelt a young man named Muzila, who was the chief of the Rikatla district (Page 381). He belonged to the Mazwaya clan, to the reigning family. He had two brothers, one of whom, called Gudu, was still a boy. This girl, Gidhlana, began to make friends with the boys of Muzila's village. Gudu sent a woman from the village of Ngwetsa to make proposals to Gidhlana (ku mu wopseta). This woman made proposals on behalf of Gudu (a wopsetela Gudu). The girl agreed. But, in the meantime, Gudu started for Johannesburg and Gidhlana was abducted by the other brother, who took her to the village of Muzila ; it was a case of marriage by theft (tlhuba) (See p. 119). Muzila was grieved at the conduct of these young men, and sent the girl to one of his counsellors to be watched over by him and, going to Ngwetsa, her father, he said : "We have stolen your pot. Look for it in our village, the village of Mazwaya's people." Ngwetsa was greatly puzzled. The first husband had not yet claimed his money back ; it was still in the hands of Ngwetsa and lo! the girl had already been taken by others! This was not right at all! They might have waited a little! All the men of Ngwetsa armed themselves and started as enemies (hi bulala) for the village of the thief.
587 They killed a pig, entered the hut of the thief, took all his implements
639 and made a heap of them on the square. The inhabitants all fled into the bush. But one of them came back with 10 . and said : "Have pity on us, please! We clasp your legs! (khoma milenge, viz., ask for forgiveness). You know ? To steal is a very old thing on earth!" "Yes, we know. The thief trusted his throat! (This is a proverb : he did not fear to swallow a large stone, thinking that his throat would be wide enough to let it pass!) He knew that he would have to pay this fine! All right! You are saved! Take the implements back into the hut."

587 The Ngwetsas took away with them the flesh of the pig, but they sent one joint to the thief, so that he might eat it with his new wife. In this way they gave their consent to the marriage. "They gave him his wife."

586 But very soon afterwards the first husband, Khandlela, came to Ngwetsa to claim the lobola money, as his wife had gone. Gudu had gone to Johannesburg, so nothing was to be found in that quarter. The discussion began. Ngwetsa said : "All right ; but 10 of the lobola money must remain with us, for the fence of our village (lihlampfu)." This is generally done when a woman has been driven

586 away by her husband. Sometimes he must forego as much as £ 1. or £ 2 of the lobolo, because he has not brought the woman back in peace. He has spoilt the fence of the village by ill-treating a girl coming from it. He must repair it with that money... Khandlela refused, saying : "We have not driven her away! She went back of her own accord ; you have even found a new husband for her!" What could the Ngwetsas do ? They had just used the lobolo of Gidhlana to buy a wife for Mubene, her brother. The money had already been given to the Moyane clan from which a girl had been chosen by Mubene. They consequently went to the Moyanes and asked them to return the money. But the Moyanes said : "Your money has already gone further. We have used it to buy a girl of Madjieta for our son. We will go and fetch it." So two projected marriages were prevented ; they would have been annulled, had they been already concluded! In this way Khandlela found his money!

587 Later on Gudu came back from Johannesburg and took Gidhlana as his wife. Hoping that he had earned some money, the Nwgetsas went to him and said : "You have spoilt our flock (ntlhambi)" viz., the oxen which we hoped to get by the sale of our daughter. "Now pay!" Muzila said to them : "Look at Shaputa ; we trust in her!" Shaputa was a little girl, the sister of Gudu. Muzila proposed to Ngwetsa's people to consider her as theirs : "They would find money through her." They consented to wait till she was of age. Some years elapsed.

766 Muzila moved to the Mabota country with Gudu. Gidhlana was suddenly taken ill with leprosy and the disease made rapid progress. She died. Muzila, the master of the village, informed Ngwetsa. Ngwetsa did not come to the burial, neither did any member of the family attend it. Was it not leprosy ? Is not the contagion terrible for members of the family ?... Other people can bury a leper ; his relatives never. However they allowed their fears to go too far, for decency required that, in such a case, some relatives at least should go and witness the burial, even though they might keep far away from the grave. Their behaviour greatly grieved Muzila and entailed unexpected consequences!

587 Shaputa grew to be a young woman and a suitor, of the Honwana
766 clan, came and bought her. The Ngwetsas heard of it and at once put in their claim. Muzila informed Gudu, who was then staying near Lourenço Marques. "He fell on his back from the shock!" (o gan hi le ntjhaku!) and refused to pay. Muzila said to Ngwetsa : "You have forfeited your claim, as you did not attend the funeral. Moreover

587 the chief of our Mazweys family, Magomanyana, says that no claim is accepted for a leper, for one drowned in the river, or for anyone who dies from smallpox or from the assagay."

692 177 Of course the Ngwetsas did not accept such an answer, but this is a typical Bantu affair (nandju), showing the many blessings of the lobola custom. The matter[1] will have to be decided by the chief, or rather by the Portuguese Administrator, who must take a good deal of trouble, if he wishes to understand it rightly and to deliver an equitable judgment!

APPENDIX IX (See p. 530).

The story of Mboza and Muhambi and of the women inherited by them, illustrating the consequences of lobola and of its suppression.

177 Compare the genealogy of the Masuluke family (page 225).

595 583 Mboza had four brothers, three elder and a younger; Sam, the elder, had a son, Hlangabeza, who married by lobola a first wife and by abduction a second, Bukutje II. Foe, the second brother, married Bukutje I and had four children: three girls, Tshakana, Estelle, Nhwanin, and one boy, Muhambi. Sam and Foe both died, so Bukutje I was inherited by Mboza and her four children went to live in his village. In the meantime Mboza became a Christian, as also did Muhambi and the three girls. Wishing to lead a Christian life, he separated from Bukutje I, who, being still a heathen, committed herself with "an empty oil-tin" (p. 213), viz., a man of Inhambane who became her servant-husband. In 1904 a Christian young man, Moses, wooed the elder of the three girls and brought £ 20 to lobola her. This money was naturally due to Muhambi in order to allow him to lobola a wife for himself, and indeed Muhambi was betrothed to Ntshelebeti, daughter of Phulan Ngwetsa. This man was still a heathen and consequently wished his daughter to be paid for.

Having been told that it is not right for a Christian to accept lobolo money, Mboza and Muhambi, actuated by a most praiseworthy scruple, decided to return the money to Moses, and Muhambi started for Johannesburg in order to earn the lobolo due to Phulan. But this was not the end of this famous "bukosi!" The younger brother, Komatan, a consistent heathen, came to Mboza, very angry with him for his

1 [See pp. 504-509 -- Analyse]

177 595 583

foolishness. "This is family property," said he, "and I do not consent to its being lost." So he claimed the £ 20, which was given to him, and out of which Mboza did not get a penny. Komatan himself did not intend to use it for his own benefit, as we shall see presently.

The following year, whilst Muhambi was still working in Johannesburg, Hlangabeza died. Muhambi was his heir, being his *makwabu*, first cousin on the paternal side. He was informed of his good luck, but answered that it was taboo for him (yila), as a Christian, to accept this inheritance. So Komatan took the first of Hlangabeza's wives, not as a wife, however, but because she had children and he wanted them to remain in the Masuluke family. The woman herself also took "an empty oil-tin," in the form of another Inhambane man. The second of Hlangabeza's wives, having been married by him by abduction, was not really the property of the Masulukes. But she had one child; so Komatan took the lobolo money of Moses and remitted it to Denisa, this woman's father, and, in this way, he secured the property of both mother and child to the Masulukes. The woman, however, went to live with a Chopi in an irregular manner and had a second child by him. On January 29th, 1909, this woman of the Denisa family came to Muhambi. Her child had to be weaned, which is done by means of a rite in which the husband must take part. She had no true husband, so she vented all her anger before Mboza and Muhambi saying: "I have no husband, nobody to give me clothing, to pay my hut-tax, to repair my house. Have you indeed forsaken me?" — "Yes" answered Muhambi, "you cannot be my wife. I have married Ntshelebeti and, for us Christians, it is not allowable to take many wives." — "Then do not be surprised if I go and take another husband, and do not go and accuse me *shikanekiwen*, before the Portuguese Administrator, saying I have spoilt your property." — "We shall not *follow* you," said Muhambi, "you are free." — "But" added Mboza, "we are not sending you to commit sin! Go and think the matter over."

This was the end of the discussion. Mboza's answer is no answer at all. It only shows the great complexity and difficulty of the position. The whole story fitly illustrates how utterly bad the custom of lobola is, and what immense difficulties its suppression entails. Let me, however, remark that these difficulties would not have arisen had there not been a heathen relative (Komatan) to uphold the claim which the Christians had foregone. During the stage of transition many hard cases such as this must unfortunately occur!

APPENDIX X

Short Account of two South African wars.

175 As regards war customs, I not only possess the information obtained from my ordinary sources, Mankhelu, Tobane, Mboza, Viguet, etc., but a certain amount of personal experience. I had indeed the good, or the bad luck, to witness two South African wars : the Ronga-Portuguese war of 1894-1896 and the Sikororo war in 1901. As many allusions are made to these wars in these pages, my readers may be interested in having a short account of them.

1) *The Ronga-Portuguese war*, of 1894-1896, was caused by the subchief Mubvesha, when he tried to make himself independent of his young suzerain, Mahazule, who had just succeeded his father Maphunga as legitimate heir of Nondwane (See page 410). Mubvesha succeeded in interesting the Portuguese Administrator in his cause, but the whole clan remained loyal to Mahazule, and, a dispute having arisen, on the 27th August 1894, at Hangwana (the seat of the Administrator), the Mazwaya army assembled and prepared to defend its chief. The Government then successively asked Ñwamantibyane, chief of Mpfumu, and Ngwanazi, chief of Maputju, for help against the rebels. Ñwamantibyane, after long hesitation, refused the call (See Appendix XI). The Maputju warriors came as far as the Tembe shore, but, when asked to cross the bay, they decamped. For some weeks the Native yimpis were the masters of the whole country, up to the boundary of the town of Lourenço Marques. But Portuguese troops soon arrived from Lisbon and re-took Hangwana, (10 miles from the town), in December. The Royal Commissioner, M. A. Ennes, with his aide de camp, General (then Captain) F. d'Andrade, having taken command of the campaign, a forward move was made. The Portuguese camped near Morakwen, on the Nkomati River, where a severe battle took place at daybreak on the 2nd February 1895. The yimpis of Mahazule and Ñwamantibyane attacked the Portuguese troops while it was still dark and nearly invaded their camp. But the white soldiers did not lose their heads ; they rapidly formed square and repulsed the enemy with great loss. At the same time Native allies of Matjolo and Mabota were driving the rebels from their retreats, so that they fled to the east of the Nkomati River into Gungunyana's territory : these Captain F. d'An-

175 drade followed into the Khosen country and defeated them on the 8th September 1895, at the battle of Magule (See page 471).

The Ngoni king, Gungunyana, had more or less encouraged the rebels to rise. When asked to give them up to the Portuguese he refused to do so. So the war had to be carried up to his stronghold of Mandlakazi. During many weeks the whole of Gungunyana's army, which was estimated at 25,000 to 30,000 men, camped near its king, ready to fight. But, for some unknown reason, the Portuguese army was delayed and the Thonga battalions, having nothing to eat, broke up. However, a strong bodyguard, the flower of the great king's troops, consisting principally of Ba-Ngoni, remained at the headquarters. When at last the Portuguese arrived in the neighbourhood of Mandlakazi, a sharp fight took place. The Ngoni warriors gallantly attacked the Portuguese square but were driven back with great loss, (305 killed, according to the official report). The royal kraal, Mandlakazi, was taken and destroyed and Gungunyana fled to Tshayimiti, the sacred wood where his ancestors were buried. Some weeks later, Captain Musinho d'Albuquerque, after a forced march, took him prisoner without any fighting, and brought him to Lourenço Marques, whence he was deported to Western Africa.

175 The Ba-Ngoni considered that they had been taken by surprise and
631 not properly defeated ; so, in 1897, a serious revolt broke out, headed by
P. Magigwane, the Commander-in-Chief of Gungunyana's yimpi. But it
177. was soon successfully put down by the Portuguese forces, who divided
63 up the country into a certain number of military zones, and the districts of Lourenço Marques and Inhambane have been perfectly quiet ever since.

175 2. *The Sikororo war* took place, in 1901, in the Shiluvane country, during the Anglo-Boer war, when the north of the Transvaal was, as it were, without white rulers. The successor of the famous Sekukuni, reigning in the Leydensburg district, Sekhukhukhu, tried to avail himself of the unsettled state of the country to realise an old political dream, viz., to become the paramount chief of the whole country. He interfered with the Maharimane clan, which inhabited the Drakensberg ranges, where the Oliphant crosses them before reaching the plain. This clan was divided into two : the legitimate heir was under the tutelage of a woman named Ñwanamohube, but his brother, Maphephe, wished to get rid of her, stating that she was exercising her authority against the interests of the country. Sekhukhukhu assured the queen-regent that he would help her if she joined him. He

75 entreated the Pedi chiefs dwelling on the northern side of the range, viz., Sikororo and Maaghe, to espouse his cause. Sikororo was a very strange old man who had retired into the mountains, far away from his villages, and a regent, named Rios, was carrying on the government in his stead. Rios agreed with Sekhukhukhu's proposals ; so did some of the subjects of Maaghe, the Masume clan. But Maaghe himself refused to do so and he was supported by Muhlaba, the Nkuna chief, who was an old ally of his.

The first encounter took place in the Maharimane valley, where Maphephe was defeated by the united yimpis of Sekhukhukhu and Ñwanamohube. He fled. In the meantime another foe, called by the Natives "Fighter-by-night," had opposed Sekhukhukhu in the Leydenburg district, invaded his territory, and defeated his troops. It seemed that this would put an end to the ambitious plans of the great Pedi chief... But such was not the case. Hearing of his enemy's defeat, Maphephe again took courage. Chased from his country, he sought a refuge with Maaghe, who was imprudent enough to welcome him and all his people in the Bokhaha valley. We witnessed the curious spectacle of a whole clan moving into our district of Shiluvane. The young chief was breathing vengeance. He soon began to make mischief, and organised a raid into Masume's territory. This put a match to the train. Rios avenged his friends by burning some villages of Muhlaba, and killing the pigs. A regular battle took place, on the 15th October 1901, between the armies of Maaghe and Muhlaba and those of Sikororo and Masume. The first had to retreat, but they suffered no loss, whilst they claimed to have killed 20 of the enemy. The situation was bad for them, as other chiefs threatened to join Sikororo and to deal summarily with them and their missionaries! I then went to ask for help at Leydsdorp, where the remainder of the Boer Commandoes were just passing, coming from Komati Poort on the way to Pietersburg. I had the good luck to meet there with a party of Hollanders, who at once volunteered to come and save women and children in danger! They stayed for two days at the Shiluvane station, where their presence caused a great sensation... But they had to look after their own affairs, and we were soon obliged to return to the same dangerous situation! On the 6th November 1901, the Sikororo yimpi, strengthened by the troops of Sekhukhukhu, Mabulanen, Masume etc., a regular confederation of yimpis, numbering 700 warriors (as it was estimated), invaded the peaceful Shiluvane valley at dawn, burning the huts, firing their rifles, and shouting wildly : "Moya! Moya!" (Wind! Wind! viz., projectiles of

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

175 the enemy are but wind!) They went so far as to cross the Moudi rivulet, less than one mile from the Shiluvane Mission Station. The two allied chiefs were not on their guard and had very few men with them. However, they rushed to meet the invaders with such courage that these were surprised. Seeing the Christian Natives clad like Europeans, they believed the Hollanders were still there, and fled ignominously, leaving some 40 of their warriors dead on the field of battle. These are the men whose flesh provided all the Zoutpansberg magicians with their powerful charms! Rios was killed, and it is said that his corpse was redeemed for the price of ten guineas by the old Sikororo. Others state that his skull was placed by Maaghe in the great drum of his capital. This defeat definitely broke the power of Sikororo, who made his submission, and was the last clash of arms worth mentioning in the war.

APPENDIX XI (See p. 463).

The position of Ñwamantibyane when the 1894 war broke out.

When the Portuguese asked Ñwamantibyane to help them against Mahazule, (August-September 1894), this young chief of twenty years of age at the most, assembled his army. An irresistible spirit of war was in the air. Held back by his counsellors, who were unwilling to fight against their rebellious compatriots, Ñwamantibyane hesitated to respond to the appeal of the Whites. He was seated, perplexed, in his camp, his demeanour morose and preoccupied, surrounded on the one hand by his "great ones," on the other by his young men who addressed him thus: "Give us, give us men to slaughter! Thou art nothing but a coward! Send us!" Those were tragic times!

He allowed a small contingent to go into the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques, in order to reconnoitre (Nov. 6. 1894). This yimpi made several prisoners and stole the oxen of the Swiss Mission, which were grazing in the vicinity of the town. One of our young men, named Tandane, was taken prisoner by a man of Ñwamba. A passer-by, belonging to the Mabota clan, was also caught. All these captives were taken to the chief Ñwamantibyane, to whom the spoil belonged, his men having been the spoilers. The man who had captured the passer-by from Mabota begged the chief's permission to

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

175 kill him, which was accorded ; this warrior, radiant with joy, immediately retired with his victim, slew him in cold blood and returned to dance before the chief. The Ñwamba man requested a like privilege. But Ñwamantibyane had other ends in view ; he wanted to make use of our young man to send a message to the Portuguese Governor, and so refused the permission asked. The man, a prey to an insatiable longing to shed blood, insisted. He was offered as compensation one, and even two, of the stolen oxen, but could not thus be satisfied. "I want my man," said he, "to kill him so that I can dance!" Ñwamantibyane had to employ force to silence him. Two oxen, twelve pounds sterling, counted as nothing to this black warrior compared with the fiendish delight he would derive from the *gila*!

As regards the conclusion of the story of Tandane, he came back with a letter from the chief asking why the Whites wanted to kill him, and begging for an interview. When the letter, written in Zulu by some of his boys, had been despatched, the young chief said : "Now I can breathe! When I eat something, it can pass through my throat!" The Portuguese Governor consented to the interview, but the letter sent back to Ñwamantibyane, in answer to his, was intercepted and so the war continued. See in the preceding Appendix how it spread to Gungunyana's country, and ended in the capture of this despot and the destruction of the Ngoni kingdom.

[411]

Phot. D. Lamb.

Sham fight at Nilebende's (Maputja).

Latin Notes for Medical Men and Ethnographers

291 "Annotatio prima (P. 40). --'Shifado' quo quisque Thonga
845 extremum penem vestit, spheroides excavataque res est;
848 quod tegimentum ex iis, quae ad pudorem et munditiem perti-
881 nent, postulatur. Si quis schifado suum amisit, ei dedecoriest."

Note 1 (page 40). Shifado, with which every Thonga covers the end of his penis, is a spherical and hollowed-out object; this covering is demanded from those who are concerned with decency and cleanliness. If anyone has lost his schifado [sic] he is disgraced.

"Olim apud Thonga, qui a populo Zulo illum morem acceperunt, viri, quod linguà 'mbayi' id est fistulam quandam ex foliis textis palmae quae 'milala' dicitur, ferre solebant.

[At one time among the Thonga, who took over this custom from the Zulu people, the men used to wear what in their language is called mbayi, that is, some kind of tube made of palm leaves woven together which is called milala.]

"Ultima 'mbayi' anno 1895 vel 1896 post Christum natum visa sunt. Quod shifado ex parvae cucurbitae cortice aut duro et excavato accurateque polito ligno factum, summo veretro affixum, minime incommode ferre videntur."

[The last mbayi were seen in the year 1895 or 1896. Because the shifado is made of the rind of a small gourd or of hard, hollowed-out and carefully polished wood, and attached at the top of the private parts, it seems that it can be worn with the minimum of discomfort.]

833 "Annotatio secunda (P. 56). S. n. i, sc. semine non im-
851 misso. Ad hoc, marito sperma foras spargendum est (a nga
842 mu weleri): hic est coitus rite factus et quasi lustralis. Inde,
765 uxor in manus utriusque sordes (thyaka ra bona) sumit, qui-
783 bus umbilicum illinit."

[Note 2 (page 56). S. n. i., that is, the semen has not been injected. Moreover the husband must eject his sperms outside of the body (a nga mu weleri): this is the coitus properly executed and, as it were, lustral. Then the wife takes in her hands the filth of both (thyaka ra bona) and smears the navel with it.]

"Annotatio tertia (P. 57). Corpus infimum pueri ex adverso et a tergo peni pater tangit.

[Note 3 (page 57). The father touches with his penis the lowest part of the boy's body from the front and from behind.]

831 "Annotatio quarta (P. 88). Hae sunt formulae:
881 Shana khololwane ma ri tiba le'ri onhaka milebe?
Novistisne avem quae labra minora laedit?

831 —I mbolo ya shuburu.
881 —Penis est incircumcisi viri.
Banhwanyana ba ka Makwakwa ba kundja na ba hlanamile. N'yini?
Puellæ ex regione Makwakwa manibus apertis coeunt. Quid significant hæc verba?
—I mahlehlwa.
—Est semen mahlehwa.
(Hlehlwa is the seed of a creeper growing along the ground; this seed [517] is of the same size as a two shilling piece and possesses, in its central part, two hooks standing up.)
[Note 4 (page 88): these are the formulae:
Shana khololwane ma ri tiba le'ri onhaka milebe?
Do you know the bird that injures the labia minora?
—I mbolo ya shuburu.
It is the penis of an uncircumcised man.
Banhwanyana ba ka Makwakwa ba kundja na ba hlanamile. N'yini?
The girls from the region of Makwakwa have intercourse with open hands. What do these words mean?
—I mahlehlwa.
—Mahlehwa is the semen.
(Hlehlwa is the seed of a creeper growing along the ground; this seed [517] is of the same size as a two shilling piece and possesses, in its central part, two hooks standing up.)]
832 "Annotatio quinta (P. 98. 182). Externorum genitalium
836 minora labra verbo milebe (singul. nebe) designantur, quæ
304 puellæ adeo trahere solent ut ea usque ad quinque, decem,
881 etiam quindecim centimetra extendant. Quæ labra nonnunquam
171 parvis baculis metiuntur, eorum longitudine, apud comites suas, immo apud sponsos, gloriantes. Istis pravis moribus enim nihil aliud puellæ sequuntur nisi futuri mariti gratiam, cui apud Ba-Pedi, si sponsam suam labra non satis extendisse arbitratur, eam domum dimittere et boves suos reposcere licet. Puellæ aululam pulmenti plenam parant quam operculo claudunt. Ad quas pueri vespere veniunt et stipem dant ut admittantur. In casae solo considunt et puellas cenantes spectant dum digitos in aululam demittunt. Puellæ quarum milebe quatuor digitos longa sunt, quatuor digitis usæ comedunt: bakulu, sunt, i.e. adultæ, et lætantur amatores. Aut tribus tantum, duobus aliquando utantur. Adolescentulæ cavis manibus cenant.
[Note 5 (pages 98 and 182). The labia minora of the outer genitals are called by the word milebe (singular nebe), and the girls are in the habit of pulling them so much that they extend from five or ten to as many as fifteen centimeters.

832 Sometimes the girls measure their labia with small sticks
836 and boast of their length to their companions and even to their
304 bridegrooms. The girls follow these perverse practices for
881 no other reason than for the sake of their future husband.
171 Among the Ba-Pedi the husband may, if he thinks that his bride has not sufficiently stretched her labia, send her home and demand his bulls back. The girls keep a pot full of food ready and cover it with a lid. In the evening the boys come to the girls and give them a small gift in order to be admitted. In the house they sit down on the floor and watch the girls eating from a pot with their fingers. The girls whose milebe are four digits long eat using four fingers: they are bakulu, that is, adult, and they enjoy their lovers. Or they use only three fingers and sometimes two. The young girls eat with the palms of their hands.]

765 "Annotatio sexta (P. 154). Seu quis per ætatem iam pro-
783 vectam imbecillior factus erit, sive qualibet de causa tam
833 impotens ut sperma emittere non possit (a nga kumi mati), ceteri viri quid fiat sciscitabuntur. Quod si utique parum procedit, tota inhibetur cærimonia. Qui vero se invicem eodem ritu miscere debebant, iis ritum conficere non fas est. Ille jejunio, per quinque dies, prout res postulat, artissime utetur, cui medicinæ ad rem accommodatæ exquirentur.

[Note 6 (page 154). If someone should have become feeble because of advanced age, or if for some reason he should be so impotent that he cannot emit sperms (a nga kumi mati), other men ask what should be done. For if it proceeds quite insufficiently, the whole ceremony is held up. And those who should have had intercourse in turn in the same ritual fashion are not permitted to complete the rite. He [the impotent man] has to fast very strictly for five days as the situation requires and the remedies appropriate to the situation will be sought.]

843 "Annotatio septima (P. 154). Nocens maritus uxorque sui
834 purgandi causâ alium ritum peragent. Uxor mariti suaque
841 pudenda veste intima et inquinatissima tergebit, quam postea comburet.

Ambo, ad ignem accedentes, caput manusque calefacient. Inde cinerem collectum mulier adipe miscet, quo mariti artus illinit, digitis bracchiis cruribusque tractis, quod 'lula' dicitur. Postea, noctibus duabus sequentibus, coibunt. Si maritus, non cum uxore sua, sed cum puella quadam ex alio vico, stupri consuetudinem junxerit, huic fossorium donabitur, ut ritum 'lula' perfectum veniat.

[Note 7 (page 154). If the husband and the wife are guilty of an offense, they perform another rite for the sake of purging themselves. The wife will cover her husband's and

843 her own pudenda with a much befouled intimate garment which
834 she afterwards burns.
841 Going to the fire they both warm their head and their hands. Then the woman mixes the ashes she has collected with fat and smears it over her husband's limbs, rubbing along his fingers, his arms, and his legs, which is called lula. Afterwards, in the two nights following, they will have intercourse. If the husband has had sexual intercourse not with his wife but with some girl from another village from lustful desire he will be given a fossorium so that the rite lula will come to its completion.]

765 "Annotatio octava (P. 155). Si mulieris parentes procul
783 habitant, maritus eius comes itineris erit, quacum superiore
833 nocte coibit, ad aquæ lustrali vim novam dandam."
595 [Note 8 (page 155). If the woman's parents live far away, her husband will be her companion on the way and he will have sexual intercourse with her the night before in order to give the lustral water new power.]

765 "Annotatio nona (P. 160). Faciebat dum 'Khunye khunye;
535 quibus verbis significatur coitus (khunyeta)."
831 [Note 9 (page 160). She was saying Khunye, khunye during
834 this time; these words signify coitus (khunyeta).

"Annotatio decima (P. 160). Carminum, morum temporis marginalis natura eo obscenior est quo nobilior defunctus fuit. Viguetus narrat: [518] 'Duce vel uno ex principibus mortuo, luctuque consueto præterito, luctum privatum, ad quem boves immolentur, celebrari. Carnem ad baculos humi fixos alligari; homines inde mulierem vocare, eamque posteriorem vestem exuere juberi, neque ullam vestem nisi anteriorem habere quam, si velit, exuere ei liceat. Eam, postea, divaricaturam esse ad unam ex carnis particulis dentibus apprehendendam ita prominentem ut omnes viri eius pudenda videant, quod plerumque 'taboo' (id est nefas) sit.'"

[Note 10 (page 160). The nature of the songs, a custom of the marginal period, is the more obscene the greater the nobility of the deceased person was. Viguet relates: [518] "When the leader or one of the chiefs is dead and the usual mourning has passed, they stage a private mourning at which bulls are sacrificed. They tie the flesh to poles fixed in the ground; then the men call a woman and order her to take off the clothes on her back and they do not allow her to have any clothes on except the one in front which, if she wants to, she may also take off. Then she must seize one of the bits of meat with her teeth, bending forward in such a

765
535 way that all the men can see her pudenda which is
831 much tabooed (that is, sinful)."]
834 "Annotatio undecima (P. 161). Hic, mulier paulo dilutiore
765 colore magnaque statura addit: 'Hi kundjana, id est:
792 coeamus!' "

[Note 11 (page 161). Here a woman with a slightly lighter color and of large stature, adds: Hi kundjana, that is, "let us have intercourse!"]

841 "Annotatio duodecima (P. 187). Hæc sunt ipsissima verba, quibus Makhelu mulieris menstruansis taboo (id est nefas) describit. Mulier menstruans est res, quæ imprimis 'yila' est. Per sex dies 'yila,' id est, nefas est. Septimo die transit flumen ad se lavandam. Octavo ei nondum licet cum marito suo coire; forte enim sanguis pudendis ad hæret, eà insciente. Magis 'refrigescit.' (Verbo phula mènstruans mulier comparatur cum aula a foco remota).

Si, ante id tempus, maritus cum uxore cœat, ægrotus fiat, veretrum retro ita recedat ut vir urinam reddere non possit et, brevi tempore, moriatur. Talem vitæ exitum multi habuerunt. Radicibus arboris cui nomen est mayilana vel mulieris menstruantis vesti particulà, a medico ad levem pulverem redactà, quæ ægro bibenda est, morbus sanari p[illegible] Aegrotus multum sanguinis reddet, et veretro [illegible]unte, salvus est."

[Note 12 (page 187). These are the very words with which Makhelu [sic] describes the taboo (that is, the sin) of the menstruating woman. A menstruating woman is something which is, first of all, yila. For six days she is yila, that is to say, taboo. On the seventh day, the flow that cleanses her passes over. On the eighth day she is not yet allowed to have intercourse with her husband; for perhaps some blood is still sticking to her pudenda without her knowledge. She "cools down" even more so. (By the word phula the menstruating woman is compared to the pot removed from the stove.)

841 If the husband should have sexual intercourse with his wife
834 before this time, he will be taken sick, his private parts will
756 decay to such an extent that the man would no longer be able to pass urine and would die within a brief period of time. Many have had such an end to their life. The sick man can be cured by a liquid containing the roots of the tree that is called mayilana or by a particle of the menstruating woman's dress, reduced to a light powder by the medicine man. The sick man loses a lot of blood; after his penis is able to pass water again, the man is well again.

765 "Annotatio tertia decima (P. 213). Cærimoniis purification-
783 is, ubi res genitales primas obtinent partes, ita explicatis,
833 quaeramus quid significent ritus illi.
587 Mors est res quæ imprimis homines contaminat. Omnia polluit quae tangit, non homines tantum ipsos sed etiam quæ mortui fuerunt.

Apud homines, propinqui mors vitæ fontes imprimis afficit, id est membrorum succos qui vitam creant. Itaque et mulieris succi vaginales et viri succi spermatici tollendi sunt: in coitu autem, sub legibus certis sunt tollendi.

Cum vidua lustratur, aut a peregrino aut a novo marito purificatur.

1) Ut recta viduæ purificatio fiat, abrumpendus est coitus, et vir, antequam semen emittat, repellendus; vir erit tum contaminatus at mulier purgata. Vir si in coitu feminam eludentem animadverterit, eam viduam esse et ipsum occidere velle intelléget, tum comites vocat qui, mulierem apprehendentes, dum vir in sinum ejus semen emiterit, vi continebunt; mulier tum polluta manebit; quod querebat, non habebit. Vir contra erit sine damno: contaminatus non erit. [519]

2) Cum purificatio a novo efficitur marito, tum ambo in casam se includunt. Res agitur permagna: tabacum ne hauriant! Medicamenta potant singularia. Tum toties cœunt deinceps quoties vir ferre valet, decies et sæpius si potest. Sed toties vir semen extrinsecus emittit: 'bayisanyana ba fanela ku huma, i.e. amovendi sunt pueri (spermatozoa),' ut dicit unus ex eis qui me de his rebus certiorem fecerunt. Nunc sunt fontes vitæ apud virum purgati, quod fieri necesse erat, cum esset et ipse contaminatione impurus. Mulier quoque pura est, haud dubie medicamentorum beneficio quæ, antequam coirent, potaverunt ambo.

Quæ interpretatio ritum recte explicat cum ab impuris hominibus perpetratur. Sed cum a puris parentibus perpetratur, ut de 'boha puri' agitur (p. 56), tum res alio modo est explananda. Pater et mater cingulum infantis e lino xylino factum genitalibus succis inlinunt, ut infans eorum vitalibus succis corroboretur et in vitam gentis ita recipiatur.

These physiological conceptions, though they may be absolutely false from the scientific point of view, certainly proceed from deep intuitions regarding the mystery of life. I insist on the fact that they are not derived from religious ideas. It is a mistake to attempt to explain the whole life of the Bantus by their religion alone, as many writers are inclined to do. These sexual practices are not more religious than those prophylactic measures which we ourselves employ to preserve ourselves from tuberculosis or small pox. They

765 are dictated by a special notion of contagion which is admittedly
723 false, scientifically speaking."
833 [Note 13 (page 213). After we have thus explained the cere-
587 monies of purification in which genital matters play the primary role, we shall inquire into the significance of these rites.

Death is something that contaminates men above all. It pollutes everything that it touches, not men themselves only, but also the things that belonged to a dead person.

Among men, the death of a relative affects first of all the sources of life, that is to say, the juices of the limbs that create life. Therefore both the vaginal juices of a woman and the man's spermatic fluid must be removed: in coitus, however, they must be removed according to certain rules:

When a widow purifies herself, she is purified by a stranger or by a new husband.

1) In order that the purification of the widow proceeds correctly, the intercourse must be broken off and the man must be pushed back before he ejaculates his semen; then the man will be contaminated and the woman will be purged. If the man notices that the woman is trying to evade him during coitus he realizes that she is a widow and that she wants him to perish. Immediately he calls his companions who, seizing the woman, will hold her by force while the man ejects his semen into her vagina; in that case the woman will remain polluted and what she wanted she will not have. The man, on the other hand, will be without blame: he will not be contaminated. [519]

2) When the purification is effected by the new husband, then both seclude themselves in the house. One matter is urged particularly strongly: that they do not smoke any tobacco! They drink curious medicines. Then they have intercourse as many times in a row as the man can last, ten times and more if he is able. But as many times as they have intercourse the man ejaculates his semen externally: bayisanyana ba fanela ku huma, that is, "the children (spermatozoa) must be removed," as one of those who informed me about these things said. Now the sources of life of the man are purged, something which had to be done while he was impure with contamination. The woman is also pure, doubtless on account of the medicines which they drank together before they had sexual intercourse.

This interpretation explains the rite correctly, provided it is carried out by impure men. But when it is executed by pure parents, as when it is concerned with the boha puri (page 56), then the matter must be explained in a different

765 fashion. The father and mother smear the infant's girdle
783 made of cotton flax with their genital juices so that the infant
833 becomes invigorated by their vital juices and thus may be
587 received into the life of the tribe.

These physiological conceptions, though they may be absolutely false from the scientific point of view, certainly proceed from deep intuitions regarding the mystery of life. I insist on the fact that they are not derived from religious ideas. It is a mistake to attempt to explain the whole life of the Bantus by their religion alone, as many writers are inclined to do. These sexual practices are not more religious than those prophylactic measures which we ourselves employ to preserve ourselves from tuberculosis or small pox. They are dictated by a special notion of contagion which is admittedly false, scientifically speaking.]

595 "Annotatio quarta decima (P. 285). Doctor G. Liengmei,
833 nostro medico, cum sæpe curaret viros qui medicinam
842 petebant qua infantes procrearent, fassi sunt se singulis noctibus cum tribus vel quatuor uxoribus coire. (A monogamis quibusdam audivimus uxorem adeo fatigari ut noctu exiret laboratum ut a marito evaderet.) Cum medicus eos hortaretur ut quinque dies concubitu omnino abstinerent, nunquam id concedere potuerunt. Volebant enim facultatem generandi recuperare libidine non omissa. Dicuntur etiam cum vires cupiditatibus nondum pares esse videantur, remedia quædam adhibere sive ut venerem excitent sive ut uxores prægnantes fiant. Duplex fit medicatio. Primum secti testiculi hirci—(quod animal fatigari negatur, mbuti a yi karali)—cum plurimis herbis mixti coquuntur et a viro eduntur. Deinde alias herbas collectas in cerevisiam injicit. Tantum aiunt esse effectum ut viro qui non amplius duas uxores habeat, non sit ea re [520] utendum, ne, illis non sufficientibus, cum aliorum uxoribus stuprum committat, quod ei sit offensioni.

Viri casti, ut in loco Mpfumo videre licet, in sua casa dormiunt et interdum uxorem quam cupiunt ad se vocant. Plerique tamen, lege sibi imposita, ne discordia inter uxores erumpat, mensem unum in casa singularum uxorum vicissim agunt.

Qui plures habent uxores aliis etiam medicaments utuntur ad libidinem excitandam. Quorum unum putant ad effectum maxime valere: Medicus, cum se ipse curavit, in locum montium secedit, quo cynocephali feminæ urinam menstruali sanguine mixtam emittere solent. Quod manet in saxis et fœdissimam diffundit odorem, medicus excipiens coquit, et ex eo magnas conficit pillas quas emptoribus vendit. Hi eas

595 in cerevisiam injiciunt.
833 Quod medicamentum ad gravia vulnera curanda quoque
842 conferunt, et liberis praebent cum caput ut cynocephali jactant."

[Note 14 (page 285). Doctor G. Liengmei, our physician, often took care of men who asked for medicine that would produce children. They confessed to him that they often slept with three or four wives in one single night. (From some monogamous men we heard that a wife would get so tired that she would go out at night to work just to escape from her husband.) When the doctor told them to abstain altogether from intercourse for five days they were never able to agree to that. For they wanted to regain their generative faculty without giving up their lust. They are said to employ certain remedies even when their powers no longer appear equal to their desires, either in order to excite their sexual desire or to make their wives pregnant. There is a two-fold remedy. First, a man cuts the testicles off a goat--(this animal does not tire, it is asserted, mbuti a yi karali)--and boils them mixed with numerous herbs; then he eats them. Next he collects other herbs and puts them into his beer. They claim that this has such an effect that the man who has no more than two wives should not use this remedy [520] lest, because his own would not be enough for him, he should commit fornication with the wives of others, which would be a grave offense on his part.

595 Virtuous men such as one can find in the village of Mpfumo sleep in their own houses and call for the wife whom they desire. Most of them have imposed upon themselves the law not to let any discord break out among their wives: therefore they spend one month in turn in the house of a particular wife.

595 Those who have several wives use still other remedies to
756 excite their sexual desire. Of these remedies they believe
833 one to be particularly effective: The medicine man, after
278 he has rested, retreats into the hills where the female baboons are wont to emit their urine mixed with the menstrual blood. That which remains on the rocks and which gives off an abominable smell the medicine man takes up and boils; from this he makes large pills that he sells to all buyers. The latter put them into their beer.

They also use this remedy to cure grave wounds, and they give it to their children when they shake their heads like baboons.]

000 Annotatio quinta decima (P. 477). Veretro fabricatur pulvis, cuius effectus mirabilis est. Qui, bellatorum carpis

000 iniectus, iis tantam sollertiam affert ut nullum frustra telum mittant. Quo pulvere tela quoque illinuntur quæ assagaies appellantur."

[Note 15 (page 477). From the private parts they prepare a powder the effect of which is marvelous. This injected into the wrists of warriors gives them such skill that they never miss the mark with the spear. The spears are also smeared with this powder and they are then called assagaies.]

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PRACTICAL CONCLUSIONS

I. ON THE RITES OF INFANCY (P. 36-61).

853 The rule that a mother "must plough for her child three hoes" is
595 excellent. It is undoubtedly a splendid preparation for future life to
177 have been fed during three years on mother's milk. Will it be possible to maintain this law under the new conditions of civilized life which are being adopted more and more throughout the tribes? Let us notice that this provision, though it was inspired partly in the interest of the child itself, is dictated mainly by a superstition concerning the lochia secretion, which is regarded as highly noxious and as keeping the mother in an unclean state for a long time. This superstition will not withstand the test of science and will pass away. On the other hand, polygamy was invented and flourishes partly on account of this law. A husband separated from the wife who is nursing a child wishes to have other women at his disposal. Polygamy is doomed to pass also. For both these reasons, it is to be feared that this healthy custom will not be maintained in the future. This is a pity, and we ought to do our best to encourage its continuance.

843 Many young married Natives leave their homes and go to Johannes-
177 burg to the mines for one or two years as soon as they see that their wife is pregnant. This is certainly on account of the above rule; but this desertion of the conjugal home is hardly to be approved.

164 As regards the whole medical treatment characteristic of this period,
751 which is considered more or less as a disease, it has no value at all.
177 The big intestinal worm is, of course, merely a product of Native imagination. The children sometimes suffer from lombrics, but not more than white children. Convulsions are frequent as a result of malaria and dysentery, and neither the ever present *milombyana* nor the

164 bi-monthly *biyeketa* nor the powder of the reed can do anything to
751 prevent them. The habit of always carrying water in the calabash and
177 of never emptying it entirely is harmful. Dr Garin, our medical missionary, examined some of these milombyana calabashes with the microscope and found them full of bacteria of all kinds. It is a splendid *milieu de culture* for them. This milombyana custom is however hard to eradicate as the principle is deeply rooted in the Thonga mind : "The child grows by means of medicine" and even Christian converts respect it. They will relinquish it when a clearer notion of medical science has entered their heads — a time which is still remote, I fear!

000 From the missionary point of view, let us notice the analogy between the rite of the broken pot and Christian baptism as administered to children by most of the Churches. Natives readily accept a ceremony of benediction for the little ones, be it baptism proper or presentation with laying on of hands. But the heathen baptism is a baptism of smoke, and not of water — and is in relation to merely external dangers, while the Christian rite represents the purification of the soul from its sin and the new and pure life. Whatever may be the difference between the two customs, we find in the animistic rite a point of analogy which may help us to explain the spiritual sacrament and its deep significance.

II. ON CIRCUMCISION (See p. 94).

177 What judgment are we to pass on this custom to which some tribes
797 still cling with great pertinacity ? The teaching of endurance and of hunting has certainly some value, but these rites as a whole have very little worth and are useless in the new economy of South Africa. The obcene language allowed during the Ngoma certainly tends to pervert the mind of the boys and constitutes an immoral preparation for sexual life.

Have we nothing to learn from the Ngoma ? More than two hundred thousand children of black South Africa are now attending our schools... more or less regularly. Hundreds of young men are boarding in our Normal Institutions. Do we always succeed in this great educational work ? Its results are not entirely satisfactory, because most of the children do not stay long enough in the school to be properly taught. As soon as they have acquired some knowledge of reading and writing, they leave and go to the towns to earn money.

177 Whatever the teacher may say, they escape... I must confess that we do not control them as well as the Father of the Circumcision... The Ngoma shows us however that strict discipline is quite possible with Native boys and that we must deal with them without any touch of harshness, of course, but with a firm hand. When the inmates of our institutions complain that the sauce of their porridge is not savoury enough, we might remind them of the food their heathen comrades are eating in the Ngoma!

881 There is a striking resemblance between Bantu circumcision, Jewish circumcision and Christian baptism.

In Jewish circumcision, the same physical operation was performed, but it was performed on infants. It had undoubtedly also the meaning of a purification, a removal of pollution and an introduction into the holy nation. In the course of time, the idea was spiritualised and circumcision meant the removal of sin. But it had a strongly religious character: Jahvé marked his chosen people by their circumcision. This religious element is wanting in the Ngoma of the Thongas and the Suthos, where the national significance alone remains.

As regards baptism, the great difference between the heathen and the Christian rite is evidently this. Christian baptism is not only a religious but also a moral rite. In its normal form, which is the immersion of adult catechumens, it represents in a striking manner the washing away of sin and the admission to the Church of Christ; it is a rite of passage; separation from the old life of sin, marginal period of instruction, admission into a holy community...

The Ngoma has no such spiritual and moral idea attached to it, but it has been inspired by the same deep and true sense of the necessity in the evolution of man, of a progress consisting in the renunciation of a miserable past and the introduction into a higher life. This idea is one of those rays of light which we are happy to discover amidst the darkness of heathendom, one of those "points d'attache" to which we can link the truths of spiritual religion.

177 797 881 What ought to be the attitude of the Government and of Missions towards this custom? As regards Governments, they could not immediately suppress the circumcision schools, though they have often been asked to do so, but it would seem that they might use their influence in checking them. As for the Mission, it has naturally fought against this school of heathenism, but not always with success; boys, even Christian boys, are wonderfully attracted by it and many have left their

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177 spelling-books for the formulæ of Manhengwane. Strange to say, it
797 frequently happens that girls refuse to marry men who have not passed
through this initiation! These facts, together with the legitimate wish
881 to give African Christianity a true national character, have suggested to some missionaries the idea of establishing *Christian Circumcision Schools*. In a special meeting at the Conference of Le Zoute, September 1926, Canon Lucas of the Universities Mission told his colleagues the results of an experiment of this kind at his station of Masasi. The missionary himself took control of all proceedings. The boys began by entering the church, the elders representing the old men of the tribe. They were circumcised in the camp which had been previously blessed and the operation was performed by a qualified Native who had been trained by medical men. The parents of the boys were waiting outside the camp, dancing. When all the boys had been circumcised, they were told by the manager of the camp that this was done to incorporate them into the tribe, and the parents again engaged in a big dance. The men remained on the spot and proceeded to the erection of the buildings of the camp where the circumcised were kept for some weeks, and carefully treated till all of them were healed. During this period of seclusion, they received instead of the obscene formulæ, teaching bearing on seven subjects : truth, honour, purity, abstinence from drink, humility, love of one's neighbour and duties toward God. They had also to pass through various physical trials, and, at the end, they were exhorted to do penance for their past sins. Their hair was cut, and burnt together with their clothing and all the camp buildings. The parents were then summoned and danced the whole night, the men mysteriously bringing new clothing for the initiated. The boys then went to church, and, answering a question put by the missionary, they said : "I ask of God that I may be a righteous man." A special blessing was then given to them. An interesting fact is that the heathen population approved of this Christian Circumcision School and accepted it as an equivalent to the old. Some heathen parents even sent their sons to it! Seven hundred boys have already been received in it and Canon Lucas has gained an enormous influence over them! I only
000 mention this attempt to "sublimate" the circumcision rites. Some missionaries are strongly opposed to this new departure, which they regard as a dangerous mixture of Christian ideas and heathen rites. Without expressing a definite opinion on the subject, I would insist on the point just mentioned : the real, genuine rite of passage of Christianity is baptism, and the African Church might perhaps be satisfied with

000 it, as the Churches of all the Continents are. Is not the Church abandoning its true domain in taking circumcision under its patronage? The operation is no doubt hygienic in most cases. Surgeons sometimes deem it necessary to prevent complications. It seems therefore more natural to leave circumcision to the province of medicine rather than to impose it as a collective rite on all Christian boys. I think that a deeper study of the question is necessary.

III. ON MARRIAGE CUSTOMS AND LOBOLA

(See p. 125 and 282).

177 What will be the fate of all these very picturesque marriage customs
586 with the advent of civilisation? Let us notice that amongst Christian converts, many of them have been abandoned as a matter of course, the bad habits of tjekela, the assault on the village, the preparation of beer, for instance. The part played by adult go-betweens is sometimes taken over by the elders of the Church, but often young people do not care for interference and conduct their own business.

Some other rites are preserved; the feast, of course, is amongst these, and we see boys ruining themselves in order to prepare a glorious wedding with splendid costumes and abundance of meat. On this point they are rather too conservative!

The religious ceremony has now become the Christian blessing which has taken the place of the heathen sacrifice to the ancestors; it is followed generally by a procession of the best men and the bridesmaids singing popular hymns, sometimes very solemnly worded, songs of repentance for instance, as they march to and fro in the nuptial village; the women, even the men, of the two families hurling at each other's heads amenities of the same kind as in former times. This is a most peculiar mixture of the old and new elements and often filled us with wonder (See Zidji, p. 212). I think however that these rites are doomed to die out, because Christian marriage is no longer a collective act, but has been individualised together with the many other acts of social life. It remains a social act indeed, but an act accomplished by two individuals on their own responsibility and in mutual love. "Ceci tuera cela." This Christian or Western individualism will kill primitive
000 collectivism and all its rites. However original and interesting the marriage ceremonies may be amongst the Bantus, I do not think they

000 can be assimilated as such to the new ideal. Let that ideal inspire new customs in accordance with its own nature as well as with the gay and joyous character of the race!

As regards *Lobola*, when explaining the advantages and evil consequences of the custom in Native life, I have already shown that the latter greatly exceed the former. This shows the attitude that we ought to adopt towards it. But before coming to a conclusion on this point, let us go back to the first principles of sociology.

The White Governments and the religious bodies at work amongst the South African Natives are all Christian; they belong to what is called Western Civilisation. Its conceptions with regard to the human individual are on a totally different level from those of the Native tribe. Since the Prophet of Nazareth pronounced these immortal words: "What would a man give for his soul," the era of individualism has set in. The infinite value of a human being has been discovered and this new principle has become predominant, not only in the religious, but also in the civil sphere. The proclamation during the French revolution of the "rights of man," which is looked upon as the greatest advance made by modern politics, is a direct result of this assertion of the value of the individual. While every century has to rediscover the formula conciliating the rights of the individual with the interests of collective Society, we all feel that this proclamation was one of the most precious conquests of humanity.

The lobola custom, invented by a society which is still in the collective, or half collective stage, is incompatible with the enlightened conceptions of Western civilisation, with its politics, its ideas of civil life, as well as its religion. It is inspired by a conception of the human being which belongs to another age. Here a wife belongs to her husband; children belong to their father in a material sense, not in the moral sense which we can alone adopt, with our conception of the individual. A boy is nothing but a member of the clan, who must perpetuate its name and glory. A girl is nothing but the means of acquiring a wife for this boy, and so of increasing the clan. A wife is nothing but a piece of family property, bought by lobola, and is consequently inherited by other men when her husband dies. They are not moral human beings nor free human beings. The opposition between the collectivist and the Western conception is absolute and if we believe that we are in the right, it is the duty of both Colonial Governments and Christian Missions to try to amend this state of things in Native society.

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The obligation however is not the same for both. A *civil Government*, undertaking to rule a tribe brought into subjection by war or placed under the Protectorate of a European power, dealing with Natives who still retain their primitive way of living, cannot pretend to govern them immediately according to the laws of civilised nations. This would be an impossibility. Such a Colonial Government must respect Native laws and judge cases in accordance with them, otherwise it would not appear to the Natives as just ; and it is indispensable that, in their dealings with uncivilised people, White Authorities should always satisfy this sense of justice, which is so strong amongst Natives. However, I do not think that this consideration ought to be pushed too far.

Native Commissioners are quite right when they aim at a progressive change in the laws and customs of primitive collectivist people in the direction of more individual liberty, so that the principles of Native society may be amended, and founded on the same basis as ours, in course of time. The State has no power to produce this evolution, but is must be favourable to it, and consider with sympathy every effort that is made to elevate and purify, the social and family system of the tribe. It has many means at its disposal to collaborate in this work, as we shall very soon see.

The *Christian Missions* can alone bring about this transformation, acting, as they do, on the hearts of the Natives, producing individual conviction in the conscience, opening a new horizon to the mind, creating amongst them a new society. For them the duty of fighting lobola is absolute, and I cannot understand how some missionaries think it may be tolerated in a Christian Church. The following reasons ought to be taken into consideration by them, in addition to those already mentioned :

1. The lobola, being a material method of concluding a marriage, tends to degrade the moral foundation of a true Christian union, mutual love in particular. We know by experience that individual *love* of a young man for a young girl, love as we conceive it, which was scarcely to be met with in the original collective Bantu society, is beginning to appear amongst the best of our converts. This will become the true and powerful bond which will more effectually strengthen conjugal union amongst them.

2. Lobola is intimately connected with polygamy, as the woman bought belongs to the husband's family and must be inherited by his younger brothers. If this man is already married, he is bound to become a polygamist. So is the only brother of many girls, who is

177 doomed by the custom to lobola for himself as many wives as the sisters
583 he possesses.

So all Missions working amongst the Natives practising the lobola, ought to agree upon a determined campaign against it, with those moral weapons which spiritual bodies ought alone to use. And I would recommend *the following rules* to be universally adopted :

1. *Lobota* (p. 101) should be prohibited, viz., no Christian father should be allowed to ask for a lobolo when giving his daughter in marriage. He is converted ; he calls himself a Christian ; he cannot be permitted a practice which is the negation of the moral character of the human being.

2. In the case of *widows*, let it be well understood that, in Christian communities, they are free as soon as their husband is dead ; that they keep their children and that, when they go home with them, no money can be claimed by the heirs, whether the woman has been paid for or not.

3. As regards *children*, the *moral right* of possession of both father and mother in regard to them should be maintained to the exclusion of a special right arising from the lobola.

4. In the case of *a boy marrying the daughter of a heathen*, we cannot prevent him from paying a lobolo. The father is the master and, as we have no moral jurisdiction over him, we cannot oppose his claim. But, let it be well understood, that this payment will not give the new husband, who is a Christian, all the rights which accompany the lobolo under Native law. It would be wise to ask for a written stipulation from the husband in this case, as well as from the Christian father who gives his girl without lobolo. Let us be on our guard here! The lobolo being family property, if the father or the elder brothers, being Christians, do not claim it, another heathen relative will always appear on the scene and say : "If you do not want it, I claim it! The girl is *ours*!" I shall discuss this case later on.

5. When Christian girls, dependant upon a heathen father, wish to free themselves from the lobola, which appears to some of them as a degrading sale, they ought to be encouraged to save money in order to redeem themselves. We have seen many cases in which this proof of energy given by girls has been a blessing for them and for the Church. The same applies to a young widow who wishes to lead a pure life and to avoid becoming the wife of a polygamist heir.

000 If all missionaries agreed on these points, the practice of lobola would soon disappear. But *the aid of the State*, which I think is desirable and quite legitimate, if it keeps within the limits of its proper

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000 domain, could considerably hasten this evolution in Native society and the disappearance of this objectionable custom.

How can a Colonial Government collaborate in this transformation ?

1. *By an official registry department*, particularly a registry of marriages, by means of which the legitimacy of unions contracted before the Registrar will be established. This will meet one of the wants which the lobola custom met, in the uncivilised state of society ; the right of the father will not be contested, though lobolo has not been paid. These Native marriages might be registered in two categories, those accompanied by lobolo and those without it.

2. *By lowering* as much as possible *the sum required for lobolo*. This is within the province of the State. Everywhere the Native chief has fixed the amount, which has varied very greatly. I heard the Portuguese Administrator of Manyisa very rightly suggest the fighting of the custom by a reduction of the price. If, for instance, the lobola were to be fixed henceforth at £ 5, as money is now so easily found, this would in itself destroy the old heathen practice. The value of a wife would appear so much superior to this trifling sum that the whole transaction would seem ridiculous. Moreover any woman would be able to redeem herself from the servitude of the lobolo. But what happens in such cases is that the Natives, while consenting to ask only £ 5 before the Court of the Administrator, obtain a promise from the bridegroom that he will pay the remaining £ 10 or £ 15 secretly, and thus the attempt at reform is frustrated.

3. Native Commissioners could also do much in assisting girls and widows who make the courageous attempt to free themselves. It could very well be enacted as a law that any widow can free herself of the consequences of lobola by payment of £ 5, or less, and that she may keep her children. Such a provision would be only just, as a Civilised Government cannot allow a heathen to force a Christian woman to become the wife of a polygamist.

4. We would also ask the Authorities to recognise and proclaim the following principle. When the first legal claimant, the father or the elder brother, the "master of the lobolo," renounces his right to it, no other relative shall be allowed to claim it for himself. This is very important. Indeed as the lobolo is collective property, it frequently happens that a heathen relative comes forward and says : "I want it." Sometimes the Christian parents cannot, or will not, oppose his claim. It may even happen that a father has consented to give his daughter without lobolo and, when he dies, his heirs, who may be raw heathen

000 will lodge their claim for the sum which the man had generously foregone. For this reason we should recommend that a statement be drawn up in each case of renunciation of lobola. This paper could always be shown to anybody trying to interfere with a lawful marriage celebrated without lobola. In the same way the heathen heirs of a Christian husband who had paid a lobolo to his father-in-law, would be unable to lay claim to the widow.

Amongst Christian Natives a middle course has sometimes been adopted. The bridegroom gives the father of the bride a present which is called *tjakisa*, i. e. to make joyful. It consists generally of a certain number of pounds sterling, inferior to the number required by the customary bride-price. By this means the suitor "soothes the heart" of his father-in-law, who would find it too hard to give his daughter for nothing. What are we to think of this expedient? Nobody can prevent one man from making a present to another. As long as it is clearly understood that this tjakisa is not a lobolo, and that it does not carry with it the evil consequences of the heathen lobolo, it may be accepted as a kind of transitory measure. But there are dangers in the adoption of this custom. As the idea of lobolo is always more or less present in the mind of all, you will find the father-in-law coming from time to time to ask for some more pounds, a fact which shows that his heart has not been sufficiently soothed .. and bad feeling is sure to arise and disturb the relationship, so much so that the worried husband will say : "I had better have paid a full lobolo at once!" I do not think we can absolutely prohibit the tjakisa, but I consider it as a "pis-aller" and greatly prefer to see the father of a Christian girl courageously renounce his claim to any special present. Such cases are happily frequent in the Native Congregations.

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177 583 The eradication of the lobola will take long, but it must take place if Native society is to pass beyond the level of collective social life, and to be raised to the status of a civilised community. There will be a transition period during which both Natives and their civilisers will have to show much patience, tact and ability ; many hard cases will arise. The story of Fos and Mboza, which I narrate in Appendix IX, illustrates these difficulties. But, whatever they may be, the reform is worth every effort and I will borrow my conclusion from a Native whom I once heard speak with splendid clearness and conviction on the

177 subject. This man, an evangelist called Zebedea, brought to old
583 Native to me, named Tumben, a Christian who was still very much attached to heathen customs. They discussed before me this question: Must Tumben claim a lobolo owed to him, in order to pay a lobolo which he owes to somebody else? The old man thought he was entitled to make his claim. Zebedea asserted that he was not, and the evangelist was right. Christian spirituality required of Tumben that he should renounce the lobolo because he was a convert; on the other hand he could not decline to pay his lobola debt to his creditor who was a heathen, and could not consequently accept the Christian point of view. The case was hard for the old man and the fight between his conscience and his interest was sad to witness. Zebedea found convincing arguments: "These lobola debts," he said, "are ropes which start from the neck of one and go to the neck of the other. Though your father dies, this rope still ties you, you are kept tied to your father's bones by this accursed rope! Others will get drawn into its coils and the strands become entangled round you! Cut it and be free!"

IV. ON POLYGAMY (See p. 289).

000 Practically, what must be the attitude of the Government and of Missions towards this custom?

1. As regards civilised Governments, having still to reckon with Native law, they cannot at once prohibit all forms of polygamy.

But when they have established marriage registration, it would seem that they ought not to allow unions posterior to the first to be considered as legitimate. These marriages ought not to be registered, and if this distinction were strictly enforced, by and by Natives would become more aware of the illegitimate character of polygamic marriages. In the Transvaal, the Native Affairs Department at one time tried to fight directly against the custom in the following manner. As every man has to pay taxes according to the number of his wives, the tax for the first wife was fixed at £ 2, and he had to pay double that sum for each extra wife. But the provision was abandoned later on. Taxation however, has everywhere the effect of limiting polygamy. In Portuguese territory, Natives are taxed according to the number of huts they possess. As each wife lives in a separate house, polygamists are more heavily taxed than others.

Enactments such as these are, I suppose, all that a Government can

000 do. It cannot suppress polygamy as long as the tribal system still holds good. But what law cannot effect, moral teaching can, and, in fact, the Christian Missions long ago began to fight against this evil.

2. All missionaries who have lived amongst the Bantus and know something of Native life, agree on one point. Polygamy is incompatible with the high moral ideal and the ideal of the family which Christianity brought into the world. Therefore they all work against it. They all also agree that a polygamist who wishes to become a Christian must by no means be prevented from doing so. He is to be accepted, as an inquirer and a candidate for baptism. But divergence of view begins on the question of receiving a polygamist into full church membership by baptism. Four different points of view may be distinguished on this question, corresponding to four different methods: the latitudinarian, the idealistic, the extreme and the midway.

The *latitudinarian view* taken by Bishop Colenso, for instance, is this: (I quote freely from *Ten weeks in Natal*, pages 139-140). "Enforcing separation on polygamist converts is quite unwarrantable. They have been married according to the practice of their land. We have no right to require them to cast off their wives and cause these poor creatures in the eyes of all their people to commit adultery! What is to become of their children? And what is the use of our reading to them the Bible stories of Abraham, Israel and David with their many wives, etc. Let us admit polygamists of old standing to communion." The only difference which Bishop Colenso would admit between polygamists and monogamists, is that the former ought not to be admitted to offices in the church. The hope of those who hold this opinion is that, as polygamy is not to be allowed to young people, it will disappear of its own accord in the next generation. I am afraid, on this point, the reasoning may be wrong. Unhappily, Natives, in the present low state of their moral conscience, are quite cunning enough to delay their conversion until they are polygamists, in order to enjoy both carnal and spiritual blessings!

The *idealistic view* is taken by those who are satisfied with a promise on the part of the husband and his extra wives to have no further conjugal relations, and allow the separated spouses to remain in the husband's village, and the husband to care for them and their children. From an ideal point of view, the provision would be excellent and save much difficulty. But practically it is very dangerous, as we can hardly expect a Native husband to keep such a promise, made in order to obtain baptism. Sooner or later, it is to be feared that he will again

000 make use of his rights ; will he thus be led to deceive his missionary, pretending to be monogamist, but leading the life of a polygamist. Experience shows that, unhappily, this fear is too well founded.

The *extreme point of view*. In some cases missionaries have required not only total separation, and a new and distant domicile for the separated wives, but that the husband should claim back all the lobola oxen, in order to break any tie still existing between him and them. This practice may be legitimate when we have reasons to doubt the good faith of the converted polygamist. But it ought not to be commended as a general rule, as it would make separation almost impossible. Would the parents of the separated wife be ready to give back the oxen, when the union is broken, not from any fault on the part of their daughter, but only for conscience sake on the part of the husband ? In this vexed question, we must put as few hindrances as possible in the way ; as regards the husband, he must be ready to lose the lobola money which he gave for the separated wives.

The midway course, which is followed by almost all the Missionary Societies, set forth in the regulations of the Berlin Society and in the report of the Anglican Conference of Bishops at Lambeth, is the following. Polygamists must not be admitted to baptism, but be accepted as candidates and kept under Christian instruction until such a time as they shall be in position to accept the law of Christ. (Resolution of the Lambeth Conference ; See Edinburgh World Missionary Conference Report of Com. II). Wives of polygamists, on the other hand, ought not to be denied baptism, if they deserve it, as it is not in their power to separate from the polygamic family.

This great principle being admitted, many questions of detail arise, for which I would recommend the following solutions :

1. Which wife should be retained ? Shall it be the first wife, or the Christian wife (supposing that the others are still heathen), or the wife who has the greatest number of children ? No fixed rule has been adopted by any Mission, so far as I know, and each case must be judged on its own merits and according to the higher principles of Christianity, the husband being exhorted to follow the course which is the most beneficial not to himself, but to the others.

2. The cast-off wives ought not to be rejected in any way. They ought to return to their parents, and their former husband ought to facilitate by all means their remarriage under the best possible conditions. I even think that he ought occasionally to provide them and their children with clothing, so that they should not feel abandoned.

OOD As regards food, they are not to be pitied, as, amongst the Bantus, it is the wife who provides the food for the family!

3. The question of the children is the most difficult, and sometimes it is impossible to solve it quite satisfactorily. When they are still young, they naturally follow the mother. Fathers find it very hard to part with them. Why ? Doubtless on account of their natural love for them ; but, if you search deeper into their hearts, you will probably find other reasons. Perhaps unconsciously they still think, according to the old Bantu law, that children, especially girls, must bring a material advantage to their father. When they really adopt the spiritual Christian point of view that a father has more duties to perform towards his children than benefits to derive from them, the separation is no longer difficult.

4. Of course no Christian husband must be allowed to inherit a widow, nor to claim a lobola should this woman be married to another man.

"The change from polygamy to monogamy must involve great difficulties and even hardships," said the Bishops at Lambeth... "No trouble or cost or self-sacrifice ought to be spared to make any suffering which may be caused as light and easy to bear as possible..." However the question at stake is most important. The very fate of the Bantu Church, and of future society, depends on its solution, and a strict adherence to principle is necessary during this time of transition.

The result of the curious inquiry made amongst the Rikatla students on the subject confirms my conclusions. They were all convinced Christians and certainly did not leave the moral side of the question altogether out of account. Yet it was easy to see that polygamy was not to them something repellent and disgusting ; they failed to see the essential moral wrong of the custom. Not one of them mentioned the great moral principle of the equality of man and woman in the law of sexual purity. They did not seem to be shocked by the fact that the Bantu rule, whilst expecting from a wife perfect faithfulness to her husband, allows the latter to have as many wives as he can buy and to seduce as many girls as he chooses. In the background of the Bantu mind is deeply ingrained the idea that woman is owned, that man is her master and that marriage is a bargain. We cannot blame our converts if they do not at once reach a full understanding of these things. When I told them that marriage ought to be the union of two human beings bound together by mutual love, that consequently when a boy had given his whole heart to a girl, there remained no place for another, they

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000 seemed to be struck by the argument and accepted it readily, but the idea did not occur to them of itself.

This difficulty in grasping the immoral character of polygamy explains why such a great number of Christian Natives, even after having been monogamists for a time, so easily fall back into polygamy. I heard that in the Cameroons, when, owing to the war, the German missionaries had to leave the country, polygamy invaded the Native congregations wholesale, Native ministers themselves returning to it, and the French missionaries who came to the rescue of these Churches had a terrible battle to fight in order to restore monogamy. All this shows that a long education will be necessary before the Bantu mind is sufficiently transformed to be able to understand perfectly and then to accept freely and willingly the standards of Christian morality in this domain.

V. ON THE FATE OF THE THONGA VILLAGE (See p. 355).

177 361 363 What will be the fate of the little Bantu community, of the circular kraal of huts, well shut in behind its fence, under the shade of its symbolical tree, well "tied" under the absolute authority of the headman ? If we look at the new Native settlements, at the modern Native villages, built under the influence of civilisation and Christianity, we shall be struck at once by the fact that they are arranged in regular streets (1). This change is momentous and highly significative. The new Thonga village is no longer a well defined family. It has become an agglomeration of families belonging to different clans, attracted to a particular spot by the European town or by the Church and the school. The straight line, with its capacity of infinite prolongation, has taken the place of the circular, with its necessarily restricted length. Considering that new ideas are now invading the Bantu tribe from all sides, it is certain that the old circle will disappear more and more and that regular streets will be more generally adopted.

From the point of view of the picturesque, this is a great pity. For the ethnographer, the circle of huts, that curious Bantu commune with its striking laws, was ten times more interesting than the commonplace street

(1) In many Bantu tribes, those of Central Africa, even in the Ba-Chopi tribe, on the South-Eastern boundary of the Thonga country, the Natives already have straight streets. Is this plan original or not ? I suppose nobody can say. In the Thonga, Zulu and Sutho kraals, at any rate, the circular arrangement is a characteristic feature.

177 of square houses or galvanised iron sheds, which are a poor imitation
361 of European dwellings. However, from the practical point of view, this change is unavoidable. It even undoubtedly stands for progress.

The *Native hut* is prettily shaped. I prefer the Thonga form, a
342 circular wall on which a conical roof is placed, to the Zulu, a beehive
177 resting on the ground, or even to the Kaffir, which combines the features of both, having also a circular wall but with a cupola roof. The conical

Phot. H. A. Junod.

Christian village of Shiluvane.

roof is a better protection against rain. But all these forms of dwelling have one great fault: they are not healthy. The rays of the sun cannot penetrate into the hut, and, though the top of the reeds is sometimes not plastered and allows a certain amount of ventilation, the air cannot circulate, because the hut has no window. Smoke must make its way through the thatch and it is very difficult indeed to obtain any current of air inside. If a new type of hut were to be adopted, with high walls, good-sized doors and windows, and a roof slightly overhanging the wall, these defects would be remedied. But civilised Natives have not tried to follow this plan. They have at once copied the European system, just

177 as with their clothing! How often we have longed to see them adopt
291 some peculiar costume appropriate to the climate and to their occupations! But when they cast off their belt of tails, it is to put on long trousers, and they all dream of a complete khakhi or serge suit! So they will build square houses, and this certainly has its advantages; the dwelling can be divided into many rooms and the different members of the family can all live under the same roof, which, from an educational point of view, is a good thing.

264 The *communism of food* is also a splendid feature and calculated to fill
177 the most sanguine socialistic dreamer with joy! But this custom has
591 been severely criticised from a hygienic point of view. The habit of all
361 plunging their fingers into the same plate fosters tuberculosis and other contagious diseases; but I do not think it is for this reason that the custom will die out. In the modern Native settlement many different families live together. They are not united by any ties of blood. Moreover they are sometimes so numerous that such communism would be practically impossible. The golden age has passed for ever!

177 With it has also passed away the merry lazy life of the half naked
461 *munumzane*. The coming of civilisation has already deeply changed his mode of living, and the transformation will accentuate itself still further. I have heard Colonists cursing these black people, who believe that they can escape the law of work under which Europeans groan: "these niggers who think that they will be allowed to remain incorrigibly lazy fellows for all time!" I do not share this loudly expressed indignation. First the Native *doda* is by no means an idle man. He has his own occupations for the benefit of the kraal. Secondly, if his wants are few, and if he very soon reaches the happy state of a man who is not obliged to work, I see thousands of Europeans enjoying the life of a "rentier" as much as he does, and without any qualms of conscience. A South African trader who works hard to make his fortune, and hopes to leave the country as quickly as possible, in order to enjoy all the comforts of a European town, theatres, concerts and clubs, has not, after all, a much loftier ideal than the Native he curses... On the other hand, circumstances themselves enforce upon the Native that law of work and teach him that "dignity of labour" of which we so often hear. A civilised Native has increased his wants ten-fold. He requires the wherewithal to satisfy them. This is the only legitimate, the most powerful incentive to work. Fifty, sixty thousand Thongas, the elite of our tribe, are constantly streaming to Johannesburg, where they are considered the best mining boys. Many of them go there to earn

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177 lobola money. But they learn to spend money on other things, and
461 those who are converts to Christianity become regular purchasers of
651 clothing, of better food, of books. The high taxation to which they are subjected also forces them to work. As long as this does not exceed a reasonable limit, and as long as the State causes the Native community to benefit by the high taxes levied on it, it is justifiable although this way of enforcing labour is not so normally healthy as the creation of
241 new wants (1). Another powerful influence which tends to make men
177 work more and to relieve women from the toil of tilling the fields, is
412 this. Wishing to make money by selling grain, the Natives are begin-
462 ning to clear larger fields than before, and we note with pleasure that they have adopted the use of the plough instead of the hoe in a great many quarters. The consequence of this change is that the men now do

466 (1) Another means has been used to obtain the same result, i. e. compulsory labour
P. (in Thonga *shibalu*). It is not at all my intention to treat this important but delicate
177. subject here. The League of Nations created in 1924 a special Slavery Commission
46 which has very ably and fully discussed the whole subject. These discussions have resulted in a Convention which was adopted by the Assembly of 1926; art. 5, which deals with forced labour, runs as follows:

The High Contracting Parties recognise that recourse to compulsory or forced labour may have grave consequences and undertake, each in respect of the territories placed under its sovereignty, jurisdiction, protection, suzerainty or tutelage, to take all necessary measures to prevent compulsory or forced labour from developing into conditions analogous to slavery.

It is agreed that:

(1) Subject to the transitional provisions laid down in paragraph (2) below, compulsory or forced labour may only be exacted for public purposes.

(2) In territories in which compulsory or forced labour for other than public purposes still survives, the High Contracting Parties shall endeavour progressively and as soon as possible to put an end to the practice. So long as such forced or compulsory labour exists, this labour shall invariably be of an exceptional character, shall always receive adequate remuneration, and shall not involve the removal of the labourers from their usual place of residence.

(3) In all cases, the responsibility for any recourse to compulsory or forced labour shall rest with the competent central authorities of the territory concerned.

The League of Nations has thus established the general principles, and nearly thirty States have already signed the Convention; amongst these we note with pleasure Great Britain and Portugal. Now the question has been transferred to the International Labour Office, which must deal with the application of the Convention. A special Committee of experts has been elected and it is hoped that it will fix general principles for Coloured Labour, which shall be submitted to the General Labour Conference in a not distant future.

I am glad to add that the Portuguese Government has recently issued a decree (N° 12.533) which has been published in the *Bolletim official de Moçambique*, November 1926, and which contains the following article (Art. 5. § unico): *Compulsory labour is only permitted when absolutely indispensable, for works of public interest and of undeniable urgency. This labour will be remunerated according to circumstances.*

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the work of preparing the fields. As women have nothing to do with the cattle and as ploughing is done with oxen, men now perform this difficult labour, and so have to work hard. Is not this one splendid result of the spread of civilisation ? The fact cannot be denied that, as regards the mode of living and the distribution of work amongst men and women, a considerable change has already taken place and is being accentuated every day in the Thonga village. What will be the ultimate result of this ?

When discussing the Native problem, the most difficult of all South African problems, politicians, missionaries, civilised Natives and newspapers generally ask this question : "Is Native tribal life to be preserved or, on the contrary, destroyed ?" No clear, satisfactory, convincing reply has as yet been given. Tribal life is composed of two elements : communal life and national life, which ought to be considered separately. I deal here with the first of these elements only. The first remark I would venture to make is that it is somewhat presumptuous on our part to believe that we can exert any very great influence on the solution of this question. Whatever one may hope or fear, the evolution of the Bantu village, which began as soon as civilisation entered the land, will go on. It is not in the power of the Pope, of the Minister of Native Affairs, or of Superintendents of any large Missionary Societies, to prevent the transformation of the primitive patriarchal tribes, which is proceeding as a matter of necessity. Human society evolves continually, and the economic and social changes which have taken place in South Africa are so momentous that they will deeply affect and eventually completely transform the Bantu community. But (this is my second remark) what we can strive for is to control and guide this necessary evolution, and I should like to propose, to all those who can collaborate in the shaping of the future Bantu society, the two following suggestions :

000 1. Though the square house may supplant the round hut, though the hubo, the bandla and the absolute authority of the numzane may disappear, let us do our best to prevent the future Native village from being a servile imitation of our own European settlements. The more original the Natives remain, the more interesting and worthy to live they will be. The "place of jealousy" will disappear together with polygamy. But let us retain all that is pleasing and moral in the picturesque circle of huts : the respect for elders, the sense of family unity, the habit of mutual help, the readiness to share food with others. Cannot these virtues be retained in the Christian village, under the

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000 direction of the missionary, or in the town location with its Council of civilised Natives ? On the other hand, in the closed circle, there was no place for strangers. Love and interest were restricted to members of the family. In the new settlement we can hope to create a sense of wider humanity, more in harmony with the traditions of modern life.

2. The evolution of Native society will certainly be accompanied by much suffering and will not attain a satisfactory result, unless much patience is displayed by both Whites and Blacks. Let the conservative Natives and the dreamers of the past admit the necessity for these changes. Let white men, who too often think that the black population has been created in the sole interests of the European, allow the transformation to come gradually and not unduly hasten it, in their eagerness to make the Natives an asset to the country. I am convinced that moral and religious teaching is of the utmost importance in order to spread this spirit of wisdom, patience and good understanding amongst the South African tribes. I hope that in the future Bantu village the demoralising public house will never be allowed to develop the inordinate taste of the Natives for alcohol. But, in the meantime, it is to be hoped that everywhere, amongst the buildings, square and round, will be found the larger and more honoured edifices, the Church and the School, in which worship takes place and teaching is provided. The very existence of these races depends on these conditions.

VI. CONCLUSIONS ON THE THIRD PART.

The new era, and the future of the South African tribe.

177 6412 The great philosopher Aristotle gave the following definition of man : "Man is a political animal"—ξῶον πολιτικον, by which words he rightly observed that man is not made to live alone, but in society. This definition is applicable to the Bantu as well as to any other human race ; the family is the first of these social aggregates ; the clan is the second. The Bantus are essentially a political race and no one could deny that they have invented a very interesting and practical political system, a system which wonderfully combines two opposite principles : the autocracy of the chief and the democratic spirit of the subject. The Bantu citizens are truly citizens. They can sit on the hubo and give their advice on all questions at stake, be they of a legislative, a political, or a judicial character. This age-old participation in the discussion of

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177 642 the affairs of the country has given them a sense of their importance, a gravity of speech and a dignity of manners which greatly impress a European visiting a typical Bantu village.

But this state of affairs is being modified very rapidly by the all-powerful civilisation which is invading South Africa from all sides like an irresistible tide. My description of the national life of the tribe, or clan, still applies to some parts of Thongaland ; but changes are coming so fast that soon it will have nothing more than an historic value. In some other parts of South Africa the old clan life has already totally disappeared.

If we have tried to foresee the future of the Bantu village, how much more serious is the question of the fate of the Bantu tribe ? I do not think I can pass it by without consideration, whatever may be the difficulties and the delicacy of what has been called the "Native problem."

In trying to find in what direction the present evolution of the South African tribes is tending, we must first consider what has been the influence of European civilisation on Native political life up to the present time. We are here dealing with past and well ascertained facts.

The result of the encounter of Civilisation and Bantu tribal life up to the present day.

177 *a)* Civilisation *has destroyed the military power* of the South African Bantus. Thirty years ago they could still fight against white people with some hope of success. Now their fighting power has been broken. They will always be able to kill a few white women, a few colonists settled amongst them, far away from the centres ; they might obtain some occasional victories against a badly conducted reconnoitring party : they cannot withstand a European Commando provided with Maxim quick-firing rifles and all the implements of modern warfare, even if they are ten times superior in numbers. The last Zulu rebellion gave a striking demonstration of this fact. The Zulu impi, with wonderful courage, rushed on the Whites with its assagais and its war songs. But six hundred of the Natives were shot dead by the mitrailleuses before they could approach near enough to throw an assagay! As long as the black race cannot fight with the white man on an equal footing as regards weapons, it cannot hope to regain its military power, whatever may be its valour or its patriotism.

b) Having conquered the territory of South Africa, the White

177 Governments have everywhere placed Native Commissioners to watch over their coloured subjects. This has put *an end to the tribal wars.* Natives are no longer allowed to indulge in their old fighting customs. They may avail themselves of a war between Europeans to square up old accounts with each other, as happened during the Anglo-Boer war, but they are forbidden to follow the war-path any longer. In many parts of South Africa they have even been disarmed. This change, as a whole, is a favourable one. Native wars never brought blessing to the race. It tends however to destroy one of the springs of patriotism, and in this way it impoverishes the Native mind.

643 175 631 P. 177. 64 *c)* These Native Commissioners have placed a very effective check, not only upon the military tendencies of the tribe, but upon *the power of its chiefs.* The authority of the chief in the clan has certainly been diminished. In some instances he has been deposed, or banished in consequence of war, and the tribe has remained without a head and without force, as it were emasculated, and unable to guide itself. As Mankhelu said: "Our chief is the forest into which we retreat! Without him we are but women!" This was sadly noticeable in the case of the Zihlahla or Mpfumo clan, which was perhaps the most developed of all the Ronga kingdoms and which suffered most from the 1894-96 war. Its young chief Ñwamantibyane was caught and deported to some spot in Eastern Africa, and the clan was dismembered, a great number of men emigrating to the Transvaal; the others remained dissatisfied but powerless in their old territory, and were incorporated with Matjolo or Mabota.

643 681 692 P. 177. 69 Even when the Native chief is maintained in his position by the Whites, his power is curtailed. As a judge, he is no longer allowed to inflict capital punishment. His tribunal only judges minor cases, and beside and beyond him, there is a further appeal, the Court of the White Commissioner, which is ready to consider every important case. Should the Native chief be unjust or selfish in his decisions, the subjects will go more and more to the White tribunal. It may be that their claims will not be so well understood as in their own *hubo*, but they will perhaps meet with fairer treatment. Shrewd and clever Native Commissioners thus succeed in attracting more applicants to their residences than the chief to his capital (1). This dual control leads to a progressive loosening of the tribal tie.

(1) This was the case for instance in Nondwane. The unjust and egoistical rule of Mabvuka compelled many of his subjects to go "shikambiwana," viz., to the Portuguese Administrator of Merakwen.

797 177 *d) Mission work*, now so wide-spread all over the country, leads to the same result. It infuses a new moral and religious ideal into the minds of the people. The old customs, the sacred superstitions, many articles of the Native code, are rejected by the converts. They remain generally very submissive to the authority of their chief, pay their taxes, join the army, but, should the Authorities summon a "nyiwa," a gathering of the clan to smell out the witches, should statute labour be ordered for a Sunday, etc., their conscience does not allow them to obey. On the other hand Native converts, under their white missionary, generally form a Church, which sometimes becomes a kind of *imperium in imperio*, subject to its own laws. This is the necessary consequence of bad, or immoral, heathen customs (beer-drinking, lobola, polygamy) which the Christian ideal cannot tolerate. A deep gulf is thus created between Christians and heathens, and this also weakens the tribal life.

The causes which have brought about this change will probably increase in power in the course of time. The process of individualisation will go on ; so consequently will this process of destruction of the tribal tie, and we may confidently look forward to a moment when the clan will have lost its political cohesion and its members have become independent of any Native Authority.

000 *e) Loss of the political sense.* How are we to regard this possibility ? It may present certain advantages over the old state of things, but, to my mind, it entails a distinct and most regrettable loss for the Natives. The political sense, with the sense of responsibility, will have disappeared, and this sense is one of the most precious aids towards the building of character. Look at a gathering of old-fashioned indunas discussing a question affecting the welfare of the tribe under the guidance of their chief ; compare it with an assembly of half civilised Natives in a Town location, a low class tea-meeting, for instance, of men with no respect for any one, addicted to drink and immorality, having rejected the authority of White missionaries because they believe themselves to be so much better informed! There was in the first gathering a dignity, a sense of duty, which you will hardly find in the second...

It is no use for us white men to curse the degenerate Native or to weep over the disappearance of the old restraints. Let us rather confess that we are in a great measure responsible for these results. We have interfered with the Bantu clan by taking away its independence; we have deprived it of one of its character building features, political

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000 responsibility. This must not be forgotten in the discussion of the Native problem. We have caused a loss, and it is our duty to try to restore to the Native mind that which we have unconsciously, perhaps without due consideration, taken from it.

We can never be contented with having obtained unpaid labourers to work our farms or paid miners to dig our gold. It is a question in which our dignity is involved that our interference in the affairs of the Natives should never result in a deterioration of their moral status.

I know that I am here approaching the most difficult, the most contested, the most delicate of all the questions connected with the Native problem, viz., the question of the political rights of the Natives, and I feel all my incompetence to deal with it. Should I be asked to suggest a solution of this vexed question, I would certainly refuse to do so. But I am here considering it not as a political theoriser but as an ethnographer, who has come to the conclusion that the present state of things has impaired the character of a race, and who is honestly searching for a remedy.

2. How can we preserve the sense of political responsibility amongst South African Natives ? (1)

Is this remedy the universal bestowal of the franchise on every male Native of twenty-one years of age, who is a British subject and has been six months resident in the country ?

a) The Native franchise. For many decades the Native population of Cape Colony has been offered the right of voting for members of Parliament. Any Native possessing a certain degree of education (able to write his own name), and a certain amount of property, or of revenue, can apply for the franchise. What has been the result of this generous policy ? Of the whole Native Cape population, only 8000 Bantus availed themselves of this opportunity. "They have exercised their privilege creditably and profitably," says the *Christian Express* of August 1908. They have fused into the two great political parties. No harm seems to have resulted for the country from the bestowal of this right

(1) These remarks were written in 1911 for the first edition, before the promulgation of the Natives Land Act, before the segregation proposals were made, and long before the proclamation of Gen. Hertzog's new Native policy. They are perhaps no longer quite up to date. I reproduce them, however, without amendation, as they contain general principles which seem to me of permanent value. Let me only express my gratitude for the fact that the idea of granting Native Councils to the South African Native tribes has made such wonderful progress.

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000 on its black population. Distinct progress has even been made. Travelling through Cape Colony, after Natal and the Transvaal, I was struck by the difference in the manners and demeanour of the Natives and in the way in which they were treated. They look much more like citizens, actual citizens or virtual citizens, and the White men show them a consideration which they hardly meet with in other Colonies.

However the granting of the franchise is not a panacea for the evil which I am now considering. See how comparatively few Natives have availed themselves of it in the most advanced of the South African states! We know that statesmen from the other Colonies are very little disposed to follow the example of the Cape. Supposing however they should offer the franchise to coloured people all over the land, the great bulk of the Native population would be little helped by it. The qualifications required would probably be high and only a few would be able to avail themselves of the opportunity. Moreover the *uncivilised* men, who are still the great majority, could make no use of it. How could they form an opinion as regards the railway and mining questions, educational and economic problems which so greatly perplex our statesmen? How would they be able to decide between the attitude of progressives and conservatives and cast a reasoned and independent vote when electing members of Parliament? I could say the same of hundreds and thousands of *superficially educated* Natives. They know more or less how to read and write, but are absolutely unable to understand the tenth part of what is published in the "Star" or the "Argus," because their horizon is totally different from that of the white man, although they are perhaps not much inferior in intelligence to many European voters. To be able to write one's own name is not a sufficient qualification for taking part in the politics of the South African Union.

The black race is now in a period of transition, and nobody can foretell in what direction and how far it will evolve. It is possible that, after a hundred or two hundred years, the South African Bantus will have reached such a level of education as will enable them to exercise normally full political rights. For the present it seems to me that the franchise must remain the privilege of the few, of those thoroughly educated Zulus, Suthos and Thongas, who have reached the requisite moral and intellectual level. I think it would be a good and wise plan to offer it to them, subject to as high qualifications as may be deemed necessary: the franchise would be kept before them as an

000 ideal accessible to the best representatives of the race all through South Africa. Through them it would have an elevating effect on the whole Native population. But some other provision must be made for the masses who cannot yet rise to such a high level, and who must nevertheless cultivate political interests and discharge political duties *for the sake of their character.*

I think this provision ought to be twofold :—to strengthen the tribal system where it is still working satisfactorily, and to grant them a type of representation which would be able to protect Native interests in the South African Commonwealth.

b) Strengthening the tribal system. The great majority of South African Natives still live under the old tribal system, more or less amended by the dominating White Government. In the Protectorates, which contain 700,000 people, in Zululand, etc., it is still in full force. In other countries the chiefs have lost more of their power and the political activity of their subjects has diminished accordingly. Some dreamers would like tribalism to be absolutely abolished and the duality of control to disappear at once by the absorption of the Chief in the Native Commissioner. That would be a mistake. As long as he is not an enfranchised citizen of the State, let the uncivilised Native remain a responsible member of his clan. Therefore let us not hasten the death of clan life. If it must die, let it die a natural death... Individualism is growing every day. Moreover who knows if the Bantu tribe will not find a means of adapting itself to the new condition of things? It will be very interesting to watch the evolution of political life in the Protectorates, in Basutoland for instance, where the soil belongs to the Natives and is inalienable, where the dangerous contact with White people is reduced to a minimum, but where civilisation and Christianity are penetrating by leaps and bounds. Some chiefs have already been converted to Christianity, such as Khama in Bechuanaland, and many others in the various tribes ; amongst them, in the Thonga tribe, Muhlaba, chief of the Nkuna clan. They generally adopt civilised customs, build good houses, buy mules and carriages. Let us suppose a certain number of these to become thoroughly changed and to be followed by the bulk of their subjects under the guidance of thoughtful White missionaries : could not the Bantu clan then evolve into some new, original, and interesting political organism in which the evils of heathenism would have disappeared and a healthy national life would prevail? The Bantus are not republicans, but they are democrats. Why should not their tribal system get rid of its objectionable features,

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000 preserving only those which are compatible with Christian morals and civilisation?

These are only questions which I put, and not definite opinions to which I would commit myself. At any rate, if the tribal system must and can be maintained for an unknown period, the Government ought to take some steps to ameliorate it, or at least to prevent its deterioration. It ought to pay special attention first of all to the character of the chiefs. They are after all Government servants, ruling to a certain

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Phot. H. A. Junod.

Mshlaba's house (in the Thabina Location, N. E. Transvaal.)

extent over British or Portuguese subjects. Moral qualifications ought to be required of them as well as of any other civil or judicial employee. Their conduct ought to be the more carefully watched in that the new conditions under which they are placed are eminently dangerous to their morale. Under the old tribal law, their power was checked by the indunas; they could even be deposed by a family council. Now the chief feels himself supported by the White Authorities and is tempted to take less care of the interests of his people. Many of them have become desperate drunkards. In some places they are allowed to obtain drink, which is absolutely refused to their subjects, and they sink deeply, morally speaking. This is a lamentable result indeed.

000 and kills the political life of the clan more surely than would the disappearance of the chief. If the tribal system is to be preserved at all, a strong and careful supervision must be exercised over the chiefs, and care taken that the indunas, and the people, retain that share of authority which original tribalism entrusted to them.

c) Native representation. It will not be sufficient, however, to create a fence, as high and strong as possible, round the Bantu clan in order to keep it alive until the Native population is able to be enfranchised. Though South Africa is a country conquered and ruled by the White man, there are a great number of questions which equally concern both races. Natives pay taxes, high taxes, they contribute to the economic progress of the land, they provide the mines and agriculture with the indispensable manual labour. There are topics on which they ought to have a say and upon which the White Government ought not to decide without having heard their voice. In all legislation affecting them directly, or the use of the money levied on them, they ought to be consulted. They are not yet able to form a sound judgment on the politics of White South Africa, but they understand very well what concerns them, and so it would be but fair to give them the means of expressing their opinion. This truth has been recognised to a certain extent. The Transkei has its Native Council and Natal has recently established a similar organisation. Lord Selborne, in his admirable address delivered before the Congregation of the University of the Cape on 27th February 1909, strongly insisted on the necessity of creating such Councils in all the districts, and we are glad to see that this idea, which has been for a long time in the minds of many friends of the Natives, has been distinctly voiced by such a high authority.

These Councils ought to act, first, as Consultative bodies giving their advice each time that Parliament is proceeding to pass laws affecting the Natives. They might even be given permission to express their views, or if necessary their complaints, as regards the Native administration, and their wishes for the welfare of their folk. Such Councils would act as a safety valve. Natives, when dissatisfied, are often contented if they have the opportunity of giving vent to their grievance, whatever may be the result of their remontrances. But this provision would render a still greater service: it would develop the political sense of the tribal Natives, and educate them on questions of general interest which concern the whole of the coloured population, and not only their own petty clan So they would be gradually prepared for a time when the duality of authority will have disappeared, and when they

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will eventually become full citizens of the South African Commonwealth.

If we open the way to the franchise to the fully educated and civilised members of the race, if we wisely control the uncivilised masses still under tribal law, taking special care of the chiefs, educating their sons, fostering material, moral and intellectual progress amongst the clans, if we create everywhere Native Councils to afford them the opportunity of studying questions affecting the Native population, and of bringing Native opinion before Parliament, then we shall have done our best to restore that sense of political responsibility which we are now gradually destroying... We shall have done our duty in regard to the future of the South African Tribe.

What this future will be, no one can tell. It depends chiefly on the Natives themselves... Everyone knows that the Act of Union contains a clause which greatly hurt the feelings of the educated Bantus of South Africa. When news reached their shores that the Act had been ratified by the House of Commons, without amendment, the colour-bar included, they expressed their deep sorrow, thinking that their race had been unjustly treated... But one of their papers published the following comment: "The Natives, men, women, and children, must bend their energies to the advancement of themselves in all that civilisation and true Christianity means, so that their claim to equality of treatment for all civilised British subjects may be irresistible..." Let this manly advice be followed by the whole Native population and there is still hope for the South African Tribe, whatever modifications it may undergo during the coming generations.

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The Life of a South African Tribe

BY

HENRI A. JUNOD, D. LITT.

OF THE

Swiss Romande Mission

SECOND EDITION REVISED AND ENLARGED

II. MENTAL LIFE

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FOURTH PART

AGRICULTURAL AND INDUSTRIAL LIFE

In the first volume of this work, I have tried to give a description of the Social Life of the tribe by depicting its customs in relation to the individual, communal and national life. In the second volume I shall consider its Mental and Spiritual Life, its Literature and Music, its Religion, Magic and Morality. The Agricultural and Industrial Life will afford a transition from the one to the other of these subjects; this belongs primarily to the social manifestations of the tribal life, but the imagination displayed by sculptors, weavers, potters (or rather "potteresses") brings it also into relation with the mental. I do not however pretend to draw a sharp line of distinction between these two domains, as the mental life is reflected in the social customs, and the social idea strongly dominates the mental life of the tribe. 121

CHAPTER I

AGRICULTURAL LIFE

A. THE LAND AND THE NATIVE SYSTEM OF LAND TENURE.

I. *The nature of the soil.*

Considering that the Thongas dwell in the South of Africa, a part of the world which is generally rocky and sterile, Nature 134

134 has favoured them to no inconsiderable extent as regards the soil of their country.

The coast belt is an ancient ocean-bed, and consists of dunes of white or reddish-brown sand, extending from the South-West to the North-East; between these dunes are basin-shaped hollows, at the bottom of which are ponds of stagnant water.

The pond in the hollow.

The hillocks rarely reach a greater elevation than 150 feet above the sea level (120 feet above the level of the lakes). The sand on the dunes is naturally quite unproductive, but the vegetation which has managed to develop there during past centuries, and the forests, which are fairly dense in certain spots, have gradually deposited a thin layer of soil, and this, when mixed with the sand and watered in due season by the rains, is capable of producing abundant crops. The hollows *(nhlangwa, mu-mi)* (1) are hardly more fertile than the dunes, although their continuous moisture

(1) For linguists, I indicate the class to which Native nouns belong. See the explanation of classes or genders, Part V. Chap. I. *Mu-mi* are the prefixes of the singular

is favourable to the growth of certain plants. But by the side of 134
the sand *(tsange)* and the hillocks *(shitalunga)*, here and there, is 137
found a sort of black earth, containing a large proportion of vegetable detritus, in which maize, sweet potatoes, sugar cane, etc. thrive splendidly. *Nyaka* is the name given to this black soil : it is found at the foot of the hills which run from Lourenco Marques in the direction of Motakwen, and extends for a distance of some fourteen to eighteen miles. Several small springs rise at the bottom of this gentle slope, and tend to form a curious marsh, covered with beautiful tropical growths, of which gigantic palms *(nimale)* are the most striking. These are found in forests [136]
covering hundreds of acres, with an impenetrable undergrowth of ferns, enormous rushes and evergreen shrubs : magnificent palm groves, where apes, wild boars and large storks find a safe retreat.

Between this marsh of primitive mud and the hills extends 133
the arable tract of nyaka. There the fields are lovely ; maize can 134
be grown all the year round. In other places the nyaka is parched and dry, as in the valley of the Lower Nkomati, from the point where it leaves the Lebombo hills to the elbow of Magule. Here the annual overflow of the river deposits on the low-lying plains a fertilising slime, as is the case in Egypt. It is strange to see, during the winter, tufts of grass which were carried down by the stream, months before, caught in the branches of the trees and suspended some 15 to 20 feet above the ground!

The sand of the coast belt is replaced in the hinterland of Matjolo, in the low level between the Nkomati and the Bila plain, etc. by another kind of soil called *hundjuni*. This is a reddish earth containing much sand, but much finer and more fertile than the sand proper.

On leaving the coast belt we reach the Lebombo and Longwe hills, which are composed of a hard reddish porphyraceous stone. Further West, a broad plain extends from the Lebombo to the Drakensberg Mountains, in some places consisting of a greyish or brownish clay, in other regions very dry and stony. The foot

and plural of Cl. II. When a noun begins with *shi*, it belongs to Cl. *shi-pi*, with *ti* to Cl. *Ndzi*, with *ku* to the Class *ku-ma*. As a rule nouns will be given in their singular form.

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[137]

Phot. P. Berthoud.

Miassle palmtrees in the marshes near Lourenço Marques.

of the Drakensberg is very fertile, as water flows abundantly from the mountain gorges. Some rivers, however, on reaching the Low Country, dry up entirely, at least during the winter time.

The soil of Spelonken is of a similar nature and very well watered. So the Thongas, who settled in Zoutpansberg, found there a soil which was, in certain respects, more favourable to agriculture than their sandy dunes or their hundjusi on the Coast. 134

Such is Mother Earth for the Thongas. They call it *misaba*, the plural form of nsaba, grains of sand. This word plainly shows that they come from sandy regions. For them the earth is a collection of grains of sand.

II. *Native System of Land Tenure.*

The Native population, taken as a whole, is a very sparse one. Let us consider the Ronga territory, for instance: 100,000 in a territory which may be estimated at 5000 square miles ; this gives a population of only 20 per square mile. The country is, however, very unequally peopled. Natives will only settle in spots where water is found, and, the sand dunes to which I have previously referred being exceedingly dry, they mainly inhabit the slopes of the hills and the immediate neighbourhood of the marshes already described. 162 311 361

To confine myself, amongst the Rongas, to the region in which I have principally travelled, that is to say the neighbourhood of Rikatla, the villages of Nondwane, which extend along a somewhat narrow strip (800 yards wide by 5 miles in length), stretching from the border of Mabota as far as Morakwen, contained in 1880 a population which I should estimate at about 1100 (1). This gives over 350 inhabitants to the square mile. Taking everything therefore into consideration, it may be confidently asserted that the country can easily support its population ; in fact it could support one three or four times as large.

It is important to bear all these circumstances in mind in order to be able properly to appreciate the Ba-Ronga laws relating to landed property. 423

(1) This population has very much diminished since the Ronga Portuguese war in 1894.

423 By law the soil belongs to the Chief, but only that, through
643 him, it may become general property. No one can buy land. It is gratuitously assigned to any and all who wish to settle in the country. The mere fact of *kondza*, viz., making submission to the chief (Vol. I, p. 433), entitles the Native to as much land as may be necessary for his subsistence.

423 It will be readily understood, however, that the supreme Chief,
622 however small his territory may be, can hardly assume the duty of marking out the various small allotments for his subjects. In ordinary practice this is done by the headmen of the villages (numzane), the important men of the country, (I will call them A), who obtain the grant of considerable tracts of land, which they apportion amongst those under their jurisdiction. They and their near relatives cultivate the most fertile parts of these tracts, or districts, and when any one (say B) wishes to settle on their reserve, they "cut the bush" for him, "tjemela nhoba," to use the technical expression ; they accompany the would-be-settler to an uncultivated piece of land and together they fix the boundaries of a plot of ground which is then assigned to him. A tree, the corner of a lake, a well, or an anthill, may be used as landmarks in this primitive surveying operation. The new-comer will clear as much of the land as he can, till it, and the fields, together with the trees they contain, will become thenceforth his property. Should any of his relatives wish to settle near him, he will, in his turn, assign to them a portion of his land, which they may clear
423 and cultivate ; and so the distribution continues. Supposing B is
428 not satisfied with his allotment, or is unable to live on neighbourly
622 terms with A, and builds his hut in some other spot, he cannot sell or otherwise dispose of his land, as it must revert to A, the original owner. On the other hand, should B die, his wife would inherit his gardens. Should father or mother die, the property would naturally pass to the sons, who would divide the fields between their wives. Thus we see that real estate is hereditary, but cannot be sold. A similar state of affairs would result should A, the numzane, who ranks almost as a petty chief, leave the country : all his rights in connection with the tract that he may have occupied for the last fifty years will cease with his departure.

It might be supposed that the title to real estate being gratuitously given, was not very secure. Quite the contrary! Once having assigned a plot of ground to B, A has no further interest in it; B is the absolute master of his land and of all that it produces. I recollect one day, at Rikatla, being almost dumbfounded when our own petty chief, Muzila, came to me and humbly asked permission to pick up some of the nkanye fruit, which I had left to rot on the ground! The land at the station (about 5 acres in extent) was granted to us by Maphunga, chief of Nondwane, and here was his relative and representative coming to me, requesting permission to make use of the produce of a tree which was useless to me! And he would, moreover, have made a like polite request to the meanest of his subjects, had he been desirous of making use of anything growing in that man's fields. I must admit that I have often admired the practical character of the Native law in this connection, and, still more so, the respect paid by the original proprietor to the individual to whom he has voluntarily assigned a portion of his land. It is, of course, entirely to the interest of the numzane to keep his protégé on his land, for he adds considerably to its value by cultivating an otherwise useless bush *(nhoba)*. He also helps to people his protector's tract of country, and thus to increase his strength; finally he makes certain payments in kind or rather in labour. The Chief gladly welcomes new-comers, as they will assist in the tilling of his fields each year, and the more labourers he has, the better for him! As for the headman of the village, the possessor of a "small country" (tikwana, dji-ma), his protégés will be always ready to do him a good turn on occasion, and he is therefore quite content to assign to them portions of his domain. Human nature is, however, much the same everywhere, and this system, which appears so perfect at first sight, has also its drawbacks. A numzane, or even a Chief, will give to his favourites the best pieces of land. A clever flatterer, or one knowing how to regale the great man with beer in due season, and thus gain his good graces, will be apt to receive an allotment of good, fertile forest land, while a less fortunate individual, out of favour at Court, will only get a piece of barren hill-side which has

423 622 423 427 423 622

423 already been tilled and abandoned as exhausted. I noticed
622 this at Rikatla. Muzila favoured his pagan subjects, who joined him in his drinking bouts, and invited him to orgies in their villages, at the expense of the Christians who no longer brew the byala beer. Thus interest at Court works here as elsewhere, although it be based on nothing nobler than pots of beer!

423 The difficulties of this system also become apparent in the
578 more thickly populated parts of the country, where all the land has been assigned and taken up. The women look round for
692 fresh arable land and may, wittingly or unwittingly, encroach on the ground of another numzane. There is, indeed, a neutral zone, vaguely defined, of which no one has as yet taken possession, as it has not been needed : the wild fruits growing there are common property ; any one who likes can gather them. When the population increases, the inhabitants of the more congested districts go and appropriate this land without any kind of formality. Such was the case when the people of Libombo, dwelling on the edge of the palm-marsh, (to the East of Rikatla), sent their women to the hill-side to clear a piece of land which Muzila considered to be his property. This petty chief sent remonstrances to Nkolele, his colleague, headman of the village of Libombo ; but they were not heeded. Then the men of Rikatla hid themselves in the bushes surrounding the spot in question, and, when the women commenced to hoe the ground, rushed out upon them, seized their hoes, and drove them off. This was the "fait patent," the actionable proceeding, which was necessary in order to have the matter brought before the Chief's tribunal. This incident doubtless led the parties interested to define their respective boundaries more carefully.

423 To go and till another's land would be quite impossible, even
618 taboo, between people of different clans. In the present case, the Rikatla and Libombo men belonged to the same Nondwane country. There was a good understanding between them. The Rikatla men would not have dared to plough a field without permission on Mabota's ground, the boundary of which was on the other side of the big water-tree (muhlu).

As regards *boundary marks* between the different clans, they

consist of natural objects such as rivers, big trees, etc. To define 423
the boundaries of their gardens, Natives dig an ordinary ditch 618
(ndjilekana, mu-mi) round the field, of about one foot in depth, which can be plainly traced even after the lapse of several years, when the field may have become fallow land and overgrown with vegetation.

The question of *roads* is a somewhat difficult, and often thorny 423
one to settle. Where has one the right to go ? And if, after 487
having used a certain path for years, you suddenly find it blocked by some individual whose field it skirts, and who has taken a fancy to hoe it up, what is to be done ? To try to come to some friendly agreement is always the most practical course. How often have we not experienced this difficulty with our cart ! The agriculturists were the more annoyed because we required a road three or four yards wide, while the Native footpaths are only little tracks of 15 to 20 inches in width. Being the only "carriage folk" in the district, we often had to ask permission to be allowed to pass, and have rarely met with any kind of refusal, for the Black is a reasonable being and quite appreciates the fact that roads are a necessity. If they see that a road is "ripening" (wupfile), viz., that it is more and more frequently used, they bow before the facts ; here, as everywhere else, custom makes the law.

At the present moment matters have been made much more 177
simple as the Portuguese Government has constructed wide 491
highways in all the more frequented parts of the country.

B. PRODUCTS OF THE SOIL.

I. *Cereals.*

"Hosi ya psone i *psithjama*" — "Their king is the *maize*," 243
says Mboza. This cereal is indeed the most widely cultivated in Thongaland. It is called *psifake* in Djonga. In the more fertile regions of the North, the size of the cobs and of the grains (nhleke, yin-tin) is much larger than on the sandy dunes of the Ba-Ronga. So the people of Khosen make fun of the Ba-Ronga and compare

243 their mealies with the small pimples of their tattooing (tinhleke ta Ba-Ronga). If maize is the most appreciated cereal, it is certainly not the most ancient known to the tribe. Owing to its modernity, no doubt, it is not subject to any taboo. It is sown and harvested [252] without any rite. At Christmas time, when the first cobs are edible, people joyfully feast on the new crop. They cook some of them in the ashes, but they allow the rest to ripen and dry upon [626] the stalks. Although no taboo prevents any owner of a field from eating the first mealies whenever it suits him, Mboza asserts that people who have obtained green mealies before the other inhabitants of the village, do not precede them in the enjoyment of this much appreciated food : "It would cause jealousy amongst them." This reason is perhaps at the bottom of the luma taboo (I, p. 394). Moreover they fear lest they might have to share their good luck with all their friends !

243 Next in importance comes the *mabele*, plur. of bele, dji-ma 273 (Ro.), ñwahuba (Dj.), the *millet* or *Kafir corn*. This is the well-known millet which we give to birds in cages, small, round, blackish grains which grow on a stem 3 to 5 feet high, in elongated cylindrical ears. Kafir corn is pounded, or ground, and may be eaten in the form of flour. But its main use is to provide the 243 yeast for the Kafir beer. As already pointed out (I. p. 42) the 825 mabele is one of the oldest cereals known to the Thongas. It is the ritual cereal, that used for the "shimhimbi," the dish offered to the confined mother or prepared for the luma ceremony. Its seeds undergo a certain treatment before being sown : the sub-chief blows upon them after having taken a small piece of a certain root in his mouth ; this root obtained from a kind of juncus found in the mountains, is supposed to have the power of keeping the ants away from the seeds. He distributes the seeds thus treated amongst his people, and every one mixes some of them with his own supply. Men of the reigning family alone possess 243 this root. Later on, when the time for sowing has come, it is 787 taboo for subjects to precede their chiefs or sub-chiefs in sowing mabele. The bones are consulted. Should the "madjuma" fall showing their mouths (see Part VI), it is the answer of the gods. They say: "Yes! this is the proper time! The mabele will do well!"

The horoscope is all the more satisfactory if the astragalus of the sheep is in the positive position, showing that the chiefs are happy and prosperous. At harvest time, Kafir corn is subject to the luma taboo, as explained in detail in a preceding chapter. All these rites prove the antiquity of the cereal. 243 787

The *sorghum*, (*maphila*, plur. of phila, dji-ma), is also extensively cultivated all through Thongaland. There are many kinds of sorghum : the *phila* proper, with reddish and white grains, the *timba*, whose stem has a sweet taste and is enjoyed almost as much as sugar cane, the *shikombe*, whose ears are curved, the *ntjyaka*, with a particularly elongated ear and the *djabana* with white seeds. The last has a somewhat bitter taste and is consequently spared by the birds, which are so fond of the other kinds of cereals that people have to stay in their gardens for months together to scare them away. 243

Rice (*mpunga*, mu-mi) is met with in a few districts only, notably on the Lower Nkomati, where the tide provides a natural irrigation, and in some depressions of the coast belt, especially near Rikatla. I could not say when it was introduced amongst the Thongas. In Shiluvane, its cultivation was entirely unknown in 1890, when it was brought thither by Lourenço Marques Natives. However a storekeeper told me that rice had been extensively cultivated in the country between 1870 and 1880. As it is subject to certain taboos (see later on) it may be that it is older than one would at first suspect.

In some places another cereal is cultivated, the *likoro* (probably Eleusine indica).

II. *Vegetables.*

Three Leguminosae play a considerable part in the feeding of the tribe : the ground nut, Kafir pea and Kafir bean. 244

a) The ground-nut, (Arachis hypogea), (rumane plur. marumane or tinumane (1) (Ro.), timanga (Dj.), is extensively cultivated,

(1) Rumane (cl. dji-ma) can form its plural either by prefixing *ma* which is the regular way, or by prefixing *tin*, which is exceptional. In the second case, the *n* of the prefix causes the initial *r* to permute into *n*.

244 being of every day use in the Thonga culinary art, in which it provides the fatty principles. This curious Papillonacea, after having blossomed, elongates the peduncle of the flower, which enters the ground, and the seed grows in the soil, well protected against the rays of the sun. Its taste is delicious, either prepared [754] as a sauce to season mealie flour, or roasted. When there are no nuts inside the shells, which often happens, Thongas call the empty shells *mabvobo*. They say: "The ground nuts have refused" — "Ma yalile marumane." But this is a euphemism. They mean that the *baloyi*, the wizards, have refused to let them grow or, rather, have stolen them from their shells during the night (See Part VI).

244 *b)* Another Leguminosa frequently cultivated is the *nyume* 824 (yi-tin (Ro.), *ndlowu*, yi-tin, (Dj.), the *Kafir pea*. This also grows in the earth, like the ground nut. It is much coarser than the European pea, but is twice or three times as large and very nourishing. This vegetable is subject to very curious taboos amongst the Rongas. Whilst all other seeds are sown in one and the same garden, this must be planted in a separate patch, and the tinyume field must be shut off from the others by a fence of thorns. Men [753] are allowed to plant them, but, as soon as they have grown a little, only women can enter the field. Should a man imprudently do so, he would transgress a severe taboo. The danger is twofold: firstly the man himself would be punished; he would get a hydrocele. But the owners of the field would also suffer: the crops would fail. They would reproach the transgressor with these words: "You have taken away (hungula) the strength of our peas!" In order to prevent any such mischance, the husband of the woman who owns the field goes and treats (daha) it in the following manner: he throws his assagay across the field, in the direction of the four cardinal points. Then the danger is removed and men can pass through the plot. It might be supposed that this taboo was of the same kind as that which rested on bananas, for instance, when they were still new in the country and feared on that account. But it would not seem that the Kafir pea is a recent innovation in Thonga agriculture. It has been known for a long time. Another taboo in connection with Kafir peas is this:

during the first year of her married life a woman is not allowed to plant them. 244 824

Amongst the Ba-Pedi of the Transvaal the planting of Kafir peas is taboo. They are said to prevent rain and to cause intense and injurious heat.

c) The Kafir bean, mbawen, yi-tin, (Ro.), nyawa, yi-tin, (Dj.), is a small round brownish seed, with a pleasant flavour, eaten either green or dry. I do not know of any taboo in regard to it. 244

Vegetables of other families also contribute to the food of the Thongas.

Sweet potatoes (nhlata, mu-mi) cultivated either in the sand of the hills or in the richer nyaka of the marshes, are a great resource, especially when they are farinaceous and not too watery. Their leaves (matsimbo) are also used as a vegetable.

Pumpkins also constitute one of the chief articles of diet of the Blacks, from one end of Africa to the other. They are of several kinds : the *ranga* (dji-ma) and *gawana* (dji-ma) of medium size, the *shilutana*, small, sometimes pear-shaped, the *khalabatla* (djima), huge water melons, with white or pink pulp and black pips, which are eaten both cooked and uncooked. Pumpkins are not grown for their fruit alone, as the leaves of certain kinds, especially the ranga, are excellent eating, and make a very good substitute for spinach. The flowers also are greatly appreciated by the Natives. Some kinds of pumpkins are used to make gourds and calabashes. (See I. p. 50.) 415 824

There are some taboos to be mentioned in connection with the *ranga*, which seems to be the oldest kind of pumpkin known to the Bantus (1). We have seen (I. p. 184) that girls are not allowed to walk amongst the leaves and must take special precautions when plucking them. It is taboo to plant any kind of pumpkin before the Chief and the sub-chief. They are subject to the law of hierarchy in the same way as Kafir corn. The prohibition is so conscientiously observed that, should an old man keep the people waiting and be too slow in planting his 244 753 824

(1) See in Meinhof, *Grundriss einer Lautlehre der Bantusprachen*, p. 183, the different forms of this word, which was *langa* in Ur-Bantu. Compare Torrend, *Comparative Grammar of the South African Languages*, p. 89.

244 pumpkins, another will go to the field and plant some seeds in
753 it without the old man's knowledge ; then people will venture to
824 plant in their own gardens. Transgression of this taboo is said to be punished by lumbago.

222 There are, besides, many wild plants which the housewives
824 collect and of which they make excellent dishes : the *tjeke*, a
828 kind of Chenopodiacea, which is also used as a medicine to induce forgetfulness ; the *nkakana*, a pretty plant of the Cucurbitaceae family, which climbs up the dried stems of maize after the harvest, and of which they eat the leaves and also the pretty little oval pointed fruit.

137 *Tomatoes* (shimati) are also found growing round the villages,
285 where they propagate themselves, and seem to prosper the better the less they are cared for : the Natives take them to Lourenço Marques for sale in very original baskets made of a single palm leaf, with the follicles artistically twisted. I am unable to say when they were introduced. There is a agreeable kind of small tomato which grows wild in Khosen, about the size of a cherry.

244 Natives also cultivate a kind of *onion* (nyala, yi-tin), smaller than the European varieties, which they very much appreciate in their sauces.

249 *The sugar cane* (moba, mu-mi) is never grown in large plantations, but you find it on the Coast, as well as in Zoutpansberg, cultivated on a small scale, either for eating, or for preparing the strong *shiwayawaya* drink, which I shall describe later on.

245 The *pine-apple* (lalasi, dji-ma) has spread as far as the Bilene country and must be of ancient date ; it differs considerably from the Natal pine-apple, being longer, coarser and not so sweet. In many villages large plantations are to be seen.

249 *Tobacco* (fole, dji-ma) is also wide-spread and seems to have been cultivated for a long time. A curious fact is that its cultivation is the business of the men, and women have nothing to do with it. Amongst the Ba-Ronga it is sown first in a damp spot in the marsh, in a special little garden called *shibibi*, and, when it has grown a little, is planted out (simeka) on the hill, near the villages. When nearly ripe the lower leaves are first

cut, dried and ground "ku djinga," as a foretaste! Then the 249
other leaves are cut, covered with nkuhlu foliage and left for three days to mature (ku pfundja) ; a string is then passed through them and they are hung to a tree to dry. Before they have become brittle, they are rolled up together so as to form the "mfunge," a bunch of tobacco leaves which is sometimes three or four feet long by 4 to 6 inches thick. This bunch is exposed to the sun on the roof for one day. When the process of drying is finished, the leaves are put once more outside in the evening so as to get a little damp, and are then finally rolled up together. The bunch of tobacco is kept inside the house and often used for [436]
barter.

The *manioc* (ntjumbulu, mu-mi) is extensively cultivated both in the sand of the hills and near the marshes. The root, dried, and eaten either whole or ground, is very good food, but some plants have a bitter taste. But manioc can hardly be called a vegetable and borders on the domain of trees.

III. *Trees and fruits.*

Fruits play an important part in the diet of the Thongas. 137
but wild fruits alone, the fruit with which Mother Earth 245
presents them. They neither plant nor cultivate the trees ; when clearing the ground, they simply spare the fruit-bearing kinds which grow naturally. It may be that a man will sow some seeds of a particularly good *nkuhlu*, or *nkanye*, in his garden, if that garden happens to be devoid of trees : this is all they do to improve the quality of the fruit. It is no wonder, after all, that tree cultivation is almost entirely absent in Thonga agriculture : villages move so frequently, owing to contamination by death, accusations of witchcraft, or exhaustion of the soil, that nobody takes the trouble to plant trees which he will not be able to carry away with him to his new residence.

As regards the indigenous fruits, they are varied and numerous. 222
Natives systematically spare every fruit tree when clearing their

222 fields and, thanks to this wise precaution, the fructiferous growths have increased enormously ; and wherever the land is cultivated it presents the appearance of a huge orchard.

137 One of the best of the Native fruits is the *sala* (dji-ma), which
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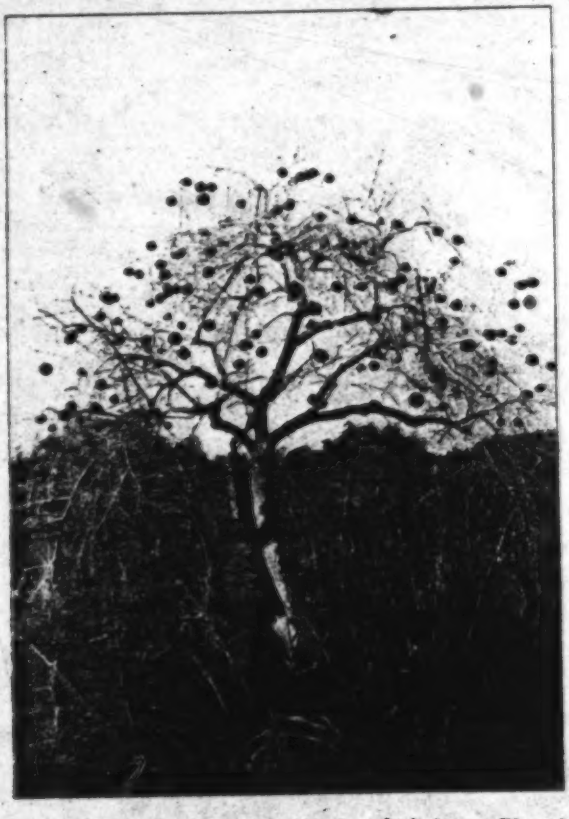

The ssala tree bearing the sala fruits. *Phot. A. Borel.*

takes a leading place in the diet of the Ba-Ronga ; it is a large shining, green ball, taking on a yellowish tint when ripening, and consists of a thin shell, easily broken, containing some twenty flat oval stones, covered with a yellowish coloured pulp, very sweet and delicate in flavour, but a little nauseating to the European taste. The sala is very invigorating and is a great and precious resource in times of shortage of crops.

Its first cousin, the *kwakwa* (dji-ma), is of the same shape and size, but, when ripening, becomes quite an orange yellow; it is never eaten uncooked. The pulp surrounding the stones is prepared in a certain way and made into strips (nhasa, yi-tin), which are hung on the trees to dry or over the fire to be smoked; this is what is called *nfuma*. Once the *nfuma* is dried, it can be pounded and made into a flour much valued when the storehouses are empty, and the new season has not yet begun. 222 252

The sala and the kwakwa are two species of the genus Strychnos (Strychnos spinosa and ungasha) which furnishes chemists and poisoners with the well-known drug strychnine. Does the fruit contain any proportion of this substance? I do not know. It has never been known to kill any one, although it may be the cause of many intestinal troubles which naturally result when the Natives, having no more maize or sweet potatoes, live on nothing but this particular fruit. Strange to say, the kwakwa stones are credited with the power of attracting lightning; the old women say that, when making *nfuma*, these large white stones must never be allowed to lie in a heap in the open air: lightning would surely strike the village were any such imprudence committed. It is a taboo. 222 137 821

I have already described the *nkanye* (mu-mi), (Sclerocarya caffra, Kafir plum), which is certainly the most highly valued of all the trees in Thongaland (I. p. 398). The fruit is used primarily and essentially for the brewing of bukanye, by pressing the pulp, but the kernels of the stones of the nkanye are also much appreciated; they are very oleaginous and a modicum of oil may be obtained by merely squeezing them between the fingers! They are called *mongo*, and the saying is that they are food for kings, for the stones are very hard, the kernels very small and it is hard work to obtain even a small quantity! Not that there is any lack of stones! Heaps, which have been thrown away at the time of the famous bukanye brewing, are to be found in the vicinity of all villages, but the cracking is the difficulty. For this a stone must be sought, far and wide, and small hollows must be made in it of a size to fit the circular nkanye stones; these are then inserted in the sockets and cracked by a sharp skilful blow with another stone, 222 252

222 great care being taken to avoid crushing the small tender kernel,
252 the royal delicacy ! In times of famine the *mongo* is in great request, in spite of the trouble involved in obtaining it.

222 Another very valuable tree is the *nkuhlu* (mu-mi) (Trichilia
439 emetica I. p. 395) whose nuts are the *tihuhlu* (yin-tin) (1) the mafureira. This is a curious fruit, the nut itself being of a greenish black colour, bitter and very oily ; on this grows white pulp (bululu), covered with a beautiful skin of a bright orange, which, however, only covers about three quarters of the central black nut. The Natives pick this fruit in November and December, and stuff their cheeks with it ; the saliva softens the pulp, which melts gradually in the mouth, affording them a prolonged enjoyment of its exquisite flavour. One sees children, and also folks of mature age, with their cheeks puffed out as if they were badly swollen and throats contracted with the effort of sucking down the delicious pulp ; when nothing remains but the black nut which is called nkampfi, viz., the product of suction, it is carefully put aside and will be used for making vegetable fat ; or it will be sold to the Whites, who export them to Marseilles where, it appears, they are used for making really good oil. Let us hope these nuts, thus sucked clean by the Blacks, have never supplied any portion of our salad dressing ! But there is no occasion to be alarmed, as they are only used for making machine oil. The Blacks themselves do not use the tihuhlu oil for culinary purposes but for outward application only.

252 The *bululu* can also be made into an edible fat by the following
303 process : whole fruits of nkuhlu are first dried, then softened in water ; when quite soft, they are pressed between the fingers so as to separate the white pulp, which is then called *munyantsi*, from the black nuts (nkampfi). This munyantsi is cooked and the fat is skimmed off (wungula) with spoons as it melts and comes to the surface. This edible fat, as well as that used for smearing the body, is preserved either in calabashes or in sala shells (shikutja). The preparation of nkampfi fat takes place as

(1) A certain number of fruits instead of belonging to the dji-ma class, as is the rule, are incorporated with the yin-tin class, the tihuhlu, the tihlu (fruit of the muhlu tree), the tindjole (fruit of the ndjole), etc.

follows : the nuts are thoroughly dried (womisa), and slightly 252
pounded in a mortar so as to remove the thin peel which covers 303
them ; they are then winnowed, and ground into a kind of flour ; this flour is put into a pot with a little water and cooked ; the fat is then collected in a big shell of Achatina and kept for external use. The residue is called *bubindje*.

I do not mention all the other fruits, more or less succulent, 137
which serve the Natives for food. One must be terribly famished 222
to enjoy them. I may just specify the *pfilu* (dji-ma), Vangueria infausta, a kind of insipid medlar ; the *tjhopfa* (dji-ma), fruit of the *ntjhopfa* tree, which I could never muster courage enough to taste, and the *bungu* (dji-ma) sometimes dignified with the title of the Kafir orange. This latter is the fruit of one of the varieties of the india-rubber tree, which grows along the shores of Delagoa Bay. (Landolphia Kirkii.) In the Morakwen forest grow the ntjhole shrubs from which the *tintjole* berries are picked during the summer.

The *muhlu* or water tree bears a berry called *tihlu*, which has an agreeable taste. The *mphimbi* bears the *mahimbi*, a large round fruit similar in form to an apricot with a double stone. Both these fruits are used to prepare a drink, and we shall mention them when treating of Thonga drinks.

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* *

There are a few taboos to mention in connection with trees. 782
It is considered dangerous to cut the trunk of any large tree. 824
Should you wish to make a mortar of a nkanye, first smear some of the bark with certain drugs and also burn them at the foot of the tree before cutting it down. Should you want to cut down a nkwenga or a mahogany-tree, nhlapfuta (Ro.), shene (Dj.), to make a canoe, the master of the forest must first offer a sacrifice to the spirits of his ancestors who have been buried there. If you omit this precaution, you will be unable to find again the tree you have chosen.

C. AGRICULTURAL CUSTOMS.

I. *The Agricultural Year.*

137 At the season which is called *shimumu*, the little heat, that
221 is to say in July, when the warm weather begins, the nkuhlu puts forth new shoots. Though rain is still far off, the mahogany and sala trees become covered with leaves of a wonderfully delicate green. A kind of Composita (the Helychrisum parviflorum, shirimbyati), which is wide-spread on the sandy dunes, blossoms all over the country ; a beautiful lily (Crinum Forbesii) will expand its splendid white and pink flowers : the *winter* (bushika) has passed away : soon the *hlobo* (summer) will come.

412 When the Ronga woman notices these signs, she picks up
221 her hoe (shikomo) and starts for the hills, or for the marshes.
462 Her husband has already repaired the implement for her, at home. If the handle was worn out, he has cut a branch of nkonono, (Terminalia sericea), which is the wood invariably used for the purpose, and has shaped it so that one end is thicker than the other ; in this thick end a hole is bored, while the iron hoe head is heated in the fire : the head has, at its base, a long iron point which is inserted nearly red-hot into the hole, burning its way in, and thus solidly fixing the two parts together. This method of fixing on the handle is called ku lumela shikomo. The Ronga hoe has a very short handle, sometimes not more than two feet in length. The Transvaal Thongas use handles three to four feet long. The woman has now nothing to do but to work hard, her lord and master having duly accomplished his share of the labour.

241 It is the end of August. Two or three months must still
221 elapse before the rainy season sets in. This period of the year is devoted to a two-fold work : the clearing of fresh land and the cultivation of marshes.

The *clearing of fresh land*, ku tlhaba lisindje (Ro.), ku khatsha

241 (Dj.), in the bush which has never yet been cultivated, or has
221 been lying fallow for a long time, is very hard work indeed!
313 Beginning in the early morning the woman cuts down the small trees with her axe (khaula, dji-ma); if the stems are too large she lights a fire at their base and leaves them to burn until they fall. Natives have not the slightest idea of the value of trees, if

Tilling the fields near Makulane (Maputju country). *Phot. D. Lanoir.*

these trees do not bear edible fruit, and destroy whole forests without any compunction. As previously mentioned, the labourer spares only the nkanye, mphimbi, nkuhlu, etc., and sometimes the mimosa parasol (gowane, Albizzia fastigiata) which provides a beneficial shade for the maize. Then she breaks the soil with her hoe and piles up in heaps the weeds (bibi, dji-ma) and bushes which she has uprooted, leaving them to dry before burning them.
[538] This is a long job and requires great patience. The old adage says very truly:

> U nga bone bibi u ku ndji rimele. (Don't waste your time in looking at your heaps of rubbish, and fancying that your work is done!)

241 This work continues all through the months of August, September
221 and October.

Cultivation of Marshes (tjhobo, dji-ma). If the woman has already tilled plenty of ground on the hill, during the previous years, she will devote these three spring months to the cultivation of the wet hollows near the lakes, between the dunes. The gardens in the marsh are called *shiramba* or *mashamba* and are very different from those on the hills called *masimo* (1).

I will now describe those which I saw in the Rikatla depression. The middle of the hollow is a marsh filled with long Papyrus (bungu), slender Typha (papala, dji-ma) or reeds (lihlanga). They are cut, uprooted; small canals are dug, in which the water collects. The roots and stems are piled in heaps, some three feet high, called *psibibi*, but they are not burnt. They are left to decay, and shilutane pumpkin seeds are sown in them, high enough to avoid putrefaction in the water. The soil is a wet black mud very favourable to the cultivation of rice. So a small plot a few square feet is sown, a *shingubya*, and, when the seeds have sprouted, they will be planted out all round. It seems that planting out has been known and practised for a long time by the Makaneta people who have large plantations of rice. Mealies are also sown in this region, in the spots where it is somewhat less wet: they will ripen one month earlier than those on the hill. The great pity is that the papyrus marsh is full of small birds called *nkapa* (mu-mi), which pluck out the tiny sprouts of mealies as soon as they appear and eat the half rotted grain at the roots. So children and women must scare away these marsh birds during these months, as they will the sparrows of the hills later on.

On the raised edge of the canals sweet potatoes are planted, not the tuber, but growing stems, which will bear fruit much earlier than those on the hill. Where water has entirely disappeared, manioc is also planted in the hollows and seems to prosper well. In early November the pumpkins of the *psibibi* will be fully developed and their leaves will provide the mistress

(1) Nsimu, cl. yi-tin, becomes in the plural masimu, cl.dji-ma; it is one of the few exceptions met with in Thonga grammar.

of the garden with a good vegetable until the first-fruits themselves ripen and furnish a more substantial food. 241 221

When the rains commence, sometimes as early as September, but generally later, it is *time to begin the regular sowing*. Everybody then starts for himself, because, although the fields tilled by the mother are the largest, every member of the family has tilled his own : the husband has his *mpashu* (I. p. 337) and each girl has her plot.

The Native idea is that every owner of a field must sow all principal cereals and vegetables in his garden, except peas, on account of their taboo. So, in a line on the border, are planted sweet potatoes and manioc. Mealie seeds are sown at a given distance from each other, alternating with Kafir corn and sorghum, and in between are planted ground nuts and beans. Watch how the mistress of the field proceeds to sow her maize : she walks along with short steps, at each one digging up a shovelful of well tilled earth, and planting in the holes three or four grains of maize, which she carefully covers over. The work is done in haste so as to take advantage of the last rains. The *lisindje* is first sown ; then begins the hasty tilling of the old fallow fields (pula, dji-ma). The crop is not likely to be so plentiful as that obtained from virgin soil, but the same fields can be used for three or four consecutive years before they become exhausted.

Natives have no idea of *fertilising the ground* in any way whatever ; at the most they may take advantage of the manure which has accumulated in some disused oxen kraal, to plant thereon a few gourds or some tobacco.

The operation of hastily tilling the fallow fields is often carried on by a *djimo* (dji-ma). Knowing that her fallows are very large and that she can hardly cope with them by herself, the owner calls all her neighbours to a djimo, viz., a working party, having wisely prepared a number of large jugs of beer. Neighbours will certainly accept the invitation as they may have to ask for similar help later on. So they come in the morning, and attack the fields with energy, singing and shouting all the time. There are special djimo songs, in particular amongst the Ba-Sutho. One may see them, some fifty black bodies toiling vigorously, 241 476 574 [533]

241 making the sand fly, their hoes working with marvellous rapidity!
476 What excitement, what strenuous work, each one urging the
574 other to still greater exertion and all hurrying to finish the job! They know that, there in the hut, ten big jars of beer brewed to a nicety wait for them, and that they will have a good time at midday, when the heat will be unbearable and the work done.

241 The maize grows and the weeds grow with it ; after the tilling
221 comes the *weeding* ; this is the work for November, December and January.

It is done twice or thrice for the mealies. The first weeding is called *tjutja*, and is done when the mealie stems have reached a height of about one foot. The second is called *hlakula*. By this time the ground nuts and beans have grown, and this weeding is intended to be for their benefit also.

In January it is the *nwebo*, the time for the first ears of maize to ripen : it is also at that time that the fields of maize are apt to be ravaged by a species of coleoptera, called the *nunu*, of which I shall have more to say when treating of the superstitions of the tribe.

In January also the sorghum and millet attain their full growth, and the grain begins to form. *Sparrows*, *finches*, and other chattering birds take up their residence in the fields and begin to plunder them. Then women and children camp out from morning to night, in their plantations, and spend three whole months shouting, yelling and making a most infernal hullabaloo, with tin cans and other musical instruments, in their endeavour to scare the thieves. This is what they call *psaya* or *rindja tinyanyana*. The flocks of sparrows, etc., move on at a single flight to the acacias or mimosas, close by, whence they make a descent on the fields of the next neighbour. This proprietress is also on guard, and, in her turn, drives off the birds with a frightful uproar ; thus the duel between birds and human beings goes on for weeks. The mother and children prevail upon the father to build them a little hut (ntjonga, mu-mi) right in the middle of the field, to enable them to protect their sorghum against the feathered enemy, and there they take up their quarters until the cereals have ripened and are ready to be harvested.

to be harvested. Poor cereals! Many grains are wanting! 241
Those mischievous sparrows have taken more than a tithe! In 417
the marshy lands of Lebombo I noticed the people scaring the birds in a somewhat original manner. A cord was stretched right across the field, for a distance of at least thirty or forty yards, supported at intervals by poles, and on it were strung large snail shells (Achatina lamarkiana) as big as one's fist; when the watchers heard the sparrows chirping on the other side of the field, instead of getting up and running after them, yelling and shouting to scare them away, they merely pulled the cord, which made the shells jingle against one another, the movement and noise frightening the birds and sending them off to attack the crops of some less ingenious neighbour! I have also seen scarecrows set up in some places, the ordinary stuffed figure. During these months of bird scaring it is impossible to get the caretakers to do anything but guard their plantations! The little maidservants scamper away to join in the work and the Christian girls no longer come to school! I can well imagine that the husbands often find empty larders at home!

The attraction of the plantation does not however hinder the 273
labourers from doing full justice to the national beer, the bukanye, which is consumed from the middle of January to the end of February! Besides, it is principally after the bukanye that it is necessary to protect the sorghum from the beaks of these winged destroyers.

The agricultural year ends with the *harvest*. Every one 241
harvests his own fields and keeps, as far as possible, his product 221
separate in his own store house. The ears of maize which have been left to dry on the stalks are broken off (tshobela) and are carefully piled in conical baskets in such a manner as to make them hold large quantities. The precious burden is at once deposited in the storehouse. After this the beans are picked (khaya): these do not ripen much before May, after all the other produce, at a season which is called "the time of beans" (nkama wa timbawen). The ground-nuts are unearthed by 241
pounding on the ground all round the stem, and pulling up the whole plant by the roots. It is curious to see the stalks coming

241 out of the earth with their well filled double pods attached to their extremities.

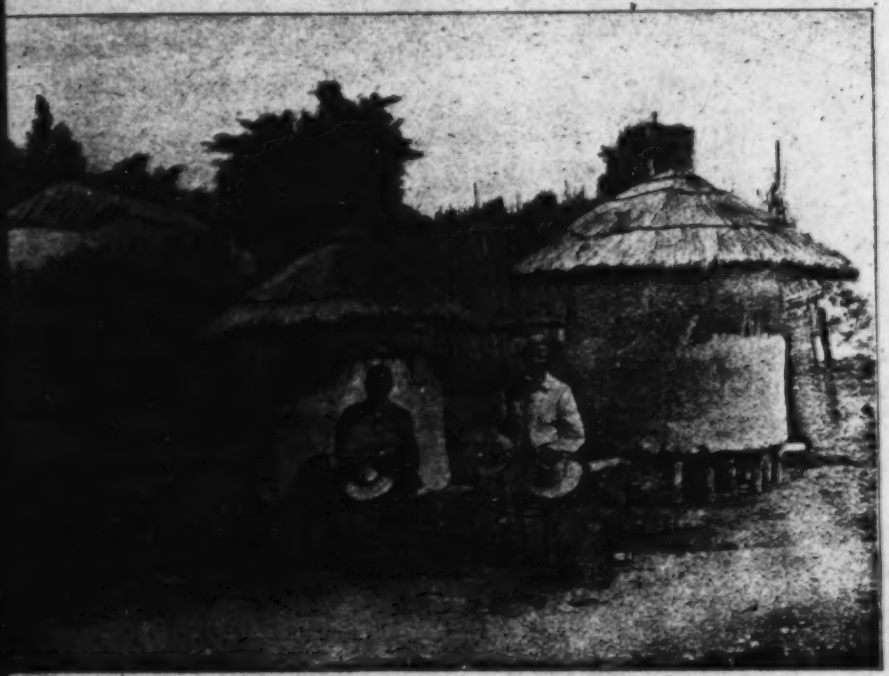
241 The men then construct *drying floors* (tjala, dji-ma) : a mat
251 made of reeds, or of the wood of the palm-tree, is placed in the
343 middle of the field, and supported by four poles ; and on it are
221

The storehouse of Sokis (Rikatila). Phot. H. A. Junod

laid (yaneka) ground-nuts, and peas, to remain there exposed to the sun until they are completely dried.

241 The next operation is the *threshing*, or separating the grain
252 from the ears (hula). This is done with sorghum and Kafir
221 corn, but not with maize, of which the cobs are generally kept entire in the storehouse until wanted. The *hula* is done on a specially prepared threshing floor in the middle of the field. The floor has been hardened by means of nkanye stones, and smeared over with clay. The sorghum and corn stems are brought thither, and the ears are beaten with small sticks. Or the ears are cut, placed in mortars and slightly pounded to liberate the grains. The best have been preserved for seed.

grains. The best have been preserved for seed. When the threshing is finished, the grains are collected (wolela or hlakula) in the *lihlelo* basket and winnowed (hehera). Kafir corn and sorghum are then stored in the big *ngula* basket (1). As regards maize, it is kept in the storehouses proper (shitlanta), 241 251 343 221



Dula storehuts in the Shiluvane village *Phot. H. A. Junod.*
(The man sitting on the right is Vigaet, my faithful informant).

little huts built of reeds with a moveable roof and raised on piles. All the shitlanta belong to the husband, though most of the tilling and all the weeding has been done by the wife, as already explained (I. p. 337). In the Transvaal, beans, peas and ground nuts are packed in the *dula* (dji-ma), which are smeared outside with clay, [423] 343

(1) It is taboo to weave the *ngula* before harvest, just as it is to prepare the stake before the birth of the baby. Before harvest Kafir corn is still *nyimba*, viz., a child not yet born. Who knows if the hail or the locusts will not destroy it? Wait till you have harvested, then you will see what size your basket must be! 241

343 or in small storehouses hung to the branches of trees (mfunge). When the harvest has been plentiful and all the storehouses have been filled, then begins the happy time of winter, of beer drinking, *bunanga* playing, (I. p. 431) paying visits, etc.

II. *Agricultural taboos.*

241 784 The first category of agricultural taboos are those previously mentioned, which spring from the idea of *hierarchy* : the prohibition to sow pumpkin seeds before the elder members of the family, the prohibition to enjoy the first-fruits (Kafir corn, bukanye, etc.) before the gods, the chief, the headman, and the elder brothers have *luma* (I, p. 394). Others belong to the *special feminine taboos*, (girls not allowed to walk amongst the pumpkins, to pluck their fruit or to pick their leaves without certain precautions, I. p. 184). Another category is that of *shimusi*. Certain days are proclaimed by the chief, or fixed by custom, as sabbath days, on which no one is allowed to till the soil. In Ñwamba, when there has been a little rain, it is taboo for the people of the clan to work in the fields ; they must remain at home. Amongst the Nkunas the day on which the new moon appears is also shimusi. The moon must be left to "become firm" (tiyela, hola) ; to cut roots while it is still "soft" is taboo : it would cause strong winds and hail. Complete rest is also customary in Khosen the day following the birth of twins. (See Part VI. Chap. II). Some other taboos are due to the fear of *wizards* : it is forbidden to whistle in the fields after having sown or until the mealies are grown. This would call the "baloyi" and endanger the harvest.

241 754 784 821

241 784 It is a taboo for a woman to remain in a standing position when she borrows a living ember (woka) from people cooking their food in their gardens ; she must sit down when she takes the ember. Should she break this law, it would cause the mealies of the owners of that garden to be burnt (psha) ; the women has "crossed their gardens" (tjemakanya). If however she does this, they

will call her on the day they begin to sow, and she will have to 241
sow the first seed; thus she will prevent all the seeds from 784
"burning."

But the most stringent taboos are connected with the *threshing of the cereals*. This work is exclusively done by women, and it is taboo for the men to approach the threshing floor. The Makanetas, who cultivate rice extensively, cut the ears and pile them into heaps in their own huts and not on the threshing floor. When the grain is dry, they thresh it by trampling on it. Should any woman pass by, it is taboo to speak to her. If she enters the hut and helps for a little while with the work, then the taboo is removed and you, the owners of the rice, can talk to her. — "Should you do so without that condition being fulfilled, this person would *take your rice* and leave you nothing but the husks (mataha). Should a relative, dwelling in the neighbouring district, come and see you whilst you are threshing rice, don't give her any part of your harvest: let her crush it in the mortar and take it away husked, lest you lose all your grain and keep the husks only! The husks of the rice which you give to your relative must remain with you." (Mboza). The same applies to Kafir corn. To allow a relative from outside to pluck ears from your garden, to thresh them and take them home means to "spoil your corn" (onha mabele). When you are threshing Kafir corn, let the visitor first take the pestle and help you before you speak to her.

As regards *tree culture*, it was formerly considered a taboo 245
to plant foreign kinds, such as bananas, oranges, etc. When 784
Mboza planted the first mango trees in Morakwen, people told 824
him: "You will die! You have called misfortune on yourself (u tihlolele), and other people will eat your fruit!" I heard this taboo explained in Shiluvane as follows. When a man has been obliged to move, and leaves trees planted by him in his old village, people passing near the ruins shake their heads and say: "Look at those trees! They have chased away the master of the village." These two testimonies are interesting, and fitly illustrate the origin of a taboo. The desolation of a ruin has been connected with the presence of new trees, as they have often been noticed together. Hence the idea that the trees are

245 the cause of the desolation. Planting new trees is consequently
784 a taboo! Nowadays however, this superstition has died out,
824 and one may see a great number of mango, orange, lemon (1), and pho-pho trees in Thonga fields, on the Coast as well as in Zoutpansberg.

[351] Natives do not generally fence their gardens. Stealing is
685 therefore very easy and it is no wonder that they have recourse to
789 magical means to protect themselves. Here are some of them; they are characteristic instances of Bantu magic.

The *rihehlo*. This consists of a kind of mysterious influence exerted on the thief by throwing a magical powder into his footprints or by taking a little of the earth found in these footprints and treating it with the drugs. The inhabitants of the village where the thief lives will be seized by disease; this will induce them to come to the owners of the garden to confess their fault and pay a fine. Then the magician who had furnished the drug will give them a counter-drug and they will be healed! Amongst the Pedis, the magician anoints with his drugs the stem from which a cob has been stolen. Then the thief will feel intolerable suffering in his little finger and come to the village of the people whom he has robbed crying: "I have stolen!" He pays the fine, receives in exchange the counter-drug and the pain ceases! (Spelonken)

The tinhlamalala. This is the name of the central nervules of the leaves of the Hyphaene palm tree. They are like little snakes, very slender, and flexible. To make the resemblance still greater, the owner of a field makes a knot at the extremity of the rod: this represents the head of the snake. Then he looks for the dried skin which has been cast off by a real snake; he reduces this to ashes, makes a powder with these ashes and anoints the rods. He weaves the rods together to form a kind of crown and places it on one of the mealies stems in his garden. When the thief

137 (1) The lemon tree is called mbomu (mu-mi). This seems to be a Native word and the tree also may be indigenous in the country. It grows wild on the banks of the Lower Nhomati to such an extent that there is an island in the river, some distance above Morakwen, which is called Ilha dos Limões, Lemon Island. The lemons are of large size and their rind resembles that of the orange.

enters the field, the tinhlamalala at once transform themselves 685
into small snakes which also bear the name of tinhlamalala. 789
(Notice the correspondence of names: a curious instance of verbal magic.) These snakes rush towards the thief, who runs away, seized with terror. Should he take the stolen cobs with him instead of throwing them on to the ground, the tinhlamalala would follow him to his village! This dreadful powder was prepared by a Nkuna named Ñwadjokwane and the people of his village used to inoculate themselves with the drug ; in this way they had nothing to fear from the snakes.

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Answers to some of Professor Frazer's questions on Agriculture. 241

There are no special ceremonies at the clearance of land for cultivation ; no grafting, nor artificial fertilisation of fruit trees is practised. (They think that trees fecundate each other by means of their roots. See, later on, paragraph on Thonga Botany). They do not believe that a deity animates the crops, only that baloyi (wizards) can increase or diminish the product of the fields (See Part VI). As regards the rite of driving away the vermin from the fields, we shall describe it in Part VI. There are no superstitions about the last corn cut, and no special ceremony practised on the harvest field. Except the rule of silence which must be kept by women threshing rice and Kafir corn, there are no special regulations for persons engaged in agricultural operations, and no sexual taboos. The plough, the hoe, the pestle and the winnowing basket are not used in ceremonial purifications or to avoid dangers.

*

* *

As regards Agriculture, it cannot be said that the Thonga tribe is in a very backward stage. Thongas, as well as most of

241 the South African Natives, are essentially agriculturists, and they succeed in obtaining their food in abundance from the soil, although it is not very rich. The variety of their cereals is indeed remarkable, but they have never developed their cultivation to any great extent, because they did not wish to harvest more than was necessary for their immediate needs : there would have been no market for a surplus. Moreover they have never invented the plough, or thought of the use of irrigation, or of manure, those three great means of intensive production which civilised people have so long possessed. As regards irrigation, the Makaneta people made use of the tide, which drives back the waters of the Nkomati River, to water their rice plantations, but they never dug channels for the purpose.

177 241 Civilisation having brought these means of progress within their reach, they show themselves, however, quite ready to take advantage of them. Ploughs are wide-spread amongst Transvaal Thongas, where missionaries have taught them their use. There is no doubt that, having been initiated into civilised methods of cultivation, South African Natives, who have such a strong natural taste for agriculture, will in future considerably develop the resources of their soil.

But two conditions are necessary for this :

1) European Agencies who have at heart the welfare of the Natives, Colonial Governments, or Missionary Societies, must help them to acquire some technical knowledge, and better seeds and implements.

2) The laws of the country must be amended in such a way that the Natives will be encouraged to buy land. As long as they are only tenants of big Land Companies, or provisional occupants, squatters on Crown land, always threatened with the possibility of their gardens being turned into farms, and sold to White people without any compensation, how can they be expected to devote much time and interest to the betterment of the soil ? Individual land tenure will be the best incentive to agricultural progress.

D. PREPARATION OF FOOD AND DRINK.

Bantus of South Africa being mostly agriculturists are also vegetarians, not however vegetarians on principle, as they eat meat as often as they have the opportunity; but these opportunities are rare, so that, as a matter of fact, their diet is essentially vegetable. I shall later on describe the two ways in which they procure meat, viz., cattle-breeding and hunting. Having seen what are the products of their fields, we can confidently proceed to the study of their kitchen, as meat seldom makes its appearance in the "pots on the fireplace!" 262

I. *Fire and salt.*

Thongas do not remember a time when they did not possess these two most important elements of the culinary art. 372

As regards *fire* (ndjilo, mu-mi), the Honwanas knew it before the XVth or XVIth century. The traditions reported I. p. 24 show that some clans believe that there was a time when food was not cooked.

There are four trees used to produce fire by friction (tsika): 137

1) The *bulolo*, a kind of Hibiscus growing in the estuary of the Nkomati, in the region regularly watered by the tide, is the best *ntsiko* or wooden flint. It is a very light and soft wood and is still used near the Coast, though matches are now to be found everywhere. 372

2) The *mpahla* (mu-mi), a bush of the Compositae family, whose wood is very hard and used to make handles for hoes. It grows all over Thongaland, in the plains as well as in mountainous regions.

3) The *nkuwa* (mu-mi), the large wild fig-tree, which covers the banks of the Nkomati and the Maputju rivers, and is common in the low lands.

137 4) The *ntjopfa* (mu-mi), the wild custard tree, employed to
372 light the sacred fire of nyokwekulu (I. p. 388). It is taboo to use it for ordinary purposes, or to warm oneself at its embers. Medicine-men alone are allowed to make ntjopfa fire, having drugs to prevent the disease caused by its use.

372 Dealing with fire taboos, I may add that it is taboo to use
784 branches of a tree which has been struck by lightning ; taboo also to keep alight the fire of a deceased person after the conclusion of the great mourning. It must be ritually extinguished (I. p. 135). In case of misfortune also (khombo), if the bones order it, the old fire must be put out and a new fire be lighted on the central fire-place of the first wife by means of the wooden flint. Each woman will go and take an ember from it and start her own fire again. These laws show that in the eyes of the Bantus there is an intimate connection between fire and the life of the village. When death or misfortune contaminates the community, fire is affected also, and it must be destroyed if the village is to resume its normal life.

372 Gungunyana used to levy a tax on fire : he ordered all the
651 fires of his kingdom to be extinguished at a certain time, and sent messengers to relight them by means of embers procured from the royal kraal. Each village had to pay a tax for the new fire. It seems that this kind of royal right was exercised in the old times by the famous Monomotapa king. Nothing of the kind is met with amongst the more modest Thonga chiefs.

372 The manner of producing fire with the wooden flint is as follows. A dry branch of the tree is secured, from half an inch to an inch thick, and cut into two pieces, each of about 18 inches in length ; one half is called the wife (nsati), the other half, the husband (nuna). The first piece, the female, is laid on the ground and a notch is made in it with a knife ; the notch is cut in two movements : first on the upper part of the wood, secondly on the side of it. The male is then somewhat rounded, inserted perpendicularly in the notch, held firmly between the palms of the hands and made to revolve by a rapid motion of the hands from top to bottom. The operator having reached the bottom of

the male at once starts again from the top; thus the friction continues without an interval. The motion widens the notch in the female to such an extent that the male penetrates and begins to burn it : the ashes find their way out by the lateral notch ; a little dry grass has been placed there and soon begins to smoulder. An expert obtains fire after six or seven consecutive frictions, especially when using bulolo. 372

Embers are kept burning as far as possible the whole night in the fire-place. Should they however have been allowed to go out, the mistress of the kitchen will send her daughter to the neighbouring hut or village to fetch a glowing cinder. This is called *ku woka* (1). The ember will be carefully carried in a sala shell or occasionally in a big snail shell. There is a characteristic rule to be observed in the woka operation. It must generally always be performed by the same person. If two women go to fetch an ember the same day from two different villages, the first must spit upon the ember of the second and extinguish it, because it is a taboo to have in the same village two fires obtained from two different sources. The act of spitting on one of the embers will "remove misfortune (susa khombo)."

Salt, also an object of primary necessity in culinary art, has always been known to the Thongas, as far back as can be remembered ; the name *munyu* (mu-mi) is a genuine Bantu word. Natives can procure it in three different ways : by gathering dried salt on the lagoons near the sea (wolela sole), and in the pans (salt pans) on the mountains (Zoutpansberg), or, when salt is not deposited on the soil, they take salted earth, put it into a conical basket and slowly pour water upon it : this percolates through into a pot, carrying the salt with it, and the solution thus obtained is evaporated. See the adjoining reproduction of a photograph, taken in the extreme North East of the Transvaal, by the Rev. P. Rosset. A third way of obtaining salt is from a certain Composita plant which is wide-spread in the plains of the Low Country ; it is burnt and its ashes washed in order to extract the 263 317 259

(1) *Woka*, from the same root as *wora*, to warm oneself at the fire and *wosha*, to roast meat.

263 small amount of salt it contains! This is a long process attended
317 with very unsatisfactorily results. During the Anglo-Boer war,
258 Natives round Leydsdorp reverted to it as all the stores were closed and no salt was procurable.

Salt manufacture, Northern Transvaal. *Phot. P. Rousset.*

Nowadays Native manufacture of salt has entirely ceased. The beautiful glistening white article has advantageously replaced the greyish, blackish mixture of former times.

II. *Food.*

252 It is not an exaggeration to speak of a culinary art amongst
581 the Thongas. They give great attention to cooking. Of a woman who knows how to cook well, it is said: "Awa hisa" "she burns;" not that she lets the sauce burn, but this expression corresponds to the French "cordon bleu." A girl who "hisa" will have more chance of being "lobola" than another.

252 This importance given to cooking explains the great richness of
192 the culinary vocabulary. Every variety of dish or of culinary process has its particular name, and to master all these terms

a special apprenticeship ought to be served to one of the queens of the kitchen. I cannot boast of having gone as far as that! 252 192

As a rule women cook only once a day, towards the end of the afternoon. The big meal is eaten in the evening when everybody is expected to eat till satisfied (shura), and what remains of it is generally finished the next day in the morning (fhhula). This evening meal consists of two component parts: the cooked cereals, and the sauces seasoning them. But the menu can be greatly varied. In most cases the cereals are prepared as *bupsa* (flour), or *mapa*, and the sauce, *muru* (Ro.), *sheshebo* (Dj.), is made of monkey nuts, ground and boiled in water, vegetables, India-pepper, tomatoes, shrimps, etc. Or the cereals, maize, millet or sorghum, may be only husked (tlhokola) and cooked whole; they are then called *tihobe* (plur. of hobe, the central part of the grain), and the monkey nut sauce is often replaced by beans or peas cooked together with the tihobe. All these dishes are very tasty and many White people readily eat the Thonga food, which seems to me superior to the Sutho. 252 [264]

However, I never very much appreciated the *bupsa* which the Thongas consider superior to the tihobe and which takes a longer time to prepare. The grains must first be soaked for several hours in water (lobeka) to soften them; they are then crushed, the husks being carefully removed by the winnowing process (hebera) in the *lihlelo* basket, which is spasmodically shaken by sudden jerky movements; the interior of the grain is then pounded until it forms a very fine flour, as light as the best Australian flour; the small round particles remaining are called *buse*, and eaten as tihobe, as the bupsa must be perfectly homogeneous. When it boils in the pot, the cook stirs it the whole time with a stick provided at the bottom with small cross bars, two to three inches in length; she twirls the stick with her hands in the same way as a man lighting a fire with the wooden flint, and this operation prevents the flour from forming lumps. The lobeka process gives a somewhat nauseating taste to the bupsa; that is why Europeans do not care for it, but Natives like it precisely for that reason. The preparation of *tihobe* is not so complicated, as no preliminary softening is necessary. It is a somewhat coarse food which,

262 however, answers admirably to the wants and capacities of the Native stomach! When the bupsa of the previous day has undergone too much fermentation during the night, it is given to
[264] the dogs. A small supplementary meal is often cooked at midday : a plate of vegetables, for instance. Or, if the pangs of hunger are too keenly felt, a little nfuma meal (p. 17) is eaten with honey. Any addition of this kind to the ordinary every day fare is welcome!

There are a few other preparations made from cereals : the *mbila*, raw meal mixed with water, the *ntlatu*, a lighter kind of maize flour used for invalids, the *shimhimbi* made of Kafir corn which is the special dish for women who are more or less fasting during the confinement period (I. p. 42).

Thongas also know how to cook by steaming. They put a large plate (mbenga, mu-mi) on top of the pot and hermetically seal it with ox dung. This prevents the steam from escaping. Dung is a thing by no means to be avoided in the culinary art. They look upon it as quite clean (1).

Men have now become accustomed to ordinary ground mealie meal *(mugayo)* which Europeans use extensively as porridge in South Africa. They eat it in the mines and in the schools ; but women do not touch it and think it vastly inferior to their own *bupsa*.

As regards the husks they are called *budangwana*, a word which may mean : "that which is eaten by the dogs." They are given to the dogs, the pigs, and the fowls.

We shall see in the next paragraph how milk and meat are dealt with.

III. *Drink*.

271 Natives are fond of the fresh clear water (mati) running in the spruits of the Transvaal, but they also make use of the

(1) I remember on one of the Transvaal roads, meeting two converts of a German colleague returning from an evangelisation tour. I offered them a piece of bread, for which they were very thankful and they moved on some distance to eat it by themselves. I was much struck to see them, after having said grace, pick up a large piece of dried ox dung which was lying there and place their bread upon it before eating : they evidently thought it was much cleaner than the bare ground!

whitish, greyish mixture found in the pools, in the midst of the sandy hollows, or in the neighbourhood of the lakes, in the Delagoa plain. To drink from a pot, or from a river, lying on your belly, or kneeling down, is *ku nwa*. But there is another word, *ku kapitela*, which describes the manner of drinking adopted in olden times by the warriors of Gideon, and of which the Thongas have not lost the secret. The Book of Judges tells the story of the 500 "who lapped, putting their hands to their mouths" (VII, 6). When crossing a spruit, you will often see Thongas drinking by throwing water into their mouths with a rapid upward motion of the hand. I had never properly understood Gideon's story until I saw a Thonga drinking by *kapitela*. 271

But the Thonga kitchen provides the tribe with many other drinks. They can be divided into 3 categories : drinks made from cereals, from fruits or from other ingredients. From cereals are made the buputju, madleko, byala and mpheka ; from fruits, the bukanye, buhimbi ; the busura, made from the sap of the palm tree, also belongs to this group. In the third category, I may mention the shiwayawaya and shikokiyane. 273

1) *Drinks made from cereals.* Under the name of *Kafir beer* are generally comprised all the varieties of intoxicating drinks prepared from mealies, millet, sorghum. But these varieties differ greatly, according to the proportion of alcohol they contain. There is a light beer called buputju and madleko and a strong beer, the byala proper, and mpheka.

The *buputju* (corresponding to the Sutho *leting*) is brewed in the following manner : a little bupsa of mealies is cooked and ground (sila) in a plate together with Kafir corn yeast. Water is poured on the mixture and fermentation soon sets in. After one day it can be consumed ; its taste is agreeable and it is hardly intoxicating (Mboza). This was the old-fashioned way of preparing buputju, and it is probably what the Ba-Ronga called *madleko*. Maize madleko looks like a thick oatmeal soup. The recipe in Shiluvane is somewhat different : mealie flour is placed in a pot, with cold water, and stirred. This mixture is poured into another pot of hot water and boiled. It is then left to cool and some Kafir corn yeast is mixed with it in the evening. Next

273 day it is sufficiently fermented to be drunk. It must be finished the same day for it would become sour, if kept longer, not having been boiled long enough to keep for any length of time. Nowadays the craving for alcohol having greatly increased, Natives do not content themselves with the original madleko. They follow more or less the Shiluvane recipe, but obtain more alcohol by mixing yeast twice with the flour, before and after boiling.

The brewing (yenga) of *byala* (Ro.), *byalwa* (Dj.), is much more complicated. It lasts nine days (I. p. 108) and this is the order of procedure amongst the Nkunas. The five first days are devoted to the preparation of the yeast ; Kafir corn is soaked in water, and left to soften for one day in a pot. On the second day, the breweress pours away (minya) the water, and covers the Kafir corn with leaves to keep it moist (pfhimba) ; this favours the growth (mila) of the germs which are left to sprout on the third, fourth and fifth day. On the sixth day the yeast (handjelo (Ro.), tshomela (Dj.) so obtained is dried and ground. Mealies are then threshed in great quantities and soaked in water ; in the evening all the women and their relatives pound them in the mortars and make flour, but they do not remove the husks. Next day they fetch water in jars and boil it ; their mealie flour is placed in other pots with a handful of yeast added to each of them ; boiling water is then poured over it and stirred so as to mix it well with the flour. When this has cooled down, they add a little yeast (kandjela). On the eighth day, at dawn, they put all these pots on the fire : the beer must be kept boiling for a long time. In the afternoon, they remove the pots from the fire (phula) and pour the beer into other jars to let it cool down. Afterwards they add all the yeast which remains. During the night, the beer must ferment (kukumuka, literally "swell"). If they find it in this condition on the morning of the ninth day, it shows that the time has come to strain it off (hluta) which is done by means of a Native sieve. (See illustration in next chapter.) All the husks floating in it are thus removed and the beer is poured into the best pots to await the guests of the beer party. In the hut it

keeps its flavour for two days, after which it loses both strength 273
and taste, and turns into vinegar (ntjubi).

Amongst the Ba-Ronga a very similar process is followed. They call *mbila* the flour and yeast on which boiling water has been poured on the seventh day, the name of the operation being *ku bandjekela mbila*. They let it remain in a cask for three days before boiling it, collecting in the meantime all the necessary fuel for the cooking. After the boiling, it is called *phiriho*. Empty wine barrels being everywhere available, beer can be brewed in greater quantities than was formerly the case.

When they took refuge in Bilen, during the war of 1894-96, the Ba-Ronga there learned to boil the beer a second time : the flour is cooked twice with the yeast and this greatly increases the strength of the byala, which is then called *mpheka*. From the innocent madleko, full of husks, which are as much food as drink, up to the very strong mpheka, passing through the different kinds of buputju and byala, all the different percentages of alcohol are met with. The quantity of yeast mixed with the flour and the length of the boiling are the two main elements to be considered, and it is very difficult to say where buputju ends and where byala begins! However the following rule may be adopted to differentiate them : beer is *byala* when yeast has been added more than once, when the boiling has been prolonged, when the liquid has been strained and when the amount of alcohol it contains is sufficient to keep it in good condition for more than one day.

2) *Drinks made with fruits or other tree products.* The *bukanye* 137
is the most famous, being the great drink at the national feast 273
(I. p. 399). But another very strong and much appreciated drink of this category is the *buhimbi*. The tree *mphimbi* (Ro.), *mbimbi* (Dj.), has an impenetrable mass of branches on which grows a very agreeable fruit of an orange colour with a double stone inside, externally very much like an apricot. When ripe in December, it is very juicy and sweet and produces a very alcoholic beverage. The fruit is pressed between the hands (phamasa) ; the liquid thus obtained is mixed with water and boiled. Any scum rising to the surface is removed (wungula) and the drink left to ferment for five days. It is so alcoholic that it will keep

137 in good condition for a year and is said to be more intoxicating
273 than wine. The mphimbi tree is found all over the Delagoa dunes.

There is an exotic tree, the Anacardium occidentale, called *nkadju* in Ronga which has been introduced and is widely cultivated in the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques. It bears

Milala palm trees.

very juicy fruit which the Natives use to prepare a pretty strong alcoholic drink, the *bukadju*. At the season of bukadju there is an enormous amount of drunkenness round the town.

The *milala* or palm tree, from which is made palm wine, *busura*, grows in forests at various places, especially in Ñwamba, the North of Nondwane, Maluleke, etc. and in some regions
273 Natives devote considerable time to its brewing. The people of Phesen (Pessene Station on the Komati Poort Railway) are said even to neglect their agricultural duties and to indulge in busura to a great excess. The preparation of palm wine is done according to rule. The forest is divided by the chief amongst

the headmen, in the same way as the ordinary bush. Each 273
headman exploits the milala of the region which has been apportioned to him and which is called *fashi*. He may take partners from other villages. The stem of the palm tree is cut to a point (batla) at its upper extremity, where the top shoot

Collecting the palm wine. *Phot. A. Borel.*

is growing. After four days this extremity is cut on the slant and a sala shell is tied on with a string and placed in a position to receive the exudation which oozes from the cut. This shell (shikutja) is soon filled up ; the owner of the tree unties it, pours the liquid into his calabash and drinks it at home. When there is plenty of it, it is stored in a big pot called *gandjelo*, which is hidden somewhere in the bush. Gandjelo means altar, the utensil in which offerings are placed for the ancestor-gods. (Part VI.) But the busura gandjelo does not seem to have any religious meaning. If a traveller happens to find it, it is

good luck ; he will say : "My god has blessed me and shown me this gandjelo," and he is quite welcome to help himself to the wine. On the other hand, it is prohibited to touch the shell and to drink from it. It is taboo. A stranger doing so would be addressed as follows : "Are you a bee, are you a butterfly to go and help yourself from a shikutja, which does not belong to you?" He would be tied up, arms and legs, and left to sleep in the open for the whole night. On leaving him they will taunt him, saying : "Go and drink from the shikutja." He may even be condemned to pay a fine, a goat, or a hoe. This palm wine has a very sweet and agreeable taste. 273 685

According to the Native idea, *honey* (bulombe) is also a drink! The prefix *bu* classifies this product amongst liquids. It is very much appreciated and Natives readily submit to be stung in order to collect it (hakula) from the holes in old trees or rocks. They generally burn some grass which they hold in one hand, keeping the bees away with the smoke and the flame, and gathering the honey combs into a pot with the other hand. Thongas frequently secure honey in an artificial way by placing a broken pot upside-down in the bush. Bees are attracted and a swarm will occasionally make its home in the pot. In the Ñwambukota region (near Morakwen) I saw a Ronga who even had bee hives of his own invention and succeeded in securing plenty of honey. Native honey is of a brownish, blackish hue. When eating it, Thongas do not at all despise the larvae : are they not meat? 222 231 272

3) *The Shiwayawaya and Shikokiyane drinks.* The various kinds of beer and drinks made from fruit were not, however, enough for the Thongas. They saw that White people used sugar-cane to distil rum and they attempted to do the same. The result of their attempt is called *Shiwayawaya.* Inhambane Natives seem to have been the first to brew it ; their kinsmen of the Lourenço Marques district soon followed their example. They crush the sugar-cane in a mortar, after having poured some water into it ; they then collect the crushed cane in a sack, press it, and extract all the liquid they can in one or two barrels. During the night a fire is lighted in a hut, near the barrels, to 273

273 warm them, and someone must keep watch all night, removing the scum and preventing the liquid from rising or overflowing. It then ferments and becomes very alcoholic. Where shiwaya-
[415] waya is drunk, quarrels and blows are sure to follow. The accompanying plate from a photograph, taken near Antioka (Khosen), shows a primitive Native press used for the preparation

Sugar-cane press, Magale (Khosen country). *Phot. A. Claw.*

of sugar-cane drink. The crushing operation takes place in the large hollowed trunk of a tree and the liquid flows out, through a pipe fixed in its lower extremity, into a pot.

177 The *shikokiyane* is prepared from Golden Syrup bought from
278 the stores. A large quantity of tins of this harmless "missionary jam," as it is called in South Africa, imported into Johannesburg, are used not by missionaries but by Natives of the Compounds who brew shikokiyane in big empty oil cans. Some of the more civilised do quite a trade in this strong drink, selling it illicitly on Sundays to their unsophisticated brethren, who thus

177 attain to the happy state of drunkenness in which they so much
273 delight, and which is not allowed by the regulations of the Compounds.

A number of other drinks have been invented by the South African Natives, but the foregoing are the principal.

See in the Practical Conclusions, I, at the end of the Volume, my remarks on "Alcoholism and the South African Tribe."

E. LIVE STOCK BREEDING.

I. *Oxen.*

231 Oxen were plentiful in Thongaland before the Zulu invasion; the Ba-Ngoni warriors stole and killed them wholesale. They have never been so numerous since then, and in 1910 they were fewer than ever, owing to cattle plague and to Texas Fever, which has destroyed the herds in the Transvaal and in the greater part of the Lourenço Marques district. Oxen are not the property of chiefs only. Any *numzane* can possess a kraal, *ranga dji-ma* (Ro.), *shibaya* (Dj.), where he keeps not only his own cattle but those entrusted to his care. Having plenty of boys to herd them, he [illegible] accepts the cows which his neighbours ask him to look [illegible] all the more so as the milk will be his, and he will be given one of the calves, according to custom (I. p. 440). Much care is taken of the welfare of the cattle: the herding-boys are expected to lead them to pasture in the
[821] morning, when the dew is still on the grass; during the five or six winter months hardly any rain falls, but heavy morning dew replaces it, moistening the grass, and Natives firmly believe that it makes the cattle fat. So it is said that the oxen must go out early and "eat the dew." (Compare the tale of Piti, *Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, p. 156.) Moreover the best kinds of grass, those which are the most nourishing, are well known, and the boys are sent to the places where they grow. Parts

of the bush are also burnt as soon as the grass dries up, so as to 231
obtain fresh grass as early as possible in the spring. In autumn, after the harvest, oxen are allowed to wander about in the gardens, where they eat the mealies and millet and sorghum stems, and find better grass.

The Thongas castrate most of their bulls ; however they keep 231
one or two in each herd for breeding purposes. Strange to say, 552
these beasts are generally very tame ; they are hardly any wilder than the castrated oxen. However, the boys sharpen their horns and excite the bulls of different herds to fight. They pour live ants on their foreheads to irritate them. They give them names ; e. g. Makonyama, the one who threatens on both sides, — Mombomakhele, the one who has curly hair on his head, the terrible one, — Ntlhontlha-ba-tsha, shisa-sha-munga, the one who beats the fire... people are burnt by the sparks as by embers of the mimosa tree, — Mabala-ya-tilo, the "stripes of heaven," — Mabata-bata, the one with many spots, etc. Many of these names are suggested by the colouring of the animals (1). I never heard songs in praise of the cattle similar to those found amongst the Ba-Sutho for instance. It does not seem that oxen have at any time played such an important part in the tribal life of the Thongas as is the case amongst Zulus or Suthos.

Women, especially those of childbearing age and having 231
sexual relations, are not allowed to take care of oxen. It is 562
taboo. When they require dung to smear the huts, they send 841
little children or girls whose menses have not yet begun or who are 784
at any rate unmarried, to fetch it from the oxen kraal. When oxen are sick, they are entrusted to the care of little girls, who must sometimes stay with them as long as two months without returning home. We have already met with these feminine taboos concerning oxen (I. p. 184) and seen that these prohibitions are based on the idea that the menstrual blood is as dangerous for oxen as for

(1) Native cattle are by no means of pure breed. There are many races which have been crossed : a small race with short horns and another with large lyre-shaped horns, probably brought from the Transvaal to the coast of Delagoa Bay. Madagascar oxen, with their strange prominence on the back, resembling zebus, have also been imported in great numbers into Lourenço Marques for butcher's purposes. Possibly some have been used for breeding.

231 men having relations with women during menstruation (I. p. 187).
562 Should a drop of it fall in the cattle kraal, this would endanger the
841 health of the whole herd. Women are even prohibited from
784 passing through a herd of oxen ; they must go round it, because otherwise the death of the calves would ensue. Amongst the Ba-Ngoni this taboo is so strong that a woman guilty of having transgressed against it was put to death (1).

231 The object of oxen-breeding is not milk but the acquisition
262 of *wealth* ; oxen mean wealth to the Native, a means of purchasing
556 girls and of thus increasing his family. Oxen are also bred for food, the meat being highly appreciated and divided amongst all the members of the family according to the strict rules previously explained (I. p. 329). The slaughtering is done by piercing the heart with an assagai, a painful and sometimes very protracted operation. This occurs at marriage feasts, at other family and national gatherings, at the sacrifice for rain (Part VI), and on special occasions, once a year for instance, when a headman wishes to feast his people. All, even neighbours who are not relatives and travellers, are welcome to the feast. Natives have wonderful olfactory powers. They seem to smell out the *lisuma*, viz., the peculiar odour of the meat, a mile off, and when an ox has been killed you see them emerging from the bush on all sides!

234 As regards *milk*, it certainly plays a part in the food of villages which are fortunate enough to possess a well-filled oxen kraal. The *milking* of the cows presents difficulties unknown in Europe! African cows have not yet learned to submit tamely to this operation! The calf must always be allowed to suck a few mouthfuls, then a boy pulls it away from the teat and the cow consents to be milked. Should a cow be too wild, they pass a string through its

241 (1) We meet here with an interesting instance of a superstition having no scientific
462 basis whatever, which is nevertheless productive of good results. Women must keep apart from oxen. Since the plough was introduced amongst South African Natives, they have been quick to notice that it is a very useful instrument, and have adopted it in many places. The plough has to be drawn by oxen and men alone are allowed to drive them. Thus women are relieved of the heavy work of tilling the fields which had been allotted to them by immemorial custom. It is probable that further knowledge will free the Natives from their old fear and from the taboo which resulted from it ; yet the idea that everything connected with oxen belongs to the domain of men will remain and thus real social progress will have been obtained through an absurd superstition !

nostrils and so keep it quiet during the whole operation. The milk is generally taken in a large wooden bowl. It is very seldom consumed as a liquid, but is *eaten* when thickened by coagulation. The fresh milk is poured into a calabash with an opening at the bottom closed by a cork : a certain quantity of whey has been kept in the calabash and this causes the fresh milk to curdle at once. When curdled but not yet set, it is called *shitjubi* and is eaten with spoons by men and women. But it is left to decompose : the whey *(mulaza)* soon separates from the thick part, which becomes entirely solid and is then called *ntjhwamba*. The cork at the bottom of the calabash is removed, the *mulaza* flows out freely and is drunk by the men and herd boys. The *ntjhwamba* is put into a plate and each man or woman, not having her *tihweti* (I. p. 187), approaches and takes a spoonful of it. A woman during menstruation must never drink milk, nor during her confinement or until her child has been presented to the moon (I. p. 52).

234 262 272 272 841 844

The milk of the first week after a cow has calved is taboo. It must not be mixed with other cows' milk, because the umbilical cord of the calf has not yet fallen off. It can, however, be boiled and consumed by children, as they do not count! After that milk is never boiled : not that there is any taboo to fear, but it is not customary. Natives do not give any clear reason for these milk taboos. They have no objection to selling their milk to strangers ; on the contrary, they are so eager to make money out of it that they often add water to it, and any European having had dealings with them in milk matters would have his story to tell!

234 262 272 609 439

Goat's milk is left for the herd boys ; men do not touch it.

II. *Other domestic animals.*

Besides oxen, the Ba-Ronga breed *goats* (mbuti, yin-tin), the care of which is relegated to the small boys (I. p. 62). Practically every one possesses one or more goats, whilst oxen are much more rarely met with.

231

231 Native goats are very small and frequently attacked by a disease called ndlwabane which decimates whole herds. They are not tended with sufficient care, although a special hut (mhala) is sometimes built to protect them from the rain.

Goats are killed by piercing the heart : this is at any rate the ritual way of killing them (I. p. 158). The officiating person stands on the right of the animal and stabs it in the left side, holding the left leg. The animal suffers acutely ; goats are however often slaughtered by cutting the throat, not from any feelings of compassion, but in order to prevent them crying too long, as "this would surely bring many people on the spot and you would have to share the meat with them!" (Mboza.)

231 782 If the ox plays an important part in *social life*, the goat seems to be specially reserved for sacrifices, that is to say for *religious usages*. This ritual use entitles us to suppose that, as millet seems to be the oldest cereal, the goat is the most ancient domestic animal amongst the Thongas, and, no doubt, amongst all South African Bantus.

The gall bladder, the astragalus, the half digested grass found in its intestines, strips made of its skin, all play a special part in the ceremonies and superstitious practices of the tribe previously mentioned. The gall bladder (nyongwa) is fixed in the hair of the person in whose honour the goat was slaughtered. The astragalus (nhlolo) is fastened to the wrist, the ankle or the waist as a means of protection. The *psanyi* (half digested grass) is taken from the shihlakahla stomach, and is used in connection with the invocation of the gods in the sacrifices. (See Part VI, Compare also I. p. 111, 160-162.)

136 231 643 782 *Sheep*, hamba, yin-tin, (Ro.) nyimpfu, yin-tin, (Dj.) are scarce in our tribe, and are mostly without wool. The wool sheep is called *shitlapu*. It is not taboo for subjects to possess sheep, but this animal is connected in a special manner with the chiefs. Its astragalus designates royal personages in the set of divinatory bones. It is used in the national sacrifices, those offered to the chief's ancestors at the capital. (See Part VI.) Let us remind the reader that its skin is used to carry a child in case of *bovumba* (I. p. 194).

The *pig*, as previously mentioned, is a new comer in the Bantu village. Its name, *nguluwe*, means the wild pig. Most villages, however, possess one or two. They are never slaughtered in connection with sacrifices. 231

Poultry (tihuku) is the most common of all live stock. Not a village is without its fowl house (shihahlu); these are generally fashioned like a small hut and perched on piles to protect the poultry during the night from snakes. (See illustration I. p. 312.) 235 343

When a hen and her brood of young chickens have to be cared for, a much smaller hut is built on the ground, but the utmost precaution is taken to keep it almost hermetically sealed, as the mhamba (a long green snake, very venomous) and the shipyahla (Echnida arietans, a large viper resembling the puff-adder) do great execution amongst fowls! As cows are not bred for milking purposes, neither are chickens raised for the sake of their eggs. In fact Thongas consider it a sheer waste to eat eggs and always allow the hens to hatch them out. Hens are wilder than they are with us and often make their nests in the open country, returning some fine day with a flourishing young family. The breed is of very small size and the eggs are tiny: it would require at least two to equal the weight of one ordinary egg such as are for sale in the European markets; it is therefore evidently more advantageous to hatch eggs than to eat them! If, by any chance, a hen dies on the nest from the bite of a snake, the Natives will willingly devour the half hatched or three quarters addled eggs; the more developed the chicken, the greater their appreciation of the delicacy, for, says the Thonga, "i nyama!" — "this is meat!" Fowls are extensively used as timhamba, viz., sacrificial offerings. The throat is cut; a little of the down plucked off the neck is dipped into the blood, and brought close to the mouth for the performance of the *tsu* rite, one of the smaller feathers of the wing (shihluwa), one of the claws, and the beak are tied together and fastened to the wrist, ankle or neck of the person for the sake of whom the offering has been made. (Part VI.) [136] 235 262 235 782

Thongas assert that they have always possessed fowls. "They 235

235 made their appearance together with men" — "ti tumbulukile ni banhu," they say. But we know that the critical sense is absent from their minds, so we cannot rely on any such absolute dictum. "The Hoñwanas had them" they add ; and this we may believe, as the Hoñwanas have always kept more or less apart from the invaders of the XVth or XVIth century (I. p. 357) and may have preserved their traditions. This shows that poultry was known in Delagoa Bay 300 or 400 years ago. Not having seen the Portuguese chronicles of 1550-1600, I cannot say whether they make any allusion to the presence of fowls at that date (1).

F. HUNTING AND FISHING.

224 Whatever may be the antiquity of cattle breeding amongst
476 South African Natives, there was a time when they had no domestic animals at all. Then, however, there were plenty of antelopes, elephants, and hippopotami in the country and they satisfied their craving for meat by hunting. Hunting was undoubtedly more developed in those remote times than now, and it was accompanied by customs and rites which are still to be found in some places, though rapidly disappearing, and in which are embodied some of the most curious animistic ideas of the tribe. Moreover, in their primitive state, Bantus only possessed very simple and inadequate weapons. It was hardly possible for an isolated member of the tribe to attack and kill big animals alone. The collaboration of his fellow clansmen was indispensable Hunting therefore was not an individual affair, but a collective concern. This gave rise to social rites, as gene-
224 rally happens when collective acts are performed. These ani-

(1) As regards the Pedi-Suthes of Zoutpansberg, the introduction of fowls amongst them is quite modern and they admit that they owe them to the Ma-Lemba who brought them into the country about 150 years ago. See my paper in *Folklore* Sept. 1908.

mistic and social rites connected with hunting constitute an elaborate system which forms a most interesting study. 224

The interest of this study has been further enhanced by the discoveries made in the caves of France and Spain regarding our forefathers of the paleolithic age. They also were great hunters, and the rites of the Bantus, who are to-day in a state of civilisation very similar to that of the Mousterian and Magdalenian periods, are capable of throwing much light on tne customs of primitive humanity. The cave-dwellers of those remote times used to depict wild animals on the walls of their caves and on some of these artistically drawn figures may be noticed characteristic spots; these would seem to represent the wounds which the hunters intended to inflict on the animals in the course of their next hunting expeditions. This was probably a magical method of achieving success in the chase. Bantus of the present day do not possess this wonderful pictorial art. Their magic is different, but it rests on the same principles, and who can say whether the description of their hunting rites may not help us to understand some of the discoveries already made or still to be made in the deposits of prehistoric times, just as the position given by them to the corpse in the grave explains why in the Mousterian skeletons the legs and forearms are bent towards the sternum.

I. *Big Game Hunting.*

Big game is plentiful in Thonga territory, more so of course in the remote places (mananga) than in the populated areas. Elephants are still found in the desert, in Hlengweland and Maputju; hippopotami swarm in the Nkomati and Limpopo; antelopes of subtropical Africa still abound north of Khosen and in the low plains of Zoutpansberg: the sable antelope, (mhalamhala), water buck (mhetlwa), koedoe, gnu (hongonyi), reed buck (nhlangu), etc. The duiker (mhunti) is met with everywhere. The smaller antelopes are the shipeya, mangulwe, etc. The giraffe (nhutlwa) and the buffalo (nyari) are still found north of Khosen, but are decreasing in number. 136 224

224 Let me first mention some of the *social rites* connected with
422 hunting.

When a man finds *a dead animal* in the bush, if it is not too heavy, he can hoist it on his shoulders and take it home to eat. We know that Natives are not afraid of eating dead meat and enjoy an extraordinary immunity from its dangers. But if it is an elephant, for instance, the man who has found it, perhaps by following the vultures which gather round the dead body, will first carefully examine the soil all round the beast to be sure that nobody has seen it before him. If no footprints are to be seen, he cuts a piece of meat, places it on a fire and eats to his heart's content. Then he cuts off the tail (tjoba) of the animal and runs home to call his fellow-clansmen. The tail is his "means of notification" (bika) ; they all rush to the spot, cut off the limbs and carry them to the village. Should the animal have fallen in a country which is not that of the finder, the latter will give the owners of the land one of the limbs and the ribs which were in contact with the ground (1).

151 To find a dead animal is not a common occurrence. Generally
224 the hunter meets with *living game*. He at once sets off in pursuit with his dogs. He may pursue the animal for hours, or even days. My friend Spoor. (I. p. 7), though suffering from asthma, often succeeded in killing an antelope which had been overcome with fatigue and was found by him lying asleep. But he may often have to start without having seen anything. *The study of footprints* is then of paramount importance. In the sandy plains

(1) The Nkumba clan, 10 Kil. north of Lourenço Marques, lost its independance on account of a dead elephant under the following circumstances. One of the men of this clan had found a dead elephant. He at once cut off the tail and went to the village of the chief to "bika." Whilst he was away a troup of men of the Libombo clan, settled some kilometers further north, came to the spot. They put an axe into the animal's rectum, and when the Nkumbas arrived they said to them : "This beast is ours ! You have cut off the tail, but we had put our axe into its rectum long before." And a big warrior took the axe out triumphantly. The Nkumbas said "goo," i. e. they were greatly embarrassed and answered : "You lie ! We had cut off the tail before you came !" — "Not at all," answered the Libombos ! "Our method of appropriating a dead animal is to put an axe into its rectum." This led to a fight in which the Nkumbas were defeated, and later on, one of them having died and been buried in their sacred wood (ntiăwen), the Libombos dug up the corpse and threw it away. The poor Nkumbas were obliged to bury it in another place : they had lost their country !

of the coast, antelopes leave well marked traces in the soil. A hunter starts at 8 a. m. and notices that the footprint is of a dark colour ; this shows that the morning dew has fallen into it ; therefore the footprint was made during the night, some hours before. If the edges of the print are sharply cut, this means that the animal passed in the early morning, when the sand was still a little wet and firm, whilst if the edges are irregular or have crumbled down, it is a sign that the print was made at noon, when the sand is quite dry and loose. The Rev. A. Aubert living in the Maputju country, who often questioned hunters on the subject, told me that these men had wonderful skill in drawing their conclusions at a glance, apparently without any reasoning process. It is evident that the reasoning process must have taken place at some period, but it has become almost instinctive : the sight of the footprint immediately gives the hunter the information required. They are even able, when on the track of two antelopes of the same kind, to state which are the footprints of the male and which those of the female, the latter being generally somewhat smaller. 151 224

When the soil is hard, or clayish, there may be more difficulty. The hunter will observe the depth of the footprint ; if it is deeply marked, this shows that the earth was wet and soft when the animal passed ; therefore it was in the early morning, just after the fall of the dew. Or he may notice that a stone has been displaced and turned upside down by the antelope's hoofs ; should the upper side of this stone be wet, the displacement took place before the dew fell. On the contrary, should it be dry, the stone has just been moved and the animal is not far off. The Rev. P. Rosset, who was once led in an eland hunt by an experienced "phisa", told me that the man was all the time muttering volubly, talking to himself in a low voice, interpreting to himself all the signs he observed and drawing his conclusions without taking any heed of his white companion (1).

(1) Native children begin very early to learn the science of footprints. They notice the peculiar aspect of the footprint of all the inmates of the village and are soon able to recognize them. They even connect them with their respective ways of walking, which is indicated by the footprints being turned more or less outwards. 151 869

When the hunter has chosen, amongst all the prints, those which 224
seem to him the freshest, he follows them up with his dogs, and 476
there is some chance of his being able to overtake the antelope. Should he succeed in killing the animal without having received help from others he can appropriate it without rewarding anybody. Only if it is too heavy to carry home, he will shout loudly, on a high, piercing note : "Hoooooyiooo..." perhaps after having climbed up a tree so as to make himself heard a long way off. Or he will cut off the tail, cover the beast with branches to prevent vultures from damaging it, plant his assegay in the ground to show his right to the possession of his victim and go home to fetch his companions. When they have helped him to carry the animal, he will give each of them a good piece of meat.

But if the hunter who discovered the antelope sees that he will 202
not be able to come up with it, he will blow his trumpet (lihlanga) 224
to call for help. When the men arrive on the spot, he will cry : 476
"Nkuna yowee!.." if he is a Nkuna, and all will repeat after him : "Nkuna yowee!.." to acknowledge his right. He may abandon the pursuit, but his right has been proclaimed and will be remembered. The second hunter who stabs the antelope will do the same ; he will shout "Mabota yowee!.." if he is of the Mabota clan, and so on till the animal has been killed. Then the meat will be distributed amongst the killers in the following way.. The first will receive the body, the second one leg, the third the foreleg and the fourth the throat, a portion being reserved for the chief, the owner of the soil on which the antelope has fallen. This manner of pursuing an animal, in which helpers are summoned by means of the trumpet, is called ku nyikanana, i. e. to surrender to each other.

If the hunter has killed a very big animal and wants his clansmen 224
alone to help him, he has recourse to another method of calling 202
them. Each clan possesses its own rallying cry, and this he 618
shouts loudly. This is intended to exclude men of other clans and to prevent fighting or any dispute about the possession of the animal. For the Ba-Nkuna this cry is : *Nyandlaleyo*! For the Tsungus : *Hi nhlanga*! For the Manukosi clan : *Muyamba ngwenya ya nambu wa tingwenya*! (Crocodile of the river of

202 crocodiles.) For the Mavundjas: *Kahlamba ntjhaba yo nonoha!*
618 (The big mountain, difficult to climb.) (1)

224 I have already described the part of a slain animal which is to
643 be given to the chief, when speaking of the prerogatives of the
825 master of the country (I. p. 406). Here are some supplementary
845 details: The general idea is that he must receive that part of the body which was in contact with the soil, because the chief is the owner of the soil. In the case of smaller antelopes however he does not claim anything. For the eland he requires, in addition to the ordinary tribute, half of the *bofu* i. e. of the paunch of fat which is found round the heart of this animal and which is believed to possess precious medicinal properties (especially for new-born children born with a membrane round the head). As regards buffaloes and other big animals, should they be killed far away from home, their meat is cut into strips (mishakatsu) and two bundles are brought back to the chief; it is also the rule that the head of any beast of great size should be eaten on the bandla, the meeting-place of the men in the capital.

224
643

Buffalo hunter with his victim.

224 So far I have described hunting with assegais, sticks and dogs.
824 But Thongas possess another method of killing big animals, a method which is perhaps more ancient and which has sometimes proved very useful. This is the *marindji trap*, i. e. a large pit dug in the earth, covered with branches and full of pointed stakes upon which the animal falls and impales itself. These stakes are made

(1) The Pedis have the same custom. The Ba-Khaha cry: "Haratsha! Mugoni! We"! This expression comes from the verb *ratsha*, to cross a river on a tree trunk, as the Khaha clan is said to have been held back in its ancient migrations by a swollen river and to have *ratsha* it successfully. The remembrance of this feat of their ancestors has remained and has given rise to this rallying cry. Other Pedis say: '*Sioandja khomo*," viz., "the killer will be given an ox for his reward."

224 of the very hard wood of the ntjenga tree, a sort of mimosa shrub,
824 and are anointed with a powder called *tjulu*. This is a deadly poison ; it is obtained from a shrub which has very pretty flowers and grows abundantly in the forests near the sea, the Strophanthus petersianus. Should an elephant fall into the game pit and succeed in escaping, it will soon die from the poisoned wound.

The marindji trap was already known to the Honwanas, three or four centuries ago, before they possessed any iron weapon. They used to kill elephants in this way and, being unable to dismember them, they made a fire all round the beast to cook it on the spot!

224 In order "to make the game forget," viz., to circumvent its
844 wariness (djibata), certain magical charms are used in connection with the trap. The fence which surrounds it is smeared over with a powder made from a human placenta. A hunter's wife carefully preserves the afterbirth of her child ; she bakes it on the evening of the day of delivery, hides it during the following day, dries it the next evening, puts it between two pieces of a broken pot, and hangs it from the roof. When the father returns from his hunting trip, he makes a powder of it, mixes it with other drugs, and uses it to smear the fence of the trap, also his arrows, or his gun. Should an antelope be wounded by a projectile covered with this drug, it is sure to fall at once! This powerful medicine is called *ndzedzena* and is deemed so important that a hunter's wife who loses the afterbirth must pay a fine of one hoe ; the hunter will try to obtain the placenta of another woman ; it is therefore not necessary that the afterbirth be that of his own wife (Viguet).

224 Game pits are not common in Thongaland ; they were still used
476 some years ago in the South of the Maputju country and in the Hlengwe territory, but I never came across any myself. At a more remote period they were employed for the most profitable collective hunting the Thongas ever attempted. All the members of the clan were summoned ; they built a strong fence as much as two kilometers in length, leaving about ten openings at equal distances ; at each of these gates was dug a game pit. In the afternoon the men assembled and prepared torches which they lighted in the evening ; and with loud shouts they chased the game

towards the fence into the pits. My informant asserts that the 224
result was sometimes marvellous ; the pits were soon full and the 476
animals coming behind ran over their comrades and escaped ; the men followed closely and stabbed the antelopes in the neck. But this of course meant the wholesale destruction of game. Happily a stop has been put to this kind of hunting.

Nowadays Natives use *iron traps* which they buy in the European 224
stores, some of which are quite sufficiently strong to catch a duiker 824
or a wild pig. They smear them with another charm, the *butiba*, a kind of brownish moss growing on the roots of a tree called shivumbunkanye. It also is said to have the power of "making the game forget."

I have described some other traps when dealing with boys' games.

Everybody was allowed to hunt in the good old times when the 224
White authorities had not yet introduced so many restrictive 554
regulations. Ordinary hunters are called bahloti or bazingeli 791
(Zulu term). But there were others who had made a kind of trade of hunting, regular, professional hunters, who were called *phisa* (pl. maphisa). They were not satisfied to kill an occasional antelope near their village, but they undertook big expeditions to the great deserts of the Hlengwe country where game was plentiful and where the most precious of all, i. e., elephants, abounded. It cannot be said that the maphisa formed a definite class in the tribe like the bone-throwers, for instance. I never heard of a true initiation taking place prior to their becoming maphisa. Yet they were known and recognized as a kind of superior caste and were very proud of their name of maphisa. They claimed a special power over big game owing to the mysterious rites which they practised; thus they partook more or less of the nature of magicians. I have come across some of them and heard marvellous stories about others. Old Madyashikulu of the Nhlongo clan, whom I met in the Ntimane country, near Antioka, boasted that he could pick out an elephant in a herd and force it to come and fall down at the foot of the tree up which he had climbed. He had then only to stab it from his retreat, and kill it ; after which he came down from the tree to

224 554 791 dance over the carcase of his victim! Another was Mubandane, a relation of Mboza, who lived in Nondwana. As is customary with many Natives of the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques, he hunted elephants for a Portuguese trader, named Fonseca, who provided him with guns and powder. When ready to undertake his hunting trip to the north of Gazaland (Mosapa), he had to undergo a purification (hlambo). His medicine-man cooked a pot full of his drugs, washed him with the froth and poured the contents of the pot on the roof, over the entrance of the hunter's hut. Mubandane had then to stoop and enter his hut, the water leaking through the grass and falling on his shoulders. These words were pronounced by the medicine-man, during this ritual entry into the hut: "Go and be happy! Though the rain fall on you, though the dew make you wet, when you sleep, you will be everywhere as in a hut; everywhere it will be like home (kaya). You will have taken your hut with you, you will enter it in a wet state!"

224 784 Other maphisa were the hippopotamus hunters settled on the banks of the Nkomati river, whose customs I shall describe later on.

In connection with their *hunting trips*, these professional hunters are subject to many taboos. As we have just seen, they must undergo a purification before starting, and also be inoculated in the wrists with special drugs, the most important being those of the tintebe (I. p. 479) the same which are used by the slayers of enemies in battle. Another favourite medicine for hunters is made from the piece of meat which is found between the heart and the lungs of big animals. In some cases they have to prepare themselves for their expedition by daily ablutions and by absolute continence for a certain number of days. The sacrifice of a fowl is also sometimes made before starting. It is taboo for adults to eat the meat of this fowl; it might endanger the success of the expedition. Little children may eat it: "they are quiet" (i. e. they have no sexual relations), and so the hunting will not be spoilt. When all these preparations are finished, the hunters start with their rattles, singing special songs, the songs of the hunters (Part V).

The trip itself may last for months, and constitutes a kind of

marginal period during which the maphisa must use protective 224
medicines against the dangers of the bush, and keep certain rules. 784

As a protection they carry their charms, especially the *ndjao*, the root of a certain juncus which is used on many other occasions. As regards the taboos which they must observe, I will first mention those applying to travellers in general, especially the *salt taboo* (I. p. 339). Should they take salt with them, this would "precede them" (rangela), and they would kill no game. It will be soon enough to look for salt when they have killed. But the great 224
taboo of these hunting trips is the *sexual taboo*. This was already 784
imposed before starting and it must be observed Phroughout the 834
expedition. The necessity of avoiding anything connected with 825
sexual relations is so great that maphisa will take with them to cook their food little boys under marriageable age. What is the reason of this prohibition? I have explained it in dealing with the Thonga idea of sexual relations (I. p. 189). If the hunters transgress the law, the big animals will be so wild that it will be impossible to approach them ; they will furiously attack the men who have sinned, because they know them, and woe upon them! So much so that if the hunters see an elephant or a hippopotamus in obstinate pursuit of one of their number, they will begin to insult him for having spoilt the whole trip by his misbehaviour, and send him home.

The law of continence is also binding on *the hunters' wives* at 224
home. It is true that when the absence of their husbands is 784
prolonged for a very long time they may become unfaithful to 837
them and the men, on their return, will find babies waiting for
them which are not their true children. This will cause them no 851
unhappiness, as these babies none the less belong to them, their 752
wives having been duly bought, and the time for fear is now passed, as they have returned home safely. The fact that these men welcome the children born during their absence caused me to think that hunters' wives were not subject to the sexual taboo as their husbands are. But further inquiry has shown that this is not true. Old Makhani assured me that incontinence on the part of the wife at home would have as a consequence that the husband would be attacked and killed by wild beasts far away in the desert.

224 784 These women must moreover observe certain rules in their everyday life. They must smear the floor of their huts only early in the morning or late in the evening, viz. at that time of day when their husbands are not busy hunting ; then all will go well with them. Thus the behaviour of the wife has its effect on her husband's fate. Sometimes she will take a plate, fill it with attractive food, call her children and distribute it to them in order that the husband, when passing through the villages in the far-distant country may be well treated by the inhabitants of the land. Should a death occur in the hunter's village during his absence, it is very dangerous for him! It was for this reason that Makhani was attacked by a buffalo which injured his skull! Those at home must expose themselves to vapour baths (mahungulo, I. p. 145) in the early morning and late in the evening, as in the case of smearing the hut.

The aim of these practices is in the first place to protect the hunter against the fury of wild animals ; but it is also to make him a man of the bush through and through. Mboza said : "The hunter must forget everything about home. Were he to have relations with women, his charms would get heated, whilst they must remain cool (titimeta). He must himself become a man of the bush (wa nhoba), similar to the animals which are found there. In this way, they will not fear him, nor will he fear them. If he sees a lion devouring an antelope, he will dare to approach it, kneel before it, clasp his hands and say : 'You, lion! give me some meat, that I may eat ; I am hungry!' The lion goes slowly away and leaves the antelope to him!" When they have killed enough game, the maphisa cut the meat into strips, which they take home. When they return they stop at the main entrance of the village. The headman comes to them, greets them and offers a hen in sacrifice on their behalf, to thank his ancestor-gods for having saved them from death. Should one of them have died during the journey, they fire a volley on arrival and are not allowed to enter before having undergone the purification rites.

Hunters must not give meat to eat to people "who are bad" (la'ba bihiki), i. e. to their wife just after a birth, to women during

menstruation, to persons in a state of defilement. This would 224
"spoil their gun." When they go to attend the burial of a relative, 784
they fire a shot upon reaching the mortuary village. Thus the ball which was in the gun at the time of the relative's death will be expelled; was it not contaminated? Moreover the hunter will wash his gun; without these precautions the weapon would not kill anything in future.

These maphisa are very jealous of each other. Some of them 224
try to destroy the power of a rival by securing a part of an animal 789
killed by him; they subject the meat to a treatment which was not explained to me; they then bury for instance a bone thus smeared; after which they are convinced that their rival will no longer be able to dispute game with them. Therefore when a hunter distributes meat to other people, he keeps for himself a little piece of each limb in order to prevent a possible enemy from "going away with his meat."

Let me now pass in review the *more important kinds of big game,* 224
and I will reproduce as literally as possible the information gathered from Thongas of all parts of the country with regard to each of them. Some of my readers, upon reading these extraordinary statements, will no doubt exclaim: "What does all this mean? Are these actual facts or pure imagination or folklore?" All three elements are certainly represented in these stories, but I think it would be useless to take much trouble to distinguish between the three. My endeavour is not to produce a scientific zoological treatise but to find in these accounts a means of penetrating more deeply into Bantu mentality; and there is no doubt that the study of hunting rites has a great deal to teach us on this subject.

The *eland* (*mhofu,* Oreas canna) is a splendid beast, highly 224
coveted but dangerous to kill. Viguet says: "It possesses the 825
nuru. When you kill it, it is taboo to walk round its body. Go straight to its head, and there, in the hair of the forehead, you will find a louse; take it. Then dig in the earth where the head has fallen: you will find a root tehre; cut it off and bring it home together with the louse. Then you are safe!" (—Other people add: "Remove its eye before cutting it open, if you wish to escape the

224 danger of nuru.")— "Having reached home, you ask the medicine-
825 man to prepare a charm with the root and the louse : he will *lurulula* you, viz., free you from the *nuru*. Should you omit this treatment you may lose your senses, be unable to find the way home or, when you are back, you may forget everything about your hunting trip. People will say to you : 'U ni nyanyunyu', — 'you are cracked' ; you act as if you had killed an eland and had not been *lurulula*, delivered from its nuru!"

Hunters assert that there is not the slightest doubt about the presence of this root into which the nuru has entered. Even if no tree grows near the spot where the eland has fallen, the root will still be there and the hunter will find it, at least if it is really he who killed the animal. Should another hunter falsely pretend to have killed it and try to claim it, he will never find the root, even if he should dig all over the ground for ten days!

Another rule in connection with the eland is this ; should one of these animals have been killed whilst you were bringing your wife home, you must cut off a piece of its skin and make a bracelet of it, which you tie round your wrist. Then you can eat your meal with your wife. To-morrow go with her to an ant-hill and fix this piece of skin to it with two wooden pegs, one on either side. In the middle between the two pegs, set fire to the skin by means of a burning brand. You are then saved. You have *lurulula* yourselves. If you do not take this precaution, your child will be miserable : it will dry up, viz., be so thin that all its tendons will become visible. — Never let your children eat eland's meat until they have been inoculated with a preventive drug! The danger associated with the eland for the hunter's family is so great that people say : "Married people ought to abstain from killing it and leave it to bachelors." In fact everything connected with this beast is dangerous. When you follow its tracks, if you see that it is tired and that saliva has fallen from its mouth, take care not to tread on it. It is taboo : you will be seized by an irresistible sleep. The reason of these dangers is that the eland has a pouch of fat round its heart called *bufu* (same root as mhofu, the name of the eland). This fat, to which I have already alluded, is a very remarkable substance! Hence all these rules!

On the other hand, should an eland be found dead, transfixed, no nuru need be feared. 224 825

We have already met with the *ndakazi antelope* taboos. Amongst the Nkunas (I. p. 366) this ndakazi, or shidyanaman, must not be killed intentionally lest the hunter and his whole family should shortly die. We have seen how the danger can be avoided when the antelope has been unintentionally killed. The hunter must place his head between his hands, as if in despair, and shout : "Ho! mamana! ndji ta dya na man" i. e. "Alack! my mother! With whom shall I eat it?" By this cry the nuru can be overcome and the possession of the meat assured. Otherwise if a hunter neglects this precaution and comes home with the tail to summon people to help him to carry the eland's meat, they will find that the body of the animal has disappeared.

Clever hunters know a second way of attaining the same end ; it is to dig in the soil near the nose (the same as in the case of the eland) and cut off the root you find there : "This root has received the nuru of the animal. When you have finished cutting off the limbs of the ndakazi, you dispose of the dung (psanyi) found in the bowels, handling it with this root. In former times hunters used to throw the limbs in all directions : this would 'spread' (hangalasa) the nuru" (Mankhelu). Amongst the Hlabis, the ndakazi is called *hingakaya*, viz., closing the way home. It is not taboo to kill it, but the hunter must shout, when throwing the assagai : "Kaya! Mawako!" i. e. "May I return home!" If the antelope is swifter than the man and runs away (with a sound like kha!) the hunter will be lost in the bush : the animal will have *hinga kaya* viz., closed the way home. It will be necessary to *lurulula* the hunter, whether he has killed the antelope or not.

A third big antelope concerning which tales abound is the *kodoe* (*gantla*, Strepsiceros kudu), which is not uncommon in the Maputju country where I gathered the following information. The man who told me these stories, Movumbi, had a great admiration for the kodoe, whom he called the elephant's brother ; he said that the old males had between their horns a green snake which dwells there and warns them when there is any danger threatening them. This snake is their shikwembu (protective

224 genius ?) It is taboo to kill one of these old males : the hunter
825 who committed this fault would never kill another kodoe. It is taboo also to kill a young one first ; one must begin with a female ; later on the hunter may try for a male. He must not, however, kill it at once but only wound it ; the kodoe must not fall on the spot ; it must run away and the hunter must follow it for a long time, perhaps two days : "two days, it is all right." Should he find it resting on the ground, he must not shoot it in that position, but whistle in order to make it stand up; then only he may shoot. The nuru of the kodoe enters a root, as in the case of the eland and the ndakazi. The protective medicine prepared from this root, powdered and mixed with fat, is employed as an ointment beneath the eyes, and behind the ears and the knees in order to "strengthen the bones." This is the lurulula rite in the case of the kodoe. There is also a *luma*, rite of the first mouthful (see later on). It is performed by eating ritually a piece of the muscle which lies between the heart and the lungs, and which is the chief hunters' medicine (p. 60).

There do not seem to be any special laws in regard to the other antelopes except the *duiker* (*mhunti* Cephalophus grimmi). The first duiker killed by a hunter must not be eaten by him ; it must be left for his parents. Should he transgress this rule, "his heart would be disgusted" and he would lose any further interest in hunting. When a duiker falls first into a game pit it is necessary to "blow over it" (huhutela) ; if this precaution is neglected, the pit will not catch anything in future. According to Madyashikulu the operation is performed as follows. The hunter chews a little of the magic root of the kind of juncus called *ndjao* which, as we have already stated, plays a great part in Thonga ritual, and blows pieces of it over the duiker all round its body on both sides, ending with the head ; the aim of the operation would seem to be in some way to collect the nuru which is distributed over the whole body, and to convey it into the head in order to let it come out through the nostrils. If the rite is properly accomplished the game pit will succeed in catching any number of buffaloes, gnus, antelopes, etc., whilst if the precaution is neglected no other animal will be obtained henceforth. In this case the "huhutela" is performed

not so much to prevent an attack of insanity as to guarantee further 224
success in hunting. Should the hunter have killed a duiker after 825
a long pursuit, the dog which started the chase must also be lurulula. The hunter cuts off one of the hoofs of the duiker, makes a notch in the cleft of the hoof and blows the ndjao into it : then he buries the hoof, calls the dog and shows it the place where it has been buried. The dog will then scratch, find the hoof and run away with it. This lurulula will help both the hunter and the dog to become greater adepts in hunting, the dog learning to follow the trail and the hunter identifying himself so much with bush life and bush animals that these will not be afraid of him and he will be able to approach them.

We now pass to the three largest animals of the country, those which could hardly be killed except by the collaboration of a considerable body of men ; they are also the three beasts which are "climbed" i. e. on the carcase of which the hunter climbs to perform the lurulula rite; these are the hippopotamus, the elephant and the rhinoceros.

There are a certain number of herds of *hippopotami* (mpfubu) in the lower part of the Nkomati river, from the Khosen country down to the sea. Natives have noticed that these herds consist of eight to ten females with a single male. When a female is just about to give birth to a young one she emigrates to some lonely creek ; if the young one is a female, she returns with it to the herd ; if it is a male, she leaves it in the creek and joins the herd alone, but comes every day to feed her offspring. Should she take it to the herd at once, the old male would kill it immediately, as the master of a herd is terribly jealous and tolerates no other male near him. The young male grows alone ; when he feels himself strong enough to attempt the venture, he goes to the herd and engages his father in battle ; he will probably be chased away, mauled, half killed ; but he will come again the following years till he succeeds in overcoming the old bull, who will in his turn fly with one of his old faithful females and found a new herd, or perhaps die miserably. These herds always keep to the same region. When a canoe passes through these dangerous spots, the backs of the hippopotami are seen from far off emerging from the

224 825 water, and Natives point to them saying: "The mapseko!" *Pseko* is the name given to old pots employed in connection with the cooking operations (to cook, ku pseka); they are turned upside down in the fire-place and the pots containing the food are placed on top of them. The backs of the hippopotami are like these inverted old black pots and that is why these animals are called after them. It would be dangerous to call them by their own name; they might become angry if they knew that they had been noticed...

224 789 I owe to Mboza a graphic description of the rules of hippopotamus hunting. There are a few villages, near the Nkomati or other rivers, whose inhabitants are regular hippopotamus hunters, and possess the special science, or art, called *butimba*; the hunters themselves are called *batimba*. This science is hereditary: it is taught by the father to his sons. These men possess a peculiar drug, the *mbangulwa*; when the hunter is inoculated with this, he acquires a special power over the hippopotami: should he wound one of them, the beast will not be able to go very far, and it will be possible to follow it and quickly find it. But this inoculation makes the man very dangerous to his fellows: should he beat any one, that person will be at once seized by a disease which will prevent his passing water or stools.

224 835 This is the manner in which these batimba hunt. During the day, the hunter fishes, watching the movements of the hippopotami all the time. When he sees that the propitious moment has come and is ready to undertake hunting operations lasting a month, he first calls his own daughter to his hut and has sexual relations with her. This incestuous act, which is strongly taboo in ordinary life, has made him into a "murderer": he has killed something at home; he has acquired the courage necessary for doing great deeds on the river! Henceforth he will have no sexual relations with his wives during the whole campaign.

224 [789] Before starting he calls his principal wife, the one to whose care the butimba magic drug is committed, and both expose their bodies to the smoke of a medicinal pill. On the same night,

immediately after these acts, he sets off with his sons ; they close 224
the drift where the beasts leave the river by placing a canoe across the track. The hippopotami are in the neighbouring forest, busy feeding, and perhaps ravaging the fields. When they return to the river, they stop in front of the canoe which obstructs their retreat : the first assagai is then thrown at them. It has been smeared over with the Strophantus powder. The animal rushes into the water ; when it reappears on the other side, it is pierced by a second assagai. These assagais are arranged in such a way that the blade, which is provided with hooks at the sides, is not firmly fixed to the handle ; moreover a long string is twined round the handle connecting it with the blade. So, when the hippopotamus enters the river, the assagai which is planted in its skin is separated from the handle, which remains floating and acts as a buoy ; the string unwinds and the handle follows the animal as it retreats, showing in which direction it has gone.

As soon as the assagai is thrown, somebody runs to the hunter's 224
village to inform his wife. The woman must at once shut herself 784
up in the hut and remain perfectly quiet. She lights a fire and 789
keeps it burning the whole time. A little child brings her her pipe
(old Ronga women are great pipe smokers). She must neither [276]
eat nor drink ; or, if she is very thirsty, the child will bring her some water. In any case she must not crush her mealies; she must not go out of the hut except to satisfy her natural wants. Why ? Because if she were to move to and fro in the village, this would induce the hippopotamus to rush wildly upon her husband and possibly kill him. Moreover the fact that she remains confined within the circular walls of the hut will have as a consequence that the wild beast will be in some sort imprisoned in a small space ; it will not be able to run far away and escape.

We find here a characteristic instance of the two kinds of magic which we shall explain later on : the communionist magic according to which the different parts of a whole act and react on each other (the great wife, whose life is in close connection with her husband's life, saves him by her quiet demeanour) and the imitative magic according to which like acts on like or produces like (the confinement of the woman within the

224 walls of the hut prevents the hippopotamus from escaping from the
784 circle formed by the canoes on the river. (Si[illegible] customs are found
789 amongst many primitive peoples. See Part VI. Ch. I.)

224 Then all the hunters of the village are called ; they enter the canoe and follow the beast. To facilitate the pursuit, they replace the floating handle of the assagai by a *male*, viz., the big nervule of the leaf of the mimale palm tree, resembling a pole of 30 feet in length. As soon as this species of pole is fixed, somebody informs the woman at home that she can come out of the hut. But let her be prudent, as victory is not yet won. The hippopotamus will come to the surface to breathe : an assagai will be thrown into its nostrils and later a second ; it will be no longer able to close its nose when plunging and will be drowned. But it may attack the hunters furiously, instigated by the spirits of baloyi (wizards) which are riding on it "just as men ride on a horse!" The fight will perhaps last a long time!

When the hippopotamus has at last been killed, songs of rejoicing burst out on all sides ; the hunters bring their canoes together and row in the direction of the village, singing the whole time special songs which are called *nyangamela*. The peculiar cries of the women are heard on the hill, their "mikulungwana." They come to the shore to meet the men. The great wife, having now been entirely set free, comes dancing and singing. The carcase is left on the sand till low tide (the tide is perceptible for a long distance in the Lower Nkomati river). Then all the hunters assemble to proceed to the two great hunters' rites, the lurulula and the luma.

First the *lurulula*. I have obtained a more precise description of this rite from two new informants. The beast is laid on its back, and its forelegs are pulled out on both sides, so as to separate them from each other. The hunter who has killed the beast takes his *ndjao* root, chews it, together with the butimba medicine, blows pieces of it into his hands, closes his eyes and introduces himself, creeping on his belly, between the forelegs ; he then creeps along the side of the hippopotamus, anointing it with the medicine which is in his hands. When he reaches the hindleg, he squeezes it with both hands, does the same to the other hindleg, creeps

along the other side and at last reaches the head, muttering the following words : "A ti fe! A ti bole" i. e. "Let them die! Let them rot." Then he prays to his ancestor-gods, asking them to give him many more such beasts. He opens his eyes, and this is the end of the ceremony. 224

As a rule two persons must perform the lurulula rite, first the hunter who has killed the hippopotamus and after him the headman of the batimba village.

The lurulula is the great hunters' rite. There is, however, a second rite to be performed before they can enjoy the flesh of their victim, the *luma*. The luma is the removal of a food taboo by a rite which must accompany the first mouthful taken. It is obligatory for the first fruits, for the food left by a deceased person, etc. (I. p. 146, 394.) This precaution is also necessary in the case of game. The hunter who transfixed the hippopotamus is the first to luma. He takes the diaphragm of the animal (mapfalo), and puts a piece of it into his mouth ; he then plunges into the river, and eats this meat while under water, "as if he were a fish." Having accomplished this feat, he emerges triumphant. His sons and the inmates of his village *luma* after him. They take a portion of the flesh of the neck, called shipelo, from that part of the hippopotamus which pushes the mud in front of it, and which is supposed to be the seat of its strength. This they mix with the mbangulwa medicine and, standing in a line, they all eat a little of it, men, women, and children. All the neighbours assemble : they have smelled out the meat! The portion for the chief is put aside (I. p. 406), as the hippopotamus is very heavily taxed, and must even be cut open by the men of the capital. Then every one receives a piece of the flesh, and luma, either by smearing the sole of the foot with it, or by taking a small live ember and mixing it with the meat. The object of the luma rite is to remove the danger of eating meat to which you are not accustomed : it might "hate you (benga)" and cause colic. The taboo is not very strict, as there is only danger of colic and not of death. (Luma is necessary for elephants, when eating the meat for the first time, but not for lions or panthers. For elephants it is performed by smearing the soles of the feet with the meat.) 224 262

825 791 The reader must certainly have noticed the curious connection established by Mboza between hippopotami and wizards. As we shall see when studying the witchcraft theory, wizards are supposed to have the power of *sending* wild animals to kill their victims. Here the idea is somewhat different. In the three stories which I have collected and of which I give a literal translation, the wizards have become the masters of the hippopotami and ride upon them during the night : they are the maleficent agents who induce these animals to play havoc in the gardens of the people. Two of the stories are supposed to have taken place in the Khosen country, the other lower down on the river, at a spot called Shihahlu. Let us begin with this one.

825 791 539 *First story.* "The wizards put a bit into the mouth of the hippopotamus and climb upon it. You cannot get the animal unless you first get its master. The 'phisa' knows the wizard because he possesses drugs more powerful than those of the wizard. At Shihahlu there was a hippopotamus which ventured to come out of the river even in daylight; it came on to the road and frightened the women passing there who had gone to buy food on account of the famine. They threw away their baskets in fear. The beast used also to go and plunder the fields. The chiefs called a very clever hunter and showed him where the hippopotamus used to come out of the river. This man, who was from Sihhahlu, swallowed his medicine and put on a great many amulets (timfisa) made of varan skin; he also took his tail, the tail of a young hippopotamus, went during the night to that spot and saw the beast; there was fire on its back; this fire belongs to the wizard. (Where do these lights come from? I do not know. Perhaps it is the work of the Devil!) The hunter returned home. Another day he went again and heard a noise in the water; the hippopotamus came out of the river and the hunter saw rings round its ears and bracelets round its legs. He shot it and it died. Then he went to tell the chiefs. They came, and sure enough they found four bracelets on each leg and six rings on each ear. I saw them myself. It had put on all its ornaments; but it was very thin because it was made to work hard for its master. We went to eat the meat of the hippopotamus which was thus adorned (longile)... During the night cries of mourning were heard on the Lombye rivulet. It was the masters of the hippopotamus who were mourning over it, and the next morning we found pieces of the blue cotton print which

is used by mourners hanging on the reeds where the hippopotamus had been cut open. These people had put them there to mourn their hippopotamus. As regards the hunter, he was given a reward of £ 6." 825 539 791

Second story. "A phisa called Shitjobeke from Matlotlo was called and shown where the hippopotamus used to emerge from the river. He went there during the night and saw its master on its back. He told him : 'So it is your hippopotamus which ravages the gardens. Hold it firm! I am going to kill it.' The wizard answered : 'I beseech you, Khosa, do not kill it ; I will not come any more to spoil the mealies!' The hunter let him go and went away. Next evening the animal came out again, its master on its back. The hunter possessed a drug by which he could kindle the lights on the back of the hippopotamus. He saw the wizard and said : 'My friend, now hold it fast. I am firing! If you do not hold it I will kill you.' He fired and the master went away. The hunter remained on the spot fearing that the wizard might come back and ressuscitate it. Next day he told the chiefs to come and cut it open. He performed the lurulula ; he blew his ndjao over the legs, the belly, the chest, and the ears ; then they turned the beast over on the other side, and he did the same thing. They cut off the tail and gave it to him : the hunter uses this as a medicine ; he will mix it with other drugs and this will help him against the wizards ; they will no longer be able to come to him during the night and make him dream of hippopotami ; it will also give him the power of killing other hippopotami. Then they cooked the meat of the chest, which is a tit-bit. The divinatory bones showed who was to roast it and eat the first mouthful and then distribute their portions to the others. The bones often say also : 'If it is the meat of a male hippopotamus do not eat it in the village, eat it at such and such a place..." [789]

Third story. "There was another hunter, Mundjindji, of the Nyoka clan. His father had been killed by Heaven (lightning), because he possessed charms which he had got from the Ba-Sutho. This man used to dig up the corpses of the dead ; he dissected the skin of their foreheads and killed, (with the drugs thus obtained,) the boys who came back from the mines (magaisa). The Commandant (Portuguese Administrator) arrested him, and he was imprisoned in Lourenço Marques. He said : 'They are telling lies about me,' and he was released. However he killed some more people and was imprisoned for one month. Even now he is still doing it. He is a 'phisa.' They called him in to get rid of a hippopotamus which was annoying them. It was the Commandant who called him. He went to hunt it. For many

539 days he did not see it, but one day, at sunset, he took his canoe and
791 went on to the river. He took a red piece of cotton ; this was reflected
825 at the bottom of the river. The hippopotamus saw it there and came up to see what was the matter. The hunter fired at it ; he fired a second time. And lo! there on its back was the one who rides upon it! One of the balls pierced him whilst the other pierced the hippopotamus. The animal rushed towards the hunter, but he fired a third time and killed it. Next morning they found the hippopotamus floating on the water, dead. In the village also a man had died during the night, and they were mourning there. The hunter had said to the people : 'I have killed a man who was on the hippopotamus.' And on one side of the river people were eating meat whilst on the other side people were crying. But they did not lodge a complaint against him ; no action can be taken in such a case."

224 As regards *the elephant (ndlopfu)* it was the favourite object of
777 the chase, because killing one of these large beasts meant not only abundance of meat but also wealth on account of the ivory. Madyashikulu used to bring the tusks to Manukosi (Gungunyana's grandfather) who returned some of them to him, and with the money thus obtained the hunter could buy a wife. There are different systems of lurulula in the case of the elephant. The hunter takes a little of the tintebe powder (the charm of the slayers) pierces the eye of the beast, mixes the vitreum with the powder, adds drugs prepared from the end of the trunk and the tail and uses this mixture to overcome the nuru. A phisa of the Maputju country employed another method. He cut a piece of meat from the foreleg, cooked it, anointed it with powder from the calabash of the slayers, chewed it and began to blow it over the animal after having "climbed it." He then crept over the elephant in the same way as described above in the case of the hippopotamus, holding his gun in his hand the whole time. His comrades used to anoint him with a white medicine round both eyes. When he had returned home the treatment was continued by the administration of two vapour baths (mahungulo). He had to expose his body to the steam produced first by a decoction of various twigs, secondly by another decoction prepared from medicinal roots mixed with pieces of meat taken from a goat and from the elephant

itself. Afterwards he had to drink the broth and eat the meat. 224
The aim of the treatment was to enable him to kill more elephants. 777
In the case of the elephant as well as of the hippopotamus the chief 643
of the country has to perform the lurulula as well as the hunter "because he is the chief of all the animals of the country and he would be unable to govern it successfully if he did not do this."

The *rhinoceros (shibetshana)* is not common in Thongaland ; a 224
few of these animals are found in the extreme south of the Maputju 825
country. The same rules were observed when the hunters had succeeded in killing one ; but this is no easy task because, as Muvumbi said, the rhinoceros is terribly wild, as it has no "mapfalo." The mapfalo is a piece of cartilage which is found in all animals between the ribs, beneath the sternum ; it is the diaphragm ; it is also the seat of fear or of the conscience. It is this particular cartilage which throbs in the case of great fear. The rhinoceros has no mapfalo ; therefore it fears nothing and rushes savagely upon the hunter. Its meat is so delicious that when a man has tasted it he no longer wishes to drink water!

I never heard mention of the lurulula in connection with the 224
lion (*nghala* (Djo.), *ndjau* (Ro.). To avoid being mauled by lions 782
the hunters put into their mouths a little of every kind of food 825
mixed with their powerful drugs and spit it out to the four winds in order to appease the ancestor-gods of the country. Then if they meet with a lion, the wild beast, instead of rushing upon them, will look at them quietly, its saliva dropping from its mouth, and will do them no harm.

Strange to say the *buffalo* (nyari) has no nuru, and when I asked 825
why this was, my Maputju informant told me : "The buffalo is an ox." This answer may perhaps help us to understand something more about the nuru idea.

The statement regarding the *zebra* (mhangwa) is more curious still. "Mhangwa a yi lubiwi! Yi ni mabala ; i nala ; a yi ngeni hosin" viz. "No tax is paid for the zebra ; it is an animal with many colours (stripes) ; it is an enemy ; it must not enter the village of the chief." We have met with the same prohibition in connection with the village of the parents-in-law (I. p. 250).

As regards the *crocodile (ngwenya)* also called *shiwutlani-*

825 *mintjeko*, the one who seizes even the calabashes (he is not satisfied with seizing the woman who goes to the river to draw water, but takes her calabashes also), I heard of a medicine-man in the Rikotjo country who knew the manner of blowing over it (huhutela). There are a number of stories told of crocodiles, for instance the story of a man who was caught by one of these terrible saurians and dragged into a creek where the crocodile intended to eat him later on. The half-dead man came to his senses, saw the sky through the dense reeds in which he had been left by his captor and eventually managed to escape!

There is still a great deal of picturesque Bantu lore to be gathered by listening to hunters telling their stories round the fire when travelling with them through the desert. I will add only two in connection with two smaller animals.

224 The *honey-eater, shinwabulombane* (Mellivora ratel) is a kind of
825 badger which lives on wild honey. It is said to proceed in the following way. It collects the honey from the hollow trunk where the bees have built their hive and takes it to a little distance. Should you have noticed it preparing its store, do not take the honey at once, but wait till it has finished its work. Then attack it ; this is however very dangerous, because the honey-eater has a special method of defending itself ; it rushes upon its enemy and tries to seize his testicles and tear them out with its claws. The honey-eater does not fear to attack even buffaloes by creeping under their body and serving them in this evil fashion ; afterwards it carefully buries the testicles... The hunter takes a branch of a very hard and thorny mimosa (the nkaya), and so keeps the animal at a distance and pierces it with his assagai. But the honey-eater has the faculty of swelling up and hardening its skin so much that it is very difficult to thrust an assagai through it. When the hunter has succeeded in killing it, the skin must go to the chief.

224 The *ant-eater (mpandana or sambane)* digs large holes in the ground. This is the method used by hunters to kill it. They send their dog into the hole, which is horizontal. The animal is inside, sleeping behind a protective wall of earth ; the dog pierces this wall and attacks it in its retreat. In the mean time the hunter digs a hole from above, some distance in front of the spot where

the ant-eater was sleeping. Attacked by the dog, the sambana 224
begins to burrow deeper into the earth; it reaches the spot where the hunter has dug his hole and tries to escape through this; but seeing that a man is waiting for it there, it suddenly turns back and returns to the opening of its burrow, where it is easily killed, notwithstanding the hard scales which cover its body.

Conclusion on the nuru idea and the lurulula rite.

I once asked old Makhani, the hunter who had suffered from an 775
attack of insanity because he had slain an enemy: "What is the nuru?" He burst out laughing, and this was the only answer I could get from him. I suppose an uneducated peasant of any European country would do the same if he were abruptly asked: "What is the soul?" An ethnologist, however, cannot rest satisfied with this avowal of ignorance or this utter want of interest. He must try to find an explanation, and some sort of an explanation is always likely to be found when we are dealing with beliefs which are not purely individual but which belong to a community.

The *nuru* (pl. miluru)—to sum up all the above accounts (see also I. 769
p. 478)—is a peculiar power possessed by man and by several wild 775
animals in virtue of which they avenge themselves on the person who 783
has killed them. This power resides in their body and appears to pass 825
out of it through their nostrils with their last breath. The fact of having killed a person or an animal *possessing the nuru* places the slayer in a state of dangerous contamination. It would sometimes appear as if the nuru had entered into him and remained sleeping in him, ready to awake in certain circumstances (I. p. 400). The danger connected with the nuru must be overcome by a special treatment; if this is not done, the nuru will cause an attack of madness and may even do great harm to the family of the slayer or hunter.

Let us try to go a step further in our analysis by putting the following 769
question: What is the relation between the *nuru* and the *shikwembu*, 775
first in relation to man, and secondly, as regards animals?

As regards man, we know that, for the Bantus, every human being at his death turns into a *shikwembu* and becomes an ancestor-god for his descendants and a hostile spirit as regards his former enemies. The shikwembu, roughly speaking, is the ghost of a deceased person. This

769 notion is clearly animistic. The shikwembu, as we shall see in the
775 VIth. Part, is a personal spirit to which prayers are addressed and offerings presented. The *nuru* is not personal. It is a power, an influence, a force of Nature. This is not a distinctly animistic idea. It belongs rather to the domain of Dynamism (See Part VI, Chapter I). Moreover any deceased person becomes a shikwembu, whilst the term nuru is used only in the case of a slain enemy, or in relation to strangers who died in a foreign country and were not properly buried. It is consequently clear that these two words nuru and shikwembu have not the same meaning ; they cannot be employed one for the other.

On the other hand there is a resemblance between the two ideas. Thongas believe that any shikwembu of a hostile tribe, and not only the shikwembu of an enemy slain in battle, can take possession of a man of their tribe and cause a disease very similar to that of the nuru at the outset (although it develops into something very different later on). This disease is a possession in the full sense of the word, and must be treated by exorcism, as we shall see in the Chapter on Possessions. Thus it is also clear that there is a similarity between the action of the nuru and of a hostile shikwembu. In the story told concerning slayers (I. p. 481, Note) we met with a typical case of nuru, ending in a sacrifice offered to the slain enemy. Undoubtedly the two ideas are connected, though not identical.

775 As regards wild beasts, the question does not arise, at least amongst
825 the Thongas. Despite the green snake found between the horns of the Kodoe, which my Maputju informant called its shikwembu, animals do not turn into shikwembu. They have only the nuru.

It would be interesting to know what the ideas of other Bantu tribes on the subject are, and I would urge students of African anthropology to inquire if the root *luru* exists in other Bantu languages and what its significance is. In his book on the *Ila-speaking people*, the Rev. Ed. W. Smith does not mention the exact corresponding term ; but he describes hunting rites which bear a close analogy to those we have met amongst the Thongas. I may mention specially the two following facts (Compare his Vol. I, p. 167 and II, p. 136). 1) When a hunter has killed an elephant and has "climbed" its body, a prayer is addressed to Leza, the Supreme Being, to the ancestral spirits (mizhimo) and to the ghost (muzhimo) of the deceased elephant. These are the words of this last prayer : "O spirit, have you no brothers and fathers who will come to be killed? Go and fetch them!" Here we meet with a tribe

which definitely believes that the animal becomes a shikwembu 775
(muzhimu). 2) When a person commits a murder, the ghost of the 825
deceased takes possession of the murderer, at least temporarily. Possession, amongst the Ba-Ila, is thus directly connected with murder. So far for the Ba-Ila. It is to be hoped that information as to other tribes will throw further light on the problem of the relation between nuru and ghost.

Considering the question only as it involves the Thongas I come 775
to the following provisional conclusion: The nuru idea is no doubt 783
very ancient, dating perhaps from a time when Animism was not 825
yet clearly distinguished from Dynamism, and when man was not even greatly differenciated from the animal. It originated in the instinctive fear which primitive man felt after shedding the blood of his fellow men and of certain particularly redoutable wild animals. This blood must be avenged (Compare the old saying of Genesis IV, 10: The voice of thy brother's blood cries unto me from the ground. The vendetta custom which is so wide-spread is a further consequence of this natural feeling). Hence a peculiar remorse and the conviction that purification is necessary to remove the contamination involved or the malediction incurred. This remorse is absent in the case of domestic animals. For this reason the buffalo has no nuru; as my informant said: "The buffalo is an ox." Why does the shedding of ox-blood cause no fear? Probably because oxen are considered as the lawful property of their owner, who has the right of killing them, whilst the men of another tribe and the animals of the bush do not belong to him.

The *lurulula rite* above all is a *protective* rite aimed at the removal of 224
this dangerous nuru. This is proved etymologically by the fact that 775
this verb is a doubly reversive derivative. It comes from the root *luru* 783
to which is added twice the reversive suffix *ula* which means to remove, 825
to take away (Compare my Shangaan Grammar § 208). The blowing over (huhutela), which is a part of the rite, means the same thing. It is a magical proceeding which is often employed in order to combat hostile spirits or influences. But the lurulula has still another meaning for the professional hunters who so eagerly practise it: It is *a means of identification of the hunter with the animal world*, so that he will be able to live in its midst without being noticed and so kill more game. As my Ronga informant says: "By this operation the hunter takes upon himself the defilement of the animal (its smell, its nature) so that the other hippopotami, when they see him, mistake him for one of themselves; this man will therefore have great courage and will not run away when

224 they come to him," For this reason hunters strongly assert that should
775 he neglect to perform the rite he will have no success in his future
783 hunting expeditions. A third aim, at least in the case of hippopotamus-
825 hunting, is to overcome the charms of the wizards who ride upon them.

When studying these old hunting rites I had the impression of living for some hours in close contact with primitive humanity, at a time when man, owing to the elementary character of the weapons at his disposal, was almost on the same level as the wild beast and was obliged to display an enormous amount of courage, skill and endurance in order to assert his domination over the animal world and to make it serve his purposes. Since the discovery of gun powder and modern weapons a new era has set in for the hunter. Did not old Viguet assert that now, when an elephant is killed by means of a gun, the nuru is no longer to be feared? Hunting has become for the Bantu of to-day an amusing sport, more profitable indeed but by no means so interesting!

II. *Psinyama-nyamana. The flesh of small animals.*

136 This word which comes from the well-known Bantu word
262 nyama, meat, is a triple diminutive, obtained by the reduplication of the stem, the prefix *psi*, and the suffix *ana*. It means all kinds of food derived from animals of small size, of which the Thongas are very fond.

Anything in any way resembling meat is welcome to them. Amongst Mammalia they specially enjoy certain kinds of rodents, not the domestic rats, but field mice called maphephe and mabuti which boys catch in their traps. Civet cats (nsimba, yi-tin) and wild cats (goya, dji-ma) are not frequently seen near the villages.

136 As regards birds, they eat them all with the few exceptions
222 which I shall shortly mention, from the tiniest sparrow to ducks
262 and Guinea fowls, which they manage to snare. They have no aversion to the lower types of animal : they collect the *matomane*, large caterpillars belonging to a species of Saturnidae called Cirina similis (Dist), which are found in families on the nkanye tree, during October. By the exercise of a gentle pressure on the hideous creatures, the inside is squeezed out, and the rest is thrown

into a saucepan and boiled, resulting in an indescribable broth of a 136
blackish colour. To see it is quite sufficient... and they enjoy it! 222
Several other kinds of Saturnidae also figure at their feasts : the 262
matomane of nyamari (Bunaea Caffraria), others of a brick red colour (Melanocera Menippe), those of the nhlangula shrub (Gonimbrasia Zambezina), etc. When the cooks go out to split [372]
the trunks of old half decayed nkanye trees, from which they get their kindling wood, they are most careful to put on one side the big white larvae of two large Cerambycidae coleoptera (Mallodon Downesii and Plocoederus frenatus, etc.). These enormous white worms (shipungu) will be fried in their own fat, and served up as a tit-bit for the ladies on their return to the village.

The insect world does great injury to the gardens through the agency of its winged members, the *locusts*, and Natives avenge themselves by eating them wholesale. When a swarm of these destructive creatures has alighted somewhere in the evening, and is benumbed by the cool air of the night, the villagers go and collect them in bags or baskets in great quantities. The heads, wings and legs are torn off and the bodies roasted on the embers, or boiled and used as seasoning. When plentiful, the locusts are dried and crushed in mortars to make a much appreciated flour. To our taste, locusts are simply nauseating.

Another favourite dish, the secret of which the Nkunas learnt from their Pedi neighbours, is provided by *the winged imagos of white ants*. At Christmas time, these insects emerge by thousands from the ant-hills of that region. Some are of small size ; the boys introduce grasses, smeared with glue, into the holes from which they come and catch a large number of them by this kind of fishing. They eat the head, which can be heard cracking between their teeth, and throw the bodies into a calabash to season the evening meal. But there is a larger kind which is even more appreciated. The body is whitish, as large as an almond. A hole in the ant-hill, three feet wide by two feet deep, is dug at the spot where the insects are most likely to emerge. An old pot is placed in the clay of the ant-hill at the bottom of this hole. The hole itself is covered with green branches. These curious winged termites, as soon as they have emerged from their retreat,

136 try to fly ; but they soon fall to the ground and you see them
222 running towards each other and shedding their slender transparent
262 wings, so that they remain on the spot, like worms, creeping slowly along, unable to defend themselves, an easy prey for the birds and the *shinana* toads, which have a grand feast on the happy day when winged termites appear! Those which happen to emerge where the hole has been dug, try to escape by flying, but are prevented from doing so by the covering of leaves. They at once fall heavily to the bottom and roll into the pot, which may become quite full in a few hours. The owner of the trap then comes and makes a splendid sauce with its contents! This kind of termite is not met with on the Coast.

I cannot enter into details as to all these more or less questionable foods. (See I, p. 65, the mention of the Shitambela beetle.)

262 Although the caterpillars, coleoptera, larvae, and locusts are universally appreciated, there are other "meats" which appeal to certain individuals or clans, but are disdainfully eschewed by others. For instance the boa is eaten with great gusto by the Rongas and disliked by the Nkunas. The same is true of the big varan lizard. The tortoise is generally eaten, but the Mpfumu boys, who esteem themselves more civilised, reject it. On inquiring why some persons or clans exclude certain kinds of meats which other persons or clans consider delectable, we find that there are two different reasons for this, between which it is important to differentiate. The exclusion is due either to a *nyenya*, viz., disgust, or to a *yila*, viz., a taboo.

1) Owing to *disgust*, some people refuse to eat *pork* : "their hearts fear it," probably because pigs are modern and some people are not yet accustomed to eat their flesh. Zulus reject every
262 kind of fish (nhlampfi) from the same feeling of disgust. Snails
777 are despised by all the Thongas ; it is true that the snail of the
825 country (Natica Wesseliana) is not very tempting, its shell being of a transparent green and its flesh reddish ; moreover it is said to "singita," viz., to bring bad luck to any one meeting with it on the way.

262 But the flesh of some other animals is abstained from, even
825 dreaded, because they *yila*, they are taboo. Thongas have no

totems, and do not exclude certain meats from their diet on account of totemic fears. But they proclaim as taboo some animals: amongst them four kinds of birds, the hawk, the vulture, the crow and the stork, because they are used by magicians to prepare powerful charms; the toad, because when teased its "urine" (murundju) oozes out and is dangerous, causing itch, as is generally believed; a kind of Tenebrionida beetle (Psammodes Bertoloni), called *shifufunu sha paripari*, because it strikes the ground with its abdomen, making a noise represented by the word *baribarr*. I could not discover the particular danger feared by the Natives in connection with this beetle, but there must be one; hence the yila. We have already met with the special feminine taboos as regards food (I. p. 183). Women abstain from certain animals, or parts of animals, fearing an evil effect on parturition. Amongst the Nkunas, women are also afraid of the meat of the leopard, the civet-cat, of any animal with paws (psa marubo); they only eat animals which have hoofs (psa masondjo). "The former are wild beasts, things of the hubo (I. p. 311), with a bad smell, food for men" (Mankhelu). 262 826

The comparison of *nyenya* and *yila* is interesting, as it may help to explain the origin of certain taboos, which is a very important subject indeed. The nyenya is the feeling of disgust which induces a person to abstain from a given food; in the yila there is, in addition, the dread of a supposed danger connected with the consumption of this food. Thus there is a great difference between the two: the idea of danger does not exist in the nyenya. However, it is quite possible that what was merely a nyenya has evolved, in the course of time, into a real yila or taboo, in which the disgust is no longer the mere individual repulsion for a distasteful food, but has become a social matter, a characteristic custom of a clan, or of a group. 262 784

Let me quote two instances which came under my personal notice. Amongst my servants was a young man belonging to the Ngoni clan. The Ba-Ngoni, being of Zulu origin, do not eat fish. Sometimes the cook put shrimps into the ground nut sauce: this was a treat to all the boys, as they are very fond of shrimps and the addition greatly improved the flavour of the dish. But our Ngoni boy, having smelt the "lisuna," used to inquire about the sauce, and if he heard that there

262 were shrimps in it, he disdainfully refused to take his share. — "We
784 are Ba-Ngoni! We do not eat fish," he said with disgust. First, shrimps are not fish ; he was "plus royaliste que le roi!" Second, he did not abstain from the sauce because it had an unpleasant flavour ; it was more tasty than ever! But the *social idea* dictated his attitude. He boasted of belonging to a superior race. He was not like these wretched Ba-Thonga who eat fish! It would be lowering himself to partake of such a meal, so he preferred to fast.

I witnessed the same scene when we were distributing cakes to our school children in Lourenço Marques. One of the girls was the daughter of a pure Ronga woman and an Indian Mussulman. She inquired if the cakes had been cooked with lard. The cakes were excellent, and she found them so, nevertheless she refused to eat them if they contained lard, because her father was not allowed to eat pork. It is evident that there is but one step from this clan repulsion, which is still a nyenya, to a definite taboo. Let the boy or girl *fear* that some evil will happen to them, because they have transgressed a sacred rule, and the nyenya will become a yila. Let it be admitted by them that the transgression of the rule may bring death to the family or the clan, and the primitive individual feeling of disgust will be transformed into the most severe collective taboo. I can quote no instance in proof of this evolution, as we have no knowledge of the past history of the taboos. From the psychological point of view, however, this process is quite within the range of possibility.

III. *Fishing.*

226 There are no particular restrictions to fishing so long as it is
821 carried on by *hooks*. Any one can go with his boat on the river, the lake, or the sea, and throw his line into the water. The fisherman will then say : "Thu! (not the sacramental tsu, but only an onomatopœia describing the fall of the hook into the water). You! my hook! they eat to their heart's content, people who dwell yonder, where they pound their mealies kneeling down (bugimamusi), there where the khwekhwe and the mhulu are, etc. (names of different kinds of fish)." Afterwards the fisher throws a pinch of tobacco on the spot where his hook

fell, not as an offering to the gods, but in order to help his hook 226
to see (hanyanyisa), to awaken it and "give it eyes to catch." This 821
sentence referring to the place "where people pound their mealies standing, or kneeling down," is an allusion to a curious cosmographic notion, which we shall explain later on (Part VI. Chap. I). Seeing the sky reflected in the water, the fisherman thinks of the ends of the earth, where heaven rests on the ground, and where women are obliged to kneel down when crushing their mealies, lest their pestles hit the sky!

There are three other principal methods of fishing, and, as they 226
are more or less of a collective nature, they are regulated by 784
laws and attended with taboos : the nhangu, the shibaba and the tjeba.

The *nhangu* is a triangular enclosure made of sticks stuck in the sand on the seashore. This enclosure has an opening looking seaward. The tide covers the nhangu, bringing with it all kinds of denizens of the sea, big lobsters, shrimps of all sizes, fish, etc ; when it retires, all these creatures are imprisoned in the nhangu, and try to find their way out through the opening ; this however is closed, and the fishers collect their catch, which is sometimes considerable. A man who wishes to build a nhangu must pay a tax to the chief of the country. During the operation he must observe the law of silence ; if anyone should speak to him, he must not answer. When the nhangu is ready he goes straight to his hut, and washes his hands, and then he can speak again. Should he transgress this taboo, the fish will rush about wildly in the trap and he will be unable to catch it. This is not a *kunga* proper (I. p. 124) but only another application of the rule imposed for example on the wife of the hippopotamus-hunter (II. p. 69). On the day of inauguration, (khangula), all the inhabitants have the right to come and partake of the result of the first fishing. This is a *luma*, the luma of the nhangu. The owner of the trap is not allowed to take a single fish home that day. Everything must be consumed on the spot.

The *shibaba* is another kind of trap, made of woven reeds, 226
which is placed on the banks of a river, of the Nkomati, for 834
instance, near the sea, within the tidal reach ; when the tide is

low, the fish is imprisoned between the reeds and the bank. 226
The construction of this trap is governed by strict laws : no 834
sexual relation is allowed during the five or six weeks of the fishing. The owner of the shibaba must cut the first reed. Women must not approach the spot. On the day of inauguration there is also a luma ceremony similar to that for the nhangu.

But the most curious fishing custom is the *tjeba*. "Ku tjeba" 226
means to kill fish in company in lakes which are drying up. At the end of the winter most of the small lakes scattered all over Thongaland, get smaller on account of the drought, and the fish they contain, consisting mostly of carp and barbel, are obliged to congregate in much smaller spaces. Natives take advantage of this and the whole country-side is summoned to go and tjeba, on a certain day, as it is important to be as numerous as possible in order to ensure success. The chief orders all his men to make *shiranga*, a kind of conical basket, a foot and a half high, whose upper end is open and wide enough to admit the hand. The shiranga must be very strong ; the tree used for the purpose is called ntjangari. When the shiranga are ready, a messenger is 202
sent to all the villages, crying : 226
626

> Kho ! Khoooo ! Hobe ! Hobeee ! U yala nsateeee ! Na nsati a randja nyamooo ! A randja mihlubeee ! Kho ! Hobe !
> You hate your wife ! Your wife also is fond of flesh food ! She is fond of the flesh of the tail of fishes !

Every male member of the tribe must answer to this summons by going to the shore. Should he refuse the call, he is blamed and despised, and his companions will sing to him a mocking song :

> U yala ku tjeba, nyathwaku !
> You refuse to fish, nyathwaku (1).

In the evening his wife will scold him, on seeing that he brings no fish home! She will punish him by giving him mealie pap without any sauce!

Before the throng enters the lake, someone must *make an* 226
offering ; he must be a descendant of the inhabitants of the country, 782

(1) Nyathwaku is a formula of insult (I. p. 445).

226 not necessarily a member of the reigning family. He does not
782 perform the full sacramental *tsu* ; he merely spits without having put anything into his mouth, and says : "Let fish abound! Let them not hide in the mud! Let there be enough of them to
226 satisfy every one." Then all the men, quite naked, throw themselves into the lake, which is only one or two feet deep ; they put their shiranga into the water and hold it firmly down on the bottom ; a fish has perhaps been caught ; it is heard flapping

The tjeba fishing. *Phot. A. Burd.*

about inside the basket. The lucky fisherman seizes it through the opening. He carries a wooden pin to which a string is attached ; this string is called by the technical name of *ntjungua*. He passes the pin through the gills of the fish and ties it on his string. Then he goes on fishing. All his companions do the same. The frightened fish scatter in all directions : but on all sides the shiranga fall over them, and the men have soon made a good haul. When they have reached the extremity of the lake, they come back shouting the following words : "Phindu-na-ye!" —"Come back, following them!" They are allowed when tired to come out of the water and rest in the rays of the sun. The more pertinacious, however, remain in as long as they like. When

when

226 the fishing is finished, they all sit down and compare their catches.
651 Perhaps an enormous barbel has been caught, "the king of the lake," as these fish sometimes attain a very large size. "Woo! a dle ñhwakwe!" — "Oh! he has killed his mother," say the men, making fun of the fortunate fisherman! But the chief sends an induna who levies the tax. Each fisherman unties one fish from his string and gives it to him.

226 The tjeba fishing is practised all over Thongaland, in Ronga
782 territory, where such ponds are numerous in the sandy hollows, amongst the Hlabis, and in the neighbourhood of rivers where there are lagoons which dry up, as far as the Maluleke country. Should there be crocodiles in the pond, which may very well happen when the lake is connected with the Limpopo or the Nkomati, the religious ceremony is more important on account of the danger incurred. Then the bones are thrown and declare who must make the offering in order to secure adequate protection from the ancestor-gods. The officiator enters the lake first, and, plunging his shiranga into the water, says: "If you are here, crocodile, go away! you hyena, do not bite." Amongst the Maluleke, a man of the Ba-Nyai tribe must perform the religious ceremony, as the Ba-Nyai were in the country before the Thongas. He must go first and catch a fish, bring it out alive, and then, surrounded by his fellow Ba-Nyai, offer it to his ancestor-gods. Then he throws it back into the water. The Thonga chief, having ordered his men to keep silence, then makes the following proclamation in a loud voice: "Let the fish abound, and kill them all, but do not bewitch each other!"

226 The Hlengwes have a very curious custom which I have already
825 explained when discussing the Bantu notion of sexual relations
839 (I. p. 189). When they *tjeba* they take a little boy and a little girl, and lay them down together under a lion's skin, as if they were husband and wife, during all the time that they are fishing. The children keep quiet, — so the fish will also keep quiet and not swim away. When the fishing is concluded, these children are "awakened," and are given a part of the catch: they are praised and thanked, as they are supposed to have secured the fish by their action... or rather by their inaction! This very significant

rite may explain why sexual relations are prohibited during all 226
important hunting and fishing operations. With their magic 825
conception of Nature, Bantus do not separate the domain of man 834
from the animal world ; human actions have their immediate effect amongst animals. So if men and women keep strict control over themselves, hippopotami, fish or elephants will not be so wild, and hunters will have more success!

*
* *

Meat is either boiled (pseka), or roasted (wosha). When 252
boiled, the broth is called *muru*, (Ro.) or *sheshebo*, (Dj.) the same name that is given to monkey nut sauce or any other seasoning. When roasted, it is either placed on the embers, or skewered on sticks (lihanga) and exposed to the heat of the fire.

The blood of animals (bubendje) is also eaten by most men. 262
However, many fear it (tshaba), not on account of a yila, as if it were taboo, but rather from individual loathing. There are no special laws to be observed as regards bones. The meat of sacrifices, offered in the funeral rites, must be eaten *on the road*, not in the mortuary nor in the guests' villages, as we have already seen.

Meat is welcome, and eagerly sought after in time of famine 262
(ndlala). Should the October rains fail, or the crops be destroyed 731
by grasshoppers, as has been, alas, frequently the case since the [136]
first appearance of these pests in August 1894 (1), the Natives are bereft of every resource (2). They dig up all the edges of the

(1) Just at the commencement of the war between the Natives and the Portuguese, grasshoppers arrived in thick clouds in the district of Lourenço Marques. They had not been seen for a great number of years ; old folk only recollected having seen them in bygone times. Since then the scourge has never entirely disappeared. The coincidence of their coming and the beginning of hostilities struck the Blacks very forcibly ; they often said, at the sight of the grasshoppers : "They announce the armies of Gungunyana."

(2) Here is a pretty couplet with reference to famine :

Nkondjo wa nhlengana shipopokwana ?

— Lembe ra ndlala a he ngume kusuhe !

The traces of the little antelope (nhlengana) (which one sees in the desert a long way from its lair) recall the year of famine, when one does not stay near home ; (one must go a long way to search for food). See also the several allusions to the year of famine in *Les Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, p. 158, 160 et seq.

262 lakes, to find the tubers of the nenuphars (Nymphea stellata), and
731 cook these indigestible roots (matibu). They have also gone so far as to make flour of the pith of the palm trees (mimale). They disinter the bodies of dead animals, or cram themselves with *masala*, which often engenders serious vomiting. Some eat big Copris beetles.

Such famines were frequent in former times, and special years are still known as having been years of *ndlala*. So, in the chronology of Shinangana (Part IV) the year 1875 (?) was called "the year of the Magadingele famine." On the Coast the Gonhwen famine is still remembered (1). The proximity of a seaport which is easily provisioned, and the possibility of earning money wherewith to buy rice and maize constitute a real advantage which Natives are the first to recognise. In this respect civilisation has rendered signal service to the Thonga commissariat!

266 (1) It does not appear that starvation ever induced Thongas to practise cannibalism on any considerable scale. Cases are known of this happening as when, during the war of 1895, a Ronga killed a man and ate his lungs and kidneys quite raw. He was prosecuted and deported to Mozambique. In the mountains, the Ba-Pedi and Ba-Sutho began to consume human flesh after the raids of Chaka and his generals. They first ate the corpses; then, having acquired a taste for this food, they began to attack travellers, springing out from the caves in the mountains, where they were hiding; they even made organised expeditions in search of men to devour. These cannibals are known by the name of Makhema and caused the Queen of the Bokhaha, Male, to change her residence (I. p. 477).

CHAPTER II

INDUSTRY OF THE THONGAS.

Industry, in the human race, is born of necessity. Man feels the need of protection and shelter from wind and weather ; this need leads him to make some sort of a covering (clothing) and to build a dwelling (habitation). The necessity of procuring food, of preparing it, of keeping it, suggests to him the idea of fashioning weapons for killing game, and utensils of various kinds for tillage, and for cooking the products of the soil. 000

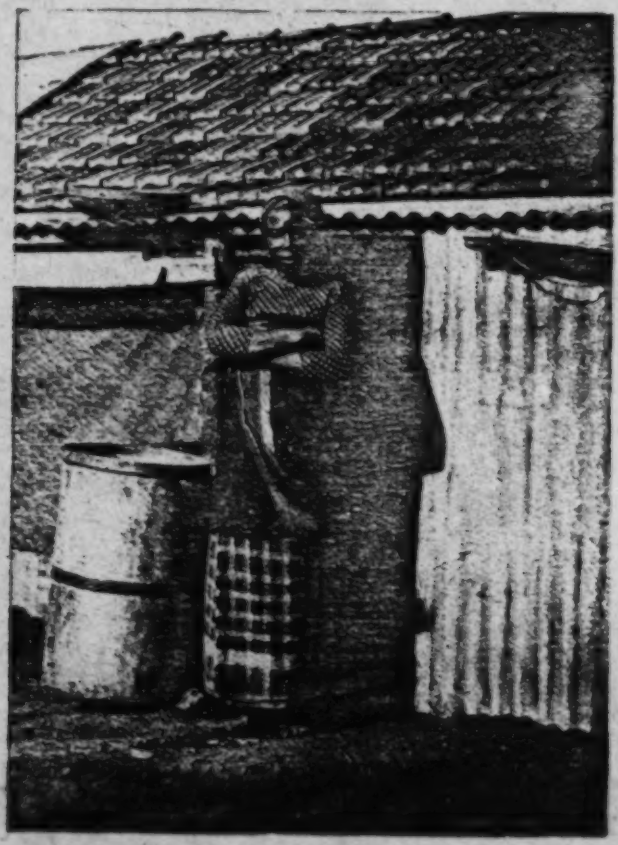
But Nature must also provide the wherewithal to be turned to account by man's intelligence. The development of human industry depends therefore on a variety of circumstances. We shall now study the inventions of the Thongas, what they have been able to evolve in the matter of clothing, habitation and utensils : we shall also consider their wood-carvings, and their exceedingly primitive commerce, and shall endeavour to find a solution of the several questions which will naturally be suggested by the extremely slow industrial development of these tribes.

A. CLOTHING AND ORNAMENTS.

I. *The Evolution of Costume.*

As regards *women*, Mboza asserts that, in remote times, Ronga women wore well tanned and softened skins, to which they hung pieces of brass, as the Pedi women still do. At present, amongst the Rongas, they are all clothed with pieces of unshaped material, which they call *kapulane* ; this piece of stuff is fastened round the 271

291 waist, whence it falls down to form a skirt. With this most women in the interior are satisfied ; they do not cover the upper part of the body. The undergarment, covering the genitalia, is



Phot. P. Berthoud.
Camilla, a Lourenço Marques woman.

called *ntlhomo* in front, (a word which is taboo), and *mphela* at the back, (this term is less taboo than the first).

177 In the Transvaal, Thonga or Shangaan women have also from
291 time immemorial adopted European materials, of which they make double pleated skirts adorned with beads, as seen in the illustration I. p. 195. This is the typical heathen costume. The Pedi or Sutho women are at once distinguishable from their Ronga

sisters by the fact that they have preserved their ancient skin 177
dress. In the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques, a further 291
development has taken place, as women there wear a large plaid which they knot over the breast and which hangs down behind as far as their heels, a costume by no means lacking in the picturesque. They cover their breast and shoulders with a bodice (kimao), generally very close-fitting, especially in the sleeves.

Phot. J. Bennett.
Christian girls of the Training Institution of Lemana (Northern Transvaal).

The pattern is said to have been borrowed from India. (See on the opposite page the portrait of Camilla, an old resident of Lourenço Marques, wearing the costume adopted by the women in the town and suburbs.)

Ordinary frocks are preferred by Christian converts, and so the European fashion tends to supplant the Indian, or the heathen.

As regards *men's costume* among the Ba-Ronga it was little more 291
than the traditional smile. It consisted, in fact, of a small article made of narrow strips of palm leaf, plaited together, and could hardly be termed "clothing." This was called *mbaya* and bears a great resemblance to the "libyan sheath" which is seen on the

old Egyptian monuments (1). The last mbaya were seen in the 291
neighbourhood of Rikatla, when the war of 1894 broke out. In the Northern clans they were still commonly used by the generation which preceded Viguet, by the Nkunas who fled before Manukosi in 1835. (See Introduction to the *Grammaire Ronga*, page 17). The Kafirs of Cape Colony were still in 1903, at this stage of dress... or rather undress, and the Pedis of the Transvaal, with their *musindu* (a mere piece of skin protecting the genitalia), are not much in advance of the mbaya stage even now. This state of affairs arose in the first place from the fact that, as yet, the sentiment of modesty had hardly been conceived. It must not be supposed, however, that morals were the more depraved for that reason; on the contrary, they were much purer, and innocence far more general, judging from the reports of those who remember those days.

But a second fact which allowed the Thongas to go about 132
without clothing, 'in puris naturalibus,' or nearly so, is the 291
warmth of the climate; the temperature rarely drops below 44° Fahrenheit and frequently rises to 113° F., the annual mean near Lourenço Marques being about 74° F. according to our observations extending over seven years. It is thus easy to dispense with a coat in that part of the world, and it is by no means a rare occurrence to see children in the interior absolutely naked (2).

This very primitive article of attire has, however, been 177
supplanted by one designed by the Zulus, and worn by men up to 291

(1) The "phallic sheath" of the earliest Egyptian statuettes, which is also to be noticed on the engravings of the XIXth dynasty, as belonging to African populations, is not of quite the same pattern as the Thonga mbaya or the Sutho musindu. However there is a real similarity between all these primitive costumes; many of the customs of the Bantus of to-day seem to have existed amongst the early Egyptians, and this fact shows that the origin of Egyptian civilisation is partially African. 177

(2) The Chopi tribe, which is very industrious, dwelling in the neighbourhood of the Thongas N. E. of the mouth of the Limpopo, has succeeded in obtaining a very superior kind of dress by beating the bark of the *mphama*, a kind of fig-tree which is wide-spread in the country, and which the Ba-Chopi even planted for this purpose. The pieces of bark become very soft and can be strung together. They are called *ntjalu*. Several samples of this curious stuff can be seen in the Neuchâtel Museum. Thongas used to buy the article from their Chopi neighbours, but never knew how to manufacture it. 439

291

Zulu costume. Phot. Natal.

177 a recent date from one end to the other of the Thonga tribe
291 (except, I am told, in some remote spots in the Hlengwe country). It consists of a belt to which are hung tails of animals, or strips of

177 skin (djobo, dji-ma), covered with hair or fur, or even the entire
291 skin of a civet cat, or antelope. The nsimba skins are in great demand, but are rather expensive, and the majority of the Ba-Ronga men wear merely two pieces of ox hide (mabebe), one in front and the other behind. Small boys often content themselves with one in front only. The young men prefer to wear them rather full, something like a petticoat! The *shifado* (Vol. I. Annotatio I) is worn with the belt of tails. This "sphaerula" is made either of carved wood or plaited milala leaves, or of a small calabash just the size required. When it is fixed in place, raw Natives consider that they have satisfied all the exigences of decency. Although much more decent than the *mbaya*, this garment of tails, or pieces of skin, is still a trifle incomplete...

Sandals of ox hide (tintango) are also an old article of dress ; they were used by hunters and travellers. They belong to the bush and it is taboo to bring them into the hubo (I. p. 355).

At the present time European costume is tending to supplant the belt of tails. The first step consists in adopting the *ladula*, a piece of stuff hanging down from the loins as far as the knees. This style of garment was still worn in 1910 by most of the young heathen round Lourenço Marques ; it was sometimes combined with the madjobo, which were still in use. But men, and especially youngsters, soon aspire to something better : trousers and jackets! (1). However ungainly the Native may appear when duly arrayed in coat and trousers, there is nothing he covets more than these garments. As they cannot all afford complete suits, they often have to be satisfied with such odds and ends as they can get from the Banyans, or pick up from their European masters. One sees them gravely walking about in worn-out long frock coats, the trousers being conspicuous by their absence. Others think themselves very fortunate if they can manage to get hold of a very much patched waistcoat with which to adorn

829 (1) The taste for European fabrics is said by thoughtful Natives to have been the cause of the loss of their independence. They support this somewhat surprising theory by the following argument : "Without this," said one of them to me, pulling the flap of my coat, "the Whites would never have conquered us ! In our wars with them there have always been some of us who would not give up these stuffs, and so made alliance with the Europeans. We were divided, and thus our power of resistance was broken."

themselves, the rest of the body remaining stark naked... except, 177
of course, for the indispensable belt of tails. One day a Rikatla 291
lad came to see me with an eye-glass fixed triumphantly on his forehead, and when I asked him what was the use of that article he replied, really meaning what he said : "Ndji yambalile" — "I have dressed." He intended to do me honour. The same lad came, on another occasion, wearing coquettishly on his head a lady's black lace hat, which he seemed to consider very "chic." I much preferred the get-up of an individual, by name Glas, who put a red lily in his tightly-curled hair, and made a chin strap of a flexible reed which he passed through the holes in his ears on either sides, so that it formed a sort of frame to his face. Every Thonga has already learned to know a *buluku* (trousers), a *djansi* (jacket), a *fascikoti* (apron, a corruption of the word waistcoat), a *hembe* (shirt), *masokisi* and *memeya* (stockings) and *shilembe* (hat). The majority of these words have doubtless come from the Boer dialect, and have changed somewhat in passing into the language of the Natives.

The "civilised" attain the height of bliss when they are able to procure an irreproachable suit of clothes, and it is a sight to behold these young men returning direct from Johannesburg, dressed in the latest style, with a white starched shirt, a silk cummerbund, and jacket and trousers to match. They think themselves handsome, but we do not share their illusion! How often have we not longed to see them adopt some costume suited to their colour, their customs, their occupations, and their climate! But they want to be like us, so what is to be done ? (1) Their 177
idea of costume is evidently different from ours : they consider it 291
as an adornment rather than as an actual protection against cold 613
or heat. If it rains, or if it is cold, they much prefer to wrap

(1) I have heard it asserted that the adoption of European clothing by the Blacks 753
tends to enfeeble them, even to the extent of rendering them liable to new diseases. I was assured that the introduction of tuberculosis amongst them is due to their clothes. This assertion is at least very much exaggerated. However it is certain that the exposure of their skin to the rays of the sun was extremely healthy. On the other hand, they do not know that wet clothing must be changed (they may have no second suit to put on), so they catch cold, and pneumonia or pleurisy sets in... I have also heard it stated that the second-hand, cast-off garments which traders sell them often infect them with syphilis (especially after circumcision), or other poisons.

177 themselves in the big rug (ngubo, mpisi-mpisi), which they all buy
291 to sleep under at night. The end of the process of evolution will
513 certainly be that they will adopt exactly the same dress as their European masters : a complete suit for the men, frocks, hats and boots for the women ; as soon as the majority of them obtain enough money to buy these, they will do so, and seeing how particular most of them are as regards their external appearance, it may be safely anticipated that Bantu beauties will submit to the tyranny of the London or Paris fashions as readily as our European élégantes!

291 It is easy to see the evolution of dress in the Bantu tribe by comparing the illustration of the South African woman (a Sutho, I. p. 46) representing the first stage, those of the Thonga women (I. p. 179 and 195) representing the second, Camilla, depicting a third stage (p. 92), and the ordinary European frock forming the fourth (1).

As for men, I unfortunately possess no picture of the primitive *mbaya*. But the following stages are illustrated by the two Zulu boys (p. 95) by the habitué of the Nkuna Court (I. p. 435), and by Tobane (I. p. 4) and Muhlaba (I. p. 426).

II. *Ornaments.*

301 The taste for decoration, for ornament, is innate with the Black. Ages ago, before he took to fixing a flower in his hair, he used to tatoo himself. We have already described (I. p. 178) the various patterns of *tattooing* of men and women, and have pointed

177 (1) I must however mention a piece of information which was given to me by two trustwortly authorities, according to which Thongas of the Northern clans possessed in
286 former times a kind of primitive *textile industry*. The Rev. Calvin Maphophe, who belongs to the Hlengwe group, asserted that Natives of the Tshobane clan, near the Sabie river, knew how to weave threads of cotton in order to form a kind of cloth called shombe, and another man of the Bilen plain told me that this cloth was worn by women at a time when men were satisfied with the mbayi. This industry has long since disappeared ; European cloth probably killed it as soon as it became procurable. The presence of subspontaneous plants of cotton in various parts of the country is in favour of this assertion. Where and when did these ancient Thongas obtain the precious textile plant and who taught them to use it ? This is an interesting historical point which I am afraid will never be elucidated.

301 out that this custom probably had a social significance in former times, though at present it is practised as an adornment.

302 As regards *hair* (nsisi, mu-mi), women often cut it, men less

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Maputju women with "tingoya." *Photo P. Aubert.*

302 frequently. A man only cuts his hair when his wife dies, as a
[765] sign of mourning : it is a taboo (I. p. 146). In former times they never shaved their beards. People made fun of those who did so, saying : "Are you an Angolese?" (The Angolese, who are numerous in the neighbourhood of Lourenço-Marques,

302 used to shave their beards). Young men sometimes let two or three of their curls grow on their forehead like horns! Others stretch out their curls and smear them with a gluey substance obtained from the nkanye tree. This is called *ku hoba misisi*.

302 As regards women, those who are nursing babies regularly
853 turn their hair into an ornament: the small curls are stretched out, smeared with fat and made to fall on the temples and on the occiput; they are then covered with ochre. This operation is called *ku hora misisi*, and the rats'tails thus produced are the *tingoya*; they are the characteristic ornament of women during the nursing period. Nursing women undoubtedly think the tingoya improve their appearance. "Look! She has *hora misisi*! How well it suits her!" people will say of a woman who has succeeded in altering her coiffure in this way. But this custom has also a ritual value (1).

Nursing women cover their whole body, their clothing, and their *ntehe* (I. p. 46) with *ochre*. The habit of anointing (tota) or smearing with ochre (tshumane) goes hand in hand with that of tingoya. This rather disgusting custom marks them as nursing, and is a protection (shisibelo) against the husband; so long as a woman covers herself with ochre, it is a sign that she will not
302 cohabit with him. They say also that ochre prevents the bad
855 smell resulting from childrens' unclean habits, and that it softens the ntehe and makes the baby grow (2). The skin of children is also covered with a coating of this pigment; some say it is done not so much with the object of beautifying the child as of hiding the dirt which the mothers are too lazy to remove! No wonder that, in these conditions, it has been found that this smearing with ochre fosters conjunctivitis and other diseases!

177 (1) The Ngoni taught the Northern Thongas another and more elaborate way of
302 curling the hair: the queens, wives of Gungunyana, transform their "thatch" into regular cylindrical chignons (shifoko), standing up like towers (I. p. 416). The Ba-Ronga have not adopted this custom, except, in some cases, the chiefs. (I. p. 386).

(2) It is very curious to observe that these two feminine modes of adornment, the tingoya and the ochre, have been adopted by the magicians, those who pretend to possess supernatural power in smelling out witches and treating possessed people (Part VI). They like to assume the appearance of women. People suffering from the Ba-Ndjao[1] possession especially use ochre. Their spirits order them to do so: they would torment their victims should the latter not obey.

1 [i.e., spirit--analyst]

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323
415

Ornaments, calabashes, pottery.

302 The use of ochre is, however, not restricted to nursing mothers
538 or magicians : it is the special province of young marriageable girls, wishing to attract attention : their brilliant skin shines like a
832 mirror, setting off to perfection the white of their eyes and the black of their hair, which is sometimes made flossy by means of antimony or ground charcoal. A quaint saying puts it thus :

> Shindzingeri pundjene ? -Banhwanyana tolan !...
> What says the pretty bird with the coral neck that sings in the grass ?
> It says : Girls, anoint yourselves with ochre ! (if you wish to be as beautiful as it is).

177 Another ornament, of ancient date, is the *bracelet*. There
301 are several kinds : 1) the big heavy copper rings, called *masindana*, which greatly resemble those of the lake-dwellers, having a similar rather oval shape with an opening for slipping them over the wrist ; 2) the modern bracelets, called *busenga*, which the Rongas first bought in Natal, and which the Ma-Lemba introduced in the Northern clans ; they are made of iron wire twined round a ring of hide ; 3) the *mafowa* are more ancient, being made of seeds strung on thongs of skin, and are wound several times round the leg. This is an ornament for either dance or war.
301 The mafowa are sometimes made of the silvery cocoons of Argema Mimosae, the Queen Moth, which are found on nkanye trees, emptied of the chrysalis which is inside and filled with grains of millet which rattle when dancing!

301 *Beads* (nkarara) are evidently of later date ; they were introduced
439 by the Whites in the XVIth century, when the Portuguese were already in regular communication with Delagoa Bay and trafficked with the Natives, exchanging glassware for gold and ivory. Glass fascinated the Blacks : its brightness and transparency pleased
539 them immensely. An old song echoes their simple transports of delight :

> E ! Bashabi ! Batatana ba shabile ; ba buya ni shintshirimana sha balungoooo !..
> Hi ! Here come the buyers ! Our fathers return with their purchases ; they bring back with them the beautiful glittering things which the Whites sell !...

301 "A few years ago an ordinary glass bottle was thought a wonder by the people in the interior," said Timoteo Mandlati to me.

(He was a Nkuna from Shiluvane.) It is not strange therefore 301
that they became enamoured of beads. They give them special 832
names, according to colour and size, and succeed in turning them to very good account. The chief ornament the women make, (beadwork is exclusively done by the women), is the *mugangu* (No. 2); used in love-making (gangisa) ; it is a kind of crown of blue beads with red chevrons, worn by girls when they wish to beautify themselves. Some are wide and some narrow ; the beads are strung on threads which are crossed and knotted as the work proceeds : no canvas foundation is used. The bead necklace 301
is called *shihekisana*. Bead bracelets on the wrist are *shibolisa*, and on the ankles *maluwada*. Beads are also used in making large and heavy belts (mugadzi), weighing one to two pounds, and very much appreciated as an ornament when dancing. In the same way calabashes (No. 5) are covered with beads, bags made of hide (No. 4), bottles and even baskets. This bead work calls for a 276
good deal of patience. One of the things which the Ronga most 301
dearly loves to have decorated with beads is his tobacco pouch, (ngulana, No. 3), which is for him not only a means of satisfying his passion for taking snuff, but also one of his most prized ornaments. I do not now refer to the carved ebony tobacco box, worn *en bandoulière*, but to the article consisting of eight or nine large seeds, hollowed out, in which is kept the powder which stimulates the brain. Each of these seeds (which come from another country) is closed with a small piece of reed ; when one is walking they rattle against each other, producing a most delightful sound! The first thing a man will say to a friend on 576
meeting him, will be : "Fole?" — "Tobacco?" and before 276
anything further is said, each will indulge in a pinch. The same act of politeness is essential before beginning any discussion. The Thonga does not smoke the calumet of p[illegible] but uses for a like purpose the many receptacled tobacco pouch, decorated with beads, which hangs from the belt at his hip. He takes from it a pinch of snuff, which he offers to his opponent ; the latter takes another pinch and proceedings then commence under the happiest auspices. Hearts are not far from concord... when noses have already fraternised!

301 Beads are merely an ornament and have no ritual value, except
789 the large white ones used by people possessed by the Ba-Ndjao spirits. (Part VI.)

B. HABITATION.

342 While there has been such a rapid change in Thonga customs regarding dress, — so rapid that in these last fifty years they have changed more in that respect than during the fifty preceding centuries —, in the field of architecture the tribe appears to have stood still ; their huts are built precisely as they were in ancient times. It is true that it is easier to put on a jacket and trousers than to alter the style of one's house : besides it must be admitted that the Thonga hut possesses several advantages. It is comparatively easy to construct, cool in the hot weather, perfectly watertight in the rainy season and is fairly ingeniously contrived.

That which is called *yindlu* (yin-tin) properly speaking, is more especially the *roof* of the hut (lwango, dji-ma) ; for it is the roof which is the most troublesome to make. A strange fact too, and one which appears paradoxical, is that, in the construction (ku yaka) of the house, they begin with the roof!

[341] The Thonga architect — and every man is his own in that
335 country — gathers together a few hundred straight sticks, one
342 to one and a half inches in width and from three to ten feet in length. He digs a hole in the ground, a yard and a half in diameter and 16 inches deep, in which he arranges his sticks in a circle, points downwards, at the bottom of the hole, and supported in such a manner that they lie at an angle of 45 degrees with the ground. Any one of these sticks will thus be at about a right angle with the opposite one, and all together they form, as it were, a huge conical basket with its point in the hole. To fasten all the sticks together, he ties them to round hoops (something like cask hoops) made of bent branches. These hoops (balelo, dji-ma) are concentric, very small at the bottom, and getting gradually larger as the work progresses. Any spaces which remain between the sticks first arranged are filled up, one after the other, with

shorter sticks, which are pushed in here and there as the building 335
proceeds, and the architect ends by obtaining a sort of enormous, 342
pointed hat lying on its apex, all the branches and sticks composing it being solidly tied together with strips of a very resistant bark, that of the bulolo Hibiscus (p. 33) or of other trees. It is now only necessary to turn the big cone over, and place it on a wall, and there you have the typical Thonga hut.

The *wall* is built with stakes, about four feet in length above the ground, planted at intervals along the circumference of a circle which the architect traces with wonderful accuracy in the sand. He then takes two flexible branches and fastens them to the stakes, at a height of one foot above the ground, the whole way round the wall, one on the inside, the other on the outside. Between these branches and in the spaces from stake to stake are inserted reeds of the same height, completing the wall : the reeds are firmly fastened to the supporting branches by a band passing alternately over and underneath them. The same operation is repeated half way up the wall (two feet above the ground), and again at three quarters of the height (three feet). The wall is now ready to put on its large conical hat, which will fit it perfectly : a cone on a cylinder!

Placing the roof in position (ku tlakula yindlu), the next 342
procedure, requires the display of considerable muscular energy. 476
All the men of the village are convened for the job : their strong arms raise the monumental basket and place it triumphantly on the wall. Beer is then given to the helpers, and a little jollification ensues ; the equivalent of the "fête du petit sapin enrubanné" which the carpenters celebrate in Switzerland when they have completed the roof of a house.

The roof must now be *covered* (fulela) *with a thatch* (byanyi) 342
to make it impermeable to the heavy rains of the wet season, [824]
and it is here that considerable ingenuity is displayed in the method adopted. The Thonga pulls up by the roots, in the low lands on the borders of the lakes, a kind of very wide grass (luhlwa), which attains a height of one and a half to two feet : this he separates into small bunches which he lays side by side on the ground and ties together, one by one, with his

342 string made of bark, fastening them with a special knot. The result is a series of hundreds of contiguous bunches seemingly sewn together with a regular seam, at about 6 inches above the roots. This can be rolled up like a mat, forming a beautiful sheaf, and carried away on the workman's shoulder to be placed on the roof. Once there, it is unrolled and fastened to the hoop of branches forming the outer circle at the base of the cone. One man runs a huge needle, threaded with a long string, through the thatch, taking care to do so just above the seam which unites the bunches of grass ; another man, who is inside the hut, receives the needle and pushes it back again through the thatch, but, in his case, just underneath the seam : the two thus continue sewing the thatch, with long stitches, all round, so that the seam itself is securely fixed to the outer hoop at the base of the roof. When they have completed the circle and provided the hut with a first belt of thatch, they fetch another sheaf of grass and unroll it on the next hoop above. Now a certain proportion is to be observed between the distance separating the two hoops (A B) and that of the seam from the roots of the grass (C D) ; that is to say if, for instance, the space between the concentric hoops is five inches, the seam will be six inches above the roots ; whence the following result : the roots of the thatch fixed to the lower hoop (A E) reach as far as the second hoop (B F) and even overlap slightly. The fresh sheaf which will be sewn on to the second hoop will thus overlap the first sheaf in such a way that its seam will be fastened practically on the top of the roots of the lower sheaf. On the second hoop there will therefore be a double thickness of thatch (at point G) all round the hut. As the *luhlwa* is about 24 inches in length, it follows that the third and fourth sheaves or layers of thatch will also cover the second hoop ; the thickness of the thatch at this point will thus be fourfold, as also all over the hut. A well built roof of this description is perfectly rain-proof. As the work goes on, progress becomes more and more rapid, as the hoops diminish in size and the apex is reached almost unexpectedly.

On the top of the cone is fastened a *circular crown* (shihlungwa) of very carefully plaited grass ; the architect doubtless had a

double object in view in thus crowning the huts: first to keep the 342
rain from percolating through at the top, and secondly to impart to the building, by means of this highly ornamental addition, a degree of finish, an air of beauty, ease and opulence which it certainly would never have possessed had it terminated in an ordinary point. It is, no doubt, owing to the fact that the crown is the glory of the house that it is removed as soon as the occupant dies!

There are still two more operations to be performed before 333
the hut is finished: *the plastering* (bama (Ro.), phama (Dj.) and the making of the *door*. But these two jobs can be undertaken at the same time for the very good reason that plastering is the work of the wives, while making the door is that of the husband. Accompanied by other women of the village, the future mistress of the hut starts out for the marshes to collect some black clay (bompfi). If the marshes are too far off, she will content herself with digging in one of the ants' nests on the hillside. These terrible ants, which destroy everything, collect large quantities of hard earth, with which to build their nests, and this differs largely from the sand of the surroundings. (It may perhaps be simply sand hardened and changed by the acid secretions of the termites.) The shirundju, the conical basket which women carry [482]
on their heads, will be used to take home clods of red or black clay, and, using the same baskets, they will fetch from the cattle kraal some fresh dung which they mix with the clay, inside the new hut, pouring water on the mixture to reduce it to the proper consistency. They tread the unsavoury mud with their feet, and, with this semi-liquid mortar, plaster the wall on the inside,

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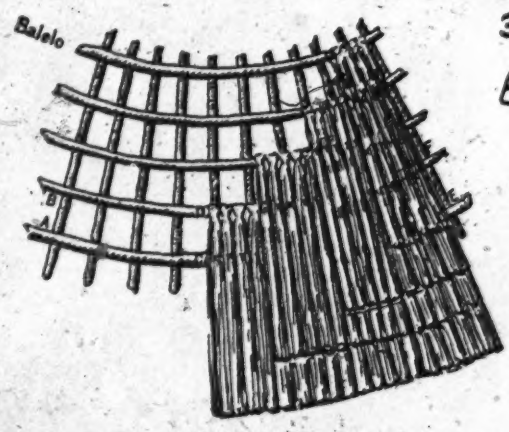
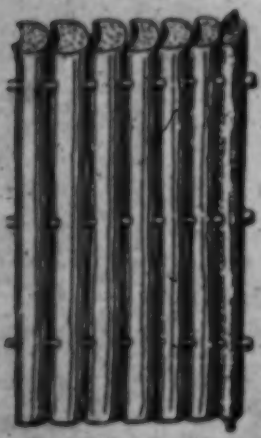
[462]



Construction of the Thonga roof.

introducing the mud between the reeds and spreading it out with 333
the palms of their hands until it forms a smooth layer all over the 342
interior. Not a ray of light can now enter the hut, except through some small open spaces to be seen, here and there, between the roof and the top of the wall. The air circulates more or less through these small vents, which, however, were not included in the original plan of the hut. The remainder of the clay makes a hard even flooring which will be re-covered from time to time with a fresh coating of black plaster (I. p. 187).


Door of a Ronga hut.

As regards the *door*, the Ba-Ronga in the 137
country round Rikatla generally make it of 335
the wood of the mimale palm (Raphia vinifera, see p. 4). 342
They cut down one or two of the giant leaves of this tree, which grows in the marshes. The leaf itself is one enormous central stalk with narrow folioles on either side; these are cut off and the nerve remains: a sort of gigantic switch, twenty to thirty feet in length, about four to six inches wide at the base and tapering gradually to its point, convex on one side, and concave on the other. Once dried, it turns a grey colour. The interior is a fibrous pith, of extraordinarily light weight, whilst the exterior bark is very thin, hard and shiny as though it had been varnished with copal. It is impossible to imagine a lighter wood. Comfort- 335
ably established under the shady trees of the square, our joiner 342
cuts the nerve into several pieces of a given length (say about four feet, the height of the wall). This is not difficult, for it is only necessary to cut through the thin outer bark, when the knife slips through the inner pith, like so much butter! These lengths are then bored through from front to back in three places, say at one, two and three feet from the bottom, and three stout sticks are passed through the holes, firmly holding the several pieces of the nerve together: this makes the door. The ends of the transverse sticks are fixed into a pole which is pointed top and bottom, thus forming pivots or hinges.

342 The *sill* consists simply of a piece of wood (ntjandja wa shipfalo) laid flat on the ground, with one edge raised so that the door cannot be opened outwards. It must always open inwards, doubtless with a view to facilitate the exclusion of unwelcome visitors by the simple expedient of sitting with one's back against
781 it. The threshold is not attended with taboos, excepting that of
342 the principal hut of the master of the village, beneath which

The Thonga hut. Phot. A. Burel.

protective drugs have been placed at the foundation of his village. It is taboo to sit on it (this may cause disease), but not to tread on
177 it. Most huts are now fitted with padlocks which are, of course,
414 of European origin. The palm wood doors are only seen in the districts where the mimale palm grows.

342 A number of small sticks are stuck in the straw crown at the top of the hut, and certainly add to the picturesque appearance of these constructions. It would seem that they are put there to hinder birds from perching on the huts, and more especially to avoid any chance visit during the night from screech-owls (makuñhunu) and other nocturnal fowl, which might alight on

342 the hut and terrify the occupants by their lugubrious cries.

356 I may mention another advantage of the Thonga hut. Between the sticks and the hoops of the roof small interstices, of a few square inches, are left when the thatch is in place ; in these small lockers all kinds of things are stowed away : ears of sorghum, or of millet, kept for seed, sticks, spoons or knives ; baskets can be hung up, by hitching the string by which they are usually carried across

The Native tin town near Pretoria Station. *Phot. A. Burd.*

the shoulder on to the handle of a spoon which is sticking out of the thatch. On entering a hut the roof looks like a regular museum ; it is useful as a cupboard or hanging wardrobe!

343 The Thonga hut, formed of two distinct parts, wall and roof, is far superior to that of the Zulus, which looks like a bee hive, and consists only of a semi-circular roof. Thongas know how to build this kind of huts, but they are generally made quite small (six feet in diameter) and used as shelters for the boys who look 000 after the goats. They are called *mitjhonga*. The Ba-Ngoni adopted their system of building from the Thongas of the plain, and Gungunyana's people constructed huge conical huts, but the

entrances were still smaller than those of the Ba-Ronga. To get 000
in, it was necessary to wriggle, or at least to go on all fours (1).

As I am dealing here only with the architectural side of the subject, and do not touch on its social side, let me merely state that the hut is divided into two parts, the right half belonging to the husband and the left to the wife (I. p. 138, 187), that it is contaminated by the death of its owner, and, being looked on as a *rumbi*, a ruin, must be pierced through (I. p. 138), deprived of its crown (I. p. 145), and ritually crushed down (I. p. 157) or closed (I. p. 162, 163).

Nobody will deny that the conical roofed Thonga hut is a 177
charming thing to see, and is wonderfully in keeping with the 342
African scenery. To judge how "Civilisation" improves the condition of things for the Natives of South Africa, let my readers contemplate the Native village as it was a few years ago, in the vicinity of Pretoria Station. Boys working on the Railway had built a horrible mass of tiny sheds of old paraffin tins, cut and flattened for the purpose. There is no lack of imagination in these constructions, but they are a perfect illustration of what the raw Native becomes when plunged suddenly into our XXth century civilisation and attempting in his poverty and ignorance to adapt himself to it. I am glad to say that, on the Missionary Stations, where Native Christians are directed by their missionaries, they build much better houses, having learnt to mould clay into bricks, and to build ovens (I. p. 536). Some of them are good masons and know the use of the level and of the square. There has been also a considerable improvement in the type of buildings erected in Town Locations during recent years.

(1) I have previously described the *shitlanta*, storehouses of various sizes, made for storing maize and other field produce, and have given (p. 26) an illustration of two of them, especially interesting as they contain the food of Sokis, who died from a sudden attack of pulmonary tuberculosis (lifuba). The provisions which are in the large storehouse must be sold as they are contaminated and dangerous to members of his family; the small one contains mealies bought from other people for his widows, who are not allowed to consume the food of the deceased, whilst strangers have nothing to fear from it. (See for the notions of contagion, Part VI.)

C. UTENSILS.

Nature, which has provided the Ba-Ronga with skins of animals for clothing, and with poles, reeds, grasses and fibrous barks for their habitations, has also favoured them with several exceedingly useful trees of which they have not been slow to take advantage. Of these the most valuable is the *milala* palm, *(Hyphaene crinita)* used for nearly all basket-work ; next comes the *nkuhlu (Trichilia emetica)* whose wood is particularly serviceable for all descriptions of carving. She has also deposited in their plains beds of clay, of more or less desirable quality, which they use for making pottery. I shall begin with the latter. 824

I. *Pottery.*

An excellent clay is to be found at Shibindji, in the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques, a district close to Morakwen, and the people of this place — they are the same who abstain from eating any animal liver (I. p. 364) — are the potters who supply the whole country. They are said to be the masters (benyi) of the art. But clay is found in many other places, in Shifukundju, Mpatshiki, etc. It is said that the clay of Muweri, near Lemon Island, on the Lower Nkomati, is even better than that of Shibindji. So the art of the potter does not belong to a single family, and is not hereditary. Any one may learn it and practise it. Pottery amongst the Thongas is essentially woman's province. Is this because earthenware utensils are principally used in the kitchen, where woman's sway is paramount and indisputed? Possibly ; in any case it is so. 134 323 323

Let us suppose then that the mother of a family wishes to renew, or to add to her stocks of pots, large and small. She starts out for the marshes, picks up in the well-known hollow several clods of clay and returns to the village carrying them on her head. No one salutes her : everyone pretends not to see her, 323 777

323 doubtless to avoid bringing any ill luck to the venture! She
777 buries the clay at the foot of a tree to keep it moist, and only takes it out of its hiding-place on the day on which she has decided to start the work.

323 Let us see by means of some photographs, taken by the greatly regretted A. Borel, how Meta, a Shibindji girl, married in Rikatla, proceeds in her work. Placing a broken piece of an old pot in the

Fashioning the pots. *Phot. A. Borel*

mortar, she pounds it until it is reduced to small fragments, the size of a grain of maize; these she mixes with her clay, adding water and sand, and kneads the whole together until she has made it into a very soft ball. She makes a hole in this, a wide opening which she enlarges by degrees, hollowing it out more and more and
323 gradually giving it the shape she wishes. I have already alluded
352 to the clever way in which the Blacks trace the circumference of a circle on the ground (I. p. 126); the same natural instinct enables them to model perfect spheres. It is astonishing to see the beautiful symmetry of these utensils, although these *pots* are fashioned without the aid of a wheel or measuring instrument of any kind.

323 The jar, still soft and wet, is put on one side. Now is the time to decorate it with very simple designs, generally triangular, after which the industrious worker leaves it to dry for a few hours, taking care to cover the opening with a thin piece of wood to prevent the wind from spoiling the shape. As soon as she dares to lift it without danger, she turns it over, smooths the bottom (tshaku), which will harden in its turn, and places the

Constructing the furnace. *Phot. A. Burd.*

pot in a hut where it continues to dry in the shade. On the day she chooses for the firing, she digs a hole in the sand, arranges the various pieces of pottery in it and covers them with a heap of small pieces of wood or with palm pith ; this she sets alight, and keeps a quick clear fire burning until she considers the firing is finished, when she leaves her red and glowing utensils to cool down
323 (hola). The cooling accomplished, she begins to inspect the
386 result of her work. This is the psychological moment! How many have cracked, how many have withstood the testing? The worthless ones are smashed, and the perfect ones reserved to be

painted a brilliant brown, which is done with a decoction of the 323
bark of the mangrove (nkapa) and of the nkanye, boiled with a 386
kind of creeper (mahlehlwa), which has a sticky sap. Such is the primitive method followed in the manufacture of all Native pottery.

The process of firing being often unsuccessful, taboos are 323
plentiful in the manufacture. When women collect the clay, 777

The furnace ready. *Phot. A. Borel.*

only one of them digs and gives it to the others; should each make haste to dig for herself, this would bring mishap: the pots would break. If no accident happens and the firing is successful, these women will say: "She who dug the other day has a lucky hand (a ni boko dja hombe). Let her dig again another time." When the clay has been hidden in the ground, at the foot of a tree, it is also taboo to tread on the spot, when walking through the village. When the heap of wood is ready, the pottereas will call a little child, an innocent creature, to set fire to the furnace. She shows it where to place the glowing ember,

323 and, if the result of the firing is good, she will always call the same
777 child on future occasions (1).

787 If all these precautions prove useless, and the woman sees that she is not succeeding, she will go so far as to consult the bones, and, if they so order, she will make an offering to her gods, gods of the father, gods of the mother, or possessing gods (Part VI), if she is a spirit-possessed woman, as the bones may

323

Result of the firing. *Phot. A. Borel.*

787 declare. People will say to her : "You manufacture pots and sell them and do not give anything to your gods : that will not do!" So she will offer a piece of clothing, a coin, etc., at the altar *(gandjelo)*.

323 (1) Meta, the Rikatla potteress has entirely given up the manufacture of pottery of
476 late years. All her pots cracked, because, she said, she was the only woman practising this art in the country. In her former home, everybody made pots and in this way the potteresses "strengthened each other (tiyisana)." Moreover when a pot was heard cracking in the furnace, somebody ran to the hut and collected a little of the dust on the floor and threw it into the other pots, and this prevented them from being spoiled. It was too far for Meta to run to her former home to get the dust—so she gave up her trade! The case of poor Meta is a good illustration of the collective character of industrial pursuits amongst primitive peoples.

Another taboo in connection with the making of a pot is this: 323
when a pot has been fired, it must still be *tested*; this operation 753
is called *ku khangula*, or *kwangula*, and is performed in the following way. A little water is poured into it, and the potteress washes it thoroughly; then some grains of maize are cooked in it and thrown away. This is to remove the *nkwangu*, or *nkhangu*, viz., the danger attending the use of an untested, unpurified pot: people using such an implement would suffer from an eruption on the arms, and even on the whole body. To give any one food to eat from a pot which has not been *khangula* is looked on as an act of hatred. [578]

Phot. D. Lenoir.

Pots used to draw water.

The pot, or boiler, used for 323
cooking is called *nhlambeto* (yin-tin, Ro.) or *mbita* (yin-tin Dj.); 415
it has a very wide opening. Smaller boilers are also made, even quite diminutive ones called *shihlembetwana* or *shimbitana*. The beer jar (khuwana, dji-ma), illustrated on page 101, No. 13, is of the same size as the boiler, but can be easily recognised by its straighter neck. Enormous beer jars are sometimes manufactured, perfect amphoras (hotjo, yin-tin), but they rarely stand the firing and are therefore scarce and expensive, fetching as much as ten shillings each: they may be two feet high; the ordinary cooking pot does not cost more than sixpence. The porringers, or large plates, are called *mbenga* (mu,-mi; No. 12) (1).

Shibindji clay is also used for making very short *pipes* (shipana), 276
prettily shaped, probably in imitation of the European cutty. Smoking does not seem to be an indigenous habit; in the interior

(1) No. 11, on page 101, shows a small vase modelled by a young Native girl, an inmate from Natal (Station of Inanda).

276 one rarely sees a Native with a pipe in his mouth, tobacco being almost exclusively used in the form of snuff. The only smokers in the country are the old women of Lourenço Marques, and the youthful dandies who try to imitate the Transvaal Boers!

532 Clay modelling is perhaps the art for which South Africans
857 are best gifted. In all the tribes children amuse themselves by

A young Spelonken artist and his work. *Phot. J. Dexter.*

modelling oxen, human beings, wheels, even waggons, sometimes very cleverly. I knew a boy in Shiluvane who was a true artist and could copy anything he saw, for instance a white lady with her hat on (1). The accompanying plate shows one of these young artists, from Spelonken, with his handiwork.

(1) The same boy, without having received any special training, could cut out a frock, and used to make the dresses of all the brides of the congregation. He had a wonderful eye for form and would have made his mark, had he received a professional training. But he died from consumption contracted in the towns!

II. *Basket-work.*

The milala palm, whose sap supplies the tipplers of Pessene with 137
their famous busura (II. p. 42), is a very valuable tree to the 285
Ba-Ronga, as it is of its leaves that the greater part of the baskets in use by this tribe are made. The basket-maker gathers the most perfect leaves. These are not like the mimale folioles, growing opposite one another on a central nerve. The *milala* (plur. of nala) are true palms, the leaves consisting of folioles from half an inch to an inch in width radiating from a common centre, which itself grows on the end of a long peduncle.

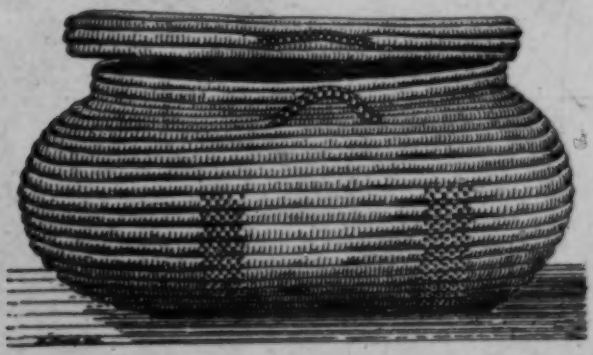
These trees are found in the woods of Mabota, Nondwane, Tembe, on the Coast, and in the low plains of the North Eastern Zoutpansberg, etc., sometimes in large numbers. Returning 285
home, the workman (here we employ the masculine, basket-making being essentially man's work) spreads out the leaves in the sun to dry, having previously straightened the folioles somewhat, separating (hangela) them one from the other ; when they dry, they turn a light grey colour with a shining polished surface, and are then hung up in the hut where they will be sheltered from the dew and ready for use. When the work is to be started, the folioles are torn (phatlula) from their peduncle, and, with a sharp pointed instrument, are split longitudinally into strips or straws of 1/8 or 2/8 of an inch wide, the ribs of the leaves (nhlamalala, yin-tin) being carefully kept ; these delicate wands have their special use.

The Ronga basket makers are very fond of decorating their 285
baskets with *designs in black*. These triangular and square 531
patterns are produced by artistically plaiting dark and light 386
coloured straws, and are not painted on after the baskets are manufactured. The straw is dyed black in the following manner : it is soaked in the black ooze (ntjhaka) of the marshes for two weeks, and then laid out to dry, which gives it a reddish-brownish colour. This hue is deepened by a second treatment. The leaves of a shrub called *mpsabutimu* are gathered and placed in a

pot with the red brown milala in alternate layers, until the utensil is full : water is then poured over them and the whole put on to boil ; very soon the straw becomes a brilliant black. The basket-maker has now only to pull up some of the grass growing in the hollow near the lake, dry it, and he is ready to commence work. 285 531 386

In the accompanying plates illustrations will be found of the principal specimens of this art, stereotyped shapes which have passed on from generation to generation, doubtless from 285

[415]



Ngula.

prehistoric times, and are called respectively : *ngula*, *hwama*, *shihumdju*, *lihlelo* and *nhluto*.

The *ngula* (yin-tin) (p. 27) takes the place of honour, and is the most prized of all the Ronga baskets. It requires days or even weeks of continuous work to make one, but the result is worthy of the time and labour bestowed upon it ; I brought with me to Europe several *ngula* of various sizes. The particular one shown below, is oval and measures six feet two inches in circumference ; but there are many much larger, both spheroid and ovoid. This is how they make or, to use the technical Native term, "tlhaba" — "pierce" this basket. The workman takes his dried grass and plaits it, lengthening the plait according to requirements, as he goes along : this plait is bound round, and entirely hidden, by a special binding of palm leaf straw, thus forming a thickish cord of about half an inch in diameter ; the cord is soon doubled back upon itself, and forms a centre, around which

are fixed several concentric rings ; each inner ring is pierced with a kind of awl and the straw of the outer ring pushed into the hole, thus fixing them securely together. Hence the expression *thlaba ngula*, to pierce a ngula. The bottom is soon finished, and differs but little in appearance from an ordinary straw-mat, such as 285

Manufacturing a ngula in Spelonken. *Phot. P. Ramet.*

is used to prevent hot dishes spoiling the polish of the European dining table. The sides are made in the same manner by superposing rings of the straw cord, giving the basket a well rounded convex shape, after which two or three rings are superimposed perpendicularly, to form the opening, the mouth of the chef d'œuvre. The cover, made in the same way, must fit exactly over the mouth of the basket ; in fact it should require to be slightly forced over it : the fastening will then hold better. On the upper part of the basket, as also on the cover, the manufacturer has carefully plaited four handles, two corresponding pairs, those

285 on the basket pointing upward while those on the cover point downward, so that they meet. Two rings are also plaited, and passed round through each pair of handles, forming simple but solid hinges on which the cover can turn without ever being separated from the basket, of which it is henceforward an integral part. A well-made ngula is absolutely impermeable, and not the smallest hole can be found in it. I think it would even hold water. Such a basket is surely a work of art!

285 The ngula is the Native's Savings Bank. In it he keeps all
415 his riches, the best grains of maize, or the best grown monkey nuts, reserved for seed at the next rainy season ; also the material with which the women will deck themselves on grand occasions, etc. The enormous basket reposes at the far end of the hut, on a low table (buhiri) specially designed for the purpose. The ngula of the northern clans, where palm leaves are not to be found, is more rounded and the palm straw replaced by solid dry grass. (See the adjoining illustration, p. 121.)

285 While the ngula is enthroned in the hut, and is never moved out
415 of it, the *hwama* (yin-tin, Ro.) or *funeko* (Dj.) (p. 124 No. 4 and 6), on the contrary, is the wallet of the traveller. It is a square bag
293 made of plaited palm straw. The cover is about as large as the bag itself and, so that it may not be lost (which might easily happen while travelling), it is secured by the string used as a shoulder strap to carry the *hwama*, this being passed through it. The bag can thus be opened by sliding the cover right along the string, but it cannot be entirely separated from it. These bags are of different sizes, some more ornamental than others. A round variety is also made by a certain basket-maker of Masana. He makes three or four projecting horns to his hwama, which then takes a cylindrical shape, and has the advantage of being able to stand upright when placed on the ground. This bag or basket, is called *shiraba* or *baki* (No. 2) ; it is the kind used by the magicians for carrying their medicines, and bones.

285 The third classic shape of Ronga basket-ware (No. 3) is the
482 *shihundju* (Ro.) *shirundju* (Dj.), the conical basket employed by the women for transporting maize, clay and manure. (It is by no means certain that the shihundju is cleaned out between

these several loads!) It is made in much the same way as the roof of a hut, point downwards, ribs of folioles taking the place of sticks. This basket may be said to be the special property of the women (1) : they are very clever at balancing it on their heads ; it is very rarely that a woman, old or young, lets her shihundju fall. When empty it is turned upside down and serves as a hat. It is a really pretty sight to see the young girls starting out for the fields with their conical baskets standing straight up on their fuzzy locks. When they are travelling and arrive at a friendly village, they hold themselves perfectly upright, shooting glances here and there without stooping or turning their heads, till their friends rush out to meet them, seize their shihundju and place them on the ground, in small holes which they hastily make in the sand. This is the first duty of hospitality amongst women! 285 482 574

The *lihlelo* (No. 8) is used by cooks for winnowing the maize. Palm leaves not being sufficiently strong for this purpose, the lihlelo is made of the roots, of a tree called *nukanhlelo* (a kind of mimosa), cut into strips, and is coated with a reddish brown varnish prepared from mangrove bark. It is the lihlelo, or rather a smaller basket of the same sort called *ndjewane*, that the housewife takes with her when picking the small wild cucumbers, or gathering the various herbs which serve for the supplementary noontide luncheon. 285 415 243

In the northern clans one often meets with a spherical basket made of the same material as the winnowing basket and covered with an ordinary lihlelo. 285

Besides the foregoing, the Ba-Ronga have two or three baskets which are not in such general use : the *nhlaba*, a kind of plaited bag with interstices between the palm straws, for carrying fish, the *ntjaba*, etc.

Another article, which might, at first sight, be taken for a basket, but which serves quite a different purpose, is the *nhluto*, the strainer. (No. 1.) This unusually shaped strainer is a sort of long bag of plaited straw into which is poured the beer made 285 415 273

(1) The male members of the family are called "ba matlhari, those of the assagai" and the female "ba-shihundju, those of the basket," as these objects are characteristic of each sex.

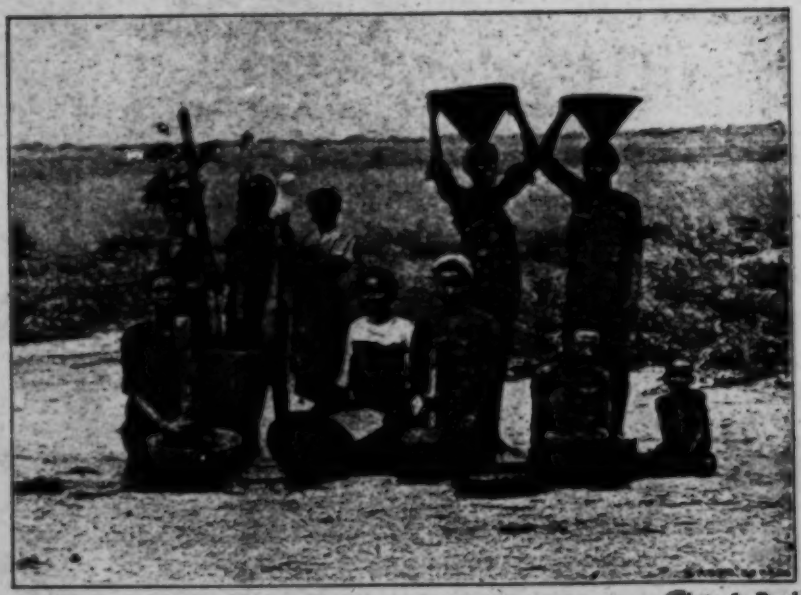
1 [See p. 124 -- Analyst]

285
415

Thonga basket work.
(One sixth of the natural size.)

285 from maize : the particles floating in this liquor are caught by the
415 straws overlapping the top, or accumulate at the bottom, whilst
273 the liquid filters through the interstices of the plait. The thick sediment remaining in the strainer can then be squeezed so as to extract all the beer. This straining and squeezing has the effect of rendering the drink much more alcoholic (p. 40).

285 The art of basket-making is by no means commonplace. Practised by men only, it is, in certain families, in certain villages,



Phot. A. Breul.

Carrying lihlelo baskets, grinding and pounding mealies.

handed down from father to son. Children with a natural taste for this sort of work are initiated into its mysteries by their parents. But no young man is ever forced to take up the profession of a basket-maker. His heart (mbilu) must be in it! Amongst primitive peoples art, and even industry, always remains a matter of individual genius. It never becomes a mechanical output, as is the case in the factories of the civilised world : for this reason it retains a character of individuality, sincerity and natural beauty, not always to be met with in the products of XXth century European industry!

285 In the environs of Lourenço Marques, in our sub-station of Masana, lived the family of Tumbene, famous for its ngula. One of the sons inherited the father's talent. He was an evangelist in our Mission, and, when he was but a lad, people came to him from far and wide, to have their old baskets or broken lihlelo repaired.

Although basket-making is confined to certain families who more or less monopolise the business, without, however, preventing any one from practising the art, the manufacture of *straw mats*, or matting (*likuku*, li-tin (Ro.), *rikuku* (Dj.), is very wide-spread. Many men know how to "tlhaba likuku" — "pierce a mat." For this the Ba-Ronga collect a quantity of solid rushes of at least 3 feet in length, (myriads of them grow in the plains), and pierce holes through them, all along the rush, at intervals of 3 inches, passing strings through the holes. A net-work of string, half an inch wide, is run down the two sides at the edges to prevent fraying. When new, these mats are of a beautiful golden yellow,
285 but the smoke in the huts soon turns them brown. Every Native
513 possesses his own mat, on which he sleeps rolled up in his rug. Women possess two, an old one, used during menstruation, and a better one on which they usually sleep (I. p. 187).

285 The *string* (ngoti, yin-tin) used for these mats is made as follows : the leaves of the nala palm are picked when very young and tender (nshunya) : a knife is passed all along the folioles, in order to remove the green fleshy covering ; the parenchyma, composed of very light but tough fibres, (nkwampa), then remains. The workman takes two small bundles of these fibres and rolls them (yahliya) together with the palm of his hand along his thigh, twisting, intertwining, firmly uniting them, continually adding fresh fibres as he goes along : in this way he can make a string as long and as thick as he likes.

The following are the technical expressions employed for different kinds of basket-work.

Luka (plaiting) for ntjaba, shihundju, lihlelo, ndjewana, hwama nhalaba, tjala (drying floor), shitlanta (store house).

Tlhaba (piercing) for ngula and likuku.

Betsha (tying) for the small *brooms* also made of palm straws (mpsayelo, No. 5), and the reed walls (khumbi, dji-ma).

Bangela (making) for the *bunana*, a sort of hammock, made 285
of plaited milala which is hung to the branches of the trees and 513
sometimes in summer used for sleeping in, to escape the mosquitoes which swarm inside the huts.

Runga (sewing) for the boats (byatsho, dji-ma). The ancient 285
Native boats built before the appearance of nails, hammers and 501
saws, were made of pieces of wood securely tied together. Some 322
of these antiquated craft are still to be seen on the Maputju river.

On the rivers up country, boats are frequently made of a large piece of curved bark, bent on both sides, which will hold two or three persons. I crossed the great Letaba in a boat of this description. Such boats are also used for storing water. Where mimale branches (or nervules) are procurable, they are tied together so as to form a raft called *shikhakhafu*. These are used on the Nkomati River, and on the lakes in Ronga territory. Big rafts made of trunks of trees fastened together, and called *magudhlwana*, were used in former times on the sea, when going to meet the White men, the Ba-Godji. (See later.) They are now no longer used and there is scarcely one to be found. In the [177] neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques the Natives now build their boats on the European model. The fishermen cut down forked branches, which serve as ribs, to which they nail planks. They are wonderfully clever at this work ; one man, Sam Matlombe, nicknamed the "King of the Bay," was particularly expert at it.

The sewn boats of olden times might well be included under the heading of basket-ware. Those of to-day belong definitely to another branch of industry, and will afford us a natural point of transition from basket work to wooden articles.

III. *Wood-carving.*

It is the *nkuhla*, mafureira tree, Trichilia emetica, as we have 322
already seen, that is used by the Natives of these parts for their 531
wood-carving. If the name of this tree is very hard to pronounce, its wood is, to an equal degree, soft and possesses the great

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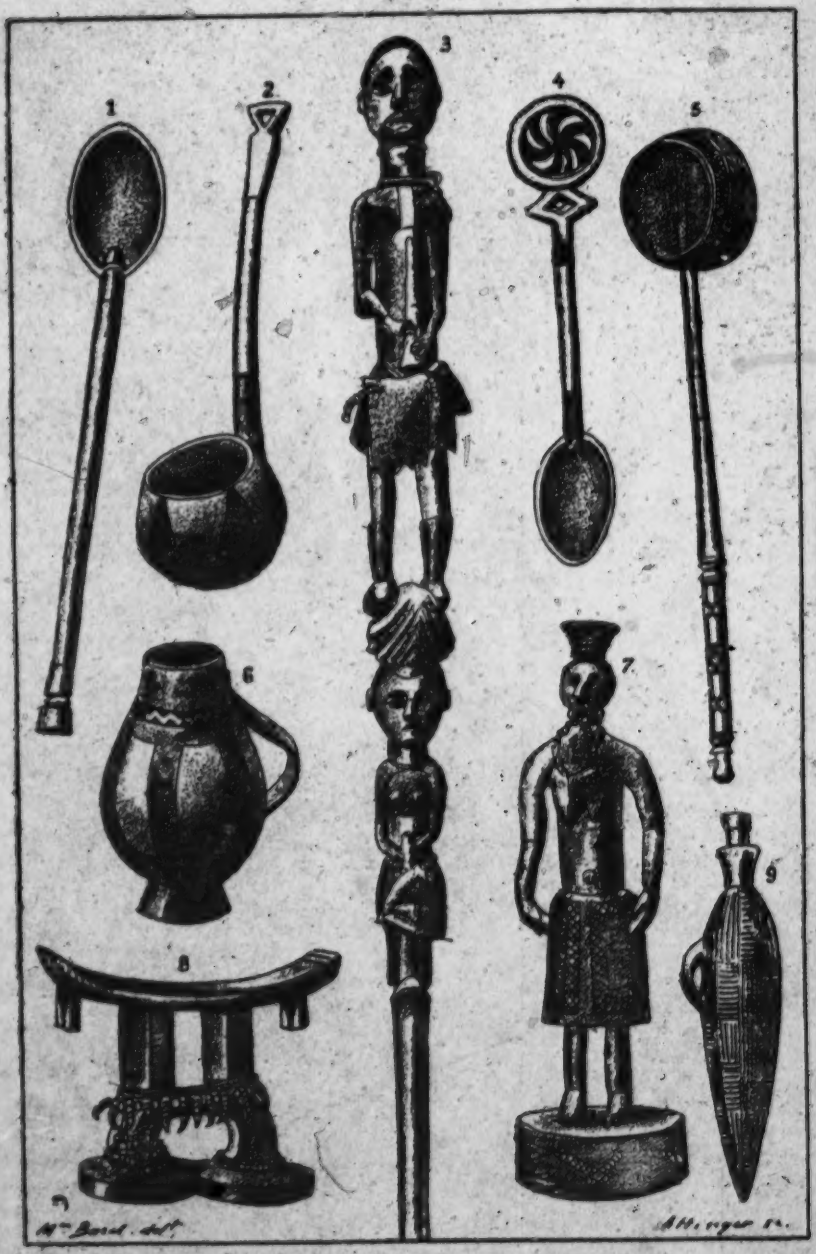

Thonga carvings.

(One seventh of the natural size.)

advantage of not easily splitting or cracking when being dried. If Nature had not bestowed on the Thongas this excellent tree, who knows if they would have ever thought of executing the works of art which are depicted in the accompanying illustration!

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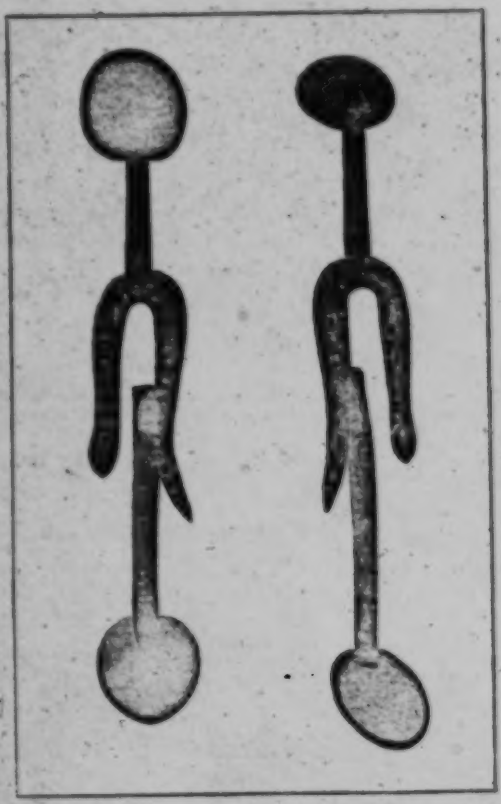


Carved spoon from Maputju country.

However before thinking of art, they began by cutting, or fashioning, with their small knives, articles of every day use: spoons (nkombe, mu mi) for instance, (see illustrations of carvings, No. 1), made in several sizes; the big one is used for serving out the potful of maize amongst the rightful claimants, and the small one for conveying food to the mouth when the hands are ritually soiled (I. p. 193). One often finds really well carved spoons. I give drawings of two which are particularly interesting; the first shows a sort of spiral, or catherine-wheel decoration at the top of the handle (No. 4); the other, brought by Dr. Audeoud from the Maputju country, has a carved snake as an ornamental motive. Spoons are all ornamented, even the plainest, with designs in black, burnt into the wood with a red-hot iron. For beer, ladles are used, made of a single piece of wood; these are generally decorated with large black triangles (No. 2). In Inhambane and Quelimane, the Natives make them of cocoa nut

shells, on which they carve curious geometrical figures (No. 5). 322
Goblets (ntcheko, mu-mi) are generally made with a handle. 531
(No. 6). 415

In the accompanying plate, (p. 131), two spoons are seen hanging to a *chain* made of links carved from nkuhlu wood. This is a wonderful product of Native art. These chains are often met with, especially in the Northern clans, some with links of six inches in length, the whole attaining to a length of many yards. The one here shown is six feet long, with links of only three inches. The special point to be noted in this "objet d'art" is that it has been carved from a single piece of wood and the artist had to make no mistake from the very beginning; a single slip of the knife would have broken the whole chain and made it useless. European joiners told me they doubted whether an ordinary workman would be able to carve such a chain. I was told that these spoon-chains were used by two individuals who wished to form an alliance; they passed the chain over their shoulders and, so united, ate from the same plate. This, however, is mere play and has no ritual value.

Between the two spoons, a kind of *bowl* is seen, almost perfectly round and prettily decorated. It was used by a man who had been possessed, and who washed his face in it every day to cool his head and appease the spirits. Thongas also carve large dishes, sometimes prettily decorated, though not so attractive as those of the Ba-Rotse of the Zambezi. I possess one of two feet in length by 10 inches in width. These are used for serving meat.

I must not forget the *mortars* (tshuri, dji-ma) usually made of mahogany, or of nkanye, and the pestles (musi, mu-mi) made of nkonono. The former are often adorned with triangular carvings.

The same style of decoration is to be seen on the *calabashes* which Natives use as bottles. The calabash, as every one knows, is a sort of gourd composed of two spheres of unequal size with a narrow connection between them. By an ingenious system of supports, placed under the gourd during its growth, Natives succeed in imparting to the upper sphere the shape of an elongated neck. There are many varieties of calabash, some small, furnished

with a long projection and used for drawing the bukanye from the large jars. They are specially kept for this purpose! (See p. 101, No. 7, and also I, p. 400). In Vol. I. p. 50, I have given an 322 531 415

Carved chain and bowl, (Neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques).
(One fifth of the natural size.)

illustration of these bukanye calabashes, called *ntjeko* (mu-mi), very prettily decorated by a Tembe artist. The black designs are burnt in and represent huts, birds, palm trees and, last but not least, two warriors fighting! The white dots are beads inserted

2: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

415

Thonga kitchen ware. *Phot. H. Gras.*

in the soft bark of the calabash. The largest calabash on this plate measures 21 inches in length and 7 in width. 322 531

Some plainer calabashes are Nos. 8 and 9 of the illustration of ornaments. Others are simply shells of sala (shikutja), (p. 16), with a good-sized hole cut in them for an opening (Nos. 6 and 10); a circular piece, say one third the size of the other, makes a capital cover; a string passes through the bottom of the calabash and the middle of the cover, fastening the two together. When this is knotted on top of the latter the *lard tin* is securely closed. This kind of calabash is generally thus designated, for it is in these round balls that the mafureira grease is kept, to which I have previously referred (p. 18). They are hung up in the roof of the hut where they swing to and fro in the smoke and become well browned. The young folks amuse themselves by carving designs on these shells. 415

Maakhelu's stick.

The artistic element is still more striking in the *snuff boxes* (ngulana, yin-tin), carved in ebony, which the chiefs are fond of carrying; the one depicted (p. 128, No. 9) came to me from Mavabane who was, for a time, chief of the Khosa clan. It is also conspicuous in the strange *pillows* (shidamu) on which the Ba-Ronga rest their heads at night. Let us contemplate this article (No. 8) with the respect it deserves! It is probably on this description of pillow that primitive humanity in all parts of the world has dreamed its dreams! We see it sculptured on the Egyptian monuments, above or by the side of princely couches. We find also among the relics of the lake-dwellers stone objects of a similar shape, which were doubtless used for the same purpose. The Bantu has adhered to this piece of prehistoric furniture all through the ages. 276 532 322 352 322

322 through the ages. The specimen in the illustration[1] was bought
352 from a young man, a traveller, on the road; the bird's claws,
777 beads and other articles tied all round it, doubtless hunting trophies, are plainly to be seen. He had the advantage of literally

Thonga statuettes.
(One third of the natural size.)

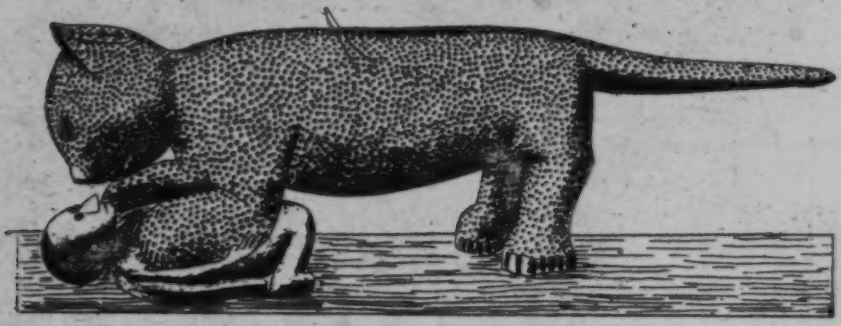
resting on his laurels, and naively believed they would bring him good luck while sleeping.

532 The Thonga artist has even dared to portray the *human form*,
481 and the result of his audacity, however grotesque, is not without
322 originality, and even a certain characteristic style, which may be recognised in all their statuettes. More often they content themselves with carving a man's head, with his crown, on the top of their walking sticks. I here give[2] an illustration of Mankhelu's stick, which was a very old one, dating from 1850,

1 [The Thonga pillow -- See p. 128, No. 8. -- Analyst]

2 [p. 133]

532 at least, and shows the primitive style without any European
481 influence. Sometimes they carve the whole body from head to
322 foot ; (as grapes do not grow in their country the use of the classic vine-leaf is quite unknown). No. 3 represents a stick with a man and a woman, the one standing on the other's head, the stronger sex treading the weaker under foot! Large statuettes, of at least one and a half to two feet in height and broad in proportion, are to be seen in the Neuchâtel Ethnographical Museum, which without doubt contains the largest collection of Thonga implements in the world, having been plentifully provided with them by the mission-



A panther devouring an Englishman.
(One twelfth of the natural size.)

aries of French Switzerland No. 7 is smaller, and represents a woman having on her head the typical conical basket, the pride of
532 the workers in the fields, and of the cooks. The five small figures
322 on the accompanying plate are very amusing indeed. They were carved by an artist of Movumbi (near Rikatla), who asserted that the man on the right was a Banyan. The other figures are Natives, men with their wax crowns, and the ladula garment (p. 96) adorned with beads ; one is a woman carrying a child!

The finest specimen of Native art that I ever saw is the carving of a *huge panther* about to devour a human being, the work of Muhlati, a sculptor living in the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques. This artist, who was very proud of his work, and asked a tolerably high price for it, claimed to be able to carve anything and everything : birds, four-footed beasts, or men. He was famous throughout the land for his talent. Nothing more quaint

[see p. 128. — Analyst]

532 could be imagined than this large spotted creature, (the spots being
322 obtained as usual by burning with a hot iron), planting his claws in the flesh of a man, (an Englishman, I was told by the inspired author of this group!), and glaring at him with two great round eyes, not very symmetrical! With touching forethought, this modern Phidias has made the posterior half of the tail quite independent of the rest of the animal. A tenon and circular

[501]

Thonga canoe. *Phot. A. Borel.*

socket allow the caudal appendage to be so neatly adjusted that the joint is hardly visible! Muhlati told me how the idea of a removable tail had occurred to him. He thought that if ever his masterpiece had to be packed up and cross the ocean, it would thus be more easily cased. This can hardly be called the idea of a savage! Besides, the work itself would never have been accomplished had there been no Whites in the country. Evidently the sculptor, indolent like all his race, would not have worked day in and day out at carving such an animal as a play-thing for his children. He concluded that his talent might well bring him in some money; it was mercenary considerations that urged him on to the execution of the work, and no mere love of art; nevertheless

532 I do not believe any foreign influence was exercised in the
322 conception of the idea. His group is absolutely original, and, as such, shows us to what lengths the sculptural talent of the Ba-Ronga can go. This group is now in the Neuchâtel Museum.
313 While statuettes are the most elaborate products of Native
532 sculpture, *canoes* (shene (Dj.) are the largest. I have already
322 mentioned the taboos connected with the cutting of the mahogany and nkwenga trees when used for this purpose (p. 19). Other trees, the mpfubu and the muhlu, can be cut without these precautions being taken.

IV. *Metallurgy.*

172 When and how did iron reach the Ba-Ronga ? Probably we
412 shall never be able to ascertain. Tradition has it that the primitive
316 inhabitants of Nondwane, the Honwana, who cooked elephants in order to tear them in pieces, had no iron implements. Some authorities tell us that the hoe in use in olden times was of an exceedingly hard wood, wrenched I know not how from a species of teak tree called *ntjhiba*. The Natives of these parts must have passed directly from the age of wood to that of iron. There was certainly a stone age, comparable to that of the lake dwellers, in Cape Colony, where a great quantity of silex and of polished stones have been found. I never heard of any such implements having been used by the Thongas, nor found within their territory. As regards the bronze age, they have known the use of copper for a long time, but it cannot be proved that they knew it before iron.

177 Iron and other metals seem to have been first introduced in
439 Delagoa Bay by the "Godji" traders and whale fishers, of whom
316 I shall shortly speak ; they are the first White visitors whom the Natives now remember. The Ba-Ronga used to exchange fowls and other domestic animals for hoes, brass bracelets, and copper brought by the strangers, and they had found out how to make copper wire by forging (fula) the pieces bought from the "Godji."

316 Later on wrecked boats provided Native smiths with iron to make
325 hoes, axes, etc. In certain villages there were regular forges,
412 (Matlharin, near Mbengelen Island, Matjolo etc.). The hoes
436 were in the well-known form of an ace of spades and were fixed into a wooden handle, as are also the axe- and battle axes (I. p. 453). But the principal supply of iron came from the Transvaal Mountains, especially from the Northern Zoutpansberg, where the Bveshas have practised the art of mining iron ore for an unknown period. These Sutho hoes have played a great part in the history of the Thonga tribe, having been extensively used as currency for lobolo purposes.

325 These Bveshas — the word is said to be a Thonga corruption of Venda — built their furnaces in ant-hills, as shown in the accompanying illustration supplied by M. H. Gros, near Iron Mountain, East of the Speionken district. They excavated three holes under the furnace, and blew into them by means of bellows made of a skin, the air being expelled through an antelope horn. The ore, broken in small pieces and mixed with charcoal, was smelted, crushed, smelted a second time, crushed again and made into hoes and axes, etc. Who had taught the Vendas this art? Did they learn it from the Ma-Lemba, that curious tribe, half Semitic in its customs, which invaded the Northern Transvaal during the XVIIIth century? Nobody knows for certain. I am under the impression that this art is older than that, as the Lebombo Natives, who invaded the Nondwane in the XVIth century, seem to have possessed iron weapons. The origin of iron and the date of its introduction into South Africa is still a mystery.

326 Among the ornaments illustrated will be found a very pretty belt (No. 1).[1] It is the work of a young man named Philemon, living in the outskirts of Lourenço Marques, who employed his leisure moments in making objects of this description with twisted wires of iron, brass and copper, bent in festoons and
[177] fastened with small tongues of metal. European influence is doubtless very marked in these belts, but still they possess a certain cachet of their own. Amongst the Zulus as in our tribe, large cups of various descriptions, including egg-cups, are

[1] [p. 101 -- Analyst]

Phot. H. Gren.

Native Ironfoundry in Zoutpansberg.

325

326 manufactured, and it is evident that, in this branch, Native art is capable of considerable development. Their method of fastening the blades of assagais to the handles with iron wire is also very ingenious. Sometimes they cover their ebony sticks from top to bottom with a delicate network of steel and brass wire. A Native expert in wire work once mended the stock of my sporting [439] gun, which was broken, and made a wonderful job of it. This wire, so extensively used for bracelets, was formerly made by Native blacksmiths, but now they buy it at Lourenço Marques or from the Hindu traders.

D. COMMERCE.

437 Thongas have an inborn inclination for trade and have always been addicted to it. Before there was question of any currency, when hoes were not yet procurable, or the *ritlatla* bracelet brought by the Whites (I. p. 385), or the copper stick called *lirale* (1) melted by the Palaora Ba-Sutho, they knew how to buy (shaba) and to sell (shabisa), viz., to exchange their primitive produce. A mat was bartered for a fowl and the thrifty savage thought : "This is good business ; the hen will lay eggs and hatch chickens and this will bring me a profit (bindjula)." A shihundju basket was also exchanged for a hen. Another way of buying was adopted when dealing with pots ; the pot was filled with mealies by the buyer and the contents left to the potter as corresponding to the value of the pot. For monkey-nuts, not husked, the pot had to be filled twice ; for more precious products, such as sorghum and Kafir corn, half of it only was measured out. I have myself witnessed some transactions of this kind amongst the Nkunas. If the pot broke when first used, the potter had to give another in its place.

439 But this primitive trade became much more extensive when the Whites made their appearance. Delagoa Bay was one of the

(1) Compare my article in *Folklore*, 24 June 1903.

first spots visited and occupied by Europeans in South Africa, 439
and a considerable Native trade developed there in the XVIth century, according to Portuguese documents. These Portuguese records show that, as far back as 1545, Lourenço Marques and Antonio Caldeira made a commercial exploration of the Bay and tried to establish regular exchanges with the Natives. These relations were not continuous, but in 1650 there were five factories in the vicinity of Delagoa, on the island of Inyak, at Sheffin, on the Nkomati (Manhisa) and on both sides of the Bay. In 1721 the Dutch settled there and remained for fourteen years. The Austrians also stationed a garrison on Inyak Island in 1781, but this stronghold was destroyed by a Portuguese frigate. Since the beginning of the XIXth century the Portuguese occupation has been more continuous. The only reason for Whites settling at Delagoa was, of course, the opportunity of traffic with the Natives, and the presence of foreigners doubtless stimulated a certain commercial development among the Ba-Ronga and the tribes of the interior. This is, at any rate, asserted by a Portuguese who visited Lourenço Marques at the end of the XVIIIth century, and wrote an account of his impressions to Don F. Amaro de San Thomé, Prelate of Mozambique. His description may appear somewhat highly coloured to those who know the localities, but I quote the following passages which bear upon our subject :

"On the Southern shore of the Bay resides King Capella (a surname bestowed by the Portuguese on the royal family of Tembe) who is now known as Antonio, (perhaps the Muhari of the Natives). He is very powerful, and has always with him a merchant who trades in ivory... To the North of the river is our factory, where we have a fort and as many as 170 soldiers. The King of Matolla (Matjolo) is very powerful, and well supplied with all necessaries. His village consists of over 400 huts. (This probably means all the villages of the country collectively). It is here that the inhabitants of the mountains bring for sale gold and copper and ivory, for which they have to pay dues. This Monarch owns a province called Cherinda (Shirindja). He obtains from it quantities of ivory... I saw in the house of the King of Maouote (Mabota) two large chests full of amber. About thirty or forty days' journey up the river (Nkomati) dwells the

439 Grand Caxa (Cacha, doubtless Khosa, in the country of Khosene), who is a kind of emperor. It is here that all trading vessels come (1). He dispenses hospitality to all the merchants who wish to buy ivory, gold, rhinoceros horns, hippopotamus' teeth, or copper, articles which they obtain particularly cheaply. A great number of negroes from the kingdom of Quitève (not far from Beira) come down from the mountains to this village for purposes of barter. They bring a large quantity of gold... The Grand Caxa and his people are in continuous relations with the Imperialists (the Austrians who occupied the Bay in 1781), who make large profits out of them. Every month two or three vessels, laden with black clothing and glass ware, arrive here for traffic with the Natives. These two rivers (the Maputju and the Nkomati) can supply each year, from my observation, sufficient ivory, gold, rhinoceros horns and hippopotamus' teeth to load more than twelve ships... The whole shore of the Bay is thickly inhabited with people who transact a large business in amber, and go to sell it to the King Matolla, Maouote and the Grand Caxa."

This description, though perhaps somewhat extravagant, proves that in the XVIIIth century the Ba-Ronga were doing a considerable trade.

It is interesting, in view of these White records, to note what Natives themselves remember regarding their trade in former times. According to them, the first White people they dealt with did not dare come on shore. They were whalefishers and gave the Makaneta people whale flesh to eat. The Ba-Ronga used to go and meet them in the Bay, on rafts made of stems of trees tied together (p. 127). They said : "We go to Godji ;" *Godji* meant that kind of trade. Blacks and Whites could not understand each other. However, the trade was not " silent trade," as has been the case in other quarters. They managed to communicate by gestures, and the Natives obtained mainly metals from these sailors, the brass ritlatla, iron hoes, pieces of copper which they made into wire, etc. Who were these strangers? The Natives cannot say for certain, but think that they were Englishmen, as the

(1) These ships, it must be understood, were in all probability very small craft carrying at the most about five tons of merchandise. During the greater part of the year it is impossible to ascend the Nkomati higher than Magule (where the river forms an elbow) with anything drawing two feet of water.

name *Ba-Godji* is still commonly applied by them to English 439
people. After these Whites, the Natives remember the arrival of the Moslems, who came with their "vessels with an elevated tail," (even to-day Arab dhows have a raised stern answering this description), called *mapengayi* and were the first to land and to undertake a regular commercial exploitation of the country. They soon learnt to speak with the Natives, and to make use of them in their trade, sending them far away into the interior to barter ivory and skins against hoes, beads, clothing, and, later on, powder and bullets.

Whatever may have been the order of arrival of these strangers, one fact is certain : the Ba-Ronga of Delagoa Bay have acted as intermediaries between the Whites and the tribes in the interior for a considerable time, the Mpfumo, Nondwane, Mabota and Hlanganu (1) Natives being particularly engaged in this trade, and going as far as Mosapa (Ba-Ndjao country) and Bvesha (Ba-Venda country), to exchange goods.

The *commercial journeyings*, though they are now a thing of the past, are well remembered by the old people, with all the particular customs accompanying them. The Ba-Sutho called these travellers *Makwapa* (Thonga pronunciation of *Magwamba*), perhaps from the name of a Thonga chief who dwelt on the Oliphant (see *Grammaire Ronga*, p. 21), or near Inhambane. The company, called *mpfhumba*, was generally led by a *ndjilashi*, viz, "the master of the expedition," to whom the Banyan entrusted goods for barter. This man had to find a certain number of carriers, who would share in the profits of the venture. The Banyans estimated the value of the goods in pounds sterling. Should the whole be worth £ 60, for instance, he put 60 mealie cobs into a trunk and the ndjilashi did the same in his own hut ; on reaching home again, he had to deliver to the Banyan money or skins or whatever he had sold the goods for, to the value of

(1) The people of Hlanganu, neighbours of Nwamba, were renowned as commercial travellers. Hence their nickname: "Ba ku hlomula fumo ba tlhaba misaba." — "Those who take the assagai and pierce the earth." They used their weapon not for fighting but for pacific purposes : the assagai served as a walking stick in their commercial journeyings. Another version is this : "Ba sheba ndlela," — "they buy the road," they do not fight, they would rather pay to be allowed to pass (I. p. 362). 437 481

439 £ 60 ; and, in case of disagreement, the 60 cobs were counted again in corroboration of the contract made. If he brought an elephant's tusk, the Banyan gave him the value of a full lobolo. Carriers received two pieces of calico as reward.

437 After having visited Kimberley, in 1870, some Thongas, having begun to understand better the advantages of trading, attempted to undertake such expeditions on their own account. But they soon gave up the experiment as the Ngonis of Muzila often robbed them of all their goods. When they were working for White men, the Ngonis were afraid to pillage the company ; on the other hand, if by chance there was a loss, it concerned the White merchant. So they preferred the system of trading for the White men.

These travelling companies had to observe many taboos in order to succeed in their expeditions, in particular the *travellers' taboos*, which have been explained I. p. 339.

533 There are several popular songs which the traders used to
539 sing on the road, or which were sung about them. One of these has already been quoted (p. 102). Here is another in which
437 the tired carriers ask their leader to allow them to return home :

Hoho! hoho! maringele wa mamano!
Hoho! hoho! dla nkambana hi muka!
Hulukati ya ndlopfu yi nga siyi fiwana!

Oho! Oho! Thou who leadest us as a mother!
Oho! Oho! Break the platter and let us go home!
The female-elephant never forsakes her young!

437 The company generally consisted of men only. The allusion to the female elephant, however, may mean that there were sometimes also women amongst them. They address the leader of the expedition, asking him to destroy the platter so that no utensils shall be left in which to prepare food, thus necessitating a return home. They are thinking besides of their little ones left behind in the village, from whom it is unnatural for them to be separated so long. The mother elephant never forsakes her little one!

CONTINUED
FROM
PRECEDING
FICHE

On their way back, they had carefully to watch a certain bird 437
called *hwati*, fish-eater ; if this bird flew in the right direction, 787
homeward, it was a hopeful sign. If it emitted its cry 825
kwekweru-kweru, (kweru means at home), or if it settled on the crown of a hut, then the travellers were happy and shouted their joyful *mikulungwane*. On the contrary, if any member of the company had died on the road, another bird, the *magudjwana*, would come and perch on the crown, with a tired air and drooping head... Then there were tears instead of shouts of joy!

These great commercial expeditions were superseded later on 439
by the *trade in skins* which the Ba-Ronga conducted, bartering them in the interior for powder or other European produce. I knew one Native who organised regular expeditions to Bilene, where he bought the skins of civet-cats with which the Zulu warriors delight to deck themselves. Thence he went into the hill country of the Swazis, or Zulus, to sell his merchandise. It was reported that he obtained scores of oxen in exchange for his precious nsimba skins. The last time, however, the venture did not turn out well, and it has not been attempted again.

Native trade, fifty years ago, consisted also in selling *wax*, and *rubber*, and tons of *nkampfi* (mafureira almonds) to the business houses at Delagoa, (the supply of ivory was exhausted years ago), but this trade has fallen off almost entirely. My impression is that Native commerce has greatly diminished during the last fifty years. So the fact is evident that civilisation, which at first gave a decided stimulus to the commercial spirit of the Thongas, has latterly almost entirely destroyed their trade. How has this been done?

One reason for this decrease in Native commerce may be 439
found in the advent of a large number of Asiatics, Banyans from 563
Goa and Bombay, who are past masters in the art of shopkeeping, and who set up in business wherever they consider there is a sufficient population to warrant the venture. Living very cheaply (rice and curry are their staple food), in any kind of shanty, selling at enormous profits, keen at making bargains, these people

1/2 D.10.2., Traders--Analysis

439 monopolise the retail trade throughout the country, and the
563 Natives are quite unable to meet this competition; they have consequently almost entirely given up all their earlier attempts at business transactions! (1)

167 A second reason why the trade of former days has almost
439 entirely disappeared is to be found in the *great economic changes* resulting from the fact that Lourenço Marques has become an important seaport, in close relation with the miners of Johannesburg who receive their supplies via Delagoa Bay. Thousands of Natives are employed in discharging the large steamers which arrive by hundreds in the roadstead. At this work a Native can earn fifteen shillings a week or more; in a short time he has made ample provision for the wants of his family and no longer finds it necessary to go to Bilene, to Zululand or Swaziland to make a living. The women too can make money by selling tomatoes and sweet potatoes to an ever increasing White population. All this is much easier

439 (1) On one occasion, in 1892, I made a list of various articles displayed for sale in and around a Banyan shop, in the district of Mahazule (to the North of Nondwane).
292 This is what Mr. Nala, a Hindu from Goa established for many years amongst the Rongas, offered to the Natives living in the neighbourhood of his primitive store.

765 *Stuffs.* These are sold by measurement taken on the individual; say, by the
584 *shikumba*, length of one arm, or by the *nkumba* or *bemba* (two arms), or by the *peça*, the entire piece, the equivalent of two bemba. The materials most in demand are called; *tingidao* (white), *mashita* (black with white stripes), *sh.landana* (all red), *shinwakana* (red and black), *mempana* (a special red stuff worn as mourning) and *malopa* (a navy blue material still more frenquently worn as mourning). Besides these are *handkerchiefs* (minturu) of various colours, principally red, a large proportion coming from the manufacturers of East Switzerland; white *blankets (gampongo*, meaning snow), for three or four shillings; coloured blankets, thicker, varying from five to seven shillings; towels, called *thawula* (an adaptation of the English word) and even some articles of ready-made clothing such as *djansi* (overcoats) at fifteen shillings! Amongst the stuffs I would more particularly note the *gangisa ntombi*, that is "for use when courting the girls", dark blue with a pattern of white flowers.

439 *Beads.* There are at least a dozen kinds to be found at Nala's; djiridja (black) mbanda (white), shingazana, shimuzana, nkankana, habo, matshimbarole, bafa, tshambo.

Sundries. Rings, fish-hooks, buttons (masowa), thread, needles, snuff boxes to be worn in the ears (tinhlanga), knives, spoons, balls of string, padlocks (makandjate) with key attached; little chains, to be hung from the belt, which tinkle when walking; bracelets (busenga, ten for a shilling); wooden spoons, combs, coils of fine iron wire; skins; a large trap for catching hyenas or other wild animals; small brass petroleum lamps; sardines at sixpence a tin, English biscuits, and last but not least, a cask of German brandy diluted (tempora) with 50% of water! This would now be replaced by three casks of Vinho colonial, one of white wine, one of red wine and one of I do not know what colour!

than collecting mafureira or wax, or tapping trees for rubber (1). 167

Moreover the fashion of going to the *Transvaal mines*, to earn money, has become so universal that a Thonga would think he had in some sort failed if he had not made a stay in town (shilungu). There, in Johannesburg, they earn £3 in the mines, or £4—£5 monthly as kitchen boys; so they despise the old primitive trading expeditions which brought less money and were attended with more danger. 439

These new economic conditions not only discourage Natives from trading on their own account, reducing them more and more to the condition of mere hired labourers, but are rapidly destroying their picturesque and interesting industry. For a few shillings they can buy European utensils. Their attractively carved spoons are replaced by ugly tin ones; their wooden tumblers by less artistic enamelled ones, their primitive plates by European ware decorated in doubtful taste. Instead of the piece of reed which they wore in their ears as a snuff box, they now buy brass cartridges, and the Thonga beauties, discarding the *tlhuhlu* fat, now anoint themselves with a scented oil imported from Europe. There may be certain advantages in these changes, but the picturesqueness of Bantu life promptly disappears, together with the incentive to develop their Native arts and crafts! 177 439

E. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ON NATIVE INDUSTRY.

It is a strange destiny, that of these African races amongst whom the civilisation of the XIXth century has appeared, effecting the most radical changes in the minds and manners of people who, for centuries, perhaps for tens of centuries, have remained in the same primitive condition, marking time, so to speak, on the same spot, or, at most, 178

(1) There are at least two species of shrubs whose sap, when hardened, produces excellent rubber. These are fairly wide-spread and M. Dewèvre, a Belgian botanist, who has made a special study of rubber plants, and to whom I sent leaves and fruits of the trees, has classified them amongst the Landolphias. One is said to be a Landolphia Petersiana, and the other a variety of the Landolphia Kirki (Dyer) called by others Landolphia Mossambicensis. Natives make an incision in the bark of the tree, and a milky sap exudes, which soon thickens and the somewhat sticky filaments are then wound 137 314

178 progressing almost imperceptibly. The transformation would seem to be as rapid as the previous immobility was fixed.

Let us try to discover the causes which may account for this extraordinary stagnation.

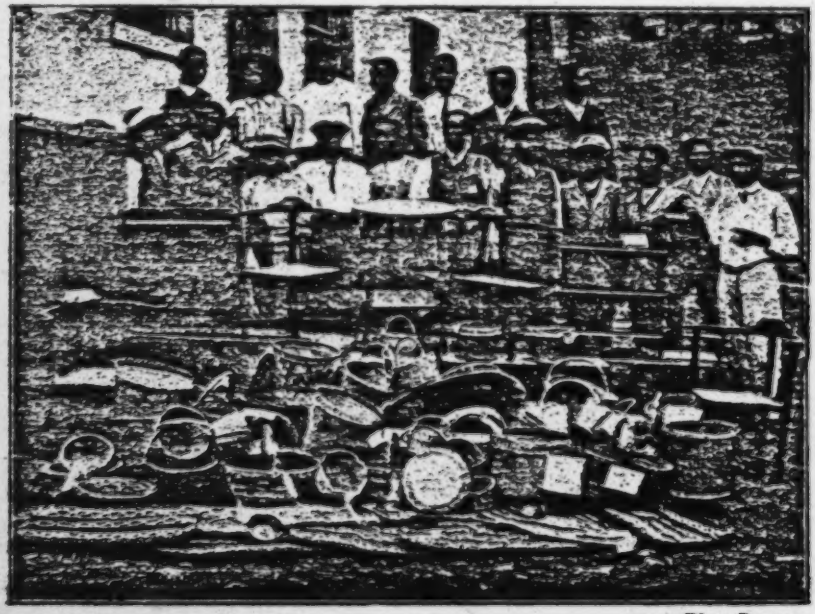
176 All are agreed in bearing witness to the fact that the state of civilisation
178 in which Europeans found the Bantu tribes of South Africa is of an extremely ancient date. It is true that we have but little historical data to go upon as regards the development of these people, but, nevertheless, it seems to me highly probable that the shape of their ngula, their hwama, their shirundju, their pillows, the construction of their huts, dates from a very remote antiquity, and has been handed down unchanged from generation to generation. How are we to account for this lack of development, whilst the Indo-European races, starting probably from similar primitive conditions, have advanced to so high a degree of civilisation as that of the Greeks and Romans, and ultimately to that of modern times?

The reply given by many casual observers to this question is that *the Bantu races are incapable of progress.* They are condemned, by reason of their mental and spiritual constitution, to vegetate in perpetual barbarism or to make themselves ridiculous by a servile imitation of the superior races. This view is not justified by the facts of the case. We recognise a relative mental inferiority in the Thongas, as in their congeners the Bantus, but their minds, nevertheless, possess in a more or less rudimentary state, all those faculties of which we aré wont to boast. During the several years I have passed in close contact with these intellects, supposedly so limited, I have been more often struck with the points of analogy between the Africans and ourselves than by the differences which separate us. Besides, it is an error to assert that they have not progressed. Their inventive genius is fully proved by the various ways in which the several tribes have taken advantage of the materials with which Nature has supplied them. The Ba-Ronga do not make their baskets in the same way as the Zulus, or the Ba-Sutho. Again, in many separate instances, we can note a distinct forward movement in their industry; the arrival of glass beads,

137 [illegible] small sticks. A good yield of rubber could undoubtedly be obtained in this country
314 if the trees were cultivated and tapped in an intelligent manner.

(With regard to the name of the rubber tree, compare *Delagoa Bay, its Natives and Natural History*, London, Philip and Son, 1891, written by Mrs Monteiro, an English woman who spent several years in Lourenço Marques and published interesting observations on the country. Without claiming any great scientific accuracy, this volume affords much interesting information.)

one or two hundred years ago, gave birth to an entirely new and original decorative art; during the last century, the contest with a tribe better clothed than themselves led them to adopt a different and more decent costume. (Compare "Introduction à la Grammaire ronga" § XXXI.) When copper and brass wire became procurable, they not only made pretty bracelets, but invented quite a new art, the weaving of belts, 176 178



[415]

Phot. Dutton.

Manual work at the Lemana Training School (Northern Transvaal).

(p. 101 No. 1), egg-cups, and cups of various forms very different from those of European make.

The ability of the Native to progress in industry cannot be doubted when one sees the results of the industrial teaching they receive in many Missionary Institutions. The Swiss Romande Missionaries have introduced, in their schools, the manufacture of baskets and mats with the materials found in the country, and the results of the experiment have been altogether in favour of the intelligence of the Natives, as shown in the accompanying illustration. One of the pupils of Shiluvane even invented a new form of basket, made with a single leaf of a big palm tree (nghunwana) growing in the Lydydorp plain. In those institutions

176 where carpentering and waggon building are scientifically taught,
178 the results are very satisfactory, and I myself saw at Lovedale a splendid American desk which had been made entirely by a Native, and was as perfect as if it had been manufactured by a European craftsman. So the industrial stagnation of the South African tribes must not be put down to an innate incapacity for progress. I think we must look elsewhere for its causes, and, without claiming to exhaust the question, I will proceed to enumerate the factors, which, to my mind, explain the exceedingly slow development of these tribes.

176 Their *political system, social and religious*, is one of the chief causes
178 of this state of things. The deceased chiefs are the gods of the nation.
183 Whatever they did should be done now; their lives are the supreme examples to be followed; the traditions handed down by their ancestors are the only religious and moral guides which these people possess. Customs which have come down from prehistoric times are law. No one would think of abandoning them. To do otherwise than others do, *psa yila*, is forbidden. It would be a denial of the divine authority of the ancestors, and a danger to the tribe. This principle is most strictly maintained in such tribes as are the freest from foreign admixture and the least exposed to outside influences. In the Khosen country, for example, when an evangelist trained in Spelonken, Yosefa, wanted to build a square house, he was prevented from doing so. It was against the law. How could he expect to live in a hut of a different shape from those his forefathers had inhabited? Had there been no Whites in the country, Yosefa would have found it impossible to build a house to his liking! This is a typical case of the immobility of Native industry (1).

But in advancing as a reason for this immobility the all-powerful sway of custom, supported and maintained by the national authorities, we have only pushed the difficulty further back. How has it been possible to maintain such a system of oppression? How is it that no stronger minded individuals have arisen to throw off this yoke and gain liberty of action, stirring up the tribe, in spite of itself, from the lethargy in which it is plunged, like an organism with its blood congealed!

(1) The lack of imagination in these races seems specially noticeable in mechanics, and it has been remarked that South African Natives have not yet invented a single machine. This may be true. However, I heard it attested by a Johannesburg technician that the Thongas have a real aptitude for running engines and a real bent for mechanics. As not one of them has ever studied advanced mathematics, no wonder they have not invented new machines.

Amongst our own races, men of genius, great thinkers, have, from the earliest times, been able to impress their new ideas upon the masses, and lead them eventually, however recalcitrant, upon the march of progress. We shall have to content ourselves with two considerations which may help to solve the problem. 176 178 183

Our civilisation is the result of a combination of millions of minds and hundreds of peoples. The lake-dweller, of the stone-age, was not much more developed than the present-day Black of South Africa: in some respects he was less so. But he inhabited Europe, and, to the South of that Continent, stretches an inland sea, the Mediterranean, which spreads out its many arms in gulfs and bays reaching to the very heart of the countries on its shores, and thus facilitates access between nation and nation. Every new discovery by one soon became the property of its neighbour. Rome inherited from Greece, and Greece from Egypt and Abyssinia, and these international relations, favoured by the geographical conditions of the Old World, explain the development, *the arithmetical progression* shall we call it, of our Indo-European civilisation. In Africa, nothing of the sort exists. Few, if any, gulfs or bays are to be found in this Continent, whose coasts are hopelessly unbroken and inhospitable. Many a long stretch of river, otherwise navigable, is closed to navigation by impassable cataracts. Deserts of burning sand separate the tribes from one another, and sometimes they are isolated by veritable ramparts of lofty mountains. Communication is almost impossible, and the Black tribe, left to its own resources, amidst natural surroundings of an enervating description, remains stationary and content with the elementary industry to which it has attained. *Outside influence is wanting* to stimulate the intellectual energy, the inventive faculty of which they possess the germs. 176 178

In addition to all this a second factor is noticeable in the course of human development, and this, while all in favour of the Indo-European races, accentuates still more forcibly the differences between the several branches of the human family. Through the centuries the Egyptian hieroglyphs slowly evolved into ideographic signs, which eventually gave place to the phonetic alphabet of the Phoenicians. This *alphabet* goes forth to conquer the world, and to give a fresh aspect to things in general. These twenty to thirty letters of which the Blacks had not the slightest notion, these signs, thanks to which stone, wood and paper have been made to speak, will henceforward allow great minds to transmit their thoughts direct to their fellow-men. The knowledge of one epoch will then be passed on intact to following generations,

176 whilst, formerly, ideas were frequently lost or distorted by popular
178 tradition; progression will henceforth be not merely *arithmetical* but *geometrical*. The *book* will be the accumulator in which the intellectual forces of the race will be stored for future transmission, without wastage, prolific of light and stimulus to every sphere of human
[212] activity. The Blacks of South Africa have never invented any system of writing. The idea of representing an object, a number, a thought, or a sound by any conventional sign, seems never to have occurred to them. Makhani, Muzila's old counsellor, did not know his own age. He probably thought, in common with many of his contemporaries, that he was at least ten years old. One day I said to him: "Why didn't you go each year, when the leaves begin to appear on the trees, and make some kind of a mark on the bark of a nkuhlu? Then, to-day, you could have counted all the marks and you would know how old you are!" He laughed and considered the idea futile, absurd! The absence of any system of writing is, doubtless, the proof of a certain intellectual inferiority, but environment may easily account for the illiterate condition of the Natives. In fact it is environment which is the chief cause of their centuries-long stagnation.

It would, however, be doing a wrong to these people, were we to judge them solely by the absence of industrial progress. Mental activity is not manifested only in the manufacture of machinery or in the transactions of high finance. Man is a being endowed with thought and speech. Speech and literature, which reflect thought, are phases of human activity more essential than industrial undertakings. The Thongas, in common with their neighbours the Ba-Sutho and the Zulus, do most certainly possess a literature, although they have no system of writing and may be classed as illiterates; of this fact I shall furnish abundant proof when treating of their *literary and artistic life*.

p. 153

FIFTH PART

LITERARY AND ARTISTIC LIFE

Ethnography does not consist merely in the description of 121
customs and rites. Beneath the manifold manifestations of the Life of the Tribe, the ethnographer tries to discover its soul... The further we proceed in our study, the nearer we approach to the mystery of its mental life.

The mental life reveals itself in two great sets of spiritual facts, those relating to the intellectual and those relating to the religious and moral side of life ; in other words, the mind of a nation may be considered under two different aspects : the intellectual, and the moral and religious. We have not yet gone far enough to come to any conclusion as regards the Religion and Morality of the Native, but we can now attempt to describe the main characteristics of the Native intellect.

CHAPTER I

Characteristics of the Bantu Intellect.

I intend to give here, briefly, the results of a study of the 197
language, the language of a nation being one of the most trustworthy and complete manifestations of its mind.

I have been bold enough to speak of the *Bantu*, and not merely of the *Thonga* intellect, because the grammatical features of all

197 the Bantu languages are so similar that conclusions drawn from one of them apply to most of the tribes, *mutatis mutandis*. At any rate Sutho, Zulu, Chopi, Venda, and Thonga are very much akin, as regards their structure, forming as they do the South Eastern group of Bantu languages ; and, though the Central or Western groups differ on certain points, it may be asserted that the Bantu dialects present a remarkable uniformity.

My aim is not, by any means, to enter upon a grammatical study. This has been done for most of our South African languages, and the linguist who wishes to learn Thonga can use the Grammaire Ronga, or the Elementary Thonga-Shangaan Grammar already referred to. Leaving aside all technicalities, I shall now only attempt to show what the language reveals as regards the Bantu intellect. Let us, on this important question, take the testimony of the Noun, the Verb, the Conjunction and the Adverb.

A. THE NOUN AND THE POWER OF CLASSIFICATION.

198 The Bantu system of Nouns shows that the Bantu intellect possesses the *Power of classification*. All nouns are divided into a certain number of classes or genders, seven or eight in the South Eastern group, as many as ten in the Central groups ; these classes are known by their singular and plural prefixes, which are very similar in all dialects. What is the system of classification which these Genders denote? The Indo-Germanic languages divide natural objects into two categories, male and female, and, in most cases, add a third category, the neuter. They are *sex-denoting* languages, as Bleek used to call them. Nothing of this kind is met with amongst the Bantus (1). They follow an entirely different

(1) The Thongas, however, possesses a feminine suffix *ati* (eti, etsi) corresponding to a feminine prefix *mi* (l. p. 36). This suffix is found in nsati, wife, rarakati, paternal aunt, hulukati, female elephant, hweti, moon, nyeleti, star, mati (?) water, etc. It appears in many names of rivers : Nkomati, Ñwebeti, Ñwanetsi, Selati, Nfoloti, Shingwedzi, etc. Other names of rivers belong to the li-tin or ri-tin class : Limbelule (Oliphant) Limpopo, Lisuthu, Letsitele (Ritshindjele), Ritabi (Great Tabie), etc.

system. As a matter of fact, it is very difficult to understand it fully. These languages have already undergone a long process of evolution, and, just as it is impossible to state why a French word like "*chemin*" is masculine and another word like *route* is feminine, so the reason why such and such a noun belongs to such and such a class is not always apparent. However, as a whole, the Bantu system of classification is much more rational than the Indo-Germanic. I shall not study it etymologically, viz., by searching for the original meaning of the prefixes, a very difficult task which has been accomplished by Prof. Meinhof, who had at his disposal an enormous quantity of material for comparison. I shall only consider it in its broad features, as it now presents itself in the living language, and I assert that it reveals a true power of classification. 193

The Bantu mind divides natural objects into seven or eight categories :

1) *Personal beings*, which are classified by prefixing *mu* (n) in the singular and *ba* in the plural, thus forming the first class, the class *mu-ba* ; munhu, man, nuna, husband, nsati, wife, etc. This class is so clearly defined in the Bantu mind that new objects bearing a personal character are immediately incorporated into it : e. g. mulungu, White man, muhanu, White woman (from an Indian word). Animals which behave like rational beings in folk tales are also removed from their class into the mu-ba class by prefixing *Ñwa* to their names, and innumerable verbal nouns are formed by prefixing *mu* to the verbal stem, if they designate persons (e. g. ku fa, to die, mufi, the dead man).

2) The second class, *mu-mi*, designates *trees* ; almost all trees belong to it (I. p. 397), and those recently introduced into the country have been named according to this rule, e. g. manga, mimanga, the mango tree. It is true that we find a number of other things with the prefix of the tree-class : the wind (moya), and similar objects (mumu, heat, ndjilo, fire, mpfuka, space, nkari, time), the body (miri) and some of its organs (nomo, the lip, nenge, the leg). But trees are the characteristic element of this class.

3) The third class, *yin-tin* (Zulu in-izin, Sutho (n)-li) is evidently that of *animals*. Ninety per cent of these belong to it ; and

193 though a number of other objects have these prefixes (different degrees of affinity for instance : namu, ndjisana, etc., I. p. 223), this is definitely the animal class.

4) The fourth class (*dji-ma* (Ro.), *ri-ma* (Dj.), Zulu : ili-ama, Sutho : le-ma) is that of *fruits*, and new fruits are constantly incorporated into it (e. g. malalandji, oranges). Many other categories of objects are found in this class : natural objects, hard, shining (pala, skull ; rambu, bone ; fumu, thlari, assagai ; dambu, sun) and things grouped together. It may be that the prefix *ma* originally applied to objects conveying the idea of duality (mahlo, eyes ; mabele, breasts ; maboko, arms ; mahahla, twins) ; but in the present state of the language fruits seem to me to be the characteristic feature of this class.

5) The fifth class (*li-tin* (Ro.), *ri-tin* (Dj.), ulu-izi (Zulu) is most difficult to define and seems to be tending to become obsolete : it is wanting in Sutho, and nearly so in Djonga. I call it the class of *organs*, at any rate of organs of an elongated form (lidjimi, tongue ; libambo, rib ; likhongotlo, spine, etc.). The primitive idea may be that of length.

6.7.8) The sixth, seventh and eighth classes bear a strongly neuter character : the sixth (*bu-ma*, Zulu ubu-ama, Sutho bo-ma) designates *abstract notions* derived from adjectives or verbs (bukulu, greatness), the seventh (*shi-psi*, Zulu isi-izi, Sutho se-li) *instruments* and the eighth (*ku*, Zulu uku, Sutho hu) *actions*. This is the verbal class, the infinitive of the verb, ku famba, meaning the march as well as to march.

The class bu-ma may also be called the class of *liquids*, as most liquids belong to it (bukanyi, buputju, etc. See I. p. 397).

Considering the principal meaning of these eight classes, we can state that, whatever may be the origin of the prefixes, the present-day Bantus, at any rate the Thongas, classify natural objects as : personal beings, trees, animals, fruits, organs, liquids, abstract notions, instruments, actions, other objects being incorporated into one or other of these classes in a more or less arbitrary way.

That this is a true classificatory system, every one speaking one of these languages will be able to testify ; instinctively one

incorporates new objects into the fitting class, or one uses the prefixes in the formation of new words according to their classifying value. The power of classification of the Bantu mind is certainly not inferior to that of Aryans. 193

B. THE VERB AND THE POWER OF COMBINATION.

The Bantu verb has no inflexion ; Bantu languages belong to the agglutinative type, viz., they express the various tenses and moods of the verb not by a change of the root, but by the addition of verbal elements, either prefixes or suffixes. But these additions are so varied, and can express such subtle ideas, that the student of Bantu languages stands amazed at the powers of combination which they reveal. It is impossible here to prove this assertion by technical examples, but I can assert that any one conversant with the use of these verbal principles is able to express all the ideas which are conveyed by the conjugation of inflective verbs and a good many more. It is no exaggeration to speak of the thousands of combinations of the Bantu conjugation.

To illustrate the power of combination of the Bantu mind, I need only refer the linguist to the wonderful set of verbal derivatives which are to be found. Take the simple form *ku bona*, to see. We may derive from it the passive *boniwa*, to be seen ; two qualificatives, *boneka* and *bonakala*, to be visible ; the applicative *bonela*, to see for somebody else, to take care of ; the causative, *bonisa*, to cause somebody to see ; the intensive, *bonisisa*, to see perfectly well ; the reciprocal, *bonana*, to see each other ; the reflexive, *tibona*, to see oneself. The reversive is still to be mentioned, as *pakula*, to unload (from pakela, to load). All these various derivations may be combined according to given laws, each adding its own meaning to the others. So, from *ku tira*, to work, can be formed *tirelana*, the applicative reciprocal, to serve each other, *tireriwa*, applicative passive, to be served, *tirisiwa*, to be made to work, etc. An endless number of combinations is thus rendered possible.

C. CONJUNCTIONS AND THE POWER OF ARGUMENT.

193 Thonga conjunctions co-ordinate ideas rather than subordinate them to each other and this may certainly be regarded as a proof that the language has reached a less advanced stage of development than our modern Indo-European languages.

The conjunction which answers to our "that" and "in order to" is *lepsaku*. This word comes from the demonstrative pronoun *lepsi*, followed by the genitive particle *a* and by the verb *ku*, to say. It therefore means etymologically "that is to say," Let me give two examples : "I believe that he has gone : Ndja kholwa lepsaku a fambile." The exact translation would be : I believe that is to say he has gone. "I eat in order to find strength : Ndja dya lepsaku ndji kuma matimba," literally : I eat that is to say I find strength. The two ideas are presented as parallel, co-ordinate, not as subordinated one to the other. In the Ronga dialect however "in order that" is rather expressed by *akuba* i. e. to be or to become, which implies more or less the idea of an aim ; but this conjunction is not followed by a conjunctive form of the verb.

A similar deficiency consists in the fact that *when* and *if* are not differentiated from each other, both these ideas being expressed by the conjunction *loko* which is merely the demonstrative pronoun of the neutral class *ku* employed in a wider sense ; I never succeeded in finding a true word to express the abstract notion of *condition*.

We ought not, however, to conclude from these facts that the Bantu mind is still in the "prelogic stage" which the sociological school attributes to primitive mentality. There exist in the language a number of other conjunctions which show that the Native method of reasoning is not very different from our own. *Because* is rendered by *hikusa* or *hikuba*, lit. by to be ; *therefore, then* (French donc) by *hi-lepso* or *hi-lepso-ke*, lit. by this, and this little word *ke* is sometimes pronounced with a peculiar movement of the index finger which proves that the speaker has as much pleasure in asserting his conclusion as Cicero when he reached the end of his argument and uttered a victorious *ergo*! The syllogism

is not unknown to the Bantus though they may not have clearly thought out all its rules. It is true that logical reasoning is often interfered with amongst these primitive peoples by the mystic associations which Mr. Lévy-Brühl describes in his books on *Les Fonctions Mentales dans les Sociétés Inférieures* and *La Mentalité Primitive*, interfered with also by emotional factors or by the intervention of the will ; this unfortunately happens in non-primitive races also. But as regards the mechanism of reasoning, I do not think there is any great difference between the Bantu mind and the mind of more civilized peoples. 193

At any rate the power of co-ordination disclosed in the Bantu languages is extremely large and gives these languages a remarkable clearness. Its main feature is this : the prefix of the noun is used to form all the adjectives and pronouns connected with it, as will be clearly seen from the following sentence :

Tindlopfu	le*tinyingi*	*ta*	tiko	*ti*	khalutile :	hi *tone*	
The elephants	numerous	of	the land	they	have passed :	It is they,	

hi *toleti*,	le'*ti*	bonekaka	mutjwen	wa	*tone*.
it is these	which	are visible	in the forest	of	them.

This is what grammarians have called the Euphonic Concord. It is certainly *euphonic*, bringing about frequent alliterations which are pleasing to the ear, and at any rate prevent misunderstanding, as they help us to realise, at once, to which noun the pronouns and adjectives refer.

D. ADVERBS AND THE POWER OF DESCRIPTION.

The Adverbs of place, manner, time, etc., form a very interesting study ; they show the presence of remnants of the three locative classes, *pa*, *mu* and *ku*, which still flourish in Central African languages, and have become obsolete in those of South Africa (*h*andle, outside ; *h*ansi, on the ground ; *h*ase, on the other border ; *m*undjuku, to morrow ; *k*aya, at home ; etc.) and this seems to 192

192 prove that our dialects represent a further development of the old Bantu languages. But I am here considering especially what I have called the *Descriptive Adverbs*, a category of very curious words which have not been sufficiently noticed and which show a wonderful power of description in the Thonga mind.

These words, hundreds of which are employed by the Natives, consist of monosyllables or polysyllables, often repeated twice or thrice, and generally following the verb *ku*. This verb *ku*, which is also one of the curious features of Thonga grammar, a very primitive verb (1), designates any manifestation of self, either in action, speech, or thought, and can be translated accordingly by to do, to say, or to think. Now, for the wonderfully acute senses of the sons of the bush, everything — man, beasts, objects of Nature — speaks and thinks, and these adverbs attempt to express in picturesque words these actions, this language of things, sounds as well as movements, attitudes, feelings, etc.

Let us begin by the *sound*. The Hare, in one of the Thonga tales, is represented as sleeping, when it suddenly awakens on hearing a sala, the fruit of the nsala tree (p. 16), fall from the branch and *say* : katla-katla, katla-katla, be! Katla-katla evidently translates the noise made by the hard shell of the fruit knocking against the branches on its way down until it reaches the ground and abruptly ends its journey, the termination of which is rendered by the short monosyllable *be*!.. The Hare, frightened by the noise, runs away and arouses all the beasts of the bush, one after the other, saying : "I have heard a noise of *katla-katla, katla-katla, be*" or, — here he changes the word, probably to avoid a tiresome repetition : "*ngaya-ngaya, ngaya-ngaya, be*!" This may be called an *onomatopoeia* and is met with in a great many languages. A certain number of the adverbs descriptive of sound are universally known and used. Birds say : *pse*! *tswi*! *tsiri*! The wind says : *wotshyu-wotshyu*... A man says *go-go-go*, he knocks at the door ; *mpfaaa*, he tears a cloth ; *pfotlo*, he breaks a stick, etc. There are hundreds of these in Thonga, and any one with enough

(1) It may be that *ku* is an abbreviated or simplified form of *ku ri* which corresponds to the Kafir *ukuti*. At any rate *ku* is employed as the past narrative tense of the verb ku *ri*.

imagination can further invent new ones ; I remember hearing a Native describe a waggon rolling along a stony road : you could recognise the sound of the wheels, of the chain, of the frame, grinding, rattling, creaking! 192

Sometimes the descriptive adverb is very different from the sound it is intended to imitate : thus, when the dog is said to *say* : *ndo-ndo-ndo*, the mouse : *tlulu-tlulu*, the duyker : *rurururu*, the hare : *tlwa-tlwa-tlwa*, the character of the movement, or of the gait, is described as well as the sound. We find indeed that a considerable number of these adverbs are *descriptive of movements*, viz., of phenomena perceived by the eyes, and not by the ear. They translate the impression made on the brain by objects, motions *seen* and not heard, *phenomena of vision*.

Movements of all kinds, of animate or inanimate beings, are vividly reproduced by the descriptive adverbs. Movements of the whole body : a man says *gaa*, he falls on his back ; *dlomu*, *nyupe*, he plunges into the water ; *retemuku*, he slips ; *ngiri-ngiri-ngiri*, he walks down ; *khaga*, he climbs ; *bvumbuluku*, he rises briskly. Movements of one limb : *ume*, he lifts an arm to threaten ; *ntshuki*, he shakes his head to deny ; *kutje*, he nods in assent ; *tjope-tjope*, his eyes twinkle. Movements which entail definite actions : *ntswi*, *mpsi*, he ties ; *nkwaa*, he opens a door ; *petlu*, he breaks something ; *dli*, he pierces ; *bvonyu*, he spoils ; etc., etc.

The various *kinds of gait* can also be described in this primitive way : *ntu-ntu-ntu*, the elephant, a bulky thing, advancing slowly ; *kwanyi-kwanyi*, the lion walking heavily ; *pha-pha-pha*, the jerky flight of the butterfly ; *kwe-kwe*, a man walking with difficulty : *tsere-tsere*, walking deliberately ; *kwiti*, limping ; *gutsele-gutsele*, a lame man ; *nyantsa-nyantsa*, spying out. The frog jumping on the ground, and later on into the water says : *nwe... nwe...nwe.... djiama*! (this last word describing the plunge into the water). A man running slowly says *wahle* ; with small steps : *nyakwi-nyakwi* ; with rapidity : *phene-mene-mene*, or *nyu-nyu*, or *kwaru-kwaru* ; sprinting, *nana-nana*, or *nwana-nwana*.

The various *attitudes* are expressed by words, sometimes in a very amusing way : a man says *phavava*, or *nhabalala*, or *bara-tjatja*, he lies on his belly ; he says *wololoko*, he stands erect ;

192 *khempfa*, he sits down very tired ; *yinti*, he stands listening attentively, etc.

The *facial expressions* are minutely described by a great wealth of such words : a man says : *langu*, he looks at something ; *lori*, with attention ; *dloto*, intently, and for a long time ; *pari*, with anger ; *dlanya*, with kindness.

Let us take another step forward and we shall find another category describing the *state of mind*, the feelings of the heart, which are also phenomena of vision in as far as they correspond to given attitudes of the body or to certain expressions of the features. A man says *gee*, he is happy ; *kono*, he fears ; *nkwi-nkwisi*, he is in a bad humour ; *doko-doko*, he covets ; *punavuna*, he has pity.

By means of such adverbs *phenomena of Nature* and even *abstract ideas* can be described. Heaven says, *mphu*, it becomes dark ; *dzunu*, the day breaks ; the smoke says *tobi-tobi*, it ascends to heaven ; the water, or the rays of the sun, say *lululu*, they begin to feel warm ; the fire says *lasi-lasi*, it is seen flickering far away.

Abstract ideas. Men say *bi* or *kutlu*, they are all killed, to the last one (total destruction) ; somebody says *kwemetelo*, he does not attain his end, etc.

[124] The list of descriptive adverbs which I have collected comprises more than 250 of them. Most of these were obtained in the following way. When teaching my pupils the Bukhaneli, viz., the Grammar of their own language — which I always found a very interesting and useful subject of study for them — I asked each of them to write down at once 50 of these strange words. Without hesitation they complied with my demand, one of them writing as many as 70. Almost all of them were different. This shows the extreme wealth of the language in this respect. It is no exaggeration to say that, in Thonga, there are ten, perhaps twenty times as many descriptive adverbs as those quoted by my
151 pupils. In dealing with the characteristics of the Thonga or
192 Bantu mind, I think they are worthy of close consideration. These thousands of words, instinctively formed to express the impression made on the brain by any kind of phenomena, prove the existence of a wonderful power of description. The Bantu

151 mind is extraordinarily sensitive to any shock from without,
192 and it finds a way of expressing this sensitiveness by picturesque words which give an extraordinary interest and colour to speech. Bantus are far superior to us in this respect, and that is why so few Europeans can really learn to use these descriptive adverbs properly (not to mention those who look upon them with contempt!) And this is one of the signs of what I do not hesitate to call the literary sense of the Bantu mind!

In the first edition I asked the question: Are these descriptive adverbs confined to the Thongas or are they to be found in other Bantu languages? The knowledge which I possessed in 1910 gave me reason to suppose that they were indeed to be met with in at least a great number of these. Torrend in his *Comparative Grammar* quotes some of them from Kafir and Senna and refers to a whole list compiled by the Rev. A. Hetherwick in his *Yao Grammar* and by Rebmann in the *Kinyassa Dictionary*. Torrend calls them onomatopoetic substantives. Colenso gives a good many of them in his *Zulu-English Dictionary*. Grout only briefly mentions five of them in his Chapter on Zulu interjections. Endemann, in the first edition of his *Sotho Grammatik* recognizes their existence (p. 170) and classes them also as interjections, but adds: "Most of the interjections of this kind do not belong to the written language." Since then the Rev. R. Godfrey has published the second edition of the Kropf *Kafir-English* Dictionary (1915) and in his remarkable Introduction has shown the immense part these expressions play in Kafir. He calls them Primary or Strong Stems. Prof. Westerman in his *Grammatik der Ewesprache* has also shown their importance in the languages of the tribes of Western Africa. It may thus be asserted that this linguistic phenomenon is met with all through primitive Africa and the conclusions which I draw from the presence of these descriptive adverbs with regard to Thonga mentality equally apply to all Africans.

As regards the name given to them, I would object to the term *interjection*. While some of them can be used as such, i. e. "thrown amongst" other words without syntactic connection, they generally follow the verb *ku ku* (or *li* or *ti*) just as "yes" or "no" follow the verb to say. So they are rather adverbs than interjections. Nor can I approve of the term employed by Torrend: *onomatopoetic substantives*. Substantives they certainly are not, as they pertain to none of the eight classes and have nothing of the nature of nouns. On the other hand, only a

192 certain number of them are real onomatopoeiae, i. e. words resembling the sound made by the thing of which they are the names. The term adopted by the Rev. R. Godfrey, Primary or Strong Stems, has been severely criticised by the Rev. W. Bourquin (see Christian Express, August and September 1916) and it would seem that this expression Primary must at any rate not be taken to mean that these words necessarily belong to the oldest elements of the language. A considerable proportion of the Kafir descriptive adverbs (60-70 %) bear the trace of a Hottentot or Bushman origin. It would however be an error to conclude from this fact that these words, amongst the Bantus, have been borrowed from the non-Bantu races. They abound in Thonga and Thonga has not been in any way influenced by the Bushmen and the Hottentots. But there is still another fact which proves that the descriptive adverbs have not been inherited from the *Ur-Bantu* ; as far as I am able to judge, the Kafir descriptive adverbs are totally different from those of the Thongas (1). There ought on the other hand to be many common to both languages (which have a great number of common roots as regards nouns, adjectives and verbs) if the present descriptive adverbs had really been used in the mother tongue. For all these reasons the term Descriptive Adverbs seems to me the best and should professional grammarians not wish to adopt it, I would suggest that they should be considered as words having no true equivalents in our more polished European languages and therefore as forming a new category, a new species to be added to the classical eight parts of speech! After all, language is not made for Grammar, but Grammar for language ! And we Europeans cannot claim to have found all the forms of expression of which the human mind is capable. If the Bantus have discovered another class of words which render them great service, why should we proclaim them as unworthy of consideration and exclude them from the written language?

193 For linguists, I add a few particulars concerning the grammatical nature of these words and the importance they may have had in the evolution of human speech. The intonation, the gesture, accompanying these adverbs of course greatly assist in understanding their meaning. Sometimes the word is *short*, ends sharply, as *gi*, a blow on a pole to drive it into the earth ; or it is *prolonged* as *ra-a-a*, the unrolling of a

(1) It is not possible to pronounce a definite judgment on this question as the lists of Kafir and Thonga descriptive adverbs which we possess are far from being complete. Full lists of these interesting particles in all the languages ought to be compiled by Bantu grammarians as soon as possible for purposes of comparison.

that which drags along the ground; or repeated many times, when the action consists in a series of repeated motions: *ngiri-ngiri-ngiri*, walking down to the sprait. From the etymological point of view, some adverbs may be termed primitive and others derivative. Amongst the primitive are, for instance, *dzi*, the act of planting (hence the verb ku dzima), *ngupe*, the act of plunging (hence ku ngupela), etc. But others are distinctly derivative, for instance: *hamelelo*, the impression caused by somebody who suddenly appears. This is certainly derived from the verb ku hamelela, which is itself the double applicative derivative of ku huma, to come out; ku humelela means, according to the law of verbal derivation, to be produced, to happen, to arrive, to appear. Hence the descriptive adverb. Other instances of such derivations are: *retsumku*, *rendjakku*, *tlheriso*, *weloko*, *khabutelo*. They are generally long words (though all the long ones are by no means derivatives). A regular means of derivation even seems to consist in the addition of the suffix *iyani* to the infinitive of the verb; so a man "says" *yetleliyani*, he sleeps, (from ku yetlela, to sleep); *yimisiyani*, he stands erect (from ku yima, to stand). It would seem as if people had found so much pleasure in expressing their ideas by this picturesque method that they even convert regular verbs into descriptive adverbs!

I must further mention that some of these adverbs, placed between the verb *ku* and the adverb, as shown in the following examples, have a true transitive nature and may be preceded by a direct object, especially those which express actions. Ex.: A ku *shi* wuyuwuyu, he throws *that* away; a ku *mu* mpsi, he makes *him* mpsi, he binds him; even the verbal reflective prefix *ti* (which is a kind of invariable pronoun) can be used in this connexion. Ex.: A ku *ti* mpsi, he ties himself. Some are at the same time transitive and intransitive, according to the sense. Ex.: A ku *kwe-kwe*, he drags his leg; (a way of walking); a ku yi kwe, he drags it (the pole); (a transitive action).

In Kafir these particles are capable of modifying their meaning considerably owing to the fact that the auxiliary *ukuti* to which they are appended can adopt the derivative verbal forms called by Godfrey the reciprocal, the relative, the stative and the reflexive. This is not possible with the Thonga auxiliary ku; I have only met with the reflexive ti, and this was not prefixed to the auxiliary as in Kafir but to the adverb itself.

In Kafir as in Thonga many of these words give rise to regular verbs. This fact, which is one more proof of their importance and is highly interesting, would alone substantiate my contention that they should be

192 carefully studied. They correspond to a phase of human development when language is still living and creating new expressions, enriching itself by means of vocables invented on all sides. Let me remind the reader of what I said in Vol. I, Appendix II about *nxoko*. This expression was invented by an old Thonga of Rikatla, a blind man of 70 or 80, who expressed by this exclamation his satisfaction at finding himself in good company. The word seemed so much to the point that it became famous. The inventor was surnamed Nxoko and created the verb ku *nxoka*, to be happy, even to *nxokela*, the relative derivative, to be happy in a certain place. Certainly such linguistic phenomena can do much to explain the origin of language. Even lofty spiritual terms have been derived from these exclamations, springing from the childish mind of the Natives. So *phati-phati*, the shining of a fat ox, has given rise to *ku phatima* and *kwetsi-kwetsi*, the brilliancy of a bottle, to *ku kwetsima*, both verbs which were chosen as best expressing the idea of sanctity or purity (in its positive sense). Did not Max Muller conjecture that the root of *Deus*, a word which has played such a great part in the evolution of mankind, originally came from the exclamation *Devar* to which our Aryan forefathers gave vent when contemplating the sky? Devar was probably nothing but a descriptive adverb.

It is to be feared that books and book language will destroy this most interesting mode of speech, so much used by those Natives who are true Bantus, and the genius of the race will certainly suffer from this loss. Let Europeans, in this as in so many other domains, try to *understand* the Native in order not to spoil him !

E. THE NUMERALS, AND THE WANT OF AN ARITHMETICAL SENSE.

802 Compared to the thousands of descriptive adverbs, Numerals make a poor show indeed in the Thonga Grammar! The Thongas possess only seven : *ñwe*, one ; *biri*, two ; *raru*, three ; which are declined like adjectives ; *mune*, four ; *ntlhanu*, five, *khume*, ten ; *dzana*, a hundred, which are nouns. With these seven words they must express all numbers. The process is very complicated indeed. Nine hundred and eighty seven will have to be rendered as follows : five hundred, and four hundred,

and five tens, and three tens, and five, and two. This system of 802
numeration is clearly decimal, and is in direct relation with the ten fingers of the hands ; this is proved by the fact that, when counting, Natives generally use their fingers. They start with the little finger of the left hand, *one* ; then the little finger and the third finger, *two* ; these two and the second, *three* ; these three and the index, *four* ; these four and the thumb, *five* ; they then add the fingers of the right hand, beginning with the thumb : five plus one, five plus two, five plus three, five plus four. *Ten* is shown by clapping both hands ; notice that five, the left hand with the thumb separated from the four other fingers, imitates the Roman sign of V, and ten, the two hands joined, with the fingers crossing each other, make an X, the Roman sign for 10! This shows that our system of numbers, of which we are justly proud, probably began in the same way as amongst most of the Bantu tribes!

On the other hand it must be said that, if this system has not reached a higher development, the cause lies in the fact that Thongas do not wish, or do not *take the trouble* to deal with high figures. They very soon declare that a number is : "tjandjabahlayi (Dj.) or hlulabakonti (Ro.)" viz., "the one which passes the capacity of reckoners." When Gungunyana made a raid into the Ntimane district and stole the oxen there, his men tried to count the cattle, but, having experienced much difficulty in the operation, they said to their king : "It is tjandjabahlayi!" — "They are innumerable!" There were a few hundreds of them (1).

More than that! Bantus have not attained to *any precision* in 805
counting the hours of the day, for instance, because there was no necessity for doing so in the primitive state. Consider how greatly our habit of always consulting our watches has contributed to create a sense of precision in us and to introduce it into our lives. For the Bantus, the sun is the only watch, and that great time-keeper is all sufficient for them. Do they wish to make an appointment for the following day? They point to a place in the

(1) As regards *counting men*, in former times this was positively prohibited. If any 802
one, seeing a throng assembled on the hubo, wanted to know the number of people present, they would say to him : "What! You are counting us? Whom do you 789
want to do away with?" (Shana wa hi nkonta, u ta hi pumba na?)

805 sky, and say: "We shall meet when the sun has reached that spot." It may be in the morning, at the time "when the rays of the sun begin to pierce" (tlhaba-sana); at noon, nhlekanhin "when the sun is in the middle of its course;" in the afternoon, *hi mfenya*, say the Rongas "when the sea breeze comes up", as is the case almost every day; or "when the sun is going down" (ndjenga) (1). It must be added that the sun is rarely hidden in these lands of light.

As regards the counting of days, they have special names for to-morrow (mundjuku), the day after to-morrow (mundlwana), and the three following days; for the third day, pambari; the fourth, wo dlankambane, viz., the one when the travellers going on a business journey break the plate in order to be obliged to come home (p. 144); for the fifth, wa tiki- tiki. Tolo, is yesterday; tolwen, the day before yesterday; tolwen wa hase, the day preceding the day before yesterday; ñanwaka, this year; hashau, next year; nweshemu, last year; ñwaka lowo, the year before last. One hardly counts days, or years, beyond this point (2).

802 One occasion on which arithmetical skill, or at least the faculty of addition, is specially required, is the counting of the lobolo, when this consists of hoes. Then the tens are carefully piled up separately, the whole family witnessing the operation, but this can hardly be called a mathematical achievement.

So, on the whole, opportunities of using the arithmetical

823 (1) If this use of the sun as a means of fixing the time inevitably leads to a want of precision, it has on the other hand, created a wonderful sense of direction amongst the Natives. They never lose sight of the North, they always know where the sun rises and sets, and this is no doubt the secret of their instinct. When travelling with them, it is not necessary to consult the compass; I would rather put my fate in their hands, knowing that they will not make any mistakes as regards direction (they will certainly make many as regards distance), as they say their *hearts* (timbilu, the same word employed for genius and instinct), viz., their subconscious powers, help them better than our instruments in the midst of the African bush; not to mention their knowledge of native paths. These powers have been cultivated by the constant observation of the sun.

(2) In my Grammaire Ronga, another list of names of the days following to-day is given, containing as many as 7. This seems to be the Ronga version, whilst that here given is the Djonga. However, in neither case is the list in constant and common use. It is known only to certain individuals who look on it more or less as a curiosity. To count days further than the day after to-morrow is quite unusual.

faculty are very rare in primitive Native life, and we ought not 802
to be astonished that this faculty has remained undeveloped. To pretend however that it is altogether wanting would be erroneous. I can give many proofs that it exists, and sometimes manifests itself in an interesting way.

First, in the game called *nyengeli-nyengeli mune*. The players 524
place a number of fruit stones on the ground two by two. One 802
turns his back, and the other player, pointing to the first group of two, asks : "Nyengeli nyengeli mune?" i.e : "How many stones are there?" The one whose back is turned replies : "Take one away and place it elsewhere," specifying where. The same thing is done with the second, and so on. Certain groups have eventually more stones than others. When a group is entirely scattered, the guesser says : "Makua ntsikitane," meaning "There are no more." The questioner then passes rapidly from group to group, over and over again, and the guesser must state how many stones each group contains. The game requires a considerable effort of memory.

Second proof : Shinangana! Shinangana is a man living in 805
Spelonken, near Elim Station, a raw Native who is ignorant of the art of reading and writing, and who never went to school, but who has created a *chronology* embracing the past 70 years. He knows what has happened in each year since 1859, and has arrived unaided at the conception of an era. His era starts from the emigration of the Thonga tribes into the Transvaal,when they fled before Manukosi, on the return of the Ngoni chief from the Mosapa or Gaza country (I. p. 28). The Nkunas, Mavundjas, Tsungus and other Hlabi clans were obliged at that time to take refuge in Spelonken, and this is the beginning of the era. Most of the years after that great event have their special designation. I had the good fortune to have an interview with Shinangana in 1905 and was able to note the details of his chronology, as he dictated them to me. After having enumerated all these years, he concluded in a triumphant tone with the exclamation : "All these years since the return of Manukosi make five hundred, and three hundred, and four months!" This is a most curious piece of Native historiography, I think quite unique in the whole Thonga tribe.

Having a remarkable bent for this work, he developed his gift, 805
acquired fame, and was consulted by all those who wished to know their age, or the date of some event. This increased his powers. He took a great delight in these consultations and, working at his subject every day, aided by his wonderful memory he could recite the whole chronology without the slightest hesitation. I give it in Appendix I,* and it is worthy of publication, not only as a proof of the possibility of a development in arithmetic amongst raw Natives, but also for its contents, as a contribution to the history of the Northern Transvaal.

We come to the same conclusion when teaching our pupils 803
arithmetic in our missionary schools. This is certainly the 163
branch of study in which they are the least proficient, and their teachers will all confess to having sometimes despaired of their mathematical faculty. However, when taught European numeration, English or Portuguese, most of them learn the four rules, and many attain to the Weights and Measures, and the Rule of Three. I saw a class of young Natives successfully studying Algebra in Lovedale, and they are not altogether incapable of Arithmetic. However they succeed better when the effort is one of memory, and this explains why they are much more at their ease when learning the English Weights and Measures, entailing complicated operations of reduction, than when put to the metric system which seems so much more simple and rational. The English system requires a perfect committal to memory of the relation between the various measures, yards, feet and inches, gallons, pints, gills, pounds, ounces and grains, and, these being once mastered, all the work becomes purely mechanical. This is what Natives like, whilst in the metric system there is one idea pervading the whole and a certain minimum of reasoning is necessary for its use : the necessity for this minimum explains the unpopularity of the metric system amongst the Native pupils, and the difficulty increases ten times when they come to problems, and have to solve them without having been told whether addition or substraction is necessary! So arithmetic, when workable by means of the memory, seems to them an easy and agreeable study ; when it requires reasoning, it is a painful occupation. If

* [See pp. 585-587 -- Analyst]

Shinangana had been trained, would he have been a genius in that 803
kind of mathematics where the power of reasoning is needed? 163
It is impossible to say, but it may be noticed that all his achievements were, after all, but masterpieces of memory, and that reasoning had very little to do with them.

The conclusion of our observations is then as follows : in the Bantu mind the literary sense is infinitely more developed than the mathematical. This is probably the case in all uncivilised or half civilised races, but amongst the South Africans it is strikingly apparent.

F. THE LITERARY SENSE OF THE THONGAS.

Let us look more closely into this literary faculty which the 521
Thonga grammar has already revealed to us. It not only consists 537
in the possession of a well constructed language, denoting powers of classification, combination, co-ordination and graphic description, but also shows itself in the poetic expression of their feelings, in a remarkable power of comparison, and in a rich folklore.

The *facility of expression*, amongst the Thongas, is very great. Any one, man or woman, is at any time ready to speak, and speaks correctly with the greatest ease. In this respect, the race is perhaps more advanced than many civilised peoples. There is nothing like the timidity you so often meet with amongst the peasants or workmen of our own lands, who, though they have had a full course of primary education, would be totally unable to deliver an address. A Native can always stand up and say what he thinks on any given question. Even if he has not thought much about it, he can speak! Finding words is no difficulty to him. Knowledge will perhaps be lacking, but fluency of speech never! This ease of elocution has evidently been acquired through a long experience in the discussion of public affairs on the *hubo*, where, as we saw (I, p. 436), every one has the right of expressing his opinion. This habit has developed literary ability,

and the Bantus, as a whole, deserve the compliment once paid to the pupils of the Lovedale Institute by the Rev. J. Henderson, when he said to them : "Your race has certainly received the gift of eloquence!" (1) 521 537

As regards the subject matter of their speeches, it does not always show much reflection, or many new ideas. Nor is there much order or sequence in their discourses. This would require proportion, measure, forethought, and all these virtues belong rather to the arithmetical sense which is so sadly deficient in the Bantu mind. What makes a Bantu address especially interesting is rather the *power of comparison* exhibited by Bantu speakers. They excel in discovering spiritual truths in material facts, or rather in perceiving the relations between the spiritual and the external world. This is one of the characteristics of the poetical faculty, and these so-called savages certainly have some sense of poetry in their minds. Most of the antithetic riddles, which will be quoted shortly, are instances of this power of comparison. When developed by proper training, this faculty will certainly become productive of valuable work. 195 537

So far, the training of Natives has been mostly in religious subjects, and I beg to give my readers some examples of their mode of comparison which I noted while listening to the preaching of evangelists, examples which bear the strong impress of the Bantu character. Sometimes the imagination is so subtle that the result is almost incoherent. They are satisfied even if the point which the two things compared have in common, that which grammarians call the "tertium comparationis," is almost infinitesimal.

(1) This power of elocution is very useful in Mission work, when evangelising the heathen villages all over Thongaland, the converts being always willing to make a speech or deliver an exhortation. They generally do this with great animation, and although the thinking is often poor, and does not show much sequence, they at least are never at a loss for words. I only once witnessed such a sad occurence! One of my pupils had prepared a sermon and was delivering it, when suddenly he stopped and could not proceed. He had lost the thread. Then a good natured smile appeared on his features and all his companions laughed heartily. This was the first time they had seen one of their countrymen in this predicament! The student had prepared a plan for his address, and had forgotten it! In former times plans were entirely absent and consequently there were no threads to lose!

For instance a Tembe Christian exhorting his hearers to fight against evil, says : 195 537

Let us, in this fight, take the shield which has been made from the skin of this ox slaughtered for our sake, Jesus Christ.

A moment of reflection is required to find the logical sequence which unites all these images. The Bantu shield being made of ox-hide, the scriptural image of the slaughtered lamb had to be transformed into that of an ox, for the sake of comparison!

Another evangelist, whose discourses were specially interesting because he was a master in this art, one day spoke for more than half an hour on the text "Charity which is the bond of perfection." In Thonga, bond, string, or rope is expressed by the same word (ngoti). So he showed how a string could be compared to charity by a great number of images, of which I remember at least the two following :

This rope, charity, is the rope which fastens the donkey to the trunk of a tree. In the evening you tie up the donkey ; it can graze the whole night all round the tree without any fear of being lost. So when we remain in connection with our Saviour, who is the tree, then we are happy and protected against all danger.

He evidently remembered the words of Christ : I am the vine. And he added :

Charity is the string, the string which ties up a parcel. You have many precious things in your parcel... But if you possess no string to tie up all these things, they will be lost on the way, one after the other, and you will reach the end of your journey (or of your life) having kept none of your spiritual advantages, etc.

This is how Simeon Gana tried to explain what conscience is :

Conscience resembles two companions who have made an arrangement to plunder, with impunity, another man's field of sweet potatoes. One of them climbs a tree, the other takes the hoe and digs up the potatoes. As soon as the owner of the field appears, the one on the tree whistles and the other promptly runs away, so that he is never

caught. But one day, the climber ran a thorn into his foot and he was obliged to sit down and extract it, as he could not climb to his post of observation in that condition. In the meantime his companion was stealing the potatoes in perfect tranquillity, thinking that his comrade was on guard. The owner arrived on the scene and caught him. Now you see clearly that conscience is the man who climbed up the tree. As long as he was doing his duty, success attended their plan. As soon as he fails to work, the man falls into disgrace. So let our conscience always be awake and warning us ! 195 537

We Europeans would never have dreamt of such a simile. Conscience represented by a thief helping another to steal! But the Bantu audience was perfectly satisfied...

Here is another comparison bearing on a similar subject :

The words of God are powerful and stir up the heart. They are like intestinal worms (manyokwana) which for a long time remain quiet in the body. But one fine night they awake and man cries out from pain, saying : "I am ill !" For years the man mocked the word of God, but that day he felt its power !

Hundreds of such comparisons, not always denoting a very refined taste, but always picturesque, might be collected from the addresses of Native Christians. I will only add this, which is deeper and more significant than many others, and which occurred to the imagination of one of my pupils :

We, preachers of the Gospel, are messengers of mourning. We have been sent to inform people of the great mourning of Jesus Christ by which He saved the world. Let us not resemble that messenger who had to go to another country to deliver his errand. On the way he passed a village where people were drinking beer. He heard the songs, looked on at the dance, entered and did not deliver his message. Such would we be, if distracted by worldly amusements, we were to neglect our sacred duty of preaching the cross.

Besides this undeniable power of comparison, Native addresses often reveal another curious feature ; the Native tendency to present ideas in a round-about manner. This is called *ku pamba*. Beneath expressions apparently simple they hide other meanings in a manner so ingenious and subtle that some of their hearers

often fail to understand them. This literary device is often apparent in their riddles, or proverbs. 195 537

The literary gifts of the Natives, finally, manifest themselves in the very interesting and rich folklore which will form the subject of our second chapter.

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Is it possible after this rapid study of the Thonga language to fix with greater accuracy the place which the Bantu languages occupy in the historic development of human speech? Languages which are regarded as the most primitive are characterised by a linguistic phenomenon which is called holophrase, viz. a single word means not only a single action, but an action accomplished under a number of peculiar circumstances. Mr. Marett in his excellent little book entitled *Anthropology* (p. 140) quotes some very curious examples of holophrase borrowed from the American languages, especially from the Fuegian. A single expression is said to mean : "to look at each other hoping that either will offer to do something which both parties are unwilling to do." I have found in Thonga only one instance in which traces of the holophrase system might be found, and this is by no means so wonderful. The demonstrative adjectives are met with in three forms, which indicate not only the object referred to, but its place as regards distance and in relation to the person speaking. Tihomu *leti*, means these oxen, near at hand, near me ; tihomu *leto*, these oxen, somewhat further off, near you, my interlocutor ; tihomu *letiya*, those oxen, far away and near a third person. The more the final a is prolonged, the further off are the oxen. Moreover these demonstrative adjectives indicate not only the situation of the oxen in space but also in time ; *leti* are the oxen of to-day, *leto* those of a near past and *letiya* those of which we were speaking a long time ago. But this is an isolated case. In Thonga ideas are differenciated almost as completely as in our Indo-European languages. The language has evolved from the holophrastic to the analytic. My conclusion is therefore that the Bantu languages, though they belong to the agglutinate variety, have reached a high degree of development ; they reveal the existence of intellectual powers not essentially different from those of civilized races. They certainly constitute the greatest achievement of Bantu mental activity and the most precious treasure inherited by the Bantus of to-day from their forefathers. 192

2: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga
p. 176

CHAPTER II

THONGA FOLKLORE.

538 Thonga folklore may be said to exhibit three different styles : *didactic* and sometimes *sententious* poetry, in its proverbs and riddles, *narrative* poetry in its manifold tales, and *lyric* poetry in its songs. The two first may be called to a certain extent *collective* or *traditional* : all the riddles or tales are ancient products of the literary activity of the tribe, handed down to the Thongas of to-day by oral tradition. On the other hand, new songs are continually being composed, and bear a much more *personal* or *individual* character. I have given a great many examples of tales and songs, in my "Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga" (324 p.), as well as in "Les Ba-Ronga" (p. 253-363).

My present object is not to compile all the available material, which would be far too long a process, but to give a general idea of Thonga folklore, and to complete my previous study by the publication of some new tales and riddles chosen from those collected since the two preceding works were published. The source is almost inexhaustible, and would suffice for the compilation of two or three volumes. The examples here given will be representative enough to convey a true idea of this rich folklore, and I refer the reader to the two books previously cited if he wishes for more information.

A. PROVERBIAL SAYINGS AND RIDDLES.

Riddles certainly furnish us with a very precious means of gaining an insight into the secret workings of the Native mind, as they form doubtless the quaintest part of their literature, and

that which bears the least resemblance to any portion of our own! I have already quoted some examples of riddles in my first volume, and the obscurity of these sayings has been sufficiently obvious. Without special explanation it would be difficult indeed to discover their meaning. 538

I. *Proverbial sayings.*

As regards *proverbs*, the Ba-Ronga possess a few containing a single statement, as for example :

1) Mumiti wa nhengele a dumba nkolo wa kwe.
He who swallows a large stone has confidence in the size of his throat!

This might be said in any country and will be recognised, at once, as applying to bumptious and pretentious folk!

2) U nga hlaule matjhuna ya mhangela.
One must not point out the male of the guinea-fowl.

Guinea fowls are all alike, male and female. So do not point to one and say : "This is a male." You would be liable to make a mistake, and to be made fun of! This proverb is said to a young husband who might be tempted to prepare the *ntehe* before the birth of his child, which is taboo. (I. p. 46.) Compare this with the proverb : Don't count your chickens before they are hatched.

3) Tinhlange ta le ntjhaku ti tibyiwa hi mutlhabi.
The tattooing marks made on the back are known to the tattooer (not to the tattooed!).

You do not know what may happen when you have turned your back. This warning was given by one of the Church elders, of Lourenço Marques, to a missionary who was leaving on furlough!

4) Matimba ya ngwenya i mati.
The strength of the crocodile is water.

When you are in your own domain you can succeed ; do not try to fight outside it. You would be like "a fish out of water..

5) U nga nwe mati, u seletela nhlobo ; mundjuku u ta nwa kwini ?
Do not fill up the well after having drunk. Where would you drink to-morrow?

538 Here the sense is at once apparent.

6) Mbuti ya shihaha a yi belekeli ntlhambin.
A good goat does not bring forth in the midst of the flock.

I heard this proverb in one of our Synods. One of the Native members wished to exhort his co-delegates to abstain from giving their advice, and voting precipitately on a certain subject : let us rather go outside, and discuss amongst ourselves, and when we have come to an understanding we will come back and vote as one man!

This last example shows how such proverbs are used... They are sometimes quoted in a low voice, so as to be heard only by those whom it is desired to warn. It is an instance of the *phamba* just referred to.

Compare also the proverb quoted (p. 21) in connection with tilling the fields :

Do not look at the weeds and think : Now ! I have tilled a large field !

Do not be satisfied by mere external appearances! Weeds may be plentiful, yet the field be small!

Hundreds of such sayings might be collected (1), though I do not think they are so extensively used as, for instance, in the Sutho tribe, where M. Jacottet told me he collected a thousand of them. The Thongas replace them by riddles, which seem to be more developed amongst this people than in the neighbouring tribes.

II. *Riddles.*

524 I have already described (I. p. 350) the part riddles play in the games of the Thonga village. The riddle, *mhumhana*, consists first in divining where the piece of charcoal is hidden, and in that

671 538 (1) We might also regard as proverbs, and include under this heading, the figurative terminology used to express the principles of right and justice, which are, as it were, a primitive codification of the common law, and to which I have previously referred — as for instance the curious sentence : A cow which has calved is not used for payin a debt. (I. p. 217).

case it is merely a matter of guess work. But it may have a more literary character, when it consists in a more or less witty question requiring a given reply. The answer is here contained in one word ; so these riddles may be called *riddles in one sentence.* 524

Leshi u nga khandjiyiki nsinya ya shone, n'shini? — Hi ndjulu.
What is the thing up the trunk of which one cannot climb? It is the juncus.
Leshi nhaka nenge wa shone u nga rwali hi ku bindja u ya tlhasa shilungwin, n'shini? — Hi nsuna.
What is the animal whose leg is so heavy that you could not carry it to Lourenço Marques? — The mosquito (which is so very light!)
Leshi shi nga heta hubo ya ka Machakene, shi ndjundja, shi kwala hubyen? — Hi nhwala!
What is it that is all over the square at Machakene, that creeps and crawls about on it? It is the louse!

This last is full of malice! The village of Machakene, formerly in the immediate vicinity of Lourenço Marques, where the fashionable European quarter is now situated, was the place where men arriving from the interior to find work at the seaport usually passed the night. They appear to have been somewhat annoyed with unwelcome attentions! Hence the riddle.

Here is a rather more difficult one :

Tiban leshi, nambi mamana wa ñwana a ku mu randja ngopfu, loko a tlhasa kaya a nga hluleka ka ku mu yamukela? — Hi nyimba.
Guess what it is that a mother loves dearly but which could not run to meet her on her return home? — It is the unborn babe in her womb.

Another riddle of the same kind is this :

Tiba leshi, nambi shi shongile, afaka u nga ti wopsana na ye? — Hi makwenu.
Do you know the person to whom you would not make an improper proposal, however handsome she may be? — It is your sister.
Leshi nsinya ya shone yi nga bonekiki, ntshini? — Yendje-yendje.
The thing of which the stem is invisible, what is it? — The cuscuta.

This plant is a cause of wonder to Natives, because its root and stem are so rarely seen. It is known that it grows from a root, but when it has developed, the stem dies and the plant lives on as a parasite.

Leshi nambi wa ba, ntjonsi wa kone wu nga boneki? — I mati.
The thing which you can beat without leaving a scar? — Water.

524 Here is one more which has a more philosophical character and which may be of later origin.

> Leshi nga hamba Tilo ni Misaba, hi tshini ? — Ntumbuluko !
> The thing which made Heaven and Earth, what is it ? — Nature !

Ntumbuluko comes from ku tumbuluka, to be created, to appear, and is well translated by the word Nature (See Part VI, Chapter I).

The Thongas possess a plentiful supply of *riddles containing two statements*, which they call *psitekatekisana* and of which I have collected about a hundred. I could easily have found ten times as many. One of our female neighbours (Lishanyi) knew a great number of these and could pour them forth without stopping well on into the night.

Whoever is most expert at asking questions takes the lead, and commences with a kind of invocation of which I have not been able to discover the meaning : Ñwanyanga mintjuti, lit. son of the moon, shadows. Then addressing one of the other players, and speaking very rapidly, he (or she) will say : "Teka, teka, teka (take, guess) heeee...!" following this up with the question to be asked, which forms the first part of the riddle ; the person addressed must immediately reply with the phrase forming the second part. If he is unable to answer, or gives a wrong reply, the questioner says : "Psi ku hlulile" — "you are beaten," and passes on to another player, again beginning with "teka, teka, teka" and asking the same question until some one is able to give the correct rejoinder. Hence the name of this game, psiṭekatekisana, i. e. things which you make others guess.

It will be seen that we are not here dealing with riddles in the true sense of the word, with solutions only to be arrived at by keenness of thought and reflection ; the answers to these must be learnt by heart, and it only requires a good memory to become an adept at the game. The ancestors, however, who composed the riddles, and handed them down to posterity, were by no
115 means lacking in wit and ingenuity. The examples given below I
524 owe mostly to Timotheo Mandlati, a Nkuna of Shiluvane, who wrote them down for me in the dialect of his own tribe ; some of

them are in Hlengwe. I also obtained a good many from my 115
Ronga informants, Spoon and Galu of Libombo, Titus, and 524
Shilati, a blind man who thought himself very learned in the "riddling art," but understood very little of what he was talking about, and, in any case, was quite unable to give any explanation of his riddles. Some are the common property of both Ba-Ronga 524
and Ba-Nkuna ; they seem to be very popular throughout the Thonga tribe.

To begin with, here are some examples of which *the inner meaning is not difficult to discover* :

> Teka-teka-teka-he ! Tiba ro pshya hi matlhelo ? — Ndlopfu yi fa hi tshembeti.
> The lake dries up at the edges ? — The elephant is killed by a small arrow.

A great result (the drying up of a lake, the death of an elephant) is often produced by a very small cause (the gradual evaporation of water at the edges, a little arrow). The idea is similar to that expressed in the proverb : "Il ne faut pas mépriser les petits commencements," or "small beginnings make great endings."

> Ndja ha batla mpalala ? — Ndja ha hleketela...
> I am still carving an iron wood stick ? — I am still thinking about it.

An undecided man might reply thus to those urging him to immediate action. The wood of the *mpalala* is extremely hard. "It is a long business to carve a figure of this wood" says the cunning fellow ; "I am not going to make up my mind about it in a hurry!"

> Ndji pfumala tshati ; nha ndji ya tjhema nhonga ?
> — Ndji pfumala ntlhambi ; nha ndji ya lobola munhu lweyo.
> I have no axe, or I would go and cut a stick ?
> — I have no oxen, or I would go and lobola this girl.

This is the sigh of the impecunious lover. In the first sentence he laments the want of an ordinary every-day object (an axe) which prevents his obtaining something he wishes for (a stick) ; he lets it be understood that a much more precious article is lacking (oxen, money, a lobolo) which would enable him to obtain something infinitely more to be desired (the girl he loves).

524 Ndji tshukumetele kwakwa, dji ya wa ngolongolo ?
— Ndji yamukele psikomo psi pfa ni Ba-Nhlabi.
I have thrown away my kwakwa; it has rolled away to the ends of the earth (into distant lands) ?
I have accepted the hoes which come from the Ba-Hlabi.

I have sold my daughter in marriage to the people of Hlabi (on the other side of the Limpopo, further up than Bilene, in Gaza); by so doing I have lost my child for ever. She has disappeared like a round fruit (kwakwa) which, when thrown a long distance, rolls and rolls away until it can never again be found.— Moral : Don't let your girls marry foreigners (Compare I, p. 260).

Shiyindlwana mpfontsho ? — Mundjuku milandju.
The little hut falls down ? — To morrow, debts.

If you don't keep your house in good order, you will soon find yourself in difficulties. A disorderly life leads to debt.

In other riddles the meaning is not so self-evident as in the preceding examples. There are some which are simply *a comparison of two objects* or of an object and an idea which resembles it in some one particular. With the rapidity of perception characteristic of the Native mind, some clever individual has been struck by this resemblance, and has thereupon composed a riddle the obscurity of which is in direct proportion to its conciseness.

Rihondjo ra ndlopfu ku mpfara ? — Munhu wa ndlala tihanyi ?
The sound of a cracked elephant-tusk ? — The anger of a hungry man.

Both have a false ring.

This Nkuna riddle is met with amongst the Rongas, in the following form :

Litimbo la phila ku mbvetshe ? — Amunhu wa ndlala mahlundju.
The creaking of the dried sorghum stalk ? — The anger of a hungry man.

Sikisiki dja mbangwe ? — Longoloko dja Ba-Tschwa.
The stem of hemp ? — The Zulu formation (when on the march, in single file).

In the way the leaves grow on the hemp stalks, there is a suggestion of the formation, or rather of the forest of plumes of Zulu warriors on the march...

524

Ntshiba ukulu wa mpfafati? — Ndjeko yikulu ya balungu.
The tall ntshiba? — The long tumblers of the Whites.

The ntshiba is the tallest tree on the Ronga hills, and casts a grateful shade. The long tumblers used by the Whites answer the same purpose; both conduce to the refreshment of the weary!

Tihuku ta ka Manyisa ta ka nhingena he psisuka?
— Baŭwhanyana ba ka Manyisa ba ku kandja ba khisamile.
The fowls of Manyisa enter the fowl-house tails first?
— The Manyisa girls pound maize sitting down.

This is probably a sly hit at the girls of the Manyisa country [516] who are reported to sit down when crushing maize; everywhere else this operation is performed standing up. They don't do things like other people. — Chickens also sometimes do things the wrong way!

Riddles which refer to some *historical event* may be classed in a third category. The best known is that concerning Tembe and his sons. (See I, p. 23.) — Here is another:

Ndji fambi nhlangwa lokulu ndji heketa Mimaleyane?
— Ndji djimi nsimo leyikulu, ndji byala ndlowu yiŭwe.
I walked right across a big plain to accompany Memaleyane?
— I hoed a large field and only planted a single pea.

This is doubtless the story of a rejected lover who thus wittily relates his discomfiture. He took all the trouble to accompany Mimaleyane a long way, right to her home, and received no reward for his gallantry. As well hoe a whole field and only plant one pea! A great deal of trouble for nothing!

A fourth category of riddles comprises those in which no real similarity of ideas would seem to exist, but merely a *similitude in sound*, a sort of graceful alliteration which is pleasing to the ear. The two following examples are very popular and very pretty from the point of view of euphony:

He kumi nkuhlu, u wupfa, ka ku sala huhlu yiŭwe?
— He kumi mulungu, a wondja-wondja, ka ku sala ndjepfu yiŭwe.
We found a *nfuhlu* which ripens, which ripens; only one nut is left?
— We found a White man who gets thinner, thinner: nothing left but a hair of his beard.

The comparison of ideas is not difficult to perceive, but what conclusion or moral can the author mean to convey? None!

524 He has been merely led away by the musical charm of the words.

Lastly I would class in a final category *the riddles which are altogether incomprehensible*, of which there are quite a large number.

> Be khumbi? — Mayo! Ku fa.
> The people against the wall? — Ah! if only I were to die!

Zebedea, a very intelligent man, who gave me this riddle, could not tell me what it meant. Possibly the words may have been altered in the course of transmission from generation to generation. I am unable to say. In any case we are discouraged from expending our energy in trying to discover meanings in the *psitekatekisana* when they are too obscure by the fact that several of these questions, or primary phrases, can be answered in different ways; the answer, or second phrase, varies with the informant. Suppose for instance, that the following question be put:

> Makhoi ya nyari yinga-yinga?
> The horns of the buffalo wander hither and thither?

The answer may be the well-known proverb (p. 21).

> U nga bone bibi u ku ndji rimele.
> Do not contemplate the heaps of weeds saying to thyself: I have finished hoeing.

Or it may be:

> Barara ba bambe ndji nabela.
> I covet the fathers of other girls.

It may be that, in the parlour game previously described, when some one fails to give the right answer, he quotes the second sentence of another riddle on the spur of the moment, and so false connections are established between sentences which have no common meaning.

Are these *psitekatekisana* peculiar to our tribe, or are they to be met with elsewhere? I cannot be certain on this point, but I have not heard anything like them quoted from other places. Some bear a strong resemblance to the antithetic proverbs of Solomon. But it must be confessed that they are entirely lacking in the deep religious or moral meaning of most of the Jewish proverbs!

B. THONGA SONGS.

I. *Thonga poetry and Thonga poets.*

Bantu poetry differs widely from our own! So do Bantu 533
poets from our "literary men." I had the good fortune to 538
make the acquaintance of one of them on the same day that I witnessed the crushing down of Mayibane's hut (I, p. 156). Attracted by the big gathering, and knowing that he would have plenty of hearers, and meat to his heart's content, this poet had come to grace the occasion with his presence. He was on a literary tour, going from one village to another, singing his songs and dancing from one end of the land to the other. Tall, his face absolutely clean shaven, his eyes having a kind of absent, semi-conscious look, he at the same time appeared most contemptuous and remained in a state of olympic calm, as if he were a very superior kind of being. He was a man of the Manyisa clan, and all seemed to show him much consideration. When those officiating at the sacrifice were busy cutting open the victim, he appeared in the circle formed by the spectators (see illustration I. p. 159, No. 7), and began his performance. He had put on a skirt of *milala* palm-leaves and imitated a lame man, assuming an air of intense suffering. Suddenly, with wonderful strength, he began to trample the ground with his feet. He had an assagai in his hand, and feigned to pierce his own side, and his thigh. Then, lifting the weapon, he cast an authoritative look on the throng and those who had been laughing stopped and kept perfectly quiet. He remained immovable, regarding them with an air of supreme contempt, impassible... And then he commenced his song (suma).

(Chorus) Oho! Oho! (Soloist) Where are you going, mother (See tune No. 1 in the collection of Thonga tunes.)

The throng joined with him in the chorus, which was really very effective. The women clapped their hands in cadence

533

Phot. A. Bard.

A Thonga minstrel.

(wombela) to encourage him. Judging that they did not do this 533
with sufficient vigour, he scooped up a handful of sand and 538
threatened to throw it into their eyes. They clapped with renewed ardour. One of them, the tall, light-coloured one who had sung the obscene songs referred to I. p. 159, came, and with a peculiar smile wrapped a yellow piece of cloth round his loins. He sang other songs, again trampling furiously on the ground, until the sacrificers had finished their work; then he was made to stop, and the prayer to Manyibane began.

This performance was indeed, wonderful, and its interest was in no wise inferior to the funeral ceremonies themselves. It is a typical example of Thonga poetry, where three elements are generally present: the music, the dance and the words, which are more or less poetical.

This Manyisa bard is by no means a unique specimen. I remember having heard, many years ago, a poet of exactly the same type, from Bilene, who visited the Ronga clans, singing everywhere and asking for old rags as his reward. There are professional poets who earn their living by their art. There are also a number of occasional poets, who compose new songs and perform them in their own villages, not aspiring to a world-wide fame. If their tunes are pleasing, they are spoken of by others, and so become known throughout the land, on the strength of their own merit. In this way songs become popular and a great number of them are constantly sung at beer-parties, after harvest, at the feasts, some gradually falling into oblivion and being replaced by new ones each season (1).

In this chapter I shall not treat of the musical character of the

(1) I met later a blind minstrel, Mungomana, who earned his living in the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques by giving concerts in the yard of an important Native 533
woman named Nwalanga, at which a number of boys from Inhambane and Chopiland 754
used to stop before leaving for Johannesburg. He accompanied their dances with his timbila (xylophone) and was payed 4.800 reis per month. He told me his story. When quite young he showed a quite unusual gift for music and dancing. He went everywhere where a feast was taking place and boys were trying to outdo each other in dancing and singing, and was always proclaimed first. A woman impressed by his wonderful art, asked him to marry her, but he declined on the plea that he was still too young. Once as he was passing along a field where this woman was at work, she said to him: "If you do not marry me, you shall not live." Frightened by this

533 songs ; that will be considered in the next chapter, in which I
538 intend to publish the forty-one tunes of my collection. Here I shall only consider them as literary products, and in trying to classify them, I have noticed that, though most of them cannot be said to be very elaborate compositions, they pertain to many different styles, lyric, elegiac, epic, dramatic, etc. and, in addition, there are those which are sung while at work, as well as the incantations to animals and spirits. I will give some examples of each of these categories.

II. *Lyric poetry.*

533 Thongas, like most human beings, have felt the need of chanting
539 their joys and sorrows, joining words to music in order the better to express their feelings. These feelings are not as a rule very deep, and their lyrics are rather play than a painful cry of the heart. Here for instance is *the complaint of the childless woman,* who longs ardently for a baby. She has been to other people and asked them to lend her one. But they have refused and only consented to lend her a mortar and a plate. She then sings to a charming melody (Tune 7).

A ba boleki ŝwana ! — Ba boleka tshuri ni nkambana !
Ngi ndji mangatlu ! — Ngi ndji shimungwe ! — Ngi n'ta ku utla !
They won't lend me a baby ! — They lend me but a mortar and a plate !
Were I an eagle ! — Were I a bird of prey ! — I would carry thee away !

The thousands of young Thongas *who go to the mines of Johannesburg,* to extract the precious auriferous quartz, seem to be quite contented with their fate. They, however, chant their

533 threat he fled to another country, but soon one of his eyes began to swell. His elder brother told him : "You have been bewitched by that woman," and his paternal aunt
754 tried to heal him. She covered him with a piece of cloth, and made him expose his eye to the steam of a certain drug boiled in a pot below. She claimed to have succeeded, having found an ox-tail hair at the bottom of the pot when she poured out the water. This was however a lie. The eye complaint became worse, till he entirely lost his sight. He then devoted his life to music, and composed many songs to accompany the dances of the magayisa (boys going to work.) These songs became popular ; if a boy wished for one of them, his favourite, to be executed, he would willingly pay 200 reis ! — Mungomana is the only Thonga I heard of who used music in his religious rites. I shall give the words of his canticle in Part VI.

misfortunes to a very melodious tune (No. 8) which I once heard 533
in Rikatla repeated a dozen times by children's voices along 539
the bushy paths. The words were in Zulu and were said to mean :

> Stones are very hard to break
> Far from home, in a foreign land.

The tune is so catching that it has become quite popular even in French Switzerland, where I have had the opportunity of singing it on many occasions.

Once when I was walking after sunset in the neighbourhood of a miserable village of two or three huts in Rikatla, I was attracted by a simple melody repeated again and again by a feminine voice. A young woman with a child on her shoulders and engaged in cooking her food was singing. She had just lost her father. Her husband was a very bad character ; she had been obliged to leave him and to take refuge in her father's village, and, lo, he had died! Feeling lonely and abandoned by all her natural helpers, she was expressing her grief in a low tone by the following words sung to a tune full of sadness (No. 41).

Tatana a ndji siya	My father has left me !
Na ndji nga li na mumben !	And I had no other except him !
Ndji se psanga libalen	I remain alone on the earth !
Sha ndji ta ya kwini mbuu !	Where shall I go then, Alas !

I am afraid Bantu lyrics have more than once found occasion 533
to celebrate the selfishness and *rudeness of the White race* ! I 539
remember travelling through the desert with three Zoutpansberg 609
colonists, and some of their black servants. The White masters 466
were not exactly gentle with their boys. A road had to be cut through the bush and it was hard work to remove the stones, and to cut down the trees. The shambock was sometimes resorted to in order to stimulate the Natives. I once heard one of them, who had just been castigated, murmuring in a low tone his monotonous complaint, whilst chopping at a stem. I caught the following words : (Tune 9)

Ba hi shanisa !	They treat us badly !
Ba ku hi hlupa !	They are hard on us !
Ba nwa makhofi !	They drink their coffee !
Ba nga hi nyike !	And they give us none !

533 Of course the colonists, who only knew "Kitchen Kafir,"
539 could not understand the complaint of the Nkuna boy!

The *song of the crab* is more tragic! (Tune No. 10). In a deep minor key a man cries for help! He went to hunt the big crabs which dwell in the mud of the mangrove forest, or on the sea-shore. He followed one ; the animal hastily hid itself in its hole. The imprudent hunter tried to catch it there ; he put his arm into the hole and attempted to pull the crab out. But the crustacean seized his finger in its claws so firmly that the man could not get free. He remained tightly held down, fixed to the ground. The tide is rising; soon it will cover him! And he cries :

> Yo-o ! Lomo tjukeni ku na mani ? — Hala yi khomi litiho !
> Alas ! - On the shore is there some one ? — The crab has caught me by the finger !

This is almost dramatic poetry and the scene is worthy of a true literary description.

533 The *erotic style* is cultivated by boys and girls on different
832 occasions though it must be said that love, as we understand it,
539 plays but little part in Thonga life. Boys in love generally express their feelings to the accompaniment of the unicord harp (see Chap. III) in the evening in the neighbourhood of the village of their beloved one ; I have never been able to catch the words of these songs, which are said to be sometimes very long, and are sung in a very loud voice ; they are not precisely chaste, according to one of our Native ministers, who considered that the use of the unicord harp ought to be forbidden to Christian boys! But here is a *love song* probably composed by a girl who was not allowed to marry the boy of her choice :

> To-morrow, to-morrow, my mother, I will start,
> To-morrow, father, I will start,
> I will start with an axe ;
> With this axe I will cut the stump,
> The stump on which my friend has hurt his leg,
> My friend whose belt of tails hangs from his waist,
> The one for whom I draw my legs out of the way. (1)

784 (1) Perhaps an allusion to the fact that it is taboo to pass over any one's outstretched
516 legs. She draws in her legs to give him the means of passing and coming to sit beside her.

The stump is perhaps some ill-disposed person whose opposition 533
the energetic maid is determined to overcome! 832

As a counterpart, here is the *complaint of a jilted lover*, who 539
gives vent to his annoyance with the girl and her family :

> Refuse me if you will, girl!
> The grains of maize you eat in your village are human eyes!
> The tumblers from which you drink are human skulls!
> The manioc roots you eat are human tibia!
> The sweet potatoes are human fingers!
> Refuse me, if you will, girl!

The vexation of a jilted lover is of short duration. He has 831
the money, he is sure to find a girl! But it would be erroneous to think Native lovers or husbands are not capable of deep and lasting affection. I know of a case, near Shiluvane, in which a Nkuna committed suicide because his wife had deceived him, and had relations with another man.

See, I. p. 286, the song in which the *despised wife* gives vent 533
to her anger : her husband has plucked her little pumpkin and given it to the wife he preferred. No doubt the *bukwele*, the special feeling of jealousy existing between co-wives, has inspired more than one song which could find no equivalent in our own literature!

Mourning songs are numerous ; they are sung just after the 533
burial. They are touching ; note the simple cry : 765
539

> Mamane! You have left us! whither have you gone?

The tune (No. 14) is striking : a very high and prolonged note, followed by double crochets sounded very rapidly and ending in another long note with a short sharp conclusion, like a cry of anguish.

One of those present rises and sings, as if he were playing the part of the bereaved :

> A ba ndji yalange-ke lepi?
> Have they not hated me, treating me in this way?

All the throng of the mourners answer :

> Ba ku yalile, wene, we ka manyana!
> They have hated you, son of so and so!

533 He answers :

539 Ba tekile nkhao !
765 They have taken my intimate friend !

This is no doubt an allusion to the wizards, who are supposed to cause most of the deaths. They are cursed in another very curious song, half Zulu, noted down by Mrs Audéoud in Maputju. (Tune 16.)

Hamban, Muthakati ! Bulela bantu ! — U teka b'sikwin !
Go away, wizard ! Killer of men ! — You take them during the night !

Or the mourning song may be a complaint, in which the family bewails its bereavement, like the old Nkuna song. (Tune 15) :

Hi bana ba Nhumba ya ntima ! Hi bana ba Malala ni ngobe.
We are the sons of the black house (the house of misfortune and defilement)

The following is strangely stoic :

A li beni mombo ! A li beni mombo !
Ku tshubuka, ku baba ka psone !
Let it beat the face ! Let it beat the face !
To run away, what a bitter thing !

Death is like a foe. Look at it face to face! Do not lose your courage in this last fight.

I quote in Part VI another mourning song, a very curious one, where an allusion is made to Heaven, the mysterious power which kills and gives life, which we have already heard mentioned in the song of the widows (I, p. 209), when they lament their bereavement.

533 This *stoic* song is also a *war* song ; it is customary to sing the
539 war songs at the death of any important personage. The following belongs to the same category, and is used on both occasions :

Ketle-ketle, nlubane ! Fumo dji wile ! A dlawa hi nomo, Tatana !
Hear this noise of weapons ! The assagai has fallen ! He has been killed on account of his words, father !

The chief has been killed, in a fight which had been caused by his imprudent words : he wished to free himself from his

suzerain (the Ngoni chief?); war ensued, and he was put to 533
death! So the sorrow caused by death has certainly furnished 539
Thonga poets with touching themes.

The heart of the whole tribe was also stirred, at the close of the before-mentioned war of 1894-1896, when the young chief Ñwamantibyane, only 18 or 20 years of age, was caught and deported to West Africa. *The lament of the child* was then composed by an unknown author; but he had so well understood the feelings of the Black nation that it at once became popular; and it was heard everywhere on the wharf, hummed by hundreds of boys carrying loads or pushing trucks, and chanting the sad fate of the child; in the villages, far and wide, they sang the recital of Ñwamantibyane's sufferings:

> Ndumakazulu! The glorious! Known as far as Zululand!
> He fought bravely! He was obliged to fly!
> He was caught and deported... etc.

And ever and again came the chorus, in a sad, resigned tone: (Tune 11).

> Hi ñwanao! Hi ñwana ba dlele! Ñwamantibyane!
> It is the child! The child they have killed! Ñwamantibyane!

Eleven years later, when travelling far away in the Manyisa district, I heard a tall, thin boy playing on his unicord harp in a Banyan store, and muttering some words, which he accompanied by beating his instrument. This was the same old lament of the child:

> It is the child, the child whom they have killed!
> He was not yet grown up!

The melody had greatly changed (tune 12) and the pain had passed out of it. But the national song had not yet entirely died away.

This is a kind of elegy, and forms a transition to the patriotic and epic songs.

III. *Epic poetry.*

The war songs have already been quoted when dealing with the Army (I. p. 460), those performed in the mukhumbi, at the coronation of the chief (I. p. 372) when preparing to go to

533 fight, when returned from battle, as well as those sung during the march of the troop. I give the striking music of some of these in the next chapter. Tune 24 is the "Sabela nkosi" the great Mpfumo song, also adopted by other clans. Tune 25, with its splendid change from the minor to the major key, is the Tembe and Maputju classical war song. No. 29 is an old Nkuna war song, dating as far back as 1820, before the Zulu invasion ; No. 27 is the principal modern Nkuna song, and
535 No. 28 the Nkuna equivalent to the Ronga *Giraffe song*. These old chants are sung to the accompaniment of the military dance, which consists in trampling on the ground, while rhythmically brandishing the assagais, lifting them first to the right, then to the left, bending them sideways, then downwards, as if to pierce (I. p. 463). They are certainly wonderfully fine compositions.

533 I include in the same category the laudatory song of the *mbongi*
826 (I. p. 424), a branch of literature in which Court poets display
644 considerable imagination and an extraordinary gift for unbounded hyperbole. All the important chiefs have their mbongi and it is required of the man holding this office that he should have a good chest (shifuba), the chest being to the Thongas the seat of eloquence (as it was to the ancient Romans : Pectus est quod oratorem facit!). The elucubrations of these poet laureates sometimes last a very long time and may have real poetic value.

614 As we saw (I. p. 361) each clan and even each family
553 possesses its own laudatory phrase ; this is the *shibongo*, a word which generally means family name, but which etymologically signifies the formula by which the clan or family glorifies (bonga) itself. These formulae are usually short and often contain archaic expressions or allusions to unknown facts which make them very difficult to understand. I have given some of those from the Ronga territory. Here are two others, collected by the Rev. A. Jaques amongst the Transvaal Thongas, who seem to cultivate this custom more than the coast clans ; they are perhaps encouraged to do so by their Pedi neighbours, who are very fond of these formulae, called by them *mireto*.

Hlangwini wa ka Shitlhelane; hi ba ka Nkandamuri; hi ba ka Manyubele ni Mbowo; hi ba ka Gidjigidji, ba tilo. —. Akane ka peitjunga! Lomu akobeni mi ta muka hi kona... 614 553

Hlangwini of (the house of) Shitlhelane; we are of (the house of) Nkandamuri; we are of (the house of) Manyubele and Mbowo; we are of (the house of) Gidjigidji, the people of Heaven. —. Build (your huts) on the hills. In the valley you will have to leave (?)

It would seem that these Hlangwinis are a clan of rain-makers, people having the power of Heaven. They advise others to settle on the hills and not in the valleys, because otherwise their huts would be swept away by the floods, owing to the terrible rains which the Hlangwinis have the power of causing to fall.

The second is not very refined, but is characteristic. Erotic allusions are frequent in those formulae :

Nkuna wa Mabutane; mabuta, ba yi bonile ku basa ka yona.
Nkuna of Mabutane; when wooing a girl, he has seen that she was pure.

Mabutane is probably a surname of Nkuna. There is in this formula a play on the word buta which means to woo (I. p. 101). Before choosing a girl, the ancestor first made sure that she was untouched ; this denotes a species of wisdom which his descendants still boast of to-day! 653

In epic poetry may be included also the *pshiphato*, a Zulu expression which means the laudatory sentence with which warriors praise themselves according to the Zulu fashion. Private individuals, and even women sometimes have their shiphato ; for instance a girl bearing the name of Yandea will glorify herself in these words : Yendea, madjaha! Yendea, the young men! This formula does not throw a very favourable light on the habits of the girl, and scarcely belongs to literature!

A more elaborate product of Thonga poetry is found in the *hunting songs*. I have already mentioned these (p. 60) and here give as a typical example the Elephant's song. I have been told by my informant, Zebedea Mbenyana, a Native of Bilen, that the hunters performed it whilst dancing on the body of the enormous beast, after having transfixed it. 533 224 115 539

1st Strophe.

533 They march in single file, the Elephants, the mighty ones,
They go to slake their thirst.

224

Antistrophe.

539 Let us go too! They're drinking amongst the thickets! Hurrah

2nd Strophe.

Hark! the smothered roarings in the forest.

Antistrophe.

'Tis a grand sound, the roaring in the forest. Hurrah!

3rd Strophe.

The crying of the elephant, the mother! 'Tis she who calls the hunters to the thickets.

Antistrophe.

Hurrah! 'tis she who calls the hunters!' Ho! Hurrah!

4th Strophe.

Yonder's the one with ears so large and drooping.

Antistrophe.

Hurrah! the big-eared one has just passed us. Hurrah!

5th Strophe.

The boys are there; the sound of knives being sharpened, there from the spot where the elephant lies slain.

Antistrophe.

Hurrah! the sound of knives being sharpened. Hurrah!

This composition certainly exhibits wonderful poetic power and grandeur, describing marvellously the emotions of the courageous band, who have finally succeeded in obtaining the precious tusks of the elephant, and vast quantities of meat. This song of triumph is worthy of a place amongst the best productions of the Muse of primitive races.

195 To the imaginative mind of the Bantu everything that causes a deep impression, even material objects, affords an occasion for the utterance of lofty phrases and words of praise. Once when travelling south of Delagoa Bay through the desert, our party arrived in the neighbourhood of the Umbelozi railway. The

train was heard in the distance. One of my servants was busy 195
cleaning the pots ; I heard him muttering the following words :

The one who roars in the distance... The one who crushes in pieces the braves and smashes them ! The one who debauches our wives : they abandon us, they go (to the towns to lead a bad life) ! The seducer ! And we remain alone.

He was extolling the huge thing and lamenting his misfortune and the curse it has brought upon the country.

IV. *Satiric poetry.*

I have already mentioned the peculiar custom of Thonga 533
literati of speaking in a round-about fashion, and using figurative 195
language, especially when they want to say something disagreeable 574
or to give vent to their humour. It is but one step from such 576
forms to satire. They generally indulge in this satiric vein when 539
dealing with relatives-in-law, women being especially prone to it. When the sisters and aunts of a married woman go to pay a visit to her, they convey all kinds of equivocal compliments. These must not be taken seriously! It is a round-about — exceedingly round-about — way of making graceful allusions and expressing their mutual esteem. I will quote the series of these songs of friendly chaff and invective as it was given to me by Shigiyane, with a running commentary to render them comprehensible. These lively and pointed choruses give a fitting finishing-touch to the marriage customs, and illustrate the curious relations existing between allied families, which I explained in Vol. I, p. 249-253.

On the wedding day the women who take the bride to her 585
husband sing the *tjeka song* : 533
539

Let us go with her, but let us go back to our homes!

This is an ironical way of saying : "She is going to find trouble : we won't follow her as far as that!." The same idea runs through all the songs which these women sing during the next few days.

585 When they accompany the bride to her new home, they sing :

533 U ya kwi, Mamano ! — Whither goest thou, mother ?
539 U ya kwi shana ? — Whither goest thou ?
574 Ba ta tshaha shihundju ni lihlelo, mamano !
They will bring thee the basket full of maize and the fan, my mother !
Ba ta kuma u tlokoli, ba tlokolisa, mamano !
When thou hast finished crushing it, they will make thee crush it again, my mother !
Ba ta kuma u kopoli, ba kopolisa, mamano !
When thou hast plastered the floor, they will make thee plaster it again, my mother !

But when they come on a visit, carrying jars of beer as presents to the newly married couple, they are much less guarded in their language, ridiculing the poor husband and his family, and making fun of every one in general. They begin singing on the way, with the jars on their heads :

He ntshonga, banhwanyana, he nga batjanana
He la libango ; fa hi nga labi, we manyana.
Ku laba manyana ka ñwan'a manyana.
We are a small band, young girls ; there are few of us.
We are looking for a piece of meat on the spit ; formerly we should not have known where to find any, our sister (so and so) !
Now our sister will get some for us from her husband !

Hi kokobisa lobe, hi ya kwihi shana ?
Hi bhanu ba ku yalwa !
He fambaka ni khombo, ni khombo dji le kaya !
Where are we going, thus dragging the hook behind us ? (1)
We are the people that are hated.
We walk in misfortune (2), the misfortune that has befallen our house !

Ka ku kandja ñwana a ku na kule.
Wo khunga he lihanyi, we koko !
Ya kokowela : kowe-kowe-kowe.
Where a daughter lives it cannot be very far off.
Go there, grannie, limping and leaning on thy staff !
Listen to the hen cackling. She says : kowe, kowe, kowe. (3)

[222] (1) They compare themselves to women who have been in the fields, picking kwakwa fruits (p. 17), and are so heavily laden that they cannot carry the hook used for pulling the fruit off the trees ; they have had to tie it to their belt, and drag it behind them on their way home. The travellers give it to be understood that they are not out for pleasure !

(2) That of having to go and see a brother-in-law who ill-treats their sister.

(3) This line is an encouragement to the old woman who finds the walk long and tiring. The other women promise her a fowl at the end of their journey, which the son-in-law will kill for her. Note the first line of the third verse : it is a kind of proverb.

On arriving at the village they stop at the edge of the stream : 585
533
539
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Fulamelani, banhwanyana, hi ya nwa mati nkobeni.
Stoop down, young women, let us drink water in the valley.

Finally they settle themselves in the home of their *bakoñwana*, their relatives-in-law, and begin to insult their hosts.

Ba yala na wo mbengana loko a boleka !
Ba li : " Famba, u ya teka kwenu u buya wa ta sila ".
Ba yala ni shudana, ba yala ni musana
Ba li : " U ya teka kwenu u buya wa ta tlokola. "
They won't lend (our sister) a grindstone when she wants to borrow one.
They say to her : " Go home and fetch one and then come back and grind. "
They won't lend her the small pestle and mortar.
They say : " Go home and get your own, and then come back and crush your maize. "

Then they make fun of the mother-in-law, who is whispering with the other women of the village, making arrangements, doubtless, for the good entertainment of the visitors. They pretend to discover in these asides some terrible plot.

A li ñwono-ñwono ! Mabulela ya nsati lweyi ! Hi file ! Hi lobile !
That woman over there is whispering ! What can she be saying !
We are dead ! We are lost !

As for the head of the village, these shrewish visitors accost him thus :

Ñwenyi wa muti, hi wene ? A ku hi hi mati, hi ñwene ?
A he hlayi wone, ya nhlobo ! Hi hla byala ne sope !
Are you the master of the village ? Are you not going to give us any water to drink ?
We don't mean well-water ; we mean beer and brandy !

The villagers approach to salute the new-comers, who sulk and refuse to say a word. Large pots are made ready for cooking food.

Mi kokela matambeko, mi kokela bamane ?
Kambe hi balala, hi nga ka manyana !
You prepare the large pots... For whom are you making them ready ?
We are enemies, we are !

585 The young folks catch fowls in order to feast them properly
533 They raise objections.
539
574

A hi djyule kwee! A hi djyule kwee!
Hi djyule nkoka-hi-pindja!
We will have nothing to do with that which cries kwee. (The cry of the fowl when being killed.)
We want the animal which is led with a string (a goat).

But it is the husband who has to put up with the worst insults.

Ha! matinga-tingela ya nhunu lwe! Loko a hi bona a ku tlhanya psirubu.
Ah! see how he wants to avoid us! As soon as he sees us he runs and hides behind the houses! (He is afraid of us!)
Hi laba tima-mbilu! hi djyula mafura ya ku nona phobo.
We want something to satisfy the heart! We must have our fat very rich!
Nyoka ya nyoka! Mbyana ya mbyana! Yi whee!
Serpent that thou art! Dog that thou art! Thou sayest bow-wow!

Then to show him that they really like and appreciate him, they add, with the true untutored rudeness which they maintain to the end of the visit :

A ku hi lobolele? Na wene, bana ba ku ba ku lobolela ki khume ni ntlhanu!
Won't you buy another wife from us! Later on your daughters will bring you a dowry worth fifteen pounds sterling!

Finally, after having had plenty to eat and to drink and a good dance, they will remark, on leaving :

Hi tlhome nyonga ya mbuti, hi muka
Twine the goat's bladder in our hair, that we may go home.

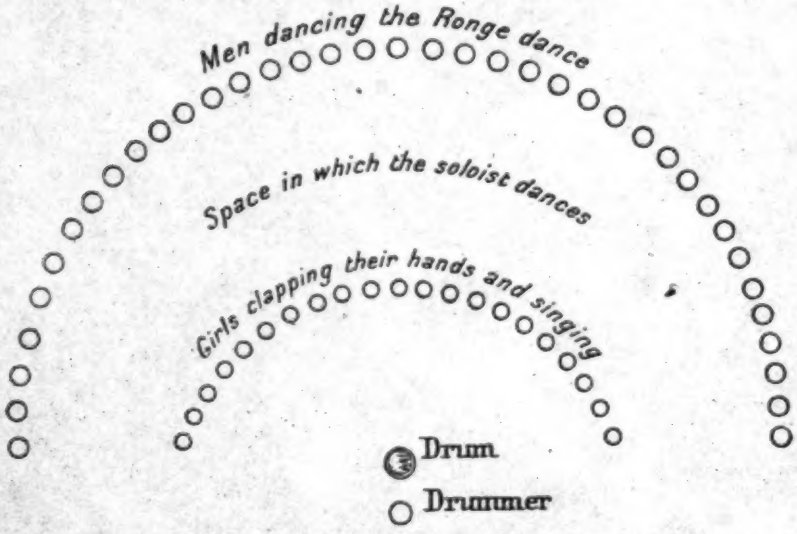
All this is not very high-flown poetry. The general intercourse between relatives-in-law is by no means refined and this rudeness contrasts with the ordinary civility of Native life. Let us remember that this way of speaking is not intended to show a want of politeness on the part of the visitors, but, on the contrary, is the behaviour suited to the occasion! I have the music of some of these songs, which were noted down by Mrs Audéoud, in Maputju. In No. 13, the bridesmaids actually exhort the bride not to follow her husband! But they are the last to expect her to follow their advice.

V. *Dramatic poetry.*

This is perhaps too lofty a term by which to designate the 538
kind of songs, or other literary productions, which I am going 535
to describe. Primitive folk have no theatre, no elaborate tragedies or comedies. But our tribe certainly possesses the rudiments of histrionic art in the dances accompanied by songs, which are called *tinsimu ta Ronge*, the songs of Ronge. The word *Ronge* does not seem to be related in any way to Ronga. It is applied to an old collection of songs in which dancing played the principal part and which were quite peculiar to the clans of the Coast. They were performed after harvest, when the storehouses were full and when the Ba-Ronga bid themselves : "Eat, drink and be merry!" Boys and girls used to remain in the bush for many [177] weeks learning these dances, in a kind of school, which may have taken the place of the circumcision school ; the latter has been suppressed for more than a century in these districts. I say, these songs *were* performed, — because they are now fast disappearing, having been replaced by Zulu songs, called *mudjatu* and *muthimbo*. These are, in their turn, giving way to new dances called *gumpsa*, in which young boys and girls put on milala palm leaf dresses. These were the great novelty in 1908 and pupils of the Mission schools were deserting them to play gumpsa. Another new dance is called *shiloyi*, and consists in the imitation of boatmen : the performers sit down and execute movements similar to those of sailors pulling a boat, to the accompaniment of song. The *shindjekandjeka* was another dance executed by the wives of Mubvesha (I, p. 287). Most of these dances take place in the capital, and the Chief summons all the boys to take part in them. This is not absolutely obligatory, but should any one begin the training, and then leave before it is finished, he will be fined. No doubt these complicated dances mark the beginning of a theatre, as will be seen shortly : they at any rate give the impression of an organised ballet.

Many of the songs refer to *historical events* in the life of the clan, or to by-gone occurrences, almost forgotten, and it is for

533 this reason that some of them are so difficult to understand ;
535 they also vary from one clan to another. The following, according
to Spoon, is the most popular song in Nondwane. An individual
539 performs on a drum to give the time to the dancers. Around the
drummer, in a semicircle, are arranged the girls who sing the
refrains (tekelela), and clap their hands to encourage the soloist
(musimi). Farther away, in concentric semi-circles, stand the



The Ronge dance.

men of the village, dancing but not singing. Between the two semicircular ranks the soloist has free play. He commences by saying :

> Ndji pfumala shigoba sha nakulori.
> Why ? I haven't got a partner for the dance !

The girls reply :

> Hi hlula hi mbilu yi babissaka.
> Our hearts are indeed very sad.

He continues :

> A pai na atahumu ! Makweru Ñwakubyele a fanaka ni pataka dja balungu.
> Never mind ! My brother Ñwakubyele (will do very well), for he shines like one of the Whites' silver pieces !

Ñwakubyele was a Counsellor whose home was about three 533
quarters of an hour's walk from Rikatla. He was probably a 539
famous dancer. The words of this song would hardly seem very inspiring, but the noise of the drum, the clapping of hands, the dancing, — and the flow of beer, — all helps to account for the intense pleasure which these games afford to the Ba-Ronga.

Another Ronge song is in praise of another dancer :

Ñwahangwa ! Ñwahangwa ! Lo'za ba shi bona, shi ne nkaukelo !
Shi bombisa tinsimo ta ku tala ta Ronge !
Ñwahangwa ! Ñwahangwa ! When one sees him (one admires) his beautiful figure. . . .
He is the perfect performer of the numberless Ronge songs.

Still another, on the same theme, celebrates Gilela, a choregraphic artist who must have rejoiced in a marvellously slim figure :

U tlanga, Gilela ! Wa tlanga, likhalo li fana ni ngoti !
Ñwatshibeni ! tlanga ! tlanga ! Ku tjhongo ; hi nga tolobele !
Thou dancest, Gilela ! Thou dancest and thy waist is no thicker than a string !
Son of Tshimbeni ! Dance, dance. — That was too little. — We have not yet had enough !

I came across three other songs which seem to refer to actual historical events, but only one of these is sufficiently comprehensible to be worth transcribing. The music of the first phrase is very characteristic. (Tune 37.)

Ndji wela, ndji wela, Ñwatembe ! Ndji wela, ndji tjike ndji wela.
Ndji koka mabyatsho ; ndji tjutjuma, ndji ya tlhasa ka Ntshangane.
Sala muti wa Muhari ! — Ndji tjike, ndji wela !
I cross the stream. I cross the stream. Oh Tembe ! I cross the stream, let me cross the river !
I tow the boats. I fly away as far as Ntshangane.
Good bye, village of Muhari ! — Let me cross the river.

The two men of Tembe who sang this song to me, telling me that it was a very popular one, were unable to explain its meaning. It is not difficult however to imagine the circumstances under which it was composed. It probably refers to fugitives, coming from the South, arriving at the Bay of Lourenço Marques, and asking the Coast dwellers, subjects of Muhari (a chief of Tembe in the XVIIIth century), for permission to cross the water

533 and to continue their journey northward to Ntshangane (1), that
539 is to say Bilene, where they wished to take refuge. The memory of their wanderings has thus been preserved in a popular song.

These examples will show that the Ronge repertoire is a varied one, but I have still to transcribe that which is, at least as far as my knowledge goes, the most curious of the whole collection. It was explained to me in detail by Shigiyane who, in the Shirindja country some fifty years ago, in the Mpatshiki district, (on the borders of Nondwane), had often taken part in the performance, always in the rôle of soloist. In her opinion it is an absolutely typical song. It is no exaggeration to say that it is almost a dramatic production, and we might rightly call it the *Shirindja comedy*. It comprises five parts — I was on the point of saying five acts, — which follow one another, but without, it must be admitted, any kind of logical sequence.

The *First Act* may be entitled "The old men's march." All the adults of the village go out into the bush, — let us say to the west, — whence they return to the square, halting and limping and dragging their limbs along, as if suffering from some complaint which prevents their walking. To a monotonous air they sing the following words :

Ndji laba batlhaben ! Angati leyi ya masengwe ya tshabisa !
Lomo kweru, mamana, we, angati leyi yi ndji tsimba ku famba ;
Ndji teka mumphinyi, ndji tshebukela ku djima,
Yi yengeta yi ndji tsimba ku famba !
Psi yengeta, psi ba roma loko ndji tjhama.
Psi ka ne mpuri, nsasi wa ku famba.
I am looking for some one to put leeches on me ! This complaint, this cursed lumbago is terrible !
In our village, oh ! my mother ! alas ! this trouble prevents my walking.
Take the handle (of my hoe). I start for the fields to till them. — And this thing stops me !
And it annoys (my relatives) to see me sitting down (doing no work). She may well be annoyed, the beauty, the good walker !

(1) Ntshangane is a surname of Manukosi who did not establish himself in Bilene much before 1820 or 1830. But for various reasons it is probable that this name already belonged to an ancient chief of the country, and that Manukosi simply adopted it as his surname. If this song really dated from the time of Muhari (a chief who reigned in the Tembe clan in the middle of the XVIIIth century), it would be the oldest of the Thonga literary productions yet collected. This fact would prove also that *Shangaan*, the name commonly given to Thongas in Johannesburg, is a very ancient one.

During this song, the old folks come to the village; then the young ones go out, in the opposite direction, returning in due course to sing their verse, which forms the second act. 533 539

Second Act. Their story is that of a son-in-law who turned his mother-in-law out of his house, because she was suffering from smallpox. The poor old woman went out to die in the bush, in spite of the protestations of her daughter against her husband's cruelty. The husband and wife are heard giving expression to their feelings :

The son-in-law : (Solo) Ndja famba, ndja famba, na ndji nyenyemuka...
Ba mu hlongola, a famba a ya fela ahangale.
I am going away ! I am going away ! I am going away in disgust
Let her be turned out and let her go and die in the bush !
The daughter : (her part is sung by all the actors in chorus)
Ndji tjetja shitlambutana, shi fambaka shi hona abuhlambo.
Lomo kweru, ka Mpatshiki, hi nga hanyi ! Hi yabana timpsalo ni mashaka.
Psi yentsha he yo ngati ya kutane !
Ngati ya kutane ya tshabisa, hosi ya nga !
Psa ku hlongola ni mukoñwana, a famba : a buya a kulubisa ku hlaya, shi hundja hi la, ba mu hlongola, a famba, a ya fela hangale.
I feel pity (when I see) smallpox making its ravages and ruining the face.
Here, at home, in the village of Mpatshiki we no longer live ! We no longer are kind to each other, even amongst relatives.
It is the fault of this terrible disease.
This disease is truly terrible, my lord !
It has driven the son-in-law from his home ; he goes, but returns with cruel words. The old woman comes this way, she is turned out ; she goes away and dies in the bush !

The Third Act begins when young and old are assembled on the village square. It is a dialogue (shibalekana) introducing a certain Gebuza, a man of Nondwane, who took refuge in Shirindja some time in the middle of the last century, when Zihlahla's warriors, led by Machaquene, went to fight in Nondwane on behalf of the Whites. This Gebuza was much beloved by Mpatshiki, a sub-chief living in the South of Shirindja, as we shall see in the fifth act. In any case he was a great dancer, and also possessed a marvellous faculty of saying a great deal and meaning very little! Listen to the following : a voluble dialogue is kept up between this individual and a young man, named Mahlahlane.

533 *Gebuza.* Nanjduwe, Mahlahlane ? — My friend, Mahlahlane ?
Mahlahlane. Ha makweru ! — Say on, my brother !
539 *G.* Tlanga, makweru ! — Dance, my brother !
M. U tlanga, u ndji tlula, makweru ! A pai na ntshumu. — You dance better than I do, my brother ! That doesn't matter.
G. A ndji pai tibanga lepsako, nambe u le makweru, inha ndja ku tlangisile Nhaviyana. — I did not know that, although you are my brother. I could please you with my dancing, Nhaviyane.

Here the sense begins to be lacking... it concludes with a cross-fire of utterly meaningless remarks.

Mahlahlane. Eee ! — That's it !
Gebuza. Nhaviyana bantsindja. — Nhaviyana, the people of the capital.
M. Eee ! — That's it !
G. Nhaviyane basurumana. — Nhaviyana, the Mahometans.
Yi banga mahlolana ! — That works wonders.
Khumbu-khumbu dja Mayingandlela — ? ? ? ? ? .
A siku dja tolo. — Yesterday.
Ku ta wa shikumbu sha ndladla — ? ? ? ? ? ?
Ndji ndjuluka ndji nha, — I go back, that's what I do.
Kupa-kupa ha matikerißwane. — Etc. etc...

On hearing this extraordinary production, quite as unintelligible as our Swiss children's "empros" — eena, meena, mina, mo, etc., — the whole company dance in silence, going through various contortions which are doubtless as full of meaning as the dialogue which precedes them.

In the *Fourth Act* all the actors re-enter the stage and commence the *shiombelane*, the hand-clapping with which they so often accompany their songs. They sing the following chorus :

> Mamana, n'ta ku yini ?
> Ins, hi tlakula Mpatshiki, ßwa-matlanga-ni-tinsana-ta-batjongwana !
> He tlanga psigaba, Mpatshiki !
> Ntlhamulo, ndji nyike hi psikwembo, ankulweni !
> My mother, what shall I say ?
> Oh ! yes ! let us praise our Chief Mpatshiki, he who loves to play with little children !
> We dance the Ronga dance, Mpatshiki !
> The echo (of our songs) comes back to us from the gods along the whole length of our villages !

Evidently the singers are celebrating the joyous gaiety of this fête, where all are happy, the Chief good-natured, and wherein the gods themselves (the deceased ancestors, probably buried in the sacred wood near the village) join the living.

Fifth Act. A few songs in which Gebuza plays a prominent part, constitute the finale. He was an interminable braggart

when once he started on stories of the contests between the 533
Nondwane and Zihlahla clans. Instead of tilling his fields, he 539
idled away his time in his village, in the shade of a nkanye, the tree of bitter fruits (nunge)... Hence the following dialogue :

Gebuza. Tjikan, ndji hlayô !	Let me tell you...
Chorus of Shirindja : U hlaya tshini ?	What silly tales do you want to tell us ?
G. Tjikan, ndi hlayô.	Let me tell you...
Chorus : iHe baka Bidjiankomo...	We folks of Bidjiankomo (1) (this is what we say) :
Paigaba psi ne nsiku, i ka leyi ;	There is a day for singing, it is to-day ;
A ku djima, a ku psi koti.	As for work, you are incapable of it.
Gebuza ! Ankanyen lo'kulu lo'wa nunge ; paigaba psi ni nsiku i ka leyi.	Gebuza (you who are lazy), under your big nkanye of bitter fruit there is a day for singing ; this is the day !

The moral of this is sufficiently obvious : "To-day we sing, we dance : but this is not everything. To-morrow we must start with the tillage for the new year."

Doubtless in each small Ronga clan similar songs and dances are performed. They seem to us exceedingly childish, but also very innocent, and show us the taste possessed by these people for musical and literary productions (2).

VI. *Action songs, or songs sung while at work.* 533

I remember once ordering one of my boys to roll along an empty cask, in which we were collecting the rain water. There was a little water in it, and this made a gurgling sound inside.

(1) The forefathers of Mpatshiki, who [illegible] chief then reigning.

(2) I should like to include in this ca[illegible] of the songs of which Mungamane, the blind minstrel (p. 187) was particularly [illegible] and which he performed when the dancers paid him an extra fee of 200 reis. It is a dialogue between a husband who is not satisfied with the wife he has bought and the men of his village :

The husband. I have gone to lobola a woman ; I have paid twenty-eight pounds ; I expected she was worth something, and lo ! she is a woman of no account. How did you dare, you, her father, to claim such a big sum, saying that she would be a help to me, when she is so utterly bad ? I will take her ; I will give her back to her parents and claim my money in order to buy another.

The men of the village. No ! Have patience with her ! Do not send her home. Do you not see that you will bring misfortune upon yourself ? Did she not bear you children ? Who will cook your food ? Who will clean your clothing ? When strangers pass through your village, who will give them food ? To go and claim one's herd is troublesome ! Send your children to fetch water ! Send them to gather fuel !

533 Rolling it with vigour, the boy imitated the noise of the gurgling all the while, apparently with great pleasure. Natives are very [461] fond of singing and shouting when at work; they evidently find help in the conjunction of music and labour.

[539] Many Thonga songs belong to this category. There are songs sung by women when pounding their mealies (I. p. 334), or when carrying their jars of beer or of bukanye to the capital. One of these *psirwalo* songs, extolling Mzila, the hawk that is in heaven, has been quoted I. p. 402. I heard it in February 1893, when an extraordinary inundation had filled all the little ponds in the hollows, and the lake of Rikatla had swollen to ten times its usual size. Beginning with the word: "Chwe! Chwe!" a descriptive adverb which renders the impression caused by a wide surface of water shining in the sun, the women sang:

Chwe! Nambyana wu tele!
The lake has overflowed!
We seek the hawk who soars in the sky!
Who is the hawk? It is Mzila!

For the music of the song see tune 17.

On the wharf at Lourenço Marques, one could collect a good number of the carrier songs, sung by the boys who carry loads from the ships to the Custom House. Some are highly impressive, full of guttural sounds such as: Ama-haussa-haussa! There is generally a soloist who intones (sima) and all the boys, covered with dust, clad in sacks, their eyes beaming, seize the heavy piece of iron, the bulky case, raise it rhythmically to their shoulders, and carry it with measured tread to the shed. To have a clever soloist who keeps good time is essential, and I was told that such artists are well paid.

I would remind the reader of the *travellers' songs*, an example of which has been given when speaking of the journeys of the traders in the interior (p. 144).

But the richest collection is that of *sailors' songs*. I heard one of these, (tune 18), on the Nkomati, repeated a hundred times in a monotonous fashion by a boy who was pushing the boat along the shore with his pole, from Morakwen to Lourenço Marques:

"I siloyi, I ndandale," he said — (these words have no more

meaning than tra-la-la) "They are starving at Ntimane, siloyi..." 533
He was journeying from the Ntimane country, near Khosen, and having heard that the crops had failed, went muttering this great news all down the river! Perhaps the song was not of his own composition, but was an old refrain which had been preserved on account of its catching tune.

Mrs Audéoud, during her long journeys on the Maputju river, [461]
noted down many of the tunes, Nos. 19-22, some in two or even three parts, curiously harmonised. The Native sailors seek in this way to vary the monotony of rowing, punting or towing the boat. No doubt a great many more such tunes could be collected.

VII. *Incantations.*

Children, as we saw, (I. p. 68), are fond of singing curious little melodies to various animals : to the big *galagala* lizard, to the *chameleon*, to the *crab* with one claw, to the *owl*. The tune of the words addressed to the owl is No. 36.[1] The boys of Rikatla used to salute our ox-waggon, when it appeared on the plain, with song No. 35 :[1] "Gweymanâo! — here are the oxen", they said running all round the span, the girls following them and lifting up the babies in their arms, to show them the strange machine and the long-horned oxen walking slowly, with impassive looks, through the little black throng.

Incantations of a more serious type are the *songs of exorcism*, 533
performed to the accompaniment of rattles, big tins and drums, 789
close to the ears of the person supposed to be possessed, in order to induce the spirit to reveal its name and to " come out". No. 37[1] is one of the most celebrated songs of this category, and has really a great deal of character. I shall speak of it again when dealing with possession.

VIII. *Songs accompanying tales and games.*

As we shall see, little songs are very frequently introduced 533
into the tales to embellish them, and are generally repeated 538
three or four times over, as if the narrator wished to exhaust

[1] [Errata: read 31 for 36; read 30 for 35; read 32 for 37. -- Analyst]

533 all their charm. Some are very primitive, like No. 33, the
538 murmuring of a little boy who has been swallowed together with his oxen by an ogre called Nyandzumulandengela ; imprisoned in the stomach of the monster, he entreats him to let him out! Another, more elaborate, is the lament of the mother whose child has been stolen by the Baboon, and who follows the animal weeping and asking it to give the little one back to her. (Tune No. 35.) Tune No. 36 belongs to another ogre tale, concerning the suitors of pretty girls who are really only hyenas transformed into men. Some one knows their true nature, and forces them to appear as they really are, by chanting their song :

Manyange, the leg belongs to me !

the song in which they dispute with each other about the leg of the girl they are wooing! The most complicated of these songs is that in the tale of Zili (No. 34) ; it is a duet, and was sung to me by two Mpfumo girls so distinctly that I could easily take it down. It is very interesting as an illustration of the laws of harmony amongst the Thongas.

C. FOLK-TALES.

538 Folk-tales are by far the most interesting and valuable part of the Thonga Folklore, and before citing any new examples of those curious and charming stories, I shall try to show their importance in the Life of the Tribe, their literary, ethnographic and philosophic value.

I. *The place occupied by Folk-tales in the Life of the Tribe.*

538 In Vol. I. p. 350, we have seen the inhabitants of the village,
517 after their evening meal, gathered round the fireplace, devoting themselves to innocent amusements ; first, guessing the piece of charcoal, pulling their fingers, asking each other riddles, — those

who are beaten in the contest having to pay a forfeit which they 538
redeem by telling a tale. So the tale is the conclusion of the 517
game, the object of the whole entertainment. I have often seen exactly the same order followed in a European company playing parlour games.

This interesting scene may be witnessed from one end of the tribe to the other : "This is their evening prayer" said one of our converts to me, a woman who was also a clever story-teller, i. e. as we Christians have our worship every night before going to sleep, so the heathen gladden their hearts by their tales. Everywhere story-telling (ku tha psihitana) is considered the most refined and most pleasing of the games. The tales are called *shihetana* or *nsingo* (mu-mi) in Ronga, *ntyeketo* (mu-mi) or *nkaringana* (mu-mi) in the Northern clans.

Story-tellers are of all ages and of both sexes. I have heard 538
little girls of ten amusing their play-mates with tales. Those I have collected were told by young girls of eighteen (Nkulunkulu and Ñwanawatilo), young men of twenty, (Khwezu, Maganyele, Simeon Makwakwa), and men of thirty and forty (Spoon, Jim Tandane) ; but the majority come from adult women, the most skillful being Shigiyane-Camilla, Sofia Midomingo, Martha and Lois. Some only know one tale, and repeat it on every occasion, like Jim Tandane, who used to narrate the story of an ogre, Ñwatlakulalambimbi, with such gusto that he was surnamed after his hero! But others can recite six, ten or twenty tales. Shigiyane, for instance, could entertain the company for many nights with her tales, some of which were very long. (See for instance "The little hated one," 24 pages, "Mubia, an ogre tale," 19 pages, in my *Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*). This woman's memory was wonderful, and the graceful manner in which she told her stories was no less astonishing. Nkulukulu had heard *her* tale ("The girl and the whale") only once in the Maputju country, and she had memorised it immediately with the little songs which enliven it.

Strange to say, there is a curious precaution to be observed in 538
connection with story-telling : it is taboo to devote oneself to 461
this occupation at noon ; it must remain an evening entertainment ; 826
if this rule is [redacted], the Transgressor will become bald!

538 if this rule is not followed, the transgressor will become bald!
461 This is one of the most surprising of the lesser taboos of the tribe. What is its origin? Have the Natives noticed that famous story-tellers, those who practised their art day and night, were liable to this misfortune? I could get no information on this point. I rather think the prohibition comes from the fact that this game is so popular that they are afraid to devote too much time to it: people would lose all inclination for work, if they started it during the day. So they instinctively forbade story-telling in the day-time!

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Phot. A. Bond.

Mantha, a Ronga story-teller.

Another curious custom in connection with tales is this: when a story-teller comes to the end of his tale, he concludes with the following words: "Tju-tju... famba ka Gwambe ni Dzabana!" — "Run away, go to Gwambe and Dzabana." These two personages are believed, at least amongst the Northern clans, to have been the first man and the first woman (see Part VI), and I suppose that the object of this kind of incantation is to prevent the marvellous story haunting the hearers during the night, and troubling their sleep by disagreeable dreams. It is a means of returning from fairyland to the realms of every-day life! All these details tend to show the importance of folk-tales in the Native life, and their popularity amongst the tribe.

II. *Classification of Thonga Folklore and its literary value.*

538 But of what does this folklore consist? How does it happen that men, girls, youngsters, will sit quietly for hours, listening to an old woman who keeps them under the spell of her tale? In reality, these products of primitive imagination are much more varied than would at first appear. Let us open the casket, whose key is kept by Gwambe and Dzabana, and make an inventory of the "treasures" of this lore, to use the words of the Rev. E. Jacottet in his publications regarding the Ba-Sutho.

It would certainly be pretentious to apply a strictly philosophical, or even literary, classification to our tales. It is, however, obvious that they present many different styles which are, it is true, often combined, but between which it is quite possible to differentiate.

1) The first and most noteworthy class is that of *animal folk-tales*, in which the "Romance (1) of the Hare" takes a prominent place; the Hare, the Tortoise and the Small Toad are seen playing clever tricks upon huge beasts such as the Elephant, the Lion, the Hippopotamus and even upon men, getting the better of them by their cunning.

2) In a second category, the same idea of the victory of the small over powerful enemies is illustrated by stories in which human beings, children, the miserable and despised, triumph over their elders and those who hate them. The type of such tales, amongst ourselves, is Cinderella. Thongas have a number of similar stories, which I would entitle *the wisdom of the little ones*.

3) The third category comprises the *Ogre tales*, where the triumph of the wisdom of feeble creatures over these horrible and cruel monsters is again celebrated.

4) Other tales, to which I may give the name of *moral tales*, are stories which are evidently intended to enforce some moral teaching. The moralising aim may be unconscious, but the

(1) I employ the term *Romance* in the same sense as the corresponding French term is used when speaking of the "Roman du Renard", the celebrated series of deeds performed by Reynard the Fox, the well-known example of mediaeval literature.

538 conclusion of the tales is unquestionably moral, showing, as it does, that bad deeds or bad characters meet with due punishment.

5) Another variety of stories of this kind, though they are called tales and told as such, seems based on *actual facts* which happened somewhere, and have been preserved in the memory of the tribe. But they are not regarded as actual historical traditions. As they are told for the entertainment of the hearers, no difference is made between them and ordinary tales. They cannot be called legends, a legend being an historical fact, transformed by the popular imagination, and held as such by those who narrate it. They are rather the contrary of legends, being regarded *as purely imaginative*, while the facts seem to be more or less historic.

6) The last category of Thonga folk-tales are the *foreign tales*, which have come from Moslem, Portuguese or English sources, but have been altered in a very curious way, thus affording interesting material for the study of the Native mind. Foreign infiltrations can be detected even in those tales which bear most distinctly the Bantu stamp, but in this last category, they seem to constitute the actual subject matter of the story.

These six classes, once more, are by no means sharply defined. One tale might be placed in two or three of them. An animal sometimes appears in a tale where the other actors are all human. Though animal folklore is generally absolutely devoid of moral purpose, a moral idea may be detected in some of the episodes, for instance, when we see the Elephant punished for having contemptuously crushed the spawn of the Small Toad, etc.

The literary value of these stories varies greatly according to the story itself, and to the narrator. Some tales are very short and insignificant, or they may be a hap-hazard collection of episodes without any plan. Others are *true compositions* in which there is order and design, a position is taken up and a conclusion reached. I recommend the perusal of the "Epic of the Small Toad" and the story of the "Little Hated One," in *Les Chants et les Contes des Ba-Ronga*. They are amongst the best and most elaborate examples of Bantu folklore, and show real literary talent. Very often, as already mentioned, *a little song* or several little

songs form the framework of the story. They are repeated at 538
least three times, the story-teller arranging his narrative in such a way that the refrain recurs again and again. Native speakers do not fear repetition ; they seem to think that to hear a catching tune once only is not sufficient, and that upon a second or third occurrence it will be more appreciated. So they make a real art of repetition. While it may make the recital somewhat monotonous, this literary procedure is by no means tedious. Some one once said to me, after having heard the tale of Nabandji, the toad-eating girl : "I should never have thought there could be so much charm in monotony!"

As regards the *narrators*, they also vary greatly. Some of them, the beginners, are dull, slow, and tedious. They mingle the episodes without any order, frequently assuming that things are known which have not before been mentioned. But others are full of life, and one feels a true literary pleasure in listening to them. It was a real treat, for instance, to hear Shigiyane, Spoon, his wife, and Simeon Makwakwa! Their gestures, their mimicry, their play of feature, the wealth of descriptive adverbs introduced into the narrative, added a great interest to the story. They imitated little children, or old people without teeth, with great effect. I even saw Spoon's wife have recourse to *imitative action* in order to increase the charm of one of the songs, No. 36, a kind of incantation by which deceitful suitors are transformed into hyenas. This song, according to the story, was sung by a woman whilst grinding her mealies. So Magugu brought with her an earthenware mortar, and vigorously worked with her pestle each time the song was repeated. The listeners seemed to take great delight in this performance.

III. *The Ethnographic Value of the Tales.*

When asked the origin of the tales they tell, Thongas invariably say : "These are old stories which we heard from our fathers. No one would dream of inventing a tale now-a-days." This assertion is certainly true. Bantu tales are very old. It is not without good

538 cause that story-tellers, when afraid of being haunted by the harrowing details, send them back to Gwambe and Dzabana, the first man and the first woman!

Another fact confirms the testimony of the Natives, and shows, at the same time, the ethnographic value of the tales. It has been noticed when comparing tales collected in various parts of South Africa, that there is a great similarity amongst them. Bantu folklore, whatever may be the differences met with amongst the tribes, possesses a true unity. More than that : this similarity is found in the folk-tales of all mankind. A number of stories seem to be found from one end of the planet to the other. Reviewing my book *Les Chants et les Contes des Ba-Ronga* in the *Revue des Traditions populaires* of June 1898, Mr. René Basset, who is perhaps the greatest authority in this domain, showed that certain episodes written in Lourenço Marques, at the dictation of a Ronga story-teller, were to be found in the folklore of the ancient Greeks and Romans, of the modern Germans, French, Greeks, Italians, Lithuanians, Siberians, Kirghizes, Indians ; in Brazil, Portugal, the Punjab, Scotland, Roumania, Guatemala, British Guiana, Morocco, etc! This is a truly wonderful phenomenon and it is very difficult to account for it. Three explanations may be given of the fact, which is one of the most interesting problems of Ethnography :

1) These stories belong to primitive humanity, and all the races carried them with them in their migrations.

2) There was, in a more or less remote past, direct contact between the various human races, by means of which the tales have been transmitted from one tribe to another, in such a way that, in the course of time, they have spread all over the world.

3) There is such a similarity in the mentality of the various races, when still in the primitive phase of their development, that they have all invented the same stories independently of each other. Hence the unity of folklore everywhere.

I do not think any one of these explanations excludes the others. There is probably a portion of truth in each of them. The difficulty is to define that portion exactly, and this cannot be done until we have more material at hand. For South Africa

we have already a great deal of information owing to the work of 538
Callaway, Theal, Torrend for the Zulu-Kafirs, Bleak and Mrs Lloyd for the Hottentots and Bushmen, Casalis, Arbousset, Jacottet for the Ba-Sutho, and my own for the Thongas. But there is still more to be collected. I am under the impression that, having now collected about fifty Thonga tales of different lengths, amounting to a total of 300 pages, in-8vo size, I possess only a fifth, or perhaps a tenth part of the whole folklore of our tribe!

However, Science cannot wait until all the tales have been reduced 000
to writing and published. It will try to come to a conclusion as soon as possible, and perhaps the best plan would be to restrict the field of investigation, and to investigate thoroughly one, at least, of the regions of this vast land. That is the suggestion I would take the liberty of making to my fellow-inquirers in the field of Bantu folklore. Let us choose a characteristic portion of it, for instance, that which I have called the "Romance of the Hare", which is more clearly defined than any other section of this primitive and oral literature. Let all the episodes of this long story be first published in a form which may be regarded as typical, preferably in the form in which they are found in any one given tribe ; let a short résumé of each be made and assigned a distinguishing number by which it will henceforth be known. Then let a folklorist, if he has the necessary time and information at his disposal, make the following investigation : — In which tribes are these episodes met with? How do they differ from the typical version? Do they appear outside Africa (amongst American Negroes, for instance) ? This inquiry would throw light on many important points, viz., what is strictly Bantu in the "Romance of the Hare", and what is common to other races ? Are there episodes which belong to one tribe only, to a group of tribes only, or to tribes widely separated from each other ? To what extent do the wording and the content differ ? Are there not new episodes invented, possibly unconsciously, in recent times by Native story-tellers ? I think, that when this was done important conclusions might be drawn which would greatly assist Ethnography in the solution of this problem, and of many questions bearing on primitive humanity.

I hope later to publish the résumé and classification, of the 56 episodes of the " Romance of the Hare ", which I have collected. I may be able to make this collection more complete, as I know that a num-

000 ber of other stories are told about the "Wily Trickster", as the Thongas call him! This attempt may serve as a starting point for the inquiry which I propose, and should this inquiry ever be conducted on an extended scale, under the auspices of the S.A.A.A.S., for instance, and the result be published in its Journal, the Science of Folklore would certainly greatly profit by such an undertaking.

538 The antiquity of the tales is beyond any doubt: they are certainly, very old. This antiquity, however, is only relative: that is to say they are constantly transformed by the narrators, and these transformations go much further than is generally supposed, further even than the Natives themselves are aware of. After having heard the same stories told by different story-tellers, I must confess that I never met twice with exactly the same version. First of all *words* differ. Each narrator has his own style, speaks freely and does not feel in any way bound by the expressions used by the person who taught him the tale. It would be a great error to think that, writing a story at the dictation of a Native, we possess the recognized standard form of the tale. There is no standard at all! For this reason I cannot attribute any great importance to the *texts* of the tales. They are examples of the language as spoken by so and so in such and such a district, and therefore have a linguistic value, just as any report or address they may make or deliver. But they are by no means stereotyped texts, transmitted as such from old times. The words of the songs, which occasionally accompany the narration, are probably the most ancient and stable element of the tales. They are often half Zulu in those of the tales which have been borrowed from the neighbouring tribe, and contain archaic expressions. Some sentences also, especially when they are quotations, have the same character and are reproduced by different narrators in an identical form; for instance, when the Small Toad, Shinana, deposits its eggs on the road and says, as a kind of challenge: "Let the passer-by pass. If he crushes them, let him crush them. If he spares them, let him spare them". I heard this sentence repeated in almost exactly the same terms by two Thongas, one from Khosen, the other from Rikatla. But these fixed elements are rare and, as a rule, Natives change the words with the greatest freedom.

The same may be said with regard to *the sequence of the episodes*; 538
although these often form definite cycles, it is rare to hear two narrators follow exactly the same order. They arrange their material as they like, sometimes in a very awkward fashion. The tricks of the Hare are sometimes attributed to the Small Toad. In Zulu folklore they are all given as the deeds of a dwarf, called Hlakanyana. I have heard Natives mixing up elements of totally different styles. For instance, in the ritornello of the "Hare's Hoe", which will be found later on and belongs to the animal or semi-animal folklore, the conclusion is borrowed from the well-known episode of the "Year of Famine", which belongs to the class of moral tales (or tales originating in an historic event). New combinations thus constantly take place, sometimes absurd when the literary sense is lacking.

I will go further: *New elements* are also introduced, owing to the tendency of Native story-tellers always to apply the circumstances of their environment to the narrative. This is one of the charms of Native tales. They are living, viz., they are not told as if they were past and remote events, in an abstract manner, but considered as happening amongst the hearers themselves, the names of listeners being often given to the heroes of the story, which is, so to speak, forced into the frame of everyday life. So all the new objects brought in by civilisation are, without the slightest difficulty, made use of by the narrator. He speaks of rifles and guns, of square houses and of clothing, which were not dreamt of by the ancient authors of the tales, and that not only in tales which are distinctly of foreign origin but also in those which are thoroughly Bantu. Thus Magugu, Spoon's wife, in her tale about the hyena-suitors, which otherwise has a strongly Bantu character, concluded by making the girl, the heroine of the story, come to the Missionary Station to be married in the Church! There is not the remotest shadow of historic or ethnographic criticism in the minds of Bantu story-tellers: hence the changes which are constantly deforming old traditions.

Lastly, my experience leads me to think that, in certain cases, the *contents of the stories* themselves are changed by oral transmission, thus giving birth to numerous versions of a tale,

538 often very different from each other and sometimes hardly recognisable. See, for instance, the splendid tale of Zili which I now publish : a man kills his wife and cuts her flesh into strips which he gives to his relatives-in-law to eat. A bird reveals his crime by a little song ; he is found out, and put to death with his whole family. The theme is very popular, and forms one of the most typical moral tales. I possess a version of the story in which it is the wife who calls her parents and, with their help, kills her husband, because he ill-treated her. They cut off the flesh and hang it in strips on the fence of the village. The husband's mother comes to pay a visit to her grandson, and they give her the poor man's flesh to eat. She stays in the village many days, wondering why they feast her with meat of which they do not partake. When she expresses her astonishment, they say to her : "We kept it for you!" When returning home, having taken a supply of meat with her, the old woman hears a bird singing :

> Tsenengu! tsenengu! There is one who fell down!
> He fell down on the square of the village,
> His flesh hangs and swings;
> It is that which you carry on your head.

This song is totally different from that in Zili. The bird repeats it until she understands the words, and then she cries :

> My son! Alas! Alas!

The source of the two stories is evidently the same, but how great are the differences between them! Such alterations have evidently taken place, and are still taking place, every day in Bantu folklore.

How far can these alterations go? To answer this question I would ask my readers to study the charming tale which I have called the "Epic of the Small Toad" (*Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, p. 109). What I call the Small Toad is not our little European green frog but a curious Batrachian, the Breviceps mossambicus, in Ronga the *shinana*. It can swell up to double its natural size and cover itself with an exudation which keeps its enemies away. It buries itself in the ground during the winter, and comes out in spring. This interesting little animal is, in the Ronga folklore,

the equal of the Hare, and even surpasses it. Some of its great 538
deeds are the same as those well known in the "Romance of the Hare." The Small Toad begins by killing an antelope by its tricks, and uses its horn as a trumpet to deceive the other beasts. This brings about a fight between the Small Toad and the Hippopotamus, followed by another between it and the Elephant, which has wilfully crushed its eggs. The Small Toad, accompanied by the Chameleon, forges assagais, kills the Elephant, and all the beasts make their submission. So it becomes a Great Chief. It would seem that the presence in the sandy country of Delagoa Bay of this kind of Batrachian with its curious habits, coupled with the example of the Ngoni chiefs who subjugated the clans of the coast by warlike expeditions, has given birth in our tribe to a new modern type of folklore, the type of the Breviceps : all the tricks previously and still told of the Hare are attributed to it, though it keeps its own definite character, viz., that of a warrior. If this be true, there has been a *real creation*, though most of the elements of the "Epic of the Small Toad" were previously in existence.

In conclusion I would say : — The Bantu tales are very old, at least the material of which they are formed is very ancient. But they are still plastic matter unconsciously undergoing constant and extensive modifications in the hands of the story-tellers. These facts are interesting, as they show the conditions of literary production amongst uncivilised tribes. This production is *essentially collective* : tales are not created on all sides by individual authors ; but they are modified, altered and enriched, as they are transmitted from one person to another, from one tribe to another, from one race to another, to such an extent that new types, new combinations, are adopted and a true development takes place (1). This is obvious if, in addition to these transform-

(1) To illustrate this theory, I published in *Folk-Lore*, Dec. 1924, an article under the title ; *La Genèse des Contes Africains : ou comme quoi les Noirs inventent des Contes sans le savoir*. The reader will find in it three tales differing widely from each other. Yet they are inspired by the same fundamental idea which is frequently met with in Bantu Folklore : "Accept the advice of old, despised people, and do not have confidence in yourself ". The present conditions of the country round Delagoa Bay may very well explain the transformation of the old Bantu story and it is quite possible to take the view that these three tales have after all the same origin.

538 ations, that which I have called the fifth category really exists, viz., if it be true that facts which really happened are told in such a way that they come to be classed amongst the fabulous. So it is quite possible that the impression shared by all the story-tellers that all the tales are ancient, that the era of creation has passed, is after all erroneous or, at any rate, only relatively true. A development is still taking place and has perhaps never been more active than now. If this is correct, the hypothesis of Callaway, that our tribes have passed through a stage of greater literary production than is now apparent, cannot be maintained.

IV. *The Moral and Philosophical Value of the Tales.*

In some of the Thonga tales the moral lesson is so clear that I did not hesitate to place them in a special category, the moral tales. They are as wide-spread as the others. I do not pretend that those who tell them have a moral purpose. But the teaching naturally arises from the narratives, and it would be worth while studying them to extract therefrom a kind of code of Native elementary morals. In them we see just punishment following on faults, such as : the *curiosity* of Namashuke (Chants et Contes, p. 22) ; the *jealousy* of Mutipi's friends (p. 158) ; and of Longoloka (Les Ba-Ronga, p. 327) ; *the obstinacy* of Sidiulu's wife ; the *unkindness* of an elder sister (p. 229) ; the *presumption* of a younger sister (p. 337) ; the *disobedience* of Halandi (p. 242) and of the elder brother in the "Disobedient child and the Snake ;" the *self-confidence* of a man who marries against his parents' will (p. 246) ; the *laziness* of the wives (p. 257) ; the *selfishness* of the husband (p. 260) the *homicide* of Zili. On the other hand we also see *kindness rewarded*, and also *pity*, in a tale not yet published, told in connection with that of The disobedient child (1).

(1) After having told how the little child saved his disobedient brother, (see later), the narrator goes on with a totally different story which, originally, had certainly no connection with the other episode. During the famine, the child who was now several years older, went away to another country. A headman received him, and ordered one of his wives to take care of him, but she refused, saying that her own children had nothing to eat. All the others did the same except one, who consented to feed him.

The animal folklore and Ogre tales seem to be absolutely 538
devoid of such moral lessons. But, as we have already pointed out, they are all more or less illustrations of the triumph of wisdom over mere brute force. This seems to be the root idea of all this folklore, and is not this indeed a highly moral and philosophical idea?

To illustrate this very interesting argument, the story-tellers, in the first instance, narrate the doings of the animals, choosing for the heroes of their tales the smallest and most defenceless. Thus we have the Hare, the cunning trickster, up to all sorts of dodges ; the Small Toad, cold and calculating, the Chameleon, with its crafty prudence. The same idea runs through the group of stories which I have called "the wisdom of the little ones ;" those who were thought to be dullards, the disinherited, and the hated, end by succeeding in life better than their persecutors, of whom they often become the benefactors. On the other hand the Ogres, as representing brute force and all that is merely material, are defeated, are punished for their misdeeds and are generally cut open (to provide an exit for the victims they have swallowed!). So the exaltation of wisdom or goodness is clearly noticeable in almost all the tales, and even foreign tales seem to show, beneath a more or less exotic colouring, that they owe their origin to the same idea. The African story-teller undoubtedly endeavours, above all, to interest his hearers by picturesque, laughable or sensational narratives : but, consciously or unconsciously, he is certainly doing work the philosophical bearing of which is undeniable.

Why does this theme of the triumph of wisdom over strength reappear so frequently and under so many aspects in this popular literature? Doubtless because the thought is natural and eminently satisfying to the mind of man. It underlies our fairy tales of *Cinderella, Hop o'my thumb* and many other European

The child sowed seeds of all kinds and, his enchanted hoe having tilled large fields in a moment, a splendid harvest was the result, and the store houses of his adopted mother were well filled. The others said : "If we had only accepted him!" On his way home, he killed an army and took their assagais, killed a troop of merchants and seized their loads of goods, killed all his relatives and took their hoes,—an episode which resembles that of the conclusion of Mutipi's tale. (Chants et Contes p. 160.)

538 fables and stories. But may there not have been, in regard to the African tribes, some special circumstances which contributed to the development of this idea, and impelled them to give vent to it in a hundred different ways?

538 181 Among the Bantus, the Chief is all powerful. Surrounded by Counsellors, protected by warriors always ready to do his bidding, he is an autocrat with power of life and death over his subjects, especially where the primitive clan has evolved into a confederation of tribes united by military power. If the Bantu clan is in a sense democratic, the hierarchy is, nevertheless, all powerful in its midst. Before the Chief and before the invincible custom of which he is the representative, every one bows and trembles. In every village the headman possesses similar power over his subordinates, and elder brothers reign as despots over the younger. From the top to the bottom of the social ladder the strong dominate over the weak and combine, in a wonderful way, to assure the submission of the inferior. In the evening, round the fire, the women and the children take their revenge in the Black man's usual way, i. e., by saying what they think in a round-about manner. They do not try to upset the existing state of affairs. Far from it! But they take a malicious pleasure in telling of the clever tricks of the Hare and his associates! Why? Because Mr. Hare represents the little one, the subject, the ordinary private individual, who has received no special advantages, either by birth or from nature, and yet who, by his own personal wit or common sense, gets the better of the great ones of the community and even of the chiefs. Is it a mere coincidence that three of the tales I have collected conclude with the death of a chief brought about by the machiavellian astuteness of that rascal, the Hare? Or, sometimes, it is the youngest sister who figures in the story; the despised one, covered with a loathsome skin disease; the insignificant little goat-herd; the son of the neglected wife; all of whom accomplish great deeds, entirely unexpectedly.

538 I see in these stories, as it were, a discreet protest of weakness against strength, a protest of spiritual against material force; possibly they may contain a warning to those in power from those

who suffer. And who knows if their ultimate object be not to assert the value of the individual amongst this down-trodden people where the individual counts for nothing? If this is so, then African folklore possesses a greater and more philosophical value than would appear at first sight. In the collective state of human society it represents an aspiration to a state of things where the individual will have his due place. In this way, it is prophetic. It can no longer be classed merely as an amusement for old women during the long evenings, or as a more or less intellectual parlour-game: it is a monument upon which the soul of the race has recorded, unconsciously perhaps, its ideas and its aspirations. It is thus doubly worthy of our study. 538

The scope of this book does not allow me to publish more than one or two tales of each category, and I must also abstain from any technical comment upon them, leaving the work of annotation and comparison to professional folklorists. My aim is to describe the South African tribe, and they constitute a sufficient illustration in themselves of its psychic life. 539

V. *Animal Folklore.*

I have published nearly thirty episodes of the Romance of the Hare in the works already referred to; those which I collected in later years form three cycles: that of the *Wily Trickster*, a collection of episodes told by Martha and heard by her in the Maputju country; the most noteworthy of these describe the victory of the Hare over the Lion; *the Hare and the Lion*, told by Simeon Makwakwa of Bilen, containing episodes quite different from those of the first cycle; *the Hare and the Baboon*, written for me by one of my pupils, Mbike Dzengen from Khosen, a very amusing story also known in Bilen with some variations. To these three cycles I have added the story of the *Hare's Hoe*, a curious specimen of a popular literary genus, the ritornello, or anadiplosis not frequently met with in Bantu folklore.

[see cat. 116, pp. 226-228 for texts of folk-Tales]

1) Ñwashisisana, the Hare. (1)

539x The Hare, that wily trickster (2), went to live with the Grey Antelope (3). One day he said to her : "Suppose we go and till our fields and plant some beans!" So off they went, and set to work. The Antelope stole the Hare's beans, and the Hare stole the Antelope's beans, but the Hare did the most of the stealing.

The Hare set a trap in his field, and the Antelope was caught by the leg. In the early morning the cunning rascal went out and found the Antelope caught in the trap : — "Don't you think you deserve to be killed" said he, "now that I have found you out?" — "No! No!" replied she. "Let me go, and we will go back to my house, where I will give you a hoe." So he let her go, and she gave him the hoe.

The Hare then packed his beans, harvested all his fields, and made ready to be off : — "Good-bye," said he to the Antelope, "I won't stay with you any longer, you are a thief!"

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He soon came across the Great Lizard, the Varan (Ñwakhwahle) lying at the edge of a water hole. It was the Chief's water hole, where they drew their water, and he had been placed there on guard to find out who it was that was continually disturbing it, and making it muddy : — "What are you doing here?" said the Hare. — "I am watching this hole to see who it is that muddies the chief's water." — "I'll tell you what," said the Hare, "we had much better go and till a field together." — "How can I dig?" said the Varan, "I can't stand on my hind legs and hold the hoe in my fore-paws." — "That doesn't matter : just you come along ; I will tie the hoe to your tail, and you will be able to dig beautifully." So the hoe was tied on ; but when this was done, the Varan couldn't move. Then the Hare ran back to the hole, drank his fill of water, and finished by stirring it up well, making it as muddy as possible. After this he walked all over the Varan's fields, and regaled

(1) For the English translation of this and most of the following tales I am greatly indebted to Mr. G. D. Fearon and to Miss G. Quin, editor of the *Student World*, who has kindly translated the two new tales published below.

(2) Ñwashisisana is the surname for the Hare, which is generally called Ñwampfundla. The word is derived from the verb *shisa* to deceive.

(3) Ñwambunti, the duiker of the Boers.

himself on his groundnuts. In the heat of the day he came back and 539x
said: — "Ho! An army has passed through the country. I hear that the warriors have dirtied the water in the hole... I hear too that they have ravaged all your crop of ground-nuts!" — "Untie me" said the Varan, "I can't budge." — "All right, but only on condition that you don't go and accuse me, the Hare, of having stirred up the water." — "But who told you this story about those soldiers who did all the mischief?" — "Don't ask me so many questions ; if you do, I won't untie you!" — "Very well! I'll be quiet ; but take away this hoe ; it hurts me!" — "Listen! first of all I'll go and draw some water for you. You must be thirsty." — "No, I'm not thirsty. Only let me go!" — "If you are not thirsty, all right! I won't untie the hoe." — "Oh! very well I am thirsty. Hurry up, and come back as fast as you can."

The Hare went to the Varan's village, took the wooden goblet he always drank out of, drew some water, and once again stirred up the hole. He took a drink to the Varan, and said to him : "If any one asks you whether I have disturbed the water, you must say that you did it. If you don't promise me this, I won't untie you." — "All right! Very well." Then the Hare ran to call the chiefs : Lord Elephant (Ñwandlopfu), Lord Lion (Ñwandjawandjawana) and the rest. They all came and asked the Varan : "Who has been drawing our water and making it all muddy?" — "It is I," said the Varan ; and the rascal of a Hare added : "Yes, I found him committing this crime, and I tied him up to a hoe, so that he couldn't run away."

The chiefs congratulated the Hare : "Ah! you have been very clever! You have discovered the villain who has been muddying our pond!" And they immediately killed the Varan.

The wily trickster took the hoe, and went to look for the Grey Antelope (Ñwamhunti). She was on sentry duty, on the edge of a pool, for guards were placed at all the pools to prevent any one approaching, as the water still continued to be muddied during the night. The Hare, not being able to get anything to drink, said to the Antelope : "What are you doing there, close to the water?" — "I am guarding the Chief's pool." — "You will all get thin and die of hunger, if you stay like that at the edge of the pools. Listen! You would do much better to come with me, and till a field ; then, in time of famine, you would have something to eat." — "Let us go!" said the Antelope.

The Hare set to work in grand style. He gave the Antelope a hoe and told her to dig too. — "I can't get on my hind legs," said she, "and hold the hoe with my forelegs." — "Let me have a look at your

539* forelegs : I'll tie the hoe to them, and you will be able to dig all right." The Antelope tried, but she couldn't do it. — "Never mind," said the Hare. "Wait a minute." He ran back to the pool, quenched his thirst, and muddied the water. Then he filled a calabash, and hid it in the bush. On returning to the Antelope, he said : "Hello! Haven't you done any hoeing yet?" — "No, I can't manage it." — "Would you believe it? An army has passed by, and they have stirred up the pool." — "No! Truly? Untie me, Hare!" — "I won't untie you unless you swear that what I said is true." — "Very well! Untie me." Off he went to get the calabash to give her a drink, and made her promise to confess that it was she who had disturbed the water ; then he called the Chiefs, who killed the Antelope.

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But there was one creature that outdid the Hare in cunning, and that was the Tortoise (Ñwamfutju). She mounted guard at the pond. The Hare arrived on the scene. — "You will all die of hunger, if you stay at the edge of the pools with nothing to do. We had much better go and till a field together." — "How can I hoe with such short legs?" — "Oh! that will be all right. I'll show you how to do it." — "Eh! No thank you! I think not!" — "Well then! Let's go and help ourselves to some of the Wild Boar's sweet potatoes." — "No," said the Tortoise uncompromisingly, "no pilfering!"

However, before very long, she began to feel hungry, so much so that, when the Hare again proposed a marauding expedition, she overcame her scruples, and they went off together to root up the sweet potatoes. Then they lit a fire of grass in the bush and roasted them. — "Tortoise," said the Hare, "just go and see if the owners of these fields are anywhere about, as we must not let them catch us." — "Yes, but let us both go. You go one way and I'll go the other." Off went the Hare, but the Tortoise, instead of following his example, stayed behind and crawled into his wallet. The Hare soon came back, filled up his wallet with sweet potatoes, threw it over his back and ran away to escape the proprietors, shouting at the top of his voice : "Hi, Tortoise! Look out! They will catch you! I'm off! Fly!" He ran as hard as he could to escape capture ; the Tortoise, inside the sack, ate the sweet potatoes ; she picked out all the best ones and finished the lot! She said (descriptive adverb), "kutlu." After a while the

Hare was tired out, and lay down quite exhausted. He felt the pangs of hunger. — "Aha!" said he to himself, "I will have a good feed!" He sat down in a shady spot, opened his wallet, put his hand inside, and pulled out one very small sweet potato. — "This is much too small for me" said he, and, putting his hand in again, felt a nice big one. — "Oho! here's a beauty!" When he had pulled it out of his bag, what was his surprise to find that his prize turned out to be... Mistress Tortoise. — "Hello! (He shoyawe!) Why! It's you!" he cried in disgust, and threw her on the ground. She scuttled away as fast and as far as she could. The Hare began to weep : — "When I think that I have been carrying her all this time! ..." He felt very crestfallen. 539*

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Continuing his travels he next met King Lion surrounded by his courtiers. He, at once asked permission to *nkonza*, viz., to swear allegiance to the King, and to settle in his country. But every day he went out to steal other folk's ground-nuts. When the owners of the fields came to look at their crops, they exclaimed : "Who can it be that digs up our ground-nuts ?" The Hare went off to find the Lion, and said to him : "Sire, your subjects are not what they should be (a ba lulamanga), for they are in the habit of stealing." — "You don't say so?" said the Lion. "Go and keep watch, and if you discover any one stealing, catch him."

The Hare went off to take up his position in the fields, but the Lion followed him, and surprised him in the very act of feasting on ground-nuts. — "Ha! ha! You tell me that my subjects are not honest folks, while it is you who do the thieving!" — "Not at all! I was only keeping a look out! Come here, and I will show you the footprints of your subjects, for I know them well!"

So they went to a large shady banyan tree. The Hare made a strong string of one of the long tendrils (lisiha), and said to the Lion : "As you think I don't speak the truth, just sit down here and you will soon see the thieves passing by ; I will wile away the time by making you a crown of wax (khehla ngiyana. I. p. 129)." — "All right," said the Lion, "make me a crown." The Hare began by parting the Lion's mane down the middle and arranging the hairs carefully, one by one, on either side of his neck, as if he were preparing a spot on the top of his head for the crown. Then he made holes

539 through the bark of the tree, on both sides of the trunk, and passed the hairs of the mane right through them, some on one side, some on the other. This done, he tied all the hairs securely together at the back of the tree with the string he had made, and said to the Lion : "I've finished the job. Jump up quickly and you will see one of your subjects stealing in the fields!" The Lion tried to jump up. He couldn't! He half killed himself struggling to get on his feet! The Hare ran to the village. — "Come," he shouted, "and see who it is who ravages your fields!" He had previously torn up a lot of ground-nut leaves and thrown them down close to the Lion. The villagers hurried to the spot. — "There! don't you see him? Haven't I found him out, eh?" The Lion didn't dare to say a single word. Then his subjects cut great staves and beat him to death : — "Ah! Hare, you are very clever, and we are very grateful!" said they.

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The Hare cut the Lion up in pieces ; then he took the skin and wrapped himself in it ; thus disguised, he went to the Lion's village and entered the Queen's hut. He said : "I am not well," and shut himself up refusing to see anyone. He gave orders to the servants to kill an ox because he was ill ; then he had a second one slaughtered, then a third! The women said to him : "Are you going to move to another place, as you are killing all your oxen?" — "No" said he, "I have no intention of moving any more. I am killing them because I know very well that I shall never get over this illness." So he had a general slaughtering of all the Lion's oxen, goats and sheep, to the very last head of cattle. When all were killed, he said to the Queen : "Haven't you got my money in your keeping? — "Yes" she replied. — "Well, bring it all out, and put it, together with my royal mat, and all my valuables, on the village square."

The Lion's skin was becoming rather odoriferous, the flies were settling upon it in swarms, and the Hare was by no means comfortable inside it. — "What sort of complaint have you got?" said the Queen, "it is something that smells very nasty." — "Oh! I have only got some sores, I must go and find a doctor. Good-bye : I shall start at once." The Lion's wife replied : "Then I will go with you, my husband. — "No," said he, "no occasion for that, for I know exactly where I must go." He went out on to the square, picked up the mat

in which all the money and valuables had been packed ; then throwing 539x off the Lion's skin, he tore away as fast as his legs could carry him with all the village in pursuit!

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He came to a burrow, and in he ran. The pursuers got a hooked stick to pull him out ; they tried to hook him and managed to get hold of his leg. —"Oh! pull away!" cried he, "pull away! you've only got hold of the root of a tree!" So they left of pulling, and had another try. This time they really hooked on to a root — "Hi! hi!" he yelled, "Hi! hi! Take care! You're hurting me! You're killing me! Ow! Ow!"... They all pulled as hard as they could, and pulled and pulled until the hook broke and they all fell over backwards ; they said : "Qaa," (descriptive adv.). Finally they were tired out and said : "Oh! let us give it up and leave him where he is!" So they stopped up the burrow with a bunch of grass and went away.

The South wind sprang up, and blew the grass deeper into the burrow. — "I am done for," said the Hare to himself, as he fancied they were succeeding in getting nearer to him. He was suffering the pangs of hunger and was terribly thirsty, but did not dare to leave the burrow, supposing his enemies to be close at hand. At length he cried out : "Have pity on me and let me go, my good fathers (ba baba), I beseech you!" He crept cautiously towards the entrance to the burrow, and found only a bunch of grass. Then he made off at once, leaving all his treasures behind him, and not even giving them a single thought.

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He ran on and on. He became thin and ill. He ate grass, but it did not remain in his inside : it passed through him immediately. He came to the home of the Grey Antelope. — "Say, Antelope, suppose we sew one another up! You stitch me up, but not completely, you know! It will keep the grass much longer in our insides when we browse, and we shall get much more nourishment out of it." She consented, and stitched him up partially. He sewed her up entirely. The Antelope swelled and died. But, fortunately for her, she fell in a

539* field belonging to a woman who picked her up, put her in her basket, on the top of her head, and carried her to the village to be eaten. She gave her to her husband to cut up ; he set to work, and began by cutting the stitches that the Hare had sewn. All that was in the Antelope's interior at once came out ; she jumped to her legs, and galloped away. She met the Hare and said to him : "All right! I've found you out now!.. Never again do I call you my friend!"

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The Hare being thirsty was looking for a pool but couldn't find one. At last he came across one where no one was on guard. The Tortoise was really in charge, but she was in the water. The Hare walked in : "What luck! How nice and cool it is!" said he, quenching his thirst, and swimming about. The Tortoise snapped at one of his legs, then at another... — "Hello! let me go! I'll promise you a goat if you will let go!" They came out of the pool together, and the Hare said to her : "Come along to my house, and get your goat." They reached his home, but no goat! Nothing! The Hare did not give her anything. Then he remembered the money that he left in the burrow and said : "Let us go and see Mr. Chameleon. He has got my valuables, for he borrowed a lot of money from me. I'll just run round and fetch my brother ; he knows all about the business and will be my witness." Having said this, he decamped. The Tortoise arrived at the Chameleon's abode and said : "Give me the Hare's money which you have got!" — "What? I haven't got anything belonging to the Hare!" Whereupon the Chameleon blew into her eyes. She swelled, and swelled, and died.

That's the end.

2) The Hare and the Lion.

One day the Hare was looking into a pool and saw the sky reflected in the water. —"Hello!" said he to himself, "there is a fine large country down there, where I can always hide if any one tries to do me any harm. I can go and be rude to the Elephants now with impunity." Off he went to insult the Elephants, who promptly chased him. He rushed into the pool, but he was soon caught.

— "Hi! hi! my grandfathers! Let me go!" (The Hare calls all the other animals "grandfather"). — "What shall we do to you? Shall we kill you?" —"What! Kill me? You will no longer have a grandson then..." — "Very well! Then we will beat you!" — "Why? You can't find any spot on me big enough to hit, I am so small..." — "Well then! we will just roll you in the mud, and smother you all over with it, inside and out!" They did so, and left him lying on the ground, choked and smothered with mud.

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The Hyena came along. She is very fond of flesh, but it must be dead flesh. She lets the other animals kill it for her. She picked up the Hare and thought she had found a choice morsel. — "But," said she, "this is too dirty! it is all covered with mud! I must wash it." So she washed it. — "Now, the meat will be all wet and nasty; I must dry it." So she laid it out, and sat down in the shade to wait. Suddenly the Hare jumped up and made off at full speed!

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He came to Lord Lion's village and this Chief took him into his service. The Lion went hunting every day, and it was the Hare's duty to look after the Lion's children, and teach them their lessons. When the Lion returned from hunting, he stopped some distance from the village and sent meat by the Hare for his three little children, saying to him: "Give the little ones the tender meat, for they are young, and you can eat the bones!" The Hare told the children: "Your father says you are to eat the bones, for they are hard and will make you strong, and I will eat the meat." Thus he regaled himself.

Then he taught them a nice little game. He collected a lot of wood, made a fire and said: "I will teach you how to jump. You know that your father catches animals by springing upon them, so you too had better learn how to spring properly." He began first: "I will show you the way I jump, and you must do just as I do." He easily cleared the fire in one bound, but, when the little Lion cub tried, he jumped right into the flames and was burnt. Then the Hare ate him up. When the Lion returned in the evening, he said to the

539 Hare : "Show me my little ones." He had stopped, as usual, a short way off, so the Hare lifted up one of the cubs saying : "Here is No. 1 ;" then another : "Here is No. 2 ;" and, lifting the same one twice : "Here is No. 3." — "'T is well!" said the Lion. The next day the Hare repeated his game with the fire. Another cub perished, and was eaten. In the evening he lifted up the one cub that was left three times, and the Lion was quite satisfied. The day following the third cub was cooked and made away with. Then the Hare climbed into a thorny tree and scratched his skin so badly that he was bleeding in several places. The Lion came back towards nightfall : — "What is the matter with you?" said he. — "Alas! my grandfather, a whole band of enemies have been here! They have killed all your children! Just see the wounds their assagays have made all over my body!" He had also taken care to make a quantity of marks on the ground : "You can see their footprints all around. I will go and find out which way they have gone, and we will pursue them!"

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The Hare ran off to the mountains, where he found an enormous boulder, so poised that it would only require the slightest push to send it crashing down the steep slope. — "This will do!" said he, "it is just exactly what I want!" He went back to the Lion and said to him : "Come along! and hide yourself just where I tell you to. If you hear a great noise, don't look up, don't even raise your head. It will be the enemy coming along, and, if you make any movement, they may see you, and run away. You can kill them when they pass close by you. Here is the spot! Hide yourself in here!" He placed him just below the rocking boulder. Then up he climbed. —"Look out! Here they come!" He pushed the rock ; down it fell, crushing the Lion. The "Slayer of flesh" (1) died! The Hare came hurriedly down the slope, cut off the Lion's claws and decamped.

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He married the Grey Antelope, for he wanted her little horns to make a trumpet. The Hare is so full of cunning that he can induce

(1) Nwangonyama, is the surname of the Lion.

any animal to marry him. After some time had elapsed, he said to her: "Let us play at cooking each other! (A hi psekane!) This is how we will do; we'll get a big cauldron, I'll get into it. You light a fire underneath. When the water begins to get warm, I will call out to you to take me out, and you will pull me out at once." No sooner said than done. The Antelope pulled the Hare out before the water was too hot. Then the Antelope got in, in her turn. The wily plotter put the cover on the cauldron, and plastered it down with dung (p. 38), filling every aperture, and saying: "You will be warmer if I do this." Then he sat down, and smoked his hemp-pipe. When the Antelope called out: "Come and help me! I am boiling!", he said: "Wait a minute, my pipe doesn't draw properly! I must pull at it a bit." She twisted about and cried for mercy. He put more wood on the fire, and, when the Antelope was thoroughly cooked, he ate the meat and kept the horns!

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He went farther on, taking with him the jaw bone of the Lion he had killed, built an immense enclosure with stakes, and put the jawbone at the entrance. Then he sent this proclamation all through the land: "Come and see! A new and wonderful thing! Teeth growing out of the ground! Quantities of them!" He summoned everyone with his trumpet, and all the animals came into the enclosure, without noticing that there was no way out of it. He closed the entrance and all were prisoners. Then he said to them: "It is well, you are in the Chief's enclosure. I will go and tell him you have arrived. He will soon be here." He went and decked himself out in a dress entirely covered with small pieces of looking-glass: it was so resplendent that it quite dazzled the eyes of all who looked at him. "Here is the King," said they all, on seeing him approach. Then he addressed them and proclaimed this law: "Know ye all! Hawks, Lions, Tigers, that from henceforth no beast of the field is allowed to kill any other one, or to eat his flesh. Nothing is to be eaten but grass." He appointed a shepherd to see that the animals did not kill each other. The Lions and Tigers grew thin on this diet: it made them ill, and none but the herbivorous animals were in good health.

One day the Hare, having sent all the animals away, took off his glittering coat, and began to browse near the enclosure. Now it

539* happened that a Lion, who was unwell, and could not go out with the others, had remained behind. He saw the Hare browsing close by, and, casting a glance around, to make sure no one was watching, with a single bound he was upon him and devoured him! In the evening all the animals returned, but as the King did not put in an appearance for eight or ten days, their spirits began to revive. They plucked up courage and flew at each other's throats : a terrible carnage was the result ; the stakes of the enclosure rotted and all the survivors dispersed. Amongst these was one of the Hare's brothers, who at once stepped into the shoes of the deceased deceiver and continued his evil ways.

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One day the Hen invited the Hare to drink some beer at her house. There he saw the Hen cooking and the Cock roosting with his head under his wing. "Where is his head?" he asked the Hen. —"Oh! he cut it off and sent it round to invite our friends to come. It is only his body that you see there : his head will soon come back." — "No! really! You don't say so? Honour bright?" — "Why certainly!" — "What sort of drugs do you use for this wonderful operation?" — "Oh! none at all! You just take a knife, sharpen it well, and cut your head off!" — "Ah! is that all? I must try it!"

Later on the Hare asked the Hen to drink beer with him. He cut off his head and killed himself. Henceforth the Hen was the most cunning of all the animals!

That is the end!

3) The Hare and the Baboon.

The Hare and the Baboon built a village together. One day, when they were tipsy, the Hare said to the Baboon : "Let us go and kill our wives!" The idea pleased the Baboon immensely : so they set off to kill them. The Hare went inside the hut and began to hit the big basket (ngula), telling his wife at the same time to shriek and cry out. The Baboon heard the cries, and was satisfied that the Hare was indeed killing his wife ; so he took a big stick and belaboured his

wife so that she died, whilst the Hare had not done his wife any harm, 539 x
having only belaboured the big basket!

One day the Baboon overheard the Hare talking to his wife. He was greatly astonished. "Ha! ha!" he said, "the rascal has played a trick on me ; I have killed my wife, and he never killed his!"

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Another day the Hare proposed to the Baboon that they should go and steal ground-nuts in other folks' fields. The Baboon was quite agreeable, as he was suffering from hunger, having no wife to till his land, or to give him any good food. When they got to the fields they began helping themselves to the ground-nuts, dug them up, and eat them. Whilst they were thus employed the Hare said : "Grandfather, don't tire yourself digging up these ground-nuts ; leave them alone ; just sit down in the shade and I will dig them up for you." The Baboon was very pleased, and took a seat under a shady tree which was close by : then the Hare dug up ground-nuts, and threw them down in front of the Baboon in such quantities that he was completely hidden behind the pile. He eat them greedily, and with great gusto. When the Hare saw that the pile was big enough, he went behind the Baboon and said : "Will you let me kill the fleas in your tail?" — "Certainly, little one!" said he. So the Hare set to work, pretending to be killing fleas, and all the while he was digging a deep hole, as deep as the tail was long, in which he intended to fix it, when he should get an opportunity! He tried to put the tail in the hole, but, in doing so, hurt the Baboon who said : "You are hurting me, grandson!" — "No," replied the Hare, "I'm not hurting you ; I am only playing with your tail!" When the Hare saw that the Baboon had nearly finished his ground-nuts, he hurried off to fetch a fresh supply in order to divert the Baboon's attention, while he continued his digging operations. Once more he tried to insert the tail in the hole ; but the Baboon called out : "What are you doing, grandson?"—"I'm not doing anything, grandfather!" said he, and continued digging until he had made the hole quite as deep as was necessary. Then he succeeded in putting the entire tail in the hole, right up to the stump ; he filled in the earth all round it, and hammered it down with a stick as hard as he could. He tried to pull it out, but couldn't ; it was so securely fixed in. Seeing the Baboon had again nearly finished his

539 ground-nuts, he got another lot, and went behind him to put the finishing touches to his handiwork.

When all was completed to his entire satisfaction, he ran off and clambered to the top of an ant-hill, and began to shout, at the top of his voice : "Hello! Here's the Baboon eating up other folks' ground nuts!" Hearing this the Baboon scolded the Hare, and told him not to make such a noise : "My grandson, you must not shout like that before I have finished my ground-nuts! You can shout as much as you like when I have done, and we will then run away together." But the Hare would not obey him, and went on shouting as loud as he could until, at last, the women of the fields heard him and people came running up with their bows and arrows and guns. Then the Hare came down from his ant-hill and took to his heels. As for the Baboon, he was in a great fright, dropped the ground-nuts, and tried to make off ; but he couldn't move, as his tail was hard and fast in the ground! When he saw the folks approaching nearer and nearer, he made the most frantic efforts to get loose, throwing himself first on one side and then on the other, until finally, groaning with pain and terror, with one tremendous bound, he wrenched his tail free ; but it was only the bone! With a skeleton-tail waving and dripping blood (lwa ku dzu-dzu-dzu, descript. adv.) he rushed away. He jumped, and dodged, fearing lest an arrow or a bullet should hit him, until he got safely into the wood.

When he reached home he found the Hare seated in his wife's hut, but he made no remark. During the night the Hare went back to the spot where they had been eating ground-nuts, and unearthed the remains of the tail, which he took home to his wife telling her to cook it ; this she did with great care, beginning by rubbing off all the hairs ; she then stewed it with some ground-nuts. She also cooked some flour. When everything was done to a turn, she dished up the food on separate plates, one containing the flour, and the other the savoury stewed tail. Then the Hare sent his son to call the Baboon, who came with much pleasure, as he knew he was being asked to a meal. On his arrival he went into the hut, sat down and was served with the flour and its seasoning, the stew. He enjoyed the food, took some of the meat and ate it. — "Why!" said he, "here is meat! Wherever did you get it, my grandson?" He had no idea it was his own tail! He ate it, emptied the plate and went home.

Some days later, the Hare told his wife to make some beer, which she did ; when it was properly brewed, he invited all the countryside

to come to a beer-drinking. They all came and drank beer. Grandfather Baboon was among the guests. While they were all enjoying themselves, the Hare raised his hand for silence, and requested permission to make a few remarks. When all the noise had subsided, he raised his voice, and asked : "Have any of you ever seen any one who devoured his own tail?" They all said : "No, we have never seen such a person!" The Baboon also declared he had never even heard of such a thing. —"Well!" said the Hare, "shall I tell you who it is?" —"Yes, do! We should much like to know," said they. Then the Hare exclaimed : "It is he, the Baboon! he has eaten the tail that he lost over there in the ground-nut field!" The Baboon was very angry, and left the gathering with a scowling face ; he went home muttering to himself : "I wonder how I can manage to get the better of that rascal? I must try, for he is always making a fool of me, and annoys me horribly." 539

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After some weeks, during which the Baboon had been cogitating how he could be revenged on the Hare, he hit upon a plan. "I'll go and get a wife" said he to himself, "and then I shall be able to trick him, and starve him to death!" So he began at once by making proposals to a girl in a distant village, and, when the time came to go and fetch her, he asked the Hare to accompany him on his journey. They each packed up their provisions and started. The Hare, when preparing for the trip, put his eatables in the bottom of his wallet, and three stones on top of them ; then he closed the package. The Baboon, who wanted to deceive the Hare, and get him to throw away his provisions, packed one stone with the eatables in his bag. When they were well on their way, they came to the bank of a river where they sat down to rest, and, beginning to feel hungry, thought they might as well have something to eat. Then said the Baboon : "Let us throw our provisions into the water, to see them float down the stream, for we are quite close to the village of my future parents-in-law." Now this was not true : the village was still a long way off. The Hare was quite willing to throw away the food, so the Baboon began and threw his stone into the water ; the Hare followed suit and also threw away a stone. Now, in the Baboon's bag only eatables were left, as he had only put one stone on the top, whilst the Hare,

539 having put into his bag three stones, and having only thrown one away, had still two remaining. — "Go on, my friend," said the Hare, "throw away another stone!" The Baboon had no more to throw, so he had to throw away his flour. The Hare then threw in his second stone. Continuing the game the Baboon flung his "seasonings" into the river, and had nothing left to eat. The Hare tossed his third stone into the water, but had all his provisions untouched. So the Baboon, failing to trick the Hare, was himself a martyr to the pangs of hunger ; for they were nowhere near the village of his relatives-in-law ; they had still four nights to sleep on the way! They jogged along on their journey and, whenever they stopped for a meal, the Baboon would seat himself at some distance from the Hare, and watch him eating ; he longed to share his provisions, but the Hare never offered him any, for the Baboon himself had stipulated that neither should ask the other for any of his eatables.

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When they had trudged on for four days, they arrived at the village, where they were well received. In the meanwhile the Baboon had arranged that if, when swallowing the good things provided, he should scald his throat, the Hare must run back and get the medicine for burns, to relieve the pain. Now this was only a dodge to get rid of the Hare, while he himself would eat up all the food, and the Hare find none on his return. However, the Hare suspected some trick and therefore stuck an arrow into the ground at the foot of the tree (muri) (1) which cures scalds and burns. Before reaching the village he said : "Oh! I have left one of my arrows over there ; I must run back and fetch it." — "Don't you go digging up the roots of that tree that I shewed you ; you must only do that if I happen to send you for some when we are having our meal." So the Hare ran back to the spot, where he had left his arrow. "He wants to trick me, does he?" said he to himself, and he dug up a root and put it carefully into his bag, so that the Baboon should not see it. On his return the Baboon questioned him as to what had kept him so long : — "You didn't dig up any roots of that tree, did you?" said he. — "Oh no!" replied the Hare. "I didn't take a single one!" And so they came to the village.

(1) Muri means both tree and remedy.

When food had been put before them, and they had commenced eating, the Baboon cried out : "I have burnt my throat! Oh! Oh!" Then the Hare hurried off, and got the remedy out of his bag : he had not very far to go. The Baboon was furious, and shouted : "I told you not to dig up the medicine, but only to do so if I should send you for it!" — "But, Grandfather," replied the Hare, "I did not like to keep you waiting in pain such a long time!" When the Baboon found he could not trick the Hare, he hurried up his wedding, and his return home, for he was very unhappy : he lost all his appetite owing to his fit of rage on seeing how short a time was needed for the Hare to fetch the medicine. On the other hand the Hare regaled himself heartily. The Baboon couldn't get over the disappointment ; he grew thinner and thinner and was nearly dying. 539*

When they once more reached their home, they were each possessed of a wife, so they both started off to build their villages in different places.

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The Hare used to go hunting to procure meat, but the Baboon was too lazy to hunt for himself, so lived by stealing meat from the Hare, and this is how he managed it : whenever the Hare had killed some game and cooked it in the open, the Baboon smeared himself all over with mud, and came rushing out of the marshes towards the Hare's village. Then the Hare and his wife and the little ones all fled away, for they were afraid of this great black beast. Now it was only the Baboon who frightened the Hare : he took the game and gave it to his wife. Thus it went on for several days, until, at last, the Hare concluded that he must look carefully into the matter. So, on a certain occasion, when the Baboon carried on his thieving in the same way, the Hare remained hidden in his village ; only his wife and children ran away. He hid in the hut so as to watch closely the animal who stole his meat and see how he could fight him. The Baboon crept up to the pot in which the meat was cooking, for the folks of the village had not yet begun their breakfast. He lifted the cover, pulled out a piece of meat, and ate it up. Then the Hare let fly an arrow and shot him right in the stomach. The Baboon ran off and went home to his wife. He was very ill. A day or two later, the Hare went to see his grandfather, and, on arriving, greeted him with : "How do you

539 do, Grandfather?" Now, before entering the hut, the Hare had heard groans, but, as soon as he stepped inside, all was quiet, for the Baboon was afraid his visitor might suspect that it was he who had been hit with the arrow. The Hare had, however, already recognised the Baboon as the culprit, and said to him : "Well, Grandfather, I hope you are feeling all right?" — "No," replied the Baboon, "I am not very well : I feel a pain in my side, which shoots right through me." — "I knew it was you who stole my meat," said the Hare, "so I shot you with an arrow." So the Baboon died and his wife lived in want and misery. — That's the end!

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Simeon Makwakwa, a Native of Bilen, gave me a different version of the way in which the Baboon worked his vengeance, or tried to do so, on the Hare for having made him eat his own tail.

The Baboon set to work picking up all the Hare's excrement for several days, until he had collected quite a large quantity. The Hare, noticing this manœuvre, said to himself : "All right! We shall see!" He caught a fowl and pulled off one of its legs without killing it : the fowl survived. The Baboon invited the Hare to dinner, and the latter went quite happily with the fowl's leg in his pocket. "Here is the plat du jour," said the Baboon, pointing to the pot in which the Hare's excrement was cooking." — "Thanks! Thanks! said the Hare, who, as soon as his host's head was turned, dug a hole in the ground into which he emptied the contents of the pot, and began eating the hen's leg that he had brought with him. The Baboon returned. — "This chicken is very good" said the Hare, gnawing the bone. And so they parted.

A few days later, when the village was full of men playing *tshuba* (I. p. 345) the Baboon arrived on the scene, very cock-a-hoop, and called out : "Let me ask a question. Has any one here ever seen a person feasting on his own excrement?" —"Why certainly not" said every one present.—"Well! I know some one who has so feasted! It is the Hare." —"Are you quite sure of that?" said the accused, and holding up in sight of all assembled, the one-legged fowl, which he had taken care to bring with him, he told the whole story. So the laugh was turned against the Baboon ; everybody made fun of him, and the villagers caught him by his blackened and twisted-up stump of a tail, and chopped it off! — That's the end!

4) The Hare's Hoe.

One day the Hare said to the Grey Antelope : "Let us go and sow peas." — "I don't like peas, I prefer wild beans" said the Antelope. So the Hare went by himself to sow peas. When they began to sprout, he noticed that they were disappearing, so he hid himself in the field, and caught the Antelope digging up his peas : "Aha!" said he, "you are a thief. Pay the fine!" She gave him a hoe and he went off. 539*

He met some women, who were digging clay with sticks. He said to them : "Haven't you got any hoes?" — "No," said they, "we haven't a single one." — "Then take this one," said he, "you can give it me back later on." When they had finished, the last one who used the hoe broke it. Then the Hare sang the following words :

Clay-diggers, give back my hoe, my friends,
My hoe which the Antelope gave me,
The Antelope who paid the fine for my peas.

The women took one of their pots, and gave it to him.

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He left, and met some men who were harvesting honey ; they were doing so in a piece of tree-bark. — "Haven't you got any pot to put your honey into?" said he. — "No" said the men, we haven't any." So he gave them his pot. The last one who handled it, broke it. When it was broken the Hare sang :

Honey-harvesters, give me back my pot.
My pot which the Clay-diggers gave me ;
The Clay-diggers paid for my hoe,
My hoe which the Antelope gave me,
The Antelope who paid the fine for my peas.

They took some of their honey, and gave it to him.

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He came to a village, and there he saw women pounding maize flour. He said to them : "Haven't you any honey to mix with your

539 flour?" — "No," said they, "we have none." So he gave them his honey, saying : "Take it, but be careful to leave me some of it." But the last one finished it all. Then he sang :

Pestle-pounders, give me back my honey,
The honey which the Honey-harvesters gave me ;
The Honey-harvesters paid for my pot,
The pot which the Clay-diggers gave me ;
The Clay-diggers paid for my hoe,
The hoe which the Antelope gave me,
The Antelope who paid the fine for my peas.

They took some of their dough, and gave it to him.

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He went on, and met some boys herding goats. —"Haven't you anything to eat?" said he, "your lips look very dry." — "No" they replied, "we have no food at all." So he gave them the dough, saying : "Eat away! but leave some for me." The last one eat the last bite. Then sang the Hare :

Goat-herds, give me back my dough,
The dough which the Pestle-pounders gave me ;
The Pestle-pounders paid for my honey,
The honey which the Honey-harvesters gave me ;
The Honey-harvesters paid for my pot,
The pot which the Clay-diggers gave me ;
The Clay-diggers paid for my hoe,
The hoe which the Antelope gave me,
The Antelope who paid the fine for my peas.

They took a goat, and gave it to him.

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He met some young men tending the oxen while feeding. He said to them : "Your lips seem very dry ; haven't you anything to eat?" — "No," said they, "we have nothing." So he said : "Take this goat, but be sure to leave some for me." The last one devoured the last mite. Then the Hare sang :

Cattle-men, give me back my goat
The goat which the Goat-herds gave me ;
The Goat-herds paid for my dough,
My dough which the Pestle-pounders gave me ;

539*

The Pestle-pounders paid for my honey,
My honey which the Honey-harvesters gave me ;
The Honey-harvesters paid for my pot,
My pot which the Clay-diggers gave me ;
The Clay-diggers paid for my hoe,
The hoe which the Antelope gave me,
The Antelope who paid the fine for my peas.

They gave him an ox.

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Still going on, he met some people who were tilling the fields. They were working for beer. — "Your lips look very dry," said he to them ; "haven't you anything to eat?" — "No!" said they. He gave them his ox saying : "You must leave a little of the meat for me." They went home with the ox, cooked it, and ate every mouthful ; nothing was left. Then the Hare came and sang :

Workers-for-beer, give back my ox,
My ox which the Cattle-men gave me ;
The Cattle-men paid for my goat.
My goat which the Goat-herds gave me ;
The Goat-herds paid for my dough,
My dough which the Pestle-pounders gave me ;
The Pestle-pounders paid for my honey,
My honey which the Honey-harvesters gave me ;
The Honey-harvesters paid for my pot,
My pot which the Clay-diggers gave me ;
The Clay-diggers paid for my hoe,
My hoe which the Antelope gave me,
The Antelope who paid the fine for my peas.

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They seized him and beat him. When he was quite unconscious, they took him out of the village, thinking he was dead. But he regained his senses and climbed up a tree, which was in the middle of the village, just on the spot where they were all drinking beer ; no one noticed him and, when he reached the top of the tree, he attracted in his direction all the light beer, and the water in the wells, in such a way that it all ran away into the ground, and folks soon found that there was nothing to drink. The little ones cried for water and there was

539* none! The men and the women started out to fetch water, but they could not find any ; the rivers even were all dried up! The little ones died, and so did both women and men! Just a few survived. These went to the Hare, and said to him : "My Lord, we ask for water, as we are dying of thirst." — "Pull up this reed by the roots" said he. All the men, even the strongest, tried hard to pull up the reed, but could not succeed. — "Now," said the Hare, and with one finger he pulled it out of the ground, and forth flowed water and beer, light and strong. Then said he : "Give me five old women." He plunged them in the pond, and drowned them. After this they allotted to him a small province, where he reigned as chief.

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The story of the Hare's Hoe is told from one end of the Thonga tribe to the other. I have another version, told me by a young man from Hutwene, near the confluence of the Lebvubye and the Limpopo, that is to say, at the North-Eastern boundary of the Transvaal (in the Maluleke clan). It is more or less identical with the Ronga version up to the moment where the Hare finds the women pounding maize ; they give him a basketful of maize as compensation. He comes to a village where the fowls have nothing to feed on but beetles, and offers his basket of maize to the owners, who throw the entire contents of the basket on the ground, and it is all eaten by the chickens. In compensation the Hare receives some feathers, which they pluck from the cocks and hens. He next comes across some young men dancing the "matangu" dance, and having no other ornaments than blades of grass twined in their hair. He gives them his feathers and, in return, they give him two assagais. The last meeting is with some men engaged in cutting up an elephant with large shells. The Hare gives them his assagais, and receives from them an elephant's tusk. The ending of the story is an adaptation — and to my mind a very inappropriate one — of an episode in the tale of the Year of the Famine, which is well known and often met with in the Ronga folklore. It concludes thus :

The Hare planted the elephant's tusk in his garden, and from it grew a beautiful fruit-bearing tree. There was a famine in the land. Then the Hare said to his wife and children : "I am going a long

way off, to shoot eagles ;" but he only went as far as his fruit tree, 539*
climbed up it and sang :

Tshoyo, tshoyo, mangayo !
I will be the chief mourner for my father.
I will be the chief mourner for my wife !

At the sound of this song, the fruit fell to the ground and he feasted on it. Returning home he would not eat the vegetables which his wife had prepared. "Give them to the children," said he, "they are hungry."

The next day he repeated the same performance ; pretended to go shooting eagles, but went to his tree and sang :

Tshoyo, tshoyo mangayo !
I will be the chief mourner for my father,
I will be the chief mourner for my wife.

The fruit fell and he feasted on it.

One day his son followed him, without his being aware of it : he heard the singing and, when his father had gone, climbed up into the tree and sang the same words :

Tshoyo, tshoyo, mangayo !
I will be the chief mourner for my father,
I will be the chief mourner for my wife !

The fruit fell and he feasted on it ; he also put a quantity of the fruit in his hair. When he got home he said to his mother : "Mother, fetch a basket, and take away in it all the lice which are biting me." She combed his hair, and fruit fell out of it. — "There" said he, "this is what father feasts upon, whilst we are dying of starvation. Come with me and I will show you where he finds it." She followed him and they sang the refrain :

Tshoyo, tshoyo, mangayo !
I will be the chief mourner for my father,
I will be the chief mourner for my wife !

The fruit fell in quantities until there was no more left on the tree. They feasted on it, and she filled a basket full of it and buried it in her hut. The husband went again to his tree to find fruit, but all was gone. Then he returned home, and was glad to partake of the vegetables prepared for him by his wife. — "It is odd" said she, "you seem quite hungry to-day."

539 When the famine was over, the Hare's wife brewed a quantity of beer, and said to her husland : "Invite all your relatives to a beer-drinking, and I will ask all those on my side of the family." When all were assembled round the jars, in the hut, she said : "Allow me to pass," and went to the back of the hut ; there she unearthed the basket of fruit. Then she told all what the Hare had done during the famine. Her relatives, shocked and angry, took her away with them, together with her children, and she left her husband.

VI. *The Wisdom of the little ones.*

The following Thonga tales have already been published under this title :

The Man with the Big Sword (Ch. et C. (1), p. 144). *Piti* (Ch. et C., p. 151). *Mutipi* (Ch. et C., p. 158). *The Little Hated one* (Ch. et C., p. 170). *Sabulana, the friend of the gods* (Ch. et C., p. 266). *Sikulume* (Les Ba-Ronga, p. 286). *Mutikatika* (Les Ba-Ronga, p. 303).

I add to these the pretty story of *The Disobedient Child and the Big Snake* and a new tale, *The Magic Cattle*, which is very different from the others and, for this reason, is quite worthy of being published. It was written by one of the pupils of the Rikatla Training School.

The disobedient child and the big Snake.

A man had three children. The eldest and the second one started out for a walk in the forest. Their mother said to them : "If you see any of that large fruit, the sala (2), you must not eat it, and if you come across any tracks of snakes you must not follow them." When they got into the forest, the elder of the two saw a fine sala hanging on a tree ; he plucked it, and broke it open (to eat the pulp.). His younger brother said : "Take care! Mother told us we were not to eat sala ;" but the elder beat him, and made him keep quiet. Soon they saw traces of a snake on the sand. The elder said : "I'm off!

(1) Ch. et C. abbreviation for "Les Chants et les Contes des Ba-Ronga," Lausanne, Bridel.

(2) The fruit with a hard shell, about the size of a large orange, which has often been mentioned. (See p. 16).

I'm going to follow the tracks!' — "No," said his brother, "mother told us not to!" but he only got another beating, and was forced to hold his tongue. The tracks led them to a spot where they found a boa, which the elder killed ; he then lit a fire by rubbing together two pieces of wood, cooked part of the boa and ate it. The younger one refused to eat his share, so the other cooked some more and ate that too ; in fact he went on cooking and eating, until he had swallowed the entire snake. When it was time to go home he found he couldn't move! Impossible to walk! The younger brother had almost to carry him, and at length, with great trouble, they managed to reach home. But the poor boy was very ill!

Then the parents sent a messenger to call the Big Snake, the great physician who was called "Chicken's Wing." The messenger went close to the hole, and sang as follows :

Tse, tse, tse, tse, Zi-nkinto-nkinto !
Do come and see the sick child, Tli-li-mamba,
His father has sent me to you, Tli-li-mamba,
He told me to seek for the doctor so clever,
The doctor so wise. Chicken's Wing, Tli-li-mamba.

The Snake slowly poked his head out of the hole and looked around, when the messenger was so terror-stricken that he dropped his weapons and fled. Others tried and failed in the same manner. At last the mother said : "I can't let my son die thus ;" so she went herself to the Snake's hole and sang :

Tse, tse, tse, tse, etc.

The great head came slowly out of the hole, and the two big eyes glared at her! In her fright she threw away her basket, and ran away. Then the youngest child, who was not yet weaned, said : "I can't bear to see my poor brother die like this!" So he went off alone to the hole and sang in his baby tones :

Tse, tse, tse, tse, Qi-to, ito !
Do turn and see ni' sick tild, Ti-li-mamba.
His fader has sent me to'oe, Ti-li-mamba.
He told me to seek for ni' doctor so 'tever,
Ni' doctor so wise, Ticken's Wing, Ti-li-mamba.

The Big Snake's head came slowly out of the hole, and looked straight at the child, who never moved, but sang once more :

Tse, tse, tse, tse, etc.

He stood where he was, perfectly fearless! Then the Big Snake said : "Very well! Just wait while I go and fetch my little calabash

539 of medicines, and my vapour bath apparatus." He came completely out of his hole. The child did not say a word. — "Carry me" said the Snake. — "How'tan I?" I not big'nuff!" — "Never mind, try and carry me all the same." The child still objecting, the Snake wound himself all round him, so that only his legs and eyes could be seen ; in this way the child carried the Doctor to the village. — "Is it very far?" asked the Snake. — "No, only a little way." In due course they arrived ; birds, fowls, and folks, all fled at the sight of them! The child entered the hut where his sick brother was lying, and the Snake unrolled himself. The patient was terribly swollen, for the sala which he had eaten had resumed its original shape, and the boa he had cooked had resuscitated inside him. Doctor Chicken's Wing administered his drugs, put up his mats round the boy, and gave him a vapour bath. While the bath was in progress, the little child began to sing :

Titilo! Mother told us, you know, Titilo,
Not to follow the tracks of the snake, Titilo.
Yet you started by picking the sala, you know,
And you swallowed it down just as fast as t'would go!

The Snake took up the words and sang in its turn :

Tsungo, tsungo, ndlontiba!
Mother told you, ndlontiba,
After snakes not to go, ndlontiba,
Yet the sala you plucked, ndlontiba,
Broke the shell, the juice sucked, ndlontiba.

Then the boa which was inside the boy, began to crawl out of his mouth. The sala came out first, as the boa pushed it in front of him, and continued pushing it with his head until he reached the very spot in the forest where the disobedient boy had eaten it ; then the boa slid away to his own home.

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The father then asked the Big Snake what reward he could give him for having cured his son. The doctor replied : "Give me an old iron ring which is of no more use to you." The father gave it. The Big Snake thanked him, and said to the youngest child : "Take me back again to my hole." But the father offered to send some grown up men to accompany him. — "No," said he, "I wish to be taken

back by the little one." So he again rolled himself round the child, 539x
and together they left the village as they had entered it.

Later on the little one came safely home.

The Magic Cattle.

There was once a chief who ruled over a big country, as big as the district of Lourenço Marques. This chief possessed a very great many cattle, so many that they could not be counted. But an epidemic came to that country, and killed all the people ; only two little boys were left, who were twins, the children of the dead chief. These children lived on cows' milk ; they had never tasted food cooked in pots. The cattle too did not know anything of human beings, for they were very numerous, and the boys had only been seen by those quite near to them.

In a certain year a hunter set out from another country, the country of Mosapa ; he made a long journey, hunting wild beasts, and he came upon the cattle, which were so many that they had eaten up all the grass and only the earth was left to them. This hunter returned home, and told his chief that he had found a land which was full of cattle, and the chief organised a warlike expedition to go and carry them off. The soldiers came into the midst of the cattle which the hunter had shown to them ; they were very pleased, and looked forward greatly to eating the flesh of the oxen. But when the warriors tried to transfix one of them, the assegai was bent and all their other weapons broke, and the bullets from their rifles would not enter the bodies of the oxen. Then they were greatly astonished at seeing such oxen, and were very unhappy in their greed, for they saw the meat before their eyes, but could not eat it.

Then the general of the army sent troops from all sides to drive the cattle together ; some went to the right, some to the left, others remained in the centre, in the main body of the army. It took them fourteen days to get all the cattle together. Playing on their flutes, they tried to return back with them to their chief, but however much they beat them, the cattle would not move, and even though they bit them with their teeth, it was of no use. So the soldiers were in great distress because the cattle refused to move, and hunger came upon them and killed them.

On a certain day two young men climbed up a tree and looked at the herd from afar ; and they saw, in the midst of the cattle, two which

539 were as big as the school building at Rikatla. The young men were greatly astonished to see such big oxen as that ; they went in that direction, passing through the herd until they came into the middle of it ; this took them seven days. It was here that the twin children were living, and now for the first time they saw human beings. They had no house ; they slept beneath the big ox, which always stood on its feet. And the vessels into which they milked the cows they put beneath the other big ox.

The young men asked the boys : "Whose cattle are these?" They answered : "They are ours ; our father left them to us." Then the young men said : "Come, let us go." So the boys fastened their wooden vessels on to one of the big oxen, and they themselves climbed on to the back of the other, and they began to sing the song with which they drive the cattle (1).

Then the ox on which they were mounted bellowed and began to run, and they came to the place where the army was. The soldiers were greatly astonished to see these boys on their ox ; they said : "It is a miracle." Then the young men who had found the boys said to the warriors : "Do not kill them!" So the soldiers asked them to give them an ox, so that they might kill it. The boys began to sing their song,

Let it die !

Then the soldiers killed a great number of oxen instead of only one.

After that the warriors asked that the cattle should be driven to the land of their chief, and the boys sang their song, saying :

Let them go !

and all the cattle began to run ; even the old ones found strength to run, the army following behind.

When they reached the land of the chief, he said : "Let the big ox be killed!" The boys sang their song and the ox died. When they had finished cutting it up, the sun was setting ; the chief commanded that it should be covered with grass, but that its limbs should not be pulled apart, saying that it could be prepared the next day.

In the middle of the night the boys sang :

Let it come to life again !

(1) This song is in Zulu, but I did not succeed in discovering its meaning.

and the ox came to life again ; they sang the song to drive the cattle, 539x
and all the cattle in the country and all the tame animals, from the biggest to the smallest, ran after the oxen of the boys. The people of the country slept that night a deep sleep, like death.

When they woke up in the middle of the day, there was nothing left in the country, not even a hen. The chief sent his army to pursue the boys and the cattle, but the boys crossed a big river in which the water was boiling, the army following close behind them. The boys sang the song to cross the river, and the water opened a way for them. When they had reached the other side, the water began to flow again. The army came up, and entered the water, and all the warriors who entered it were drowned. Only one man remained ; he waited, expecting to see all the warriors come out on the other side. When he saw no one, he tried to dip his stick into the water, but his stick caught fire. He ran away, horribly frightened, and told the story to his chief But the chief had now no one left to send in pursuit.

The two boys went to live in the place whence they had fled with their cattle.

This is the story : that is the end of it.

VII. *The Ogre Tales.*

See the following already published :

Nyandzumula-ndengela (Ch. et C., p. 198). *Ñwamubya* (Ch. C., p. 203). *Ngumba-ngumba* (Ch. et C., p. 200). *Namashuke* (Ch. et C., p. 221). *Ñwahungukuri* (Les Ba-Ronga, p. 311). *Mbukwana* (Les Ba-Ronga, p. 313). In the first edition I published the long story of *The Ogre Scaly-Heart*, in place of which I here give *The Ziniko Ogres*. This tale was also written for me by one of my pupils in Rikatla. I have chosen it because it affords a good example of the fact already mentioned that Thonga story-tellers are apt to mix tales of very different kinds in a way which is not always very intelligent. Here the ogre tale suddenly becomes an animal tale : the ogre Ziniko changes into the Hare. The narrator seems to have felt that this passing from one class to another was not desirable, and tried to justify it by stating that, as an ogre does not possess an altogether human character, he can transform himself into an animal!

The Ziniko Ogres.

539x There was once a man who was married to a woman.

This man set out for Johannesburg. As he was leaving, he commanded his wife never to drive away the hens. The woman obeyed his command for a long time, until her husband was on the point of returning home. But on a certain day the woman set to work to crush her mealies, and she placed her child on the ground a little way off. Whilst she was pounding the mealies, the baby woke up, and the mother went to it. Then the hens came to the mealies ; seeing this, the woman cried psaa (this is the expression used to drive away hens or birds) ; she had forgotten the command. Then all the hens flew away.

Seeing this, she set out in pursuit of them and went on till sunset ; but the hens flew across a river which was in that place, and she could not cross it. Close at hand she saw a little path, which she followed ; she came to a place where there was a hut standing alone ; there was nobody in it. She entered the hut ; on the ground there was a great quantity of animals' bones. She sat down there. Suddenly she heard a great noise ; it was the Zinikos coming back. She looked, and saw that they had all only one arm and one leg. Then she hid herself in the midst of the bones.

When they came to the entrance of the village, they placed themselves in line one behind another, the little ones in front and the big ones behind. They carried pieces of wood and the flesh of wild animals ; and they said :

"Ziniko - Ziniko ; Ziniko khogoloo ; Ziniko - Ziniko, Ziniko ppu khogoloo - Ziniko khogoloo - Ziniko khogolooo!"

They lit a fire, roasted their meat, and ate. When the time came to go to bed, they sent one of their number to go and light a fire in the hut ; he refused, and they disputed amongst themselves. Then another got up saying : "Ziniko - Ziniko ; Ziniko khogoloo - psee" and lit the fire. Suddenly he perceived an agreeable smell, and looked to see where it came from, but finding nothing, he called his companion : "Ziniko - Ziniko, come here." His comrade came, and he too perceived the agreeable smell ; they both looked carefully, and at last they discovered the woman. When they had found her, they called the others, who came up saying : "Ziniko - Ziniko - khogoloo - khogolooo."

Then they questioned the woman, asking her who she was ; but she trembled with fear. Then they said : "Give us your child's arm so

that we may eat it." She trembled and was terrified and said to them : "But he will die, my child!" They answered : "Are we dead? We have not got both our arms either ; we have only one arm and one leg! Give us the arm, so that we may eat it." They spoke angrily. Then she gave them her child's arm, and they ate it. 539 ×

Then they asked for the leg, and she gave it to them ; they cut it off and ate it. Finally, they said : "Now give us what remains, to end up with." And they tore the child from her and cut it in two.

When they had finished, they said : "Now we want you, to eat." She began to cry, but they cut her in two and in a trice they had eaten her up. Then they took the two skulls and stuck them up on poles at the door of the hut.

Some days passed, and the husband came back from the Transvaal. Seeing that there was nobody in the house, he set out to follow the footprints of his wife along the way by which she had gone ; he too walked till sunset and saw the little path which his wife had taken and came to the hut where the Zinikos lived. Then all at once he saw the heads of his wife and child at the door of the hut, but he turned back and went home. He went to fetch his bow and many arrows ; then he returned to the Zinikos' dwelling, entered the hut and hid himself.

Then he heard the noise that they made as they came home ; when they came to the entrance of the village they stopped again as before, the little ones in front, saying :

"Ziniko - Ziniko ; Ziniko khogoloo ; Ziniko - Ziniko ; Ziniko khogolooo." They lit a fire and roasted some meat. When they were ready to go to bed, they sent a little one to light the fire in the hut. He did not refuse, thinking perhaps that he would find meat there. He took a small lighted torch and said : "Ziniko - Ziniko ; Ziniko khogoloo - psee." But before he had time to blow up his fire, the man transfixed his face with an arrow and he fell dead, face downwards ; he did not even utter a cry.

Ten minutes passed, and he did not come out of the hut ; then they sent another, saying : "The first is enjoying himself, eating the bones, go and beat him." The second entered the hut, but the same thing happened to him as to the first ; and the same with a third, until they were all dead without knowing what was happening. Only the chief and his counsellor remained. Then the chief said to his counsellor : "They are all mad! Go and beat them." But the counsellor refused to go, saying : "Listen, chief, there is something in the hut." But the chief grew very angry and the counsellor made up his mind to go. As

539r he was going into the hut, the man said to him : "Take that, then you will understand." The counsellor fell back, with his arms stretched out,

Seeing this, the chief grew afraid, and asked : "Ha, Ziniko, what are you doing, falling like that?" But the counsellor did not answer, for he was dead. The chief however had not noticed this, and continued to question him, walking angrily up and down, and saying : "Aha, Ziniko, why did you fall down?"

The man saw that the chief was running away, so he shot an arrow after him, but he missed him, he did not transfix him. The chief continued to run, shouting : "Ziniko - Ziniko - Ziniko," for he could not be silent. He ran in the direction of a certain little hut. When he reached it, he took down an arm and a leg, and fitted them on. At that moment the man came up, and not recognising him, said : "Have you not seen the chief of the Zinikos?" He answered : "No, I have not seen him." The man questioned him closely, but he continued to deny it, until at length the man stopped questioning him. He remained in that place and the two made friends, but the man did not know that it was Ziniko.

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Then they went to buy some goats. Ziniko bought a billy- goat and the man a nanny-goat, but there was very little water in that place. So they tried to think of a trick to get water. Ziniko at once hit on a very clever plan. He said : "Let us prepare the skin of a hare, and I will put it on." (This is not surprising, for we know that he was not altogether a man.) So they prepared the skin and they sought also for some bees' honey. They put this honey into a calabash, and they took another calabash to put their water in; they prepared everything with great care, for the well from which they could draw water was guarded by very clever and powerful beings, so they had to act with great cunning.

The next morning Ziniko took his calabashes and went to the well, (1) but now he is no longer Ziniko, he is the Hare. Having come to it,

(1) This is the well-known episode of the well in the Romance of the Hare. We have already met with another version of the story (p. 226). This seems to be the typical one. It has been published in a more complete and picturesque form in Ch. et C. p. 127.

he began to knock the calabashes together, so that they said : "Gelebete - gelebete - gelebete, gelebete - gelebete - gelebetee..." Then the guardian of the well answered : "Who are you?" He said : "It is I, the Hare!" "What do you want?" "I should like some water." The guardian said : "Come!" thinking that he would be able to seize him, and bind him. But just as he was approaching the well, the Hare said : "Taste that!" (1) The guardian, having tasted the honey, forgot all about seizing him, and said : "Give me some more." The Hare answered : "No, that honey is not good. It will only be good if I tie your legs together behind ; then it will be really excellent." The guardian of the well said at once : "Very well, tie me ;" and the Hare tied his legs together with a very strong rope. Then he began to beat him, saying : "There, that is the good taste of the honey!" Then he went to draw water, and bathed in the well. When he had had enough of this, he hung the two calabashes round his neck and returned home without having unbound the guardian. When the Lord Elephant and the Lord Lion arrived, they found the guardian of the well bound. They asked him : "What is the meaning of this?" He answered : "It is the Hare who has bound me!" They put another guardian in his place, but the same thing happened ; they put still another, but the same thing happened. In the end, they put the Toad there, so that he might catch the Hare without being seen.

In the morning the Hare arrived, swinging his calabashes : Gelebete - gelebete - gelebeteee, gelebete - gelebete - gelebeteee, gelebete - gelebete - gelebeteee... He knocked his calabashes together three times, because nobody answered ; then, seeing that all was quiet, he said to himself : "They have given up! They dare not try again!" Then he went in, drew water, and bathed ; but when he tried to go out, he felt that he was caught. He tried very hard to see what it was that had seized him by the leg, and discovered that it was the Toad. Then he took him, killed him, and hung him up on a tree.

When the others came back, they found the Toad hung up ; then they put in his place the Frog, who seized the Hare and did not let him go until the others had come up and found him. They made him prisoner. He said to them : "It would be a good thing if you were to learn from me how to kill somebody with a bow ; place me a little way off, and

(1) In Ronga : A ku mu nampaiso, a nice example of a derivative descriptive adverb. A = he ; ku = said ; mu = him ; nampaiso, from nampsa = ku taste ; derivative causative nampaisa = to make one taste ; o, final vowel employed to form descriptive adverbs.

539x then you can shoot at me." So they took him and placed him where he had told them, but he took to his heels and ran away. They ran after him, but could not catch him ; he left them far behind.

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Now the Hare had bought a goat, and also his companion, the young man who had killed all the Zinikos. The young man's goat gave birth to a kid during the night. The Hare took the kid and put it beside his billy-goat. Then he called his companion and said to him : "See! my goat has given birth to a kid!" The man was greatly astonished, and said : "Is it really possible for a billy-goat to produce a kid?" The Hare answered : "Certainly ; it has produced it." They disputed together a long time. At length the young man ceased to argue, and said : "Very well, it is your kid." But another day, the young man set out, saying : "I am going home, I am going to see my father." On the way, he bought some mourning clothes, and came back without having been home at all. The Hare was startled when he saw him, because the young man had put on his mourning clothes. He asked : "What has happened at your home?" He answered : "My father has lost a child to which he had given birth." Then the Hare was astonished, and said : "Has it ever been known for a man to give birth to a child?" The young man answered : "But did you not say that your billy-goat had given birth to a kid?" The Hare said goo (was greatly embarrassed) and drove his comrade away.

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However, those whom he had left behind in his flight were still in pursuit of him. On a certain day Madam Antelope met him. On seeing her, he greeted her : "Good day, Madam Antelope." She said to him : "Oho! Now you are caught!" But he said : "Why, what harm have I done?" She said : "Was it not you who ran away from the well?" But he answered : "No, it was not I." Then they lived together and became friends. Whilst they were living together, the Hare said : "It would be a good thing if we were to kill our mothers." (1)

(1) See a similar episode p. 236, another proof of the plasticity of Thonga folklore.

So the Antelope went and killed her mother, but the Hare did not kill his, and he went and brought her food secretly, so that the Antelope should not know. But in the end the Antelope noticed it, and she killed the Hare's mother whilst he was away. When he went to give her food, he found her dead ; then he came back very sad, and went and sat down on the side where the smoke was blowing, and began to shed tears, as if it was the smoke that annoyed him, but this was a trick of his so that he could cry. His companion said to him : "Why are you shedding tears?" He answered : "It is the smoke which annoys me." She said : "Come on this side." But there too it was the same thing. Then she questioned him again, and he answered : "You have killed my mother, and now you ask why I am crying?" The Antelope said : "Was it not you who deceived me?" She drove him away, and so they parted company. 539x

VIII. *Moral Tales.*

The following have been already published :

The Girl and the Whale (Ch. et C., p. 277) ; *The Road to Heaven* (Ch. et C., p. 237) ; *Nabandji, the Toad's Girl* (Ch. et C., p. 264) ; *Halandi and Mayiwane* (Ch. et C., p. 242) ; *Titishane's Cat* (Ch. et C., p. 253); *The Lazy Woman* (Ch. et C., p. 257); *Charity rewarded* (Ch. et C., p. 270) ; *Longoloka* (Les Ba-Ronga, p. 327) ; *The Bounder-of-the-plain* (Les Ba-Ronga, p. 353), a totemic tale, similar to Titishanes'cat.

I reproduce here the tale of *Zili*, which was first published in the Report of the S. A. A. A. S. for 1904, Vol. III, p. 250. It is one of the most striking of all and its graphic description of the torments of conscience is wonderful. The song illustrating it, in two parts, is also very curious and will be again mentioned. (See tune 34, later on.)

Zili.

A man named Zili married a woman. One day he said to her : "It is a long time since we went to visit thy parents. Prepare a pot of beer and let us go." She put the pot on her head and set out. He led her by a path which was new to her, a road which no one used. — "Why dost thou lead me here?" she said. — "Never mind, it is another way," answered he. They came to a tree and rested beneath it. The woman objected : — "There is no room to sit down." — "Just

539x sit down and set down thy pot of beer, that I may drink" said he. She gave it to him. He drank. Then he caught hold of her and killed her. He cut off her head, her arms, her legs, everything that had human shape. Those limbs he wrapped in a truss of grass, and went and hung them up at the top of the tree. As for the remainder of the body, he skinned it, cut the flesh into strips, which he also wrapped up in grass, and took them with him on his way.

Soon a bird began to sing :

Zili ! Amasesendini, amasendi baba ! — Si loyile, sesendini !
I nyama mune yakunhati ! Sesendin !
I kala nkila ka lihondjo ! Sesendin !
Zili ! Amasesendini, amasendi, old man ! — You are a witch, sesendini !
What's that kind of meat ? Sesendin !
It has got no tail ! It has no horn ! Sesendin !

— "What bird is this that sings and calls me by name?" said he. He threw his stick at the bird and killed it. Then he lifted his burden, and went on his way. But the bird rose again ; it followed him, passed close to him, flapping its wings, *pfu... pfu...*, perched on another tree, and sang its song once more. Zili astonished, exclaimed : "How is it the bird follows me thus? Is it possible that I did not kill it outright?" He gave chase to it, knocked it down, tore it limb from limb and threw the mangled remains to the winds. Once more he picked up his load, and continued his journey.

But behold, the bird gathered together its scattered limbs, and came back to life. Zili again pursued it a long way, and again killed it. He lighted a fire with the wooden flint. Then he laid the dead bird on the wood and watched it slowly burn to ashes. He then ground the ashes to powder, and scattered it far and wide. He remained sitting a long time at this place. As the bird did not return, he said to himself : "This time it is quite dead." He then resumed his journey and duly arrived with his load at the village of his parents-in-law.

They hastened to meet him : — "Here is Zili. Good-day, Zili!" They took from his hands the truss of grass filled with flesh ; they bade him enter the hut, and, before untying the bundle, they asked for news of his home. Then his mother-in-law took up the bundle ; — "To-day" said she, "thou dost treat us as princes!" And she began to open it. But, lo! swiftly and silently the bird arrived, and, perching on the top of the hut in which they were sitting, it began its song :

Zili ! Amasesendini, amasendi, old man ! — You are a witch, sesendini !
What's that kind of meat ? Sesendin !
It has got no tail ! It has no horn ! Sesendin !

Zili kept quiet. —"What a curious bird's song that is!" said his parents-in-law. Others said, however : "Oh, it is only a bird." And the bird sang on. 539x

"How did you leave our daughter at home?" inquired the parents. — "Quite well" answered he. "She will soon come herself." But the bird continued its song : "Zili, etc."

At last the bird flew into the hut. They drove it out, but it would not keep silent. The people began to understand what it said. Zili trembled, but said not a word. The bird then went to sing in the ears of the mother, as she began to roast the flesh Zili had brought. She understood and fell fainting.

Then the men of the village turned to Zili : — "What does this mean? What bird is this that follows thee and calls thee by name?" But Zili declared : "The bird came not with me. I heard it here for the first time in your hut." — "If that is so, come and let us see our child," said they.

They set off, the bird flying before them, and they following its guidance. It led them to the big tree in the bush, and began to sing loudly close to the truss of grass which Zili had hung up. Some one climbed up the tree, and untied the bundle. They opened it, and, at once, the men recognized the girl's face and the bracelets she wore on her wrists and ankles. They seized Zili and bound him. Some of them went on to summon Zili's relations all into one hut. When the others arrived they threw Zili, still bound, into the hut and then set fire to it.

So died Zili and his relations.

IX. *Tales founded on real facts.*

This is a new category which I have not mentioned in previous publications, but which is, I think, well defined. In it I would include the well-known and wide-spread theme of the *Year of famine* (Ch. et C. p. 260) and the following two curious stories : "*The Child that was carried off by the Baboon*" (a fact which may very well have happened), and "*Those who laugh but once.*" The latter is an example of ironic popular folklore, a branch of literature which is met with in many countries, and consists in making fun of people of a certain village or region. In Switzerland the village of which one makes fun and tells stories is never lacking!

539 *Those who only laugh once* are said to dwell near Inyaka Island, in the Maputju Country. But the story-teller, to whom I owe this amusing tale, Jeremia Lomben, asserted that they are an imaginary clan. However, the words *Makwetjhu, tjhwala*, quoted as pronounced by them, are a deformation of makweshju and shjwala, their ordinary form in the Maputju dialect, and it is said, that, in a certain spot of Inyaka Island, this altered pronunciation is really met with. So this tale has probably been applied to the Inyaka people, although it originally concerned another clan now forgotten. Natives take an immense delight in making fun of what they esteem an erroneous pronunciation, each clan laughing at the other for peculiarities of dialect.

THE CHILD THAT WAS CARRIED OFF BY A BABOON.

A man started out with all his belongings and went to marry a wife in a foreign country. The woman lived with him for a long time, and had a daughter. One morning she went out to work in the fields, but could find no one to carry her baby. When she got to the field, she hoed a large plot of ground ; she laid her baby on the ground, and put it to sleep. A baboon arrived on the scene, and began to play with the child without anyone seeing it. Soon after the mother saw what was going on, but said nothing, for she knew that, if she made a noise, the baboon might kill the little one. But the baboon presently picked up the child and climbed up into a high tree. The woman said : "You can play with him, if you like, but be gentle and don't hurt him." The baboon replied : "If you make any noise, and if you call the folks to help you, I can easily crush him against the tree." So she kept quiet, and the baboon jumped from tree to tree. When she lost sight of it, she did not say anything, but went on hoeing, and soon the baboon managed to slip away unobserved. When she finally lifted her head, and looked around, she could not see the baboon anywhere, neither could she find her child. She looked intently at the tops of all the trees, without seeing anything. Then she threw down her hoe, and went to search for the baby. She walked a long way and shouted loudly, but with no result. She climbed to the top of a hill, for, she said : "As the baboon went by the tops of the trees perhaps he will hear me better if I get on a high place too." There she sang a song,

which was both an appeal and a lament for her little one. (See tune 35, later on.) 539x

Baboon! Ravisher! What have you done with my child? Tell me! My heart is anxious,
I must go, I must go home quickly to my master! Alas! (1)

Not knowing in which direction to continue the pursuit, she went to enquire at a village. She said: "Have you, by any chance, seen a baboon, which had a child with it?" — "Yes," they replied, "one has just passed by: there are its footprints still in the sand, and the hole it made to hold the little one's calabash." She started on again, in all haste, walked a long way, following the marks as much as possible, but she could not find the pair, for the baboons are curious animals, and when they are tired, they spring from one tree-top to another. The woman searched in many places and went everywhere singing her lament and weeping. She sang:

Baboon! Ravisher! What have you done with my child? Tell me! My heart is anxious.
I must go, I must go home quickly to my master! Alas!

Then she turned homeward. Night was coming on. Before reaching her home, she cut down the trunk of a tree, which was about the size round of a child. She cut it so that it was rather fatter in the middle, and thinner at the two ends: then she put this in the skin which she had used for carrying her baby, and, feeling very sad, went back to her village. She took care to cover the piece of wood with a cloth so that folks could not, at once, see what she was carrying. She went into the yard of her mother-in-law's house, who said to her: "What does this mean? How is it that you are coming back so late at night?" — "It isn't my fault," said she, "it is the child's: she is feverish." — "Well! if she is feverish, that is just why you ought to have come home earlier!" — "No, I wanted to hoe a small patch and sow my maize, but even now, I have not been able to hoe a piece worth mentioning, and have brought my seeds back with me." The mother-in-law was silent; but shortly afterwards she said: "Put the child down, so that I can have a look at her; you are not going to sleep with her on your back to-night, are you?" — "I will put her down when she wakes up," said she, and the mother-in-law said nothing more.

(1) The words of this song are half Zulu.

539x When the husband came home, he asked his wife similar questions. He said : "Put the child down on the ground so that I can see her ; it won't hurt her, even if she is not very well." The wife went about from spot to spot, doing her work, and hoping thus to distract her husband's attention, and prevent him asking her any awkward questions ; at last she went into her hut to go to bed. Her husband said to her : "Didn't I tell you to lay the child on the ground, so that I might have a look at her? If she is ill, never mind ; she will die in my arms, I who am her father!" In spite of his insisting, the woman would not obey him. Then the man became very angry ; he took his assagai and slit open the skin in which the baby was carried, when out fell the log of wood! — "Is this what you were hiding?" cried he. "Is this my child?" Irritated to a degree, he went out and called his relations to come and see what had taken place in the hut and to look at the block of wood. He wanted to kill his wife, but the relations said : "Don't kill her ; we will begin by examining her, and trying to find out how all this has happened, how it is that her child is changed into a log of wood." The poor woman, all faint and trembling said : "I fear it is all up with me to-day!" Then she told them just what had occurred saying : "It was while I was hoeing : and you know that I had no one to take care of the baby." Her relations replied : "It is quite clear to us that you have killed your baby ; she was not carried off by any baboon. If a baboon had done this, why didn't you rush home and tell us about it? We would have aroused all the men in the village, and they would have followed it until they caught it."

They turned the woman out of the village : perhaps they killed her, I am not quite sure.

Those who only laugh once (Ba ka Mahleka-kañwe).

These folks lived in a country by the sea, a country that was quite cut off from all other countries by an immense marsh of papyrus. They were all able to go across this quagmire, for they knew just where to plant their feet. (No one ever went to see them, for those who were not accustomed to jump from one clod of earth to another were apt to fall into the slimy mud). They were called "Those who only laugh once," for when they burst out laughing, they only got as far as "Ha! ;" they could not go on : "Ha! ha! ha! ha!" That was their infirmity. — Now their chief never had any occasion to assemble the

539x

army for warlike expeditions, because his people were entirely separated from all the rest of the world. However, some of his folks, having gone to visit a neighbouring country, heard that the army had gone out to battle, and saw the warriors dancing and celebrating their doughty deeds before the chief. On their return home, they said to their own chief : "Call our army together too and let us go out to fight wild boars!" So they started out for the big forest, where the wild boars are to be found, and roused them up about noon ; one man ran his assagai through a boar and cried out : "Tjhokota makwetjhu, ndi tlhabile sha ku tjhwala nkumbu ndi nomu!" — "Ho! my brother, extol my prowess! I have slain a beast which carries his nose on top of his mouth!" The other replied : "Ho! it is a wild boar." They returned home, and their chief entertained them quite royally, because they had shown themselves so valiant in the fight.

On another occasion they heard far off in the distance a noise : "Huuum!" They cried : "Chief, call the army together! To arms, every one of you!" They all went to get their assagais. Again they heard a quail: "Huuum!" — "It is over there!" they said, and proceeded very slowly and cautiously in the direction of the sound. Once more they heard : "Huuum!" — "It is some huge wild beast," they cried ; "Let us be after it!" So they all began to stamp on the ground together : "Rji, rji, rji," and holding the assagai in one hand and the shield in the other they formed a circle round the enemy and gradually closed in on him. Suddenly : "Whirrr!!" (1) and up got a quail! The whole army were so startled that they fell over backwards! When they recovered from the shock, they all went home, feeling very much ashamed of themselves.

X. *Foreign Tales.*

Under this title I have already published in "Les Chants et les Contes des Ba-Ronga" : *Bonawasi* (p. 291) ; *The three Vessels* (p. 364) ; *Likanga* (p. 309) ; *The Boy and the Big Snake* (p. 314) ; *The King's Daughter* (p. 317) ; and in Les Ba-Ronga : *The Mice* (p. 352) ; *Big Head* (p. 339).

I have since collected others and now publish one of them, the *Unnatural Mother*. The beginning of the tale is very much the same as that of Longoloka, and may be Bantu. The hunting expedition of the

(1) Whirrr ! is the usual way of expressing the *rising* of a quail or a partridge.

539* father to Mosapa has certainly been inspired by local circumstances. But the story soon takes on a very different character, and we hear of White people who are cannibals (a strange occurence indeed), and work sugar-mills, and of a man who would like to take a second wife, but is prevented from doing so by the monogamic scruples of his relatives; the birth of twins is looked on as a misfortune in the true Bantu manner, etc., an extraordinary mixture of wholly incongruous elements. I leave to professional folklorists the task of determining the origin of all these episodes. This tale comes from a middle-aged woman named Martha, (p. 212) who heard it from her grandmother in the Southern part of the Maputju country, when she was a little girl (1875?), at a time "when there were few White people in the country." Those able to reach this remote part of Thongaland were Banyans, rather than Europeans.

These foreign tales, altered as they are by the Native mind, present a special interest, because they show how episodes conceived by the European or Asiatic brain, are changed when related by Africans. I listened to a girl who had stayed in Basutoland, and had brought back with her the story of Cinderella. It was easily recognisable but, instead of the fairy who consoles and advises the heroine of the tale, it was her deceased mother, who, as an ancestor-god (shikwembo), appeared to her on her grave.

The Unnatural Mother and the Girl with a Star on her Forehead.

This is how the tale begins: Once upon a time there was a woman who had a moon on her forehead. In her childhood she lived with her parents. Her parents died. She had a large mirror which had been given to her by her mother. When she was grown up she was married, and went away to her husband, taking her mirror with her. She was fond of bathing, and when she had bathed and arranged her curly hair, she placed her mirror on the table, and said to it: "My mother's mirror, is there any one in the country more beautiful than I am?" The mirror answered: "You are only surpassed in beauty by that which is in heaven" (ñwa nya ka tilo). Then she felt very happy, took her mirror off the table, and sat down, her mind thoroughly at rest. She became pregnant. Before the child was born her husband left for Mosapa (1).

(1) A country to the North of Gazaland where elephants are still to be found. (1. p. 28.)

He left with his wife the following strict instructions. "I am going to Mosapa to kill elephants. When the child is born, should it die, you just keep for me one of its bones." — "Very well," said she, and the man went off elephant-hunting. 539x

The woman remained at home with her servant, who stayed in the house until she was about to be delivered. When she began to feel the pangs of labour she said to her servant : "Heat some water for me, I would like to take a bath." He put the water on the fire to heat; afterwards she had a bath, placed her mirror on the table, combed her hair and said to the mirror : "My mother's mirror, is there any one in this country more beautiful than I am?" — "You are only surpassed in beauty by that which is in heaven," was the reply. Then she put away the mirror, spread some blankets on the floor, and gave birth to a daughter. The baby was born after sunset, but she saw that there was a bright light in the house. The villagers were terrified and said : "It looks as if the house were on fire!" This light came from a brilliant star that was on the baby's forehead.

The mother took good care of her little one and laid her on a bed. She bathed and combed her hair as usual but forgot her mirror. The child grew and began to sit up ; she could even stand and walk a few steps . She toddled about in her mother's hut. The village folks were astonished, and said : "What can it be that is burning in the chief's hut?" They did not know that a child had been born. Then the servant told them : "My Mistress (1) has a daughter!"

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The child grew and walked out, holding her mother's hand. One day the mother took the mirror, and bathed the child, and combed her hair. The little one's hair was still more lovely than the mother's, because the star sent out rays of light, like beads upon her head. The mother gazed at her daughter, and began to feel afraid of her. She again asked her mirror : "My mother's mirror, is there any one in the country more beautiful than I am?" The mirror answered : "Think carefully. I told you that you were only surpassed in beauty by that which is in heaven, and by that I meant the infant that was in your

(1) Muhanu, a term by which White women are designated in Ronga. — "Was she really a White woman ?," I asked Martha. — "Yes," she replied.

589x womb. You are only surpassed in beauty by your child." The woman took the mirror, and broke it ; she was angry, because it had said : "You are only surpassed in beauty by your child." She picked up the pieces and threw them behind a box. She went to her hut, dressed the child and put on its hat. Then she dressed herself and put on her own hat. She put a pretty umbrella into the child's hands, took her own, and they set out together.

They went up a mountain where there was a high road along which many people passed ; the mother said to the folks : "Look at me, and tell me if you think there is any one more beautiful than I am?" They replied: "You are certainly very beautiful, Mother, but the child who is with you is more beautiful than you are." The woman began to feel unhappy, and went home with the child. Each day she went to the mountain road and asked the same question of the passers-by, and they answered : "Assuredly (nyambo) you are beautiful, but you are not so beautiful as your child who has a star on her forehead."

When the child had grown still more, and was about as tall as Nhwanene (1) her mother found a small calabash, which she gave her and sent her to draw water saying : "Don't go to the place where folks generally go to draw water, but go to the spot where there is a high precipice." She said to herself : "The child will tumble over and be killed." But the girl did not go to the high precipice; she went to the place where everybody went. When she got home her mother said : "Didn't you hear me when I told you to draw water at the spot where there is a high precipice?" The girl replied : "Mother, I went where you told me to go," for she knew quite well that her mother wanted to kill her.

The woman called her Kafirs (a name given by the Rongas to Native servants), and said to them : "If I told you to kill this girl, would you obey me? I would give you a bag full of money." They said : "Yes." Then she said : "Take the child and kill her. When you have killed her, cut off her little finger and cut out her heart and liver, bringing them back to me, that I may be sure you have really killed her."

The Kafirs said to the young girl : "Let us be off!" They started away together. When they came to a certain spot, they said to her : "Listen! Your mother told us to kill you. If we let you go, will you be able to run far away by yourself?" — "Certainly," said she, "I can easily run away alone. Although I don't know the country, I could easily find

(1) A girl of about ten years of age in the village of Rikatla, where this tale was told.

a home somewhere." — "Will you be brave," they said, "and let us cut off your little finger?" She held up her little finger and told them to cut it off. They did so. She stooped down, tore off a piece of her dress and bandaged the stump : then she ran away, and bathed in the river and in the sea ; wherever she went she bathed. 539k

As for the Kafirs, an antelope suddenly sprang out of the bush, which they hunted until they caught it ; they cut it up, took out the heart and liver, and brought them together with the little finger (1) to their mistress. The woman then thanked them heartily, saying : "You have done well, for my daughter was more beautiful than I am, and that was what depressed me. That is why I wandered about on the mountains, because she was more beautiful than I. Now I ought to be happy!"

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The child continued on her way, and came to a large house belonging to White folks, the people of Yibane. She reached this house in the evening, after sunset, and went into it ; it was the chief's house, but it was quite empty : every one had gone out to steal ; those folks stole men, shut them up and ate them. Yibane was their chief. It was for him that they kidnapped people.

As these robbers were returning home they saw a bright light in Yibane's house and started running as fast as they could, crying out : "The house is on fire!" Yibane threw open the door and found the young girl seated on his bed. He said to her : "My daughter, whence do you come?" and embraced her adding : "Now I have indeed found something really beautiful!" Then he changed his mind, and said : "You are not my daughter, you will be my wife ; you will grow up, and you will be my spouse. I will give up all my evil ways, and will cast them away from me!" Accordingly he gave the order : "Go and find all the people you have imprisoned, and set them free. Never again hunt men to kill and eat them." His people thanked him and said : "We will never again eat men as we now have such a beautiful princess!" Yibane said : "Go and bathe and come back clean, all of you, for I have found a lovely wife!" When the girl had grown to be about the height of

(1) The story-teller has probably forgotten to state here that the husband returned from Mozaga and that the unnatural mother showed him the little finger, pretending that the child had died.

539* Shihahanhlanga (1), Yibane ordered the wedding feast to be prepared ; the people went into the marshes to steal sugar-cane and built a large mill (pikawusi) to crush the cane. He went out on this business with all his people, and the young girl remained alone, knowing that she was soon to be married. Just then the little servant who used to play with her when she was quite young, happened to pass by. The girl was at the window and the servant saw her ; he said to himself : "I have never seen any one like this woman, although I have travelled through many lands." He never suspected that it was his former playmate that he saw. He ran back to the girl's mother, and said : "I have seen a girl with a star on her forehead, but she did not see me." The mother said : "See! Take these beautiful slippers ; don't you think she would like to buy them?" The servant replied : "Give them to me ; I will take them to her." He went off in haste, and reached the house one day when Yibane was away, busy crushing sugar-cane. He found the girl at home and offered to sell her the slippers: — "How much do you want for them?" said she. — "Whatever you like to give me," he replied ; "they are very pretty ones." — "Wait a moment : I must just try them on."

She went into the house and put on the slippers. No sooner had she done so than she died. The boy ran home to the mother and told her that the girl was dead. "That is well," said she. "You certainly had the last word!" When Yibane returned from the sugar-mill, and regained his own home, his wife did not come out to meet him. He opened the door and found her lying on the bed ; he thought she was asleep and tried to awaken her, but could not ; then he saw that she was lifeless. His people heard him weeping, turning everything topsy-turvy and saying : "I shall never be able to find a wife as beautiful as she! The best thing I can do is to live alone, for I had centred all my hopes in her!"

He procured a coffin, and lined it with cloth, putting some money into it ; then they carried off the young girl to bury her. But Yibane said : "My wife shall never be put in the ground. Place her on a tree and build a canopy over her, a large canopy of planks, stretching a long way round!" They had to use force to restrain him, for he wanted to kill himself. The people took some silken stuff and made a canopy over the coffin, so that the heat should not hurt it.

(1) Surname of a young girl of Rikatla, named Madonge, who might be about 18 years old.

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The chief of that country, as it might be Matlotlomane, (1) had a son. 539*
This son went out hunting. He came to the spot, and looking up into the tree said to his servant : "What is it that glitters up there?" He had caught sight of the golden nails which had been used to close the coffin. The servants said : "Let us run and see who can touch the tree first!" The chief's son got there first, the servants later. He said, to them : "Climb up the tree and bring down that box : be careful not to let it fall too heavily."

When the coffin was brought down, he unlocked it with the key that was attached to it, and tried to open it. He had hardly raised the lid, when he saw a light inside ; so he closed it again at once, and said to his servants : "Carry it home." They all helped one another, for the box was heavy, and arrived at their village when it was dark. The young man told the servants not to say a word to his father of what they had found : "Only tell him," said he, "that I am not feeling well." He gave them all the game he had killed and said : "Don't bring me any meat : you can eat all the game yourselves ; no one may enter my room!"

He shut himself up in his room, lifted the girl out of the coffin and laid her on the bed, he sat on the ground weeping, and saying : "I have found my wife : how lovely she is, but, alas, she is dead!" He called his youngest brother, who lived in another room, and said to him : "Bring me some water ; I want to bathe myself." But he used the water to bathe the young girl, thinking she might possibly revive. The parents were astonished to see a bright light in his room. They questioned the servants who had been hunting with him, but they only said : "We don't know anything about it." Then the parents asked : "What is the matter with our son?" The servants replied : "We don't know ; he only told us that he had a headache."

Several days passed. He ate nothing, and drank nothing. He forbade anyone to enter his room. He placed the young girl on another bed, and mourned, and mourned, and mourned her.

One day he placed her on his own bed ; it was in the morning. His brother came in, and found him washing the girl's face. The young

(1) Surname given to the Portuguese Administrator, at the post of Moraswen, about one hour and a half's distance from Rikatla.

539* brother said : "Where did you manage to find this lovely thing? I congratulate you ;" and to congratulate him, he shook the girl's leg and took off her slipper ; then he took off the other one, upon which she suddenly awoke, and came to life again. The chief's son thanked his youngest brother and said : "You have acted with great wisdom! I thought you were but a little boy, and you have been wise enough to bring my wife to life again!"

He took two shillings out of his purse, and gave them to the boy. He would not leave his room ; he would not go and visit his mother ; he only wanted to stay and look at the young girl. The elder brother sent the younger to his mother to get some water to bathe the girl. There were many rooms in the house. Then he asked the young girl : "Do you think you could walk?" He took her by both hands, for her limbs were stiff, and led her into one of the rooms, where there was a large bath, and plunged her into it. When she had taken her bath, they were greatly rejoiced, for they saw the star shining brightly on her forehead. The youngest brother went out, but did not dare to tell all these things to his mother, for all the servants had told him : "If you are asked any questions you must conceal the truth." He only went to ask for food for his brother saying : "He is a little better now."

His parents were very glad to know he was recovering. They killed chickens for him, thinking it was he who eat all the meat. They didn't know he had a wife who was soon well enough to eat. She became fat and strong, and nobody knew anything about her.

When the elder brother saw that the girl was in good health once more, he sent the younger out of the room saying : "Now you had better go back to our mother." The younger was annoyed at being turned out like that, so he went and told everything to the parents. He said : "My brother has a wife, but she is not a woman of this country ; when you look at her you are so dazzled that you have to turn your eyes away, but when once you are accustomed to her face, you can't keep your eyes off her." His parents said : "We will go and see her." — "Yes," said he, "but don't let him know that I told you! Go quietly, and when she is seated at table, you will see her." So the parents started to go to their son's room. They saw it was all lit up, and asked the younger brother : "Is it the light of lamps that we see?" — "No," said he, "it is a star that she has on her forehead." They entered the room, while the husband and wife were at table. They greatly admired the beauty of the girl, and were very happy. The mother embraced her saying : "This is indeed a lovely girl!" The father was also much taken

with her beauty and said : "This woman would suit me very well as a wife!" The mother rebuked him saying : "I will go away with all my children, if you take this woman as a wife! She is not for you! I am your wife! You have sinned!" (1) 539'

He replied : "That is true! I have sinned. My head was turned by her beauty!" They said to him : "Don't do such a thing again!"

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A splendid feast was prepared when the chief's son was married to the young girl. She became with child. Her husband said to her : "I am going to Mosapa to hunt elephants." His wife began to weep. "Oh," said he, "I will come back again, but I can't forget the elephants." Time went on, and the woman became the mother of twins — a boy and a girl. She wrote a letter to her husband, at Mosapa, to tell him the news and sent it to him by a servant. This man passed by the old home of the girl with the star, where the mother was living. Everyone was drinking, and they asked him to drink with them. When he had fallen asleep, the mother took the letter and read it. She saw that it was signed : "she who has a star on her forehead." — "It is from her," cried she, "then she is still alive!" She tore up the letter, burnt it, took another piece of paper and wrote : "Your wife has given birth to two monkeys," putting the paper into the servant's pocket. The servant found the husband, who read : "Your wife has given birth to two monkeys!" Then he wrote in reply : "Never mind! They are mine, don't kill them. I will play with them when I get back." The servant started back on the return journey, and again passed by the village of the girl's mother ; there they made him drink once more, and the woman took the letter and wrote another one, to replace it, which said : "Put out her eyes, cut off the nipples of her breasts ; place one child on her back, and the other on her bosom ; make her walk through the bush, torn by thorns, and pierced by spines, and so let her suffer!" They woke the servant and said to him : "Be off, the sun is already set." He arrived safely at his mistress' village, and handed the letter to her father-in-law, who, when he had read it, burst into tears. The father and mother

(1) Monogamic scruples which certainly betray some foreign influence. The "tip of the ear" of Martha, who is upon occasion an earnest preacher of the Gospel, here appears, and this again shows how these tales are altered.

539* were afraid to give the letter to their daughter-in-law ; they said : "Our son has gone mad : he says the children must be killed because they are twins! (1) "They could not make up their minds what to do. Finally they decided that they must give the letter to their daughter-in-law, as it came from her husband, but they said to her : "As for us, we will not touch you to do you any harm. If he wants to have this done, he can do it himself!" The wife said : "No, you must do it." She felt sure this letter did not come from her husband, so she said : "Go and do it." — Then they put out her eyes, cut off the nipples of her breasts, tied one child in front of her, the other behind, and she started out ; she did not walk upright, but crawled along on her hands and knees. She reached the forest, all covered with blood. She got there just at sunset. The sky began to thunder, and spoke to her saying : "My daughter, what do you seek here?" She replied : "I seek nothing. They have put out my eyes, they have cut off the nipples of my breasts, and have driven me from home with one child tied on in front and one behind, so that I should be torn by thorns." The sky continued : "Don't be afraid, my daughter ; go straight on, and if you come to a river, cross it without fear." When she reached the river, she found it was a very big one. "My little ones may be drowned," said she, but added: "Never mind!" She threw herself into the water, and swam across. Under the water she found a steam boat, and when she came out of the river she was in the steam boat, her eyes were back in their places again and also the nipples of her breasts. She sat down, and saw some food prepared, but did not know whence it came. Then she began to eat, and her children played around her.

Now the husband returned from Mosapa with elephant tusks. It was after sunset. He looked all round for his wife, but could not find her anywhere. He made enquiries, and they told him everything. He made no fuss, but only said : "Show me the way she went," and they showed him. He followed her and found little pieces of clothing torn off and strewed all along the way. He came to the forest and passed through it ; he also reached the river without seeing anything of his wife. At last he found her ; the steamboat had disappeared. Once more he saw the star which lit up her face. He also saw her children ; the girl had a star on her forehead like her mother, and the boy had a moon like his grandmother. He smiled on them and took them home without asking any questions. His parents were afraid he would be very angry with them, but nothing even ruffled him.

(1) This idea is evidently Bantu.

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When they were all at home again, the wife said to her husband : 539x
"Let us prepare a grand feast, and invite all the country-side, to celebrate your return and my wonderful cure." — "That's right," said he, "let all the inhabitants of the country be invited." Now the wife wanted to get hold of her mother. The steamboat brought crowds of people : all Yibane's folk came and so did the girl's mother. Quantities of food had been prepared and all feasted right royally. The young woman saw her mother and pointed her out to her husband, saying : "Look, there she is, the woman who had my finger cut off, who killed me with the slippers, who put out my eyes and cut off the nipples of my breasts!"

Now there was a large tent in which every one was seated on chairs. The husband and wife came in, and seated themselves, dressed in their holiday clothes. The people were very anxious to look at the wife, but could not do so, as the brightness of the star on her forehead dazzled them. She put a veil over her face and then they were able to gaze upon her. As for the mother, she was filled with shame ; she said to herself : "And I thought I had killed her!" She trembled.

When they had finished eating, the young wife addressed them : "Silence!" said she. "I am going to tell you a story!" They all applauded. She added : "It is not a very long one. Listen, princes and subjects. When you give birth to a beautiful child, do you dare to kill it?" The chiefs were astounded at such a question! "We never thought such a thing possible." — "Well, I have known such a thing," she said. "Look at my finger!" Then she began, and told them all the story ; how her mother had killed her with the slippers, had put her eyes out and cut off the nipples of her breasts. The mother was there, in full view of everyone. Finally the young woman said to her husband : "I wish my mother to be killed to day!" The husband said : "No, leave her alone." — "No, said she, she must be put to death."

She had a small gun of her own, and with it she shot the mother right before them all. The people picked up the body, and went off to bury it. As for the young woman, she gave a piece of land to her father, who said to her : "You have done quite right : I did not know who you were."

She gave him a certain sum of money with which to procure another wife, and he settled in her village.

That's the end.

CHAPTER III

Music.

533 Music in a more or less rudimentary form, plays a great part in the Life of the Bantu tribe. Some tribes are more gifted than others in this respect. In the Province of Mozambique the Ba-Chopi are certainly the best musicians, as we shall see. But Thongas are also great singers and players, and their dances are invariably accompanied by music. What is its character? The melodies and rhythms are very difficult to catch, and I do not pretend to give here a full and definite description of Thonga music; but the following specimens will convey a fair idea of it, and a study of their musical instruments will help us, in some measure, to understand their musical system.

A. MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS.

1) Wind Instruments.

534 The simplest is the *shiwaya*, an empty sala shell, or the shell of a Kafir orange (p. 19): it has two holes, one through which children sing, another which they alternately shut and open, the withdrawal of the hand allowing the sound to be emitted; the result is a monotonous wu-wu-wu, which is sufficient to amuse little boys.

Next in importance comes the *nanga*, (yi-tin) the goatherd's flute, made of the tibia of a goat, or of some other animal, on which the boys play two notes, generally in thirds. This is truly the infancy of art, but the tone of these little flutes is very sweet and wonderfully in keeping with the bush life, the bleating

of the goats and the nudity of the artist! There are many kinds 534
of goatherds' flutes. One is called *ndjwebe* ; its sound resembles mbvrrr.... mbvrrr.... Natives are in the habit of putting a feather inside their bone flutes in order to keep them clean.

Another more elaborate flute is made of a reed, having a hole at one extremity for the mouth, and three others at the other extremity for the fingers. According to the number of holes stopped, the sound varies. It is called *shitiringo* (Dj.), or *shitloti* (Ro.), and Native artists are capable of producing pleasing tunes upon it. No. 39 in my collection of tunes is a shitiringo melody, heard on the banks of the Great Tabi.

But the true tinanga are the trumpets which compose the *bunanga*, the band already referred to (I. p. 431) as being one of the manifestations of Court Life. They are also called *timhalamhala*, from the name of the mhalamhala (Hippotragus niger), the large, dark antelope whose horns are employed for the manufacture of these trumpets, together with the horns of the mhala (impala) antelope. These instruments are tuned according to rule. Ten of them, each having a different sound, form a *simo*, a kind of orchestra, completed by the big and the small drum already described. They are used to accompany the special 535
dances which take place in the little capital of the Ronga clans, and in which the players are themselves the dancers, marching behind each other, with peculiar contortions, narrowing and widening their circle according to the time beaten by the drum.

The bunanga players receive a regular training before going 533
to the capital, to play before the chief. When they have prepared the numbers of their programme, they all go to the capital, each sub-chief leading his band, for a musical contest. The tinduna act as judges. Each *simo* plays in turn. The judges discuss their respective merits, and when they have come to a decision, they call a young man to proclaim the result of the competition. This proclamation is called *ku tjema shibangu*, to cut the contest, and is performed in a very curious way. The herald has an axe in his hand. With a loud voice, he pronounces the verdict : "So and so played badly ; so and so better ; the one who played best is so and so." — "Nkino hi nkhensa wa ka man." Then he

533 beats the trunk of a tree with his axe, as if he wished to confirm the decision, and runs away. This is to avoid protests and insults from those who did not win!

No. 40 is a tune played by the bunanga. It is very monotonous and the music is evidently not so important as the dance, the rhythm, and the contortions. There are only four notes in this tune. However it is probable that the ten instruments of the simo form a whole octave, with two notes below it, the same as the ten keys of the timbila which will presently be described. Unfortunately I have not been able to ascertain if this is actually so, having only once witnessed the performance of the bunanga. I am afraid the bunanga orchestra of antelope horns has now entirely disappeared from Ronga territory.

2) Stringed Instruments.

534 As regards stringed instruments, they possess the *unicord harp* called *gubu*. There are two different forms of it; the *shitjendje*, which consists of a bent rod, a bow, both extremities of which are united by a string made of milala palm fibres (nkuha), or a piece of wire. On the lower part of the bow a calabash is fixed as sounding box. The shitjendje is held upright; one hand grasps it at its lower extremity, whilst the other beats on the lower third of the string with a little stick. The hand which grasps the instrument places its finger on this lower third of the string in different places, so as to vary the length and produce different sounds.

A gubu player.

534 In the *nkaku*, the sounding box is fixed in the middle of the bow. From it a wire starts and is tied to the middle of the string, thus dividing it into two equal parts. The instrument is grasped near the calabash, and the fingers are extended on either half of the string to differentiate the sounds. The other hand beats on either side with a stick.

The tune No. 12 was accompanied by a shitjendje.

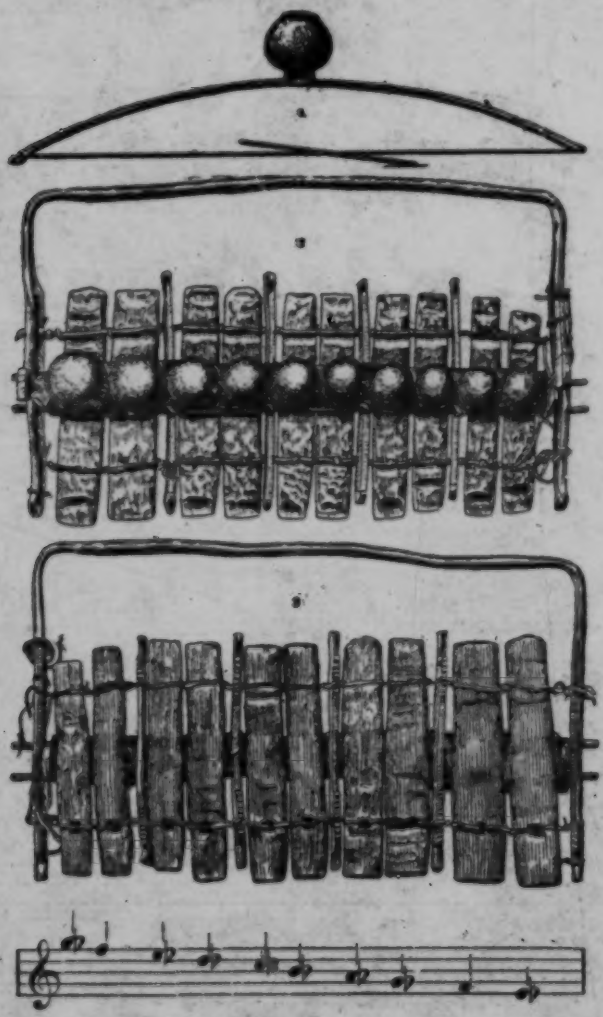
3) The Timbila or Bantu Xylophone.

The most completely characteristic musical instrument of our tribe is the *timbila*, which may be seen on the accompanying plate showing both the upper and the under side of this very interesting Native piano. It is composed of ten keys, made of very hard wood, attached to each other by straps of leather on a wooden frame consisting of a curved branch. The keys rest on shells of sala, which act as sounding boxes, and in which two holes are pierced, one in the upper part to receive the sound, and one at the side, covered by a membrane, generally a piece of a bat's wing, in order to cause the sound to vibrate. This piano is easy to carry. The player places it in front of him and beats on the keys with one or two sticks, furnished at one extremity with an india-rubber or a leather ball. (See the cover of *Les Chants et les Contes des Ba-Ronga*).

Comparing it with a European piano I have ascertained that the third key is a G flat, and that, if we strike the following ones, up to the last, we obtain a regular major scale, that of G flat, with its proper half tones between the third and fourth and the seventh and eighth intervals. The two lower keys are, the first E flat, the second F natural. The interval from E flat to G flat is a minor third, so that, should we start with the lower key and strike the seven following, we should obtain a minor scale of E flat corresponding to the major scale of G flat : but it would not entirely resemble our harmonic minor scale as there is no "sensible," viz., the seventh note of the scale is not raised. Only when descending from the eighth to the first we should have a perfect melodic minor scale. This minor scale, without the

534 raised seventh, is well known in the history of music : it is called the Eolian scale.

So we find this interesting fact as the result of our examination:



The timbila and its ten notes.

the timbila, in its ten notes, contains both the major and minor scales.

Is this accidental ? Or are all the timbila tuned according to

534 this method? The second hypothesis is highly probable. Of
533 course there may be slight differences between the instruments, which is not astonishing, as they are made with primitive implements by unskilled workmen ; but the proof that they are all made according to a fixed rule is that many timbila are often played together by musicians who form an orchestra. This is rarely the case amongst Thongas but frequently amongst the

A timbila player.

Ba-Chopi, who are the true "masters" of this instrument. It is said that, in this very musical tribe, Native pianists sit in a line along the street of the village (for their villages are built in a straight line) and play together, all the throng of men dancing in front of them. I witnessed a similar performance when the Crown Prince of Portugal visited Lourenço Marques in 1907. Great feasts were given in his honour ; 25,000 armed warriors defiled before him, and thirty timbila played the National Portuguese Anthem. The Administrators who taught these Native artists to play that difficult tune on their xylophones deserve every congratulation! It was wonderful. The melody

534 was quite recognisable and played in perfect tune. If the timbila
533 had not been tuned to the same pitch, this concert would have become a dreadful cacophony! In the Johannesburg Compounds the East Coast boys manufacture timbila themselves, of smaller and larger sizes, some with enormous keys made of common pitch-pine boards, and emitting deep low tones, the sounding boxes being empty oil cans. They succeed in tuning them more or less perfectly. So every citizen of Johannesburg can hear their concerts, and witness their dances, in the Compounds of the Ferreira Mine and elsewhere on Sundays, and, though these ugly pitch pine timbila seem a parody on the beautiful instruments played at home, still the performance is worth a visit! (1)

533 The existence of the timbila is a proof that these tribes possess a real musical system. The Ba-Chopi are the "masters," and

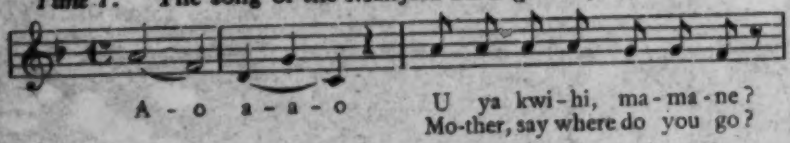
(1) I have lately received some additional information on the timbila from my son, the Rev. H. Ph. Junod, who is living in Manjakaze, not far from the Chopi border. The keys are cut from a very hard tree, the mwendja, which is first put into a big fire in order to make all the sap run out. Large stems of that tree were used by the Ba-Chopi to built their strongholds when they fought against Gungunyana forty years ago. They have been exposed long enough to the rays of the sun to have dried perfectly, and the instrument makers employ them to furnish their keys. The artist begins with the lowest. His father was himself a timbila player and he tunes his keys in accordance with those of the paternal instrument, slightly diminishing the thickness of the little board till it gives exactly the same sound. This explains how all the instruments are tuned to the same pitch. It is not an easy job to find sala shells of all the required sizes. The vibrating membrane is made of the diaphragm of a small rodent called khweva. All the xylophones seen by my informant in Chopiland start from D (or E flat?). Some have 10, some 12, some 14 keys. Some have oply four, but they are enormous and emit deep sounds like drums; they are employed to accompany the others. It is rare nowadays to hear orchestras of timbila, as most of the men are constantly away from their villages, working for the Whites; but individual players are still frequently met with, some of them possessing great dexterity.

The xylophone is widely distributed all over the African Continent, Thongaland being the most southern point where this instrument is found. I saw a magnificent example in Vendaland, in the village of a counsellor named Chikhobokhobo. It had no less than 23 keys forming three complete octaves with two supplementary notes at the top. The owner of this piano was very proud of it and kept it in a special hut. I believe it to be the same which was greatly admired at Wembley where it was exhibited in 1925 by Mr C. T. Harries, the Native Commissioner. In Baroteland the xylophone is called *strimba*, *warimba* amongst many other tribes of Central Africa, *budimba* or *imbila* amongst the Ba-lla, and *bala* in the French Soudan. Mr Ch. Joyeux, who published an interesting paper on "Quelques manifestations musicales observées en Haute Guinée française" (*Revue d'Ethnographie et des traditions populaires*, Paris, 1924, p. 161-212) has analysed the xylophone of that country and found exactly the same succession of sounds as in the Thonga timbila. The prototype of this instrument is said to be found in the Dutch East Indies and in the Malay Peninsula.

this is generally admitted; the Thongas, however, are not far 533
behind them, some of them having learnt to manufacture the instrument, and a great many playing upon it quite artistically. In order to define this musical system more precisely, let me now give the 41 following tunes as examples, some of which I owe to Mrs Audéoud, whilst the majority have been noted down by myself.

B. A COLLECTION OF THONGA TUNES. 533 539

Tune 1. The song of the Manyisa bard (p. 185).

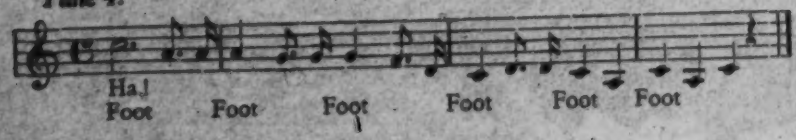


Tunes 2. 3. 4. 5. 6., heard far away through the bush in the village of Muzila, sub-chief of Rikatla, in the years 1890-1893. In N° 4 the singers were beating the ground with their feet to mark the time. In 5 and 6 boys answered to men and girls to women in the usual antiphonic fashion.

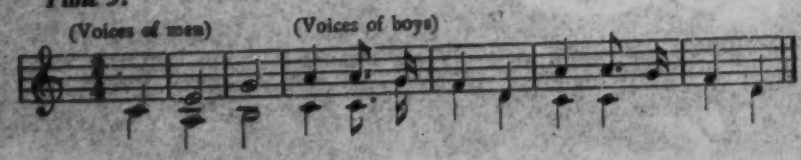
Tune 2.

Tune 3.

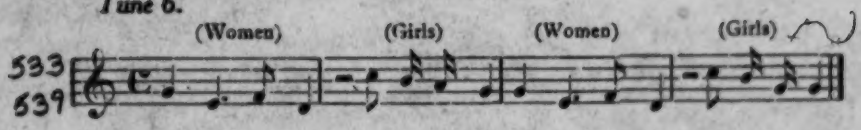
Tune 4.



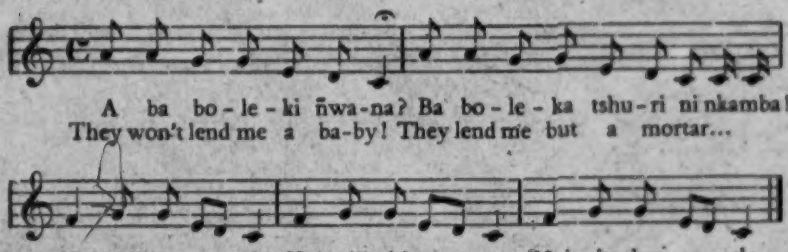
Tune 5.



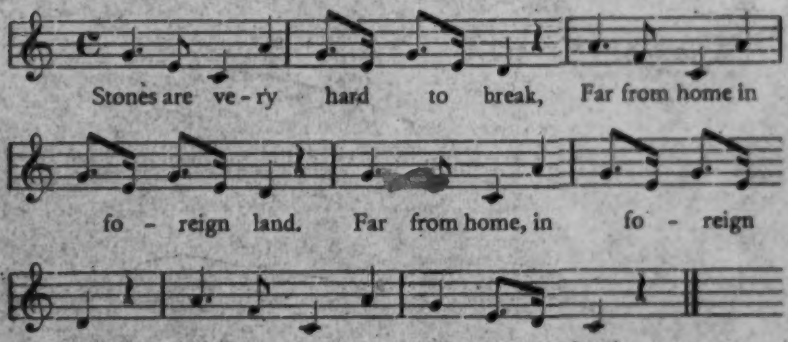
Tune 6.



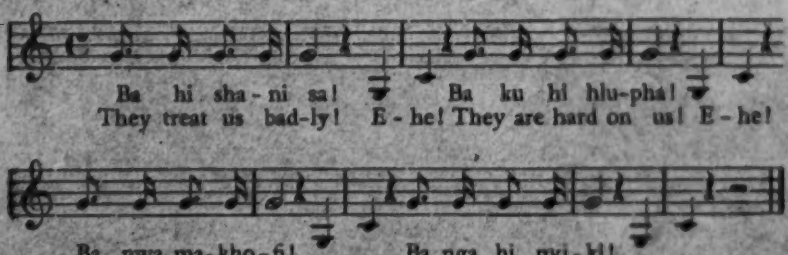
Tune 7. The Complaint of the childless woman (p. 188).



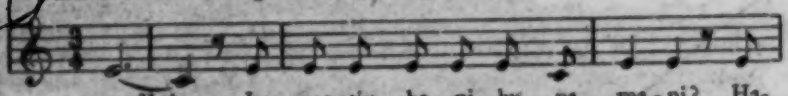
Tune 8. Complaint of the boys going to Johannesburg (p. 189).



Tune 9. Complaint of the Nkuna boy (p. 189).



Tune 10. The song of the Crab (p. 190).



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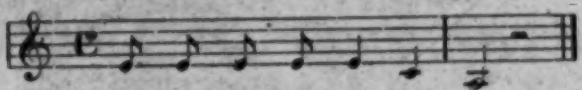
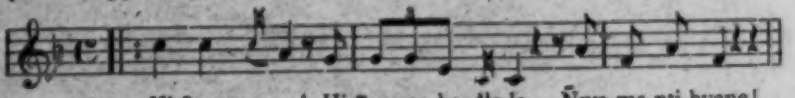
Yo! Lo - mo tju - ke - ni ku na ma - ni? Ha-
A - las! Here on the shore is there no one? The

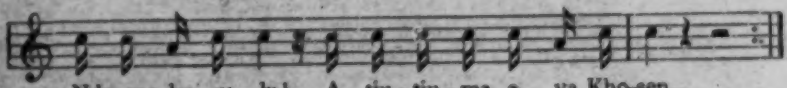


-la yi kho - mi li - ti ho!
crab has caught me by the hand!

Tune 11. The lament over the deported chief Ñwamantibyane (See I. App. XI.).

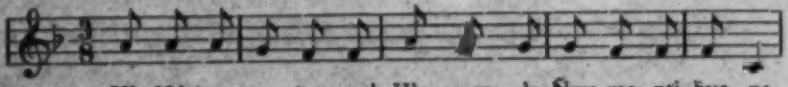


Hi ñwa - na - o! Hi ñwa-na ba dle-le, Ñwa-ma-nti-byane!
It is the child! The child whom they have killed, Nwa-ma-nti-by-ane!

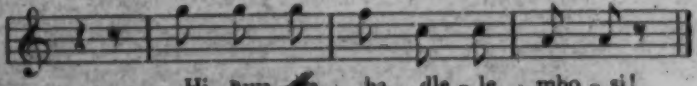


Ndu-ma-ku - ru - lu! A tju - tju - ma a ya Kho-sen...
He is the glorious... He had to fly up to Kho-sen...

Tune 12. The same lament as sung thirteen years later, with accompaniment of the shitjendje.

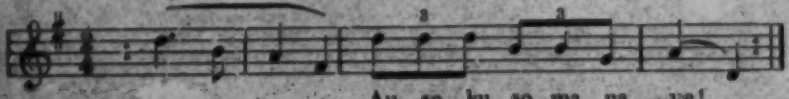


Hle Ndu-ma - ne, ñwa-na! Hlo - ngo - la Ñwa-ma - nti - bya - na
Have pi - ty on the child, They chased him, Nwa-ma-nti-bya - na



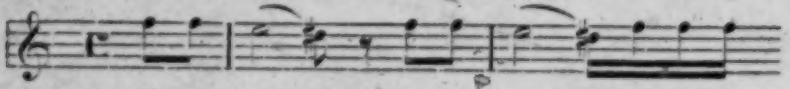
Hi ñwa - na ba dle - le, mbo - si!
'Tis the child they have killed, a - las!

Tune 13. The song of the bridesmaids: (p. 200) "Do not go with him". (Mrs. Audéoud, Makulane). (Comp. p. 197).

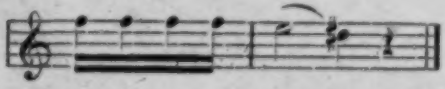


Au so ku so ma na ye!
Ye . . . . ! Don't con-sent to go with him!

533 539 *Tune 14.* Mourning song heard after the death of Hamunde's wife who was drowned in the lake of Rikatla (1893) (p. 191).



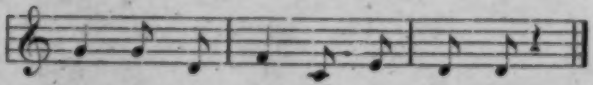
Ma-ma - nee! Ma-ma - nee! U ndji si-
O my mo-ther! O my mo-ther! You have left



yi - le u yi kwi - ni!
me, where did you go?

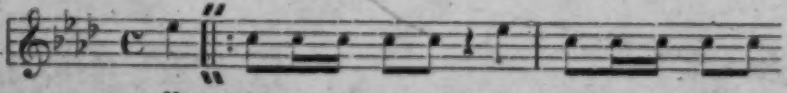
Tune 15. Old Nkuna mourning song (p. 192).

Hi ba - na ba Nhu - mba ya nti - ma Hi ba-
We are sons of the house, the black house.



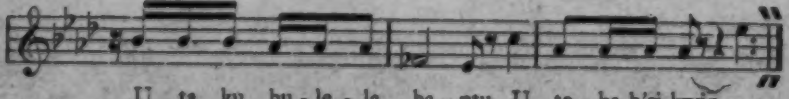
na ba Ma - la - la ni ngo - be.

Tune 16. Mourning song at the death of Chief Tshutsha (Maputju, Mrs Audéoud) (p. 192).



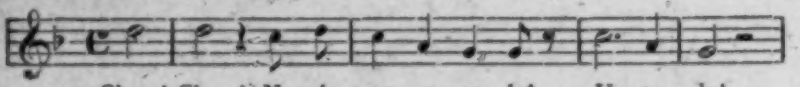
Ha - mban mu-tha - ka - ti, Ha - mban mu-tha - ka - ti,
Good bye, you, wi - zard, Good bye, you, wi-zard!

bu - le - la ba - ntu, Ha - mban mu-tha - ka - ti,
you kil - ler of men! Good bye, you, wi-zard.

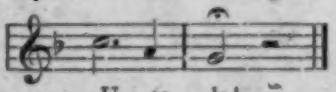


U ta ku bu - le - la ba - ntu U te - ka b'si-kwin.
Why do you come and kill our folk, You come in the night.

Tune 17. Song of the women carrying "makanye" to Muzila (I. p. 402. II. p. 208). 533 539

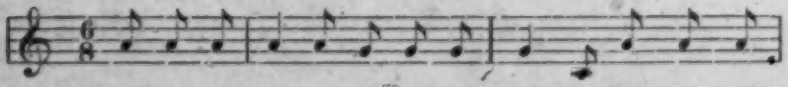


Chwe! Chwe! Na-mbya-na u te-le! U te-le!
Hi la-ba shi-mun-gu Le-shi ka
Shi-mhu-ngu hi ma-ni? Hi Mzi-la!

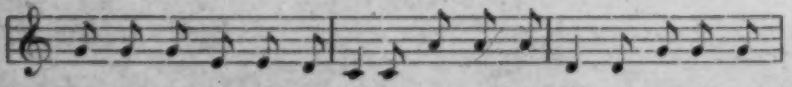


U te-le!
Le ti-lwen!
Hi Mzi-la!

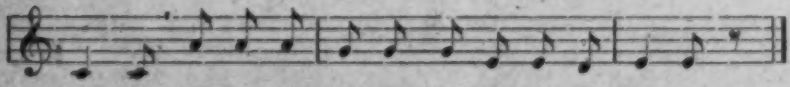
Tune 18. Sailors' song on the Nkomati River (1904) (p. 208).



A hi si-lo-yi, A hi nda-nda-le. Ku ni ndla-
A hi si-lo-yi, A hi nda-nda-le. They are starv-

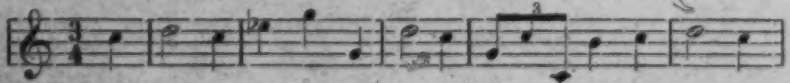


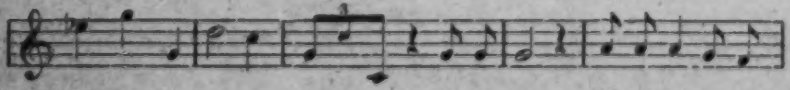
la ka Nti-ma-na, si-lo-yi. A hi si-lo-yi, A hi nda-
ing at Nti-ma-na, si-lo-yi. A hi si-lo-yi, A hi nda-

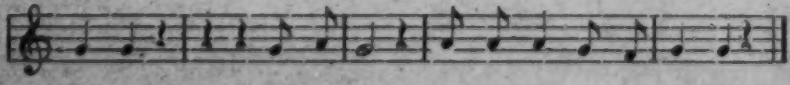


nda-le. Ku ni ndla-la ka Nti-ma-na, si-lo-yi.
nda-le. They are starv-ing at Nti-ma-na, si-lo-yi.

Tunes 19, 20, 21, 22. Sailors' songs on the Maputju River. (Mrs. Audéoud. 1906-1907).







Tune 20.

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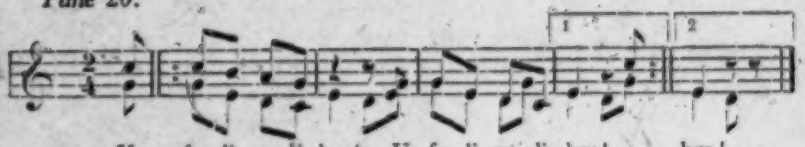
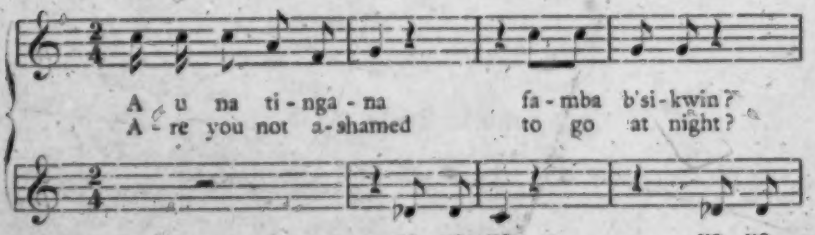


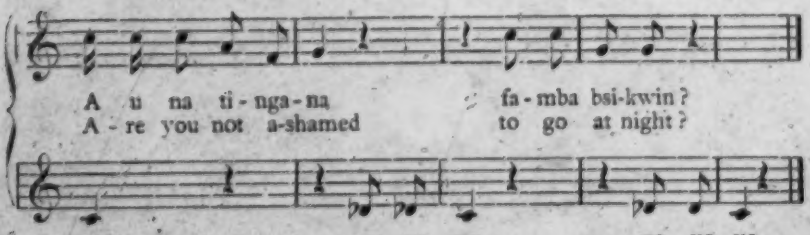
U fe - li ma-li, hm!... U fe - li ma - li, hm!... hm!

Tune 21.



A u na ti - nga - na fa - mba b'si - kwin?
A - re you not a-shamed to go at night?

yo yo yo yo yo

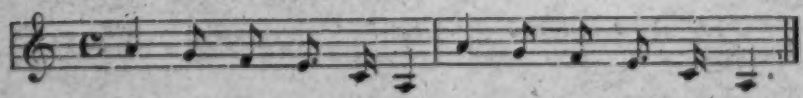


A u na ti - nga - na fa - mba bsi-kwin?
A - re you not a-shamed to go at night?

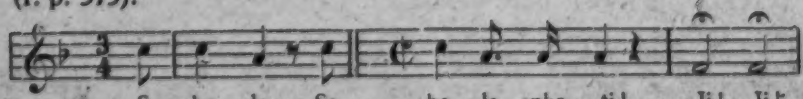
yo yo yo yo yo yo yo

Tune 22.

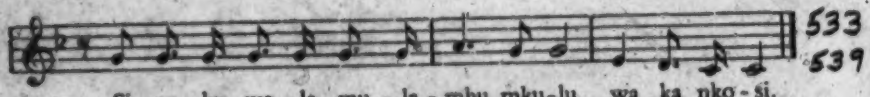
Tune 23. Carriers song.



Tune 24. War song sung at the coronation of the Mpfumo chiefs (I. p. 373).

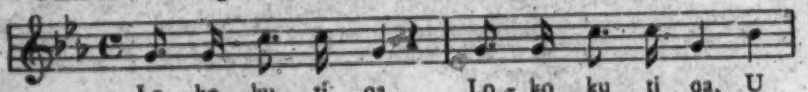


Sa - be - la, Sa - - be - la, nko - si! Ji! Ji!
O - bey, O - - bey the chief! Ji! Ji!



Si ya ku we - la mu - la - mbu mku-lu wa ka nko - si.
Let us go, let us cross the great ri - ver, that of the chief.

Tune 25. **The great war song of Maputju (p. 194).**

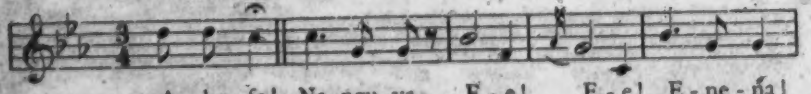


Lo - ko ku ti qa, Lo - ko ku ti qa, U
At the dawn of the day, At the dawn of day, Who

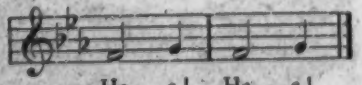
be-kwe ngu-ba - ne Mu-wa - yi? Mwai ka Ma - bu-du, Mwa-
is he that crowned thee, Muwayi? Mwai of Ma - pu-tju, Mwa-

yi, ka Ma - bu - du, U be - kwe ngu - ban!
yi of Ma - pu - tju, Who has crown - ed thee!

Tune 26. **Marching song of the army (I. p. 469).**

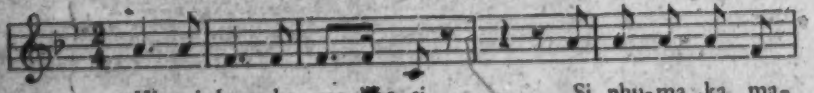


A - ba - fo! Na-ngu-ya, E - e! E - e! E - ne - na!
The en'my! Here they are, E - e! E - e! Here they are!

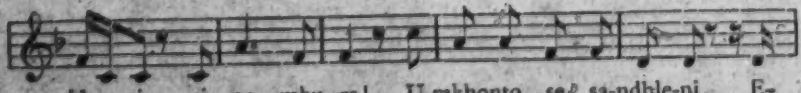


Ha - a! Ha - a!
Ha - a! Ha - a!

Tune 27. **The song of the spear (Nkuna) (I. p. 461).**



Hi yi-kwa ka ma-kho-si, Si phu-ma ka ma-
War comes from the chiefs. It is or dered by the



kho - si, si ga - mbu - za! U-mkhonto se sa-ndhle-ni E-
chiefs. We go and kill! The spear is in our hands. E-

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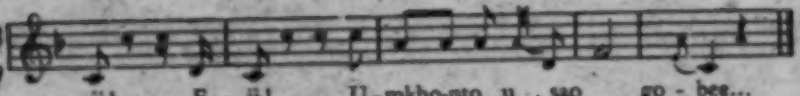
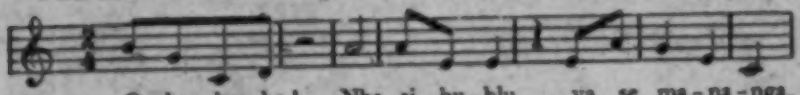
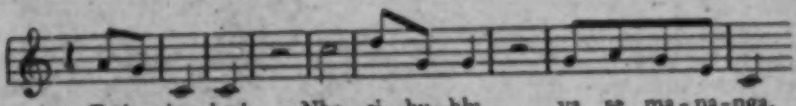


ji! E - ji! U-mkho-nto u sao go - bee...
ji! E - ji! The spear kills and bends in the wound.

Tune 28. The Giraffe of the desert (Nkuna, Nondwane). I. p. 461.

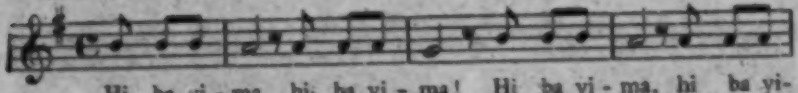


O - ho ho - ho! Nha si hu - hlu, ya se ma - na - nga.
'T is the gi - raffe, far in the de - sert.



E - ho ho - ho! Nha si hu - hlu ya se ma - na - nga.
'T is the gi - raffe, far in the de - sert.

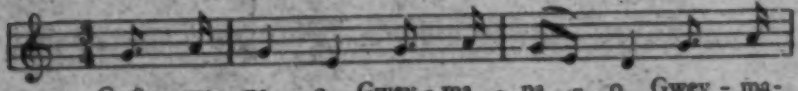
Tune 29. Oldest Nkuna war song (I. p. 461).



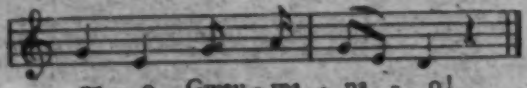
Hi ba yi - ma, hi ba yi - ma! Hi ba yi - ma, hi ba yi-
Let us stand fast, let us stand fast! Let us stand fast, let us stand

ma! Mi te - ka bu - re - na mi nyi - ka ti-nu-ba ta ba-mbe!
fast! Do not let your strength go, it would help the en'my to con-quer!

Tune 30. Childrens' song welcoming the trek oxen (p. 209).

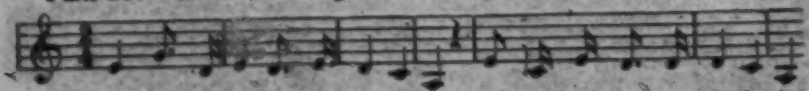


Gwey - ma - na - o, Gwey - ma - na - o, Gwey - ma-
See the o - xen! See the o - xen! See the



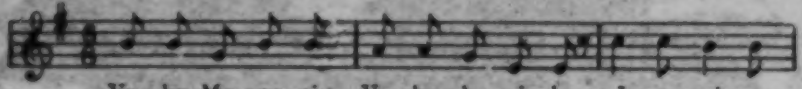
na - o, Gwey - ma - na - o!
o - xen, See the o - xen!

Tune 31. Childrens' song to the owl (p. 209).

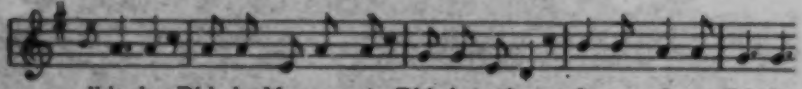


Shi - ko - ta-na gau - le - la fo - le, Ñwa-mbengen gau - le - la fo - le.

Tune 32. Incantation to the spirit during exorcism (p. 209) (Part VI). 533 539



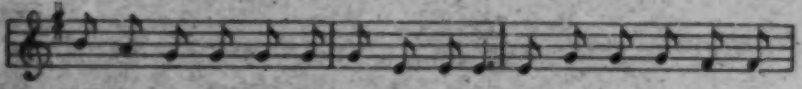
Vu - ka Mu-ngo-ni, Vu - ka, ku - si - le, I - nyo-ni ya
A-wake, o Zu - lu, The day has come, Now the bird is



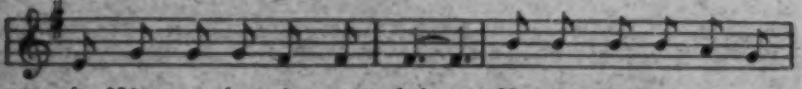
dhla - la. Dhla-la Mu-ngo-ni, Dhla-la va-len, I nyo-ni ya dhla-la.
sing-ing. Play al-so, Zu - lu, Play in the bush, Now the bird is singing.

Tune 33. Song of the tale of the ogre Nyandzumulandengela (Timbila song). (p. 210).

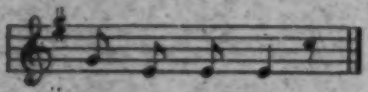
Nya-ndzu-mu - la - nde-nge - la, Ndzu-mu - la - nde-nge - la!



Ndji hwe ti - ho - mu ta nga ndji mu-ka! Nya ndzu-mu-la - nde - nge-
Give me my o-xen, please, that I may go!



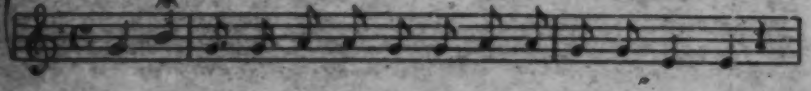
la, Ndzu-mu - la - nde - nge - la! U - te - ki - le mi mhu-
You have ta - ken me and



nu u mi - ta!
you swal-lowed me!

Tune 34. Song in two parts, in the tale of Zili (p. 259).

Zi - li! A - ma - se - se - ndi - ni, a - ma-sen - di { ba - ba!
{ old Man.



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Si - lo - yi - le se - se - ndi - ni, I nya - ma mu - ne, ya ku
You bad wi-zard — What's that kind of meat, ve - ry

nha - ti se - se-ndin, I ka - la nki - la ka li - ho-ndjo,
strange meat — It has got no tail, it has no horn.

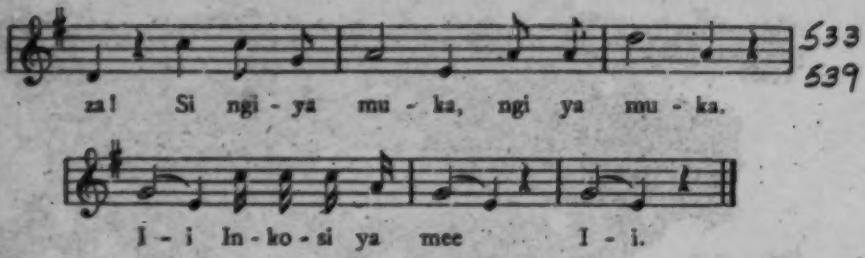
se - se - ndin. Zi - li! A - ma - se - se - ndi - ni, A - ma-

se - ndi ba - ba! Si - lo - yi - le se - se - ndin!
old man, You bad wi - zard

Tune 35. Song of the mother whose child has been carried off by the Baboon (p. 263).

Mfe - ne sa - ndhle - ni, Mfe - ne sa - ndhle - ni, A

u ngi dhla-yi - se - le mu - nta - na - me, si ya ndo - ndo



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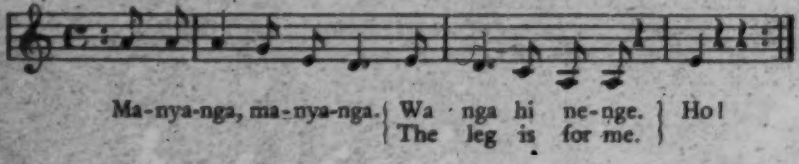
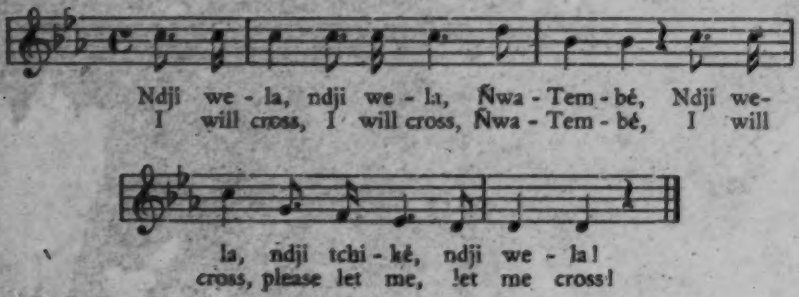
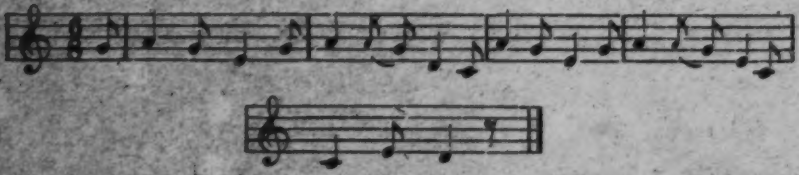
Tune 36. Incantation by which hyena-men are transformed into hyenas, in an ogre-tale (p. 210).



Tune 37. One of the Ronge songs (p. 203).



Tune 38. A tune played on the shitiringo flute on the banks of the Great Tabi (p. 277).



Tune 39. A shitiringo tune from Shiluvane.

533 *Tune 40.* A bunanga tune (I. p. 431, II. p. 277).

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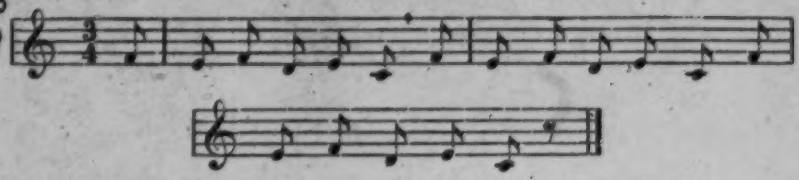
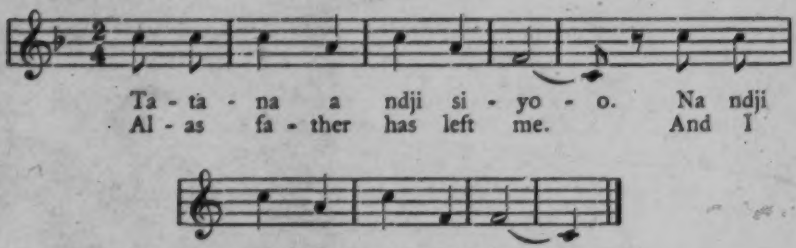


Tune 41 (p. 189).



C. THE MUSICAL SYSTEM OF THE THONGAS.

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Having now studied the instruments used by our tribe, and a certain number of tunes, we can try to come to some conclusions as regards its musical system. Let it be said, first of all, that such conclusions are only provisional, and I do not pretend that they are final. Noting down Native tunes is a very delicate task, as nothing is more plastic than sound, and however accurate we have tried to be, we may have introduced something of our own into this transcript. Nothing but phonograph records would be scientifically beyond suspicion! However between all these tunes there is enough similarity, enough family likeness, to convince students of primitive music that they are genuine, and that we are entitled to draw some deductions from this material.

As regards *rhythm*, it is generally very well marked, being emphasised by the accompanying instruments, and the movements of dancers: arms lowered in cadence, weapons brandished, feet stamping the ground at regular intervals, etc. However I

did not always find it easy to catch, and there are certainly sudden 633
changes in the time which put the hearer out of his reckoning. I have heard people assert that in primitive music rhythm is by far the most interesting element. Anybody having witnessed a war-dance, or the performance of the East Coast boys in the Johannesburg Compounds, will be able to certify that there is a wonderful sense of time in these productions. The binary combinations, 2/4 and 4/4 time, are met with more frequently than the ternary modes, 3/4 and 6/8.

The *melodic system* is evidently based on the scale of seven intervals, just the same as our own music. The presence of the scale underlying all this music is proved by the preceding tunes, but more specially, as we noticed, by the timbila. Most of the tunes could be played on this primitive piano, which is evidently constructed according to the rules of the ordinary scale. I came to the same conclusion when teaching the sol-fa notation to raw Natives, and I remember having a class of boys, just from the bush, in Lourenço Marques, who, at the first lesson, after a quarter of an hour, were singing our scale without difficulty; what seemed to be unknown was the name of the seven notes do, re, mi, etc., but the sounds themselves, in their regular succession, were quite familiar to their ears. One hears sometimes of a scale which has but three or four notes. Does it exist? Is not this succession of sounds "given" to the human ear, as also the succession of colours in the rainbow to the human eye? As we shall see, Natives do not distinguish all the colours. They use the same word, *libungu*, for yellow, and red; black and dark blue are also both *ntima*. Their eye has not yet been fully trained. Their ear seems to me to be more developed, and to have attained a distinct perception of the elementary sounds.

Let it be remarked, however, that there are differences amongst them. Some sing more in tune than others. Often they are a third or a quarter of a tone flat or sharp. I would say that they do not precisely sing out of tune, but they are not yet true on the note. But this will come with due training. I very rarely met with Natives with no idea of tune. This occurrence is, I think, more frequent amongst the Whites than amongst the Blacks. As

533 regards accidentals, I have seen some boys master the chromatic scale without much difficulty. But sharps and flats, viz., sounds which do not bear the ordinary, regular relation to those preceding or following them, are generally very difficult to catch, sometimes altogether beyond their reach. The use of European instruments will raise them to that higher level in the course of time.

But let us confine ourselves to their primitive state. They not only know our *major scale*, but frequently sing in the *minor one*. On the timbila, as we saw, they can play in the eolian method, viz., in a minor scale in which there is no raised seventh. In fact, even in the distinctly minor tunes, this raised seventh is never met with. We often notice the passage from the major to the minor, or vice versa, and our collection affords two striking examples of this musical procedure : in tune No. 33, the melody after 6 bars recommences a third lower : this is a characteristic timbila tune ; the melody, started on the third key, is played again starting on the first, passing from the major to the minor. In No. 25, at the end of the second bar, the reverse phenomenon takes place. The melody was first minor ; it is raised a third higher and becomes major for a while, returning later on to the minor.

The *character* of most of the Bantu melodies is rather sad, and this is generally explained by the assertion that they are in the minor key. I do not think this is true. Most of my tunes, 25, are undoubtedly major, 10 are minor, and 5 are mixed or doubtful. This impression comes rather from the fact that the melody almost invariably begins on a high note and descends to low notes, often ending on the lowest. The song starts brilliantly, triumphantly, and goes down, down, till it dies away on the lowest note. Hence the melancholy impression these tunes convey. The melody is very short, as a rule ; sometimes quite rudimentary ; its constant repetitions also produce a monotonous effect which enhances the sadness of the music. A professional musician, after having perused these tunes, once said to me : "Well, they are not 'jolly good fellows' your black people! Not a single dancing tune! Nothing merry about this music!"

The rules of *Native harmony* are very difficult to detect. They certainly exist. When you hear a chorus beautiful of voices ⅄

⅄ [Erratum: Read - of beautiful voices]

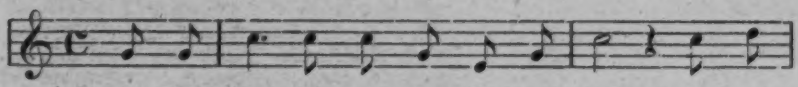
singing in two or three parts, you at once perceive great differences 533
between their system of harmony and ours. These choruses are by no means disagreeable, but are very strange to our European ear. It would be most interesting to seize them and note them down, but it would be a long job! I have succeeded at least in fixing the two parts of the song of Zili, which may be considered typical ; I owe it to two girls of Lourenço Marques, who had clear voices and lent themselves willingly and with great patience to the long investigation. A curious succession of fourths and sixths will be noticed, quite unusual in our music. The professional to whom I submitted this song told me it reminded him of similar chords found in the works of mediaeval composers like Bianchois, and Adam de la Halle. The fourth seems to be more acceptable to the Bantu ear than the third or the fifth. A collection of timbila music would be of great assistance in coming to a conclusion on the subject, as the artists invariably play with two hands, and a score of phonographic records taken in Johannesburg of a good player would be very valuable. Not having had the opportunity of making such an investigation, I must be satisfied to commend it to those who have time to devote themselves to it.

To sum up the result of this inquiry, I may say that Thonga music has certainly reached a certain stage of development, being based upon the seven intervals scale, recognizing the major and minor keys, and following a certain system of harmony ; but the melodies are still short and rudimentary and, although they may attain real grandeur when performed by hundreds of warriors, they are generally monotonous and sad. Notwithstanding this, the black race is essentially musical ; its gifts in this domain are real, and if properly developed they will certainly in time produce remarkable results.

We can guess to some extent what contribution the Blacks will 533
make to the musical treasures of humanity when we hear the Negro 539
artists who travel round Europe singing the striking plantation songs which they learned from their fathers. As far as I know, South African Bantus have not yet published many musical compositions comparable to those of their American brethren ; yet educated Natives, even school children, already invent songs for their own pleasure which

533 are more elaborate than the old ones, but which retain the true Bantu
539 character. I will quote three which I managed to seize in the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques.

The first may be called *the song of the children who no longer wished to attend evening prayer.* I heard them singing it unnoticed on the Lourenço Marques hill. It must be said that on every Mission Station all the converts assemble every evening to attend a short service, bringing their children with them. It seems that, on one occasion, the missionary went away for a furlough and evening prayer was stopped for a while; it was however resumed when he came back home... much to the disappointment of the children, and they composed this song, whose words are perhaps not very edifying, though they ought not to be taken too seriously. The tune, at any rate, is charming:



A - shi - kho - ngo - to sha bu - si - ku! Le - psi
Eve - ning prayer of the mis - sio - na - ry! As he
Eve - ning prayer of the old Fu - ra - ngu! (1) As he

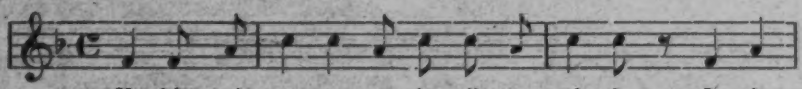
ku tlha - si - ki ye - ne, A ta hi psa - u - la hi ku ba
has now come home a-gain, The bell will ring, ring, ring, and it will
has now come home a-gain, It will say nwe-nwe-nwe, and it will

a - nsi - mbi Ni bu - si - ku: Hi nga ye - tle - li!
vex our ears, Du - ring the night: No sleep a - ny more!
vex our ears Du - ring the night: No sleep a - ny more!

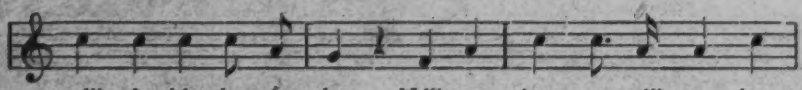
The second was composed *by a blind girl* of the Maputju country at the time of the Murimi Movement of which I shall speak later on (App. V). The prophet of this new god, Murimi, was travelling all over Thongaland to destroy witchcraft and to inaugurate a new

(1) "Old Furangu" is the church elder Frank whose name was transformed according to Thonga phonetics. In the following verses there are a number of descriptive adverbs imitating the ringing of the bell. It will say: go-go-go—rwa-rwa-rwa—nge-nge-nge...

era of prosperity and the chiefs called all their subjects, men and women, to take a snuff of a certain magical tobacco which would rid the country of all the killers by night. The young poetess imagines a woman, a witch, preparing to go to the meeting ordered by the chiefs in order to take the snuff. But she does not at all intend to renounce her criminal ways. She has in her power "psipoko" (see Part. VI, Witchcraft, and App. V), i. e. little folk no bigger than real babies, who are really dead people whom she has bewitched and whom she employs as slaves to till her gardens. During the day she hides them in the bush and during the night she makes them work. Now she takes leave of them before attending the meeting where she is determined to lie, pretending that she has nothing to do with witchcraft, whilst she is secretely determined to go on practising it. The song of the Christian girl reveals her duplicity and concludes by asserting that converts do not believe in this mass of absurdities. 533 539

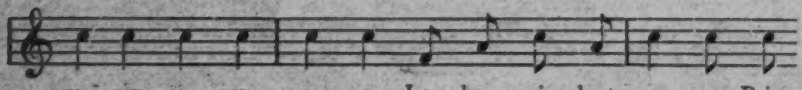


Ka hla - yi ma-ma a ku tjha-ma nho ben, Lo -ko
Their mo - ther told them: Keep quiet in the fo - rest, When I
But we, Chris - tians, we ob - ject, we don't ac - cept. What hea-

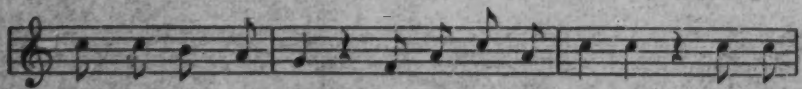


ndji da - hi - le fo - le, Ndji ta bu - ya ndji ta ku
have gone to take the snuff, I shall come back and I shall
thens want us to be - lieve, And we an - swer by clo - sing

te - ka, Ndji ya ku pha-me - la psa-ku - da. Lo - ko psi ku
take you, And I shall give you some-thing to eat. They cry, they say:
our ears When we hear from them all this non-sense.



u - we, u - we, u - we, Lo - ko psi ku u - we, Psi
U - we, u - we, u - we! They cry, they say: U - we, As



dji - le - la ku mam' Lo - ku psi ku: U - we! Bu - ya
they call for their mother. They cry, they say: U - we! Come back

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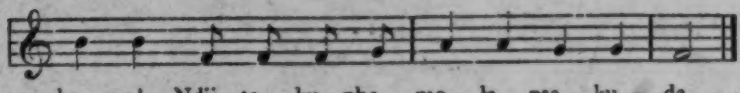
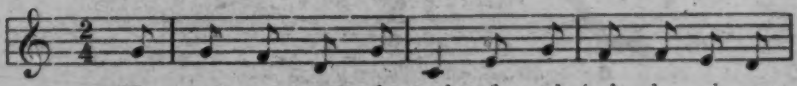
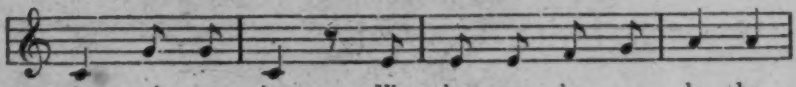


ka - ya!—Ndji ta ku pha - me - la psa - ku - da.
quick - ly!—Yes! - I will give you some-thing to eat.

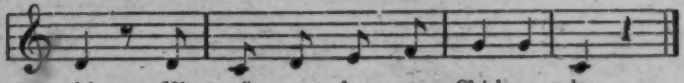
The third song is a sort of hymn whose author is a young evangelist belonging to the Chopi tribe, a tribe particularly gifted for music. This boy, named Onesime, was lame and lay for many years on his bed of suffering; there he composed quite a number of melodies which he taught his pupils. Here is the *Song of the Star*, which he himself wrote for me in Sol-Fa Notation, and in which he expresses the feelings of his pious heart:



Bo - na nye - le - ti le - yi yi ba - ni - nga-
Look to that star a- bove, which has come and is shin-
Let us be - lieve e'en now and we shall find hap - pi-



ka mi - sa - ba. Yi bo - na - ka - la he-
ing on the world. It has ap-peared in high hea-
ness, here and now. If we look to hea - ven a-



nhla Hi ti - mpsa - lu ta Shi-kwe-mbu
ven, By the grace of the Lo-ving God.
bove, We shall gain life and peace.

See at the end of this volume the Practical Conclusion of Part. V: *The Problem of Native Education.*

2: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga
p. 301

SIXTH PART

RELIGIOUS LIFE AND SUPERSTITIONS.

The mystery of the Psychic life! There is a mystery in any 121
form of life, be it vegetable, animal, or intellectual. But how much deeper and more difficult it is to fathom, when we are dealing with those higher manifestations of the mental life, which seem peculiar to mankind : Religion, Morality and also, besides these, Magic of all kinds, Divination, Spirit-Possession, Witchcraft, all of which we include under the term Superstition. Amongst savage peoples Religion and Magic, Morality and Taboo, are not yet clearly differentiated. I believe them to proceed from different sources ; but they are more or less confounded in the rites, and this makes them all the more difficult to understand. I do not now claim to throw a perfect light on the dim, confused notions of the Bantu soul. The race is so little philosophical that it can accept conflicting ideas to an extent which would be impossible in more rational, more intellectually developed minds. My aim is, as ever, to be as impartial as possible. I have no preconceived idea as to what primitive man was, or ought to have been. I believe the evolutionist theory to be supported by a great number of probabilities and to be the best solution of many problems. Yet I think it to be merely a hypothesis, and that it would be unscientific to regard it as a dogma to the strengthening of which Science must devote all its labours. I may endeavour to reach some conclusions at the end of this VIth Part ; but my intention is to treat this subject by giving a faithful record of my own observations : professional anthropologists, or historians of Religion can do what they like with this material ; my only ambition is that it should be entirely reliable.

000. In the first chapter, I shall try to record the ideas of the Thongas on Nature and Man ; this is what might be called their *Natural Philosophy*, if the term were not somewhat pretentious. In the second, their distinctively *religious notions and rites* will be explained. In the third I shall describe the manifold manifestations of their *Magic*, in which I include the Practice of Medicine, Witchcraft, Possession and Divination. In the fourth, the question of *Morality and Taboo* will be considered.

CHAPTER I

Conceptions of the Thongas regarding Nature and Man.

A. CONCEPTIONS REGARDING NATURE.

I. *Origin of the World.*

773 "What is it that created Heaven and Earth? — Nature!" This proverb or riddle, already quoted (p. 180), is perhaps the only answer given by the Thongas to the problem of creation. *Ntumbuluko*, the word I translate by Nature, comes from *ku tumbuluka*, to happen, to be formed. It does not convey any clear idea of a Creation. The sense of causality is very little developed amongst most of the Thongas. So they are contented with this rather pantheistic notion, beyond which many very educated scientists of our age will not go, that Nature created the world, and they do not search further. Some say that the originator of Heaven and Earth is Rivimbi, or Kudjwana, or Ñwari. The first two of these names are the Venda or Pedi names of the first human beings ; Ñwali or Myali is a god of the Ba-Nyai whose legend has spread amongst the Northern clans of the Thongas, especially the Hlengwes and the Malulekes. It is possible that the tribes from which these names have been borrowed, truly believe these personages to have created the world. In

the story of Ñwali, for instance, it is said that, when he lived, 773
stones were not yet hard, and so the implements of the first men left their impression on the rocks (Comp. I. p. 22). But they are in the first place the *creators of mankind*, as we shall notice.

I believe that the *origin of man* preoccupies the Bantu mind much more than the origin of the world as a whole. They can live their whole life without being troubled by this question, which has perplexed so many hearts in other lands. Only a few particularly serious spirits, the religious geniuses of the tribe, search eagerly for light on this subject. I have met with one of these. His name was Rangane, and he came from the Maluleke district. When quite a young boy he often asked his mother who it was who had made heaven and earth. She told him : "It is Khudjwana, but he died long ago. Even the place where he was buried is unknown." This did not satisfy the curiosity of the child ; so she sent him to the old men to question them. They answered by the myth of the reed which we shall explain later on, saying : "All men came from a reed." This also failed to satisfy the thirst of this inquiring soul, desirous of knowing whence everything proceeds, and he told me how gladly surprised he was when, having come to Pretoria for work, he heard a convert say that God had created everything and teaching the Christian explanation of the world. I remember that his face beamed with joy when he told his story. But such earnest, philosophical natures are very rare amongst Natives, and Rangane was an exception. He died when still at the beginning of his course of study ; and he was vastly superior to most of his comrades as regards religious perception.

II. *The celestial world.*

(Thonga astronomy).

If Thongas do not bother much about the origin of heaven, and 772
of its lights, what are their ideas concerning them?

Heaven (tilo, dji-ma) is for them an immense solid vault which rests on the earth. The point where heaven touches the earth

772 is called *bugimamusi*, a curious word of the bu-ma class, the prefix *bu* meaning a place, viz., the place where the women can lean their pestles against the vault, (whilst everywhere else pestles must be leant against a wall or a tree). This expression is sometimes further explained by the following words : "Lomu ba kandjaka na ba khisamile" — "Where women pound their mealies on their knees ;" they cannot stand erect, or their pestles would strike against the vault! This vault rests on the earth, which is often called *libala*, viz., the great plain. On what does the earth itself rest? This question does not seem to trouble the Thonga mind and I never heard an answer to it. In this respect it may be said, in excuse for the African Natives, that the ancient Greeks, with all their intellectual ability, were not much in advance of them. Some people escape the difficulty by asserting that the earth is infinite, viz., that it is endlessly prolonged downwards and has no bottom. — In the next chapter we shall see that *Tilo*, heaven, is, for the Thongas, not only the material firmament which rests on the earth, but a spiritual principle which plays a considerable part in the religious conceptions of the tribe.

772 The *sun* (dambu, dji-ma) is never personified, nor worshipped.
821 This word is perhaps related to Nyambe of the Ba-Rotse, Nzambi of the Vili, and a number of other similar words which are names of God. But if there was ever a time when the sun was regarded as a personal being, the notion has now entirely faded away. On the seashore, in the Makaneta district, according to Mboza, people believe that the sun emerges from the water. The reflection of light which remains on the sea, after the appearance of the sun, is considered as a kind of source of light from which the sun emerges and renews itself every morning : it is "cut out from the provision of fire," adheres to heaven, follows its course and *dies* in the West. To-morrow another sun will come out from the "provision," and so on. But others object to this explanation and assert that the sun passes under the earth and comes back the following day : so there is only one sun. To this theory the first retort that the earth having no bottom, the sun cannot pass under it !

000 The dawn is called *mpundju* ; then comes *tlhabela sana*, the

The dawn is called mpundju; then comes thabela sana, the 805
time when the rays of the sun (sana) are piercing ; *hisa ka sana*, 821
when they are burning ; *nhlekanhi*, the middle of the sky, or *shitakataka*, the maximum point of the heat ; then *ndjenga* (Dj.), or *lihungu* (Ro.), the afternoon, the time when the sun goes down (renga) ; *ku pela* or *ku hlwa*, when it reaches the horizon, and *mpimabayeni* (Dj.) the twilight, literally "the time when you do not easily recognize strangers coming to your village because it grows dark." These are the divisions of the day (siku). Then comes the night (busiku).

Eclipses do not seem to have ever much impressed the 821
imagination of the Thongas. At any rate, they never caused panics (Mboza). When, warned that an eclipse will take place, they see that, indeed, the sun or moon is "turning dark" (dji yentsha ntima), Natives are more struck with wonder at the supernatural knowledge of the White people, than with fear of the phenomenon itself.

I have already dealt with the notion of the *year*, (lembe, dji-ma), 806
which is very vague ; it begins at two different periods : that of 821
tilling and that of harvesting the first fruits (I, p. 396, II, p. 20). Thongas do not make any difference between a solar and a lunar year, their knowledge of months being very imperfect, as we shall shortly see.

Before leaving the source of light, I may add that the *light* 821
itself is called *ku bonekisa* (Ro.), or *ku bonakala* (Dj.), litt. that 822
which makes to appear. Of course Natives have no explanation to give of it. Moonlight is called by another name, viz. *ñweti*, connected with hweti, moon. *Colours* are very imperfectly perceived, at least if we are to base our judgment on the vocabulary. *Ntima* means both black and dark blue. *Libungu* is carmine, red, purple, and also yellow. Yellow is not perceived as a distinct colour. *Psuka* is the tinge of dawn, and of the rising sun. *Nkushe*, which means sea-weed, is applied to the *blue* sky ; *nkwalala* is grey, *lihlaza* (Ro.) is green, the green of grass in the spring, and the [231]
corresponding term in Djonga is *rilambyana*, that which makes dogs howl. Very green grass has this effect on Native dogs.

The *moon* (ñhweti (Dj.), hweti (Ro.) cl. yi-tin), was perhaps 821
personified in former times, as it bears the feminine suffix *eti*,

821 which is also met with in *nyeleti* (star) and in the names of certain rivers. (I. p. 36.) At the present time there is no trace of worship or of mythological conceptions in connection with it. Natives see in its spots a woman carrying a shirundju basket or a bundle of sticks, but they do not attach to that image more importance than we do when we talk of the man in the moon.

821 I have described (I. p. 52) how the new moon is received
527 with exclamations of joy : in the villages the first person who
241 sees it shouts : "Kengelekezeeee,"—"the Crescent! the Crescent!" and this word is passed on from one village to another, and dancers rejoice because they will have moonlight to illuminate their feasts! Such is, at least, the reason now given by the Rongas for this custom. There were perhaps other ideas connected with the new moon in former times. — According to a Nkuna informant the day of the new moon is a *shimusi*, a day of rest. It is taboo to till the fields and cut the roots of the trees with a hoe. The moon must be left to become firm (tiyela). It is still tender as a new born child. Destroying winds might
821 blow and hail fall if this taboo were transgressed. — The
787 appearance of the crescent was also carefully examined, says the
828 same informant. If its horns were turned towards the earth, this showed that there was nothing to fear, all the dangers contained in this month had been poured out : "mafumo ma hangalakile" — "the assagais were dispersed." On the contrary, if the horns were turned towards heaven, this showed that the moon was full of weapons and misfortunes. — The new moon is of great importance in the customs connected with exorcism and possession, as every exorcist must undergo the *haza* purification at each new moon (Chapter III). Moreover Thongas, like many civilised people, also believe that some persons at this time have an attack of madness which is called *rihuhe ra ñhweti*, the lunar madness.

772 When the first quarter appears, the moon is said to *thwaza*,
821 a Zulu word which corresponds to *tjhama* in Thonga, and is very much used in the terminology of possession. Eight days later, it is said to *basa*, to be white or brilliant ; full moon is said to *sima* or to *lata batjongwana*, to put the little children to bed, because when it rises, it finds them already sleeping on their mats.

The wane is called *ku shwela dambo* : the moon is then found by the rising sun to be still in the sky, not having yet dipped below the horizon. When, at last, it disappears, it is *munyama*, the obscurity; the moon is said *to fa*, to have died. Is this meant figuratively, as is often the case with the word ku fa, or do the Thongas really think that each moon dies and is replaced by a new moon? It is difficult to say ; most of them believe in an actual destruction and a new creation of the moon each month (Timotheo), and this would explain why they have the same word for moon and month ; they evidently identify the two ideas. Some, however, told me that they believed it to be the same celestial body which appeared anew each month. 772 821

Spoon, who is endowed with a very vivid imagination, believed that the sun and the moon have a race each month : the moon when it first appears is not yet firm (a yi si tiyela), like a new born child, so its light is feeble ; it is dominated by the sun ; but it grows and fights. When it is full, the sun sees "that now it is the moon!" : it is something to be reckoned with! During the second half of the month, as it decreases, it lingers in the sky and the sun soon overtakes it again and compels it to pass behind. Then the moon is entirely vanquished! How far these were Spoon's personal explanations or generally accepted ideas, I could not say. The term *shwela*, applied to the last quarter and meaning : "to be surprised in the morning" (See Ch. III), seems to convey a similar idea, and it is probable that Spoon rightly interpreted the ancient ideas of the tribe.

Each moon, being new, bears a special name. These names of the months, or moons, are now almost completely forgotten, at least in the Southern clans. This is indeed curious, when we think of the custom of presenting little children to the moon and telling them the name of their month (I. p. 53). This rite ought to have prevented the names from becoming obsolete. In the Northern clans they have been better preserved, and one of my colleagues, the Rev. H. Berthoud, succeeded in identifying them more or less. His attempt to revive the nomenclature for use among civilised Natives did not, however, succeed any better than the attempt of the scientists of the French Revolution. 772 805 821

192 Amongst the Ba-Ronga those[1] which are still known are : *Nhlangula*,
805 the month in which the flowers are swept (hlangula) from the
821 trees, probably October, when all the minkuhlu, minkanye, etc., blossom ; *Ñwendjamhala*, the month in which the antelope mhala, brings forth its young (November?) ; *Mawuwana*, when the *tihuhlu* (p. 18) are plucked, because the people shout : "Wuwana! wuwana!" in their joy at having plenty of almonds to suck, corresponds to December. *Hukuri* is said to be the month when the fruits of the *nkwakwa* (p. 17) are ripe (December also?): *Ndjati*, or *ndjata*, viz., I am coming, is the time of *nwebo*, when everyone is in his fields eating the new cobs of mealies, and if you call a person he will answer : "I will come directly! Have patience! I am busy here!" "This may be January or February. *Sunguti* is also one of the summer months. *Sibamesoko*, the moon which closes the paths, also called *Dwebindlela* or *Sibandlelo*, is easy to identify : it is February, the time when the grass grows so high that it hides the paths leading to the nkanye trees. This is the end of the bukanye time (I. p. 397). *Nyenyana*, *Nywenywankulu* are the months of the birds (nyanyana), when one spends all one's time in chasing the winged marauders from the fields of sorghum and millet (March. April). *Mudashini*, viz., what am I to eat? is the month when you have harvested so many different kinds of food that you do not know which to choose : this is the time directly after harvest, May or June. *Khotabushika*, viz., when winter comes, probably June or July.

772 The *stars* are called *tinyeleti* (yin-tin) and play a remarkably
821 small part in the ideas of the tribe. The modern theory according to which all religions started from the worship of stars, finds no confirmation at all in the South African Bantu tribes.

821 It is taboo to try to count the stars. If any one attempts
784 to do so people will say to him : "Keep quiet or you will wet the
861 hut during the night!" Counting stars represents the torments of the soul! If a child has been deprived of food as a punishment for an offence, his parents will tell him, when he goes to sleep : "Go and count the stars," viz., "you will feel hungry and not be able to go to sleep ; you will be as unhappy as if you had to count the stars."

[1] [names of moons -- Analyst]

I never heard a distinction made between fixed stars and 821
planets. They are all called tinyeleti. The best-known is 772
Venus, which bears many names. Not knowing that the evening 881
and morning star are one and the same, they have given it different names. The evening star is *Gumbashilalelo*, the one which steals the evening meal, because it appears when people are eating it, or *khwekhweti*, the brilliant star, or *Nkata wa hweti*, the moon's husband (as the two are often seen close together) ; the morning star is called *Ngongomela*, or *Khwezu*, and is greatly lauded as the herald of day. It gives the warriors the signal for starting on a war-like expedition : the warriors can easily kill their enemies under cover of the darkness, and the sun will soon appear and help them to complete their victory. Travellers also start on their journey when they see it : the dawn will soon be here ! Lit by its light, candidates for circumcision leave the village of the chief to go to the house of initiation. According to one of my informants (I. p. 75) there is a profound and mystic idea in this custom : Ngongomela announces the day ; so little boys must be conducted by the morning star when they abandon their childhood and all its ignorance to enter the adult life with all its knowledge. It leads them from darkness into the light ! So Venus plays a great part in Thonga customs. It is the great star. Notice the feminine suffix *eti* in one of its names. It may have been personified in former times.

The *Pleiades* are the only constellation which bears a name 821
in Thonga. They call it *shirimelo*, the one which announces 772
the tilling season, because, in fact, in the lands situated in the Tropic of Cancer, it rises in July or August, when tilling is resumed. I have not heard of any other constellation known to the Natives. They have no notion whatever of constellations : their mind does not seem to have tried to group the stars, or to have seen figures of animals, or objects, in the sky ; their imagination in this domain is very poor, and they remain far behind the Oriental nations in this respect.

Falling stars are looked on as a bad omen. When they see 821
one falling towards a certain point of the horizon, Natives think 787
that a Chief must have died in the country towards which the 789

821 star is directing its course, and they have a formula of incantation
787 to get rid of the misfortune attending this phenomenon. They
789 say : "Thu! Thu! Nkulunkulu ndjuwee, famba psa ku u nga fa u ku bi." — "You great thing, go away alone (without me, leaving me behind) and die and disappear entirely." This is more an imprecation (shiruketelo) than an incantation. The syllable *thu* indicates, and accompanies, the emission of a little saliva. It is different from the sacramental *tsu*, employed to invoke the spirits of the ancestors : it is an insult. It is spitting *at* something, not an act of respect and an offering, like *tsu* (1). This is the Ronga formula ; the one used in Northern clans has the same meaning : "*Rura, rura weshe*" (Move, move alone!).

821 *Comets* greatly impress the imagination of the Thongas ;
787 they are called *shimusana*, or *nyeleti ya musana*, the star of dust, or *nyeleti ya nkila*, the star with a tail, and when they appear they also mean the death of a chief. People say : "See ! A chief has died, but they have not yet published the mourning" (I. p. 414). The star which is said to have appeared the year of the death of Manukosi was probably a comet. (See Report of the S.A.A.A.S. 1905, Vol. III, p. 232.)

772 These few superstitions and observations comprise all the Astronomy of the Thongas. The sidereal world is almost entirely outside the range of their preoccupations.

III. *Cosmographic and Meteorological Phenonomena.*

1) The Wind.

821 The wind is called *moya*, an interesting word which means
822 also spirit (the human breath and the spiritual part of man), and is applied to the acting, living agent, or to the smell, or taste, of some objects. For instance it is said of an alcoholic beverage

861 (1) They spit at a child who is causing an unpleasant smell, saying to him : "Thu!
578 u ya tinyela matjimba." — "Go away to ease yourself." Should you do this to a person older than yourself, he will say to you : "What ! you make *thu* to me (wa ndji tjhuka), you want me to ease myself !"

which has lost its strength that its "moya" has gone. It is also the 821
moya which gives their potency to medical charms. 822

Another word for wind is *mheho*. Strong winds are called *shidzedze*. When they break trees and damage the mealies they are attributed to baloyi, wizards, who fight during the night, quarelling over the cobs.

One frequently hears about *timheho ta mune*, the four winds. 821
They are called : *Ñwalungu*, the north wind, (a curious word 823
perhaps connected with Balungu, the White men ; see later on) ; 132
Nyingitimu (Ro.), or *Djonga* (Dj.), the South wind ; *Mupfanyaka*, the one coming from the plain of the black earth, the West Wind ; *Mfenya*, the sea breeze, coming from the East. Sailors who are great connoisseurs in this domain distinguish further the South Westerly wind, which they call *Mfenyakulu*, the great Mfenya. In Shiluvane, the West wind, which sometimes blows with great violence, coming down from the mountains of the Transvaal Plateau, is called *Burwa*, place of habitation of the Ba-Rwa (bu, locative prefix indicating a country). (Compare I. p. 18). Two other terms of the bu-ma class, also applied to East and West in all the clans, are : *Busha*, the spot where the sun rises (ku sha), the East, and *Bupeladambu*, the spot where the sun sets, the West. So there is no doubt that the Thongas possess the idea of the four cardinal points.

2) Native Geography.

The geographical notions of the tribe are, on the other hand, 823
very scanty. As a rule, they do not think it possible to know a 815
country, or place, where they have not travelled. Every one must compile his own geography. Hunters, and men engaged in commercial journeys, had some knowledge of the Spelonken (Bvesha), of Pietermaritzburg (Umgungundhlovu), of Kimberley (Dayiman), and now practically every grown-up Thonga has been to Johannesburg (Nkamben). But those who have always remained at home, women especially, show gross ignorance regarding their own country. I met some who were totally ignorant of the fact that the Nkomati River, which leaves the

823 Transvaal at Komati Poort (a place known to all), was the same as
815 the Nkomati which enters the sea near Morakwen, northwards of Lourenço Marques, at a distance of 60 miles from Komati Poort. It must be said, in excuse for them, that in Morakwen the river is called Morako (locative Morakwen) and thus many people have never been aware of the identity of the two!

If you wish to impress Natives greatly with your knowledge, tell them the names of all the countries of Thongaland in their geographical order, as you may have learnt them in conversation, or by studying the map. They will be amazed, and say : "What a wonderful traveller you are, knowing so many spots so far distant from each other!" The teaching of Geography in the schools tends, of course, to alter this state of things.

3) Earthquakes and Rainbows.

823 Earthquakes are not frequent in this part of the world ; so they are rarely spoken of. Thongas have, however, a name for them, *shimbeti*. They do not give any explanation of them and believe that they are perhaps caused by the gods. I remember having once heard a mysterious sound accompanied by a slight tremor of the soil. It was during the Boer war and was, I think, caused by the blowing up of a bridge somewhere on the other side of the range. All the Natives covered their heads with their hands and seemed greatly impressed.

821 The *rainbow* is called *shikwangulatilo*, viz., the one which
778 removes the danger from the sky. Notice the stem *kwangula*, to inaugurate, which we have already met with, when dealing with pottery (p. 117). The sky after rain is compared to a new pot, from which the *nkangu* must be removed. But this is merely an expression. No one can say what the danger is that is thus removed ; it is probable that the tribe had more precise ideas on the subject in former times, and that these have become obsolete. In some of the northern clans (Nkhabelane, Mathiye, Shiburi, Mongwe) the rainbow is called the Bow of Nyandziyo. Nyandziyo is said to be a man of the olden times who made the

rainbow ; he dwells in heaven and the rainbow is his bow. He it is who taught men the use of the bow. 773 821

The two great phenomena which mostly impress South Africans are lightning and rain, and of these you hear wonderful and endless stories!

4) Lightning.

This is called *lihati* (li-tin), and is said to be caused by a bird called *ndlati* (yi-tin). These two words, etymologically speaking, seem to be related to each other. They possess the feminine suffix *ti* which is met with in the forms *eti, ati, oti*. This bird is also called *nkuku wa tilo* amongst the Ba-Ronga, the cock of heaven, or *psele dja tilo*, the hen of heaven, and magicians know how to determine its sex when the bird has fallen. 821 825

The thunder is attributed either to the bird itself or, more frequently, to Heaven. The proper expression for "It thunders" is : "Tilo dji djuma" — "Heaven roars."

In the Northern clans those who practise magical arts add many other particulars to the story, some of which may have been borrowed from the Pedi magicians, who seem to possess a more complete explanation of the phenomenon. According to them, the *ndlati* (Pedi, *dali*) is a bird of four colours, green, red, black and white, which lives in the mountains, by preference at the confluence of rivers. The medicine-men of former times knew its hiding place and had even found the eggs of the bird in a nest floating on the water. When a thunderstorm breaks, the bird flies to heaven into the clouds ; there may be scores of them, but one only will be dangerous (lebya) and cause death. It rushes down to the ground, striking a tree on its way, tearing its bark and its wood, and throwing it down ; or it falls on a hut and burns it, or on a man and kills him. Having reached the soil, the bird can be caught, and I heard people seriously assert that four of these birds, unable to fly away, had been found the previous year in Sikororo country. Or the bird enters the ground, to a depth of two to three feet, and either remains there in its own form, or (this is the most common saying) deposits its urine (murundju), 821 825 791

821 which had caused the flash of lightning, and flies away back to
825 the mountains. The magician who understands the "treatment
791 of Heaven" comes and digs at the spot ; there he finds a kind of gelatinous substance which solidifies after a little time. I possess a little of this curious drug given to me by a Pedi magician, by name Mudjumi ; it resembles a piece of chalk, and is considered very valuable on account of its rareness, and because it is used in the manufacture of the wonderful medicine of Heaven. Should a village have been struck by lightning, the magician of Heaven will come and dig out this foreign body ; if he finds it, the taboo is removed. If he does not, the whole village must move to another place. In the same way, it is taboo to warm oneself at a fire made of the wood of a tree that has been struck by lightning, or to use it as fuel.

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Happily this dreadful bird can be prevented from killing and burning by magical means. Both the Pedi Mudjumi and the Thonga Makasane possessed the enchanted flute, by which they could force Heaven — or the bird of Heaven — to spare them. Mudjumi having sold me his flute, I can describe it at length. It is made of a hollow bone five inches long, covered with Varan skin, filled at its larger extremity with a black substance like wax. Inside, to keep it clean, there is a vulture's feather. The bone is said to have been taken from the ndlati bird ; the wax substance was made from powder obtained by drying up and pulverising a little of the heart, the eye, the bones, the feathers, and the flesh of the bird. In the wax are embedded three seeds of Abrus precatorius, the "lucky bean" well-known in South Africa, a round seed of a splendid coral colour with a black spot, very much used in Thonga magic. This addition of Abrus precatorius intensifies the sound of the flute and enables it to reach heaven.

The flute of Heaven.
Drawn by J. Weare.

reach heaven. The magician, seeing the thunderstorm approaching, climbs up the hill without any fear, blows in his flute: psee... psee... psee..., and shouts: "You! Heaven! Go further! I have nothing against you! I do not fight against you!" He may add in a threatening tone: "If you are sent by my enemies against me, I will cut you open with this knife of mine." The thunderstorm will then pass away! 821 791 789

This invocation to Heaven is curious, and we shall better understand it when studying the part played by Heaven in Thonga religion. Here I am merely considering the superstition as an attempt at explaining a natural phenomenon. And we may well ask: how is it possible for such absurdities to be believed, and firmly believed, by men who are not at all devoid of a sense of observation? The idea that lightning is a bird comes perhaps from the fact that its movements in falling from above resemble the evolutions of a bird in the air. After all the phenomenon is so sudden that this explanation could easily be accepted by the imagination of the savage. As regards the statements about the coagulated urine of the bird, I must admit that I was unable to understand on what they could be based, until I saw some samples of fulgurites found where lightning had struck the ground; the heat of the electric current vitrifies the sand, forming a kind of pipe, which enters the soil, where it ramifies to a certain depth. These fulgurites, though not perfectly answering to the description given by Native magicians, may have been the natural substratum upon which Bantu imagination built up all the other superstitions. 821

5) The problem of rain and the way Thongas deal with it.

All over the earth the question of rainfall is of primary importance, but this is especially the case in Subtropical Africa, even more than anywhere else. Rain may not fall during seven months, from April to October, and nobody worries about it. But if it fails in November and December, at the beginning of the rainy season, it is a dreadful misfortune, a calamity more serious 132 731 789

132 than any other. The life of every individual, and consequently
731 of the whole clan, is threatened. Famine will certainly follow,
789 as cereals can only be sown during these two months and famine means not only suffering and anguish, but often death, in a primitive tribe which is totally ignorant of trade with out-lying countries, and does not possess any means of conveyance for food bought in other lands. No wonder therefore that the imagination of the South African Native has invented ways and means of regularising the rainfall, and that rites, and charms, and all the powers of magic have been resorted to with a view to ensuring the precious rain to the tribe at the right time.

789 These methods may be classified in two categories : the rites which aim at removing the causes which are believed to prevent rain and the charms by which the rain is made to fall, irrespective of any preventing cause.

a) *The causes which prevent rainfall and the rites by which they are removed.*

821 The general view is that rain comes *from the gods* : "Psikwembu
789 psi nisa mpfula" — "the spirits of the ancestors cause rain to fall."
782 So, should the spring showers not come in due time, the first idea will be to offer a sacrifice to the ancestor-gods, especially if the bones consulted have revealed that the anger of the gods is the real
[533] cause. Men will go to the sacred wood where the ancestors have been buried, sing there an ancient mourning song (I suppose No. 15, page 286, is used for the purpose), and some of them will beat the graves with sticks. As regards the sacrifice, it consists of a black victim, or it may even be the offering of a living human being to the gods ; these rites will be described later on.

Or it may be that a certain individual, *a wizard*, endowed with magical power, or rather possessing enchanted drugs, prevents the rain from falling (a siba mpfula) through wickedness, or hatred of his countrymen. This is a rarer occurrence.

100 But the terrible calamity of drought is brought into direct

But the terrible calamity of drought is brought into direct
relation with some physiological phenomena which no one would 789
have thought of in this connection : the miscarriage of women 821
when the foetus has not been dealt with according to rule, the 843
birth of twins, the death of children not yet received into the tribe 845
by the ceremony of *boha puri* (I. p. 56) and not buried in wet 766
ground ; these are the great natural causes which prevent rain 171
from falling! I have met with this conception all over the Thonga tribe. I found it also amongst the Pedis of the Transvaal, who firmly believe it, and it would be most interesting to know if Suthos, Zulus, and Hottentots have the same superstitions. Let me quote the *ipsissima verba* of Mankhelu, the great 789
medicine-man of the Nkuna Court. I shall never forget the 821
earnest tone of his voice, his deep conviction, when he uttered 843
to me the following words, as a kind of revelation : "When a 783
woman has had a miscarriage, when she has let her blood flow secretly and has buried the abortive child in an unknown place, it is enough to make the burning winds blow, and to dry up all the land : the rain can no longer fall, because the country is no longer right (tiko a ra ha lulami). Rain fears that spot. It must stop at that very place and can go no further. This woman has been very guilty. She has spoilt the country of the chief, because she has hidden blood which had not yet properly united to make a human being. That blood is taboo! What she has done is taboo. It causes starvation."

"What then must be done?" — "The chief will collect his men and ask them : 'Are you in a normal state?' (lit. are you right?). They answer : 'Such and such a woman was pregnant but nobody knows what she has brought forth.' This woman will be arrested and told to go and show us where she has put it. The earth is dug up ; the hole is sprinkled with a decoction made of two drugs prepared in a special pot, the *mbendula* and *nyangale* ; the woman herself must wash her body every day with that medicine. Then a little of the earth taken from the hole will be scraped up and thrown into the river ; water drawn from the river will be poured into the hole : the country will be well again, and then the rain will come.

"Moreover, we, the medicine-men, after having sent old

789 women to the river to throw away the contaminated earth, order
821 them to make a ball of that earth, and to bring it back to us in
843 the early morning. We grind it, we put it into a pot where it
783 must remain for five days, and then we prepare the great drug to sprinkle the land. The medicine is put into oxen horns and they go to all the drifts, to the boundaries of the country, on the borders of the Ñwebeti and of the Thabina rivers, on the road to Sibila's country, to Diskop (Leydsdorp); they must not however cross rivers. Our neighbours do the same on their own side. One of the girls digs the earth, the others dip a stick into the horn and sprinkle the drug into the hole. We also sprinkle the road on which these women have trodden, when they had their blood; we remove the misfortune caused by these women on the roads. The country is pure again. Rain can fall."

This is the purifying rite in the Nkuna clan. Mankhelu asserts that the Pedis do the same. He did not know if the custom existed amongst other Thonga clans. But Viguet described the same custom to me as being in force on the borders of the Limpopo, under the name of *mbelele*. The bones having revealed that the country is impure, the chief orders the mbelele : it is a period of mourning (nkosi) for the land. First the *phokolo*, or sacrifice of the black victim is performed (See Part VI). Then the women assemble. They must remove all their clothing, only putting some grass round their loins and, with a peculiar skipping step, singing a special song : "Mpfula nana" — "rain fall," — they go to all the spots where children prematurely born have been buried in dry ground, on the hills, take away what they find in the broken pots and collect all that impure matter in a secret place, so that children may see nothing of what they are doing. Water is poured on these graves in order to "quench them (timula)." On the evening of the same day they go and bury these impurities ; this is
[183 done in the mud, near the river. No man must approach during
831] this operation : the women would have the right to strike the imprudent one and ask him questions on the obscene formulae of circumcision ; the man would answer in the most impure words he could find, as all language taboos are suspended on that day ; nakedness even is no longer taboo, "because," says Viguet,

"it is the law of the country!" Every one consents to the suspension of the ordinary laws! (1) [183 831

Amongst the Rongas, I did not hear of any connection between prematurely born children and rain. When the mbelele rite is performed, a mother of twins must lead the procession of women who draw water and pour it on the graves of the twins in order to secure the rain. They also clean all the wells (kuha tinhlobo), digging them afresh and removing any filth in the water. It may be that the corpse of a twin, if it has been buried in dry ground, will be dug out of its grave and buried again near the river, or they will go in procession and pour water on the grave. This will influence Heaven, which is killing the earth by the terrible heat of the sun. The burning October winds will cease and the rain will fall. 789 821 843 783 845

There is something mysterious about all these customs. Considered merely as ideas regarding Nature and natural phenomena, I believe their essential meaning to be this : — there are some cases of human birth which are taboo. While any birth is taboo, owing to the lochia, that of children prematurely born is doubly dangerous. Abnormal children, such as twins, children who have died before the "boha puri" rite (I. p. 56), in some clans also children who cut their upper teeth first, share this noxious character. They are a calamity for the whole land as they are connected with the mysterious power of Heaven, and so prevent the rain from falling. The great remedy for the evil, the only means of counteracting this influence, is to bury these children in wet ground. Should this not have been done, the chief must order these little corpses to be exhumed and buried near the river : this is the aim and object of the mbelele. If wet, these graves will cause no harm (2).

How did these extraordinary conceptions first originate ? 000

(1) This rite of *mbelele* shows striking analogies with the Passage rites which we have already often met with in Thonga customs. This is a special period, a mourning period for the land, says Viguet, a marginal period which, as such, is accompanied by obscene manifestations, both in speech and in absence of clothing. 766 783

(2) In the Maluleke clan, as previously mentioned, these three categories of children must be *cremated*, and foreigners dying in the midst of the clan are also burnt after their death, from fear that they might belong to one of these categories and so prevent the rain from falling, if they were buried in dry ground. The mbelele rite there is called *nkelenkele*. Rangane describes it as follows : — Women collect the bones of twins, 789 821 183

845 What is the connection between abnormal births of human
772 beings and the rain-fall? I think it can be found in the
771 conception of Heaven which has inspired so many curious rites, and which I shall explain in the next chapter. So it is possible that, after all, the mbelele rite has a religious idea at its base.

b) *Rain charms.*

789 The removal of the corpses of abnormal children from dry
177 ground and their burial near the river probably sometimes proves ineffective to produce rain. So Bantu magicians have invented a great many charms to obtain the greatly desired showers, and the power of the rain-makers is enormous. Our tribe does not seem to have developed this art as much as others. The Sutho-Pedis are masters in this domain and Mankhelu, who had been taught by them and had become a great and renowned rain-maker, revealed all his secrets to me. He possessed the drug and used it frequently, he said, having often been called in by Sutho chiefs dwelling in far distant districts, as far off as Pretoria. He assured me that he had met with so much success that these chiefs had given him oxen, horses, a waggon, precious beads, etc.! Where had he found this marvellous drug? At Rivimbi (in Venda : Luvimbi), a country north of Spelonken, not far from the Limpopo and to which he went, as far as I could make out, in 1865 or 1866. The Luvimbi people are the descendants of Luvimbi, (1) a chief of the old times (as old as Nkuna, says Mankhelu) who, after his death, went to heaven and became king of heaven ; he still exists there as a spirit, hearing and knowing everything that is done on earth. This Luvimbi is probably the same whom the Vendas call the first man, and concerning whom they have a number of traditions which I shall mention a little later.

776 and those of still-born children or those who died at birth; to these they add their old
783 rags (perhaps the cloths used for their menses?); they bring all these impurities to the
789 cross-ways and *burn them* there, singing impure songs, saying: "To-day is a great day! There is no taboo any more! If you prohibit anything, it will be an insult to the rain;
821 it will not fall." The smoke of all that they have burnt constitutes a religious offering: now the country will be pure and the rain will fall. The conception prevailing among
183 the Malulekes is somewhat different from that of the Rongas.

(1) I have published an account of the Venda traditions connected with Luvimbi or Raluvimbi in *The S. A Journal of Science*, April 1921, where more details will be found concerning this personage.

which I shall mention a little later. They all invoke him to obtain rain, asserts Mankhelu, even Modjadji, the great queen who has acquired such fame: she does not pretend to be superior to Luvimbi; she owes her rain-making power to him! His successors have kept the famous recipe for rainmaking. Mankhelu visited them. He brought with him "bukosi," viz., riches, and they gave him horns full of the drug. One of them is in my possession; it seems to be the horn of a he-goat. These people manufacture the rain-producing medicine on an extensive scale. Baskets are seen in their huts, full of the ingredients of which it is composed. Strange to say, these ingredients all come *from the sea*; as far as I could identify them from Mankhelu's description, they are: sea-urchins, (shinana sha mitwa), sea-weeds (pindja ra lwandle, lit. rope of the sea), bones of whales, or sea-fish, bivalve sea-shells, pieces of wood from wrecked vessels run aground, etc. All these are roasted and, when the process is sufficiently advanced, sea-water is poured on them to cool them (timula). They are then pulverised and "salted" with another drug called "shinyuke," something black which I could not identify. The powder so obtained is put into the horns, half of which are dipped into sheep's fat and so become female drugs. Having been given the four horns, two male and two female, Mankhelu was told that these would retain their virtue for ever; when he saw that their contents were nearly finished, he could always prepare a fresh supply by roasting marine products, but he would have to grind a little of the original drug with the new powder in order to *pfusha*, viz., to raise its strength, according to the universal practice of Bantu medicine-men. The original drug is the well-spring (shihlobo). Should any one try to manufacture the drug himself, using exactly the same ingredients, he would meet with total failure, as the virtue of the drug is derived from two sources: the produce of the sea, and the power of the first inventor, Luvimbi.

Having returned with the precious charm, when summoned by any chief to act as rain-maker, Mankhelu employed it in the following way.

He first asked the chief to kill a black goat or sheep (a he-goat, or a ram, if the bones said so); the head, at any rate, had

789 to be black. The heart was pierced with a puncheon and the blood flowed. He carefully washed the horns with the blood and smeared them later on (horola) with the "psanyi" found in the intestines of the animal. Then he took his *ntsiko*, viz., the two pieces of wood which served as his flint, poured a little of the powder into the notch of the female stick and made fire by the rapid friction described on p. 34. In the meantime Mankhelu prayed as follows : "Here are the drugs, Rivimbi of Tsome (Rivimbi's father)! Give us rain." Then he invoked his own gods, saying : "Go to Rivimbi for me and come along here all of you to make the rain fall." This performance is a "mhamba," a means of calling the gods, especially Rivimbi, "the master of this mhamba." After a while the wood began to burn ; leaves of the "nembe-nembe" bush (Cassia petersiana) were placed on it and a black smoke rose and ascended to heaven. Then the clouds appeared and soon the thunderstorm broke. A feather of the ndlati bird of lightning was placed amongst the leaves as a protection against thunderbolts.

Mankhelu was absolutely convinced of the efficacy of this means of rain-making, and there seems to be more sense in this rite than in many others. To use the sea to cause rain to [821] fall, is not after all so absurd! I would not assert that Natives have a clear idea as to the formation of clouds, *mapapa* (Dj.), *matlabi* (Ro.), and know that the water from above comes from the water below, but at any rate they know that the sea is water and rain is [822] also water. To obtain rain by smoke rising from burning sea products is a procedure which is in keeping with one of the most common beliefs of primitive man, that like produces like, a belief which has found its expression in the famous principle of the old physicians : "Similia similibus curantur."

When practising his rain-making art at home, Mankhelu proceeded with less ceremonial pomp. After having consulted his bones, he took four leaves of the tjeke plant (p. 14), smeared them with the magical powder and exposed them to the rays of the burning sun. As soon as these leaves were fully dry, "Heaven began to roar" and the rain came.

[177] The great rain medicine is of Pedi or Venda origin. In addition

to the sacrifice of the black victim and to the mbelele rite of purification of the land, which are characteristic Thonga customs, it seems that another old Thonga way of obtaining rain was the *tjeba fishing* which I described on p. 86. When the whole clan had gone to catch the barbels in the almost dried up ponds, a thunderstorm would come and rain would fall. This was especially the case with certain small lakes such as Malangotiba in Nondwane, and that in Nsime near Morakwen, because battles had taken place on their borders and the enemies' corpses had been thrown into the water. So these lakes had become "great sacred woods" (ntimu). I suppose the spirits of the deceased, which were certainly "gods of bitterness," (see next chapter), were supposed to prevent the rain, and the *tjeba* either appeased them or made them powerless.

To sum up this very complicated subject, I would say rain rites belong to three different categories: 1) The religious rites connected with ancestor worship (black offering, visit to the sacred woods, old songs and sometimes offering of a human victim). 2) Rites of purification of the land, those which are derived from the mysterious relations established between the power of Heaven and abnormal births (mbelele, cleaning of wells by women accompanied by the mother of twins); these present some features of the ordinary passage rites, either because the fall of rain inaugurates a new season, or because drought is a calamity comparable with death and attended with contamination. 3) The magic rites, in which sea charms play the most important part.

Hail, shihangu (Dj.), mabyana, lit. little stones (Ro.), is frequent in Thongaland; according to Mboza, it is not the object of any peculiar superstitions. Amongst the Pedis the day on which it has fallen must be kept as a sabbath. It is taboo to till the fields on that day.

IV. *The Inorganic World.*

Water is called *mati*, a noun of the bu-ma class, the class of liquids, employed only in the plural form. Notice the suffix *ti*, which seems to show that, at a period when mythological

193 conceptions were still current, it was considered as a feminine principle. This supposition is confirmed by the fact that *rivers* (nambu. pl. milambu) also have the feminine termination (I. p. 36, Note). I find the following names of rivers ending in *ti* : Nkomati, Nfolóti (Umbelosi), Ñwebeti, Shalati, Timbati ; the termination *etsi*, *edzi*, may be another form of the same suffix (Ñwanetsi, Ntsatsi, Shingwedzi, Madzi, etc.). A very curious fact, which shows the same conception, is that the river which crosses the territory of the Tembe clan is called Mi-Tembe. I first thought this to be a plural form of the mu-mi class ; but it is more natural to explain this *mi* as the feminine prefix (1) which means daughter of, as Migogwe, etc. (I. p. 352).

823 *Crossing rivers* is subject to a curious rule. It is taboo to bathe
784 in the stream before crossing it ; taboo also for the traveller to
824 cook his food on the hither side of the river ; he must first cross,
789 and then take his meal. This rule is still universally observed by
133 waggon trekkers in South Africa. In this case there may be a reason for the taboo : South African rivers are apt to be swollen in a moment by sudden rain, and the crossing made impossible for days : the traveller therefore makes haste ; he will have plenty of time to stop on the other side! When the river is dangerous, a Thonga will first chew (phora) a little of his *ndjao*, the root of a juncus, which is supposed to increase courage and to ensure victory over hostile influences. (See Part VI.)

823 Some *Lakes* and *Rivers* are believed to be inhabited by spirits,
769 but not in the ordinary fetichistic way, in which a special spiritual
776 being is incorporated with the natural object ; these spirits are
782 *psikwembo*, spirits of the deceased ancestors of the owners of the land, and are propitiated by their descendants. Should another clan have invaded the territory where these lakes are, and crocodiles threaten the fishermen, (p. 88) they will call some one belonging to the clan of the old possessors of the country and ask him to make an offering to appease *his* gods. This is the ordinary course, and the more closely we search the more completely these lake and

(1) A number of river names have the prefix *li* or *ri*, especially those which are of Sutho origin : Lebvubye. Ritabi (Letaba) Ritshindjele (Letsitele), Rimbelule (Lepalula, Olifant). Others begin with *ñwa*, *ma*, and may be ancient names of men.

river spirits become identified with ancestor-gods. In my investigations I found one case, however, where a special spirit, a kind of Nature spirit seemed to be invoked. This was on the sea shore, in the northern part of Nondwane, at a place called Mahilane, where there are two great rocks on the beach. When the great waves dash against them, with a fearful roar, people go and sacrifice (hahla); they pray thus: "Tsu! Oh sea! Let vessels be wrecked, and steamers also, and let their riches come to us and help us." In former times, a young girl was sometimes exposed there as a prey, or an offering to the power of Mahilane. Now this is exactly what is done in the sacred woods for the ancestor gods and, in fact, Mboza asserts that: "When abandoning the girl, the officiant says: You, Psikwembo, ancestor-gods, drive on the sea that it may wreck vessels." 823 769 776 782

When urged to speak with more precision, my informant answered: "Mahilane and the sea are one and the same thing (ntshumu munwe). When the sea is roaring people exclaim: 'Mahilane roars'! Near the island of Shefin, where two branches of the Nkomati river meet in the estuary, people say: 'Makaneta is roaring'. Here it is Makaneta and no longer Mahilane." 823 776 769

This information is extremely interesting. As regards Makaneta, we know him perfectly well; he is the ancestor of Mboza and descendant of Mazwaya (I. p. 360). This ancestor-god begins to be confused with a natural phenomenon taking place in the country where he lived. The religious fear of the spirit of the deceased mingles with the awe inspired by the roaring of the sea to such an extent that both notions coincide in the imagination of the savage. We here note the exact point where *an ancestral spirit evolves into a Nature spirit*, and this instance proves, in the clearest possible manner, that the conception of the ancestor spirit preceded that of the Nature spirit. Here, at any rate, Ancestrolatry is anterior to both Fetichism and Naturism. These later forms of the belief can be easily accounted for by the development of Ancestrolatry: the reverse process would be much more difficult to explain.

The *sea*, with its immensity and its wonderful power, deeply impresses the Thongas dwelling near it. They do not however tell many stories about it, nor did I hear of any explanation 823

823 regarding its confines and the shore on the other side. Some
791 magicians claim to have gone and stayed for some time down in the depths : to have "crossed the sea" is for them a kind of diploma, which gives them the right of exercising their art. (See Chapter III.)

823 The *tide* (byaela) is considered to be caused by a whale (nkomu) which alternately swallows and vomits the sea-water : this is the common idea. Some Natives, however, connect it with the moon, having noticed that the tide is higher at full moon and at the wane.

The sea must be feared : it is jealous. "When some one is taken away by the great wave, do not shout! Do not exclaim : 'He is lost!', else you will never see him again. On the contrary, if you say : 'All right, let him go', then the returning wave will bring him back." These are the assertions of Spoon. And old Makhani expressed his approval by nodding his head!

372 "It is the same with *fire*," Spoon also remarked. There was
784 a terrible bush fire in Rikatla on the 18th of September 1908. As always happens at the end of winter, the bush was absolutely dry. A leper woman, tilling her fields, wished to cook a little manioc. The fire leapt to the weeds which she had gathered and from these to the bush. Two huts were burnt. "It is their own fault," said Spoon, "when the bush fire comes you must put it out quietly. If you make any noise, if you shout, it comes straight at you. That is what happened. In the first village people fought calmly and succeeded in saving their huts. At Jeck's village, they cried out. The fire leapt on to a hut, the small hut of the son. The mother cried : 'Yo! yo! Where shall I put my child?' She went on crying out until the hut was burnt to the ground. So the fire leapt on to the big hut and burnt it. She has only herself to blame!" (1)

823 The origin of *stones* is absolutely unknown. Pikinini, a Nkuna boy, who was endowed with an extraordinary imagination, once drew my attention to the stratification of a large dolomite boulder on which different concentric layers were visible, and said to me :

[521] (1) Silence is always recommended to prevent misfortune : in the case of war (I, p. 470) women at home must keep silent ; likewise when the husband is hunting hippopotami (p. 69), when a child is seized with convulsions owing to the power of *tilo* (heaven). See also my remarks on the kunga rite. (I. p. 124).

"You see! Stones also grow!" Another Native geologist, who 823
had heard the European story of creation, coming from the Coast, a country of sand and sand only, and visiting the Drakensberg Mountains near Shiluvane, was amazed by the enormous cliffs of the Mamotswiri and gave vent to the following reflection : "No wonder we have no stones in our sandy land. When God created the earth, he used them all to build these mountains!"

Fossils are rare in Thongaland, where sand covers almost the 136
whole country. There is however in the southern part of the 823
Maputju region an outcrop of cretaceous rock which belongs to the 777
Gault and which contains ammonites, Nautillus etc. Natives call them *nsongo stones* and are very much afraid of them. They say that "these stones with ribs" can walk. They bring bad luck (singita). Should a child pick up one of these fossils and bring it into the village, he will fall ill ; he must therefore undergo a special treatment.

Crystal greatly pleases the Natives. It is rare in South Africa. 135
When magicians can secure a white or a black crystal they generally 301
wear it round their necks together with the claws, or teeth, of wild animals, or with their little skin bags which they use as amulets. For this reason I once had the good fortune to be able to exchange a crystal I had brought from Switzerland for one of these charms!

The *earth* (misaba) is also a great and important thing. First 823
because it is identified with the people dwelling on it, with the clan. 695
Tiko, the land, means both the soil and the people. Further than 787
this, the earth is the chief (I. p. 382) ; hence many laws : e. g. the tusk of the elephant which fell on the earth when the beast was killed, belongs to the chief, etc. (p. 57). The most solemn oath is that which is taken with earth (ku funga u hahla hi misaba). Should a man be accused of stealing or of being a wizard, if he puts a little earth in his mouth, says *tsu*, and declares : "I do not know anything about it," those who care for his safety will look for a medicine-man to treat him : it is a *mondjo* (a magical method of divination. See Chapter III). The same thing is done when an oath has been taken by sucking a piece of iron.

A curious superstition regarding the earth is this : after moving 823
from one country to another, you should for some days mix with

your food a little of the earth of the country which you have left ; 823
this will provide the transition between the old and the new domicile (See I. p. 49).

Metals known to the tribe before the coming of the Whites 135
were few. (See page 137). *Nhumbu* or *nsimbi*, iron, *nsuku*, copper, and *ntchopfa*, a name applied to all white metals (tin, silver, etc.) are the only Native names for metals. There is no word for gold.

V. *The Vegetable World. Thonga Botany.*

While Bantus possess a very limited knowledge of Astronomy, 815
Geography, Mineralogy, etc., while their ideas in these domains are in no way deserving of the name of Science, they are much more advanced as regards Plants. Here it is quite allowable to speak of a Science, a rudimentary Science, no doubt, but a true, precise knowledge which has been transmitted from past ages and which denotes a real power of observation.

The Delagoa flora is not very rich. I have succeeded in 137
collecting between four and five hundred different kinds in a 124
herbarium which I sent many years ago for classification to the 815
Herbier Boissier in Geneva. In February 1893, before forwarding the second lot of exsiccata, I gathered together some Natives of Rikatla in the hut which I had pompously styled a Museum and, having promised them 1 s. each if they consented to remain till the end of the examination, I submitted the dried plants to them, asking them their names, their uses, etc. The result of the inquiry was marvellous. My areopagus did not seem to be a very choice one : an old woman, as dry as my exsiccata and smoking her pipe, another with ochre-smeared hair, a young one, with a baby on her shoulder, an elderly one-eyed man named Hamunde, my milkman. After them came the young chief Muzila, walking 815
slowly, swinging the tails of his belt. This chief, notwithstanding 756
his social rank, showed gross ignorance of botany ; but some of the 824
others knew the name of almost every plant ; had I had a *ñanga*, a medicine-man, amongst them, I am sure I should have obtained

the names of all the specimens of the collection, for they are the great connoisseurs in this domain, their drugs being almost entirely obtained from the vegetable world. 815 756 824

A study of these names undoubtedly proves that Natives have the notion of the *genus*. This had been denied ; it seems that, when naming animals, Bantus distinguish correctly between species, but do not classify species into genera. In Botany it is not so. Under the same name they bring together forms which are sometimes widely different, but which belong to the same genus. Here are some of these names. 137 815 824

Tsuna means fern and applies to the Acrostichum tenuifolium, which climbs up the palm trees in the marsh, as well as to the few other kinds of Filices found in the district of Lourenço Marques ; *gowhwa* is the name for Liliaceae, many kinds of which blossom in the spring : the Crinum Forbesii, with its big white and pink flower, and other kinds forming a bowl at the extremity of the stem ; there are five kinds of Commelina in my collection, which were called *Nkompfana*, both those with blue flowers, and the yellow ; a certain Papillionaceae genus, the Eriosema, is called *Rongole*. All the Strigae, a genus of the Scrophulariaceae family, are known under the name of *Shitshinyambita*, those which prevent the pot from boiling, as they are believed to have this effect when put into the fire. The Lobeliae are called *Shilawana*, etc.

The notion of the *genus* is so truly present that Thongas distinguish between various species in the same genus. So the tree called *Nkahlu*, an Apocynea, the Tabaernaemontana ventricosa, a valuable tree whose sap is used as a styptic, and whose roots are used to make a decoction for lung complaints, has a congener, found in the palm-tree marsh, the Voacanga Dregei, which is called *Nkahlutjobo*, nkahlu of the marsh. The two genera are very closely akin to each other. 815 137 824 757

Cognate species found in various regions are thus distinguished by the mention of their habitat, either the hill (ntlhaba), or the black earth (nyaka), or the forest (mutju). There is the *Muhlu wa ntlhaba*, of the hill, and *Muhlu-tjhobo*, of the marsh (Secamone sp. tree of the Asclepiadaceae family). This is even more striking

137 in the case of the Hibiscus genus. Its name is *Ntjhesi*; there
824 are the Ntjhesi of the hill (Hibiscus surratensis, etc.), the Ntjhensi
757 of the nyaka, another species found in Morakwen in the black
815 earth; and there is the *shitjhesinyana sha ntlhaba*, double diminutive of ntjhesi, the Sida cordifolia, a pretty little Malvacea, a near relative of the Hibiscus, very much used in treating children's complaints, a panacea for babies, as it cures their vomiting, headache, wounds and internal troubles!

137 I find the same correct connection established between two
824 Anonaceae shrubs, the Artabotrys brachypetala, called *Ntiti*, and
815 the Art. Monteiroae, called *Shintitane*, little Ntiti, of the same genus, but a shrub of a very different appearance.

However there is, of course, no anatomical study at the base of this classification: so their ideas of genus are not always, scientifically speaking, correct. They call any parasite *Phakama*, whatever may be its form, and have a superstitious fear of them, especially of the larger ones, growing on other trees, such as the nkanye and nkuhlu: "Phakama dja singita!" (1)

137 *Nkushe* means sea-weed, either the true algae, as Lagarosiphon muscoides, or other plants growing in water and belonging to totally different families, such as Urticularia stellaris, found in the same locality. *Nkaka*, or *Nkakana*, is the little Cucumber already described (p. 14), whilst *Nkaka wa tjhobo* is a Convolvulvus (Ipomea cairica). The *Shirimbyati*, one of the names most employed, designates first the Helichrysum parviflorum, a yellow Composita which covers the sandy dunes, and blossoms during the winter; but *Shirimbyati sha tjhume*, the male one, is Gnaphalium stenophyllum, and *Shirimbyati sha mutju*, the one of the forest, an Indigofera belonging to the Leguminosae family; these three plants have in common small hard leaves: hence the same name is given to them, although they are by no means related botanically speaking. So shirimbyati corresponds to our word heath, which is applied to many forms of evergreen undergrowth.

777 (1) "The parasite stem *singita*," i. e. is of bad omen. They do not say *yila*, is
824 taboo, though some rules apply to it similar to those concerning the tree struck by
753 lightning. One does not warm oneself at its fire; its wood is not employed to cook food, for fear lest men should suffer from hydrocele.

The want of an enlightened botanical sense is further seen in the following fact : three different kinds of Vernonia, though belonging to the same genus, are called by different names, as if the Thongas had altogether failed to perceive their relation. The Vernonia cinerea is called *Ntshontshongori* ; the V. Perotteti, *Nkukulashibuya* (the plant with which one sweeps the threshing floor) ; the V. Tigna, *Hlunguhlungu*. 137

Another case of one and the same name applied to plants of different families having merely an external resemblance is the following : the *Ndjiba* is a Leguminosa tree of large proportions, Apalatoa delagoensis (Schinz), and the *Shindjibana*, viz., the little Ndjiba, is a small shrub with leaves somewhat similar to those of the Ndjiba. Its scientific name is Synaptolepis Oliveriana and it belongs to the Thymeleaceae family.

It is no wonder that the notion of genus, though existant, has not always been correctly and universally applied. Thongas have no idea of the anatomy of plants ; they have never dissected a flower, and are totally ignorant of the presence of male and female elements in it. They know, however, that these sexual differences exist. They have noticed, for instance, amongst the nkanye stems, which are of a dioecious species, that some are male and some female, and they carefully preserve some of the male stems in order to fecundate the female ones ; but they believe that this fecundation takes place through the roots of the trees! 815 824

Thus, when the name of a plant can be explained, we see that, in naming it, *its external characters, or its uses*, have alone been considered. For instance the beautiful yellow Sterculiacea, Melhania Forbesii, is called *Muhlwadambu*, Setting Sun, because its deep colour is similar to that of the sun when dipping below the horizon. A certain plant whose seeds explode when crushed is the *Buputwana*, because, "it says bu-bu-bu." A climbing Composita with juicy stem is the *Kamele*, "the one which is pressed," (kama) to squeeze out its juice, which is said to have a medicinal value. A Euphorbiacea whose fruit is eaten by the partridges (Fluggea obovata) is the *Midyanhwari*, partridges' food. Those named after their uses are, for instance, *Nkukulashibuya*, the one which sweeps the threshing floor (Vernonia Perotteti) ; *Nhlangulaba-* 137 815 824

137 *tjongwana*, the one employed to wipe little children when dirty!
815 (This plant is tomentous and answers well for the purpose);
Psekamafura, a large tree (Casearia Junodi, Schinz), a tree whose
824 fuel is particularly good for melting mafureira fat (p. 18), etc. The Asparagus bearst he name of *Nkwangulatilo*, the same as that of the rainbow. When asked why this is so, Natives say that it is because the colour of the asparagus leaves resembles that of the rainbow, but another explanation which seems to me more probable is this: it is because this plant is given as a medicine to little children to prevent the roaring of thunder from "tearing out their diaphragm (handjula lipfalo)."

815 The great use of the vegetable world is to provide men with food and medicine. If plants bear names and have been carefully
824 studied by the Bantus this is, in the first place, because they are useful in these two respects. We have already considered Thonga vegetarian food (p. 9-19), and I shall devote some pages to the medical art in Chapter III.

In Appendix II, I give a list of Thonga botanical names with their scientific equivalents. These plants have been identified by Dr. Schinz, who published a flora of Delagoa Bay in the "Bulletin de l'Herbier Boissier," No. 10, 1900.

The conclusion reached from this study of Thonga names of plants is that the vegetable world has been the subject of a true and, in a certain sense, scientific observation on their part. Their botanical knowledge can be compared with that of our forefathers of two or three hundred years ago, before Botany became a true science, when plants were still named from their external characteristics, and studied as medicinal herbs; I would even say that this knowledge, though of an inferior type, is more general amongst Thongas than, for instance, amongst the European peasantry; a fact which shows that their powers of observation and scientific study are not inferior to those of other more advanced races.

Do plants play a part in Thonga religion? (1)

000 When travelling through the country, you may come across

(1) The Vendas plant the bulbs of an Amaryllida which they call Lohome near the stone which they use as an altar. See *S. A. Journal of Science*, Vol. XVII, p. 215.

When travelling through the country, you may come across a tree round which a rag has been tied, evidently for some religious purpose. One's first idea would be that this tree is worshipped, but this is by no means the case. The tree is probably that which the divinatory bones have singled out as the one around which the village should be built, and the offering of this rag is made to the spirits of the ancestors, exactly as is done when the rag is placed near the grave, or at the door of the little hut built on it, in the case of those possessed. (See I. p. 141 and later on Chapter III). The tree is only sacred on account of this association. I have sometimes called the *Nkanye* a sacred tree, and the Thongas call it the king of trees, but it is not so in itself, or in virtue of any Nature spirit dwelling in it ; anybody can cut it without transgressing a taboo ; it is venerated because it provides the tribe with the national beer, and because its branches are used as pillows for the dead and its twigs as *mhamba* in the funeral service (I. p. 138). The religious and social *luma*, to which the bukanyi is subject (I. p. 397), is observed from fear of the ancestral spirits and not because the tree itself is in any way worshipped. In fact I never met with any worship offered to a plant as such. 824 769 778

VI. *The Animal World.*

Plants, *psimili or psa-ku-mila*, things which grow (ku mila), are distinguished from animals, called *psibandjana*, or *psihari*, which are said to *kula*, become great, and not *mila*. 815 136 825

The knowledge possessed by the Thongas with regard to animals is extensive. They give names to all the larger ones, especially, of course, to those which are eaten, but also to some which are smaller, insignificant and useless.

The *Annelida* are called by the generic name of *tinyokana*, diminutive of *nyoka* (yin-tin), snake ; leeches, *ntjundju* (mumi) ; lumbrics, *nshikwa* (yin-tin), both those living in the earth and parasites in the intestines of children.

Amongst *Myriapoda* the Julideae are called *Khongoloti* (dji-ma) ; the Millepedes, *Ndlandlalati* (yin-tin). When one of these has stung a Native, you will see him swallow a little earth, and a

815 mouthful of water after it, to prevent swelling. "The milleped
136 will die at once and you will not suffer much, because you have
826 been wiser than it (u yi rangelile butlharin)."

The same precaution is taken with regard to Scorpions, *shiphame* (Dj.), *mubalane* (Ro.). Other Arachnida are Spiders (*pume* (dji-ma) *ripe* (dji-ma), Ticks *(shikalana)*, and the Itch *(shinwayana)*, which Thongas know but too well without being aware that it is caused by a microscopic animal. To this group probably belongs the *maroda*, a parasite met with in the huts of Bilen and other remote parts of the country, whose bite causes actual disease.

The *insect world*, so richly represented in Tropical countries (1) is pretty well known, though many of its representatives are of no practical use to the Natives.

Orthoptera. Acridius peregrinus, the locust which ravages the fields, is called *humbi* (yin-tin) in Ronga and *ndjiya* (yin-tin) in Djonga. (See p. 81). The first "clouds" which appeared greatly impressed the Natives when they were seen at the beginning of the war of 1894. I heard some one say that this phenomenon had been foretold by a "mulungwana," a little man fallen from heaven to announce this calamity which threatened the land. (See next Chapter). Other Acridians are called *mhera* (yin-tin); the larvae of locusts, which abound at certain times in the gardens, are the *hondje* (yin-tin). The Pamphygus, a fat, heavy, grey locust, the female apterous, are called *phuphu* (dji-ma). The Grillus is *Shiyendlwa* (shi- psi), and is eaten by some. But the best known Orthoptera are those of the Mantidae family whose representatives are numerous in the country. They are called *Ñwambyevu* (Dj.) or *Ñwambyevulane* (Ro.), viz., the one which cuts the hair, probably on account of its claws, which move like
825 scissors. This insect plays a great part in the superstitions of the
769 Bushmen, who worship it. Amongst the Thongas there is a similar custom; young shepherds, when they meet with a Mantis,

(1) See my publications on the Entomology of Delagoa Bay; I. *Coleoptera*, in collaboration with Dr. Bugnion; II *Orthoptera*, by Dr. A. von Schulthess Rechberg; III *Hemiptera* by Prof. Montandon in the "Bulletin de la Société vaudoise des Sciences Naturelles." XXV, p. 132-220; IV), *Lepidoptera*, "Bulletin de la Société Neuchâteloise des Sciences Naturelles" Tome XXVII, p. 177-250.

tear out a little hair from the skins of their belt and offer it to the 825
insect saying : "Take, Grandfather!" They say that in old times 769
they were looked on as gods (psikwembu), or rather emissaries of the ancestor-gods, just like the little green snakes (Chapter II) ; their name was Mahulwahulwane, and when one of them entered a hut, no one interfered with it, as it was thought that perhaps some god had come to pay a visit to his descendants. These ideas regarding Mantidae seem to be now disappearing and the offering made to them is merely a little children's game. Another 136
Orthoptera is the *Shipfalapfapfa*, an onomatopoeia, describing a 825
flying locust, and the *Shishirikoko*, a large species which emits 815
saliva through its thorax. When it flies the Thongas say to it : "Go to the place where people eat meat!"

Hemiptera. Bugs are well, too well, known in Thongaland, having taken up their abode in most of the huts, where they are tolerated. They are called *Nsiketi* (yin-tin) and the wild bugs *Nsiketi ya nhoba*, bug of the bush. Lice, *Nhwala* (yin-tin), are regarded as vermin, and often as the result of bewitchment, especially when seen swarming on children. Many Aphidae (grubs) cause an exudation on certain shrubs, a kind of wax, the *Mubodi*, which is used for the manufacture of the black crowns (I, p. 130) ; others are called *Shibungubungu*, the red ones, probably a kind of cochineal.

Neuroptera. *Diptera*. The equivalent of these names of flies is 815
Nhongana (yin-tin). Mosquitoes are called *Busuna* and fleas 136
Butseka, with the prefix *bu* which here means a collection, a great number. *Busokoti*, a similar word, designates ants. The big gad-flies are the *Bawa* (dji-ma). The Libellulidae are called *Mungutane* (mu-ba) and the Termitideae *Muhlwa* (mu-mi).

Lepidoptera. Butterflies and moths are designated by a single word, *Phaphalati* (Dj. Notice the feminine suffix), or *Phaphatane* (Ro.) (dji-ma), and their caterpillars by the term *Hukwa* (yin-tin) or *Tomane* (dji-ma), this last word especially applying to the large Saturnidae caterpillars which are eaten by the Natives (p. 80). The relation between the caterpillar and the butterfly is not generally known ; only once did I find a boy who knew that a certain white cocoon, used as an ornament in dances (p. 102) gave

136 birth to the big green moth with long tails, the Queen Moth. The
815 reason why butterflies, though plentiful in Thongaland, have so little attracted the attention of Natives is, no doubt, the fact that they do not in any way contribute to their food. I have told the story of a woman who tried to force a child to eat a butterfly. (I. p. 445.)

136 *Coleoptera*. The general term for Coleoptera is *Shifufununu*, and it especially applies to the big Tenebrionidae (Psammodes
825 Bertoloni), called *shifufununu sha paripari* (p. 68) and to the large
777 black Carabidae of the Anthia genus which abound on the roads in spring ; one of them, marked with small depressions on the elytra is, for that reason, called the small-pox shifufununu (sha nyedzane). Travelling once with a grown-up Thonga we saw a black Carabida which had four white spots on the back. It was the charming Eccoptoptera mutilloides. I saw him trace a circle round it in the sand saying : "To-day I shall eat to my heart's content!" — "Namunhla ndji ta shura!" — "What are you doing?" I said. — "Oh! This is the *Shurwa-shurwane*," he answered. "When you meet it it is a sign that you will have plenty to eat!" He was mistaken! The real shurwa-shurwane is the Mutilla, a kind of apterous wasp, which has also four white spots on its back, and the beetle we met was so similar to it that he mistook it for a Mutilla ; is it not called mutilloides, pseudo-mutilla? (1)

136 — The Copridæ are called *Gadlen* (dji-ma) and these strange
[753] dung-eaters, which are extremely abundant in the country, are thought to be under the command of the wizards who can introduce
825 them into your body to kill you. The pretty Cerambycidæ,
262 with their long horns, are the *Ñwahomurikotjo*, the ox of Rikotcho, or, according to a truer etymology, the ox with horns bent backwards (kotjeka). Children sing an incantation before them, clapping their hands (I, p. 68). Their big white larvae, the *Shipungwana*, dig channels in the stems of nkanye, nkuhlu, mphesa, etc., and are readily eaten as well as the *Shimhukuta*, the

(1) This custom reminds one of the action of Swiss children when they send the ladybird to heaven, to ask God to give them fine weather to-morrow, or of their saying that crushing a golden Carabus on the road will cause rain to fall. Certain Coleoptera are of good omen everywhere! Only, if in Europe they foretell fine weather, in Africa they announce a good meal. The difference is significant!

136 larva of a large Calandra which swarms in the stems of the palm
825 trees of the marsh (p. 4). The *Shitambela*, a big Buprestida
262 (Sternocera Orissa) is roasted by the shepherds and eaten after they have torn off its elytra.

136 *Hymenoptera*. *Wasps* are called *Mupfi* or *Mupfu* (mu-mi),
755 and are divided into four different classes : the *Mupfu* proper (Belonogaster), the *Tlatlanhongana*, the *Bamaandlopfu*, a grey species, and the *Mumpfundlopfu*, a large black species which burrows in the soil. When someone has been stung by a wasp, the others laugh at him. If he resents being made fun of, they say to him : "Be not angry ; we do this to help you." They are really trying to divert his attention from the pain in order to
136 comfort him. *Bees* are called *Nyoshi* (yin-tin) and are greatly
262 appreciated for their honey (p. 44). Natives know the males
815 (*djongwe*, dji-ma) the larvae *(shipungwa)*, which they eat with as much pleasure as the honey itself. They call the honeycombs *hahlà* (dji-ma) or *shihlenga*, the wax *mumpfu* (mu-mi) and the
136 pollen brought by the bees, *nsindjo*. The curious *Mbonga* (yin-tin)
825 *Bee* is worth special mention, owing to the superstitions which are current regarding it, and the part it plays in certain rites (I. p. 390). This species, which does not sting, digs a narrow passage of two or three feet deep in the soil and excavates a hole of one or two feet broad where it builds its round nest. Natives say that nobody knows what the mbonga does with the earth which it digs out of the cavity in which it makes its nest. No heap of earth is ever seen in the vicinity. The hole is continued under the nest and has no end. It probably extends to subterranean pools where the insects go to drink, — as it is said that no one has ever seen a mbonga drinking from the lake or the well, as the other bees do. Moreover the entrance to a mbonga nest is invisible to the majority of people. It is only certain families who can see it and consequently dig out the precious honey (1). For all these reasons the mbonga is

777 (1) The Libombo family was one of those "which the mbonga loves" (randja). Elias who belongs to it told me that he once paid a visit to one of his neighbours who had just cleaned his village; he discovered a mbonga hole and said to his friend: "There is a mbonga nest in your village." But the man was unable to find it. Elias then dug as deep as his shoulders and found the nest all surrounded by "calabashes" full of honey. He says that when rain falls the little bees cover the entrance of

136 surrounded with a certain mystery, and this is no doubt why its
825 honey is used in the manufacture of the *nyokwekulu*. Its scientific name is Trigona togoensis, var. Junodi (Friese).

136 Amongst the *Mollusca*, a great many are eaten : the *Mbatsana*
262 (yin-tin) of the sea (bivalve shells), *Likatla* (li-tin) of the lakes, and the *Hwaru* (yi-tin), oysters of the Tembe shore. The land
454 snails are called *Humba* (yi-tin) ; the big ones (Achatina Lamar-
787 kiana) are used as safes for the deposit of pounds sterling and are often buried in the huts ; hence the expression *Humba ya bupfundji*, shell of riches! The smaller ones, resembling our snails (Aerope caffra), are rarer and it is considered a bad omen to meet with them on the road. — "Where you go you will hear cries of mourning!" Their name is *Shikumbukwane*. The slugs are called *Holokompfa* (yin-tin) and the smaller snails, *Shihumbanyana*, diminutive of *humba*.

136 *Fish* all have names, but having never dwelt in the close vicinity
825 of the sea, I have not learnt them. I know the *Mfungwe* (yi-tin). the fish whose mouth ends in a saw, the *Mangapfi* (dji-ma), the
262 name of a kind of hawk given to the flying fish of Delagoa Bay, the *Nhempfane* (yi-tin) found in the fresh water ponds, the *Ntima* (yi-tin) the barbel, the black fish which must not be eaten by lovers before their marriage (I, p. 107).

136 *Amphibia*. *Ntlambya* (mu-mi) is the ordinary frog (Rana oxy-rhynca) whose young are known and called *Shilungula* ; another black species is the *Rebya* (dji-ma) ; the tree-frogs are called *Shilungwalungwana* (Rappia marmorata and argus) ; the toad *Kele* (dji-ma), Bufo regularis ; the famous Breviceps mossambicus is *Shinana* (I. p. 87) the great warrior of the tales (p. 221).

136 *Reptilia*. There are many kinds of *Lizards*. The common
825 kind found in the houses, under the verandas is the *Mponondjo* (mu-mi) (Mabuia striata), ; the Lygodactylus capensis, found on the hills, is the *Nkolombya* (mu-mi) ; the little Agama

777 the hole with their wings to prevent water from inundating the nest. When it lasts too long they quickly go down to close the entrance of the nest ; the water then leaks down the pipe which descends into the interior of the earth. He added : "If a man does not belong to a family which "knows" the mbonga and if he happens to find a nest he will meet with misfortune ; one of his relatives will die. The bees will bring him ill-luck (singita)."

aculeata, which runs on the sand, *Shipyindji* or *Shihonokamahlo*, 136
the one which gazes at you ; the large gheko, Agama atricollis, 825
with a head of which the grey colour can change into blue, *Galagala* or *Phululu* (dji-ma) (I. p. 173) the grey one, which hides itself in dark places, in hollow stems or under roofs is the *Hokokwana* (dji-ma) (Hemidactylus grenatus) ; it is said that when this lizard sucks at the breast of a human being, it is impossible to remove it, and the only means of getting rid of it is to go and suckle a dog!

But the most curious lizard of these countries, that which most 136
strikes the Native imagination is the Chameleon (Chameleon 825
Petersii), *Lumpfana* (dji-ma). Herd boys throw ground tobacco 789
into its mouth to avenge themselves for the bad turn it did mankind when it lingered on the road and came too late to bring the message of eternal life (as we shall learn in a moment). It is used by certain magicians to discover thieves. They smear a chameleon with a drug which makes it turn white and then let it go : "Then the thief, wherever he may be, also turns white, and if he does not confess his theft, he dies!"

The flesh of none of these lizards is eaten, but that of the big 136
Varan which lives near the rivers, *Kwahle* (dji-ma), is considered 825
a delicacy. The kwahle is said to be very hard to kill. About 262
Crocodiles (*ngwenya*, yin-tin) all sorts of stories are told. When 787
one of them has been killed, the contents of its stomach are carefully preserved ; Thongas assert that each year, when the rains begin, crocodiles swallow a stone, so that their age can be known by counting them. These stones are taboo ; for a subject to swallow them is a cause of death, but one of them is chosen, treated with certain drugs and swallowed by the chief to warn him of his death, as we have already seen (I, p. 393). Crocodile stones play an important part in divination. (See Part VI. Ch. III. D).

Tortoises, whose generic name is *Mfutju* (yin-tin), are eaten and also used in the divinatory art, as we shall see. Some lake tortoises are called *Gamba* (dji-ma) and sea tortoises *Hasi* (dji-ma).

Snakes (nyoka, yin-tin) are generally dreaded and considered 825
dangerous, although many kinds are quite harmless. The 136

825 *Shipyahla* (Ro.), *Mhiri* (yin-tin, Dj.) is the big, lazy, grey puff adder,
136 which creeps along the ground, and is one of the most venomous kinds, together with the *Mhamba* (yin-tin), a slender species, very swift and often found on trees. "When you meet a mhiri," say the Nkunas, "throw a little earth on it and you will soon see
[752] its brother!" Of course magicians have plenty of drugs to cure snake bites. For this purpose they use the head of the adder roasted and pulverised. *Shibatlankombe*, (Naja nigricollis), "the one which carves a spoon" is the name of a species which
[762] curves its neck till it looks like a spoon. The *Hhlaru* (yin-tin) is the boa. It is eaten. Another member of the Clapidae family is the *Likure*, a pretty greyish violet species (Causus Lichtensteinii).
[769] Amongst the harmless snakes are those little blue ones, *Shihundje* (Dendrophis subcarinatus), which are considered as emissaries of the ancestor spirits. I shall mention them again later on. The *Nsoma* (yin-tin), very common and harmless, is probably Dispholidus typus. Some small ones, not larger than worms, but hard and shining like metal, are called *Tumbi-tumbi*, because they hide (tumba) in the sand. One of them seems to be Xenocalamus bicolor.

825 There are also the legendary snakes of the Thongas. On the
777 Coast they speak of the *Buwumati*, which dwells in the lakes and is invisible. It is only heard crying "bu-wu-bu-wu" when rain is falling, and its voice is as loud as that of an antelope. If it shows itself to a traveller, it is a very bad sign. The story is told of a man who came back from consulting a bone-thrower. He saw the buwumati lying on the ground, its coils extending to a great distance, closing all the passages. He retraced his steps, but after three days he died. In the Transvaal, this dreadful snake is called *Shimhemhemhe*, the name being an imitation of its cry.
825 This superstition is perhaps of Pedi origin, but it has been accepted by the Nkunas. The shimhemhemhe dwells in certain dark woody ravines on the slopes of the Drakensberg mountains. If anyone imprudently penetrates there, the snake pursues him, creeping along the branches above, and bites him on the top of the head. A man met with it once on the way to Thabina; he saw it on the road, its head raised, a shining head of two colours. There

was no end to its body. He tried to avoid it by making a long circuit ; he reached home, but died because he had seen the snake which it is death to see! 825

Birds (Tinyanyana, yin-tin). As I have made no regular collection of birds, I cannot here give the scientific names corresponding to the vernacular ones. These are very numerous, and they are not always the same in the different clans. Here is the list which I made by questioning the pupils of my school who came from all parts of Thongaland : (1) 136

Palmipeda. *Sekwa* (dji-ma) duck. *Sekwanyari, Sekwamhala, Shikukubi,* (Mal. Kho.). *Ñwafamben* (Mal. Nku.). *Shihlakahlaka, Lingubi* (Mal.). *Shiyankaken, Tutwana,* (Mpf. Bil.). *Ngululwana* (yin-tin), (Mpf.).

Long-legged birds. (Tinyanyana ta psikokoko). *Kukolwe* (Mpf. Bil. Mal.). *Munyangana, Ñwantjangantjangana* (mu-ba) (Mpf.). *Makhondjwawa, Gumba* (dji-ma), *Mayiwabembe, Tshebane* (Mal.). *Mugalandlopfu* (Mpf. Mal.) ; *Tshembyana* (Mal.). *Tjololwane* (Mal. Mpf.). *Yindwa, Randjane,* (Kho. Mal.). *Ñwamahlanga* (Mpf.). *Mampfana,* or *Shisibaliyehdjo* (I. p. 339).

Gallinacea. *Huku,* domestic hen. *Nkuku* (mu-mi cock. *Hwari* (yin-tin) partridge. *Mhangelane* (yin-tin), Guinea fowl. *Shitjatjatja* (Mpf. Nku.). *Nkungu* (Mpf.). *Matjyatjyana* (Nku.). *Teentana, or keenkana* (dji-ma), quail, (Mpf.). *Nkwahla,* (Mpf. Kho.). *Hukumati,* (Mpf. Nku.). *Mangoko* (Mal.). *Makokwe,* or *Makwekwe* (Mpf.). *Hlokoyo* (Mal.). *Shibotshe* (Mal.). *Djyedjyedjye,* (Mal.). *Ndjendjenle* (Mal.). *Ndura,* (Nku.). *Ngukulukwana* (Nku.), or *Shitiwitiwi* (Mpf.). *Nkulunkulu* (Mpf. Kho.) a splendid bird, red, green and blue, called the bird of the chiefs, because chiefs used to adorn themselves with its feathers ; it is the Gallirex porphyreolophus.

Pigeons. *Tuba* (dji-ma), pigeon. *Shibambalana,* or *bombokonyi* (Mpf.) ; same as *Mbabawanyi* (Nku. Mal.). *Gororotwana* (Mpf.) corresponds to *Gugurwana* (Mal. Kho.). *Nyakungufe* (Mpf.) corresponds to *Kopolo,* or *Mangobolo* (Nku. Mal.). *Ngalane* or *Shidjwatepe* (Mal.).

(1) Abbrev. Mal. = Maluleke ; Kho. = Khosen, Antioka ; Nku. = Nkuna ; Mpf. = Mpfumo ; Bil. = Bilene ; Spel. = Spelonken.

136 Sparrows. *Mbawulwane* (yin-tin), (Mpf.) or *Mbeulwane* (Kho. Nku.) swallow. *Psikidyana* (Spel. Mal.). *Tinhwana* (Mpf. Bil.). *Tinkata* (Kho.). *Nkapa* (mu-mi) (Mpf.). *Nsongwana*, (Mpf.). *Nhlekwana*, *Tshamatisa*, *Shindjengeletana* (Mpf. Nku.). *Nadwangafolen* (mu-ba) (Mpf.). *Ñwamutjalatana* (mu-ba) (Mpf.). *Lidjadjana*, (Spel. Mal.). *Timhatana* (Mpf.). *Tinhelwa* (Mpf.). *Ngodzi* (Spel. Mal.). *Khwezu*, *Kololwana*, etc., *Sowa* (dji-ma), sparrow.

Creepers, *Gongondjwane*, lit. the one who knocks. *Shitjemahangala* (Mal.). *Munywane* (Mal.). *Ngobo* (Nku). *Hokwe*, *Ndhlazi*, *Nkoro*.

Rapaces. *Gama* (dji-ma) eagle. *Khoti* (dji-ma) vulture. *Shikotana*, *Mangapfi*, *Shimungu*, *Shihununu*, (Mpf.), or *Khukhunu* (Kho. Mal.). *Shikotlwane*, *Hwati*, *Fukwana* (dji-ma). *Manhengana*, etc.

Runners. *Yintjya* (yin-tin), ostrich.

825 Some birds are the objects of superstitious ideas. First, the mythical lightning bird whose story has been told p. 313. Then the Mampfana, the one who stops travellers (I. p. 339), and the Nhlalala. The *Nhlalala* is the honey-bird. It is a little sparrow of a greyish colour. When a traveller crosses the uninhabited country, it calls his attention by emitting short and repeated cries ; it jumps from one branch to another and does not rest until it has induced the traveller to follow it. It then leads him to a hollow stem where bees have gathered honey. The fortunate wayfarer can eat to his heart's content and afterwards gives the bird the wax. If he desires to be shown a second tree, he has only to burn the wax : the nhlalala not having had its full share of the treat will lead him to another stem, hoping for another chance ; there is so much honey in the second spot that you will certainly leave some for your kind guide! Such are some of the stories told by a boy named Pikinini about the honey-bird.

224 *Mammalia*. My information, on this subject, is far from complete. One ought to join a Native hunting party, and hear the hunters tell their mighty deeds round the fire in the evening, if one wishes to acquire all their knowledge and learn all their queer ideas about the beasts of the bush, which they have carefully observed, and regarding which a great number of stories are in circulation (p. 63-76).

circulation (p. 63-76). I shall have to content myself with giving the names of some Mammalia and relating some superstitions concerning them. 136

Edentata : two kinds are known, the *Mpandjana* (yin-tin), the ant-bear, which is covered with hair, and the *Kwara* (dji-ma) which has scales. The only Cetacea known is the *Nkomu* (yin-tin), the whale.

Solipedes : *Mangwa* (yin-tin) means zebra, and this term is sometimes applied to horses ; this latter animal is called *Hanshi* (dji-ma), evidently a corruption of the English word. *Mbongolo* (yin-tin), donkey. *Mula* or *Mewula*, mule.

Pachyderma : *Ngulube* (yin-tin), wild boar and also, by extension, domesticated pig. *Mpfubu* (yin-tin), hippopotamus.

Ruminantia : *Homu* (yin-tin), ox. *Nyari* (yin-tin), buffalo. *Hamba* (yin-tin, Ro.), *Nyimpfu* (yin-tin, Dj.), sheep. *Mbuti* (yin-tin), goat. *Mhalamhala* (yin-tin), sable antelope, Hippotragus niger. *Mhala* (yin-tin) (Zulu impala). *Mhunti* (yin-tin), duiker *Hongonyi* (yin-tin), gnu. *Mangulwe* (mu-ba). *Mhetlwa* (yin-tin), water buck. *Nhlangu* (yin-tin), reed buck. *Mhofu* (yin-tin), eland, *Nhuthwa* (yin-tin), giraffe, etc.

Proboscidea : *Ndlopfu* (yin-tin), elephant.

Rodentia : *Mpfundla* (mu-mi), hare, *Nhlolo* (yin-tin), rabbit. *Khondlo* (dj -ma), mouse. *Vondo* (dj -ma), *Phephe* (dj-ma), *Ngole* (yin-tin), etc.

Insectivora : *Shitlulandlela*, mole, lit. the one which crosses the road ; it is a bad omen for a mole to cross your path. *Tjukunyana*, a brownish mole which digs its burrows just below the surface of the ground. Hence the fact that a bracelet made of its skin is employed as medicine against the Filaria, a parasite which makes its way under the skin! 136 777 825 755

Carnivora : *Nsimba* (yin-tin), civet cat. *Shipakana*, cat. *Mbyana* (yin-tin), dog. *Mhisi* (yin-tin), hyena. *Hlolwa*, *Nhlati* (mu-ba), fox. *Yingwe* (yin-tin), leopard. *Ndjau* (Ro.), *nghala* (Dj.), lion, etc. 136

Chiroptera : *Tangadana* (dji-ma, Ro.), *Mangadyana*, (mu-ba. Dj.), bat.

Primates : *Mfene* (yin-tin), baboon. *Habu* (yin-tin), monkey.

825 Monkeys are thought to be degenerate human beings, who have lost the habit of working and tilling fields, and thus fallen into their present miserable condition.

816 The collection of Native names of animals which I have compiled
192 is interesting ; first from the linguistic point of view, for purposes of comparison. Bantu philology needs such lists of words on which to base its conclusions. Let me point out that there seems to be a great uniformity in the various South African dialects as regards the names of large animals, the root being the same although the names have been differentiated by the regular phonetic permutations (1) ; names of trees, on the contrary, vary very much, even from one Thonga clan to the other. But these names also interest us as throwing some light on the Bantu conceptions of Nature. The notion of *genus* is not so marked as amongst plants. It is not, however, absent. The different kinds of ducks are called *sekwa*, sekwa-nyari, sekwa-mhala, the word sekwa being a true genus name. The notion of *order* may even be discovered in the classification of mammalia made by Mankhelu when he said : "Women eat only the flesh of animals having *hoofs*, and not that of animals having *paws*" (p. 83).

193 It is curious to inquire to which of the grammatical classes these names belong. Most of them are of the *yin-tin* class, the animal class proper. Torrend makes a connection between the prefix *tin* and the stem *psala*, to beget, to bring forth, and this may be correct. But many are of the *dji-ma* class, which often contains objects forming groups ; animals roaming in companies, as well as the regiments of the army (mabotshu, mabandla, I. p. 456), frequently belong to this class. (Sekwa, duck ; sowa, sparrow ; khoti, vulture ; hanshi, the horse of White people, of the cavalry, etc.). Some mammalia have the personal prefix *ba* for the plural. The mu-ba prefixes are always employed in tales when the animal is personified ; in the few cases here referred to, however, *ba* is used without any idea of personifying the animal ; the bat, the fox and a kind of red antelope (mangulwe) are designated in this way, and I

(1) Compare the names in my list with the Zulu and Nyandja names collected by Miss Werner in the *Revue d'Ethnographie et de Sociologie*. Jan. April 1911.

193 am really unable to give any reason for the fact. A few other names of animals begin with *bu*, the singular prefix in the bu-ma class, which has evidently a collective meaning. *Busuna* is the immense number of mosquitoes which one hears buzzing in the night during the rainy season, whilst one mosquito is *nsuna*, pl. tinsuna; *busukoti* is the crowd of ants swarming in the ants' nest, whilst *nsukoti*, (cl. yin-tin) is one ant, etc.

Phot. A. Borel.

Gebuza, whose nose was torn off by a hyena.

815 Thus, amongst the Bantus, scientific knowledge of animals is still in a very primitive stage and may be compared to that possessed, for instance, by the author of Leviticus.

825 On the other hand, the animal world is not in their eyes so far removed from man as it is with us. Man lives in close connection with the animals, not only when he hunts them and tries to transform himself into "a thing of the bush" (p. 79), but even in ordinary life, and considers them as very similar to himself. For instance, some Thongas believe that animals have a *language*, and try to speak to them. I have already mentioned Pikinini; he was a boy from the Bilen country who stayed with me for a time at Shiluvane, having left Bilene after the defeat of Gungunyana. As he

825 was working one day together with some little Pedi boys, I heard him talking volubly. Evidently he did not expect any answer from his helpers, who knew Thonga but imperfectly :

— "What are you saying?" I asked him. — "Oh! I am speaking to the cock." — "What do you mean?" — "I am asking it if it knows what is going on in our country, at Gungunyana. It answers that it does. This cock is a clever cock. It is a man. When cocks do not know what one asks them, they say *hwi* (descriptive adverb meaning to keep quiet)." — "Are there any other beasts to which one can talk?" — "Certainly, those which belong [765] to the village." — "Dogs?" — "No! Pigeons! When someone dies in the village, the headman must go and gather together all the pigeons, giving them some water or some food, and tell them about the death. Then they begin to coo ; they are satisfied to have been informed, treated like people of the home. If this precaution is omitted, the pigeons will leave the village in the afternoon and never return (1). This happened to a Ngoni of Bilen."

Enchanted animals can also speak, for instance a hyena which has been sent by a wizard. In Rikatla there was a man named Gebuza whose face was entirely disfigured, his nose having been torn off by a hyena ; his story was told as follows. Once a hyena entered the village in the early morning when every one was still asleep. It saluted the people saying :

— "Good morning, you people." — "Good morning" answered the people in the hut. — "Give me fire" demanded the hyena. — "Open the door and take an ember" they said. — "No, open it yourselves!" Gebuza opened the door and the hyena seized his nose in its teeth, and bit it off. This is one of the countless wizard stories. With the exception of these instances I do not think the Natives, as a rule, believe that animals have a language, or that men can speak with them. They do not, however, feel

(1) A curious resemblance may be noted here. Amongst French Swiss peasants and in parts of England and of Germany, when the master of the farm dies the bees must be officially informed of the fact, and some one goes to the bee hives and tells them what has happened; misfortune would otherwise befall them.

themselves so far removed from the animal world as is the case 826
amongst more civilised races.

Another point on which Thongas see a resemblance between 774
man and the animal is this : they believe that both possess the *nuru* (I. p. 478 ; II, p. 77-80). It is true that the nuru is only found in some animals : the eland, the ndakazi antelope, the elephant, the hippopotamus, etc. We shall have to consider this superstition again when dealing with Thonga Animism.

Is this idea of identity between man and the animal pushed 826
so far as a belief that men can transform themselves into animals, 791
and vice-versa? It is certain that in tales men are often changed into hyenas, lions, etc. (See Dukuli, *Les Ba-Ronga*, p. 283 and the story of the Ogre Ziniko (p. 256).) But these are purely fictitious. The theory is by no means generally accepted. In the ordinary course of life such transformations would not be considered possible. But they are certainly thoroughly believed in in the domain of magic. Magicians claim that they can fly through the air, with their axes, transform themselves into the lightning bird and so kill their enemy. But it is the wizards (baloyi) who are considered to possess this power par excellence, especially the faculty of changing human beings into beasts to make them work on their behalf. These ideas will be studied in Chapter III.

I have already mentioned the bird which "stops travellers" 826
(I. p. 339) ; amongst Mammalia a certain Antelope is the object of 777
the same superstitious fear. This is the little red *magulwe* (or *shipene*) whose astragalus bone is employed in divination under the name of malumbi (See Part VI. Letter D). — "When it crosses the road, in front of a travelling party," says Mankhelu, "the leader of the company stops his comrades, goes forward, sits down alone at the spot where the antelope passed, and pours his magical powder into the footprints of the animal. Then he shouts to his companions to come and follow him. Having walked for some time, he takes off all his clothing, and lies down quite naked, as if he were dead. The others continue their march forward. After a while, he jumps to his feet and, making a circuit through the bush, outruns them, without being noticed, and sits down on the road, further on.

825 They come up to him and wonder how he got there. By this rite
777 he has prevented the misfortune which the antelope would have caused to the travellers."

B. CONCEPTIONS REGARDING MAN.

I. *The origin of man.*

773 While the Thonga mind is very little puzzled by the question of the creation of heaven and earth, the origin of man preoccupies it more deeply. I must now enter into some details as to the story of human origin which has been already mentioned (I. p. 21). It contains two parts : the creation of man and the cause of death.

1) The creation of man.

The first human beings came out of the *lihlanga*, the reed, as some say, or the *nhlanga*, the marsh of reeds, according to others. These two versions seem to answer to two different conceptions. The first is that one man and one woman suddenly came out of one reed, which exploded (baleka), and there they were! According to the second, men of different tribes emerged from a marsh of reeds, each tribe already having its peculiar costume, implements and customs. So when you ask about the origin of the iron hoe amongst the Vendas, who possessed it before the Thongas, you will be told : "The Vendas emerged from the marsh of reeds holding them" (1).

The first man and woman are called in the Northern clans

177 (1) I believe the first version to be the true Thonga one. It may be that the idea that all races came out of the marsh of reeds is an alteration of the primitive conception under Nyai influence. The Ba-Nyai say that all men emerged from a big hole, the hole of Myali or Nwari, in the earth, at a time when stones and rocks were still so soft that foot-prints remained marked on them. It has been supposed that the myth of the reed is simply an allusion to a physiological phenomenon, but I do not believe this.

Gwambe and Dzabana. No special story is told of these ancestors 773
of mankind, but their names are still used under certain circumstances. When expelling a disease, in the *hondlola* rite, the medicine man says: "Go away to Gwambe and Dzabana," an expression used concurrently with this: "Go away to Shiburi and Nkhabelane," viz., to the extremity of the land, a long way off; again, when many tales have been told and folks are going to sleep, these tales are also sent away back to Gwambe and Dzabana (p. 212). Why? Perhaps because they are the old, old people, and the tales which are so ancient belong to them! At any rate, by this kind of incantation story-tellers aim at preventing the hearers' sleep from being disturbed by the remembrance of the marvellous things they have been told. In the legends relating to old migrations the "Road of Gwambe" (1) is mentioned. When the ancient peoples passed along it, the earth was not yet solid, so they left the print of their feet, of their mortars, etc., in the rocks, where they are still to be seen on the edge of a river called Hlantsabuhlalu. (Nyai idea? I. p. 22.)

In the Ronga clans, these two ancestors of mankind are called 773
Likalahumba and *Nsilambowa*. The first name means: the one 825
who brought a glowing cinder in a shell, viz., the originator of fire, (Compare the Hlengwe tradition, I. p. 24). Nsilambowa, the name of the woman, means the one who grinds vegetables. The first human beings, according to these names, were those who

(1) What is the connection between this *Gwambe* and the name of *Ma-Gwamba* 101
commonly given to the Thongas of Spelonken (I. p. 19)? It is difficult to say. According to some, there is still a clan descended from Gwambe, the first man, whose chief calls himself Gwambe. The Ba-Venda, when they saw the Thonga merchants bringing their goods from Delagoa Bay or Inhambane, called them Makwapa, Balungwana ba Kwapen, the little White people from Kwapa or Gwamba country, viz., those who bring clothes, beads bought from the Whites. It seems certain that there exists a Gwamba clan somewhere in Gazaland, not far from the Chopi border. A story is told of this Gwamba chief, who sent messengers to Modjadji to obtain rain from her. On their return they refused to cooperate in gathering fuel for their fire and died on the road, where their graves are still to be seen. Other informants give a totally different version of the origin of the term Ma-Gwamba: Gwambe was a chief dwelling on the banks of the Oliphant, near the Dunduli villages; his men, while on a journey, said to the Vendas: "We people of Gwambe even accept old women," viz., if they receive us well, we call them our wives to please them! Hence the name they were given. Still other explanations might be found and I think there is no real connection between Gwambe, the first man, and the Ma-Gwamba.

773 introduced fire and the culinary art into the world! This idea is
826 interesting and seems to show that, to the Native mind, the cooking of food is the pursuit which differentiates man from the animals.

177 In the clans of Maluleke and Spelonken there is a third tradition
773 relating to the first man, but it has certainly been borrowed from the Venda or Pedi tribes. They say the first man was *Rivimbi* and his son *Khudjana* (name transformed into Hobyana according to Thonga phonetics). The Thongas only say that Hobyana is the creator of Heaven and Earth and the first ancestor of the race. But the Vendas and Pedis have a number of traditions about these two heroes (1).

2) The cause of death.

773 When the first human beings emerged from the marsh of
826 reeds, the chief of this marsh sent the Chameleon (Lumpfana)
761 to them, with this message: "Men will die, but they will rise again." The Chameleon started walking slowly, according to his habit. Then the big lizard with the blue head, the Galagala, was sent to tell men: "You shall die and rot." Galagala started with his swift gait and soon passed Lumpfana. He delivered his message, and when Lumpfana arrived with his errand, men said to him: "You are too late. We have already

773 (1) Here is one of the most curious of these traditions, a strange story indeed,
when we reflect that these two personages are the great gods who created the uni-
776 verse! Once, in olden times, Khudjana planted a big pole in the earth, and passed
spokes through it, right to the top. Rivimbi having climbed up, Khudjana took out
177 the lower spokes and went home. His father being unable to get down, the son stole the food prepared for him and ate it at his ease. Then he again put the spokes in their places and the old man came home. But when he wished to have his meal, he found that nothing was left. His wife then gave him Khudjana's portion!

There is great confusion amongst these traditions. According to Mankhelu this Rivimbi, or Luvimbi, is the same as the great rain-maker to whose descendants he went to obtain the rain medicine (p. 320). He is not only the creator of the earth, but the protector of all men, who are his sons. So, if some one wishes to harm a man who is not guilty, the Vendas say to him: "Do not kill Luvimbi's man." If you steal a partridge caught in a trap which was not set by you, they say: "Luvimbi, who stands on that tree, sees you." He would seem to be a superior being, a god (shikwembu), even the chief of gods, endowed with omnipresence and omniscience. Moreover there is a relation between Rivimbi and Nwali, the Ba-Nyai god, who is represented either as father or son of Rivimbi, or identical with him. It may be that the Rivimbi tradition, which is both Pedi and Venda and seems to refer definitely to a first ancestor who has become the great god, has been mixed with the Nwali tradition, which is Nyai, so that ideas of different origins have been intermingled.

accepted another message." That is why men are subject to death. 773 825

This myth is so strongly believed that shepherds, when they see a chameleon climbing slowly up a tree, begin to tease it, and, when it opens its mouth, throw a pinch of tobacco into it, and are greatly amused to see the poor thing change colour, passing from green to orange, and from orange to black, in agony, to the great delight of the little boys ; they thus avenge themselves on the chameleon! (p. 339). 761

The same story[1] is told amongst the Zulus, and other myths of a similar character are found all over Africa, especially amongst the Ba-Rotsi (1). It would be an interesting study to collect them all, and thus to compile the African Genesis. We should probably find that the origin of man and death are the two great subjects on which the imagination of the Bantus has tried to throw some light, and that, though the moral element is strangely lacking in these myths, yet there is a striking resemblance between them and the Biblical story, where an answer to the same questions is given. 171 773

II. *The various human races.*

Have Bantus a clear idea of the human race? What they call *banhu* in Thonga, *bantu* in Zulu, evidently means "black people," the first inhabitants of the country. The Zulus are regarded, owing to their military ability, as a superior race, not however to such an extent as they themselves believe to be the case! Whatever may be their hostility or repugnance to their fellow blacks, they know that they belong to the same species. I am not sure that they hold this idea regarding White people, who are not *banhu* but *balungu*. 609 829

What is the origin of this word? As it is also used in Zulu (abelungo), the etymology suggested is the verb *ku lunga*, to be right, good. White people would then be correct, nice people, to

(1) Compare *Foi et Vie*. Oct. 1910. Les Origines. A. Jalla.

[1] [about the original cause of death. See p. 350, cat. 116-Analyst]

609 the Native (1). However complimentary to us this explanation
829 may be, I very much doubt its accuracy. Firstly, Black people have not generally such a good opinion of us. They admit our superiority in intelligence, but unfortunately have not always found that White people behaved correctly in their dealings with them. Secondly, when we compare the word balungu with *Ñwalungu*, North, *balungwena*, inhabitants of Heaven, (see Chapter II), and with *Mulungu*, the great name for God in Central Africa, we are led to suppose that there may have been ancient mythological traditions, now forgotten, relating to White people, when they were not yet well known.

773 To account for the superiority of the White race, Mankhelu
829 assured me he had heard the following story many years ago, told by his grandfather in the village of Shiluvane, long before the arrival of the missionaries. When Ñwali created the first man, from whom both Whites and Blacks are descended, they were all naked. Gwambe slept with his sister, an act which had been forbidden, and she had a child. Since that time children are born; but this was not the intention of Ñwali, who wished to create adult human beings only! The Gwambe (first ancestor) of the White people showed respect to his father, who was naked, whilst the Gwambe of the Blacks did not; hence the deterioration (onhakala) of the Blacks. "We were fools and have been deprived of everything, and Ñwali said: You Blacks shall wear down your nails to the quick by digging the earth to find food!" As already pointed out, Mankhelu had not the slightest trace of the critical sense. This is evidently the Biblical story very curiously transformed. The idea of an original fault committed by the Black race in the beginning having resulted in the inferior position it now occupies, is, however, met with in many parts of Africa, and is probably autochthonous amongst the Thongas.

"Balungu ba hlulwa hi lifu ntsena" has become a kind of proverb, quoted by Natives when they see the marvels of

(1) Others say that their forefather named the White people *balungu* because they were *clean* (lungs having also that meaning). "They are always clean though they do not wash their bodies! They have no dirt." But these explanations are not quite satisfactory.

civilisation and means : "White people are only overcome by 773
death." I once heard a little boy muttering it when I was playing 829
the harmonium.

Their notions regarding the several European races are very 609
crude. Once when I asked one of them if he knew whence the Whites came, he told me : "The Portuguese came from the sea, the Boers from the mountains." — "And we, missionaries, who are neither Portuguese nor Boers?" — "You come from Heaven," he answered with a charming smile!

Pikinini, who knew how to converse with the cock, once told me what the Bilen people think of the Whites. It was just after the deportation of Gungunyana :

— "Gungunyana is dead. The Portuguese have eaten him!"

— "How is that?"

— "Certainly! The Portuguese eat human flesh. Every one knows it. They have no legs ; they are fishes (tinhlampfi). They have a tail instead of legs. They live in water."

— "Then how do they manage to fight with you and to beat you if they are fishes and have no legs?"

— "Ho! Those who come to fight against us are the young men ; they have legs. They take us and put us all in a steamer which goes far away, far away. This steamer reaches a large rock which is surrounded by water on all sides. This is their country. We are taken out and placed on an island, whilst the soldiers go and fire shots to announce to the great White men-fishes that we have arrived. They choose one of us and make a little cut in his little finger to see if he is fat enough ; if not, he is put into a big basket full of ground-nuts which he must eat in order to become fat. When he is fat enough, they place him in a big, elongated pot of the size of a man, and red-hot. We know these particulars because a man, Ngomongomo, gave us the full explanation. He had been caught, but on the road his gods helped him ; he was covered with an eruption of pimples which was so disgusting that he was left in the island, and brought back here. He saw everything. We first refused to believe that. Now we know that it is the truth!"

Evidently Pikinini was in earnest and these absurd ideas were

609 accepted as facts by the majority of his countrymen in Bilen. Is it not strange to notice that, whilst a great number of Europeans think of the Blacks as being all cannibals, these savages, on the other hand, believe exactly the same thing of us! Of course a closer contact with White people has already led them to a truer knowledge of what we really are, and they have discovered that, after all, there is not such a great difference between the various human races!

In former times the Thongas would seem to have believed that all White people, not only the Portuguese, dwelt in water. They were said to have eyes in front and behind and to see on all sides, so that it was impossible to escape from them. They used to kidnap Black people and take them away.

III. *The human body.*

1) Ideas of Anatomy.

815 The Thongas have never made an anatomic study of a human
826 corpse. They have a riddle to this effect: "Ku pfura ndjilo mungema? — Ba lahla munhu wa ku fa." — "A fire of live coals? — They bury a dead man." As you never put your hand in the fire, so you would not touch a corpse. Nor have they ever made a post mortem examination! What they know of the human body is entirely derived from the inductions they have drawn from oxen, pigs and game which they cut open. Considering that the source of their knowledge is so indirect, one wonders that they have learnt so much of the human physical structure.

192 Having taught a little anatomy to the students of our Institute,
826 I can bear testimony that they have names for most of the bones of the skeleton. *Pala* (dji-ma) means skull; *lihlaya* (li-ti), maxillary bone; *tinyo*, pl. menyo, teeth; *tshuri* (dji-ma), molar tooth (same word as mortar); *litlatla*, clavicle; *likhongotlo*, spine; *khatla* (dji-ma), shoulder blade; *shintjintji*, sternum; *shikangana*, extremity of the sternum; *libambo*, rib; (they believe there are *ten* ribs on each side!); *shikukwana*, humerus; *nkono* (mu-mi), cubitus;

ñwalihlanga, (mu-ba) femur ; *lihandja*, tibia ; they seem to know 192
nothing of the radius and the peroneus ; *guywa-guywana*, rotula ; 826
nhlolo, astragalus ; other bones are called by the name of the region, or the organ, to which they belong : the bone of the pelvis, *nyongwa* (yin-tin), the hip ; the wrist bones, *hlakala* ; those of the palm, *shipapa* ; those of the fingers, *litiho* ; those of the toes, *shikuñwana* ; those of the ankle, *shirendje* ; of the sole, *nkondjo* (mu-mi) ; the thumb is called *khudju* (dji-ma), and the big toe, *the great shikuñwana*.

The different organs are also known : *byongwe* (bu-ma) (Dj.) *bongwe* (Ro.) is the brain ; *tihlo*, pl. *mahlo*, the eye ; *ndlebe* (yin-tin), the ear ; *nhompfu* (yin-tin), the nose ; *nomo*, pl. *milomo*, the lips and the mouth ; *lidjimi*, the tongue ; *nkolo* (mu-mi), the throat ; they know that there are two pipes, one for food, the other for air, but they are not sure which is in front and which behind! *Hahu* (dji-ma), (Ro.), *phaphu* (Dj.), lungs ; *shidyelo*, the stomach ; *mbilu* (yin-tin), the heart ; *shibindji*, the liver ; *libengo*, the spleen ; *lipfalo*, the diaphragm ; *rumbu* (dji-ma), the bowels, including the male internal genitalia ; external genitalia of man and woman are taboo ; *yinso* (yin-tin) means kidneys ; *nhlonge* (yin-tin), skin ; *nwala* (mu-mi) nail ; *nsisi* (mu-mi), hair, etc.

But on pushing the inquiry somewhat further, we begin to notice a gross ignorance of important facts. The one word [843]
nsiha (mu-mi) means nerves, tendons, ligaments, veins and arteries ; *nyimba* is the uterus, but also means pregnancy. Natives seem to think that a new nyimba is created at each pregnancy. They know nothing of the glands and I never discovered a name for the pancreas.

2) Physiological notions.

For this reason it is obvious that they cannot know what really 827
happens in the body, and the marvellous and complicated system of our physical life. The mystery of the nervous system is entirely unknown, as is also the way in which blood (*ngati*, yin-tin) is formed from food, the digestive process, the circulation of the blood and the action of the air upon it, etc. We must not be

827 surprised at this ignorance ; our forefathers, three hundred years ago, were not much more advanced than the Natives are now.

On the other hand, Bantus, and especially Thongas, have a number of physiological ideas, which are pure superstitions, being devoid of any scientific foundation, but are, nevertheless, firmly believed and give rise to a number of practices, rites, and purifications. This is a most interesting subject and its study throws much light on the condition of primitive man. I have tried to explain these physiological conceptions in an article published in "La Revue d'Ethnographie et de Sociologie, Mai 1910." It is not possible to enter into all the details here, and I am obliged to refer the reader to that article for more particulars. However my description of the Life of the Tribe would not be complete if this subject were entirely omitted ; so I will rapidly give a general idea of this curious Native physiology.

561 In the Thonga mind, human life is composed of a certain number
851 of periods which follow each other, each having its particular
827 character.

As we have seen in the Evolution of man (Part I), *the first period* (busahana) extends from birth to the fall of the umbilical cord ; the baby is in a state of contamination owing to the lochia and must not be touched ; from the eighth or ninth day till the weaning takes place, is *the nursing period*, divided into two or three sub-periods by the presentation to the moon and the tying of the cotton string. The child has been progressively received into human society. Up to this day he has been considered as under treatment, because a child is not a complete healthy human being ; he is but *water* (mati), not yet firm ; he is always threatened with disease and so he must continually drink his *milombyana*. The *hondlola* ceremony closes this period and, by the act of weaning, he enters into the *childhood* period. (I. p. 59).

561 Infancy is a *bukhuna*, a state of incompleteness fraught with
827 a certain defilement. Childhood is also a bukhuna, and this contemptible inferiority must be removed by the circumcision rites, the significance of which is both physiological and social. When they wish to marry, viz., *to pass from the class of unmarried to that of married people*, young men and women must again

undergo a number of ceremonies of a social rather than of a physiological character. 561 827

But, in addition to these conceptions of human life, which determine so many acts and customs, there are at least *five physiological phenomena* which are believed to be attended with defilement, and which call for special precautions and rites : the menstrual flow, the lochia, disease, death and the birth of twins. To protect individuals, the family, or the clan, against these dangerous defilements, is one of the main preoccupations of any adult Thonga ; and to gain this end they submit to endless ceremonies of purification, and observe innumerable taboos ; thus it is plain that these physiological conceptions, absolutely unscientific and wrong as they are, play an immense part in their lives and cause them any amount of unnecessary trouble. 783

I need not deal at length with these five greatly dreaded physiological events. As regards menses, the subject has been treated in Vol. I, p. 187. (Compare Vol. II, p. 47) ; as regards lochia, see Vol. I, p. 43 ; concerning disease, we shall hear further in our third chapter. The tremendous contaminating power of death has been shown in the explanation of funeral rites, and the birth of twins will be studied more closely in the next chapter. The importance of these facts in the system of taboos will also be explained in Chap. IV.

The sexual act, though not considered as attended with contamination in the same manner as the five other physiological facts just referred to, is, however, subject to very characteristic restrictions. I have already explained them when dealing with conjugal life (I. p. 188). It will, however, perhaps not be superfluous to treat of this question again, considering it in its physiological aspect and in relation to the Bantu conception of Nature, and giving at the same time precise references to all the cases hitherto met with. 827 834 783

Let us first remark that, as some of my informants said, the sexual act when indulged in before marriage, by boys and girls in their gangisa (I. p. 150) has quite another bearing than when accomplished by married people. It would seem that it is not the physical act in itself which is attended with all these taboos,

827 but the act in as far as it is a regular manifestation of the
834 collective life of the family ; in this case only does it have its
783 terrible repercussion on the life of the community. Married people who have regular sexual relations, "who are hot," constitute a danger in the three following connections.

1) They are dangerous to those *individual members of the community* who are in a weak state of health and in whom disease would gain new strength if they entered into contact with married people. This is true of the master of the village when he is seriously ill (I. p. 133), of the mother who has given birth to a baby (I. p. 43), of the baby itself which is considered as "being not yet firm," (and sexual relations are forbidden to its parents until they have tied the cotton string round its loins) (I. p. 45, 58) ; of circumcised boys (I. p. 80, 93) ; of convalescents, who must not tread on the same paths as married folk or, if they do so, must tie round their ankles a root of the *sungi* juncus as a protection against the emanation, or perspiration (nyuku) which married people have left in their footprints or on the grass. During their whole convalescence sexual relations have been strictly forbidden to them (Ch. III. B. III. 4).

2) Sexual relations constitute a danger *to the community itself* as a whole, when its existence is threatened. They are prohibited in time of epidemic. Mboza, having heard that a proclamation had been issued in Lourenço Marques on account of an epidemic, was convinced that the object of the decree was to suspend sexual relations amongst the White community! The same law applies to all marginal periods, because these are critical times in which the life of the community is threatened. This is the case during the Great Mourning (I. p. 150). Mourners must *keep quiet ;* if not, there might be quarrels, the mourning might "overcome them." Again when moving the village to another place (I. p. 320), the same rule must be observed.

3) Married people again are taboo in certain operations or pursuits, the success of which would be endangered if they took part in them or if they indulged in their ordinary relations. It must not be a married person who sets fire to the furnace in which

the potteress fires her pots (1) (p. 115). Why is this so? No 834
doubt because if married people, who are hot, did it, the fire would 783
become uncontrollable and all the pots would crack. The same 827
reason explains why sexual relations are so strongly prohibited in hunting and fishing. The game or fish would be so wild that it would be impossible to catch it ; big game would probably kill the hunters (p. 61).

This conception of the sexual act explains why certain functions in the ritual must be performed by young children, still without knowledge of sexual matters, or by old women past the time of childbearing and consequently belonging to the asexual class (I. p. 466).

How is it possible to explain, on the other hand, that this act, so severely prohibited on so many occasions, should be the great purifying act by which the community gets rid of the defilement of death and returns to normal life? We have seen that this is the case after the death of an important person in the village as well as when the village itself moves to another place, probably in consequence of defilement by the loss of some of its members. Notice that the sexual act, in order to obtain the desired result, must be accomplished in the ritual fashion, i. e. s. n. i. (I. Annotatio 2 and 13). It would seem that, in the Thonga mind, death defiles not 834
only the belongings of the deceased, his implements, his assegais, 783
even his fire, but also his parents, even the parents of his wife, and 761
above all, those secretions of the genital organs which are the very 827
fountain of their life, and through which the community is maintained and multiplied. They must be cleansed in order that the social group may re-enter upon a normal state. The ceremonies which we have described (I. p. 152-156 and 320-328) are highly significant. Each couple must perform the rite in turn and all must participate in a collective lustration which takes

(1) According to the Rev. Ed. W. Smith the same rule is observed in the smelting operations of the Ba-Ila. A little boy and a little girl are put into the kiln when it is about a foot high and they must crack a bean in their mouths and swallow it. We have here a very good example of Bantu primitive philosophy. The innocence or, as we may say, the *coolness*, of the little ones will prevent the flame from being too fierce and spoiling the whole operation, whilst the slow cracking of the bean will ensure the success of the smelting process (Smith and Dale, *The Ila-Speaking People*, I. p. 205).

834 place at a given spot and according to a given order of precedence.
783 This will bring about the definite restoration of the village and a new and pure life will henceforth be possible.

761 I ought perhaps to offer some excuse for having dwelt at some
827 length on a subject which is generally left alone as indelicate. I hope however that my readers will agree with me that all these physiological conceptions and all these strange customs, far from being of a lascivious or licentious character, denote, on the contrary, a deep and earnest conception of life and an aspiration towards purity which it is most interesting to observe. They are at the same time amongst the most striking manifestations of Bantu Dynamism.

827 Beside these great principles of Thonga physiology, I may
576 mention a few other ideas relating to the various secretions of the human body.

578 *Spitting* (ku thuka) is a sign of want of respect, as we have seen (p. 310). It is especially prohibited in the presence of people who are eating, and if any one should spit, they will insult the culprit, saying to him : "Eat your own shikohlolo!" — When some one expectorates, others present will cover the phlegm with sand, not on account of taboo, but from disgust.

826 *Blood* (ngati, yin-tin) is also instinctively covered with sand, as
791 soon as it has been shed. This is a taboo, because wizards might use it to bewitch you! The charms of the wizards are commonly called *tingati*, bloods.

827 As regards *sweat* (nyuku, mu-mi), although I cannot assert that the idea is universal, I think it is conceived as coming from outside and falling on men like the dew (mbere) on the grass. When they enter a place which is close, Natives say : "There is sweat here." The etymology of this word is *ku nyuka*, to melt.

Excrement (matjimba) is looked upon as disgusting, but there is no taboo in connection with it.

Yawning (yahlamula) is attended with no superstition.

Hiccough (shitikwane) is not feared in children, but very much so in the case of sick people.

Belching (bisa) is sometimes considered as the result of having been bewitched, especially if the patient becomes thin. Magicians

also belch, to show the mysterious power hidden within them. 827

When any one *sneezes* it is the signal for bestowing upon him good wishes : "Butomi ni burongo!" — "Life and sleep!" The sneezer himself may begin to pray as follows : "Bupsayi! Bukwari! (two liturgical words of invocation to the gods) I pray to you! I have no anger against you! Be with me, and let me sneeze! Let me know sleep and let me know life, that I may go by the road, that I may find an antelope (dead in the bush), that I may take it on my shoulders ; or that I may go and kill 'ndlopfu bukene,' an elephant, (viz., meet with a girl and obtain her favour), etc. Now I say it is enough, you my nose!"

Cutting the *hair* has been referred to already (I, p. 146, II. p. 99). 826
In Tembe and Nondwane there is a curious superstition regarding hair : it is taboo to throw it away without precaution, otherwise a bird called *makhondjwana*, or *ñwantshekuto*, might find it and line its nest with it, and your hair would not grow any more!

IV. *The human soul.*

Thongas have a quantity of names to designate the *psychic* 826
faculties and generally locate them in various organs of the body. 828
Patience resides in the liver, and the identification is so complete that there is but one word to express both the organ and the virtue : *shibindji*! *Hatred* is located in the spleen, and both are called *libengo* (from ku benga, to hate). *Mbilu*, the heart, is the seat of *genius* and intellectual gifts. A man expert in certain arts and crafts has been taught by his heart. From the heart come the decisions of the will : a heathen cannot be converted to Christianity because his heart has not yet told him to be so (mbilu a yi si hlaya). To have a good heart implies kindness, compassion. The chest, *shifuba*, not the lungs, is the seat of intelligence and eloquence (as pectus in Latin). A dumb man is a man "whose chest is dead." The diaphragm either *lipfalo*, sing., or *timpfalo*, plur., or *mapfalo*, is the conscience ; its contractions are identical with qualms of conscience (p. 75). The head and the bowels do not seem to be the seat of any special faculty.

774 But although Natives locate the psychic faculties in the different
763 organs, they certainly believe in an independent psychic principle, in a *soul*. On this point, however, their ideas are most confused. They call it *moya*, spirit, and in the Ronga clans, *hika*, breath (the plural mahika, in the expression "ku ba ni mahika," means to be out of breath). This is the vital principle of man, and when a person is dying, his relatives sit near him "waiting for the departure of breath" (langusela ku suka ka hika). "The spirit has gone," — "moya wu sukile," they say, when death has come. They have no theory as regards the way the breath goes out of the body, nor do they stop the nostrils or the mouth to prevent its escape (1).

774 A third name for soul is *ntjhuti* (mu-mi), or *shitjhuti* (Ro.), *ndjuti* (Dj.) *shadow*. It seems to apply more especially to the departed soul rather than to the psychic principle of the living. I have been assured that one cannot dream of the shintjuti of any one still alive, but only if he is dead. The shadow, as such, is not subject to many taboos or superstitious fears. They do not fear to tread on the shadow of a chief, for instance. It may even be questioned if they identify the material shadow with the shitjhuti, the spiritual part of man which separates from his body at death (2). At any rate many think that it is the shitjhuti which becomes shikwembu, the ancestor god.

In former times Thongas feared to look at their own reflection in a pool. They seem to have passed that stage now. The reason was perhaps that they thought their spiritual principle to be

775 (1) A Native of Botshabelo, near Middleburg, Transvaal, asserted in my hearing
825 that in this part of the Sutho nation it was believed that the human soul escaped from the body at death in the form of a Copris beetle. The grave is not filled up with earth until a Copris has been seen in the neighbourhood; and if a hawk appears at the same time the satisfaction is still greater; the beetle has transformed itself into a hawk and the soul has in truth found its way out. Strange to say, when these Ba-Sutho give a patient medicine and see that it has had the desired effect, they say: "It has agreed with the Copris;" whilst if the patient dies they say: "The Copris has refused the medicine."

774 (2) In the following story a direct relation is established between the real shadow and the vital principle. A Ronga magician, Shidzabalane, used to show his supernatural power in the following way: he slept on the ground and ordered a mortar to be placed on his chest and three women to pound mealies in it. This seemed to make no impression on him (a fact which can easily be explained if he was in a state of catalepsy). But it suddenly occurred to one of these women that he had perhaps passed into his shadow, so she hit the shadow with her pestle. The magician at once rose, crying out; he had really left his body and entered into his shadow!

identical with their image. This notion seems to be at the root of 774
the fear they show of being photographed, as we shall see directly.

We see therefore that Thongas are not at all dogmatic on this subject. The soul is at the same time the breath, viz., something of the nature of the wind, the shadow, the image, the external likeness, or fashion of man as opposed to his flesh.

Whatever may be the original notion, they consider the human being as double and capable of unsheathing itself on certain occasions ; their conception on this point may throw more light on their ideas concerning the nature of the soul.

Some believe that the *unsheathing* always takes place during the night and that the soul comes back when its owner awakes ; this is, par excellence, the case in regard to witches, who unsheath by their magical power and bewitch people during the night, as we shall see. But, though the belief is not universal, some think that all souls go away (or die) during sleep. I heard a boy earnestly praying one evening that his soul might come back to him next morning! This is a kind of physiological normal unsheathing which is attended with no bad results. But a pathological unsheathing also exists, and is very dangerous. It may be caused by the photograph of a man being taken. Ignorant Natives [609]
instinctively object to being photographed. They say : "These White people want to steal us (pepula) and take us with them, far away into lands which we do not know, and we shall remain only incomplete beings." When shown the magic lantern, you hear them pitying the men shown on the pictures, and saying : "That is how they ill-treat us when they take our photographs! (1)"

But the great and dangerous parting of soul and body, which 774
causes certain death, is that which wizards operate by their magic 754
charms. We shall study these strange conceptions in Chapter 761
III. They firmly believe that such is the result of witchcraft ; so, when some one is dying, and the divinatory bones have revealed that the disease was caused by a certain *noyi* (witch or wizard), the

(1) The following reflection well illustrates the superstitious fear which Natives have of likenesses of the dead. Before the 1894 war broke out, I had gone to show the magic lantern in remote heathen villages, and people accused me of having caused the disturbance by bringing to life again (pfusha) men who had died long ago.

754 magician shuts him in with the dying man in the hut and gives him
774 the following command : "Bring back the spirit which you have taken and hidden somewhere." Some magicians, who are more
761 powerful than the wizards, pretend to be able to find the stolen spirit and so to restore the patient to health. In cases of epilepsy, or of any psychic trouble attended with unconsciousness, when the sick person returns to his senses, they triumph : have they not brought back the soul? But they say that this must be done in haste. No time must be lost!

775 Lastly, the final unsheathing of personality takes place at death. The body becomes rotten, but the shadow goes away and continues its life as a god, shikwembu. The belief in the continuation of life after death is universal, being at the base of Ancestrolatry, which is the religion of the tribe. We shall study the ideas relating to the future life when dealing with the gods.

What Thongas can absolutely not understand is the resurrection of the body. "Mbuti yi fa, yi bola ; homu yi fa, yi bola ; munhu a fa, a bola!" — "The goat dies and rots, the ox dies and rots, man dies and rots!" answers the sceptical Thonga when he hears the story of the resurrection.

On the whole their ideas of future life are not so very different from those of the ancient Greeks, who believed that the human soul went after death to the realm of shadows.

787 *Dreams* are not generally liked by the Thongas. If something
828 they happened to dream really takes place, it "disgusts" them (nyenyetsa). When a man has seen a woman several times in his dreams, especially if she was pregnant, he will consult the bones. If he dreams that he has relations with her, he may go next day and hit her with a stick. He leaves the stick on the ground and goes away without a word. According to Mboza, this is done to get rid of the obsession, and to prevent the dream from becoming reality. That is the reason, I suppose, why a Christian boy once said to his missionary : "I dream of many people, but I keep quiet!" Amongst Thongas dreams do not seem to play the great part which the animistic theory attributes to them in the formation of primitive beliefs.

Conclusion of Chapter I. Classification of Thonga Conceptions of Nature and Man.

During the World Missionary Conference at Edinburgh, the question of the various religions was discussed one day in connection with the preaching of the missionary message. Speakers frequently mentioned Animism in their discourses. In the gallery which was reserved for missionaries' wives, a lady wrote a few words on a slip of paper and passed it to a gentleman who happened to be sitting not far from her : — "Can you tell me what animistic religions are?" was the question it contained. Unfortunately the answer given by the gentleman is unknown. He probably felt somewhat embarrassed... The lady was quite right in putting the question, as few people really understand what is meant by this term! It is not so easy to give at a moment's notice, a thorough and adequate definition of its meaning on a slip of paper. 774

The South African tribes are regarded as animistic in their beliefs. They belong to that section of mankind which is said to profess the animistic religion. But in what does their Animism consist? Since Tylor first invented the word Animism and defined it as "the belief in spiritual beings," it has acquired a wonderful popularity, but it has been used so indiscriminately that it has lost very much of its definiteness and it has been necessary for modern Anthropology to restrict its meaning in order to maintain scientific precision.

Animism according to Prof. Marett (*The Threshold of Religion*, p. 15.) implies not merely the attribution of personality and will, but of "soul or spirit." He terms *Animatism* conceptions according to which natural objects are endowed with personality and will only, but not with a distinct existence as spirits. In as far as the power attributed to natural objects is not clearly personified, but conceived of as a more or less independent energy, or virtue, we are dealing with *Dynamism* and not Animism. To these distinctions I would add another, which is essential. When speaking with savages or semi-primitive men, you sometimes hear them expressing ideas, giving explanations which are purely *personal*, whilst others of their notions are *collective*. When we wish to ascertain the conceptions of a tribe as a whole, we must lay much more stress on this latter kind ; they are generally incorporated in rites and customs which every one accepts ; they are really *beliefs*, whilst those of the first category are merely *ideas* springing from the imagination of the savage.

774 Having traced the broad lines of our classification let us now see
771 how far the Thonga conceptions are animistic, animatic or dynamistic.

1) Individual ideas.

In a certain year, the *mintjhopfa* trees (p. 19) did not bear fruit. A Rikatla boy, named Zinyao, took a stick and walked through the bush, belabouring all the ntjhopfa shrubs, scolding them because they had not done their duty. An ethnographer, anxious to penetrate into the mysteries of primitive souls, might infer from this fact that Thongas believe in the personality of trees, and that each tree possesses a spirit; this would however be absolutely false. Zinyao was doing the same thing as a little boy who hits the table against which he has knocked his head, or as a little girl who breaks her doll because she is angry with it. The same boy, who was evidently endowed with a strongly animistic tendency, once saw a big moth fall to the ground; a hen at once ran towards it and devoured it. Zinyao watched very attentively, and I heard him muttering to himself: "The Son-of-Moth goes to the Son-of-Hen, yonder, and asks him to pay a fine, because, says he, I have been eaten by you there on the earth." If this reflection were taken seriously, it would mean that, to the Thonga mind, each animal has a soul which continues to exist after death, and even that wrongs done to an animal during its earthly life must be repaired in the after world. This conclusion would be absolutely erroneous. No one seriously believes in a continued existence of animals after death; and, as to a final judgment, there is no idea of it, even as regards human beings, who are believed to be immortal! These were the *personal views* of Zinyao.

I would place in the same category the description of the fight between the moon and the sun, as given by Spoon (p. 307). The same informant on another occasion gave me an eloquent and graphic account of the battle of the water near the lake of Rikatla, when the rain has been falling for many days: "In the hollow there is a papyrus marsh which becomes filled with water; at a quarter of an hour's distance the lake itself is swollen by the rain; there is a canal which joins marsh and lake; so the waters flow into that canal from both sides; they meet in the middle and fight: but the water from the papyrus marsh comes with greater force, and after a while it overcomes the other current and makes its way triumphantly to the lake!" These individual ideas are either animatic (idea of trees, of sun and moon, of water,

lightning), or animistic (Son-of-the-Moth). But they are not of much 771
importance. They belong to the same category as the description given 774
by the Psalmist of the sun as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, or to that of Homer comparing the break of the day to a young damsel with rosy fingers. This is poetry, mere personification of natural objects, or forces, and not beliefs. The poetical tendency is very marked amongst primitive races. It may be that ideas of this kind were more firmly held in former times, if the tribe has really passed through a more mythological phase, a hypothesis for which there are some grounds.

2) Collective beliefs.

The beliefs of the Thongas which deserve to be called by that name 771
because they are universal and express themselves in important rites and 769
customs, are the following :

1. The human soul continues its existence after death, when it is 775
endowed with new powers which make it an object of awe and fear. *The spirits of the ancestors* are the main objects of religious worship. They form the principal category of spirits (psikwembu).

2. Although the spirits of the departed generally have nothing to [789]
do with people other than their descendants, some of them, especially *those belonging to foreign tribes*, can take possession of living men and cause troubles which must be cured by a process of exorcism. This is the second category of spirits.

3. Some individuals have the power of magically unsheathing them- 774
selves during the night, and their spirit goes out to torment, or to kill 754
and eat other people. These are *the wizards* (baloyi) ; this third cate- 791
gory of spirits accomplish their wicked deeds when separated from the body, but their body is still living and they re-enter it. These three beliefs are distinctly animistic.

4. There is in man, and in a few large animals, a semi-spiritual 771
principle, the *nuru*, which escapes from the body when the individual is 774
killed in war, or in hunting, and through which the dead man, or animal, 828
avenges himself or itself on the murderer. What is the relation between the nuru and the shadow (sitjhuti)? This is not stated. The nuru seems to be of a more material nature, as it can enter a root, and it remains attached to the corpse and the bones of the person or animal killed. This category of spiritual enemies, probably invented under the influence of fear and remorse, has no connection with ordinary people,

771 and only troubles those who have killed, rendering them, as is generally
774 believed, insane. — The nuru belief seems to be a compromise between
828 Animism and Dynamism. (See p. 77-80.)

5. There are in plants, animals, stones, hidden virtues which can be
789 either useful or harmful to man. Medicine-men (tinanga) possess a more or less esoteric knowledge of such, and magicians (bangoma), endowed with special powers, can acquire a control over these virtues and use them in medical art, or in magic. — This is true Dynamism.

6. Certain natural objects, such as the sea, the bush fire, are sometimes vaguely personified. — This is Animatism.

772 7. But above them all is Heaven, Tilo, which is sometimes looked on as a real being, sometimes as an impersonal power, a number of mysterious superstitions finding their explanation in this strange and perhaps obsolete notion of Heaven. — This is more than Animatism and seems to be a vague theistic, even monotheistic, idea.

771 The essential difference between Animism and Dynamism seems to
774 me clear. But it is by no means absolute. We shall often meet with rites which belong to both domains, or bear an intermediate character. In the following chapters the exact nature and influence of these various kinds of spirits and impersonal forces will be studied, and I hope that an explanation of all the facts concerning them will throw more light on the subject and show that, at any rate, Thonga Animism is very different from the Animism of the Dutch East Indies, for instance, where men speak of thousands of spirits of the earth, air, water, mountains and trees ; very different also from the fetichism met with in other Bantu tribes of Central and Western Africa.

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82 Before leaving this chapter, in which I have tried to sketch what I have
789 called by the rather pretentious term of The Natural Philosophy of the Bantus, and as a preparation for the explanation of the religious and dynamistic rites described in the following chapters, I think it advisable to set forth the principles which seem to underlie most of these rites, and which may be called the *axioms of primitive mentality*.

As regards what are commonly called *magic rites* I contend that they are in no sense purely arbitrary but that they rest on certain definite principles. These axioms of primitive mentality are what anthropologists fittingly call collective representations, viz., everybody believes

them. Whatever may be their origin, they form a part of the mental make up of every Native. A careful study of the rites reveals at least three such axioms: Like acts on like and produces like; the part represents the whole and acts on the whole; the spoken wish produces the desired result. 82 789

1) *Like acts on like and produces like.* All the elements of Nature are dependent on each other, and if there is a similarity between two of them, they are at once brought into a special relation with each other and begin to influence each other. The application of this principle is universal, in the religious as well as in the dynamistic domain. The Native mind is extremely quick at perceiving a similarity between the most heterogeneous objects or phenomena, and immediately establishes a causal relation between them. We have already met with scores of instances of this law. *Colour* acts on colour; black sheep and black smoke produce a black cloud full of rain (p. 318). *Form* produces a similar form; a necklace of maize grains round the neck of a small-pox patient produces an eruption of small, transparent, pustules which are not dangerous, in place of the large, thick, deadly ones. (See Chapter III. A.) *Disintegration* produces disintegration; the chewing of a bean ensures the melting of the iron ore in the kiln (p. 359). *A certain state of mind* produces a similar condition in living beings, and even in material phenomena; the continence of little children ensures control over the flame of the furnace (p. 115) whilst the passion of married people accelerates disease, and increases the fury of wild beasts, (p. 61) etc. (1)

This kind of magic has been called *imitative magic.* A corollary of this principle is that the image or object representing a thing is in close relation with the thing itself, and any action performed on the image will have its repercussion on the thing represented.

(1) To show how far this action of like on like can go, let me quote this final example which I gave in my paper on *The Magic Conception of Nature amongst Bantus (South African Journal of Science,* Nov. 1920). A magician has had the good luck to discover a crow's nest full of young. He climbs up the tree, and ties all the little birds together by their feet. The mother crow, however, is not at a loss to deliver her progeny. She brings each day a leaf taken from different trees, and places it in the nest. The magician keeps watch. He climbs the tree, looks at the leaf, and recognizes the tree from which it has been taken. He then goes and digs up a piece of root from that tree. After a few days he will have collected quite a bundle of different roots. By that time the little crows will be free, the string which bound them having given way, or having rotted, and the magician will possess a medicine of first rate quality. By means of it he will be able to free any patient from any disease or worry by which he is held fast. 825 755

82 789 2) *The portion of a complexus acts on the whole.* The elements of Nature are considered as forming complexuses in which the component parts are united in such a manner that they react on each other. The body forms such a complexus ; an isolated organ can therefore act on the whole body or replace it. (See the case of the trumpet of heaven (p. 314) which is the femur of the bird of lightning and which is used to expel the thunderstorm). But there are much more complicated complexuses, for instance the village, muti. When death strikes its chief or any of its members, everything is contaminated (I. p. 143). Material contact is of paramount importance here ; but more spiritual considerations are also taken into account in establishing these complexuses. Why is it the first wife of the hunter who must shut herself up in the hut in order to save her husband from the fury of the hippopotamus (p. 69)? Because she is united to him by a mysterious tie, being the lawful, true wife (I. p. 284). The community of life is more complete between her and her husband than between the hunter and his minor wives. For this reason, I prefer to call this form of magic *communionist magic* rather than sympathetic magic, the term generally employed. In many magic rites imitative magic and communionist magic are combined.

3) *The words in which a wish is emphatically expressed produce the desired result.* Primitive man in the hierarchic form of his social group, is accustomed to command and to be obeyed. He attaches great importance to his word, and intends natural forces to accomplish his will as well as his subordinates. This may be one of the reasons for the prevalence of this kind of magic, which has inspired incantations, imprecations, etc. There are no doubt other reasons, and the forms of verbal magic are numerous.

It is evident that we cannot assign any scientific value to any of these axioms of primitive mentality. They are absolutely false. It is not true in actual life that like produces like, that the part acts on the whole, and that the expressed wish produces the desired result. The magic rite may be attended with some objective result in as much as its performance gives the performer greater confidence in himself, thus producing an auto-suggestion favourable to the success of the operation. Moreover the magicians develope certain subliminal powers which are not yet well understood but which are real and may be effective (especially in the domain of divination). But magic rites are utterly irrational ; they are doomed to disappear before the advance of Civilization and Science.

p. 371

CHAPTER II

RELIGION.

About the end of the XVIIIth century, a Portuguese military commander visited the Bay, and, after having spent a year and eight months in the country, sent to the Prelate of Mozambique a very curious report on the cultivation, trade and civilisation of the land (p. 141). The following sentence is found in his report : — "All the inhabitants are Hottentots, and have no religion." That he should have had erroneous ideas concerning the distinction between Bantu and Hottentot tribes is but natural ; the ethnology of South Africa was not yet known. But that, after such a long sojourn amongst the Natives, he should have declared that these people had no religion seems indeed strange! I can, however, understand the error, and excuse it. Amongst the Thongas there are no temples, no special day set apart for worship, no priest class, in fact, nothing external to attract attention to their religion. Even if he had been present at any of the religious ceremonies, the visitor might very well have mistaken them for ordinary family gatherings, as he would not have noticed anything like religious awe in the offering of the sacrifice, stolen by the *batukulu* (I. p. 162), in the prayer cut short a[illegible] laughter, or in the songs, which would be of the usual typ[illegible]ps even of a somewhat obscene character. Yet, notwithstanding all this, how real is the *Ancestrolatry*, the Religion of the Thongas, of, in fact, all the South African Bantus! How frequent and manifold are its manifestations! This is *the first, and most perceptible of their religious intuitions*, and any European who has stayed in their villages, learnt their language, and tried to understand their customs, will have had an opportunity of familiarizing himself with this religion. But there is a *second set of religious intuitions*, less

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771 easy to perceive. In the quartz of the South African veldt, miners, in their investigations, sometimes strike a reef : they crush the hard stone, wash it, apply to it certain chemical tests and find there is gold in the reef. This is similar to an experience which I once had when conversing with Thonga natives. Quite unexpectedly I heard them speaking of *Heaven*, not as a kind of impersonal being, but as a king, endowed with great power and omniscience, who must be feared by thieves, because he knows them. Persevering in my inquiries, I discovered this second set of religious intuitions, quite distinct from the first, viz., the *Deistic Conception of Heaven*. I intend now to describe these two parts of the Thonga religious system. Later on we may discuss their relation to each other. "System" is perhaps too big a word, for no Native philosopher or theologian has ever classified this somewhat confused mass of religious ideas, and we must not look for anything logical and organic. We may even meet with contradictions, conflicting statements... While trying to bring some order into the subject, I will endeavour at the same time to give a faithful and reverent explanation of Native ideas.[1]

A. ANCESTROLATRY.

I. *The Ancestor-Gods (Psikwembu).*

1) The name of the ancestor-gods.

769 Any man who has departed this earthly life, becomes a
776 *shikwembu*, a god. We shall show, later on, that to translate
193 "shikwembu" by god (with a small "g") is by no means incorrect. The word is indeed interesting, but unhappily no light is thrown on it by etymology. It belongs to the shi-psi class, the class of instruments. Take the verb "famba" to walk ; put the prefix "shi" in front of it, and change the final "a" into "o" and you obtain "shifambo" — "the thing with which one walks!" So shikwembu would mean "the thing with which one *kwemba*." Only this

[1] [For complete discussion of Thonga religion, see pp. 372-450, category 116. -- Analyst]

stem *kwemba* is never used, and its meaning is unknown. There 769
is another form, *nkwembu*, of the class mu-mi, very rarely used, and 776
having the same meaning, and the word *bukwembu*, the abstract 193
noun derived from the same root. Bukwembu is the "power which creates life and death, which gives riches, or which makes poor," says Viguet. In Pedi the ancestor-gods are called *badimo*, a word which seems to be related to *Khedimo* (above, in heaven). But I have heard this connection doubted (1). In Zulu the etymology of *indhlozi* and *itongo*, employed to designate the ancestor-gods, is also unknown, which is a pity, as it would have been interesting to see if the stem from which they come also means above. Is it not strange that in these three closely- [171]
connected languages the terms used for the spirits, about which they have exactly the same ideas, are absolutely without any linguistic relation? In Sutho, these spirits belong to the class "mu-ba," the class of persons, which seems natural. In Zulu their two names are of the class yin-tin and dji-ma, respectively ; in Thonga they belong to the shi-psi class. This dissimilarity is indeed curious.

2) Categories of Ancestor-Gods.

Since every human being becomes a shikwembu after death, [766]
there are consequently many categories of these. What is the fate
of little children? If they die in infancy no religious ceremony is 776
performed over their grave, nor are any prayers offered to them. 769
The twig rite (I. p. 142) only begins for children who have died at the age of puberty. Infants are, however, seen in the sacred woods amongst the adult gods. This is one of the points about

(1) The Vendas call the ancestor-gods *badzimo*, which is evidently the same word as the Sutho badimo. The Rev. Th. Schwellnus told me he thought that the etymology of this word was the verb dzima (in Thonga tima) which means to extinguish (Timula tora means to quench the thirst). The badzimo would thus be those who bring relief, who remove anguish. As this stem dzimo under various forms is widespread amongst the Bantu tribes to designate the ancestor-gods, it would be interesting to know if the corresponding verb dzima also exists and if this etymology is clearly established. The word *ntimu*, sacred wood, in Thonga, may perhaps come from the same root.

776 which there is no very clear explanation ; doubtless the matter did
769 not seem worthy of inquiry!

The two great categories of gods are *those of the family*, and *those of the country*, the latter being those of the reigning family. They lo not differ as regards their nature. In national calamities those of the country are invoked, whilst, for purely family matters, those of the family are called upon.

769 Moreover, each family has two sets of gods, those *on the father's side* and *those on the mother's*, those of "kweru" and those of
776 "bakokwana" (I. p. 268). They are equal in dignity. Both can
602 be invoked, and the divinatory bones are always called on to decide to which the offering must be made. It would seem, however, as if the gods of the mother's side were more tender-hearted and more popular than those of the father's. The reason for this is, perhaps, that relations are easier with the family of the mother than with that of the father. It is also just possible that it is a relic of the matriarchal period, when the ancestors of the mother alone were known, and consequently invoked. At any rate, the part played by batukulu nephews in the offerings shows that they are the true representatives of the gods, not of those of their father, but of their mother.

776 Two other categories of gods, which I have sometimes heard mentioned, are the *Gods of assagais* (psikwembu psa matlhari)
769 and *the Gods of bitterness* (psa shibiti). The former are those who
766 have been killed in battle ; the latter are those who have been drowned, killed by a wild beast, or who have committed suicide, or the pregnant woman who has been buried without being cut open (I. p. 166). In most of these cases, as is evident, the corpse has not been buried with the due rites and ceremonies ; the deceased has not been properly cared for : hence his bitterness ; or, as in the case of the pregnant woman, something has been buried without having first breathed its last breath (I. p. 140). In the case of the suicide, the poor man who hanged himself was full of sadness ; "The great bitterness is the rope", said Mboza. In most of these cases no one was present at the death! These gods are therefore angry, and are the most to be feared.

000 The *Gods of the Bush, Psikwembu psa Nhoba*, are also especially

The Gods of the Bush, Psikwembu psa Nhoba, are also especially dreaded. There is a little song which is sung as a welcome to travellers who reach their home safely : 776 484 533

> Shikwembu sha nhoba shi etlele !
> Shi etlele, banhwanyana !
> Amadikeo-dikeo-dikeo !
> The god of the bush has remained asleep !
> He has remained asleep, young girls !
> Hurrah ! hurrah ! hurrah !

The spirits of the departed who wander about in the bush, not having been properly buried, try to attack innocent travellers. You are fortunate to escape their anger! For this reason they often say to a relative who is starting out on a journey : "Go with your god," viz., the special ancestor-god who can protect you against the dangers of the bush. 769 776 784

I have also heard mention of *Shikwembu sha tihanye*, the god of quarrels. When an offering prescribed by the bones and presented to a certain ancestor-god has not had the desired result, people say : "This god is a god of quarrels. Let us make an offering to the others so that they may scold him." 776 769

3) The Abode of the Ancestor-Gods and their Mode of Life.

Ideas on these two points are very confused, even contradictory. Some say that the departed go to a great village *under the earth*, a village where everything is white (or pure, "ku basa") ; there they till the fields, reap great harvests, and live in abundance, and they take of this abundance to give to their descendants on earth. They have also a great many cattle. The place where they live seems to be a kind of Hades or Paradise (1). But it would seem, when we consider the funeral rites, that the deceased, on the contrary, 775 776 787

(1) The Ba-Ila (see Smith and Dale, *The Ila-speaking people*, II p. 119) believe that the ghosts go *Kwiwe*, to the East, to Chilenga, the Creator. But they have the same contradictory ideas as the Thongas concerning the abode of their deceased ancestors. 171

Amongst the Natives of Barotseland, on the Zambezi, it is said that the dead go to Nyambe, the God of Heaven. They pierce the lobe of their ears and make other incisions in their bodies as a sign that they belong to Nyambe. When they die and reach the end of the earth at the great river Walamba (the Styx of the Zambezian tribes) the ferryman who conveys the dead to the other bank looks at them to see if

775 remains *in his grave*. Is not his grave his house (I. p. 137)? Does
776 he not sit on his square, where his mats have been unrolled? Thus
787 the life of the shikwembu seems to be the exact continuation of his earthly existence. That such is the idea is proved by the two bones which represent the gods in the set of divinatory bones : 1) the astragalus or nail of an ant-bear, because ant-bears live in the earth, and come out only during the night ; 2) the astragalus of an antelope, found in the excrement of a hyena ; the hyena ate the antelope, and swallowed the bone, which came to light again ; in the same way the gods have been buried in the ground, and reveal themselves later on. (Compare Ch. III. D.) A third idea, more or less intermediate between the other two, is that the gods reside *in the sacred woods*, and there lead their family life in human form, parents and children, even little children, who are carried on their mothers' shoulders. Mboza went so far as to say that they are married and bring forth children, as children are seen on their mothers' backs. Here again, we find the life of the other world regarded as the exact reproduction of this terrestrial existence.

4) The Sacred Woods.

764 These are vast, almost impenetrable thickets, in which the
769 ancient chiefs have been buried ; they are called *ntimu*, (mu-mi)
778 cemeteries. Every clan owns one or more of these burying places. The ntimu is reserved for the men of the royal family, those who have been the owners of the land. They are buried in different sections of the forest, "according to their villages," in such a way that the wood represents separate cemeteries, corresponding to the

171 they bear the marks, and only in that case does he take them to Nyambe (See *Ames primitives*, Th. Burnier, Paris Mission, 102, Boulevard Arago).

The Ba-Chopi believe that their ancestor-gods dwell in rivers. They have no fear of the graves where the deceased have been buried, and even till the ground over them, asserting that the bones alone remain in the earth, the ghosts themselves having departed into the river where they are heard singing, dancing, and playing on antelope horns. When the chiefs make a national offering, they mix the meat with water when they present it to their gods, and the one officiating turns his eyes towards the river when he prays. He places the part of the victim which has been cut out for the gods on the bank of the river, and everybody goes home. The gods come when all have gone and take the offering. It is taboo to remain on the spot and to be seen by them!

villages of the living. No woman, and no uterine nephew is 764
buried in the official cemeteries. 769

These woods are taboo. It is forbidden to gather fuel there, 778
to cut down any tree, or to allow the bush fire to enter them. Should anyone have imprudently set fire to the grass in the neighbourhood, and be unable to extinguish the blaze, and should the fire thus pass over a grave, he must provide a goat for sacrifice, in order to "extinguish" (timula) the sacred wood. All entry is strictly prohibited except to the guardian of the wood (mutameli wa ntimu), the priest, who is the descendant of the gods of the forest. He goes there from time to time, to offer the sacrifices. He penetrates into the dense foliage by a narrow path, hardly perceptible. I have often visited one of the most celebrated woods, that of Libombo, two miles east of the Rikatla station. The old Libombo chiefs were buried there, and Nkolele, the proprietor of the forest, was very proud of it. He asserted that Mahazule, the chief of Nondwane, belonging to the reigning family of Mazwaya, whose forefathers had conquered the land of Nondwane, feared the spot and, in order to avoid it, took a circuitous route to Lourenço-Marques, or, if forced to take that road, stopped near the wood to pay his respects to the old chiefs buried there. I did not see anything remarkable in that wood. Forcing my way through the bushes, brambles, and creepers I at length came to a sort of tumulus, but very slightly raised, on which were to be seen some dried leaves of maize, the remains of offerings placed there some time previously. The young man who acted as my guide — considerably against his inclination, I fancy, — turned away his face, with a terrified expression, when we came upon this grave. In another spot I found some other tombs. Snakes thrive, naturally, in these thickets, where they are undisturbed, but I did not see any on that occasion. No mausoleum has been built over any of these venerated sepulchres ; a few pieces of old blackened pottery were all we saw — the remnants of the jugs and plates belonging to the deceased, which were broken on the spot after his death.

The dread in which these sacred woods are held by the Natives 769
is certainly not due to any unusual objects they may have seen 778
538

769 there. It is inculcated, and kept alive, by the truly terrifying tales
778 which are told concerning them. These are related in the evening,
538 in low tones, and with frightened looks, and the feeling of awe is
776 fed and maintained by these legends. I intend to narrate here those I heard from various informants ; these stories will illustrate better than any philosophical explanation the ideas of the Natives concerning their gods. Those connected with the Libombo wood are the most typical. I owe them to Spoon and the aged Nkolele. I will begin with those which are of most ancient origin, and whose legendary character is most unmistakable.

539 One day a woman was passing close by the forest of Libombo : she
776 plucked a sala (p. 16) from a tree and ate it, after which she went to till
769 her garden. On another occasion, just as she was cracking another sala against the trunk of a tree before eating it, she saw that the fruit, instead of having a stone inside, was filled with small vipers. She threw it away, but the vipers said to her : "Go on! Eat away! Haven't we seen you every day picking sala? And these sala are ours, and not yours. What shall we gods have to eat? Have we not made this tree to grow?" And she went home and died, because she had been cursed by the gods.

Another woman was passing by the forest on a rainy day, and saw a child, who had climbed a tree, and was eating berries. She approached the child and said : "Give me some of those berries!" The boy made no reply, so she began to pick some for herself. When she had picked enough, she said : "Are you going on picking berries in such a rain as this! Where is your mother?" He still remained silent. She felt sorry for the child, thinking he was indeed to be pitied : — "Come," said she, "and let me carry you on my back." So she went up to the tree, and lifted down the child, and tied him on her back with her shawl ; then, putting her conical basket on her head, she started for home. On arriving at her hut, she saw that a fire had been lighted on account of the rain. — "Put on some more wood," said she, "for the sake of this little one, whom I found on the road eating berries." She untied the shawl, and tried to place the child on her hips, but he refused to be moved, and clung to her back, where he kept quite still. The folks said to the woman : "Put him down on the ground, so that he can go and warm himself near the embers." He refused. Then they said to him : "Get down!" But he still refused to move. Then the villagers said to the woman : "Didn't you pass by the Libombo forest?" — "Yes! I did," she replied, "and there I found this child gathering berries, and

brought him along with me." — "This is no child! It is a god!" they 539
cried ; "a child never has a hard head like this one has. And look at his 776
legs! What strength! How ever did you come to think it was a child?"
—"But," said she, "I certainly thought it was a child — and can it 769
be a god?" — They sent for magicians, who threw the bones. At once the magicians knew what was wrong : — "Ha! Hé! You found him at Libombo, did you not?" They tried to remove him by force, but he clung still more closely to the woman's back, stiffening his legs round her waist, and his arms around her neck. They tried to unclench his hands, but it was impossible! Then they begged her to go back to Libombo, and implore the owners of the forest to set her free from this child. She took her basket, and returned to the tree where she had found him. The guardian of the forest soon appeared. It was Makundju, the ancestor of Nkolele. He inveighed against the woman and those who accompanied her, saying : — "When you find fruit in the forest, do not pick it! If it be maize, leave it alone, or, if you pick it, spare at least one ear. If your chicken flies into the wood, do not go after it. If your goat runs away into it, you must not follow it. We are worn out, we folks of Libombo, with offering sacrifices for you passers-by... Your troubles are the consequences of the sins (psihono) you commit in this place." A white hen was caught, and sacrificed on behalf of the woman. Emitting the "tsu" the priest said : "Behold our ox, by which we present our petition. Let this god leave her back. She did not do it on purpose. She thought it was a child ; she did not know it was a god. Which way can people go henceforth if you, gods, put obstacles in the way?" While this sacrifice was being offered, the being suddenly left her back, disappeared, and no one knew how, or whither he went. As for the woman, she trembled violently and died...

A man once defied the prohibition of cutting dry wood in the forest. Suddenly he was pelted from behind with kwakwa and sala fruits. It was the gods. He tried to fly, but was unable to find the path out of the thicket. He was lost, and tired of wandering about he let his bundle of faggots fall. Then the gods allowed him to find his way out again, but, when he found himself in the open, he perceived that he was carrying nothing, even his axe had been taken from him.

Sometimes the gods made themselves heard ; when they were 776
especially happy they played on trumpets, sang and danced. 778
Passers-by often tried to get a glimpse of them, but the noise

776 ceased at once, and would commence again suddenly right behind
778 the listeners. The people of the country know quite well whence this music comes, and, at Libombo, they can even report the song which is heard in this forest. It is a great pity that I was not able to obtain the music of this ode of the gods! I can, however, give the words, which will probably be found to smack considerably of the earth, earthy! —

With ground- nuts and onions, nté, nté, nté!
Make a good sauce in the pan!

However, here are one or two facts of quite recent occurrence, showing that the age of sacred wood miracles is not yet over, or that, at least, the religious awe still survives in some faithful hearts!

Spoon assured me that he saw on one occasion a whole herd of goats in the forest, while he was picking tihuhlu nuts. He ran to tell his grandfather, Nkolele, and to ask if he might appropriate them. Nkolele reproved him with bitter words : "Unhappy man! Don't dare to touch them! They belong to the gods! Don't even speak of them! It is taboo! (psa yila)."

The young folks of Libombo used to blaspheme in their hearts, saying: "There are no gods." "But," added Spoon, "we very soon saw that there were some, when they killed one of us, named Mapfindlen. He was walking along the path, singing and jumping, when he trod on a snake, which he had not seen, and hurt it. During the night the gods came to him. He began to scratch himself all over his body. He saw them against the wall : they were like snakes, and they said : 'Thou hast hurt us!' No one else saw them. His mother tried to quiet him, but he shrieked, and said to her : 'Leave me alone! The gods are killing me because I trod on them! Help!' They threw the bones. The diviner said : 'This comes from your household gods! Has he not trodden on a snake?' His parents procured an offering, and sacrificed to the gods, trying to propitiate them ; but the gods were angry and Mapfindlen died."

The following is the most recent of the stories. It was related to me by the hero himself, Nkólele, the aged priest of Libombo.

After the war of 1894-1895, the Portuguese Authorities established a camp at Morakwen, and decided to build a town there. To do this it became necessary to widen the primitive pathway which led to Lourenço Marques, and Natives had to cede trees and grass lands, to the extent of several metres on each side of the path ; then a fine road was built of some 20 kilometres in length. This road passed close by the sacred wood, as it had been decided to follow the line of the pathway, which skirted this wood for a distance of about half a mile. Amongst many other trees was one huge mahogany, under whose shade I have frequently passed, which sent out a low branch, right over the path ; it was necessary to cut off this branch, and the people living in the neighbourhood were intrusted with the job. "When they began the work," said Nkolele to me, on the 28th November, 1895, "I went to see what they were doing with the mahogany tree. As I was seated the gods came to me, saying : 'What are you doing here? You ought to have stayed at home.' I fell backwards unconscious, and remained in that state for four days. I couldn't eat : they had closed my mouth. I could not speak! My people picked me up and carried me home. My relatives and my children were all summoned : the villagers said : 'Our medicine-man has left us! He is dead!' Then my eldest son went to offer a sacrifice in the sacred wood. He let loose a fowl, which flew away and never returned ; he prayed : 'Oh! my ancestors! Here is my ox. Do not slay my father!' Then I got up. Ah! It was he, who saved me, Ngelenwana, my eldest son! I looked around and said : 'What have all these people come here for?' They were terror stricken. Then they told me that the gods of Libombo were angry with me. The gods said to me (doubtless by means of the bones) : 'Take an ox-cock' (meaning an ox, an animal for sacrifice, which may be a cock), 'and go to your brother Shihubane. Let him give you a fowl, and go and sacrifice. Why did you go there? You ought to have stayed at home, and have sent your children.' I did not go any more by the big road. I go by the path through the marshes, and never by the avenue made by the Whites. Now I can go that way, for I have sacrificed, and the gods have said : 'He has asked our pardon by means of his gifts."

Is there not something significant and touching about this tale? Civilisation penetrates irresistibly, crushing everything in its way, and cutting remorselessly, perhaps unwittingly, through the edge of the sacred wood! And there, under the mahogany

776 tree, the aged priest, the guardian of its traditions, swoons away
778 and asks forgiveness for having been an involuntary witness of the sacrilege!

These stories are by no means restricted to the Libombo sacred wood. Similar tales are told of all the forests. Mboza says :

A woman was imprudent enough to cut some dry branches in the sacred wood of Masinge, near Morakwen. She at once heard an unusual voice : bi... bi... and received blows. She ran away home leaving her garment in the bush. Having arrived home, she asked her husband to go and fetch it, but he refused, from fear. Nkomuza, the guardian of the forest, went to fetch it, but they had to reward him with a bottle of wine.

An older story about the same forest runs as follows :— In olden times the gods were frequently seen marching in file, going to draw water from the well. They had their own road. They were of short stature, the women carrying babies in the *ntehe*, but, strange to say, with the feet up and the head downwards! A man, called Mishimhongo, built his village near to the forest. The gods, angry with him, entered his huts while he was busy with all his people working in the fields. Only a little child remained in the village, and the gods wrapped him up in a mat, and hid him somewhere behind the huts. Then they went to the garden and shouted : "Mishimhongo! There are visitors in your village." The man looked to see who was calling him, but saw no one. He went home, and found that the child had disappeared. In the evening the gods came and said to him : "Look behind the huts. But move at once ; do not remain near our road! If you do so, we shall kill you and your child." The poor man needed no second warning!

Not far from this place, in the Nkanyen district, is the sacred wood of Tlhatlha. An enormous pot is said to have been placed there long ago, a marvellous pot which possesses the faculty of locomotion. It can move as far as that village yonder (half a mile). But though it may have arrived only yesterday at the spot where you see it, it is quite hidden in the grass and shrubs, as if it had been there for years! It takes its walk from one end of the graves to the other. It is taboo to touch it! When the Portuguese tried to establish a camp there, they heard strange noises during the night, drums, trumpets, etc. The Landis (Natives) said to them : "Take care! There are gods here." So they removed their camp to Morakwen. (Mboza.)

The wood of Tembe, called Mudlomadlomana, is very celebrated.

It is said that, in olden days, there was an anchor there, and before 776
sacrificing, the priest always used to lift it up, and let it fall to the 778
ground, saying: "Shawan! (I salute thee) Tembe!" If the sacrifice was acceptable the sound of a trumpet: "bvé... bvé...," was heard, far away in the depths of the woods, but no form was ever seen. This anchor also possessed extraordinary powers. When the country was at war with its neighbours, and matters did not go well with Tembe, the anchor would move off by itself into the Matjolo district. This was the portent of some terrible catastrophe!

No one ever penetrated very far into the sacred wood of [789]
Tryini, of the Matjolo clan, for it was said that any one doing so would be lost, and unable to find his way out. When the people of Matjolo were in need of rain, they took a young man of the country into the wood, and there abandoned him. The gods accepted their offering, and the young man, struck with paralysis, was unable to follow in their retreat those who had led him to martyrdom! He saw them going away, but remained behind to be devoured by the gods. The others hastened to sacrifice and returned home; they were forbidden to look behind them. Once home, they told how they had seen on the ground, in the wood, foot-prints of adults, and even of little ones who must have been old enough to crawl on their hands and knees! Often, they say, they brought back the rain with them!

According to all these stories, it is evident that, in the Thonga 769
mind, the ancestor-gods dwell in the sacred woods, and lead a life 776
there in the earth, and occasionally outside, very similar to the 778
terrestrial one. Mankhelu had, however, another idea, which is 789
difficult to reconcile with this representation. On his forked magic pole he had a long shining grey branch of a climbing shrub called *ñwabola*. This has enormous thorns, which are supposed to have the power of calling the precious things which are far away, and of gathering them in the hut: money, oxen, girls to marry, etc., and also the ancestor-gods: "When they pass through the country, coming from our old domicile, near the Limpopo, they are caught by the thorns, and settle here to bless us." This idea that the gods fly through the air, is very rarely met 769
776

769 with. I never heard it said that the gods were in heaven, not-
776 withstanding the Sutho term badimo, which is believed by some to mean those who are above.

5. Relations between Ancestor-gods and their living descendants.

769 The apparitions of ancestor-gods in a human form in the
776 sacred woods are not of frequent occurrence. The gods reveal
825 themselves to their descendants by other and more common
753 means; first, by their appearance *in the form of animals*, such as the Mantis (p. 335) or more often as little bluish green snakes called *shihundje* (p. 340). These charming and harmless reptiles are frequently seen in the huts, crawling in the thatch of the roof, or along the reeds of the walls (1). Natives never touch them, thinking that they are some of their gods who have come to pay them a visit. It is taboo to kill them. If a disease breaks out in the village the bones may reveal that some one in the hut has hurt the gods, and a sacrifice will be required in order to appease them. They also appear in the form of the large grey puff-adder (shiphyahla) (2).

769 Secondly, the ancestor-gods communicate with the living
776 *in their dreams*. If some one dreams of one of his dead relatives,
787 he is very much frightened, and consults the bones, in order

769 (1) This is the story which I heard from one of my informants of the Khosen
825 country: All his family was once assembled together for a marriage feast. The people were playing on the village square and enjoying themselves. The old women had remained in the hut, and suddenly they saw two little green snakes crawling along the reeds of the wall. They were much afraid, and at once called the headman. He came in, saw the snakes, and said: "Do not fear! These are our ancestor-gods! They have come to share in our feast."

(2) Describing to me a sacrifice at which he officiated either in September or October 1895, the old priest Nkolele told me as a fact the following story, which I will now quote word for word:

"I myself went into the wood with the offering I had prepared for the gods, and then *it came out*. It was a snake; it was the father of Makundju, the Master of the Forest, Mombo-wa-ndlopfu, Elephant's-Face. He came out and circled round all those present. The women rushed away terrified. But he had only come to thank us. He didn't come to bite us. He thanked us saying: 'Thank you! Thank you! So you are still there, my children! You came to load me with presents, and to

to know exactly what the god desires of him (Viguet). If the 769
apparition was painful, if the god came as an enemy, fighting, the 776
dreamer, when he awakes, will take some tobacco, or a small 787
piece of cloth, and hang it somewhere in the reeds of the wall, near the door, as an offering. Or possibly the god has ordered him to give him something to drink. He will then buy a bottle of ginor wine, and pour a little outside the door ; whatever remains he will drink with his companions. If the dream takes place during a journey and the ancestor-god seems to be happy, the traveller will throw some tobacco on the ground when he awakes and say : "I had prayed thee to help me on my road ; thou hast come indeed! Help me to go further." But if the ancestor-god has an angry look and tells him : "Why do you not give me a piece of calico print? You have forgotten me"—the traveller will fetch a piece and tie it round a tree and say : "When I return home after making money, I will give thee some."

But the great means by which the will of the gods is revealed is the *set of divinatory bones*, which are cast on every occasion, and are called the "Bula," the Word. Does this mean the Word of the gods? Not precisely, but in most cases the diviner thinks he owes his divinatory power to a dead relative, who used to cast lots himself, and who transmitted his spirit of interpretation to him. Whatever may be the real explanation, the fact remains that it is by means of the bones that Thongas believe they know what their gods think and wish, and this is the reason, as we shall

bring me fruit! T'is well!' — He came to thank us for our chicken. Even if one 769
only kills a chicken, he is quite content. For him, it has just the same value as an
ox. It was an enormous viper, as thick as my leg, down there (he pointed to his 825
ankle). It came close up to me, and kept quite still, never biting me. I looked at it.
It said : 'Thank you! So you are still there, my grandson!'"

— "But," said I to Nkolele, "what you are telling me, is it really fact, or just fancy?"

— "Undoubted fact! These are great truths! After that I prayed, and said : 'Thou, Mombo-wa-Ndlopfu, the Master of this land, thou who hast given it to thy son Makundju; Makundju gave it to his son Hati; Hati gave it to Makhumbi; Makhumbi gave it to Kinini; Kinini gave it to Mikabyana; Mikabyana gave it to Mawatle... ('Mawatle gave it to me, his son' is here understood)... Look upon my offering. Is it not a beautiful one? And here am I, left all alone. If I had not brought this with me, who would have given you anything? Is it not just so? I ask of thee, my ancestor, I ask of thee all the trees; the palm trees for building, the trunks which can be hollowed out for canoes; and let it be that these trunks shall not fall on the people and crush them, when they go to cut them down, over there in the marsh.'"

787 see, why divination plays such an important part in their life.
769 It is of the utmost importance to know what their gods think
776 and do, as the very existence of the village, and of the clan, and the welfare of every member of the clan depends on them. Is not Lukwembo, Divinity "the power of killing or of making alive, of enriching or of making poor?" Natives believe firmly in these two opposite actions of their gods. They are the masters of everything : earth, fields, trees, rain, men, children, even of baloyi, wizards! They have full control over all these objects or persons.

769 The gods can *bless* : if the trees bear plenty of fruit, it is because
776 they have made it grow (I. p. 414) ; if the crops are plentiful, it is because they forced wizards to increase them, or hindered them
777 from spoiling them (I. p. 396) ; if you come across a pot of palm wine, it is your god who has sent you that windfall (p. 44). When Mboza escaped from the Morakwen battle, one of his relatives exclaimed on his return home : "The gods of Makaneta have still been with you!" (Psikwembu psa ka Makaneta psa ha ku yimelele.) Often when a man has narrowly escaped drowning, or spraining his ankle on a stump which has caught his foot, he will say : "The gods have saved me."

769 But they can also *curse*, and bring untold misfortune on their
776 descendants. If the rain fails, it is owing to their anger ; if a tree
789 falls on you, they have directed its fall ; if a crocodile bites you, the gods have sent it ; if your child has fever and is delirious, they are
753 in him, tormenting his soul ; if your wife is sterile, they have prevented her from childbearing ; perhaps the gods of your mother have done this, because you had not given your maternal uncle the *tjhumba* part of the lobolo, which he has the right to claim (I. p. 267) ; in fact any disease, any calamity may come from them. There are, of course, other sources of misfortune : the baloyi, for instance, or Heaven, and the bones will show who has caused the mischief ; but the ancestor-gods are certainly the most powerful spiritual agency acting on man's life. Hence the necessity of propitiating them by prayers and sacrifices.

II. *The Means of Propitiation. Offerings and Sacrifices.*

It is no wonder, since these spirits are so terrible, that their descendants have sought means of propitiating them. The study of these rites is very interesting, and will throw more light on the ideas of the Bantus concerning their ancestor-gods. Some of these means of propitiation bear a magical character. For instance, when Mankhelu wished to induce the gods to sleep and leave him in peace, he took roots which had been brought to light naturally by a swollen river that had washed away the ground The reason is clear ; the gods are in the earth, therefore things found in the earth can influence them. So he cut these roots in small pieces, cooked them with the flesh of a goat, and drank the broth ; the assagai which killed the goat had been first smeared with a powder made of these roots. He fastened the astragalus of the goat on his ankle, on the right side if the god to be propitiated belonged to his father's family, and on the left if it was one of his mother's ancestors. If the propitiatory ceremony was performed for a woman, the astragalus was tied with a strap "en bandouillère" round her body. 769 782 789

We shall often see such *magic acts* performed in the ancestor worship of the Thongas. This is in keeping with their general conception of Nature, as already explained (p. 369), and with the magic principles or axioms of primitive mentality. But to the magic element is added the religious ; the officiant is aware that he intends to influence living, conscious and superior beings, therefore he has recourse above all to specifically *religious means*, viz., to offerings and prayers. He presents to his gods what he calls a *mhamba*, and not *miri*, charms or medicines similar to those employed in magic proper. We shall understand more fully what the word mhamba means when we have described the various kinds of offerings.

1) Classification of Offerings.

These offerings are much more complicated and varied than they at first seem. The following principles of classification may be applied to them : 782

782 1) *Individual and family offerings* — those which concern a man or his family alone, — and *national offerings* — those which concern the whole clan.

2) The *simple offerings* called *gandjela*, and the *sacramental ones*, accompanied by the famous *tsu* which constitutes them a *hahla* (Ro.) or a *phahla* (Dj.).

3) Offerings attended with *bloodshed*, and those where no victim is killed.

4) The *regular offerings*, made at certain dates, or in connection with definite events in the life of the family or of the clan, and those made in *special* circumstances.

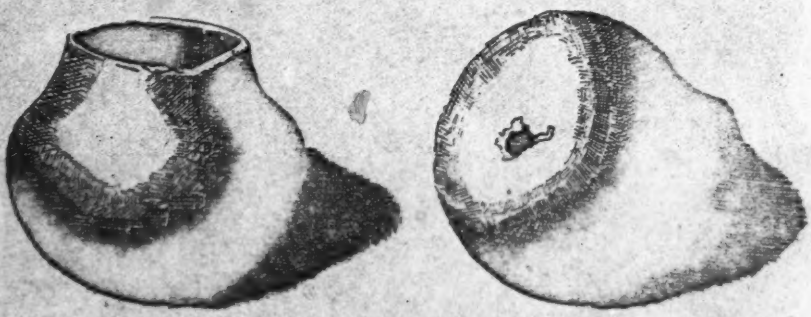
a) *Individual and Family Offerings.*

Simple Offerings (Gandjela).

782 Here the ritual is reduced to its minimum. The offering is
778 made by the father of the family at the gandjelo, the altar, or place of worship. This is, as has already been pointed out, a little pot, placed at the right side of the entrance to the village, or under the tree designated by the bones (I. p. 320) (1). In some cases, especially if the headman is a medicine-man or magician, the gandjelo consists of a forked branch planted in the ground, either inside his hut, or in the very middle of the square. Such was the case in the village of Mankhelu (See illustration I. p. 5). His gandjelo was a branch of *nkonola* (or *nkonono*) ; this tree, the *mpfilu* and *shisalala* are the only trees which are used for the purpose. He had removed the bark in some places, and smeared the stems with his black powders, so that there were two dark rings of about 3 inches wide on the branch. A lot of curious things were to be seen hanging from the lateral branches : bags

621 (1) If there are people of different clans inhabiting the same village owing to the fact that foreigners have "kondza" i. e, have put themselves under the authority of the
778 headman (I. p. 433), there will be a central gandjelo, the altar of the master of the village, at the foot of the sacred tree where offerings will be made for himself and his
782 relatives ; but people of the other clans will have their own altars which will be placed near the main entrance, on the spot where the representatives of each of these clans assemble when discussing their own affairs.

full of roots, calabashes of different sizes, containing the precious 782
drugs, pieces of the *ñwabola* shrub (p. 383), etc. When he had 778
earned some money or acquired something by accident, Mankhelu used to put these objects near the stem, and leave them there for the night in order to inform his gods of his good fortune. At the foot of the branch the earth was smeared with black clay, forming a circle with a little furrow traced round the outside of it. Men who are not so important as this great *ñanga*, are contented with the



Sokis' mug. The altar of primitive mankind.

small pot I described before. This can be placed on the grave, if it happens to be near the village.

In the case of Sokis (I. p. 139) it was the *deceased's own mug* which was used, pierced at the bottom in order to allow the beer to sink easily into the ground, when an offering was made to the recently deceased by his relatives (1).

Regular offerings are brought to the altar by the headman. 782
When he has finished preparing his *tobacco* for use, he carefully puts aside some leaves of it, and places them near the pot. When he has ground the tobacco for snuff he puts two little spoonsful

(1) I had the good fortune to obtain this mug, which may well be called the altar of primitive humanity! I offered Sokis' wife a small pig in exchange for it. She was quite willing to accept the bargain, but her sister-in-law made objections, doubtless fearing that the deceased might be angry... The widow answered her thus: "When he was living you refused him beer often enough! You may do the same now, and accept the little pig." Thanks to the common-sense view taken by Sokis' wife I am now in possession of this precious pierced mug, and in a position to give its facsimile in the accompanying plate.

782 into the pot, one for the paternal, the other for the maternal gods, saying as he does so :

Fole hi ledji! Tlanganan mi djaha, mi nga ndji hobilise loko ndji djaha fole, mi ku ndji mi tjona.

Here is some tobacco! Come all of you and take a pinch, and do not be angry with me when I snuff, nor say that I deprive you of your share.

Having made his offering, the headman must return to his seat, on the hubo, without looking behind him : this is a taboo.

Another way of gandjela is the offering of a piece of cloth (nturu), which may be tied at the entrance, or to the tree of the village (p. 333). Liquids also are poured into the gandjelo (I. p. 341) : beer, when a beer feast is to take place ; wine, when it has been bought at the neighbouring store ; palm-wine, when the big pot called gandjelo (see p. 43 for the explanation of this word in this particular connection) has been filled, and the precious drink has been brought to the village.

Occasional offerings are made, for instance, in a case of *shirwalo* (I. p. 406) when relatives-in-law have brought jars of beer. A little of the beer is first offered to the gods, in order that the pots may not get broken during the return journey. Another case is after a dream, in which the gods have asked for such and such an offering to be made (p. 385).

Sacramental Offerings or Ku Hahla (Ro.), Phahla (Dj.).

782 These are of much greater importance than the simple ones
787 and also differ from them in two ways, viz., they are always ordered by the divinatory bones, and accompanied by the sacramental *tsu*. The bones are first consulted, and give many indications, e. g., what must be the nature of the offering ; to which god it must be consecrated ; in what place the act of worship must be performed, (in the hut, behind it, at the door, in the square, in the sacred wood, or in the bush). When the ceremony

takes place over the grave the bones reveal whether the officiant must stand at the head or at the foot. (See Chap. III, D. for the consultation of the bones). 782 787

The Offering of Bitterness. There is a progressive character in the offerings, according to the value of the gift accompanying the *tsu*. In some cases, all that is given to the gods is the small amount of saliva emitted in pronouncing the sacramental sound. These offerings are called "Offerings of Bitterness" (ku hahla hi shibiti), and form a most curious category. They are generally presented by a headman who is overwhelmed with sorrow, and deprived of everything. "He shows his misery by offering nothing but his saliva. He leans his head upon his shoulder with a look of profound sadness. His heart is bitter! He has nothing! He therefore does not try to win over his gods by presenting rich gifts to them. He wishes rather to gain their blessing by this appearance of abject misery. And they will indeed have pity on him!" (Mboza). This is certainly touching! But this kind of offering, though showing more individual piety than others, must only be made ritually, i. e., by order of the bones. The sacrifice of bitterness may be resorted to when no evil has as yet fallen on the village, as a preventive against misfortune. 782

The Offering of Charcoal. When a headman is in great difficulties, (quarrels in his village, disease amongst his people), the bones may order him to *hahla* with a piece of charcoal. He takes an extinct charcoal, puts it to his lips, utters the *tsu* and adds :

Akhwari! i. e. Smoothly! You, so and so. What you want is this. Abu.paayi! i. e. Gently! This is fire! This is the mouth of the lion! Let what troubles me come to an end, etc.

The Offering of Earth. Earth is the offering of the chiefs, because they are the masters of the soil (I. p. 405). It can, however, also be used by subjects on various occasions. When the bones have not revealed that the disease was sent by the ancestor-gods, when they have not said that it was the work of wizards, then it is caused by "the earth, misaba" i. e. by some unknown people of the land (bhanu-ba misaba). The bones say : "Go and seek the navel of the earth." The navel of the earth is the ant-heap. The officiant then takes a piece of termite nest and *hahla* with it. He 782 787

782 addresses his prayer to his ancestor-gods in order to be delivered
787 from his enemies.

The Offering of a Thorn (Mhamba ya Mutwa). This is also called *ku hahla ka shihlahla*, the sacrifice of the forest. The headman has seen that misfortune has fallen on his village ; all his people die, the village is about to disappear, to become merely a part of the bush. He goes to the forest, picks up a thorn there and accomplishes the religious act by sucking the thorn, and emitting his saliva. Then he returns to the forest and places the thorn where the bones have ordered him.

782 *The Offering of Contempt (Mhamba ya Litsañwa)*. We have
783 already seen a case in which this offering is made. It is a compo-
824 nent part of the burial ritual (I. p. 142) and we have called it the rite of the twig. But it can be performed on other occasions also. In certain clans (Nkuna-Khosa, Hlengwe) it does not take place at the burial, but is of common use when someone wishes *to avoid contempt*, to be well received by those to whom he goes ; for instance when he goes to his debtors and fears that they may despise him and perhaps refuse to accept his claim, or when a young man goes to woo a girl and is afraid that she may not look favourably on his suit. The religious act is performed as follows. The officiant cuts a twig of the nkanye tree. We have often mentioned this tree, whose fruits are used to prepare the famous bukanye beer ; it is everywhere regarded as the best of trees, and highly valued. It is dioecious, as we have seen (I. p. 397). The twig must come from a female stem, if a man *hahla* for himself, from a male stem if a woman does so. The officiant bites the extremity of the twig till he has drawn a little of the sap into his mouth ; then he emits that sap together with his saliva, and proceeds to his prayer.

789 *The Offering of the Fig Tree (Mhamba ya Hlulawumbe)*. This
782 tree is called shihlampfana or hlulawumbe. It frequently grows
824 as a parasite on another tree ; or surrounds it, growing close to its stem, and in this way kills it. If a man has enemies, if there are people who hate him, he digs up a bit of the root of this fig tree and uses it in making his prayer. These troublesome persons will be choked, destroyed, just like the stem close to which the hlulawumbe grows. (Hlulawumbe means to overcome others).

hlulawumbe grows, (Hlulawumbe means to overcome others) (1). 000

Offerings of the Medicine-men. The Native physicians are, as 782
has already been pointed out, very pious. Their art having been 756
handed down to them by their forefathers, as a family secret, they 484
always implore the blessing of their ancestors on their various treatments. This is done by true offerings, performed with the *tsu* and a liturgical prayer. In Vol. I. p. 55, the religious ceremony which accompanies the monthly vapour bath administered to infants was described ; a religious rite takes place also in the hondola of the weaning (I. p. 59). These are typical cases. Another offering of the same nature is made on behalf of the man who is about to *start out on a journey*, for instance to Johannesburg. The doctor, having prepared the protective drugs in a pot, brings them to the entrance of the traveller's hut, and calls his "patient,"; then, taking a little of the decoction in his mouth, he spits it at him with the sacramental *tsu*, and prays in the following words :

Akhwari! Abusayi! Ndji hlaya psolepso! Khongelwa a nga dlawi. Ku dlawa phalaburena! Khombo a dji suke, dji ya ka Shiburi, dji ya ka Nkhabelane! A a fambe psinene, a kandjetela balala, mitwa mi yetlele, ku yetlela ni tindjau. A a ye nwa mati ya kone, ma mu tjhabisa hi djo tluka ledji.

Gently! Smoothly! I say so. Death does not come to him for whom prayer is made ; death only comes to him who trusts in his own strength! Let misfortune depart, let it go to Shiburi, and Nkhabelane (2). Let him travel safely ; let him trample on his enemies ; let thorns sleep, let lions sleep ; let him drink water wherever he goes, and let that water make him happy, by the strength of this leaf (viz., of my medicinal herbs).

(1) I may mention here another religious ceremony which is also called a mhamba, 135
though I am not sure that a regular prayer is offered. It is the *Offering of a Stone.* 823
Stones are almost totally lacking in Thongaland. But on the Swazi border, in the 782
Lebombo hills, there are porphyreous rocks, and when a Native passes a certain spot, 484
on the Estatuen road, he picks up a stone, spits on it, touches both his knees with it and throws it on a heap made of the stones thrown by those who passed before him. This heap of stones is called *shittane.* This rite is said to be performed in order to call a blessing on the journey ; thus the traveller will find a favourable reception in the villages and be given plenty of food. This custom is wide-spread in many other tribes.

(2) The extremity of the land (Comp. I, p. 55).

782 To these words is generally added an invocation to the medicine-
756 man's gods, who are entreated to bless the drugs they have given to their descendant, and to join with the traveller's gods in order
484 to insure his success in this undertaking. The decoction is then used to wash the body of the young man. He will pay the fee on his return home.

224 *Offerings of Hunters.* This is called *byalwa bya ngenge*; the beer
782 of ngenge. This beer is made of maize grains which have been crushed but not softened by long steeping in water, as is generally
273 done in brewing ; they are then reduced to flour ; some water is poured on this and it is offered in that form by the head hunter, all his companions standing near him. They must start at once ; there is therefore no time to brew proper beer.

484 *Offerings of Travellers.* These also have their particular mhamba,
782 which is called *Lehika*. It consists of water alone which the officiant takes in his mouth and spits out, saying : "*Pff*!" (amongst the Hlengwes : "*Phaaa*"). "My ancestor-gods! May I find no difficulty
578 on my road, etc." This *water offering* is also made by a headman
782 whose village is troubled by endless disputes. The way of bringing them to an end is not clear. So he entreats his gods to "open the road, pfula ndlela," so that all hearts may be relieved. This will help him to "herd his village, ku byisa muti." The idea of finding a road clearly accounts for the fact that this offering is made under two sets of circumstances so different from one another. Why water is used to attain this end I do not know.

The offerings hitherto described bear a more or less individual character. Let us now consider those which are in direct relation to the life of the family.

782 *Regular Family Sacrifices.* We have seen these performed in
842 connection with the most important events in life. At the *weaning* (I. p. 58, this might however be termed a medical sacrifice), *on the marriage day*, either publicly, as amongst the Ronga clans (I. p. 110), or privately, by the bride's father alone, as is the custom amongst the Nkunas (I. p. 118). The gods are entreated to give the newly married woman "timbeleko," births, i. e., children, as it seems that the power of begetting depends directly
000 on the gods. Regular acts of worship are performed also at the

Regular acts of worship are performed also at the *burial* (I. p. 142), at the *crushing of the hut* (I. p. 158-163), on the 782
days of *mahloko* (I. p. 215), and at the *adjudication of the inheri* 765
(I. p. 208). 262

I have already mentioned the stringent taboo in regard to the victims killed in these sacrifices. The portions distributed amongst the different relations must not be eaten either in the village of the deceased, or in those of the various visitors. This meat must be roasted on the road, and eaten on the spot, and it is likewise taboo to season it in any way. The inhabitants of the deceased's village can eat the meat boiled, but it is prohibited to add ground-nuts to the broth.

These are the great family sacrifices, in which the uterine 782
nephews play their curious part, and on the occasion of which family matters are brought up and settled. They play a most important part in the life of the family, and I have therefore described them at length, when treating of the social life of the tribe, as religion and social life are here intimately united. There is therefore no need for me to add much more regarding them here. With their clearly established and typical ritual they form the most definite and settled element of the religious life of the tribe.

Rangane asserts that another offering is regularly performed in the Maluleke district. On the first occasion of the *cooking of the new mealies*, each headman prepares a little of the flour, takes a spoonful of it, and throws it away, praying at the same time to the Ba-Nyai spirits, i. e., the gods of the Ba-Nyai, who have been conquered by the Malulekes. He calls this "magandjelo ya ku ñwantseka," i. e., "sacrifice tasted and thrown away." This is evidently to propitiate the gods, who were the first owners of the country and who might harm or destroy the invaders. Compare p. 377 the respect shown by Mahazule to the Libombo sacred wood, and also the curious request of the Samaritans, II Kings. XVII.

Special Family Sacrifices. By these, I mean particularly those 782
offered *in cases of disease.* The bones having revealed that the 755
disease is caused by the gods (and not by wizards, nor by Heaven, nor by contamination, which are three other possibilities), and also that it comes from such and such a god, a god of bitterness, or a god

782 of the paternal or the maternal line, now indicate the nature of
755 the offering which must be made, the place, and sometimes even the person who must make it. Here is the detailed description, given by Viguet, of a sacrifice made for a ntukulu, a uterine nephew, who is ill : — "Suppose," says Viguet, "that I am the sick child. The bones have said that an offering must be made to the gods of our *bakokwana* (mother's family) ; so we go to our maternal relatives, to my *malume*, and ask him to perform the sacrifice. The offering may consist of a hen or an ornament like a bracelet. If it is a hen, my malume will kill it in accordance with the ceremonial rite, take a few of the feathers of the neck, which have been soiled by the blood, put them to his mouth, and spit on them, making *tsu* (the blood of the victim thus mingles with the saliva of the priest), and say (bulabulela) :

You, our gods, and you so and so, here is our mhamba (offering)! Bless this child, and make him live and grow ; make him rich, so that when we visit him, he may be able to kill an ox for us... You are useless, you gods ; you only give us trouble! For, although we give you offerings, you do not listen to us! We are deprived of everything! You, so and so (naming the god, to whom the offering must be addressed in accordance with the decree pronounced by the bones, i. e., the god who was angry, and who induced the other gods to come and do harm to the village, by making the child ill), you are full of hatred! You do not enrich us! All those who succeed, do so by the help of their gods! — Now we have made you this gift! Call your ancestors so and so ; call also the gods of this sick boy's father, because his father's people did not steal his mother : these people, of such and such a clan, came in the daylight (to lobola the mother). So come here to the altar! Eat and distribute amongst yourselves our ox (the hen!) according to your wisdom.

Then the priest takes a feather from one of the wings, a claw of the left foot and the beak, and after tying them together, attaches them to the left wrist or left ankle of the child, or to his neck, passing the string over the shoulder and under the left arm ; (all is on the left side, because it is an offering to the gods of the mother's family ; it would be on the right side if it were to the

gods of the father). These parts of the victim are called *psirungulo*, the religious amulet. 782 755

When the offering consists of a bracelet, the bones having so ordered, the priest will pour consecrated beer over it, and say his prayer. The bracelet will then be fastened to the child's foot. He may not remove it, nor exchange it for anything else : it belongs to the gods.

This description, given by Vigurt, is typical of sacrifices offered in the case of disease. In the Maluleke clan the sacrifice made for a sick person is as follows. The headman takes beer, which has been specially prepared for the gods and is very much diluted, the beer called *byala bosila*, and a twig of male nkanye. He orders the patient to sit near the altar, and after dipping the twig into the beer, sucks it and says the following words :

Phaa! (this word corresponds to tsu) : this is byala bosila, you Makhima! Take it and convey it to your father Mashakadzi ; call each other and come here together to drink! Let all disease depart! Heal this man!

I must also mention the sacrifice performed in the curious ceremony of *dlaya shilongo*, in the case of marriage between near relatives (I. p. 258), and will now proceed to describe two others, viz., the sacrifice on behalf of the son who has just returned from Johannesburg, and the sacrifice of reconciliation.

When a young man, who has been absent from home for a long time, *returns to his village*, he cannot be received again into the community without special precautions being taken. If there has been a death in the kraal he must be purified from the collective contamination before eating the food of the village. This is the luma milomo (I. p. 146), and is connected with the defilement from death. Some of the provisions of the deceased, kept in a pot and diluted with hot water, must be poured between his two great toes, and he must afterwards rub them together. But, before this, a religious act is performed. Before the boy, who is on the return journey, is allowed to enter his native village, he has to stay for a short time just outside, while his father, seated at the main entrance, cuts open the neck of a hen, which he has 782 783 484

782 previously selected, and throws it on the boy's luggage. The
783 victim leaps about (phuphumela) in its agony. The officiant then
484 plucks out some of the bloodstained feathers, pronounces the tsu, and says :

> Here is your son. He has returned home safely, because you have accompanied him! Perhaps he has brought back pounds sterling with him to lobola. Perhaps he will now take a wife! I do not know. The great thing is that he is healthy, and you have brought him back safely.

782 *The Offering of Reconciliation.* One of the most curious of
578 the religious acts performed in connection with the family is
593 called *ku hahlela madjieta,* viz., to perform a sacramental act in connection with the madjieta. *Djieta* (dji-ma) means a *rash oath,* or an oath *with imprecation.* If two brothers quarrel, and the younger believing himself to be the injured one, breaks off all connection with his brother, he may say to the latter in his anger : "Never will I speak to you again, or come any more to your village!" This is a djieta. To give greater weight to the imprecation, the angry brother will put his nail beneath one of his incisor teeth, push it from within outwards and say : "U ta kota u *ñwoo* psi nga yentshekanga!" This probably means : "May you die if this does not happen," viz. if I do not keep my oath. Or he will pinch up the skin below his eye, and pull it out, saying : "U ta kota wao *hum*!" (Same meaning). The two men may remain for years without the slightest intercourse with each other. But if a serious disease should break out in the village of the younger, and the bones order him to make an offering, he is at once in a difficulty. He has no right to present it himself, for, according to the great law of priesthood in ancestrolatry, it is his elder brother who must do it for him. The bones, on being again consulted, give the response : — "There is something in the way. You two have tied a knot. Untie it first, then offer the sacrifice." The younger brother will then go to the elder, and say : "I have sinned in swearing that I would never come again to your village. Let us hahlela djieta, i. e., accomplish the sacrificial act, which will

cancel the rash oath (1). The elder will scold him severely, but 782
will eventually accept his excuses. This meeting for confession 578
and reconciliation is called ku hahlela madjieta, even if no other act, 593
no *tsu*, or prayer, is performed. — The reconciliation may, however, be celebrated in a more solemn manner by a ceremony, which is attended by the elder members of the family. The brother who pronounced the imprecation prepares a decoction of a special herb, called mudahomu, and pours it into a sala shell. Everyone assembles on the square, and the two former enemies sit in the midst, on the bare ground. The offender raises the shell to his lips, sips the decoction, spits it out with the customary tsu, and says : "This is our djieta. We pronounced it, because our hearts were bitter. To-day it must come to an end. It is right that we make peace." The other brother, the offended one, then takes the shell, and after going through the same rite of the tsu, says : "I was justly angry, because it was he who first offended me! But let it be ended to-day ; let us eat out of the same spoon, drink out of the same cup, and be friends again." Then he breaks the shell, and they drink and enjoy themselves together.

In the Northern clans this offering is called *byalwa bya huwa, the* [754]
beer of noise (on account of the noise made by those who quarelled). It is considered as necessary, not only to reconcile the estranged brothers, but as a protection against wizards. Wizards might be encouraged to bewitch these men, thinking that, if one of them met with misfortune, people would say that his brother had cast a spell over him ; the wizards would then have an opportunity of killing him without fear of being discovered! The offering consists of *many sorts of cereals*, mealies, millet, sorgho taken from the granaries of all those who have fought ; two handfuls of the

(1) See also my article on "The Sacrifice of Reconciliation" amongst the Ba-Ronga (*South African Journal of Science*, February 1911). The djieta is any rash oath, and not only one pronounced against a brother. If a man swears that he will never enter a pool again (because he has been stung), or a river (because he has been followed by a crocodile), it is likewise a *djieta*. Should he find it necessary to enter this lake or this river again, he must first hahlela djieta, i. e. cancel his oath by a sacramental act. This is not necessarily a prayer to his gods, but only an invocation addressed to the imprecation itself: "You djieta, I said I would enter this lake no more, but I want to *tjeba* (p. 86) and to eat fish! Don't cause me to suffer for it." Then he takes some water in his hands, and throws it into the pool.

578 grains are brought to the altar and thrown on to it and the brothers
782 who wish to be reconciled recount their grievances. The offering,
593 though called beer of noise, is not really beer at all, (the cereals offered are not ground nor cooked). However, as my informant said, it is truly beer, as these raw cereals *represent* beer. Natives do not think that they have said anything contradictory in expressing themselves in this way! Notice the fact that these cereals are collected from all the granaries (Tembe). In the same manner the members of the whole family must be reconciled.

782 The same offering is resorted to in *cases of protracted births*
846 (I. p. 40) when it is known that the woman in labour lived on bad terms with another woman. The latter will be called ; she will
575 take a little water in her mouth and spit it out against the hypogastrium of the other, saying *phaa* with the following words : "The angry words which we have spoken must come to an end. May you find help. (Lepsi hi nga bulabula psi fanele ku hela, u pfuneka)". This prayer will not be accompanied by an invocation of the ancestor-gods of either of these women. A similar ceremony is performed when the bones have revealed that delay in parturition or in the child's taking the maternal breast is due to the *bitterness* of its parents in their previous relations. The diviner will tell the father "Hahlela shibiti, make an offering on account of bitterness." This will be performed in the hut. The father will come, and without putting anything into his mouth he will say *tsu* and add the following words : "Let her give birth to the child! What I had (in my heart) I have left! Let us be united again. (A a beleke! Lepsi ndji nga na psu ndji psi tjikile! Hi tlhangana kambe)." In this case the offering is also called an offering of bitterness, though it is very different from the one previously described under that name.

782 *Offering of "the Big millet" (mabele makuku).* The millet (mabele or ñwahuba) is the smallest of the cereals cultivated by the Thongas ; this offering, however, is called "big" on account of its importance and its character. It is a true *thanksgiving offering.* When the family has special cause for rejoicing, for instance if there has been serious illness and the patient has recovered, all its members are called together for the offering of the "big millet."

Let us remember that this cereal is probably the most ancient known to the Thongas. If a daughter is living far away at her husband's home, she must come and bring him with her, because an ox will be killed, if possible, or at any rate a goat. A preliminary ceremony is performed to announce (hlehleleta) to the ancestor-gods that an ox is prepared for them. If the cause of the rejoicing is the safe return of a son who has been absent for a long time, working at Kimberley, for instance, his gun is brought to the altar and also the living ox, and the officiant thanks his gods by offering "byala bosila, ground beer". (See later). When the true beer is brewed, i. e. some days later, the second ceremony takes place, all being present ; the ox is killed, and the offering of the animal and of the millet beer is made, the *psanyi* of the victim being poured on to the altar, and also a little of the beer. During the prayer of thanksgiving the women shout their mikulungwana after each sentence of which they particularly approve. This is one of the rare offerings not dictated by fear or misfortune. 782

Before passing to the next topic, the National Offerings, I wish to quote a graphic description of a religious ceremony performed near the Shiluvane Mission Station by the Makaringe family, and attended by 200 members of this sub-clan. These Makaringes live amongst the Nkunas, but belong to the clan of Ba-ka- Baloyi, settled near the confluence of the Olifant and the Limpopo. I owe this description to the Rev.A. Jaques, together with the photograph which accompanies it. I do not know to what category this offering belongs. No particularly sad event had happened to account for it, so that it is quite possible that it was also a thanksgiving offering. I will let the Rev. A. Jaques describe the event :

"In January 1924 I had the opportunity of attending a sacrifice of the Makaringes. The ceremony took place on the graves of their ancestors, on the hill which is at the foot of the Marobunye mountain. Those present numbered about 200.

A first libation of beer was made on the spot where the old men knew the graves to be. The chief of the clan, the old induna Mugwaleni, officiated. Squatting on his heels, he held in his hands the twig of a female nkanye ; this he put into his mouth and spat twice, producing the sacramental sound tsu. Then he poured out some beer, invoking the

782 ancestor-gods. All the members of the clan squatting in a circle round him clapped their hands in cadence, the palms slightly curved, in such a way that the clapping produces a hollow noise. This is the respectful manner of saluting the bakoñwana, the wife's parents and the mpselekulobye, (a term which designates the father and mother of a son-in-law or of a daughter-in-law). This way of saluting intimates the respect shown to the ancestors.

Then the victim (in this case a cow) was killed. A young man tried to

Photo A. Jaques.

The sacrifice offered by the Makaringe family to its ancestor-gods in Shilavane (January 1924).

pierce its heart with an assegai. (Curiously enough I have observed that the Thongas always stab the animal on the right side.) But on this occasion the ill-directed weapon struck the breast plate, and the badly-tempered iron was bent aside. It was a painful sight, but happily somebody knocked the animal down with an axe.

When it had been cut open, the second sacrifice took place. Someone brought on a plate the portion reserved for the spirits, consisting of a piece of the ear, of the tongue, of the forelegs, of one of the hindlegs, of the heart, of the liver, of the bowels and all the grass contained in the first stomach.

The circle is again formed and those present take up the same positions. Mugwaleni seizes each of the portions one after the other and places them on the ground, addressing himself to the dead; he calls them by their names, speaking to them in a familiar manner and begs for

782 their protection : "May the harvest be plentiful ; may the cattle multiply ; may all our wives become pregnant." He uses by preference negative expressions : "Be not angry against us ; may the cows not slip their calves ; may our wives have no miscarriages, etc." In the meantime the people continue the same clapping of hands (called ku diya or ku losa gupsi, gupsi expressing exactly the hollow sound produced by the curved hands).

Notwithstanding this ritual clapping of hands, not much respect is shown by those present. They chat and joke whilst the chief of the clan is praying. A little tobacco has been spread as a libation on the graves and all help themselves to it. The influence of European ideas can be noticed ; a man cries : "Take off your hats!" and most of the men obey, showing that they are conscious that this is a religious ceremony worthy of respect.

As soon as the ceremony is over, they begin to dance. Immediately the clapping changes. It is now done with the hands held flat. It is chiefly the women, especially the old ones, who dance. Gabaze, the principal wife of the Nkuna chief Muhlaba, who is a Makaringe, the sister of Mugwaleni, makes herself conspicuous by her contortions. These are the ordinary dances.

They eat the roasted meat ; they drink the beer brought by the women. The portions offered to the manes are eaten as well as the rest, and I did not observe that they were reserved to special persons. The skin of the victim is cut into small strips which the men tie round the right wrist, the women round the left."

b) *National Offerings.*

782 These are those offered at the capital, to the ancestors of the
769 chief, but on behalf of the whole clan, because the gods of the
796 reigning family have control over the clan, just as the chief has
554 over the families of his subjects.

The regular national offering is the *luma* of the first fruits, their consecration, which I have described at length as one of the principal manifestations of the National life (I. p. 396-406). The Bantu conception of hierarchy is clearly illustrated by this custom : the gods must be the first to enjoy the produce of the new year, then the chief, the sub-chiefs, the counsellors, the

782 headmen, then the younger brothers in order of age. There
769 is a stringent taboo directed against the person who precedes
796 his superiors in the enjoyment of the first fruits, this law being
554 applicable to Kafir corn or bukanye in certain clans, and also to sorghum, pumpkin leaves and beer, etc., in others (1).

834 The sexual taboo is also enforced. Those who contravene this
782 law are said to "destroy the efficacity of the offering, nyumbisa mhamba." At the Ngoni Court, where sexual excesses were prevalent (see I. Annotatio 14) it is said that the chiefs used to remain continent for a fortnight at the time of luma. The reason of this taboo is probably the fact that the luma signifies the entering upon a new year, a new season, and is thus a rite of passage.

782 The religious meaning of the rite is clear : the gods, if deprived of the right they possess by virtue of their hierarchical position, would avenge themselves by threatening the harvest ; so they must be given their share first.

In the Maluleke clan, in which the customs seem to have been influenced by the Ba-Nyai, there is also a regular offering at the capital, when *the crops are still growing*. Rangane describes it as follows : "When the chief sees that the Kafir corn is threatened by the vermin in the fields, he says : "Perhaps the masters of the country (i. e. my ancestors who are dead) are angry ; perhaps I have not worshipped them fittingly." He summons the sons of the royal family (mangalakana) from all parts of the country, prepares beer, and selects a goat for the sacrifice ; they assemble around the graves with the sons and the uterine nephews, where they worship, and then, after eating all that is to be eaten, they return."

The special national offerings are those in connection with rain. If the rain falls at the right season, the sacrifice will not be made ; but should it fail to do so, the whole ritual will be gone through. This sacrifice for rain, is, as has already been mentioned (p. 318) called *phokolo* amongst the Bilen clans, and is performed in the

(1) Amongst the Malulekes a *second luma* is necessary after harvest, when brewing the first beer. It seems that the sub-chiefs or even headmen, settled in districts far away from the capital, can obtain a special license to perform the luma ceremony on their own account, but they must first apply for this permission, and after having finished, they must forward the chief's share to him.

following way. The bones are consulted, and a special pot, called 782
phokolo, is buried just below the surface of the ground, in the middle of a clean spot well hidden in a dense thicket of thorny shrubs. The victim, a black ram without any white spot, is brought there, and killed in accordance with the ceremonial rites. The grass of the paunch is squeezed over the pot, so that the green liquid drips into it, and the blood is spread all over the ground. Four furrows have been dug in the form of a cross with the pot as a centre, and pointing towards the four cardinal points. Little girls ("who are not yet wise," i. e. they are not yet informed regarding sexual matters) are sent to fetch water and fill the pot until it overflows into the furrows. This being done, they go back to their mothers. The *mbelele* rite will immediately follow (p. 318). This phokolo sacrifice is the religious act in connection with ancestrolatry, the mbelele being actuated by entirely different ideas. The phokolo rite is replaced in the Nkuna clan by the official visit to the graves, accompanied by an old mourning song, and the custom of beating the mounds with sticks ; (whether to awaken the gods or to show them the dissatisfaction of the worshippers, I do not know). In many sacred woods, a living *human victim* is offered to the gods, as already mentioned (p. 383). The phokolo rite is a regular sacrifice attended with bloodshed.

In the case of war threatening the country, another offering is 721
made which is called *Mhamba ya Burena, the Offering of Valour.* 782
The general of the army chooses a thorn, a large thorn taken from a munga tree (the Accacia horrida), not a crooked one ; he sucks it without biting it, and emits his saliva saying : "Tsu! You, the ancestor-gods, so and so and so, enemies wish to take your country! Give us valour! May we stab them with this thorn, with the assegai! (Ñwi, psikwembu, man, man, man. Yimpi yi ta, yi ta teka tiko djenu! Hi nyikan burena, hi ba tlhaba hi mutwa lo, hi tlhari!)" This offering resembles the offering of the thorn made by the headman, but it has an entirely different meaning, and it is probable that the kind of thorn employed is different.

Another national act of worship, which recalls the rite of 778
the nkanye twig in funeral ceremonies, is performed with the 782
aid of the *great mhamha*, to which I have already referred

778 (I. p. 386). This is a most curious object, the mhamba par excel-
782 lence, in the Tembe and Zihlahla clans. It is so highly venerated that people fear to call it by its own name, and refer to it as hlengwe, riches. According to the description of Hlekisa, (a Tembe Native), it consists of the nails and hair of the deceased chiefs. When a chief dies, the more or less imperishable portions of his body, such as the nails and the hair of his head and beard, are carefully cut, kneaded together with the dung of the oxen which have been killed at his death, and a kind of pellet is thus made. This is bound round with thongs of hide. When another chief dies, a second pellet is made and added to the first, and so on down through centuries. The mhamba of the Tembe clan is at the present time about one foot in length, says my informant, who is a cousin of the man to whose custody this sacred relic has been committed, and who has seen it often. The guardian must be of a particularly calm temperament, and must not be given to the use of strong language, nor to intoxication. The chief gives him money or perhaps a wife, for his trouble, because of the responsibility which he has undertaken towards the country. He keeps the mhamba in a hut specially built for the purpose, at the back of his own village. Whenever he is called upon to use it for a religious purpose, he must abstain from sexual relations for a whole month. The sacrifice then performed will consist of a goat, slaughtered in the usual way, but consecrated without the ordinary tsu. The tsu is replaced by the mhamba, which the officiant will brandish in the same way as the nkanye twig (I. p. 142) in the funeral ceremony, tracing circles in the air, and invoking the gods. — This object is wrapped in great mystery. Mboza thinks that the *ntjobo* of the Nondwane, kept in the sacred hut of nyokwekulu (I. p. 386), the national medicine, was the same thing, but most people were ignorant of what it consisted. At any rate the same law applied to both : it was looked on as the greatest calamity for it to fall into the hands of enemies in time of war. When the clan is forced to seek refuge in flight, the keeper of the mhamba is the first to flee. The whole army stands between the guardian of the precious amulet of the clan and the enemy. It is more than its flag, and will not be taken until all the warriors have been killed

or dispersed. — It is said that once during the war between Tembe and Maputju, the latter succeeded in gaining possession of the mhamba ; a terrible drought ensued, for the gods of Maputju were irritated, as they were of the same family as those of Tembe (I. p. 329). Not knowing what to do with it, the Maputjus at length cut open a goat between the hind legs, and introduced the mhamba into its body. They then led the goat to the river which marks the boundary of the Tembe country, and threw it into the water. Hlekisa's grandfather, a Tembe man, who had settled in Maputju, was asked to lead the goat. — Thus the rightful owners recovered their mhamba. (Is there not a striking resemblance between this story and that of the capture of the ark of the covenant by the Philistines?) 778 782

The mhamba of the Zihlahla country used to be kept by a man named Petshela, who carried it with him from place to place, when fleeing, refusing to trust it to the care of any save his own children. Is it still in existence, since the clan was deprived of its independence? In Nondwane the national amulet was in the care of the Godhlela family, as already mentioned in I. p. 388, and this function was hereditary.

The story *of the great mhamba of the Shirindja clan* (between Nondwane and Manyisa) is even more impressive than those told about the palladium of Tembe and Zihlahla. The man who revealed these mysteries to me did so somewhat reluctantly, saying that those who give information about them may die! In this clan the mhamba consists of *the skin of the faces of the deceased chiefs.* As soon as a chief is dead, the great ñanga Manketwana removes the skin from his forehead down to his chin and spreads it on the ground, the edges being fixed down by sticks all round in order that it shall dry without shrivelling. He also cuts off the fingers. The whole is then handed over to an old woman who no longer has sexual relations, the wife of one of the sub-chiefs. She adds this skin to those of the ancient chiefs and keeps the bundle in a special hut, the hut of the mhamba, built behind the principal hut of the new chief, in which she sleeps. No one is allowed to enter it ; married men in particular must not do so ; and a woman only if the child she carries on her shoulders has not yet passed through

778 the ceremony of tying the cotton string (I. p. 56. Sexual relations
782 have been prohibited to her from the birth of her child up to the performance of this rite. She is consequently pure). The chief may penetrate into it, but only if he has abstained from intercourse with his wives for a whole week. Mankentwane himself must observe this law, otherwise the "medicine, muri" would be spoiled and lose all its virtue. (The sexual taboo, in this case, is evidently dictated by the fact that the mhamba is directly connected with military matters, as we shall see. Compare I. p. 470.) In this sacred hut the old woman constantly keeps up a fire which is maintained with the logs of a certain tree, called shibondjwane, cut by the subjects at the command of the chief. Now and again she exposes the skins to the rays of the sun in order to kill the worms which attack them. Should enemies invade the country, she escapes, carrying the bundle in a mat. If they come up with her, she at once disappears (nyumba) leaving the mat on the spot. As soon as an enemy has taken hold of it, he becomes insane ; he begins to wander about in the bush, unable to return home. When the war is over, the old woman goes to the place where she left the mhamba ; if she does not immediately find it there, her heart is not in the least troubled. The bones are thrown, and reveal where the mhamba has been put by the enemy. Two days
778 do not elapse before it is found! The great mhamba is used first
782 of all for the preparation of military expeditions. A small portion
726 of the fingers and of the faces is cut off and these pieces are mixed with the other war charms ; a pill is made and placed on a piece of broken pottery over a fire in the sacred wood. All the warriors pass by one after the other and expose their assegais, their legs, and their faces to the smoke ; finally the great ñanga puts the fire out and the army is ready to start. But the Shirindja mhamba also plays a great part in the National religious ceremonies, as in the other clans (1).

171 (1) It is interesting to compare the Thonga *great mhamba* with two objects found amongst other Bantu tribes. The first of these is the *byiri* of the Pahuins of the French
778 Congo. This is a most powerful fetish consisting of a skull kept in a box in the huts of these people, in a dark corner; it is used as a means of obtaining wealth and of discovering wizards. In former times it is said to have been the skull of the father of the owner of the hut which had been dug up by him and smeared with drugs. In

2) The Main Elements of Ancestor Worship.

The sequence of the religious ceremonies in a typical sacrifice, like that performed at the crushing of the hut, is as follows : 769 782

1) The bones are first consulted, and reveal to what god, when, how, and by whom the sacrifice must be made.

2) The officiant, who is as a rule the eldest male member of the family, comes and presides over the sacrifice.

3) The victims are brought by those who have either been designated, or who have volunteered to provide them.

4) They are killed by the uterine nephews, the goats or sheep by piercing the heart, the hens by cutting the throat. Sometimes the face of the goat is directed to a certain point of the horizon.

5) The victim bleats, or if it is a hen, jumps about on the ground in its agony. At each thrust of the assagay, or of the

order to secure this much desired object as soon as possible, the son would go so far as to poison his father. Now, according to the testimony of Mr. F. Grébert (*Au Gabon*, p. 154), the byeri is not necessarily the skull of an ancestor. Any skull can be used, either that of a traveller found dead on the caravan route or even the skull of a man belonging to a foreign clan who has been assassinated. The byeri, whatever may be its origin, acts by its own power and no longer on account of its connection with the spirit of an ancestor. It is a true fetish, a material, magical object which is able to kill or to enrich in virtue of its own power. The Thonga mhamba is not a fetish. Its power is never dissociated from the spirits of the old chiefs whose nails, hair or faces have been used to produce it. Whatever action it may have is due to the fact that these nails, hair or faces influence the dead chiefs to whom they belonged, according to the magic principle that the part acts on the whole. The origin of the byeri is certainly ancestor-worship, but here ancestrolatry has evolved into fetichism, and I conclude from these facts that Thonga ancestrolatry is simpler, more spiritualistic and must therefore be more ancient than the present Pahuin system. 171 778

Amongst the Ba-Ganda (see Rev. J. Roscoe, *the Baganda*) there are powerful gods who have their priests and mediums, and are worshipped according to a complicated ritual, one of them being the war-god Kibuka. They have their temples, in which there is a sacred shrine placed on a stool. The shrine of Kibuka was secured and sent to the Museum of Ethnology at Cambridge, and it was found to contain, together with other objects, a bag with a human jawbone, the male organ and a decorated umbilical cord. This is a proof that the god Kibuka is an ancestor-god, whatever may be the splendour to which his worship has attained in the course of time. And here again we are in presence of what seems to be a later form of ancestrolatry, most probably evolved in consequence of the development of the social system of the Baganda. They form a nation with a powerful royal family, more than one thousand years old. With them the spirits of the dead kings hover round their jawbones, just as they are influenced by their nails, hair or faces amongst the Thongas, who would seem to be in a less advanced stage of evolution.

782 knife, the uterine nephews utter their cries of joy (1). This
769 is their way of consenting (pfumela) or answering, for they accept the offering on behalf of the gods (2). The whole crowd joins in these manifestations of joy.

6) The victim is cut open, and one limb, or small pieces of each limb, are put aside for the gods ; the half digested grass, *psanyi*, found in the intestines, especially in the *shihlakahla* stomach, is carefully put aside.

7) The priest takes a little of the psanyi mixed with the blood of the victim, puts it to his lips, emits a little saliva, and spits out the whole, pronouncing the *tsu*, this being the means of consecrating the offering, or, as we may say, despatching it to the gods.

8) He pronounces the prayer — occasionally interrupted by some member of the family, who has a complaint to make.

9) In certain cases of special misfortune, whilst praying he squeezes the green liquid contained in the psanyi over his hearers, who rub their bodies with it.

10) One of the nephews "cuts his prayer" (i. e. brings it to an end) by taking in his mouth a little of the consecrated beer or wine, or part of the hen's gizzard.

11) The uterine nephews steal the offering and run away, followed by the throng, who throw pellets of psanyi at them. They eat the portion of the gods.

12) Should the offering have been made on behalf of a particular individual, the astragalus of the goat, or some portions of the hen are tied to him and worn for a [illegible] on the left or right side of the body : the left if the offering was made to the maternal ancestors, the right if it was made to the paternal gods.

Let us examine more closely some of these acts, so that we may better understand the elements of this ceremony.

(1) Amongst the Ba Nyai they clap their hands and shout : "Ndiyo !" — "all right."

782 (2) It is not necessary to add more about the part played by the uterine nephews in
604 the sacrifice, for it has been explained in detail in Vol. I, p. 269 when treating of the family system. The two great reasons for their taking such a prominent part in the religious ritual seem to be the following : 1) during the life of their maternal uncle, and also of all their mother's family, they were on very intimate terms with them, "even eating from the same piece of food, not fearing their saliva." Therefore they now eat the flesh of the victim instead of the ancestor-gods of their mother. 2) Maternal relatives have a special religious duty towards their nephews. They act as their priests

a) The Priesthood.

The Thongas have no sacerdotal caste, but, as has already been 782
pointed out, the right of officiating in religious ceremonies is 798
strictly confined to *the eldest brother*. All offerings must be made 593
through him. To supplant him is a great taboo, and would entail the malediction of the gods, and even the death of the offender. There are, however, some minor offerings which anyone is allowed to make to his gods ; for instance, a lover who has been jilted, may, after having consulted the bones, give something to his god in order to obtain his aid in regaining the favour of the girl he loves. But, as a rule, no one must *hahla*, or even *gandjela*, before the death of his parents. If, after their death, their son should happen to dream of them, he must offer worship to the deceased by pouring some ground tobacco on to his wooden pillow, this being the commencement of his religious functions : "he begins to learn to gandjela" (Rangane), and, if he is the eldest, he may in course of time become the priest of the whole family. I heard, however, a man from Tembe assert that he had *hahla* when his father was still living, but in this case he had been designated by the bones. A little child may even perform the office if the bones order it ; his father will then hold him in his arms and pray in his stead. The bones often call on *women* to [562]
pronounce the prayer, especially the elder sister ; there is no anti-feminism in Thonga religion. In the *luma* ceremony, however, it must always be a man, the chief himself, who is the principal officiant. The wives of the clansmen naturally cannot take a prominent part in the offerings made for the clan, being themselves members of another clan and having their own ancestor-gods, to

(I. p. 268), offerings being frequently made to the gods of the mother's family through 782
the agency of the maternal uncle. Hence the fact that uterine nephews take such a 604
peculiar part in the ritual of the worship.

I must add that according to information just received from the Rev. A. Jaques, in the Northern clans uterine nephews do not steal the portion of the offerings put apart for the ancestor-gods. It seems that this custom, which I believe to be ancient, is met with essentially amongst the Ronga clans, where the special term *mupsyana* (an old Bantu word corresponding to *um-tshana* in Xosa and *mochana* in Sutho) has also been preserved to designate the uterine nephew, whilst it has fallen into disuse in the Northern clans. (Compare I. p. 162, 232, 498.)

782 whom they sometimes pray in the hut (See App. IV). Amongst
593 Thongas the wife does not adopt the gods of her husband's
793 family (1).

The beginnings of the *constitution of a sacerdotal caste* may be seen in the fact that in each clan, the mhamba, the sacred object used by the royal family to invoke its gods, or the drug on which national invulnerability depends, is entrusted to the care of a certain man, whose office is hereditary. As soon as the political tie becomes stronger, and the power of the paramount chief greater, the religious acts which are performed at the capital gain in importance, and the person who officiates becomes a kind of high priest. Should this evolution continue, it is easy to see how a sacerdotal class may be formed at the expense of the primitive family worship, which thus increasingly loses its importance. Amongst the Thongas this has not yet taken place, and their religious system seems to correspond to a very ancient state of things ; it is in all probability the pure form of primitive Ancestrolatry.

b) The Thonga Conception of the Offerings.

782 With the help of new information obtained since writing the
778 first edition of this book, I think it now possible to attain to a fuller
789 understanding of the meaning of this great Thonga word *mhamba* which I have translated either by offering or by sacrifice, in connection with the killing of a victim. Under this designation come objects of two distinct categories : articles of food, clothing, etc. which are of immediate service to human existence and which are *given* to the ancestor-gods, and magic or magico-religious objects which are not given but only employed in the act of worship. The aim is the same, whatever may be the nature of the object, viz. to obtain the favour and help of the ancestor-gods, but in the first case the officiant adresses himself to living, conscious

(1) There seems to be a profound difference between Thongas and Suthos on this point. The Rev. P. Ramseyer assured me on very good evidence that in Basutoland "a wife takes the family name (seboko) of her husband and abandons her *midimo*." The midimo, says my informant, are not only the *badimo* proper, i. e. the ancestor-gods, but all the supernatural powers in which a given clan trusts, the totem, the spirit (moro) of hail, of rain, of lightning, of disease. A Suto woman can become a Tobela by marriage, though this seldom actually happens.

spirits, endowed with intelligence, feelings and will, and tries to induce them to respond to his needs, whilst, in the second case he trusts that his offering will act on them magically, i. e. automatically, according to the principles of magic explained above. Let us consider these two kinds of mhamba more closely. 782 778 789

1) *The gifts.* As regards their nature these are indeed most varied, consisting in the first place of *domestic animals*, the ox, goat, fowl, which are only used by subjects, the sheep being the offering proper to the chief (p. 50). Pigs are not accepted for the altar, neither are antelopes, or other kinds of game. I have never heard of any offering consisting of the flesh of wild beasts. The victim is generally killed, but there are cases of its being consecrated *living*. If a living hen or goat is given to the gods, (a ring sometimes being attached to the leg of the fowl), it is taboo henceforth to kill or sell it; if it dies, it must not be eaten, and it must also be replaced by another (1). Another kind of living offering is the *human sacrifice* made in certain sacred woods in order to obtain rain, but this is rarely resorted to. "The victim wanders about in the forest till he dies," says Mboza; "the gods take him." 782

The most common kind of offering is *the produce of the fields*, chiefly the Kafir Corn in the official luma, but also other cereals, sorghum maize, likoro (p. 11), various kinds of pumpkins. Ground nuts are never offered. But the ancestor-gods appreciate drinks, not only the national beer, but also the wine of the Whites. They like narcotics as well as intoxicants, and tobacco is one of the gifts most frequently made to them.

Clothing, especially handkerchiefs of various designs (these designs being often prescribed by the bones) is often offered, even ornaments, e. g. the bracelet in the sacrifice for the uterine nephew (p. 396); but it is the sick boy who wears it, probably instead of the gods.

Lastly one sometimes finds on the graves "wealth, hlengwe,"

(1) I have heard of two cases of a *living human offering* in the Bões and Manyiss regions. A girl had been consecrated to the ancestor-gods; she was therefore a mhamba. In the first case a goat had been given to them also, as a living mhamba. The girl died, and the goat ought to have been burnt together with all her belongings, but her parents presented it to Christian Natives, who were free from the fear of the ancestor-gods.

782 elephants' tusks or hippopotamus teeth. (Nkolele). I never heard of any money being consecrated to the ancestor-gods, but generally speaking it may be said that most of the things which rejoice the heart of a human being may be placed on the altar and employed to win the favour of the ancestral spirits.

But what is *the actual value of these gifts*? All things considered, it must be confessed that it is very small. The sacrificing Jew made a burnt offering : he burnt the victim in order that Jehovah might be gratified with the smoke of the roasting flesh, which ascended to heaven! Nothing of this sort is met with amongst the Thongas. When the offering is a living one, there is actually a certain element of self-denial, in that the sacrificer renounces the possibility of eating it or selling it ; but the bones rarely order such offerings. Generally the offerings cost nothing. Thongas present their gods with a goat, but they eat it themselves. From each limb a small piece is cut ; this is enough for the gods, and the uterine nephews will steal even that. If the bones have ordered the sacrifice of an ox, it may happen that the officiating headman, having none to offer, will go to one of his neighbours who possesses an old, dry oxhide, and cut a small piece from it; this will serve as his ox. As for fowls, a feather or the bones are placed on the altar, but the meat is eaten by the people ; only, whether it be a fowl or a goat which is sacrificed, the animal must be in perfect condition ; it is not stated if this is in honour of the gods or for the satisfaction of the eaters. The same thing happens with regard to cereals. The bones frequently prescribe a mhamba called *byala bosila*. What is this? It is prepared as follows. The officiant takes a handful of maize grains and softens them by steeping them for a time in water. Then he stirs the mixture, takes a little in his mouth and emits his tsu. He may even content himself with the scum produced by this stirring. Nobody would eat byala bosila nor dare to offer it to a visitor. The particles of bran which remain in the sieve when beer is brewed are also quite good enough for the gods. But observe, said my informant, that thus no one, not even the poorest, will ever want for a mhamba to offer to his gods.

How is this to be explained? Mboza assured me that it was done to *deceive* (kanganyisa) the spirits of the ancestors, as if they

were still the wretched old people from whom the grandchildren used to steal their food (I. p. 132). But I doubt the truth of this explanation. The valueless nature of the offerings is rather due to the fact that Natives know perfectly well that the gods neither eat nor take what is offered to them, and that it is devoured by the fowls running about the place. When telling the story of the theophany described on p. 384, the old priest Nkolele made the following remark : "Even if one only kills a chicken, the god is quite content, for, to him, it has the same value as an ox." This seems to be the true explanation. The gods do not ask for real food, or wealth ; they only regard the "mhamba" as a token of love from their descendants, and a sign that these have not forgotten them, but will do their duty towards them (1). If this be the case, the offerings, which have little material worth, acquire a real religious or spiritual value. But it must be confessed that, although this may really have been the original idea, the chief anxiety of the worshippers now-a-days is to observe exactly the details of the *prescribed ritual*. This is what makes an offering acceptable, and not the disposition of the heart towards the gods... It is possible that an offering may be refused by the gods. A worshipper may be "overcome" by his mhamba, and will then return home shivering, having only increased the anger of the spirits. Therefore, let the rules of the ritual be well observed, and especially the indications of the divinatory bones. 782

Some features of this ritual are most interesting, especially the *tsu* so often mentioned, by which the offering is consecrated. What does it mean? The Natives themselves are unable to explain it, so we are reduced to mere supposition. It consists in an emission of saliva, generally mixed with something from the victim : some of the short feathers of the neck soiled with blood, in the case of a fowl, or a little psanyi also kneaded with blood, in that of a goat. But in the offering of bitterness (p. 391) there is

(1) In Chinese Ancestrolatry the same thing occurs. Worshippers do not offer their ancestors real money, etc., but paper representations, which they burn for the ancestors, thinking that the spirits of the various articles will enter the other world, and be accepted by the spirits of the deceased. Probably Bantu worshippers are unconsciously influenced by a similar idea.

782 merely saliva ; this, however, is a true "hahla," and this fact shows that the saliva is a gift, the *personal gift of the worshipper*. He first gives his gods something emanating from himself, mingling it with the blood or psanyi of the victim, and only then does he approach them. So there seems to be a deep meaning underlying this sacramental act, though most of the worshippers are not aware of it (a circumstance which unhappily occurs in all religions) ; though unconscious, it exists and has given rise to the rite ; the gift of oneself is necessary to obtain the favour of the Divinity. — What is the intention in adding the blood and psanyi? Is there any meaning in the *choice of the blood* which is mixed with saliva in order to despatch the offering to the gods (sungulisa mhamba)? Is the blood (ngati) regarded as containing the life of the animal, as was the case amongst the Jews, who used it in sacrifices "to cover the soul" or the sins of the worshipper (hence the idea of atonement)? There is no sign of a similar conception among the Thongas. It is true that they prefer to resort to sacrifices with blood in cases of misfortune, disease and death, when some idea of guilt may be entertained. The moral element, however, if it ever really existed, has entirely disappeared from the actual horizon of ancestrolatry.

782 On the other hand, the use of the *psanyi*, the half digested
783 grass found in the shihlakahla stomach, is easier to explain. It is evidently a means of purification for the family, if not exactly from sin, at least from misfortune (khombo) ; hence their custom of washing their bodies with the green liquid extracted from it, a religious ceremony which to us seems very disgusting, but to the Natives quite clean, their ideas about dung being very different from ours (p. 38). A large ball of psanyi is put on the head of the bride after the dlaya shilongo ceremony (I. p. 257) in order to remove the dangers of consanguineous marriage, and so make it easier for her to have children. Pellets of this substance are thrown too at the uterine nephews, when they run away after stealing the offering (I. p. 162) ; or on to the roof of the deceased's hut, when this is officially closed, with the aim of removing the danger of death ; the slaughtered goat has thus to contribute to the restoration of peace and happiness to the family.

No special use is made of the *bones* of the victim, except, as we shall see later, in offerings on behalf of those possessed. The only part kept is the *astragalus*, or the *psirungulo* just described, which are tied to the person on whose behalf the sacrifice has been made, probably to insure for him a permanent blessing from the gods. 782 777

It must be observed that the sacrificial ritual, as well as the medical art, lays great stress on the sex of the offerings. As a rule, there must be opposition between the sex of the victim and that of the person for whom, or to whom, the sacrifice is made. A woman is prayed for by means of a he-goat or a cock, and a man by a she-goat or a hen. 782 755 562

What is the reason of this rule? — "Psi yaka muti," says my informant. "It builds up the village." As a village can only grow and multiply by the union of the male and the female element, so in order to succeed in any pursuit it is necessary to unite both sexes. This principle is universally applied : when a girl is ill, a boy will bring her medicine, and vice-versa. The rule is also followed in another case. It may be that a mhamba has been wrongly performed and threatens to bring misfortune instead of appeasing the gods. This mhamba must consequently be "quenched, timula" "so that it may keep quiet and cool down, because it might cause annoyance and overcome them" (Mboza). This will be done by offering a mhamba of the opposite sex, which will correct the first. So if a female nkanye twig has been employed in the funeral ceremony, when the ritual ought to have been performed with a twig taken from a male stem, the ceremony will be repeated with a *male twig in order to quench* the first mhamba.

The last observation to be made about the gifts presented to the ancestor-gods is that the *psirungulo*, viz. the part of the victim which is tied to the person for whose sake it has been sacrificed, must be attached to the left part of the body if this person belongs to the female, to the right if to the male sex ; moreover in the sacrifices offered to maternal gods, the attachment is always done on the left side, whatever may be the sex of the person. Why is this? Because the left side belongs to the woman, the right to the man. We have seen that this is the case in the hut (I. p. 187). 782 562

782 *Shimantji* is the term used for left ; its etymology is unknown.
562 *Shinene* means right ; it also indicates nice, good, true. In this as in many other instances the male sex has arrogated to itself the better part!

782 2) *The magical objects used in worship.* First of all comes *the*
789 *great mhamba*, the nails, hair or faces of deceased chiefs. We are
778 evidently dealing here with a case of *communionist magic.* I explain in the same way the use of roots brought to light by a river which has washed away the ground (p. 387), but it may be that this is also an instance of *imitative magic* : the roots were hidden in the soil and have come to light ; in the same way the ancestor-gods have been buried in the ground and have again come forth to bless or curse their descendants. The curious astragalus bone of an antelope which had been swallowed by a hyena and found later in its stools and which Mankhelu employed to represent the gods in his divinatory set of bones, would favour this second explanation. In fact most of these objects are supposed to act in virtue of the principle of similarity : the nkanye twig, because this venerated tree will ensure respect to the person, living or dead, for whom it is used ; the piece of charcoal, because the enemy will be reduced to impotence just as the piece of wood has been consumed by fire ; the thorn employed by the general of the army, because the warriors will be able to pierce their opponents and kill them, etc. Is the number of magic objects used in this connection limited to those I have mentioned? I do not think so. It is probable that some others may be found in the various parts of the tribe. I even have proof that new objets of a magic character are still invented by worshippers who are gifted with special imaginative powers. My old friend Mankhelu was telling me the particulars of the battle of Nov. 1901, during the Sikororo war (I. p. 513), when suddenly jumping to his feet and taking a small bundle of grass, he said : "Listen! I will show you the mhamba I made when the enemy rushed on us. I took a bundle of grass like those which women use for binding their sticks, and feverishly separated the blades, saying : 'Let them fail to surround us, or decoy us!' Then I scattered them in all directions and said : 'Let them be so dispersed, carried off and destroyed!' And this is exactly what happened,

On my return from the battle I showed all the army how I had 782
prayed." The old general's spontaneous appeal to the gods on 789
behalf of his country in its hour of supreme danger is indeed 778
worthy of notice, and also furnishes a proof that ancestor-worship is still a living force and has not become a mere matter of ritual amongst those who practise it. This prayer of the Nkuna general, this exclamation of an anguished soul in the presence of a great danger, may be regarded as *verbal magic*, as it is not expressedly addressed to the gods, and the same may be said of the formula employed to cancel an oath in the offering of reconciliation, the mention of the gods being absent in this case also. All these acts, however, are mhamba. They are in reality accomplished with the idea that the gods hear and see what is said and done and will be induced to deliver their worshippers.

The magic character of these rites is most marked in the cases of communionist magic ; those which are classed under imitative magic may perhaps be more properly called *symbols*, or at least some of them (1).

Elias Libombo once came to me and said : "My brother, Klass, 787
died. He was *the mhamba of the Libombos*. Now his younger 793

(1) But what is a *symbol* in religion, and what is the difference between the symbol and the magic rite? I cannot treat this important subject here in all the necessary detail and length. Let us take only one instance. The offering of incense which took place every evening in the Temple of Jerusalem and which is also widespread in certain branches of the Christian Church is regarded as a symbol. The perfumed smoke which ascends towards heaven corresponds to the prayers of the worshippers, which are thought of as ascending to God and pleasing Him, just as the agreeable smell of incense gratifies the nostrils of the man who perceives it. But in the Hebrew religion it is not thought that incense conveys prayers to God in some actual and magical fashion. It is a symbol. Psychologically speaking this use of incense is probably to be explained in the following manner: The material representation of a religious act (or a religious truth) tends to induce in the worshipper a stronger faith in the efficacy of the act or the reality of the truth. His soul thus finds satisfaction in the performance of the symbolic act through which he feels himself brought into closer communion with his God. It is easy to understand that in the course of the religious evolution, a higher conception of God should have caused the magic act to evolve into the symbol, and that the symbol itself should be abandoned or reduced to a minimum when the idea of God has become perfectly spiritualised and communion with the Father who is in Heaven is realized without any external and intermediary means. A comparison of the great mhamba with the relics of saints or other relics used in certain religions would probably show a similar type of evolution.

Some scientists believe that religious evolution contained a *preanimistic phase*, in which the worship of spirits had not yet come into existence, and in which primitive man employed only magic means to influence the supernatural powers. This

787 brother will be so called." Nkolele, the father of these two men,
793 was the Libombo mhamba before them. This is another meaning of this great word mhamba. Klass was neither a gift made to the ancestor-gods of the Libombos, nor a magic object employed to win their favour, but he was the elder member of the family, the one who was the official and indispensable intermediary between all the Libombos and their gods. For this reason he was a mhamba. This leads me to propose the following definition of the word : *A mhamba is any object or act or even person which is used to establish a bond between the gods and their worshippers.*

Having thus analysed all the elements contained in the Thonga mhamba, we may safely conclude that its spiritual and religious value cannot be denied. Whatever place ritual may hold in the ceremonies of ancestrolatry, whatever mixture of devotional and magic elements may be found in them, the offering is not a mere external gift which appeases the gods by its material value, nor a simple means of coercion which forces them to submit to the will of the worshipper. By means of the mhamba the Thonga really aims at entering into relationship with those powerful spirits who control his life (1).

may be true, but as regards Bantus, they have long outgrown this stage. Even when they have recourse to magic processes in order to influence their ancestor-gods, these have a distinctive character, different from that of the ordinary magic which they practise when they wish to affect the impersonal forces of Nature. Everything done in order to obtain the favour of the ancestor-gods is a *mhamba*, not a *muri*, as I have already pointed out.

782 (1) Religious and magic practices are more or less mingled in Thonga ritual and it
789 is evident that the smaller the degree of magic contained in a rite, the more genuine religious feeling there will be in it. I owe to my Venda informant the description of
755 a sacrifice performed in his tribe for a sick child, where the two elements are combined to an extraordinary extent. It is called *the offering of the goat with clothes* (mbudzi ya u dzwindisa).

A goat is provided. It is placed before a basin of water mixed with certain drugs and forced to drink, to drink till it is fully distended, and dies. It is then skinned and cut open. The large intestine is extracted from the body, and a part of it is cut off and stitched up at one end so as to form a kind of pouch. From each limb a bit of meat is taken, and a provision of the seeds of various cereals, brought to the spot together with drugs. All these different kinds of food are introduced into the pouch, the process of filling it being accompanied by prayers to the ancestor-god. The officiant, whilst proceeding with his task, puts seeds into the goat's intestine with one hand, and, with the other, takes other seeds and places them apart. These he will keep carefully in order to sow them later on. And continually he prays: "Eat your fill and be satisfied, and leave us some for our use." Thus the ancestor-god has been fed, well and duly stuffed. The pouch is then stitched at its other end. But now the ancestor-god must be clothed

c) *Prayers.*

The act of prayer is called *khongota* (Ro.), *khongela* (Dj.) 782
(the same word being also employed to mean "supplicate"); or *bulabulela*, to speak to, or scold the gods; *bukutjela* means a long, meandering prayer in which the officiant says the same thing over and over again. I have given twenty-two different forms of prayer when describing the manifold religious acts of the Thongas: two prayers of medicine men (I. 55, II. 393); those pronounced on the day of marriage (I. p. 111); of death, with the nkanye twig (I. p. 142); in the ceremony of crushing down the hut (I. 161); at the distribution of the widows (I. 208); at the death of a sister (I. 216); in the ceremony of killing the tie of consanguinity (I. 258); on journeys (I. p. 340. II. p. 394, 398); on offering the first fruits (I. 396); before the tjeba fishing (II. p. 87); when sneezing (II. 361); on offering tobacco at the altar (II. p. 390); for a sick nephew (II. p. 396); at the sacrifice of reconciliation (II. p. 399); at the worship of the Makaringe family (II. p. 403);

also! A strap is cut from the goat's skin and the sacrificer winds it all round the 782
pouch. Carrying the offering with him he now goes to the grave of the grandfather, 789
digs, and lays the pouch in the earth parallel to the body beneath; he then prays again: 755
"We worship you, grandfather! And we have clothed you. This is your food. Eat and be full and be contented. And leave us food, plenty of food that we also may be contented, and bless the sick child."

Let us try to analyse this rite according to the ideas of magic which we have explained, p. 369. We are dealing here with the ancestor-god complexus. A goat is provided, a gift made. This is religion. This goat has now become one of the possessions of the ancestor-god, a part of him. Henceforth the goat represents the god and an action performed upon it will be at the same time performed on the god. The goat is filled with water to quench the thirst of the god. A pouch is made of the intestine, a part of the animal which will now represent the whole, and food is introduced into it to feed the god. All these acts are instances of *communionist magic*, and the prayer which accompanies them is the religious element of the sacrifice. Some seeds are put apart to be sown later on. As they belonged to the provision made for the offering, these seeds partake of the nature of the whole of that provision; they have entered into the ancestor-god complexus; they are therefore particularly suitable for sowing, since the blessing of the powerful god will rest upon them. This is communionist magic again, whilst the filling up of the goat with water and food and the clothing its intestine with a strap may be regarded as *imitative magic*. The placing of the pouch in the grave facing the same way as the body of the ancestor once more signifies the identity of both, and the sacrificer is definitely persuaded that by all these rites he has really exercised a strong and compelling influence on his god (See my paper on "Some Features of the Religion of the Ba-Venda" *S. A. Journal of Science*, April, 1921).

782 in the offering of charcoal (II. p. 391); of valour (II. p. 405); see also Mankhelu's prayers before the battle (II. p. 418), and Nkolele's invocation in the Libombo wood (II. p. 384).

Most of these prayers have an *extremely liturgical* character; all know what must be said on each occasion of regular sacrifice; the personal element is almost totally wanting. Here are the principal parts of a typical prayer.

After the consecration of the offering with the sacramental *tsu*, a kind of *dedication*, the officiant sometimes begins with the words: "Abusayi! Akhwari!", or "Ibusayi! Ikhwari!" These words mean: Gently! Smoothly! They are pronounced with a gentle intonation as if to express deep feeling. According to Mboza the worshipper wishes to say: "I am not angry with you!" "It is the *tisola* of the heathen," said the same informant. Tisola, in the Christian language of the Thongas, means to humble or condemn oneself in asking for forgiveness.

Then comes the *invocation*. If the sacrifice is on behalf of a sick person, the god to whom the offering is made, he having been designated by the bones as the cause of the misfortune, is called, and asked to bring thither all the other gods whom he had induced to aid him in punishing the patient; or the priest may call first his own father, and entreat him to go and bring his grandfather, the latter to bring his progenitor, and so on till the last named. The ancestors in the main line are then sent to call all the great-uncles, and all the deceased of collateral lines. Or, if praying for the welfare of the country, the officiant will address his remotest ancestor first, because it was he who gave the land to his descendants, and then proceed to call the son and grandson of this ancient founder of the dynasty, continuing the succession of generations until he reaches his own father. It seems as if it were desired to have as many gods as possible present at the ceremony. The gods of the father's family may also be summoned, if the sacrifice is made to the gods of the mother's (p. 396).

The *petition* follows the invocation, and this naturally differs with circumstances. At the luma sacrifice (January) the priest asks the gods to increase the produce of the fields. At the family

gatherings, after a death, the elder brother entreats the gods to 782
bless the family, to prevent bad feeling, or strife, to give wisdom and strength to the new headman, that he may be successful in his rule over the village (1).

When some great misfortune is the occasion for this religious act being performed, the petition is preceded, or followed, by a regular *insulting* of the gods. There are two words used to designate this curious part of the prayer : *holobela*, or *holobisa*, to scold the gods, or *rukatela*, the actual word for "to insult." There is an instance of this strangely impertinent manner of addressing the gods in the sacrifice for the sick nephew (p. 396). These insults are generally uttered while the priest is squeezing the psanyi over the shoulders of his subordinates.

The last part of the prayer is *its sudden termination*, when one of the uterine nephews puts a portion of the victim into the officiant's mouth, thus "cutting his oration" (tjema). This is a true part of the ritual. When the victim is a hen, it is the gizzard, which has been half roasted during the long prayer, that is used for this purpose. The priest eats it, and so is the first to partake of the flesh of the offering.

Prayers to the ancestors do not show very much religious 782
feeling, and are, at any rate, absolutely devoid of awe. Whilst 769

(1) *Music* plays no part in Thonga religious ritual. During the preparation of the 781
offering those present often sing, but these songs are those which accompany the ordi- 533
nary dances and bear no religious character. I only once heard of a true sacred chant. 776
Mungomane, the distinguished dancer and musician who made his living by the exercise of his art in the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques (p. 187) told me that when he presided over the worship in his village, he used to *sing his prayer*. He gave me the words, but unfortunately not the notes. They are worth quoting :

"Let the meat not stick in your throats ! Eat, you chiefs, you ancestor-gods... They are coming (the oxen) ; they see me, whilst I mourn you, my father and my mother, whilst I remain outside, where I receive life from you, who are below ; I remain, I am a miserable wretch.

"The oxen are slain ! Slay the oxen ! Here they are. I mourn you. Let us eat them together, you father and mother. Give me life and give it also to my children. Let us eat these oxen which I possess, but I possess them for you. Let us not suffer from complaints of the chest here in our home.

"This is the song by which we accompany you, as you return below. Let us remain in good health."

At a given moment the uterine nephew answered by saying :

"I magnify you, my father ! You shall see me, father and mother !"

And all those present, seeing that they would have plenty of meat to eat, joined in a chorus of praise, clapping their hands.

782 sacrificing, the Natives laugh, talk in loud tones, dance, sing
769 obscene songs, even interrupt the prayer with their remarks,
781 and insult each other about family matters. The officiant himself
533 sits on the seat designated by the bones, and speaks in a monotonous manner, looking straight in front of him with utter indifference.
776 There is nothing in his demeanour which denotes fear. An exception must perhaps be made in the case of those members of the Makaringe family who clapped their hands during the prayer in the same manner as when saluting "bakonwana" (p. 402). They have as much respect for the ancestor-gods as for their relatives-in-law, and that is, indeed, saying much. I have heard that in the Maputju country people kneel down during the prayer. In Nondwane women alone kneel, whilst the men sit on their heels, the customary attitude in worship (1). If the gods were actually old people, still living, they could not be addressed with more familiarity. This leads us finally to consider in what the divinity of the ancestor-gods consists.

d) The Divine Nature of the Ancestor-Gods.

776 I have brought together in a preceding paragraph (p. 372-386)
769 all that the Natives say about their gods. Now let us return to them, after having studied the religious ritual, and ask : What

(1) The Ma-Lemba, that curious tribe settled amongst the Thongas and Vendas of Spelonken which has certain Semitic customs (I p. 73) are much more respectful towards their ancestor-gods. They have prayer meetings at which the old men of many families assemble together; one of them, he who knows the ancestors best, leads the others in prayer, "quoting all their mountains" viz. all the sacred hills where the ancestors have been buried, and at the end of each sentence they all answer : "hundjiii..." When the prayer is finished, they each raise an arm and say : "Amen !" This is one of the customs borrowed by them from the Semitic populations with which they came into contact in former times. When they heard Christians pronouncing the same word to conclude their prayers, they were very much astonished. One of them told me; "This shows that we were Christians formerly and have become back-sliders." One of their formulae when praying is as follows. "You, so and so and so, help us and enable us to reach Mudzimu." Mudzimu is the name by which they designate the Supreme Being in whom they believe and of whom they say : "All that you eat, it is Mudzimu who gives it to you!" If a child refuses to obey, they say to him : "Mudzimu will see you!" For them the ancestor-gods are but intermediaries between themselves and Mudzimu. They often call themselves Basilamusi, Moslems, and claim that there were Moslems belonging to their tribes (A ba ri ba ka hina).

do all these ceremonies reveal as to the conceptions of the Thongas concerning the ancestral spirits which they worship? A striking contrast exists in their ideas. On the one hand, the ancestor-gods are *true gods*, endowed with the attributes of divinity, whilst, on the other, they seem to be merely *human beings*, exactly on the same level as their worshippers. 776 769

1) *They are divine!* When an old decrepit man or woman dies, he at once becomes a god : he has entered the domain of infinity. The Thongas have no very clear idea of infinity. They have, however, a technical term for it : "lepsi nga yiki helo (Dj.), or mbangu (Ro.)" — "that which does not reach the point where it ends." This idea has certainly been extented to the shades which have attained the rank of psikwembu. The psikwembu are *omnipresent*. As Mankelu says : "For them there is no such thing as distance (a psi na kule) ; they are everywhere present (psi kone hikwaku). They are like heaven, the sun and the moon. There is no place where it can be said that the moon is not." The notion of *omnipresence* is perhaps that which has been understood most clearly. *Omniscience* is also believed in : the gods know what their descendants do, though they may be separated from them, perhaps dwelling in distant lands. *Omnipotence* results from the fact that they control everything in the life of their descendants. They are superior to wizards in this respect. As regards their connection with Heaven, I have never heard the point discussed. Natives do not philosophise. Thus the ancestral spirits are true gods endowed with divine attributes.

2) *They are still, however, only men!* They are not transcendent beings before whom miserable sinners tremble and offer prayers. The attitude of the worshippers, which I have just described, the freedom they show in insulting their gods, indicates that they consider them as exactly on the same level as themselves. This human nature of the gods is clearly shown by two facts : the limits of their power and their want of moral character. The domain in which they exercise their power is limited, being only *that of their own family* ; they watch over their descendants, bless or punish them, but they are absolutely indifferent to other men, and do not trouble about their affairs more than they did when still alive

776 on earth. I have nothing to fear or to hope from my neighbour's
769 gods, if I do not belong to the same "shibongo" (I. p. 360). The gods of the royal family are invoked on behalf of the whole country, and have power to give rain to the land ; but it is the chief and his uncles who must approach and sacrifice to them. I have no right to do so. It is true that an exception seems to be made in the case of the gods of bitterness, or of the bush, who attack the traveller, although he belongs to another family. But this is indeed only an exceptional case, it being their kinsfolk, who neglected to bury them, who are most exposed to their wrath.

Another proof that they are men is this : although as gods they have acquired these divine ontological powers, they have made no real moral progress. They are not better than they were as men. Their *character* is that of suspicious old people, who resent any want of respect, or attention, on the part of their descendants. They wish to be thought of, and presented with offerings. It would seem that they are not actually in need of anything, for they live in abundance, but they exact a punctual observance of the duties of their descendants in regard to them. They must *luma*, eat the first fruits, and have their share of the tobacco leaves and also of the ground tobacco. They are jealous,
783 and avenge themselves when forgotten (1). The only sin which
769 seems to be deserving of punishment is to neglect them. There are, however, two other faults which they strongly condemn, and
776 for which they may even kill their descendants : the first is any serious *transgression against the law of hierarchy* (as we saw, when dealing with the sacrifice of reconciliation) ; they punish especially the young man, even though he be the chief, who dares thus to

539 (1) In a very interesting tale, which is unique, and which I owe to Camilla and have published in *Les Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, p. 264, we hear of the people of Mashaken, near Lourenço Marques forgetting for many years to make offerings to their gods. Famine ensues. The men go to the marsh to cut sugar canes. They are unable to break them, and the gods chase them away. The women, who come to a place where honey is flowing from a tree, try to take the combs, but their hands break off and remain fixed to the spot ! The bones order Sabulana, a young girl, to go to the sacred wood to sacrifice. She enters the forest and sees the gods assembled. They say to her : "Tell your people that they have sinned, because they have tilled the ground and harvested without presenting us with any offerings. Now we are glad, because they have come to invoke us." This story was told me as a tale, not as a legend of the sacred woods.

encroach upon the right of the *regular priest*, which is a great 783
taboo ; secondly, they kill a man who loses all restraint in sexual 769
relations ; when any one yields to that sin, people say : "The 776
gods will lead him into the thick bush and kill him there." To other sins they are quite indifferent. Mboza even asserted, with a sadness which reminded me of the complaints of Asaph in Ps. LXXII, that men of bad habits do not fall ill or meet with misfortune ; the cough only attacks the good ; wizards bewitch them and do not go to the bad fellows, "for the gods see that they are not worth anything!"

In conclusion, I should say that what is wanting in the conception of the ancestor-gods, as compared with the God of higher religions, is both transcendence and the moral attributes.

III. *General Characteristics of Ancestrolatry.*

If I had to characterise Thonga ancestrolatry, I would say : 771

It is a *spiritualistic* religion, in the sense that no idols are adored ; there is neither idolatry nor fetichism in it. Spirits and spirits alone are worshipped.

It is an *animistic* religion, as defined in the preceding chapter, the categories of spirit gods being numerous, and these spirits being worshipped in order to win their favour, and propitiated when they are angry.

Though consisting essentially of offerings and prayers, which are distinctly religious acts, *it is mingled with magic* to a considerable extent.

It is a *particularistic family* religion, each family having its own particular gods. We may also see in it the beginings of a *particularistic national* religion (the great mhamba).

It is a *social* religion, its prescriptions being aimed at keeping alive and strengthening the hierarchy, which is the main feature of the social order.

It is an *unsacerdotal* religion, there being no sacerdotal order, but at the same time the priesthood of the elder brother is strictly enforced.

It is a *non-moral* religion, by which I do not mean that it is *immoral*, i. e. opposed to the laws of morality, but that it has no, or at least very

little, connection with the moral conduct of the individual. It has no moral prescriptions except those which insure the observance of the hierarchical order in the family. It neither promises reward nor threatens punishment after death. 771

Consequently it is purely *eudemonistic*, the religious ceremonies having as their sole aim material benefits connected with the terrestrial life, e. g. abundance, health, peace, and good sleep!

It is *unphilosophical*, that is to say, it does not attempt to answer the great problems about the origin and purpose of the world and human existence. These questions of causality and finality are absolutely beyond its horizon.

It is essentially *ritualistic*, and leaves very little place for true religious feeling. Adoration is practically non-existent. However, elements of *personal religion* are not altogether wanting. Some expressions in the liturgical prayers reveal humility and trust, e. g. "Death doth not come to the man who is prayed for, but only to the one who trusts in his own strength" (p. 393) ; thankfulness for escape from danger is sometimes expressed in a spontaneous and genuine way ; and may not also the sacrifice of bitterness (p. 391) be actuated by a real and touching feeling of dependency ; the old formula of invocation and the sacramental word *tsu*, now inexplicable, seem to show that there was, even in former times, such a thing as *self dedication*, and some aspiration towards a real communion between the worshipper and his gods. (See Appendix III on Personal Religion amongst Thongas.)

Animism is generally spoken of as a *religion of fear*. Applied to Thonga ancestrolatry, this statement would be an exaggeration. There is indeed no deep love for the ancestor-gods in the hearts of the Thongas; how could it be so when these "psikwembu" are so jealous, and show so little love themselves? But there is no perpetual fear. The attitude is rather that of *indifference*. Natives ask for one thing only : that they may live in peace, and that their gods may interfere with them as little as possible.

B. THE CONCEPTION OF HEAVEN.

When studying the classic tragedies of Greece, and more especially those of Aeschylus and Sophocles, one is led to the conclusion that the gods of Olympus, in whom may be recognised, more or less distinctly, the personification of the forces of Nature, 771 772

or heroes glorified by apotheosis, were not the only beings in whom that intellectually gifted people believed, nor the sole objects of their veneration. Higher than Olympus, and dwelling in the more remote heavens, a mysterious divinity looks down upon mankind, a divinity wiser and nobler than the capricious Zeus, or the voluptuous Artemis ; sometimes this being is called Nemesis, the avenger, inexorable fate, and sometimes it is a god more human and more moral in character. But this Supreme Being is vaguely conceived, and its form is, as it were, closely veiled, In the religion of the Thongas we meet with a similar phenomenon. Above the gods whom the common people know, worship, and call by name, there exists a power which to the majority remains ill-defined and which they express by the word *Heaven* (Tilo). This word *Tilo*, which, in the ordinary language, is used to designate the blue sky (p. 304), contains a far deeper and more comprehensive meaning. I shall not attempt to throw complete light on these ideas, which are so dim in the Native mind. But the reader who studies carefully the facts and customs which I am just about to describe, will certainly be convinced that there really exist two parallel series of religious ideas in the Thonga Religion. We have already dealt with those which first manifest themselves to the observer. Let us now consider the others ; they are not less interesting, nor less picturesque ; they are indeed perhaps deeper than those of the ordinary Ancestrolatry. This belief is in such an embryonic state that it very easily escapes observation. As already pointed out, it is a vein, a reef of gold, which has been discovered through some fortuitous circumstance, and must be worked with great care.

I. *The definition of Heaven.*

Tilo is a grand word ; it comes from the same root as *Zulu*, the honoured name of a great and powerful tribe.

"Before you came to teach us that there is an All-Good Being, a Father in Heaven, we already knew there was a Heaven, but did not know there was anyone in it." Such was the declaration

of one of the most intelligent women of our congregation at 772
Lourenço Marques, who was also the best acquainted with all the ancient Ba-Ronga customs. Timotheo Mandlati said to me, on the other hand : "Our fathers all believed that life existed in Heaven" (butomi byi kone tilwen). It is quite certain that, according to the ideas of the Thongas, as well as to those of many other tribes, Heaven was a *place* ; a place much to be desired, where was to be found that which is so seldom met with on earth, namely rest. Hence a song, which is to be found in [539]
a very similar form amongst the Zulus (1), and even amongst the Ba-Sutho, and runs thus :

(Solo) Bukali bya ngoti !
(Tutti) Nha ndji yahliya ngoti, ndji ya Tilwen !
Ndji ya kuma ku wisa !
(Solo) What a rare thing is string !
(Tutti) Oh ! how I should love to plait a string, and go up to Heaven, I would go there to find rest !

An old refrain which has come down through the ages, and has in no wise been inspired by the Christian religion : it is pure, authentic Bantu! Thus the warriors, when threatening their adversaries, and hurling defiance from one troop to another, say : "Make ready your string, and climb up to Heaven, there is no place for you here below. Here you will find nothing but misfortune" (I. p. 472) (2).

Thongas, however, never declare as a belief that men go to Heaven after death. They become "psikwembu," and we have already seen where their abode is. Nevertheless Viguet told me the story of a Hlengwe, whom he knew in times long gone by, in the Bilen country, who used to address the people in mysterious tones as follows :

(1) "Who could make a cord, whereby to go to Heaven ?" Such is the Zulu version given by Callaway.

(2) When a bone-thrower has decided that his consultant must make an offering, he often tells him, looking towards heaven : "Go, make the offering and say : It is good if I overcome the people who are below by the country which is afar." The people who are below are the wizards. The country which is afar is heaven. Another version is as follows : "It is good if I overcome the people who are below and reach the country which is far away." In the first case Heaven is considered as possessing a power greater than that of wizards ; in the second it means evidently the place of rest.

Though you eat plenty of fat and of honey, and drink plenty of beer, the day will come when you will say "Huku-huku" (fall on your back, i. e. die) ; people will say "Woo" (i. e. mourn you), and ask you : "Where are you going?" Then answer : "I am going to Ngundju-ya-mapsele, the Source-of-Grace, to the place where the oxen are herded by vultures (because there is no hatred and no death there), where the mosquito is killed with a stick (because everything is so flourishing and big there), where the fowl dies from fat (because there is no disease nor dearth in that blessed land) — to Heaven!" 772

This Hlengwe had either heard these words in his home or had invented them himself.

But Tilo is something more than a place. It is a *power* which acts and manifests itself in various ways. It is sometimes called *Hosi*, Lord. But this power is generally regarded as something entirely impersonal. Thongas appear to think that Heaven regulates and presides over certain great cosmic phenomena to which men must, willingly or unwillingly, submit, more especially those of a sudden and unexpected nature, by which I mean above all rain, storms, and, in human affairs, death, convulsions and the birth of twins. From this idea spring certain very characteristic customs, which I shall proceed to describe briefly.

It is Heaven that afflicts children with those terrible and mysterious *convulsions*, which carry them off without their having been really ill, in a manner of speaking... "He is ill from Heaven" — "A ni Tilo," said an old Native doctor to me in a low tone, referring to a case of this description. So Heaven is the great nombo (infantile disease), (I. p. 48), whilst diarrhea is the small nombo. [753]

But more than this, *it is Heaven which kills and makes live.* Hence the frequent expression : "Heaven loved him," when someone has escaped some deadly danger, or is particularly prosperous, and "Heaven hated him," when he has been very unfortunate, or has died.

The same idea is expressed in the following dirge. 772 539

Wa hi kangamyisa, Tshabane !
Hi yingeli Tilo, dji ku dja buya nininini !
Hi kumi babamina babiri, ba famba ba hlahluba Tilo.
Wa nga yingela psa bambe, u ta yingela ni psa ku !

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You deceive us, Tshabane!
We have heard Heaven thunder... The roaring will soon come.
We have seen two men who were going to throw the bones with reference to Heaven...
Doubtless you have heard tell of the misfortunes of others:
You will hear them talking of your own!

Enigmatic words, but, with the help of the Natives, I have unravelled their meaning: — You are deceiving us, Tshabane, you who are trying to reassure us. We have heard Heaven. A storm has burst, there was a sudden downpour, a flash of lightning; Heaven has struck! It has killed some one. Two men passed by, terrified; they went to consult the bones, to try and find means to ward off these strokes of Heaven. Useless! If you have seen the sorrow of those who mourn, do not imagine that you will escape. It will soon be your turn!

Another song which contains a similar allusion to Heaven as the power which kills, has already been quoted when describing the customs of widowhood (I. p. 207). "What shall we say to thee! King!"

The tale of "the Road to Heaven" (See *Les Chants et les Contes des Ba-Ronga*, p. 237) is also very significant in this respect. It tells the story of a young girl, who, having broken her jar, and fearing a scolding from her mother, *climbs up her string* and goes to Heaven. (Always the same idea of shelter from all evils.) (1) There she finds a village; a child is given to her, because she is so gentle and obedient. Her sister tries to do the same thing. But she is ill-tempered and wicked. Heaven explodes (baleka), kills her (by lightning), and her bones are blown right to her parents' house. In the tale of the Adventures of Bonawasi (Ch. & C. p. 295) Heaven intervenes to endow a young Native with peculiar wisdom, by means of which he gets the better of the Governor of the town. Possibly some idea of the God of the Europeans may have found its way into the composition of this tale, in which may be recognized certain traces of foreign influence. But this is assuredly not the

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(1) The mention of this string is perhaps due to a tradition common in other African tribes. According to the Ba-Rotse, Leza, God, who dwelt on earth, ascended to Heaven one day by a spider's web. Several human beings tried to climb up the same way, but fell and failed in the attempt. (Comp. A. Jalla, *Fot ai Vie*, Oct. 1910.)

case in respect to the story of Nwalungukuri, which I have published in *Les Ba-Ronga*, p. 312, and in which Heaven is credited with the full knowledge of a hidden crime committed by a murderer. This idea is so far from being an innovation due to European influence that thoughtful Natives all agree that, in former times, it was more usual to attribute death to the power of Heaven. It was a common saying that "Heaven has fallen (lu we Tilo) on such and such a village." Nowadays it is rather the gods, or the wizards, who are believed to cause death. 772 539 [761]

But this belief in Heaven has not only inspired these sayings, songs, and tales; it has also given rise to curious customs, a description of which will throw more light on this conception of the Thongas. Their existence proves that we are not here dealing with the "animatic" invention of some person gifted with a vivid imagination (p. 366), but with a true tribal belief.

II. *Customs Connected with the Conception of Heaven.*

1) Heaven, Twins and Rain.

This power, which causes lightning and death, also presides, in a very special way, at the *birth of twins*, so much so that the mother is called by the name of "Tilo," — "Heaven," — and the children "Bana ba Tilo," — "Children of Heaven" (1). Now the arrival of two or three babies at the same time is looked upon by the Thongas as a great misfortune, a defilement in respect of which very special rites must be performed. I give the details of these rites as practised in the Zihlakla, Nondwane, and Nkuna clans, as they were described to me by Tobane, Mboza, Mankhela, etc. 845 772

Twins (lahla, or bandjwa, dji-ma) are now both allowed to live. But in former times, one of them, the one which appeared to be the feebler, was always put to death, being left to die of 845 847 766

(1) In our school at Lourenço Marques there was a charming young girl, who was named Nwana-wa-Tilo, Daughter of Heaven, because she had a twin brother.

845 starvation, or strangled by a rope. It was buried in a broken
847 pot, like other infants (I. p. 165), just below the surface of the
766 ground, a hole being left for the air to enter, so that the "spirit (moya) may go out," in order that, for the mother also, the "spirit may get out," may be able to fly out and not close (the passages), this being a primary condition of her having other children (1).

845 But even the death of one of the twins is not considered sufficient
756 to remove the curse. Directly after birth a particular doctor is
783 sent for, who keeps the drugs needed in such a case. Shimhuntana and Manganyele were the medicine-men who were capable of dealing with the twin defilement in the district of Lebombo, and Ñwashihuhuri of the Matimela family in the Zihlahla clan. They were held only to be surpassed by the medicine-man who treated cases of leprosy. The mother has to leave the village immediately, and they build for her a miserable little hut behind the others, where she goes to live with her twins. Her former hut is burnt with all her possessions.

In *Zihlahla*, all the women assemble that same day and start out in all directions, North, South, East and West to draw water in old calabashes from all the lakes and wells of the neighbourhood. They go skipping along, and singing

"Mbelele! Mbelele! Let rain fall"

This is the mbelele song (p. 318).

Then they return. The mother is seated with her two babes in her arms. They throw the water over her, intoning all the while the same monotonous refrain. This ceremony is to begin the removal of the "misfortune of twin birth, which is a death," (khombo dja lihahla, dji nga lifu). To complete the purification the magician gives to the father and mother a certain drug, which is kept in the Matimela family. The mother will put some of this into the little milombyana calabash, containing the diet-drink of newly born infants.

In *Khosen* the purification is performed by the medicine-man

(1) Even if a child dies at the age of ten days or more, if it is buried in the ground, its grave must be quite shallow; for if it were buried too deep the mother would have no other children.

alone (See *Les Ba-Ronga*, p. 414). He pours his drugs into 845
one of the pots brought by the women, adds to them the psanyi 756
of the goat sacrificed for the occasion, and pours all the contents 783
on to the shoulders of the mother, who holds the babes in her lap. After this he pours from some other pot, which contains pure water, and the woman conscientiously washes herself and her children all the while. Until her purification no inhabitant of the village is allowed to eat anything, and the following day it is taboo to work in the fields, for this would prevent the rain from falling.

Amongst the *Nkunas*, the mother of twins sits at the entrance of the hut, and the drug is poured over the roof above the doorway; it leaks through the thatch on to her, and thus both the mother and the hut are purified at the same time.

This preliminary purification being thus accomplished, the 845
woman goes to live in "her shelter," outside the village. She 853
is absolutely shut off from all the other inhabitants. She has her own pots, axe, mortar, pestle, and does all her own cooking. Nobody even pays her a visit, and people only speak to her from a distance. Her children see no one but her. To each is allotted one breast, always the same. To help her in the nursing of twins [671]
the mother must "buy" a girl, to whom the care of one of the children is committed. This is a law. It is taboo for a girl, even [784]
should she be the elder sister, to "play" with a twin. The payment of £ 1 or ten shillings removes this taboo and the defilement (shisila) connected with it.

Women fear that, if they touch anything belonging to the 845
mother of twins, if they smear themselves with her provision 784
of fat, or if the defiled one smears herself with their fat, they will also incur the dreadful misfortune of giving birth to twins. For this reason it is taboo for a mother of twins to draw water except at a certain spot. She must select one place and always go there. When she returns from drawing water, she must pay attention to the little wreath of grass which she wears on her head to help her balance her pot; it must not be thrown away with those used by other women, for fear that they also should become contaminated (tokela).

845 All these regulations[1] clearly show that, for the time being, the
184 mother of twins, like the widow, (I. p. 200) is regarded as outside
783 the pale of society. But her defilement is worse than that of the widow ; so, in order to be purified from it, the rite of *lahla khombo* (casting away the malediction) through which she must pass is much more severe. According to Mboza she must "deceive" four men one after the other, in the bush, all of whom will die. She hears that so and so says *djoo-djoo*, viz., becomes livid, that his body swells, that he is dead! She knows the reason. He has taken her defilement! Perhaps the fourth does not die but only becomes consumptive. These men have been pointed out to her by the divinatory bones. Each time she succeeds in performing the purification ceremony described in I. p. 205, she informs her medicine-man, who "prepares for her a vapour bath." Afterwards, she goes to reside at her parents' house, has relations with a lover, and gives birth to another child. Then her purification is complete, and her husband goes with 10/- to fetch her, and bring her home. The lover completed the removal of the "buhahla" i. e. the condition in which a mother of twins is. He has washed her (hlampsa). A new hut will be built for her, furnished with new utensils, and the ordinary family life will begin afresh.

845 As regards the twins themselves, they do not pass through
853 the ceremony of presentation to the moon (I. p. 52) as other children do. They are weaned earlier ; immediately after the reappearance of the menses the mother begins her *lahla khombo*, which at the same time is a *lumula*, a weaning of the children. They are then fed with goat's milk.

845 Twins are not liked by other people. They are looked upon as bad characters. When the little ones begin to crawl, and chance to go towards the other huts, people throw cinders at them and drive them away, saying : "These are children of Heaven. Be off! You annoy us!" If any ordinary child has a particularly bad disposition, they often say : "You are naughty! You are just like a twin!" — "Hahla dja karata" — "Twins are troublesome" is another common saying ; and if a child is really exceptionally difficult to deal with, people say : "It is a twin! You cannot do anything with it! (A dji koteki!)"

[1] [See pp. 433-435, Cat. 116 -- Analyst]

Special precautions are taken in respect to twins when they 845
pay a mourning visit. One of the grave-diggers meets them at the 765
entrance of the village and says: "Do not fear, Children of Heaven." He then puts some ashes on their heads and on their fontanelles. This is done because twins are feeble (ma ni bushapu) and the defilement might affect them more than other children. They must therefore be protected by smearing the middle of the head, and the "extremity of the tree of life," viz., the fontanelle, with a preventive. The mother also undergoes a similar treatment. She must prostrate herself near the hut of the deceased, at the place where the wall has been pierced to make an exit for the corpse. Then the grave-digger brings some live embers in a broken pot, pours a little water on to them, and dips his fingers into the water; he then presses both his hands against the woman's belly and brings them round her waist, pressing them all the while against the skin, until they meet on the spine; thus she is "cured inside" (dahiwa ndjen). This will prevent her from suffering from internal troubles, to which she, having given birth to Tilo, Heaven, is particularly liable. (Comp. I. p. 151) (1).

From this brief description of the customs connected with twins 845
in most of the Thonga clans, it may be seen that their explanation [783]
is twofold: 1) The birth of twins is a death, consequently a 772
defilement, indeed the worst of all defilements. Hence the 789
purificatory rites which bear the character of *passage rites*: the mother is secluded and passes through a period of isolation, after which she is again admitted to society after a painful "casting away of her misfortune." 2) But the cause of the defilement is not an ordinary death, but Heaven. *She is Heaven*; she is said to have

(1) Another category of persons bearing a special relation to Heaven are the 184
albinos. Cases of albinism are not frequent amongst South African Natives, yet they 826
are sometimes met with. They are called in Thonga *Khalandlati*, a word which 772
means literally *charcoal-lightning*. It is believed that they have been burnt (hisa) by lightning in their mother's womb before their birth. "Ba tlalile, a ba wupfanga, ba 845
bengiwi hi tilo," viz. "they are uncomplete beings, they are not ripe, they have been hated by Heaven"; these are the terms in which they are described. They are not however regarded as taboo (yila), they merely inspire disgust (nyenya) (p. 83). As regards women suffering from this kind of disgrace, other women do not smear themselves with the same ochre as they, lest they should give birth to albinos; they do not drink from the same cup. Men do not marry them, and in this respect they are classed with leper women and witches, who are also looked on as repugnant.

845 *made Heaven* (a hambi Tilo), to have *carried Heaven* (a rwi Tilo), to
772 have *ascended to Heaven* (a khandjiyi Tilo). This connection
789 established between her and Heaven is clearly seen in the *rain customs* previously described. Notice that the day following the
766 birth of twins is a *shimusi*, i. e. a day of rest. Nobody tills the ground, fearing that it would prevent rain from falling. When the *mbelele* takes place in Nondwane and Zihlahla (p. 318), the half naked women who are sent to clean the wells take with them a mother of twins. This is no doubt in order to show them where the graves of twins are. But there is also another reason. In the sacred wood of Libombo there is a hole into which the woman is put ; her sisters then pour on to her the water which they have drawn from all the wells, till the hole is half full, and the water comes up to her breasts. This will cause the rain to fall. Why is this? No doubt because, the woman of Heaven being wet, Heaven itself will be wet. Spoon did not give this explanation himself, but, when I suggested it to him, he accepted it readily. For the same reason the graves of twins are watered. In certain cases water is poured on the graves of the ancestors also, because rain is attributed both to them and to Heaven, and this watering the graves is meant to induce either Heaven or the ancestor-gods to cause rain to fall. Hence again the precaution taken of burying twins in damp places, and of exhuming them in times of drought if they have been buried in dry ground (1).

845 The connection between twins and Heaven, so clearly to
772 be seen in these customs, appears again in respect to thunder-
821 storms, which, as we shall see, are another manifestation of Heaven.
789 When lightning threatens a village, people say to a twin : "Help us! You are a Child of Heaven! You can therefore cope with Heaven (mi kota Tilo), it will hear you when you speak." So the child

845 (1) In other clans this law is extended to children prematurely born, even though they
761 are not twins, and even to children who have not had the cotton string tied round their waist or who have cut their upper teeth first. On the other hand, among the Nkunas
772 no special connection seems to be established between twins and Heaven. These differences may be explained by the fact that all these abnormal cases were ascribed to
766 Heaven in former times, and the connection has been preserved in the various clans in respect to one or the other of these categories. Note that, in the song of the widows (I. p. 207), the king Heaven appears to have caused the death of the husband; this is another proof that Heaven was formerly considered the most frequent cause of death.

goes out of the hut and prays to Heaven in the following words : 845
"Go away! Do not annoy us! We are afraid. Go and roar far 772
away." When the thunderstorm has ended, the child is 821
thanked (1). His mother can also help in the same way, for has 789
she not ascended to Heaven? "She can speak with it, she is at it (or in it) — a li ku djone." (Spoon.)

We find in these rites a striking instance of the combination of the three forms of magic which have been explained above (p. 368). Heaven, rain, lightning, the mother of twins and the twins themselves form a connected whole. Action brought to bear on the mother of twins will therefore have its effect on Heaven ; this is *communionist magic*. This action consists in pouring water over her, (not only in plunging her into a lake). According to the principle of *imitative magic*, Heaven will thus be watered and will pour rain upon the earth. The act of the twin in commanding the lightning to spare the country is a case of *verbal magic*. All this would be logical enough and the conclusions perfectly legitimate if only the premisses were true!

Customs regarding twins vary from one clan to another. While 845
in one tribe they are put to death, in others their advent is considered an event of great happiness. This is the case in *Tembe and Maputju*, where women are said to wish for twins, and, if certain mothers have enjoyed this piece of good fortune, others ask them for some of the fat with which they have smeared their bodies, hoping by the use of the same ointment to obtain a like happy result. The hut is never burnt. The mother gives birth to the twins behind the hut (fukwen, I. p. 37). When it is time for her to re-enter her domicile, a hole is made in the wall at the back. The husband is excluded from the hut till the day of presentation to the moon (a ceremony which, in these clans, is not omitted in the case of twins). When he is again admitted, his wife strikes his legs with a stick, in order "to cure him" (ku mu

(1) Mrs. Junod, who was for years a missionary amongst the Fañ or Pahouin of 171
the French Congo, told me that, one day, after a tornado, the rainbow suddenly appeared in the sky. One of her female pupils at once ran to her, and hid her face in her schoolmistress' lap. On asking the reason of this fear the teacher was told that this girl was a twin, and twins dare not look at the rainbow. So the connection between Heaven and twins exists also in this tribe of Western Africa.

845 daha). Striking is frequently one of the rites of aggregation.
184 (See Van Gennep, *Rites de Passage*, p. 55). Let us remember that the Tembe clan is of Northern origin (I. p. 23) and has retained some customs which are different from those of the other Thongas (1).

2) Heaven and the "Nunu."

136 The following is a very extraordinary custom, and one which,
241 in many respects, greatly resembles those I have already described.
845 There is to be found, on the shores of Delagoa Bay, a small Coleoptera belonging to the Alcides genus of the Cucurlionidæ
772 family. It has a proboscis-shaped mouth, a very hard carapace
825 of half a centimetre in length, brown, and marked on each elytron with two longitudinal white bands. The Blacks call it the *nunu*. It is a scourge to the fields of beans and maize (much as cockchafers are with us). In December or January, when these insects begin to swarm, the chief men of the country order the diviners to throw the bones, and send the women to pick the "nunu" off the bean stalks. They gather them in "sala" shells. Then they choose (probably by casting lots) *a woman who has given birth to twins.*

(1) Amongst *the Hereros* a multiple birth is the happiest event which could possibly occur ! The Rev. E. Dannert published in the *Capetown Folklore Journal* an account of the customs practised on such occasions by the Natives of this tribe, which occupies the Western side of Southern Africa, at about the same latitude as the Thongas. The father and mother are condemned to complete silence, under penalty of bringing a curse on those who speak to them. All the members of the tribe are convened and bring their cattle with them. The twins' family has to appear before the whole assembly, and is received with lamentations. Each individual must present himself to the parents, and make them a gift of beads, or other ornaments, in return for which the father and mother purify them by means of a certain powder. After this the father has the right of going from village to village, and claiming an ox from each one, as a kind of ransom. He becomes quite a rich man. This is the *kunga rite*, which we have also met with on many occasions amongst the Thongas (I. p. 124.). How can this diversity between the customs of the Hereros and those of most of the Thongas be explained? No doubt by this vague mysterious idea of Heaven, which is behind the religious conceptions of these tribes and in which all these rites originated. This celestial power, when it manifests itself, stupefies the Natives, for it causes "a death," entails a curse. With the Thongas it is the mother and children who are the objects of this malediction, hence the purifying ceremonies imposed upon them. With the Hereros, it is the whole tribe which is affected. The family into which the twins are born has been distinguished and honoured by this heavenly visitation, and collects for itself the fines which all must pay to regain the celestial favour !

One of her daughters, who is one of the twins, is told to throw 241
the whole "catch" of insects into the neighbouring lake. She is 845
accompanied by a woman of mature age, and, without speaking a 772
word, must go straight to the lake in question. Behind her 825
marches the whole crowd of women, arms, waists and heads covered with grass, carrying branches of the big-leaved manioc, which they wave from side to side, and singing the following song, which has been composed for this occasion :

> Nunu, muka! Hi da mabele!
> Nunu, go away! That we may eat mealies!

The twin throws her little calabash into the water without turning round (for she is not allowed to look behind). Then the savage yells are raised louder than ever, and the women sing their impure songs (ta ku ruketela), which they would never dare to utter on ordinary occasions, and which are reserved for these ceremonies, rain seeking and "nunu" hunting.

On that day, as during the mbelele, woe to the man who walks 241
along the paths! He is pitilessly attacked by these viragos, who 772
push him to one side, or even maltreat him, and none of his fellows 579
will go to his assistance. They all keep out of the way, for they 825
well know what would be in store for them, should they meet the savage crowd! So they mostly stay quietly at home in their huts!

The "nunu" is not always thrown into the water. Sometimes, to get rid of the plague, or rather to conjure it away, they start out in a band, armed with sticks, to throw these destructive insects on to neighbouring lands. It would seem that the men are mixed up in these underhand tricks, for it is said that this way of handing over the "nunu" to neighbours, often leads to pitched battles, in which sticks are wielded to some purpose, and blows rain thick and heavy! The people of Rikatla, citizens of Nondwane, used to make a present of their pseudo-cockchafers to the inhabitants of the district of Makunyule, belonging to the Mabota clan. But the true 825
way of conjuring away the "nunu" is to drown them in the lake, 772
and this custom, in common with the preceding ones, certainly has some connection with the notion of Heaven, the appearance of these pests being caused by that mysterious power, which

825 presides over all unaccountable and unavoidable phenomena of the
772 atmosphere and of the life of the fields, or of human existence.

We have seen how the two sets of religious customs play their part side by side in the rites of rain-making. A similar coincidence may be noticed here. The removal of the "nunu," a rite which originated in the conception of Heaven, corresponds to the sacrifice of the chief in the Maluleke country, who gathers his sons together to pray to his ancestor-gods for the destruction of the vermin (psidi) which eat the mealies and endanger the harvest (p. 404).

3) Heaven, Storms and Robbers.

772 The most characteristic manifestation of Heaven is in the
821 storm. According to the statement of the credulous Natives, after the women have finished cleaning the wells, and have watered
789 the graves of twins, clouds appear, a whirlwind arises, and "Heaven
627 begins to thunder" — "Tilo [illegible]djuma." — I have already described Thonga ideas about thunder and the lightning bird (p. 313), and the powerful charm made from the flesh, feathers and urine of this marvellous creature! There is still another use made of this extraordinary drug. It is a powerful aid in *tracing thieves*! The magician who possesses this powder of Heaven, (Ñwagwalen of Shikhabele in the Mabota clan), when called upon to point out the thief, acts in the following way. Suppose some one finds that some valuable article has disappeared from his hut, he will say to his near relatives, to those whom he suspects of having committed the larceny : "Take care! If you don't confess, we will go to Ñwagwalen, who lives at Shikhabele!" This threat may possibly be sufficient to elicit an avowal. If not, the individual who has been wronged goes to the diviner, and asks his assistance ; the latter takes his "bag of tricks," his drugs, and his big black stick, i. e., the stick which he was carrying when he dug in the earth and found the urine of the bird, or the bird itself. A notch has been made in the stick, to show the depth of the hole in which he has discovered Heaven. Carrying these charms, he goes to find the chief. An audience being granted, he cries aloud : "O Chief! a theft has been

committed! Now, no one ought ever to rob me. What shall I do!" Then the Chief assembles his subjects and invites the guilty one to confess. If all deny it, Ñwagwalen starts off, with all his apparatus, for the place where the theft was committed, and "treats it medicinally" (a dahela mbangu). He spreads out his drugs, raises his stick in the air, and addresses Heaven as follows : 772 821 789 627

> We, Tilo, hi wene u ka ni mablu, u bonaka busiku ni nhlekanhi!
> Ba tekile pea nga ba kaneta! Tana u ba komba ba psha!
> Oh Heaven, thou it is who hast eyes which see as well by night as by day...
> They have stolen my goods, and they deny it! Come and discover them; may they be consumed!

Then the clouds begin to gather, and, towards evening, the storm breaks. Lightning strikes the thief in his hut, and causes the stolen articles to reappear. — "I saw this happen at Hoñwana," declared Spoon, "but of late years such occurrences have been less frequent."

According to Camilla, the guilty person is sometimes punished by a terrible attack of vermin, of which he is unable to rid himself; or he is confronted with several palm leaves, which, by a kind of supernatural judgment, turn into snakes, if he be truly guilty of having stolen the missing property.

The intervention of Heaven in the matter of detecting thieves is also an accepted fact in Khosen. My colleague, the Rev. A. Grandjean, told me of the following significant custom. When there is a storm, those who have missed any belongings go and stand at the door of the hut of the suspected thief, and it is quite possible that the inmate, terrified by the thunder, may throw out the stolen articles.

It may be concluded, from these perfectly authenticated customs, that the Natives attribute to Heaven the power of *omniscience*, more especially in respect to the detection of theft. The basket of bones is never consulted for this purpose. Moreover as Heaven guarantees property and makes people afraid to steal, it acts as a kind of *moralising influence*. [626]

I have also been told by witnesses from the Nkuna region that into the composition of the charm used to protect gardens against thieves, (p. 30) there enters a little powder obtained by burning a 789 772

789 stem which has been struck by lightning, i. e. by Heaven ; or the
772 magician will burn branches of the same tree in the garden itself and bring them near to the stalks in order that these may be surrounded by the smoke emanating from them. If a thief enters the ga.den with evil intentions, "Tilo dji ta mu dlaya, i. e. Heaven will kill him."

4) Heaven and the Balungwana.

772 In 1894, as previously stated, locusts, which had not been
825 seen for some fifty years, made their appearance on the shores of Delagoa Bay, and also in Natal and the Transvaal. The popular
776 imagination was, naturally, greatly stirred by this unusual phenomenon, which was at first greeted with smiles and astonishment, but which, later on, was the cause of endless lamentation. I was one day walking up the hill of Lourenço Marques with an old man, the counsellor of one of the sub-chiefs of Tembe, a thoughtful and intelligent person, when he said to me, with great earnestness, in a low voice, as if referring to some important event : "Have you not heard that in Maputju two dwarfs (psimhu-ñwanyana) fell from Heaven ; a little man and a little woman. They came to say to the people : "Do not kill the grasshoppers! They belong to us!" This counsellor only repeated what all thought and were saying in all the native villages ; these grasshoppers, arriving unexpectedly from on high, were a manifestation of Heaven, just like the lightning, rain, twins, or the nunu, and these celestial beings had come to announce it to men.

772 But belief in the existence of *special personages* in Heaven
776 did not originate in connection with these terribly destructive
821 insects. The idea had been familiar, for a long time past, to the Rongas, and probably to all the Thongas. These personages were not only described as dwarfs, but also as balungwana (p. 352). They were said to fall from Heaven at the time of the great rains. Thus, Timoteo Mandlati told me people had seen some of them appear, a long time ago, in the Nkuna country, and that they had gone back to heaven in a cloud ; they live in celestial space, and when it thunders without any rain falling, the Nkunas say :

"Balungwana ba tlanga henhla" — "The balungwana are at play 772
up there." Or it is they who are singing in heaven when there is a 776
prolonged roar of thunder, saying : "wuwu-wuwu!" 821

When some one passes along the road, they dispute up above as to who he may be. One says : "It is so and so," and the others contradict him. Then they spit on the traveller, who is quite astonished to see some saliva on his hand. He mistakes it for rain, and looks up to the sky to see where the rain is coming from. The balungwana then have a chance to see his face, and the one who has guessed rightly says to the others : "You see! I was right."

In Bilen I heard of a man who prevented children from picking 772
the beautiful red flowers of Tecoma capensis, telling them that the 776
balungwana wanted them for dresses. The same individual believed that these little men would bring oxen to him.

The Rongas say that a little man fell on the hill of Lourenço Marques, near the house of Sithini, the son of Mashaken, just before the famous war between Mozila and Mawewe (I. p. 28), the rival claimants to the kingdom of Gaza, and that this dwarf came as a presage of the troubles which were to follow. "Lots of folk saw him" said Charlie in 1895 ; (he was then a man of some forty years of age). "We were too young to be allowed to look at him ; the Whites took him and carried him off to Mozambique." — Heaven is therefore inhabited. This is generally admitted, but the idea, from all that one can gather, remains very vague.

C. CONCLUDING REMARKS ON THONGA RELIGION.

I. *The Origin of the Conception of Heaven.*

Ancestrolatry forms a clear, well-defined religion, with its theology 771
(i. e., the ideas as regards the psikwembu), its sacrifices, and its prayers. 772
The dim, mysterious ideas about Heaven, incorporated in or rather 776
lying behind some of the most extraordinary rites of the tribe, bear a 171
very different character. There is something incoherent, vague and

771 unexpected in them, and it would seem that, bearing as they do an
772 essentially deistic character, and accompanied by no true worship, they
776 might as well be absent from the horizon of the Thonga mind.

However, when we study other Bantu tribes, we come to exactly
171 the opposite conclusion, i. e., that it would be indeed strange if no religious ideas of this kind were found amongst our tribe. In fact, this occurrence of a double set of religious ideas is universal amongst Bantus. They all believe in a kind of Supreme Being, an All-Father, who bears many different names, *Nzame* amongst the Fan and a great number of West African tribes, *Nyambe* amongst the Ba-Rotsi, *Leza* in some Zambezi and Rhodesian districts, *Mulungu* amongst fifteen East African tribes (1), *Unkulunkulu* in Zululand, *Nungungulu* round Inhambane, and *Mudimo* amongst the Ba-Sutho, etc., etc. The Thonga *Tilo* is, most likely, one of these names. The word probably comes from the root *ulu*, high, elevated, and *ilu*, heaven, which the Rev. P. Sacleux has found with that meaning amongst Central or West African tribes. (*Mulu*, amongst the Bembas ; *Liulu*, in Kimbundu ; *Diulu*, in Luba ; *Wilu*, in Luyi ; *Egulu* in Ganda ; *Idjulu*, amongst the Tongas of Zambezi, etc.). This root, with the personal prefix, has given birth to the term *Mugulu*, designating God in Tabwa and *Mukuru* in Herero. It may be that Mukuru is rather related to the *Unkulunkulu* of the Zulus, the Great One. (See Mgr. Le Roy, "La Religion des Primitifs," 1909, p. 498.)

In the South African tribes, however, the conception of the Supreme Being is not nearly so precise as in most parts of Central Africa. The Thonga Tilo, although sometimes invoked, is hardly a being, but seems rather to be a personification of Nature. Is this the original conception of the Supreme Being, or is it rather a transformation of this? I abstained, in *Les Ba-Ronga*, from expressing any definite opinion on this point. Further study has now led me to believe that the latter conclusion is the more probable, and that ideas concerning Heaven were more definite in former times. This, at any rate, is also the conviction of intelligent elderly Natives, who are able to remember the former ideas held by the tribe. They say : "As regards death, people now commonly affirm that it is caused by witchcraft, whilst formerly they attributed it to the agency of Heaven." Let us also notice the name of the dwarfs who are believed to inhabit Heaven, the *balungwana*. This word is a

(1) Comp. J. Torrend's *Comparative Grammar of the S. A. Bantu Languages*, p. 68.

diminutive of *Mulungu*, *balungu*, by which are designated, amongst the 771
Zulus and Thongas, White people of every description, whether 772
Europeans or Asiatics. Could the inhabitants of Heaven have been
called "balungwana," on account of their resemblance to the Whites? It 776
would hardly seem probable, for the name of the balungwana, and the 171
ideas connected with them, were in existence long before White people were generally known, or had settled in the country. It is much more reasonable to suppose that the name of these mythical beings, as also that by which the Whites are designated, is a derivative of some other pre-existent term ; and what should this be if not the famous vocable "Mulungu," which stands for God, the One Supreme God, in so many of the Bantu dialects of East Africa, from Lake Victoria Nyanza to the Zambesi, to Senna and Quilimane? I should be inclined to think that the tribes in the neighbourhood of Delagoa were also acquainted with this name, which is so widely known, and that it has, in the course of centuries, disappeared from their theology, only leaving, as a last trace, the term balungwana, applied to the heavenly beings who occasionally descend to earth, and balungu, designating that superior race whose wisdom has always impressed the Blacks as supernatural. If this hypothesis were confirmed, we should have the right to conclude that the idea of Heaven, such as it is described in this chapter, is the disfigured remnant of a higher and monotheistic conception, held by the primitive Bantus before their dispersion, which has evolved in various ways amongst the different tribes.

II. *The Antiquity of Ancestrolatry.*

Ancestor Worship seems, on the other hand, to be an extremely 171
ancient religion amongst mankind. There have been discovered of late 769
years sepulchres of prehistoric date, which seem to show that the funeral rites of the first races were very similar to those practised by the Bantus of the present day. In comparing the burial of Sokis (I. p. 139) with that of a human being of the Mousterian age, whose remains were recently discovered by Hauser in the celebrated "Abri du Moustier" (Dordogne) (1) I noticed the following resemblances :

(1) See my paper "Deux enterrements à 20,000 ans de distance." *Anthropos*, 1900, I. v. Comp. also *L'homme préhistorique*. January, 1909.

171 1) In both cases, the corpse was treated with great, even affectionate
769 care, protected against the earth, and provided with a pillow.

2) The legs and arms had been bent towards the body, a custom widespread amongst primitive races, and directly due to the belief in an after-life.

3) The deceased is regarded as sleeping : hence the pillow provided for him.

4) His after-life is believed to be an exact continuation of his existence on earth. Hence the fact that the articles which he was accustomed to use are put on to, or inside, his grave, the mats, rugs, mug in one case, and silex or "coups de poing" in the other.

5) If the rites performed for Sokis may be explained by the hypothesis that he has become a *shikwembu*, a god endowed with divine powers, if they are in truth acts of worship, it is but reasonable to suppose that the same religious conceptions gave birth to the similar rites of the Mousterian Primitives. The Mousterian Age is one of the first periods of the Quaternary. Some palaeontologists believe it to be anterior to the last glacial period, and think that the dwellers in la Dordogne lived 20,000, even 50,000 years ago! They possessed, then, a religion, and this religion was probably Ancestrolatry.

III. *The Relation between Ancestrolatry and the Conception of Heaven.*

769 The conclusion which may be drawn from the two preceding
772 paragraphs is that both Ancestor Worship and the Conception of a
776 Supreme Being are of very ancient date, and the question naturally arises as to which is the older. I do not pretend here to be able to supply a solution to this great problem, but merely to draw the attention of my readers to the following facts.

1) When questioned as to the relative antiquity of their two sets of religious ideas, Thongas reply that they are unable to give an answer. Their conception of Heaven is so impersonal that they cannot draw any comparison between the two. Their neighbours, the Swazis and the Zulus, however, are very decided upon this point. The Rev. W. Challis, in *The East and the West* of July, 1908, summarises their statements as follows :

"Long ago a great and noble Bantu king was in the habit of climbing a twin peaked mountain at daybreak, there to intercede with the Great Great One (Unkulunkulu) on behalf of his people. His son, who succeeded him, was afraid to draw near to the Great God whom his father worshipped, so he called upon the spirit of his father to intercede for him and his people before the Creator of all. Gradually each head of a house adopted this method of approaching God, until each family had its own ancestral spirits as mediators first, then merely as beings who brought good or bad luck, and who needed to be propitiated by sacrifice and constant flattery and attention. But God is not in their thoughts now ; only a vague tradition among the old men survives as to the existence of the Great Great One." 769 772 776

The Zulus affirm, so Callaway says, that the same proceeding took place amongst their ancestors. This seems to be a phenomenon similar to the adoration of saints in medieval times, after a period when religion had had a much purer and more transcendental character.

2) A second fact, which points in the same direction, is the contrast which exists in the conception of the ancestral spirits. On the one hand they are but men, who may be insulted (as was often the case with the saints to whom reference has just been made ; take, for instance, the incident of the striking of the image of St Antony of Padua by a worshipper, because the saint had not helped him to recover some lost property) ; on the other hand they are endowed with the qualities of omnipresence, omniscience and omnipotence in their relations with their descendants. It would seem as if the idea of divinity, which was not originally connected with the spirits of the departed, had been applied to them in an awkward and merely external fashion.

3) It is wonderful to notice how easily the idea of the Christian God is accepted by the Bantus. They have scarcely any difficulty in believing that this is the real God to whom worship is due. Livingstone long ago remarked this, and the truth of it has been confirmed by Miss Kingsley, for one, in regard to the Northern Bantus, and also by most of those who have endeavoured to win over these tribes to Christianity. It seems as if one were telling them an old story, with which they had been quite familiar but had now half forgotten. In regard to the Thongas I believe the psychological process to be as follows. When they hear of the *Shikwembu*, who is *in Heaven*, there at once takes place in their minds a coalescence, or reunion of the two main characteristics of their two religions ; — their *shikwembu* is personal but not transcendental ; their *Heaven* is transcendental but not personal.

769 God, the real God who is preached to them, is both personal and
772 transcendental ; it is as if two different kinds of electricity suddenly came in contact with each other in their minds and produced a flash
776 of light... The result is decisive. The two ideas can no longer be kept apart. When the Native has adopted the living God of Christianity, he either understands Him more and more fully, and is able to find great joy and satisfaction of soul in his new religion, or he abandons Him, and becomes godless, if he is unwilling to accept the morality of a true Christian life ; he very seldom returns to Ancestrolatry, nor to his former deistic and naturalistic conceptions. This is another proof that the knowledge of the one and only God, who reigns over all, was indeed sleeping in his heart and conscience, no doubt as a result of the ancient monotheistic conceptions of the Bantus.

The evolution of mankind has been a long one! Even if the Bantus formerly had the idea of God, this would not go to prove anything as regards the primitive religion of humanity. This question is entirely beyond the range of the present work, and even Science may perhaps never be able to answer it. I can therefore leave it out of consideration.

My last observation has shown the caducity of the Thonga religion. It is not able to stand before the advance of the higher revealed religions, Mohammedanism and Christianity. Hence the facility with which Thongas are converted to one or other of these beliefs. This fact is of considerable importance in respect to the future of the tribe, and it will be necessary for us to consider it in our Conclusion.

(See also *Some additional remarks on the idea of the Supreme Being and on Ancestor-worship in relation to Religious History.* App. IV.)

2: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga
p. 451

CHAPTER III

MAGIC

Without pretending here to give definitions applicable to all the primitive races, well knowing how difficult the subject is, yet, I think I ought at the beginning of this Chapter to explain as clearly as possible the distinction which I draw between Religion, Magic and Science, as they are represented amongst the South African tribes. 789

I include under the term *Religious* all the rites, practices, conceptions, or feelings which presuppose the belief in personal or semi-personal spirits endowed with the attributes of Deity, and with which man tries to enter into relation, either to win their assistance or to avert their anger, essentially by means of offerings and prayers.

Under *Magic* I include all the rites, practices, and conceptions which aim at dealing with hostile, neutral, or favourable influences, either impersonal forces of Nature, or living men acting as wizards, or personal spirits, whether ancestor-gods or the hostile ghosts which are supposed to take possession of their victims, these rites and practices being inspired by the magic principles explained above (p. 368). I recognise two kinds of magic: *White magic*, by which man tries to protect himself against these influences, or turn them to his advantage, and *Black magic*, by which man attempts to make use of these forces against his fellows.

I call *Scientific* all the rites, practices, and conceptions which are inspired by a true observation of facts. I include in this category certain medical treatments, ideas as to botany and zoology, etc.

These different elements are intermingled in practice to such an extent that, as explained in the preceeding Chapter, Religion is largely adulterated with Magic. On the other hand, Magic often admits religious elements (see Possession), and the true domain of Science is invaded on all sides by conceptions of a magical character. This will be shown by the study of the four subjects which I include in the Chapter on Magic, viz.: Medical Art, Possession, Witchcraft and Divination.

The confusion between these three domains also accounts for the composite character of those individuals who practise the medical, or magical art. The medicine-man (ñanga) is far from being purely a man of science, he partakes more or less of the nature of the magician,

789 and prays to the ancestors who transmitted their charms to him. The magician (mungoma) is sometimes a kind of priest when he undertakes to exorcise the spirits of possession. The diviner (wa bula), whose art is entirely based on magical conceptions, occasionally prays to his ancestor-gods to help him in throwing the bones which he has received from them. I am convinced that the three domains are essentially distinct, and that the Thongas have a dim perception of this distinction. But they grade into each other with the greatest ease, and I shall try to follow these gradations, faithfully endeavouring not to alter the original ideas, whilst trying to explain them intelligibly.

A. MEDICAL ART.

756 The medicinal practices of the South African Bantus are very interesting from the ethnographic point of view, but their study has also a practical importance. In all civilised lands the medical profession is subject to restrictions; the candidate must pass examinations showing that he is capable of treating his future patients. Nothing of this kind is to be found amongst the Thongas. The only qualification of the doctor is that of having inherited some recipes from one of his ancestors, and of using them with more or less success on voluntary patients. Should steps be taken by Colonial Governments to stop, or at any rate to regularise, the action of the medicine-men?

A precise knowledge of their practices is necessary in order to come to a conclusion on this point. Missionaries have also a great interest in this study. They have all noticed how often their converts, when sickness overcomes them, abandon the Mission Station and run to their quacks, sometimes brusquely interrupting a treatment which had been prescribed to them by a fully trained medical missionary. The result is almost sure to be the eventual loss of their health and of their faith. Let us, therefore, try to understand the Native medical art and see how far we can trust its representatives.

I. *The Medicine-men.*

I came across a good many *ñanga* (yin-tin), the technical name given to Native physicians. They are all very proud of their

knowledge, and it must be remarked that this knowledge is mostly 756
hereditary. Certain drugs have been tried, and used for years, by a certain individual, who probably owed them to his father, or to another of his ancestors. Before his death he transmitted his art to his son, or to his uterine nephew, the one of his descendants who seemed to be "induced by his heart" (mbilu) to enter the profession. This being the case, medicine-men differ very greatly as regards competence. Some only treat one complaint, or one category of patients, because they only know the medicine which applies to them. For instance *Eliashib*, one of our first converts, a native of Khosen, had only one drug, the bark of a certain tree which possessed terrible purgative powers, and he prescribed it in every case, half killing those who came to him for treatment, and who had all the more confidence in the drug because it came from a distant land. Eliashib was hardly a nanga. *Sam Ngwetsa*, my Rikatla neighbour, was a physician for infantile diseases only. He knew the milombyana prescription and how to biyeketa (I. p. 48, 54), and people used to ask for his assistance as a specialist in this domain alone. We have seen that there is also a special doctor who boasts of being able to treat the dangerous condition of the mother of twins, and another who treats leprosy, this latter being regarded as the most skilful of all. *Spoon-Elias* had a more extensive knowledge of the popular "materia medica" than Sam, but he was still only a beginner. His Nondwane colleague, *Kokolo*, was vastly superior, — an individual in the prime of life, wearing the black crown which distinguishes the notables of the land. He belonged to an ancient family of doctors; his father Mankena and his grandfather Mahlahlana practised before him, and bequeathed to him the valuable legacy of their experience. Tobane, to whom I applied to put me in touch with some really clever practitioners, said of this man: "Awa daha!" — "He is one who succeeds in his cures!", adding with a look of profound respect: "It seems that even the Whites of Lourenço Marques consult him!" And Kokolo, without too much persuasion, showed me his drugs, and went to "dig" for some for my special benefit. I had to pay him fairly generously, as the gentleman does not work for nothing, and it was with an

756 evident consciousness of his talent and powers that he explained to me the uses of his medicines.

278 But the most distinguished medicine-man I ever met was old
756 *Mankhelu*, who may be looked upon as one of the masters of the profession in the Thonga tribe. "It is no play, what I am
789 doing! I have beaten an ox (i. e. made a present of an ox)
782 to my maternal uncle Hlomendhlen! I even gave him two oxen, and he taught me his medical art! He led me everywhere, showing me all his drugs." So Mankhelu became a regular ñanga, in addition to being a diviner, a master of the art of throwing bones, a rain-maker, a counsellor, and general of the army. His whole family shared his professional character, and helped him in his work. Every year, at the time of bukanye, the drugs had to be renewed. His wives went all over the bush to dig out the medicinal roots and to collect them in their *lihlelo* baskets (p. 123). On their return home the bones were consulted to find out who was to cut the roots in pieces (gemela). This having been done, they pounded them in their mortars ; a portion of this material was dried outside, and reduced to powder without having been cooked ; these were the *male medicines*. The other portion was roasted in pieces of broken pots, burnt until it was like charcoal, ground and made into a black powder ; these were the *female medicines*. The whole village assembled and inhaled the smoke through reeds during the operation. A goat was killed and a sacrifice performed ; the liquid contained in the *psanyi* (p. 410) was squeezed on the burning drugs to put them out ; a little bukanye beer was also used for the same purpose. In the meantime Mankhelu said "*tsu*," and addressed this prayer to his gods, and especially to the ancestor who had taught him his science :

"You! so and so! Let these drugs of yours rise (pfuka, i. e. find new strength). Let people come from the Zulus, from Mosilekatse, from Mpfumu! Let them think of our leaves (matluka, the common name for drugs). Let them bring elephant tusks, marriageable girls, etc. Let them dream of us!"

756 This operation of renewing the drugs aims at giving them
278 new strength. Mankhelu said : "We let our drugs *luma* for
787

the new year ; we raise our calabashes, so that the new season 278
may not be too difficult for us... This will consolidate our home ; 756
bad coughs will not attack us too severely. It will shut out the
wind ; we shall no longer be very ill, because these are new 789
drugs. As regards the old ones, they have been contaminated (khuma) by the misfortunes of last year. They are mad (hungukile). A new rain falls ; let there be also new drugs, and we can undertake our journeys to sell our goods." So the ñanga removed a little of the old powder from each calabash ; he threw this on the path at a crossway ; then he washed the calabashes at the same spot : "Misfortune is thus thrown away. Passers-by will take it with them as it has been thrown out there by us." Then the new powder was added to the remainder of the old, which was "raised" by it.

In order to throw more light on the nature of Mankhelu's 756
art, let me briefly mention *the roots* (rimetju), or *the leaves* (tluka,
ri-ma), or, to use the great, the generic name, *the drugs* (muri, 789
mu-mi) which composed the marvellous powder of the calabashes. 278
He was not a man of one drug. He claimed to be a universal 824
physician, so he mixed together all kinds of drugs, being sure that, in this way, they would certainly be effective in any case brought to him. Here is the description given by him.

Ntjebe : that by which we find strength to trample on our enemies ; we trample also on the winds which spoil the mealies ; we drive out the bad cold (or wind) which has come to us and made us cough. (Notice the triple use of this drug).

Shikuku : that which tramples on misfortune.

Mpoñwana wa burisi matuba-tubana : vanquisher of the enemy and of misfortune.

Shinano : that which induces the enemies to sleep ; you hang some leaves of it on your shield and they are overcome by drowsiness, they do not see you coming towards them.

Nembe-nembe. By it you reach your enemy while he still sleeps and kill him before he can defend himself.

Mpetshu wa milomo : that of the lips! It overcomes the curses and the assagais of the others!

750 *Rihinga ra ndlela* : a root found on the path ; it helps you to go
789 on, though others may seek to hinder you in your progress.

Shivunge : that which attracts patients to the doctor.

278 *Nandjiyane* : that which makes his words agreeable, so that
824 patients will like them ; (from ku nandjiya, to be agreeable).

Mvakazi, phuphuma ra matlhari : that which is used to make the slayers vomit the main drug of the *tintebe* (I. p. 479).

Mbendjula : that which strengthens all the other drugs.

These are the principal trees, or plants, used for the preparation of the powder. They must be *salted* by the addition of the *sea*, viz., of the medicines taken from the sea, which Mankhelu uses to cause rain to fall (p. 321).

The sexual character of the drugs is essential. The female are used principally for sprinkling the army and the assagais, the male for treating diseases. We find here again the law of opposition of sexes ; the military domain is the male domain par excellence : it must be treated by means of female drugs. On the contrary, when slaughtering a she-goat for the sacrifice, a little of the male drugs must be placed in its mouth and the weapon used to kill it must be smeared with the same, and vice-versa for the he-goat. "To act otherwise is taboo. All the ñanga do this" (p. 417).

755 There may be some true scientific elements in Thonga medical
757 practice. Experiments have been made in using certain roots to cure certain diseases, and tradition has handed down some prescriptions from father to son. Why should there not be effective curative properties in plants of their country just as in the Cinchona bark, or in Castor oil seeds? And why should they not have discovered them?
756 However the Native ñanga is by no means a scientific man, and the best,
789 the most renowned, are perhaps the least scientific. Those who treat only one complaint and only know one drug, are perhaps those most resembling real physicians ; they act on the results of experiment. But the line between science and superstition is very soon crossed, and the medical art passes with the greatest ease into the domain of magic, all the more so as the difference between Science and Magic is not perceived. *Muri*, which means originally tree, plant, medicinal herb, is at the same time any means of producing any effect, natural or super-

natural, on any influence, hostile or favourable, personal or 756
impersonal (1). That is why the *ntjebe* shrub helps Mankhelu to attain 789
three objects at the same time : cure a bad cough, protect the mealies, and rout the enemy.

The question has often been put : Are these medicine-men sincere? 755
or are they mere quacks living on the stupidity of the patients whom 756
they deceive? I am convinced, after having listened to their talk, that most of them thoroughly believe in the value of their drugs ; this does not prevent them from occasionally using tricks in order to impress their patients with their miraculous power. One of my pupils, who had accompanied a ñanga for a long time, wishing to enter the profession himself, and had thus had an opportunity to watch his master in his medical work, assured me that, as a rule, the man administered his drugs honestly and in good faith ; but if somebody came suffering from toothache and asked for relief, the doctor first procured a little worm found in the berry of a solaneous shrub called rulane. This he placed in a pot filled with boiling water. The patient had then to inhale the vapour from the pot, his head being covered with a cloth. When the inhalation was over the ñanga took a piece of charcoal and rubbed his forehead with it ; he did the same all round his eyes and told him : "Now your eyes are open and you will be able to see what it was that caused your suffering." He emptied the pot and the little white worm appeared at the bottom, resembling the caries of a decaying tooth : "This is what they had brought on you" the ñanga would add." ("They" evidently means the wizards.) This is clearly a trick pure and simple. But, according to my informant, it was also a medical treatment, because the aim of the trick was to convince the patient that he had been cured. It was thus what we should call a means of suggestion. If, after that, the suffering did not cease, the ñanga would tell his patient that he had not paid enough to effect the cure, that his ancestor-gods (those of the ñanga, who had given him his drugs) were angry at receiving such a small fee, etc. The trick of making patients believe that a harmful object has been extracted from their body is frequently used. We have

(1) The following story, which I owe to one of my colleagues, fittingly illustrates the ideas held by most of the Thongas concerning *muri*, remedy. A man of the Libombo clan found a bottle filled with a white salt which he at once recognized as being most probably a *muri*. He picked up the bottle and kept it carefully in his hut. One day, feeling unwell, he thought the occasion had come to use his precious drug. His wife bade him be careful, but he secretly swallowed a good dose. Was it not a *muri* ? He was poisoned, and would have died if my colleague had not succeeded in saving him by means of an antidote.

755 seen another instance of this (p. 188). It is in keeping with two ideas
756 which are very familiar to Natives and which we shall meet with again later, viz. that disease is a material thing and that it is generally caused by this thing being introduced into the body by wizards.

The mixed character of the medical art of the primitives, which is so evident in their medicine-men, will appear clearly as we continue our study.

II. *Medical Practices.*

752 *Surgical cases* are treated in the worst possible way, any intervention with a knife being looked on as absurd, if not culpable (1). When dealing with *sores*, the aim of the ñanga seems to be to conceal them under a black powder, so as to give the patient a false impression; he thinks himself healed, as he can no longer see his sore. Mankhelu used to grind the bark of the *Ndjupfura* tree (a tree with a white sap) and put the powder on the sore to make it dry up, renewing the application on the fourth day, then five days later, then six days later. — For *wounds* Kokolo used the sap of the *Shilangamahlo*, letting it fall in drops on the bleeding wound. The *Nkahlu* (p. 329), with its milky sap, is commonly used for this purpose. — "But," says Kokolo, "the chief is *Shilangamahlo*." *Bruises* are treated by the *rimba* method. When a person has fallen and some complication is feared, a fire is made; when there are enough glowing embers, and the soil is very hot, the ashes are pushed aside and a little sand taken from the river is poured on the spot, and some nkuhlu leaves on top of it. The patient leans over the place "which has been so treated;" this is an unexpected application of the principle "similia similibus curantur;" — as the soil has been burnt, but afterwards "quenched" (timula) by the cool sand, so the bruise will be prevented from burning him dangerously! — *Decayed teeth* are not extracted, properly speaking; they are broken down with a piece of iron, on which the Native dentist beats with a hammer

(1) Gungunyana, who killed thousands of poor Ba-Chopi without the slightest remorse, could not conceal his horror of Dr. Liengme, who dared to amputate limbs, or to cut open the body in order to cure patients!

752 until he has removed as much as he can of the tooth! Sometimes he breaks the jaw also ; the jaw may even pass through the cheek, causing a frightful wound! Once one of my colleagues had to perform the operation of the removal of the inferior maxillary bone, which was protruding as the result of the so-called extraction of a tooth by a ñanga! — *Snake bites* are treated with a powder made of a snake burnt to ashes, and some ingredients mixed with it, the whole being *salted* with common salt. Incisions are made in all the joints, wrist, ankle, elbow, and also in front of the neck, and the powder introduced into them. Children are inoculated as a means of prevention, so that, when bitten, the venom will not affect them ; the doctor has "preceded the snake" (yi yi rangerile).

757 *Medical cases* are generally treated more rationally than surgical
278 cases. Here are some of Kokolo's and Spoon's prescriptions.

To begin with the drug used when one "feels his head," in other words has a *headache*; this is the root of a shrub called *Nhlangula*, which seems to be a regular anaesthetic, and is used as follows. The fresh bark is scraped with a knife, and a certain quantity is folded up in a cloth and applied to the forehead for half a day. In case of *toothache* the same drug is used together with another called *Ndjenga* : they are boiled ; a little of the decoction thus obtained is held in the mouth, and the pain should disappear.

When it "bites inside," that is to say when one suffers from *colic* or looseness of the bowels, the remedy is *Munwangati*, *Shimbyati* and *Shidlanyoka* made up into a bunch. The doctor prepares this medicine with great care, cutting the roots into equal lengths and tying them together with a band of palm leaf. (See illustration, No. 2.)[1] He concocts his remedy with a larger quantity of the roots of the milder type, and only a few pieces of those which act more violently. The bunch called *shitsimbo* is then boiled to bring out the active principles of the drugs, and the decoction is taken by the patient, just as it is. Sometimes it is mixed with maize, when preparing the meal, and taken in that way. As the bunch, or packet, of these roots retains its medicinal properties for a long time, a single packet may be used over and over again during a whole week.

The prescription for *dysentery* is as follows : *Shimbyati*, *Shi-*

1 [p. 460 -- analyst]

757 *dlambangi*, *Likalahumba*, *Nkonono* (Terminalia sericea) and *Nsala*
278 (Strychnos spinosa). That for *bronchitis*, or for a cold in the head, is *Menyomamba*, *Mphesu* (a kind of mimosa, Albizzia versicolor) *Shongwe*, *Ntshatshe* (a papilionaceous shrub), *Gowane* (Zygia fastigiata, a large mimosa) and *Muhlandlopfu*. The last is a very
[753] powerful drug; the last but one less so. For *hydrocele* the following are used: *Lihlehlwa*, *Ntshatshe*, *Nkonono*, *Mamuntana*.

Thonga Pharmacopoeia.

1. Box made of maize bracts, containing medicine. 2. Shitsimbo. 3. Skin of a mole, containing powdered drugs. 4. Pill (Mhala). 5. Bracelet of *tjukunyana*. 6. *Timfise*, amulets. 7. *Sungi* root tied round the ankle.

The Natives regard this complaint as contagious, and as being transmitted by matrimonial relations.

I obtained two *purgatives* from my Native doctors. The first is *an aloe*, or cactus, a species of which grows plentifully on the sand dunes. The sap is squeezed on to grains of millet or sorghum, which are kept in neatly constructed boxes of maize leaves; these are made by plucking an ear of maize, breaking off the cob and leaving the large bracts which enclose it and which adhere to

the stalk at its base. This is a very primitive receptacle, and easily procurable (No. 1). The medicine is thus kept until required for use, when it is ground to a powder and taken in water. The second of these purgatives is the bark of a tree growing in the Nkomati valley in the Khosen country. This is the one, already alluded to, which was appropriated by one of our Christians, named Eliashib, who administered it to the Rikatla folk in such generous doses that it generally did more harm than good. 757 278

Three or four other roots form part of the packet for children ; these are called, as previously explained (I. p. 48), by the general term milombyana, medicines to promote the growth of newly-born infants. If an intestinal parasite be expelled by *dlanyoka*, it is burnt to cinders and reduced to a powder ; an incision is made in the belly and loins of the child, into which the powder is rubbed. This is a kind of inoculation, a further application of the principle "like cures like."

The packet used for treating *haematuria* contains six drugs : *Humbutlo*, *Ntshopfa*, *Shintitana* (an Apocynea shrub related to the Artabotrys, p. 330), *Likalahumba*, *Ndjindjila* and *Shimbyati*. According to doctor's directions these are boiled in a pot with beans ; after a while the packet is taken out. The patient must then transfix one bean with a thorn and throw it over his left shoulder ; he pierces a second in the same way and throws it over his right shoulder, then a third, which he swallows. The first two beans are used to "try the earth," that is to say, to propitiate the several evil influences existing in the soil, which have probably been the cause of the illness. Such is the first part of the treatment. The second part consists in pounding large white tubers (something like elongated potatoes) in a mortar. The paste thus obtained is squeezed into a jar, and the patient must take this juice as well as the beans, seasoned as aforesaid! Every evening he must drink a cup of the bitter mixture (the packet broth), and also a cup of the sweet medicine made from the tubers. If, after this, the haematuria does not stop, the patient will be given a *phungulo*, a turkish bath, which I shall describe later on. The foregoing is Spoon's method of treatment. — Dr. Kokolo had another cure for the same complaint ; he

757 used *Shirole, Nembe-nembe, Likumba-kumba* and *Nhlanhlana,*
278 which he recommended to be taken in the usual way as a tisane, cutting them up in small pieces in a pot. They are roasted on a brazier and the smoke inhaled through a hollow reed ; the carbonised pieces are ground to a powder which is mixed with ordinary food. A curious fact to be noted with regard to this complaint is that the patient's wife, if he be married, has to undergo the same treatment. — *Gonorrhea* is treated with *Shilangamahlo, Hlahlana, Nembe-nembe* (Cassia petersiana) and *Ntinti* (Artabotrys Monteiroi): If necessary *Shimbyati* is added as an adjuvant. It is with the leaves of this latter plant that Kokolo made the huge pill which he presented to me (No. 4).

For the last named illness, as for haematuria, if internal treatment does not suffice, a more efficacious method "for outward application only," is resorted to. A certain number of roots will be burned and pulverised, the black powder thus obtained being mixed with fat taken from the paunch of an ox. This is rolled up into a ball and placed on red-hot embers, and the patient must expose the part affected to the heat thrown out, and to the smoke thus engendered.

Fever is not considered very dangerous by the Thongas, and strange to say, has no special name. It is called "to feel one's head", or "to have a hot body". Natives are so accustomed to it, and its attacks are generally so mild, that they do not take much heed of it. They lie on the ground, exposed to the burning sun, wrapped in a blanket, and perspire to their heart's content. "Take the root of *Mbalatangati,* cook it in a little pot and drink it with a spoon ; you will have a good sleep," says Mankhelu.

Consumption (lifuba) is treated as follows by Mankhelu. Part of the lungs of a crocodile, and of a sheep, is mixed with fat taken from a gnu and a root of the *Khawa* tree. All the ingredients are burnt in a broken pot and the patient must inhale the smoke through a reed ; this will dry up his chest, because the fat of the gnu is always dry and cannot melt!

757 *Leprosy,* "the vanquisher of physicians," is treated by some specialists. There was one near Rikatla, but he absolutely

refused to communicate his secret. He belonged to the Chopi 757
tribe. The Ba-Pedi forbid sexual relations to lepers.

A nursing woman who has no milk must take a certain 853
Euphorbiacea shrub called *nete*, containing a milky juice, crush it in the mortar, cook it in water and drink it. When a cow refuses to feed her calf Natives smear the calf with the *ribvumbara* herb, which has a pleasant odour. The cow smells this, and allows the calf to suck.

The treatment of *sterility* has already been described (I. p. 190) 842
Mankhelu tried to cure it by digging a root of *Nembe-nembe* 278
and one of *Nhlangowume* ; he cooked both together, and ordered the woman to eat them during a period of six days, mixing them with her food. This drug was considered as "closing her" (pfala), so that she would no longer have her "tihweti, "and thus be enabled to conceive. In the meantime, she had to undergo the horola or hondlola rite, which I shall describe presently.

Small-pox, nyedzane, was on several occasions introduced by the 164
Whites, or by the Zulu armies on their return from their Northern raids. There have been at least five or six epidemics in the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques during the last fifty years.

I had the opportunity of witnessing the last in 1918 in Rikatla and 751
thus obtained first-hand information on the way Natives treat this disease and on their strange ideas concerning it. I published a detailed account of these in the S. A. *Journal of Science*, July 1919, and will give here a description of the most important of these *customs connected with small-pox amongst the Ba-Ronga*. When small-pox has invaded the country and reached the borders of the territory of a clan, the headmen assemble at the chief's residence and decide to proceed to the general inoculation of the population. This is a remedy which they have long been accustomed to use. They have noticed that the disease is milder when produced by inoculation with the virus than when it *hahela*, i. e. flies to the person. (There is some truth in this assertion ; the protection afforded however is not very effective, and severe and even fatal cases often follow the inoculation. It does not always secure immunity from a second attack.) The virus is provided by the people of a neighbouring clan who have already been attacked by

751 the disease, and it is the *batukulu* of the chief, his nephews, the sons of his sisters, who are sent to procure it. Are they not the favourites of their maternal uncle? (I. p. 222). Nobody could suspect them of bringing misfortune into the village of their *bakokwana*! The particular ntukulu who must render this service to the country is designated by the bones. The bones also indicate the village of the neighbouring clan to which he must go to fetch the virus. The serous fluid is taken from old people or from children, who have no sexual intercourse ; we already know the reason for this. The ntukulu inoculates himself and his comrades and returns home ; when their pustules are ripe, they inoculate all the members of the clan who have not yet suffered [784] from the disease.[1] From this day begins for the whole clan a distinct marginal period, with all the taboos accompanying the critical phases of the life of the community. No one is allowed to wash his body. Absolute continence is imposed on all. Salt is prohibited, as it is said to make the blood flow more quickly in the body and it may cause the wounds to become sore.

164 But in addition to the ordinary taboos, some other measures are 751 taken which are dictated by the special nature of small-pox. This 755 disease, amongst Black people, manifests itself in two forms, which may be called the white and the black. The former is much milder than the latter. In it the pustules are large, superficial, scattered all over the body and well separated from each other ; the skin is discoloured over them and becomes whitish ; they soon dry up and do not leave deep marks. In the second form, which is the confluent and haemorrhagic type of the disease, the pustules are small, black, continuous with each other, and full of blood ; they soon discharge a nasty fluid ; fever is high and death may intervene. 751 The whole aim of the treatment is to promote the mild, white form 755 of small-pox and to prevent the black form. It is therefore taboo to eat any meat containing blood, which is black and must therefore be avoided. On the contrary, fish meat is allowed because it is white and contains no dark blood. Another device of Native doctors to obtain this result is to place before the eyes of their patients grains of mealies, which are white like the desired pustules and are also similar to them in form, and to prevent their

[1] [Small-pox--analyst]

seeing grains of Kafir corn, which are of a dark colour. Grains of 751
mealies are softened in water, pierced through and made into 755
necklaces which patients wear round their necks, whilst the spikes
of Kafir corn, which are to be found in every hut fixed to the reeds
of the roof as seeds for the next season, are carefully taken away and
hidden somewhere in the bush during the whole time of the
epidemic. Should the malignant form of small-pox develop 755
notwithstanding all these precautions, the headman will shake his 782
head and tell the parents of the patient : "Hahlani! — Make an 783
offering." But in this particular hahla no real offering will be
made, and the prayer will not be addressed to the ancestor-gods.
The principal words of this prayer are : "Mavuzane, dhlula!"
These are Zulu expressions which correspond in Ronga to :
"Mabutise, tlula!" i. e. "Questioner, pass on your way!" Who is
this Questioner? It is small-pox itself, Nyedzana, which is more or
less personified and looked on as a real and terrible visitor coming
at given intervals to examine the country and search for sinners.
The great sin which Questioner especially wishes to discover is
buloyi, murder by witchcraft. Let the patient then confess the
acts of bewitchment which he has committed, and he will be
spared. If he conceals them, small-pox will kill him. Suppose
that the patient so seriously ill is a grown-up woman, the wife of one
of the men of the village. Her parents will first be called. The
headman and all the inmates of the village will attend the meeting
in the hut. "Confess your guilt!" they will all say to the woman.
She may answer : "No! I am not a witch" *(A ndi noyi!)* They
insist : "Do not hide anything." And under the strain of their
questions she may say : "Yes! I am a walker in the night! I have
eaten so-and-so! I have eaten my own child!" If the patient is a
little child, his father will have to make the confession in his stead.
He will take the infant in his arms and say : "Mavuzane dhlula!
Questioner, pass on your way! Yes! We are baloyi. I have
taught my child to eat human bodies! But we will not persist in
our bad doings! Go away and leave us in peace!" (1).

(1) We have here one of the cases in which an impersonal force of Nature is treated as 782
if it were a personal being endowed with superhuman power, and invoked. The prayer

755 When the disease has run its course, and the pustules have dried
783 up, a day is appointed on which the marginal period will come to an end, and the clan return to its regular life. This return is marked by the special *Reintegration and Purification rites*, which aim at removing the defilement acquired by the disease. The main purificatory rite, that which regularly closes a marginal period, is *the smearing of all the huts* with a new layer of clay, either mixed with cow's dung or not. The old ground is for ever covered. It is a way of saying : "Behold, the former things are passed away, everything has become new." On the morning of that day, every patient must go and wash his body *on the road*, as if to pour all the filth of the disease on to it. Moreover, the ashes found in the fire-places inside the huts, the necklaces of mealie grains, the implements used by the people who have been seriously ill, sometimes their garments, the ochre with which they anointed themselves, all the things which were employed in connection with the scourge, are collected and thrown indiscriminately on to the large paths, preferably on the places where two roads cross each other, a rite which is by no means altruistic, and still less antiseptic! We shall see shortly how it is to be explained.

828 *Nervous diseases* are peculiarly feared by Natives. *Melancholia*
755 is believed to be caused by those spirits of possession which will form the subject of the next paragraph. *Idiocy* has no remedy ; nothing can be done with an idiot : "It is death! It has found him!" (Mankhelu). *Delirium* (mihahamo) is cured by *Mbulula khutla*. The patient must enter the hole from which clay is taken for smearing the huts, and is washed with a decoction of the drug when in this hole. Moreover a stick of the same tree is cut and kept in the roof of the hut, and the person who sleeps with the patient will take it every night and place it near his head. "Thus we kill delirium." (Mankhelu). — Another form of insanity is called *rihuhe*, "the disease which comes from far away with the winds" — "ri pfa timhehwen" (Mankhelu). A drug is prepared with the *shiromo* root, mixed with the lung of a sheep and the blood

782 to Small-Pox (with capital letters) may be compared with that pronounced when an imprecation has been uttered or when someone wishes to cancel his oath (p. 399).

found inside its heart. All these things are burnt in a broken pot, 828
and made into a medicinal powder. The patient is brought to the 755
broken pot; a cut is made in his head, so that it bleeds abundantly until the pot is filled with blood; the blood boils in the pot, it solidifies and is burnt. The ñanga takes it and buries it in an ant's nest, according to the timula rite described below. The wound of the patient is filled with the medicine; he eats the meat, he sleeps: — "If you have been equal to the occasion, he will be cured; you have given him lots of sleep. — You have killed the *rihuhe*" (Mankhelu). The *wutleka* disease means both the *convulsions* of little children generally explained by the agency of Heaven, called Tilo (p. 431), and epilepsy. The great remedy for the latter disease, which greatly terrifies the Natives, is provided by monkeys and baboons. Pieces of their skin and their excrement are roasted in a broken pot. Some pieces of lion's skin are added; when the powder is prepared, the limbs of the patient are smeared with it; his body is also sprinkled with a decoction made of these drugs, or an ointment is prepared from them and applied to the head, the fingers, and all the limbs, which are then pulled with some force (olola). The patient is laid down and leaves of the hlampfura tree (Kigelia pinnata) are put on his head: — "He sleeps, he passes water, he evacuates stools, he is cured!" But to confirm the healing, a very curious ceremony is performed which reminds one of the rite of the scapegoat, so often met with amongst primitives. The doctor makes the image of a monkey (habu) with a kind of grass called *muhulane*; this image is smeared with the drugs just described, and fastened to a long rope; a little boy must then drag the dummy out of the village, and all his comrades hit him with sticks, saying: "Go away! Go away!" He runs until he reaches a tree far away in the bush. All the boys hang the figure to it, and it remains there swinging in the wind. The disease has thus been expelled.

When folly is accompanied by great excitement, and there is 828
danger of the people of the village being mishandled by the sufferer, 758
he is prevented from doing harm by means of fetters. These consist of a log of wood pierced through by a lozenge-shaped hole into which the foot of the madman is introduced; a wooden bolt is

128 then fixed across the hole in such a way that he will be unable to
758 withdraw it. When he wishes to walk he is obliged to drag along the heavy log. He very soon loses his strength, being ill-fed, and covered with vermin, and dies in a terrible condition.

*

* *

757 In our study of these various treatments, we have met with about twenty different prescriptions of Native physicians, containing, in all, some 40 to 50 different drugs, to be made use of in various ways : outward application, inhalation, fumigation, infusion, decoction, inoculation, manducation of carbonised or pulverised drugs, etc. We are then entitled to assert that, up to a certain point, the Blacks do possess an *ars medica*. To complete our review of medical matters, I must further mention a few curious practices of the Thonga doctors, which forcibly remind us of those to which our own practitioners sometimes have recourse.

Let us begin with *cupping*. A full account of this will be found in the story of the "Gambadeur de la Plaine" (*Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, page 357) where a young girl resuscitates a buffalo by performing this operation. She proceeds as follows. Water is boiled and in it is placed the packet of roots required ; a spot in the temporal region is carefully washed, and a few incisions are made with a razor (likari). A particular horn (nhluku ya ku lumeka), which is open at both ends, is placed over the incisions and the operator, putting his mouth to the horn, draws in his breath, causing the blood to flow freely. The wound is then exposed to the vapour emanating from the boiling *shitsimbo* packet, and smeared with a particular ointment, kept in a calabash.

[783] The next in order of the practices which we are noticing, is the *phungulo* (Dj.), or *hungulo* (Ro.), a kind of *Turkish or vapour bath*, which is administered in certain complaints and also after the funeral rites, in order to remove the contamination of death (I. p. 145). A circular enclosure is made, with a screen of matting, in the middle of which the patient is placed, and, close by him,

on live embers, a pot containing leaves which are supposed to 757
possess medicinal properties. A second mat is then spread over the top of the enclosure, thus shutting the patient up in a sort of small hut. The smoke from the live embers makes him cough terribly. The hot vapour from the pot induces profuse perspiration from every pore, and the victim of this treatment is left for a very considerable time in this intensely uncomfortable condition! When, at length, the remedy is supposed to have had sufficient time to act efficaciously, the mats are removed. The patient suddenly finds himself in the open air, absolutely dripping with perspiration. I saw a man remain in this condition, in the chill of the evening, apparently risking inflamation of the lungs. The doctor rubs his cheeks, or some other parts of his body, with either a white or a black powder. Such is the Thonga Turkish bath, which is frequently referred to in their folklore. — The [753]
phungulo is administered in most cases where ritual defilement is feared, or is believed to have caused the disease. The kind of poisoning caused by the impurities connected with death, menses, lochia, etc., manifests itself by swelling of the joints, of the hands and feet, pains in the bones, etc. This vapour bath is also resorted [842]
to in order to cure married people who do not succeed in having children. The physician makes for them a shitsimbo packet of the following roots : *Nhlangawume, Mpoñwana, Ritiyi* ; he cooks this in the pot inside the mat enclosure ; and into the fire, under the pot, he puts part of the flesh of the goat which has been sacrificed for the occasion, in particular the uterus. This flesh has been previously smeared with drugs. So, by means either of the vapour, or of the smoke, the medicine enters the patients. "Ba wupfa," — "they ripen" or "are cooked." When the mat is removed, a pot full of cold water is poured over them and extinguishes the phungulo which has "cooked them." They will have to take home the meat, and cook it in their hut together with the packet of roots. Another packet is put into the pot in which they keep their beer.

A third practice, quite as old as the foregoing, is the *tlhema* or *cautery*. This may be done with a packet of roots, which are heated and applied to the part affected. But, as a general rule,

757 cautery is done *with the foot*. This is undoubtedly a curious proceeding! Kokolo gave me a detailed description of it. A hoe is made red-hot; an obliging individual lends his foot, a foot which has rarely been encased in a shoe and possesses a sole with a skin like leather! This natural sole is rubbed with the leaves of a plant called *Shungwe*, which has been chewed and mixed in the palm of the hand with saliva and grease. For the same purpose Mankhelu employed a fat containing among other ingredients, the following drugs: *Hlampfura* and *Ñwambulawamitwa*. Then the obliging operator places his foot on the red-hot hoe and, with a quick movement, plants it on the spot to be cauterised, the patient being hardly able to bear the contact. As for the owner of the foot, the horny sole is apparently so thick that he feels no pain at all. This is the remedy for the *shitjebe blood*, probably pleurisy.

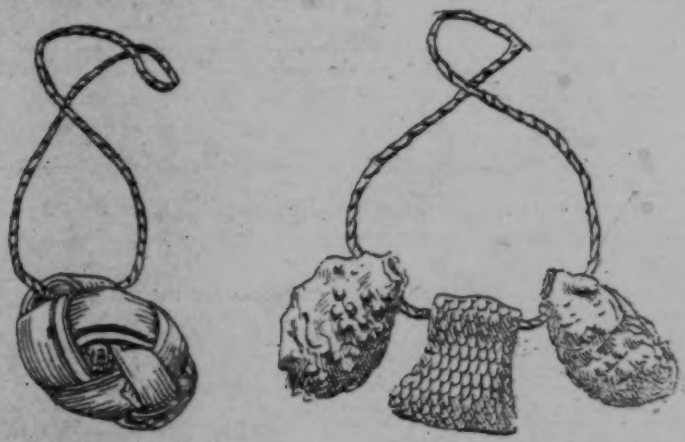
755 783 The last practice to be noticed, the one by which the doctor gives his patient a clean bill of health, is the *hondlola* or *hondla* (Ro.) or *horola* (Dj.); it is a ceremony of purification, performed *after the cure is effected*, to remove the defilement (nsila) of disease. "In this way," says Mankhelu, "we disperse (hulurisa) the blood which has made the patient ill, so that it cannot return to him violently." The hondla is obligatory after all serious diseases and after weaning. I have described how it is performed in this latter case (I. p. 59). According to Mankhelu, a sacrifice is always made in connection with the hondlola. In the case of adults, a goat is slaughtered. The doctor having carefully taken a piece of each limb of the goat, prays "by means of them" to his gods, saying:

> You so and so! This is my ox which I have slaughtered... Give me strength (ndji thwasane matimba) that I may cure this man. I have no other drugs! I do not add any others to those which you gave me. So give me strength; accept me with both hands, that I may be able to cure.

The psanyi of the goat is then mixed with various drugs, especially the *Shireti* and the powder of the calabashes. The patient, sitting on a mat, rubs his whole body (tihorola) vigorously with this psanyi; all the particles (timhore, or timhorola, or

timbhorola) which fall on the mat are carefully gathered together, 783
and the bones are consulted to know where they must be thrown 755
(See Letter D). This is the *tumba* rite, following the hondlola. The bones may perhaps have indicated a hole in the trunk of a tree, or the river, or the mud of the marsh, or an ants' nest, or the entrance to a molehill. The physician takes the timbhorola in a piece of broken pot, or sala shell, and introduces them into the hole, which he closes with a little clay ; he has with him water in a little calabash, of which he takes a sip and says : "Tsuu! or

[751]



Fowa and timfisa, medico-magical amulets.

pheuuu! Let the misfortune remain here." On the way home no looking back is allowed : this is taboo. Should the tumba be made in an ants' nest, and should the ants themselves close the hole, this is a very good sign! The bones may perhaps order the particles contained in the sala shell to be placed in another kind of ants' nest, made of grass ; the ñanga will go during the day and prepare a place for the shell. In the evening, when it is dark, he will put the shell into the hole without looking back towards it. The ants will take all the timbhorola down into their nest, and so "the misfortune will remain with them." (Mboza.) — The 751
hondlola rite is generally accompanied by the preparation of 755
protective amulets (timfisa). The nails and hair of the patient are 783
cut, put into small bags of lizard skin and tied round his neck.

751 One frequently meets people wearing this ornament, which also
755 aims at making the cure permanent. Sometimes the nails are those
from one hand and foot only. The *psirungulo* i. e. the astragalus
783 of the slaughtered goat, or the beak, claws and some feathers of the hen (p. 410) are also tied round the neck of the patient. This is the *religious amulet*, whilst the lizard bag is the *medico-magical* one. Convalescents are moreover provided with the *fowa*, a kind of rattle, consisting of a root called *sungi* (there is no connection between this word and the sungi of the circumcision school, I. p. 77) contained in a kind of round box made of palm leaf which is tied round the ankle. This is intended to protect them against the perspiration of those who have sexual relations (p. 358). They sometimes wear a little piece of reed filled with a protective powder, as do also nursing mothers during the whole nursing period (1) (I. p. 48).

[527] The hondlola rite also marks the moment when sexual relations, which had been suspended during the disease, are resumed. Celebrating as it does the victory over disease, the day of hondlola
756 is regarded as a fête-day. Beer is prepared as a mark of gratitude to the doctor and "to rejoice his heart." It is also the day of reckoning ; the physician must be paid. This individual has not, however, waited until now to ask for a "refresher." From the commencement of the case it has been necessary to *pfula hwama*, that is to say, to lift the cover of the medicine wallet by means of sixpence or a shilling. At times he has been very anxious to change the medicine, in order to produce a greater effect ; on such

751 (1) I may here mention two other articles which are frequently worn by Thonga Natives: one is the dried seed-pod of the flower of the large Protea bush (sugar bush) which is so common on the slopes of the Drakensberg. It looks like a hard brownish cone, all covered with concentric layers of little square ledges. This cures *vertigo*. Why? No doubt because when it is turned round rapidly, it makes the spectator giddy. It is hung round the neck with a string. This curious remedy is brought back from the Barberton mountains by those who go to work in the Transvaal. The second is a bracelet often seen round little children's wrists, and is made from the skin of a kind of tawny mole, called *tju'unyana*, which digs its burrows almost on the level of the ground. You can see the earth a little raised all along its track. The *Filaria* parasite, which is often met with in our tribe, also creeps under the skin in a similar way (p. 343). See illustration No. 5. These are two new instances of the principle "similia similibus curantur." Bags filled with snake powder are also often worn as a preventive.

occasions he has been presented with a chicken as an encouragment; 756
but on the day of the hondlola, when his skill is joyfully affirmed, and the cure an accomplished fact, accounts must be definitely settled with the ñanga, who will henceforth discontinue his visits.

III. *Conception of Disease.*

The preceding details make it possible for us to understand the 753
conceptions which underlie these rites and ceremonies. Possessing as they do so few and such inaccurate notions regarding Anatomy or Physiology, it is not surprising that correct pathological knowledge is absolutely non-existent amongst South African Bantus. In fact this knowledge is both superficial and superstitious. I shall try to prove this by a study of the *names* given to the diseases, the *causes* to which they are attributed, the *notion* of contagion, and the ideas underlying the *rites which mark the end of a disease.*

1) As regards the method of *naming diseases*, it is most childish. 753
Thongas call the complaint from which they suffer by the name 827
of the organ affected ; for instance "I have a foot, I have a hand, I have a neck" (ndji ni nenge, boko, nkolo) means "I have a pain in my foot, my hand or my neck." These curious expressions doubtless arise from the fact that no notice is taken of the existence of any particular organ until something goes wrong with it. "He has a head" means "He is mad." For "I have a headache," the expression "ndji yingela nhloko," meaning "I feel my head," would generally be used. Very often one hears complaints of "a blood" (ngati) which moves from spot to spot, finally taking up its abode in the side or in the stomach, or elsewhere. This is an idea similar to that of the morbid humours of olden days. There are then as many diseases as there are organs, and we are often asked for remedies for the "nape of the neck complaint," or for the "inside trouble." This latter might be gastritis, congestion of the liver, or dysentery, and we should often be wholly at a loss how to prescribe were it not for the highly picturesque, and often particularly appropriate, imagery used by the patients, or by their friends, in describing the various symptoms ; for instance when

753 a sufferer from "inside trouble" says that "it bites" (luma),
827 we know that it is a case of intestinal colic. But it becomes somewhat puzzling when a patient declares that he suffers from an intestinal worm which passes from his stomach into his neck and returns through his lungs, when it does not happen to take a fancy to remain in his head! "It makes a sound like *pfie...pfie...*," said an old man to me when describing this animal, which plays an important part in the medical science of the Natives (1). (I. p. 48.)

[164] There are, however, certain technical terms which are used to designate some diseases ; thus *mukuhlwana* means cough and the mucous catarrh of the throat and nose. The ordinary *mbukulu* seems to be tonsilitis, while the special *mbukulu* is an affliction accompanied by fever, vertigo, delirium and madness, which is generally attributed to the malign influences of the spirits of the departed. — Hydrocele *(masangu*, or *masenge)* is wide-spread and well-known, as is also bilharzia, a form of haematuria called *shinyalu* or *ndjundjwane*, which appears in severe forms and is due to a special parasite. Rheumatism is called *shifambo*, the runner, as it moves from spot to spot. Syphilis, imported long ago by Europeans, is universally known, and is, alas, so general in the neighbourhood of the town of Lourenço Marques that almost all Natives suffer from it. The Natives call it *buba* (probably from bubo). Gonorrhea is of more recent importation, and dates — according to my informant Tobane — from the time of the construction of the Pretoria Railway ; it is called *shikandjameti*, the disease which crushes the villages.

The eruptive diseases are perhaps those best recognized by the Natives. *Shintshinana* is the name for measles, but seems also applicable to scarlet fever. Small-pox is called *nyedzana*, and, as regards psychic or nervous troubles, the treatment of which

(1) I may here mention that the tape worm and the lumbric, both called *tinyokana*, small snakes, are very common amongst Natives, and are well known to them. They even think that these worms are necessary for digestion. An old woman had asked one of my colleagues to give her a vermifuge, and the drug had been successful. But she came back to ask him to give her another medicine to prevent all the inhabitants from escaping. Some of them must remain in her body "because," as the old woman said, "who would eat my food afterwards" ?

we have just studied, they are attributed either to Heaven or to 753
evil spirits or to the winds. The name of the *wutleka* disease 827
is worthy of notice. This word comes from *wutla*, which means to rob, to seize ; wutleka, the qualificative derivative (Thonga Grammar § 196) means the condition of something taken away. This would seem to be a passive meaning, as if the patient had been robbed by some agent. However, Mankhelu explains the term by saying : "The patient has stolen the *rirabi*" — "a wutle rirabi". *Rirabi* is very closely allied to a word meaning stick ; the old doctor says it is the name of the disease. If this etymology be correct the patient would be considered as having taken the disease by a kind of robbery. But Native etymology must always be accepted with caution.

All these names show how unprecise is the pathological knowledge of the Thongas.

2) As regards the *causes of diseases*, Thongas are groping in 753
the grossest superstition. When a medical man wishes to treat a 787
disease, he first tries to diagnose its cause. The Bantu ñanga does the same, only the difference is that he takes very little notice of the physical symptoms. There is no auscultation, no palpation, no examination of the secretions, blood, saliva, or urine, as these are disgusting and must be covered with sand as soon as possible! The great means of diagnosing a disease is the throwing of bones. There are three great causes of disease : the spirits of the gods, the wizards and the makhumo, defilement from death or from impure persons. A fourth less common cause is Heaven. The bones will reveal by the way in which they fall which is the one to be combated.

3) Their ideas of *contagion* are not much in advance of their 753
other pathological conceptions. The two most dreaded diseases 164
in this respect are consumption (lifuba) and leprosy (nhlokonho). 751
Consumption is by no means a new ailment due to civilisation, though it has increased enormously since Thonga boys have gone to the towns. A proof that it has been known for a long time is to be found in its great importance in the ritual. To the Thonga mind it is caused by the *makhumo*, i. e., the contamination of death, or the defilement resulting from contact with a woman in

753 a state of physiological impurity. Hence the law ordering
164 people affected with any of these kinds of makhumo to eat with
751 spoons ; they thus protect themselves against the poison which might cause them to become consumptive. A curious feature in the conception of *contagion* is the following. When Sokis died (I. p. 139) I heard some of those present saying to his sister, who was carrying a child on her shoulders : "Do not cry! If you cry the disease will jump to your baby!" There were two reasons for this warning ; to cry in the presence of misfortune increases
753 the danger tenfold (compare p. 326) ; moreover the contagion of
768 disease is especially to be feared in connection with the relatives of the sick or dead person. Hence the strange custom illustrated on plate p. 26 : when a man dies of consumption his relatives are absolutely forbidden to eat any of the food he may have left. The "luma milomo" ceremony (I. p. 146) is of no use in this case. In former times all his mealies were burnt. Nowadays, however, it is allowable for people outside his family to buy and consume his provision. The large storehouse, illustrated on p. 26, contained the mealies harvested in Sokis' fields. These were sold to strangers, whilst relatives bought other mealies which were stored in the small hut for the use of his widow and children (p. 111). The same reason no doubt explains why the widow of a consumptive must *lahla khombo* with strangers, and not with men of the village (I. p. 206).

758 This peculiar idea of contagion also gives rise to the rules
766 for *burying lepers*. Their relatives must not have anything to do with the burial (I. p. 508). Relatives-in-law can perform
768 this painful duty, or possibly the family of the deceased leper will ask a friend to help them in their distress. "Have you prepared something as a reward for me?" he asks, and if this is the case he digs a grave just outside the wall of the hut where the patient died, removes the reeds of the wall, and pulls the corpse down into the hole without any funeral ceremony. The relatives are assembled far away on the square, and do not even dare to look on at the burial. All the implements are broken in the depths of the forest, at a great distance, for fear that a relative might touch one of them and die. Or they are left in the hut, and the whole village is at once removed.

village is at once removed. Leprosy is called *nhlulabadahi*, the disease which is stronger than the doctors. It is very much dreaded ; lepers are not, however, segregated ; they live in the village with other people and even attend beer-parties, but they bring their own mugs, whilst every other guest receives a drinking utensil from the master of the village. 758

Another disease which is believed to be contagious is "possession" by the *Bandjao spirits*. Should you pick up on the road some object which belonged to one of the possessed, his madness will jump to you (tlulela). — Epilepsy is also dreaded on that account. A nursing woman must not see any one suffering from an attack of this disease, or the child which is on her shoulders will become epileptic. 753 828

Speaking of the conception of disease, I must remind the reader of the fact that *sexual relations* between the inhabitants of the village are believed to aggravate the condition of the patient dwelling in it (I. p. 133, II. p. 358), and are consequently forbidden during epidemics and in any case of serious illness. Hence the precautions which convalescents must take of wearing the *sungi*, as we have just seen. 753 834

4) The special rites which mark the end of an illness throw much light on the Thonga conception of disease. A serious illness constitutes a marginal period either for the individual concerned, or, in the case of an epidemic, for the community, and the hondlola rite is the method by which the patient is reintegrated into society ; it clearly has the character of a passage rite. The rubbing with psanyi, the removal of the defilement of disease, the throwing away of the "timbhorola," the cutting of nails and hair, all these are rites of separation from the period of disease, whilst the feast of the hondlola day, and the resuming of sexual relations (1) are rites of reintegration. In the disease of possession, as we shall see it is the reintegration into the society of spirit-possessed persons and amounts to an initiation. 753 783 184 755

(1) We often hear of a Christian woman, who has gone to a heathen medicine-man for treatment, having sexual intercourse with him. We generally attribute this fact to immorality alone, but it was probably a part of the treatment, at the precise moment when sexual taboos were removed.

753 In the case of an epidemic, it is the whole clan which passes
184 through the marginal period, and all its members have to perform
755 the reintegration rites, by means of which they re-inter upon
783 normal life.

But these rites have another meaning as well. They aim at "dispersing the disease." In the hondlola proper, the particles which have fallen on the mat during the rubbing operation are cast away into an ants' nest; this is the *tumba*, which corresponds to the throwing away of all the "nsila", i. e. the "filth" of the small-pox patients at a cross-roads. In this case the body of the patient is also washed at that spot; this is likewise done at the conclusion of measles. The same idea underlies all these customs, that by their means the patient or clan will *definitely get rid of the disease.* Disease forms an organic whole, an important element of which consists of the dried perspiration of the patient, the dirt covering his skin, the implements he has used during his confinement, the dust of his hut, etc. All these are thrown either into an ants' nest to be disposed of there by the insects, or on to the road to be trampled under foot by travellers. The latter, by coming into contact with this filth, will at the same time take upon themselves the disease which it represents and carry it away into far distant countries. Thus the request of the medicine man will be granted, (I. p. 55, II. p. 393): "Let the bad blood go to Nkhabelene, to Shiburi... to the ends of the earth." I do not think that in this apparently hostile act of throwing the dust of a contaminated hut on to the road Thongas are actuated by the wish that travellers should be infected with the disease. Their principal aim is to disperse the contagion according to the principles of communionist and imitative magic. It is however dangerous to tread upon it. It is one of those "makhumo" which can cause disease.

000 The medical system of the Bantus is mingled to such an extent with superstition and error that very little reliance can be placed upon it. The question which I put at the beginning of this section is therefore very difficult to answer. What is the duty of the White Government in regard to the Native quacks? The ideal would be to replace them by fully qualified, civilised doctors. As this is impossible, let medical missionaries at least be encouraged, and their number increased, and

000 a medical course be open to educated Natives, if not a complete University course, at least such instruction as would allow them to treat their fellow men in a scientific manner, the medicine-men being gradually prevented from practising their very questionable art.

B. POSSESSION.

753 The curious psychic phenomenon which I am now about to describe belongs to the domain of medecine ; it is "the disease," or rather the "madness of the gods" (bubabyi bya psikwembu). But at the same time it bears a distinctly religious character, the spirits which are believed to cause the disease being *psikwembu*, spirits of deceased people, to whom worship will be addressed. On the other hand, the rites connected with the treatment of this kind of madness are definitely magical, and those who have suffered from it often become recognised magicians, claiming to possess supernatural powers.

This is a very interesting subject from the point of view of psychology and psychiatry. Phenomena of possession exist amongst most uncivilised races, even amongst more advanced peoples, and it would be useful to compare the manifestations of this disease amongst Bantus with those met with in other parts of the world. I shall however leave this task to professionals, and only try faithfully and clearly to describe and, if possible, to understand, the facts which I witnessed myself. This disease has spread enormously amongst the Thongas in the last fifty years. It is said to have been previously very rare, or even unknown ; since that time it has become quite an epidemic, although it is at the present moment rather on the decrease. Possession is more frequent amongst the Ba-Ronga than in the Northern clans.

I. *The Spirits which Cause the Disease.*

753 776 Strange to say, the gods or spirits which are credited with the power of possessing people, are not the ancestors of the Thongas themselves, the ancestor-gods, but Zulu spirits and those

753 of the Ba-Ndjao tribe, who inhabit the country beyond the Sabie,
776 as far as the neighbourhood of Beira. It appears that the possessions which first occurred were due to the Zulu and Ngoni spirits ; possibly they coincided with the invasion of the warriors of Manukosi, and with the ever-increasing exodus of young men who go to work in the diamond mines at Kimberley, or the gold mines at Johannesburg, or Natal, and travel through territory occupied by Zulus. As regards the Ba-Ndjao spirits they are sometimes called *amandiki*, and are said to have followed the Thonga and Ngoni soldiers of Gungunyana, who established themselves for some years at Mosapa, right in the middle of the Ndjao country, to the North of the Sabie, and who, later on, came down again from that mountainous region into the fertile plain of Bilene. (Lower Limpopo.) On the other hand, when the war of 1894 to 1895 compelled the Northern Ba-Ronga, those from Mabota, Zihlahla and Nondwane to flee, they took with them, so the story goes, the gods who had possessed them, and "scattered" them so thoroughly in the countries of the North that, when they returned to their own homes, they were no longer molested by these *psikwembu*. That is what I was told by a Native. We must carefully note, at the outset, these two ideas : the tormenting spirits are the *manes of strangers* and not of the people of the country, and they frequently attack Thongas who happen to be travelling in such countries, and follow them in their further migrations (1).

The Ndjao possessions appear to be worse than the Zulu. "Bundjao bya karata" — "the Ndjao possession is painful." If the incantations used are in Zulu for Zulu possessions, they are in the Ndjao language when such are caused by Ndjao spirits, and those who suffer from this affliction are known by the large white beads which they wear in their hair. Sometimes they have merely a short string of small beads, hanging down somewhere from the head. I well remember on the banks of a stream, in a

(1) However, in the case of Mholombo, the spirit was an old Tembe chief, a true ancestor, and in that of Ñwashinhwana there was a throng of occupants, amongst them her own son, Manuel, who had died some time before. In the case of Mboza it was also a Ronga, but he had died in a foreign country (See later).

wooded valley called Nhlalalene, where we had made a halt during 753
one of our journeyings, seeing a good-looking young woman 776
wearing one of these curious ornaments. I was struck with the sight, and asked my companion why she was thus decorated. — "She invokes the spirits of the Ba-Ndjao," was the reply.

II. *Beginning and Diagnosis of the Disease.*

I have carefully studied the story of many cases of possession 168
amongst the Ba-Ronga (See *Bulletin de la Société Neuchâteloise* 753
de Géographie. Tome X, p. 388). Most of them began by a distinct crisis, in which the patient was unconscious, but this does not seem to have been brought about by any previous nervous trouble. A woman of the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques, *Ñwashinhwana*, fled from her home and threw herself into the Bay. The contact with the cold water restored her to her senses, after which the bones declared that she had *psikwembu*. Another, *Mholombo*, heard a voice calling her during a dream ; it was the possessing spirit, which revealed itself later on as a chief long since dead. I will now give full details of the case of *Mboza*, who was himself possessed at one time, and later on became a regular exorcist. After having worked in Kimberley for some time, he returned home in good health. Soon afterwards, however, he became lame for six months. He attributed his difficulty in walking to rheumatism (shifambo). There was some improvement in his condition, but he began to feel other symptoms ; he lost his appetite and almost entirely ceased to eat. Here is his testimony : "One day, having gone with another young man to gather juncus, in order to manufacture a mat, the psikwembu suddenly started in me" (ndji sunguleka hi psikwembu psikañwe). I came back home, trembling in all my limbs. I entered the hut, but suddenly I rose to my feet and began to attack the people of the village ; then I ran away, followed by my friends, who seized me, and at once the spirits were scattered (hangalaka). When I became conscious again, I was told I had hurt a *khehla* (a man with the wax crown (I. p. 129), and had struck other people on their backs :

752 "Ha!" they said, "he has the gods (or he is sick from the gods, a ni
753 psikwembu)." Thus the first signs of possession seem to be a
754 nervous crisis, but also the occurence of certain suspicious symptoms : a persistant pain in the chest, irrepressible hiccough, unusual yawning, emaciation without apparent cause, etc. These symptoms, however, are not sufficient grounds for a diagnosis, and the bones are always consulted in order to arrive at a conclusion. The amulets of the patient (called "his shade") are placed on the mat, and the bones thrown near them. We shall see, under letter D, how they must fall to confirm the diagnosis. Should they do so, a second consultation takes place in order to ascertain to what doctor the treatment must be entrusted. There are medicine-men who are specialists for this disease. They are not true *ñanga*, but are called *gobela* (dji-ma), at least amongst the Ba-Ronga, who suffer from possession more than the other clans. These gobela have formed many rival schools in which the drugs used, and the rites followed, differ slightly ; the schools of Kkongosa, Sindondondo, Ñwatshulu, who are men, and those of Ñwamutheto (in the Shifimbatello district) and of Thambulanyoka, viz., Snake-bone, both of whom are women, etc. Ñwashinhwana was treated by a disciple of Khongosa ; Mboza by Ñwatshulu.

III. *The Treatment of Possession, or Exorcism.*

755 In former times, the only remedy was waving a large palm-leaf (milala) in front of the patient. This was deemed sufficient to "scatter the spirits." Now the treatment is much more complicated. Though it varies slightly in the various schools above mentioned, it comprises four principal rites : the drum performance, the ablution in the gobo calabash, the drinking of the blood and the hondlola ceremony. In the Khongosa treatment the gobo rite comes first, and is called *baselo*. A certain root, the *phuphumane*, is prepared, and dipped into water in a big calabash cut in two so as to form a large basin. The mixture is stirred ; an abundant foam is thus produced and the patient must

wash himself with it ; or he must take the basin on his knees, suck 755
in a little of this foam between his lips and spit it out in the direction of the four winds, saying *tsu*, evidently as a preliminary means of propitiating the possessing spirits, which will be invoked and entreated to reveal themselves in the following rite.

In the case of Mboza, the calabash came as the second phase of the treatment, the first being the drum performance.

1) The drum performance (gongondjela).

This extraordinary rite reminds one of the witches' sabbaths 755
of medieval times by the infernal din and uproar through which 787
the possessed will have to pass. However, notwithstanding the external resemblance, it is totally different, having nothing to do with witchcraft proper, and being only a "medical practice" in the eyes of the Thongas. — A strange medical practice, indeed, devised rather to kill than to heal the patient!

In the first place the bones must be consulted to find out in what spot the sabbath should be held. If the bone which represents the patient falls in the middle of all the rest, this shows that the tambourines, or "tom-toms," must be beaten in the interior of the hut itself. If the bone falls on the outer edge, the sabbath must be in the doorway ; if it falls further to one side, beyond all the others, the treatment must take place on the village square (hubyen) ; if it rolls still further off, and if the astragalus of the roaming gazelle is also separated from the rest, this shows that the meeting must take place in the bush, quite away from the village. If the bones remain silent, revealing nothing, then the throwing will be continued behind the hut, or on the square, until they speak. It is also necessary that the four shells Oliva, and Cypraea, which form part of the set of bones, should fall on their backs, exposing their crack or mouth. This signifies that the possessing gods, the spirits, will come out ; there will be an egress for them, whilst if, on the contrary, the shells fall differently, shewing their convex sides, the diviner will say : "Ma tikarata ntsena" — "all your trouble is in vain :" the sabbath

755 will have no effect ; no means of egress for the gods will be found!
787 (Compare Letter D. Divination). But a way will soon be found to get over this difficulty, and it will not be long before the sabbath is in full swing.

755 In the hut, right in the middle, the patient is seated. Dejected, with downcast eyes, and fixed expression, he waits... Everyone throughout the country knows that to-day, to-night, on the appearance of the new moon, the strange and terrible exorcism will begin. All those who have once been possessed will officiate. The director of the ceremony, the *gobela*, who has been appointed by the bones, holds his tambourine, made of the skin of the big varan lizard stretched over a circular wooden frame. (See Illustration p. 124, No. 9.) In the calm quiet of the evening air the first blow is struck. It reverberates, and is heard afar off on all sides ; it penetrates the thickets and reaches the neighbouring villages, where it inspires a strange emotion, a transcendent delight born of curiosity, malice, and I know not what feeling of unconscious satisfaction. All rush in the direction of the well-known sound ; each one hurries to the hut of the possessed ; all desire to take part in this struggle, this conflict with the invisible world.

They all assemble, some with tambourines, others with large tin cases picked up on the outskirts of the town (tins in which kerosine oil is sold in Lourenço Marques), still others with calabashes, filled with small objects, which do duty as rattles (ndjele, yin-tin) ; and now, crowding round the patient, they begin their hideous din, striking, brandishing, shaking their various instruments of torture with all their might and main. Some lightly touch the head or ears of the unfortunate sufferer. It is a frightful hubbub, which continues, with but short interruptions, during the whole night, or until the performers in this fantastic concert are compelled to stop from sheer fatigue.

755 But this is merely the orchestra, the accompaniment. That
533 which is most essential is the *singing*, the human voice, the *chorus of exorcists*, a short refrain, following on a still shorter solo, repeated a hundred or a thousand times, always with the same object in view, toward which all strive seriously and persistently, namely to compel the spiritual being, the mysterious possessing spirit which

is there present, to reveal itself, and declare its name, after which it 755
will be duly overcome. These songs are at the same time both 533
simple and poetic. They address the spirit in laudatory terms, trying to cajole it by flattery, to get on the right side of it, and thus induce it to grant the signal favour of a final surrender. Here follows the first of these songs which I heard. — One day, when I was travelling, hearing the uproar of a sabbath behind some bushes, I jumped off my waggon, and found myself right in the midst of an exorcism ceremony.

> Shibendjana ! u vukele bantu !
> Rhinoceros ! thou attackest men !

These were the words shouted by the singers round a poor woman who appeared to be in some sort of a dream, and was seemingly unconscious ; my arrival had scarcely any effect on the unearthly hubbub, in spite of the fact that the appearance of a White man in the villages of that district was generally regarded as quite an event.

When the hours pass without any visible effect being produced on the patient, the chorus is changed. The night may be far spent, and day-light at hand :

> Come out, spirit, you make us weep till sun-rise !
> Why are we thus ill-treated ?

Or, perhaps by way of bringing greater pressure to bear, they will threaten to leave the spirit, for good and all, if it will not heed the chidings of the frenzied tambourine players :

> Come, let us be off ! bird of the chiefs ! Let us go away (as thou treatest us so harshly).

The melodies of the exorcists' incantations have a singularly persistent, incisive, penetrating character. I had the opportunity of noting down one which was sung with a strange alto accompaniment in fourths. This tune is No. 32 in the collection (p. 291). The disturbing effect of this music was intensified by a very pronounced sforzando when the chorus took up the dominant phrase. This is the song, as universally known and sung in the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques.

> Awake ! Awake ! The daylight breaks ! Now the bird is singing !
> Play also, Zulu, play in the bush. Now the bird is singing.

755 The meaning is not difficult to gather. "Day is dawning.
533 Awake then, sleeping spirit! (This spirit is called Mu-Ngoni, Zulu, for the case is supposed to be one of Zulu possession). The birds are already sporting in the thickets. Soon we shall be obliged to go to our work and leave you! It is your last chance; come out and salute the morning and reveal yourself to us!"

This insistence is renewed. The patient begins to show signs of assent. The shikwembu is preparing to come out. Those present encourage it:

> Shawane! Mu-Ngoni. Huma ha hombe hi tindlela ta hu lulama...
> We salute thee, spirit! Come out gently by the straight way.

Meaning: Do not hurt the afflicted one! Spare him!

755 Overcome at length by this noisy concert the patient enters into a condition of nervous exaltation. The crisis occurs, evidently as a result of hypnotic suggestion. He rises and dances wildly in the hut. The hubbub is redoubled. They implore the spirit to *declare its name*. A name is shouted, a Zulu name, that of some ancient departed chief, such as Manukosi, or Mozila; sometimes, strange to say, the name of Gungunyana himself, although he was still living. An old woman, formerly possessed, told me that she cried out the name of Pitlikeza, and it appeared that this Pitlikesa was an itinerant Zulu bard, who wandered about the district of Delagoa when she was a young girl. She was quite convinced that the spirit of that individual had taken up its abode in her, years after Pitlikeza's passage through the country.

In the case of Mboza the patient was covered with a large piece of calico during the whole drum performance. A first medicinal pellet was burnt under the calico, in a broken pot full of embers, a male pellet (made of the fat of an ox or a he-goat); no result having been obtained, a second pellet, a female one, made from the fat of a she-goat, was introduced. The exorcist, Ñwatshulu prayed to the gods as follows:

> Help us, you Ngoni spirits (or gods, psikwembu). I received this medicine from your hands, so "they" must come out at once from my patient. Should he have swallowed a snake, or a toad, should these prevent the spirits from coming out, let these animals run away, far away, and provide an egress for the spirits.

When the second pellet was nearly all burnt, Mboza began 755
to tremble ; the women sang louder. The *gobela* shouted amidst the uproar : "Come out, Ngoni!" Then he ordered the singers to keep quiet, crept beneath the veil and said : "You who dance there, who are you? A Zulu? A Ndjao? Are you a hyena?" The patient nodded his head and answered : "No!" — "Then you are a Zulu?" — "Yes, I am..." And, during a pause, he said : "I am Mboza." Mboza was a Ronga who died in Kimberley many years ago. The uproar was resumed and the third pellet was introduced. This is the "pellet par excellence," neither male nor female, the one which is expected to have the strongest effect. Mboza suddenly rose, threw himself upon those present, beat them on the head, scattered them all right and left, and ran out of the hut under the impression that the spirits were beating him! "Every one saw that day that I had terrible spirits in me." In the crisis of madness the patient sometimes throws himself into the fire and feels no pain, or falls in catalepsy (a womile, lit. becomes dry), and strikes his head against wood, or the ground, without feeling anything.

Sometimes the concert of tambourines continues for three or four days, a week, or a fortnight. I know a woman (since converted to Christianity under the name of Monica) who underwent a seven days treatment of this description. All depends upon the patient's nervous condition, and upon the degree of depression to which fasting and suffering have reduced him.

The spirit, having disclosed its name and title, is henceforward known and can be interrogated. Spoon, the diviner, whose wife had been twice possessed, once by the Zulus and once by the Ba-Ndjao, told me the story of one of these conversations. He happened to be in one of the neighbouring villages when he was suddenly sent for in great haste and told that his wife, who had attended a sabbath at such and such a spot, was taken with the madness of the gods. He went as fast as he could to the place indicated, and found that his wife was really beside herself, and dancing like a person possessed. He had never before noticed in her the slightest sign of possession. The spirit began to speak, as soon as she was somewhat calmed down, and gave answers to the

755 questions put to it : "I entered into this *ligodo*, i. e. into this body, this vessel, in such and such a manner. Her husband had gone to work in the gold mines. I entered into him while he was seated on a stone, and when he returned home I left him and entered into his wife." — "Are you alone, spirit?" is the usual question, to which it may reply : "No, I have my son and my grandson with me ;" and, if the witnesses suspect that there really are several spirits in the patient, the tambourine symphony is again resorted to, in order to dislodge the entire company. Sometimes the possessed pronounces as many as ten different names.

Or it may be that the gobela only asks the name of the father and grandfather of the possessing spirit, in order the better to know the latter with all his genealogy. Such was the case with Mboza. "My father is Ndlebende," said the spirit. — "Ho!" answered the gobela, "then you are Mboza, son of Ndlebende." And he identified the spirit in that way.

755 It may be that, at the first sitting, the spirit will claim some
533 satisfaction : a "nturu," a piece of calico of such and such a colour. It is also generally at this time that the patient will *sing his song*. Every possessed person invents a song which will be henceforth *his*, and by means of which crises, or trances will be provoked or cured. Nwashinhwana sang :

> Alas ! my father ! Medicine-men can do nothing for me !
> Who will deliver me ?

Mboza :

I am the one who wanders about, I come out from the body of magicians.

These songs are generally in Zulu, and it is asserted that, even if the patient does not know this language, he will be able to use it in his conversation, by a kind of miracle of tongues!

The first rite is now completed. It has succeeded in forcing the spirit to reveal its name (1).

754 (1) Exorcism by drum beating is the classical method of expelling spirits. Of late years, since 1910, another method has been invented called *ku femba* which, strange
755 to say, is connected with a new word borrowed from European Animism, the word *shipoko*, now current in Thonga terminology. Shipoko comes from the Boer spook, which means ghost. According to the Native idea, wizards have power to enslave ghosts and make them work in their own fields during the night. They can also send them to take possession of their victims and torment them. If a patient is supposed to

2) The rite of the gobo basin.

When Mboza had finished revealing the name of the spirit 755
possessing him, he had to undergo the rite of the *gobo*. His head was dipped into this, not entirely, but so that his eyes, at least, were plunged in the water. Then the gobela said : "Open your eyes." He felt a sensation of burning, and saw nothing but a red space with black dots running to and fro through the field of vision. He was kept in that position for a good long time. Then he raised his head, and the water ran all over his face and on to his body : he was purified (a basile). But this rite does not seem to be strictly a purification rite. By this kind of baptism the patient is said to have "crossed the sea." He enters upon a new life, and it is clearly a rite of passage. Now he will be able to speak, because "he has seen everything." It is the drug which "makes one see" (muri wa ku bonisa). Some are said to have learnt divination by this gobo ablution.

Having undergone these two first parts of the treatment, Mboza says he slept soundly. Next day, came the third.

3) The appeasement by blood (ku thwaza).

During the confabulation following the concert of tambourines, the spirits speaking through the mouth of the patient, although

be possessed by one of these shipoko, the exorcist will proceed with the femba in the 754
following manner. He prepares a little crown made of medicinal roots woven together, 755
similar to the *hari* which women place on their heads when carrying their water jugs. The patient lies down in his hut, surrounded by the mathwaza beating their drums. The magician touches one of his limbs with the hari, blows upon it, brings it close to his lips and draws in his breath. If nothing happens, he touches another limb, the arm, the side, the leg, the head, drawing in his breath each time, searching for the ghost. Suddenly he is seized by a fit, and falls down unconscious ! The ghost has entered him, he has swallowed it. His attendants raise him up and take him outside the hut. They begin to ask him : "Who are you ?" He tells them his name ; he also informs them that he has been sent by so and so, a wizard. This wizard may be "an inhabitant of your village, someone with whom you eat porridge every day !" The shipoko continues his confession :" Yes ! this man has sent me to kill the patient."

We shall hear more of these shipoko when dealing with witchcraft. We find here a curious mixture of witchcraft and the ideas of possession, with the addition of a European element. My informant assures me that this femba rite is quite modern, and I can readily believe it.

755 perfectly distinct from him, had already demanded some presents; but there is one in particular that must be given in order to

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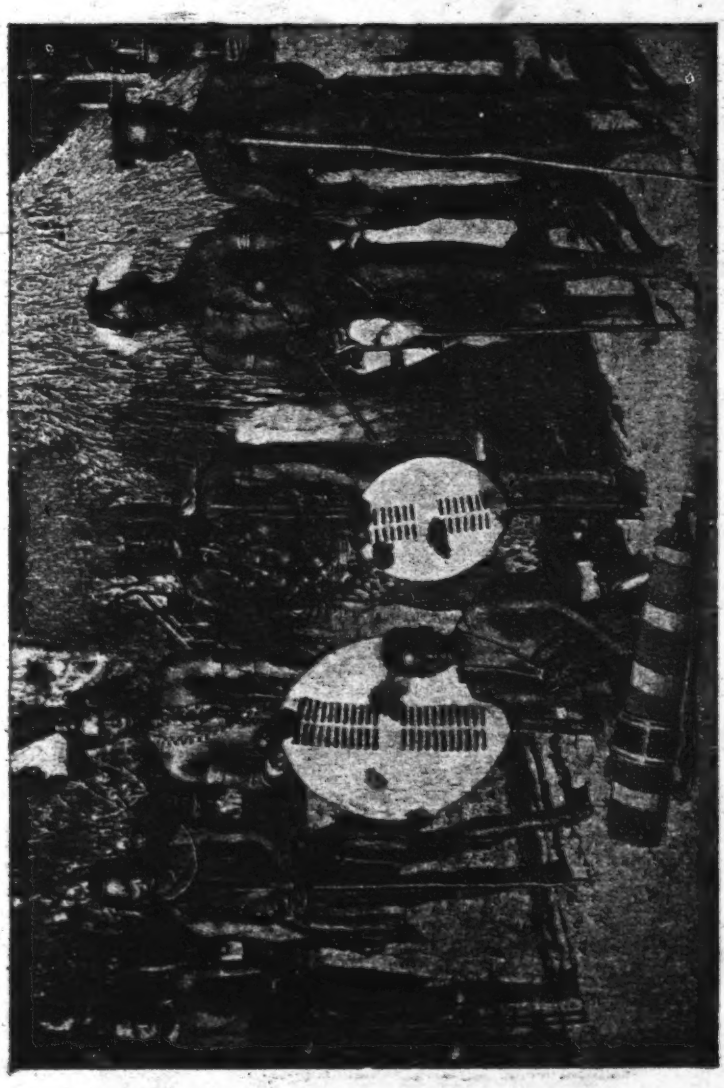


The great exorcist Hokoza with his companions (Tembe).

propitiate them and to get rid of them (hangalasa). The refrain of the second verse of the exorcists' song, which I have already quoted, mentions this offering, and half promises us, as an

755 inducement to the spirit to disclose its name. This is what is called the *thwaza*.

Aba ka Khongosa ba thwaza hi huku!

meaning : the patients of Khongosa's school treat with fowl's blood. Blood, an abundance of blood, is necessary to effect the cure of the patient, and to obtain an assurance from the objectionable tenant in possession that it will do no further harm. As a general rule it is given something better than fowl's blood. In most schools a she-goat is taken, if the patient be a man, or a he-goat in the case of a woman. The exorcist who has been in charge of the cure orders the by-standers to repeat the song which had induced the first crisis. The possessed again shows excitement, and exhibits the same symptoms of raving madness that I have previously described. Then the animal is pierced beneath the foreleg (in the case of Mboza this took place at the entrance of his own hut), and the patient throws himself on the wound, greedily sucking the flowing blood, and, in frenzy, filling his stomach with it. When he has drunk his fill, he has to be dragged away from the animal by main force ; certain medicines (one of which is called *ntshatshu*, apparently an emetic) are administered, his throat is tickled with a feather and he retires behind the hut to vomit all the blood he has absorbed. By this means the spirit, or spirits, have been duly appeased and expelled.

The sufferer, who is now recovering, is next washed again, and smeared with ochre. The spirits will have ochre on the day of thwaza, and torment him if he does not satisfy their desire ; Sometimes the *kunga* rite is also practised for the exorcised, viz., no one is allowed to speak to him before having given him a present. (Compare I. p. 124) (1).

756 (1) The accompanying illustration represents a well known exorcist named Hokoza, who had won great fame in the Tembe and Maputju regions, a kindly man who had even some sympathy for Christianity, to which most of these magicians are strongly opposed, as may easily be understood. According to the Rev. A. Aubert, Hokoza used to begin teaching the magic art to his patients on the day of thwaza. Whilst the exorcised was seated in his hut, after having vomited the blood, some of the disciples of the magician took that part of the skull of the goat to which the horns are attached, its astragales and gall-bladder, and went to a certain spot to hide these objects. When they returned to the patient's village, the latter began to dance, to sing his song, to put

755 It is interesting to note what is done with the different parts of the sacrificed goat : the *bile-bladder* is stuck in the patient's hair according to custom (p. 50), to symbolise the happiness and good fortune that the sacrifice has ensured; afterwards he is clothed with *strips of the skin* of the animal. All the tambourine players, who are themselves *mathwaza*, i. e. who have already gone through the torture of possession, decorate themselves also with these strips of skin, crossing them over the breast. The strips must be tied together with *munganazi*, i. e. strings made from the roots of the munga tree, which have a pleasant odour ; this has the property of "rejoicing the nose" of the spirits, and is always used in the ritual of possession. In former times people wearing strips were often met with, as these ornaments had to be worn, at that time, during *a whole year*, until the hondlola. — The *flesh* of the sacrificed goat also supplies the means of finally exorcising these mysterious spirit powers. From each limb a small piece is cut, and these pieces are cooked in a separate saucepan, with a powdered drug prepared for this special purpose. The head exorcist breaks off the branch of an acacia bearing enormous shiny white thorns, on each of which is spitted a piece of meat. The patient runs at full speed towards the branch, and seizes a piece of meat between his teeth in passing. While eating it, he rushes towards the East. He comes back, seizes another piece in the same manner, and runs towards the West, and so on towards all the four cardinal points. In this way he propitiates the gods, the spirits of every country, in whatever direction they may lie. The young *mathwaza*, viz., those who have lately passed through this initiation, must also seize the pieces of meat with their teeth, but not the gobela, nor the old mathwaza. This is one of the rites of the Khongosa school. Ñwatshulu used not to observe it. The remainder of the goat is then cooked and eaten. A feast is celebrated, in which the chief exorcist dances and sings his song,

756 himself into a state of trance, and ran outside in search of the hidden objects. It was a species of trial ; Hokoza wished to know if the exorcised possessed the gift of divination. If he succeeded in finding the astragalus, he tied it to his left foot ; the gall-bladder he fixed in his hair. Hokoza was then satisfied and predicted a bright future for his pupil.

all the people clapping their hands (wombela), to encourage him, as an accompaniment. — The *horns and hoofs* will be carefully kept, and placed on the roof of the hut, just over the door (shiranwin) by which the afflicted one enters, evidently to protect the abode from malign influences. — The *astragalus* will be tied, together with the strips, on the sternum of the patient. — The *bones* of the goat are the objects of special care. They must not be broken to eat the marrow, but burnt in the shade of a large tree, where it is "cool." So the possessing spirit will also be cool (titimela) and not too wild. Sometimes they are preserved in a special pot, and burnt on the day of the hondlola. 755

The period of convalescence[1] then begins. It lasts one year, and is a distinct marginal period, as clearly appears from the fact that sexual relations are absolutely forbidden during that phase, and until the hondlola. It is also, more or less, a period of apprenticeship, as the possessed will become an exorcist himself, if his magical powers become sufficiently developed. He accompanies the gobela everywhere, assists him in his cures, and so learns the art of exorcism. The apprentice will also have to practise the rites of protection, which I shall shortly describe, and which are obligatory during the whole period of convalescence, and even later. 758 834 756

4) The final purification of the hondlola and investing with amulets (timfisa).

As we saw, the hondlola, the removal of defilement of disease, is necessary at the close of any illness. So, when a possessed person is regarded as healed, he will have to pass through this rite. It can however only be carried out on the one condition that the possessed husband, or wife, has remained in a state of continence during the period of convalescence. In order to know if they have obeyed this law, a fowl will be placed on the head of the patient. If he, or she, has been continent according to order, the bird will remain quiet ; it will not fly away, even should someone approach and pass close by. If it flies off making a great noise, the angry exorcist will also take his leave, saying : 755 758 787

1 [For the individual whose spirit was possessed — Analyst]

755 "You have sinned and, in so doing, have marred the efficacy of all
758 my medicines (mi honile miri)." On the other hand, if the rule
787 has been properly observed, the bird will remain quite still, when it will be stabbed with a knife and its blood will be used in connection with the hondlola friction. Afterwards the fowl will be plucked and eaten by the village folk, but neither the patient, nor his spouse, nor the exorcist-in-chief will be allowed to partake of it. Thenceforth the husband and wife are permitted to live together as in the past.

755 The hondlola rites seem particularly complicated in cases of possession. Their sequence was as follows in that of Mboza. 1) He had to pay £ 1 to Ñwatshulu, as a reward for his medical attendance. He gave him the money, together with a pot of beer. 2) Then the doctor took his *gobo* calabash, stirred the medicine in order to make it froth abundantly, invoking his gods all the time, and saying : "Awake, you who spit on the road, you, Zulus, who have ears capable of hearing, etc... 3) Then he shouted : "Mboza! Eat!" The exorcised had to kneel down and swallow the froth. 4) The exorcist took mafureira fat, mixed it in his hand with medicinal powder, smeared and rubbed the body of the convalescent, from the knees to the feet, the arms, the chest, the belly, and the head. 5) He cut the nails of the hands and feet with a knife, and also a little of the hair on the forehead, and put the whole into the timfisa bags (p. 471) together with medicinal powder. 6) Then followed the ordinary hondlola friction. A pellet (shibuwu) had been prepared by crushing roots of the *bamhuntane* and *shilewana* trees in a mortar, and a hen had been killed. Mboza sat on a mat and the doctor rubbed his whole body with the pellet. He gathered the *timhora*, the particles fallen on the mat, mixed them with the blood of the hen, and again rubbed the patient. 7) Fresh timhora fell on the mat. They were gathered up a second time. Some were put into the amulet bags, the remainder were made into a ball, which was not thrown away as in ordinary diseases, but carefully placed at the back of the hut, where the forked branch was to be planted.

ooo Let us remember that, in the case of the exorcised, the hondlola

Let us remember that, in the case of the exorcised, the hondlola
does not only mean the re-introduction of the patient into the 755
society of the healthy, but his reception into the society of the 756
magicians. It is the last act of *initiation* : he himself becomes a magician, a doctor able to treat those who are possessed. This new dignity is symbolised by the *shiphandje* (forked branch) which will be given to him to-day, as it is to medicine-men (p. 388), or diviners (See later on). It was Ñwatshulu who chose and cut the branch for Mboza from the tree called *shiralala*. He dug a hole in the back part of Mboza's hut, chewed his sungi or ndjao root, and blew against the foot of the branch before planting it in the hole. Then he made the branch firm in the ground, and hung to it the baskets full of drugs and calabashes full of medicinal powders which he gave to his disciple. This branch will be the drug store of the new magician, the place where he keeps all his magic drugs ; it will also be his *altar* (gandjelo), not the altar of the ancestor-gods, who have no part here, but that of the possessing spirits, to whom he will also henceforth address his worship. (Compare with Mankhelu's forked branch, letter D). This leads us on to the next division of the subject.

IV. *The new Condition of the Exorcised.*

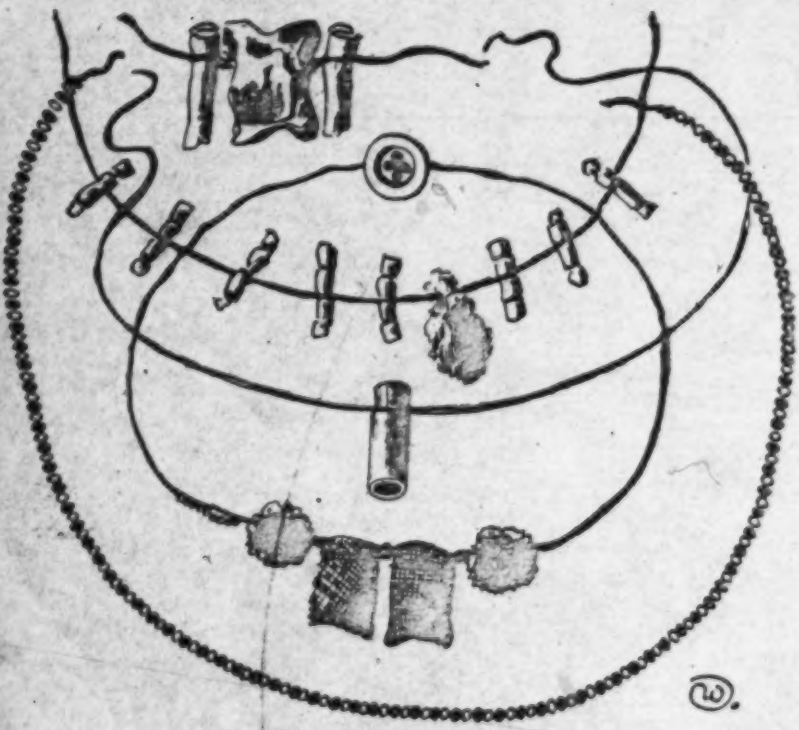
It is interesting to note the stages in the process of initiation 756
through which the possessed passes in the different acts of his 184
treatment. The tambourine performance has provoked, or accentuated, the manifestation of his dual personality, viz., the person possessed and the spirit possessing. The baptism in the calabash has helped him to cross the sea and to reach the land beyond, the land of miracles and of magic powers! By the drinking of blood, he has become a superior being, a man who does not fear that which makes others tremble ; he has *thwaza*. This word is the same as that employed for the renewal of the moon (p. 306) ; like the moon, he has been born again ; a new light has appeared after a period of darkness. He has entered a new life. The period of convalescence, with its taboos, is his last trial ; by the hondlola he finally enters the society of the initiated.

756 Henceforth he will lead a special life, characterised by protective
184 and propitiatory rites, which tend to the development of his subliminal faculties.

1) Protective rites.

756 As soon as he was "born again" in the thwaza ceremony,
751 but to a still higher degree later on, after being elevated to the
789 dignity of the magician, the exorcised, having entered the mysterious world of those endowed with powers, becomes the butt of all his colleagues in the magical arts ; first the baloyi, the witches, who *try* him, to see if he is able to discover their evil deeds, and secondly the other magicians, who are annoyed at seeing a rival ready to dispute their practice with them. So he must be continually on his guard ; in the evening, especially, he must protect himself against their nightly charms. The great protective medicine is a pellet made of the powder of many roots, which have been burned and bound together with fat taken from the bowels of a goat. The first of these roots comes from a tree called *mabophe*, found in the Bilen country. This has the power of tying (bopha, in Zulu, means to tie) the knees of the wizards who come during the night, so that they will be found in the morning, stark naked, in the hut of the exorcised. The *nulu* root seems to be used for the same purpose ; the *nsala*, which also enters into the composition of the protective pellets, rather aims at ensuring the success of the treatment undertaken by the new gobela ; as its fruits are plentiful (p. 16), so will the possessed come in great numbers to the doctor. The pellet is used for medical treatment, but the same drugs are also kept in the form of powder, in a piece of reed, or in the calabashes hanging from the forked pole. Every night the exorcised swallows a pinch, and throws another pinch on the fire in his hut. This will prevent enemies from entering, or make them prisoners. Before eating, he must also protect himself by chewing (phora) a little of the *manono*, a kind of antiseptic or anti-witchcraft root as big as a stick, which he always carries with him ; this is the special *luma* (I. p. 146) of the exorcised. Who knows if his food has not been poisoned by the malpractices of his rivals?

When undertaking a journey, he must always chew his *ndjao*, the juncus root which has often been mentioned and which "cleans roads;" this is "his shield," because the ndjao knows and tries (djinga) everything, and overcomes the hostility of man and things. It is the universal remedy against any hostile influence. So, after having chewed, he spits on his stick, rubs it and starts on



Protective amulets worn by exorcised.

his journey, saying: "The road is ripe (wupfile), let us go!" — The astragalus will be the principal charm that the possessed will have to wear, and will be tied round his neck between two little amulet bags or reeds.

The exorcised leads a life of constant fighting against evil spiritual influences. These protective rites are observed all through the year of convalescence.

Another rite, which is observed after the hondlola only, is

756 Another rite, which is observed after the hondlola only, is
783 the *haza*, viz., the monthly purification of the exorcist. He
821 fills his gobo calabash with a decoction made of the roots of the mphesu and ntjebe trees, drinks the whole, tickles his throat with a feather and vomits the medicine. "A tibasisa ndjen" — "he purifies his inside." This is done at every new moon. The connection between the possessed and the moon, which was first established by the fact that he had *thwaza*[1] as well as the moon, is maintained and intensified by this rite.

2) Propitiatory rites.

751 Besides these protective drugs, the exorcised wears a necklace
756 made of little pieces of a creeper called *mayambatju;* tied together with a munganazi string. See the second necklace in the
782 illustration. This is intended *to calm his gods*, and to scatter
158 them when they desire to come upon him with violence. This is indeed a great danger ; the exorcised is liable to nervous attacks of a dangerous nature, especially during the first few weeks following the exorcism. Perhaps his song is heard in the distance. Then suddenly he is seized with madness, and furiously assaults his neighbours with the small hatchet, or the assagay used in the dances. People run away ; or, on the contrary, they collect and begin to clap their hands, and make their infuriated companion dance and sing his own song. This may help to dispel the spirits, and calm him down. Sometimes, feeling uneasy, foreseeing a crisis, the poor man himself asks them to sing. But he may also be led, in his frenzy, to the bush, far away, unconscious, quite mad, tearing his clothes and his skin with the thorns. This often happened to Ñwashinhwana. Her husband then followed her, and, when the crisis was over, saw her fall down exhausted and brought her home ; there, having returned to her senses, she became very sad and wept bitterly. So, in order to avoid being tormented, the exorcised propitiate their spirits ; they worship them, in truth, and this gives birth to *a new religion* totally different from ancestrolatry, which has its rites and its duties.

756 As already pointed out, the exorcised has *his own altar* in his
778 hut. It is the forked branch, round which a circle of raised clay
782

[1] [See p. 495 -- Analyst]

is carefully maintained, and regularly smeared. He puts his 756
offerings there, principally tobacco. The snuff box is deposited 778
there. Does he want snuff? He enters the hut clapping his 782
hands, saluting his spirits, and, taking the box, throws a pinch of it at the foot of the branch, and says: "You! Ngoni, you see that I have not stolen! I first gave you your share." His wife will do the same. This is a "mhamba." — When ready to undertake a journey, he will come to the altar, sit on his ankles (a woman will kneel down) and take leave of the spirits. Holding his assagay, and his manono root, he says: "Good-bye, Ba-Ngoni! This hut is yours; keep it well! I go to such and such a place," and asks them to bless his journeying. On his return he will inform the spirits that he has succeeded in his trip. If he is sick, and the bones have revealed that the disease has been caused by the spirits, he again comes to the altar, and says: "You! Ba-Ngoni, why are you angry with me?" These acts of worship are not only performed at the altar. Wherever he may be, before drinking beer, the exorcised will pour out a little for his spirits. He will also throw a little food for them before eating. This will be *a daily worship*, much more constant and individual than the rites of ancestrolatry, a real communion with the spirits who, after having tormented the exorcist, have become his benefactors, giving him the power of healing others and thus of making money! There is much more religiosity in the exorcised than in ordinary people.

3) Development of subliminal faculties.

All these nervous crises, natural or provoked, the double 756
psychological existence which is fostered by them, the regular 158
participation in the exorcism of others, generally greatly injure 791
the mind of the exorcised; they have an extraordinary look, something wild about them, as if they were not in their right senses. They may be heard sometimes groaning, or emitting a sudden cry without any reason. This nervous instability may pass away and they may return to their normal state, but it may be that if they possess those strange mental powers, which modern psychology

756 calls subliminal, and which are more or less dormant in every
158 individual, these faculties will suddenly develop and the exorcised
791 will become a real magician. A faculty of *second sight* may reveal itself. Or he will become a *diviner*, either by ecstasy or by bone throwing (See Letter D). Or he will be a *wonder-worker*, a *prophet*, etc. Mholombo, who was an extraordinarily acute woman, had possessed all these gifts. She could discover wizards ; one night, crossing the Mabota country, she met one of the indunas of the chief accompanied by two other men, leading his own wife to the marsh, in order to eat her. They were acting in their capacity of wizards (See Letter C). Mholombo knew them at once and said to them : "No use eating her. Her meat is bitter sour." Terrified, the wizards fled, and confessed their guilt next morning! I have related in the *Bulletin de la Société Neuchâteloise de Géographie*, of 1910, how she received divinatory bones from her possessing spirit, prophesied the arrival of missionaries, showed up the man who had stolen £ 8 to the Mpfumo chief, was given the power to cross the Nkomati river by walking on the water, etc. By this same power Shidzabalane was able to leave his body, and to go and dwell in his own shadow (p. 362). Reference will again be made to the profession of magician when dealing with witchcraft.

4) The society of the exorcised.

756 If the power of an exorcised person becomes very great, if he succeeds in his cures, all his *mathwaza* join him, and he becomes the founder of a school. He starts new rites, discovers more powerful drugs, and so attracts patients to himself from all parts. We have seen that five or six schools existed northward of Lourenço Marques, in the Mabota and Nondwane countries. Mboza might have started a new one, as he had already cured two patients.

Each school of exorcists celebrates *an annual feast*, in winter, at the close of the harvest season, a feast to which all the disciples of the master are summoned. This is the rite of the *renewal of the drugs*, which we have already noticed as a medical practice in the

case of ordinary medicine-men. Mboza, who was the favourite of 756
Nwatshulu, was entrusted with the organisation of the feast. He stood at the main entrance of the village and welcomed the exorcised coming with their empty calabashes ; on their arrival, each of them gave two shillings, or half a crown, or a mat, or a fowl for the master ; this was their annual fee. Next day they all gathered fuel and burnt the drugs in broken pots, two or three mathwazana around each fire. Then they all inhaled the smoke through reeds, and absorbed the froth of the phuphumana and psekamafura decoction from the gobo basin. In the evening the old inhabitants began to grind the carbonised roots, and Mboza filled the calabashes of the disciples with the new protective medicines, after which dancing began, each of the exorcised singing his own song as well as the universally known refrains, such as : "Vuka Mungoni," etc. This was a great day of rejoicing!

As already pointed out, great rivalry exists between these schools. Professional hatred is carried to its extreme limits amongst magicians ; they not only *test* their colleagues, entering their huts during the night, but they steal each other's drugs. I have been told how Sindondondo overcame Khongosa. Sindondondo was a wonderful man, dwelling on the Western border of the Nkomati, at Shifukundju. He had disappeared for two or three years, and was regarded as dead, but he unexpectedly reappeared, saying that he had lived at the bottom of the sea during the whole time. There he had not eaten anything ; he was like a fish. The chiefs of that country, under the water, had given him his great drug called *ndzundzu*, and he returned home bringing with him a bunch of the precious roots. His people welcomed him and made a feast on his return. He then became a great magician, and exorcised a number of people. He and his one wife were the sole inhabitants of his village ; he was very particular as regards his food, eating only mealies of the preceding year, and drinking no beer. (The [262]
exorcised often observe special, individual alimentary taboos.) His forked pole was outside, on his hubo, not in the hut, and when he went on a journey, he ordered a neighbour to keep watch over his drugs and his fowls. Should some other man try to enter his

756 village, he would find it full of enormous snakes, surrounding the magic branch. Khongosa, who inhabited the district called Nkanyen, on the Eastern border of the Nkomati, wished to possess the marvellous *ndzundzu* drug ; so one night he crossed the river and tried to steal it. But Sindondondo was on his guard, his protective charms were working. They caught his rival, who was *shwela*, viz., imprisoned till after sunrise. Sindondondo behaved magnanimously : "Why, my friend (gobelakulori), did you not come in daylight to ask for my medicine? I would have given it to you! I could cover you with shame now, and show all the people what kind of an exorcist you are! But I have pity on you! Go home." And he released him. Mboza was fully persuaded of the truth of this story.

It may happen that a disciple emancipates himself and founds a new society of the exorcised ; this is, of course, very unpleasant for his master, as the new doctor will start a dangerous competition and refuse to pay any more fees to his initiator ; he will proclaim himself as his superior. So the old gobela goes to his altar and prays his Ngoni gods to make the drugs of his rival powerless. This prayer is heard, and the young gobela is obliged to ask for forgiveness, and to pay a fine of £ 1 in order to obtain success in his future cures. He may perhaps *succeed* his master, but only when the latter is dead.

5) Funeral rites of the exorcised.

766 The burial of the exorcised is attended by other mathwazana,
756 and by his disciples, if he was an exorcist, and special rites are observed for his funeral. The corpse is taboo. It must be covered with ochre. The grave is smeared with clay, and the body is not laid down on its side, but is placed in a sitting position, its hand holding the assagay, or hatchet, which the deceased used when dancing and singing the songs of exorcism. A bunch of *shibowa*, a Urticaria which grows in water, is placed on his head : "*This is to cool him*, because his poor head has been so tired, it has suffered so much from anguish, pain, excitement!" The grass, being taken from the water, also appears *to cool the spirits*, who will

thus remain in the grave, and not trouble other people. Moreover 766
a little hut is built on the grave itself, as was the case for Sokis 756
(I. p. 141). with the same intention, to protect the exorcised against heat and fatigue. If the deceased was not only a disciple but a master, his drugs will be stored in the hut till the adjudication of the inheritance. The most skilful of his followers, the one who best knows the use of these charms, will dance on the grave, all his companions clapping their hands to encourage him, and, when the mourning is ended, he will "raise the drugs," burning them as is done at the annual feast, and will eventually succeed his master.

6) Conclusion on Possession.

Cases of possession, such as those which occur amongst the Thongas, 158
are met with in a great many other countries. A Swiss missionary, the 753
Rev. H. Rusillon, working in the Paris Mission in Madagascar, has drawn attention to practices very similar to these, called the Tromba, amongst Hovas. It is impossible not to note the striking resemblance between the Thonga disease and that of the demoniacs of the New Testament. On hearing the story of the madman in Gadara, whose spirit called itself Legion, the Natives at once identify the phenomenon, and say: "These demoniacs had psikwembu."

These psychological phenomena are certainly of a morbid character. The fact that they generally appear in an epidemic form is significant. It has been noticed that similar epidemics have broken out in populations which have been weakened by the sufferings of a long war, when the nervous resistance had been reduced by privations. May not the progress of Alcoholism, together with the disintegration of the old social order caused by the influence of European civilisation, account for the spread of the disease amongst the Ba-Ronga in the last fifty years?

Whilst not pretending to analyse these phenomena scientifically and fully, I will here add two observations:

1) In the Jewish conception, phenomena of possession were due to *evil spirits*, devilish agencies, which tormented poor humanity, and were cured by the power of the real and true God. Dualism prevailed in their religious conceptions. This idea of dualism is altogether absent from the Thonga belief. South African Bantus have not yet reached that stage of religion where the antagonistic ideas of right and wrong are

158 transported into the realm of divinity, thus giving rise to the true gods
753 and the devils. Possessing spirits are not worse than ancestor-gods. They all are non-moral. They can bless and curse, and their moral character is not taken into account at all.

2) The progress of modern psychology gives an explanation of many of these phenomena. The disease of the personality which manifests itself in the presence of a double psychological consciousness is well-known ; the hypnotic suggestion which the tambourine players unconsciously exert on their victims, sufficiently explains the origin of the disease, and the kind of life led by the exorcised is well calculated to develop their mediumistic faculties. So many of the so-called miracles of possession are easily accounted for. It would however be going too far to exclude, a priori, any possibility of external spiritual influences in
[797] those phenomena. There is one very striking fact which is a source of great wonder to the Natives. These patients, as soon as they put themselves under Christian influence, are healed at once and for ever. We have, amongst our converts, exorcists who had acquired great fame, and who recount, with glowing eyes, how they have been delivered from their terrible anguish by their new faith. For, whatever success they may have obtained in their career of exorcists, their condition was a disease, a painful disease, and they are extremely glad to have been delivered from it. This fact must certainly be remembered when trying to arrive at an explanation of possession.

C. WITCHCRAFT.

789 I have pointed out, in an article published in the Report of
754 the S. A. A. A. S., of 1906, how little comprehension most White people have of this important but difficult subject. A confusion is almost always made between the *witches* and the *witch-doctors*. The French word *sorcier* and the English term *sorcerer*, indiscriminately used for those who cast spells and for magicians, lead to the same misconception. In order to avoid errors it is, I think, imperative first of all clearly to distinguish between *Black Magic* and *White Magic*. The adjectives black and white are not employed in this connection amongst South African Natives, but Thongas certainly do make the distinction and possess different terms for each. Black magic is called *Buloyi* ; it consists of the

criminal magical practices by which wizards and witches bewitch 789
innocent folk. Buloyi is a crime. White Magic is called *Bungoma*, 754
and means the magical operations of those who combat evil influences and use their powers for the benefit, and not for the ruin, of their countrymen. The *mungoma* (magician) is consequently the great enemy of the *noyi* (caster of spells). It may be that the power of both is at bottom of the same nature. But the use they make of it is entirely opposed, the one exerting it in the interests of Society, the other against it. We shall therefore have to deal with these two categories of persons in two separate paragraphs.

I. *Black Magic (Buloyi)*.

Buloyi, an abstract noun of the bu-ma class, as well as *noyi* [192]
(pl. *baloyi*), is derived from the verb *ku loya* (Ro.), *lowa* (Dj.), to bewitch. This word is very interesting. It seems to have been known already in the Ur-Bantu (Comp. Meinhof, *Grundriss*, p. 173) and exists in Swaheli, Herero, Xosa, Sutho, Thonga, etc. Strange to say, the stem is absent in Zulu, where it is replaced by *thakata*. In Thonga its most common meaning is to bewitch. But the word is also applied to the act of a man who marries his near cousin (I. p. 258). Moreover Nkolele, describing to me the sacrifice in the sacred wood, and speaking of the *ntukulu* who prepares to steal the offering, said : "Here is the *noyi*, ready to come and steal the beer..." I also heard the crocodile stone, used by the chief as a charm to protect his life, called *buloyi bya hosi*, the magical power of the chief (I. p. 393) ; these instances show that the word loya is sometimes, though rarely, used in a more general sense. Its technical meaning, however, is and remains : to injure or kill by enchantment. Who are these baloyi, and what crime do they perpetrate?

1) The Baloyi.

The *baloyi*, or people possessing the evil eye, are numerous 754
in each tribe. Their power is hereditary, but, strange to say, it is transmitted by the mother and not by the father. Therefore

754 should a polygamist have three wives, one of whom is a noyi, all the children he will have by that "noyi" wife will be baloyi, and his other children will not be so. This dreadful power is sucked in at their mother's breast when they are still infants, but it must be strengthened by special medicines in order to be really efficient. The "noyi" mother chooses one of her sons to whom she does not give these drugs, and he will be free from buloyi. She does this in order that, if one of her offspring should later on be accused of having killed by witchcraft and be called to pass through the ordeal (of which we shall speak hereafter), the immune child may be sent in his place to undergo the trial. The chief will consent to this substitution, as it is well known that all the sons of a "noyi" woman are equally baloyi. But the intoxicating medicine of the ordeal will have no effect on the substitute, and therefore the true noyi will escape!

These baloyi know each other. They form a kind of *secret society* within the tribe, and they assemble during the night — in their spiritual bodies — to eat human flesh in the desert. There they form a true "hubo," that is, a meeting for discussion. They discuss what they will do to injure property or destroy life. They sometimes fight. If one of them is defeated in the discussion, suggesting, for instance, that there should be no mealies this year, a proposal which is not accepted by the others, they condemn him to pay a fine, and this fine will consist of a human body, which he will have to provide, after having killed it by witchcraft. It may be that he will choose his own child to bring to the horrible banquet! This shows that there are more and less powerful baloyi, and they are constantly trying to overcome each other in finding out more efficient charms.

As regards the other members of the tribe who are not witches, or wizards, they are regarded by them as stupid beings who deserve no better fate than to be eaten wholesale by the clever baloyi! These man-eaters are the truly intelligent, the superior, the wise ones! (Ba tlharihile). They are also called for that reason "bahanyi" — "those who live," no doubt because they possess a kind of superior life. They are, however, greatly feared by the others, and when a boy wishes to marry, the main thing to

consider in the choice of his wife is that she should not belong to a 754
family of witches. The accusation: "You are a noyi"[1] is the [578]
gravest insult which one man can utter to another (1).

The activity of the baloyi is almost entirely nocturnal. For this reason they are sometimes called by the euphemism: "ba busiku" — "the men of night." In fact, they possess the faculty of getting out of themselves at night time; they have large wings, and, after having left their huts by the crown of grass which covers the top, or by the closed door, they fly through the air and betake themselves to their horrible work.

As they are active in the darkness of night a connection is [825]
established between them and nocturnal birds, especially *owls* (kuhunu). When the sinister cry of this bird is heard, men take a torch upon which they have spit out of their mouths a little ndjao powder, and chase away the creature. Baloyi are also identified with the little moving lights sometimes seen in the marshes, the will-o'-the-wisps, the fires of the night (mindjilo ya busiku), the belief being that these fires are either the baloyi themselves, or that they are sent by the baloyi as a threat (2). We have seen (p. 720) that the wizards who ride on hippopotami during the night are credited with the power of producing flames similar to lamps.

Two questions here arise. Does the Native mind imagine that 000

(1) Thongas are extremely sensitive in regard to a possible suspicion that they are baloyi. When I proposed to my pupils in the Shiluvane Institution that they should move up for the bad season to the sanatorium which we had set up in the mountains, in order to avoid the dangers of fever in the Low Country, not wishing to abandon their comfortable accomodation at the station, they made great difficulties. I therefore said to them: "But if your devoted teacher, Miss So and So, catches the fever, on account of the heat and moisture of the malarial climate, will you not be responsible for whatever may happen?" This remark caused quite a commotion amongst the pupils. "What?" they said. "We are then baloyi! We have the power of killing people by witchcraft!"

(2) One of my informants says: "We are walking peacefully along the path at night-time, chatting pleasantly with our companions. Suddenly a will-o'-the-wisp appears. We at once stop on seeing this terrible object, for one of us must be the culprit. It cannot arise from any other cause. We organise a meeting for confession (rerela nyiwa, see below), and thus rebuke the noyi who is amongst us. Sometimes people who see the fires of the night trample on the ground, take a pinch of earth between their fingers and put it to their mouths (khabuta)." (This may be a kind of "mhamba" similar to that described on page 391, aimed at obtaining protection against the "enemies of the earth.")

[1] [literally "caster of spells" -- see pp. 504 ff., cat. 116 - Analyst]

754 Two questions here arise. Does the Native mind imagine that
828 a true unsheathing of the personality takes place when the baloyi go on their nocturnal expedition, or that they leave the hut themselves, in their entirety, in their ordinary persons? As far as I could make out, the Sutho theory is different from the Thonga. The Ba-Sutho say that the wizard goes altogether, soul and body. Nothing remains on the mat when he has departed for his nocturnal ride! He casts spells over the other inhabitants of the hut, and they sleep so heavily that they notice nothing. The Thongas tell a different story. According to them, the noyi is but a part of the personality. When he flies away, his "ntjhuti," his shadow, remains behind, lying on the mat. But it is not the true body that remains. It appears as such only to the foolish non-initiated. In reality what remains is a *wild beast*, with which the noyi has chosen to identify himself. This fact was disclosed to me by the following striking confession of S. Gana, a very intelligent Nkuna. "Suppose," he said, "my father is a noyi and I am not. I wish to marry a certain girl whom I love. My father knows that she is a noyi, because they all know each other, and he tells me : 'Don't do that! She is *clever* ; you will repent!' However, I persist in my idea. He urges me to abandon the plan, and threatens me with great misfortune. I marry her. One night, my father enters my hut and awakens me. He says to me : 'What did I tell you! Look! Your wife has gone!' I look at her place and find her sleeping calmly — 'No. Here she is.' — 'That is not she! She is away! Take this assagai and stab her. — 'No, father, I dare not.' — 'Do as I say!' And he puts the assagai into my hand and makes me strike her violently in her leg. A cry, the cry of a wild beast, is heard, and a hyena appears in the place of my wife, a hyena which deposits its faeces in its fear, and escapes from the hut, howling. My father gives me some powder to swallow so that I shall be able to recognise the baloyi and their ways and habits. He leaves me — trembling greatly from fear — and goes home. When the sun is about to rise, I hear a noise like that of the wind in the branches, and suddenly something falls down from the top of the hut beside me. It is my wife. She lies sleeping, but her leg shows a wound, the wound that had been made in the hyena!"

From this dramatic story it must be inferred that, according to the idea of the Ba-Thonga, there is a true unsheathing of the personality when the noyi goes about its nightly work. 754 828

A second question arises, which is this. As the baloyi lead a double existence, a day-light existence in which they are merely men, and a nightly existence, in which they perform their work as witches, are they aware, during the day, of what they have done during the night? In other words, are they conscious of their doings as witches? The question is difficult to answer, as there seems to be no clear idea on this point in the Native mind. The old, genuine view is that a noyi *does not know what he is doing* ; he is not even aware that he is a noyi until he has been revealed as such by the methods which will be explained later. Therefore he is unconscious. His nightly activity is unknown to him when he returns to his ordinary daily life. For instance, my informants assure me that a man may have sent a crocodile to kill another, during his noyi existence, but that he will be the first to show sympathy to the poor sufferer, and to deplore this sad accident. And he will be amazed when the diviner points him out as having caused the death by his buloyi, of which he was in entire ignorance. But those baloyi who have long practised their horrible tricks would seem to be aware and even proud of their doings, and therefore more or less conscious of their double life. Some of them go even further ; they renounce their evil deeds and become magicians, using the knowledge they have acquired to baffle the enchantments of other baloyi, as we shall see.

But let us hear what the dreadful acts are which they commit in their baloyi form.

2) The Crimes of the Baloyi.

(a) The baloyi are in the first place *thieves*. This is the least criminal aspect of their activity. They steal mostly mealies or the products of the fields. They empty the ground-nuts of their contents (p. 12). The magicians have a kind of medicine with which they plaster their mealie cobs in the gardens, and the [illegible]yi, when he wants to tear them from the stalk, remains a prisoner 754

754 on the spot, unable to withdraw his hand from the cob! But, what is even more curious, the baloyi of one country assemble and form an army and go to fight with the baloyi of another, in order to deprive them of their mealies and carry them away to their own fields. For instance, in 1900, there was a great war between the baloyi of Mpfumu, near Lourenço Marques, and those of the peninsula of Inyack, at the entrance of Delagoa Bay. That year the Kafir beans were plentiful at Mpfumu, and this was explained by the fact that the Mpfumu baloyi had won the victory over their Inyack enemies. They owed their success to the following trick. They gathered a large number of seeds of the little cucumber, called nkakana, and made with them a kind of enormous ladder, which was suspended midway between sky and sea ; upon it they crossed the 20 or 30 miles of the bay of Delagoa and stole all the Kafir beans of Inyack (1). If a tempest has uprooted trees and broken branches, people are sure to say that the "army (yimpi) of the baloyi" has passed in the shape of a terrific storm during the night.

754 *b)* But the great crime of the baloyi is that of *killing*. They
789 are murderers, and all the more to be feared as they act unconsciously, without being seen or known. Two motives inspire their crimes — hatred and jealousy. If one of them has been offended, he is sure to revenge himself by putting his enemy to death. During the night he escapes from his hut (as we have seen above), opens his wings and flies directly to the dwelling of the man he hates. But the habitation of this man is well protected ; all round it there is a spiritual fence made up of charms, various

(1) On one of these expeditions to the Inyak Islands the baloyi of the Movumbi district wished to buy food from their colleagues beyond the Bay. A certain woman, who was a great noyi, took her daughter-in-law with her, but the latter was not a noyi. However she was led through the air, along the nkakana ladder, to the village of Magilankinsin, a headman of Inyak. This man refused to accept her, as she was ignorant of the buloyi art, and sent her back home. In the meantime the husband, Midlalen, noticed that his wife was not sleeping in the hut. When she reappeared in the morning he asked her : "Where have you been ?" — "To Inyaka." — "Indeed !" — "Yes ! I saw everything there." — "How did you go ?" — "I do not know." — "How did you return ?" — "I do not know." — "Have you seen Magilankinsin ?" — "Yes !" The husband suggested that his mother had played this trick by means of her buloyi and chased her away from his village. Mboza told the story as absolutely authentic, and added "these events occurred some ten years ago."

medicines which close the kraal against any invasion of witches. 754
What must he do in order to perpetrate his crime? He has first 789
made an agreement with another noyi residing in that village, who has made an opening in this spiritual fence, similar to one of the small holes in the material one! He then gets into the kraal, tries to penetrate into the hut by the door, finds it closed, beats on it and, being unable to enter that way, flies to the crown of the hut and descends through it into the abode of the enemy, calmly sleeping on his mat. Then he proceeds to the bewitching operation, and the poor bewitched man is condemned to die! "O loyiwile," — "he has been bewitched ;" "ku sa ntjhuti ntsena," — "only his shadow remains." They also say that only the "ntjhumbu," the corpse, has been left, his true self having been stolen and eaten. He is sometimes called *ntungulu*, a word used to designate a wasp whose nest has been destroyed, and which flies about disconcerted, not knowing where to go, unable to sting, because it has no home... The heart of the bewitched has been stolen and put somewhere in a hole or a cavern (mhakwen). "Ba mu pepulile," they have ravished him, (like a feather taken away by the wind). He will get up in the morning, and die some days later, but what will die will be only his shadow. He himself was killed during that frightful night. He is already eaten! Or he will become mad (lihlanyi) and people will say : "The living have had the better of him" — "Ba mu kotile bahanyi." Here we find again, in an even more mysterious form, the idea of the duality of the human personality. How it is possible for a man who has still some days or months to live to be regarded as already entirely eaten up, I do not pretend to explain. Such is however the Native idea. One of my informants tried to overcome the difficulty by saying that what the noyi takes with him to eat is the inside, the bowels ; the outward frame alone remains, and the man will soon die! Most of the Natives, when the absurdity of the idea is pointed out to them, laugh and say nothing.

In order to attain his criminal ends, the noyi may resort to 754
various means ; he may point at his enemy *with the index finger*, which is a common method of bewitching in many nations. If, later on, you are overtaken by misfortune, you will remember

754 that so and so has "shown you with the finger" (komba hi litiho), and will suspect him of having cast a spell over you. (Comp. I. p. 250.) Or he may obtain a hold on you by *taking your own blood*, if this has by chance been shed on the ground, and using it as a means of bewitching you, (a ku loyela ha yone). Hence the precaution universally taken of covering one's blood with earth, should any have dripped from a wound (p. 360). But the five chief methods which a noyi has at his disposal are the following : ruma, mitisa, matshelwa, ntshutshu and mpfulo.

The *ruma* (to send) consists in sending either a crocodile, or a lion, or more often a snake, to the place where the enemy is about to pass. He will be killed or wounded. We may recall the story of Gebuza, whose nose was torn off by a hyena ; this is a typical case of ruma. In Maputju, the heathen accused the converts of bewitching them by means of the owls which took shelter under the roof of the chapel! In Khosen also the Christians were charged with having sent a crocodile from Nkomati River into the Sokotiba lake to kill those who refused to be converted to Christianity! If the noyi does not wish to kill, he may only send antelopes to destroy the fields and eat the sweet potatoes. Even in the Christian village of Shiluvane, during the days when the "duykers" are plentiful, and become a nuisance, you may hear some one say : "*They* are sending us their duikers!" Who are *they*? A mystery! *They* are the baloyi! But do not call them by their name!

The *mitisa* (ku *mita*, to swallow, ku *mitisa*, to make somebody swallow) is the only one of these five methods of bewitching used during the day. It consists in giving to a visitor something to eat or drink into which certain drugs have been introduced. The mealie pap or the beer look just as usual, but, owing to the enchantments of buloyi, as soon as you have swallowed them, they are transformed, in your throat, into any kind of noxious creature, which threatens to suffocate you, and gives rise to a disease and perhaps produces death! You may thus have swallowed a snake, a beetle of the Copris genus, one of those strange dung-eaters, a big fly, or certain kinds of flesh of animals. The great effort of the magician to whom you will apply for treatment will be to remove

these foreign bodies, and, when you vomit, he will show you with 754
triumph a bit of bone, a tooth, the famous beetle, or other objects which he himself had cleverly placed there beforehand (p. 457). There is a medicine which Natives are fond of having inoculated into their tongues, and which has the wonderful property of forcing the bewitched food to reveal its true character when you eat it. If you have been treated with this, you will hear the cracking of the elytra of the beetle, and at once be able to spit out of your mouth the death-containing food!

The *matshelwa* (ku tshela, to throw) are not only these foreign bodies which the noyi introduces into you by means of poisoned food, but may be *tingati* (blood) poured on you during the night in such quantity that the floor of the hut will be found quite wet in the morning (1).

The *ntchutchu* (ku tchutcha, to inspire) is another way of getting rid of an enemy. It is a *bewitching of the will* by which the noyi inspires his enemy with the idea of leaving the country. Without any motive, the poor bewitched person prepares to go to Johannesburg, or anywhere else. There he will become the prey of other baloyi, who will kill him. When a boy dies in the mines, as hundreds of them do, his parents think : — "He has been killed by such and such a disease." But the author of his death is not in Johannesburg, he is here at home ; it is the noyi who hated him and made him go by "ntchutchu."

The *mpfulo* is still worse. This word, which comes from the verb ku pfula, to open, designates the mysterious power which the baloyi possess of *opening* all kinds of things. One of them, a Nkuna, named Ñwayekeyeke, had charms to open *the oxen kraals* ;

(1) The following story fittingly illustrates this kind of "buloyi," An evangelist of the Manyisa region, named Abel M. had taken into his house his wife's daughter. He was himself without children. The girl fell on the threshold of the hut and injured her leg. Her parents took her home again, but found the leg very much emaciated, and consulted the bones. The diviner told them that Abel had "loya" his niece through sheer jealousy because he had no children ; he had "eaten the girl's leg," but, being a hunter, he had killed an antelope and introduced the femur of the animal into the leg in place of the bone ; the true bone was however still somewhere in Abel's hut and the magician offered to go to the evangelist's village, and boasted that he would be able to find it. Fearing a scandal, Abel entreated his wife's parents not to allow this. They said : "Then take the girl back into your home and treat her." He did so, and the girl eventually recovered.

754 during the night, he would come into a village holding a hyena tail daubed over with peculiar medicines, and would throw all the inhabitants into a deep sleep. Then, waving the tail, he would open the kraal and call the cattle out. Flying with the rapidity of the wind, he would then be followed by the whole herd which he had bewitched. When tired, he would jump on to a tree and rest for a while, fearing lest the oxen should run over him and tread him down, they being irresistibly attracted by the tail. Should anyone see him on his way, he would say : "Take an ox, I give it to you," until he reached his village and housed the stolen oxen in his own kraal. But there are other kinds of *mpfulo* : the power of *opening the hut*, removing the husband sleeping there without waking him, and committing adultery with his wife. However the great *mpfulo* consists in *opening a man*. The following story will show how this criminal act is accomplished. Some fifty years ago, a young man called Nkokana, the uncle of my informant, astonished the whole tribe by his marvellous skill in dancing like a chameleon. The circumcision school was just over, and on the last day of it all the boys had to enter solemnly the kraal of the chief, performing the ceremony which has been described I. p. 93, and which is called ku nenga. One of the men of the tribe, who was a noyi, was struck by the perfect performance of Nkokana, and, filled with jealousy, resolved to bewitch him. As the boys were going home that same day, happy to have reached the end of all their trials, they had to cross a thick wood ; suddenly a voice was heard calling : "Nkokana!" The boy said : "Yes, I am coming," and went to the place from which the voice came. But he found nobody. Instead of going back to his companions, who were waiting for him, he ran all through the bush, as if possessed by a kind of madness, always following the voice, but with no success. The night passed. He came back home entirely worn out, a mere shadow of himself, and died some days later. He had been "opened up" by the witch. When this sort of bewitching takes place it is probable that the noyi wishes to enslave his victim, and make him work for him.

c) This leads us to the last of the crimes of the baloyi. Their object may not be to kill their victims, but *to use them as their*

servants, for ploughing their fields, cutting their wood, and so on. 754
One day the footprints of a leopard were seen in a mealie garden near the Shiluvane station. People were convinced that this was nothing but a bewitched person, sent there during the night in the form of an animal (1) to serve the owner of the field ; it is said that the baloyi, when assembled in their hubo, choose those whom they like amongst the victims they have overcome by the ntshutshu, by their magical inspiration, and change them into leopards, hyenas and snakes, compelling them either to till the fields, or to uproot mealies in the gardens of others, and to "lead" (byisa) the stems and plant them in the gardens of baloyi. A Nkuna of Thabina once claimed to have witnessed such a case of nocturnal theft, — and he was expelled from the country because, as people said, he could not know of such deeds if he were not himself a noyi. Of late years, since the word *shipoko* has been adopted by the Rongas (see p. 488, note 1) it is believed that these nocturnal servants of the baloyi are the ghosts of dead people and that they resemble little children. The baloyi hide them in the forests during the day and take them during the night to till their fields. As we shall see, these baby workers bewitched by the wizards were much spoken of during the strange Murimi revival which I shall describe later on. (See also the song of the Christian girl who ridicules the deceitful witch (p. 299) and compare with App. V.)

To be fair towards the wizards I must add that there are also some *good baloyi*, viz., baloyi who use their power to bless. They can do this when sent by the ancestor-spirits to increase the produce of the fields, if the prayer of the luma day has been heard by the gods (I. p. 396). In this case the wizards are said to have *loyela masimu*, bewitched the fields to make them produce more (loyela, applicative derivative of loya). This would seem to show

(1) The connection established between animals and baloyi is pushed even further in Maputju. My colleague, the late Rev. W. Audéoud, heard of baloyi who really look on themselves as the possessors of certain beasts. One of them owned a wild boar. A hunter killed the son of this wild boar and the noyi bewitched him, as he considered that he had a vested right of property in the son as well as in the father ! We have seen, when dealing with hunting rites, that baloyi domesticate the hippopotami of the Komati river and use them as mounts (p. 72-74).

754 that baloyi are more or less subject to the ancestral gods. It may happen also that if somebody shows kindness to a noyi, this noyi will take him under his protection, and prevent his comrades from doing harm to his friend. But these are rare occurrences, and the baloyi are, and remain, criminals in the view of the Thongas.

Stealing, killing, enslaving are the principal crimes of these maleficent beings. But they can also cause any other species of harm to their infortunate victims. I have told the story of a young man who complained to me of having been deprived by the tricks of a noyi aunt of the power of having sexual intercourse with his wife; she was pregnant and the witch wished to act on the offspring in such a way as to change it into a snake, a hare, a quail, or a duiker, so that the mother should die on the day of the birth. (I. p. 187.)

II. *White Magic and Magicians.*

1) Distinction between Magicians and Wizards.

754 As previously stated, the power which the magicians claim to
791 possess is perhaps not essentially different from that of the baloyi.
756 They even sometimes boast that they are themselves baloyi, baloyi more powerful than the ordinary witches, and that they are thus able to discover them and baffle all their tricks. So Mathuza, one of the most celebrated Ronga witch-doctors, used to say: "I am the great Noyi! I am the one who kills. I can fly. So I know them all and I disclose them." But magicians differ absolutely from wizards in four ways, at least:

1) Their activity is not secret, nocturnal and more or less unconscious. They act openly, in the light, during the day, and do not hide their magical powers; on the contrary, they make a show of them, covering themselves with any number of charms; most of them wear "tingoya" and smear themselves with ochre (p. 100).

2) They all undergo a preparation, or pass through an initiation, differing according to the different kinds of magic they practise.

So they possess, so to speak, letters patent, either because they have been received into the society of their fellow-magicians (as is the case with medicine-men, exorcists, and throwers of bones), or because they have found new and powerful drugs during a sojourn, real or pretended, in the sea, the desert, or elsewhere. 754 791 756

3) Whilst baloyi are said to use *tingati* (blood) poisons, the magicians employ *miri*, i. e., medicinal herbs or objects, drugs which, however, are all thought to possess special powers. I do not say "supernatural" powers, as the notion conveyed by this word cannot exist in any definite form amongst people who have hardly a true conception of Nature. The stronger the miri, the stronger the magician. — In addition to their drugs, they certainly believe themselves endowed with personal power due to the development of their faculties of second sight, etc., which they also attribute to the spirits (ancestor-gods) from whom they have inherited their drugs.

4) The last point of difference but by no means the least important, is this: magicians are the supporters and upholders of the social order, and not criminals attempting to destroy it. They foretell the future, cure diseases, prevent misfortune of all kinds, fight against baloyi, and are regularly consulted by the Native Court for the detection of wizards.

Between the unconscious baloyi whose crimes are purely imaginary and the bangoma who use their magical powers for the benefit of those who have recourse to them, there certainly exists another category, i. e. wicked individuals who kill their fellow-men by means of real poisons or by criminal practices and do this quite consciously, either to avenge themselves on their enemies or to help others to get rid of those whom they hate. Such acts may be called ku loya, by an extended use of the term; but there is another word to designate these crimes, the word *ku dambika*, which we already met with when speaking of the jilted lover who wishes to play an evil trick on the girl who despised him (I. p. 101). In the neighbourhood of Rikatla, there was a man who claimed to be a noyi of this type, and to have at the same time the power of "treating" (daha) buloyi. He was a Mu-Sutho, a stranger. Wishing to kill an enemy, a Ronga of the country asked his help; 754 791

754 the magician bade him first bring a sheep ; this he slew, took part
791 of its fat, and smeared with it and with some very black drugs a root of the ntjhopfa tree (I. p. 58). This fat and these drugs were to give to the root the power of "taking away" the heart of the enemy ; the magician buried it in the road and assured his client that when the root was rotten his enemy would be dead. This root was discovered later on, owing to a revelation given by the bones, and the man who had consulted the magician had to pay a fine of £ 1. No doubt such conscious acts of witchcraft exist, but this is not the typical loya.

2) Various categories of magicians.

756 Some magicians specialise in one division of the immense domain
791 of magic, but others claim to practise the magic arts in all their diversity.

1) Those whose activity bears a less magical character. These are the *ñanga* (yin-tin), or *ba-muri*, whom we met with when dealing with the medical art (Compare Chapter I. the Medicine-men).

2) Those who have passed through the ceremony of exorcism and have become exorcists. They are called *gobela*, and the character of their initiation has been sufficiently explained in Chapter II.

3) Those called *mungoma*, magicians proper, who have divinatory powers and can perform wonders, fight the baloyi, cause rain to fall, influence Heaven, etc., even if there has been no exorcism episode in their previous career.

4) Those whose principal qualification is the power to detect baloyi, and who are called for that reason *shinusa*, "smellers-out."

5) The bone-throwers *(ba-bula)*, whom we shall describe in Chapter IV.

The priests, *ba ku hahla*, do not enter into any of these categories, their specific activity being of a totally different character ; they have recourse to Religion and not to Magic.

3) Some Thonga Magicians.

On calling to mind the various magicians with whom I came in contact, I observe that very few limited themselves to the medical art alone ; *Sam Ngwetsa* and *Kokolo* alone did this. The aim of the magician is to combine as many branches of the business as possible. — *Mankhelu*, with his forked branch, was a medicine-man of the highest rank, owing to his calabashes containing a mixture of all the most powerful drugs, salted with Rivimbi's sea charms. He was a magician, being a rain-maker, a detector of baloyi, and, in particular, a successful bone-thrower, but he seemed to be entirely ignorant of the art of exorcism. — *Makasana*, on the contrary, a Thonga from the Leydenburg district, had acquired his power after passing through the ordeal of exorcism and had obtained the drugs of his exorcist. This had made him into a regular *mungoma*. Round his neck he wore three necklaces of half transparent yellow beads, between which were small square lizard-skin bags, timfisa, containing : 1) drugs against snake bites ; 2) charms against the baloyi ; 3) the *maringo ya tilo*, the charms of Heaven. Birds' claws and a crocodile's tooth also hung round his neck ; his hair was pulled out, the *tingoya* radiating in all directions, and in the very middle, on the top of his head, he wore a little chain, in the form of a narrow turban, to which a brass cartridge was fixed ; this was his snuff box, resting comfortably on his thick thatch! Possessing all these drugs Makasana was at the same time exorcist, witch-doctor, medicine-man, and magician of Heaven. The last qualification was perhaps his principal one ; he told me that he had to fight against his colleagues, who wished to test him by means of their own charms. — "At noon," he said, "when the sky is quite clear, I see a little cloud appearing over my head, quite black. The lightning bird is in it, and wants to kill me, having been sent by one of my enemies. Then I pour a little of the medicine of Heaven into the palm of my hand ; when I see the bird moving its wings and ready to rush down upon me, I blow a little of my drug towards the cloud and the bird will come and fall down powerless quite close to me. Then I take it, and cut

756 it in half. I take a little of the heart, and of the eyes, I crush the
791 bones, I make a powder with all these ingredients, and this is my great medicine. With one of the bones I make a flute ; I put a little powder into it, and, when a thunderstorm breaks, I go outside without danger and conjure the lightning by playing on my flute, etc." (p. 314).

Mathuza, the magician of Nondwane to whom I have just alluded, was essentially a detector of baloyi. — So was also *Ñwashihandjime*, the great Nkuna magician, a splendid creature, tall, his eyes beaming with a kind of supernatural light. I once saw him, after having performed the "smelling out" rite, point out a woman with the tail he always carried with him, an enormous tail fixed on a handle richly decorated with beads and copper wire.
[825] This tail, which is one of the most common attributes of the mungoma, is generally *a gnu tail*. It is said that when a mother gnu has dropped her offspring, she beats it (phyita) with her tail and thus gives the new-born gnu the necessary strength to walk and follow its mother. Hence the peculiar magic use of the gnu tail. In its very middle are hidden certain drugs which possess a revelatory virtue ; the magician puts his nose right amongst the hair before pronouncing his sentence and beating (phyita) the noyi. Ñwashihandjime is said to have disappeared from his village for months, and to have come back from the desert emaciated but full of new magical powers. I once tried to draw his attention to things more spiritual than his art and his drugs. He gazed at me with wild eyes, as if unable to follow my demonstration ; suddenly he emitted a cry very similar to a hiccough and turned his back.
[827] (Hiccoughing is a well-known symptom, showing either that one has been bewitched by "mitisa," or that one possesses magical power).

At the station of Shiluvane I once made an inventory of the charms of another Nkuna magician. In his hair the man wore a brass bracelet and some rings, and a necklace with a sixpence attached, all these objects having been inherited from his father, who was himself a mungoma ; moreover he hung round his neck a little piece of the skin of a goat, which had been sacrificed after the death of his father ; in this way he tried to acquire and keep

the power of his initiator and of his god. Two panther's claws 756
were fixed on his head, pointing towards each other, as if they 791
wished to catch something ; this helped him to go and seize (to ba) the wizard in the *vumisa* rite, which I shall now describe. Two empty goats' bladders swung amidst his crop of tingoya as he walked, an unmistakable sign that he had cured patients and received goats as a reward. The noise they made in hitting against each other "called other goats to come to him." From his neck hung two crocodile's teeth, a piece of buffalo's horn, "psiboho psa nga" — "that which ties me, viz., makes me firm ;" another horn which had been broken by a bullet and in which he kept the *nulu* medicine (p. 496), the root of a white sea-weed, used to produce the foam of the *gobo* rite in the exorcism, and a goat's horn full of a powder which cures the "burwa" disease. The burwa is the strong Westerly wind in Shiluvane (I. p. 18) which the baloyi are said to use for bewitching through the ears. He rubbed the patient with the horn and placed it near one ear, then near the other, and could cure the bewitched in that way. Another drug, called "rishwala," helped him to acquire many wives, and to have many children ; a cock's spur was also worn in order to give him "courage and weight." This mungoma, who called at Shiluvane on the 28th of June 1899, sold me a "kaross" (a rug) made of skins of rock rabbits, the work of the Ba-Pedi, worth £ 6. He had earned it by the practice of his art.

I here give the picture of a true Ronga *gobela*, from Tembe, who once passed through Rikatla with two assistants ; he was on a tour to exorcise the possessed of the land. He had a terrifying appearance with all his military and magical attire, his big snake skins, and his gnu tail ; he hardly condescended to pronounce a word, maintaining all the time a most dignified demeanour. He was, before all else, an exorcist.

These few descriptions are sufficient to illustrate the composite character of the magicians. There is no end to their charms and their tricks, but they are certainly in earnest as regards the practice of their art, and are convinced that they are very useful and powerful personages.

III. *The Method of dealing with Wizards.*

754 All the power of the magicians is resorted to in order to check
756 the enchantments of the baloyi. Their drugs are used with two
791 objects, — protection and cure, the cure consisting mainly in the disclosure of the wizard.

1) Protective methods.

789 The village, as we have seen, (I. p. 311) is well protected with
754 *anti-baloyi drugs*. The fence itself, the main entrance and the threshold of the headman's hut, have been magically treated when first built. But the magician, when he thinks it necessary, "revives" the drugs by burning his powder in a little fire on the road which enters the village. This protects the main entrance, and he does the same at the threshold of the headman's hut. The smoke will keep the wizards away. Stones, daubed with the powder, are placed in all directions to close the openings.

"These medicines act wonderfully," says Mankhelu. "Should a *noyi* succeed in entering the hut, the power of the smoke will be such that he will at once be revealed. The *noyi* will suddenly be seen there without any clothing, apparently dreaming, seeing nothing, knowing nothing. If it is a woman, I shall call her husband and show him his wife... 'What are you doing here?' he will say to her. She will not utter a word. Then I shall say to him : 'Look here, my friend... I might be hard on you. But I have pity. Do not allow your wife to do anything of the kind again. Pay me one or two oxen, and I will keep silent.' He will consent. Then I beat the woman with my stick. She awakes, and, quite ashamed of being in another hut without any clothing, she will fly away home!" Such is the testimony of Mankhelu, and he is certain of having succeeded more than once!!

Mboza asserted to me that he had witnessed a similar case

2: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

791

Phot. A. Basel.

A Ronga "gobela."

789 in Muthiyane (near Rikatla). A woman had been thus "surprised
754 by the rising sun" (shwela, p. 307). She was stark naked and had something red, like fire, on both shoulders ; these were the remnants of her wings. Having been overcome by the magical drugs she had been unable to reabsorb these wings into her flesh, and part of them remained outside. Every one ran away at this sight, and the chief ordered the woman to be shut up in her hut.

Some magicians used to fight the baloyi by *running through the bush during the night* and catching them as they flew by with their wings of fire. Note how Mholombo prevented two wizards from killing a woman (p. 500), and how the exorcised protect themselves by means of the mabophe drug, and by swallowing their nulu powder (p. 496). 1/A

2) Method of disclosing the Baloyi.

754 But should all the protective medicines which surround the village, together with those which have been swallowed by the inhabitants, or by which they have been inoculated, remain without effect, and should a serious case of illness occur, one of those evils which are generally attributed to the baloyi, the first thing to do is to *detect* the culprit.

Who may he be? The patient's relatives have most probably already some idea on this point, because, at the beginning of most buloyi cases, something happens which arouses *suspicion*, and this is a very important point to be noted if we wish to find the psychological explanation of these customs. Perhaps there has been a quarrel between two persons, and one of them, in his anger, has said to the other : "N'ta ku bona" i. e. "I shall see you." On hearing this the people immediately say : "This man is a noyi. He has revealed by daylight his crimes of the night." The man himself had perhaps not the slightest idea of such a thing. The same conclusion will be drawn if he points to another person with his index finger (I. p. 250). An imprudent word which at first sight would appear quite innocent may have the same

1/A [For futher information on methods of dealing with wizards see pp. 525-535 -- Analyst]

result if hostile feelings already existed between two persons (1). 754
Jealousy alone is sufficient to give rise to the suspicion even without a word having been uttered (2).

The fact of a woman having lost many children is also a reason [761] for suspecting her of being a witch, as the death of a baby is constantly considered as having been caused by its own mother, who wished "to eat it." The fact of belonging to a family of baloyi is also an indication to the same effect, buloyi being hereditary, as we have seen.

But a mere suspicion is not sufficient to warrant action being 754 taken against the suspected noyi. An objective proof, a piece of 787 convincing evidence is required, and this the magicians are asked to 791 supply. The patient's relatives go *to the diviner* who will cast the bones and discover whether the disease is due to witchcraft or not. This consultation is secret, and is merely preliminary. There are, in the sets of bones employed in Thonga divination, some which,

(1) The evangelist Silas G. was one day speaking to Saul N., an elder of his Church, about Church contributions and said: "So and so does not pay his dues. It would be good to show him his duty." Saul answered: "I do not wonder; that man has a bad wife and you are sure to fail in your duty when you have a bad wife." — "No", said Silas. "Everyone ought to pay his contribution. You, for example, would certainly do your duty even if you had a bad wife!" — "Nevertheless I maintain that a wife who behaves badly takes away her husband's courage. Look at your own case, Silas. Your wife does harm to your work as an evangelist. Did she not say the other day when she saw my baby: 'How fat it is! It is like a pumpkin!'" On hearing these words Silas starts! They are an accusation of buloyi. To say that the baby was as fat as a pumpkin showed that the woman who used these words was ready to eat its body during the night; the evangelist's wife was a noyi! An enquiry was at once started to ascertain if she had really pronounced these words, and the whole little Church was upset. Finally the elder was blamed for having brought an accusation of buloyi, which is forbidden in the Native Congregations, and he resigned his office. The evangelist and his wife "became thin" owing to the mental suffering caused by the insinuation of the elder.

(2) I had amongst my evangelists a very active and intelligent man who cultivated large gardens and was well provided with everything. His neighbours began to suspect him for this reason. He said to them: "We ought not to work on Sundays," and this increased their suspicions. "It is evident", they said, "that *he is not alone!* How does he manage to have such splendid harvests when he does not work on Sundays? Surely he has others to till for him. He takes our backs and uses them to cultivate his big fields. And the reason why he has such wonderful crops is that he has taken our own mealies from our gardens by his witchcraft" — "But," said others, "you cannot complain! Mealies are plentiful in your gardens too!" — "No," answered the enemies of the evangelist. "Though you see mealies in our gardens, they are no longer mealies; they have been taken away by him." They meant that, just as a bewitched person is no longer normal but has been emptied of his viscera, so the cereals had been robbed of their virtue by buloyi.

754 represent the *baloyi*, in particular the astragalus of the reedbuck, or
787 of the duiker, the small antelope which rambles about during
the night, just at the time when witches are at work. Should
791 this bone fall in a certain way near the bone representing the patient, or near his amulets, which have been placed on the mat, this shows that his disease is the result of buloyi. The name of the noyi will be sought, and perhaps ascertained, on that first day, but the parents of the victim will never venture to accuse him merely on the testimony of the bones. The next step will be to go to the *mungoma*, the magician who "smells out" the *baloyi*.

The magician employs various means to find out a noyi.

a) *The Enchanted Horn.*

754 In the Murchison Range there is a magician who possesses an
791 enchanted horn, into which he introduces a short twig smeared with an anti-baloyi medicine. Persons suspected of having killed by witchcraft must try to pull the twig out of the horn. The noyi will be unable to do this, though he may declare, like the others : "I have not killed." Amongst the Nkunas, the magician who has succeeded in finding out a wizard, takes his coat and hangs it on a tree as a trophy.

b) *The Enchanted Flute.*

When some one dies and his relatives think he has been bewitched, they can call a certain mungoma who "treats the grave" with his drugs. If he thinks that he has discovered the noyi, he gives to the bereaved a small flute, telling him to go and play on it in the neighbourhood. This helps not only to detect the wizard but to punish him ; he will die. This rite is called "to play on the little flute (ku yimbelela shinangana) for somebody."

c) *The rera nyiwa, or ba hungwe.*

Rera nyiwa or *ba hungwe* means to summon an assembly for 754
discovering wizards. This is done when the chief is ill, or when an epidemic has broken out and threatens the villages. The headman, or sub-chief, assembles all his people and says : "Hungwe!" (this word has the meaning of : "Take care!"). "The bones have declared it : It is so and so : a woman having two, three or four children... or married twice... or a widow... or a girl... or a man... or a medicine-man..... Cease your enchantments and make the patient live! We know you! Do not bring upon him bad influences during the night! If you do not restore him to health, we shall kill you!" All the people look at each other and try to discover who is meant by the bones and by the speaker. The rera nyiwa acts as a solemn warning to all the baloyi of the country, and may thus prolong the life of the chief.

This method of combating baloyi is also resorted to in connection with the products of the soil when some fields are in good condition and others not, or when caterpillars or locusts have spoiled some whilst others have been spared. This unequality is due to the baloyi! In the region of Matalane, near Rikatla, this kind of nyiwa was performed as follows at the end of 1918. The clansmen assembled in the little capital, whilst the women were ordered to stay at home. The men visited all the gardens, those in the marshes as well as those on the sandy hill, and took from each of them food of all the different kinds, sweet potatoes, manioc, mealies, pumpkins, even pine-apples. Then the whole throng assembled somewhere in the bush, a big pot was brought, and they all ate from it, the man who had been designated by the bones taking the first mouthful (luma) and offering a "mhamba." Then he said to the people : "We have seen where food is plentiful and where it is wanting!" The aim of the whole performance was evidently to show the supposed wizards that they must cease their bewitching of the fields. It was at the same time a symbolical meal in which all the members of the little community ate some food from each of the fields, thus asserting that all must remain equal (ba fanana) and that this equality must not be destroyed by the wizards' robbing the others by their enchantments, and becoming rich at their expense.

d) *The smelling-out procedure.*

754 But should it be desirable to ascertain the name of the noyi,
695 in order to punish him (for instance, in a case of death, where
787 nothing remains but to avenge oneself on the murderer), the mungoma will proceed to the *shinusa divination*, the regular smelling-out. This can be done in two ways, either by questioning or by ecstasy.

1) *Smelling-out by questioning.* The relatives of the bewitched come to the shinusa, pay him £ 1, and ask him to find out the murderer. He makes them sit down in a half-circle, and, facing them, begins to put questions to them. They always answer by the word *mamoo*, which means yes, in the language of *bungoma*. Hence the Zulu term *vumisa* viz., "to make somebody say yes," applied to this ceremony. The *mamoo* is cool or warm, doubtful or convinced, and the clever diviner easily perceives every shade of meaning in this perpetual *mamoo*. He is well aware of all the disputes and hatred between the people and, in his investigation, he draws nearer and nearer to the man of whom the consulting party is thinking. Their *mamoo* becomes bolder. The questions are more precise. At last, when he feels himself in agreement with the consultants, the *mungoma* pronounces the name and lets his tail fall. He is bathed in perspiration after the great strain, and remains silent, as if he were indeed infallible ; he has triumphantly "smelt out" the culprit. Next day, relatives of the patient go to the kraal of the noyi, waving branches, dance before him, and say : "So you are killing us!" The accused keeps silent. Then he says : "All right. We shall come to-morrow and also consult our *mungoma*." Both parties then go to another diviner. The performance of "smelling out" is again gone through, and very likely the verdict of the second *mungoma* will confirm that of the first ; the augurs know that they must not contradict each other if they wish to maintain their authority, and the terrible tail falls on the head of the accused. As soon as proof and counterproof have been obtained, the case becomes a judicial one. The plaintiff brings the matter before the chief, who will not condemn until the

754 guilt of the pretended noyi is confirmed by ordeal, the trial by the
695 famous philter called *mondjo*.
787 2) *Smelling-out by ecstasy* partakes more or less of the character of the rera nyiwa. All the people have been assembled in the Capital. The chief wishes to collect together all the baloyi of the land. The diviner arrives, decked out with amulets and all the insignia of his power. In his hands he carries his magical

Photo D. Lanoir.

Smelling-out a wizard.

tail, by way of a whip, and an assagay. He begins to dance, the crowd seated all round him, clapping their hands (wombela), and singing a chorus peculiar to the occasion :

> Nwashongana khale ! Famba u ya teka, u ya teka, mungoma !
> Beautiful dancer of slender figure ! Seek for it, seek for it, diviner !

He goes on dancing ; like Pythia of old he falls into a condition of extreme nervous excitement, ecstasy, inspiration. He brandishes his tail, dilates his nostrils, inhales the air on all sides, as if to smell out the spot from whence the evil influence has emanated, then takes to his heels in a certain direction, the assembly

754 still clapping their hands and singing. He approaches a hut,
695 enters, and triumphantly plants his assagay in one corner. A hole
787 is dug in that spot and — just where so and so places his wooden pillow when retiring to rest for the night — there are discovered a small gourd full of blood, packets of suspicious objects connected with enchantment, and perhaps a snake. It is quite possible that the diviner may have previously hidden these articles; nevertheless he carries them exultingly away; they are the wizards' weapons, the "bloods" (tingati) which they throw over their victims at night.

The shinusa returns to the village of the chief, who is veryangry, and orders him to go and show these objects to their owner. Then the magician, making a sign to the crowd to stop singing, will go and throw the articles in front of the occupant of the hut to put him to shame before the whole assembly. The mysterious charms, and the noyi's gourd, must in every case be consumed by fire, and then the sickness and deaths in the village should cease.

e) *The Mondjo ordeal.*

754 As already pointed out, the final and supreme method of
695 unmasking baloyi is the *mondjo ordeal.* This is a legal procedure ordered by the chief, a true method of obtaining information in a criminal case. This custom calls to mind the judgment of God in the Middle Ages (ordeal is derived from "urtheil," judgment); it is practised by the majority of the Bantu tribes, varying from one tribe to another, but everywhere it has the same end in view, namely the discovery of the casters of spells by the imposition of an ordeal which is supposed to be fatal to such as are guilty.

This ordeal is called amongst the Ba-Ronga (as also from one end of the Thonga tribe to the other) *drinking the mondjo* (ku nwa
[137] mondjo). The mondjo is a plant of the Solaneae family, probably a Datura, which possesses intoxicating properties. With it a special magician prepares a beverage which is to act as a means of revelation. It can be resorted to by any individual accused of witchcraft, or of any other crime. A woman accused of adultery,

for instance, may say: "Let us go and drink the mondjo." The mondjo magician will give both the accused and the plaintiff a little of his drug, and the one who becomes intoxicated, or unconscious, after having drunk the magic beverage will be convicted of guilt. But the mondjo ordeal can also be ordered by the chiefs, just the same as the rera nyiwa, not only as a warning, but with the object of revealing the wizards and in order to get rid of them. 754 695

This is how the ceremony is performed in Nondwane. When it has been decided at the capital that all subjects shall undergo this ordeal, the chief sends word to the Shihahu folk to prepare the mondjo. These particular folk are a small clan inhabiting the left bank of the Nkomati, not far from the sea, northward of the district of Manyisa. The mondjo is cultivated by the medicine-men of Shihahu, but they have by no means the monopoly of it, for my neighbour, Hamunde, who lived at Rikatla, a few steps from the station, had one of these plants growing in his village, where I myself saw it. But it is at Shihahu that the recipe is known for the preparation of this magic philter. This is very complicated and intricate. It contains several strange ingredients, amongst others, it may be noted, *the fat of a leper long since deceased*, or a little of his powdered bones! To make sure of the efficacy of the drink, the Shihahu folk experiment upon a certain individual named Mudlayi. This man is considered the very chief, the "bull" of all the wizards of the country (nkunzi ya baloyi). He is more powerful than all the others in casting spells. If, therefore, the decoction produces in him the characteristic intoxicating effect by which the spell-casters are discovered, it is certain that the brewing has been a success. If, by any chance, Mudlayi should not have been intoxicated, word will be sent to the chief that the decoction has failed (yi hi hlulile), and another brew will be made, until the mondjo has attained the strength required. Then the people of Shihahu do not go directly to the chief, but, according to the rules of etiquette, to the counsellor who looks after the interests of their country. The other counsellors come to greet them, but the whole business is kept a great secret. Messengers are then sent to all the sub-chiefs, telling them to assemble at a

754 certain time, in a given place, bringing all their people with them.
695 This general assembly takes place on the borders of a lake. Every man and every woman must defile before the proprietors of the decoction and take a small mouthful of it, tepid, from a particular receptacle. Already at this stage of the proceedings some few, terror-stricken, make a confession : "Ndja loya!" — "I am a caster of spells," they cry. These persons are then collected together and placed on one side under a tree. The rest sit down in a line, in the fiery glare of the noon-day sun. There they are, then, all seated and exposed to the torrid heat of the sun's rays. They have received the following order : "Do not move! You must not scratch yourselves! Remain motionless!"

Mudlayi begins to dance in front of them. With widely opened eyes he glares in a peculiar manner at those who have sipped the mondjo. In his hair is fixed a large feather, which he waves up and down by moving his head. Everyone gazes at him intently.

Suddenly some one scratches his arm. Sounding his trumpet, *nte-nte-nte*, Mudlayi approaches the individual and places the feather in his hair over the forehead. The man tries to pull it out, but only clutches the air on one side or the other, in front of the feather. He is quite incapable of catching hold of it. A second individual begins to show the same symptoms of intoxication (popya) a little way down the line. Mudlayi continues his comings and goings to the sound of his trumpet. A third and a fourth are overcome in turn. They try to get up, clutching the grass to assist them to do so, but fall to the ground, or crawl feebly about. The others keep away from them. It seems that the mondjo dries up the saliva of all who drink it, but, in the case of the truly guilty, this effect is greatly accentuated ; the jaws become locked. They try to speak, but can only say *be-be-be-be* (they stammer). They are carried off, and all placed together under the tree, where they are guarded by the chief's counsellors, who will not allow their friends or relations to come near them.

"*Selekan*!" — "Get up!" is the order given to all the others, the seated crowd who have not become intoxicated. Jumping to their feet, they must run at full tilt to the lake and bathe.

Some get into difficulties on the way, they jostle each other, fall to the ground, and remain there, unable to regain their legs. Some even fall down in the water ; all such are baloyi. The rest, who have successfully undergone the trial of the mondjo, come back and are restored to freedom, after having received three pinches of a special powder ; one of these is thrown over the right shoulder, another over the left, and the third is swallowed, in order to counteract the defilement consequent on having imbibed this drink of the wizards, which contained in solution... the fat of a human being! As to the poor, unfortunate hypnotised folk, their affair is settled. The magic potion has revealed their criminal character. They must be made to admit their evil deeds. The counsellors interrogate them. To restore the power of speech, a particular tisane, prepared from the herb called *tjeke*, is poured into the mouth ; they are shampooed *(tlhema)* on the cheeks and all over the body with its leaves. The saliva returns. They gradually revive and then begin to speak : "Yes! I devour men! I ate so and so and I still have some of his flesh in store!.. I hate so and so, and I would like to kill him, but I haven't done so yet... I bewitched the maize to hinder its growth." They are well reprimanded and told : "Cease your witchcraft and enchantments. Remove your spells from the cereals, let them grow properly, or we will kill you!" 754 695

How can the effect of the mondjo be explained? According to an old Native, the intoxication of the baloyi comes from the presence of these elements of human flesh contained in the solution. The noyi, who swallows them in drinking the philter, thus does during the day what he is accustomed to do during the night : hence the loss of his senses. As a matter of fact the man who administers the drug is clever enough to give a larger dose to those who are more or less supposed to be baloyi. Moreover there is a regular process of hypnotisation in Mudlayi's performance, and that is why some people fall into what seems to be a true cataleptic state.

3) The Punishment of Witchcraft.

754 683 What is the punishment inflicted on those convicted of the crime of witchcraft? Let us remember that this is a crime, an act of homicide, doubly punishable by the Court. Chief Shiluvane had definitely prohibited it by a decree in the following words: "I do not allow anyone to die in my country except on account of old age. So let the baloyi at once cease their enchantments, or I shall kill them all." In former times the crime of witchcraft was punished by death and the culprit was immediately hanged. The last to be punished in this way, in the Nkuna clan, was Mudebane (I. p. 443), and Mankhelu himself executed him. The wizards are impaled or drowned, as the case may be. Flogging and banishment were also resorted to when the crime was not so heinous. In Khosen wizards were expelled from the villages and roamed about the country, sleeping in the ruins, mocked at and insulted by the children, and oxen sinews were tied round their biceps so tightly that they entered their flesh and caused great suffering.

177.68 One of my informants (Fenis), who drank the mondjo at the death of Zihlahla, chief of the Mpfumo district, about 1870, told me that the heaviest penalty imposed on the wizards on that occasion was a fine of one or two goats, or of one pound sterling. He attributed this leniency to the proximity of the Whites. The civilised Governments in Africa have certainly done their best to put down this method of smelling-out wizards, and their efforts have been by no means without result. Native chiefs are now content with fining the wizar[illegible]0 or £ 15, half of which remains in their own pockets. I he[illegible]e of them who claimed to be a Christian, but did not object to the substantial increase to his civil list brought about by witchcraft suits.

IV. *Concluding Remarks on Witchcraft.*

754 182 Witchcraft is one of the greatest curses of Native Life. I attribute the enormous hold which this superstition has taken on the mind of the Bantu to three causes: 1) The *Animistic beliefs* explained on p. 367

which are at the root of the idea of the double existence of the baloyi. 182 754
2) *Cannibalism*, which has perhaps never existed as a general custom [266] in South Africa, but has been practised sporadically in times of famine, and has left a feeling of disgust and horror in the minds of later generations ; this feeling is also manifested in the numerous Ogre tales.
3) The *terrible hatred* of which the Native mind is capable. If some [152] people venture to accuse members of these tribes of such awful acts as those of killing and eating human beings, it is because they know that a Native who hates would not shrink from anything to satisfy his desire of vengeance.

We must however remember that the witchcraft superstition was universally found amongst our own forefathers, and that there were epidemics of it in the XIVth, XVth and even the XVIth centuries, hundreds of wizards having been tortured and burnt in most European countries, after having been tried before regular Courts. I have tried to establish a parallel between the ideas and practices of witchcraft in French Switzerland and those of the Thongas. The results of the comparison are very curious. I cannot give them all here, and must refer the reader to the Paris Revue *Foi et Vie*, No. of October, 1910, in which they were published. The most striking difference is this. Amongst Thongas, we are still in the *predualistic age*, viz., the opposition between a good, moral Spirit (God) and bad, wicked spirits (demons, Satan) does not yet exist in Religion. So the power of God is not invoked to reveal the wizards, or to protect the innocent against their spells. But the same animistic conceptions evidently formed the basis of European as of African witchcraft.

This superstition has a deadly effect on Native life. It is a continual source of trouble, fear, quarrels, sorrow. Strange to say, it has been on the increase in recent years. It ruins the villages. — "Formerly," say my informants, "you could see villages of ten or twenty huts. Now the accusations of witchcraft have broken them up. Each man builds his own hut apart, from fear of being bewitched, or because he is suspected of being a noyi (1)."

(1) The evil affects the Native Christian communities also, fostering hatred amongst them, and this animistic doctrine is much more difficult to overcome than ancestrolatry, which is very quickly and completely abandoned by converts.

Some Christian Natives are so convinced that witchcraft is a reality that they interpret Matt. X. 28 by saying that "those who kill the body and who must not be feared" are the baloyi. Unhappily a Zulu translation of the Greek word φαρμακοί by the word corresponding to baloyi, in Revelation XXII, v. 15, confirmed them in

754 The Thonga tribe really suffers from the results of the witchcraft superstition and this explains a curious magico-religious movement which took place in the years 1914-1917, in which the tribe made a serious and touching attempt to free itself from this scourge. The story of "The Murimi Movement" will be found in Appendix V.

I have already explained how I think Government can and must interfere in order to check this terrible superstition. (I. p. 445.) But its eradication will only be possible under a twofold influence, the increase of the scientific spirit, which will conquer and destroy the absurdities of the animistic magical conceptions involved in these practices, and the Christian Religion, the Religion of Love and of Light, which banishes fear and hatred.

D. DIVINATION.

787 Divinatory practices are extremely common amongst Thongas. Surrounded by so many evil influences, having very little or no scientific knowledge, possessing no notion of a God capable of illumining the path of their life, they try to obtain directions by the various methods of divination which they have invented, and it must be confessed that they have reached a high degree of proficiency in this domain. The anxiety to know the future lies at the foundation both of omens and divinatory practices. Let us first briefly consider the former.

I. *Omens.*

These are of two kinds; some objects are ill-omened, they *singita* or *hlolela*, foretell bad luck; others are favourable and announce happiness and, more especially, plenty of meat!

their idea that wizards certainly exist, since they are even mentioned in the Bible! Of course those who are further advanced see the absurdity of the witchcraft theory, but a great many do not. As a proof of this I may quote this letter addressed by a young convert to his father from Johannesburg: "If the Lord agrees with it, I shall return home in the month of February; expect me that month. I entreat you not to tell anyone, less they bewitch me by preparing (lit. placing) snakes for me (ba ndji bekela tinyoka)."

Amongst the first we have already noticed *falling stars* (p. 309) ; 787
the snail (p. 338) : should you meet with it on the road, you will soon hear that one of your relatives has died ; *the stem of cuscuta* (yendje-yendje) ; (1) there are families, however, for which this is not of bad omen, but for other people it foretells misfortune ; *the mbonga bee* belongs to the same class (p. 337) ; the various kinds of *mistletoe* are also of bad omen. So also is the *puff-adder* (p. 340), the *likure* (p. 340), a greyish slender snake : if it blows upon you, or bites you, you will grow thin and turn grey, like the animal itself ; the long-legged bird *shitshinyariendjo* foretells misfortune on the road (I. p. 339) as do also the *buwumati* snake and the *nkangu bird*.

Other objects are of good omen ; the beetle *Eccopteptera* and the *Mutilla* (p. 336), and especially the beetle *Bombolosi*, belonging to the Curculionidae family, a curious insect which drops to the ground and counterfeits death when touched or frightened ; it is the symbol of riches. Natives hang it on a string at their door ; I have heard of others hanging it in their hair ; but in this case it is said to be placed there to eat lice!

All these superstitions are believed in more or less seriously. But, in order to know their fate and what they must do to avoid misfortune, Thongas have recourse to true methods of divination. Amongst these mantic practices some are simple and some more elaborate.

II. *Less important Means of Divination.*

1) Amongst these I may mention first the *pshapsha*, which 524
corresponds to our "drawing lots" and is performed exactly 787
in the same way by placing pieces of grass or sticks of different length between the fingers, and pulling out one of them, having

(1) The cuscuta sometimes covers large patches of ground on the sandy hills of 187
Thongaland ; as is well-known, it has a regular root, but afterwards becomes a parasite 824
on the vegetables to which it attaches itself, whilst its stem and root die. This fact 787
has been noticed by the Natives, and has given the cuscuta a special value in their eyes. When they happen to find a plant which still retains its stem and root, magicians make use of these, especially in their exorcism rites. But this stem, which is so rare, is a bad omen for ordinary people.

524 first decided to act in such and such a way if the longer or the
787 shorter grass be drawn. This is more or less a game and is employed mostly by children.

787 2) Another more serious method of divination is the *mondjo*, the enchanted philter, used as a regular means of procedure to obtain evidence in Court (I. p. 443), especially to discover wizards and adulterous women. It has been described at full length in the preceding paragraph.

3) A third is the *divination by ecstasy* which is employed by the magician when "smelling out" wizards. The old men assert that, in former times, there were diviners who could guess anything when in that peculiar psychological state in which the subliminal faculties may develop to a marvellous extent. Hendrick, a very old Native of Khosen, said to me, speaking of one of these *shintsa* (the term by which these diviners are known) : "He used to travel all through the land, practising his art in the villages. He was able to describe minutely a goat which he had never seen ; or if somebody had buried something in a certain place to test him, he would go straight to the spot and say : 'Dig in the earth here, and you will find it.' Viguet also asserted that there were formerly true and trustworthy diviners in the Hlabi clans, and I myself heard trustworthy witnesses assert that a certain diviner who had been called into a village near Rikatlr actually discovered some pounds sterling which had been hidden by their owner, who was no longer in the country.

4 & 5) A young man of the Mabota clan described to me two other methods of divination employed by his father, old Tumben (I. p. 531). One was called the *Small Mug* (shintjekwana). The diviner took a wooden mug in his left hand and held it by the handle. He placed in it an antelope's or goat's horn, and with his right hand he struck his right leg, putting the question to which he wanted an answer. He would say : "Is the matter really as I say?" If he had guessed rightly, the horn began to move to and fro ; if not, it remained quiet. Tumben also consulted the oracles by means of the *Small Calabash* (nhungubane). This calabash had some rags hanging from its neck, and a string was passed round it by which he held it dandling from the thumb of his left hand. He

lifted that hand and with his right hand struck his right hip, 787
meanwhile putting questions to the magical calabash, and calling it by the name he had given to it, viz., Nkoshi-wa-tihomu. To signify agreement, the calabash answered by means of the rags, which moved in all directions. Thereupon he said: "Keep quiet!" and the calabash remained quiet. — "He astonished us greatly, our father," added my informant! "His divinatory power came from the fact that certain incisions had been made in his hand and a special medicine inoculated into them. He had been taught by a man called Shitakule. Those who have not been initiated cannot consult the calabash; the rags do not move for them, neither does the horn in the small mug."

All these are primitive means of divination. We now come to the more elaborate, the famous divinatory bones. But before entering upon this most curious and interesting subject, I will describe the *Hakati*, which is based on the same ideas, but, being very much more simple, affords a useful introduction to the study of the bones.

III. *The Hakati.*

Hakati (yin-tin) is the name given to the stone of a fruit growing in the desert. This stone is oval-shaped, and is cut in two so as to form two pointed cupules with a small notch at each extremity. These extremities are both called *nomu*, mouth, though there is undoubtedly an anterior part, that which is pointed, and a posterior part, that which is blunt. Six of these cupules constitute a whole set. Three are male (♂), three female (♀), the former being distinguished merely by their larger size. In the set which I possess, some cupules have been marked with brands of different kinds. These marks do not appear to have any significance, except that they help the diviner to recognise such and such a shell at once. The six shells are pierced through in the middle so that they can be passed through a string and hung round the neck. (See the left side of the accompanying plate.)

The hakati is mostly employed in Hlengweland (Gaza), and seems to have been invented by the Ndjao tribe; the Ba-Ronga and

787 Thongas of other clans found it there during the hunting expeditions, and brought it back with them. It is used mostly by hunters to obtain directions and predictions in regard to their undertakings. Some also employ them for their domestic affairs (psa muti), but they are hardly sufficient for this purpose.

I have given an illustration of four cases which Spoon explained to me. The shells are thrown on a mat and two main things must be considered in the interpretation : the *direction* towards which they look and the *side* on which they fall, whether on their back, in the negative position, showing the concave side of the shell, or on their "legs," in the positive position, showing the convex side of the shell.

The Hakati.

No. 1. Two female shells on their backs looking to the right : the women have remained asleep in the village. One of them (♂ shell on her legs) is working. The male shell on the top is the hunter who starts in the early morning, and pursues the elephant (the ♂ shell to the right) with his gun (the ♂ shell at the bottom)... The hunter is on his back : he has missed the elephant, which runs away, being on its legs! The signs are unfavourable!

No. 2. Same scene : Women asleep at home ; early morning. But here the hunter is on his legs and the elephant on its back : the beast will be killed! The signs are favourable!

No. 3. A case of disease. Everybody on their backs, males and females! A very bad case, with no hope! They hardly breathe!

No. 4. Another case of disease. On the left, three shells ; the shell in the middle is the patient ; that at the bottom, in the negative position, is his grief, his mouth wide open, moaning ; that on the top is a female

one, a woman who caused his disease, either by bewitching him, or 787
because he had an unlawful connection with her. On the right three other shells : that at the top, the male one, is a friend going out of the village to fetch a remedy ; the two others, female, are two women opening their mouths, not to lament, but to laugh! They laugh at the man who was silly enough to expose himself to such a disgrace!

Those who practise the hakati art must also be initiated. They must bury their shells in the earth on the road, and when some one passes by on the path they unearth one shell, a male one if the passer-by be a man, a female one if it be a woman, (See later).

IV. *The Divinatory bones (Bula).*

The hakati shells are regarded as more or less childish. The 787
divinatory bones, on the contrary, constitute an admirable system 791
of divination and play a considerable part in the life of the tribe. They are called *nhlolo* (yin-tin), which is their little name ; the great one is *bula*, evidently the same word as *ku bula*, to speak, i. e. the *Word* with a capital letter, the Revelation! I remember old Maselesele, a Nkuna diviner, telling me : "You Christians believe in your Bible. Our Bible is much better than yours! It is the divinatory bones!"

I was initiated into the knowledge of this wonderful art by many masters. The first was *Spoon* (I. p. 4) ; he was only a beginner, and his set of bones was not complete ; but he understood the rules perfectly well and all that he told me was confirmed by subsequent study. The second was *Maselesele*, the old Nkuna just referred to, a blind man who knew his bones by the mere touch, and had a true veneration for them. Unhappily for this poor Nkuna, his hut was burnt during the Sikororo war (I. p. 512) and the precious basket containing his bones was destroyed. — "Why did they not warn you of the fate they were about to undergo?," I asked Maselesele one day. "They might have ordered you to save them if they knew everything!" He could find no answer to this remark, but his faith was absolutely unshakable. Such was also the case with *Mankhelu*, who had

787 practised the art all his life, and was attached to his divinatory
791 bones by every fibre of his being. His set was the most complete I ever saw, containing as many as 64 objects. He even had two sets, one contained in a leathern basket, the other in a kind of net with small meshes ; the first he called the Father and the second the Son. The Father always remained at home, whilst he took the Son with him on his travels (1). I spent many hours with him, trying fully to understand his teaching, and he took great trouble to initiate me, concealing nothing from me, wondering sometimes at his own readiness to do so, and saying: "This thing I would not have told my own son." I had thus an opportunity of penetrating into the depths of the Bantu mind, which has perhaps invented nothing more elaborate or more typical than this divinatory system. Of course no sensible person would for a moment believe in the objective value of these practices. *Astragalomancy* has no more real value than Cheiromancy, Necromancy and all the other "mancies." But I am obliged to admit that the Thonga system is far more ingenious than any other that I have met with, and that it answers admirably to the wants of the Natives, comprehending all the elements of their life, and photographing them, so to speak, in such a manner that indications and directions can be obtained for all possible cases.

I have explained Spoon's art in detail in "Les Ba-Ronga." I will here confine myself to Mankhelu's revelations, which were more complete, as the old man was one of the masters of the diviner's profession as well as of that of the medicine-man.

1) The objects composing the set of divinatory bones.

787 These may be divided into two kinds : the *bones* properly
825 speaking, most of which are *astragalus bones*, and the various objects which are *not bones*. I shall now enumerate them, always

(1) I heard of another bone-thrower from Tembe who had also two baskets of bones; the first was called the basket of the chiefs, the second the basket of the subjects; the first was used in criminal cases to discover wizards: they were bones which "killed," and when they had accomplished their purpose, the diviner left them to rest for a whole week, using in the meantime the second basket. He then washed them, and they were ready to be used again.

giving the Native name of the object, as these names are technical 787
and form quite a special vocabulary which seems to have an 825
archaic character.

a) Amongst the bones some belong to *domestic animals*, goats and sheep, and consequently represent the *people dwelling in the village* :

Five astragalus of *he-goats* : 1) *Mbulwa*, the astragalus of an old castrated he-goat, the old man. 2) *Mbulwana* (diminutive of mbulwa), a he-goat not so old : men of ripe age. 3) *Shivimbiri*, a non-castrated he-goat : men in their prime. 4) *Shivimbidjana* (diminutive of the preceding), a non-castrated younger he-goat : young men of sixteen to twenty. 5) *Morisana wa timbuti shi-ãnwa-mafi*, the astragalus of a kid which is still a suckling : little boys, goatherds.

Six astragalus of she-goats : 1) *Gosha nkata wa mbulwa*, the old woman no longer capable of childbearing (1). 2) *Mihlangwana ya bukati, shinyuki sha timbuti*, a ripe woman still at the childbearing age, one who still smears her body with ochre. 3) *Ntibulana* (from tibula, to bring forth a child for the first time, I. p. 192) young married women, having had only one child. 4) *Nhombela*, a she-goat before parturition : girls practising the *gangisa* (I. p. 97), running about during the night but not yet married. 5) *Nhombe-djana* and *nhombedjana yo-ãnwa-mafi*, little goat and suckling goat : girls still without sexual knowledge, or babies at the breast.

The goats, here as everywhere else, stand for the subjects. The *sheep* indicate the chiefs. There are five astragalus of sheep : 1) *Hamba, nuna wa noni*, a castrated ram, the chief and the old men of the royal family. 2) *Shikwela sha timpfu* or *Khuna ra*

(1) This, like most of the bones, has a long story. When Mankhelu was emprisoned by the old Boer Government for having strangled a pretended wizard (I. p. 444), and condemned to death, a diviner consulted the bones for him, and advised him to draw the image of a Native village on the earth and to pray every day to his ancestor-gods on his mother's side, asserting that they would deliver him, and that, when he returned home, he should sacrifice a goat to them. He added : "If people offer you a cow on the road, refuse." Mankhelu was indeed released, owing to petitions made in his favour, and, on his way home, everybody came to welcome him. In one village, the people wanted to give him a cow, but he refused it. When he reached his kraal, one of the wives of his maternal uncle appeared with twenty jars of beer, five baskets of mealies and three goats. He sacrificed one of these, and the astragalus became the gosha of his set... He cannot look at it without a thrill of the heart!

787 *timpfu*, a non-castrated ram : the sons of the royal family, the
825 εὐγενεῖς! (bana ba-ku-psalwa). 3) Another *Shikwela*, astragalus of the ram sacrified during the Sikororo war, the one whose psanyi was used for the sprinkling of the Nkuna army ; it designates the enemy, and is watched with special attention when casting the bones in connection with military affairs. 4) *Noni wa timpfu*, an old sheep, the widow of the chief. 5) *Nhombela ya timpfu*, a young sheep, the girls of the royal family. As regards the wife of the chief, she is represented by the astragalus of the female mhala antelope.

787 In one of his sets of bones Mankhelu also had two objects
177 taken *from an ox*. One was an oval-shaped smooth bone, two
771 inches long, the other, one of its hoofs decorated on one of its three sides with triangular marks (See plate). Both represent the *Nkuma* tribe, whose totem is the buffalo. (Comp. I. p. 364.) But this is a custom borrowed from the Sutho-Pedis. I never saw bones corresponding to totems used in Thonga divination ; the idea of totem is altogether absent from the minds of the Thongas when not influenced by their Pedi neighbours.

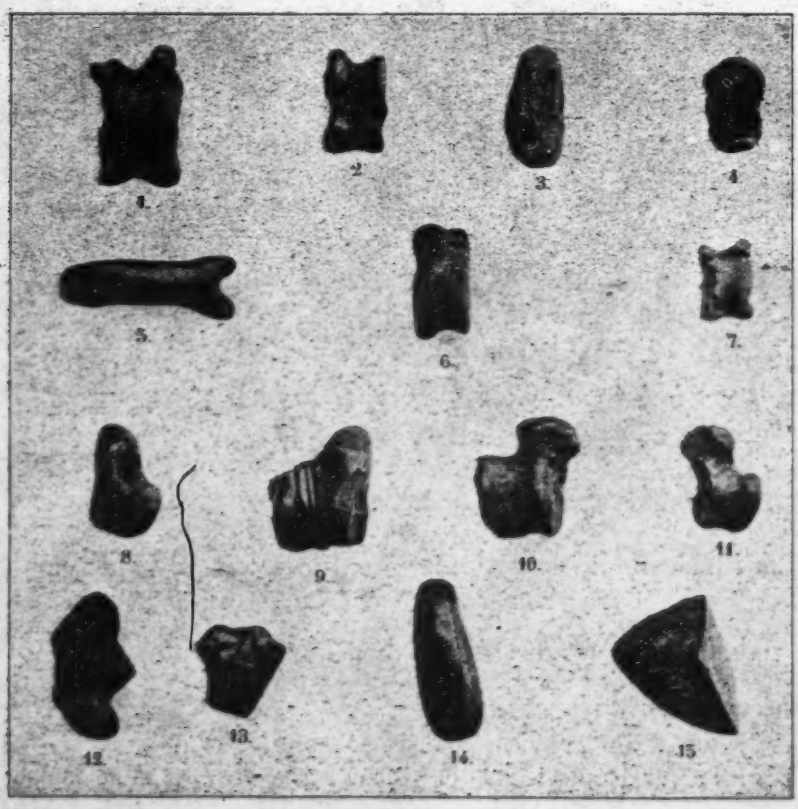
787 In addition to those of the domestic animals, there are a number
825 of astragalus, or other bones, taken from *wild animals*.

First from *antelopes* : the male *mhala*, *tsombe ra mhala*, means the chief, and the female mhala, his wife ; the male mhunti, *tsombe ra mhunti*, *mhunti ya matlhari*, the duiker of the weapons, means fighting men, and the female mhunti, called *mbiri*, means women of loose character : *mbiri ya ku tola, ñwashifamba ni mafura eku rimen*, the woman who smears herself with grease and ochre, even when she goes to her field (thus trying to attract the attention of men). The *nhlangu* (reed buck), wandering about during the night, means wizards, as these cast their spells by night. Mankhelu had only the astragalus of the female in his set. The *mbalala* antelope dwells in the forest ; it does not like to come out in the plains ; its astragalus therefore designates the chief who rests in his hut and does not expose himself to the toil and the heat of the day.

The astragalus of the *ngolube ya ku dya marambo, yi tjela mitshi yi ralarala, yi languta hi matlhelo*, the wild boar which eats bones,

787 which digs holes, which looks about on all sides, is the medicine-
825 man who searches for roots to prepare his drugs. The female wild pig is the medicine man's wife.

Three astragalus of a very different form come from *baboons*, *numa wa mfene*, the male baboon, *nsati wa mfene*, the female



Objects specially worthy of note in Mankhelu's set of divinatory bones.

1. Mhelele antelope ♂. +. 2. Ram —. 3. Mhala antelope ♂ ×. 4. Reed buck ♀ :. 5. Phalanx of a Lion +. 6. Astragalus found in the dejects of a hyena: Ancestor-god. 7. Mahambi +. 8. Ant-bear +. 9. Hyena +. 10. Leopard +. 11. Baboon +. 12. Kanye stone +. 13. Kanye: part of twig +. 14. Ox. 15. Ox hoof.

baboon, *nhombela ya mfene*, the young baboon. They symbolise the *village*, because baboons never move from their chosen spot. "You never see the ruins of their habitations; though men may

787 build in their neighbourhood, these apes do not leave permanently,
825 you will see them coming back again next spring."

The following bones are asexual. There is only one of each kind in the set and it is not indicated whether it is male or female : the phalanx of a *lion* (ndjao), either male or female, taken either from the fore leg or from the hind leg, either on the left or on the right side. The lion is the chief of wild animals, so its phalanx represents the chief of the tribe, par excellence. It also designates White people, who are regarded as being as rich as kings! The astragalus of the *leopard*, *yingwe*, *shidya mafura*, the beast which eats fat and eats no grass, is also alone of its kind, the male only being taken ; it represents those who can choose their food, the rich, not the poor and wretched, "the chiefs and you White people," says Mankhelu! The *hyena*, *mhisi*, stands for the counsellors, the sycophants, the parasites ; they resemble the hyena, which follows the lion and the panther to eat the remains of their feasts, crunching the bones of a prey which it was not strong enough to kill! But the astragalus of the hyena also represents the wizards, because they eat the flesh of people whom they steal ; the ancestor-gods, because the hyena remains hidden in its hole during the day, like the psikwembu in their graves ; the chief himself, in as much as the chief also "eats" his subjects, and you cannot follow him and recover your property any more than you can a hyena!

The astragalus of the *ant-bear* (mhandjela), which digs the holes in which porcupines live, has also many meanings : the ancestor-gods, because they dwell in the earth and never come out in the day-time ; the power of death, because it digs the grave ; the chief himself, because ant-bears eat earth, and the chief also puts it to his mouth when sacrificing. He has the right to do so, when saying *tsu*, because the earth is his ; it belonged to his ancestors before him and he calls to them by its means (I. p. 405). Spoon used one of the claws of the ant-bear, instead of its astragalus.

A very curious bone is the one called *Shikwembu*, ancestor-god. It is a mhala astragalus found in the excrement of a hyena ; a most uncommon discovery, made by Mankhelu when on his way to Swaziland. The bone is worn down : it has evidently been bitten

by sharp teeth. I have explained (p. 376) how fittingly this bone was chosen to represent the spirits of the departed. They also have been swallowed by the earth, as the astragalus by the hyena, but return again to light and life in a new and divine existence! 787 825

The last astragalus of the set is the *malumbi*, the astragalus of the *shipene* or *mangulwe* antelope ; it is also asexual : *shirombe sha matiko, malumbyana wa tintibo, ntsinyarendjo*! the miserable of the land, the little antelope with white spots, the one which stops travellers (p. 347)! It plays a special part in the divinatory system, representing everything which is violent (lcba) : the chief, the enemy, and especially the mysterious power of Heaven. For that reason it is watched with great attention by those who cast bones in connection with rain. When it falls in the "mild" position, it means that "the eye of Heaven is open, the knot is untied, the mouth of Heaven is open, rain will fall!" Then Mankhelu will make the offering (mhamba) for rain ; first the four leaves, then, if this is not sufficient, and if the chief requires it, the sacrifice of the black ram (p. 322, 316).

I include in the category of bones the pieces of *Tortoise shell*, *mfutju*, four of which are found in Mankhelu's basket : *mbulwa wa mfutju*, the adult male tortoise, *nsati*, *ntibula ya mfutju*, the young tortoise. According to the way in which they fall, these objects designate peace or misfortune for the village, prosperity or starvation (1).

b) The second category comprises the objects which are not bones or parts of the body of an animal. The most conspicuous are the *sea-shells* (djuma, dji-ma) belonging to two different genera : the *Oliva* shells, representing the attributes of the male, assagais, virile courage, etc., the *Cypraea* shells, corresponding to the attributes of the female, baskets, pots, pregnancy, births, oxen for lobola, etc. 787

There are besides two *kanye stones* of an abnormal form, one

(1) One day, when travelling through heavy rain, Mankhelu found a tortoise and obtained one of his divinatory bones from it. Soon afterwards he came upon an animal (I did not catch its name) which had just died, and ate it. Some time later he was offered a big he-goat in a village. So when the tortoise falls together with the astragalus of that animal, it is a sign that plenty of meat will be forthcoming!

787 found by a woman, the *female nkanye*, the other by a man, the *male nkanye*. These abnormal stones are very rare. They represent the vegetable world, especially *medicines, drugs*. They are supplemented by a little piece of nkanye twig, *nhombela ya nkanye*, the girl of nkanye, which was cut by a girl of Mankhelu's village on a certain day when he went to his "bakokwana" (to the relatives of his mother) to make a sacrifice. Being their uterine nephew, he had special rights and took the opportunity of enriching his divinatory set with their assistance.

Two *stones* are also to be found in the basket : the first is *ribye ra ngwenya* or *shimidjya sha ngwenya*, a stone found in the stomach of a crocodile ; these stones are generally of a dark colour, and frequently represent mourning, defilement (khumo, nsila) ; the second is *ribye ra dayiman*, the diamond stone, not a real diamond unhappily, but a stone with a striking design, found on the road, or in distant lands, by a traveller. It means luck, money, riches brought from foreign countries, gold which is extracted from the soil, in the same way as was this stone. I have shown in the accompanying plate (p. 545) the most curious and rare of the contents of Mankhelu's basket. In that of Maselesele there were also two pieces of white china, which represented the Whites ; another Nkuna diviner had chosen the shuttle of a sewing-machine for the same purpose. But these are new-comers in the basket, and are not met with in the old sets.

Comparing the explanations of the old Nkuna Mankhelu, who had been initiated long before and was an experienced diviner, with those of Spoon who belonged to the Coast clans, and was still a beginner in the art, I found a remarkable agreement between them. There are, however, some differences which can be explained by the wonderful imagination of the diviners. For instance, the wild pig indicated for Spoon the ancestor-gods, because they dwell in the sacred woods and dig the earth, and also old relatives who are on the eve of becoming gods ; the duiker meant the wizard because it also walks during the night, and the traveller because it rarely rests.

Though the bones have a fixed and definite meaning, they can also designate other objects if it is possible to establish a connection

between the animal and these objects, and we know how quick the 787
Bantu mind is at discovering such relations between men and animals.

2) The Consultation of the divinatory bones and the rules for their interpretation.

I owe to a Tembe informant the following full description of the 787
sequence of acts performed in a consultation of the divinatory 755
bones. Suppose one of the inmates of the village to have been 791
suddenly taken ill. The people who dwell in the same hut will at once go to the headman, even if it is night-time ; he will come, inspect the patient, and, having convinced himself of the seriousness of the case, he will start immediately for the diviner's village, not forgetting to take with him the necklace of the patient with his protective amulets (timfisa p. 471) ; if the man did not wear timfisa, the headman will replace these by some roots of a common plant, the tjeke, p. 14, or even of a common grass, the ntlangi ; these roots will be rubbed against his forehead and against his chest and will then be called his *ntjuleko*. Having reached the diviner's village, the consultant briefly states the object of his visit. A mat is unrolled and the ntjuleko placed on it, somewhere at the side ; the diviner takes all his bones in his hand, holds them firmly, and having chewed a little piece of a magic root, (1) spits on them and throws them on to the mat, saying with emphasis : "Mhamoo!" Those attending the consultation answer in the same tone : "Hizwaa! Si ya vuma!" — "Yes! We are agreed." This throwing is only preliminary. By spitting over his bones the diviner wishes to awaken them (pfusha) to make them see (hanyanyisa). He then passes them to the consultant, who will himself throw them throughout the whole consultation, the diviner only holding his little stick and pointing to them in order to explain their significance.

In the first place the consultant takes the necklace of the patient 787
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(1) Mankhelu used for this purpose the bulb of a Liliacea called shirungulu, which has an agreeable scent.

787 or the above-mentioned roots, and rubs three or four bones against
755 them. These objects having been in close contact with the patient and containing his "nsila," the exudation of his body, establish a connection between him and the bones. The bones will then "know him" and throughout the operation these astragalus, which have been, so to speak, anointed with the "nsila" of the patient, will be watched with special interest; if they are "doubtful," hesitating (gome), the diviner will also have doubts about the revelations made by the others (1).

The consultant throws the bones for the first time, the diviner having asked: "What about the patient?" If the bones fall in a manner which corresponds to the state of the patient, all is well. The diviner will show with his stick that this correspondence exists. It is a proof that the bones have really awakened and are disposed to speak. The question is then put a second time in order that the first reply may be confirmed.

The way is now open for further inquiries; in the first place, what is the cause of the disease? Does it come from the ancestor-gods? From a male ancestor-god? From one on the paternal side? From great-grandfather so and so? From great-grandmother so and so? When the bones answer in the negative, another name is tried, and so the consultation proceeds by a process of elimination; the names of deceased great-uncles, parents, uncles, even of a son who may have died quite young are pronounced successively. If the ancestor-god who caused the disease is not found in the paternal line, then the same questions are put regarding the maternal ancestors, the bakokwana, the diviner himself suggesting to the consultant the names which are to be mentioned. It may be that the bones, which are often thrown two or three times for each name, will designate one of the ancestors. Then begins another series of questions. Why is the god angry? Is it because the patient has neglected his duties towards him? What does he ask for in order that he may be appeased? Goat's flesh? Clothing? Beer? Mealies? Who shall bring (tamela)

(1) If the diviner or his client consults for himself, he rubs these bones against his own forehead and his chest before throwing them on to the mat, and the connection is thus established.

787 the offering? The headman? An adult? A child? A certain
755 relation who is on bad terms with the patient and has sworn never to enter his village again? If the latter is designated he will have to come, after having first made the offering of reconciliation (described p. 398). The bones must likewise designate the person who will have to stab the victim, as also the person who will say tsu and pronounce the prayer. This may be a baby, and, in

Consulting the bones. Phot. A. Burd.

that case, his father will take him in his arms and pray instead of him. Women are often designated, as we saw on p. 411.

But it may happen that the bones do not agree that the disease has been caused by an ancestor-god at all. The consultation then takes another turn. Was it caused by a wizard? By a witch? Is it so and so? Or so and so? If no affirmative answer is given there then remains still another alternative. Has the patient been contaminated by the defilement of the bush (the dust of conta-

787 minated huts thrown down at crossroads) or of the footprints
755 (mitila, p. 478)?

Such is the procedure followed in a consultation regarding disease. It will be modified according to circumstances, when the advice of the bones is asked for in other difficulties.

If from the beginning there is no correspondance whatever between the manner in which the bones have fallen and the case for which they are consulted, if they "refuse to speak," the diviner will perhaps roll up his mat and leave the hut ; he will then try to throw the bones on the square, or in the bush, or behind the hut, and the consultation will be continued there till a clear answer is given.

787 In order to see if the bones have really consented to speak, three or four things are specially examined : the *side* on which the bones have fallen, the *direction* towards which they look, their *disposition* or the position they have taken in regard to each other, and the *relation* of the male and the female bones towards each other, viz., are all the male or all the female bones on the same side? Each object can fall on two sides, all of them having a *convex* and a *concave* side. If they fall so as to show the convex side (bukhatsha position), they are said *to be full* (ku tala), or *to stand on their legs* and to *march forward* (ku famba) ; this is the *positive side*, which I indicate by + ; if they fall showing their concave side (lwandla position) they are *empty* (ku pshya, image of a lake which has dried up), or lie *on their back* : this is the *negative position* which I indicate by —. In the first case, the person or principal represented by the bones is happy (tjaka), at peace (rula), active, marching, powerful ; in the second he is tired (karala), ashamed (tingana), powerless, dying (fa). Astragalus of goats, and sheep on their convex side, show that the inhabitants of the village, or the chief, are in good health and good spirits, working, succeeding ; if on their concave side, they show that those persons are lying ill or dying. On the other hand, the astragalus of the ant-bear in the positive position indicates that the digger is digging a grave, that the ancestor-gods are awake and probably ready to punish, etc. So it would not be correct to call the convex the favourable, and the concave the unfavourable side. The first is the *active*

787 position, the second the *passive* one. Most of the astragalus may fall not only on these two principal sides, but also on the right or on the left side. The right side is called *ntjumba*, and is somewhat convex. Mankhelu explained to me its meaning by himself imitating the position (See the accompanying plate). He sits with his shield protecting him, with *his chest full*, ready to

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Phot. H. A. Junod.

Mankhelu imitating the "ntjumba" position.

787 spit (like a cat), and his assagay lifted ready to be thrown ; this is the position of hostility, of anger. The left side is called *dzwari*, or *minkono*, viz., the elbows ; it is somewhat concave. It is the position of a man half leaning on his elbows, *his chest empty*, enjoying life and not threatening others, the assagay being turned towards the soil (See the next plate). These two positions, which I represent by ×, the sign of multiplication, for *ntjumba*, and :, the sign of division, for *minkono*, are rarely met with. Spoon knew nothing of them. They belong to a more elaborate art. In fact

787 the two first positions are by far the most common. Let us see what is the meaning of some of the divinatory objects in these different positions :

Baboon +, the village is firm ; no ruins! Baboon —, the village is destroyed ; disease or death ; that which you eat does not remain inside : dysentery.

Ancestor-god +, the gods are happy and thankful. Ancestor-

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Phot. H. A. Junod.

Mudhela imitating the "minkomo" position.

787 god —, they sleep ; there is nothing to fear ; ×, they are angry, they speak in a low voice ; : , they speak mildly.

Kanye +, the drugs have their eyes open (the two kernels inside the nkanye stone have been removed, and it appears to have two eyes, which are visible in the positive position and hidden in the negative) ; the drugs help, cure. Kanye —, the eyes of the drugs are closed ; the medicine-man will not succeed.

Crocodile stone +, the country is at peace, the village is happy,

787 no misfortune. Crocodile stone —, the crocodile is hidden in the water, it waits for you and will kill you : starvation, death, defilement.

Tortoise-shells +, the village is smeared with ochre ; every one perspires agreeably, walking slowly as tortoises do when they come out to enjoy the rain, and eat grass. People drink beer, and have plenty to eat. Tortoise-shell —, misfortune in the village ; everything looks black (the concave side of the tortoise-shell is rough and more or less black). Nothing is cared for on the square ; the grass grows there ; disorder, death, starvation. The tortoises are hidden in their holes.

Female sea-shells +, the rivers are full ; pregnancy takes its normal course ; the wealth which comes by the sea in the steamers is well protected. Female sea-shells —, the rivers are empty ; birth is imminent, either favourable or otherwise ; there has been a wreck at sea, and you will find riches on the shore!

Male sea-shells +, the assagais are in good condition ; men succeed in their undertakings. Male sea-shells —, the assagais are broken ; the army will be defeated.

Sea-shells in the negative position, showing their opening, also mean a mouth open to laugh or to cry : if all are in this position, it means lamentation, because when all the people open their mouths together, it is always to lament ; when two or three only show their teeth, it means laughter, as people never laugh all together, but only a few at a time!

While the side on which the bones fall must be considered before all else in the interpretation, the *direction* in which they look is also very important, as it reveals the intentions and movements of all the personages represented ; their *arrangement* shows the relation between these persons ; moreover if all, or most, of the astragalus of the same sex fall in the same position, this is a sign to be particularly noted for the following reason. If a woman is ill and you wish to receive directions as to what to do for her, you cast the bones ; if the she-goat falls on the negative side, this proves that the Word is speaking; but if all the other feminine astragalus show their concave side also then no doubt remains ; the Word is really speaking ; a valuable confirmation has been given!

3) Some cases of astragalomancy.

787 My informants explained to me a certain number of cases which will illustrate the system of astragalomancy better than anything else. I have published illustrations of seven of these in an article in the *Bulletin IX of the Society of Geography of Neuchâtel*. They were given to me by Spoon. I shall here re-publish one of them, the case of the sick mother, and two new ones, much more complex, which I owe to Mankhelu.

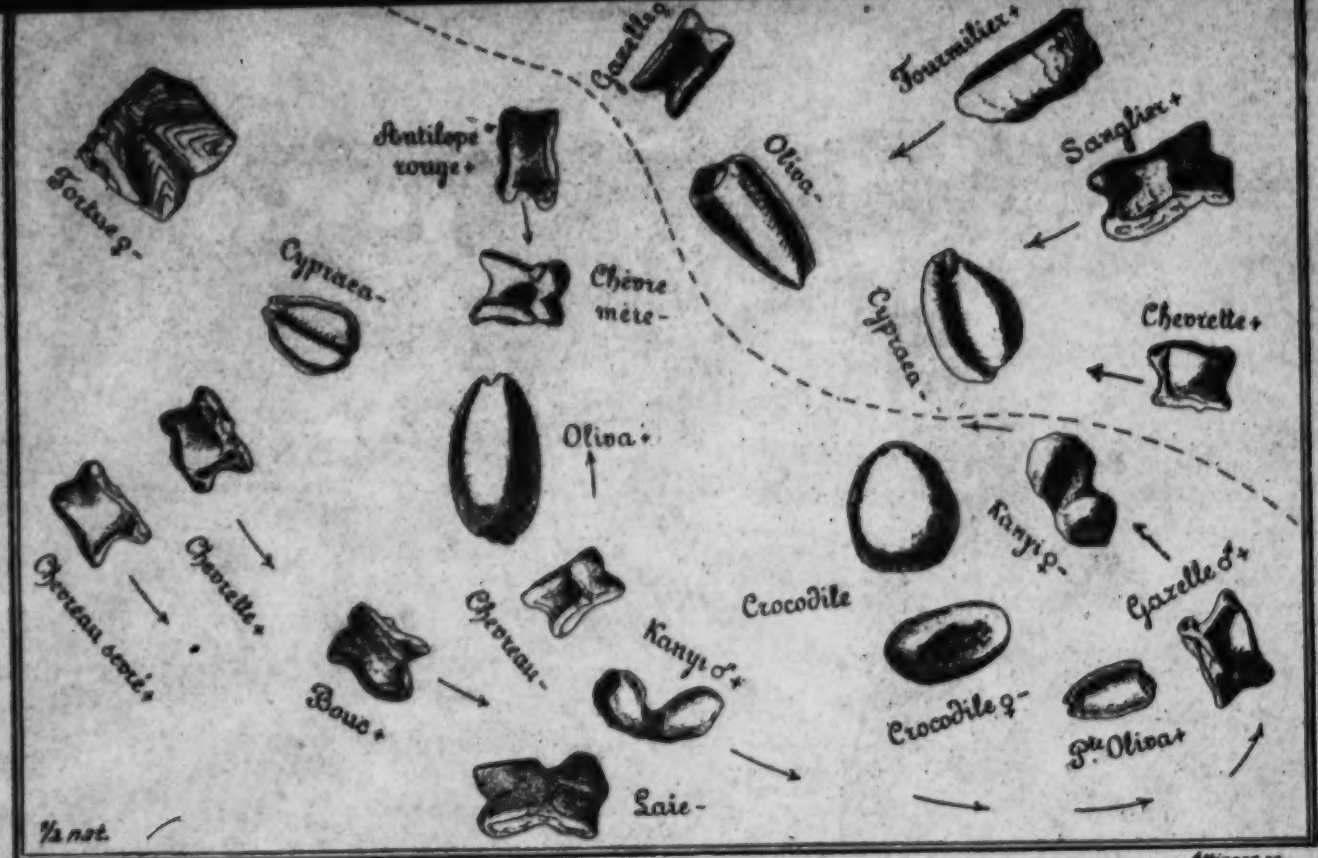
These three cases will be sufficient to illustrate the divinatory system. Let me give, as a preliminary, the two following instances :

Prediction of rain : Ram × and Mhala ×, the chief is full of confidence ; the He-goats, the headmen are glad and thankful ; Mbalala +, the chief is happy ; it will be wet in the forest! Tortoises —, there is black everywhere ; the soil is dark on account of the rain. Olivae +, all the huts are closed because nobody dares to go out lest he be soaked! Baboons +, the village will have plenty to eat. If Baboon were —, the rain would be accompanied by bad winds, which would break down the mealies and bring starvation.

The place where the timbhorola (the dirt which falls from the body of a convalescent during the hondlola rite, p. 471) *must be thrown*. Here the diviner proceeds by questions, in order to obtain the directions required. He asks : "In the river?" and throws the bones ; if the astragalus of the patient falls in the + position, Male Tortoise also, while the female astragalus are on their elbows, playing, smiling ; if the Lion is — (the bad bloods have been overcome) ; if Hyena is — (the disease which kills is vanquished), if the Ant-bear is — (the gods sleep), and the female Tortoises are +, meaning that women will soon be able to smear their bodies with ochre, then the answer is : yes. If this is not the case, he asks : "Into an ants'nest?" and again throws the bones, until the answer is positive.

The chiefs always consult the bones in order to know if the time has come *to sow the seeds* of pumpkins and millet. If all the Sea-Shells fall showing their mouths (yahlama), and the astragalus of the ram and ewe are in the + position, then you may sow.

See, p. 483, how the bones are consulted in order to obtain directions *in the rites of exorcism*, and, p. 525, how they help to *discover the wizards*.



Reproduced from "Les Bas Ronga."

The case of the sick mother.

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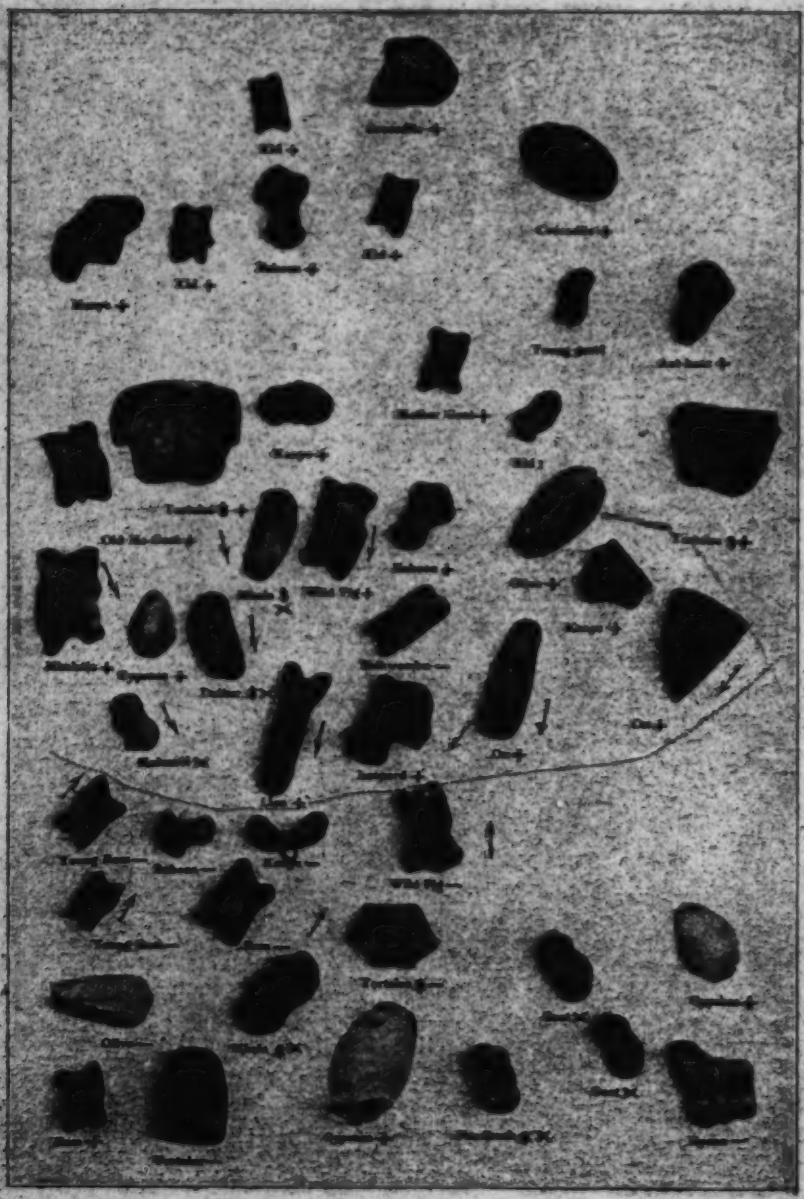

(One third of the natural size)

The battle of Mondi

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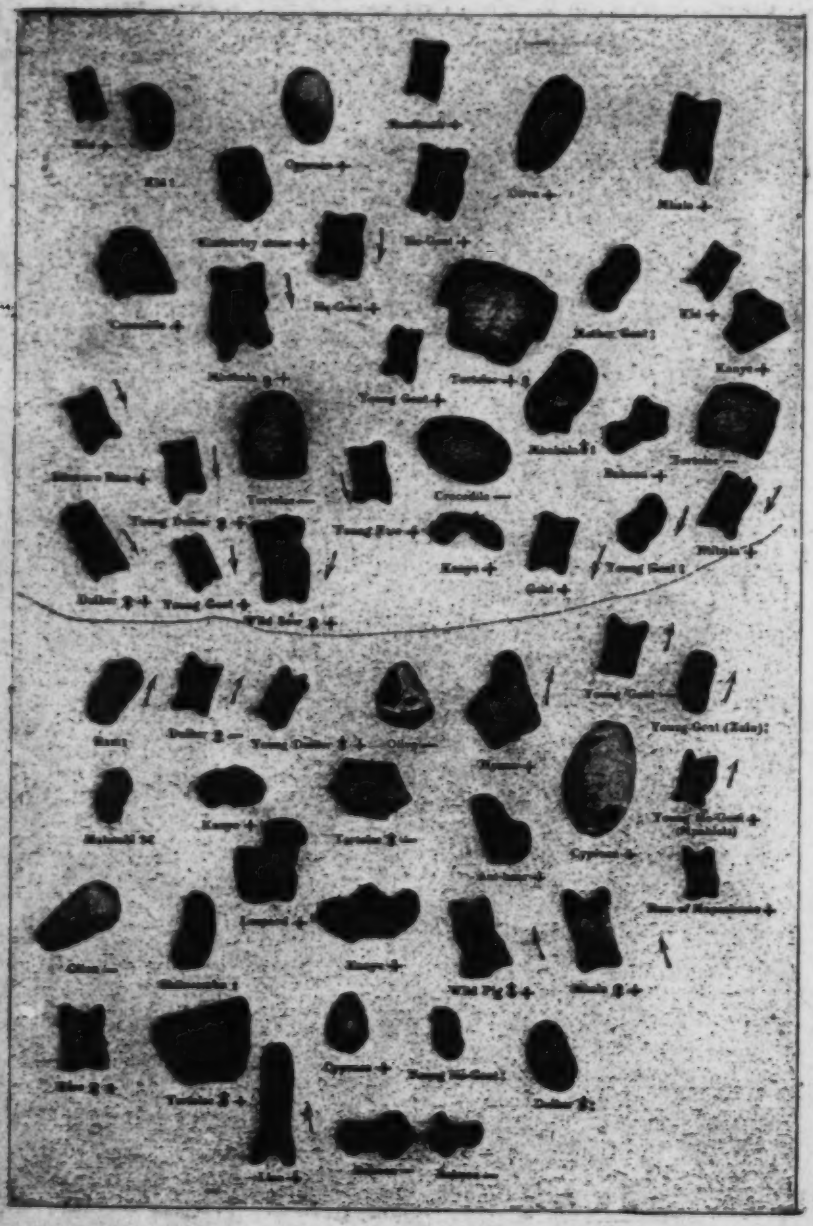

(One third of natural size).

Prophecy of a Migration.

a) *The case of the sick mother* (p. 557).

787 In the centre we see *She-Goat* —; the mother is sick, on her back!
755 Above, the red Antelope, Malumbi + and below, Oliva +, are looking towards her ; these are the malignant influences which have thrown her into this state. *Cypraea* — wide-open, on her left, shows that she is suffering from dysentery! On the extreme left we see *Weaned Kid* + and *Young Goat* + on their legs, walking ; they are going towards *He-goat*, the father, who is also +, not quite discouraged, and pointing toward the *kanye*, the medicine by which he hopes to cure his wife. By so doing he keeps in check *Wild Sow* — the ancestor-god, who is thus prevented from adding his hostile influence to those already active. Near him is *Kid* — a young boy on his back, quite in despair, who keeps close to his mother. The father, having spoken with his children, starts for the bush, following the three arrows shown at the bottom of the plate. On the right, we see *Gazelle, Duiker* + ; this is he again returning from his walk as a traveller (the duiker, being always on his legs, often represents travellers). He holds the drug he has dug up *(Kanye —)*. But this kanye stone is on the bad side ; itwas difficult to find the roots, which penetrated into the soil, as do the two protuberances of the stone! Moreover two *Crocodiles' stones* speak of death, and the little *Oliva* + looks at the father in a hostile manner. The bones of the upper part, on the right, contain no encouragement whatever. *Wild Pig* + is an old relative coming to pay a visit to the sick woman ; he is accompanied by a girl, *Young She-Goat*, below him, who also goes towards the village with lamentations, shown by the open *Cypraea* in front of her ; on the top, *Ant-bear* + comes to dig the grave! Near him *Duiker* — is on its back, without strength, whilst *Tortoise* —, in the left hand corner, is also lying on her back ; no agreeable perspiration, no peace, no happiness.

The bones here give a triple revelation ; they depict the actual position, show its cause, and indicate its course and the remedy ; the disease is serious, but there is ground for hope if the father finds the right drug. If the astragalus of the He-Goat had been on its back, and that of the Wild Sow on its legs, directed against the patient, the case would have been hopeless.

b) *The battle of Moudi* (p. 558).

On the 6th of November, 1901, when the hostile army of Sikororo was signalled (I. p. 513), Mankhelu, seized with a terrible dread, consulted his bones. The Word spoke with such precision that one would be tempted to believe that the message was touched up post eventum. But Mankhelu asserts that many witnesses were present and testify to the prophecy of the victory which occurred the following day. 787

The bones fell in two lots, first, those on the upper two thirds of the plate, on the side of the diviner, and consequently representing his own army : complete victory! Second, those in the lower third of the plate, representing the enemy : absolute rout! I have separated these two parts with dots. Let us look at the lower part first. Three Rams on their backs : the chiefs killed ; the Ram is Rios, the acting chief of the Sikororo clan, the great enemy. Yesterday a ram was sacrificed to ask the gods to give victory. Its astragalus was taken and added to the other bones, to represent Rios ; here he is, dead on the battle-field! Close by, Wild Pig and Kanye are also on their backs : their medicine-man has been unable to protect them. Baboon is —, the village of Sikororo is destroyed! Tortoises —, no peace in that village, they are black! No resplendent ochre, but darkness and misfortune for them! Female Mhala ×, the women have their chests full of grief ; they cry. See all the female astragalus on their backs, or on their sides, in dreadful misfortune. Oliva —, the weapons broken, powerless. Two Cyprea +, no laughter, faces dark! Hyena —, Titus, a Pedi Christian who acted as counsellor to the chief, the sycophant of Rios, has been killed. See, in the left corner, at the bottom, Ram +. This is old Sikororo, the chief who dwelt in the mountains and had not given his consent to the treacherous attack. He is alone, unaware of what has been done by Rios, the chief regent. The Nkunas will not interfere with the good old man.

On the Nkuna side, Lion and Malumbi are in the foreground ; the one + the other ×, viz. full of courage : they represent the superior powers : you, Ba-Moneri (the missionaries), who helped us in that terrible hour! Leopard +, the sons of the chief are also running furiously towards the enemy. Ox +, the totem of the Nkuna clan is in good order ; he is safe. Shikwembu sleeps ; the ancestor-gods are not anxious about us ; they rest peacefully. Wild Pig +, the medicine-man who sprinkled the army is happy ; all his drugs (Kanye +) are

787 acting, they have their eyes open. Look behind Malumbi ; all the troops of warriors, Mhunti, Mhala, are in the ntjumba position, in high spirits, and their arms (Oliva +) are all strong and victorious ; the guns will not miss fire. Behind them, the kids and young goats, little boys and girls, are playing, quietly leaning on their elbows (minkono position). The chief (Mbabala +) who remained at home, is happy, as is also the old He-goat, his uncle, who did not take part in the battle. Ant-bear +, the ancestor-god of the village, is also quiet ; the two Tortoises + warm themselves in the rays of the sun ; the women still smear their bodies with fat and ochre!

The battle of the 6th of November, 1901, was a great event for the Nkuna tribe. For me it proved a wonderful opportunity of witnessing some of the most curious customs of the tribe. I owe to it this consultation, the narrative of Mankhelu's mhamba (p. 418) and the knowledge of many military rites (I. p. 476).

c) *Prophecy of a Migration* (p. 559).

On the day of the renewal of his drugs, which was a feast for his whole village (p. 454), Mankhelu threw his bones, which promised marvellous things : a throng of distinguished visitors were about to come and make their submission to him and increase his power ; princes, rich people laden with wealth! As Mankhelu was residing on the Mission farm, he said to me one day : "Be happy, my missionary, you will have new tenants who will increase the value of your farm! They are preparing their loads now... My god, Shiluvane, has revealed this to me. They will come before the tilling season begins. If they do not come I will give you an ox!" Some months later, no one having appeared on the horizon, I inquired from my old friend as to my ox. With a good-natured laugh he said : "Look! I will show you how the bones lied to me," and he placed his sixty-two bones on the mat as they had fallen on that day.

Once more we have the two halves, which I have separated by the dotted line ; in the lower part the migrating clan arriving, in the upper, Mankhelu's village welcoming it. Two Baboons —, the village is ruined, they leave it ; their chiefs are Lion, who is +, in good health, and Ram : laughing, smiling, playing. Malumbi is ×; his chest is full, because he is running away ; he is a powerful man, but he is out of breath. Near Ram we have his daughter Duiker ♀ on her back : he offers her in

marriage. She will even give us a child (young male Duiker near her!) The child will be a boy, as he is surrounded by Tortoise ♂ and the male shell Oliva. These chiefs may have been dispossessed of their own country; this is shown by the Ram of Mapsakomo; this astragalus was taken after a sacrifice made at the death of Mapsakomo, the rival of Muhlaba, who died of anger when his right to the chieftainship of the Nkuna clan was forfeited (I. p. 412). Young He-Goat, in front of him, also proves the foreign origin of the visitors; it is an astragalus which Mankhelu obtained in the Mpahlela district, South of the Oliphant. Young goat, playing, indicates the same thing, its astragalus having come from Swaziland. In front of her is another Young goat —; this is a girl who is offered to us in marriage, perhaps a second, perhaps the same as Duiker ♀; at any rate the prediction is confirmed. This Young goat is called that of *ringela bovumba*, because its astragalus has been taken from the animal sacrificed in the rite of removing the malediction of bovumba (I. p. 194). It may perhaps indicate that the misfortune of these noble strangers will also be removed when they come and dwell with us! Hyena is in the + position: they are cunning people; nobody will dare to run after them! They keep firm hold of what they possess or have stolen! Leopard +: they are rich people, living on fat and flesh. The two Cypraea +, indicate the sea and the wealth brought into the country by the steamers, which they carry with them! One might think that they were White people! Wild Pig +, they have their medicine-man and their drugs (Kanye +); their children (young He-goat: and Duiker ♂) play and dance! Their women (Mhala + Ewe +) are covered with ochre as shown by Tortoise +. Their gods, Shikwembu and Ant-bear +, are with them and have "given them the road"; they are pointing in the same direction. "Look at Ewe, the old woman, the widow of the chiefs! What has she hanging round her neck? — Oliva, a crocodile-tooth, an amulet well smeared with protective drugs?" Such is the procession of the new-comers. 787

In the upper half, we see the village of Mankhelu welcoming the new-comers; the young children and the women run in front (Duiker ♀+, Young Duiker +, Young Goats + and Young Ewe +, Ntibula +); they are curious, they are anxious to see who the visitors are. Behind them come the old people: Mbabala ♀+, the wife of the chief; the chief himself, Muhlaba, Mbabala ♂:, is on his elbows, quiet and smiling, in no way fearing this peaceful invasion, whilst his mother, Mother-Goat, comes also, dancing. Baboon +; does not this show that the village is secure? Mankhelu himself is represented by three bones: Ram +

787 and two He-Goats +. He comes with dignity to meet the arrivals. Behind, in the village itself (at the top of the plate), boys (kids) play beneath the shade of the trees (kanye) ; two women are killing each other's lice! i. e. Reedbuck and Cypraea, the female sea-shell! etc. One of the Tortoises is —, showing its black side. But this is not a sign of disease or defilement ; the village has been cleaned, the black soil is visible everywhere because it has been well swept and the huts also have been smeared afresh. The black colour also indicates that the bush has been burnt ; it prophesies the time when these strangers will come, when the bush-fire has reduced all the grass to ashes, in September or October, at the end of the winter The Tortoise in front of He-Goat is + ; this is the face of Mankhelu, radiant with joy. "Mahlwen ka mbulwa ku nyuka!" — "on the face of the old man there is sweet perspiration." His drugs are all right (kanye +, means both drugs and shade). Crocodile is —, the rivers are low ; this confirms the forecast of the time of the arrival. The Kimberley stone is + ; the earth is solid, firm. Oliva +, the sky is clear, we are happy! When we rise in the morning we look towards the East! etc.

—"Wonderful!" said I to Mankhelu. "Only they did not come!" — "Never mind," he answered. — "Then the bones have deceived you!" — "Not at all! If it is not this year, it will be next year! Moreover, we diviners are not afraid of being told that our bones lie. When, later on, our prophecies are fulfilled, then people wonder! They are convinced. And after all, if the Word lies, it is not my fault!" — "How is that?" — "We do not put our ideas into them (a hi ti rumeteli) ; we merely interpret them ; it is they who speak!" — "Then they have a power in themselves?" — "No! the power is in the chest of the diviner." Such was the conversation with which the demonstration closed. I shall return to it presently.

4) The initiation of the diviners.

791 Astragalomancy is not an esoteric art ; every one in the tribe knows the bones, and their significance, and all the men attend the consultations and help in the interpretation. However, every one is not a diviner and an initiation is necessary to become a fully qualified practitioner. If a young man feels that he has the qualities of perspicuity and shrewdness necessary for the practice of the art, he begins by collecting the astragalus one after

another. This is a long job. Spoon told me that, having once been annoyed by a forecast made by a diviner, he thought: "I might as well consult the bones myself!" So he picked up the astragalus of a goat in a hut. He obtained others when hunting; on the road to Johannesburg he saw a curious stone, which became the lucky stone in his set. When he had ten astragalus, he began to throw them for his comrades, giving them advice in their love affairs! Then he consulted his bones before going to hunt and noticed that, when the astragalus of the duiker fell in the negative position, he killed game. But he was still an apprentice; he had not the right to receive money, but only bracelets which hung on the string of his basket (1). When the apprentice has earned enough of these bracelets, he goes to an old practitioner, gives them to him as a fee, and asks to be initiated, so that he may become a master himself. Shishakane, in the Movumbi district, and Ñwahoñwana, in the Mabota clan, were those to whom such applications were made. The following are the ceremonies of initiation amongst the Ba-Ronga. 791

The master takes all the bones collected by the apprentice, kills a fowl, introduces them into the body (2), and cooks the whole. Then the candidate eats the fowl, returns home with his bones and buries the astragalus on the road, at the entrance of the village. He hides himself at that spot, to watch. When a woman passes, he exhumes a female astragalus; when a man, a male one; the he-goat, in the case of a man of ripe age, the kid, in that of a boy, etc. In this way all his bones are said to "have returned to him." Then he again calls on the master. The old man orders him to close his eyes and places before him all his bones in a line; the candidate must recognise them all by touch and take them all up one after the other, pronouncing the name of each. The examination evidently aims at ascertaining if he knows them thoroughly. Having successfully passed through the trial, the

(1) The divinatory basket of Spoon is shown on the plate p. 124 No. 2.

(2) I suppose that he adds his own bones to those of the applicant, in order that their divinatory virtue may enter the bones of the candidate. This is the rule followed in the Nkuna initiation. See later.

791 new diviner must undergo a hondlola, a long ablution with nkuhlu leaves, after which he is initiated ; he has the right of asking payment in cash, up to the sum of three pence. For a shilling, he will consent to throw the bones all day until they have revealed everything.

Amongst the Nkunas the initiation is somewhat different ; the apprentice does not practise his art until he has earned a goat. He practises in foreign villages, where he is not known and where people believe that he has already been initiated. Having succeeded, he brings the animal to his master and will then "have his bones cooked for him" (a ta psekeriwa bula). One of the forelegs and the diaphragm are put in a pot together with a root called banga. The set of bones of the master and that of the apprentice are added to them, and the whole is cooked. When the meat is done, the contents of the pot are poured into a lihlelo basket, and both suck in the broth with their lips. They then eat the meat, which has been cut into pieces, without touching it with their hands, seizing it with their teeth alone, "the same as vultures do, which scent meat from far away." The heart of one of these birds has been cooked with the other drugs "so that the new diviner will be able to dream of things which are far away and go straight to them." He will be able to go and guess anything at once without fear or hesitation.

The bones have remained in the lihlelo basket, and another drug is used to wash them ; this is the bark of a tree called *mbandjwa*. The new diviner must then show his powers of divination : all his astragalus being mixed with those of the master, he must pick them out without a mistake, calling them by the name he has given them. If he fails, the trial must be gone through again later ; he returns home and the bones are given a rest ; he then comes another day and the two sets are again dipped, this time into beer ; the beer is drunk by both the master and the apprentice, the bones are washed and thrown, and the latter must now pick them out again. He will probably succeed, and so becomes a master. But the old diviner gives him one of the bones of his own set, which will "reign over the set of the initiated." This bone will always be considered first ; it is the *father* and *mother* of the set.

If the other bones indicate a bad omen, the new diviner will not be troubled so long as the king of the set shows a good one. If, on the other hand, the king is in the — position, or in the × position, the young man will fear to give a favourable prophecy. 791

The diviner (wa bula) is in most cases at the same time a ñanga, a medicine-man, and he will probably initiate the candidate into the knowledge of his drugs also. "Because," said Mankhelu, "to possess the Word alone is of little use : you need also the *mbhulo*, the magic medicines." The price paid to the initiator was formerly 80 hoes, or a wife, and the initiated, when calling at the village of his master, used to sleep in the hut of this woman. Being in possession of these new qualifications the newly-qualified diviner has the right of *planting his magic forked branch* (shiphandje. See Illustration I. p. 5 and II. p. 495). This rite is subject to many rules, which the initiator teaches his pupil ; the latter must dig a certain quantity of white sand in a deep pool, and bury it in his hut where he intends placing the branch. This will then be "planted in the abyss" (shidziba). Should the hut burn, or should enemies set fire to it, water will spring from the depths and prevent the shipandje from being consumed. Moreover a sacrifice is made to the ancestors who transmitted their drugs to the initiator, and the psanyi of the slaughtered sheep is used to smear the branch. An intimate relation remains between the old doctor and his pupil. When the former dies, the latter must "raise," or "awaken his drugs" by a number of ceremonies which aim at removing the defilement brought upon them by this death. These are rules which apply to medicine-men as well as to diviners.

The forked pole is both the laboratory and the altar (it is also called gandjelo, p. 388) and also the museum of the magician. He hangs to it his calabashes of drugs, his basket of bones, the psirungulo (part of the victims preserved as religious amulets, p. 472) and any valuable objects that he may possess. When Mankhelu had made some money by his bone-throwing or his medical practice, he used to leave the coins during the night at the foot of the branch, in order to inform his gods of his success!

I am unable to say whether, in former times, the diviners *formed a class* apart within the tribe, better defined, more close and secret

791 than is at present the case. It may be so, as the hondlola by which they pass from apprenticeship to mastership is a true rite of integration, by which they enter upon a new condition and acquire a special position. At every new moon henceforth they will have to wash their bones ritually in order to remove the defilement of the preceding month, after which they will smear them with psanyi.

When a diviner finds that he is not successful in his forecasts, he consults another member of the fraternity, who tells him to offer such and such a victim to an ancestor-god who was himself a bone-thrower, and who is supposed to have given the bones to his unsuccessful descendant. The spirit of interpretation of the deceased will then enter into the supplicant.

In order to attract customers, Mankhelu kept a little pellet of black grease amongst his bones. When he arrived at a place to practise his art, he took a little of this grease and placed it on a glowing cinder, arranging the bones all round, and the smoke which rose from the fat acted as a summons to the people. "So I saw one coming from this direction with an ox, another from another direction with a goat, and made good profit!"

Women may also become bone-throwers, but this is a rare occurrence.

5) The importance of the divinatory bones.

787 From all the foregoing information it may easily be gathered that the
791 art of bone-throwing is by no means child's play, nor mere quackery by which astute sooth-sayers deceive their credulous fellows. It is a true art which the diviners practise *in all sincerity*, themselves believing that they receive objective revelations through its means. This sincerity is attested by many proofs.

1) The fact, already mentioned, that it is not a secret, esoteric art, but that all know its rules and take part in the interpretation.

2) The confidence which diviners have in the power of their bones, and the strong attachment which they profess for their divinatory basket (1). Each of their astragalus bears a name which reminds them

(1) The conversation, just referred to, which I had with Mankhelu after his explanation of the unfulfilled prophecy, is very striking in this respect. It concluded as follows : — "Mankhelu," I said to him, "you see that your bones deceive you! They

787 of the person who gave it to them, the circumstances in which it was
791 found, and some of the triumphs of their career. Their whole life is connected with these bones, which they truly love and to which they are bound by all the fibres of their hearts!

Of course diviners are *shrewd*! Their interpretation does not proceed from mathematic evidence, but from their extraordinary powers of imagination. Tortoise in the negative position may at the same time mean black earth, death, defilement, a well-swept village, the burnt bush, according to the requirements of the case ; but this is fair play and everyone approves of their ingenuity ; it is not a conscious attempt to deceive. It is evident that the predictions often remain unfulfilled, as in the case of Mankhelu's prophecy. Or the exact reverse of the forecast happens. One of my evangelists, Filipi Mabemane, when still a heathen, went to consult a Matjolo diviner regarding the birth of a child which was shortly to take place. "It will be a boy, and he will live" was the answer. Actually, it was a girl and she died! So many people are more or less sceptical and say : "Tinhlolo i ntlhangana na pso!" — "The bones tell the truth when by chance it so happens!" However their faith is not impaired for long! The anxiety to know the future is so great that they consult anew, but not the same diviner. People say : "Psa mu hlula," — "He has been overcome," and go to another! Qualified doctors sometimes experience similar treatment even amongst the Whites! Viguet once quarelled with a bone-thrower. The man of art contended that he always told the truth. "What did you tell me?" said Viguet. "You told me that I should get plenty of oxen and goats. Where are they? And why did you not tell me : 'Hanya, hanya, hanya... Live, live, live... there will come a day when something will happen and we shall quarrel!' " But the sceptics are rare. Faith in the bones is blind, but it is great!

How is this confidence, which both diviners and their customers have in the divinatory bones, to be explained?

are old, dry, dead things which cannot help you ! Come to the light of the true Revelation of Jesus Christ." — "You are right, Moneri," answered my friend. "I am old! I cannot use my bones any more, as I no longer travel for trade or feasting ! I shall have to come to the Church by and by." — "If that is so, let me have your basket ; it interests me very much. I will pay for it." — "He ! Moneri ! Impossible !" — "Why ? At any rate sell me the Son, if you wish to keep the Father !" — "No ! I want to keep the Son." — "Then give me the Father !" — "Never !" said he quite scandalised. — "You see that your heart is still in it, old chap !" — "Yes. When a child has dysentery, can I leave it so ? Must I not consult the bones to know what drug to give ?..." I did not succeed that day in buying either Son or Father. However, the diviner died some years later and his heirs consented to sell me one of his sets, which is now in my possession.

787 Does it come from a *religious belief*? It is not easy to say definitely to
791 what extent the divinatory art rests on religion. On the one hand, the power of interpretation of the bones comes from the ancestor-gods who were bone-throwers themselves, and they are invoked to give or to revive this power. Mankhelu even told me that the prophecy of the arrival of the strangers had been inspired in him by his deceased father Shiluvane. But the Bula, the Word, is not generally looked on as being the utterance of the ancestor-gods. The bones are, in a certain sense, *superior to the gods* whose intentions they disclose. The Bula is the revelation of a more or less impersonal power, independent of the gods.

787 It is undeniable that the divinatory art is *essentially magical*; it rests
789 on those universal axioms of primitive mentality which are deeply engrained in the Bantu mind (p. 368) and this is sufficient to account
791 for the indisputable value which it possesses in the eyes of the Thongas. Like replaces like. By virtue of mere external similarity one object can signify another. Thus human beings are represented by animals which resemble them in a certain point. The reedbuck which wanders during the night stands for the wizards who do the same; the hyena, which eats the remains of the lion's feast, is the parasite who follows the chief, etc. Thus there are representative and represented objects. But like also acts on like: in some mysterious way the fate of the representative object will be the fate of the object represented. There is no doubt that diviners sometimes claim not only the power to form a diagnosis, to discover causes and give advice, but to influence the course of events themselves and determinate certain results. Mankhelu believed that he had contributed to the defeat of the Sikororo tribe when the bones so vividly depicted the rout of their army. If imitative magic controls the divinatory art, the part played by communionist magic is equally great. The part represents the whole. The astragalus, which is but a small bone, represents the whole body, and its fate prophecies the fate of the entire animal or person represented by it. The Native mind has a much profounder conception of the unity of the animal and human worlds than we have. Spoon once said to me mysteriously: "The astragalus of the goat truly represents the people of the village, because these animals live in the village; they know us, they know what is in us." Observe also how the consultant takes the amulets of the patient and rubs them against the bones in order that they may be able to speak the truth about him. These amulets contain the nails and hair of the patient if they have been tied round his neck in the hondlola ceremony. Moreover they are covered with his "nsila," the exudation of his body,

the material representation of his personality. By this contact the patient has in a way become a part of the "complexus Bula" and what happens to the bones will also happen to him ; what is said by the bones will henceforth apply directly to him. This magic conception of Nature is probably the profound and secret reason why the diviners believe so firmly in their art. 787 789 791

On the other hand, this art is so perfect that bone-throwers can derive very great satisfaction from the practice of it. It must be born in mind that, in fact, all the elements of Native life are represented by the objects contained in the basket of divinatory bones. It is a resumé of their whole social order, of all their institutions, and the bones, when they fall, provide them with an instantaneous picture of all that may befall them. This system is so elaborate that I do not hesitate to say that, together with their language, their folklore, their lobola customs and their burial rites, it is the product of their psychic life which shows most intelligence. If the premises of divination are accepted, astragalomancy seems to me vastly superior to cheiromancy and all the other systems which have been invented by us. It is also superior to the divination by four tablets of ivory or wood practised by a certain number of South African tribes, a description of which will be found in Appendix VI (1). 787 181

But if this system of divination is a proof of great intelligence, it must be confessed that *its results*, as shown in the psychic life of the tribe, 787 155 182

(1) There are some grounds for thinking that divination by astragalus bones is very old in the history of mankind. The Greeks practised *astragalomancy*. In a paper to which I shall refer in App. VI, the Rev. N. Roberts mentions the temple of Dodone, in which, according to Cicero, there was a large brass basin with the statue of a man upon it, and this man held in his hands a whip with three straps from which hung small astragalus bones. When these bones were set in motion by the wind, they struck against the basin and the sounds thus produced had a prophetic character. This was astragalomancy, but of a very different kind from that just described. Aristotle makes frequent allusions to the astragalus bone and says, inter alia, that one of its sides, named *coon*, represents the figure 6 ; another, named *chion*, the figure 1, etc. This shows that in his time the astragalus bone was already identified with the dice. The dice, also called *αστραγαλος* in Greek is simply an astragalus bone whose sides have been cut so as to form a perfect cube. We find traces of the use of the astragalus even further back in the past. Angelo Mosso, quoted by the same author, asserts that he found many astragalus in Italy, where they were used in connection with primitive religion as far back as the neolithic period. The discovery in the lake of Neuchâtel of a collection of more than thirty astragalus in the lake dwellers' station of Auvernier may be a proof that these bones did in truth play a part in the customs of primitive humanity. If this is so, then the Bantus have preserved the astragalus as they did the wooden pillow of the old Egyptians, the ancestrolatry of the Mousterians and the "mbaya" (p. 93) of the Libyans. The astragalus is still employed in play to represent cattle by Swiss children in the Canton of Valais, and I am told that the South African Boers have the same custom, and call these bones dol-osse.

787 are most *deplorable*. These practices kill in ovo any serious attempt at
155 the use of reason or experience in practical life. Native doctors might
have arrived at a useful and beneficent knowledge of the medicinal
182 virtues of vegetables, if they had studied them carefully. But why
should they trouble themselves with study, when a single cast of the bones at once tells them what root must be taken to cure the disease? (Compare my account of diagnosis, p. 475). Further, the bones annihilate the moral conscience, or, at any rate, they prevent any healthy development of this precious faculty. When overtaken by misfortune the Bantu might be moved to introspection to review his conduct, and see what wrong actions he had committed. From this self-examination, moral progress might result. But such trouble is useless! The bones are thrown. They reveal that misfortune was caused by such and such spiritual influences, wizards, gods, defilement, Heaven, that it must be combated by such and such means, — a drug, or a packet of drugs, a victim, male or female, offered by so and so, in such and such a manner. This is all-sufficient and the conscience remains dormant (1) as does the reason. I am convinced that, however high the degree of astuteness engendered by the divinatory bones may be, they have been extremely detrimental to the intellectual and moral welfare of the Natives.

This leads us to our last chapter, in which the questions of Taboo and Morality will be considered.

(1) Wishing to know if the bones were sometimes used to obtain moral guidance, I once asked Mankhelu: "As you throw your bones on every occasion, would you consult them when going to a beer party? There might be trouble, perhaps quarrels, blows... If you wish to avoid these would the bones tell you to abstain from the party?" He laughed heartily. "No!" said he. "If I saw that the men were drinking too much I should leave before they were [illegible] drunk." I have some doubts if he would really have done so, but it remains clear that the bones have nothing to do with morality!

p. 573

CHAPTER IV

Taboo and Morality.

If we take the trouble to make a careful study of the life of 183
so-called savages, we very soon notice that, instead of being free 784
from all law and restraint, as superficial observers believe, their 577
life is, on the contrary, subject to a great number of rules and prohibitions, by which primitive man is held captive in the bonds of custom and tradition. These prohibitions are of two principal kinds. Those which are most obvious are *the taboos*, which we have met with on each page of these two volumes. They play an immense part in the behaviour of the raw Native. But, in addition to these, there are other restraints which seem to spring from a totally different set of ideas, *the moral principles*. The relation between the taboo and moral notions is very difficult to determine. It is at the present time one of the most debated questions of Anthropology ; I shall try to show what the state of things is in that phase of human development to which the Thongas of South Africa have attained.

A. THE TABOO.

I ventured to give a provisional definition of the *yila*, or *taboo*, 784
of the Thongas, when we met with the first interdiction of this type, Vol. I. page 37 : "Any object, act, or person that implies a danger for the individual or for the community, and that must consequently be avoided, this object, act or person being under a kind of ban." After explaining hundreds of taboos, I do not feel that this definition needs any alteration. Its main element is this :

784 the object, act or person tabooed constitutes a danger (1) ; it must therefore be avoided.

I. *Classification of Taboos.*

Let us now sum up our study of taboos by attempting to classify them.

The most primitive of all are those which are called by Modern Ethnographers *the sympathetic taboos*, those which man instinctively observes in order to preserve his life and avoid suffering. To touch a burning ember or a fire, is taboo. Thongas sometimes use the word yila for such prohibitions : they say for instance "psa yila" for a little child to play with a knife. But this category of taboos, which impose themselves on man with a certain self-evidence, play no special part in Thonga customs.

1) The first category on which I would dwell is that of the *physiological taboos.*

a) First, those connected with *defilement*. When dealing with physiological ideas (p. 357), we noticed that there were five or six physiological phenomena which are considered to be attended with special danger, because they are the great *agents of defilement* : the menstrual flow, the lochia, disease, death and the birth of twins. Those who have been defiled by one or other of these agencies are taboo ; they are subject to a number of interdictions, in order that fatal contagion may be avoided ; in most cases, they have to pass through a marginal period, at the end of which they are again received into society. Hence a great many taboos, which I would call the *physiological taboos proper*. The *sexual taboos*, and the *special feminine taboos* (I. p. 184) naturally belong to this category, in which I would also include the *military taboos* in connection with the slayers (I. p. 478), and those underlying the strange *hunting rites* (p. 77), as all these seem to proceed from the

(1) The word *yila* very closely corresponds to the term taboo so widely used in Anthropology. In current speech it is sometimes employed in a wider sense, in cases where the notion of danger is not clearly present, but this is certainly an extension of the meaning. In fact the *yila proper* exactly answers to the definition just given.

idea of defilement through death. *Adultery* is taboo because the 784
husband fears "the bad bloods" by which his wife may have been contaminated through her misconduct. In as far as respect for the *totem* is considered necessary for the maintenance of the health of the clansman, I would also include the taboos of this order in the physiological category ; these are, however, very few in number amongst the Thongas (I. p. 366).

b) Another variety of the same category are *the taboos connected* 561
with growth or *change of condition*, or *with the various initiations* 784
through which a Native may be called on to pass. The whole life of primitive man consists, as has already been stated, in a succession of stages ; he must proceed from one to the other through ceremonies in connection with which a number of taboos are to be noticed. The individual who ascends from an inferior stage to a superior one, always passes through a marginal period by which he is separated from the former and received into the latter. In this case the seclusion is not due to defilement properly speaking ; it is connected with the idea of *growth*. Hence the taboos of *tying the cotton string*, (I. p. 56), *weaning* (I. p. 58), when passing from infancy to childhood, *puberty*, when entering upon adult life through circumcision, *marriage* (p. 124), when being received into the group of married people ; initiation into the society of the possessed, and into the profession of magician, or diviner, is attended with similar taboos.

All the taboos of this category seem to have been actuated by the idea of danger accompanying ritual impurity, or passage from one condition to another.

2) A second category of taboos, much less numerous, are the 821
cosmic taboos. Nature prohibits certain acts ; if they are 784
committed, rain will not fall, and the community will suffer. The prohibition of cutting the roots at the new moon (p. 306), of tilling the fields when a shower falls in the morning (p. 28), of warming oneself at a fire of parasitic plants and at the ntjhopfa (p. 18), and some agricultural taboos belong to this category. Some of the most severe physiological taboos, those connected with twins and with unlawfully buried children, become cosmic, inasmuch as they prevent rain from falling (p. 317).

784 3) A third kind of taboos are those I call *taboos of prevision*. Foresight is dangerous on certain occasions : Do not build your hut before you are married! (I. p. 251). Do not prepare the ntehe before the birth of your child (I. p. 46), nor your ngula basket before harvest! The travellers' taboos (I. p. 339) might also be included in this class.

4) A fourth category comprises the manifold *social taboos, viz.*, those actions which are prohibited because they would be dangerous to the social order. Exogamous laws (I. p. 256), hlonipha customs, viz., the tabooing of certain words by the chief (I. p. 384), and especially the curious taboos to be observed in the intercourse of allied families (I. p. 250), are social. The taboos connected with the moving of a village (I. p. 320) are physiological in so far as they are actuated by the fear of defilement, and social in so far as they aim at maintaining the life of the social organism, which is the *muti*. But those which chiefly bear the character of social taboos are those connected with the idea of *hierarchy*. We have met with them in the ceremonies of the first fruits (1) (I. p. 394) and in the rules of sowing. It is taboo to "precede" a chief or an elder brother in agricultural operations, sowing or harvesting!

5) This leads us to a fifth category : the *religious taboos*. The ancestor-gods, being the elders of the actual members of the family, must be treated as hierarchically superior ; hence the religious taboo of luma : the interdiction of eating the new crop before having presented the gods with the first fruits ; the prohibition of infringing the sacerdotal rights of an elder brother (p. 398) is a taboo of the same kind. We here observe the intimate connection between social and religious life in Ancestrolatry. Forgetfulness in fulfilling duties towards the gods (p. 426), and killing green snakes (p. 384) are also religious taboos.

195 6) I include in a sixth category the *language taboos*, ku ruketela,
784 viz., the use of obscene expressions not allowed in ordinary life.

(1) The *luma* taboos are social and religious; but they also belong to the first variety of physiological taboos in so far as they are actuated by the fear of defilement (food of a deceased person, Vol. I. p. 146) ; to the second variety in so far as they are connected with a change of condition : first use of a new crop (I. p. 394), of a new meat (p. 71), of a new implement (p. 117), or fishing trap (p. 85). (Notice the relation between khangula , to inaugurate, and luma).

The words designating the sexual act and the various parts of the genital organs are *yila*; but there are substitutes for them, euphemisms which may be used in their stead. When a child employs such words, people scold him, and say to him : "Psa yila! Do you think we are cleaning the wells?" This remark is due to the fact that the language taboos are suspended during the marginal periods and especially during the "mourning of the land," when the rains are delayed and people try to cause them to fall by the rite of cleaning the wells (p. 318). The language taboos are related to the social taboos ; to use obscene words leads to the destruction of social order, and this is allowed only when that order is actually destroyed, for instance during the mbelele rite (p. 318), during the time of moving the village (I. p. 321), and during mourning ceremonies (I. p. 160). 195 784

These six categories, although they are not absolutely distinct, form a convenient method of classifying the taboos.

II. *Some remarks on the taboos.*

1) What is the *origin of taboos*? It is not impossible to trace it in a number of cases. The *hlonipha taboos*, for instance, are proclaimed by the chiefs under certain special circumstances (I. p. 384). The taboo concerning *the planting of new fruit trees* is explained by the coincidence of the desolation of a ruined village with the presence of such trees (p. 29). Such coincidences, amounting to bad omens, have no doubt given birth to numerous taboos. If misfortune has followed a certain act two or three times, a hasty generalisation is made by the primitive mind : post hoc ergo propter hoc! So the act is tabooed. 784 152

This is due to the fact that with primitive people, as with children, *the emotional element predominates over the rational*, and when unfortunate events have happened or are feared, disease, drought, death, when the mind is in a state of terror, anxiety, or merely of nervous expectation, the reasoning faculties are disturbed, and a distinctive mental phenomenon shows itself, called by the French philosopher Renouvier the *intellectual vertigo* (le

784 vertige intellectuel). Prof. Raoul Allier, in his valuable book on
152 *La Psychologie de la Conversion chez les peuples non civilisés* (Vol. I. p. 250-260), ably describes the psychological process which takes place in the soul of the savage. Suppose some event to have happened which has caused a deep emotion in the tribe, the arrival for instance of the first Europeans with a number of unknown objects which arouse fear in the Native population. This emotion may perhaps subside and eventually be forgotten, and the tribe will accustom itself to the presence of the new comers ; but if some great misfortune supervenes, for instance if a serious epidemic breaks out, a new emotion will be produced throughout the country. This will remind the people of the emotion previously experienced on the arrival of the Europeans, and, in the disturbed state of mind thus created, the association established between the two emotions will be extended to the two facts which gave birth to these emotions, and the tribe will declare that the first fact is the cause of the second. Europeans and everything they brought with them will henceforth be considered as taboo. This is utterly illogical and the conclusion absurd. Yet this is what actually happens amongst people whose reasoning faculties are but little developed. These observations help us greatly in our understanding of primitive mentality, and many taboos may be psychologically explained in this way. Most of them, however, are inexplicable. They originate in the animistic or dynamistic collective representations of the tribe (p. 368) and these representations are instinctive, unconscious and consequently unaccountable.

784 2) How are they *enforced*? In as far as taboos have been
626 proclaimed by conscious agents, their transgression will meet with punishment by those agents. A chief will sue a subject
753 using a hlonipha word. The gods will punish those who transgress the law of hierarchy, who pass all bounds in incontinence, who forget their duties towards them (p. 426). But, in most cases, the decree is not enforced by a conscious agent. The *taboo avenges itself directly*. Consumption, swelling of the legs, the impossibility of passing water, disease of one kind or another will follow the transgression, or the children will be covered with an eruption of pimples.

3) How are taboos *dealt with?* 784

Happily the danger of taboos can be removed, otherwise life would be almost impossible! The medicine-men have the 789 necessary drugs to protect their poor fellow-men against the misfortune (khombo) which is always threatening them! Is not the whole arsenal of magic at their disposal? Rites in great numbers provide the necessary protection, especially the *luma rite*, which is the proper method of avoiding the special dangers connected with the *first use* of anything. The wish to obtain protection against all these dangers explains the immense influence of the medicine-men, of those who know the preventive drugs to be used against defilement and misfortune.

It is impossible to attain to a true knowledge of the taboos 784 without studying the laws of *their suspension*. Taboos are sometimes suspended. The chief, for instance, is above them, at any rate above some of them, being himself a magical being, a tabooed personage (I. p. 382). The collectivity has a still greater power over them and can cancel them. There are times when all these prohibitions, or at least some of them, are withdrawn; these are the marginal periods, when we behold the strange spectacle that ordinary taboos are suspended (language taboos, relatives-in-law taboos), whilst others are enforced (sexual taboos). I have often drawn attention to this curious phenomenon.

B. MORAL RESTRAINTS.

But taboos are not the only kind of restraint to which primitive 183 Bantus submit themselves. The following statements have been 604 collected from old or young informants who were urged to express their inner feelings on this question:

1) The maternal uncle must provide the ntehe for the first child of his sister. However this is not *yila*, it is a *nau*, a law, and if it is transgressed no direct harm will follow. (I. p. 46.)

2) Men and women do not bathe in the same spot in the lake 183 of Rikatla. Why? Not on account of a yila, but on account of 834

183 *shitshabo*, viz., fear, or respect (1). There is no danger in
834 transgressing this law of decency, but to do so is condemned.

3) When a young man has transgressed the taboo of *matlulana* (I. p. 197), having had sexual relations with the same woman as another man, he is not allowed to attend the burial of his rival. It is a taboo. However, if the deceased is his own father, the culprit can be treated with drugs, and so fulfil his duty of grave-digger, being protected against the dangers of his condition : "The *yila* has been removed, but the *biha* remains." *Biha* means that which is bad.

183 So there are three domains, besides the yila, in which the
577 Native is conscious of the restraints imposed upon him : law or custom, respect or decency, and duty or *fanelo*. To these might be added a fourth, the disgust for a certain food (p. 83). The great difference between the taboo and the other prohibitions is that the transgression of the latter is not necessarily attended with danger (2).

Let us consider more closely the idea of *fanelo*, or duty.

192 Fanelo comes from *ku fana*, to be alike ; fanela is what is
183 seemly, becoming. This is not as yet a very high notion of
577 morality. The moral sense, however, certainly exists and this is proved by three facts :

1) The richness of the vocabulary expressive of moral ideas. There are more words applicable to the negative side of the idea and signifying *bad*, than to the positive, signifying *good* ; a phenomenon which may be observed in most primitive languages, even in our French patois. *Ku biha* means to be bad, morally speaking, and to be ugly, esthetically speaking. The distinctiveness of the two domains exists, however, in the mind of the Native. He says : "behile mbilu" — "is bad in his heart," or "behile liso" — "is ugly as regards his face." *Shibi*, the derivative noun of the verb ku

(1) I have heard the mixed bathing of men and women also called a yila, but it is a special kind of yila, *the yila of tshabiso*, the taboo of respect or decency.

(2) I would not, however, insist too strongly on the distinctiveness of these five domains. Theft and murder are prohibited on account of *duty*, but they become taboo if the culprit is discovered, because they will bring punishment upon him. The moral wrong of these acts was perceived *before* their dangerous character, and we have here an instance of a taboo grafted on a moral, or social, prohibition.

biha, is regularly used in Djonga to mean *sin*. It also designates 192
the offensive substance which a child or careless person may have 183
left on the path, instead of observing the sanitary regulations of 577
Native villages. (I. p. 311.) But in addition to biha we have *dyoha* (Dj.), *doha* (Ro.), to commit a wrong, *hona* (Ro.), *onha* (Dj.), which means to spoil, but also to sin, and from which comes *shihono*, the true word for sin in Ronga. *Somboloka* means to be irremediably bad, crooked, like a stem which cannot be straightened.

On the contrary the adjective *nene*, corresponding to biha, contains three meanings: good, nice, and true, the derivate *bunene* designating rather goodness and beauty, and another derivative, *psinene*, truth; the verb used for to be good is *shonga* (Ro), or *saseka* (Dj.), and has both the moral and esthetic significance. *Ku lulama* is to be straight, like a stem, and the use of this word indicates a deep and clear sense of right doing. Many other expressions might be quoted, showing that the notion of moral good and evil is certainly present in the Native mind, quite independently of that of taboo. They also recognise the *conscience* (timpfalu), seated in the diaphragm (p. 361).

2) *Intercourse with Natives* proves the same thing. Though 183
their ideas may differ from ours as regards what is good (1), 577
they are undoubtedly moral beings, with a more or lees developed conscience.

3) Their *folklore* is the best and most objective proof that this [538]
is so. Vice is punished and virtue rewarded in all the tales which I have called *moral*, and they certainly contain a whole code of natural and elementary morality (p. 222). The pangs of conscience in a criminal are depicted in a wonderful fashion in Zili, for instance.

However, it must be confessed that this morality is low, that it does not possess a very strong hold on the Native soul, and that the imperative of conscience is by no means the categorical

(1) The idea of charity is particularly low: charity is due only to relatives, or to 577
clansmen, and not to foreigners. I remember a man of the Manyisa clan who nearly 609
died near the lake of Rikatla, having been hurt when working on the railway; nobody took pity on him, because he belonged to another clan. He was saved by a converted woman, Lois, who had a wonderful understanding of the new principles of universal brotherhood.

577 imperative of Kant. If you can steal without being caught, you
183 may steal! Such is the advice generally given. To tell lies is mere play, which few people take seriously, especially if the lies are not intended to do harm to your fellow-men. There is a great laxity in Native morals (1). Why is this? I am convinced that this weakness of the moral sense is due to the fact that the moral law is not regarded as having been proclaimed by a personal, transcendental God. No relation is established between duty and the divinity. Religion is non-moral ; the ancestor-gods themselves are non-moral. The absolute character of the moral law can only spring from the absolute character of a God who has established it. For the Bantu the law, *nau*, is the *interest of the clan*. Theft is bad because it ruins individual property, and it is necessary to respect property, otherwise collective life becomes impossible. So theft, blows, insults, murder, and witchcraft are condemned and punished, because these actions endanger society and its recognised modes of life. But if society is not aware of it, you may steal ; you are not guilty ; no one has been offended! This principle gives to the morality of Natives a very curious *legal character*, which White people are sometimes slow to understand. A man is not guilty if he has not been convicted of his fault by a regular judicial pronouncement. He does not even feel himself guilty. But if his sin is proved, he at once gives up all subterfuge (Compare Zidji, p. 206) (2). We thus come to this conclusion : if the great

(1) Let me observe, however, that the domain of morality is also the domain of liberty ; and where there is liberty there are also individual differences. This is certainly the case amongst South African Bantus as regards their moral conduct. Any European having Native servants under his direction will have noticed that some of them show real moral qualities, faithfulness, disinterestedness, straightforwardness, respect, even a capacity for self-sacrifice, whilst others are unmitigated liars and thieves and addicted to vices which endanger the welfare and the purity of the home. Even in the Native village such differences are met with. I knew, for instance, a young man who never adopted the gangisa custom, which almost every boy looks on as the legitimate amusement of his age (I. p. 97) ; something told him that it was not right, and he kept away from the girls.

(2) This tendency of the Bantu mind to consider as right and good any decision which has been taken by the group, irrespective of its real moral value, also accounts for a fact which those who have to deal with pupils of African Native Institutions have frequently observed. It may happen that the Principal of the Institution will voice an opinion, give an order or propose a measure which does not please the Native students, and opposition will manifest itself amongst the group. Some of the more obstinate

fault of Bantu religion is that it is non-moral, that of Bantu morality is that it is non-religious. No supreme legislator has ordained it. Hence the want of the idea of the absolute in the dictates of the Bantu conscience. 577 183

Nevertheless, the rudiments of morality are present in the Thonga conscience, the feeling of duty, the sense of right and wrong, and these are independent of the essentially self-interested idea of taboo.

C. RELATION BETWEEN TABOO, SACREDNESS AND MORALITY.

Some modern Ethnographers see in the taboo idea the origin of that of the sacred, and of morality. Amongst South African Bantus, the idea of sacredness is not a prominent one. It may be said that the person of the chief is sacred to them, being set apart; the law of hierarchy, the right of precedence belonging to the elder brother is also sacred, and this conception is very closely allied to that of taboo, though it does not necessarily contain the idea of danger. But if sacredness has been in certain cases a natural development of taboo, I do not think this is the case with moral ideas. 784 577 183

In some cases, morality distinctly preceded taboo; speaking of theft, we have just seen the taboo conception grafted on to a

succeed in persuading their comrades to a unanimous refusal of obedience, and as soon as they feel themselves thus agreed they will oppose their Principal apparently with a good conscience, despite his most persuasive arguments and all the patience that he may display. Morally speaking, they are clearly wrong; religiously also; the principles which they have themselves adopted indubitably condemn them. Yet they will maintain their resistance so long as they can face their master with a united front. But if the Principal is clever enough to take one or two of them — the most sensible — apart, and convince them, then the charm is broken. Feeling themselves divided, the pupils at once come to the conclusion that they are wrong, and they readily submit to the will of their superior. Such events may take place in other colleges, and amongst other races, I am afraid, but the difference is that amongst Bantus, just emerging from the state of collectivism, where morality depended not on the laws of a clearly conceived, holy God, but on the will of the community, the feeling of being right or wrong is above all determined by the attitude of the group. (See my paper on The Magic Conception of Nature amongst Bantus. *South African Journal of Science*. Nov. 1920).

784 primitive moral idea ; we have also met with a taboo evolving from
577 a notion of disgust (nyenya) (p. 83) ; or of decency (p. 580). I do
183 not assert that it could be proved that the moral restriction in all cases preceded the taboo prohibition. There is on the other hand no ground for asserting that the moral ideas are a natural development of original taboos ; these two sets of ideas seem to be parallel in the domain of conduct, just as Ancestrolatry and the idea of an All-Father are in religion.

p. 585

APPENDIX I (See p. 169).

The Chronology of Shinangana, a Thonga of Spelonken.

Speaking in 1905, he says :

Sixty-seven years ago, Shiluvane and the other Thonga chiefs fled before Manukosi (1838, or 1839?). 173

Three years later, battle with Matshekwane, Manukosi's general, who pursued the Nkunas (1842).

In the sixteenth year of the era, battle of Gologodjwen, when the Nkuna chief, Shiluvane, fought against the Ba-Pedi of Sekukuni (1855). In the nineteenth year, Manukosi dies (1858 or 1859? His death may have taken place as early as 1856).

Henceforth each year is known by its principal event :

Expedition of Shihahen (1859).

Beginning of the great war of succession between Manukosi's sons, Muzila and Mawewe. Muzila fled to Spelonken (1860).

Circumcision school at Mudjadji (1861).

We are plundered by Djiwawa (or Joao Albasini, the Portuguese Commander who for many years was the chief of the Thonga refugees of Spelonken) (1862).

Djiwawa goes to fight against Mawewe (1863) (1).

We are plundered by the Swazi army (1864).

Shiluvane, the Nkuna chief, settles in the Nyarin country (1865).

Djiwawa kills Ribole and Magoro (1866).

The Modjadji army fights with the Nyari clan (1867).

The Swazis plunder Modjadji's country (Buluberi) (1868).

Djiwawa plunders the people of Mashao (Spelonken) (1869).

Muzila's army returns from Mosapa (Gaza), and plunders Spelonken (Bvesha) (1870).

The Swazis plunder Makandju (1871).

Circumcision school of Madori in Spelonken (1872).

Daimani (Opening of the Kimberley mines where Natives begin to go to work) (1873).

(1) According to Portuguese documents, this intervention of Muzila and Albasini took place in 1862, Mawewe having been definitely beaten on the 20th August 1862.

173 Birth of my child Rihlangana. Death of Shiluvane (1874).
Famine of Magadingele (1875).
Death of Nkambi, son of Mhalamhala, a Khosa (1876).
War of Makhanana of the Loyi country. Refugees come to Spelonken (1877).
The Makandju people kill Ñwashitine of Rikotjo (1878).
Birth of my child Ntitiri (1879).
Circumcision school of Mayingwe (1880).
Djiwawa goes to seize Sekukuni (1881).
War between the Boers and the English (1882).
Year of the comet (1883). Djiwawa's son, Sambana, becomes chief. Sambana plunders the village of a Venda called Mbekwa (1884).
Phundjululu : the vermin destroy the mealies (1885).
Circumcision school of Ñwamutjungu, a Hlanganu who had come from Spelonken (1886).
A Gwamba chief quarrels with Girifi. (Mr. Grieve, an old colonist of Spelonken) (1887).
Sambana beats a policeman (1888).
Death of Djiwawa (1889).
Sambana calls statute labourers (1890).
Death of Sambana (1891).
Circumcision school at Modjadji (1892).
My son Magondjwen starts on a journey (1893).
He returns home (1894).
We are struck by hail. Four people die (1895).
My son-in-law goes away (1896).
Epidemic among cattle. War of Makhube. We accompany the Boers (1897).
Matshona : Plague among oxen (1898).
Bahehemuki! The people of Gungunyana take refuge in Spelonken (after the war of Magigwana with the Portuguese) (1899).
The Boers attack Phefu, the Venda chief (1900).
The Whites fight. (Anglo-Boer war) (1901).
The English column chases the Boers away from Pietersburg ; Ñwashimbutane! The Son-of-the-Kid! (General Beyers, compared with a kid on account of his swift movements through the country during the guerilla war.) (1902).
Mugayo! Ndlala! The mealie flour bought from the Whites on account of the famine! (1903).
Of course many of these dates are doubtful... Many are of very

small importance; it seems childish indeed to mention as the only noteworthy event of the year 1888 the fact that Sambana, Albasini's son, had beaten a policeman. This shows, however, the historical sense of Shinangana; he wished to record that uneventful year in his chronicle, and he chose the most remarkable fact that had occurred in it, though it was, indeed, of no great importance. Thus he attained his object, which was to preserve a full record of all the years from 1858 to 1903. The chronology of Shinangana is a true feat of memory, and, as he remained free from any civilised influence, it is a feat that must be considered when dealing with phenomena of oral tradition amongst savages. 173

APPENDIX II (See p. 332).

List of Thonga botanic names with their scientific equivalents.

According to the publication of Hans Schinz and Henri-A. Junod:
"Zur Kenntnis der Pflanzenwelt der Delago-Bay."
"Bulletin de l'Herbier Boissier," Tome VII. N° II, 1899.

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Pteridophyta.	Tsuza.	Acrostichum tenuifolium (and other fern
Typhaceae.	Papala.	Typha australis (Used to make mats).
Pandanaceae.	Shihlowa.	Pandanus.
Aponogetonaceae.	Fezyana.	Aponogeton spathaceus (1).
Hydrocharitaceae.	Nkushe.	Lagarosiphon muscoides (2).
Gramina.	Luhlwa.	Imperata cylindrica (Used as thatch).
»	Byanyi.	Andropogon (and all the other grasses).
»	Litlange. Ntlangi.	Cynodon dactylon.
Cyperaceae.	Nhlale.	Cyperus flabelliformis.
»	Bungu.	Cyperus prolifer (?) (Papyrus).
Commelinaceae.	Nkompfuna.	Commelina africana, Forskalei, etc.
Liliaceae.	Gothwa.	Crinum Forbesii, etc.
Orchidaceae.	Shibezagane.	Eulophia papillosa.
Olacaceae.	Psautemu.	Opilia tomentella (3).
Amaranthaceae.	Shinghalafumane.	Hermbstaedtia elegans.
»	Tlabatlabane.	Cyphocarpa Zeyheri (4).
Nymphaeaceae.	Tibu.	Nymphaea coerulea (Bulb edible).
Menispermaceae.	Shimbyati.	Cissampelos Pareira (5).
»	Shibumbula.	Synclisia Junodi.
Anonaceae.	Ntiti.	Artabotrys brachypetala.
»	Shintitana.	Artabotrys Monteirose.
Leguminosae.	Gowana.	Albizzia fastigiata.
»	Khawa.	Acacia kraussiana.
»	Ndjiba.	Apalatos delagoensis.
»	Ntjenge.	Dichrostachys nutans.
»	Nembe-nembe.	Cassia petersiana.
»	Hlapfuta (Ro).	Afzelia Cuanzensis. (6)
»	Shene (Dj).	» »
»	Shirimbyati sha mutju.	Indigofera podophylla.
»	Shirimgati sha tchume.	Indigofera sp.?
»	Lisekaseka.	Sesbania aculeata.
»	Shekane.	Desmodium incanum.
»	Nwesenhlanga.	Canavalia obtusifolia.
»	Rongolo ra nhlobe.	Erissema cajanoides (The white Rongolo
Malpighiaceae.	Nyamari.	Ekebergia Meyeri.
Euphorbiaceae.	Midyanhwari.	Flueggea obovata.
»	Shinyandjana.	Phyllanthus pentandrus.
Anacardiaceae.	Nkanye.	Sclerocarya caffra (King of trees!) (p. 17
Hippocrateaceae.	Shikokombela.	Hippocratea sp.
»	Mphyimba.	Salacia Kraussii (Fruit edible).
Sapindaceae.	Bupetwane.	Cardiospermum halicacabum.
Malvaceae.	Ntjimi.	Hibiscus surattensis, Trionum, etc.
»	Shintjimozane.	Sida cordifolia.
»	Bushale.	Gossypium herbaceum (Cotton).

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Sterculiaceae.	Muhlwadambu.	Melhania Forbesii.
»	Nkondlwahari.	Waltheria americana.
Ochnaceae.	Kelekele.	Ochna arborea.
Flacourtiaceae.	Psekamafura.	Casearia Junodii (Schinz).
»	Nhlungunu.	Flacourtia Ramontoli.
Passifloraceae.	Menyamamba.	Modecca Kirkii.
Thymeleaceae.	Shindjibane.	Synaptolepis Oliveriana.
Combretaceae.	Balekanhloko.	Combretum Gueinzii.
»	Nkonono.	Terminalia sericea (Used for handles, etc.).
Ebenaceae.	Nhlangulane.	Euclea natalensis.
»	Shirole.	Royena pentandra.
Sapotaceae.	Ndjole.	Mimusops caffra (Fruit edible).
Loganiaceae.	Nsala.	Strychnos spinosa (p. 16).
»	Nkwakwa.	Strychnos Ungasha (p. 17).
Apocynaceae.	Nulu.	Carissa Arduina.
»	Ntamunga.	Carissa sp. (Fruit edible).
»	Mbungu.	Landolphia Kirkii (?)
»	Nkahlu.	Tabaernaemontana ventricosa (Styptic).
»	Nkahlu-tjhobo.	Vocanga Dregei.
»	Ntjulu.	Strophanthus Petersianus (p. 58).
Asclepiadaceae.	Muhlu-tjhobo.	Secamone sp.
»	Ndjutlwane.	Sarcostoma viminale.
Convolvulaceae.	Nkaka-wa-tjhobo.	Ipomoea cairica.
»	Masinga.	Stictocardia Woodii.
Scrophulariaceae.	Shitsinyambita.	Striga orobanchoïdes.
»	Murilwane (Dj).	Striga lutea.
Solanaceae.	Rulane.	Solanum pandurseforme.
»	Mondjo.	Datura fastuosa (?) (8).
Bignoniaceae.	Mpfungura.	Kigelia aethiopica.
Pedaliaceae.	Hlehlwa.	Pretrea Forbesii.
Lentibulariaceae.	Nkushe.	Utricularia stellaris.
Rubiaceae.	Ngalangala.	Tricalysia Kraussiana.
Cucurbitaceae.	Nkaka.	Momordica Balsamina (Edible).
»	Shirakarana.	Citrullus Naudinianus.
»	Nkaka wa Batshopi.	Coccinia jatrophaefolia (Eaten by Chopis).
Campanulaceae.	Shihlangwana.	Wahlenbergia arenaria.
»	Shilawana.	Lobelia chilawana (Schinz).
Compositae.	Ntshontshongori.	Vernonia cinerea.
»	Nkukula-shibuya.	» Perotteti.
»	Hlunguhlungu.	» tigna.
»	Shifedyana.	Ageratum conyzoides.
»	Kamele.	Mikania scandens (Medicinal).
»	Shirimbyati sha tchune.	Gnaphalium stenophyllum.
»	Shirimbyati.	Helichrysum parviflorum.
»	Mushidji.	Bidens africana.
»	Nhlangula-batjongwana.	Helichrysum damarense.

This list might be greatly extended by any one devoting more time to the study of Thonga botany. Though it is not complete, I publish it, knowing by experience how difficult accurate botanic classification is in South African flora. It may be used as a starting point.

(1) Dancers make crowns of it. (2) All the algae and generally plants growing in water are called Nkushe. (3) Baroyens are said to use it to clean their teeth. (4) Used for rheumatism (5) Medicine for bowel complaints. (6) Used to manufacture canoes. (7) Indiarubber, Kafir orange, p. 19. (8) This plant, used as a means of divination, is a Datura, subspontaneous or cultivated in various spots. I cannot guarantee the name of the species (p. 550).

APPENDIX III (See p. 428).

On Personal Religion amongst the Thongas.

781 769 The following facts prove that though ancestor-worship is above all a collective and ritual affair, religious acts of a personal and individual character are not wanting.

A young man of the Hobyana family told me that when he was still a boy, he was employed by his father to convey travellers over the river in a boat. He was accused by his brothers of stealing the money paid to him for this service. His brothers did not like him; they took from him the money which he received from the travellers and accused him of keeping it for himself and of deceiving the owner of the boat. One evening, as he was returning home after his day's work, he heard a great noise in the village; people were speaking of him in angry tones. A Portuguese official had passed through the country some time before and had shown him kindness. He decided to run away and seek refuge amongst the Whites. The night was pitch dark when he arrived on the borders of a great plain. He felt very lonely and was seized by a terrible fear of this great, empty space which he had to cross. Then "another heart" told him to pray to the ancestor-gods to help him in his anguish. He remembered how his father used to *hahla*, and thought of saying "tsu." But he did not dare to pronounce the sacramental syllable. A feeling of shame (tingana) prevented him from doing so. However, he kneeled down, put the parcel containing his clothes under his left arm, crossed his hands before his breast and joined them (fumbarela). He decided not to address his prayer to his paternal ancestors, those of the Hobyana family, as it was his father and his brothers who were ill-treating him, but rather to those of his mother. One of these maternal ancestors bore a special relation to him, as his parents had named him after this ancestor, who had died without posterity and whose name they wished to "revive" (pfusha) in this way. The boy prayed as follows: "You, my ancestor-god, after whom I have been named, save me and lead me where I am going." While pronouncing these words, he kept his eyes towards the East, where the moon was just rising, and, adds the boy, "I felt a great peace and joy in my heart and continued my journey."

Another boy of the Mashaba family, going for the first time to work in Johannesburg, was suddenly seized by fear in the railway carriage,

remembering that he had been told that the mines were full of water and that boys working underground contracted fatal diseases. Overcome by the idea that he was going to his death, he jumped out of the train at the third station after Komati Poort and began to walk in the direction of Barberton through the desert. Feeling tired, he lay down and tried to sleep. But he heard antelopes running about quite near him, saying "mpfi! mpfi!" — "If these animals were hyenas," thought he, "I should be lost." Then the idea came to him that he ought to call upon the psikwembu to help him, which he did without pronouncing the official tsu, saying: "My gods! Help me! Save me from dangers and from wild beasts! Keep me alive!" 781 769

One of my pupils of the Khosa clan had a great affection for his mother. He said that she frequently prayed in her hut when he was sick, asking the psikwembu to heal him (p. 412). She used to offer them a little of a special mealie pap, prepared with particular care, and to throw a pinch of ground tobacco on the threshold of the hut in the morning. When she was tilling her garden and felt very tired and unwell, she used to pray "according to what her heart instructed her to say."

An Inhambane boy told me that, when travellers cross the Inharrime drift, many take a little water in their mouths, say tsu, and pray to their ancestor-gods to take care of them in this dangerous passage. Though his father and mother were still living and it is the custom not to hahla before their death, he said tsu, as the others did.

At the Morakwen drift the river Nkomati is very broad, and when the South wind begins to blow in fury the ferryman who rows travellers across to the opposite side runs great danger. One of his relatives told me that when this happens, he spits out a little saliva (as an offering of bitterness) and says: "Tsu! Do not hate me! These heads are not mine," meaning: "The children I convey do not belong to me, and I should have a great responsibility towards their parents if they perished in the river." Another witness assured me that this ferryman also begged all those in the canoe to join in his prayer and to entreat their own ancestor-gods to save them.

A Native of the Manyisa country added: "Individual prayer undoubtedly exists! During the heat of battle, a warrior, feeling himself in great danger, will kneel down, plant his shield in front of him and invoke his ancestor-gods. Some have remained in this position so long that the enemy have been able to stab them while they were still kneeling."

Such spontaneous appeals to the ancestor-gods do certainly occur,

2: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

and this shows that ancestrolatry, notwithstanding its strongly ritualistic character, sometimes affords religious souls real help and relief. 781

When asked what they wish to obtain by their ancestor-worship, Thongas often answer : *Butomi*. This word comes from the adjective *ntomi*, to which is prefixed *bu*, the prefix of abstraction. *Ntomi* designates a man who is in good health, and butomi means above all *good health* ; but it has also a wider connotation and may well be translated by *life*. Life for the greater number is merely good health, plenty to eat, the possession of many children, material blessings ; but for the finer types it means something more ; it is the full happiness, to which they vaguely aspire and from which the moral element is not altogether absent. At least such is the impression I sometimes had when I heard them speak about butomi. 769

APPENDIX IV (See p. 450).

Additional Remarks on the idea of the Supreme Being and on Ancestor-worship amongst Bantus in relation to the History of Religion. 000

Much new light has been thrown of late years on the subject of the relation between ancestrolatry and the belief in a Supreme Being, a subject which remains one of the greatest problems of the History of Religion. In the paragraph which I devoted to this question in my first edition and which is reproduced in the second (p. 448), I refrained from attempting a definite solution of the problem of the order of priority of these two beliefs. I still believe that it is safer to maintain an attitude of reserve on the subject, as such a solution ought to take into account not only Bantus, of whom I know something, but the whole of primitive humanity. I should like only to add a few remarks which have been suggested to me by a comparison with some other Bantu tribes, and to put forward tentatively an explanation which may be applicable to the Bantu domain.

As already pointed out, the belief in a Supreme Being is found in various forms amongst all the Bantus, but it is perhaps nowhere more clearly defined than amongst the Ba-Ila, so minutely described by the Rev. Ed. W. Smith in his book, already quoted, on the Ba-Ila speaking people. *Leza* is designated by a number of typical praise-names : the Creator, the Moulder, the Constructor, the One who has no end, the Guardian the Giver, the One who gives and who causes to rot, the

Master, Owner of things. He is also the Persecutor. He is sometimes more or less confounded with rain, with lightning, and with the sky and what comes from it. It is generally believed that the Supreme Being amongst the Bantus is a divinity who has abandoned the world and takes no more heed of mankind. Leza is sometimes described in this light ; he is however invoked in prayers which are sometimes touching. The chapter which Mr. Smith has devoted to Leza must be read by all who wish to acquaint themselves with Bantu theology.

The Supreme Being amongst the Ba-Rotsi, *Nyambe*, whose name is sometimes equivalent to Leza, seems to be more remote than Leza ; yet, according to the Rev. Th. Burnier (*Ames Primitives*, p. 10) every morning the Zambezian Native presents Nyambe with an offering of water in a wooden plate placed on a little altar built in his kraal ; he kneels down ; he turns his face towards the rising sun, and twice makes the royal salute *Yo-Sho*. Then he bows his head and claps his hands against each other, muttering certain words.

The Rev. E. Allegret (*Revue de l'Histoire des Religions*, 1904) heard amongst the Fañ of the French Congo a list of epithets applied to *Nzam* very similar to those by which Leza is praised. The old Native who revealed these names to him did not understand their meaning, but it was not difficult to discover it from their etymology . These mysterious words, Mebeghe, Menkwa, Sokuma, Mbongwe, mean: The Upholder of all men, the Judge who cuts, i. e. decides, everything, the King of Kings, the Organiser, the Creator of generations. Nzam is looked upon as the father of all men, and every one when quoting his own genealogy comes finally to him as the first in the series ; when he pronounces his name, however, the Fañ adds the praise-names just referred to. The Supreme Being is often confounded with the originator of mankind, or with heroes of past times, but the more thoroughly the question is studied, the more clearly the transcendental nature of the divinity amongst Bantu tribes appears.

As regards ancestor-worship, a comparison between the Thongas and three other Bantu tribes which are particularly well described, the Akamba, the Ba-Ila and the Ba-Ganda, shows that the nature and importance of the ancestor-gods is closely connected with the social system of the tribes. Amongst *the Akamba*, living near Kilimandjaro (see G. Lindblom, *The Akamba, Vol 17 Archives d'Etudes Orientales Ch.* X and XIII), with the exception of totemic clans which play no part in religion, the only social unit is *the family*. There are no chiefs except the heads of families. There the power of the ancestor-gods is reduced

600 to its minimum ; though they are very much feared, they are thought to be mortal. Amongst the Thongas, we find *the composite clan* described in Part III. Here the social unit is larger, a family reigns over a country which comprises a number of people belonging to other families ; there are consequently *national* ancestor- gods, those of the royal family, who are of greater importance and power, as they control the whole country. We go a step further when we reach the Ba-Ila. Here, besides the family *bazhimu* worshipped by their descendants much in the same way as amongst Thongas, there are *communal gods*, i. e. the spirits of dead men who control a wide tract of country and are worshipped by all the inhabitants of the region, even by those who are not descended from them. There are more than 14 of these larger communities, and the ancestor-gods who preside over them have more importance and power than the simple family ghosts. Higher up in the scale than these communal divinities there is still another divinity called Bulongo, also a mudzimu, whose origin, however, is not known, but who is superior to the communal gods, being worshipped through the whole country, almost on an equality with Leza. The situation amongst the Baganda is again different. Here worship is addressed to the family ancestor-gods, but it is of small importance. In this country there are a number of *high gods*, more or less specialised as regards their attributes : Katonda, the Creator, Mukasa the benevolent, Kibuka, the war-god, Kitaka, the earth-god, — about twenty gods and godesses, most of whom have their temple, their mediums, their complicated ritual, their mythology. Uganda, on the other hand, is *an old kingdom* governed by a royal family which has been in existence many centuries, and thus the social system of the Ba-Ganda is very much in advance of the primitive forms of Bantu society. The ancestor-gods would seem to have undergone the same evolution. These great gods are human beings who lived centuries ago, a fact which is proved by the jawbone which was found in the shrine of the god Kibuku (p. 409). But they are greatly superior to the aimu, the psikwembu or the bazhimu of the Akamba, of the Thongas or of the Ba-Ila. A comparison between the ancestrolatry of these four tribes tends to show that the wider the original social unit has become, the greater the development of the power and importance of the ancestor-gods. We might therefore be inclined to conclude that the appearance of the idea of the Supreme Being is merely the last stage of this evolution, that ancestor-worship came first and that the notion of the Supreme Being was derived from it. There are however many objections to this theory ; it might as fairly

be argued that the idea of a Supreme Being came first and that the idea of divinity was later incorporated in the ancestral spirits in a degree corresponding to their importance, — itself connected with the social system of the tribe, — until these ancestor-gods absorbed, so to speak, all the attributes of the Supreme Being, as is the case amongst the Ba-Ganda. Moreover we meet with many peoples belonging to primitive humanity, who possess a remarkably clear idea of the Supreme Being, although their social system has undergone no such development, e. g. the tribes of South Eastern Australia. It must also be noticed that this belief contains elements of Naturism which do not belong to the definition of ancestor-worship and could hardly be derived from it.

When everything is taken into consideration, and all due respect paid to the evolutionist hypothesis which has proved so useful in many instances, is it absolutely necessary that the two beliefs should be derived one from the other? Is it not rather probable that both arose in the human heart simultaneously from different, parallel sources? What is religion? It is essentially the feeling of man's dependence on higher, supranormal powers to which he has recourse to help him in his distress. From the beginning, as soon as he became conscious of himself, man was sensible of his dependence on Nature, especially on the celestial phenomena. Heaven smiled on him in the rays of the sun and terrified him by lightning and the roar of thunder. Later, when he passed from the nomadic to the agricultural stage, he was more dependant than ever upon rain for his means of life. No wonder primitive humanity worshipped Nature and especially the sun and heaven. But from the beginning also, man was faced with family relationships, and in that domain also his experiences were similar. The tenderness of the mother, the authority of the male members of the family created around him an atmosphere in which he felt himself strongly dependant. When, with the development of animistic conceptions, he became convinced that his ancestors were still living in his vicinity, it was natural that he should think of calling on them for help in his difficulties (1). Later

(1) In a very suggestive little book, *Le sentiment religieux et la Psychologie de l'Enfant* (Delachaux et Niestlé, Neuchâtel), Mr. Pierre Bovet of the Institute J. J. Rousseau, has shown by some typical examples, that children, when left to themselves as far as their religious development is concerned, and driven by the religious instinct which is in them to create their own gods, worship either the sun or their parents. This correspondence between the religion of the child and that of primitive humanity, is, if it is confirmed, a most interesting fact. Physically speaking, during the pre-natal period, the child reproduces the main evolutionary forms of life of the animal world; later, in the same way, when his mental and spiritual development begins, he passes through the stages which primitive humanity has traversed.

000 still, reflexion sets in. Man begins to think of causes and of the first cause. In many tribes we meet with men of a superior spiritual type who are preoccupied by the question of origin which leaves the mass cold (p. 303). This is causalism. It is a third source of religious beliefs and has given birth to the very wide-spread idea of the Moulder. Memories of the great deeds of ancient heroes, more or less legendary in character, may have also intervened to give individuality to the divinities created by popular imagination. This is the theory of the Greek philosopher Euhemerus and is called euhemerism. To all these sources, in a thousand different forms, primitive religion owes its origin, and it is unnecessary to establish a relation of cause and effect between its various elements. This explanation, which is in harmony with the polygenist theory of the origin of Religion advanced by Archbishop Söderblom in his book *Das Werden des Gottesglaubens*, seems to me the most satisfactory both from the scientific and from the religious point of view. Scientifically speaking it is in accordance with facts and does not distort them in order to force them into a preconceived system. The positivist thinker, even the philosopher who recognizes no objective value in religion, can accept this theory as to its origin. But what about the Christian thinker, who believes in the existence of God and in the objective reality of the spiritual world? In putting this question I abandon the purely scientific standpoint which this book claims to adopt. I am conscious of the fact, but I do so purposely. If the positivist sees in the origin and development of primitive religion a purely natural process, this is not the case with the thinker who believes in God. He takes the view that all through, God was striving to draw the human race to himself. Naturism, family relations, causalism, euhemerism have been His avenues of approach to the spirit of man, and in these rudimentary forms of religion I see a kind of revelation, very uncomplete indeed, but corresponding to the low stage of intellectual and moral developement of primitive humanity, a progressive revelation on which further revelations, contributed by all the prophets of mankind, have since been grafted, until God has become fully known to us as Light, Holiness and Love. And for this reason I do not despise the childish rites of Animism nor the absurd representations of Naturism. In them I see not only an attempt on the part of man to know God, but an attempt on the part of God to make Himself known to man.

APPENDIX V (See p. 536).

The Murimi Movement, an attempt on the part of the Thonga Tribe to get rid of witchcraft.

In the year 1913 (or 1914) the members of one of the Hlengwe clans 754
living near the Sabie River, in the extreme north of the Thonga terri- 776
tory, seeing that the crops were bad, game wanting, and that even honey 771
was scarce, contributed each of them a small sum of money, collected £ 10 and sent messengers to Myali, the Kalanga god who dwells in a cave in Machonaland, in order to regain prosperity. They were well received by the priests of Myali, who introduced them to the god they serve. They had to pass through a tunnel, with a big rock hanging over their heads. On the other side of this tunnel there was a kind of amphitheatre of rocks, enclosing a very clean and well-swept space. A voice from the rocks above greeted them in Zulu : "Good morning, my children", and they were given a pouch full of tobacco with the following instructions : "When you reach your home, take a snuff of this tobacco ; then go to your gardens, blow your noses and spread the nasal mucus in the soil ; henceforth you will have abundant harvests." The Hlengwe messengers returned home and began to use the precious drug, but this tobacco of Murimi, as it was called, had a marvellous fate. It found purchasers throughout the Thonga tribe, and during four years all the Thonga clans performed the new rite, the rite of Murimi, in the conviction that a new era had set in in which there would be no more famine and in which witchcraft, that great enemy of humanity, which causes disease, robs, and kills, would be expelled for ever.

Who is this Myali? He is the same personage who is called Ñwali in other parts of the country, the same also as Ra-Luvimbi, the god of the Ba-Venda, to whom they pray to obtain rain (See p. 321). His sacred cave is in the Matoppo hills, in the midst of that extraordinary desert of rocks in which Cecil Rhodes chose the spot for his grave, some fifteen miles further south. Mr Eliott, who was Native Commissioner in this region, told me that the description of the cave given above was exact. I will not discuss here the origin of the cult of Myali, called also Mlimo, a term probably corresponding to the Sutho Modimo, which would seem to have been transformed into Murimi when it was adopted by the Thongas. This is a most interesting subject to which I would draw the attention of our Rhodesian colleagues. Myali has med-

754 iums, consecrated girls (bampouka) set apart from their youth to be-
776 come the wives of his priests ; the rite of the magical tobacco, which is
771 a fecundation rite, is unknown in South African ancestrolatry. Every-
thing would appear to suggest that this cult is of foreign origin. A fact which is worthy of special notice is this : *Myali is the enemy of wizards.* If anyone guilty of witchcraft approaches his cave, he will be struck dead, and his priests will have nothing to do with witchcraft cases.

I cannot explain in detail how the new cult spread from the Hlengwe country down to the Maputju region, thus creating in the Thonga tribe a unity which has but seldom been attained. Certain individuals appear to have availed themselves of the new belief to do a profitable piece of business. They bought a part of the original tobacco of Murimi, mixed it with ordinary tobacco and went to the chiefs offering to let their subjects snuff the miraculous drug. I happened to meet one of these prophets of Murimi, who also called himself Murimi and who had been arrested by the Portuguese Administrator of Morakwen, as the Authorities seem to have feared at a certain moment that the agitation caused by this movement might have a political character. This particular Murimi appeared to be a very simple type of man. He was half lame, his arms were crooked, and he told me that his reason for fighting the wizards was that it was they who had reduced him to that miserable condition ; he was convinced that his efforts to combat them were very beneficial to the country. But notwithstanding these altruistic inclinations, he did not neglect his own interests ; anyone admitted to snuff the tobacco had to give the chief a fowl or a "nkinyenta", i. e. 500 reis, then of the value of I s. 6d, and Murimi received a considerable share of the fee.

Wonderful rumours preceded the distributor of tobacco. It was said that he had been emprisoned by one of the Administrators, further north, but had suffered nothing through this infringement of his liberty; the following night he had been miraculously transported to the bed of the Commandant, whilst the latter had taken his place in the gaol! He was now approaching the town of Lourenço Marques in the form of a gigantic dragon before whom everyone fled!

754 The following is the description of the manner in which the Murimi
rite was performed in the Matalane region, some 15 miles north of
771 Lourenço Marques. The chief Magebeza summons all his subjects to assemble early in the morning in a forest (Sept. 1916). His counsellors are present and bring with them the lame prophet holding in his hands a sala shell containing the tobacco. A woman comes and, kneels down in front of him; she holds out her open hand, palm upwards. Murimi takes

hold of one of the fingers in order that the hand may remain well open, 754
pours a little tobacco into it and asks : "Are you a witch?" She answers: "No!" — "Then," says the prophet, "snuff!" The woman draws 771
up all the precious tobacco into her nose, taking care not to let the least particle fall on the ground. If she carries a baby on her back, she puts a little of the powder into his nostrils, and if she is pregnant, she rubs her hypogastrium on both sides with the drug in order to "let the child who is inside snuff." Another woman comes; she answers in a hesitating manner, which does not escape the prophet; she may go so far as to say : "I do not know ; perhaps I am a witch". Murimi looks at her with terrible eyes : "Take care," he says, "cast away your witchcraft immediately. If you do not do so, this goat's skin in which you are carrying your child will come to life again and belabour your breasts with its hoofs! And the day you begin to cast your spells again, you will be split in two (handjuka hi le makari)!" The worst case is when a woman who is a witch accepts the tobacco without confessing her evil deeds. Then, such was the rumour, the tobacco poured into her hand would suddenly increase in quantity, and upon that sign, Murimi would give her hand a blow from beneath, throwing all the tobacco over her shoulder, and the woman would fall to the ground unable to get up again and on the point of splitting in two.

When all the subjects had passed through the trial, Ndonga, one of the counsellors, addressed the throng in these words : "Now witchcraft is destroyed! You have all cast it far away. But let it not come back again. If any of you has *psipoko* (pl. of shipoko, p. 488) kill them, cut them in pieces with your axes or with your big knives, and let them not come back, because, if they do so, it would be a great calamity for you. They would beg you: 'Mother! give me something to eat' and if you should do so, you would die" He added: "A new era has begun. You have no longer anything to fear from wizards. If one of them approaches you to bewitch you, he will immediately split in two. Murimi has cut off the wings of the baloyi. They will not be able to come to do harm to you during the night. Henceforth we are free from the calamities which caused us to suffer so greatly."

This is the first part of the rite, which aims at destroying witchcraft for ever. But it has also a second aim, the bringing in of a new prosperity, a golden age in which everyone will have plenty to eat, in which even, according to some, death will no longer exist. The second part of the rite is connected with this great hope.

Whilst Murimi proceeded with the examination of the people, another

754 counsellor, Phayindi, was preparing "the leaves"; these are the large
771 bracts protecting mealie-cobs which he has torn from the stem and in the centre of which he has placed a little of the tobacco. These are now lying on the ground, and each woman must go to fetch one and return home with her husband. Keeping silent all the while, she takes a little pot full of water, pours a little of the drug into it and carries it to the threshold of the hut, where both husband and wife wash their hands and feet. She must not enter the hut herself ; the husband enters, and carefully places the pot in the back part of the hut. The woman then sets out for her gardens, carrying the leaf. She follows the boundaries of each field, digging in the ground here and there, throws into the hole a little mucus from her nose, which is still full of the tobacco, and covers it with earth. She keeps to the end the largest field, in which there may be a nkuhlu tree (p. 18), the mafureira tree which is apparently preferred by Murimi. She digs a little hole at the foot of this tree and buries the leaf in it, in such a way that only the middle of the leaf which contains the tobacco will be covered with earth ; both ends will remain visible. Thus the fields are "fattened (nonisa)" for ever. But if the mistress of the field should again begin to practise witchcraft, the leaf will come out of the soil and fly up to the chief's village, where the guilty woman will have to redeem it by paying a fine of £ 1.. Having finished performing the fecundation rite, the woman claps her hands and says : "Murimi! I ask thee to help me here in my gardens in order that I may have a plentiful harvest and become fat!". She then returns home, and leans her hoe against the sacred tree of the village. Her husband, who has waited for her, again washes her feet with the lustral water and the injunction of silence is removed.

These are the rites of the first day. But now begins a sacred period which lasts from ten to fifteen days, and is marked by three strong taboos. The labour taboo ; no work is allowed in the fields until agricultural occupations are resumed by the collective tilling of the chief's field. The sexual taboo ; at the end of the period the great wife will smear her hut with clay and have relations with her husband the following night ; next day the other women will do the same, but woe to the one who should precede the great wife (I p. 324). The travelling taboo ; travelling is forbidden during these days and everyone must stay at home till the chief has cancelled the prohibition by himself undertaking a journey.

This is still not the end. Those who have snuffed the tobacco of

Murimi constitute in some sort a new humanity; they have been *initiated* into a new life; they must abstain from relations with those who do not belong to their society, and observe peculiar rules which will distinguish them from the uninitiated. If a man has not snuffed whilst his wife has done so, she must not allow him to have conjugal relations with her; if he was away from the country when Murimi passed, the husband must go to the capital and snuff there, a little of the tobacco having been preserved for those who were absent. He will be subject to the law of silence until he has ritually washed his hands and feet. (This is a form of the kungs rite as observed in the initiation ceremonies. (See I, p. 124.) If strangers pass through the village, no food will be offered to them unless they have snuffed, at any rate no food coming from the fields which have been "treated (daha)" with the drug. The following are some of the taboos regulating the life of the initiated. Language taboos: the word *fole*, which means tobacco, must only be used to designate the tobacco of Murimi; ordinary tobacco must be called by a new word, *shilandi*. The word *mpfula*, rain, is prohibited and must be replaced by *magayisa*, (which means a party of boys going to work). Alimentary taboos: no special food is prohibited, but certain articles of diet must be eaten according to new rules. This is particularly the case for the fruit of the nsala tree (p. 16). The shell must be broken in such a way that it forms two halves; the eater must lie on his belly, place the upper half of the shell on the soil, suck out the pulp round the stones to his heart's content and put all the stones back into the first half of the shell; when he has finished, he must place the second half over the first and deposit the fruit thus reconstituted at the foot of the tree, saying: "Murimi!" in order to show his gratefulness to his new god. If there are many ripe sala fruits on the stem, one must be left for Murimi. When digging sweet potatoes, sticks must be used rather than the hoe for the first ten days, during which tilling the ground with hoes is taboo; later on the hoe may be used, but one potato must be left in the earth as the share of Murimi. There are a number of other less important taboos to be observed; the stem of the cuscuta must not be employed to tie the bundle of dead wood gathered in the bush for fuel, because the cuscuta is the mat of Murimi. Certain kinds of snakes, the big Varan lizard, the tortoise and the small turtledove called shivambalane must not be killed. Should a hunter kill a shivambalane by mistake, he must place it on the branch of a tree, saying: "Murimi!". Above all, the initiated, the members of the new humanity, delivered from the fears of witchcraft by the all-powerful Murimi, must invoke him upon every

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754 occasion. At the conclusion of their speeches they pronounce his name. Though no special offering is made except the sweet potato and the sala
771 fruit just referred to, and no special ceremony of worship is performed, Murimi has clearly become the object of adoration of his devotees and is much nearer their hearts and consciences than the ancestor-gods.

A year or two went by and the Thongas were obliged to confess that the produce of the fields in the meagre sand of their hills was not richer than in former years. People died just as before ; the great salvation which the worshippers of Murimi had expected did not come, and the tribe understood vaguely that it had been the victim of a gigantic hoax. At least when the question was put to the devotees of the new cult : "What about Murimi?" they smiled and did not answer a word, and very soon Murimi was forgotten.

754 It might be thought that this strange movement was the result of Euro-
771 pean influence ; it bears a strongly monotheistic character, and Murimi is certainly very different from the ancestor-gods and from Tilo, Heaven,
776 and much more akin to the Christian God. It must however be observed that very little information was given about this god, who was to a certain extent identified with his prophets, the latter being named Murimi as well as himself. But setting aside the small part played by Murimi, we are forced to recognise that the new rite is essentially and authentically Bantu. It is directly connected with witchcraft, the old Thonga animistic belief ; we have already met, in connection with the treatment of smallpox, with the idea of destroying witchcraft by means of a collective confession and repudiation (p. 465). The taboos accompanying the new rite are those we have everywhere found in the marginal periods or when an initiation was taking place. The Murimi Movement is thus a genuine creation of primitive Thonga mentality. Changes are taking place so rapidly that it is probably the last. I am glad therefore to have had an opportunity of witnessing it and of publishing the record of such an interesting event. Further details will be found in a paper which appeared in *Le Journal de Psychologie normale et pathologique*. 15 Décembre 1924. Paris.

APPENDIX VI (See p. 571).

Divination by means of Ivory Tablets amongst the Ba-Pedi.

Astragalus bones are employed for purposes of divination in many South African tribes: Suthos of Basutoland, Pedis of the Transvaal, Ba-Rotse of the Zambezi plain, Nyandjas of Lake Nyassa etc. Wishing to ascertain if the interpretation of the bones was the same amongst the Ba-Khaha of Shiluvane as amongst their Nkuna neighbours, I asked

Legoame. Selume. Thoegsdime. Thogoane.

The four divinatory tablets. Upper side.

a diviner of this tribe to explain his art to me, which he very willingly did. It was in the year 1907; this man, Mutshezi, possessed most of the astragalus of the Thongas and used them in the same manner, but I noticed amongst them four ivory tablets of a triangular shape which were totally absent from all the sets belonging to Thonga diviners which I had ever seen. Setting aside his astragalus bones and confining himself to the four tablets, my informant showed me that, as their upper face was marked with dots whilst their lower face was quite plain and white, these four objects could fall in sixteen different ways, each of which had its own significance. This is mathematically speaking perfectly true, and I was greatly astonished to find an uneducated Bantu, belonging to a race so little developed from the point of view of

the arithmetical sense, possessed of such a surprising knowledge of the law of permutations! Pushing my questions further, I learned that two out of the four ivory tablets were male, one of them, named *Legoame*, being the adult male and the second, *Selume*, the boy, whilst the two others, which have a notch on their smaller side, were female, the larger one called *Thoagadime* and the smaller *Thogoane*. It was evident that these four objects, representing the four principal divisions of the family, formed by themselves a complete system of divination independently of the astragalus which accompanied them. The information which I collected in 1907 was not sufficient to enable me to publish the sixteen combinations with the necessary accuracy. But my colleague the Rev A. Jaques, who has been living in Shiluvane during the last few years, has at my request kindly completed the study which I began and thanks to his valuable help I was able to write a full description of this species of mantic in the *Bulletin de la Société Neuchâteloise de Géographie*, 1925. I cannot reproduce it here in full, but I will give the main results of the researches of the Rev. A. Jaques and myself (1)

Let us call Legoame, the man, M, Selume, the boy, B, Thoagadime, the woman, W, and Thogoane, the girl G. The tablets may fall showing their upper side, the side covered with dots ; they are then in the positive, active position, corresponding to the position of the astragalus showing its convex side. I shall indicate this position by +. Or they may fall showing their lower side, the plain side without any markings. This is the negative or inactive position, indicated by —. When the diviner has cast his ivories and sees how they have fallen, he first utters a word or a few words expressing the *formula* of the combination. Then

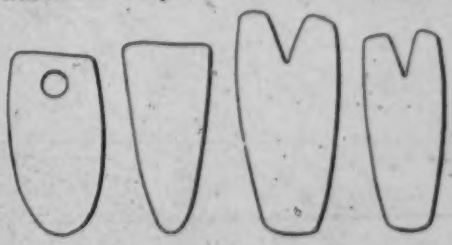
(1) The Rev. S. S. Dornan, in a paper published in Vol. XX of the *South African Journal of Science*, on Divination and Divining Bones, declares that the system of the four tablets is very much employed amongst the Bushmen, each individual possessing his set and using it for his own wants. He believes that the Bantus have borrowed it from the Bushmen. In a paper by Mr. H. W. Garbutt published in 1900 in the *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Society*, there are plates representing the divinatory tablets used amongst the Ma-Shona, the Ma-Tebele and the Ma-Kalanga of Rhodesia and amongst the Ba-Toka, Ba-Totela and the Ba-Leya of the Zambezi region. It seems evident that these, though generally rectangular in form and made of wood, are employed for the same purposes as amongst the Pedis. Amongst the Ma-Kalanga they are called Kwami, Tshilume, Lumwe and Dagwala and these names are very similar to those of the tablets in Pedi. I would further mention the paper of the Rev. N. Roberts in the *South African Journal of Science*, 1915, p. 367-370, in which he describes the four ivory tablets found by him in the Malaboch tribe, in the Northern Transvaal, not very far from Shiluvane. He discovered the same sixteen combinations and gives their names which, as a whole, correspond to those of the Khaha-Pedis, but he does not enter into a detailed explanation of their meaning.

he begins a kind of incantation, which is more or less uncomprehensible, consisting, as it does, of obsolete expressions of the meaning of which the diviner is almost entirely ignorant, but which evidently aim at stimulating his divinatory powers. It is even possible that, according to the principle of verbal magic, the magician expects by this more or less lyric utterance of mysterious words to exert a real influence on the course of the events which he is about to predict. When the incantation is finished, the diviner proceeds to the *application* of the revelation made by the combination to the case for which he has been consulted. Leaving aside these incantations, which are so difficult to translate, I will now give : *a)* the formula of each combination, *b)* the general idea, sometimes very vague, which each contains, and *c)* some of the applications.

1. M+B+W+G+ . *a) Mphirifiri.* The coming and going of a throng of people. — *b)* Febrile activity (everyone is on his legs). — *c)* Dances, quarrels in the village. Thunderstorm or strong wind. Locusts. An object lost will not be found ; it is lost amongst the throng, etc.

2. M+B+W+G— . *a) Makhulela ea masadja.* (Dead things in the chief's village). — *b)* The chest is full (of violent feelings, bitterness, sadness. — *c)* There is much disease, the patient is panting. No rain. The enemies will capture the chief, etc.

3. M+B+W—G— . *a) Mashupia a sebimmpi* (The animal which has no horns, the secret thing which one keeps to oneself). — *b)* The heart is enchained. There is something hidden which people will not reveal. — *c)* No peace in the village. The disease is constipation, and the patient dies without having expressed his last wishes. The mother will give birth to a dead child and will not reveal the name of its father. No rain ; it is tied up, etc.



The four divinatory tablets. Under side.

4. M+B—W—G—. *a) Legoame la makhuluho.* (The man, the father, flows out). — *b)* Something leaks away, gets lost. — *c)* The village is scattered. The disease is dysentery. If anyone dies it will be the father. Rain will fall abundantly. We shall kill the enemies' chief. This combination designates the father.

5. M—B—W—G— . *a) Muthakulana oa matzepe* (meaning un-

ooo known). — *b)* Everything is lying on the ground; everything is dead, everything black. — *c)* In the village, mats are unrolled; people are sitting down talking. The disease comes from the mats on which the patient has had unlawful relations. Rain will fall and darken the soil. The lost object will not be found; it is hidden in the dark ground, etc.

6. M—B+W+G+ . *a) Moraroana oa sili* (The little circle of vomiting?). — *b)* Things which produce nausea, disgust or which happen suddenly. — *c)* In the village, people are disgusted with each other on account of theft. The disease is accompanied by vomiting. On the war-path a warrior has had bleeding of the nose and the whole army has returned. In the Court, the judges will not accept the claim, finding it disgusting, etc.

7. M—B—W+G+ . *a) Bukhacha* (Kept back at home). — *b)* Rest. People remain at home. — *c)* In the village the women either quarrel or are satisfied, but they do not think of going away. The disease consists of great fatigue and will not soon be cured. Protracted birth. War is not brought to a conclusion. No travel is undertaken, etc.

8. M—B+W—G+ . *a) Thabadiva* (Bath in the river?). — *b)* [illegible]ssing rivers, and telling lies. — *c)* In the village, quarrels. The disease is not clear, the patient lies; you think he will recover; it is a lie; he is near his death. No war: false rumours. The traveller will cross many rivers and reach a far distant country. Thunderstorm, but no rain, a deceptive noise. No harvest; the fields do not make good their promises. In the Court you will be accused of lying. This combination designates the Ba-Tokwa tribe, which has the crocodile as totem.

9. M—B+W—G— . *a) Selume thudu* (The little boy alone?). — *b)* Tears! Misery! — *c)* In the village, poverty, bad feeling. The maternal uncle refuses to give his daughter to her motsoala (L. p. 293). The disease causes weeping and is fatal. War, travel accompanied by tears. If you have lost something, cry as much as you like, you will not find it again. The harvest fails: nothing but tears. This combination especially designates the maternal uncle.

10. M—B+W+G— . *a) Sefara* (Something which is attached to something else). — *b)* That which is attached to the body: the breasts, the suckling child; two things at an angle with each other. — *c)* In the village you have taken in a stranger who is spoiling your life. The disease affects the breast, the ears, the arms. Difficult parturition: the child remains attached to his mother. In the battle, warriors fight

interlocked. The chief's wife must go with her baby in her arms to make an offering at the village gate, etc.

11. M+B—W+G—. *a) Mugolori oa rebatsalala* (The man and the woman are standing, satisfied?). — *b)* Double meaning: Happy family life and relations with the mogolo, elder brother (I p. 497). — *c)* Peace in the village. Pregnancy normal. No war. No travelling. Rain does not come, but remains where it is. On the other hand, anger of the elder brother; his younger brother has had relations with his wife. If rain is wanting, ask your elder brother to make an offering.

12. M+B—W—G+. *a) Sethaku sa musepedi* (The sandal of the traveller). — *b)* The traveller. Quarrels. Disorder. — *c)* In the village they fight with knives. Dispute about the expected birth. In the war, desperate fighting. The traveller has put on his sandals: he will go far, etc. Ma-Kalanga clans, and those which have the lion as totem.

13. M—B—W+G—. *a) Murupi oa setshuga* (The hawk which frightens). — *b)* Fright! Terror! — *c)* The village is destroyed by a fire. Inside, the disease burns; death will come in a way which will terrify you. The mother will give birth to something awful, perhaps to twins. In the war, enemies will set fire to your village, etc. This combination designates the principal wife and the grandmother.

14. M—B—W—G+. *a) Lenwe la thupuli la mavone.* (Alone; thing which one picks up, which is seen?). — *b)* Loneliness (of a girl) and abduction. Things seen. — *c)* In the village you have shown kindness to somebody who abandons you with ingratitude. Women make denial, one of them says: "I am not pregnant"; but it is no use lying: it has been clearly seen! No war near: you will only see it from afar, etc. This combination also designates the younger co-wife of your mother or your younger brother's wife.

15. M+B—W+G+ . *a) Moraro omogolo* (The great circle). — *b)* To turn round in a circle. — *c)* In the village people are sitting, apparently in peace, whilst they slander each other and thus burn the village. The disease affects the loins and the hips. (Moraro also means behind). The woman suffers from the intestinal worm which moves all round her body. The army of enemies will camp round your village, but will not enter it. No rain; it falls all round the country, but not in it, etc. This combination designates the grandfather.

16. M+B+W—G+ . *a) Maviana ea lishada* (Small stones which make a noise). — *b)* Noise caused by small stones hitting each other or by locusts' wings. — *c)* In the village, quarrels and cries. Rival wives

fight. A sister insults her brother who refuses to give his daughter to her cousin, the woman's son (I. p. 293). The disease is itch or folly ; or it is caused by the anger of the ancestor-gods with the maternal uncle who refuses his daughter to her motswala. The traveller will go to a mourning ceremony, etc. This combination also designates the paternal aunt and the girls, because the wife has gone (thoagadime is on her back) and the husband has nobody to play with except his sister and the girls of the village.

This system of divination is much more difficult to understand than astragalomancy. Though it is easy to recognize in some of its features the magic principles which underly most of the Bantu practices of divination, yet there are also in the interpretation of the ivory tablets other elements and a large amount of conventionality , as I have tried to show in the paper quoted above, to which I must refer the reader for more details. It would be interesting to know whether the interpretation given by the Bushmen is similar to that of the Pedis ; are the words of the incantations used by the latter of Bushmen origin? This is one of the subjects which South African ethnologists ought to study without delay.

PRACTICAL CONCLUSIONS

I. On Alcoholism and the South African tribe. (See p. 46)

The craving of the Bantu of South Africa for alcohol is by no means a result of civilisation. The race, being of a weak character, has always given way to drunkenness. Deprived of true religious and moral principles, it was exposed, as all primitive races are, to the excesses of that dangerous passion. The beer-drinking parties are as old as the tribe itself, or at any rate, as ancient as the introduction of cereals! 733

But it must be confessed that civilisation has developed this natural instinct to a terrible degree. In former times, Natives were able to get intoxicated from time to time, the chiefs more frequently than their subjects, owing to the shirwalo taxation (I. p. 405). But the brewing took nine days, and in the meantime the inmates of the village were obliged to keep sober. Now all that is changed. Where the law does not prohibit the sale of liquor to Natives, they can buy as much as they like at all times; some of them are therefore constantly under the influence of drink as long as they have money to purchase it, and the progressive alcoholisation of the entire population is already to be observed. I lived for many years in a Colony where there is no liquor law. Formerly German rum was sold all over the country by thousands of flagons, and I even saw children drinking it with avidity, although they shivered whilst swallowing the deadly drug! Later on it was prohibited and replaced by what is called "Vinho colonial", which, however, was no great improvement. According to the late E. Torre do Valle, a great friend of the Ba-Ronga, who strongly deprecated this liquor trade, it is an adulterated mixture in which tobacco, India-pepper, etc. are used to give pungency to the taste, and containing but little natural wine. When a White man enters an upcountry store and wants something to drink, the Banyan who retails this mixture from three barrels standing on the end of the counter, refuses to serve him with it, saying: "This is for Natives and not for White men". Round Lourenço Marques there are hundreds of such bars, and although the Authorities have tried to diminish their number, the drunkenness in the Native Location is terrible and almost incredible in extent. Let the visitor go on Saturday night or Sunday along the avenues of Majlanganen (I. p. 206), where the galvanised iron stores extend without interruption in all directions, and observe the women, men, youngsters dancing on the road in front of the

733 bars, falling on the ground, spending their last penny to get drink beneath the eyes of the amused storekeeper, and he will realise what the unrestricted sale of drink to the Blacks means. It is simply horrible to contemplate ; morally it is a most reprehensible, economically a most deplorable, physically a most dangerous state of things. I shall not deal here with the moral side of the question ; let us merely consider what is the effect of this liquor trade on the health and on the economic future of the Black race.

1) There can be no doubt that it *kills* hundreds of Natives. Whatever stamina the race may possess, it cannot long resist the deadly effects of an inferior, unwholesome type of liquor absorbed in such enormous quantities. Coffee must be *kweba*, drunk in sips, but wine according to Natives, must be *nwa*, viz., drunk "à plein gosier" like water ! We saw the young chief Shongele, heir of the Klosen clan, son of Magudju, die a miserable death from delirium tremens, and many other chiefs and sub-chiefs followed his example. For years they led a disgusting life, half drunk all the time, no longer able to preside over the tribal court, or to govern their people, having entirely lost the dignity of manner and the sense of position which was so remarkable amongst Bantu rulers, clapping their hands and abjectly entreating the White visitor to give them *sope* (the Native name for brandy).

[164] Hand in hand with drunkenness goes immorality, and immorality as practised in that hell means the unchecked propagation of syphilis. According to medical authority, ninety p[illegible]nt of the Natives round the town of Lourenço Marques are now contaminated. The girls who come on Saturday to sell their produce in the market and sleep two nights in the Native town, give themselves, for a few pence, to one of the hundreds of boys working on the wharf, and thus propagate the disease in the interior, and all this means the rapid destruction of a race which was made for life, and has great possibilities before it.

During the war of 1894, a merchant in the town of Lourenço Marques said to me cynically : "The Natives are a nuisance ! Let them be given as much alcohol as they want and we shall soon get rid of them."

2) Alcohol will kill the Black race in the long run. It is already *ruining the kafir trade*. Those who uphold the liquor traffic, in order to increase the Revenue of the Colony, ought to obtain the opinion of the traders who do not deal in liquor. These merchants, who try to create new wants, to develop a healthy and useful trade amongst Natives, in a word to civilise them, would testify that selling strong drink to the Natives prevents their buying anything else. The craving for

alcohol is such that they spend all their money on it and no longer care for clothing, better food, ploughs, live stock, etc. The *consuming power* of the Black race as regards European goods, which might become enormous, is thus curtailed ; and at the same time its capacity for work is destroyed. When drink was allowed to be sold in the Compounds of Johannesburg, the Mine Managers soon found that a third of their Black workers were constantly in a state of intoxication and unfit to go down into the mine. So the sale was happily stopped, not so much on moral as on purely practical grounds. 733

So, if we study the question seriously, we are forced to the conclusion that total prohibition of European liquor, and any similar product, is the one chance of salvation for the Natives. I know of only two classes of people who would oppose this conclusion : the liquor traders — whose judgment is not disinterested — and some educated Natives, and negrophiles, who resent any colour legislation and think such prohibition an insult to the Black race. There is no need to reply to the former. Let them consider the heavy responsibility which they incur when they enrich themselves by slowly killing a primitive, childish race which has not enough moral force to resist the danger ! To the second I would say : "Even if some of you have in reality attained that moral status in which you can use and not abuse your liberty, you must confess that your race, as a whole, has not yet reached this level. A great number of the best Native Christians have fallen irretrievably and been lost owing to the passion for drink ; how much more defenceless are the rank and file, raw heathen or weak Christians ! Accept the testimony of facts and recognize that the Black race, just emerging from savagery, is still in a state of moral infancy and must be treated with great consideration. Later on, let us hope, the time will come when it will have grown in strength and moral vigour, and no legal restrictions will be required."

As regards *Native drinks*, the use of *byala*, strong beer, is generally prohibited in Christian Congregations. Some Missions also exclude light beer, *buputju*, whilst some (amongst them the Swiss Romande Mission) allow it. *Buputju* proper, the Suto *leting*, is not very objectionable, containing but little alcohol ; but I have already pointed out the great difficulty of establishing a clear line of demarcation between buputju and byala. Our experience is that Native Christians readily approve the prohibition of byala... but, after a while, they begin to brew a buputju which is almost the equivalent of it, and the morality of their congregations sinks in proportion to the increase of alcohol in

733 their drink. So, in a Synod held in Shiluvane in 1908, the question was earnestly discussed during a whole day. The following were the confessions made by the delegates "We have deceived our leaders! What we drink is byala, and not buputju! We ourselves, the elders, are drinking and leading the others into temptation ; thus we give strength to the beer. The beer is the hyena. It kills the soul ! It kills the work of salvation! Let it die once for all, the wild beast. Let a knife be provided to cut the throat of the wild beast", viz., let strict regulations be adopted to prevent drunkenness in the Church.

When Natives arrive at such a conviction of the danger of alcohol for their race, and take up such a position in regard to their own beer, should not we Whites be greatly to blame if we increased their difficulties by providing them with European drinks which are ten times more dangerous for them!

At the International Conference on Alcoholism which took place in Geneva, 1st to 3d September 1925, regulations for the Colonies were discussed and I had the honour of putting forward the following suggestions, especially as regards Mozambique ; they were supported by Gen. A Freire d'Andrade, the Portuguese delegate to this Conference.

"The ideal would be total prohibition of any foreign alcoholic liquor, as Natives already possess sufficient national drinks. If, however, it is felt to be impossible to adopt such a radical measure at the present time, the following restrictions are suggested, bearing on two categories of drinks, imported drinks and those manufactured in the Colony.

First Category. Imported drinks.

a) Prohibition of importation and sale of all *distilled* liquors.

b) Prohibition of adulterated wines, prepared for Native consumption (trade spirits, vinho colonial).

c) Compulsory analysis of all *fermented* drinks offered for sale and prohibition of all those which contain more than 12 % of alcohol and of those which are of a harmful character.

Second Category. Drinks manufactured in the Colony.

a) Prohibition of distillation of any liquors destined for consumption, whether manufactured by European or Native processes.

b) Periodical examination by the Sanitary Service of the Colony of all fermented drinks manufactured by Europeans or Natives, and prohi-

2: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

bition of those which are prejudicial to public health, whether on account of a too high percentage of alcohol, on account of their mode of manufacture, or on account of the physical and moral disorders which they produce." 733

These proposals were favourably received by the Committee for the Colonies, but no vote was taken on details, only a general resolution being passed. It is clear that these recommendations are intended for the whole Native population. In the domain of the Church we should go much further, as pointed out above.

II. On the Problem of Native Education.

The study which we have made of the Bantu Intellect in Part V has paved the way for a consideration of this great question, which is one of the most important features of the Native problem in South Africa. 871 177-87

The wild buffalo has been made prisoner! A yoke has been placed on its neck. — The savage mind of the Bantu is now being trained to civilised methods, and the Elementary School gathers in the goatherds of the bush, all over South Africa. More than 220,000 children are attending a course of instruction. The wild buffalo has bowed its neck to the yoke with wonderful readiness! It is one of the promising features of the present situation of the Black race that it has so quickly accepted the school. This acceptance proves its vitality; it understands that the acquisition of knowledge is, for it, the only way of adapting itself to altered circumstances. So, though primary education has nowhere yet been made compulsory, children are leaving their flocks and learning reading, writing, and arithmetic. This phenomenon is universal, and is to be observed not only in the towns, where big boys of twenty or thirty years of age crowd to the evening schools, patiently writing letters on slates with clumsy fingers, but in the most remote parts of the country, wherever a missionary or a Native teacher opens a school.

This spread of instruction is bound to have great results for the future of the race, and its intellectual development; it is therefore of the utmost importance that rational and wise methods should be adopted in the conduct of this work, in order to help rather than injure the Bantu mind. Unfortunately it cannot be said that such has always been the case in past times. To avoid mistakes and errors I beg to put forward the following suggestion as to the first principle of Native Education.

1) The Necessity of a special Native Curriculum.

I should like in the first place to give a personal recollection.

When I was a young missionary on the Rikatla Station, I had the great misfortune to lose my Native teacher. He was not satisfied with the pay he received from the Mission, so he took leave without ceremony and went to town to earn more money. I remained alone to attend to all the spiritual and educational duties of the Station. Until then, I had left the entire charge of the school to him. Now I was obliged to go myself each day to teach the twenty or thirty boys and girls of the class. But what I at first regarded as a very sad occurrence proved a real blessing. Having to teach in a Native school for some months, I gained very valuable experience, and I at once saw that, with a language totally different from our own, and subject to other influences, and a different training in their homes, Native children could not be taught on exactly the same lines as Europeans ; in other circumstances, other methods had to be employed. In what way, and how far, the training must be different was a very interesting question, and its solution seemed to me to deserve every effort on the part of the friends of the Native.

What was my surprise, on visiting Cape Colony some years later, to find that, in this the most advanced of the South African States, the same course of instruction was followed in the schools for the Natives as in those for White children! The former had to pass through the six classical Standards just in the same way as the sons of the English or Dutch colonists. What was the reason for this strange regulation? Was it in the name of a liberal and generous negrophilism that Blacks were treated exactly the same as Whites? I was told that this was not altogether the true explanation, and that it was due rather to the indifference with which Native Education was regarded ; the Authorities had not taken the trouble to inquire into the matter, and ascertain if this was the proper method of dealing with it. The Natives, as a rule, were satisfied, believing that the more they were treated like Europeans, the more did they really resemble them. But there were signs of uneasiness. School Inspectors, intelligent Natives, were observing that such a system resulted in a superficial and useless education, in a denationalisation of Native children without any true progress towards a more civilised state. In fact, agitation on this question led to an official inquiry conducted by a Select Committee of the House of Parliament,

and a number of complaints were brought forward condemning this system as actually harmful to the Native pupils.

Three times the South African General Missionary Conference discussed this important subject. It had a full right to do this ; it was in fact its undoubted duty to do so, since Native Education in South Africa is in the hands of the missionary bodies, who provide the teachers, and found the schools, the State only exercising a general supervision and paying part of the salaries. So on two occasions I had the privilege of impressing upon this Assembly the necessity of a special Native course of instruction, once in Johannesburg in 1904 and once in Bloemfontain in 1909 (1).

Before explaining the grounds for this necessity, let me remark that, *a priori*, it is entirely reasonable to make a difference between the instruction given to a young savage just emerging from the bush, and that afforded to a civilised child. The six Standards of the British Curriculum constitute indeed an excellent programme, and many educationists are so convinced of its perfection that they would apply it to all the children on the face of the earth. We may observe, however, that in foreign countries like France and Germany, where the schools have reached the same degree of excellence, the curriculum is slightly different. In a programme of primary education, there would seem to be two series of elements : the universal elements, which every human being must be taught if he wishes to be looked upon as educated, and the particular or national elements which answer to the special wants or gifts of the various nations. So we might say that the English course has a more practical, the German a more scientific, and the French a more literary character. If such differences exist amongst the civilised nations, is it not reasonable to expect to find them when we are educating on the one hand White children, and on the other children born in the bush, far away from European influences, in a totally different environment, amidst totally different traditions?

But the necessity for a special course of instruction for Natives does not only arise from the differences between the Bantu and European mind. It is forced upon us by the fact that these tribes possess and use their own languages ; the centre of the problem is the presence of these languages, and this being the most important point in the discussion, I must dwell at length upon it.

(1) See Reports of the South African General Missionary Conference of 1904 : "The place of the Native Language in Native Education," and in the Report of 1909 : "Native Education and Native Literature." Compare Journal of the African Society, October 1905.

2) The place of the Vernacular in Native Education.

000 If we wish to express a sound judgment on this subject, another question of a more general character must first be considered. What will be the fate of the Native languages in the course of evolution of the Black race in South Africa?

Some superficial observers have expressed their conviction that these dialects are bound to disappear in the near future before all-powerful civilisation and its vehicle, the European languages. This opinion is based on no substantial foundations. In the last 20 or 30 years, the use of Native languages has not decreased in the slightest, nor is there any sign of the Black populations abandoning them. In some places in the Orange Province a kind of Low Dutch has superseded Sesutho, or the old Hottentot dialect, but this is owing to the disintegration of the tribes and the prevalence of European influences. Where the Bantus still adhere to their tribal system, or where they dwell in locations, they retain their native tongue, and they are fully justified in doing so; these languages are altogether worthy of preservation, as has been shown in the first chapter of Part V. They are not degenerate, they are not inexpressive, they are rich in their own way, and, at any rate, they are admirably in keeping with those who invented them. Thus they are by far the best medium for the expression of their thoughts. I may quote here the Thonga proverb: "The strength of the crocodile is water." When speaking his own tongue, the Native is a crocodile in water. He is strong, he is eloquent, he is a personality! When speaking a foreign language, most of them are caricatures. Of course some of them master English perfectly, or Portuguese, or Dutch, if they have been in long and intimate contact with Whites. But this is a chance which falls to the share of very few, and it will probably not be the lot of the majority until social and political conditions have undergone an entire change. If our European patois have been preserved for centuries in so many countries where they have had to fight against a literary language, against books, School and Church, how much more probable is it that Sesutho, Zulu and Thonga will remain the languages of the South African tribes! The vernacular then will live, and it is worthy of being used both as a medium for instruction and as an object of study in Native schools.

On the other hand, European languages are making great progress amongst the Natives, and it is but natural and desirable that it should be so. The South African Native instinctively understands that he must

be able to converse with his White master in his tongue, as the White master is much too busy (and perhaps too lazy) to learn the language of his boy. The greatest concession the White man will make is to speak a smattering of "Kitchen Kafir," that most deplorable mixture of Zulu, Dutch, English and Portuguese, lacking all grammatical construction, which flourishes on the docks and in the stores of half civilised South Africa. To kill this execrable product more promptly, let the Natives arrive at a true knowledge of the European language as quickly as possible. The Governments desire this, the storekeepers long for it, the mistress of the house demands it, and the missionaries have nothing to say against it!

In fact the *South African tribe must be bi-lingual*, the vernacular remaining the language of the home, of the soul, of religion, of intercourse between the Blacks; while the European language, English, Portuguese, or Dutch, as the case may be, is used in the ever-increasing intercourse with the Whites. That the race can attain to such a level is beyond doubt; its literary ability is quite equal to the effort.

If these premises are true, what conclusions are to be drawn from them as regards Native Education? The Native child enters school knowing only his vernacular. He must leave school having acquired a true training of the mind, and having become at the same time a useful member of the community, two aims, the educational and the practical, which must not be sacrificed one to the other. How are we to attain them both? I shall consider the question more especially from the point of view of language.

Without entering into technical details, let me say that Native primary education ought to comprise three stages:

1) *The Vernacular Stage*, a period of two years during which pupils who are just commencing their studies learn to read and write their own language. This will form a solid foundation which will be useful to them all their lives. At this stage, the European language is taught by ear only, colloquially, according to the method of the Berlitz School, as far as possible by establishing a direct connection between objects seen and the foreign words learned. This period corresponds to Sub-Standards A and B.

2) *The Mixed Stage*, corresponding to Standards I, II, III of the English course, forms the transition period. The pupils are still taught through the medium of their own tongue; they receive lessons in its admirable and regular grammar, until they are able to parse sentences, a very good exercise which will accustom their minds to analyse and

classify (1). But Readers in a European language are now put into their hands, and they read these, the teachers always taking care to avoid a mere memorising of words without an understanding of their meaning. For this purpose we recommend for use during this stage, bilingual books containing a literal translation of the text in the Native language on the opposite page.

3) *The European Stage*, corresponding to Standards IV, V, VI. Some contact is still kept with the vernacular at this stage by reading the best of Native literature, when available ; but here the Native curriculum comes nearer to the European, some subjects, however, such as history, being taught in a somewhat different way, to answer to the needs of Natives. The European language, English, or Dutch, or Portuguese, is employed as a medium as much as possible.

This division into three stages will provide a sound evolution from the untrained bush life to adult and civilised life, and will do as little as possible to destroy the character of the Native.

I cannot here go into full details of the course of instruction which I proposed to the Bloemfontein Conference, in 1909, and which was included in the Report. I will only add that after an interesting discussion, the assembly passed a resolution, approving the system of the proposed three stages, which in the English Colonies would be termed the Vernacular, Anglo-Vernacular and English stages. In the Mozambique Province, Governor General Freire d'Andrade adopted a similar plan, combining it with the Portuguese Code of Education (1908). Natal has also changed its Code of Native Education exactly on the lines indicated in the Bloemfontein Conference.

As regards the Transvaal authorities, they only began to take an interest in Native Education after the Anglo-Boer war. Provisional Standards were adopted with two Sub-Standards, in which the requirements, as regards English, were very modest. The study of the Native language was nowhere mentioned ; the vernacular was entirely lost sight of. "Teach it as much as you like and have time to do so," said the Department, "but we cannot take it into account." Such a recommendation, however, cannot easily be carried out. A subject not mentioned in the curriculum, and not included in the examinations, will never receive study. This system, moreover, gave rise to the following

(1) This teaching of the Native grammar to Native pupils has been given in the Swiss Mission schools for years, and has proved very interesting. I am glad to observe that Bishop Cameron, of Cape Town, recommended it in the following words : "In order to train the mind to understand the process of thought, the Kafir grammar, which is elaborate, logical and on the whole regular, is a much more satisfactory instrument than the English grammar."

serious difficulty. Native children, on their first arrival at the school, had to be provided with two books, the vernacular Reader and the English Primer. They had therefore to begin by learning the same letters with two different values, *a* being pronounced like the Italian *a*, in the Bantu orthography, and like *é*, the French *é*, in the English book; *e* being respectively the English *a* and the French *i*; *i* the English *e* and the French *ae*; *u* the French *ou* and the English *you*! The case is almost as bad with the consonants! This course is surely not desirable from a pedagogic point of view. Is it not cruel to force pupils, who are just beginners, to learn two alphabets at the outset? And are we not right in claiming that one of the axioms of Native Education should be the exclusion of any European book, as long as the child is still learning to read his Native Reader? If this plan is not adopted, the results will be deplorable. A teacher in Cape Colony who had occasion to examine pupils taught in out-stations according to such methods, said to me: "They are supposed to have passed Standard III. They easily read a St. III Reader, but they do not understand a word of it, and when I examine them in Kafir, they are unable to read the first Kafir Reader." So the result of this method has not been more favourable to the English language than it has to the vernacular. Four years of study on these lines have only resulted in a useless memorising of English words, and an almost complete inability to read Kafir. Out-station teachers may be blamed for this deplorable result; but anti-pedagogic methods, or rather the want of reasonable methods, have had a great part in bringing it about.

The system I now advocate, insisting, as it does, on a real understanding of all subjects taught, is designed to correct the great fault in Native Education all over South Africa. The Bantu mind is endowed with a wonderful memory, as we have seen. Moreover, being the mind of a primitive race, it has a strong tendency to imitation. Hence the fact that Native children (and often teachers) are perfectly satisfied with a parrot-like learning of words and sounds which they do not understand. They commit to memory entire books in a purely mechanical manner, without bothering at all about the meaning of the words; this knowledge is but a superficial veneer which will disappear as soon as they have left school, and most of them leave after Standard III. This parrot-like way of learning must be combated with the utmost determination and, realising that this is a weak point of the Bantus of this and perhaps of the next generation, the Native curriculum must provide a means of checking the spread of this evil, which I have ventured to call the blight of Native Education (See Rep. of the Bloemfontein Conference, page 20).

3) The want of the Arithmetical sense.

000 In the preceding pages, I have dealt with the best means of developing those literary faculties of the mind which are so prominent amongst the Bantu tribes. A system of education ought to foster the natural abilities and gifts of a race. It ought also to remedy its defects, and a thorough teaching of arithmetic must be given in the Native schools precisely because the mathematical sense is feeble in most of the Native pupils. The method generally followed is to teach them European numeration. I think that this is the only reasonable course, as their own system is much too complicated, and no elaborate arithmetical work would be possible if counting were done in the vernacular. The danger which we meet with in this branch of study is once again the tendency to be satisfied with merely mechanical work in which the reasoning faculty plays no part. Do not be content if you find your pupils' eyes shining and their hearts thrilling when they are merely reducing feet into inches, or yards into feet! Complete your teaching by giving them a problem which appeals to their reasoning powers!

4) Seven principles of Native Education.

In conclusion, I would say that Native Education, in order rightly to direct the evolution of the race, must be actuated by the following principles, the first four being a résumé of the foregoing considerations, whilst the last three are also of great importance.

1) The teaching of vernacular reading and writing is the foundation of the whole.

2) The teaching of the European languages must be given at first orally and never allowed to become a merely mechanical effort of memory.

3) Arithmetic must play a considerable part in the programme, and be taught as a means of developing the still dormant reasoning faculty.

4) The study of the vernacular Grammar is a first-rate means of developing the sense of classification amongst young pupils.

5) The Native curriculum must try in addition to meet other wants peculiar to the Natives. They have not been taught a number of common scientific facts which White children naturally learn through their environment, so they ought to be given an elementary course of science in order to check notions of witchcraft and other superstitions.

6) Industrial Training is of the first necessity to a race which, though highly gifted in this domain, has still to be civilised and can aspire to something better than mere unskilled labour. Agriculture ought to be

taught by preference, and, where possible each school should have its experimental garden subsidised by the State.

7) Last but not least, Native Education ought to give a prominent place to the religious and moral element, these being of the utmost importance in the uplifting of a race in which character is weak and whose religion is still unrelated to morality.

I do not attempt to deal here with the problem of Higher, Normal and University education for the Natives. These also ought not to be mere servile imitations of White methods, but so organised as to answer to the special requirements of the Natives, and I would refer the reader to the Report of the Bloemfontein Conference on this point; all those who have taken the trouble to study this question will agree that such higher education ought to be liberally offered to the Black race. The more qualified physicians, advocates, or ministers can be trained, the more numerous will be the élite which, sooner or later, must take the lead in the development of the race. Is it not in the interest of all that superstition should disappear, that hygiene should be taught, that justice should be administered irrespective of colour, and that Christian morality should be preached? Natives are ready to pay for these higher qualifications. I do not see any reason why they should be prevented from acquiring them, if their intellect be equal to the task.

Since this book was first published, all the African Colonies have been visited by a Commission of educational experts under the auspices of the Phelps-Stokes Fund and the Foreign Missionary Societies of America and Europe, and the results of this inquiry have been published in the two epoch-making reports of Dr. Th. Jesse Jones on *Education in Africa*. It is unnecessary to state how entirely the author of these lines agrees with the spirit which animates these reports and with the recommendations they contain. The British Government has also issued a memorandum on its educational policy which is inspired by the same conviction that Native Education must adapt itself entirely to Native life, and which recommends the use of the vernaculars as of the highest importance. A new era seems to have set in, in which the problem of Native Education is being faced more seriously than ever before, and an attempt is being made to solve it according to the best interests of the Africans. Let us hope that the Africans themselves will understand that the kind of mental development at which such a course of instruction aims, in accordance with their character, their traditions and their actual wants, is infinitely preferable for them to that servile imitation of the Whites which is still the aspiration of some amongst them.

2: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga
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CONCLUSION

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121 I have reached the end of my study of the Life of a South African
114 tribe in its principal manifestations, social, mental and spiritual. In
174 order to write a complete anthropological monograph, I ought to have also dealt at length with the physical features of the Thongas. This would have led me too far. However I have taken a few anthropometric measurements, which have been published in the *Bulletin de la Société neuchâteloise de Géographie* of 1917, together with an explanation kindly written by Dr. E. Pittard of Geneva, whose competency in this domain is well-known. I now come to my conclusion. The aim of this book being twofold, scientific and practical, I shall try in these final pages to answer two great questions, one appertaining to Science: How far can the present-day South Africans be described as Primitives? the other, of greater practical importance: How far can the South African tribe withstand the new condition of things brought about by twentieth-century civilisation?

I. *How far can the present-day South African Bantus be described as Primitives?*

One often hears of Primitive Humanity. Do the South African tribes belong to it? This is a very difficult question to answer, as we do not know exactly what Primitive Humanity was and what the evolution of these tribes has been. In the absence of any ancient written record, of any remains of an ancient stone civilisation, we can only make conjectures. But these are based on three sets of facts: Native traditions (to which, however, we must always apply severe criticism), traces of an old and obsolete past actually found in the language or in the rites, and comparison with early civilisations now discovered in palaeolithic settlements, or apparent on the ancient Egyptian monuments, etc. I do not claim to have obtained positive evidence on all points, and I shall leave a good number of interrogation marks in the course of this attempt. We know, however, that Science proceeds by successive approximations. I submit my table of the development of civilisation in the South African tribe as a hypothesis, open to any amendment which further discoveries may suggest. 174

I hesitated before writing anything about the *first period*. A number of Native traditions declare that, at a remote period, their forefathers had no knowledge of *fire*, (I. p. 24, II. p. 33). According to some of my Pedi informants, fire would be of relatively recent origin in certain clans. We cannot, however, believe that fire was ever absolutely absent, seeing that the cave dwellers of the Mousterian age, at the end of the glacial period, knew of it, as is attested by the fire-places found everywhere in the Mousterian deposits. It is probable that the first ancestors of the Thongas lived on roots and fruits, having but very simple weapons, and scarcely any clothing. This condition of things may have prevailed long before the Bantu stock was formed. The race perhaps passed through the totemic phase, which is still to be found amongst more primitive races (I. p. 335), and has left some traces amongst the Thongas up to this day. Mother-right, the traces of which are so clear, was probably the family system of those times, of which we know nothing definite. What was this system? It is impossible to say, and the only feature of which we are sure is that female descent prevailed during that period. Funeral rites probably existed, as they are met with in Mousterian burial-places, and they imply, as previously shown, a belief in

174 Ancestrolatry. Who knows if the idea of an All-Father, which is almost universal in primitive humanity, was not already in existence? The idea of the divine, in one form or another, would seem to have been one of the earliest conceptions of the human mind. Its appearance in the dim consciousness of this ancient being from whom we are descended was perhaps the signal of his attainment of a true humanity. But this is speculation, and I do not wish here to leave the solid ground of Science.

In a *second period*, the beginning of which it is impossible to fix and which I consequently separate from the first by dots, in the table, animals are domesticated, the goat probably first. Agriculture sets in. The soil is tilled with wooden hoes. Male descent supplants female descent and the patriarchate becomes the family system ; its further development leads to the formation of the clan, an enlarged patriarchal family. I conjecture that it is at this stage that the Bantu stock was founded (1). The language was probably the Ur-Bantu, and it is very interesting to reconstitute its main elements, grammatical features, and vocabulary, by a comparison with the present Bantu dialects. Things called by the same word in all existing dialects were probably in existence at that period (2). I imagine that the physiological taboos were already

(1) As regards the origin of the great Bantu family, I will only briefly mention the very interesting *theory of the cycles of civilisation*, advanced by some modern anthropologists. According to some scientists, there have been ten successive cycles in the evolution of mankind. First, the Tasmanian cycle, now extinct ; secondly, the cycle of the Boomerang, still existing in Southern Australia; third, the cycle of Totem, and fourth, the cycle of the Masks, both of which are met with to-day in North-Western Australia and in New Guinea. The fifth cycle is the cycle of the Bow, which succeeded to III and IV all over Melanesia and was superseded later by cycle VI, called Maleo-Polynesian. The latter forms the transition between the primitive cycles, I—VI and those of the semi-civilised and civilised peoples, i. e. the Hindu, the Chinese, the Semitico-musulman, and the European. According to this theory, Africa was invaded first by populations belonging to the three first cycles, which have been preserved down to the present day in the tribes of the Bushmen and Pigmees. A second invasion, composed of representatives of cycles IV and V, and called the Nigritian invasion, later on overran the greater part of the Continent, from Madagascar up to the Senegal. The Sudanese Negroes are the remnants of these Nigritians Later still a third invasion, called Protohamitic, brought to Africa elements belonging to cycle III, which had undergone a considerable evolution, and to cycle VI. These have mixed with the Nigritians and this fusion has given birth to the Bantus Opinions vary as regards the origin of the Bantu language, some believing that these Protohamitic invaders brought it with them, whilst others think that the Ur-Bantu sulted from the fusion of the Nigritian language with the language of the Protohami These theories are the result of a minute comparative study of the customs, lang es, implements and beliefs of all fractions of primitive humanity ; they do not be more than a hypothesis, but they will undoubtedly be useful to Science as such, and further study will show how far they can be adopted.

(2) This argument ought not, however, to be pushed too far. I have been able to ascertain that the fowl was unknown amongst the Pedi clans of the Northern

then in force, as they are found almost identical amongst Semitic peoples, as shown in Leviticus. The hierarchy must have soon followed the institution of patriarchism, and of the clan. Witchcraft probably existed ; it must have been a belief of primitive humanity, as it is still present in a very similar form amongst peasants and uncultured people in civilised lands. We have the right to suppose also that astragalomancy was practised. Some features of the Thonga language show that mythological conceptions then prevailed which seem to have almost entirely disappeared at the present time (I. p. 36, II. p. 306). This period must have lasted for tens, perhaps hundreds of centuries, until the South African tribes, after endless migrations, reached their present abode, probably pushing the early occupants towards the South ; at the end of the XVth century we find the Thonga tribe located near Delagoa Bay (1). 174

The third period is inaugurated by the invasion by the clans mentioned in our Introduction. White men appear, trade begins, stuffs are adopted by women, the men retaining their mbaya. Iron is introduced both by these invaders and by the White whale-fishers and traders. Agriculture undergoes a new development ; so also do military tactics, 174 177

Transvaal, in the beginning of the XVIIIth century, having been introduced by the Ma-Lemba about 1750. In spite of this, the Pedis call it *khugu*, the same word as *huku* in Thonga, Ur-Bantu *kuku*. The name of the thing may have been introduced at the same time as the thing itself, and incorporated by undergoing the phonetic permutations required by the dialect (Compare *Folklore*, Sept. 1908, The Balemba).

(1) The *Lourenço Marques Guardian*, in a very favourable review of Vol. I (Oct. 7, 1912), expresses the regret that I have not dwelt at greater length on the first origin and migrations of the Thonga tribe. The writer thinks that this was formerly a much larger tribe "the basic element in the Hamitic invasion of the coastal region." As far as I know, no document exists on which evidence on such questions could be based. The Portuguese chronicles of the XVIth and XVIIth centuries describe a state of things which is quite modern compared with the first Bantu invasion of South Africa, that of the *Zindj*, to which Masoudi's "Golden Meadows" makes an allusion, A. D. 943. When the Portuguese travellers reached the shore of Delagoa Bay, the stream of migration had already taken an Eastern or North-Eastern direction (I. p. 23). — As regards inferences drawn from the wide-spread term *Thonga* (Ronga, Tonga), I think they have very little value ; this word probably means "people of the East," as *Kalanga* means people of the North. It is applied by Natives to those tribes which dwell eastwards of them, whatever their origin may be. It is a geographical designation, like the term Orientals, and discloses nothing as regards the ethnological features of the tribes to which it is applied. In fact, as regards language, customs, folklore, there is much less affinity between our Thongas, the Tongas of Inhambane, and the Tongas of Zambesi than between them and the Zulus. [101]

We must be content to remain ignorant of facts as to which there exists no reliable record.

THE EVOLUTION OF

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	Costume	Implements Weapons	Food	Trade	State	Family system
1st Period (Pre-Bantu)	*Men.* Mbaya? *Women.* Skins?	Wooden clubs?	Fruits and roots.	?	Nomadic.	Female descent.
2d Period Ur-Bantu till 1500	id.	Pottery. Basket work. Wooden hoes? Bows? Wooden pillow.	Goat. Millet, Pumpkins. Game caught in traps.	Exchange of wares for produce.	Agricultural.	Male descent.
3d Period 1500-1820	*Men:* Mbaya. *Women:* Skirts of cloth.	Pottery. Basket work. Iron hoes and assagais. Bows.	Goat. Sheep? Ox? Millet. Sorghum? Beans?	Godji (p. 142). *Sales:* Amber, Ivory, Skins, etc. *Purchases:* Stuff, Beads, Copper, Iron.	id.	Patriarchate. Lobolo. Polygamy.
4th Period 1820-1910	*Men:* Zulu belt. *Women:* Skirts. Keimao.	id. Guns. Bows disappear.	id. Maize, Peas, Bananas, Mangoes, etc.	S. Mafureira, India-rubber, Skins. Commercial expeditions. Introduction of European money.	Agricultural. Yearly military expeditions in Gaza.	id. Decrease of Polygamy.
1910	Increase of European dress.	Increase of European implements. Decrease in Native arts and crafts.	id. European food. Alcohol.	Decrease of Native trade.	Work in towns.	id. Family life injured by the long absence of men.

the Natives now possessing better weapons. Decided progress has certainly taken place all round, the invading population being superior in civilisation to the old one. The Thonga language is definitely formed with its six dialects. Folklore is enriched by the contributions of all the various clans. Ancestrolatry still reigns in the religious beliefs, with a relatively clear notion of Heaven and of an All-Father. This change was gradual until 1820.

THE THONGA TRIBE

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Tribal system	Military system	Language	Folklore	Religion	Taboo	Magic
Totemism ?	?	?	?	Ancestrolatry. All-Father ?	Sympathetic.	?
Clan.	?	Ur-Bantu ? Sex-denoting suffixes. 11 Classes of Nouns. Formation of Thonga.	Mythological conceptions. Tales.	Ancestrolatry. All-Father.	Physiological. Hierarchic. Agricultural.	Witchcraft. Astragalomancy.
Invasion of neighbouring clans.	Lineal formation. Skirmishes.	Thonga. 8 Classes of Nouns. Six dialects.	Decrease of Mythology. Rich folklore.	Ancestrolatry. Clearer notion. of Tilo, All-Father.	id.	id.
Formation and disappearance of military kingdoms. Dual Control. (I. p. 542).	Zulu circular formation. Cruel wars.	Progress of Ronga dialect. Adoption of European expressions (Portuguese Dutch and English).	Addition of Asiatic and Portuguese elements.	Ancestrolatry. Tilo conception less clear. Christianity. Islam. Possessions.	id. Military.	id. Possessions.
Authority of chiefs decreases. Increase of the number of detribalised Natives.	Decrease of military and political spirit.	id.	id.	id. Progress of Christianity.	Severity. of taboos decreases.	id.

Fourth period. At this time a new period begins, owing to the profound disturbance caused by the invasion of the Ngoni army under Manukosi. The men's costume changes. The clans are amalgamated under the Zulu conqueror. The military spirit increases. War, accompanied by bloodshed and all the Zulu war-panoply, replaces the skirmishes of former times. In Gazaland the year is divided into two halves, one for agricultural labour, the other for the military plundering

174 expeditions organised by the Ngoni kings. Foreign elements increase
177 in number and power. Asiatic and Portuguese influences begin to be felt. A considerable Native trade develops in Lourenço Marques. The Ronga clans dwelling near the town acquire more influence. This brings us up to the present time, which I need not describe more fully.

In 1920, we see European civilisation invading the whole territory of the tribe, by leaps and bounds, and the changes, which in previous decades had been slow, becoming rapid and profound. The tribe loses its coherence more and more ; the authority of the chief decreases and that of the White Commissioner increases. Taboos and ancestor-gods no longer receive much credence ; Islam makes some recruits, owing to intermarriage, and Christianity pushes forward its Missions. The few indications given in this part of the table show the trend of evolution at the present time.

This outline of the development of the tribe — an outline which is submitted, I repeat, with the utmost reserve, — does not confirm the opinion generally held in former times regarding Black tribes, i. e., that they are in a state of utter degeneracy. On the contrary, *a slow progress* may be observed, generally due to outside influences, notwithstanding the fact of long industrial stagnation ; this progress has been so marked in agriculture, in the family and in the social system, that it is no longer possible to describe the Bantus as absolute Primitives. They would be more fittingly spoken of as Semi-Primitives. On the other hand, there seems to have been almost complete *immobility* in the religious domain, even a process of degeneration, if the old monotheistic idea has really become less clearly defined in the last century. Folklore has been enriched, but, as a whole, the mental and spiritual life has evolved very little. Of course I do not mention the quite modern changes brought about by missionary enterprise and Islam propaganda.

II. *How far can the South African Tribe withstand the new condition of things brought about by Twentieth-Century Civilisation ?*

177 There have been more changes in the South African tribe during the last fifty years than during the fifty or five hundred preceding centuries, and this process of transformation is bound to continue at a geometrical

rate of progression during the fifty years to come. Taking into consideration for a moment the real and permanent interests of the Native, let us ask to what probable goal this transformation is leading him. I leave on one side for the present the influence of missionary enterprise. 177

Civilisation has certainly brought some *blessings* to the tribe, and I have carefully and impartially noted these ; the disappearance of deadly famines, owing to the development of trade ; better clothing (this is a mixed blessing) ; better seeds and agricultural implements (plough) ; the possibility of earning money ; the incentive to work in order to pay taxes, (Natives would certainly not call this a blessing!) ; the decrease of polygamy ; and the broadening of ideas, consequent on travelling and work in towns.

But the *curses* of civilisation far exceed its blessings for the South African Native : he has lost more through it than he has gained. Amongst them are the loss of political interest and responsibility (I. p. 543) ; the loss of hierarchic respect for the chiefs and elder brothers; the loss of personal dignity ; in addition may be noticed a decrease of religious faith and respect for taboos.

Further, the vices of Civilisation have found a lamentably ready welcome on the part of these Primitives : alcoholism of a degraded type (on the Coast), onanism, sodomy (in the Compounds), looseness of morals, — and these have caused new and very dangerous diseases which are now quickly spreading amongst them : alcoholic cachexy, syphilis, a great increase of consumption, due to the work in towns, not to speak of the criminal instincts which have developed under these influences (II. p. 610), murder, and rape (hence the Black peril, unknown in the primitive state). The tribe has lost its standards and traditions and moral and physical results have quickly followed.

To help it in the fight against these new and terrible foes, the Black race fortunately possesses considerable physical strength and great fertility. But these may not necessarily last for ever. They are capable of being lost. We find the Mpongwe tribe, in French Congo, fast disappearing as a result of a longer contact with the debasing influence of the Whites ; the birth-rate is reduced to almost nothing and this formerly large tribe will probably die out in the course of one or two generations.

I cannot conceal the fact that I consider the situation of the South African tribe, under present conditions, as very serious. If these influences are not checked, I believe that the extinction of the race is

possible in the long run, and I think every thoughtful observer will come 177
to the same conclusion (1). Ought not steps to be taken by the Government to check the progress of the evil? Would not a policy of segregation for instance, be desirable ? Or, would it not be in the interest of the Natives to remove them to tropical Africa, leaving South Africa to the White man? These questions have been discussed at length in South African papers, and I have nothing to say about them except that such steps seem to be absolutely impracticable. I am convinced that the only remedy for these deadly perils is the formation, in the Black tribe, of a strong moral character, accompanied by sufficient enlightment of mind to enable the Native himself to perceive the danger, and to overcome it.

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Various ways have been suggested to attain this goal. Leaving aside 000
the eugenic effort suggested by D. Kidd, in his Kafir Socialism, we may mention what is called the *Gospel of Work* which some people have recommended. Let the Natives be forced to work with their hands, and their character will soon improve! There is much truth in this theory, and I believe regular manual work is a blessing for the Blacks as it is for any other race. Let us remark however that this "Gospel" is not always preached with the sole idea of benefiting the Black race. Moreover, even if it were possible to enforce labour on the South African Bantus, in this age of liberty, what would be the ultimate result? Would it really transform them? As soon as they could rid themselves of the obligation, they would run away and become worse than before. Labour is a great educator, provided the worker is in agreement with the law of labour, and this agreement can only be obtained when the heart of the savage is changed by a power of another kind.

*

* *

In the conclusion to Volume I, I have myself advocated the grant to the Native of certain political rights which were after all very modest ;

(1) These remarks apply especially to the Thonga tribe. The situation of the Zulu and Sutho tribes is better, in as much as the sale of intoxicants is prohibited amongst them. However, many of the dangers here described threaten those tribes also.

this proposal was not made with the intention of taking part in South African politics (which I am quite willing to leave to those whose duty it is to attend to them), but as a means of protecting the Native mind against degeneration, and I believe such an enactment might help to mould the character of the race, as no human being can make any true moral progress if he has no responsibility. This would not, however, be sufficient in itself, and the lowering of character, produced by present-day influences, would even render the enfranchisement of the Natives dangerous.

*

* *

My conclusion is that the only means of salvation for the South African tribe is to be found in a regeneration achieved by Christianity, while education should, at the same time, provide the enlightenment of mind which is also a primary necessity. My readers will do me the justice to acknowledge that I have not often alluded to the great work of Christianisation in which I am engaged. I am however a missionary, and as such, I have a faith and I entertain a hope. May I be allowed to express it in a few words at the close of this study?

I am convinced that Christianity is the only true solution of the problem ; not merely a new set of rites which should take the place of the old animistic rites, but a *spiritual Christianity*, combining in perfect harmony religious belief and moral duty, accepted by the Bantu soul, — that soul which is eminently religious, — and leading the weak and carnal Bantu savage to the heights of the Christian ideal, thus victoriously replacing the non-moral religion and the non-religious morality of the Native.

Christianity, *the Religion of sanctity*, affords the only true satisfaction to that aspiration for purity so conspicuous in Bantu rites. Science will soon dispel all the superstitious dread of taboos. Let these imaginary fears be replaced by the fear of moral wrong, let sin become for the Christianised Native the real, the true, taboo, and a sound life will then be possible.

Christianity, the Religion of conversion, *regeneration*, supernatural transformation, will bring within the reach of the Native a power from above to deliver him and save him. Magical conceptions are doomed to die before long in the light of Science ; the absurdity of the axioms of primitive humanity will soon be perceived. But the faith in an all

powerful Father will free the savage from the fear of spirits and open his heart to the holy influence of the teachings of Christ.

Christianity, *the Religion of love*, love between individuals, and love between the races, will regulate the relations between Whites and Blacks, who are both indispensable to the cultivation and full utilisation of the marvellous riches of South Africa, will dispel race hatred, and promote the helpful collaboration of Africanders and Africans.

*

* *

But are the Bantus capable of accepting such a lofty and spiritual religion? I would answer : "Yes." Their intellect can understand the Gospel of "the Father who is in Heaven," as they already possess the rudiments of this central teaching of Christianity in the beliefs of Ancestrolatry, and in their conceptions of Heaven. That their heart is able to grasp it by faith — the only condition of entrance into the kingdom of God — is proved by a thousand instances. I fully recognise that many, perhaps most of the Christianised Natives, have not attained to the heights of moral and religious life, that their conduct is often in strange contrast with their profession. "Mission Kafirs" are not in very good repute. But I have seen many, in the humble circumstances of kraal life, who have been thoroughly transformed, women who have displayed wonderful qualities of sweetness and perseverance, and men whose character has become firm and strong, full of love and disinterestedness ; I know self-denying, consecrated, even pastoral souls amongst them, who are by no means inferior to European Christians, and I have sometimes had a vision of the South African tribe, less hampered by social and worldly circumstances than ourselves, transformed by the powerful spiritual influence of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, approaching the Christian ideal as nearly, and perhaps more nearly than we do! This was a dream ; but the reality remains, the Bantu soul is capable of regeneration as well as the European.

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Therefore let all the friends of the South African tribe work for its salvation. This is a sacred duty ; according to a great law of the

moral world, if the superior race does not work for the moral betterment of the inferior, the inferior causes the superior to degenerate.

So let the Christian Church increase its Missions, let the Government multiply the schools. Let the Native Commissioner, the mistress of the house, the storekeeper, the Compound Manager, instead of treating the Black man with contempt, remember that he is a moral being, and must become more and more so through their influence. Let the educated Natives also be aware of their immense responsibility towards their tribe in this respect. Native industry may disappear, the tribal life come to an end, the old restraints fall away ; something better will take their places. Bantu collectivism is dying out. In its stead Christianity will promote a healthy and progressive individualism and, under the new regime, the race will take its proper place in the South African Commonwealth. I see no other way in which it can escape destruction.

* * * * *

The Africander population, formed by the amalgamation of some of the best stocks of the Aryan race, has certainly a great future in store for it. May it be blessed on the sunny shores and on the high lands of South Africa. May it enrich itself, and humanity, by bringing to light the marvellous mineral wealth hidden in the rocks of this ancient land. But if the expansion of the Africander race were obtained at the cost of the ruin of the former occupants of the country, it would be an immense pity and an undeniable blemish. For, however bright the future of the Africanders may be, Africa would no longer be Africa if there were no more Africans!

* * *

May God preserve the Life of the South African Tribe!

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POST SCRIPTUM.

ooo Before laying down my pen, I have one more duty, a very agreeable duty, to perform. I would express my thankfulness to all those who kindly helped me in this work, to my colleagues, some of whom have given me valuable information, to the Council of the Swiss Romande Mission, which has always encouraged me in my study of Native life, and to the English friends who have kindly revised my manuscript. In this connection, I wish particularly to mention Miss G. Quin, co-editor of the *Student World*, who has taken great trouble to make it more adequate to the requirements of the English language. If the second edition shows any improvement over the first in this respect, it is entirely due to her. I wish also to thank Mr Clement Heaton, who designed the Thonga warrior on the cover, and Mr. P. Wavre, who drew the plans. I must not forget Professors H. Borle, J. Lecoultre and G. Attinger, who kindly translated the Latin notes.

I am grateful also to the professional anthropologists who have shown a kind appreciation of the first edition, and hope that the new material added in the second will prove equally useful to the cause of Science. But my greatest wish is that many South African citizens, by a perusal of these pages, may acquire a more exact knowledge of the Natives, that some prejudices may thus be destroyed, and some interest and sympathy aroused, and that in this way my book may ultimately help to create a better understanding between Whites and Blacks.

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ERRATA AND ADDENDA

VOL. I

P. 16. This map shows the distribution of the Thonga population thirty years ago. Since then a considerable emigration into the Transvaal has taken place (p. 19), and the Low Country of the Leydenburg and Zoutpansberg districts, which is almost entirely white on the map, ought to show many coloured spots representing Thonga villages.

P. 73. Three lines from the bottom, read Ma-Lemba in ... instead of Malembain.

P. 249. Two » » the top, » Why is there this difference?

P. 265. Six » » the bottom, » App. VI. ... instead of App. IV.

P. 340. Twelve » » » » » Wa-Nyika » » Wa-Nika.

P. 384. Sixteen » » the top, » known ... » » know.

VOL. II.

P. 209. Sixteen lines from the top, read 31 ... instead of 36.
» Eighteen » » » » » 30 ... » » 35.
» Eight » » the bottom, » 32 ... » » 37.

P. 296. First » » » » » of beautiful voices.

P. 298. I have discovered that this melody is used in the congregations of the French Basutoland Mission and is not originally Bantu. But it has been curiously transformed by Thonga children, a fact which is of common occurrence. The study of such alterations would greatly help in the understanding of the Bantu musical genius.

P. 461. First line from the top, read: and easily procurable.
» Second » » » » » until ... instead of unti.

P. 472. Sixth » » the bottom, » the » » he.
» Fourth » » » » » skin » » skint.

I trust that my readers will kindly excuse these errata when they remember tha the book was printed in Switzerland.

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and

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A. RITA-FERREIRA

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GRUPO TONGA

I. TONGAS EM GERAL

510 BASTOS, M. H. Calçada — Da música e cantares indígenas — Três canções do Maputo

Moçambique (2): 29-44, 1935

1. Cântico de aclamação.
2. Cântico do *Mukhumbi* (disposição do exército em círculo à maneira angune).
3. Canção da machamba e dos gafanhotos.

Os tongas da região são considerados pela autora como fortemente influenciados por zulos.

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511 BASTOS, M. H. Calçada
MONTEZ, Caetano — Da música e cantares indígenas — Canções djongas (Magude)

Moçambique 3: 17-29, 1935

Inhacunbe — cantiga de amor.
Inhacunbane — cantiga de escárnio.

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512 * BERTHOUD, H. — Thonga-Märchen aus Transvaal

Z. Eingeboren-Sprachen 20: 241-256, 1929; 21: 54-74, 122-158 e 310-319, 1930; 22: 114-120, 1932

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513 DICKE, B. H. **Notes on some customs arising out of the Bantu marriage**

South Afr. J. Sci. 27: 549-556, 1930

As viúvas fictícias entre os Sutos do Nordeste do Transvaal. Os Tongas não conheciam tal costume porque, originalmente, não usavam gado nas transacções matrimoniais. Diferenças tribais quanto no costume do *lobolo*. Liberdade sexual antenupcial concedida às raparigas tongas.

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514 GOLDMAN, Irving **The Bathonga of South Africa**

In MEAD, Margaret ed. *Cooperation and competition among primitive peoples*. Nova Iorque. McGraw-Hill Book Coy. 1937. Pp. 354-381

Baseado na obra de Junod, o autor fornece um resumo da vida económica, da estrutura social e do sistema educativo dos Tongas. Alude, em especial, ao papel desempenhado pelo indivíduo e respectivo grau de integração na cultura.

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515 GUYE, H. **Recrudescence palenne: le culte de Mourimi**

Bull. Mission Suisse Romande 28: 165-171, 1916

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516 GUYE, H. **Boulayi**

Bull. Mission Suisse Romande 32: 104-109, 1921

Ambos estes artigos se referem à feitiçaria e meios utilizados entre os Tongas para a combater.

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517 JAQUET, A. A. **Terms of kinship and corresponding patterns of behaviour among the Thonga**

Bantu Stud. 3 (4): 327-348, 1929

Termos de parentesco e sua relação com os padrões de comportamento social entre os Tongas.

3: Rita-Ferreira E-4 (no date) 1962
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518 JEANNERET, Philippe — **Les Ma-Khoga**

Bull. Soc. neuchâtel. Géogr. 8: 126-155, 1894-95

Notas gerais sobre a cultura material, as cerimónias fúnebres e a magia. Refere-se ao despotismo dos conquistadores angunos. Ilustrado.

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519 JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **La tribu et la langue Thonga avec quelques échantillons du folklore Thonga**

Lausana. B. Bridel. 1896. 40 pp.

Contém um resumo da cultura tonga, mas é sobretudo linguístico.

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520 JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **Some remarks on the folklore of the Ba-Thonga**

Folk-Lore 14: 116-124, 1903

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521 JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **The Ba-Thonga of the Transvaal**

Adresses Pap. Brit. South Afr. Assoc. Advanc. Sci. 3: 222-262, 1905

Esta monografia respeita sobretudo à história da migração dos Tongas do Sul de Moçambique para o Transvaal Norte, à língua, ao folclore e às concepções morais e religiosas.

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522 JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **Zidji; étude de mœurs sud-africaines**

Saint-Blaise. Foyer Solidariste. 1911. VI + 333 pp.

Novela sobre a vida de um jovem tonga. Contém grande cópia de informes etnográficos.

3: Rita-Ferreira E-4 (no date) 1962
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523 JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **A Vida de uma Tribo Sul-Africana — I — Vida Social**

Lisboa. Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa. 1917. XIII + 469 pp.

Primeira tradução, por Carlos Bivar, do vol. I da 1.ª ed. da grande monografia de Junod sobre os Tongas.

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524 JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **The magic conception of nature among the Bantus**

South Afr. J. Sci. 17: 76-86, 1920

Concepções mágicas dos Tongas sobre a natureza.

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525 JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **Bantu heathen prayers**

Internat. Rev. Missions 11 (44): 561-571, 1922

As preces pagãs dos Tongas têm acentuado carácter litúrgico; são actos rituais realizados por certos agentes em relação às circunstâncias familiares e nacionais.

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526 JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **Le totemisme chez les Thongas, les Pédis et les Venda**

Globe 63: 1-22, 1924

Interessante estudo comparativo sobre as crenças e estruturas totémicas entre os três grupos étnicos referidos.

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527 JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **La genèse des contes africains**

Folk-Lore 35: 324-345, 1924

Modo como os contos são modificados à medida que são transmitidos de bocca em bocca.

3: Rita-Ferreira E-4 (no date) 1962
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528 JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **Les rites de défensive et les rites d'évitement dans les coutumes matrimoniales des Bantous sud-africains**

Bull. Schweiz. Ges. Anthropol. Ethnol. 1926-27: 6-7

Ritos defensivos e evitativos no casamento tonga.

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529 JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **Les coutumes matrimoniales des Thongas**

Bull. Mission Suisse Romande 38: 135-141 e 192-197, 1926-27

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530 JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **Moral sense among the Bantu**

Internat. Rev. Missions 16 (61): 85-90, 1927

Depois de estudar alguns costumes tongas, o autor conclui por afirmar o seu elevado sentido moral.

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531 JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **The life of a South African tribe**

2.ª ed. Londres. Macmillan. 1927. Vol. I, 660 pp.; vol. II, 559 pp.

Segunda edição, revista e aumentada, da magnífica monografia do autor sobre os Tongas. O relato exaustivo que faz da cultura tonga é ilustrado com casos individuais e com observações sobre as transformações introduzidas pelo contacto com a cultura ocidental.

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532 JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **Le sacrifice dans l'ancestrolatrie sud-africaine**

Arch. Psychol. 23: 305-335, 1932

Aspectos psicológicos da ancestrolatria tonga.

3: Rita-Ferreira E-4 (no date) 1962
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533 JUNOD, H. Alexandre **Vier afrikanische spiele**

Zurique. Wanderer-Verlag. 1934. 56 pp.

Versões dramatizadas de temas nativos: a vida de uma feiticeira, uma época de fome, diversos contos. Ilustrado.

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534 JUNOD, H. Alexandre **Mœurs et coutumes des Bantous. La vie d'une tribu sud-africaine**

Paris. Payot. 1936. Vol. I, 513 pp.; vol. II, 580 pp.

Edição francesa da monumental obra de Junod (pai) sobre os Tongas.

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535 JUNOD, H. Alexandre **Usos e Costumes dos Bantos. A Vida duma Tribo Sul-Africana**

Lourenço Marques. Imprensa Nacional. 1944, vol. I, 556 pp.; 1946, vol. II, 634 pp.

Única edição completa, em língua portuguesa, da monumental obra do missionário suiço sobre os Tongas. Versão da edição francesa.

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536 JUNOD, H. Philipe **The Va-Thonga (The Thonga-Shangaan people)**

In DUGGAN-CRONIN, A. M. ed. *The Bantu tribes of South Africa*. Cambridge. Deighton, Bell & Coy. Sect. 1. Vol. IV. 1935. Pp. 9-32

Tem especial interesse pelos estudos fotográficos que apresenta. A introdução supracitada constitui, no entanto, um bom resumo da divisão étnica e da cultura dos Tongas do Sul de Moçambique.

3: Rita-Ferreira E-4 (no date) 1962
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537 JUNOD, H. Philipe — **NwaMpfundla-NwaSiona (The romance of the hare)**

Pretória. Wallachs'. 1940. 172 pp.

Cinquenta fábulas sobre a lebre escritas em verso *tsonga*. Cada fábula termina com um ditame moral, ainda que nem todas as astúcias da lebre tenham valor ético.

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538 JUNOD, H. Philipe
JAQUES, A. A. — **Vutlhari bya Vatsonga (Machangana). The wisdom of the Tsonga-Shangana people**

Cleveland (Transval). The Central Mission Press. 1935. 285 pp.

Compilação de algumas centenas de provérbios e enigmas, com tradução em inglês e notas explicativas.

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539 KHAMBANE, Chitlangou
CLERC, André — **Chitlangou, fils de chef**

Lausana. Mission Suisse dans l'Afrique du Sud. 1946. 258 pp.

Relato vivido e romanceado das aventuras do filho de um chefe tonga. Contém bastantes informações etnográficas e vários anexos sobre a construção de palhotas no litoral, o clã dos Khambanes, os ossículos divinatórios, os médicos-mágicos, etc.

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540 KIRBY, Percival R. — **A note on the shipalapala of the Tonga**

South Afr. J. Sci. 35: 361-363, 1938

Pequeno estudo sobre a trombeta normalmente confeccionada com um chifre do antílope *Hippotragus niger*.

3: Rita-Ferreira E-4 (no date) 1962
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541 KRIGE, J. D. **Traditional origins and tribal relationships of the Sotho of northern Transvaal**

Bantu Stud. 11 (4): 321-356, 1937

Contém um capítulo dedicado às infiltrações tongas no Norte do Transvaal, entre os Sothos.

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542 LONGMORE, L. **The A. A. Jaques collection of native head-rests**

Afr. Mus. Soc. Newsletter 1 (4): 26-28, 1951

Descrição da colecção de travesseiros tongas de madeira que foi exposta em Johannesburg em 1950.

MARQUES, Belo

(V. ref. 199)

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543 NUNES, Joaquim **Apontamentos sobre a tribo dos Ba-Thonga**

Bol. Soc. Estud. Moçambique 1 (3): 25-36, 1932

Divisão étnica dos Tongas. Considerações gerais sobre a origem dos Tongas. Invasões angunas. Identidade e não diversidade entre Tongas e Bitongas (do Inhambane). Origem dos Chopes e táctica que lhes permitiram sobreviver aos ataques dos Angunes: refúgio nas dunas entre as lagoas e o mar, povoações incultas, grandes povoações fortificadas. Gosto pela agricultura e práticas agrícolas dos Chopes especialmente adequadas aos terrenos arenosos em que vivem. Indica a existência de 100 000 chopes em Zavala, em 1912, população que em 1927 se achava reduzida a 40 000.

3: Rita-Ferreira E-4 (no date) 1962
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544 RAMSAY, T. D. **Tsonga law in the Transvaal**

Pretória. Government Printer. 1941. Segunda publicação actualizada em Afr. Stud. 5 (3): 143-156, 1946

Pequeno mas útil resumo do direito consuetudinário entre os Tongas do Transval. O material foi recolhido entre os chefes e indunas do distrito de Pilgrim's Rest.

São versados, em especial, os seguintes pontos:

Casamento (requisitos, lobolo, poligínia, posição das diversas mulheres, sororato e levirato);

Adultério (danos, filhos adulterinos, reincidência);

Sedução (danos, filhos nascidos, etc.);

Responsabilidade do chefe pelas infracções cometidas pelos membros da sua povoação.

Aluguer de gado. Alimentos devidos. Propriedade e herança.

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545 SELIGMAN, Brenda Z. **The relationship systems of the Nandi, Masai and Thonga**

Man 17, art. n.º 46: 62-66, 1917

Estudo comparativo entre os sistemas de classificação do parentesco dos Nandis, Masais e Tongas.

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546 STEVENSON-HAMILTON, J. **The Low-Veld: its wild life and its people**

Londres. Gassell & Coy. 1929. XII + 288 pp.

Descrição popular da história, da vida social, da religião e das práticas mágicas dos Tongas do Transval.

Nota. — Também contém informações importantes sobre os Tongas as seguintes referências: 8, 11, 18, 27, 50, 51, 69, 95, 102, 105, 112, 115, 117, 118, 158, 169, 225, 228, 261 e 287.

3: Rita-Ferreira E-4 (no date) 1962
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547 * BISHOP, H. L. — **Recent works on the Ba-Ronga**

London quart. I iv. Julho 1907: 74-86

(Não consultado. Referência recolhida indirectamente.)

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548 * BISHOP, H. L. — **Social conditions among a Bantu people**

Geogr. Teacher 9: 146-157, 1918

(Não consultado. Referência recolhida indirectamente.)

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549 BISHOP, H. L. — **A selection of Sironga folk-lore**

South Afr. J. Sci. 19: 383-400, 1922

Contos narrando as aventuras do coelho. Texto apenas em inglês.

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550 BISHOP, H. L. — **A selection of Sironga proverbs**

South Afr. J. Sci. 19: 401-415, 1922

94 provérbios rongas com tradução em inglês e notas explicativas.

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551 CARDOSO, J. Serra — **O simba (gato bravo) (Um conto do Maputo)**

Moçambique (4): 77-84, 1935

3: Rita-Ferreira E-4 (no date) 1962
FT6 Thonga FT6
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552 CLERC, André **Marriage laws of the Ronga tribe**

Bantu Stud. 12 (2): 75-104, 1938

Importante estudo dedicado às leis matrimoniais dos Rongas do Maputo. Capacidade para contracção do matrimónio. Condições físicas e impedimentos. Relações ilícitas. Noivado e cerimoniais do casamento. Dissolução, separação, divórcio e seus efeitos. Posição do marido e da mulher perante as respectivas famílias. Regime do *lobolo*.

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553 * FALCÃO, J. B. **Usos e costumes nas terras da coroa de Lourenço Marques**

Revista Portuguesa 24: 151-163, 1909

(Referência recolhida indirectamente.)

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554 JUNOD, H. Alexandre **L'art divinatoire ou la science des osselets chez les Rongas de la Baie de Delagoa.**

Bull. Soc. neuchâtel. Géogr. 9: 57-83, 1896-97.

Descrição pormenorizada e com ilustrações da astragalomancia entre os Rongas.

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555 JUNOD, H. Alexandre **Les chants et les contes des Ba-Ronga de la Baie de Delagoa**

Lausana. G. Bridel. 1897. 327 pp.

Os clãs rongas, seus instrumentos e sistema musical. Cantos de amor, de núpcias, de luto, de exorcistas, de carregadores, de caça e de guerra.

Lugar dos contos na vida ronga e seu valor filosófico. Divide os contos nas seguintes categorias: de animais, de ogres, contos exaltando a astúcia dos humildes e pequenos, contos com intuitos morais e contos de origem estrangeira.

3: Rita-Ferreira E-4 (no date) 1962
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556 • JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **Nouveaux contes ronga transcrits dans la langue indigène avec traduction française**

Neuchâtel. P. Attinger. 1898. 91 pp.

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557 JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **Les Ba-Ronga: étude ethnographique sur les indigènes de la Baie de Delagoa**

Bull. Soc. neuchâtel. Géogr. 10: 5-500. 1898

Primeiro esboço da sua grande monografia sobre os Tonga. Respeita, em especial, ao direito consuetudinário, à vida nacional, à indústria, a tradições, usos e costumes e às superstições e religião.

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558 JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **The fate of the widows amongst the Ba-Ronga**

Rep. South Afr. Assoc. Advanc. Sci. 5: 363-375. 1908

Ritos de luto e de purificação. Herança das viúvas pelos parentes do defunto.

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559 JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **Um conto ronga inédito: o anel de Boa**

Bol. Soc. Geogr. Lisboa. 27.ª série (2): 78-80. 1909

Texto únicamente em português.

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560 JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **Deux cas de possession chez les Ba-Ronga**

Bull. Soc. neuchâtel. Géogr. 20: 387-402. 1909-10

Descrição de dois casos de possessão em mulheres, sendo um espontâneo e um provocado. Não se trataria de espíritos «demoníacos», mas dos próprios espíritos «dos antepassados».

3: Rita-Ferreira E-4 (no date) 1962
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561 JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **The sacrifice of reconciliation amongst the Ba-Ronga**

Rep. South Afr. Assoc. Advanc. Sci. 7: 179-182, 1910

Cerimónia efectuada por ocasião da reconciliação de dois irmãos desavindos.

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562 JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **Deux enterrements à 20.000 ans d'intervalle**

Anthropos 5 (5-6): 957-968, 1910

Comparações entre uma sepultura ronga e uma sepultura pré-histórica, conforme elementos recolhidos em pesquisas arqueológicas.

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563 JUNOD, H. Alexandre — **Native customs in relation to small-pox amongst the Ba-Ronga**

Rep. South Afr. Assoc. Advanc. Sci. 15: 694-702, 1918

Costumes seguidos durante as epidemias de varíola: a proclamação inicial, o processo de inoculação, tabus a observar durante o período de margem, actos religiosos, ritos conclusivos.

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564 KÖHLER, J. — **Das Recht der Ba-Ronga**

Z. vergleichende Rechtswiss. 14: 456-472, 1900

Estudo do direito consuetudinário ronga, baseado em Junod. Sistema e termos de parentesco. Casamento, compensação nupcial, levirato e comportamento sexual. Tabu da sogra. Adopção. Gémeos. Chefes. Lei penal.

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565 MONTEIRO, Rose — **Delagoa Bay — Its natives and natural history**

Londres. George Philip & Son. 1891. XII + 274 pp.

Contém algumas informações etnográficas sobre os Rongas da baía de Espírito Santo, mas é, sobretudo, de interesse para botânicos e zoólogos.

3: Rita-Ferreira E-4 (no date) 1962
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Ronga
Changana

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566 THIBOLET, Georges de — **Le ronga d'hier et d'aujourd'hui (une page d'histoire de la civilisation)**

Bol. Soc. Geogr. Lisboa, 33.ª série (3): 108-112, 1915

Considerações gerais sobre os Rongas e a colonização europeia.

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3. CHANGANAS

567 BOAVIDA, Joaquim — **O romance do coelhinho — O coelho e a gazela**

Moçambique (2): 81-86, 1935

Recolhido entre os Changanas de Matsice.

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568 CASTELO BRANCO, A. dos S. Ferrão — **A vida duma tribo vátua. Suas origens e seus costumes**

Bol. Soc. Geogr. Lisboa, 64.ª série (5-6): 275-276, 1946

Resumo duma comunicação lida na Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa. Refere-se aos Changanas.

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569 CLEMENTE, F. de Assis — **Le droit Vatoua**

Mémoire présenté à la 10ª session du Congrès International des Orientalistes. Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa, 1892. 14 pp.

Os angunes (vátuas) que ocuparam o Sul de Moçambique dividiam os crimes em três categorias, de harmonia com a sua gravidade. O adultério consumado ou não, a tentativa de homicídio contra qualquer membro da casa real e a traição e fuga para país ou tribo inimiga eram punidos com a morte. Constituição do tribunal, normas observadas no seu funcionamento e honorários devidos. Carácter público das audiências.

Formalidades e regras observadas na distribuição das heranças.

3: Rita-Ferreira E-4 (no date) 1962
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570 CRUZ, P.e Daniel da — **Em Terras de Gaza**

Porto. Bibliotheca Geographica e Colonial. 1910. 317 pp.

O cap. II é assim dividido:
História dos povos de Gaza; raças e caracteres físicos: demografia: língua, numeração, moeda e cronologia. Instituições sociais: casamento, iniciação de filhos, realeza, justiça, crenças religiosas, ritos fúnebres, feitiçaria. Costumes indígenas: habitação, ocupações domésticas, refeições, misteres da mulher, danças e instrumentos, jogos, vestuário e ornamentos, saudações e cumprimentos. Emigração. Agricultura indígena: machambas, culturas de cereais, de leguminosas, de tubérculos e raízes, árvores e plantas frutíferas e industriais. Animais domésticos, caça e pesca. Artes indígenas.
Profusamente ilustrado.

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571 E. A. M. — **Cantos guerreiros indígenas**

Bol. Soc. Estud. Moçambique 1 (6): 43-46. 1932

Referência ao canto guerreiro dos Changaanas, entoado por ocasião da incusala, a festa real.

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572 ELTON, F. — **Journal of an exploration of the Limpopo river**

J. roy. geogr. Soc. 42: 1-49. 1872

Útil para o estudo da distribuição étnica e da divisão tribal no tempo dos Angunes. Mapa.

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573 * ERSKINE, St. Vincent — **Journey of exploration to the mouth of the river Limpopo**

J. roy. geogr. Soc. 39: 233-276. 1869

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574 * ERSKINE, St. Vincent — **Journey to Umzila's S.-E. Africa, in 1871-72**

J. roy. geogr. Soc. 48: 45-128. 1875

3: Rita-Ferreira E-4 (no date) 1962
FT6 Thonga FT6
Chongana

575 • EARSKINE, St. Vincent — **Third and fourth journey in Gaza or southern Mozambique, 1873-1874 and 1874-1875**

J. roy. geogr. Soc. 48: 25-56, 1878

Juntamente com os antecedentes, este trabalho constitui, talvez, a fonte mais idónea e completa para o estudo do império *angune* no Sul de Moçambique.

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576 FERREIRA, Cláudio — **O nativo de Bilene**

An. Inst. Med. trop. 10 (4, II): 3507-3540, 1953

Etnologia. Demografia. Regime alimentar. Nosonecrologia.
Considera a existência de duas «tribos» distintas no Bilene: tonga, que dá origem aos Bilen, Mabuingelas e Mundzua, e zulo, que dá origem aos Mungunes.

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577 HEMANS, T. J. — **Nyamkungangedzi and his weapons**

Nada (26): 66-67, 1949

Descrição, com ilustrações, das armas dum velho guerreiro changana. Considerações sobre o seu valor espiritual.

---

578 JACKSON, A. P. — **Ample food without ploughing**

Nada 31: 62-66, 1954

Recursos alimentares dos Changanas da Rodésia do Sul, obtidos por meio da caça e da colecta. Ervas, frutos silvestres, raízes, gafanhotos, ratos, larvas, etc. Tais recursos não só constituem uma reserva para as épocas de escassez, como também são utilizados para variar a dieta ordinária e para fornecer vitaminas, proteínas e gorduras.

3: Rita-Ferreira E-4 (no date) 1962
FT6 Thonga FT6
Changana

113

579 LEWIS, J. — **Some cases of inheritance in native law**

Afr. Stud. 4 (2): 70-87, 1945

Quatro casos de herança entre Zulos e Changanas.

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580 LIENHME, G. — **Un potentat africain: Gungounyane et son règne**

Bull. Soc. neuchâtel. Géogr. 13: 99-135, 1901

Descrição do *kraal* real, coroação, instalações do rei, exército, ritos bélicos, primícias, sistema político, vida privada.

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581 LIENHME, G. — **The last South African potentate: Gungunhana, his court and national rites**

Adresses Pap. Brit. South Afr. Assoc. Advanc. Sci. 3: 300-307, 1905

Descreve em especial a festa das primícias e a medicação ritual do exército.

MHLANGA, Wilson

(V. ref. 770)

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582 MONTEZ, Caetano — **As invasões dos Mangunis e dos Machanganas — Zunguendabe e Naba: 1820-1823 — Gaza e Manicusse: 1830-1840**

Moçambique (10): 25-55, 1937

História das conquistas *angunas* entre os Tongas, até à morte de Manicusse, que teve lugar em 1879.

3: Rita-Ferreira E-4 (no date) 1962
FT6 Thonga FT6
Changana

583 MONTEZ, Caetano
BASTOS, M. H. Calçada
Koui N'quale!... A grande festa do rei Gungunhana

Moçambique (4): 5-24, 1935

Esta cerimónia era realizada em Janeiro e prolongava-se por 25 ou 30 dias. Incluía sacrifícios humanos, sendo a carne ingerida pelos rapazes que atingiam a idade do serviço militar, constituía uma exaltação do rei, do seu poderio e da guerra.

Seria uma adaptação da festa das primícias dos Tongas, *luma bukanye*, ao génio imperialista e bélico dos Angunes.

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584 NEVES, Diocleciano Fernandes das
Exploração do rio Bembe

Bol. Soc. Geogr. Lisboa, 3.ª série (6): 336-347, 1882

Bastantes informes sobre a invasão zulu, o império fundado por Manicusse e as lutas de sucessão que se seguiram à sua morta.

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585 TRACEY, Hugh
Marimbas, os xilofones dos Changanas

Moçambique (31): 49-61, 1942

Estudo baseado em oito marimbas: confecção das teclas, das caixas de ressonância e dos maçanetas. Afinação.

(Há, provavelmente, confusão na designação do grupo étnico, visto fazer-se referência à região de Mambona, sita na foz do rio Save.)

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586 XAVIER, A. A. Caldas
Reconhecimento do Limpopo — Os territórios ao sul do Save e os Vátuas

Bol. Soc. Geogr. Lisboa, 13.ª série (3): 127-176, 1894

Algumas observações sobre os invasores angunes: marcas tribais, tongas angunizados, tabus alimentares em relação ao peixe e à carne de porco, sistema de dominação política.

Nota. — Também contém informações importantes sobre os Changanas (Shangaans) as seguintes referências: 8, 90, 171, 186, 190 e 377.

3: Rita-Ferreira E-4 (no date) 1962
FT6 Thonga FT6
Changana
Tsua

113

4. TSUAS

587 MBANZE, Neftali J. **A Ngango wa muTshwa**

Cleveland (Transval). The Central Mission Press. S. d. 111 pp.

Monografia sobre os costumes *tsuas*, especialmente os relacionados com o casamento, as relações de parentesco e o papel atribuído às mulheres. Escrito em *chitsua*.

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588 MUCAMBE, Elias S. **Tikaringani ta vanhu va waTshwa**

Cleveland (Transval). The Central Mission Press. S. d. 51 pp.

Colectânea de folclore *tsua*. Escrito em *chitsua*.

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589 MUCAMBE, Elias S. **A mabingu ya baTswa ni titokatokani**

Cleveland (Transval). The Central Mission Press. 1945. 56 pp.

Colectânea de provérbios e enigmas *tsuas*. Escrito em *chitsua*.

---

590 MUCAMBE, Elias S. **A matimu ya baTswa**

Cleveland (Transval). The Central Mission Press. 1948. 54 pp.

Tradições dos clãs *tsuas*. Escrito em *chitsua*.

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591 MUCAMBE, Elias S. **Munghana wa sivanana**

Cleveland (Transval). The Central Mission Press. 1950. 64 pp.

Diversos contos de animais. Escrito em *chitsua*.

3: Rita-Ferreira E-4 (no date) 1962

FT6 Thonga FT6

Changana

Tsua

113

592 MUKHOMBO, Aron S. **Hwavunddlani ni bangana bakwa**

Cleveland (Transval). The Central Mission Press. 1938. 79 pp.

Colectânea de contos de animais recolhidos da tradição oral. Escrito em *chitsua*.

---

593 MUKHOMBO, Aron S. **A nkutsulani wa matinu ya baTswa**

Cleveland (Transval). The Central Mission Press. 1945. 111 pp.

Tradições, costumes, provérbios *tsuas*. Escrito em *chitsua*.

---

594 MUKHOMBO, Aron S. **Tikaringani ta nwavunddlani ni vanghana vakwa**

Cleveland (Transval). The Central Mission Press. 1949. 64 pp.

Contos *tsuas* sobre o coelho e seus amigos. Escrito em *chitsua*.

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595 MUKHOMBO, Aron S. **A mulavetali wa ntumbulula wa vaTskwa**

Cleveland (Transval). The Central Mission Press. 1954. 77 pp.

Lendas e tradições *tsuas*. Escrito em *chitsua*.

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596 RODRIGUES, Francisco Castelo **A alimentação do indígena de Vilanculos**

An. Inst. Med. trop. 10 (3, II): 1129-1155, 1953

Breve revisão dos principios fundamentais sobre nutrição e das necessidades individuais normais. Resultados de um inquérito realizado em Vilanculos: recursos locais, causas que influenciam a sua falta e contribuem para as deficiências da dieta, principais alimentos e seu valor nutritivo, dieta diária e seus inconvenientes.

3: Rita-Ferreira E-4 (no date) 1962
FT6 Thonga FT6
Tsua

113

597 SEQUEIRA, A. de Melo — **Vilanculos**

Bol. Soc. Estud. Moçambique **2** (8): 37-64, 1933; **2** (9): 41-61, 1933; **2** (11): 33-63, 1933; **2** (12): 17-59, 1933.

Fisiografia, orografia, hidrografia e meteorologia. Fauna e flora. História. Calendários e numeração. Armas e antigas actividades bélicas. Marcas tribais. Indumentária. Exercício da autoridade. Regime tributário. Inamovibilidade da população. Homenagens e saudações. Constituição da família e nascimentos. Casamentos e divórcios. Sistema de parentesco. Óbitos. Testamentos, heranças, sucessões e outros aspectos do direito consuetudinário. Caça e pesca. Agricultura e pecuária.

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598 SEQUEIRA, A. de Melo — **O totemismo nas tribos do distrito de Inhambane**

Bol. Soc. Estud. Moçambique **3** (23): 427-439, 1934; **3** (24): 460-472, 1934

Na primeira parte, exposição de três das correntes teóricas que procuram explicar o totemismo (nominalista, sociológica e psicológica). Na segunda parte, estudo sobre o totemismo em Vilanculos e no arquipélago do Bazaruto. Cifs e interdições alimentares. Outros ritos e crenças mágicas.

[pp. 143 ff. not processed]

Nota. — Também contêm informações importantes sobre os Tsuas (Tswa) as seguintes referências: 164, 208, 210 e 212.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

INTRODUCTION

2/ In the year 1895, I had the great pleasure of receiving a visit from Lord Bryce in Lourenço Marques where I was staying at the head of the Swiss Romande Mission. This distinguished statesman, in the course of his travels through South Africa, had devoted considerable attention to the Native tribes throughout the country, endeavouring to understand them and to foresee their future. He had soon noticed however how scant is our knowledge about them, and was trying to stimulate men on the spot to undertake a scientific study of their primitive life. In the course of our conversation, I was struck by the following remark which he made to me: "How thankful should we be, we men of the XIXth century, if a Roman had taken the trouble fully to investigate the habits of our Celtic forefathers ! This work has not been done, and we shall always remain ignorant of things which would have interested us so much !"

This observation was quite a revelation to me. It was possible then, that these Natives, for whose sake we went to Africa, would themselves benefit by such a study, and that, in the course of time, they would be grateful to know what they had been, when they were still leading their savage life... This argument, in addition to so many others, had never occurred to me. Up to that date I had already collected some Ronga tales and studied some curious customs of the tribe. But the science which I was pursuing as a favourite pastime was Entomology. Delagoa Bay is a splendid place for beetles and butterflies. I had come across a wonderful forest near Morakwen where I had been fortunate enough to discover a new kind of Papilio ! Since that time Ethnography has more or less supplanted Entomology. I started on the systematic and thorough investigation which Lord Bryce recommended to me, and I very soon found out that, after all, Man is infinitely more interesting than the insect ! The material which I gathered amongst

121 the Ba-Ronga of Delagoa Bay was first published in my French book *Les Ba-Ronga* with the kind help of the Geographical Society of Neuchâtel in 1898. Since then I have pursued my studies amongst the Northern Clans of the Thongas of the Transvaal and, if I am able to undertake this publication, in which I hope to give a more complete description of the life of a South African tribe, I feel that I owe to my distinguished visitor the generating idea, the decisive impulse.

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* *

000 This was the right moment to undertake this enquiry, as the following sad experience will plainly show. Coming home in 1909, I met, on board the splendid U. C. Steamer on which we were travelling, three well known Native gentlemen who were, I think, going to England for political reasons. I had great pleasure in speaking with them. One of them was the editor of a Native paper ; another was a Christian chief, the third was at the head of a Training Institution which he had founded himself. One day I made up my mind to gather some ethnographical facts from them. They were Zulus, and I wanted to know for purposes of comparison what were the precise ideas of their tribe about witchcraft. Never in my scientific career did I meet with a more complete failure ! The editor had been born in a Wesleyan family, and never lived amongst heathen. The chief knew much more on the subject but, for some obscure reason, was not inclined to disclose his knowledge. The Principal of the Institution was a very clever man ; he first declared that witchcraft was met with amongst white people just the same as amongst South African Natives, and that it was only a form of mesmerism ; and, as he was always anxious to get more knowledge himself, he proceeded to question me about mesmerism ; the whole interview ended therefore in a lesson which I was obliged to give him on that mysterious subject, and I did not learn anything new from my three friends... I left them in quite a melancholy mood, thinking how different it was with my Thonga informants, Mboza, Tobane and even Elias !

123 In fact, the circumstances in which I found myself amongst the Thongas, were the most favourable imaginable for such an investigation. The great bulk of the tribe is still absolutely savage. We have mastered its language and can understand all they tell us. On the other hand we have founded a Church amongst them and have

126 in the book on *Les Ba-Ronga*. I have still a good many in manuscript, some of which will be found in the second volume of the present work.

* * *

121 My aim in collecting all this material has been twofold ; scientific and practical.

Spoon-Elias
as Church elder in 1907.

First of all scientific. The life of a South African tribe is a collection of biological phenomena which must be described objectively and which are of great interest, representing, as they do, a certain stage of human development. These biological phenomena are sometimes at first of a repulsive character. The sexual life of the Bantus especially shocks our moral feelings. I did not think however that I could entirely leave out this subject in a scientific book, and the more I studied it, the more I saw that these strange rites have a much deeper meaning than at first appears, and that we could not pretend to know Natives if we remained ignorant of these facts. But while trying to give a full account, I am convinced, on the other hand, that, to be truly scientific, such a description must be limited to one well defined tribe. I go even further : all the data must be localised ; in the tribe itself there are different clans ; customs vary from one to another. It is of the greatest importance that all the facts be classed geographically. A similar work can be done later for other tribes, and it is only when a sufficient number of trustworthy monographs have been written that a comparative study on Bantu ethnography can be undertaken. The "Essential Kafir" of Dudley Kidd is very interesting and full of useful remarks, but the essential Kafir will not be known till a scientific and thorough study of all the tribes has been completed. My aim has been to submit the Thonga tribe to such a study and I shall be most gratified if it leads other observers to undertake the same investigation with regard to other African tribes.

121 Though I do not pretend to prejudge anything about any other South African tribe, it will soon be seen that many of the customs here described are spread more or less over the whole of the Sub-Continent, and that what I write about the Thongas applies more or less to the Suthos, the Zulus, even to the Nyandjas of Lake Nyassa and to tribes in Central Africa. I think therefore that the conclusions reached by this study may be of use not only to those interested in the Thonga tribe itself but to all Africanists or Bantuists.

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000 There are two classes of men to whom I should like to bring some practical help in their work: the Native Commissioners and the Missionaries.

It is absolutely necessary that Native Commissioners should have a better knowledge of the tribe which they administer in the name of civilised Governments. They are apt to make the most dangerous mistakes from mere ignorance of the true nature of rites or superstitions which they do not understand. I have heard of colonial authorities receiving witchcraft accusations, believing that the pretended wizards were real murderers and anthropophagists and condemning them as such! To govern savages, you must study them thoroughly in order both to recognise the wrong ideas against which you have to contend and to avoid hurting their feelings unnecessarily. This is imperative if you wish to win their confidence and maintain a friendly understanding between them and the alien European Government. How many Native wars might have been avoided if the Native Commissioner had had a better knowledge of Bantu ethnography, and, on the other hand, how much good has been done by those who have taken the trouble to study the Natives with sympathy in order to be just to them!

And this is equally true of Missionaries.

Missionary work is much better understood now than it was formerly. The Edinburgh Conference of 1910 proclaimed the necessity for Missionaries of a sympathetic study of Native beliefs and social customs. One of the eight Commissions which prepared that wonderful Congress devoted considerable time to this subject, and issued a remarkable report, whose conclusions are worth reading. It urges that in each field a thorough investigation be undertaken, in

000 order that the message of the Gospel may be presented in such a way as will appeal to those aspirations after the truth which reveal themselves in the religion and social rites of the Natives. How superior is this conception to that of former times, when heathenism was looked on as a creation of the devil through and through! We see better now that, amidst darkness and sin, the heathen mind is often seeking light and righteousness, and that these rays of truth, these presentiments of a higher life, must be infinitely respected and utilised in the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. For instance, see how seriously savages keep their taboo!... This taboo—as we shall see—is inspired by strange, unscientific physiological ideas regarding defilement and contagion, which will disappear when scientific knowledge has spread amongst them. But let these ideas be somewhat amended, let the Natives understand that what is taboo is not physical uncleanness but moral evil, and their strong aversion to the act tabooed may become a powerful moral impulse for good.

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128 121 Here is the plan which I mean to adopt. After having briefly explained in a preliminary chapter what the Thonga tribe is, I shall take an individual and follow him in his career from birth to death; the story of the evolution of a man and of a woman will constitute the first part of the book.

Then I shall pass on to the first social organism formed by these individuals, and study the life of the family and of the village, which is but an enlarged family.

The villages make up the clan and the tribe. The national life will constitute my third part, where I shall deal especially with the Chief, the Court and the Army.

Agricultural and industrial life and literary and artistic life will then be studied (as collective manifestations of the life of the tribe) and last but not least, I shall devote a considerable amount of time to the religious life and superstitions, trying to penetrate into the soul of the tribe, and to understand the manifold manifestations of its psychic life, which have always had a special interest for me.

128 It would have been safer for me to write this new and enlarged edition of *Les Ba-Ronga* in French, my native tongue. I decided to attempt it in English, as the public interested in South African affairs

128 is essentially an English-speaking public and as a great portion of the Thonga tribe is settled in British Territory. I know that I can rely on the indulgence of the English public... When my readers notice that the book has been written by a foreigner—I am afraid they will often make that observation—I beg them kindly to remember that, for me, it would have been much more agreeable to write it in French...

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121 To work for Science is noble ; but to help our fellow men is nobler still.

In the difficult undertaking which lies before me, I shall feel immensely gratified if scientists find useful material for their studies amongst my observations. Anthropologists try to throw some light on the dark problem of the origin of the psychic life in mankind; may the picture of a South African primitive tribe bring them some valuable information. But I should feel even deeper satisfaction if my work could help my South African brethren, and contribute to the peaceful solution of our great practical problem there, the Native problem. White men soon tire of the Native when they only see the badly brought up youths who walk about the streets of our colonial towns. They despise them, find them "cheeky" and very soon come to the conclusion : "Natives are no good !" Who can deny that this attitude, adopted by so many South Africans, is as dangerous for the peace of the country as are the very defects with which they reproach the Natives, and which often come from contact with a depraved and unscupulous civilisation ? Let those who are prejudiced against the black race study more carefully its customs, its mind, such as it reveals itself in the old rites of the Bantu tribes. They will see that these Natives are much more earnest than they thought and that in them beats a true human heart. If, in their ignorance of true morality and of true religion, they have submitted themselves willingly to the sufferings of initiation, to the painful rites of purification, in order to reach what they thought to be a higher level of human righteousness, are we not entitled to hope that we shall be able to build up true character in them when we bring them under the moralising influence of Christianity, and teach them to understand the religion which has saved the world ?

Should I succeed in eliciting new and more enlightened sympathy

121 amongst the Whites for our Native brethren, should this book prevent the gulf which separates the races from becoming wider, I think it will have been worth while writing it.

May I be allowed one final comment ? Colossal changes are now taking place amongst the South African tribes. Civilisation has taken fast hold not only of the coast but of the interior. It has exercised a marvellous influence on the High Velt of Johannesburg and is spreading to the borders of the desert. Amongst those races so long stagnant, an evolution has started which is proceeding with great rapidity and a kind of fatality. What will be its ultimate result ? The ethnographer does not generally trouble himself with such questions. It is enough for him to note the facts carefully and to describe them accurately. I aim at being a faithful and impartial ethnographer in the study of customs which still exist but will soon have passed away, but I cannot forget that I am also a Missionary. I belong to that body of men who, with Native Commissioners and liberal minded Colonists, feel they have a sacred duty to perform towards the weaker race. In this most tempting basket of varied fruits which civilisation offers to the Native, we feel we must guide his inexperienced hand, pointing out to him those which conduce to his happiness and progress and those which are poisonous and might be fatal to him. This book is addressed to those who can influence this evolution, be they the Authorities puzzled by the Native problem, or be they educated Natives who
121 are perplexed regarding the future of their race. I will endeavour to
128 indicate the lines along which it appears to me we ought to direct the tribe in order that it may escape shame and destruction. But these suggestions will be given at the end of the volume, in special paragraphs, carefully separated from the scientific treatise. I have enough respect for science to avoid mixing the two subjects. On the other hand, I trust those of my readers who do not share my religious faith or my philanthropic hopes will not blame me for here touching upon the important problems of Native policy. Science has never opposed the betterment and ennoblement of humanity ! If this book can in the slightest degree help towards this end, such help will be its best and most precious justification.

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128 Since the first edition was published, I have spent seven years more in Rikatla and gathered a considerable amount of new information,

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

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SECOND PART

THE LIFE OF THE FAMILY AND OF THE VILLAGE

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621 592 Having followed a man and a woman from the beginning to the end of their existence, I now come to the Life of the Family and of the Village. Both subjects are in close connexion. As a rule, a village is but a family composed of the headman, the father, his wives, his children and the old folk who depend upon him; but in many cases his younger brothers live with him, sometimes a son-in-law, or even a stranger, and all these inmates compose the village, *muti* (1). In the first chapter we shall consider the family itself, its constitution, the system of relationship, and in the second, the village, the concrete embodiment of the family, its foundation, its main laws and the respective occupations of its members.

CHAPTER I

THE LIFE OF THE FAMILY

121 601 The kinship system of the Thongas and, I suppose, of all the Bantus is widely different from ours, and greatly surprises the

(1) Native villages are generally called *kraals* by South African colonists. This expression comes from the Portuguese word *curral* which means properly stable. I shall employ it to designate the enclosure where oxen are kept, the cattle-kraal, but it does not seem right to apply it to the *muti* which is a *village*, however small and poor it may be. The Portuguese call native villages *povoação*.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

121/601

uninitiated student who tries to understand it. It is a very complicated matter indeed. In *Les Ba-Ronga* I have given the genealogy of Tobane and tried to sketch the system, and even to explain it. I cannot say that I was altogether satisfied with this first attempt. When later on I had an opportunity of studying the subject in the Northern clans, I found that a comparison between the customs of the different parts of the tribe helped greatly to an understanding of the whole matter. This led me to extend my investigation to neighbouring tribes, and, after the publication of the first edition of this book, I made inquiries amongst the Vendas, Pedi-Khahas, Suthos, Chopis, Ndjaos and Tongas. I then conceived the ambitious plan of drawing up a table of the terms of relationship in all these tribes or sub-tribes, being convinced that it would be of great interest, both from the linguistic and from the ethnographic point of view. I publish it in Appendix IV, at the end of this Volume. My chief concern remains with the Thonga tribe, but after having described in detail the kinship system amongst the Thongas, I intend to sketch some of the most characteristic customs met with amongst their fellow Bantus in South Africa.

May I add that though it is comparatively easy to discover the main ideas in relation to the family in the Thonga tribe, yet the whole tangle is extraordinarily difficult to unravel. I had believed that it was composed of two threads only, twisted together and knotted a hundred times : the lobola and polygamy customs. But I saw that many other threads were entwined with these : remnants of an ancient state of society where the mother-right prevailed, and perhaps traces of the old group-marriage system which is still extant amongst Australian natives. My aim is more modest to-day. I do not claim to explain everything, but to present a wider, more complete statement of facts, which I offer to professional anthropologists in order that they may fix the place of the present Thonga system of relationship in the evolution of the human family.

FOURTH PART

AGRICULTURAL AND INDUSTRIAL LIFE

In the first volume of this work, I have tried to give a description 121
of the Social Life of the tribe by depicting its customs in relation to the individual, communal and national life. In the second volume I shall consider its Mental and Spiritual Life, its Literature and Music, its Religion, Magic and Morality. The Agricultural and Industrial Life will afford a transition from the one to the other of these subjects; this belongs primarily to the social manifestations of the tribal life, but the imagination displayed by sculptors, weavers, potters (or rather "potteresses") brings it also into relation with the mental. I do not however pretend to draw a sharp line of distinction between these two domains, as the mental life is reflected in the social customs, and the social idea strongly dominates the mental life of the tribe.

CHAPTER I

Agricultural Life

A. THE LAND AND THE NATIVE SYSTEM OF LAND TENURE.

I. *The nature of the soil.*

Considering that the Thongas dwell in the South of Africa, a 134
part of the world which is generally rocky and sterile, Nature

p. 153

FIFTH PART

LITERARY AND ARTISTIC LIFE

Ethnography does not consist merely in the description of customs and rites. Beneath the manifold manifestations of the Life of the Tribe, the ethnographer tries to discover its soul... The further we proceed in our study, the nearer we approach to the mystery of its mental life. 121

The mental life reveals itself in two great sets of spiritual facts, those relating to the intellectual and those relating to the religious and moral side of life ; in other words, the mind of a nation may be considered under two different aspects : the intellectual, and the moral and religious. We have not yet gone far enough to come to any conclusion as regards the Religion and Morality of the Native, but we can now attempt to describe the main characteristics of the Native intellect.

CHAPTER I

Characteristics of the Bantu Intellect.

I intend to give here, briefly, the results of a study of the language, the language of a nation being one of the most trustworthy and complete manifestations of its mind. 197

I have been bold enough to speak of the *Bantu*, and not merely of the *Thonga* intellect, because the grammatical features of all

SIXTH PART

RELIGIOUS LIFE AND SUPERSTITIONS.

The mystery of the Psychic life! There is a mystery in any form of life, be it vegetable, animal, or intellectual. But how much deeper and more difficult it is to fathom, when we are dealing with those higher manifestations of the mental life, which seem peculiar to mankind: Religion, Morality and also, besides these, Magic of all kinds, Divination, Spirit-Possession, Witchcraft, all of which we include under the term Superstition. Amongst savage peoples Religion and Magic, Morality and Taboo, are not yet clearly differentiated. I believe them to proceed from different sources; but they are more or less confounded in the rites, and this makes them all the more difficult to understand. I do not now claim to throw a perfect light on the dim, confused notions of the Bantu soul. The race is so little philosophical that it can accept conflicting ideas to an extent which would be impossible in more rational, more intellectually developed minds. My aim is, as ever, to be as impartial as possible. I have no preconceived idea as to what primitive man was, or ought to have been. I believe the evolutionist theory to be supported by a great number of probabilities and to be the best solution of many problems. Yet I think it to be merely a hypothesis, and that it would be unscientific to regard it as a dogma to the strengthening of which Science must devote all its labours. I may endeavour to reach some conclusions at the end of this VIth Part; but my intention is to treat this subject by giving a faithful record of my own observations: professional anthropologists, or historians of Religion can do what they like with this material; my only ambition is that it should be entirely reliable. 121

2: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga
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CONCLUSION

121 I have reached the end of my study of the Life of a South African
114 tribe in its principal manifestations, social, mental and spiritual. In
174 order to write a complete anthropological monograph, I ought to have also dealt at length with the physical features of the Thongas. This would have led me too far. However I have taken a few anthropometric measurements, which have been published in the *Bulletin de la Société neuchâteloise de Géographie* of 1917, together with an explanation kindly written by Dr. E. Pittard of Geneva, whose competency in this domain is well-known. I now come to my conclusion. The aim of this book being twofold, scientific and practical, I shall try in these final pages to answer two great questions, one appertaining to Science: How far can the present-day South Africans be described as Primitives? the other, of greater practical importance: How far can the South African tribe withstand the new condition of things brought about by twentieth-century civilisation

121 the Ba-Ronga of Delagoa Bay was first published in my French book *Les Ba-Ronga* with the kind help of the Geographical Society of Neuchâtel in 1898. Since then I have pursued my studies amongst the Northern Clans of the Thongas of the Transvaal and, if I am able to undertake this publication, in which I hope to give a more complete description of the life of a South African tribe, I feel that I owe to my distinguished visitor the generating idea, the decisive impulse.

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COO This was the right moment to undertake this enquiry, as the following sad experience will plainly show. Coming home in 1909, I met, on board the splendid U. C. Steamer on which we were travelling, three well known Native gentlemen who were, I think, going to England for political reasons. I had great pleasure in speaking with them. One of them was the editor of a Native paper; another was a Christian chief, the third was at the head of a Training Institution which he had founded himself. One day I made up my mind to gather some ethnographical facts from them. They were Zulus, and I wanted to know for purposes of comparison what were the precise ideas of their tribe about witchcraft. Never in my scientific career did I meet with a more complete failure! The editor had been born in a Wesleyan family, and never lived amongst heathen. The chief knew much more on the subject but, for some obscure reason, was not inclined to disclose his knowledge. The Principal of the Institution was a very clever man; he first declared that witchcraft was met with amongst white people just the same as amongst South African Natives, and that it was only a form of mesmerism; and, as he was always anxious to get more knowledge himself, he proceeded to question me about mesmerism; the whole interview ended therefore in a lesson which I was obliged to give him on that mysterious subject, and I did not learn anything new from my three friends... I left them in quite a melancholy mood, thinking how different it was with my Thonga informants, Mboza, Tobane and even Elias!

123 In fact, the circumstances in which I found myself amongst the Thongas, were the most favourable imaginable for such an investigation. The great bulk of the tribe is still absolutely savage. We have mastered its language and can understand all they tell us. On the other hand we have founded a Church amongst them and have

123 intimate relations with some of them. The adults in our congregations
115 have been heathen themselves and have practised the rites on which I questioned them. They can describe them better than raw heathens, as they now stand at a certain distance from their old life and can judge of it more independently. They possess what our French historians call *le recul nécessaire*. Enjoying their full confidence, having learned by long practice how to put questions in order to get impartial answers, I think that their testimony can be considered as scientifically reliable. Of course errors are always possible. But science proceeds by successive approximations. I dare say the present monograph of the Thonga tribe, compared with my book *Les Ba-Ronga*, will be a nearer approach to the truth, and it is quite possible that later on a more perfect account will be given by somebody who has had more time to spare and more insight than myself into this delicate work.

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115 When a historian publishes a monograph, he first gives a list of his sources of information. He vindicates the truth of his results by showing that they are based on trustworthy documents. My documents are not books. They are living witnesses, and I beg to introduce some of them to my readers, as they have been my faithful collaborators and I owe to them most of my knowledge.

The first man whom I questioned systematically was a Ronga of Nondwane (North of Lourenço Marques) named *Spoon*. He had been my butterfly catcher and I had often admired his skill and his powers of observation. He became my instructor in the art of bone throwing. He had been more or less a diviner, using his dice when going to hunt ; but after the war of the Natives against the Portuguese (1894-1895) he lost confidence in his divinatory bones as well as in his gods, and became a Christian. He always had a great deal of imagination. I was often obliged to verify his explanations. Spoon certainly had the mythological sense more developed than any of my other informants ; however he was through and through a Bantu and whatever he said was always picturesque and striking. He died in 1924.

After him, I undertook to gather all the knowledge possessed by *Tobane*. Tobane was a splendid man when I knew him in Lourenço Marques, in the years 1895 and 1896. Tall, of a remarkably light complexion, his eyes very clear and bright, he was a man of mark in the

115 In my congregation at the station of Shiluvane was an old convert baptised, odd to relate, by the name of a professor of divinity of Lausanne, *Viguet*. He was a clever man, but not always a very good Christian, I must confess. He possessed a splendid memory. Having been headman in a village of Thonga refugees in the Spelonken, he gave me valuable information regarding the mysteries of family life as well as about the initiation ceremonies. His home was Tsungu on the Limpopo but he had moved to the Transvaal during the succession war of 1862. He was certainly a first-rate informant, possessing a clear head, always using the technical expressions and illustrating his points with great skill. He and Mankhelu have taught me most of what I know about the Northern clans. I learned however many other facts from *Mawewe*, the poet-laureate of the Nkuna court and from *Simeon Gana*, one of my pupils who belonged to an old and important family, and also from others.

115 In 1907 I came back to the coast to start in Rikatla (18 miles North
124 of Lourenço Marques) a Training Institution for our work in Portuguese Territory. There I again found my old friend Spoon, who had been baptised Elias and was one of the elders of the little Church; he had grown old, but was still of the same merry character and disposed to communicate anything he knew. Another man was his co-elder there, a Ronga of the Mazwaya family called *Mboza*. I found him to be a very intelligent man, quite an authority on the rites of the clan. He had been "possessed" and had gone through all the initiation ceremonies of the Ngoni possession, having become an exorciser himself. So he was able to give me new information on this mysterious subject. I undertook a systematic investigation with these two men in 1909, taking as a guide the set of questions prepared by Prof. J. Frazer for people collecting ethnographical material, and giving special attention to the question of the taboo. During this study, which took me many months, I was more than ever impressed with the immense complexity of the life of a South African tribe!

115 In quoting my sources of information I must also mention the
126 pupils of my school. Every Tuesday night we had a meeting in which one of them had to relate a story, to describe a custom, to tell a Native tale... His companions then added what they knew, and as some of them were grown up men, these debates were often very instructive.

I was able to collect in all more than one hundred tales; most of them have been published in my *Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga* and

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

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CHAPTER II

THE EVOLUTION OF A WOMAN FROM BIRTH TO DEATH

Essay of a Ronga girl on the subject.

124 In July 1897, the School Inspector gave to the big girls of the Swiss Mission school at Lourenço Marques the following subject for an examination in composition: "The life of a Ronga woman." This is the translation of one of the pupils' essays on the life of their country women:

846 "When a girl is born amongst the Ba-Ronga, people come and
302 congratulate the mother and say: "A ma buyeni mati," that is
854 to say: "Let the water come!" When the time is at hand when she will come out of the hut, ochre is crushed for her and a calabash full of the fat of *nkuhlu* almond is prepared, and the two ingredients are mixed and smeared over her.

"Her curly hair is stretched out in corkscrew fashion, and ochre is put on it to transform it into a kind of rats' tails. (This is the operation called *hora ngoya*.) The mother also smears herself with ochre, and puts on her head a crown of small strings (shikupu) (1). Then, when the child lets her head fall on account of the weakness of her neck, a plaited string, which is just the right size for a necklace, is tied round her throat. 'Thus,' they say, 'her nape will be strengthened.'

854 "A small calabash with medicine is given her to drink; they also prepare for her a small pot of the medicine, and they say it

(1) I have heard this custom explained as follows: the mothers amuse the children by shaking their heads; the small strings dance about and make the babies laugh. This can only be true of infants already two or three months old.

124 The description I have given of the *lahla khombo*, translating
178 exactly the narratives of Mbozà, Elias, and an old widower called
164 Magingi, refers to the rite as it was performed in the normal
783 fashion some twenty years ago amongst the Ba-Ronga. Now
765 customs are changing. There is, all around the town of Lourenço Marques, an agglomeration of Natives coming from many tribes. Immorality there has become terrible owing especially to alcoholic excesses, a free and enormous sale of adulterated wine taking place in this region. The widows are sure to find there a hundred men for each of them, when they wish to cast away their defilement. But in this promiscuity the poison of syphilis makes terrible ravages. According to our medical missionary, 90 % of the
783 Natives are contaminated by this disease. When the men up
765 country saw that their wives came back ritually purified but
178 physically contaminated, they began themselves to accomplish the necessary act. This has become the general custom to such an
833 extent that, when a widow goes to Majlangalen, (such is the name of that hell of drunkenness and immorality), it is now said of her : "She will refuse to stay with her legal heirs!" However the law of the *lahla khombo nhoben*, to cast away the malediction in the bush, remains inexorable in the three cases where the defilement is considered as being of the worst kind : if the
[845] husband died of phthisis or of leprosy, or if the woman has had twins.

Old widows who can find no lovers may be purified by means of drugs.

765 e) *The year of widowhood*. Though the widows have found
587 new husbands, they still remain in the old kraal. They must accomplish there "a full hoe," viz. a whole year of ploughing. In their new fields they leave the dry sticks of the mealies of the year before, in such a way that everybody passing by will know at once that this is the field of a widow. But what they harvest this year will belong to the new husband. They have now the right to *fambelana*, viz. to go to each other. The suitor brings clothing to the woman, and the woman pays him visits with jars of beer. They belong more or less to each other. But the marriage of the inherited woman is not absolutely settled. Her

192 *khempfa*, he sits down very tired ; *yinti*, he stands listening attentively, etc.

The *facial expressions* are minutely described by a great wealth of such words : a man says : *langu*, he looks at something ; *lori*, with attention ; *dloto*, intently, and for a long time ; *pari*, with anger ; *dlanya*, with kindness.

Let us take another step forward and we shall find another category describing the *state of mind*, the feelings of the heart, which are also phenomena of vision in as far as they correspond to given attitudes of the body or to certain expressions of the features. A man says *gee*, he is happy ; *kono*, he fears ; *nkwi-nkwisi*, he is in a bad humour ; *doko-doko*, he covets ; *punavuna*, he has pity.

By means of such adverbs *phenomena of Nature* and even *abstract ideas* can be described. Heaven says, *mphu*, it becomes dark ; *dzunu*, the day breaks ; the smoke says *tobi-tobi*, it ascends to heaven ; the water, or the rays of the sun, say *lululu*, they begin to feel warm ; the fire says *lasi-lasi*, it is seen flickering far away.

Abstract ideas. Men say *bi* or *kutlu*, they are all killed, to the last one (total destruction) ; somebody says *kwemetelo*, he does not attain his end, etc.

[124] The list of descriptive adverbs which I have collected comprises more than 250 of them. Most of these were obtained in the following way. When teaching my pupils the Bukhaneli, viz., the Grammar of their own language — which I always found a very interesting and useful subject of study for them — I asked each of them to write down at once 50 of these strange words. Without hesitation they complied with my demand, one of them writing as many as 70. Almost all of them were different. This shows the extreme wealth of the language in this respect. It is no exaggeration to say that, in Thonga, there are ten, perhaps twenty times as many descriptive adverbs as those quoted by my
151 pupils. In dealing with the characteristics of the Thonga or
192 Bantu mind, I think they are worthy of close consideration. These thousands of words, instinctively formed to express the impression made on the brain by any kind of phenomena, prove the existence of a wonderful power of description. The Bantu

your food a little of the earth of the country which you have left ; 823
this will provide the transition between the old and the new domicile (See I. p. 49).

Metals known to the tribe before the coming of the Whites 135
were few. (See page 137). *Nhumbu* or *nsimbi*, iron, *nsuku*, copper, and *ntchopfa*, a name applied to all white metals (tin, silver, etc.) are the only Native names for metals. There is no word for gold.

V. *The Vegetable World. Thonga Botany.*

While Bantus possess a very limited knowledge of Astronomy, 815
Geography, Mineralogy, etc., while their ideas in these domains are in no way deserving of the name of Science, they are much more advanced as regards Plants. Here it is quite allowable to speak of a Science, a rudimentary Science, no doubt, but a true, precise knowledge which has been transmitted from past ages and which denotes a real power of observation.

The Delagoa flora is not very rich. I have succeeded in 137
collecting between four and five hundred different kinds in a 124
herbarium which I sent many years ago for classification to the 815
Herbier Boissier in Geneva. In February 1893, before forwarding the second lot of exsiccata, I gathered together some Natives of Rikatla in the hut which I had pompously styled a Museum and, having promised them 1 s. each if they consented to remain till the end of the examination, I submitted the dried plants to them, asking them their names, their uses, etc. The result of the inquiry was marvellous. My areopagus did not seem to be a very choice one : an old woman, as dry as my exsiccata and smoking her pipe, another with ochre-smeared hair, a young one, with a baby on her shoulder, an elderly one-eyed man named Hamunde, my
milkman. After them came the young chief Muzila, walking 815
slowly, swinging the tails of his belt. This chief, notwithstanding 756
his social rank, showed gross ignorance of botany ; but some of the 824
others knew the name of almost every plant ; had I had a *ñanga*, a medicine-man, amongst them, I am sure I should have obtained

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126 in the book on *Les Ba-Ronga*. I have still a good many in manuscript, some of which will be found in the second volume of the present work.

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121 My aim in collecting all this material has been twofold ; scientific and practical.

Spoon-Eliss
as Church elder in 1907.

First of all scientific. The life of a South African tribe is a collection of biological phenomena which must be described objectively and which are of great interest, representing, as they do, a certain stage of human development. These biological phenomena are sometimes at first of a repulsive character. The sexual life of the Bantus especially shocks our moral feelings. I did not think however that I could entirely leave out this subject in a scientific book, and the more I studied it, the more I saw that these strange rites have a much deeper meaning than at first appears, and that we could not pretend to know Natives if we remained ignorant of these facts. But while trying to give a full account, I am convinced, on the other hand, that, to be truly scientific, such a description must be limited to one well defined tribe. I go even further : all the data must be localised ; in the tribe itself there are different clans ; customs vary from one to another. It is of the greatest importance that all the facts be classed geographically. A similar work can be done later for other tribes, and it is only when a sufficient number of trustworthy monographs have been written that a comparative study on Bantu ethnography can be undertaken. The "Essential Kafir" of Dudley Kidd is very interesting and full of useful remarks, but the essential Kafir will not be known, till a scientific and thorough study of all the tribes has been completed. My aim has been to submit the Thonga tribe to such a study and I shall be most gratified if it leads other observers to undertake the same investigation with regard to other African tribes.

000 order that the message of the Gospel may be presented in such a way as will appeal to those aspirations after the truth which reveal themselves in the religion and social rites of the Natives. How superior is this conception to that of former times, when heathenism was looked on as a creation of the devil through and through! We see better now that, amidst darkness and sin, the heathen mind is often seeking light and righteousness, and that these rays of truth, these presentiments of a higher life, must be infinitely respected and utilised in the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. For instance, see how seriously savages keep their taboo!... This taboo—as we shall see—is inspired by strange, unscientific physiological ideas regarding defilement and contagion, which will disappear when scientific knowledge has spread amongst them. But let these ideas be somewhat amended, let the Natives understand that what is taboo is not physical uncleanness but moral evil, and their strong aversion to the act tabooed may become a powerful moral impulse for good.

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128 121 Here is the plan which I mean to adopt. After having briefly explained in a preliminary chapter what the Thonga tribe is, I shall take an individual and follow him in his career from birth to death; the story of the evolution of a man and of a woman will constitute the first part of the book.

Then I shall pass on to the first social organism formed by these individuals, and study the life of the family and of the village, which is but an enlarged family.

The villages make up the clan and the tribe. The national life will constitute my third part, where I shall deal especially with the Chief, the Court and the Army.

Agricultural and industrial life and literary and artistic life will then be studied (as collective manifestations of the life of the tribe) and last but not least, I shall devote a considerable amount of time to the religious life and superstitions, trying to penetrate into the soul of the tribe, and to understand the manifold manifestations of its psychic life, which have always had a special interest for me.

128 It would have been safer for me to write this new and enlarged edition of *Les Ba-Ronga* in French, my native tongue. I decided to attempt it in English, as the public interested in South African affairs

128 is essentially an English-speaking public and as a great portion of the Thonga tribe is settled in British Territory. I know that I can rely on the indulgence of the English public... When my readers notice that the book has been written by a foreigner—I am afraid they will often make that observation—I beg them kindly to remember that, for me, it would have been much more agreeable to write it in French...

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121 To work for Science is noble ; but to help our fellow men is nobler still.

In the difficult undertaking which lies before me, I shall feel immensely gratified if scientists find useful material for their studies amongst my observations. Anthropologists try to throw some light on the dark problem of the origin of the psychic life in mankind; may the picture of a South African primitive tribe bring them some valuable information. But I should feel even deeper satisfaction if my work could help my South African brethren, and contribute to the peaceful solution of our great practical problem there, the Native problem. White men soon tire of the Native when they only see the badly brought up youths who walk about the streets of our colonial towns. They despise them, find them "cheeky" and very soon come to the conclusion : "Natives are no good !" Who can deny that this attitude, adopted by so many South Africans, is as dangerous for the peace of the country as are the very defects with which they reproach the Natives, and which often come from contact with a depraved and unscupulous civilisation ? Let those who are prejudiced against the black race study more carefully its customs, its mind, such as it reveals itself in the old rites of the Bantu tribes. They will see that these Natives are much more earnest than they thought and that in them beats a true human heart. If, in their ignorance of true morality and of true religion, they have submitted themselves willingly to the sufferings of initiation, to the painful rites of purification, in order to reach what they thought to be a higher level of human righteousness, are we not entitled to hope that we shall be able to build up true character in them when we bring them under the moralising influence of Christianity, and teach them to understand the religion which has saved the world ?

Should I succeed in eliciting new and more enlightened sympathy

121 amongst the Whites for our Native brethren, should this book prevent the gulf which separates the races from becoming wider, I think it will have been worth while writing it.

May I be allowed one final comment ? Colossal changes are now taking place amongst the South African tribes. Civilisation has taken fast hold not only of the coast but of the interior. It has exercised a marvellous influence on the High Velt of Johannesburg and is spreading to the borders of the desert. Amongst those races so long stagnant, an evolution has started which is proceeding with great rapidity and a kind of fatality. What will be its ultimate result ? The ethnographer does not generally trouble himself with such questions. It is enough for him to note the facts carefully and to describe them accurately. I aim at being a faithful and impartial ethnographer in the study of customs which still exist but will soon have passed away, but I cannot forget that I am also a Missionary. I belong to that body of men who, with Native Commissioners and liberal minded Colonists, feel they have a sacred duty to perform towards the weaker race. In this most tempting basket of varied fruits which civilisation offers to the Native, we feel we must guide his inexperienced hand, pointing out to him those which conduce to his happiness and progress and those which are poisonous and might be fatal to him. This book is addressed to those who can influence this evolution, be they the Authorities puzzled by the Native problem, or be they educated Natives who
121 are perplexed regarding the future of their race. I will endeavour to
128 indicate the lines along which it appears to me we ought to direct the tribe in order that it may escape shame and destruction. But these suggestions will be given at the end of the volume, in special paragraphs, carefully separated from the scientific treatise. I have enough respect for science to avoid mixing the two subjects. On the other hand, I trust those of my readers who do not share my religious faith or my philanthropic hopes will not blame me for here touching upon the important problems of Native policy. Science has never opposed the betterment and ennoblement of humanity ! If this book can in the slightest degree help towards this end, such help will be its best and most precious justification.

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128 Since the first edition was published, I have spent seven years more in Rikatla and gathered a considerable amount of new information,

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

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especially about the kinship system, hunting rites and ancestor worship. I intend to introduce this new material in the present second edition. I had also the opportunity of sojourning in Besutoland and amongst the Ba-Venda of the Northern Transvaal, and of collecting data which are valuable for a comparison of the customs of the various Bantu tribes of South Africa. I shall refer to these occasionally, without however abandoning my original plan, which is the description of the Thonga tribe.

Geneva, June 1926. Henri A. Junod.

PRELIMINARY CHAPTER

THE THONGA TRIBE

1. *Geographical delimitation of the tribe.*

101 The Thonga tribe is composed of a group of Bantu peoples
131 settled on the eastern coast of South Africa, extending from the neighbourhood of St Lucia Bay (28° Lat. S.) on the Natal Coast up to the Sabie River on the north (1). Thongas are to be found therefore in four of the present South African states : in Natal (Amatongaland), the Transvaal (Leydenbourg, Zoutpansberg and Waterberg districts), in Rhodesia, and chiefly in Portuguese East Africa (Lourenço Marques, Inhambane and Mozambique Company districts). The Thongas border on the Zulus and the Swazis southwards ; westwards on the Ba-Mbayi, Ba-Lauti and other Suto-Pedi clans in the Transvaal ; northwards on the Vendas and Ba-Nyai in the Zoutpansberg and Rhodesia, and on the Ndjaos near the Sabie ; and eastwards on the Thongas near Inhambane and on the Ba-Chopi, north of the mouth of the Limpopo.

101 The tribe comprises a certain number of clans. These clans form six groups, which speak the various dialects of the Thonga language.

133 (1) There are two rivers called Sabie in the Thonga Territory ; one is the Sabie of the South, which flows in the Leydenburg district and joins the Nkomati not far from Kil. 53 of the Lourenço Marques-Transvaal line, and the other, that here referred to, which comes from Rhodesia and flows into the Indian Ocean not far from the 21° lat. South.

101 619 insult. It is applied in Johannesburg roughly to all the East Coast "boys," even to the Ba-Chopi, who are considered by the Ba-Ronga of Delagoa Bay as much inferior to them. Its adoption would be objectionable on that account. I recognise that the word Ba-Thonga does not enjoy much more favour and is not quite satisfactory ; however considering that it means originally "people of the East" and that the tribe is indeed living in the eastern part of South Africa, it ought to be accepted in the course of time without much difficulty.

Let us remark that another tribe, quite different in language and ethnographic features, dwelling near Inhambane, quite close to our Thonga tribe, calls itself Ba-Tonga. But there is no aspirate after the *T* and this is enough to distinguish it from the Ba-Thonga.

IV. *The six Groups of the Thonga Clans.*

101 197 131 Let us consider briefly, with the aid of the accompanying map, these six main groups.

1. All round the Bay of Delagoa, we find the *Ronga group*. This word Ronga is a very old one and very convenient, as all these clans consent to be called by it. The real Rongas are, I think, the Mpfumo and the Matjolo clans, who are settled on the west of the Bay. South of the Bay is the Tembe clan and its two sub-clans, which have become independent : Matutwen and Maputju. North of Lourenço Marques are the Mabota and Maxaya clans, the country of the latter, which extends on both sides of the estuary of the Nkomati, being called Nondwane. Further north are the two clans of Shirindja and Manyisa which form the transition to the following group. The new generation speaks a purer Ronga dialect, the old one more the Djonga.

Continuing our survey in a northerly direction, we cross two rivers : the Nkomati and the Olifant. From the Nkomati to the Olifant we meet with the Djonga group, and from the Olifant northward with the Nwalungu group. Djonga means

2: Junod M-S (1875-1909) 1927 Thonga

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South, Nwalungu means North. The Ba-Djonga are the clans south of the Olifant, the Ba-Nwalungu north of it. Such designations have therefore only a relative value and have been evidently invented by people dwelling on the borders of the Olifant. But they are used in some places, and I do not find any better ones to designate the two dialects of the Thonga spoken south and north of the river.

2. *The Djonga group* includes the Khosa (in the Khosen or Cossine country) the Rikotjo, the Shiburi and the Mathiye clans, if we go directly north. To the east of the Djonga clans proper, we find a number of clans settled on both sides of the Limpopo, in the triangle formed by the Limpopo, the Shengan and the line of the 24° parallel and calling themselves the Ba-Hlabi. They speak a dialect very similar to the Djongas. Their names are as follows, from the confluence of the Olifant and the Limpopo to the south: Mapsanganyi, Tsungu, Mavundja, Nkwinika and Makamo. The Nkuna clan was settled not far from this confluence. It migrated into the Transvaal in great numbers, together with Mavundja and other Hlabis during the wars of Manukosi.

3. *The Nwalungu group* includes two different elements: first the Ba-Loyi or Ba-ka-Baloyi, in the triangle formed by the two rivers northward of their confluence, and the Maluleke further north, extending all along the Limpopo as far as its confluence with the Lebvubye River and further along the Lebvubye itself. They occupy there a part of the Low Country of the Transvaal, being more or less mixed with the Venda and Nyai population. The Malulekes, according to the Native historians, are one half of a larger clan called the Nwanatis, whose second half is settled near the mouth of the Limpopo under the name of the Makwakwas of Khambane and Ndindane.

These three groups are to be found on the central line, on the axis of the tribe. On the west we meet with the Hlanganu group and on the east with the Bila and Hlengwe groups.

4. *The Hlanganu group* is the smallest of all, including the Nwamba clan in the plain of Delagoa Bay, and the Mabila and Hlanganu clans in the Lebombo hills. The Hlanganus overflow

101 197 131 into the Transvaal territory and are scattered in the large desert of the Low Country of the Leydenburg district, together with clans of Sutho (Pedi) and Swazi (Mbayi) origin. The Hlanganu dialect is very much akin to the Djonga.

5. *The Bila group*, called after the name of Bila, the great and fruitful plain of the Lower Limpopo valley, includes the clans living on both banks of the river. They have suffered very much at the hands of the Zulu invaders who made their home in that fertile country, but their dialect has kept some very peculiar traits.

101 131 6. *The Hlengwe group*. In the Djonga dialect, *hlengwe* means wealth. I do not know if this be the etymology of the name Hlengwe as designating all the Thonga population of the east and north-east, from the Limpopo to Inhambane and to the Sabie of the north. The name Hlengwe applies properly only to the northern part of the eastern clans. I retain it however provisionally. It seems that this group, which forms perhaps half of the tribe, includes at least three great subdivisions : 1) The *Hlengwes proper*, facing the Malulekes and the Ba-Loyi on the west and extending as far as the Sabie to the north. Their main clans are Tshauke, Mbenzane, Mavube, Magwinyane. 2) *The Ba-Tsoa* (1) of Inhambane with the Hlenbengwanes, Yingwanes, Nkumbis. 3) *The Nwanatis* with the Makwakwas, Khambanes, Ndindanes, bordering on the Chopis to the north and the west.

101 167 Outside of the proper area of the tribe, we find *colonies of emigrated* Thongas in many parts of the Transvaal. The largest is in the Spelonken district, north of the Zoutpansberg, where they form the majority of the population. There they were called

(1) This name Ba-Tswa, is the Hlengwe form of Ba-Tjwa, a term by which the Zulus have been commonly designated amongst the Thongas. Ba-Tjwa is probably the corresponding form for Ba-Rwa, an appellation by which the Suthos of the Zoutpansberg plains used to call the tribes of the mountains, whence comes the wind called Bu-rwa. The Ba-Rwa are properly the Bushmen, as one knows, but under that name were included Bantus of a quite different type. This shows that the Natives, in naming foreign tribes, consider the geographical relation between themselves and these tribes much more than their ethnic characteristics : so one very often meets with the word "Bakalanga" which means people of the north. The Bakalanga proper are in Rhodesia, but in Lourenço Marques the Khosa tribe is called Bakalanga.

The term Ba-Ngoni is applied to the Zulus, as well as Ba-Tjwa, but it is restricted to that clan of the Zulus which was under Manukosi.

10/ *Ma-Gwamba* by the Vendas and Bveshas who possessed the country
167 before them. These Ma-Gwamba are made up mostly of Hlengwe,
737 Maluleke and Djonga refugees. In the Modjadji country, we find two colonies of Ba-ka-Baloyi with their own chiefs. Near Leydsdorp, a more considerable clan, numbering about 6000, is the Nkuna clan under Muhlaba. On the Sabie of the south, in the plain of the Leydenburg district, another colony has been founded more recently, since the war of the Portuguese against Gungunyane, by the Ngonis and Bilas who did not accept the new rule. They remain under Mpisane, a near relative of the late Ngoni potentate.

In the Orichstadt valley, and in many other parts of the Leydenburg mountains, little colonies of Thongas are met with, as well as in the Waterberg district (especially near Nilstrom) and in the towns of Pretoria and Johannesburg. A good many of the thousands of Shangaanes coming every year to the mines settle down definitively in the Town Locations of these great centres.

During the last twenty years the number of these emigrants has certainly increased. It was not possible to indicate on the map all their settlements between the Hlanganu domain proper, the Drakensberg Mountains and the Olifant River. On the farms of the Zoutpansberg and Pietersburg Districts they also form a notable portion of the Native population.

V. *The numerical strength of the Thonga Tribe.*

161 It is very difficult to ascertain the numbers of the Thongas. The census of the Transvaal taken on the 17th of April 1904 gives 82,325 as being the total Thonga population of that colony; of these, 48,117 are located in the Zoutpansberg. This is a minimum, as it has been recognised that at least 10 % ought to be added to these figures; there were scarcely any young men in the kraals when the census was taken. Let us estimate at 100,000 the numerical strength of that part of the tribe which is located in the Transvaal.

As regards Portuguese East Africa, we find some interesting

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14
Thonga FT6
Venda FX19

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THE PLACE OF THE NORTH-EASTERN TRANSVAAL SOTHO IN THE SOUTH BANTU COMPLEX

EILEEN JENSEN KRIGE

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THE Sotho of the North-Eastern Transvaal Lowveld occupy an area with fairly well-marked geographical boundaries. To the east, the Game Reserve, low-lying, unhealthy, very sparsely populated even in the old days, remains an effective barrier to contact with and further migrations from the Shangana-Tonga of Portuguese East Africa. South are the Olifants River and the towering Drakensberg range curving north-west then northwards to merge into the well-marked escarpment on the west dividing Lowveld from Highveld. On the north the Klein Letaba river roughly demarcates our area from the Venda and the Shangana-Tonga of the Knobnose Location. The Sotho-speaking Venda of Tswale and Moila, who fall well within this area, resemble in culture their Sotho-ized neighbours more than their own Venda kin to the north; but the Shangana-Tonga, who occupy most of the lower-lying eastern and north-eastern portion of the area and comprise at least one-third of its total population, are unassimilated strangers of different stock coming from the north-east and east. They have been entering since about 1840, usually in small bands, at first seeking the protection of and subjecting themselves to the Sotho owners of the land. On the arrival

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[p. 265]

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14
Thonga FT6

of the white man, some of their headmen were granted independent locations which have served as nuclei for the building up of more united tribal groups. (See accompanying map.)

The most important Sotho tribes of this area are the Lobedu, the Narene and the Khaha who together comprise about three-quarters of the total Sotho population.[1] The outstanding demographical feature is, however, the numerical predominance of the Lobedu who, with a population of well over 40,000, are not only the greatest tribe, but outnumber all the other Sotho-speaking tribes put together.[2] The pre-eminence and cultural influence of the Lobedu in this area does not rest solely upon their numerical preponderance. It is based largely upon the fame of their queen, Modjadji, who, as the greatest rain-maker in the Northern Transvaal, is not only regularly approached with gifts by other chiefs but also sometimes places them on the throne (*ho bea bohosi*) and is appealed to in cases of disputed succession.

This area, though forming part of a greater cultural whole including the Northern Transvaal Highveld and probably Pediland to the south, is, however, sharply characterized by distinctive features, such as ritual suicide of the chief and recognition of women as rulers in their own right, that are not found elsewhere. These are sufficient to form a fairly well-defined culture pattern, which, owing to the overwhelming numerical preponderance of the Lobedu, if for no other reason,

[1] The Sotho population of our area is made up as follows, according to van Warmelo:

Lobedu	8237	taxpayers.	
Narene	2521	"	(Mahlo 1332, Letswalo 1189).
Khaha	1608	"	
Thabina (Moxoboya)	1088	"	
Phalaborwa	332	"	
Makxoba	700	"	
Baba Mamidja	413	"	
Shai or Tsubye	256	"	
Tswale	357	"	Sotho-speaking Venda.
Moila	260	"	Sotho-speaking Venda.

The only large tribal groups among Shangana-Tonga are

Mohlaba	2918	taxpayers.
Nwamitwa	1347	"

[2] The proportion is Lobedu 8237 taxpayers.
rest 7533 "

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14
Venda FX19
Thonga FT6
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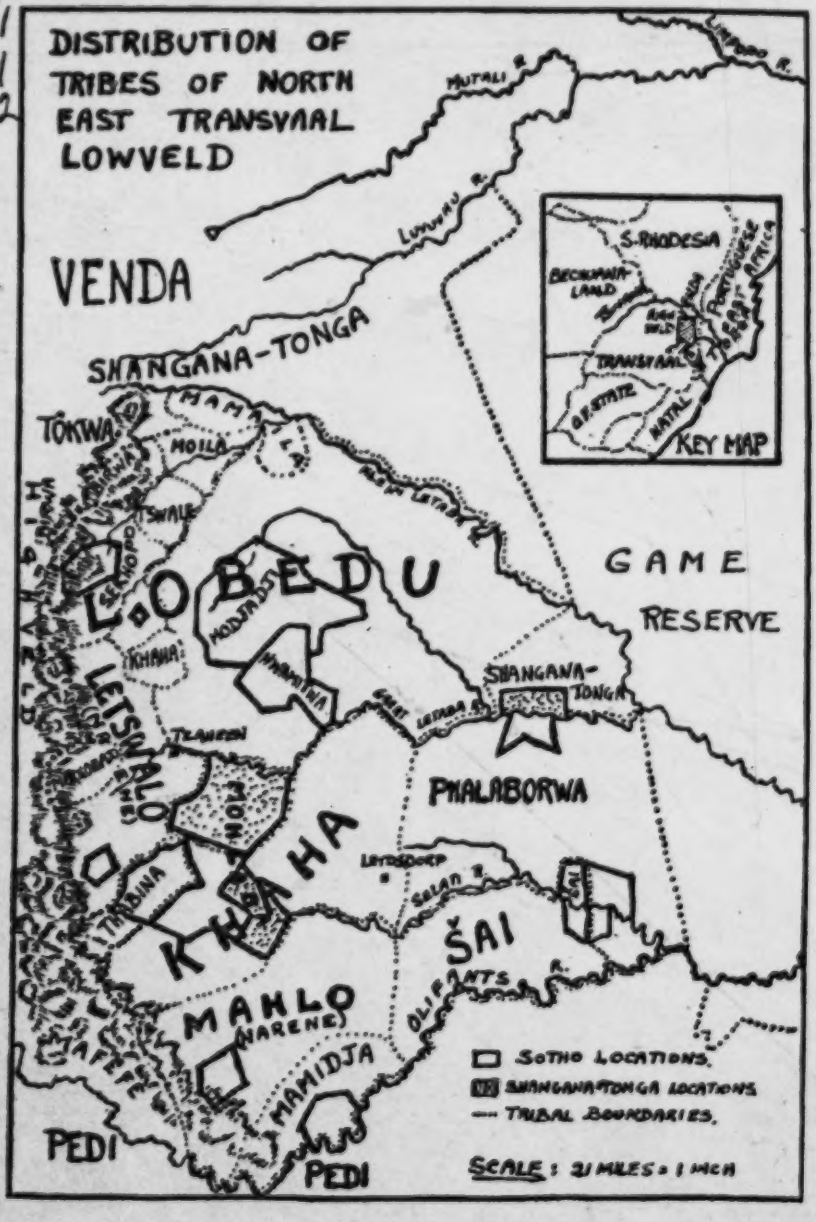

[p. 267]

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

881 a clever way that the men will be unable to untie them. Should one of the men succeed in undoing the knots, the boy will get a good thrashing during the meal, and so on.

The unhappy boys who are ill and cannot take part in the hunting trips must be on their guard ; when their comrades come back, much excited, they fall upon them with sticks and are allowed to beat them for not having come to help them.

[132] *Cold.* The months of June to August are the coldest of the South African winter and, during the night, the temperature falls to 41 Fah., or even lower. The boys lie naked in their shed,

Photo A. Junod.

Circumcised boys sitting near the fire of "the Elephant"

heads turned towards the central court, and suffer bitterly from the cold. They are allowed to light fires in the court, but not near their feet, and it is said that one of the greatest trials of the Ngoma is that the head is warm and the feet cold. Moreover, they must always lie on their backs. Shepherds keep watch during the night and beat them if they lie on their side. No blanket is allowed, only light grass covers. The soil, not being smeared, swarms with a kind of white worm which bites severely during the night. Ashes are poured on the ground to kill them, but this is of but little use. In certain lodges, when there is a pool in the neighbourhood, the boys are led early in the morning into

old Egyptian monuments (1). The last mbaya were seen in the 291
neighbourhood of Rikatla, when the war of 1894 broke out. In the Northern clans they were still commonly used by the generation which preceded Viguet, by the Nkunas who fled before Manukosi in 1835. (See Introduction to the *Grammaire Ronga*, page 17). The Kafirs of Cape Colony were still in 1903, at this stage of dress... or rather undress, and the Pedis of the Transvaal, with their *musindu* (a mere piece of skin protecting the genitalia), are not much in advance of the mbaya stage even now. This state of affairs arose in the first place from the fact that, as yet, the sentiment of modesty had hardly been conceived. It must not be supposed, however, that morals were the more depraved for that reason ; on the contrary, they were much purer, and innocence far more general, judging from the reports of those who remember those days.

But a second fact which allowed the Thongas to go about 132
without clothing, 'in puris naturalibus,' or nearly so, is the 291
warmth of the climate ; the temperature rarely drops below 44° Fahrenheit and frequently rises to 113° F., the annual mean near Lourenço Marques being about 74° F. according to our observations extending over seven years. It is thus easy to dispense with a coat in that part of the world, and it is by no means a rare occurrence to see children in the interior absolutely naked (2).

This very primitive article of attire has, however, been 177
supplanted by one designed by the Zulus, and worn by men up to 291

(1) The "phallic sheath" of the earliest Egyptian statuettes, which is also to be 177
noticed on the engravings of the XIXth dynasty, as belonging to African populations, is not of quite the same pattern as the Thonga mbaya or the Sutho musindu. However there is a real similarity between all these primitive costumes ; many of the customs of the Bantus of to-day seem to have existed amongst the early Egyptians, and this fact shows that the origin of Egyptian civilisation is partially African.

(2) The Chopi tribe, which is very industrious, dwelling in the neighbourhood of 439
the Thongas N. E. of the mouth of the Limpopo, has succeeded in obtaining a very superior kind of dress by beating the bark of the *mphama*, a kind of fig-tree which is wide-spread in the country, and which the Ba-Chopi even planted for this purpose. The pieces of bark become very soft and can be strung together. They are called *ntjala*. Several samples of this curious stuff can be seen in the Neuchâtel Museum. Thongas used to buy the article from their Chopi neighbours, but never knew how to manufacture it.

which has lost its strength that its "moya" has gone. It is also the 821
moya which gives their potency to medical charms. 822

Another word for wind is *mheho*. Strong winds are called *shidzedze*. When they break trees and damage the mealies they are attributed to baloyi, wizards, who fight during the night, quarelling over the cobs.

One frequently hears about *timheho ta mune*, the four winds. 821
They are called : *Ñwalungu*, the north wind, (a curious word 823
perhaps connected with Balungu, the White men ; see later on) ; 132
Nyingitimu (Ro.), or *Djonga* (Dj.), the South wind ; *Mupfanyaka*, the one coming from the plain of the black earth, the West Wind ; *Mfenya*, the sea breeze, coming from the East. Sailors who are great connoisseurs in this domain distinguish further the South Westerly wind, which they call *Mfenyakulu*, the great Mfenya. In Shiluvane, the West wind, which sometimes blows with great violence, coming down from the mountains of the Transvaal Plateau, is called *Burwa*, place of habitation of the Ba-Rwa (bu, locative prefix indicating a country). (Compare I. p. 18). Two other terms of the bu-ma class, also applied to East and West in all the clans, are : *Busha*, the spot where the sun rises (ku sha), the East, and *Bupeladambu*, the spot where the sun sets, the West. So there is no doubt that the Thongas possess the idea of the four cardinal points.

2) Native Geography.

The geographical notions of the tribe are, on the other hand, 823
very scanty. As a rule, they do not think it possible to know a 815
country, or place, where they have not travelled. Every one must compile his own geography. Hunters, and men engaged in commercial journeys, had some knowledge of the Spelonken (Bvesha), of Pietermaritzburg (Umgungundhlovu), of Kimberley (Dayiman), and now practically every grown-up Thonga has been to Johannesburg (Nkamben). But those who have always remained at home, women especially, show gross ignorance regarding their own country. I met some who were totally ignorant of the fact that the Nkomati River, which leaves the

reach heaven. The magician, seeing the thunderstorm approaching, climbs up the hill without any fear, blows in his flute: psee... psee... psee..., and shouts: "You! Heaven! Go further! I have nothing against you! I do not fight against you!" He may add in a threatening tone: "If you are sent by my enemies against me, I will cut you open with this knife of mine." The thunderstorm will then pass away! 821 791 789

This invocation to Heaven is curious, and we shall better understand it when studying the part played by Heaven in Thonga religion. Here I am merely considering the superstition as an attempt at explaining a natural phenomenon. And we may well ask: how is it possible for such absurdities to be believed, and firmly believed, by men who are not at all devoid of a sense of observation? The idea that lightning is a bird comes perhaps from the fact that its movements in falling from above resemble the evolutions of a bird in the air. After all the phenomenon is so sudden that this explanation could easily be accepted by the imagination of the savage. As regards the statements about the coagulated urine of the bird, I must admit that I was unable to understand on what they could be based, until I saw some samples of fulgurites found where lightning had struck the ground; the heat of the electric current vitrifies the sand, forming a kind of pipe, which enters the soil, where it ramifies to a certain depth. These fulgurites, though not perfectly answering to the description given by Native magicians, may have been the natural substratum upon which Bantu imagination built up all the other superstitions. 821

5) The problem of rain and the way Thongas deal with it.

All over the earth the question of rainfall is of primary importance, but this is especially the case in Subtropical Africa, even more than anywhere else. Rain may not fall during seven months, from April to October, and nobody worries about it. But if it fails in November and December, at the beginning of the rainy season, it is a dreadful misfortune, a calamity more serious 132 731 789

132 than any other. The life of every individual, and consequently
731 of the whole clan, is threatened. Famine will certainly follow,
789 as cereals can only be sown during these two months and famine means not only suffering and anguish, but often death, in a primitive tribe which is totally ignorant of trade with out-lying countries, and does not possess any means of conveyance for food bought in other lands. No wonder therefore that the imagination of the South African Native has invented ways and means of regularising the rainfall, and that rites, and charms, and all the powers of magic have been resorted to with a view to ensuring the precious rain to the tribe at the right time.

789 These methods may be classified in two categories : the rites which aim at removing the causes which are believed to prevent rain and the charms by which the rain is made to fall, irrespective of any preventing cause.

a) *The causes which prevent rainfall and the rites by which they are removed.*

821 The general view is that rain comes *from the gods* : "Psikwembu
789 psi nisa mpfula" — "the spirits of the ancestors cause rain to fall."
782 So, should the spring showers not come in due time, the first idea will be to offer a sacrifice to the ancestor-gods, especially if the bones consulted have revealed that the anger of the gods is the real
[533] cause. Men will go to the sacred wood where the ancestors have been buried, sing there an ancient mourning song (I suppose No. 15, page 286, is used for the purpose), and some of them will beat the graves with sticks. As regards the sacrifice, it consists of a black victim, or it may even be the offering of a living human being to the gods ; these rites will be described later on.

Or it may be that a certain individual, *a wizard*, endowed with magical power, or rather possessing enchanted drugs, prevents the rain from falling (a siba mpfula) through wickedness, or hatred of his countrymen. This is a rarer occurrence.

000 But the terrible calamity of drought is brought into direct

to the sacrifice of the black victim and to the mbelele rite of purification of the land, which are characteristic Thonga customs, it seems that another old Thonga way of obtaining rain was the *tjeba fishing* which I described on p. 86. When the whole clan had gone to catch the barbels in the almost dried up ponds, a thunderstorm would come and rain would fall. This was especially the case with certain small lakes such as Malangotiba in Nondwane, and that in Nsime near Morakwen, because battles had taken place on their borders and the enemies' corpses had been thrown into the water. So these lakes had become "great sacred woods" (ntimu). I suppose the spirits of the deceased, which were certainly "gods of bitterness," (see next chapter), were supposed to prevent the rain, and the *tjeba* either appeased them or made them powerless.

To sum up this very complicated subject, I would say rain rites belong to three different categories: 1) The religious rites connected with ancestor worship (black offering, visit to the sacred woods, old songs and sometimes offering of a human victim). 2) Rites of purification of the land, those which are derived from the mysterious relations established between the power of Heaven and abnormal births (mbelele, cleaning of wells by women accompanied by the mother of twins); these present some features of the ordinary passage rites, either because the fall of rain inaugurates a new season, or because drought is a calamity comparable with death and attended with contamination. 3) The magic rites, in which sea charms play the most important part.

Hail, shihangu (Dj.), mabyana, lit. little stones (Ro.), is frequent in Thongaland; according to Mboza, it is not the object of any peculiar superstitions. Amongst the Pedis the day on which it has fallen must be kept as a sabbath. It is taboo to till the fields on that day.

IV. *The Inorganic World.*

Water is called *mati*, a noun of the bu-ma class, the class of liquids, employed only in the plural form. Notice the suffix *ti*, which seems to show that, at a period when mythological

PRELIMINARY CHAPTER

THE THONGA TRIBE

I. *Geographical delimitation of the tribe.*

101 The Thonga tribe is composed of a group of Bantu peoples
131 settled on the eastern coast of South Africa, extending from the neighbourhood of St Lucia Bay (28° Lat. S.) on the Natal Coast up to the Sabie River on the north (1). Thongas are to be found therefore in four of the present South African states : in Natal (Amatongaland), the Transvaal (Leydenbourg, Zoutpansberg and Waterberg districts), in Rhodesia, and chiefly in Portuguese East Africa (Lourenço Marques, Inhambane and Mozambique Company districts). The Thongas border on the Zulus and the Swazis southwards ; westwards on the Ba-Mbayi, Ba-Lauti and other Suto-Pedi clans in the Transvaal ; northwards on the Vendas and Ba-Nyai in the Zoutpansberg and Rhodesia, and on the Ndjaos near the Sabie ; and eastwards on the Thongas near Inhambane and on the Ba-Chopi, north of the mouth of the Limpopo.

101 The tribe comprises a certain number of clans. These clans form six groups, which speak the various dialects of the Thonga language.

133 (1) There are two rivers called Sabie in the Thonga Territory ; one is the Sabie of the South, which flows in the Leydenburg district and joins the Nkomati not far from Kil. 53 of the Lourenço Marques-Transvaal line, and the other, that here referred to, which comes from Rhodesia and flows into the Indian Ocean not far from the 21° lat. South.

is favourable to the growth of certain plants. But by the side of 134
the sand *(pfunye)* and the hillocks *(shitshunga)*, here and there, is 137
found a sort of black earth, containing a large proportion of vegetable detritus, in which maize, sweet potatoes, sugar cane, etc. thrive splendidly. *Nyaka* is the name given to this black soil : it is found at the foot of the hills which run from Lourenco Marques in the direction of Morakwen, and extends for a distance of some fourteen to eighteen miles. Several small springs rise at the bottom of this gentle slope, and tend to form a curious marsh, covered with beautiful tropical growths, of which gigantic palms *(mimale)* are the most striking. These are found in forests [136]
covering hundreds of acres, with an impenetrable undergrowth of ferns, enormous rushes and evergreen shrubs : magnificent palm groves, where apes, wild boars and large storks find a safe retreat.

Between this marsh of primitive mud and the hills extends 133
the arable tract of nyaka. There the fields are lovely ; maize can 134
be grown all the year round. In other places the nyaka is parched and dry, as in the valley of the Lower Nkomati, from the point where it leaves the Lebombo hills to the elbow of Magule. Here the annual overflow of the river deposits on the low-lying plains a fertilising slime, as is the case in Egypt. It is strange to see, during the winter, tufts of grass which were carried down by the stream, months before, caught in the branches of the trees and suspended some 15 to 20 feet above the ground!

The sand of the coast belt is replaced in the hinterland of Matjolo, in the low level between the Nkomati and the Bila plain, etc. by another kind of soil called *hundjusi*. This is a reddish earth containing much sand, but much finer and more fertile than the sand proper.

On leaving the coast belt we reach the Lebombo and Longwe hills, which are composed of a hard reddish porphyraceous stone. Further West, a broad plain extends from the Lebombo to the Drakensberg Mountains, in some places consisting of a greyish or brownish clay, in other regions very dry and stony. The foot

and plural of Cl. II. When a noun begins with *shi*, it belongs to Cl. shi-pai, with *li* to Cl. li-tin, with *du* to the Class be-ma. As a rule nouns will be given in their singular form.

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Phot. P. Berthoud.

Mimale palmtrees in the marshes near Lourenço Marques.

of the Drakensberg is very fertile, as water flows abundantly from the mountain gorges. Some rivers, however, on reaching the Low Country, dry up entirely, at least during the winter time.

193 conceptions were still current, it was considered as a feminine principle. This supposition is confirmed by the fact that *rivers* (nambu. pl. milambu) also have the feminine termination (I. p. 36, Note). I find the following names of rivers ending in *ti* : Nkomati, Nfoloti (Umbelosi), Ñwebeti, Shalati, Timbati ; the termination *etsi, edzi*, may be another form of the same suffix (Ñwanetsi, Ntsatsi, Shingwedzi, Madzi, etc.). A very curious fact, which shows the same conception, is that the river which crosses the territory of the Tembe clan is called Mi-Tembe. I first thought this to be a plural form of the mu-mi class ; but it is more natural to explain this *mi* as the feminine prefix (1) which means daughter of, as Migogwe, etc. (I. p. 352).

823 *Crossing rivers* is subject to a curious rule. It is taboo to bathe
784 in the stream before crossing it ; taboo also for the traveller to
824 cook his food on the hither side of the river ; he must first cross,
789 and then take his meal. This rule is still universally observed by
133 waggon trekkers in South Africa. In this case there may be a reason for the taboo : South African rivers are apt to be swollen in a moment by sudden rain, and the crossing made impossible for days : the traveller therefore makes haste ; he will have plenty of time to stop on the other side! When the river is dangerous, a Thonga will first chew (phora) a little of his *ndjao*, the root of a juncus, which is supposed to increase courage and to ensure victory over hostile influences. (See Part VI.)

823 Some *Lakes* and *Rivers* are believed to be inhabited by spirits,
769 but not in the ordinary fetichistic way, in which a special spiritual
776 being is incorporated with the natural object ; these spirits are
782 *psikwembo*, spirits of the deceased ancestors of the owners of the land, and are propitiated by their descendants. Should another clan have invaded the territory where these lakes are, and crocodiles threaten the fishermen, (p. 88) they will call some one belonging to the clan of the old possessors of the country and ask him to make an offering to appease *his* gods. This is the ordinary course, and the more closely we search the more completely these lake and

(1) A number of river names have the prefix *li* or *ri*, especially those which are of Sutho origin : Lebvubye. Ritabi (Letaba) Ritshindjele (Letsitele), Rimbelule (Lepalula, Olifant). Others begin with *ñwa, ma*, and may be ancient names of men.

FOURTH PART

AGRICULTURAL AND INDUSTRIAL LIFE

In the first volume of this work, I have tried to give a description of the Social Life of the tribe by depicting its customs in relation to the individual, communal and national life. In the second volume I shall consider its Mental and Spiritual Life, its Literature and Music, its Religion, Magic and Morality. The Agricultural and Industrial Life will afford a transition from the one to the other of these subjects; this belongs primarily to the social manifestations of the tribal life, but the imagination displayed by sculptors, weavers, potters (or rather "potteresses") brings it also into relation with the mental. I do not however pretend to draw a sharp line of distinction between these two domains, as the mental life is reflected in the social customs, and the social idea strongly dominates the mental life of the tribe. 121

CHAPTER I

AGRICULTURAL LIFE

A. THE LAND AND THE NATIVE SYSTEM OF LAND TENURE.

1. *The nature of the soil.*

Considering that the Thongas dwell in the South of Africa, a part of the world which is generally rocky and sterile, Nature 134

134 has favoured them to no inconsiderable extent as regards the soil of their country.

The coast belt is an ancient ocean-bed, and consists of dunes of white or reddish-brown sand, extending from the South-West to the North-East; between these dunes are basin-shaped hollows, at the bottom of which are ponds of stagnant water.

The pond in the hollow.

The hillocks rarely reach a greater elevation than 150 feet above the sea level (120 feet above the level of the lakes). The sand on the dunes is naturally quite unproductive, but the vegetation which has managed to develop there during past centuries, and the forests, which are fairly dense in certain spots, have gradually deposited a thin layer of soil, and this, when mixed with the sand and watered in due season by the rains, is capable of producing abundant crops. The hollows *(ndlongwa, mu-ewi)* (1) are hardly more fertile than the dunes, although their continuous moisture

(1) For linguists, I indicate the class to which Native nouns belong. See the explanation of classes or genders, Part V. Chap. I. *Mu-ewi* are the prefixes of the singular

is favourable to the growth of certain plants. But by the side of 134
the sand *(tsfunye)* and the hillocks *(shitshunga)*, here and there, is 137
found a sort of black earth, containing a large proportion of vegetable detritus, in which maize, sweet potatoes, sugar cane, etc. thrive splendidly. *Nyaka* is the name given to this black soil : it is found at the foot of the hills which run from Lourenco Marques in the direction of Morakwen, and extends for a distance of some fourteen to eighteen miles. Several small springs rise at the bottom of this gentle slope, and tend to form a curious marsh, covered with beautiful tropical growths, of which gigantic palms *(mimale)* are the most striking. These are found in forests [136]
covering hundreds of acres, with an impenetrable undergrowth of ferns, enormous rushes and evergreen shrubs : magnificent palm groves, where apes, wild boars and large storks find a safe retreat.

Between this marsh of primitive mud and the hills extends 133
the arable tract of nyaka. There the fields are lovely ; maize can 134
be grown all the year round. In other places the nyaka is parched and dry, as in the valley of the Lower Nkomati, from the point where it leaves the Lebombo hills to the elbow of Magule. Here the annual overflow of the river deposits on the low-lying plains a fertilising slime, as is the case in Egypt. It is strange to see, during the winter, tufts of grass which were carried down by the stream, months before, caught in the branches of the trees and suspended some 15 to 20 feet above the ground!

The sand of the coast belt is replaced in the hinterland of Matjolo, in the low level between the Nkomati and the Bila plain, etc. by another kind of soil called *hundjini*. This is a reddish earth containing much sand, but much finer and more fertile than the sand proper.

On leaving the coast belt we reach the Lebombo and Longwe hills, which are composed of a hard reddish porphyraceous stone. Further West, a broad plain extends from the Lebombo to the Drakensberg Mountains, in some places consisting of a greyish or brownish clay, in other regions very dry and stony. The foot

and plural of Cl. 8. Where a noun begins with *shi*, it belongs to Cl. shi-pi, with *B* to Cl. *Ki-bi*, with *ba* to the Class ba-ma. As a rule nouns will be given in their singular form.

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Phot. P. Berthoud.

Miscale palmtrees in the marshes near Lourenço Marques.

of the Drakensberg is very fertile, as water flows abundantly from the mountain gorges. Some rivers, however, on reaching the Low Country, dry up entirely, at least during the winter time.

The soil of Spelonken is of a similar nature and very well watered. So the Thongas, who settled in Zoutpansberg, found there a soil which was, in certain respects, more favourable to agriculture than their sandy dunes or their hundjusi on the Coast. 134

Such is Mother Earth for the Thongas. They call it *misaba*, the plural form of nsaba, grains of sand. This word plainly shows that they come from sandy regions. For them the earth is a collection of grains of sand.

II. *Native System of Land Tenure.*

The Native population, taken as a whole, is a very sparse one. Let us consider the Ronga territory, for instance: 100,000 in a territory which may be estimated at 5000 square miles ; this gives a population of only 20 per square mile. The country is, however, very unequally peopled. Natives will only settle in spots where water is found, and, the sand dunes to which I have previously referred being exceedingly dry, they mainly inhabit the slopes of the hills and the immediate neighbourhood of the marshes already described. 162 311 361

To confine myself, amongst the Rongas, to the region in which I have principally travelled, that is to say the neighbourhood of Rikatla, the villages of Nondwane, which extend along a somewhat narrow strip (800 yards wide by 5 miles in length), stretching from the border of Mabota as far as Morakwen, contained in 1880 a population which I should estimate at about 1100 (1). This gives over 350 inhabitants to the square mile. Taking everything therefore into consideration, it may be confidently asserted that the country can easily support its population ; in fact it could support one three or four times as large.

It is important to bear all these circumstances in mind in order to be able properly to appreciate the Ba-Ronga laws relating to landed property. 423

(1) This population has very much diminished since the Ronga Portuguese war in 1894.

C. UTENSILS.

Nature, which has provided the Ba-Ronga with skins of animals for clothing, and with poles, reeds, grasses and fibrous barks for their habitations, has also favoured them with several exceedingly useful trees of which they have not been slow to take advantage. Of these the most valuable is the *milala* palm, *(Hyphaene crinita)* used for nearly all basket-work ; next comes the *nkuhlu (Trichilia emetica)* whose wood is particularly serviceable for all descriptions of carving. She has also deposited in their plains beds of clay, of more or less desirable quality, which they use for making pottery. I shall begin with the latter. 824

I. *Pottery.*

An excellent clay is to be found at Shibindji, in the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques, a district close to Morakwen, and the people of this place — they are the same who abstain from eating any animal liver (I. p. 364) — are the potters who supply the whole country. They are said to be the masters (benyi) of the art. But clay is found in many other places, in Shifukundju, Mpatshiki, etc. It is said that the clay of Muweri, near Lemon Island, on the Lower Nkomati, is even better than that of Shibindji. So the art of the potter does not belong to a single family, and is not hereditary. Any one may learn it and practise it. Pottery amongst the Thongas is essentially woman's province. Is this because earthenware utensils are principally used in the kitchen, where woman's sway is paramount and indisputed? Possibly ; in any case it is so. 134 323 323

Let us suppose then that the mother of a family wishes to renew, or to add to her stocks of pots, large and small. She starts out for the marshes, picks up in the well-known hollow several clods of clay and returns to the village carrying them on her head. No one salutes her : everyone pretends not to see her, 323 777

"You see! Stones also grow!" Another Native geologist, who had heard the European story of creation, coming from the Coast, a country of sand and sand only, and visiting the Drakensberg Mountains near Shiluvane, was amazed by the enormous cliffs of the Mamotswiri and gave vent to the following reflection : "No wonder we have no stones in our sandy land. When God created the earth, he used them all to build these mountains!" 823

Fossils are rare in Thongaland, where sand covers almost the whole country. There is however in the southern part of the Maputju region an outcrop of cretaceous rock which belongs to the Gault and which contains ammonites, Nautillus etc. Natives call them *nsongo stones* and are very much afraid of them. They say that "these stones with ribs" can walk. They bring bad luck (singita). Should a child pick up one of these fossils and bring it into the village, he will fall ill ; he must therefore undergo a special treatment. 136 823 777

Crystal greatly pleases the Natives. It is rare in South Africa. When magicians can secure a white or a black crystal they generally wear it round their necks together with the claws, or teeth, of wild animals, or with their little skin bags which they use as amulets. For this reason I once had the good fortune to be able to exchange a crystal I had brought from Switzerland for one of these charms! 135 301

The *earth* (misaba) is also a great and important thing. First because it is identified with the people dwelling on it, with the clan. *Tiko*, the land, means both the soil and the people. Further than this, the earth is the chief (I. p. 382) ; hence many laws : e. g. the tusk of the elephant which fell on the earth when the beast was killed, belongs to the chief, etc. (p. 57). The most solemn oath is that which is taken with earth (ku funga u hahla hi misaba). Should a man be accused of stealing or of being a wizard, if he puts a little earth in his mouth, says *tsu*, and declares : "I do not know anything about it," those who care for his safety will look for a medicine-man to treat him : it is a *mondjo* (a magical method of divination. See Chapter III). The same thing is done when an oath has been taken by sucking a piece of iron. 823 695 787

A curious superstition regarding the earth is this : after moving from one country to another, you should for some days mix with 823

your food a little of the earth of the country which you have left ; 823
this will provide the transition between the old and the new domicile (See I. p. 49).

Metals known to the tribe before the coming of the Whites 135
were few. (See page 137). *Nhumbu* or *nsimbi*, iron, *nsuku*, copper, and *ntchopfa*, a name applied to all white metals (tin, silver, etc.) are the only Native names for metals. There is no word for gold.

V. *The Vegetable World. Thonga Botany.*

While Bantus possess a very limited knowledge of Astronomy, 815
Geography, Mineralogy, etc., while their ideas in these domains are in no way deserving of the name of Science, they are much more advanced as regards Plants. Here it is quite allowable to speak of a Science, a rudimentary Science, no doubt, but a true, precise knowledge which has been transmitted from past ages and which denotes a real power of observation.

The Delagoa flora is not very rich. I have succeeded in 137
collecting between four and five hundred different kinds in a 124
herbarium which I sent many years ago for classification to the 815
Herbier Boissier in Geneva. In February 1893, before forwarding the second lot of exsiccata, I gathered together some Natives of Rikatla in the hut which I had pompously styled a Museum and, having promised them 1 s. each if they consented to remain till the end of the examination, I submitted the dried plants to them, asking them their names, their uses, etc. The result of the inquiry was marvellous. My areopagus did not seem to be a very choice one : an old woman, as dry as my exsiccata and smoking her pipe, another with ochre-smeared hair, a young one, with a baby on her shoulder, an elderly one-eyed man named Hamunde, my milkman. After them came the young chief Muzila, walking 815
slowly, swinging the tails of his belt. This chief, notwithstanding 756
his social rank, showed gross ignorance of botany ; but some of the 824
others knew the name of almost every plant ; had I had a *ñanga*, a medicine-man, amongst them, I am sure I should have obtained

hlulawumbe grows, (Hlulawumbe means to overcome others) (1). 000

Offerings of the Medicine-men. The Native physicians are, as 782
has already been pointed out, very pious. Their art having been 756
handed down to them by their forefathers, as a family secret, they 484
always implore the blessing of their ancestors on their various treatments. This is done by true offerings, performed with the *tsu* and a liturgical prayer. In Vol. I. p. 55, the religious ceremony which accompanies the monthly vapour bath administered to infants was described ; a religious rite takes place also in the hondola of the weaning (I. p. 59). These are typical cases. Another offering of the same nature is made on behalf of the man who is about to *start out on a journey*, for instance to Johannesburg. The doctor, having prepared the protective drugs in a pot, brings them to the entrance of the traveller's hut, and calls his "patient,"; then, taking a little of the decoction in his mouth, he spits it at him with the sacramental *tsu*, and prays in the following words :

Akhwari! Abusayi! Ndji hlaya psolepso! Khongelwa a nga dlawi. Ku dlawa phalaburena! Khombo a dji suke, dji ya ka Shiburi, dji ya ka Nkhabelane! A a fambe psinene, a kandjetela balala, mitwa mi yetlele, ku yetlela ni tindjau. A a ye nwa mati ya kone, ma mu tjhabisa hi djo tluka ledji.

Gently! Smoothly! I say so. Death does not come to him for whom prayer is made ; death only comes to him who trusts in his own strength! Let misfortune depart, let it go to Shiburi, and Nkhabelane (2). Let him travel safely ; let him trample on his enemies ; let thorns sleep, let lions sleep ; let him drink water wherever he goes, and let that water make him happy, by the strength of this leaf (viz., of my medicinal herbs).

(1) I may mention here another religious ceremony which is also called a mhamba, 135
though I am not sure that a regular prayer is offered. It is the *Offering of a Stone.* 823
Stones are almost totally lacking in Thongaland. But on the Swazi border, in the 782
Lebombo hills, there are porphyreous rocks, and when a Native passes a certain spot, 484
on the Estatuen road, he picks up a stone, spits on it, touches both his knees with it and throws it on a heap made of the stones thrown by those who passed before him. This heap of stones is called *shittlane.* This rite is said to be performed in order to call a blessing on the journey ; thus the traveller will find a favourable reception in the villages and be given plenty of food. This custom is wide-spread in many other tribes.

(2) The extremity of the land (Comp. I, p. 55).

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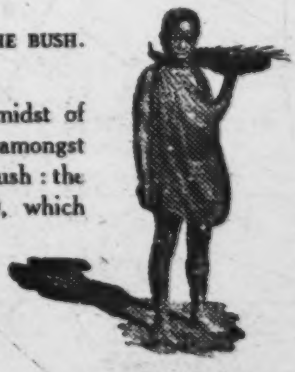
of a little bit of wood, and when the bird puts its beak into the bait, it is caught round the neck by the string. On the borders of the lake of Rikatla, boys used to catch even big birds with these traps. They set many kinds of snares. One is a cage made of sticks of palm marrows which shuts automatically when a bird enters and eats the grain by which it has been attracted. They sometimes build two walls of sticks planted in the soil and converging to the same point, where they reach a little door provided with the trap. Hares are sometimes caught in this way. They follow the wall, and when they go through the door, they tread on a hurdle which is connected with a bent rod : the rod springs back and the hare is caught.

4) Learning the science of the bush.



Phot. G. Liengme.
A Thonga boy.

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This life in the velt, always in the midst of Nature, develops the power of observation amongst the boys. They know everything in the bush : the big Psyche caterpillar (Eumeta cervina), which hangs from the nembe-nembe shrub (Cassia petersiana) like a little bundle of sticks, and which they call *mahambanindlwane*, "the one who walks with his house;" the big Carabid beetle which appears with the first rain, the Anthia alveolata, marked with large hollows on the elytra and which is therefore named "the son of the smallpox." Indeed I found in Rikatla a boy who knew that a certain white cocoon found on the branches of the nkanye tree (Sclerocarya caffra) gives birth to the splendid green Queen Moth (Argema Mimosae).

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Having collected beetles and butterflies extensively for years, I have had an opportunity of recognizing the power of observation of these boys, who were my best hunters! Of course they particularly appreciate things edible... especially the *shitambela*, a big Bupresta beetle which they roast and suck.

In their country there

524 are big nasty yellow-brown hornets (a kind of Belonogaster)
136 which build more or less circular nests, sometimes attaining to the size of a man's head. On a certain day the boys decide to make war on these enemies. They make shields with the leaves of the *nala* palm tree which they plait together.

524 They cut down branches, which they wave to protect themselves, and one of them goes and strikes a heavy blow on the wasps' nest! The irritated insects rush out on their assailants and sting them. The boys try to kill the wasps with their sticks or to crush them when they light on them. Sometimes, overcome by the pain, they run away; sometimes, resisting to the last, they kill and exterminate their winged enemies.

Besides this there are also *big battles between the shepherds* of the different flocks. The shepherds amuse themselves by taking one another's cattle. Those who are the strongest bring the stolen herd triumphantly back to the neighbourhood of their village, but they would never let it enter the kraal. The vanquished call to their help their elder brothers, who come to recover their property and, if they can, give the thieves a sound thrashing!

578 Insults and fights are frequent between the clans. The boys
962 of Mpfumu call out to those of Matjolo: "Forest gadders! Eaters
991 of snails and boas, of lizards and tortoises" (all of which are questionable food!) (In Ronga: Balala! Badi ba tihumba ni tinhlaru ni makhwahle ni tinfutchu). Those of Matjolo answer them: "Crowd of women that you are, clad in cotton material!" (Babasati! Matchimbamphela!), in reference to the fact that the inhabitants of Mpfumu, living near the town, some time ago replaced the belt of skins worn by the savages by a piece of cotton tied to the waist and hanging down to the knee (ladula).

855 The custom of frightening children with imaginary beasts is
857 wide spread amongst the Thongas. The bogey man is called
538 *Shingomu-Ngomu* or else *Shikunkununu*, and by this very expressive
761 word they designate a huge and mighty being who walks, swaying his big body from right to left, with a sound like *ngomu-ngomu*. The ogre is *Shitukulumukumba*, a word coming originally from the Zulus, which corresponds to the Ronga *Ñwambilutimhokora*, that is to say: "the one who has scales on the heart." He eats

857 the stick and gives it to the girl! Or if the mother says : "I found
524 the baby in the banana grove," the father will cut a banana stem,
864 take the heart of the bulb and beat it so as to separate the fibres, which will then represent the hair of the baby ; the girl will then play with it for a time.

Girls, like boys, have also special games.

524 First the *ntshengu -ntshengu*. A big girl takes the part of the mother and all the little ones hide behind her. She stretches out her arms to protect them against another girl, who is the thief and tries to take the children away. Notwithstanding the mother's efforts, all are taken one by one, and the stealing is done whilst they sing :

> Alack ! Mother ! Protect us, protect us !

The mother answers :

> All my children are taken, all will soon be taken,
> All will soon be taken, there, behind me.
>
> (Yo! Mamana! ntshengu-ntshengu! ba bela hi shiruba .

The capture being effected, all the children sit down in a row and cross their legs. To their right and left they dig small holes which represent wells or pots. The mother passes. She stretches out their legs and they allow her do this. Then she pretends to drink water from their pitchers and says: "My child, where did you find this water ?" The child says : "Oh! I have drawn it over there, at the spring, under the banana trees, in the cool shade." Then comes the girl who plays the part of the thief. She tries to stretch out their legs. But the children refuse ; they stiffen themselves. She tastes their water and enquires where they brought it from. "I drew it in a nasty hole full of frogs, mud and dirt." They add all the different remarks they can think of.

524 As the boys sing to the transport oxen when a wagon comes
136 along the road, so the girls address a kind of *incantation to a big*
333 *grey lizard* called *galagala*, which can turn its head blue at will. The lizard is found lying on a branch, warming itself in the rays

524 of the sun. One girl approaches it, and claps her hands under its nose, singing in a monotonous tone :

> Gala-gala, hana-hana nhloko !
> Big lizard, lift up, lift up your head !

It seems that the lizard is so fascinated by the song that he stretches his neck and swings his head to and fro during the whole time that the girl claps her hands.

524 136 226 To the *crabs*, which are very numerous in the slime on the sea-shore, and have only one claw, coloured green, violet or enamel blue, they sing :

> Ba ka mphembemuiwe, tlakula silawuto !
> Come along, you animals with only one claw ! Lift it up and bring it down again.

The little girls who go hunting crabs as a condiment for their food assured me that, on hearing this song, the crustaceans do come out of their holes, and that the harvest is then a large one.

When an *owl*, mistaking the time, comes out of her hiding place at noon, she is received with applause, and they sing to her :

> Shikotana, gaulela fole !
> Owl ! flap your wings ! You will find tobacco !

524 Another girls' game, which is wide-spread, and in which the young Thongas acquire great proficiency is called : *ku tha buhlolo*. They take a string tied at both ends so as to form a large ring, and make all kinds of complicated figures by twisting it with their fingers and even with their lips. I have made a drawing of some of them. Girls compete together and try to surpass each other in inventing new figures. They teach each other this *buhlolo*.

Another old game, which is found under various forms in a great number of countries, is the *mathakisana*, knuckle bones. Girls gather stones of the nkanye fruit (tinfula), dig a hole, and put them into it. One of them takes a kind of ball (shigungu), perhaps a small sala fruit or any other fruit. She throws it in the air and, in the meantime, takes out of the hole four or five stones and puts them back, leaving only one outside. This stone is then

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and plural of Cl. II. When a noun begins with *shi*, it belongs to Cl. shi-pu, with *li* to Cl. li-ma, with *du* to the Class bo-ma. As a rule nouns will be given in their singular form.

231 Native goats are very small and frequently attacked by a disease called ndlwabane which decimates whole herds. They are not tended with sufficient care, although a special hut (mhala) is sometimes built to protect them from the rain.

Goats are killed by piercing the heart : this is at any rate the ritual way of killing them (I. p. 158). The officiating person stands on the right of the animal and stabs it in the left side, holding the left leg. The animal suffers acutely ; goats are however often slaughtered by cutting the throat, not from any feelings of compassion, but in order to prevent them crying too long, as "this would surely bring many people on the spot and you would have to share the meat with them!" (Mboza.)

231 782 If the ox plays an important part in *social life*, the goat seems to be specially reserved for sacrifices, that is to say for *religious usages*. This ritual use entitles us to suppose that, as millet seems to be the oldest cereal, the goat is the most ancient domestic animal amongst the Thongas, and, no doubt, amongst all South African Bantus.

The gall bladder, the astragalus, the half digested grass found in its intestines, strips made of its skin, all play a special part in the ceremonies and superstitious practices of the tribe previously mentioned. The gall bladder (nyongwa) is fixed in the hair of the person in whose honour the goat was slaughtered. The astragalus (nhlolo) is fastened to the wrist, the ankle or the waist as a means of protection. The *psanyi* (half digested grass) is taken from the shihlakahla stomach, and is used in connection with the invocation of the gods in the sacrifices. (See Part VI, Compare also I. p. 111, 160-162.)

136 231 643 782 *Sheep*, hamba, yin-tin, (Ro.) nyimpfu, yin-tin, (Dj.) are scarce in our tribe, and are mostly without wool. The wool sheep is called *shitlapu*. It is not taboo for subjects to possess sheep, but this animal is connected in a special manner with the chiefs. Its astragalus designates royal personages in the set of divinatory bones. It is used in the national sacrifices, those offered to the chief's ancestors at the capital. (See Part VI.) Let us remind the reader that its skin is used to carry a child in case of *bovumba* (I. p. 194).

The *pig*, as previously mentioned, is a new comer in the Bantu village. Its name, *nguluve*, means the wild pig. Most villages, however, possess one or two. They are never slaughtered in connection with sacrifices. 231

Poultry (tihuku) is the most common of all live stock. Not a village is without its fowl house (shihahlu) ; these are generally fashioned like a small hut and perched on piles to protect the poultry during the night from snakes. (See illustration I. p. 312.) 235 343

When a hen and her brood of young chickens have to be cared for, a much smaller hut is built on the ground, but the utmost precaution is taken to keep it almost hermetically sealed, as the mhamba (a long green snake, very venomous) and the shipyahla (Echnida arietans, a large viper resembling the puff-adder) do great execution amongst fowls! As cows are not bred for milking purposes, neither are chickens raised for the sake of their eggs. In fact Thongas consider it a sheer waste to eat eggs and always allow the hens to hatch them out. Hens are wilder than they are with us and often make their nests in the open country, returning some fine day with a flourishing young family. The breed is of very small size and the eggs are tiny : it would require at least two to equal the weight of one ordinary egg such as are for sale in the European markets ; it is therefore evidently more advantageous to hatch eggs than to eat them! If, by any chance, a hen dies on the nest from the bite of a snake, the Natives will willingly devour the half hatched or three quarters addled eggs ; the more developed the chicken, the greater their appreciation of the delicacy, for, says the Thonga, "i nyama!" — "this is meat!" Fowls are extensively used as timhamba, viz., sacrificial offerings. The throat is cut ; a little of the down plucked off the neck is dipped into the blood, and brought close to the mouth for the performance of the [illegible] rite, one of the smaller feathers of the wing (shihluwa), one of the claws, and the beak are tied together and fastened to the wrist, ankle or neck of the person for the sake of whom the offering has been made. (Part VI.) [136] 235 262 235 782

Thongas assert that they have always possessed fowls. "They 235

mistic and social rites connected with hunting constitute an elaborate system which forms a most interesting study. 224

The interest of this study has been further enhanced by the discoveries made in the caves of France and Spain regarding our forefathers of the paleolithic age. They also were great hunters, and the rites of the Bantus, who are to-day in a state of civilisation very similar to that of the Mousterian and Magdalenian periods, are capable of throwing much light on tne customs of primitive humanity. The cave-dwellers of those remote times used to depict wild animals on the walls of their caves and on some of these artistically drawn figures may be noticed characteristic spots; these would seem to represent the wounds which the hunters intended to inflict on the animals in the course of their next hunting expeditions. This was probably a magical method of achieving success in the chase. Bantus of the present day do not possess this wonderful pictorial art. Their magic is different, but it rests on the same principles, and who can say whether the description of their hunting rites may not help us to understand some of the discoveries already made or still to be made in the deposits of prehistoric times, just as the position given by them to the corpse in the grave explains why in the Mousterian skeletons the legs and forearms are bent towards the sternum.

I. *Big Game Hunting.*

Big game is plentiful in Thonga territory, more so of course in the remote places (mananga) than in the populated areas. 136 224
Elephants are still found in the desert, in Hlengweland and Maputju; hippopotami swarm in the Nkomati and Limpopo; antelopes of subtropical Africa still abound north of Khosen and in the low plains of Zoutpansberg: the sable antelope, (mhalamhala), water buck (mhetlwa), koedoe, gnu (hongonyi), reed buck (nhlangu), etc. The duiker (mhunti) is met with everywhere. The smaller antelopes are the shipeya, mangulwe, etc. The giraffe (nhutlwa) and the buffalo (nyari) are still found north of Khosen, but are decreasing in number.

224 they come to him," For this reason hunters strongly assert that should
775 he neglect to perform the rite he will have no success in his future
783 hunting expeditions. A third aim, at least in the case of hippopotamus-
825 hunting, is to overcome the charms of the wizards who ride upon them.

When studying these old hunting rites I had the impression of living for some hours in close contact with primitive humanity, at a time when man, owing to the elementary character of the weapons at his disposal, was almost on the same level as the wild beast and was obliged to display an enormous amount of courage, skill and endurance in order to assert his domination over the animal world and to make it serve his purposes. Since the discovery of gun powder and modern weapons a new era has set in for the hunter. Did not old Viguet assert that now, when an elephant is killed by means of a gun, the nuru is no longer to be feared? Hunting has become for the Bantu of to-day an amusing sport, more profitable indeed but by no means so interesting!

II. *Psinyama-nyamana. The flesh of small animals.*

136 This word which comes from the well-known Bantu word
262 nyama, meat, is a triple diminutive, obtained by the reduplication of the stem, the prefix *psi*, and the suffix *ana*. It means all kinds of food derived from animals of small size, of which the Thongas are very fond.

Anything in any way resembling meat is welcome to them. Amongst Mammalia they specially enjoy certain kinds of rodents, not the domestic rats, but field mice called maphephe and mabuti which boys catch in their traps. Civet cats (nsimba, yi-tin) and wild cats (goya, dji-ma) are not frequently seen near the villages.

136 As regards birds, they eat them all with the few exceptions
222 which I shall shortly mention, from the tiniest sparrow to ducks
262 and Guinea fowls, which they manage to snare. They have no aversion to the lower types of animal : they collect the *matomane*, large caterpillars belonging to a species of Saturnidae called Cirina similis (Dist), which are found in families on the nkanye tree, during October. By the exercise of a gentle pressure on the hideous creatures, the inside is squeezed out, and the rest is thrown

into a saucepan and boiled, resulting in an indescribable broth of a 136
blackish colour. To see it is quite sufficient... and they enjoy it! 222
Several other kinds of Saturnidae also figure at their feasts : the 262
matomane of nyamari (Bunaea Caffraria), others of a brick red colour (Melanocera Menippe), those of the nhlangula shrub (Gonimbrasia Zambezina), etc. When the cooks go out to split [372]
the trunks of old half decayed nkanye trees, from which they get their kindling wood, they are most careful to put on one side the big white larvae of two large Cerambycidae coleoptera (Mallodon Downesii and Plocoederus frenatus, etc.). These enormous white worms (shipungu) will be fried in their own fat, and served up as a tit-bit for the ladies on their return to the village.

The insect world does great injury to the gardens through the agency of its winged members, the *locusts*, and Natives avenge themselves by eating them wholesale. When a swarm of these destructive creatures has alighted somewhere in the evening, and is benumbed by the cool air of the night, the villagers go and collect them in bags or baskets in great quantities. The heads, wings and legs are torn off and the bodies roasted on the embers, or boiled and used as seasoning. When plentiful, the locusts are dried and crushed in mortars to make a much appreciated flour. To our taste, locusts are simply nauseating.

Another favourite dish, the secret of which the Nkunas learnt from their Pedi neighbours, is provided by *the winged imagos of white ants*. At Christmas time, these insects emerge by thousands from the ant-hills of that region. Some are of small size ; the boys introduce grasses, smeared with glue, into the holes from which they come and catch a large number of them by this kind of fishing. They eat the head, which can be heard cracking between their teeth, and throw the bodies into a calabash to season the evening meal. But there is a larger kind which is even more appreciated. The body is whitish, as large as an almond. A hole in the ant-hill, three feet wide by two feet deep, is dug at the spot where the insects are most likely to emerge. An old pot is placed in the clay of the ant-hill at the bottom of this hole. The hole itself is covered with green branches. These curious winged termites, as soon as they have emerged from their retreat,

136 try to fly; but they soon fall to the ground and you see them
222 running towards each other and shedding their slender transparent
262 wings, so that they remain on the spot, like worms, creeping slowly along, unable to defend themselves, an easy prey for the birds and the *shinana* toads, which have a grand feast on the happy day when winged termites appear! Those which happen to emerge where the hole has been dug, try to escape by flying, but are prevented from doing so by the covering of leaves. They at once fall heavily to the bottom and roll into the pot, which may become quite full in a few hours. The owner of the trap then comes and makes a splendid sauce with its contents! This kind of termite is not met with on the Coast.

I cannot enter into details as to all these more or less questionable foods. (See I, p. 65, the mention of the Shitambela beetle.)

262 Although the caterpillars, coleoptera, larvae, and locusts are universally appreciated, there are other "meats" which appeal to certain individuals or clans, but are disdainfully eschewed by others. For instance the boa is eaten with great gusto by the Rongas and disliked by the Nkunas. The same is true of the big varan lizard. The tortoise is generally eaten, but the Mpfumu boys, who esteem themselves more civilised, reject it. On inquiring why some persons or clans exclude certain kinds of meats which other persons or clans consider delectable, we find that there are two different reasons for this, between which it is important to differentiate. The exclusion is due either to a *nyenya*, viz., disgust, or to a *yila*, viz., a taboo.

1) Owing to *disgust*, some people refuse to eat *pork*: "their hearts fear it," probably because pigs are modern and some people are not yet accustomed to eat their flesh. Zulus reject every
262 kind of fish (nhlampfi) from the same feeling of disgust. Snails
777 are despised by all the Thongas; it is true that the snail of the
825 country (Natica Wesseliana) is not very tempting, its shell being of a transparent green and its flesh reddish; moreover it is said to "singita," viz., to bring bad luck to any one meeting with it on the way.

262 But the flesh of some other animals is abstained from, even
825 dreaded, because they *yila*, they are taboo. Thongas have no

rite may explain why sexual relations are prohibited during all 226
important hunting and fishing operations. With their magic 825
conception of Nature, Bantus do not separate the domain of man 834
from the animal world ; human actions have their immediate effect amongst animals. So if men and women keep strict control over themselves, hippopotami, fish or elephants will not be so wild, and hunters will have more success!

* * *

Meat is either boiled (pseka), or roasted (wosha). When 252
boiled, the broth is called *muru*, (Ro.) or *shashebo*, (Dj.) the same name that is given to monkey nut sauce or any other seasoning. When roasted, it is either placed on the embers, or skewered on sticks (lihanga) and exposed to the heat of the fire.

The blood of animals (bubendje) is also eaten by most men. 262
However, many fear it (tshaba), not on account of a yila, as if it were taboo, but rather from individual loathing. There are no special laws to be observed as regards bones. The meat of sacrifices, offered in the funeral rites, must be eaten *on the road*, not in the mortuary nor in the guests' villages, as we have already seen.

Meat is welcome, and eagerly sought after in time of famine 262
(ndlala). Should the October rains fail, or the crops be destroyed 731
by grasshoppers, as has been, alas, frequently the case since the [136]
first appearance of these pests in August 1894 (1), the Natives are bereft of every resource (2). They dig up all the edges of the

(1) Just at the commencement of the war between the Natives and the Portuguese, grasshoppers arrived in thick clouds in the district of Lourenço Marques. They had not been seen for a great number of years; old folk only recollected having seen them in bygone times. Since then the scourge has never entirely disappeared. The coincidence of their coming and the beginning of hostilities struck the Blacks very forcibly; they often said, at the sight of the grasshoppers: "They announce the armies of Gungunyane."

(2) Here is a pretty couplet with reference to famine:

Nkondje wa nhlongana shipopokwana ?

— Lembe ra ndlala a ku nguna kusuhe !

The traces of the little antelope (nhlongana) (which one sees in the desert a long way from its lair) recall the year of famine, when one does not stay near home ; (one must go a long way to search for food). See also the several allusions to the year of famine in *Les Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, p. 158, 160 et seq.

"You see! Stones also grow!" Another Native geologist, who had heard the European story of creation, coming from the Coast, a country of sand and sand only, and visiting the Drakensberg Mountains near Shiluvane, was amazed by the enormous cliffs of the Mamotswiri and gave vent to the following reflection : "No wonder we have no stones in our sandy land. When God created the earth, he used them all to build these mountains!" 823

Fossils are rare in Thongaland, where sand covers almost the whole country. There is however in the southern part of the Maputju region an outcrop of cretaceous rock which belongs to the Gault and which contains ammonites, Nautillus etc. Natives call them *nsongo stones* and are very much afraid of them. They say that "these stones with ribs" can walk. They bring bad luck (singita). Should a child pick up one of these fossils and bring it into the village, he will fall ill ; he must therefore undergo a special treatment. 136 823 777

Crystal greatly pleases the Natives. It is rare in South Africa. When magicians can secure a white or a black crystal they generally wear it round their necks together with the claws, or teeth, of wild animals, or with their little skin bags which they use as amulets. For this reason I once had the good fortune to be able to exchange a crystal I had brought from Switzerland for one of these charms! 135 301

The *earth* (misaba) is also a great and important thing. First because it is identified with the people dwelling on it, with the clan. *Tiko*, the land, means both the soil and the people. Further than this, the earth is the chief (I. p. 382) ; hence many laws : e. g. the tusk of the elephant which fell on the earth when the beast was killed, belongs to the chief, etc. (p. 57). The most solemn oath is that which is taken with earth (ku funga u hahla hi misaba). Should a man be accused of stealing or of being a wizard, if he puts a little earth in his mouth, says *tsu*, and declares : "I do not know anything about it," those who care for his safety will look for a medicine-man to treat him : it is a *mondjo* (a magical method of divination. See Chapter III). The same thing is done when an oath has been taken by sucking a piece of iron. 823 695 787

A curious superstition regarding the earth is this : after moving from one country to another, you should for some days mix with 823

When travelling through the country, you may come across a tree round which a rag has been tied, evidently for some religious purpose. One's first idea would be that this tree is worshipped, but this is by no means the case. The tree is probably that which the divinatory bones have singled out as the one around which the village should be built, and the offering of this rag is made to the spirits of the ancestors, exactly as is done when the rag is placed near the grave, or at the door of the little hut built on it, in the case of those possessed. (See I. p. 141 and later on Chapter III). The tree is only sacred on account of this association. I have sometimes called the *Nkanye* a sacred tree, and the Thongas call it the king of trees, but it is not so in itself, or in virtue of any Nature spirit dwelling in it ; anybody can cut it without transgressing a taboo ; it is venerated because it provides the tribe with the national beer, and because its branches are used as pillows for the dead and its twigs as *mhamba* in the funeral service (I. p. 138). The religious and social *luma*, to which the bukanyi is subject (I. p. 397), is observed from fear of the ancestral spirits and not because the tree itself is in any way worshipped. In fact I never met with any worship offered to a plant as such.

VI. *The Animal World.*

Plants, *psimili or psa-ku-mila*, things which grow (ku-mila), are distinguished from animals, called *psibandjana* or *psihari*, which are said to *kula*, become great, and not *mila*.

The knowledge possessed by the Thongas with regard to animals is extensive. They give names to all the larger ones, especially, of course, to those which are eaten, but also to some which are smaller, insignificant and useless.

The *Annelida* are called by the generic name of *tinyokana*, diminutive of *nyoka* (yin-tin), snake ; leeches, *ntjundju* (mumi) ; lumbrics, *nshikwa* (yin-tin), both those living in the earth and parasites in the intestines of children.

Amongst *Myriapoda* the Julidease are called *Khongoloti* (dji-ma) ; the Millepedes, *Ndlandlalati* (yin-tin). When one of these has stung a Native, you will see him swallow a little earth, and a

815 mouthful of water after it, to prevent swelling. "The milleped
136 will die at once and you will not suffer much, because you have
826 been wiser than it (u yi rangelile butlharin)."

The same precaution is taken with regard to Scorpions, *shiphame* (Dj.), *mubalane* (Ro.). Other Arachnida are Spiders (*pume* (dji-ma) *ripe* (dji-ma), Ticks *(shikalana)*, and the Itch *(shinwayana)*, which Thongas know but too well without being aware that it is caused by a microscopic animal. To this group probably belongs the *maroda*, a parasite met with in the huts of Bilen and other remote parts of the country, whose bite causes actual disease.

The *insect world*, so richly represented in Tropical countries (1) is pretty well known, though many of its representatives are of no practical use to the Natives.

Orthoptera. Acridius peregrinus, the locust which ravages the fields, is called *humbi* (yin-tin) in Ronga and *ndjiya* (yin-tin) in Djonga. (See p. 81). The first "clouds" which appeared greatly impressed the Natives when they were seen at the beginning of the war of 1894. I heard some one say that this phenomenon had been foretold by a "mulungwana," a little man fallen from heaven to announce this calamity which threatened the land. (See next Chapter). Other Acridians are called *mhera* (yin-tin); the larvae of locusts, which abound at certain times in the gardens, are the *hondje* (yin-tin). The Pamphygus, a fat, heavy, grey locust, the female apterous, are called *phuphu* (dji-ma). The Grillus is *Shiyendlwa* (shi- psi), and is eaten by some. But the best known Orthoptera are those of the Mantidae family whose representatives are numerous in the country. They are called *Ñwambyevu* (Dj.) or *Ñwambyevulane* (Ro.), viz., the one which cuts the hair, probably on account of its claws, which move like
825 scissors. This insect plays a great part in the superstitions of the
769 Bushmen, who worship it. Amongst the Thongas there is a similar custom; young shepherds, when they meet with a Mantis,

(1) See my publications on the Entomology of Delagoa Bay; I. *Coleoptera*, in collaboration with Dr. Bugnion; II *Orthoptera*, by Dr. A. von Schulthess Rechberg; III *Hemiptera* by Prof. Montandon in the "Bulletin de la Société vaudoise des Sciences Naturelles." XXV, p. 132-220; IV), *Lepidoptera*, "Bulletin de la Société Neuchâteloise des Sciences Naturelles" Tome XXVII, p. 177-250.

tear out a little hair from the skins of their belt and offer it to the 826
insect saying : "Take, Grandfather!" They say that in old times 769
they were looked on as gods (psikwembu), or rather emissaries of the ancestor-gods, just like the little green snakes (Chapter II) ; their name was Mahulwahulwane, and when one of them entered a hut, no one interfered with it, as it was thought that perhaps some god had come to pay a visit to his descendants. These ideas regarding Mantidae seem to be now disappearing and the offering made to them is merely a little children's game. Another 136
Orthoptera is the *Shipfalapfapfa*, an onomatopoeia, describing a 826
flying locust, and the *Shishirikoko*, a large species which emits 815
saliva through its thorax. When it flies the Thongas say to it : "Go to the place where people eat meat!"

Hemiptera. Bugs are well, too well, known in Thongaland, having taken up their abode in most of the huts, where they are tolerated. They are called *Nsiketi* (yin-tin) and the wild bugs *Nsiketi ya nhoba*, bug of the bush. Lice, *Nhwala* (yin-tin), are regarded as vermin, and often as the result of bewitchment, especially when seen swarming on children. Many Aphidae (grubs) cause an exudation on certain shrubs, a kind of wax, the *Mubodi*, which is used for the manufacture of the black crowns (I, p. 130) ; others are called *Shibungubungu*, the red ones, probably a kind of cochineal.

Neuroptera. *Diptera*. The equivalent of these names of flies is 815
Nhongana (yin-tin). Mosquitoes are called *Busuna* and fleas 136
Butseka, with the prefix *bu* which here means a collection, a great number. *Busokoti*, a similar word, designates ants. The big gad-flies are the *Bawa* (dji-ma). The Libellulidae are called *Mungutane* (mu-ba) and the Termitideae *Muhlwa* (mu-mi).

Lepidoptera. Butterflies and moths are designated by a single word, *Phaphalati* (Dj. Notice the feminine suffix), or *Phaphatane* (Ro.) (dji-ma), and their caterpillars by the term *Hukwa* (yin-tin) or *Tomane* (dji-ma), this last word especially applying to the large Saturnidae caterpillars which are eaten by the Natives (p. 80). The relation between the caterpillar and the butterfly is not generally known ; only once did I find a boy who knew that a certain white cocoon, used as an ornament in dances (p. 102) gave

136 birth to the big green moth with long tails, the Queen Moth. The
815 reason why butterflies, though plentiful in Thongaland, have so little attracted the attention of Natives is, no doubt, the fact that they do not in any way contribute to their food. I have told the story of a woman who tried to force a child to eat a butterfly. (I. p. 445.)

136 *Coleoptera.* The general term for Coleoptera is *Shifufununu*, and it especially applies to the big Tenebrionidae (Psammodes
825 Bertoloni), called *shifufununu sha paripari* (p. 68) and to the large
777 black Carabidae of the Anthia genus which abound on the roads in spring ; one of them, marked with small depressions on the elytra is, for that reason, called the small-pox shifufununu (sha nyedzane). Travelling once with a grown-up Thonga we saw a black Carabida which had four white spots on the back. It was the charming Eccoptoptera mutilloides. I saw him trace a circle round it in the sand saying : "To-day I shall eat to my heart's content !" — "Namunhla ndji ta shura !" — "What are you doing ?" I said. — "Oh ! This is the *Shurwa-shurwane*," he answered. "When you meet it it is a sign that you will have plenty to eat !" He was mistaken ! The real shurwa-shurwane is the Mutilla, a kind of apterous wasp, which has also four white spots on its back, and the beetle we met was so similar to it that he mistook it for a Mutilla ; is it not called mutilloides, pseudo-mutilla ? (1)
136 — The Copridæ are called *Gadlen* (dji-ma) and these strange
[753] dung-eaters, which are extremely abundant in the country, are thought to be under the command of the wizards who can introduce
825 them into your body to kill you. The pretty Cerambycidæ,
262 with their long horns, are the *Ñwahomurikotjo*, the ox of Rikotcho, or, according to a truer etymology, the ox with horns bent backwards (kotjeka). Children sing an incantation before them, clapping their hands (I, p. 68). Their big white larvae, the *Shipungwana*, dig channels in the stems of nkanye, nkuhlu, mphesa, etc., and are readily eaten as well as the *Shimhukuta*, the

(1) This custom reminds one of the action of Swiss children when they send the ladybird to heaven, to ask God to give them fine weather to-morrow, or of their saying that crushing a golden Carabus on the road will cause rain to fall. Certain Coleoptera are of good omen everywhere ! Only, if in Europe they foretell fine weather, in Africa they announce a good meal. The difference is significant !

136 larva of a large Calandra which swarms in the stems of the palm
825 trees of the marsh (p. 4). The *Shitambela*, a big Buprestida
262 (Sternocera Orissa) is roasted by the shepherds and eaten after they have torn off its elytra.

136 *Hymenoptera*. *Wasps* are called *Mupfi* or *Mupfu* (mu-mi),
755 and are divided into four different classes: the *Mupfu* proper (Belonogaster), the *Tlatlanhongana*, the *Bamaandlopfu*, a grey species, and the *Mumpfundlopfu*, a large black species which burrows in the soil. When someone has been stung by a wasp, the others laugh at him. If he resents being made [illegible] of, they say to him: "Be not angry; we do this to help you." They are really trying to divert his attention from the pain in order to
136 comfort him. *Bees* are called *Nyoshi* (yin-tin) and are greatly
262 appreciated for their honey (p. 44). Natives know the males
815 (*djongwe*, dji-ma) the larvae *(shipungwa)*, which they eat with as much pleasure as the honey itself. They call the honeycombs *hahla* (dji-ma) or *shihlenga*, the wax *mumpfu* (mu-mi) and the
136 pollen brought by the bees, *nsindjo*. The curious *Mbonga* (yin-tin)
825 *Bee* is worth special mention, owing to the superstitions which are current regarding it, and the part it plays in certain rites (I. p. 390). This species, which does not sting, digs a narrow passage of two or three feet deep in the soil and excavates a hole of one or two feet broad where it builds its round nest. Natives say that nobody knows what the mbonga does with the earth which it digs out of the cavity in which it makes its nest. No heap of earth is ever seen in the vicinity. The hole is continued under the nest and has no end. It probably extends to subterranean pools where the insects go to drink, — as it is said that no one has ever seen a mbonga drinking from the lake or the well, as the other bees do. Moreover the entrance to a mbonga nest is invisible to the majority of people. It is only certain families who can see it and consequently dig out the precious honey (1). For all these reasons the mbonga is

777 (1) The Libombo family was one of those "which the mbonga loves" (randja). Elias who belongs to it told me that he once paid a visit to one of his neighbours who had just cleaned his village; he discovered a mbonga hole and said to his friend: "There is a mbonga nest in your village." But the man was unable to find it. Elias then dug as deep as his shoulders and found the nest all surrounded by "calabashes" full of honey. He says that when rain falls the little bees cover the entrance of

136 surrounded with a certain mystery, and this is no doubt why its
825 honey is used in the manufacture of the *nyokwekulu*. Its scientific name is Trigona togoensis, var. Junodi (Friese).

136 Amongst the *Mollusca*, a great many are eaten : the *Mbatsana*
262 (yin-tin) of the sea (bivalve shells), *Likatla* (li-tin) of the lakes, and the *Hwaru* (yi-tin), oysters of the Tembe shore. The land
454 snails are called *Humba* (yi-tin) ; the big ones (Achatina Lamar-
787 kiana) are used as safes for the deposit of pounds sterling and are often buried in the huts ; hence the expression *Humba ya bupfundji*, shell of riches! The smaller ones, resembling our snails (Aerope caffra), are rarer and it is considered a bad omen to meet with them on the road. — "Where you go you will hear cries of mourning!" Their name is *Shikumbukwane*. The slugs are called *Holokompfa* (yin-tin) and the smaller snails, *Shihumbanyana*, diminutive of *humba*.

136 *Fish* all have names, but having never dwelt in the close vicinity
825 of the sea, I have not learnt them. I know the *Mfungwe* (yi-tin). the fish whose mouth ends in a saw, the *Mangapfi* (dji-ma), the
262 name of a kind of hawk given to the flying fish of Delagoa Bay, the *Nhempfane* (yi-tin) found in the fresh water ponds, the *Ntima* (yi-tin) the barbel, the black fish which must not be eaten by lovers before their marriage (I, p. 107).

136 *Amphibia*. *Ntlambya* (mu-mi) is the ordinary frog (Rana oxyrhynca) whose young are known and called *Shilungula* ; another black species is the *Rebya* (dji-ma) ; the tree-frogs are called *Shilungwalungwana* (Rappia marmorata and argus) ; the toad *Kele* (dji-ma), Bufo regularis ; the famous Breviceps mossambicus is *Shinana* (I. p. 87) the great warrior of the tales (p. 221).

136 *Reptilia*. There are many kinds of *Lizards*. The common
825 kind found in the houses, under the verandas is the *Mponondjo* (mu-mi) (Mabuia striata), ; the Lygodactylus capensis, found on the hills, is the *Nkolombya* (mu-mi) ; the little Agama

777 the hole with their wings to prevent water from inundating the nest. When it lasts too long they quickly go down to close the entrance of the nest ; the water then leaks down the pipe which descends into the interior of the earth. He added : "If a man does not belong to a family which "knows" the mbonga and if he happens to find a nest he will meet with misfortune ; one of his relatives will die. The bees will bring him ill-luck (singita)."

aculeata, which runs on the sand, *Shipyindji* or *Shihonokamahlo*, 136
the one which gazes at you ; the large gheko, Agama atricollis, 825
with a head of which the grey colour can change into blue, *Galagala* or *Phululu* (dji-ma) (I. p. 173) the grey one, which hides itself in dark places, in hollow stems or under roofs is the *Hokokwana* (dji-ma) (Hemidactylus grenatus) ; it is said that when this lizard sucks at the breast of a human being, it is impossible to remove it, and the only means of getting rid of it is to go and suckle a dog!

But the most curious lizard of these countries, that which most 136
strikes the Native imagination is the Chameleon (Chameleon 825
Petersii), *Lumpfana* (dji-ma). Herd boys throw ground tobacco 789
into its mouth to avenge themselves for the bad turn it did mankind when it lingered on the road and came too late to bring the message of eternal life (as we shall learn in a moment). It is used by certain magicians to discover thieves. They smear a chameleon with a drug which makes it turn white and then let it go : "Then the thief, wherever he may be, also turns white, and if he does not confess his theft, he dies!"

The flesh of none of these lizards is eaten, but that of the big 136
Varan which lives near the rivers, *Kwahle* (dji-ma), is considered 825
a delicacy. The kwahle is said to be very hard to kill. About 262
Crocodiles (*ngwenya*, yin-tin) all sorts of stories are told. When 787
one of them has been killed, the contents of its stomach are carefully preserved ; Thongas assert that each year, when the rains begin, crocodiles swallow a stone, so that their age can be known by counting them. These stones are taboo ; for a subject to swallow them is a cause of death, but one of them is chosen, treated with certain drugs and swallowed by the chief to warn him of his death, as we have already seen (I, p. 393). Crocodile stones play an important part in divination. (See Part VI. Ch. III. D).

Tortoises, whose generic name is *Mfutju* (yin-tin), are eaten and also used in the divinatory art, as we shall see. Some lake tortoises are called *Gamba* (dji-ma) and sea tortoises *Hasi* (dji-ma).

Snakes (nyoka, yin-tin) are generally dreaded and considered 825
dangerous, although many kinds are quite harmless. The 136

825 *Shipyahla* (Ro.), *Mhiri* (yin-tin, Dj.) is the big, lazy, grey puff adder,
136 which creeps along the ground, and is one of the most venomous kinds, together with the *Mhamba* (yin-tin), a slender species, very swift and often found on trees. "When you meet a mhiri," say the Nkunas, "throw a little earth on it and you will soon see
[752] its brother!" Of course magicians have plenty of drugs to cure snake bites. For this purpose they use the head of the adder roasted and pulverised. *Shibatlankombe*, (Naja nigricollis), "the one which carves a spoon" is the name of a species which
[262] curves its neck till it looks like a spoon. The *Hhlaru* (yin-tin) is the boa. It is eaten. Another member of the Clapidae family is the *Likure*, a pretty greyish violet species (Causus Lichtensteinii).
[769] Amongst the harmless snakes are those little blue ones, *Shihundje* (Dendrophis subcarinatus), which are considered as emissaries of the ancestor spirits. I shall mention them again later on. The *Nsoma* (yin-tin), very common and harmless, is probably Dispholidus typus. Some small ones, not larger than worms, but hard and shining like metal, are called *Tumbi-tumbi*, because they hide (tumba) in the sand. One of them seems to be Xenocalamus bicolor.

825 There are also the legendary snakes of the Thongas. On the
777 Coast they speak of the *Buwumati*, which dwells in the lakes and is invisible. It is only heard crying "bu-wu-bu-wu" when rain is falling, and its voice is as loud as that of an antelope. If it shows itself to a traveller, it is a very bad sign. The story is told of a man who came back from consulting a bone-thrower. He saw the buwumati lying on the ground, its coils extending to a great distance, closing all the passages. He retraced his steps, but after three days he died. In the Transvaal, this dreadful snake is called *Shimhemhemhe*, the name being an imitation of its cry.
825 This superstition is perhaps of Pedi origin, but it has been accepted by the Nkunas. The shimhemhemhe dwells in certain dark woody ravines on the slopes of the Drakensberg mountains. If anyone imprudently penetrates there, the snake pursues him, creeping along the branches above, and bites him on the top of the head. A man met with it once on the way to Thabina; he saw it on the road, its head raised, a shining head of two colours. There

was no end to its body. He tried to avoid it by making a long circuit ; he reached home, but died because he had seen the snake which it is death to see! 825

Birds (Tinyanyana, yin-tin). As I have made no regular collection of birds, I cannot here give the scientific names corresponding to the vernacular ones. These are very numerous, and they are not always the same in the different clans. Here is the list which I made by questioning the pupils of my school who came from all parts of Thongaland : (1) 136

Palmipeda. *Sekwa* (dji-ma) duck. *Sekwanyari*, *Sekwamhala*, *Shikukubi*, (Mal. Kho.). *Ñwafamben* (Mal. Nku.). *Shihlakahlcka*, *Lingubi* (Mal.). *Shiyankaken*, *Tutwana*, (Mpf. Bil.). *Ngululwana* (yin-tin), (Mpf.).

Long-legged birds. (Tinyanyana ta psikokoko). *Kukolwe* (Mpf. Bil. Mal.). *Munyangana*, *Ñwantjangantjangana* (mu-ba) (Mpf.). *Makhondjwawa*, *Gumba* (dji-ma), *Mayiwabembe*, *Tshebane* (Mal.). *Mugalandlopfu* (Mpf. Mal.) ; *Tshembyana* (Mal.). *Tjololwane* (Mal. Mpf.). *Yindwa*, *Randjane*, (Kho. Mal.). *Ñwamahlanga* (Mpf.). *Mampfana*, or *Shisibaliyendjo* (I. p. 339).

Gallinacea. *Huku*, domestic hen. *Nkuku* (mu-mi cock. *Hwari* (yin-tin) partridge. *Mhangelane* (yin-tin), Guinea fowl. *Shitjatjatja* (Mpf. Nku.). *Nkungu* (Mpf.). *Matjyatjyana* (Nku.). *Teentana*, or *keenkana* (dji-ma), quail, (Mpf.). *Nkwahla*, (Mpf. Kho.). *Hukumati*, (Mpf. Nku.). *Mangoko* (Mal.). *Makokwe*, or *Makwekwe* (Mpf.). *Hlokoyo* (Mal.). *Shibotshe* (Mal.). *Djyedjyedjye*, (Mal.). *Ndjendjenle* (Mal.). *Ndura*, (Nku.). *Ngukulukwana* (Nku.), or *Shitiwitiwi* (Mpf.). *Nkulunkulu* (Mpf. Kho.) a splendid bird, red, green and blue, called the bird of the chiefs, because chiefs used to adorn themselves with its feathers ; it is the Gallirex porphyreolophus.

Pigeons. *Tuba* (dji-ma), pigeon. *Shibambalana*, or *bombokonyi* (Mpf.) ; same as *Mbabawunyi* (Nku. Mal.). *Gororotwana* (Mpf.) corresponds to *Guguruwana* (Mal. Kho.). *Nyakungufe* (Mpf.) corresponds to *Kopolo*, or *Mangobolo* (Nku. Mal.). *Ngalane* or *Shidjuvapepe* (Mal.).

(1) Abbrev. Mal. = Maluleke ; Kho. = Khosen, Antioka ; Nku. = Nkuna ; Mpf. = Mpfumo ; Bil. = Bilene ; Spel. = Spelonken.

136 Sparrows. *Mbawulwane* (yin-tin), (Mpf.) or *Mbeulwane* (Kho. Nku.) swallow. *Psikidyana* (Spel. Mal.). *Tinhwana* (Mpf. Bil.). *Tinkata* (Kho.). *Nkapa* (mu-mi) (Mpf.). *Nsongwana*, (Mpf.). *Nhlekwana*, *Tshamatisa*, *Shindjengeletana* (Mpf. Nku.). *Nadwangafolen* (mu-ba) (Mpf.). *Ñwamutjalatana* (mu-ba) (Mpf.). *Lidjadjana*, (Spel. Mal.). *Timhatana* (Mpf.). *Tinhelwa* (Mpf.). *Ngodzi* (Spel. Mal.). *Khwezu*, *Kololwana*, etc., *Sowa* (dji-ma), sparrow.

Creepers, *Gongondjwane*, lit. the one who knocks. *Shitjemahangala* (Mal.). *Mumywane* (Mal.). *Ngobo* (Nku). *Hokwe*, *Ndhlazi*, *Nkoro*.

Rapaces. *Gama* (dji-ma) eagle. *Khoti* (dji-ma) vulture. *Shikotana*, *Mangapfi*, *Shimungu*, *Shihununu*, (Mpf.), or *Khukhunu* (Kho. Mal.). *Shikotlwane*, *Hwati*, *Fukwana* (dji-ma). *Manhengana*, etc.

Runners. *Yintjya* (yin-tin), ostrich.

825 Some birds are the objects of superstitious ideas. First, the mythical lightning bird whose story has been told p. 313. Then the Mampfana, the one who stops travellers (I. p. 339), and the Nhlalala. The *Nhlalala* is the honey-bird. It is a little sparrow of a greyish colour. When a traveller crosses the uninhabited country, it calls his attention by emitting short and repeated cries ; it jumps from one branch to another and does not rest until it has induced the traveller to follow it. It then leads him to a hollow stem where bees have gathered honey. The fortunate wayfarer can eat to his heart's content and afterwards gives the bird the wax. If he desires to be shown a second tree, he has only to burn the wax : the nhlalala not having had its full share of the treat will lead him to another stem, hoping for another chance ; there is so much honey in the second spot that you will certainly leave some for your kind guide! Such are some of the stories told by a boy named Pikinini about the honey-bird.

224 *Mammalia*. My information, on this subject, is far from complete. One ought to join a Native hunting party, and hear the hunters tell their mighty deeds round the fire in the evening, if one wishes to acquire all their knowledge and learn all their queer ideas about the beasts of the bush, which they have carefully observed, and regarding which a great number of stories are in circulation (p. 63-76).

circulation (p. 63-76). I shall have to content myself with giving the names of some Mammalia and relating some superstitions concerning them. 136

Edentata : two kinds are known, the *Mpandjana* (yin-tin), the ant-bear, which is covered with hair, and the *Kwara* (dji-ma) which has scales. The only Cetacea known is the *Nkomu* (yin-tin), the whale.

Solipedes : *Mangwa* (yin-tin) means zebra, and this term is sometimes applied to horses ; this latter animal is called *Hanshi* (dji-ma), evidently a corruption of the English word. *Mbongolo* (yin-tin), donkey. *Mula* or *Mewula*, mule.

Pachyderma : *Ngulube* (yin-tin), wild boar and also, by extension, domesticated pig. *Mpfubu* (yin-tin), hippopotamus.

Ruminantia : *Homu* (yin-tin), ox. *Nyari* (yin-tin), buffalo. *Hamba* (yin-tin, Ro.), *Nyimpfu* (yin-tin, Dj.), sheep. *Mbuti* (yin-tin), goat. *Mhalamhala* (yin-tin), sable antelope, Hippotragus niger. *Mhala* (yin-tin) (Zulu impala). *Mhunti* (yin-tin), duiker *Hongonyi* (yin-tin), gnu. *Mangulwe* (mu-ba). *Mhetlwa* (yin-tin), water buck. *Nhlangu* (yin-tin), reed buck. *Mhofu* (yin-tin), eland, *Nhutlwa* (yin-tin), giraffe, etc.

Proboscidea : *Ndlopfu* (yin-tin), elephant.

Rodentia : *Mpfundla* (mu-mi), hare, *Nhlolo* (yin-tin), rabbit. *Khondlo* (dj -ma), mouse. *Vondo* (dj -ma), *Phephe* (dj-ma), *Ngole* (yin-tin), etc.

Insectivora : *Shitlulandlela*, mole, lit. the one which crosses the road ; it is a bad omen for a mole to cross your path. *Tjukumyana*, a brownish mole which digs its burrows just below the surface of the ground. Hence the fact that a bracelet made of its skin is employed as medicine against the Filaria, a parasite which makes its way under the skin! 136 777 825 755

Carnivora : *Nsimba* (yin-tin), civet cat. *Shipakana*, cat. *Mbyana* (yin-tin), dog. *Mhisi* (yin-tin), hyena. *Hlolwa*, *Nhlati* (mu-ba), fox. *Yingwe* (yin-tin), leopard. *Ndjau* (Ro.), *nghala* (Dj.), lion, etc. 136

Chiroptera : *Tangadana* (dji-ma, Ro.), *Mangadyana*, (mu-ba. Dj.), bat.

Primates : *Mfene* (yin-tin), baboon. *Habu* (yin-tin), monkey.

845 daha). Striking is frequently one of the rites of aggregation.
184 (See Van Gennep, *Rites de Passage*, p. 55). Let us remember that the Tembe clan is of Northern origin (I. p. 23) and has retained some customs which are different from those of the other Thongas (1).

2) Heaven and the "Nunu."

●136 The following is a very extraordinary custom, and one which,
241 in many respects, greatly resembles those I have already described.
845 There is to be found, on the shores of Delagoa Bay, a small Coleoptera belonging to the Alcides genus of the Cucurlionidæ
772 family. It has a proboscis-shaped mouth, a very hard carapace
825 of half a centimetre in length, brown, and marked on each elytron with two longitudinal white bands. The Blacks call it the *nunu*. It is a scourge to the fields of beans and maize (much as cockchafers are with us). In December or January, when these insects begin to swarm, the chief men of the country order the diviners to throw the bones, and send the women to pick the "nunu" off the bean stalks. They gather them in "sala" shells. Then they choose (probably by casting lots) *a woman who has given birth to twins.*

(1) Amongst *the Hereros* a multiple birth is the happiest event which could possibly occur! The Rev. E. Dannert published in the *Capetown Folklore Journal* an account of the customs practised on such occasions by the Natives of this tribe, which occupies the Western side of Southern Africa, at about the same latitude as the Thongas. The father and mother are condemned to complete silence, under penalty of bringing a curse on those who speak to them. All the members of the tribe are convened and bring their cattle with them. The twins' family has to appear before the whole assembly, and is received with lamentations. Each individual must present himself to the parents, and make them a gift of beads, or other ornaments, in return for which the father and mother purify them by means of a certain powder. After this the father has the right of going from village to village, and claiming an ox from each one, as a kind of ransom. He becomes quite a rich man. This is the *kunga rite*, which we have also met with on many occasions amongst the Thongas (I. p. 124.). How can this diversity between the customs of the Hereros and those of most of the Thongas be explained? No doubt by this vague mysterious idea of Heaven, which is behind the religious conceptions of these tribes and in which all these rites originated. This celestial power, when it manifests itself, stupefies the Natives, for it causes "a death," entails a curse. With the Thongas it is the mother and children who are the objects of this malediction, hence the purifying ceremonies imposed upon them. With the Hereros, it is the whole tribe which is affected. The family into which the twins are born has been distinguished and honoured by this heavenly visitation, and collects for itself the fines which all must pay to regain the celestial favour!

262 643 609 796 even those who are settled in the clan. They have their own medicine and luma for themselves, though they must not do it before the chief of the country.

III. *The luma of bukanye and the great national feast.*

137 273 796 824 The most characteristic of all these ceremonies connected with the first fruits is the luma of bukanyi. Tobane has given me a circumstantial description of this feast and it deserves to be reproduced in all its details, as being a typical manifestation of Bantu national life.

The *nkanye* (1) is a large tree, one of the finest in the country. Its botanical name is Sclerocarya caffra (Sond); it is generally known amongst the English of Natal as the Kafir plum.

It bears fruit of the size of a greengage, which when ripe is a beautiful golden yellow and has a strong flavour of turpentine and a penetrating odour. It is a dioecian tree, the male bearing bunches of flowers while the female has single flowers. The Natives are quite aware of this; they cut down the male plants but take care to keep a few in each district to fecundate the female. The fruit — the kanye — begins to ripen in the month of January and falls to the ground. The odour is perceptible everywhere, and it is then that the principal men of the country approach the chief and say to him: "The time has come to luma."

In the luma of the bukanye it is easy to discover four consecutive ceremonies:

a) The luma of the gods and of the chief.

262 782 273 796 The first ripe makanye are gathered and pressed at the capital, and the sour liquor thus obtained is poured out on the tomb of the deceased chiefs in the sacred wood; they are invoked to bless this new year and the feast which is about to be celebrated.

(1) Nkanye, plural minkanye, is the tree in question. Kanye, plural makanye, is the fruit of this tree; bukanye is the drink made from this fruit. In the same way the wild apricot tree is called mphimbi, plural mimphimbi. The fruit himbi, plural mahimbi; the drink made from the fruit, buhimbi.

is favourable to the growth of certain plants. But by the side of 134
the sand *(pfunye)* and the hillocks *(shitshunga)*, here and there, is 137
found a sort of black earth, containing a large proportion of vegetable detritus, in which maize, sweet potatoes, sugar cane, etc. thrive splendidly. *Nyaka* is the name given to this black soil : it is found at the foot of the hills which run from Lourenco Marques in the direction of Morakwen, and extends for a distance of some fourteen to eighteen miles. Several small springs rise at the bottom of this gentle slope, and tend to form a curious marsh, covered with beautiful tropical growths, of which gigantic palms *(mimale)* are the most striking. These are found in forests [136]
covering hundreds of acres, with an impenetrable undergrowth of ferns, enormous rushes and evergreen shrubs : magnificent palm groves, where apes, wild boars and large storks find a safe retreat.

Between this marsh of primitive mud and the hills extends 133
the arable tract of nyaka. There the fields are lovely ; maize can 134
be grown all the year round. In other places the nyaka is parched and dry, as in the valley of the Lower Nkomati, from the point where it leaves the Lebombo hills to the elbow of Magule. Here the annual overflow of the river deposits on the low-lying plains a fertilising slime, as is the case in Egypt. It is strange to see, during the winter, tufts of grass which were carried down by the stream, months before, caught in the branches of the trees and suspended some 15 to 20 feet above the ground!

The sand of the coast belt is replaced in the hinterland of Matjolo, in the low level between the Nkomati and the Bila plain, etc. by another kind of soil called *hundjusi*. This is a reddish earth containing much sand, but much finer and more fertile than the sand proper.

On leaving the coast belt we reach the Lebombo and Longwe hills, which are composed of a hard reddish porphyraceous stone. Further West, a broad plain extends from the Lebombo to the Drakensberg Mountains, in some places consisting of a greyish or brownish clay, in other regions very dry and stony. The foot

and plural of Cl. fi. When a noun begins with *shi*, it belongs to Cl. shi-pi, with *li* to Cl. li-ma, with *du* to the Class ba-ma. As a rule nouns will be given in their singular form.

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134

[137]

Phot. P. Bathand.

Minsale palmtrees in the marshes near Lourenço Marques.

of the Drakensberg is very fertile, as water flows abundantly from the mountain gorges. Some rivers, however, on reaching the Low Country, dry up entirely, at least during the winter time.

244 pumpkins, another will go to the field and plant some seeds in
753 it without the old man's knowledge ; then people will venture to
824 plant in their own gardens. Transgression of this taboo is said to be punished by lumbago.

222 There are, besides, many wild plants which the housewives
824 collect and of which they make excellent dishes : the *tjeke*, a
828 kind of Chenopodiacea, which is also used as a medicine to induce forgetfulness ; the *nkakana*, a pretty plant of the Cucurbitaceae family, which climbs up the dried stems of maize after the harvest, and of which they eat the leaves and also the pretty little oval pointed fruit.

137 *Tomatoes* (shimati) are also found growing round the villages,
285 where they propagate themselves, and seem to prosper the better the less they are cared for : the Natives take them to Lourenço Marques for sale in very original baskets made of a single palm leaf, with the follicles artistically twisted. I am unable to say when they were introduced. There is a agreeable kind of small tomato which grows wild in Khosen, about the size of a cherry.

244 Natives also cultivate a kind of *onion* (nyala, yi-tin), smaller than the European varieties, which they very much appreciate in their sauces.

249 *The sugar cane* (moba, mu-mi) is never grown in large plantations, but you find it on the Coast, as well as in Zoutpansberg, cultivated on a small scale, either for eating, or for preparing the strong *shiwayawaya* drink, which I shall describe later on.

245 The *pine-apple* (lalasi, dji-ma) has spread as far as the Bilene country and must be of ancient date ; it differs considerably from the Natal pine-apple, being longer, coarser and not so sweet. In many villages large plantations are to be seen.

249 *Tobacco* (fole, dji-ma) is also wide-spread and seems to have been cultivated for a long time. A curious fact is that its cultivation is the business of the men, and women have nothing to do with it. Amongst the Ba-Ronga it is sown first in a damp spot in the marsh, in a special little garden called *shibibi*, and, when it has grown a little, is planted out (simeka) on the hill, near the villages. When nearly ripe the lower leaves are first

cut, dried and ground "ku djinga," as a foretaste! Then the 249
other leaves are cut, covered with nkuhlu foliage and left for three days to mature (ku pfundja) ; a string is then passed through them and they are hung to a tree to dry. Before they have become brittle, they are rolled up together so as to form the "mfunge," a bunch of tobacco leaves which is sometimes three or four feet long by 4 to 6 inches thick. This bunch is exposed to the sun on the roof for one day. When the process of drying is finished, the leaves are put once more outside in the evening so as to get a little damp, and are then finally rolled up together. The bunch of tobacco is kept inside the house and often used for [436]
barter.

The *manioc* (ntjumbulu, mu-mi) is extensively cultivated both in the sand of the hills and near the marshes. The root, dried, and eaten either whole or ground, is very good food, but some plants have a bitter taste. But manioc can hardly be called a vegetable and borders on the domain of trees.

III. *Trees and fruits.*

Fruits play an important part in the diet of the Thongas. 137
but wild fruits alone, the fruit with which Mother Earth 245
presents them. They neither plant nor cultivate the trees ; when clearing the ground, they simply spare the fruit-bearing kinds which grow naturally. It may be that a man will sow some seeds of a particularly good *nkuhlu*, or *nkanye*, in his garden, if that garden happens to be devoid of trees : this is all they do to improve the quality of the fruit. It is no wonder, after all, that tree cultivation is almost entirely absent in Thonga agriculture : villages move so frequently, owing to contamination by death, accusations of witchcraft, or exhaustion of the soil, that nobody takes the trouble to plant trees which he will not be able to carry away with him to his new residence.

As regards the indigenous fruits, they are varied and numerous. 222
Natives systematically spare every fruit tree when clearing their

222 fields and, thanks to this wise precaution, the fructiferous growths have increased enormously ; and wherever the land is cultivated it presents the appearance of a huge orchard.

/137 222 One of the best of the Native fruits is the *sala* (dji-ma), which

The nsala tree bearing the sala fruits. *Phot. A. Borel.*

takes a leading place in the diet of the Ba-Ronga ; it is a large shining, green ball, taking on a yellowish tint when ripening, and consists of a thin shell, easily broken, containing some twenty flat oval stones, covered with a yellowish coloured pulp, very sweet and delicate in flavour, but a little nauseating to the European taste. The sala is very invigorating and is a great and precious resource in times of shortage of crops.

Its first cousin, the *kwakwa* (dji-ma), is of the same shape and size, but, when ripening, becomes quite an orange yellow; it is never eaten uncooked. The pulp surrounding the stones is prepared in a certain way and made into strips (nhasa, yi-tin), which are hung on the trees to dry or over the fire to be smoked; this is what is called *nfuma*. Once the *nfuma* is dried, it can be pounded and made into a flour much valued when the storehouses are empty, and the new season has not yet begun. 222 252

The sala and the kwakwa are two species of the genus Strychnos (Strychnos spinosa and ungasha) which furnishes chemists and poisoners with the well-known drug strychnine. Does the fruit contain any proportion of this substance? I do not know. It has never been known to kill any one, although it may be the cause of many intestinal troubles which naturally result when the Natives, having no more maize or sweet potatoes, live on nothing but this particular fruit. Strange to say, the kwakwa stones are credited with the power of attracting lightning; the old women say that, when making *nfuma*, these large white stones must never be allowed to lie in a heap in the open air: lightning would surely strike the village were any such imprudence committed. It is a taboo. 222 137 821

I have already described the *nkanye* (mu-mi), (Sclerocarya caffra, Kafir plum), which is certainly the most highly valued of all the trees in Thongaland (I. p. 398). The fruit is used primarily and essentially for the brewing of bukanye, by pressing the pulp, but the kernels of the stones of the nkanye are also much appreciated; they are very oleaginous and a modicum of oil may be obtained by merely squeezing them between the fingers! They are called *mongo*, and the saying is that they are food for kings, for the stones are very hard, the kernels very small and it is hard work to obtain even a small quantity! Not that there is any lack of stones! Heaps, which have been thrown away at the time of the famous bukanye brewing, are to be found in the vicinity of all villages, but the cracking is the difficulty. For this a stone must be sought, far and wide, and small hollows must be made in it of a size to fit the circular nkanye stones; these are then inserted in the sockets and cracked by a sharp skilful blow with another stone, 222 252

follows : the nuts are thoroughly dried (womisa), and slightly 252
pounded in a mortar so as to remove the thin peel which covers 303
them ; they are then winnowed, and ground into a kind of flour ; this flour is put into a pot with a little water and cooked ; the fat is then collected in a big shell of Achatina and kept for external use. The residue is called *bubindje*.

I do not mention all the other fruits, more or less succulent, 137
which serve the Natives for food. One must be terribly famished 222
to enjoy them. I may just specify the *pfilu* (dji-ma), Vangueria infausta, a kind of insipid medlar ; the *tjhopfa* (dji-ma), fruit of the *ntjhopfa* tree, which I could never muster courage enough to taste, and the *bungu* (dji-ma) sometimes dignified with the title of the Kafir orange. This latter is the fruit of one of the varieties of the india-rubber tree, which grows along the shores of Delagoa Bay. (Landolphia Kirkii.) In the Morakwen forest grow the ntjhole shrubs from which the *tintjole* berries are picked during the summer.

The *muhlu* or water tree bears a berry called *tihlu*, which has an agreeable taste. The *mphimbi* bears the *mahimbi*, a large round fruit similar in form to an apricot with a double stone. Both these fruits are used to prepare a drink, and we shall mention them when treating of Thonga drinks.

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There are a few taboos to mention in connection with trees. 782
It is considered dangerous to cut the trunk of any large tree. 824
Should you wish to make a mortar of a nkanye, first smear some of the bark with certain drugs and also burn them at the foot of the tree before cutting it down. Should you want to cut down a nkwenga or a mahogany-tree, nhlapfuta (Ro.), shene (Dj.), to make a canoe, the master of the forest must first offer a sacrifice to the spirits of his ancestors who have been buried there. If you omit this precaution, you will be unable to find again the tree you have chosen.

C. AGRICULTURAL CUSTOMS.

I. *The Agricultural Year.*

137 221 At the season which is called *shimumu*, the little heat, that is to say in July, when the warm weather begins, the nkuhlu puts forth new shoots. Though rain is still far off, the mahogany and sala trees become covered with leaves of a wonderfully delicate green. A kind of Composita (the Helychrisum parviflorum, shirimbyati), which is wide-spread on the sandy dunes, blossoms all over the country ; a beautiful lily (Crinum Forbesii) will expand its splendid white and pink flowers : the *winter* (bushika) has passed away : soon the *hlobo* (summer) will come.

412 221 462 When the Ronga woman notices these signs, she picks up her hoe (shikomo) and starts for the hills, or for the marshes. Her husband has already repaired the implement for her, at home. If the handle was worn out, he has cut a branch of nkonono, (Terminalia sericea), which is the wood invariably used for the purpose, and has shaped it so that one end is thicker than the other ; in this thick end a hole is bored, while the iron hoe head is heated in the fire : the head has, at its base, a long iron point which is inserted nearly red-hot into the hole, burning its way in, and thus solidly fixing the two parts together. This method of fixing on the handle is called ku lumela shikomo. The Ronga hoe has a very short handle, sometimes not more than two feet in length. The Transvaal Thongas use handles three to four feet long. The woman has now nothing to do but to work hard, her lord and master having duly accomplished his share of the labour.

241 221 It is the end of August. Two or three months must still elapse before the rainy season sets in. This period of the year is devoted to a two-fold work : the clearing of fresh land and the cultivation of marshes.

The *clearing of fresh land*, ku tlhaba lisindje (Ro.), ku khatsha

245 the cause of the desolation. Planting new trees is consequently
784 a taboo! Nowadays however, this superstition has died out,
824 and one may see a great number of mango, orange, lemon (1), and pho-pho trees in Thonga fields, on the Coast as well as in Zoutpansberg.

[351] Natives do not generally fence their gardens. Stealing is therefore very easy and it is no wonder that they have recourse to
685 magical means to protect themselves. Here are some of them ;
789 they are characteristic instances of Bantu magic.

The *rihehlo*. This consists of a kind of mysterious influence exerted on the thief by throwing a magical powder into his footprints or by taking a little of the earth found in these footprints and treating it with the drugs. The inhabitants of the village where the thief lives will be seized by disease ; this will induce them to come to the owners of the garden to confess their fault and pay a fine. Then the magician who had furnished the drug will give them a counter-drug and they will be healed! Amongst the Pedis, the magician anoints with his drugs the stem from which a cob has been stolen. Then the thief will feel intolerable suffering in his little finger and come to the village of the people whom he has robbed crying : "I have stolen!" He pays the fine, receives in exchange the counter-drug and the pain ceases! (Spelonken)

The tinhlamalala. This is the name of the central nervules of the leaves of the Hyphaene palm tree. They are like little snakes, very slender, and flexible. To make the resemblance still greater, the owner of a field makes a knot at the extremity of the rod : this represents the head of the snake. Then he looks for the dried skin which has been cast off by a real snake ; he reduces this to ashes, makes a powder with these ashes and anoints the rods. He weaves the rods together to form a kind of crown and places it on one of the mealies stems in his garden. When the thief

● /137 (1) The lemon tree is called mbomu (mu-mi). This seems to be a Native word and the tree also may be indigenous in the country. It grows wild on the banks of the Lower Nkomati to such an extent that there is an island in the river, some distance above Morakwen, which is called Ilha dos Limões, Lemon Island. The lemons are of large size and their rind resembles that of the orange.

D. PREPARATION OF FOOD AND DRINK.

Bantus of South Africa being mostly agriculturists are also vegetarians, not however vegetarians on principle, as they eat meat as often as they have the opportunity ; but these opportunities are rare, so that, as a matter of fact, their diet is essentially vegetable. I shall later on describe the two ways in which they procure meat, viz., cattle-breeding and hunting. Having seen what are the products of their fields, we can confidently proceed to the study of their kitchen, as meat seldom makes its appearance in the "pots on the fireplace!" 262

I. *Fire and salt.*

Thongas do not remember a time when they did not possess these two most important elements of the culinary art. 372

As regards *fire* (ndjilo, mu-mi), the Honwanas knew it before the XVth or XVIth century. The traditions reported I. p. 24 show that some clans believe that there was a time when food was not cooked.

There are four trees used to produce fire by friction (tsika) : 137

1) The *bulolo*, a kind of Hibiscus growing in the estuary of the Nkomati, in the region regularly watered by the tide, is the best *ntsiko* or wooden flint. It is a very light and soft wood and is still used near the Coast, though matches are now to be found everywhere. 372

2) The *mpahla* (mu-mi), a bush of the Compositae family, whose wood is very hard and used to make handles for hoes. It grows all over Thongaland, in the plains as well as in mountainous regions.

3) The *nkuwa* (mu-mi), the large wild fig-tree, which covers the banks of the Nkomati and the Maputju rivers, and is common in the low lands.

137 4) The *ntjopfa* (mu-mi), the wild custard tree, employed to
372 light the sacred fire of nyokwekulu (I. p. 388). It is taboo to use it for ordinary purposes, or to warm oneself at its embers. Medicine-men alone are allowed to make ntjopfa fire, having drugs to prevent the disease caused by its use.

372 Dealing with fire taboos, I may add that it is taboo to use
784 branches of a tree which has been struck by lightning ; taboo also to keep alight the fire of a deceased person after the conclusion of the great mourning. It must be ritually extinguished (I. p. 135). In case of misfortune also (khombo), if the bones order it, the old fire must be put out and a new fire be lighted on the central fire-place of the first wife by means of the wooden flint. Each woman will go and take an ember from it and start her own fire again. These laws show that in the eyes of the Bantus there is an intimate connection between fire and the life of the village. When death or misfortune contaminates the community, fire is affected also, and it must be destroyed if the village is to resume its normal life.

372 Gungunyana used to levy a tax on fire : he ordered all the
651 fires of his kingdom to be extinguished at a certain time, and sent messengers to relight them by means of embers procured from the royal kraal. Each village had to pay a tax for the new fire. It seems that this kind of royal right was exercised in the old times by the famous Monomotapa king. Nothing of the kind is met with amongst the more modest Thonga chiefs.

372 The manner of producing fire with the wooden flint is as follows. A dry branch of the tree is secured, from half an inch to an inch thick, and cut into two pieces, each of about 18 inches in length ; one half is called the wife (nsati), the other half, the husband (nuna). The first piece, the female, is laid on the ground and a notch is made in it with a knife ; the notch is cut in two movements : first on the upper part of the wood, secondly on the side of it. The male is then somewhat rounded, inserted perpendicularly in the notch, held firmly between the palms of the hands and made to revolve by a rapid motion of the hands from top to bottom. The operator having reached the bottom of

keeps its flavour for two days, after which it loses both strength and taste, and turns into vinegar (ntjubi). 273

Amongst the Ba-Ronga a very similar process is followed. They call *mbila* the flour and yeast on which boiling water has been poured on the seventh day, the name of the operation being *ku bandjekela mbila*. They let it remain in a cask for three days before boiling it, collecting in the meantime all the necessary fuel for the cooking. After the boiling, it is called *phiriho*. Empty wine barrels being everywhere available, beer can be brewed in greater quantities than was formerly the case.

When they took refuge in Bilen, during the war of 1894-96, the Ba-Ronga there learned to boil the beer a second time : the flour is cooked twice with the yeast and this greatly increases the strength of the byala, which is then called *mpheka*. From the innocent madleko, full of husks, which are as much food as drink, up to the very strong mpheka, passing through the different kinds of buputju and byala, all the different percentages of alcohol are met with. The quantity of yeast mixed with the flour and the length of the boiling are the two main elements to be considered, and it is very difficult to say where buputju ends and where byala begins! However the following rule may be adopted to differentiate them : beer is *byala* when yeast has been added more than once, when the boiling has been prolonged, when the liquid has been strained and when the amount of alcohol it contains is sufficient to keep it in good condition for more than one day.

2) *Drinks made with fruits or other tree products*. The *bukanye* is the most famous, being the great drink at the national feast (I. p. 399). But another very strong and much appreciated drink of this category is the *buhimbi*. The tree *mphimbi* (Ro.), *mbimbi* (Dj.), has an impenetrable mass of branches on which grows a very agreeable fruit of an orange colour with a double stone inside, externally very much like an apricot. When ripe in December, it is very juicy and sweet and produces a very alcoholic beverage. The fruit is pressed between the hands (phamasa) ; the liquid thus obtained is mixed with water and boiled. Any scum rising to the surface is removed (wungula) and the drink left to ferment for five days. It is so alcoholic that it will keep 137 273

137 in good condition for a year and is said to be more intoxicating
273 than wine. The mphimbi tree is found all over the Delagoa dunes.

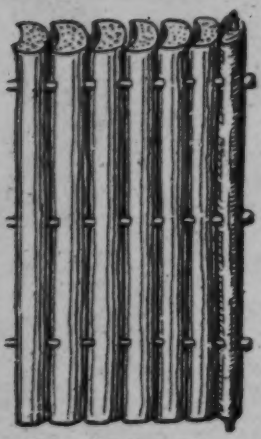
There is an exotic tree, the Anacardium occidentale, called *nkadju* in Ronga which has been introduced and is widely cultivated in the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques. It bears

Milala palm trees.

very juicy fruit which the Natives use to prepare a pretty strong alcoholic drink, the *bukadju*. At the season of bukadju there is an enormous amount of drunkenness round the town.

The *milala* or palm tree, from which is made palm wine, *busura*, grows in forests at various places, especially in Ñwamba, the North of Nondwane, Maluleke, etc. and in some regions
273 Natives devote considerable time to its brewing. The people of Phesen (Pessene Station on the Komati Poort Railway) are said even to neglect their agricultural duties and to indulge in busura to a great excess. The preparation of palm wine is done according to rule. The forest is divided by the chief amongst

introducing the mud between the reeds and spreading it out with 333
the palms of their hands until it forms a smooth layer all over the 342
interior. Not a ray of light can now enter the hut, except through some small open spaces to be seen, here and there, between the roof and the top of the wall. The air circulates more or less through these small vents, which, however, were not included in the original plan of the hut. The remainder of the clay makes a hard even flooring which will be re-covered from time to time with a fresh coating of black plaster (I. p. 187).


Door of a Ronga hut.

As regards the *door*, the Ba-Ronga in the 137
country round Rikatla generally make it of 335
the wood of the mimale palm (Raphia vinifera, see p. 4). They cut down one or two of 342
the giant leaves of this tree, which grows in the marshes. The leaf itself is one enormous central stalk with narrow folioles on either side; these are cut off and the nerve remains: a sort of gigantic switch, twenty to thirty feet in length, about four to six inches wide at the base and tapering gradually to its point, convex on one side, and concave on the other. Once dried, it turns a grey colour. The interior is a fibrous pith, of extraordinarily light weight, whilst the exterior bark is very thin, hard and shiny as though it had been varnished with copal. It is impossible to imagine a lighter wood. Comfort- 335
ably established under the shady trees of the square, our joiner 342
cuts the nerve into several pieces of a given length (say about four feet, the height of the wall). This is not difficult, for it is only necessary to cut through the thin outer bark, when the knife slips through the inner pith, like so much butter! These lengths are then bored through from front to back in three places, say at one, two and three feet from the bottom, and three stout sticks are passed through the holes, firmly holding the several pieces of the nerve together: this makes the door. The ends of the transverse sticks are fixed into a pole which is pointed top and bottom, thus forming pivots or hinges.

II. *Basket-work.*

The milala palm, whose sap supplies the tipplers of Pessene with 137
their famous busura (II. p. 42), is a very valuable tree to the 285
Ba-Ronga, as it is of its leaves that the greater part of the baskets in use by this tribe are made. The basket-maker gathers the most perfect leaves. These are not like the mimale folioles, growing opposite one another on a central nerve. The *milala* (plur. of nala) are true palms, the leaves consisting of folioles from half an inch to an inch in width radiating from a common centre, which itself grows on the end of a long peduncle.

These trees are found in the woods of Mabota, Nondwane, Tembe, on the Coast, and in the low plains of the North Eastern Zoutpansberg, etc., sometimes in large numbers. Returning 285
home, the workman (here we employ the masculine, basket-making being essentially man's work) spreads out the leaves in the sun to dry, having previously straightened the folioles somewhat, separating (hangela) them one from the other ; when they dry, they turn a light grey colour with a shining polished surface, and are then hung up in the hut where they will be sheltered from the dew and ready for use. When the work is to be started, the folioles are torn (phatlula) from their peduncle, and, with a sharp pointed instrument, are split longitudinally into strips or straws of 1/8 or 2/8 of an inch wide, the ribs of the leaves (nhlamalala, yin-tin) being carefully kept ; these delicate wands have their special use.

The Ronga basket makers are very fond of decorating their 285
baskets with *designs in black*. These triangular and square 531
patterns are produced by artistically plaiting dark and light 386
coloured straws, and are not painted on after the baskets are manufactured. The straw is dyed black in the following manner : it is soaked in the black ooze (ntjhaka) of the marshes for two weeks, and then laid out to dry, which gives it a reddish-brownish colour. This hue is deepened by a second treatment. The leaves of a shrub called *mpsabutimu* are gathered and placed in a

than collecting mafureira or wax, or tapping trees for rubber (1). 167

Moreover the fashion of going to the *Transvaal mines*, to earn money, has become so universal that a Thonga would think he had in some sort failed if he had not made a stay in town (shilungu). There, in Johannesburg, they earn £ 3 in the mines, or £ 4—£ 5 monthly as kitchen boys ; so they despise the old primitive trading expeditions which brought less money and were attended with more danger. 439

These new economic conditions not only discourage Natives from trading on their own account, reducing them more and more to the condition of mere hired labourers, but are rapidly destroying their picturesque and interesting industry. For a few shillings they can buy European utensils. Their attractively carved spoons are replaced by ugly tin ones ; their wooden tumblers by less artistic enamelled ones, their primitive plates by European ware decorated in doubtful taste. Instead of the piece of reed which they wore in their ears as a snuff box, they now buy brass cartridges, and the Thonga beauties, discarding the *tihuhlu* fat, now anoint themselves with a scented oil imported from Europe. There may be certain advantages in these changes, but the picturesqueness of Bantu life promptly disappears, together with the incentive to develop their Native arts and crafts! 177 439

E. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ON NATIVE INDUSTRY.

It is a strange destiny, that of these African races amongst whom the civilisation of the XIXth century has appeared, effecting the most radical changes in the minds and manners of people who, for centuries, perhaps for tens of centuries, have remained in the same primitive condition, marking time, so to speak, on the same spot, or, at most, 178

(1) There are at least two species of shrubs whose sap, when hardened, produces excellent rubber. These are fairly wide-spread and M. Dewèvre, a Belgian botanist, who has made a special study of rubber plants, and to whom I sent leaves and fruits of the trees, has classified them amongst the Landolphia. One is said to be a Landolphia Petersiana, and the other a variety of the Landolphia Kirki (Dyer) called by others Landolphia Monteiroi. Natives make an incision in the bark of the tree, and a milky sap exudes, which soon thickens and the somewhat sticky filaments are then wound 137 314

178 progressing almost imperceptibly. The transformation would seem to be as rapid as the previous immobility was fixed.

Let us try to discover the causes which may account for this extraordinary stagnation.

176 All are agreed in bearing witness to the fact that the state of civilisation
178 in which Europeans found the Bantu tribes of South Africa is of an extremely ancient date. It is true that we have but little historical data to go upon as regards the development of these people, but, nevertheless, it seems to me highly probable that the shape of their ngula, their hwama, their shirundju, their pillows, the construction of their huts, dates from a very remote antiquity, and has been handed down unchanged from generation to generation. How are we to account for this lack of development, whilst the Indo-European races, starting probably from similar primitive conditions, have advanced to so high a degree of civilisation as that of the Greeks and Romans, and ultimately to that of modern times?

The reply given by many casual observers to this question is that *the Bantu races are incapable of progress.* They are condemned, by reason of their mental and spiritual constitution, to vegetate in perpetual barbarism or to make themselves ridiculous by a servile imitation of the superior races. This view is not justified by the facts of the case. We recognise a relative mental inferiority in the Thongas, as in their congeners the Bantus, but their minds, nevertheless, possess in a more or less rudimentary state, all those faculties of which we are wont to boast. During the several years I have passed in close contact with these intellects, supposedly so limited, I have been more often struck with the points of analogy between the Africans and ourselves than by the differences which separate us. Besides, it is an error to assert that they have not progressed. Their inventive genius is fully proved by the various ways in which the several tribes have taken advantage of the materials with which Nature has supplied them. The Ba-Ronga do not make their baskets in the same way as the Zulus, or the Ba-Sutho. Again, in many separate instances, we can note a distinct forward movement in their industry; the arrival of glass beads,

137 [illegible] small sticks. A good yield of rubber could undoubtedly be obtained in this country
314 if the trees were cultivated and tapped in an intelligent manner.

(With regard to the name of the rubber tree, compare *Delagoa Bay, its Natives and Natural History*, London, Philip and Son, 1891, written by Mrs Monteiro, an English-woman who spent several years in Lourenço Marques and published interesting observations on the country. Without claiming any great scientific accuracy, this volume affords much interesting information.)

your food a little of the earth of the country which you have left ; 823
this will provide the transition between the old and the new domicile (See I. p. 49).

Metals known to the tribe before the coming of the Whites 135
were few. (See page 137). *Nhumbu* or *nsimbi*, iron, *nsuku*, copper, and *ntchopfa*, a name applied to all white metals (tin, silver, etc.) are the only Native names for metals. There is no word for gold.

V. *The Vegetable World. Thonga Botany.*

While Bantus possess a very limited knowledge of Astronomy, 815
Geography, Mineralogy, etc., while their ideas in these domains are in no way deserving of the name of Science, they are much more advanced as regards Plants. Here it is quite allowable to speak of a Science, a rudimentary Science, no doubt, but a true, precise knowledge which has been transmitted from past ages and which denotes a real power of observation.

The Delagoa flora is not very rich. I have succeeded in 137
collecting between four and five hundred different kinds in a 124
herbarium which I sent many years ago for classification to the 815
Herbier Boissier in Geneva. In February 1893, before forwarding the second lot of exsiccata, I gathered together some Natives of Rikatla in the hut which I had pompously styled a Museum and, having promised them 1 s. each if they consented to remain till the end of the examination, I submitted the dried plants to them, asking them their names, their uses, etc. The result of the inquiry was marvellous. My areopagus did not seem to be a very choice one : an old woman, as dry as my exsiccata and smoking her pipe, another with ochre-smeared hair, a young one, with a baby on her shoulder, an elderly one-eyed man named Hamunde, my milkman. After them came the young chief Muzila, walking 815
slowly, swinging the tails of his belt. This chief, notwithstanding 756
his social rank, showed gross ignorance of botany ; but some of the 824
others knew the name of almost every plant ; had I had a *ñanga*, a medicine-man, amongst them, I am sure I should have obtained

the names of all the specimens of the collection, for they are the great connoisseurs in this domain, their drugs being almost entirely obtained from the vegetable world. 815 756 824

A study of these names undoubtedly proves that Natives have the notion of the *genus*. This had been denied ; it seems that, when naming animals, Bantus distinguish correctly between species, but do not classify species into genera. In Botany it is not so. Under the same name they bring together forms which are sometimes widely different, but which belong to the same genus. Here are some of these names. 137 815 824

Tsuna means fern and applies to the Acrostichum tenuifolium, which climbs up the palm trees in the marsh, as well as to the few other kinds of Filicea found in the district of Lourenço Marques ; *gonhwa* is the name for Liliaceae, many kinds of which blossom in the spring : the Crinum Forbesii, with its big white and pink flower, and other kinds forming a bowl at the extremity of the stem ; there are five kinds of Commelina in my collection, which were called *Nkompfana*, both those with blue flowers, and the yellow ; a certain Papillionaceae genus, the Eriosema, is called *Rongole*. All the Strigae, a genus of the Scrophulariaceae family, are known under the name of *Shitshinyambita*, those which prevent the pot from boiling, as they are believed to have this effect when put into the fire. The Lobeliae are called *Shilawana*, etc.

The notion of the *genus* is so truly present that Thongas distinguish between various species in the same genus. So the tree called *Nkahlu*, an Apocynea, the Tabaernaemontana ventricosa, a valuable tree whose sap is used as a styptic, and whose roots are used to make a decoction for lung complaints, has a congener, found in the palm-tree marsh, the Voacanga Dregei, which is called *Nkahlutjobo*, nkahlu of the marsh. The two genera are very closely akin to each other. 815 137 824 757

Cognate species found in various regions are thus distinguished by the mention of their habitat, either the hill (ntlhaba), or the black earth (nyaka), or the forest (mutju). There is the *Muhlu wa ntlhaba*, of the hill, and *Muhlu-tjhobo*, of the marsh (Secamone sp. tree of the Asclepiadaceae family). This is even more striking

137 in the case of the Hibiscus genus. Its name is *Ntjhesi* ; there
824 are the Ntjhesi of the hill (Hibiscus surratensis, etc.), the Ntjhensi
757 of the nyaka, another species found in Morakwen in the black
815 earth ; and there is the *shitjhesinyana sha ntlhaba*, double diminutive of ntjhesi, the Sida cordifolia, a pretty little Malvacea, a near relative of the Hibiscus, very much used in treating children's complaints, a panacea for babies, as it cures their vomiting, headache, wounds and internal troubles!

137 I find the same correct connection established between two
824 Anonaceae shrubs, the Artabotrys brachypetala, called *Ntiti*, and
815 the Art. Monteiroae, called *Shintitane*, little Ntiti, of the same genus, but a shrub of a very different appearance.

However there is, of course, no anatomical study at the base of this classification : so their ideas of genus are not always, scientifically speaking, correct. They call any parasite *Phakama*, whatever may be its form, and have a superstitious fear of them, especially of the larger ones, growing on other trees, such as the nkanye and nkuhlu : "Phakama dja singita!" (1)

137 *Nkushe* means sea-weed, either the true algae, as Lagarosiphon muscoides, or other plants growing in water and belonging to totally different families, such as Urticularia stellaris, found in the same locality. *Nkaka*, or *Nkakana*, is the little Cucumber already described (p. 14), whilst *Nkaka wa tjhobo* is a Convolvulvus (Ipomea cairica). The *Shirimbyati*, one of the names most employed, designates first the Helichrysum parviflorum, a yellow Composita which covers the sandy dunes, and blossoms during the winter ; but *Shirimbyati sha tjhune*, the male one, is Gnaphalium stenophyllum, and *Shirimbyati sha mutju*, the one of the forest, an Indigofera belonging to the Leguminosae family ; these three plants have in common small hard leaves : hence the same name is given to them, although they are by no means related botanically speaking. So shirimbyati corresponds to our word heath, which is applied to many forms of evergreen undergrowth.

777 (1) "The parasite stem *singita*," i. e. is of bad omen. They do not say *yila*, is
824 taboo, though some rules apply to it similar to those concerning the tree struck by lightning. One does not warm oneself at its fire ; its wood is not employed to cook
753 food, for fear lest men should suffer from hydrocele.

The want of an enlightened botanical sense is further seen in the following fact : three different kinds of Vernonia, though belonging to the same genus, are called by different names, as if the Thongas had altogether failed to perceive their relation. The Vernonia cinerea is called *Ntshontshongori* ; the V. Perotteti, *Nkukulashibuya* (the plant with which one sweeps the threshing floor) ; the V. Tigna, *Hlunguhlungu*. 137

Another case of one and the same name applied to plants of different families having merely an external resemblance is the following : the *Ndjiba* is a Leguminosa tree of large proportions, Apalatoa delagoensis (Schinz), and the *Shindjibana*, viz., the little Ndjiba, is a small shrub with leaves somewhat similar to those of the Ndjiba. Its scientific name is Synaptolepis Oliveriana and it belongs to the Thymeleaceae family.

It is no wonder that the notion of genus, though existant, has not always been correctly and universally applied. Thongas have no idea of the anatomy of plants ; they have never dissected a flower, and are totally ignorant of the presence of male and female elements in it. They know, however, that these sexual differences exist. They have noticed, for instance, amongst the nkanye stems, which are of a dioecious species, that some are male and some female, and they carefully preserve some of the male stems in order to fecundate the female ones ; but they believe that this fecundation takes place through the roots of the trees! 815 824

Thus, when the name of a plant can be explained, we see that, in naming it, *its external characters, or its uses*, have alone been considered. For instance the beautiful yellow Sterculiacea, Melhania Forbesii, is called *Muhlwadambu*, Setting Sun, because its deep colour is similar to that of the sun when dipping below the horizon. A certain plant whose seeds explode when crushed is the *Buputwana*, because, "it says bu-bu-bu." A climbing Composita with juicy stem is the *Kamele*, "the one which is pressed," (kama) to squeeze out its juice, which is said to have a medicinal value. A Euphorbiacea whose fruit is eaten by the partridges (Fluggea obovata) is the *Midyañhwari*, partridges' food. Those named after their uses are, for instance, *Nkukulashibuya*, the one which sweeps the threshing floor (Vernonia Perotteti) ; *Nhlangulaba-* 137 815 824

137 *tjongwana*, the one employed to wipe little children when dirty!
815 (This plant is tomentous and answers well for the purpose); *Psekamafura*, a large tree (Casearia Junodi, Schinz), a tree whose
824 fuel is particularly good for melting mafureira fat (p. 18), etc. The Asparagus bearst he name of *Nkwangulatilo*, the same as that of the rainbow. When asked why this is so, Natives say that it is because the colour of the asparagus leaves resembles that of the rainbow, but another explanation which seems to me more probable is this: it is because this plant is given as a medicine to little children to prevent the roaring of thunder from "tearing out their diaphragm (handjula lipfalo)."

815 The great use of the vegetable world is to provide men with food and medicine. If plants bear names and have been carefully
824 studied by the Bantus this is, in the first place, because they are useful in these two respects. We have already considered Thonga vegetarian food (p. 9-19), and I shall devote some pages to the medical art in Chapter III.

In Appendix II, I give a list of Thonga botanical names with their scientific equivalents. These plants have been identified by Dr. Schinz, who published a flora of Delagoa Bay in the "Bulletin de l'Herbier Boissier," No. 10, 1900.

The conclusion reached from this study of Thonga names of plants is that the vegetable world has been the subject of a true and, in a certain sense, scientific observation on their part. Their botanical knowledge can be compared with that of our forefathers of two or three hundred years ago, before Botany became a true science, when plants were still named from their external characteristics, and studied as medicinal herbs; I would even say that this knowledge, though of an inferior type, is more general amongst Thongas than, for instance, amongst the European peasantry; a fact which shows that their powers of observation and scientific study are not inferior to those of other more advanced races.

Do plants play a part in Thonga religion? (1)

000 When travelling through the country, you may come across

(1) The Vendas plant the bulbs of an Amaryllida which they call Lohome near the stone which they use as an altar. See *S. A. Journal of Science*, Vol. XVII, p. 215.

754 still clapping their hands and singing. He approaches a hut,
695 enters, and triumphantly plants his assagay in one corner. A hole
787 is dug in that spot and — just where so and so places his wooden pillow when retiring to rest for the night — there are discovered a small gourd full of blood, packets of suspicious objects connected with enchantment, and perhaps a snake. It is quite possible that the diviner may have previously hidden these articles; nevertheless he carries them exultingly away; they are the wizards' weapons, the "bloods" (tingati) which they throw over their victims at night.

The shinusa returns to the village of the chief, who is veryangry, and orders him to go and show these objects to their owner. Then the magician, making a sign to the crowd to stop singing, will go and throw the articles in front of the occupant of the hut to put him to shame before the whole assembly. The mysterious charms, and the noyi's gourd, must in every case be consumed by fire, and then the sickness and deaths in the village should cease.

e) *The Mondjo ordeal.*

754 As already pointed out, the final and supreme method of
695 unmasking baloyi is the *mondjo ordeal*. This is a legal procedure ordered by the chief, a true method of obtaining information in a criminal case. This custom calls to mind the judgment of God in the Middle Ages (ordeal is derived from "urtheil," judgment); it is practised by the majority of the Bantu tribes, varying from one tribe to another, but everywhere it has the same end in view, namely the discovery of the casters of spells by the imposition of an ordeal which is supposed to be fatal to such as are guilty.

This ordeal is called amongst the Ba-Ronga (as also from one end of the Thonga tribe to the other) *drinking the mondjo* (ku nwa
[137] mondjo). The mondjo is a plant of the Solaneae family, probably a Datura, which possesses intoxicating properties. With it a special magician prepares a beverage which is to act as a means of revelation. It can be resorted to by any individual accused of witchcraft, or of any other crime. A woman accused of adultery,

Amongst the first we have already noticed *falling stars* (p. 309) ; 787
the snail (p. 338) : should you meet with it on the road, you will soon hear that one of your relatives has died ; *the stem of cuscuta* (yendje-yendje) ; (1) there are families, however, for which this is not of bad omen, but for other people it foretells misfortune ; *the mbonga bee* belongs to the same class (p. 337) ; the various kinds of *mistletoe* are also of bad omen. So also is the *puff-adder* (p. 340), the *likure* (p. 340), a greyish slender snake : if it blows upon you, or bites you, you will grow thin and turn grey, like the animal itself ; the long-legged bird *shitshinyariendjo* foretells misfortune on the road (I. p. 339) as do also the *buwumati* snake and the *nkangu bird*.

Other objects are of good omen ; the beetle *Eccopteptera* and the *Mutilla* (p. 336), and especially the beetle *Bombolosi*, belonging to the Curculionidae family, a curious insect which drops to the ground and counterfeits death when touched or frightened ; it is the symbol of riches. Natives hang it on a string at their door ; I have heard of others hanging it in their hair ; but in this case it is said to be placed there to eat lice!

All these superstitions are believed in more or less seriously. But, in order to know their fate and what they must do to avoid misfortune, Thongas have recourse to true methods of divination. Amongst these mantic practices some are simple and some more elaborate.

II. *Less important Means of Divination.*

1) Amongst these I may mention first the *pshapsha*, which 524
corresponds to our "drawing lots" and is performed exactly 787
in the same way by placing pieces of grass or sticks of different length between the fingers, and pulling out one of them, having

(1) The cuscuta sometimes covers large patches of ground on the sandy hills of 137
Thongaland ; as is well-known, it has a regular root, but afterwards becomes a parasite 824
on the vegetables to which it attaches itself, whilst its stem and root die. This fact 787
has been noticed by the Natives, and has given the cuscuta a special value in their eyes. When they happen to find a plant which still retains its stem and root, magicians make use of these, especially in their exorcism rites. But this stem, which is so rare, is a bad omen for ordinary people.

APPENDIX II (See p. 332).

List of Thonga botanic names with their scientific equivalents.

According to the publication of Hans Schinz and Henri-A. Junod:
"Zur Kenntnis der Pflanzenwelt der Delago-Bay."
"Bulletin de l'Herbier Boissier," Tome VII, N° II, 1899.

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137

Pteridophyta.	Tsuna.	Acrostichum tenuifolium (and other fern
Typhaceae.	Papala.	Typha australis (Used to make mats).
Pandanaceae.	Shihlowa.	Pandanus.
Aponogetonaceae.	Fenyana.	Aponogeton spathaceus (1).
Hydrocharitaceae.	Nkushe.	Lagarosiphon muscoides (2).
Gramina.	Luhlwa.	Imperata cylindrica (Used as thatch).
»	Byanyi.	Andropogon (and all the other grasses).
»	Litlange. Ntlangi.	Cynodon dactylon.
Cyperaceae.	Nhlale.	Cyperus flabelliformis.
»	Bungu.	Cyperus prolifer (?) (Papyrus).
Commelinaceae.	Nkompfana.	Commelina africana, Forskalei, etc.
Liliaceae.	Goñhwa.	Crinum Forbesii, etc.
Orchidaceae.	Shishengane.	Eulophia papillosa.
Olacaceae.	Psautemu.	Opilia tomentella (3).
Amarantaceae.	Shinghalafumane.	Hermbstaedtia elegans.
»	Tlabatlabane.	Cyphocarpa Zeyheri (4).
Nympheaceae.	Tibu.	Nymphaea coerulea (Bulb edible).
Menispermaceae.	Shimbyati.	Cissampelos Pareira (5).
»	Shihumbula.	Synclisia Junodi.
Anonaceae.	Ntiti.	Artabotrys brachypetala.
»	Shistitana.	Artabotrys Monteirosae.
Leguminosae.	Gowana.	Albizzia fastigiata.
»	Khawa.	Acacia kraussiana.
»	Ndjiba.	Apalatoa delagoensis.
»	Ntjunge.	Dichrostachys nutans.
»	Nembe-nembe.	Cassia petersiana.
»	Hlapfuta (Ro).	Afzelia Cuanzensis. (6)
»	Shene (Dj).	» »
»	Shirimbyati sha mutju.	Indigofera podophylla.
»	Shirimgeti sha tchune.	Indigofera sp ?
»	Lisekaseka.	Sesbania aculeata.
»	Shekane.	Desmodium incanum.
»	Nwamahlanga.	Canavalia obtusifolia,
»	Rongolo ra nhlobe.	Eriosema cajanoides (The white Rongolo)
Meliaceae.	Nyamari.	Ekebergia Meyeri.
Euphorbiaceae.	Midyanhwari.	Flugea obovata.
»	Shinyandjana.	Phyllantus pentandrus.
Anacardiaceae.	Nkanye.	Sclerocarya caffra (King of trees!) (p. 17)
Hippocrateaceae.	Shikokombela.	Hippocrates sp.
»	Mphyinsha.	Salacia Kraussii (Fruit edible).
Sapindaceae.	Buputwane.	Cardiospermum halicacabum.
Malvaceae.	Ntjinsi.	Hibiscus surattensis, Trionum, etc.
»	Shintjincana.	Sida cordifolia.
»	Bushale.	Gossypium herbaceum (Cotton).

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Sterculiaceae.	Muhlwadambu.	Melhania Forbesii.
»	Nkondlwahari.	Waltheria americana.
Ochnaceae.	Kelekele.	Ochna arborea.
Flacourtiaceae.	Psekamafura.	Casearia Junodii (Schinz).
»	Nhlungunu.	Flacourtia Ramontoli.
Passifloraceae.	Menyamamba.	Modecca Kirkii.
Thymeleaceae.	Shindjibane.	Synaptolepis Oliveriana.
Combretaceae.	Balekanhloko.	Combretum Gueinzii.
»	Nkonono.	Terminalia sericea (Used for handles, etc.).
Ebenaceae.	Nhlangulane.	Euclea natalensis.
»	Shirole.	Royena pentandra.
Sapotaceae.	Ndjole.	Mimusops caffra (Fruit edible).
Loganiaceae.	Neala.	Strychnos spinosa (p. 16).
»	Nkwakwa.	Strychnos Ungasha (p. 17).
Apocynaceae.	Nulu.	Carissa Arduina.
»	Ntamunga.	Carissa sp. (Fruit edible).
»	Mbungu.	Landolphia Kirkii (7)
»	Nkahlu.	Tabaernaemontana ventricosa (Styptic).
»	Nkahlu-tjhobo.	Vocanga Dregei.
»	Ntjulu.	Strophanthus Petersianus (p. 58).
Asclepiadaceae.	Muhlu-tjhobo.	Secamone sp.
»	Ndjutlwane.	Sarcostoma viminale.
Convolvulaceae.	Nkaka-wa-tjhobo.	Ipomoea cairica.
»	Masinga.	Stictocardia Woodii.
Scrophulariaceae.	Shitsinyambita.	Striga orobanchoïdes.
»	Murilwane (Dj).	Striga lutea.
Solanaceae.	Rulane.	Solanum panduraeforme.
»	Mondjo.	Datura fastuosa (?) (8).
Bignoniaceae.	Mpfungura.	Kigelia aethiopica.
Pedaliaceae.	Hlehlwa.	Preirea Forbesii.
Lentibulariaceae.	Nkushe.	Utricularia stellaris.
Rubiaceae.	Ngalangala.	Tricalysia Kraussiana.
Cucurbitaceae.	Nkaka.	Momordica Balsamina (Edible).
»	Shirakarana.	Citrullus Naudinianus.
»	Nkaka wa Batshopi.	Coccinia jatrophaefolia (Eaten by Chopis).
Campanulaceae.	Shihlangwana.	Wahlenbergia arenaria.
»	Shilawana.	Lobelia chilawana (Schinz).
Compositae.	Ntshontshongori.	Vernonia Cinerea.
»	Nkukula-shibuya.	» Perotteti.
»	Hlanguhlungu.	» tigna.
»	Shifodyana.	Ageratum conyzoides.
»	Kamele.	Mikania scandens (Medicinal).
»	Shirimbyati sha tchune.	Gnaphalium stenophyllum.
»	Shirimbyati.	Helichrysum parviflorum.
»	Mushidji.	Bidens africana.
»	Nhlangula-batjongwana.	Helichrysum damarense.

This list might be greatly extended by any one devoting more time to the study of Thonga botany. Though it is not complete, I publish it, knowing by experience how difficult accurate botanic classification is in South African flora. It may be used as a starting point.

(1) Dancers make crowns of it. (2) All the algae and generally plants growing in water are called Nkushe. (3) Banyans are said to use it to clean their teeth. (4) Used for rheumatism (5) Medicine for bowel complaints. (6) Used to manufacture canoes. (7) Indiarubber, Kafir orange, p. 19. (8) This plant, used as a means of divination, is a Datura, subspontaneous or cultivated in various spots. I cannot guarantee the name of the species (p. 530).

181 703 as the Pedis. I saw the two armies, the same day, preparing for the same battle. The Thongas were armed to the teeth, forming a great circle, all standing, shouting their war songs, gesticulating, jumping, imploring their chief to allow them to start. The Pedi warriors were sitting under trees, taking their snuff and apparently as calm as any other day.

During the Gungunyane war, the Thongas were brave, at least those not entirely dependent on the Ngoni king, who had not allowed his warriors to kill white men. The Rongas of Mpfumu especially showed great courage and endurance, and those who served the Portuguese in their Angola war have been praised as being very steady and reliable.

177 181 725 721 On the other hand everything seems to prove that military ability is not an ancient feature of the Thonga character, and that it has been imparted to them by the Zulus, who taught them the art of fighting during the last century, pushing them to the front in their battles and calling them "Mabuyandlela," "those who open the way." Before the Ngoni invasion, the Thonga armies were ignorant of the *mukhumbi* viz. the armed circle of warriors which is the basis of the Zulu military system; (See Part IV) : they used to form themselves into a straight line and, in their battles, very few men were killed. They were normal Bantu clans, viz. people living peacefully, occasionally quarrelling with their neighbours. The idea of conquest, of vast dominion, the system of an armed nation which Chaka and his followers pursued, was something new amongst South African Natives and was probably borrowed by Dingiswayo from the Whites. This fact ought not to be ignored.

Under a just European supervision, there is no probability that the Thonga tribe will change its peaceful and mild charcter.

142 3) *Physical characteristics of the Thongas.* It cannot be said that the Thongas possess a very distinct and unique physical type. They are generally of a dark brown colour, sometimes purely black, much darker than the Suthos. As a whole, their external appearance bears a much closer resemblance to that of the Zulus, but, as regards face and stature, they vary very much. You may meet Thongas with typical negro faces, broad lips, flat

142/144 noses, prominent cheek bones, and the same day, at the same place, other men of the same clan with a much narrower face, thin lips and pointed noses. It seems that there are two different types amongst them, the coarse type which was perhaps more wide-spread amongst the primitive populations, and which has been kept very distinct by the Ba-Chopi of the Coast, and the finer, which belonged perhaps to the invaders, and both types have inter-crossed in all possible ways. There seems also to have been an Arabic influence in some of the clans. A Native Commissioner in the Zoutpansberg has noticed amongst some of the Thonga settlements striking Semitic features, arched noses, thin lips. Has there been any intermarriage between the Thongas and those Arabs who settled on the East Coast long before it was discovered by Vasco de Gama ? Who can say ?

854 is to lessen the dangers of growth (pumba nombo), so that the sickness should not be too bad. (These are the milombyana,

[142]

Phot. A. Bere

Girls with babies at Makulane

(Mapunju country.)

304 right!" When the Ba-Ngoni of the XIXth century came, they submitted themselves to the custom, not from fear of mockery, but to hide their Zulu nationality. Chaka had sent his impis to kill them and, as they were recognised by the absence of pimples, they began to tattoo themselves. When the danger was passed,

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Phot. H.-A. Junod.
Tattooed women of the Nkuna clan.

they ceased to perform the operation. They began in their turn to mock the Thongas who had followed their example.

304 Amo gst the Ba-Ronga it is not certain that the big black
881 pimples ever existed. In former times men used to make two lines of small pimples on both sides of the body, extending from the nipple and from the shoulders downwards. Now the custom

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

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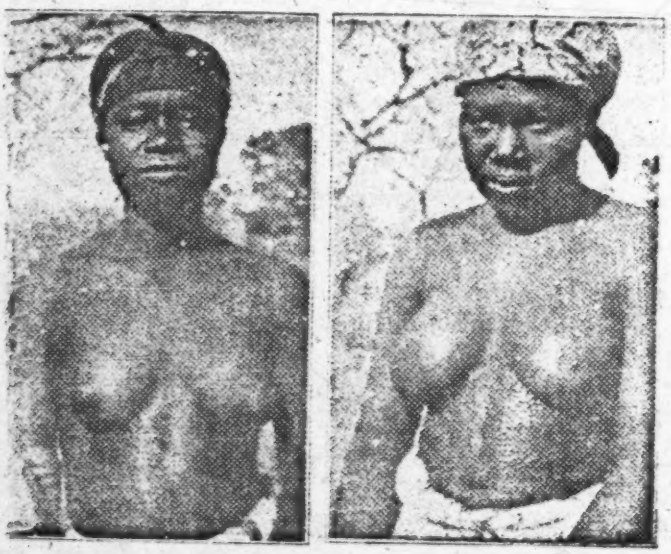
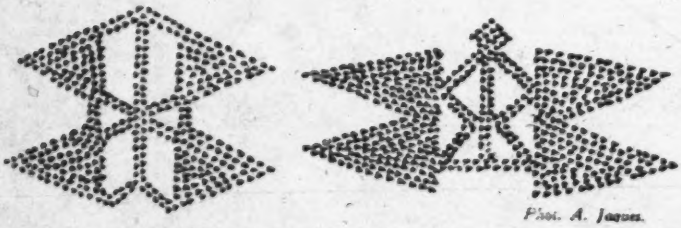
these days, or to go to the village to eat the food of other people (just as it is for boys who pierce their ears). Girls prepare themselves for the operation by eating a special food which soften-





Phot. A. Jaques.

Tattooed women of the Tembe clan.

the skin of the belly (nabyala khuri). All these rules tend to show that, in former times, tattooing had a deep meaning, a ritual value which has more or less disappeared. Mboza told me : "It is not a regular taboo (yila), but only a custom (shihila) of the country."

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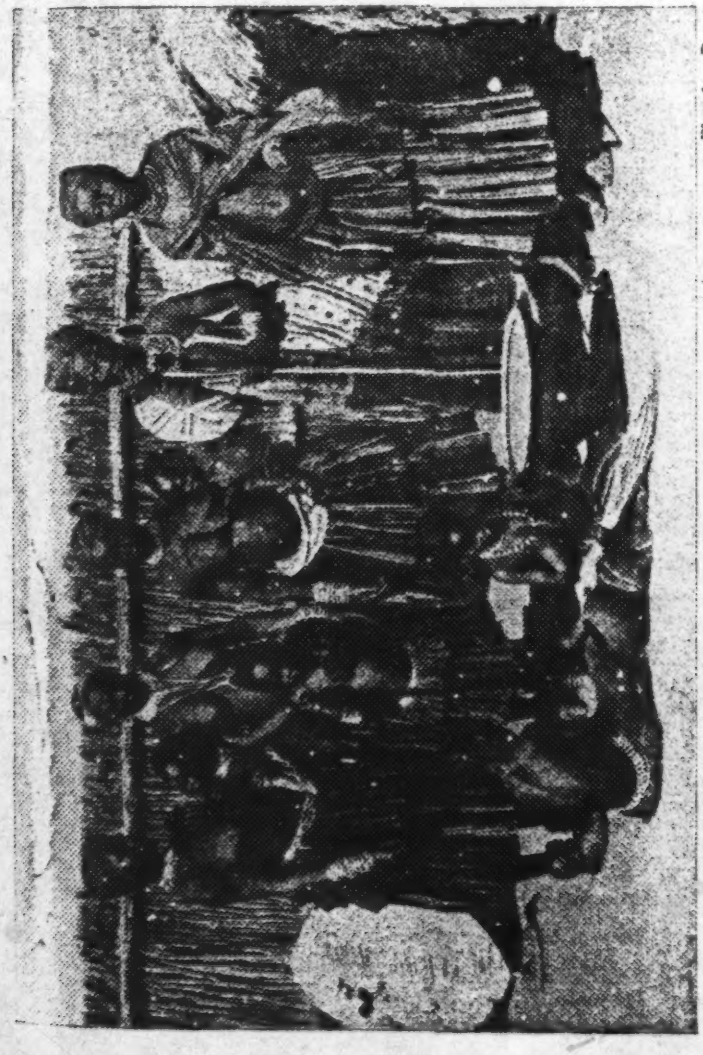

Thonga women of the Transvaal.

Phot. from Pretoria

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which is very cunning : it pricks up its ears, it prepares itself for defence, when attacked!

Tail of nsimango, you are like Muhlaba, you are of a great beauty, you are shining inside the forest, the black forest, you are sparkling, kati-kati-kati, (1) a man may truly fear when he sees you!

Give them meat, that they may all eat! Give your men the foreleg,

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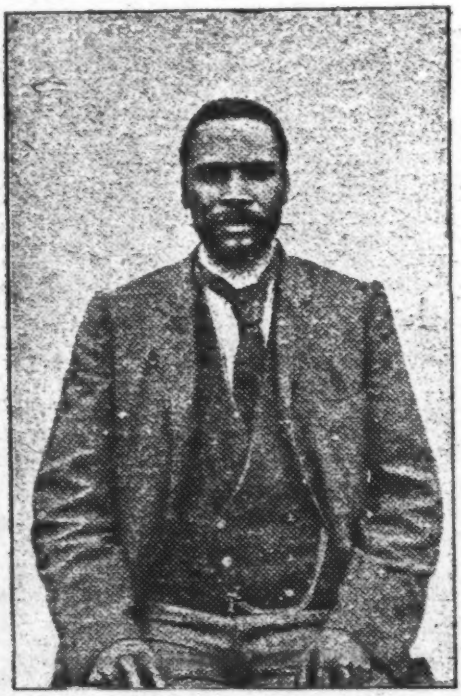

Muhlaba, the Chief of the Nkuna clan. *Phot. A. Borel.*

give them the hindleg, that they may all eat to their hearts' content... Pull their legs forward (ba koke milenge), so that they fall back in terror of you!

Why do you govern them so mildly! Look at them with terrible

(1) Descriptive adverb.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

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put forward in short sentences, generally interrogative, by one of the counsellors. The assembly listens in silence until the mover concludes with an energetic "Ahina," being the equivalent of "That's all right." (See p. 354.) Another individual elaborates the matter further, saying: "Did you not hear what he said? He said so and so." This is the way of seconding the motion. The debate proceeds, and, little by little, objections are brought forward and the assembly comes to a decision.

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It often happens that the chief does not say a word; when he see that the counsellors are agreed and if he has no objection, he merely shows his assent by nodding his head. So the decision is arrived at without his intervention and without any vote being taken. The voice of the majority has not been ascertained by any show of hands, but it is generally perceived by intuition in a very remarkable way, and grave counsellors, who have been squatting in a circle all through the discussion, jump to their feet and disperse, knowing perfectly well what has been decided. If however the counsellors do not agree, they put the matter into the hands of the chief, and the chief, after having listened to the arguments pro and con, "cuts the matter" (tjema mhaka) by some short sentences, after which everybody must shout the royal salutation: "Bayete!"

Phot. A. Burd.
An habitué of the Nhuna Court.

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When there are two parties present, the debate is conducted according to other rules. For instance, if a stranger wishes to have speech with a chief or to proffer some request, he is generally accompanied by a counsellor. The chief, together with some of his men, receives him either in the hut, if the affair must

301 out that this custom probably had a social significance in former times, though at present it is practised as an adornment.

302 As regards *hair* (nsisi, mu-mi), women often cut it, men less

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Maputju women with "tingoya."

302 frequently. A man only cuts his hair when his wife dies, as a [765] sign of mourning : it is a taboo (I. p. 146). In former times they never shaved their beards. People made fun of those who did so, saying : "Are you an Angolese?" (The Angolese, who are numerous in the neighbourhood of Lourenço-Marques,

538 if this rule is not followed, the transgressor will become bald!
461 This is one of the most surprising of the lesser taboos of the tribe. What is its origin? Have the Natives noticed that famous story-tellers, those who practised their art day and night, were liable to this misfortune? I could get no information on this point. I rather think the prohibition comes from the fact that this game is so popular that they are afraid to devote too much time to it: people would lose all inclination for work, if they started it during the day. So they instinctively forbade story-telling in the day-time!

[142 538]

Phot. A. Borel.

Martha, a Ronga story-teller.

Another curious custom in connection with tales is this: when a story-teller comes to the end of his tale, he concludes with the following words: "Tju-tju... famba ka Gwambe ni Dzabana!" — "Run away, go to Gwambe and Dzabana." These two personages are believed, at least amongst the Northern clans, to have been the first man and the first woman (see Part VI), and I suppose that the object of this kind of incantation is to prevent the marvellous story haunting the hearers during the night, and troubling their sleep by disagreeable dreams. It is a means of returning from fairyland to the realms of every-day life! All these details tend to show the importance of folk-tales in the Native life, and their popularity amongst the tribe.

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144 noses, prominent cheek bones, and the same day, at the same place, other men of the same clan with a much narrower face, thin lips and pointed noses. It seems that there are two different types amongst them, the coarse type which was perhaps more wide-spread amongst the primitive populations, and which has been kept very distinct by the Ba-Chopi of the Coast, and the finer, which belonged perhaps to the invaders, and both types have inter-crossed in all possible ways. There seems also to have been an Arabic influence in some of the clans. A Native Commissioner in the Zoutpansberg has noticed amongst some of the Thonga settlements striking Semitic features, arched noses, thin lips. Has there been any intermarriage between the Thongas and those Arabs who settled on the East Coast long before it was discovered by Vasco de Gama ? Who can say ?

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

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of a little bit of wood, and when the bird puts its beak into the bait, it is caught round the neck by the string. On the borders of the lake of Rikatla, boys used to catch even big birds with these traps. They set many kinds of snares. One is a cage made of sticks of palm marrows which shuts automatically when a bird enters and eats the grain by which it has been attracted. They sometimes build two walls of sticks planted in the soil and converging to the same point, where they reach a little door provided with the trap. Hares are sometimes caught in this way. They follow the wall, and when they go through the door, they tread on a hurdle which is connected with a bent rod : the rod springs back and the hare is caught.

4) Learning the science of the bush.

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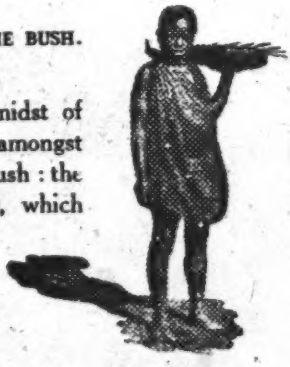
This life in the velt, always in the midst of Nature, develops the power of observation amongst the boys. They know everything in the bush : the big Psyche caterpillar (Eumeta cervina), which hangs from the nembe-nembe shrub (Cassia petersiana) like a little bundle of sticks, and which they call *mahambanindlwane*, "the one who walks with his house;" the big Carabid beetle which appears with the first rain, the Anthia alveolata, marked with large hollows on the elytra and which is therefore named "the son of the smallpox." Indeed I found in Rikatla a boy who knew that a certain white cocoon found on the branches of the nkanye tree (Sclerocarya caffra) gives birth to the splendid green Queen Moth (Argema Mimosae). Having collected beetles and butterflies extensively for years, I have had an opportunity of recognizing the power of observation of these boys, who were my best hunters! Of course they particularly appreciate things edible... especially the *shitambela*, a big Bupresta beetle which they roast and suck.



Phot. G. Liengme.
A Thonga boy.

[262]

685 has been pulled up and the sand nicely smoothed down, so that
343 any traces of a thief would easily be seen. He will possibly be
151 recognised at once by the trackers, owing to some peculiarity in the
625 marks on the sand, the foot-print of each individual being more or less known ; clever detectives can even ascertain the height and gait of a man from the length of his stride! If there are no peculiar marks in the foot-prints, the trackers will follow them and reach the village where the thief lives. They will perhaps take him by surprise in his hut. If the matter cannot be settled by the headman of the village and has to be brought before the chief, the guilty party will be fined as much as two, three or even five pounds sterling (Tobane) (1).

When detectives have been unable to trace a thief, they assume a philosophical attitude and say : "Only wait. A man who has stolen will steal again, and you will catch him another time!"

643 *Revolt against the decisions of the chief's hubo* is very rare. Should
687 any person take the part of a condemned man and encourage him to oppose the decision of the Court, he will be beaten with a shambock on the square of the capital. "U onhi hubo," "he has spoilt the Court!" Moreover he may have to pay a fine of £ 2. (Mankhelu.)

643 *Answer to some of Professor Frazer's questions on Government.*
835 There are no separate chiefs for war and peace. But in time
224 of war the great induna, who is the Commander-in-chief of the
701 army, directs all military operations. — The chief is never required to marry his own sister or daughter. The only similar case of which I have heard, is that of a hunter who must have sexual relations with his daughter before going on a hunting trip (Part IV).

643 — The king's mother does not hold any special office.—
778 The chief does not keep any portion of his deceased predecessor excepting the nails and hair used for the mhamba (See page 386 and part VI)

538 (1) The following interesting couplet in two sentences aptly describes the thief :
Shishlungwa rendjeletane ? — The crown on the hut nicely rounded ?
Mangatlu a psha ritiho... — The hawk burns his claws...
The thief is like a crown on the top of a hut. He is a lazy person, he attitudinises and will not work. Evil will befall him, as with a hawk who tries to snatch the meat that is roasting and burns his claws!

224 Let me first mention some of the *social rites* connected with
422 hunting.

When a man finds *a dead animal* in the bush, if it is not too heavy, he can hoist it on his shoulders and take it home to eat. We know that Natives are not afraid of eating dead meat and enjoy an extraordinary immunity from its dangers. But if it is an elephant, for instance, the man who has found it, perhaps by following the vultures which gather round the dead body, will first carefully examine the soil all round the beast to be sure that nobody has seen it before him. If no footprints are to be seen, he cuts a piece of meat, places it on a fire and eats to his heart's content. Then he cuts off the tail (tjoba) of the animal and runs home to call his fellow-clansmen. The tail is his "means of notification" (bika) ; they all rush to the spot, cut off the limbs and carry them to the village. Should the animal have fallen in a country which is not that of the finder, the latter will give the owners of the land one of the limbs and the ribs which were in contact with the ground (1).

● 151 To find a dead animal is not a common occurrence. Generally
224 the hunter meets with *living game*. He at once sets off in pursuit with his dogs. He may pursue the animal for hours, or even days. My friend Spoor (I. p. 7), though suffering from asthma, often succeeded in killing an antelope which had been overcome with fatigue and was found by him lying asleep. But he may often have to start without having seen anything. *The study of footprints* is then of paramount importance. In the sandy plains

(1) The Nkumba clan, 10 Kil. north of Lourenço Marques, lost its independance on account of a dead elephant under the following circumstances. One of the men of this clan had found a dead elephant. He at once cut off the tail and went to the village of the chief to "bika." Whilst he was away a troup of men of the Libombo clan, settled some kilometers further north, came to the spot. They put an axe into the animal's rectum, and when the Nkumbas arrived they said to them : "This beast is ours ! You have cut off the tail, but we had put our axe into its rectum long before." And a big warrior took the axe out triumphantly. The Nkumbas said "goo," i. e. they were greatly embarrassed and answered : "You lie ! We had cut off the tail before you came !" — "Not at all," answered the Libombos ! "Our method of appropriating a dead animal is to put an axe into its rectum." This led to a fight in which the Nkumbas were defeated, and later on, one of them having died and been buried in their sacred wood (ntiñwen), the Libombos dug up the corpse and threw it away. The poor Nkumbas were obliged to bury it in another place : they had lost their country !

of the coast, antelopes leave well marked traces in the soil. A hunter starts at 8 a. m. and notices that the footprint is of a dark colour ; this shows that the morning dew has fallen into it ; therefore the footprint was made during the night, some hours before. If the edges of the print are sharply cut, this means that the animal passed in the early morning, when the sand was still a little wet and firm, whilst if the edges are irregular or have crumbled down, it is a sign that the print was made at noon, when the sand is quite dry and loose. The Rev. A. Aubert living in the Maputju country, who often questioned hunters on the subject, told me that these men had wonderful skill in drawing their conclusions at a glance, apparently without any reasoning process. It is evident that the reasoning process must have taken place at some period, but it has become almost instinctive : the sight of the footprint immediately gives the hunter the information required. They are even able, when on the track of two antelopes of the same kind, to state which are the footprints of the male and which those of the female, the latter being generally somewhat smaller.

151 224

When the soil is hard, or clayish, there may be more difficulty. The hunter will observe the depth of the footprint ; if it is deeply marked, this shows that the earth was wet and soft when the animal passed ; therefore it was in the early morning, just after the fall of the dew. Or he may notice that a stone has been displaced and turned upside down by the antelope's hoofs ; should the upper side of this stone be wet, the displacement took place before the dew fell. On the contrary, should it be dry, the stone has just been moved and the animal is not far off. The Rev. P. Rosset, who was once led in an eland hunt by an experienced "phisa", told me that the man was all the time muttering volubly, talking to himself in a low voice, interpreting to himself all the signs he observed and drawing his conclusions without taking any heed of his white companion (1).

(1) Native children begin very early to learn the science of footprints. They notice the peculiar aspect of the footprint of all the inmates of the village and are soon able to recognize them. They even connect them with their respective ways of walking, which is indicated by the footprints being turned more or less outwards.

151 868

192 *khempfa*, he sits down very tired ; *yinti*, he stands listening attentively, etc.

The *facial expressions* are minutely described by a great wealth of such words : a man says : *langu*, he looks at something ; *lori*, with attention ; *dloto*, intently, and for a long time ; *pari*, with anger ; *dlanya*, with kindness.

Let us take another step forward and we shall find another category describing the *state of mind*, the feelings of the heart, which are also phenomena of vision in as far as they correspond to given attitudes of the body or to certain expressions of the features. A man says *gee*, he is happy ; *kono*, he fears ; *nkwi-nkwisi*, he is in a bad humour ; *doko-doko*, he covets ; *punavuna*, he has pity.

By means of such adverbs *phenomena of Nature* and even *abstract ideas* can be described. Heaven says, *mphu*, it becomes dark ; *dzunu*, the day breaks ; the smoke says *tobi-tobi*, it ascends to heaven ; the water, or the rays of the sun, say *lululu*, they begin to feel warm ; the fire says *lasi-lasi*, it is seen flickering far away.

Abstract ideas. Men say *bi* or *kutlu*, they are all killed, to the last one (total destruction) ; somebody says *kwemetelo*, he does not attain his end, etc.

[124] The list of descriptive adverbs which I have collected comprises more than 250 of them. Most of these were obtained in the following way. When teaching my pupils the Bukhaneli, viz., the Grammar of their own language — which I always found a very interesting and useful subject of study for them — I asked each of them to write down at once 50 of these strange words. Without hesitation they complied with my demand, one of them writing as many as 70. Almost all of them were different. This shows the extreme wealth of the language in this respect. It is no exaggeration to say that, in Thonga, there are ten, perhaps twenty times as many descriptive adverbs as those quoted by my pupils. In dealing with the characteristics of the Thonga or Bantu mind, I think they are worthy of close consideration. These thousands of words, instinctively formed to express the impression made on the brain by any kind of phenomena, prove the existence of a wonderful power of description. The Bantu

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151 192 mind is extraordinarily sensitive to any shock from without, and it finds a way of expressing this sensitiveness by picturesque words which give an extraordinary interest and colour to speech. Bantus are far superior to us in this respect, and that is why so few Europeans can really learn to use these descriptive adverbs properly (not to mention those who look upon them with contempt!) And this is one of the signs of what I do not hesitate to call the literary sense of the Bantu mind!

In the first edition I asked the question: Are these descriptive adverbs confined to the Thongas or are they to be found in other Bantu languages? The knowledge which I possessed in 1910 gave me reason to suppose that they were indeed to be met with in at least a great number of these. Torrend in his *Comparative Grammar* quotes some of them from Kafir and Senna and refers to a whole list compiled by the Rev. A. Hetherwick in his *Yao Grammar* and by Rebmann in the *Kinyassa Dictionary*. Torrend calls them onomatopoetic substantives. Colenso gives a good many of them in his *Zulu-English Dictionary*. Grout only briefly mentions five of them in his Chapter on Zulu interjections. Endemann, in the first edition of his *Sotho Grammatik* recognizes their existence (p. 170) and classes them also as interjections, but adds: "Most of the interjections of this kind do not belong to the written language." Since then the Rev. R. Godfrey has published the second edition of the Kropf *Kafir-English* Dictionary (1915) and in his remarkable Introduction has shown the immense part these expressions play in Kafir. He calls them Primary or Strong Stems. Prof. Westerman in his *Grammatik der Ewesprache* has also shown their importance in the languages of the tribes of Western Africa. It may thus be asserted that this linguistic phenomenon is met with all through primitive Africa and the conclusions which I draw from the presence of these descriptive adverbs with regard to Thonga mentality equally apply to all Africans.

As regards the name given to them, I would object to the term *interjection*. While some of them can be used as such, i. e. "thrown amongst" other words without syntactic connection, they generally follow the verb *ku ku* (or *li* or *ti*) just as "yes" or "no" follow the verb to say. So they are rather adverbs than interjections. Nor can I approve of the term employed by Torrend: *onomatopoetic substantives*. Substantives they certainly are not, as they pertain to none of the eight classes and have nothing of the nature of nouns. On the other hand, only a

832 576 593 152 572 Even a husband never kissed his wife. On coming back from a journey, a man would hardly greet his wife; she would see him passing through the village, prepare food for him, and when it was cooked, she would come and salute him by presenting it to him. But if he has a good friend in the village, and if this friend sees him coming back after a long absence, their meeting will be much more touching. The friend will go to the main entrance of the village, exclaim: "Ha-Ha," take his parcel from his hands, put his arms round his shoulders (a ku mu buso hi mandla), remove the perspiration from his face, and pat him gently, saying: "Your ancestor-gods have their eyes open! They have worked well! They have brought you back."

574 609 622 *Hospitality.* When strangers enter a village, men sit on the *bandla*, and women go further on and sit on the *hubo*; they remain quietly there till the people of the village come and salute them (losa). Should the inhabitants delay too long, the visitors move on, saying: "These people are not good." But this is very rare. Generally the master of the village comes to them, inquiring who they are, whence they come, where they are going, and asks them: "Do you wish to spend the night here?" If they say: "Yes," the headman will empty one of his huts by putting two of his wives together, and will himself sleep with the visitors. Should there still be food, he will give them some. If not, he says: 574 609 622 203 195 "*Ndlala*!" "Starvation!" After a little while, a mat is unrolled and the official ceremony of "djungulisana" takes place. This is a very amusing custom. The headman sits together with his hosts and enquires about the news of their home. One of the visitors begins in a monotonous tone and pours forth volubly a flow of words with a peculiar cadence and almost without taking breath. His interlocutor interrupts him after each sentence, with "Ahina, hina," that is to say "Indeed, indeed!" till the whole skein is unwound; the two men finish with a longer "*Hina*," the inhabitants of the hut adding an emphatic "*khani*," a heartfelt "thank you;" then the master of the village begins to relate his own news in the same tone. It is impossible to imagine anything more curious than this "mélopée" in two parts. 574 609 This law of hospitality is general all over the tribe. Should

which are at the root of the idea of the double existence of the baloyi. 2) *Cannibalism*, which has perhaps never existed as a general custom in South Africa, but has been practised sporadically in times of famine, and has left a feeling of disgust and horror in the minds of later generations ; this feeling is also manifested in the numerous Ogre tales. 3) The *terrible hatred* of which the Native mind is capable. If some people venture to accuse members of these tribes of such awful acts as those of killing and eating human beings, it is because they know that a Native who hates would not shrink from anything to satisfy his desire of vengeance.

We must however remember that the witchcraft superstition was universally found amongst our own forefathers, and that there were epidemics of it in the XIVth, XVth and even the XVIth centuries, hundreds of wizards having been tortured and burnt in most European countries, after having been tried before regular Courts. I have tried to establish a parallel between the ideas and practices of witchcraft in French Switzerland and those of the Thongas. The results of the comparison are very curious. I cannot give them all here, and must refer the reader to the Paris Revue *Foi et Vie*, No. of October, 1910, in which they were published. The most striking difference is this. Amongst Thongas, we are still in the *predualistic age*, viz., the opposition between a good, moral Spirit (God) and bad, wicked spirits (demons, Satan) does not yet exist in Religion. So the power of God is not invoked to reveal the wizards, or to protect the innocent against their spells. But the same animistic conceptions evidently formed the basis of European as of African witchcraft.

This superstition has a deadly effect on Native life. It is a continual source of trouble, fear, quarrels, sorrow. Strange to say, it has been on the increase in recent years. It ruins the villages. — "Formerly," say my informants, "you could see villages of ten or twenty huts. Now the accusations of witchcraft have broken them up. Each man builds his own hut apart, from fear of being bewitched, or because he is suspected of being a noyi (1)."

(1) The evil affects the Native Christian communities also, fostering hatred amongst them, and this animistic doctrine is much more difficult to overcome than ancestrolatry, which is very quickly and completely abandoned by converts.

Some Christian Natives are so convinced that witchcraft is a reality that they interpret Matt. X. 28 by saying that "those who kill the body and who must not be feared" are the baloyi. Unhappily a Zulu translation of the Greek word φαρμακοί by the word corresponding to baloyi, in Revelation XXII, v. 15, confirmed them in

The words designating the sexual act and the various parts of the genital organs are *yila*; but there are substitutes for them, euphemisms which may be used in their stead. When a child employs such words, people scold him, and say to him : "Psa yila! Do you think we are cleaning the wells?" This remark is due to the fact that the language taboos are suspended during the marginal periods and especially during the "mourning of the land," when the rains are delayed and people try to cause them to fall by the rite of cleaning the wells (p. 318). The language taboos are related to the social taboos ; to use obscene words leads to the destruction of social order, and this is allowed only when that order is actually destroyed, for instance during the mbelele rite (p. 318), during the time of moving the village (I. p. 321), and during mourning ceremonies (I. p. 160). 195 784

These six categories, although they are not absolutely distinct, form a convenient method of classifying the taboos.

II. *Some remarks on the taboos.*

1) What is the *origin of taboos*? It is not impossible to trace it in a number of cases. The *hlonipha taboos*, for instance, are proclaimed by the chiefs under certain special circumstances (I. p. 384). The taboo concerning *the planting of new fruit trees* is explained by the coincidence of the desolation of a ruined village with the presence of such trees (p. 29). Such coincidences, amounting to bad omens, have no doubt given birth to numerous taboos. If misfortune has followed a certain act two or three times, a hasty generalisation is made by the primitive mind : post hoc ergo propter hoc! So the act is tabooed. 784 152

This is due to the fact that with primitive people, as with children, *the emotional element predominates over the rational*, and when unfortunate events have happened or are feared, disease, drought, death, when the mind is in a state of terror, anxiety, or merely of nervous expectation, the reasoning faculties are disturbed, and a distinctive mental phenomenon shows itself, called by the French philosopher Renouvier the *intellectual vertigo* (le

784 vertige intellectuel). Prof. Raoul Allier, in his valuable book on
152 *La Psychologie de la Conversion chez les peuples non civilisés* (Vol. I. p. 250-260), ably describes the psychological process which takes place in the soul of the savage. Suppose some event to have happened which has caused a deep emotion in the tribe, the arrival for instance of the first Europeans with a number of unknown objects which arouse fear in the Native population. This emotion may perhaps subside and eventually be forgotten, and the tribe will accustom itself to the presence of the new comers ; but if some great misfortune supervenes, for instance if a serious epidemic breaks out, a new emotion will be produced throughout the country. This will remind the people of the emotion previously experienced on the arrival of the Europeans, and, in the disturbed state of mind thus created, the association established between the two emotions will be extended to the two facts which gave birth to these emotions, and the tribe will declare that the first fact is the cause of the second. Europeans and everything they brought with them will henceforth be considered as taboo. This is utterly illogical and the conclusion absurd. Yet this is what actually happens amongst people whose reasoning faculties are but little developed. These observations help us greatly in our understanding of primitive mentality, and many taboos may be psychologically explained in this way. Most of them, however, are inexplicable. They originate in the animistic or dynamistic collective representations of the tribe (p. 368) and these representations are instinctive, unconscious and consequently unaccountable.

784 2) How are they *enforced*? In as far as taboos have been
626 proclaimed by conscious agents, their transgression will meet with punishment by those agents. A chief will sue a subject
753 using a hlonipha word. The gods will punish those who transgress the law of hierarchy, who pass all bounds in incontinence, who forget their duties towards them (p. 426). But, in most cases, the decree is not enforced by a conscious agent. The *taboo avenges itself directly*. Consumption, swelling of the legs, the impossibility of passing water, disease of one kind or another will follow the transgression, or the children will be covered with an eruption of pimples.

161 figures in the Mozambique Year Book. The Black population of the Lourenço Marques District is estimated at 99,698, distributed as follows :

Circumscription of	Morakwen (1)	21,510
»	Manyisa	24,183
»	Sabi	12,960
»	Magudju (Khosen)	18,197
»	Maputju	22,848
	Total	99,698

The population of the old region of Gaza which includes Bilen, the Makwakwas, the Ba-Loi, the Hlabis and part of the Hlengwe clans, is estimated at 147,995. Gaza having now been incorporated with the Lourenço Marques district, the latter has a Native population of 257,693. However the Year Book declares that this is a minimum, and states that at least 13,000 ought to be added to this number. Let us take 270,000 for the Lourenço Marques district. As regards the Inhambane district, the Year Book estimates the total population at 750,088 ; a very small percentage ought to be deducted for the White and Asiatic population, not more than 1 to 2,000. How many of the remaining thousands belong to our tribe ? There are numerous clans of Ba-Chopi on the coast and of Ba-Tonga round Inhambane. These two tribes however occupy but a small area of this large district, the interior of which is inhabited by the various Hlengwe clans. So we may admit that at least half of these 750,000 Natives are Thongas. If we are correct in this estimate, the total numerical strength of the Thonga tribe would be about 750,000.

VI. *The History of the Thonga tribe*

153 Everyone who has had to teach South African Natives has been astonished at their memory. It is so good that it sometimes prevents the reasoning faculty from developing as it ought to.

(1) I have adopted the Native pronunciation of Native names and the orthography explained in my Elementary Grammar of the Thonga-Shangaan Language. (Lausanne, Bridel.)

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

153 Some of these people are able to repeat a tale lasting five or ten
773 minutes after having heard it twice or thrice only. It is to be wondered at therefore that they have so few traditions, or rather that these traditions do not reach further back in history. In fact, when you inquire into what they know of the past, you find first, a story about their origin which bears a strongly mythical character ; secondly, traditions more or less legendary about the migrations of the various clans ; thirdly, genealogies of the royal family containing eight to ten names, and fourthly, historical narratives which go back as far as the beginning of the 19th century, and which give the impression of true historical facts. History, amongst the Thongas, begins only one hundred years ago. What took place before that is almost entirely forgotten. This fact shows that, even amongst races possessing a good memory, before the introduction of a system of writing traditions regarding the ancient past can hardly be relied upon.

A. Prehistoric Period.

773 1) *The story of man's origin* is this. The first human beings emerged from reeds. Each tribe came into this world with its present characteristics. For instance the Ba-Bvesha, who are great blacksmiths, knew how to forge their iron picks from the first day. They "came out" holding them. The Ba-Ronga group calls the first ancestors of humanity Likalahumba and Nsilambowa, viz. the one who brings a glowing cinder in a shell (the man) and the one who grinds vegetables (the woman). The Ba-Djonga call them Gwambe and Dzabana. Another story universally believed tells us how death came amongst men by the fault of the chameleon (See Part VI). All these stories are purely mythical and form part of the African Genesis which is met with in most tribes.

173 2) *Legends about the ancient migrations* of the various clans. Almost every clan pretends to have come from afar and, strange to say, they came from all the points of the compass. Two of their clans, without doubt, come from the north, the Ba-ka-

Having a remarkable bent for this work, he developed his gift, 805
acquired fame, and was consulted by all those who wished to know their age, or the date of some event. This increased his powers. He took a great delight in these consultations and, working at his subject every day, aided by his wonderful memory he could recite the whole chronology without the slightest hesitation. I give it in Appendix I,* and it is worthy of publication, not only as a proof of the possibility of a development in arithmetic amongst raw Natives, but also for its contents, as a contribution to the history of the Northern Transvaal.

We come to the same conclusion when teaching our pupils 803
arithmetic in our missionary schools. This is certainly the 163
branch of study in which they are the least proficient, and their teachers will all confess to having sometimes despaired of their mathematical faculty. However, when taught European numeration, English or Portuguese, most of them learn the four rules, and many attain to the Weights and Measures, and the Rule of Three. I saw a class of young Natives successfully studying Algebra in Lovedale, and they are not altogether incapable of Arithmetic. However they succeed better when the effort is one of memory, and this explains why they are much more at their ease when learning the English Weights and Measures, entailing complicated operations of reduction, than when put to the metric system which seems so much more simple and rational. The English system requires a perfect committal to memory of the relation between the various measures, yards, feet and inches, gallons, pints, gills, pounds, ounces and grains, and, these being once mastered, all the work becomes purely mechanical. This is what Natives like, whilst in the metric system there is one idea pervading the whole and a certain minimum of reasoning is necessary for its use : the necessity for this minimum explains the unpopularity of the metric system amongst the Native pupils, and the difficulty increases ten times when they come to problems, and have to solve them without having been told whether addition or substraction is necessary! So arithmetic, when workable by means of the memory, seems to them an easy and agreeable study ; when it requires reasoning, it is a painful occupation. If

* [See pp. 585-587 -- Analyst]

Shinangana had been trained, would he have been a genius in that kind of mathematics where the power of reasoning is needed? It is impossible to say, but it may be noticed that all his achievements were, after all, but masterpieces of memory, and that reasoning had very little to do with them. 803 163

The conclusion of our observations is then as follows : in the Bantu mind the literary sense is infinitely more developed than the mathematical. This is probably the case in all uncivilised or half civilised races, but amongst the South Africans it is strikingly apparent.

F. THE LITERARY SENSE OF THE THONGAS.

Let us look more closely into this literary faculty which the Thonga grammar has already revealed to us. It not only consists in the possession of a well constructed language, denoting powers of classification, combination, co-ordination and graphic description, but also shows itself in the poetic expression of their feelings, in a remarkable power of comparison, and in a rich folklore. 521 537

The *facility of expression*, amongst the Thongas, is very great. Any one, man or woman, is at any time ready to speak, and speaks correctly with the greatest ease. In this respect, the race is perhaps more advanced than many civilised peoples. There is nothing like the timidity you so often meet with amongst the peasants or workmen of our own lands, who, though they have had a full course of primary education, would be totally unable to deliver an address. A Native can always stand up and say what he thinks on any given question. Even if he has not thought much about it, he can speak! Finding words is no difficulty to him. Knowledge will perhaps be lacking, but fluency of speech never! This ease of elocution has evidently been acquired through a long experience in the discussion of public affairs on the *hubo*, where, as we saw (I, p. 436), every one has the right of expressing his opinion. This habit has developed literary ability,

the material representation of his personality. By this contact the 787
patient has in a way become a part of the "complexus Bula" and what 789
happens to the bones will also happen to him ; what is said by the bones 791
will henceforth apply directly to him. This magic conception of Nature is probably the profound and secret reason why the diviners believe so firmly in their art.

On the other hand, this art is so perfect that bone-throwers can 787
derive very great satisfaction from the practice of it. It must be born 181
in mind that, in fact, all the elements of Native life are represented by the objects contained in the basket of divinatory bones. It is a resumé of their whole social order, of all their institutions, and the bones, when they fall, provide them with an instantaneous picture of all that may befall them. This system is so elaborate that I do not hesitate to say that, together with their language, their folklore, their lobola customs and their burial rites, it is the product of their psychic life which shows most intelligence. If the premises of divination are accepted, astragalomancy seems to me vastly superior to cheiromancy and all the other systems which have been invented by us. It is also superior to the divination by four tablets of ivory or wood practised by a certain number of South African tribes, a description of which will be found in Appendix VI (1).

But if this system of divination is a proof of great intelligence, it 787
must be confessed that *its results*, as shown in the psychic life of the tribe, 155
182

(1) There are some grounds for thinking that divination by astragalus bones is very old in the history of mankind. The Greeks practised *astragalomancy*. In a paper to which I shall refer in App. VI, the Rev. N. Roberts mentions the temple of Dodone, in which, according to Cicero, there was a large brass basin with the statue of a man upon it, and this man held in his hands a whip with three straps from which hung small astragalus bones. When these bones were set in motion by the wind, they struck against the basin and the sounds thus produced had a prophetic character. This was astragalomancy, but of a very different kind from that just described. Aristotle makes frequent allusions to the astragalus bone and says, inter alia, that one of its sides, named *coon*, represents the figure 6 ; another, named *chion*, the figure 1, etc. This shows that in his time the astragalus bone was already identified with the dice. The dice, also called *αστραγαλος* in Greek is simply an astragalus bone whose sides have been cut so as to form a perfect cube. We find traces of the use of the astragalus even further back in the past. Angelo Mosso, quoted by the same author, asserts that he found many astragalus in Italy, where they were used in connection with primitive religion as far back as the neolithic period. The discovery in the lake of Neuchâtel of a collection of more than thirty astragalus in the lake dwellers' station of Auvernier may be a proof that these bones did in truth play a part in the customs of primitive humanity. If this is so, then the Bantus have preserved the astragalus as they did the wooden pillow of the old Egyptians, the ancestrolatry of the Mousterians and the "mbaya" (p. 93) of the Libyans. The astragalus is still employed in play to represent cattle by Swiss children in the Canton of Valais, and I am told that the South African Boers have the same custom, and call these bones dol-osse.

787 are most *deplorable*. These practices kill in ovo any serious attempt at
●/55 the use of reason or experience in practical life. Native doctors might
182 have arrived at a useful and beneficent knowledge of the medicinal virtues of vegetables, if they had studied them carefully. But why should they trouble themselves with study, when a single cast of the bones at once tells them what root must be taken to cure the disease? (Compare my account of diagnosis, p. 475). Further, the bones annihilate the moral conscience, or, at any rate, they prevent any healthy development of this precious faculty. When overtaken by misfortune the Bantu might be moved to introspection to review his conduct, and see what wrong actions he had committed. From this self-examination, moral progress might result. But such trouble is useless! The bones are thrown. They reveal that misfortune was caused by such and such spiritual influences, wizards, gods, defilement, Heaven, that it must be combated by such and such means, — a drug, or a packet of drugs, a victim, male or female, offered by so and so, in such and such a manner. This is all-sufficient and the conscience remains dormant (1) as does the reason. I am convinced that, however high the degree of astuteness engendered by the divinatory bones may be, they have been extremely detrimental to the intellectual and moral welfare of the Natives.

This leads us to our last chapter, in which the questions of Taboo and Morality will be considered.

(1) Wishing to know if the bones were sometimes used to obtain moral guidance, I once asked Mankhelu: "As you throw your bones on every occasion, would you consult them when going to a beer party? There might be trouble, perhaps quarrels, blows... If you wish to avoid these would the bones tell you to abstain from the party?" He laughed heartily. "No!" said he. "If I saw that the men were drinking too much I should leave before they were quite drunk." I have some doubts if he would really have done so, but it remains clear that the bones have nothing to do with morality!

671 must remember this and, in order to enlighten the Native mind, they must try to find where these differences lie. But these are minor points, and the sense of justice is nevertheless one of the most striking and promising characteristics of the Bantu.

157 674 Before enumerating the various cases which can be brought before the Native Court, let me remark that, generally speaking, Bantus are very peaceful, law-abiding people, under normal circumstances; when protected against alcoholic excesses they are little addicted to crime. In the Blue Book for Native Affairs of Cape Colony, 1908, the Chief Magistrate of the Transkeian Territory comments on "the general docility of the Natives, the perfect immunity from crimes of violence, which the European population, male and female, enjoys amongst them, and the cheapness of police administration." He adds: "The policing of the Territories, including the Detective Force, costs only 7d. per head of the territorial population, or, counting Chiefs and Headmen whose functions are mainly administrative, 10d., against 6s. 3d. per head for policing the Colony proper. Reports from twenty districts comment on the paucity or absence of crime. Kentani, with a population of 34,000 did not furnish a single case for the Circuit Court. The Magistrates of four districts remark on 'the peaceable and law-abiding character of the Native,' the Magistrate of Kentani adding: 'when kept away from the drink curse'." (*Christ. Express*, Aug. 1908.)

I think the same report might be made in most of the districts of South Africa where Natives still live by themselves.

674 177 The state of affairs would be very different in the Town locations, where we meet with a great number of men and women of dissolute morals. They are often backsliders who have left the Mission Stations because they did not like to submit to the Christian rule of morality. So they have freed themselves from all restraints, tribal as well as Christian, and, if they have not entirely lost all sense of justice, they, at any rate, do not walk "in the paths of righteousness." I am here only concerned with clan Natives.

wooded valley called Nhlalalene, where we had made a halt during 753
one of our journeyings, seeing a good-looking young woman 776
wearing one of these curious ornaments. I was struck with the sight, and asked my companion why she was thus decorated. — "She invokes the spirits of the Ba-Ndjao," was the reply.

II. *Beginning and Diagnosis of the Disease.*

I have carefully studied the story of many cases of possession 168
amongst the Ba-Ronga (See *Bulletin de la Société Neuchâteloise* 753
de Géographie. Tome X, p. 388). Most of them began by a distinct crisis, in which the patient was unconscious, but this does not seem to have been brought about by any previous nervous trouble. A woman of the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques, *Ñwashinhwana*, fled from her home and threw herself into the Bay. The contact with the cold water restored her to her senses, after which the bones declared that she had *psikwembu*. Another, *Mholombo*, heard a voice calling her during a dream ; it was the possessing spirit, which revealed itself later on as a chief long since dead. I will now give full details of the case of *Mboza*, who was himself possessed at one time, and later on became a regular exorcist. After having worked in Kimberley for some time, he returned home in good health. Soon afterwards, however, he became lame for six months. He attributed his difficulty in walking to rheumatism (shifambo). There was some improvement in his condition, but he began to feel other symptoms ; he lost his appetite and almost entirely ceased to eat. Here is his testimony : "One day, having gone with another young man to gather juncus, in order to manufacture a mat, the psikwembu suddenly started in me" (ndji sunguleka hi psikwembu psikañwe). I came back home, trembling in all my limbs. I entered the hut, but suddenly I rose to my feet and began to attack the people of the village ; then I ran away, followed by my friends, who seized me, and at once the spirits were scattered (hangalaka). When I became conscious again, I was told I had hurt a *khehla* (a man with the wax crown (I. p. 129), and had struck other people on their backs :

●158 "Ha!" they said, "he has the gods (or he is sick from the gods, a ni
753 psikwembu)." Thus the first signs of possession seem to be a
756 nervous crisis, but also the occurence of certain suspicious symptoms : a persistant pain in the chest, irrepressible hiccough, unusual yawning, emaciation without apparent cause, etc. These symptoms, however, are not sufficient grounds for a diagnosis, and the bones are always consulted in order to arrive at a conclusion. The amulets of the patient (called "his shade") are placed on the mat, and the bones thrown near them. We shall see, under letter D, how they must fall to confirm the diagnosis. Should they do so, a second consultation takes place in order to ascertain to what doctor the treatment must be entrusted. There are medicine-men who are specialists for this disease. They are not true *ñanga*, but are called *gobela* (dji-ma), at least amongst the Ba-Ronga, who suffer from possession more than the other clans. These gobela have formed many rival schools in which the drugs used, and the rites followed, differ slightly ; the schools of Kkongosa, Sindondondo, Ñwatshulu, who are men, and those of Ñwamutheto (in the Shifimbatello district) and of Thambulanyoka, viz., Snake-bone, both of whom are women, etc. Ñwashinhwana was treated by a disciple of Khongosa ; Mboza by Ñwatshulu.

III. *The Treatment of Possession, or Exorcism.*

755 In former times, the only remedy was waving a large palm-leaf (milala) in front of the patient. This was deemed sufficient to "scatter the spirits." Now the treatment is much more complicated. Though it varies slightly in the various schools above mentioned, it comprises four principal rites : the drum performance, the ablution in the gobo calabash, the drinking of the blood and the hondlola ceremony. In the Khongosa treatment the gobo rite comes first, and is called *baselo*. A certain root, the *phuphumane*, is prepared, and dipped into water in a big calabash cut in two so as to form a large basin. The mixture is stirred ; an abundant foam is thus produced and the patient must

756 Another rite, which is observed after the homdlala only, is
783 the *haza*, viz., the monthly purification of the exorcist. He
821 fills his gobo calabash with a decoction made of the roots of the mphesu and ntjebe trees, drinks the whole, tickles his throat with a feather and vomits the medicine. "A tibasisa ndjen" — "he purifies his inside." This is done at every new moon. The connection between the possessed and the moon, which was first established by the fact that he had *thwaza*[1] as well as the moon, is maintained and intensified by this rite.

2) Propitiatory rites.

751 Besides these protective drugs, the exorcised wears a necklace
756 made of little pieces of a creeper called *mayambatju*; tied together with a munganazi string. See the second necklace in the
782 illustration. This is intended *to calm his gods*, and to scatter
●168 them when they desire to come upon him with violence. This is indeed a great danger ; the exorcised is liable to nervous attacks of a dangerous nature, especially during the first few weeks following the exorcism. Perhaps his song is heard in the distance. Then suddenly he is seized with madness, and furiously assaults his neighbours with the small hatchet, or the assagay used in the dances. People run away ; or, on the contrary, they collect and begin to clap their hands, and make their infuriated companion dance and sing his own song. This may help to dispel the spirits, and calm him down. Sometimes, feeling uneasy, foreseeing a crisis, the poor man himself asks them to sing. But he may also be led, in his frenzy, to the bush, far away, unconscious, quite mad, tearing his clothes and his skin with the thorns. This often happened to Ñwashinhwana. Her husband then followed her, and, when the crisis was over, saw her fall down exhausted and brought her home ; there, having returned to her senses, she became very sad and wept bitterly. So, in order to avoid being tormented, the exorcised propitiate their spirits ; they worship them, in truth, and this gives birth to *a new religion* totally different from ancestrolatry, which has its rites and its duties.

756 As already pointed out, the exorcised has *his own altar* in his
778 hut. It is the forked branch, round which a circle of raised clay
782

[1] [See p. 495 -- Analyst]

is carefully maintained, and regularly smeared. He puts his 756
offerings there, principally tobacco. The snuff box is deposited 778
there. Does he want snuff? He enters the hut clapping his 782
hands, saluting his spirits, and, taking the box, throws a pinch of it at the foot of the branch, and says: "You! Ngoni, you see that I have not stolen! I first gave you your share." His wife will do the same. This is a "mhamba." — When ready to undertake a journey, he will come to the altar, sit on his ankles (a woman will kneel down) and take leave of the spirits. Holding his assagay, and his manono root, he says: "Good-bye, Ba-Ngoni! This hut is yours; keep it well! I go to such and such a place," and asks them to bless his journeying. On his return he will inform the spirits that he has succeeded in his trip. If he is sick, and the bones have revealed that the disease has been caused by the spirits, he again comes to the altar, and says: "You! Ba-Ngoni, why are you angry with me?" These acts of worship are not only performed at the altar. Wherever he may be, before drinking beer, the exorcised will pour out a little for his spirits. He will also throw a little food for them before eating. This will be *a daily worship*, much more constant and individual than the rites of ancestrolatry, a real communion with the spirits who, after having tormented the exorcist, have become his benefactors, giving him the power of healing others and thus of making money! There is much more religiosity in the exorcised than in ordinary people.

3) Development of subliminal faculties.

All these nervous crises, natural or provoked, the double 756
psychological existence which is fostered by them, the regular 158
participation in the exorcism of others, generally greatly injure 791
the mind of the exorcised; they have an extraordinary look, something wild about them, as if they were not in their right senses. They may be heard sometimes groaning, or emitting a sudden cry without any reason. This nervous instability may pass away and they may return to their normal state, but it may be that if they possess those strange mental powers, which modern psychology

756 calls subliminal, and which are more or less dormant in every
158 individual, these faculties will suddenly develop and the exorcised
791 will become a real magician. A faculty of *second sight* may reveal itself. Or he will become a *diviner*, either by ecstasy or by bone throwing (See Letter D). Or he will be a *wonder-worker*, a *prophet*, etc. Mholombo, who was an extraordinarily acute woman, had possessed all these gifts. She could discover wizards ; one night, crossing the Mabota country, she met one of the indunas of the chief accompanied by two other men, leading his own wife to the marsh, in order to eat her. They were acting in their capacity of wizards (See Letter C). Mholombo knew them at once and said to them : "No use eating her. Her meat is bitter sour." Terrified, the wizards fled, and confessed their guilt next morning! I have related in the *Bulletin de la Société Neuchâteloise de Géographie*, of 1910, how she received divinatory bones from her possessing spirit, prophesied the arrival of missionaries, showed up the man who had stolen £ 8 to the Mpfumo chief, was given the power to cross the Nkomati river by walking on the water, etc. By this same power Shidzabalane was able to leave his body, and to go and dwell in his own shadow (p. 362). Reference will again be made to the profession of magician when dealing with witchcraft.

4) The society of the exorcised.

756 If the power of an exorcised person becomes very great, if he succeeds in his cures, all his *mathwaza* join him, and he becomes the founder of a school. He starts new rites, discovers more powerful drugs, and so attracts patients to himself from all parts. We have seen that five or six schools existed northward of Lourenço Marques, in the Mabota and Nondwane countries. Mboza might have started a new one, as he had already cured two patients.

Each school of exorcists celebrates *an annual feast*, in winter, at the close of the harvest season, a feast to which all the disciples of the master are summoned. This is the rite of the *renewal of the drugs*, which we have already noticed as a medical practice in the

thus remain in the grave, and not trouble other people. Moreover 766
a little hut is built on the grave itself, as was the case for Sokis 756
(I. p. 141), with the same intention, to protect the exorcised against heat and fatigue. If the deceased was not only a disciple but a master, his drugs will be stored in the hut till the adjudication of the inheritance. The most skilful of his followers, the one who best knows the use of these charms, will dance on the grave, all his companions clapping their hands to encourage him, and, when the mourning is ended, he will "raise the drugs," burning them as is done at the annual feast, and will eventually succeed his master.

6) Conclusion on Possession.

Cases of possession, such as those which occur amongst the Thongas, 158
are met with in a great many other countries. A Swiss missionary, the 753
Rev. H. Rusillon, working in the Paris Mission in Madagascar, has drawn attention to practices very similar to these, called the Tromba, amongst Hovas. It is impossible not to note the striking resemblance between the Thonga disease and that of the demoniacs of the New Testament. On hearing the story of the madman in Gadara, whose spirit called itself Legion, the Natives at once identify the phenomenon, and say: "These demoniacs had psikwembu."

These psychological phenomena are certainly of a morbid character. The fact that they generally appear in an epidemic form is significant. It has been noticed that similar epidemics have broken out in populations which have been weakened by the sufferings of a long war, when the nervous resistance had been reduced by privations. May not the progress of Alcoholism, together with the disintegration of the old social order caused by the influence of European civilisation, account for the spread of the disease amongst the Ba-Ronga in the last fifty years?

Whilst not pretending to analyse these phenomena scientifically and fully, I will here add two observations:

1) In the Jewish conception, phenomena of possession were due to *evil spirits*, devilish agencies, which tormented poor humanity, and were cured by the power of the real and true God. Dualism prevailed in their religious conceptions. This idea of dualism is altogether absent from the Thonga belief. South African Bantus have not yet reached that stage of religion where the antagonistic ideas of right and wrong are

158 transported into the realm of divinity, thus giving rise to the true gods
753 and the devils. Possessing spirits are not worse than ancestor-gods. They all are non-moral. They can bless and curse, and their moral character is not taken into account at all.

2) The progress of modern psychology gives an explanation of many of these phenomena. The disease of the personality which manifests itself in the presence of a double psychological consciousness is well-known ; the hypnotic suggestion which the tambourine players unconsciously exert on their victims, sufficiently explains the origin of the disease, and the kind of life led by the exorcised is well calculated to develop their mediumistic faculties. So many of the so-called miracles of possession are easily accounted for. It would however be going too far to exclude, a priori, any possibility of external spiritual influences in
[797] those phenomena. There is one very striking fact which is a source of great wonder to the Natives. These patients, as soon as they put themselves under Christian influence, are healed at once and for ever. We have, amongst our converts, exorcists who had acquired great fame, and who recount, with glowing eyes, how they have been delivered from their terrible anguish by their new faith. For, whatever success they may have obtained in their career of exorcists, their condition was a disease, a painful disease, and they are extremely glad to have been delivered from it. This fact must certainly be remembered when trying to arrive at an explanation of possession.

C. WITCHCRAFT.

789 I have pointed out, in an article published in the Report of
754 the S. A. A. A. S., of 1906, how little comprehension most White people have of this important but difficult subject. A confusion is almost always made between the *witches* and the *witch-doctors*. The French word *sorcier* and the English term *sorcerer*, indiscriminately used for those who cast spells and for magicians, lead to the same misconception. In order to avoid errors it is, I think, imperative first of all clearly to distinguish between *Black Magic* and *White Magic*. The adjectives black and white are not employed in this connection amongst South African Natives, but Thongas certainly do make the distinction and possess different terms for each. Black magic is called *Buloyi* ; it consists of the

101 167 137 *Ma-Gwamba* by the Vendas and Bveshas who possessed the country before them. These Ma-Gwamba are made up mostly of Hlengwe, Maluleke and Djonga refugees. In the Modjadji country, we find two colonies of Ba-ka-Baloyi with their own chiefs. Near Leydsdorp, a more considerable clan, numbering about 6000, is the Nkuna clan under Muhlaba. On the Sabie of the south, in the plain of the Leydenburg district, another colony has been founded more recently, since the war of the Portuguese against Gungunyane, by the Ngonis and Bilas who did not accept the new rule. They remain under Mpisane, a near relative of the late Ngoni potentate.

In the Orichstadt valley, and in many other parts of the Leydenburg mountains, little colonies of Thongas are met with, as well as in the Waterberg district (especially near Nilstrom) and in the towns of Pretoria and Johannesburg. A good many of the thousands of Shangaanes coming every year to the mines settle down definitively in the Town Locations of these great centres.

During the last twenty years the number of these emigrants has certainly increased. It was not possible to indicate on the map all their settlements between the Hlanganu domain proper, the Drakensberg Mountains and the Olifant River. On the farms of the Zoutpansberg and Pietersburg Districts they also form a notable portion of the Native population.

V. *The numerical strength of the Thonga Tribe.*

161 It is very difficult to ascertain the numbers of the Thongas. The census of the Transvaal taken on the 17th of April 1904 gives 82,325 as being the total Thonga population of that colony; of these, 48,117 are located in the Zoutpansberg. This is a minimum, as it has been recognised that at least 10 % ought to be added to these figures; there were scarcely any young men in the kraals when the census was taken. Let us estimate at 100,000 the numerical strength of that part of the tribe which is located in the Transvaal.

As regards Portuguese East Africa, we find some interesting

161 figures in the Mozambique Year Book. The Black population of the Lourenço Marques District is estimated at 99,698, distributed as follows :

Circumscription of	Morakwen (1)	21,510
»	» Manyisa	24,183
»	» Sabi	12,960
»	» Magudju (Khosen)	18,197
»	» Maputju	22,848
	Total	99,698

The population of the old region of Gaza which includes Bilen, the Makwakwas, the Ba-Loi, the Hlabis and part of the Hlengwe clans, is estimated at 147,995. Gaza having now been incorporated with the Lourenço Marques district, the latter has a Native population of 257,693. However the Year Book declares that this is a minimum, and states that at least 13,000 ought to be added to this number. Let us take 270,000 for the Lourenço Marques district. As regards the Inhambane district, the Year Book estimates the total population at 750,088 ; a very small percentage ought to be deducted for the White and Asiatic population, not more than 1 to 2,000. How many of the remaining thousands belong to our tribe ? There are numerous clans of Ba-Chopi on the coast and of Ba-Tonga round Inhambane. These two tribes however occupy but a small area of this large district, the interior of which is inhabited by the various Hlengwe clans. So we may admit that at least half of these 750,000 Natives are Thongas. If we are correct in this estimate, the total numerical strength of the Thonga tribe would be about 750,000.

VI. *The History of the Thonga tribe*

153 Everyone who has had to teach South African Natives has been astonished at their memory. It is so good that it sometimes prevents the reasoning faculty from developing as it ought to.

( ) I have adopted the Native pronunciation of Native names and the orthography explained in my Elementary Grammar of the Thonga-Shangaan Language. (Lausanne, Bridel.)

The soil of Spelonken is of a similar nature and very well watered. So the Thongas, who settled in Zoutpansberg, found there a soil which was, in certain respects, more favourable to agriculture than their sandy dunes or their hundjusi on the Coast. 134

Such is Mother Earth for the Thongas. They call it *misaba*, the plural form of nsaba, grains of sand. This word plainly shows that they come from sandy regions. For them the earth is a collection of grains of sand.

II. *Native System of Land Tenure.*

The Native population, taken as a whole, is a very sparse one. Let us consider the Ronga territory, for instance: 100,000 in a territory which may be estimated at 5000 square miles ; this gives a population of only 20 per square mile. The country is, however, very unequally peopled. Natives will only settle in spots where water is found, and, the sand dunes to which I have previously referred being exceedingly dry, they mainly inhabit the slopes of the hills and the immediate neighbourhood of the marshes already described. 162 311 361

To confine myself, amongst the Rongas, to the region in which I have principally travelled, that is to say the neighbourhood of Rikatla, the villages of Nondwane, which extend along a somewhat narrow strip (800 yards wide by 5 miles in length), stretching from the border of Mabota as far as Morakwen, contained in 1880 a population which I should estimate at about 1100 (1). This gives over 350 inhabitants to the square mile. Taking everything therefore into consideration, it may be confidently asserted that the country can easily support its population ; in fact it could support one three or four times as large.

It is important to bear all these circumstances in mind in order to be able properly to appreciate the Ba-Ronga laws relating to landed property. 423

(1) This population has very much diminished since the Ronga Portuguese war in 1894.

787 Amongst the Ba-Ronga the ill-omen is not considered so serious.
782 Later on, when the child loses his first teeth, he must not
856 let them fall out hap-hazard anywhere. He must take the fallen tooth, go to the ash-heap, put his finger into the hole and say : "Kokwa, kokwa, ndji hwe hobe !" (Grandfather, grandfather, give me a grain of maize !) Then he throws the tooth over his shoulder on to the ashes and goes home without looking backward. Should he look backward, his grandfather (the spirit of the departed ?) would not give him a new tooth (1). This custom is no longer taboo and is disappearing.

856 When a younger brother cuts his teeth, they are considered
163 as pushing away or pulling out the teeth of the elder, as the younger brother comes into the world, as a rule, three years after the elder.

As regards *hair*, the first cutting is accompanied by the following
302 custom : the mother sprinkles some drops of her milk on the
856 forehead and on the occiput of the child ; then she cuts his hair and throws it away in the midst of thick grass. When she cuts her own hair, she always leaves a lock on both sides of the head for the amusement of the child, till he is able to walk.

853 Nursing women very often anoint themselves with ochre. This is said to be in order to prevent their husbands from having relations with them.

These rites are not considered as very important. But there are three others which are most punctiliously observed, and which divide the nursing period into three subperiods : the presentation to the moon, after three months, the tying of the cotton string, after one year, and the weaning ceremonies at the close of the period.

4) The presentation to the moon (ku yandla).

821 The appearance of the new moon is always received with cheers by the Ba-Ronga. The first person who sees it shouts :

(1) Comparative Ethnography : I remember quite well that, when I was a boy, we were told in Neuchâtel that we must not let a broken tooth get lost, lest it should be found by a dog and a dog's tooth would grow in its stead !

124 The description I have given of the *lahla khombo*, translating
178 exactly the narratives of Mbozá, Elias, and an old widower called
~~164~~ Magingi, refers to the rite as it was performed in the normal
783 fashion some twenty years ago amongst the Ba-Ronga. Now
765 customs are changing. There is, all around the town of Lourenço Marques, an agglomeration of Natives coming from many tribes. Immorality there has become terrible owing especially to alcoholic excesses, a free and enormous sale of adulterated wine taking place in this region. The widows are sure to find there a hundred men for each of them, when they wish to cast away their defilement. But in this promiscuity the poison of syphilis makes terrible ravages. According to our medical missionary, 90 % of the
783 Natives are contaminated by this disease. When the men up
765 country saw that their wives came back ritually purified but
178 physically contaminated, they began themselves to accomplish the
833 necessary act. This has become the general custom to such an extent that, when a widow goes to Majlangalen, (such is the name of that hell of drunkenness and immorality), it is now said of her : "She will refuse to stay with her legal heirs!" However the law of the *lahla khombo nhoben*, to cast away the malediction in the bush, remains inexorable in the three cases where the defilement is considered as being of the worst kind : if the
[845] husband died of phthisis or of leprosy, or if the woman has had twins.

Old widows who can find no lovers may be purified by means of drugs.

765 e) *The year of widowhood*. Though the widows have found
587 new husbands, they still remain in the old kraal. They must accomplish there "a full hoe," viz. a whole year of ploughing. In their new fields they leave the dry sticks of the mealies of the year before, in such a way that everybody passing by will know at once that this is the field of a widow. But what they harvest this year will belong to the new husband. They have now the right to *fambelana*, viz. to go to each other. The suitor brings clothing to the woman, and the woman pays him visits with jars of beer. They belong more or less to each other. But the marriage of the inherited woman is not absolutely settled. Her

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga
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PRACTICAL CONCLUSIONS

I. ON THE RITES OF INFANCY (P. 36-61).

853 The rule that a mother "must plough for her child three hoes" is
545 excellent. It is undoubtedly a splendid preparation for future life to
177 have been fed during three years on mother's milk. Will it be possible to maintain this law under the new conditions of civilized life which are being adopted more and more throughout the tribes? Let us notice that this provision, though it was inspired partly in the interest of the child itself, is dictated mainly by a superstition concerning the lochia secretion, which is regarded as highly noxious and as keeping the mother in an unclean state for a long time. This superstition will not withstand the test of science and will pass away. On the other hand, polygamy was invented and flourishes partly on account of this law. A husband separated from the wife who is nursing a child wishes to have other women at his disposal. Polygamy is doomed to pass also. For both these reasons, it is to be feared that this healthy custom will not be maintained in the future. This is a pity, and we ought to do our best to encourage its continuance.

843 Many young married Natives leave their homes and go to Johannes-
177 burg to the mines for one or two years as soon as they see that their wife is pregnant. This is certainly on account of the above rule; but this desertion of the conjugal home is hardly to be approved.

164 As regards the whole medical treatment characteristic of this period,
751 which is considered more or less as a disease, it has no value at all.
177 The big intestinal worm is, of course, merely a product of Native imagination. The children sometimes suffer from lombrics, but not more than white children. Convulsions are frequent as a result of malaria and dysentery, and neither the ever present *milombyana* nor the

164 bi-monthly *biyeketa* nor the powder of the reed can do anything to
751 prevent them. The habit of always carrying water in the calabash and
177 of never emptying it entirely is harmful. Dr Carin, our medical missionary, examined some of these milombyana calabashes with the microscope and found them full of bacteria of all kinds. It is a splendid *milieu de culture* for them. This milombyana custom is however hard to eradicate as the principle is deeply rooted in the Thonga mind : "The child grows by means of medicine" and even Christian converts respect it. They will relinquish it when a clearer notion of medical science has entered their heads — a time which is still remote, I fear!

000 From the missionary point of view, let us notice the analogy between the rite of the broken pot and Christian baptism as administered to children by most of the Churches. Natives readily accept a ceremony of benediction for the little ones, be it baptism proper or presentation with laying on of hands. But the heathen baptism is a baptism of smoke, and not of water — and is in relation to merely external dangers, while the Christian rite represents the purification of the soul from its sin and the new and pure life. Whatever may be the difference between the two customs, we find in the animistic rite a point of analogy which may help us to explain the spiritual sacrament and its deep significance.

II. ON CIRCUMCISION (See p. 94).

177 What judgment are we to pass on this custom to which some tribes
797 still cling with great pertinacity ? The teaching of endurance and of hunting has certainly some value, but these rites as a whole have very little worth and are useless in the new economy of South Africa. The obcene language allowed during the Ngoma certainly tends to pervert the mind of the boys and constitutes an immoral preparation for sexual life.

Have we nothing to learn from the Ngoma ? More than two hundred thousand children of black South Africa are now attending our schools... more or less regularly. Hundreds of young men are boarding in our Normal Institutions. Do we always succeed in this great educational work ? Its results are not entirely satisfactory, because most of the children do not stay long enough in the school to be properly taught. As soon as they have acquired some knowledge of reading and writing, they leave and go to the towns to earn money.

refused to communicate his secret. He belonged to the Chopi 757
tribe. The Ba-Pedi forbid sexual relations to lepers.

A nursing woman who has no milk must take a certain 853
Euphorbiacea shrub called *nete*, containing a milky juice, crush it in the mortar, cook it in water and drink it. When a cow refuses to feed her calf Natives smear the calf with the *ribvumbara* herb, which has a pleasant odour. The cow smells this, and allows the calf to suck.

The treatment of *sterility* has already been described (I. p. 190) 842
Mankhelu tried to cure it by digging a root of *Nembe-nembe* 278
and one of *Nhlangowume* ; he cooked both together, and ordered the woman to eat them during a period of six days, mixing them with her food. This drug was considered as "closing her" (pfala), so that she would no longer have her "tihweti, "and thus be enabled to conceive. In the meantime, she had to undergo the horola or hondlola rite, which I shall describe presently.

Small-pox, nyedzane, was on several occasions introduced by the 164
Whites, or by the Zulu armies on their return from their Northern raids. There have been at least five or six epidemics in the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques during the last fifty years.

I had the opportunity of witnessing the last in 1918 in Rikatla and 751
thus obtained first-hand information on the way Natives treat this disease and on their strange ideas concerning it. I published a detailed account of these in the S. A. *Journal of Science*, July 1919, and will give here a description of the most important of these *customs connected with small-pox amongst the Ba-Ronga*. When small-pox has invaded the country and reached the borders of the territory of a clan, the headmen assemble at the chief's residence and decide to proceed to the general inoculation of the population. This is a remedy which they have long been accustomed to use. They have noticed that the disease is milder when produced by inoculation with the virus than when it *hahela*, i. e. flies to the person. (There is some truth in this assertion ; the protection afforded however is not very effective, and severe and even fatal cases often follow the inoculation. It does not always secure immunity from a second attack.) The virus is provided by the people of a neighbouring clan who have already been attacked by

751 the disease, and it is the *batukulu* of the chief, his nephews, the sons of his sisters, who are sent to procure it. Are they not the favourites of their maternal uncle? (I. p. 222). Nobody could suspect them of bringing misfortune into the village of their *bakokwana*! The particular ntukulu who must render this service to the country is designated by the bones. The bones also indicate the village of the neighbouring clan to which he must go to fetch the virus. The serous fluid is taken from old people or from children, who have no sexual intercourse ; we already know the reason for this. The ntukulu inoculates himself and his comrades and returns home ; when their pustules are ripe, they inoculate all the members of the clan who have not yet suffered [784] from the disease.[1] From this day begins for the whole clan a distinct marginal period, with all the taboos accompanying the critical phases of the life of the community. No one is allowed to wash his body. Absolute continence is imposed on all. Salt is prohibited, as it is said to make the blood flow more quickly in the body and it may cause the wounds to become sore.

164 But in addition to the ordinary taboos, some other measures are 751 taken which are dictated by the special nature of small-pox. This 755 disease, amongst Black people, manifests itself in two forms, which may be called the white and the black. The former is much milder than the latter. In it the pustules are large, superficial, scattered all over the body and well separated from each other ; the skin is discoloured over them and becomes whitish ; they soon dry up and do not leave deep marks. In the second form, which is the confluent and haemorrhagic type of the disease, the pustules are small, black, continuous with each other, and full of blood ; they soon discharge a nasty fluid ; fever is high and death may intervene. 751 The whole aim of the treatment is to promote the mild, white form 755 of small-pox and to prevent the black form. It is therefore taboo to eat any meat containing blood, which is black and must therefore be avoided. On the contrary, fish meat is allowed because it is white and contains no dark blood. Another device of Native doctors to obtain this result is to place before the eyes of their patients grains of mealies, which are white like the desired pustules and are also similar to them in form, and to prevent their

[1] [Small-pox--analyst]

753 a sufferer from "inside trouble" says that "it bites" (luma),
827 we know that it is a case of intestinal colic. But it becomes somewhat puzzling when a patient declares that he suffers from an intestinal worm which passes from his stomach into his neck and returns through his lungs, when it does not happen to take a fancy to remain in his head! "It makes a sound like *pfie...pfie...*," said an old man to me when describing this animal, which plays an important part in the medical science of the Natives (1). (I. p. 48.)

[164] There are, however, certain technical terms which are used to designate some diseases ; thus *mukuhlwana* means cough and the mucous catarrh of the throat and nose. The ordinary *mbukulu* seems to be tonsilitis, while the special *mbukulu* is an affliction accompanied by fever, vertigo, delirium and madness, which is generally attributed to the malign influences of the spirits of the departed. — Hydrocele *(masangu*, or *masenge)* is wide-spread and well-known, as is also bilharzia, a form of haematuria called *shinyalu* or *ndjundjwane*, which appears in severe forms and is due to a special parasite. Rheumatism is called *shifambo*, the runner, as it moves from spot to spot. Syphilis, imported long ago by Europeans, is universally known, and is, alas, so general in the neighbourhood of the town of Lourenço Marques that almost all Natives suffer from it. The Natives call it *buba* (probably from bubo). Gonorrhea is of more recent importation, and dates — according to my informant Tobane — from the time of the construction of the Pretoria Railway ; it is called *shikandjameti*, the disease which crushes the villages.

The eruptive diseases are perhaps those best recognized by the Natives. *Shintshinana* is the name for measles, but seems also applicable to scarlet fever. Small-pox is called *nyedzana*, and, as regards psychic or nervous troubles, the treatment of which

(1) I may here mention that the tape worm and the lumbric, both called *tinyokana*, small snakes, are very common amongst Natives, and are well known to them. They even think that these worms are necessary for digestion. An old woman had asked one of my colleagues to give her a vermifuge, and the drug had been successful. But she came back to ask him to give her another medicine to prevent all the inhabitants from escaping. Some of them must remain in her body "because," as the old woman said, "who would eat my food afterwards" ?

we have just studied, they are attributed either to Heaven or to 753
evil spirits or to the winds. The name of the *wutleka* disease 827
is worthy of notice. This word comes from *wutla*, which means to rob, to seize ; wutleka, the qualificative derivative (Thonga Grammar § 196) means the condition of something taken away. This would seem to be a passive meaning, as if the patient had been robbed by some agent. However, Mankhelu explains the term by saying : "The patient has stolen the *rirabi*" — "a wutle rirabi". *Rirabi* is very closely allied to a word meaning stick ; the old doctor says it is the name of the disease. If this etymology be correct the patient would be considered as having taken the disease by a kind of robbery. But Native etymology must always be accepted with caution.

All these names show how unprecise is the pathological knowledge of the Thongas.

2) As regards the *causes of diseases*, Thongas are groping in 753
the grossest superstition. When a medical man wishes to treat a 787
disease, he first tries to diagnose its cause. The Bantu ñanga does the same, only the difference is that he takes very little notice of the physical symptoms. There is no auscultation, no palpation, no examination of the secretions, blood, saliva, or urine, as these are disgusting and must be covered with sand as soon as possible! The great means of diagnosing a disease is the throwing of bones. There are three great causes of disease : the spirits of the gods, the wizards and the makhumo, defilement from death or from impure persons. A fourth less common cause is Heaven. The bones will reveal by the way in which they fall which is the one to be combated.

3) Their ideas of *contagion* are not much in advance of their 753
other pathological conceptions. The two most dreaded diseases 164
in this respect are consumption (lifuba) and leprosy (nhlokonho). 751
Consumption is by no means a new ailment due to civilisation, though it has increased enormously since Thonga boys have gone to the towns. A proof that it has been known for a long time is to be found in its great importance in the ritual. To the Thonga mind it is caused by the *makhumo*, i. e., the contamination of death, or the defilement resulting from contact with a woman in

753 a state of physiological impurity. Hence the law ordering
164 people affected with any of these kinds of makhumo to eat with
751 spoons ; they thus protect themselves against the poison which might cause them to become consumptive. A curious feature in the conception of *contagion* is the following. When Sokis died (I. p. 139) I heard some of those present saying to his sister, who was carrying a child on her shoulders : "Do not cry! If you cry the disease will jump to your baby!" There were two reasons for this warning ; to cry in the presence of misfortune increases
753 the danger tenfold (compare p. 326) ; moreover the contagion of
768 disease is especially to be feared in connection with the relatives of the sick or dead person. Hence the strange custom illustrated on plate p. 26 : when a man dies of consumption his relatives are absolutely forbidden to eat any of the food he may have left. The "luma milomo" ceremony (I. p. 146) is of no use in this case. In former times all his mealies were burnt. Nowadays, however, it is allowable for people outside his family to buy and consume his provision. The large storehouse, illustrated on p. 26, contained the mealies harvested in Sokis' fields. These were sold to strangers, whilst relatives bought other mealies which were stored in the small hut for the use of his widow and children (p. 111). The same reason no doubt explains why the widow of a consumptive must *lahla khombo* with strangers, and not with men of the village (I. p. 206).

758 This peculiar idea of contagion also gives rise to the rules
766 for *burying lepers*. Their relatives must not have anything to do with the burial (I. p. 508). Relatives-in-law can perform
768 this painful duty, or possibly the family of the deceased leper will ask a friend to help them in their distress. "Have you prepared something as a reward for me?" he asks, and if this is the case he digs a grave just outside the wall of the hut where the patient died, removes the reeds of the wall, and pulls the corpse down into the hole without any funeral ceremony. The relatives are assembled far away on the square, and do not even dare to look on at the burial. All the implements are broken in the depths of the forest, at a great distance, for fear that a relative might touch one of them and die. Or they are left in the hut, and the whole village is at once removed.

733 bars, falling on the ground, spending their last penny to get drink beneath the eyes of the amused storekeeper, and he will realise what the unrestricted sale of drink to the Blacks means. It is simply horrible to contemplate ; morally it is a most reprehensible, economically a most deplorable, physically a most dangerous state of things. I shall not deal here with the moral side of the question ; let us merely consider what is the effect of this liquor trade on the health and on the economic future of the Black race.

1) There can be no doubt that it *kills* hundreds of Natives. Whatever stamina the race may possess, it cannot long resist the deadly effects of an inferior, unwholesome type of liquor absorbed in such enormous quantities. Coffee must be *kweba*, drunk in sips, but wine according to Natives, must be *nwa*, viz., drunk "à plein gosier" like water ! We saw the young chief Shongele, heir of the Klosen clan, son of Magudju, die a miserable death from delirium tremens, and many other chiefs and sub-chiefs followed his example. For years they led a disgusting life, half drunk all the time, no longer able to preside over the tribal court, or to govern their people, having entirely lost the dignity of manner and the sense of position which was so remarkable amongst Bantu rulers, clapping their hands and abjectly entreating the White visitor to give them *sope* (the Native name for brandy).

[164] Hand in hand with drunkenness goes immorality, and immorality as practised in that hell means the unchecked propagation of syphilis. According to medical authority, ninety per cent of the Natives round the town of Lourenço Marques are now contaminated. The girls who come on Saturday to sell their produce in the market and sleep two nights in the Native town, give themselves, for a few pence, to one of the hundreds of boys working on the wharf, and thus propagate the disease in the interior, and all this means the rapid destruction of a race which was made for life, and has great possibilities before it.

During the war of 1894, a [illegible]nt in the town of Lourenço Marques said to me cynically : "Th[illegible] are a nuisance ! Let them be given as much alcohol as they want and we shall soon get rid of them."

2) Alcohol will kill the Black race in the long run. It is already *ruining the kafir trade*. Those who uphold the liquor traffic, in order to increase the Revenue of the Colony, ought to obtain the opinion of the traders who do not deal in liquor. These merchants, who try to create new wants, to develop a healthy and useful trade amongst Natives, in a word to civilise them, would testify that selling strong drink to the Natives prevents their buying anything else. The craving for

101 into the Transvaal territory and are scattered in the large desert
197 of the Low Country of the Leydenburg district, together with
131 clans of Sutho (Pedi) and Swazi (Mbayi) origin. The Hlanganu dialect is very much akin to the Djonga.

5. *The Bila group*, called after the name of Bila, the great and fruitful plain of the Lower Limpopo valley, includes the clans living on both banks of the river. They have suffered very much at the hands of the Zulu invaders who made their home in that fertile country, but their dialect has kept some very peculiar traits.

101 6. *The Hlengwe group*. In the Djonga dialect, *hlengwe* means
131 wealth. I do not know if this be the etymology of the name Hlengwe as designating all the Thonga population of the east and north-east, from the Limpopo to Inhambane and to the Sabie of the north. The name Hlengwe applies properly only to the northern part of the eastern clans. I retain it however provisionally. It seems that this group, which forms perhaps half of the tribe, includes at least three great subdivisions : 1) The *Hlengwes proper*, facing the Malulekes and the Ba-Loyi on the west and extending as far as the Sabie to the north. Their main clans are Tshauke, Mbenzane, Mavube, Magwinyane. 2) *The Ba-Tswa* (1) of Inhambane with the Hlenbengwanes, Yingwanes, Nkumbis. 3) *The Nwanatis* with the Makwakwas, Khambanes, Ndindanes, bordering on the Chopis to the north and the west.

101 Outside of the proper area of the tribe, we find *colonies of*
167 *emigrated* Thongas in many parts of the Transvaal. The largest is in the Spelonken district, north of the Zoutpansberg, where they form the majority of the population. There they were called

(1) This name Ba-Tswa, is the Hlengwe form of Ba-Tjwa, a term by which the Zulus have been commonly designated amongst the Thongas. Ba-Tjwa is probably the corresponding form for Ba-Rwa, an appellation by which the Suthos of the Zoutpansberg plains used to call the tribes of the mountains, whence comes the wind called Bu-rwa. The Ba-Rwa are properly the Bushmen, as one knows, but under that name were included Bantus of a quite different type. This shows that the Natives, in naming foreign tribes, consider the geographical relation between themselves and these tribes much more than their ethnic characteristics : so one very often meets with the word "Bakalanga" which means people of the north. The Bakalanga proper are in Rhodesia, but in Lourenço Marques the Khosa tribe is called Bakalanga.

The term Ba-Nguni is applied to the Zulus, as well as Ba-Tjwa, but it is restricted to that clan of the Zulus which was under Manukosi.

101 167 131 *Ma-Gwamba* by the Vendas and Bveshas who possessed the country before them. These Ma-Gwamba are made up mostly of Hlengwe, Maluleke and Djonga refugees. In the Modjadji country, we find two colonies of Ba-ka-Baloyi with their own chiefs. Near Leydsdorp, a more considerable clan, numbering about 6000, is the Nkuna clan under Muhlaba. On the Sabie of the south, in the plain of the Leydenburg district, another colony has been founded more recently, since the war of the Portuguese against Gungunyane, by the Ngonis and Bilas who did not accept the new rule. They remain under Mpisane, a near relative of the late Ngoni potentate.

In the Orichstadt valley, and in many other parts of the Leydenburg mountains, little colonies of Thongas are met with, as well as in the Waterberg district (especially near Nilstrom) and in the towns of Pretoria and Johannesburg. A good many of the thousands of Shangaanes coming every year to the mines settle down definitively in the Town Locations of these great centres.

During the last twenty years the number of these emigrants has certainly increased. It was not possible to indicate on the map all their settlements between the Hlanganu domain proper, the Drakensberg Mountains and the Olifant River. On the farms of the Zoutpansberg and Pietersburg Districts they also form a notable portion of the Native population.

V. *The numerical strength of the Thonga Tribe.*

161 It is very difficult to ascertain the numbers of the Thongas. The census of the Transvaal taken on the 17th of April 1904 gives 82,325 as being the total Thonga population of that colony; of these, 48,117 are located in the Zoutpansberg. This is a minimum, as it has been recognised that at least 10 % ought to be added to these figures; there were scarcely any young men in the kraals when the census was taken. Let us estimate at 100,000 the numerical strength of that part of the tribe which is located in the Transvaal.

As regards Portuguese East Africa, we find some interesting

B. Historic Period.

175
167 Having tried to fix what is historical in the prehistoric period, we now come to the XIXth century ; and here we find a great amount of detailed information in which there may be some legendary traits, but which as a whole seems to be entirely trustworthy. It does not suit our plan to narrate here all these facts. To do so would lead us much too far. Let us only say that the history of the Thonga tribe during the whole of the XIXth century was dominated by the invasion and migrations of the Zulu conquerors, who left Chaka and for their own sake enslaved the poor Ama-Thonga of the coast, just as Mosilekatsi did among the Mashonas. These Ba-Ngoni were led by Manukosi ; he found all the Thonga clans living according to the old Bantu style, each for itself, without national unity ; he easily conquered them and tried to impose on them the military system of dominion created by Dingiswayo and Chaka. Many of the Thonga clans emigrated into the Transvaal at that time (between 1835-1840) rather than submit to Manukosi ; as the Boers had settled in the country and as the Ngoni chiefs always feared a war with the Whites more than anything else, these Thongas were left undisturbed by Manukosi. They belonged to the Nkuna, Ba-Loyi and Mavundja clans, and founded nu nerous colonies in the Transvaal.

175 Manukosi reigned quietly for more than twenty years in the Limpopo valley and as far as the Mosapa (Ba-Ndjao country, north of the Sabie). His death took place in 1856. Then a dreadful war of succession still known as "the war" (mubango) raged for more than six years over the whole area of the Thonga tribe. Two brothers disputed the chieftainship. According to the Thonga law of succession, Muzila was the legal heir ; but the Ngoni law was against him and in favour of his younger brother Mawewe. Mawewe was then proclaimed chief and Muzila's followers fled to the Spelonken ; the new king however behaved as a cruel despot and, with the help of the Portuguese and of the Ronga warriors, Muzila defeated him decisively on the Sabie River, August 17-20 1862. The Ba-Ronga always remained

439 monopolise the retail trade throughout the country, and the
563 Natives are quite unable to meet this competition; they have consequently almost entirely given up all their earlier attempts at business transactions! (1)

167 A second reason why the trade of former days has almost
439 entirely disappeared is to be found in the *great economic changes* resulting from the fact that Lourenço Marques has become an important seaport, in close relation with the miners of Johannesburg who receive their supplies via Delagoa Bay. Thousands of Natives are employed in discharging the large steamers which arrive by hundreds in the roadstead. At this work a Native can earn fifteen shillings a week or more; in a short time he has made ample provision for the wants of his family and no longer finds it necessary to go to Bilene, to Zululand or Swaziland to make a living. The women too can make money by selling tomatoes and sweet potatoes to an ever increasing White population. All this is much easier

439 (1) On one occasion, in 1892, I made a list of various articles displayed for sale
292 in and around a Banyan shop, in the district of Mahazule (to the North of Nondwane). This is what Mr. Nala, a Hindu from Goa established for many years amongst the
765 Rongas, offered to the Natives living in the neighbourhood of his primitive store.

584 *Stuffs.* These are sold by measurement taken on the individual; say, by the *shikumba*, length of one arm, or by the *nkumba* or *bemba* (two arms), or by the *peça*, the entire piece, the equivalent of two bemba. The materials most in demand are called; *tingidao* (white), *mashita* (black with white stripes), *sh.landana* (all red), *shinwakana* (red and black), *mempana* (a special red stuff worn as mourning) and *malopa* (a navy blue material still more frenquently worn as mourning). Besides these are *handkerchiefs* (minturu) of various colours, principally red, a large proportion coming from the manufacturers of East Switzerland; white *blankets (gampongo*, meaning snow), for three or four shillings; coloured blankets, thicker, varying from five to seven shillings; towels, called *thawala* (an adaptation of the English word) and even some articles of ready-made clothing such as *djansi* (overcoats) at fifteen shillings! Amongst the stuffs I would more particularly note the *gangisa ntombi*, that is "for use when courting the girls", dark blue with a pattern of white flowers.

439 *Beads.* There are at least a dozen kinds to be found at Nala's; djiridja (black) mbanda (white), shingazana, shimuzana, nkankana, habo, matshimbarole, bafa, tshambo.

Sundries. Rings, fish-hooks, buttons (masowa), thread, needles, snuff boxes to be worn in the ears (tinhlanga), knives, spoons, balls of string, padlocks (makandjate) with key attached; little chains, to be hung from the belt, which tinkle when walking; bracelets (busenga, ten for a shilling); wooden spoons, combs, coils of fine iron wire; skins; a large trap for catching hyenas or other wild animals; small brass petroleum lamps; sardines at sixpence a tin, English biscuits, and last but not least, a cask of German brandy diluted (tempora) with 50% of water! This would now be replaced by three casks of Vinho colonial, one of white wine, one of red wine and one of I do not know what colour!

than collecting mafureira or wax, or tapping trees for rubber (1). 167

Moreover the fashion of going to the *Transvaal mines*, to earn money, has become so universal that a Thonga would think he had in some sort failed if he had not made a stay in town (shilungu). There, in Johannesburg, they earn £3 in the mines, or £4—£5 monthly as kitchen boys ; so they despise the old primitive trading expeditions which brought less money and were attended with more danger. 439

These new economic conditions not only discourage Natives from trading on their own account, reducing them more and more to the condition of mere hired labourers, but are rapidly destroying their picturesque and interesting industry. For a few shillings they can buy European utensils. Their attractively carved spoons are replaced by ugly tin ones ; their wooden tumblers by less artistic enamelled ones, their primitive plates by European ware decorated in doubtful taste. Instead of the piece of reed which they wore in their ears as a snuff box, they now buy brass cartridges, and the Thonga beauties, discarding the *tihuhlu* fat, now anoint themselves with a scented oil imported from Europe. There may be certain advantages in these changes, but the picturesqueness of Bantu life promptly disappears, together with the incentive to develop their Native arts and crafts! 177 439

E. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ON NATIVE INDUSTRY.

It is a strange destiny, that of these African races amongst whom the civilisation of the XIXth century has appeared, effecting the most radical changes in the minds and manners of people who, for centuries, perhaps for tens of centuries, have remained in the same primitive condition, marking time, so to speak, on the same spot, or, at most, 178

(1) There are at least two species of shrubs whose sap, when hardened, produces excellent rubber. These are fairly wide-spread and M. Dewèvre, a Belgian botanist, who has made a special study of rubber plants, and to whom I sent leaves and fruits of the trees, has classified them amongst the Landolphia. One is said to be a Landolphia Petersiana, and the other a variety of the Landolphia Kirki (Dyer) called by others Landolphia Monteiroi. Natives make an incision in the bark of the tree, and a milky sap exudes, which soon thickens and the somewhat sticky filaments are then wound 137 314

3) Pointing of the teeth (Ku hleta).

304 This custom is also dying out. It used to be incumbent on
881 all the girls. Now many do not observe it. They have seen that teeth deformed in this way decay more quickly. The operation is performed on the incisors, and girls must keep their mouths closed for two or three days, not showing their teeth to anybody.

Near Rikatla, the hleta custom was still in force in the heathen villages in 1910. It gives the girls a kind of canine aspect.

4) The milebe custom.

304 This is very wide-spread all over South Africa. Though it has
881 disappeared now amongst most of the Ronga clans, it is still
832 practised in the Manyisa country, over the whole of Bilen and
171 in the Northern clans, amongst the Zulus, the Pedi-Suthos, etc. It is probably the origin of the famous "Hottentot apron," which some ethnographers thought to be a congenital malformation, and which is merely the result of this custom (Annotatio 5)[1]. It is a very ugly habit, very immoral from our point of view, fixing the imagination of the girl on sexual relations, but amongst the Thongas it is upheld as being quite the right thing.

B. MARRIAGE AND CONJUGAL LIFE

1) Conditions of Marriage

581 In the primitive Bantu tribe every girl gets married, some,
832 however, sooner than others. Suitors prefer pretty girls to ugly ones! But what is their standard of beauty ? The ideal is tall stature, strong limbs and well developed breasts. A proverb

1 [See p. 517 in these categories or in 116-Analyse]

524 protect himself. He tries to close the access to his position by drawing the line *f, g*. But, arrived at *g*, he comes to the end of his saliva (a helela), and A. who started at *h*, having arrived at *i*, turns round the point *g*, where his enemy has stopped miserably, and, going on, *j, k*, reaches the opening *d* and triumphantly ends his campaign in *e*!

But E. of the opposite camp has noticed a gate in the barrier X. Q. The saliva has dried there. He quickly carries his blow-pipe across the battle field, squirting all the time, and passes through the opening Y. He draws the line *l, m, n, o* and so destroys the part Q. Y. of the fortification X. Q. Should B. be quick enough, he might prevent him accomplishing his plan by drawing the line *p, q*... And so on! Young men, even men of ripe age, take an immense delight in these saliva battles. But the saliva must be blackish... It must be *ntjutju* saliva, viz., saliva produced by hemp, and not the ordinary white saliva, called *matjafula*. Should one of the players try to supplement the blackish by the white, he would be disqualified... His enemy would seize him by the forehead, and force him to lift his head and stop his attack. Should he go on, however, the other would say: "What? You come to me with matjafula!" This may lead to quarrels, even to blows... The hemp-pipe falls down and it all ends in cordial laughter.

276 861 789 This hemp-smoking custom becomes a passion with many young men. To cure them their parents break the pipe, take a little of the soot which is found inside, and mix it with their food without their being aware of it. When this has been done three times, it is said to fill them with disgust for hemp... Similia similibus curantur... We shall often meet with this medical principle in the Thonga superstitions.

524 171 The most interesting game played by men, a game which fascinates them and which is certainly more refined than hemp-smoking, is the *tshuba*. It is at the same time one of the most widespread games of mankind. Mr. Stewart Culin says, in the Report of the Smithsonian Institute for 1893 and 1894, that it is played under the same name by the American Negroes, and that it is but a variety of the *mancala*, the national game of Africa,

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which is found in many other countries, Ceylon, Indo-China, Bombay, Java, Jerusalem, Liberia, Abyssinia, Cairo, Gabon, Angola and amongst the Central African tribes. From the ethnographic point of view and for purposes of comparison it is, therefore, very interesting to note its rules all over the world.

524

I tried (and I think successfully), to discover those of the Thongas, which at first seemed to me incomprehensible. The accompany-

Phot. A. Burt

Men playing tshuba naer Rikatla.

ing illustration will help to explain them. The apparatus required is most simple. Let us imagine it played in its most elementary form, when two men only are engaged in it. Each of them digs two rows of four little holes, behind which he squats. They face each other. So there will be sixteen holes, eight belonging to *A* and eight to *B*. In each hole they put two stones, either real stones or fruit stones. Those of the kanye fruit are mostly used, but, by preference, Natives play with the pretty shining grey seeds of a shrub found near the sea, which resemble the marbles used by European boys.

No. I shows two players ready to commence, with the sixteen

551 618 576 edged sword which "cuts" disputes brought to the capital. (The Khosa chiefs were reputed for their wisdom in deciding judicial or political matters.)

Hlabi: Ba Nhlabi ba ku bengwa, Nhlabi ya Makamu ya Mavuse ya nkonwana, — The Hlabi who are hated, sons of Makamu, of Mavuse, of the calf (?)

Hlengwe: Shikobela sha Matsheme, Tshauke wa Matsheme (names of old chiefs).

551 618 643 576 *Tembe*: Mulao Ngolanyama madlaya a nga di, makhama a nga di, a dlayele bahloti: — Mulao (son of Tembe ?), the lion which kills and does not eat, the hawk which kills, it kills for the hunters, viz., it is so well fed itself, so rich that it can leave the meat for others. Such a sentence was pronounced in former times by subjects entering the royal kraal, crawling on their knees, when they wished to receive food from the chief.

Nhlanganu: Ba ku hlomula fumo, ba renga ndlela: — Those who unsheath the sword in order to buy the road, (the right of passing through a foreign country) (1).

551 In addition to these laudatory phrases of clans, each individual has his own sentence or sentences by which he praises himself or by which others praise his qualities. They are specially common in the case of boys, but even girls possess them. In the case of chiefs, such praises are much longer. See for instance the praise of the Nkuna chief Muhlaba (Part III, Ch. III, III).

* * *

171 If we cross the plain of the Sabi and reach the Drakensberg, we find that all the Pedi tribes dwelling together with the Thongas in the Leydenburg and Zoutpansberg district, possess laudatory

551 609 (1) This custom of praising the various tribes in such terms is so familiar to the Thongas that they have invented similar expressions for the white people. The Portuguese are: Ba ka nâofazmalo, — the Sons of Never mind, because they seem to the Natives to be somewhat careless or indifferent. The English are: Bana ba Nhluleki, a hluleka ku hleka, a tiba ku lwa, — the sons of the one who cannot, he cannot laugh, he knows how to fight! Perhaps Natives consider them, on the contrary, somewhat too earnest, too keen!

171 names which they also call *seboko*, the same word as shibongo ;
but most of these names are names of animals, and are called by
the technical term *muthupu*, totem ; the animal is the emblem
000 or totem of the group. The Pedi clans are totemic. This
means that, not only do they glorify themselves by comparing
themselves with an animal and taking its name, but they think
that there is a mysterious vital connection between it and their social
group. I cannot give here all the facts I collected amongst them
on the subject. They were published in *Le Globe*, the organ of
the Geneva Geographical Society, Volume LXIII, under the
following title : *Le Totemisme chez les Thongas, les Pédis et les
Vendas*. Let me merely mention the following details. The
Khahas of the Shiluvane valley have the small grey antelope, called
duyker, as totem. They salute each other in these words : "Goni!
Phudi!" *Goni* is probably the name of an old ancestor, the same
as Nkuna for the Ba-Nkuna ; but *phudi* means duyker. They
consider it taboo to make a *ntehe* of its skin for their children.
Some of them do not eat the flesh of that antelope, fearing that their
children would become idiotic, or be covered with boils. They will
not sit near a man of another clan who is handling the skin of a
duyker. The Mashilas (Sekukuni's people), who have the porcu-
pine as totem, say : "It is taboo even to tread on its dung; the soles
of the feet would become sore." Many clans are afraid to kill the
animal which is their totem ; this is not a law enforced by the chiefs ;
the totem itself punishes them if they trangress it. However,
nowhere did I find the idea that they are descended from the totem.
They say: "The old people noticed that the flesh of such and such
an animal made the people of their clan ill ; so they proclaimed
it taboo." Amongst the Vendas, or at any rate amongst certain
Venda clans (Ba-Laudzi, Ba-Ngwe, Ba-Shidzibe) the totem is
connected with the ancestor-gods. At his death, each member
of the clan is transformed into the animal venerated by his clan
and joins his congeners in the sacred wood where they live.
618 Nothing of this kind is met with amongst the Thongas. The
551 Thonga clans are *atotemic*. Many men bear the name of animals,
[825] but this is merely a means of glorifying themselves ; there is no
taboo with regard to the flesh, skin, or dung of that animal. I have

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

64/3 their own saliva," (viz., their mouths watering the while). He sometimes throws a piece of meat to one of his favourites, who accepts it with both hands, shouting : "Bayete!" In the Tembe capital, men crawled on their knees before the chief, shouting: "Ngolanyama" "Lion!". Ñwangundjuwana, the chief of Ñwamba, was known for his more democratic ways. He used to eat with his men.

To shake hands with a chief was also considered as taboo before the days of Christianity. Now Muhlaba somewhat reluctantly accepts the hand which is extended to him by the most modest of his subjects, even by children on Christmas Day. The idea which is at the bottom of the fear is that the chief is a magical being. He possesses special medicines with which he rubs himself or which he swallows, so that his body is taboo (ntjumbu wa hosi wa yila). He is dangerous. "When he points at you with his finger, you are a dead man" (Mboza). Owing to the charms with which he had smeared his body, Maphunga, the chief of Nondwane, made those who discussed State affairs with him, even White people, "unable to answer him or to resist
64/3 his will" (Mboza). In order to increase this salutary fear, some
171 chiefs had the curious custom of *disappearing for a time* (tumba) "just like a big caterpillar when it enters the ground and becomes a chrysalis." The same Maphunga used to remain invisible during one week each year before the great bukanye feast (1). We shall see the same rite practised by the great magicians, who also aspire to create a deep impression on the
64/3 imagination of the people. (See Part VI.) As already mentioned, the chief alone must be addressed by the royal salutation "Bayete"
576 or "Baheti." The hosana has no right to it legally, and must be addressed by the term "Baba," "Father." As regards subjects, they are called *malandja*, from the verb ku landja,

(1) This custom is met with amongst the Pedis, where old chiefs abandon their kraals and go to live in the desert for years, leaving a prince regent in their stead. This kind of hermit life gives them great prestige. The Pedi chief Sikororo, near Shiluvane, is the best-known case of such a disappearance. Sexual continence, even repugnance to women, was one of his reasons for this seclusion, which lasted until his death. (1903 or 1904).

643 to follow, the followers. The Chief is the one who walks in front, whom the malandja, the ordinary folk, follow from motives of submission and fidelity, much as a dog follows his master from attachment, but is ready to fight for him should occasion arise.

643 551 The *name of the chief* must not be pronounced on any and every occasion. Should it contain a word which designates another object, the name of this object must be changed. So the Mpfumu chief *Ñwamantibyane* felt that his name was too similar to *ntibu* (diminutive *ntibyane*),a certain antelope. It was henceforth taboo to call this animal ntibu in his territory. It had to be called nguya. Zihlahla, the father of Ñwamantibyane, had gone even further than his son ; his counsellors complained that he gave them no meat to eat, keeping all for himself. "He is a dog," they said. The chief overheard the remark and took action in the following decree : "Let it be know all over the country that *mbyana*, the dog, is I. When you pronounce this word, you will be referring to your chief. I therefore command you hereafter to call real dogs *kalawana*." And this was done for some time. So, in Nondwane, people proclaimed as taboo the verb *ku phunga*, to sprinkle, and replaced it by *ku kweba*, which means to drink, in order not to offend *Maphunga*. This custom of showing respect by avoiding the use of the name of a chief in connexion with ordinary objects, is even extended to other men, if they are of particular note. So a great personage of the Maputju clan having been named Mahlahla, which means small branches, these had to be called mavinda. The prohibition to pronounce the name of the chief can go so far that even names of deceased chiefs are taboo, at least in the Bilen region. So the petty chief of Rikatla had been called *Muzila* after the great Ngoni chief, son of Manukosi and father of Gungunyana. But people used to call him *Mbozin*, fearing lest the warriors of Bilen might say : "What is this ? Where have you hidden him ? Show us Muzila. We assert that he died long ago!"

171 These are traces of the *hlonipha* custom, which is, however, not so much developed amongst Thongas as amongst Zulus.

643 The law of luma seems to have applied to all kinds of food
262 in former times. Nowadays it is not observed for the following
171 products : maize, Kafir beans and peas, rice, sorghum, water
527 melons (makalabatla) and monkey nuts. It is partly observed
241 for mafureira almonds (tihuhlu), strychnos paste (fuma) and pumpkin leaves (magawane). It is strongly enforced for black Kafir corn and bukanye. Such is at any rate the case in the four clans of Nondwane, Mabota, Ñwamba and Tembe. Amongst the Zulus and Swazis on the contrary, I have been told people luma maize and do not luma kafir corn. Kafir corn is probably the most ancient cereal amongst the Ba-Thonga, and bukanye has always existed in the country. This is perhaps the reason why these luma rites, which bear a very old character, are still applied to these products to the exclusion of other more modern cereals.

I. *The luma without a religious ceremony.*

631 Let us first study the less ritualistic kind of luma, the luma
262 of the *mafureira almond*, for instance. It is practised in each
643 sub-chief's village, and, though it is tending to become obsolete,
527 it is still enforced by some "tihosana." Thus my neighbour in Rikatla, Habele, the hosana placed by Mobvesha over this part of the territory, met some time ago a boy who was eating these almonds, the description of which I shall give later on.— "Who gave them to you ?" asked Habele... The child kept silent.—"Come with me to your parents!" Having found their home, the sub-chief scolded them severely : "You have started sucking (munya) the almonds before us. You wanted to kill my head ? Pay a fine!" They answered : "The birds made them fall from the tree... The children were not guilty!" However they had to pay 500 reis.

262 The luma of almonds, which takes place in December, when
643 they are ripe, is performed in the following way. The almonds
527 are dipped into a small calabash full of water to soften them. Some of the powder of the nyokwekulu is added to them. The headman first takes some for himself and then distributes them to his people. They suck the almonds, take in their hands the part

643 and pays them regular visits, staying some days in these secondary
595 capitals.

643 But a more effective way of holding the country is to place his son or his near relatives as sub-chiefs in all these districts.
631 If the son is still young, the chief will send along with him a
171 trustworthy counsellor to watch over him. Thus, when he dies, and when the elder son is called to the succession, the new chief will have his brothers as co-chiefs or sub-chiefs. Should they be ambitious, should they have acquired some power during the last years of their father's government, they may refuse to obey and proclaim themselves independent. This has happened many times amongst the Rongas. Let me shortly recapitulate the three instances already mentioned. In the Tembe kingdom Maputju, who "ate the foreleg," made himself king of the greater part of the territory. The separated brothers became fierce enemies and often fought against each other, all the more as Tembe greatly resented the revolt of Maputju, and Maputju knew he had not been fair to his elder brother (p. 329). The same thing happened when Matjolo became independent of Mpfumo, his elder brother ; both were sons of Nhlaruti. The origin of the war of 1894-1896 was the same ; Mubvesha, belonging to the Hlewana branch of the Mazwaya family, wished to become independent... even to take the chieftainship from the elder branch to which Maphunga and his successor Mahazule belonged.

So the Thonga clan has a tendency to fall to pieces, just like the Thonga village, and it requires a good deal of firmness and diplomacy on the part of a chief to keep his kingdom intact.

3) The law of succession.

643 Its main provision is this ; when a chief dies, his elder son is the regular heir, but all his younger brothers must reign before the son, the true heir, is crowned. This system attempts to reconcile two principles which we have already met with as governing the family life : 1) the absolute preeminent right of the elder branch, 2) the community of property amongst brothers.

713 411 595 643 of palm leaves 5 in. and handle 35 ½ inches. As previously mentioned, the handle of the large sized assagai is broken at the warriors' death, being "he," or his defilement ; but the blade "never dies." It belongs to the chief, as does also the shield, and the son will inherit it. During the warrior's life, it is kept in the hut of his *first wife*. She is called the owner (ñwinyi) of the assagai. It is taboo for the other wives to touch it ; another fact which shows the special position of the first wife. (Comp. p. 284.)

713 411 439 Another weapon in more restricted use and which can also be employed for cutting wood, is the *axe* or *hatchet*, of which I have met with two descriptions (No. 3) ; the blade (mbimbi) may be narrow and elongated—it is then called shingwatane,—or broad and rounded,—when it is the shiyema. These hatchets are firmly inserted in their wooden handles like the axes of the lake-dwellers. European manufacturers now export a considerable number of semicircular hatchets, similar to the one on the right in my illustration, to Delagoa. The one here portrayed will be at once recognised as being of Native make. I may also mention the big *knives* (mikwa), a sort of sword ; one sometimes meets brawny fellows walking along the paths, armed with these dangerous looking implements! However they are quite inoffensive.

713 411 171 I managed to obtain from a traveller a beautiful *dagger* which he was carrying slung across his breast ; it is a rare specimen and comes, I am told, from the Ba-Ndjao tribe (No. 5). The sheath is made of two pieces of wood, artistically carved and fastened together with a plait of iron wire ; it is slightly hollowed out to allow the blade to enter ; this is firmly fixed in the handle through which it passes from end to end, coming out at the extremity, where it is bent back and thus held tightly in place. The Ba-Pedi in the Zoutpansberg also make similar knives.

714 171 Finally, when the warrior holds in one hand his large assagai, in the other will be found his *shield* (shitlhangu) (No. 1), which he grasps by the stick around which this piece of defensive armour pivots. The Thonga shield is made like that of the Zulus, of a piece of ox-hide, oval in shape and of varying size, sometimes all of one colour and sometimes variegated. (The several battalions

727 the dead body, which remains quite naked ; should the slain be a Pedi wearing the piece of skin called nsindo round his genitalia, the slayer takes it with him as a proof that he has killed a man. A second warrior passing the dying or dead enemy will transfix (hlomula) his arm. A third passing will pierce his leg. These two last have not done so meritorious a deed as the first : they have not slain but merely finished off (huhula) the enemy. They act as witnesses to the first man, who is the actual possessor of the corpse ; they acquire, however, an equal right to dance : they are the *bahlomuri* of the real slayer. Should a fourth man pass by and again stab the dead, he is credited with no glory at all.

171/727 Besides the stabbing in the arm and leg, the dead bodies of enemies are subjected to still further *mutilations* ; they are ripped open and eventually disembowelled, an operation designated by the Zulu word "qanza." This revolting custom seems to be carried out in a more complete way amongst the Ba-Pedi than amongst the Thongas. In the battle of Nov. 6 1901, when the Sikororo and Sekukuni forces were repulsed by Maaghe and Muhlaba at Shiluvane, and forty foes were killed (App. X), their corpses disappeared entirely, cut into pieces by the medicine men of the victorious clan ; magicians from all Zoutpansberg came and asked to buy parts of the slain in order to prepare their powerful charms. In fact, in their opinion, the flesh and blood of an enemy killed in battle is the most efficacious of all charms and makes a *first rate drug* called *marumelo*. This medicine is also used for other purposes : with it the seeds are smeared in order to ensure a good harvest. When the mealies are two feet high, the magician ties together leaves on stems at the four corners of the field, after having treated them with the drug ; the blacksmiths from the Iron Mountain of Zoutpansberg buy it and mix it with their mineral ore, in order to strengthen the iron which they melt in their furnaces (nonisa nsimbi). Without this help they would obtain but slag. The hunters inoculate themselves in the following way with the powder obtained from the tendons and the bones : they make incisions in the skin of their wrists and elbows, draw a little blood, mix it with the drug, cook both in a pot, expose their arrows and assagais to the

789 the medicine of the slayers of men. At bukanye time they can
727 use it to *luma*, viz., to season the first calabash they drink (See
828 page 400). For this purpose it is as good as the great mbhulo,
783 "the medicine of the country," provided by the chief, and it will prevent them attacking their own people under the influence of drink. The *tintebe* will also be helpful in future battles. The insanity which threatens those who shed blood might begin early. So, on the battle-field itself, just after their deed, warriors are given a preventive dose of the medicine by those who have killed on previous occasions and who wear tintebe.

789 The period of seclusion having been concluded by the final
783 purification, all the implements (mizilo) used by the slayers
727 during these days, and their old garments, are tied together and hung by a string to a tree, at some distance from the capital, where they are left to rot (1).

Having reached their homes, the slayers have still to complete the cure by chewing a piece of root called monungwane every morning and evening, and spitting it out in the direction of the rising or the setting sun with the same exclamation : "Phee! phee!" — "Go down, sink!" The piece of root is tied to the assagay (2).

727 The description of the rites performed for the treatment of the slayers
828 applies especially to the Northern clans. But the following narrative
789 of an old man named Makhani from the Rikatla region shows that
783 similar customs were also in existence amongst the Ba-Ronga. This man had wounded an enemy in a battle ; the wound proved fatal and the

(1) I had the good luck to find those which were used for the purification of the slayers after the Mooudi fight during the Sikororo war and they are now in the Ethnographical Museum of Neuchâtel. They consist of half a dozen old calabashes, a pair of sandals, etc.

171 (2) Purification customs for the warriors are somewhat different amongst the Petlis. After the Mooudi battle, the slayers of Maaghe's yimpi had to undergo the following medicinal treatment : the heart of the slain having been torn out, the muscles of their faces sliced off, their limbs amputated, all these portions of human flesh mixed with drugs and ox-flesh were cooked in a pot, the assagais being used to stir the horrible broth. This was poured into a flat basket which it is taboo to touch ; some one drew it with a curved assagay as far as the middle of the square. Then the slayers, having been previously white-washed with clay, advanced on their knees, and, with vociferations or cries imitating vultures, caught a piece of meat in their teeth, not touching it with their hands. Their wives are said to participate in this meal, as being also contaminated by the defilement of their glorious husbands.

831 —I mbolo ya shuburu.
881 —Penis est incircumcisi viri.

Banhwanyana ba ka Makwakwa ba kundja na ba hlanamile. N'yini?

Puellæ ex regione Makwakwa manibus apertis coeunt. Quid significant hæc verba?

—I mahlehlwa.

—Est semen mahlehwa.

(Hlehlwa is the seed of a creeper growing along the ground; this seed [517] is of the same size as a two shilling piece and possesses, in its central part, two hooks standing up.)

[Note 4 (page 88): these are the formulae:

Shana khololwane ma ri tiba le'ri onhaka milebe?

Do you know the bird that injures the labia minora?

—I mbolo ya shuburu.

It is the penis of an uncircumcised man.

Banhwanyana ba ka Makwakwa ba kundja na ba hlanamile. N'yini?

The girls from the region of Makwakwa have intercourse with open hands. What do these words mean?

—I mahlehlwa.

—Mahlehwa is the semen.

(Hlehlwa is the seed of a creeper growing along the ground; this seed [517] is of the same size as a two shilling piece and possesses, in its central part, two hooks standing up.)]

832 "Annotatio quinta (P. 98. 182). Externorum genitalium
836 minora labra verbo milebe (singul. nebe) designantur, quæ
304 puellæ adeo trahere solent ut ea usque ad quinque, decem,
881 etiam quindecim centimetra extendant. Quæ labra nonnunquam
171 parvis baculis metiuntur, eorum longitudine, apud comites suas, immo apud sponsos, gloriantes. Istis pravis moribus enim nihil aliud puellæ sequuntur nisi futuri mariti gratiam, cui apud Ba-Pedi, si sponsam suam labra non satis extendisse arbitratur, eam domum dimittere et boves suos reposcere licet. Puellæ aululam pulmenti plenam parant quam operculo claudunt. Ad quas pueri vespere veniunt et stipem dant ut admittantur. In casae solo considunt et puellas cenantes spectant dum digitos in aululam demittunt. Puellæ quarum milebe quatuor digitos longa sunt, quatuor digitis usæ comedunt: bakulu, sunt, i.e. adultæ, et lætantur amatores. Aut tribus tantum, duobus aliquando utantur. Adolescentulæ cavis manibus cenant.

[Note 5 (pages 98 and 182). The labia minora of the outer genitals are called by the word milebe (singular nebe), and the girls are in the habit of pulling them so much that they extend from five or ten to as many as fifteen centimeters.

832 Sometimes the girls measure their labia with small sticks
836 and boast of their length to their companions and even to their
304 bridegrooms. The girls follow these perverse practices for
881 no other reason than for the sake of their future husband.
171 Among the Ba-Pedi the husband may, if he thinks that his bride has not sufficiently stretched her labia, send her home and demand his bulls back. The girls keep a pot full of food ready and cover it with a lid. In the evening the boys come to the girls and give them a small gift in order to be admitted. In the house they sit down on the floor and watch the girls eating from a pot with their fingers. The girls whose milebe are four digits long eat using four fingers: they are bakulu, that is, adult, and they enjoy their lovers. Or they use only three fingers and sometimes two. The young girls eat with the palms of their hands.]

765 "Annotatio sexta (P. 154). Seu quis per ætatem iam pro-
783 vectam imbecillior factus erit, sive qualibet de causa tam
833 impotens ut sperma emittere non possit (a nga kumi mati), ceteri viri quid fiat sciscitabuntur. Quod si utique parum procedit, tota inhibetur cærimonia. Qui vero se invicem eodem ritu miscere debebant, iis ritum conficere non fas est. Ille jejunio, per quinque dies, prout res postulat, artissime utetur, cui medicinæ ad rem accommodatæ exquirentur.

[Note 6 (page 154). If someone should have become feeble because of advanced age, or if for some reason he should be so impotent that he cannot emit sperms (a nga kumi mati), other men ask what should be done. For if it proceeds quite insufficiently, the whole ceremony is held up. And those who should have had intercourse in turn in the same ritual fashion are not permitted to complete the rite. He [the impotent man] has to fast very strictly for five days as the situation requires and the remedies appropriate to the situation will be sought.]

843 "Annotatio septima (P. 154). Nocens maritus uxorque sui
834 purgandi causâ alium ritum peragent. Uxor mariti suaque
841 pudenda veste intima et inquinatissima tergebit, quam postea comburet.

Ambo, ad ignem accedentes, caput manusque calefacient. Inde cinerem collectum mulier adipe miscet, quo mariti artus illinit, digitis bracchiis cruribusque tractis, quod 'lula' dicitur. Postea, noctibus duabus sequentibus, coibunt. Si maritus, non cum uxore sua, sed cum puella quadam ex alio vico, stupri consuetudinem junxerit, huic fossorium donabitur, ut ritum 'lula' perfectum veniat.

[Note 7 (page 154). If the husband and the wife are guilty of an offense, they perform another rite for the sake of purging themselves. The wife will cover her husband's and

But the terrible calamity of drought is brought into direct
relation with some physiological phenomena which no one would 789
have thought of in this connection : the miscarriage of women 821
when the foetus has not been dealt with according to rule, the 843
birth of twins, the death of children not yet received into the tribe 845
by the ceremony of *boha puri* (I. p. 56) and not buried in wet 766
ground ; these are the great natural causes which prevent rain 171
from falling! I have met with this conception all over the
Thonga tribe. I found it also amongst the Pedis of the Transvaal, who firmly believe it, and it would be most interesting to know if Suthos, Zulus, and Hottentots have the same superstitions. Let me quote the *ipissima verba* of Mankhelu, the great 789
medicine-man of the Nkuna Court. I shall never forget the 821
earnest tone of his voice, his deep conviction, when he uttered 843
to me the following words, as a kind of revelation : "When a 783
woman has had a miscarriage, when she has let her blood flow secretly and has buried the abortive child in an unknown place, it is enough to make the burning winds blow, and to dry up all the land : the rain can no longer fall, because the country is no longer right (tiko a ra ha lulami). Rain fears that spot. It must stop at that very place and can go no further. This woman has been very guilty. She has spoilt the country of the chief, because she has hidden blood which had not yet properly united to make a human being. That blood is taboo! What she has done is taboo. It causes starvation."

"What then must be done?" — "The chief will collect his men and ask them : 'Are you in a normal state?' (lit. are you right?). They answer : 'Such and such a woman was pregnant but nobody knows what she has brought forth.' This woman will be arrested and told to go and show us where she has put it. The earth is dug up ; the hole is sprinkled with a decoction made of two drugs prepared in a special pot, the *mbendula* and *nyangale* ; the woman herself must wash her body every day with that medicine. Then a little of the earth taken from the hole will be scraped up and thrown into the river ; water drawn from the river will be poured into the hole : the country will be well again, and then the rain will come.

"Moreover, we, the medicine-men, after having sent old

accepted another message." That is why men are subject to death. 773 825

This myth is so strongly believed that shepherds, when they see a chameleon climbing slowly up a tree, begin to tease it, and, when it opens its mouth, throw a pinch of tobacco into it, and are greatly amused to see the poor thing change colour, passing from green to orange, and from orange to black, in agony, to the great delight of the little boys ; they thus avenge themselves on the chameleon! (p. 339). 761

The same story[1] is told amongst the Zulus, and other myths of a similar character are found all over Africa, especially amongst the Ba-Rotsi (1). It would be an interesting study to collect them all, and thus to compile the African Genesis. We should probably find that the origin of man and death are the two great subjects on which the imagination of the Bantus has tried to throw some light, and that, though the moral element is strangely lacking in these myths, yet there is a striking resemblance between them and the Biblical story, where an answer to the same questions is given. 171 773

II. *The various human races.*

Have Bantus a clear idea of the human race? What they call *banhu* in Thonga, *bantu* in Zulu, evidently means "black people," the first inhabitants of the country. The Zulus are regarded, owing to their military ability, as a superior race, not however to such an extent as they themselves believe to be the case! Whatever may be their hostility or repugnance to their fellow blacks, they know that they belong to the same species. I am not sure that they hold this idea regarding White people, who are not *banhu* but *balungu*. 609 829

What is the origin of this word? As it is also used in Zulu (abelungo), the etymology suggested is the verb *ku lunga*, to be right, good. White people would then be correct, nice people, to

(1) Compare *Foi et Vie*. Oct. 1910. Les Origines. A. Jalla.

[1] [about the original cause of death. See p. 350, cat. 116-Analyst]

stem *kwemba* is never used, and its meaning is unknown. There 769
is another form, *nkwembu*, of the class mu-mi, very rarely u[illegible]nd 776
having the same meaning, and the word *bukwembu*, the abstract 193
noun derived from the same root. Bukwembu is the "power which creates life and death, which gives riches, or which makes poor," says Viguet. In Pedi the ancestor-gods are called *badimo*, a word which seems to be related to *Khedimo* (above, in heaven). But I have heard this connection doubted (1). In Zulu the etymology of *indhlozi* and *itongo*, employed to designate the ancestor-gods, is also unknown, which is a pity, as it would have been interesting to see if the stem from which they come also means above. Is it not strange that in these three closely- [171]
connected languages the terms used for the spirits, about which they have exactly the same ideas, are absolutely without any linguistic relation? In Sutho, these spirits belong to the class "mu-ba," the class of persons, which seems natural. In Zulu their two names are of the class yin-tin and dji-ma, respectively ; in Thonga they belong to the shi-psi class. This dissimilarity is indeed curious.

2) Categories of Ancestor-Gods.

Since every human being becomes a shikwembu after death, [766]
there are consequently many categories of these. What is the fate
of little children? If they die in infancy no religious ceremony is 776
performed over their grave, nor are any prayers offered to them. 769
The twig rite (I. p. 142) only begins for children who have died at the age of puberty. Infants are, however, seen in the sacred woods amongst the adult gods. This is one of the points about

(1) The Vendas call the ancestor-gods *badzimo*, which is evidently the same word as the Sutho badimo. The Rev. Th. Schwellnus told me he thought that the etymology of this word was the verb dzima (in Thonga tima) which means to extinguish (Timula tora means to quench the thirst). The badzimo would thus be those who bring relief, who remove anguish. As this stem dzimo under various forms is widespread amongst the Bantu tribes to designate the ancestor-gods, it would be interesting to know if the corresponding verb dzima also exists and if this etymology is clearly established. The word *ntimu*, sacred wood, in Thonga, may perhaps come from the same root.

The Gods of the Bush, Psikwembu psa Nhoba, are also especially dreaded. There is a little song which is sung as a welcome to travellers who reach their home safely : 776 484 533

> Shikwembu sha nhoba shi etlele !
> Shi etlele, banhwanyana !
> Amadikeo-dikeo-dikeo !
> The god of the bush has remained asleep !
> He has remained asleep, young girls !
> Hurrah ! hurrah ! hurrah !

The spirits of the departed who wander about in the bush, not having been properly buried, try to attack innocent travellers. You are fortunate to escape their anger! For this reason they often say to a relative who is starting out on a journey : "Go with your god," viz., the special ancestor-god who can protect you against the dangers of the bush. 769 776 784

I have also heard mention of *Shikwembu sha tihanye*, the god of quarrels. When an offering prescribed by the bones and presented to a certain ancestor-god has not had the desired result, people say : "This god is a god of quarrels. Let us make an offering to the others so that they may scold him." 776 769

3) The Abode of the Ancestor-Gods and their Mode of Life.

Ideas on these two points are very confused, even contradictory. Some say that the departed go to a great village *under the earth*, a village where everything is white (or pure, "ku basa") ; there they till the fields, reap great harvests, and live in abundance, and they take of this abundance to give to their descendants on earth. They have also a great many cattle. The place where they live seems to be a kind of Hades or Paradise (1). But it would seem, when we consider the funeral rites, that the deceased, on the contrary, 775 776 787

(1) The Ba-Ila (see Smith and Dale, *The Ila-speaking people*, II p. 119) believe that the ghosts go *Kwiwe*, to the East, to Chilenga, the Creator. But they have the same contradictory ideas as the Thongas concerning the abode of their deceased ancestors. 171

Amongst the Natives of Barotseland, on the Zambezi, it is said that the dead go to Nyambe, the God of Heaven. They pierce the lobe of their ears and make other incisions in their bodies as a sign that they belong to Nyambe. When they die and reach the end of the earth at the great river Walamba (the Styx of the Zambezian tribes) the ferryman who conveys the dead to the other bank looks at them to see if

775 remains *in his grave*. Is not his grave his house (I. p. 137)? Does
776 he not sit on his square, where his mats have been unrolled? Thus
the life of the shikwembu seems to be the exact continuation of his
787 earthly existence. That such is the idea is proved by the two bones which represent the gods in the set of divinatory bones : 1) the astragalus or nail of an ant-bear, because ant-bears live in the earth, and come out only during the night ; 2) the astragalus of an antelope, found in the excrement of a hyena ; the hyena ate the antelope, and swallowed the bone, which came to light again ; in the same way the gods have been buried in the ground, and reveal themselves later on. (Compare Ch. III. D.) A third idea, more or less intermediate between the other two, is that the gods reside *in the sacred woods*, and there lead their family life in human form, parents and children, even little children, who are carried on their mothers' shoulders. Mboza went so far as to say that they are married and bring forth children, as children are seen on their mothers' backs. Here again, we find the life of the other world regarded as the exact reproduction of this terrestrial existence.

4) The Sacred Woods.

764 These are vast, almost impenetrable thickets, in which the
769 ancient chiefs have been buried ; they are called *ntimu*, (mu-mi)
cemeteries. Every clan owns one or more of these burying places.
778 The ntimu is reserved for the men of the royal family, those who have been the owners of the land. They are buried in different sections of the forest, "according to their villages," in such a way that the wood represents separate cemeteries, corresponding to the

171 they bear the marks, and only in that case does he take them to Nyambe (See *Ames primitives*, Th. Burnier, Paris Mission, 102, Boulevard Arago).

The Ba-Chopi believe that their ancestor-gods dwell in rivers. They have no fear of the graves where the deceased have been buried, and even till the ground over them, asserting that the bones alone remain in the earth, the ghosts themselves having departed into the river where they are heard singing, dancing, and playing on antelope horns. When the chiefs make a national offering, they mix the meat with water when they present it to their gods, and the one officiating turns his eyes towards the river when he prays. He places the part of the victim which has been cut out for the gods on the bank of the river, and everybody goes home. The gods come when all have gone and take the offering. It is taboo to remain on the spot and to be seen by them!

778 the ceremony of tying the cotton string (I. p. 56. Sexual relations
782 have been prohibited to her from the birth of her child up to the performance of this rite. She is consequently pure). The chief may penetrate into it, but only if he has abstained from intercourse with his wives for a whole week. Mankentwane himself must observe this law, otherwise the "medicine, muri" would be spoiled and lose all its virtue. (The sexual taboo, in this case, is evidently dictated by the fact that the mhamba is directly connected with military matters, as we shall see. Compare I. p. 470.) In this sacred hut the old woman constantly keeps up a fire which is maintained with the logs of a certain tree, called shibondjwane, cut by the subjects at the command of the chief. Now and again she exposes the skins to the rays of the sun in order to kill the worms which attack them. Should enemies invade the country, she escapes, carrying the bundle in a mat. If they come up with her, she at once disappears (nyumba) leaving the mat on the spot. As soon as an enemy has taken hold of it, he becomes insane ; he begins to wander about in the bush, unable to return home. When the war is over, the old woman goes to the place where she left the mhamba ; if she does not immediately find it there, her heart is not in the least troubled. The bones are thrown, and reveal where the mhamba has been put by the enemy. Two days
778 do not elapse before it is found! The great mhamba is used first
782 of all for the preparation of military expeditions. A small portion
726 of the fingers and of the faces is cut off and these pieces are mixed with the other war charms ; a pill is made and placed on a piece of broken pottery over a fire in the sacred wood. All the warriors pass by one after the other and expose their assegais, their legs, and their faces to the smoke ; finally the great ñanga puts the fire out and the army is ready to start. But the Shirindja mhamba also plays a great part in the National religious ceremonies, as in the other clans (1).

171 (1) It is interesting to compare the Thonga *great mhamba* with two objects found amongst other Bantu tribes. The first of these is the *byiri* of the Pahuins of the French
778 Congo. This is a most powerful fetish consisting of a skull kept in a box in the huts of these people, in a dark corner; it is used as a means of obtaining wealth and of discovering wizards. In former times it is said to have been the skull of the father of the owner of the hut which had been dug up by him and smeared with drugs. In

2) The Main Elements of Ancestor Worship.

The sequence of the religious ceremonies in a typical sacrifice, like that performed at the crushing of the hut, is as follows : 769 782

1) The bones are first consulted, and reveal to what god, when, how, and by whom the sacrifice must be made.

2) The officiant, who is as a rule the eldest male member of the family, comes and presides over the sacrifice.

3) The victims are brought by those who have either been designated, or who have volunteered to provide them.

4) They are killed by the uterine nephews, the goats or sheep by piercing the heart, the hens by cutting the throat. Sometimes the face of the goat is directed to a certain point of the horizon.

5) The victim bleats, or if it is a hen, jumps about on the ground in its agony. At each thrust of the assagay, or of the

order to secure this much desired object as soon as possible, the son would go so far as to poison his father. Now, according to the testimony of Mr. F. Grébert (*Au Gabon*, p. 154), the byeri is not necessarily the skull of an ancestor. Any skull can be used, either that of a traveller found dead on the caravan route or even the skull of a man belonging to a foreign clan who has been assassinated. The byeri, whatever may be its origin, acts by its own power and no longer on account of its connection with the spirit of an ancestor. It is a true fetish, a material, magical object which is able to kill or to enrich in virtue of its own power. The Thonga mhamba is not a fetish. Its power is never dissociated from the spirits of the old chiefs whose nails, hair or faces have been used to produce it. Whatever action it may have is due to the fact that these nails, hair or faces influence the dead chiefs to whom they belonged, according to the magic principle that the part acts on the whole. The origin of the byeri is certainly ancestor-worship, but here ancestrolatry has evolved into fetichism, and I conclude from these facts that Thonga ancestrolatry is simpler, more spiritualistic and must therefore be more ancient than the present Pahuin system. 171 778

Amongst the Ba-Ganda (see Rev. J. Roscoe, *the Baganda*) there are powerful gods who have their priests and mediums, and are worshipped according to a complicated ritual, one of them being the war-god Kibuka. They have their temples, in which there is a sacred shrine placed on a stool. The shrine of Kibuka was secured and sent to the Museum of Ethnology at Cambridge, and it was found to contain, together with other objects, a bag with a human jawbone, the male organ and a decorated umbilical cord. This is a proof that the god Kibuka is an ancestor-god, whatever may be the splendour to which his worship has attained in the course of time. And here again we are in presence of what seems to be a later form of ancestrolatry, most probably evolved in consequence of the development of the social system of the Baganda. They form a nation with a powerful royal family, more than one thousand years old. With them the spirits of the dead kings hover round their jawbones, just as they are influenced by their nails, hair or faces amongst the Thongas, who would seem to be in a less advanced stage of evolution.

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You deceive us, Tshabane!
We have heard Heaven thunder... The roaring will soon come.
We have seen two men who were going to throw the bones with reference to Heaven...
Doubtless you have heard tell of the misfortunes of others:
You will hear them talking of your own!

Enigmatic words, but, with the help of the Natives, I have unravelled their meaning: — You are deceiving us, Tshabane, you who are trying to reassure us. We have heard Heaven. A storm has burst, there was a sudden downpour, a flash of lightning; Heaven has struck! It has killed some one. Two men passed by, terrified; they went to consult the bones, to try and find means to ward off these strokes of Heaven. Useless! If you have seen the sorrow of those who mourn, do not imagine that you will escape. It will soon be your turn!

Another song which contains a similar allusion to Heaven as the power which kills, has already been quoted when describing the customs of widowhood (I. p. 207). "What shall we say to thee! King!"

The tale of "the Road to Heaven" (See *Les Chants et les Contes des Ba-Ronga*, p. 237) is also very significant in this respect. It tells the story of a young girl, who, having broken her jar, and fearing a scolding from her mother, *climbs up her string* and goes to Heaven. (Always the same idea of shelter from all evils.) (1) There she finds a village; a child is given to her, because she is so gentle and obedient. Her sister tries to do the same thing. But she is ill-tempered and wicked. Heaven explodes (baleka), kills her (by lightning), and her bones are blown right to her parents' house. In the tale of the Adventures of Bonawasi (Ch. & C. p. 295) Heaven intervenes to endow a young Native with peculiar wisdom, by means of which he gets the better of the Governor of the town. Possibly some idea of the God of the Europeans may have found its way into the composition of this tale, in which may be recognized certain traces of foreign influence. But this is assuredly not the

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(1) The mention of this string is perhaps due to a tradition common in other African tribes. According to the Ba-Rotse, Leza, God, who dwelt on earth, ascended to Heaven one day by a spider's web. Several human beings tried to climb up the same way, but fell and failed in the attempt. (Comp. A. Jalla, *Foi et Vie*, Oct. 1910.)

goes out of the hut and prays to Heaven in the following words : 845
"Go away! Do not annoy us! We are afraid. Go and roar far 772
away." When the thunderstorm has ended, the child is 821
thanked (1). His mother can also help in the same way, for has 789
she not ascended to Heaven? "She can speak with it, she is at it (or in it) — a li ku djone." (Spoon.)

We find in these rites a striking instance of the combination of the three forms of magic which have been explained above (p. 368). Heaven, rain, lightning, the mother of twins and the twins themselves form a connected whole. Action brought to bear on the mother of twins will therefore have its effect on Heaven ; this is *communionist magic*. This action consists in pouring water over her, (not only in plunging her into a lake). According to the principle of *imitative magic*, Heaven will thus be watered and will pour rain upon the earth. The act of the twin in commanding the lightning to spare the country is a case of *verbal magic*. All this would be logical enough and the conclusions perfectly legitimate if only the premisses were true!

Customs regarding twins vary from one clan to another. While 845
in one tribe they are put to death, in others their advent is considered an event of great happiness. This is the case in *Tembe and Maputju*, where women are said to wish for twins, and, if certain mothers have enjoyed this piece of good fortune, others ask them for some of the fat with which they have smeared their bodies, hoping by the use of the same ointment to obtain a like happy result. The hut is never burnt. The mother gives birth to the twins behind the hut (fukwen, I. p. 37). When it is time for her to re-enter her domicile, a hole is made in the wall at the back. The husband is excluded from the hut till the day of presentation to the moon (a ceremony which, in these clans, is not omitted in the case of twins). When he is again admitted, his wife strikes his legs with a stick, in order "to cure him" (ku mu

(1) Mrs. Junod, who was for years a missionary amongst the Faň or Pahouin of the French Congo, told me that, one day, after a tornado, the rainbow suddenly appeared in the sky. One of her female pupils at once ran to her, and hid her face in her schoolmistress' lap. On asking the reason of this fear the teacher was told that this girl was a twin, and twins dare not look at the rainbow. So the connection between Heaven and twins exists also in this tribe of Western Africa. 171

"Balungwana ba tlanga henhla" — "The balungwana are at play 772
up there." Or it is they who are singing in heaven when there is a 776
prolonged roar of thunder, saying : "wuwu-wuwu!" 821

When some one passes along the road, they dispute up above as to who he may be. One says : "It is so and so," and the others contradict him. Then they spit on the traveller, who is quite astonished to see some saliva on his hand. He mistakes it for rain, and looks up to the sky to see where the rain is coming from. The balungwana then have a chance to see his face, and the one who has guessed rightly says to the others : "You see! I was right."

In Bilen I heard of a man who prevented children from picking 772
the beautiful red flowers of Tecoma capensis, telling them that the 776
balungwana wanted them for dresses. The same individual believed that these little men would bring oxen to him.

The Rongas say that a little man fell on the hill of Lourenço Marques, near the house of Sithini, the son of Mashaken, just before the famous war between Mozila and Mawewe (I. p. 28), the rival claimants to the kingdom of Gaza, and that this dwarf came as a presage of the troubles which were to follow. "Lots of folk saw him" said Charlie in 1895 ; (he was then a man of some forty years of age). "We were too young to be allowed to look at him ; the Whites took him and carried him off to Mozambique." — Heaven is therefore inhabited. This is generally admitted, but the idea, from all that one can gather, remains very vague.

C. CONCLUDING REMARKS ON THONGA RELIGION.

I. *The Origin of the Conception of Heaven.*

Ancestrolatry forms a clear, well-defined religion, with its theology 771
(i. e., the ideas as regards the psikwembu), its sacrifices, and its prayers. 772
The dim, mysterious ideas about Heaven, incorporated in or rather 776
lying behind some of the most extraordinary rites of the tribe, bear a
very different character. There is something incoherent, vague and 171

771 unexpected in them, and it would seem that, bearing as they do an
772 essentially deistic character, and accompanied by no true worship, they
776 might as well be absent from the horizon of the Thonga mind.

171 However, when we study other Bantu tribes, we come to exactly the opposite conclusion, i. e., that it would be indeed strange if no religious ideas of this kind were found amongst our tribe. In fact, this occurrence of a double set of religious ideas is universal amongst Bantus. They all believe in a kind of Supreme Being, an All-Father, who bears many different names, *Nzame* amongst the Fan and a great number of West African tribes, *Nyambe* amongst the Ba-Rotsi, *Leza* in some Zambezi and Rhodesian districts, *Mulungu* amongst fifteen East African tribes (1), *Unkulunkulu* in Zululand, *Nungungulu* round Inhambane, and *Mudimo* amongst the Ba-Sutho, etc., etc. The Thonga *Tilo* is, most likely, one of these names. The word probably comes from the root *ulu*, high, elevated, and *ilu*, heaven, which the Rev. P. Sacleux has found with that meaning amongst Central or West African tribes. (*Mulu*, amongst the Bembas ; *Liulu*, in Kimbundu ; *Diulu*, in Luba ; *Wilu*, in Luyi ; *Egulu* in Ganda ; *Idjulu*, amongst the Tongas of Zambezi, etc.). This root, with the personal prefix, has given birth to the term *Mugulu*, designating God in Tabwa and *Mukuru* in Herero. It may be that Mukuru is rather related to the *Unkulunkulu* of the Zulus, the Great One. (See Mgr. Le Roy, "La Religion des Primitifs," 1909, p. 498.)

In the South African tribes, however, the conception of the Supreme Being is not nearly so precise as in most parts of Central Africa. The Thonga Tilo, although sometimes invoked, is hardly a being, but seems rather to be a personification of Nature. Is this the original conception of the Supreme Being, or is it rather a transformation of this? I abstained, in *Les Ba-Ronga*, from expressing any definite opinion on this point. Further study has now led me to believe that the latter conclusion is the more probable, and that ideas concerning Heaven were more definite in former times. This, at any rate, is also the conviction of intelligent elderly Natives, who are able to remember the former ideas held by the tribe. They say : "As regards death, people now commonly affirm that it is caused by witchcraft, whilst formerly they attributed it to the agency of Heaven." Let us also notice the name of the dwarfs who are believed to inhabit Heaven, the *balungwana*. This word is a

(1) Comp. J. Torrend's *Comparative Grammar of the S. A. Bantu Languages*, p. 68.

diminutive of *Mulungu, balungu*, by which are designated, amongst the Zulus and Thongas, White people of every description, whether Europeans or Asiatics. Could the inhabitants of Heaven have been called "balungwana," on account of their resemblance to the Whites? It would hardly seem probable, for the name of the balungwana, and the ideas connected with them, were in existence long before White people were generally known, or had settled in the country. It is much more reasonable to suppose that the name of these mythical beings, as also that by which the Whites are designated, is a derivative of some other pre-existent term ; and what should this be if not the famous vocable "Mulungu," which stands for God, the One Supreme God, in so many of the Bantu dialects of East Africa, from Lake Victoria Nyanza to the Zambesi, to Senna and Quilimane? I should be inclined to think that the tribes in the neighbourhood of Delagoa were also acquainted with this name, which is so widely known, and that it has, in the course of centuries, disappeared from their theology, only leaving, as a last trace, the term balungwana, applied to the heavenly beings who occasionally descend to earth, and balungu, designating that superior race whose wisdom has always impressed the Blacks as supernatural. If this hypothesis were confirmed, we should have the right to conclude that the idea of Heaven, such as it is described in this chapter, is the disfigured remnant of a higher and monotheistic conception, held by the primitive Bantus before their dispersion, which has evolved in various ways amongst the different tribes.

II. *The Antiquity of Ancestrolatry.*

Ancestor Worship seems, on the other hand, to be an extremely ancient religion amongst mankind. There have been discovered of late years sepulchres of prehistoric date, which seem to show that the funeral rites of the first races were very similar to those practised by the Bantus of the present day. In comparing the burial of Sokis (I. p. 139) with that of a human being of the Mousterian age, whose remains were recently discovered by Hauser in the celebrated "Abri du Moustier" (Dordogne) (1) I noticed the following resemblances :

(1) See my paper "Deux enterrements à 20,000 ans de distance." *Anthropos*, 1900, I. v. Comp. also *L'homme préhistorique*. January, 1909.

171 1) In both cases, the corpse was treated with great, even affectionate
769 care, protected against the earth, and provided with a pillow.

2) The legs and arms had been bent towards the body, a custom widespread amongst primitive races, and directly due to the belief in an after-life.

3) The deceased is regarded as sleeping : hence the pillow provided for him.

4) His after-life is believed to be an exact continuation of his existence on earth. Hence the fact that the articles which he was accustomed to use are put on to, or inside, his grave, the mats, rugs, mug in one case, and silex or "coups de poing" in the other.

5) If the rites performed for Sokis may be explained by the hypothesis that he has become a *shikwembu*, a god endowed with divine powers, if they are in truth acts of worship, it is but reasonable to suppose that the same religious conceptions gave birth to the similar rites of the Mousterian Primitives. The Mousterian Age is one of the first periods of the Quaternary. Some palaeontologists believe it to be anterior to the last glacial period, and think that the dwellers in la Dordogne lived 20,000, even 50,000 years ago! They possessed, then, a religion, and this religion was probably Ancestrolatry.

III. *The Relation between Ancestrolatry and the Conception of Heaven.*

769 The conclusion which may be drawn from the two preceding
772 paragraphs is that both Ancestor Worship and the Conception of a
776 Supreme Being are of very ancient date, and the question naturally arises as to which is the older. I do not pretend here to be able to supply a solution to this great problem, but merely to draw the attention of my readers to the following facts.

1) When questioned as to the relative antiquity of their two sets of religious ideas, Thongas reply that they are unable to give an answer. Their conception of Heaven is so impersonal that they cannot draw any comparison between the two. Their neighbours, the Swazis and the Zulus, however, are very decided upon this point. The Rev. W. Challis, in *The East and the West* of July, 1908, summarises their statements as follows :

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14
South African Natives FX5
Thonga FTb

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are conspicuously absent from the tribes of the Northern Transvaal. Military organization is interwoven with many aspects of Nguni life and has left its stamp upon the people. Their age organization, much stronger and stricter than that of the Sotho, has by its association with the regimental system a military character; enrolment into a regiment is an important step in the life of each individual; strengthening of the army forms an important part of the yearly first-fruit ceremonies, while the Zulu even had military villages in which the men spent much of their time. All this is absent from the Lowveld where war never involved more than one or two regiments in what was little more than skirmishes for cattle, and the chief weapons, the bow and arrow, supplemented by spear and battle-axe, made fighting at close quarters unusual.

The South-eastern tribes, as also the Shangana–Tonga, have a much greater sense of display than is found among Sotho generally. To the young Zulu who spends his days courting the girls, dress and general appearance have an absorbing interest that is not found among northern Sotho; the beautiful regimental dress of Zulu and Swazi has no Sotho counterpart; doctors do not dress up to distinguish themselves from others; the Sotho bride who goes to her husband's kraal fully covered in a blanket has little wedding finery; while Sotho dancing lacks the dramatic and spectacular qualities of Nguni dances. In Sotho culture there is no place for the *giya*-ing, jumping, and shouting one's own praises in public, that plays so prominent a part in Zulu society. Nor does song among the Sotho, who like all Bantu are musical, occupy quite the same important position as among Nguni, where every child has its lullaby, every wedding new songs specially composed for the occasion, and every sib its praise song.

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The Shangana–Tonga of the Lowveld fall midway between the culture of Zulu–Xhosa and that of the Northern Transvaal Sotho. Cattle in their society play no greater part than among Sotho; they have no milk taboos; in their agriculture they hardly differ from the Sotho except in having had one or two different crops which they are said to have introduced among Sotho. They are not strongly patrilineal like Zulu–Xhosa, the mother's side of the family plays as important a part as among Sotho in social life and religion, but they have no female

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14
South African Natives FX5
Thonga FT6

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priestesses and their joking relationship between a man and his mother's brother is not found in Sotho society.

Like the Zulu–Xhosa, the Shangana–Tonga have no marriage with relatives, while they differ from both Zulu and Sotho in allowing inheritance of the mother's brother's wife. Women do not marry women in Shangana–Tonga society; their sexual rites associated with the moving of a village have no parallel elsewhere. The religious system of Shangana–Tonga resembles that of the Sotho more than it does the Zulu–Xhosa in the use of shrines and beer offerings, but the sacred drum cult is absent and the use of fowls in sacrifice has its parallel among southern Lowveld tribes only. Their smelling-out doctor, whose methods resemble those of the doctor in Zulu–Xhosa society, is not found among Sotho, but the ordinary bone-thrower hardly differs from the Sotho doctor either in methods or initiation. Of the northern Sotho initiation schools, only the *khoba* and circumcision school are found among Shangana–Tonga, while Shangana–Tonga love of display, manner of dancing and singing resembles that of the Zulu–Xhosa. The similarities between Shangana–Tonga and the Sotho of the Lowveld are to be accounted for more by common influences in the past than by recent borrowings, though there is a considerable amount of diffusion to-day. The Shangana–Tonga of the Northern Transvaal Lowveld are very mixed: one tribe, that of Muhlava, came originally from Zululand, settling in its present habitat after a sojourn in Portuguese East Africa; others, like that of Nwamitwa who belongs to the great Valoyi family, trace their origin to the Nyai country beyond the Limpopo whence they came southwards towards the Tonga.

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Peaceful conditions, closer contacts between members of different tribes in the service of the white man, subjection to a uniform system of European law and administration which calls forth similar responses among different tribes, all are tending towards gradual elimination of marked tribal differences and greater uniformity in tribal custom and conditions. To-day the old Venda initiation schools have all but died out while Sotho schools are rapidly spreading into Vendaland; Christian missions are exerting similar influences among different tribes; young men returning from work in towns bring home everywhere a changed attitude towards tribal customs and morality and a more

532 I do not believe any foreign influence was exercised in the
322 conception of the idea. His group is absolutely original, and, as such, shows us to what lengths the sculptural talent of the Ba-Ronga can go. This group is now in the Neuchâtel Museum.
313 While statuettes are the most elaborate products of Native
532 sculpture, *canoes* (shene (Dj.) are the largest. I have already
322 mentioned the taboos connected with the cutting of the mahogany and nkwenga trees when used for this purpose (p. 19). Other trees, the mpfubu and the muhlu, can be cut without these precautions being taken.

IV. *Metallurgy.*

172 When and how did iron reach the Ba-Ronga ? Probably we
412 shall never be able to ascertain. Tradition has it that the primitive
316 inhabitants of Nondwane, the Honwana, who cooked elephants in order to tear them in pieces, had no iron implements. Some authorities tell us that the hoe in use in olden times was of an exceedingly hard wood, wrenched I know not how from a species of teak tree called *ntjhiba*. The Natives of these parts must have passed directly from the age of wood to that of iron. There was certainly a stone age, comparable to that of the lake dwellers, in Cape Colony, where a great quantity of silex and of polished stones have been found. I never heard of any such implements having been used by the Thongas, nor found within their territory. As regards the bronze age, they have known the use of copper for a long time, but it cannot be proved that they knew it before iron.

177 Iron and other metals seem to have been first introduced in
439 Delagoa Bay by the "Godji" traders and whale fishers, of whom
316 I shall shortly speak ; they are the first White visitors whom the Natives now remember. The Ba-Ronga used to exchange fowls and other domestic animals for hoes, brass bracelets, and copper brought by the strangers, and they had found out how to make copper wire by forging (fula) the pieces bought from the "Godji."

153 773 Some of these people are able to repeat a tale lasting five or ten minutes after having heard it twice or thrice only. It is to be wondered at therefore that they have so few traditions, or rather that these traditions do not reach further back in history. In fact, when you inquire into what they know of the past, you find first, a story about their origin which bears a strongly mythical character ; secondly, traditions more or less legendary about the migrations of the various clans ; thirdly, genealogies of the royal family containing eight to ten names, and fourthly, historical narratives which go back as far as the beginning of the 19th century, and which give the impression of true historical facts. History, amongst the Thongas, begins only one hundred years ago. What took place before that is almost entirely forgotten. This fact shows that, even amongst races possessing a good memory, before the introduction of a system of writing traditions regarding the ancient past can hardly be relied upon.

A. Prehistoric Period.

773 1) *The story of man's origin* is this. The first human beings emerged from reeds. Each tribe came into this world with its present characteristics. For instance the Ba-Bvesha, who are great blacksmiths, knew how to forge their iron picks from the first day. They "came out" holding them. The Ba-Ronga group calls the first ancestors of humanity Likalahumba and Nsilambowa, viz. the one who brings a glowing cinder in a shell (the man) and the one who grinds vegetables (the woman). The Ba-Djonga call them Gwambe and Dzabana. Another story universally believed tells us how death came amongst men by the fault of the chameleon (See Part VI). All these stories are purely mythical and form part of the African Genesis which is met with in most tribes.

173 2) *Legends about the ancient migrations* of the various clans. Almost every clan pretends to have come from afar and, strange to say, they came from all the points of the compass. Two of their clans, without doubt, come from the north, the Ba-ka-

173 Baloyi and the Tembe. The Ba-ka-Baloyi, they say, came down the valley of the Limpopo in very remote times ; they came in such numbers that they opened out a wide track as wide as a wagon road : "It is the old, old road of Gwambe, the first man on earth who emerged from the reed. So well was the road trodden that to this day the grass has not grown over it." Many Thongas pretend to have seen it, white and straight, stretching from the northern bank of the Limpopo and going southwards through the desert, just like the road over which Attila passed ! At a certain place, near a rivulet where the Ba-Loyi rested, one can still see in the rock the print of the mortars of the women. "The stones at that time were not yet hardened, and they retained the marks made by the mortars in that old expedition, the marks also of the hemp pipes of the men and of their *matshuba*." (The *matshuba* are the little holes hollowed out by the Natives in four rows, as required in their favourite game called *tshuba*. See Part II, Chap. II.)

According to some of the Native historians, the Ba-Loyi came from the Ba-Nyai country along with the Ba-Nwanati, who also belonged to the Nyai or Kalanga race. They went southwards by that wonderful old road till they reached the sea coast not far from the mouth of the Limpopo. The sight of the sea, that broad unknown river, filled them with great fear. The Ba-Loyi felt they could not remain in such a dangerous neighbourhood and advised the whole party to go back to the north. In the meantime, however, their Nwanati friends had discovered a fruit not common on the African high veld, but very common on the sandy plains of the coast. In shape it was round, about the size of an orange, with a hard outer shell. When broken it was found to contain a number of stones, each wrapped in a delicate, strongly scented pulp, of which the Natives prepare an excellent dish. This fruit is called *makwakwa*. "We shall remain here to break open our *makwakwa*" said the Ba-Nwanati, and they bade farewell to the Ba-Loyi, who started back to their present abode. Hence the name Makwakwa now given to those Nwanatis.

173 The Nwanatis included the Makwakwas of Khambane and the
773 Malulekes. These latter separated from their brethren and

173 returned north, to the country of the Ba-Loyi, led by their ancestor,
773 Mashakatsi. This man, who was a great hunter, saw that he could easily defeat the Ba-Nyai who were settled in those parts, and brought back his followers with him. He became the founder of the dynasty of Maluleke. (For further details about these legends, see Addresses and Papers of the Joint Meeting of British and South African Associations for the Advancement of Science, Johannesburg 1905.)

As regards the Tembe clan, it is said to have come down as far as Delagoa Bay from the Kalanga country by the Nkomati river on a floating island of papyrus, and to have crossed the Tembe river and settled to the south of the Bay. An old saying alludes to this arrival and to the conquest of the country :

Phandje, phandje ra nala—Tembe kulu a wela.

As the palm leaf with its numerous feelers—so did the ancestor Tembe when he crossed.

He placed his sons in all the districts of the plain to govern in his name. The Tembe people, when they greet each other, sometimes use the salutation Nkalanga, i. e. man of the north or of the Kalanga country, and there is little doubt that, notwithstanding the legendary traits in this tradition, the fact itself of the northern origin of these clans is true. In the course of time the chiefs of Matutwen and Maputju, descendants of Tembe, became independent.

173 Most of the other clans point to Zululand or to Swaziland as having been their first abode, which they left to invade the low country of the coast. Mpfumu and Matjolo are both sons of Nhlaruti, who is said to have been the first invader ; from him sprang their two clans which have become independent of and even hostile to each other. The Nondwane families point to the
[764] neighbourhood of Komati Port as being the place from which they came. There were successive invasions of a peaceful character. These people still turn the face of their dead to the west, because the clan came from the Lebombo hills, and this rite proves that the tradition is well founded. The Nkuna, Khosa, and Hlabi clans also claim the same western or south-western origin. Amongst the Ba-Nkuna, some old men say they know

173 the precise place in Zululand whence their forefather Nkuna started and declare that they still have relatives there.

The Hlanganus and Hlengwes seem to have no tradition of this kind. The only one I heard about the Hlengwes is this. Tshauke, their first king, took as his wife the daughter of another chief belonging to the Sono tribe. The Sonos knew how to cook their food, the Hlengwes did not: they were still ignorant of fire and used to eat their porridge raw. The son of Tshauke stole a glowing cinder from the Sonos and brought it home in a big shell. The Sonos were angry and declared war on the Hlengwes; but these latter, having gained new strength because they had been eating cooked food, won the victory. The son of Tshauke was then named Shioki-sha-humba-he who brings fire in a shell. This tradition is connected with the name of the first man, Likala-humba, which we have just explained, and it evidently bears a legendary character.

173 372 773

A similar story is told about the Shiburi clan (between the Olifant and Nkomati rivers). The old inhabitants of that country were the Masilanes and Nshongos. Once, at a very remote period, a man of the Shiburi clan, who was a Pedi and dwelt in Mabulanen, at the foot of the Drakensberg Mountains, pursued an eland which he had wounded and killed it in the territory of the Masilanes. He returned home to call his countrymen to cut it in pieces and to eat it according to the custom of hunters. These people then roasted the meat and handed over some of it to the Masilanes. The Masilanes used to eat meat raw as they did not know the use of fire. They found that cooked meat was much better than raw meat and told the Shiburis: "You are more intelligent than we are; we will serve you henceforth!" They therefore decided to get rid of their own chief. The Shiburis lighted a big fire, dug a hole and put the glowing embers into it. Then a mat was spread over the mouth of the hole and the chief was asked to sit upon it. He fell into the pit and died, and the Shiburis became the masters of the country. They abandoned their costume (the musubelo, viz. the piece of skin fastened between the legs as used by the Pedis) their language and their marriage laws, married Masilane girls and became true Thongas (Mabuyandlela).

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

173 If these stories had a historical foundation, it would prove that
372 there was a time when the use of fire was unknown to certain Thonga clans. This, however, is hardly admissible. Fire has been used by human beings from the remotest antiquity, even in the paleolithic age, as far back as the Mousterian period, 20,000 years ago or more. It is probable that even before that time the dry velt of South Africa was often set on fire by lightning. But the recurrence of these legends, which remind one of the Greek myth of Prometheus, shows at any rate the immense value which the Thongas attach to the use of fire.

173 What were the races that the invaders found in the country ? Their name is still known in some places. In the Khosen Country, they were the Ntimbas and Shibambos. In the Nondwane, the Honwanas, Mahlangwanas and Nkumbas. All agree in saying that they were on a lower scale of civilisation (See Part IV) and that the new comers overcame them easily because they were more intelligent and possessed better weapons.

3) A third source of information regarding prehistoric times is to be found in the *genealogies of the royal families* which each clan has preserved more or less completely. I have gathered the following (1) :

Mpfumu : Nhlaruti, Mpfumu, Fayi, Maromana, Shilupane, Hasana (who attacked Lourenço Marques in 1868, was banished but received back his country in 1875 ; he died in 1878), Hamule, Zihlahla, Nwamantibyane (banished in 1896 to Western Africa where he died).

Tembe : Tembe, Nkupu, Nwangobe, Silambowa, Muhari (1781-1795), Mayeta (1823), Bangwana, Bukutje (1857), Mabayi (banished in 1890), Bukutje II.

Maputju : Maputju was the younger brother of Muhari and made himself independent of him. Muwayi, Makasana (1800-1850), Tlhuma, Musongi or Nozililo (1850), Ngwanazi (who fled to British Amatongaland after the Gungunyana war in 1895).

Nondwana : Libombo (probably reigning before the invasion),

(1) Compare E. Torre do Valle. Diccionario shironga-portugues. Lourenço Marques. Imprensa Nacional 1906.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

173 Masinga, Ngomana, Matinana, Makwakwa, Papele, Khobete (who rebelled against the Portuguese in 1859), Mapunga, Mahazule.

Mabota : Mabota, Magwenyana, Lawulana, Magumbin, Mbakana, Nwatjonga.

Nwamba : Kopo-Nwamba, Rihati, Sindjini, Malengana, Nkolele, Mangoro, Mudlayi, Nwangundjuwana.

Khosa : Khosa, Ripanga, Mabone, Molelemane, Ripindje, Magudjulane, Nshalati Pukwana, Magudju, Shongele.

Nkuna : Nkuna, Shitlhelane, Rinono, Kulalen, Nwarinyekana, Muhlari, Ribye-ra ku-tika, Shiluvane, Muhlaba.

Maluleke : Mashakatsi, Dlamana, Shitanda, Shihala, Nkuri, Mhinga, Sunduza.

173 643 These genealogies, as one can see, generally contain eight to ten names. The list of Maputju chiefs has six only, because this dynasty is not so old and did not begin before the end of the XVIIIth century. But all the others are longer. I do not pretend that they are absolutely correct ; in the same clan, there are sometimes variations according to the informants. There may have been links omitted in the chain because, to the Natives, a grandson is a son, just like a real son. On the other hand, the law of succession amongst the Thongas calls to the chieftainship the younger brothers of the deceased chief ; so some of these names may very well belong to brothers. Therefore it does not at all follow that eight names correspond to eight different generations. If that were so, estimating a generation at 30 years, we should conclude that the first chief lived some 250 years ago, viz. in 1650 ; but I have found conclusive proof that, for some of these genealogies, the first name in the list was already known in 1550. So we must consider these genealogies as being in fact too short. Many names must have been dropped out in the course of time.

173 The proof to which I allude has been afforded by the Portuguese reports published in the Mémoire addressed in 1873 to the President of the French Republic, who was called to act as mediator in the conflict between England and Portugal about the right of possession of the southern part of the Bay (Lisboa.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

173 Imprensa Nacional). In this interesting publication we find the oldest documents relative to the Bay and, amongst others, we read the following account in a Report of the Portuguese chronicler Perestrello, written in 1554 : "Into the Bay flow three rivers... The first one to the south, is called Zembe. It separates the land of a king of that name from the dominion of the king Nyaka... The second is the river of the Holy Spirit or of Lourenço Marques. It separates the land of Zembe from the land of two other chiefs whose names are Rumu and Mina Lebombo. The third and last is the Manhisa, so called after a Kafir of that name who governs there." In these statements we can easily recognize the names of the actual clans of Tembe (Zembe), Mpfumu (Rumu), Lebombo and Manyisa. These names were already known at that time and the chiefs to whom they apply were settled in the same country where they now are or not far from it. The chief Nyaka has left his name to the Inyak Island. It seems that his dynasty was then reigning over a larger tract of country than now. It is possible that he was confined to the island where his descendants now live, by the military operations of Maputju. Let us remark moreover that Zembe and Manhisa were names applied not only to those two chiefs, but to *rivers*. Zembe is the actual Mi-Tembe which flows between the Tembe and Matjolo countries, and Manhisa is evidently the Nkomati which crosses the Manhisa country some fifty kilometers higher than the estuary. If the Natives already called rivers after the name of these chiefs, it is probable that the chiefs themselves were already dead, and had lived in a more or less remote past. All these arguments tend to show that four or five hundred years ago at least the chiefs Tembe, Mpfumu, Manhisa, Libombo, all of whom still have descendants, were already in the country round Delagoa Bay. I do not think any scientifically accurate statement could be made with regard to so remote a period and I propose this as a landmark in the history of South African Natives (1).

(1) For more details about the history of the Thongas and of the neighbouring tribes, see my article in the "South African Journal of Science", 1914: *The condition of the Natives of South East Africa in the XVIth Century according to the early Portuguese documents.*

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APPENDIX I (See p. 169).

The Chronology of Shinangana, a Thonga of Spelonken.

Speaking in 1905, he says :

Sixty-seven years ago, Shiluvane and the other Thonga chiefs fled before Manukosi (1838, or 1839?). 173

Three years later, battle with Matshekwane, Manukosi's general, who pursued the Nkunas (1842).

In the sixteenth year of the era, battle of Gologodjwen, when the Nkuna chief, Shiluvane, fought against the Ba-Pedi of Sekukuni (1855). In the nineteenth year, Manukosi dies (1858 or 1859? His death may have taken place as early as 1856).

Henceforth each year is known by its principal event :

Expedition of Shihahen (1859).

Beginning of the great war of succession between Manukosi's sons, Muzila and Mawewe. Muzila fled to Spelonken (1860).

Circumcision school at Mudjadji (1861).

We are plundered by Djiwawa (or Joao Albasini, the Portuguese Commander who for many years was the chief of the Thonga refugees of Spelonken) (1862).

Djiwawa goes to fight against Mawewe (1863) (1).

We are plundered by the Swazi army (1864).

Shiluvane, the Nkuna chief, settles in the Nyarin country (1865).

Djiwawa kills Ribole and Magoro (1866).

The Modjadji army fights with the Nyari clan (1867).

The Swazis plunder Modjadji's country (Buluberi) (1868).

Djiwawa plunders the people of Mashao (Spelonken) (1869).

Muzila's army returns from Mosapa (Gaza), and plunders Spelonken (Bvesha) (1870).

The Swazis plunder Makandju (1871).

Circumcision school of Madori in Spelonken (1872).

Daiman! (Opening of the Kimberley mines where Natives begin to go to work) (1873).

(1) According to Portuguese documents, this intervention of Muzila and Albasini took place in 1862, Mawewe having been definitely beaten on the 20th August 1862.

173 Birth of my child Rihlangana. Death of Shiluvane (1874).
Famine of Magadingele (1875).
Death of Nkambi, son of Mhalambala, a Khosa (1876).
War of Makhanana of the Loyi country. Refugees come to Spelonken (1877).
The Makandju people kill Ñwashitine of Rikotjo (1878).
Birth of my child Ntitiri (1879).
Circumcision school of Mayingwe (1880).
Djiwawa goes to seize Sekukuni (1881).
War between the Boers and the English (1882).
Year of the comet (1883). Djiwawa's son, Sambana, becomes chief. Sambana plunders the village of a Venda called Mbekwa (1884).
Phundjululu : the vermin destroy the mealies (1885).
Circumcision school of Ñwamutjungu, a Hlanganu who had come from Spelonken (1886).
A Gwamba chief quarrels with Girifi. (Mr. Grieve, an old colonist of Spelonken) (1887).
Sambana beats a policeman (1888).
Death of Djiwawa (1889).
Sambana calls statute labourers (1890).
Death of Sambana (1891).
Circumcision school at Modjadji (1892).
My son Magondjwen starts on a journey (1893).
He returns home (1894).
We are struck by hail. Four people die (1895).
My son-in-law goes away (1896).
Epidemic among cattle. War of Makhube. We accompany the Boers (1897).
Matshona : Plague among oxen (1898).
Bahehemuki! The people of Gungunyana take refuge in Spelonken (after the war of Magigwana with the Portuguese) (1899).
The Boers attack Phefu, the Venda chief (1900).
The Whites fight. (Anglo-Boer war) (1901).
The English column chases the Boers away from Pietersburg ; Ñwashimbutane! The Son-of-the-Kid! (General Beyers, compared with a kid on account of his swift movements through the country during the guerilla war.) (1902).
Mugayo! Ndlala! The mealie flour bought from the Whites on account of the famine! (1903).
Of course many of these dates are doubtful... Many are of very

small importance; it seems childish indeed to mention as the only noteworthy event of the year 1888 the fact that Sambana, Albasini's son, had beaten a policeman. This shows, however, the historical sense of Shinangana; he wished to record that uneventful year in his chronicle, and he chose the most remarkable fact that had occurred in it, though it was, indeed, of no great importance. Thus he attained his object, which was to preserve a full record of all the years from 1858 to 1903. The chronology of Shinangana is a true feat of memory, and, as he remained free from any civilised influence, it is a feat that must be considered when dealing with phenomena of oral tradition amongst savages. 173

2: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga
p 622

CONCLUSION

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121 I have reached the end of my study of the Life of a South African
114 tribe in its principal manifestations, social, mental and spiritual. In
order to write a complete anthropological monograph, I ought to have
174 also dealt at length with the physical features of the Thongas. This
would have led me too far. However I have taken a few anthropometric
measurements, which have been published in the *Bulletin de la Société neuchâteloise de Géographie* of 1917, together with an explanation kindly written by Dr. E. Pittard of Geneva, whose competency in this domain is well-known. I now come to my conclusion. The aim of this book being twofold, scientific and practical, I shall try in these final pages to answer two great questions, one appertaining to Science: How far can the present-day South Africans be described as Primitives? the other, of greater practical importance: How far can the South African tribe withstand the new condition of things brought about by twentieth-century civilisation?

I. *How far can the present-day South African Bantus be described as Primitives?*

One often hears of Primitive Humanity. Do the South African tribes belong to it? This is a very difficult question to answer, as we do not know exactly what Primitive Humanity was and what the evolution of these tribes has been. In the absence of any ancient written record, of any remains of an ancient stone civilisation, we can only make conjectures. But these are based on three sets of facts: Native traditions (to which, however, we must always apply severe criticism), traces of an old and obsolete past actually found in the language or in the rites, and comparison with early civilisations now discovered in palaeolithic settlements, or apparent on the ancient Egyptian monuments, etc. I do not claim to have obtained positive evidence on all points, and I shall leave a good number of interrogation marks in the course of this attempt. We know, however, that Science proceeds by successive approximations. I submit my table of the development of civilisation in the South African tribe as a hypothesis, open to any amendment which further discoveries may suggest. 174

I hesitated before writing anything about the *first period*. A number of Native traditions declare that, at a remote period, their forefathers had no knowledge of *fire*, (I. p. 24, II. p. 33). According to some of my Pedi informants, fire would be of relatively recent origin in certain clans. We cannot, however, believe that fire was ever absolutely absent, seeing that the cave dwellers of the Mousterian age, at the end of the glacial period, knew of it, as is attested by the fire-places found everywhere in the Mousterian deposits. It is probable that the first ancestors of the Thongas lived on roots and fruits, having but very simple weapons, and scarcely any clothing. This condition of things may have prevailed long before the Bantu stock was formed. The race perhaps passed through the totemic phase, which is still to be found amongst more primitive races (I. p. 335), and has left some traces amongst the Thongas up to this day. Mother-right, the traces of which are so clear, was probably the family system of those times, of which we know nothing definite. What was this system? It is impossible to say, and the only feature of which we are sure is that female descent prevailed during that period. Funeral rites probably existed, as they are met with in Mousterian burial-places, and they imply, as previously shown, a belief in

174 Ancestrolatry. Who knows if the idea of an All-Father, which is almost universal in primitive humanity, was not already in existence? The idea of the divine, in one form or another, would seem to have been one of the earliest conceptions of the human mind. Its appearance in the dim consciousness of this ancient being from whom we are descended was perhaps the signal of his attainment of a true humanity. But this is speculation, and I do not wish here to leave the solid ground of Science.

In a *second period*, the beginning of which it is impossible to fix and which I consequently separate from the first by dots, in the table, animals are domesticated, the goat probably first. Agriculture sets in. The soil is tilled with wooden hoes. Male descent supplants female descent and the patriarchate becomes the family system ; its further development leads to the formation of the clan, an enlarged patriarchal family. I conjecture that it is at this stage that the Bantu stock was founded (1). The language was probably the Ur-Bantu, and it is very interesting to reconstitute its main elements, grammatical features, and vocabulary, by a comparison with the present Bantu dialects. Things called by the same word in all existing dialects were probably in existence at that period (2). I imagine that the physiological taboos were already

(1) As regards the origin of the great Bantu family, I will only briefly mention the very interesting *theory of the cycles of civilisation*, advanced by some modern anthropologists. According to some scientists, there have been ten successive cycles in the evolution of mankind. First, the Tasmanian cycle, now extinct ; secondly, the cycle of the Boomerang, still existing in Southern Australia; third, the cycle of Totem, and fourth, the cycle of the Masks, both of which are met with to-day in North-Western Australia and in New Guinea. The fifth cycle is the cycle of the Bow, which succeeded to III and IV all over Melanesia and was superseded later by cycle VI, called Maleo-Polynesian. The latter forms the transition between the primitive cycles, I—VI and those of the semi-civilised and civilised peoples, i. e. the Hindu, the Chinese, the Semitico-musulman, and the European. According to this theory, Africa was invaded first by populations belonging to the three first cycles, which have been preserved down to the present day in the tribes of the Bushmen and Pigmees. A second invasion, composed of representatives of cycles IV and V, and called the Nigritian invasion, later on overran the greater part of the Continent, from Madagascar up to the Senegal. The Sudanese Negroes are the remnants of these Nigritians Later still a third invasion, called Protohamitic, brought to Africa elements belonging to cycle III, which had undergone a considerable evolution, and to cycle VI. These have mixed with the Nigritians and this fusion has given birth to the Bantus Opinions vary as regards the origin of the Bantu language, some believing that these Protohamitic invaders brought it with them, whilst others think that the Ur-Bantu sulted from the fusion of the Nigritian language with the language of the Protoham These theories are the result of a minute comparative study of the customs, lang es, implements and beliefs of all fractions of primitive humanity ; they do not be more than a hypothesis, but they will undoubtedly be useful to Science as such, and further study will show how far they can be adopted.

(2) This argument ought not, however, to be pushed too far. I have been able to ascertain that the fowl was unknown amongst the Pedi clans of the Northern

then in force, as they are found almost identical amongst Semitic peoples, as shown in Leviticus. The hierarchy must have soon followed the institution of patriarchism, and of the clan. Witchcraft probably existed ; it must have been a belief of primitive humanity, as it is still present in a very similar form amongst peasants and uncultured people in civilised lands. We have the right to suppose also that astragalomancy was practised. Some features of the Thonga language show that mythological conceptions then prevailed which seem to have almost entirely disappeared at the present time (I. p. 36, II. p. 306). This period must have lasted for tens, perhaps hundreds of centuries, until the South African tribes, after endless migrations, reached their present abode, probably pushing the early occupants towards the South ; at the end of the XVth century we find the Thonga tribe located near Delagoa Bay (1). 174

The third period is inaugurated by the invasion by the clans mentioned in our Introduction. White men appear, trade begins, stuffs are adopted by women, the men retaining their mbaya, Iron is introduced both by these invaders and by the White whale-fishers and traders. Agriculture undergoes a new development ; so also do military tactics, 174 177

Transvaal, in the beginning of the XVIIIth century, having been introduced by the Ma-Lemba about 1750. In spite of this, the Pedis call it *khugu*, the same word as *huku* in Thonga, Ur-Bantu *kuku*. The name of the thing may have been introduced at the same time as the thing itself, and incorporated by undergoing the phonetic permutations required by the dialect (Compare *Folklore*, Sept. 1908, The Balemba).

(1) The *Lourenço Marques Guardian*, in a very favourable review of Vol. I (Oct. 7, 1912), expresses the regret that I have not dwelt at greater length on the first origin and migrations of the Thonga tribe. The writer thinks that this was formerly a much larger tribe "the basic element in the Hamitic invasion of the coastal region." As far as I know, no document exists on which evidence on such questions could be based. The Portuguese chronicles of the XVIth and XVIIth centuries describe a state of things which is quite modern compared with the first Bantu invasion of South Africa, that of the *Ztndj*, to which Masoudi's "Golden Meadows" makes an allusion, A. D. 943. When the Portuguese travellers reached the shore of Delagoa Bay, the stream of migration had already taken an Eastern or North-Eastern direction (I. p. 23). — As regards inferences drawn from the wide-spread term *Thonga* (Ronga, Tonga), I think they have very little value ; this word probably means "people of the East," as *Kalanga* means people of the North. It is applied by Natives to those tribes which dwell eastwards of them, whatever their origin may be. It is a geographical designation, like the term Orientals, and discloses nothing as regards the ethnological features of the tribes to which it is applied. In fact, as regards language, customs, folklore, there is much less affinity between our Thongas, the Tongas of Inhambane, and the Tongas of Zambesi than between them and the Zulus. [101]

We must be content to remain ignorant of facts as to which there exists no reliable record.

THE EVOLUTION OF

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	Costume	Implements Weapons	Food	Trade	State	Family system
1st Period (Pre-Bantu)	*Men.* Mbaya? *Women.* Skins?	Wooden clubs?	Fruits and roots.	?	Nomadic.	Female descent.
2d Period Ur-Bantu till 1500	id.	Pottery. Basket work. Wooden hoes? Bows? Wooden pillow.	Goat. Millet, Pumpkins. Game caught in traps.	Exchange of wares for produce.	Agricultural.	Male descent.
3d Period 1500-1820	*Men:* Mbaya. *Women:* Skirts of cloth.	Pottery. Basket work. Iron hoes and assagais. Bows.	Goat. Sheep? Ox? Millet. Sorghum? Beans?	Godji (p. 142). *Sales:* Amber, Ivory, Skins, etc. *Purchases:* Stuff, Beads, Copper, Iron.	id.	Patriarchate. Lobolo. Polygamy.
4th Period 1820-1910	*Men:* Zulu belt. *Women:* Skirts. Keimao.	id. Guns. Bows disappear.	id. Maize, Peas, Bananas, Mangoes, etc.	*S.* Mafureira, India-rubber, Skins. Commercial expeditions. Introduction of European money.	Agricultural. Yearly military expeditions in Gaza.	id. Decrease of Polygamy.
1910	Increase of European dress.	Increase of European implements. Decrease in Native arts and crafts.	id. European food. Alcohol.	Decrease of Native trade.	Work in towns.	id. Family life injured by the long absence of men.

the Natives now possessing better weapons. Decided progress has certainly taken place all round, the invading population being superior in civilisation to the old one. The Thonga language is definitely formed with its six dialects. Folklore is enriched by the contributions of all the various clans. Ancestrolatry still reigns in the religious beliefs, with a relatively clear notion of Heaven and of an All-Father. This change was gradual until 1820.

THE THONGA TRIBE

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Tribal system	Military system	Language	Folklore	Religion	Taboo	Magic
Totemism ?	?	?	?	Ancestrolatry. All-Father?	Sympathetic.	?
Clan.	?	Ur-Bantu ? Sex-denoting suffixes. 11 Classes of Nouns. Formation of Thonga.	Mythological conceptions. Tales.	Ancestrolatry. All-Father.	Physiological. Hierarchic. Agricultural.	Witchcraft. Astragalomancy.
Invasion of neighbouring clans.	Lineal formation. Skirmishes.	Thonga. 8 Classes of Nouns. Six dialects.	Decrease of Mythology. Rich folklore.	Ancestrolatry. Clearer notion. of Tilo, All-Father.	id.	id.
Formation and disappearance of military kingdoms. Dual Control. (I. p. 542).	Zulu circular formation. Cruel wars.	Progress of Ronga dialect. Adoption of European expressions (Portuguese Dutch and English).	Addition of Asiatic and Portuguese elements.	Ancestrolatry. Tilo conception less clear. Christianity. Islam. Possessions.	id. Military.	id. Possessions.
Authority of chiefs decreases. Increase of the number of detribalised Natives.	Decrease of military and political spirit.	id.	id.	id. Progress of Christianity.	Severity. of taboos decreases.	id.

Fourth period. At this time a new period begins, owing to the profound disturbance caused by the invasion of the Ngoni army under Manukosi. The men's costume changes. The clans are amalgamated under the Zulu conqueror. The military spirit increases. War, accompanied by bloodshed and all the Zulu war-panoply, replaces the skirmishes of former times. In Gazaland the year is divided into two halves, one for agricultural labour, the other for the military plundering

174 expeditions organised by the Ngoni kings. Foreign elements increase
177 in number and power. Asiatic and Portuguese influences begin to be felt. A considerable Native trade develops in Lourenço Marques. The Ronga clans dwelling near the town acquire more influence. This brings us up to the present time, which I need not describe more fully.

In 1920, we see European civilisation invading the whole territory of the tribe, by leaps and bounds, and the changes, which in previous decades had been slow, becoming rapid and profound. The tribe loses its coherence more and more ; the authority of the chief decreases and that of the White Commissioner increases. Taboos and ancestor-gods no longer receive much credence ; Islam makes some recruits, owing to intermarriage, and Christianity pushes forward its Missions. The few indications given in this part of the table show the trend of evolution at the present time.

This outline of the development of the tribe — an outline which is submitted, I repeat, with the utmost reserve, — does not confirm the opinion generally held in former times regarding Black tribes, i. e., that they are in a state of utter degeneracy. On the contrary, *a slow progress* may be observed, generally due to outside influences, notwithstanding the fact of long industrial stagnation ; this progress has been so marked in agriculture, in the family and in the social system, that it is no longer possible to describe the Bantus as absolute Primitives. They would be more fittingly spoken of as Semi-Primitives. On the other hand, there seems to have been almost complete *immobility* in the religious domain, even a process of degeneration, if the old monotheistic idea has really become less clearly defined in the last century. Folklore has been enriched, but, as a whole, the mental and spiritual life has evolved very little. Of course I do not mention the quite modern changes brought about by missionary enterprise and Islam propaganda.

II. *How far can the South African Tribe withstand the new condition of things brought about by Twentieth-Century Civilisation?*

177 There have been more changes in the South African tribe during the last fifty years than during the fifty or five hundred preceding centuries, and this process of transformation is bound to continue at a geometrical

B. Historic Period.

175/167 Having tried to fix what is historical in the prehistoric period, we now come to the XIXth century ; and here we find a great amount of detailed information in which there may be some legendary traits, but which as a whole seems to be entirely trustworthy. It does not suit our plan to narrate here all these facts. To do so would lead us much too far. Let us only say that the history of the Thonga tribe during the whole of the XIXth century was dominated by the invasion and migrations of the Zulu conquerors, who left Chaka and for their own sake enslaved the poor Ama-Thonga of the coast, just as Mosilekatsi did among the Mashonas. These Ba-Ngoni were led by Manukosi ; he found all the Thonga clans living according to the old Bantu style, each for itself, without national unity ; he easily conquered them and tried to impose on them the military system of dominion created by Dingiswayo and Chaka. Many of the Thonga clans emigrated into the Transvaal at that time (between 1835-1840) rather than submit to Manukosi ; as the Boers had settled in the country and as the Ngoni chiefs always feared a war with the Whites more than anything else, these Thongas were left undisturbed by Manukosi. They belonged to the Nkuna, Ba-Loyi and Mavundja clans, and founded numerous colonies in the Transvaal.

175 Manukosi reigned quietly for more than twenty years in the Limpopo valley and as far as the Mosapa (Ba-Ndjao country, north of the Sabie). His death took place in 1856. Then a dreadful war of succession still known as "the war" (mubango) raged for more than six years over the whole area of the Thonga tribe. Two brothers disputed the chieftainship. According to the Thonga law of succession, Muzila was the legal heir ; but the Ngoni law was against him and in favour of his younger brother Mawewe. Mawewe was then proclaimed chief and Muzila's followers fled to the Spelonken ; the new king however behaved as a cruel despot and, with the help of the Portuguese and of the Ronga warriors, Muzila defeated him decisively on the Sabie River, August 17-20 1862. The Ba-Ronga always remained

1: Junod M-5 . (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

175 independent of the Ngoni chiefs, being directly under the Portuguese authorities.

A Portuguese called Albasini, who acted during all that time as a chief of the Thongas of the Spelonken, played a considerable part in these events.

When Muzila died, his son Gungunyane succeeded him. The Ba-Ngoni had greatly diminished in number. In 1890 there were not more than a few hundred of them in the whole country. However they held it very firmly and the Thongas hated them. Therefore when the war between the Portuguese and some Ronga clans in 1894 led to difficulties between the Whites and Gungunyane, the Ngoni chief was abandoned by most of his people, even by his uncle Nkuyu : his capital Mandlakasi was burnt and he himself was captured by Musinho d'Albuquerque at the end of the year 1895 ; the despotic rule of the Zulus came to an end, and has been replaced by the Portuguese administration, much to the advantage of the Thonga tribe.

VII. *Ethnic characteristics of the Thonga tribe.*

197 What are the characteristic features of our tribe in relation to the other ethnic groups of South African Bantus, especially to the Zulus and Suthos ? We shall try to sketch them briefly as regards three main points : language and mental and physical character.

1) *The Language of the Thongas.* It would be useless to give here an elaborate description of the Thonga language : this has already been done for the Ronga dialect in my "Grammaire Ronga" published with the help of the Portuguese Government in 1896 (Bridel, Lausanne) and for the Djonga dialect in my Elementary Grammar of the Thonga-Shangaan language, which I published at the beginning of the Thonga-English Pocket Dictionary compiled by my colleague the Rev. Ch. Châtelain (Bridel, Lausanne 1908). I shall consider the language here only from an ethnological point of view, that is to say only to ascertain the proper place of the Thongas amongst the Bantus.

881 for the Nkunas near Leydsdorp. They have a special word for
304 the physical operation, *yimba*, (in Ronga *soka*) which is used together with *ngoma* (Sutho *goma*), the generic term for all the customs connected with it. (It must not be forgotten that the word *ngoma* is also used for other initiations, especially for the initiation of widows, as will be seen in Chap. II.)

881 Amongst the Ba-Ronga, circumcision was abandoned more
175 than a hundred years ago, before the arrival of Manukosi, and
304 they were called *Ba-butoya*, the cowards, by other Northern clans, who said they feared the sufferings of that cruel school. Mboza has seen some old Ronga men who had been circumcised probably at the begining of the XIXth Century. It is well known that somewhat later Chaka put a stop to the custom amongst the Zulus; it did not fit in with the new military system inaugurated by him. When the Ngoni general Manukosi invaded the plains of the Low Country, it is not surprising that circumcision disappeared in those clans also. The constant fighting which prevailed in those troubled times did not allow men to stay three consecutive months in a circumcision lodge. It was feared also that circumcised boys would be killed by the enemy, being unable to run away in case of an invasion. But old men in the Bilen country assert that the *Ngoma* is a very old custom amongst the Thongas, and that it has long been practised by all their clans.

881 Is it possible to ascertain its *true origin* ? My informants,
177 Viguet especially, were convinced that the Ngoma was brought
563 to the tribes of the Northern Transvaal by the *Ma-Lemba*, and it
304 is a historical fact that, as regards the Ba-Venda of that country, the rite was adopted quite recently under the influence of the Ma-Lemba. These Ma-Lemba are a very curious people, living amongst the Thongas and the Suthos of Zoutpansberg, just like the Jews amongst the European nations, without a chief, without national unity, but with characteristic customs to which they adhere from generation to generation... They resemble the Jews in the fact that they do not eat flesh unless all the blood has been first carefully drained away. They dread eating blood above all else, and they shave at each new moon. They brought with them

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The *Nkuna clan*, which migrated from the confluence of the Olifhant and the Limpopo to the country round Leydsdorp, in or about 1835, is certainly of purer descent than most of the other Thonga clans, owing to its disturbed history, and its numerous migrations, which prevented other people from joining it, and strengthened the national tie. The common ancestor is Nkuna who, some centuries ago, left Zululand to settle in the plain of the Lower Limpopo. His son was Shitlhelana, his grandson Rinono. All the sons of Rinono are still known. One of them was the founder of the present royal family, and the present *hosi*, or chief, Muhlaba, is descended from him. The descendants of the others, who call themselves by their names, are the Mhuntanyanas, the Mashonganas, the Mbhalatis, the Kulalas, the Mushwanas, etc ; they form what is called the *doors* (tinyangwa) of the clan, each of these districts being under a petty chief, who is *hosana* (diminutive of hosi). So the nation is but an enlarged family, and everyone depends on his *hosana* and his *hosi*, the members of the royal family alone having only a *hosi*.

In the *Nondwane country*, on either side of the estuary of the Nkomati river, the situation is somewhat different. The whole land was first occupied in the XIIth and XIIIth centuries by three independant clans, the Mahlangwan, Honwana and Nkumba, which were on a lower scale of civilisation, having no iron weapons nor oxhide shields. They were scattered as far as the Mabota country and their numbers must have been very small. The first invasion took place before 1500, when a chief of the Lebombo hills, called Libombo, settled almost without fighting on the Western part of the estuary. This is the chief whom the old Portuguese chronicler Perestrello met in 1554, and who said to him : "Mena Libombo," — "I am Libombo." The original clans submitted to the invaders who mixed with them, being of a race not very different from them. Then, later on, came the clan now reigning, the Mazwaya, which conquered the whole country. According to the custom generally observed, the Mazwaya chief placed his relatives and his sons in the various parts of the land as petty chiefs (tihosana), retaining the old Libombo chiefs as counsellors (tindjuna) to watch over them and assist them.

This is a wise method of procedure; the old deposed chief becomes responsible for the welfare of the new one! Thus many *doors*, or provinces, were formed, and each of the petty chiefs founded a house and had his *shibongo*, his laudatory name. There were the Marwayas Masinga, the main branch, near Morakwen; the Marwayas Tjakame, not far from them; the Marwayas Hlewane, Marwayas Matinana, Marwayas Makaneta, etc. As the complicated law of succession frequently leads to disorders, as we shall see, the main branch lost its paramount power and became secondary. The kingship passed to the Matinana branch. However the Masingas retained their authority in their own jurisdiction, and it would be taboo to place a member of a younger branch over them. The religious regard for hierarchical order prevents such an offence from being committed. Lately, as a consequence of the war of 1904, the Hlewane branch has in its turn supplanted the Matinana. Thus, from all these facts, it appears that two hundred years ago the population of Nondwane was already composed of three different and successive strata. Since then, the situation has become even more complex. A great number of immigrants has settled in the country during the last century, coming in groups and asking the Marwaya chiefs and headmen to receive them. This is a very frequent occurrence amongst Thongas. They leave their clan, either because they want change, or because an accusation of witchcraft has induced them to flee, and they settle in another country. When I was living in Rikatla, one of the outside districts of the Marwaya country, before the war of 1894, the *hosana* was Muzila, a young man of the reigning family; but there were very few Marwayas under him. He had as *induna* a Tembe man, called Mandjia, whose father, Mankhere, had come long ago to Rikatla and was so well known that people used to call the district: "Ka Mankhere," "at Mankhere's." Another village belonged to Hazunde, a Djonga from the Shiburi country. A third had been built by people from the Manyisa clan, Nwamangele being their headman. So the population of the estuary of the Nhanati, which, at that time, had reached the number of six to eight thousand, became very mixed. However the country continued to be called

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"At Mazwaya's." It belongs to the Mazwaya clan. Such is the composition of most of the Thonga clans. Though their origin is certainly the patriarchal family, they are far from being of pure descent.

I am under the impression that this is the old, normal political state of the Bantus; small tribes of some thousand persons with a tendency to break up when they become too numerous, as happened in the cases of the Tembe-Mapute and also with the Mpfumo-Matjolo, who were first united under Nhlaruti. (See p. 23.) During the first half of the XIXth century, South Africa witnessed the birth of many great Native kingdoms, in which a large number of tribes were amalgamated, thus forming much larger political units. This process began in the country now called Zululand, in 1800. There were then ninety-four different small tribes comparable with our Thonga clans, that of the Zulus numbering only 2000. They were amalgamated from 1818 to 1820, by the well-known military raids of Chaka, to such an extent that, in 1820, this terrible despot had more than 100,000 warriors, and had added half a million people to his tribe, having deprived three hundred clans of their independance. Two Zulu generals followed the exemple of Chaka; Moselekatsi amalgamated the tribes of Mashonaland, and Manukosi the Thonga clans, not to mention Songandabe and the Angoni of Nyassa. The same process was accomplished more or less peacefully for the Bantus of Basutoland by Moshesh, and for the Ba-Pedi by Sekukuni, so that the original state of autonomy of the South African clans was generally replaced by large kingdoms in the greater part of South Africa.

Was this development a natural evolution of the Bantu clan? I do not think so. We must not forget that the first idea of transforming the clan into a conquering army, the idea which inspired Chaka, was brought to Zululand by the Umtetwa chief Dingiswayo, and that he conceived it on seeing an English regiment in Cape Town. The military spirit of the Bantus, which might have remained quiescent for a few more centuries, was awakened or stirred up by this sight. The seed found a wonderfully well-prepared soil, I confess. But without that seed, this terrible

618 movement of amalgamation would probably not have taken place,
175 and I think we may consider the clan life, as it is still met with
643 amongst the Rongas, (who were never subject to the Ngoni chief), as the typical Bantu political state (1).

B. THE LAUDATORY NAME OF THE CLANS AND TOTEMISM.

618 Each clan is known by the name of the old chief who is believed
551 to have been its original ancestor. So the Nkuna clan comes
101 from Nkuna, who lived four or five hundred years ago, and left Zululand for the Bilen country. The Mazwaya clan descends from Mazwaya, grandfather of Masinga and ancestor of all the heads of the sub-clans, Makaneta, Hlewane, etc. This name is a kind of *family name* for all the members of the clan. In the course of time, when sub-clans begin to aspire to independence, the first ancestor tends to fall into oblivion and is supplanted by the ancestor of the sub-clan. This process is easily noticeable at the present moment in Nondwane, where Mboza, for instance, calls himself a Makaneta. He says : "I am wa ka Makaneta," — "a man of the Makaneta house ;" but if he wants to be more precise, he will say : "I am a Mazwaya Makaneta." — "Shibongo a shi diwi," "the family name is never eaten, it is eternal!" (Mboza.)

618 This old name is called *shibongo* from *ku bonga*, to laud, to
551 praise. It is a *laudatory name*. It is used as such on two diffe-
576 rent occasions : 1) *When people salute each other*. A friend who meets Mboza on the road will say to him : "Shawan, Makaneta," "Good morning Makaneta!" But also : "Shawan Makhetshe!" (Makhetshe is the grandfather of Makaneta) ; or : "Shawan Mazwaya" or "Shawan Nwamasuluke." (Masuluke is the true father of Mboza.)

(1) The objection might be raised that, in former centuries, the celebrated Monomotapa founded a great kingdom. But what this exactly was, nobody knows. The descriptions of the chroniclers of those times are not very trustworthy, as we shall see from a quotation which will be made later on.

643 But whilst they may be reconciled in ordinary life, these two principles become antagonistic when carried into politics, and this law of succession has been the source of endless disturbances amongst the Thonga clans. It is true that the younger brothers of the chief, when taking his place, are looked on more or less as princes regent, holding office on behalf of their nephew, who is the lawful heir to the throne. They are said to "make him grow" (kurisa) to "keep his tumbler" (hlayisa ndyelo).

But if the former chief died in youth, and if his younger brother has lived and reigned for a long time, and has become very popular, he is very much tempted to appropriate the chieftainship for his own family and to order the tribe to crown his son, to the exclusion of the son of the first chief, who belonged to the elder branch, but who has been more or less forgotten during all these years. This leads to conflicts and fighting. The lawful heir will contest (*banga*, a Zulu word) and a *mubango* (civil war) will follow. Or, if he is not able to fight, he will keep to himself, full of bitterness, and ready to seize the first opportunity of asserting his rights.

643 Such a usurpation has twice taken place in the Nkuna tribe.
175 It is not easy to know exactly what happened, because there
721 are conflicting statements. Those who hold the chieftainship do not tell the story in the same way as those who consider that they were robbed of their right. This is the testimony of one of the latter, Mbokota, son of Madjubane. There were three brothers, Hoshana, Mbangwa and Ribye (1). During

(1) *Genealogy of the Nkuna family showing why and how contests arose for the succession.*

The names of the chiefs who reigned are thus underlined .....
The names of those who were deprived of the chieftainship, thus ———

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the disturbances caused by the Ngoni invasion, Hoshana fled to the Ñwamba country and lost touch with the main body of the clan which settled in the Transvaal. He however possessed the *ritlatla* (p. 385). On his death the royal appanage was brought to Shiluvane, but it never went back to Hoshana's children, who lost their right for ever. Mbangwa had three children, a daughter, Tibatiba, and two sons, Nyantsiri and Shiluvane. On his death, his younger brother Ribye reigned. He died, and then the chieftainship came back to Mbangwa's children. In the meantime Nyantsiri had died, but he had left two children, Madyubane and Mapsakomo. Madyubane, the elder, was still a child. So Tibatiba, the elder sister, said to Shiluvane : "Take the elephant tusk belonging to the Nkuna royal family and reign in the place of Nyantsiri ; but you have only to 'keep the tumbler' of Madyubane." Shiluvane sold the tusk and bought wives, beads and clothing for himself. Madyubane died some years later ; but he had a younger brother, Mapsakomo, and also a son called Mbokota. The chieftainship ought certainly to have returned to the elder branch. Mbokota told me himself that Shiluvane, before he died, ordered his counsellors to proclaim him as chief. So, on Shiluvane's death, a great contest arose. The headmen came to the capital and asked which son of Shiluvane had been designated by the late chief as his successor. No one dared reply, because there were four men who claimed the chieftainship : Mapsakomo, a younger brother of the legal heir Madyubane, Mbokota the son of Madyubane, Muhlaba and Muholo, both sons of Shiluvane. The great counsellor Shikhibane then said : "I heard Shiluvane say he wished Muhlaba to reign." The headmen accepted this statement, but the other pretenders greatly resented it. Seeing that many Ba-Nkuna were opposed to Muhlaba, Shikhibane assembled the whole tribe in arms to proclaim his protégé. He wanted the army itself to manifest its will. Mbokota, Mapsakomo and Muholo protested. But the warriors took Muhlaba, who was still a young man, and brought him to his new residence in an epic march all through the country during which they sang the war songs. The contest was finally settled by the Boer Authorities ; Captain Dahl, then Native Commissioner for Zoutpansberg.

643/175 confirmed the choice of Muhlaba. The Pedi queen Magayibia, of the Nyarin clan, also asserted that she had heard Shiluvane designate this young man as his successor, and the other pretenders were obliged to keep quiet. But they remained very discontented (1).

I have seen another similar case of the elder branch losing its right on account of a younger brother placing his son on the throne, to the exclusion of the legal heir. It happened amongst the Ba-ka-Baloyi who took refuge in the Mudjadji country. The sons of Nkami, younger brother of Shitshabe, tried to seize the chieftainship to the detriment of Munyamana, son of Shitshabe, and this gave rise to a war in consequence of which, however, Munyamana regained his right. (See S. A. A. A. S. Report of the Meeting of 1905. Vol. III, page 251.)

All these facts tend to show that the position of the chief is attended with many dangers and difficulties, not to mention those which arise from the presence of the White Government, with which I shall deal later on.

643 So it must be recognised that the Thongas have not been able to discover a political system guaranteeing the peace of the country in a satisfactory way. The habit of dividing the power between brothers who soon become rivals, and of allowing the younger brothers to reign before the legal heir, both tend to destroy the unity of the clan and give rise to quarrels and unrest. Another bad consequence of these features of the royal right is this ; a chief, when he ascends the throne, will do his best to *get rid of troublesome brothers* in order to reign alone and to ensure the chieftainship to his son. This has often happened, especially in the case of Maphunga, chief of Nondwane, who killed as many as four brothers or near relations : Sitjobela, Ñwanambalana, Zulu and

(1) I remember one day paying a visit to Mbokota, and hearing him complain bitterly about his fate. He had tried to show his independence by establishing a separate circumcision school for his people so that they should not go to the "sungi" of Muhlaba. The chief did not prevent him from doing this, but he had just sent a messenger to claim the fees paid by the boys. Mbokota was much grieved at being obliged to remit them, and, if he had had enough men, he would certainly have revolted. But he had but a handful of warriors. He was not popular amongst the tribe, so he did not think it wise to "banga" and eventually submitted to Muhlaba.

l: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

CHAPTER IV

THE ARMY.

A. WAR-LIKE PROCLIVITIES OF THE THONGAS.

721 As mentioned in the preliminary chapter (p. 34), in former
726 times the war-like spirit seems to have been but little developed
175 amongst the Thongas. The primitive population possessed no iron weapons, and the invasions which took place from the XVth to the XVIIIth century seem to have been peaceful. Conquerors and subjects soon intermarried and no recollection of bloody contests remained. When clans fought against each other, in those remote times, namely before the arrival of the Zulus (1820), they thought they had done doughty deeds when two or three warriors had been killed, and the vanquishers returned home saying : "None of the enemy is left!!" The army used to form in a straight line, not in a circle, as was the case later on under Zulu influence.

175 When the cruel hordes of Manukosi subjugated the plain of Delagoa, all that was changed. Of course the Thonga yimpis were defeated very easily. First of all, those of Maputju and Tembe ; in the country of Matjolo, which was afterwards invaded, the chief Mashekane was so stout that he had been surnamed "Mitahomu ni timhondjo" — "the one who swallows an ox, horns and all..." He fought bravely but was also defeated. In Khosen, says Hendrick, an old man who stayed for years in Rikatla and who was then a child, the aborigines were deceived by the perpendicular sticks which the Ba-Ngoni invaders had fixed to their ox-hide shields ; they mistook them for reeds and thought they could break them easily ; but their three united yimpis, that of Khosen under Mbanyele, of Rikotsho under Makwakwa, and of Shiburi under Shitlhama, were repulsed, broken through by the Zulu phalanx.

175 177 726 703 These Zulus or Ngonis taught the tribes of the plain a system of war much more cruel than the old one : "kill everything," — such is the rule. No exception is made except in the case of women, who are taken prisoners. The Thonga clans readily accepted this new mode of fighting. They adopted the Zulu system wholesale, the proof of which is that all their military terminology is pure Zulu. Their apprenticeship began during the invasion ; the Ba-Ngoni seeing that the Thongas had a certain aptness for war, incorporated them into their own regiments and used to send them forward to the attack, as previously mentioned. They praised them by calling them the *Mabuyandlela* — those who prepare the way, — a kind of nickname which the Thongas have kept to this day and of which they were very proud.

721 175 703 However I do not think it would be unfair to the Thongas to assert that the old peaceful basis of their character is still preserved, notwithstanding this influence. We have had an opportunity of judging of their warlike capabilities during the war of 1894-1896 with the Portuguese. (See Appendix X, Short account of two South African wars.) The Natives did not fight from choice. While some of them gave proof of great endurance, and the army fought in some cases with a certain tenacity, Thongas and especially Ba-Ronga did not show themselves very able warriors. Want of discipline, mutual distrust, timidity resulting in frequent retreats, inability to follow up their successes, such were the main causes of their defeat. The wild soldiers of Maputju, who considered themselves the equals of the genuine Zulus, showed their courage only when there was no danger!

B. WAR COSTUME AND WEAPONS.

714 One day when we were comfortably seated under the beautiful tree at our station of Rikatla, a strange looking monster suddenly appeared on the scene, running towards us! The children fled and the women hid themselves... It was Charley, our milk-man, who, with some other warriors, was going to a military review, to be

726 to heaven! The vanquishers follow their enemies until they reach their villages. As a rule, *they kill every one*, women, children, old men and tired warriors who have been unable to run away. They take the oxen and burn the huts. However exceptions are made in some instances : Sigaole, the ally of the Whites, ordered his warriors to spare the lives of the people of Zihlahla, during the expedition of February 1895, and to take them prisoners instead. "If you find any inhabitants remaining in the villages" said he "go into them. Let some one draw a line on the ground around the village and forbid the soldiers to cross it and to massacre the people." Generally speaking, however, the only lives spared are those of the younger women
726 and girls of whom they can hope to make some profit, either
567 by taking them as wives or selling them to others for matrimonial purposes. These prisoners are called "heads" (tinhloko) (1). This is the only kind of slavery practised by our tribe. Such wives are not ill-treated, as a rule.

726 So far I have described the war-customs of the Natives when fighting with each other. Let me add some particulars taken from the Thonga-Portuguese war of 1894-1896 (App. X.) which throw some light on the Native modes of fighting against White people.

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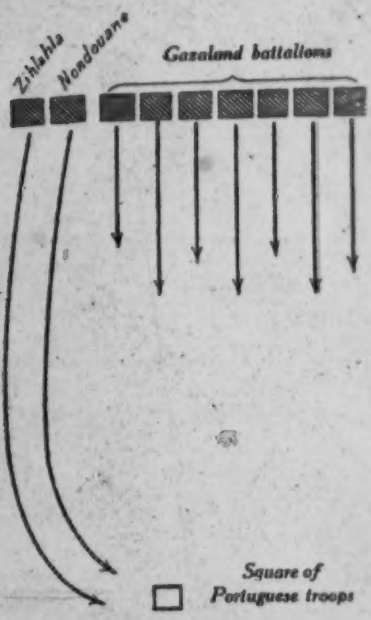
726 When opposed to White troops, the attack en masse would be too
175 dangerous : regiments advancing in serried ranks would offer too good a target to the European artillery. From information I have gathered with reference to the battle of Makupe or Magule (Sept. 8 1895), it would appear that the Ba-Ronga advanced in skirmishing order, those provided with guns approaching very close to the lines of the Whites. During this fight, one of the most important of the whole campaign, the Portuguese Commanding Officer, M. F. d'Andrade, shewed great presence of mind : the Zihlahla and Nondwane

(1) Two women, members of our Church, were carried off in this way by some of the Zihlahla men (6th October 1894), and we had the greatest trouble in finding them. They were seized close to the town, while going to their food-stores and their captors had duly married them with the acquiescence of their chief.

726/175 warriors came into almost actual contact with the Portuguese square, whilst the Gaza regiments, which were in greatly superior force, remained at a distance and then retreated. They had been told by Gungunyana that they were not to kill White men, so their presence was a mere parade. The Ba-Ronga finding themselves thus deserted followed the same tactics! One of the warriors present on this occasion drew me a plan of the engagement on the floor of a hut! (See accompanying sketch).



On the whole it must be admitted that the Natives of these parts seem greatly to prefer surprise attacks, sudden descents upon peaceful and unsuspecting folk, to any kind of regular pitched battle.

The Swazis used to arrive in the Delagoa plain very early in the morning, surround the villages and massacre indiscriminately all the inhabitants, in the years 1860-1870. The Ngonis of Gungunyana adopted the same method. The Matjolo warriors, whom the Portuguese sent against Zihlahla in February 1895, encamped in perfect silence within one hour's march of the spot where Nwamantibyane had taken refuge (Nhlalalene) and attacked his people when they least expected them. They indulged in the pleasure of killing numbers of women and children, whilst their male enemies fled into the palm marshes, shouting vociferously: "Make ready your rope to climb up to heaven... There will be no more rest on earth for you! Cook three meals: you may eat two but never a third." Empty threats! The greater part of the Native fights during this war consisted in ambuscades and treacherous slaughterings: lots of noise, plenty of bluster, but not much real bravery.

We shall arrive at the same estimate of Native valour if we consider *the great campaign* planned by Gungunyana in concert with Zihlahla

726 and Mahazule, who had taken refuge in Gaza, during July-August 1895.
175 Nine regiments, representing a large effective force, were to start from Manzimehlope, the country beyond the Nkomati River; three of these were to ascend the left bank of the river, to cross it in the neighbourhood of Komati-Poort and to enter Swaziland, the Ngoni chief having made alliance with the Swazis. The other regiments were to cross the Nkomati to the West of the Sabie, and thence to go southward by Moveni. The remaining three, with whom were incorporated Zihlahla and Mahazule, were to ravage Shirindja, Ntimane and Nondwane, passing about one hour's march to the West of Lourenço Marques, exterminating the inhabitants of Matjolo (allies of the Whites), whose retreat to the town would be thus cut off... The nine regiments were to effect a junction at a place called Nkobotlwene, to the South of the Bay, where the forces of Gungunyana would fraternise with those of Maputju, with whom they were on good terms. For the space of seven months, tens of thousands of these warriors were to overrun the country
726 and to annihilate all the tribes opposed to Gungunyana. The chief
609 would not massacre the Whites, nor would he attack their town: he
17 [illegible]ated on rendering them powerless by depriving them of the assistance of their Black allies, and expected them thus to sue for peace on honourable terms! Such, at least, was the plan of campaign which transpired after Gungunyana had been made prisoner, in the centre of his own country of Gaza, by a party of about forty White soldiers! The whole thing culminated in a single day's skirmish in the Ntimane country. The petty chiefs quarrelled amongst themselves; only a few hardy warriors dared to cross the Nkomati and slaughtered some women at a short distance from the outpost of Chinabane. Finding themselves discovered, they at once recrossed the river and made off to the Northward.

578 The principal causes of the incapacity in military matters so noticeable amongst the Blacks during the war of 1894-1896, are doubtless the *internal jealousies* between the tribes and also, it must be said, the mysterious dread inspired by the White race, their artillery and their superior discipline.

726 The feeling of mistrust existing between Matjolo and Nwamba,
175 Nondwane, Zihlahla and Shirindja, also explains the terrible *panics*
703 which occured during the military operations. On several occasions the Native forces were subject to panics which might have entailed the most serious results. As an instance I relate the following, which nearly led to the partial destruction of the Matjolo army. The Matjolo

726 173 703 warriors, as also those of Ñwamba, had received orders from the Whites, at the end of January 1895, to attack Zihlahla and Mahazule. One of the young men of Matjolo, who was present during the operations, told me this story : "We were to have joined the men of Ñwamba at a village called Mukapan, but did not find them at the rendez-vous. As they had made common cause with Zihlahla at the beginning of the revolt, we had not much confidence in them. It looked as if they were in hiding and intended to attack us treacherously and kill us. At this time two panics occured. The first was at Hukwen, when a man dreamt that he was being killed, and cried out : "Yo! Uwe! There are people who are killing me!" It was pitch dark. Every one jumped to his feet. Some ran to hide in the forest, but others shouted : "The enemy are here!" Fighting began in the regiment of Geba, (composed of men of the same age as Sigaole, the chief), but no one was killed. A few individuals who kept their presence of mind restored order, but we came very near exterminating each other! The next night a Chopi of our troop had a fright, and cried out : "Why do you want to kill me, you men of Matjolo ? I will tell Sigaole's mother." He was promptly secured and forced to keep quiet for fear that he would rouse the Nondwane people, etc. A similar panic seized the troops of Mahazule, when they went to lay waste the country round Lourenço Marques (October 1894).

726 192 To avoid these panics, as far as possible, the Ba-Ronga arrange a *password* before starting on an expedition. I was able to learn two of these countersigns, after the war, by questioning some young men who had taken part in certain military operations. On one occasion the pass-word was as follows : "Be ge pi ?" These are Zulu words signifying : "What are you looking at ?" The requisite answer being : "Be ge pezulu"—"We are looking at the sky." In the famous attack made by the Zihlahla warriors on the town of Lourenço Marques, on 14th October 1894, the word was : "U landu bane ?"—"With whom have you a quarrel ?"—and the reply : "Ngi landa Mlungu!"—"I have a quarrel with the white man!"

727 765 *Return from the battle.* When a yimpi has been defeated in battle, but is not pursued by the enemy, it returns silently and disperses before reaching the capital, each warrior going back ashamed to his village. Mourning takes place in the villages of the deceased. But much lamenting is not allowed. It may be that the chief will prohibit any mourning if many have been

l: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

APPENDIX X

Short Account of two South African wars.

175 As regards war customs, I not only possess the information obtained from my ordinary sources, Mankhelu, Tobane, Mboza, Viguet, etc., but a certain amount of personal experience. I had indeed the good, or the bad luck, to witness two South African wars : the Ronga-Portuguese war of 1894-1896 and the Sikororo war in 1901. As many allusions are made to these wars in these pages, my readers may be interested in having a short account of them.

1) *The Ronga-Portuguese war*, of 1894-1896, was caused by the subchief Mubvesha, when he tried to make himself independent of his young suzerain, Mahazule, who had just succeeded his father Maphunga as legitimate heir of Nondwane (See page 410). Mubvesha succeeded in interesting the Portuguese Administrator in his cause, but the whole clan remained loyal to Mahazule, and, a dispute having arisen, on the 27th August 1894, at Hangwana (the seat of the Administrator), the Mazwaya army assembled and prepared to defend its chief. The Government then successively asked Ñwamantibyane, chief of Mpfumu, and Ngwanazi, chief of Maputju, for help against the rebels. Ñwamantibyane, after long hesitation, refused the call (See Appendix XI). The Maputju warriors came as far as the Tembe shore, but, when asked to cross the bay, they decamped. For some weeks the Native yimpis were the masters of the whole country, up to the boundary of the town of Lourenço Marques. But Portuguese troops soon arrived from Lisbon and re-took Hangwana, (10 miles from the town), in December. The Royal Commissioner, M. A. Ennes, with his aide de camp, General (then Captain) F. d'Andrade, having taken command of the campaign, a forward move was made. The Portuguese camped near Morakwen, on the Nkomati River, where a severe battle took place at daybreak on the 2nd February 1895. The yimpis of Mahazule and Ñwamantibyane attacked the Portuguese troops while it was still dark and nearly invaded their camp. But the white soldiers did not lose their heads ; they rapidly formed square and repulsed the enemy with great loss. At the same time Native allies of Matjolo and Mabota were driving the rebels from their retreats, so that they fled to the east of the Nkomati River into Gungunyana's territory : these Captain F. d'An-

175 drade followed into the Khosen country and defeated them on the 8th September 1895, at the battle of Magule (See page 471).

The Ngoni king, Gungunyana, had more or less encouraged the rebels to rise. When asked to give them up to the Portuguese he refused to do so. So the war had to be carried up to his stronghold of Mandlakazi. During many weeks the whole of Gungunyana's army, which was estimated at 25,000 to 30,000 men, camped near its king, ready to fight. But, for some unknown reason, the Portuguese army was delayed and the Thonga battalions, having nothing to eat, broke up. However, a strong bodyguard, the flower of the great king's troops, consisting principally of Ba-Ngoni, remained at the headquarters. When at last the Portuguese arrived in the neighbourhood of Mandlakazi, a sharp fight took place. The Ngoni warriors gallantly attacked the Portuguese square but were driven back with great loss, (305 killed, according to the official report). The royal kraal, Mandlakazi, was taken and destroyed and Gungunyana fled to Tshayimiti, the sacred wood where his ancestors were buried. Some weeks later, Captain Musinho d'Albuquerque, after a forced march, took him prisoner without any fighting, and brought him to Lourenço Marques, whence he was deported to Western Africa.

175 631 P. 177. 63 The Ba-Ngoni considered that they had been taken by surprise and not properly defeated ; so, in 1897, a serious revolt broke out, headed by Magigwane, the Commander-in-Chief of Gungunyana's yimpi. But it was soon successfully put down by the Portuguese forces, who divided up the country into a certain number of military zones, and the districts of Lourenço Marques and Inhambane have been perfectly quiet ever since.

175 2. *The Sikororo war* took place, in 1901, in the Shiluvane country, during the Anglo-Boer war, when the north of the Transvaal was, as it were, without white rulers. The successor of the famous Sekukuni, reigning in the Leydensburg district, Sekhukhukhu, tried to avail himself of the unsettled state of the country to realise an old political dream, viz., to become the paramount chief of the whole country. He interfered with the Maharimane clan, which inhabited the Drakensberg ranges, where the Oliphant crosses them before reaching the plain. This clan was divided into two : the legitimate heir was under the tutelage of a woman named Ñwanamohube, but his brother, Maphephe, wished to get rid of her, stating that she was exercising her authority against the interests of the country. Sekhukhukhu assured the queen-regent that he would help her if she joined him. He

175 entreated the Pedi chiefs dwelling on the northern side of the range, viz., Sikororo and Maaghe, to espouse his cause. Sikororo was a very strange old man who had retired into the mountains, far away from his villages, and a regent, named Rios, was carrying on the government in his stead. Rios agreed with Sekhukhukhu's proposals ; so did some of the subjects of Maaghe, the Masume clan. But Maaghe himself refused to do so and he was supported by Muhlaba, the Nkuna chief, who was an old ally of his.

The first encounter took place in the Maharimane valley, where Maphephe was defeated by the united yimpis of Sekhukhukhu and Ñwanamohube. He fled. In the meantime another foe, called by the Natives "Fighter-by-night," had opposed Sekhukhukhu in the Leydenburg district, invaded his territory, and defeated his troops. It seemed that this would put an end to the ambitious plans of the great Pedi chief... But such was not the case. Hearing of his enemy's defeat, Maphephe again took courage. Chased from his country, he sought a refuge with Maaghe, who was imprudent enough to welcome him and all his people in the Bokhaha valley. We witnessed the curious spectacle of a whole clan moving into our district of Shiluvane. The young chief was breathing vengeance. He soon began to make mischief, and organised a raid into Masume's territory. This put a match to the train. Rios avenged his friends by burning some villages of Muhlaba, and killing the pigs. A regular battle took place, on the 15th October 1901, between the armies of Maaghe and Muhlaba and those of Sikororo and Masume. The first had to retreat, but they suffered no loss, whilst they claimed to have killed 20 of the enemy. The situation was bad for them, as other chiefs threatened to join Sikororo and to deal summarily with them and their missionaries! I then went to ask for help at Leydsdorp, where the remainder of the Boer Commandoes were just passing, coming from Komati Poort on the way to Pietersburg. I had the good luck to meet there with a party of Hollanders, who at once volunteered to come and save women and children in danger! They stayed for two days at the Shiluvane station, where their presence caused a great sensation... But they had to look after their own affairs, and we were soon obliged to return to the same dangerous situation! On the 6th November 1901, the Sikororo yimpi, strengthened by the troops of Sekhukhukhu, Mabulanen, Masume etc., a regular confederation of yimpis, numbering 700 warriors (as it was estimated), invaded the peaceful Shiluvane valley at dawn, burning the huts, firing their rifles, and shouting wildly : "Moya! Moya!" (Wind! Wind! viz., projectiles of

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

175 the enemy are but wind!) They went so far as to cross the Moudi rivulet, less than one mile from the Shiluvane Mission Station. The two allied chiefs were not on their guard and had very few men with them. However, they rushed to meet the invaders with such courage that these were surprised. Seeing the Christian Natives clad like Europeans, they believed the Hollanders were still there, and fled ignominously, leaving some 40 of their warriors dead on the field of battle. These are the men whose flesh provided all the Zoutpansberg magicians with their powerful charms! Rios was killed, and it is said that his corpse was redeemed for the price of ten guineas by the old Sikororo. Others state that his skull was placed by Maaghe in the great drum of his capital. This defeat definitely broke the power of Sikororo, who made his submission, and was the last clash of arms worth mentioning in the war.

APPENDIX XI (See p. 463).

The position of Ñwamantibyane when the 1894 war broke out.

When the Portuguese asked Ñwamantibyane to help them against Mahazule, (August-September 1894), this young chief of twenty years of age at the most, assembled his army. An irresistible spirit of war was in the air. Held back by his counsellors, who were unwilling to fight against their rebellious compatriots, Ñwamantibyane hesitated to respond to the appeal of the Whites. He was seated, perplexed, in his camp, his demeanour morose and preoccupied, surrounded on the one hand by his "great ones," on the other by his young men who addressed him thus : "Give us, give us men to slaughter! Thou art nothing but a coward! Send us!" Those were tragic times!

He allowed a small contingent to go into the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques, in order to reconnoitre (Nov. 6. 1894). This yimpi made several prisoners and stole the oxen of the Swiss Mission, which were grazing in the vicinity of the town. One of our young men, named Tandane, was taken prisoner by a man of Ñwamba. A passer-by, belonging to the Mabota clan, was also caught. All these captives were taken to the chief Ñwamantibyane, to whom the spoil belonged, his men having been the spoilers. The man who had captured the passer-by from Mabota begged the chief's permission to

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

175 kill him, which was accorded ; this warrior, radiant with joy, immediately retired with his victim, slew him in cold blood and returned to dance before the chief. The Nwamba man requested a like privilege. But Ñwamantibyane had other ends in view ; he wanted to make use of our young man to send a message to the Portuguese Governor, and so refused the permission asked. The man, a prey to an insatiable longing to shed blood, insisted. He was offered as compensation one, and even two, of the stolen oxen, but could not thus be satisfied. "I want my man," said he, "to kill him so that I can dance!" Ñwamantibyane had to employ force to silence him. Two oxen, twelve pounds sterling, counted as nothing to this black warrior compared with the fiendish delight he would derive from the *gila*!

As regards the conclusion of the story of Tandane, he came back with a letter from the chief asking why the Whites wanted to kill him, and begging for an interview. When the letter, written in Zulu by some of his boys, had been despatched, the young chief said : "Now I can breathe! When I eat something, it can pass through my throat!" The Portuguese Governor consented to the interview, but the letter sent back to Ñwamantibyane, in answer to his, was intercepted and so the war continued. See in the preceding Appendix how it spread to Gungunyana's country, and ended in the capture of this despot and the destruction of the Ngoni kingdom.

[411]

Phot. D. Lewis.

Sham Fight at Ndlebende's (Magaqa).

177 Governments have everywhere placed Native Commissioners to watch over their coloured subjects. This has put *an end to the tribal wars*. Natives are no longer allowed to indulge in their old fighting customs. They may avail themselves of a war between Europeans to square up old accounts with each other, as happened during the Anglo-Boer war, but they are forbidden to follow the war-path any longer. In many parts of South Africa they have even been disarmed. This change, as a whole, is a favourable one. Native wars never brought blessing to the race. It tends however to destroy one of the springs of patriotism, and in this way it impoverishes the Native mind.

643 175 631 P. 177. 64 *c)* These Native Commissioners have placed a very effective check, not only upon the military tendencies of the tribe, but upon *the power of its chiefs*. The authority of the chief in the clan has certainly been diminished. In some instances he has been deposed, or banished in consequence of war, and the tribe has remained without a head and without force, as it were emasculated, and unable to guide itself. As Mankhelu said: "Our chief is the forest into which we retreat! Without him we are but women!" This was sadly noticeable in the case of the Zihlahla or Mpfumo clan, which was perhaps the most developed of all the Ronga kingdoms and which suffered most from the 1894-96 war. Its young chief Ñwamantibyane was caught and deported to some spot in Eastern Africa, and the clan was dismembered, a great number of men emigrating to the Transvaal; the others remained dissatisfied but powerless in their old territory, and were incorporated with Matjolo or Mabota.

643 681 692 P. 177. 69 Even when the Native chief is maintained in his position by the Whites, his power is curtailed. As a judge, he is no longer allowed to inflict capital punishment. His tribunal only judges minor cases, and beside and beyond him, there is a further appeal, the Court of the White Commissioner, which is ready to consider every important case. Should the Native chief be unjust or selfish in his decisions, the subjects will go more and more to the White tribunal. It may be that their claims will not be so well understood as in their own *hubo*, but they will perhaps meet with fairer treatment. Shrewd and clever Native Commissioners thus succeed in attracting more applicants to their residences than the chief to his capital (1). This dual control leads to a progressive loosening of the tribal tie.

(1) This was the case for instance in Nondwane. The unjust and egoistical rule of Mubvesha compelled many of his subjects to go "shikanekiwen," viz., to the Portuguese Administrator of Moralven.

178 progressing almost imperceptibly. The transformation would seem to be as rapid as the previous immobility was fixed.

Let us try to discover the causes which may account for this extraordinary stagnation.

176 178 All are agreed in bearing witness to the fact that the state of civilisation in which Europeans found the Bantu tribes of South Africa is of an extremely ancient date. It is true that we have but little historical data to go upon as regards the development of these people, but, nevertheless, it seems to me highly probable that the shape of their ngula, their hwama, their shirundju, their pillows, the construction of their huts, dates from a very remote antiquity, and has been handed down unchanged from generation to generation. How are we to account for this lack of development, whilst the Indo-European races, starting probably from similar primitive conditions, have advanced to so high a degree of civilisation as that of the Greeks and Romans, and ultimately to that of modern times?

The reply given by many casual observers to this question is that *the Bantu races are incapable of progress.* They are condemned, by reason of their mental and spiritual constitution, to vegetate in perpetual barbarism or to make themselves ridiculous by a servile imitation of the superior races. This view is not justified by the facts of the case. We recognise a relative mental inferiority in the Thongas, as in their congeners the Bantus, but their minds, nevertheless, possess in a more or less rudimentary state, all those faculties of which we are wont to boast. During the several years I have passed in close contact with these intellects, supposedly so limited, I have been more often struck with the points of analogy between the Africans and ourselves than by the differences which separate us. Besides, it is an error to assert that they have not progressed. Their inventive genius is fully proved by the various ways in which the several tribes have taken advantage of the materials with which Nature has supplied them. The Ba-Ronga do not make their baskets in the same way as the Zulus, or the Ba-Sutho. Again, in many separate instances, we can note a distinct forward movement in their industry; the arrival of glass beads,

137 314 [illegible] small sticks. A good yield of rubber could undoubtedly be obtained in this country if the trees were cultivated and tapped in an intelligent manner.

(With regard to the name of the rubber tree, compare *Delagoa Bay, its Natives and Natural History*, London, Philip and Son, 1891, written by Mrs Monteiro, an English woman who spent several years in Lourenço Marques and published interesting observations on the country. Without claiming any special scientific accuracy, this volume affords much interesting information.)

one or two hundred years ago, gave birth to an entirely new and original decorative art; during the last century, the contest with a tribe better clothed than themselves led them to adopt a different and more decent costume. (Compare "Introduction à la Grammaire ronga" § XXXI.) When copper and brass wire became procurable, they not only made pretty bracelets, but invented quite a new art, the weaving of belts, 176 178

[415]

Phot. Doutes.

Manual work at the Lemana Training School (Northern Transvaal).

(p. 101 No. 1); egg-cups, and cups of various forms very different from those of European make.

The ability of the Native to progress in industry cannot be doubted when one sees the results of the industrial teaching they receive in many Missionary Institutions. The Swiss Romande Missionaries have introduced, in their schools, the manufacture of baskets and mats with the materials found in the country, and the results of the experiment have been altogether in favour of the intelligence of the Natives, as shown in the accompanying illustration. One of the pupils of Shiluvane even fashioned a [illegible] basket, made with a single leaf of a big palm tree [illegible] glass. In these institutions

176 where carpentering and waggon building are scientifically taught,
178 the results are very satisfactory, and I myself saw at Lovedale a splendid American desk which had been made entirely by a Native, and was as perfect as if it had been manufactured by a European craftsman. So the industrial stagnation of the South African tribes must not be put down to an innate incapacity for progress. I think we must look elsewhere for its causes, and, without claiming to exhaust the question, I will proceed to enumerate the factors, which, to my mind, explain the exceedingly slow development of these tribes.

176 Their *political system, social and religious*, is one of the chief causes
178 of this state of things. The deceased chiefs are the gods of the nation.
183 Whatever they did should be done now; their lives are the supreme examples to be followed; the traditions handed down by their ancestors are the only religious and moral guides which these people possess. Customs which have come down from prehistoric times are law. No one would think of abandoning them. To do otherwise than others do, *psa yila*, is forbidden. It would be a denial of the divine authority of the ancestors, and a danger to the tribe. This principle is most strictly maintained in such tribes as are the freest from foreign admixture and the least exposed to outside influences. In the Khosen country, for example, when an evangelist trained in Spelonken, Yosefa, wanted to build a square house, he was prevented from doing so. It was against the law. How could he expect to live in a hut of a different shape from those his forefathers had inhabited? Had there been no Whites in the country, Yosefa would have found it impossible to build a house to his liking! This is a typical case of the immobility of Native industry (1).

But in advancing as a reason for this immobility the all-powerful sway of custom, supported and maintained by the national authorities, we have only pushed the difficulty further back. How has it been possible to maintain such a system of oppression? How is it that no stronger minded individuals have arisen to throw off this yoke and gain liberty of action, stirring up the tribe, in spite of itself, from the lethargy in which it is plunged, like an organism with its blood congealed!

(1) The lack of imagination in these races seems specially noticeable in mechanics, and it has been remarked that South African Natives have not yet invented a single machine. This may be true. However, I heard it attested by a Johannesburg technician that the Thongas have a real aptitude for running engines and a real bent for mechanics. As not one of them has ever studied advanced mathematics, no wonder they have not invented new machines.

Amongst our own races, men of genius, great thinkers, have, from the earliest times, been able to impress their new ideas upon the masses, and lead them eventually, however recalcitrant, upon the march of progress. We shall have to content ourselves with two considerations which may help to solve the problem. 176 178 183

Our civilisation is the result of a combination of millions of minds and hundreds of peoples. The lake-dweller, of the stone-age, was not much more developed than the present-day Black of South Africa: in some respects he was less so. But he inhabited Europe, and, to the South of that Continent, stretches an inland sea, the Mediterranean, which spreads out its many arms in gulfs and bays reaching to the very heart of the countries on its shores, and thus facilitates access between nation and nation. Every new discovery by one soon became the property of its neighbour. Rome inherited from Greece, and Greece from Egypt and Abyssinia, and these international relations, favoured by the geographical conditions of the Old World, explain the development, *the arithmetical progression* shall we call it, of our Indo-European civilisation. In Africa, nothing of the sort exists. Few, if any, gulfs or bays are to be found in this Continent, whose coasts are hopelessly unbroken and inhospitable. Many a long stretch of river, otherwise navigable, is closed to navigation by impassable cataracts. Deserts of burning sand separate the tribes from one another, and sometimes they are isolated by veritable ramparts of lofty mountains. Communication is almost impossible, and the Black tribe, left to its own resources, amidst natural surroundings of an enervating description, remains stationary and content with the elementary industry to which it has attained. *Outside influence is wanting* to stimulate the intellectual energy, the inventive faculty of which they possess the germs. 176 178

In addition to all this a second factor is noticeable in the course of human development, and this, while all in favour of the Indo-European races, accentuates still more forcibly the differences between the several branches of the human family. Through the centuries the Egyptian hieroglyphs slowly evolved into ideographic signs, which eventually gave place to the phonetic alphabet of the Phoenicians. This *alphabet* goes forth to conquer the world, and to give a fresh aspect to things in general. These twenty to thirty letters of which the Blacks had not the slightest notion, these signs, thanks to which stone, wood and paper have been made to speak, will henceforward allow great minds to transmit their thoughts direct to their fellow-men. The knowledge of one epoch will then be passed on intact to following generations,

176 whilst, formerly, ideas were frequently lost or distorted by popular
178 tradition; progression will henceforth be not merely *arithmetical* but *geometrical*. The *book* will be the accumulator in which the intellectual forces of the race will be stored for future transmission, without wastage, prolific of light and stimulus to every sphere of human
[212] activity. The Blacks of South Africa have never invented any system of writing. The idea of representing an object, a number, a thought, or a sound by any conventional sign, seems never to have occurred to them. Makhani, Muzila's old counsellor, did not know his own age. He probably thought, in common with many of his contemporaries, that he was at least ten years old. One day I said to him: "Why didn't you go each year, when the leaves begin to appear on the trees, and make some kind of a mark on the bark of a nkuhlu? Then, to-day, you could have counted all the marks and you would know how old you are!" He laughed and considered the idea futile, absurd! The absence of any system of writing is, doubtless, the proof of a certain intellectual inferiority, but environment may easily account for the illiterate condition of the Natives. In fact it is environment which is the chief cause of their centuries-long stagnation.

It would, however, be doing a wrong to these people, were we to judge them solely by the absence of industrial progress. Mental activity is not manifested only in the manufacture of machinery or in the transactions of high finance. Man is a being endowed with thought and speech. Speech and literature, which reflect thought, are phases of human activity more essential than industrial undertakings. The Thongas, in common with their neighbours the Ba-Sutho and the Zulus, do most certainly possess a literature, although they have no system of writing and may be classed as illiterates; of this fact I shall furnish abundant proof when treating of their *literary and artistic life*.

the Pedis. I saw the two armies, the same day, preparing for the same battle. The Thongas were armed to the teeth, forming a great circle, all standing, shouting their war songs, gesticulating, jumping, imploring their chief to allow them to start. The Pedi warriors were sitting under trees, taking their snuff and apparently as calm as any other day.

During the Gungunyane war, the Thongas were brave, at least those not entirely dependent on the Ngoni king, who had not allowed his warriors to kill white men. The Rongas of Mpfumu especially showed great courage and endurance, and those who served the Portuguese in their Angola war have been praised as being very steady and reliable.

On the other hand everything seems to prove that military ability is not an ancient feature of the Thonga character, and that it has been imparted to them by the Zulus, who taught them the art of fighting during the last century, pushing them to the front in their battles and calling them "Mabuyandlela," "those who open the way." Before the Ngoni invasion, the Thonga armies were ignorant of the *mukhumbi* viz. the armed circle of warriors which is the basis of the Zulu military system; (See Part IV) : they used to form themselves into a straight line and, in their battles, very few men were killed. They were normal Bantu clans, viz. people living peacefully, occasionally quarrelling with their neighbours. The idea of conquest, of vast dominion, the system of an armed nation which Chaka and his followers pursued, was something new amongst South African Natives and was probably borrowed by Dingiswayo from the Whites. This fact ought not to be ignored.

Under a just European supervision, there is no probability that the Thonga tribe will change its peaceful and mild charcter.

3) *Physical characteristics of the Thongas.* It cannot be said that the Thongas possess a very distinct and unique physical type. They are generally of a dark brown colour, sometimes purely black, much darker than the Suthos. As a whole, their external appearance bears a much closer resemblance to that of the Zulus, but, as regards face and stature, they vary very much. You may meet Thongas with typical negro faces, broad lips, flat

always use, he says: "Abuŝayi, akhwari! This is the child! May he grow! May he become a man by means of this medicine of mine! May his perspiration be good; may the impurity go away; may it go to Shiburi, to Nkhabelane! (1) May the child play well, be like his companions. This is not my first attempt! You have given me these drugs; may they protect him against disease so that nobody may say there is no power in them, etc." After this prayer the doctor takes the little child and goes back to the central place of the village. The mother stays and washes her own body with the decoction, praying also to her gods (but without the *tsu*, as this has been uttered by the "master of the drugs").

The treatment of the biyeketa is also called "hungulo dja milombo," "the vapour bath for infantile diseases;" it is not a curative, but a preventive; it aims at ascertaining if the child is all right. If he has bad stools (a nga tlambi psinene) the mother will perhaps remember that she has forgotten to enclose him and she will call the doctor in at once. Should he fall sick, the biyeketa will not be performed again but the milombyana will be administered more frequently. However, it is of importance for the growth of the child. To neglect it is taboo! (2)

As for the cuts, sometimes they are followed by a second vapour bath, as if the doctor wished to cause the medicine contained in the smoke to penetrate through them into the body, in which case he will only "close" them later on by introducing a healing powder into them. Children generally cry when they see the physician... They dread the pain of the cuts. When the mother goes to the doctor's village, she takes with her the wood, the mat and a pot of beer or a fowl in payment. The physician's charge for a biyeketa is sixpence to one shilling or a hen or a pot of beer.

(1) Viz. to the end of the world. These clans are far away to the north, outside the Ronga country.

(2) I hear that the converts generally have not abandoned the biyeketa, but they do not allow the doctor to perform the sacrificial act and to pray to the spirits. Sam Ngwetsa, the children's physician of Rikatla used to pray thus: "O Father of mercy! I pray thee! I do not pray the dead but thee only who art in heaven! Grant us to see this child in good health, standing firm, this little lamb!"

524 177 Thonga boys are so fond of games that they even try to imitate those of the Europeans. In the accompanying illustration, they are seen sitting in two rows throwing some projectiles along the ground. I wondered what game this was, and was informed that these boys, having seen Portuguese officials playing billiards at the camp, had attempted to do the same, and this was the result!

C. THE AGE OF PUBERTY

I. *Circumcision rites.*

1) Spread and origin of circumcision amongst the Thongas.

857 As he grows up, the Thonga boy leaves the flock of goats and is entrusted with the care of the big cattle, oxen and cows, 881 when his father owns any. He becomes very proud, and tyran- 882 nises over his younger brothers; he calls himself their "hosi," 866 their chief, and sends them to work for him; in Maputju, big boys went so far as to scorn water brought from the pool by women, and only to use water specially fetched by small boys. If they grow so important in their own eyes, the reason is that special rites are performed on them during this period, rites which are calculated to give them great self-confidence. Amongst these rites, some have a direct relation with the sexual life and some represent only the entrance upon manhood. Let us begin with a study of circumcision, then we will take the other puberty rites and the habit of *gangisa*.

881 In a great many Bantu tribes, the age of puberty is marked 304 by ceremonies of initiation, often accompanied by circumcision. There is little doubt that circumcision was practised throughout the Thonga tribes in former times. It is still current with those Thongas who emigrated into the Transvaal, and this is not a custom borrowed from the Pedi clans, which have all preserved circumcision. Though the Thongas often receive initiation in Pedi schools, in the Spelonken, they possess their own schools

881 for the Nkunas near Leydsdorp. They have a special word for
304 the physical operation, *yimba*, (in Ronga *soka*) which is used together with *ngoma* (Sutho *goma*), the generic term for all the customs connected with it. (It must not be forgotten that the word *ngoma* is also used for other initiations, especially for the initiation of widows, as will be seen in Chap. II.)

881 Amongst the Ba-Ronga, circumcision was abandoned more
175 than a hundred years ago, before the arrival of Manukosi, and
304 they were called *Ba-butoya*, the cowards, by other Northern clans, who said they feared the sufferings of that cruel school. Mboza has seen some old Ronga men who had been circumcised probably at the begining of the XIXth Century. It is well known that somewhat later Chaka put a stop to the custom amongst the Zulus; it did not fit in with the new military system inaugurated by him. When the Ngoni general Manukosi invaded the plains of the Low Country, it is not surprising that circumcision disappeared in those clans also. The constant fighting which prevailed in those troubled times did not allow men to stay three consecutive months in a circumcision lodge. It was feared also that circumcised boys would be killed by the enemy, being unable to run away in case of an invasion.. But old men in the Bilen country assert that the *Ngoma* is a very old custom amongst the Thongas, and that it has long been practised by all their clans.

881 Is it possible to ascertain its *true origin* ? My informants,
177 Viguet especially, were convinced that the Ngoma was brought
363 to the tribes of the Northern Transvaal by the *Ma-Lemba*, and it
304 is a historical fact that, as regards the Ba-Venda of that country, the rite was adopted quite recently under the influence of the Ma-Lemba. These Ma-Lemba are a very curious people, living amongst the Thongas and the Suthos of Zoutpansberg, just like the Jews amongst the European nations, without a chief, without national unity, but with characteristic customs to which they adhere from generation to generation... They resemble the Jews in the fact that they do not eat flesh unless all the blood has been first carefully drained away. They dread eating blood above all else, and they shave at each new moon. They brought with them

l: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

881 the metallurgic art and introduced domestic fowls into the country.
177 All these facts tend to show that they have had intimate relations
663 with Semitic peoples, and they themselves declare that they came from the North by sea and reached the coast after shipwreck. Now they practise circumcision with great assiduity and hold a special position in the lodges of the Spelonken. They are called there the masters of the Ngoma (1). Circumcision is wide-spread amongst Semitic nations, and one might be tempted to infer from these remarks that the custom has been taught to the Bantus by Semitic masters. This is certainly true as regards the Ba-Venda in the Spelonken (2).

In South Africa the Ngoma is much older than the arrival of the Ma-Lemba (which can be fixed some time during the XVIIIth century). What happened in Spelonken, through the agency of the Ma-Lemba, during the XIXth century, may have taken place at some earlier date in the case of other South African tribes, and the Semitic origin of the Ngoma is quite possible, though there is no proof at present extant.

2) General characteristics of the circumcision rites.

881 I am treating here of the rites as they are met with amongst
115 the Thongas of Spelonken especially ; my informants on this point have been Viguet, who was initiated some 60 years ago, and Valdo, a much younger man, who went through the rites 30 years ago; both are from Spelonken. There Thonga and Bvesha (Sutho) candidates enter the same lodges. A boy named Pikinini revealed to me the secret formulae as they are recited amongst the Nkunas
881 (Leydsdorp). The rites certainly vary amongst the tribes and they seem to have been simplified in late years, but there is a general resemblance between them all. Pedis have two circumcision

(1) I note in a paper by the Rev. W. A. Norton on the puberty rites of the Basuto (S. A. *Journal of Science* March 1910) that, if a Bushman is in a lodge, he takes precedence amongst the Suthos and that there circumcision is derived from the Bushmen just as it is from the Ma-Lembain the Zoutpansberg.

(2) See my paper on the "Balemba of the Zoutpansberg" *Folklore*, Sept. 1908 and also, "*Zidji*," my South African novel. Chap. II. (Saint-Blaise, Foyer Solidariste).

881 the chief must not be used by him to buy a wife. This would pollute the village (makhuma). It would cause unfortunate births (timbeleko) and ruin the life of the people.

The chameleon procession is performed in the villages of the main headmen of the tribe during the few following days till, at last, the ochre of the initiated is removed and they return home definitely.

SOME REMARKS ON THE CIRCUMCISION SCHOOL

177 The square form of the sungi sheds, so different from the circular form
881 adopted by the Bantus for their homes and implements, might be the
341 trace of a Semitic influence. But, on the whole, all these rites are closely
822 connected together and their sequence is quite easy to understand.

The Ngoma is truly a puberty rite, but not a sexual initiation. The
881 suspension of conjugal relations, and the prevalence of licentious language might give the idea that it is in direct relation with the sexual life. But these two phenomena are met with on other occasions, as we shall see, and seem to be characteristic occurrences in most of the marginal periods. Moreover boys of ten and twelve and men of twenty-five or more can occasionally be admitted to the sungi, and this proves that the school has nothing to do with marriage, properly speaking. Neither is the Ngoma a pure act of aggregation to a definite clan. Boys of one clan often go to the sungi of another chief to be initiated ; they do not become his subjects by so doing. Even Thongas sometimes enter into Sutho lodges and Ma-Lemba have a special place in them. It is true that the Ngoma is the business of the chief. Only those who are really chiefs have the right to build a lodge. But though the initiated are exhorted to become good subjects of their chief, the intention of the circumcision school is rather to introduce the little boy *into manhood*, to cleanse him from the *bukhuma* (p. 58) to make him a thoughtful adult member of the community.

(See practical conclusion on Circumcision Rites at the end of Vol. I.)

II. *Other Puberty Rites.*

881 The Ngoma has disappeared in most of the Thonga clans, but
178 there are a few other puberty rites which have been preserved all through the tribe.

1) THE CUSTOM OF THE EROTIC DREAM (Tilorela).

881 195 751 When a young man has noticed for the first time an emissio seminis, he is said to have become an adult (a kulile, a thombile) to have "drunk the nkanye." The nkanye is the tree from which the bukanye is made. It is prepared for the great feast of the new year. *To drink the nkanye* is an euphemism to designate the entrance into a new phase of life, into the age of puberty. According to Mboza, the lad must go early in the morning to wash his body, and that is all. But Tobane says that, in the Mpfumo clan, the family doctor is called; in a broken pot, he roasts pieces of skin of all the beasts of the veldt, together with some half digested grass taken from the stomach of a goat (psanyi). The boy must eat a little of this medicine and rub all his joints with it. This will strengthen him so that, when he has relations with girls, he will not be overcome (gemiwa) by them. This rite, which is very similar to the rite of the broken pot performed for infants, is connected with the "gangisa," the sexual habits of young people which begin at the time of puberty, as we shall see later on.

881 291 177 789 832 At this time also, the boy begins to wear the very primitive clothing called *shifado* (sha ku siba, the thing with which one closes, see Annotatio I)[1]. In former times they wore only the *mbayi*, a small cylindrical or conical object of woven palm leaves, which was the national dress of the Thongas; the *shifado* seems to be of Zulu origin. It is very much valued as preventing contact with the earth, as a protection against ants and an aid to continence; the lads who do not wear it are blamed and accused of being *ba-nato*. The word *nato* means a magical medicine by means of which men of low morals throw men or women into a deep sleep during the night, enter the huts of other people and commit adultery with their wives.

2) THE PIERCING OF THE EARS (Ku tjunya, (Ro.), boshela. (Dj.).

881 304 177 This also takes place at this period. There are two ways of performing it, either by an actual piercing of the lower lobe with a thorn, or by cutting it with a knife. The first method

1 [See p. 516 in these categories or in 116 -- Analyst]

1. Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

881 is the old Thonga custom, and has been preserved by the women
304 in its original form, at least amongst the Ba-Ronga ; they frequently
177 pass a ring through the small opening thus produced. The second was practised by the Zulu-Ngonis, and was adopted by the Thonga men in order to resemble their conquerors. The result is an ugly hole. This is not a law imposed by the chief ; it is however universally observed. When a lad does not pierce his ears, his comrades mock him, saying. " U toya ! " " You are a coward! We shall put a spoonful of porridge in this big ear of yours! " (Viz. It will hold food because it is not pierced!)

881 The operation is performed in the winter by a man who
304 knows how to do it. Before it is begun, the boy bites the *ndjao*,
824 the root of a kind of juncus which is considered the best means of strengthening the virile force. The doctor introduces into
833 the hole a small piece of reed ; he takes it out every day to wash the wound and puts it in again to keep the hole open. As long as the ear is not healed, the lad must eat his food without salt : he must not go about in the kraals and partake of the porridge of other people, because this food might have been prepared by women having intercourse with their husbands (ba ku khila) and this would make him very ill (1). He must also keep away from girls. When he is healed, he takes away the piece of hard reed and replaces it by a pretty white object.

304 Some Thongas tatoo themselves, or used to do so formerly,
178 but this custom is disappearing and is now preserved only by women. We shall describe it in the chapter on the evolution of the woman, as well as the *hleta* custom, the pointing of the teeth.

It is probable that in former times the taboo character of these various ceremonies was more marked that now. At present they are merely a *shihila sha tiko*, a custom of the country.

(1) This alimentary taboo, as well as the interdiction of sexual relations, even of intercourse with married people, clearly shows that the piercing of the ears is a rite of passage. (p. 74).

836 of rattles, they sometimes stay with them till late in the night.
832 They bring them small presents, articles of clothing or other things, and thus obtain permission to have intercourse with them. Mboza described to me a very immoral meeting which sometimes takes place in these huts in connection with the *milebe* habit, and which is connected with this gangisa. It is impossible to give the details here. (Annotatio 5.)[1]

836 The gangisa custom is, from our point of view, very immoral.
831 Amongst Natives it is not censured at all, and it would be more accurate to speak of *amorality* then of *immorality*, amongst them, on this particular point. A boy who has no such flirt, no *shigango*, is laughed at as a coward; a girl who refuses to accept such advances is accused of being malformed. However Mboza told me he had never had a shigango himself and the abuse in this respect is not approved of by old people. In Manyisa, I heard of a young chief who was leading all the lads to gangisa and forcing the girls to accept them. The extent of this evil depends very much
[644] on the character of the boys and girls. I may add that, as regards the young people of the capital, they are not allowed to practise the gangisa because they belong to the royal family and are closely watched.

When they become Christians, Natives readily accept our standard of morality, but cases of fornication are very frequent amongst converts, so much so that this has been rightly called the African sin! I mention this fact, but I must say on the other hand that thousands of pupils in our Native Institutions lead a very moral and continent life and do not seem to find any great difficulty in doing so.

839 If the gangisa spoils the whole life of the young heathen, it is
177 only just to add that they do not practise two vices which are prevalent amongst certain civilised nations, onanism and sodomy. These immoral customs were entirely unknown in the Thonga tribe before the coming of civilisation. Unhappily it is no longer so now, as we shall see in Appendix III on unnatural vice in Johannesburg.

836 Comparing the habits of the Pedis and the Thongas we observe
837 this strange fact: amongst the Thongas the unmarried girl is

1 [See p.517 in these categories or in 116 -- Analysis]

556 ed by so many good things! Sycophants are not lacking, "Good
395 evening, son of so and so!" they say. "You are one of the
574 great men of the country." And in return for these and other compliments, the magnanimous Gidja shares his feast with his admirers!

Strangers are crossing the country and inquire where they can be received. "Go to Gidja" they are told. "A ni tshengwe, a fuya tshengwe" viz. "he is the possessor of a harem! He is not killed by famine! He has beer to drink every day! He can give food to poor people. Even then, some of it remains on the plate and is eaten by little boys and dogs in the square. There is always abundance there." And the travellers come and enter (khuleka) his village, after which they will tell in their homes the story of the magnificence of Gidja and extol his hospitality.

Thus the man who has succeeded in life becomes famous, his advice will carry weight in the discussions in which he takes part; he will perhaps be even more esteemed than the chief himself, though he does not enjoy the special prestige which the royal family owes to the blood running in its veins.

Conclusion: the greatness of an African is before all else a matter of pots, and the matter of pots is closely connected with polygamy!

885 During these years of mature age the evolution of a man is not
354 marked by special ceremonies. There is one custom however which is common to all, and which marks an advance in their social position. It is that of fixing the wax ring.

II. *Fixing the wax ring.*

885 Amongst the South Africans, the crown is not the appanage of
177 royalty. All men having reached mature age have the right to
354 adorn themselves with it. It is true, it is not a diadem of precious
301 stones, but a large ring of wax. This custom seems to have a Zulu origin. The Ba-Sutho do not know it and the Ba-Thonga, who all practise it, have taken it from the conquering tribe which owes its fortune to the famous Chaka. This habit has spread all

885 over the country from Maputju to the borders of Gaza, but only
177 during the last hundred years. This black crown is called
554 *ngiyana* (Ro.) or *shidlodlo* (Dj.), and the crowning ceremony is called *khehla*. From this verb has come the term *makhehla*, a name given to all those who wear this ornament.

885 This ceremony is accomplished in the following way. At a
301 given time, the chief informs all the men of a certain age that
527 they must prepare their rings. The counsellors and the sons of the royal family who belong to this " class " must go to the capital. Several oxen are killed ; the back tendons are carefully preserved and made into strings. This being done, the master hairdressers, that is to say those who know how to fix these strange appendages, are called in.

They come, supplied with small sticks (tinhlamalala, the central nervures of the leaves of the milala palm-tree) which they plait together with these strings made of tendons so as to form the skeleton, the circular frame of the crown. These strings are drawn through the curly hair, all round the head, so as to fix the frame of the crown above the temples. The remaining hair on the sides and behind has been previously shaven. The chief possesses a provision of wax ; the wax which is preferred is not that of bees, but the rosy secretion of certain grubs which is found on some bushes, and which the young boys of the capital go and collect. This wax is mixed with different ingredients to make it black. It is fixed on the frame of sticks and shaped into a large round or oval ring, as black as jet, which can be made to shine brightly. When all is finished, they eat the flesh of the oxen, enjoy themselves, dance and celebrate this great occasion!

885 The more humble subjects crown themselves in their own
301 villages, where tonsorial artists come to adorn them. The poor go to the hairdresser, and do not use strings made of tendons (they have no ox to kill), but strings made of the fibres of a palm-tree, which are cheaper. It is said that nowadays palm-tree strings (bukuha) have almost entirely supplanted the others, the more so as they are not spoilt by the washing of the crown ; whilst, if the *ngiyana* is fixed with tendons, no water must fall on it, or it would soften.

Moreover the crown must be taken care of ; it can be spoilt

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Mulalen was Sokis' little daughter. They bring with them presents, five hundred reis, a hen, a goat, some light beer, perhaps a mat for the widow because hers has been thrown away or a piece of mourning cloth. The inhabitants receive them politely, and spread mats on the ground for them. They tell each other the news (djungulisana). Then after having *luma*, they eat and drink. The Ba-Ronga have their drink already prepared: it is the red wine which Banyan merchants sell to them all over the country. The visitors get drunk. They dance, and the mourning ceremony turns into an orgy with dances and songs of all kinds. The singing during this Great Mourning consists either of war songs executed by the men, which are very impressive, or of ordinary dancing songs, the licentious ones being particularly appropriate and being performed by women. (Annotatio 9)[1]. In fact they are the proper mourning songs, those which are specially chosen when it is wished duly to lament a great man. I have witnessed these performances at a mourning ceremony of the "breaking of the hut" and shall refer to this subject again. In Vol. II. Part V Ch. II. B. I shall quote some of the mourning songs which have a peculiar stoic character. Here are two others from a collection made by Mrs Audéoud, the wife of one of our missionaries. They were sung at the death of the chief Tshutsha, near Makulane in the Maputju country. One of these was a war song accompanied with drums. It sounded as follows :

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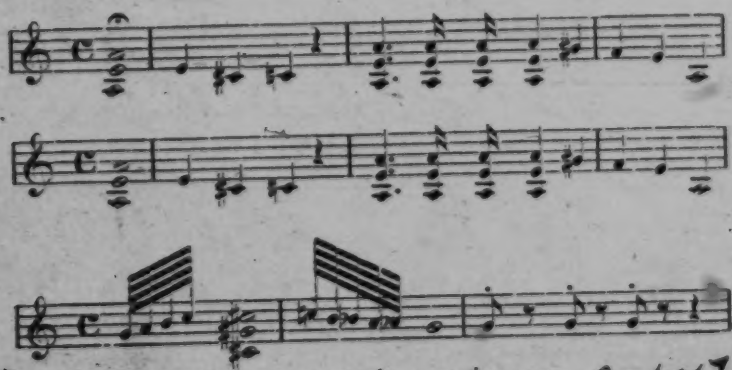

1 [See p. 517 in these categories or in 116--Analysis]

765 anointed with the medicine. As regards adults, the operation of
783 *maganyo* is performed as follows ; the master of the mourning
516 passes his hand down from the knee to the toes. This rite[1] is evidently in connexion with the act of walking, which is thus purified, and with standing upright (yima), which means health and strength.

765 *Cutting the hair* is also a medicinal act amongst the Hlabis.
783 The physician takes a broken pot, pours into it water and a
302 purifying powder, washes the head of the deceased's wife with this preparation and cuts her hair with a razor. Everyone takes a little of the mixture and washes his own head, and they then shave each other. The hair is thrown away into the bush, not on the grave.

765 The Great Mourning is concluded by the *phunga*, the sprinkling,
783 corresponding to the Ronga *shuba*, which is performed exactly in the same way while the water is still boiling. The doctor sprinkles
177 a whole potful on the people ; then he pours fresh water into the
231 pot and sprinkles the doors, the back part of the kraals of the oxen and of the goats. —"How about the pigs ?" I asked Viguet. He laughed heartily! —"The pigs? They are nothing ! They have come from the White people They are so new to the country that lately the Pedis killed them outside the villages and the men only ate their flesh!" The pig has no part in the Bantu ritual!

V. *Sexual rites of purification.*

765 This is a most curious and mysterious subject and, to understand
783 it thoroughly, it is necessary to penetrate deeply into the Bantu mind and to forget our own conceptions of conjugal life. I hope
834 none of my readers will be shocked by ceremonies which are evidently performed with the greatest earnestness and are a real aspiration toward purity, purity as it is conceived by a tribe still plunged in the dim notions of collective morality.

1 [among the Northern clans --Analyst]

CONTINUED
FROM
PRECEDING
FICHE

There is a special term in the Northern clans to indicate the relationship of two men who have married two sisters born of the same mother. They are called : bamakwabu ba shinauma, an expression which is the simplification of the following sentence : shi na wuñwe mamana, i. e. there is only one mother. This term seems to have been borrowed from the Pedis.

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2) Relatives on the mother's side.

601 Tobane II calls Mishikombo *mamana*, mother. She is his
593 true mamana and this relation is very deep and tender, combining respect and love. Love however generally exceeds respect. The proper word for tenderness is *timpsalu*, which comes from *psala*, to beget, and the mother is often called *mpsele* (a term which is applied also to the female of all animals). It is the word which answers best to the feelings of a mother for her children. She is generally weak with them and is often accused by the father of spoiling them.

601 The mother's sisters are *bamamana* in the second degree,
604 because, if the true mother dies, one of them will probably take care of the children. Their husbands are *batatana* : Phayindi is tatana to Madonge and Muhambi. He calls them *bana*, children. Mboza is also a tatana to Mahlobo and Mathamba, being a makwabu, brother of their father, owing to the fact that he and Phayindi have married sisters.

601 All the co-wives are also *bamamana*, mothers by polygamy,
578 (Ñwashihoni and Mishihari to Tobane). They are *bamamana*
595 *ba shitshengwe*, harem mothers. I respect them but they are further from me than my mother's sisters. A more familiar term for mother, corresponding to roro, father, is *ñwa*, a word always used with the possessive pronoun and only in the second and third person : ñwaku, your mother, ñwakwe, his mother. Ñwaku is employed in certain insults and oaths, and is to be avoided as being vituperative.

601 Many other women are mamana : the wife of my paternal uncle (Magugu for Muhambi), though I can inherit her in certain cases ; the daughter of my maternal uncle, because she is the

584 you are there, or on the road, have nothing to do with it. The
825 zebra is *mbalamberi*, an animal of two colours; moreover it has no
777 horns. The same holds good for the giraffe. It has two colours,
784 it has too long bowels. Psa yila! The reedbuck cries: "Dzoo." It is a witch: a mukoñwana must not eat it. For the same reason a sheep without horns is never given to bakoñwana.

7. When you go with women to the parents of your fiancée for a *shirwalo*, viz., to bring them beer, should one of the jugs fall to the ground, psa yila! Return home!

606 8. From a Thonga of the Maputju country I once heard that it
609 was a great taboo in that district for a man to drink milk with
787 his parents-in-law; let us say rather to *eat* milk, as Natives
618 always take it in its solid form, i. e. curdled. This man was a
825 Christian; he had given up many heathen customs and had gone
177 so far as to partake of milk with his mother-in-law, but, the people all round were very much shocked at his conduct. Pushing my inquiry further, I heard that the milk taboo was observed not only with bakoñwana, but with all the inhabitants of the country who did not belong to one's clan; curdled milk was to be eaten only with people bearing the same family name. In other words, it is forbidden to eat milk *in any village where one can take a wife*. In a very interesting paper published in the *South African Journal of Science*, 1925, p. 481, Mrs A. W. Hoernlé says that this custom is wide-spread amongst many Bantu tribes of Central and South Africa, and explains it by the very intimate relationship which is thought to exist between human beings and cattle. The oxen are one with the clan to which they belong, and only members of that clan can partake of the milk of their cows. I never met with this idea in the other parts of the Thonga tribe, and I may remark that, as the Maputju clan is settled very near to the Zulus and has been more or less "zuluised", this custom might very well have been borrowed from its neighbours. Further researches will show whether the other Thonga clans have preserved what seems to be a very old Bantu idea, or at any rate traces of it. This is quite possible.

584 9. Do not build a hut for your wife before you have married
777 her. Mankhelu says: "Even if you have plenty of money
784 to lobola, if you make such a blunder your wife will be taken from you.

In Shiluvane, I was in a very favorable position to judge of the real feelings of the Thongas. There were two tribes there, which had been living side by side for more than seventy years, tribes united by old friendship and military alliance, viz., the Nkuna clan of the Thongas and the Khaha clan of the Pedis. I did not see a single case of intermarriage between them. The difference of language could not account for the fact, because generally speaking, all the men could speak both Thonga and Pedi. When asked why they did not contract unions with the Pedis, the Nkunas answered : "Their customs are too disgusting for us." They meant more especially the freedom with which Khaha women commit adultery. Pedis would probably have made the same objection to the immorality of Thonga boys and girls. Whatever may be the cause, they have not intermarried up to this day.

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582 On the other hand the Thongas are *exogamic* as regards the family. To understand properly these exogamic rules, let us classify the cases in the four following categories : Cases of absolute prohibition of marriage ; of conditional permission ; of unconditional permission, and cases in which marriage is recommended.

I. *Cases of absolute prohibition.*

582 605 As a rule marriage is prohibited between a tatana, mamana, rarana and a ñwana, and between bamakwabu.

On the father's side the prohibition is particularly severe. Amongst the Ba-Ronga, it is taboo for a boy to marry a girl when both can lay claim to a common ancestor in the paternal line. It seems that the rule is not so stringent in the Northern clans. According to Mankhelu, marriage is absolutely prohibited between all the descendants of a grandfather, viz., between first cousins. Between second cousins it is permitted conditionally, "by killing the family tie," and between third cousins it is allowed. "Third cousins" as Mankhelu says, "are *batlandlamani ba tolo* ; they belong to families which were relatives yesterday. We are

231 436 583 177 The scarcity of oxen, probably caused by the wars with the Zulus, was no doubt the reason why they were replaced by hoes. *Hoes* were universally employed from 1840-1870, together with oxen, when available. Ten was the regular price for lobola. Later on fathers asked twenty, thirty, fifty. They were first of native make ; the Vendas of Spelonken, near the Iron Mountain, provided the whole tribe for a time with that heavy currency, until the Europeans saw that there was good business to be done by supplying them. (See Part IV). Portuguese traders of Delagoa Bay began to send Natives to Gaza with guns and powder to hunt elephants, and paid them in hoes : twenty, fifty, one hundred hoes for a tusk, according to its size.

436 177 583 464 But hoes have also been superseded by the universal power of the *pound sterling*. After the death of Manukosi (1858), early in the sixties of the last century, some Zulus came to Delagoa Bay from Natal, sent by Englishmen to hunt elephants in Gaza. They told the people of the country that money could be obtained in Pietermaritzburg (Umgundhlovo) by working, and the first Ba-Ronga went *ku berengen*, viz., to serve white people there. In 1870, in the year still called Daiman by the chroniclers of the tribe, many more went to Kimberley, especially from the Transvaal colonies of Thongas, and gold coin began to spread amongst the tribe with all its usefulness and all its dangers. It is now becoming more and more current, as from 50,000 to 70,000 Natives of the Thonga tribe are working in the Johannesburg mines. First of all £ 1 was worth ten hoes, and the lobolo money was fixed at £ 8 by the chiefs. But this price was soon considered insufficient by the parents. They wanted £ 10.10.0, ten guineas! They had already learned that, amongst cultivated people and in refined transactions, we talk of guineas and not of pounds! Later on it rose as high as £ 20 for an ordinary girl, £ 30 for a chief's daughter. The average round Lourenço Marques was £ 18 at the beginning of this century and in the Transvaal £ 25 (1). When a

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(1) There is a tendancy constantly to increase the amount of the lobolo. Nowadays it is nearer £ 30 than £ 20. In this connection I may mention the following fact. A man named Mpunzi had payed £ 28 for his wife, and the matter was looked on as concluded ; but later on his parents-in-law came to claim £ 2 more. Why? They had purchased a wife for their son and had obtained her for £ 28 ; it was all right so

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when a

Banyan takes a native wife (or rather a concubine), he can get her for £ 10, and the father consents to this lower price, first because a "white man's" wife is better treated and fed than ordinary native women, and secondly because the Banyan will soon go home, to India, and this kind of marriage is tacitly looked upon as temporary. The influx of money had also the following unexpect-

Cattle in the Nkomati River near Antioka.

ed effect on the native custom. There are two kinds of lobolo: 1) the lobolo which a boy obtains from his sister's marriage, and which he employs with the consent of the family to buy a wife for himself; this is the true old-fashioned way for him to contract a marriage; 2) the acquired lobolo won by a boy who has worked for it, and who has *started a herd for himself* (tisungulela ntlhambi). This second kind of lobolo became much easier to procure under

far. But the people who had given their daughter for that sum wanted to lobola a girl and were asked £ 30. Therefore they claimed £ 2 from the bakoñwana of Mpunzi and these, in their turn, came to him asking for £ 2 more. And it was so arranged. This story fittingly illustrates the explanation of the lobolo which I set forth below: it is a compensation.

583 the new conditions, especially when a stay of a year or two in
177 Johannesburg was long enough to save the necessary sum. Boys who had no sister, and who would have been destitute in former times, could then dream of a *tshenwge* viz., of marrying three or four wives! And they had this advantage that, their wives not having been bought with family property (their sister's oxen), no bakoñwana could disturb them in their domestic happiness, as may happen to those who marry by means of the first-mentioned lobolo.

This leads us to consider :

583 II. *The original meaning and the consequences of the lobola.*

As we have said previously, the only way of understanding the lobola, as well as other similar payments in kind which we meet with amongst a great number of uncivilized or half civilized nations, (1) is to consider it as *a compensation given by one group to another group*, in order to restore the equilibrium between the various collective units composing the clan. The first group acquires a new member : the second feels itself diminished, and claims something which permits it to reconstitute itself, in its turn, by the acquisition of another woman. This collectivist conception alone explains all the facts.

583 In this way, the acquired wife, though she keeps her shibongo
562 (clan name), becomes the property of the first group. She is
593 aggregated to it by complicated marriage ceremonies, representing
618 the passage from one family to another. She is owned by the new family, herself and the children who will be born of her. She is not in any way a slave, but she is nevertheless owned. She is not the individual property of one man, but the collective property of a group. Hence the following facts :

1) Her whole family take part in the marriage ceremonies, especially on the day when the lobola is brought by the bridegroom

(1) See A. van Gennep, *Les Rites de passage*, p. 170. The *Kalym* of the Turko-Mongolians, the *Nyen* of Southern Thibet, etc., correspond to the Bantu lobola.

524 but one stone, a poor *tshonga*, he says : "I have only caught women!"

524 Fighting and hunting are great sports for Natives ; hence the
177 popularity of the tshuba game. It has become such a passion
461 with the men that they neglect all their duties to indulge in it, and it has been necessary, in certain Christian villages, to prohibit the tshuba altogether, as the whole male population was abandoning its work for the game!

461 The *evening games* are happily not so dangerous for the moral
538 well-being of the village. Women who have worked the whole
517 day now have their innings. This is the *tha* par excellence, the
826 most refined amusement, the story telling. It takes place at eventide. It is taboo to *tha* in the middle of the day. Those who should transgress the law would become bald (!), and persons affected with loss of hair are commonly and jocosely accused of having told tales at midday. So, when the moon shines, when all the work of the day is ended, all the inhabitants assemble at one of the firesides to amuse themselves. They rarely gather together on the hubo for that purpose, as the square is reserved
524 for the discussion of matters of importance or for dances. The diversions at first consist of a parlour game, which is also known amongst Europeans, *guessing the charcoal piece (mhumhana)*. Two sides are formed opposite each other, women on one side, men on the other. One of the women, holding a piece of charcoal, puts it into the hands of one of the other partners, saying : "Dana, u shura ñwanaaaa'nga," (eat and be satisfied, my child). Then both present their closed hands to the other side saying : "Mhumha!" The man opposite must guess in which hand the charcoal is hidden. He flips one of the four hands with his finger saying : "Give me! Here it is!" If he has guessed rightly, he has won, and then proceeds in his turn to hide the charcoal in the hand of one of his own side. When they have had enough of this game and wish to finish it in the proper manner, *they pull their fingers* and make them crack *(ku ba tindjwati)*. Each of them pulls a finger in turn. The first who is unable to produce a sound is expelled from his side. Then those who have been beaten make faces, as ugly or funny as they can, at their victors ; these must

576 is not as if they were trying to raise their hats, as they do not wear
609 any. The explanation of the gesture is this, according to a Transvaal Native : the Boers taught black people to point to heaven, when saluting a white man, with this meaning : I compare you with the One who is above!

576 In the Northern clans, salutations are generally accompanied
201 by a clapping of hands (omba mandla). Men beat their hands against each other, placing them parallel to each other ; women do the same, placing them crosswise or at right angles. Amongst the Ba-Pedi this salutation with the hands is performed in a somewhat different manner ; when a Pedi enters the hubo, and wishes to greet a gathering of men, he claps his hands before his breast ; but when he salutes only one person, he bows down and claps his hands at the height of his knees, either on the right side or on the left. Amongst the Ba-Ronga, clapping the hands is a sign of thankfulness ; they say as they do so : *I khani mambo*, which probably means : "I dance before you, Sir." ("Mambo"
576 means chief in the Ndjao language.) In Djonga the proper word for thanking is *nkomo*. The etymology of this word seems to be : "I homu," "it is an ox." If anyone gives me a hen, he presents it to me saying : "Take my chick." When he brings a goat he says : "This is my hen." In both cases I answer : "Nkomo," "it is an ox!" The Thonga etiquette requires that the giver depreciate his gift and that the receiver magnify it! Another less polite way of thanking is this : *Yengetan*!, — "do it again," or *ni mundjuku*, — "and also to-morrow!"

576 Thongas used not to *shake hands* in former times. Now-a-days
177 the civilised Natives have adopted the European fashion, but this kind of familiarity is not approved of by the old folks, especially by the chiefs. Natives, when they shake hands, often do it in two movements : first they catch the four fingers and then slide on to the thumb. I do not know where they have
832 learnt to do this! *Kissing* was formerly entirely unknown. A good mother would occasionally wipe her baby's nose, but this can hardly be called a kiss. When they saw the custom adopted by the Europeans, they said laughingly : "Look at these people! They suck each other! They eat each other's saliva and dirt!"

574 travellers be refused the customary hospitality in a village and
609 incur misfortune later on, the chief will make the people of that village responsible and they will have to pay a fine. In Gungunyana's country, warriors were sent to plunder such a village. Lack of hospitality, however, is not considered as a taboo (yila), because "it does not kill;" it is a bad action (biha).

Now-a-days, customs are beginning to change; hundreds of young men (magaisa) coming from the towns after working there, pass through the country, and it would be impossible to put them up and feed them all. They sleep on the *bandla* and cook food for themselves, occasionally buying some mealies or a hen from the inhabitants. Moreover they have plenty of money and they can pay!

609 It must also be added that, if they dispense hospitality liberally,
618 the Thongas can be very hard on people who do not belong to
761 their special clan. Feelings of humanity are sometimes strangely deficient. I heard of a boy of the Manyisa district who had fallen down near the lake of Rikatla, unable to proceed further on account of a bad wound received while working on the railway at Lourenço Marques. Nobody took pity on him because he was of another clan, and he would have died there if a Christian woman, named Lois, had not received him in her village and nursed him. Fear of death and its contamination may partly explain this want of compassion for strangers.

784 As already mentioned, it was formerly taboo to enter the
643 village square wearing boots. These boots consist of sandals
677 made by the hunters for their long trips through the thorny bush. They were not allowed on the hubo. A subject was not permitted to sit on a mortar or on anything else; the chief alone could do so, and it was considered a sign of pride to sit on anything but the bare ground!

609 The habit of offering a concubine to passers-by is never met
177 with amongst the Rongas as it is in other tribes. Now-a-days dissolute women may offer themselves. But they have learnt
574 from white men this new kind of immorality.

On the fate of the Thonga Village, see Practical Conclusions. V.

551 come to this conclusion after a careful investigation. Here are
618 the only facts that I have discovered which may be said to
522 be connected with totemic customs.

The first is that the shibongo sometimes gives an opportunity for *more or less witty jokes*. There is, near Rikatla, a clan called *Shibindji*. Shibindji means liver. When a man of this group meets with others who eat liver, they say to him : "Come along, we are going to run this skewer through you and roast you!" Another clan is the *Ntcheko*; this word means a tumbler or a small calabash with an elongated handle used for drinking purposes (p. 50). At the bukanye time, when everyone is getting these calabashes ready for the feast, they say : "Alas! poor creatures that we are! People are going to carry us from one end of the country to the other, to dip us into their pots and drink out of us!.." And so on. This is not totemism. I have however met with four more facts which must be mentioned, and which are very interesting.

618 1) In the neighbourhood of Pietersburg a Thonga who belongs
551 to the Rikotcho clan, but whose shibongo is *Ñwangwenya*, the son
177 of the crocodile, is said to "dance the crocodile" (tshina ngwenya). These Thonga words are the expression used by the Pedis to indicate their totemic customs, (ho bina kwena), not that there is any special dance or song performed in honour of the sacred animal ; this may have been the case formerly, but is not so now.

2) The laudatory name of the Nkuna clan is also said to be a *ntshupu*, though it does not imply any taboo. This word, which is unknown in other parts of Thongaland, corresponds to the Pedi *muthupu*, which indicates totemic animals. The Nkuna men like to be saluted by these words : "Nkuna! Homu (ox)! Nyari
618 (buffalo)!" There are a number of Pedi tribes who "dance to the
551 buffalo." Mankhelu assured me that, as the Nkunas have the
177 same totem as these tribes, they have a common origin, and have come from the same place in Zululand. This assertion is so evidently erroneous that he could not maintain it. The old man had not the slightest idea of historical accuracy: he had only unconsciously drawn the conclusion of a common origin from a similarity of totem. Moreover, in his set of divinatory bones, he used to represent his own tribe by a small piece of ox bone, just in

618 the same way as Pedi diviners do for their various tribes, represent-
551 ing them by the astragalus of their totems.
177 As regards these two incidents, they are easily explained by the influence of the Sutho tribes amongst which these Thongas have been living for a long time. Nothing of the kind is met with amongst the Thongas who have remained in their own country, and Maaghe, the Pedi-Khaha chief, assured me that this appellation of the Nkunas, Nyari, buffalo, is modern and borrowed from the Pedis. The Nkunas do not observe any taboo in connexion with the ox, and this shows that their totemic custom is a mere external imitation of that of the Suthos. These two instances might be called cases of *secondary* or *adopted totemism*.

618 Considering only the Thongas as compared with the Pedis, we
551 might be tempted to conclude that the Thongas had preserved
178 the old Bantu custom of naming themselves after their ancestor; just as the Thongas used to add to that name other laudatory expressions, we might suppose that the Pedi tribes had adopted names of animals to glorify themselves; in the course of time, the essentially totemic fears and taboos may have been introduced into the customs, owing to the importance given to the shibongo. This would be a rationalistic explanation of totemism. *A priori* it could not be said to be impossible. Though totemism appears to be a very old custom of humanity, it is not necessary, *per se*, that the Bantu tribes should have all passed through that phase of primitive belief.

618 3) I must, however, mention a third instance which shows
539 that this notion of a community of life between an animal and
178 a human group must have existed also amongst the ancient Thongas. There are, *in their folklore*, tales which seem to have been inspired by such old ideas now lost, especially the tale of Titishan, which I have published in "Les chants et contes des Ba-Ronga," page 253. A girl named Titishan marries a man. When she goes to her husband's home, she asks her parents to give her their cat. They refuse, saying: "You know that our life is attached to it." She insists, and they at last consent. She shuts the animal up in a place where nobody sees it. Her husband even ignores its existence. One day,

one refuses to be a chief. Thonga tales recounting the story of some one who succeeded wonderfully in life often conclude by saying that this person was given a territory and became a chief... which seems to be the highest reward of virtue or wisdom. Nowadays, however, one may meet with cases where the heir to the chieftainship, having become a Christian, renounces that high position because he feels that there is an incompatibility between the Bantu way of ruling and his new faith.

But it would be a great error to think that a Thonga chief is, or can be, an autocratic despot. This may have been the case with Chaka, Lobengula or Gungunyana, when the tribe became an amalgamation of clans held together by military power ; in order to maintain their usurped authority, these chiefs had to be cruel despots. But this is a late development in the Bantu political system. I am now only taking into consideration the primitive form of tribal life, which is the clan life.

For a chief dangers may arise from three sources : from his own character, from the Thonga system of government itself, and from the law of succession.

1) The character of the chief.

A chief who wishes to succeed in his government *must have a good character*. If he imposes taxation, he must not use his wealth in a selfish way. For instance, when women bring him a *shiriwalo* of a dozen pots of beer, he must give them back one or two to quench their thirst. Moreover he must distribute most of the remaining pots to his men, who are on the *bandla*, always ready to share with him the advantages of his position.

Should he buy oxen with the product of the fines, he will be wise to slaughter one from time to time for his counsellors and for the whole clan. A chief who is good (a ni timpsalu) is said to *maintain* or to *save the country* (bekisa tiko). If he does not do that, he is severely criticised. Mubvesha, who used all his money to buy wives, and prevented all the men from seeing them, whilst he himself was too old to content them, was considered

645 If these men are intelligent, they acquire great influence with the chief and may even be able to impose their will upon him. This was the case in September 1894, when the young king Ñwamantibyane was prevented by his counsellors from obeying the summons of the Portuguese Government, who claimed his assistance in fighting Mahazule (See App. XI). They often act as a useful counterpoise to the autocratic power of the chief.

Lastly we find another category of Counsellors, those appointed by the chief in the various districts to act as overseers or magistrates, to adjudicate the petty differences of the people; they must refer to the capital all important affairs (timhaka), the quarrels which the head of the village is unable to settle, and all matters which can only be judged by the chief, to whom they are of the greatest assistance in his decisions, being past masters in the art of Bantu reasoning.

The tindjuna are thus a complete organisation, as necessary to the chief as they are to the orderly development of tribal life.

II. *The Favourites, or Messengers.*

644/177 When the chief is crowned while still young, he gathers around him a circle of personal friends of his own age who are called *tinxekwa*. This is a Zulu word, and it would seem that this custom has been borrowed from the Zulu court procedure. In Ronga they are called *tinyumi*, which means messengers, and they generally build a *lao*, viz., a bachelor's house, near the capital, to be ready to answer any call. They partake in the games of their royal comrade and also in his feasts, but they have no official authority.

III. *The Herald.*

On one occasion I happened to be the guest, together with one of my colleagues, of the chief Ñwamantibyane, long before there was any question of the war of Lourenço Marques. Stretched in

671 must remember this and, in order to enlighten the Native mind, they must try to find where these differences lie. But these are minor points, and the sense of justice is nevertheless one of the most striking and promising characteristics of the Bantu.

157 674 Before enumerating the various cases which can be brought before the Native Court, let me remark that, generally speaking, Bantus are very peaceful, law-abiding people, under normal circumstances; when protected against alcoholic excesses they are little addicted to crime. In the Blue Book for Native Affairs of Cape Colony, 1908, the Chief Magistrate of the Transkeian Territory comments on "the general docility of the Natives, the perfect immunity from crimes of violence, which the European population, male and female, enjoys amongst them, and the cheapness of police administration." He adds: "The policing of the Territories, including the Detective Force, costs only 7d. per head of the territorial population, or, counting Chiefs and Headmen whose functions are mainly administrative, 10d., against 6s. 3d. per head for policing the Colony proper. Reports from twenty districts comment on the paucity or absence of crime. Kentani, with a population of 34,000 did not furnish a single case for the Circuit Court. The Magistrates of four districts remark on 'the peaceable and law-abiding character of the Native,' the Magistrate of Kentani adding: 'when kept away from the drink curse'." (*Christ. Express*, Aug. 1908.)

I think the same report might be made in most of the districts of South Africa where Natives still live by themselves.

674 177 The state of affairs would be very different in the Town locations, where we meet with a great number of men and women of dissolute morals. They are often backsliders who have left the Mission Stations because they did not like to submit to the Christian rule of morality. So they have freed themselves from all restraints, tribal as well as Christian, and, if they have not entirely lost all sense of justice, they, at any rate, do not walk "in the paths of righteousness." I am here only concerned with clan Natives.

627 683 754 Gungunyana, executions were of frequent occurrence. When the chief had condemned a man to death, he merely made a sign to one of his executioners, who followed the unfortunate individual, as he went away into the bush, possibly quite unconscious of the fate awaiting him, and dealt him a heavy blow from behind with either club or assagay, killing him on the spot. Chiefs now only expel wizards or witches from the country, accompanying them to the boundary, or impose a high fine on them, keeping half of the amount. However there are still individuals who avenge themselves for the death of a relative on the suspected murderer by killing him. Such cases are not infrequently brought before the Courts of Pretoria and Johannesburg.

177 681 627 683 754 What is the duty of the civilised tribunal in such instances ? White judges generally condemn to death a man who has killed a "noyi". I know of cases in which even an induna who had hanged a "noyi," duly condemned by the Native Court, was himself considered a criminal and condemned as such. This happened to our friend Mankhelu, one of the pillars of the Nkuna tribe, the General of the army... He only escaped death owing to petitions sent to the Boer Authorities by both Blacks and Whites. This happened, I think, in 1888. Are European judges right in pronouncing the capital punishment in such cases ? This is questionable. It is certainly erroneous to assimilate Mankhelu's act which, in his own eyes, is an act of justice, to an ordinary murder, and to punish him as an assassin. He did what he thought to be right according to his knowledge. The husband of a bewitched woman who kills the murderer of his wife is more blamable, because his act is not sanctioned by the authority of a regular Court. However neither one nor the other deserves death.

683 754 I fully recognise that such acts of the Native tribunals must be stopped. A chief who accepts accusations of witchcraft ought to be punished, especially if it has been duly explained to him that a White Government does not allow any such case to be judged in the country. In the course of time Natives will understand this and the witchcraft superstition will dwindle away. But let us be patient with them, remembering that our forefathers of 300 years ago did exactly the same thing and burnt hundreds of suspected witches after having subjected them to horrible tortures.

In an essay on the subject published in the S.A.A.A.S Report of

175 These Zulus or Ngonis taught the tribes of the plain a system
177 of war much more cruel than the old one : "kill everything,"
726 — such is the rule. No exception is made except in the case
703 of women, who are taken prisoners. The Thonga clans readily accepted this new mode of fighting. They adopted the Zulu system wholesale, the proof of which is that all their military terminology is pure Zulu. Their apprenticeship began during the invasion ; the Ba-Ngoni seeing that the Thongas had a certain aptness for war, incorporated them into their own regiments and used to send them forward to the attack, as previously mentioned. They praised them by calling them the *Mabuyandlela* — those who prepare the way, — a kind of nickname which the Thongas have kept to this day and of which they were very proud.

721 However I do not think it would be unfair to the Thongas
175 to assert that the old peaceful basis of their character is still
703 preserved, notwithstanding this influence. We have had an opportunity of judging of their warlike capabilities during the war of 1894-1896 with the Portuguese. (See Appendix X, Short account of two South African wars.) The Natives did not fight from choice. While some of them gave proof of great endurance, and the army fought in some cases with a certain tenacity, Thongas and especially Ba-Ronga did not show themselves very able warriors. Want of discipline, mutual distrust, timidity resulting in frequent retreats, inability to follow up their successes, such were the main causes of their defeat. The wild soldiers of Maputju, who considered themselves the equals of the genuine Zulus, showed their courage only when there was no danger!

B. WAR COSTUME AND WEAPONS.

714 One day when we were comfortably seated under the beautiful tree at our station of Rikatla, a strange looking monster suddenly appeared on the scene, running towards us! The children fled and the women hid themselves... It was Charley, our milk-man, who, with some other warriors, was going to a military review, to be

714 in the Chaka army were distinguished by differently coloured shields.) On either side of the central line, from top to bottom, two parallel rows of small square incisions are made (magabela) through which are run strips of hide of a different colour, the effect being a series of oblongs. By an ingenious device the ends of these strips are so tied at the back of the shield as to form several sheath-like nooses into which is inserted the stick by which it is held. The space between the two lines of oblongs is called the back (nhlana) of the shield. The nooses or sheaths are four or six in number : two or three at the top, and two or three at the bottom, a space being left in the middle, where the warrior grasps the stick. This stick tends to strengthen the shield, but, being merely passed through the nooses, it acts also as a pivot around which it can turn ; it is this pivoting action which gives to the shield its chief value as a protection. An assagai (usually thrown with considerable strength) would easily penetrate the ox-hide, but when it strikes the shield, the force of the impact causes it to pivot and the weapon is deflected to one side: should it strike exactly in the middle, it would hit the stick, break it and lose all further impetus. It is hardly necessary to add that the *shitlhangu* of the South African Black is absolutely useless when opposed to bullets ; it was invented to protect the warrior against the dreaded assagai, at a time when firearms were not yet thought of!

713 177 During the last century the Ba-Ronga have begun to use guns for hunting and also for war. Although the sale of firearms to the Natives has often been prohibited, the Ba-Ronga were reported to possess several hundreds of rifles at the commencement of the 1894 war, and also to be fairly proficient in their use... very different from the Madagascans, who removed the sights from their rifles on the score that they were in the way when taking aim!

C. THE MOBILISATION OF THE ARMY.

202 726 643 In the Zihlahla country, when the chief wished to muster his forces, he did so by means of the *shipalapala*, the rudimentary trumpet which I described in the preceding chapter. A swift

535 703 An extraordinary war spirit comes over them all.." And every one having witnessed these performances in the Thonga or Zulu mukhumbi will confess that they are wonderfully impressive. It is a mixture of dramatic, epic and lyric poetry, three literary *genres* which are still confounded, the whole being enhanced by a deep, wild music and subject to the laws of a certain artistic style.

703 643 726 The fighting instincts are excited to the highest pitch by these patriotic choruses and dramatic representations. Thus should the troops be slow in making a start, the young men go dancing to the chief and beg him to "grant them permission" to go forth and slay, or rather to "give them men" to slaughter (ku nyika). The Native idea appears to be that the chief holds the lives of the enemies in his hands; without his permission they cannot go forward, but this once given, they rush enthusiastically to the fray. They even go so far as to taunt him with being an old woman, a coward, because he will not let them go at once (1).

When the excitement has reached the culminating point, and it has been definitely decided to fight, the time has arrived for the magic treatment by which the warriors will be rendered invulnerable.

G. ADMINISTERING THE WAR-MEDICINE.

726 177 789 751 This custom is probably of ancient origin, but I have reason to believe that, amongst the Ba-Ronga, it was practised without any great formality until the advent of the Zulu influence, when it was brought into much greater prominence and invested with more solemnity. "Drinking the war-medicine" took place on several occasions during the revolt of 1894 to 1895. At *Zihlahla* this potion was administered to all warriors before the rebel attack

(1) Gungunyana, on one occasion, when his warriors were importuning him with similar requests, sent the more ardent spirits to wage war unarmed against the wild beasts, and I was told they actually succeeded in capturing a leopard alive and brought it back to the chief!

J. SOME REMARKS ABOUT WAR RITES.

177/726 The war rites of the Thongas, whatever may be their origin — and they seem to be a mixture of old Thonga and new Zulu customs, — form a very interesting and complete whole.

The most noticeable are the *national rites*. In war time, the very existence of the clan is threatened, because the chief, the central and vital cell of this organism, is in danger. Hence the readiness of all the warriors to answer to the first call of the *shipalapala*, and to gather round him, "building the circle," which protects him, the whole clan forming a single village and binding itself by the striking ceremonies of *guba* and by patriotic songs, to die for him. Notice that most of the *guba* songs extol the chief. All these customs in which the individual or collective courage is stimulated, the *guba* and the *gila*, are national or social rites directed towards the salvation of the clan. They owe their origin to the national idea.

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But war also brings dangers to every warrior. Hence the *protective* rites of sprinkling the mukhumbi with the war-medicine of the clan; or of giving each man some of it to swallow. The rite is inspired by the notion *similia similibus curantur*, the idea being that the warrior, having eaten a small portion of the enemy, will become invulnerable to his blows.

But other rites, especially the war taboos, seem to owe their origin to the *idea of passage*.

The *whole clan* enters upon a special phase as soon as war has been decided upon by the chief, "who gives it" to his warriors. Hence the taboos observed at home, many of which are exactly the same as those of the circumcision school and of the period of mourning. We notice the same contrast already so often mentioned : certain sexual prohibitions are removed (e. g. a queen will enter quite naked into the mukhumbi!)

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tions (before 1890). Three persons of that family died. The bones were consulted and the diviner asked : "Have you not slain a Ndjao?" They answered: "Yes." — "Then," said the bone-thrower "you will all die as this man has followed you." The bones showed that, in order to avoid the destruction of their family, the Ndzindzis had to offer a girl to the ghost of the slain, a living sacrifice. This girl would not be allowed to marry, or even to be courted by boys. Should she have relations with a man it would be necessary to replace her by another. Thus the angry ghost would be propitiated.

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APPENDIX II (See p. 40)

On Thonga names, nicknames and surnames.

553 As an illustration of the way in which the Thongas change their names, I give the story of those of Mboza and Elias.

Mboza was called at his birth "Mulamule," after his paternal uncle. The whole name was, in Zulu : "Mulamula nkwinzi izilwako," viz., "the man who calms the bull which fights." At about the age of sixteen, he changed it to Mahubula. At that time he was trying to collect divinatory bones in order to become a diviner. He had called one of these bones "Hubula," and after that his comrades began to apply the name to him. He was seized by the "folly of gods." (Part. VI). When he was cured of this pretended possession, the spirit which made itself known called itself Mboza. This was the name of a man of his village, his own nephew, who had gone to Johannesburg and had died there. When he became a Christian, and was baptised, 177 Mboza kept his name. Most of the Natives like to take another name 553 on that occasion, the name of a disciple or of a prophet. We are not very ready to comply with their wish, as we have already too many Daniels, Jonas and Petros, and Mboza probably yielded to this argument.

551 *Elias* was called "Shifenyo" on the day of his birth, after a man who happened to pass through the village. This visitor was a kind of beggar who used to follow people carrying food to the chief, hoping to get something to eat. The child was of a good family, but they gave him the name of this low and despised individual, a truly democratic act! When he was older, one of his friends said to him : "Your name does not suit you. Call yourself *Spoon*." He adopted the new appellation, and the women of his village used to make fun of him saying : "Come along, we will distribute the food with this spoon!" 177 When baptised a Christian he became Elias, a somewhat onerous 551 name, especially as our Elias is not as strong and perfect as a prophet ought to be... But Natives never shrink from assuming great names. They always feel themselves equal to them!

881 The names adopted at puberty by boys are very often European ones. There are scores of Jims, Sams, Bobs, etc. They also adopt as 177 551 names European words or words of European origin, as : Spoon, Nglazi (glass) Komits'i (cup), Djass (jacket), Fulitshi (forage), Fifteen, etc.

838 entrance of the yard, come and "humutsha" i. e. make proposals to the
548 younger ones, not only to little boys (there are only a few of these) but
588 also to boys up to the age of twenty and more. If these lads consent to become their bakhontshana, they will be treated with greater kindness than the others. Their husbands will give them 10/ to woo them (buta) and will choose for them easy occupations, as, for instance, sweeping the dormitories, whilst the others will have to go to the hard underground work. Those who have not been chosen on their arrival by the policemen will probably receive a similar proposal from their older companions in the mine, and these men will then help them in the difficult task of "be hole" i. e. digging their hole. But the "husband" will have not only to woo this peculiar kind of *nsati* (wife) ; he must also *lobola* her, and a feast sometimes takes place when as much as £ 25 is put on the ground, a goat is killed and a real contract made which binds the nkhontshana to his master for the whole time he remains in the Compounds. The elder brother of the boy will receive the money in this disgusting parody of the Bantu marriage.

Sometimes the husband pays his nkhontshana at the end of each month as much as £ 1.10 and this represents a big increase in the earnings of the boy.

What happens when the contract is broken ? The "husband" claims the money remitted by him. If the boy refuses to return it the matter may be brought before the Compound Manager, who generally dismisses the plaintiff, saying : "If the boy does not love you any more, let him go."

839 The cause of the evil is not difficult to detect : it is the segregation
~~111~~ of the Native miners in these enormous conglomerations of males, far
548 from home, far from their wives, a most abnormal condition of life for
588 men who have always enjoyed the freedom of the African bush. When prostitutes were allowed to live near the Compounds, unnatural vice was not so common ; when they were driven out, bukhontshana at once increased enormously, and thus the disappearance of one evil brought a new one in its train. On the other hand, my informant asserted that Thongas (Matshanganas, as they are called in Johannesburg) had never much frequented the haunts of prostitution, from fear of venereal diseases. They prefered a nkhontshana ; the danger was not so great! As the word nkontshana comes from the Bilen country, the home of the Matshanganas, it might be thought that this vice was known and practised amongst Natives before it took on such extensive proportions in the Compounds. There is an old Thonga song which

839 177 548 588 says: "You, nkhontshana, get up, the cocks are crowing, be not surprised by the rising sun." This song warns the girl who has gone during the night to sleep in the lao, the boys' hut, that she had better run away at once lest she should be found in a place where she ought not to be. But it is a girl who is meant here and not a Johannesburg nkhontshana! No! Greek heathenism knew this refinement of immorality and indulged in it, but Bantu heathenism, whatever may be its corruption, never dreamed of it. Even to-day, though it is said to have penetrated into some parts (as in the Maputju country), the Native kraal feels a real abhorrence of it. I was told the following story. A man, in Bilen, had married a woman; he came to the Rand and took his wife's brother as his nkhontshana. When he returned home, his parents-in-law were very angry with him; they gave him back the lobolo money and took their daughter from him, saying: "You are a hyena! You are a wizard! You might as well sin with your mother-in-law!" 839 177 Unnatural vice was taught to the South African Bantus by men of a foreign race; it first invaded the prisons; now it is raging in these big Native miners' settlements, where it is deflouring the Bantu youth. For if it does not immediately destroy their physical strength, this perversion of one of the most essential functions of man corrupts the sources of moral stamina and endangers the foundations of Bantu social life.

Is there no remedy for this terrible evil?

The worst aspect of the situation is that the immense majority of the Natives themselves do not consider this sin as of any importance at all. 839 They speak of it with laughter. I was told that it is severely prohibited by law and that any boy found guilty of bukhontshana is 684 548 condemned to twelve months' imprisonment. But it is extremely difficult to bring the evidence necessary for conviction. The indunas and Native policemen enter into a conspiration of silence, being themselves the first and greatest sinners in this respect. Happily the Mission is fighting the evil as energetically as possible and the Compound Managers help its agents to secure separate dormitories, where a certain number of boys can find a refuge against contamination. A few hundreds or thousands escape in this way, but what is that in comparison with the tens of thousands who are exposed to this frightful temptation in the Compounds fittingly spoken of, by a wise South African statesman, as the University of crime?

839 548 My informant, who was perfectly acquainted with the circumstances of life in the Compounds, mentioned the following measures which he

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APPENDIX V (See p. 226)

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As an example of *the absolute obedience due to the father*, I may quote the testimony of the Rev. Calvin Maphophe, one of the Native ministers of the Swiss Mission, now living in Lourenço Marques. It illustrates vividly the painful conflict which takes place in the heart of a Bantu boy when he is faced with the dilemma of either obeying a heathen father who forbids him to become a Christian, or going against the paternal will and joining the Church.

One day one of the little shepherds belonging to Maphophe's village in the Spelonken brought to his comrades an astonishing piece of news. He had gone to the missionary station and heard a white man say that there is a God in heaven and that this God created all things. His words were received with absolute incredulity by the company of [773] boys herding the goats ; they answered : "It is an impossibility! Do we not know that the first man and woman came out of a reed ?" However young Matsivi (this was the name of Calvin Maphophe) and his brother Shihosi wished to set their minds at rest about the matter and they began to attend the service on Sundays. They were so struck by the message heard in the little church that they decided to learn more of this extraordinary teaching of the White people, and every Sunday they went to the Station. One of the men of the tribe informed their father that they were assiduous attendants at the Christian services. Maphophe called together all the men of his village and summoned the two boys before this tribunal. Pointing his finger at them he said : "These boys have dared to go to the White people and hear things which are dangerous to us. We do not wish them to become insane! Take it to heart both of you. It is over. Henceforth you must never go again to the village of the Whites. If you disobey, you will be beaten."

The two boys were terribly moved by their father's words. It is a recognised principle in the Bantu tribe that a child who wishes to do right must obey his father, and they were anxious to behave well... But the attraction they felt for the new teaching was too great. They solved the problem by running away from their home. This is not the place to tell the end of the story. It may be found in a little pamphlet "Le Pasteur Calvin Mapopé" published by the headquarters of the Swiss Romande Mission (2, Chemin des Cèdres, Lausanne).

587 the chief of our Mazwaya family, Magomanyama, says that no claim is accepted for a leper, for one drowned in the river, or for anyone who dies from smallpox or from the assagay."

692 177 Of course the Ngwetsas did not accept such an answer, but this is a typical Bantu affair (nandju), showing the many blessings of the lobola custom. The matter[1] will have to be decided by the chief, or rather by the Portuguese Administrator, who must take a good deal of trouble, if he wishes to understand it rightly and to deliver an equitable judgment!

APPENDIX IX (See p. 530).

The story of Mboza and Muhambi and of the women inherited by them, illustrating the consequences of lobola and of its suppression.

177 Compare the genealogy of the Masuluke family (page 225).

595 583 Mboza had four brothers, three elder and a younger; Sam, the elder, had a son, Hlangabeza, who married by lobola a first wife and by abduction a second, Bukutje II. Fos, the second brother, married Bukutje I and had four children: three girls, Tshakaza, Estelle, Nhwaanin, and one boy, Muhambi. Sam and Fos both died, so Bukutje I was inherited by Mboza and her four children went to live in his village. In the meantime Mboza became a Christian, as also did Muhambi and the three girls. Wishing to lead a Christian life, he separated from Bukutje I, who, being still a heathen, committed herself with "an empty oil-tin" (p. 213), viz., a man of Inhambane who became her servant-husband. In 1904 a Christian young man, Moses, wooed the elder of the three girls and brought £ 20 to lobola her. This money was naturally due to Muhambi in order to allow him to lobola a wife for himself, and indeed Muhambi was betrothed to Ntshelebeti, daughter of Phulan Ngwetsa. This man was still a heathen and consequently wished his daughter to be paid for.

Having been told that it is not right for a Christian to accept lobolo money, Mboza and Muhambi, actuated by a most praiseworthy scruple, decided to return the money to Moses, and Muhambi started for Johannesburg in order to earn the lobolo due to Phulan. But this was not the end of this famous "bukosi!" The younger brother, Komatan, a consistent heathen, came to Mboza, very angry with him for his

1 [See pp. 506-509 -- Analyst]

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foolishness. "This is family property," said he, "and I do not consent to its being lost." So he claimed the £ 20, which was given to him, and out of which Mboza did not get a penny. Komatan himself did not intend to use it for his own benefit, as we shall see presently.

The following year, whilst Muhambi was still working in Johannesburg, Hlangabeza died. Muhambi was his heir, being his *makwabu*, first cousin on the paternal side. He was informed of his good luck, but answered that it was taboo for him (yila), as a Christian, to accept this inheritance. So Komatan took the first of Hlangabeza's wives, not as a wife, however, but because she had children and he wanted them to remain in the Masuluke family. The woman herself also took "an empty oil-tin," in the form of another Inhambane man. The second of Hlangabeza's wives, having been married by him by abduction, was not really the property of the Masulukes. But she had one child; so Komatan took the lobolo money of Moses and remitted it to Denisa, this woman's father, and, in this way, he secured the property of both mother and child to the Masulukes. The woman, however, went to live with a Chopi in an irregular manner and had a second child by him. On January 29th, 1909, this woman of the Denisa family came to Muhambi. Her child had to be weaned, which is done by means of a rite in which the husband must take part. She had no true husband, so she vented all her anger before Mboza and Muhambi saying: "I have no husband, nobody to give me clothing, to pay my hut-tax, to repair my house. Have you indeed forsaken me?" — "Yes" answered Muhambi, "you cannot be my wife. I have married Ntshelebeti and, for us Christians, it is not allowable to take many wives." — "Then do not be surprised if I go and take another husband, and do not go and accuse me *shikanekiswen*, before the Portuguese Administrator, saying I have spoilt your property." — "We shall not *follow* you," said Muhambi, "you are free." — "But" added Mboza, "we are not sending you to commit sin! Go and think the matter over."

This was the end of the discussion. Mboza's answer is no answer at all. It only shows the great complexity and difficulty of the position. The whole story fitly illustrates how utterly bad the custom of lobola is, and what immense difficulties its suppression entails. Let me, however, remark that these difficulties would not have arisen had there not been a heathen relative (Komatan) to uphold the claim which the Christians had foregone. During the stage of transition many hard cases such as this must unfortunately occur!

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PRACTICAL CONCLUSIONS

I. ON THE RITES OF INFANCY (P. 36-61).

853 The rule that a mother "must plough for her child three hoes" is
595 excellent. It is undoubtedly a splendid preparation for future life to
177 have been fed during three years on mother's milk. Will it be possible to maintain this law under the new conditions of civilized life which are being adopted more and more throughout the tribes? Let us notice that this provision, though it was inspired partly in the interest of the child itself, is dictated mainly by a superstition concerning the lochia secretion, which is regarded as highly noxious and as keeping the mother in an unclean state for a long time. This superstition will not withstand the test of science and will pass away. On the other hand, polygamy was invented and flourishes partly on account of this law. A husband separated from the wife who is nursing a child wishes to have other women at his disposal. Polygamy is doomed to pass also. For both these reasons, it is to be feared that this healthy custom will not be maintained in the future. This is a pity, and we ought to do our best to encourage its continuance.

843 Many young married Natives leave their homes and go to Johannes-
177 burg to the mines for one or two years as soon as they see that their wife is pregnant. This is certainly on account of the above rule; but this desertion of the conjugal home is hardly to be approved.

164 As regards the whole medical treatment characteristic of this period,
751 which is considered more or less as a disease, it has no value at all.
177 The big intestinal worm is, of course, merely a product of Native imagination. The children sometimes suffer from lombrics, but not more than white children. Convulsions are frequent as a result of malaria and dysentery, and neither the ever present *milombyana* nor the

164 751 177 bi-monthly *biyeketa* nor the powder of the reed can do anything to prevent them. The habit of always carrying water in the calabash and of never emptying it entirely is harmful. Dr Garin, our medical missionary, examined some of these milombyana calabashes with the microscope and found them full of bacteria of all kinds. It is a splendid *milieu de culture* for them. This milombyana custom is however hard to eradicate as the principle is deeply rooted in the Thonga mind : "The child grows by means of medicine" and even Christian converts respect it. They will relinquish it when a clearer notion of medical science has entered their heads — a time which is still remote, I fear!

000 From the missionary point of view, let us notice the analogy between the rite of the broken pot and Christian baptism as administered to children by most of the Churches. Natives readily accept a ceremony of benediction for the little ones, be it baptism proper or presentation with laying on of hands. But the heathen baptism is a baptism of smoke, and not of water — and is in relation to merely external dangers, while the Christian rite represents the purification of the soul from its sin and the new and pure life. Whatever may be the difference between the two customs, we find in the animistic rite a point of analogy which may help us to explain the spiritual sacrament and its deep significance.

II. ON CIRCUMCISION (See p. 94).

177 797 What judgment are we to pass on this custom to which some tribes still cling with great pertinacity ? The teaching of endurance and of hunting has certainly some value, but these rites as a whole have very little worth and are useless in the new economy of South Africa. The obcene language allowed during the Ngoma certainly tends to pervert the mind of the boys and constitutes an immoral preparation for sexual life.

Have we nothing to learn from the Ngoma ? More than two hundred thousand children of black South Africa are now attending our schools... more or less regularly. Hundreds of young men are boarding in our Normal Institutions. Do we always succeed in this great educational work ? Its results are not entirely satisfactory, because most of the children do not stay long enough in the school to be properly taught. As soon as they have acquired some knowledge of reading and writing, they leave and go to the towns to earn money.

177 Whatever the teacher may say, they escape... I must confess that we do not control them as well as the Father of the Circumcision... The Ngoma shows us however that strict discipline is quite possible with Native boys and that we must deal with them without any touch of harshness, of course, but with a firm hand. When the inmates of our institutions complain that the sauce of their porridge is not savoury enough, we might remind them of the food their heathen comrades are eating in the Ngoma!

881 There is a striking resemblance between Bantu circumcision, Jewish circumcision and Christian baptism.

In Jewish circumcision, the same physical operation was performed, but it was performed on infants. It had undoubtedly also the meaning of a purification, a removal of pollution and an introduction into the holy nation. In the course of time, the idea was spiritualised and circumcision meant the removal of sin. But it had a strongly religious character: Jahvé marked his chosen people by their circumcision. This religious element is wanting in the Ngoma of the Thongas and the Suthos, where the national significance alone remains.

As regards baptism, the great difference between the heathen and the Christian rite is evidently this. Christian baptism is not only a religious but also a moral rite. In its normal form, which is the immersion of adult catechumens, it represents in a striking manner the washing away of sin and the admission to the Church of Christ; it is a rite of passage; separation from the old life of sin, marginal period of instruction, admission into a holy community...

The Ngoma has no such spiritual and moral idea attached to it, but it has been inspired by the same deep and true sense of the necessity in the evolution of man, of a progress consisting in the renunciation of a miserable past and the introduction into a higher life. This idea is one of those rays of light which we are happy to discover amidst the darkness of heathendom, one of those "points d'attache" to which we can link the truths of spiritual religion.

177 797 881 What ought to be the attitude of the Government and of Missions towards this custom? As regards Governments, they could not immediately suppress the circumcision schools, though they have often been asked to do so, but it would seem that they might use their influence in checking them. As for the Mission, it has naturally fought against this school of heathenism, but not always with success; boys, even Christian boys, are wonderfully attracted by it and many have left their

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

177 spelling-books for the formulæ of Manhengwane. Strange to say, it
797 frequently happens that girls refuse to marry men who have not passed
through this initiation! These facts, together with the legitimate wish
881 to give African Christianity a true national character, have suggested to
some missionaries the idea of establishing *Christian Circumcision Schools*. In a special meeting at the Conference of Le Zoute, September 1926, Canon Lucas of the Universities Mission told his colleagues the results of an experiment of this kind at his station of Masasi. The missionary himself took control of all proceedings. The boys began by entering the church, the elders representing the old men of the tribe. They were circumcised in the camp which had been previously blessed and the operation was performed by a qualified Native who had been trained by medical men. The parents of the boys were waiting outside the camp, dancing. When all the boys had been circumcised, they were told by the manager of the camp that this was done to incorporate them into the tribe, and the parents again engaged in a big dance. The men remained on the spot and proceeded to the erection of the buildings of the camp where the circumcised were kept for some weeks, and carefully treated till all of them were healed. During this period of seclusion, they received instead of the obscene formulæ, teaching bearing on seven subjects : truth, honour, purity, abstinence from drink, humility, love of one's neighbour and duties toward God. They had also to pass through various physical trials, and, at the end, they were exhorted to do penance for their past sins. Their hair was cut, and burnt together with their clothing and all the camp buildings. The parents were then summoned and danced the whole night, the men mysteriously bringing new clothing for the initiated. The boys then went to church, and, answering a question put by the missionary, they said : "I ask of God that I may be a righteous man." A special blessing was then given to them. An interesting fact is that the heathen population approved of this Christian Circumcision School and accepted it as an equivalent to the old. Some heathen parents even sent their sons to it! Seven hundred boys have already been received in it and Canon Lucas has gained an enormous influence over them! I only
000 mention this attempt to "sublimate" the circumcision rites. Some missionaries are strongly opposed to this new departure, which they regard as a dangerous mixture of Christian ideas and heathen rites. Without expressing a definite opinion on the subject, I would insist on the point just mentioned : the real, genuine rite of passage of Christianity is baptism, and the African Church might perhaps be satisfied with

000 it, as the Churches of all the Continents are. Is not the Church abandoning its true domain in taking circumcision under its patronage ? The operation is no doubt hygienic in most cases. Surgeons sometimes deem it necessary to prevent complications. It seems therefore more natural to leave circumcision to the province of medicine rather than to impose it as a collective rite on all Christian boys. I think that a deeper study of the question is necessary.

III. ON MARRIAGE CUSTOMS AND LOBOLA

(See p. 125 and 282).

177 586 What will be the fate of all these very picturesque marriage customs with the advent of civilisation ? Let us notice that amongst Christian converts, many of them have been abandoned as a matter of course, the bad habits of tjekela, the assault on the village, the preparation of beer, for instance. The part played by adult go-betweens is sometimes taken over by the elders of the Church, but often young people do not care for interference and conduct their own business.

Some other rites are preserved ; the feast, of course, is amongst these, and we see boys ruining themselves in order to prepare a glorious wedding with splendid costumes and abundance of meat. On this point they are rather too conservative!

The religious ceremony has now become the Christian blessing which has taken the place of the heathen sacrifice to the ancestors ; it is followed generally by a procession of the best men and the bridesmaids singing popular hymns, sometimes very solemnly worded, songs of repentance for instance, as they march to and fro in the nuptial village ; the women, even the men, of the two families hurling at each other's heads amenities of the same kind as in former times. This is a most peculiar mixture of the old and new elements and often filled us with wonder (See Zidji, p. 212). I think however that these rites are doomed to die out, because Christian marriage is no longer a collective act, but has been individualised together with the many other acts of social life. It remains a social act indeed, but an act accomplished by two individuals on their own responsibility and in mutual love. "Ceci tuera cela." This Christian or Western individualism will kill primitive 000 collectivism and all its rites. However original and interesting the marriage ceremonies may be amongst the Bantus, I do not think they

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

000 The obligation however is not the same for both. A *civil Government*, undertaking to rule a tribe brought into subjection by war or placed under the Protectorate of a European power, dealing with Natives who still retain their primitive way of living, cannot pretend to govern them immediately according to the laws of civilised nations. This would be an impossibility. Such a Colonial Government must respect Native laws and judge cases in accordance with them, otherwise it would not appear to the Natives as just ; and it is indispensable that, in their dealings with uncivilised people, White Authorities should always satisfy this sense of justice, which is so strong amongst Natives. However, I do not think that this consideration ought to be pushed too far.

Native Commissioners are quite right when they aim at a progressive change in the laws and customs of primitive collectivist people in the direction of more individual liberty, so that the principles of Native society may be amended, and founded on the same basis as ours, in course of time. The State has no power to produce this evolution, but is must be favourable to it, and consider with sympathy every effort that is made to elevate and purify the social and family system of the tribe. It has many means at its disposal to collaborate in this work, as we shall very soon see.

177 583 The *Christian Missions* can alone bring about this transformation, acting, as they do, on the hearts of the Natives, producing individual conviction in the conscience, opening a new horizon to the mind, creating amongst them a new society. For them the duty of fighting lobola is absolute, and I cannot understand how some missionaries think it may be tolerated in a Christian Church. The following reasons ought to be taken into consideration by them, in addition to those already mentioned :

1. The lobola, being a material method of concluding a marriage, tends to degrade the moral foundation of a true Christian union, mutual love in particular. We know by experience that individual *love* of a young man for a young girl, love as we conceive it, which was scarcely to be met with in the original collective Bantu society, is beginning to appear amongst the best of our converts. This will become the true and powerful bond which will more effectually strengthen conjugal union amongst them.

2. Lobola is intimately connected with polygamy, as the woman bought belongs to the husband's family and must be inherited by his younger brothers. If this man is already married, he is bound to become a polygamist. So is the only brother of many girls, who is

177 doomed by the custom to lobola for himself as many wives as the sisters
583 he possesses.

So all Missions working amongst the Natives practising the lobola, ought to agree upon a determined campaign against it, with those moral weapons which spiritual bodies ought alone to use. And I would recommend *the following rules* to be universally adopted :

1. *Lobola* (p. 101) should be prohibited, viz., no Christian father should be allowed to ask for a lobolo when giving his daughter in marriage. He is converted ; he calls himself a Christian ; he cannot be permitted a practice which is the negation of the moral character of the human being.

2. In the case of *widows*, let it be well understood that, in Christian communities, they are free as soon as their husband is dead ; that they keep their children and that, when they go home with them, no money can be claimed by the heirs, whether the woman has been paid for or not.

3. As regards *children*, the *moral right* of possession of both father and mother in regard to them should be maintained to the exclusion of a special right arising from the lobola.

4. In the case of *a boy marrying the daughter of a heathen*, we cannot prevent him from paying a lobolo. The father is the master and, as we have no moral jurisdiction over him, we cannot oppose his claim. But, let it be well understood, that this payment will not give the new husband, who is a Christian, all the rights which accompany the lobolo under Native law. It would be wise to ask for a written stipulation from the husband in this case, as well as from the Christian father who gives his girl without lobolo. Let us be on our guard here! The lobolo being family property, if the father or the elder brothers, being Christians, do not claim it, another heathen relative will always appear on the scene and say : "If you do not want it, I claim it! The girl is *ours*!" I shall discuss this case later on.

5. When Christian girls, dependant upon a heathen father, wish to free themselves from the lobola, which appears to some of them as a degrading sale, they ought to be encouraged to save money in order to redeem themselves. We have seen many cases in which this proof of energy given by girls has been a blessing for them and for the Church. The same applies to a young widow who wishes to lead a pure life and to avoid becoming the wife of a polygamist heir.

000 If all missionaries agreed on these points, the practice of lobola would soon disappear. But *the aid of the State*, which I think is desirable and quite legitimate, if it keeps within the limits of its proper

000 will lodge their claim for the sum which the man had generously foregone. For this reason we should recommend that a statement be drawn up in each case of renunciation of lobola: This paper could always be shown to anybody trying to interfere with a lawful marriage celebrated without lobola. In the same way the heathen heirs of a Christian husband who had paid a lobolo to his father-in-law, would be unable to lay claim to the widow.

Amongst Christian Natives a middle course has sometimes been adopted. The bridegroom gives the father of the bride a present which is called *tjakisa*, i.e. to make joyful. It consists generally of a certain number of pounds sterling, inferior to the number required by the customary bride-price. By this means the suitor "soothes the heart" of his father-in-law, who would find it too hard to give his daughter for nothing. What are we to think of this expedient? Nobody can prevent one man from making a present to another. As long as it is clearly understood that this tjakisa is not a lobolo, and that it does not carry with it the evil consequences of the heathen lobolo, it may be accepted as a kind of transitory measure. But there are dangers in the adoption of this custom. As the idea of lobolo is always more or less present in the mind of all, you will find the father-in-law coming from time to time to ask for some more pounds, a fact which shows that his heart has not been sufficiently soothed .. and bad feeling is sure to arise and disturb the relationship, so much so that the worried husband will say : "I had better have paid a full lobolo at once!" I do not think we can absolutely prohibit the tjakisa, but I consider it as a "pis-aller" and greatly prefer to see the father of a Christian girl courageously renounce his claim to any special present. Such cases are happily frequent in the Native Congregations.

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177/583 The eradication of the lobola will take long, but it must take place if Native society is to pass beyond the level of collective social life, and to be raised to the status of a civilised community. There will be a transition period during which both Natives and their civilisers will have to show much patience, tact and ability ; many hard cases will arise. The story of Fos and Mboza, which I narrate in Appendix IX, illustrates these difficulties. But, whatever they may be, the reform is worth every effort and I will borrow my conclusion from a Native whom I once heard speak with splendid clearness and conviction on the

127/583 subject. This man, an evangelist called Zebedea, brought an old Native to me, named Tumben, a Christian who was still very much attached to heathen customs. They discussed before me this question : Must Tumben claim a lobolo owed to him, in order to pay a lobolo which he owes to somebody else ? The old man thought he was entitled to make his claim. Zebedea asserted that he was not, and the evangelist was right. Christian spirituality required of Tumben that he should renounce the lobolo because he was a convert ; on the other hand he could not decline to pay his lobola debt to his creditor who was a heathen, and could not consequently accept the Christian point of view. The case was hard for the old man and the fight between his conscience and his interest was sad to witness. Zebedea found convincing arguments : "These lobola debts," he said, "are ropes which start from the neck of one and go to the neck of the other. Though your father dies, this rope still ties you, you are kept tied to your father's bones by this accursed rope! Others will get drawn into its coils and the strands become entangled round you! Cut it and be free!"

IV. ON POLYGAMY (See p. 289).

000 Practically, what must be the attitude of the Government and of Missions towards this custom ?

1. As regards civilised Governments, having still to reckon with Native law, they cannot at once prohibit all forms of polygamy.

But when they have established marriage registration, it would seem that they ought not to allow unions posterior to the first to be considered as legitimate. These marriages ought not to be registered, and if this distinction were strictly enforced, by and by Natives would become more aware of the illegitimate character of polygamic marriages. In the Transvaal, the Native Affairs Department at one time tried to fight directly against the custom in the following manner. As every man has to pay taxes according to the number of his wives, the tax for the first wife was fixed at £ 2, and he had to pay double that sum for each extra wife. But the provision was abandoned later on. Taxation however, has everywhere the effect of limiting polygamy. In Portuguese territory, Natives are taxed according to the number of huts they possess. As each wife lives in a separate house, polygamists are more heavily taxed than others.

Enactments such as these are, I suppose, all that a Government can

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000 seemed to be struck by the argument and accepted it readily, but the idea did not occur to them of itself.

This difficulty in grasping the immoral character of polygamy explains why such a great number of Christian Natives, even after having been monogamists for a time, so easily fall back into polygamy. I heard that in the Cameroons, when, owing to the war, the German missionaries had to leave the country, polygamy invaded the Native congregations wholesale, Native ministers themselves returning to it, and the French missionaries who came to the rescue of these Churches had a terrible battle to fight in order to restore monogamy. All this shows that a long education will be necessary before the Bantu mind is sufficiently transformed to be able to understand perfectly and then to accept freely and willingly the standards of Christian morality in this domain.

V. ON THE FATE OF THE THONGA VILLAGE (See p. 355).

177 361 363 What will be the fate of the little Bantu community, of the circular kraal of huts, well shut in behind its fence, under the shade of its symbolical tree, well "tied" under the absolute authority of the headman? If we look at the new Native settlements, at the modern Native villages, built under the influence of civilisation and Christianity, we shall be struck at once by the fact that they are arranged in regular streets (1). This change is momentous and highly significative. The new Thonga village is no longer a well defined family. It has become an agglomeration of families belonging to different clans, attracted to a particular spot by the European town or by the Church and the school. The straight line, with its capacity of infinite prolongation, has taken the place of the circular, with its necessarily restricted length. Considering that new ideas are now invading the Bantu tribe from all sides, it is certain that the old circle will disappear more and more and that regular streets will be more generally adopted.

From the point of view of the picturesque, this is a great pity. For the ethnographer, the circle of huts, that curious Bantu commune with its striking laws, was ten times more interesting than the commonplace street

(1) In many Bantu tribes, those of Central Africa, even in the Ba-Chopi tribe, on the South-Eastern boundary of the Thonga country, the Natives already have straight streets. Is this plan original or not? I suppose nobody can say. In the Thonga, Zulu and Sutho kraals, at any rate, the circular arrangement is a characteristic feature.

177/361 of square houses or galvanised iron sheds, which are a poor imitation of European dwellings. However, from the practical point of view, this change is unavoidable. It even undoubtedly stands for progress.

342 177 The *Native hut* is prettily shaped. I prefer the Thonga form, a circular wall on which a conical roof is placed, to the Zulu, a beehive resting on the ground, or even to the Kaffir, which combines the features of both, having also a circular wall but with a cupola roof. The conical

Phot. H. A. Junod.

Christian village of Shiluvane.

roof is a better protection against rain. But all these forms of dwelling have one great fault : they are not healthy. The rays of the sun cannot penetrate into the hut, and, though the top of the reeds is sometimes not plastered and allows a certain amount of ventilation, the air cannot circulate, because the hut has no window. Smoke must make its way through the thatch and it is very difficult indeed to obtain any current of air inside. If a new type of hut were to be adopted, with high walls, good-sized doors and windows, and a roof slightly overhanging the wall, these defects would be remedied. But civilised Natives have not tried to follow this plan. They have at once copied the European system, just

177/291 as with their clothing! How often we have longed to see them adopt some peculiar costume appropriate to the climate and to their occupations! But when they cast off their belt of tails, it is to put on long trousers, and they all dream of a complete khakhi or serge suit! So they will build square houses, and this certainly has its advantages; the dwelling can be divided into many rooms and the different members of the family can all live under the same roof, which, from an educational point of view, is a good thing.

264 177 591 361 The *communism of food* is also a splendid feature and calculated to fill the most sanguine socialistic dreamer with joy! But this custom has been severely criticised from a hygienic point of view. The habit of all plunging their fingers into the same plate fosters tuberculosis and other contagious diseases; but I do not think it is for this reason that the custom will die out. In the modern Native settlement many different families live together. They are not united by any ties of blood. Moreover they are sometimes so numerous that such communism would be practically impossible. The golden age has passed for ever!

177/461 With it has also passed away the merry lazy life of the half naked *munumzane*. The coming of civilisation has already deeply changed his mode of living, and the transformation will accentuate itself still further. I have heard Colonists cursing these black people, who believe that they can escape the law of work under which Europeans groan: "these niggers who think that they will be allowed to remain incorrigibly lazy fellows for all time!" I do not share this loudly expressed indignation. First the Native *doda* is by no means an idle man. He has his own occupations for the benefit of the kraal. Secondly, if his wants are few, and if he very soon reaches the happy state of a man who is not obliged to work, I see thousands of Europeans enjoying the life of a "rentier" as much as he does, and without any qualms of conscience. A South African trader who works hard to make his fortune, and hopes to leave the country as quickly as possible, in order to enjoy all the comforts of a European town, theatres, concerts and clubs, has not, after all, a much loftier ideal than the Native he curses... On the other hand, circumstances themselves enforce upon the Native that law of work and teach him that "dignity of labour" of which we so often hear. A civilised Native has increased his wants ten-fold. He requires the wherewithal to satisfy them. This is the only legitimate, the most powerful incentive to work. Fifty, sixty thousand Thongas, the elite of our tribe, are constantly streaming to Johannesburg, where they are considered the best mining boys. Many of them go there to earn

177 lobola money. But they learn to spend money on other things, and
461 those who are converts to Christianity become regular purchasers of
651 clothing, of better food, of books. The high taxation to which they are subjected also forces them to work. As long as this does not exceed a reasonable limit, and as long as the State causes the Native community to benefit by the high taxes levied on it, it is justifiable although this way of enforcing labour is not so normally healthy as the creation of
241 new wants (1). Another powerful influence which tends to make men
177 work more and to relieve women from the toil of tilling the fields, is
412 this. Wishing to make money by selling grain, the Natives are begin-
462 ning to clear larger fields than before, and we note with pleasure that they have adopted the use of the plough instead of the hoe in a great many quarters. The consequence of this change is that the men now do

466 (1) Another means has been used to obtain the same result, i. e. compulsory labour
P. (in Thonga *shibalu*). It is not at all my intention to treat this important but delicate
177. subject here. The League of Nations created in 1924 a special Slavery Commission
46 which has very ably and fully discussed the whole subject. These discussions have resulted in a Convention which was adopted by the Assembly of 1926; art. 5, which deals with forced labour, runs as follows:

The High Contracting Parties recognise that recourse to compulsory or forced labour may have grave consequences and undertake, each in respect of the territories placed under its sovereignty, jurisdiction, protection, suzerainty or tutelage, to take all necessary measures to prevent compulsory or forced labour from developing into conditions analogous to slavery.

It is agreed that:

(1) Subject to the transitional provisions laid down in paragraph (2) below, compulsory or forced labour may only be exacted for public purposes.

(2) In territories in which compulsory or forced labour for other than public purposes still survives, the High Contracting Parties shall endeavour progressively and as soon as possible to put an end to the practice. So long as such forced or compulsory labour exists, this labour shall invariably be of an exceptional character, shall always receive adequate remuneration, and shall not involve the removal of the labourers from their usual place of residence.

(3) In all cases, the responsibility for any recourse to compulsory or forced labour shall rest with the competent central authorities of the territory concerned.

The League of Nations has thus established the general principles, and nearly thirty States have already signed the Convention; amongst these we note with pleasure Great Britain and Portugal. Now the question has been transferred to the International Labour Office, which must deal with the application of the Convention. A special Committee of experts has been elected and it is hoped that it will fix general principles for Coloured Labour, which shall be submitted to the General Labour Conference in a not distant future.

I am glad to add that the Portuguese Government has recently issued a decree (N° 12.533) which has been published in the *Bolletim official de Moçambique*, November 1926, and which contains the following article (Art. 5, § unico): *Compulsory labour is only permitted when absolutely indispensable, for works of public interest and of undeniable urgency. This labour will be remunerated according to circumstances.*

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the work of preparing the fields. As women have nothing to do with the cattle and as ploughing is done with oxen, men now perform this difficult labour, and so have to work hard. Is not this one splendid result of the spread of civilisation ? The fact cannot be denied that, as regards the mode of living and the distribution of work amongst men and women, a considerable change has already taken place and is being accentuated every day in the Thonga village. What will be the ultimate result of this ?

When discussing the Native problem, the most difficult of all South African problems, politicians, missionaries, civilised Natives and newspapers generally ask this question : "Is Native tribal life to be preserved or, on the contrary, destroyed ?" No clear, satisfactory, convincing reply has as yet been given. Tribal life is composed of two elements : communal life and national life, which ought to be considered separately. I deal here with the first of these elements only. The first remark I would venture to make is that it is somewhat presumptuous on our part to believe that we can exert any very great influence on the solution of this question. Whatever one may hope or fear, the evolution of the Bantu village, which began as soon as civilisation entered the land, will go on. It is not in the power of the Pope, of the Minister of Native Affairs, or of Superintendents of any large Missionary Societies, to prevent the transformation of the primitive patriarchal tribes, which is proceeding as a matter of necessity. Human society evolves continually, and the economic and social changes which have taken place in South Africa are so momentous that they will deeply affect and eventually completely transform the Bantu community. But (this is my second remark) what we can strive for is to control and guide this necessary evolution, and I should like to propose, to all those who can collaborate in the shaping of the future Bantu society, the two following suggestions :

000 1. Though the square house may supplant the round hut, though the hubo, the bandla and the absolute authority of the numzane may disappear, let us do our best to prevent the future Native village from being a servile imitation of our own European settlements. The more original the Natives remain, the more interesting and worthy to live they will be. The "place of jealousy" will disappear together with polygamy. But let us retain all that is pleasing and moral in the picturesque circle of huts : the respect for elders, the sense of family unity, the habit of mutual help, the readiness to share food with others. Cannot these virtues be retained in the Christian village, under the

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000 direction of the missionary, or in the town location with its Council of civilised Natives ? On the other hand, in the closed circle, there was no place for strangers. Love and interest were restricted to members of the family. In the new settlement we can hope to create a sense of wider humanity, more in harmony with the traditions of modern life.

2. The evolution of Native society will certainly be accompanied by much suffering and will not attain a satisfactory result, unless much patience is displayed by both Whites and Blacks. Let the conservative Natives and the dreamers of the past admit the necessity for these changes. Let white men, who too often think that the black population has been created in the sole interests of the European, allow the transformation to come gradually and not unduly hasten it, in their eagerness to make the Natives an asset to the country. I am convinced that moral and religious teaching is of the utmost importance in order to spread this spirit of wisdom, patience and good understanding amongst the South African tribes. I hope that in the future Bantu village the demoralising public house will never be allowed to develop the inordinate taste of the Natives for alcohol. But, in the meantime, it is to be hoped that everywhere, amongst the buildings, square and round, will be found the larger and more honoured edifices, the Church and the School, in which worship takes place and teaching is provided. The very existence of these races depends on these conditions.

VI. CONCLUSIONS ON THE THIRD PART.

The new era, and the future of the South African tribe.

177/642 The great philosopher Aristotle gave the following definition of man : "Man is a political animal"—*ξῶον πολιτικον*, by which words he rightly observed that man is not made to live alone, but in society. This definition is applicable to the Bantu as well as to any other human race ; the family is the first of these social aggregates ; the clan is the second. The Bantus are essentially a political race and no one could deny that they have invented a very interesting and practical political system, a system which wonderfully combines two opposite principles : the autocracy of the chief and the democratic spirit of the subject. The Bantu citizens are truly citizens. They can sit on the hubo and give their advice on all questions at stake, be they of a legislative, a political, or a judicial character. This age-old participation in the discussion of

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the affairs of the country has given them a sense of their importance, a gravity of speech and a dignity of manners which greatly impress a European visiting a typical Bantu village.

But this state of affairs is being modified very rapidly by the all-powerful civilisation which is invading South Africa from all sides like an irresistible tide. My description of the national life of the tribe, or clan, still applies to some parts of Thongaland ; but changes are coming so fast that soon it will have nothing more than an historic value. In some other parts of South Africa the old clan life has already totally disappeared.

If we have tried to foresee the future of the Bantu village, how much more serious is the question of the fate of the Bantu tribe ? I do not think I can pass it by without consideration, whatever may be the difficulties and the delicacy of what has been called the "Native problem."

In trying to find in what direction the present evolution of the South African tribes is tending, we must first consider what has been the influence of European civilisation on Native political life up to the present time. We are here dealing with past and well ascertained facts.

The result of the encounter of Civilisation and Bantu tribal life up to the present day.

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a) Civilisation *has destroyed the military power* of the South African Bantus. Thirty years ago they could still fight against white people with some hope of success. Now their fighting power has been broken. They will always be able to kill a few white women, a few colonists settled amongst them, far away from the centres ; they might obtain some occasional victories against a badly conducted reconnoitring party : they cannot withstand a European Commando provided with Maxim quick-firing rifles and all the implements of modern warfare, even if they are ten times superior in numbers. The last Zulu rebellion gave a striking demonstration of this fact. The Zulu impi, with wonderful courage, rushed on the Whites with its assagais and its war songs. But six hundred of the Natives were shot dead by the mitrailleuses before they could approach near enough to throw an assagay! As long as the black race cannot fight with the white man on an equal footing as regards weapons, it cannot hope to regain its military power, whatever may be its valour or its patriotism.

b) Having conquered the territory of South Africa, the White

177 Governments have everywhere placed Native Commissioners to watch over their coloured subjects. This has put *an end to the tribal wars.* Natives are no longer allowed to indulge in their old fighting customs. They may avail themselves of a war between Europeans to square up old accounts with each other, as happened during the Anglo-Boer war, but they are forbidden to follow the war-path any longer. In many parts of South Africa they have even been disarmed. This change, as a whole, is a favourable one. Native wars never brought blessing to the race. It tends however to destroy one of the springs of patriotism, and in this way it impoverishes the Native mind.

643 175 631 P. 177. 64 *c)* These Native Commissioners have placed a very effective check, not only upon the military tendencies of the tribe, but upon *the power of its chiefs.* The authority of the chief in the clan has certainly been diminished. In some instances he has been deposed, or banished in consequence of war, and the tribe has remained without a head and without force, as it were emasculated, and unable to guide itself. As Mankhelu said: "Our chief is the forest into which we retreat! Without him we are but women!" This was sadly noticeable in the case of the Zihlahla or Mpfumo clan, which was perhaps the most developed of all the Ronga kingdoms and which suffered most from the 1894-96 war. Its young chief Ñwamantibyane was caught and deported to some spot in Eastern Africa, and the clan was dismembered, a great number of men emigrating to the Transvaal; the others remained dissatisfied but powerless in their old territory, and were incorporated with Matjolo or Mabota.

643 681 692 P. 177. 69 Even when the Native chief is maintained in his position by the Whites, his power is curtailed. As a judge, he is no longer allowed to inflict capital punishment. His tribunal only judges minor cases, and beside and beyond him, there is a further appeal, the Court of the White Commissioner, which is ready to consider every important case. Should the Native chief be unjust or selfish in his decisions, the subjects will go more and more to the White tribunal. It may be that their claims will not be so well understood as in their own *hubo*, but they will perhaps meet with fairer treatment. Shrewd and clever Native Commissioners thus succeed in attracting more applicants to their residences than the chief to his capital (1). This dual control leads to a progressive loosening of the tribal tie.

(1) This was the case for instance in Nondwane. The unjust and egoistical rule of Mabwaba compelled many of his subjects to go "shikanoshiwen," viz., to the Portuguese Administrator of Moralven.

797/177 *d) Mission work*, now so wide-spread all over the country, leads to the same result. It infuses a new moral and religious ideal into the minds of the people. The old customs, the sacred superstitions, many articles of the Native code, are rejected by the converts. They remain generally very submissive to the authority of their chief, pay their taxes, join the army, but, should the Authorities summon a "nyiwa," a gathering of the clan to smell out the witches, should statute labour be ordered for a Sunday, etc., their conscience does not allow them to obey. On the other hand Native converts, under their white missionary, generally form a Church, which sometimes becomes a kind of *imperium in imperio*, subject to its own laws. This is the necessary consequence of bad, or immoral, heathen customs (beer-drinking, lobola, polygamy) which the Christian ideal cannot tolerate. A deep gulf is thus created between Christians and heathens, and this also weakens the tribal life.

The causes which have brought about this change will probably increase in power in the course of time. The process of individualisation will go on ; so consequently will this process of destruction of the tribal tie, and we may confidently look forward to a moment when the clan will have lost its political cohesion and its members have become independent of any Native Authority.

880 *e) Loss of the political sense.* How are we to regard this possibility ? It may present certain advantages over the old state of things, but, to my mind, it entails a distinct and most regrettable loss for the Natives. The political sense, with the sense of responsibility, will have disappeared, and this sense is one of the most precious aids towards the building of character. Look at a gathering of old-fashioned indunas discussing a question affecting the welfare of the tribe under the guidance of their chief ; compare it with an assembly of half civilised Natives in a Town location, a low class tea-meeting, for instance, of men with no respect for any one, addicted to drink and immorality, having rejected the authority of White missionaries because they believe themselves to be so much better informed! There was in the first gathering a dignity, a sense of duty, which you will hardly find in the second...

It is no use for us white men to curse the degenerate Native or to weep over the disappearance of the old restraints. Let us rather confess that we are in a great measure responsible for these results. We have interfered with the Bantu clan by taking away its independence; we have deprived it of one of its character building features, political

consist of natural objects such as rivers, big trees, etc. To define 423
the boundaries of their gardens, Natives dig an ordinary ditch 618
(ndjilekana, mu-mi) round the field, of about one foot in depth, which can be plainly traced even after the lapse of several years, when the field may have become fallow land and overgrown with vegetation.

The question of *roads* is a somewhat difficult, and often thorny 423
one to settle. Where has one the right to go ? And if, after 487
having used a certain path for years, you suddenly find it blocked by some individual whose field it skirts, and who has taken a fancy to hoe it up, what is to be done ? To try to come to some friendly agreement is always the most practical course. How often have we not experienced this difficulty with our cart ! The agriculturists were the more annoyed because we required a road three or four yards wide, while the Native footpaths are only little tracks of 15 to 20 inches in width. Being the only "carriage folk" in the district, we often had to ask permission to be allowed to pass, and have rarely met with any kind of refusal, for the Black is a reasonable being and quite appreciates the fact that roads are a necessity. If they see that a road is "ripening" (wupfile), viz., that it is more and more frequently used, they bow before the facts ; here, as everywhere else, custom makes the law.

At the present moment matters have been made much more 177
simple as the Portuguese Government has constructed wide 491
highways in all the more frequented parts of the country.

B. PRODUCTS OF THE SOIL.

I. *Cereals.*

"Hosi ya psone i *psithjama*" — "Their king is the *maize*," 243
says Mboza. This cereal is indeed the most widely cultivated in Thongaland. It is called *psifake* in Djonga. In the more fertile regions of the North, the size of the cobs and of the grains (nhleke, yin-tin) is much larger than on the sandy dunes of the Ba-Ronga. So the people of Khosen make fun of the Ba-Ronga and compare

241 the South African Natives, are essentially agriculturists, and they succeed in obtaining their food in abundance from the soil, although it is not very rich. The variety of their cereals is indeed remarkable, but they have never developed their cultivation to any great extent, because they did not wish to harvest more than was necessary for their immediate needs : there would have been no market for a surplus. Moreover they have never invented the plough, or thought of the use of irrigation, or of manure, those three great means of intensive production which civilised people have so long possessed. As regards irrigation, the Makaneta people made use of the tide, which drives back the waters of the Nkomati River, to water their rice plantations, but they never dug channels for the purpose.

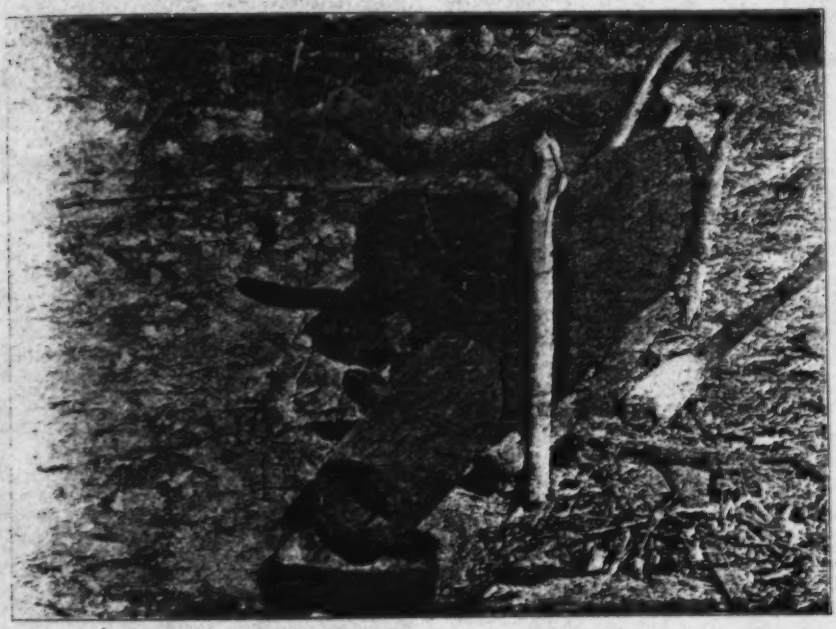
●177 241 Civilisation having brought these means of progress within their reach, they show themselves, however, quite ready to take advantage of them. Ploughs are wide-spread amongst Transvaal Thongas, where missionaries have taught them their use. There is no doubt that, having been initiated into civilised methods of cultivation, South African Natives, who have such a strong natural taste for agriculture, will in future considerably develop the resources of their soil.

But two conditions are necessary for this :

1) European Agencies who have at heart the welfare of the Natives, Colonial Governments, or Missionary Societies, must help them to acquire some technical knowledge, and better seeds and implements.

2) The laws of the country must be amended in such a way that the Natives will be encouraged to buy land. As long as they are only tenants of big Land Companies, or provisional occupants, squatters on Crown land, always threatened with the possibility of their gardens being turned into farms, and sold to White people without any compensation, how can they be expected to devote much time and interest to the betterment of the soil ? Individual land tenure will be the best incentive to agricultural progress.

273 warm them, and someone must keep watch all night, removing the scum and preventing the liquid from rising or overflowing. It then ferments and becomes very alcoholic. Where shiwaya-
[415] waya is drunk, quarrels and blows are sure to follow. The accompanying plate from a photograph, taken near Antioka (Khosen), shows a primitive Native press used for the preparation



Sugar-cane press, Magule (Khosen country). *Phot. A. Clerc.*

of sugar-cane drink. The crushing operation takes place in the large hollowed trunk of a tree and the liquid flows out, through a pipe fixed in its lower extremity, into a pot.

●177 The *shikokiyane* is prepared from Golden Syrup bought from
273 the stores. A large quantity of tins of this harmless "missionary jam," as it is called in South Africa, imported into Johannesburg, are used not by missionaries but by Natives of the Compounds who brew shikokiyane in big empty oil cans. Some of the more civilised do quite a trade in this strong drink, selling it illicitly on Sundays to their unsophisticated brethren, who thus

177 attain to the happy state of drunkenness in which they so much
273 delight, and which is not allowed by the regulations of the Compounds.

A number of other drinks have been invented by the South African Natives, but the foregoing are the principal.

See in the Practical Conclusions, I, at the end of the Volume, my remarks on "Alcoholism and the South African Tribe."

E. LIVE STOCK BREEDING.

I. *Oxen.*

231 Oxen were plentiful in Thongaland before the Zulu invasion; the Ba-Ngoni warriors stole and killed them wholesale. They have never been so numerous since then, and in 1910 they were fewer than ever, owing to cattle plague and to Texas Fever, which has destroyed the herds in the Transvaal and in the greater part of the Lourenço Marques district. Oxen are not the property of chiefs only. Any *numzane* can possess a kraal, *ranga* dji-ma (Ro.), *shibaya* (Dj.), where he keeps not only his own cattle but those entrusted to his care. Having plenty of boys to herd them, he readily accepts the cows which his neighbours ask him to look after, all the more so as the milk will be his, and he will be given one of the calves, according to custom (I. p. 440). Much care is taken of the welfare of the cattle: the herding-boys are expected to lead them to pasture in the
[821] morning, when the dew is still on the grass; during the five or six winter months hardly any rain falls, but heavy morning dew replaces it, moistening the grass, and Natives firmly believe that it makes the cattle fat. So it is said that the oxen must go out early and "eat the dew." (Compare the tale of Piti, *Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, p. 156.) Moreover the best kinds of grass, those which are the most nourishing, are well known, and the boys are sent to the places where they grow. Parts

291 waist, whence it falls down to form a skirt. With this most women in the interior are satisfied ; they do not cover the upper part of the body. The undergarment, covering the genitalia, is

Phot. P. Berthoud.
Camilla, a Lourenço Marques woman.

called *ntlhomo* in front, (a word which is taboo), and *mphela* at the back, (this term is less taboo than the first).

177 In the Transvaal, Thonga or Shangaan women have also from
291 time immemorial adopted European materials, of which they make double pleated skirts adorned with beads, as seen in the illustration I. p. 195. This is the typical heathen costume. The Pedi or Sutho women are at once distinguishable from their Ronga

sisters by the fact that they have preserved their ancient skin 177
dress. In the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques, a further 291
development has taken place, as women there wear a large plaid which they knot over the breast and which hangs down behind as far as their heels, a costume by no means lacking in the picturesque. They cover their breast and shoulders with a bodice (kimao), generally very close-fitting, especially in the sleeves.

Phot. J. Bennett.
Christian girls of the Training Institution of Lemana (Northern Transvaal).

The pattern is said to have been borrowed from India. (See on the opposite page the portrait of Camilla, an old resident of Lourenço Marques, wearing the costume adopted by the women in the town and suburbs.)

Ordinary frocks are preferred by Christian converts, and so the European fashion tends to supplant the Indian, or the heathen.

As regards *men's costume* among the Ba-Ronga it was little more 291
than the traditional smile. It consisted, in fact, of a small article made of narrow strips of palm leaf, plaited together, and could hardly be termed "clothing." This was called *mbaya* and bears a great resemblance to the "libyan sheath" which is seen on the

old Egyptian monuments (1). The last mbaya were seen in the 291
neighbourhood of Rikatla, when the war of 1894 broke out. In the Northern clans they were still commonly used by the generation which preceded Viguet, by the Nkunas who fled before Manukosi in 1835. (See Introduction to the *Grammaire Ronga*, page 17). The Kafirs of Cape Colony were still in 1903, at this stage of dress... or rather undress, and the Pedis of the Transvaal, with their *musindu* (a mere piece of skin protecting the genitalia), are not much in advance of the mbaya stage even now. This state of affairs arose in the first place from the fact that, as yet, the sentiment of modesty had hardly been conceived. It must not be supposed, however, that morals were the more depraved for that reason ; on the contrary, they were much purer, and innocence far more general, judging from the reports of those who remember those days.

But a second fact which allowed the Thongas to go about 132
without clothing, 'in puris naturalibus,' or nearly so, is the 291
warmth of the climate ; the temperature rarely drops below 44° Fahrenheit and frequently rises to 113° F., the annual mean near Lourenço Marques being about 74° F. according to our observations extending over seven years. It is thus easy to dispense with a coat in that part of the world, and it is by no means a rare occurrence to see children in the interior absolutely naked (2).

This very primitive article of attire has, however, been 177
supplanted by one designed by the Zulus, and worn by men up to 291

(1) The "phallic sheath" of the earliest Egyptian statuettes, which is also to be 177
noticed on the engravings of the XIXth dynasty, as belonging to African populations, is not of quite the same pattern as the Thonga mbaya or the Sutho musindu. However there is a real similarity between all these primitive costumes ; many of the customs of the Bantus of to-day seem to have existed amongst the early Egyptians, and this fact shows that the origin of Egyptian civilisation is partially African.

(2) The Chopi tribe, which is very industrious, dwelling in the neighbourhood of 439
the Thongas N. E. of the mouth of the Limpopo, has succeeded in obtaining a very superior kind of dress by beating the bark of the *mphama*, a kind of fig-tree which is wide-spread in the country, and which the Ba-Chopi even planted for this purpose. The pieces of bark become very soft and can be strung together. They are called *ntjalu*. Several samples of this curious stuff can be seen in the Neuchâtel Museum. Thongas used to buy the article from their Chopi neighbours, but never knew how to manufacture it.

291

Zulu costume. *Phot. Natal.*

177 a recent date from one end to the other of the Thonga tribe
291 (except, I am told, in some remote spots in the Hlengwe country). It consists of a belt to which are hung tails of animals, or strips of

177 skin (djobo, dji-ma), covered with hair or fur, or even the entire
291 skin of a civet cat, or antelope. The nsimba skins are in great demand, but are rather expensive, and the majority of the Ba-Ronga men wear merely two pieces of ox hide (mabebe), one in front and the other behind. Small boys often content themselves with one in front only. The young men prefer to wear them rather full, something like a petticoat! The *shifado* (Vol. I. Annotatio I) is worn with the belt of tails. This "sphaerula" is made either of carved wood or plaited milala leaves, or of a small calabash just the size required. When it is fixed in place, raw Natives consider that they have satisfied all the exigences of decency. Although much more decent than the *mbaya*, this garment of tails, or pieces of skin, is still a trifle incomplete...

Sandals of ox hide (tintango) are also an old article of dress ; they were used by hunters and travellers. They belong to the bush and it is taboo to bring them into the hubo (I. p. 355).

At the present time European costume is tending to supplant the belt of tails. The first step consists in adopting the *ladula*, a piece of stuff hanging down from the loins as far as the knees. This style of garment was still worn in 1910 by most of the young heathen round Lourenço Marques ; it was sometimes combined with the madjobo, which were still in use. But men, and especially youngsters, soon aspire to something better : trousers and jackets! (1). However ungainly the Native may appear when duly arrayed in coat and trousers, there is nothing he covets more than these garments. As they cannot all afford complete suits, they often have to be satisfied with such odds and ends as they can get from the Banyans, or pick up from their European masters. One sees them gravely walking about in worn-out long frock coats, the trousers being conspicuous by their absence. Others think themselves very fortunate if they can manage to get hold of a very much patched waistcoat with which to adorn

829 (1) The taste for European fabrics is said by thoughtful Natives to have been the cause of the loss of their independence. They support this somewhat surprising theory by the following argument : "Without this," said one of them to me, pulling the flap of my coat, "the Whites would never have conquered us ! In our wars with them there have always been some of us who would not give up these stuffs, and so made alliance with the Europeans. We were divided, and thus our power of resistance was broken."

themselves, the rest of the body remaining stark naked... except, 177
of course, for the indispensable belt of tails. One day a Rikatla 291
lad came to see me with an eye-glass fixed triumphantly on his forehead, and when I asked him what was the use of that article he replied, really meaning what he said : "Ndji yambalile" — "I have dressed." He intended to do me honour. The same lad came, on another occasion, wearing coquettishly on his head a lady's black lace hat, which he seemed to consider very "chic." I much preferred the get-up of an individual, by name Glas, who put a red lily in his tightly-curled hair, and made a chin strap of a flexible reed which he passed through the holes in his ears on either sides, so that it formed a sort of frame to his face. Every Thonga has already learned to know a *buluku* (trousers), a *djansi* (jacket), a *fascikoti* (apron, a corruption of the word waistcoat), a *hembe* (shirt), *masokisi* and *memeya* (stockings) and *shilembe* (hat). The majority of these words have doubtless come from the Boer dialect, and have changed somewhat in passing into the language of the Natives.

The "civilised" attain the height of bliss when they are able to procure an irreproachable suit of clothes, and it is a sight to behold these young men returning direct from Johannesburg, dressed in the latest style, with a white starched shirt, a silk cummerbund, and jacket and trousers to match. They think themselves handsome, but we do not share their illusion! How often have we not longed to see them adopt some costume suited to their colour, their customs, their occupations, and their climate! But they want to be like us, so what is to be done ? (1) Their 177
idea of costume is evidently different from ours : they consider it 291
as an adornment rather than as an actual protection against cold 513
or heat. If it rains, or if it is cold, they much prefer to wrap

(1) I have heard it asserted that the adoption of European clothing by the Blacks 753
tends to enfeeble them, even to the extent of rendering them liable to new diseases. I was assured that the introduction of tuberculosis amongst them is due to their clothes. This assertion is at least very much exaggerated. However it is certain that the exposure of their skin to the rays of the sun was extremely healthy. On the other hand, they do not know that wet clothing must be changed (they may have no second suit to put on), so they catch cold, and pneumonia or pleurisy sets in... I have also heard it stated that the second-hand, cast-off garments which traders sell them often infect them with syphilis (especially after circumcision), or other poisons.

177 themselves in the big rug (ngubo, mpisi-mpisi), which they all buy
291 to sleep under at night. The end of the process of evolution will
513 certainly be that they will adopt exactly the same dress as their European masters : a complete suit for the men, frocks, hats and boots for the women ; as soon as the majority of them obtain enough money to buy these, they will do so, and seeing how particular most of them are as regards their external appearance, it may be safely anticipated that Bantu beauties will submit to the tyranny of the London or Paris fashions as readily as our European élégantes!

291 It is easy to see the evolution of dress in the Bantu tribe by comparing the illustration of the South African woman (a Sutho, I. p. 46) representing the first stage, those of the Thonga women (I. p. 179 and 195) representing the second, Camilla, depicting a third stage (p. 92), and the ordinary European frock forming the fourth (1).

As for men, I unfortunately possess no picture of the primitive *mbaya*. But the following stages are illustrated by the two Zulu boys (p. 95) by the habitué of the Nkuna Court (I. p. 435), and by Tobane (I. p. 4) and Muhlaba (I. p. 426).

II. *Ornaments.*

301 The taste for decoration, for ornament, is innate with the Black. Ages ago, before he took to fixing a flower in his hair, he used to tatoo himself. We have already described (I. p. 178) the various patterns of *tattooing* of men and women, and have pointed

177 (1) I must however mention a piece of information which was given to me by two trustworthy authorities, according to which Thongas of the Northern clans possessed in
286 former times a kind of primitive *textile industry*. The Rev. Calvin Maphophe, who belongs to the Hlengwe group, asserted that Natives of the Tshobane clan, near the Sabie river, knew how to weave threads of cotton in order to form a kind of cloth called shombe, and another man of the Bilen plain told me that this cloth was worn by women at a time when men were satisfied with the mbayi. This industry has long since disappeared ; European cloth probably killed it as soon as it became procurable. The presence of subspontaneous plants of cotton in various parts of the country is in favour of this assertion. Where and when did these ancient Thongas obtain the precious textile plant and who taught them to use it ? This is an interesting historical point which I am afraid will never be elucidated.

302 used to shave their beards). Young men sometimes let two or three of their curls grow on their forehead like horns! Others stretch out their curls and smear them with a gluey substance obtained from the nkanye tree. This is called *ku hoba misisi.*

302 As regards women, those who are nursing babies regularly
853 turn their hair into an ornament: the small curls are stretched out, smeared with fat and made to fall on the temples and on the occiput; they are then covered with ochre. This operation is called *ku hora misisi*, and the rats'tails thus produced are the *tingoya*; they are the characteristic ornament of women during the nursing period. Nursing women undoubtedly think the tingoya improve their appearance. "Look! She has *hora misisi*! How well it suits her!" people will say of a woman who has succeeded in altering her coiffure in this way. But this custom has also a ritual value (1).

Nursing women cover their whole body, their clothing, and their *ntehe* (I. p. 46) with *ochre*. The habit of anointing (tota) or smearing with ochre (tshumane) goes hand in hand with that of tingoya. This rather disgusting custom marks them as nursing, and is a protection (shisibelo) against the husband; so long as a woman covers herself with ochre, it is a sign that she will not
302 cohabit with him. They say also that ochre prevents the bad
855 smell resulting from childrens' unclean habits, and that it softens the ntehe and makes the baby grow (2). The skin of children is also covered with a coating of this pigment; some say it is done not so much with the object of beautifying the child as of hiding the dirt which the mothers are too lazy to remove! No wonder that, in these conditions, it has been found that this smearing with ochre fosters conjunctivitis and other diseases!

● 177 (1) The Ngoni taught the Northern Thongas another and more elaborate way of
302 curling the hair: the queens, wives of Gungunyana, transform their "thatch" into regular cylindrical chignons (shifoko), standing up like towers (I. p. 416). The Ba-Ronga have not adopted this custom, except, in some cases, the chiefs. (I. p. 386).

(2) It is very curious to observe that these two feminine modes of adornment, the tingoya and the ochre, have been adopted by the magicians, those who pretend to possess supernatural power in smelling out witches and treating possessed people (Part VI). They like to assume the appearance of women. People suffering from the Ba-Ndjao[1] possession especially use ochre. Their spirits order them to do so: they would torment their victims should the latter not obey.

[1] [i.e., spirit--analyst]

302 The use of ochre is, however, not restricted to nursing mothers
538 or magicians : it is the special province of young marriageable girls, wishing to attract attention : their brilliant skin shines like a
832 mirror, setting off to perfection the white of their eyes and the black of their hair, which is sometimes made flossy by means of antimony or ground charcoal. A quaint saying puts it thus :

> Shindzingeri pundjene ? -Banhwanyana tolan !...
> What says the pretty bird with the coral neck that sings in the grass ?
> It says : Girls, anoint yourselves with ochre ! (if you wish to be as beautiful as it is).

●177 Another ornament, of ancient date, is the *bracelet*. There
301 are several kinds : 1) the big heavy copper rings, called *masindana*, which greatly resemble those of the lake-dwellers, having a similar rather oval shape with an opening for slipping them over the wrist ; 2) the modern bracelets, called *busenga*, which the Rongas first bought in Natal, and which the Ma-Lemba introduced in the Northern clans ; they are made of iron wire twined round a ring of hide ; 3) the *mafowa* are more ancient, being made of seeds strung on thongs of skin, and are wound several times round the leg. This is an ornament for either dance or war.
301 The mafowa are sometimes made of the silvery cocoons of Argema Mimosae, the Queen Moth, which are found on nkanye trees, emptied of the chrysalis which is inside and filled with grains of millet which rattle when dancing!

301 *Beads* (nkarara) are evidently of later date ; they were introduced
439 by the Whites in the XVIth century, when the Portuguese were already in regular communication with Delagoa Bay and trafficked with the Natives, exchanging glassware for gold and ivory. Glass fascinated the Blacks : its brightness and transparency pleased
539 them immensely. An old song echoes their simple transports of delight :

> E ! Bashabi ! Batatana ba shabile ; ba buya ni shintshirimana sha balungoooo !..
> Hi ! Here come the buyers ! Our fathers return with their purchases ; they bring back with them the beautiful glittering things which the Whites sell !...

301 "A few years ago an ordinary glass bottle was thought a wonder by the people in the interior," said Timoteo Mandlati to me.

342 The *sill* consists simply of a piece of wood (ntjandja wa shipfalo) laid flat on the ground, with one edge raised so that the door cannot be opened outwards. It must always open inwards, doubtless with a view to facilitate the exclusion of unwelcome visitors by the simple expedient of sitting with one's back against
784 it. The threshold is not attended with taboos, excepting that of
342 the principal hut of the master of the village, beneath which

The Thonga hut. *Phot. A. Burel.*

protective drugs have been placed at the foundation of his village. It is taboo to sit on it (this may cause disease), but not to tread on
177 it. Most huts are now fitted with padlocks which are, of course,
414 of European origin. The palm wood doors are only seen in the districts where the mimale palm grows.

342 A number of small sticks are stuck in the straw crown at the top of the hut, and certainly add to the picturesque appearance of these constructions. It would seem that they are put there to hinder birds from perching on the huts, and more especially to avoid any chance visit during the night from screech-owls (makuñhunu) and other nocturnal fowl, which might alight on

entrances were still smaller than those of the Ba-Ronga. To get 000
in, it was necessary to wriggle, or at least to go on all fours (1).

As I am dealing here only with the architectural side of the subject, and do not touch on its social side, let me merely state that the hut is divided into two parts, the right half belonging to the husband and the left to the wife (I. p. 138, 187), that it is contaminated by the death of its owner, and, being looked on as a *rumbi*, a ruin, must be pierced through (I. p. 138), deprived of its crown (I. p. 145), and ritually crushed down (I. p. 157) or closed (I. p. 162, 163).

Nobody will deny that the conical roofed Thonga hut is a 177
charming thing to see, and is wonderfully in keeping with the 342
African scenery. To judge how "Civilisation" improves the condition of things for the Natives of South Africa, let my readers contemplate the Native village as it was a few years ago, in the vicinity of Pretoria Station. Boys working on the Railway had built a horrible mass of tiny sheds of old paraffin tins, cut and flattened for the purpose. There is no lack of imagination in these constructions, but they are a perfect illustration of what the raw Native becomes when plunged suddenly into our XXth century civilisation and attempting in his poverty and ignorance to adapt himself to it. I am glad to say that, on the Missionary Stations, where Native Christians are directed by their missionaries, they build much better houses, having learnt to mould clay into bricks, and to build ovens (I. p. 536). Some of them are good masons and know the use of the level and of the square. There has been also a considerable improvement in the type of buildings erected in Town Locations during recent years.

(1) I have previously described the *shitlanta*, storehouses of various sizes, made for storing maize and other field produce, and have given (p. 26) an illustration of two of them, especially interesting as they contain the food of Sokia, who died from a sudden attack of pulmonary tuberculosis (lifuba). The provisions which are in the large storehouse must be sold as they are contaminated and dangerous to members of his family; the small one contains mealies bought from other people for his widows, who are not allowed to consume the food of the deceased, whilst strangers have nothing to fear from it. (See for the notions of contagion, Part VI.)

Bangela (making) for the *bunana*, a sort of hammock, made of plaited milala which is hung to the branches of the trees and sometimes in summer used for sleeping in, to escape the mosquitoes which swarm inside the huts. 285 513

Runga (sewing) for the boats (byatsho, dji-ma). The ancient Native boats built before the appearance of nails, hammers and saws, were made of pieces of wood securely tied together. Some of these antiquated craft are still to be seen on the Maputju river. 285 501 322

On the rivers up country, boats are frequently made of a large piece of curved bark, bent on both sides, which will hold two or three persons. I crossed the great Letaba in a boat of this description. Such boats are also used for storing water. Where mimale branches (or nervules) are procurable, they are tied together so as to form a raft called *shikhakhafu*. These are used on the Nkomati River, and on the lakes in Ronga territory. Big rafts made of trunks of trees fastened together, and called *magudhlwana*, were used in former times on the sea, when going to meet the White men, the Ba-Godji. (See later.) They are now no longer used and there is scarcely one to be found. In the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques the Natives now build their boats on the European model. The fishermen cut down forked branches, which serve as ribs, to which they nail planks. They are wonderfully clever at this work ; one man, Sam Matlombe, nicknamed the "King of the Bay," was particularly expert at it. [177]

The sewn boats of olden times might well be included under the heading of basket-ware. Those of to-day belong definitely to another branch of industry, and will afford us a natural point of transition from basket work to wooden articles.

III. *Wood-carving*.

It is the *nkuhlu*, mafureira tree, Trichilia emetica, as we have already seen, that is used by the Natives of these parts for their wood-carving. If the name of this tree is very hard to pronounce, its wood is, to an equal degree, soft and possesses the great 322 531

532 I do not believe any foreign influence was exercised in the
322 conception of the idea. His group is absolutely original, and, as such, shows us to what lengths the sculptural talent of the Ba-Ronga can go. This group is now in the Neuchâtel Museum.
313 While statuettes are the most elaborate products of Native
532 sculpture, *canoes* (shene (Dj.) are the largest. I have already
322 mentioned the taboos connected with the cutting of the mahogany and nkwenga trees when used for this purpose (p. 19). Other trees, the mpfubu and the muhlu, can be cut without these precautions being taken.

IV. *Metallurgy.*

172 When and how did iron reach the Ba-Ronga ? Probably we
412 shall never be able to ascertain. Tradition has it that the primitive
316 inhabitants of Nondwane, the Honwana, who cooked elephants in order to tear them in pieces, had no iron implements. Some authorities tell us that the hoe in use in olden times was of an exceedingly hard wood, wrenched I know not how from a species of teak tree called *ntjhiba*. The Natives of these parts must have passed directly from the age of wood to that of iron. There was certainly a stone age, comparable to that of the lake dwellers, in Cape Colony, where a great quantity of silex and of polished stones have been found. I never heard of any such implements having been used by the Thongas, nor found within their territory. As regards the bronze age, they have known the use of copper for a long time, but it cannot be proved that they knew it before iron.

177 Iron and other metals seem to have been first introduced in
439 Delagoa Bay by the "Godji" traders and whale fishers, of whom
316 I shall shortly speak ; they are the first White visitors whom the Natives now remember. The Ba-Ronga used to exchange fowls and other domestic animals for hoes, brass bracelets, and copper brought by the strangers, and they had found out how to make copper wire by forging (fula) the pieces bought from the "Godji."

316 Later on wrecked boats provided Native smiths with iron to make
325 hoes, axes, etc. In certain villages there were regular forges,
412 (Matlharin, near Mbengelen Island, Matjolo etc.). The hoes
436 were in the well-known form of an ace of spades and were fixed into a wooden handle, as are also the axes, and battle axes (I. p. 453). But the principal supply of iron came from the Transvaal Mountains, especially from the Northern Zoutpansberg, where the Bveshas have practised the art of mining iron ore for an unknown period. These Sutho hoes have played a great part in the history of the Thonga tribe, having been extensively used as currency for lobolo purposes.

325 These Bveshas — the word is said to be a Thonga corruption of Venda — built their furnaces in ant-hills, as shown in the accompanying illustration supplied by M. H. Gros, near Iron Mountain, East of the Speionken district. They excavated three holes under the furnace, and blew into them by means of bellows made of a skin, the air being expelled through an antelope horn. The ore, broken in small pieces and mixed with charcoal, was smelted, crushed, smelted a second time, crushed again and made into hoes and axes, etc. Who had taught the Vendas this art? Did they learn it from the Ma-Lemba, that curious tribe, half Semitic in its customs, which invaded the Northern Transvaal during the XVIIIth century? Nobody knows for certain. I am under the impression that this art is older than that, as the Lebombo Natives, who invaded the Nondwane in the XVIth century, seem to have possessed iron weapons. The origin of iron and the date of its introduction into South Africa is still a mystery.

326 Among the ornaments illustrated will be found a very pretty belt (No. 1).[1] It is the work of a young man named Philemon, living in the outskirts of Lourenço Marques, who employed his leisure moments in making objects of this description with twisted wires of iron, brass and copper, bent in festoons and [177] fastened with small tongues of metal. European influence is doubtless very marked in these belts, but still they possess a certain cachet of their own. Amongst the Zulus as in our tribe, large cups of various descriptions, including egg-cups, are

[1] [p. 101 -- Analyst]

than collecting mafureira or wax, or tapping trees for rubber (1). 167

Moreover the fashion of going to the *Transvaal mines*, to earn 439
money, has become so universal that a Thonga would think he had in some sort failed if he had not made a stay in town (shilungu). There, in Johannesburg, they earn £ 3 in the mines, or £ 4—£ 5 monthly as kitchen boys ; so they despise the old primitive trading expeditions which brought less money and were attended with more danger.

These new economic conditions not only discourage Natives 177
from trading on their own account, reducing them more and 439
more to the condition of mere hired labourers, but are rapidly destroying their picturesque and interesting industry. For a few shillings they can buy European utensils. Their attractively carved spoons are replaced by ugly tin ones ; their wooden tumblers by less artistic enamelled ones, their primitive plates by European ware decorated in doubtful taste. Instead of the piece of reed which they wore in their ears as a snuff box, they now buy brass cartridges, and the Thonga beauties, discarding the *tihuhlu* fat, now anoint themselves with a scented oil imported from Europe. There may be certain advantages in these changes, but the picturesqueness of Bantu life promptly disappears, together with the incentive to develop their Native arts and crafts!

E. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ON NATIVE INDUSTRY.

It is a strange destiny, that of these African races amongst whom 178
the civilisation of the XIXth century has appeared, effecting the most radical changes in the minds and manners of people who, for centuries, perhaps for tens of centuries, have remained in the same primitive condition, marking time, so to speak, on the same spot, or, at most,

(1) There are at least two species of shrubs whose sap, when hardened, produces 137
excellent rubber. These are fairly wide-spread and M. Dewèvre, a Belgian botanist, 314
who has made a special study of rubber plants, and to whom I sent leaves and fruits of the trees, has classified them amongst the Landolphia. One is said to be a Landolphia Petersiana, and the other a variety of the Landolphia Kirki (Dyer) called by others Landolphia Monteiroi. Natives make an incision in the bark of the tree, and a milky sap exudes, which soon thickens and the somewhat sticky filaments are then wound

V. *Dramatic poetry.*

This is perhaps too lofty a term by which to designate the 533
kind of songs, or other literary productions, which I am going 535
to describe. Primitive folk have no theatre, no elaborate tragedies or comedies. But our tribe certainly possesses the rudiments of histrionic art in the dances accompanied by songs, which are called *tinsimu ta Ronge*, the songs of Ronge. The word *Ronge* does not seem to be related in any way to Ronga. It is applied to an old collection of songs in which dancing played the principal part and which were quite peculiar to the clans of the Coast. They were performed after harvest, when the storehouses were full and when the Ba-Ronga bid themselves : "Eat, drink and be merry!" Boys and girls used to remain in the bush for many [177] weeks learning these dances, in a kind of school, which may have taken the place of the circumcision school ; the latter has been suppressed for more than a century in these districts. I say, these songs *were* performed, — because they are now fast disappearing, having been replaced by Zulu songs, called *mudjatu* and *muthimbo*. These are, in their turn, giving way to new dances called *gumpsa*, in which young boys and girls put on milala palm leaf dresses. These were the great novelty in 1908 and pupils of the Mission schools were deserting them to play gumpsa. Another new dance is called *shiloyi*, and consists in the imitation of boatmen : the performers sit down and execute movements similar to those of sailors pulling a boat, to the accompaniment of song. The *shindjekandjeka* was another dance executed by the wives of Mubvesha (I, p. 287). Most of these dances take place in the capital, and the Chief summons all the boys to take part in them. This is not absolutely obligatory, but should any one begin the training, and then leave before it is finished, he will be fined. No doubt these complicated dances mark the beginning of a theatre, as will be seen shortly : they at any rate give the impression of an organised ballet.

Many of the songs refer to *historical events* in the life of the clan, or to by-gone occurrences, almost forgotten, and it is for

895 What is the connection between abnormal births of human
772 beings and the rain-fall? I think it can be found in the
771 conception of Heaven which has inspired so many curious rites, and which I shall explain in the next chapter. So it is possible that, after all, the mbelele rite has a religious idea at its base.

b) *Rain charms.*

789 The removal of the corpses of abnormal children from dry
177 ground and their burial near the river probably sometimes proves ineffective to produce rain. So Bantu magicians have invented a great many charms to obtain the greatly desired showers, and the power of the rain-makers is enormous. Our tribe does not seem to have developed this art as much as others. The Sutho-Pedis are masters in this domain and Mankhelu, who had been taught by them and had become a great and renowned rain-maker, revealed all his secrets to me. He possessed the drug and used it frequently, he said, having often been called in by Sutho chiefs dwelling in far distant districts, as far off as Pretoria. He assured me that he had met with so much success that these chiefs had given him oxen, horses, a waggon, precious beads, etc.! Where had he found this marvellous drug? At Rivimbi (in Venda : Luvimbi), a country north of Spelonken, not far from the Limpopo and to which he went, as far as I could make out, in 1865 or 1866. The Luvimbi people are the descendants of Luvimbi, (1) a chief of the old times (as old as Nkuna, says Mankhelu) who, after his death, went to heaven and became king of he[illegible] he still exists there as a spirit, hearing and knowing every[illegible]at is done on earth. This Luvimbi is probably the same whom the Vendas call the first man, and concerning whom they have a number of traditions which I shall mention a little later.

776 and those of still-born children or those who died at birth; to these they add their old
783 rags (perhaps the cloths used for their menses?); they bring all these impurities to the
789 cross-ways and burn them there, singing impure songs, saying: "To-day is a great day! There is no taboo any more! If you prohibit anything, it will be an insult to the rain;
821 it will not fall." The smoke of all that they have burnt constitutes a religious offering: now the country will be pure and the rain will fall. The conception prevailing among
133 the Malelekes is somewhat different from that of the Rongas.

(1) I have published an account of the Venda traditions connected with Luvimbi or Ralavimbi in *The S. A Journal of Science*, April 1921, where more details will be found concerning this personage.

789 to be black. The heart was pierced with a puncheon and the blood flowed. He carefully washed the horns with the blood and smeared them later on (horola) with the "psanyi" found in the intestines of the animal. Then he took his *ntsiko*, viz., the two pieces of wood which served as his flint, poured a little of the powder into the notch of the female stick and made fire by the rapid friction described on p. 34. In the meantime Mankhelu prayed as follows: "Here are the drugs, Rivimbi of Tsome (Rivimbi's father)! Give us rain." Then he invoked his own gods, saying: "Go to Rivimbi for me and come along here all of you to make the rain fall." This performance is a "mhamba," a means of calling the gods, especially Rivimbi, "the master of this mhamba." After a while the wood began to burn; leaves of the "nembe-nembe" bush (Cassia petersiana) were placed on it and a black smoke rose and ascended to heaven. Then the clouds appeared and soon the thunderstorm broke. A feather of the ndlati bird of lightning was placed amongst the leaves as a protection against thunderbolts.

Mankhelu was absolutely convinced of the efficacy of this means of rain-making, and there seems to be more sense in this rite than in many others. To use the sea to cause rain to [821] fall, is not after all so absurd! I would not assert that Natives have a clear idea as to the formation of clouds, *mapapa* (Dj.), *matlabi* (Ro.), and know that the water from above comes from the water below, but at any rate they know that the sea is water and rain is [822] also water. To obtain rain by smoke rising from burning sea products is a procedure which is in keeping with one of the most common beliefs of primitive man, that like produces like, a belief which has found its expression in the famous principle of the old physicians: "Similia similibus curantur."

When practising his rain-making art at home, Mankhelu proceeded with less ceremonial pomp. After having consulted his bones, he took four leaves of the tjeke plant (p. 14), smeared them with the magical powder and exposed them to the rays of the burning sun. As soon as these leaves were fully dry, "Heaven began to roar" and the rain came.

[177] The great rain medicine is of Pedi or Venda origin. In addition

825 They come up to him and wonder how he got there. By this rite
777 he has prevented the misfortune which the antelope would have caused to the travellers."

B. CONCEPTIONS REGARDING MAN.

I. *The origin of man.*

773 While the Thonga mind is very little puzzled by the question of the creation of heaven and earth, the origin of man preoccupies it more deeply. I must now enter into some details as to the story of human origin which has been already mentioned (I. p. 21). It contains two parts : the creation of man and the cause of death.

1) The creation of man.

The first human beings came out of the *lihlanga*, the reed, as some say, or the *nhlanga*, the marsh of reeds, according to others. These two versions seem to answer to two different conceptions. The first is that one man and one woman suddenly came out of one reed, which exploded (baleka), and there they were! According to the second, men of different tribes emerged from a marsh of reeds, each tribe already having its peculiar costume, implements and customs. So when you ask about the origin of the iron hoe amongst the Vendas, who possessed it before the Thongas, you will be told : "The Vendas emerged from the marsh of reeds holding them" (1).

The first man and woman are called in the Northern clans

777 (1) I believe the first version to be the true Thonga one. It may be that the idea that all races came out of the marsh of reeds is an alteration of the primitive conception under Nyai influence. The Ba-Nyai say that all men emerged from a big hole, the hole of Myali or Nwari, in the earth, at a time when stones and rocks were still so soft that foot-prints remained marked on them. It has been supposed that the myth of the reed is simply an allusion to a physiological phenomenon, but I do not believe this.

773 introduced fire and the culinary art into the world! This idea is
826 interesting and seems to show that, to the Native mind, the cooking of food is the pursuit which differentiates man from the animals.

177 In the clans of Maluleke and Spelonken there is a third tradition
773 relating to the first man, but it has certainly been borrowed from the Venda or Pedi tribes. They say the first man was *Rivimbi* and his son *Khudjana* (name transformed into Hobyana according to Thonga phonetics). The Thongas only say that Hobyana is the creator of Heaven and Earth and the first ancestor of the race. But the Vendas and Pedis have a number of traditions about these two heroes (1).

2) The cause of death.

773 When the first human beings emerged from the marsh of
826 reeds, the chief of this marsh sent the Chameleon (Lumpfana)
761 to them, with this message: "Men will die, but they will rise again." The Chameleon started walking slowly, according to his habit. Then the big lizard with the blue head, the Galagala, was sent to tell men: "You shall die and rot." Galagala started with his swift gait and soon passed Lumpfana. He delivered his message, and when Lumpfana arrived with his errand, men said to him: "You are too late. We have already

773 (1) Here is one of the most curious of these traditions, a strange story indeed, when we reflect that these two personages are the great gods who created the uni-
776 verse! Once, in olden times, Khudjana planted a big pole in the earth, and passed spokes through it, right to the top. Rivimbi having climbed up, Khudjana took out
177 the lower spokes and went home. His father being unable to get down, the son stole the food prepared for him and ate it at his ease. Then he again put the spokes in their places and the old man came home. But when he wished to have his meal, he found that nothing was left. His wife then gave him Khudjana's portion!

There is great confusion amongst these traditions. According to Mankhelu this Rivimbi, or Luvimbi, is the same as the great rain-maker to whose descendants he went to obtain the rain medicine (p. 320). He is not only the creator of the earth, but the protector of all men, who are his sons. So, if some one wishes to harm a man who is not guilty, the Vendas say to him: "Do not kill Luvimbi's man." If you steal a partridge caught in a trap which was not set by you, they say: "Luvimbi, who stands on that tree, sees you." He would seem to be a superior being, a god (shikwembu), even the chief of gods, endowed with omnipresence and omniscience. Moreover there is a relation between Rivimbi and Nwali, the Ba-Nyai god, who is represented either as father or son of Rivimbi, or identical with him. It may be that the Rivimbi tradition, which is both Pedi and Venda and seems to refer definitely to a first ancestor who has become the great god, has been mixed with the Nwali tradition, which is Nyai, so that ideas of different origins have been intermingled.

787 *timpfu*, a non-castrated ram : the sons of the royal family, the
825 εὐγενεῖς! (bana ba-ku-psalwa). 3) Another *Shikwela*, astragalus of the ram sacrified during the Sikororo war, the one whose psanyi was used for the sprinkling of the Nkuna army ; it designates the enemy, and is watched with special attention when casting the bones in connection with military affairs. 4) *Noni wa timpfu*, an old sheep, the widow of the chief. 5) *Nhombela ya timpfu*, a young sheep, the girls of the royal family. As regards the wife of the chief, she is represented by the astragalus of the female mhala antelope.

787 In one of his sets of bones Mankhelu also had two objects
177 taken *from an ox*. One was an oval-shaped smooth bone, two
771 inches long, the other, one of its hoofs decorated on one of its three sides with triangular marks (See plate). Both represent the *Nkuna* tribe, whose totem is the buffalo. (Comp. I. p. 364.) But this is a custom borrowed from the Sutho-Pedis. I never saw bones corresponding to totems used in Thonga divination ; the idea of totem is altogether absent from the minds of the Thongas when not influenced by their Pedi neighbours.

787 In addition to those of the domestic animals, there are a number
825 of astragalus, or other bones, taken from *wild animals*.

First from *antelopes* : the male *mhala*, *tsombe ra mhala*, means the chief, and the female mhala, his wife ; the male mhunti, *tsombe ra mhunti*, *mhunti ya matlhari*, the duiker of the weapons, means fighting men, and the female mhunti, called *mbiri*, means women of loose character : *mbiri ya ku tola, ñwashifamba ni mafura eku rimen*, the woman who smears herself with grease and ochre, even when she goes to her field (thus trying to attract the attention of men). The *nhlangu* (reed buck), wandering about during the night, means wizards, as these cast their spells by night. Mankhelu had only the astragalus of the female in his set. The *mbalala* antelope dwells in the forest ; it does not like to come out in the plains ; its astragalus therefore designates the chief who rests in his hut and does not expose himself to the toil and the heat of the day.

The astragalus of the *ngolube ya ku dya marambo, yi tjela mitshi yi ralarala, yi languta hi matlhelo*, the wild boar which eats bones,

then in force, as they are found almost identical amongst Semitic peoples, as shown in Leviticus. The hierarchy must have soon followed the institution of patriarchism, and of the clan. Witchcraft probably existed ; it must have been a belief of primitive humanity, as it is still present in a very similar form amongst peasants and uncultured people in civilised lands. We have the right to suppose also that astragalomancy was practised. Some features of the Thonga language show that mythological conceptions then prevailed which seem to have almost entirely disappeared at the present time (I. p. 36, II. p. 306). This period must have lasted for tens, perhaps hundreds of centuries, until the South African tribes, after endless migrations, reached their present abode, probably pushing the early occupants towards the South ; at the end of the XVth century we find the Thonga tribe located near Delagoa Bay (1). 174

The third period is inaugurated by the invasion by the clans mentioned in our Introduction. White men appear, trade begins, stuffs are adopted by women, the men retaining their mbaya. Iron is introduced both by these invaders and by the White whale-fishers and traders. Agriculture undergoes a new development ; so also do military tactics, 174 177

Transvaal, in the beginning of the XVIIIth century, having been introduced by the Ma-Lemba about 1750. In spite of this, the Pedis call it *khugu*, the same word as *huku* in Thonga, Ur-Bantu *kuku*. The name of the thing may have been introduced at the same time as the thing itself, and incorporated by undergoing the phonetic permutations required by the dialect (Compare *Folklore*, Sept. 1908, The Balemba).

(1) The *Lourenço Marques Guardian*, in a very favourable review of Vol. I (Oct. 7, 1912), expresses the regret that I have not dwelt at greater length on the first origin and migrations of the Thonga tribe. The writer thinks that this was formerly a much larger tribe "the basic element in the Hamitic invasion of the coastal region." As far as I know, no document exists on which evidence on such questions could be based. The Portuguese chronicles of the XVIth and XVIIth centuries describe a state of things which is quite modern compared with the first Bantu invasion of South Africa, that of the *Zindj*, to which Masoudi's "Golden Meadows" makes an allusion, A. D. 943. When the Portuguese travellers reached the shore of Delagoa Bay, the stream of migration had already taken an Eastern or North-Eastern direction (I. p. 23). — As regards inferences drawn from the wide-spread term *Thongu* (Ronga, Tonga), I think they have very little value ; this word probably means "people of the East," as *Kalanga* means people of the North. It is applied by Natives to those tribes which dwell eastwards of them, whatever their origin may be. It is a geographical designation, like the term Orientals, and discloses nothing as regards the ethnological features of the tribes to which it is applied. In fact, as regards language, customs, folklore, there is much less affinity between our Thongas, the Tongas of Inhambane, and the Tongas of Zambesi than between them and the Zulus. [101]

We must be content to remain ignorant of facts as to which there exists no reliable record.

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THE EVOLUTION OF

	Costume	Implements Weapons	Food	Trade	State	Family system
1st Period (Pre-Bantu)	*Men.* Mbaya? *Women.* Skins?	Wooden clubs?	Fruits and roots.	?	Nomadic.	Female descent.
2d Period Ur-Bantu till 1500	id.	Pottery. Basket work. Wooden hoes? Bows? Wooden pillow.	Goat. Millet, Pumpkins. Game caught in traps.	Exchange of wares for produce.	Agricultural.	Male descent.
3d Period 1500-1820	*Men:* Mbaya. *Women:* Skirts of cloth.	Pottery. Basket work. Iron hoes and assagais. Bows.	Goat. Sheep? Ox? Millet. Sorghum? Beans?	Godji (p. 142). *Sales:* Amber, Ivory, Skins, etc. *Purchases:* Stuff, Beads, Copper, Iron.	id.	Patriarchate. Lobolo. Polygamy.
4th Period 1820-1910	*Men:* Zulu belt. *Women:* Skirts. Keimao.	id. Guns. Bows disappear.	id. Maize, Peas, Bananas, Mangoes, etc.	*S.* Mafureira, India-rubber, Skins. Commercial expeditions. Introduction of European money.	Agricultural. Yearly military expeditions in Gaza.	id. Decrease of Polygamy.
1910	Increase of European dress.	Increase of European implements. Decrease in Native arts and crafts.	id. European food. Alcohol.	Decrease of Native trade.	Work in towns.	id. Family life injured by the long absence of men.

the Natives now possessing better weapons. Decided progress has certainly taken place all round, the invading population being superior in civilisation to the old one. The Thonga language is definitely formed with its six dialects. Folklore is enriched by the contributions of all the various clans. Ancestrolatry still reigns in the religious beliefs, with a relatively clear notion of Heaven and of an All-Father. This change was gradual until 1820.

THE THONGA TRIBE

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Tribal system	Military system	Language	Folklore	Religion	Taboo	Magic
Totemism ?	?	?	?	Ancestrolatry. All-Father ?	Sympathetic.	?
Clan.	?	Ur-Bantu ? Sex-denoting suffixes. 11 Classes of Nouns. Formation of Thonga.	Mythological conceptions. Tales.	Ancestrolatry. All-Father.	Physiological. Hierarchic. Agricultural.	Witchcraft. Astragalomancy.
Invasion of neighbouring clans.	Lineal formation. Skirmishes.	Thonga. 8 Classes of Nouns. Six dialects.	Decrease of Mythology. Rich folklore.	Ancestrolatry. Clearer notion. of Tilo, All-Father.	id.	id.
Formation and disappearance of military kingdoms. Dual Control. (I. p. 542).	Zulu circular formation. Cruel wars.	Progress of Ronga dialect. Adoption of European expressions (Portuguese Dutch and English).	Addition of Asiatic and Portuguese elements.	Ancestrolatry. Tilo conception less clear. Christianity. Islam. Possessions.	id. Military.	id. Possessions.
Authority of chiefs decreases. Increase of the number of detribalised Natives.	Decrease of military and political spirit.	id.	id.	id. Progress of Christianity.	Severity. of taboos decreases.	id.

Fourth period. At this time a new period begins, owing to the profound disturbance caused by the invasion of the Ngoni army under Manukosi. The men's costume changes. The clans are amalgamated under the Zulu conqueror. The military spirit increases. War, accompanied by bloodshed and all the Zulu war-panoply, replaces the skirmishes of former times. In Gazaland the year is divided into two halves, one for agricultural labour, the other for the military plundering

174 expeditions organised by the Ngoni kings. Foreign elements increase
177 in number and power. Asiatic and Portuguese influences begin to be felt. A considerable Native trade develops in Lourenço Marques. The Ronga clans dwelling near the town acquire more influence. This brings us up to the present time, which I need not describe more fully.

In 1920, we see European civilisation invading the whole territory of the tribe, by leaps and bounds, and the changes, which in previous decades had been slow, becoming rapid and profound. The tribe loses its coherence more and more ; the authority of the chief decreases and that of the White Commissioner increases. Taboos and ancestor-gods no longer receive much credence ; Islam makes some recruits, owing to intermarriage, and Christianity pushes forward its Missions. The few indications given in this part of the table show the trend of evolution at the present time.

This outline of the development of the tribe — an outline which is submitted, I repeat, with the utmost reserve, — does not confirm the opinion generally held in former times regarding Black tribes, i. e., that they are in a state of utter degeneracy. On the contrary, *a slow progress* may be observed, generally due to outside influences, notwithstanding the fact of long industrial stagnation ; this progress has been so marked in agriculture, in the family and in the social system, that it is no longer possible to describe the Bantus as absolute Primitives. They would be more fittingly spoken of as Semi-Primitives. On the other hand, there seems to have been almost complete *immobility* in the religious domain, even a process of degeneration, if the old monotheistic idea has really become less clearly defined in the last century. Folklore has been enriched, but, as a whole, the mental and spiritual life has evolved very little. Of course I do not mention the quite modern changes brought about by missionary enterprise and Islam propaganda.

II. *How far can the South African Tribe withstand the new condition of things brought about by Twentieth-Century Civilisation ?*

177 There have been more changes in the South African tribe during the last fifty years than during the fifty or five hundred preceding centuries, and this process of transformation is bound to continue at a geometrical

rate of progression during the fifty years to come. Taking into consideration for a moment the real and permanent interests of the Native, let us ask to what probable goal this transformation is leading him. I leave on one side for the present the influence of missionary enterprise. 177

Civilisation has certainly brought some *blessings* to the tribe, and I have carefully and impartially noted these ; the disappearance of deadly famines, owing to the development of trade ; better clothing (this is a mixed blessing) ; better seeds and agricultural implements (plough) ; the possibility of earning money ; the incentive to work in order to pay taxes, (Natives would certainly not call this a blessing!) ; the decrease of polygamy ; and the broadening of ideas, consequent on travelling and work in towns.

But the *curses* of civilisation far exceed its blessings for the South African Native : he has lost more through it than he has gained. Amongst them are the loss of political interest and responsibility (I. p. 543) ; the loss of hierarchic respect for the chiefs and elder brothers; the loss of personal dignity ; in addition may be noticed a decrease of religious faith and respect for taboos.

Further, the vices of Civilisation have found a lamentably ready welcome on the part of these Primitives : alcoholism of a degraded type (on the Coast), onanism, sodomy (in the Compounds), looseness of morals, — and these have caused new and very dangerous diseases which are now quickly spreading amongst them : alcoholic cachexy, syphilis, a great increase of consumption, due to the work in towns, not to speak of the criminal instincts which have developed under these influences (II. p. 610), murder, and rape (hence the Black peril, unknown in the primitive state). The tribe has lost its standards and traditions and moral and physical results have quickly followed.

To help it in the fight against these new and terrible foes, the Black race fortunately possesses considerable physical strength and great fertility. But these may not necessarily last for ever. They are capable of being lost. We find the Mpongwe tribe, in French Congo, fast disappearing as a result of a longer contact with the debasing influence of the Whites ; the birth-rate is reduced to almost nothing and this formerly large tribe will probably die out in the course of one or two generations.

I cannot conceal the fact that I consider the situation of the South African tribe, under present conditions, as very serious. If these influences are not checked, I believe that the extinction of the race is

possible in the long run, and I think every thoughtful observer will come 177
to the same conclusion (1). Ought not steps to be taken by the Government to check the progress of the evil? Would not a policy of segregation for instance, be desirable ? Or, would it not be in the interest of the Natives to remove them to tropical Africa, leaving South Africa to the White man? These questions have been discussed at length in South African papers, and I have nothing to say about them except that such steps seem to be absolutely impracticable. I am convinced that the only remedy for these deadly perils is the formation, in the Black tribe, of a strong moral character, accompanied by sufficient enlightment of mind to enable the Native himself to perceive the danger, and to overcome it.

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* *

Various ways have been suggested to attain this goal. Leaving aside 000
the eugenic effort suggested by D. Kidd, in his Kafir Socialism, we may mention what is called the *Gospel of Work* which some people have recommended. Let the Natives be forced to work with their hands, and their character will soon improve! There is much truth in this theory, and I believe regular manual work is a blessing for the Blacks as it is for any other race. Let us remark however that this "Gospel" is not always preached with the sole idea of benefiting the Black race. Moreover, even if it were possible to enforce labour on the South African Bantus, in this age of liberty, what would be the ultimate result? Would it really transform them? As soon as they could rid themselves of the obligation, they would run away and become worse than before. Labour is a great educator, provided the worker is in agreement with the law of labour, and this agreement can only be obtained when the heart of the savage is changed by a power of another kind.

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In the conclusion to Volume I, I have myself advocated the grant to the Native of certain political rights which were after all very modest ;

(1) These remarks apply especially to the Thonga tribe. The situation of the Zulu and Sutho tribes is better, in as much as the sale of intoxicants is prohibited amongst them. However, many of the dangers here described threaten those tribes also.

177.10 ---- 177.88

177 lobola money. But they learn to spend money on other things, and
461 those who are converts to Christianity become regular purchasers of
637 clothing, of better food, of books. The high taxation to which they are subjected also forces them to work. As long as this does not exceed a reasonable limit, and as long as the State causes the Native community to benefit by the high taxes levied on it, it is justifiable although this way of enforcing labour is not so normally healthy as the creation of
241 new wants (1). Another powerful influence which tends to make men
177 work more and to relieve women from the toil of tilling the fields, is
412 this. Wishing to make money by selling grain, the Natives are begin-
262 ning to clear larger fields than before, and we note with pleasure that they have adopted the use of the plough instead of the hoe in a great many quarters. The consequence of this change is that the men now do

466 (1) Another means has been used to obtain the same result, i. e. compulsory labour
v. (in Thonga *shibalu*). It is not at all my intention to treat this important but delicate
177 subject here. The League of Nations created in 1924 a special Slavery Commission
46 which has very ably and fully discussed the whole subject. These discussions have resulted in a Convention which was adopted by the Assembly of 1926; art. 5, which deals with forced labour, runs as follows:

The High Contracting Parties recognise that recourse to compulsory or forced labour may have grave consequences and undertake, each in respect of the territories placed under its sovereignty, jurisdiction, protection, suzerainty or tutelage, to take all necessary measures to prevent compulsory or forced labour from developing into conditions analogous to slavery.

It is agreed that:

(1) Subject to the transitional provisions laid down in paragraph (2) below, compulsory or forced labour may only be exacted for public purposes.

(2) In territories in which compulsory or forced labour for other than public purposes still survives, the High Contracting Parties shall endeavour progressively and as soon as possible to put an end to the practice. So long as such forced or compulsory labour exists, this labour shall invariably be of an exceptional character, shall always receive adequate remuneration, and shall not involve the removal of the labourers from their usual place of residence.

(3) In all cases, the responsibility for any recourse to compulsory or forced labour shall rest with the competent central authorities of the territory concerned.

The League of Nations has thus established the general principles, and nearly thirty States have already signed the Convention; amongst these we note with pleasure Great Britain and Portugal. Now the question has been transferred to the International Labour Office, which must deal with the application of the Convention. A special Committee of experts has been elected and it is hoped that it will fix general principles for Coloured Labour, which shall be submitted to the General Labour Conference in a not distant future.

I am glad to add that the Portuguese Government has recently issued a decree (No 12.533) which has been published in the *Bolletim official da Moçambique*, November 1926, and which contains the following article (Art. 5, § unico): *Compulsory labour is only permitted when absolutely indispensable, for works of public interest and of undeniable urgency. This labour will be remunerated according to circumstances.*

175 drade followed into the Khosen country and defeated them on the 8th September 1895, at the battle of Magule (See page 471).

The Ngoni king, Gungunyana, had more or less encouraged the rebels to rise. When asked to give them up to the Portuguese he refused to do so. So the war had to be carried up to his stronghold of Mandlakazi. During many weeks the whole of Gungunyana's army, which was estimated at 25,000 to 30,000 men, camped near its king, ready to fight. But, for some unknown reason, the Portuguese army was delayed and the Thonga battalions, having nothing to eat, broke up. However, a strong bodyguard, the flower of the great king's troops, consisting principally of Ba-Ngoni, remained at the headquarters. When at last the Portuguese arrived in the neighbourhood of Mandlakazi, a sharp fight took place. The Ngoni warriors gallantly attacked the Portuguese square but were driven back with great loss, (305 killed, according to the official report). The royal kraal, Mandlakazi, was taken and destroyed and Gungunyana fled to Tshayimiti, the sacred wood where his ancestors were buried. Some weeks later, Captain Musinho d'Albuquerque, after a forced march, took him prisoner without any fighting, and brought him to Lourenço Marques, whence he was deported to Western Africa.

175 The Ba-Ngoni considered that they had been taken by surprise and
631 not properly defeated ; so, in 1897, a serious revolt broke out, headed by
P. Magigwane, the Commander-in-Chief of Gungunyana's yimpi. But it
177. was soon successfully put down by the Portuguese forces, who divided
63 up the country into a certain number of military zones, and the districts of Lourenço Marques and Inhambane have been perfectly quiet ever since.

175 2. *The Sikororo war* took place, in 1901, in the Shiluvane country, during the Anglo-Boer war, when the north of the Transvaal was, as it were, without white rulers. The successor of the famous Sekukuni, reigning in the Leydensburg district, Sekhukhukhu, tried to avail himself of the unsettled state of the country to realise an old political dream, viz., to become the paramount chief of the whole country. He interfered with the Maharimane clan, which inhabited the Drakensberg ranges, where the Oliphant crosses them before reaching the plain. This clan was divided into two : the legitimate heir was under the tutelage of a woman named Ñwanamohube, but his brother, Maphephe, wished to get rid of her, stating that she was exercising her authority against the interests of the country. Sekhukhukhu assured the queen-regent that he would help her if she joined him. He

177 Governments have everywhere placed Native Commissioners to watch over their coloured subjects. This has put *an end to the tribal wars.* Natives are no longer allowed to indulge in their old fighting customs. They may avail themselves of a war between Europeans to square up old accounts with each other, as happened during the Anglo-Boer war, but they are forbidden to follow the war-path any longer. In many parts of South Africa they have even been disarmed. This change, as a whole, is a favourable one. Native wars never brought blessing to the race. It tends however to destroy one of the springs of patriotism, and in this way it impoverishes the Native mind.

643 175 681 P. 177. 64 *c)* These Native Commissioners have placed a very effective check, not only upon the military tendencies of the tribe, but upon *the power of its chiefs.* The authority of the chief in the clan has certainly been diminished. In some instances he has been deposed, or banished in consequence of war, and the tribe has remained without a head and without force, as it were emasculated, and unable to guide itself. As Mankhelu said: "Our chief is the forest into which we retreat! Without him we are but women!" This was sadly noticeable in the case of the Zihlahla or Mpfumo clan, which was perhaps the most developed of all the Ronga kingdoms and which suffered most from the 1894-96 war. Its young chief Ñwamantibyane was caught and deported to some spot in Eastern Africa, and the clan was dismembered, a great number of men emigrating to the Transvaal; the others remained dissatisfied but powerless in their old territory, and were incorporated with Matjolo or Mabota.

643 681 692 P. 177. 69 Even when the Native chief is maintained in his position by the Whites, his power is curtailed. As a judge, he is no longer allowed to inflict capital punishment. His tribunal only judges minor cases, and beside and beyond him, there is a further appeal, the Court of the White Commissioner, which is ready to consider every important case. Should the Native chief be unjust or selfish in his decisions, the subjects will go more and more to the White tribunal. It may be that their claims will not be so well understood as in their own *hubo*, but they will perhaps meet with fairer treatment. Shrewd and clever Native Commissioners thus succeed in attracting more applicants to their residences than the chief to his capital (1). This dual control leads to a progressive loosening of the tribal tie.

(1) This was the case for instance in Nondwane. The unjust and egoistical rule of Mubvesha compelled many of his subjects to go "shikanekiswen," viz., to the Portuguese Administrator of Morakven.

3) The Punishment of Witchcraft.

754 683 What is the punishment inflicted on those convicted of the crime of witchcraft? Let us remember that this is a crime, an act of homicide, doubly punishable by the Court. Chief Shiluvane had definitely prohibited it by a decree in the following words: "I do not allow anyone to die in my country except on account of old age. So let the baloyi at once cease their enchantments, or I shall kill them all." In former times the crime of witchcraft was punished by death and the culprit was immediately hanged. The last to be punished in this way, in the Nkuna clan, was Mudebane (I. p. 443), and Mankhelu himself executed him. The wizards are impaled or drowned, as the case may be. Flogging and banishment were also resorted to when the crime was not so heinous. In Khosen wizards were expelled from the villages and roamed about the country, sleeping in the ruins, mocked at and insulted by the children, and oxen sinews were tied round their biceps so tightly that they entered their flesh and caused great suffering.

177.68 One of my informants (Fenis), who drank the mondjo at the death of Zihlahla, chief of the Mpfumo district, about 1870, told me that the heaviest penalty imposed on the wizards on that occasion was a fine of one or two goats, or of one pound sterling. He attributed this leniency to the proximity of the Whites. The civilised Governments in Africa have certainly done their best to put down this method of smelling-out wizards, and their efforts have been by no means without result. Native chiefs are now content with fining the wizards £ 10 or £ 15, half of which remains in their own pockets. I heard of one of them who claimed to be a Christian, but did not object to the substantial increase to his civil list brought about by witchcraft suits.

IV. *Concluding Remarks on Witchcraft.*

754 182 Witchcraft is one of the greatest curses of Native Life. I attribute the enormous hold which this superstition has taken on the mind of the Bantu to three causes: 1) The *Animistic beliefs* explained on p. 367

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643 681 692 P. 177. 69 Even when the Native chief is maintained in his position by the Whites, his power is curtailed. As a judge, he is no longer allowed to inflict capital punishment. His tribunal only judges minor cases, and beside and beyond him, there is a further appeal, the Court of the White Commissioner, which is ready to consider every important case. Should the Native chief be unjust or selfish in his decisions, the subjects will go more and more to the White tribunal. It may be that their claims will not be so well understood as in their own *hubo*, but they will perhaps meet with fairer treatment. Shrewd and clever Native Commissioners thus succeed in attracting more applicants to their residences than the chief to his capital (1). This dual control leads to a progressive loosening of the tribal tie.

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bition of those which are prejudicial to public health, whether on account of a too high percentage of alcohol, on account of their mode of manufacture, or on account of the physical and moral disorders which they produce." 733

These proposals were favourably received by the Committee for the Colonies, but no vote was taken on details, only a general resolution being passed. It is clear that these recommendations are intended for the whole Native population. In the domain of the Church we should go much further, as pointed out above.

II. On the Problem of Native Education.

The study which we have made of the Bantu Intellect in Part V has paved the way for a consideration of this great question, which is one of the most important features of the Native problem in South Africa. 871 177-87

The wild buffalo has been made prisoner! A yoke has been placed on its neck. — The savage mind of the Bantu is now being trained to civilised methods, and the Elementary School gathers in the goatherds of the bush, all over South Africa. More than 220,000 children are attending a course of instruction. The wild buffalo has bowed its neck to the yoke with wonderful readiness! It is one of the promising features of the present situation of the Black race that it has so quickly accepted the school. This acceptance proves its vitality; it understands that the acquisition of knowledge is, for it, the only way of adapting itself to altered circumstances. So, though primary education has nowhere yet been made compulsory, children are leaving their flocks and learning reading, writing, and arithmetic. This phenomenon is universal, and is to be observed not only in the towns, where big boys of twenty or thirty years of age crowd to the evening schools, patiently writing letters on slates with clumsy fingers, but in the most remote parts of the country, wherever a missionary or a Native teacher opens a school.

This spread of instruction is bound to have great results for the future of the race, and its intellectual development; it is therefore of the utmost importance that rational and wise methods should be adopted in the conduct of this work, in order to help rather than injure the Bantu mind. Unfortunately it cannot be said that such has always been the case in past times. To avoid mistakes and errors I beg to put forward the following suggestion as to the first principle of Native Education.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

881 the chief must not be used by him to buy a wife. This would pollute the village (makhuma). It would cause unfortunate births (timbeleko) and ruin the life of the people.

The chameleon procession is performed in the villages of the main headmen of the tribe during the few following days till, at last, the ochre of the initiated is removed and they return home definitely.

SOME REMARKS ON THE CIRCUMCISION SCHOOL

177 881 341 822 881 The square form of the sungi sheds, so different from the circular form adopted by the Bantus for their homes and implements, might be the trace of a Semitic influence. But, on the whole, all these rites are closely connected together and their sequence is quite easy to understand.

The Ngoma is truly a puberty rite, but not a sexual initiation. The suspension of conjugal relations, and the prevalence of licentious language might give the idea that it is in direct relation with the sexual life. But these two phenomena are met with on other occasions, as we shall see, and seem to be characteristic occurrences in most of the marginal periods. Moreover boys of ten and twelve and men of twenty-five or more can occasionally be admitted to the sungi, and this proves that the school has nothing to do with marriage, properly speaking. Neither is the Ngoma a pure act of aggregation to a definite clan. Boys of one clan often go to the sungi of another chief to be initiated ; they do not become his subjects by so doing. Even Thongas sometimes enter into Sutho lodges and Ma-Lemba have a special place in them. It is true that the Ngoma is the business of the chief. Only those who are really chiefs have the right to build a lodge. But though the initiated are exhorted to become good subjects of their chief, the intention of the circumcision school is rather to introduce the little boy *into manhood*, to cleanse him from the *bukhuma* (p. 58) to make him a thoughtful adult member of the community.

(See practical conclusion on Circumcision Rites at the end of Vol. I.)

II. *Other Puberty Rites.*

881 178 The Ngoma has disappeared in most of the Thonga clans, but there are a few other puberty rites which have been preserved all through the tribe.

881 is the old Thonga custom, and has been preserved by the women
304 in its original form, at least amongst the Ba-Ronga ; they frequently
177 pass a ring through the small opening thus produced. The second was practised by the Zulu-Ngonis, and was adopted by the Thonga men in order to resemble their conquerors. The result is an ugly hole. This is not a law imposed by the chief ; it is however universally observed. When a lad does not pierce his ears, his comrades mock him, saying. " U toya ! " " You are a coward! We shall put a spoonful of porridge in this big ear of yours! " (Viz. It will hold food because it is not pierced!)

881 The operation is performed in the winter by a man who
304 knows how to do it. Before it is begun, the boy bites the *ndjao*,
824 the root of a kind of juncus which is considered the best means
833 of strengthening the virile force. The doctor introduces into the hole a small piece of reed ; he takes it out every day to wash the wound and puts it in again to keep the hole open. As long as the ear is not healed, the lad must eat his food without salt : he must not go about in the kraals and partake of the porridge of other people, because this food might have been prepared by women having intercourse with their husbands (ba ku khila) and this would make him very ill (1). He must also keep away from girls. When he is healed, he takes away the piece of hard reed and replaces it by a pretty white object.

304 Some Thongas tatoo themselves, or used to do so formerly,
178 but this custom is disappearing and is now preserved only by women. We shall describe it in the chapter on the evolution of the woman, as well as the *kleta* custom, the pointing of the teeth.

It is probable that in former times the taboo character of these various ceremonies was more marked that now. At present they are merely a *shihila sha tiko*, a custom of the country.

(1) This alimentary taboo, as well as the interdiction of sexual relations, were of intercourse with married people, clearly shows that the piercing of the ears is a ritual passage. (p. 74).

836 quite free and the married woman is taboo. Amongst the Pedis
837 it is just the reverse ; girls are absolutely prohibited from having any sexual relation before their marriage and, on the contrary, after marriage a woman who has had children can have intercourse with other men than her husband. I shall try to explain this difference when dealing with Pedi customs. (Part II. Chap. I. G.)

* * *

600 In his book on Kafir Socialism, Dudley Kidd has laid great stress on the fact that the mental development of the African Native is arrested at the time of puberty, and has tried to find remedies for this inferiority. It may be said that the vivacity of mind, the rapidity of comprehension, which is sometimes wonderful amongst the younger boys, decreases when they reach the age of fifteen or sixteen. Cases can even be recorded amongst them of an arrest or slackening in the development of the psychical faculties at the period of puberty. But this is by no means the rule. In all our Institutions we have pupils who show great zeal for study and increased intellectual power between sixteen and twenty. I may say that Dr Mac Vicar of Lovedale concluded as I do, that this assertion of D. Kidd is very much exaggerated.

D. MARRIAGE

582 According to the old Thonga idea it was only when a boy was
[1]78 fully grown that he could think of marriage. In former times lads used to enjoy their youth in carelessness and pleasure, going to dance in all the villages, till they were twenty five years old. Nowadays boys marry very early. Money to lobola is obtained more readily and " gangisa " is not as easy as it used to be, two reasons which have advanced the marriage age in the present generation.

583 old men carry the hoes and show them to the defenders of the kraal saying: "This is our ox!" Or they hide themselves amidst the cattle as claiming their protection, because this is certainly the only condition upon which the bride's clan would consent to receive the invaders. Mr. van Gennep is right, I think, in rejecting the old explanation of the sham fight as being a remnant of the marriage by capture, which would have been the primitive form of marriage amongst these tribes. The Thongas possess the marriage by abduction, but this is quite another thing, as we have seen.

583 591 178 2) But it is probable that some of the rites of the Thonga marriage must be explained by an older form of marriage. The Rev. W. C. Willoughby in this book on *Race Problems in the New Africa* calls the type of marriage which we have described, and which is met with in all the South African tribes, *marriage of dominion*. The system of family life which results from the marriage of dominion is patrilineal :— children will trace their descent through their father and inherit his property,— patrilocal—the mother lives in the village of the father— patripotestal—the father possesses the children and has full power over them. But in other Bantu tribes, especially in Central Africa, the system is different. There we meet with what the same author calls the *matrilineal theory of marriage*. This system is matrilocal—the wife remains in the village of her group ; matrilineal—children trace their descent through their female ancestors ; avunculipotestal—the mother's brother has power over them, not the father. They belong to the mother's group and inherit its property. Under this system, the hloma, viz. the third "moment" of the marriage of dominion, does not take place, and the lobola, the bride-price, is not so important. The husband is only a lodger or a frequent visitor in his wife's village; he is a mere begetter of other people's children, and pays for this privilege by working for his wife's group or occasionally presenting it with gifts.

It is probable that this matrilineal theory of marriage is the older and that it has developed, under various influences, into the marriage of dominion. Mr. Willoughby supposes that men having captured women in raids and brought them to their homes found that system more convenient for them, and wished to possess their regular wives in the same manner. Change in the economic conditions must have had the same result. When, owing to a more settled way of living, property increased and cattle became plentiful, it is easy to conceive that the men of the husband's group made a kind of social contract with the men of

583 the wife's group, offering a higher bride-price in order to obtain the
591 transfer of the bride to her suitor's home.
178 Now, if this is the history of the evolution of the Bantu marriage (and we shall see later on, in studying the relation of the uterine nephew with his mother's brother, that it is quite probable that it is), we may find, in comparing these two forms of marriage, the explanation of some of the Thonga rites. The position of the wife was certainly much more satisfactory, from her point of view, under the old system. She could remain with her people and her husband had but little power over her, whilst, in the marriage of dominion, she must stay in the village of another group, work for it, and perhaps be ill-treated. Does this fact not account for her flight to the bush or to another village the day before hloma, when the female relatives of the husband go and seize her by force ? She tries to hide herself under a veil, as if she wished not to be recognised; but the husband's aunts remorselessly take it from her, and as she goes to the conjugal dwelling, her friends accompany her, singing songs of mourning. These rites are certainly more readily explained if there was, in a remote past, entirely forgotten by individuals, yet still influencing the mind of the community, another state of things, when the married woman was much freer and more happy.

585 3) We find the explanation of some other ceremonies when we apply to them the theory of the *Rites of passage*. For both bridegroom and bride, there is in fact passage to a new condition of life. They pass from the position of single to that of married persons. Hence the part taken by their best friends and by the bridesmaids, from whom they are separated by their marriage. For the bride there is passage from one family to another, from one village to another.

I cannot say that I have found distinct *separation* and *marginal* rites, but aggregation rites are numerous. The *aggregation rites* are first of all the common participation in the flesh of the oxen during the feasts. Nothing makes Natives more friendly towards each other than to eat meat together. Then come the building of the wood pile, the girl's acts of civility to the husband's friends during the *tjekela* and the day after the *hloma*. These rites being collective seem to represent the union of the two families. The new wife performs them herself individually during the first week of her marriage.

584 How is it possible to explain the calculated resistance to acts of politeness on the part of both male and female visitors during the betrothal ceremonies, and even later on ? If the girls alone made a difficulty about entering the village, the hut, and sitting down on the

301 and knocked out of shape by a blow or if its owner goes through
885 thorny bushes. A *khehla* who has some self-respect will frequently
354 polish and repair this valuable ornament, for it is a sign of mature
482 age. He who has been ordered by the chief to wear it no longer
643 carries burdens on his head; his crown would be spoilt! He will
461 be accompanied by a boy who carries his parcels; he himself will only carry his stick or his assagai. He will at once be known as one of the mature men of the tribe. This is not to say that the mere fact of wearing the *ngiyana* gives the right of taking part in the important affairs of the country; the counsellors alone possess this right; but from amongst the "crowned," will be chosen the man who is sent to another chief to treat of political questions, for instance.

301 When the hair grows (for, though it is curly, it may become long), the crown rises with it and becomes more or less unsteady, which must be most uncomfortable! The best thing would be to cut the ornament off and then replace it. Mr. Mandjia, one of our neighbours at Rikatla, was probably too lazy to undertake this job, so he put a small red handkerchief between his skull and the crown to prevent it from wobbling.

765 At a certain time all the *ngiyana* disappeared from the land of
643 Nondwane. The chief Mapunga was dead! The loss, kept
354 secret for a year, had been made public, and the law requires all the
885 mature men to take off their crowns when the sovereign of the country is dead. They take the wax from the frame, and make a ball of it; this they fix on a little stick, and place this stick in the roof of their hut above the door. The frame is hung up quite close by, and they leave these objects there till the new chief orders his subjects to re-make their crowns. This shows clearly that the crowning custom is in close relation with the national life of the tribe. The "makhehla" also form special battalions in the army.

178 Nowadays, however, this custom is not observed as religiously
354 as in bygone times. Life is harder, one must go and earn pounds sterling in the port of Lourenço Marques, or in the gold mines, and one can no longer indulge in a lazy life! It may therefore happen that a poor man will refuse to wear the crown, and say to

178/554 his chief : " What shall I eat ? Will you feed me ? Must I not carry burdens on my head ? I do not know what to do with the ngiyana. " — " Tiko dji bolile, " say the old people shaking their heads, " A ke he na nao," that is to say : " The country is falling into decay, going to the dogs. There is no longer any law... " Oh! the good old times!

F. OLD AGE

888 The man however grows older, older. His hair and his beard turn white, the wrinkles deepen on his face. He stoops. His skin no longer shines with health and corpulence. His wives die and his glory fades. His crown loses the lustre of bygone times. If a branch scratches it, if a knock spoils it, he has not a shilling to pay the repairer! He is forsaken. He is less respected and often only a burden unwillingly supported. The children laugh at him. If the cook sends them to carry to the lonely grandfather his share of food in his leaky old hut, the young rascals are capable of eating it on the way and of depriving the old man of his meal, afterwards pretending that they have done what they were told! And when, between two huts, under shelter of the hedge of reeds, he warms his round-shouldered back in the rays of the setting sun, huddled there, quite weighed down by his years, lost in some senile dream, they point to the decrepit form and say to each other : " He! Shikhunkununu! " — " It is the bogey-man, the ogre! "

People of mature age show scarcely more consideration for old people than do the young ones. Lately in the district of Matjolo, an old man and an old woman, Kobole and Minyokwana, were forsaken by their children, who were moving to another part of the country. They were left in a miserable shed, merely a roof supported by some poles without any reeds to close in the wall. Some compassionate souls took pity on this poor wretched couple, who had fallen into second childhood and did not even know what they were saying.

881 home to her true mother. She also presents her with a pot of beer. A feast takes place on this occasion and the kunga rite is performed, just as for the circumcised boy on the day of his aggregation (page 93). Little presents will be brought by the girl to her adoptive mother who will distribute them to old women. If the initiated girl has been already bought by lobola, the mother goes with her to her future husband and says to him: "She is grown up." He will give her a present of £ 1., and the veil will be taken away. These last rites distinctly mean the aggregation of the girl to adult society, and all this khomba custom is a very good example of a passage rite, the passage being from the asexual to the sexual group.

881 178 The Pedi-Sutho clans of the Transvaal also practise this rite, which they call *khoba*. In addition they have the *bale*, the initiation school for girls, corresponding to the circumcision school of the boys. The Nkuna clan of the Thongas is said to have practised it also in former times, but the *bale* has entirely disappeared all through the Thonga tribe.

There are three other customs more or less related to nubility: tattooing, the pointing of the teeth and the milebe custom.

2) Tattooing (Tlhabela tinhlanga).

304 There have been different methods of tattooing amongst the Thongas. In former times, in the Northern clans, the Ba-Thonga used to disfigure themselves by making very big black pimples on the forehead, the nose, and the cheeks. Hence the name of *Knobneusen* which they received from the Boers in Spelonken. Even the men were tattooed, but they shewed only one line of pimples down the middle of the face, from the forehead to the chin. Women had, in addition, two horizontal lines on the forehead and three on each cheek. It was a custom of the primitive population and is still observed by the Ba-Chopi. The invaders of the XVth or XVIth century adopted it because they were mocked by their subjects, who said: "Flat noses are not

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is dying out ; it is practised only by women, undoubtedly in connection with nubility or with marriage. But the tattooing of the face has disappeared almost entirely. What remains is the tattooing of the shoulders and of the epigastric and hypogastric regions.

The operation is painful ; girls sometimes cry and must be forced to submit to it. The patterns are triangular. Four triangles are first drawn on the shoulders on both sides ; the upper triangles meeting with the lower ones at their apex, so as to leave a square place, not tattooed, in the middle of the back. This drawing is made with ochre ; the skin is caught up and lifted with a little iron hook all along the line and slightly cut with a razor All the incisions must be of the same size. The blood oozes out and is stopped by the ochre, which is profusely spread over the small wounds. Tattooing of the back is not very painful. It is more so on the anterior part of the body. These four triangles are also drawn under the breasts, leaving a square place of which the navel occupies the exact centre. But between the two upper triangles two others are introduced, forming a conical shaped pyramid whose point comes between the breasts.

Such is the ordinary arrangement of the tattoo pimples in Nondwane, but it varies considerably according to the clans, as the two adjoining plates clearly show. The two Nkuna women whom I photographed at Shiluvane in 1900, have only two lines of pimples, forming a right angle under their right breast. The Rev. Alex. Jaques has kindly sent me two other photographs of tatooed Tembe girls taken in August 1926 and Mrs. Jaques has drawn an enlarged figure of the marks which shows plainly the patterns adopted in that part of the country. I reproduce them in a second illustration. Here the four triangles are distinctly seen.

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The freshly tattooed girl hides herself for a week, after which she shows herself to her boy (shigango), who will kill a fowl for her to congratulate her. He says : "It is pretty to tattoo yourself. Otherwise your belly would be like the belly of a fish, or of a white person!" The time of healing is considered as a disease (perhaps as a marginal period). It is taboo to put salt in the food during

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

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881
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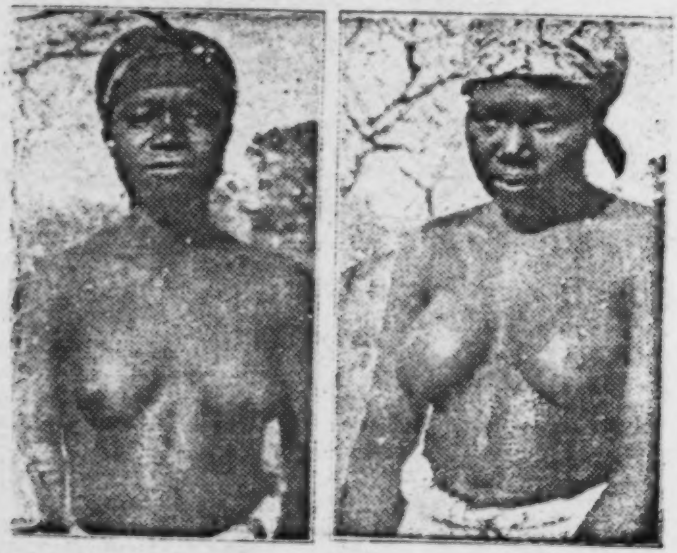
these days, or to go to the village to eat the food of other people (just as it is for boys who pierce their ears). Girls prepare themselves for the operation by eating a special food which soften-

[142]



Phot. A. Jaquet.

Tattooed women of the Tembe clan.

the skin of the belly (nabyala khuri). All these rules tend to show that, in former times, tattooing had a deep meaning, a ritual value which has more or less disappeared. Mboza told me : "It is not a regular taboo (yila), but only a custom (shihila) of the country."

124 The description I have given of the *lahla khombo*, translating
178 exactly the narratives of Mbozá, Elias, and an old widower called
164 Magingi, refers to the rite as it was performed in the normal
783 fashion some twenty years ago amongst the Ba-Ronga. Now
765 customs are changing. There is, all around the town of Lourenço Marques, an agglomeration of Natives coming from many tribes. Immorality there has become terrible owing especially to alcoholic excesses, a free and enormous sale of adulterated wine taking place in this region. The widows are sure to find there a hundred men for each of them, when they wish to cast away their defilement. But in this promiscuity the poison of syphilis makes terrible ravages. According to our medical missionary, 90 % of the
783 Natives are contaminated by this disease. When the men up
765 country saw that their wives came back ritually purified but
178 physically contaminated, they began themselves to accomplish the necessary act. This has become the general custom to such an
833 extent that, when a widow goes to Majlangalen, (such is the name of that hell of drunkenness and immorality), it is now said of her : "She will refuse to stay with her legal heirs!" However the law of the *lahla khombo nhoben*, to cast away the malediction in the bush, remains inexorable in the three cases where the defilement is considered as being of the worst kind : if the
[845] husband died of phthisis or of leprosy, or if the woman has had twins.

Old widows who can find no lovers may be purified by means of drugs.

765 e) *The year of widowhood.* Though the widows have found
587 new husbands, they still remain in the old kraal. They must accomplish there "a full hoe," viz. a whole year of ploughing. In their new fields they leave the dry sticks of the mealies of the year before, in such a way that everybody passing by will know at once that this is the field of a widow. But what they harvest this year will belong to the new husband. They have now the right to *fambelana*, viz. to go to each other. The suitor brings clothing to the woman, and the woman pays him visits with jars of beer. They belong more or less to each other. But the marriage of the inherited woman is not absolutely settled. Her

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 [redacted]

606 581 eventual misunderstanding between them will have its "contre coup" throughout the two groups. The two families regard each other with mistrust, especially the two married couples who depend so closely upon each other, owing to the lobola ; but when they have become acquainted, when they are assured that common life is possible and even agreeable, when the first alliance has been strengthened by others amongst the tinamu, then the bukoñwana taboos more or less *fall off*. This is an explanation of these strange relations between relatives-in-law ; I do not pretend that it is absolutely adequate. There may also be in this domain some remains of previous customs which have now disappeared, and Comparative Ethnography will probably throw more light on this problem in the course of time.

C. MARRIAGE RULES

582 The study of the terms of relationship has shown us the constitution of the Thonga family. We have seen that they are often dictated by the possibility or non-possibility for a man of marrying certain women. There exist distinct marriage rules, and I propose to recapitulate them here, at the risk of some repetition, in order to throw as much light as possible on this difficult but very important subject.

Generally speaking it may be said that the Thongas are *endogamic* as regards the tribe and the clan, and *exogamic* as regards the family. They are *endogamic* as regards the tribe, that is to say 582 they marry within it. Members of clans very remote from each 178 other may find it difficult to contract unions, (see later on), but they do so, especially in Spelonken, where representatives of many different parts of the tribe have met by force of historical circumstances. In the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques you may find Thonga women married to men of other tribes and even to white people. But this is the result of a new state of things, which the old Thongas did not foresee ; nor would they have approved of it, I am sure. In Shiluvane, I was in a very favourable

I. *Original promiscuity.*

582 As regards the idea that promiscuity prevailed originally—a supposition which is combated by some scientists (see W. H. R. Rivers, "On the origin of the classificatory system of relationship," Anthropological Essays), I see no trace of it amongst the Thongas. Amongst the Pedis, there is one day when free intercourse is allowed all through the clans ; it is the closing day of the second circumcision school. But this custom can be explained on a totally different basis.

II. *Group marriage.*

178 As regards *group marriage*, we may see a remnant of the system
582 in the fact that a man has a special preferential right to certain
595 women of his wife's family, the tinamu. His son will also consider
837 it peculiarly appropriate to take a wife from his mother's clan, the one into which his father married.

The tinamu custom might be explained in that way. There is however a very marked difference between the group-marriage system and the Thonga family law. Amongst Australian aborigenes, whilst a man of a group has the right of marrying all the women of the other group, a woman of the other group has the same right to marry all the men of the first. Amongst the Thongas it is absolutely taboo for a married woman to have relations with anybody except her own husband. Polygamy exists and is approved of, but polyandry is strongly censured and considered a disgusting custom. The main reason for this is no doubt the *matlulana* superstition, which bears all the character of a very ancient idea in the Thonga system. The story of P. K. which I relate in Appendix IV, will show how deeply the sin of polyandry is felt (1).

(1) It is true that the Ba-Pedi who are neighbours of the Thongas, have a kind of polyandry (See page 99). But this has nothing to do with group marriage, and the wives of a rich man whom he allows to have intercourse with other men, choose their lovers as they like and not according to a law of preferential right binding two groups.

III. *Matriarchy*.

178 But as regards *mother-right* and the *uterine family*, I must confess
602 that I have altered my views since writing Les Ba-Ronga, and would testify my gratitude to Mr. S. Hartland, who encouraged me to study this subject more attentively. I had not then gathered all the facts, and the identity of the *ntukulu* and the *mupsyana* only became clearly apparent to me when studying the Northern clans. Now, having inquired with special care into this most curious feature of the Thonga system, I have come to the conclusion that the most probable explanation is that, in former and very remote times, our tribe passed through the matriarchal stage. Let us carefully consider the relation of a malume with his uterine nephews, recapitulating all the facts.

1) Duties and rights of the maternal uncle.

604 As we have seen, the uterine nephew all through his career
591 is the object of special care on the part of his uncle : if he is a first-born child, the malume prepares his ntehe. (See page 46.) When weaned, he goes to stay in the village of his mother's relatives for many years, a girl sometimes till she is grown up.
604 Later on, when she marries, the maternal uncle claims a right
583 called *tjhumba*, £ 1, on the total amount of the lobolo. It is taboo to refuse it ; should a father dare to keep that £ 1, his brothers will say to him : "Do you not fear the gods ? The mother's gods will kill you ! Your daughter will have no children. Did you alone bring her into the world ? Did not these people help you in bringing her forth ? And has not your wife grown with the assistance of those gods ? Her brother must be allowed to have his *tjhumba*" (Mboza).

585 On the day of the remittance of the lobolo, the maternal uncle
604 and all the mother's relatives are invited to the feast, and for them a special part of the festal ox is reserved, called *nyimba*, viz. the

604 782 assagay. The batukulu dispose of the portion of the limbs offered to the gods. They *cut* the prayer and, at that moment they steal the meat or the beer of the sacrifice and run away with them. Why is this? "Because a ntukulu does not fear the saliva of his malume" (Mboza). They live in such intimacy with them that they can eat that which was reserved for the gods (1) (See p. 162).

604 The ntukulu *also takes precedence* in some other rites ; in the circumcision school the uterine nephew of the chief is at the head of the circumcised. In the *luma milomo* (page 146) he starts the purifying ceremony, and "gives to the others" (nyiketa) the use of the food of the deceased.

604 428 178 But it is especially in the question of the inheritance that he shows himself in his characteristic aspect. Father-right has set in and is strongly supported by the lobola custom. Therefore the sons of the deceased have the sole right to the property of their father, wives as well as implements. The batukulu, however, the uterine nephews, refuse to be left out! You will find them everywhere, trying to get something for themselves. They were already planning with the malume's wives to take them as spouses after the death of their husband. Remember how they teased the whole fámily, on the day of the distribution of the widows (page 208). When the implements were distributed, they came and claimed their *tjhumba* (a technical expression, it would seem, which means precisely this kind of claim lodged by a malume or a ntukulu). They were given the small assagay, the big one remaining for the son. In this way *ba nyiketa pfindla, they give over the inheritance to the legal heirs.* This is a most vivid representation of a right which no longer exists, having in fact become

769 602 (1) Some ethnographers have supposed that ancestral worship only began when the father took command of the family and consequently did not exist in the period of mother-right. This seems to me absolutely false. The spirits of the mother's family are invoked as well as the father's ancestors, and the special place of the uterine nephews in worship down to this day is best explained in this way: before the gods of the father were known and prayed to, those of the mother were worshipped, and consequently the batukulu held a special position in the ritual. When the ancestors on the father's side made their appearance in the Bantu Pantheon, beside those on the mother's side, or after the institution of father right, the batukulu preserved that special position.

604 obsolete, but which asserts itself in virtue of the survival of an old
178 custom. I have often been struck by the unconscious way in
428 which they act on all these occasions! They give the impression of people who have been hypnotised and ordered to do something next day, when no longer in the mesmeric sleep. You see them carrying out the act, constrained by a mysterious necessity and without knowing why they do so. The hypnotising factor here is the weight of heredity, of all this hoary antiquity, which belongs indeed to the past, but still influences the subliminal life of the tribe...

643 As regards the chiefs, I may add that the uterine nephew may
604 be given the chieftainship over a certain part of the country. He is well received at the Court, better than the nephews on the brother's side, because, with these, there is always the risk that they may become usurpers. This also explains why a chief, when in danger, will ask help from his bakokwana rather than from the relatives of his own family. The latter may seize the opportunity for "bangana buhosi", i. e. to dispute the chieftainship with him.

611 Mother-right most probably existed amongst the ancestors of
178 the Thongas, whatever may be the country in which they then lived
602 and the name by which they were called. But everything seems to prove that this phase has long ago passed away. No one remembers anything of the kind. Genealogies, which are the oldest records of the tribe, mention only the ancestors of the father. They are recalled much better than those of the mother. The lobola custom, which is the strongest support of the paternal right at the present time, has been practised since time immemorial (1). See also the special names of the great-grandfathers in the paternal line (p. 227).

000 (1) Lobola is however not incompatible with the uterine form of the family. I have been informed by the Rev. E. Allégret, working in the French Congo, that the Mpongwe and Galoa of the Lower Ogowe have still partly preserved the mother-right. But lobola exists. The first lobolo is payed indifferently to the father or the mother of the bride, and the choice is made according to the personal relations existing between the husband's family and the families of the bride's parents. When a second daughter marries, half the lobolo is given to the maternal uncle. The children stay in the father's village, but they are under the guidance of the mother and of her family. They belong to the mother's clan. This system evidently denotes a less advanced stage of evolution. However matriarchy is passing into patriarchy, and the lobola custom will probably hasten the process.

603 611 does not belong to him, and, whatever the child may do in this respect, the ease and indulgence which characterises his relations with his nephew will not be altered. Thus whatever influence the natural feelings of tenderness of the mother towards her children may have had on the special mode of behaviour of the batukulu towards their bakokwana, they are not the only factor, nor perhaps the most important factor to be considered: Property plays a greater part in the determination of that kind of relationship in the present circumstances, and as regards its first origin, the matriarchy hypothesis goes a long way to explain its characteristics.

602 611 178 But let me frankly recognise that the matriarchy theory is but a hypothesis. As Mr. Brown rightly shows, there is not a tribe amongst the Bantus, as far as we know, where that family system exists in its integrity, i. e. matrilineal, matrilocal, matripotestal. Everywhere there seems to prevail a mixture of the two systems. However if there has been an evolution (and an evolution has certainly taken place) and if one system preceded the other, it must certainly have been matriarchy, as its traces, in the present patriarchal system, bear all the character of relics of a former period.

000 I have tried to look far back into the past of the Thonga family system. Now I would ask: What about its future ? The question must be asked, because we are not considering the South African tribe only as a subject of scientific study. We are deeply interested in its welfare and in its destiny. New forces have appeared which act in a new way on primitive society.

What will be, what must be the nature of the evolution ? How must it be directed by those who have a responsibility for the shaping of the future Bantu society ?

We shall answer this question in our Practical Conclusions, at the end of this Volume. For the present we shall be satisfied with a scientific collection of the facts in relation to the two great customs which lie at the base of the whole family system of the Bantus : Lobola and Polygamy.

618 the same way as Pedi diviners do for their various tribes, represent-
551 ing them by the astragalus of their totems.
177 As regards these two incidents, they are easily explained by the influence of the Sutho tribes amongst which these Thongas have been living for a long time. Nothing of the kind is met with amongst the Thongas who have remained in their own country, and Maaghe, the Pedi-Khaha chief, assured me that this appellation of the Nkunas, Nyari, buffalo, is modern and borrowed from the Pedis. The Nkunas do not observe any taboo in connexion with the ox, and this shows that their totemic custom is a mere external imitation of that of the Suthos. These two instances might be called cases of *secondary* or *adopted totemism*.
618 Considering only the Thongas as compared with the Pedis, we
551 might be tempted to conclude that the Thongas had preserved
178 the old Bantu custom of naming themselves after their ancestor; just as the Thongas used to add to that name other laudatory expressions, we might suppose that the Pedi tribes had adopted names of animals to glorify themselves; in the course of time, the essentially totemic fears and taboos may have been introduced into the customs, owing to the importance given to the shibongo. This would be a rationalistic explanation of totemism. *A priori* it could not be said to be impossible. Though totemism appears to be a very old custom of humanity, it is not necessary, *per se*, that the Bantu tribes should have all passed through that phase of primitive belief.
618 3) I must, however, mention a third instance which shows
539 that this notion of a community of life between an animal and
178 a human group must have existed also amongst the ancient Thongas. There are, *in their folklore*, tales which seem to have been inspired by such old ideas now lost, especially the tale of Titishan, which I have published in "Les chants et contes des Ba-Ronga," page 253. A girl named Titishan marries a man. When she goes to her husband's home, she asks her parents to give her their cat. They refuse, saying: "You know that our life is attached to it." She insists, and they at last consent. She shuts the animal up in a place where nobody sees it. Her husband even ignores its existence. One day,

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when she goes to the fields, the cat escapes from its kraal, enters the hut, puts on the war ornaments of the husband, dances and sings. Children, attracted by the noise, discover it and inform the master of the village of the strange dancer they have seen... He goes and kills it. At that very moment Titishan falls to the ground, in her garden. She says : "I have been killed at home." She asks her husband to accompany her, with the corpse of the cat wrapped in a mat, to her parents' village. All her relatives attend. They severely reproach their daughter for having insisted on taking the animal. The mat is unrolled and, as soon as they see the dead cat, they all fall lifeless to the ground, one after the other. The Clan-of-the-Cat is destroyed and the husband returns home after having closed the gate of the village with a branch (See Page 323) : "Their life was in the cat."

Folk-tales are very ancient, and this one is by no means unique of its kind. (Compare Jacottet's "Treasury of the Ba-Sutho Lore," Morija 1908, Masilo punished for having eaten zebra's meat.) It shows that the totemic idea existed in former times, in those primitive periods of evolution which some Bantu tribes have now outgrown.

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4) A fourth fact tends to show that a mystic relation between an animal and a clan existed in former times. There is, in the north of the Transvaal, a kind of antelope called by the Natives *Shidyanaman*. It is taboo to kill it : "If a Nkuna does so, his family will die during the year, his wife, his children, his own head. Should he kill one by mistake, he must cry with a loud voice and shout : — Yoo! Shana n'ta da na mane! Alack! with whom shall I eat it ?" Mankhelu says it is taboo to eat its flesh, but the taboo is removed by this formula. The Ba-Nkuna do not know how to explain this custom. It may be a relic of former totemic ideas. However Mankhelu does not call the shidyanaman a ntshupu, a totem, and these customs may perhaps be connected with the *nuru* superstition (Comp. Ch. IV and Part IV, hunting customs). But even supposing that the Thongas have gone through the totemic phase, the present clans have entirely forgotten these ancient beliefs.

than collecting mafureira or wax, or tapping trees for rubber (1). 167

Moreover the fashion of going to the *Transvaal mines*, to earn money, has become so universal that a Thonga would think he had in some sort failed if he had not made a stay in town (shilungu). There, in Johannesburg, they earn £ 3 in the mines, or £ 4—£ 5 monthly as kitchen boys ; so they despise the old primitive trading expeditions which brought less money and were attended with more danger. 439

These new economic conditions not only discourage Natives from trading on their own account, reducing them more and more to the condition of mere hired labourers, but are rapidly destroying their picturesque and interesting industry. For a few shillings they can buy European utensils. Their attractively carved spoons are replaced by ugly tin ones ; their wooden tumblers by less artistic enamelled ones, their primitive plates by European ware decorated in doubtful taste. Instead of the piece of reed which they wore in their ears as a snuff box, they now buy brass cartridges, and the Thonga beauties, discarding the *tihuhlu* fat, now anoint themselves with a scented oil imported from Europe. There may be certain advantages in these changes, but the picturesqueness of Bantu life promptly disappears, together with the incentive to develop their Native arts and crafts! 177 439

E. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ON NATIVE INDUSTRY.

It is a strange destiny, that of these African races amongst whom the civilisation of the XIXth century has appeared, effecting the most radical changes in the minds and manners of people who, for centuries, perhaps for tens of centuries, have remained in the same primitive condition, marking time, so to speak, on the same spot, or, at most, 178

(1) There are at least two species of shrubs whose sap, when hardened, produces excellent rubber. These are fairly wide-spread and M. Dewèvre, a Belgian botanist, who has made a special study of rubber plants, and to whom I sent leaves and fruits of the trees, has classified them amongst the Landolphia. One is said to be a Landolphia Petersiana, and the other a variety of the Landolphia Kirki (Dyer) called by others Landolphia Monteiroi. Natives make an incision in the bark of the tree, and a milky sap exudes, which soon thickens and the somewhat sticky filaments are then wound 137 314

178 progressing almost imperceptibly. The transformation would seem to be as rapid as the previous immobility was fixed.

Let us try to discover the causes which may account for this extraordinary stagnation.

176 178 All are agreed in bearing witness to the fact that the state of civilisation in which Europeans found the Bantu tribes of South Africa is of an extremely ancient date. It is true that we have but little historical data to go upon as regards the development of these people, but, nevertheless, it seems to me highly probable that the shape of their ngula, their hwama, their shirundju, their pillows, the construction of their huts, dates from a very remote antiquity, and has been handed down unchanged from generation to generation. How are we to account for this lack of development, whilst the Indo-European races, starting probably from similar primitive conditions, have advanced to so high a degree of civilisation as that of the Greeks and Romans, and ultimately to that of modern times?

The reply given by many casual observers to this question is that *the Bantu races are incapable of progress.* They are condemned, by reason of their mental and spiritual constitution, to vegetate in perpetual barbarism or to make themselves ridiculous by a servile imitation of the superior races. This view is not justified by the facts of the case. We recognise a relative mental inferiority in the Thongas, as in their congeners the Bantus, but their minds, nevertheless, possess in a more or less rudimentary state, all those faculties of which we are wont to boast. During the several years I have passed in close contact with these intellects, supposedly so limited, I have been more often struck with the points of analogy between the Africans and ourselves than by the differences which separate us. Besides, it is an error to assert that they have not progressed. Their inventive genius is fully proved by the various ways in which the several tribes have taken advantage of the materials with which Nature has supplied them. The Ba-Ronga do not make their baskets in the same way as the Zulus, or the Ba-Sutho. Again, in many separate instances, we can note a distinct forward movement in their industry; the arrival of glass beads,

137 314 [illegible] small sticks. A good yield of rubber could undoubtedly be obtained in this country if the trees were cultivated and tapped in an intelligent manner.

(With regard to the name of the rubber tree, compare *Delagoa Bay, its Natives and Natural History*, London, Philip and Son, 1891, written by Mrs Monteiro, an English woman who spent several years in Lourenço Marques and published interesting observations on the country. Without claiming any special scientific accuracy, this volume affords much interesting information.)

one or two hundred years ago, gave birth to an entirely new and original decorative art; during the last century, the contest with a tribe better clothed than themselves led them to adopt a different and more decent costume. (Compare "Introduction à la Grammaire ronga" § XXXI.) When copper and brass wire became procurable, they not only made pretty bracelets, but invented quite a new art, the weaving of belts, 176 178

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Phot. Denian.

Manual work at the Lemana Training School (Northern Transvaal).

(p. 101 No. 1), egg-cups, and cups of various forms very different from those of European make.

The ability of the Native to progress in industry cannot be doubted when one sees the results of the industrial teaching they receive in many Missionary Institutions. The Swiss Romande Missionaries have introduced, in their schools, the manufacture of baskets and mats with the materials found in the country, and the results of the experiment have been altogether in favour of the intelligence of the Natives, as shown in the accompanying illustration. One of the pupils of Shiluvane even invented a new form of basket, made with a single leaf of a big palm tree (*ingobo-mane*) growing in the Legdeldop plain. In these institutions

176 where carpentering and waggon building are scientifically taught,
178 the results are very satisfactory, and I myself saw at Lovedale a splendid American desk which had been made entirely by a Native, and was as perfect as if it had been manufactured by a European craftsman. So the industrial stagnation of the South African tribes must not be put down to an innate incapacity for progress. I think we must look elsewhere for its causes, and, without claiming to exhaust the question, I will proceed to enumerate the factors, which, to my mind, explain the exceedingly slow development of these tribes.

176 Their *political system, social and religious*, is one of the chief causes
178 of this state of things. The deceased chiefs are the gods of the nation.
183 Whatever they did should be done now; their lives are the supreme examples to be followed; the traditions handed down by their ancestors are the only religious and moral guides which these people possess. Customs which have come down from prehistoric times are law. No one would think of abandoning them. To do otherwise than others do, *psa yila*, is forbidden. It would be a denial of the divine authority of the ancestors, and a danger to the tribe. This principle is most strictly maintained in such tribes as are the freest from foreign admixture and the least exposed to outside influences. In the Khosen country, for example, when an evangelist trained in Spelonken, Yosefa, wanted to build a square house, he was prevented from doing so. It was against the law. How could he expect to live in a hut of a different shape from those his forefathers had inhabited? Had there been no Whites in the country, Yosefa would have found it impossible to build a house to his liking! This is a typical case of the immobility of Native industry (1).

But in advancing as a reason for this immobility the all-powerful sway of custom, supported and maintained by the national authorities, we have only pushed the difficulty further back. How has it been possible to maintain such a system of oppression? How is it that no stronger minded individuals have arisen to throw off this yoke and gain liberty of action, stirring up the tribe, in spite of itself, from the lethargy in which it is plunged, like an organism with its blood congealed!

(1) The lack of imagination in these races seems specially noticeable in mechanics, and it has been remarked that South African Natives have not yet invented a single machine. This may be true. However, I heard it attested by a Johannesburg technician that the Thongas have a real aptitude for running engines and a real bent for mechanics. As not one of them has ever studied advanced mathematics, no wonder they have not invented new machines.

Amongst our own races, men of genius, great thinkers, have, from the earliest times, been able to impress their new ideas upon the masses, and lead them eventually, however recalcitrant, upon the march of progress. We shall have to content ourselves with two considerations which may help to solve the problem. 176 178 183

Our civilisation is the result of a combination of millions of minds and hundreds of peoples. The lake-dweller, of the stone-age, was not much more developed than the present-day Black of South Africa: in some respects he was less so. But he inhabited Europe, and, to the South of that Continent, stretches an inland sea, the Mediterranean, which spreads out its many arms in gulfs and bays reaching to the very heart of the countries on its shores, and thus facilitates access between nation and nation. Every new discovery by one soon became the property of its neighbour. Rome inherited from Greece, and Greece from Egypt and Abyssinia, and these international relations, favoured by the geographical conditions of the Old World, explain the development, *the arithmetical progression* shall we call it, of our Indo-European civilisation. In Africa, nothing of the sort exists. Few, if any, gulfs or bays are to be found in this Continent, whose coasts are hopelessly unbroken and inhospitable. Many a long stretch of river, otherwise navigable, is closed to navigation by impassable cataracts. Deserts of burning sand separate the tribes from one another, and sometimes they are isolated by veritable ramparts of lofty mountains. Communication is almost impossible, and the Black tribe, left to its own resources, amidst natural surroundings of an enervating description, remains stationary and content with the elementary industry to which it has attained. *Outside influence is wanting* to stimulate the intellectual energy, the inventive faculty of which they possess the germs. 176 178

In addition to all this a second factor is noticeable in the course of human development, and this, while all in favour of the Indo-European races, accentuates still more forcibly the differences between the several branches of the human family. Through the centuries the Egyptian hieroglyphs slowly evolved into ideographic signs, which eventually gave place to the phonetic alphabet of the Phoenicians. This *alphabet* goes forth to conquer the world, and to give a fresh aspect to things in general. These twenty to thirty letters of which the Blacks had not the slightest notion, these signs, thanks to which stone, wood and paper have been made to speak, will henceforward allow great minds to transmit their thoughts direct to their fellow-men. The knowledge of one epoch will then be passed on intact to following generations,

176 whilst, formerly, ideas were frequently lost or distorted by popular
178 tradition ; progression will henceforth be not merely *arithmetical* but *geometrical*. The *book* will be the accumulator in which the intellectual forces of the race will be stored for future transmission, without wastage, prolific of light and stimulus to every sphere of human
[212] activity. The Blacks of South Africa have never invented any system of writing. The idea of representing an object, a number, a thought, or a sound by any conventional sign, seems never to have occurred to them. Makhani, Muzila's old counsellor, did not know his own age. He probably thought, in common with many of his contemporaries, that he was at least ten years old. One day I said to him : "Why didn't you go each year, when the leaves begin to appear on the trees, and make some kind of a mark on the bark of a nkuhlu? Then, to-day, you could have counted all the marks and you would know how old you are!" He laughed and considered the idea futile, absurd! The absence of any system of writing is, doubtless, the proof of a certain intellectual inferiority, but environment may easily account for the illiterate condition of the Natives. In fact it is environment which is the chief cause of their centuries-long stagnation.

It would, however, be doing a wrong to these people, were we to judge them solely by the absence of industrial progress. Mental activity is not manifested only in the manufacture of machinery or in the transactions of high finance. Man is a being endowed with thought and speech. Speech and literature, which reflect thought, are phases of human activity more essential than industrial undertakings. The Thongas, in common with their neighbours the Ba-Sutho and the Zulus, do most certainly possess a literature, although they have no system of writing and may be classed as illiterates ; of this fact I shall furnish abundant proof when treating of their *literary and artistic life*.

J. Junod M-S (1855-1909) 1927 Thonga

197 and Moselekatsi amalgamated clans and tribes under their military rule, and could not subsist unless they maintained a despotic domination over them ; they were an aristocratic race and considered their language as superior. Ruling by fear and by the sword, they purposely remained aliens amongst the enslaved tribes. Quite different was the spirit of the ancient invaders of 1400 or 1500 A. D. They had not such an ideal of vast domination ; they operated on a much smaller scale : they were satisfied to take the chieftainship from the aborigines, and quickly mingled with them, married their daughters (as they still do) and so became one with them.

Would the Ba-Ngoni have been able, in course of time, to establish their Zulu dialect instead of the Thonga, if the Portuguese had not broken their power ? It is impossible to say. They had succeeded in imposing all their Zulu terminology in military matters. Meanwhile the women were not learning Zulu and the women are the best safeguards of the purity of the language amongst primitive peoples. Therefore I do not think they would have been able to uproot the old language, which must have been spoken for many centuries in Thonga territory.

My conclusion is then that the Thonga language was already spoken by the primitive occupants of the country more than 500 years ago and that, together with a certain number of customs, it formed the great bond which bound the Thonga clans together in past centuries.

181 703 2) *Mental characteristics of the Thongas.* We shall only ask how the Thongas compare with the Zulus or Suthos as regards character, and especially from a military point of view.

Having had the opportunity to witness a war in which the Nkuna chief Muhlaba was allied with the Pedi chief Maaghe, in the Zoutpansberg, I can testify that the Thongas had ten times as much military spirit

Phot. C. Lingner

"Indaba" Thonga warrior.

181 703 the Pedis. I saw the two armies, the same day, preparing for the same battle. The Thongas were armed to the teeth, forming a great circle, all standing, shouting their war songs, gesticulating, jumping, imploring their chief to allow them to start. The Pedi warriors were sitting under trees, taking their snuff and apparently as calm as any other day.

During the Gungunyane war, the Thongas were brave, at least those not entirely dependent on the Ngoni king, who had not allowed his warriors to kill white men. The Rongas of Mpfumu especially showed great courage and endurance, and those who served the Portuguese in their Angola war have been praised as being very steady and reliable.

177 181 725 721 On the other hand everything seems to prove that military ability is not an ancient feature of the Thonga character, and that it has been imparted to them by the Zulus, who taught them the art of fighting during the last century, pushing them to the front in their battles and calling them "Mabuyandlela," "those who open the way." Before the Ngoni invasion, the Thonga armies were ignorant of the *mukhumbi* viz. the armed circle of warriors which is the basis of the Zulu military system; (See Part IV) : they used to form themselves into a straight line and, in their battles, very few men were killed. They were normal Bantu clans, viz. people living peacefully, occasionally quarrelling with their neighbours. The idea of conquest, of vast dominion, the system of an armed nation which Chaka and his followers pursued, was something new amongst South African Natives and was probably borrowed by Dingiswayo from the Whites. This fact ought not to be ignored.

Under a just European supervision, there is no probability that the Thonga tribe will change its peaceful and mild charcter.

3) *Physical characteristics of the Thongas.* It cannot be said 142 that the Thongas possess a very distinct and unique physical type. They are generally of a dark brown colour, sometimes purely black, much darker than the Suthos. As a whole, their external appearance bears a much closer resemblance to that of the Zulus, but, as regards face and stature, they vary very much. You may meet Thongas with typical negro faces, broad lips, flat

643 seems to have been particularly feared. He had even bought
619 poison from white people and is said to have killed his rival, Musongi, chief of the Maputju clan, with whom he fought the battle of Malangotiba in 1870. He sent a woman of bad life to Maputju. The woman succeeded in winning the confidence of the king and poured this poison into his glass. Nowadays the Ronga chiefs have been taught by the Authorities to sit in council when discussing matters.

643 The two principal prerogatives of the chief are the right of *luma* and taxation.

III. *The right of luma, and the first fruits rites.*

181 We come to a set of rites which might be dealt with when
241 considering the Agricultural life, but I prefer to describe them here, as they provide us with a typical illustration of the constitution of the clan ; they are highly characteristic of the Bantu community, a community which is essentially agricultural in its pursuits, animistic in its beliefs, and hierarchic as regards its social and national life.

643 We have already met with the word *luma* and noticed that
262 its ordinary meaning is *to bite* ; its ritual sense is to *remove the*
784 *injurious character of a given food by a certain ceremony*. The luma
527 is a necessity before eating the flesh of certain wild beasts, as we
241 shall see when studying the laws of hunting (See Part IV). But it is of still more importance, and one of the great laws of the clan, that the official luma shall take place before the subjects eat the products of the new year. There seem to be two ideas at the root of this strange taboo :

1) To eat certain kinds of food is dangerous for one's health, and the first mouthful taken must be seasoned with the royal drug.

2) The gods, the chief, and elder brothers, have a prior right to enjoy the products of the soil. To precede them in doing this is a sin which would bring them misfortune. The hierarchy must be absolutely respected.

538 fables and stories. But may there not have been, in regard to the African tribes, some special circumstances which contributed to the development of this idea, and impelled them to give vent to it in a hundred different ways?

538 181 Among the Bantus, the Chief is all powerful. Surrounded by Counsellors, protected by warriors always ready to do his bidding, he is an autocrat with power of life and death over his subjects, especially where the primitive clan has evolved into a confederation of tribes united by military power. If the Bantu clan is in a sense democratic, the hierarchy is, nevertheless, all powerful in its midst. Before the Chief and before the invincible custom of which he is the representative, every one bows and trembles. In every village the headman possesses similar power over his subordinates, and elder brothers reign as despots over the younger. From the top to the bottom of the social ladder the strong dominate over the weak and combine, in a wonderful way, to assure the submission of the inferior. In the evening, round the fire, the women and the children take their revenge in the Black man's usual way, i. e., by saying what they think in a round-about manner. They do not try to upset the existing state of affairs. Far from it! But they take a malicious pleasure in telling of the clever tricks of the Hare and his associates! Why? Because Mr. Hare represents the little one, the subject, the ordinary private individual, who has received no special advantages, either by birth or from nature, and yet who, by his own personal wit or common sense, gets the better of the great ones of the community and even of the chiefs. Is it a mere coincidence that three of the tales I have collected conclude with the death of a chief brought about by the machiavellian astuteness of that rascal, the Hare? Or, sometimes, it is the youngest sister who figures in the story; the despised one, covered with a loathsome skin disease; the insignificant little goat-herd; the son of the neglected wife; all of whom accomplish great deeds, entirely unexpectedly.

538 I see in these stories, as it were, a discreet protest of weakness against strength, a protest of spiritual against material force; possibly they may contain a warning to those in power from those

the material representation of his personality. By this contact the patient has in a way become a part of the "complexus Bula" and what happens to the bones will also happen to him ; what is said by the bones will henceforth apply directly to him. This magic conception of Nature is probably the profound and secret reason why the diviners believe so firmly in their art. 787 789 791

On the other hand, this art is so perfect that bone-throwers can derive very great satisfaction from the practice of it. It must be born in mind that, in fact, all the elements of Native life are represented by the objects contained in the basket of divinatory bones. It is a resumé of their whole social order, of all their institutions, and the bones, when they fall, provide them with an instantaneous picture of all that may befall them. This system is so elaborate that I do not hesitate to say that, together with their language, their folklore, their lobola customs and their burial rites, it is the product of their psychic life which shows most intelligence. If the premises of divination are accepted, astragalomancy seems to me vastly superior to cheiromancy and all the other systems which have been invented by us. It is also superior to the divination by four tablets of ivory or wood practised by a certain number of South African tribes, a description of which will be found in Appendix VI (1). 787 181

But if this system of divination is a proof of great intelligence, it must be confessed that *its results*, as shown in the psychic life of the tribe, 787 155 182

(1) There are some grounds for thinking that divination by astragalus bones is very old in the history of mankind. The Greeks practised *astragalomancy*. In a paper to which I shall refer in App. VI, the Rev. N. Roberts mentions the temple of Dodone, in which, according to Cicero, there was a large brass basin with the statue of a man upon it, and this man held in his hands a whip with three straps from which hung small astragalus bones. When these bones were set in motion by the wind, they struck against the basin and the sounds thus produced had a prophetic character. This was astragalomancy, but of a very different kind from that just described. Aristotle makes frequent allusions to the astragalus bone and says, inter alia, that one of its sides, named *caon*, represents the figure 6 ; another, named *chion*, the figure 1, etc. This shows that in his time the astragalus bone was already identified with the dice. The dice, also called *αστραγαλος* in Greek is simply an astragalus bone whose sides have been cut so as to form a perfect cube. We find traces of the use of the astragalus even further back in the past. Angelo Mosso, quoted by the same author, asserts that he found many astragalus in Italy, where they were used in connection with primitive religion as far back as the neolithic period. The discovery in the lake of Neuchâtel of a collection of more than thirty astragalus in the lake dwellers' station of Auvernier may be a proof that these bones did in truth play a part in the customs of primitive humanity. If this is so, then the Bantus have preserved the astragalus as they did the wooden pillow of the old Egyptians, the ancestrolatry of the Mousterians and the "mbaya" (p. 93) of the Libyans. The astragalus is still employed in play to represent cattle by Swiss children in the Canton of Valais, and I am told that the South African Boers have the same custom, and call these bones dol-ose.

837 of his father, which is considered as *biha*, very bad), he must not
684 take any part in the burial, though he might be the regular "master
783 of the mourning." Relatives will drive him away because they
578 have pity on him, they know what misfortune threatens him. It is
182 a terrible taboo! There are medicines to remove this contamin-
626 ation ; the *yila* is removed by them, but the *biha* (bad action)
753 remains! However in the case of the disease called *mpondjo*, (which I believe to be the lupus), medicines are of no avail ; should a man visit his rival, who is suffering from it, he will die. We have also seen the terrible complications which are believed to take place at the birth of children, when there has been a question of adultery. (P. 40.)

836 These great taboos show that there is a deep feeling amongst the Thongas that promiscuity of any kind is a bad and a dangerous thing. Even in the case of *gangisa*, boys are censured when two of them court the same girl.

10) Divorce.

586 Adultery is one of the causes of divorce. The guilty woman, instead of obeying her legitimate husband and helping him to get his compensation, may choose to go to her lover and live with him. This leads to an immediate divorce. The husband goes to the parents of the unfaithful wife and claims his lobolo. They have perhaps no money to give. However they will try to get it as soon as possible, even if it is by the dissolution of the marriage of their own son ; they will perhaps send back his young wife to her parents and claim the lobolo paid for her, in order to meet the claim of the angry husband (See Part JJ). It would seem easier to go to the thief and claim from him the lobola for the adulteress whom he has stolen (tlhuba). But a thief is not a reliable man! If he has stolen, it proves that he had nothing (1). (See Appendix VIII.)

Divorce frequently takes place for more trivial reasons, for

548 (1) Women of low morals are called in Ronga gwababana, prostitute. There are plenty of them all round Lourenço Marques, where morality has sunk to a very low level; but this is the result of degeneration.

621 1) *Social rites.* The muti, as we have seen, is a little organised
596 community having its own laws, amongst which the most important
833 seems to be the law of hierarchy. The elder brother is the undisputed
768 master and no one can supersede him. He is the owner of the village. No one must "steal it" from him. Should any one do so, the whole community would suffer and no children would be born ; the life of the organism would be deeply affected. That is the reason why the headman must go first with his principal wife to have relations with her in the new village, and thus *take possession* of it or *tie* it. For this same reason, when the headman dies, the village *must* move. It is taboo to remain in it. Until the inheritance has been distributed, it is still *his home* (kwa kwe) ; but as soon as this ceremony has taken place, the villagers must go away, and close the door with a thorny branch. The part played by the
621 principal wife in all these ceremonies is most remarkable. It is
595 absolutely imperative that the headman should "tie the village" with her,
562 and not with another of his spouses. Should she be very old, the law
768 must be observed all the same ; should she be ill, and unable to have sexual
764 relations, the village simply cannot be moved. In the Northern clans we see her taking the shield and the assagai, closing the village and "giving it" to the inmates, even performing a sacrifice and praying to the gods. It is very rare to see a woman presiding at a public religious ceremony ; but she is the owner of the village as well as the headman. Moving is imperative when she dies as well as after the death of the headman. The main gate must also be closed and a new entrance made in the fence to be used during the year of mourning ; in the case of her death, this opening must be made on the left of the regular *mharana*, whilst, when the husband dies, it is made on the right side ; just as in the hut, when the corpse is removed for burial. (See page 138.)

351 2) *Protective rites.* These are those which concern the fence. This
789 fence does not afford material protection. The branches dry up very
621 soon and, in the case of a bush-fire, for instance, they would do more harm than good. It is a spiritual protection, a barrier of charms, of magic influences, to prevent the entrance of wizards and of all the hostile powers of the bush. We shall understand this better when treating of witchcraft superstitions. (Part VI.)

182 3) *Passage rites.* The reader will have been surprised to observe
621 amongst the ceremonies of the moving of villages, many features
829 which we have already met with in the circumcision school, or in the mourning customs. At first sight there seems to be no relation whatever between the moving of a village, the initiation of boys and the

182 mourning over the dead. The inner connexion existing between these
621 three events is that, in all of them, there is a passage. Hence the
783 resemblance of the rites. This striking similarity is, to my mind, the
829 best proof that the passage rites constitute a peculiar category. When a
headman has decided to move, he leaves his old kraal, he *separates* from it, not by the ordinary gate, but by a special opening made at the back of the village. He is not allowed to return to it again. Then, for him and for all his people, begins a *marginal period* of one month or more, the buhlapfa (notice the prefix *bu* which indicates a period here, as in busahana [page 42]). We see the village, during these few weeks, put beyond the pale of society. The ordinary laws are suspended, (licencious songs), and many special taboos are enforced (prohibition of sexual relations, fire taboo, water taboo, etc.), just as in the period of mourning; at last the village returns to the ordinary course of life by a final act of purification, the mysterious *hlamba ndjaka*, which seems to be the most powerful means of cleansing the collective life. This last ceremony shows that, here, the marginal period has been instituted on account of the uncleaness, the impurity of the old village. Let us remember that in most cases the village has been moved on account of death! All the adult members of the social organism take part in the cleansing (at least in the Northern clans) and so the village begins a new and purified life. No one can deny the deep significance of all these rites and the mystic conception of the Thonga village.

C. THE HEADMAN AND THE ORGANISATION OF THE VILLAGE.

596 Each village thus possesses its superior (hosi), its master. He
576 is called *mumumzane* or *numzane*, a curious expression which is
621 also employed in Zulu; it means owner of a kraal, gentleman,
618 and is often used in saluting grown up men. We have seen the mystic relation between the headman and his *muti*. The village, the muti, is the primitive social organism. The clan (tiko), which is the gathering of all the *miti*, reproduces all the features of the
622 village life on a large scale. So the *numzane* corresponds to the
596 *hosi*, chief of the tribe. Both certainly possess great authority,

726 On the other hand sexual relations, which are allowed in ordinary
829 life, become taboo. This period of fighting seems really to be
834 considered as a marginal period for the whole tribe.

It is so par excellence *for the warriors* and I think that many of the rites imposed upon them are to be explained in this way. As we saw, the period of margin is generally preceded by separation rites. (See page 74.) Some of these, which are very characteristic, are performed when the army starts : the leave-taking from the General with wild shouts, the custom of swallowing a piece of meat without touching it with the hands and taking an emetic afterwards, that of jumping over the ntjhopfa branch, the medicine of oblivion! etc. The triumphant return, the partaking of the meat of the oxen which have been taken, may be the aggregation ceremonies, viz., the acts by which the warriors return to their ordinary life.

726 Passage rites are still more distinct *in the case of the slayers* ; but
829 their condition is worse, as it implies the idea of defilement following
304 upon murder and is attended with the danger proceeding from the *nuru*.
182 They are "hot" (an expression which also applies to the tabooed woman
783 during her menses etc.); they are "black" (an epithet which also designates the grave-diggers, the bereaved mother, etc.). Hence a *seclusion* much more complete, a true period of margin with many alimentary and sexual (1) taboos. Possibly the incisions on the brow are an old kind of tatooing in connexion with this marginal period, similar to the inguinal incision of the widows (p. 201). The purification rites are of the same kind as those of the mourners, and particularly of the grave-diggers. The return to society, after their seclusion, is marked by rites of separation from the marginal period, which no doubt aim at getting rid of the defilement connected therewith. (Exposure of the *mizilo* outside the village in the bush.) Is it not striking to notice the correspondence between these rites in their peculiar sequence and those of the circumcision school, of mourning, of moving a village ?

See, as a conclusion to Part III, Practical Conclusions, No. VI : "The New era and the Future of the South African Tribe."

834 (1) The sexual taboos are so severe that, after the Moodi battle, one of the slayers
727 took great offence at a man who dared to touch his food, as the man was living in his home and had relations with his wife. The slayer was afraid that this contact might cause his own death or bring misfortune to his family.

3) The Punishment of Witchcraft.

754 What is the punishment inflicted on those convicted of the
683 crime of witchcraft? Let us remember that this is a crime, an act of homicide, doubly punishable by the Court. Chief Shiluvane had definitely prohibited it by a decree in the following words : "I do not allow anyone to die in my country except on account of old age. So let the baloyi at once cease their enchantments, or I shall kill them all." In former times the crime of witchcraft was punished by death and the culprit was immediately hanged. The last to be punished in this way, in the Nkuna clan, was Mudebane (I. p. 443), and Mankhelu himself executed him. The wizards are impaled or drowned, as the case may be. Flogging and banishment were also resorted to when the crime was not so heinous. In Khosen wizards were expelled from the villages and roamed about the country, sleeping in the ruins, mocked at and insulted by the children, and oxen sinews were tied round their biceps so tightly that they entered their flesh and caused great suffering.

177.68 One of my informants (Fenis), who drank the mondjo at the death of Zihlahla, chief of the Mpfumo district, about 1870, told me that the heaviest penalty imposed on the wizards on that occasion was a fine of one or two goats, or of one pound sterling. He attributed this leniency to the proximity of the Whites. The civilised Governments in Africa have certainly done their best to put down this method of smelling-out wizards, and their efforts have been by no means without result. Native chiefs are now content with fining the wizards £ 10 or £ 15, half of which remains in their own pockets. I heard of one of them who claimed to be a Christian, but did not object to the substantial increase to his civil list brought about by witchcraft suits.

IV. *Concluding Remarks on Witchcraft.*

754 Witchcraft is one of the greatest curses of Native Life. I attribute the
● 182 enormous hold which this superstition has taken on the mind of the Bantu to three causes : 1) The *Animistic beliefs* explained on p. 367

2. Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

which are at the root of the idea of the double existence of the baloyi. 182 754
2) *Cannibalism*, which has perhaps never existed as a general custom [266
in South Africa, but has left a feeling of disgust and horror in the minds of later generations ; this feeling is also manifested in the numerous Ogre tales.
3) The *terrible hatred* of which the Native mind is capable. If some [152]
people venture to accuse members of these tribes of such awful acts as those of killing and eating human beings, it is because they know that a Native who hates would not shrink from anything to satisfy his desire of vengeance.

We must however remember that the witchcraft superstition was universally found amongst our own forefathers, and that there were epidemics of it in the XIVth, XVth and even the XVIth centuries, hundreds of wizards having been tortured and burnt in most European countries, after having been tried before regular Courts. I have tried to establish a parallel between the ideas and practices of witchcraft in French Switzerland and those of the Thongas. The results of the comparison are very curious. I cannot give them all here, and must refer the reader to the Paris Revue *Foi et Vie*, No. of October, 1910, in which they were published. The most striking difference is this. Amongst Thongas, we are still in the *predualistic age*, viz., the opposition between a good, moral Spirit (God) and bad, wicked spirits (demons, Satan) does not yet exist in Religion. So the power of God is not invoked to reveal the wizards, or to protect the innocent against their spells. But the same animistic conceptions evidently formed the basis of European as of African witchcraft.

This superstition has a deadly effect on Native life. It is a continual source of trouble, fear, quarrels, sorrow. Strange to say, it has been on the increase in recent years. It ruins the villages. — "Formerly," say my informants, "you could see villages of ten or twenty huts. Now the accusations of witchcraft have broken them up. Each man builds his own hut apart, from fear of being bewitched, or because he is suspected of being a noyi (1)."

(1) The evil affects the Native Christian communities also, fostering hatred amongst them, and this animistic doctrine is much more difficult to overcome than ancestrolatry, which is very quickly and completely abandoned by converts.

Some Christian Natives are so convinced that witchcraft is a reality that they interpret Matt. X. 28 by saying that "those who kill the body and who must not be feared" are the baloyi. Unhappily a Zulu translation of the Greek word φαρμακοί by the word corresponding to baloyi, in Revelation XXII, v. 15, confirmed them in

the material representation of his personality. By this contact the 787
patient has in a way become a part of the "complexus Bula" and what 789
happens to the bones will also happen to him ; what is said by the bones 791
will henceforth apply directly to him. This magic conception of Nature is probably the profound and secret reason why the diviners believe so firmly in their art.

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787 are most *deplorable*. These practices kill in ovo any serious attempt at
155 the use of reason or experience in practical life. Native doctors might
have arrived at a useful and beneficent knowledge of the medicinal
182 virtues of vegetables, if they had studied them carefully. But why
should they trouble themselves with study, when a single cast of the
bones at once tells them what root must be taken to cure the disease?
(Compare my account of diagnosis, p. 475). Further, the bones
annihilate the moral conscience, or, at any rate, they prevent any
healthy development of this precious faculty. When overtaken by
misfortune the Bantu might be moved to introspection to review his
conduct, and see what wrong actions he had committed. From this self-
examination, moral progress might result. But such trouble is useless!
The bones are thrown. They reveal that misfortune was caused by
such and such spiritual influences, wizards, gods, defilement, Heaven,
that it must be combated by such and such means, — a drug, or a packet
of drugs, a victim, male or female, offered by so and so, in such and such
a manner. This is all-sufficient and the conscience remains dormant (1)
as does the reason. I am convinced that, however high the degree of
astuteness engendered by the divinatory bones may be, they have been
extremely detrimental to the intellectual and moral welfare of the
Natives.

This leads us to our last chapter, in which the questions of Taboo and Morality will be considered.

(1) Wishing to know if the bones were sometimes used to obtain moral guidance, I once asked Mankhelu: "As you throw your bones on every occasion, would you consult them when going to a beer party? There might be trouble, perhaps quarrels, blows... If you wish to avoid these would the bones tell you to abstain from the party?" He laughed heartily. "No!" said he. "If I saw that the men were drinking too much I should leave before they were quite drunk." I have some doubts if he would really have done so, but it remains clear that the bones have nothing to do with morality!

be secret, or on the square, if there is no objection to making it public. The chief and his men sit on one side, the visitor on the other; if he wishes to conform strictly to all the laws of etiquette, he will first explain the matter to his own Agent General, who will communicate with the chief's special counsellor, repeating the words of the visitor, sentence by sentence; the counsellor will, in his turn, communicate with the chief, again telling him the whole story, as if he had not heard a word of it before. The affair will thus have passed through three hands and the answer should, in due formality, be given through the same channels. These precautions, which seem eminently superfluous, even somewhat ridiculous, to a person unacquainted with Bantu etiquette, evidently proceed from the fact that there are no stenographers or secretaries to furnish any written record of the proceedings, so that it is necessary to have as many witnesses as possible and that these should thoroughly understand the matter under consideration.

II. *Judicial Cases.*

1) Sense of justice.

As has often been remarked, the Bantus possess a strong sense of justice. They believe in social order and in the observance of the laws and, though these laws are not written, they are universal and perfectly well known. The law is the custom, that which has always been done. The old men, the counsellors and more particularly the counsellors of the capital, are those who can speak authoritatively. But everybody is welcome in the *hubo*, where matters are discussed; even a stranger can take part in the discussion. "No one is excluded, if he speaks rightly; only fools, those who do not know anything" (Mankhelu).

This participation in the discussions of the hubo has developed the sense of law to a wonderful extent amongst the Bantus. They are all born advocates and judges, and take a great interest in this business! No wonder therefore that the Thonga vocabulary

176 where carpentering and waggon building are scientifically taught,
178 the results are very satisfactory, and I myself saw at Lovedale a splendid American desk which had been made entirely by a Native, and was as perfect as if it had been manufactured by a European craftsman. So the industrial stagnation of the South African tribes must not be put down to an innate incapacity for progress. I think we must look elsewhere for its causes, and, without claiming to exhaust the question, I will proceed to enumerate the factors, which, to my mind, explain the exceedingly slow development of these tribes.

176 Their *political system, social and religious*, is one of the chief causes
178 of this state of things. The deceased chiefs are the gods of the nation.
183 Whatever they did should be done now ; their lives are the supreme examples to be followed ; the traditions handed down by their ancestors are the only religious and moral guides which these people possess. Customs which have come down from prehistoric times are law. No one would think of abandoning them. To do otherwise than others do, *psa yila*, is forbidden. It would be a denial of the divine authority of the ancestors, and a danger to the tribe. This principle is most strictly maintained in such tribes as are the freest from foreign admixture and the least exposed to outside influences. In the Khosen country, for example, when an evangelist trained in Spelonken, Yosefa, wanted to build a square house, he was prevented from doing so. It was against the law. How could he expect to live in a hut of a different shape from those his forefathers had inhabited? Had there been no Whites in the country, Yosefa would have found it impossible to build a house to his liking! This is a typical case of the immobility of Native industry (1).

But in advancing as a reason for this immobility the all-powerful sway of custom, supported and maintained by the national authorities, we have only pushed the difficulty further back. How has it been possible to maintain such a system of oppression? How is it that no stronger minded individuals have arisen to throw off this yoke and gain liberty of action, stirring up the tribe, in spite of itself, from the lethargy in which it is plunged, like an organism with its blood congealed !

(1) The lack of imagination in these races seems specially noticeable in mechanics, and it has been remarked that South African Natives have not yet invented a single machine. This may be true. However, I heard it attested by a Johannesburg technician that the Thongas have a real aptitude for running engines and a real bent for mechanics. As not one of them has ever studied advanced mathematics, no wonder they have not invented new machines.

Amongst our own races, men of genius, great thinkers, have, from the earliest times, been able to impress their new ideas upon the masses, and lead them eventually, however recalcitrant, upon the march of progress. We shall have to content ourselves with two considerations which may help to solve the problem. 176 178 183

Our civilisation is the result of a combination of millions of minds and hundreds of peoples. The lake-dweller, of the stone-age, was not much more developed than the present-day Black of South Africa: in some respects he was less so. But he inhabited Europe, and, to the South of that Continent, stretches an inland sea, the Mediterranean, which spreads out its many arms in gulfs and bays reaching to the very heart of the countries on its shores, and thus facilitates access between nation and nation. Every new discovery by one soon became the property of its neighbour. Rome inherited from Greece, and Greece from Egypt and Abyssinia, and these international relations, favoured by the geographical conditions of the Old World, explain the development, *the arithmetical progression* shall we call it, of our Indo-European civilisation. In Africa, nothing of the sort exists. Few, if any, gulfs or bays are to be found in this Continent, whose coasts are hopelessly unbroken and inhospitable. Many a long stretch of river, otherwise navigable, is closed to navigation by impassable cataracts. Deserts of burning sand separate the tribes from one another, and sometimes they are isolated by veritable ramparts of lofty mountains. Communication is almost impossible, and the Black tribe, left to its own resources, amidst natural surroundings of an enervating description, remains stationary and content with the elementary industry to which it has attained. *Outside influence is wanting* to stimulate the intellectual energy, the inventive faculty of which they possess the germs. 176 178

In addition to all this a second factor is noticeable in the course of human development, and this, while all in favour of the Indo-European races, accentuates still more forcibly the differences between the several branches of the human family. Through the centuries the Egyptian hieroglyphs slowly evolved into ideographic signs, which eventually gave place to the phonetic alphabet of the Phoenicians. This *alphabet* goes forth to conquer the world, and to give a fresh aspect to things in general. These twenty to thirty letters of which the Blacks had not the slightest notion, these signs, thanks to which stone, wood and paper have been made to speak, will henceforward allow great minds to transmit their thoughts direct to their fellow-men. The knowledge of one epoch will then be passed on intact to following generations,

719 women to the river to throw away the contaminated earth, order
821 them to make a ball of that earth, and to bring it back to us in
843 the early morning. We grind it, we put it into a pot where it
783 must remain for five days, and then we prepare the great drug to sprinkle the land. The medicine is put into oxen horns and they go to all the drifts, to the boundaries of the country, on the borders of the Nwebeti and of the Thabina rivers, on the road to Sibila's country, to Diskop (Leydsdorp); they must not however cross rivers. Our neighbours do the same on their own side. One of the girls digs the earth, the others dip a stick into the horn and sprinkle the drug into the hole. We also sprinkle the road on which these women have trodden, when they had their blood; we remove the misfortune caused by these women on the roads. The country is pure again. Rain can fall."

This is the purifying rite in the Nkuna clan. Mankhelu asserts that the Pedis do the same. He did not know if the custom existed amongst other Thonga clans. But Viguet described the same custom to me as being in force on the borders of the Limpopo, under the name of *mbelele*. The bones having revealed that the country is impure, the chief orders the mbelele: it is a period of mourning (nkosi) for the land. First the *phokolo*, or sacrifice of the black victim is performed (See Part VI). Then the women assemble. They must remove all their clothing, only putting some grass round their loins and, with a peculiar skipping step, singing a special song: "Mpfula nana" — "rain fall," — they go to all the spots where children prematurely born have been buried in dry ground, on the hills, take away what they find in the broken pots and collect all that impure matter in a secret place, so that children may see nothing of what they are doing. Water is poured on these graves in order to "quench them (timula)." On the evening of the same day they go and bury these impurities; this is
[183 done in the mud, near the river. No man must approach during
831] this operation: the women would have the right to strike the imprudent one and ask him questions on the obscene formulae of circumcision; the man would answer in the most impure words he could find, as all language taboos are suspended on that day; nakedness even is no longer taboo, "because," says Viguet,

"it is the law of the country!" Every one consents to the suspension of the ordinary laws! (1)

Amongst the Rongas, I did not hear of any connection between prematurely born children and rain. When the mbelele rite is performed, a mother of twins must lead the procession of women who draw water and pour it on the graves of the twins in order to secure the rain. They also clean all the wells (kuha tinhlobo), digging them afresh and removing any filth in the water. It may be that the corpse of a twin, if it has been buried in dry ground, will be dug out of its grave and buried again near the river, or they will go in procession and pour water on the grave. This will influence Heaven, which is killing the earth by the terrible heat of the sun. The burning October winds will cease and the rain will fall.

There is something mysterious about all these customs. Considered merely as ideas regarding Nature and natural phenomena, I believe their essential meaning to be this : — there are some cases of human birth which are taboo. While any birth is taboo, owing to the lochia, that of children prematurely born is doubly dangerous. Abnormal children, such as twins, children who have died before the "boha puri" rite (I. p. 56), in some clans also children who cut their upper teeth first, share this noxious character. They are a calamity for the whole land as they are connected with the mysterious power of Heaven, and so prevent the rain from falling. The great remedy for the evil, the only means of counteracting this influence, is to bury these children in wet ground. Should this not have been done, the chief must order these little corpses to be exhumed and buried near the river : this is the aim and object of the mbelele. If wet, these graves will cause no harm (2).

How did these extraordinary conceptions first originate ?

(1) This rite of *mbelele* shows striking analogies with the Passage rites which we have already often met with in Thonga customs. This is a special period, a mourning period for the land, says Viguet, a marginal period which, as such, is accompanied by obscene manifestations, both in speech and in absence of clothing.

(2) In the Malulekе clan, as previously mentioned, these three categories of children must be *cremated*, and foreigners dying in the midst of the clan are also burnt after their death, from fear that they might belong to one of these categories and so prevent the rain from falling, if they were buried in dry ground. The mbelele rite there is called *nhylenhyle*. Rangane describes it as follows : — Women collect the bones of twins,

895 What is the connection between abnormal births of human
772 beings and the rain-fall? I think it can be found in the
771 conception of Heaven which has inspired so many curious rites, and which I shall explain in the next chapter. So it is possible that, after all, the mbelele rite has a religious idea at its base.

b) *Rain charms.*

789 The removal of the corpses of abnormal children from dry
177 ground and their burial near the river probably sometimes proves ineffective to produce rain. So Bantu magicians have invented a great many charms to obtain the greatly desired showers, and the power of the rain-makers is enormous. Our tribe does not seem to have developed this art as much as others. The Sutho-Pedis are masters in this domain and Mankhelu, who had been taught by them and had become a great and renowned rain-maker, revealed all his secrets to me. He possessed the drug and used it frequently, he said, having often been called in by Sutho chiefs dwelling in far distant districts, as far off as Pretoria. He assured me that he had met with so much success that these chiefs had given him oxen, horses, a waggon, precious beads, etc.! Where had he found this marvellous drug? At Rivimbi (in Venda : Luvimbi), a country north of Spelonken, not far from the Limpopo and to which he went, as far as I could make out, in 1865 or 1866. The Luvimbi people are the descendants of Luvimbi, (1) a chief of the old times (as old as Nkuna, says Mankhelu) who, after his death, went to heaven and became king of heaven ; he still exists there as a spirit, hearing and knowing everything that is done on earth. This Luvimbi is probably the same whom the Vendas call the first man, and concerning whom they have a number of traditions which I shall mention a little later.

776 and those of still-born children or those who died at birth ; to these they add their old
783 rags (perhaps the cloths used for their menses?) ; they bring all these impurities to the
789 cross-ways and *burn them* there, singing impure songs, saying : "To-day is a great day!
821 There is no taboo any more! If you prohibit anything, it will be an insult to the rain;
183 it will not fall." The smoke of all that they have burnt constitutes a religious offering : now the country will be pure and the rain will fall. The conception prevailing among the Maluleke is somewhat different from that of the Rongas.

(1) I have published an account of the Venda traditions connected with Luvimbi or Raluvimbi in *The S. A Journal of Science*, April 1921, where more details will be found concerning this personage.

2: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

p. 573

CHAPTER IV

Taboo and Morality.

If we take the trouble to make a careful study of the life of so-called savages, we very soon notice that, instead of being free from all law and restraint, as superficial observers believe, their life is, on the contrary, subject to a great number of rules and prohibitions, by which primitive man is held captive in the bonds of custom and tradition. These prohibitions are of two principal kinds. Those which are most obvious are *the taboos*, which we have met with on each page of these two volumes. They play an immense part in the behaviour of the raw Native. But, in addition to these, there are other restraints which seem to spring from a totally different set of ideas, *the moral principles.* The relation between the taboo and moral notions is very difficult to determine. It is at the present time one of the most debated questions of Anthropology ; I shall try to show what the state of things is in that phase of human development to which the Thongas of South Africa have attained. 183 784 577

A. THE TABOO.

I ventured to give a provisional definition of the *yila*, or *taboo*, of the Thongas, when we met with the first interdiction of this type, Vol. I. page 37 : "Any object, act, or person that implies a danger for the individual or for the community, and that must consequently be avoided, this object, act or person being under a kind of ban." After explaining hundreds of taboos, I do not feel that this definition needs any alteration. Its main element is this : 784

3) How are taboos *dealt with?* 784

Happily the danger of taboos can be removed, otherwise life would be almost impossible! The medicine-men have the 789 necessary drugs to protect their poor fellow-men against the misfortune (khombo) which is always threatening them! Is not the whole arsenal of magic at their disposal? Rites in great numbers provide the necessary protection, especially the *luma rite*, which is the proper method of avoiding the special dangers connected with the *first use* of anything. The wish to obtain protection against all these dangers explains the immenre influence of the medicine-men, of those who know the preventive drugs to be used against defilement and misfortune.

It is impossible to attain to a true knowledge of the taboos 784 without studying the laws of *their suspension*. Taboos are sometimes suspended. The chief, for instance, is above them, at any rate above some of them, being himself a magical being, a tabooed personage (I. p. 382). The collectivity has a still greater power over them and can cancel them. There are times when all these prohibitions, or at least some of them, are withdrawn; these are the marginal periods, when we behold the strange spectacle that ordinary taboos are suspended (language taboos, relatives-in-law taboos), whilst others are enforced (sexual taboos). I have often drawn attention to this curious phenomenon.

B. MORAL RESTRAINTS.

But taboos are not the only kind of restraint to which primitive 183 Bantus submit themselves. The following statements have been 604 collected from old or young informants who were urged to express their inner feelings on this question:

1) The maternal uncle must provide the ntehe for the first child of his sister. However this is not *yila*, it is a *nau*, a law, and if it is transgressed no direct harm will follow. (I. p. 46.)

2) Men and women do not bathe in the same spot in the lake 183 of Rikatla. Why? Not on account of a yila, but on account of 834

183 *shitshabo*, viz., fear, or respect (1). There is no danger in
834 transgressing this law of decency, but to do so is condemned.

3) When a young man has transgressed the taboo of *matlulana* (I. p. 197), having had sexual relations with the same woman as another man, he is not allowed to attend the burial of his rival. It is a taboo. However, if the deceased is his own father, the culprit can be treated with drugs, and so fulfil his duty of grave-digger, being protected against the dangers of his condition : "The *yila* has been removed, but the *biha* remains." *Biha* means that which is bad.

183 So there are three domains, besides the yila, in which the
577 Native is conscious of the restraints imposed upon him : law or custom, respect or decency, and duty or *fanelo*. To these might be added a fourth, the disgust for a certain food (p. 83). The great difference between the taboo and the other prohibitions is that the transgression of the latter is not necessarily attended with danger (2).

Let us consider more closely the idea of *fanelo*, or duty.

192 Fanelo comes from *ku fana*, to be alike ; fanela is what is
183 seemly, becoming. This is not as yet a very high notion of
577 morality. The moral sense, however, certainly exists and this is proved by three facts :

1) The richness of the vocabulary expressive of moral ideas. There are more words applicable to the negative side of the idea and signifying *bad*, than to the positive, signifying *good* ; a phenomenon which may be observed in most primitive languages, even in our French patois. *Ku biha* means to be bad, morally speaking, and to be ugly, esthetically speaking. The distinctiveness of the two domains exists, however, in the mind of the Native. He says : "behile mbilu" — "is bad in his heart," or "behile liso" — "is ugly as regards his face." *Shibi*, the derivative noun of the verb ku

(1) I have heard the mixed bathing of men and women also called a yila, but it is a special kind of yila, *the yila of tshabiso*, the taboo of respect or decency.

(2) I would not, however, insist too strongly on the distinctiveness of these five domains. Theft and murder are prohibited on account of *duty*, but they become taboo if the culprit is discovered, because they will bring punishment upon him. The moral wrong of these acts was perceived *before* their dangerous character, and we have here an instance of a taboo grafted on a moral, or social, prohibition.

biha, is regularly used in Djonga to mean *sin*. It also designates the offensive substance which a child or careless person may have left on the path, instead of observing the sanitary regulations of Native villages. (I. p. 311.) But in addition to biha we have *dyoha* (Dj.), *doha* (Ro.), to commit a wrong, *hona* (Ro.), *onha* (Dj.), which means to spoil, but also to sin, and from which comes *shihono*, the true word for sin in Ronga. *Somboloka* means to be irremediably bad, crooked, like a stem which cannot be straightened.

On the contrary the adjective *nene*, corresponding to biha, contains three meanings: good, nice, and true, the derivate *bunene* designating rather goodness and beauty, and another derivative, *psinene*, truth; the verb used for to be good is *shonga* (Ro), or *saseka* (Dj.), and has both the moral and esthetic significance. *Ku lulama* is to be straight, like a stem, and the use of this word indicates a deep and clear sense of right doing. Many other expressions might be quoted, showing that the notion of moral good and evil is certainly present in the Native mind, quite independently of that of taboo. They also recognise the *conscience* (timpfalu), seated in the diaphragm (p. 361).

2) *Intercourse with Natives* proves the same thing. Though their ideas may differ from ours as regards what is good (1), they are undoubtedly moral beings, with a more or lees developed conscience.

3) Their *folklore* is the best and most objective proof that this is so. Vice is punished and virtue rewarded in all the tales which I have called *moral*, and they certainly contain a whole code of natural and elementary morality (p. 222). The pangs of conscience in a criminal are depicted in a wonderful fashion in Žili, for instance.

However, it must be confessed that this morality is low, that it does not possess a very strong hold on the Native soul, and that the imperative of conscience is by no means the categorical

(1) The idea of charity is particularly low: charity is due only to relatives, or to clansmen, and not to foreigners. I remember a man of the Manyisa clan who nearly died near the lake of Rikatla, having been hurt when working on the railway; nobody took pity on him, because he belonged to another clan. He was saved by a converted woman, Lois, who had a wonderful understanding of the new principles of universal brotherhood.

577 imperative of Kant. If you can steal without being caught, you
183 may steal! Such is the advice generally given. To tell lies is mere play, which few people take seriously, especially if the lies are not intended to do harm to your fellow-men. There is a great laxity in Native morals (1). Why is this? I am convinced that this weakness of the moral sense is due to the fact that the moral law is not regarded as having been proclaimed by a personal, transcendental God. No relation is established between duty and the divinity. Religion is non-moral ; the ancestor-gods themselves are non-moral. The absolute character of the moral law can only spring from the absolute character of a God who has established it. For the Bantu the law, *nau*, is the *interest of the clan*. Theft is bad because it ruins individual property, and it is necessary to respect property, otherwise collective life becomes impossible. So theft, blows, insults, murder, and witchcraft are condemned and punished, because these actions endanger society and its recognised modes of life. But if society is not aware of it, you may steal ; you are not guilty ; no one has been offended! This principle gives to the morality of Natives a very curious *legal character*, which White people are sometimes slow to understand. A man is not guilty if he has not been convicted of his fault by a regular judicial pronouncement. He does not even feel himself guilty. But if his sin is proved, he at once gives up all subterfuge (Compare Zidji, p. 206) (2). We thus come to this conclusion : if the great

(1) Let me observe, however, that the domain of morality is also the domain of liberty ; and where there is liberty there are also individual differences. This is certainly the case amongst South African Bantus as regards their moral conduct. Any European having Native servants under his direction will have noticed that some of them show real moral qualities, faithfulness, disinterestedness, straightforwardness, respect, even a capacity for self-sacrifice, whilst others are unmitigated liars and thieves and addicted to vices which endanger the welfare and the purity of the home. Even in the Native village such differences are met with. I knew, for instance, a young man who never adopted the gangisa custom, which almost every boy looks on as the legitimate amusement of his age (l. p. 97) ; something told him that it was not right, and he kept away from the girls.

(2) This tendency of the Bantu mind to consider as right and good any decision which has been taken by the group, irrespective of its real moral value, also accounts for a fact which those who have to deal with pupils of African Native Institutions have frequently observed. It may happen that the Principal of the Institution will voice an opinion, give an order or propose a measure which does not please the Native students, and opposition will manifest itself amongst the group. Some of the more obstinate

fault of Bantu religion is that it is non-moral, that of Bantu morality is that it is non-religious. No supreme legislator has ordained it. Hence the want of the idea of the absolute in the dictates of the Bantu conscience. 577 183

Nevertheless, the rudiments of morality are present in the Thonga conscience, the feeling of duty, the sense of right and wrong, and these are independent of the essentially self-interested idea of taboo.

C. RELATION BETWEEN TABOO, SACREDNESS AND MORALITY.

Some modern Ethnographers see in the taboo idea the origin of that of the sacred, and of morality. Amongst South African Bantus, the idea of sacredness is not a prominent one. It may be said that the person of the chief is sacred to them, being set apart; the law of hierarchy, the right of precedence belonging to the elder brother is also sacred, and this conception is very closely allied to that of taboo, though it does not necessarily contain the idea of danger. But if sacredness has been in certain cases a natural development of taboo, I do not think this is the case with moral ideas. 784 577 183

In some cases, morality distinctly preceded taboo; speaking of theft, we have just seen the taboo conception grafted on to a

succeed in persuading their comrades to a unanimous refusal of obedience, and as soon as they feel themselves thus agreed they will oppose their Principal apparently with a good conscience, despite his most persuasive arguments and all the patience that he may display. Morally speaking, they are clearly wrong; religiously also; the principles which they have themselves adopted indubitably condemn them. Yet they will maintain their resistance as long as they can face their master with a united front. But if the Principal is clever enough to take one or two of them — the most sensible — apart, and convince them, then the charm is broken. Feeling themselves divided, the pupils at once come to the conclusion that they are wrong, and they readily submit to the will of their superior. Such events may take place in other colleges, and amongst other races, I am afraid, but the difference is that amongst Bantus, just emerging from the state of collectivism, where morality depended not on the laws of a clearly conceived, holy God, but on the will of the community, the feeling of being right or wrong is above all determined by the attitude of the group. (See my paper on The Magic Conception of Nature amongst Bantus. *South African Journal of Science*. Nov. 1920).

784 primitive moral idea ; we have also met with a taboo evolving from
577 a notion of disgust (nyenya) (p. 83) ; or of decency (p. 580). I do
183 not assert that it could be proved that the moral restriction in all cases preceded the taboo prohibition. There is on the other hand no ground for asserting that the moral ideas are a natural development of original taboos ; these two sets of ideas seem to be parallel in the domain of conduct, just as Ancestrolatry and the idea of an All-Father are in religion.

845 All these regulations[1] clearly show that, for the time being, the
184 mother of twins, like the widow, (I. p. 200) is regarded as outside
783 the pale of society. But her defilement is worse than that of the widow ; so, in order to be purified from it, the rite of *lahla khombo* (casting away the malediction) through which she must pass is much more severe. According to Mboza she must "deceive" four men one after the other, in the bush, all of whom will die. She hears that so and so says *djoo-djoo*, viz., becomes livid, that his body swells, that he is dead! She knows the reason. He has taken her defilement! Perhaps the fourth does not die but only becomes consumptive. These men have been pointed out to her by the divinatory bones. Each time she succeeds in performing the purification ceremony described in I. p. 205, she informs her medicine-man, who "prepares for her a vapour bath." Afterwards, she goes to reside at her parents' house, has relations with a lover, and gives birth to another child. Then her purification is complete, and her husband goes with 10/- to fetch her, and bring her home. The lover completed the removal of the "buhahla" i. e. the condition in which a mother of twins is. He has washed her (hlampsa). A new hut will be built for her, furnished with new utensils, and the ordinary family life will begin afresh.

845 As regards the twins themselves, they do not pass through
853 the ceremony of presentation to the moon (I. p. 52) as other children do. They are weaned earlier ; immediately after the reappearance of the menses the mother begins her *lahla khombo*, which at the same time is a *lumula*, a weaning of the children. They are then fed with goat's milk.

845 Twins are not liked by other people. They are looked upon as bad characters. When the little ones begin to crawl, and chance to go towards the other huts, people throw cinders at them and drive them away, saying : "These are children of Heaven. Be off! You annoy us!" If any ordinary child has a particularly bad disposition, they often say : "You are naughty! You are just like a twin!" — "Hahla dja karata" — "Twins are troublesome" is another common saying ; and if a child is really exceptionally difficult to deal with, people say : "It is a twin! You cannot do anything with it! (A dji koteki!)"

[1] [See pp. 433-435, Cat. 116 -- Analyst]

Special precautions are taken in respect to twins when they 845
pay a mourning visit. One of the grave-diggers meets them at the 765
entrance of the village and says : "Do not fear, Children of Heaven." He then puts some ashes on their heads and on their fontanelles. This is done because twins are feeble (ma ni bushapu) and the defilement might affect them more than other children. They must therefore be protected by smearing the middle of the head, and the "extremity of the tree of life," viz., the fontanelle, with a preventive. The mother also undergoes a similar treatment. She must prostrate herself near the hut of the deceased, at the place where the wall has been pierced to make an exit for the corpse. Then the grave-digger brings some live embers in a broken pot, pours a little water on to them, and dips his fingers into the water ; he then presses both his hands against the woman's belly and brings them round her waist, pressing them all the while against the skin, until they meet on the spine ; thus she is "cured inside" (dahiwa ndjen). This will prevent her from suffering from internal troubles, to which she, having given birth to Tilo, Heaven, is particularly liable. (Comp. I. p. 151) (1).

From this brief description of the customs connected with twins 845
in most of the Thonga clans, it may be seen that their explanation [783]
is twofold : 1) The birth of twins is a death, consequently a 772
defilement, indeed the worst of all defilements. Hence the 789
purificatory rites which bear the character of *passage rites* : the mother is secluded and passes through a period of isolation, after which she is again admitted to society after a painful "casting away of her misfortune." 2) But the cause of the defilement is not an ordinary death, but Heaven. *She is Heaven* ; she is said to have

(1) Another category of persons bearing a special relation to Heaven are the 184
albinos. Cases of albinism are not frequent amongst South African Natives, yet they
are sometimes met with. They are called in Thonga *Khalandlati*, a word which 826
means literally *charcoal-lightning*. It is believed that they have been burnt (hisa) by
lightning in their mother's womb before their birth. "Ba tlalile, a ba wupfanga, ba 772
bengiwi hi tilo," viz. "they are uncomplete beings, they are not ripe, they have been
hated by Heaven" ; these are the terms in which they are described. They are not 845
however regarded as taboo (yila), they merely inspire disgust (nyenya) (p. 83). As
regards women suffering from this kind of disgrace, other women do not smear themselves
with the same ochre as they, lest they should give birth to albinos ; they do not drink
from the same cup. Men do not marry them, and in this respect they are classed with
leper women and witches, who are also looked on as repugnant.

845 daha). Striking is frequently one of the rites of aggregation.
184 (See Van Gennep, *Rites de Passage*, p. 55). Let us remember that the Tembe clan is of Northern origin (I. p. 23) and has retained some customs which are different from those of the other Thongas (1).

2) Heaven and the "Nunu."

136 The following is a very extraordinary custom, and one which,
241 in many respects, greatly resembles those I have already described.
845 There is to be found, on the shores of Delagoa Bay, a small
772 Coleoptera belonging to the Alcides genus of the Cucurlionidæ
826 family. It has a proboscis-shaped mouth, a very hard carapace of half a centimetre in length, brown, and marked on each elytron with two longitudinal white bands. The Blacks call it the *nunu*. It is a scourge to the fields of beans and maize (much as cockchafers are with us). In December or January, when these insects begin to swarm, the chief men of the country order the diviners to throw the bones, and send the women to pick the "nunu" off the bean stalks. They gather them in "sala" shells. Then they choose (probably by casting lots) *a woman who has given birth to twins.*

(1) Amongst *the Hereros* a multiple birth is the happiest event which could possibly occur! The Rev. E. Dannert published in the *Capetown Folklore Journal* an account of the customs practised on such occasions by the Natives of this tribe, which occupies the Western side of Southern Africa, at about the same latitude as the Thongas. The father and mother are condemned to complete silence, under penalty of bringing a curse on those who speak to them. All the members of the tribe are convened and bring their cattle with them. The twins' family has to appear before the whole assembly, and is received with lamentations. Each individual must present himself to the parents, and make them a gift of beads, or other ornaments, in return for which the father and mother purify them by means of a certain powder. After this the father has the right of going from village to village, and claiming an ox from each one, as a kind of ransom. He becomes quite a rich man. This is the *kunga rite*, which we have also met with on many occasions amongst the Thongas (I. p. 124.). How can this diversity between the customs of the Hereros and those of most of the Thongas be explained? No doubt by this vague mysterious idea of Heaven, which is behind the religious conceptions of these tribes and in which all these rites originated. This celestial power, when it manifests itself, stupefies the Natives, for it causes "a death," entails a curse. With the Thongas it is the mother and children who are the objects of this malediction, hence the purifying ceremonies imposed upon them. With the Hereros, it is the whole tribe which is affected. The family into which the twins are born has been distinguished and honoured by this heavenly visitation, and collects for itself the fines which all must pay to regain the celestial favour!

village is at once removed. Leprosy is called *nhlulabadahi*, the disease which is stronger than the doctors. It is very much dreaded ; lepers are not, however, segregated ; they live in the village with other people and even attend beer-parties, but they bring their own mugs, whilst every other guest receives a drinking utensil from the master of the village. 758

Another disease which is believed to be contagious is "possession" by the *Bandjao spirits*. Should you pick up on the road some object which belonged to one of the possessed, his madness will jump to you (tlulela). — Epilepsy is also dreaded on that account. A nursing woman must not see any one suffering from an attack of this disease, or the child which is on her shoulders will become epileptic. 753 828

Speaking of the conception of disease, I must remind the reader of the fact that *sexual relations* between the inhabitants of the village are believed to aggravate the condition of the patient dwelling in it (I. p. 133, II. p. 358), and are consequently forbidden during epidemics and in any case of serious illness. Hence the precautions which convalescents must take of wearing the *sungi*, as we have just seen. 753 834

4) The special rites which mark the end of an illness throw much light on the Thonga conception of disease. A serious illness constitutes a marginal period either for the individual concerned, or, in the case of an epidemic, for the community, and the hondlola rite is the method by which the patient is reintegrated into society ; it clearly has the character of a passage rite. The rubbing with psanyi, the removal of the defilement of disease, the throwing away of the "timbhorola," the cutting of nails and hair, all these are rites of separation from the period of disease, whilst the feast of the hondlola day, and the resuming of sexual relations (1) are rites of reintegration. In the disease of possession, as we shall see it is the reintegration into the society of spirit-possessed persons and amounts to an initiation. 753 783 184 755

(1) We often hear of a Christian woman, who has gone to a heathen medicine-man for treatment, having sexual intercourse with him. We generally attribute this fact to immorality alone, but it was probably a part of the treatment, at the precise moment when sexual taboos were removed.

753 In the case of an epidemic, it is the whole clan which passes
184 through the marginal period, and all its members have to perform
755 the reintegration rites, by means of which they re-inter upon
783 normal life.

But these rites have another meaning as well. They aim at "dispersing the disease." In the hondlola proper, the particles which have fallen on the mat during the rubbing operation are cast away into an ants' nest; this is the *tumba*, which corresponds to the throwing away of all the "nsila", i. e. the "filth" of the small-pox patients at a cross-roads. In this case the body of the patient is also washed at that spot; this is likewise done at the conclusion of measles. The same idea underlies all these customs, that by their means the patient or clan will *definitely get rid of the disease.* Disease forms an organic whole, an important element of which consists of the dried perspiration of the patient, the dirt covering his skin, the implements he has used during his confinement, the dust of his hut, etc. All these are thrown either into an ants' nest to be disposed of there by the insects, or on to the road to be trampled under foot by travellers. The latter, by coming into contact with this filth, will at the same time take upon themselves the disease which it represents and carry it away into far distant countries. Thus the request of the medicine man will be granted, (I. p. 55, II. p. 393): "Let the bad blood go to Nkhabelene, to Shiburi... to the ends of the earth." I do not think that in this apparently hostile act of throwing the dust of a contaminated hut on to the road Thongas are actuated by the wish that travellers should be infected with the disease. Their principal aim is to disperse the contagion according to the principles of communionist and imitative magic. It is however dangerous to tread upon it. It is one of those "mathumo" which can cause disease.

000 The medical system of the Bantus is mingled to such an extent with superstition and error that very little reliance can be placed upon it. The question which I put at the beginning of this section is therefore very difficult to answer. What is the duty of the White Government in regard to the Native quacks? The ideal would be to replace them by fully qualified, civilised doctors. As this is impossible, let medical missionaries at least be encouraged, and their number increased, and

Let us remember that, in the case of the exorcised, the hondlola
does not only mean the re-introduction of the patient into the 755
society of the healthy, but his reception into the society of the 756
magicians. It is the last act of *initiation* : he himself becomes a magician, a doctor able to treat those who are possessed. This new dignity is symbolised by the *shiphandje* (forked branch) which will be given to him to-day, as it is to medicine-men (p. 388), or diviners (See later on). It was Ñwatshulu who chose and cut the branch for Mboza from the tree called *shiralala*. He dug a hole in the back part of Mboza's hut, chewed his sungi or ndjao root, and blew against the foot of the branch before planting it in the hole. Then he made the branch firm in the ground, and hung to it the baskets full of drugs and calabashes full of medicinal powders which he gave to his disciple. This branch will be the drug store of the new magician, the place where he keeps all his magic drugs ; it will also be his *altar* (gandjelo), not the altar of the ancestor-gods, who have no part here, but that of the possessing spirits, to whom he will also henceforth address his worship. (Compare with Mankhelu's forked branch, letter D). This leads us on to the next division of the subject.

IV. *The new Condition of the Exorcised.*

It is interesting to note the stages in the process of initiation 756
through which the possessed passes in the different acts of his 184
treatment. The tambourine performance has provoked, or accentuated, the manifestation of his dual personality, viz., the person possessed and the spirit possessing. The baptism in the calabash has helped him to cross the sea and to reach the land beyond, the land of miracles and of magic powers! By the drinking of blood, he has become a superior being, a man who does not fear that which makes others tremble ; he has *thwaza*. This word is the same as that employed for the renewal of the moon (p. 306) ; like the moon, he has been born again ; a new light has appeared after a period of darkness. He has entered a new life. The period of convalescence, with its taboos, is his last trial ; by the hondlola he finally enters the society of the initiated.

756 Henceforth he will lead a special life, characterised by protective
184 and propitiatory rites, which tend to the development of his subliminal faculties.

1) Protective rites.

756 As soon as he was "born again" in the thwaza ceremony,
751 but to a still higher degree later on, after being elevated to the
789 dignity of the magician, the exorcised, having entered the mysterious world of those endowed with powers, becomes the butt of all his colleagues in the magical arts ; first the baloyi, the witches, who *try* him, to see if he is able to discover their evil deeds, and secondly the other magicians, who are annoyed at seeing a rival ready to dispute their practice with them. So he must be continually on his guard ; in the evening, especially, he must protect himself against their nightly charms. The great protective medicine is a pellet made of the powder of many roots, which have been burned and bound together with fat taken from the bowels of a goat. The first of these roots comes from a tree called *mabophe*, found in the Bilen country. This has the power of tying (bopha, in Zulu, means to tie) the knees of the wizards who come during the night, so that they will be found in the morning, stark naked, in the hut of the exorcised. The *nulu* root seems to be used for the same purpose ; the *nsala*, which also enters into the composition of the protective pellets, rather aims at ensuring the success of the treatment undertaken by the new gobela ; as its fruits are plentiful (p. 16), so will the possessed come in great numbers to the doctor. The pellet is used for medical treatment, but the same drugs are also kept in the form of powder, in a piece of reed, or in the calabashes hanging from the forked pole. Every night the exorcised swallows a pinch, and throws another pinch on the fire in his hut. This will prevent enemies from entering, or make them prisoners. Before eating, he must also protect himself by chewing (phora) a little of the *manono*, a kind of antiseptic or anti-witchcraft root as big as a stick, which he always carries with him ; this is the special *luma* (I. p. 146) of the exorcised. Who knows if his food has not been poisoned by the malpractices of his rivals?

581 says: "Nsati wa mabele u nga nabele loko u nge na bukosi."
832 — "Do not covet a woman with large breasts if you have no money..." This does not mean that she will cost more, but her father, knowing that she will not want for suitors, will not consent to let her go unless the full lobolo is paid at once. On the other hand a girl with an elongated face is admired more than one who is too broad-faced. Of the first they say: "She is pretty, she resembles an antelope" (a kota mhala); of the second: "She is
832 chubby-cheeked, she is like a sow." A light complexion is preferred
186 to a very dark one, because the white or yellow races are regarded
734 as superior, and a Native laying claim to any European or Asiatic
581 blood is proud of it. Parents, who also have their say in the
829 question of marriage, insist on two other points: the working capacity of the girl, and the absence of any witchcraft blot in the family. Should her mother have been convicted of being a witch,
581 the girl will be feared. However, every girl finds a husband in the
583 land where polygamy flourishes. If he be slow in coming, she will apply to her doctor, who will prepare the *love charms*, which will make her "appear," so that she will be noticed by the boys (See page 100). If even that does not succeed, she has other means at her disposal and may go herself to make proposals to a man (wopsana). He is seduced by her, and constitutes himself a thief who has *tlhuba*, viz. "taken in marriage by abduction" (See page 119). The parents will claim the lobolo and he must pay it. Marriage and childbearing remain the only carreer to which a Thonga woman can look forward. Hence a number of special feminine taboos which are very curious.

2) Special feminine taboos.

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845 Some of them concern girls *before childbearing* and cease after
784 parturition. In the Tembe and Maputju clans, girls must not eat
562 pork, because pigs root nervously with their noses; the future child
825 would also move its head from one side to the other, when on the verge of birth, and this would make delivery difficult. Other

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

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THIRD PART

NATIONAL LIFE.

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618 Having sketched the Individual and Communal life of the
619 Thongas, we will now consider the National life. We have seen
186 what the *muti*, the Village, means to a Thonga. What does the Nation, *tiko* mean to him ? As we have already pointed out, what we call the nation, tiko, is not the big tribe, numbering many hundred thousand people, but the special clan to which this Thonga belongs. There is no feeling of national unity in the tribe as a whole ; its unity consists only in a language and in certain customs which are common to all the clans. So the true national unit is the clan.

CHAPTER I

THE CLAN.

A. THE ACTUAL ORGANISATION OF THE CLAN.

618 Whatever may have been the social system of the Bantus in past ages, the existing clan can be directly traced from the patriarchal family. I have particularly studied the composition of two of the Thonga clans, the Nkunas of Zoutpansberg and the Marwayas of the estuary of the Nkomati. Let us see how the clan is composed in both these instances.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

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of Mpfumo are notified when it is sufficiently fermented ; the latter then mobilise their military contingent, consisting of a picked battalion of youths and men wearing the wax-crown. They are magnificently attired in skins of civet-cat and other warlike apparel, but carry sticks only and small toy shields (mahahu), as the object of the expedition is eminently peaceful and entirely actuated by friendship. They go first to the house of their Agent General, Mambene, where they are met and conducted to the capital, taking with them the money and oxen which must be handed over to the parents of the princess. The curious sham-fight, details of which we have already given when describing ordinary marriages, also takes place on this occasion, the Matjolos trying to carry off the oxen and the Mpfumos defending themselves and endeavouring to appropriate the jugs of beer which are in the capital. This mock engagement is fairly lively, sticks are wielded with some force and the blows fall heavily until a few wounds are apparent and a little blood is let, when hostilities are at once stopped and friendship reigns supreme.

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The money and oxen are given to Sigaole, chief of Matjolo, in the presence of witnesses. Mpfumo kills a bull for Matjolo and Matjolo slaughters a cow for Mpfumo, without any kind of religious ceremony : a sacrifice has previously been offered in Matjolo to propitiate their gods in favour of Mimalengane. On the other hand the young folks of the two countries execute the dances peculiar to each clan, trying to outrival one another, for the honour of their country. The guests pass one night at the capital of Matjolo and return to their homes the following day.

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The relatives of the bride prepare her trousseau, which is not much richer than in the case of ordinary people ; a *ngula*, large basket, in which are placed some maize and other cereals which she will plant in her new home, sundry cooking utensils, saucepans, winnowing baskets, a hoe, an axe ; on the subsequent day, all the women accompany her to her husband's dwelling and then go to perform the ceremony of building the wood pile (p. 112). They are regaled with a couple of oxen and return to their home.

The chief's wife is not compelled, as are young married women generally, to live with the mother-in-law and to wait upon her

II. *The sexual and language taboos of the sungi.*

881 The whole sungi is taboo to every uninitiated person and
831 especially to women. A woman who has seen the " shondlo ",
834 viz. the leaves which the circumcised put over their wound,
784 and which form their only clothing, must be killed. But taboos abound for everybody. The sexual taboos are most noteworthy. Sexual intercourse is strictly prohibited to all inmates, men as well as shepherds ; breaking this law would kill the circumcised. Therefore the men must not go home, or at least as seldom as possible, during these three months. Married people in the village may have sexual relations ; but there must be no noise, no quarrels between jealous co-wives ; because, if they insult each other and if this is known in the sungi, the shepherds will come one evening and plunder that village. Strange to say, in the meantime obscene language is permitted and even recommended— a contrast which we shall often meet with during the marginal periods. Some of the formulae contain expressions which are taboo at other times ; when the women bring the food to the sungi, the shepherds who receive it from their hands are allowed to address them with as many unchaste words as they like. The mothers themselves have the right of singing obscene songs when they pound the mealies for the sungi.

192 As regards language, there are also special expressions used
881 during the school which are either archaic or foreign ; for instance, all orders are given in a tongue which is neither Thonga nor Sutho: Tshai goma, Go to the table ; Thari, Eat ; Khedi, Smear with white clay, etc. Often actions are not designated by the ordinary word, but by unusual terms. For instance, the daily smearing of the bodies with clay is called : " to eat sheep's fat. " To put on the leaves of the shondlo is " to eat sheep's flesh. " To be beaten with the mbuti sticks is " to drink goat's milk. " Evidently the aim of this terminology is to increase the impression of mystery which the rites must convey to the uninitiated.

866 As regards the rites of the marginal period, they are calculated
881 to give the candidates the impression that they are new men,

192 881 These formulae are so characteristic that they provide the principal pass words by which the circumcised recognize each other. Should I want to know if a man is initiated, I should say to him : " *Mashindla bya ndjako*, the beast which must be opened from behind. " If he answers at once : " Ngwenya, the

Phot. A. Bast

Cutting open a crocodile near the Nhamati river.

crocodile," I know that he has been circumcised. But he must add the following words : " khekeretana wa mufagu " i. e. " the knife which circumcises."

831 881 There are also some obscene formulae which refer to certain diseases of women, of which not a word is told outside the Ngoma. Some others are so ugly that I can give them only in Latin (Annotatio quarta).[1] Even the formulae of the crocodile

[1] [See p. 516 in these categories or in [illegible] -- analyst]

b The bakoñwana.

606 First of all, *the wife's father*. There is a great respect in the heart of his son-in-law towards him, even a certain amount of fear, because, should a quarrel arise between a man and his wife, the father-in-law will preside over the painful discussions which will take place, he being the natural protector of his daughter. However, in normal cases, the two men live on good terms with each other, and very soon the son-in-law calls his father-in-law tatana, father ; of course the word tatana is not used here in its technical sense, but only by extension.

607 Secondly the bakoñwana are *the wife's brothers*. When their
192 father dies, they take his place as protectors of their sister. Hence the uneasiness and fear with regard to them, which is, however, less marked in their case. The wife's brothers will never be called bamakweru (as they will never be ba-kweru, those of my house) but they are frequently designated by the term *soar*, or *sibar*, which is merely a corruption of the Dutch word zwager. This curious adoption of a foreign term is modern ; it is spreading more and more amongst the Zulus, Xosas and Suthos of Basutoland. Amongst the Thongas I only once heard the word soar used. The tendency to assimilate that kind of relationship to the European conception is a proof that the old fear of brothers-in-law is disappearing in the new generation.

606 But it is in the relation with two women of the wife's family that the respect of bukoñwana is pushed to the greatest extent : the wife's mother and the wife of the brother-in-law. In these cases there is not only respect but *avoidance*

The wife's mother.

606 Let us listen to Viguet telling the story of a man meeting his
576 mother-in-law in the bush. "If one of the two sees the other coming a long way off, soon enough to escape without being noticed, he will speedily hide himself and reach his destination by making a long circuit, half a mile if necessary. But if they have come too near to have recourse to flight, this is what will happen. You leave the road ; you enter the bush on your right

be secret, or on the square, if there is no objection to making it public. The chief and his men sit on one side, the visitor on the other; if he wishes to conform strictly to all the laws of etiquette, he will first explain the matter to his own Agent General, who will communicate with the chief's special counsellor, repeating the words of the visitor, sentence by sentence; the counsellor will, in his turn, communicate with the chief, again telling him the whole story, as if he had not heard a word of it before. The affair will thus have passed through three hands and the answer should, in due formality, be given through the same channels. These precautions, which seem eminently superfluous, even somewhat ridiculous, to a person unacquainted with Bantu etiquette, evidently proceed from the fact that there are no stenographers or secretaries to furnish any written record of the proceedings, so that it is necessary to have as many witnesses as possible and that these should thoroughly understand the matter under consideration.

II. *Judicial Cases.*

1) Sense of justice.

As has often been remarked, the Bantus possess a strong sense of justice. They believe in social order and in the observance of the laws and, though these laws are not written, they are universal and perfectly well known. The law is the custom, that which has always been done. The old men, the counsellors and more particularly the counsellors of the capital, are those who can speak authoritatively. But everybody is welcome in the *hubo*, where matters are discussed; even a stranger can take part in the discussion. "No one is excluded, if he speaks rightly; only fools, those who do not know anything" (Mankhelu).

This participation in the discussions of the hubo has developed the sense of law to a wonderful extent amongst the Bantus. They are all born advocates and judges, and take a great interest in this business! No wonder therefore that the Thonga vocabulary

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

671 possesses a rich store of *judicial expressions*. Here are the most common : *Nau* (pl. milau) means law, custom. *Ku tlula nau*, to jump over the law, means transgression. *Nandju* (pl. *milandju*) means the fault resulting from transgression. This interesting word comes from *ku landja*, to follow. It applies in the first instance to cases which lead to a prosecution, but secondly to any fault. *Ku doha*, is to be wrong and *ku dohela mhunu*, the applicative derivative, to wrong another. *Ku da*, to eat somebody, or *dela*, is also a picturesque expression employed for injury to property. *Ku ramba* (Dj.), *ku rjamela hosin* (Ro.) is the technical expression to designate a complaint lodged before the chief. *Ku riha* (Dj.), *djiha* (Ro.) means to pay a fine, and *rihisa*, *djihisa* (the factitive derivative), to impose a fine.

672 This strong sense of justice however differs from the European on certain points. Owing to their collectivist notions, the Bantus consider relatives as responsible for the debts of their own kin, as we have already seen (p. 332). Another case in which they entertain ideas which seem very strange to us is this ; when anyone has lent you an implement and you make a bad use of it, the fault is as much the lender's as the borrower's. I remember a queer case which took place in my school in Rikatla. Some boys had to go in the afternoon to work in the vegetable garden under the supervision of their overseer. On the way one of them happened to hurt his foot by treading on a thorn. So, when he arrived in the garden, he borrowed a knife from the overseer and began to make sandals of palm-leaf pith. The elder boy entreated him to work. He refused to obey, so the overseer denounced him publicly, when the weekly inquiry into the conduct of the boys was made, on the following Friday. But the temporary shoemaker did not admit to being guilty of anything at all, and his final argument was this : "I cannot understand how Mr. Overseer can accuse me when he himself lent me the knife which I used to carve my sandals!" D. Kidd tells similar stories about Pondos in his "Essential Kafir."

671 So there are differences between Native and European conceptions of justice, and Bantus do not always draw the same conclusions as we do from given premises. Native Commissioners

726 173 703 warriors, as also those of Nwamba, had received orders from the Whites, at the end of January 1895, to attack Zihlahla and Mahazule. One of the young men of Matjolo, who was present during the operations, told me this story : "We were to have joined the men of Nwamba at a village called Mukapan, but did not find them at the rendez-vous. As they had made common cause with Zihlahla at the beginning of the revolt, we had not much confidence in them. It looked as if they were in hiding and intended to attack us treacherously and kill us. At this time two panics occured. The first was at Hukwen, when a man dreamt that he was being killed, and cried out : "Yo! Uwe! There are people who are killing me!" It was pitch dark. Every one jumped to his feet. Some ran to hide in the forest, but others shouted : "The enemy are here!" Fighting began in the regiment of Geba, (composed of men of the same age as Sigaole, the chief), but no one was killed. A few individuals who kept their presence of mind restored order, but we came very near exterminating each other! The next night a Chopi of our troop had a fright, and cried out : "Why do you want to kill me, you men of Matjolo ? I will tell Sigaole's mother." He was promptly secured and forced to keep quiet for fear that he would rouse the Nondwane people, etc. A similar panic seized the troops of Mahazule, when they went to lay waste the country round Lourenço Marques (October 1894).

726 192 To avoid these panics, as far as possible, the Ba-Ronga arrange a *password* before starting on an expedition. I was able to learn two of these countersigns, after the war, by questioning some young men who had taken part in certain military operations. On one occasion the pass-word was as follows : "Be ge pi ?" These are Zulu words signifying : "What are you looking at ?" The requisite answer being : "Be ge pezulu"—"We are looking at the sky." In the famous attack made by the Zihlahla warriors on the town of Lourenço Marques, on 14th October 1894, the word was : "U landu bane ?"—"With whom have you a quarrel ?"—and the reply : "Ngi landa Mlungu!"—"I have a quarrel with the white man!"

727 765 *Return from the battle.* When a yimpi has been defeated in battle, but is not pursued by the enemy, it returns silently and disperses before reaching the capital, each warrior going back ashamed to his village. Mourning takes place in the villages of the deceased. But much lamenting is not allowed. It may be that the chief will prohibit any mourning if many have been

263 small amount of salt it contains! This is a long process attended
317 with very unsatisfactorily results. During the Anglo-Boer war,
258 Natives round Leydsdorp reverted to it as all the stores were closed and no salt was procurable.

Salt manufacture, Northern Transvaal. *Phot. P. Rennet.*

Nowadays Native manufacture of salt has entirely ceased. The beautiful glistening white article has advantageously replaced the greyish, blackish mixture of former times.

II. *Food.*

252 It is not an exaggeration to speak of a culinary art amongst
581 the Thongas. They give great attention to cooking. Of a woman who knows how to cook well, it is said: "Awa hisa" "she burns;" not that she lets the sauce burn, but this expression corresponds to the French "cordon bleu." A girl who "hisa" will have more chance of being "lobola" than another.

252 This importance given to cooking explains the great richness of
192 the culinary vocabulary. Every variety of dish or of culinary process has its particular name, and to master all these terms

a special apprenticeship ought to be served to one of the queens of the kitchen. I cannot boast of having gone as far as that!

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As a rule women cook only once a day, towards the end of the afternoon. The big meal is eaten in the evening when everybody is expected to eat till satisfied (shura), and what remains of it is generally finished the next day in the morning (fihlula). This evening meal consists of two component parts: the cooked cereals, and the sauces seasoning them. But the menu can be greatly varied. In most cases the cereals are prepared as *bupsa* (flour), or *mapa*, and the sauce, *muru* (Ro.), *sheshebo* (Dj.), is made of monkey nuts, ground and boiled in water, vegetables, India-pepper, tomatoes, shrimps, etc. Or the cereals, maize, millet or sorghum, may be only husked (tlhokola) and cooked whole; they are then called *tihobe* (plur. of hobe, the central part of the grain), and the monkey nut sauce is often replaced by beans or peas cooked together with the tihobe. All these dishes are very tasty and many White people readily eat the Thonga food, which seems to me superior to the Sutho.

However, I never very much appreciated the *bupsa* which the Thongas consider superior to the tihobe and which takes a longer time to prepare. The grains must first be soaked for several hours in water (lobeka) to soften them; they are then crushed, the husks being carefully removed by the winnowing process (hehera) in the *lihlelo* basket, which is spasmodically shaken by sudden jerky movements; the interior of the grain is then pounded until it forms a very fine flour, as light as the best Australian flour; the small round particles remaining are called *buse*, and eaten as tihobe, as the bupsa must be perfectly homogeneous. When it boils in the pot, the cook stirs it the whole time with a stick provided at the bottom with small cross bars, two to three inches in length; she twirls the stick with her hands in the same way as a man lighting a fire with the wooden flint, and this operation prevents the flour from forming lumps. The lobeka process gives a somewhat nauseating taste to the bupsa; that is why Europeans do not care for it, but Natives like it precisely for that reason. The preparation of *tihobe* is not so complicated, as no preliminary softening is necessary. It is a somewhat coarse food which,

is not unknown to the Bantus though they may not have clearly thought out all its rules. It is true that logical reasoning is often interfered with amongst these primitive peoples by the mystic associations which Mr. Lévy-Brühl describes in his books on *Les Fonctions Mentales dans les Sociétés Inférieures* and *La Mentalité Primitive*, interfered with also by emotional factors or by the intervention of the will ; this unfortunately happens in non-primitive races also. But as regards the mechanism of reasoning, I do not think there is any great difference between the Bantu mind and the mind of more civilized peoples. 193

At any rate the power of co-ordination disclosed in the Bantu languages is extremely large and gives these languages a remarkable clearness. Its main feature is this : the prefix of the noun is used to form all the adjectives and pronouns connected with it, as will be clearly seen from the following sentence :

*T*ndlopfu	let*i*nyingi	*ta*	tiko	*ti*	khalutile :	hi	*t*one
The elephants	numerous	of	the land	they	have passed :	It is	they,

hi *t*oleti,	le'*ti*	bonekaka	mutjwen	wa	*t*one.
it is these	which	are visible	in the forest	of	them.

This is what grammarians have called the Euphonic Concord. It is certainly *euphonic*, bringing about frequent alliterations which are pleasing to the ear, and at any rate prevent misunderstanding, as they help us to realise, at once, to which noun the pronouns and adjectives refer.

D. ADVERBS AND THE POWER OF DESCRIPTION.

The Adverbs of place, manner, time, etc., form a very interesting study ; they show the presence of remnants of the three locative classes, *pa*, *mu* and *ku*, which still flourish in Central African languages, and have become obsolete in those of South Africa (*h*andle, outside ; *h*ansi, on the ground ; *h*ase, on the other border ; *m*undjuku, to morrow ; *k*aya, at home ; etc.) and this seems to 192

192 prove that our dialects represent a further development of the old Bantu languages. But I am here considering especially what I have called the *Descriptive Adverbs*, a category of very curious words which have not been sufficiently noticed and which show a wonderful power of description in the Thonga mind.

These words, hundreds of which are employed by the Natives, consist of monosyllables or polysyllables, often repeated twice or thrice, and generally following the verb *ku*. This verb *ku*, which is also one of the curious features of Thonga grammar, a very primitive verb (1), designates any manifestation of self, either in action, speech, or thought, and can be translated accordingly by to do, to say, or to think. Now, for the wonderfully acute senses of the sons of the bush, everything — man, beasts, objects of Nature — speaks and thinks, and these adverbs attempt to express in picturesque words these actions, this language of things, sounds as well as movements, attitudes, feelings, etc.

Let us begin by the *sound*. The Hare, in one of the Thonga tales, is represented as sleeping, when it suddenly awakens on hearing a sala, the fruit of the nsala tree (p. 16), fall from the branch and *say* : katla-katla, katla-katla, be! Katla-katla evidently translates the noise made by the hard shell of the fruit knocking against the branches on its way down until it reaches the ground and abruptly ends its journey, the termination of which is rendered by the short monosyllable *be*!.. The Hare, frightened by the noise, runs away and arouses all the beasts of the bush, one after the other, saying : "I have heard a noise of *katla-katla, katla-katla, be*" or, — here he changes the word, probably to avoid a tiresome repetition : "*ngaya-ngaya, ngaya-ngaya, be*!" This may be called an *onomatopoeia* and is met with in a great many languages. A certain number of the adverbs descriptive of sound are universally known and used. Birds say : *pse*! *tswi*! *tsiri*! The wind says : *wotshyu-wotshyu*... A man says *go-go-go*, he knocks at the door ; *mpfaaa*, he tears a cloth ; *pfotlo*, he breaks a stick, etc. There are hundreds of these in Thonga, and any one with enough

(1) It may be that *ku* is an abbreviated or simplified form of *ku ri* which corresponds to the Kafir *ukuti*. At any rate *ku* is employed as the past narrative tense of the verb ku *ri*.

imagination can further invent new ones ; I remember hearing a Native describe a waggon rolling along a stony road : you could recognise the sound of the wheels, of the chain, of the frame, grinding, rattling, creaking! 192

Sometimes the descriptive adverb is very different from the sound it is intended to imitate : thus, when the dog is said to *say* : *ndo-ndo-ndo*, the mouse : *tlulu-tlulu*, the duyker : *rurururu*, the hare : *tlwa-tlwa-tlwa*, the character of the movement, or of the gait, is described as well as the sound. We find indeed that a considerable number of these adverbs are *descriptive of movements*, viz., of phenomena perceived by the eyes, and not by the ear. They translate the impression made on the brain by objects, motions *seen* and not heard, *phenomena of vision*.

Movements of all kinds, of animate or inanimate beings, are vividly reproduced by the descriptive adverbs. Movements of the whole body : a man says *gaa*, he falls on his back ; *dlomu*, *nyupe*, he plunges into the water ; *retemuku*, he slips ; *ngiri-ngiri-ngiri*, he walks down ; *khaga*, he climbs ; *bvumbuluku*, he rises briskly. Movements of one limb : *ume*, he lifts an arm to threaten ; *ntshuki*, he shakes his head to deny ; *kutje*, he nods in assent ; *tjope-tjope*, his eyes twinkle. Movements which entail definite actions : *ntswi*, *mpsi*, he ties ; *nkwaa*, he opens a door ; *petlu*, he breaks something ; *dli*, he pierces ; *bvonyu*, he spoils ; etc., etc.

The various *kinds of gait* can also be described in this primitive way : *ntu-ntu-ntu*, the elephant, a bulky thing, advancing slowly ; *kwanyi-kwanyi*, the lion walking heavily ; *pha-pha-pha*, the jerky flight of the butterfly ; *kwe-kwe*, a man walking with difficulty : *tsere-tsere*, walking deliberately ; *kwiti*, limping ; *gutsele-gutsele*, a lame man ; *nyantsa-nyantsa*, spying out. The frog jumping on the ground, and later on into the water says : *nwe... nwe...nwe.... djiama*! (this last word describing the plunge into the water). A man running slowly says *wahle* ; with small steps : *nyakwi-nyakwi* ; with rapidity : *phene-mene-mene*, or *nyu-nyu*, or *kwaru-kwaru* ; sprinting, *nana-nana*, or *nwana-nwana*.

The various *attitudes* are expressed by words, sometimes in a very amusing way : a man says *phavava*, or *nhabalala*, or *baratjatja*, he lies on his belly ; he says *wololoko*, he stands erect ;

192 *khempfa*, he sits down very tired ; *yinti*, he stands listening attentively, etc.

The *facial expressions* are minutely described by a great wealth of such words : a man says : *langu*, he looks at something ; *lori*, with attention ; *dloto*, intently, and for a long time ; *pari*, with anger ; *dlanya*, with kindness.

Let us take another step forward and we shall find another category describing the *state of mind*, the feelings of the heart, which are also phenomena of vision in as far as they correspond to given attitudes of the body or to certain expressions of the features. A man says *gee*, he is happy ; *kono*, he fears ; *nkwi-nkwisi*, he is in a bad humour ; *doko-doko*, he covets ; *punavuna*, he has pity.

By means of such adverbs *phenomena of Nature* and even *abstract ideas* can be described. Heaven says, *mphu*, it becomes dark ; *dzunu*, the day breaks ; the smoke says *tobi-tobi*, it ascends to heaven ; the water, or the rays of the sun, say *lululu*, they begin to feel warm ; the fire says *lasi-lasi*, it is seen flickering far away.

Abstract ideas. Men say *bi* or *kutlu*, they are all killed, to the last one (total destruction) ; somebody says *kwemetelo*, he does not attain his end, etc.

[124] The list of descriptive adverbs which I have collected comprises more than 250 of them. Most of these were obtained in the following way. When teaching my pupils the Bukhaneli, viz., the Grammar of their own language — which I always found a very interesting and useful subject of study for them — I asked each of them to write down at once 50 of these strange words. Without hesitation they complied with my demand, one of them writing as many as 70. Almost all of them were different. This shows the extreme wealth of the language in this respect. It is no exaggeration to say that, in Thonga, there are ten, perhaps twenty times as many descriptive adverbs as those quoted by my
151 pupils. In dealing with the characteristics of the Thonga or
192 Bantu mind, I think they are worthy of close consideration. These thousands of words, instinctively formed to express the impression made on the brain by any kind of phenomena, prove the existence of a wonderful power of description. The Bantu

151 192 mind is extraordinarily sensitive to any shock from without, and it finds a way of expressing this sensitiveness by picturesque words which give an extraordinary interest and colour to speech. Bantus are far superior to us in this respect, and that is why so few Europeans can really learn to use these descriptive adverbs properly (not to mention those who look upon them with contempt!) And this is one of the signs of what I do not hesitate to call the literary sense of the Bantu mind!

In the first edition I asked the question: Are these descriptive adverbs confined to the Thongas or are they to be found in other Bantu languages? The knowledge which I possessed in 1910 gave me reason to suppose that they were indeed to be met with in at least a great number of these. Torrend in his *Comparative Grammar* quotes some of them from Kafir and Senna and refers to a whole list compiled by the Rev. A. Hetherwick in his *Yao Grammar* and by Rebmann in the *Kinyassa Dictionary*. Torrend calls them onomatopoetic substantives. Colenso gives a good many of them in his *Zulu-English Dictionary*. Grout only briefly mentions five of them in his Chapter on Zulu interjections. Endemann, in the first edition of his *Sotho Grammatik* recognizes their existence (p. 170) and classes them also as interjections, but adds: "Most of the interjections of this kind do not belong to the written language." Since then the Rev. R. Godfrey has published the second edition of the Kropf *Kafir-English* Dictionary (1915) and in his remarkable Introduction has shown the immense part these expressions play in Kafir. He calls them Primary or Strong Stems. Prof. Westerman in his *Grammatik der Ewesprache* has also shown their importance in the languages of the tribes of Western Africa. It may thus be asserted that this linguistic phenomenon is met with all through primitive Africa and the conclusions which I draw from the presence of these descriptive adverbs with regard to Thonga mentality equally apply to all Africans.

As regards the name given to them, I would object to the term *interjection*. While some of them can be used as such, i. e. "thrown amongst" other words without syntactic connection, they generally follow the verb *ku ku* (or *li* or *ti*) just as "yes" or "no" follow the verb to say. So they are rather adverbs than interjections. Nor can I approve of the term employed by Torrend: *onomatopoetic substantives*. Substantives they certainly are not, as they pertain to none of the eight classes and have nothing of the nature of nouns. On the other hand, only a

192 certain number of them are real onomatopoeiae, i. e. words resembling the sound made by the thing of which they are the names. The term adopted by the Rev. R. Godfrey, Primary or Strong Stems, has been severely criticised by the Rev. W. Bourquin (see Christian Express, August and September 1916) and it would seem that this expression Primary must at any rate not be taken to mean that these words necessarily belong to the oldest elements of the language. A considerable proportion of the Kafir descriptive adverbs (60-70 %) bear the trace of a Hottentot or Bushman origin. It would however be an error to conclude from this fact that these words, amongst the Bantus, have been borrowed from the non-Bantu races. They abound in Thonga and Thonga has not been in any way influenced by the Bushmen and the Hottentots. But there is still another fact which proves that the descriptive adverbs have not been inherited from the *Ur-Bantu* ; as far as I am able to judge, the Kafir descriptive adverbs are totally different from those of the Thongas (1). There ought on the other hand to be many common to both languages (which have a great number of common roots as regards nouns, adjectives and verbs) if the present descriptive adverbs had really been used in the mother tongue. For all these reasons the term Descriptive Adverbs seems to me the best and should professional grammarians not wish to adopt it, I would suggest that they should be considered as words having no true equivalents in our more polished European languages and therefore as forming a new category, a new species to be added to the classical eight parts of speech! After all, language is not made for Grammar, but Grammar for language ! And we Europeans cannot claim to have found all the forms of expression of which the human mind is capable. If the Bantus have discovered another class of words which render them great service, why should we proclaim them as unworthy of consideration and exclude them from the written language?

193 For linguists, I add a few particulars concerning the grammatical nature of these words and the importance they may have had in the evolution of human speech. The intonation, the gesture, accompanying these adverbs of course greatly assist in understanding their meaning. Sometimes the word is *short*, ends sharply, as *gi*, a blow on a pole to drive it into the earth ; or it is *prolonged* as *ra-a-a*, the unrolling of a

(1) It is not possible to pronounce a definite judgment on this question as the lists of Kafir and Thonga descriptive adverbs which we possess are far from being complete. Full lists of these interesting particles in all the languages ought to be compiled by Bantu grammarians as soon as possible for purposes of comparison.

mat which drags along the ground ; or *repeated* many times, when the 193
action consists in a series of repeated motions : *ngiri-ngiri-ngiri*, walking down to the spruit. From the etymological point of view, some adverbs may be termed *primitive* and others *derivative*. Amongst the primitive are, for instance, *dzi*, the act of planting (hence the verb ku dzima), *nyupe*, the act of plunging (hence ku nyupela), etc. But others are distinctly derivative, for instance : *humelelo*, the impression caused by somebody who suddenly appears. This is certainly derived from the verb ku humelela, which is itself the double applicative derivative of ku huma, to come out ; ku humelela means, according to the law of verbal derivation, to be produced, to happen, to arrive, to appear. Hence the descriptive adverb. Other instances of such derivations are : *retsmuku*, *rendjeleku*, *tlheriso*, *woloko*, *khabutelo*. They are generally long words (though all the long ones are by no means derivatives). A regular means of derivation even seems to consist in the addition of the suffix *iyani* to the infinitive of the verb ; so a man "says" *yetleliyani*, he sleeps, (from ku yetlela, to sleep) ; *yimisiyani*, he stands erect (from ku yima, to stand). It would seem as if people had found so much pleasure in expressing their ideas by this picturesque method that they even convert regular verbs into descriptive adverbs !

I must further mention that some of these adverbs, placed between the verb *ku* and the adverb, as shown in the following examples, have a true transitive nature and may be preceded by a direct object, especially those which express actions. Ex.: A ku *shi* wuyuwuyu, he throws *that* away ; a ku *mu* mpsi, he makes *him* mpsi, he binds him ; even the verbal reflective prefix *ti* (which is a kind of invariable pronoun) can be used in this connexion. Ex.: A ku *ti* mpsi, he ties himself. Some are at the same time transitive and intransitive, according to the sense. Ex.: A ku *kwe-kwe*, he drags his leg ; (a way of walking) ; a ku yi kwe, he drags it (the pole) ; (a transitive action).

In Kafir these particles are capable of modifying their meaning considerably owing to the fact that the auxiliary *ukuti* to which they are appended can adopt the derivative verbal forms called by Godfrey the reciprocal, the relative, the stative and the reflexive. This is not possible with the Thonga auxiliary ku ; I have only met with the reflexive ti, and this was not prefixed to the auxiliary as in Kafir but to the adverb itself.

In Kafir as in Thonga many of these words give rise to regular verbs. 192
This fact, which is one more proof of their importance and is highly interesting, would alone substantiate my contention that they should be

192 carefully studied. They correspond to a phase of human development when language is still living and creating new expressions, enriching itself by means of vocables invented on all sides. Let me remind the reader of what I said in Vol. I, Appendix II about *nxoko*. This expression was invented by an old Thonga of Rikatla, a blind man of 70 or 80, who expressed by this exclamation his satisfaction at finding himself in good company. The word seemed so much to the point that it became famous. The inventor was surnamed Nxoko and created the verb ku *nxoka*, to be happy, even to *nxokela*, the relative derivative, to be happy in a certain place. Certainly such linguistic phenomena can do much to explain the origin of language. Even lofty spiritual terms have been derived from these exclamations, springing from the childish mind of the Natives. So *phati-phati*, the shining of a fat ox, has given rise to *ku phatima* and *kwetsi-kwetsi*, the brilliancy of a bottle, to *ku kwetsima*, both verbs which were chosen as best expressing the idea of sanctity or purity (in its positive sense). Did not Max Muller conjecture that the root of *Deus*, a word which has played such a great part in the evolution of mankind, originally came from the exclamation *Devar* to which our Aryan forefathers gave vent when contemplating the sky? Devar was probably nothing but a descriptive adverb.

It is to be feared that books and book language will destroy this most interesting mode of speech, so much used by those Natives who are true Bantus, and the genius of the race will certainly suffer from this loss. Let Europeans, in this as in so many other domains, try to *understand* the Native in order not to spoil him !

E. THE NUMERALS, AND THE WANT OF AN ARITHMETICAL SENSE.

802 Compared to the thousands of descriptive adverbs, Numerals make a poor show indeed in the Thonga Grammar! The Thongas possess only seven : *ñwe*, one ; *biri*, two ; *raru*, three ; which are declined like adjectives ; *mune*, four ; *ntlhanu*, five, *khume*, ten ; *dzana*, a hundred, which are nouns. With these seven words they must express all numbers. The process is very complicated indeed. Nine hundred and eighty seven will have to be rendered as follows : five hundred, and four hundred,

often fail to understand them. This literary device is often apparent in their riddles, or proverbs. 195 537

The literary gifts of the Natives, finally, manifest themselves in the very interesting and rich folklore which will form the subject of our second chapter.

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Is it possible after this rapid study of the Thonga language to fix with greater accuracy the place which the Bantu languages occupy in the historic development of human speech? Languages which are regarded as the most primitive are characterised by a linguistic phenomenon which is called holophrase, viz. a single word means not only a single action, but an action accomplished under a number of peculiar circumstances. Mr. Marett in his excellent little book entitled *Anthropology* (p. 140) quotes some very curious examples of holophrase borrowed from the American languages, especially from the Fuegian. A single expression is said to mean : "to look at each other hoping that either will offer to do something which both parties are unwilling to do." I have found in Thonga only one instance in which traces of the holophrase system might be found, and this is by no means so wonderful. The demonstrative adjectives are met with in three forms, which indicate not only the object referred to, but its place as regards distance and in relation to the person speaking. Tihomu *leti*, means these oxen, near at hand, near me ; tihomu *leto*, these oxen, somewhat further off, near you, my interlocutor ; tihomu *letiya*, those oxen, far away and near a third person. The more the final a is prolonged, the further off are the oxen. Moreover these demonstrative adjectives indicate not only the situation of the oxen in space but also in time ; *leti* are the oxen of to-day, *leto* those of a near past and *letiya* those of which we were speaking a long time ago. But this is an isolated case. In Thonga ideas are differenciated almost as completely as in our Indo-European languages. The language has evolved from the holophrastic to the analytic. My conclusion is therefore that the Bantu languages, though they belong to the agglutinate variety, have reached a high degree of development ; they reveal the existence of intellectual powers not essentially different from those of civilized races. They certainly constitute the greatest achievement of Bantu mental activity and the most precious treasure inherited by the Bantus of to-day from their forefathers. 192

192 Amongst the Ba-Ronga those[1] which are still known are : *Nhlangula*,
805 the month in which the flowers are swept (hlangula) from the
821 trees. probably October, when all the minkuhlu, minkanye, etc., blossom ; *Ñwendjamhala*, the month in which the antelope mhala, brings forth its young (November?) ; *Mawuwana*, when the *tihuhlu* (p. 18) are plucked, because the people shout : "Wuwana! wuwana!" in their joy at having plenty of almonds to suck, corresponds to December. *Hukuri* is said to be the month when the fruits of the *nkwakwa* (p. 17) are ripe (December also?). *Ndjati*, or *ndjata*, viz., I am coming, is the time of *nwebo*, when everyone is in his fields eating the new cobs of mealies, and if you call a person he will answer : "I will come directly! Have patience! I am busy here!" "This may be January or February. *Sunguti* is also one of the summer months. *Sibamesoko*, the moon which closes the paths, also called *Dwebindlela* or *Sibandlela*, is easy to identify : it is February, the time when the grass grows so high that it hides the paths leading to the nkanye trees. This is the end of the bukanye time (I. p. 397). *Nyenyana*, *Nywenywankulu* are the months of the birds (nyanyana), when one spends all one's time in chasing the winged marauders from the fields of sorghum and millet (March. April). *Mudashini*, viz., what am I to eat? is the month when you have harvested so many different kinds of food that you do not know which to choose : this is the time directly after harvest, May or June. *Khotabushika*, viz., when winter comes, probably June or July.

772 The *stars* are called *tinyeleti* (yin-tin) and play a remarkably
821 small part in the ideas of the tribe. The modern theory according to which all religions started from the worship of stars, finds no confirmation at all in the South African Bantu tribes.

821 It is taboo to try to count the stars. If any one attempts
784 to do so people will say to him : "Keep quiet or you will wet the
861 hut during the night!" Counting stars represents the torments of the soul! If a child has been deprived of food as a punishment for an offence, his parents will tell him, when he goes to sleep : "Go and count the stars," viz., "you will feel hungry and not be able to go to sleep ; you will be as unhappy as if you had to count the stars."

[1] [names of moons -- Analyst]

826 Monkeys are thought to be degenerate human beings, who have lost the habit of working and tilling fields, and thus fallen into their present miserable condition.

815 The collection of Native names of animals which I have compiled is interesting ; first from the linguistic point of view, for purposes 192 of comparison. Bantu philology needs such lists of words on which to base its conclusions. Let me point out that there seems to be a great uniformity in the various South African dialects as regards the names of large animals, the root being the same although the names have been differentiated by the regular phonetic permutations (1) ; names of trees, on the contrary, vary very much, even from one Thonga clan to the other. But these names also interest us as throwing some light on the Bantu conceptions of Nature. The notion of *genus* is not so marked as amongst plants. It is not, however, absent. The different kinds of ducks are called *sekwa*, sekwa-nyari, sekwa-mhala, the word sekwa being a true genus name. The notion of *order* may even be discovered in the classification of mammalia made by Mankhelu when he said : "Women eat only the flesh of animals having *hoofs*, and not that of animals having *paws*" (p. 83).

193 It is curious to inquire to which of the grammatical classes these names belong. Most of them are of the *yin-tin* class, the animal class proper. Torrend makes a connection between the prefix *tin* and the stem *psala*, to beget, to bring forth, and this may be correct. But many are of the *dji-ma* class, which often contains objects forming groups ; animals roaming in companies, as well as the regiments of the army (mabotshu, mabandla, I. p. 456), frequently belong to this class. (Sekwa, duck ; sowa, sparrow ; khoti, vulture ; hanshi, the horse of White people, of the cavalry, etc.). Some mammalia have the personal prefix *ba* for the plural. The mu-ba prefixes are always employed in tales when the animal is personified ; in the few cases here referred to, however, *ba* is used without any idea of personifying the animal ; the bat, the fox and a kind of red antelope (mangulwe) are designated in this way, and I

(1) Compare the names in my list with the Zulu and Nyandja names collected by Miss Werner in the *Revue d'Ethnographie et de Sociologie*. Jan. April 1911.

609 accepted as facts by the majority of his countrymen in Bilen. Is it not strange to notice that, whilst a great number of Europeans think of the Blacks as being all cannibals, these savages, on the other hand, believe exactly the same thing of us! Of course a closer contact with White people has already led them to a truer knowledge of what we really are, and they have discovered that, after all, there is not such a great difference between the various human races!

In former times the Thongas would seem to have believed that all White people, not only the Portuguese, dwelt in water. They were said to have eyes in front and behind and to see on all sides, so that it was impossible to escape from them. They used to kidnap Black people and take them away.

III. *The human body.*

1) Ideas of Anatomy.

815 826 The Thongas have never made an anatomic study of a human corpse. They have a riddle to this effect: "Ku pfura ndjilo mungema? — Ba lahla munhu wa ku fa." — "A fire of live coals? — They bury a dead man." As you never put your hand in the fire, so you would not touch a corpse. Nor have they ever made a post mortem examination! What they know of the human body is entirely derived from the inductions they have drawn from oxen, pigs and game which they cut open. Considering that the source of their knowledge is so indirect, one wonders that they have learnt so much of the human physical structure.

192 826 Having taught a little anatomy to the students of our Institute, I can bear testimony that they have names for most of the bones of the skeleton. *Pala* (dji-ma) means skull; *lihlaya* (li-ti), maxillary bone; *tinyo*, pl. menyo, teeth; *tshuri* (dji-ma), molar tooth (same word as mortar); *litlatla*, clavicle; *likhongotlo*, spine; *khatla* (dji-ma), shoulder blade; *shintjintji*, sternum; *shikangana*, extremity of the sternum; *libambo*, rib; (they believe there are *ten* ribs on each side!); *shikukwana*, humerus; *nkono* (mu-mi), cubitus;

ñwalihlanga, (mu-ba) femur ; *lihandja*, tibia ; they seem to know 192
nothing of the radius and the peroneus ; *guywa-guywana*, rotula ; 826
nhlolo, astragalus ; other bones are called by the name of the region, or the organ, to which they belong : the bone of the pelvis, *nyongwa* (yin-tin), the hip ; the wrist bones, *hlakala* ; those of the palm, *shipapa* ; those of the fingers, *litiho* ; those of the toes, *shikuñwana* ; those of the ankle, *shirendje* ; of the sole, *nkondjo* (mu-mi) ; the thumb is called *khudju* (dji-ma), and the big toe, *the great shikuñwana*.

The different organs are also known : *byongwe* (bu-ma) (Dj.) *bongwe* (Ro.) is the brain ; *tihlo*, pl. *mahlo*, the eye ; *ndlebe* (yin-tin), the ear ; *nhompfu* (yin-tin), the nose ; *nomo*, pl. *milomo*, the lips and the mouth ; *lidjimi*, the tongue ; *nkolo* (mu-mi), the throat ; they know that there are two pipes, one for food, the other for air, but they are not sure which is in front and which behind! *Hahu* (dji-ma), (Ro.), *phaphu* (Dj.), lungs ; *shidyelo*, the stomach ; *mbilu* (yin-tin), the heart ; *shibindji*, the liver ; *libengo*, the spleen ; *lipfalo*, the diaphragm ; *rumbu* (dji-ma), the bowels, including the male internal genitalia ; external genitalia of man and woman are taboo ; *yinso* (yin-tin) means kidneys ; *nhlonge* (yin-tin), skin ; *nwala* (mu-mi) nail *nsisi* (mu-mi), hair, etc.

But on pushing the inquiry somewhat further, we begin to notice a gross ignorance of important facts. The one word [843]
nsiha (mu-mi) means nerves, tendons, ligaments, veins and arteries ; *nyimba* is the uterus, but also means pregnancy. Natives seem to think that a new nyimba is created at each pregnancy. They know nothing of the glands and I never discovered a name for the pancreas.

2) Physiological notions.

For this reason it is obvious that they cannot know what really 827
happens in the body, and the marvellous and complicated system of our physical life. The mystery of the nervous system is entirely unknown, as is also the way in which blood (*ngati*, yin-tin) is formed from food, the digestive process, the circulation of the blood and the action of the air upon it, etc. We must not be

criminal magical practices by which wizards and witches bewitch 789
innocent folk. Buloyi is a crime. White Magic is called *Bungoma*, 754
and means the magical operations of those who combat evil influences and use their powers for the benefit, and not for the ruin, of their countrymen. The *mungoma* (magician) is consequently the great enemy of the *noyi* (caster of spells). It may be that the power of both is at bottom of the same nature. But the use they make of it is entirely opposed, the one exerting it in the interests of Society, the other against it. We shall therefore have to deal with these two categories of persons in two separate paragraphs.

I. *Black Magic (Buloyi)*.

Buloyi, an abstract noun of the bu-ma class, as well as *noyi* [192]
(pl. *baloyi*), is derived from the verb *ku loya* (Ro.), *lowa* (Dj.), to bewitch. This word is very interesting. It seems to have been known already in the Ur-Bantu (Comp. Meinhof, *Grundriss*, p. 173) and exists in Swaheli, Herero, Xosa, Sutho, Thonga, etc. Strange to say, the stem is absent in Zulu, where it is replaced by *thakata*. In Thonga its most common meaning is to bewitch. But the word is also applied to the act of a man who marries his near cousin (I. p. 258). Moreover Nkolele, describing to me the sacrifice in the sacred wood, and speaking of the *ntukulu* who prepares to steal the offering, said : "Here is the *noyi*, ready to come and steal the beer..." I also heard the crocodile stone, used by the chief as a charm to protect his life, called *buloyi bya hosi*, the magical power of the chief (I. p. 393) ; these instances show that the word loya is sometimes, though rarely, used in a more general sense. Its technical meaning, however, is and remains : to injure or kill by enchantment. Who are these baloyi, and what crime do they perpetrate?

1) The Baloyi.

The *baloyi*, or people possessing the evil eye, are numerous 754
in each tribe. Their power is hereditary, but, strange to say, it is transmitted by the mother and not by the father. Therefore

183 *shitshabo*, viz., fear, or respect (1). There is no danger in
834 transgressing this law of decency, but to do so is condemned.

3) When a young man has transgressed the taboo of *matlulana* (I. p. 197), having had sexual relations with the same woman as another man, he is not allowed to attend the burial of his rival. It is a taboo. However, if the deceased is his own father, the culprit can be treated with drugs, and so fulfil his duty of grave-digger, being protected against the dangers of his condition : "The *yila* has been removed, but the *biha* remains." *Biha* means that which is bad.

183 So there are three domains, besides the yila, in which the
577 Native is conscious of the restraints imposed upon him : law or custom, respect or decency, and duty or *fanelo*. To these might be added a fourth, the disgust for a certain food (p. 83). The great difference between the taboo and the other prohibitions is that the transgression of the latter is not necessarily attended with danger (2).

Let us consider more closely the idea of *fanelo*, or duty.

192 Fanelo comes from *ku fana*, to be alike ; fanela is what is
183 seemly, becoming. This is not as yet a very high notion of
577 morality. The moral sense, however, certainly exists and this is proved by three facts :

1) The richness of the vocabulary expressive of moral ideas. There are more words applicable to the negative side of the idea and signifying *bad*, than to the positive, signifying *good* ; a phenomenon which may be observed in most primitive languages, even in our French patois. *Ku biha* means to be bad, morally speaking, and to be ugly, esthetically speaking. The distinctiveness of the two domains exists, however, in the mind of the Native. He says : "behile mbilu" — "is bad in his heart," or "behile liso" — "is ugly as regards his face." *Shibi*, the derivative noun of the verb ku

(1) I have heard the mixed bathing of men and women also called a yila, but it is a special kind of yila, *the yila of tshabisa*, the taboo of respect or decency.

(2) I would not, however, insist too strongly on the distinctiveness of these five domains. Theft and murder are prohibited on account of *duty*, but they become taboo if the culprit is discovered, because they will bring punishment upon him. The moral wrong of these acts was perceived *before* their dangerous character, and we have here an instance of a taboo grafted on a moral, or social, prohibition.

biha, is regularly used in Djonga to mean *sin*. It also designates the offensive substance which a child or careless person may have left on the path, instead of observing the sanitary regulations of Native villages. (I. p. 311.) But in addition to biha we have *dyoha* (Dj.), *doha* (Ro.), to commit a wrong, *hona* (Ro.), *onha* (Dj.), which means to spoil, but also to sin, and from which comes *shihono*, the true word for sin in Ronga. *Somboloka* means to be irremediably bad, crooked, like a stem which cannot be straightened. 192 183 577

On the contrary the adjective *nene*, corresponding to biha, contains three meanings: good, nice, and true, the derivate *bunene* designating rather goodness and beauty, and another derivative, *psinene*, truth; the verb used for to be good is *shonga* (Ro), or *saseka* (Dj.), and has both the moral and esthetic significance. *Ku lulama* is to be straight, like a stem, and the use of this word indicates a deep and clear sense of right doing. Many other expressions might be quoted, showing that the notion of moral good and evil is certainly present in the Native mind, quite independently of that of taboo. They also recognise the *conscience* (timpfalu), seated in the diaphragm (p. 361).

2) *Intercourse with Natives* proves the same thing. Though their ideas may differ from ours as regards what is good (1), they are undoubtedly moral beings, with a more or lees developed conscience. 183 577

3) Their *folklore* is the best and most objective proof that this is so. Vice is punished and virtue rewarded in all the tales which I have called *moral*, and they certainly contain a whole code of natural and elementary morality (p. 222). The pangs of conscience in a criminal are depicted in a wonderful fashion in Zili, for instance. [538]

However, it must be confessed that this morality is low, that it does not possess a very strong hold on the Native soul, and that the imperative of conscience is by no means the categorical

(1) The idea of charity is particularly low: charity is due only to relatives, or to clansmen, and not to foreigners. I remember a man of the Manyisa clan who nearly died near the lake of Rikatla, having been hurt when working on the railway; nobody took pity on him, because he belonged to another clan. He was saved by a converted woman, Lois, who had a wonderful understanding of the new principles of universal brotherhood. 577 609

II. *Tribe, Groups and Clans.*

101/618 It is necessary first of all to define clearly the precise meaning of these three terms.

We reserve the term *tribe* for the totality of the Thonga nation. This word is frequently used to designate the smaller national units, which are called after some old chief whose descendants are still reigning, like Tembe, Khosa, Nkuna, etc. We prefer for the sake of clearness to call these small units *clans*, as there is certainly a great resemblance between them and the Scottish clans. As a rule all men belonging to a clan bear the name of the old chief, who is more or less considered the ancestor of them all. In the Tembe country, most of the inhabitants will salute each other with these words : "Shawan Tembe, good morning, Tembe" ! But Tembe, the name of the clan, means not only a group of people, but a certain part of the country south of Delagoa Bay. In that country men of other clans have settled. There are also sub-clans of the Tembe clan which have already adopted special salutations, because they have formed collateral branches of the big Tembe family. However the term *clan* is the best, I think, to designate this kind of national unit, as its origin is essentially familial. Now some of these clans, those which occupy the same tract of country, form *groups* because they speak the same dialect of the Thonga language.

III. *The generic Name of the Tribe.*

101/619 As we shall see, there is no true national unity amongst the Thongas (1). They are hardly conscious that they form a definite

193 (1) What orthography are we to adopt when using the Bantu proper names in the plural? Different systems are used in ethnographic books, but the following appears to me the most rational. When a Bantu proper name is used with its plural prefix, the addition of a final *s* is not justified ; but in that case the prefix ought to be separated from the root by a hyphen, in order that the uninitiated reader may understand at once that he is dealing with a plural. Thus I would write : Ama-Zulu, Ba-Ronga, etc.

101/619 nation, and therefore they possess no common name for it. The name *Thonga* (pronounce *t* + aspirated *h*, not the English *th*) was applied to them by the Zulu or Ngoni invaders, who enslaved most of their clans between 1815 and 1830. The origin of this Zulu name is probably the term *Ronga*, which means Orient (buronga = dawn) and by which the clans round Lourenço Marques used to call themselves. According to the phonetic laws of the two languages *R* in Ronga becomes *Th* when pronounced by the Zulus. (Ex. Randja, to love, in Ronga, is thanda in Zulu ; raru, three, thathu.) This word Thonga became a nickname which, in the mouth of the Zulus, was almost the equivalent of slave, and they applied it to the whole Thonga stock ; the appellation is not liked by the Thongas, but I know of no other which would be preferable to it.

Strange to say, the Thongas of the Northern Clans, especially those of the Bilen and Djonga groups, like to call themselves *Tjongas*, the Hlengwes *Tsongas*. This word is perhaps originally the same as Ronga and may have meant also people of the East, although the *R* of the Ronga dialect does not permute regularly into *Tj* and *Ts* in the Northern clans ; but this meaning is doubtful, and has at any rate been forgotten. Another name, which is much used amongst white people to designate the Thongas, is the word *Shangaan*. Shangaan or Tshangaan was one of the surnames of Manukosi, the Zulu chief who settled on the East Coast and subjugated most of the Thongas at the time of Chaka. It is possible that this name was even older, and that it belonged to a chief who lived in the valley of the Lower Limpopo before Manukosi. At any rate, this valley was called Ka Tshangaan and its inhabitants Matshangaan. But this term was never accepted by the Ba-Ronga, who consider it as an

193 (in the singular: Mu-Ronga, Mu-Sutho), but never Ama-Zulus, Ba-Rongas. As however ordinary readers are not acquainted with Bantu grammar, I think it is more advisable to use these Bantu proper names without their prefixes, treating them as if they were English words, and, in that case it is necessary to add the final *s*, as we generally do according to the rules of European spelling. Many writers do not adopt this system in their books; but write the plural in exactly the same form as the singular, and it is therefore impossible to distinguish between the two. This may lead to confusion. I therefore propose to write : a Thonga, the Thongas, one Hlengwe, two Hlengwes, but it should be remembered that the final *s* must not be pronounced.

197 193 The Thonga idiom belongs to the *South-Eastern group of the Bantu languages* and is related both to Sutho and Zulu. All these languages have in common certain grammatical features which distinguish them from other groups. Amongst them I may mention the frequent use of the lateral sounds *hl, dl, tl*, the presence of seven or eight distinct classes of nouns, recognizable by prefixes which correspond to each other in these three languages, the formation of the locative by a suffix *ini* or *ng* and not by prefixes, the consequent absence of the three locative classes pa, ku, mu, etc. It has been asserted by people who have not studied Thonga carefully that it is merely a dialect of Zulu. This is not true (1). Thonga is altogether different from Zulu and Sutho, though it closely resembles both, especially Zulu.

194 197 *Relation to Sutho.* As regards Sutho, its phonetic system is characterised by the absence of a certain phenomenon common to most Bantu languages, to Thonga and Zulu especially. The Bantu phonology is dominated by a peculiar nasalisation of certain consonants when prefixed by an *n* or an *m*. This *n* or *m* is generally the prefix of the class mu-ba, mu-mi or in-tin (zin), and has the power of producing marvellous changes in this initial consonant. But, in Sutho, this prefix is dropped altogether except in a few cases, and these nasalised sounds are almost entirely lacking. As regards some other grammatical features, Sutho, especially the Pedi dialect of Sutho, is not so far from Thonga. It is not possible to quote many instances; let us only remark that Sutho possesses the roots *loya* for witchcraft and *yila* for taboo which are also present in Thonga and are lacking in Zulu.

Relation to Zulu. The great difference between Thonga and Zulu as regards phonetics is the complete absence of the three characteristic Zulu clicks (2) in Thonga. The Thongas have no

(1) Thongas and Zulus *do not understand* each other. In linguistic terminology, I think one ought never to designate as a dialect of a language an idiom which people speaking that language cannot understand at all. It is then a different language altogether, and we ought to keep the term dialect for the various forms of a single language which are of such a nature that people speaking them can understand each other more or less perfectly.

(2) The Zulu clicks are, as is generally believed, of Hottentot origin. It is not surprising therefore that they were not adopted by the Thongas, who do not seem to have had any contact with Hottentots.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

194 clicks at all except in a few words borrowed from the Zulu like
197 nqolo, wagon. Certain letters regularly permute from one language into the other : *Z* of the Zulu is *t* in Thonga ; *r* of the Thonga is generally replaced by *l* or *th* in Zulu.

Originality of Thonga. But though Thonga and Zulu resemble each other in many respects, Thonga possesses some peculiar features which prove its originality. As regards its sounds, it is characterised by the frequent occurrence of a labial sibilant sound, a little like *ps* pronounced with a kind of whistling, which corresponds to the Zulu *z* in the plural of the class isi-izi. It is further characterised by some special nasalisations of initial consonants. *N+k*, which remains *nk* in Zulu, becomes *h* in Thonga : for instance the Zulu *nkosi*, chief, is *hosi* in Thonga. (It is *Khushi* in Sutho-Pedi where the initial *n* has been dropped). There is a long list of words of the in-tin class which show this phenomenon (homu, ox ; huku, hen, etc.). The initial *r* when preceded by *n* becomes *nh* (*nh*ena, warrior ; tin*h*aru, three ; cf. *r*aru, three, burena, bravery, morena, in Sutho, chief). This seems to be the primitive combination. In some other cases it becomes *ntjh* in Ronga and *ndj* in Djonga (rako, behind, *ntjh*ako, *ndj*ako). These two *r* have probably a different origin in the Ur-Bantu. These transformations are peculiar to Thonga.

193 As regards morphology, Thonga has some striking peculiarities : a great variety of demonstrative forms due to the presence of a kind of demonstrative particle *le* or *la* and also a great development of the participial forms of the verbs. In its conjugation, the verb is quite as well provided with auxiliaries as in any other South African language and we could easily discover in Thonga the one or two thousand combinations which have been counted in the Zulu conjugation.

Thonga, for all these reasons, is a language apart which has developed with its different dialects.

197 *The six dialects.* We have tried to classify them under six names, but this classification is, of course, purely formal : in fact each of them presents transition forms, and they coalesce with each other through a great number of intermediary

FIRST PART

THE LIFE OF THE INDIVIDUAL

CHAPTER I

THE EVOLUTION OF A MAN FROM BIRTH TO DEATH

A. INFANCY

1. *The day of Birth.*

84/4 When a new member of the tribe is expected, when the mother begins to feel the pangs of childbirth (ku luñwa), the father sends word to the midwives of the neighbourhood and all of them come at once. They are called *tinsungakati* (1). Every woman having some experience in this department is a midwife, no special training being required for the qualification (2).

The *place chosen* for the delivery (phuluka) is generally the back of the hut (mahosi) where the pregnant woman lives. Some mats are brought and hung up in such a way as to form a smal

193 (1) This word is interesting. Its termination *ati* is the proper feminine suffix wh is found in nsati, wife, hulukati, female elephant, Nkomati, the river of that nam the rivers being considered as female by the Thongas.

(2) Amongst certain Thonga clans, especially the Khosas of Magude, there is a person who is bound to come and assist the woman in childbirth : this is the mukoñwana lo' nkulu of her husband i. e. the woman who has been bought with her husband's oxen. The woman in labour leans her head on this woman's chest, whilst the other midwives help her in parturition. When the Rev. F. Paillard went to assist a woman during labour, the "mukoñwana lo' nkulu" told him : "You have taken my place." See Part II. Ch. I. B. 3).

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601 193 Grammatically speaking, most of the Thonga terms of kinship belong to the class mu-ba, the personal class. They form their plural in *ba* (batatana, bana, bamakwabu, batukulu). Some however are of the class yin-tin which comprises mostly animals, but also names of trades and of family relations : Ndjisana, nhondjwa, namu, nhombe, nhlantsa forming their plural in *ti*. The five following terms, Tatana, Mamana, Rarana, Malume, Kokwana, are treated as proper nouns when they are used as such. , For instance when I say Tatana, it means *my* father, the one to whom this term applies par excellence. In this case Tatana is not preceeded by the initial vowel *a* or *e*, which is always prefixed to the common nouns (See Elementary Grammar ot the Thonga-Shangaan Language, page 26 § 65). If I wish to say "his father," I should say : Atatana wa kwe (Ro.), or Etata wa yena (Dj.) etc.

B. EXPLANATION OF THONGA TERMS OF RELATIONSHIP

602 Let us go deeper into the study of each of these terms, trying to ascertain their principal and derivative meanings. We shall consult the three genealogies here given, those of Tobane (A), of Mboza (B) and of his wife Nsabula (C), endeavouring to ascertain not only the social but also the moral relation existing between these several people. There are two kinds of relationship : blood relationship or consanguinity and marriage relationship, relationship on the wife's side or affinity. Amongst blood relatives, there are two categories which differ more from each other amongst the Bantus than amongst us, relatives on the father's side and on the mother's side. On the father's side, the relatives are called bakweru (Ro.), barikweru (Dj.), those of our home ; and on the mother's side, bakokwana, the ancestors.

We shall consider each of these three relationships separately, though it will be found impossible to isolate them entirely from each other. In each of them, we shall find two sets of terms : terms of correspondence and of reciprocity. We shall see also

197 the Bantu languages are so similar that conclusions drawn from one of them apply to most of the tribes, *mutatis mutandis*. At any rate Sutho, Zulu, Chopi, Venda, and Thonga are very much akin, as regards their structure, forming as they do the South Eastern group of Bantu languages ; and, though the Central or Western groups differ on certain points, it may be asserted that the Bantu dialects present a remarkable uniformity.

My aim is not, by any means, to enter upon a grammatical study. This has been done for most of our South African languages, and the linguist who wishes to learn Thonga can use the Grammaire Ronga, or the Elementary Thonga-Shangaan Grammar already referred to. Leaving aside all technicalities, I shall now only attempt to show what the language reveals as regards the Bantu intellect. Let us, on this important question, take the testimony of the Noun, the Verb, the Conjunction and the Adverb.

A. THE NOUN AND THE POWER OF CLASSIFICATION.

● 198 The Bantu system of Nouns shows that the Bantu intellect possesses the *Power of classification*. All nouns are divided into a certain number of classes or genders, seven or eight in the South Eastern group, as many as ten in the Central groups ; these classes are known by their singular and plural prefixes, which are very similar in all dialects. What is the system of classification which these Genders denote? The Indo-Germanic languages divide natural objects into two categories, male and female, and, in most cases, add a third category, the neuter. They are *sex-denoting* languages, as Bleek used to call them. Nothing of this kind is met with amongst the Bantus (1). They follow an entirely different

(1) The Thongas, however, possesses a feminine suffix *ati* (eti, etsi) corresponding to a feminine prefix *mi* (l. p. 36). This suffix is found in nsati, wife, rarakati, paternal aunt, hulukati, female elephant, hweti, moon, nyeleti, star, mati (?) water, etc. It appears in many names of rivers : Nkomati, Ñwebeti, Ñwanetsi, Selati, Nfoloti, Shingwedzi, etc. Other names of rivers belong to the li-tin or ri-tin class : Limbelule (Oliphant) Limpopo, Lisuthu, Letsitele (Ritshindjele), Ritabi (Great Tabie), etc.

system. As a matter of fact, it is very difficult to understand it fully. These languages have already undergone a long process of evolution, and, just as it is impossible to state why a French word like "*chemin*" is masculine and another word like *route* is feminine, so the reason why such and such a noun belongs to such and such a class is not always apparent. However, as a whole, the Bantu system of classification is much more rational than the Indo-Germanic. I shall not study it etymologically, viz., by searching for the original meaning of the prefixes, a very difficult task which has been accomplished by Prof. Meinhof, who had at his disposal an enormous quantity of material for comparison. I shall only consider it in its broad features, as it now presents itself in the living language, and I assert that it reveals a true power of classification.

The Bantu mind divides natural objects into seven or eight categories :

1) *Personal beings*, which are classified by prefixing *mu* (n) in the singular and *ba* in the plural, thus forming the first class, the class *mu-ba* ; munhu, man, nuna, husband, nsati, wife, etc. This class is so clearly defined in the Bantu mind that new objects bearing a personal character are immediately incorporated into it : e. g. mulungu, White man, muhanu, White woman (from an Indian word). Animals which behave like rational beings in folk tales are also removed from their class into the mu-ba class by prefixing *Ñwa* to their names, and innumerable verbal nouns are formed by prefixing *mu* to the verbal stem, if they designate persons (e. g. ku fa, to die, mufi, the dead man).

2) The second class, *mu-mi*, designates *trees* ; almost all trees belong to it (I. p. 397), and those recently introduced into the country have been named according to this rule, e. g. manga, mimanga, the mango tree. It is true that we find a number of other things with the prefix of the tree-class : the wind (moya), and similar objects (mumu, heat, ndjilo, fire, mpfuka, space, nkari, time), the body (miri) and some of its organs (nomo, the lip, nenge, the leg). But trees are the characteristic element of this class.

3) The third class, *yin-tin* (Zulu in-izin, Sutho (n)-li) is evidently that of *animals*. Ninety per cent of these belong to it ; and

●193 though a number of other objects have these prefixes (different degrees of affinity for instance : namu, ndjisana, etc., I. p. 223), this is definitely the animal class.

4) The fourth class (*dji-ma* (Ro.), *ri-ma* (Dj.), Zulu : ili-ama, Sutho : le-ma) is that of *fruits*, and new fruits are constantly incorporated into it (e. g. malalandji, oranges). Many other categories of objects are found in this class : natural objects, hard, shining (pala, skull ; rambu, bone ; fumu, thlari, assagai ; dambu, sun) and things grouped together. It may be that the prefix *ma* originally applied to objects conveying the idea of duality (mahlo, eyes ; mabele, breasts ; maboko, arms ; mahahla, twins) ; but in the present state of the language fruits seem to me to be the characteristic feature of this class.

5) The fifth class (*li-tin* (Ro.), *ri-tin* (Dj.), ulu-izi (Zulu) is most difficult to define and seems to be tending to become obsolete : it is wanting in Sutho, and nearly so in Djonga. I call it the class of *organs*, at any rate of organs of an elongated form (lidjimi, tongue ; libambo, rib ; likhongotlo, spine, etc.). The primitive idea may be that of length.

6.7.8) The sixth, seventh and eighth classes bear a strongly neuter character : the sixth (*bu-ma*, Zulu ubu-ama, Sutho bo-ma) designates *abstract notions* derived from adjectives or verbs (bukulu, greatness), the seventh (*shi-psi*, Zulu isi-izi, Sutho se-li) *instruments* and the eighth (*ku*, Zulu uku, Sutho hu) *actions*. This is the verbal class, the infinitive of the verb, ku famba, meaning the march as well as to march.

The class bu-ma may also be called the class of *liquids*, as most liquids belong to it (bukanyi, buputju, etc. See I. p. 397).

Considering the principal meaning of these eight classes, we can state that, whatever may be the origin of the prefixes, the present-day Bantus, at any rate the Thongas, classify natural objects as : personal beings, trees, animals, fruits, organs, liquids, abstract notions, instruments, actions, other objects being incorporated into one or other of these classes in a more or less arbitrary way.

That this is a true classificatory system, every one speaking one of these languages will be able to testify ; instinctively one

incorporates new objects into the fitting class, or one uses the prefixes in the formation of new words according to their classifying value. The power of classification of the Bantu mind is certainly not inferior to that of Aryans. 193

B. THE VERB AND THE POWER OF COMBINATION.

The Bantu verb has no inflexion ; Bantu languages belong to the agglutinative type, viz., they express the various tenses and moods of the verb not by a change of the root, but by the addition of verbal elements, either prefixes or suffixes. But these additions are so varied, and can express such subtle ideas, that the student of Bantu languages stands amazed at the powers of combination which they reveal. It is impossible here to prove this assertion by technical examples, but I can assert that any one conversant with the use of these verbal principles is able to express all the ideas which are conveyed by the conjugation of inflective verbs and a good many more. It is no exaggeration to speak of the thousands of combinations of the Bantu conjugation.

To illustrate the power of combination of the Bantu mind, I need only refer the linguist to the wonderful set of verbal derivatives which are to be found. Take the simple form *ku bona*, to see. We may derive from it the passive *boniwa*, to be seen ; two qualificatives, *boneka* and *bonakala*, to be visible ; the applicative *bonela*, to see for somebody else, to take care of ; the causative, *bonisa*, to cause somebody to see ; the intensive, *bonisisa*, to see perfectly well ; the reciprocal, *bonana*, to see each other ; the reflexive, *tibona*, to see oneself. The reversive is still to be mentioned, as *pakula*, to unload (from pakela, to load). All these various derivations may be combined according to given laws, each adding its own meaning to the others. So, from *ku tira*, to work, can be formed *tirelana*, the applicative reciprocal, to serve each other, *tireriwa*, applicative passive, to be served, *tirisiwa*, to be made to work, etc. An endless number of combinations is thus rendered possible.

C. CONJUNCTIONS AND THE POWER OF ARGUMENT.

●193 Thonga conjunctions co-ordinate ideas rather than subordinate them to each other and this may certainly be regarded as a proof that the language has reached a less advanced stage of development than our modern Indo-European languages.

The conjunction which answers to our "that" and "in order to" is *lepsaku*. This word comes from the demonstrative pronoun *lepsi*, followed by the genitive particle *a* and by the verb *ku*, to say. It therefore means etymologically "that is to say," Let me give two examples : "I believe that he has gone : Ndja khólwa lepsaku a fambile." The exact translation would be : I believe that is to say he has gone. "I eat in order to find strength : Ndja dya lepsaku ndji kuma matimba," literally : I eat that is to say I find strength. The two ideas are presented as parallel, co-ordinate, not as subordinated one to the other. In the Ronga dialect however "in order that" is rather expressed by *akuba* i. e. to be or to become, which implies more or less the idea of an aim ; but this conjunction is not followed by a conjunctive form of the verb.

A similar deficiency consists in the fact that *when* and *if* are not differentiated from each other, both these ideas being expressed by the conjunction *loko* which is merely the demonstrative pronoun of the neutral class *ku* employed in a wider sense ; I never succeeded in finding a true word to express the abstract notion of *condition*.

We ought not, however, to conclude from these facts that the Bantu mind is still in the "prelogic stage" which the sociological school attributes to primitive mentality. There exist in the language a number of other conjunctions which show that the Native method of reasoning is not very different from our own. *Because* is rendered by *hikuna* or *hikuba*, lit. by to be ; *therefore, then* (French donc) by *hi-lepso* or *hi-lepso-ke*, lit. by this, and this little word *ke* is sometimes pronounced with a peculiar movement of the index finger which proves that the speaker has as much pleasure in asserting his conclusion as Cicero when he reached the end of his argument and uttered a victorious *ergo*! The syllogism

is not unknown to the Bantus though they may not have clearly thought out all its rules. It is true that logical reasoning is often interfered with amongst these primitive peoples by the mystic associations which Mr. Lévy-Brühl describes in his books on *Les Fonctions Mentales dans les Sociétés Inférieures* and *La Mentalité Primitive*, interfered with also by emotional factors or by the intervention of the will ; this unfortunately happens in non-primitive races also. But as regards the mechanism of reasoning, I do not think there is any great difference between the Bantu mind and the mind of more civilized peoples. 193

At any rate the power of co-ordination disclosed in the Bantu languages is extremely large and gives these languages a remarkable clearness. Its main feature is this : the prefix of the noun is used to form all the adjectives and pronouns connected with it, as will be clearly seen from the following sentence :

Tjadlopfu	le*ttayingi*	*ta*	tiko	*ti*	khalutile :	hi *tone*	
The elephants	numerous	of	the land	they	have passed :	It is they,	

hi *teleti*,	le'*ti*	bonekaka	mutjweu	wa	*tone*.
it is these	which	are visible	in the forest	of	them.

This is what grammarians have called the Euphonic Concord. It is certainly *euphonic*, bringing about frequent alliterations which are pleasing to the ear, and at any rate prevent misunderstanding, as they help us to realise, at once, to which noun the pronouns and adjectives refer.

D. ADVERBS AND THE POWER OF DESCRIPTION.

The Adverbs of place, manner, time, etc., form a very interesting study ; they show the presence of remnants of the three locative classes, *pa*, *mu* and *ku*, which still flourish in Central African languages, and have become obsolete in those of South Africa (*handle*, outside ; *hansi*, on the ground ; *hase*, on the other border ; *mandjuku*, to morrow ; *kaya*, at home ; etc.) and this seems to 192

192 certain number of them are real onomatopoeiae, i. e. words resembling the sound made by the thing of which they are the names. The term adopted by the Rev. R. Godfrey, Primary or Strong Stems, has been severely criticised by the Rev. W. Bourquin (see Christian Express, August and September 1916) and it would seem that this expression Primary must at any rate not be taken to mean that these words necessarily belong to the oldest elements of the language. A considerable proportion of the Kafir descriptive adverbs (60-70 %) bear the trace of a Hottentot or Bushman origin. It would however be an error to conclude from this fact that these words, amongst the Bantus, have been borrowed from the non-Bantu races. They abound in Thonga and Thonga has not been in any way influenced by the Bushmen and the Hottentots. But there is still another fact which proves that the descriptive adverbs have not been inherited from the *Ur-Bantu* ; as far as I am able to judge, the Kafir descriptive adverbs are totally different from those of the Thongas (1). There ought on the other hand to be many common to both languages (which have a great number of common roots as regards nouns, adjectives and verbs) if the present descriptive adverbs had really been used in the mother tongue. For all these reasons the term Descriptive Adverbs seems to me the best and should professional grammarians not wish to adopt it, I would suggest that they should be considered as words having no true equivalents in our more polished European languages and therefore as forming a new category, a new species to be added to the classical eight parts of speech! After all, language is not made for Grammar, but Grammar for language ! And we Europeans cannot claim to have found all the forms of expression of which the human mind is capable. If the Bantus have discovered another class of words which render them great service, why should we proclaim them as unworthy of consideration and exclude them from the written language?

● 193 For linguists, I add a few particulars concerning the grammatical nature of these words and the importance they may have had in the evolution of human speech. The intonation, the gesture, accompanying these adverbs of course greatly assist in understanding their meaning. Sometimes the word is *short*, ends sharply, as *gi*, a blow on a pole to drive it into the earth ; or it is *prolonged* as *ra-a-a*, the unrolling of a

(1) It is not possible to pronounce a definite judgment on this question as the lists of Kafir and Thonga descriptive adverbs which we possess are far from being complete. Full lists of these interesting particles in all the languages ought to be compiled by Bantu grammarians as soon as possible for purposes of comparison.

mat which drags along the ground ; or *repeated* many times, when the action consists in a series of repeated motions : *ngiri-ngiri-ngiri*, walking down to the spruit. From the etymological point of view, some adverbs may be termed *primitive* and others *derivative*. Amongst the primitive are, for instance, *dzi*, the act of planting (hence the verb ku dzima), *nyupe*, the act of plunging (hence ku nyupela), etc. But others are distinctly derivative, for instance : *humelelo*, the impression caused by somebody who suddenly appears. This is certainly derived from the verb ku humelela, which is itself the double applicative derivative of ku huma, to come out ; ku humelela means, according to the law of verbal derivation, to be produced, to happen, to arrive, to appear. Hence the descriptive adverb. Other instances of such derivations are : *retemuku*, *rendjeleku*, *tlheriso*, *woloko*, *khabutelo*. They are generally long words (though all the long ones are by no means derivatives). A regular means of derivation even seems to consist in the addition of the suffix *iyani* to the infinitive of the verb ; so a man "says" *yetleliyani*, he sleeps, (from ku yetlela, to sleep) ; *yimisiyani*, he stands erect (from ku yima, to stand). It would seem as if people had found so much pleasure in expressing their ideas by this picturesque method that they even convert regular verbs into descriptive adverbs ! 193

I must further mention that some of these adverbs, placed between the verb *ku* and the adverb, as shown in the following examples, have a true transitive nature and may be preceded by a direct object, especially those which express actions. Ex.: A ku *shi* wuyuwuyu, he throws *that* away ; a ku *mu* mpsi, he makes *him* mpsi, he binds him ; even the verbal reflective prefix *ti* (which is a kind of invariable pronoun) can be used in this connexion. Ex.: A ku *ti* mpsi, he ties himself. Some are at the same time transitive and intransitive, according to the sense. Ex.: A ku *kwe-kwe*, he drags his leg ; (a way of walking) ; a ku yi kwe, he drags it (the pole) ; (a transitive action).

In Kafir these particles are capable of modifying their meaning considerably owing to the fact that the auxiliary *ukuti* to which they are appended can adopt the derivative verbal forms called by Godfrey the reciprocal, the relative, the stative and the reflexive. This is not possible with the Thonga auxiliary ku ; I have only met with the reflexive ti, and this was not prefixed to the auxiliary as in Kafir but to the adverb itself.

In Kafir as in Thonga many of these words give rise to regular verbs. 192
This fact, which is one more proof of their importance and is highly interesting, would alone substantiate my contention that they should be

to the sacrifice of the black victim and to the mbelele rite of purification of the land, which are characteristic Thonga customs, it seems that another old Thonga way of obtaining rain was the *tjeba fishing* which I described on p. 86. When the whole clan had gone to catch the barbels in the almost dried up ponds, a thunderstorm would come and rain would fall. This was especially the case with certain small lakes such as Malangotiba in Nondwane, and that in Nsime near Morakwen, because battles had taken place on their borders and the enemies' corpses had been thrown into the water. So these lakes had become "great sacred woods" (ntimu). I suppose the spirits of the deceased, which were certainly "gods of bitterness," (see next chapter), were supposed to prevent the rain, and the *tjeba* either appeased them or made them powerless.

To sum up this very complicated subject, I would say rain rites belong to three different categories: 1) The religious rites connected with ancestor worship (black offering, visit to the sacred woods, old songs and sometimes offering of a human victim). 2) Rites of purification of the land, those which are derived from the mysterious relations established between the power of Heaven and abnormal births (mbelele, cleaning of wells by women accompanied by the mother of twins); these present some features of the ordinary passage rites, either because the fall of rain inaugurates a new season, or because drought is a calamity comparable with death and attended with contamination. 3) The magic rites, in which sea charms play the most important part.

Hail, shihangu (Dj.), mabyana, lit. little stones (Ro.), is frequent in Thongaland; according to Mboza, it is not the object of any peculiar superstitions. Amongst the Pedis the day on which it has fallen must be kept as a sabbath. It is taboo to till the fields on that day.

IV. *The Inorganic World.*

Water is called *mati*, a noun of the bu-ma class, the class of liquids, employed only in the plural form. Notice the suffix *ti*, which seems to show that, at a period when mythological

193 conceptions were still current, it was considered as a feminine principle. This supposition is confirmed by the fact that *rivers* (nambu. pl. milambu) also have the feminine termination (I. p. 36, Note). I find the following names of rivers ending in *ti* : Nkomati, Nfoloti (Umbelosi), Ñwebeti, Shalati, Timbati ; the termination *etsi*, *edzi*, may be another form of the same suffix (Ñwanetsi, Ntsatsi, Shingwedzi, Madzi, etc.). A very curious fact, which shows the same conception, is that the river which crosses the territory of the Tembe clan is called Mi-Tembe. I first thought this to be a plural form of the mu-mi class ; but it is more natural to explain this *mi* as the feminine prefix (1) which means daughter of, as Migogwe, etc. (I. p. 352).

823 *Crossing rivers* is subject to a curious rule. It is taboo to bathe
784 in the stream before crossing it ; taboo also for the traveller to
824 cook his food on the hither side of the river ; he must first cross,
789 and then take his meal. This rule is still universally observed by
133 waggon trekkers in South Africa. In this case there may be a reason for the taboo : South African rivers are apt to be swollen in a moment by sudden rain, and the crossing made impossible for days : the traveller therefore makes haste ; he will have plenty of time to stop on the other side! When the river is dangerous, a Thonga will first chew (phora) a little of his *ndjao*, the root of a juncus, which is supposed to increase courage and to ensure victory over hostile influences. (See Part VI.)

823 Some *Lakes* and *Rivers* are believed to be inhabited by spirits,
769 but not in the ordinary fetichistic way, in which a special spiritual
776 being is incorporated with the natural object ; these spirits are
782 *psikwembo*, spirits of the deceased ancestors of the owners of the land, and are propitiated by their descendants. Should another clan have invaded the territory where these lakes are, and crocodiles threaten the fishermen, (p. 88) they will call some one belonging to the clan of the old possessors of the country and ask him to make an offering to appease *his* gods. This is the ordinary course, and the more closely we search the more completely these lake and

(1) A number of river names have the prefix *li* or *ri*, especially those which are of Sutho origin : Lebvubye. Ritabi (Letaba) Ritshindjele (Letsitele), Rimbelule (Lepalula, Olifant). Others begin with *ñwa*, *ma*, and may be ancient names of men.

826 Monkeys are thought to be degenerate human beings, who have lost the habit of working and tilling fields, and thus fallen into their present miserable condition.

816 192 The collection of Native names of animals which I have compiled is interesting ; first from the linguistic point of view, for purposes of comparison. Bantu philology needs such lists of words on which to base its conclusions. Let me point out that there seems to be a great uniformity in the various South African dialects as regards the names of large animals, the root being the same although the names have been differentiated by the regular phonetic permutations (1) ; names of trees, on the contrary, vary very much, even from one Thonga clan to the other. But these names also interest us as throwing some light on the Bantu conceptions of Nature. The notion of *genus* is not so marked as amongst plants. It is not, however, absent. The different kinds of ducks are called *sekwa*, sekwa-nyari, sekwa-mhala, the word sekwa being a true genus name. The notion of *order* may even be discovered in the classification of mammalia made by Mankhelu when he said : "Women eat only the flesh of animals having *hoofs*, and not that of animals having *paws*" (p. 83).

193 It is curious to inquire to which of the grammatical classes these names belong. Most of them are of the *yin-tin* class, the animal class proper. Torrend makes a connection between the prefix *tin* and the stem *psala*, to beget, to bring forth, and this may be correct. But many are of the *dji-ma* class, which often contains objects forming groups ; animals roaming in companies, as well as the regiments of the army (mabotshu, mabandla, I. p. 456), frequently belong to this class. (Sekwa, duck ; sowa, sparrow ; khoti, vulture ; hanshi, the horse of White people, of the cavalry, etc.). Some mammalia have the personal prefix *ba* for the plural. The mu-ba prefixes are always employed in tales when the animal is personified ; in the few cases here referred to, however, *ba* is used without any idea of personifying the animal ; the bat, the fox and a kind of red antelope (mangulwe) are designated in this way, and I

(1) Compare the names in my list with the Zulu and Nyandja names collected by Miss Werner in the *Revue d'Ethnographie et de Sociologie*. Jan. April 1911.

193 am really unable to give any reason for the fact. A few other names of animals begin with *bu*, the singular prefix in the bu-ma class, which has evidently a collective meaning. *Busuna* is the immense number of mosquitoes which one hears buzzing in the night during the rainy season, whilst one mosquito is *nsuna*, pl. tinsuna; *busukoti* is the crowd of ants swarming in the ants' nest, whilst *nsukoti*, (cl. yin-tin) is one ant, etc.

Phot. A. Borel.

Gebuza, whose nose was torn off by a hyena.

815 Thus, amongst the Bantus, scientific knowledge of animals is still in a very primitive stage and may be compared to that possessed, for instance, by the author of Leviticus.

825 On the other hand, the animal world is not in their eyes so far removed from man as it is with us. Man lives in close connection with the animals, not only when he hunts them and tries to transform himself into "a thing of the bush" (p. 79), but even in ordinary life, and considers them as very similar to himself. For instance, some Thongas believe that animals have a *language*, and try to speak to them. I have already mentioned Pikinini; he was a boy from the Bilen country who stayed with me for a time at Shiluvane, having left Bilene after the defeat of Gungunyana. As he

771 easy to perceive. In the quartz of the South African veldt, miners, in their investigations, sometimes strike a reef : they crush the hard stone, wash it, apply to it certain chemical tests and find there is gold in the reef. This is similar to an experience which I once had when conversing with Thonga natives. Quite unexpectedly I heard them speaking of *Heaven*, not as a kind of impersonal being, but as a king, endowed with great power and omniscience, who must be feared by thieves, because he knows them. Persevering in my inquiries, I discovered this second set of religious intuitions, quite distinct from the first, viz., the *Deistic Conception of Heaven*. I intend now to describe these two parts of the Thonga religious system. Later on we may discuss their relation to each other. "System" is perhaps too big a word, for no Native philosopher or theologian has ever classified this somewhat confused mass of religious ideas, and we must not look for anything logical and organic. We may even meet with contradictions, conflicting statements... While trying to bring some order into the subject, I will endeavour at the same time to give a faithful and reverent explanation of Native ideas.[1]

A. ANCESTROLATRY.

I. *The Ancestor-Gods (Psikwembu).*

1) The name of the ancestor-gods.

769 Any man who has departed this earthly life, becomes a
776 *shikwembu*, a god. We shall show, later on, that to translate
193 "shikwembu" by god (with a small "g") is by no means incorrect. The word is indeed interesting, but unhappily no light is thrown on it by etymology. It belongs to the shi-psi class, the class of instruments. Take the verb "famba" to walk ; put the prefix "shi" in front of it, and change the final "a" into "o" and you obtain "shifambo" — "the thing with which one walks!" So shikwembu would mean "the thing with which one *kwemba*." Only this

[1] [For complete discussion of Thonga religion, see pp. 372-450, category 116.-- Analyst]

stem *kwemba* is never used, and its meaning is unknown. There 769
is another form, *nkwembu*, of the class mu-mi, very rarely used, and 776
having the same meaning, and the word *bukwembu*, the abstract 193
noun derived from the same root. Bukwembu is the "power which creates life and death, which gives riches, or which makes poor," says Viguet. In Pedi the ancestor-gods are called *badimo*, a word which seems to be related to *Khedimo* (above, in heaven). But I have heard this connection doubted (1). In Zulu the etymology of *indhlozi* and *itongo*, employed to designate the ancestor-gods, is also unknown, which is a pity, as it would have been interesting to see if the stem from which they come also means above. Is it not strange that in these three closely- [171]
connected languages the terms used for the spirits, about which they have exactly the same ideas, are absolutely without any linguistic relation? In Sutho, these spirits belong to the class "mu-ba," the class of persons, which seems natural. In Zulu their two names are of the class yin-tin and dji-ma, respectively ; in Thonga they belong to the shi-psi class. This dissimilarity is indeed curious.

2) Categories of Ancestor-Gods.

Since every human being becomes a shikwembu after death, [766]
there are consequently many categories of these. What is the fate 776
of little children? If they die in infancy no religious ceremony is 769
performed over their grave, nor are any prayers offered to them. The twig rite (I. p. 142) only begins for children who have died at the age of puberty. Infants are, however, seen in the sacred woods amongst the adult gods. This is one of the points about

(1) The Vendas call the ancestor-gods *badzimo*, which is evidently the same word as the Sutho badimo. The Rev. Th. Schwellnus told me he thought that the etymology of this word was the verb dzima (in Thonga tima) which means to extinguish (Timula tora means to quench the thirst). The badzimo would thus be those who bring relief, who remove anguish. As this stem dzimo under various forms is widespread amongst the Bantu tribes to designate the ancestor-gods, it would be interesting to know if the corresponding verb dzima also exists and if this etymology is clearly established. The word *ntimu*, sacred wood, in Thonga, may perhaps come from the same root.

197 The Thonga idiom belongs to the *South-Eastern group of the*
193 *Bantu languages* and is related both to Sutho and Zulu. All these languages have in common certain grammatical features which distinguish them from other groups. Amongst them I may mention the frequent use of the lateral sounds *hl, dl, tl,* the presence of seven or eight distinct classes of nouns, recognizable by prefixes which correspond to each other in these three languages, the formation of the locative by a suffix *ini* or *ng* and not by prefixes, the consequent absence of the three locative classes pa, ku, mu, etc. It has been asserted by people who have not studied Thonga carefully that it is merely a dialect of Zulu. This is not true (1). Thonga is altogether different from Zulu and Sutho, though it closely resembles both, especially Zulu.

194 *Relation to Sutho.* As regards Sutho, its phonetic system is
197 characterised by the absence of a certain phenomenon common to most Bantu languages, to Thonga and Zulu especially. The Bantu phonology is dominated by a peculiar nasalisation of certain consonants when prefixed by an *n* or an *m*. This *n* or *m* is generally the prefix of the class mu-ba, mu-mi or in-tin (zin), and has the power of producing marvellous changes in this initial consonant. But, in Sutho, this prefix is dropped altogether except in a few cases, and these nasalised sounds are almost entirely lacking. As regards some other grammatical features, Sutho, especially the Pedi dialect of Sutho, is not so far from Thonga. It is not possible to quote many instances; let us only remark that Sutho possesses the roots *loya* for witchcraft and *yila* for taboo which are also present in Thonga and are lacking in Zulu.

Relation to Zulu. The great difference between Thonga and Zulu as regards phonetics is the complete absence of the three characteristic Zulu clicks (2) in Thonga. The Thongas have no

(1) Thongas and Zulus *do not understand* each other. In linguistic terminology, I think one ought never to designate as a dialect of a language an idiom which people speaking that language cannot understand at all. It is then a different language altogether, and we ought to keep the term dialect for the various forms of a single language which are of such a nature that people speaking them can understand each other more or less perfectly.

(2) The Zulu clicks are, as is generally believed, of Hottentot origin. It is not surprising therefore that they were not adopted by the Thongas, who do not seem to have had any contact with Hottentots.

194 clicks at all except in a few words borrowed from the Zulu like
197 nqolo, wagon. Certain letters regularly permute from one language into the other: *Z* of the Zulu is *t* in Thonga; *r* of the Thonga is generally replaced by *l* or *th* in Zulu.

Originality of Thonga. But though Thonga and Zulu resemble each other in many respects, Thonga possesses some peculiar features which prove its originality. As regards its sounds, it is characterised by the frequent occurrence of a labial sibilant sound, a little like *ps* pronounced with a kind of whistling, which corresponds to the Zulu *z* in the plural of the class isi-izi. It is further characterised by some special nasalisations of initial consonants. *N+k*, which remains *nk* in Zulu, becomes *h* in Thonga: for instance the Zulu *nkosi*, chief, is *hosi* in Thonga. (It is *Khushi* in Sutho-Pedi where the initial *n* has been dropped). There is a long list of words of the in-tin class which show this phenomenon (homu, ox; huku, hen, etc.). The initial *r* when preceded by *n* becomes *nh* (*nh*ena, warrior; tin*h*aru, three; cf. raru, three, burena, bravery, morena, in Sutho, chief). This seems to be the primitive combination. In some other cases it becomes *ntjh* in Ronga and *ndj* in Djonga (rako, behind, *ntjh*ako, *ndj*ako). These two *r* have probably a different origin in the Ur-Bantu. These transformations are peculiar to Thonga.

193 As regards morphology, Thonga has some striking peculiarities: a great variety of demonstrative forms due to the presence of a kind of demonstrative particle *le* or *la* and also a great development of the participial forms of the verbs. In its conjugation, the verb is quite as well provided with auxiliaries as in any other South African language and we could easily discover in Thonga the one or two thousand combinations which have been counted in the Zulu conjugation.

Thonga, for all these reasons, is a language apart which has developed with its different dialects.

197 *The six dialects.* We have tried to classify them under six names, but this classification is, of course, purely formal: in fact each of them presents transition forms, and they coalesce with each other through a great number of intermediary

115 forgotten (especially in Basutoland). It may also be that some mistakes have been made, and I must apologize if such is the case. However I give this table as it is, after having done the best I could, knowing, as I said in my introduction, that Science proceeds by successive approximations and hoping that it will be a useful stone in the building up of African ethnological Science.

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194 As regards the spelling of all these words, I have followed as well as I could the system used in the books of the different languages. As, however, there is a deplorable multiplicity in the orthographic systems of South Africa, certain signs have not exactly the same value in all the columns. It is impossible to avoid this drawback, but it is of minor importance, my first aim being ethnographic and not linguistic. In Thonga I render by *ps* the sibilant *s* which is represented by *s* with a circumflex in the Thonga-Ronga books, and by *tj* and *dj* the cerebral *t* and *d*. I employ undiscriminately *b* for the strong *b* which is more common in Ronga and for the soft *b*, represented by *ṽ* in Thonga-Djonga books.

The Rev. P. Schwellnus has kindly transcribed most of the Khaha terms collected by me in the orthography recently adopted for Pedi books. Thus the letter *g*, when found alone or after *k*, represents the greek *γ*, a hard fricative guttural, whilst *g* associated with *n* corresponds to the nasal guttural *ng* in the English "singing" (*ñ* in Thonga). The cerebral *t* (*tj* in Thonga) is represented by *c*. In this form the kinship terms do not entirely agree with the Khaha pronunciation. The Khahas have a tendancy to soften many sounds (*dz* instead of *ts*, a kind of *d* instead of *tl*). I have adopted, however, the official Pedi orthography, as it is inadvisable, from a practical point of view, to preserve all the peculiarities of less important dialects or semi-dialects.

In the Sutho orthography *kh* corresponds to the Pedi *kg* ; *l* before *i* and *u* represents a sound intermediary between *l* and *d*, also present in Chopi, a soft cerebral *d* ; in Pedi it is written *d*. This sound occurs in the feminine suffix *ali* (Sutho), *adi* (Pedi) often met with in kinship terms (*ati* in Thonga, *azi* in Zulu, *adzi* in Venda). *O* and *u* are used both in Sutho and Pedi for the semi-vowels *w* and *y*. *Ch* in Sutho is pronounced like *tsh* in Thonga and Zulu.

853 grandmother, by name Mishidohi, who had an adult son and had had no other child since, prepared light beer and other appropriate food and succeeded in secreting milk in her own breast ; so the child was saved !

856 826 A child during these first months of its existence is regarded as a very weak creature. "I mati !" i. e. "It is nothing but water !" Hence perhaps the curious idea that a baby, just like a new born animal, is able to swim, at any rate it cannot be drowned : it floats on the water. When a woman carrying a little child on her back crosses a river and is in danger of being swept away by the stream, people shout to her from the shore : "Untie the 'ntehe' and let the baby cross. Think of yourself, the little one will follow all right." They say: "Psa yila, it is taboo that a baby should sink." Note the curious use of the word "yila" in this sentence.

3) Dentition.

856 364 351 As soon as the child has cut the two lower and upper incisors, the mother takes a white bead (tjambu) and ties it to one of the child's hairs above the forehead. This white bead is said to help the other teeth to come out normally. If this precaution were not taken, the child would not become intelligent ; he would shiver instead of smiling ; he would bring forward his lips and his tongue to prevent the air from getting into his mouth ! When all the teeth are duly cut, the bead is removed and thrown away *talen*, viz. on the *tala*. The *tala* is the ash-heap, the place behind the hut on which everyone throws ashes and dirt. It plays a great part in the customs of the Thongas and other South African Bantus.

195 The teeth (tinyó-menyo) of the children are called figuratively *hobe*. The *hobe* (pl. *tihobe*) means the grain of pounded maize which is white and very similar to a tooth. Hence the expression : "A humi hobe," "he has got out a grain of maize," employed to indicate the cutting of the teeth.

787 766 856 When a child cuts his upper teeth first, it is a bad omen. In the Northern clans and especially amongst the Ba-Pedi, it is a great taboo. At his death the child must be buried in wet soil.

1) The custom of the erotic dream (Tilorela).

881 When a young man has noticed for the first time an emissio
195 seminis, he is said to have become an adult (a kulile, a thombile)
751 to have "drunk the nkanye." The nkanye is the tree from which the bukanye is made. It is prepared for the great feast of the new year. *To drink the nkanye* is an euphemism to designate the entrance into a new phase of life, into the age of puberty. According to Mboza, the lad must go early in the morning to wash his body, and that is all. But Tobane says that, in the Mpfumo clan, the family doctor is called; in a broken pot, he roasts pieces of skin of all the beasts of the veldt, together with some half digested grass taken from the stomach of a goat (psanyi). The boy must eat a little of this medicine and rub all his joints with it. This will strengthen him so that, when he has relations with girls, he will not be overcome (gemiwa) by them. This rite, which is very similar to the rite of the broken pot performed for infants, is connected with the "gangisa," the sexual habits of young people which begin at the time of puberty, as we shall see later on.

881 At this time also, the boy begins to wear the very primitive
291 clothing called *shifado* (sha ku siba, the thing with which one
177 closes, see Annotatio 1). In former times they wore only the *mbayi*,
789 a small cylindrical or conical object of woven palm leaves, which
832 was the national dress of the Thongas; the *shifado* seems to be of Zulu origin. It is very much valued as preventing contact with the earth, as a protection against ants and an aid to continence; the lads who do not wear it are blamed and accused of being *ba-nato*. The word *nato* means a magical medicine by means of which men of low morals throw men or women into a deep sleep during the night, enter the huts of other people and commit adultery with their wives.

2) The piercing of the ears (Ku tjunya, (Ro.), boshela. (Dj.).

881 This also takes place at this period. There are two ways of
304 performing it, either by an actual piercing of the lower lobe
177 with a thorn, or by cutting it with a knife. The first method

1 [See p. 516 In these categories or in 116 --Analyst]

832 576 593 152 572 Even a husband never kissed his wife. On coming back from a journey, a man would hardly greet his wife ; she would see him passing through the village, prepare food for him, and when it was cooked, she would come and salute him by presenting it to him. But if he has a good friend in the village, and if this friend sees him coming back after a long absence, their meeting will be much more touching. The friend will go to the main entrance of the village, exclaim : "Ha-Ha," take his parcel from his hands, put his arms round his shoulders (a ku mu buso hi mandla), remove the perspiration from his face, and pat him gently, saying : "Your ancestor-gods have their eyes open! They have worked well! They have brought you back."

574 609 622 *Hospitality*. When strangers enter a village, men sit on the *bandla*, and women go further on and sit on the *hubo* ; they remain quietly there till the people of the village come and salute them (losa). Should the inhabitants delay too long, the visitors move on, saying : "These people are not good." But this is very rare. Generally the master of the village comes to them, inquiring who they are, whence they come, where they are going, and asks them : "Do you wish to spend the night here ?" If they say : "Yes," the headman will empty one of his huts by putting two of his wives together, and will himself sleep with the visitors. Should there still be food, he will give them some. If not, he says : 574 "*Ndlala*!" "Starvation!" After a little while, a mat is unrolled 609 and the official ceremony of "djungulisana" takes place. This is a 622 very amusing custom. The headman sits together with his hosts and enquires about the news of their home. One of the 203 visitors begins in a monotonous tone and pours forth volubly 195 a flow of words with a peculiar cadence and almost without taking breath. His interlocutor interrupts him after each sentence, with "Ahina, hina," that is to say "Indeed, indeed!" till the whole skein is unwound ; the two men finish with a longer "*Hina*," the inhabitants of the hut adding an emphatic "*khani*," a heartfelt "thank you ;" then the master of the village begins to relate his own news in the same tone. It is impossible to 574 imagine anything more curious than this "mélopée" in two parts. 609 This law of hospitality is general all over the tribe. Should

and the Bantus, as a whole, deserve the compliment once paid to the pupils of the Lovedale Institute by the Rev. J. Henderson, when he said to them: "Your race has certainly received the gift of eloquence!" (1) 521 537

As regards the subject matter of their speeches, it does not always show much reflection, or many new ideas. Nor is there much order or sequence in their discourses. This would require proportion, measure, forethought, and all these virtues belong rather to the arithmetical sense which is so sadly deficient in the Bantu mind. What makes a Bantu address especially interesting is rather the *power of comparison* exhibited by Bantu speakers. They excel in discovering spiritual truths in material facts, or rather in perceiving the relations between the spiritual and the external world. This is one of the characteristics of the poetical faculty, and these so-called savages certainly have some sense of poetry in their minds. Most of the antithetic riddles, which will be quoted shortly, are instances of this power of comparison. When developed by proper training, this faculty will certainly become productive of valuable work. 195 537

So far, the training of Natives has been mostly in religious subjects, and I beg to give my readers some examples of their mode of comparison which I noted while listening to the preaching of evangelists, examples which bear the strong impress of the Bantu character. Sometimes the imagination is so subtle that the result is almost incoherent. They are satisfied even if the point which the two things compared have in common, that which grammarians call the "tertium comparationis," is almost infinitesimal.

(1) This power of elocution is very useful in Mission work, when evangelising the heathen villages all over Thongaland, the converts being always willing to make a speech or deliver an exhortation. They generally do this with great animation, and although the thinking is often poor, and does not show much sequence, they at least are never at a loss for words. I only once witnessed such a sad occurence! One of my pupils had prepared a sermon and was delivering it, when suddenly he stopped and could not proceed. He had lost the thread. Then a good natured smile appeared on his features and all his companions laughed heartily. This was the first time they had seen one of their countrymen in this predicament! The student had prepared a plan for his address, and had forgotten it! In former times plans were entirely absent and consequently there were no threads to lose!

For instance a Tembe Christian exhorting his hearers to fight against evil, says : 195 537

Let us, in this fight, take the shield which has been made from the skin of this ox slaughtered for our sake, Jesus Christ.

A moment of reflection is required to find the logical sequence which unites all these images. The Bantu shield being made of ox-hide, the scriptural image of the slaughtered lamb had to be transformed into that of an ox, for the sake of comparison!

Another evangelist, whose discourses were specially interesting because he was a master in this art, one day spoke for more than half an hour on the text "Charity which is the bond of perfection." In Thonga, bond, string, or rope is expressed by the same word (ngoti). So he showed how a string could be compared to charity by a great number of images, of which I remember at least the two following :

This rope, charity, is the rope which fastens the donkey to the trunk of a tree. In the evening you tie up the donkey ; it can graze the whole night all round the tree without any fear of being lost. So when we remain in connection with our Saviour, who is the tree, then we are happy and protected against all danger.

He evidently remembered the words of Christ : I am the vine. And he added :

Charity is the string, the string which ties up a parcel. You have many precious things in your parcel... But if you possess no string to tie up all these things, they will be lost on the way, one after the other, and you will reach the end of your journey (or of your life) having kept none of your spiritual advantages, etc.

This is how Simeon Gana tried to explain what conscience is :

Conscience resembles two companions who have made an arrangement to plunder, with impunity, another man's field of sweet potatoes. One of them climbs a tree, the other takes the hoe and digs up the potatoes. As soon as the owner of the field appears, the one on the tree whistles and the other promptly runs away, so that he is never

caught. But one day, the climber ran a thorn into his foot and he was obliged to sit down and extract it, as he could not climb to his post of observation in that condition. In the meantime his companion was stealing the potatoes in perfect tranquillity, thinking that his comrade was on guard. The owner arrived on the scene and caught him. Now you see clearly that conscience is the man who climbed up the tree. As long as he was doing his duty, success attended their plan. As soon as he fails to work, the man falls into disgrace. So let our conscience always be awake and warning us ! 195 537

We Europeans would never have dreamt of such a simile. Conscience represented by a thief helping another to steal! But the Bantu audience was perfectly satisfied...

Here is another comparison bearing on a similar subject :

The words of God are powerful and stir up the heart. They are like intestinal worms (manyokwana) which for a long time remain quiet in the body. But one fine night they awake and man cries out from pain, saying : "I am ill !" For years the man mocked the word of God, but that day he felt its power !

Hundreds of such comparisons, not always denoting a very refined taste, but always picturesque, might be collected from the addresses of Native Christians. I will only add this, which is deeper and more significant than many others, and which occurred to the imagination of one of my pupils :

We, preachers of the Gospel, are messengers of mourning. We have been sent to inform people of the great mourning of Jesus Christ by which He saved the world. Let us not resemble that messenger who had to go to another country to deliver his errand. On the way he passed a village where people were drinking beer. He heard the songs, looked on at the dance, entered and did not deliver his message. Such would we be, if distracted by worldly amusements, we were to neglect our sacred duty of preaching the cross.

Besides this undeniable power of comparison, Native addresses often reveal another curious feature ; the Native tendency to present ideas in a round-about manner. This is called *ku pamba*. Beneath expressions apparently simple they hide other meanings in a manner so ingenious and subtle that some of their hearers

often fail to understand them. This literary device is often apparent in their riddles, or proverbs. 195 537

The literary gifts of the Natives, finally, manifest themselves in the very interesting and rich folklore which will form the subject of our second chapter.

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Is it possible after this rapid study of the Thonga language to fix with greater accuracy the place which the Bantu languages occupy in the historic development of human speech? Languages which are regarded as the most primitive are characterised by a linguistic phenomenon which is called holophrase, viz. a single word means not only a single action, but an action accomplished under a number of peculiar circumstances. Mr. Marett in his excellent little book entitled *Anthropology* (p. 140) quotes some very curious examples of holophrase borrowed from the American languages, especially from the Fuegian. A single expression is said to mean : "to look at each other hoping that either will offer to do something which both parties are unwilling to do." I have found in Thonga only one instance in which traces of the holophrase system might be found, and this is by no means so wonderful. The demonstrative adjectives are met with in three forms, which indicate not only the object referred to, but its place as regards distance and in relation to the person speaking. Tihomu *leti*, means these oxen, near at hand, near me ; tihomu *leto*, these oxen, somewhat further off, near you, my interlocutor ; tihomu *letiya*, those oxen, far away and near a third person. The more the final a is prolonged, the further off are the oxen. Moreover these demonstrative adjectives indicate not only the situation of the oxen in space but also in time ; *leti* are the oxen of to-day, *leto* those of a near past and *letiya* those of which we were speaking a long time ago. But this is an isolated case. In Thonga ideas are differenciated almost as completely as in our Indo-European languages. The language has evolved from the holophrastic to the analytic. My conclusion is therefore that the Bantu languages, though they belong to the agglutinate variety, have reached a high degree of development ; they reveal the existence of intellectual powers not essentially different from those of civilized races. They certainly constitute the greatest achievement of Bantu mental activity and the most precious treasure inherited by the Bantus of to-day from their forefathers. 192

1st Strophe.

533 They march in single file, the Elephants, the mighty ones,
224 They go to slake their thirst.

539 *Antistrophe.*

Let us go too! They're drinking amongst the thickets! Hurrah

2nd Strophe.

Hark! the smothered roarings in the forest.

Antistrophe.

'Tis a grand sound, the roaring in the forest. Hurrah!

3rd Strophe.

The crying of the elephant, the mother! 'Tis she who calls the hunters to the thickets.

Antistrophe.

Hurrah! 'tis she who calls the hunters! Ho! Hurrah!

4th Strophe.

Yonder's the one with ears so large and drooping.

Antistrophe.

Hurrah! the big-eared one has just passed us. Hurrah!

5th Strophe.

The boys are there; the sound of knives being sharpened, there from the spot where the elephant lies slain.

Antistrophe.

Hurrah! the sound of knives being sharpened. Hurrah!

This composition certainly exhibits wonderful poetic power and grandeur, describing marvellously the emotions of the courageous band, who have finally succeeded in obtaining the precious tusks of the elephant, and vast quantities of meat. This song of triumph is worthy of a place amongst the best productions of the Muse of primitive races.

195 To the imaginative mind of the Bantu everything that causes a deep impression, even material objects, affords an occasion for the utterance of lofty phrases and words of praise. Once when travelling south of Delagoa Bay through the desert, our party arrived in the neighbourhood of the Umbelozi railway. The

train was heard in the distance. One of my servants was busy 195
cleaning the pots ; I heard him muttering the following words :

The one who roars in the distance... The one who crushes in pieces the braves and smashes them ! The one who debauches our wives : they abandon us, they go (to the towns to lead a bad life) ! The seducer ! And we remain alone.

He was extolling the huge thing and lamenting his misfortune and the curse it has brought upon the country.

IV. *Satiric poetry.*

I have already mentioned the peculiar custom of Thonga 533
literati of speaking in a round-about fashion, and using figurative 195
language, especially when they want to say something disagreeable 574
or to give vent to their humour. It is but one step from such 576
forms to satire. They generally indulge in this satiric vein when 539
dealing with relatives-in-law, women being especially prone to it. When the sisters and aunts of a married woman go to pay a visit to her, they convey all kinds of equivocal compliments. These must not be taken seriously! It is a round-about — exceedingly round-about — way of making graceful allusions and expressing their mutual esteem. I will quote the series of these songs of friendly chaff and invective as it was given to me by Shigiyane, with a running commentary to render them comprehensible. These lively and pointed choruses give a fitting finishing-touch to the marriage customs, and illustrate the curious relations existing between allied families, which I explained in Vol. I, p. 249-253.

On the wedding day the women who take the bride to her 585
husband sing the *tjeka song* : 533

Let us go with her, but let us go back to our homes! 539

This is an ironical way of saying : "She is going to find trouble : we won't follow her as far as that!." The same idea runs through all the songs which these women sing during the next few days.

784 3) A third kind of taboos are those I call *taboos of prevision*. Foresight is dangerous on certain occasions : Do not build your hut before you are married! (I. p. 251). Do not prepare the ntehe before the birth of your child (I. p. 46), nor your ngula basket before harvest! The travellers' taboos (I. p. 339) might also be included in this class.

4) A fourth category comprises the manifold *social taboos, viz.*, those actions which are prohibited because they would be dangerous to the social order. Exogamous laws (I. p. 256), hlonipha customs, viz., the tabooing of certain words by the chief (I. p. 384), and especially the curious taboos to be observed in the intercourse of allied families (I. p. 250), are social. The taboos connected with the moving of a village (I. p. 320) are physiological in so far as they are actuated by the fear of defilement, and social in so far as they aim at maintaining the life of the social organism, which is the *muti*. But those which chiefly bear the character of social taboos are those connected with the idea of *hierarchy*. We have met with them in the ceremonies of the first fruits (1) (I. p. 394) and in the rules of sowing: It is taboo to "precede" a chief or an elder brother in agricultural operations, sowing or harvesting!

5) This leads us to a fifth category : the *religious taboos*. The ancestor-gods, being the elders of the actual members of the family, must be treated as hierarchically superior ; hence the religious taboo of luma: the interdiction of eating the new crop before having presented the gods with the first fruits ; the prohibition of infringing the sacerdotal rights of an elder brother (p. 398) is a taboo of the same kind. We here observe the intimate connection between social and religious life in Ancestrolatry. Forgetfulness in fulfilling duties towards the gods (p. 426), and killing green snakes (p. 384) are also religious taboos.

●195 6) I include in a sixth category the *language taboos*, ku ruketela,
784 viz., the use of obscene expressions not allowed in ordinary life.

(1) The *luma* taboos are social and religious; but they also belong to the first variety of physiological taboos in so far as they are actuated by the fear of defilement (food of a deceased person, Vol. I. p. 146) ; to the second variety in so far as they are connected with a change of condition : first use of a new crop (I. p. 394), of a new meat (p. 71), of a new implement (p. 117), or fishing trap (p. 85). (Notice the relation between khangula , to inaugurate, and luma).

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The words designating the sexual act and the various parts of the 195
genital organs are *yila*; but there are substitutes for them, euphem- 784
isms which may be used in their stead. When a child employs such words, people scold him, and say to him : "Psa yila! Do you think we are cleaning the wells?" This remark is due to the fact that the language taboos are suspended during the marginal periods and especially during the "mourning of the land," when the rains are delayed and people try to cause them to fall by the rite of cleaning the wells (p. 318). The language taboos are related to the social taboos ; to use obscene words leads to the destruction of social order, and this is allowed only when that order is actually destroyed, for instance during the mbelele rite (p. 318), during the time of moving the village (I. p. 321), and during mourning ceremonies (I. p. 160).

These six categories, although they are not absolutely distinct, form a convenient method of classifying the taboos.

II. *Some remarks on the taboos.*

1) What is the *origin of taboos*? It is not impossible to trace it in 784
a number of cases. The *hlonipha taboos*, for instance, are 152
proclaimed by the chiefs under certain special circumstances (I. p. 384). The taboo concerning *the planting of new fruit trees* is explained by the coincidence of the desolation of a ruined village with the presence of such trees (p. 29). Such coincidences, amounting to bad omens, have no doubt given birth to numerous taboos. If misfortune has followed a certain act two or three times, a hasty generalisation is made by the primitive mind : post hoc ergo propter hoc! So the act is tabooed.

This is due to the fact that with primitive people, as with children, *the emotional element predominates over the rational*, and when unfortunate events have happened or are feared, disease, drought, death, when the mind is in a state of terror, anxiety, or merely of nervous expectation, the reasoning faculties are disturbed, and a distinctive mental phenomenon shows itself, called by the French philosopher Renouvier the *intellectual vertigo* (le

101 619 ~~insult~~. It is applied in Johannesburg roughly to all the East Coast "boys," even to the Ba-Chopi, who are considered by the Ba-Ronga of Delagoa Bay as much inferior to them. Its adoption would be objectionable on that account. I recognise that the word Ba-Thonga does not enjoy much more favour and is not quite satisfactory ; however considering that it means originally "people of the East" and that the tribe is indeed living in the eastern part of South Africa, it ought to be accepted in the course of time without much difficulty.

Let us remark that another tribe, quite different in language and ethnographic features, dwelling near Inhambane, quite close to our Thonga tribe, calls itself Ba-Tonga. But there is no aspirate after the *T* and this is enough to distinguish it from the Ba-Thonga.

IV. *The six Groups of the Thonga Clans.*

101 197 131 Let us consider briefly, with the aid of the accompanying map, these six main groups.

1. All round the Bay of Delagoa, we find the *Ronga group*. This word Ronga is a very old one and very convenient, as all these clans consent to be called by it. The real Rongas are, I think, the Mpfumo and the Matjolo clans, who are settled on the west of the Bay. South of the Bay is the Tembe clan and its two sub-clans, which have become independent : Matutwen and Maputju. North of Lourenço Marques are the Mabota and Mazwaya clans, the country of the latter, which extends on both sides of the estuary of the Nkomati, being called Nondwane. Further north are the two clans of Shirindja and Manyisa which form the transition to the following group. The new generation speaks a purer Ronga dialect, the old one more the Djonga.

Continuing our survey in a northerly direction, we cross two rivers : the Nkomati and the Olifant. From the Nkomati to the Olifant we meet with the Djonga group, and from the Olifant northward with the Nwalungu group. Djonga means

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

101/197/131 South, Nwalungu means North. The Ba-Djonga are the clans south of the Olifant, the Ba-Nwalungu north of it. Such designations have therefore only a relative value and have been evidently invented by people dwelling on the borders of the Olifant. But they are used in some places, and I do not find any better ones to designate the two dialects of the Thonga spoken south and north of the river.

2. *The Djonga group* includes the Khosa (in the Khosen or Cossine country) the Rikotjo, the Shiburi and the Mathiye clans, if we go directly north. To the east of the Djonga clans proper, we find a number of clans settled on both sides of the Limpopo, in the triangle formed by the Limpopo, the Shengan and the line of the 24° parallel and calling themselves the Ba-Hlabi. They speak a dialect very similar to the Djongas. Their names are as follows, from the confluence of the Olifant and the Limpopo to the south: Mapsanganyi, Tsungu, Mavundja, Nkwinika and Makamo. The Nkuna clan was settled not far from this confluence. It migrated into the Transvaal in great numbers, together with Mavundja and other Hlabis during the wars of Manukosi.

3. *The Nwalungu group* includes two different elements: first the Ba-Loyi or Ba-ka-Baloyi, in the triangle formed by the two rivers northward of their confluence, and the Maluleke further north, extending all along the Limpopo as far as its confluence with the Lebvubye River and further along the Lebvubye itself. They occupy there a part of the Low Country of the Transvaal, being more or less mixed with the Venda and Nyai population. The Malulekes, according to the Native historians, are one half of a larger clan called the Nwanatis, whose second half is settled near the mouth of the Limpopo under the name of the Makwakwas of Khambane and Ndindane.

These three groups are to be found on the central line, on the axis of the tribe. On the west we meet with the Hlanganu group and on the east with the Bila and Hlengwe groups.

4. *The Hlanganu group* is the smallest of all, including the Nwamba clan in the plain of Delagoa Bay, and the Mabila and Hlanganu clans in the Lebombo hills. The Hlanganus overflow

101 197 131 into the Transvaal territory and are scattered in the large desert of the Low Country of the Leydenburg district, together with clans of Sutho (Pedi) and Swazi (Mbayi) origin. The Hlanganu dialect is very much akin to the Djonga.

5. *The Bila group*, called after the name of Bila, the great and fruitful plain of the Lower Limpopo valley, includes the clans living on both banks of the river. They have suffered very much at the hands of the Zulu invaders who made their home in that fertile country, but their dialect has kept some very peculiar traits.

101 131 6. *The Hlengwe group*. In the Djonga dialect, *hlengwe* means wealth. I do not know if this be the etymology of the name Hlengwe as designating all the Thonga population of the east and north-east, from the Limpopo to Inhambane and to the Sabie of the north. The name Hlengwe applies properly only to the northern part of the eastern clans. I retain it however provisionally. It seems that this group, which forms perhaps half of the tribe, includes at least three great subdivisions : 1) The *Hlengwes proper*, facing the Malulekes and the Ba-Loyi on the west and extending as far as the Sabie to the north. Their main clans are Tshauke, Mbenzane, Mavube, Magwinyane. 2) *The Ba-Tswa* (1) of Inhambane with the Hlenbengwanes, Yingwanes, Nkumbis. 3) *The Nwanatis* with the Makwakwas, Khambanes, Ndindanes, bordering on the Chopis to the north and the west.

101 167 Outside of the proper area of the tribe, we find *colonies of emigrated* Thongas in many parts of the Transvaal. The largest is in the Spelonken district, north of the Zoutpansberg, where they form the majority of the population. There they were called

(1) This name Ba-Tswa, is the Hlengwe form of Ba-Tjwa, a term by which the Zulus have been commonly designated amongst the Thongas. Ba-Tjwa is probably the corresponding form for Ba-Rwa, an appellation by which the Suthos of the Zoutpansberg plains used to call the tribes of the mountains, whence comes the wind called Bu-rwa. The Ba-Rwa are properly the Bushmen, as one knows, but under that name were included Bantus of a quite different type. This shows that the Natives, in naming foreign tribes, consider the geographical relation between themselves and these tribes much more than their ethnic characteristics : so one very often meets with the word "Bakalanga" which means people of the north. The Bakalanga proper are in Rhodesia, but in Lourenço Marques the Khosa tribe is called Bakalanga.

The term Ba-Ngoni is applied to the Zulus, as well as Ba-Tjwa, but it is restricted to that clan of the Zulus which was under Manukosi.

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175 independent of the Ngoni chiefs, being directly under the Portuguese authorities.

A Portuguese called Albasini, who acted during all that time as a chief of the Thongas of the Spelonken, played a considerable part in these events.

When Muzila died, his son Gungunyane succeeded him. The Ba-Ngoni had greatly diminished in number. In 1890 there were not more than a few hundred of them in the whole country. However they held it very firmly and the Thongas hated them. Therefore when the war between the Portuguese and some Ronga clans in 1894 led to difficulties between the Whites and Gungunyane, the Ngoni chief was abandoned by most of his people, even by his uncle Nkuyu : his capital Mandlakasi was burnt and he himself was captured by Musinho d'Albuquerque at the end of the year 1895 ; the despotic rule of the Zulus came to an end, and has been replaced by the Portuguese administration, much to the advantage of the Thonga tribe.

VII. *Ethnic characteristics of the Thonga tribe.*

197 What are the characteristic features of our tribe in relation to the other ethnic groups of South African Bantus, especially to the Zulus and Suthos ? We shall try to sketch them briefly as regards three main points : language and mental and physical character.

1) *The Language of the Thongas.* It would be useless to give here an elaborate description of the Thonga language : this has already been done for the Ronga dialect in my "Grammaire Ronga" published with the help of the Portuguese Government in 1896 (Bridel, Lausanne) and for the Djonga dialect in my Elementary Grammar of the Thonga-Shangaan language, which I published at the beginning of the Thonga-English Pocket Dictionary compiled by my colleague the Rev. Ch. Châtelain (Bridel, Lausanne 1908). I shall consider the language here only from an ethnological point of view, that is to say only to ascertain the proper place of the Thongas amongst the Bantus.

197 The Thonga idiom belongs to the *South-Eastern group of the*
193 *Bantu languages* and is related both to Sutho and Zulu. All these languages have in common certain grammatical features which distinguish them from other groups. Amongst them I may mention the frequent use of the lateral sounds *hl*, *dl*, *tl*, the presence of seven or eight distinct classes of nouns, recognizable by prefixes which correspond to each other in these three languages, the formation of the locative by a suffix *ini* or *ng* and not by prefixes, the consequent absence of the three locative classes pa, ku, mu, etc. It has been asserted by people who have not studied Thonga carefully that it is merely a dialect of Zulu. This is not true (1). Thonga is altogether different from Zulu and Sutho, though it closely resembles both, especially Zulu.

194 *Relation to Sutho.* As regards Sutho, its phonetic system is
197 characterised by the absence of a certain phenomenon common to most Bantu languages, to Thonga and Zulu especially. The Bantu phonology is dominated by a peculiar nasalisation of certain consonants when prefixed by an *n* or an *m*. This *n* or *m* is generally the prefix of the class mu-ba, mu-mi or in-tin (zin), and has the power of producing marvellous changes in this initial consonant. But, in Sutho, this prefix is dropped altogether except in a few cases, and these nasalised sounds are almost entirely lacking. As regards some other grammatical features, Sutho, especially the Pedi dialect of Sutho, is not so far from Thonga. It is not possible to quote many instances; let us only remark that Sutho possesses the roots *loya* for witchcraft and *yila* for taboo which are also present in Thonga and are lacking in Zulu.

Relation to Zulu. The great difference between Thonga and Zulu as regards phonetics is the complete absence of the three characteristic Zulu clicks (2) in Thonga. The Thongas have no

(1) Thongas and Zulus *do not understand* each other. In linguistic terminology, I think one ought never to designate as a dialect of a language an idiom which people speaking that language cannot understand at all. It is then a different language altogether, and we ought to keep the term dialect for the various forms of a single language which are of such a nature that people speaking them can understand each other more or less perfectly.

(2) The Zulu clicks are, as is generally believed, of Hottentot origin. It is not surprising therefore that they were not adopted by the Thongas, who do not seem to have had any contact with Hottentots.

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194 clicks at all except in a few words borrowed from the Zulu like
197 nqolo, wagon. Certain letters regularly permute from one language into the other: *Z* of the Zulu is *t* in Thonga; *r* of the Thonga is generally replaced by *l* or *th* in Zulu.

Originality of Thonga. But though Thonga and Zulu resemble each other in many respects, Thonga possesses some peculiar features which prove its originality. As regards its sounds, it is characterised by the frequent occurrence of a labial sibilant sound, a little like *ps* pronounced with a kind of whistling, which corresponds to the Zulu *z* in the plural of the class isi-izi. It is further characterised by some special nasalisations of initial consonants. *N+k*, which remains *nk* in Zulu, becomes *h* in Thonga: for instance the Zulu *nkosi*, chief, is *hosi* in Thonga. (It is *Khushi* in Sutho-Pedi where the initial *n* has been dropped). There is a long list of words of the in-tin class which show this phenomenon (homu, ox; huku, hen, etc.). The initial *r* when preceded by *n* becomes *nh* (*nh*ena, warrior; ti*nh*aru, three; cf. raru, three, burena, bravery, morena, in Sutho, chief). This seems to be the primitive combination. In some other cases it becomes *ntjh* in Ronga and *ndj* in Djonga (rako, behind, *ntjh*ako, *ndj*ako). These two *r* have probably a different origin in the Ur-Bantu. These transformations are peculiar to Thonga.

193 As regards morphology, Thonga has some striking peculiarities: a great variety of demonstrative forms due to the presence of a kind of demonstrative particle *le* or *la* and also a great development of the participial forms of the verbs. In its conjugation, the verb is quite as well provided with auxiliaries as in any other South African language and we could easily discover in Thonga the one or two thousand combinations which have been counted in the Zulu conjugation.

Thonga, for all these reasons, is a language apart which has developed with its different dialects.

197 *The six dialects.* We have tried to classify them under six names, but this classification is, of course, purely formal: in fact each of them presents transition forms, and they coalesce with each other through a great number of intermediary

197 forms (1). This is a very striking fact. I take for instance the word *ririmi*, which means tongue in Djonga, north of the Nkomati River. Here we find two *r* pronounced more or less as rolled *r*, never gutturally. If we go somewhat further South, to the Nondwane, ririmi becomes *rjirjimi*. The *r* becomes more palatal. We reach Mpfumu : there the word has changed into *lidjimi*. The first *r* has become a pure dental, the second a palato-dental (with a kind of cerebralisation). There is a regular evolution of the sound from one dialect to the other. The same process might be followed for *b* which is a true explosive *b* to the south of the Bay and becomes *v*, a fricative labial and sometimes almost *w*, a semivowel, when we go to the north. This regularity in the geographical relation of the sounds is very clear, and it shows that the language must have developed undisturbed like a tree putting forth branches, these branches separating more and more from each other till the dialects are formed, each with its peculiar sounds.

This fact is all the more marvellous when we remember that the Thonga tribe has been made up of peoples of various origin which have invaded the country, coming from different parts. The only explanation which accounts for these two apparently contradictory facts is that these invaders adopted the language of the primitive population and did not influence it enough to prevent its following its natural evolution... If this be true, the Thonga language ought to be considered as the oldest element in the life of the tribe, and we can then understand how it has given it its unity.

It is true that the course of events, from a linguistic point of view, has been totally different since the Zulu invasion of the XIXth century. The Ba-Ngoni of Manukosi did not adopt the Thonga as their language : they kept their Zulu dialect ; and most men of the Thonga clans knew and used it also together with their own national tongue. But this difference can easily be explained. The Zulu generals who followed the example of Chaka, Manukosi

1) In Appendix N° 1, I give a list of the most interesting words, showing how they are pronounced in all parts of the tribe, in order to characterise the various dialects.

J. Junod M-S (1835-1909) 1927 Thonga

197 and Moselekatsi amalgamated clans and tribes under their military rule, and could not subsist unless they maintained a despotic domination over them ; they were an aristocratic race and considered their language as superior. Ruling by fear and by the sword, they purposely remained aliens amongst the enslaved tribes. Quite different was the spirit of the ancient invaders of 1400 or 1500 A. D. They had not such an ideal of vast domination ; they operated on a much smaller scale : they were satisfied to take the chieftainship from the aborigines, and quickly mingled with them, married their daughters (as they still do) and so became one with them.

Would the Ba-Ngoni have been able, in course of time, to establish their Zulu dialect instead of the Thonga, if the Portuguese had not broken their power ? It is impossible to say. They had succeeded in imposing all their Zulu terminology in military matters. Meanwhile the women were not learning Zulu and the women are the best safeguards of the purity of the language amongst primitive peoples. Therefore I do not think they would have been able to uproot the old language, which must have been spoken for many centuries in Thonga territory.

My conclusion is then that the Thonga language was already spoken by the primitive occupants of the country more than 500 years ago and that, together with a certain number of customs, it formed the great bond which bound the Thonga clans together in past centuries.

181 703 2) *Mental characteristics of the Thongas.* We shall only ask how the Thongas compare with the Zulus or Suthos as regards character, and especially from a military point of view.

Having had the opportunity to witness a war in which the Nkuna chief Muhlaba was allied with the Pedi chief Maaghe, in the Zoutpansberg, I can testify that the Thongas had ten times as much military spirit

Phot. G. Liesegang.
"raloiwed" Thonga warrior.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

APPENDIX I (See p. 31)

Characteristics of the six dialects of the Thonga language.

197/113 In the accompanying table I have compiled a list of characteristic words in the six main dialects of the Thonga language. The Ronga and Djonga lists have been made by myself, and represent those dialects as spoken in the Mpfumo and Nkuna clans. The population south of Delagoa Bay speaks a kind of sub-dialect of the Ronga, the Lwandle or Maputju. (Abbr. Map.). I owe to the Rev. L. Perrin the peculiar forms found in that district. The Rev. P. Loze of Lourenço Marques compiled for me the list of the Hlanganu equivalents, as they are met with in the Ñwamba clans. They are not very different from the Djonga. Probably the dialect of Hlanganu proper, in the Lebombo Hills, would show greater differences. The Rev. H. Guye, who resided in Khosen and in Shikhumbane (Lower Limpopo Valley), provided me with a Djonga-Khosa list, very similar to the Nkuna and with the characteristic forms of the Bila dialect (Station of Shikhumbane, 15 miles west of Chai-Chai), also of the Hlengwe as spoken in the Khambana District, on the eastern border of the Lower Limpopo (Kh.). The Hlengwe, being so extensively spoken, possesses many sub-dialects. The Rev. S. Malale, a Native minister, compiled the characteristic forms of the Tshauke (Tsh.) region and those of the Madzibi tribe (Madz.) dwelling in the hinterland of Inhambane. The American missionaries have already published many books in the Tswa sub-dialect spoken in the vicinity of Inhambane, so I have also been able to mention a few Tswa forms. Lastly I owe to the same Rev. S. Malale the Ñwalungu forms, those of Maluleke as well as those of the Ba-ka-Baloyi (Bal.) proper, and, in addition, those of the Hlabi (Hl.), which are very similar to the Djonga.

197 The orthography employed in these lists is that which the Swiss missionaries adopted for the Vocabulary and Grammar of the Thonga-Shangaan language. (Bridel, Lausanne 1908.) For our missionary books, we have always used the excellent and scientific system of Lepsius, with its two main principles : a letter must always have the same value, and a single sound must be represented by a single letter.

197 Unhappily this system implies the use of special signs which are not found in the ordinary printing establishments, so we have had to adopt another conversational orthography for outside publications.

The *j* added to *t*, *d*, *r* and *sh* is not exactly the French *j*, but indicates a cerebralisation of the preceding sound. *Tj* is a *t* pronounced with the tip of the tongue bent somewhat backward, behind the palatal and towards the cerebral point. It is different from *tsh* which is *t* + *sh*, *sh* being the palatal *sh*, as in shore. *Dj* is not very different from the English *j* in just. *Rj* is a very much rolled *r*, tending towards the French *j* (as in jour); *shj* is a further modification of *r* where all guttural element has disappeared: a palatal *sh* cerebralised. These four sounds are not the pure *cerebral* sounds mentioned by Lepsius. I prefer describing them as *cerebralised*. However, in Malukele, *dj* sometimes becomes *dh*, as in the word mundhuku, and then it is pure cerebral. Besides the lateral sounds *hl*, *dl*, *tl*, very frequent in Thonga, there also occurs in Bila the Zulu *dhl*, which would perhaps be more correctly written *jl*.

Two peculiar sibilant sounds, *ps* and *bz*, (sw and zw in the Grammar) are accompanied by a special whistling noise. The v is not a true *v*, which is very rare in Thonga and is only met with in the combination *bv*, and in the Hlengwe ngovu, vuna, etc. It is a soft *b*, a fricative labial. A strong *b* is rare in all the dialects, except after *m* or before *y*. In the Maputju sub-dialect alone it is frequently used instead of the soft *b*. *Ṅ* is the nasal guttural *n* pronounced as *ng* in singing; it is the same sound as *ñ*.

The following comparison bears on three different subjects: the sounds, the grammatical forms and some characteristic words of the vocabulary. As regards sounds, notice especially the very interesting permutations of *r*, which find their explanation in the hypothesis of Meinhof on the Ur-Bantu. (Compare Meinhof, Grundrisse einer Lautlehre der Bantu Sprachen). This table will provide colonists with a shibboleth for the Thonga tribe, viz., with a means of ascertaining the origin of any Thonga with whom they may meet. They will be able to diagnose the clan to which he belongs. To understand it fully, it will be necessary to study the Ronga or Thonga grammars, to which I must refer the reader.

I. Phonetic permutations

		Ronga	Hlanganu	Djonga	Bila	Ñwalungu	Hlengwe
	Stone	rjibye (Map.) Djibye	ribye	ribye	ribye	ribye	ribye (Madz.) rige
	Three	rjarju (Map.) Shjashju	raru	raru	raru	raru	raru
	To till	djima	rima	rima	rima	rima	rima
	Tongue	lidjimi	ririmi	ririmi	lirimi	lerimi lorimi	lerimi lorimi
r	Tongues	tindjimi	tirimi	tindjimi	tirimi	tindimi	tindimi (Madz.) tirimi
	Shadow	ntjhuti	ndjuti ndruti	ndjuti	ndzuti	nduti	ntsuti ndzuti
	Shadows	mintjhuti	mindjuti mindruti	miruti mindjuti	mindzuti	miruti minduti	mintsuti mindzuti miruti
	Ant-hill	rjuka (Map.) Shjuka	ruka	tjhuka	ruka	tshuka	ruka
	Mountain	nhava	nhava	ntjhava	nthava	ntshava ntsava	ntsava
	Part	ndjima (Map.) ndima	ndjima	ndjima	ndzima	ndima	ndzima
dj	I	ndji (Map.) ndi	ndji ndri	ndji	ndzi	ndi	ndzi
	To morrow	Mundjuku (Map.) munduku	mundruku	mundjuku		mundhuku mendhuku	mundzuku
	To run	tjutjuma (Map.) tshutshuma	tjutjuma	tjutjuma	tsutsuma	tsutsuma	tsutsuma
tj	Only	ntsena (Map.) mpsena	ntsena	ntsena (Hlabi) ntjena	ntse	ntsena	ntsena (Kh.) ntse
	To learn	dondja (Map.) donda	dyondja	dyondja	dyondza	dyonda	gondza
dy	To eat	da	dya	dya	dhla		ga
	Sun	dambu	dyambu	dyambu	dhlambo		gambo
	Dog	mbyana	mbyana	mbyana	mbyana		gwana
by	This grass	byanyi lebyi	byanhyi lebyi	byanyi lebyi	gwanye leli	byanyi lebyi byoni lebyi	gwanyi legi ganyi legi
	To say	byela	byela	byela	byela		(Kh.) gwela

y	To build	yaka	aka	aka	aka		aka
w	To warm oneself	wurja	ora	ora	wora	ora	wora
hw	Moon	hweti	ṅhweti	nhweti	ṅhweti	ṅhweti	ṅhweti
hl	To-day	namunhla	namuntlha	namuntlha (Hl.) nyamuntlha	nyamuntlha	nyamunhla	nyamuntlha
hl	To-meet together	tlhangana	tlhangana	hlangana		hlangana tlhangana	tlhangana
š	To speak	švulavula (Map.) bulabula	švulavula	švulavula	švulavula	švulavula	švulavula (Madz.) walawula
š	To place	šeka (Map.) beka	šeka	šeka	šeka		šeka
	Belly	khurji (Map.) khudji	khuri	khwiri	khwiri	khwiri	(rumbu)
	To have a good taste	nandjika (Map.) nandiha	nandjiha	nandjiha	nandjika	nandiha	nandziha
	To have a bad smell	nuha		nuṅhwa	nuṅha		nunha
	Tail	nkila	ntshila	ntshila	ntshila	ntshila (Bal.) ntsila	ntshila ntsila
	To distribute food	khema	khema	phema (Hl.) khema	khema	phema	khema
	To be short	goma	koma	koma	koma	koma	koma
	Much	ngopfu	ngopfu	ngopfu	ngopfu	ngopfu	ngopfu (Tsh.) ngovu
	To help	pfuna	pfuna	pfuna	pfuna	pfuna	pfuna (Tsh.) vuna
	To dry up	phya		phya	khwa		khwa

II. Grammatical forms

cl. mu-va	man	mhunu	muhu	munhu	munhu	munhu	munhu
	men	vhanu	vahu	vanhu	vanhu	vanhu	vanhu
	stranger	muyeni	ṅeni	ṅeni		ṅweni, ṅeni	
cl. mu-mi	handle	mphinyi (Map.) mphinyu	mbhinyi	mbinyi	mbenyi	mbhinyi	mphyinyi
	fig-trees	minkuwa	minkuwa	mikuwa	mikuwa	mikuwa	mikuwa

		Ronga	Hlanganu	Djonga	Bila	Nwalungu	Hlengwe
	this land	tiko lodji	tiko leri	tiko leri	tiko leli	tiko ledyi (Bal.) leli	tiko leyi
cl. dji-ma	of mine	dja mga	ra mga	ra mme	la mina	dya mina (Bal.) la mina	ga mina
	of them	dja ɓo	ra ɓo	ra ɓoo	la ɓona	dya ɓona (Bal.) la vona	ga ɓona
	that very one	djohodjo, djodjo	rolero, rero	rolero, rero	lolelo, lelo	dyohodyo, dyodyo lolelo, lelo	galago lolelo, lelo
cl. ku-ma	night	ɓusiku	ɓusiku	ɓusiku	wusiku	ɓusiku	wusiku
cl. shi-pi	lanka	peiro	peiro	peiro	peiro	peiro	peiro (Tsh.) buiro
	goat	ambuti	ambuti	ambuti			ambuti
	one man	mhunu mukwe	muiwe	mówe	muáwe	wuáwe	
	large trees	miriji le'nikulu	le'yikulu	le'yikulu	le'yikulu	le'yikulu	
	high trees	ya ku leha	ya ku leha	yo leha	yo leha	yo leha (Bal.) ya ku leha	
	a big (or old) man	mhunu lwe'nkulu		lo'kulu (Hl.) lo'nkulu	lwe'nkulu	lo'nkulu	
	three oxen	tihomu tirjarju	tirarru	tirarru tinharu	tinharu	tinharu	tinharu
	which day?	Siku djini?	rihi?	rihi?	yeshe	rihi? yeshe	gihi?
	the father alone	tatana pwaako	o paakwe	yeshe			dadazo yeshe (Tsh.) yeshe
	'n'wa'ngana	(Map.) ha ɓapakwe a ɓambile	a	u	u	a	a (Tsh.) u
	I have taken him	mdji mo tekile	o'tekile	ówe tekile	mo tekile	ówe	mo
	we have seen him	hi mp ɓonile	m'monile	m'monile	mo ɓonile	mo	mo
	I love him	mdji mo rjandjile	a'djandjile	a'djandjile	mdzi mo randzile	mdi ówe randzi	mdzo mo randzile
	the t-ma are many	mdji mi tolo	yi tolo	yi	yi	yi	yi
	I have not gone	a mdji yonga	yonga	yonga	yonga	yongi	yongi
	I was going	ogho mdji ya	a mdji ya	a mdji ya	a mdzi ya	a mdi ya	a mdzi ya
	I would go	ambu mdji ta ya	a mdji ta ya	ngi mdji ta ya	mo mdzi ya	ingi mdi ta ya	a mdzi ta mo mdzi ya
			ambu mdji ta ya	a mdji ta ya			
	the man who goes	lwa'a hambaka (Map.) hambaka	lwo a hambaka	l'a hambaka	lu'a hambaka	l'a hambaka	lu'a hambaka hambaka

who has gone	fambiki	fambicke	fambicke	nga famba	fambicke	nga fambe
who will go	tsaka famba	nga ta famba	nga tamba	nga ta famba	nga tamba	(Tsh.) fambileko
who does not go	nga fambikiki	nga fambike	nga ta famba	nga fambike	nga ta famba	nga ta famba
who has not gone	(Map.) fambikokoko		nga fambike		nga fambike	nga fambike
	nga fambangakiki		nga fambangike	nga fambangike	nga fambangike	(Tsh.) nga fambiko
	(Map.) fambangakokoko					nga fambangike
to be known	tibyiwa		tiviwa	tiviwa		(Tsh.) nga fambangiko
though	nambi	nambi	hambi	hambi	hambi	(Tswa.) fambangikako
						tigwa
whilst	kasi	kasi	kasi	kasi	kasi	hambi
	(Map.) nkanni					(Tswa.) hambu
as	paang epsi	paanga hepsi	tane he lepsi	ku kota	tane he	kasi
					ku kota	(Tswa.) kanilezi
						ku kota

III. Vocabulary differences

To make	yentsha	endla	endla	endla	endla	maha
To kill	dlaya	dlaya	dlaya	dhlaya	yendla	dhlaya
					dlaya	(Tsh.) daya
To hear	yingela	twa	twa	twa	twa	tsaka
To be happy	tshava	thafa	tsaka	tsaka	tsaka	lafa
To look for	djyula	lafa	la'a	lafa	lafa	shilo
A thing	sha-ntshumu	sha-ntshumu	shilo	shilo	shilo	hlayisa
To care for	lekisa	fekisa	hlayisa	hlayisa	hlayisa	themba
To trust	dumba	djyumba	tjemba	tsumba	themba	(Tsh.) gwandza
				themba	(Bal.) pemba	lwandle
Sea	lakulu	lwandle	lwandle	lwandle	lwandle	(Tswa) fimbi
						tatani
Father!	tatana	tatana	tatana	tatana	tatani	
	(Map.) tati					
Mother!	mamana	mamana	mamana	mamani	manani	mamani
	(Map.) mami					
Uterine nephew	mupeyana	mphyana	ntukulu	ntukulu	ntukulu	ntukulu
						(Tsh.) nzukulu
Maternal uncle	malume	malume	kokwane	kokwane	kokwani	kokwani
Paternal aunt	sazana	sazana	kahani	lishani	kahani	kahani
	(Map.) cavi					
Bad	ku bila	ku bila	ku biba	ku biba		

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FIFTH PART

LITERARY AND ARTISTIC LIFE

Ethnography does not consist merely in the description of 121
customs and rites. Beneath the manifold manifestations of the Life of the Tribe, the ethnographer tries to discover its soul... The further we proceed in our study, the nearer we approach to the mystery of its mental life.

The mental life reveals itself in two great sets of spiritual facts, those relating to the intellectual and those relating to the religious and moral side of life ; in other words, the mind of a nation may be considered under two different aspects : the intellectual, and the moral and religious. We have not yet gone far enough to come to any conclusion as regards the Religion and Morality of the Native, but we can now attempt to describe the main characteristics of the Native intellect.

CHAPTER I

Characteristics of the Bantu Intellect.

I intend to give here, briefly, the results of a study of the 197
language, the language of a nation being one of the most trustworthy and complete manifestations of its mind.

I have been bold enough to speak of the *Bantu*, and not merely of the *Thonga* intellect, because the grammatical features of all

197 the Bantu languages are so similar that conclusions drawn from one of them apply to most of the tribes, *mutatis mutandis*. At any rate Sutho, Zulu, Chopi, Venda, and Thonga are very much akin, as regards their structure, forming as they do the South Eastern group of Bantu languages ; and, though the Central or Western groups differ on certain points, it may be asserted that the Bantu dialects present a remarkable uniformity.

My aim is not, by any means, to enter upon a grammatical study. This has been done for most of our South African languages, and the linguist who wishes to learn Thonga can use the Grammaire Ronga, or the Elementary Thonga-Shangaan Grammar already referred to. Leaving aside all technicalities, I shall now only attempt to show what the language reveals as regards the Bantu intellect. Let us, on this important question, take the testimony of the Noun, the Verb, the Conjunction and the Adverb.

A. THE NOUN AND THE POWER OF CLASSIFICATION.

193 The Bantu system of Nouns shows that the Bantu intellect possesses the *Power of classification*. All nouns are divided into a certain number of classes or genders, seven or eight in the South Eastern group, as many as ten in the Central groups ; these classes are known by their singular and plural prefixes, which are very similar in all dialects. What is the system of classification which these Genders denote? The Indo-Germanic languages divide natural objects into two categories, male and female, and, in most cases, add a third category, the neuter. They are *sex-denoting* languages, as Bleek used to call them. Nothing of this kind is met with amongst the Bantus (1). They follow an entirely different

(1) The Thongas, however, possesses a feminine suffix *ati* (eti, oti) corresponding to a feminine prefix *mi* (I. p. 36). This suffix is found in nati, wife, rarakati, paternal aunt, hulukati, female elephant, hweti, moon, nyeleti, star, mati (?) water, etc. It appears in many names of rivers : Nhomati, Ñwebeti, Ñwanetsi, Selati, Nfoloti, Shingwedzi, etc. Other names of rivers belong to the li-tin or ri-tin class : Limbelule (Oliphant) Limpopo, Lisutha, Letsitele (Ritshindjele), Ritsibi (Great Tshie), etc.

621 entrance and finishes his walk at the other, hanging upon it the
789 branch with which he has been sprinkling.

10) Then he sacrifices a hen. A young man accompanying
782 him cuts its throat ; the doctor plucks some feathers from the
756 neck, sacrifices in the ordinary way and invokes his gods : "You used to treat villages (daha miti) with these drugs and I do the same. I do not act of my own wisdom ; you have given it to me. Bless this place, etc." Then he plucks a feather from the hen's right wing, and suspends it at the main entrance or in the main hut, inside, over the door, according to the directions given by the bones. This is the *shirungulo* (see Part VI) and the act is called : "to tie the village" (tjimba muti).

621 Amongst the Rongas, there are some other *buhlapfa taboos*. It
372 is not allowable to light any fire in a village until it is completely
784 built. During the whole building period, cooking is done outside
789 the fence ; crushing mealies in the mortars and dancing are also
198 prohibited. Whistling (ku ba noti) is forbidden, as it might call the wizards inside the village before it has been protected by the charms.

621 If a man has many wives, he may build a second village for
595 himself and establish one of them there. A grown-up son, the son of the woman, will represent the headman in that village, but the law of "tying the village" will also be observed in this case. The headman will perform the act with this woman, and preside at the burning of the dried grass and of the medicinal pill, by which he *gives* the village to the inhabitants.

When a younger brother, or a son, leaves the headman and founds a village for himself (tihambela muti), he does it according to the same laws as those observed at the regular moving of a village.

III. *Some remarks on the rules of moving.*

621 Let us now analyse the two parallel sequences of rites which we have just described, and which complete each other. It is easy to discover amongst them three series of rites, social, protective and passage rites.

606 these bukoñwana rules would cause death. Yet they are religiously kept as necessary to ensure normal relations between the two families.

We have already seen the taboos which must be observed during the betrothal period (p. 106). Later on, during the gatherings which take place *before marriage*, other taboos are imposed.

606 802 201 584 784 1. In the discussion concerning the lobola, when oxen are counted, the bridegroom's parents must never offer eight head of cattle, because one of them will be killed for the feast, and so eight means only seven. *Seven* is counted by raising, one after the other, the five fingers of the left hand and the thumb and index-finger of the right. In raising the index-finger, they might point it at the bakoñwana, and this would be a mortal offence. To point at anyone with the index-finger is as bad as bewitching him. It is done only in anger, and all the preceding discussions might be nullified if such an imprudence were committed.

2. Should one of the oxen be frightened by the shouts of joy with which the arrival of the herd is greeted and by the sham-fight of the lobola day, and run away home, it is taboo. The ox has seen that something is wrong and has consequently fled. Even should they succeed in bringing it back, "timpfalo ti tjukile," the conscience (or the diaphragm) has been stirred!

584 825 777 784 3. If one of the oxen has no horns (homu ya mhulu), or only abortive horns, psa yila : *bukoñwana byi ta pfumala timpsalu*, viz., the relations with relatives-in-law will have no tenderness, because such an ox moves its head to and fro and it wanders in the night ; it is abnormal. The bride's family will not accept it.

4. Should the lobolo consist of hoes, and should the rain fall on them while they are being carried to the bakoñwana, it is taboo. The lobolo must not be brought in a wet condition, otherwise the new relations will be spoilt (bukoñwana byi ta tshipa) ; the young people will not be able to marry.

5. Do not bring with you tobacco in the leaf when going *bukwen* as a fiancé, bring only ground tobacco, or misfortune will happen. Later on, when you have married your wife, it is allowable.

6. Never eat zebra or reedbuck's meat when staying with your parents-in-law. Should they kill one of these animals while

576 is not as if they were trying to raise their hats, as they do not wear
609 any. The explanation of the gesture is this, according to a Transvaal Native : the Boers taught black people to point to heaven, when saluting a white man, with this meaning : I compare you with the One who is above!

576 In the Northern clans, salutations are generally accompanied
201 by a clapping of hands (omba mandla). Men beat their hands against each other, placing them parallel to each other ; women do the same, placing them crosswise or at right angles. Amongst the Ba-Pedi this salutation with the hands is performed in a somewhat different manner ; when a Pedi enters the hubo, and wishes to greet a gathering of men, he claps his hands before his breast ; but when he salutes only one person, he bows down and claps his hands at the height of his knees, either on the right side or on the left. Amongst the Ba-Ronga, clapping the hands is a sign of thankfulness ; they say as they do so : *I khani mambo*, which probably means : "I dance before you, Sir." ("Mambo"
576 means chief in the Ndjao language.) In Djonga the proper word for thanking is *nkomo*. The etymology of this word seems to be : "I homu," "it is an ox." If anyone gives me a hen, he presents it to me saying : "Take my chick." When he brings a goat he says : "This is my hen." In both cases I answer : "Nkomo," "it is an ox!" The Thonga etiquette requires that the giver depreciate his gift and that the receiver magnify it! Another less polite way of thanking is this : *Yengetan!*, — "do it again," or *ni mundjuku*, — "and also to-morrow!"

576 Thongas used not to *shake hands* in former times. Now-a-days
177 the civilised Natives have adopted the European fashion, but this kind of familiarity is not approved of by the old folks, especially by the chiefs. Natives, when they shake hands, often do it in two movements : first they catch the four fingers and then slide on to the thumb. I do not know where they have
832 learnt to do this! *Kissing* was formerly entirely unknown. A good mother would occasionally wipe her baby's nose, but this can hardly be called a kiss. When they saw the custom adopted by the Europeans, they said laughingly : "Look at these people! They suck each other! They eat each other's saliva and dirt!"

683 754 1906, I ventured to suggest certain means of checking the *buloyi* superstition. The Department of Native Affairs might give the following directions to its subordinates, the Native chiefs :

1) The crime of buloyi is not recognised under penal law.

2) The Native chiefs are prohibited from trying any buloyi case.

3) The plaintiff must be reprimanded as disturbing the peace of the country.

4) The witch doctor or mungoma (magician), who pretends to have smelt out a wizard, must be fined as using his authority to deceive people and foster hatred amongst them.

5) No evidence based on the use of divinatory bones must be accepted.

These rules, if strictly enforced and combined with Christian teaching and the progress of civilisation, will in the course of time put an end to the scourge of witchcraft.

683 695 578 *Insults.* Ku rukana or ruketela, to hurl insults at each other's head, is very frequent amongst Thongas and does not lead to any judicial case, if not accompanied by assault and bruises (1). There are however insulting deeds which are considered as crimes. To take human blood, or spittle, or excrement with a stick and to push it into the mouth of a child, for instance, is considered a very serious insult which must be judged before the Court. A man who committed such an offence would have to pay a fine amounting to a whole lobola. I heard of a woman, who gave a child a butterfly to eat. The parents of the little one were very angry. She denied having done such a thing. They said to her: "Confess your sin and pay a fine of 5/—." She refused and offered to undergo the ordeal, viz., to drink the mondjo philtre. "If you insist" said they, "you will have to pay £ 10." However she persisted and became intoxicated ; this was a proof of her guilt. She was fined to the amount of £ 40, £ 20 for the child and £ 20 for the chief!

683 201 754 To point at any one with the index finger is also a grave insult which may have judicial consequences, because this action is brought into close relation with *buloyi*.

683 578 695 (1) The most common insult which women can cast in each other's teeth is nthashwaku (Ro) or nyashwaku (Nkuna) which means: the genitals of your mother. A scuffle with blows is sure to arise when that word has been pronounced. It is also used when taking an oath. Men swear by the name of their chief.

764 light a new one, and everyone will take from it embers to kindle
761 his own fire in the different huts. It is one of the conditions of the
purification of the village.

783 The same day young people are sent to all the relatives in
262 the neighbourhood to announce the death. Even the relations
who are absent far away, in Johannesburg, must be informed;
this is done in the following way. Someone takes a handful of
grass, lights it and, when it is on fire, throws it in the direction
of the absent one, saying: "Your brother, here, is dead. Do
not fear. May your enemies (viz. your white employers) have con-
sideration and love for you, that you may find sleep and health."

II. *The grave.*

764 The men of the village then go out to dig the grave. They
choose a place behind the hut of the deceased or somewhere
further off in the little forest which generally surrounds the village;
or in the *ntimu*, the sacred wood, if he were one of the guardians
of the forest (1), one belonging to the elder branch of the family.

First of all the diggers see that a tree is near the grave on which
to hang some of the belongings of the deceased (those which
will be kept but will have to be purified); they dig a hole of
about six feet in length, four in width, and two and half or three
deep. This first hole can be dug with ordinary hoes. Then, at
the side of it, they excavate a second hole, more or less circular in
form, using for this a light wooden board, generally the rim of an
old basket. The sides of the hole are well smoothed by means of
this instrument. In the Northern clans they sometimes smear it
with mud taken from the river; they also put a reed beside the
corpse, and grass, which grew in water, is spread at the bottom
of the grave (2). So the grave, is in a way, double. It presents

(1) In the Southern clans the grave of the husband or the wife is dug in front of the hut in which they were living (as this hut is to be abandoned); in the case of a child, he will be buried at the side of the hut (as, in this case, the hut will not be destroyed.) The grave is surrounded by a fence made of sticks and plastered with clay. Thus people will remember where the corpse has been buried.

(2) Compare this custom with the rite of burying little children and twins in wet soil.

C. SUNDRY COURT CUSTOMS

644 The paraphernalia of royalty are very modest in the Thonga courts. However there are some to be mentioned in addition to the regalia which I have described.

I. *The Big Drum* (Muntshintshi).

644 534 237 This is found in every capital, even sometimes in the sub-chief's villages. It is made of a hollowed stem, somewhat like an ordinary mortar; or it may be rounded, and even provided with three legs, as in Nondwane; a piece of skin is stretched over the opening. This may be the skin of an elephant's ear, of a buffalo, of an ox or of an antelope *mangulwe*. This instrument is subject to some taboos; when the skin cracks, it is forbidden to look inside. There is something mysterious about it and nobody must disclose that mystery. People say that a bullet is introduced into it when it is made. In Shiluvane they asserted that the skull of the hostile chief, Sikororo, killed in the battle of Nov. 1901, had been put into the big drum! At any rate, there is a special individual who is summoned to repair it and he receives a fowl as reward.

644 534 731 202 The big drum is beaten on various occasions:

a) To announce a great fatality, especially the death of a chief, or the day of the publication of the mourning; also the approach of the inundation, when the Nkomati river rises, in January or February, and threatens to cover the whole land; again when the bush fire threatens to destroy the capital.

b) To summon warriors to the capital in case of imminent war.

644 534 c) To execute various musical performances. The big drum leads a special dance (nkino), which takes place at the capital during the winter, when the harvest is ended, and the country happy and prosperous. It is accompanied by a smaller drum (shikolombane) which is called the "son" of the big one. The

III. *The shipalapala.*

643 534 202 Speaking of the musical instruments of the Court, I must also mention *the trumpet of assembly, shipalapala,* which is the recognised means of summoning the subjects to the capital. The sound of the big drum, though heard at a great distance, cannot reach to the confines of the country. So, when the chief wants his men to assemble at once, he uses the *shipalapala.* This is a horn of mhalamhala, or of nyala or of phifa antelope, the sound of which is like mpu-ù-u (with an accent on the second syllable). The envoy of the chief runs to the capital of a sub-chief, blowing all the time. When he has reached that village, he transmits his message and a young man starts at once with the shipalapala of the sub-chief to another district. So, in a short time, notice is given to the whole tribe to assemble.

IV. *Visitors.*

643 609 574 When a stranger passes through the capital, he must sit down outside the central square and at some little distance from it. Some one will come and inquire what he wants ; he replies : "I come from such and such a country, and I wish to pay my respects to the chief." Then the counsellor or "Agent General" charged with the affairs of the traveller's country will come and converse with him and announce him (bika) to the chief, who will receive him affably and possibly assign him a hut to sleep in, in case he wishes to stay the night, at the same time providing him with food. Should the chief be particularly well disposed towards his guest, he will kill a calf or even an ox for him ; and he, on his return, will speak in praise of the hospitality he has received, saying : "The chief made me share his reign," literally : "He made me reign, (a ndji fumisile)." Such is the procedure when the respective countries of guest and host are adjoining and the tribes

643 609 574 on good and friendly terms. Should relations between them be at all strained, or should war be imminent, all the roads would be closed and no one allowed to enter the capital.

V. *The Kondza custom.*

641 643 The chief is also approached by those who may wish to become subject to him, to be naturalized ; this is called *kondza*, from a Zulu word conveying this meaning. The chief will assign to the new *nandja* a dwelling place, and he will be incorporated in the nation without further ceremony. By this kondza, he binds himself to pay the taxes (See the story of Mutipi. *Les chants et les contes des Ba-Ronga*, page 164).

Naturalised strangers, however, do not eat the first fruits (luma) with the same drug as the people of the country. They have their own medicine and take it according to their own rules. They are however forbidden to luma before the chief of their adopted land (p. 397).

VI. *Diplomatic relations.*

648 ~~342~~ 726 224 We have seen that these are very carefully conducted, each of the neighbouring clans having one counsellor entrusted with the care of its affairs. In case of war, friendly clans frequently make alliances (shinakulobye). They send messages to each other, or they have special means of communicating news in case of war. Supposing, for instance, Ñwamba and Nondwane should fight against Matjolo. They put two traps at their common boundary, on the side of the road, one on the territory of Ñwamba and one on that of Nondwane. These traps consist of a rod bent by a string fastened to the ground. Should the army of Matjolo have made an invasion during the night into Ñwamba territory and put the people to flight, the men of Nwamba

202/726 will at once go and undo the trap which is on their side ; in the morning, the people of Nondwane will know that they must also fly.

D. THE TRIBUNAL OF THE CHIEF.

642 In the Thonga Court there is no separation of powers. The legislative, executive, and judicial powers are all in the hands of the chief, aided by his counsellors. The chief is the supreme authority and his decisions are without appeal.

1. *Legislative affairs.*

671 The *chief* makes the laws (p. 382) and presides at discussions
643 which end in a resolution. But his counsellors assist him.
583 Here is an example of such a decision taken at Maphunga's court. There was no uniformity as to the money to be paid for a lobolo, and some fathers claimed as much as £ 20 or £ 30 for their daughters. The great counsellors of the capital decided (tjimba mhaka, viz., to tie the matter) that a lobolo should be £ 15.10 as the maximum. They "tied the matter" with the assent of the chief. Then all the sub-chiefs and counsellors were summoned to the capital. The chief called the roll to ascertain if they were all present. The great counsellor then said to the assembly : "The herds which people claim are too large. Have you gold mines and do you know how to make coins ? Henceforth do not lobola with too much money. £ 15.10 is quite enough!" Every sub-chief, on his return home, called his men and informed them of the decision : "Hi to timhaka! Such are the matters!" said they. The subjects were disappointed. They wept! But they had to accept the decision. To oppose it is taboo! "Psa yila!"

643 A *native debate* or discussion is conducted on very different
645 lines from those to which we are generally accustomed, nothing
671 ever being put to the vote. The chief presides. A proposition is

685 721 *Theft* (ku yiba) is universally condemned, not so much for its immoral character as for the fact that it renders a normal social life impossible. The notion of *individual property*, though it is not developed as in more civilised nations, is nevertheless at the base of the whole Bantu system. The Bantus are agriculturists. They believe that the products of their labour belong to them and that no one else is entitled to appropriate them. The notion of property is in direct relation to work accomplished. (Compare Part IV.)

685 574 202 To steal growing mealies is not usual. A thief breaks off the cob, whilst the master of the field first uproots the stalk and then takes the cobs. If a friend of his who happens to be travelling passes through his gardens and wants to eat a cob, he is quite welcome to do so. He also uproots the stalk, puts it on one side of the road or leans it against a tree and draws a line on the ground from the place where the stalk grew to the spot where he has put it. Perhaps the owner of the field will discover the uprooted stalk after a whole month. If he inquires who has helped himself to his mealies, his friend will say to him : "Did you not see the line ?" And they will laugh over it (hlekelelana). A thief acting hastily would not have had time to draw the line!

685 789 There are certain magical drugs with which people smear mealie stalks (see Part IV) and they assert that, if any one tries to penetrate into their garden to steal, he will have his hand caught and will not be able to get rid of the plant! For some reason or another, these magical methods do not always work. So the injured person has recourse to the tribunal.

685 343 Should the thief be caught in the very act, there is no difficulty! His own field will be taken by the owner of the stolen mealies and he will have to pay a fine of one ox, otherwise the matter will be brought before the Court, and the only difference will be that the fine will be of two or three oxen, one of which will remain in the hands of the chief. (Mankhelu.) If the thief has been clever enough to avoid being caught, if he has stolen from a store hut, Natives are clever detectives and he will probably be discovered. These store huts are generally built in the middle of the field, or in the little bush which surrounds the village ; the grass all around

714 in the Chaka army were distinguished by differently coloured shields.) On either side of the central line, from top to bottom, two parallel rows of small square incisions are made (magabela) through which are run strips of hide of a different colour, the effect being a series of oblongs. By an ingenious device the ends of these strips are so tied at the back of the shield as to form several sheath-like nooses into which is inserted the stick by which it is held. The space between the two lines of oblongs is called the back (nhlana) of the shield. The nooses or sheaths are four or six in number : two or three at the top, and two or three at the bottom, a space being left in the middle, where the warrior grasps the stick. This stick tends to strengthen the shield, but, being merely passed through the nooses, it acts also as a pivot around which it can turn ; it is this pivoting action which gives to the shield its chief value as a protection. An assagai (usually thrown with considerable strength) would easily penetrate the ox-hide, but when it strikes the shield, the force of the impact causes it to pivot and the weapon is deflected to one side: should it strike exactly in the middle, it would hit the stick, break it and lose all further impetus. It is hardly necessary to add that the *shitlhangu* of the South African Black is absolutely useless when opposed to bullets ; it was invented to protect the warrior against the dreaded assagai, at a time when firearms were not yet thought of!

713 177 During the last century the Ba-Ronga have begun to use guns for hunting and also for war. Although the sale of firearms to the Natives has often been prohibited, the Ba-Ronga were reported to possess several hundreds of rifles at the commencement of the 1894 war, and also to be fairly proficient in their use... very different from the Madagascans, who removed the sights from their rifles on the score that they were in the way when taking aim!

C. THE MOBILISATION OF THE ARMY.

202 726 643 In the Zihlahla country, when the chief wished to muster his forces, he did so by means of the *shipalapala*, the rudimentary trumpet which I described in the preceding chapter. A swift

202 726 643 messenger (shigidjimi) ran from village to village, blowing this instrument ; when he was tired he passed it on to some other good runner, who carried the summons further afield ; he ran and ran until he was exhausted, when he handed the trumpet to a third, and so on until the whole country had been covered.

At the sound of the well-known call of the shipalapala, the warriors shout : "A hi hlomen!" — "to arms!" They at once put on their war costumes and repair to the capital.

In Nondwane all the sub-chiefs possessed their shipalapala, and each of them summoned his own people. There the shipalapala mostly sounded to call for dances and for feasts. When the army was mobilised merely to discuss matters quietly, messengers ran through the country shouting : "Mayivonule!" — "take the shields!"..., to which the warriors answered : "A hi hlomen!" — "to arms!" The messenger had to go quickly. "He did not lose time in grinding tobacco ;" he only indicated the time when the army was expected in the capital.

Should matters be more serious, should a hostile yimpi have invaded the territory, every one can give the alarm (tlhabela mukhosi), shouting : "Yi ngeeneeeeeee!" "It has entered!" (viz., the hostile army has invaded our territory). All the women flee away and the men run to the capital.

D. THE MUKHUMBI, THE CIRCLE OF WARRIORS.

643 701 726 Decked out like wild animals, the warriors hasten with all speed to the chief's village, where the regiments muster. The army (1) is divided into a certain number of *battalions*, *mabotshu*, or *meboko*, all men of about the same age forming a *botshu*. The *botshu* itself is made up of several *companies*, *mitlawa* or *mabandla*, and may therefore vary very much in numbers.

(1) Yimpi (pl. tiyimpi) in Thonga corresponds to impi in Zulu.

701 726 In the army of Matjolo there were nine battalions, commencing with that composed of youths from sixteen to twenty years old, up to that of "crown men" (makehla) and the grey beards who where still capable of handling an assagai; for every able-bodied man is a soldier and makes it a point of honour to join the army when it is mobilised. In the Zihlahla clan, the battalions of young men were called *Megajlela* and also *Ndumakazulu*, "the one who is celebrated as far as Zululand," surname of the chief Ñwamantibyane. After them came the *Nyonibovu*, *Giva*, *Malwabo*, *Djanungwana*.

Mankhelu, the Commander of the Nkuna yimpi, gave me the names of his battalions and the explanation of them. The old men formed the regiment called *Mamphondo*, those of the horns. Some of them used to tie a horn on their foreheads; they imitated the rhinoceros or the buffalo. The following regiment was the *Mamphisi* (timhisi), the hyenas; then the *Machoni*, the sea birds, a kind of duck, very swift; then the *Timbuluwane*, a sort of lynx, the *Mafakubi*, representing the ndakazi antelope and, lastly, the most numerous regiment, the *Dhlanazo*, "those who eat with others (dya na bu)." Each regiment has, as we shall see, its own war-cry, in which it imitates the animal whose name it bears.

701 726 202 When all have reached the capital the first procedure is the "formation of the circle," in Thonga *biya mukhumbi*, to fence the circle or *aka mukhumbi*, to build the circle. This is accomplished in the Zihlahla army by a special summons which I might call "the order to fall in." Heralds scatter in all directions, enter the huts, approach the groups encamped around the capital, and shout in a high and monotonous key the following Zulu words. It will be noticed that the formula given is that which was made use of by the heralds in the Mpfumo clan during the war of 1894.

Irwana! Otyo adjalo, Mevelu, (1)
Be nga m'thandi ba ka Nkupane,
Uuta'ka Sihlahla, eukulu ai ka Hamale,
Malobola ge dyase e bulandia ka Mbukwane.

(1) Mevelu, the Zulu surname for Ñwamantibyane.

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726
202

Listen! This is what Nwamantibyane says,
He whom the people of Nkupane do not love. (1)
The son of the Great Forest (Sihlahla) of Hamule, (2)
He who took a wife and used the sword in the country of
his parents-in-law, in Mbokwane's country.

Gwalagwala a likwa,
Ilihlengo ngo kubekeka,
Umpathi we nhamo,
U na ku debula Mangole ni Maputukiri.

The royal bird with red plumage (3),
Magnificent to contemplate,
He who holds in his hand a gun
With which he will fire on the Angolese and the Portuguese.

Ndume kati, lo wa khiti,
Mo nga ngumlwana,
U ti ku: a yi fumule!

He whose fame spreads afar, our chief,
Who is as a wild beast,
It is he who says: "To arms!".

701 This final exclamation, prolonged and finishing abruptly on
726 the last syllable, carries a long distance; all the warriors jump to their feet and, brandishing their assagais and shields, run to the chief's village, where the circle is to be formed. Each

[614]

(1) The people of Nkupane are one of the younger branches of the royal family of Mpfumo. They lived close to Lourenço Marques, on the other slope of the hill, to the West of the town. They would have liked undoubtedly, in common with many others, to assert their independence by throwing off the yoke of the elder branch, and even attempted to do so when Mahombole tried, in 1867 or in 1869, to overthrow Zihlahla. But the elder branch, whose chiefs were energetic men, succeeded in maintaining its authority over the whole clan. The fact that the people of Nkupane "do not love" Nwamantibyane redounds rather to the credit of the latter.

(2) Nwamantibyane's father was Zihlahla, his grandfather was Hamule. Sihlahla, or Zihlahla, in Zulu means forest, hence the herald's play on the word. The reign of Zihlahla, which we may place at from 1867 to 1883, was very troubled, at least during its first few years. The young chief, on his return from Natal, after the death of his father Hamule, married Mbilwana, a princess of the royal family of Mabota. During the bloody wars then raging, Zihlahla was angry with Mabota (whose chief was Mbokwane), for playing him false, and, one fine day, he made a raid into the country of his parents-in-law, killing many people. To have thus treated his "bakoswana," who are ordinarily held in such great respect, (see Part II) was a proof of valour which is remembered to this day, more than fifty years after the event. It must be said that, after this exploit, Zihlahla left his residence near the town and took refuge in the Nwambe territory; the Whites with whom he was fighting put in his place a certain Nwayeye whose name we shall find in a war song to which we shall have occasion to refer later on.

(3) The nhalankulu is a bird which is shot in the forest on the borders of the Nhanati; its feathers are red, and only chiefs are allowed to wear them.

When the hunter has chosen, amongst all the prints, those which 224
seem to him the freshest, he follows them up with his dogs, and 476
there is some chance of his being able to overtake the antelope. Should he succeed in killing the animal without having received help from others he can appropriate it without rewarding anybody. Only if it is too heavy to carry home, he will shout loudly, on a high, piercing note : "Hoooooyiooo..." perhaps after having climbed up a tree so as to make himself heard a long way off. Or he will cut off the tail, cover the beast with branches to prevent vultures from damaging it, plant his assegay in the ground to show his right to the possession of his victim and go home to fetch his companions. When they have helped him to carry the animal, he will give each of them a good piece of meat.

But if the hunter who discovered the antelope sees that he will 202
not be able to come up with it, he will blow his trumpet (lihlanga) 224
to call for help. When the men arrive on the spot, he will cry : 476
"Nkuna yowee!.." if he is a Nkuna, and all will repeat after him : "Nkuna yowee!.." to acknowledge his right. He may abandon the pursuit, but his right has been proclaimed and will be remembered. The second hunter who stabs the antelope will do the same ; he will shout "Mabota yowee!.." if he is of the Mabota clan, and so on till the animal has been killed. Then the meat will be distributed amongst the killers in the following way.. The first will receive the body, the second one leg, the third the foreleg and the fourth the throat, a portion being reserved for the chief, the owner of the soil on which the antelope has fallen. This manner of pursuing an animal, in which helpers are summoned by means of the trumpet, is called ku nyikanana, i. e. to surrender to each other.

If the hunter has killed a very big animal and wants his clansmen 224
alone to help him, he has recourse to another method of calling 202
them. Each clan possesses its own rallying cry, and this he 618
shouts loudly. This is intended to exclude men of other clans and to prevent fighting or any dispute about the possession of the animal. For the Ba-Nkuna this cry is : *Nyandlaleyo*! For the Tsungus : *Hi nhlanga*! For the Manukosi clan : *Muyamba ngwenya ya namba wa tingwenya*! (Crocodile of the river of

202 crocodiles.) For the Mavundjas: *Kahlamba ntjhaba yo nonoha!*
618 (The big mountain, difficult to climb.) (1)

224 I have already described the part of a slain animal which is to
643 be given to the chief, when speaking of the prerogatives of the
825 master of the country (I. p. 406). Here are some supplementary
845 details: The general idea is that he must receive that part of the body which was in contact with the soil, because the chief is the owner of the soil. In the case of smaller antelopes however he does not claim anything. For the eland he requires, in addition to the ordinary tribute, half of the *bofu* i. e. of the paunch of fat which is found round the heart of this animal and which is believed to possess precious medicinal properties (especially for new-born children born with a membrane round the
224 head). As regards
643 buffaloes and other big animals, should they be killed far away from home, their meat is cut into strips (mishakatsu) and two bundles are brought back to the chief; it is also the rule that the head of any beast of great size should be eaten on the bandla, the meeting-place of the men in the capital.

Buffalo hunter with his victim.

224 So far I have described hunting with assegais, sticks and dogs.
824 But Thongas possess another method of killing big animals, a method which is perhaps more ancient and which has sometimes proved very useful. This is the *marindji trap*, i. e. a large pit dug in the earth, covered with branches and full of pointed stakes upon which the animal falls and impales itself. These stakes are made

(1) The Pedis have the same custom. The Ba-Khaha cry: "Haratsha! Mugoni! We"! This expression comes from the verb *ratsha*, to cross a river on a tree trunk, as the Khaha clan is said to have been held back in its ancient migrations by a swollen river and to have *ratsha* it successfully. The remembrance of this feat of their ancestors has remained and has given rise to this rallying cry. Other Pedis say: "*Stoandja khomo*," viz., "the killer will be given an ox for his reward."

low, the fish is imprisoned between the reeds and the bank. 226
The construction of this trap is governed by strict law[illegible] 834
sexual relation is allowed during the five or six weeks [illegible] fishing. The owner of the shibaba must cut the first reed. Women must not approach the spot. On the day of inauguration there is also a luma ceremony similar to that for the nhangu.

But the most curious fishing custom is the *tjeba*. "Ku tjeba" 226
means to kill fish in company in lakes which are drying up. At the end of the winter most of the small lakes scattered all over Thongaland, get smaller on account of the drought, and the fish they contain, consisting mostly of carp and barbel, are obliged to congregate in much smaller spaces. Natives take advantage of this and the whole country-side is summoned to go and tjeba, on a certain day, as it is important to be as numerous as possible in order to ensure success. The chief orders all his men to make *shiranga*, a kind of conical basket, a foot and a half high, whose upper end is open and wide enough to admit the hand. The shiranga must be very strong; the tree used for the purpose is called ntjangari. When the shiranga are ready, a messenger is 202
sent to all the villages, crying : 226
626

> Kho! Khoooo! Hobe! Hobeee! U yala nsateeee! Na nsati a randja nyamooo! A randja mihlubeee! Kho! Hobe!
> You hate your wife! Your wife also is fond of flesh food! She is fond of the flesh of the tail of fishes!

Every male member of the tribe must answer to this summons by going to the shore. Should he refuse the call, he is blamed and despised, and his companions will sing to him a mocking song :

> U yala ku tjeba, nyaňhwaku!
> You refuse to fish, nyaňhwaku (1).

In the evening his wife will scold him, on seeing that he brings no fish home! She will punish him by giving him mealie pap without any sauce!

Before the throng enters the lake, someone must *make an* 226
offering; he must be a descendant of the inhabitants of the country, 782

(1) Nyaňhwaku is a formula of insult (I. p. 445).

832 576 593 152 572 Even a husband never kissed his wife. On coming back from a journey, a man would hardly greet his wife; she would see him passing through the village, prepare food for him, and when it was cooked, she would come and salute him by presenting it to him. But if he has a good friend in the village, and if this friend sees him coming back after a long absence, their meeting will be much more touching. The friend will go to the main entrance of the village, exclaim: "Ha-Ha," take his parcel from his hands, put his arms round his shoulders (a ku mu buso hi mandla), remove the perspiration from his face, and pat him gently, saying: "Your ancestor-gods have their eyes open! They have worked well! They have brought you back."

574 609 622 *Hospitality.* When strangers enter a village, men sit on the *bandla*, and women go further on and sit on the *hubo*; they remain quietly there till the people of the village come and salute them (losa). Should the inhabitants delay too long, the visitors move on, saying: "These people are not good." But this is very rare. Generally the master of the village comes to them, inquiring who they are, whence they come, where they are going, and asks them: "Do you wish to spend the night here?" If they say: "Yes," the headman will empty one of his huts by putting two of his wives together, and will himself sleep with the visitors. Should there still be food, he will give them some. If not, he says: 574 609 622 "*Ndlala*!" "Starvation!" After a little while, a mat is unrolled and the official ceremony of "djungulisana" takes place. This is a very amusing custom. The headman sits together with his hosts and enquires about the news of their home. One of the 203 195 visitors begins in a monotonous tone and pours forth volubly a flow of words with a peculiar cadence and almost without taking breath. His interlocutor interrupts him after each sentence, with "Ahina, hina," that is to say "Indeed, indeed!" till the whole skein is unwound; the two men finish with a longer "*Hina*," the inhabitants of the hut adding an emphatic "*khani*," a heartfelt "thank you;" then the master of the village begins to relate his own news in the same tone. It is impossible to 574 imagine anything more curious than this "mélopée" in two parts. 609 This law of hospitality is general all over the tribe. Should

176 whilst, formerly, ideas were frequently lost or distorted by popular
178 tradition; progression will henceforth be not merely *arithmetical* but *geometrical*. The *book* will be the accumulator in which the intellectual forces of the race will be stored for future transmission, without wastage, prolific of light and stimulus to every sphere of human activity. The Blacks of South Africa have never invented any system [212] of writing. The idea of representing an object, a number, a thought, or a sound by any conventional sign, seems never to have occurred to them. Makhani, Muzila's old counsellor, did not know his own age. He probably thought, in common with many of his contemporaries, that he was at least ten years old. One day I said to him: "Why didn't you go each year, when the leaves begin to appear on the trees, and make some kind of a mark on the bark of a nkuhlu? Then, to-day, you could have counted all the marks and you would know how old you are!" He laughed and considered the idea futile, absurd! The absence of any system of writing is, doubtless, the proof of a certain intellectual inferiority, but environment may easily account for the illiterate condition of the Natives. In fact it is environment which is the chief cause of their centuries-long stagnation.

It would, however, be doing a wrong to these people, were we to judge them solely by the absence of industrial progress. Mental activity is not manifested only in the manufacture of machinery or in the transactions of high finance. Man is a being endowed with thought and speech. Speech and literature, which reflect thought, are phases of human activity more essential than industrial undertakings. The Thongas, in common with their neighbours the Ba-Sutho and the Zulus, do most certainly possess a literature, although they have no system of writing and may be classed as illiterates; of this fact I shall furnish abundant proof when treating of their *literary and artistic life*.

C. AGRICULTURAL CUSTOMS.

I. *The Agricultural Year.*

137 221 At the season which is called *shimumu*, the little heat, that is to say in July, when the warm weather begins, the nkuhlu puts forth new shoots. Though rain is still far off, the mahogany and sala trees become covered with leaves of a wonderfully delicate green. A kind of Composita (the Helychrisum parviflorum, shirimbyati), which is wide-spread on the sandy dunes, blossoms all over the country ; a beautiful lily (Crinum Forbesii) will expand its splendid white and pink flowers : the *winter* (bushika) has passed away : soon the *hlobo* (summer) will come.

412 221 462 When the Ronga woman notices these signs, she picks up her hoe (shikomo) and starts for the hills, or for the marshes. Her husband has already repaired the implement for her, at home. If the handle was worn out, he has cut a branch of nkonono, (Terminalia sericea), which is the wood invariably used for the purpose, and has shaped it so that one end is thicker than the other ; in this thick end a hole is bored, while the iron hoe head is heated in the fire : the head has, at its base, a long iron point which is inserted nearly red-hot into the hole, burning its way in, and thus solidly fixing the two parts together. This method of fixing on the handle is called ku lumela shikomo. The Ronga hoe has a very short handle, sometimes not more than two feet in length. The Transvaal Thongas use handles three to four feet long. The woman has now nothing to do but to work hard, her lord and master having duly accomplished his share of the labour.

241 221 It is the end of August. Two or three months must still elapse before the rainy season sets in. This period of the year is devoted to a two-fold work : the clearing of fresh land and the cultivation of marshes.

The *clearing of fresh land*, ku tlhaba lisindje (Ro.), ku khatsha

241 (Dj.), in the bush which has never yet been cultivated, or has
●221 been lying fallow for a long time, is very hard work indeed!
313 Beginning in the early morning the woman cuts down the small trees with her axe (khaula, dji-ma); if the stems are too large she lights a fire at their base and leaves them to burn until they fall. Natives have not the slightest idea of the value of trees, if

Tilling the fields near Makulane (Maputju country). *Phot. D. Lanoir.*

these trees do not bear edible fruit, and destroy whole forests without any compunction. As previously mentioned, the labourer spares only the nkanye, mphimbi, nkuhlu, etc., and sometimes the mimosa parasol (gowane, Albizzia fastigiata) which provides a beneficial shade for the maize. Then she breaks the soil with her hoe and piles up in heaps the weeds (bibi, dji-ma) and bushes which she has uprooted, leaving them to dry before burning them.
[538] This is a long job and requires great patience. The old adage says very truly:

> U nga bone bibi u ku ndji rimele. (Don't waste your time in looking at your heaps of rubbish, and fancying that your work is done!)

241 This work continues all through the months of August, September
221 and October.

Cultivation of Marshes (tjhobo, dji-ma). If the woman has already tilled plenty of ground on the hill, during the previous years, she will devote these three spring months to the cultivation of the wet hollows near the lakes, between the dunes. The gardens in the marsh are called *shiramba* or *mashamba* and are very different from those on the hills called *masimo* (1).

I will now describe those which I saw in the Rikatla depression. The middle of the hollow is a marsh filled with long Papyrus (bungu), slender Typha (papala, dji-ma) or reeds (lihlanga). They are cut, uprooted ; small canals are dug, in which the water collects. The roots and stems are piled in heaps, some three feet high, called *psibibi*, but they are not burnt. They are left to decay, and shilutane pumpkin seeds are sown in them, high enough to avoid putrefaction in the water. The soil is a wet black mud very favourable to the cultivation of rice. So a small plot a few square feet is sown, a *shingubya*, and, when the seeds have sprouted, they will be planted out all round. It seems that planting out has been known and practised for a long time by the Makaneta people who have large plantations of rice. Mealies are also sown in this region, in the spots where it is somewhat less wet : they will ripen one month earlier than those on the hill. The great pity is that the papyrus marsh is full of small birds called *nkapa* (mu-mi), which pluck out the tiny sprouts of mealies as soon as they appear and eat the half rotted grain at the roots. So children and women must scare away these marsh birds during these months, as they will the sparrows of the hills later on.

On the raised edge of the canals sweet potatoes are planted, not the tuber, but growing stems, which will bear fruit much earlier than those on the hill. Where water has entirely disappeared, manioc is also planted in the hollows and seems to prosper well. In early November the pumpkins of the *psibibi* will be fully developed and their leaves will provide the mistress

(1) Nsimu, cl. yi-tin, becomes in the plural masimu, cl.dji-ma ; it is one of the few exceptions met with in Thonga grammar.

of the garden with a good vegetable until the first-fruits themselves ripen and furnish a more substantial food. 241 221

When the rains commence, sometimes as early as September, but generally later, it is *time to begin the regular sowing*. Everybody then starts for himself, because, although the fields tilled by the mother are the largest, every member of the family has tilled his own : the husband has his *mpashu* (I. p. 337) and each girl has her plot.

The Native idea is that every owner of a field must sow all principal cereals and vegetables in his garden, except peas, on account of their taboo. So, in a line on the border, are planted sweet potatoes and manioc. Mealie seeds are sown at a given distance from each other, alternating with Kafir corn and sorghum, and in between are planted ground nuts and beans. Watch how the mistress of the field proceeds to sow her maize : she walks along with short steps, at each one digging up a shovelful of well tilled earth, and planting in the holes three or four grains of maize, which she carefully covers over. The work is done in haste so as to take advantage of the last rains. The *lisindje* is first sown ; then begins the hasty tilling of the old fallow fields (pula, dji-ma). The crop is not likely to be so plentiful as that obtained from virgin soil, but the same fields can be used for three or four consecutive years before they become exhausted.

Natives have no idea of *fertilising the ground* in any way whatever ; at the most they may take advantage of the manure which has accumulated in some disused oxen kraal, to plant thereon a few gourds or some tobacco.

The operation of hastily tilling the fallow fields is often carried on by a *djimo* (dji-ma). Knowing that her fallows are very large and that she can hardly cope with them by herself, the owner calls all her neighbours to a djimo, viz., a working party, having wisely prepared a number of large jugs of beer. Neighbours will certainly accept the invitation as they may have to ask for similar help later on. So they come in the morning, and attack the fields with energy, singing and shouting all the time. There are special djimo songs, in particular amongst the Ba-Sutho. One may see them, some fifty black bodies toiling vigorously, 241 476 574 [533]

241 making the sand fly, their hoes working with marvellous rapidity!
476 What excitement, what strenuous work, each one urging the
other to still greater exertion and all hurrying to finish the job!
574 They know that, there in the hut, ten big jars of beer brewed to a nicety wait for them, and that they will have a good time at midday, when the heat will be unbearable and the work done.

241 The maize grows and the weeds grow with it ; after the tilling
221 comes the *weeding* ; this is the work for November, December and January.

It is done twice or thrice for the mealies. The first weeding is called *tjutja*, and is done when the mealie stems have reached a height of about one foot. The second is called *hlakula*. By this time the ground nuts and beans have grown, and this weeding is intended to be for their benefit also.

In January it is the *nwebo*, the time for the first ears of maize to ripen : it is also at that time that the fields of maize are apt to be ravaged by a species of coleoptera, called the *nunu*, of which I shall have more to say when treating of the superstitions of the tribe.

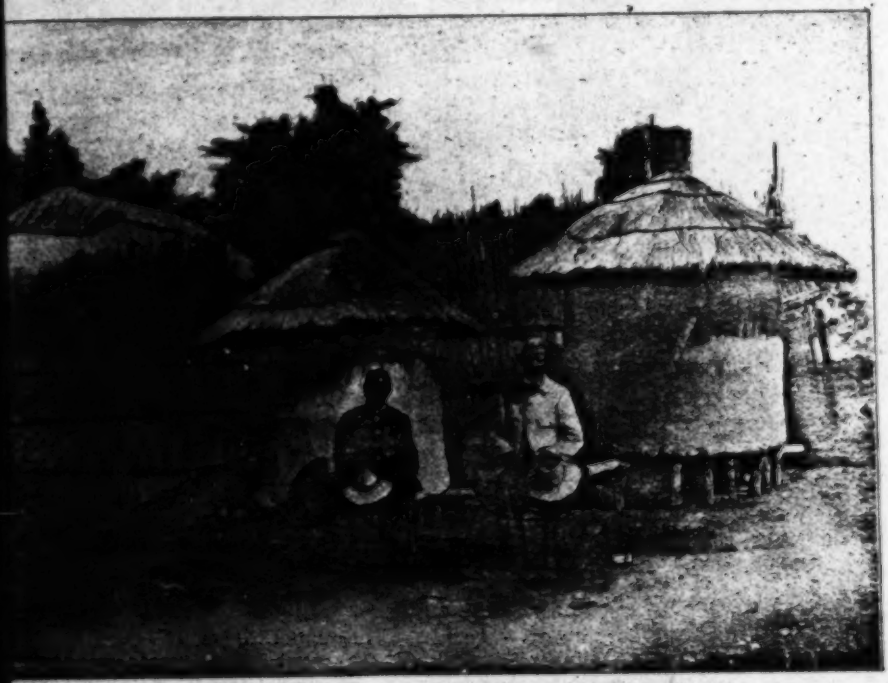
In January also the sorghum and millet attain their full growth, and the grain begins to form. *Sparrows, finches*, and other chattering birds take up their residence in the fields and begin to plunder them. Then women and children camp out from morning to night, in their plantations, and spend three whole months shouting, yelling and making a most infernal hullabaloo, with tin cans and other musical instruments, in their endeavour to scare the thieves. This is what they call *psaya* or *rindja tinyanyana*. The flocks of sparrows, etc., move on at a single flight to the acacias or mimosas, close by, whence they make a descent on the fields of the next neighbour. This proprietress is also on guard, and, in her turn, drives off the birds with a frightful uproar ; thus the duel between birds and human beings goes on for weeks. The mother and children prevail upon the father to build them a little hut (ntjonga, mu-mi) right in the middle of the field, to enable them to protect their sorghum against the feathered enemy, and there they take up their quarters until the cereals have ripened and are ready to be harvested.

to be harvested. Poor cereals! Many grains are wanting! 241
Those mischievous sparrows have taken more than a tithe! In 417
the marshy lands of Lebombo I noticed the people scaring the birds in a somewhat original manner. A cord was stretched right across the field, for a distance of at least thirty or forty yards, supported at intervals by poles, and on it were strung large snail shells (Achatina lamarkiana) as big as one's fist; when the watchers heard the sparrows chirping on the other side of the field, instead of getting up and running after them, yelling and shouting to scare them away, they merely pulled the cord, which made the shells jingle against one another, the movement and noise frightening the birds and sending them off to attack the crops of some less ingenious neighbour! I have also seen scarecrows set up in some places, the ordinary stuffed figure. During these months of bird scaring it is impossible to get the caretakers to do anything but guard their plantations! The little maidservants scamper away to join in the work and the Christian girls no longer come to school! I can well imagine that the husbands often find empty larders at home!

The attraction of the plantation does not however hinder the 273
labourers from doing full justice to the national beer, the bukanye, which is consumed from the middle of January to the end of February! Besides, it is principally after the bukanye that it is necessary to protect the sorghum from the beaks of these winged destroyers.

The agricultural year ends with the *harvest*. Every one 241
harvests his own fields and keeps, as far as possible, his product 221
separate in his own store house. The ears of maize which have been left to dry on the stalks are broken off (tshobela) and are carefully piled in conical baskets in such a manner as to make them hold large quantities. The precious burden is at once deposited in the storehouse. After this the beans are picked (khaya): these do not ripen much before May, after all the other produce, at a season which is called "the time of beans" (nkama wa timbawen). The ground-nuts are unearthed by 241
pounding on the ground all round the stem, and pulling up the whole plant by the roots. It is curious to see the stalks coming

grains. The best have been preserved for seed. When the threshing is finished, the grains are collected (wolela or hlakula) in the *lihlelo* basket and winnowed (hehera). Kafir corn and sorghum are then stored in the big *ngula* basket (1). As regards maize, it is kept in the storehouses proper (shitlanta), 241 251 343 221



Dula storehuts in the Shiluvane village *Phot. H. A. Junod.*
(The man sitting on the right is Viguet, my faithful informant).

little huts built of reeds with a moveable roof and raised on piles. All the shitlanta belong to the husband, though most of the tilling and all the weeding has been done by the wife, as already explained (I. p. 337). In the Transvaal, beans, peas and ground nuts are packed in the *dula* (dji-ma), which are smeared outside with clay, [423] 343

(1) It is taboo to weave the *ngula* before harvest, just as it is to prepare the ntshe before the birth of the baby. Before harvest Kafir corn is still *nyimba*, viz., a child not yet born. Who knows if the hail or the locusts will not destroy it? Wait till you have harvested, then you will see what size your basket must be! 241

244 pumpkins, another will go to the field and plant some seeds in
753 it without the old man's knowledge ; then people will venture to
824 plant in their own gardens. Transgression of this taboo is said to be punished by lumbago.

222 There are, besides, many wild plants which the housewives
824 collect and of which they make excellent dishes : the *tjeke*, a
828 kind of Chenopodiacea, which is also used as a medicine to induce forgetfulness ; the *nkakana*, a pretty plant of the Cucurbitaceae family, which climbs up the dried stems of maize after the harvest, and of which they eat the leaves and also the pretty little oval pointed fruit.

137 *Tomatoes* (shimati) are also found growing round the villages,
285 where they propagate themselves, and seem to prosper the better the less they are cared for : the Natives take them to Lourenço Marques for sale in very original baskets made of a single palm leaf, with the follicles artistically twisted. I am unable to say when they were introduced. There is a agreeable kind of small tomato which grows wild in Khosen, about the size of a cherry.

244 Natives also cultivate a kind of *onion* (nyala, yi-tin), smaller than the European varieties, which they very much appreciate in their sauces.

249 *The sugar cane* (moba, mu-mi) is never grown in large plantations, but you find it on the Coast, as well as in Zoutpansberg, cultivated on a small scale, either for eating, or for preparing the strong *shiwayawaya* drink, which I shall describe later on.

245 The *pine-apple* (lalasi, dji-ma) has spread as far as the Bilene country and must be of ancient date ; it differs considerably from the Natal pine-apple, being longer, coarser and not so sweet. In many villages large plantations are to be seen.

249 *Tobacco* (fole, dji-ma) is also wide-spread and seems to have been cultivated for a long time. A curious fact is that its cultivation is the business of the men, and women have nothing to do with it. Amongst the Ba-Ronga it is sown first in a damp spot in the marsh, in a special little garden called *shibibi*, and, when it has grown a little, is planted out (simeka) on the hill, near the villages. When nearly ripe the lower leaves are first

cut, dried and ground "ku djinga," as a foretaste! Then the 249
other leaves are cut, covered with nkuhlu foliage and left for three days to mature (ku pfundja) ; a string is then passed through them and they are hung to a tree to dry. Before they have become brittle, they are rolled up together so as to form the "mfunge," a bunch of tobacco leaves which is sometimes three or four feet long by 4 to 6 inches thick. This bunch is exposed to the sun on the roof for one day. When the process of drying is finished, the leaves are put once more outside in the evening so as to get a little damp, and are then finally rolled up together. The bunch of tobacco is kept inside the house and often used for [436]
barter.

The *manioc* (ntjumbulu, mu-mi) is extensively cultivated both in the sand of the hills and near the marshes. The root, dried, and eaten either whole or ground, is very good food, but some plants have a bitter taste. But manioc can hardly be called a vegetable and borders on the domain of trees.

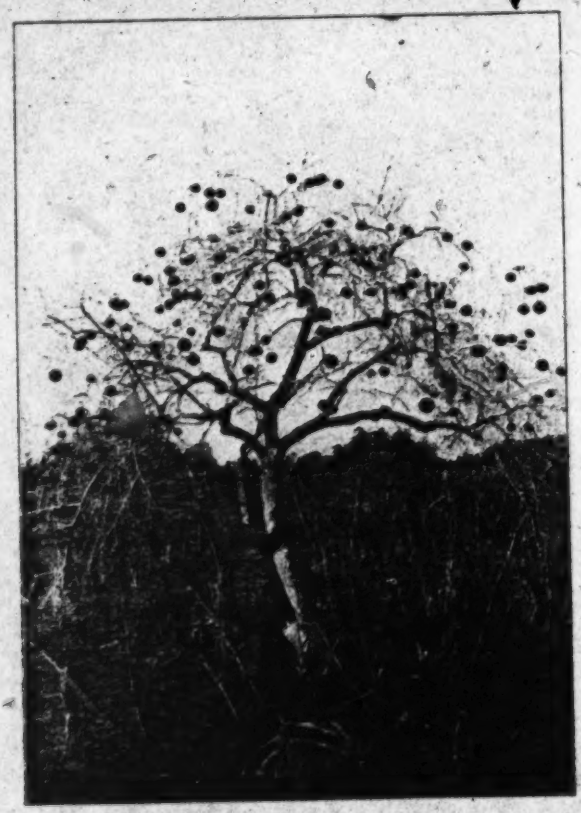
III. *Trees and fruits.*

Fruits play an important part in the diet of the Thongas. 137
but wild fruits alone, the fruit with which Mother Earth 245
presents them. They neither plant nor cultivate the trees ; when clearing the ground, they simply spare the fruit-bearing kinds which grow naturally. It may be that a man will sow some seeds of a particularly good *nkuhlu*, or *nkanye*, in his garden, if that garden happens to be devoid of trees ; this is all they do to improve the quality of the fruit. It is no wonder, after all, that tree cultivation is almost entirely absent in Thonga agriculture : villages move so frequently, owing to contamination by death, accusations of witchcraft, or exhaustion of the soil, that nobody takes the trouble to plant trees which he will not be able to carry away with him to his new residence.

As regards the indigenous fruits, they are varied and numerous. 222
Natives systematically spare every fruit tree when clearing their

222 fields and, thanks to this wise precaution, the fructiferous growths have increased enormously ; and wherever the land is cultivated it presents the appearance of a huge orchard.

137 222 One of the best of the Native fruits is the *sala* (dji-ma), which



The nsala tree bearing the sala fruits. *Phot. A. Borel.*

takes a leading place in the diet of the Ba-Ronga ; it is a large shining, green ball, taking on a yellowish tint when ripening, and consists of a thin shell, easily broken, containing some twenty flat oval stones, covered with a yellowish coloured pulp, very sweet and delicate in flavour, but a little nauseating to the European taste. The sala is very invigorating and is a great and precious resource in times of shortage of crops.

Its first cousin, the *kwakwa* (dji-ma), is of the same shape and size, but, when ripening, becomes quite an orange yellow; it is never eaten uncooked. The pulp surrounding the stones is prepared in a certain way and made into strips (nhasa, yi-tin), which are hung on the trees to dry or over the fire to be smoked; this is what is called *nfuma*. Once the *nfuma* is dried, it can be pounded and made into a flour much valued when the storehouses are empty, and the new season has not yet begun. 222 252

The sala and the kwakwa are two species of the genus Strychnos (Strychnos spinosa and ungasha) which furnishes chemists and poisoners with the well-known drug strychnine. Does the fruit contain any proportion of this substance? I do not know. It has never been known to kill any one, although it may be the cause of many intestinal troubles which naturally result when the Natives, having no more maize or sweet potatoes, live on nothing but this particular fruit. Strange to say, the kwakwa stones are credited with the power of attracting lightning; the old women say that, when making *nfuma*, these large white stones must never be allowed to lie in a heap in the open air: lightning would surely strike the village were any such imprudence committed. It is a taboo. 222 137 821

I have already described the *nkanye* (mu-mi), (Sclerocarya caffra, Kafir plum), which is certainly the most highly valued of all the trees in Thongaland (I. p. 398). The fruit is used primarily and essentially for the brewing of bukanye, by pressing the pulp, but the kernels of the stones of the nkanye are also much appreciated; they are very oleaginous and a modicum of oil may be obtained by merely squeezing them between the fingers! They are called *mongo*, and the saying is that they are food for kings, for the stones are very hard, the kernels very small and it is hard work to obtain even a small quantity! Not that there is any lack of stones! Heaps, which have been thrown away at the time of the famous bukanye brewing, are to be found in the vicinity of all villages, but the cracking is the difficulty. For this a stone must be sought, far and wide, and small hollows must be made in it of a size to fit the circular nkanye stones; these are then inserted in the sockets and cracked by a sharp skilful blow with another stone, 222 252

222 great care being taken to avoid crushing the small tender kernel,
252 the royal delicacy ! In times of famine the *mongo* is in great request, in spite of the trouble involved in obtaining it.

222 Another very valuable tree is the *nkuhlu* (mu-mi) (Trichilia
439 emetica I. p. 395) whose nuts are the *tihuhlu* (yin-tin) (1) the mafureira. This is a curious fruit, the nut itself being of a greenish black colour, bitter and very oily ; on this grows white pulp (bululu), covered with a beautiful skin of a bright orange, which, however, only covers about three quarters of the central black nut. The Natives pick this fruit in November and December, and stuff their cheeks with it ; the saliva softens the pulp, which melts gradually in the mouth, affording them a prolonged enjoyment of its exquisite flavour. One sees children, and also folks of mature age, with their cheeks puffed out as if they were badly swollen and throats contracted with the effort of sucking down the delicious pulp ; when nothing remains but the black nut which is called nkampfi, viz., the product of suction, it is carefully put aside and will be used for making vegetable fat ; or it will be sold to the Whites, who export them to Marseilles where, it appears, they are used for making really good oil. Let us hope these nuts, thus sucked clean by the Blacks, have never supplied any portion of our salad dressing ! But there is no occasion to be alarmed, as they are only used for making machine oil. The Blacks themselves do not use the tihuhlu oil for culinary purposes but for outward application only.

252 The *bululu* can also be made into an edible fat by the following
303 process : whole fruits of nkuhlu are first dried, then softened in water ; when quite soft, they are pressed between the fingers so as to separate the white pulp, which is then called *munyantsi*, from the black nuts (nkampfi). This munyantsi is cooked and the fat is skimmed off (wungula) with spoons as it melts and comes to the surface. This edible fat, as well as that used for smearing the body, is preserved either in calabashes or in sala shells (shikutja). The preparation of nkampfi fat takes place as

(1) A certain number of fruits instead of belonging to the dji-ma class, as is the rule, are incorporated with the yin-tin class, the tihuhlu, the tihlu (fruit of the mahlu tree), the tindjole (fruit of the ndjole), etc.

follows : the nuts are thoroughly dried (womisa), and slightly 252
pounded in a mortar so as to remove the thin peel which covers 303
them ; they are then winnowed, and ground into a kind of flour ; this flour is put into a pot with a little water and cooked ; the fat is then collected in a big shell of Achatina and kept for external use. The residue is called *bubindje*.

I do not mention all the other fruits, more or less succulent, 137
which serve the Natives for food. One must be terribly famished 222
to enjoy them. I may just specify the *pfilu* (dji-ma), Vangueria infausta, a kind of insipid medlar ; the *tjhopfa* (dji-ma), fruit of the *ntjhopfa* tree, which I could never muster courage enough to taste, and the *bunga* (dji-ma) sometimes dignified with the title of the Kafir orange. This latter is the fruit of one of the varieties of the india-rubber tree, which grows along the shores of Delagoa Bay. (Landolphia Kirkii.) In the Morakwen forest grow the ntjhole shrubs from which the *tintjole* berries are picked during the summer.

The *muhlu* or water tree bears a berry called *tihlu*, which has an agreeable taste. The *mphimbi* bears the *mahimbi*, a large round fruit similar in form to an apricot with a double stone. Both these fruits are used to prepare a drink, and we shall mention them when treating of Thonga drinks.

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* *

There are a few taboos to mention in connection with trees. 782
It is considered dangerous to cut the trunk of any large tree. 824
Should you wish to make a mortar of a nkanye, first smear some of the bark with certain drugs and also burn them at the foot of the tree before cutting it down. Should you want to cut down a nkwenga or a mahogany-tree, nhlapfuta (Ro.), shene (Dj.), to make a canoe, the master of the forest must first offer a sacrifice to the spirits of his ancestors who have been buried there. If you omit this precaution, you will be unable to find again the tree you have chosen.

good luck ; he will say : "My god has blessed me and shown me this gandjelo," and he is quite welcome to help himself to the wine. On the other hand, it is prohibited to touch the shell and to drink from it. It is taboo. A stranger doing so would be addressed as follows : "Are you a bee, are you a butterfly to go and help yourself from a shikutja, which does not belong to you?" He would be tied up, arms and legs, and left to sleep in the open for the whole night. On leaving him they will taunt him, saying : "Go and drink from the shikutja." He may even be condemned to pay a fine, a goat, or a hoe. This palm wine has a very sweet and agreeable taste. 273 685

According to the Native idea, *honey* (bulombe) is also a drink! The prefix *bu* classifies this product amongst liquids. It is very much appreciated and Natives readily submit to be stung in order to collect it (hakula) from the holes in old trees or rocks. They generally burn some grass which they hold in one hand, keeping the bees away with the smoke and the flame, and gathering the honey combs into a pot with the other hand. Thongas frequently secure honey in an artificial way by placing a broken pot upside-down in the bush. Bees are attracted and a swarm will occasionally make its home in the pot. In the Ñwambukota region (near Morakwen) I saw a Ronga who even had bee hives of his own invention and succeeded in securing plenty of honey. Native honey is of a brownish, blackish hue. When eating it, Thongas do not at all despise the larvae : are they not meat? 222 231 272

3) *The Shiwayawaya and Shikokiyane drinks.* The various kinds of beer and drinks made from fruit were not, however, enough for the Thongas. They saw that White people used sugar-cane to distil rum and they attempted to do the same. The result of their attempt is called *Shiwayawaya.* Inhambane Natives seem to have been the first to brew it ; their kinsmen of the Lourenço Marques district soon followed their example. They crush the sugar-cane in a mortar, after having poured some water into it ; they then collect the crushed cane in a sack, press it, and extract all the liquid they can in one or two barrels. During the night a fire is lighted in a hut, near the barrels, to 273

224 they come to him," For this reason hunters strongly assert that should
775 he neglect to perform the rite he will have no success in his future
783 hunting expeditions. A third aim, at least in the case of hippopotamus-
825 hunting, is to overcome the charms of the wizards who ride upon them.

When studying these old hunting rites I had the impression of living for some hours in close contact with primitive humanity, at a time when man, owing to the elementary character of the weapons at his disposal, was almost on the same level as the wild beast and was obliged to display an enormous amount of courage, skill and endurance in order to assert his domination over the animal world and to make it serve his purposes. Since the discovery of gun powder and modern weapons a new era has set in for the hunter. Did not old Viguet assert that now, when an elephant is killed by means of a gun, the nuru is no longer to be feared? Hunting has become for the Bantu of to-day an amusing sport, more profitable indeed but by no means so interesting!

II. *Psinyama-nyamana. The flesh of small animals.*

136 This word which comes from the well-known Bantu word
262 nyama, meat, is a triple diminutive, obtained by the reduplication of the stem, the prefix *psi*, and the suffix *ana*. It means all kinds of food derived from animals of small size, of which the Thongas are very fond.

Anything in any way resembling meat is welcome to them. Amongst Mammalia they specially enjoy certain kinds of rodents, not the domestic rats, but field mice called maphephe and mabuti which boys catch in their traps. Civet cats (nsimba, yi-tin) and wild cats (goya, dji-ma) are not frequently seen near the villages.

186 As regards birds, they eat them all with the few exceptions
222 which I shall shortly mention, from the tiniest sparrow to ducks
262 and Guinea fowls, which they manage to snare. They have no aversion to the lower types of animal : they collect the *matomane*, large caterpillars belonging to a species of Saturnidae called Cirina similis (Dist), which are found in families on the nkanye tree, during October. By the exercise of a gentle pressure on the hideous creatures, the inside is squeezed out, and the rest is thrown

into a saucepan and boiled, resulting in an indescribable broth of a 136
blackish colour. To see it is quite sufficient... and they enjoy it! 222
Several other kinds of Saturnidae also figure at their feasts : the 262
matomane of nyamari (Bunaea Caffraria), others of a brick red colour (Melanocera Menippe), those of the nhlangula shrub (Gonimbrasia Zambezina), etc. When the cooks go out to split [372]
the trunks of old half decayed nkanye trees, from which they get their kindling wood, they are most careful to put on one side the big white larvae of two large Cerambycidae coleoptera (Mallodon Downesii and Plocoederus frenatus, etc.). These enormous white worms (shipungu) will be fried in their own fat, and served up as a tit-bit for the ladies on their return to the village.

The insect world does great injury to the gardens through the agency of its winged members, the *locusts*, and Natives avenge themselves by eating them wholesale. When a swarm of these destructive creatures has alighted somewhere in the evening, and is benumbed by the cool air of the night, the villagers go and collect them in bags or baskets in great quantities. The heads, wings and legs are torn off and the bodies roasted on the embers, or boiled and used as seasoning. When plentiful, the locusts are dried and crushed in mortars to make a much appreciated flour. To our taste, locusts are simply nauseating.

Another favourite dish, the secret of which the Nkunas learnt from their Pedi neighbours, is provided by *the winged imagos of white ants*. At Christmas time, these insects emerge by thousands from the ant-hills of that region. Some are of small size ; the boys introduce grasses, smeared with glue, into the holes from which they come and catch a large number of them by this kind of fishing. They eat the head, which can be heard cracking between their teeth, and throw the bodies into a calabash to season the evening meal. But there is a larger kind which is even more appreciated. The body is whitish, as large as an almond. A hole in the ant-hill, three feet wide by two feet deep, is dug at the spot where the insects are most likely to emerge. An old pot is placed in the clay of the ant-hill at the bottom of this hole. The hole itself is covered with green branches. These curious winged termites, as soon as they have emerged from their retreat,

136 try to fly ; but they soon fall to the ground and you see them
222 running towards each other and shedding their slender transparent
262 wings, so that they remain on the spot, like worms, creeping slowly along, unable to defend themselves, an easy prey for the birds and the *shinana* toads, which have a grand feast on the happy day when winged termites appear! Those which happen to emerge where the hole has been dug, try to escape by flying, but are prevented from doing so by the covering of leaves. They at once fall heavily to the bottom and roll into the pot, which may become quite full in a few hours. The owner of the trap then comes and makes a splendid sauce with its contents! This kind of termite is not met with on the Coast.

I cannot enter into details as to all these more or less questionable foods. (See I, p. 65, the mention of the Shitambela beetle.)

262 Although the caterpillars, coleoptera, larvae, and locusts are universally appreciated, there are other "meats" which appeal to certain individuals or clans, but are disdainfully eschewed by others. For instance the boa is eaten with great gusto by the Rongas and disliked by the Nkunas. The same is true of the big varan lizard. The tortoise is generally eaten, but the Mpfumu boys, who esteem themselves more civilised, reject it. On inquiring why some persons or clans exclude certain kinds of meats which other persons or clans consider delectable, we find that there are two different reasons for this, between which it is important to differentiate. The exclusion is due either to a *nyenya*, viz., disgust, or to a *yila*, viz., a taboo.

1) Owing to *disgust*, some people refuse to eat *pork* : "their hearts fear it," probably because pigs are modern and some people are not yet accustomed to eat their flesh. Zulus reject every
262 kind of fish (nhlampfi) from the same feeling of disgust. Snails
777 are despised by all the Thongas ; it is true that the snail of the
826 country (Natica Wesseliana) is not very tempting, its shell being of a transparent green and its flesh reddish ; moreover it is said to "singita," viz., to bring bad luck to any one meeting with it on the way.

262 But the flesh of some other animals is abstained from, even
826 dreaded, because they *yila*, they are taboo. Thongas have no

585 When they accompany the bride to her new home, they sing :

533 U ya kwi, Mamano ! — Whither goest thou, mother ?
539 U ya kwi shana ? — Whither goest thou ?
574 Ba ta tshaha shihundju ni lihlelo, mamano !
They will bring thee the basket full of maize and the fan, my mother !
Ba ta kuma u tlokoli, ba tlokolisa, mamano !
When thou hast finished crushing it, they will make thee crush it again, my mother !
Ba ta kuma u kopoli, ba kopolisa, mamano !
When thou hast plastered the floor, they will make thee plaster it again, my mother !

But when they come on a visit, carrying jars of beer as presents to the newly married couple, they are much less guarded in their language, ridiculing the poor husband and his family, and making fun of every one in general. They begin singing on the way, with the jars on their heads :

He ntshonga, banhwanyana, he nga batjanana
He la libango ; fa hi nga labi, we manyana.
Ku laba manyana ka ñwan'a manyana.
We are a small band, young girls ; there are few of us.
We are looking for a piece of meat on the spit ; formerly we should not have known where to find any, our sister (so and so) !
Now our sister will get some for us from her husband !

Hi kokobisa lobe, hi ya kwihi shana ?
Hi bhanu ba ku yalwa !
He fambaka ni khombo, ni khombo dji le kaya !
Where are we going, thus dragging the hook behind us ? (1)
We are the people that are hated.
We walk in misfortune (2), the misfortune that has befallen our house !

Ka ku kandja ñwana a ku na kule.
Wo khunga he lihanyi, we koko !
Ya kokowela : kowe-kowe-kowe.
Where a daughter lives it cannot be very far off.
Go there, grannie, limping and leaning on thy staff !
Listen to the hen cackling. She says : kowe, kowe, kowe. (3)

[222] (1) They compare themselves to women who have been in the fields, picking kwakwa fruits (p. 17), and are so heavily laden that they cannot carry the hook used for pulling the fruit off the trees ; they have had to tie it to their belt, and drag it behind them on their way home. The travellers give it to be understood that they are not out for pleasure !

(2) That of having to go and see a brother-in-law who ill-treats their sister.

(3) This line is an encouragement to the old woman who finds the walk long and tiring. The other women promise her a fowl at the end of their journey, which the son-in-law will kill for her. Note the first line of the third verse : it is a kind of proverb.

685 857 Generally speaking the elder boys send the younger to commit these thefts, and the plunder is enjoyed by the whole company. They threaten to beat them if they return empty-handed. A sad fate for the youngsters—blows on all sides ; blows from the owners of the fields if they are caught, blows from their comrades if they bring nothing back with them!

Here are one or two tricks employed by the little thieves. In order to take a water-melon (khalabatla) out of a field without being noticed by the women who are busy pulling up their ground nuts, they cut the stalk and fasten it to a piece of string. The other end of this is attached to the leg of the thief, who moves away slowly, drawing the water-melon after him. When he is out of reach of the women, he hastily puts it under his arm and makes off at top speed.

To catch a hen without its making a sound, they dig a little hole behind the huts of the village, and put a few grains of maize in it. The fowl puts its head into the hole to eat the grains, and immediately the little rascal who was watching from behind a bush, rushes out, seizes it by the neck and carries it off before it can utter a single cry!

672 685 The penalty when a boy is caught is a good whipping without a fine. "Psa batjongwana ! It is an action of little boys !" These minor thefts are not considered serious.

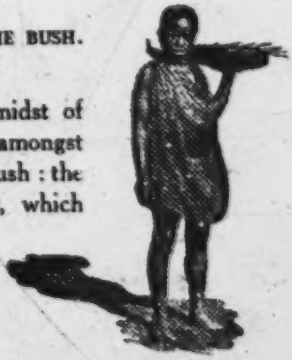
3) Catching game.

262 223 837 Hunger is the constant companion of these boys, who do not get enough to eat at home. It is true they ate to their heart's content (shura) yesterday evening, but this morning they had only a very scanty breakfast (fhluta). They try to satisfy their never satisfied appetite by catching game : not big game of course, as they have no real weapons, but birds, field-mice, eggs in the nests (the less fresh they are, the better, because there is more meat inside!) etc. To get birds they throw their sticks at them, and are very clever at killing a partridge as it rises heavily from the grass ; or they make traps with a flexible stick to which they tie a string with a bait. They bend the stick, set the trap by means

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

223/857 of a little bit of wood, and when the bird puts its beak into the bait, it is caught round the neck by the string. On the borders of the lake of Rikatla, boys used to catch even big birds with these traps. They set many kinds of snares. One is a cage made of sticks of palm marrows which shuts automatically when a bird enters and eats the grain by which it has been attracted. They sometimes build two walls of sticks planted in the soil and converging to the same point, where they reach a little door provided with the trap. Hares are sometimes caught in this way. They follow the wall, and when they go through the door, they tread on a hurdle which is connected with a bent rod : the rod springs back and the hare is caught.

4) Learning the science of the bush.



Phot. G. Liengme.
A Thonga boy.

136/857/151 This life in the velt, always in the midst of Nature, develops the power of observation amongst the boys. They know everything in the bush : the big Psyche caterpillar (Eumeta cervina), which hangs from the nembe-nembe shrub (Cassia petersiana) like a little bundle of sticks, and which they call *mahambanindlwane*, " the one who walks with his house ;" the big Carabid beetle which appears with the first rain, the Anthia alveolata, marked with large hollows on the elytra and which is therefore named " the son of the smallpox ." Indeed I found in Rikatla a boy who knew that a certain white cocoon found on the branches of the nkanye tree (Sclerocarya caffra) gives birth to the splendid green Queen Moth (Argema Mimosae). [262] Having collected beetles and butterflies extensively for years, I have had an opportunity of recognizing the power of observation of these boys, who were my best hunters! Of course they particularly appreciate things edible... especially the *shitambela*, a big Bupresta beetle which they roast and suck.

831/881 and of the hippopotamus are by no means poetic descriptions of these big animals similar to those contained in the book of Job. The first alludes to the manner in which the male crocodile copulates with his female. And the second tells the story of a virgin girl whom the young boys violate in order to open the way to the grown up men who will follow them. Impure allusions are found everywhere in this teaching of the circumcision school.

When the instructor has finished, he lifts his stick with a certain gesture and all the boys shout at once : " Zithari! " Viguet told me that that exclamation meant : " They are as long as that " and that it was an obscene allusion. The old men take great delight in being flattered and, if the boys wish to add to their pleasure, they will say : " When you spit, the wind from your mouth would kill enemies at the other end of the country! "

As is plain from these quotations, the teaching of the Ngoma is quite trivial, and the formulae are rather a collection of esoteric words than a true intellectual training.

533/881 *The songs* of the Ngoma have no deeper meaning. We have seen already the song of the Elephant and of the Winter-bird... Every morning, just after they wake, the circumcised sing for a long time the following words, which they repeat also when coming back from hunting trips.

Sing your song, bird of the morn
Mafé-é-é-é !

The melody is rude, wild but very impressive. Mafé-é-é-é must mean : " We are the initiated, we are the men! "

224/881/868 *Hunting*. Hunting is the only useful thing taught in the Ngoma. Boys go almost every day to the velt and become very clever in catching game. They beat the bush, sometimes climb hills and chase all the game to the top, killing it there with their assagais, knobkerries, etc. Near Shiluvane they even attack the Mamotsuiri mountain once during their three months. All the men of the country are summoned to take part in the big expedition, which requires real strategic skill.

881 To sum up the rites of this marginal period of the Circumcision school, this is the programme of a day in the sungi. The shepherds

462 thank (tlangela) her husband for his kind help! This is her
273 method of notifying him that all the grain has been harvested, as, whatever the man's share of the work may have been, the mealies belong to him.

462 The main work of the man is the *building and repairing of the*
356 *huts*. This is truly an arduous job, but it is not of yearly recur-
342 rence. Every third or fourth year they are obliged to re-thatch the roof. The huts are built and repaired during the winter, from May to September.

A second domain, which is exclusively man's, is the *care of the cattle*; the boys milk the cows, construct and repair the kraal: the little boys herd the goats, and the young men the oxen, as has already been mentioned.

462 It is also the men who *make all the utensils and tools* used in the
411 village, pots and other crockery excepted; mortars, pestles,
294 handles for axes or hoes (mimphinyi), wooden platters, carved or forged articles, all this work pertains to them. They must also make the *ntehe* for their wives, or sisters, after the birth of the babies. This is probably the explanation of the curious fact noticed amongst Native Christians, namely that they are much more clever at needlework than their wives. Big fellows are often seen forsaking the hoe to work with the needle, and there are fathers who make their own clothing as well as the dresses for their wives and children!

462 *Hunting and fishing* are, of course, also men's work... or pastime.
224 For some of them hunting is an actual trade, at least such was the case in former times, before the White Governments imposed strict regulations and levied heavy licences on that sport. We shall study, in Part IV, the curious customs relating to these two favourite occupations of the Natives.

574 A great part of their time is devoted by the men to *paying*
517 *visits*. They are very fond of calling on each other, and sometimes
484 they go great distances to see relatives or friends. They do not travel to pay visits only, but they frequently journey to claim payment of their debts (milandju). To regain the possession of a miserable head of cattle they willingly lose whole weeks! And what endless discussions in the *hubo*, when an unfortunate visitor

643 651 In the Northern clans it seems that these payments in kind called *shirwalo* (carrying of beer, from ku rwala, to carry), are expected from all those who are not hunters and bring no meat to the capital.

643 651 224 825 2. The right of the chief *over wild beasts killed in hunting* is not the same for all game. Rhinoceros is not taxed ; it is even taboo to bring its meat to the chief. On the contrary when a man has killed a wild buffalo, an elan, a giraffe or an antelope, he must first cut some joints for the chief. If it is a panther or a lion, he must give up the skin ; if an elephant, the tusk which scratched the soil when it fell belongs to the chief ; it is "the tusk of the soil," and the chief is "the soil." The other tusk is for the hunter (ndlayi). In the Maputju country, it was even forbidden to kill elephants. Ngwanazi, the chief who was deported in 1896, had reserved the monopoly of elephant hunting for himself and his warriors. The hippopotamus is taxed more heavily than any other beast. The hunter who has succeeded in killing one has not the right of cutting it open. Should he do so, it would be considered a serious offence. He might be put to death. (Mankhelu.) He must at once send word to the capital, and the men of the Court will come immediately and cut up the animal, taking half the joints to the chief. As for the crocodile, it must also be opened by the men of the Court, because it contains many things such as marvellous stones used in magic, and bracelets of the women whom it has devoured. The chief appropriates what he pleases amongst these objects.

643 466 3. *Statute labour* is one of the main revenues of the royal kraal. In some cases, subjects must come to the capital, led by their sub-chiefs, and till a field for the chief or rather for the queen who has been bought with the nation's money. In Nondwane, which is a large country, each of the sub-clans must till a field for the wives of the chief in its own territory. For instance, in each of the districts of Mapulangu, Bandi, Manuel, Maghebeza, Malwan, Hlangunyingin, the chief Mubvesha possessed a royal field which his subjects weeded and harvested every year, and the sub-chief Habele, who was in charge of those districts, had to gather the mealies and carry them to the capital. This official tilling is done

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643 on good and friendly terms. Should relations between them be
609 at all strained, or should war be imminent, all the roads would be
574 closed and no one allowed to enter the capital.

V. *The Kondza custom.*

641 The chief is also approached by those who may wish to become
643 subject to him, to be naturalized ; this is called *kondza*, from a Zulu word conveying this meaning. The chief will assign to the new *nandja* a dwelling place, and he will be incorporated in the nation without further ceremony. By this kondza, he binds himself to pay the taxes (See the story of Mutipi. *Les chants et les contes des Ba-Ronga*, page 164).

Naturalised strangers, however, do not eat the first fruits (luma) with the same drug as the people of the country. They have their own medicine and take it according to their own rules. They are however forbidden to luma before the chief of their adopted land (p. 397).

VI. *Diplomatic relations.*

648 We have seen that these are very carefully conducted, each
602 of the neighbouring clans having one counsellor entrusted with
726 the care of its affairs. In case of war, friendly clans frequently
724 make alliances (shinakulobye). They send messages to each other, or they have special means of communicating news in case of war. Supposing, for instance, Ñwamba and Nondwane should fight against Matjolo. They put two traps at their common boundary, on the side of the road, one on the territory of Ñwamba and one on that of Nondwane. These traps consist of a rod bent by a string fastened to the ground. Should the army of Matjolo have made an invasion during the night into Ñwamba territory and put the people to flight, the men of Nwamba

685 has been pulled up and the sand nicely smoothed down, so that
343 any traces of a thief would easily be seen. He will possibly be
151 recognised at once by the trackers, owing to some peculiarity in the
625 marks on the sand, the foot-print of each individual being more or less known ; clever detectives can even ascertain the height and gait of a man from the length of his stride! If there are no peculiar marks in the foot-prints, the trackers will follow them and reach the village where the thief lives. They will perhaps take him by surprise in his hut. If the matter cannot be settled by the headman of the village and has to be brought before the chief, the guilty party will be fined as much as two, three or even five pounds sterling (Tobane) (1).

When detectives have been unable to trace a thief, they assume a philosophical attitude and say : "Only wait. A man who has stolen will steal again, and you will catch him another time!"

643 *Revolt against the decisions of the chief's hubo* is very rare. Should
687 any person take the part of a condemned man and encourage him to oppose the decision of the Court, he will be beaten with a shambock on the square of the capital. "U onhi hubo," "he has spoilt the Court!" Moreover he may have to pay a fine of £ 2. (Mankhelu.)

643 *Answer to some of Professor Frazer's questions on Government.*
835 There are no separate chiefs for war and peace. But in time
224 of war the great induna, who is the Commander-in-chief of the
701 army, directs all military operations. — The chief is never required to marry his own sister or daughter. The only similar case of which I have heard, is that of a hunter who must have sexual relations with his daughter before going on a hunting trip (Part IV).

643 — The king's mother does not hold any special office.—
778 The chief does not keep any portion of his deceased predecessor excepting the nails and hair used for the mhamb[illegible] see page 386 and part VI)

538 (1) The following interesting couplet in two sentences aptly describes the thief :
Shishlungwa rendyeletane ? — The crown on the hut nicely rounded ?
Mangatlu a paha ritiho... — The hawk burns his claws...
The thief is like a crown on the top of a hut. He is a lazy person, he attitudinises and will not work. Evil will befall him, as with a hawk who tries to snatch the meat that is roasting and burns his claws!

235 made their appearance together with men" — "ti tumbulukile ni banhu," they say. But we know that the critical sense is absent from their minds, so we cannot rely on any such absolute dictum. "The Honwanas had them" they add ; and this we may believe, as the Honwanas have always kept more or less apart from the invaders of the XVth or XVIth century (I. p. 357) and may have preserved their traditions. This shows that poultry was known in Delagoa Bay 300 or 400 years ago. Not having seen the Portuguese chronicles of 1550-1600, I cannot say whether they make any allusion to the presence of fowls at that date (1).

F. HUNTING AND FISHING.

224 Whatever may be the antiquity of cattle breeding amongst
476 South African Natives, there was a time when they had no domestic animals at all. Then, however, there were plenty of antelopes, elephants, and hippopotami in the country and they satisfied their craving for meat by hunting. Hunting was undoubtedly more developed in those remote times than now, and it was accompanied by customs and rites which are still to be found in some places, though rapidly disappearing, and in which are embodied some of the most curious animistic ideas of the tribe. Moreover, in their primitive state, Bantus only possessed very simple and inadequate weapons. It was hardly possible for an isolated member of the tribe to attack and kill big animals alone. The collaboration of his fellow clansmen was indispensable Hunting therefore was not an individual affair, but a collective concern. This gave rise to social rites, as gene-
224 rally happens when collective acts are performed. These ani-

(1) As regards the Pedi-Suthos of Zoutpansberg, the introduction of fowls amongst them is quite modern and they admit that they owe them to the Ma-Lemba who brought them into the country about 150 years ago. See my paper in *Folklore* Sept. 1908.

mistic and social rites connected with hunting constitute an elaborate system which forms a most interesting study. 224

The interest of this study has been further enhanced by the discoveries made in the caves of France and Spain regarding our forefathers of the paleolithic age. They also were great hunters, and the rites of the Bantus, who are to-day in a state of civilisation very similar to that of the Mousterian and Magdalenian periods, are capable of throwing much light on the customs of primitive humanity. The cave-dwellers of those remote times used to depict wild animals on the walls of their caves and on some of these artistically drawn figures may be noticed characteristic spots; these would seem to represent the wounds which the hunters intended to inflict on the animals in the course of their next hunting expeditions. This was probably a magical method of achieving success in the chase. Bantus of the present day do not possess this wonderful pictorial art. Their magic is different, but it rests on the same principles, and who can say whether the description of their hunting rites may not help us to understand some of the discoveries already made or still to be made in the deposits of prehistoric times, just as the position given by them to the corpse in the grave explains why in the Mousterian skeletons the legs and forearms are bent towards the sternum.

I. *Big Game Hunting.*

Big game is plentiful in Thonga territory, more so of course in the remote places (mananga) than in the populated areas. 136 224 Elephants are still found in the desert, in Hlengweland and Maputju; hippopotami swarm in the Nkomati and Limpopo; antelopes of subtropical Africa still abound north of Khosen and in the low plains of Zoutpansberg: the sable antelope, (mhalamhala), water buck (mhetlwa), koedoe, gnu (hongonyi), reed buck (nhlangu), etc. The duiker (mhunti) is met with everywhere. The smaller antelopes are the shipeya, mangulwe, etc. The giraffe (nhutlwa) and the buffalo (nyari) are still found north of Khosen, but are decreasing in number.

224 Let me first mention some of the *social rites* connected with
422 hunting.

When a man finds *a dead animal* in the bush, if it is not too heavy, he can hoist it on his shoulders and take it home to eat. We know that Natives are not afraid of eating dead meat and enjoy an extraordinary immunity from its dangers. But if it is an elephant, for instance, the man who has found it, perhaps by following the vultures which gather round the dead body, will first carefully examine the soil all round the beast to be sure that nobody has seen it before him. If no footprints are to be seen, he cuts a piece of meat, places it on a fire and eats to his heart's content. Then he cuts off the tail (tjoba) of the animal and runs home to call his fellow-clansmen. The tail is his "means of notification" (bika) ; they all rush to the spot, cut off the limbs and carry them to the village. Should the animal have fallen in a country which is not that of the finder, the latter will give the owners of the land one of the limbs and the ribs which were in contact with the ground (1).

151 To find a dead animal is not a common occurrence. Generally
224 the hunter meets with *living game*. He at once sets off in pursuit with his dogs. He may pursue the animal for hours, or even days. My friend Spoor. (I. p. 7), though suffering from asthma, often succeeded in killing an antelope which had been overcome with fatigue and was found by him lying asleep. But he may often have to start without having seen anything. *The study of footprints* is then of paramount importance. In the sandy plains

(1) The Nkumba clan, 10 Kil. north of Lourenço Marques, lost its independance on account of a dead elephant under the following circumstances. One of the men of this clan had found a dead elephant. He at once cut off the tail and went to the village of the chief to "bika." Whilst he was away a troup of men of the Libombo clan, settled some kilometers further north, came to the spot. They put an axe into the animal's rectum, and when the Nkumbas arrived they said to them : "This beast is ours ! You have cut off the tail, but we had put our axe into its rectum long before." And a big warrior took the axe out triumphantly. The Nkumbas said "goo," i. e. they were greatly embarrassed and answered : "You lie ! We had cut off the tail before you came !" — "Not at all," answered the Libombos ! "Our method of appropriating a dead animal is to put an axe into its rectum." This led to a fight in which the Nkumbas were defeated, and later on, one of them having died and been buried in their sacred wood (ntiliwen), the Libombos dug up the corpse and threw it away. The poor Nkumbas were obliged to bury it in another place : they had lost their country !

of the coast, antelopes leave well marked traces in the soil. A hunter starts at 8 a. m. and notices that the footprint is of a dark colour ; this shows that the morning dew has fallen into it ; therefore the footprint was made during the night, some hours before. If the edges of the print are sharply cut, this means that the animal passed in the early morning, when the sand was still a little wet and firm, whilst if the edges are irregular or have crumbled down, it is a sign that the print was made at noon, when the sand is quite dry and loose. The Rev. A. Aubert living in the Maputju country, who often questioned hunters on the subject, told me that these men had wonderful skill in drawing their conclusions at a glance, apparently without any reasoning process. It is evident that the reasoning process must have taken place at some period, but it has become almost instinctive : the sight of the footprint immediately gives the hunter the information required. They are even able, when on the track of two antelopes of the same kind, to state which are the footprints of the male and which those of the female, the latter being generally somewhat smaller. 151 224

When the soil is hard, or clayish, there may be more difficulty. The hunter will observe the depth of the footprint ; if it is deeply marked, this shows that the earth was wet and soft when the animal passed ; therefore it was in the early morning, just after the fall of the dew. Or he may notice that a stone has been displaced and turned upside down by the antelope's hoofs ; should the upper side of this stone be wet, the displacement took place before the dew fell. On the contrary, should it be dry, the stone has just been moved and the animal is not far off. The Rev. P. Rosset, who was once led in an eland hunt by an experienced "phisa", told me that the man was all the time muttering volubly, talking to himself in a low voice, interpreting to himself all the signs he observed and drawing his conclusions without taking any heed of his white companion (1).

(1) Native children begin very early to learn the science of footprints. They notice the peculiar aspect of the footprint of all the inmates of the village and are soon able to recognize them. They even connect them with their respective ways of walking, which is indicated by the footprints being turned more or less outwards. 151 868

When the hunter has chosen, amongst all the prints, those which seem to him the freshest, he follows them up with his dogs, and there is some chance of his being able to overtake the antelope. Should he succeed in killing the animal without having received help from others he can appropriate it without rewarding anybody. Only if it is too heavy to carry home, he will shout loudly, on a high, piercing note: "Hoooooyiooo..." perhaps after having climbed up a tree so as to make himself heard a long way off. Or he will cut off the tail, cover the beast with branches to prevent vultures from damaging it, plant his assegay in the ground to show his right to the possession of his victim and go home to fetch his companions. When they have helped him to carry the animal, he will give each of them a good piece of meat. 224 476

But if the hunter who discovered the antelope sees that he will not be able to come up with it, he will blow his trumpet (lihlanga) to call for help. When the men arrive on the spot, he will cry: "Nkuna yowee!.." if he is a Nkuna, and all will repeat after him: "Nkuna yowee!.." to acknowledge his right. He may abandon the pursuit, but his right has been proclaimed and will be remembered. The second hunter who stabs the antelope will do the same; he will shout "Mabota yowee!.." if he is of the Mabota clan, and so on till the animal has been killed. Then the meat will be distributed amongst the killers in the following way.. The first will receive the body, the second one leg, the third the foreleg and the fourth the throat, a portion being reserved for the chief, the owner of the soil on which the antelope has fallen. This manner of pursuing an animal, in which helpers are summoned by means of the trumpet, is called ku nyikanana, i. e. to surrender to each other. 202 224 476

If the hunter has killed a very big animal and wants his clansmen alone to help him, he has recourse to another method of calling them. Each clan possesses its own rallying cry, and this he shouts loudly. This is intended to exclude men of other clans and to prevent fighting or any dispute about the possession of the animal. For the Ba-Nkuna this cry is: *Nyandlaleyo!* For the Tsungus: *Hi ahlanga!* For the Manukosi clan: *Mayamba ngwenya ya namba wa tingwenya!* (Crocodile of the river of 224 202 618

202 618 crocodiles.) For the Mavundjas: *Kahlamba ntjhaba yo nonoha!* (The big mountain, difficult to climb.) (1)

224 643 825 845 I have already described the part of a slain animal which is to be given to the chief, when speaking of the prerogatives of the master of the country (I. p. 406). Here are some supplementary details: The general idea is that he must receive that part of the body which was in contact with the soil, because the chief is the owner of the soil. In the case of smaller antelopes however he does not claim anything. For the eland he requires, in addition to the ordinary tribute, half of the *bofu* i. e. of the paunch of fat which is found round the heart of this animal and which is believed to possess precious medicinal properties (especially for new-born children born with a membrane round the head). As regards buffaloes and other big animals, should they be killed far away from home, their meat is cut into strips (mishakatsu) and two bundles are brought back to the chief; it is also the rule that the head of any beast of great size should be eaten on the bandla, the meeting-place of the men in the capital.

224 643

Buffalo hunter with his victim.

224 824 So far I have described hunting with assegais, sticks and dogs. But Thongas possess another method of killing big animals, a method which is perhaps more ancient and which has sometimes proved very useful. This is the *marindji trap*, i. e. a large pit dug in the earth, covered with branches and full of pointed stakes upon which the animal falls and impales itself. These stakes are made

(1) The Podis have the same custom. The Ba-Khaba cry: "Haratsha! Mugosi! Wa"! This expression comes from the verb *ratsha*, to cross a river on a tree trunk, as the Khaba clan is said to have been held back in its ancient migrations by a swollen river and to have *ratsha* it successfully. The remembrance of this feat of their ancestors has remained and has given rise to this rallying cry. Other Podis say: "*Sinen'ja khomo*," viz., "the killer will be given an ox for his reward."

224 of the very hard wood of the ntjenga tree, a sort of mimosa shrub,
824 and are anointed with a powder called *tjulu*. This is a deadly poison ; it is obtained from a shrub which has very pretty flowers and grows abundantly in the forests near the sea, the Strophanthus petersianus. Should an elephant fall into the game pit and succeed in escaping, it will soon die from the poisoned wound.

The marindji trap was already known to the Honwanas, three or four centuries ago, before they possessed any iron weapon. They used to kill elephants in this way and, being unable to dismember them, they made a fire all round the beast to cook it on the spot!

224 In order "to make the game forget," viz., to circumvent its
844 wariness (djibata), certain magical charms are used in connection with the trap. The fence which surrounds it is smeared over with a powder made from a human placenta. A hunter's wife carefully preserves the afterbirth of her child ; she bakes it on the evening of the day of delivery, hides it during the following day, dries it the next evening, puts it between two pieces of a broken pot, and hangs it from the roof. When the father returns from his hunting trip, he makes a powder of it, mixes it with other drugs, and uses it to smear the fence of the trap, also his arrows, or his gun. Should an antelope be wounded by a projectile covered with this drug, it is sure to fall at once! This powerful medicine is called *ndzedzena* and is deemed so important that a hunter's wife who loses the afterbirth must pay a fine of one hoe ; the hunter will try to obtain the placenta of another woman ; it is therefore not necessary that the afterbirth be that of his own wife (Viguet).

224 Game pits are not common in Thongaland ; they were still used
476 some years ago in the South of the Maputju country and in the Hlengwe territory, but I never came across any myself. At a more remote period they were employed for the most profitable collective hunting the Thongas ever attempted. All the members of the clan were summoned ; they built a strong fence as much as two kilometers in length, leaving about ten openings at equal distances ; at each of these gates was dug a game pit. In the afternoon the men assembled and prepared torches which they lighted in the evening ; and with loud shouts they chased the game

towards the fence into the pits. My informant asserts that the 224
result was sometimes marvellous ; the pits were soon full and the 476
animals coming behind ran over their comrades and escaped ; the men followed closely and stabbed the antelopes in the neck. But this of course meant the wholesale destruction of game. Happily a stop has been put to this kind of hunting.

Nowadays Natives use *iron traps* which they buy in the European 224
stores, some of which are quite sufficiently strong to catch a duiker 824
or a wild pig. They smear them with another charm, the *butiba*, a kind of brownish moss growing on the roots of a tree called shivumbunkanye. It also is said to have the power of "making the game forget."

I have described some other traps when dealing with boys' games.

Everybody was allowed to hunt in the good old times when the 224
White authorities had not yet introduced so many restrictive 554
regulations. Ordinary hunters are called bahloti or bazingeli 791
(Zulu term). But there were others who had made a kind of trade of hunting, regular, professional hunters, who were called *phisa* (pl. maphisa). They were not satisfied to kill an occasional antelope near their village, but they undertook big expeditions to the great deserts of the Hlengwe country where game was plentiful and where the most precious of all, i. e., elephants, abounded. It cannot be said that the maphisa formed a definite class in the tribe like the bone-throwers, for instance. I never heard of a true initiation taking place prior to their becoming maphisa. Yet they were known and recognized as a kind of superior caste and were very proud of their name of maphisa. They claimed a special power over big game owing to the mysterious rites which they practised; thus they partook more or less of the nature of magicians. I have come across some of them and heard marvellous stories about others. Old Madyashikulu of the Nhlongo clan, whom I met in the Ntimane country, near Antioka, boasted that he could pick out an elephant in a herd and force it to come and fall down at the foot of the tree up which he had climbed. He had then only to stab it from his retreat, and kill it ; after which he came down from the tree to

224 554 791 dance over the carcase of his victim! Another was Mubandane, a relation of Mboza, who lived in Nondwana. As is customary with many Natives of the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques, he hunted elephants for a Portuguese trader, named Fonseca, who provided him with guns and powder. When ready to undertake his hunting trip to the north of Gazaland (Mosapa), he had to undergo a purification (hlambo). His medicine-man cooked a pot full of his drugs, washed him with the froth and poured the contents of the pot on the roof, over the entrance of the hunter's hut. Mubandane had then to stoop and enter his hut, the water leaking through the grass and falling on his shoulders. These words were pronounced by the medicine-man, during this ritual entry into the hut: "Go and be happy! Though the rain fall on you, though the dew make you wet, when you sleep, you will be everywhere as in a hut; everywhere it will be like home (kaya). You will have taken your hut with you, you will enter it in a wet state!"

224 784 Other maphisa were the hippopotamus hunters settled on the banks of the Nkomati river, whose customs I shall describe later on.

In connection with their *hunting trips*, these professional hunters are subject to many taboos. As we have just seen, they must undergo a purification before starting, and also be inoculated in the wrists with special drugs, the most important being those of the tintebe (I. p. 479) the same which are used by the slayers of enemies in battle. Another favourite medicine for hunters is made from the piece of meat which is found between the heart and the lungs of big animals. In some cases they have to prepare themselves for their expedition by daily ablutions and by absolute continence for a certain number of days. The sacrifice of a fowl is also sometimes made before starting. It is taboo for adults to eat the meat of this fowl; it might endanger the success of the expedition. Little children may eat it: "they are quiet" (i. e. they have no sexual relations), and so the hunting will not be spoilt. When all these preparations are finished, the hunters start with their rattles, singing special songs, the songs of the hunters (Part V).

The trip itself may last for months, and constitutes a kind of

marginal period during which the maphisa must use protective medicines against the dangers of the bush, and keep certain rules. 224 784

As a protection they carry their charms, especially the *ndjao*, the root of a certain juncus which is used on many other occasions. As regards the taboos which they must observe, I will first mention those applying to travellers in general, especially the *salt taboo* (I. p. 339). Should they take salt with them, this would "precede them" (rangela), and they would kill no game. It will be soon enough to look for salt when they have killed. But the great taboo of these hunting trips is the *sexual taboo*. This was already imposed before starting and it must be observed Phroughout the expedition. The necessity of avoiding anything connected with sexual relations is so great that maphisa will take with them to cook their food little boys under marriageable age. What is the reason of this prohibition? I have explained it in dealing with the Thonga idea of sexual relations (I. p. 189). If the hunters transgress the law, the big animals will be so wild that it will be impossible to approach them; they will furiously attack the men who have sinned, because they know them, and woe upon them! So much so that if the hunters see an elephant or a hippopotamus in obstinate pursuit of one of their number, they will begin to insult him for having spoilt the whole trip by his misbehaviour, and send him home. 224 784 834 825

The law of continence is also binding on *the hunters' wives* at home. It is true that when the absence of their husbands is prolonged for a very long time they may become unfaithful to them and the men, on their return, will find babies waiting for them which are not their true children. This will cause them no unhappiness, as these babies none the less belong to them, their wives having been duly bought, and the time for fear is now passed, as they have returned home safely. The fact that these men welcome the children born during their absence caused me to think that hunters' wives were not subject to the sexual taboo as their husbands are. But further inquiry has shown that this is not true. Old Makhani assured me that incontinence on the part of the wife at home would have as a consequence that the husband would be attacked and killed by wild beasts far away in the desert. 224 784 837 851 752

224
784

These women must moreover observe certain rules in their everyday life. They must smear the floor of their huts only early in the morning or late in the evening, viz. at that time of day when their husbands are not busy hunting ; then all will go well with them. Thus the behaviour of the wife has its effect on her husband's fate. Sometimes she will take a plate, fill it with attractive food, call her children and distribute it to them in order that the husband, when passing through the villages in the far-distant country may be well treated by the inhabitants of the land. Should a death occur in the hunter's village during his absence, it is very dangerous for him! It was for this reason that Makhani was attacked by a buffalo which injured his skull! Those at home must expose themselves to vapour baths (mahungulo, I. p. 145) in the early morning and late in the evening, as in the case of smearing the hut.

The aim of these practices is in the first place to protect the hunter against the fury of wild animals ; but it is also to make him a man of the bush through and through. Mboza said : "The hunter must forget everything about home. Were he to have relations with women, his charms would get heated, whilst they must remain cool (titimeta). He must himself become a man of the bush (wa nhoba), similar to the animals which are found there. In this way, they will not fear him, nor will he fear them. If he sees a lion devouring an antelope, he will dare to approach it, kneel before it, clasp his hands and say : 'You, lion! give me some meat, that I may eat ; I am hungry!' The lion goes slowly away and leaves the antelope to him!" When they have killed enough game, the maphisa cut the meat into strips, which they take home. When they return they stop at the main entrance of the village. The headman comes to them, greets them and offers a hen in sacrifice on their behalf, to thank his ancestor-gods for having saved them from death. Should one of them have died during the journey, they fire a volley on arrival and are not allowed to enter before having undergone the purification rites.

Hunters must not give meat to eat to people "who are bad" (la'ba bihiki), i. e. to their wife just after a birth, to women during

menstruation, to persons in a state of defilement. This would 224
"spoil their gun." When they go to attend the burial of a relative, 784
they fire a shot upon reaching the mortuary village. Thus the ball which was in the gun at the time of the relative's death will be expelled ; was it not contaminated? Moreover the hunter will wash his gun ; without these precautions the weapon would not kill anything in future.

These maphisa are very jealous of each other. Some of them 224
try to destroy the power of a rival by securing a part of an animal 789
killed by him ; they subject the meat to a treatment which was not explained to me ; they then bury for instance a bone thus smeared ; after which they are convinced that their rival will no longer be able to dispute game with them. Therefore when a hunter distributes meat to other people, he keeps for himself a little piece of each limb in order to prevent a possible enemy from "going away with his meat."

Let me now pass in review the *more important kinds of big game,* 224
and I will reproduce as literally as possible the information gathered from Thongas of all parts of the country with regard to each of them. Some of my readers, upon reading these extraordinary statements, will no doubt exclaim : "What does all this mean? Are these actual facts or pure imagination or folklore?" All three elements are certainly represented in these stories, but I think it would be useless to take much trouble to distinguish between the three. My endeavour is not to produce a scientific zoological treatise but to find in these accounts a means of penetrating more deeply into Bantu mentality ; and there is no doubt that the study of hunting rites has a great deal to teach us on this subject.

The *eland* (*mhofu*, Oreas canna) is a splendid beast, highly 224
coveted but dangerous to kill. Viguet says : "It possesses the 825
nuru. When you kill it, it is taboo to walk round its body. Go straight to its head, and there, in the hair of the forehead, you will find a louse ; take it. Then dig in the earth where the head has fallen : you will find a root tehre ; cut it off and bring it home together with the louse. Then you are safe!" (—Other people add : "Remove its eye before cutting it open, if you wish to escape the

224 825 danger of nuru.")— "Having reached home, you ask the medicine-man to prepare a charm with the root and the louse : he will *lurulula* you, viz., free you from the *nuru*. Should you omit this treatment you may lose your senses, be unable to find the way home or, when you are back, you may forget everything about your hunting trip. People will say to you : 'U ni nyanyunyu', — 'you are cracked' ; you act as if you had killed an eland and had not been *lurulula*, delivered from its nuru!"

Hunters assert that there is not the slightest doubt about the presence of this root into which the nuru has entered. Even if no tree grows near the spot where the eland has fallen, the root will still be there and the hunter will find it, at least if it is really he who killed the animal. Should another hunter falsely pretend to have killed it and try to claim it, he will never find the root, even if he should dig all over the ground for ten days!

Another rule in connection with the eland is this ; should one of these animals have been killed whilst you were bringing your wife home, you must cut off a piece of its skin and make a bracelet of it, which you tie round your wrist. Then you can eat your meal with your wife. To-morrow go with her to an ant-hill and fix this piece of skin to it with two wooden pegs, one on either side. In the middle between the two pegs, set fire to the skin by means of a burning brand. You are then saved. You have *lurulula* yourselves. If you do not take this precaution, your child will be miserable : it will dry up, viz., be so thin that all its tendons will become visible. — Never let your children eat eland's meat until they have been inoculated with a preventive drug! The danger associated with the eland for the hunter's family is so great that people say : "Married people ought to abstain from killing it and leave it to bachelors." In fact everything connected with this beast is dangerous. When you follow its tracks, if you see that it is tired and that saliva has fallen from its mouth, take care not to tread on it. It is taboo : you will be seized by an irresistible sleep. The reason of these dangers is that the eland has a pouch of fat round its heart called *bufu* (same root as mhofu, the name of the eland). This fat, to which I have already alluded, is a very remarkable substance! Hence all these rules!

On the other hand, should an eland be found dead, transfixed, no nuru need be feared. 224 825

We have already met with the *ndakazi antelope* taboos. Amongst the Nkunas (I. p. 366) this ndakazi, or shidyanaman, must not be killed intentionally lest the hunter and his whole family should shortly die. We have seen how the danger can be avoided when the antelope has been unintentionally killed. The hunter must place his head between his hands, as if in despair, and shout : "Ho! mamana! ndji ta dya na man" i. e. "Alack! my mother! With whom shall I eat it?" By this cry the nuru can be overcome and the possession of the meat assured. Otherwise if a hunter neglects this precaution and comes home with the tail to summon people to help him to carry the eland's meat, they will find that the body of the animal has disappeared.

Clever hunters know a second way of attaining the same end ; it is to dig in the soil near the nose (the same as in the case of the eland) and cut off the root you find there : This root has received the nuru of the animal. When you have finished cutting off the limbs of the ndakazi, you dispose of the dung (psanyi) found in the bowels, handling it with this root. In former times hunters used to throw the limbs in all directions : this would 'spread' (hangalasa) the nuru" (Mankhelu). Amongst the Hlabis, the ndakazi is called *hingakaya*, viz., closing the way home. It is not taboo to kill it, but the hunter must shout, when throwing the assagai : "Kaya! Mawako!" i. e. "May I return home!" If the antelope is swifter than the man and runs away (with a sound like kha!) the hunter will be lost in the bush : the animal will have *hinga kaya* viz., closed the way home. It will be necessary to *lurulula* the hunter, whether he has killed the antelope or not.

A third big antelope concerning which tales abound is the *kodoe* (*gantla*, Strepsiceros kudu), which is not uncommon in the Maputju country where I gathered the following information. The man who told me these stories, Movumbi, had a great admiration for the kodoe, whom he called the elephant's brother ; he said that the old males had between their horns a green snake which dwells there and warns them when there is any danger threatening them. This snake is their shikwembu (protective

224 genius ?) It is taboo to kill one of these old males : the hunter
825 who committed this fault would never kill another kodoe. It is taboo also to kill a young one first ; one must begin with a female ; later on the hunter may try for a male. He must not, however, kill it at once but only wound it ; the kodoe must not fall on the spot ; it must run away and the hunter must follow it for a long time, perhaps two days : "two days, it is all right." Should he find it resting on the ground, he must not shoot it in that position, but whistle in order to make it stand up; then only he may shoot. The nuru of the kodoe enters a root, as in the case of the eland and the ndakazi. The protective medicine prepared from this root, powdered and mixed with fat, is employed as an ointment beneath the eyes, and behind the ears and the knees in order to "strengthen the bones." This is the lurulula rite in the case of the kodoe. There is also a *luma*, rite of the first mouthful (see later on). It is performed by eating ritually a piece of the muscle which lies between the heart and the lungs, and which is the chief hunters' medicine (p. 60).

There do not seem to be any special laws in regard to the other antelopes except the *duiker* (*mhunti* Cephalophus grimmi). The first duiker killed by a hunter must not be eaten by him ; it must be left for his parents. Should he transgress this rule, "his heart would be disgusted" and he would lose any further interest in hunting. When a duiker falls first into a game pit it is necessary to "blow over it" (huhutela) ; if this precaution is neglected, the pit will not catch anything in future. According to Madyashikulu the operation is performed as follows. The hunter chews a little of the magic root of the kind of juncus called *ndjao* which, as we have already stated, plays a great part in Thonga ritual, and blows pieces of it over the duiker all round its body on both sides, ending with the head ; the aim of the operation would seem to be in some way to collect the nuru which is distributed over the whole body, and to convey it into the head in order to let it come out through the nostrils. If the rite is properly accomplished the game pit will succeed in catching any number of buffaloes, gnus, antelopes, etc., whilst if the precaution is neglected no other animal will be obtained henceforth. In this case the "huhutela" is performed

not so much to prevent an attack of insanity as to guarantee further success in hunting. Should the hunter have killed a duiker after a long pursuit, the dog which started the chase must also be lurulula. The hunter cuts off one of the hoofs of the duiker, makes a notch in the cleft of the hoof and blows the ndjao into it : then he buries the hoof, calls the dog and shows it the place where it has been buried. The dog will then scratch, find the hoof and run away with it. This lurulula will help both the hunter and the dog to become greater adepts in hunting, the dog learning to follow the trail and the hunter identifying himself so much with bush life and bush animals that these will not be afraid of him and he will be able to approach them.

224 825

We now pass to the three largest animals of the country, those which could hardly be killed except by the collaboration of a considerable body of men ; they are also the three beasts which are "climbed" i. e. on the carcase of which the hunter climbs to perform the lurulula rite; these are the hippopotamus, the elephant and the rhinoceros.

There are a certain number of herds of *hippopotami* (mpfubu) in the lower part of the Nkomati river, from the Khosen country down to the sea. Natives have noticed that these herds consist of eight to ten females with a single male. When a female is just about to give birth to a young one she emigrates to some lonely creek ; if the young one is a female, she returns with it to the herd ; if it is a male, she leaves it in the creek and joins the herd alone, but comes every day to feed her offspring. Should she take it to the herd at once, the old male would kill it immediately, as the master of a herd is terribly jealous and tolerates no other male near him. The young male grows alone ; when he feels himself strong enough to attempt the venture, he goes to the herd and engages his father in battle ; he will probably be chased away, mauled, half killed ; but he will come again the following years till he succeeds in overcoming the old bull, who will in his turn fly with one of his old faithful females and found a new herd, or perhaps die miserably. These herds always keep to the same region. When a canoe passes through these dangerous spots, the backs of the hippopotami are seen from far off emerging from the

224 825 water, and Natives point to them saying: "The mapseko!" *Pseko* is the name given to old pots employed in connection with the cooking operations (to cook, ku pseka); they are turned upside down in the fire-place and the pots containing the food are placed on top of them. The backs of the hippopotami are like these inverted old black pots and that is why these animals are called after them. It would be dangerous to call them by their own name; they might become angry if they knew that they had been noticed...

224 789 I owe to Mboza a graphic description of the rules of hippopotamus hunting. There are a few villages, near the Nkomati or other rivers, whose inhabitants are regular hippopotamus hunters, and possess the special science, or art, called *butimba*; the hunters themselves are called *batimba*. This science is hereditary: it is taught by the father to his sons. These men possess a peculiar drug, the *mbangulwa*; when the hunter is inoculated with this, he acquires a special power over the hippopotami: should he wound one of them, the beast will not be able to go very far, and it will be possible to follow it and quickly find it. But this inoculation makes the man very dangerous to his fellows: should he beat any one, that person will be at once seized by a disease which will prevent his passing water or stools.

224 835 This is the manner in which these batimba hunt. During the day, the hunter fishes, watching the movements of the hippopotami all the time. When he sees that the propitious moment has come and is ready to undertake hunting operations lasting a month, he first calls his own daughter to his hut and has sexual relations with her. This incestuous act, which is strongly taboo in ordinary life, has made him into a "murderer": he has killed something at home; he has acquired the courage necessary for doing great deeds on the river! Henceforth he will have no sexual relations with his wives during the whole campaign.

224 [789] Before starting he calls his principal wife, the one to whose care the butimba magic drug is committed, and both expose their bodies to the smoke of a medicinal pill. On the same night,

immediately after these acts, he sets off with his sons ; they close 224
the drift where the beasts leave the river by placing a canoe across the track. The hippopotami are in the neighbouring forest, busy feeding, and perhaps ravaging the fields. When they return to the river, they stop in front of the canoe which obstructs their retreat : the first assagai is then thrown at them. It has been smeared over with the Strophantus powder. The animal rushes into the water ; when it reappears on the other side, it is pierced by a second assagai. These assagais are arranged in such a way that the blade, which is provided with hooks at the sides, is not firmly fixed to the handle ; moreover a long string is twined round the handle connecting it with the blade. So, when the hippopotamus enters the river, the assagai which is planted in its skin is separated from the handle, which remains floating and acts as a buoy ; the string unwinds and the handle follows the animal as it retreats, showing in which direction it has gone.

As soon as the assagai is thrown, somebody runs to the hunter's 224
village to inform his wife. The woman must at once shut herself 784
up in the hut and remain perfectly quiet. She lights a fire and 789
keeps it burning the whole time. A little child brings her her pipe
(old Ronga women are great pipe smokers). She must neither [276]
eat nor drink ; or, if she is very thirsty, the child will bring her some water. In any case she must not crush her mealies; she must not go out of the hut except to satisfy her natural wants. Why ? Because if she were to move to and fro in the village, this would induce the hippopotamus to rush wildly upon her husband and possibly kill him. Moreover the fact that she remains confined within the circular walls of the hut will have as a consequence that the wild beast will be in some sort imprisoned in a small space ; it will not be able to run far away and escape.

We find here a characteristic instance of the two kinds of magic which we shall explain later on : the communionist magic according to which the different parts of a whole act and react on each other (the great wife, whose life is in close connection with her husband's life, saves him by her quiet demeanour) and the imitative magic according to which like acts on like or produces like (the confinement of the woman within the

229 walls of the hut prevents the hippopotamus from escaping from the
784 circle formed by the canoes on the river. (Similar customs are found
789 amongst many primitive peoples. See Part VI. Ch. I.)

224 Then all the hunters of the village are called ; they enter the canoe and follow the beast. To facilitate the pursuit, they replace the floating handle of the assagai by a *male*, viz., the big nervule of the leaf of the mimale palm tree, resembling a pole of 30 feet in length. As soon as this species of pole is fixed, somebody informs the woman at home that she can come out of the hut. But let her be prudent, as victory is not yet won. The hippopotamus will come to the surface to breathe ; an assagai will be thrown into its nostrils and later a second ; it will be no longer able to close its nose when plunging and will be drowned. But it may attack the hunters furiously, instigated by the spirits of baloyi (wizards) which are riding on it "just as men ride on a horse!" The fight will perhaps last a long time!

When the hippopotamus has at last been killed, songs of rejoicing burst out on all sides ; the hunters bring their canoes together and row in the direction of the village, singing the whole time special songs which are called *nyangamela*. The peculiar cries of the women are heard on the hill, their "mikulungwana." They come to the shore to meet the men. The great wife, having now been entirely set free, comes dancing and singing. The carcase is left on the sand till low tide (the tide is perceptible for a long distance in the Lower Nkomati river). Then all the hunters assemble to proceed to the two great hunters' rites, the lurulula and the luma.

First the *lurulula*. I have obtained a more precise description of this rite from two new informants. The beast is laid on its back, and its forelegs are pulled out on both sides, so as to separate them from each other. The hunter who has killed the beast takes his *ndjao* root, chews it, together with the butimba medicine, blows pieces of it into his hands, closes his eyes and introduces himself, creeping on his belly, between the forelegs ; he then creeps along the side of the hippopotamus, anointing it with the medicine which is in his hands. When he reaches the hindleg, he squeezes it with both hands, does the same to the other hindleg, creeps

along the other side and at last reaches the head, muttering the following words : "A ti fe! A ti bole" i. e. "Let them die! Let them rot." Then he prays to his ancestor-gods, asking them to give him many more such beasts. He opens his eyes, and this is the end of the ceremony. 224

As a rule two persons must perform the lurulula rite, first the hunter who has killed the hippopotamus and after him the headman of the batimba village.

The lurulula is the great hunters' rite. There is, however, a second rite to be performed before they can enjoy the flesh of their victim, the *luma*. The luma is the removal of a food taboo by a rite which must accompany the first mouthful taken. It is obligatory for the first fruits, for the food left by a deceased person, etc. (I. p. 146, 394.) This precaution is also necessary in the case of game. The hunter who transfixed the hippopotamus is the first to luma. He takes the diaphragm of the animal (mapfalo), and puts a piece of it into his mouth ; he then plunges into the river, and eats this meat while under water, "as if he were a fish." Having accomplished this feat, he emerges triumphant. His sons and the inmates of his village *luma* after him. They take a portion of the flesh of the neck, called shipelo, from that part of the hippopotamus which pushes the mud in front of it, and which is supposed to be the seat of its strength. This they mix with the mbangulwa medicine and, standing in a line, they all eat a little of it, men, women, and children. All the neighbours assemble : they have smelled out the meat! The portion for the chief is put aside (I. p. 406), as the hippopotamus is very heavily taxed, and must even be cut open by the men of the capital. Then every one receives a piece of the flesh, and luma, either by smearing the sole of the foot with it, or by taking a small live ember and mixing it with the meat. The object of the luma rite is to remove the danger of eating meat to which you are not accustomed : it might "hate you (benga)" and cause colic. The taboo is not very strict, as there is only danger of colic and not of death. (Luma is necessary for elephants, when eating the meat for the first time, but not for lions or panthers. For elephants it is performed by smearing the soles of the feet with the meat.) 224 262

539 days he did not see it, but one day, at sunset, he took his canoe and
791 went on to the river. He took a red piece of cotton ; this was reflected
825 at the bottom of the river. The hippopotamus saw it there and came up to see what was the matter. The hunter fired at it ; he fired a second time. And lo! there on its back was the one who rides upon it! One of the balls pierced him whilst the other pierced the hippopotamus. The animal rushed towards the hunter, but he fired a third time and killed it. Next morning they found the hippopotamus floating on the water, dead. In the village also a man had died during the night, and they were mourning there. The hunter had said to the people : 'I have killed a man who was on the hippopotamus.' And on one side of the river people were eating meat whilst on the other side people were crying. But they did not lodge a complaint against him ; no action can be taken in such a case."

224 As regards *the elephant (ndlopfu)* it was the favourite object of
777 the chase, because killing one of these large beasts meant not only abundance of meat but also wealth on account of the ivory. Madyashikulu used to bring the tusks to Manukosi (Gungunyana's grandfather) who returned some of them to him, and with the money thus obtained the hunter could buy a wife. There are different systems of lurulula in the case of the elephant. The hunter takes a little of the tintebe powder (the charm of the slayers) pierces the eye of the beast, mixes the vitreum with the powder, adds drugs prepared from the end of the trunk and the tail and uses this mixture to overcome the nuru. A phisa of the Maputju country employed another method. He cut a piece of meat from the foreleg, cooked it, anointed it with powder from the calabash of the slayers, chewed it and began to blow it over the animal after having "climbed it." He then crept over the elephant in the same way as described above in the case of the hippopotamus, holding his gun in his hand the whole time. His comrades used to anoint him with a white medicine round both eyes. When he had returned home the treatment was continued by the administration of two vapour baths (mahungulo). He had to expose his body to the steam produced first by a decoction of various twigs, secondly by another decoction prepared from medicinal roots mixed with pieces of meat taken from a goat and from the elephant

itself. Afterwards he had to drink the broth and eat the meat. 224
The aim of the treatment was to enable him to kill more elephants. 777
In the case of the elephant as well as of the hippopotamus the chief 643
of the country has to perform the lurulula as well as the hunter "because he is the chief of all the animals of the country and he would be unable to govern it successfully if he did not do this."

The *rhinoceros (shibetshana)* is not common in Thongaland ; a 224
few of these animals are found in the extreme south of the Maputju 825
country. The same rules were observed when the hunters had succeeded in killing one ; but this is no easy task because, as Muvumbi said, the rhinoceros is terribly wild, as it has no "mapfalo." The mapfalo is a piece of cartilage which is found in all animals between the ribs, beneath the sternum ; it is the diaphragm ; it is also the seat of fear or of the conscience. It is this particular cartilage which throbs in the case of great fear. The rhinoceros has no mapfalo ; therefore it fears nothing and rushes savagely upon the hunter. Its meat is so delicious that when a man has tasted it he no longer wishes to drink water!

I never heard mention of the lurulula in connection with the 224
lion (*nghala* (Djo.), *ndjau* (Ro.). To avoid being mauled by lions 782
the hunters put into their mouths a little of every kind of food 825
mixed with their powerful drugs and spit it out to the four winds in order to appease the ancestor-gods of the country. Then if they meet with a lion, the wild beast, instead of rushing upon them, will look at them quietly, its saliva dropping from its mouth, and will do them no harm.

Strange to say the *buffalo* (nyari) has no nuru, and when I asked 825
why this was, my Maputju informant told me : "The buffalo is an ox." This answer may perhaps help us to understand something more about the nuru idea.

The statement regarding the *zebra* (mhangwa) is more curious still. "Mhangwa a yi lubiwi! Yi ni mabala ; i nala ; a yi ngeni hosin" viz. "No tax is paid for the zebra ; it is an animal with many colours (stripes) ; it is an enemy ; it must not enter the village of the chief." We have met with the same prohibition in connection with the village of the parents-in-law (I. p. 250).

As regards the *crocodile (ngwenya)* also called *shiwutlani-*

825 *mintjeko*, the one who seizes even the calabashes (he is not satisfied with seizing the woman who goes to the river to draw water, but takes her calabashes also), I heard of a medicine-man in the Rikotjo country who knew the manner of blowing over it (huhutela). There are a number of stories told of crocodiles, for instance the story of a man who was caught by one of these terrible saurians and dragged into a creek where the crocodile intended to eat him later on. The half-dead man came to his senses, saw the sky through the dense reeds in which he had been left by his captor and eventually managed to escape!

There is still a great deal of picturesque Bantu lore to be gathered by listening to hunters telling their stories round the fire when travelling with them through the desert. I will add only two in connection with two smaller animals.

224 The *honey-eater, shinwabulombane* (Mellivora ratel), is a kind of
825 badger which lives on wild honey. It is said to proceed in the following way. It collects the honey from the hollow trunk where the bees have built their hive and takes it to a little distance. Should you have noticed it preparing its store, do not take the honey at once, but wait till it has finished its work. Then attack it ; this is however very dangerous, because the honey-eater has a special method of defending itself ; it rushes upon its enemy and tries to seize his testicles and tear them out with its claws. The honey-eater does not fear to attack even buffaloes by creeping under their body and serving them in this evil fashion ; afterwards it carefully buries the testicles... The hunter takes a branch of a very hard and thorny mimosa (the nkaya), and so keeps the animal at a distance and pierces it with his assagai. But the honey-eater has the faculty of swelling up and hardening its skin so much that it is very difficult to thrust an assagai through it. When the hunter has succeeded in killing it, the skin must go to the chief.

224 The *ant-eater (mpandana or sambane)* digs large holes in the ground. This is the method used by hunters to kill it. They send their dog into the hole, which is horizontal. The animal is inside, sleeping behind a protective wall of earth ; the dog pierces this wall and attacks it in its retreat. In the mean time the hunter digs a hole from above, some distance in front of the spot where

the ant-eater was sleeping. Attacked by the dog, the sambana 224
begins to burrow deeper into the earth; it reaches the spot where the hunter has dug his hole and tries to escape through this; but seeing that a man is waiting for it there, it suddenly turns back and returns to the opening of its burrow, where it is easily killed, notwithstanding the hard scales which cover its body.

Conclusion on the nuru idea and the lurulula rite.

I once asked old Makhani, the hunter who had suffered from an 775
attack of insanity because he had slain an enemy: "What is the nuru?" He burst out laughing, and this was the only answer I could get from him. I suppose an uneducated peasant of any European country would do the same if he were abruptly asked: "What is the soul?" An ethnologist, however, cannot rest satisfied with this avowal of ignorance or this utter want of interest. He must try to find an explanation, and some sort of an explanation is always likely to be found when we are dealing with beliefs which are not purely individual but which belong to a community.

The *nuru* (pl. miluru)—to sum up all the above accounts (see also I. 769
p. 478)—is a peculiar power possessed by man and by several wild 775
animals in virtue of which they avenge themselves on the person who 783
has killed them. This power resides in their body and appears to pass 825
out of it through their nostrils with their last breath. The fact of having killed a person or an animal *possessing the nuru* places the slayer in a state of dangerous contamination. It would sometimes appear as if the nuru had entered into him and remained sleeping in him, ready to awake in certain circumstances (I. p. 400). The danger connected with the nuru must be overcome by a special treatment; if this is not done, the nuru will cause an attack of madness and may even do great harm to the family of the slayer or hunter.

Let us try to go a step further in our analysis by putting the following 769
question: What is the relation between the *nuru* and the *shikwembu*, 775
first in relation to man, and secondly, as regards animals?

As regards man, we know that, for the Bantus, every human being at his death turns into a *shikwembu* and becomes an ancestor-god for his descendants and a hostile spirit as regards his former enemies. The shikwembu, roughly speaking, is the ghost of a deceased person. This

which definitely believes that the animal becomes a shikwembu 775
(muzhimu). 2) When a person commits a murder, the ghost of the 826
deceased takes possession of the murderer, at least temporarily. Possession, amongst the Ba-Ila, is thus directly connected with murder. So far for the Ba-Ila. It is to be hoped that information as to other tribes will throw further light on the problem of the relation between nuru and ghost.

Considering the question only as it involves the Thongas I come 775
to the following provisional conclusion: The nuru idea is no doubt 783
very ancient, dating perhaps from a time when Animism was not 825
yet clearly distinguished from Dynamism, and when man was not even greatly differenciated from the animal. It originated in the instinctive fear which primitive man felt after shedding the blood of his fellow men and of certain particularly redoutable wild animals. This blood must be avenged (Compare the old saying of Genesis IV, 10: The voice of thy brother's blood cries unto me from the ground. The vendetta custom which is so wide-spread is a further consequence of this natural feeling). Hence a peculiar remorse and the conviction that purification is necessary to remove the contamination involved or the malediction incurred. This remorse is absent in the case of domestic animals. For this reason the buffalo has no nuru; as my informant said: "The buffalo is an ox." Why does the shedding of ox-blood cause no fear? Probably because oxen are considered as the lawful property of their owner, who has the right of killing them, whilst the men of another tribe and the animals of the bush do not belong to him.

The *lurulula rite* above all is a *protective* rite aimed at the removal of 224
this dangerous nuru. This is proved etymologically by the fact that 775
this verb is a doubly reversive derivative. It comes from the root *luru* 783
to which is added twice the reversive suffix *ula* which means to remove, 826
to take away (Compare my Shangaan Grammar § 208). The blowing over (huhutela), which is a part of the rite, means the same thing. It is a magical proceeding which is often employed in order to combat hostile spirits or influences. But the lurulula has still another meaning for the professional hunters who so eagerly practise it: It is *a means of identification of the hunter with the animal world*, so that he will be able to live in its midst without being noticed and so kill more game. As my Ronga informant says: "By this operation the hunter takes upon himself the defilement of the animal (its smell, its nature) so that the other hippopotami, when they see him, mistake him for one of themselves; this man will therefore have great courage and will not run away when

224 they come to him." For this reason hunters strongly assert that should
775 he neglect to perform the rite he will have no success in his future
783 hunting expeditions. A third aim, at least in the case of hippopotamus-
825 hunting, is to overcome the charms of the wizards who ride upon them.

When studying these old hunting rites I had the impression of living for some hours in close contact with primitive humanity, at a time when man, owing to the elementary character of the weapons at his disposal, was almost on the same level as the wild beast and was obliged to display an enormous amount of courage, skill and endurance in order to assert his domination over the animal world and to make it serve his purposes. Since the discovery of gun powder and modern weapons a new era has set in for the hunter. Did not old Viguet assert that now, when an elephant is killed by means of a gun, the nuru is no longer to be feared? Hunting has become for the Bantu of to-day an amusing sport, more profitable indeed but by no means so interesting!

II. *Psinyama-nyamana. The flesh of small animals.*

136 This word which comes from the well-known Bantu word
262 nyama, meat, is a triple diminutive, obtained by the reduplication of the stem, the prefix *psi*, and the suffix *ana*. It means all kinds of food derived from animals of small size, of which the Thongas are very fond.

Anything in any way resembling meat is welcome to them. Amongst Mammalia they specially enjoy certain kinds of rodents, not the domestic rats, but field mice called maphephe and mabuti which boys catch in their traps. Civet cats (nsimba, yi-tin) and wild cats (goya, dji-ma) are not frequently seen near the villages.

136 As regards birds, they eat them all with the few exceptions
222 which I shall shortly mention, from the tiniest sparrow to ducks
262 and Guinea fowls, which they manage to snare. They have no aversion to the lower types of animal : they collect the *matomane*, large caterpillars belonging to a species of Saturnidae called Cirina similis (Dist), which are found in families on the nkanye tree, during October. By the exercise of a gentle pressure on the hideous creatures, the inside is squeezed out, and the rest is thrown

Hlangwini wa ka Shitlholane; hi ba ka Nkandamuri; hi ba ka Manyubele ni Mbowo; hi ba ka Gidjigidji, ba tilo. —. Akane ka psitjanga! Lomu akobeni mi ta muka hi kona... 614 553

Hlangwini of (the house of) Shitlholane; we are of (the house of) Nkandamuri; we are of (the house of) Manyubele and Mbowo; we are of (the house of) Gidjigidji, the people of Heaven. —. Build (your huts) on the hills. In the valley you will have to leave (?)

It would seem that these Hlangwinis are a clan of rain-makers, people having the power of Heaven. They advise others to settle on the hills and not in the valleys, because otherwise their huts would be swept away by the floods, owing to the terrible rains which the Hlangwinis have the power of causing to fall.

The second is not very refined, but is characteristic. Erotic allusions are frequent in those formulae :

Nkuna wa Mabutane; mabuta, ba yi bonile ku basa ka yona.
Nkuna of Mabutane; when wooing a girl, he has seen that she was pure.

Mabutane is probably a surname of Nkuna. There is in this formula a play on the word buta which means to woo (I. p. 101). Before choosing a girl, the ancestor first made sure that she was untouched ; this denotes a species of wisdom which his descendants still boast of to-day! 553

In epic poetry may be included also the *pshiphato*, a Zulu expression which means the laudatory sentence with which warriors praise themselves according to the Zulu fashion. Private individuals, and even women sometimes have their shiphato ; for instance a girl bearing the name of Yandea will glorify herself in these words : Yendea, madjaha! Yendea, the young men! This formula does not throw a very favourable light on the habits of the girl, and scarcely belongs to literature!

A more elaborate product of Thonga poetry is found in the *hunting songs*. I have already mentioned these (p. 60) and here give as a typical example the Elephant's song. I have been told by my informant, Zebedea Mbenyana, a Native of Bilen, that the hunters performed it whilst dancing on the body of the enormous beast, after having transfixed it. 533 224 115 539

1st Strophe.

533 They march in single file, the Elephants, the mighty ones,
224 They go to slake their thirst.
539

Antistrophe.

Let us go too! They're drinking amongst the thickets! Hurrah

2nd Strophe.

Hark! the smothered roarings in the forest.

Antistrophe.

'Tis a grand sound, the roaring in the forest. Hurrah!

3rd Strophe.

The crying of the elephant, the mother! 'Tis she who calls the hunters to the thickets.

Antistrophe.

Hurrah! 'tis she who calls the hunters! Ho! Hurrah!

4th Strophe.

Yonder's the one with ears so large and drooping.

Antistrophe.

Hurrah! the big-eared one has just passed us. Hurrah!

5th Strophe.

The boys are there; the sound of knives being sharpened, there from the spot where the elephant lies slain.

Antistrophe.

Hurrah! the sound of knives being sharpened. Hurrah!

This composition certainly exhibits wonderful poetic power and grandeur, describing marvellously the emotions of the courageous band, who have finally succeeded in obtaining the precious tusks of the elephant, and vast quantities of meat. This song of triumph is worthy of a place amongst the best productions of the Muse of primitive races.

195 To the imaginative mind of the Bantu everything that causes a deep impression, even material objects, affords an occasion for the utterance of lofty phrases and words of praise. Once when travelling south of Delagoa Bay through the desert, our party arrived in the neighbourhood of the Umbelozi railway. The

136 Sparrows. *Mbawulwane* (yin-tin), (Mpf.) or *Mbeulwane* (Kho. Nku.) swallow. *Psikidyana* (Spel. Mal.). *Tinhwana* (Mpf. Bil.). *Tinkata* (Kho.). *Nkapa* (mu-mi) (Mpf.). *Nsongwana*, (Mpf.). *Nhlekwana*, *Tshamatisa*, *Shindjengeletana* (Mpf. Nku.). *Nadwangafolen* (mu-ba) (Mpf.). *Ñwamutjalatana* (mu-ba) (Mpf.). *Lidjadjana*, (Spel. Mal.). *Timhatana* (Mpf.). *Tinhelwa* (Mpf.). *Ngodzi* (Spel. Mal.). *Khwezu*, *Kololwana*, etc., *Sowa* (dji-ma), sparrow.

Creepers, *Gongondjwane*, lit. the one who knocks. *Shitjemahangala* (Mal.). *Munywane* (Mal.). *Ngobo* (Nku). *Hokwe*, *Ndhlazi*, *Nkoro*.

Rapaces. *Gama* (dji-ma) eagle. *Khoti* (dji-ma) vulture. *Shikotana*, *Mangapfi*, *Shimungu*, *Shihunumu*, (Mpf.), or *Khukhunu* (Kho. Mal.). *Shikotlwane*, *Hwati*, *Fukwana* (dji-ma). *Manhengana*, etc.

Runners. *Yintjya* (yin-tin), ostrich.

125 Some birds are the objects of superstitious ideas. First, the mythical lightning bird whose story has been told p. 313. Then the Mampfana, the one who stops travellers (I. p. 339), and the Nhlalala. The *Nhlalala* is the honey-bird. It is a little sparrow of a greyish colour. When a traveller crosses the uninhabited country, it calls his attention by emitting short and repeated cries ; it jumps from one branch to another and does not rest until it has induced the traveller to follow it. It then leads him to a hollow stem where bees have gathered honey. The fortunate wayfarer can eat to his heart's content and afterwards gives the bird the wax. If he desires to be shown a second tree, he has only to burn the wax : the nhlalala not having had its full share of the treat will lead him to another stem, hoping for another chance ; there is so much honey in the second spot that you will certainly leave some for your kind guide! Such are some of the stories told by a boy named Pikinini about the honey-bird.

224 *Mammalia*. My information, on this subject, is far from complete. One ought to join a Native hunting party, and hear the hunters tell their mighty deeds round the fire in the evening, if one wishes to acquire all their knowledge and learn all their queer ideas about the beasts of the bush, which they have carefully observed, and regarding which a great number of stories are in circulation (p. 63-76).

782 To these words is generally added an invocation to the medicine-
756 man's gods, who are entreated to bless the drugs they have given
to their descendant, and to join with the traveller's gods in order
484 to insure his success in this undertaking. The decoction is then used to wash the body of the young man. He will pay the fee on his return home.

224 *Offerings of Hunters.* This is called *byalwa bya ngenge*; the beer
782 of ngenge. This beer is made of maize grains which have been crushed but not softened by long steeping in water, as is generally
273 done in brewing ; they are then reduced to flour ; some water is poured on this and it is offered in that form by the head hunter, all his companions standing near him. They must start at once ; there is therefore no time to brew proper beer.

484 *Offerings of Travellers.* These also have their particular mhamba,
782 which is called *Lehika.* It consists of water alone which the officiant takes in his mouth and spits out, saying : "*Pff!*" (amongst the Hlengwes : "*Phaaa*"). "My ancestor-gods! May I find no difficulty
578 on my road, etc." This *water offering* is also made by a headman
782 whose village is troubled by endless disputes. The way of bringing them to an end is not clear. So he entreats his gods to "open the road, pfula ndlela," so that all hearts may be relieved. This will help him to "herd his village, ku byisa muti." The idea of finding a road clearly accounts for the fact that this offering is made under two sets of circumstances so different from one another. Why water is used to attain this end I do not know.

The offerings hitherto described bear a more or less individual character. Let us now consider those which are in direct relation to the life of the family.

782 *Regular Family Sacrifices.* We have seen these performed in
842 connection with the most important events in life. At the *weaning* (I. p. 58, this might however be termed a medical sacrifice), *on the marriage day*, either publicly, as amongst the Ronga clans (I. p. 110), or privately, by the bride's father alone, as is the custom amongst the Nkunas (I. p. 118). The gods are entreated to give the newly married woman "timbeleko," births, i. e., children, as it seems that the power of begetting depends directly
000 on the gods. Regular acts of worship are performed also at the

524 of the sun. One girl approaches it, and claps her hands under its nose, singing in a monotonous tone :

> Gala-gala, hana-hana nhloko !
> Big lizard, lift up, lift up your head !

It seems that the lizard is so fascinated by the song that he stretches his neck and swings his head to and fro during the whole time that the girl claps her hands.

524 To the *crabs*, which are very numerous in the slime on the 136 sea-shore, and have only one claw, coloured green, violet or enamel 226 blue, they sing :

> Ba ka mphembemuiwe, tlakula silawuto !
> Come along, you animals with only one claw ! Lift it up and bring it down again.

The little girls who go hunting crabs as a condiment for their food assured me that, on hearing this song, the crustaceans do come out of their holes, and that the harvest is then a large one.

When an *owl*, mistaking the time, comes out of her hiding place at noon, she is received with applause, and they sing to her :

> Shikotana, gaulela fole !
> Owl ! flap your wings ! You will find tobacco !

524 Another girls' game, which is wide-spread, and in which the young Thongas acquire great proficiency is called : *ku tha buhlolo*. They take a string tied at both ends so as to form a large ring, and make all kinds of complicated figures by twisting it with their fingers and even with their lips. I have made a drawing of some of them. Girls compete together and try to surpass each other in inventing new figures. They teach each other this *buhlolo*.

Another old game, which is found under various forms in a great number of countries, is the *mathakisana*, knuckle bones. Girls gather stones of the nkanye fruit (tinfula), dig a hole, and put them into it. One of them takes a kind of ball (shigungu), perhaps a small sala fruit or any other fruit. She throws it in the air and, in the meantime, takes out of the hole four or five stones and puts them back, leaving only one outside. This stone is then

834 They must not enter the hut of a person dangerously ill ; this would
784 hasten his death. People who are just recovering from a disease, when
581 they walk about on the paths, must tie around their ankles the root
829 called sungi, which will protect them against the perspiration or
753 emanation left by married people in their footprints, because, as one of my informants said, "ba-ku-khila ba hisa," viz. married people are hot.

834 Moreover not only individuals but the whole social life would be
836 endangered if sexual relations took place when the community itself is
581 in a critical position. They are prohibited therefore in wartime, during
829 the whole duration of hunting parties, and also during the marginal periods. Strange to say, this law does not apply so severely to unmarried boys and girls amusing themselves according to the "shigango" custom (p. 97). It seems that it is not the act in itself which is tabooed, but the act in as much as it is accomplished by regularly married people ; in this case only has it a bearing on the life of the community.

What is the reason of these prohibitions ? "Married people are hot." What does this aphorism mean ? The following rite may help us to understand it.

831 In the Malulcke country, when the whole population enters a lake
834 to kill fish according to the tjeba custom (Part IV. Chap. I), a little boy
226 and a little girl are chosen and laid down under a lion's skin, as if they
829 were husband and wife, and told to remain very quiet during all the time
789 the grown up people are fishing. Not knowing anything about sexual
771 intercourse, they will obey ; then the fish also will keep quiet and will be killed easily. Why ? Because there is in the sexual act something wild, fierce, passionate which, according to the law of correspondance which is at the base of all Bantu magic, has an influence on the hostile forces : these will be excited and more difficult to overcome : enemies in battle, the animals of the bush during hunting and fishing parties, disease, danger of contamination at death and during the marginal periods. Life is, so to speak accelerated by the sexual act, and this acceleration is communicated to the whole of Nature. Therefore : Keep quiet, be continent!

This profound conception of life also explains why so often certain actions must be accomplished by children, not yet able to have sexual relations, or by old women who no longer practise them.

Let us remark that all these rites do not belong to Animism, properly speaking, but to Dynamism (Part VI. Chap. I), which plays a part almost as important as Animism in Bantu primitive philosophy.

262 were shrimps in it, he disdainfully refused to take his share. — "We
784 are Ba-Ngoni! We do not eat fish," he said with disgust. First, shrimps are not fish ; he was "plus royaliste que le roi!" Second, he did not abstain from the sauce because it had an unpleasant flavour ; it was more tasty than ever! But the *social idea* dictated his attitude. He boasted of belonging to a superior race. He was not like these wretched Ba-Thonga who eat fish! It would be lowering himself to partake of such a meal, so he preferred to fast.

I witnessed the same scene when we were distributing cakes to our school children in Lourenço Marques. One of the girls was the daughter of a pure Ronga woman and an Indian Mussulman. She inquired if the cakes had been cooked with lard. The cakes were excellent, and she found them so, nevertheless she refused to eat them if they contained lard, because her father was not allowed to eat pork. It is evident that there is but one step from this clan repulsion, which is still a nyenya, to a definite taboo. Let the boy or girl *fear* that some evil will happen to them, because they have transgressed a sacred rule, and the nyenya will become a yila. Let it be admitted by them that the transgression of the rule may bring death to the family or the clan, and the primitive individual feeling of disgust will be transformed into the most severe collective taboo. I can quote no instance in proof of this evolution, as we have no knowledge of the past history of the taboos. From the psychological point of view, however, this process is quite within the range of possibility.

III. *Fishing.*

226 There are no particular restrictions to fishing so long as it is
821 carried on by *hooks*. Any one can go with his boat on the river, the lake, or the sea, and throw his line into the water. The fisherman will then say : "Thu! (not the sacramental tsu, but only an onomatopœia describing the fall of the hook into the water). You! my hook! they eat to their heart's content, people who dwell yonder, where they pound their mealies kneeling down (bugimamusi), there where the khwekhwe and the mhulu are, etc. (names of different kinds of fish)." Afterwards the fisher throws a pinch of tobacco on the spot where his hook

fell, not as an offering to the gods, but in order to help his hook 226
to see (hanyanyisa), to awaken it and "give it eyes to catch." This 821
sentence referring to the place "where people pound their mealies standing, or kneeling down," is an allusion to a curious cosmographic notion, which we shall explain later on (Part VI. Chap. I). Seeing the sky reflected in the water, the fisherman thinks of the ends of the earth, where heaven rests on the ground, and where women are obliged to kneel down when crushing their mealies, lest their pestles hit the sky!

There are three other principal methods of fishing, and, as they 226
are more or less of a collective nature, they are regulated by 784
laws and attended with taboos : the nhangu, the shibaba and the tjeba.

The *nhangu* is a triangular enclosure made of sticks stuck in the sand on the seashore. This enclosure has an opening looking seaward. The tide covers the nhangu, bringing with it all kinds of denizens of the sea, big lobsters, shrimps of all sizes, fish, etc ; when it retires, all these creatures are imprisoned in the nhangu, and try to find their way out through the opening ; this however is closed, and the fishers collect their catch, which is sometimes considerable. A man who wishes to build a nhangu must pay a tax to the chief of the country. During the operation he must observe the law of silence ; if anyone should speak to him, he must not answer. When the nhangu is ready he goes straight to his hut, and washes his hands, and then he can speak again. Should he transgress this taboo, the fish will rush about wildly in the trap and he will be unable to catch it. This is not a *kunga* proper (I. p. 124) but only another application of the rule imposed for example on the wife of the hippopotamus-hunter (II. p. 69). On the day of inauguration, (khangula), all the inhabitants have the right to come and partake of the result of the first fishing. This is a *luma*, the luma of the nhangu. The owner of the trap is not allowed to take a single fish home that day. Everything must be consumed on the spot.

The *shibaba* is another kind of trap, made of woven reeds, 226
which is placed on the banks of a river, of the Nkomati, for 834
instance, near the sea, within the tidal reach ; when the tide is

low, the fish is imprisoned between the reeds and the bank. 226
The construction of this trap is governed by strict laws : no 834
sexual relation is allowed during the five or six weeks of the fishing. The owner of the shibaba must cut the first reed. Women must not approach the spot. On the day of inauguration there is also a luma ceremony similar to that for the nhangu.

But the most curious fishing custom is the *tjeba*. "Ku tjeba" 226
means to kill fish in company in lakes which are drying up. At the end of the winter most of the small lakes scattered all over Thongaland, get smaller on account of the drought, and the fish they contain, consisting mostly of carp and barbel, are obliged to congregate in much smaller spaces. Natives take advantage of this and the whole country-side is summoned to go and tjeba, on a certain day, as it is important to be as numerous as possible in order to ensure success. The chief orders all his men to make *shiranga*, a kind of conical basket, a foot and a half high, whose upper end is open and wide enough to admit the hand. The shiranga must be very strong ; the tree used for the purpose is called ntjangari. When the shiranga are ready, a messenger is 202
sent to all the villages, crying : 226
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> Kho ! Khoooo ! Hobe ! Hobeee ! U yala nsateeee ! Na nsati a randja nyamooo ! A randja mihlubeee ! Kho ! Hobe !
> You hate your wife ! Your wife also is fond of flesh food ! She is fond of the flesh of the tail of fishes !

Every male member of the tribe must answer to this summons by going to the shore. Should he refuse the call, he is blamed and despised, and his companions will sing to him a mocking song :

> U yala ku tjeba, nyañhwaku !
> You refuse to fish, nyañhwaku (1).

In the evening his wife will scold him, on seeing that he brings no fish home! She will punish him by giving him mealie pap without any sauce!

Before the throng enters the lake, someone must *make an* 226
offering ; he must be a descendant of the inhabitants of the country. 782

(1) Nyañhwaku is a formula of insult (I. p. 445).

not necessarily a member of the reigning family. He does not perform the full sacramental *tsu* ; he merely spits without having put anything into his mouth, and says : "Let fish abound! Let them not hide in the mud! Let there be enough of them to satisfy every one." Then all the men, quite naked, throw themselves into the lake, which is only one or two feet deep ; they put their shiranga into the water and hold it firmly down on the bottom ; a fish has perhaps been caught ; it is heard flapping

The tjeba fishing. *Phot. A. Borel.*

about inside the basket. The lucky fisherman seizes it through the opening. He carries a wooden pin to which a string is attached ; this string is called by the technical name of *ntjungwa*. He passes the pin through the gills of the fish and ties it on his string. Then he goes on fishing. All his companions do the same. The frightened fish scatter in all directions : but on all sides the shiranga fall over them, and the men have soon made a good haul. When they have reached the extremity of the lake, they come back shouting the following words : "Phindu-na-ye!" —"Come back, following them!" They are allowed when tired to come out of the water and rest in the rays of the sun. The more pertinacious, however, remain in as long as they like. When

when

226 the fishing is finished, they all sit down and compare their catches.
651 Perhaps an enormous barbel has been caught, "the king of the lake," as these fish sometimes attain a very large size. "Woo! a dle ñhwakwe!" — "Oh! he has killed his mother," say the men, making fun of the fortunate fisherman! But the chief sends an induna who levies the tax. Each fisherman unties one fish from his string and gives it to him.

226 The tjeba fishing is practised all over Thongaland, in Ronga
782 territory, where such ponds are numerous in the sandy hollows, amongst the Hlabis, and in the neighbourhood of rivers where there are lagoons which dry up, as far as the Maluleke country. Should there be crocodiles in the pond, which may very well happen when the lake is connected with the Limpopo or the Nkomati, the religious ceremony is more important on account of the danger incurred. Then the bones are thrown and declare who must make the offering in order to secure adequate protection from the ancestor-gods. The officiator enters the lake first, and, plunging his shiranga into the water, says : "If you are here, crocodile, go away! you hyena, do not bite." Amongst the Maluleke, a man of the Ba-Nyai tribe must perform the religious ceremony, as the Ba-Nyai were in the country before the Thongas. He must go first and catch a fish, bring it out alive, and then, surrounded by his fellow Ba-Nyai, offer it to his ancestor-gods. Then he throws it back into the water. The Thonga chief, having ordered his men to keep silence, then makes the following proclamation in a loud voice : "Let the fish abound, and kill them all, but do not bewitch each other!"

226 The Hlengwes have a very curious custom which I have already
825 explained when discussing the Bantu notion of sexual relations
834 (I. p. 189). When they *tjeba* they take a little boy and a little girl, and lay them down together under a lion's skin, as if they were husband and wife, during all the time that they are fishing. The children keep quiet, — so the fish will also keep quiet and not swim away. When the fishing is concluded, these children are "awakened," and are given a part of the catch : they are praised and thanked, as they are supposed to have secured the fish by their action... or rather by their inaction! This very significant

rite may explain why sexual relations are prohibited during all 226
important hunting and fishing operations. With their magic 825
conception of Nature, Bantus do not separate the domain of man 834
from the animal world ; human actions have their immediate effect amongst animals. So if men and women keep strict control over themselves, hippopotami, fish or elephants will not be so wild, and hunters will have more success!

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* *

Meat is either boiled (pseka), or roasted (wosha). When 252
boiled, the broth is called *muru*, (Ro.) or *sheshebo*, (Dj.) the same name that is given to monkey nut sauce or any other seasoning. When roasted, it is either placed on the embers, or skewered on sticks (lihanga) and exposed to the heat of the fire.

The blood of animals (bubendje) is also eaten by most men. 262
However, many fear it (tshaba), not on account of a yila, as if it were taboo, but rather from individual loathing. There are no special laws to be observed as regards bones. The meat of sacrifices, offered in the funeral rites, must be eaten *on the road*, not in the mortuary nor in the guests' villages, as we have already seen.

Meat is welcome, and eagerly sought after in time of famine 262
(ndlala). Should the October rains fail, or the crops be destroyed 731
by grasshoppers, as has been, alas, frequently the case since the [136]
first appearance of these pests in August 1894 (1), the Natives are bereft of every resource (2). They dig up all the edges of the

(1) Just at the commencement of the war between the Natives and the Portuguese, grasshoppers arrived in thick clouds in the district of Lourenço Marques. They had not been seen for a great number of years: old folk only recollected having seen them in bygone times. Since then the scourge has never entirely disappeared. The coincidence of their coming and the beginning of hostilities struck the Blacks very forcibly; they often said, at the sight of the grasshoppers: "They announce the armies of Gungunyana."

(2) Here is a pretty couplet with reference to famine:

Nkondjo wa nhlengana shipopokwana ?

— Lembe ra ndlala a he ngume kusuhe !

The traces of the little antelope (nhlengana) (which one sees in the desert a long way from its lair) recall the year of famine, when one does not stay near home ; (one must go a long way to search for food). See also the several allusions to the year of famine in *Les Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, p. 158, 160 et seq.

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862 842 see that conception has taken place before the child is weaned, they will hasten the ceremony. But they will be severely judged by the old people. Should the little one be sick, the husband will be scolded by the parents of the mother. They will say : "A djambeli ñwana," he has caused damage to the child! If a man forces his wife to transgress the law, she will run during the night to the hut of her husband's father to tell him. Actually this is a very rare occurrence. Children follow each other regularly at an interval of two and a half or three years, and seldom is the law transgressed which says : A mother must nurse her child during three "hoes," viz. three ploughing seasons.

B. CHILDHOOD

591 861 857 The infant, shiputja (Ro.) shihlangi (Dj.) is on the way to become a boy, mufana. During the first years of this period, which extends from the third to the fourteenth year, he stays with his grandparents. They do not give him much "education." He grows at Mother Nature's good pleasure. And as Nature is not always synonymous with morality, he sometimes commits bad actions. Sometimes also, fearing chastisement for a particularly wicked deed, he flees from the kraal of the grandparents and goes home, where the paternal hand will hold him a little more firmly. But the father does not bother much with these little boys and they enjoy an immense amount of liberty. These years are perhaps the happiest of their whole life. They spend their time in the following occupations : herding the goats, stealing, catching game, learning the science of the velt, playing.

1) Herding the goats.

231 Just as the Kaffir corn is the old Thonga cereal which is used alone in the rites, so the goat is the domestic animal par excellence, no doubt the first which the tribe knew and that which is always employed in the sacrifices. Goats are very common ; everybody

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possesses one or two. They are kept together in one of the villages and the sons of the master of the village or of the other proprietors must tend them. They "stay with the goats" (tjhama timbutin) till their tenth or eleventh year and afterwards they are promoted to the care of the oxen, supposing there are oxen in the village.

The young goatherds, with hardly anything on—a meagre

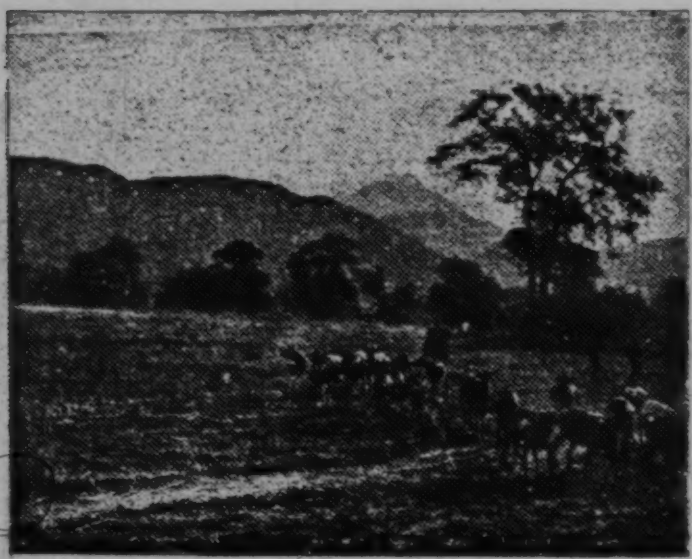

Photo. H.-A. Junod.

Boys herding goats on the Shilovane plain
(In the background, the Mamowiti mountain).

belt of tails or bits of skin hanging from their loins, sometimes only in front, nothing behind,—go to the veld playing on their little trumpets, made of a bone or a reed. They pass by the gardens, and the goats look with one eye at the green mealies, the fresh leaves of the sweet potatoes which are not protected by stone walls, (there is hardly a stone all over the Thonga country) nor by barbed wire fences. But the boys are on the watch and

231 "cut the road" from the goats (tjemetela) to keep them away
857 from the gardens. They safely reach the little plain where
867 nothing but hard Gramineae grow. There the boys begin to play, having handed over the charge of the goats to the youngest of the party. The little chap gets tired of watching ; little by little the whole herd goes back to the forbidden garden and eats greedily of the savoury stems of the mealies! After a while, the boys discover that the goats are gone. They run after them, and bring them back. But the mistress of the garden passes near by, coming back from the well with her pitcher on her head. She sees the harm done, inspects the traces of the goats, knows by them which herd has plundered her field, uproots some of the spoiled stems and with great clamour goes to the village of the guilty boys and throws down the mealies right before the hut of the father. No compensation is claimed in such a case, generally, but the father will thrash the boys when they come back ; or should there be a recurrence of the offence, the husband of the owner of the garden will himself administer a correction to the careless goatherds.

827 Boys herding the goats have certain customs. When one of
857 them emits a certain unseemly sound from the rectum, the others say to him : "Fakisa !" He must answer : "Cita munyakanya goben." (I have let out my wind by the rectum). This formula, which is Zulu, is secret. If he does not know it, they beat him and make him look after the goats till the end of the day. Should another boy reveal the answer to the uninitiated, they will punish him in the same way.

2) Stealing.

685 What were they doing when the goats escaped ? They had
857 probably themselves succeeded in stealing some sweet potatoes and were roasting them on a little fire, well hidden in the velt. Or they had discovered in the bush a broken pot, an old disused and perforated mortar, which some one had placed there to attract bees. And indeed there was honey inside. They had stolen it... Goatherds are regular thieves and known as such.

when he has brought his

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second wife, he will build for her also a hut of the same type. But this second hut, the third, and the fourth which may come afterwards, will not be erected in a straight row like a street. They will form an arc, which will be prolonged so as to constitute first a semi-circle and then a complete circle, if a sufficient number of buildings are added. This is the ideal of the black man, to

Phot. H. Grau

Ndjakandjaka, a headman of Spelonken, with his men.

become the lord and master of a complete circular village. Most of the men do not realise this ideal. Three or four huts, a wretched quarter of a circle is all that they attain to! Some, better armed for the struggle of life, or more favoured by circumstances, succeed in closing their circle. Their cattle, for which they have also built a circular enclosure right in the middle of the square of the village, multiply and are not carried off by peripneumonia and hematuria,

765 anointed with the medicine. As regards adults, the operation of
783 *maganyo* is performed as follows ; the master of the mourning
516 passes his hand down from the knee to the toes. This rite[1] is evidently in connexion with the act of walking, which is thus purified, and with standing upright (yima), which means health and strength.

765 *Cutting the hair* is also a medicinal act amongst the Hlabis.
783 The physician takes a broken pot, pours into it water and a
302 purifying powder, washes the head of the deceased's wife with this preparation and cuts her hair with a razor. Everyone takes a little of the mixture and washes his own head, and they then shave each other. The hair is thrown away into the bush, not on the grave.

765 The Great Mourning is concluded by the *phunga*, the sprinkling,
783 corresponding to the Ronga *shuba*, which is performed exactly in
177 the same way while the water is still boiling. The doctor sprinkles
231 a whole potful on the people ; then he pours fresh water into the pot and sprinkles the doors, the back part of the kraals of the oxen and of the goats. —"How about the pigs ?" I asked Viguet. He laughed heartily! —"The pigs? They are nothing ! They have come from the White people They are so new to the country that lately the Pedis killed them outside the villages and the men only ate their flesh!" The pig has no part in the Bantu ritual!

V. *Sexual rites of purification.*

765 This is a most curious and mysterious subject and, to understand
783 it thoroughly, it is necessary to penetrate deeply into the Bantu mind and to forget our own conceptions of conjugal life. I hope
834 none of my readers will be shocked by ceremonies which are evidently performed with the greatest earnestness and are a real aspiration toward purity, purity as it is conceived by a tribe still plunged in the dim notions of collective morality.

1 [among the Northern clans --Analyst]

E. THE LOBOLA CUSTOM.

I. *The History of the Custom. How it is practised.*

436 583 439 As far back as Natives can remember, lobola has always been practised. First it consisted of *mats* and *baskets*, in those remote times when white people had not yet made their appearance. *Large iron rings* were procured by barter from sailors who anchored off the shore (see Part IV), and were employed for the purpose. Later on white traders settled in the country. *Beads* were bought from them (nkarara), especially large ones (mubatlwana). A chief used to lobola with ten handfuls of these, a subject with only five. Large *brass rings* were also used in old times. Two of them have been found lately in the Maputju country, and one came into my possession. It weighs more than two pounds. They were called *litlatla* and were very much sought after. One was enough to buy a wife.

436 583 *Oxen* have also been used for a very long time for lobola. Some say that they were the regular means of getting a wife in the 18th century. When Manukosi came, in 1820, he appropriated all the cattle, and the Thongas were obliged to use beads and hoes for that reason. At any rate the Nkunas, when they emigrated into the Transvaal in 1835, were paying lobolo in oxen. A father claimed ten for his daughter. The Pedis of the country claimed only two or three, and this was one of the reasons why 436 583 231 the two tribes did not intermarry. Strange to say, I never heard goats mentioned as having served for this purpose, though the goat is certainly the oldest domestic animal of the South African Bantus! Whatever may have been the objects first used, sooner or later oxen, live stock, became the usual means of lobola. This appears plainly in the technical expressions : to go out with a herd (ntlhambi), viz., to go to lobola,—to eat the oxen, viz., to accept a lobolo,—the woman of my oxen, viz., the one bought with the oxen given by me for my wife, etc.

231 436 583 177 The scarcity of oxen, probably caused by the wars with the Zulus, was no doubt the reason why they were replaced by hoes. *Hoes* were universally employed from 1840-1870, together with oxen, when available. Ten was the regular price for lobola. Later on fathers asked twenty, thirty, fifty. They were first of native make ; the Vendas of Spelonken, near the Iron Mountain, provided the whole tribe for a time with that heavy currency, until the Europeans saw that there was good business to be done by supplying them. (See Part IV). Portuguese traders of Delagoa Bay began to send Natives to Gaza with guns and powder to hunt elephants, and paid them in hoes : twenty, fifty, one hundred hoes for a tusk, according to its size.

436 177 583 464 But hoes have also been superseded by the universal power of the *pound sterling*. After the death of Manukosi (1858), early in the sixties of the last century, some Zulus came to Delagoa Bay from Natal, sent by Englishmen to hunt elephants in Gaza. They told the people of the country that money could be obtained in Pietermaritzburg (Umgundhlovo) by working, and the first Ba-Ronga went *ku berengen*, viz., to serve white people there. In 1870, in the year still called Daiman by the chroniclers of the tribe, many more went to Kimberley, especially from the Transvaal colonies of Thongas, and gold coin began to spread amongst the tribe with all its usefulness and all its dangers. It is now becoming more and more current, as from 50,000 to 70,000 Natives of the Thonga tribe are working in the Johannesburg mines. First of all £ 1 was worth ten hoes, and the lobolo money was fixed at £ 8 by the chiefs. But this price was soon considered insufficient by the parents. They wanted £ 10.10.0, ten guineas! They had already learned that, amongst cultivated people and in refined transactions, we talk of guineas and not of pounds! Later on it rose as high as £ 20 for an ordinary girl, £ 30 for a chief's daughter. The average round Lourenço Marques was £ 18 at the beginning of this century and in the Transvaal £ 25 (1). When a

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(1) There is a tendancy constantly to increase the amount of the lobolo. Nowadays it is nearer £ 30 than £ 20. In this connection I may mention the following fact. A man named Mpunzi had payed £ 28 for his wife, and the matter was looked on as concluded ; but later on his parents-in-law came to claim £ 2 more. Why? They had purchased a wife for their son and had obtained her for £ 28 ; it was all right so

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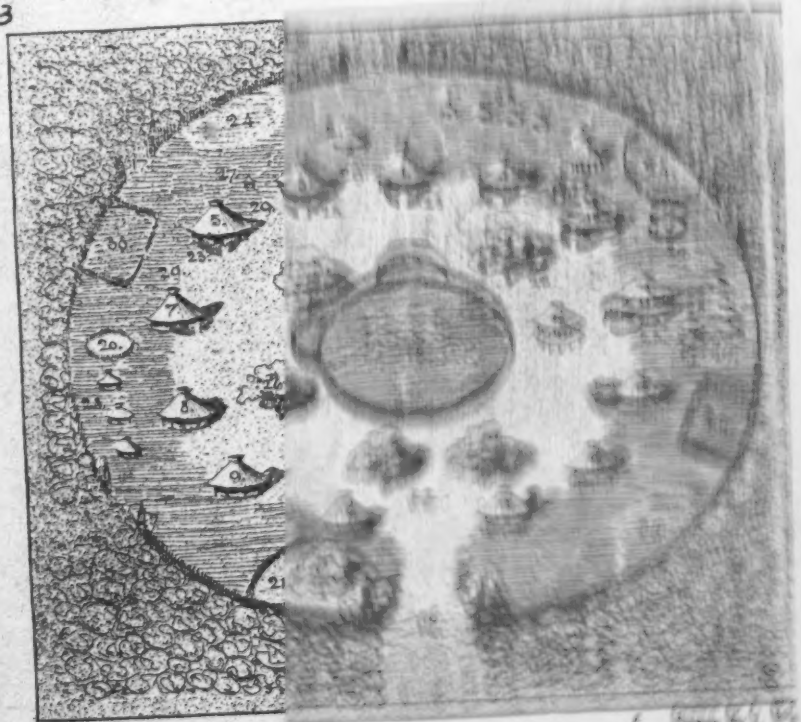
or *shibala* (Dj.) (18), the ox kraal, when the village possesses oxen. They are rar[illegible] now, plague and Texas fever having more than decimated the herds. Small enclosures at the sides



Plan of the Thonga village

1. Hut of the headman's [illegible] wife. 4. Of the third; 5. [illegible] brother. 9. Wife of third br[illegible] nephew. 13. Hut of a stran[illegible] 17. Back gates. 18. Oxen k[illegible] 22. Square of the village (hut[illegible] trees of the hubo. 27. Hemb[illegible]

are reserved for the calves, which are kept there when the cows go to feed during the afternoon. On the right a small hut, a conical roof supported by poles without a wall so as to let the

air circulate, is the goats' kraal (19). It may be placed somewhere else, behind the huts, for instance; or sometimes goats are tethered every night by the leg to sticks round the hubo. The pigs are never kept on the hubo, but always behind the hut: they are newcomers in the Thonga village and have hardly yet won their "droit de cité." Let us salute, as we pass by, the tree (25) which is, as we shall see, the mystical stem of the village. We may perhaps see, hanging upon it, a piece of clothing offered to the gods; or at its base a broken pot which is the *sandjeto*, the altar of the village. The *sandjeto* is often placed, by preference, among the poles of the main entrance on the right. The village tree, which has a ritual significance, is not to be confounded with the trees of the hubo (26), which are but *mimosa* shade-trees, under which the minor deeds are done of minor.

So we reach the main hut, which faces the gate. This is the dwelling of the headman. In front of it, the *sandjeto* and on it, the altar and on it the drums. It is called *mahanda*. Great amount, now, may assume a large kraal, like to build such a hut, which is smaller than the ordinary one and which is women's house. It is the headman's own hut, where people talk, eat, pay their homage to him; it is kind of office of the mayor of the village. The more there is of the summer, the wives to come to that place. But he generally prefers to keep in the wives' huts, one month in each, according to the seasonal cycle.

Behind it and to it is a whole, a chief for the complement. It is built, like the goats' kraal, without plaster walls, and is smaller than it is hut. There may be three or four of these in the village.

The headman and his wives occupy the back of the village. At the sides live his younger brothers, one, who has two wives, to 7 and 8, two others, those who have but one wife each, to 9 and to 10 respectively. To 11 lives a married son; to 12 it may be a nephew, son of the headman's sister, or a son-in-law; (see page 329). It might be the hut of a stranger (*mulubi*), who has asked permission to stay with the headman of the village, or to which to be under his protection. This one is not frequent, but may occur, and to avoid to be received into the mystic unity of the community, the man will have to "blanda ritule" (See page 199), together with all the other land of the kraal.

of desolation and of sorrow. (Remember Job and compare the rite of desolation and of sorrow.) (Remember Job and compare the rite of sangola bowumba, page 194.) The store houses, *pailanta* (Ro.), *pailoi* (D.S.), 28) are close by and are built in various forms; little huts with reed walls, when intended for the mealies, with plastered walls, when built to contain ground nuts or sorghum (*mudulu* (D.)). They are sometimes placed on a palm-tree floor resting on short poles, or they are suspended to the boughs of a

The interior of a Kongo village. (Northern)

Photo. A. Bunt

[illegible] *Bird houses* (Ro. 29) are to be found in the same region; sometimes they are placed even further in the forest on account of their offensive smell.

Middle forest, heaps of unburnt stones, broken mortars and decorated pottles lie about behind the huts. If anyone wants to keep the place tidy, he can plant aloe aquifer Ruwe (29), or *ulwanu*, or Chili pepper (*kichiri*). Pumpkin plants also sprout over all the thatches. Flowers of European origin are sometimes seen on the huts in the neighbourhood of Lowanza Mission, especially "everlastings", or the tropical periwinkle. Vines have

When goats have damaged somebody's garden, there is no fine to pay. The shepherds are whipped and the matter is thus concluded. Should the father of the boys, however, take their part and protect them with his weapons, he will be summoned to the tribunal of the chief and have to pay a fine of £ 5 or two or three goats.

Thonga Natives who have but a few head of cattle, are accustomed to entrust them to the care of neighbours possessing a large herd, in order to spare themselves the trouble of finding herding boys. There are some laws regulating this matter. If the owner of the cow, or the ox, or the goat, gives money in advance to the master of the large herd, all the calves, oxen and kids, which may be born belong to him. But if he has not paid anything, the master of the herd is entitled to choose one ox out of the herd, one ox for ten head, the third or fourth calf or kid. If it be a cow, one of the children will belong to the man who took care of it. Should the owner forget or omit the due reward, there will be trouble forthcoming. When he goes to take his cattle back, the master of the herd will keep one kraal for himself, and if a female goat, kid will go to the chief, if male, the matter is important; if the animal is castrated, for instance, it is ox.

If an ox accompanied with another man's herd dies, the master of the herd will inform the owner in order that he may go and dispose of the meat. Should he be living too far off, the ox will be taken on the spot and the skin will be sent to the owner. Suppose the master of the herd pretends that the ox is dead, but has only sold it with another herd, and sent a skin to the owner to deceive him, it is a case of theft, which will be judged as such.

3) Criminal cases.

Adultery. One who punishes adultery very severely indeed, is here when the woman is married. The fine is a full dowry, five cows (?). Amongst the Nhungu if the accused man denies his guilt when questioned before, the hours are considered, as even the magicians who practice the "ordeal" divination. (Pan

good luck ; he will say : "My god has blessed me and shown 278
me this gandjelo," and he is quite welcome to help himself to 279
the wine. On the other hand, it is prohibited to touch the 280
shell and to drink from it. It is taboo. A stranger doing so would be addressed as follows : "Are you a bee, are you a butterfly to go and help yourself from a shikutja, which does not belong to you?" He would be tied up, arms and legs, and left to sleep in the open for the whole night. On leaving him they will taunt him, saying : "Go and drink from the shikutja." He may even be condemned to pay a bue, a goat, or a hoe. This palm wine has a very sweet and agreeable taste.

According to the Native idea, *honey* (bulombe) is also a drink! 282
The prefix *bu* classifies this product amongst liquids. It is very 283
much appreciated and Natives readily submit to be stung in 284
order to collect it (taking) from the hollow in the trees or rocks. They generally have some grass which they hold in one hand, keeping the bees away with the smoke and the flame, and gathering the honey combs into a pot with the other hand. Thonga frequently smoke honey in an artificial way by placing a broken pot upside down in the bush. Bees are attracted and a swarm will occasionally make its home in the pot. In the Nwamboleke region (near Mozelewe) I saw a Konga who even had bee hives of his own invention and succeeded in securing plenty of honey. Native honey is of a brownish, blackish hue. When eating it, Thonga do not at all despise the larvae ; are they not meat?

3) The Shimgumuyu and Shikokoma drinks. The various 285
kinds of beer and drinks made from fruit were not, however, enough for the Thonga. They saw that White people used sugar-cane to distil rum and they attempted to do the same. The result of their attempt is called *Shimgumuyu*. Ichambane Natives seem to have been the first to brew it ; then Kinsenga of the Lourenço Marques district soon followed their example. They crush the sugar-cane in a mortar, after having poured some water into it ; they then collect the crushed cane in a sack, press it, and extract all the liquid they can in one or two barrels. During the night a fire is lighted in a hut, near the barrels, in

127 attain to the happy state of drunkenness in which they so much
127 attain to the happy state of drunkenness in
248 delight, and which is not allowed by the regulations of the
248 Compounds.

A number of other drinks have been invented by the South African Natives, but the foregoing are the principal.

See in the *Practical Conclusions, I, at the end of the Volume, my remarks on "Alcoholism and the South African Tribe."*

E. LIVE STOCK BREEDING.

1. Oxen.

241 Oxen were plentiful in Thongaland before the Zulu invasion; the Zulu raids swept and killed them wholesale. They have never been so numerous since then, and in 1910 they were fewer than ever, owing to cattle plague and to Texas Fever, which has destroyed the herds in the Transvaal and in the greater part of the Lourenço Marques district. Oxen are not the property of chiefs only. Any commoner can possess a kraal, *ranga* (R.), *ranga* (D.), where he keeps not only his own cattle but those entrusted to his care. Having plenty of boys to herd them, he readily accepts the cows which his neighbours ask him to look after, all the more so as the milk will be his, and he will be given one of the calves, according to custom (1, p. 240). Much care is taken of the welfare of the cattle: the herding boys are expected to lead them to pasture in the
[242] morning, when the dew is still on the grass; during the five or six winter months hardly any rain falls, but heavy morning dew replaces it, moistening the grass, and Natives firmly believe that it makes the cattle fat. So it is said that the oxen must go out early and "eat the dew." (Compare the tale of Piti, *Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, p. 194.) Moreover the best kinds of grass, those which are the most nourishing, are well known, and the boys are sent to the places where they grow. Parts

of the bush are also burnt as soon as the grass dries up, so as to obtain fresh grass as early as possible in the spring. In autumn, after the harvest, oxen are allowed to wander about in the gardens, where they eat the mealies and millet and sorghum stems, and find better grass. 231

The Thongas castrate most of their bulls ; however they keep one or two in each herd for breeding purposes. Strange to say, these beasts are generally very tame ; they are hardly any wilder than the castrated oxen. However, the boys sharpen their horns and excite the bulls of different herds to fight. They pour live ants on their foreheads to irritate them. They give them names ; e. g. Makonyama, the one who threatens on both sides, — Mombomakhele, the one who has curly hair on his head, the terrible one, — Ntlhontlha-ba-tsha, shisa-sha-munga, the one who beats the fire... people are burnt by the sparks as by embers of the mimosa tree, — Mabala-ya-tilo, the "stripes of heaven," — Mabata-bata, the one with many spots, etc. Many of these names are suggested by the colouring of the animals (1). I never heard songs in praise of the cattle similar to those found amongst the Ba-Sutho for instance. It does not seem that oxen have at any time played such an important part in the tribal life of the Thongas as is the case amongst Zulus or Suthos. 231 552

Women, especially those of childbearing age and having sexual relations, are not allowed to take care of oxen. It is taboo. When they require dung to smear the huts, they send little children or girls whose menses have not yet begun or who are at any rate unmarried, to fetch it from the oxen kraal. When oxen are sick, they are entrusted to the care of little girls, who must sometimes stay with them as long as two months without returning home. We have already met with these feminine taboos concerning oxen (I. p. 184) and seen that these prohibitions are based on the idea that the menstrual blood is as dangerous for oxen as for 231 562 841 784

(1) Native cattle are by no means of pure breed. There are many races which have been crossed : a small race with short horns and another with large lyre-shaped horns, probably brought from the Transvaal to the coast of Delagoa Bay. Madagascar oxen, with their strange prominence on the back, resembling zebus, have also been imported in great numbers into Lourenço Marques for butcher's purposes. Possibly some have been used for breeding.

231 men having relations with women during menstruation (I. p. 187).
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841 health of the whole herd. Women are even prohibited from
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234 As regards *milk*, it certainly plays a part in the food of villages which are fortunate enough to possess a well-filled oxen kraal. The *milking* of the cows presents difficulties unknown in Europe! African cows have not yet learned to submit tamely to this operation! The calf must always be allowed to suck a few mouthfuls, then a boy pulls it away from the teat and the cow consents to be milked. Should a cow be too wild, they pass a string through its

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II. *Other domestic animals.*

Besides oxen, the Ba-Ronga breed *goats* (mbuti, yin-tin), the care of which is relegated to the small boys (I. p. 62). Practically every one possesses one or more goats, whilst oxen are much more rarely met with.

231 Native goats are very small and frequently attacked by a disease called ndlwabane which decimates whole herds. They are not tended with sufficient care, although a special hut (mhala) is sometimes built to protect them from the rain.

Goats are killed by piercing the heart : this is at any rate the ritual way of killing them (I. p. 158). The officiating person stands on the right of the animal and stabs it in the left side, holding the left leg. The animal suffers acutely ; goats are however often slaughtered by cutting the throat, not from any feelings of compassion, but in order to prevent them crying too long, as "this would surely bring many people on the spot and you would have to share the meat with them!" (Mboza.)

231 782 If the ox plays an important part in *social life*, the goat seems to be specially reserved for sacrifices, that is to say for *religious usages*. This ritual use entitles us to suppose that, as millet seems to be the oldest cereal, the goat is the most ancient domestic animal amongst the Thongas, and, no doubt, amongst all South African Bantus.

The gall bladder, the astragalus, the half digested grass found in its intestines, strips made of its skin, all play a special part in the ceremonies and superstitious practices of the tribe previously mentioned. The gall bladder (nyongwa) is fixed in the hair of the person in whose honour the goat was slaughtered. The astragalus (nhlolo) is fastened to the wrist, the ankle or the waist as a means of protection. The *psanyi* (half digested grass) is taken from the shihlakahla stomach, and is used in connection with the invocation of the gods in the sacrifices. (See Part VI, Compare also I. p. 111, 160-162.)

136 231 643 782 *Sheep*, hamba, yin-tin, (Ro.) nyimpfu, yin-tin, (Dj.) are scarce in our tribe, and are mostly without wool. The wool sheep is called *shitlapu*. It is not taboo for subjects to possess sheep, but this animal is connected in a special manner with the chiefs. Its astragalus designates royal personages in the set of divinatory bones. It is used in the national sacrifices, those offered to the chief's ancestors at the capital. (See Part VI.) Let us remind the reader that its skin is used to carry a child in case of *bovumba* (I. p. 194).

The *pig*, as previously mentioned, is a new comer in the Bantu village. Its name, *nguluve*, means the wild pig. Most villages, however, possess one or two. They are never slaughtered in connection with sacrifices. 231

Poultry (tihuku) is the most common of all live stock. Not a village is without its fowl house (shihahlu) ; these are generally fashioned like a small hut and perched on piles to protect the poultry during the night from snakes. (See illustration I. p. 312.) 235 343

When a hen and her brood of young chickens have to be cared for, a much smaller hut is built on the ground, but the utmost precaution is taken to keep it almost hermetically sealed, as the mhamba (a long green snake, very venomous) and the shipyahla (Echnida arietans, a large viper resembling the puff-adder) do great execution amongst fowls! As cows are not bred for milking purposes, neither are chickens raised for the sake of their eggs. In fact Thongas consider it a sheer waste to eat eggs and always allow the hens to hatch them out. Hens are wilder than they are with us and often make their nests in the open country, returning some fine day with a flourishing young family. The breed is of very small size and the eggs are tiny : it would require at least two to equal the weight of one ordinary egg such as are for sale in the European markets ; it is therefore evidently more advantageous to hatch eggs than to eat them! If, by any chance, a hen dies on the nest from the bite of a snake, the Natives will willingly devour the half hatched or three quarters addled eggs ; the more developed the chicken, the greater their appreciation of the delicacy, for, says the Thonga, "i nyama!" — "this is meat!" Fowls are extensively used as timhamba, viz., sacrificial offerings. The throat is cut ; a little of the down plucked off the neck is dipped into the blood, and brought close to the mouth for the performance of the *tsu* rite, one of the smaller feathers of the wing (shihluwa), one of the claws, and the beak are tied together and fastened to the wrist, ankle or neck of the person for the sake of whom the offering has been made. (Part VI.) [136] 235 262 235 782

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The dawn is called mpundju; then comes thabela sana, the 805
time when the rays of the sun (sana) are piercing ; *hisa ka sana*, 821
when they are burning ; *nhlekanhi*, the middle of the sky, or *shitakataka*, the maximum point of the heat ; then *ndjenga* (Dj.), or *lihungu* (Ro.), the afternoon, the time when the sun goes down (renga) ; *ku pela* or *ku hlwa*, when it reaches the horizon, and *mpimabayeni* (Dj.) the twilight, literally "the time when you do not easily recognize strangers coming to your village because it grows dark." These are the divisions of the day (siku). Then comes the night (busiku).

Eclipses do not seem to have ever much impressed the 821
imagination of the Thongas. At any rate, they never caused panics (Mboza). When, warned that an eclipse will take place, they see that, indeed, the sun or moon is "turning dark" (dji yentsha ntima), Natives are more struck with wonder at the supernatural knowledge of the White people, than with fear of the phenomenon itself.

I have already dealt with the notion of the *year*, (lembe, dji-ma), 805
which is very vague ; it begins at two different periods : that of 821
tilling and that of harvesting the first fruits (I, p. 396, II, p. 20). Thongas do not make any difference between a solar and a lunar year, their knowledge of months being very imperfect, as we shall shortly see.

Before leaving the source of light, I may add that the *light* 821
itself is called *ku bonekisa* (Ro.), or *ku bonakala* (Dj.), litt. that 822
which makes to appear. Of course Natives have no explanation to give of it. Moonlight is called by another name, viz. *ñweti*, connected with hweti, moon. *Colours* are very imperfectly perceived, at least if we are to base our judgment on the vocabulary. *Ntima* means both black and dark blue. *Libungu* is carmine, red, purple, and also yellow. Yellow is not perceived as a distinct colour. *Psuka* is the tinge of dawn, and of the rising sun. *Nkushe*, which means sea-weed, is applied to the *blue* sky ; *nkwalala* is grey, *liklaza* (Ro.) is green, the green of grass in the spring, and the [231] ●
corresponding term in Djonga is *rilambyana*, that which makes dogs howl. Very green grass has this effect on Native dogs.

The *moon* (ñhweti (Dj.), hweti (Ro.) cl. yi-tin), was perhaps 821
personified in former times, as it bears the feminine suffix *eti*,

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361 together with all the inhabitants of the kraal. The two huts near
313 the entrance are, on the left, the *lao*, where unmarried boys sleep
596 (14) and on the right (15) the *nhangu* where the girls live. Often
356 the nhangu is built behind the huts of the mothers, near the mhala; in this way the girls are kept under more effective watch. The boys of the *lao* have to guard the door, which they close at night where it is the custom to do so. The *hubo* and the *bandla*, the squares, are generally kept quite clean.

361 In front of each hut is a *yard* (*ndangu* pl. *mindangu*, 23) which
372 is also generally well swept. In the centre of each of these are
417 some broken pots (mapseko), or pieces of hard clay taken from
351 ant-hills (psirubu); this is the *fireplace (shitiko)*, where the mistress of the hut cooks her food. The fence round the yard used, as a rule, to be made of poles or even trunks of trees planted near each other and forming a circular wall. Nowadays, especially amongst the Rongas, these yards are enclosed with reeds and may be built square, a single wall fencing off as many as three or four huts. The top of this wall is sometimes crenelated. I rather think this arrangement is modern; the circular wall of the ndangu
585 is an old custom, as is proved by the following fact. On the day of
338 *hloma*, when the bride's-maids and female relatives bring the bride to her husband, they not only build up the woodpile (shigiyane, see page 112), but, in the northern clans, they must also erect a new ndangu which will be called *tsandana*, and so people will know that in the yard there is a *nhlomi*, a bride, working for her mother-in-law! The ndangu is the place where women tell folk-tales of the tribe to the children and to each other, whilst they attend to their cooking, or after the evening meal.

361 If cleanliness prevails on the square and in the yards, the
356 same cannot be said of the region between the huts and the
235 fence. This is called *mahosi* or *makotini*. It is the place where
351 old baskets and broken pots are kept. The chicken houses
343 (*shihahlu*, 27) are built there; these are generally little huts, with reed walls, placed on a floor of palmtree boards, supported by four poles forked at their upper extremities. The *ash-heaps* are somewhat further on (24). They are called *tala*, and play a part in certain rites, representing, as it would seem, the place of desolation and of sorrow.

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Thongas assert that they have always possessed fowls. "They 235

235 made their appearance together with men" — "ti tumbulukile ni banhu," they say. But we know that the critical sense is absent from their minds, so we cannot rely on any such absolute dictum. "The Hoñwanas had them" they add ; and this we may believe, as the Hoñwanas have always kept more or less apart from the invaders of the XVth or XVIth century (I. p. 357) and may have preserved their traditions. This shows that poultry was known in Delagoa Bay 300 or 400 years ago. Not having seen the Portuguese chronicles of 1550-1600, I cannot say whether they make any allusion to the presence of fowls at that date (1).

F. HUNTING AND FISHING.

224 Whatever may be the antiquity of cattle breeding amongst
476 South African Natives, there was a time when they had no domestic animals at all. Then, however, there were plenty of antelopes, elephants, and hippopotami in the country and they satisfied their craving for meat by hunting. Hunting was undoubtedly more developed in those remote times than now, and it was accompanied by customs and rites which are still to be found in some places, though rapidly disappearing, and in which are embodied some of the most curious animistic ideas of the tribe. Moreover, in their primitive state, Bantus only possessed very simple and inadequate weapons. It was hardly possible for an isolated member of the tribe to attack and kill big animals alone. The collaboration of his fellow clansmen was indispensable Hunting therefore was not an individual affair, but a collective concern. This gave rise to social rites, as gene-
224 rally happens when collective acts are performed. These ani-

(1) As regards the Pedi-Suthos of Zeutpansberg, the introduction of fowls amongst them is quite modern and they admit that they owe them to the Ma-Lemba who brought them into the country about 150 years ago. See my paper in *Folklore* Sept. 1908.

644 When they have chosen it—it must be the stem of a nkonono
789 tree—they cut it and bring it back to the capital. In front walks the master of the ceremonies, Godlela, and behind him four men carrying the shiphandje. Those who accompany them have the right of entering the villages and stealing fowls. Woe to those who meet with this troop! They will be relieved of all they carry, "because the forked branch of the great medicine of the chief is taboo."

644 The sacred branch having duly reached the capital, Godlela
789 proceeds to the second operation, the *burning of the drugs.*
826 Mboza saw the magician take pieces of skin cut from buffaloes,
237 lions, hyenas, elans, panthers, snakes of various kinds and, last but not least, from the bodies of men, enemies killed in the wars: part of the skin of the forehead, the heart, the diaphragm, the nails, a finger, some ears... All these are roasted
644 in a large pot. On some mats are spread various magical roots
789 cut into small pieces; these are also thrown into the pot. The chief and all the sub-chiefs approach and, with hollow reeds, inhale and swallow the vapour and the smoke which emanates from it (1).

The preparation of the great medicine having been sucessfully accomplished, the great drum (nhumburi) of the capital is brought on to the square, and everybody dances, even women, who take assagais in their hands and sing: "We are thankful if we die (hi tlangela ku fa)" viz., "The country is in security, our invincible medicine is ready! We shall not be killed by enemies
644 but will die a natural death." Before extinguishing the fire which
789 was used to roast the medicines, Godlela takes a little water, pours it on the glowing embers and, when it vaporises with the
782 customary sound, he emits the sacramental *tsu* and prays to his gods, the departed spirits of the Tlhaltha family, as doctors always do, in order to obtain their blessing on the nyokwekulu.

618 (1) The Hlewane sub-clan, which revolted many times against the legal chief and succeeded by its intrigues in provoking the war of 1894, after which it became the reigning family of Nondwane, used to abstain from participating in this "swallowing of the smoke," because, in former years, it had been defeated by Maphunga's people and some of its men killed; their flesh had been used in the concoction of the nyokwekulu. So they feared to go and inhale the odour of their fellow clansmen.

789 the fat collected in order to mix it with the war medicine, the flesh
726 being left to the dogs to eat and destroy.

In some clans, chiefs possess *other personal charms* which are
643 very much dreaded and called *psitjemba*. So, in the Maluleke
789 clan, each of the children of the ancient chief Mashakadzi received
237 from him one of these psitjemba. It consists of a part of the skull of a child, the top of the head, where the pulse is seen beating at the fontanella. This has been smeared with the vitreous humour taken from the eyes of lions or elephants, and powders made from the skins of wild beasts. The possession of this charm gives the chief a supernatural power. If, being irritated with you, he invokes his gods by sucking it and emits the sacramental tsu, he can call on any wild beast he likes to kill you... He has sacrified with the psitjemba ; you will die!

643 Some chiefs of the Northern clans used to *swallow one of the*
787 *stones* found in the stomach of a crocodile. It is said that
825 crocodiles, when cut open, are found to contain a certain number of stones, as they are supposed to eat one each year, when the rainy season comes on. One of them is chosen and smeared with special medicines and swallowed by the chief. Natives firmly believe that this stone remains in the body of the chief, and that it is "his head, his life" (Viguet). When it is passed in his stools the first time, this is a premonitory warning. When it occurs a second time, it is a clear announcement that the chief is about to die. So chiefs can always know when their time is near. In other clans the crocodile stone is replaced by what is called *ndjalama*. Amongst Nkunas this word designates a kind of bright copper button, which the Pedis of the Palaora mine used to make and sell. But ndjalama also means large sized beads. Whatever it is, some chiefs swallowed the ndjalama and were warned by it of their death. This object, as well as the crocodile stone, is taboo for subjects to swallow. They would die. It is "buloyi bya hosi" — "the magical power of the chief."

643 On account of these powerful and dangerous charms possessed
619 by them, chiefs of different clans regarded it as a taboo to stay in each other's company ; they were afraid lest they might be killed by the magical power of their colleagues. Maphunga

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C. SUNDRY COURT CUSTOMS

644 The paraphernalia of royalty are very modest in the Thonga courts. However there are some to be mentioned in addition to the regalia which I have described.

I. *The Big Drum* (Muntshintshi).

644 534 237 This is found in every capital, even sometimes in the sub-chief's villages. It is made of a hollowed stem, somewhat like an ordinary mortar; or it may be rounded, and even provided with three legs, as in Nondwane; a piece of skin is stretched over the opening. This may be the skin of an elephant's ear, of a buffalo, of an ox or of an antelope *mangulwe*. This instrument is subject to some taboos; when the skin cracks, it is forbidden to look inside. There is something mysterious about it and nobody must disclose that mystery. People say that a bullet is introduced into it when it is made. In Shiluvane they asserted that the skull of the hostile chief, Sikororo, killed in the battle of Nov. 1901, had been put into the big drum! At any rate, there is a special individual who is summoned to repair it and he receives a fowl as reward.

644 534 731 202 The big drum is beaten on various occasions:

a) To announce a great fatality, especially the death of a chief, or the day of the publication of the mourning; also the approach of the inundation, when the Nkomati river rises, in January or February, and threatens to cover the whole land; again when the bush fire threatens to destroy the capital.

b) To summon warriors to the capital in case of imminent war.

644 534 c) To execute various musical performances. The big drum leads a special dance (nkino), which takes place at the capital during the winter, when the harvest is ended, and the country happy and prosperous. It is accompanied by a smaller drum (shikolombane) which is called the "son" of the big one. The

462 places the food (phamela) on plates of the size of small basins or
511 dishes (mbenga). We have seen how she distributes it amongst
264 the inhabitants of the village. When all have finished eating, the women wash the plates, put aside the pots which contain the food left for the next morning, and tidy up the yards.

517 Whatever we may say, the day has been a well-filled one for the women. They are very rarely seen playing in the day time. We shall see how they recuperate themselves in the evening.

II. *Men's occupations.*

462 As for the men, their life is far from being as active as that
517 of the women. They have not, like their diligent wives, the regular continuous work of preparing the food, not to mention the care of the children. The duties which fall on them, and which they are willing to perform, only require of them isolated efforts from time to time.

462 As regards *agricultural work*, it is generally believed that
241 men leave this entirely to the women. This is exaggerated. Amongst the Rongas each man possesses his own field which he himself tills, and this is an old custom, a special term even being applied to the field thus tilled: it is called *mpashu*. He may sow seeds in it, but he does not weed it, leaving his wife to do this troublesome work for him and also to reap it. He makes only one exception in the case of the sorghum, of which he consents to go and cut the ears. But he helps his wife in other ways, for ins-
462 tance in the storing of the food; he builds the little huts used as
251 storehouses, prepares the *tjala*, viz., the mat stretched on four poles on which ground nuts are dried in the field, digs holes for the *buhiri*, the shelf at the back of the hut where the basket containing the seeds is placed. His wife does not think him a lazy fellow at
462 all. When the harvest is finished, she takes the smaller cobs of
273 mealies (makunhula), those which will not be kept, or the grains of millet and sorghum which are found on the threshing floor after the threshing, and with them she prepares a special beer to

643 619 seems to have been particularly feared. He had even bought poison from white people and is said to have killed his rival, Musongi, chief of the Maputju clan, with whom he fought the battle of Malangotiba in 1870. He sent a woman of bad life to Maputju. The woman succeeded in winning the confidence of the king and poured this poison into his glass. Nowadays the Ronga chiefs have been taught by the Authorities to sit in council when discussing matters.

643 The two principal prerogatives of the chief are the right of *luma* and taxation.

III. *The right of luma, and the first fruits rites.*

181 241 We come to a set of rites which might be dealt with when considering the Agricultural life, but I prefer to describe them here, as they provide us with a typical illustration of the constitution of the clan ; they are highly characteristic of the Bantu community, a community which is essentially agricultural in its pursuits, animistic in its beliefs, and hierarchic as regards its social and national life.

643 262 784 527 241 We have already met with the word *luma* and noticed that its ordinary meaning is *to bite* ; its ritual sense is to *remove the injurious character of a given food by a certain ceremony*. The luma is a necessity before eating the flesh of certain wild beasts, as we shall see when studying the laws of hunting (See Part IV). But it is of still more importance, and one of the great laws of the clan, that the official luma shall take place before the subjects eat the products of the new year. There seem to be two ideas at the root of this strange taboo :

1) To eat certain kinds of food is dangerous for one's health, and the first mouthful taken must be seasoned with the royal drug.

2) The gods, the chief, and elder brothers, have a prior right to enjoy the products of the soil. To precede them in doing this is a sin which would bring them misfortune. The hierarchy must be absolutely respected.

643 The law of luma seems to have applied to all kinds of food
262 in former times. Nowadays it is not observed for the following
171 products : maize, Kafir beans and peas, rice, sorghum, water
527 melons (makalabatla) and monkey nuts. It is partly observed
241 for mafureira almonds (tihuhlu), strychnos paste (fuma) and pumpkin leaves (magawane). It is strongly enforced for black Kafir corn and bukanye. Such is at any rate the case in the four clans of Nondwane, Mabota, Ñwamba and Tembe. Amongst the Zulus and Swazis on the contrary, I have been told people luma maize and do not luma kafir corn. Kafir corn is probably the most ancient cereal amongst the Ba-Thonga, and bukanye has always existed in the country. This is perhaps the reason why these luma rites, which bear a very old character, are still applied to these products to the exclusion of other more modern cereals.

I. *The luma without a religious ceremony.*

631 Let us first study the less ritualistic kind of luma, the luma
262 of the *mafureira almond*, for instance. It is practised in each
643 sub-chief's village, and, though it is tending to become obsolete,
527 it is still enforced by some "tihosana." Thus my neighbour in Rikatla, Habele, the hosana placed by Mobvesha over this part of the territory, met some time ago a boy who was eating these almonds, the description of which I shall give later on.— "Who gave them to you ?", asked Habele... The child kept silent.—"Come with me to your parents!" Having found their home, the sub-chief scolded them severely : "You have started sucking (munya) the almonds before us. You wanted to kill my head ? Pay a fine!" They answered : "The birds made them fall from the tree... The children were not guilty!" However they had to pay 500 reis.

262 The luma of almonds, which takes place in December, when
643 they are ripe, is performed in the following way. The almonds
527 are dipped into a small calabash full of water to soften them. Some of the powder of the nyokwekulu is added to them. The headman first takes some for himself and then distributes them to his people. They suck the almonds, take in their hands the part

643 wife in the path follows her husband who walks at his ease, with
651 his stick in his hand, whilst she carries his belongings in her basket
641 on her head... If the prerogative of the chief is to live in abundance, the duty of the subject is to pay taxes! This duty is expressed by the word *luba* (Dj.), *hlenga* (Ro.). It is so true that this is the principal function of the subject that, when a man leaves his clan and goes to live in another clan, he comes to the chief and says : "I want to *luba* or *nkonza* (a word borrowed by the Rongas from the Zulus), to pay the tax..." This is the proper way of making his submission.

643 The explanation of the rites of the first fruits throws much light on the Bantu conception of the chief's position in respect to his subjects. For them he is certainly endowed with the divine right more fully than the King or the Kaiser in any European country ; he is the *son* of the gods, not only their protégé... The gods are the lords of everything... He shares this lordship with them. Hence his right of taxing his subjects. On the other hand we saw that he is the *soil*! He is more than Lewis XIV, who could say: "L'État c'est moi!" The Bantu chief can say : "I am the earth! — Le sol c'est moi!" Hence, on the part of the subjects, the duty of sharing with him the products of the soil and also of their hunting.

643 The Thonga chief taxes his subjects in four different ways :
651 he takes a regular portion of the harvest ; he claims a part of
241 most of the wild beasts killed ; he makes his people work for him ;
273 he also taxes the revenue of those who go away to work for the Whites. A fifth source of his revenue is found in the fines imposed in judicial cases.

1. As regards *taxation of the products of the soil*, it consists in a basket (shihundju) of mealies contributed by each village at harvest time. This is the regular taxation. Moreover those who brew a great quantity of beer for a feast always send some jars to the chief, especially when the season of tilling the fields or threshing the grain has come. This is not a regular tax, at least amongst the Ba-Ronga, and is considered as *mashobo*, an act of civility, and not as *hlenga* proper. Bukanye must be brought to the capital in great quantities during the great national feast.

177 lobola money. But they learn to spend money on other things, and
461 those who are converts to Christianity become regular purchasers of
651 clothing, of better food, of books. The high taxation to which they are subjected also forces them to work. As long as this does not exceed a reasonable limit, and as long as the State causes the Native community to benefit by the high taxes levied on it, it is justifiable although this way of enforcing labour is not so normally healthy as the creation of
241 new wants (1). Another powerful influence which tends to make men
177 work more and to relieve women from the toil of tilling the fields, is
412 this. Wishing to make money by selling grain, the Natives are begin-
462 ning to clear larger fields than before, and we note with pleasure that they have adopted the use of the plough instead of the hoe in a great many quarters. The consequence of this change is that the men now do

466 (1) Another means has been used to obtain the same result, i. e. compulsory labour
P. (in Thonga *shibalu*). It is not at all my intention to treat this important but delicate
177. subject here. The League of Nations created in 1924 a special Slavery Commission
46 which has very ably and fully discussed the whole subject. These discussions have resulted in a Convention which was adopted by the Assembly of 1926; art. 5, which deals with forced labour, runs as follows:

The High Contracting Parties recognise that recourse to compulsory or forced labour may have grave consequences and undertake, each in respect of the territories placed under its sovereignty, jurisdiction, protection, suzerainty or tutelage, to take all necessary measures to prevent compulsory or forced labour from developing into conditions analogous to slavery.

It is agreed that:

(1) Subject to the transitional provisions laid down in paragraph (2) below, compulsory or forced labour may only be exacted for public purposes.

(2) In territories in which compulsory or forced labour for other than public purposes still survives, the High Contracting Parties shall endeavour progressively and as soon as possible to put an end to the practice. So long as such forced or compulsory labour exists, this labour shall invariably be of an exceptional character, shall always receive adequate remuneration, and shall not involve the removal of the labourers from their usual place of residence.

(3) In all cases, the responsibility for any recourse to compulsory or forced labour shall rest with the competent central authorities of the territory concerned.

The League of Nations has thus established the general principles, and nearly thirty States have already signed the Convention; amongst these we note with pleasure Great Britain and Portugal. Now the question has been transferred to the International Labour Office, which must deal with the application of the Convention. A special Committee of experts has been elected and it is hoped that it will fix general principles for Coloured Labour, which shall be submitted to the General Labour Conference in a not distant future.

I am glad to add that the Portuguese Government has recently issued a decree (Nº 12.533) which has been published in the *Bolletim official de Moçambique*, November 1926, and which contains the following article (Art. 5. § unico): *Compulsory labour is only permitted when absolutely indispensable, for works of public interest and of undeniable urgency. This labour will be remunerated according to circumstances.*

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the work of preparing the fields. As women have nothing to do with the cattle and as ploughing is done with oxen, men now perform this difficult labour, and so have to work hard. Is not this one splendid result of the spread of civilisation ? The fact cannot be denied that, as regards the mode of living and the distribution of work amongst men and women, a considerable change has already taken place and is being accentuated every day in the Thonga village. What will be the ultimate result of this ?

When discussing the Native problem, the most difficult of all South African problems, politicians, missionaries, civilised Natives and newspapers generally ask this question : "Is Native tribal life to be preserved or, on the contrary, destroyed ?" No clear, satisfactory, convincing reply has as yet been given. Tribal life is composed of two elements : communal life and national life, which ought to be considered separately. I deal here with the first of these elements only. The first remark I would venture to make is that it is somewhat presumptuous on our part to believe that we can exert any very great influence on the solution of this question. Whatever one may hope or fear, the evolution of the Bantu village, which began as soon as civilisation entered the land, will go on. It is not in the power of the Pope, of the Minister of Native Affairs, or of Superintendents of any large Missionary Societies, to prevent the transformation of the primitive patriarchal tribes, which is proceeding as a matter of necessity. Human society evolves continually, and the economic and social changes which have taken place in South Africa are so momentous that they will deeply affect and eventually completely transform the Bantu community. But (this is my second remark) what we can strive for is to control and guide this necessary evolution, and I should like to propose, to all those who can collaborate in the shaping of the future Bantu society, the two following suggestions :

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1. Though the square house may supplant the round hut, though the hubo, the bandla and the absolute authority of the numzane may disappear, let us do our best to prevent the future Native village from being a servile imitation of our own European settlements. The more original the Natives remain, the more interesting and worthy to live they will be. The "place of jealousy" will disappear together with polygamy. But let us retain all that is pleasing and moral in the picturesque circle of huts : the respect for elders, the sense of family unity, the habit of mutual help, the readiness to share food with others. Cannot these virtues be retained in the Christian village, under the

C. AGRICULTURAL CUSTOMS.

I. *The Agricultural Year.*

137 At the season which is called *shimumu*, the little heat, that
221 is to say in July, when the warm weather begins, the nkuhlu puts forth new shoots. Though rain is still far off, the mahogany and sala trees become covered with leaves of a wonderfully delicate green. A kind of Composita (the Helychrisum parviflorum, shirimbyati), which is wide-spread on the sandy dunes, blossoms all over the country ; a beautiful lily (Crinum Forbesii) will expand its splendid white and pink flowers : the *winter* (bushika) has passed away : soon the *hlobo* (summer) will come.

412 When the Ronga woman notices these signs, she picks up
221 her hoe (shikomo) and starts for the hills, or for the marshes.
462 Her husband has already repaired the implement for her, at home. If the handle was worn out, he has cut a branch of nkonono, (Terminalia sericea), which is the wood invariably used for the purpose, and has shaped it so that one end is thicker than the other ; in this thick end a hole is bored, while the iron hoe head is heated in the fire : the head has, at its base, a long iron point which is inserted nearly red-hot into the hole, burning its way in, and thus solidly fixing the two parts together. This method of fixing on the handle is called ku lumela shikomo. The Ronga hoe has a very short handle, sometimes not more than two feet in length. The Transvaal Thongas use handles three to four feet long. The woman has now nothing to do but to work hard, her lord and master having duly accomplished his share of the labour.

241 It is the end of August. Two or three months must still
221 elapse before the rainy season sets in. This period of the year is devoted to a two-fold work : the clearing of fresh land and the cultivation of marshes.

The *clearing of fresh land*, ku tlhaba lisindje (Ro.), ku khatsha

241 221 313 (Dj.), in the bush which has never yet been cultivated, or has been lying fallow for a long time, is very hard work indeed! Beginning in the early morning the woman cuts down the small trees with her axe (khaula, dji-ma); if the stems are too large she lights a fire at their base and leaves them to burn until they fall. Natives have not the slightest idea of the value of trees, if

Tilling the fields near Makulane (Maputju country). *Phot. D. Lanotte.*

these trees do not bear edible fruit, and destroy whole forests without any compunction. As previously mentioned, the labourer spares only the nkanye, mphimbi, nkuhlu, etc., and sometimes the mimosa parasol (gowane, Albizzia fastigiata) which provides a beneficial shade for the maize. Then she breaks the soil with her hoe and piles up in heaps the weeds (bibi, dji-ma) and bushes which she has uprooted, leaving them to dry before burning them. [538] This is a long job and requires great patience. The old adage says very truly:

> U nga bone bibi u ku ndji rimele. (Don't waste your time in looking at your heaps of rubbish, and fancying that your work is done!)

241 This work continues all through the months of August, September
221 and October.

Cultivation of Marshes (tjhobo, dji-ma). If the woman has already tilled plenty of ground on the hill, during the previous years, she will devote these three spring months to the cultivation of the wet hollows near the lakes, between the dunes. The gardens in the marsh are called *shiramba* or *mashamba* and are very different from those on the hills called *masimo* (1).

I will now describe those which I saw in the Rikatla depression. The middle of the hollow is a marsh filled with long Papyrus (bungu), slender Typha (papala, dji-ma) or reeds (lihlanga). They are cut, uprooted ; small canals are dug, in which the water collects. The roots and stems are piled in heaps, some three feet high, called *psibibi*, but they are not burnt. They are left to decay, and shilutane pumpkin seeds are sown in them, high enough to avoid putrefaction in the water. The soil is a wet black mud very favourable to the cultivation of rice. So a small plot a few square feet is sown, a *shingubya*, and, when the seeds have sprouted, they will be planted out all round. It seems that planting out has been known and practised for a long time by the Makaneta people who have large plantations of rice. Mealies are also sown in this region, in the spots where it is somewhat less wet : they will ripen one month earlier than those on the hill. The great pity is that the papyrus marsh is full of small birds called *nkapa* (mu-mi), which pluck out the tiny sprouts of mealies as soon as they appear and eat the half rotted grain at the roots. So children and women must scare away these marsh birds during these months, as they will the sparrows of the hills later on.

On the raised edge of the canals sweet potatoes are planted, not the tuber, but growing stems, which will bear fruit much earlier than those on the hill. Where water has entirely disappeared, manioc is also planted in the hollows and seems to prosper well. In early November the pumpkins of the *psibibi* will be fully developed and their leaves will provide the mistress

(1) Nsimu, cl. yi-tin, becomes in the plural masimu, cl.dji-ma ; it is one of the few exceptions met with in Thonga grammar.

of the garden with a good vegetable until the first-fruits themselves ripen and furnish a more substantial food. 241 221

When the rains commence, sometimes as early as September, but generally later, it is *time to begin the regular sowing*. Everybody then starts for himself, because, although the fields tilled by the mother are the largest, every member of the family has tilled his own : the husband has his *mpasha* (I. p. 337) and each girl has her plot.

The Native idea is that every owner of a field must sow all principal cereals and vegetables in his garden, except peas, on account of their taboo. So, in a line on the border, are planted sweet potatoes and manioc. Mealie seeds are sown at a given distance from each other, alternating with Kafir corn and sorghum, and in between are planted ground nuts and beans. Watch how the mistress of the field proceeds to sow her maize : she walks along with short steps, at each one digging up a shovelful of well tilled earth, and planting in the holes three or four grains of maize, which she carefully covers over. The work is done in haste so as to take advantage of the last rains. The *lisindje* is first sown ; then begins the hasty tilling of the old fallow fields (pula, dji-ma). The crop is not likely to be so plentiful as that obtained from virgin soil, but the same fields can be used for three or four consecutive years before they become exhausted.

Natives have no idea of *fertilising the ground* in any way whatever ; at the most they may take advantage of the manure which has accumulated in some disused oxen kraal, to plant thereon a few gourds or some tobacco.

The operation of hastily tilling the fallow fields is often carried on by a *djimo* (dji-ma). Knowing that her fallows are very large and that she can hardly cope with them by herself, the owner calls all her neighbours to a djimo, viz., a working party, having wisely prepared a number of large jugs of beer. Neighbours will certainly accept the invitation as they may have to ask for similar help later on. So they come in the morning, and attack the fields with energy, singing and shouting all the time. There are special djimo songs, in particular amongst the Ba-Sutho. One may see them, some fifty black bodies toiling vigorously, 241 476 574 [533]

241 making the sand fly, their hoes working with marvellous rapidity! What excitement, what strenuous work, each one urging the other to still greater exertion and all hurrying to finish the job! They know that, there in the hut, ten big jars of beer brewed to a nicety wait for them, and that they will have a good time at midday, when the heat will be unbearable and the work done.

241 The maize grows and the weeds grow with it ; after the tilling comes the *weeding* ; this is the work for November, December and January.

It is done twice or thrice for the mealies. The first weeding is called *tjutja*, and is done when the mealie stems have reached a height of about one foot. The second is called *hlakula*. By this time the ground nuts and beans have grown, and this weeding is intended to be for their benefit also.

In January it is the *nwebo*, the time for the first ears of maize to ripen : it is also at that time that the fields of maize are apt to be ravaged by a species of coleoptera, called the *nunu*, of which I shall have more to say when treating of the superstitions of the tribe.

In January also the sorghum and millet attain their full growth, and the grain begins to form. *Sparrows*, *finches*, and other chattering birds take up their residence in the fields and begin to plunder them. Then women and children camp out from morning to night, in their plantations, and spend three whole months shouting, yelling and making a most infernal hullabaloo, with tin cans and other musical instruments, in their endeavour to scare the thieves. This is what they call *psaya* or *rindja tinyanyana*. The flocks of sparrows, etc., move on at a single flight to the acacias or mimosas, close by, whence they make a descent on the fields of the next neighbour. This proprietress is also on guard, and, in her turn, drives off the birds with a frightful uproar ; thus the duel between birds and human beings goes on for weeks. The mother and children prevail upon the father to build them a little hut (ntjonga, mu-mi) right in the middle of the field, to enable them to protect their sorghum against the feathered enemy, and there they take up their quarters until the cereals have ripened and are ready to be harvested.

to be harvested. Poor cereals! Many grains are wanting! 241
Those mischievous sparrows have taken more than a tithe! In 417
the marshy lands of Lebombo I noticed the people scaring the birds in a somewhat original manner. A cord was stretched right across the field, for a distance of at least thirty or forty yards, supported at intervals by poles, and on it were strung large snail shells (Achatina lamarkiana) as big as one's fist; when the watchers heard the sparrows chirping on the other side of the field, instead of getting up and running after them, yelling and shouting to scare them away, they merely pulled the cord, which made the shells jingle against one another, the movement and noise frightening the birds and sending them off to attack the crops of some less ingenious neighbour! I have also seen scarecrows set up in some places, the ordinary stuffed figure. During these months of bird scaring it is impossible to get the caretakers to do anything but guard their plantations! The little maidservants scamper away to join in the work and the Christian girls no longer come to school! I can well imagine that the husbands often find empty larders at home!

The attraction of the plantation does not however hinder the 273
labourers from doing full justice to the national beer, the bukanye, which is consumed from the middle of January to the end of February! Besides, it is principally after the bukanye that it is necessary to protect the sorghum from the beaks of these winged destroyers.

The agricultural year ends with the *harvest*. Every one 241
harvests his own fields and keeps, as far as possible, his product 221
separate in his own store house. The ears of maize which have been left to dry on the stalks are broken off (tshobela) and are carefully piled in conical baskets in such a manner as to make them hold large quantities. The precious burden is at once deposited in the storehouse. After this the beans are picked (khaya): these do not ripen much before May, after all the other produce, at a season which is called "the time of beans" (nkama wa timbawen). The ground-nuts are unearthed by 241
pounding on the ground all round the stem, and pulling up the whole plant by the roots. It is curious to see the stalks coming

241 out of the earth with their well filled double pods attached to their extremities.

241 The men then construct *drying floors* (tjala, dji-ma) : a mat
251 made of reeds, or of the wood of the palm-tree, is placed in the
343 middle of the field, and supported by four poles ; and on it are
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The storehouses of Sokis (Rikatla). *Phot. H. A. Junod.*

laid (yaneka) ground-nuts, and peas, to remain there exposed to the sun until they are completely dried.

241 The next operation is the *threshing*, or separating the grain
252 from the ears (hula). This is done with sorghum and Kafir
221 corn, but not with maize, of which the cobs are generally kept entire in the storehouse until wanted. The *hula* is done on a specially prepared threshing floor in the middle of the field. The floor has been hardened by means of nkanye stones, and smeared over with clay. The sorghum and corn stems are brought thither, and the ears are beaten with small sticks. Or the ears are cut, placed in mortars and slightly pounded to liberate the grains. The best have been preserved for seed.

grains. The best have been preserved for seed. When the threshing is finished, the grains are collected (wolela or hlakula) in the *lihlelo* basket and winnowed (hehera). Kafir corn and sorghum are then stored in the big *ngula* basket (1). As regards maize, it is kept in the storehouses proper (shitlanta), 241 251 343 221

Dula storehouse in the Shilevane village *Phot. H. A. Junod.*
(The man sitting on the right is Viguet, my faithful informant).

little huts built of reeds with a moveable roof and raised on piles. All the shitlanta belong to the husband, though most of the tilling and all the weeding has been done by the wife, as already explained (I. p. 337). In the Transvaal, beans, peas and ground nuts are packed in the *dula* (dji-ma), which are smeared outside with clay, [423] 343

(1) It is taboo to weave the *ngula* before harvest, just as it is to prepare the stake before the birth of the baby. Before harvest Kafir corn is still *nyimba*, viz., a child not yet born. Who knows if the hail or the locusts will not destroy it? Wait till you have harvested, then you will see what size your basket must be! 241

343 or in small storehouses hung to the branches of trees (mfunge). When the harvest has been plentiful and all the storehouses have been filled, then begins the happy time of winter, of beer drinking, *bunanga* playing, (I. p. 431) paying visits, etc.

II. *Agricultural taboos.*

241 784 The first category of agricultural taboos are those previously mentioned, which spring from the idea of *hierarchy* : the prohibition to sow pumpkin seeds before the elder members of the family, the prohibition to enjoy the first-fruits (Kafir corn, bukanye, etc.) before the gods, the chief, the headman, and the elder brothers have *luma* (I, p. 394). Others belong to the *special feminine taboos*, (girls not allowed to walk amongst the pumpkins, to pluck their fruit or to pick their leaves without certain precautions, I. p. 184). Another category is that of *shimusi*. Certain days are proclaimed by the chief, or fixed by custom, as sabbath days, on which no one is allowed to till the soil. In Ñwamba, when there has been a little rain, it is taboo for the people of the clan to work in the fields ; they must remain at home. Amongst the Nkunas the day on which the new 241 754 moon appears is also shimusi. The moon must be left to "become 784 firm" (tiyela, hola) ; to cut roots while it is still "soft" is taboo : it 821 would cause strong winds and hail. Complete rest is also customary in Khosen the day following the birth of twins. (See Part VI. Chap. II). Some other taboos are due to the fear of *wizards* : it is forbidden to whistle in the fields after having sown or until the mealies are grown. This would call the "baloyi" and endanger the harvest.

241 784 It is a taboo for a woman to remain in a standing position when she borrows a living ember (woka) from people cooking their food in their gardens ; she must sit down when she takes the ember. Should she break this law, it would cause the mealies of the owners of that garden to be burnt (psha) ; the women has "crossed their gardens" (tjemakanya). If however she does this, they

will call her on the day they begin to sow, and she will have to sow the first seed; thus she will prevent all the seeds from "burning." 241 784

But the most stringent taboos are connected with the *threshing of the cereals*. This work is exclusively done by women, and it is taboo for the men to approach the threshing floor. The Makanetas, who cultivate rice extensively, cut the ears and pile them into heaps in their own huts and not on the threshing floor. When the grain is dry, they thresh it by trampling on it. Should any woman pass by, it is taboo to speak to her. If she enters the hut and helps for a little while with the work, then the taboo is removed and you, the owners of the rice, can talk to her. — "Should you do so without that condition being fulfilled, this person would *take your rice* and leave you nothing but the husks (mataba). Should a relative, dwelling in the neighbouring district, come and see you whilst you are threshing rice, don't give her any part of your harvest: let her crush it in the mortar and take it away husked, lest you lose all your grain and keep the husks only! The husks of the rice which you give to your relative must remain with you." (Mboza). The same applies to Kafir corn. To allow a relative from outside to pluck ears from your garden, to thresh them and take them home means to "spoil your corn" (onha mabele). When you are threshing Kafir corn, let the visitor first take the pestle and help you before you speak to her.

As regards *tree culture*, it was formerly considered a taboo to plant foreign kinds, such as bananas, oranges, etc. When Mboza planted the first mango trees in Morakwen, people told him: "You will die! You have called misfortune on yourself (u tihlolele), and other people will eat your fruit!" I heard this taboo explained in Shiluvane as follows. When a man has been obliged to move, and leaves trees planted by him in his old village, people passing near the ruins shake their heads and say: "Look at those trees! They have chased away the master of the village." These two testimonies are interesting, and fitly illustrate the origin of a taboo. The desolation of a ruin has been connected with the presence of new trees, as they have often been noticed together. Hence the idea that the trees are 245 784 824

enters the field, the tinhlamalala at once transform themselves into small snakes which also bear the name of tinhlamalala. (Notice the correspondence of names: a curious instance of verbal magic.) These snakes rush towards the thief, who runs away, seized with terror. Should he take the stolen cobs with him instead of throwing them on to the ground, the tinhlamalala would follow him to his village! This dreadful powder was prepared by a Nkuna named Ñwadjokwane and the people of his village used to inoculate themselves with the drug ; in this way they had nothing to fear from the snakes. 685 787

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Answers to some of Professor Frazer's questions on Agriculture. 241

There are no special ceremonies at the clearance of land for cultivation ; no grafting, nor artificial fertilisation of fruit trees is practised. (They think that trees fecundate each other by means of their roots. See, later on, paragraph on Thonga Botany). They do not believe that a deity animates the crops, only that baloyi (wizards) can increase or diminish the product of the fields (See Part VI). As regards the rite of driving away the vermin from the fields, we shall describe it in Part VI. There are no superstitions about the last corn cut, and no special ceremony practised on the harvest field. Except the rule of silence which must be kept by women threshing rice and Kafir corn, there are no special regulations for persons engaged in agricultural operations, and no sexual taboos. The plough, the hoe, the pestle and the winnowing basket are not used in ceremonial purifications or to avoid dangers.

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As regards Agriculture, it cannot be said that the Thonga tribe is in a very backward stage. Thongas, as well as most of

241 the South African Natives, are essentially agriculturists, and they succeed in obtaining their food in abundance from the soil, although it is not very rich. The variety of their cereals is indeed remarkable, but they have never developed their cultivation to any great extent, because they did not wish to harvest more than was necessary for their immediate needs : there would have been no market for a surplus. Moreover they have never invented the plough, or thought of the use of irrigation, or of manure, those three great means of intensive production which civilised people have so long possessed. As regards irrigation, the Makaneta people made use of the tide, which drives back the waters of the Nkomati River, to water their rice plantations, but they never dug channels for the purpose.

177 241 Civilisation having brought these means of progress within their reach, they show themselves, however, quite ready to take advantage of them. Ploughs are wide-spread amongst Transvaal Thongas, where missionaries have taught them their use. There is no doubt that, having been initiated into civilised methods of cultivation, South African Natives, who have such a strong natural taste for agriculture, will in future considerably develop the resources of their soil.

But two conditions are necessary for this :

1) European Agencies who have at heart the welfare of the Natives, Colonial Governments, or Missionary Societies, must help them to acquire some technical knowledge, and better seeds and implements.

2) The laws of the country must be amended in such a way that the Natives will be encouraged to buy land. As long as they are only tenants of big Land Companies, or provisional occupants, squatters on Crown land, always threatened with the possibility of their gardens being turned into farms, and sold to White people without any compensation, how can they be expected to devote much time and interest to the betterment of the soil ? Individual land tenure will be the best incentive to agricultural progress.

231 men having relations with women during menstruation (I. p. 187).
562 Should a drop of it fall in the cattle kraal, this would endanger the
841 health of the whole herd. Women are even prohibited from
784 passing through a herd of oxen ; they must go round it, because otherwise the death of the calves would ensue. Amongst the Ba-Ngoni this taboo is so strong that a woman guilty of having transgressed against it was put to death (1).

231 The object of oxen-breeding is not milk but the acquisition
262 of *wealth* ; oxen mean wealth to the Native, a means of purchasing
556 girls and of thus increasing his family. Oxen are also bred for food, the meat being highly appreciated and divided amongst all the members of the family according to the strict rules previously explained (I. p. 329). The slaughtering is done by piercing the heart with an assagai, a painful and sometimes very protracted operation. This occurs at marriage feasts, at other family and national gatherings, at the sacrifice for rain (Part VI), and on special occasions, once a year for instance, when a headman wishes to feast his people. All, even neighbours who are not relatives and travellers, are welcome to the feast. Natives have wonderful olfactory powers. They seem to smell out the *lisuna*, viz., the peculiar odour of the meat, a mile off, and when an ox has been killed you see them emerging from the bush on all sides!

234 As regards *milk*, it certainly plays a part in the food of villages which are fortunate enough to possess a well-filled oxen kraal. The *milking* of the cows presents difficulties unknown in Europe! African cows have not yet learned to submit tamely to this operation! The calf must always be allowed to suck a few mouthfuls, then a boy pulls it away from the teat and the cow consents to be milked. Should a cow be too wild, they pass a string through its

241 (1) We meet here with an interesting instance of a superstition having no scientific
462 basis whatever, which is nevertheless productive of good results. Women must keep apart from oxen. Since the plough was introduced amongst South African Natives, they have been quick to notice that it is a very useful instrument, and have adopted it in many places. The plough has to be drawn by oxen and men alone are allowed to drive them. Thus women are relieved of the heavy work of tilling the fields which had been allotted to them by immemorial custom. It is probable that further knowledge will free the Natives from their old fear and from the taboo which resulted from it ; yet the idea that everything connected with oxen belongs to the domain of man will remain and thus real social progress will have been obtained through an absurd superstition !

821 which is also met with in *nyeleti* (star) and in the names of certain rivers. (I. p. 36.) At the present time there is no trace of worship or of mythological conceptions in connection with it. Natives see in its spots a woman carrying a shirundju basket or a bundle of sticks, but they do not attach to that image more importance than we do when we talk of the man in the moon.

821 I have described (I. p. 52) how the new moon is received
527 with exclamations of joy : in the villages the first person who
241 sees it shouts : "Kengelekezeeee,"—"the Crescent! the Crescent!" and this word is passed on from one village to another, and dancers rejoice because they will have moonlight to illuminate their feasts! Such is, at least, the reason now given by the Rongas for this custom. There were perhaps other ideas connected with the new moon in former times. — According to a Nkuna informant the day of the new moon is a *shimusi*, a day of rest. It is taboo to till the fields and cut the roots of the trees with a hoe. The moon must be left to become firm (tiyela). It is still tender as a new born child. Destroying winds might
821 blow and hail fall if this taboo were transgressed. — The
787 appearance of the crescent was also carefully examined, says the
828 same informant. If its horns were turned towards the earth, this showed that there was nothing to fear, all the dangers contained in this month had been poured out : "mafumo ma hangalakile" — "the assagais were dispersed." On the contrary, if the horns were turned towards heaven, this showed that the moon was full of weapons and misfortunes. — The new moon is of great importance in the customs connected with exorcism and possession, as every exorcist must undergo the *haza* purification at each new moon (Chapter III). Moreover Thongas, like many civilised people, also believe that some persons at this time have an attack of madness which is called *rihuhe ra ñhweti*, the lunar madness.

772 When the first quarter appears, the moon is said to *thwaza*,
821 a Zulu word which corresponds to *tjhama* in Thonga, and is very much used in the terminology of possession. Eight days later, it is said to *basa*, to be white or brilliant ; full moon is said to *sima* or to *lata batjongwana*, to put the little children to bed, because when it rises, it finds them already sleeping on their mats.

845 daha). Striking is frequently one of the rites of aggregation.
184 (See Van Gennep, *Rites de Passage*, p. 55). Let us remember that the Tembe clan is of Northern origin (I. p. 23) and has retained some customs which are different from those of the other Thongas (1).

2) Heaven and the "Nunu."

136 The following is a very extraordinary custom, and one which,
241 in many respects, greatly resembles those I have already described.
845 There is to be found, on the shores of Delagoa Bay, a small
772 Coleoptera belonging to the Alcides genus of the Cucurlionidæ
825 family. It has a proboscis-shaped mouth, a very hard carapace of half a centimetre in length, brown, and marked on each elytron with two longitudinal white bands. The Blacks call it the *nunu*. It is a scourge to the fields of beans and maize (much as cockchafers are with us). In December or January, when these insects begin to swarm, the chief men of the country order the diviners to throw the bones, and send the women to pick the "nunu" off the bean stalks. They gather them in "sala" shells. Then they choose (probably by casting lots) *a woman who has given birth to twins.*

(1) Amongst *the Hereros* a multiple birth is the happiest event which could possibly occur! The Rev. E. Dannert published in the *Capetown Folklore Journal* an account of the customs practised on such occasions by the Natives of this tribe, which occupies the Western side of Southern Africa, at about the same latitude as the Thongas. The father and mother are condemned to complete silence, under penalty of bringing a curse on those who speak to them. All the members of the tribe are convened and bring their cattle with them. The twins' family has to appear before the whole assembly, and is received with lamentations. Each individual must present himself to the parents, and make them a gift of beads, or other ornaments, in return for which the father and mother purify them by means of a certain powder. After this the father has the right of going from village to village, and claiming an ox from each one, as a kind of ransom. He becomes quite a rich man. This is the *kunga rite*, which we have also met with on many occasions amongst the Thongas (I. p. 124.). How can this diversity between the customs of the Hereros and those of most of the Thongas be explained? No doubt by this vague mysterious idea of Heaven, which is behind the religious conceptions of these tribes and in which all these rites originated. This celestial power, when it manifests itself, stupefies the Natives, for it causes "a death," entails a curse. With the Thongas it is the mother and children who are the objects of this malediction, hence the purifying ceremonies imposed upon them. With the Hereros, it is the whole tribe which is affected. The family into which the twins are born has been distinguished and honoured by this heavenly visitation, and collects for itself the fines which all must pay to regain the celestial favour!

One of her daughters, who is one of the twins, is told to throw 241
the whole "catch" of insects into the neighbouring lake. She is 845
accompanied by a woman of mature age, and, without speaking a 772
word, must go straight to the lake in question. Behind her 825
marches the whole crowd of women, arms, waists and heads covered with grass, carrying branches of the big-leaved manioc, which they wave from side to side, and singing the following song, which has been composed for this occasion :

> Nunu, muka! Hi da mabele !
> Nunu, go away! That we may eat mealies !

The twin throws her little calabash into the water without turning round (for she is not allowed to look behind). Then the savage yells are raised louder than ever, and the women sing their impure songs (ta ku ruketela), which they would never dare to utter on ordinary occasions, and which are reserved for these ceremonies, rain seeking and "nunu" hunting.

On that day, as during the mbelele, woe to the man who walks 241
along the paths! He is pitilessly attacked by these viragos, who 772
push him to one side, or even maltreat him, and none of his fellows 579
will go to his assistance. They all keep out of the way, for they 825
well know what would be in store for them, should they meet the savage crowd! So they mostly stay quietly at home in their huts!

The "nunu" is not always thrown into the water. Sometimes, to get rid of the plague, or rather to conjure it away, they start out in a band, armed with sticks, to throw these destructive insects on to neighbouring lands. It would seem that the men are mixed up in these underhand tricks, for it is said that this way of handing over the "nunu" to neighbours, often leads to pitched battles, in which sticks are wielded to some purpose, and blows rain thick and heavy! The people of Rikatla, citizens of Nondwane, used to make a present of their pseudo-cockchafers to the inhabitants of the district of Makunyule, belonging to the Mabota clan. But the true 825
way of conjuring away the "nunu" is to drown them in the lake, 772
and this custom, in common with the preceding ones, certainly has some connection with the notion of Heaven, the appearance of these pests being caused by that mysterious power, which

consist of natural objects such as rivers, big trees, etc. To define 423
the boundaries of their gardens, Natives dig an ordinary ditch 618
(ndjilekana, mu-mi) round the field, of about one foot in depth, which can be plainly traced even after the lapse of several years, when the field may have become fallow land and overgrown with vegetation.

The question of *roads* is a somewhat difficult, and often thorny 423
one to settle. Where has one the right to go ? And if, after 487
having used a certain path for years, you suddenly find it blocked by some individual whose field it skirts, and who has taken a fancy to hoe it up, what is to be done ? To try to come to some friendly agreement is always the most practical course. How often have we not experienced this difficulty with our cart ! The agriculturists were the more annoyed because we required a road three or four yards wide, while the Native footpaths are only little tracks of 15 to 20 inches in width. Being the only "carriage folk" in the district, we often had to ask permission to be allowed to pass, and have rarely met with any kind of refusal, for the Black is a reasonable being and quite appreciates the fact that roads are a necessity. If they see that a road is "ripening" (wupfile), viz., that it is more and more frequently used, they bow before the facts ; here, as everywhere else, custom makes the law.

At the present moment matters have been made much more 177
simple as the Portuguese Government has constructed wide 491
highways in all the more frequented parts of the country.

B. PRODUCTS OF THE SOIL.

I. *Cereals.*

"Hosi ya psone i *psithjama*" — "Their king is the *maize*," 243
says Mboza. This cereal is indeed the most widely cultivated in Thongaland. It is called *psifake* in Djonga. In the more fertile regions of the North, the size of the cobs and of the grains (nhleke, yin-tin) is much larger than on the sandy dunes of the Ba-Ronga. So the people of Khosen make fun of the Ba-Ronga and compare

243 their mealies with the small pimples of their tattooing (tinhleke ta Ba-Ronga). If maize is the most appreciated cereal, it is certainly not the most ancient known to the tribe. Owing to its modernity, no doubt, it is not subject to any taboo. It is sown and harvested
[252] without any rite. At Christmas time, when the first cobs are edible, people joyfully feast on the new crop. They cook some of them in the ashes, but they allow the rest to ripen and dry upon
[626] the stalks. Although no taboo prevents any owner of a field from eating the first mealies whenever it suits him, Mboza asserts that people who have obtained green mealies before the other inhabitants of the village, do not precede them in the enjoyment of this much appreciated food : "It would cause jealousy amongst them." This reason is perhaps at the bottom of the luma taboo (I, p. 394). Moreover they fear lest they might have to share their good luck with all their friends !

243 Next in importance comes the *mabele*, plur. of bele, dji-ma
273 (Ro.), ñwahuba (Dj.), the *millet* or *Kafir corn*. This is the well-known millet which we give to birds in cages, small, round, blackish grains which grow on a stem 3 to 5 feet high, in elongated cylindrical ears. Kafir corn is pounded, or ground, and may be eaten in the form of flour. But its main use is to provide the
243 yeast for the Kafir beer. As already pointed out (I. p. 42) the
825 mabele is one of the oldest cereals known to the Thongas. It is the ritual cereal, that used for the "shimhimbi," the dish offered to the confined mother or prepared for the luma ceremony. Its seeds undergo a certain treatment before being sown : the sub-chief blows upon them after having taken a small piece of a certain root in his mouth ; this root obtained from a kind of juncus found in the mountains, is supposed to have the power of keeping the ants away from the seeds. He distributes the seeds thus treated amongst his people, and every one mixes some of them with his own supply. Men of the reigning family alone possess
243 this root. Later on, when the time for sowing has come, it is
787 taboo for subjects to precede their chiefs or sub-chiefs in sowing mabele. The bones are consulted. Should the "madjuma" fall showing their mouths (see Part VI), it is the answer of the gods. They say: "Yes! this is the proper time! The mabele will do well!"

The horoscope is all the more satisfactory if the astragalus of the sheep is in the positive position, showing that the chiefs are happy and prosperous. At harvest time, Kafir corn is subject to the luma taboo, as explained in detail in a preceding chapter. All these rites prove the antiquity of the cereal. 243 787

The *sorghum*, (*maphila*, plur. of phila, dji-ma), is also extensively cultivated all through Thongaland. There are many kinds of sorghum : the *phila* proper, with reddish and white grains, the *timba*, whose stem has a sweet taste and is enjoyed almost as much as sugar cane, the *shikombe*, whose ears are curved, the *ntjyaka*, with a particularly elongated ear and the *djabana* with white seeds. The last has a somewhat bitter taste and is consequently spared by the birds, which are so fond of the other kinds of cereals that people have to stay in their gardens for months together to scare them away. 243

Rice (*mpunga*, mu-mi) is met with in a few districts only, notably on the Lower Nkomati, where the tide provides a natural irrigation, and in some depressions of the coast belt, especially near Rikatla. I could not say when it was introduced amongst the Thongas. In Shiluvane, its cultivation was entirely unknown in 1890, when it was brought thither by Lourenço Marques Natives. However a storekeeper told me that rice had been extensively cultivated in the country between 1870 and 1880. As it is subject to certain taboos (see later on) it may be that it is older than one would at first suspect.

In some places another cereal is cultivated, the *likoro* (probably Eleusine indica).

II. *Vegetables.*

Three Leguminosae play a considerable part in the feeding of the tribe : the ground nut, Kafir pea and Kafir bean. 244

a) The ground-nut, (Arachis hypogea), (rumane plur. marumane or tinumane (1) (Ro.), timanga (Dj.), is extensively cultivated,

(1) Rumane (cl. dji-ma) can form its plural either by prefixing *ma* which is the regular way, or by prefixing *tin*, which is exceptional. In the second case, the *n* of the prefix causes the initial *r* to permute into *n*.

these several loads!) It is made in much the same way as the roof of a hut, point downwards, ribs of folioles taking the place of sticks. This basket may be said to be the special property of the women (1) : they are very clever at balancing it on their heads ; it is very rarely that a woman, old or young, lets her shihundju fall. When empty it is turned upside down and serves as a hat. It is a really pretty sight to see the young girls starting out for the fields with their conical baskets standing straight up on their fuzzy locks. When they are travelling and arrive at a friendly village, they hold themselves perfectly upright, shooting glances here and there without stooping or turning their heads, till their friends rush out to meet them, seize their shihundju and place them on the ground, in small holes which they hastily make in the sand. This is the first duty of hospitality amongst women! 285 482 574

The *lihlelo* (No. 8) is used by cooks for winnowing the maize. Palm leaves not being sufficiently strong for this purpose, the lihlelo is made of the roots, of a tree called *nukanhlelo* (a kind of mimosa), cut into strips, and is coated with a reddish brown varnish prepared from mangrove bark. It is the lihlelo, or rather a smaller basket of the same sort called *ndjewane*, that the housewife takes with her when picking the small wild cucumbers, or gathering the various herbs which serve for the supplementary noontide luncheon. 285 415 243

In the northern clans one often meets with a spherical basket made of the same material as the winnowing basket and covered with an ordinary lihlelo. 285

Besides the foregoing, the Ba-Ronga have two or three baskets which are not in such general use : the *nhlaba*, a kind of plaited bag with interstices between the palm straws, for carrying fish, the *ntjaba*, etc.

Another article, which might, at first sight, be taken for a basket, but which serves quite a different purpose, is the *nhluto*, the strainer. (No. 1.) This unusually shaped strainer is a sort of long bag of plaited straw into which is poured the beer made 285 415 273

(1) The male members of the family are called "ba matlhari, those of the assagai" and the female "ba-shihundju, those of the basket," as these objects are characteristic of each sex.

1 [See p. 124 -- Analyst]

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244 being of every day use in the Thonga culinary art, in which it provides the fatty principles. This curious Papillonacea, after having blossomed, elongates the peduncle of the flower, which enters the ground, and the seed grows in the soil, well protected against the rays of the sun. Its taste is delicious, either prepared
[754] as a sauce to season mealie flour, or roasted. When there are no nuts inside the shells, which often happens, Thongas call the empty shells *mabvobo*. They say: "The ground nuts have refused" — "Ma yalile marumane." But this is a euphemism. They mean that the *baloyi*, the wizards, have refused to let them grow or, rather, have stolen them from their shells during the night (See Part VI).

244 *b)* Another Leguminosa frequently cultivated is the *nyume*
824 (yi-tin (Ro.), *ndlowu*, yi-tin, (Dj.), the *Kafir pea*. This also grows in the earth, like the ground nut. It is much coarser than the European pea, but is twice or three times as large and very nourishing. This vegetable is subject to very curious taboos amongst the Rongas. Whilst all other seeds are sown in one and the same garden, this must be planted in a separate patch, and the tinyume field must be shut off from the others by a fence of thorns. Men
[753] are allowed to plant them, but, as soon as they have grown a little, only women can enter the field. Should a man imprudently do so, he would transgress a severe taboo. The danger is twofold: firstly the man himself would be punished; he would get a hydrocele. But the owners of the field would also suffer: the crops would fail. They would reproach the transgressor with these words: "You have taken away (hungula) the strength of our peas!" In order to prevent any such mischance, the husband of the woman who owns the field goes and treats (daha) it in the following manner: he throws his assagay across the field, in the direction of the four cardinal points. Then the danger is removed and men can pass through the plot. It might be supposed that this taboo was of the same kind as that which rested on bananas, for instance, when they were still new in the country and feared on that account. But it would not seem that the Kafir pea is a recent innovation in Thonga agriculture. It has been known for a long time. Another taboo in connection with Kafir peas is this:

during the first year of her married life a woman is not allowed to plant them. 244 824

Amongst the Ba-Pedi of the Transvaal the planting of Kafir peas is taboo. They are said to prevent rain and to cause intense and injurious heat.

c) The Kafir bean, mbawen, yi-tin, (Ro.), nyawa, yi-tin, (Dj.), is a small round brownish seed, with a pleasant flavour, eaten either green or dry. I do not know of any taboo in regard to it. 244

Vegetables of other families also contribute to the food of the Thongas.

Sweet potatoes (nhlata, mu-mi) cultivated either in the sand of the hills or in the richer nyaka of the marshes, are a great resource, especially when they are farinaceous and not too watery. Their leaves (matsimbo) are also used as a vegetable.

Pumpkins also constitute one of the chief articles of diet of the Blacks, from one end of Africa to the other. They are of several kinds : the *ranga* (dji-ma) and *gawana* (dji-ma) of medium size, the *shilutana*, small, sometimes pear-shaped, the *khalabatla* (djima), huge water melons, with white or pink pulp and black pips, which are eaten both cooked and uncooked. Pumpkins are not grown for their fruit alone, as the leaves of certain kinds, especially the ranga, are excellent eating, and make a very good substitute for spinach. The flowers also are greatly appreciated by the Natives. Some kinds of pumpkins are used to make gourds and calabashes. (See I. p. 50.) 415 824

There are some taboos to be mentioned in connection with the *ranga*, which seems to be the oldest kind of pumpkin known to the Bantus (1). We have seen (I. p. 184) that girls are not allowed to walk amongst the leaves and must take special precautions when plucking them. It is taboo to plant any kind of pumpkin before the Chief and the sub-chief. They are subject to the law of hierarchy in the same way as Kafir corn. The prohibition is so conscientiously observed that, should an old man keep the people waiting and be too slow in planting his 244 753 824

(1) See in Meinhof, *Grundriss einer Lautlehre der Bantusprachen*, p. 183, the different forms of this word, which was *langa* in Ur-Bantu. Compare Torrend, *Comparative Grammar of the South African Languages*, p. 89.

244 pumpkins, another will go to the field and plant some seeds in
753 it without the old man's knowledge ; then people will venture to
824 plant in their own gardens. Transgression of this taboo is said to be punished by lumbago.

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828 kind of Chenopodiacea, which is also used as a medicine to induce forgetfulness ; the *nkakana*, a pretty plant of the Cucurbitaceae family, which climbs up the dried stems of maize after the harvest, and of which they eat the leaves and also the pretty little oval pointed fruit.

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285 where they propagate themselves, and seem to prosper the better the less they are cared for : the Natives take them to Lourenço Marques for sale in very original baskets made of a single palm leaf, with the follicles artistically twisted. I am unable to say when they were introduced. There is a agreeable kind of small tomato which grows wild in Khosen, about the size of a cherry.

244 Natives also cultivate a kind of *onion* (nyala, yi-tin), smaller than the European varieties, which they very much appreciate in their sauces.

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The manioc (ntjumbulu, mu-ni), is extensively cultivated both in the sand of the hills and near the marshes. The root, dried, and eaten either whole or ground, is very good food, but some plants have a bitter taste. But manioc can hardly be called a vegetable and borders on the domain of trees.

III. *Trees and fruits.*

Fruits play an important part in the diet of the Thongas. 137
but wild fruits alone, the fruit with which Mother Earth 245
presents them. They neither plant nor cultivate the trees ; when clearing the ground, they simply spare the fruit-bearing kinds which grow naturally. It may be that a man will sow some seeds of a particularly good *nkuhlu*, or *nkanye*, in his garden, if that garden happens to be devoid of trees : this is all they do to improve the quality of the fruit. It is no wonder, after all, that tree cultivation is almost entirely absent in Thonga agriculture : villages move so frequently, owing to contamination by death, accusations of witchcraft, or exhaustion of the soil, that nobody takes the trouble to plant trees which he will not be able to carry away with him to his new residence.

As regards the indigenous fruits, they are varied and numerous. 222
Natives systematically spare every fruit tree when clearing their

will call her on the day they begin to sow, and she will have to 241
sow the first seed; thus she will prevent all the seeds from 784
"burning."

But the most stringent taboos are connected with the *threshing of the cereals*. This work is exclusively done by women, and it is taboo for the men to approach the threshing floor. The Makanetas, who cultivate rice extensively, cut the ears and pile them into heaps in their own huts and not on the threshing floor. When the grain is dry, they thresh it by trampling on it. Should any woman pass by, it is taboo to speak to her. If she enters the hut and helps for a little while with the work, then the taboo is removed and you, the owners of the rice, can talk to her. — "Should you do so without that condition being fulfilled, this person would *take your rice* and leave you nothing but the husks (mataha). Should a relative, dwelling in the neighbouring district, come and see you whilst you are threshing rice, don't give her any part of your harvest: let her crush it in the mortar and take it away husked, lest you lose all your grain and keep the husks only! The husks of the rice which you give to your relative must remain with you." (Mboza). The same applies to Kafir corn. To allow a relative from outside to pluck ears from your garden, to thresh them and take them home means to "spoil your corn" (onha mabele). When you are threshing Kafir corn, let the visitor first take the pestle and help you before you speak to her.

As regards *tree culture*, it was formerly considered a taboo 245
to plant foreign kinds, such as bananas, oranges, etc. When 784
Mboza planted the first mango trees in [illegible]kwen, people told 824
him: "You will die! You have called misfortune on yourself (u tihlolele), and other people will eat your fruit!" I heard this taboo explained in Shiluvane as follows. When a man has been obliged to move, and leaves trees planted by him in his old village, people passing near the ruins shake their heads and say: "Look at those trees! They have chased away the master of the village." These two testimonies are interesting, and fully illustrate the origin of a taboo. The desolation of a ruin has been connected with the presence of new trees, as they have often been noticed together. Hence the idea that the trees are

245 784 824 the cause of the desolation. Planting new trees is consequently a taboo! Nowadays however, this superstition has died out, and one may see a great number of mango, orange, lemon (1), and pho-pho trees in Thonga fields, on the Coast as well as in Zoutpansberg.

[351] 685 789 Natives do not generally fence their gardens. Stealing is therefore very easy and it is no wonder that they have recourse to magical means to protect themselves. Here are some of them; they are characteristic instances of Bantu magic.

The *rihehlo*. This consists of a kind of mysterious influence exerted on the thief by throwing a magical powder into his footprints or by taking a little of the earth found in these footprints and treating it with the drugs. The inhabitants of the village where the thief lives will be seized by disease; this will induce them to come to the owners of the garden to confess their fault and pay a fine. Then the magician who had furnished the drug will give them a counter-drug and they will be healed! Amongst the Pedis, the magician anoints with his drugs the stem from which a cob has been stolen. Then the thief will feel intolerable suffering in his little finger and come to the village of the people whom he has robbed crying: "I have stolen!" He pays the fine, receives in exchange the counter-drug and the pain ceases! (Spelonken)

The tinhlamalala. This is the name of the central nervules of the leaves of the Hyphaene palm tree. They are like little snakes, very slender, and flexible. To make the resemblance still greater, the owner of a field makes a knot at the extremity of the rod: this represents the head of the snake. Then he looks for the dried skin which has been cast off by a real snake; he reduces this to ashes, makes a powder with these ashes and anoints the rods. He weaves the rods together to form a kind of crown and places it on one of the mealies stems in his garden. When the thief

137 (1) The lemon tree is called mbomu (mo-mi). This seems to be a Native word and the tree also may be indigenous in the country. It grows wild on the banks of the Lower Nkomati to such an extent that there is an island in the river, some distance above Moakwen, which is called Ilha dos Limões, Lemon Island. The lemons are of large size and their rind resembles that of the orange.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

of desolation and of sorrow. (Remember Job and compare the rite of rangela bowumba, page 194.) The *store houses, paitlanda* (Ro.), *paitlati* (Dj.), 28) are close by and are built in various forms; little huts with reed walls, when intended for the mealies, with plastered walls, when built to contain ground nuts or sorgho (*madulu* (Dj.). They are sometimes placed on a palm-tree floor resting on short poles, or they are suspended to the boughs of a

Phot. A. Bovel.

The interior of a Ronga village. (Nouchwane).

tree. *Pigs' kraals* (*hoko* 20) are to be found in the same region; sometimes they are placed even further in the forest on account of their offensive smell.

Mealie leaves, heaps of makanye stones, broken mortars and discarded pestles lie about behind the huts. If anyone wants to keep the place tidy, he can plant pine apples there (30), or tobacco, or Chili-pepper (biribiri). Pumpkin plants often creep over all this disorder. Flowers of European origin are sometimes seen on the hubo in the neighbourhood of Lourenco Marques, especially "everlastings", or the tropical periwinkle, Vinca rosea

247/331 (L.), with its white or pink blossoms, which have spread all over the coast.

Having now finished our first general inspection, let us add some details about the huts and the open places in the village.

342 The hut, the construction of which we shall describe later on,
784 (Part IV) has an opening (nyangwa) of variable dimensions closed by a door. In some parts of the Gaza country it is so small that one must positively crawl to enter it. Everywhere one must at any rate stoop low (korama). As regards the *threshhold* (ntjandja wa shipfalo), it is not taboo to step over it. The headman's threshhold however is dreaded because it was treated with medicines when the hut was built, so it is taboo to sit on it ; these powerful medicines might do harm and
342 even cause death. In the middle of the black clay floor is a
354 kind of raised circle, in the centre of which fire is occasionally lighted in winter on account of the cold. It is the interior *shitiko*. Cooking may be done here if it rains ; glowing embers sometimes remain on it during the night and numberless babies have been burnt to death by falling into the fire while their mothers were
513 sleeping. On the left, on entering, is the sleeping place (shilawo)
853 of the wife, on the right that of the husband. They both however
841 generally spread their mats on the right and sleep beside each other. It is only during the tabooed periods (menses, nursing), that the husband must keep to his own particular side (p. 188).

353 The back of the hut is generally occupied by the big basket (ngula) in which clothing and seeds are kept. This spot is called *mfungwe*. In the roof *(lwangu)* are fixed or suspended various articles : ears of sorghum or millet, cobs to be used as seed at the next sowing, assagais, sticks and knobkerries etc., and against the walls one frequently observes rough drawings made with white clay, or, in the vicinity of towns, chromos of Queen Victoria, Edward VII, or Don Carlos, as the case may be!

361 The hubo and the bandla differ from each other. *Bandla* is
351 a Zulu word which has supplanted the Ronga term *shisiso*, viz.,
562 "the place where one finds shelter from the wind." Men light a small fire there to warm themselves. They also eat together

273 musical instinct. Some days later, another headman invites his
574 neighbours to another beer-drinking, and so they eat and drink
622 together (ba delana, ba nwelana) as long as there is plenty in
595 the storehouses. When provisions become scarce, they begin to spare the mealies. But the advantage of the polygamist becomes apparent here ; his storehouses are many and he can feast his friends for many months.

These beer-drinking customs are essentially demoralising ; they

[273]

Phot. A. Bard.

Beer-drinking party in Maputju country.

are one of the curses of primitive Native life. But let me remark that, as the making of the beer takes nine days, these excesses cannot be very frequent, and the habit of drinking wine at the White man's store is ten times more harmful, as in this case alcohol is never lacking. We shall speak later on of alcoholism amongst Natives. (See Part IV.)

276 Another pastime, very much appreciated by some, but not so
248 general, is *hemp smoking* and the accompanying *saliva contest*. Hemp (mbange) has been cultivated for a considerable time amongst the Thongas, especially on the coast, not to make ropes, but for smoking.

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4/62 places the food (phamela) on plates of the size of small basins or
511 dishes (mbenga). We have seen how she distributes it amongst
264 the inhabitants of the village. When all have finished eating, the
women wash the plates, put aside the pots which contain the food
left for the next morning, and tidy up the yards.
517 Whatever we may say, the day has been a well-filled one
for the women. They are very rarely seen playing in the day time.
We shall see how they recuperate themselves in the evening.

II. *Men's occupations.*

4/62 As for the men, their life is far from being as active as that
517 of the women. They have not, like their diligent wives, the
regular continuous work of preparing the food, not to mention
the care of the children. The duties which fall on them, and
which they are willing to perform, only require of them isolated
efforts from time to time.
4/62 As regards *agricultural work*, it is generally believed that
241 men leave this entirely to the women. This is exaggerated.
Amongst the Rongas each man possesses his own field which he
himself tills, and this is an old custom, a special term even
being applied to the field thus tilled: it is called *mpashu*. He may
sow seeds in it, but he does not weed it, leaving his wife to do this
troublesome work for him and also to reap it. He makes only
one exception in the case of the sorghum, of which he consents to
go and cut the ears. But he helps his wife in other ways, for ins-
4/62 tance in the storing of the food; he builds the little huts used as
251 storehouses, prepares the *tjala*, viz., the mat stretched on four poles
on which ground nuts are dried in the field, digs holes for the
buhiri, the shelf at the back of the hut where the basket containing
the seeds is placed. His wife does not think him a lazy fellow at
4/62 all. When the harvest is finished, she takes the smaller cobs of
273 mealies (makunhula), those which will not be kept, or the grains
of millet and sorghum which are found on the threshing floor
after the threshing, and with them she prepares a special beer to

241 out of the earth with their well filled double pods attached to their extremities.

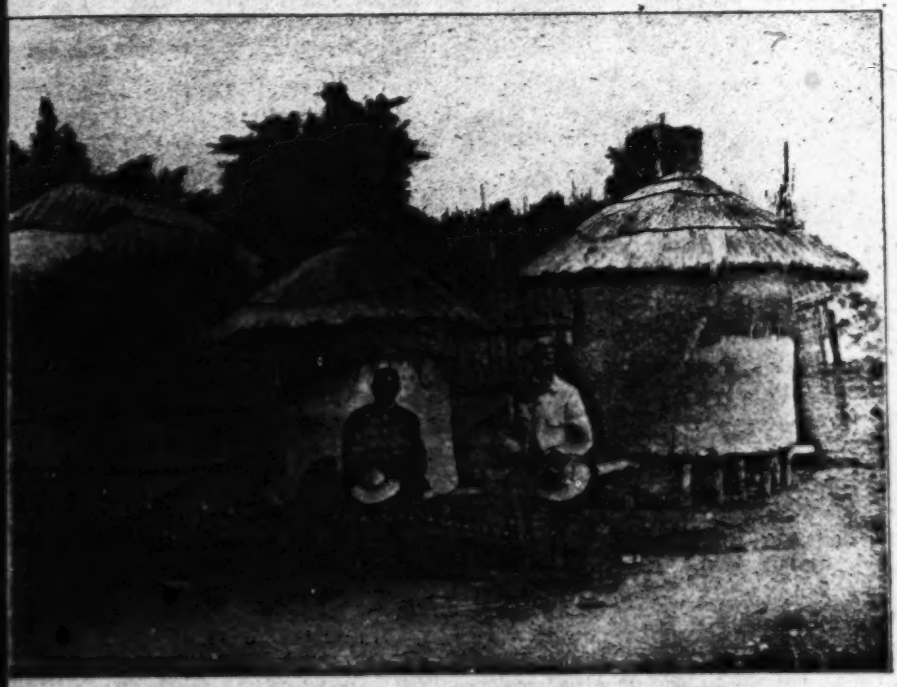
241 The men then construct *drying floors* (tjala, dji-ma) : a mat
251 made of reeds, or of the wood of the palm-tree, is placed in the
343 middle of the field, and supported by four poles ; and on it are
221

The storehouses of Sokis (Rikatla). *Phot. H. A. Junod*

laid (yaneka) ground-nuts, and peas, to remain there exposed to the sun until they are completely dried.

241 The next operation is the *threshing*, or separating the grain
252 from the ears (hula). This is done with sorghum and Kafir
221 corn, but not with maize, of which the cobs are generally kept entire in the storehouse until wanted. The *hula* is done on a specially prepared threshing floor in the middle of the field. The floor has been hardened by means of nkanye stones, and smeared over with clay. The sorghum and corn stems are brought thither, and the ears are beaten with small sticks. Or the ears are cut, placed in mortars and slightly pounded to liberate the grains. The best have been preserved for seed.

grains. The best have been preserved for seed. When the threshing is finished, the grains are collected (wolela or hlakula) in the *lihlelo* basket and winnowed (hehera). Kafir corn and sorghum are then stored in the big *ngula* basket (1). As regards maize, it is kept in the storehouses proper (shitlanta), 241 251 343 221



Dula storehuts in the Shiluvane village *Phot. H. A. Junod.*
(The man sitting on the right is Viguet, my faithful informant).

little huts built of reeds with a moveable roof and raised on piles. All the shitlanta belong to the husband, though most of the tilling and all the weeding has been done by the wife, as already explained (I. p. 337). In the Transvaal, beans, peas and ground nuts are packed in the *dula* (dji-ma), which are smeared outside with clay, [423] 343

(1) It is taboo to weave the *ngula* before harvest, just as it is to prepare the stube before the birth of the baby. Before harvest Kafir corn is still *nyimba*, viz., a child not yet born. Who knows if the hail or the locusts will not destroy it? Wait till you have harvested, then you will see what size your basket must be! 241

462
511
482

In a small pot they prepare a fresh sauce of monkey nuts to season it. The family takes its *morning meal* (fihlula) ; then, if it is the season of tillage, *they go to the fields*, with hoes on their shoulders, the shihundju (conic baskets) on their heads, and sometimes their babies on their backs. The whole morning they will dig up sweet potatoes, grub up their future plantation, or weed their

[252]

Phot. H. Gr.

Spelonken women preparing the evening meal after their return from the fields.

mealies. In the heat of the day they come back in order to prepare the evening meal. Sometimes, if the gardens are far away, or when they are employed in scaring the birds from their sorghum plantation, they remain the whole day in their fields, and cook their evening food there, bringing it back to the village at sunset quite hot (1).

(1) I saw a Rikatla woman coming home under such conditions, carrying her child on her shoulders and the burning monkey-nut sauce in the shihundju on her head. Her foot caught in a root ; she tottered ; the pot fell on the baby, which was scalded to death.

462 Many other home duties may oblige the woman to leave the
511 fields at noon ; her head still laden with her basket, she may
356 go to the swamps, near by, and dig out a store of black clay
317 (bompfi). She comes back, mixes the clay with the fresh dung which she has taken from the oxen kraal, and, spreading this mixture with her hands, smears the floor of the hut. This work is called *sindja* (Ro) or *kopola* (Dj.). Dust and vermin will at once disappear under this plaster of black earth, which will dry in a few hours time. Woe to the woman who has not put enough dung in this novel kind of cement! The floor will crack. The clay will shrivel and, when people walk on it, it will crumble into dust! The work will have to be done all over again two or three days later. But if the clay is of good quality, it will harden and last at least a week, the more so as neither wooden shoes nor nailed boots will spoil it.

462 Another woman will go with her primitive axe in search of
511 dead wood. She makes a bundle which she ties with grasses,
213 strengthening these grasses by entwining them with small
284 twigs (1). On returning to the village, she throws her burden on to the ground, before the door of her hut, with the exclamation : "Hu!"

462 Others go to their storehouses, the small huts on poles, where
511 mealies, monkey nuts in their husks, millet and sorghum are kept.
313 They take what they need from these stores (tshaha) by lifting up
252 the roof of the little hut, come back and empty the mealies into the
376 mortar, whilst a friend rubs off the grains from the ears of millet or shells the monkey nuts. Two or three women seize their pestles and begin to pound, in measured time, the bottom of their mortars : Gu-gu-gu-gu. Quite a long way off, on the other side of the copse, this pestle song can be heard, resembling the noise of the flails when corn is threshed in the barn. And the busy women stream with perspiration! This method of crushing the mealies in an erect position, by a vigorous up and down movement of the pestle in

284 (1) Men, when they fasten a bundle with a string, make a knot (ba fundju) whilst
313 women twist it with a little stick (sulela hi linhi) ; when a woman ties a knot, the two ends of the string will be at right angles to the string, whilst when a man makes it, the ends will be parallel with it. (Mbotza).

516 the mortar, is a very healthy one and gives the Thonga women a straight and slender figure. In the tribes where the millet is mostly ground between stones, the women who do this work kneeling are shorter and stouter.

462 511 312 Before putting the mealies on the fire, the women go down to the village well, their round pitchers on their heads, to fetch the water they need. In the Ronga country these wells are simple holes dug in the sand, in the centre of the hollows (1). Wells are generally surrounded by thorny branches so as to prevent the cattle from coming to drink and fouling the water. It must be observed that it is not a spring which feeds the well; it is the underground layer of water which has been reached, and which always maintains the same level except in times of drought.

[415]

Phot. A. de Moreau.

Shilovane girls returning from the well.

462 511 372 252 The sun goes down on the horizon. The long shadows of the trees round the village lengthen on the square. Through the leaves, a few rays still reach the fireplaces and traverse the smoke which rises peacefully from the various kitchens. Between broken pots, or between the pieces of termitine clay which constitute the hearth on which the pots rest, the women place some pieces of dead wood; when these burn away in the centre, they push them further under the pot where the flour is cooking (ba hlanganyeta ndjilo). Evening has come. The men have arrived. With a large spoon (nkombe) the lady of the house

(1) In the Transvaal, where there are rivers, water is taken from them, or from wells dug near the spruit into which the water leaks through the soil, being more or less filtered by this process.

243 their mealies with the small pimples of their tattooing (tinhleke ta Ba-Ronga). If maize is the most appreciated cereal, it is certainly not the most ancient known to the tribe. Owing to its modernity, no doubt, it is not subject to any taboo. It is sown and harvested [252] without any rite. At Christmas time, when the first cobs are edible, people joyfully feast on the new crop. They cook some of them in the ashes, but they allow the rest to ripen and dry upon [626] the stalks. Although no taboo prevents any owner of a field from eating the first mealies whenever it suits him, Mboza asserts that people who have obtained green mealies before the other inhabitants of the village, do not precede them in the enjoyment of this much appreciated food : "It would cause jealousy amongst them." This reason is perhaps at the bottom of the luma taboo (I, p. 394). Moreover they fear lest they might have to share their good luck with all their friends !

243 Next in importance comes the *mabele*, plur. of bele, dji-ma
273 (Ro.), ñwahuba (Dj.), the *millet* or *Kafir corn*. This is the well-known millet which we give to birds in cages, small, round, blackish grains which grow on a stem 3 to 5 feet high, in elongated cylindrical ears. Kafir corn is pounded, or ground, and may be eaten in the form of flour. But its main use is to provide the
243 yeast for the Kafir beer. As already pointed out (I. p. 42) the
825 mabele is one of the oldest cereals known to the Thongas. It is the ritual cereal, that used for the "shimhimbi," the dish offered to the confined mother or prepared for the luma ceremony. Its seeds undergo a certain treatment before being sown : the sub-chief blows upon them after having taken a small piece of a certain root in his mouth ; this root obtained from a kind of juncus found in the mountains, is supposed to have the power of keeping the ants away from the seeds. He distributes the seeds thus treated amongst his people, and every one mixes some of them with his own supply. Men of the reigning family alone possess
243 this root. Later on, when the time for sowing has come, it is
787 taboo for subjects to precede their chiefs or sub-chiefs in sowing mabele. The bones are consulted. Should the "madjuma" fall showing their mouths (see Part VI), it is the answer of the gods. They say: "Yes! this is the proper time! The mabele will do well!"

Its first cousin, the *kwakwa* (dji-ma), is of the same shape and size, but, when ripening, becomes quite an orange yellow; it is never eaten uncooked. The pulp surrounding the stones is prepared in a certain way and made into strips (nhasa, yi-tin), which are hung on the trees to dry or over the fire to be smoked; this is what is called *nfuma*. Once the *nfuma* is dried, it can be pounded and made into a flour much valued when the storehouses are empty, and the new season has not yet begun. 222 252

The sala and the kwakwa are two species of the genus Strychnos (Strychnos spinosa and ungasha) which furnishes chemists and poisoners with the well-known drug strychnine. Does the fruit contain any proportion of this substance? I do not know. It has never been known to kill any one, although it may be the cause of many intestinal troubles which naturally result when the Natives, having no more maize or sweet potatoes, live on nothing but this particular fruit. Strange to say, the kwakwa stones are credited with the power of attracting lightning; the old women say that, when making *nfuma*, these large white stones must never be allowed to lie in a heap in the open air: lightning would surely strike the village were any such imprudence committed. It is a taboo. 222 137 821

I have already described the *nkanye* (mu-mi), (Sclerocarya caffra, Kafir plum), which is certainly the most highly valued of all the trees in Thongaland (I. p. 398). The fruit is used primarily and essentially for the brewing of bukanye, by pressing the pulp, but the kernels of the stones of the nkanye are also much appreciated; they are very oleaginous and a modicum of oil may be obtained by merely squeezing them between the fingers! They are called *mango*, and the saying is that they are food for kings, for the stones are very hard, the kernels very small and it is hard work to obtain even a small quantity! Not that there is any lack of stones! Heaps, which have been thrown away at the time of the famous bukanye brewing, are to be found in the vicinity of all villages, but the cracking is the difficulty. For this a stone must be sought, far and wide, and small hollows must be made in it of a size to fit the circular nkanye stones; these are then inserted in the sockets and cracked by a sharp skilful blow with another stone, 222 252

222 great care being taken to avoid crushing the small tender kernel,
252 the royal delicacy! In times of famine the *mongo* is in great request, in spite of the trouble involved in obtaining it.

222 Another very valuable tree is the *nkuhlu* (mu-mi) (Trichilia
439 emetica I. p. 395) whose nuts are the *tihuhlu* (yin-tin) (1) the mafureira. This is a curious fruit, the nut itself being of a greenish black colour, bitter and very oily; on this grows white pulp (bululu), covered with a beautiful skin of a bright orange, which, however, only covers about three quarters of the central black nut. The Natives pick this fruit in November and December, and stuff their cheeks with it; the saliva softens the pulp, which melts gradually in the mouth, affording them a prolonged enjoyment of its exquisite flavour. One sees children, and also folks of mature age, with their cheeks puffed out as if they were badly swollen and throats contracted with the effort of sucking down the delicious pulp; when nothing remains but the black nut which is called nkampfi, viz., the product of suction, it is carefully put aside and will be used for making vegetable fat; or it will be sold to the Whites, who export them to Marseilles where, it appears, they are used for making really good oil. Let us hope these nuts, thus sucked clean by the Blacks, have never supplied any portion of our salad dressing! But there is no occasion to be alarmed, as they are only used for making machine oil. The Blacks themselves do not use the tihuhlu oil for culinary purposes but for outward application only.

252 The *bululu* can also be made into an edible fat by the following
303 process: whole fruits of nkuhlu are first dried, then softened in water; when quite soft, they are pressed between the fingers so as to separate the white pulp, which is then called *munyantsi*, from the black nuts (nkampfi). This munyantsi is cooked and the fat is skimmed off (wungula) with spoons as it melts and comes to the surface. This edible fat, as well as that used for smearing the body, is preserved either in calabashes or in sala shells (shikutja). The preparation of nkampfi fat takes place as

(1) A certain number of fruits instead of belonging to the dji-ma class, as is the rule, are incorporated with the yin-tin class, the tihuhlu, the tihlu (fruit of the muhlu tree), the tindjole (fruit of the mdjole), etc.

follows: the nuts are thoroughly dried (womisa), and slightly pounded in a mortar so as to remove the thin peel which covers them; they are then winnowed, and ground into a kind of flour; this flour is put into a pot with a little water and cooked; the fat is then collected in a big shell of Achatina and kept for external use. The residue is called *bubindje*. 252 303

I do not mention all the other fruits, more or less succulent, which serve the Natives for food. One must be terribly famished to enjoy them. I may just specify the *pfilu* (dji-ma), Vangueria infausta, a kind of insipid medlar; the *tjhopfa* (dji-ma), fruit of the *ntjhopfa* tree, which I could never muster courage enough to taste, and the *bungu* (dji-ma) sometimes dignified with the title of the Kafir orange. This latter is the fruit of one of the varieties of the india-rubber tree, which grows along the shores of Delagoa Bay. (Landolphia Kirkii.) In the Morakwen forest grow the ntjhole shrubs from which the *tintjole* berries are picked during the summer. 137 222

The *muhlu* or water tree bears a berry called *tihlu*, which has an agreeable taste. The *mphimbi* bears the *mahimbi*, a large round fruit similar in form to an apricot with a double stone. Both these fruits are used to prepare a drink, and we shall mention them when treating of Thonga drinks.

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There are a few taboos to mention in connection with trees. 782

It is considered dangerous to cut the trunk of any large tree. 824 Should you wish to make a mortar of a nkanye, first smear some of the bark with certain drugs and also burn them at the foot of the tree before cutting it down. Should you want to cut down a nkwenga or a mahogany-tree, nhlapfuta (Ro.), shene (Dj.), to make a canoe, the master of the forest must first offer a sacrifice to the spirits of his ancestors who have been buried there. If you omit this precaution, you will be unable to find again the tree you have chosen.

241 out of the earth with their well filled double pods attached to their extremities.

241 The men then construct *drying floors* (tjala, dji-ma) : a mat
251 made of reeds, or of the wood of the palm-tree, is placed in the
343 middle of the field, and supported by four poles ; and on it are
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The storehouses of Sokis (Rikatla). *Phot. H. A. Junod.*

laid (yaneka) ground-nuts, and peas, to remain there exposed to the sun until they are completely dried.

241 The next operation is the *threshing*, or separating the grain
252 from the ears (hula). This is done with sorghum and Kafir
221 corn, but not with maize, of which the cobs are generally kept entire in the storehouse until wanted. The *hula* is done on a specially prepared threshing floor in the middle of the field. The floor has been hardened by means of nkanye stones, and smeared over with clay. The sorghum and corn stems are brought thither, and the ears are beaten with small sticks. Or the ears are cut, placed in mortars and slightly pounded to liberate the grains. The best have been preserved for seed.

263 small amount of salt it contains! This is a long process attended
317 with very unsatisfactorily results. During the Anglo-Boer war,
258 Natives round Leydsdorp reverted to it as all the stores were closed and no salt was procurable.

Salt manufacture, Northern Transvaal. *Phot. P. Rousset.*

Nowadays Native manufacture of salt has entirely ceased. The beautiful glistening white article has advantageously replaced the greyish, blackish mixture of former times.

II. *Food.*

252 It is not an exaggeration to speak of a culinary art amongst
581 the Thongas. They give great attention to cooking. Of a woman who knows how to cook well, it is said: "Awa hisa" "she burns;" not that she lets the sauce burn, but this expression corresponds to the French "cordon bleu." A girl who "hisa" will have more chance of being "lobola" than another.

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192 the culinary vocabulary. Every variety of dish or of culinary process has its particular name, and to master all these terms

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[264]

a special apprenticeship ought to be served to one of the queens of the kitchen. I cannot boast of having gone as far as that!

As a rule women cook only once a day, towards the end of the afternoon. The big meal is eaten in the evening when everybody is expected to eat till satisfied (shura), and what remains of it is generally finished the next day in the morning (fihlula). This evening meal consists of two component parts: the cooked cereals, and the sauces seasoning them. But the menu can be greatly varied. In most cases the cereals are prepared as *bupsa* (flour), or *mapa*, and the sauce, *muru* (Ro.), *sheshebo* (Dj.), is made of monkey nuts, ground and boiled in water, vegetables, India-pepper, tomatoes, shrimps, etc. Or the cereals, maize, millet or sorghum, may be only husked (tlhokola) and cooked whole; they are then called *tihobe* (plur. of hobe, the central part of the grain), and the monkey nut sauce is often replaced by beans or peas cooked together with the tihobe. All these dishes are very tasty and many White people readily eat the Thonga food, which seems to me superior to the Sutho.

However, I never very much appreciated the *bupsa* which the Thongas consider superior to the tihobe and which takes a longer time to prepare. The grains must first be soaked for several hours in water (lobeka) to soften them; they are then crushed, the husks being carefully removed by the winnowing process (hehera) in the *lihlelo* basket, which is spasmodically shaken by sudden jerky movements; the interior of the grain is then pounded until it forms a very fine flour, as light as the best Australian flour; the small round particles remaining are called *buse*, and eaten as tihobe, as the bupsa must be perfectly homogeneous. When it boils in the pot, the cook stirs it the whole time with a stick provided at the bottom with small cross bars, two to three inches in length; she twirls the stick with her hands in the same way as a man lighting a fire with the wooden flint, and this operation prevents the flour from forming lumps. The lobeka process gives a somewhat nauseating taste to the bupsa; that is why Europeans do not care for it, but Natives like it precisely for that reason. The preparation of *tihobe* is not so complicated, as no preliminary softening is necessary. It is a somewhat coarse food which,

262 however, answers admirably to the wants and capacities of the Native stomach! When the bupsa of the previous day has undergone too much fermentation during the night, it is given to [264] the dogs. A small supplementary meal is often cooked at midday: a plate of vegetables, for instance. Or, if the pangs of hunger are too keenly felt, a little nfuma meal (p. 17) is eaten with honey. Any addition of this kind to the ordinary every day fare is welcome!

There are a few other preparations made from cereals: the *mbila*, raw meal mixed with water, the *ntlatu*, a lighter kind of maize flour used for invalids, the *shimhimbi* made of Kafir corn which is the special dish for women who are more or less fasting during the confinement period (I. p. 42).

Thongas also know how to cook by steaming. They put a large plate (mbenga, mu-mi) on top of the pot and hermetically seal it with ox dung. This prevents the steam from escaping. Dung is a thing by no means to be avoided in the culinary art. They look upon it as quite clean (1).

Men have now become accustomed to ordinary ground mealie meal *(mugayo)* which Europeans use extensively as porridge in South Africa. They eat it in the mines and in the schools; but women do not touch it and think it vastly inferior to their own *bupsa*.

As regards the husks they are called *budangwana*, a word which may mean: "that which is eaten by the dogs." They are given to the dogs, the pigs, and the fowls.

We shall see in the next paragraph how milk and meat are dealt with.

III. *Drink*.

271 Natives are fond of the fresh clear water (mati) running in the spruits of the Transvaal, but they also make use of the

(1) I remember on one of the Transvaal roads, meeting two converts of a German colleague returning from an evangelisation tour. I offered them a piece of bread, for which they were very thankful and they moved on some distance to eat it by themselves. I was much struck to see them, after having said grace, pick up a large piece of dried ox dung which was lying there and place their bread upon it before eating: they evidently thought it was much cleaner than the bare ground!

rite may explain why sexual relations are prohibited during all 226
important hunting and fishing operations. With their magic 825
conception of Nature, Bantus do not separate the domain of man 834
from the animal world ; human actions have their immediate effect amongst animals. So if men and women keep strict control over themselves, hippopotami, fish or elephants will not be so wild, and hunters will have more success!

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* *

Meat is either boiled (pseka), or roasted (wosha). When 252
boiled, the broth is called *muru*, (Ro.) or *sheshebo*, (Dj.) the same name that is given to monkey nut sauce or any other seasoning. When roasted, it is either placed on the embers, or skewered on sticks (lihanga) and exposed to the heat of the fire.

The blood of animals (bubendje) is also eaten by most men. 262
However, many fear it (tshaba), not on account of a yila, as if it were taboo, but rather from individual loathing. There are no special laws to be observed as regards bones. The meat of sacrifices, offered in the funeral rites, must be eaten *on the road*, not in the mortuary nor in the guests' villages, as we have already seen.

Meat is welcome, and eagerly sought after in time of famine 262
(ndlala). Should the October rains fail, or the crops be destroyed 731
by grasshoppers, as has been, alas, frequently the case since the [136]
first appearance of these pests in August 1894 (1), the Natives are bereft of every resource (2). They dig up all the edges of the

(1) Just at the commencement of the war between the Natives and the Portuguese, grasshoppers arrived in thick clouds in the district of Lourenço Marques. They had not been seen for a great number of years: old folk only recollected having seen them in bygone times. Since then the scourge has never entirely disappeared. The coincidence of their coming and the beginning of hostilities struck the Blacks very forcibly; they often said, at the sight of the grasshoppers: "They announce the armies of Gungunyana."

(2) Here is a pretty couplet with reference to famine:

Nkondjo wa nhlengana shipopokwana ?

— Lembe ra ndlala a he ngume kusuhe !

The traces of the little antelope (nhlengana) (which one sees in the desert a long way from its lair) recall the year of famine, when one does not stay near home ; (one must go a long way to search for food). See also the several allusions to the year of famine in *Les Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, p. 158, 160 et seq.

the male at once starts again from the top; thus the friction continues without an interval. The motion widens the notch in the female to such an extent that the male penetrates and begins to burn it : the ashes find their way out by the lateral notch ; a little dry grass has been placed there and soon begins to smoulder. An expert obtains fire after six or seven consecutive frictions, especially when using bulolo. 372

Embers are kept burning as far as possible the whole night in the fire-place. Should they however have been allowed to go out, the mistress of the kitchen will send her daughter to the neighbouring hut or village to fetch a glowing cinder. This is called *ku woka* (1). The ember will be carefully carried in a sala shell or occasionally in a big snail shell. There is a characteristic rule to be observed in the woka operation. It must generally always be performed by the same person. If two women go to fetch an ember the same day from two different villages, the first must spit upon the ember of the second and extinguish it, because it is a taboo to have in the same village two fires obtained from two different sources. The act of spitting on one of the embers will "remove misfortune (susa khombo)."

Salt, also an object of primary necessity in culinary art, has always been known to the Thongas, as far back as can be remembered ; the name *munyu* (mu-mi) is a genuine Bantu word. Natives can procure it in three different ways : by gathering dried salt on the lagoons near the sea (wolela sole), and in the pans (salt pans) on the mountains (Zoutpansberg), or, when salt is not deposited on the soil, they take salted earth, put it into a conical basket and slowly pour water upon it : this percolates through into a pot, carrying the salt with it, and the solution thus obtained is evaporated. See the adjoining reproduction of a photograph, taken in the extreme North East of the Transvaal, by the Rev. P. Rosset. A third way of obtaining salt is from a certain Composita plant which is wide-spread in the plains of the Low Country ; it is burnt and its ashes washed in order to extract the 263 317 258

(1) *Woka*, from the same root as *wora*, to warm oneself at the fire and *wosha*, to roast meat.

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856 mouthful to drink, then dip her finger into the medecine and let
731 two or three drops fall from it on the fontanella ; then she spits on
757 the lower part of the shell and presses it all along the sternum
854 of the baby as far as the navel. This is said to "nurse the child, to make him grow." Should he be sick, this treatment will be repeated many times a day. If he is well and goes about with his mother, she will pour the *milombyana* into the small calabash and give him a few sups from it from time to time.

The child must never drink ordinary water, but only the
853 *milombyana* decoction. It is a taboo. Should the mother travel
271 far from home and leave behind her the *milombyana* pot, she is
284 allowed to add some water to the calabash, but she must always leave a little of the decoction in the calabash before doing so. The mother herself is not allowed to drink the water of another country. She must only drink water from home and, if she is forced to travel, she must take a little powder from the reed each time she drinks, so that the child may become familiarised with that country (1). These laws must be kept during all the nursing period.

862 The child begins to eat *solid food* as soon as his teeth are cut, and when he is able to take it with his own hands. But some people do not like to give it to him too soon, as they say his stools become fetid. When later on he is able to go outside and to take care of himself, then he can eat any ordinary food.

853 If the mother dies during the nursing period, the little one is almost sure to follow her. The baby is fed with goat's or cow's milk, but the Natives do not know that they must add water to it ; sooner or later therefore the child dies of enteritis.

I have heard of some cases in which another woman has taken charge of the child, nursed him with her own milk and weaned him successfully ; her own child being older, she weaned him earlier than the usual time and nursed the other child in his

261 (1) A similar custom is observed in the case of moving from one country to another.
284 When a Ronga comes back from Kimberley having found a wife there, both bring with them a little of the earth of the place they are leaving, and the woman must eat a little of it every day in her porridge in order to accustom herself to her new abode. This earth provides the transition between the two domiciles !

643 in, of which the following is a resumé. One of the chief men
584 of Matjolo commences by saying :
595 "It is quite right that you of Mpfumu have desired to renew today the old ties of relationship... Hamule your grandfather took his wife from Matjolo. Well! we are obliged to you. Nevertheless Sigaole has sent us to enquire how you intend to make payment for her ?"

— "We have thirty pounds sterling" reply the representatives of Mpfumo.

— "Ah! Thirty pounds ? That means that Mimalengane will have to chop her own wood and draw her own water ?" (That is to say: Thirty pounds suffice for the princess... but payment must also be made for two girls, the younger sisters (tinhlampsa), who must accompany her, to help her in the household duties, as is customary.)

— "We will ask Nwamantibyane what he has to say to this" continues the headman of Mpfumo.

— "How about those twenty oxen ?" says the chief to his representatives, when the matter is put before him. The envoy returns to the hut and announces : "There are also twenty oxen!"

— "It is well," say the men of Matjolo, "that will do for two girls to help in the work of the household."

643 Thus this delicate business is transacted without any great
584 difficulty. The feasting then begins in earnest. All eat until
261 they *shura*, that is until satiated, the stomach protruding in a gentle curve beneath the sternum, which is the black man's idea of a thoroughly satisfactory meal!

The betrothal being duly arranged, there still remain the betrothal visits to be paid and the wedding to be celebrated. Strange to say the chief, in these ceremonies, is conspicuous by his absence! His male friends alone go to see the betrothed, mainly with a view to reporting on her appearance, etc., to their royal master. Moreover when a chief is concerned, the betrothal visit of the suitor's friends is not returned by the girls, as in the case of ordinary mortals.

643 The marriage feast takes place, of course, at the bride's home.
585 In Matjolo quantities of beer have been prepared, and the people

II. *The first week ; Confinement Period.*

846 From the day of birth till the moment when the umbilical
753 cord falls, seven days may elapse : this forms a special period
863 called *busahana*, which is the period of confinement for both mother and child. It will be concluded by the special ceremony of the child's first outing, marked by the rite of the broken pot. During these seven or eight days, *the mother* is restricted to a special diet, and this is a true "marginal period" for her. She is absolutely outside the pale of society. The diet is prescribed by the family doctor, who knows how to treat children, and consists of a special dish prepared with Kafir corn (1) (mabele) and called *shimhimbi*, with which special medicines have been mixed. The aim of this medication (khwebela busahana) is twofold : first to expel the unclean blood which follows the birth, and which is a very great taboo, and secondly to stimulate the production of the milk. This food is cooked in a special pot (shikhwebelo sha busahana) and is eaten not with the hands, as some particles of the unclean blood might enter it and cause the mother to become phthisic, but with a special spoon.

846 Both the pot and the spoon will be fastened over the entrance of the hut, inside (shirangen sha nyangwa), at the end of this period of seclusion.

A fowl is also killed during these first days, a hen if the child is a girl, a cock if it is a boy. Some medicinal powder is poured into the broth, and the mother drinks it and eats part of the meat, the husband eating the remainder. This little luxury is indulged in as it helps the mother to recover her strength sooner ; she is attended to by her own mother, who has been summoned as soon as the birth has been satisfactorily effected, and who helps her to feed the child.

262 (1) This use of Kafir corn in this and other old rites proves the antiquity of this cereal. It is probably the first which was known to the Natives. Maize is quite a modern food amongst the Thongas, though the time of its introduction is not known. See Part IV.

685 857 Generally speaking the elder boys send the younger to commit these thefts, and the plunder is enjoyed by the whole company. They threaten to beat them if they return empty-handed. A sad fate for the youngsters—blows on all sides ; blows from the owners of the fields if they are caught, blows from their comrades if they bring nothing back with them!

Here are one or two tricks employed by the little thieves. In order to take a water-melon (khalabatla) out of a field without being noticed by the women who are busy pulling up their ground nuts, they cut the stalk and fasten it to a piece of string. The other end of this is attached to the leg of the thief, who moves away slowly, drawing the water-melon after him. When he is out of reach of the women, he hastily puts it under his arm and makes off at top speed.

To catch a hen without its making a sound, they dig a little hole behind the huts of the village, and put a few grains of maize in it. The fowl puts its head into the hole to eat the grains, and immediately the little rascal who was watching from behind a bush, rushes out, seizes it by the neck and carries it off before it can utter a single cry!

672 685 The penalty when a boy is caught is a good whipping without a fine. "Psa batjongwana ! It is an action of little boys !" These minor thefts are not considered serious.

3) Catching game.

262 857 Hunger is the constant companion of these boys, who do not get enough to eat at home. It is true they ate to their heart's content (shura) yesterday evening, but this morning they had only a very scanty breakfast (fihluta). They try to satisfy their never satisfied appetite by catching game : not big game of course, as they have no real weapons, but birds, field-mice, eggs in the nests (the less fresh they are, the better, because there is more meat inside!) etc. To get birds they throw their sticks at them, and are very clever at killing a partridge as it rises heavily from the grass ; or they make traps with a flexible stick to which they tie a string with a bait. They bend the stick, set the trap by means

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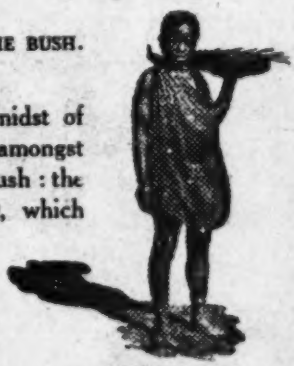
of a little bit of wood, and when the bird puts its beak into the bait, it is caught round the neck by the string. On the borders of the lake of Rikatla, boys used to catch even big birds with these traps. They set many kinds of snares. One is a cage made of sticks of palm marrows which shuts automatically when a bird enters and eats the grain by which it has been attracted. They sometimes build two walls of sticks planted in the soil and converging to the same point, where they reach a little door provided with the trap. Hares are sometimes caught in this way. They follow the wall, and when they go through the door, they tread on a hurdle which is connected with a bent rod : the rod springs back and the hare is caught.

4) Learning the science of the bush.



Phot. G. Liengme.
A Thonga boy.

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This life in the velt, always in the midst of Nature, develops the power of observation amongst the boys. They know everything in the bush : the big Psyche caterpillar (Eumeta cervina), which hangs from the nembe-nembe shrub (Cassia petersiana) like a little bundle of sticks, and which they call *mahambanindlwane*, "the one who walks with his house;" the big Carabid beetle which appears with the first rain, the Anthia alveolata, marked with large hollows on the elytra and which is therefore named "the son of the smallpox." Indeed I found in Rikatla a boy who knew that a certain white cocoon found on the branches of the nkanye tree (Sclerocarya caffra) gives birth to the splendid green Queen Moth (Argema Mimosae).

[262]

Having collected beetles and butterflies extensively for years, I have had an opportunity of recognizing the power of observation of these boys, who were my best hunters! Of course they particularly appreciate things edible... especially the *shitambela*, a big Bupresta beetle which they roast and suck.

In their country there

524 are big nasty yellow-brown hornets (a kind of Belonogaster)
136 which build more or less circular nests, sometimes attaining to the size of a man's head. On a certain day the boys decide to make war on these enemies. They make shields with the leaves of the *nala* palm tree which they plait together.

524 They cut down branches, which they wave to protect themselves, and one of them goes and strikes a heavy blow on the wasps' nest! The irritated insects rush out on their assailants and sting them. The boys try to kill the wasps with their sticks or to crush them when they light on them. Sometimes, overcome by the pain, they run away; sometimes, resisting to the last, they kill and exterminate their winged enemies.

Besides this there are also *big battles between the shepherds* of the different flocks. The shepherds amuse themselves by taking one another's cattle. Those who are the strongest bring the stolen herd triumphantly back to the neighbourhood of their village, but they would never let it enter the kraal. The vanquished call to their help their elder brothers, who come to recover their property and, if they can, give the thieves a sound thrashing!

576 Insults and fights are frequent between the clans. The boys
762 of Mpfumu call out to those of Matjolo: " Forest gadders! Eaters
291 of snails and boas, of lizards and tortoises " (all of which are questionable food!) (In Ronga: Balala! Badi ba tihumba ni tinhlaru ni makhwahle ni tinfutchu). Those of Matjolo answer them: " Crowd of women that you are, clad in cotton material! " (Babasati! Matchimbamphela!), in reference to the fact that the inhabitants of Mpfumu, living near the town, some time ago replaced the belt of skins worn by the savages by a piece of cotton tied to the waist and hanging down to the knee (ladula).

855 The custom of frightening children with imaginary beasts is
857 wide spread amongst the Thongas. The bogey man is called
538 *Shingomu-Ngomu* or else *Shikunkunumu*, and by this very expressive
861 word they designate a huge and mighty being who walks, swaying his big body from right to left, with a sound like *ngomu-ngomu*. The ogre is *Shitukulumukumba*, a word coming originally from the Zulus, which corresponds to the Ronga *Ñwambilutimhokora*, that is to say: " the one who has scales on the heart. " He eats

832 hut and tie the bag round his neck. What remains of the *timhoroia*
733 will be used to smear the hut. Then all the girls will love him ;
783 or in the case of a girl, she will soon be asked in marriage.
584 This ceremony is a characteristic *hondlola*, the same which is performed on the weaning day (see page 59) and after any serious disease ; it is a rite of removal of impurity. (Notice the termination ola, ula, ulula in these verbs ; it means generally to undo, to take away).

832 If the love charms do not obtain the desired result, the angry
754 boy will perhaps try to avenge himself. He will take a fowl, or
262 perhaps only an egg, treat it with special drugs and give it to the girl in order to bewitch her. This kind of witchcraft is called *ku dambikela*. (See the Chapter on Witchcraft, Part VI). The girl will give birth not to a child, but to an animal, a pigeon, or a snake. Or her genitalia will be changed and take the appearance of the male organ. This is one of the causes why eggs and fowls are taboo for girls.

Let us now hear from Tobane the description of the marriage rites amongst the Mpfumo clan. We shall afterwards see how the customs differ in other Ronga and Thonga clans.

II. *Marriage ceremonies of the Mpfumo clan.*

1) The betrothal (Buta).

584 When a young man has made up his mind to get married, and when he is in possession of the necessary lobola (1) cattle, he starts, one fine day, with two or three of his friends to look for a wife in the villages. He puts on his most brilliant ornaments and his most precious skins. Here they are, arriving in the village

583 1) *Ku lobola* means to buy in marriage. *Ku lobola* (a factitive derivative of the verb) is said of a father who claims a sum of money from his daughter's suitor. *Lobolo* or *ndjobolo* or *bukosi* (wealth) is the sum paid, the oxen, the hoes, or the pounds sterling. We shall use these words, which are employed in Thonga as well as in Zulu and ought to be adopted as technical ethnographic terms. I use the verb for the act of paying and the noun for the sum itself.

584 On the appointed day, they go and sit outside the village of
374 the fiancé and cough to announce their presence. The same strange proceedings begin, but this time it is the damsels who make difficulties and the young men must beg and entreat them to enter first the village, then the hut, and then to sit on the mats and to accept food. Each of the groomsmen is most attentive to the girl he chose at the preceding meeting and, to obtain her good will, he generally gives her a fowl or the equivalent in money. In the early morning the visitors rise, go and get water, warm it a little and pour it into basins before the doors of the huts, so that, on that day, the inhabitants of the village will make their ablutions with water fetched by them. Then they go and do feminine work, acting as servants of the fiancé's parents. Thus they remove the ashes from the fire-place and throw them on the ash-heap close by; they cut the wood for the young men's mothers and light the several fires of the village. They pretend to leave when the sun sets, but no one will hear of it, and they must spend another night. At last, on the following day, they go home, accompanied by the young men and again, at parting, knot grasses together. On the day of the *koroka* definite arrangements are made for the wedding.

3) Taboos of the betrothal period.

584 The two families which enter into relation with each other by
574 marriage must observe many taboos (See [illegible] II). Here are some
784 of those which are enforced during the visits of *tjekela* and *koroka*:
262 1) The visitors must not eat all the mealie corn on the spike; they must leave a few grains on it.

2) They must not tear off the leaves which are round the spike. When they have eaten all the corn, they rearrange these leaves in such a way that the cob seems not to have been touched.

3) They must not "make a hole in the pot" (bobota hotjo), viz. they leave a portion of the liquid in the beer pot, they do not empty it entirely.

4) It is forbidden to return home in rain when one has gone

584 to *tjekela*. You must wait for fine weather, otherwise it is an
574 insult to the future father-in-law.
584 5) If, during the visit, you eat monkey nuts, you must not
262 take off the thin skin which covers the kernel.

6) The suitor—the owner of the oxen—must not eat black fish that day. Only his friends have the right to do so. These fish, a kind of barbel, are to be found in the lakes (as that of Rikatla) and in the Nkomati river. The suitor will not partake of them for fear lest the girl he wishes to marry should slip through his hands like a fish. Moreover this fish is black: it might bring darkness, unhappiness.

7) Neither must he eat honey during his visit, because honey like the black fish, is slippery... Honey flows...

8) He is also forbidden to eat fowls, because cocks and hens scratch the soil with their claws, scattering it about; thus the marriage "might be scattered (hangalasa bukati) before it is ripe". In the Tembe clans, formerly, any solid food was taboo until the families had killed an ox for the feasts.

These taboos are not the proper taboos of a marginal period, as if the betrothal were considered as one of these periods. They are family taboos, belonging to the category of those dictated by the mutual distrust of two allied families.

585 The wedding feast consists of two parts: the *lobola feast*, viz. all the ceremonies connected with the remittance of the lobolo which takes place at the bride's village, and the *tlhoma*, viz. the bringing the bride to the bridegroom's village. Should the lobolo have been entirely paid at once, these two ceremonies will follow each other without much delay. If the sum of money or the number of oxen is not complete, the *tlhoma* will very probably be postponed.

4) Lobola feast.

a) Preparations.

585 On both sides, the friends are informed that the feast is close
273 at hand. The bride's family in particular must prepare in good time, as they have to provide the beer which will be consumed in

says: "Nsati wa mabele u nga nabele loko u nge na bukosi." — "Do not covet a woman with large breasts if you have no money..." This does not mean that she will cost more, but her father, knowing that she will not want for suitors, will not consent to let her go unless the full lobolo is paid at once. On the other hand a girl with an elongated face is admired more than one who is too broad-faced. Of the first they say: "She is pretty, she resembles an antelope" (a kota mhala); of the second: "She is chubby-cheeked, she is like a sow." A light complexion is preferred to a very dark one, because the white or yellow races are regarded as superior, and a Native laying claim to any European or Asiatic blood is proud of it. Parents, who also have their say in the question of marriage, insist on two other points; the working capacity of the girl, and the absence of any witchcraft blot in the family. Should her mother have been convicted of being a witch, the girl will be feared. However, every girl finds a husband in the land where polygamy flourishes. If he be slow in coming, she will apply to her doctor, who will prepare the *love charms*, which will make her "appear," so that she will be noticed by the boys (See page 100). If even that does not succeed, she has other means at her disposal and may go herself to make proposals to a man (wopsana). He is seduced by her, and constitutes himself a thief who has *tlhuba*, viz. "taken in marriage by abduction" (See page 119). The parents will claim the lobolo and he must pay it. Marriage and childbearing remain the only carreer to which a Thonga woman can look forward. Hence a number of special feminine taboos which are very curious.

2) Special feminine taboos.

Some of them concern girls *before childbearing* and cease after parturition. In the Tembe and Maputju clans, girls must not eat pork, because pigs root nervously with their noses; the future child would also move its head from one side to the other, when on the verge of birth, and this would make delivery difficult. Other

other

animals are taboo for girls : the *hare* because it is too cunning ; and the antelope *nhlengane*. This antelope raises the foot when it hears a noise ; hence the idea that its leg is hollow and that it perceives the sound through it. The child would do the same, if its mother were to eat the meat of the nhlengane. It would be unable to hear with its ears, only with its hands!

The *legs* of fowls (tibias) are also taboo for all women, because the hen scatters the sand... So are the *hoofs of oxen*, and *pigs' feet*. A woman eating them would walk too much... She would go everywhere to look for husbands!

It is taboo for a girl to *walk amongst pumpkin plants* (maranga), to pluck the fruits. She is only allowed to pluck those which can be reached from outside. Were she to transgress this law, she would emit a bad odour, and no boy would court her. Her mother, having no fear of being despised, can walk amongst the pumpkins. A second taboo relative to pumpkins is this : unmarried women must cut a "pumpkin nose" (nhompfu) viz. the end of the stem, and fix it at their waist when plucking the pumpkins, lest they get abcesses in certain regions of their body.

It is taboo for them to eat cooked *oxen blood* (bubendje). The following taboos apply also to *married women*. They are not allowed to eat what is called *nkopfu*, viz. some parts of the bowels which are cooked together with the stomach of the ox. "It would spoil the child inside." The *testicles*, which are generally given to the uterine nephew when the meat is distributed according to the laws, and the *underlip* of any animal are also forbidden to them. So is also the *tongue*... because it is reserved for old people as a mark of respect! The *rectum* (gobana) is taboo for women and children. Children might make unseemly noises from the rectum! Women must abstain from *porcupine* and *monkeys' flesh* ; all their offspring would resemble these animals. Such cases have happened, it is said! Women must not eat *eggs* ; they would run a double danger : their child might be born bald and remain so ; or they might be like a hen, which runs in all directions when laying an egg. They would have no peace in child bearing! (See also page 101.)

Nubile girls, during their "tiwheti," must not *approach th-*

Nubile girls, during their "tiwheti," must approach the oxen *kraal* and look at them. The cattle might suffer, be attacked
284 by a bad cough (mukhulwane), get thin! This taboo is instituted
825 to protect the oxen, not the human inhabitants of the village, as D.
562 Kidd says is the case amongst the Zulus. (Part IV. Ch. I. E.)
262 When women have passed the time of child-bearing, most of
[886] the taboos cease, and they can eat monkeys and porcupine if they wish!

3) The first year of married life.

581 I shall not return to the subject of marriage rites, which have
562 been fully explained in the preceding chapter. Let me say that, though a Thonga woman cannot imagine life without marriage (ku kandja bukati), she does not enter on the new state with any enthusiasm. Her parents have warned her that she will be illtreated, accused of witchcraft and adultery, etc. Her sisters bewail her fate on her wedding day in song. The fact that she has been paid for, though it does not constitute an actual sale, puts her in an inferior position (See Part II).

562 During the first year, she has no *ndangu*, viz. no fire-place of
264 her own. She cooks for her mother-in-law. During the three
585 first weeks the husband eats with her and with the girl who accompanied her to her new home. Afterwards, he goes back to eat with the men. In some places it would seem that the husband eats with her the whole year, until she has her own pot (hlembeto).

4) Husband and wife.

593 What are the relations between husband and wife after the
571 honey-moon? Of course they vary very much according to
517 the character of both. As a rule however, the married people have very little intimacy with each other; the man remains with his companions on the "bandla," the village square where they meet, and only occasionally comes into the "ndangu," the reed enclosure of the fire-place, which is the true domain of the

777 from you... In the same manner, do not prepare the skin for
784 the child before it is born. Your wife would not bring forth a human being. Should you transgress this rule, you would bring misfortune on yourself (wa tihlolela, wa singita), and on your family. If you go to Moneri (the missionary) and ask him for a skin for this purpose before the birth of your child, he will tell you it is so." Note the deep-rooted conviction of the old heathen, who appeals to the authority of the missionary to strengthen the taboo!

585 10. Later on, when you are married, you must avoid eating
784 honey with your wife for a whole year, till she has had a child.
777 The bride is allowed to eat honey at her parent's home, but not in her new domicile and with her husband. The husband can eat
262 it in the bush, but he must wash his hands when he comes back, lest his wife should notice it. She would run home if she knew of it. We have already met with this prohibition in the tjekela visit, and heard the reason for it : honey flows ; the bride would go! The explanation now given is this : honey is too sweet, and your bride is too sweet also. (Is it not your honey-moon or honey-year ?) The two things do not go together. (Psa yalana, they hate each other.) A third reason is this : Bees, when they have eaten their honey, fly away from the hive. So would your wife do... After a year this misfortune is no longer to be feared.

606 This last idea is very curious. It shows that the bukoñwana
581 taboos *decrease in severity as time passes.* The strained relations between the son-in-law and his wife's mother also become easier. He begins to call her mamana, and she calls him ñwana. This transformation even goes so far that in some cases a mukoñwana can go and dwell in his parents-in-law's village, especially if he has children and if the children are grown up. And this fact gives us the natural explanation of these curious rules.

Marriage, as we have seen, is not an individual affair in the collective stage of family life. It is a contract made between two groups, which enter by it into a special relation towards each other. This relation is fraught with danger, because the interests of both groups are involved ; a bride and bridegroom are inspired with a mutual feeling of fear, knowing that an

643 619 seems to have been particularly feared. He had even bought poison from white people and is said to have killed his rival, Musongi, chief of the Maputju clan, with whom he fought the battle of Malangotiba in 1870. He sent a woman of bad life to Maputju. The woman succeeded in winning the confidence of the king and poured this poison into his glass. Nowadays the Ronga chiefs have been taught by the Authorities to sit in council when discussing matters.

643 The two principal prerogatives of the chief are the right of *luma* and taxation.

III. *The right of luma, and the first fruits rites.*

181 241 We come to a set of rites which might be dealt with when considering the Agricultural life, but I prefer to describe them here, as they provide us with a typical illustration of the constitution of the clan ; they are highly characteristic of the Bantu community, a community which is essentially agricultural in its pursuits, animistic in its beliefs, and hierarchic as regards its social and national life.

643 262 784 527 241 We have already met with the word *luma* and noticed that its ordinary meaning is *to bite* ; its ritual sense is to *remove the injurious character of a given food by a certain ceremony*. The luma is a necessity before eating the flesh of certain wild beasts, as we shall see when studying the laws of hunting (See Part IV). But it is of still more importance, and one of the great laws of the clan, that the official luma shall take place before the subjects eat the products of the new year. There seem to be two ideas at the root of this strange taboo :

1) To eat certain kinds of food is dangerous for one's health, and the first mouthful taken must be seasoned with the royal drug.

2) The gods, the chief, and elder brothers, have a prior right to enjoy the products of the soil. To precede them in doing this is a sin which would bring them misfortune. The hierarchy must be absolutely respected.

643 The law of luma seems to have applied to all kinds of food
262 in former times. Nowadays it is not observed for the following
171 products : maize, Kafir beans and peas, rice, sorghum, water
527 melons (makalabatla) and monkey nuts. It is partly observed
241 for mafureira almonds (tihuhlu), strychnos paste (fuma) and pumpkin leaves (magawane). It is strongly enforced for black Kafir corn and bukanye. Such is at any rate the case in the four clans of Nondwane, Mabota, Ñwamba and Tembe. Amongst the Zulus and Swazis on the contrary, I have been told people luma maize and do not luma kafir corn. Kafir corn is probably the most ancient cereal amongst the Ba-Thonga, and bukanye has always existed in the country. This is perhaps the reason why these luma rites, which bear a very old character, are still applied to these products to the exclusion of other more modern cereals.

I. *The luma without a religious ceremony.*

631 Let us first study the less ritualistic kind of luma, the luma
262 of the *mafureira almond*, for instance. It is practised in each
643 sub-chief's village, and, though it is tending to become obsolete,
527 it is still enforced by some "tihosana." Thus my neighbour in Rikatla, Habele, the hosana placed by Mobvesha over this part of the territory, met some time ago a boy who was eating these almonds, the description of which I shall give later on.— "Who gave them to you ?" asked Habele... The child kept silent.—"Come with me to your parents!" Having found their home, the sub-chief scolded them severely : "You have started sucking (munya) the almonds before us. You wanted to kill my head ? Pay a fine!" They answered :-"The birds made them fall from the tree... The children were not guilty!" However they had to pay 500 reis.

262 The luma of almonds, which takes place in December, when
643 they are ripe, is performed in the following way. The almonds
527 are dipped into a small calabash full of water to soften them. Some of the powder of the nyokwekulu is added to them. The headman first takes some for himself and then distributes them to his people. They suck the almonds, take in their hands the part

262 643 527 which is not eaten, and rub their faces with it. But *no religious ceremony is performed.* It is the same for the *fuma*, a paste made with the contents of the kwakwa fruit, a kind of Strychnos very similar to the nsala, but of a different taste. The ceremony was even more simple than with the almonds ; the chief used to send a little of this paste to each village saying : "Let this be the first bite you swallow : the new year has come!" (Luman, ku tlhese nguba.) No powder was used in connexion with it. The magical drug was used, on the other hand, when the luma of pumpkin leaves took place.

II. *The luma of the Kafir corn.*

262 643 782 769 796 The great, the official luma, amongst the Ronga clans, is that performed for the Kafir corn (mabelè). The great wife of the chief grinds the first grains of Kafir corn reaped in the fields. She cooks the flour in a pot and pours into it some of the royal powder kept in the calabash, so as to make a *shimhimbi* (See page 42). The chief takes a little of the food and offers it to the spirits of his ancestors, at the main entrance of the royal kraal. He prays to them in the following terms : "Here has the new year come! Precede us, you gods, and luma, so that, for us also, Kafir corn shall help our body, that we may become fat, not thin, that the witches may increase the corn, makè it to be plentiful, so that, even if there is only a small field, big baskets may be filled! (Nguba hi yoleyi! Rangan ñwine, mi luma, ñwi Psikwembu! Na hine, mabele ma tjhama amirin yeru psinene, hi kuluka hi nga wondji. Abaloyi ba yandjisa, psi tala ngopfu, nambi shi shisi-ñwanyana shi shiñwe, a ku tale tingula!)"

262 643 796 554 609 After this religious ceremony everyone luma in turn, the chief first, then the sub-chiefs, then the counsellors, then the warriors who have killed enemies in battle, then the headmen of the kraals who have all been summoned to the capital. Should one of the headmen be prevented from coming by illness, his younger brother will not precede him. He will bring him the *shimhimbi* in a leaf ; the elder will take it, and, after him, the other brothers. Women do not eat the magic powder. Neither do strangers,

262 643 609 796 even those who are settled in the clan. They have their own medicine and luma for themselves, though they must not do it before the chief of the country.

III. *The luma of bukanye and the great national feast.*

137 273 796 824 The most characteristic of all these ceremonies connected with the first fruits is the luma of bukanyi. Tobane has given me a circumstantial description of this feast and it deserves to be reproduced in all its details, as being a typical manifestation of Bantu national life.

The *nkanye* (1) is a large tree, one of the finest in the country. Its botanical name is Sclerocarya caffra (Sond); it is generally known amongst the English of Natal as the Kafir plum.

It bears fruit of the size of a greengage, which when ripe is a beautiful golden yellow and has a strong flavour of turpentine and a penetrating odour. It is a dioecian tree, the male bearing bunches of flowers while the female has single flowers. The Natives are quite aware of this; they cut down the male plants but take care to keep a few in each district to fecundate the female. The fruit — the kanye — begins to ripen in the month of January and falls to the ground. The odour is perceptible everywhere, and it is then that the principal men of the country approach the chief and say to him: "The time has come to luma."

In the luma of the bukanye it is easy to discover four consecutive ceremonies:

a) The luma of the gods and of the chief.

262 782 273 796 The first ripe makanye are gathered and pressed at the capital, and the sour liquor thus obtained is poured out on the tomb of the deceased chiefs in the sacred wood; they are invoked to bless this new year and the feast which is about to be celebrated.

(1) Nkanye, plural minkanye, is the tree in question. Kanye, plural makanye, is the fruit of this tree; bukanye is the drink made from this fruit. In the same way the wild apricot tree is called mphimbi, plural mimphimbi. The fruit himbi, plural mahimbi; the drink made from the fruit, bukimbi.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

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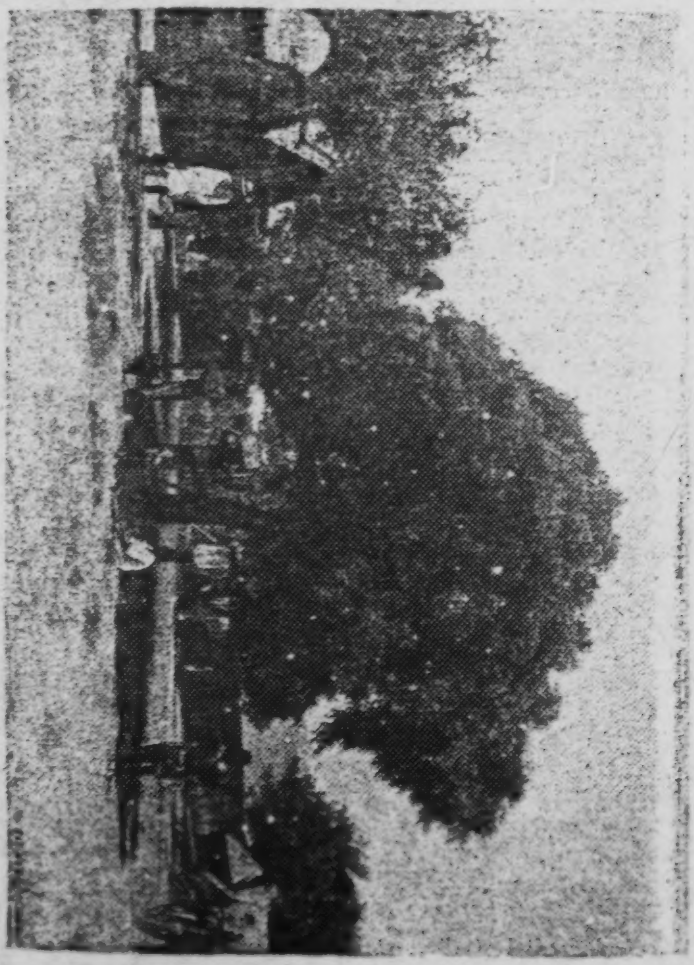
Nkolele, the sub-chief of Libombo, used on this occasion to pronounce the following prayer : "This is the new year. Let us



The "Nkanye" of Rikal", (16 miles North of Lourenço-Marques). Phot. P. Rechard.

not kill each other! Let us eat peacefully! (Hi yo nguba! Hi nga dlayane! A hi nwenen ha hombe!)" Here is another

262 formula : "May this bukanyi do no harm! May we not slay each
782 other under its influence. May it cause no serious quarrels."
796 They are afraid that, during the general intoxication which will
273 shortly prevail, quarrels will arise, some of which may terminate fatally. During the whole month of bukanye drinking, all business is at a standstill, just as with us all bankruptcy proceedings and all prosecutions for debt are held in abeyance for two weeks during the New Year holidays!

The gods having luma first, the bones are consulted. Should the throw be propitious, the chief will luma next ; thus the opening ceremony of the feast is concluded.

b) The luma of the army.

796 The young people are now assembled to clean up the public
273 square and all the roads ; the ball room must be prepared! The women of the capital start out early in the morning, beating the *psibubutwana*, that is to say sounding the call that is produced by striking the lips (bu-bu-bu-bu), and they go all over the country gathering the golden fruit ; this is piled up in an enormous heap on the public square and the brew is proceeded with in the following manner. The makanye are pierced (tshunya) with a pointed wooden splinter ; the stone falls covered with a transparent white pulp into the jar ; into this jar is also squeezed out with the fingers all the juice which remains in the pulp adhering to the skin ; this is continued until the jar is half full, when the stones are taken out, and on the following day the pressing is resumed until the jar is full. On the third day the beer has sufficiently fermented to be pungent and agreeable to the taste and is ready for consumption. Empty barrels are easily procurable in the environs of Lourenço Marques. The women of the capital brew ten or fifteen huge casks of the precious liquor! This accomplished, the second ceremony begins.

796 A convocation of the entire male portion of the tribe is held in
273 the capital, but the first to respond to the call must be the men,
789 the warriors of the army, who come in full array, with all their
701 ornaments, and carrying their small play shields. One cask of

539 There is quite a collection of these carriers' songs praising the chiefs. Mzila (or Muzila), whom we saw a short time back scaring sparrows, is here compared to the mythical lightning bird, to the hawk that swoops down from the clouds. (See Part VI.) Why does he not once for all annihilate the sparrows which pillage his fields of sorghum ? But this is poetry! and there is often a wide gap between poetry and reality!

d) The feasting of the chief in the villages.

796 The fourth and final act of the bukanye feasting in which, as we
273 have seen, the chief plays a prominent part, is the *nsungi* which
643 may be called the "fin de saison" orgy. The chief now returns the visits of his subjects and casks of beer are prepared for him in every village. Dancing and singing are in full swing. He is fêted and acclaimed! But the makanye are getting over-ripe ; a new month, a new moon is at hand, which is called *sibandlela* "she who closes the roads ;" the paths leading to the foot of the trees become almost impassable, owing to the grass which grows to an incredible height during the rains prevailing at this season. The fine weather is over. Winter is knocking at the door.

796 Amongst the Nkunas the luma ceremony called "to eat the
789 new year" (dyaka ñwaka) is performed with a special pumpkin
643 (kwembe) cooked at the capital together with the medicine used for rain-making. The chief first eats of it in the evening and makes the sign of a cross on the big drum, which is then beaten to call the people in his village. Then all the men come, bringing the little horns in which they keep the rain medicine (See Part VI). They eat a little and smear the rim of these horns with the medicine ; the horns also must "eat the new year." Then everybody can enjoy the products of the harvest. Should anyone precede the chief, this would be fatal to the latter or make him ill... Such is the testimony of Mankhelu. I suspect these rites to have been influenced by the proximity of the Ba-Pedi. "Now we have no longer any first fruits' feast (mulumo)," says Mankhelu with some melancholy. "White people have killed it. Everybody

262 eats freely in his house according to his good pleasure. Formerly
821 we used to take the oxen of the man who had dared to steal the
796 new year."

Conclusion on the luma rite.

796 All these luma rites[1] of first fruits seem to have primarily a *religious*
782 *origin*. The Bantus do not feel that they dare enjoy the products of
554 the soil unless they have first given a portion of them to their gods. Is it not these gods who make the cereals grow? Have they not the power even of controlling the wizards who bewitch the fields? These rites are also evidently dictated by the *sense of hierarchy*. A subject must not precede his chief nor a younger brother the elder in the use of the new harvest, else they would kill those in authority. Such an act is against order. We shall see that, even when the seeds are sown, the elders must take precedence. But the custom seems also to have been actuated by the idea of *passage*. There is a passage from one year to another. For the Thongas, I think the new year begins
805 twice every year: it begins when tilling recommences, in July, August,
796 when the heat returns. This is the hlobo. It begins a second time at
789 harvest, and then there is passage from the food of the last year to the food of this year. This is the nguba (Ro.) or ñwaka (Dj.). Though the luma rites do not bear all the characteristics of a true passage rite, like those of circumcision or moving, we may observe in the luma of bukanye a kind of marginal period of general licence, when the ordinary laws are more or less suspended. The taking of a first mouthful probably signifies the aggregation to the new period, the magical powder used on this occasion being a protective measure to shield them from the calamities of this unknown year... And after all, is it not that feeling of fear which so easily takes possession of the heart of man when entering on a new state and starting something fresh, which has led the savage to surround the use of the first fruit with so many ritual precautions?

IV. *Taxation.*

643 The chief governs (fuma). *Fuma* means to command, but also to live in plenty, to be rich. The subject (nandja, follower) obeys; he follows the chief who marches before him just as the

1 [see pp. 394-404 in these categories c. in 116-Analyst]

262 For lists of agricultural products, taboos and ceremonies connected with eating, see pp. 9-19.

D. PREPARATION OF FOOD AND DRINK.

Bantus of South Africa being mostly agriculturists are also vegetarians, not however vegetarians on principle, as they eat meat as often as they have the opportunity ; but these opportunities are rare, so that, as a matter of fact, their diet is essentially vegetable. I shall later on describe the two ways in which they procure meat, viz., cattle-breeding and hunting. Having seen what are the products of their fields, we can confidently proceed to the study of their kitchen, as meat seldom makes its appearance in the "pots on the fireplace!" 262

I. *Fire and salt.*

Thongas do not remember a time when they did not possess these two most important elements of the culinary art. 372

As regards *fire* (ndjilo, mu-mi), the Honwanas knew it before the XVth or XVIth century. The traditions reported I. p. 24 show that some clans believe that there was a time when food was not cooked.

There are four trees used to produce fire by friction (tsika) : 137

1) The *bulolo*, a kind of Hibiscus growing in the estuary of the Nkomati, in the region regularly watered by the tide, is the best *ntsiko* or wooden flint. It is a very light and soft wood and is still used near the Coast, though matches are now to be found everywhere. 372

2) The *mpahla* (mu-mi), a bush of the Compositae family, whose wood is very hard and used to make handles for hoes. It grows all over Thongaland, in the plains as well as in mountainous regions.

3) The *nkuwa* (mu-mi), the large wild fig-tree, which covers the banks of the Nkomati and the Maputju rivers, and is common in the low lands.

231 men having relations with women during menstruation (I. p. 187).
562 Should a drop of it fall in the cattle kraal, this would endanger the
841 health of the whole herd. Women are even prohibited from
784 passing through a herd of oxen ; they must go round it, because otherwise the death of the calves would ensue. Amongst the Ba-Ngoni this taboo is so strong that a woman guilty of having transgressed against it was put to death (1).

231 The object of oxen-breeding is not milk but the acquisition
262 of *wealth* ; oxen mean wealth to the Native, a means of purchasing
556 girls and of thus increasing his family. Oxen are also bred for food, the meat being highly appreciated and divided amongst all the members of the family according to the strict rules previously explained (I. p. 329). The slaughtering is done by piercing the heart with an assagai, a painful and sometimes very protracted operation. This occurs at marriage feasts, at other family and national gatherings, at the sacrifice for rain (Part VI), and on special occasions, once a year for instance, when a headman wishes to feast his people. All, even neighbours who are not relatives and travellers, are welcome to the feast. Natives have wonderful olfactory powers. They seem to smell out the *lisuna*, viz., the peculiar odour of the meat, a mile off, and when an ox has been killed you see them emerging from the bush on all sides!

234 As regards *milk*, it certainly plays a part in the food of villages which are fortunate enough to possess a well-filled oxen kraal. The *milking* of the cows presents difficulties unknown in Europe! African cows have not yet learned to submit tamely to this operation! The calf must always be allowed to suck a few mouthfuls, then a boy pulls it away from the teat and the cow consents to be milked. Should a cow be too wild, they pass a string through its

241 (1) We meet here with an interesting instance of a superstition having no scientific
462 basis whatever, which is nevertheless productive of good results. Women must keep apart from oxen. Since the plough was introduced amongst South African Natives, they have been quick to notice that it is a very useful instrument, and have adopted it in many places. The plough has to be drawn by oxen and men alone are allowed to drive them. Thus women are relieved of the heavy work of tilling the fields which had been allotted to them by immemorial custom. It is probable that further knowledge will free the Natives from their old fear and from the taboo which resulted from it ; yet the idea that everything connected with oxen belongs to the domain of man will remain and thus real social progress will have been obtained through an absurd superstition !

nostrils and so keep it quiet during the whole operation. The milk is generally taken in a large wooden bowl. It is very seldom consumed as a liquid, but is *eaten* when thickened by coagulation. The fresh milk is poured into a calabash with an opening at the bottom closed by a cork : a certain quantity of whey has been kept in the calabash and this causes the fresh milk to curdle at once. When curdled but not yet set, it is called *shitjubi* and is eaten with spoons by men and women. But it is left to decompose : the whey *(mulaza)* soon separates from the thick part, which becomes entirely solid and is then called *ntjhwamba*. The cork at the bottom of the calabash is removed, the *mulaza* flows out freely and is drunk by the men and herd boys. The *ntjhwamba* is put into a plate and each man or woman, not having her *tihweti* (I. p. 187), approaches and takes a spoonful of it. A woman during menstruation must never drink milk, nor during her confinement or until her child has been presented to the moon (I. p. 52).

The milk of the first week after a cow has calved is taboo. It must not be mixed with other cows' milk, because the umbilical cord of the calf has not yet fallen off. It can, however, be boiled and consumed by children, as they do not count! After that milk is never boiled : not that there is any taboo to fear, but it is not customary. Natives do not give any clear reason for these milk taboos. They have no objection to selling their milk to strangers ; on the contrary, they are so eager to make money out of it that they often add water to it, and any European having had dealings with them in milk matters would have his story to tell!

Goat's milk is left for the herd boys ; men do not touch it.

II. *Other domestic animals.*

Besides oxen, the Ba-Ronga breed *goats* (mbuti, yin-tin), the care of which is relegated to the small boys (I. p. 62). Practically every one possesses one or more goats, whilst oxen are much more rarely met with.

The *pig*, as previously mentioned, is a new comer in the Bantu village. Its name, *nguluve*, means the wild pig. Most villages, however, possess one or two. They are never slaughtered in connection with sacrifices. 231

Poultry (tihuku) is the most common of all live stock. Not a village is without its fowl house (shihahlu); these are generally fashioned like a small hut and perched on piles to protect the poultry during the night from snakes. (See illustration I. p. 312.) 235 343

When a hen and her brood of young chickens have to be cared for, a much smaller hut is built on the ground, but the utmost precaution is taken to keep it almost hermetically sealed, as the mhamba (a long green snake, very venomous) and the shipyahla (Echnida arietans, a large viper resembling the puff-adder) do great execution amongst fowls! As cows are not bred for milking purposes, neither are chickens raised for the sake of their eggs. In fact Thongas consider it a sheer waste to eat eggs and always allow the hens to hatch them out. Hens are wilder than they are with us and often make their nests in the open country, returning some fine day with a flourishing young family. The breed is of very small size and the eggs are tiny; it would require at least two to equal the weight of one ordinary egg such as are for sale in the European markets; it is therefore evidently more advantageous to hatch eggs than to eat them! If, by any chance, a hen dies on the nest from the bite of a snake, the Natives will willingly devour the half hatched or three quarters addled eggs; the more developed the chicken, the greater their appreciation of the delicacy, for, says the Thonga, "i nyama!" — "this is meat!" Fowls are extensively used as timhamba, viz., sacrificial offerings. The throat is cut; a little of the down plucked off the neck is dipped into the blood, and brought close to the mouth for the performance of the *tsu* rite, one of the smaller feathers of the wing (shihluwa), one of the claws, and the beak are tied together and fastened to the wrist, ankle or neck of the person for the sake of whom the offering has been made. (Part VI.) [136] 235 262 235 782

Thongas assert that they have always possessed fowls. "They 235

along the other side and at last reaches the head, muttering the following words : "A ti fe! A ti bole" i. e. "Let them die! Let them rot." Then he prays to his ancestor-gods, asking them to give him many more such beasts. He opens his eyes, and this is the end of the ceremony. 224

As a rule two persons must perform the lurulula rite, first the hunter who has killed the hippopotamus and after him the headman of the batimba village.

The lurulula is the great hunters' rite. There is, however, a second rite to be performed before they can enjoy the flesh of their victim, the *luma*. The luma is the removal of a food taboo by a rite which must accompany the first mouthful taken. It is obligatory for the first fruits, for the food left by a deceased person, etc. (I. p. 146, 394.) This precaution is also necessary in the case of game. The hunter who transfixed the hippopotamus is the first to luma. He takes the diaphragm of the animal (mapfalo), and puts a piece of it into his mouth ; he then plunges into the river, and eats this meat while under water, "as if he were a fish." Having accomplished this feat, he emerges triumphant. His sons and the inmates of his village *luma* after him. They take a portion of the flesh of the neck, called shipelo, from that part of the hippopotamus which pushes the mud in front of it, and which is supposed to be the seat of its strength. This they mix with the mbangulwa medicine and, standing in a line, they all eat a little of it, men, women, and children. All the neighbours assemble : they have smelled out the meat! The portion for the chief is put aside (I. p. 406), as the hippopotamus is very heavily taxed, and must even be cut open by the men of the capital. Then every one receives a piece of the flesh, and luma, either by smearing the sole of the foot with it, or by taking a small live ember and mixing it with the meat. The object of the luma rite is to remove the danger of eating meat to which you are not accustomed : it might "hate you (benga)" and cause colic. The taboo is not very strict, as there is only danger of colic and not of death. (Luma is necessary for elephants, when eating the meat for the first time, but not for lions or panthers. For elephants it is performed by smearing the soles of the feet with the meat.) 224 262

224 they come to him," For this reason hunters strongly assert that should
775 he neglect to perform the rite he will have no success in his future
783 hunting expeditions. A third aim, at least in the case of hippopotamus-
825 hunting, is to overcome the charms of the wizards who ride upon them.

When studying these old hunting rites I had the impression of living for some hours in close contact with primitive humanity, at a time when man, owing to the elementary character of the weapons at his disposal, was almost on the same level as the wild beast and was obliged to display an enormous amount of courage, skill and endurance in order to assert his domination over the animal world and to make it serve his purposes. Since the discovery of gun powder and modern weapons a new era has set in for the hunter. Did not old Viguet assert that now, when an elephant is killed by means of a gun, the nuru is no longer to be feared? Hunting has become for the Bantu of to-day an amusing sport, more profitable indeed but by no means so interesting!

II. *Psinyama-nyamana. The flesh of small animals.*

136 This word which comes from the well-known Bantu word
262 nyama, meat, is a triple diminutive, obtained by the reduplication of the stem, the prefix *psi*, and the suffix *ana*. It means all kinds of food derived from animals of small size, of which the Thongas are very fond.

Anything in any way resembling meat is welcome to them. Amongst Mammalia they specially enjoy certain kinds of rodents, not the domestic rats, but field mice called maphephe and mabuti which boys catch in their traps. Civet cats (nsimba, yi-tin) and wild cats (goya, dji-ma) are not frequently seen near the villages.

136 As regards birds, they eat them all with the few exceptions
222 which I shall shortly mention, from the tiniest sparrow to ducks
262 and Guinea fowls, which they manage to snare. They have no aversion to the lower types of animal : they collect the *matomane*, large caterpillars belonging to a species of Saturnidae called Cirina similis (Dist), which are found in families on the nkanye tree, during October. By the exercise of a gentle pressure on the hideous creatures, the inside is squeezed out, and the rest is thrown

into a saucepan and boiled, resulting in an indescribable broth of a 136
blackish colour. To see it is quite sufficient... and they enjoy it! 222
Several other kinds of Saturnidae also figure at their feasts : the 262
matomane of nyamari (Bunaea Caffraria), others of a brick red colour (Melanocera Menippe), those of the nhlangula shrub (Gonimbrasia Zambezina), etc. When the cooks go out to split [372]
the trunks of old half decayed nkanye trees, from which they get their kindling wood, they are most careful to put on one side the big white larvae of two large Cerambycidae coleoptera (Mallodon Downesii and Plocoederus frenatus, etc.). These enormous white worms (shipungu) will be fried in their own fat, and served up as a tit-bit for the ladies on their return to the village.

The insect world does great injury to the gardens through the agency of its winged members, the *locusts*, and Natives avenge themselves by eating them wholesale. When a swarm of these destructive creatures has alighted somewhere in the evening, and is benumbed by the cool air of the night, the villagers go and collect them in bags or baskets in great quantities. The heads, wings and legs are torn off and the bodies roasted on the embers, or boiled and used as seasoning. When plentiful, the locusts are dried and crushed in mortars to make a much appreciated flour. To our taste, locusts are simply nauseating.

Another favourite dish, the secret of which the Nkunas learnt from their Pedi neighbours, is provided by *the winged imagos of white ants*. At Christmas time, these insects emerge by thousands from the ant-hills of that region. Some are of small size ; the boys introduce grasses, smeared with glue, into the holes from which they come and catch a large number of them by this kind of fishing. They eat the head, which can be heard cracking between their teeth, and throw the bodies into a calabash to season the evening meal. But there is a larger kind which is even more appreciated. The body is whitish, as large as an almond. A hole in the ant-hill, three feet wide by two feet deep, is dug at the spot where the insects are most likely to emerge. An old pot is placed in the clay of the ant-hill at the bottom of this hole. The hole itself is covered with green branches. These curious winged termites, as soon as they have emerged from their retreat,

136 try to fly; but they soon fall to the ground and you see them
222 running towards each other and shedding their slender transparent
262 wings, so that they remain on the spot, like worms, creeping slowly along, unable to defend themselves, an easy prey for the birds and the *shinana* toads, which have a grand feast on the happy day when winged termites appear! Those which happen to emerge where the hole has been dug, try to escape by flying, but are prevented from doing so by the covering of leaves. They at once fall heavily to the bottom and roll into the pot, which may become quite full in a few hours. The owner of the trap then comes and makes a splendid sauce with its contents! This kind of termite is not met with on the Coast.

I cannot enter into details as to all these more or less questionable foods. (See I, p. 65, the mention of the Shitambela beetle.)

262 Although the caterpillars, coleoptera, larvae, and locusts are universally appreciated, there are other "meats" which appeal to certain individuals or clans, but are disdainfully eschewed by others. For instance the boa is eaten with great gusto by the Rongas and disliked by the Nkunas. The same is true of the big varan lizard. The tortoise is generally eaten, but the Mpfumu boys, who esteem themselves more civilised, reject it. On inquiring why some persons or clans exclude certain kinds of meats which other persons or clans consider delectable, we find that there are two different reasons for this, between which it is important to differentiate. The exclusion is due either to a *nyenya*, viz., disgust, or to a *yila*, viz., a taboo.

1) Owing to *disgust*, some people refuse to eat *pork*: "their hearts fear it," probably because pigs are modern and some people are not yet accustomed to eat their flesh. Zulus reject every
262 kind of fish (nhlampfi) from the same feeling of disgust. Snails
777 are despised by all the Thongas; it is true that the snail of the
826 country (Natica Wesseliana) is not very tempting, its shell being of a transparent green and its flesh reddish; moreover it is said to "singita," viz., to bring bad luck to any one meeting with it on the way.

262 But the flesh of some other animals is abstained from, even
826 dreaded, because they *yila*, they are taboo. Thongas have no

totems, and do not exclude certain meats from their diet on account of totemic fears. But they proclaim as taboo some animals: amongst them four kinds of birds, the hawk, the vulture, the crow and the stork, because they are used by magicians to prepare powerful charms; the toad, because when teased its "urine" (murundju) oozes out and is dangerous, causing itch, as is generally believed; a kind of Tenebrionida beetle (Psammodes Bertoloni), called *shifufunu sha paripari*, because it strikes the ground with its abdomen, making a noise represented by the word *baribari*. I could not discover the particular danger feared by the Natives in connection with this beetle, but there must be one; hence the yila. We have already met with the special feminine taboos as regards food (I. p. 183). Women abstain from certain animals, or parts of animals, fearing an evil effect on parturition. Amongst the Nkunas, women are also afraid of the meat of the leopard, the civet-cat, of any animal with paws (psa marubo); they only eat animals which have hoofs (psa masondjo). "The former are wild beasts, things of the hubo (I. p. 311), with a bad smell, food for men" (Mankhelu). 262 126

The comparison of *nyenya* and *yila* is interesting, as it may help to explain the origin of certain taboos, which is a very important subject indeed. The nyenya is the feeling of disgust which induces a person to abstain from a given food; in the yila there is, in addition, the dread of a supposed danger connected with the consumption of this food. Thus there is a great difference between the two: the idea of danger does not exist in the nyenya. However, it is quite possible that what was merely a nyenya has evolved, in the course of time, into a real yila or taboo, in which the disgust is no longer the mere individual repulsion for a distasteful food, but has become a social matter, a characteristic custom of a clan, or of a group. 262 784

Let me quote two instances which came under my personal notice. Amongst my servants was a young man belonging to the Ngoni clan. The Ba-Ngoni, being of Zulu origin, do not eat fish. Sometimes the cook put shrimps into the ground nut sauce: this was a treat to all the boys, as they are very fond of shrimps and the addition greatly improved the flavour of the dish. But our Ngoni boy, having smelt the "lisuna," used to inquire about the sauce, and if he heard that there

262 were shrimps in it, he disdainfully refused to take his share. — "We
784 are Ba-Ngoni! We do not eat fish," he said with disgust. First, shrimps are not fish ; he was "plus royaliste que le roi!" Second, he did not abstain from the sauce because it had an unpleasant flavour ; it was more tasty than ever! But the *social idea* dictated his attitude. He boasted of belonging to a superior race. He was not like these wretched Ba-Thonga who eat fish! It would be lowering himself to partake of such a meal, so he preferred to fast.

I witnessed the same scene when we were distributing cakes to our school children in Lourenço Marques. One of the girls was the daughter of a pure Ronga woman and an Indian Mussulman. She inquired if the cakes had been cooked with lard. The cakes were excellent, and she found them so, nevertheless she refused to eat them if they contained lard, because her father was not allowed to eat pork. It is evident that there is but one step from this clan repulsion, which is still a nyenya, to a definite taboo. Let the boy or girl *fear* that some evil will happen to them, because they have transgressed a sacred rule, and the nyenya will become a yila. Let it be admitted by them that the transgression of the rule may bring death to the family or the clan, and the primitive individual feeling of disgust will be transformed into the most severe collective taboo. I can quote no instance in proof of this evolution, as we have no knowledge of the past history of the taboos. From the psychological point of view, however, this process is quite within the range of possibility.

III. *Fishing.*

226 There are no particular restrictions to fishing so long as it is
821 carried on by *hooks*. Any one can go with his boat on the river, the lake, or the sea, and throw his line into the water. The fisherman will then say : "Thu! (not the sacramental tsu, but only an onomatopœia describing the fall of the hook into the water). You! my hook! they eat to their heart's content, people who dwell yonder, where they pound their mealies kneeling down (bugimamusi), there where the khwekhwe and the mhulu are, etc. (names of different kinds of fish)." Afterwards the fisher throws a pinch of tobacco on the spot where his hook

rite may explain why sexual relations are prohibited during all 226
important hunting and fishing operations. With their magic 825
conception of Nature, Bantus do not separate the domain of man 834
from the animal world ; human actions have their immediate effect amongst animals. So if men and women keep strict control over themselves, hippopotami, fish or elephants will not be so wild, and hunters will have more success!

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* *

Meat is either boiled (pseka), or roasted (wosha). When 252
boiled, the broth is called *muru*, (Ro.) or *sheshebo*, (Dj.) the same name that is given to monkey nut sauce or any other seasoning. When roasted, it is either placed on the embers, or skewered on sticks (lihanga) and exposed to the heat of the fire.

The blood of animals (bubendje) is also eaten by most men. 262
However, many fear it (tshaba), not on account of a yila, as if it were taboo, but rather from individual loathing. There are no special laws to be observed as regards bones. The meat of sacrifices, offered in the funeral rites, must be eaten *on the road*, not in the mortuary nor in the guests' villages, as we have already seen.

Meat is welcome, and eagerly sought after in time of famine 262
(ndlala). Should the October rains fail, or the crops be destroyed 731
by grasshoppers, as has been, alas, frequently the case since the [136]
first appearance of these pests in August 1894 (1), the Natives are bereft of every resource (2). They dig up all the edges of the

(1) Just at the commencement of the war between the Natives and the Portuguese, grasshoppers arrived in thick clouds in the district of Lourenço Marques. They had not been seen for a great number of years; old folk only recollected having seen them in bygone times. Since then the scourge has never entirely disappeared. The coincidence of their coming and the beginning of hostilities struck the Blacks very forcibly; they often said, at the sight of the grasshoppers: "They announce the armies of Gungunyana."

(2) Here is a pretty couplet with reference to famine:
Nkoadjo wa nhlengana shipopokwana ?
— Lembe ra ndlala a he ngume kusuhe !
The traces of the little antelope (nhlengana) (which one sees in the desert a long way from its lair) recall the year of famine, when one does not stay near home ; (one must go a long way to search for food). See also the several allusions to the year of famine in *Les Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, p. 158, 160 et seq.

262 lakes, to find the tubers of the nenuphars (Nymphea stellata), and
731 cook these indigestible roots (matibu). They have also gone so far as to make flour of the pith of the palm trees (mimale). They disinter the bodies of dead animals, or cram themselves with *masala*, which often engenders serious vomiting. Some eat big Copris beetles.

Such famines were frequent in former times, and special years are still known as having been years of *ndlala*. So, in the chronology of Shinangana (Part IV) the year 1875 (?) was called "the year of the Magadingele famine." On the Coast the Goñhwen famine is still remembered (1). The proximity of a seaport which is easily provisioned, and the possibility of earning money wherewith to buy rice and maize constitute a real advantage which Natives are the first to recognise. In this respect civilisation has rendered signal service to the Thonga commissariat!

266 (1) It does not appear that starvation ever induced Thongas to practise cannibalism on any considerable scale. Cases are known of this happening as when, during the war of 1895, a Ronga killed a man and ate his lungs and kidneys quite raw. He was prosecuted and deported to Mozambique. In the mountains, the Ba-Pedi and Ba-Sutho began to consume human flesh after the raids of Chaka and his generals. They first ate the corpses; then, having acquired a taste for this food, they began to attack travellers, springing out from the caves in the mountains, where they were hiding; they even made organised expeditions in search of men to devour. These cannibals are known by the name of Makhema and caused the Queen of the Bokhaha, Male, to change her residence (J. p. 477).

136 birth to the big green moth with long tails, the Queen Moth. The
815 reason why butterflies, though plentiful in Thongaland, have so little attracted the attention of Natives is, no doubt, the fact that they do not in any way contribute to their food. I have told the story of a woman who tried to force a child to eat a butterfly. (I. p. 445.)

136 *Coleoptera.* The general term for Coleoptera is *Shifufununu*, and it especially applies to the big Tenebrionidae (Psammodes
825 Bertoloni), called *shifufununu sha paripari* (p. 68) and to the large
777 black Carabidae of the Anthia genus which abound on the roads in spring ; one of them, marked with small depressions on the elytra is, for that reason, called the small-pox shifufununu (sha nyedzane). Travelling once with a grown-up Thonga we saw a black Carabida which had four white spots on the back. It was the charming Eccoptoptera mutilloides. I saw him trace a circle round it in the sand saying : "To-day I shall eat to my heart's content!" — "Namunhla ndji ta shura!" — "What are you doing?" I said. — "Oh! This is the *Shurwa-shurwane*," he answered. "When you meet it it is a sign that you will have plenty to eat!" He was mistaken! The real shurwa-shurwane is the Mutilla, a kind of apterous wasp, which has also four white spots on its back, and the beetle we met was so similar to it that he mistook it for a Mutilla ; is it not called mutilloides, pseudo-mutilla? (1)
136 — The Copridæ are called *Gadlen* (dji-ma) and these strange
[753] dung-eaters, which are extremely abundant in the country, are thought to be under the command of the wizards who can introduce
825 them into your body to kill you. The pretty Cerambycidæ,
262 with their long horns, are the *Ñwahomurikotjo*, the ox of Rikotcho, or, according to a truer etymology, the ox with horns bent backwards (kotjeka). Children sing an incantation before them, clapping their hands (I, p. 68). Their big white larvae, the *Shipungwana*, dig channels in the stems of nkanye, nkuhlu, mphesa, etc., and are readily eaten as well as the *Shimhukuta*, the

(1) This custom reminds one of the action of Swiss children when they send the ladybird to heaven, to ask God to give them fine weather to-morrow, or of their saying that crushing a golden Carabus on the road will cause rain to fall. Certain Coleoptera are of good omen everywhere! Only, if in Europe they foretell fine weather, in Africa they announce a good meal. The difference is significant!

136 larva of a large Calandra which swarms in the stems of the palm
825 trees of the marsh (p. 4). The *Shitambela*, a big Buprestida
262 (Sternocera Orissa) is roasted by the shepherds and eaten after they have torn off its elytra.

136 *Hymenoptera*. *Wasps* are called *Mupfi* or *Mupfu* (mu-mi),
755 and are divided into four different classes : the *Mupfu* proper (Belonogaster), the *Tlatlanhongana*, the *Bamaandlopfu*, a grey species, and the *Mumpfundlopfu*, a large black species which burrows in the soil. When someone has been stung by a wasp, the others laugh at him. If he resents being made fun of, they say to him : "Be not angry ; we do this to help you." They are really trying to divert his attention from the pain in order to
136 comfort him. *Bees* are called *Nyoshi* (yin-tin) and are greatly
262 appreciated for their honey (p. 44). Natives know the males
815 (*djongwe*, dji-ma) the larvae *(shipungwa)*, which they eat with as much pleasure as the honey itself. They call the honeycombs *hahla* (dji-ma) or *shihlenga*, the wax *mumpfu* (mu-mi) and the
136 pollen brought by the bees, *nsindjo*. The curious *Mbonga* (yin-tin)
825 *Bee* is worth special mention, owing to the superstitions which are current regarding it, and the part it plays in certain rites (p. 390). This species, which does not sting, digs a narrow passage of two or three feet deep in the soil and excavates a hole of one or two feet broad where it builds its round nest. Natives say that nobody knows what the mbonga does with the earth which it digs out of the cavity in which it makes its nest. No heap of earth is ever seen in the vicinity. The hole is continued under the nest and has no end. It probably extends to subterranean pools where the insects go to drink, — as it is said that no one has ever seen a mbonga drinking from the lake or the well, as the other bees do. Moreover the entrance to a mbonga nest is invisible to the majority of people. It is only certain families who can see it and consequently dig out the precious honey (1). For all these reasons the mbonga is

777 (1) The Libombo family was one of those "which the mbonga loves" (randja). Elias who belongs to it told me that he once paid a visit to one of his neighbours who had just cleaned his village ; he discovered a mbonga hole and said to his friend : "There is a mbonga nest in your village." But the man was unable to find it. Elias then dug as deep as his shoulders and found the nest all surrounded by "calabashes" full of honey. He says that when rain falls the little bees cover the entrance of

136 surrounded with a certain mystery, and this is no doubt why its
825 honey is used in the manufacture of the *nyokwekulu*. Its scientific name is Trigona togoensis, var. Junodi (Friese).

136 Amongst the *Mollusca*, a great many are eaten : the *Mbatsana*
262 (yin-tin) of the sea (bivalve shells), *Likatla* (li-tin) of the lakes,
454 and the *Hwaru* (yi-tin), oysters of the Tembe shore. The land snails are called *Humba* (yi-tin) ; the big ones (Achatina Lamar-
787 kiana) are used as safes for the deposit of pounds sterling and are often buried in the huts ; hence the expression *Humba ya bupfundji*, shell of riches! The smaller ones, resembling our snails (Aerope caffra), are rarer and it is considered a bad omen to meet with them on the road. — "Where you go you will hear cries of mourning!" Their name is *Shikumbukwane*. The slugs are called *Holokompfa* (yin-tin) and the smaller snails, *Shihumbanyana*, diminutive of *humba*.

136 *Fish* all have names, but having never dwelt in the close vicinity
825 of the sea, I have not learnt them. I know the *Mfungwe* (yi-tin) the fish whose mouth ends in a saw, the *Mangapfi* (dji-ma), the
262 name of a kind of hawk given to the flying fish of Delagoa Bay, the *Nhempfane* (yi-tin) found in the fresh water ponds, the *Ntima* (yi-tin) the barbel, the black fish which must not be eaten by lovers before their marriage (I, p. 107).

136 *Amphibia*. *Ntlambya* (mu-mi) is the ordinary frog (Rana oxyrhynca) whose young are known and called *Shilungula* ; another black species is the *Rebya* (dji-ma) ; the tree-frogs are called *Shilungwalungwana* (Rappia marmorata and argus) ; the toad *Kele* (dji-ma), Bufo regularis ; the famous Breviceps mossambicus is *Shinana* (I. p. 87) the great warrior of the tales (p. 221).

136 *Reptilia*. There are many kinds of *Lizards*. The common
825 kind found in the houses, under the verandas is the *Mponondjo* (mu-mi) (Mabuia striata), ; the Lygodactylus capensis, found on the hills, is the *Nkolombya* (mu-mi) ; the little Agama

777 the hole with their wings to prevent water from inundating the nest. When it lasts too long they quickly go down to close the entrance of the nest ; the water then leaks down the pipe which descends into the interior of the earth. He added : "If a man does not belong to a family which "knows" the mbonga and if he happens to find a nest he will meet with misfortune ; one of his relatives will die. The bees will bring him ill-luck (singita)."

aculeata, which runs on the sand, *Shipyindji* or *Shihonokamahlo*, 136
the one which gazes at you ; the large gheko, Agama atricollis, 825
with a head of which the grey colour can change into blue, *Galagala* or *Phululu* (dji-ma) (I. p. 173) the grey one, which hides itself in dark places, in hollow stems or under roofs is the *Hokokwana* (dji-ma) (Hemidactylus grenatus) ; it is said that when this lizard sucks at the breast of a human being, it is impossible to remove it, and the only means of getting rid of it is to go and suckle a dog!

But the most curious lizard of these countries, that which most 136
strikes the Native imagination is the Chameleon (Chameleon 825
Petersii), *Lumpfana* (dji-ma). Herd boys throw ground tobacco 789
into its mouth to avenge themselves for the bad turn it did mankind when it lingered on the road and came too late to bring the message of eternal life (as we shall learn in a moment). It is used by certain magicians to discover thieves. They smear a chameleon with a drug which makes it turn white and then let it go : "Then the thief, wherever he may be, also turns white, and if he does not confess his theft, he dies!"

The flesh of none of these lizards is eaten, but that of the big 136
Varan which lives near the rivers, *Kwahle* (dji-ma), is considered 825
a delicacy. The kwahle is said to be very hard to kill. About 262
Crocodiles (*nguenya*, yin-tin) all sorts of stories are told. When 787
one of them has been killed, the contents of its stomach are carefully preserved ; Thongas assert that each year, when the rains begin, crocodiles swallow a stone, so that their age can be known by counting them. These stones are taboo ; for a subject to swallow them is a cause of death, but one of them is chosen, treated with certain drugs and swallowed by the chief to warn him of his death, as we have already seen (I, p. 393). Crocodile stones play an important part in divination. (See Part VI. Ch. III. D).

Tortoises, whose generic name is *Mfutju* (yin-tin), are eaten and also used in the divinatory art, as we shall see. Some lake tortoises are called *Gamba* (dji-ma) and sea tortoises *Hasi* (dji-ma).

Snakes (nyoka, yin-tin) are generally dreaded and considered 825
dangerous, although many kinds are quite harmless. The 136

825 *Shipyahla* (Ro.), *Mhiri* (yin-tin, Dj.) is the big, lazy, grey puff adder,
136 which creeps along the ground, and is one of the most venomous kinds, together with the *Mhamba* (yin-tin), a slender species, very swift and often found on trees. "When you meet a mhiri," say the Nkunas, "throw a little earth on it and you will soon see
[752] its brother!" Of course magicians have plenty of drugs to cure snake bites. For this purpose they use the head of the adder roasted and pulverised. *Shibatlankombe*, (Naja nigricollis), "the one which carves a spoon" is the name of a species which
[262] curves its neck till it looks like a spoon. The *Hhlaru* (yin-tin) is the boa. It is eaten. Another member of the Clapidae family is the *Likure*, a pretty greyish violet species (Causus Lichtensteinii).
[769] Amongst the harmless snakes are those little blue ones, *Shihundje* (Dendrophis subcarinatus), which are considered as emissaries of the ancestor spirits. I shall mention them again later on. The *Nsoma* (yin-tin), very common and harmless, is probably Dispholidus typus. Some small ones, not larger than worms, but hard and shining like metal, are called *Tumbi-tumbi*, because they hide (tumba) in the sand. One of them seems to be Xenocalamus bicolor.

825 There are also the legendary snakes of the Thongas. On the
777 Coast they speak of the *Buwumati*, which dwells in the lakes and is invisible. It is only heard crying "bu-wu-bu-wu" when rain is falling, and its voice is as loud as that of an antelope. If it shows itself to a traveller, it is a very bad sign. The story is told of a man who came back from consulting a bone-thrower. He saw the buwumati lying on the ground, its coils extending to a great distance, closing all the passages. He retraced his steps, but after three days he died. In the Transvaal, this dreadful snake is called *Shimhemhemhe*, the name being an imitation of its cry.
825 This superstition is perhaps of Pedi origin, but it has been accepted by the Nkunas. The shimhemhemhe dwells in certain dark woody ravines on the slopes of the Drakensberg mountains. If anyone imprudently penetrates there, the snake pursues him, creeping along the branches above, and bites him on the top of the head. A man met with it once on the way to Thabina; he saw it on the road, its head raised, a shining head of two colours. There

Regular acts of worship are performed also at the
burial (I. p. 142), at the *crushing of the hut* (I. p. 158-163), on the 782
days of *mahloko* (I. p. 215), and at the *adjudication of the inheritance* 765
(I. p. 208). 262

I have already mentioned the stringent taboo in regard to the victims killed in these sacrifices. The portions distributed amongst the different relations must not be eaten either in the village of the deceased, or in those of the various visitors. This meat must be roasted on the road, and eaten on the spot, and it is likewise taboo to season it in any way. The inhabitants of the deceased's village can eat the meat boiled, but it is prohibited to add ground-nuts to the broth.

These are the great family sacrifices, in which the uterine 782
nephews play their curious part, and on the occasion of which family matters are brought up and settled. They play a most important part in the life of the family, and I have therefore described them at length, when treating of the social life of the tribe, as religion and social life are here intimately united. There is therefore no need for me to add much more regarding them here. With their clearly established and typical ritual they form the most definite and settled element of the religious life of the tribe.

Rangane asserts that another offering is regularly performed in the Maluleke district. On the first occasion of the *cooking of the new mealies*, each headman prepares a little of the flour, takes a spoonful of it, and throws it away, praying at the same time to the Ba-Nyai spirits, i. e., the gods of the Ba-Nyai, who have been conquered by the Malulekes. He calls this "magandjelo ya ku ñwantseka," i. e., "sacrifice tasted and thrown away." This is evidently to propitiate the gods, who were the first owners of the country and who might harm or destroy the invaders. Compare p. 377 the respect shown by Mahazule to the Libombo sacred wood, and also the curious request of the Samaritans, II Kings. XVII.

Special Family Sacrifices. By these, I mean particularly those 782
offered *in cases of disease.* The bones having revealed that the 755
disease is caused by the gods (and not by wizards, nor by Heaven, nor by contamination, which are three other possibilities), and also that it comes from such and such a god, a god of bitterness, or a god

case of ordinary medicine-men. Mboza, who was the favourite of Ñwatshulu, was entrusted with the organisation of the feast. He stood at the main entrance of the village and welcomed the exorcised coming with their empty calabashes ; on their arrival, each of them gave two shillings, or half a crown, or a mat, or a fowl for the master ; this was their annual fee. Next day they all gathered fuel and burnt the drugs in broken pots, two or three mathwazana around each fire. Then they all inhaled the smoke through reeds, and absorbed the froth of the phuphumana and psekamafura decoction from the gobo basin. In the evening the old inhabitants began to grind the carbonised roots, and Mboza filled the calabashes of the disciples with the new protective medicines, after which dancing began, each of the exorcised singing his own song as well as the universally known refrains, such as : "Vuka Mungoni," etc. This was a great day of rejoicing! 756

As already pointed out, great rivalry exists between these schools. Professional hatred is carried to its extreme limits amongst magicians : they not only *test* their colleagues, entering their huts during the night, but they steal each other's drugs. I have been told how Sindondondo overcame Khongosa. Sindondondo was a wonderful man, dwelling on the Western border of the Nkomati, at Shifukundju. He had disappeared for two or three years, and was regarded as dead, but he unexpectedly reappeared, saying that he had lived at the bottom of the sea during the whole time. There he had not eaten anything ; he was like a fish. The chiefs of that country, under the water, had given him his great drug called *ndzundzu*, and he returned home bringing with him a bunch of the precious roots. His people welcomed him and made a feast on his return. He then became a great magician, and exorcised a number of people. He and his one wife were the sole inhabitants of his village ; he was very particular as regards his food, eating only mealies of the preceding year, and drinking no beer. (The exorcised often observe special, individual alimentary taboos.) His forked pole was outside, on his hubo, not in the hut, and when he went on a journey, he ordered a neighbour to keep watch over his drugs and his fowls. Should some other man try to enter his [262]

the male at once starts again from the top; thus the friction continues without an interval. The motion widens the notch in the female to such an extent that the male penetrates and begins to burn it : the ashes find their way out by the lateral notch ; a little dry grass has been placed there and soon begins to smoulder. An expert obtains fire after six or seven consecutive frictions, especially when using bulolo. 372

Embers are kept burning as far as possible the whole night in the fire-place. Should they however have been allowed to go out, the mistress of the kitchen will send her daughter to the neighbouring hut or village to fetch a glowing cinder. This is called *ku woka* (1). The ember will be carefully carried in a sala shell or occasionally in a big snail shell. There is a characteristic rule to be observed in the woka operation. It must generally always be performed by the same person. If two women go to fetch an ember the same day from two different villages, the first must spit upon the ember of the second and extinguish it, because it is a taboo to have in the same village two fires obtained from two different sources. The act of spitting on one of the embers will "remove misfortune (susa khombo)."

Salt, also an object of primary necessity in culinary art, has always been known to the Thongas, as far back as can be remembered ; the name *munyu* (mu-mi) is a genuine Bantu word. Natives can procure it in three different ways : by gathering dried salt on the lagoons near the sea (wolela sole), and in the pans (salt pans) on the mountains (Zoutpansberg), or, when salt is not deposited on the soil, they take salted earth, put it into a conical basket and slowly pour water upon it : this percolates through into a pot, carrying the salt with it, and the solution thus obtained is evaporated. See the adjoining reproduction of a photograph, taken in the extreme North East of the Transvaal, by the Rev. P. Rosset. A third way of obtaining salt is from a certain Composita plant which is wide-spread in the plains of the Low Country ; it is burnt and its ashes washed in order to extract the 263 317 259

(1) *Woka*, from the same root as *wora*, to warm oneself at the fire and *woika*, to roast meat.

263 small amount of salt it contains! This is a long process attended
317 with very unsatisfactorily results. During the Anglo-Boer war,
258 Natives round Leydsdorp reverted to it as all the stores were closed and no salt was procurable.

Salt manufacture, Northern Transvaal. *Phot. P. Rousset.*

Nowadays Native manufacture of salt has entirely ceased. The beautiful glistening white article has advantageously replaced the greyish, blackish mixture of former times.

II. *Food.*

252 It is not an exaggeration to speak of a culinary art amongst
581 the Thongas. They give great attention to cooking. Of a woman who knows how to cook well, it is said: "Awa hisa" "she burns;" not that she lets the sauce burn, but this expression corresponds to the French "cordon bleu." A girl who "hisa" will have more chance of being "lobola" than another.

252 This importance given to cooking explains the great richness of
192 the culinary vocabulary. Every variety of dish or of culinary process has its particular name, and to master all these terms

Nubile girls, during their "tiwheti", must approach the *oxen kraal* and look at them. The cattle might suffer, be attacked by a bad cough (mukhulwane), get thin! This taboo is instituted to protect the oxen, not the human inhabitants of the village, as D. Kidd says is the case amongst the Zulus. (Part IV. Ch. I. E.) When women have passed the time of child-bearing, most of the taboos cease, and they can eat monkeys and porcupine if they wish!

3) The first year of married life.

I shall not return to the subject of marriage rites, which have been fully explained in the preceding chapter. Let me say that, though a Thonga woman cannot imagine life without marriage (ku kandja bukati), she does not enter on the new state with any enthusiasm. Her parents have warned her that she will be illtreated, accused of witchcraft and adultery, etc. Her sisters bewail her fate on her wedding day in song. The fact that she has been paid for, though it does not constitute an actual sale, puts her in an inferior position (See Part II).

During the first year, she has no *ndangu*, viz. no fire-place of her own. She cooks for her mother-in-law. During the three first weeks the husband eats with her and with the girl who accompanied her to her new home. Afterwards, he goes back to eat with the men. In some places it would seem that the husband eats with her the whole year, until she has her own pot (hlembeto).

4) Husband and wife.

What are the relations between husband and wife after the honey-moon? Of course they vary very much according to the character of both. As a rule however, the married people have very little intimacy with each other; the man remains with his companions on the "bandla," the village square where they meet, and only occasionally comes into the "ndangu," the reed enclosure of the fire-place, which is the true domain of the

A demonstration of joy takes place at the birth of any subsequent child, but the kunga is only performed for the first-born. It does not seem that in the case of the first-born child, as in the case of bowumba (see p. 125) the gifts of kunga are subject to any taboo.

8) Loss of children.

A woman who loses an infant (wa ku felwa) is deeply contaminated with the defilement of death. She must bury it herself without aid from her husband. Next day, she goes behind the hut, kneels down and draws off her own milk on to the ground. She does this until the secretion has ceased. This is taboo; her milk is polluted; no drop of it must fall in the gardens. She must avoid crossing the fields and going to the storehouses to fetch food. Until she has been "put right again (busetela)," she eats with a spoon. To use a spoon is a bad omen for a woman, because it reminds her of death. That is the reason why men adopt this civilized custom more readily than women. During her mourning, no sexual relations are allowed. When menstruation begins again, she first keeps silent, and does not tell her husband. Only on the second or third occasion does she inform him of the fact. He can then purify her; this is done in the same way as in the case of widows. (See p. 154.) Then he buys new clothing for her and she resumes her ordinary mode of life. Everybody seeing her with this new attire will know that "she has been repaired." Should any one else than the husband give her this clothing, the latter will be greatly offended and accuse her of having relations with a lover.

A man does not put on *malopa*, mourning clothing, for a child who was not yet of age. The woman alone does so. However a husband is always grieved at the death of his child and a sad event like this often leads to dreadful results. He will begin to think that his wife is a witch and has eaten her own child by her magical powers. Such an accusation is almost sure to end in a divorce.

A woman who has *lost many children*, three or four, is considered

361 in the bandla, and it is strictly reserved for them. Women are
351 allowed to penetrate into it only when they bring food. Boys
562 must remove the ashes from the fireplace, not women. The *hubo*, on the contrary, is open to all. A shed is sometimes built on it to afford shelter during the rainy days. There are special acts always performed on the hubo : the cutting up (shindla), the slaughtering and butchery of animals and the feast of "eating the head." The head of any slaughtered ox belongs to the men, and they eat it together on the hubo (See letter C.). It is the business of the young men to keep the hubo clean, and they sometimes assemble to pull up the grass which may have grown on it. In former times it was taboo to come to the hubo with
292 sandals. Sandals are used for hunting and must be taken off before entering the village.

Another place to which I have already alluded is the *bukwele*,
361 the "place of jealousy," where angry co-wives insult each other!
351 On our diagram it would be located between 5 and 4, for the
595 wives of the headman.

The Thonga village, this closed circle of huts, is a living
361 organism. All its members form a whole whose unity is remark-
596 able. This common life never appears in a more striking form
264 than at the evening meal. Let us look at our diagram. In every
476 yard the mistress of the hut has cooked her mealies and her sauce in different pots, and, when the sun sets, she distributes the contents (phamela) in wooden or earthen plates. The largest is for the husband. He sits on the bandla with his companions, the other men of the village, and the youths waiting for the meal. All these plates, generally carried by small girls or boys, are brought from all sides to the men's gathering. All do not necessarily contain the ordinary mealies pap ; some are filled with manioc, some with sweet potatoes, etc. The men attack the first plate, all of them taking the food with their fingers. They pass on to the second and so on to the last. Meanwhile each mother has filled other smaller plates, one for the girls, one for the boys, one for herself. She has even sent to each of the other women of the village a little of her cooking, and the others have done the same to her ; so each member of the community, when

361 546 264 476 he or she has finished the meal, will have eaten a little of all that has been cooked on all the fires. It is impossible to imagine a more perfect communism than this as regards food! I myself witnessed this custom of the evening meal in Spoon Libombo's village in Rivatla. Amongst the inhabitants of the kraal there were two blind male adults, the wife of one of them being half blind herself ; the wife of the other was an old woman who could hardly till a few square yards of mealies and groundnuts, and keep the birds and the hens away from them. Spoon's wife and the wife of another man of the village alone were healthy and able to work normally. So the whole burden rested on their shoulders, as the share the other women could take in the feeding of the men was necessarily small. However I never heard Spoon grumble ; being the headman, he made it a point of honour that all the people dwelling with him should have enough to eat. Everybody who has lived with South African Natives has admired their wonderful readiness to share any food they may have with those present. Even children are much superior in this respect to White children. I attribute this virtue to the community of food which reigns in the Bantu village, and which is certainly one of the most attractive features of Kafir socialism. Village life has not taught the Thongas merely bad habits.

B. MOVING A VILLAGE AND FOUNDING A NEW ONE.

621 754 596 Large kraals similar to the one shown in our illustration were more numerous in former times than now. It is rare to meet with such a number of huts and so many people under one headman. Why ? Because, say my informants, the superstition of witchcraft has considerably increased in later times. Suppose the wife of one of the younger brothers should [787] die ; the divinatory bones reveal that this death is due to a witch ; they go so far as to designate one of the wives of the headman as guilty. No common life is any longer possible. The widower will move elsewhere and build a fence around his

622 but it must not become tyrannical. They must govern for the
596 benefit of their subordinates.
264 This peculiar position of the numzane amongst his people is
554 illustrated, in a striking way, by the laws of distribution of the joints of meat on the day when the headman kills an ox to feast them. The various portions must be distributed to the relatives according to the place which they occupy in the family. The headman, nominal proprietor of the ox, will keep the breast (shifuba). This is not only the sternum and the ribs, but most of the viscera which are contained in them. The tripe, the heart, the kidneys will be put all together inside the stomach, and constitute what is called *nkopfu wa homu*. The headman will probably send the heart and the kidneys to his wives (tinkosikazi, his queens!). The brother who comes next will receive one of the hindlegs ; the third in rank one of the forelegs. The elder son will eat the second hindleg, and the younger son the second foreleg. They will eat this meat with their families, or houses (tiyindlu). This custom is very old (!).

Let us continue with the distribution. To the brothers-in-law, or to the relatives-in-law generally, the tail is sent. It is the portion of the sister. But it does not consist only of the tail properly so-called ; it comprises all the hind parts of the animal, especially the rump (kondjo). The malume (maternal uncle) receives part of the loins (muhlubula). The liver is put aside for the grandfather and the old people generally, because it is soft and they have no teeth to gnaw the bones. The head belongs to all the men of the village, who must eat it on the hubo, as we have seen. They may give the tongue (ndjaka) to the old men. It

622 (1) This custom is illustrated in a very interesting manner by the relative position
596 of the three clans occupying the South of the Bay. They are all descended from
264 Tembe (See page 23). *Tembe*, the ancestor, representing the elder branch of the
554 royal family, ate the chest. He was the superior (hosi), and this rank is still held by
618 his descendants in the direct line. *Sabi* or Mpanyele, the second brother, or son of the second brother, ate the hindleg ; he was established later on in the Mathuthweni district, between Tembe and Maputju. *Maputju*, the younger brother, head of the third branch, ate the foreleg. But he revolted against his elder brother and carved out for himself a kingdom which very soon became stronger than those of Tembe and Mathuthweni. Mathuthweni became more or less independent. But when people wish to remind the Maputju people of their inferior origin, they say to them : "Tembe ate the breast, Sabi the hindleg and Maputju the foreleg !"

622 is taboo for the women to eat it, or the under lip (See p. 184).
576 From each limb a small piece is taken (tshumbuta) and
264 placed on a skewer; it is the portion of the shepherds and of
334 the butchers, (makotjo ya babyisi). (See the tale of Piti, *Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, page 152). Sometimes the shepherds also receive the lungs and the spleen.

This way of distributing ox meat is called "ku tlhaba homu ba hamba milao," viz., "to kill an ox according to rule." Should a younger brother or a son kill an ox, he will send the breast to the master of the village, but he keeps all the limbs and does not observe the rules because, as he says: "It is enough to pay taxes to the chief of the country." Often one of the legs is sent to the chief of the clan.

Strange to say when a goat is killed none of these prescribed rules are followed, as they only concern the exen.

622 These customs show clearly the position of the headman;
596 he is the master but also the father of his subordinates, and their provider.

1) He must *watch* over the village (basopa, Dutch word passop, universally adopted by the Natives). During the night, if his son is away working in Johannesburg, he takes care that no lovers come into the huts of his daughters-in-law, (a langusa bumbuye), and if he happens to catch one, he will make him pay the fine.

622 2) He is a true *justice of peace* amongst the inmates of the
692 village, doing his best to maintain good relations amongst them.
578 Suppose for instance that the pigs belonging to one of the inhab-
685 itants come out of their enclosure and over-run the gardens of another man. This man will go and say to the owner of the pigs:
643 "Such and such a thing has happened, please close the pigs' kraal more carefully." Should the same thing happen a second time, he will complain to the *numzane*. The headman will then go to the culprit and say: "You have not heeded the warning; you must pay compensation (djiha)." If the culprit listens to the "voice of the blood" (bushaka), he will obey and the matter will end smoothly; if not, the headman can only keep silent: he has no soldiers, no means of enforcing his judgment; the plaintiff will then go to the chief of the tribe to complain. The case will be

4/62 places the food (phamela) on plates of the size of small basins or
511 dishes (mbenga). We have seen how she distributes it amongst
264 the inhabitants of the village. When all have finished eating, the
women wash the plates, put aside the pots which contain the food
left for the next morning, and tidy up the yards.

517 Whatever we may say, the day has been a well-filled one
for the women. They are very rarely seen playing in the day time.
We shall see how they recuperate themselves in the evening.

II. *Men's occupations.*

4/62 As for the men, their life is far from being as active as that
517 of the women. They have not, like their diligent wives, the
regular continuous work of preparing the food, not to mention
the care of the children. The duties which fall on them, and
which they are willing to perform, only require of them isolated
efforts from time to time.

4/62 As regards *agricultural work*, it is generally believed that
241 men leave this entirely to the women. This is exaggerated.
Amongst the Rongas each man possesses his own field which he
himself tills, and this is an old custom, a special term even
being applied to the field thus tilled: it is called *mpashu*. He may
sow seeds in it, but he does not weed it, leaving his wife to do this
troublesome work for him and also to reap it. He makes only
one exception in the case of the sorghum, of which he consents to
go and cut the ears. But he helps his wife in other ways, for ins-
4/62 tance in the storing of the food; he builds the little huts used as
251 storehouses, prepares the *tjala*, viz., the mat stretched on four poles
on which ground nuts are dried in the field, digs holes for the
buhiri, the shelf at the back of the hut where the basket containing
the seeds is placed. His wife does not think him a lazy fellow at
4/62 all. When the harvest is finished, she takes the smaller cobs of
273 mealies (makunhula), those which will not be kept, or the grains
of millet and sorghum which are found on the threshing floor
after the threshing, and with them she prepares a special beer to

177 as with their clothing! How often we have longed to see them adopt
291 some peculiar costume appropriate to the climate and to their occupations! But when they cast off their belt of tails, it is to put on long trousers, and they all dream of a complete khakhi or serge suit! So they will build square houses, and this certainly has its advantages; the dwelling can be divided into many rooms and the different members of the family can all live under the same roof, which, from an educational point of view, is a good thing.

264 The *communism of food* is also a splendid feature and calculated to fill
177 the most sanguine socialistic dreamer with joy! But this custom has
591 been severely criticised from a hygienic point of view. The habit of all
361 plunging their fingers into the same plate fosters tuberculosis and other contagious diseases; but I do not think it is for this reason that the custom will die out. In the modern Native settlement many different families live together. They are not united by any ties of blood. Moreover they are sometimes so numerous that such communism would be practically impossible. The golden age has passed for ever!

177 With it has also passed away the merry lazy life of the half naked
461 *mumumzane*. The coming of civilisation has already deeply changed his mode of living, and the transformation will accentuate itself still further. I have heard Colonists cursing these black people, who believe that they can escape the law of work under which Europeans groan: "these niggers who think that they will be allowed to remain incorrigibly lazy fellows for all time!" I do not share this loudly expressed indignation. First the Native *doda* is by no means an idle man. He has his own occupations for the benefit of the kraal. Secondly, if his wants are few, and if he very soon reaches the happy state of a man who is not obliged to work, I see thousands of Europeans enjoying the life of a "rentier" as much as he does, and without any qualms of conscience. A South African trader who works hard to make his fortune, and hopes to leave the country as quickly as possible, in order to enjoy all the comforts of a European town, theatres, concerts and clubs, has not, after all, a much loftier ideal than the Native he curses... On the other hand, circumstances themselves enforce upon the Native that law of work and teach him that "dignity of labour" of which we so often hear. A civilised Native has increased his wants ten-fold. He requires the wherewithal to satisfy them. This is the only legitimate, the most powerful incentive to work. Fifty, sixty thousand Thongas, the elite of our tribe, are constantly streaming to Johannesburg, where they are considered the best mining boys. Many of them go there to earn

a special apprenticeship ought to be served to one of the queens of the kitchen. I cannot boast of having gone as far as that!

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192

As a rule women cook only once a day, towards the end of the afternoon. The big meal is eaten in the evening when everybody is expected to eat till satisfied (shura), and what remains of it is generally finished the next day in the morning (fihlula). This evening meal consists of two component parts: the cooked cereals, and the sauces seasoning them. But the menu can be greatly varied. In most cases the cereals are prepared as *bupsa* (flour), or *mapa*, and the sauce, *muru* (Ro.), *sheshebo* (Dj.), is made of monkey nuts, ground and boiled in water, vegetables, India-pepper, tomatoes, shrimps, etc. Or the cereals, maize, millet or sorghum, may be only husked (tlhokola) and cooked whole; they are then called *tihobe* (plur. of hobe, the central part of the grain), and the monkey nut sauce is often replaced by beans or peas cooked together with the tihobe. All these dishes are very tasty and many White people readily eat the Thonga food, which seems to me superior to the Sutho.

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[264]

However, I never very much appreciated the *bupsa* which the Thongas consider superior to the tihobe and which takes a longer time to prepare. The grains must first be soaked for several hours in water (lobeka) to soften them; they are then crushed, the husks being carefully removed by the winnowing process (hehera) in the *lihlelo* basket, which is spasmodically shaken by sudden jerky movements; the interior of the grain is then pounded until it forms a very fine flour, as light as the best Australian flour; the small round particles remaining are called *buse*, and eaten as tihobe, as the bupsa must be perfectly homogeneous. When it boils in the pot, the cook stirs it the whole time with a stick provided at the bottom with small cross bars, two to three inches in length; she twirls the stick with her hands in the same way as a man lighting a fire with the wooden flint, and this operation prevents the flour from forming lumps. The lobeka process gives a somewhat nauseating taste to the bupsa; that is why Europeans do not care for it, but Natives like it precisely for that reason. The preparation of *tihobe* is not so complicated, as no preliminary softening is necessary. It is a somewhat coarse food which,

262 however, answers admirably to the wants and capacities of the Native stomach! When the bupsa of the previous day has undergone too much fermentation during the night, it is given to
[264] the dogs. A small supplementary meal is often cooked at midday : a plate of vegetables, for instance. Or, if the pangs of hunger are too keenly felt, a little nfuma meal (p. 17) is eaten with honey. Any addition of this kind to the ordinary every day fare is welcome!

There are a few other preparations made from cereals : the *mbila*, raw meal mixed with water, the *ntlatu*, a lighter kind of maize flour used for invalids, the *shimhimbi* made of Kafir corn which is the special dish for women who are more or less fasting during the confinement period (I. p. 42).

Thongas also know how to cook by steaming. They put a large plate (mbenga, mu-mi) on top of the pot and hermetically seal it with ox dung. This prevents the steam from escaping. Dung is a thing by no means to be avoided in the culinary art. They look upon it as quite clean (1).

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III. *Drink*.

271 Natives are fond of the fresh clear water (mati) running in the spruits of the Transvaal, but they also make use of the

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000 smoke, and rub the incisions with the powder. They will then be able to aim straight (See Annotatio 15). The powder specially prepared from the tendons of slain enemies will be spread on the paths during future wars ; foes marching on it unknowingly will suddenly become unable to walk and will easily be killed.

The Zulus are said to have the same customs as the Pedis.

726 I cannot guarantee that all the Thonga clans observe all these
789 customs.[1] The Nkuna magicians, in olden times, before they were
278 influenced by their Pedi neighbours, used to dissect the tendons
751 of the back (riringa) of the slain enemy, which they smeared
826 with his medulla and hung to the shields of the warriors... Enemies seeing these shields would "tjemeka nhlana" — "have their backs broken," a figurative expression which means to be terror stricken. A part of the body was also preserved and mixed with the war-medicine ; the idea which underlies this custom being evidently this : when you have eaten the flesh of your enemies, you have absorbed all their strength and they are unable to do you any further harm (1). We have seen that the "mbhulo," the "nyokwekulu," all the powerful "medicines of the country" carefully kept in each clan, contain a little human flesh. These drugs are used as protective war medicines ; most probably owing to the same principle.

II. *The treatment of the slayers.*

727 To have killed an enemy on the battle-field entails an immense
775 glory for the slayers ; but that glory is fraught with great danger.

(1) This custom is the only remnant of anthropophagy remaining amongst the
266 Thongas, and I wonder if this superstition is not the true explanation of the origin of cannibalism. Where cannibalism still prevails, as amongst the Faŋ of the Congo, I am told that the bodies eaten are generally those of hostile clans, or occasionally that of a wife (who belongs to another clan according to the laws of exogamy). Is it not probable that, in the beginning, these feasts had a ritual and military value similar to that which we find in the administering of the war-medicine in South African tribes? In the course of time, the Faŋ acquired a taste for human flesh and ate it for their own pleasure. Dealing with anthropophagy, I must not forget that it occurred in several instances in South Africa after the devastation brought about by the Zulu expeditions of 1820-1830. In Zoutpansberg, in the mountains of Drakensberg, Natives reduced to starvation began to eat their fellow men. This also happened in the Bokhakha during the reign of Queen Male. (See Part IV.)

[See pp. 476-477 -- Analyst]

262 lakes, to find the tubers of the nenuphars (Nymphea stellata), and
731 cook these indigestible roots (matibu). They have also gone so far as to make flour of the pith of the palm trees (mimale). They disinter the bodies of dead animals, or cram themselves with *masala*, which often engenders serious vomiting. Some eat big Copris beetles.

Such famines were frequent in former times, and special years are still known as having been years of *ndlala*. So, in the chronology of Shinangana (Part IV) the year 1875 (?) was called "the year of the Magadingele famine." On the Coast the Gonhwen famine is still remembered (1). The proximity of a seaport which is easily provisioned, and the possibility of earning money wherewith to buy rice and maize constitute a real advantage which Natives are the first to recognise. In this respect civilisation has rendered signal service to the Thonga commissariat!

266 (1) It does not appear that starvation ever induced Thongas to practise cannibalism on any considerable scale. Cases are known of this happening as when, during the war of 1895, a Ronga killed a man and ate his lungs and kidneys quite raw. He was prosecuted and deported to Mozambique. In the mountains, the Ba-Pedi and Ba-Sutho began to consume human flesh after the raids of Chaka and his generals. They first ate the corpses; then, having acquired a taste for this food, they began to attack travellers, springing out from the caves in the mountains, where they were hiding; they even made organised expeditions in search of men to devour. These cannibals are known by the name of Makhema and caused the Queen of the Bokhaha, Male, to change her residence (I. p. 477).

which are at the root of the idea of the double existence of the baloyi. 182 754
2) *Cannibalism*, which has perhaps never existed as a general custom [266
in South Africa, but has been practised sporadically in times of famine, and has left a feeling of disgust and horror in the minds of later generations ; this feeling is also manifested in the numerous Ogre tales.
3) The *terrible hatred* of which the Native mind is capable. If some [152]
people venture to accuse members of these tribes of such awful acts as those of killing and eating human beings, it is because they know that a Native who hates would not shrink from anything to satisfy his desire of vengeance.

We must however remember that the witchcraft superstition was universally found amongst our own forefathers, and that there were epidemics of it in the XIVth, XVth and even the XVIth centuries, hundreds of wizards having been tortured and burnt in most European countries, after having been tried before regular Courts. I have tried to establish a parallel between the ideas and practices of witchcraft in French Switzerland and those of the Thongas. The results of the comparison are very curious. I cannot give them all here, and must refer the reader to the Paris Revue *Foi et Vie*, No. of October, 1910, in which they were published. The most striking difference is this. Amongst Thongas, we are still in the *predualistic age*, viz., the opposition between a good, moral Spirit (God) and bad, wicked spirits (demons, Satan) does not yet exist in Religion. So the power of God is not invoked to reveal the wizards, or to protect the innocent against their spells. But the same animistic conceptions evidently formed the basis of European as of African witchcraft.

This superstition has a deadly effect on Native life. It is a continual source of trouble, fear, quarrels, sorrow. Strange to say, it has been on the increase in recent years. It ruins the villages. — "Formerly," say my informants, "you could see villages of ten or twenty huts. Now the accusations of witchcraft have broken them up. Each man builds his own hut apart, from fear of being bewitched, or because he is suspected of being a noyi (1)."

(1) The evil affects the Native Christian communities also, fostering hatred amongst them, and this animistic doctrine is much more difficult to overcome than ancestrolatry, which is very quickly and completely abandoned by converts.

Some Christian Natives are so convinced that witchcraft is a reality that they interpret Matt. X. 28 by saying that "those who kill the body and who must not be feared" are the baloyi. Unhappily a Zulu translation of the Greek word φαρμακοί by the word corresponding to baloyi, in Revelation XXII, v. 15, confirmed them in

856 mouthful to drink, then dip her finger into the medecine and let
731 two or three drops fall from it on the fontanella ; then she spits on
757 the lower part of the shell and presses it all along the sternum
854 of the baby as far as the navel. This is said to "nurse the child, to make him grow." Should he be sick, this treatment will be repeated many times a day. If he is well and goes about with his mother, she will pour the *milombyana* into the small calabash and give him a few sups from it from time to time.

The child must never drink ordinary water, but only the
853 *milombyana* decoction. It is a taboo. Should the mother travel
271 far from home and leave behind her the *milombyana* pot, she is
2/84 allowed to add some water to the calabash, but she must always leave a little of the decoction in the calabash before doing so. The mother herself is not allowed to drink the water of another country. She must only drink water from home and, if she is forced to travel, she must take a little powder from the reed each time she drinks, so that the child may become familiarised with that country (1). These laws must be kept during all the nursing period.

862 The child begins to eat *solid food* as soon as his teeth are cut, and when he is able to take it with his own hands. But some people do not like to give it to him too soon, as they say his stools become fetid. When later on he is able to go outside and to take care of himself, then he can eat any ordinary food.

853 If the mother dies during the nursing period, the little one is almost sure to follow her. The baby is fed with goat's or cow's milk, but the Natives do not know that they must add water to it ; sooner or later therefore the child dies of enteritis.

I have heard of some cases in which another woman has taken charge of the child, nursed him with her own milk and weaned him successfully ; her own child being older, she weaned him earlier than the usual time and nursed the other child in his

261 (1) A similar custom is observed in the case of moving from one country to another.
2/84 When a Ronga comes back from Kimberley having found a wife there, both bring with them a little of the earth of the place they are leaving, and the woman must eat a little of it every day in her porridge in order to accustom herself to her new abode. This earth provides the transition between the two domiciles !

881 the water and must remain in it a long time till the sun appears.
271 The shepherds prevent them from coming out. This is also said to help the wound to heal. (Valdo).

Thirst. It is absolutely forbidden to drink a drop of water during the whole initiation, and this taboo is said to be very painful. Boys sometimes succeed, during their hunting trips, in enticing their shepherds in one direction and in the meantime some of them escape and go to the river to drink. They will be severely punished if caught!

522 *Unsavoury food.* The law is that women, the mothers of the
881 circumcised, must bring plenty of porridge, twice as much as is required for the boys. Should one of them fail to do this she will be punished at a given time. They deposit their pots at some distance, so that they cannot catch any glimpse of the Ngoma, and shout : "Ha tsoo! We are burning." This means : "Our heads are sore from having carried our pots such a long way." Shepherds run to meet them and answer with a great many jokes in rather dubious taste : "We know what is burning with you, etc." Is not this the rule of the Ngoma ? The shepherds bring back with them the empty pots of the day before which the women take back to their homes. Should one of them have provided too little food, her pot will be filled with long grass, and when she goes home with her comrades, they will make fun of her. If she does not learn to do better, the "Mother of the Ngoma" will organise a punitive expedition to her village, and kill goats and fowls, and thus make her obey.

881 All the food is placed on the reed tables, and must be eaten by the boys without any seasoning. Should the indulgent mothers have brought some ground nut sauce, it will be confiscated and eaten by the men. When they hear the order : "Tshai goma," the candidates must rush to the tables, kneel down, and, at the word "Thari," seize the food with both hands and swallow it as quickly as possible. If they delay, they are beaten by the shepherds who superintend the meal. When one batch of boys has finished, they must rush to another table where other boys are still struggling with their heap of porridge and help them to finish their portions. Owing to this emulation, the meal does not last

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whitish, greyish mixture found in the pools, in the midst of the sandy hollows, or in the neighbourhood of the lakes, in the Delagoa plain. To drink from a pot, or from a river, lying on your belly, or kneeling down, is *ku nwa*. But there is another word, *ku kapitela*, which describes the manner of drinking adopted in olden times by the warriors of Gideon, and of which the Thongas have not lost the secret. The Book of Judges tells the story of the 500 "who lapped, putting their hands to their mouths" (VII, 6). When crossing a spruit, you will often see Thongas drinking by throwing water into their mouths with a rapid upward motion of the hand. I had never properly understood Gideon's story until I saw a Thonga drinking by *kapitela*. 271

But the Thonga kitchen provides the tribe with many other drinks. They can be divided into 3 categories : drinks made from cereals, from fruits or from other ingredients. From cereals are made the buputju, madleko, byala and mpheka ; from fruits, the bukanye, buhimbi ; the busura, made from the sap of the palm tree, also belongs to this group. In the third category, I may mention the shiwayawaya and shikokiyane. 273

1) *Drinks made from cereals.* Under the name of *Kafir beer* are generally comprised all the varieties of intoxicating drinks prepared from mealies, millet, sorghum. But these varieties differ greatly, according to the proportion of alcohol they contain. There is a light beer called buputju and madleko and a strong beer, the byala proper, and mpheka.

The *buputju* (corresponding to the Sutho *leting*) is brewed in the following manner : a little bupsa of mealies is cooked and ground (sila) in a plate together with Kafir corn yeast. Water is poured on the mixture and fermentation soon sets in. After one day it can be consumed ; its taste is agreeable and it is hardly intoxicating (Mboza). This was the old-fashioned way of preparing buputju, and it is probably what the Ba-Ronga called *madleko*. Maize madleko looks like a thick oatmeal soup. The recipe in Shiluvane is somewhat different : mealie flour is placed in a pot, with cold water, and stirred. This mixture is poured into another pot of hot water and boiled. It is then left to cool and some Kafir corn yeast is mixed with it in the evening. Next

good luck ; he will say : "My god has blessed me and shown me this gandjelo," and he is quite welcome to help himself to the wine. On the other hand, it is prohibited to touch the shell and to drink from it. It is taboo. A stranger doing so would be addressed as follows : "Are you a bee, are you a butterfly to go and help yourself from a shikutja, which does not belong to you?" He would be tied up, arms and legs, and left to sleep in the open for the whole night. On leaving him they will taunt him, saying : "Go and drink from the shikutja." He may even be condemned to pay a fine, a goat, or a hoe. This palm wine has a very sweet and agreeable taste. 273 685

According to the Native idea, *honey* (bulombe) is also a drink! The prefix *bu* classifies this product amongst liquids. It is very much appreciated and Natives readily submit to be stung in order to collect it (hakula) from the holes in old trees or rocks. They generally burn some grass which they hold in one hand, keeping the bees away with the smoke and the flame, and gathering the honey combs into a pot with the other hand. Thongas frequently secure honey in an artificial way by placing a broken pot upside-down in the bush. Bees are attracted and a swarm will occasionally make its home in the pot. In the Ñwambukota region (near Morakwen) I saw a Ronga who even had bee hives of his own invention and succeeded in securing plenty of honey. Native honey is of a brownish, blackish hue. When eating it, Thongas do not at all despise the larvae : are they not meat? 222 231 272

3) *The Shiwayawaya and Shikokiyane drinks.* The various kinds of beer and drinks made from fruit were not, however, enough for the Thongas. They saw that White people used sugar-cane to distil rum and they attempted to do the same. The result of their attempt is called *Shiwayawaya*. Inhambane Natives seem to have been the first to brew it ; their kinsmen of the Lourenço Marques district soon followed their example. They crush the sugar-cane in a mortar, after having poured some water into it ; they then collect the crushed cane in a sack, press it, and extract all the liquid they can in one or two barrels. During the night a fire is lighted in a hut, near the barrels, to 273

nostrils and so keep it quiet during the whole operation. The milk is generally taken in a large wooden bowl. It is very seldom consumed as a liquid, but is *eaten* when thickened by coagulation. The fresh milk is poured into a calabash with an opening at the bottom closed by a cork : a certain quantity of whey has been kept in the calabash and this causes the fresh milk to curdle at once. When curdled but not yet set, it is called *shitjubi* and is eaten with spoons by men and women. But it is left to decompose : the whey *(mulaza)* soon separates from the thick part, which becomes entirely solid and is then called *ntjhwamba*. The cork at the bottom of the calabash is removed, the *mulaza* flows out freely and is drunk by the men and herd boys. The *ntjhwamba* is put into a plate and each man or woman, not having her *tihweti* (I. p. 187), approaches and takes a spoonful of it. A woman during menstruation must never drink milk, nor during her confinement or until her child has been presented to the moon (I. p. 52).

The milk of the first week after a cow has calved is taboo. It must not be mixed with other cows' milk, because the umbilical cord of the calf has not yet fallen off. It can, however, be boiled and consumed by children, as they do not count! After that milk is never boiled : not that there is any taboo to fear, but it is not customary. Natives do not give any clear reason for these milk taboos. They have no objection to selling their milk to strangers ; on the contrary, they are so eager to make money out of it that they often add water to it, and any European having had dealings with them in milk matters would have his story to tell!

Goat's milk is left for the herd boys ; men do not touch it.

II. *Other domestic animals.*

Besides oxen, the Ba-Ronga breed *goats* (mbuti, yin-tin), the care of which is relegated to the small boys (I. p. 62). Practically every one possesses one or more goats, whilst oxen are much more rarely met with.

584 to *tjekela*. You must wait for fine weather, otherwise it is an
574 insult to the future father-in-law.

784 5) If, during the visit, you eat monkey nuts, you must not
262 take off the thin skin which covers the kernel.

6) The suitor—the owner of the oxen—must not eat black fish that day. Only his friends have the right to do so. These fish, a kind of barbel, are to be found in the lakes (as that of Rikatla) and in the Nkomati river. The suitor will not partake of them for fear lest the girl he wishes to marry should slip through his hands like a fish. Moreover this fish is black: it might bring darkness, unhappiness.

7) Neither must he eat honey during his visit, because honey like the black fish, is slippery... Honey flows...

8) He is also forbidden to eat fowls, because cocks and hens scratch the soil with their claws, scattering it about; thus the marriage "might be scattered (hangalasa bukati) before it is ripe". In the Tembe clans, formerly, any solid food was taboo until the families had killed an ox for the feasts.

These taboos are not the proper taboos of a marginal period, as if the betrothal were considered as one of these periods. They are family taboos, belonging to the category of those dictated by the mutual distrust of two allied families.

585 The wedding feast consists of two parts: the *lobola feast*, viz. all the ceremonies connected with the remittance of the lobolo which takes place at the bride's village, and the *tlhoma*, viz. the bringing the bride to the bridegroom's village. Should the lobolo have been entirely paid at once, these two ceremonies will follow each other without much delay. If the sum of money or the number of oxen is not complete, the *tlhoma* will very probably be postponed.

4) Lobola feast.

a) Preparations.

585 On both sides, the friends are informed that the feast is close
273 at hand. The bride's family in particular must prepare in good time, as they have to provide the beer which will be consumed in

585 great quantities. The brewing requires several days. All the
273 relations of the young girl agree on a day to begin operations in the several villages they inhabit. First of all the grains must be taken out of all the mealie spikes which were kept in the small cellar huts (ku hula). The following day these mealie seeds are steeped in cold water, in large pots. When they have become sufficiently soft, they are pounded (kandja) in wooden mortars, the yeast of millet is added (kandela) and the preparation is then boiled (pseka). On the day of the boiling, the family of the fiancé is informed that the next day the beer will be drained off and that on the following day the wedding will begin.

585 That same day the bridegroom with his friends goes to his future parents-in-law. He does not find his sweetheart there; she has wisely been hidden in the neighbourhood. He brings with him a goat which will subsequently play an important part in the proceedings. The next day the whole family of the fiancé assembles and makes sure that the provision of hoes or the number of pounds sterling for the lobolo is complete. The third day they all start.

b) The assault of the village.

Let us describe this most curious feature of the feast as it took place forty years ago, when English gold was not yet known in the country, and when the price of a wife was paid in hoes. These hoes, to the number of forty or fifty, were distributed among the relatives, who carried them on their heads. In a long row, they wind along the path. When they approach close to the bride's village, most of them sit down in the shade, whilst a few young men go on before to make the assault. The bride's brothers guard the doors of the circular thorny fence which generally surrounds the villages. Provided with their sticks, they try to prevent the aggressors from entering. In vain! The assailants leap here and there in the bush, hurl themselves over the barriers, are pursued by the sentinels, run across the square, and try to steal pitchers of beer, whilst the boys of the village hit them as hard as they can.

Taking advantage of this tumult the older men arrive, and

765 574 177 273 Mulalen was Sokis' little daughter. They bring with them presents, five hundred reis, a hen, a goat, some light beer, perhaps a mat for the widow because hers has been thrown away or a piece of mourning cloth. The inhabitants receive them politely, and spread mats on the ground for them. They tell each other the news (djungulisana). Then after having *luma*, they eat and drink. The Ba-Ronga have their drink already prepared: it is the red wine which Banyan merchants sell to them all over the country. The visitors get drunk. They dance, and the mourning ceremony turns into an orgy with dances and songs of all kinds. The singing during this Great Mourning consists either of war songs executed by the men, which are very impressive, or of ordinary dancing songs, the licentious ones being particularly appropriate and being performed by women. (Annotatio 9). In fact they are the proper mourning songs, those which are specially chosen when it is wished duly to lament a great man. I have witnessed these performances at a mourning ceremony of the " breaking of the hut " and shall refer to this subject again. In Vol. II. Part V Ch. II. B. I shall quote some of the mourning songs which have a peculiar stoic character. Here are two others from a collection made by Mrs Audéoud, the wife of one of our missionaries. They were sung at the death of the chief Tshutsha, near Makulane in the Maputju country. One of these was a war song accompanied with drums. It sounded as follows :

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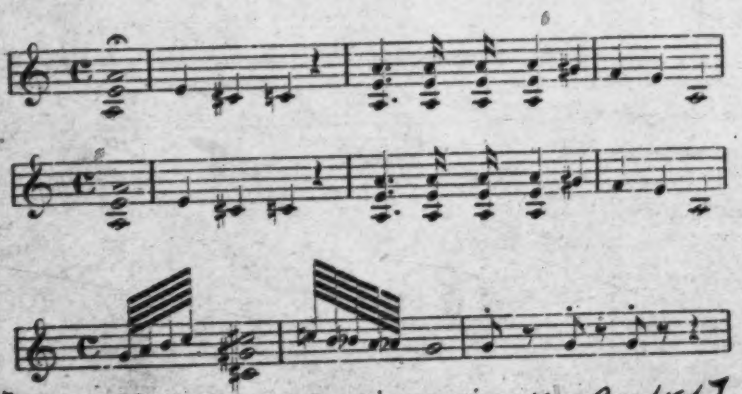

2 [see p. 517 in these categories or in 116--Analyse]

final fate will not be known before the last and most important act : the adjudication of the inheritance.

f) *The day of the adjudication of the inheritance.* This is a most typical ceremony prepared for with great care, because the day is full of surprises and dangers. Every precaution is taken to avoid misunderstanding, and to bring the mourning to a peaceful and satisfactory conclusion. It is winter time ; the mealies have been collected from the fields of the widows, the small cobs called *makunula* have been set carefully apart, as they have to be used especially to prepare the beer for the feast. The council of the family is again assembled and decides that the time has come. The divinatory bones are consulted. Should they be favourable, the ceremony can take place. The bones are again asked a number of questions : Who must take the mealies from the granary and put them in the pot to soften them in water ? (first operation of native beer making). A newly married woman who has had only one child is chosen by preference. Then it is asked how long this softening must continue ; who is to shout her *mikulungwane* to accompany the work ; who will have to get the mealies out ; which woman must give the first blow in the mortar to pound the softened mealies, etc.

All the relatives assemble in the mortuary village. One year has elapsed since the death, and the bitter feelings of mourning have passed. Nobody will miss the feast, certainly not the *batukulu*, viz., the nephews, sons of the sisters of the deceased. Some may be disappointed this day, but one of these nephews may return home richer than when he left! Most of the relatives arrive before the great day, to help in the preparation of the beer. When the woman designated by the bones has given the first blow, all her companions start at once pounding with vigour : "Che-ghe-ghe-ghe," and they sing songs of mourning. This is one of these songs, and a very significant one :

> Hi rilo, hi rilo! Hi ta ku yini ku we, Hosi ndjina ?
> We are weeping, we are weeping! What shall we say to thee, King!

This king is without doubt Heaven, the more or less personal being who kills or gives life, and whom we shall often meet with in these pages.

462 places the food (phamela) on plates of the size of small basins or
511 dishes (mbenga). We have seen how she distributes it amongst
264 the inhabitants of the village. When all have finished eating, the women wash the plates, put aside the pots which contain the food left for the next morning, and tidy up the yards.

517 Whatever we may say, the day has been a well-filled one for the women. They are very rarely seen playing in the day time. We shall see how they recuperate themselves in the evening.

II. *Men's occupations.*

462 As for the men, their life is far from being as active as that
517 of the women. They have not, like their diligent wives, the regular continuous work of preparing the food, not to mention the care of the children. The duties which fall on them, and which they are willing to perform, only require of them isolated efforts from time to time.

462 As regards *agricultural work*, it is generally believed that
241 men leave this entirely to the women. This is exaggerated. Amongst the Rongas each man possesses his own field which he himself tills, and this is an old custom, a special term even being applied to the field thus tilled: it is called *mpashu*. He may sow seeds in it, but he does not weed it, leaving his wife to do this troublesome work for him and also to reap it. He makes only one exception in the case of the sorghum, of which he consents to go and cut the ears. But he helps his wife in other ways, for ins-
462 tance in the storing of the food; he builds the little huts used as
251 storehouses, prepares the *tjala*, viz., the mat stretched on four poles on which ground nuts are dried in the field, digs holes for the *buhiri*, the shelf at the back of the hut where the basket containing the seeds is placed. His wife does not think him a lazy fellow at
462 all. When the harvest is finished, she takes the smaller cobs of
273 mealies (makunhula), those which will not be kept, or the grains of millet and sorghum which are found on the threshing floor after the threshing, and with them she prepares a special beer to

462 thank (tlangela) her husband for his kind help! This is her
273 method of notifying him that all the grain has been harvested, as, whatever the man's share of the work may have been, the mealies belong to him.

462 The main work of the man is the *building and repairing of the*
356 *huts*. This is truly an arduous job, but it is not of yearly recur-
342 rence. Every third or fourth year they are obliged to re-thatch the roof. The huts are built and repaired during the winter, from May to September.

A second domain, which is exclusively man's, is the *care of the cattle*; the boys milk the cows, construct and repair the kraal: the little boys herd the goats, and the young men the oxen, as has already been mentioned.

462 It is also the men who *make all the utensils and tools* used in the
411 village, pots and other crockery excepted; mortars, pestles,
294 handles for axes or hoes (mimphinyi), wooden platters, carved or forged articles, all this work pertains to them. They must also make the *ntehe* for their wives, or sisters, after the birth of the babies. This is probably the explanation of the curious fact noticed amongst Native Christians, namely that they are much more clever at needlework than their wives. Big fellows are often seen forsaking the hoe to work with the needle, and there are fathers who make their own clothing as well as the dresses for their wives and children!

462 *Hunting and fishing* are, of course, also men's work... or pastime.
224 For some of them hunting is an actual trade, at least such was the case in former times, before the White Governments imposed strict regulations and levied heavy licences on that sport. We shall study, in Part IV, the curious customs relating to these two favourite occupations of the Natives.

574 A great part of their time is devoted by the men to *paying*
517 *visits*. They are very fond of calling on each other, and sometimes
484 they go great distances to see relatives or friends. They do not travel to pay visits only, but they frequently journey to claim payment of their debts (milandju). To regain the possession of a miserable head of cattle they willingly lose whole weeks! And what endless discussions in the *hubo*, when an unfortunate visitor

273 1) Men's favourite pastime in South Africa is *drinking beer*.
275 There are no bars on the velt... But every village is from time
574 to time a brewery and a drinking place. Beer is prepared in large
596 quantities. As we shall see, the brewing lasts about nine days. Near Lourenço Marques, Natives fill not only pots but big casks with it! One of the jugs is put aside for the headman to try it. He must pour a little of it into the *gandjelo* ; this religious act is obligatory. Next day the men of the village assemble in the morning to sample it also, and, at noon, all the friends from the
273 neighbouring villages arrive. Everybody is welcome. Even a
574 leper can take part in the beer-drinking ; but he will come with
596 his own calabash and they will fill it with a special ladle. As a rule near neighbours also bring their calabashes, but people coming from afar are not expected to do so. The beer is drunk with great haste. Before it is all finished, the headman puts aside a pot for his father-in-law, his uterine nephew, and the friend who invited him on a previous occasion... Of course after having filled their stomachs, men and women dance on the hubo in the afternoon, and especially in the evening, when the moon shines ; the shouting sometimes becomes dreadful when drunkenness has overcome all

000 the rain which was pouring down. Suddenly I noticed the Walusangano family returning from the garden in the same order as the week before : in front Leya with the bundle of wood, the basket of vegetables, the hoe and the baby on her back, followed by the children, and behind, the father with the protective umbrella. "Such are the fruits of my efforts." I thought! But I refused to consider myself beaten. I said to myself : "I will speak to them once more! The women will certainly be on my side, these poor overworked women!"

On the following Sunday Nesheye (one of the best Christian women of the congregation) came to see me after the sermon. . She had something to tell me... She said : "You observe us, and you wonder at certain things. We also, on our side are observing you, and we see things which we also do not understand. When your wife does the washing, you remain standing by and do not help her. With us it is the men who do the washing. Again, we have seen your wife sewing and mending your clothes and the clothes of the children, and you beside her, not thinking of helping her. With us it is the men who mend the clothes."

Having spoken thus, Nsesheye put her two hands joined together on the mat, then separated them as if she were cutting something in two, and said to me : "That is the way your forefathers distributed the work, a little heap here and another little heap there ; and they said : This is the work of men and that the work of women. Our forefathers proceeded in the same way, and said : This is men's work and that is women's work... We must leave it so. The Gospel has not to concern itself with these matters. We do not wish to have the reputation of being lazy and you do not wish it either."

(From the *Journal de l'Unité des Frères*, January 1926.)

273/574 622 595 musical instinct. Some days later, another headman invites his neighbours to another beer-drinking, and so they eat and drink together (ba delana, ba nwelana) as long as there is plenty in the storehouses. When provisions become scarce, they begin to spare the mealies. But the advantage of the polygamist becomes apparent here; his storehouses are many and he can feast his friends for many months.

These beer-drinking customs are essentially demoralising; they

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Phot. A. Bertl.

Beer-drinking party in Maputju country.

are one of the curses of primitive Native life. But let me remark that, as the making of the beer takes nine days, these excesses cannot be very frequent, and the habit of drinking wine at the White man's store is ten times more harmful, as in this case alcohol is never lacking. We shall speak later on of alcoholism amongst Natives. (See Part IV.)

276/248 Another pastime, very much appreciated by some, but not so general, is *hemp smoking* and the accompanying *saliva contest*. Hemp (mbange) has been cultivated for a considerable time amongst the Thongas, especially on the coast, not to make ropes, but for smoking.

262 even those who are settled in the clan. They have their own
643 medicine and luma for themselves, though they must not do it
609 before the chief of the country.
796

III. *The lumá of bukanye and the great national feast.*

137 The most characteristic of all these ceremonies connected with
273 the first fruits is the luma of bukanyi. Tobane has given me a
796 circumstantial description of this feast and it deserves to be
824 reproduced in all its details, as being a typical manifestation of Bantu national life.

The *nkanye* (1) is a large tree, one of the finest in the country. Its botanical name is Sclerocarya caffra (Sond); it is generally known amongst the English of Natal as the Kafir plum.

It bears fruit of the size of a greengage, which when ripe is a beautiful golden yellow and has a strong flavour of turpentine and a penetrating odour. It is a dioecian tree, the male bearing bunches of flowers while the female has single flowers. The Natives are quite aware of this; they cut down the male plants but take care to keep a few in each district to fecundate the female. The fruit — the kanye — begins to ripen in the month of January and falls to the ground. The odour is perceptible everywhere, and it is then that the principal men of the country approach the chief and say to him: "The time has come to luma."

In the luma of the bukanye it is easy to discover four consecutive ceremonies:

a) The luma of the gods and of the chief.

262 The first ripe makanye are gathered and pressed at the capital,
782 and the sour liquor thus obtained is poured out on the tomb of the deceased chiefs in the sacred wood; they are invoked to
273 bless this new year and the feast which is about to be celebrated.
796

(1) Nkanye, plural minkanye, is the tree in question. Kanye, plural makanye, is the fruit of this tree; bukanye is the drink made from this fruit. In the same way the wild apricot tree is called mphimbi, plural mimphimbi. The fruit himbi, plural mahimbi; the drink made from the fruit, buhimbi.

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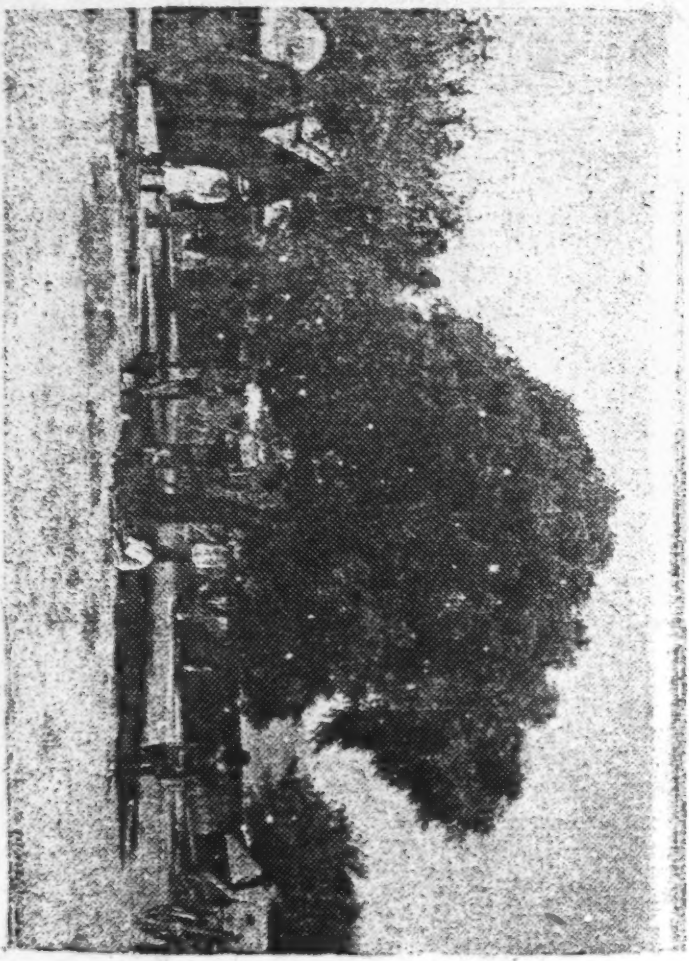
Nkolele, the sub-chief of Libombo, used on this occasion to pronounce the following prayer : "This is the new year. Let us



The "Nkanye" of Rikal's (16 miles North of Lourenço-Marques). *Phot. P. Rethead.*

not kill each other! Let us eat peacefully! (Hi yo nguba! Hi nga dlayane! A hi nwenen ha hombe!)" Here is another

262 formula : "May this bukanyi do no harm! May we not slay each
782 other under its influence. May it cause no serious quarrels."
796 They are afraid that, during the general intoxication which will
273 shortly prevail, quarrels will arise, some of which may terminate fatally. During the whole month of bukanye drinking, all business is at a standstill, just as with us all bankruptcy proceedings and all prosecutions for debt are held in abeyance for two weeks during the New Year holidays!

The gods having luma first, the bones are consulted. Should the throw be propitious, the chief will luma next ; thus the opening ceremony of the feast is concluded.

b) The luma of the army.

796 The young people are now assembled to clean up the public
273 square and all the roads ; the ball room must be prepared! The women of the capital start out early in the morning, beating the *psibubutwana*, that is to say sounding the call that is produced by striking the lips (bu-bu-bu-bu), and they go all over the country gathering the golden fruit ; this is piled up in an enormous heap on the public square and the brew is proceeded with in the following manner. The makanye are pierced (tshunya) with a pointed wooden splinter ; the stone falls covered with a transparent white pulp into the jar ; into this jar is also squeezed out with the fingers all the juice which remains in the pulp adhering to the skin ; this is continued until the jar is half full, when the stones are taken out, and on the following day the pressing is resumed until the jar is full. On the third day the beer has sufficiently fermented to be pungent and agreeable to the taste and is ready for consumption. Empty barrels are easily procurable in the environs of Lourenço Marques. The women of the capital brew ten or fifteen huge casks of the precious liquor! This accomplished, the second ceremony begins.

796 A convocation of the entire male portion of the tribe is held in
273 the capital, but the first to respond to the call must be the men,
789 the warriors of the army, who come in full array, with all their
701 ornaments, and carrying their small play shields. One cask of

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

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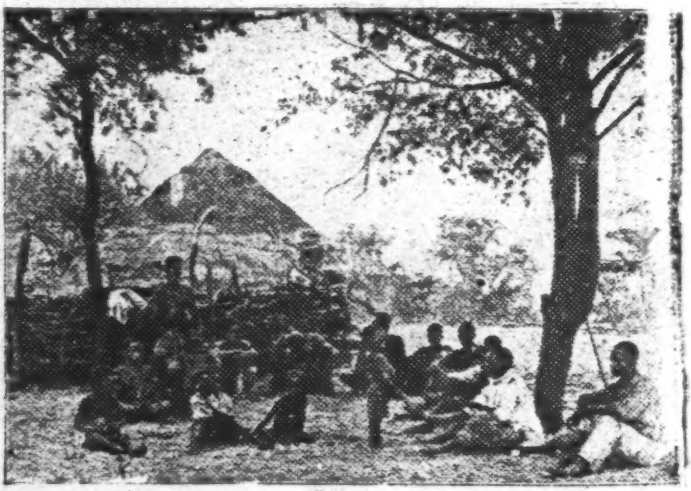
beer is selected, into which is thrown the black powder, the great medicine of the land, called in this case *buhlungu bya miluru*, the powder of the miluru. The nuru, plur. miluru, is the mysterious spiritual influence which a man or a beast killed by the assagais can exert on the slayer, making him lose his head and commit acts of folly, or, at least, have red eyes (shenga mahlo). We shall again meet with this curious conception when



Bukanye drinking near Antioka. (Portuguese East Africa.) *Phot. A. Bord.*

studying the rites of the army and of hunting. All those who are proudly conscious of having killed a man in war must first drink the new beer which has been medicated to keep them from killing any of their compatriots during the ensuing weeks of the bukanye. They approach one after the other, the chief also, if he be a man-slayer. Each of them receives a small calabash, (ntcheko, p. 50) full of the fermented liquid. He jumps and runs in the direction of the entrance, drinks a mouthful, spits it out with *tsu* and says : "Father and mother! May I live! May I hold the calabash! Even to morrow! For ever!" People laugh. He is very happy! Others sing and dance the war dance :

796 "We drink the bukanye anew! Who would have thought that
273 we should drink again from this cup", viz., "that we should have
789 escaped all the dangers of war" (Hi nwa nkanyi lomu'mpsa! Afa
701 hi nga hlayi epsaku hi ta nwa ntcheko lo kambe).

After this, the casks are distributed to the other warriors, who drink to their hearts' content. The addition of the black powder is not absolutely necessary in their case. They can luma without it. Then the war circle is formed and the principal counsellors harangue the assembled warriors, giving them the following advice : "Drink in peace (ha hombe). Let no one spoil this bukanye by transfixing his brother with his assagai. Go and drink in your villages. Do not pick quarrels with strangers passing through the country, etc." The gathering then disperses.

c) The luma in the village.

796 The preparatory luma is accomplished. The *yila* has been
273 removed. Now comes the third act : the drinking in the villages.
786 The women who remained at home while the men-slayers went to luma at the bidding of the chief, have gathered large quantities of makanye. The tree is to be found extensively all over the country, as no female plant is ever cut down ; there is one or more in every field, and every one possesses such a tree, as every one owns a field ; when all the trees in the gardens have been stripped of fruit, the women pass to the trees growing in the bush far from the villages.

But here also everything must be done in right order of precedence ; the petty chief of such a district must commence to luma in the presence of his subjects, and not until after he has done so can the people drink freely in the villages. From this moment, however, there is no further restriction. Drinking continues day and night, night and day! When the supply is finished in one village, they go to the next. These feasts are the saturnalia, the bacchanalia, the carnival of the tribe! During these weeks some individuals are in a continuous state of semi-intoxication. Orgies on all sides, songs and dances! The younger men run along the paths, with a more or less unsteady

796 gait, brandishing sticks with pieces of red cloth attached as
273 pennants. They are in search of full barrels! It must be said
786 that the inebriety produced by the bukanye is of a rather mild type, as this Native beer contains very little alcohol ; but the quantity absorbed is so enormous that it ends by going to their heads : this is more especially so with the bukanye brewed from a species of nkanye called *nunge*, which appears to be stronger and more intoxicating.

796 How far does sexual licence go during the bukanye ? Not to
273 the point of general promiscuity, as amongst the Ba-Pedi after the circumcision school. However many cases of adultery occur.
833 Men and women forget the elementary rules of condvet. They
786 attend to the wants of nature in the same places, which is taboo under ordinary circumstances : "Nau a wa ha tiyi,"—"the law is no longer in force."

796 Still, in the midst of all this carnival, the payment of the tax
273 must not be forgotten... This is the time to carry to the chief the liquor which is flowing so freely on all sides, but of which
643 he claims the lion's share. Each petty chief sends his people
651 to the capital with brimming jars. This is termed "lumisa hosi," supplying the chief with new wine. The women do not enter the capital at once, but go to one of the counsellors, who promptly abstracts a couple of jars for his own use. The chief returns one or two jars to the carriers, as they have come a long way and are doubtless thirsty ; the remainder will be kept to refresh the very numerous guests at the Court ; any coming from afar will spend the night and not return until the next day. I have seen a company of these women carrying baskets
539 full of makanye to Muzila. How graceful was the Indian file winding its way along the path and singing, amongst others, the following chorus : (See for further particulars *Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, page 46.)

Chwe! Chwe! Hi laba shimungu — Leshi ka — Le tilwen!
Chwe! Chwe! Shimungu hi mani? — Hi Mzila! — Hi Mzila!
Hi! Hi! We seek the hawk! — Who soars — In the sky!
Hi! Hi! Who is the hawk? — It is Mzila! — It is Mzila!

539 There is quite a collection of these carriers' songs praising the chiefs. Mzila (or Muzila), whom we saw a short time back scaring sparrows, is here compared to the mythical lightning bird, to the hawk that swoops down from the clouds. (See Part VI.) Why does he not once for all annihilate the sparrows which pillage his fields of sorghum ? But this is poetry! and there is often a wide gap between poetry and reality!

d) The feasting of the chief in the villages.

796 273 643 The fourth and final act of the bukanye feasting in which, as we have seen, the chief plays a prominent part, is the *nsungi* which may be called the "fin de saison" orgy. The chief now returns the visits of his subjects and casks of beer are prepared for him in every village. Dancing and singing are in full swing. He is fêted and acclaimed! But the makanye are getting over-ripe ; a new month, a new moon is at hand, which is called *sibandlela* "she who closes the roads ;" the paths leading to the foot of the trees become almost impassable, owing to the grass which grows to an incredible height during the rains prevailing at this season. The fine weather is over. Winter is knocking at the door.

796 789 643 262 821 Amongst the Nkunas the luma ceremony called "to eat the new year" (dyaka ñwaka) is performed with a special pumpkin (kwembe) cooked at the capital together with the medicine used for rain-making. The chief first eats of it in the evening and makes the sign of a cross on the big drum, which is then beaten to call the people in his village. Then all the men come, bringing the little horns in which they keep the rain medicine (See Part VI). They eat a little and smear the rim of these horns with the medicine ; the horns also must "eat the new year." Then everybody can enjoy the products of the harvest. Should anyone precede the chief, this would be fatal to the latter or make him ill... Such is the testimony of Mankhelu. I suspect these rites to have been influenced by the proximity of the Ba-Pedi. "Now we have no longer any first fruits' feast (mulumo)," says Mankhelu with some melancholy. "White people have killed it. Everybody

643 wife in the path follows her husband who walks at his ease, with
651 his stick in his hand, whilst she carries his belongings in her basket
641 on her head... If the prerogative of the chief is to live in abundance, the duty of the subject is to pay taxes! This duty is expressed by the word *luba* (Dj.), *hlenga* (Ro.). It is so true that this is the principal function of the subject that, when a man leaves his clan and goes to live in another clan, he comes to the chief and says : "I want to *luba* or *nkonza* (a word borrowed by the Rongas from the Zulus), to pay the tax..." This is the proper way of making his submission.

643 The explanation of the rites of the first fruits throws much light on the Bantu conception of the chief's position in respect to his subjects. For them he is certainly endowed with the divine right more fully than the King or the Kaiser in any European country ; he is the *son* of the gods, not only their protégé... The gods are the lords of everything... He shares this lordship with them. Hence his right of taxing his subjects. On the other hand we saw that he is the *soil*! He is more than Lewis XIV, who could say: "L'État c'est moi!" The Bantu chief can say : "I am the earth! — Le sol c'est moi!" Hence, on the part of the subjects, the duty of sharing with him the products of the soil and also of their hunting.

643 The Thonga chief taxes his subjects in four different ways :
651 he takes a regular portion of the harvest ; he claims a part of
241 most of the wild beasts killed ; he makes his people work for him ;
273 he also taxes the revenue of those who go away to work for the Whites. A fifth source of his revenue is found in the fines imposed in judicial cases.

1. As regards *taxation of the products of the soil*, it consists in a basket (shihundju) of mealies contributed by each village at harvest time. This is the regular taxation. Moreover those who brew a great quantity of beer for a feast always send some jars to the chief, especially when the season of tilling the fields or threshing the grain has come. This is not a regular tax, at least amongst the Ba-Ronga, and is considered as *mashobo*, an act of civility, and not as *hlenga* proper. Bukanye must be brought to the capital in great quantities during the great national feast.

644 the men. However he was allowed to visit it Behind these huts were two passages between poles carefully arranged, one leading to the pig-sties, another to the bush. The photographer was told that this was intended to secure an exit for the queens in case of war... I suppose it had a more common and practical use in every day life! They are the *psiruba* of the queens (p. 311). In the royal kraal these back entrances are taboo.

517 644 It is on the square that the men of the neighbourhood love

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Phot. D' J. de Montmollin

Back gate with hen-house.

to meet in the morning, when they come to pay their respects to the chief ; they sit down in groups and discuss the news of the day ; this is called, as we have seen, "ku ya bandla," "to go to the men's square." Everyone is welcome there, not only members of the reigning family, but also those of the clans conquered by the present chiefs, (as the Honwana, Mahlangwane etc., in Nondwane. Page 357). There is no lack of beer, made from maize or millet, when crops have been good, the women frequently bringing brimming jars to the capital ; the daily visits of the men are not therefore altogether disinterested.

273 517 644

243 their mealies with the small pimples of their tattooing (tinhleke ta Ba-Ronga). If maize is the most appreciated cereal, it is certainly not the most ancient known to the tribe. Owing to its modernity, no doubt, it is not subject to any taboo. It is sown and harvested [252] without any rite. At Christmas time, when the first cobs are edible, people joyfully feast on the new crop. They cook some of them in the ashes, but they allow the rest to ripen and dry upon [626] the stalks. Although no taboo prevents any owner of a field from eating the first mealies whenever it suits him, Mboza asserts that people who have obtained green mealies before the other inhabitants of the village, do not precede them in the enjoyment of this much appreciated food : "It would cause jealousy amongst them." This reason is perhaps at the bottom of the luma taboo (I, p. 394). Moreover they fear lest they might have to share their good luck with all their friends !

243 Next in importance comes the *mabele*, plur. of bele, dji-ma 273 (Ro.), ñwahuba (Dj.), the *millet* or *Kafir corn*. This is the well-known millet which we give to birds in cages, small, round, blackish grains which grow on a stem 3 to 5 feet high, in elongated cylindrical ears. Kafir corn is pounded, or ground, and may be eaten in the form of flour. But its main use is to provide the 243 yeast for the Kafir beer. As already pointed out (I. p. 42) the 825 mabele is one of the oldest cereals known to the Thongas. It is the ritual cereal, that used for the "shimhimbi," the dish offered to the confined mother or prepared for the luma ceremony. Its seeds undergo a certain treatment before being sown : the sub-chief blows upon them after having taken a small piece of a certain root in his mouth ; this root obtained from a kind of juncus found in the mountains, is supposed to have the power of keeping the ants away from the seeds. He distributes the seeds thus treated amongst his people, and every one mixes some of them with his own supply. Men of the reigning family alone possess 243 this root. Later on, when the time for sowing has come, it is 787 taboo for subjects to precede their chiefs or sub-chiefs in sowing mabele. The bones are consulted. Should the "madjuma" fall showing their mouths (see Part VI), it is the answer of the gods. They say : "Yes ! this is the proper time ! The mabele will do well !"

to be harvested. Poor cereals! Many grains are wanting! 241
Those mischievous sparrows have taken more than a tithe! In 417
the marshy lands of Lebombo I noticed the people scaring the birds in a somewhat original manner. A cord was stretched right across the field, for a distance of at least thirty or forty yards, supported at intervals by poles, and on it were strung large snail shells (Achatina lamarkiana) as big as one's fist; when the watchers heard the sparrows chirping on the other side of the field, instead of getting up and running after them, yelling and shouting to scare them away, they merely pulled the cord, which made the shells jingle against one another, the movement and noise frightening the birds and sending them off to attack the crops of some less ingenious neighbour! I have also seen scarecrows set up in some places, the ordinary stuffed figure. During these months of bird scaring it is impossible to get the caretakers to do anything but guard their plantations! The little maidservants scamper away to join in the work and the Christian girls no longer come to school! I can well imagine that the husbands often find empty larders at home!

The attraction of the plantation does not however hinder the 273
labourers from doing full justice to the national beer, the bukanye, which is consumed from the middle of January to the end of February! Besides, it is principally after the bukanye that it is necessary to protect the sorghum from the beaks of these winged destroyers.

The agricultural year ends with the *harvest*. Every one 241
harvests his own fields and keeps, as far as possible, his product 221
separate in his own store house. The ears of maize which have been left to dry on the stalks are broken off (tshobela) and are carefully piled in conical baskets in such a manner as to make them hold large quantities. The precious burden is at once deposited in the storehouse. After this the beans are picked (khaya): these do not ripen much before May, after all the other produce, at a season which is called "the time of beans" (nkama wa timbawen). The ground-nuts are unearthed by 241
pounding on the ground all round the stem, and pulling up the whole plant by the roots. It is curious to see the stalks coming

whitish, greyish mixture found in the pools, in the midst of 271
the sandy hollows, or in the neighbourhood of the lakes, in the Delagoa plain. To drink from a pot, or from a river, lying on your belly, or kneeling down, is *ku nwa*. But there is another word, *ku kapitela*, which describes the manner of drinking adopted in olden times by the warriors of Gideon, and of which the Thongas have not lost the secret. The Book of Judges tells the story of the 500 "who lapped, putting their hands to their mouths" (VII, 6). When crossing a spruit, you will often see Thongas drinking by throwing water into their mouths with a rapid upward motion of the hand. I had never properly understood Gideon's story until I saw a Thonga drinking by *kapitela*.

But the Thonga kitchen provides the tribe with many other 273
drinks. They can be divided into 3 categories : drinks made from cereals, from fruits or from other ingredients. From cereals are made the buputju, madleko, byala and mpheka ; from fruits, the bukanye, buhimbi ; the busura, made from the sap of the palm tree, also belongs to this group. In the third category, I may mention the shiwayawaya and shikokiyane.

1) *Drinks made from cereals*. Under the name of *Kafir beer* are generally comprised all the varieties of intoxicating drinks prepared from mealies, millet, sorghum. But these varieties differ greatly, according to the proportion of alcohol they contain. There is a light beer called buputju and madleko and a strong beer, the byala proper, and mpheka.

The *buputju* (corresponding to the Sutho *leting*) is brewed in the following manner : a little bupsa of mealies is cooked and ground (sila) in a plate together with Kafir corn yeast. Water is poured on the mixture and fermentation soon sets in. After one day it can be consumed ; its taste is agreeable and it is hardly intoxicating (Mboza). This was the old-fashioned way of preparing buputju, and it is probably what the Ba-Ronga called *madleko*. Maize madleko looks like a thick oatmeal soup. The recipe in Shiluvane is somewhat different : mealie flour is placed in a pot, with cold water, and stirred. This mixture is poured into another pot of hot water and boiled. It is then left to cool and some Kafir corn yeast is mixed with it in the evening. Next

273 day it is sufficiently fermented to be drunk. It must be finished the same day for it would become sour, if kept longer, not having been boiled long enough to keep for any length of time. Nowadays the craving for alcohol having greatly increased, Natives do not content themselves with the original madleko. They follow more or less the Shiluvane recipe, but obtain more alcohol by mixing yeast twice with the flour, before and after boiling.

The brewing (yenga) of *byala* (Ro.), *byalwa* (Dj.), is much more complicated. It lasts nine days (I. p. 108) and this is the order of procedure amongst the Nkunas. The five first days are devoted to the preparation of the yeast ; Kafir corn is soaked in water, and left to soften for one day in a pot. On the second day, the breweress pours away (minya) the water, and covers the Kafir corn with leaves to keep it moist (pfhimba) ; this favours the growth (mila) of the germs which are left to sprout on the third, fourth and fifth day. On the sixth day the yeast (handjelo (Ro.), tshomela (Dj.) so obtained is dried and ground. Mealies are then threshed in great quantities and soaked in water ; in the evening all the women and their relatives pound them in the mortars and make flour, but they do not remove the husks. Next day they fetch water in jars and boil it ; their mealie flour is placed in other pots with a handful of yeast added to each of them ; boiling water is then poured over it and stirred so as to mix it well with the flour. When this has cooled down, they add a little yeast (kandjela). On the eighth day, at dawn, they put all these pots on the fire : the beer must be kept boiling for a long time. In the afternoon, they remove the pots from the fire (phula) and pour the beer into other jars to let it cool down. Afterwards they add all the yeast which remains. During the night, the beer must ferment (kukumuka, literally "swell"). If they find it in this condition on the morning of the ninth day, it shows that the time has come to strain it off (hluta) which is done by means of a Native sieve. (See illustration in next chapter.) All the husks floating in it are thus removed and the beer is poured into the best pots to await the guests of the beer party. In the hut it

keeps its flavour for two days, after which it loses both strength 273
and taste, and turns into vinegar (ntjubi).

Amongst the Ba-Ronga a very similar process is followed. They call *mbila* the flour and yeast on which boiling water has been poured on the seventh day, the name of the operation being *ku bandjekela mbila*. They let it remain in a cask for three days before boiling it, collecting in the meantime all the necessary fuel for the cooking. After the boiling, it is called *phiriho*. Empty wine barrels being everywhere available, beer can be brewed in greater quantities than was formerly the case.

When they took refuge in Bilen, during the war of 1894-96, the Ba-Ronga there learned to boil the beer a second time : the flour is cooked twice with the yeast and this greatly increases the strength of the byala, which is then called *mpheka*. From the innocent madleko, full of husks, which are as much food as drink, up to the very strong mpheka, passing through the different kinds of buputju and byala, all the different percentages of alcohol are met with. The quantity of yeast mixed with the flour and the length of the boiling are the two main elements to be considered, and it is very difficult to say where buputju ends and where byala begins! However the following rule may be adopted to differentiate them : beer is *byala* when yeast has been added more than once, when the boiling has been prolonged, when the liquid has been strained and when the amount of alcohol it contains is sufficient to keep it in good condition for more than one day.

2) *Drinks made with fruits or other tree products.* The *bukanye* /37
is the most famous, being the great drink at the national feast 273
(I. p. 399). But another very strong and much appreciated drink of this category is the *buhimbi*. The tree *mphimbi* (Ro.), *mbimbi* (Dj.), has an impenetrable mass of branches on which grows a very agreeable fruit of an orange colour with a double stone inside, externally very much like an apricot. When ripe in December, it is very juicy and sweet and produces a very alcoholic beverage. The fruit is pressed between the hands (phamasa) ; the liquid thus obtained is mixed with water and boiled. Any scum rising to the surface is removed (wungula) and the drink left to ferment for five days. It is so alcoholic that it will keep

137 in good condition for a year and is said to be more intoxicating
273 than wine. The mphimbi tree is found all over the Delagoa dunes.

There is an exotic tree, the Anacardium occidentale, called *nkadju* in Ronga which has been introduced and is widely cultivated in the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques. It bears

Milala palm trees.

very juicy fruit which the Natives use to prepare a pretty strong alcoholic drink, the *bukadju*. At the season of bukadju there is an enormous amount of drunkenness round the town.

The *milala* or palm tree, from which is made palm wine, *busura*, grows in forests at various places, especially in Ñwamba, the North of Nondwane, Maluleke, etc. and in some regions
273 Natives devote considerable time to its brewing. The people of Phesen (Pessene Station on the Komati Poort Railway) are said even to neglect their agricultural duties and to indulge in busura to a great excess. The preparation of palm wine is done according to rule. The forest is divided by the chief amongst

the headmen, in the same way as the ordinary bush. Each 273
headman exploits the milala of the region which has been apportioned to him and which is called *fashi*. He may take partners from other villages. The stem of the palm tree is cut to a point (batla) at its upper extremity, where the top shoot

Collecting the palm wine. *Phot. A. Borel.*

is growing. After four days this extremity is cut on the slant and a sala shell is tied on with a string and placed in a position to receive the exudation which oozes from the cut. This shell (shikutja) is soon filled up ; the owner of the tree unties it, pours the liquid into his calabash and drinks it at home. When there is plenty of it, it is stored in a big pot called *gandjelo*, which is hidden somewhere in the bush. Gandjelo means altar, the utensil in which offerings are placed for the ancestor-gods. (Part VI.) But the busura gandjelo does not seem to have any religious meaning. If a traveller happens to find it, it is

good luck ; he will say : "My god has blessed me and shown 273
me this gandjelo," and he is quite welcome to help himself to 685
the wine. On the other hand, it is prohibited to touch the shell and to drink from it. It is taboo. A stranger doing so would be addressed as follows : "Are you a bee, are you a butterfly to go and help yourself from a shikutja, which does not belong to you?" He would be tied up, arms and legs, and left to sleep in the open for the whole night. On leaving him they will taunt him, saying : "Go and drink from the shikutja." He may even be condemned to pay a fine, a goat, or a hoe. This palm wine has a very sweet and agreeable taste.

According to the Native idea, *honey* (bulombe) is also a drink! 222
The prefix *bu* classifies this product amongst liquids. It is very 231
much appreciated and Natives readily submit to be stung in 272
order to collect it (hakula) from the holes in old trees or rocks. They generally burn some grass which they hold in one hand, keeping the bees away with the smoke and the flame, and gathering the honey combs into a pot with the other hand. Thongas frequently secure honey in an artificial way by placing a broken pot upside-down in the bush. Bees are attracted and a swarm will occasionally make its home in the pot. In the Ñwambukota region (near Morakwen) I saw a Ronga who even had bee hives of his own invention and succeeded in securing plenty of honey. Native honey is of a brownish, blackish hue. When eating it, Thongas do not at all despise the larvae : are they not meat?

3) *The Shiwayawaya and Shikokiyane drinks.* The various 273
kinds of beer and drinks made from fruit were not, however, enough for the Thongas. They saw that White people used sugar-cane to distil rum and they attempted to do the same. The result of their attempt is called *Shiwayawaya*. Inhambane Natives seem to have been the first to brew it ; their kinsmen of the Lourenço Marques district soon followed their example. They crush the sugar-cane in a mortar, after having poured some water into it ; they then collect the crushed cane in a sack, press it, and extract all the liquid they can in one or two barrels. During the night a fire is lighted in a hut, near the barrels, to

273 warm them, and someone must keep watch all night, removing the scum and preventing the liquid from rising or overflowing. It then ferments and becomes very alcoholic. Where shiwaya-waya is drunk, quarrels and blows are sure to follow. The [415] accompanying plate from a photograph, taken near Antioka (Khosen), shows a primitive Native press used for the preparation

Sugar-cane press, Magule (Khosen country). *Phot. A. Clerc.*

of sugar-cane drink. The crushing operation takes place in the large hollowed trunk of a tree and the liquid flows out, through a pipe fixed in its lower extremity, into a pot.

177 The *shikokiyane* is prepared from Golden Syrup bought from
273 the stores. A large quantity of tins of this harmless "missionary jam," as it is called in South Africa, imported into Johannesburg, are used not by missionaries but by Natives of the Compounds who brew shikokiyane in big empty oil cans. Some of the more civilised do quite a trade in this strong drink, selling it illicitly on Sundays to their unsophisticated brethren, who thus

177 attain to the happy state of drunkenness in which they so much
273 delight, and which is not allowed by the regulations of the Compounds.

A number of other drinks have been invented by the South African Natives, but the foregoing are the principal.

See in the Practical Conclusions, I, at the end of the Volume, my remarks on "Alcoholism and the South African Tribe."

E. LIVE STOCK BREEDING.

1. *Oxen.*

231 Oxen were plentiful in Thongaland before the Zulu invasion; the Ba-Ngoni warriors stole and killed them wholesale. They have never been so numerous since then, and in 1910 they were fewer than ever, owing to cattle plague and to Texas Fever, which has destroyed the herds in the Transvaal and in the greater part of the Lourenço Marques district. Oxen are not the property of chiefs only. Any *numzane* can possess a kraal, *ranga* dji-ma (Ro.), *shibaya* (Dj.), where he keeps not only his own cattle but those entrusted to his care. Having plenty of boys to herd them, he readily accepts the cows which his neighbours ask him to look after, all the more so as the milk will be his, and he will be given one of the calves, according to custom (I. p. 440). Much care is taken of the welfare of the cattle: the herding-boys are expected to lead them to pasture in the
[821] morning, when the dew is still on the grass; during the five or six winter months hardly any rain falls, but heavy morning dew replaces it, moistening the grass, and Natives firmly believe that it makes the cattle fat. So it is said that the oxen must go out early and "eat the dew." (Compare the tale of Piti, *Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, p. 156.) Moreover the best kinds of grass, those which are the most nourishing, are well known, and the boys are sent to the places where they grow. Parts

these several loads!) It is made in much the same way as the roof of a hut, point downwards, ribs of folioles taking the place of sticks. This basket may be said to be the special property of the women (1) : they are very clever at balancing it on their heads ; it is very rarely that a woman, old or young, lets her shihundju fall. When empty it is turned upside down and serves as a hat. It is a really pretty sight to see the young girls starting out for the fields with their conical baskets standing straight up on their fuzzy locks. When they are travelling and arrive at a friendly village, they hold themselves perfectly upright, shooting glances here and there without stooping or turning their heads, till their friends rush out to meet them, seize their shihundju and place them on the ground, in small holes which they hastily make in the sand. This is the first duty of hospitality amongst women! 285 482 574

The *lihlelo* (No. 8) is used by cooks for winnowing the maize. Palm leaves not being sufficiently strong for this purpose, the lihlelo is made of the roots, of a tree called *nukanhlelo* (a kind of mimosa), cut into strips, and is coated with a reddish brown varnish prepared from mangrove bark. It is the lihlelo, or rather a smaller basket of the same sort called *ndjewane*, that the housewife takes with her when picking the small wild cucumbers, or gathering the various herbs which serve for the supplementary noontide luncheon. 285 415 243

In the northern clans one often meets with a spherical basket made of the same material as the winnowing basket and covered with an ordinary lihlelo. 285

Besides the foregoing, the Ba-Ronga have two or three baskets which are not in such general use : the *nhlaba*, a kind of plaited bag with interstices between the palm straws, for carrying fish, the *ntjaba*, etc.

Another article, which might, at first sight, be taken for a basket, but which serves quite a different purpose, is the *nhluto*, the strainer. (No. 1.) This unusually shaped strainer is a sort of long bag of plaited straw into which is poured the beer made 285 415 273

(1) The male members of the family are called "ba matlhari, those of the assagai" and the female "ba-shihundju, those of the basket," as these objects are characteristic of each sex.

1 [see p. 124 -- Analyst]

285 from maize : the particles floating in this liquor are caught by the
415 straws overlapping the top, or accumulate at the bottom, whilst
273 the liquid filters through the interstices of the plait. The thick sediment remaining in the strainer can then be squeezed so as to extract all the beer. This straining and squeezing has the effect of rendering the drink much more alcoholic (p. 40).

285 The art of basket-making is by no means commonplace. Practised by men only, it is, in certain families, in certain villages,

Phot. A. Borel.

Carrying lihlelo baskets, grinding and pounding mealies.

handed down from father to son. Children with a natural taste for this sort of work are initiated into its mysteries by their parents. But no young man is ever forced to take up the profession of a basket-maker. His heart (mbilu) must be in it! Amongst primitive peoples art, and even industry, always remains a matter of individual genius. It never becomes a mechanical output, as is the case in the factories of the civilised world : for this reason it retains a character of individuality, sincerity and natural beauty, not always to be met with in the products of XXth century European industry!

782 To these words is generally added an invocation to the medicine-
756 man's gods, who are entreated to bless the drugs they have given to their descendant, and to join with the traveller's gods in order
484 to insure his success in this undertaking. The decoction is then used to wash the body of the young man. He will pay the fee on his return home.

224 *Offerings of Hunters.* This is called *byalwa bya ngenge*; the beer
782 of ngenge. This beer is made of maize grains which have been crushed but not softened by long steeping in water, as is generally
273 done in brewing ; they are then reduced to flour ; some water is poured on this and it is offered in that form by the head hunter, all his companions standing near him. They must start at once ; there is therefore no time to brew proper beer.

484 *Offerings of Travellers.* These also have their particular mhamba,
782 which is called *Lehika*. It consists of water alone which the officiant takes in his mouth and spits out, saying : "*Pff*!" (amongst the Hlengwes : "*Phaaa*"). "My ancestor-gods! May I find no difficulty
578 on my road, etc." This *water offering* is also made by a headman
782 whose village is troubled by endless disputes. The way of bringing them to an end is not clear. So he entreats his gods to "open the road, pfula ndlela," so that all hearts may be relieved. This will help him to "herd his village, ku byisa muti." The idea of finding a road clearly accounts for the fact that this offering is made under two sets of circumstances so different from one another. Why water is used to attain this end I do not know.

The offerings hitherto described bear a more or less individual character. Let us now consider those which are in direct relation to the life of the family.

782 *Regular Family Sacrifices.* We have seen these performed in
842 connection with the most important events in life. At the *weaning* (I. p. 58, this might however be termed a medical sacrifice), *on the marriage day*, either publicly, as amongst the Ronga clans (I. p. 110), or privately, by the bride's father alone, as is the custom amongst the Nkunas (I. p. 118). The gods are entreated to give the newly married woman "timbeleko," births, i. e., children, as it seems that the power of begetting depends directly
000 on the gods. Regular acts of worship are performed also at the

273 1) Men's favourite pastime in South Africa is *drinking beer*.
275 There are no bars on the velt... But every village is from time
574 to time a brewery and a drinking place. Beer is prepared in large
596 quantities. As we shall see, the brewing lasts about nine days. Near Lourenço Marques, Natives fill not only pots but big casks with it! One of the jugs is put aside for the headman to try it. He must pour a little of it into the *gandjelo* ; this religious act is obligatory. Next day the men of the village assemble in the morning to sample it also, and, at noon, all the friends from the
273 neighbouring villages arrive. Everybody is welcome. Even a
574 leper can take part in the beer-drinking ; but he will come with
596 his own calabash and they will fill it with a special ladle. As a rule near neighbours also bring their calabashes, but people coming from afar are not expected to do so. The beer is drunk with great haste. Before it is all finished, the headman puts aside a pot for his father-in-law, his uterine nephew, and the friend who invited him on a previous occasion... Of course after having filled their stomachs, men and women dance on the hubo in the afternoon, and especially in the evening, when the moon shines ; the shouting sometimes becomes dreadful when drunkenness has overcome all

000 the rain which was pouring down. Suddenly I noticed the Walusangano family returning from the garden in the same order as the week before : in front Leya with the bundle of wood, the basket of vegetables, the hoe and the baby on her back, followed by the children, and behind, the father with the protective umbrella. "Such are the fruits of my efforts." I thought! But I refused to consider myself beaten. I said to myself : "I will speak to them once more! The women will certainly be on my side, these poor overworked women!"

On the following Sunday Nesheye (one of the best Christian women of the congregation) came to see me after the sermon. She had something to tell me... She said : "You observe us, and you wonder at certain things. We also, on our side are observing you, and we see things which we also do not understand. When your wife does the washing, you remain standing by and do not help her. With us it is the men who do the washing. Again, we have seen your wife sewing and mending your clothes and the clothes of the children, and you beside her, not thinking of helping her. With us it is the men who mend the clothes."

Having spoken thus, Nsesheye put her two hands joined together on the mat, then separated them as if she were cutting something in two, and said to me : "That is the way your forefathers distributed the work, a little heap here and another little heap there ; and they said : This is the work of men and that the work of women. Our forefathers proceeded in the same way, and said : This is men's work and that is women's work... We must leave it so. The Gospel has not to concern itself with these matters. We do not wish to have the reputation of being lazy and you do not wish it either."

(From the *Journal de l'Unité des Frères*, January 1926.)

273 574 622 595 musical instinct. Some days later, another headman invites his neighbours to another beer-drinking, and so they eat and drink together (ba delana, ba nwelana) as long as there is plenty in the storehouses. When provisions become scarce, they begin to spare the mealies. But the advantage of the polygamist becomes apparent here ; his storehouses are many and he can feast his friends for many months.

These beer-drinking customs are essentially demoralising ; they

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Phot. A. Borel.

Beer-drinking party in Maputju country.

are one of the curses of primitive Native life. But let me remark that, as the making of the beer takes nine days, these excesses cannot be very frequent, and the habit of drinking wine at the White man's store is ten times more harmful, as in this case alcohol is never lacking. We shall speak later on of alcoholism amongst Natives. (See Part IV.)

276 248 Another pastime, very much appreciated by some, but not so general, is *hemp smoking* and the accompanying *saliva contest*. Hemp (mbange) has been cultivated for a considerable time amongst the Thongas, especially on the coast, not to make ropes, but for smoking.

276 smoking. The date of its introduction and its origin are unknown. The pipe used for smoking is made of a reed (lihlanga) with a small pierced wooden or stone ball (mbiza) fixed at its upper extremity. In the ball the hemp is placed and lit. The lower

Phot. A. Bard.

Hemp-smoker.

extremity of the reed is introduced into a horn half filled with water. The reed soaks in this water. With one hand, the smoker closes the horn, leaving only a narrow opening through which he sucks vigorously so as to form a vacuum. The smoke is thus drawn through the reed and the water into the mouth of the smoker. Its passage through the water cools it. Without this precaution the smoke would be too strong, stop the saliva, and

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324
517

make the man drunk at once. It is called *shingwandja*, when pure, and is not liked, whilst they say that when it has gone through water, it has an agreeable taste. It makes the smokers cough terribly, but they thoroughly enjoy this exercise.[1] Moreover it excites an abundant flow of saliva which is the chief requisite for their favourite game. They take a hollow grass, called *shenga*, and begin the fight by blowing their saliva through it on to the ground. The simplest form of the game consists in squirting as

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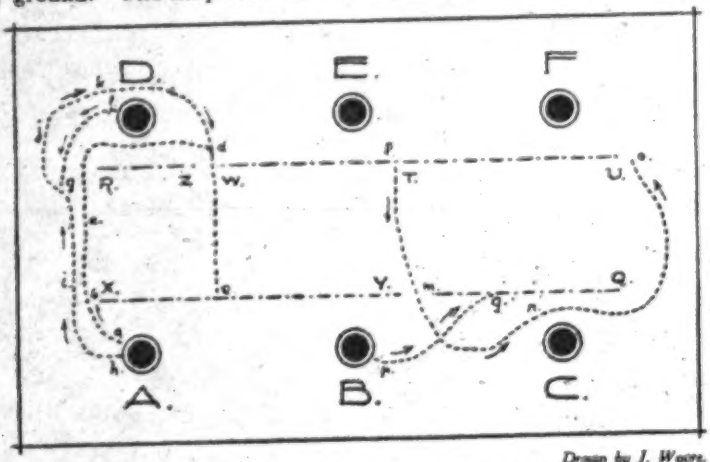


Drawn by J. Weore.

Illustration of the saliva contest of hemp-smokers.

long streams of saliva as possible. He who squirts the furthest wins. But it is sometimes much more complicated. In the accompanying diagram the reader can follow the wonderful combinations of this game, called *ku tjhuma* or *hlazelana*. There are two sides, each with its pipe. Three men, A. B. C. oppose three others, D. E. F. First of all, each side protects itself by making a saliva fence, line X. Q. for the first side, R. U. for the second. Unhappily for D. E. F. the saliva dries up on the point Z. W. and so their fence is broken. A takes his advantage. He begins to squirt out his saliva on the line *a, b, c, d*..., passes through the opening Z. W., and, having come back victoriously to *e*, he has destroyed all the fortifications R. Z. Suppose D. wants to

1 [i.e., hemp smoking -- Analyst]

524 protect himself. He tries to close the access to his position by drawing the line *f, g*. But, arrived at *g*, he comes to the end of his saliva (a helela), and A. who started at *h*, having arrived at *i*, turns round the point *g*, where his enemy has stopped miserably, and, going on, *j, k*, reaches the opening *d* and triumphantly ends his campaign in *e*!

But E. of the opposite camp has noticed a gate in the barrier X. Q. The saliva has dried there. He quickly carries his blow-pipe across the battle field, squirting all the time, and passes through the opening Y. He draws the line *l, m, n, o* and so destroys the part Q. Y. of the fortification X. Q. Should B. be quick enough, he might prevent him accomplishing his plan by drawing the line *p. q*... And so on! Young men, even men of ripe age, take an immense delight in these saliva battles. But the saliva must be blackish... It must be *ntjutju* saliva, viz., saliva produced by hemp, and not the ordinary white saliva, called *matjafula*. Should one of the players try to supplement the blackish by the white, he would be disqualified... His enemy would seize him by the forehead, and force him to lift his head and stop his attack. Should he go on, however, the other would say : "What ? You come to me with matjafula!" This may lead to quarrels, even to blows... The hemp-pipe falls down and it all ends in cordial laughter.

276 861 789 This hemp-smoking custom becomes a passion with many young men. To cure them their parents break the pipe, take a little of the soot which is found inside, and mix it with their food without their being aware of it. When this has been done three times, it is said to fill them with disgust for hemp... Similia similibus curantur... We shall often meet with this medical principle in the Thonga superstitions.

524 171 The most interesting game played by men, a game which fascinates them and which is certainly more refined than hemp-smoking, is the *tshuba*. It is at the same time one of the most widespread games of mankind. Mr. Stewart Culin says, in the Report of the Smithsonian Institute for 1893 and 1894, that it is played under the same name by the American Negroes, and that it is but a variety of the *mancala*, the national game of Africa,

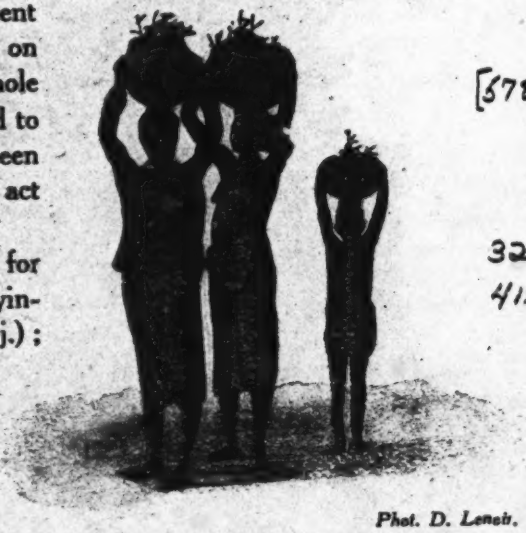
immediately after these acts, he sets off with his sons ; they close 224
the drift where the beasts leave the river by placing a canoe across the track. The hippopotami are in the neighbouring forest, busy feeding, and perhaps ravaging the fields. When they return to the river, they stop in front of the canoe which obstructs their retreat : the first assagai is then thrown at them. It has been smeared over with the Strophantus powder. The animal rushes into the water ; when it reappears on the other side, it is pierced by a second assagai. These assagais are arranged in such a way that the blade, which is provided with hooks at the sides, is not firmly fixed to the handle ; moreover a long string is twined round the handle connecting it with the blade. So, when the hippopotamus enters the river, the assagai which is planted in its skin is separated from the handle, which remains floating and acts as a buoy ; the string unwinds and the handle follows the animal as it retreats, showing in which direction it has gone.

As soon as the assagai is thrown, somebody runs to the hunter's 224
village to inform his wife. The woman must at once shut herself 784
up in the hut and remain perfectly quiet. She lights a fire and 789
keeps it burning the whole time. A little child brings her her pipe
(old Ronga women are great pipe smokers). She must neither [276]
eat nor drink ; or, if she is very thirsty, the child will bring her some water. In any case she must not crush her mealies; she must not go out of the hut except to satisfy her natural wants. Why ? Because if she were to move to and fro in the village, this would induce the hippopotamus to rush wildly upon her husband and possibly kill him. Moreover the fact that she remains confined within the circular walls of the hut will have as a consequence that the wild beast will be in some sort imprisoned in a small space ; it will not be able to run far away and escape.

We find here a characteristic instance of the two kinds of magic which we shall explain later on : the communionist magic according to which the different parts of a whole act and react on each other (the great wife, whose life is in close connection with her husband's life, saves him by her quiet demeanour) and the imitative magic according to which like acts on like or produces like (the confinement of the woman within the

(He was a Nkuna from Shiluvane.) It is not strange therefore 301
that they became enamoured of beads. They give them special 832
names, according to colour and size, and succeed in turning them to very good account. The chief ornament the women make, (beadwork is exclusively done by the women), is the *mugangu* (No. 2); used in love-making (gangisa) ; it is a kind of crown of blue beads with red chevrons, worn by girls when they wish to beautify themselves. Some are wide and some narrow ; the beads are strung on threads which are crossed and knotted as the work proceeds : no canvas foundation is used. The bead necklace 301
is called *shihekisana*. Bead bracelets on the wrist are *shibolisa*, and on the ankles *maluwada*. Beads are also used in making large and heavy belts (mugadzi), weighing one to two pounds, and very much appreciated as an ornament when dancing. In the same way calabashes (No. 5) are covered with beads, bags made of hide (No. 4), bottles and even baskets. This bead work calls for a 276
good deal of patience. One of the things which the Ronga most 301
dearly loves to have decorated with beads is his tobacco pouch, (ngulana, No. 3), which is for him not only a means of satisfying his passion for taking snuff, but also one of his most prized ornaments. I do not now refer to the carved ebony tobacco box, worn *en bandoulière*, but to the article consisting of eight or nine large seeds, hollowed out, in which is kept the powder which stimulates the brain. Each of these seeds (which come from another country) is closed with a small piece of reed ; when one is walking they rattle against each other, producing a most delightful sound! The first thing a man will say to a friend on 576
meeting him, will be : "Fole?" — "Tobacco?" and before 276
anything further is said, each will indulge in a pinch. The same act of politeness is essential before beginning any discussion. The Thonga does not smoke the calumet of peace, but uses for a like purpose the many receptacled tobacco pouch, decorated with beads, which hangs from the belt at his hip. He takes from it a pinch of snuff, which he offers to his opponent ; the latter takes another pinch and proceedings then commence under the happiest auspices. Hearts are not far from concord... when noses have already fraternised!

Another taboo in connection with the making of a pot is this: 323
when a pot has been fired, it must still be *tested*; this operation 753
is called *ku khangula*, or *kwangula*, and is performed in the following way. A little water is poured into it, and the potteress washes it thoroughly; then some grains of maize are cooked in it and thrown away. This is to remove the *nkwangu*, or *nkhangu*, viz., the danger attending the use of an untested, unpurified pot: people using such an implement would suffer from an eruption on the arms, and even on the whole body. To give any one food to eat from a pot which has not been *khangula* is looked on as an act of hatred.



[578]

Phot. D. Lenoir.

Pots used to draw water.

The pot, or boiler, used for 323
cooking is called *nhlambeto* (yin-tin, Ro.) or *mbita* (yin-tin Dj.); 415.
it has a very wide opening. Smaller boilers are also made, even quite diminutive ones called *shihlembetwana* or *shimbitana*. The beer jar (khuwana, dji-ma), illustrated on page 101, No. 13, is of the same size as the boiler, but can be easily recognised by its straighter neck. Enormous beer jars are sometimes manufactured, perfect amphoras (hotjo, yin-tin), but they rarely stand the firing and are therefore scarce and expensive, fetching as much as ten shillings each: they may be two feet high; the ordinary cooking pot does not cost more than sixpence. The porringers, or large plates, are called *mbenga* (mu,-mi; No. 12) (1).

Shibindji clay is also used for making very short *pipes* (shipana), 276
prettily shaped, probably in imitation of the European cutty. Smoking does not seem to be an indigenous habit; in the interior

(1) No. 11, on page 101, shows a small vase modelled by a young Native girl, an invalid from Natal (Station of Inanda).

276 one rarely sees a Native with a pipe in his mouth, tobacco being almost exclusively used in the form of snuff. The only smokers in the country are the old women of Lourenço Marques, and the youthful dandies who try to imitate the Transvaal Boers!

532 Clay modelling is perhaps the art for which South Africans
857 are best gifted. In all the tribes children amuse themselves by

A young Spelonken artist and his work. *Phot. J. Dutton.*

modelling oxen, human beings, wheels, even waggons, sometimes very cleverly. I knew a boy in Shiluvane who was a true artist and could copy anything he saw, for instance a white lady with her hat on (1). The accompanying plate shows one of these young artists, from Spelonken, with his handiwork.

(1) The same boy, without having received any special training, could cut out a frock, and used to make the dresses of all the brides of the congregation. He had a wonderful eye for form and would have made his mark, had he received a professional training. But he died from consumption contracted in the towns!

in the soft bark of the calabash. The largest calabash on this plate measures 21 inches in length and 7 in width. 322 531

Some plainer calabashes are Nos. 8 and 9 of the illustration of ornaments. Others are simply shells of sala (shikutja), (p. 16), with a good-sized hole cut in them for an opening (Nos. 6 and 10); a circular piece, say one third the size of the other, makes a capital cover; a string passes through the bottom of the calabash and the middle of the cover, fastening the two together. When this is knotted on top of the latter the *lard tin* is securely closed. This kind of calabash is generally thus designated, for it is in these round balls that the mafureira grease is kept, to which I have previously referred (p. 18). They are hung up in the roof of the hut where they swing to and fro in the smoke and become well browned. The young folks amuse themselves by carving designs on these shells. 415

Mankhelu's stick.

The artistic element is still more striking in the *snuff boxes* (ngulana, yin-tin), carved in ebony, which the chiefs are fond of carrying; the one depicted (p. 128, No. 9) came to me from Mavabaze who was, for a time, chief of the Khosa clan. It is also conspicuous in the strange *pillows* (shidamu) on which the Ba-Ronga rest their heads at night. Let us contemplate this article (No. 8) with the respect it deserves! It is probably on this description of pillow that primitive humanity in all parts of the world has dreamed its dreams! We see it sculptured on the Egyptian monuments, above or by the side of princely couches. We find also among the relics of the lake-dwellers stone objects of a similar shape, which were doubtless used for the same purpose. The Bantu has adhered to this piece of prehistoric furniture all through the ages. 276 532 322 352 322

846 As regards *the child*, the umbilical cord is anointed every day ;
853 he begins to take the breast and drink the "*milombyana*," the great medicine which we shall describe later on.

During these days many taboos must be observed :

The *husband* is not allowed to enter the hut on any pretext ; this is not on account of his being unclean, quite the contrary. A birth does not contaminate the father amongst the Ba-Thonga as it does in other tribes. He is not obliged to undergo any medication. His exclusion from the conjugal hut is due entirely to the fact that his wife is polluted by the blood of the lochia, and he would run the greatest danger to himself if he came near.

846 *All married people* are also excluded (bakhili) viz. all those
854 who have regular sexual intercourse. Should they touch the child, he would die. If however a woman wishes very much to go and see the new-born, she must abstain from relations with her husband during two days. Then she can be admitted into the hut. On the other hand young girls are welcome in the hut, but they must not kiss the baby during these first days. "It is not yet firm ; it is only water," as they say ; later on, when it begins to laugh and to play, they may kiss it. Even the father may do so then ; when he comes back from a journey, he holds it in his arms and kisses it on the temple. Supposing that the
846 umbilical cord has now fallen off normally, the confinement period will be at an end. This termination is marked by two rites.

The mother of the delivered woman will have *to smear with clay the floor of the hut*. This is the great cleansing act which brings to an end a marginal period. It takes away all the dangerous blood, and the husband as well as all the other dwellers in the village will be allowed to enter the hut.

846 The second act is *the rite of the broken pot* (ku tjibelela shi-
751 rengelen, viz. to make fire under the shirengele, the bit of broken
278 pot used for the purpose). This is a medical treatment and a
825 religious ceremony combined. It is performed by the family doctor on the threshold of the hut in the following way : he puts into this piece of broken pottery pieces of skin of all the beasts of the bush : antelopes, wild cats, elephants, hippopotami, rats, civet cats, hyenas, elands and snakes of dangerous kinds, and roasts

846 751 825 278 856 them till they burn. The smoke then rises, and he exposes the child to it for a long time : the body, face, nose and mouth. The baby begins to cry ; he sneezes, he coughs ; this is just what is wanted. Then the doctor takes what remains of the pieces of skin, grinds them, makes a powder, mixes it with *tihuhlu* (1) grease of the year before last and consequently hard enough to make an ointment. With this ointment he rubs the whole body of the child, especially the joints, which he extends gently in order to assist the baby's growth.

846 751 853 All this fumigation and manipulation is intended to act as a preventive. Having been thus exposed to all external dangers, dangers which are represented by the beasts of the bush, the child may go out of the hut. He is now able "to cross the foot prints of wild beasts" (tjemakanya mitila) without harm. Snakes will not bite him, at any rate their bite will not hurt him ; lions will not kill him. The remainder of the powder is put into a little bit of reed closed at both ends, which the mother has to carry with her during the whole nursing period in order to continue the treatment.

846 755 753 821 This rite of the broken pot is also the great preventive remedy against the much dreaded ailment of babies, *convulsions*. If a child suffers from this, they will say : "a tlalile shirengelen," viz. "he did not find any help in the broken pot" and the parents will go to another doctor whose drugs are more powerful, to have the child once more exposed to the smoke. It may even be that a grown-up man will undergo this treatment again, if he has been ill with convulsions, but, in this case, the broken pot with its pieces of skin is put on the head of the patient, which has been first covered with a wisp of cuscuta (hare dja yendjeyendje). The great aim of all the medication of children by the "milombyana" is also to fight against convulsions, as we shall see (2).

(1) The tihuhlu are the seeds of the nkuhlu tree known under the name of mafuseira. They are oleaginous and the fat (mafura) obtained from them is very much used for external applications amongst the Thongas.

(2) In *Savage Childhood* p. 12, Dudley Kidd describes this "baptism of smoke" amongst Zulus. Some dirt is scraped from the father's body and is mixed with other drugs in order to impart to the child his ancestral spirit. Another ingredient

853 824 *neta* as a medecine. The shrub, which is an Euphorbiacea, contains milky sap. It is a treatment based on the principle : Similia similibus curantur.

751 278 753 854 The Thongas believe that milk alone would never suffice to make a child grow : *Ñwana a ku̱la hi miri, the child grows by medicine*, such is the adage which is universally met with. When you see a woman carrying a child on her back, you will notice hanging to the *ntehe* the reed (lihlanga) containing the black powder which protects against the dangers of the bush, and a little calabash half filled with water. This water is not pure water, it is the medicine called *milombyana*. This word is the plural and diminutive form of *nombo*, which means baby's ailment. There is a great *nombo*, convulsions, also called *tilo*, heaven, because this complaint is brought into a mysterious connection with the influence of Heaven (See Part VI). There is a small *nombo* ; this is the infantile diarrhea which so often troubles little children ; but both diseases are supposed to be caused by the *nyoka*, the intestinal parasite, the worm or snake (nyoka means both) which is in every child and must always be combated because, if unchecked, it will pass from the bowels to the stomach ; it will come and beat the fontanella (1) and will finally penetrate the chest. Then the little one will turn up his eyes, be seized by [278] convulsions and die. Happily there are some drugs which have a 751 wonderful effect on this dangerous guest ! One of my neighbours, 757 who was a convert in Rikatla, gave me their names. The first is a 854 very common Protacea (?) with large husks called the Dlanyoka, "the one which kills worms." Mixed with the roots of a Leguminacea called *Ñwamahlanga* and with two other plants found near the sea, it forces the worm to keep quiet. These drugs are boiled and the decoction is carefully poured into a special little pot called *hlembetwana ya milombyana* which will be kept in the hut. Every morning the mother will warm the pot a little, pour some of its contents into a shell of sala and give the child a

757 826 (1) Tjaba-tjaba, the fontanella, plays a great part in the diagnosis of children's doctors and they often cover it with black wax. When the child hiccoughs, his mother or somebody else will blow on the fontanella to prevent vomiting. This will "make his heart stand" (yimisa ṋhilu).

852 [854] permissible to push him gently by his elbows and 3) to sing him songs to console him (khongota) when he cries. This was taboo before the presentation to the moon.

There is another custom which seems to be confounded sometimes with the yandla. It is also performed for small children and is called : *kulakulisa*. When a friend of the family passes through the village coming from afar, from Johannesburg for instance, he takes the new-born child in his arms, throws him up and says : "Kula-kula-kula, u ya tlhasa Johan." (Grow, grow, grow and reach Johannesburg.) This is a minor custom (nau nyana) ; it is more or less play and is not tabooed like the yandla.

854 278 751 852 After the yandla, a new therapeutic agent is added to the decoction of milombyana, the *biyeketa*. *Ku biyeketa* means : "to put inside an enclosure." Twice a month during the afternoon, when the moon is new and when it is full, the family doctor goes to the kraal of the baby, he lights a fire before the door of the hut and cooks his medicines with water in a pot till they boil. Then he draws the embers to one side of the pot and lays on them a big pill, a *mhula*. The *mhula* is made of fat from an ox paunch or from a goat's paunch mixed with medicinal powder. Then he places a mat on end so as to make a small round enclosure : mother and baby enter it, and he covers them with a piece of cotton cloth. They expose themselves to the steam which comes from the pot and to the smoke which emanates from the mhula. When both have copiously perspired and the emanation has come to an end, the mother tells the doctor to uncover them, and they emerge from the vapour bath. Then the doctor cuts both of them with a razor on the forehead, on the sternum, on the spine between the shoulders, on the elbow, on the wrist, on the knees and introduces a little of his medicinal powder into the small wounds. The pot with the hot decoction is then taken by the doctor behind the hut, the mother accompanying him. She pours a little of the water into his hands : he spits into it, uttering the sound *tsu* (which is the sacramental act in ordinary worship) and throws it on the child. The mother rubs the whole body of the little one with it ; in the meantime the doctor prays to his gods, viz. the spirits of his ancestors. Begining with the formula of invocation which doctors

765 put strings, made from the same skin, over their breasts. The
292 widow adds new strings when other goats are killed during the mourning visits which will take place later on, and until the adjudication of the inheritance. It is a sign that her husband is dead (a feliwile).

2) The Great Mourning in the Northern clans.

765 The foregoing is the sequence of the rites of the Great Mourning
783 in the Ronga clans. In the Northern clans, according to Viguet, the same elements are found, but in another form.
825 As soon as the mourning lamentations begin, the grave-diggers
278 send some men to fetch the *tinyele*, which are bits of skin taken from the soles of elephants' feet. These are burnt on charcoal, together with cocks' dung, and the mourners come and inhale the smoke with reeds, when they are tired of wailing. The *tinyele* are considered to be a powerful medicine. It is taboo to eat or even to snuff before having inhaled this smoke.

765 That first night, everyone sleeps in the open, and the
783 grave-diggers are not allowed to use their mats. They must cut grass to cover them for fear that their impurity might contaminate the mats. As usual, sexual relations are suspended between married people, but the *bugango* is not taboo in the Northern clans, as girls (psigango) are not wives (basati). When, on the following days, visitors come to the mourning, they go straight to the grave with a small basket of mealies and spread them over it saying. "Go! Die! You have left us." This spreading of mealies is a *mhamba*, an offering. Then the doctor comes. It seems that his operations last only three days. There are no vapour baths properly speaking, but the doctor burns his powders together with bits of bark in broken pots, and all the mourners come and inhale the smoke through reeds, as they did on the first day.

The *purification of the food* is performed by a rite which corresponds with the *lumisa milomo* of the Rongas. The doctor

000 smoke, and rub the incisions with the powder. They will then be able to aim straight (See Annotatio 15). The powder specially prepared from the tendons of slain enemies will be spread on the paths during future wars ; foes marching on it unknowingly will suddenly become unable to walk and will easily be killed.

The Zulus are said to have the same customs as the Pedis.

726 I cannot guarantee that all the Thonga clans observe all these
789 customs.[1] The Nkuna magicians, in olden times, before they were
278 influenced by their Pedi neighbours, used to dissect the tendons
751 of the back (riringa) of the slain enemy, which they smeared
826 with his medulla and hung to the shields of the warriors... Enemies seeing these shields would "tjemeka nhlana" — "have their backs broken," a figurative expression which means to be terror stricken. A part of the body was also preserved and mixed with the war-medicine ; the idea which underlies this custom being evidently this : when you have eaten the flesh of your enemies, you have absorbed all their strength and they are unable to do you any further harm (1). We have seen that the "mbhulo," the "nyokwekulu," all the powerful "medicines of the country" carefully kept in each clan, contain a little human flesh. These drugs are used as protective war medicines ; most probably owing to the same principle.

II. *The treatment of the slayers.*

727 To have killed an enemy on the battle-field entails an immense
775 glory for the slayers ; but that glory is fraught with great danger.

266 (1) This custom is the only remnant of anthropophagy remaining amongst the Thongas, and I wonder if this superstition is not the true explanation of the origin of cannibalism. Where cannibalism still prevails, as amongst the Fañ of the Congo, I am told that the bodies eaten are generally those of hostile clans, or occasionally that of a wife (who belongs to another clan according to the laws of exogamy). Is it not probable that, in the beginning, these feasts had a ritual and military value similar to that which we find in the administering of the war-medicine in South African tribes? In the course of time, the Fañ acquired a taste for human flesh and ate it for their own pleasure. Dealing with anthropophagy, I must not forget that it occurred in several instances in South Africa after the devastation brought about by the Zulu expeditions of 1820-1830. In Zoutpansberg, in the mountains of Drakensberg, Natives reduced to starvation began to eat their fellow men. This also happened in the Bokhakha during the reign of Queen Male. (See Part IV.)

1[See pp. 476-477 -- Analyst]

595 in cerevisiam injiciunt.
833 Quod medicamentum ad gravia vulnera curanda quoque
842 conferunt, et liberis praebent cum caput ut cynocephali jactant."

[Note 14 (page 285). Doctor G. Liengmei, our physician, often took care of men who asked for medicine that would produce children. They confessed to him that they often slept with three or four wives in one single night. (From some monogamous men we heard that a wife would get so tired that she would go out at night to work just to escape from her husband.) When the doctor told them to abstain altogether from intercourse for five days they were never able to agree to that. For they wanted to regain their generative faculty without giving up their lust. They are said to employ certain remedies even when their powers no longer appear equal to their desires, either in order to excite their sexual desire or to make their wives pregnant. There is a two-fold remedy. First, a man cuts the testicles off a goat--(this animal does not tire, it is asserted, mbuti a yi karali)--and boils them mixed with numerous herbs; then he eats them. Next he collects other herbs and puts them into his beer. They claim that this has such an effect that the man who has no more than two wives should not use this remedy [520] lest, because his own would not be enough for him, he should commit fornication with the wives of others, which would be a grave offense on his part.

595 Virtuous men such as one can find in the village of Mpfumo sleep in their own houses and call for the wife whom they desire. Most of them have imposed upon themselves the law not to let any discord break out among their wives: therefore they spend one month in turn in the house of a particular wife.

595 Those who have several wives use still other remedies to
756 excite their sexual desire. Of these remedies they believe
833 one to be particularly effective: The medicine man, after
278 he has rested, retreats into the hills where the female baboons are wont to emit their urine mixed with the menstrual blood. That which remains on the rocks and which gives off an abominable smell the medicine man takes up and boils; from this he makes large pills that he sells to all buyers. The latter put them into their beer.

They also use this remedy to cure grave wounds, and they give it to their children when they shake their heads like baboons.]

000 Annotatio quinta decima (P. 477). Veretro fabricatur pulvis, cuius effectus mirabilis est. Qui, bellatorum carpis

756 evident consciousness of his talent and powers that he explained to me the uses of his medicines.

278 But the most distinguished medicine-man I ever met was old
756 *Mankhelu*, who may be looked upon as one of the masters of the profession in the Thonga tribe. "It is no play, what I am
789 doing! I have beaten an ox (i. e. made a present of an ox)
782 to my maternal uncle Hlomendhlen! I even gave him two oxen, and he taught me his medical art! He led me everywhere, showing me all his drugs." So Mankhelu became a regular ñanga, in addition to being a diviner, a master of the art of throwing bones, a rain-maker, a counsellor, and general of the army. His whole family shared his professional character, and helped him in his work. Every year, at the time of bukanye, the drugs had to be renewed. His wives went all over the bush to dig out the medicinal roots and to collect them in their *lihlelo* baskets (p. 123). On their return home the bones were consulted to find out who was to cut the roots in pieces (gemela). This having been done, they pounded them in their mortars ; a portion of this material was dried outside, and reduced to powder without having been cooked ; these were the *male medicines*. The other portion was roasted in pieces of broken pots, burnt until it was like charcoal, ground and made into a black powder ; these were the *female medicines*. The whole village assembled and inhaled the smoke through reeds during the operation. A goat was killed and a sacrifice performed ; the liquid contained in the *psanyi* (p. 410) was squeezed on the burning drugs to put them out ; a little bukanye beer was also used for the same purpose. In the meantime Mankhelu said "*tsu*," and addressed this prayer to his gods, and especially to the ancestor who had taught him his science :

"You! so and so! Let these drugs of yours rise (pfuka, i. e. find new strength). Let people come from the Zulus, from Mosilekatse, from Mpfumu! Let them think of our leaves (matluka, the common name for drugs). Let them bring elephant tusks, marriageable girls, etc. Let them dream of us!"

756 This operation of renewing the drugs aims at giving them
278 new strength. Mankhelu said : "We let our drugs *luma* for
789

the new year ; we raise our calabashes, so that the new season 228
may not be too difficult for us... This will consolidate our home ; 756
bad coughs will not attack us too severely. It will shut out the
wind ; we shall no longer be very ill, because these are new 789
drugs. As regards the old ones, they have been contaminated (khuma) by the misfortunes of last year. They are mad (hungukile). A new rain falls ; let there be also new drugs, and we can undertake our journeys to sell our goods." So the ñanga removed a little of the old powder from each calabash ; he threw this on the path at a crossway ; then he washed the calabashes at the same spot : "Misfortune is thus thrown away. Passers-by will take it with them as it has been thrown out there by us." Then the new powder was added to the remainder of the old, which was "raised" by it.

In order to throw more light on the nature of Mankhelu's 756
art, let me briefly mention *the roots* (rimetju), or *the leaves* (tluka, 789
ri-ma), or, to use the great, the generic name, *the drugs* (muri,
mu-mi) which composed the marvellous powder of the calabashes. 278
He was not a man of one drug. He claimed to be a universal 824
physician, so he mixed together all kinds of drugs, being sure that, in this way, they would certainly be effective in any case brought to him. Here is the description given by him.

Ntjebe : that by which we find strength to trample on our enemies ; we trample also on the winds which spoil the mealies ; we drive out the bad cold (or wind) which has come to us and made us cough. (Notice the triple use of this drug).

Shikuku : that which tramples on misfortune.

Mpoñwana wa burisi matuba-tubana : vanquisher of the enemy and of misfortune.

Shinano : that which induces the enemies to sleep ; you hang some leaves of it on your shield and they are overcome by drowsiness, they do not see you coming towards them.

Nembe-nembe. By it you reach your enemy while he still sleeps and kill him before he can defend himself.

Mpetshu wa milomo : that of the lips! It overcomes the curses and the assagais of the others!

756 *Rihinga ra ndlela* : a root found on the path ; it helps you to go
789 on, though others may seek to hinder you in your progress.

Shivunge : that which attracts patients to the doctor.

278 *Nandjiyane* : that which makes his words agreeable, so that
824 patients will like them ; (from ku nandjiya, to be agreeable).

Mvakazi, phuphuma ra matlhari : that which is used to make the slayers vomit the main drug of the *tintebe* (I. p. 479).

Mbendjula : that which strengthens all the other drugs.

These are the principal trees, or plants, used for the preparation of the powder. They must be *salted* by the addition of the *sea*, viz., of the medicines taken from the sea, which Mankhelu uses to cause rain to fall (p. 321).

The sexual character of the drugs is essential. The female are used principally for sprinkling the army and the assagais, the male for treating diseases. We find here again the law of opposition of sexes ; the military domain is the male domain par excellence : it must be treated by means of female drugs. On the contrary, when slaughtering a she-goat for the sacrifice, a little of the male drugs must be placed in its mouth and the weapon used to kill it must be smeared with the same, and vice-versa for the he-goat. "To act otherwise is taboo. All the ñanga do this" (p. 417).

755 There may be some true scientific elements in Thonga medical
757 practice. Experiments have been made in using certain roots to cure certain diseases, and tradition has handed down some prescriptions from father to son. Why should there not be effective curative properties in plants of their country just as in the Cinchona bark, or in Castor oil seeds? And why should they not have discovered them?
756 However the Native ñanga is by no means a scientific man, and the best,
789 the most renowned, are perhaps the least scientific. Those who treat only one complaint, and only know one drug, are perhaps those most resembling real physicians ; they act on the results of experiment. But the line between science and superstition is very soon crossed, and the medical art passes with the greatest ease into the domain of magic, all the more so as the difference between Science and Magic is not perceived. *Muri*, which means originally tree, plant, medicinal herb, is at the same time any means of producing any effect, natural or super-

752 until he has removed as much as he can of the tooth! Sometimes he breaks the jaw also ; the jaw may even pass through the cheek, causing a frightful wound! Once one of my colleagues had to perform the operation of the removal of the inferior maxillary bone, which was protruding as the result of the so-called extraction of a tooth by a ñanga! — *Snake bites* are treated with a powder made of a snake burnt to ashes, and some ingredients mixed with it, the whole being *salted* with common salt. Incisions are made in all the joints, wrist, ankle, elbow, and also in front of the neck, and the powder introduced into them. Children are inoculated as a means of prevention, so that, when bitten, the venom will not affect them ; the doctor has "preceded the snake" (yi yi rangerile).

757 *Medical cases* are generally treated more rationally than surgical
278 cases. Here are some of Kokolo's and Spoon's prescriptions.

To begin with the drug used when one "feels his head," in other words has a *headache*; this is the root of a shrub called *Nhlangula*, which seems to be a regular anaesthetic, and is used as follows. The fresh bark is scraped with a knife, and a certain quantity is folded up in a cloth and applied to the forehead for half a day. In case of *toothache* the same drug is used together with another called *Ndjenga* : they are boiled ; a little of the decoction thus obtained is held in the mouth, and the pain should disappear.

When it "bites inside," that is to say when one suffers from *colic* or looseness of the bowels, the remedy is *Munwangati*, *Shimbyati* and *Shidlanyoka* made up into a bunch. The doctor prepares this medicine with great care, cutting the roots into equal lengths and tying them together with a band of palm leaf. (See illustration, No. 2.) $\frac{1}{A}$ He concocts his remedy with a larger quantity of the roots of the milder type, and only a few pieces of those which act more violently. The bunch called *shitsimbo* is then boiled to bring out the active principles of the drugs, and the decoction is taken by the patient, just as it is. Sometimes it is mixed with maize, when preparing the meal, and taken in that way. As the bunch, or packet, of these roots retains its medicinal properties for a long time, a single packet may be used over and over again during a whole week.

The prescription for *dysentery* is as follows : *Shimbyati*, *Shi-*

$\frac{1}{A}$ [p. 460 -- analyst]

757 *dlambangi*, *Likalahumba*, *Nkonono* (Terminalia sericea) and *Nsala*
278 (Strychnos spinosa). That for *bronchitis*, or for a cold in the head, is *Menyomamba*, *Mphesu* (a kind of mimosa, Albizzia versicolor) *Shongwe*, *Ntshatshe* (a papilionaceous shrub), *Gowane* (Zygia fastigiata, a large mimosa) and *Muhlandlopfu*. The last is a very
[753] powerful drug ; the last but one less so. For *hydrocele* the following are used : *Lihlehlwa*, *Ntshatshe*, *Nkonono*, *Mamuntana*.

Thonga Pharmacopoeia.

1. Box made of maize bracts, containing medicine. 2. Shitsimbo. 3. Skin of a mole, containing powdered drugs. 4. Pill (Mhula). 5. Bracelet of *tjukunyana*. 6. *Timfisa*, amulets. 7. *Sungi* root tied round the ankle.

The Natives regard this complaint as contagious, and as being transmitted by matrimonial relations.

I obtained two *purgatives* from my Native doctors. The first is *an aloe*, or cactus, a species of which grows plentifully on the sand dunes. The sap is squeezed on to grains of millet or sorghum, which are kept in neatly constructed boxes of maize leaves ; these are made by plucking an ear of maize, breaking off the cob and leaving the large bracts which enclose it and which adhere to

the stalk at its base. This is a very primitive receptacle, and easily procurable (No. 1). The medicine is thus kept until required for use, when it is ground to a powder and taken in water. The second of these purgatives is the bark of a tree growing in the Nkomati valley in the Khosen country. This is the one, already alluded to, which was appropriated by one of our Christians, named Eliashib, who administered it to the Rikatla folk in such generous doses that it generally did more harm than good. 757 278

Three or four other roots form part of the packet for children ; these are called, as previously explained (I. p. 48), by the general term milombyana, medicines to promote the growth of newly-born infants. If an intestinal parasite be expelled by *dlanyoka*, it is burnt to cinders and reduced to a powder ; an incision is made in the belly and loins of the child, into which the powder is rubbed. This is a kind of inoculation, a further application of the principle "like cures like."

The packet used for treating *haematuria* contains six drugs : *Humbutlo*, *Ntshopfa*, *Shintitana* (an Apocynea shrub related to the Artabotrys, p. 330), *Likalahumba*, *Ndjindjila* and *Shimbyati*. According to doctor's directions these are boiled in a pot with beans ; after a while the packet is taken out. The patient must then transfix one bean with a thorn and throw it over his left shoulder ; he pierces a second in the same way and throws it over his right shoulder, then a third, which he swallows. The first two beans are used to "try the earth," that is to say, to propitiate the several evil influences existing in the soil, which have probably been the cause of the illness. Such is the first part of the treatment. The second part consists in pounding large white tubers (something like elongated potatoes) in a mortar. The paste thus obtained is squeezed into a jar, and the patient must take this juice as well as the beans, seasoned as aforesaid! Every evening he must drink a cup of the bitter mixture (the packet broth), and also a cup of the sweet medicine made from the tubers. If, after this, the haematuria does not stop, the patient will be given a *phungulo*, a turkish bath, which I shall describe later on. The foregoing is Spoon's method of treatment. — Dr. Kokolo had another cure for the same complaint ; he

757 used *Shirole*, *Nembe-nembe*, *Likumba-kumba* and *Nhlanhlana*,
278 which he recommended to be taken in the usual way as a tisane, cutting them up in small pieces in a pot. They are roasted on a brazier and the smoke inhaled through a hollow reed ; the carbonised pieces are ground to a powder which is mixed with ordinary food. A curious fact to be noted with regard to this complaint is that the patient's wife, if he be married, has to undergo the same treatment. — *Gonorrhea* is treated with *Shilangamahlo*, *Hlahlana*, *Nembe-nembe* (Cassia petersiana) and *Ntinti* (Artabotrys Monteiroi): If necessary *Shimbyati* is added as an adjuvant. It is with the leaves of this latter plant that Kokolo made the huge pill which he presented to me (No. 4).

For the last named illness, as for haematuria, if internal treatment does not suffice, a more efficacious method "for outward application only," is resorted to. A certain number of roots will be burned and pulverised, the black powder thus obtained being mixed with fat taken from the paunch of an ox. This is rolled up into a ball and placed on red-hot embers, and the patient must expose the part affected to the heat thrown out, and to the smoke thus engendered.

Fever is not considered very dangerous by the Thongas, and strange to say, has no special name. It is called "to feel one's head", or "to have a hot body". Natives are so accustomed to it, and its attacks are generally so mild, that they do not take much heed of it. They lie on the ground, exposed to the burning sun, wrapped in a blanket, and perspire to their heart's content. "Take the root of *Mbalatangati*, cook it in a little pot and drink it with a spoon ; you will have a good sleep," says Mankhelu.

Consumption (lifuba) is treated as follows by Mankhelu. Part of the lungs of a crocodile, and of a sheep, is mixed with fat taken from a gnu and a root of the *Khawa* tree. All the ingredients are burnt in a broken pot and the patient must inhale the smoke through a reed ; this will dry up his chest, because the fat of the gnu is always dry and cannot melt!

757 *Leprosy*, "the vanquisher of physicians," is treated by some specialists. There was one near Rikatla, but he absolutely

refused to communicate his secret. He belonged to the Chopi 757
tribe. The Ba-Pedi forbid sexual relations to lepers.

A nursing woman who has no milk must take a certain 853
Euphorbiacea shrub called *nete*, containing a milky juice, crush it in the mortar, cook it in water and drink it. When a cow refuses to feed her calf Natives smear the calf with the *ribvumbara* herb, which has a pleasant odour. The cow smells this, and allows the calf to suck.

The treatment of *sterility* has already been described (I. p. 190) 842
Mankhelu tried to cure it by digging a root of *Nembe-nembe* 278
and one of *Nhlangowume* ; he cooked both together, and ordered the woman to eat them during a period of six days, mixing them with her food. This drug was considered as "closing her" (pfala), so that she would no longer have her "tihweti, "and thus be enabled to conceive. In the meantime, she had to undergo the horola or hondlola rite, which I shall describe presently.

Small-pox, nyedzane, was on several occasions introduced by the 164
Whites, or by the Zulu armies on their return from their Northern raids. There have been at least five or six epidemics in the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques during the last fifty years.

I had the opportunity of witnessing the last in 1918 in Rikatla and 751
thus obtained first-hand information on the way Natives treat this disease and on their strange ideas concerning it. I published a detailed account of these in the S. A. *Journal of Science*, July 1919, and will give here a description of the most important of these *customs connected with small-pox amongst the Ba-Ronga*. When small-pox has invaded the country and reached the borders of the territory of a clan, the headmen assemble at the chief's residence and decide to proceed to the general inoculation of the population. This is a remedy which they have long been accustomed to use. They have noticed that the disease is milder when produced by inoculation with the virus than when it *hahela*, i. e. flies to the person. (There is some truth in this assertion ; the protection afforded however is not very effective, and severe and even fatal cases often follow the inoculation. It does not always secure immunity from a second attack.) The virus is provided by the people of a neighbouring clan who have already been attacked by

462 Many other home duties may oblige the woman to leave the
511 fields at noon ; her head still laden with her basket, she may
356 go to the swamps, near by, and dig out a store of black clay
317 (bompfi). She comes back, mixes the clay with the fresh dung which she has taken from the oxen kraal, and, spreading this mixture with her hands, smears the floor of the hut. This work is called *sindja* (Ro) or *kopola* (Dj.). Dust and vermin will at once disappear under this plaster of black earth, which will dry in a few hours time. Woe to the woman who has not put enough dung in this novel kind of cement! The floor will crack. The clay will shrivel and, when people walk on it, it will crumble into dust! The work will have to be done all over again two or three days later. But if the clay is of good quality, it will harden and last at least a week, the more so as neither wooden shoes nor nailed boots will spoil it.

462 Another woman will go with her primitive axe in search of
511 dead wood. She makes a bundle which she ties with grasses,
213 strengthening these grasses by entwining them with small
284 twigs (1). On returning to the village, she throws her burden on to the ground, before the door of her hut, with the exclamation : "Hu!"

462 Others go to their storehouses, the small huts on poles, where
511 mealies, monkey nuts in their husks, millet and sorghum are kept.
343 They take what they need from these stores (tshaha) by lifting up
252 the roof of the little hut, come back and empty the mealies into the
516 mortar, whilst a friend rubs off the grains from the ears of millet or shells the monkey nuts. Two or three women seize their pestles and begin to pound, in measured time, the bottom of their mortars : Gu-gu-gu-gu. Quite a long way off, on the other side of the copse, this pestle song can be heard, resembling the noise of the flails when corn is threshed in the barn. And the busy women stream with perspiration! This method of crushing the mealies in an erect position, by a vigorous up and down movement of the pestle in

284 (1) Men, when they fasten a bundle with a string, make a knot (ba fundju) whilst
313 women twist it with a little stick (sulela hi linhi) ; when a woman ties a knot, the two ends of the string will be at right angles to the string, whilst when a man makes it, the ends will be parallel with it. (Mboza).

244 pumpkins, another will go to the field and plant some seeds in
753 it without the old man's knowledge ; then people will venture to
824 plant in their own gardens. Transgression of this taboo is said to be punished by lumbago.

222 There are, besides, many wild plants which the housewives
824 collect and of which they make excellent dishes : the *tjeke*, a
828 kind of Chenopodiacea, which is also used as a medicine to induce forgetfulness ; the *nkakana*, a pretty plant of the Cucurbitaceae family, which climbs up the dried stems of maize after the harvest, and of which they eat the leaves and also the pretty little oval pointed fruit.

137 *Tomatoes* (shimati) are also found growing round the villages,
285 where they propagate themselves, and seem to prosper the better the less they are cared for : the Natives take them to Lourenço Marques for sale in very original baskets made of a single palm leaf, with the follicles artistically twisted. I am unable to say when they were introduced. There is a agreeable kind of small tomato which grows wild in Khosen, about the size of a cherry.

244 Natives also cultivate a kind of *onion* (nyala, yi-tin), smaller than the European varieties, which they very much appreciate in their sauces.

249 *The sugar cane* (moba, mu-mi) is never grown in large plantations, but you find it on the Coast, as well as in Zoutpansberg, cultivated on a small scale, either for eating, or for preparing the strong *shiwayawaya* drink, which I shall describe later on.

245 The *pine-apple* (lalasi, dji-ma) has spread as far as the Bilene country and must be of ancient date ; it differs considerably from the Natal pine-apple, being longer, coarser and not so sweet. In many villages large plantations are to be seen.

249 *Tobacco* (fole, dji-ma) is also wide-spread and seems to have been cultivated for a long time. A curious fact is that its cultivation is the business of the men, and women have nothing to do with it. Amongst the Ba-Ronga it is sown first in a damp spot in the marsh, in a special little garden called *shibibi*, and, when it has grown a little, is planted out (simeka) on the hill, near the villages. When nearly ripe the lower leaves are first

II. *Basket-work.*

The milala palm, whose sap supplies the tipplers of Pessene with 137
their famous busura (II. p. 42), is a very valuable tree to the 285
Ba-Ronga, as it is of its leaves that the greater part of the baskets in use by this tribe are made. The basket-maker gathers the most perfect leaves. These are not like the mimale folioles, growing opposite one another on a central nerve. The *milala* (plur. of nala) are true palms, the leaves consisting of folioles from half an inch to an inch in width radiating from a common centre, which itself grows on the end of a long peduncle.

These trees are found in the woods of Mabota, Nondwane, Tembe, on the Coast, and in the low plains of the North Eastern Zoutpansberg, etc., sometimes in large numbers. Returning 285
home, the workman (here we employ the masculine, basket-making being essentially man's work) spreads out the leaves in the sun to dry, having previously straightened the folioles somewhat separating (hangela) them one from the other ; when they dry, they turn a light grey colour with a shining polished surface, and are then hung up in the hut where they will be sheltered from the dew and ready for use. When the work is to be started, the folioles are torn (phatlula) from their peduncle, and, with a sharp pointed instrument, are split longitudinally into strips or straws of 1/8 or 2/8 of an inch wide, the ribs of the leaves (nhlamalala, yin-tin) being carefully kept ; these delicate wands have their special use.

The Ronga basket makers are very fond of decorating their 285
baskets with *designs in black*. These triangular and square 531
patterns are produced by artistically plaiting dark a[illegible]ht 386
coloured straws, and are not painted on after the ba[illegible]e manufactured. The straw is dyed black in the following manner : it is soaked in the black ooze (ntjhaka) of the marshes for two weeks, and then laid out to dry, which gives it a reddish-brownish colour. This hue is deepened by a second treatment. The leaves of a shrub called *mpsabutimu* are gathered and placed in a

pot with the red brown milala in alternate layers, until the utensil is full : water is then poured over them and the whole put on to boil ; very soon the straw becomes a brilliant black. The basket-maker has now only to pull up some of the grass growing in the hollow near the lake, dry it, and he is ready to commence work.

In the accompanying plates illustrations will be found of the principal specimens of this art, stereotyped shapes which have passed on from generation to generation, doubtless from

Ngula.

prehistoric times, and are called respectively : *ngula*, *huvama*, *shihundju*, *lihlelo* and *nhluto*.

The *ngula* (yin-tin) (p. 27) takes the place of honour, and is the most prized of all the Ronga baskets. It requires days or even weeks of continuous work to make one, but the result is worthy of the time and labour bestowed upon it ; I brought with me to Europe several *ngula* of various sizes. The particular one shown below, is oval and measures six feet two inches in circumference ; but there are many much larger, both spheroid and ovoid. This is how they make or, to use the technical Native term, "tlhaba" — "pierce" this basket. The workman takes his dried grass and plaits it, lengthening the plait according to requirements, as he goes along : this plait is bound round, and entirely hidden, by a special binding of palm leaf straw, thus forming a thickish cord of about half an inch in diameter ; the cord is soon doubled back upon itself, and forms a centre, around which

are fixed several concentric rings ; each inner ring is pierced with a kind of awl and the straw of the outer ring pushed into the hole, thus fixing them securely together. Hence the expression *thlaba ngula*, to pierce a ngula. The bottom is soon finished, and differs but little in appearance from an ordinary straw-mat, such as 285

Manufacturing a ngula in Spelonken. *Phot. P. Ramet.*

is used to prevent hot dishes spoiling the polish of the European dining table. The sides are made in the same manner by superposing rings of the straw cord, giving the basket a well rounded convex shape, after which two or three rings are superimposed perpendicularly, to form the opening, the mouth of the chef d'œuvre. The cover, made in the same way, must fit exactly over the mouth of the basket ; in fact it should require to be slightly forced over it : the fastening will then hold better. On the upper part of the basket, as also on the cover, the manufacturer has carefully plaited four handles, two corresponding pairs, those

285 on the basket pointing upward while those on the cover point downward, so that they meet. Two rings are also plaited, and passed round through each pair of handles, forming simple but solid hinges on which the cover can turn without ever being separated from the basket, of which it is henceforward an integral part. A well-made ngula is absolutely impermeable, and not the smallest hole can be found in it. I think it would even hold water. Such a basket is surely a work of art!

285 415 The ngula is the Native's Savings Bank. In it he keeps all his riches, the best grains of maize, or the best grown monkey nuts, reserved for seed at the next rainy season ; also the material with which the women will deck themselves on grand occasions, etc. The enormous basket reposes at the far end of the hut, on a low table (buhiri) specially designed for the purpose. The ngula of the northern clans, where palm leaves are not to be found, is more rounded and the palm straw replaced by solid dry grass. (See the adjoining illustration, p. 121.)

285 415 293 While the ngula is enthroned in the hut, and is never moved out of it, the *hwama* (yin-tin, Ro.) or *funeko* (Dj.) (p. 124 No. 4 and 6), on the contrary, is the wallet of the traveller. It is a square bag made of plaited palm straw. The cover is about as large as the bag itself and, so that it may not be lost (which might easily happen while travelling), it is secured by the string used as a shoulder strap to carry the *hwama*, this being passed through it. The bag can thus be opened by sliding the cover right along the string, but it cannot be entirely separated from it. These bags are of different sizes, some more ornamental than others. A round variety is also made by a certain basket-maker of Masana. He makes three or four projecting horns to his hwama, which then takes a cylindrical shape, and has the advantage of being able to stand upright when placed on the ground. This bag or basket, is called *shiraba* or *baki* (No. 2) ; it is the kind used by the magicians for carrying their medicines, and bones.

285 482 The third classic shape of Ronga basket-ware (No. 3) is the *shihundju* (Ro.) *shirundju* (Dj.), the conical basket employed by the women for transporting maize, clay and manure. (It is by no means certain that the shihundju is cleaned out between

these several loads!) It is made in much the same way as the roof of a hut, point downwards, ribs of folioles taking the place of sticks. This basket may be said to be the special property of the women (1) : they are very clever at balancing it on their heads ; it is very rarely that a woman, old or young, lets her shihundju fall. When empty it is turned upside down and serves as a hat. It is a really pretty sight to see the young girls starting out for the fields with their conical baskets standing straight up on their fuzzy locks. When they are travelling and arrive at a friendly village, they hold themselves perfectly upright, shooting glances here and there without stooping or turning their heads, till their friends rush out to meet them, seize their shihundju and place them on the ground, in small holes which they hastily make in the sand. This is the first duty of hospitality amongst women! 285 482 574

The *lihlelo* (No. 8) is used by cooks for winnowing the maize. Palm leaves not being sufficiently strong for this purpose, the lihlelo is made of the roots, of a tree called *nukanhlelo* (a kind of mimosa), cut into strips, and is coated with a reddish brown varnish prepared from mangrove bark. It is the lihlelo, or rather a smaller basket of the same sort called *ndjewane*, that the housewife takes with her when picking the small wild cucumbers, or gathering the various herbs which serve for the supplementary noontide luncheon. 285 415 243

In the northern clans one often meets with a spherical basket made of the same material as the winnowing basket and covered with an ordinary lihlelo. 285

Besides the foregoing, the Ba-Ronga have two or three baskets which are not in such general use : the *nhlaba*, a kind of plaited bag with interstices between the palm straws, for carrying fish, the *ntjaba*, etc.

Another article, which might, at first sight, be taken for a basket, but which serves quite a different purpose, is the *nhluto*, the strainer. (No. 1.) This unusually shaped strainer is a sort of long bag of plaited straw into which is poured the beer made 285 415 273

(1) The male members of the family are called "ba matlhari, those of the assagai" and the female "ba-shihundju, those of the basket," as these objects are characteristic of each sex.

1 [see p. 124 -- Analyst]

285
415

Thonga basket work.
(One sixth of the natural size.)

285 from maize : the particles floating in this liquor are caught by the
415 straws overlapping the top, or accumulate at the bottom, whilst
273 the liquid filters through the interstices of the plait. The thick sediment remaining in the strainer can then be squeezed so as to extract all the beer. This straining and squeezing has the effect of rendering the drink much more alcoholic (p. 40).

285 The art of basket-making is by no means commonplace. Practised by men only, it is, in certain families, in certain villages,

Phot. A. Bord.

Carrying lihlolo baskets, grinding and pounding mealies.

handed down from father to son. Children with a natural taste for this sort of work are initiated into its mysteries by their parents. But no young man is ever forced to take up the profession of a basket-maker. His heart (mbilu) must be in it! Amongst primitive peoples art, and even industry, always remains a matter of individual genius. It never becomes a mechanical output, as is the case in the factories of the civilised world : for this reason it retains a character of individuality, sincerity and natural beauty, not always to be met with in the products of XXth century European industry!

285 In the environs of Lourenço Marques, in our sub-station of Masana, lived the family of Tumbene, famous for its ngula. One of the sons inherited the father's talent. He was an evangelist in our Mission, and, when he was but a lad, people came to him from far and wide, to have their old baskets or broken lihlelo repaired.

Although basket-making is confined to certain families who more or less monopolise the business, without, however, preventing any one from practising the art, the manufacture of *straw mats*, or matting (*likuku*, li-tin (Ro.), *rikuku* (Dj.), is very wide-spread. Many men know how to "tlhaba likuku" — "pierce a mat." For this the Ba-Ronga collect a quantity of solid rushes of at least 3 feet in length, (myriads of them grow in the plains), and pierce holes through them, all along the rush, at intervals of 3 inches, passing strings through the holes. A net-work of string, half an inch wide, is run down the two sides at the edges to prevent fraying. When new, these mats are of a beautiful golden yellow,
285 but the smoke in the huts soon turns them brown. Every Native
513 possesses his own mat, on which he sleeps rolled up in his rug. Women possess two, an old one, used during menstruation, and a better one on which they usually sleep (I. p. 187).

285 The *string* (ngoti, yin-tin) used for these mats is made as follows : the leaves of the nala palm are picked when very young and tender (nshunya) : a knife is passed all along the folioles, in order to remove the green fleshy covering ; the parenchyma, composed of very light but tough fibres, (nkwampa), then remains. The workman takes two small bundles of these fibres and rolls them (yahliya) together with the palm of his hand along his thigh, twisting, intertwining, firmly uniting them, continually adding fresh fibres as he goes along : in this way he can make a string as long and as thick as he likes.

The following are the technical expressions employed for different kinds of basket-work.

Luka (plaiting) for ntjaba, shihundju, lihlelo, ndjewana, hwama nhalaba, tjala (drying floor), shitlanta (store house).

Tlhaba (piercing) for ngula and likuku.

Betsha (tying) for the small *brooms* also made of palm straws (mpsayelo, No. 5), and the reed walls (khumbi, dji-ma).

Bangela (making) for the *bunana*, a sort of hammock, made 285
of plaited milala which is hung to the branches of the trees and 513
sometimes in summer used for sleeping in, to escape the mosquitoes which swarm inside the huts.

Runga (sewing) for the boats (byatsho, dji-ma). The ancient 285
Native boats built before the appearance of nails, hammers and 501
saws, were made of pieces of wood securely tied together. Some 322
of these antiquated craft are still to be seen on the Maputju river.

On the rivers up country, boats are frequently made of a large piece of curved bark, bent on both sides, which will hold two or three persons. I crossed the great Letaba in a boat of this description. Such boats are also used for storing water. Where mimale branches (or nervules) are procurable, they are tied together so as to form a raft called *shikhakhafu*. These are used on the Nkomati River, and on the lakes in Ronga territory. Big rafts made of trunks of trees fastened together, and called *magudhlwana*, were used in former times on the sea, when going to meet the White men, the Ba-Godji. (See later.) They are now no longer used and there is scarcely one to be found. In the [177] neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques the Natives now build their boats on the European model. The fishermen cut down forked branches, which serve as ribs, to which they nail planks. They are wonderfully clever at this work ; one man, Sam Matlombe, nicknamed the "King of the Bay," was particularly expert at it.

The sewn boats of olden times might well be included under the heading of basket-ware. Those of to-day belong definitely to another branch of industry, and will afford us a natural point of transition from basket work to wooden articles.

III. *Wood-carving*.

It is the *nkuhlu*, mafureira tree, Trichilia emetica, as we have 322
already seen, that is used by the Natives of these parts for their 531
wood-carving. If the name of this tree is very hard to pronounce, its wood is, to an equal degree, soft and possesses the great

177 themselves in the big rug (ngubo, mpisi-mpisi), which they all buy
291 to sleep under at night. The end of the process of evolution will
513 certainly be that they will adopt exactly the same dress as their European masters : a complete suit for the men, frocks, hats and boots for the women ; as soon as the majority of them obtain enough money to buy these, they will do so, and seeing how particular most of them are as regards their external appearance, it may be safely anticipated that Bantu beauties will submit to the tyranny of the London or Paris fashions as readily as our European élégantes!

291 It is easy to see the evolution of dress in the Bantu tribe by comparing the illustration of the South African woman (a Sutho, I. p. 46) representing the first stage, those of the Thonga women (I. p. 179 and 195) representing the second, Camilla, depicting a third stage (p. 92), and the ordinary European frock forming the fourth (1).

As for men, I unfortunately possess no picture of the primitive *mbaya*. But the following stages are illustrated by the two Zulu boys (p. 95) by the habitué of the Nkuna Court (I. p. 435), and by Tobane (I. p. 4) and Muhlaba (I. p. 426).

II. *Ornaments.*

301 The taste for decoration, for ornament, is innate with the Black. Ages ago, before he took to fixing a flower in his hair, he used to tatoo himself. We have already described (I. p. 178) the various patterns of *tattooing* of men and women, and have pointed

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551 for girls and boys. *Nhwanin* is a girl's name, as it means "girl" and *Nwandjise* a boy's name as it means "boy" (1).

553 All these birth-names are abandoned later on, generally at
881 the circumcision school, or at the age of puberty, in the clans
787 where the custom of circumcising has disappeared; boys and girls then choose new names. Men and women who undergo initiation adopt a new name. So do those subjected to the treatment for possession; these take the name of their pretended possessor when he has made himself known. I refer the reader to Appendix II for further information regarding Thonga names.

845 *Premature Birth.* When a child is born prematurely and is very small and delicate, he is wrapped in the leaves of the castor-oil plant and put into a big pot, which is then exposed to the heat of the sun. This is a true incubator, and the treatment is said to be attended with success (Tobane).

845 *Protracted Births and Illegitimate Births.* There would seem to be
848 no relation between these; but to the Thonga mind, on the contrary, a protracted and difficult birth proves that the child is not legitimate. This conviction is so strong that when a woman knows that the child which she is going to bear is not the son of her husband (nuna) but of a lover (mbuye), she will admit this secretly to the principal midwife, in order to spare herself the pains of a difficult birth, as it is taboo to bear a "child of adultery" hiding the fact: it would cause the mother untold suffering.

Therefore, if the delivery lasts too long, the midwife will begin to have doubts as to the legitimacy of the child. The first thing she will do is to send word to the husband. He knows
845 what it means. He takes in his *shifado* (2) a little of his *semen*,
848 mixes it with water in a shell of sala (the big round fruit of the
291 Strychnos) and the woman drinks it. It may be that then the child will "feel his father," if the husband is really his father, and that this will bring the birth to a prompt conclusion; but

(1) I know of an exception to this rule. The son of the Maboia chief was named Nhwanin, a girl's name, in order to deceive the malevolent powers which had killed his brethers and sisters.

(2) See Anaptatio I at the end of the volume in the collection of Latin notes written for medical men and ethnographers.

1 [see p. 516 in these categories or IN 116 -- Analyst]

In their country there
524 are big nasty yellow-brown hornets (a kind of Belonogaster)
536 which build more or less circular nests, sometimes attaining to the size of a man's head. On a certain day the boys decide to make war on these enemies. They make shields with the leaves of the *nala* palm tree which they plait together.

524 They cut down branches, which they wave to protect themselves, and one of them goes and strikes a heavy blow on the wasps' nest! The irritated insects rush out on their assailants and sting them. The boys try to kill the wasps with their sticks or to crush them when they light on them. Sometimes, overcome by the pain, they run away; sometimes, resisting to the last, they kill and exterminate their winged enemies.

Besides this there are also *big battles between the shepherds* of the different flocks. The shepherds amuse themselves by taking one another's cattle. Those who are the strongest bring the stolen herd triumphantly back to the neighbourhood of their village, but they would never let it enter the kraal. The vanquished call to their help their elder brothers, who come to recover their property and, if they can, give the thieves a sound thrashing!

578 Insults and fights are frequent between the clans. The boys
762 of Mpfumu call out to those of Matjolo: " Forest gadders! Eaters
791 of snails and boas, of lizards and tortoises " (all of which are questionable food!) (In Ronga: Balala! Badi ba tihumba ni tinhlaru ni makhwahle ni tinfutchu). Those of Matjolo answer them: " Crowd of women that you are, clad in cotton material! " (Babasati! Matchimbamphela!), in reference to the fact that the inhabitants of Mpfumu, living near the town, some time ago replaced the belt of skins worn by the savages by a piece of cotton tied to the waist and hanging down to the knee (ladula).

855 The custom of frightening children with imaginary beasts is
857 wide spread amongst the Thongas. The bogey man is called
538 *Shingomu-Ngomu* or else *Shikunkwunu*, and by this very expressive
761 word they designate a huge and mighty being who walks, swaying his big body from right to left, with a sound like *ngomu-ngomu*. The ogre is *Shitukulumukumba*, a word coming originally from the Zulus, which corresponds to the Ronga *Ñwambilutimhokora*, that is to say: " the one who has scales on the heart. " He eats

1) THE CUSTOM OF THE EROTIC DREAM (Tilorela).

881 195 751 When a young man has noticed for the first time an emissio seminis, he is said to have become an adult (a kulile, a thombile) to have "drunk the nkanye." The nkanye is the tree from which the bukanye is made. It is prepared for the great feast of the new year. *To drink the nkanye* is an euphemism to designate the entrance into a new phase of life, into the age of puberty. According to Mboza, the lad must go early in the morning to wash his body, and that is all. But Tobane says that, in the Mpfumo clan, the family doctor is called; in a broken pot, he roasts pieces of skin of all the beasts of the veldt, together with some half digested grass taken from the stomach of a goat (psanyi). The boy must eat a little of this medicine and rub all his joints with it. This will strengthen him so that, when he has relations with girls, he will not be overcome (gemiwa) by them. This rite, which is very similar to the rite of the broken pot performed for infants, is connected with the "gangisa," the sexual habits of young people which begin at the time of puberty, as we shall see later on.

881 291 177 789 832 At this time also, the boy begins to wear the very primitive clothing called *shifado* (sha ku siba, the thing with which one closes, see Annotatio I)[1]. In former times they wore only the *mbayi*, a small cylindrical or conical object of woven palm leaves, which was the national dress of the Thongas; the *shifado* seems to be of Zulu origin. It is very much valued as preventing contact with the earth, as a protection against ants and an aid to continence; the lads who do not wear it are blamed and accused of being *ba-nato*. The word *nato* means a magical medicine by means of which men of low morals throw men or women into a deep sleep during the night, enter the huts of other people and commit adultery with their wives.

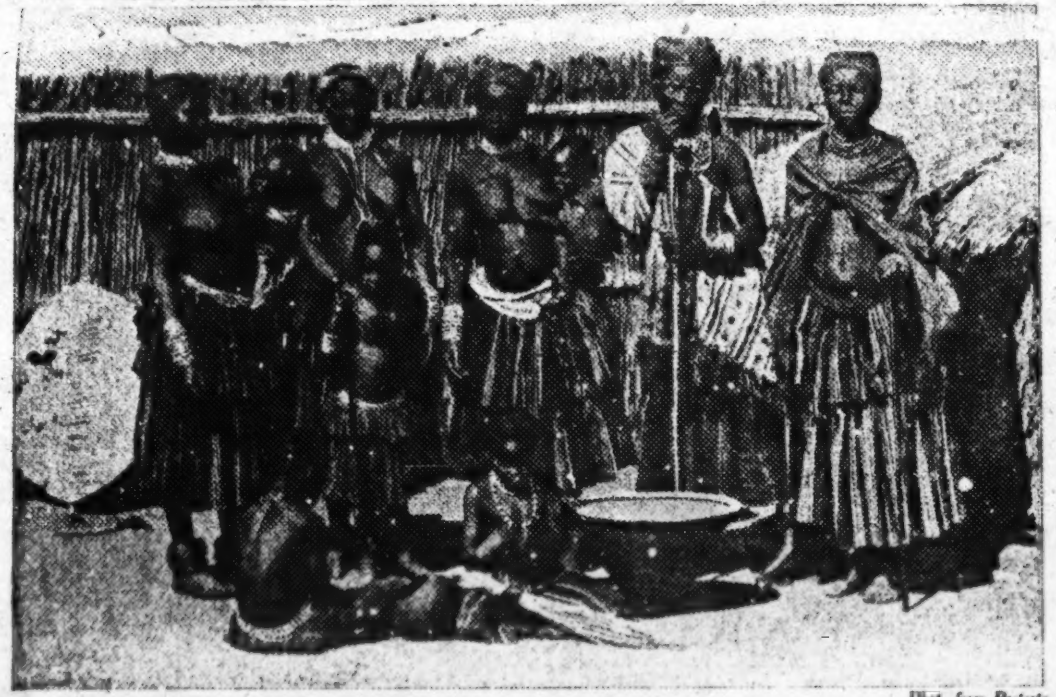
2) THE PIERCING OF THE EARS (Ku tjunya, (Ro.), boshela. (Dj.).

881 304 177 This also takes place at this period. There are two ways of performing it, either by an actual piercing of the lower lobe with a thorn, or by cutting it with a knife. The first method

1 [See p. 516 in these categories or in 116 --Analyst]

1; Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

142/391



Phot. from Pretoria

Thonga women of the Transvaal.

Latin Notes for Medical Men and Ethnographers

291 "Annotatio prima (P. 40). --'Shifado' quo quisque Thonga
845 extremum penem vestit, spheroides excavataque res est;
848 quod tegimentum ex iis, quae ad pudorem et munditiem perti-
881 nent, postulatur. Si quis schifado suum amisit, ei dedecoriest."

Note 1 (page 40). Shifado, with which every Thonga covers the end of his penis, is a spherical and hollowed-out object; this covering is demanded from those who are concerned with decency and cleanliness. If anyone has lost his schifado [sic] he is disgraced.

"Olim apud Thonga, qui a populo Zulo illum morem acceperunt, viri, quod linguâ 'mbayi' id est fistulam quandam ex foliis textis palmae quae 'milala' dicitur, ferre solebant.

[At one time among the Thonga, who took over this custom from the Zulu people, the men used to wear what in their language is called mbayi, that is, some kind of tube made of palm leaves woven together which is called milala.]

"Ultima 'mbayi' anno 1895 vel 1896 post Christum natum visa sunt. Quod shifado ex parvae cucurbitae cortice aut duro et excavato accurateque polito ligno factum, summo veretro affixum, minime incommode ferre videntur."

[The last mbayi were seen in the year 1895 or 1896. Because the shifado is made of the rind of a small gourd or of hard, hollowed-out and carefully polished wood, and attached at the top of the private parts, it seems that it can be worn with the minimum of discomfort.]

833 "Annotatio secunda (P. 56). S. n. i, sc. semine non im-
851 misso. Ad hoc, marito sperma foras spargendum est (a nga
842 mu weleri): hic est coitus rite factus et quasi lustralis. Inde,
765 uxor in manus utriusque sordes (thyaka ra bona) sumit, qui-
783 bus umbilicum illinit."

[Note 2 (page 56). S. n. i., that is, the semen has not been injected. Moreover the husband must eject his sperms outside of the body (a nga mu weleri): this is the coitus properly executed and, as it were, lustral. Then the wife takes in her hands the filth of both (thyaka ra bona) and smears the navel with it.]

"Annotatio tertia (P. 57). Corpus infimum pueri ex adverso et a tergo peni pater tangit.

[Note 3 (page 57). The father touches with his penis the lowest part of the boy's body from the front and from behind.]

831 "Annotatio quarta (P. 88). Hae sunt formulae:
881 Shana khololwane ma ri tiba le'ri onhaka milebe?
Novistisne avem quae labra minora laedit?

177 291 as with their clothing! How often we have longed to see them adopt some peculiar costume appropriate to the climate and to their occupations! But when they cast off their belt of tails, it is to put on long trousers, and they all dream of a complete khakhi or serge suit! So they will build square houses, and this certainly has its advantages; the dwelling can be divided into many rooms and the different members of the family can all live under the same roof, which, from an educational point of view, is a good thing.

264 177 591 361 The *communism of food* is also a splendid feature and calculated to fill the most sanguine socialistic dreamer with joy! But this custom has been severely criticised from a hygienic point of view. The habit of all plunging their fingers into the same plate fosters tuberculosis and other contagious diseases; but I do not think it is for this reason that the custom will die out. In the modern Native settlement many different families live together. They are not united by any ties of blood. Moreover they are sometimes so numerous that such communism would be practically impossible. The golden age has passed for ever!

177 461 With it has also passed away the merry lazy life of the half naked *munumzane*. The coming of civilisation has already deeply changed his mode of living, and the transformation will accentuate itself still further. I have heard Colonists cursing these black people, who believe that they can escape the law of work under which Europeans groan; "these niggers who think that they will be allowed to remain incorrigibly lazy fellows for all time!" I do not share this loudly expressed indignation. First the Native *doda* is by no means an idle man. He has his own occupations for the benefit of the kraal. Secondly, if his wants are few, and if he very soon reaches the happy state of a man who is not obliged to work, I see thousands of Europeans enjoying the life of a "rentier" as much as he does, and without any qualms of conscience. A South African trader who works hard to make his fortune, and hopes to leave the country as quickly as possible, in order to enjoy all the comforts of a European town, theatres, concerts and clubs, has not, after all, a much loftier ideal than the Native he curses... On the other hand, circumstances themselves enforce upon the Native that law of work and teach him that "dignity of labour" of which we so often hear. A civilised Native has increased his wants ten-fold. He requires the wherewithal to satisfy them. This is the only legitimate, the most powerful incentive to work. Fifty, sixty thousand Thongas, the elite of our tribe, are constantly streaming to Johannesburg, where they are considered the best mining boys. Many of them go there to earn

CHAPTER II

INDUSTRY OF THE THONGAS.

Industry, in the human race, is born of necessity. Man feels the need of protection and shelter from wind and weather ; this need leads him to make some sort of a covering (clothing) and to build a dwelling (habitation). The necessity of procuring food, of preparing it, of keeping it, suggests to him the idea of fashioning weapons for killing game, and utensils of various kinds for tillage, and for cooking the products of the soil. 000

But Nature must also provide the wherewithal to be turned to account by man's intelligence. The development of human industry depends therefore on a variety of circumstances. We shall now study the inventions of the Thongas, what they have been able to evolve in the matter of clothing, habitation and utensils : we shall also consider their wood-carvings, and their exceedingly primitive commerce, and shall endeavour to find a solution of the several questions which will naturally be suggested by the extremely slow industrial development of these tribes.

A. CLOTHING AND ORNAMENTS.

I. *The Evolution of Costume.*

As regards *women*, Mboza asserts that, in remote times, Ronga women wore well tanned and softened skins, to which they hung pieces of brass, as the Pedi women still do. At present, amongst the Rongas, they are all clothed with pieces of unshaped material, which they call *kapulane* ; this piece of stuff is fastened round the 291

291 waist, whence it falls down to form a skirt. With this most women in the interior are satisfied ; they do not cover the upper part of the body. The undergarment, covering the genitalia, is

Phot. P. Berthoud.
Camilla, a Lourenço Marques woman.

called *ntlhomo* in front, (a word which is taboo), and *mphela* at the back, (this term is less taboo than the first).

177 In the Transvaal, Thonga or Shangaan women have also from
291 time immemorial adopted European materials, of which they make double pleated skirts adorned with beads, as seen in the illustration I. p. 195. This is the typical heathen costume. The Pedi or Sutho women are at once distinguishable from their Ronga

sisters by the fact that they have preserved their ancient skin 177
dress. In the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques, a further 291
development has taken place, as women there wear a large plaid which they knot over the breast and which hangs down behind as far as their heels, a costume by no means lacking in the picturesque. They cover their breast and shoulders with a bodice (kimao), generally very close-fitting, especially in the sleeves.

Phot. J. Bennett.
Christian girls of the Training Institution of Lemana (Northern Transvaal).

The pattern is said to have been borrowed from India. (See on the opposite page the portrait of Camilla, an old resident of Lourenço Marques, wearing the costume adopted by the women in the town and suburbs.)

Ordinary frocks are preferred by Christian converts, and so the European fashion tends to supplant the Indian, or the heathen.

As regards *men's costume* among the Ba-Ronga it was little more 291
than the traditional smile. It consisted, in fact, of a small article made of narrow strips of palm leaf, plaited together, and could hardly be termed "clothing." This was called *mbaya* and bears a great resemblance to the "libyan sheath" which is seen on the

old Egyptian monuments (1). The last mbaya were seen in the 291
neighbourhood of Rikatla, when the war of 1894 broke out. In the Northern clans they were still commonly used by the generation which preceded Viguet, by the Nkunas who fled before Manukosi in 1835. (See Introduction to the *Grammaire Ronga*, page 17). The Kafirs of Cape Colony were still in 1903, at this stage of dress... or rather undress, and the Pedis of the Transvaal, with their *musindu* (a mere piece of skin protecting the genitalia), are not much in advance of the mbaya stage even now. This state of affairs arose in the first place from the fact that, as yet, the sentiment of modesty had hardly been conceived. It must not be supposed, however, that morals were the more depraved for that reason; on the contrary, they were much purer, and innocence far more general, judging from the reports of those who remember those days.

But a second fact which allowed the Thongas to go about 132
without clothing, 'in puris naturalibus,' or nearly so, is the 291
warmth of the climate; the temperature rarely drops below 44° Fahrenheit and frequently rises to 113° F., the annual mean near Lourenço Marques being about 74° F. according to our observations extending over seven years. It is thus easy to dispense with a coat in that part of the world, and it is by no means a rare occurrence to see children in the interior absolutely naked (2).

This very primitive article of attire has, however, been 177
supplanted by one designed by the Zulus, and worn by men up to 291

(1) The "phallic sheath" of the earliest Egyptian statuettes, which is also to be 177
noticed on the engravings of the XIXth dynasty, as belonging to African populations, is not of quite the same pattern as the Thonga mbaya or the Sutho musindu. However there is a real similarity between all these primitive costumes; many of the customs of the Bantus of to-day seem to have existed amongst the early Egyptians, and this fact shows that the origin of Egyptian civilisation is partially African.

(2) The Chopi tribe, which is very industrious, dwelling in the neighbourhood of 439
the Thongas N. E. of the mouth of the Limpopo, has succeeded in obtaining a very superior kind of dress by beating the bark of the *mphama*, a kind of fig-tree which is wide-spread in the country, and which the Ba-Chopi even planted for this purpose. The pieces of bark become very soft and can be strung together. They are called *ntjalu*. Several samples of this curious stuff can be seen in the Neuchâtel Museum. Thongas used to buy the article from their Chopi neighbours, but never knew how to manufacture it.

291

Zulu costume. Phot. Natal.

177 a recent date from one end to the other of the Thonga tribe
291 (except, I am told, in some remote spots in the Hlengwe country). It consists of a belt to which are hung tails of animals, or strips of

177 skin (djobo, dji-ma), covered with hair or fur, or even the entire
291 skin of a civet cat, or antelope. The nsimba skins are in great demand, but are rather expensive, and the majority of the Ba-Ronga men wear merely two pieces of ox hide (mabebe), one in front and the other behind. Small boys often content themselves with one in front only. The young men prefer to wear them rather full, something like a petticoat! The *shifado* (Vol. I. Annotatio I) is worn with the belt of tails. This "sphaerula" is made either of carved wood or plaited milala leaves, or of a small calabash just the size required. When it is fixed in place, raw Natives consider that they have satisfied all the exigences of decency. Although much more decent than the *mbaya*, this garment of tails, or pieces of skin, is still a trifle incomplete...

Sandals of ox hide (tintango) are also an old article of dress ; they were used by hunters and travellers. They belong to the bush and it is taboo to bring them into the hubo (I. p. 355).

At the present time European costume is tending to supplant the belt of tails. The first step consists in adopting the *ladula*, a piece of stuff hanging down from the loins as far as the knees. This style of garment was still worn in 1910 by most of the young heathen round Lourenço Marques ; it was sometimes combined with the madjobo, which were still in use. But men, and especially youngsters, soon aspire to something better : trousers and jackets! (1). However ungainly the Native may appear when duly arrayed in coat and trousers, there is nothing he covets more than these garments. As they cannot all afford complete suits, they often have to be satisfied with such odds and ends as they can get from the Banyans, or pick up from their European masters. One sees them gravely walking about in worn-out long frock coats, the trousers being conspicuous by their absence. Others think themselves very fortunate if they can manage to get hold of a very much patched waistcoat with which to adorn

829 (1) The taste for European fabrics is said by thoughtful Natives to have been the cause of the loss of their independence. They support this somewhat surprising theory by the following argument : "Without this," said one of them to me, pulling the flap of my coat, "the Whites would never have conquered us ! In our wars with them there have always been some of us who would not give up these stuffs, and so made alliance with the Europeans. We were divided, and thus our power of resistance was broken."

themselves, the rest of the body remaining stark naked... except, 177
of course, for the indispensable belt of tails. One day a Rikatla 291
lad came to see me with an eye-glass fixed triumphantly on his forehead, and when I asked him what was the use of that article he replied, really meaning what he said : "Ndji yambalile" — "I have dressed." He intended to do me honour. The same lad came, on another occasion, wearing coquettishly on his head a lady's black lace hat, which he seemed to consider very "chic." I much preferred the get-up of an individual, by name Glas, who put a red lily in his tightly-curled hair, and made a chin strap of a flexible reed which he passed through the holes in his ears on either sides, so that it formed a sort of frame to his face. Every Thonga has already learned to know a *buluku* (trousers), a *djansi* (jacket), a *fascikoti* (apron, a corruption of the word waistcoat), a *hembe* (shirt), *masokisi* and *memeya* (stockings) and *shilembe* (hat). The majority of these words have doubtless come from the Boer dialect, and have changed somewhat in passing into the language of the Natives.

The "civilised" attain the height of bliss when they are able to procure an irreproachable suit of clothes, and it is a sight to behold these young men returning direct from Johannesburg, dressed in the latest style, with a white starched shirt, a silk cummerbund, and jacket and trousers to match. They think themselves handsome, but we do not share their illusion! How often have we not longed to see them adopt some costume suited to their colour, their customs, their occupations, and their climate! But they want to be like us, so what is to be done ? (1) Their 177
idea of costume is evidently different from ours : they consider it 291
as an adornment rather than as an actual protection against cold 613
or heat. If it rains, or if it is cold, they much prefer to wrap

(1) I have heard it asserted that the adoption of European clothing by the Blacks 753
tends to enfeeble them, even to the extent of rendering them liable to new diseases. I was assured that the introduction of tuberculosis amongst them is due to their clothes. This assertion is at least very much exaggerated. However it is certain that the exposure of their skin to the rays of the sun was extremely healthy. On the other hand, they do not know that wet clothing must be changed (they may have no second suit to put on), so they catch cold, and pneumonia or pleurisy sets in... I have also heard it stated that the second-hand, cast-off garments which traders sell them often infect them with syphilis (especially after circumcision), or other poisons.

177 themselves in the big rug (ngubo, mpisi-mpisi), which they all buy
291 to sleep under at night. The end of the process of evolution will
513 certainly be that they will adopt exactly the same dress as their European masters : a complete suit for the men, frocks, hats and boots for the women ; as soon as the majority of them obtain enough money to buy these, they will do so, and seeing how particular most of them are as regards their external appearance, it may be safely anticipated that Bantu beauties will submit to the tyranny of the London or Paris fashions as readily as our European élégantes!

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584 square ; they sit down in the shade. They are asked : " What do you want ? " " We have come to see the girls ", they answer bluntly. And the reply is : " All right. Look at them. "

584 Of course the girls do their very best to be as pleasing as possible, as the mother has told them that these are suitors.
292 The suitor is easily known by his special attire, a belt of skins
361 either of leopard or tiger-cat. He goes from one yard to the other, and talks with the cooks, inquiring their names, and looking at them as, with vigourous and graceful movements of the body, they crush the mealies in their mortar. If the seekers find what they want, they return home, if not, they go to the next hamlet. (Let us say here that each village consists of not more than six to twelve huts built in a circle, leaving a central circular place, the shaded " square ", of which the oxen kraal occupies the middle.) (See Part II.)

584 When he is satisfied, the suitor goes home and says to his parents : "So and so pleases me. Go and woo her. (Ku buta)." Then a middle aged man of the village is sent to the parents of the young girl. He is received in the father's hut and, with all the circumlocutions required by etiquette, he discharges his errand. The girl is called and told that the visitor who came the other day has chosen her ; she is asked if she also loves him (or if she wants him... for there is only one word in Ronga to express these two kindred notions, ku randja). " Oh! is it the one who looked thus and so and who wore this and that ? Yes, I consent to accept (to eat) the money out of his hands (ku da bukosi ku yene). " If she does not care for him, she will declare it quite as plainly : the suitor will have to seek elsewhere. It is a fact worth noting that, amongst these so-called savages, a father very seldom obliges his daughter to accept a husband whom she dislikes, except in the case of debt. If the matter is arranged to the satisfaction of all parties the buta (1) or betrothal is concluded and the messenger is feasted, while he, on his part, gives a present (shihlengwe) to the girl's parents of the value of a hoe or ten

(1) *Buta* may be a factitive derivative of the verb *bula*, to speak: to cause somebody to speak, to give an answer.

584 In fact this is exactly what the young men want, and the second night is spent like the first.

The third day they go away. All the young girls accompany them along the paths, for a long distance, and, when they part, boys and girls tie together the high standing grasses on the veldt (ku ba mafundju hi byanyi), a touching symbol of their loves! Seeing these knots during the whole season at a crossroads,

Phot. A. Borel

Drawing water from the Maputju river.

passers-by will know that lovers parted there. On taking leave, the young people arrange another meeting. The girls will go after a week or two to return the visit.

292 301 584 In fact, to the *tjekela* of the boys corresponds the *koroka* of the girls. " They make the betrothal visit to see the husband (ba ya ku koroken, ku ya bona nuna) ". They also put on their finest attire ; red and white cloth, in their curled hair a small crown of blue and red beads, looking really pretty, on ankles and wrists bracelets of twisted iron wire.

765 The other is a curious apostrophe to the wizards who were
533 believed to have bewitched the deceased, and means : " Good bye, wizard! Good bye, wizard! You will kill people. You come to kill people, you come during the night. "

765 But the *closing day* arrives at last, the *day of the sprinkling*
783 (shuba). When the grave-diggers have well perspired in their vapour bath, the doctor takes the pot in which the medicine is still boiling. All the women sit down with their children on their backs, the men stand in a line, holding their assagais and sticks in their hands. The doctor sprinkles his decoction over them all with a branch covered with leaves. The children cry because the burning drops hurt them. The women try to hide behind each other. The men gesticulate as if striking enemies with their assagais ; this is to show that their arms are strong and that they can now go to the war, as it would have been taboo for them to join the army before this purification had taken place. Should a man be absent from home, his sticks are also brought to the sprinkling to be purified (1). Then the doctor goes with his pot, sprinkling all the village, the huts, the doors, the backs of the roofs, the fence, the belongings of the deceased which are kept to be distributed amongst the heirs. After this operation, the village is pure as far as material things are concerned. The contamination which had fallen on all of them by reason of their owner's death is removed. Before the sprinkling it would have been dangerous to remove anything. Now if any one should have left anything in the kraal before the death, he can come and recover it. This is the act by which " the mourning is scattered " (hangalasa nkosi).

765 Visitors go home, having put on their *malopa*, if they are Ba-
292 Ronga ; strings of milala palm leaves round their heads, their necks, arms, and legs, if they belong to Northern clans. The custom of wearing a white handkerchief round the head is spreading. If a goat is killed, every one wears a bracelet made of its skin round the wrist, and the widow and the principal grave-digger

(1) In the Northern clans, says Viguet, a little of this mixture is kept to sprinkle, visitors during the following days, because " they are taboo for the things of the village, not having been cleansed ; " (ba yila psa le mutin, hikuba a ba basiniwanga.)

765 put strings, made from the same skin, over their breasts. The
292 widow adds new strings when other goats are killed during the mourning visits which will take place later on, and until the adjudication of the inheritance. It is a sign that her husband is dead (a feliwile).

2) The Great Mourning in the Northern clans.

765 The foregoing is the sequence of the rites of the Great Mourning
783 in the Ronga clans. In the Northern clans, according to Viguet, the same elements are found, but in another form.

825 As soon as the mourning lamentations begin, the grave-diggers
278 send some men to fetch the *tinyele*, which are bits of skin taken from the soles of elephants' feet. These are burnt on charcoal, together with cocks' dung, and the mourners come and inhale the smoke with reeds, when they are tired of wailing. The *tinyele* are considered to be a powerful medicine. It is taboo to eat or even to snuff before having inhaled this smoke.

765 That first night, everyone sleeps in the open, and the
783 grave-diggers are not allowed to use their mats. They must cut grass to cover them for fear that their impurity might contaminate the mats. As usual, sexual relations are suspended between married people, but the *bugango* is not taboo in the Northern clans, as girls (psigango) are not wives (basati). When, on the following days, visitors come to the mourning, they go straight to the grave with a small basket of mealies and spread them over it saying. "Go! Die! You have left us." This spreading of mealies is a *mhamba*, an offering. Then the doctor comes. It seems that his operations last only three days. There are no vapour baths properly speaking, but the doctor burns his powders together with bits of bark in broken pots, and all the mourners come and inhale the smoke through reeds, as they did on the first day.

The *purification of the food* is performed by a rite which corresponds with the *lumisa milomo* of the Rongas. The doctor

765 little of it into a glass and raises it to the lips of the old man. "He
782 cuts his prayer" and while all the attention of the public is
604 concentrated upon this act (which belongs also to the ritual, as the priest must be the first to partake of the offering), the wives of the batukulu rush towards the shoulders, lungs and hoofs of the goats and the bottle of wine, seize them and run away towards the west. They have stolen the meat of the sacrifice! At once all stand up and follow them laughing, shouting and pelting them with the *psanyi*, which they had kept for this purpose. The thieves hide themselves behind some bush and eat the meat. Uterine nephews are representatives of the gods, as we shall see later on, and they assert their right by stealing the offering and eating it up.

This ceremony is highly characteristic as it embodies some of the principal ideas of the Thongas in the domain of religion, social life and taboo. It was worth while describing it, and we shall refer to it later on, when dealing with sacrifices and the position of the uterine nephews in the family.

765 The crushing down of the hut is not performed in exactly
292 the same manner amongst the Ba-Ronga. In the clans *South of*
554 *the Bay*, they only *close* it (pfala yindlu). They dig holes in
825 front of the door, into which they insert poles of the bush called *nhleha*, tying thorny branches horizontally to them. The shield of the deceased is placed against the door. The religious rite then takes place and from the skins of the sacrificed goats strips are cut, which the widows will have to wear *en bandoulière* during the following months of their widowhood. The astragalus bones are kept and hung round the neck. The gall-bladder is also preserved and fixed in the hair of the new master of the village as a sign of his new position.

765 In the *district of Makaneta*, on the estuary of the Nkomati,
596 the ceremony comprises two successive acts. First there is also a *provisory closing* of the hut, which can take place one month after the death and is accompanied by the family gathering and the religious ceremony. One year later, when the inheritance is adjudicated, the hut is crushed down, but only if it belonged to a headman of the village and if the kraal is obliged to move in

783 765 575 787 of mourning women sitting on the main road, prudently stops and makes a long detour to avoid the place... What is done at this meeting ? One of the widows makes an incision with a knife or a bit of glass in the skin of the new member of the society, in the inguinal region on the left side, "where the husband was resting." If the blood flows freely, it is a good sign. The women are satisfied ; they say there was a good understanding between husband and wife ; if the blood does not flow it is a bad omen. Then one of them lights a little fire with a handful of dry grass ; this grass has been torn from the roof of the deceased's hut. A little excrement from a cock (not a hen!) is then thrown into the fire, and the widow must expose both hands to the smoke. Afterwards she must extinguish the fire with her own water. Should she be unable to do this, it is a further proof that she has not been faithful to her husband and that she has killed him by her adulteries. These rites are very similar to the first circumcision rites, the incision performed recalling the ablation of the foreskin, and the exposure to the smoke, the jumping over the fire. These are great taboos. Evidently they are initiation rites, accompanying the passage from one condition to another. Why does the ceremony take place on the main road ? Because later on the contamination of death will attach itself to travellers passing that spot, and the mourners themselves will get rid of it in this way.

783 765 575 292 After that, the company returns home. The other widows take every bit of clothing from their companion, and tie a reed or a palm thread around her waist with some broad leaves attached to it. With this scanty garment, they bring her home. She walks surrounded by them. Someone warns the men to leave the road as they are not allowed to see the procession. They hide themselves in their huts. The widow is led to her hut, the hut of the great wife which has now been uncrowned. She must accomplish *the last crossing of the hut*. Entering through the door, she shouts loudly : "My husband! My husband! You have left me alone! What am I to do ?" Then she goes out, not by the door but by the hole which has been made in the wall to carry the corpse to the grave. Behind the hut her friends are waiting for her and give her back her old clothing, which has been

361 in the bandla, and it is strictly reserved for them. Women are
351 allowed to penetrate into it only when they bring food. Boys
562 must remove the ashes from the fireplace, not women. The *hubo*, on the contrary, is open to all. A shed is sometimes built on it to afford shelter during the rainy days. There are special acts always performed on the hubo : the cutting up (shindla), the slaughtering and butchery of animals and the feast of "eating the head." The head of any slaughtered ox belongs to the men, and they eat it together on the hubo (See letter C.). It is the business of the young men to keep the hubo clean, and they sometimes assemble to pull up the grass which may have grown on it. In former times it was taboo to come to the hubo with
292 sandals. Sandals are used for hunting and must be taken off before entering the village.

Another place to which I have already alluded is the *bukwele*,
361 the "place of jealousy," where angry co-wives insult each other!
351 On our diagram it would be located between 5 and 4, for the
595 wives of the headman.

The Thonga village, this closed circle of huts, is a living
361 organism. All its members form a whole whose unity is remark-
596 able. This common life never appears in a more striking form
264 than at the evening meal. Let us look at our diagram. In every
476 yard the mistress of the hut has cooked her mealies and her sauce in different pots, and, when the sun sets, she distributes the contents (phamela) in wooden or earthen plates. The largest is for the husband. He sits on the bandla with his companions, the other men of the village, and the youths waiting for the meal. All these plates, generally carried by small girls or boys, are brought from all sides to the men's gathering. All do not necessarily contain the ordinary mealies pap ; some are filled with manioc, some with sweet potatoes, etc. The men attack the first plate, all of them taking the food with their fingers. They pass on to the second and so on to the last. Meanwhile each mother has filled other smaller plates, one for the girls, one for the boys, one for herself. She has even sent to each of the other women of the village a little of her cooking, and the others have done the same to her ; so each member of the community, when

439 monopolise the retail trade throughout the country, and the
563 Natives are quite unable to meet this competition; they have consequently almost entirely given up all their earlier attempts at business transactions! (1)

167 A second reason why the trade of former days has almost
439 entirely disappeared is to be found in the *great economic changes* resulting from the fact that Lourenço Marques has become an important seaport, in close relation with the miners of Johannesburg who receive their supplies via Delagoa Bay. Thousands of Natives are employed in discharging the large steamers which arrive by hundreds in the roadstead. At this work a Native can earn fifteen shillings a week or more; in a short time he has made ample provision for the wants of his family and no longer finds it necessary to go to Bilene, to Zululand or Swaziland to make a living. The women too can make money by selling tomatoes and sweet potatoes to an ever increasing White population. All this is much easier

439 (1) On one occasion, in 1892, I made a list of various articles displayed for sale in and around a Banyan shop, in the district of Mahazule (to the North of Nondwane).
292 This is what Mr. Nala, a Hindu from Goa established for many years amongst the
765 Rongas, offered to the Natives living in the neighbourhood of his primitive store.

584 *Stuffs.* These are sold by measurement taken on the individual; say, by the *shikumba*, length of one arm, or by the *nkumba* or *bemba* (two arms), or by the *peça*, the entire piece, the equivalent of two bemba. The materials most in demand are called; *tingidao* (white), *mashita* (black with white stripes), *sh.landana* (all red), *shinwakana* (red and black), *mempana* (a special red stuff worn as mourning) and *malopa* (a navy blue material still more frenquently worn as mourning). Besides these are *handkerchiefs* (minturu) of various colours, principally red, a large proportion coming from the manufacturers of East Switzerland; white *blankets (gampongo*, meaning snow), for three or four shillings; coloured blankets, thicker, varying from five to seven shillings; towels, called *thawula* (an adaptation of the English word) and even some articles of ready-made clothing such as *djansi* (overcoats) at fifteen shillings! Amongst the stuffs I would more particularly note the *gangisa ntombi*, that is "for use when courting the girls", dark blue with a pattern of white flowers.

439 *Beads.* There are at least a dozen kinds to be found at Nala's; djiridja (black) mbanda (white), shingazana, shimuzana, nkankana, habo, matshimbarole, bafa, tshambo.

Sundries. Rings, fish-hooks, buttons (masowa), thread, needles, snuff boxes to be worn in the ears (tinhlanga), knives, spoons, balls of string, padlocks (makandjate) with key attached; little chains, to be hung from the belt, which tinkle when walking; bracelets (busengi, ten for a shilling); wooden spoons, combs, coils of fine iron wire; skins; a large trap for catching hyenas or other wild animals; small brass petroleum lamps; sardines at sixpence a tin, English biscuits, and last but not least, a cask of German brandy diluted (tempora) with 50% of water! This would now be replaced by three casks of Vinho colonial, one of white wine, one of red wine and one of I do not know what colour!

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

584 shillings ; this present " strengthens their bones " (ba tiya marambo) and nothing further remains to be done but to choose the day on which the betrothal visit shall take place. (1)

2) THE BETROTHAL VISITS (Tjekela and koroka).

584 301 This visit (ku ya ku tjekelen) is paid in the following manner. The fiancé chooses his best friend to be his " shangwane " ; the fiancée does the same on her side, and these two " shangwane " must do their best to help them both during the whole of these complicated ceremonies. Then the bridegroom summons, together with his shangwane, three or four other friends of his own age, and a little lad to carry their mats. They go and bathe and put on their finest attire : rich skins, bracelets hung to their belts, horse-hair necklaces with white beads threaded here and there which swing to and fro on neck and breast. Neither do they forget their small shields of skin, which give them a martial appearance without, however, suggesting any thought of war or strife. Before starting they take a good meal cooked at home. In the evening, after sunset, they reach the village of the fiancée. They sit down outside the gate and cough to make known that they have arrived. Then the inhabitants, who were expecting them, come out to meet them and beg them to enter. The visitors make difficulties. They pretend not to wish to do so. The people of the village insist. At last, with apparent reluctance, they advance into the central square. A hut is prepared for them, and they are invited to go and rest there. They begin by refusing. But the young girls take out of their hands their sticks and their miniature shields and carry them into the hut. At last, with a

[293] 584 574

(1) Amongst the Wa-Nyika (a tribe dwelling between the Nyassa and Tanganyika lakes) the betrothal takes place as follows : A female messenger is sent by the suitor's parents to the girl's parents. She brings with her a hoe. The father calls the girl and shows her the tool saying : " This is your hoe ; it comes from so and so. " If the girl looks at the hoe with a gloomy expression and leaves the hut slowly, still looking at it, it is a sign that she does not accept the proposal. Should she on the contrary cover her face with her hands and run away without looking at the hoe, she thus declares that she consents to become the wife of the boy. (*Journal de l'Unité des Frères*. January 1926).

285 on the basket pointing upward while those on the cover point downward, so that they meet. Two rings are also plaited, and passed round through each pair of handles, forming simple but solid hinges on which the cover can turn without ever being separated from the basket, of which it is henceforward an integral part. A well-made ngula is absolutely impermeable, and not the smallest hole can be found in it. I think it would even hold water. Such a basket is surely a work of art!

285 415 The ngula is the Native's Savings Bank. In it he keeps all his riches, the best grains of maize, or the best grown monkey nuts, reserved for seed at the next rainy season ; also the material with which the women will deck themselves on grand occasions, etc. The enormous basket reposes at the far end of the hut, on a low table (buhiri) specially designed for the purpose. The ngula of the northern clans, where palm leaves are not to be found, is more rounded and the palm straw replaced by solid dry grass. (See the adjoining illustration, p. 121.)

285 415 293 While the ngula is enthroned in the hut, and is never moved out of it, the *hwama* (yin-tin, Ro.) or *funeko* (Dj.) (p. 124 No. 4 and 6), on the contrary, is the wallet of the traveller. It is a square bag made of plaited palm straw. The cover is about as large as the bag itself and, so that it may not be lost (which might easily happen while travelling), it is secured by the string used as a shoulder strap to carry the *hwama*, this being passed through it. The bag can thus be opened by sliding the cover right along the string, but it cannot be entirely separated from it. These bags are of different sizes, some more ornamental than others. A round variety is also made by a certain basket-maker of Masana. He makes three or four projecting horns to his hwama, which then takes a cylindrical shape, and has the advantage of being able to stand upright when placed on the ground. This bag or basket, is called *shiraba* or *baki* (No. 2) ; it is the kind used by the magicians for carrying their medicines, and bones.

285 482 The third classic shape of Ronga basket-ware (No. 3) is the *shihundju* (Ro.) *shirundju* (Dj.), the conical basket employed by the women for transporting maize, clay and manure. (It is by no means certain that the shihundju is cleaned out between

462 thank (tlangela) her husband for his kind help! This is her
273 method of notifying him that all the grain has been harvested, as, whatever the man's share of the work may have been, the mealies belong to him.

462 The main work of the man is the *building and repairing of the*
356 *huts*. This is truly an arduous job, but it is not of yearly recur-
342 rence. Every third or fourth year they are obliged to re-thatch the roof. The huts are built and repaired during the winter, from May to September.

A second domain, which is exclusively man's, is the *care of the cattle*; the boys milk the cows, construct and repair the kraal: the little boys herd the goats, and the young men the oxen, as has already been mentioned.

462 It is also the men who *make all the utensils and tools* used in the
411 village, pots and other crockery excepted; mortars, pestles,
294 handles for axes or hoes (mimphinyi), wooden platters, carved or forged articles, all this work pertains to them. They must also make the *ntehe* for their wives, or sisters, after the birth of the babies. This is probably the explanation of the curious fact noticed amongst Native Christians, namely that they are much more clever at needlework than their wives. Big fellows are often seen forsaking the hoe to work with the needle, and there are fathers who make their own clothing as well as the dresses for their wives and children!

462 *Hunting and fishing* are, of course, also men's work... or pastime.
224 For some of them hunting is an actual trade, at least such was the case in former times, before the White Governments imposed strict regulations and levied heavy licences on that sport. We shall study, in Part IV, the curious customs relating to these two favourite occupations of the Natives.

574 A great part of their time is devoted by the men to *paying*
517 *visits*. They are very fond of calling on each other, and sometimes
484 they go great distances to see relatives or friends. They do not travel to pay visits only, but they frequently journey to claim payment of their debts (milandju). To regain the possession of a miserable head of cattle they willingly lose whole weeks! And what endless discussions in the *hubo*, when an unfortunate visitor

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301 ORNAMENT--types of ornament worn (e.g., necklaces, bracelets, rings, anklets, earrings, labrets, hair ornaments); mode of attachment or suspension; age, sex, and status differences; materials and manufacture; occasions of use; etc. See also:

Work in bone, horn, and shell 391

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Drawing water from the Maputju river. *Phot. A. Borel*

passers-by will know that lovers parted there. On taking leave, the young people arrange another meeting. The girls will go after a week or two to return the visit.

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556 ed by so many good things! Sycophants are not lacking, "Good
595 evening, son of so and so!" they say. "You are one of the
574 great men of the country." And in return for these and other compliments, the magnanimous Gidja shares his feast with his admirers!

Strangers are crossing the country and inquire where they can be received. "Go to Gidja" they are told. "A ni tshengwe, a fuya tshengwe" viz. "he is the possessor of a harem! He is not killed by famine! He has beer to drink every day! He can give food to poor people. Even then, some of it remains on the plate and is eaten by little boys and dogs in the square. There is always abundance there." And the travellers come and enter (khuleka) his village, after which they will tell in their homes the story of the magnificence of Gidja and extol his hospitality.

Thus the man who has succeeded in life becomes famous, his advice will carry weight in the discussions in which he takes part; he will perhaps be even more esteemed than the chief himself, though he does not enjoy the special prestige which the royal family owes to the blood running in its veins.

Conclusion: the greatness of an African is before all else a matter of pots, and the matter of pots is closely connected with polygamy!

885 During these years of mature age the evolution of a man is not
554 marked by special ceremonies. There is one custom however which is common to all, and which marks an advance in their social position. It is that of fixing the wax ring.

II. *Fixing the wax ring.*

885 Amongst the South Africans, the crown is not the appanage of
177 royalty. All men having reached mature age have the right to
554 adorn themselves with it. It is true, it is not a diadem of precious
301 stones, but a large ring of wax. This custom seems to have a Zulu origin. The Ba-Sutho do not know it and the Ba-Thonga, who all practise it, have taken it from the conquering tribe which owes its fortune to the famous Chaka. This habit has spread all

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over the country from Maputju to the borders of Gaza, but only during the last hundred years. This black crown is called *ngiyana* (Ro.) or *shidlodlo* (Dj.), and the crowning ceremony is called *khehla*. From this verb has come the term *makhehla*, a name given to all those who wear this ornament.

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This ceremony is accomplished in the following way. At a given time, the chief informs all the men of a certain age that they must prepare their rings. The counsellors and the sons of the royal family who belong to this " class " must go to the capital. Several oxen are killed ; the back tendons are carefully preserved and made into strings. This being done, the master hairdressers, that is to say those who know how to fix these strange appendages, are called in.

They come, supplied with small sticks (tinhlamalala, the central nervures of the leaves of the milala palm-tree) which they plait together with these strings made of tendons so as to form the skeleton, the circular frame of the crown. These strings are drawn through the curly hair, all round the head, so as to fix the frame of the crown above the temples. The remaining hair on the sides and behind has been previously shaven. The chief possesses a provision of wax ; the wax which is preferred is not that of bees, but the rosy secretion of certain grubs which is found on some bushes, and which the young boys of the capital go and collect. This wax is mixed with different ingredients to make it black. It is fixed on the frame of sticks and shaped into a large round or oval ring, as black as jet, which can be made to shine brightly. When all is finished, they eat the flesh of the oxen, enjoy themselves, dance and celebrate this great occasion!

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The more humble subjects crown themselves in their own villages, where tonsorial artists come to adorn them. The poor go to the hairdresser, and do not use strings made of tendons (they have no ox to kill), but strings made of the fibres of a palm-tree, which are cheaper. It is said that nowadays palm-tree strings (bukuha) have almost entirely supplanted the others, the more so as they are not spoilt by the washing of the crown ; whilst, if the *ngiyana* is fixed with tendons, no water must fall on it, or it would soften.

Moreover the crown must be taken care of ; it can be spoilt

301 and knocked out of shape by a blow or if its owner goes through
885 thorny bushes. A *khehla* who has some self-respect will frequently
554 polish and repair this valuable ornament, for it is a sign of mature
482 age. He who has been ordered by the chief to wear it no longer
645 carries burdens on his head; his crown would be spoilt! He will
461 be accompanied by a boy who carries his parcels; he himself will only carry his stick or his assagai. He will at once be known as one of the mature men of the tribe. This is not to say that the mere fact of wearing the *ngiyana* gives the right of taking part in the important affairs of the country; the counsellors alone possess this right; but from amongst the "crowned," will be chosen the man who is sent to another chief to treat of political questions, for instance.

301 When the hair grows (for, though it is curly, it may become long), the crown rises with it and becomes more or less unsteady, which must be most uncomfortable! The best thing would be to cut the ornament off and then replace it. Mr. Mandjia, one of our neighbours at Rikatla, was probably too lazy to undertake this job, so he put a small red handkerchief between his skull and the crown to prevent it from wobbling.

765 At a certain time all the *ngiyana* disappeared from the land of
643 Nondwane. The chief Mapunga was dead! The loss, kept
554 secret for a year, had been made public, and the law requires all the
885 mature men to take off their crowns when the sovereign of the country is dead. They take the wax from the frame, and make a ball of it; this they fix on a little stick, and place this stick in the roof of their hut above the door. The frame is hung up quite close by, and they leave these objects there till the new chief orders his subjects to re-make their crowns. This shows clearly that the crowning custom is in close relation with the national life of the tribe. The "makhehla" also form special battalions in the army.

178 Nowadays, however, this custom is not observed as religiously
554 as in bygone times. Life is harder, one must go and earn pounds sterling in the port of Lourenço Marques, or in the gold mines, and one can no longer indulge in a lazy life! It may therefore happen that a poor man will refuse to wear the crown, and say to

643 695 331 The name of the chief is sacred in so far as it is generally used in oaths. When asked to swear, a Nondwane man will say: "Maphunga!" (1)

II. *The Regalia.*

643 Kings everywhere like to adorn themselves with specially imposing objects, insignia of their office, which differentiate them from their subjects. The Thonga chiefs have no peculiar crown — the shidlodlo belonging to all adults (p. 129)—, no special garment, no sceptre and no throne. We sometimes translate by the word throne *shilubelo* viz., the place where one *luba*, pays the tax; but this is only a hut smaller than the others and subjects can also possess it. (See page 313). However there are, in some of these small kingdoms, royal objects which may be called regalia (bukosi bya hosi).

643 301 Amongst the Nkunas, the chief possesses a large copper bracelet called *ritlatla*, which was bought a very long time ago, in Lourenço Marques, by the Nkuna clan in exchange for tusks of elephants, says Mankhelu. According to others, the ritlatla was made in old times by Natives from the copper, or perhaps from the gold dug by them. The ritlatla was in the hands of the elder branch of the Nkuna clan; Hoshana was its headman, but he had fled into the Ñwamba country during the troubled period of 1855 to 1860. When he died, his people brought the ritlatla to the chief Shiluvane who belonged to a younger branch, thinking that, at his death, the ritlatla together with the chieftainship would be given back to

643 681 (1) Kidd, in his *Kafir Socialism*, has asserted that Bantu chiefs are very jealous and kill their subjects when they become too rich and thus overshadow them. This may be the case in other tribes or when a military government has taken the place of the old patriarchal system. Amongst the Thongas it is not true. My informants could not quote a single instance of a murder committed by a chief for that reason alone. I heard of Shiluvane killing a subject called Mahluhluni who had acquired too much power; but Mahluhluni had declared that he wanted to usurp the chieftainship; so it was a case of high treason! A rich nduna, in the territory of Nhandja (Nondwane), was also killed and his oxen taken by the chief because he had tried to abduct one of the chief's wives. But many headmen had as many oxen as Maphunga and were not troubled by him on that account: "Why should he hate them? They could not harm him, as he was protected by the supernatural powers, and they brought him all the more beer as they had plenty of wives and consequently of meshes!"

643 301 them. But they were disappointed in their hope : Shiluvane kept both the ritlatla and the power and bequeathed them to his son, Muhlaba, as we shall see. Legends are current about the ritlatla. It is said to be able to move of its own will. "This piece of metal is indeed a wonderful thing," wrote a young Nkuna, to me "because when it is buried in the soil, as black people are in the habit of doing with their treasures, a piece of iron must be put inside it to prevent it from going away; if this precaution is not taken, the ritlatla may leave the place where it was and go somewhere else. In the space of one year, it may go as far as the Masetana spruit (about one mile)."

643 Another royal property of the Nkuna family was an *elephant's tusk*, which vanquished enemies had brought as a token of their submission.

643 302 787 In Nondwana, the old chief Papele who preceded Maphunga and lived in the middle of the last century, wore a *kind of chignon* or bun made by plaiting his hair, which was a sign of royalty (shifoko). But this custom has passed away. There was also *a long stick* which was kept exposed to the smoke of the royal fire in the sacred hut of *nyokwekulu*, which I shall describe presently, and which was called *ntjobo* and also *mhamba*, viz., offering; this was evidently of religious value to the clan, and was taken outside when the army assembled. It possessed the power of becoming invisible to enemies. Moreover this magical stick was very useful because it warned the clan when some danger was threatening. The ntjobo was then put into a fire; if it did not burn, this showed that the clan had nothing to fear from its enemies; if it burned, it meant that the clan would be attacked and defeated. Then another stick would be prepared and put into the fire with the hope that it would resist it.

643 778 We shall speak in Part VI of another sacred *mhamba* which most of the Thonga clans possessed, made of the nails and hair of the deceased chiefs in the Tembe clan, and of the dried skin of their faces in the Shirindja clan. It was used as a means of propitiation in national calamities. In the Khosen country, the chief also possessed the *mhamba*. This was a mysterious object which the clan had always possessed, from time immemorial, from the beginning

714 held by his chief Mahazule. He approached us, a giant of 6 ft. in height, decked out in a costume which was certainly grotesque, but of which I at once caught the general idea ; he had evidently tried to resemble a wild animal and had succeeded admirably in the attempt. Such is most likely the origin of the war costume in mankind! As for Charley, he was thoroughly delighted to note the terrorising effect produced by his appearance on the youngsters and folk of weak nerves.

He was, admittedly, the handsomest warrior in our locality, and condescended on one occasion to allow us to photograph him, when he explained in detail the several component parts of his costume, which, as a whole, was certainly formidable! The photograph was a failure, but the get-up has remained imprinted on my memory.

714 To begin with the top ; the head was decorated with three
825 plumes of long slender feathers, taken from a bird called *sakabonyi*, the widow bird, which is only to be found in the mountains ; sometimes the feathers of other birds are added (magalu, mafukwana); one of these plumes is worn in the centre, the others one on each side, and all three are fixed on to a conical helmet (shintlontlo) trimmed with ostrich feathers. This helmet is set on a kind of toque of another skin, which is held in place by a chin-strap. This style of head gear makes the head look about twice the natural size, and, to give it a still more ferocious appearance, it is adorned here and there with porcupine quills.

714 Round his neck Charley wore a necklace of plaited thongs
301 of black calf skin (tinkocho). Armlets of long white ox hairs,
825 carefully selected from the tail, ornamented his biceps, and garters of a similar make were on the calves of his legs.

The belt around his loins was very rich, the beautiful skin of a civet cat (nsimba), with its fine yellow stripes, hanging down in front to the middle of his thighs, and small antelopes' skins behind (madjobo ya nhlengane). Finally, to complete the wild animal appearance, calves and ankles were covered with bracelets of large black seeds, which come from the North (timbavu), each seed being as large as a cherry. The size of the legs is thus considerably increased and conveys the idea of a pachyderm ; when he jumped

727 enemy died later on, after his return to his home. Makhani did not
828 know this. One day he became suddenly delirious and rushed about
789 all over the village trying to stab his own people. "Oho!" said those
783 who saw him, "it is because the man he wounded has died!" They at once called the magician who possessed the nuru medicine, a man of the Mapsanganye clan, who came with his calabash. In this calabash there was a carved stick cut from a tree called shiralala, the extremity of which must always remain plunged in the medicine. The magician dipped this stick into a mixture made of honey and the drug, and passed it over the lips of Makhani, who seized it with his tongue, sucking it as the magician moved it from right to left, and licking his lips. A drop of the medicine was then put into each ear, on each upper eye-lid, and below the sternum. He was then cured and, taking a lighted torch, he threw it in the direction of the enemy's country with threatening words : "A ba fe, bafo, ba bola i. e. Let them die, the enemies, let them rot. I will kill still others!" Every day he had to go to the pool and wash his body, treating himself with the tintebe powder.

727 During the weeks following the battle heroes do not only
301 wear the tintebe, besides these miluru amulets, they have the
703 right to wear certain trophies. These are in the first place
554 antelope or goat's horns pierced at the base ; they thread a string through the hole thus made and tie them round their necks (See illustrations, p. 33 and 453). They also make necklaces of small pieces of wood, notched in a peculiar manner and burnt in the fire ; a hole is made through these and they are strung together like beads and worn round the neck. Sometimes these necklaces are made so long that they are worn as a bandoleer. I recollect seeing the Matjolo warriors returning from their expedition of February 1895: they came to show themselves off to the Whites at Lourenço Marques, gloriously proud of having massacred defenceless women and children whom they had surprised in the early hours of the morning! People threw them pieces of silver which they converted into brandy! (1)

727 (1) The terrible malediction which rests on those who have killed an enemy
775 is well illustrated by the following story which the Rev. C. Maphophe told me of an
761 event that had taken place not long ago in the Shishongi country (Manyisa district). A man of the Ndzindzi family had killed a Ndjao during one of Gungunyana's expedi-

177 themselves in the big rug (ngubo, mpisi-mpisi), which they all buy
291 to sleep under at night. The end of the process of evolution will
513 certainly be that they will adopt exactly the same dress as their European masters : a complete suit for the men, frocks, hats and boots for the women ; as soon as the majority of them obtain enough money to buy these, they will do so, and seeing how particular most of them are as regards their external appearance, it may be safely anticipated that Bantu beauties will submit to the tyranny of the London or Paris fashions as readily as our European élégantes!

291 It is easy to see the evolution of dress in the Bantu tribe by comparing the illustration of the South African woman (a Sutho, I. p. 46) representing the first stage, those of the Thonga women (I. p. 179 and 195) representing the second, Camilla, depicting a third stage (p. 92), and the ordinary European frock forming the fourth (1).

As for men, I unfortunately possess no picture of the primitive *mbaya*. But the following stages are illustrated by the two Zulu boys (p. 95) by the habitué of the Nkuna Court (I. p. 435), and by Tobane (I. p. 4) and Muhlaba (I. p. 426).

II. *Ornaments.*

301 The taste for decoration, for ornament, is innate with the Black. Ages ago, before he took to fixing a flower in his hair, he used to tatoo himself. We have already described (I. p. 178) the various patterns of *tattooing* of men and women, and have pointed

177 (1) I must however mention a piece of information which was given to me by two trustworthy authorities, according to which Thongas of the Northern clans possessed in
286 former times a kind of primitive *textile industry*. The Rev. Calvin Maphophe, who belongs to the Hlengwe group, asserted that Natives of the Tshobane clan, near the Sabie river, knew how to weave threads of cotton in order to form a kind of cloth called shombe, and another man of the Bilen plain told me that this cloth was worn by women at a time when men were satisfied with the mbayi. This industry has long since disappeared ; European cloth probably killed it as soon as it became procurable. The presence of subspontaneous plants of cotton in various parts of the country is in favour of this assertion. Where and when did these ancient Thongas obtain the precious textile plant and who taught them to use it ? This is an interesting historical point which I am afraid will never be elucidated.

301 out that this custom probably had a social significance in former times, though at present it is practised as an adornment.

302 As regards *hair* (nsisi, mu-mi), women often cut it, men less

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Maputju women with "tingoya." *Photo P. Aubert.*

302 frequently. A man only cuts his hair when his wife dies, as a
[765] sign of mourning : it is a taboo (I. p. 146). In former times they never shaved their beards. People made fun of those who did so, saying : "Are you an Angolese?" (The Angolese, who are numerous in the neighbourhood of Lourenço-Marques,

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Ornaments, calabashes, pottery.

302 The use of ochre is, however, not restricted to nursing mothers
539 or magicians : it is the special province of young marriageable girls, wishing to attract attention : their brilliant skin shines like a
832 mirror, setting off to perfection the white of their eyes and the black of their hair, which is sometimes made flossy by means of antimony or ground charcoal. A quaint saying puts it thus :

> Shindzingeri pundjene ? -Banhwanyana tolan !...
> What says the pretty bird with the coral neck that sings in the grass ?
> It says : Girls, anoint yourselves with ochre ! (if you wish to be as beautiful as it is).

177 Another ornament, of ancient date, is the *bracelet*. There
301 are several kinds : 1) the big heavy copper rings, called *masindana*, which greatly resemble those of the lake-dwellers, having a similar rather oval shape with an opening for slipping them over the wrist ; 2) the modern bracelets, called *busenga*, which the Rongas first bought in Natal, and which the Ma-Lemba introduced in the Northern clans ; they are made of iron wire twined round a ring of hide ; 3) the *mafowa* are more ancient, being made of seeds strung on thongs of skin, and are wound several times round the leg. This is an ornament for either dance or war.
● 301 The mafowa are sometimes made of the silvery cocoons of Argema Mimosae, the Queen Moth, which are found on nkanye trees, emptied of the chrysalis which is inside and filled with grains of millet which rattle when dancing!

301 *Beads* (nkarara) are evidently of later date ; they were introduced
439 by the Whites in the XVIth century, when the Portuguese were already in regular communication with Delagoa Bay and trafficked with the Natives, exchanging glassware for gold and ivory. Glass fascinated the Blacks : its brightness and transparency pleased
539 them immensely. An old song echoes their simple transports of delight :

> E ! Bashabi ! Batatana ba shabile ; ba buya ni shintshirimana sha balungoooo !..
> Hi ! Here come the buyers ! Our fathers return with their purchases ; they bring back with them the beautiful glittering things which the Whites sell !...

301 "A few years ago an ordinary glass bottle was thought a wonder by the people in the interior," said Timoteo Mandlati to me.

(He was a Nkuna from Shiluvane.) It is not strange therefore 301
that they became enamoured of beads. They give them special 832
names, according to colour and size, and succeed in turning them to very good account. The chief ornament the women make, (beadwork is exclusively done by the women), is the *mugangu* (No. 2); used in love-making (gangisa) ; it is a kind of crown of blue beads with red chevrons, worn by girls when they wish to beautify themselves. Some are wide and some narrow ; the beads are strung on threads which are crossed and knotted as the work proceeds : no canvas foundation is used. The bead necklace 301
is called *shihekisana*. Bead bracelets on the wrist are *shibolisa*, and on the ankles *maluwada*. Beads are also used in making large and heavy belts (mugadzi), weighing one to two pounds, and very much appreciated as an ornament when dancing. In the same way calabashes (No. 5) are covered with beads, bags made of hide (No. 4), bottles and even baskets. This bead work calls for a 276
good deal of patience. One of the things which the Ronga most 301
dearly loves to have decorated with beads is his tobacco pouch, (ngulana, No. 3), which is for him not only a means of satisfying his passion for taking snuff, but also one of his most prized ornaments. I do not now refer to the carved ebony tobacco box, worn *en bandoulière*, but to the article consisting of eight or nine large seeds, hollowed out, in which is kept the powder which stimulates the brain. Each of these seeds (which come from another country) is closed with a small piece of reed ; when one is walking they rattle against each other, producing a most delightful sound! The first thing a man will say to a friend on 576
meeting him, will be : "Fole?" — "Tobacco?" and before 276
anything further is said, each will indulge in a pinch. The same act of politeness is essential before beginning any discussion. The Thonga does not smoke the calumet of peace, but uses for a like purpose the many receptacled tobacco pouch, decorated with beads, which hangs from the belt at his hip. He takes from it a pinch of snuff, which he offers to his opponent ; the latter takes another pinch and proceedings then commence under the happiest auspices. Hearts are not far from concord... when noses have already fraternised!

301 789 Beads are merely an ornament and have no ritual value, except the large white ones used by people possessed by the Ba-Ndjao spirits. (Part VI.)

B. HABITATION.

342 While there has been such a rapid change in Thonga customs regarding dress, — so rapid that in these last fifty years they have changed more in that respect than during the fifty preceding centuries —, in the field of architecture the tribe appears to have stood still ; their huts are built precisely as they were in ancient times. It is true that it is easier to put on a jacket and trousers than to alter the style of one's house : besides it must be admitted that the Thonga hut possesses several advantages. It is comparatively easy to construct, cool in the hot weather, perfectly watertight in the rainy season and is fairly ingeniously contrived.

That which is called *yindlu* (yin-tin) properly speaking, is more especially the *roof* of the hut (lwango, dji-ma) ; for it is the roof which is the most troublesome to make. A strange fact too, and one which appears paradoxical, is that, in the construction (ku yaka) of the house, they begin with the roof!

[341] 336 342 The Thonga architect — and every man is his own in that country — gathers together a few hundred straight sticks, one to one and a half inches in width and from three to ten feet in length. He digs a hole in the ground, a yard and a half in diameter and 16 inches deep, in which he arranges his sticks in a circle, points downwards, at the bottom of the hole, and supported in such a manner that they lie at an angle of 45 degrees with the ground. Any one of these sticks will thus be at about a right angle with the opposite one, and all together they form, as it were, a huge conical basket with its point in the hole. To fasten all the sticks together, he ties them to round hoops (something like cask hoops) made of bent branches. These hoops (balelo, dji-ma) are concentric, very small at the bottom, and getting gradually larger as the work progresses. Any spaces which remain between the sticks first arranged are filled up, one after the other, with

"You see! Stones also grow!" Another Native geologist, who 823
had heard the European story of creation, coming from the Coast, a country of sand and sand only, and visiting the Drakensberg Mountains near Shiluvane, was amazed by the enormous cliffs of the Mamotswiri and gave vent to the following reflection : "No wonder we have no stones in our sandy land. When God created the earth, he used them all to build these mountains!"

Fossils are rare in Thongaland, where sand covers almost the 136
whole country. There is however in the southern part of the 823
Maputju region an outcrop of cretaceous rock which belongs to the 777
Gault and which contains ammonites, Nautillus etc. Natives call them *nsongo stones* and are very much afraid of them. They say that "these stones with ribs" can walk. They bring bad luck (singita). Should a child pick up one of these fossils and bring it into the village, he will fall ill ; he must therefore undergo a special treatment.

Crystal greatly pleases the Natives. It is rare in South Africa. 135
When magicians can secure a white or a black crystal they generally 301
wear it round their necks together with the claws, or teeth, of wild animals, or with their little skin bags which they use as amulets. For this reason I once had the good fortune to be able to exchange a crystal I had brought from Switzerland for one of these charms!

The *earth* (misaba) is also a great and important thing. First 823
because it is identified with the people dwelling on it, with the clan. 695
Tiko, the land, means both the soil and the people. Further than 787
this, the earth is the chief (I. p. 382) ; hence many laws : e. g. the tusk of the elephant which fell on the earth when the beast was killed, belongs to the chief, etc. (p. 57). The most solemn oath is that which is taken with earth (ku funga u hahla hi misaba). Should a man be accused of stealing or of being a wizard, if he puts a little earth in his mouth, says *tsu*, and declares : "I do not know anything about it," those who care for his safety will look for a medicine-man to treat him : it is a *mondjo* (a magical method of divination. See Chapter III). The same thing is done when an oath has been taken by sucking a piece of iron.

A curious superstition regarding the earth is this : after moving 823
from one country to another, you should for some days mix with

787 Amongst the Ba-Ronga the ill-omen is not considered so serious.
82 Later on, when the child loses his first teeth, he must not
856 let them fall out hap-hazard anywhere. He must take the fallen tooth, go to the ash-heap, put his finger into the hole and say : "Kokwa, kokwa, ndji hwe hobe !" (Grandfather, grandfather, give me a grain of maize !) Then he throws the tooth over his shoulder on to the ashes and goes home without looking backward. Should he look backward, his grandfather (the spirit of the departed ?) would not give him a new tooth (1). This custom is no longer taboo and is disappearing.

856 When a younger brother cuts his teeth, they are considered
163 as pushing away or pulling out the teeth of the elder, as the younger brother comes into the world, as a rule, three years after the elder.

As regards *hair*, the first cutting is accompanied by the following
302 custom : the mother sprinkles some drops of her milk on the
836 forehead and on the occiput of the child ; then she cuts his hair and throws it away in the midst of thick grass. When she cuts her own hair, she always leaves a lock on both sides of the head for the amusement of the child, till he is able to walk.

853 Nursing women very often anoint themselves with ochre. This is said to be in order to prevent their husbands from having relations with them.

These rites are not considered as very important. But there are three others which are most punctiliously observed, and which divide the nursing period into three subperiods : the presentation to the moon, after three months, the tying of the cotton string, after one year, and the weaning ceremonies at the close of the period.

4) The presentation to the moon (ku yandla).

821 The appearance of the new moon is always received with cheers by the Ba-Ronga. The first person who sees it shouts :

(1) Comparative Ethnography : I remember quite well that, when I was a boy, we were told in Neuchâtel that we must not let a broken tooth get lost, lest it should be found by a dog and a dog's tooth would grow in its stead !

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with a heap of grass and the men say : " He is dead !," because a circumcised boy cannot fall and live. One of the shepherds goes in haste to a village of the neighbouring tribe and buys a fowl ; this is killed and its blood is sprinkled over the grass ; the boy who fell escapes when the women have gone home, but the next day, when they come back to the spot, they see the blood and are convinced that, in very truth, one of the circumcised dies when he falls!

Sometimes a little child is taken from the arms of its mother and brought to the place where the boys are sitting hidden during the dance. They kiss him and smile at him, because he is innocent; he may see what women are not allowed to contemplate!

III. *The last day.*

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The last day is marked by the greatest and most difficult trial. During the whole preceding night, the boys are not allowed to sleep. Sleep is the last enemy they must overcome. They stab the Elephant and repeat the formulae till the morning. Then all the bits of skin remaining from the circumcising are picked up by the Manyabe ; he burns them, and makes them into a powder with which he smears the mulagaru pole. All the masks and grass mats are thrown on to the roof of the shed and, at dawn, the troop of circumcised, surrounded by the shepherds and men, is directed towards a pool and made to run to it without looking backwards ; (separation from the sungi, from the seclusion period). If they were to look at what is taking place behind them, their eyes would be pierced, and they would be blind for ever! Fire is set to the whole establishment by some of the men, and all the filth and ignorance of childhood is burnt in this great conflagration. The boys are led into the water, wash away the white clay shouting : " I am a man," cut their hair (separation rite), anoint themselves with ochre, put on new clothing and are addressed by the father of the circumcision :

[302]

" You are no longer *shuburu*! Try now to behave like men. It would be unworthy of you to steal sweet potatoes in the fields as you used to do before. Now the Ngoma is closed and it is taboo

765 well as the obligation of using special spoons, refer only to the
783 diggers and the widows.
302 Other rites must be performed by the whole community.

First the *cutting of the hair*, which must be complete for the widows and the near relations. Men sometimes cut only one strand on each side, women cut from the forehead to the nape of the neck. The operation is performed either by the doctor or by anybody who is familiar with it, and the instrument used is either an iron razor or a bit of glass. They say this shaving is an act of respect for the dead, also a sign of sadness and a means of preventing the *mayiha*, the impression of the hair standing on end from fear of death. Should mourners forget to cut their hair, they might lose their senses, and become delirious (hahama).

765 Then they put on *malopa*, viz, pieces of dark blue cotton
783 cloth which have been used for a long time amongst the Ba-Ronga.
604 The first widow must have them before she enters the enclosure of the second vapour bath.

A third general rite is the *luma milomo*, the purification of the food of the deceased. This is not a medicinal operation, but it seems that, by this act, every relative removes from himself the danger which is in the contaminated food. The word *luma*, which we shall often find in the Thonga ritual, means originally to bite (like a dog) or to cause violent, internal pain (colic or pains of labour). But in the ritual terminology it means to accomplish certain rites in relation to some given food in order to remove the danger which is attached to it. The *milomo* are seeds of each kind of cereal which the deceased had in his storehouses. Some beans, grains of maize, kaffir corn, kaffir peas, etc., are cooked and poured into one of the baskets (lihlelo) of the deceased. The *ntukulu*, viz. the uterine nephew, the son of the sister of the deceased, is first called. It is he who must begin the rite and this is so important that, when people go to pay their mourning visit, they always take with them a girl or a boy who is a " ntukulu " of the one they mourn. The child stands before the pot, his feet together. The master of the mourning, (in this case, the first widow) kneels before him, takes a few drops from the pot, and some of the cooked food which remains at the bottom, and pours

765 anointed with the medicine. As regards adults, the operation of
783 *mogungo* is performed as follows ; the master of the mourning
516 passes his hand down from the knee to the toes. This rite[1] is evidently in connexion with the act of walking, which is thus purified, and with standing upright (yima), which means health and strength.

765 *Cutting the hair* is also a medicinal act amongst the Hlabis.
783 The physician takes a broken pot, pours into it water and a
302 purifying powder, washes the head of the deceased's wife with this preparation and cuts her hair with a razor. Everyone takes a little of the mixture and washes his own head, and they then shave each other. The hair is thrown away into the bush, not on the grave.

765 The Great Mourning is concluded by the *phunga*, the sprinkling,
783 corresponding to the Rongo *shuba*, which is performed exactly in the same way while the water is still boiling. The doctor sprinkles
177 a whole potful on the people ; then he pours fresh water into the
231 pot and sprinkles the doors, the back part of the kraals of the oxen and of the goats. —"How about the pigs ?" I asked Viguet. He laughed heartily! —"The pigs? They are nothing! They have come from the White people They are so new to the country that lately the Pedis killed them outside the villages and the men only ate their flesh!" The pig has no part in the Bantu ritual!

V. *Sexual rites of purification.*

765 This is a most curious and mysterious subject and, to understand
783 it thoroughly, it is necessary to penetrate deeply into the Bantu mind and to forget our own conceptions of conjugal life. I hope
834 none of my readers will be shocked by ceremonies which are evidently performed with the greatest earnestness and are a real aspiration toward purity, purity as it is conceived by a tribe still plunged in the dim notions of collective morality.

1 [among the Northern clans - Analyst]

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

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CHAPTER II

The evolution of a woman from Birth to Death

Essay of a Ronga girl on the subject.

124 In July 1897, the School Inspector gave to the big girls of the Swiss Mission school at Lourenço Marques the following subject for an examination in composition: "The life of a Ronga woman." This is the translation of one of the pupils' essays on the life of their country women:

"When a girl is born amongst the Ba-Ronga, people come and 846 congratulate the mother and say: "A ma buyeni mati," that is 301 to say: "Let the water come!" When the time is at hand when 834 she will come out of the hut, ochre is crushed for her and a calabash full of the fat of *nkuhlu* almond is prepared, and the two ingredients are mixed and smeared over her.

"Her curly hair is stretched out in corkscrew fashion, and ochre is put on it to transform it into a kind of rats' tails. (This is the operation called *hova ngoya*.) The mother also smears herself with ochre, and puts on her head a crown of small strings (shikupu) (1). Then, when the child lets her head fall on account of the weakness of her neck, a plaited string, which is just the right size for a necklace, is tied round her throat. 'Thus,' they say, 'her nape will be strengthened.'

854 "A small calabash with medicine is given her to drink; they also prepare for her a small pot of the medicine, and they say it

(1) I have heard this custom explained as follows: the mothers amuse the children by clashing their hands; the small strings dance about and make the babies laugh. This can only be true of infants already two or three months old.

643 301 them. But they were disappointed in their hope : Shiluvane kept both the ritlatla and the power and bequeathed them to his son, Muhlaba, as we shall see. Legends are current about the ritlatla. It is said to be able to move of its own will. "This piece of metal is indeed a wonderful thing," wrote a young Nkuna, to me "because when it is buried in the soil, as black people are in the habit of doing with their treasures, a piece of iron must be put inside it to prevent it from going away; if this precaution is not taken, the ritlatla may leave the place where it was and go somewhere else. In the space of one year, it may go as far as the Masetana spruit (about one mile)."

643 Another royal property of the Nkuna family was an *elephant's tusk*, which vanquished enemies had brought as a token of their submission.

643 In Nondwana, the old chief Papele who preceded Maphunga 302 and lived in the middle of the last century, wore a *kind of chignon* 787 or bun made by plaiting his hair, which was a sign of royalty (shifoko). But this custom has passed away. There was also *a long stick* which was kept exposed to the smoke of the royal fire in the sacred hut of *nyokwekulu*, which I shall describe presently, and which was called *ntjobo* and also *mhamba*, viz., offering; this was evidently of religious value to the clan, and was taken outside when the army assembled. It possessed the power of becoming invisible to enemies. Moreover this magical stick was very useful because it warned the clan when some danger was threatening. The ntjobo was then put into a fire; if it did not burn, this showed that the clan had nothing to fear from its enemies; if it burned, it meant that the clan would be attacked and defeated. Then another stick would be prepared and put into the fire with the hope that it would resist it.

643 We shall speak in Part VI of another sacred *mhamba* which most 778 of the Thonga clans possessed, made of the nails and hair of the deceased chiefs in the Tembe clan, and of the dried skin of their faces in the Shirindja clan. It was used as a means of propitiation in national calamities. In the Khosen country, the chief also possessed the *mhamba*. This was a mysterious object which the clan had always possessed, from time immemorial, from the beginning

714 heavily or stamped his feet on the ground, it sounded like the tread of an elephant.

714 This costume is a warm one, and the warrior carries a sort of 321 bone curry-comb, made of the rib of an ox, shaped and sharpened, 302 which he uses to scrape the perspiration from his face and body, when taking violent exercice or indulging in the dances descriptive of his prowess. Such is the native pocket-handkerchief!

714 The several component parts of the war-dress are kept in a little hut raised on poles, near the owner's dwelling, and are carefully looked after, being frequently dusted and exposed to the sun to preserve them from moths and weevils. A complete uniform is worth several pounds sterling!

713 *Arms* among the Ba-Ronga are of a very primitive kind, those 411 of most ancient date being doubtless the *club* (nhonga) and the *knobkerrie* (gungwe) (1) of which two specimens are given in the accompanying illustration (No. 4). The Native never journeys without his stick, using it to kill snakes, should any cross his path, and should fortune smile on him, to knock over any quail that may rise at his feet. In quarrels or in war time this *nhonga* can be a dangerous weapon. The stick with the fluted head comes, I am told, from Bilen, and it seems that this style is in great favour in Gaza. It may have a phallic significance.

But the most formidable weapon of the South African Black is the *assagai* (tlhari, fumo (No. 2), of which there are two kinds; the larger (likhalo) consisting of a sharp, pointed, double edged steel blade, fixed on to a stick with iron or brass wire, and the smaller (tindjombi) with a blade of the size of our arrow-head, fastened to the handle with strips of bark or of palm leaves. The former is for hand-to-hand combat, and the warrior never releases his hold of it, while the latter—of which three or four may be held in the hand when entering the fight—are thrown at the enemy from a distance (2). The length of the large assagai on the right of the illustration is as follows: Blade 14 inches; binding of iron

797 (1) These sticks were given to me as dentistry fees for the extraction of decayed
713 teeth!

(2) I once had an opportunity to observe the effects of the assagai. A young evangelist of our Mission was surprised on the railway line by some Zihlahla warriors

301 out that this custom probably had a social significance in former times, though at present it is practised as an adornment.

302 As regards *hair* (nsisi, mu-mi), women often cut it, men less

142

Maputju women with "tingoya." *Photo P. Aubert.*

302 frequently. A man only cuts his hair when his wife dies, as a
[765] sign of mourning : it is a taboo (I. p. 146). In former times they never shaved their beards. People made fun of those who did so, saying : "Are you an Angolese?" (The Angolese, who are numerous in the neighbourhood of Lourenço-Marques,

302 used to shave their beards). Young men sometimes let two or three of their curls grow on their forehead like horns! Others stretch out their curls and smear them with a gluey substance obtained from the nkanye tree. This is called *ku hoba misisi*.

302 As regards women, those who are nursing babies regularly
853 turn their hair into an ornament: the small curls are stretched out, smeared with fat and made to fall on the temples and on the occiput; they are then covered with ochre. This operation is called *ku hora misisi*, and the rats'tails thus produced are the *tingoya*; they are the characteristic ornament of women during the nursing period. Nursing women undoubtedly think the tingoya improve their appearance. "Look! She has *hora misisi*! How well it suits her!" people will say of a woman who has succeeded in altering her coiffure in this way. But this custom has also a ritual value (1).

Nursing women cover their whole body, their clothing, and their *ntehe* (I. p. 46) with *ochre*. The habit of anointing (tota) or smearing with ochre (tshumane) goes hand in hand with that of tingoya. This rather disgusting custom marks them as nursing, and is a protection (shisibelo) against the husband; so long as a woman covers herself with ochre, it is a sign that she will not
302 cohabit with him. They say also that ochre prevents the bad
855 smell resulting from childrens' unclean habits, and that it softens the ntehe and makes the baby grow (2). The skin of children is also covered with a coating of this pigment; some say it is done not so much with the object of beautifying the child as of hiding the dirt which the mothers are too lazy to remove! No wonder that, in these conditions, it has been found that this smearing with ochre fosters conjunctivitis and other diseases!

177 (1) The Ngoni taught the Northern Thongas another and more elaborate way of
302 curling the hair: the queens, wives of Gungunyana, transform their "thatch" into regular cylindrical chignons (shifoko), standing up like towers (I. p. 416). The Ba-Ronga have not adopted this custom, except, in some cases, the chiefs. (I. p. 386).

(2) It is very curious to observe that these two feminine modes of adornment, the tingoya and the ochre, have been adopted by the magicians, those who pretend to possess supernatural power in smelling out witches and treating possessed people (Part VI). They like to assume the appearance of women. People suffering from the Ba-Ndjao[1] possession especially use ochre. Their spirits order them to do so: they would torment their victims should the latter not obey.

1 [i.e., spirit--analyst]

302 The use of ochre is, however, not restricted to nursing mothers
538 or magicians : it is the special province of young marriageable
832 girls, wishing to attract attention : their brilliant skin shines like a mirror, setting off to perfection the white of their eyes and the black of their hair, which is sometimes made flossy by means of antimony or ground charcoal. A quaint saying puts it thus :

> Shindzingeri pundjene ? -Banhwanyana tolan !...
> What says the pretty bird with the coral neck that sings in the grass ?
> It says : Girls, anoint yourselves with ochre ! (if you wish to be as beautiful as it is).

177 Another ornament, of ancient date, is the *bracelet*. There
301 are several kinds : 1) the big heavy copper rings, called *masindana*, which greatly resemble those of the lake-dwellers, having a similar rather oval shape with an opening for slipping them over the wrist ; 2) the modern bracelets, called *busenga*, which the Rongas first bought in Natal, and which the Ma-Lemba introduced in the Northern clans ; they are made of iron wire twined round a ring of hide ; 3) the *mafowa* are more ancient, being made of seeds strung on thongs of skin, and are wound several times round the leg. This is an ornament for either dance or war.
301 The mafowa are sometimes made of the silvery cocoons of Argema Mimosae, the Queen Moth, which are found on nkanye trees, emptied of the chrysalis which is inside and filled with grains of millet which rattle when dancing!

301 *Beads* (nkarara) are evidently of later date ; they were introduced
439 by the Whites in the XVIth century, when the Portuguese were already in regular communication with Delagoa Bay and trafficked with the Natives, exchanging glassware for gold and ivory. Glass fascinated the Blacks : its brightness and transparency pleased
539 them immensely. An old song echoes their simple transports of delight :

> E ! Bashabi ! Batatana ba shabile ; ba buya ni shintshirimana sha balungoooo !..
> Hi ! Here come the buyers ! Our fathers return with their purchases ; they bring back with them the beautiful glittering things which the Whites sell !...

301 "A few years ago an ordinary glass bottle was thought a wonder by the people in the interior," said Timoteo Mandlati to me.

222 great care being taken to avoid crushing the small tender kernel,
252 the royal delicacy ! In times of famine the *mongo* is in great request, in spite of the trouble involved in obtaining it.

222 Another very valuable tree is the *nkuhlu* (mu-mi) (Trichilia
439 emetica I. p. 395) whose nuts are the *tihuhlu* (yin-tin) (1) the mafureira. This is a curious fruit, the nut itself being of a greenish black colour, bitter and very oily ; on this grows white pulp (bululu), covered with a beautiful skin of a bright orange, which, however, only covers about three quarters of the central black nut. The Natives pick this fruit in November and December, and stuff their cheeks with it ; the saliva softens the pulp, which melts gradually in the mouth, affording them a prolonged enjoyment of its exquisite flavour. One sees children, and also folks of mature age, with their cheeks puffed out as if they were badly swollen and throats contracted with the effort of sucking down the delicious pulp ; when nothing remains but the black nut which is called nkampfi, viz., the product of suction, it is carefully put aside and will be used for making vegetable fat ; or it will be sold to the Whites, who export them to Marseilles where, it appears, they are used for making really good oil. Let us hope these nuts, thus sucked clean by the Blacks, have never supplied any portion of our salad dressing ! But there is no occasion to be alarmed, as they are only used for making machine oil. The Blacks themselves do not use the tihuhlu oil for culinary purposes but for outward application only.

252 The *bululu* can also be made into an edible fat by the following
303 process : whole fruits of nkuhlu are first dried, then softened in water ; when quite soft, they are pressed between the fingers so as to separate the white pulp, which is then called *munyantsi*, from the black nuts (nkampfi). This munyantsi is cooked and the fat is skimmed off (wungula) with spoons as it melts and comes to the surface. This edible fat, as well as that used for smearing the body, is preserved either in calabashes or in sala shells (shikutja). The preparation of nkampfi fat takes place as

(1) A certain number of fruits instead of belonging to the dji-ma class, as is the rule, are incorporated with the yin-tin class, the tihuhlu, the tihlu (fruit of the muhlu tree), the tindjole (fruit of the ndjole), etc.

follows : the nuts are thoroughly dried (womisa), and slightly 252
pounded in a mortar so as to remove the thin peel which covers 303
them ; they are then winnowed, and ground into a kind of flour ; this flour is put into a pot with a little water and cooked ; the fat is then collected in a big shell of Achatina and kept for external use. The residue is called *bubindje*.

I do not mention all the other fruits, more or less succulent, 137
which serve the Natives for food. One must be terribly famished 222
to enjoy them. I may just specify the *pfilu* (dji-ma), Vangueria infausta, a kind of insipid medlar ; the *tjhopfa* (dji-ma), fruit of the *ntjhopfa* tree, which I could never muster courage enough to taste, and the *bungu* (dji-ma) sometimes dignified with the title of the Kafir orange. This latter is the fruit of one of the varieties of the india-rubber tree, which grows along the shores of Delagoa Bay. (Landolphia Kirkii.) In the Morakwen forest grow the ntjhole shrubs from which the *tintjole* berries are picked during the summer.

The *muhlu* or water tree bears a berry called *tihlu*, which has an agreeable taste. The *mphimbi* bears the *mahimbi*, a large round fruit similar in form to an apricot with a double stone. Both these fruits are used to prepare a drink, and we shall mention them when treating of Thonga drinks.

*

* *

There are a few taboos to mention in connection with trees. 782
It is considered dangerous to cut the trunk of any large tree. 824
Should you wish to make a mortar of a nkanye, first smear some of the bark with certain drugs and also burn them at the foot of the tree before cutting it down. Should you want to cut down a nkwenga or a mahogany-tree, nhlapfuta (Ro.), shene (Dj.), to make a canoe, the master of the forest must first offer a sacrifice to the spirits of his ancestors who have been buried there. If you omit this precaution, you will be unable to find again the tree you have chosen.

Thonga boys are so fond of games that they even try to imitate those of the Europeans. In the accompanying illustration, they are seen sitting in two rows throwing some projectiles along the ground. I wondered what game this was, and was informed that these boys, having seen Portuguese officials playing billiards at the camp, had attempted to do the same, and this was the result!

C. THE AGE OF PUBERTY

I. *Circumcision rites.*

1) Spread and origin of circumcision amongst the Thongas.

As he grows up, the Thonga boy leaves the flock of goats and is entrusted with the care of the big cattle, oxen and cows, when his father owns any. He becomes very proud, and tyrannises over his younger brothers; he calls himself their "hosi," their chief, and sends them to work for him; in Maputju, big boys went so far as to scorn water brought from the pool by women, and only to use water specially fetched by small boys. If they grow so important in their own eyes, the reason is that special rites are performed on them during this period, rites which are calculated to give them great self-confidence. Amongst these rites, some have a direct relation with the sexual life and some represent only the entrance upon manhood. Let us begin with a study of circumcision, then we will take the other puberty rites and the habit of *gangisa*.

In a great many Bantu tribes, the age of puberty is marked by ceremonies of initiation, often accompanied by circumcision. There is little doubt that circumcision was practised throughout the Thonga tribes in former times. It is still current with those Thongas who emigrated into the Transvaal, and this is not a custom borrowed from the Pedi clans, which have all preserved circumcision. Though the Thongas often receive initiation in Pedi schools, in the Spelonken, they possess their own schools

881 for the Nkunas near Leydsdorp. They have a special word for
304 the physical operation, *yimba*, (in Ronga *soka*) which is used together with *ngoma* (Sutho *goma*), the generic term for all the customs connected with it. (It must not be forgotten that the word *ngoma* is also used for other initiations, especially for the initiation of widows, as will be seen in Chap. II.)

881 Amongst the Ba-Ronga, circumcision was abandoned more
175 than a hundred years ago, before the arrival of Manukosi, and
304 they were called *Ba-butoya*, the cowards, by other Northern clans, who said they feared the sufferings of that cruel school. Mboza has seen some old Ronga men who had been circumcised probably at the begining of the XIXth Century. It is well known that somewhat later Chaka put a stop to the custom amongst the Zulus; it did not fit in with the new military system inaugurated by him. When the Ngoni general Manukosi invaded the plains of the Low Country, it is not surprising that circumcision disappeared in those clans also. The constant fighting which prevailed in those troubled times did not allow men to stay three consecutive months in a circumcision lodge. It was feared also that circumcised boys would be killed by the enemy, being unable to run away in case of an invasion. But old men in the Bilen country assert that the *Ngoma* is a very old custom amongst the Thongas, and that it has long been practised by all their clans.

881 Is it possible to ascertain its *true origin* ? My informants,
177 Viguet especially, were convinced that the Ngoma was brought
563 to the tribes of the Northern Transvaal by the *Ma-Lemba*, and it
304 is a historical fact that, as regards the Ba-Venda of that country, the rite was adopted quite recently under the influence of the Ma-Lemba. These Ma-Lemba are a very curious people, living amongst the Thongas and the Suthos of Zoutpansberg, just like the Jews amongst the European nations, without a chief, without national unity, but with characteristic customs to which they adhere from generation to generation... They resemble the Jews in the fact that they do not eat flesh unless all the blood has been first carefully drained away. They dread eating blood above all else, and they shave at each new moon. They brought with them

821 parents. Some may escape, but if they happen to be at hand on
881 the next occasion, they will be included by consent or by force.
304 Even an adult member of the tribe can be compelled to go through the initiation, if he is found in the country in an uncircumcised state. The *time of year* chosen for the opening of the school is a month during which the morning star appears, in winter. *Ngongomela*, Venus, is the herald of the day. She precedes the sun, so she must lead the boys to their new life, from darkness to the light! (Valdo)

643 One day all the candidates are gathered in the capital ; for this
881 school is the business of the chief, and has been arranged by the council of the headmen (tinduna) over which he presides ; he has the supervision of it, and will receive the fees from the initiated later on. Boys circumcised four years ago must also attend the whole school as shepherds (barisi, psitjiba), namely as servants of the men and watchers over the candidates. They have already partly built the lodge outside the village, in a remote place, not too far away however, because the women must bring food each day for all the inmates of the " yard of mysteries ".

881 After having slept in the capital, early in the morning, when Ngongomela rises in the East, the band of the uncircumcised *goes out* from the inhabited world to the wilderness, to the lodge. This is the first separation rite. The second is this : they find on the road a fire made of strongly scented wood ; when they smell the smoke, they must jump over it. This rite is called : Tlula ritsa, to jump over the firebrand.

533 Later on, when still at some distance from the newly built
881 lodge, they hear a great noise, a song accompanied by the beating of drums and blowing of antelope horns. They must not understand the meaning of the words which are sung by the host of shepherds and the men, as it would frighten them too much :

The little boy cries ! Bird of the winter !

881 Here they are halted. Eight of them are chosen and told to go forward. Each one is given an assagai, and they are pushed between the singers, who hold sticks and stand facing each other

1) The custom of the erotic dream (Tilorela).

881 When a young man has noticed for the first time an emissio
195 seminis, he is said to have become an adult (a kulile, a thombile)
751 to have "drunk the nkanye." The nkanye is the tree from which the bukanye is made. It is prepared for the great feast of the new year. *To drink the nkanye* is an euphemism to designate the entrance into a new phase of life, into the age of puberty. According to Mboza, the lad must go early in the morning to wash his body, and that is all. But Tobane says that, in the Mpfumo clan, the family doctor is called; in a broken pot, he roasts pieces of skin of all the beasts of the veldt, together with some half digested grass taken from the stomach of a goat (psanyi). The boy must eat a little of this medicine and rub all his joints with it. This will strengthen him so that, when he has relations with girls, he will not be overcome (gemiwa) by them. This rite, which is very similar to the rite of the broken pot performed for infants, is connected with the "gangisa," the sexual habits of young people which begin at the time of puberty, as we shall see later on.

881 At this time also, the boy begins to wear the very primitive
291 clothing called *shifado* (sha ku siba, the thing with which one
177 closes, see Annotatio I)[1]. In former times they wore only the *mbayi*,
789 a small cylindrical or conical object of woven palm leaves, which
832 was the national dress of the Thongas; the *shifado* seems to be of Zulu origin. It is very much valued as preventing contact with the earth, as a protection against ants and an aid to continence; the lads who do not wear it are blamed and accused of being *ba-nato*. The word *nato* means a magical medicine by means of which men of low morals throw men or women into a deep sleep during the night, enter the huts of other people and commit adultery with their wives.

2) The piercing of the ears (Ku tjunya, (Ro.), boshela. (Dj.).

881 This also takes place at this period. There are two ways of
304 performing it, either by an actual piercing of the lower lobe
177 with a thorn, or by cutting it with a knife. The first method

1 [See p. 516 in these categories or in 116 -- Analyst]

881 is the old Thonga custom, and has been preserved by the women
304 in its original form, at least amongst the Ba-Ronga ; they frequently
177 pass a ring through the small opening thus produced. The second was practised by the Zulu-Ngonis, and was adopted by the Thonga men in order to resemble their conquerors. The result is an ugly hole. This is not a law imposed by the chief ; it is however universally observed. When a lad does not pierce his ears, his comrades mock him, saying. " U toya ! " " You are a coward! We shall put a spoonful of porridge in this big ear of yours! " (Viz. It will hold food because it is not pierced!)

881 The operation is performed in the winter by a man who
304 knows how to do it. Before it is begun, the boy bites the *ndjao*,
824 the root of a kind of juncus which is considered the best means
833 of strengthening the virile force. The doctor introduces into the hole a small piece of reed ; he takes it out every day to wash the wound and puts it in again to keep the hole open. As long as the ear is not healed, the lad must eat his food without salt ; he must not go about in the kraals and partake of the porridge of other people, because this food might have been prepared by women having intercourse with their husbands (ba ku khila) and this would make him very ill (1). He must also keep away from girls. When he is healed, he takes away the piece of hard reed and replaces it by a pretty white object.

304 Some Thongas tatoo themselves, or used to do so formerly,
178 but this custom is disappearing and is now preserved only by women. We shall describe it in the chapter on the evolution of the woman, as well as the *hleta* custom, the pointing of the teeth.

It is probable that in former times the taboo character of these various ceremonies was more marked that now. At present they are merely a *shihila sha tiko*, a custom of the country.

(1) This alimentary taboo, as well as the interdiction of sexual relations, even of intercourse with married people, clearly shows that the piercing of the ears is a rite of passage. (p. 74).

881 home to her true mother. She also presents her with a pot of beer. A feast takes place on this occasion and the kunga rite is performed, just as for the circumcised boy on the day of his aggregation (page 93). Little presents will be brought by the girl to her adoptive mother who will distribute them to old women. If the initiated girl has been already bought by lobola, the mother goes with her to her future husband and says to him: "She is grown up." He will give her a present of £ 1., and the veil will be taken away. These last rites distinctly mean the aggregation of the girl to adult society, and all this khomba custom is a very good example of a passage rite, the passage being from the asexual to the sexual group.

881 178 The Pedi-Sutho clans of the Transvaal also practise this rite, which they call *khoba*. In addition they have the *bale*, the initiation school for girls, corresponding to the circumcision school of the boys. The Nkuna clan of the Thongas is said to have practised it also in former times, but the *bale* has entirely disappeared all through the Thonga tribe.

There are three other customs more or less related to nubility: tattooing, the pointing of the teeth and the milebe custom.

2) Tattooing (Tlhabela tinhlanga).

304 There have been different methods of tattooing amongst the Thongas. In former times, in the Northern clans, the Ba-Thonga used to disfigure themselves by making very big black pimples on the forehead, the nose, and the cheeks. Hence the name of *Knobneusen* which they received from the Boers in Spelonken. Even the men were tattooed, but they shewed only one line of pimples down the middle of the face, from the forehead to the chin. Women had, in addition, two horizontal lines on the forehead and three on each cheek. It was a custom of the primitive population and is still observed by the Ba-Chopi. The invaders of the XVth or XVIth century adopted it because they were mocked by their subjects, who said: "Flat noses are not

304 right!" When the Ba-Ngoni of the XIXth century came, they submitted themselves to the custom, not from fear of mockery, but to hide their Zulu nationality. Chaka had sent his impis to kill them and, as they were recognised by the absence of pimples, they began to tattoo themselves. When the danger was passed,

[142]

Phot. H.-A. Junod.
Tattooed women of the Nkuna clan.

they ceased to perform the operation. They began in their turn to mock the Thongas who had followed their example.

304 881 Amongst the Ba-Ronga it is not certain that the big black pimples ever existed. In former times men used to make two lines of small pimples on both sides of the body, extending from the nipple and from the shoulders downwards. Now the custom

304 881 is dying out ; it is practised only by women, undoubtedly in connection with nubility or with marriage. But the tattooing of the face has disappeared almost entirely. What remains is the tattooing of the shoulders and of the epigastric and hypogastric regions.

The operation is painful ; girls sometimes cry and must be forced to submit to it. The patterns are triangular. Four triangles are first drawn on the shoulders on both sides ; the upper triangles meeting with the lower ones at their apex, so as to leave a square place, not tattooed, in the middle of the back. This drawing is made with ochre ; the skin is caught up and lifted with a little iron hook all along the line and slightly cut with a razor All the incisions must be of the same size. The blood oozes out and is stopped by the ochre, which is profusely spread over the small wounds. Tattooing of the back is not very painful. It is more so on the anterior part of the body. These four triangles are also drawn under the breasts, leaving a square place of which the navel occupies the exact centre. But between the two upper triangles two others are introduced, forming a conical shaped pyramid whose point comes between the breasts.

Such is the ordinary arrangement of the tattoo pimples in Nondwane, but it varies considerably according to the clans, as the two adjoining plates clearly show. The two Nkuna women whom I photographed at Shiluvane in 1900, have only two lines of pimples, forming a right angle under their right breast. The Rev. Alex. Jaques has kindly sent me two other photographs of tatooed Tembe girls taken in August 1926 and Mrs. Jaques has drawn an enlarged figure of the marks which shows plainly the patterns adopted in that part of the country. I reproduce them in a second illustration. Here the four triangles are distinctly seen.

304 881 178 The freshly tattooed girl hides herself for a week, after which she shows herself to her boy (shigango), who will kill a fowl for her to congratulate her. He says : "It is pretty to tattoo yourself. Otherwise your belly would be like the belly of a fish, or of a white person!" The time of healing is considered as a disease (perhaps as a marginal period). It is taboo to put salt in the food during

1: Junod, M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

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881
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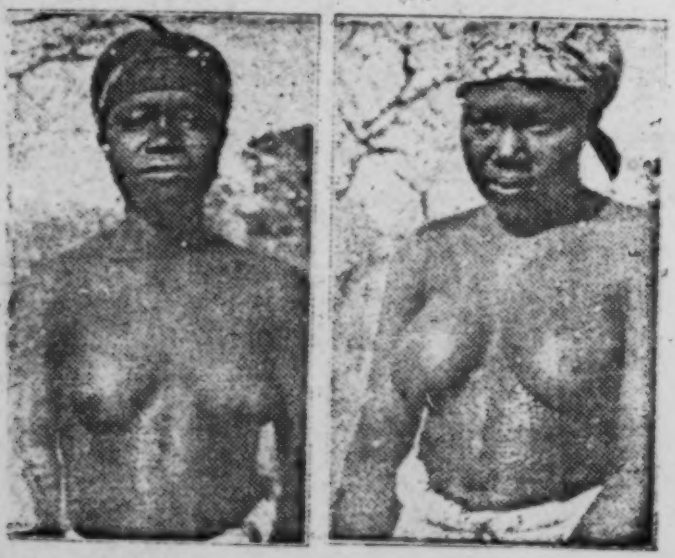
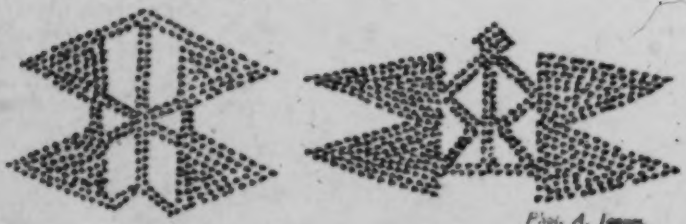
these days, or to go to the village to eat the food of other people (just as it is for boys who pierce their ears). Girls prepare themselves for the operation by eating a special food which softens

[142]





Phot. A. Junod.

Tattooed women of the Tembe clan.

the skin of the belly (nabyala khuri). All these rules tend to show that, in former times, tattooing had a deep meaning, a ritual value which has more or less disappeared. Mboza told me : "It is not a regular taboo (yila), but only a custom (shihila) of the country."

3) Pointing of the teeth (Ku hleta).

304 881 This custom is also dying out. It used to be incumbent on all the girls. Now many do not observe it. They have seen that teeth deformed in this way decay more quickly. The operation is performed on the incisors, and girls must keep their mouths closed for two or three days, not showing their teeth to anybody.

Near Rikatla, the hleta custom was still in force in the heathen villages in 1910. It gives the girls a kind of canine aspect.

4) The milebe custom.

304 881 832 171 This is very wide-spread all over South Africa. Though it has disappeared now amongst most of the Ronga clans, it is still practised in the Manyisa country, over the whole of Bilen and in the Northern clans, amongst the Zulus, the Pedi-Suthos, etc. It is probably the origin of the famous "Hottentot apron," which some ethnographers thought to be a congenital malformation, and which is merely the result of this custom (Annotatio 5)[1]. It is a very ugly habit, very immoral from our point of view, fixing the imagination of the girl on sexual relations, but amongst the Thongas it is upheld as being quite the right thing.

B. MARRIAGE AND CONJUGAL LIFE

1) Conditions of Marriage

581 832 In the primitive Bantu tribe every girl gets married, some, however, sooner than others. Suitors prefer pretty girls to ugly ones! But what is their standard of beauty ? The ideal is tall stature, strong limbs and well developed breasts. A proverb

1 [See p. 517 in these categories or in 116-Analyse]

727 "hot" and from special plates (mireko) and broken pots. They are
783 forbidden to drink water. Their food must be cold. The chief
834 kills oxen for them (yi ba lumisa hi tihomu); but if the meat
761 were hot it would make them swell internally "because they are hot themselves, they are defiled (ba na nsila)." If they ate hot food, the defilement would enter into them. "They are black (ntima). This black must be removed" (Mankhelu). During all this time sexual relations are absolutely forbidden to them.

727 They must not go home to their wives. In former times the
304 Ba-Ronga used to tatoo them with special marks from one eyebrow to the other. Dreadful medicines were introduced into the incisions and there remained pimples "which gave them the appearance of a buffulo when it frowns" (1).

789 After some days a medicine-man comes to purify them (ku ba
727 phutula), "to remove their black." There seem to be various
783 means of doing it, according to Mankhelu. Seeds of all kinds are put into a broken pot and roasted, together with drugs and *psanyi* of a goat. The slayers inhale the smoke which emanates from the pot. They put their hands into the mixture and rub their limbs with it (ba tilula) especially the joints.

789 Viguet describes this last act thus :—Pieces of medicinal roots
727 are put into the broken pot and roasted. They inhale the smoke.
782 Then cow's milk is poured into the pot on the embers and, when it boils, they have to put their fingers into it, one hand after the other, and pass them across their lips emitting the sacramental : "tsu" (which proves that it is a sacrifice to the gods, a religious act). Afterwards they say : "Phee! phee!" — viz.,
789 phephela phansi, (Dj. tikela hansi), "Go down, sink." This
727 means : "May you go deep into the earth, you, my enemy and
783 not come back to torment me." The last part of the treatment consists in rubbing the biceps, the legs, and the whole body with this milk. The medicinal embers are carefully collected, and reduced to a powder ; this will be put into small bags of skin called *tintebe* which the slayer will wear round his neck. They contain

578 (1) Hence an expression which is still in common use. When a Ronga wants to defy some one he says to him : "You are a coward! If you say you can tackle me come and kiss my forehead."

[Yes, the slayers returned from battle --Analyst]

726 On the other hand sexual relations, which are allowed in ordinary
829 life, become taboo. This period of fighting seems really to be
834 considered as a marginal period for the whole tribe.

It is so par excellence *for the warriors* and I think that many of the rites imposed upon them are to be explained in this way. As we saw, the period of margin is generally preceded by separation rites. (See page 74.) Some of these, which are very characteristic, are performed when the army starts: the leave-taking from the General with wild shouts, the custom of swallowing a piece of meat without touching it with the hands and taking an emetic afterwards, that of jumping over the ntjhopfa branch, the medicine of oblivion! etc. The triumphant return, the partaking of the meat of the oxen which have been taken, may be the aggregation ceremonies, viz., the acts by which the warriors return to their ordinary life.

726 Passage rites are still more distinct *in the case of the slayers*; but
829 their condition is worse, as it implies the idea of defilement following
834 upon murder and is attended with the danger proceeding from the *muru*.
782 They are "hot" (an expression which also applies to the tabooed woman
783 during her menses etc.); they are "black" (an epithet which also designates the grave-diggers, the bereaved mother, etc.). Hence a *seclusion* much more complete, a true period of margin with many alimentary and sexual (1) taboos. Possibly the incisions on the brow are an old kind of tatooing in connexion with this marginal period, similar to the inguinal incision of the widows (p. 201). The purification rites are of the same kind as those of the mourners, and particularly of the grave-diggers. The return to society, after their seclusion, is marked by rites of separation from the marginal period, which no doubt aim at getting rid of the defilement connected therewith. (Exposure of the *mizilo* outside the village in the bush.) Is it not striking to notice the correspondence between these rites in their peculiar sequence and those of the circumcision school, of mourning, of moving a village?

See, as a conclusion to Part III, Practical Conclusions, No. VI: "The New era and the Future of the South African Tribe."

834 (1) The sexual taboos are so severe that, after the Mocudi battle, one of the slayers
727 took great offence at a man who dared to touch his food, as the man was living in his home and had relations with his wife. The slayer was afraid that this contact might cause his own death or bring misfortune to his family.

831 —I mbolo ya shuburu.
881 —Penis est incircumcisi viri.

Banhwanyana ba ka Makwakwa ba kundja na ba hlanamile. N'yini?

Puellæ ex regione Makwakwa manibus apertis coeunt. Quid significant hæc verba?

—I mahlehlwa.

—Est semen mahlehwa.

(Hlehlwa is the seed of a creeper growing along the ground; this seed [517] is of the same size as a two shilling piece and possesses, in its central part, two hooks standing up.)

[Note 4 (page 88): these are the formulae:

Shana khololwane ma ri tiba le'ri onhaka milebe?

Do you know the bird that injures the labia minora?

—I mbolo ya shuburu.

It is the penis of an uncircumcised man.

Banhwanyana ba ka Makwakwa ba kundja na ba hlanamile. N'yini?

The girls from the region of Makwakwa have intercourse with open hands. What do these words mean?

—I mahlehlwa.

—Mahlehwa is the semen.

(Hlehlwa is the seed of a creeper growing along the ground; this seed [517] is of the same size as a two shilling piece and possesses, in its central part, two hooks standing up.)]

832 "Annotatio quinta (P. 98. 182). Externorum genitalium
836 minora labra verbo milebe (singul. nebe) designantur, quæ
304 puellæ adeo trahere solent ut ea usque ad quinque, decem,
881 etiam quindecim centimetra extendant. Quæ labra nonnunquam
171 parvis baculis metiuntur, eorum longitudine, apud comites suas, immo apud sponsos, gloriantes. Istis pravis moribus enim nihil aliud puellæ sequuntur nisi futuri mariti gratiam, cui apud Ba-Pedi, si sponsam suam labra non satis extendisse arbitratur, eam domum dimittere et boves suos reposcere licet. Puellæaululam pulmenti plenam parant quam operculo claudunt. Ad quas pueri vespere veniunt et stipem dant ut admittantur. In casae solo considunt et puellas cenantes spectant dum digitos in aululam demittunt. Puellæ quarum milebe quatuor digitos longa sunt, quatuor digitis usæ comedunt: bakulu, sunt, i.e. adultæ, et lætantur amatores. Aut tribus tantum, duobus aliquando utantur. Adolescentulæ cavis manibus cenant.

[Note 5 (pages 98 and 182). The labia minora of the outer genitals are called by the word milebe (singular nebe), and the girls are in the habit of pulling them so much that they extend from five or ten to as many as fifteen centimeters.

832 Sometimes the girls measure their labia with small sticks
836 and boast of their length to their companions and even to their
304 bridegrooms. The girls follow these perverse practices for
881 no other reason than for the sake of their future husband.
171 Among the Ba-Pedi the husband may, if he thinks that his bride has not sufficiently stretched her labia, send her home and demand his bulls back. The girls keep a pot full of food ready and cover it with a lid. In the evening the boys come to the girls and give them a small gift in order to be admitted. In the house they sit down on the floor and watch the girls eating from a pot with their fingers. The girls whose milebe are four digits long eat using four fingers: they are bakulu, that is, adult, and they enjoy their lovers. Or they use only three fingers and sometimes two. The young girls eat with the palms of their hands.]

765 "Annotatio sexta (P. 154). Seu quis per ætatem iam pro-
783 vectam imbecillior factus erit, sive qualibet de causa tam
833 impotens ut sperma emittere non possit (a nga kumi mati), ceteri viri quid fiat sciscitabuntur. Quod si utique parum procedit, tota inhibetur cærimonia. Qui vero se invicem eodem ritu miscere debebant, iis ritum conficere non fas est. Ille jejunio, per quinque dies, prout res postulat, artissime utetur, cui medicinæ ad rem accommodatæ exquirentur.

[Note 6 (page 154). If someone should have become feeble because of advanced age, or if for some reason he should be so impotent that he cannot emit sperms (a nga kumi mati), other men ask what should be done. For if it proceeds quite insufficiently, the whole ceremony is held up. And those who should have had intercourse in turn in the same ritual fashion are not permitted to complete the rite. He [the impotent man] has to fast very strictly for five days as the situation requires and the remedies appropriate to the situation will be sought.]

843 "Annotatio septima (P. 154). Nocens maritus uxorque sui
834 purgandi causâ alium ritum peragent. Uxor mariti suaque
841 pudenda veste intima et inquinatissima tergebit, quam postea comburet.

Ambo, ad ignem accedentes, caput manusque calefacient. Inde cinerem collectum mulier adipe miscet, quo mariti artus illinit, digitis bracchiis cruribusque tractis, quod 'lula' dicitur. Postea, noctibus duabus sequentibus, coibunt. Si maritus, non cum uxore sua, sed cum puella quadam ex alio vico, stupri consuetudinem junxerit, huic fossorium donabitur, ut ritum 'lula' perfectum veniat.

[Note 7 (page 154). If the husband and the wife are guilty of an offense, they perform another rite for the sake of purging themselves. The wife will cover her husband's and

The soil of Spelonken is of a similar nature and very well watered. So the Thongas, who settled in Zoutpansberg, found there a soil which was, in certain respects, more favourable to agriculture than their sandy dunes or their hundjusi on the Coast. 134

Such is Mother Earth for the Thongas. They call it *misaba*, the plural form of nsaba, grains of sand. This word plainly shows that they come from sandy regions. For them the earth is a collection of grains of sand.

II. *Native System of Land Tenure.*

The Native population, taken as a whole, is a very sparse one. Let us consider the Ronga territory, for instance: 100,000 in a territory which may be estimated at 5000 square miles ; this gives a population of only 20 per square mile. The country is, however, very unequally peopled. Natives will only settle in spots where water is found, and, the sand dunes to which I have previously referred being exceedingly dry, they mainly inhabit the slopes of the hills and the immediate neighbourhood of the marshes already described. 162 311 361

To confine myself, amongst the Rongas, to the region in which I have principally travelled, that is to say the neighbourhood of Rikatla, the villages of Nondwane, which extend along a somewhat narrow strip (800 yards wide by 5 miles in length), stretching from the border of Mabota as far as Morakwen, contained in 1880 a population which I should estimate at about 1100 (1). This gives over 350 inhabitants to the square mile. Taking everything therefore into consideration, it may be confidently asserted that the country can easily support its population ; in fact it could support one three or four times as large.

It is important to bear all these circumstances in mind in order to be able properly to appreciate the Ba-Ronga laws relating to landed property. 423

(1) This population has very much diminished since the Ronga Portuguese war in 1894.

516 the mortar, is a very healthy one and gives the Thonga women a straight and slender figure. In the tribes where the millet is mostly ground between stones, the women who do this work kneeling are shorter and stouter.

462 511 312 Before putting the mealies on the fire, the women go down to the village well, their round pitchers on their heads, to fetch the water they need. In the Ronga country these wells are simple holes dug in the sand, in the centre of the hollows (1). Wells are generally surrounded by thorny branches so as to prevent the cattle from coming to drink and fouling the water. It must be observed that it is not a spring which feeds the well; it is the underground layer of water which has been reached, and which always maintains the same level except in times of drought.

[415]

Phot. A. de Mauran.

Shilovane girls returning from the well.

462 511 372 252 The sun goes down on the horizon. The long shadows of the trees round the village lengthen on the square. Through the leaves, a few rays still reach the fireplaces and traverse the smoke which rises peacefully from the various kitchens. Between broken pots, or between the pieces of termitine clay which constitute the hearth on which the pots rest, the women place some pieces of dead wood; when these burn away in the centre, they push them further under the pot where the flour is cooking (ba hlanganyeta ndjilo). Evening has come. The men have arrived. With a large spoon (nkombe) the lady of the house

(1) In the Transvaal, where there are rivers, water is taken from them, or from wells dug near the spruit into which the water leaks through the soil, being more or less filtered by this process.

462 Many other home duties may oblige the woman to leave the
511 fields at noon ; her head still laden with her basket, she may
356 go to the swamps, near by, and dig out a store of black clay
317 (bompfi). She comes back, mixes the clay with the fresh dung which she has taken from the oxen kraal, and, spreading this mixture with her hands, smears the floor of the hut. This work is called *sindja* (Ro) or *kopola* (Dj.). Dust and vermin will at once disappear under this plaster of black earth, which will dry in a few hours time. Woe to the woman who has not put enough dung in this novel kind of cement! The floor will crack. The clay will shrivel and, when people walk on it, it will crumble into dust! The work will have to be done all over again two or three days later. But if the clay is of good quality, it will harden and last at least a week, the more so as neither wooden shoes nor nailed boots will spoil it.

462 Another woman will go with her primitive axe in search of
511 dead wood. She makes a bundle which she ties with grasses,
313 strengthening these grasses by entwining them with small
284 twigs (1). On returning to the village, she throws her burden on to the ground, before the door of her hut, with the exclamation : "Hu!"

462 Others go to their storehouses, the small huts on poles, where
511 mealies, monkey nuts in their husks, millet and sorghum are kept.
343 They take what they need from these stores (tshaha) by lifting up
252 the roof of the little hut, come back and empty the mealies into the
516 mortar, whilst a friend rubs off the grains from the ears of millet or shells the monkey nuts. Two or three women seize their pestles and begin to pound, in measured time, the bottom of their mortars : Gu-gu-gu-gu. Quite a long way off, on the other side of the copse, this pestle song can be heard, resembling the noise of the flails when corn is threshed in the barn. And the busy women stream with perspiration! This method of crushing the mealies in an erect position, by a vigorous up and down movement of the pestle in

284 (1) Men, when they fasten a bundle with a string, make a knot (ba fundju) whilst
313 woman twist it with a little stick (sulela hi linhi) ; when a woman ties a knot, the two ends of the string will be at right angles to the string, whilst when a man makes it, the ends will be parallel with it. (Mbeza).

241 (Dj.), in the bush which has never yet been cultivated, or has
221 been lying fallow for a long time, is very hard work indeed!
313 Beginning in the early morning the woman cuts down the small trees with her axe (khaula, dji-ma); if the stems are too large she lights a fire at their base and leaves them to burn until they fall. Natives have not the slightest idea of the value of trees, if

Tilling the fields near Makulane (Maputju country). *Phot. D. Lanoir.*

these trees do not bear edible fruit, and destroy whole forests without any compunction. As previously mentioned, the labourer spares only the nkanye, mphimbi, nkuhlu, etc., and sometimes the mimosa parasol (gowane, Albizzia fastigiata) which provides a beneficial shade for the maize. Then she breaks the soil with her hoe and piles up in heaps the weeds (bibi, dji-ma) and bushes which she has uprooted, leaving them to dry before burning them.
[538] This is a long job and requires great patience. The old adage says very truly:

> U nga bone bibi u ku adji rimele. (Don't waste your time in looking at your heaps of rubbish, and fancying that your work is done!)

532 I do not believe any foreign influence was exercised in the
322 conception of the idea. His group is absolutely original, and, as such, shows us to what lengths the sculptural talent of the Ba-Ronga can go. This group is now in the Neuchâtel Museum.

313 While statuettes are the most elaborate products of Native
532 sculpture, *canoes* (shene (Dj.) are the largest. I have already
322 mentioned the taboos connected with the cutting of the mahogany and nkwenga trees when used for this purpose (p. 19). Other trees, the mpfubu and the muhlu, can be cut without these precautions being taken.

IV. *Metallurgy.*

172 When and how did iron reach the Ba-Ronga ? Probably we
412 shall never be able to ascertain. Tradition has it that the primitive
316 inhabitants of Nondwane, the Honwana, who cooked elephants in order to tear them in pieces, had no iron implements. Some authorities tell us that the hoe in use in olden times was of an exceedingly hard wood, wrenched I know not how from a species of teak tree called *ntjhiba*. The Natives of these parts must have passed directly from the age of wood to that of iron. There was certainly a stone age, comparable to that of the lake dwellers, in Cape Colony, where a great quantity of silex and of polished stones have been found. I never heard of any such implements having been used by the Thongas, nor found within their territory. As regards the bronze age, they have known the use of copper for a long time, but it cannot be proved that they knew it before iron.

177 Iron and other metals seem to have been first introduced in
439 Delagoa Bay by the "Godji" traders and whale fishers, of whom
316 I shall shortly speak ; they are the first White visitors whom the Natives now remember. The Ba-Ronga used to exchange fowls and other domestic animals for hoes, brass bracelets, and copper brought by the strangers, and they had found out how to make copper wire by forging (fula) the pieces bought from the "Godji."

than collecting mafureira or wax, or tapping trees for rubber (1). 167

Moreover the fashion of going to the *Transvaal mines*, to earn money, has become so universal that a Thonga would think he had in some sort failed if he had not made a stay in town (shilungu). There, in Johannesburg, they earn £ 3 in the mines, or £ 4—£ 5 monthly as kitchen boys ; so they despise the old primitive trading expeditions which brought less money and were attended with more danger. 439

These new economic conditions not only discourage Natives from trading on their own account, reducing them more and more to the condition of mere hired labourers, but are rapidly destroying their picturesque and interesting industry. For a few shillings they can buy European utensils. Their attractively carved spoons are replaced by ugly tin ones ; their wooden tumblers by less artistic enamelled ones, their primitive plates by European ware decorated in doubtful taste. Instead of the piece of reed which they wore in their ears as a snuff box, they now buy brass cartridges, and the Thonga beauties, discarding the *tihuhlu* fat, now anoint themselves with a scented oil imported from Europe. There may be certain advantages in these changes, but the picturesqueness of Bantu life promptly disappears, together with the incentive to develop their Native arts and crafts! 177 439

E. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ON NATIVE INDUSTRY.

It is a strange destiny, that of these African races amongst whom the civilisation of the XIXth century has appeared, effecting the most radical changes in the minds and manners of people who, for centuries, perhaps for tens of centuries, have remained in the same primitive condition, marking time, so to speak, on the same spot, or, at most, 178

(1) There are at least two species of shrubs whose sap, when hardened, produces excellent rubber. These are fairly wide-spread and M. Dewèvre, a Belgian botanist, who has made a special study of rubber plants, and to whom I sent leaves and fruits of the trees, has classified them amongst the Landolphia. One is said to be a Landolphia Petersiana, and the other a variety of the Landolphia Kirki (Dyer) called by others Landolphia Monteiroi. Natives make an incision in the bark of the tree, and a milky sap exudes, which soon thickens and the somewhat sticky filaments are then wound 137 314

178 progressing almost imperceptibly. The transformation would seem to be as rapid as the previous immobility was fixed.

Let us try to discover the causes which may account for this extraordinary stagnation.

176 All are agreed in bearing witness to the fact that the state of civilisation
178 in which Europeans found the Bantu tribes of South Africa is of an extremely ancient date. It is true that we have but little historical data to go upon as regards the development of these people, but, nevertheless, it seems to me highly probable that the shape of their ngula, their hwama, their shirundju, their pillows, the construction of their huts, dates from a very remote antiquity, and has been handed down unchanged from generation to generation. How are we to account for this lack of development, whilst the Indo-European races, starting probably from similar primitive conditions, have advanced to so high a degree of civilisation as that of the Greeks and Romans, and ultimately to that of modern times?

The reply given by many casual observers to this question is that *the Bantu races are incapable of progress.* They are condemned, by reason of their mental and spiritual constitution, to vegetate in perpetual barbarism or to make themselves ridiculous by a servile imitation of the superior races. This view is not justified by the facts of the case. We recognise a relative mental inferiority in the Thongas, as in their congeners the Bantus, but their minds, nevertheless, possess in a more or less rudimentary state, all those faculties of which we are wont to boast. During the several years I have passed in close contact with these intellects, supposedly so limited, I have been more often struck with the points of analogy between the Africans and ourselves than by the differences which separate us. Besides, it is an error to assert that they have not progressed. Their inventive genius is fully proved by the various ways in which the several tribes have taken advantage of the materials with which Nature has supplied them. The Ba-Ronga do not make their baskets in the same way as the Zulus, or the Ba-Sutho. Again, in many separate instances, we can note a distinct forward movement in their industry; the arrival of glass beads,

137 [illegible] small sticks. A good yield of rubber could undoubtedly be obtained in this country
314 if the trees were cultivated and tapped in an intelligent manner.

(With regard to the name of the rubber tree, compare *Delagoa Bay, its Natives and Natural History*, London, Philip and Son, 1891, written by Mrs Montseio, an English-woman who spent several years in Lourenço Marques and published interesting observations on the country. Without claiming any special scientific accuracy, this volume affords much interesting information.)

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316 Later on wrecked boats provided Native smiths with iron to make
325 hoes, axes, etc. In certain villages there were regular forges,
412 (Matlharin, near Mbengelen Island, Matjolo etc.). The hoes
436 were in the well-known form of an ace of spades and were fixed into a wooden handle, as are also the axes, and battle axes (I. p. 453). But the principal supply of iron came from the Transvaal Mountains, especially from the Northern Zoutpansberg, where the Bveshas have practised the art of mining iron ore for an unknown period. These Sutho hoes have played a great part in the history of the Thonga tribe, having been extensively used as currency for lobolo purposes.

325 These Bveshas — the word is said to be a Thonga corruption of Venda — built their furnaces in ant-hills, as shown in the accompanying illustration supplied by M. H. Gros, near Iron Mountain, East of the Speionken district. They excavated three holes under the furnace, and blew into them by means of bellows made of a skin, the air being expelled through an antelope horn. The ore, broken in small pieces and mixed with charcoal, was smelted, crushed, smelted a second time, crushed again and made into hoes and axes, etc. Who had taught the Vendas this art? Did they learn it from the Ma-Lemba, that curious tribe, half Semitic in its customs, which invaded the Northern Transvaal during the XVIIIth century? Nobody knows for certain. I am under the impression that this art is older than that, as the Lebombo Natives, who invaded the Nondwane in the XVIth century, seem to have possessed iron weapons. The origin of iron and the date of its introduction into South Africa is still a mystery.

326 Among the ornaments illustrated will be found a very pretty belt (No. 1).[1] It is the work of a young man named Philemon, living in the outskirts of Lourenço Marques, who employed his leisure moments in making objects of this description with twisted wires of iron, brass and copper, bent in festoons and [197] fastened with small tongues of metal. European influence is doubtless very marked in these belts, but still they possess a certain cachet of their own. Amongst the Zulus as in our tribe, large cups of various descriptions, including egg-cups, are

[1] [p. 101 -- Analyst]

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511 fields at noon; her head still laden with her basket, she may
356 go to the swamps, near by, and dig out a store of black clay
317 (bompfi). She comes back, mixes the clay with the fresh dung which she has taken from the oxen kraal, and, spreading this mixture with her hands, smears the floor of the hut. This work is called *sindja* (Ro) or *kopola* (Dj.). Dust and vermin will at once disappear under this plaster of black earth, which will dry in a few hours time. Woe to the woman who has not put enough dung in this novel kind of cement! The floor will crack. The clay will shrivel and, when people walk on it, it will crumble into dust! The work will have to be done all over again two or three days later. But if the clay is of good quality, it will harden and last at least a week, the more so as neither wooden shoes nor nailed boots will spoil it.

462 Another woman will go with her primitive axe in search of
511 dead wood. She makes a bundle which she ties with grasses,
313 strengthening these grasses by entwining them with small
284 twigs (1). On returning to the village, she throws her burden on to the ground, before the door of her hut, with the exclamation: "Hu!"

462 Others go to their storehouses, the small huts on poles, where
511 mealies, monkey nuts in their husks, millet and sorghum are kept.
343 They take what they need from these stores (tshaha) by lifting up
252 the roof of the little hut, come back and empty the mealies into the
516 mortar, whilst a friend rubs off the grains from the ears of millet or shells the monkey nuts. Two or three women seize their pestles and begin to pound, in measured time, the bottom of their mortars: Gu-gu-gu-gu. Quite a long way off, on the other side of the copse, this pestle song can be heard, resembling the noise of the flails when corn is threshed in the barn. And the busy women stream with perspiration! This method of crushing the mealies in an erect position, by a vigorous up and down movement of the pestle in

284 (1) Men, when they fasten a bundle with a string, make a knot (ba fundju) whilst
313 women twist it with a little stick (sulela hi linhi); when a woman ties a knot, the two ends of the string will be at right angles to the string, whilst when a man makes it, the ends will be parallel with it. (Mboza).

the male at once starts again from the top; thus the friction continues without an interval. The motion widens the notch in the female to such an extent that the male penetrates and begins to burn it : the ashes find their way out by the lateral notch ; a little dry grass has been placed there and soon begins to smoulder. An expert obtains fire after six or seven consecutive frictions, especially when using bulolo. 372

Embers are kept burning as far as possible the whole night in the fire-place. Should they however have been allowed to go out, the mistress of the kitchen will send her daughter to the neighbouring hut or village to fetch a glowing cinder. This is called *ku woka* (1). The ember will be carefully carried in a sala shell or occasionally in a big snail shell. There is a characteristic rule to be observed in the woka operation. It must generally always be performed by the same person. If two women go to fetch an ember the same day from two different villages, the first must spit upon the ember of the second and extinguish it, because it is a taboo to have in the same village two fires obtained from two different sources. The act of spitting on one of the embers will "remove misfortune (susa khombo)."

Salt, also an object of primary necessity in culinary art, has always been known to the Thongas, as far back as can be remembered ; the name *munyu* (mu-mi) is a genuine Bantu word. Natives can procure it in three different ways : by gathering dried salt on the lagoons near the sea (wolela sole), and in the pans (salt pans) on the mountains (Zoutpansberg), or, when salt is not deposited on the soil, they take salted earth, put it into a conical basket and slowly pour water upon it : this percolates through into a pot, carrying the salt with it, and the solution thus obtained is evaporated. See the adjoining reproduction of a photograph, taken in the extreme North East of the Transvaal, by the Rev. P. Rosset. A third way of obtaining salt is from a certain Composita plant which is wide-spread in the plains of the Low Country ; it is burnt and its ashes washed in order to extract the 263 317 258

(1) *Woka*, from the same root as *wora*, to warm oneself at the fire and *wosha*, to roast meat.

263 small amount of salt it contains! This is a long process attended
317 with very unsatisfactorily results. During the Anglo-Boer war,
258 Natives round Leydsdorp reverted to it as all the stores were closed and no salt was procurable.

Salt manufacture, Northern Transvaal. *Phot. P. Rossat.*

Nowadays Native manufacture of salt has entirely ceased. The beautiful glistening white article has advantageously replaced the greyish, blackish mixture of former times.

II. *Food.*

252 It is not an exaggeration to speak of a culinary art amongst
581 the Thongas. They give great attention to cooking. Of a woman who knows how to cook well, it is said: "Awa hisa" "she burns;" not that she lets the sauce burn, but this expression corresponds to the French "cordon bleu." A girl who "hisa" will have more chance of being "lobola" than another.

252 This importance given to cooking explains the great richness of
192 the culinary vocabulary. Every variety of dish or of culinary process has its particular name, and to master all these terms

714 heavily or stamped his feet on the ground, it sounded like the tread of an elephant.

714 This costume is a warm one, and the warrior carries a sort of
321 bone curry-comb, made of the rib of an ox, shaped and sharpened,
302 which he uses to scrape the perspiration from his face and body, when taking violent exercice or indulging in the dances descriptive of his prowess. Such is the native pocket-handkerchief!

714 The several component parts of the war-dress are kept in a little hut raised on poles, near the owner's dwelling, and are carefully looked after, being frequently dusted and exposed to the sun to preserve them from moths and weevils. A complete uniform is worth several pounds sterling!

713 *Arms* among the Ba-Ronga are of a very primitive kind, those
411 of most ancient date being doubtless the *club* (nhonga) and the *knobkerrie* (gungwe) (1) of which two specimens are given in the accompanying illustration (No. 4). The Native never journeys without his stick, using it to kill snakes, should any cross his path, and should fortune smile on him, to knock over any quail that may rise at his feet. In quarrels or in war time this *nhonga* can be a dangerous weapon. The stick with the fluted head comes, I am told, from Bilen, and it seems that this style is in great favour in Gaza. It may have a phallic significance.

But the most formidable weapon of the South African Black is the *assagai* (tlhari, fumo (No. 2), of which there are two kinds ; the larger (likhalo) consisting of a sharp, pointed, double edged steel blade, fixed on to a stick with iron or brass wire, and the smaller (tindjombi) with a blade of the size of our arrow-head, fastened to the handle with strips of bark or of palm leaves. The former is for hand-to-hand combat, and the warrior never releases his hold of it, while the latter—of which three or four may be held in the hand when entering the fight—are thrown at the enemy from a distance (2). The length of the large assagai on the right of the illustration is as follows : Blade 14 inches ; binding of iron

797 (1) These sticks were given to me as dentistry fees for the extraction of decayed
713 teeth !

(2) I once had an opportunity to observe the effects of the assagai. A young evangelist of our Mission was surprised on the railway line by some Zihlahla warriors

Bangela (making) for the *bunana*, a sort of hammock, made 285
of plaited milala which is hung to the branches of the trees and 513
sometimes in summer used for sleeping in, to escape the mosquitoes which swarm inside the huts.

Runga (sewing) for the boats (byatsho, dji-ma). The ancient 285
Native boats built before the appearance of nails, hammers and 501
saws, were made of pieces of wood securely tied together. Some 322
of these antiquated craft are still to be seen on the Maputju river.

On the rivers up country, boats are frequently made of a large piece of curved bark, bent on both sides, which will hold two or three persons. I crossed the great Letaba in a boat of this description. Such boats are also used for storing water. Where mimale branches (or nervules) are procurable, they are tied together so as to form a raft called *shikhakhafu*. These are used on the Nkomati River, and on the lakes in Ronga territory. Big rafts made of trunks of trees fastened together, and called *magudhlwana*, were used in former times on the sea, when going to meet the White men, the Ba-Godji. (See later.) They are now no longer used and there is scarcely one to be found. In the [177] neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques the Natives now build their boats on the European model. The fishermen cut down forked branches, which serve as ribs, to which they nail planks. They are wonderfully clever at this work ; one man, Sam Matlombe, nicknamed the "King of the Bay," was particularly expert at it.

The sewn boats of olden times might well be included under the heading of basket-ware. Those of to-day belong definitely to another branch of industry, and will afford us a natural point of transition from basket work to wooden articles.

III. *Wood-carving.*

It is the *nkuhla*, mafureira tree, Trichilia emetica, as we have 322
already seen, that is used by the Natives of these parts for their 531
wood-carving. If the name of this tree is very hard to pronounce, its wood is, to an equal degree, soft and possesses the great

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Thonga carvings.

(One seventh of the natural size.)

advantage of not easily splitting or cracking when being dried. If Nature had not bestowed on the Thongas this excellent tree, who knows if they would have ever thought of executing the works of art which are depicted in the accompanying illustration!

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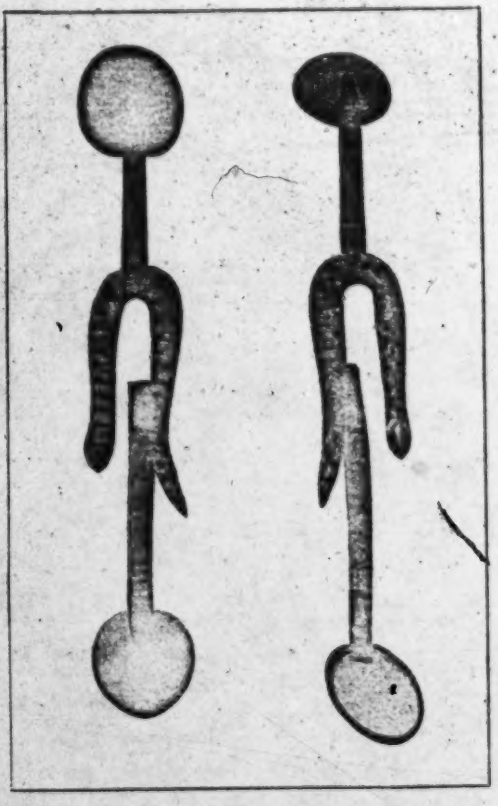
However before thinking of art, they began by cutting, or fashioning, with their small knives, articles of every day use: *spoons* (nkombe, mu mi) for instance, (see illustrations of carvings, No. 1), made in several sizes; the big one is used for serving out the potful of maize amongst the rightful claimants, and the small one for conveying food to the mouth when the hands are ritually soiled (I. p. 193). One often finds really well carved spoons. I give drawings of two which are particularly interesting; the first shows a sort of spiral, or catherine-wheel decoration at the top of the handle (No. 4); the other, brought by Dr. Audeoud from the Maputju country, has a carved snake as an ornamental motive. Spoons are all ornamented, even the plainest, with designs in black, burnt into the wood with a red-hot iron. For beer, ladles are used, made of a single piece of wood; these are generally decorated with large black triangles (No. 2). In Inhambane and Quelimane, the Natives make them of cocoa nut



Carved spoon from Maputju country.

shells, on which they carve curious geometrical figures (No. 5). 322
Goblets (ntcheko, mu-mi) are generally made with a handle. 531
(No. 6). 415

In the accompanying plate, (p. 131), two spoons are seen hanging to a *chain* made of links carved from nkuhlu wood. This is a wonderful product of Native art. These chains are often met with, especially in the Northern clans, some with links of six inches in length, the whole attaining to a length of many yards. The one here shown is six feet long, with links of only three inches. The special point to be noted in this "objet d'art" is that it has been carved from a single piece of wood and the artist had to make no mistake from the very beginning; a single slip of the knife would have broken the whole chain and made it useless. European joiners told me they doubted whether an ordinary workman would be able to carve such a chain. I was told that these spoon-chains were used by two individuals who wished to form an alliance; they passed the chain over their shoulders and, so united, ate from the same plate. This, however, is mere play and has no ritual value.

Between the two spoons, a kind of *bowl* is seen, almost perfectly round and prettily decorated. It was used by a man who had been possessed, and who washed his face in it every day to cool his head and appease the spirits. Thongas also carve large dishes, sometimes prettily decorated, though not so attractive as those of the Ba-Rotse of the Zambezi. I possess one of two feet in length by 10 inches in width. These are used for serving meat.

I must not forget the *mortars* (tshuri, dji-ma) usually made of mahogany, or of nkanye, and the pestles (musi, mu-mi) made of nkonono. The former are often adorned with triangular carvings.

The same style of decoration is to be seen on the *calabashes* which Natives use as bottles. The calabash, as every one knows, is a sort of gourd composed of two spheres of unequal size with a narrow connection between them. By an ingenious system of supports, placed under the gourd during its growth, Natives succeed in imparting to the upper sphere the shape of an elongated neck. There are many varieties of calabash, some small, furnished

with a long projection and used for drawing the bukanye from the large jars. They are specially kept for this purpose! (See p. 101, No. 7, and also I, p. 400). In Vol. I. p. 50, I have given an

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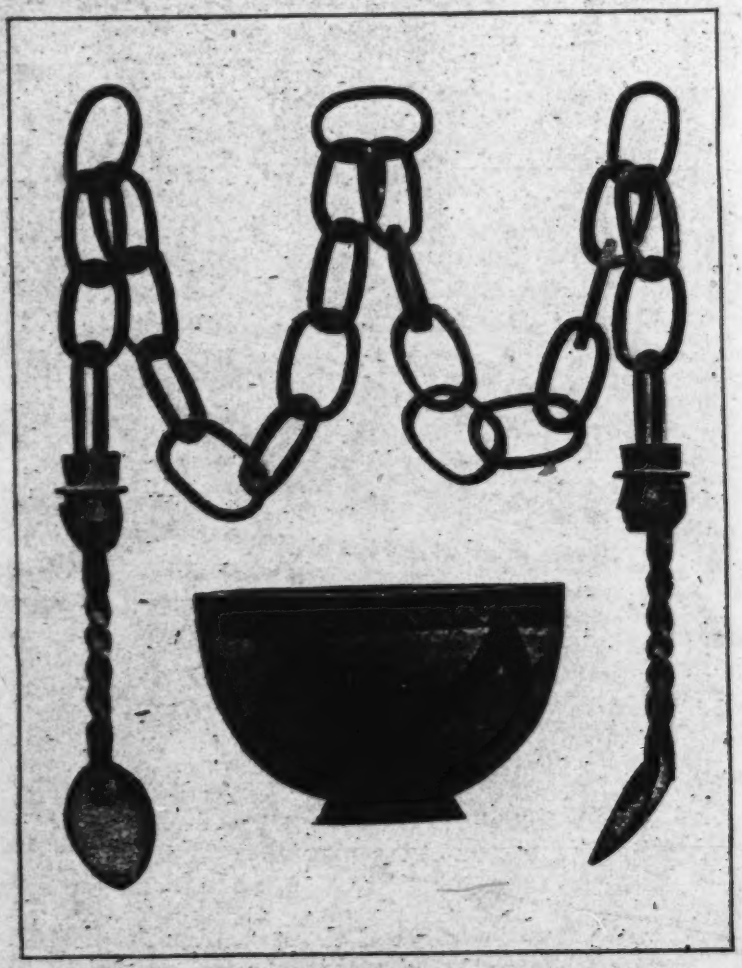


Carved chain and bowl. (Neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques).
(One fifth of the natural size.)

illustration of these bukanye calabashes, called *ntjeko* (mu-mi), very prettily decorated by a Tembe artist. The black designs are burnt in and represent huts, birds, palm trees and, last but not least, two warriors fighting! The white dots are beads inserted

in the soft bark of the calabash. The largest calabash on this plate measures 21 inches in length and 7 in width. 322 531

Some plainer calabashes are Nos. 8 and 9 of the illustration of ornaments. Others are simply shells of sala (shikutja), (p. 16), with a good-sized hole cut in them for an opening (Nos. 6 and 10); a circular piece, say one third the size of the other, makes a capital cover; a string passes through the bottom of the calabash and the middle of the cover, fastening the two together. When this is knotted on top of the latter the *lard tin* is securely closed. This kind of calabash is generally thus designated, for it is in these round balls that the mafureira grease is kept, to which I have previously referred (p. 18). They are hung up in the roof of the hut where they swing to and fro in the smoke and become well browned. The young folks amuse themselves by carving designs on these shells. 415

Mankhelu's stick.

The artistic element is still more striking in the *snuff boxes* (ngulana, yin-tin), carved in ebony, which the chiefs are fond of carrying; the one depicted (p. 128, No. 9) came to me from Mavabaze who was, for a time, chief of the Khosa clan. It is also conspicuous in the strange *pillows* (shidamu) on which the Ba-Ronga rest their heads at night. Let us contemplate this article (No. 8) with the respect it deserves! It is probably on this description of pillow that primitive humanity in all parts of the world has dreamed its dreams! We see it sculptured on the Egyptian monuments, above or by the side of princely couches. We find also among the relics of the lake-dwellers stone objects of a similar shape, which were doubtless used for the same purpose. The Bantu has adhered to this piece of prehistoric furniture all through the ages. 276 532 322 352 322

322 through the ages. The specimen in the illustration[1] was bought
352 from a young man, a traveller, on the road; the bird's claws,
777 beads and other articles tied all round it, doubtless hunting trophies, are plainly to be seen. He had the advantage of literally

Thonga statuettes.
(One third of the natural size.)

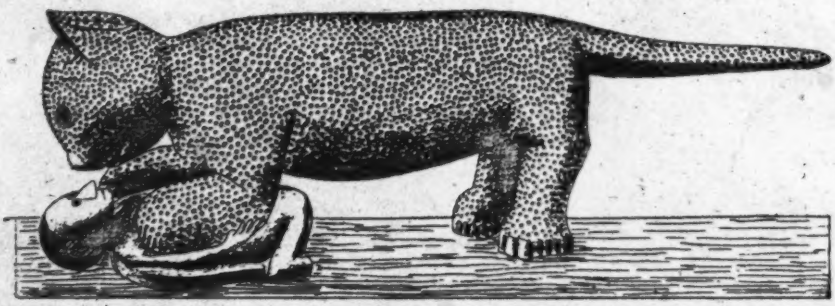
resting on his laurels, and naively believed they would bring him good luck while sleeping.

532 The Thonga artist has even dared to portray the *human form*,
481 and the result of his audacity, however grotesque, is not without
322 originality, and even a certain characteristic style, which may be recognised in all their statuettes. More often they content themselves with carving a man's head, with his crown, on the top of their walking sticks. I here give[2] an illustration of Mankhelu's stick, which was a very old one, dating from 1850,

[1] [The Thonga pillow -- See p. 128, No. 8. -- Analyst]

[2] [p. 133]

532 at least, and shows the primitive style without any European
481 influence. Sometimes they carve the whole body from head to
322 foot ; (as grapes do not grow in their country the use of the classic vine-leaf is quite unknown). No. 3 represents a stick with a man and a woman, the one standing on the other's head, the stronger sex treading the weaker under foot! Large statuettes, of at least one and a half to two feet in height and broad in proportion, are to be seen in the Neuchâtel Ethnographical Museum, which without doubt contains the largest collection of Thonga implements in the world, having been plentifully provided with them by the mission-



A panther devouring an Englishman.
(One twelfth of the natural size.)

aries of French Switzerland No. 7 is smaller, and represents a woman having on her head the typical conical basket, the pride of
532 the workers in the fields, and of the cooks. The five small figures
322 on the accompanying plate are very amusing indeed. They were carved by an artist of Movumbi (near Rikatla), who asserted that the man on the right was a Banyan. The other figures are Natives, men with their wax crowns, and the ladula garment (p. 96) adorned with beads ; one is a woman carrying a child!

The finest specimen of Native art that I ever saw is the carving of a *huge panther* about to devour a human being, the work of Muhlati, a sculptor living in the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques. This artist, who was very proud of his work, and asked a tolerably high price for it, claimed to be able to carve anything and everything : birds, four-footed beasts, or men. He was famous throughout the land for his talent. Nothing more quaint

[see p. 128.— Analyst]

532 could be imagined than this large spotted creature, (the spots being
322 obtained as usual by burning with a hot iron), planting his claws in the flesh of a man, (an Englishman, I was told by the inspired author of this group!), and glaring at him with two great round eyes, not very symmetrical! With touching forethought, this modern Phidias has made the posterior half of the tail quite independent of the rest of the animal. A tenon and circular

[501]

Thonga canoe. *Phot. A. Burl.*

socket allow the caudal appendage to be so neatly adjusted that the joint is hardly visible! Muhlati told me how the idea of a removable tail had occurred to him. He thought that if ever his masterpiece had to be packed up and cross the ocean, it would thus be more easily cased. This can hardly be called the idea of a savage! Besides, the work itself would never have been accomplished had there been no Whites in the country. Evidently the sculptor, indolent like all his race, would not have worked day in and day out at carving such an animal as a play-thing for his children. He concluded that his talent might well bring him in some money; it was mercenary considerations that urged him on to the execution of the work, and no mere love of art; nevertheless

532 I do not believe any foreign influence was exercised in the
322 conception of the idea. His group is absolutely original, and, as such, shows us to what lengths the sculptural talent of the Ba-Ronga can go. This group is now in the Neuchâtel Museum.

313 While statuettes are the most elaborate products of Native
532 sculpture, *canoes* (shene (Dj.) are the largest. I have already
322 mentioned the taboos connected with the cutting of the mahogany and nkwenga trees when used for this purpose (p. 19). Other trees, the mpfubu and the muhlu, can be cut without these precautions being taken.

IV. *Metallurgy.*

172 When and how did iron reach the Ba-Ronga ? Probably we
412 shall never be able to ascertain. Tradition has it that the primitive
316 inhabitants of Nondwane, the Honwana, who cooked elephants in order to tear them in pieces, had no iron implements. Some authorities tell us that the hoe in use in olden times was of an exceedingly hard wood, wrenched I know not how from a species of teak tree called *ntjhiba*. The Natives of these parts must have passed directly from the age of wood to that of iron. There was certainly a stone age, comparable to that of the lake dwellers, in Cape Colony, where a great quantity of silex and of polished stones have been found. I never heard of any such implements having been used by the Thongas, nor found within their territory. As regards the bronze age, they have known the use of copper for a long time, but it cannot be proved that they knew it before iron.

177 Iron and other metals seem to have been first introduced in
439 Delagoa Bay by the "Godji" traders and whale fishers, of whom
316 I shall shortly speak ; they are the first White visitors whom the Natives now remember. The Ba-Ronga used to exchange fowls and other domestic animals for hoes, brass bracelets, and copper brought by the strangers, and they had found out how to make copper wire by forging (fula) the pieces bought from the "Godji."

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Ornaments, calabashes, pottery.

C. UTENSILS.

Nature, which has provided the Ba-Ronga with skins of animals for clothing, and with poles, reeds, grasses and fibrous barks for their habitations, has also favoured them with several exceedingly useful trees of which they have not been slow to take advantage. Of these the most valuable is the *milala* palm, *(Hyphaene crinita)* used for nearly all basket-work; next comes the *nkuhlu (Trichilia emetica)* whose wood is particularly serviceable for all descriptions of carving. She has also deposited in their plains beds of clay, of more or less desirable quality, which they use for making pottery. I shall begin with the latter. 824

I. *Pottery.*

An excellent clay is to be found at Shibindji, in the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques, a district close to Morakwen, and the people of this place — they are the same who abstain from eating any animal liver (I. p. 364) — are the potters who supply the whole country. They are said to be the masters (benyi) of the art. But clay is found in many other places, in Shifukundju, Mpatshiki, etc. It is said that the clay of Muweri, near Lemon Island, on the Lower Nkomati, is even better than that of Shibindji. So the art of the potter does not belong to a single family, and is not hereditary. Any one may learn it and practise it. Pottery amongst the Thongas is essentially woman's province. Is this because earthenware utensils are principally used in the kitchen, where woman's sway is paramount and indisputed? Possibly; in any case it is so. 134 323 323

Let us suppose then that the mother of a family wishes to renew, or to add to her stocks of pots, large and small. She starts out for the marshes, picks up in the well-known hollow several clods of clay and returns to the village carrying them on her head. No one salutes her: everyone pretends not to see her, 323 777

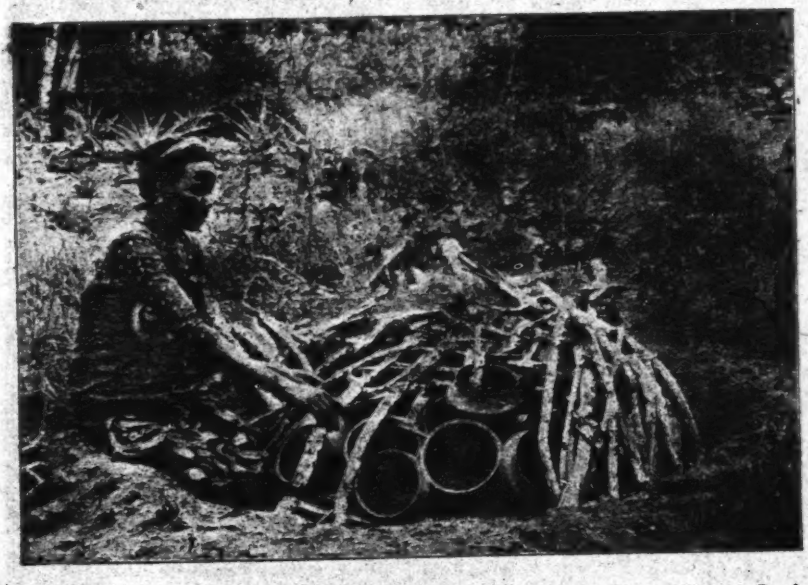
323 doubtless to avoid bringing any ill luck to the venture! She
777 buries the clay at the foot of a tree to keep it moist, and only takes it out of its hiding-place on the day on which she has decided to start the work.

323 Let us see by means of some photographs, taken by the greatly regretted A. Borel, how Meta, a Shibindji girl, married in Rikatla, proceeds in her work. Placing a broken piece of an old pot in the

Fashioning the pots. *Phot. A. Borel*

mortar, she pounds it until it is reduced to small fragments, the size of a grain of maize : these she mixes with her clay, adding water and sand, and kneads the whole together until she has made it into a very soft ball. She makes a hole in this, a wide opening which she enlarges by degrees, hollowing it out more and more and
323 gradually giving it the shape she wishes. I have already alluded
352 to the clever way in which the Blacks trace the circumference of a circle on the ground (I. p. 126) ; the same natural instinct enables them to model perfect spheres. It is astonishing to see the beautiful symmetry of these utensils, although these pots are fashioned without the aid of a wheel or measuring instrument of any kind.

323 The jar, still soft and wet, is put on one side. Now is the time to decorate it with very simple designs, generally triangular, after which the industrious worker leaves it to dry for a few hours, taking care to cover the opening with a thin piece of wood to prevent the wind from spoiling the shape. As soon as she dares to lift it without danger, she turns it over, smooths the bottom (tshaku), which will harden in its turn, and places the



Constructing the furnace. *Phot. A. Borel.*

pot in a hut where it continues to dry in the shade. On the day she chooses for the firing, she digs a hole in the sand, arranges the various pieces of pottery in it and covers them with a heap of small pieces of wood or with palm pith ; this she sets alight, and keeps a quick clear fire burning until she considers the firing is finished, when she leaves her red and glowing utensils to cool down
323 (hola). The cooling accomplished, she begins to inspect the
386 result of her work. This is the psychological moment! How many have cracked, how many have withstood the testing? The worthless ones are smashed, and the perfect ones reserved to be

painted a brilliant brown, which is done with a decoction of the 323
bark of the mangrove (nkapa) and of the nkanye, boiled with a 386
kind of creeper (mahlehlwa), which has a sticky sap. Such is the primitive method followed in the manufacture of all Native pottery.

The process of firing being often unsuccessful, taboos are 323
plentiful in the manufacture. When women collect the clay, 777

The furnace ready. *Phot. A. Borel.*

only one of them digs and gives it to the others ; should each make haste to dig for herself, this would bring mishap : the pots would break. If no accident happens and the firing is successful, these women will say : "She who dug the other day has a lucky hand (a ni boko dja hombe). Let her dig again another time." When the clay has been hidden in the ground, at the foot of a tree, it is also taboo to tread on the spot, when walking through the village. When the heap of wood is ready, the potteress will call a little child, an innocent creature, to set fire to the furnace. She shows it where to place the glowing ember,

323 and, if the result of the firing is good, she will always call the same
777 child on future occasions (1).

787 If all these precautions prove useless, and the woman sees that she is not succeeding, she will go so far as to consult the bones, and, if they so order, she will make an offering to her gods, gods of the father, gods of the mother, or possessing gods (Part VI), if she is a spirit-possessed woman, as the bones may

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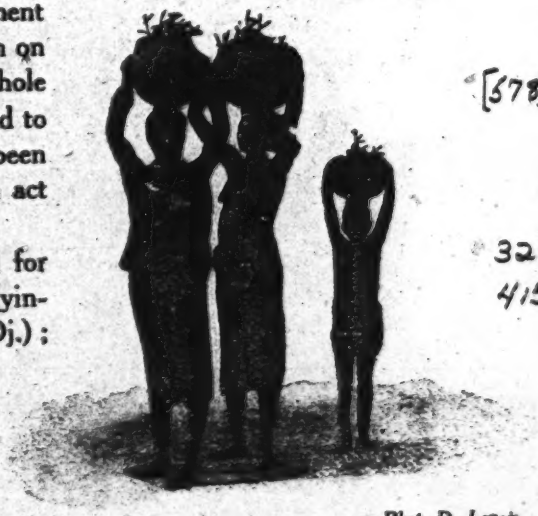
Result of the firing. *Phot. A. Borel.*

787 declare. People will say to her : "You manufacture pots and sell them and do not give anything to your gods : that will not do!" So she will offer a piece of clothing, a coin, etc., at the altar *(gandjelo)*.

323 (1) Meta, the Rikatla potteress has entirely given up the manufacture of pottery of
476 late years. All her pots cracked, because, she said, she was the only woman practising this art in the country. In her former home, everybody made pots and in this way the potteresses "strengthened each other (tiyisana)." Moreover when a pot was heard cracking in the furnace, somebody ran to the hut and collected a little of the dust on the floor and threw it into the other pots, and this prevented them from being spoiled. It was too far for Meta to run to her former home to get the dust—so she gave up her trade! The case of poor Meta is a good illustration of the collective character of industrial pursuits amongst primitive peoples.

Another taboo in connection with the making of a pot is this: 323
when a pot has been fired, it must still be *tested*; this operation 753
is called *ku khangula*, or *kwangula*, and is performed in the following way. A little water is poured into it, and the potteress washes it thoroughly; then some grains of maize are cooked in it and thrown away. This is to remove the *nkwangu*, or *nkhangu*, viz., the danger attending the use of an untested, unpurified pot: people using such an implement would suffer from an eruption on the arms, and even on the whole body. To give any one food to eat from a pot which has not been *khangula* is looked on as an act of hatred. [578]

The pot, or boiler, used for cooking is called *nhlambeto* (yin-tin, Ro.) or *mbita* (yin-tin Dj.); it has a very wide opening. Smaller boilers are also made, even quite diminutive ones called *shihlembetwana* or *shimbitana*. The beer jar (khuwana, dji-ma), illustrated on page 101, No. 13, is of the same size as the boiler, but can be easily recognised by its straighter neck. Enormous beer jars are sometimes manufactured, perfect amphoras (hotjo, yin-tin), but they rarely stand the firing and are therefore scarce and expensive, fetching as much as ten shillings each: they may be two feet high; the ordinary cooking pot does not cost more than sixpence. The porringers, or large plates, are called *mbenga* (mu,-mi; No. 12) (1). 323 415



Phot. D. Leach.

Pots used to draw water.

Shibindji clay is also used for making very short *pipes* (shipana), prettily shaped, probably in imitation of the European cutty. Smoking does not seem to be an indigenous habit; in the interior 276

(1) No. 11, on page 101, shows a small vase modelled by a young Native girl, an invalid from Natal (Station of Inanda).

316 Later on wrecked boats provided Native smiths with iron to make
325 hoes, axes, etc. In certain villages there were regular forges,
412 (Matlharin, near Mbengelen Island, Matjolo etc.). The hoes
436 were in the well-known form of an ace of spades and were fixed into a wooden handle, as are also the axes, and battle axes (I. p. 453). But the principal supply of iron came from the Transvaal Mountains, especially from the Northern Zoutpansberg, where the Bveshas have practised the art of mining iron ore for an unknown period. These Sutho hoes have played a great part in the history of the Thonga tribe, having been extensively used as currency for lobolo purposes.

325 These Bveshas — the word is said to be a Thonga corruption of Venda — built their furnaces in ant-hills, as shown in the accompanying illustration supplied by M. H. Gros, near Iron Mountain, East of the Speionken district. They excavated three holes under the furnace, and blew into them by means of bellows made of a skin, the air being expelled through an antelope horn. The ore, broken in small pieces and mixed with charcoal, was smelted, crushed, smelted a second time, crushed again and made into hoes and axes, etc. Who had taught the Vendas this art? Did they learn it from the Ma-Lemba, that curious tribe, half Semitic in its customs, which invaded the Northern Transvaal during the XVIIIth century? Nobody knows for certain. I am under the impression that this art is older than that, as the Lebombo Natives, who invaded the Nondwane in the XVIth century, seem to have possessed iron weapons. The origin of iron and the date of its introduction into South Africa is still a mystery.

326 Among the ornaments illustrated will be found a very pretty
197 belt (No. 1).[1] It is the work of a young man named Philemon, living in the outskirts of Lourenço Marques, who employed his leisure moments in making objects of this description with twisted wires of iron, brass and copper, bent in festoons and
[197] fastened with small tongues of metal. European influence is doubtless very marked in these belts, but still they possess a certain cachet of their own. Amongst the Zulus as in our tribe, large cups of various descriptions, including egg-cups, are

[1] [p. 101 -- Analyst]

Phot. H. Gros.

Native Ironfoundry in Zoutpansberg.

325

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[1] [p. 101 -- Analyst]

326 manufactured, and it is evident that, in this branch, Native art is capable of considerable development. Their method of fastening the blades of assagais to the handles with iron wire is also very ingenious. Sometimes they cover their ebony sticks from top to bottom with a delicate network of steel and brass wire. A Native expert in wire work once mended the stock of my sporting [439] gun, which was broken, and made a wonderful job of it. This wire, so extensively used for bracelets, was formerly made by Native blacksmiths, but now they buy it at Lourenço Marques or from the Hindu traders.

D. COMMERCE.

437 Thongas have an inborn inclination for trade and have always been addicted to it. Before there was question of any currency, when hoes were not yet procurable, or the *ritlatla* bracelet brought by the Whites (I. p. 385), or the copper stick called *lirale* (1) melted by the Palaora Ba-Sutho, they knew how to buy (shaba) and to sell (shabisa), viz., to exchange their primitive produce. A mat was bartered for a fowl and the thrifty savage thought : "This is good business ; the hen will lay eggs and hatch chickens and this will bring me a profit (bindjula)." A shihundju basket was also exchanged for a hen. Another way of buying was adopted when dealing with pots ; the pot was filled with mealies by the buyer and the contents left to the potter as corresponding to the value of the pot. For monkey-nuts, not husked, the pot had to be filled twice ; for more precious products, such as sorghum and Kafir corn, half of it only was measured out. I have myself witnessed some transactions of this kind amongst the Nkunas. If the pot broke when first used, the potter had to give another in its place.

439 But this primitive trade became much more extensive when the Whites made their appearance. Delagoa Bay was one of the

(1) Compare my article in *Folklore*, 24 June 1903.

double object in view in thus crowning the huts : first to keep the 342
rain from percolating through at the top, and secondly to impart to the building, by means of this highly ornamental addition, a degree of finish, an air of beauty, ease and opulence which it certainly would never have possessed had it terminated in an ordinary point. It is, no doubt, owing to the fact that the crown is the glory of the house that it is removed as soon as the occupant dies!

There are still two more operations to be performed before 333
the hut is finished : *the plastering* (bama (Ro.), phama (Dj.) and the making of the *door*. But these two jobs can be undertaken at the same time for the very good reason that plastering is the work of the wives, while making the door is that of the husband. Accompanied by other women of the village, the future mistress of the hut starts out for the marshes to collect some black clay (bompfi). If the marshes are too far off, she will content herself with digging in one of the ants' nests on the hillside. These terrible ants, which destroy everything, collect large quantities of hard earth, with which to build their nests, and this differs largely from the sand of the surroundings. (It may perhaps be simply sand hardened and changed by the acid secretions of the termites.) The shirundju, the conical basket which women carry [482]
on their heads, will be used to take home clods of red or black clay, and, using the same baskets, they will fetch from the cattle kraal some fresh dung which they mix with the clay, inside the new hut, pouring water on the mixture to reduce it to the proper consistency. They tread the unsavoury mud with their feet, and, with this semi-liquid mortar, plaster the wall on the inside,

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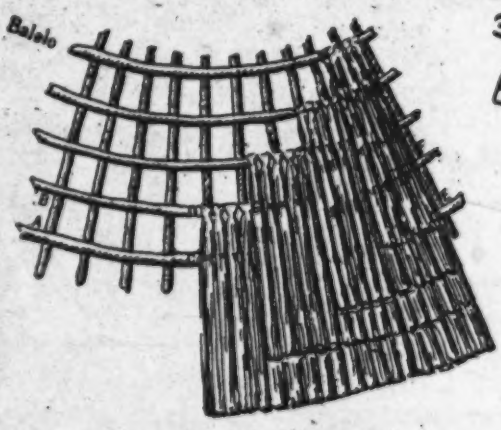
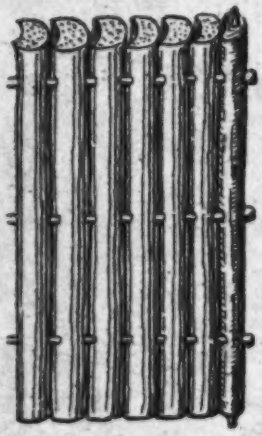
[462]



Construction of the Thonga roof.

introducing the mud between the reeds and spreading it out with the palms of their hands until it forms a smooth layer all over the interior. Not a ray of light can now enter the hut, except through some small open spaces to be seen, here and there, between the roof and the top of the wall. The air circulates more or less through these small vents, which, however, were not included in the original plan of the hut. The remainder of the clay makes a hard even flooring which will be re-covered from time to time with a fresh coating of black plaster (I. p. 187).



Door of a Ronga hut.

As regards the *door*, the Ba-Ronga in the country round Rikatla generally make it of the wood of the mimale palm (Raphia vinifera, see p. 4). They cut down one or two of the giant leaves of this tree, which grows in the marshes. The leaf itself is one enormous central stalk with narrow folioles on either side; these are cut off and the nerve remains: a sort of gigantic switch, twenty to thirty feet in length, about four to six inches wide at the base and tapering gradually to its point, convex on one side, and concave on the other. Once dried, it turns a grey colour. The interior is a fibrous pith, of extraordinarily light weight, whilst the exterior bark is very thin, hard and shiny as though it had been varnished with copal. It is impossible to imagine a lighter wood. Comfortably established under the shady trees of the square, our joiner cuts the nerve into several pieces of a given length (say about four feet, the height of the wall). This is not difficult, for it is only necessary to cut through the thin outer bark, when the knife slips through the inner pith, like so much butter! These lengths are then bored through from front to back in three places, say at one, two and three feet from the bottom, and three stout sticks are passed through the holes, firmly holding the several pieces of the nerve together: this makes the door. The ends of the transverse sticks are fixed into a pole which is pointed top and bottom, thus forming pivots or hinges.

301 Beads are merely an ornament and have no ritual value, except
789 the large white ones used by people possessed by the Ba-Ndjao spirits. (Part VI.)

B. HABITATION.

342 While there has been such a rapid change in Thonga customs regarding dress, — so rapid that in these last fifty years they have changed more in that respect than during the fifty preceding centuries —, in the field of architecture the tribe appears to have stood still ; their huts are built precisely as they were in ancient times. It is true that it is easier to put on a jacket and trousers than to alter the style of one's house : besides it must be admitted that the Thonga hut possesses several advantages. It is comparatively easy to construct, cool in the hot weather, perfectly watertight in the rainy season and is fairly ingeniously contrived.

That which is called *yindlu* (yin-tin) properly speaking, is more especially the *roof* of the hut (lwango, dji-ma) ; for it is the roof which is the most troublesome to make. A strange fact too, and one which appears paradoxical, is that, in the construction (ku yaka) of the house, they begin with the roof!

[341] The Thonga architect — and every man is his own in that
335 country — gathers together a few hundred straight sticks, one
342 to one and a half inches in width and from three to ten feet in length. He digs a hole in the ground, a yard and a half in diameter and 16 inches deep, in which he arranges his sticks in a circle, points downwards, at the bottom of the hole, and supported in such a manner that they lie at an angle of 45 degrees with the ground. Any one of these sticks will thus be at about a right angle with the opposite one, and all together they form, as it were, a huge conical basket with its point in the hole. To fasten all the sticks together, he ties them to round hoops (something like cask hoops) made of bent branches. These hoops (balelo, dji-ma) are concentric, very small at the bottom, and getting gradually larger as the work progresses. Any spaces which remain between the sticks first arranged are filled up, one after the other, with

shorter sticks, which are pushed in here and there as the building 335
proceeds, and the architect ends by obtaining a sort of enormous, 342
pointed hat lying on its apex, all the branches and sticks composing it being solidly tied together with strips of a very resistant bark, that of the bulolo Hibiscus (p. 33) or of other trees. It is now only necessary to turn the big cone over, and place it on a wall, and there you have the typical Thonga hut.

The *wall* is built with stakes, about four feet in length above the ground, planted at intervals along the circumference of a circle which the architect traces with wonderful accuracy in the sand. He then takes two flexible branches and fastens them to the stakes, at a height of one foot above the ground, the whole way round the wall, one on the inside, the other on the outside. Between these branches and in the spaces from stake to stake are inserted reeds of the same height, completing the wall : the reeds are firmly fastened to the supporting branches by a band passing alternately over and underneath them. The same operation is repeated half way up the wall (two feet above the ground), and again at three quarters of the height (three feet). The wall is now ready to put on its large conical hat, which will fit it perfectly : a cone on a cylinder!

Placing the roof in position (ku tlakula yindlu), the next 342
procedure, requires the display of considerable muscular energy. 476
All the men of the village are convened for the job : their strong arms raise the monumental basket and place it triumphantly on the wall. Beer is then given to the helpers, and a little jollification ensues ; the equivalent of the "fête du petit sapin enrubanné" which the carpenters celebrate in Switzerland when they have completed the roof of a house.

The roof must now be *covered* (fulela) *with a thatch* (byanyi) 342
to make it impermeable to the heavy rains of the wet season, [824]
and it is here that considerable ingenuity is displayed in the method adopted. The Thonga pulls up by the roots, in the low lands on the borders of the lakes, a kind of very wide grass (luhlwa), which attains a height of one and a half to two feet : this he separates into small bunches which he lays side by side on the ground and ties together, one by one, with his

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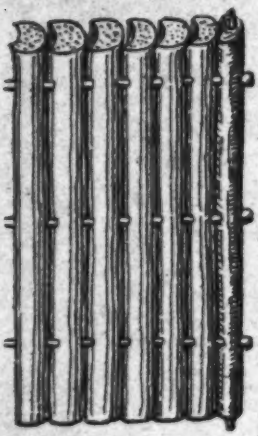

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1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

881 the chief must not be used by him to buy a wife. This would pollute the village (makhuma). It would cause unfortunate births (timbeleko) and ruin the life of the people.

The chameleon procession is performed in the villages of the main headmen of the tribe during the few following days till, at last, the ochre of the initiated is removed and they return home definitely.

SOME REMARKS ON THE CIRCUMCISION SCHOOL

177 881 341 822 881 The square form of the sungi sheds, so different from the circular form adopted by the Bantus for their homes and implements, might be the trace of a Semitic influence. But, on the whole, all these rites are closely connected together and their sequence is quite easy to understand.

The Ngoma is truly a puberty rite, but not a sexual initiation. The suspension of conjugal relations, and the prevalence of licentious language might give the idea that it is in direct relation with the sexual life. But these two phenomena are met with on other occasions, as we shall see, and seem to be characteristic occurrences in most of the marginal periods. Moreover boys of ten and twelve and men of twenty-five or more can occasionally be admitted to the sungi, and this proves that the school has nothing to do with marriage, properly speaking. Neither is the Ngoma a pure act of aggregation to a definite clan. Boys of one clan often go to the sungi of another chief to be initiated ; they do not become his subjects by so doing. Even Thongas sometimes enter into Sutho lodges and Ma-Lemba have a special place in them. It is true that the Ngoma is the business of the chief. Only those who are really chiefs have the right to build a lodge. But though the initiated are exhorted to become good subjects of their chief, the intention of the circumcision school is rather to introduce the little boy *into manhood*, to cleanse him from the *bukhuma* (p. 58) to make him a thoughtful adult member of the community.

(See practical conclusion on Circumcision Rites at the end of Vol. I.)

II. *Other Puberty Rites.*

881 178 The Ngoma has disappeared in most of the Thonga clans, but there are a few other puberty rites which have been preserved all through the tribe.

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E. MATURE AGE

I. *The Bantu Ideal.*

581 The married man is called " he who has his home " (a ni le
354 kwakwe) in opposition to the single man (nkhwenda). But let
us say at once that the kind of individual called bachelor does
562 not abound amongst the Bantus. Only the utterly wretched,
885 invalids, and the weak-minded, are deprived of legal marriage, which for the black man is and remains the one object in life. It is through his wife and children that he becomes somebody in society. This fact does not appear during the first year of wedlock, for the newly married woman must cook at the fireplace of her mother-in-law. She is hardly more than a servant during a whole year ; she does not possess her own pot ; and this must be so because she does not yet eat the mealies of her own garden, having ploughed her fields in her former domicile the previous year. Her husband eats with her. He is not yet
595 a lord. But if he is rich, if he is the heir of an important man, he will not be long in buying a second and third wife.

These new marriages will be contracted like the first, but with less pomp. It may even happen that the feast is held in the husband's village, if he is middle-aged and is celebrating his fifth or sixth wedding.

595 For each new wife, he will build a hut. He has begun his
342 village when building the house of his first wife, the great wife,
556 (nsati lwe nkulu) as she is called, who will remain the principal
592 one whatever may happen. While, without compass, he was
361 drawing on the ground, with the marvellous instinct of the South African Native, the circumference of the circle on which the patched reed walls of his dwelling were to rise, while he was covering this circular wall with a conical roof, he was saying to himself : " I establish my home ; I inaugurate my village ". During the following years, the aim of his life will be to complete little by little another wider circle... When he has bought his

765 the headman of a large village in the Shifimbatlelo district (18 miles North of Lourenço Marques). His son Mugwanu had been chosen to take his place, but Manyibane had a younger brother, called Fenis, who had taken care of the village in the meantime. All the relatives were assembled. Groups were formed under all the trees. At 4. 30 p. m. the men began to gather near the old black-roofed hut ; one of them, an elderly man, took between
[824] his teeth a piece of a root of a special juncus, called *sungi*, bit off a little of it and, after having chewed this substance, rubbed both his legs with it (evidently to find courage and strength for the work he was undertaking) and penetrated into the old hut. He came back bringing with him a dozen beautiful white eggs!.. The hen did not know that the habitation of the deceased was a tabooed grave, and had laid her eggs in this convenient refuge! Then all the men approached and began to pull out the poles of the wall, digging on both sides of each pole ; some of them lifted the roof so as to make room enough for the poles to be pulled out. This work was accomplished with great care ; the earth was carefully placed in a pot and slowly poured out some distance away ; the poles were gently laid down in front of the entrance, on the top of the door, which had been previously placed there, thus forming a regular heap. These precautions are taken out of respect for the deceased. It would be an insult to him to do otherwise, and a relation guilty of such an offence "would at once be seized by colic, the disease of the wolves (masule)." Some boys, clad in European dress, threw the poles violently on the ground. Spoon laughed : "They know the *shilungo*, the ways of the White men," he said. "They have lost their respect!"

765 When all the poles were removed and there remained only
342 the reeds of the wall, the men jumped on the roof. The roof is a big conical basket made of sticks tied together and covered with grass. It at once sank down under their weight. But they wished to flatten the cone, to crush it down to the level of the
765 soil. Therefore some of the men pulled the sticks out of the roof to lessen the resistance ; some kicked it in order to break the sticks. They could not succeed ; the cone was still there more or

247 (L.), with its white or pink blossoms, which have spread all over
351 the coast.

Having now finished our first general inspection, let us add some details about the huts and the open places in the village.

342 The hut, the construction of which we shall describe later on,
784 (Part IV) has an opening (nyangwa) of variable dimensions closed by a door. In some parts of the Gaza country it is so small that one must positively crawl to enter it. Everywhere one must at any rate stoop low (korama). As regards the *threshhold* (ntjandja wa shipfalo), it is not taboo to step over it. The headman's threshhold however is dreaded because it was treated with medicines when the hut was built, so it is taboo to sit on it ; these powerful medicines might do harm and
342 even cause death. In the middle of the black clay floor is a
354 kind of raised circle, in the centre of which fire is occasionally lighted in winter on account of the cold. It is the interior *shitiko*. Cooking may be done here if it rains ; glowing embers sometimes remain on it during the night and numberless babies have been burnt to death by falling into the fire while their mothers were
513 sleeping. On the left, on entering, is the sleeping place (shilawo)
853 of the wife, on the right that of the husband. They both however
841 generally spread their mats on the right and sleep beside each other. It is only during the tabooed periods (menses, nursing), that the husband must keep to his own particular side (p. 188).

353 The back of the hut is generally occupied by the big basket (ngula) in which clothing and seeds are kept. This spot is called *mfungwe*. In the roof *(lwangu)* are fixed or suspended various articles : ears of sorghum or millet, cobs to be used as seed at the next sowing, assagais, sticks and knobkerries etc., and against the walls one frequently observes rough drawings made with white clay, or, in the vicinity of towns, chromos of Queen Victoria, Edward VII, or Don Carlos, as the case may be!

361 The hubo and the bandla differ from each other. *Bandla* is
351 a Zulu word which has supplanted the Ronga term *shisiso*, viz.,
562 "the place where one finds shelter from the wind." Men light a small fire there to warm themselves. They also eat together

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of building will be stopped at once and the little community will find another place to which to move! Moreover the guilty woman will have to ask the principal wife for forgiveness. 2) A second great taboo is this : — No one must wash his body during the whole "buhlapfa", as this might cause the rain to fall and it would interfere with the building operations.

3) The building of the huts begins immediately, each man making the circular wall first. When all the walls are ready,

Carrying a roof.

the *roofs are moved* from the old village to the new by all the men together. They lift each roof on to their shoulders, after having removed the old grass, and go out of the village, not by the main entrance, but by one of the back gates which has been widened for the purpose. A broad road has been prepared through the bush. They follow it, marching as fast as they can, and singing the obscene songs which are reserved for special occasions (see Part VI). In these they insult the women who accompany them, carrying the baskets, the mortars, the pestles. "The village is broken in pieces, so are the ordinary laws. The insults which are taboo are now allowed" (Mboza). This suspension of morality in speech is only allowed on the day when roofs are carried to the new village. Some days later, again, the women will take their revenge when they smear the floor of the huts ; then they too will sing their songs, insulting the men. But

621 824 765 troublesome and he should wish to remove them, he must ask some one else to do it. On the day of his death, or rather when his hut is crushed down, a branch of that tree will be put on the place where the threshhold was, and another used to close the main entrance of the village, a new entrance being then made through the fence and used as the gate during the rest of the mourning period.

621 833 3) He has sexual relations on the new spot on the first night with his principal wife ; in this way he will *fuya muri*, viz. "possess this tree," and also *fuya muti*, "possess the village." The Ronga *fuya* corresponds here also to the *boha* of the Northern clans (Compare boha puri and fuya ñwana, page 57). If someone precedes him in sexual intercourse, he is guilty ; he has "preceded the village" (rangela muti). By this act the headman has definitely left the old village. The others can go back to it to fetch what remains ; for him it is taboo.

621 831 834 342 4) The same day, all the inhabitants come and move all the roofs, if it is possible to do this in one day. One hut is rapidly built to afford shelter to the inhabitants, in case of rain. The first roof to be transported is that of the hut of the principal wife. This is also done to the accompaniment of obscene songs. These songs are not allowed when only one hut is transported, which may happen when some one goes to live in another village.

It is definitely a custom which goes with the moving of a whole village.

5) The following day two huts are erected, one for the men, the other for the women, because they must not sleep together. "They are still in the bush ; it is buhlapfa ; the village is not yet firm." Those who break this law cause injury to the headman. The bones will soon reveal that "he has been preceded as regards the village ; (a rangeliwile muti)." All the huts are smeared twice ; the women begin to sleep in them, but not the men. The fence and the main entrance must first be prepared.

621 789 6) The *main entrance* (mharana). The men pull up the grass all the way from the back hut to the place where the main entrance must be, so as to make a road all through the village. All the dried plants weeded out during this operation are carefully

462 thank (tlangela) her husband for his kind help! This is her
273 method of notifying him that all the grain has been harvested, as, whatever the man's share of the work may have been, the mealies belong to him.

462 The main work of the man is the *building and repairing of the*
356 *huts*. This is truly an arduous job, but it is not of yearly recur-
342 rence. Every third or fourth year they are obliged to re-thatch the roof. The huts are built and repaired during the winter, from May to September.

A second domain, which is exclusively man's, is the *care of the cattle*; the boys milk the cows, construct and repair the kraal: the little boys herd the goats, and the young men the oxen, as has already been mentioned.

462 It is also the men who *make all the utensils and tools* used in the
411 village, pots and other crockery excepted; mortars, pestles,
294 handles for axes or hoes (mimphinyi), wooden platters, carved or forged articles, all this work pertains to them. They must also make the *ntehe* for their wives, or sisters, after the birth of the babies. This is probably the explanation of the curious fact noticed amongst Native Christians, namely that they are much more clever at needlework than their wives. Big fellows are often seen forsaking the hoe to work with the needle, and there are fathers who make their own clothing as well as the dresses for their wives and children!

462 *Hunting and fishing* are, of course, also men's work... or pastime.
224 For some of them hunting is an actual trade, at least such was the case in former times, before the White Governments imposed strict regulations and levied heavy licences on that sport. We shall study, in Part IV, the curious customs relating to these two favourite occupations of the Natives.

574 A great part of their time is devoted by the men to *paying*
517 *visits*. They are very fond of calling on each other, and sometimes
484 they go great distances to see relatives or friends. They do not travel to pay visits only, but they frequently journey to claim payment of their debts (milandju). To regain the possession of a miserable head of cattle they willingly lose whole weeks! And what endless discussions in the *hubo*, when an unfortunate visitor

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361

of square houses or galvanised iron sheds, which are a poor imitation of European dwellings. However, from the practical point of view, this change is unavoidable. It even undoubtedly stands for progress.

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177

The *Native hut* is prettily shaped. I prefer the Thonga form, a circular wall on which a conical roof is placed, to the Zulu, a beehive resting on the ground, or even to the Kaffir, which combines the features of both, having also a circular wall but with a cupola roof. The conical

Phot. H. A. Junod.

Christian village of Shiluvane.

roof is a better protection against rain. But all these forms of dwelling have one great fault : they are not healthy. The rays of the sun cannot penetrate into the hut, and, though the top of the reeds is sometimes not plastered and allows a certain amount of ventilation, the air cannot circulate, because the hut has no window. Smoke must make its way through the thatch and it is very difficult indeed to obtain any current of air inside. If a new type of hut were to be adopted, with high walls, good-sized doors and windows, and a roof slightly overhanging the wall, these defects would be remedied. But civilised Natives have not tried to follow this plan. They have at once copied the European system, just

000 preserving only those which are compatible with Christian morals and civilisation?

These are only questions which I put, and not definite opinions to which I would commit myself. At any rate, if the tribal system must and can be maintained for an unknown period, the Government ought to take some steps to ameliorate it, or at least to prevent its deterioration. It ought to pay special attention first of all to the character of the chiefs. They are after all Government servants, ruling to a certain

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Phot. H. A Junod.

Muhlaba's house (in the Thabina Location, N. E. Transvaal.)

extent over British or Portuguese subjects. Moral qualifications ought to be required of them as well as of any other civil or judicial employee. Their conduct ought to be the more carefully watched in that the new conditions under which they are placed are eminently dangerous to their morale. Under the old tribal law, their power was checked by the indunas ; they could even be deposed by a family council. Now the chief feels himself supported by the White Authorities and is tempted to take less care of the interests of his people. Many of them have become desperate drunkards. In some places they are allowed to obtain drink, which is absolutely refused to their subjects, and they sink deeply, morally speaking. This is a lamentable result indeed.

301 Beads are merely an ornament and have no ritual value, except
789 the large white ones used by people possessed by the Ba-Ndjao spirits. (Part VI.)

B. HABITATION.

● 342 While there has been such a rapid change in Thonga customs regarding dress, — so rapid that in these last fifty years they have changed more in that respect than during the fifty preceding centuries —, in the field of architecture the tribe appears to have stood still ; their huts are built precisely as they were in ancient times. It is true that it is easier to put on a jacket and trousers than to alter the style of one's house : besides it must be admitted that the Thonga hut possesses several advantages. It is comparatively easy to construct, cool in the hot weather, perfectly watertight in the rainy season and is fairly ingeniously contrived.

That which is called *yindlu* (yin-tin) properly speaking, is more especially the *roof* of the hut (lwango, dji-ma) ; for it is the roof which is the most troublesome to make. A strange fact too, and one which appears paradoxical, is that, in the construction (ku yaka) of the house, they begin with the roof!

[341] The Thonga architect — and every man is his own in that
336 country — gathers together a few hundred straight sticks, one
342 to one and a half inches in width and from three to ten feet in length. He digs a hole in the ground, a yard and a half in diameter and 16 inches deep, in which he arranges his sticks in a circle, points downwards, at the bottom of the hole, and supported in such a manner that they lie at an angle of 45 degrees with the ground. Any one of these sticks will thus be at about a right angle with the opposite one, and all together they form, as it were, a huge conical basket with its point in the hole. To fasten all the sticks together, he ties them to round hoops (something like cask hoops) made of bent branches. These hoops (balelo, dji-ma) are concentric, very small at the bottom, and getting gradually larger as the work progresses. Any spaces which remain between the sticks first arranged are filled up, one after the other, with

shorter sticks, which are pushed in here and there as the building 335
proceeds, and the architect ends by obtaining a sort of enormous, 342
pointed hat lying on its apex, all the branches and sticks composing it being solidly tied together with strips of a very resistant bark, that of the bulolo Hibiscus (p. 33) or of other trees. It is now only necessary to turn the big cone over, and place it on a wall, and there you have the typical Thonga hut.

The *wall* is built with stakes, about four feet in length above the ground, planted at intervals along the circumference of a circle which the architect traces with wonderful accuracy in the sand. He then takes two flexible branches and fastens them to the stakes, at a height of one foot above the ground, the whole way round the wall, one on the inside, the other on the outside. Between these branches and in the spaces from stake to stake are inserted reeds of the same height, completing the wall : the reeds are firmly fastened to the supporting branches by a band passing alternately over and underneath them. The same operation is repeated half way up the wall (two feet above the ground), and again at three quarters of the height (three feet). The wall is now ready to put on its large conical hat, which will fit it perfectly : a cone on a cylinder!

Placing the roof in position (ku tlakula yindlu), the next 342
procedure, requires the display of considerable muscular energy. 476
All the men of the village are convened for the job : their strong arms raise the monumental basket and place it triumphantly on the wall. Beer is then given to the helpers, and a little jollification ensues ; the equivalent of the "fête du petit sapin enrubanné" which the carpenters celebrate in Switzerland when they have completed the roof of a house.

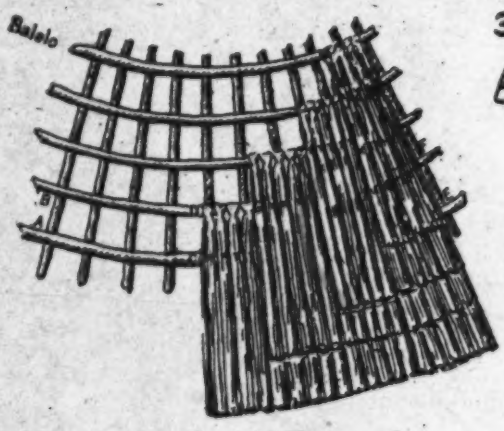
The roof must now be *covered* (fulela) *with a thatch* (byanyi) 342
to make it impermeable to the heavy rains of the wet season, [824]
and it is here that considerable ingenuity is displayed in the method adopted. The Thonga pulls up by the roots, in the low lands on the borders of the lakes, a kind of very wide grass (luhlwa), which attains a height of one and a half to two feet : this he separates into small bunches which he lays side by side on the ground and ties together, one by one, with his

342 string made of bark, fastening them with a special knot. The result is a series of hundreds of contiguous bunches seemingly sewn together with a regular seam, at about 6 inches above the roots. This can be rolled up like a mat, forming a beautiful sheaf, and carried away on the workman's shoulder to be placed on the roof. Once there, it is unrolled and fastened to the hoop of branches forming the outer circle at the base of the cone. One man runs a huge needle, threaded with a long string, through the thatch, taking care to do so just above the seam which unites the bunches of grass ; another man, who is inside the hut, receives the needle and pushes it back again through the thatch, but, in his case, just underneath the seam : the two thus continue sewing the thatch, with long stitches, all round, so that the seam itself is securely fixed to the outer hoop at the base of the roof. When they have completed the circle and provided the hut with a first belt of thatch, they fetch another sheaf of grass and unroll it on the next hoop above. Now a certain proportion is to be observed between the distance separating the two hoops (A B) and that of the seam from the roots of the grass (C D) ; that is to say if, for instance, the space between the concentric hoops is five inches, the seam will be six inches above the roots ; whence the following result : the roots of the thatch fixed to the lower hoop (A E) reach as far as the second hoop (B F) and even overlap slightly. The fresh sheaf which will be sewn on to the second hoop will thus overlap the first sheaf in such a way that its seam will be fastened practically on the top of the roots of the lower sheaf. On the second hoop there will therefore be a double thickness of thatch (at point G) all round the hut. As the *luhlwa* is about 24 inches in length, it follows that the third and fourth sheaves or layers of thatch will also cover the second hoop ; the thickness of the thatch at this point will thus be fourfold, as also all over the hut. A well built roof of this description is perfectly rain-proof. As the work goes on, progress becomes more and more rapid, as the hoops diminish in size and the apex is reached almost unexpectedly.

On the top of the cone is fastened a *circular crown* (shihlungwa) of very carefully plaited grass ; the architect doubtless had a

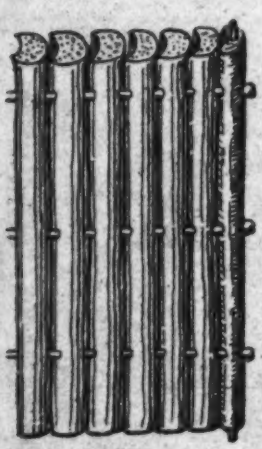
double object in view in thus crowning the huts : first to keep the 342
rain from percolating through at the top, and secondly to impart to the building, by means of this highly ornamental addition, a degree of finish, an air of beauty, ease and opulence which it certainly would never have possessed had it terminated in an ordinary point. It is, no doubt, owing to the fact that the crown is the glory of the house that it is removed as soon as the occupant dies!

There are still two more operations to be performed before 333
the hut is finished : *the plastering* (bama (Ro.), 342
phama (Dj.) and the making of the *door*. But [462]
these two jobs can be undertaken at the same time for the very good reason that plastering is the work of the wives, while making the door is that of the husband. Accompanied by other women of the village, the future mistress of the hut starts out for the marshes to collect some black clay (bompfi). If the marshes are too far off, she will content herself with digging in one of the ants'nests on the hillside. These terrible ants, which destroy everything, collect large quantities of hard earth, with which to build their nests, and this differs largely from the sand of the surroundings. (It may perhaps be simply sand hardened and changed by the acid secretions of the termites.) The shirundju, the conical basket which women carry [482]
on their heads, will be used to take home clods of red or black clay, and, using the same baskets, they will fetch from the cattle kraal some fresh dung which they mix with the clay, inside the new hut, pouring water on the mixture to reduce it to the proper consistency. They tread the unsavoury mud with their feet, and, with this semi-liquid mortar, plaster the wall on the inside,



Construction of the Thonga roof.

introducing the mud between the reeds and spreading it out with 333
the palms of their hands until it forms a smooth layer all over the 342
interior. Not a ray of light can now enter the hut, except through some small open spaces to be seen, here and there, between the roof and the top of the wall. The air circulates more or less through these small vents, which, however, were not included in the original plan of the hut. The remainder of the clay makes a hard even flooring which will be re-covered from time to time with a fresh coating of black plaster (I. p. 187).



Door of a Ronga hut.

As regards the *door*, the Ba-Ronga in the 137
country round Rikatla generally make it of 335
the wood of the mimale palm (Raphia vini- 342
fera, see p. 4). They cut down one or two of the giant leaves of this tree, which grows in the marshes. The leaf itself is one enormous central stalk with narrow folioles on either side; these are cut off and the nerve remains: a sort of gigantic switch, twenty to thirty feet in length, about four to six inches wide at the base and tapering gradually to its point, convex on one side, and concave on the other. Once dried, it turns a grey colour. The interior is a fibrous pith, of extraordinarily light weight, whilst the exterior bark is very thin, hard and shiny as though it had been varnished with copal. It is impossible to imagine a lighter wood. Comfort- 335
ably established under the shady trees of the square, our joiner 342
cuts the nerve into several pieces of a given length (say about four feet, the height of the wall). This is not difficult, for it is only necessary to cut through the thin outer bark, when the knife slips through the inner pith, like so much butter! These lengths are then bored through from front to back in three places, say at one, two and three feet from the bottom, and three stout sticks are passed through the holes, firmly holding the several pieces of the nerve together: this makes the door. The ends of the transverse sticks are fixed into a pole which is pointed top and bottom, thus forming pivots or hinges.

342 The *sill* consists simply of a piece of wood (ntjandja wa shipfalo) laid flat on the ground, with one edge raised so that the door cannot be opened outwards. It must always open inwards, doubtless with a view to facilitate the exclusion of unwelcome visitors by the simple expedient of sitting with one's back against
784 it. The threshold is not attended with taboos, excepting that of
342 the principal hut of the master of the village, beneath which

The Thonga hut. *Phot. A. Burel.*

protective drugs have been placed at the foundation of his village. It is taboo to sit on it (this may cause disease), but not to tread on
177 it. Most huts are now fitted with padlocks which are, of course,
414 of European origin. The palm wood doors are only seen in the districts where the mimale palm grows.

342 A number of small sticks are stuck in the straw crown at the top of the hut, and certainly add to the picturesque appearance of these constructions. It would seem that they are put there to hinder birds from perching on the huts, and more especially to avoid any chance visit during the night from screech-owls (ma-kuñhunu) and other nocturnal fowl, which might alight on

342 the hut and terrify the occupants by their lugubrious cries.

356 I may mention another advantage of the Thonga hut. Between the sticks and the hoops of the roof small interstices, of a few square inches, are left when the thatch is in place ; in these small lockers all kinds of things are stowed away : ears of sorghum, or of millet, kept for seed, sticks, spoons or knives ; baskets can be hung up, by hitching the string by which they are usually carried across

The Native tin town near Pretoria Station. *Phot. A. Borel.*

the shoulder on to the handle of a spoon which is sticking out of the thatch. On entering a hut the roof looks like a regular museum ; it is useful as a cupboard or hanging wardrobe!

343 The Thonga hut, formed of two distinct parts, wall and roof, is far superior to that of the Zulus, which looks like a bee hive, and consists only of a semi-circular roof. Thongas know how to build this kind of huts, but they are generally made quite small (six feet in diameter) and used as shelters for the boys who look

000 after the goats. They are called *mitjhonga*. The Ba-Ngoni adopted their system of building from the Thongas of the plain, and Gungunyana's people constructed huge conical huts, but the

entrances were still smaller than those of the Ba-Ronga. To get 000
in, it was necessary to wriggle, or at least to go on all fours (1).

As I am dealing here only with the architectural side of the subject, and do not touch on its social side, let me merely state that the hut is divided into two parts, the right half belonging to the husband and the left to the wife (I. p. 138, 187), that it is contaminated by the death of its owner, and, being looked on as a *rumbi*, a ruin, must be pierced through (I. p. 138), deprived of its crown (I. p. 145), and ritually crushed down (I. p. 157) or closed (I. p. 162, 163).

Nobody will deny that the conical roofed Thonga hut is a 177
charming thing to see, and is wonderfully in keeping with the 342
African scenery. To judge how "Civilisation" improves the condition of things for the Natives of South Africa, let my readers contemplate the Native village as it was a few years ago, in the vicinity of Pretoria Station. Boys working on the Railway had built a horrible mass of tiny sheds of old paraffin tins, cut and flattened for the purpose. There is no lack of imagination in these constructions, but they are a perfect illustration of what the raw Native becomes when plunged suddenly into our XXth century civilisation and attempting in his poverty and ignorance to adapt himself to it. I am glad to say that, on the Missionary Stations, where Native Christians are directed by their missionaries, they build much better houses, having learnt to mould clay into bricks, and to build ovens (I. p. 536). Some of them are good masons and know the use of the level and of the square. There has been also a considerable improvement in the type of buildings erected in Town Locations during recent years.

(1) I have previously described the *shitlanta*, storehouses of various sizes, made for storing maize and other field produce, and have given (p. 26) an illustration of two of them, especially interesting as they contain the food of Sokis, who died from a sudden attack of pulmonary tuberculosis (lifuba). The provisions which are in the large storehouse must be sold as they are contaminated and dangerous to members of his family; the small one contains mealies bought from other people for his widows, who are not allowed to consume the food of the deceased, whilst strangers have nothing to fear from it. (See for the notions of contagion, Part VI.)

787 the two first positions are by far the most common. Let us see what is the meaning of some of the divinatory objects in these different positions :

Baboon +, the village is firm ; no ruins! Baboon —, the village is destroyed ; disease or death ; that which you eat does not remain inside : dysentery.

Ancestor-god +, the gods are happy and thankful. Ancestor-

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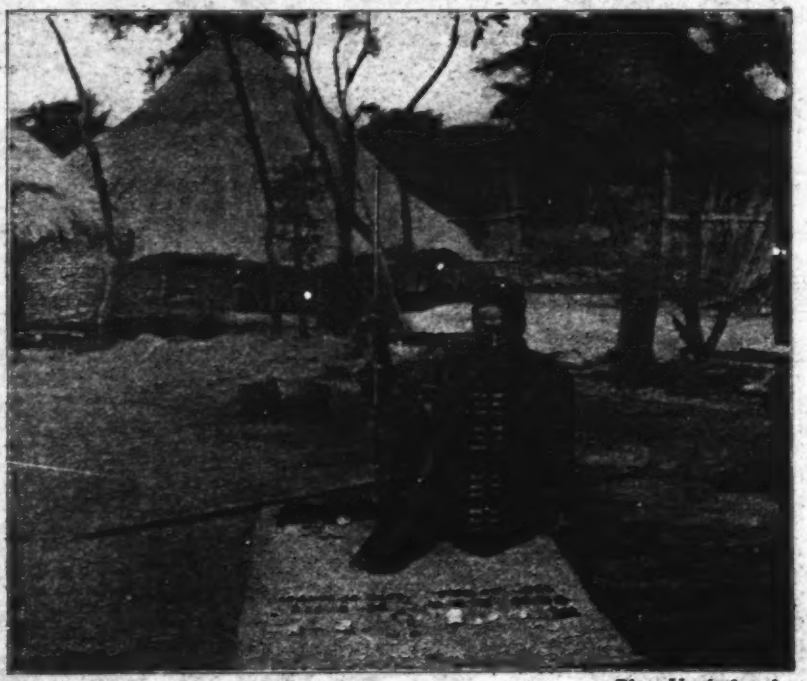

Phot. H. A. Junod.

Maakhelu imitating the "minkono" position.

787 god —, they sleep ; there is nothing to fear ; ×, they are angry, they speak in a low voice ; : , they speak mildly.

Kanye +, the drugs have their eyes open (the two kernels inside the nkanye stone have been removed, and it appears to have two eyes, which are visible in the positive position and hidden in the negative) ; the drugs help, cure. Kanye —, the eyes of the drugs are closed ; the medicine-man will not succeed.

Crocodile stone +, the country is at peace, the village is happy,

361 or *shibala* (Dj.) (18), the oxen kraal, when the village possesses
231 oxen. They are rare now, plague and Texas-fever having
331 more than decimated the herds. Small enclosures at the sides
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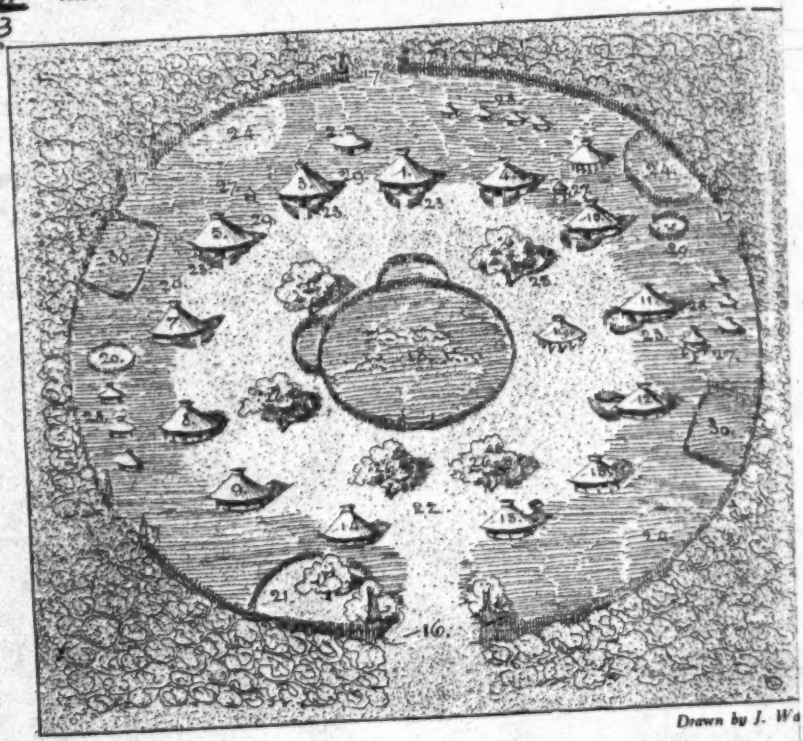

Drawn by J. W'a

Plan of the Thonga village.

1. Hut of the headman's first wife. 2. Headman's private hut. 3. Hut of the headman's second wife. 4. Of the third; 5. Of the fourth. 7 and 8. Huts of the two wives of the headman's younger brother. 9. Wife of third brother. 10. Wife of fourth brother. 11. Headman's son. 12. Headman's nephew. 13. Hut of a stranger. 14. Lao of the boys. 15. Nhanqu of the girls. 16. Main entrance. 17. Back gates. 18. Oxen kraal. 19. Goats' kraal. 20. Pigs' kraal. 21. Square of the men (bandla). 22. Square of the village (hubo). 23. Fire-places. 24. Ash-heaps. 25. Tree of the village. 26. Shade-trees of the hubo. 27. Henhouse. 28. Storehouses. 29. Place of jealousy. 30. Tobacco-gardens.

are reserved for the calves, which are kept there when the cows go to feed during the afternoon. On the right a small hut, a conical roof supported by poles without a wall so as to let the

361 air circulate, is the goats' kraal (19). It may be placed somewhere
231 else, behind the huts, for instance ; or sometimes goats are tethered
331 every night by the leg to sticks round the hubo. The pigs are
343 never kept on the hubo, but always behind the hut : they are newcomers in the Thonga village and have hardly yet won their "droit de cité." Let us salute, as we pass by, the tree (25) which
361 is, as we shall see, the mystical stem of the village. We may perhaps
824 see, hanging upon it, a piece of clothing offered to the gods, or at its
782 base a broken pot which is the *gandjelo*, the altar of the village. The gandjelo is often placed, by preference, among the poles of the
351 main entrance on the right. The village tree, which has a ritual significance, is not to be confounded with the trees of the hubo (26), which are but *mindjuti*, shade-trees, under which the inhabitants are fond of sitting.

361 So we reach the main hut which faces the gate. This is the
595 dwelling of the headman. In hut 3 lives his second wife, in 4, his third and in 5 his fourth. 2 is called *shilubelo*. Great personages, men owning a large kraal, like to build such a hut, which is smaller than the ordinary ones and where no woman sleeps. It is the headman's own hut, where people *luba*, viz., pay their homage to him; a kind of office of the master of the village! He may sleep in it and summon his wives to come to him there. But he generally prefers to sleep in his wives' huts, one month in each, according to the polygamic custom.

361 Behind 4 and 10 is a *mhala*, a shed for the implements. It is
343 built, like the goats' kraal, without plaster walls, and is smaller
351 than a hut. There may be three or four of these in the village.
596 The headman and his wives occupy the back of the village. At the sides live his younger brothers, one, who has two wives, in 7 and 8, two others, those who have but one wife each, in 9 and in 10 respectively. In 11 lives a married son; in 12 it may be a nephew, son of the headman's sister, or a son-in-law; (see
361 page 252). 13 might be the hut of a stranger (mulubeti), who has
574 asked permission to stay with the headman of the village, as he
783 wished to be under his protection. The case is not frequent, but may occur, and in order to be received into the mystic unity of the community, this man will have to "hlamba ndjaka" (See page 153), together with all the inhabitants of the kraal.

361 together with all the inhabitants of the kraal. The two huts near
313 the entrance are, on the left, the *lao*, where unmarried boys sleep
596 (14) and on the right (15) the *nhangu* where the girls live. Often
356 the nhangu is built behind the huts of the mothers, near the mhala ; in this way the girls are kept under more effective watch. The boys of the *lao* have to guard the door, which they close at night where it is the custom to do so. The *hubo* and the *bandla*, the squares, are generally kept quite clean.

361 In front of each hut is a *yard* (*ndangu* pl. *mindangu*, 23) which
372 is also generally well swept. In the centre of each of these are
417 some broken pots (mapseko), or pieces of hard clay taken from
351 ant-hills (psirubu) ; this is the *fireplace (shitiko)*, where the mistress of the hut cooks her food. The fence round the yard used, as a rule, to be made of poles or even trunks of trees planted near each other and forming a circular wall. Nowadays, especially amongst the Rongas, these yards are enclosed with reeds and may be built square, a single wall fencing off as many as three or four huts. The top of this wall is sometimes crenelated. I rather think this arrangement is modern ; the circular wall of the ndangu
585 is an old custom, as is proved by the following fact. On the day of
338 *hloma*, when the bride's-maids and female relatives bring the bride to her husband, they not only build up the woodpile (shigiyane, see page 112), but, in the northern clans, they must also erect a new ndangu which will be called *tsandana*, and so people will know that in the yard there is a *nhlomi*, a bride, working for her mother-in-law! The ndangu is the place where women tell folk-tales of the tribe to the children and to each other, whilst they attend to their cooking, or after the evening meal.

361 If cleanliness prevails on the square and in the yards, the
356 same cannot be said of the region between the huts and the
235 fence. This is called *mahosi* or *makotini*. It is the place where
331 old baskets and broken pots are kept. The chicken houses
343 (*shihahlu*, 27) are built there ; these are generally little huts, with reed walls, placed on a floor of palmtree boards, supported by four poles forked at their upper extremities. The *ash-heaps* are somewhat further on (24). They are called *tala*, and play a part in certain rites, representing, as it would seem, the place of desolation and of sorrow.

of desolation and of sorrow. (Remember Job and compare the rite of rangela bowumba, page 194.) The *stove houses*, *paitlanta* (Ro.), *paitlati* (Dj.), 28) are close by and are built in various forms: little huts with reed walls, when intended for the mealies, with plastered walls, when built to contain ground nuts or sorgho (*nadula* (Dj.). They are sometimes placed on a palm-tree floor resting on short poles, or they are suspended to the boughs of a 343 351 361

Phot. A. Junod.

The interior of a Ronga village. (Nondwane).

tree. *Pigs' kraals* (*hoko* 20) are to be found in the same region: sometimes they are placed even further in the forest on account of their offensive smell. 231 351

Mealie leaves, heaps of makanye stones, broken mortars and discarded pestles lie about behind the huts. If anyone wants to keep the place tidy, he can plant pine apples there (30), or tobacco, or Chili-pepper (*biribiri*). Pumpkin plants often creep over all this disorder. Flowers of European origin are sometimes seen on the hubo in the neighbourhood of Lourenco Marques, especially "everlastings", or the tropical periwinkle, Vinca rosea 356 247 351

462 Many other home duties may oblige the woman to leave the
511 fields at noon ; her head still laden with her basket, she may
356 go to the swamps, near by, and dig out a store of black clay
317 (bompfi). She comes back, mixes the clay with the fresh dung which she has taken from the oxen kraal, and, spreading this mixture with her hands, smears the floor of the hut. This work is called *sindja* (Ro) or *kopola* (Dj.). Dust and vermin will at once disappear under this plaster of black earth, which will dry in a few hours time. Woe to the woman who has not put enough dung in this novel kind of cement! The floor will crack. The clay will shrivel and, when people walk on it, it will crumble into dust! The work will have to be done all over again two or three days later. But if the clay is of good quality, it will harden and last at least a week, the more so as neither wooden shoes nor nailed boots will spoil it.

462 Another woman will go with her primitive axe in search of
511 dead wood. She makes a bundle which she ties with grasses,
313 strengthening these grasses by entwining them with small
284 twigs (1). On returning to the village, she throws her burden on to the ground, before the door of her hut, with the exclamation : "Hu!"

462 Others go to their storehouses, the small huts on poles, where
511 mealies, monkey nuts in their husks, millet and sorghum are kept.
313 They take what they need from these stores (tshaha) by lifting up
252 the roof of the little hut, come back and empty the mealies into the
516 mortar, whilst a friend rubs off the grains from the ears of millet or shells the monkey nuts. Two or three women seize their pestles and begin to pound, in measured time, the bottom of their mortars : Gu-gu-gu-gu. Quite a long way off, on the other side of the copse, this pestle song can be heard, resembling the noise of the flails when corn is threshed in the barn. And the busy women stream with perspiration! This method of crushing the mealies in an erect position, by a vigorous up and down movement of the pestle in

284 (1) Men, when they fasten a bundle with a string, make a knot (ba fundju) whilst
313 women twist it with a little stick (sulela hi limbi) ; when a woman ties a knot, the two ends of the string will be at right angles to the string, whilst when a man makes it, the ends will be parallel with it. (Mbora).

644 the men. However he was allowed to visit it Behind these huts were two passages between poles carefully arranged, one leading to the pig-sties, another to the bush. The photographer was told that this was intended to secure an exit for the queens in case of war... I suppose it had a more common and practical use in every day life! They are the *psiruba* of the queens (p. 311). In the royal kraal these back entrances are taboo.

517 It is on the square that the men of the neighbourhood love
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Phot. Dr J. de Montmollin

Back gate with hen-house.

to meet in the morning, when they come to pay their respects to the chief; they sit down in groups and discuss the news of the day; this is called, as we have seen, "ku ya bandla," "to go to the men's square." Everyone is welcome there, not only members of the reigning family, but also those of the clans conquered by the present chiefs, (as the Honwana, Mahlangwane etc., in
273 Nondwane. Page 357). There is no lack of beer, made from
517 maize or millet, when crops have been good, the women frequently bringing brimming jars to the capital; the daily visits
644 of the men are not therefore altogether disinterested.

685/721 *Theft* (ku yiba) is universally condemned, not so much for its immoral character as for the fact that it renders a normal social life impossible. The notion of *individual property*, though it is not developed as in more civilised nations, is nevertheless at the base of the whole Bantu system. The Bantus are agriculturists. They believe that the products of their labour belong to them and that no one else is entitled to appropriate them. The notion of property is in direct relation to work accomplished. (Compare Part IV.)

685/574/202 To steal growing mealies is not usual. A thief breaks off the cob, whilst the master of the field first uproots the stalk and then takes the cobs. If a friend of his who happens to be travelling passes through his gardens and wants to eat a cob, he is quite welcome to do so. He also uproots the stalk, puts it on one side of the road or leans it against a tree and draws a line on the ground from the place where the stalk grew to the spot where he has put it. Perhaps the owner of the field will discover the uprooted stalk after a whole month. If he inquires who has helped himself to his mealies, his friend will say to him : "Did you not see the line ?" And they will laugh over it (hlekelelana). A thief acting hastily would not have had time to draw the line!

685/789 There are certain magical drugs with which people smear mealie stalks (see Part IV) and they assert that, if any one tries to penetrate into their garden to steal, he will have his hand caught and will not be able to get rid of the plant! For some reason or another, these magical methods do not always work. So the injured person has recourse to the tribunal.

685/343 Should the thief be caught in the very act, there is no difficulty! His own field will be taken by the owner of the stolen mealies and he will have to pay a fine of one ox, otherwise the matter will be brought before the Court, and the only difference will be that the fine will be of two or three oxen, one of which will remain in the hands of the chief. (Mankhelu.) If the thief has been clever enough to avoid being caught, if he has stolen from a store hut, Natives are clever detectives and he will probably be discovered. These store huts are generally built in the middle of the field, or in the little bush which surrounds the village ; the grass all around

685 has been pulled up and the sand nicely smoothed down, so that
343 any traces of a thief would easily be seen. He will possibly be
751 recognised at once by the trackers, owing to some peculiarity in the
625 marks on the sand, the foot-print of each individual being more or less known; clever detectives can even ascertain the height and gait of a man from the length of his stride! If there are no peculiar marks in the foot-prints, the trackers will follow them and reach the village where the thief lives. They will perhaps take him by surprise in his hut. If the matter cannot be settled by the headman of the village and has to be brought before the chief, the guilty party will be fined as much as two, three or even five pounds sterling (Tobane) (1).

When detectives have been unable to trace a thief, they assume a philosophical attitude and say: "Only wait. A man who has stolen will steal again, and you will catch him another time!"

643 *Revolt against the decisions of the chief's hubo* is very rare. Should
687 any person take the part of a condemned man and encourage him to oppose the decision of the Court, he will be beaten with a shambock on the square of the capital. "U onhi hubo," "he has spoilt the Court!" Moreover he may have to pay a fine of £2. (Mankhelu.)

643 *Answer to some of Professor Frazer's questions on Government.*
835 There are no separate chiefs for war and peace. But in time
224 of war the great induna, who [illegible] Commander-in-chief of the
701 army, directs all military operations. The chief is never required to marry his own sister or daughter. The only similar case of which I have heard, is that of a hunter who must have sexual relations with his daughter before going on a hunting trip (Part IV).

643 — The king's mother does not hold any special office.—
778 The chief does not keep any portion of his deceased predecessor excepting the nails and hair used for the mhamba (See page 386 and part VI.)

538 (1) The following interesting couplet in two sentences aptly describes the thief:
Shakhangwa randjelatsane? — The crown on the hut nicely rounded?
Mangetle a pala ritlho... — The hawk burns his claws...
The thief is like a crown on the top of a hut. He is a lazy person, he ostentatious and will not work. Evil will befall him, as with a hawk who tries to snatch the meat that is roasting and burns his claws!

241 out of the earth with their well filled double pods attached to their extremities.

241 The men then construct *drying floors* (tjala, dji-ma) : a mat
251 made of reeds, or of the wood of the palm-tree, is placed in the
343 middle of the field, and supported by four poles ; and on it are
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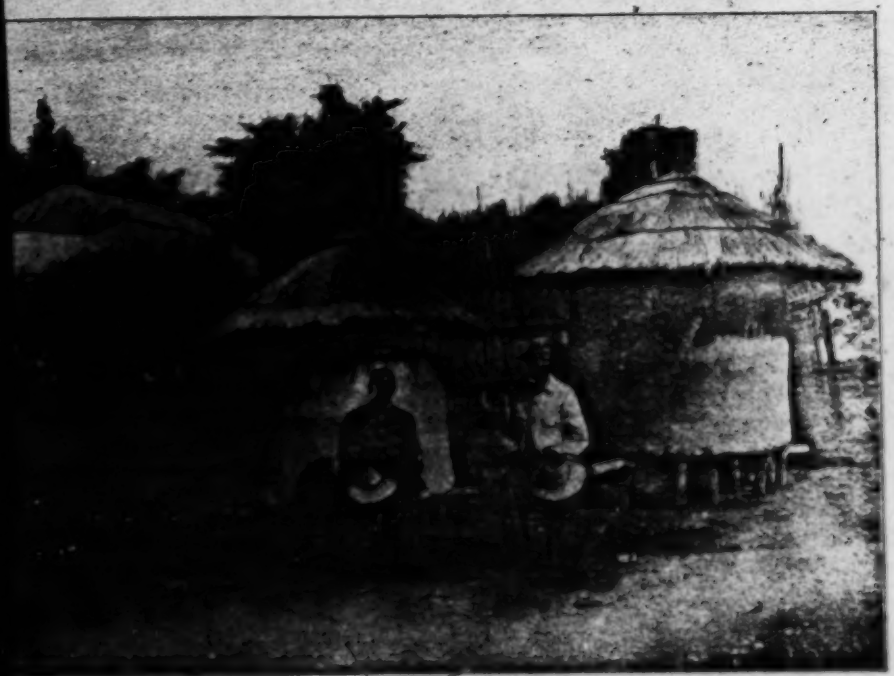
The storehouses of Sokis (Rikatla). Phot. H. A. Junod

laid (yaneka) ground-nuts, and peas, to remain there exposed to the sun until they are completely dried.

241 The next operation is the *threshing*, or separating the grain
252 from the ears (hula). This is done with sorghum and Kafir
221 corn, but not with maize, of which the cobs are generally kept entire in the storehouse until wanted. The *hula* is done on a specially prepared threshing floor in the middle of the field. The floor has been hardened by means of nkanye stones, and smeared over with clay. The sorghum and corn stems are brought thither, and the ears are beaten with small sticks. Or the ears are cut, placed in mortars and slightly pounded to liberate the grains. The best have been preserved for seed.

grains. The best have been preserved for seed. When the threshing is finished, the grains are collected (wolela or hlakula) in the *lihlelo* basket and winnowed (hehera). Kafir corn and sorghum are then stored in the big *ngula* basket (1). As regards maize, it is kept in the storehouses proper (shitlanta), 241 251 343 221



Dula storehouse in the Shilovane village *Phot. H. A. Junod.*
(The man sitting on the right is Viguet, my faithful informant).

little huts built of reeds with a moveable roof and raised on piles. All the shitlanta belong to the husband, though most of the tilling and all the weeding has been done by the wife, as already explained (I. p. 337). In the Transvaal, beans, peas and ground nuts are packed in the *dula* (dji-ma), which are smeared outside with clay, [423] 343

(1) It is taboo to weave the *ngula* before harvest, just as it is to prepare the *ntsha* before the birth of the baby. Before harvest Kafir corn is still *nyimba*, viz., a child not yet born. Who knows if the hail or the locusts will not destroy it? Wait till you have harvested, then you will see what size your basket must be! 241

343 or in small storehouses hung to the branches of trees (mfunge). When the harvest has been plentiful and all the storehouses have been filled, then begins the happy time of winter, of beer drinking, *bumanga* playing, (I. p. 431) paying visits, etc.

II. *Agricultural taboos.*

241 784 The first category of agricultural taboos are those previously mentioned, which spring from the idea of *hierarchy* : the prohibition to sow pumpkin seeds before the elder members of the family, the prohibition to enjoy the first-fruits (Kafir corn, bukanye, etc.) before the gods, the chief, the headman, and the elder brothers have *luma* (I, p. 394). Others belong to the *special feminine taboos*, (girls not allowed to walk amongst the pumpkins, to pluck their fruit or to pick their leaves without certain precautions, I. p. 184). Another category is that of *shimusi*. Certain days are proclaimed by the chief, or fixed by custom, as sabbath days, on which no one is allowed to till the soil. In Nwamba, when there has been a little rain, it is taboo for the people of the clan to work in the fields ; they must remain 241 at home. Amongst the Nkunas the day on which the new 754 moon appears is also shimusi. The moon must be left to "become 784 firm" (tiyela, hola) ; to cut roots while it is still "soft" is taboo : it 821 would cause strong winds and hail. Complete rest is also customary in Khosen the day following the birth of twins. (See Part VI. Chap. II). Some other taboos are due to the fear of *wizards* : it is forbidden to whistle in the fields after having sown or until the mealies are grown. This would call the "baloyi" and endanger the harvest.

241 784 It is a taboo for a woman to remain in a standing position when she borrows a living ember (woka) from people cooking their food in their gardens ; she must sit down when she takes the ember. Should she break this law, it would cause the mealies of the owners of that garden to be burnt (psha) ; the women has "crossed their gardens" (tjemakanya). If however she does this, they

The *pig*, as previously mentioned, is a new comer in the Bantu village. Its name, *nguluve*, means the wild pig. Most villages, however, possess one or two. They are never slaughtered in connection with sacrifices. 231

Poultry (tihuku) is the most common of all live stock. Not a village is without its fowl house (shihahlu); these are generally fashioned like a small hut and perched on piles to protect the poultry during the night from snakes. (See illustration I. p. 312.) 235 343

When a hen and her brood of young chickens have to be cared for, a much smaller hut is built on the ground, but the utmost precaution is taken to keep it almost hermetically sealed, as the mhamba (a long green snake, very venomous) and the shipyahla (Echnida arietans, a large viper resembling the puff-adder) do great execution amongst fowls! As cows are not bred for milking purposes, neither are chickens raised for the sake of their eggs. In fact Thongas consider it a sheer waste to eat eggs and always allow the hens to hatch them out. Hens are wilder than they are with us and often make their nests in the open country, returning some fine day with a flourishing young family. The breed is of very small size and the eggs are tiny; it would require at least two to equal the weight of one ordinary egg such as are for sale in the European markets; it is therefore evidently more advantageous to hatch eggs than to eat them! If, by any chance, a hen dies on the nest from the bite of a snake, the Natives will willingly devour the half hatched or three quarters addled eggs; the more developed the chicken, the greater their appreciation of the delicacy, for, says the Thonga, "i nyama!" — "this is meat!" Fowls are extensively used as timhamba, viz., sacrificial offerings. The throat is cut; a little of the down plucked off the neck is dipped into the blood, and brought close to the mouth for the performance of the *tsu* rite, one of the smaller feathers of the wing (shihluwa), one of the claws, and the beak are tied together and fastened to the wrist, ankle or neck of the person for the sake of whom the offering has been made. (Part VI.) [136] 235 262 235 782

Thongas assert that they have always possessed fowls. "They 235

342 the hut and terrify the occupants by their lugubrious cries.

356 I may mention another advantage of the Thonga hut. Between the sticks and the hoops of the roof small interstices, of a few square inches, are left when the thatch is in place ; in these small lockers all kinds of things are stowed away : ears of sorghum, or of millet, kept for seed, sticks, spoons or knives ; baskets can be hung up, by hitching the string by which they are usually carried across

The Native tin town near Pretoria Station. *Phot. A. Bond.*

the shoulder on to the handle of a spoon which is sticking out of the thatch. On entering a hut the roof looks like a regular museum ; it is useful as a cupboard or hanging wardrobe!

343 The Thonga hut, formed of two distinct parts, wall and roof, is far superior to that of the Zulus, which looks like a bee hive, and consists only of a semi-circular roof. Thongas know how to build this kind of huts, but they are generally made quite small (six feet in diameter) and used as shelters for the boys who look after the goats. They are called *mitjhonga*. The Ba-Ngoni adopted their system of building from the Thongas of the plain, and Gungunyana's people constructed huge conical huts, but the

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

b) Marginal rites.

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The newly circumcised boy is now to be three months secluded from society in the "yard of mysteries" called *sungi*. Let us first describe this lodge, and we shall see what his occupations will be during this time of trial.

1. *The Sungi.*

(See the accompanying plan of the lodge).

The whole sungi is surrounded by a high fence of thorny branches. This is a sign that all that goes on inside must be

Circumcised boys near Shilurane. *Photo A. Jaquet.*

kept secret. No one who is not initiated can be allowed to see it, especially women. This fence is extended at the entrance so as to form a long avenue by which one penetrates into the yard. Then the way of access continues between twelve poles arranged in pairs (2). The inmates alone have the right to take the road between the poles. Circumcised visitors (uncircumcised would not be admitted) go round them and cross the road five times so as to reach the men's entrance at the end (3),

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

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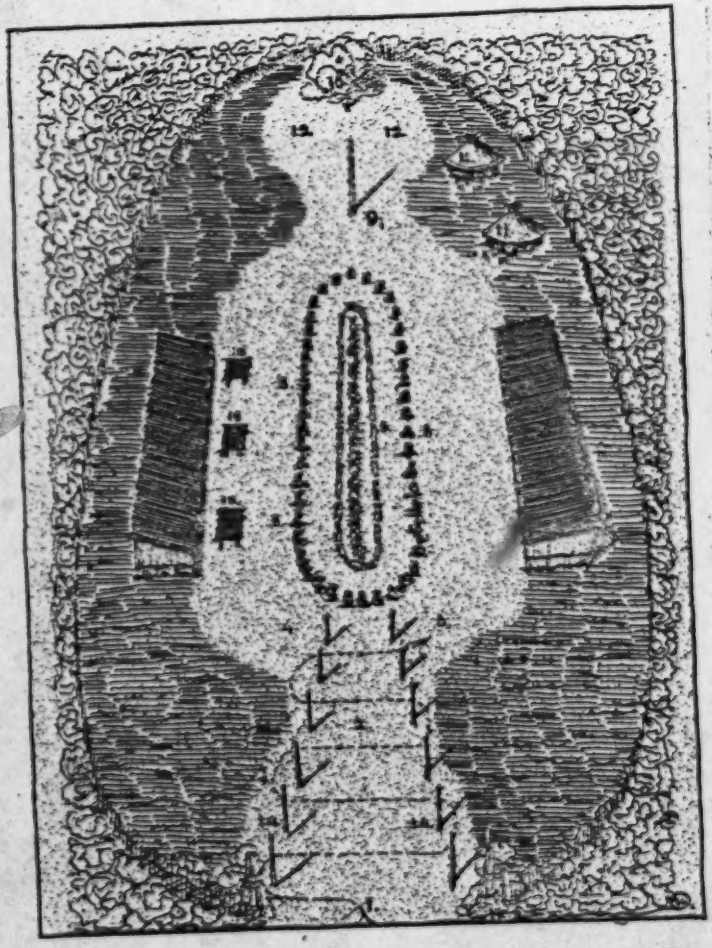
and not the candidates' gate, which is on the opposite side (4). Further on is the central court of the sungi, with the long fireplace built with stones and called the Elephant (5) round which the boys must sit (8), warming their right hips at the fire. The uterine



Plan of the circumcision lodge. *Drawn by J. Wauve.*

[644] 881 349 nephew of the chief, the son of his sister, who takes precedence in all the rites, and who is the first to be circumcised, sits on a special stone with the others behind him. He is called the *Hwatye*. Near the fireside are the tables made of hurdles of reeds on which the porridge of the boys is served every day (15). The central court is occupied on both sides by two square sheds hastily and roughly built, the one on the right (7) being the hut of the shepherds and of the men, the one on the left (6) the hut of the circumcised. The soil is not smeared in these houses. Some of the men also sleep in separate huts behind (11). It is behind the Elephant that the big Mulagaru pole will be raised at the close of the school (9). Further at the back of the sungi is the place of the formulae where the boys are taught (12). A tree sometimes grows in the middle and the instructor climbs up it to impart his teaching (10)!

I have drawn this plan of the sungi with the help of Viguet. Having never seen it with my own eyes, I cannot guarantee that it does not omit many details... But it is correct as a whole.

881 The inmates of the lodge fall into three categories : 1. the " bukwera " viz. the troop of candidates who are to be initiated ; 2. the shepherds (barisi or psitjiba, the boys who light (tjibela) the fire of the Elephant) who waken the circumcised in the morning, accompany them on their hunting trips, watch them when they eat, etc. 3. The grown up men who have volunteered to come and stay in the sungi during the whole school. They eat the flesh of the animals killed by the bukwera, carve pestles, weave baskets, enjoy themselves, and form the council which looks after the well-being of the school. Amongst them are the so-called father and mother of the Ngoma, two men who are specially in charge of the school. The " father " has a difficult task ; he must keep discipline, administer punishment, etc. These two men are paid, as are also the Lion-men and the Manyabe. The Manyabe is the great doctor of the school. He has poured his charms on the fence to protect the lodge against wizards. He does not stay in the sungi, but can be called at any time to administer medicine to the boys who are unwell or whose wounds do not heal properly.

853 grandmother, by name Mishidohi, who had an adult son and had had no other child since, prepared light beer and other appropriate food and succeeded in secreting milk in her own breast ; so the child was saved !

856 826 A child during these first months of its existence is regarded as a very weak creature. "I mati !" i. e. "It is nothing but water !" Hence perhaps the curious idea that a baby, just like a new born animal, is able to swim, at any rate it cannot be drowned : it floats on the water. When a woman carrying a little child on her back crosses a river and is in danger of being swept away by the stream, people shout to her from the shore : "Untie the 'ntehe' and let the baby cross. Think of yourself, the little one will follow all right." They say: "Psa yila, it is taboo that a baby should sink." Note the curious use of the word "yila" in this sentence.

3) Dentition.

856 364 351 As soon as the child has cut the two lower and upper incisors, the mother takes a white bead (tjambu) and ties it to one of the child's hairs above the forehead. This white bead is said to help the other teeth to come out normally. If this precaution were not taken, the child would not become intelligent ; he would shiver instead of smiling ; he would bring forward his lips and his tongue to prevent the air from getting into his mouth ! When all the teeth are duly cut, the bead is removed and thrown away *talen*, viz. on the *tala*. The *tala* is the ash-heap, the place behind the hut on which everyone throws ashes and dirt. It plays a great part in the customs of the Thongas and other South African Bantus.

195 The teeth (tinyo-menyo) of the children are called figuratively *hobe*. The *hobe* (pl. *tihobe*) means the grain of pounded maize which is white and very similar to a tooth. Hence the expression : "A humi hobe," "he has got out a grain of maize," employed to indicate the cutting of the teeth.

787 766 856 When a child cuts his upper teeth first, it is a bad omen. In the Northern clans and especially amongst the Ba-Pedi, it is a great taboo. At his death the child must be buried in wet soil.

595 643 in date. At her death the chief does not perform the incision : the first in date remains the first from the ritual point of view. All these facts show that, for the Thongas, there is a deeper, more mystical conception of matrimony than at first appears, when we consider their present polygamic family. For them, true, complete matrimony is the union of two persons, not of three or ten, and little wives are not much more than concubines. This feeling may very well be explained by the supposition that the race has passed through a previous monogamic phase.

II. *Consequences of polygamy.*

595 A happy consequence of the custom is that, in the primitive Bantu tribe, no disconsolate old maid is to be found. This is no doubt an advantage. I fear, however, that when monogamy sets in, this unblessed singleness will follow in its train.

But the evils of polygamy by far exceed its few advantages!

1) The first is the dreadful development of sexual passion which occurs amongst polygamists. White people who have lived in close touch with Natives in a head kraal where men have many wives, can bear testimony to the frightful excesses in which they indulge. See Annotatio 14, the observations of Dr. Liengme at Gungunyana's residence.

595 578 357 2) A second evil resulting from the custom is the domestic quarrelling which prevails in the villages of polygamists. There is a special term which indicates the peculiar jealousy of a wife towards her co-wives, *bukwele*. The prefix *bu*, in Bantu languages, designates abstract things, ideas, feelings. It is also an indication of place. *Bukwele* therefore also means the special spot between the court yards, where the wives of one man go to insult each other (rukutelana). The story of Leah and Rachel, in the book of Genesis, may give some idea of the reason of such quarrels!

595 578 Sometimes the husband amuses himself by fostering these by no means edifying feelings amongst his spouses. Tobane says : "He will say bad things (psitokoro) to one of his wives, his

1 [See pp. 519-520 in these categories of in 116-Analyst]

361 district, fifteen miles to the north, far enough from the town, where the ugly galvanised iron sheds have not yet supplanted the old typical hut. We see, in the bush, on the slope of the sandy dune, a little forest of mimosa, *minkanye*, *mikawakwa* (Strychnos). In its midst nestles a village. Thongas like to build amongst trees, to protect themselves against the terrible south winds which frequently blow across the plain, and perhaps also to shield themselves from the inquisitive eyes of people passing along the road. The little community prefers to live by itself, as it is entirely self-sufficing. This small wood is also used 361 514 for other purposes. Thongas have not yet learned to build the kind of outhouse which is described in English by two letters (W. C.), and they "go outside" (humela handle) into the little copse. The air is not very pure when we cross it, so we hasten to reach the village. The accompanying plan (p. 312) represents a combination of features observed in many Thonga kraals; it is rare to find a "muti" as complete as this.

361 We first note the external circular fence *(lihlampfu)*. It is 712 made of branches, thorny or otherwise, one and a half to two feet 417 high, more or less rotten. It is not built as a protection against 351 enemies. In this tribe, villages are not fortified, and, in case of war, the only resource is flight. The fence protects against 361 spiritual enemies, witches, as we shall see later on. The path 351 leads us straight to the main entrance (16) the *mharana*, which is three or four feet wide. But the fence is open in some other places for narrower passages called *psiruba* (17), one for about every three huts; these smaller openings lead to the wood and are used only by the inhabitants to "humela handle." Passers by, as a rule, do not enter by such back gates. They are private. On either side of the large gate is often seen a growing tree and some poles, which clearly show the entrance. This is never closed during the day. On our right, a little court with some broken pots which denote a fire-place, is the *bandla* (21), the place where the men congregate. In front of us, at the other extremity of the circle, is the headman's hut (1) or rather the hut of his principal wife. On the way to it, we cross the *hubo* (22) the central square and pass round the *ranga*, (Ro.), *shibaya*

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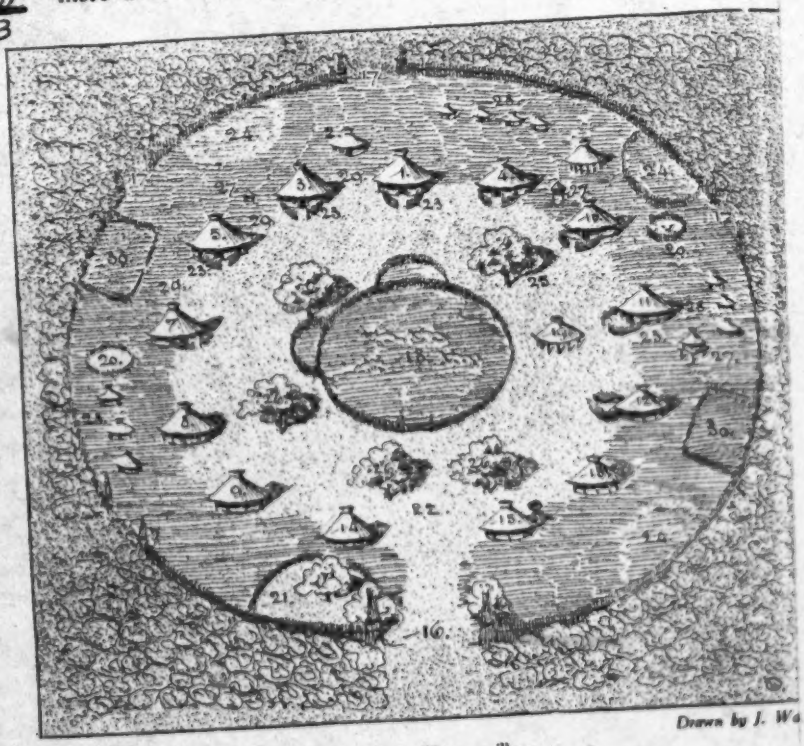
or *shibala* (Dj.) (18), the oxen kraal, when the village possesses oxen. They are rare now, plague and Texas-fever having more than decimated the herds. Small enclosures at the sides



Drawn by J. W

Plan of the Thonga village.

1. Hut of the headman's first wife. 2. Headman's private hut. 3. Hut of the headman's second wife. 4. Of the third; 5. Of the fourth. 7 and 8. Huts of the two wives of the headman's younger brother. 9. Wife of third brother. 10. Wife of fourth brother. 11. Headman's son. 12. Headman's nephew. 13. Hut of a stranger. 14. Lao of the boys. 15. Nhanga of the girls. 16. Main entrance. 17. Back gates. 18. Oxen kraal. 19. Goats' kraal. 20. Pigs' kraal. 21. Square of the men (bandla). 22. Square of the village (hubo). 23. Fire-places. 24. Ash-heaps. 25. Tree of the village. 26. Shade-trees of the hubo. 27. Henhouse. 28. Storehouses. 29. Place of jealousy. 30. Tobacco-gardens.

are reserved for the calves, which are kept there when the cows go to feed during the afternoon. On the right a small hut, a conical roof supported by poles without a wall so as to let the

361 air circulate, is the goats' kraal (19). It may be placed somewhere
231 else, behind the huts, for instance ; or sometimes goats are tethered
331 every night by the leg to sticks round the hubo. The pigs are
343 never kept on the hubo, but always behind the hut : they are newcomers in the Thonga village and have hardly yet won their "droit de cité." Let us salute, as we pass by, the tree (25) which
361 is, as we shall see, the mystical stem of the village. We may perhaps
824 see, hanging upon it, a piece of clothing offered to the gods, or at its
782 base a broken pot which is the *gandjelo*, the altar of the village.
351 The gandjelo is often placed, by preference, among the poles of the main entrance on the right. The village tree, which has a ritual significance, is not to be confounded with the trees of the hubo (26), which are but *mindjuti*, shade-trees, under which the inhabitants are fond of sitting.

361 So we reach the main hut which faces the gate. This is the
595 dwelling of the headman. In hut 3 lives his second wife, in 4, his third and in 5 his fourth. 2 is called *shilubelo*. Great personages, men owning a large kraal, like to build such a hut, which is smaller than the ordinary ones and where no woman sleeps. It is the headman's own hut, where people *luba*, viz., pay their homage to him; a kind of office of the master of the village! He may sleep in it and summon his wives to come to him there. But he generally prefers to sleep in his wives' huts, one month in each, according to the polygamic custom.

361 Behind 4 and 10 is a *mhala*, a shed for the implements. It is
343 built, like the goats' kraal, without plaster walls, and is smaller
351 than a hut. There may be three or four of these in the village.
596 The headman and his wives occupy the back of the village. At the sides live his younger brothers, one, who has two wives, in 7 and 8, two others, those who have but one wife each, in 9 and in 10 respectively. In 11 lives a married son; in 12 it may be a nephew, son of the headman's sister, or a son-in-law; (see
361 page 252). 13 might be the hut of a stranger (mulubeti), who has
574 asked permission to stay with the headman of the village, as he
783 wished to be under his protection. The case is not frequent, but may occur, and in order to be received into the mystic unity of the community, this man will have to "hlamba ndjaka" (See page 153), together with all the inhabitants of the kraal.

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1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

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Phot. A. Bond.

The interior of a Ronga village. (Nwadzeme).

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361 in the bandla, and it is strictly reserved for them. Women are
351 allowed to penetrate into it only when they bring food. Boys
562 must remove the ashes from the fireplace, not women. The *hubo*, on the contrary, is open to all. A shed is sometimes built on it to afford shelter during the rainy days. There are special acts always performed on the hubo : the cutting up (shindla), the slaughtering and butchery of animals and the feast of "eating the head." The head of any slaughtered ox belongs to the men, and they eat it together on the hubo (See letter C.). It is the business of the young men to keep the hubo clean, and they sometimes assemble to pull up the grass which may have grown on it. In former times it was taboo to come to the hubo with
292 sandals. Sandals are used for hunting and must be taken off before entering the village.

Another place to which I have already alluded is the *bukwele*,
361 the "place of jealousy," where angry co-wives insult each other!
351 On our diagram it would be located between 5 and 4, for the
595 wives of the headman.

The Thonga village, this closed circle of huts, is a living
361 organism. All its members form a whole whose unity is remark-
596 able. This common life never appears in a more striking form
264 than at the evening meal. Let us look at our diagram. In every
476 yard the mistress of the hut has cooked her mealies and her sauce in different pots, and, when the sun sets, she distributes the contents (phamela) in wooden or earthen plates. The largest is for the husband. He sits on the bandla with his companions, the other men of the village, and the youths waiting for the meal. All these plates, generally carried by small girls or boys, are brought from all sides to the men's gathering. All do not necessarily contain the ordinary mealies pap ; some are filled with manioc, some with sweet potatoes, etc. The men attack the first plate, all of them taking the food with their fingers. They pass on to the second and so on to the last. Meanwhile each mother has filled other smaller plates, one for the girls, one for the boys, one for herself. She has even sent to each of the other women of the village a little of her cooking, and the others have done the same to her ; so each member of the community, when

621/831 all this is done in fun. It is a great day of rejoicing for the "tinamu", who tease each other as much as they like. A man may be wanting in respect even to his great mukoñwana on these days!

621/756/337/789 6) When the huts are ready, the *fence* is built. The family doctor is summoned. The medicine man throws leaves or stones treated with his drugs along the circular line, where the headman intends to place the branches which will form the future fence of the village. This being done, the men erect the fence.

7) Special precautions are taken for *the main entrance*. Poles are erected on both sides, but before they are put in place, the doctor pours medicine into the holes in the ground and also smears the poles with it at the bottom and at the top. Mankhelu used to bury a black stone, taken out of the river, at the gate. This stone had also been smeared with drugs. "In this way, I prevent enemies from entering. Those who come to try their charms against us (ku hi ringa hi maringo) will be attacked by disease and go and die in their houses."

783/834/621 8) The building is finished. Nothing remains to be done but to *ripen the village* (wupfisa muti). Men and women assemble in two separate groups and ask each other if they have been continent during the whole "buhlapfa". If one of them confesses to having sinned, he has stolen the village from the headman; the whole work is spoiled and must be recommenced elsewhere. If all the members of the community have behaved well, they proceed to a purifying ceremony exactly similar to the *hlamba ndjaka* which takes place during the mourning ceremonies. Each couple has sexual relations according to a fixed order of precedence, one every night, and they all go to trample on the spot where the women wash their hands. The principal wife is the last to perform these rites.

621/595 9) Then comes the *drawing to himself of the village by the headman* (kokotela muti). At dawn, after the night when she has had her ritual sexual relations with the headman, his principal wife takes his shield and his assagais and stands at the main entrance, everyone being present. Outside is a thorny branch prepared for the occasion. In her martial attire, she drags this branch to the entrance and closes it.

621 1) *Social rites.* The muti, as we have seen, is a little organised
596 community having its own laws, amongst which the most important
833 seems to be the law of hierarchy. The elder brother is the undisputed
768 master and no one can supersede him. He is the owner of the village. No one must "steal it" from him. Should any one do so, the whole community would suffer and no children would be born ; the life of the organism would be deeply affected. That is the reason why the headman must go first with his principal wife to have relations with her in the new village, and thus *take possession* of it or *tie* it. For this same reason, when the headman dies, the village *must* move. It is taboo to remain in it. Until the inheritance has been distributed, it is still *his home* (kwa [illegible]), but as soon as this ceremony has taken place, the villagers must go away, and close the door with a thorny branch. The part played by the
621 principal wife in all these ceremonies is most remarkable. It is
595 absolutely imperative that the headman should "tie the village" with her,
562 and not with another of his spouses. Should she be very old, the law
768 must be observed all the same ; should she be ill, and unable to have sexual
764 relations, the village simply cannot be moved. In the Northern clans we see her taking the shield and the assagai, closing the village and "giving it" to the inmates, even performing a sacrifice and praying to the gods. It is very rare to see a woman presiding at a public religious ceremony ; but she is the owner of the village as well as the headman. Moving is imperative when she dies as well as after the death of the headman. The main gate must also be closed and a new entrance made in the fence to be used during the year of mourning ; in the case of her death, this opening must be made on the left of the regular *mharana*, whilst, when the husband dies, it is made on the right side ; just as in the hut, when the corpse is removed for burial. (See page 138.)

351 2) *Protective rites.* These are those which concern the fence. This
789 fence does not afford material protection. The branches dry up very
621 soon and, in the case of a bush-fire, for instance, they would do more harm than good. It is a spiritual protection, a barrier of charms, of magic influences, to prevent the entrance of wizards and of all the hostile powers of the bush. We shall understand this better when treating of witchcraft superstitions. (Part VI.)

182 3) *Passage rites.* The reader will have been surprised to observe
621 amongst the ceremonies of the moving of villages, many features which we have already met with in the circumcision school, or in the
829 mourning customs. At first sight there seems to be no relation whatever between the moving of a village, the initiation of boys and the

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

351
644

Phot. Dr J. de Montmollin.

Main gate of the Tembe capital.

Phot. Dr J. de Montmollin.

The "hubo," square of the Tembe capital
(The huts of the queens in the background, behind the reed wall).

644 the men. However he was allowed to visit it Behind these huts were two passages between poles carefully arranged, one leading to the pig-sties, another to the bush. The photographer was told that this was intended to secure an exit for the queens in case of war... I suppose it had a more common and practical use in every day life! They are the *psiruba* of the queens (p. 311). In the royal kraal these back entrances are taboo.

517 644 It is on the square that the men of the neighbourhood love

343 351

Phot. Dr J. de Maillmolli

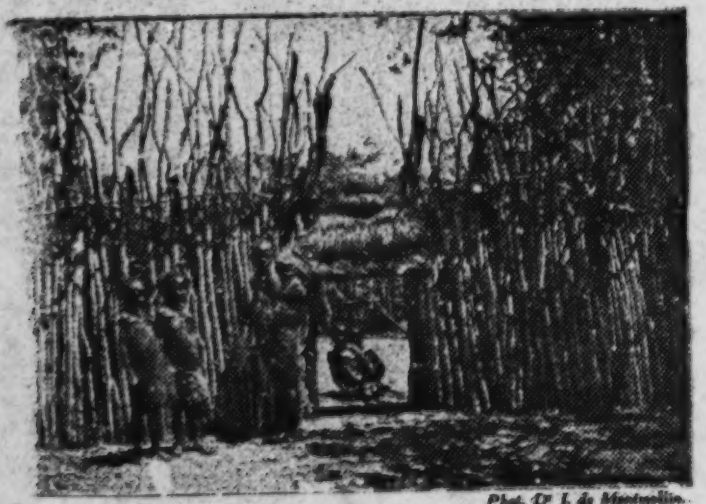
Back gate with hen-house.

to meet in the morning, when they come to pay their respects to the chief; they sit down in groups and discuss the news of the day; this is called, as we have seen, "ku ya bandla," "to go to the men's square." Everyone is welcome there, not only members of the reigning family, but also those of the clans conquered by the present chiefs, (as the Hoñwana, Mahlangwane etc., in 273 Nondwane. Page 357). There is no lack of beer, made from 517 maize or millet, when crops have been good, the women frequently bringing brimming jars to the capital; the daily visits 644 of the men are not therefore altogether disinterested.

B. COURT PERSONAGES.

644 Amongst those most frequently seen at the Court, must be mentioned the Counsellors, the Favourites, the Herald and the Official Vituperator.

351



Phot. Dr J. de Mentmollin.

Back gate.

1 *The Counsellors.*

645 The Counsellors, tindjuna (1), constitute a Cabinet which assists the chief in carrying on the functions of Royalty. There are several grades of these functionaries; first the Principal Counsellors (letikulu) whose province it is to discuss and decide

(1) The Zulu word *induna* is well known and has been more or less adopted in current speech in South Africa. The Thonga form is adjuna, pl. tindjuna. I employ both these forms indiscriminately.

245 the cause of the desolation. Planting new trees is consequently
784 a taboo! Nowadays however, this superstition has died out,
824 and one may see a great number of mango, orange, lemon (1), and pho-pho trees in Thonga fields, on the Coast as well as in Zoutpansberg.

[351] Natives do not generally fence their gardens. Stealing is
685 therefore very easy and it is no wonder that they have recourse to
789 magical means to protect themselves. Here are some of them; they are characteristic instances of Bantu magic.

The *rihehlo*. This consists of a kind of mysterious influence exerted on the thief by throwing a magical powder into his footprints or by taking a little of the earth found in these footprints and treating it with the drugs. The inhabitants of the village where the thief lives will be seized by disease; this will induce them to come to the owners of the garden to confess their fault and pay a fine. Then the magician who had furnished the drug will give them a counter-drug and they will be healed! Amongst the Pedis, the magician anoints with his drugs the stem from which a cob has been stolen. Then the thief will feel intolerable suffering in his little finger and come to the village of the people whom he has robbed crying: "I have stolen!" He pays the fine, receives in exchange the counter-drug and the pain ceases! (Spelonken)

The tinhlamalala. This is the name of the central nervules of the leaves of the Hyphaene palm tree. They are like little snakes, very slender, and flexible. To make the resemblance still greater, the owner of a field makes a knot at the extremity of the rod: this represents the head of the snake. Then he looks for the dried skin which has been cast off by a real snake; he reduces this to ashes, makes a powder with these ashes and anoints the rods. He weaves the rods together to form a kind of crown and places it on one of the mealies stems in his garden. When the thief

137 (1) The lemon tree is called mbomu (mu-mi). This seems to be a Native word and the tree also may be indigenous in the country. It grows wild on the banks of the Lower Nkomati to such an extent that there is an island in the river, some distance above Morakwen, which is called Ilha dos Limões, Lemon Island. The lemons are of large size and their rind resembles that of the orange.

323 doubtless to avoid bringing any ill luck to the venture! She
777 buries the clay at the foot of a tree to keep it moist, and only takes it out of its hiding-place on the day on which she has decided to start the work.

323 Let us see by means of some photographs, taken by the greatly regretted A. Borel, how Meta, a Shibindji girl, married in Rikatla, proceeds in her work. Placing a broken piece of an old pot in the

Fashioning the pots. *Phot. A. Borel*

mortar, she pounds it until it is reduced to small fragments, the size of a grain of maize: these she mixes with her clay, adding water and sand, and kneads the whole together until she has made it into a very soft ball. She makes a hole in this, a wide opening which she enlarges by degrees, hollowing it out more and more and
323 gradually giving it the shape she wishes. I have already alluded
352 to the clever way in which the Blacks trace the circumference of a circle on the ground (I. p. 126); the same natural instinct enables them to model perfect spheres. It is astonishing to see the beautiful symmetry of these utensils, although these *pots* are fashioned without the aid of a wheel or measuring instrument of any kind.

322 through the ages. The specimen in the illustration[1] was bought
352 from a young man, a traveller, on the road; the bird's claws,
777 beads and other articles tied all round it, doubtless hunting trophies, are plainly to be seen. He had the advantage of literally

Thonga statuettes.
(One third of the natural size.)

resting on his laurels, and naively believed they would bring him good luck while sleeping.

532 The Thonga artist has even dared to portray the *human form*,
481 and the result of his audacity, however grotesque, is not without
322 originality, and even a certain characteristic style, which may be recognised in all their statuettes. More often they content themselves with carving a man's head, with his crown, on the top of their walking sticks. I here give[2] an illustration of Mankhelu's stick, which was a very old one, dating from 1850,

1 [The Thonga pillow -- See p. 128, No. 8. -- Analyst]

2 [p. 133]

247 (L.), with its white or pink blossoms, which have spread all over
331 the coast.

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Phot. A. Burd.

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462 Many other home duties may oblige the woman to leave the
511 fields at noon ; her head still laden with her basket, she may
356 go to the swamps, near by, and dig out a store of black clay
317 (bompfi). She comes back, mixes the clay with the fresh dung which she has taken from the oxen kraal, and, spreading this mixture with her hands, smears the floor of the hut. This work is called *sindja* (Ro) or *kopola* (Dj.). Dust and vermin will at once disappear under this plaster of black earth, which will dry in a few hours time. Woe to the woman who has not put enough dung in this novel kind of cement! The floor will crack. The clay will shrivel and, when people walk on it, it will crumble into dust! The work will have to be done all over again two or three days later. But if the clay is of good quality, it will harden and last at least a week, the more so as neither wooden shoes nor nailed boots will spoil it.

462 Another woman will go with her primitive axe in search of
511 dead wood. She makes a bundle which she ties with grasses,
313 strengthening these grasses by entwining them with small
284 twigs (1). On returning to the village, she throws her burden on to the ground, before the door of her hut, with the exclamation : "Hu!"

462 Others go to their storehouses, the small huts on poles, where
511 mealies, monkey nuts in their husks, millet and sorghum are kept.
313 They take what they need from these stores (tshaha) by lifting up
252 the roof of the little hut, come back and empty the mealies into the
516 mortar, whilst a friend rubs off the grains from the ears of millet or shells the monkey nuts. Two or three women seize their pestles and begin to pound, in measured time, the bottom of their mortars : Gu-gu-gu-gu. Quite a long way off, on the other side of the copse, this pestle song can be heard, resembling the noise of the flails when corn is threshed in the barn. And the busy women stream with perspiration! This method of crushing the mealies in an erect position, by a vigorous up and down movement of the pestle in

284 (1) Men, when they fasten a bundle with a string, make a knot (ba fundju) whilst
313 women twist it with a little stick (sulela hi linhi) ; when a woman ties a knot, the two ends of the string will be at right angles to the string, whilst when a man makes it, the ends will be parallel with it. (Mboza).

462 thank (tlangela) her husband for his kind help! This is her
273 method of notifying him that all the grain has been harvested, as, whatever the man's share of the work may have been, the mealies belong to him.

462 The main work of the man is the *building and repairing of the*
356 *huts*. This is truly an arduous job, but it is not of yearly recur-
342 rence. Every third or fourth year they are obliged to re-thatch the roof. The huts are built and repaired during the winter, from May to September.

A second domain, which is exclusively man's, is the *care of the cattle*; the boys milk the cows, construct and repair the kraal: the little boys herd the goats, and the young men the oxen, as has already been mentioned.

462 It is also the men who *make all the utensils and tools* used in the
411 village, pots and other crockery excepted; mortars, pestles,
294 handles for axes or hoes (mimphinyi), wooden platters, carved or forged articles, all this work pertains to them. They must also make the *ntehe* for their wives, or sisters, after the birth of the babies. This is probably the explanation of the curious fact noticed amongst Native Christians, namely that they are much more clever at needlework than their wives. Big fellows are often seen forsaking the hoe to work with the needle, and there are fathers who make their own clothing as well as the dresses for their wives and children!

462 *Hunting and fishing* are, of course, also men's work... or pastime.
224 For some of them hunting is an actual trade, at least such was the case in former times, before the White Governments imposed strict regulations and levied heavy licences on that sport. We shall study, in Part IV, the curious customs relating to these two favourite occupations of the Natives.

574 A great part of their time is devoted by the men to *paying*
517 *visits*. They are very fond of calling on each other, and sometimes
484 they go great distances to see relatives or friends. They do not travel to pay visits only, but they frequently journey to claim payment of their debts (milandju). To regain the possession of a miserable head of cattle they willingly lose whole weeks! And what endless discussions in the *hubo*, when an unfortunate visitor

643 The grass of the roof of this hut must never be removed, though
784 it may rot owing to the rains. It is taboo. One simply puts
356 a layer of new grass over the old one, a thing which is rarely done in the case of ordinary roofs.

643 In case of war, should the clan be obliged to leave the country,
789 a special little hut is hastily built in the bush and the precious medicine is deposited therein. There is no fear that the enemy
722 will take it, either Whites or Natives, because this hut also has the attribute of invisibility. This happened during the war of 1894 (1). In the case of the *mhamba* of the Tembe and Zihlahla clans it is different; the man who keeps it must run away with it and with the chief.

643 Such are the laws of the mphulo. This great medicine may
789 certainly be regarded as a part of the regalia, and the most important part. It is, for the chief and sub-chiefs, a means of strengthening their authority, as will be seen in the description of the luma rite. On the other hand the mphulo is a collective possession, the powerful magic means by which the clan resists its enemies or conquers them. It occupies the very centre of the national life.

789 In the Manyisa clan the war-medicine is called *mabophe*, and is
726 kept by a man called Chikiza, who belongs to the Ntjeko clan, not
643 to the royal family. He is said to have inherited it from his
787 forefathers. The medicine however belongs to the chief. It is administered as follows. The *ñanga* prepares small heaps of wood on the road, pours a little of the drug over them, sets fire to them and the warriors tread on the embers and extinguish the fire with their feet. This makes them invulnerable or at least protects them against fatal wounds. When they are ready to start for battle, the bones are thrown, and give the following intimation:
643 "Do not kill the first enemy you meet with, but catch him alive, be
789 it a man or a woman, and bring him to the chief." The chief, accompanied by some indumas, must stab him outside the royal
726 kraal; the body of the deceased enemy will then be cut open, and

(1) In the Nondwane the nyokwekulu is still kept by the heir of Maphunga, Magomanyana. The new chief, the usurper, tried to find it, but Godlela refused to give it to him. Thus Mubvesha has no *mphulo*.

342 the hut and terrify the occupants by their lugubrious cries.

356 I may mention another advantage of the Thonga hut. Between the sticks and the hoops of the roof small interstices, of a few square inches, are left when the thatch is in place ; in these small lockers all kinds of things are stowed away : ears of sorghum, or of millet, kept for seed, sticks, spoons or knives ; baskets can be hung up, by hitching the string by which they are usually carried across

The Native tin town near Pretoria Station. *Phot. A. Borel.*

the shoulder on to the handle of a spoon which is sticking out of the thatch. On entering a hut the roof looks like a regular museum ; it is useful as a cupboard or hanging wardrobe!

343 The Thonga hut, formed of two distinct parts, wall and roof, is far superior to that of the Zulus, which looks like a bee hive, and consists only of a semi-circular roof. Thongas know how to build this kind of huts, but they are generally made quite small (six feet in diameter) and used as shelters for the boys who look

000 after the goats. They are called *mitjhonga*. The Ba-Ngoni adopted their system of building from the Thongas of the plain, and Gungunyana's people constructed huge conical huts, but the

584 square ; they sit down in the shade. They are asked : " What do you want ? " " We have come to see the girls ", they answer bluntly. And the reply is : " All right. Look at them. "

584 Of course the girls do their very best to be as pleasing as
292 possible, as the mother has told them that these are suitors.
361 The suitor is easily known by his special attire, a belt of skins either of leopard or tiger-cat. He goes from one yard to the other, and talks with the cooks, inquiring their names, and looking at them as, with vigourous and graceful movements of the body, they crush the mealies in their mortar. If the seekers find what they want, they return home, if not, they go to the next hamlet. (Let us say here that each village consists of not more than six to twelve huts built in a circle, leaving a central circular place, the shaded " square ", of which the oxen kraal occupies the middle.) (See Part II.)

584 When he is satisfied, the suitor goes home and says to his parents : "So and so pleases me. Go and woo her. (Ku buta)." Then a middle aged man of the village is sent to the parents of the young girl. He is received in the father's hut and, with all the circumlocutions required by etiquette, he discharges his errand. The girl is called and told that the visitor who came the other day has chosen her ; she is asked if she also loves him (or if she wants him... for there is only one word in Ronga to express these two kindred notions, ku randja). " Oh! is it the one who looked thus and so and who wore this and that ? Yes, I consent to accept (to eat) the money out of his hands (ku da *bukosi ku yuma*). " If she does not care for him, she will declare it quite as plainly : the suitor will have to seek elsewhere. It is a fact worth noting that, amongst those so-called savages, a father very seldom obliges his daughter to accept a husband whom she dislikes, except in the case of debt. If the matter is arranged to the satisfaction of all parties the buta (1) or betrothal is concluded and the messenger is feasted, while he, on his part, gives a present (shihlengwe) to the girl's parents of the value of a hoe or ten

(1) *Buta* may be a factitive derivative of the verb *bula*, to speak : to cause somebody to speak, to give an answer.

E. MATURE AGE

1. *The Bantu Ideal.*

581 The married man is called " he who has his home " (a ni le
354 kwakwe) in opposition to the single man (nkhwenda). But let
562 us say at once that the kind of individual called bachelor does
885 not abound amongst the Bantus. Only the utterly wretched, invalids, and the weak-minded, are deprived of legal marriage, which for the black man is and remains the one object in life. It is through his wife and children that he becomes somebody in society. This fact does not appear during the first year of wedlock, for the newly married woman must cook at the fireplace of her mother-in-law. She is hardly more than a servant during a whole year ; she does not possess her own pot ; and this must be so because she does not yet eat the mealies of her own garden, having ploughed her fields in her former domicile the previous year. Her husband eats with her. He is not yet
595 a lord. But if he is rich, if he is the heir of an important man, he will not be long in buying a second and third wife.

These new marriages will be contracted like the first, but with less pomp. It may even happen that the feast is held in the husband's village, if he is middle-aged and is celebrating his fifth or sixth wedding.

595 For each new wife, he will build a hut. He has begun his
342 village when building the house of his first wife, the great wife,
556 (nsati lwe nkulu) as she is called, who will remain the principal
542 one whatever may happen. While, without compass, he was
361 drawing on the ground, with the marvellous instinct of the South African Native, the circumference of the circle on which the patched reed walls of his dwelling were to rise, while he was covering this circular wall with a conical roof, he was saying to himself : " I establish my home ; I inaugurate my village ". During the following years, the aim of his life will be to complete little by little another wider circle... When he has bought his

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

when he has brought his

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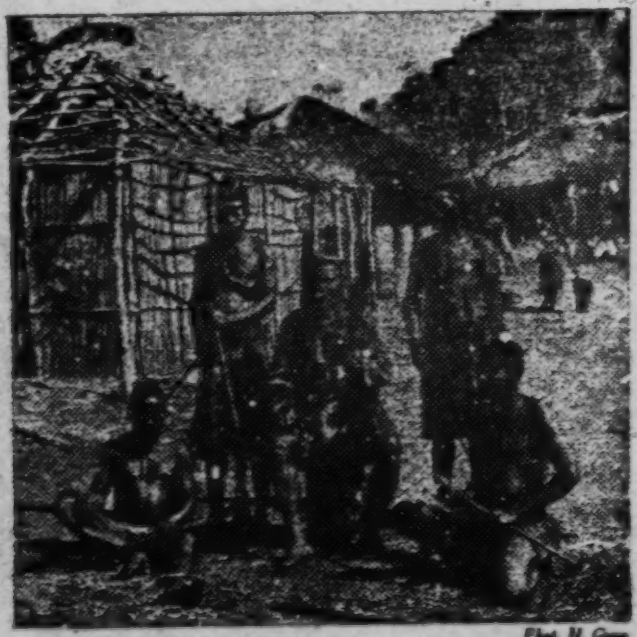
second wife, he will build for her also a hut of the same type. But this second hut, the third, and the fourth which may come afterwards, will not be erected in a straight row like a street. They will form an arc, which will be prolonged so as to constitute first a semi-circle and then a complete circle, if a sufficient number of buildings are added. This is the ideal of the black man, to



Phot. H. Gros

Nkhumbane, a headman of Spelonken, with his men.

become the lord and master of a complete circular village. Most of the men do not realise this ideal. Three or four huts, a wretched quarter of a circle is all that they attain to! Some, better armed for the struggle of life, or more favoured by circumstances, succeed in closing their circle. Their cattle, for which they have also built a circular enclosure right in the middle of the square of the village, multiply and are not carried off by peripneumonia and hematuria,

595 which, in this country, decimate so many herds! Every three
592 years, theirs wives bear children. If they are boys, it is an
361 honour; the village will not lack heirs, neither will the father
556 lack arms to help and to defend him! If they are girls, it means
842 wealth; oxen will come to the family! Their brothers will not lack wives, for the sisters will be sold to provide for the brothers. Meanwhile, the huts are erected, large and small, that of the head of the family being the largest, the *malao*, those of the boys the least well kept.

Let us consider a Ronga favoured by fate, as was Gidja, of the country of Libombo, near Rikatla. His village numbered not less than twenty-four huts, with beautiful shady trees behind; notice the enclosure for the cattle and for the goats on the central place, that for the pigs behind the houses... There are cocks and hens pecking about everywhere, dogs wandering around in search of something to steal, for they receive hardly any food; a crowd of youngsters leading the cattle, and everywhere the noise of the pestles crushing the daily mealies in the large mortars. He walks about proudly in his favoured enclosure, contemplating his prosperity with pleasure. Young men are ready to do the work he gives them to do. He will treat them with beer brewed by his wives. And often the people of the neighbouring villages will join his people for dances and games on the fine square, which is surrounded and enclosed on all sides by huts.

595 And, above all things, in the evening, each of his wives will
556 bring him the pot which she has cooked for him. This is the
574 essential matrimonial duty of the wife. Not one will fail in it. Gidja, the lord of six or seven pots of mealies seasoned with a sauce of monkey nuts, will feast and be satiated (shura) every day, and that means much, for the inner capacity of a Thonga is something wonderful.

He will become large and stout, and shining, which in South Africa is a sure sign of wealth and nobility. The stouter he gets the more will he be respected. But it can easily be imagined that he cannot alone empty all these pots over which he reigns supreme. He feasts his children, but others too come to pay him visits at the evening hour when they know him to be surround-

CHAPTER II

THE LIFE OF THE VILLAGE.

621/396 The Thonga village (muti) is not a hap-hazard agglomeration of people. It is a social organism with a well-defined construction and is regulated by strict laws. After all, it is merely an enlarged family: the headman and the old people who have fallen to his charge, his wives, his younger brothers and their wives, his married sons, his unmarried sons and daughters. All these people form a community whose life it is most interesting to study.

Let us describe its outward appearance, the laws of its "foundation" and "moving", its organisation under the headman, the doings of its different members and the rules of etiquette which are observed. While our first chapter gave us an insight into the internal constitution of the Thonga family, this will show us how the social organism, which is at the base of all the tribal life, manifests itself outwardly in the village.

A. THE THONGA VILLAGE.

361 We have already caught a glimpse of it, from the inside, through the eyes of the headman Gidja (p. 128). Now we enter it from outside, as foreigners, with the curiosity of the ethnographer and the philosophical interests of the sociologist.

The Thonga villages present a remarquable uniformity all through the tribe. The same laws regulate their construction in the Ronga as in the Northern clans. Let us suppose that we have left Lourenço Marques and reached the Mabota and Nondwane

361 district, fifteen miles to the north, far enough from the town, where the ugly galvanised iron sheds have not yet supplanted the old typical hut. We see, in the bush, on the slope of the sandy dune, a little forest of mimosa, *minkanye*, *mikawakwa* (Strychnos). In its midst nestles a village. Thongas like to build amongst trees, to protect themselves against the terrible south winds which frequently blow across the plain, and perhaps also to shield themselves from the inquisitive eyes of people passing along the road. The little community prefers to live by
361 itself, as it is entirely self-sufficing. This small wood is also used
514 for other purposes. Thongas have not yet learned to build the kind of outhouse which is described in English by two letters (W. C.), and they "go outside" (humela handle) into the little copse. The air is not very pure when we cross it, so we hasten to reach the village. The accompanying plan (p. 312) represents a combination of features observed in many Thonga kraals; it is rare to find a "muti" as complete as this.

361 We first note the external circular fence *(lihlampfu)*. It is
712 made of branches, thorny or otherwise, one and a half to two feet
417 high, more or less rotten. It is not built as a protection against
351 enemies. In this tribe, villages are not fortified, and, in case of war, the only resource is flight. The fence protects against
361 spiritual enemies, witches, as we shall see later on. The path
351 leads us straight to the main entrance (16) the *mharana*, which is three or four feet wide. But the fence is open in some other places for narrower passages called *psiruba* (17), one for about every three huts; these smaller openings lead to the wood and are used only by the inhabitants to "humela handle." Passers by, as a rule, do not enter by such back gates. They are private. On either side of the large gate is often seen a growing tree and some poles, which clearly show the entrance. This is never closed during the day. On our right, a little court with some broken pots which denote a fire-place, is the *bandla* (21), the place where the men congregate. In front of us, at the other extremity of the circle, is the headman's hut (1) or rather the hut of his principal wife. On the way to it, we cross the *hubo* (22) the central square and pass round the *ranga*, (Ro.), *shibaya*.

361 or *shibala* (Dj.) (18), the oxen kraal, when the village possesses
231 oxen. They are rare now, plague and Texas-fever having
351 more than decimated the herds. Small enclosures at the sides
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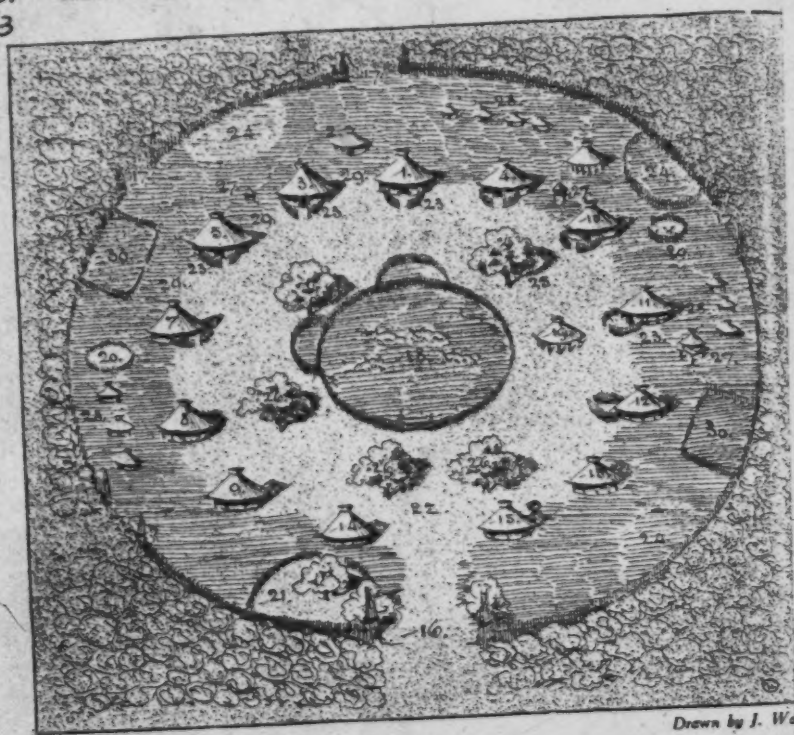

Drawn by J. Wa

Plan of the Thonga village.

1. Hut of the headman's first wife. 2. Headman's private hut. 3. Hut of the headman's second wife. 4. Of the third; 5. Of the fourth. 7 and 8. Huts of the two wives of the headman's younger brother. 9. Wife of third brother. 10. Wife of fourth brother. 11. Headman's son. 12. Headman's sorghum. 13. Hut of a stranger. 14. Lair of the boys. 15. Nhanga of the girls. 16. Main entrance. 17. Back gate. 18. Oxen kraal. 19. Goats' kraal. 20. Pigs' kraal. 21. Square of the men (bandla). 22. Square of the village (baba). 23. Fire-places. 24. Ash-heaps. 25. Tree of the village. 26. Shade-trees of the baba. 27. Headmen. 28. Sentinels. 29. Place of jealousy. 30. Tobacco-gardens.

are reserved for the calves, which are kept there when the cows go to feed during the afternoon. On the right a small hut, a conical roof supported by poles without a wall so as to let the

361 air circulate, is the goats' kraal (19). It may be placed somewhere
231 else, behind the huts, for instance ; or sometimes goats are tethered
351 every night by the leg to sticks round the hubo. The pigs are
343 never kept on the hubo, but always behind the hut : they are newcomers in the Thonga village and have hardly yet won their "droit de cité." Let us salute, as we pass by, the tree (25) which
361 is, as we shall see, the mystical stem of the village. We may perhaps
824 see, hanging upon it, a piece of clothing offered to the gods, or at its
782 base a broken pot which is the *gandjelo*, the altar of the village.
351 The gandjelo is often placed, by preference, among the poles of the main entrance on the right. The village tree, which has a ritual significance, is not to be confounded with the trees of the hubo (26), which are but *mindjuti*, shade-trees, under which the inhabitants are fond of sitting.

361 So we reach the main hut which faces the gate. This is the
595 dwelling of the headman. In hut 3 lives his second wife, in 4, his third and in 5 his fourth. 2 is called *shilubelo*. Great personages, men owning a large kraal, like to build such a hut, which is smaller than the ordinary ones and where no woman sleeps. It is the headman's own hut, where people *luba*, viz., pay their homage to him; a kind of office of the master of the village! He may sleep in it and summon his wives to come to him there. But he generally prefers to sleep in his wives' huts, one month in each, according to the polygamic custom.

361 Behind 4 and 10 is a *mhala*, a shed for the implements. It is
343 built, like the goats' kraal, without plaster walls, and is smaller
351 than a hut. There may be three or four of these in the village.
596 The headman and his wives occupy the back of the village. At the sides live his younger brothers, one, who has two wives, in 7 and 8, two others, those who have but one wife each, in 9 and in 10 respectively. In 11 lives a married son; in 12 it may be a nephew, son of the headman's sister, or a son-in-law; (see
361 page 252). 13 might be the hut of a stranger (mulubeti), who has
574 asked permission to stay with the headman of the village, as he
783 wished to be under his protection. The case is not frequent, but may occur, and in order to be received into the mystic unity of the community, this man will have to "hlamba ndjaka" (See page 153), together with all the inhabitants of the kraal.

361 together with all the inhabitants of the kraal. The two huts near
513 the entrance are, on the left, the *lao*, where unmarried boys sleep
596 (14) and on the right (15) the *nhangu* where the girls live. Often
356 the nhangu is built behind the huts of the mothers, near the mhala ; in this way the girls are kept under more effective watch. The boys of the *lao* have to guard the door, which they close at night where it is the custom to do so. The *hubo* and the *bandla*, the squares, are generally kept quite clean.

361 In front of each hut is a *yard* (*ndangu* pl. *mindangu*, 23) which
372 is also generally well swept. In the centre of each of these are
417 some broken pots (mapseko), or pieces of hard clay taken from
351 ant-hills (psirubu) ; this is the *fireplace (shitiko)*, where the mistress of the hut cooks her food. The fence round the yard used, as a rule, to be made of poles or even trunks of trees planted near each other and forming a circular wall. Nowadays, especially amongst the Rongas, these yards are enclosed with reeds and may be built square, a single wall fencing off as many as three or four huts. The top of this wall is sometimes crenelated. I rather think this arrangement is modern ; the circular wall of the ndangu
585 is an old custom, as is proved by the following fact. On the day of
538 *hloma*, when the bride's-maids and female relatives bring the bride to her husband, they not only build up the woodpile (shigiyane, see page 112), but, in the northern clans, they must also erect a new ndangu which will be called *tsandana*, and so people will know that in the yard there is a *nhlomi*, a bride, working for her mother-in-law! The ndangu is the place where women tell folk-tales of the tribe to the children and to each other, whilst they attend to their cooking, or after the evening meal.

361 If cleanliness prevails on the square and in the yards, the
356 same cannot be said of the region between the huts and the
235 fence. This is called *mahosi* or *makotini*. It is the place where
351 old baskets and broken pots are kept. The chicken houses
343 (*shihahlu*, 27) are built there ; these are generally little huts, with reed walls, placed on a floor of palmtree boards, supported by four poles forked at their upper extremities. The *ash-heaps* are somewhat further on (24). They are called *tala*, and play a part in certain rites, representing, as it would seem, the place of desolation and of sorrow.

of desolation and of sorrow. (Remember Job and compare the rite of rangela bowumba, page 194.) The *store houses, paitlanda* (Ro.), *paitlati* (Dj.), 28) are close by and are built in various forms; little huts with reed walls, when intended for the mealies, with plastered walls, when built to contain ground nuts or sorgho (*madulu* (Dj.). They are sometimes placed on a palm-tree floor resting on short poles, or they are suspended to the boughs of a

Phot. A. Burd.

The interior of a Ronga village. (Nondwane).

tree. *Pigs' kraals* (*hoko* 20) are to be found in the same region; sometimes they are placed even further in the forest on account of their offensive smell.

Mealie leaves, heaps of makanye stones, broken mortars and discarded pestles lie about behind the huts. If anyone wants to keep the place tidy, he can plant pine apples there (30), or tobacco, or Chili-pepper (biribiri). Pumpkin plants often creep over all this disorder. Flowers of European origin are sometimes seen on the hubo in the neighbourhood of Lourenco Marques, especially "everlastings", or the tropical periwinkle, Vinca rosea

247 (L.), with its white or pink blossoms, which have spread all over
331 the coast.

Having now finished our first general inspection, let us add some details about the huts and the open places in the village.

342 The hut, the construction of which we shall describe later on,
784 (Part IV) has an opening (nyangwa) of variable dimensions closed by a door. In some parts of the Gaza country it is so small that one must positively crawl to enter it. Everywhere one must at any rate stoop low (korama). As regards the *threshhold* (ntjandja wa shipfalo), it is not taboo to step over it. The headman's threshhold however is dreaded because it was treated with medicines when the hut was built, so it is taboo to sit on it ; these powerful medicines might do harm and
342 even cause death. In the middle of the black clay floor is a
354 kind of raised circle, in the centre of which fire is occasionally lighted in winter on account of the cold. It is the interior *shitiko*. Cooking may be done here if it rains ; glowing embers sometimes remain on it during the night and numberless babies have been burnt to death by falling into the fire while their mothers were
513 sleeping. On the left, on entering, is the sleeping place (shilawo)
853 of the wife, on the right that of the husband. They both however
841 generally spread their mats on the right and sleep beside each other. It is only during the tabooed periods (menses, nursing), that the husband must keep to his own particular side (p. 188).

353 The back of the hut is generally occupied by the big basket (ngula) in which clothing and seeds are kept. This spot is called *mfungwe*. In the roof *(lwangu)* are fixed or suspended various articles : ears of sorghum or millet, cobs to be used as seed at the next sowing, assagais, sticks and knobkerries etc., and against the walls one frequently observes rough drawings made with white clay, or, in the vicinity of towns, chromos of Queen Victoria, Edward VII, or Don Carlos, as the case may be!

361 The hubo and the bandla differ from each other. *Bandla* is
331 a Zulu word which has supplanted the Ronga term *shisiso*, viz.,
562 "the place where one finds shelter from the wind." Men light a small fire there to warm themselves. They also eat together

361 in the bandla, and it is strictly reserved for them. Women are
351 allowed to penetrate into it only when they bring food. Boys
562 must remove the ashes from the fireplace, not women. The *hubo*, on the contrary, is open to all. A shed is sometimes built on it to afford shelter during the rainy days. There are special acts always performed on the hubo : the cutting up (shindla), the slaughtering and butchery of animals and the feast of "eating the head." The head of any slaughtered ox belongs to the men, and they eat it together on the hubo (See letter C.). It is the business of the young men to keep the hubo clean, and they sometimes assemble to pull up the grass which may have grown on it. In former times it was taboo to come to the hubo with
292 sandals. Sandals are used for hunting and must be taken off before entering the village.

Another place to which I have already alluded is the *bukwele*,
361 the "place of jealousy," where angry co-wives insult each other!
351 On our diagram it would be located between 5 and 4, for the
595 wives of the headman.

The Thonga village, this closed circle of huts, is a living
361 organism. All its members form a whole whose unity is remark-
596 able. This common life never appears in a more striking form
264 than at the evening meal. Let us look at our diagram. In every
476 yard the mistress of the hut has cooked her mealies and her sauce in different pots, and, when the sun sets, she distributes the contents (phamela) in wooden or earthen plates. The largest is for the husband. He sits on the bandla with his companions, the other men of the village, and the youths waiting for the meal. All these plates, generally carried by small girls or boys, are brought from all sides to the men's gathering. All do not necessarily contain the ordinary mealies pap ; some are filled with manioc, some with sweet potatoes, etc. The men attack the first plate, all of them taking the food with their fingers. They pass on to the second and so on to the last. Meanwhile each mother has filled other smaller plates, one for the girls, one for the boys, one for herself. She has even sent to each of the other women of the village a little of her cooking, and the others have done the same to her ; so each member of the community, when

361 596 264 476 he or she has finished the meal, will have eaten a little of all that has been cooked on all the fires. It is impossible to imagine a more perfect communism than this as regards food! I myself witnessed this custom of the evening meal in Spoon Libombo's village in Rikatla. Amongst the inhabitants of the kraal there were two blind male adults, the wife of one of them being half blind herself ; the wife of the other was an old woman who could hardly till a few square yards of mealies and groundnuts, and keep the birds and the hens away from them. Spoon's wife and the wife of another man of the village alone were healthy and able to work normally. So the whole burden rested on their shoulders, as the share the other women could take in the feeding of the men was necessarily small. However I never heard Spoon grumble ; being the headman, he made it a point of honour that all the people dwelling with him should have enough to eat. Everybody who has lived with South African Natives has admired their wonderful readiness to share any food they may have with those present. Even children are much superior in this respect to White children. I attribute this virtue to the community of food which reigns in the Bantu village, and which is certainly one of the most attractive features of Kafir socialism. Village life has not taught the Thongas merely bad habits.

B. MOVING A VILLAGE AND FOUNDING A NEW ONE.

621 754 596 Large kraals similar to the one shown in our illustration were more numerous in former times than now. It is rare to meet with such a number of huts and so many people under one headman. Why ? Because, say my informants, the superstition of witchcraft has considerably increased in later times. Suppose the wife of one of the younger brothers should [787] die ; the divinatory bones reveal that this death is due to a witch ; they go so far as to designate one of the wives of the headman as guilty. No common life is any longer possible. The widower will move elsewhere and build a fence around his

000 seemed to be struck by the argument and accepted it readily, but the idea did not occur to them of itself.

This difficulty in grasping the immoral character of polygamy explains why such a great number of Christian Natives, even after having been monogamists for a time, so easily fall back into polygamy. I heard that in the Cameroons, when, owing to the war, the German missionaries had to leave the country, polygamy invaded the Native congregations wholesale, Native ministers themselves returning to it, and the French missionaries who came to the rescue of these Churches had a terrible battle to fight in order to restore monogamy. All this shows that a long education will be necessary before the Bantu mind is sufficiently transformed to be able to understand perfectly and then to accept freely and willingly the standards of Christian morality in this domain.

V. ON THE FATE OF THE THONGA VILLAGE (See p. 355).

177 361 363 What will be the fate of the little Bantu community, of the circular kraal of huts, well shut in behind its fence, under the shade of its symbolical tree, well "tied" under the absolute authority of the headman ? If we look at the new Native settlements, at the modern Native villages, built under the influence of civilisation and Christianity, we shall be struck at once by the fact that they are arranged in regular streets (1). This change is momentous and highly significative. The new Thonga village is no longer a well defined family. It has become an agglomeration of families belonging to different clans, attracted to a particular spot by the European town or by the Church and the school. The straight line, with its capacity of infinite prolongation, has taken the place of the circular, with its necessarily restricted length. Considering that new ideas are now invading the Bantu tribe from all sides, it is certain that the old circle will disappear more and more and that regular streets will be more generally adopted.

From the point of view of the picturesque, this is a great pity. For the ethnographer, the circle of huts, that curious Bantu commune with its striking laws, was ten times more interesting than the commonplace street

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of square houses or galvanised iron sheds, which are a poor imitation of European dwellings. However, from the practical point of view, this change is unavoidable. It even undoubtedly stands for progress.

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The *Native hut* is prettily shaped. I prefer the Thonga form, a circular wall on which a conical roof is placed, to the Zulu, a beehive resting on the ground, or even to the Kaffir, which combines the features of both, having also a circular wall but with a cupola roof. The conical

Phot. H. A. Junod.

Christian village of Shiluvane.

roof is a better protection against rain. But all these forms of dwelling have one great fault: they are not healthy. The rays of the sun cannot penetrate into the hut, and, though the top of the reeds is sometimes not plastered and allows a certain amount of ventilation, the air cannot circulate, because the hut has no window. Smoke must make its way through the thatch and it is very difficult indeed to obtain any current of air inside. If a new type of hut were to be adopted, with high walls, good-sized doors and windows, and a roof slightly overhanging the wall, these defects would be remedied. But civilised Natives have not tried to follow this plan. They have at once copied the European system, just

177/291 as with their clothing! How often we have longed to see them adopt some peculiar costume appropriate to the climate and to their occupations! But when they cast off their belt of tails, it is to put on long trousers, and they all dream of a complete khakhi or serge suit! So they will build square houses, and this certainly has its advantages; the dwelling can be divided into many rooms and the different members of the family can all live under the same roof, which, from an educational point of view, is a good thing.

264/177/591/361 The *communism of food* is also a splendid feature and calculated to fill the most sanguine socialistic dreamer with joy! But this custom has been severely criticised from a hygienic point of view. The habit of all plunging their fingers into the same plate fosters tuberculosis and other contagious diseases; but I do not think it is for this reason that the custom will die out. In the modern Native settlement many different families live together. They are not united by any ties of blood. Moreover they are sometimes so numerous that such communism would be practically impossible. The golden age has passed for ever!

177/461 With it has also passed away the merry lazy life of the half naked *mumumzane*. The coming of civilisation has already deeply changed his mode of living, and the transformation will accentuate itself still further. I have heard Colonists cursing these black people, who believe that they can escape the law of work under which Europeans groan: "these niggers who think that they will be allowed to remain incorrigibly lazy fellows for all time!" I do not share this loudly expressed indignation. First the Native *doda* is by no means an idle man. He has his own occupations for the benefit of the kraal. Secondly, if his wants are few, and if he very soon reaches the happy state of a man who is not obliged to work, I see thousands of Europeans enjoying the life of a "rentier" as much as he does, and without any qualms of conscience. A South African trader who works hard to make his fortune, and hopes to leave the country as quickly as possible, in order to enjoy all the comforts of a European town, theatres, concerts and clubs, has not, after all, a much loftier ideal than the Native he curses... On the other hand, circumstances themselves enforce upon the Native that law of work and teach him that "dignity of labour" of which we so often hear. A civilised Native has increased his wants ten-fold. He requires the wherewithal to satisfy them. This is the only legitimate, the most powerful incentive to work. Fifty, sixty thousand Thongas, the elite of our tribe, are constantly streaming to Johannesburg, where they are considered the best mining boys. Many of them go there to earn

The soil of Spelonken is of a similar nature and very well watered. So the Thongas, who settled in Zoutpansberg, found there a soil which was, in certain respects, more favourable to agriculture than their sandy dunes or their hundjusi on the Coast. 134

Such is Mother Earth for the Thongas. They call it *misaba*, the plural form of nsaba, grains of sand. This word plainly shows that they come from sandy regions. For them the earth is a collection of grains of sand.

II. *Native System of Land Tenure.*

The Native population, taken as a whole, is a very sparse one. Let us consider the Ronga territory, for instance: 100,000 in a territory which may be estimated at 5000 square miles ; this gives a population of only 20 per square mile. The country is, however, very unequally peopled. Natives will only settle in spots where water is found, and, the sand dunes to which I have previously referred being exceedingly dry, they mainly inhabit the slopes of the hills and the immediate neighbourhood of the marshes already described. 162 311 361

To confine myself, amongst the Rongas, to the region in which I have principally travelled, that is to say the neighbourhood of Rikatla, the villages of Nondwane, which extend along a somewhat narrow strip (800 yards wide by 5 miles in length), stretching from the border of Mabota as far as Morakwen, contained in 1880 a population which I should estimate at about 1100 (1). This gives over 350 inhabitants to the square mile. Taking everything therefore into consideration, it may be confidently asserted that the country can easily support its population ; in fact it could support one three or four times as large.

It is important to bear all these circumstances in mind in order to be able properly to appreciate the Ba-Ronga laws relating to landed property. 423

(1) This population has very much diminished since the Ronga Portuguese war in 1894.

000 seemed to be struck by the argument and accepted it readily, but the idea did not occur to them of itself.

This difficulty in grasping the immoral character of polygamy explains why such a great number of Christian Natives, even after having been monogamists for a time, so easily fall back into polygamy. I heard that in the Cameroons, when, owing to the war, the German missionaries had to leave the country, polygamy invaded the Native congregations wholesale, Native ministers themselves returning to it, and the French missionaries who came to the rescue of these Churches had a terrible battle to fight in order to restore monogamy. All this shows that a long education will be necessary before the Bantu mind is sufficiently transformed to be able to understand perfectly and then to accept freely and willingly the standards of Christian morality in this domain.

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853 grandmother, by name Mishidohi, who had an adult son and had had no other child since, prepared light beer and other appropriate food and succeeded in secreting milk in her own breast ; so the child was saved !

856 826 A child during these first months of its existence is regarded as a very weak creature. "I mati !" i. e. "It is nothing but water !" Hence perhaps the curious idea that a baby, just like a new born animal, is able to swim, at any rate it cannot be drowned : it floats on the water. When a woman carrying a little child on her back crosses a river and is in danger of being swept away by the stream, people shout to her from the shore : "Untie the 'ntehe' and let the baby cross. Think of yourself, the little one will follow all right." They say: "Psa yila, it is taboo that a baby should sink." Note the curious use of the word "yila" in this sentence.

3) Dentition.

856 364 351 As soon as the child has cut the two lower and upper incisors, the mother takes a white bead (tjambu) and ties it to one of the child's hairs above the forehead. This white bead is said to help the other teeth to come out normally. If this precaution were not taken, the child would not become intelligent ; he would shiver instead of smiling ; he would bring forward his lips and his tongue to prevent the air from getting into his mouth ! When all the teeth are duly cut, the bead is removed and thrown away *talen*, viz. on the *tala*. The *tala* is the ash-heap, the place behind the hut on which everyone throws ashes and dirt. It plays a great part in the customs of the Thongas and other South African Bantus.

195 The teeth (tinyo-menyo) of the children are called figuratively *hobe*. The *hobe* (pl. *tihobe*) means the grain of pounded maize which is white and very similar to a tooth. Hence the expression : "A humi hobe," "he has got out a grain of maize," employed to indicate the cutting of the teeth.

787 766 856 When a child cuts his upper teeth first, it is a bad omen. In the Northern clans and especially amongst the Ba-Pedi, it is a great taboo. At his death the child must be buried in wet soil.

173 the precise place in Zululand whence their forefather Nkuna started and declare that they still have relatives there.

The Hlanganus and Hlengwes seem to have no tradition of this kind. The only one I heard about the Hlengwes is this. 173 Tshauke, their first king, took as his wife the daughter of another 372 chief belonging to the Sono tribe. The Sonos knew how to cook 773 their food, the Hlengwes did not: they were still ignorant of fire and used to eat their porridge raw. The son of Tshauke stole a glowing cinder from the Sonos and brought it home in a big shell. The Sonos were angry and declared war on the Hlengwes; but these latter, having gained new strength because they had been eating cooked food, won the victory. The son of Tshauke was then named Shioki-sha-humba-he who brings fire in a shell. This tradition is connected with the name of the first man, Likala-humba, which we have just explained, and it evidently bears a legendary character.

A similar story is told about the Shiburi clan (between the Olifant and Nkomati rivers). The old inhabitants of that country were the Masilanes and Nshongos. Once, at a very remote period, a man of the Shiburi clan, who was a Pedi and dwelt in Mabulanen, at the foot of the Drakensberg Mountains, pursued an eland which he had wounded and killed it in the territory of the Masilanes. He returned home to call his countrymen to cut it in pieces and to eat it according to the custom of hunters. These people then roasted the meat and handed over some of it to the Masilanes. The Masilanes used to eat meat raw as they did not know the use of fire. They found that cooked meat was much better than raw meat and told the Shiburis: "You are more intelligent than we are; we will serve you henceforth!" They therefore decided to get rid of their own chief. The Shiburis lighted a big fire, dug a hole and put the glowing embers into it. Then a mat was spread over the mouth of the hole and the chief was asked to sit upon it. He fell into the pit and died, and the Shiburis became the masters of the country. They abandoned their costume (the musubelo, viz. the piece of skin fastened between the legs as used by the Pedis) their language and their marriage laws, married Masilane girls and became true Thongas (Mabuyandlela).

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

173 If these stories had a historical foundation, it would prove that
372 there was a time when the use of fire was unknown to certain Thonga clans. This, however, is hardly admissible. Fire has been used by human beings from the remotest antiquity, even in the paleolithic age, as far back as the Mousterian period, 20,000 years ago or more. It is probable that even before that time the dry velt of South Africa was often set on fire by lightning. But the recurrence of these legends, which remind one of the Greek myth of Prometheus, shows at any rate the immense value which the Thongas attach to the use of fire.

173 What were the races that the invaders found in the country ? Their name is still known in some places. In the Khosen Country, they were the Ntimbas and Shibambos. In the Nondwane, the Honwanas, Mahlangwanas and Nkumbas. All agree in saying that they were on a lower scale of civilisation (See Part IV) and that the new comers overcame them easily because they were more intelligent and possessed better weapons.

3) A third source of information regarding prehistoric times is to be found in the *genealogies of the royal families* which each clan has preserved more or less completely. I have gathered the following (1) :

Mpfumu : Nhlaw[illegible], Mpfumu, Fayi, Maromana, Shilupane, Hasana (who attacked Lourenço Marques in 1868, was banished but received back his country in 1875 ; he died in 1878), Hamule, Zihlahla, Nwamantibyane (banished in 1896 to Western Africa where he died).

Tembe : Tembe, Nkupu, Nwangobe, Silambowa, Muhari (1781-1795), Mayeta (1823), Bangwana, Bukutje (1857), Mabayi (banished in 1890), Bukutje II.

Maputju : Maputju was the younger brother of Muhari and made himself independent of him. Muwayi, Makasana (1800-1850), Tlhuma, Musongi or Nozililo (1850), Ngwanazi (who fled to British Amatongaland after the Gungunyana war in 1895).

Nondwana : Libombo (probably reigning before the invasion),

(1) Compare E. Torre do Valle. Diccionario shirenga-portuguez. Lourenço Marques. Imprensa Nacional 1906.

763 Some ethnographers have adopted the "embryonic explanation" to account for this custom, which is found all through primitive humanity, from the Mousterian age down to the first inhabitants of Egypt, and amongst a great many uncivilised tribes all over the earth (1). They say: "Primitive man placed the corpse in the attitude of the child before birth because he believed that death is but a new birth, the beginning of a new life..." I asked Viguet if he thought this to be the true original [843] explanation. He told me he did not know ; he would not deny it. But there is one fact which prevents its acceptance ; the Thongas have never done any dissection, and are ignorant of the position of the foetus in the womb. So probably are all primitive peoples. This kind of knowledge came much later in the evolution of mankind. The intention of this rite is more probably to place a dying man in the sitting position which a Thonga generally adopts when in his hut, as the grave is *but a hut in the earth* and he is meant to continue his life in it exactly as before. All the other burial rites confirm this explanation, as we shall see.

Manyibane is dead... In some districts they see that he does not die with *closed hands*. It is taboo, because then the children of the dead will quarrel (Viguet). They close his eyes and take away all his clothes. In the Mpfumo clan, they *wash the body*. Afterwards they cover him with an old rug. No one cries. Lamentations are absolutely prohibited before the burial is over ; it is taboo. It would " break the back " of the men who have to perform the funeral rites.

764 Should there be *strangers* in the village when the death takes
761 place, they will run away quickly to avoid defilement ; otherwise
783 they would have to take part in all the purifying ceremonies of the
372 following days.

Without delay, the *fire* which was burning in the funeral hut is removed and carried out into the square. It must be carefully kept alight. This is a taboo. Should there be rain, it must be protected. All the inhabitants must use this fire during the next five days. It will be put out by the doctor, with sand or water, on the day of the dispersion of the mourners. He will then

(1) See my paper in *Anthropos* Sept. 1910 : "Two burials at twenty thousand years distance."

361 together with all the inhabitants of the kraal. The two huts near
313 the entrance are, on the left, the *lao*, where unmarried boys sleep
396 (14) and on the right (15) the *nhangu* where the girls live. Often
356 the nhangu is built behind the huts of the mothers, near the mhala ; in this way the girls are kept under more effective watch. The boys of the *lao* have to guard the door, which they close at night where it is the custom to do so. The *hubo* and the *bandla*, the squares, are generally kept quite clean.

361 In front of each hut is a *yard* (*ndangu* pl. *mindangu*, 23) which
372 is also generally well swept. In the centre of each of these are
417 some broken pots (mapseko), or pieces of hard clay taken from
351 ant-hills (psirubu) ; this is the *fireplace (shitiko)*, where the mistress of the hut cooks her food. The fence round the yard used, as a rule, to be made of poles or even trunks of trees planted near each other and forming a circular wall. Nowadays, especially amongst the Rongas, these yards are enclosed with reeds and may be built square, a single wall fencing off as many as three or four huts. The top of this wall is sometimes crenelated. I rather think this arrangement is modern ; the circular wall of the ndangu
585 is an old custom, as is proved by the following fact. On the day of
538 *hloma*, when the bride's-maids and female relatives bring the bride to her husband, they not only build up the woodpile (shigiyane, see page 112), but, in the northern clans, they must also erect a new ndangu which will be called *tsandana*, and so people will know that in the yard there is a *nhlomi*, a bride, working for her mother-in-law! The ndangu is the place where women tell folk-tales of the tribe to the children and to each other, whilst they attend to their cooking, or after the evening meal.

361 If cleanliness prevails on the square and in the yards, the
356 same cannot be said of the region between the huts and the
225 fence. This is called *mahosi* or *makotini*. It is the place where
351 old baskets and broken pots are kept. The chicken houses
343 (*shihahlu*, 27) are built there ; these are generally little huts, with reed walls, placed on a floor of palmtree boards, supported by four poles forked at their upper extremities. The *ash-heaps* are somewhat further on (24). They are called *tala*, and play a part in certain rites, representing, as it would seem, the place of desolation and of sorrow.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

621 entrance and finishes his walk at the other, hanging upon it the
789 branch with which he has been sprinkling.

782 10) Then he sacrifices a hen. A young man accompanying
him cuts its throat ; the doctor plucks some feathers from the
756 neck, sacrifices in the ordinary way and invokes his gods : "You used to treat villages (daha miti) with these drugs and I do the same. I do not act of my own wisdom ; you have given it to me. Bless this place, etc." Then he plucks a feather from the hen's right wing, and suspends it at the main entrance or in the main hut, inside, over the door, according to the directions given by the bones. This is the *shirungulo* (see Part VI) and the act is called : "to tie the village" (tjimba muti).

621 Amongst the Rongas, there are some other *buhlapfa taboos*. It
372 is not allowable to light any fire in a village until it is completely
784 built. During the whole building period, cooking is done outside
789 the fence ; crushing mealies in the mortars and dancing are also prohibited. Whistling (ku ba noti) is forbidden, as it might call
198 the wizards inside the village before it has been protected by the charms.

621 If a man has many wives, he may build a second village for
595 himself and establish one of them there. A grown-up son, the son of the woman, will represent the headman in that village, but the law of "tying the village" will also be observed in this case. The headman will perform the act with this woman, and preside at the burning of the dried grass and of the medicinal pill, by which he *gives* the village to the inhabitants.

When a younger brother, or a son, leaves the headman and founds a village for himself (tihambela muti), he does it according to the same laws as those observed at the regular moving of a village.

III. *Some remarks on the rules of moving.*

621 Let us now analyse the two parallel sequences of rites which we have just described, and which complete each other. It is easy to discover amongst them three series of rites, social, protective and passage rites.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

516 the mortar, is a very healthy one and gives the Thonga women a straight and slender figure. In the tribes where the millet is mostly ground between stones, the women who do this work kneeling are shorter and stouter.

462 511 312 Before putting the mealies on the fire, the women go down to the village well, their round pitchers on their heads, to fetch the water they need. In the Ronga country these wells are simple holes dug in the sand, in the centre of the hollows (1). Wells are generally surrounded by thorny branches so as to prevent the cattle from coming to drink and fouling the water. It must be observed that it is not a spring which feeds the well; it is the underground layer of water which has been reached, and which always maintains the same level except in times of drought.

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Phot. A. de Meuron.

Shilouane girls returning from the well.

462 511 372 252 The sun goes down on the horizon. The long shadows of the trees round the village lengthen on the square. Through the leaves, a few rays still reach the fireplaces and traverse the smoke which rises peacefully from the various kitchens. Between broken pots, or between the pieces of termitine clay which constitute the hearth on which the pots rest, the women place some pieces of dead wood; when these burn away in the centre, they push them further under the pot where the flour is cooking (ba hlanganyeta ndjilo). Evening has come. The men have arrived. With a large spoon (nkombe) the lady of the house

(1) In the Transvaal, where there are rivers, water is taken from them, or from wells dug near the spruit into which the water leaks through the soil, being more or less filtered by this process.

789 of most people! This honey comes from below. It is a hidden,
823 a mysterious thing. A little of it is added to the drug and the
787 mixture is poured into a double horn, viz., two horns whose large ends are firmly fixed to each other, the point where they meet being carefully covered with dung, which acts as glue. A hole has been made in the upper horn and the drug is introduced through this. It is a great means of divination. When war is imminent, the nyokwekulu begins to ferment, and exudes through the hole : "It knows all about war." So the country can prepare for it. No wonder that this powerful medicine is preserved with superstitious awe and the greatest care.

643 A place of honour is reserved for the magical horn in the
595 hut of the first wife of the chief. In the middle of the hearth
372 a perpetual fire burns ; it must never be allowed to go out ; it
824 is taboo. The wood used for it must be that of a tree found on the sea shore, and called ntjobori. The Makaneta sub-clan must furnish it regularly. It is taboo to take embers from this fireplace, which is called the royal fire, the medicinal fire (ndjilo wa buhosi, wa muri). Should the principal wife let the fire go out, then Godlela must be called on to light it again, rubbing together two sticks of a shrub called ntjopfa. The fire produced by burning this shrub is considered dangerous. It is taboo to cut its branches or to use them for the purpose of warming oneself ; the genitalia are said to swell when this law is transgressed (See Part IV). But Godlela does not fear ; has he not his drugs to protect himself ? He can and must use ntjopfa to re-light the nyokwekulu fire, and he will be given a good reward for his work! The ntjobori, in burning, produces an abundant smoke which leaves a deposit on the horn, on the forked branch and on all the calabashes containing the provision of powder.

643 The queen Mimpanyanhoba who was in charge of the
372 nyokwekulu had no sexual relations with the chief on that account.
595 I do not know if absolute continence is always enforced on the
784 keeper of the sacred fire, as was the case for the Roman Vestal Virgins. But I have been told by Mboza that this woman prevented her co-wives from coming near her hut ; it was taboo.

726 643 (ku hlantiwile butoya, ku sele burena). The chief having meanwhile taken up his position on a neighbouring hill, the several regiments rush towards him, surround him and beg to be sent as soon as possible to fight and to slay.

726 643 372 789 *e)* But, before this can be done, the chief returns to the capital, the army following him. A double trial has still to be undergone. A large broom is made of small branches of trees soaked in fat from sheep's tails and is then set on fire. The chief walks round carrying his flaming torch, passing it rapidly before the faces of the warriors formed in a circle. Some of the helmets catch fire and the wearers are promptly ordered to fall out of the ranks. The chief addresses them in angry tones : "Deliver up to me," he says, "the charms you are concealing! 'Tis only I, the chief, who may possess enchanted drugs. You certainly have some, as your plumes took fire... Look at the other warriors ; the feathers on their heads are not burnt!" This trial is probably a means of frightening suspected traitors or of expelling wizards (baloyi).

726 643 789 *f)* All shields are now "presented" all round the circle. The chief bends back the point of an assagai and with it strikes each shield, but not with sufficient force to pierce it... This "consecration" of the shields will doubtless make them a more secure protection against the enemy's weapons.

g) Lastly the series is closed by the "aspersion." A mortar is produced in which some leaves are soaking ; these are stirred round in water and the chief sprinkles the whole army. This is the final ceremony. The chief remains at home : the warriors thus fortified and protected against all dangers start on their expedition.

This last act only is performed in the clans of Shirindja, Ñwamba and Zihlahla.

H. ON THE WAR PATH. THE BATTLE. STRATEGY. PANICS. RETURN HOME.

726 The *mukhumbi* has been "built" for the last time. Proclamations have all been issued. Nothing remains but to start.

This *starting of the army* (ku thethwa) is also done according to

D. PREPARATION OF FOOD AND DRINK.

Bantus of South Africa being mostly agriculturists are also vegetarians, not however vegetarians on principle, as they eat meat as often as they have the opportunity ; but these opportunities are rare, so that, as a matter of fact, their diet is essentially vegetable. I shall later on describe the two ways in which they procure meat, viz., cattle-breeding and hunting. Having seen what are the products of their fields, we can confidently proceed to the study of their kitchen, as meat seldom makes its appearance in the "pots on the fireplace!" 262

I. *Fire and salt.*

Thongas do not remember a time when they did not possess these two most important elements of the culinary art. 372

As regards *fire* (ndjilo, mu-mi), the Hoñwanas knew it before the XVth or XVIth century. The traditions reported I. p. 24 show that some clans believe that there was a time when food was not cooked.

There are four trees used to produce fire by friction (tsika) : 137

1) The *bulolo*, a kind of Hibiscus growing in the estuary of the Nkomati, in the region regularly watered by the tide, is the best *ntsiko* or wooden flint. It is a very light and soft wood and is still used near the Coast, though matches are now to be found everywhere. 372

2) The *mpahla* (mu-mi), a bush of the Compositae family, whose wood is very hard and used to make handles for hoes. It grows all over Thongaland, in the plains as well as in mountainous regions.

3) The *ñkuna* (mu-mi), the large wild fig-tree, which covers the banks of the Nkomati and the Maputju rivers, and is common in the low lands.

137 4) The *ntjopfa* (mu-mi), the wild custard tree, employed to
372 light the sacred fire of nyokwekulu (I. p. 388). It is taboo to use it for ordinary purposes, or to warm oneself at its embers. Medicine-men alone are allowed to make ntjopfa fire, having drugs to prevent the disease caused by its use.

372 Dealing with fire taboos, I may add that it is taboo to use
784 branches of a tree which has been struck by lightning ; taboo also to keep alight the fire of a deceased person after the conclusion of the great mourning. It must be ritually extinguished (I. p. 135). In case of misfortune also (khombo), if the bones order it, the old fire must be put out and a new fire be lighted on the central fire-place of the first wife by means of the wooden flint. Each woman will go and take an ember from it and start her own fire again. These laws show that in the eyes of the Bantus there is an intimate connection between fire and the life of the village. When death or misfortune contaminates the community, fire is affected also, and it must be destroyed if the village is to resume its normal life.

372 Gungunyana used to levy a tax on fire : he ordered all the
651 fires of his kingdom to be extinguished at a certain time, and sent messengers to relight them by means of embers procured from the royal kraal. Each village had to pay a tax for the new fire. It seems that this kind of royal right was exercised in the old times by the famous Monomotapa king. Nothing of the kind is met with amongst the more modest Thonga chiefs.

372 The manner of producing fire with the wooden flint is as follows. A dry branch of the tree is secured, from half an inch to an inch thick, and cut into two pieces, each of about 18 inches in length ; one half is called the wife (nsati), the other half, the husband (nuna). The first piece, the female, is laid on the ground and a notch is made in it with a knife ; the notch is cut in two movements : first on the upper part of the wood, secondly on the side of it. The male is then somewhat rounded, inserted perpendicularly in the notch, held firmly between the palms of the hands and made to revolve by a rapid motion of the hands from top to bottom. The operator having reached the bottom of

the male at once starts again from the top; thus the friction continues without an interval. The motion widens the notch in the female to such an extent that the male penetrates and begins to burn it : the ashes find their way out by the lateral notch ; a little dry grass has been placed there and soon begins to smoulder. An expert obtains fire after six or seven consecutive frictions, especially when using bulolo. 372

Embers are kept burning as far as possible the whole night in the fire-place. Should they however have been allowed to go out, the mistress of the kitchen will send her daughter to the neighbouring hut or village to fetch a glowing cinder. This is called *ku woka* (1). The ember will be carefully carried in a sala shell or occasionally in a big snail shell. There is a characteristic rule to be observed in the woka operation. It must generally always be performed by the same person. If two women go to fetch an ember the same day from two different villages, the first must spit upon the ember of the second and extinguish it, because it is a taboo to have in the same village two fires obtained from two different sources. The act of spitting on one of the embers will "remove misfortune (susa khombo)."

Salt, also an object of primary necessity in culinary art, has always been known to the Thongas, as far back as can be remembered ; the name *munyu* (mu-mi) is a genuine Bantu word. Natives can procure it in three different ways : by gathering dried salt on the lagoons near the sea (wolela sole), and in the pans (salt pans) on the mountains (Zoutpansberg), or, when salt is not deposited on the soil, they take salted earth, put it into a conical basket and slowly pour water upon it : this percolates through into a pot, carrying the salt with it, and the solution thus obtained is evaporated. See the adjoining reproduction of a photograph, taken in the extreme North East of the Transvaal, by the Rev. P. Rosset. A third way of obtaining salt is from a certain Composita plant which is wide-spread in the plains of the Low Country ; it is burnt and its ashes washed in order to extract the 263 317 258

(1) *Woka*, from the same root as *wora*, to warm oneself at the fire and *wosha*, to roast meat.

into a saucepan and boiled, resulting in an indescribable broth of a blackish colour. To see it is quite sufficient... and they enjoy it! Several other kinds of Saturnidae also figure at their feasts : the matomane of nyamari (Bunaea Caffraria), others of a brick red colour (Melanocera Menippe), those of the nhlangula shrub (Gonimbrasia Zambezina), etc. When the cooks go out to split the trunks of old half decayed nkanye trees, from which they get their kindling wood, they are most careful to put on one side the big white larvae of two large Cerambycidae coleoptera (Mallodon Downesii and Plocoederus frenatus, etc.). These enormous white worms (shipungu) will be fried in their own fat, and served up as a tit-bit for the ladies on their return to the village.

The insect world does great injury to the gardens through the agency of its winged members, the *locusts*, and Natives avenge themselves by eating them wholesale. When a swarm of these destructive creatures has alighted somewhere in the evening, and is benumbed by the cool air of the night, the villagers go and collect them in bags or baskets in great quantities. The heads, wings and legs are torn off and the bodies roasted on the embers, or boiled and used as seasoning. When plentiful, the locusts are dried and crushed in mortars to make a much appreciated flour. To our taste, locusts are simply nauseating.

Another favourite dish, the secret of which the Nkunas learnt from their Pedi neighbours, is provided by *the winged imagos of white ants*. At Christmas time, these insects emerge by thousands from the ant-hills of that region. Some are of small size ; the boys introduce grasses, smeared with glue, into the holes from which they come and catch a large number of them by this kind of fishing. They eat the head, which can be heard cracking between their teeth, and throw the bodies into a calabash to season the evening meal. But there is a larger kind which is even more appreciated. The body is whitish, as large as an almond. A hole in the ant-hill, three feet wide by two feet deep, is dug at the spot where the insects are most likely to emerge. An old pot is placed in the clay of the ant-hill at the bottom of this hole. The hole itself is covered with green branches. These curious winged termites, as soon as they have emerged from their retreat,

821 which had caused the flash of lightning, and flies away back to
825 the mountains. The magician who understands the "treatment
791 of Heaven" comes and digs at the spot ; there he finds a kind of gelatinous substance which solidifies after a little time. I possess a little of this curious drug given to me by a Pedi magician, by name Mudjumi ; it resembles a piece of chalk, and is considered very valuable on account of its rareness, and because it is used in the manufacture of the wonderful medicine of Heaven. Should a village have been struck by lightning, the magician of Heaven will come and dig out this foreign body ; if he finds it, the taboo is removed. If he does not, the whole village must move to another place. In the same way, it is taboo to warm oneself at a fire made of the wood of a tree that has been struck by lightning, or to use it as fuel.

The flute of Heaven.
Drawn by J. Weave.

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Happily this dreadful bird can be prevented from killing and burning by magical means. Both the Pedi Mudjumi and the Thonga Makasane possessed the enchanted flute, by which they could force Heaven — or the bird of Heaven — to spare them. Mudjumi having sold me his flute, I can describe it at length. It is made of a hollow bone five inches long, covered with Varan skin, filled at its larger extremity with a black substance like wax. Inside, to keep it clean, there is a vulture's feather. The bone is said to have been taken from the ndlati bird ; the wax substance was made from powder obtained by drying up and pulverising a little of the heart, the eye, the bones, the feathers, and the flesh of the bird. In the wax are embedded three seeds of Abrus precatorius, the "lucky bean" well-known in South Africa, a round seed of a splendid coral colour with a black spot, very much used in Thonga magic. This addition of Abrus precatorius intensifies the sound of the flute and enables it to reach heaven.

823 regarding its confines and the shore on the other side. Some
791 magicians claim to have gone and stayed for some time down in the depths : to have "crossed the sea" is for them a kind of diploma, which gives them the right of exercising their art. (See Chapter III.)

828 The *tide* (byaela) is considered to be caused by a whale (nkomu) which alternately swallows and vomits the sea-water : this is the common idea. Some Natives, however, connect it with the moon, having noticed that the tide is higher at full moon and at the wane.

The sea must be feared : it is jealous. "When some one is taken away by the great wave, do not shout! Do not exclaim : 'He is lost!', else you will never see him again. On the contrary, if you say : 'All right, let him go', then the returning wave will bring him back." These are the assertions of Spoon. And old Makhani expressed his approval by nodding his head!

372 "It is the same with *fire*," Spoon also remarked. There was
784 a terrible bush fire in Rikatla on the 18th of September 1908. As always happens at the end of winter, the bush was absolutely dry. A leper woman, tilling her fields, wished to cook a little manioc. The fire leapt to the weeds which she had gathered and from these to the bush. Two huts were burnt. "It is their own fault," said Spoon, "when the bush fire comes you must put it out quietly. If you make any noise, if you shout, it comes straight at you. That is what happened. In the first village people fought calmly and succeeded in saving their huts. At Jeck's village, they cried out. The fire leapt on to a hut, the small hut of the son. The mother cried : 'Yo! yo! Where shall I put my child?' She went on crying out until the hut was burnt to the ground. So the fire leapt on to the big hut and burnt it. She has only herself to blame!" (1)

823 The origin of *stones* is absolutely unknown. Pikinini, a Nkuna boy, who was endowed with an extraordinary imagination, once drew my attention to the stratification of a large dolomite boulder on which different concentric layers were visible, and said to me :

[521] (1) Silence is always recommended to prevent misfortune : in the case of war (I, p. 470) women at home must keep silent ; likewise when the husband is hunting hippopotami (p. 69), when a child is seized with convulsions owing to the power of *tilo* (heaven). See also my remarks on the kunga rite. (I. p. 124).

323 The jar, still soft and wet, is put on one side. Now is the time to decorate it with very simple designs, generally triangular, after which the industrious worker leaves it to dry for a few hours, taking care to cover the opening with a thin piece of wood to prevent the wind from spoiling the shape. As soon as she dares to lift it without danger, she turns it over, smooths the bottom (tshaku), which will harden in its turn, and places the

Constructing the furnace. *Phot. A. Borel.*

pot in a hut where it continues to dry in the shade. On the day she chooses for the firing, she digs a hole in the sand, arranges the various pieces of pottery in it and covers them with a heap of small pieces of wood or with palm pith ; this she sets alight, and keeps a quick clear fire burning until she considers the firing is finished, when she leaves her red and glowing utensils to cool down
323 (hola). The cooling accomplished, she begins to inspect the
386 result of her work. This is the psychological moment! How many have cracked, how many have withstood the testing? The worthless ones are smashed, and the perfect ones reserved to be

painted a brilliant brown, which is done with a decoction of the 323
bark of the mangrove (nkapa) and of the nkanye, boiled with a 386
kind of creeper (mahlehlwa), which has a sticky sap. Such is the primitive method followed in the manufacture of all Native pottery.

The process of firing being often unsuccessful, taboos are 323
plentiful in the manufacture. When women collect the clay, 777

The furnace ready. *Phot. A. Borel.*

only one of them digs and gives it to the others; should each make haste to dig for herself, this would bring mishap: the pots would break. If no accident happens and the firing is successful, these women will say: "She who dug the other day has a lucky hand (a ni boko dja hombe). Let her dig again another time." When the clay has been hidden in the ground, at the foot of a tree, it is also taboo to tread on the spot, when walking through the village. When the heap of wood is ready, the potteress will call a little child, an innocent creature, to set fire to the furnace. She shows it where to place the glowing ember,

II. *Basket-work.*

The milala palm, whose sap supplies the tipplers of Pessene with 137
their famous busura (II. p. 42), is a very valuable tree to the 285
Ba-Ronga, as it is of its leaves that the greater part of the baskets in use by this tribe are made. The basket-maker gathers the most perfect leaves. These are not like the mimale folioles, growing opposite one another on a central nerve. The *milala* (plur. of nala) are true palms, the leaves consisting of folioles from half an inch to an inch in width radiating from a common centre, which itself grows on the end of a long pedunele.

These trees are found in the woods of Mabota, Nondwane, Tembe, on the Coast, and in the low plains of the North Eastern Zoutpansberg, etc., sometimes in large numbers. Returning 285
home, the workman (here we employ the masculine, basket-making being essentially man's work) spreads out the leaves in the sun to dry, having previously straightened the folioles somewhat, separating (hangela) them one from the other ; when they dry, they turn a light grey colour with a shining polished surface, and are then hung up in the hut where they will be sheltered from the dew and ready for use. When the work is to be started, the folioles are torn (phatlula) from their peduncle, and, with a sharp pointed instrument, are split longitudinally into strips or straws of 1/8 or 2/8 of an inch wide, the ribs of the leaves (nhlamalala, yin-tin) being carefully kept ; these delicate wands have their special use.

The Ronga basket makers are very fond of decorating their 285
baskets with *designs in black*. These triangular and square 531
patterns are produced by artistically plaiting dark and light 386
coloured straws, and are not painted on after the baskets are manufactured. The straw is dyed black in the following manner : it is soaked in the black ooze (ntjhaka) of the marshes for two weeks, and then laid out to dry, which gives it a reddish-brownish colour. This hue is deepened by a second treatment. The leaves of a shrub called *mpsabutimu* are gathered and placed in a

pot with the red brown milala in alternate layers, until the utensil is full : water is then poured over them and the whole put on to boil ; very soon the straw becomes a brilliant black. The basket-maker has now only to pull up some of the grass growing in the hollow near the lake, dry it, and he is ready to commence work. 285 531 386

In the accompanying plates illustrations will be found of the principal specimens of this art, stereotyped shapes which have passed on from generation to generation, doubtless from 285

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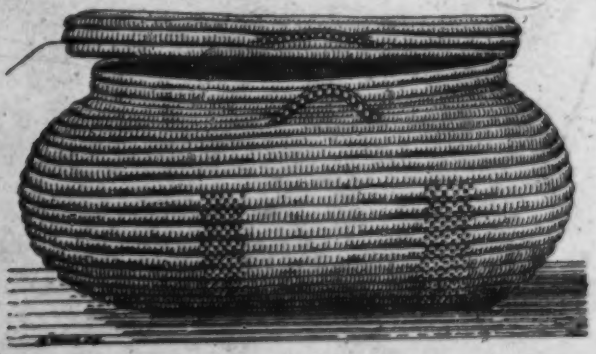

Ngula.

prehistoric times, and are called respectively : *ngula, huvama, shihundju, lihlelo* and *nhluto*.

The *ngula* (yin-tin) (p. 27) takes the place of honour, and is the most prized of all the Ronga baskets. It requires days or even weeks of continuous work to make one, but the result is worthy of the time and labour bestowed upon it ; I brought with me to Europe several *ngula* of various sizes. The particular one shown below, is oval and measures six feet two inches in circumference ; but there are many much larger, both spheroid and ovoid. This is how they make or, to use the technical Native term, "tlhaba" — "pierce" this basket. The workman takes his dried grass and plaits it, lengthening the plait according to requirements, as he goes along : this plait is bound round, and entirely hidden, by a special binding of palm leaf straw, thus forming a thickish cord of about half an inch in diameter ; the cord is soon doubled back upon itself, and forms a centre, around which

462 thank (tlangela) her husband for his kind help! This is her
273 method of notifying him that all the grain has been harvested, as, whatever the man's share of the work may have been, the mealies belong to him.

462 The main work of the man is the *building and repairing of the*
356 *huts*. This is truly an arduous job, but it is not of yearly recur-
342 rence. Every third or fourth year they are obliged to re-thatch the roof. The huts are built and repaired during the winter, from May to September.

A second domain, which is exclusively man's, is the *care of the cattle*; the boys milk the cows, construct and repair the kraal: the little boys herd the goats, and the young men the oxen, as has already been mentioned.

462 It is also the men who *make all the utensils and tools* used in the
411 village, pots and other crockery excepted; mortars, pestles,
294 handles for axes or hoes (mimphinyi), wooden platters, carved or forged articles, all this work pertains to them. They must also make the *ntehe* for their wives, or sisters, after the birth of the babies. This is probably the explanation of the curious fact noticed amongst Native Christians, namely that they are much more clever at needlework than their wives. Big fellows are often seen forsaking the hoe to work with the needle, and there are fathers who make their own clothing as well as the dresses for their wives and children!

462 *Hunting and fishing* are, of course, also men's work... or pastime.
224 For some of them hunting is an actual trade, at least such was the case in former times, before the White Governments imposed strict regulations and levied heavy licences on that sport. We shall study, in Part IV, the curious customs relating to these two favourite occupations of the Natives.

574 A great part of their time is devoted by the men to *paying*
517 visits. They are very fond of calling on each other, and sometimes
484 they go great distances to see relatives or friends. They do not travel to pay visits only, but they frequently journey to claim payment of their debts (milandju). To regain the possession of a miserable head of cattle they willingly lose whole weeks! And what endless discussions in the *hubo*, when an unfortunate visitor

714 heavily or stamped his feet on the ground, it sounded like the tread of an elephant.

714 This costume is a warm one, and the warrior carries a sort of
321 bone curry-comb, made of the rib of an ox, shaped and sharpened,
302 which he uses to scrape the perspiration from his face and body, when taking violent exercice or indulging in the dances descriptive of his prowess. Such is the native pocket-handkerchief!

714 The several component parts of the war-dress are kept in a little hut raised on poles, near the owner's dwelling, and are carefully looked after, being frequently dusted and exposed to the sun to preserve them from moths and weevils. A complete uniform is worth several pounds sterling!

713 *Arms* among the Ba-Ronga are of a very primitive kind, those
411 of most ancient date being doubtless the *club* (nhonga) and the *knobkerrie* (gungwe) (1) of which two specimens are given in the accompanying illustration (No. 4). The Native never journeys without his stick, using it to kill snakes, should any cross his path, and should fortune smile on him, to knock over any quail that may rise at his feet. In quarrels or in war time this *nhonga* can be a dangerous weapon. The stick with the fluted head comes, I am told, from Bilen, and it seems that this style is in great favour in Gaza. It may have a phallic significance.

But the most formidable weapon of the South African Black is the *assagai* (tlhari, fumo (No. 2), of which there are two kinds; the larger (likhalo) consisting of a sharp, pointed, double edged steel blade, fixed on to a stick with iron or brass wire, and the smaller (tindjombi) with a blade of the size of our arrow-head, fastened to the handle with strips of bark or of palm leaves. The former is for hand-to-hand combat, and the warrior never releases his hold of it, while the latter—of which three or four may be held in the hand when entering the fight—are thrown at the enemy from a distance (2). The length of the large assagai on the right of the illustration is as follows: Blade 14 inches; binding of iron

797 (1) These sticks were given to me as dentistry fees for the extraction of decayed
713 teeth!

(2) I once had an opportunity to observe the effects of the assagai. A young evangelist of our Mission was surprised on the railway line by some Zibhabha warriors

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

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wire, 4 ½ inches and handle 34 ½ inches. The small one, on the left, measures: blade 7 in., iron stem adjoining blade 7 in., binding

Thonga weapons.

1. Shield; 2. Assagais; 3. Battle axes; 4. Knobkerries; 5. Dagger; 6 and 7. Necklace and little horn worn by men dayon.

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in ambush during the 1894 war, and was transfixed at one blow. (7 th January 1895). He had fallen on his knees and the wretches struck him in the back; the assagai was only prevented from going right through his body by a note book which he was carrying in the breast pocket of his coat.

713 of palm leaves 5 in. and handle 35 ½ inches. As previously
411 mentioned, the handle of the large sized assagai is broken at the
595 warriors' death, being "he," or his defilement; but the blade
643 "never dies." It belongs to the chief, as does also the shield, and the son will inherit it. During the warrior's life, it is kept in the hut of his *first wife*. She is called the owner (ñwinyi) of the assagai. It is taboo for the other wives to touch it; another fact which shows the special position of the first wife. (Comp. p. 284.)

713 Another weapon in more restricted use and which can also
411 be employed for cutting wood, is the *axe* or *hatchet*, of which I
439 have met with two descriptions (No. 3); the blade (mbimbi) may be narrow and elongated—it is then called shingwatane,—or broad and rounded,—when it is the shiyema. These hatchets are firmly inserted in their wooden handles like the axes of the lake-dwellers. European manufacturers now export a considerable number of semicircular hatchets, similar to the one on the right in my illustration, to Delagoa. The one here portrayed will be at once recognised as being of Native make. I may also mention the big *knives* (mikwa), a sort of sword; one sometimes meets brawny fellows walking along the paths, armed with these dangerous looking implements! However they are quite inoffensive.

713 I managed to obtain from a traveller a beautiful *dagger* which
411 he was carrying slung across his breast; it is a rare specimen
171 and comes, I am told, from the Ba-Ndjao tribe (No. 5). The sheath is made of two pieces of wood, artistically carved and fastened together with a plait of iron wire; it is slightly hollowed out to allow the blade to enter; this is firmly fixed in the handle through which it passes from end to end, coming out at the extremity, where it is bent back and thus held tightly in place. The Ba-Pedi in the Zoutpansberg also make similar knives.

714 Finally, when the warrior holds in one hand his large assagai,
171 in the other will be found his *shield* (shitlhangu) (No. 1), which he grasps by the stick around which this piece of defensive armour pivots. The Thonga shield is made like that of the Zulus, of a piece of ox-hide, oval in shape and of varying size, sometimes all of one colour and sometimes variegated. (The several battalions

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

175 kill him, which was accorded ; this warrior, radiant with joy, immediately retired with his victim, slew him in cold blood and returned to dance before the chief. The Nwamba man requested a like privilege. But Ñwamantibyane had other ends in view ; he wanted to make use of our young man to send a message to the Portuguese Governor, and so refused the permission asked. The man, a prey to an insatiable longing to shed blood, insisted. He was offered as compensation one, and even two, of the stolen oxen, but could not thus be satisfied. "I want my man," said he, "to kill him so that I can dance!" Ñwamantibyane had to employ force to silence him. Two oxen, twelve pounds sterling, counted as nothing to this black warrior compared with the fiendish delight he would derive from the *gila*!

As regards the conclusion of the story of Tandane, he came back with a letter from the chief asking why the Whites wanted to kill him, and begging for an interview. When the letter, written in Zulu by some of his boys, had been despatched, the young chief said : "Now I can breathe! When I eat something, it can pass through my throat!" The Portuguese Governor consented to the interview, but the letter sent back to Ñwamantibyane, in answer to his, was intercepted and so the war continued. See in the preceding Appendix how it spread to Gungunyana's country, and ended in the capture of this despot and the destruction of the Ngoni kingdom.

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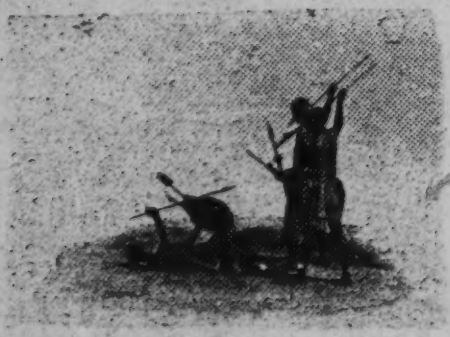

Phot. D. Lamb.

Sham fight at Ndlebende's (Magaju).

585 pointing with their fingers to the hoes they carry on their heads, they murmur the following words : " Here is our ox! It does not know how to drink! It does not know how to drink! (Homu a yi nwi! a yi nwi!)" The others rush towards them, and try to steal their burdens and to bar the way ; all this goes on amidst laughter, and until one of the old people of the bride's village says : " Let us leave them! (A hi ba tjikene!)" Then the company enters, laden with the precious hoes.

c) The counting of the lobolo.

585 The implements are deposited in the centre of the square and
4/12 fixed into the ground by tens. The hoes used by the Thongas, whether of Native or European make, are lengthened and pointed in such a way that they can be introduced into a wooden handle, something like the tools of the lake dwellers. They have a very remote resemblance to an ace of spades with a pointed shaft.

585 The bride's family gathers to ascertain if the number agreed upon is there. They remark to one another that there are so and so many of them. " Look, they say, they have paid such and such a lobolo. (Labisan ba lobolile ha kukari.) " It is very important that there should be a large number of witnesses, for who knows to how many discussions and quarrels these hoes will give rise if the marriage turns out badly ? When this counting is done, all hearts being gladdened by the sight of the wealth which will eventually allow the bride's brother to get married himself, the jugs of beer, which were brought the day before by the aunts, sisters, and relations of the bride, are fetched in. They pass from one hand to another ; the old people, and the men, prefer going into a hut, where they talk over the latest news whilst they quench their thirst.

d) The wedding procession.

Whilst the old people rest, a goat is taken for the sacrifice and slaughtered at the door of the hut of the bride's mother. Whilst the goat is being cut into pieces, the bridegroom's sisters, the big

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

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lobola money. But they learn to spend money on other things, and those who are converts to Christianity become regular purchasers of clothing, of better food, of books. The high taxation to which they are subjected also forces them to work. As long as this does not exceed a reasonable limit, and as long as the State causes the Native community to benefit by the high taxes levied on it, it is justifiable although this way of enforcing labour is not so normally healthy as the creation of new wants (1). Another powerful influence which tends to make men work more and to relieve women from the toil of tilling the fields, is this. Wishing to make money by selling grain, the Natives are beginning to clear larger fields than before, and we note with pleasure that they have adopted the use of the plough instead of the hoe in a great many quarters. The consequence of this change is that the men now do

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(1) Another means has been used to obtain the same result, i. e. compulsory labour (in Thonga *shibalu*). It is not at all my intention to treat this important but delicate subject here. The League of Nations created in 1924 a special Slavery Commission which has very ably and fully discussed the whole subject. These discussions have resulted in a Convention which was adopted by the Assembly of 1926; art. 5, which deals with forced labour, runs as follows:

The High Contracting Parties recognise that recourse to compulsory or forced labour may have grave consequences and undertake, each in respect of the territories placed under its sovereignty, jurisdiction, protection, suzerainty or tutelage, to take all necessary measures to prevent compulsory or forced labour from developing into conditions analogous to slavery.

It is agreed that:

(1) Subject to the transitional provisions laid down in paragraph (2) below, compulsory or forced labour may only be exacted for public purposes.

(2) In territories in which compulsory or forced labour for other than public purposes still survives, the High Contracting Parties shall endeavour progressively and as soon as possible to put an end to the practice. So long as such forced or compulsory labour exists, this labour shall invariably be of an exceptional character, shall always receive adequate remuneration, and shall not involve the removal of the labourers from their usual place of residence.

(3) In all cases, the responsibility for any recourse to compulsory or forced labour shall rest with the competent central authorities of the territory concerned.

The League of Nations has thus established the general principles, and nearly thirty States have already signed the Convention; amongst these we note with pleasure Great Britain and Portugal. Now the question has been transferred to the International Labour Office, which must deal with the application of the Convention. A special Committee of experts has been elected and it is hoped that it will fix general principles for Coloured Labour, which shall be submitted to the General Labour Conference in a not distant future.

I am glad to add that the Portuguese Government has recently issued a decree (No 12.533) which has been published in the *Bolletim official de Moçambique*, November 1926, and which contains the following article (Art. 5. § unico): *Compulsory labour is only permitted when absolutely indispensable, for works of public interest and of undeniable urgency. This labour will be remunerated according to circumstances.*

C. AGRICULTURAL CUSTOMS.

I. *The Agricultural Year.*

137 At the season which is called *shimumu*, the little heat, that
221 is to say in July, when the warm weather begins, the nkuhlu puts forth new shoots. Though rain is still far off, the mahogany and sala trees become covered with leaves of a wonderfully delicate green. A kind of Composita (the Helychrisum parviflorum, shirimbyati), which is wide-spread on the sandy dunes, blossoms all over the country ; a beautiful lily (Crinum Forbesii) will expand its splendid white and pink flowers : the *winter* (bushika) has passed away : soon the *hlobo* (summer) will come.

412 When the Ronga woman notices these signs, she picks up
221 her hoe (shikomo) and starts for the hills, or for the marshes.
462 Her husband has already repaired the implement for her, at home. If the handle was worn out, he has cut a branch of nkonono, (Terminalia sericea), which is the wood invariably used for the purpose, and has shaped it so that one end is thicker than the other ; in this thick end a hole is bored, while the iron hoe head is heated in the fire : the head has, at its base, a long iron point which is inserted nearly red-hot into the hole, burning its way in, and thus solidly fixing the two parts together. This method of fixing on the handle is called ku lumela shikomo. The Ronga hoe has a very short handle, sometimes not more than two feet in length. The Transvaal Thongas use handles three to four feet long. The woman has now nothing to do but to work hard, her lord and master having duly accomplished his share of the labour.

241 It is the end of August. Two or three months must still
221 elapse before the rainy season sets in. This period of the year is devoted to a two-fold work : the clearing of fresh land and the cultivation of marshes.

The *clearing of fresh land*, ku tlhaba lisindje (Ro.), ku khatsha

532 I do not believe any foreign influence was exercised in the
322 conception of the idea. His group is absolutely original, and, as such, shows us to what lengths the sculptural talent of the Ba-Ronga can go. This group is now in the Neuchâtel Museum.
313 While statuettes are the most elaborate products of Native
532 sculpture, *canoes* (shene (Dj.) are the largest. I have already
322 mentioned the taboos connected with the cutting of the mahogany and nkwenga trees when used for this purpose (p. 19). Other trees, the mpfubu and the muhlu, can be cut without these precautions being taken.

IV. *Metallurgy.*

172 When and how did iron reach the Ba-Ronga ? Probably we
412 shall never be able to ascertain. Tradition has it that the primitive
316 inhabitants of Nondwane, the Honwana, who cooked elephants in order to tear them in pieces, had no iron implements. Some authorities tell us that the hoe in use in olden times was of an exceedingly hard wood, wrenched I know not how from a species of teak tree called *ntjhiba*. The Natives of these parts must have passed directly from the age of wood to that of iron. There was certainly a stone age, comparable to that of the lake dwellers, in Cape Colony, where a great quantity of silex and of polished stones have been found. I never heard of any such implements having been used by the Thongas, nor found within their territory. As regards the bronze age, they have known the use of copper for a long time, but it cannot be proved that they knew it before iron.

177 Iron and other metals seem to have been first introduced in
439 Delagoa Bay by the "Godji" traders and whale fishers, of whom
316 I shall shortly speak ; they are the first White visitors whom the Natives now remember. The Ba-Ronga used to exchange fowls and other domestic animals for hoes, brass bracelets, and copper brought by the strangers, and they had found out how to make copper wire by forging (fula) the pieces bought from the "Godji."

316 Later on wrecked boats provided Native smiths with iron to make
325 hoes, axes, etc. In certain villages there were regular forges,
412 (Matlharin, near Mbengelen Island, Matjolo etc.). The hoes
436 were in the well-known form of an ace of spades and were fixed into a wooden handle, as are also the axes, and battle axes (I. p. 453). But the principal supply of iron came from the Transvaal Mountains, especially from the Northern Zoutpansberg, where the Bveshas have practised the art of mining iron ore for an unknown period. These Sutho hoes have played a great part in the history of the Thonga tribe, having been extensively used as currency for lobolo purposes.

325 These Bveshas — the word is said to be a Thonga corruption of Venda — built their furnaces in ant-hills, as shown in the accompanying illustration supplied by M. H. Gros, near Iron Mountain, East of the Speionken district. They excavated three holes under the furnace, and blew into them by means of bellows made of a skin, the air being expelled through an antelope horn. The ore, broken in small pieces and mixed with charcoal, was smelted, crushed, smelted a second time, crushed again and made into hoes and axes, etc. Who had taught the Vendas this art? Did they learn it from the Ma-Lemba, that curious tribe, half Semitic in its customs, which invaded the Northern Transvaal during the XVIIIth century? Nobody knows for certain. I am under the impression that this art is older than that, as the Lebombo Natives, who invaded the Nondwane in the XVIth century, seem to have possessed iron weapons. The origin of iron and the date of its introduction into South Africa is still a mystery.

326 Among the ornaments illustrated will be found a very pretty belt (No. 1).[1] It is the work of a young man named Philemon, living in the outskirts of Lourenço Marques, who employed his leisure moments in making objects of this description with twisted wires of iron, brass and copper, bent in festoons and [177] fastened with small tongues of metal. European influence is doubtless very marked in these belts, but still they possess a certain cachet of their own. Amongst the Zulus as in our tribe, large cups of various descriptions, including egg-cups, are

[1] [p. 101 -- Analyst]

342 The *sill* consists simply of a piece of wood (ntjandja wa shipfalo) laid flat on the ground, with one edge raised so that the door cannot be opened outwards. It must always open inwards, doubtless with a view to facilitate the exclusion of unwelcome visitors by the simple expedient of sitting with one's back against
784 it. The threshold is not attended with taboos, excepting that of
342 the principal hut of the master of the village, beneath which

The Thonga hut. *Phot. A. Borel.*

protective drugs have been placed at the foundation of his village. It is taboo to sit on it (this may cause disease), but not to tread on
177 it. Most huts are now fitted with padlocks which are, of course,
414 of European origin. The palm wood doors are only seen in the districts where the mimale palm grows.

342 A number of small sticks are stuck in the straw crown at the top of the hut, and certainly add to the picturesque appearance of these constructions. It would seem that they are put there to hinder birds from perching on the huts, and more especially to avoid any chance visit during the night from screech-owls (makuñhunu) and other nocturnal fowl, which might alight on

853 place. These women were wives of the same husband at Libombo near Rikatla and the foster mother claimed compensation for her deed Another wonderful case is the following : a woman died shortly after the birth of her boy called Mayimbule ; the

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Thonga calabashes

The smaller are used (as bowls) as medicinal powder (tshumphane). The vessel in size (mukhubi) are employed for the calabashes. Those with the long necks are the mukhubu, used as bottles or for drinking.

765 this between his great toes. He bends his body and rubs the
783 two great toes against one another. Then he turns his back to
604 the place and goes away. He must not look behind : it is taboo. Then the other relatives say : " Let us all go and *luma milomo*. " He has given them the right to do so.

765 A little of the *milomo* is carefully kept in a pot for months.
783 When relatives who were absent on the day of the death come back from Johannesburg or from elsewhere, they must perform this ceremony before entering the village and eating any food in it. " Ba yila muti " — " they are taboo to the village." The rule applies only to relatives. Other people may very well eat from the deceased's store of food without any harm, as its contamination is dangerous only to his family. Another variety of this rite consists in preparing light beer with the mealies of the dead and taking first one mouthful which must be spat out on the right side, then a second one on the left side, after which one is allowed to drink.

765 The *gardens* of the deceased must also be purified, and this is
783 done by the rite called *baninga mabele*, to give light to the mealies.
415 The widows and all the female relatives go to his fields holding an old and empty *shikutja*. The shikutja is the hard shell of a sala fruit, the size of an orange, in which has been kept the provision of vegetable *tihuhlu* fat (see Part IV) and which is still impregnated with it. The women set fire to it and walk through the gardens holding it up and illuminating the fields. This is perhaps in relation to the idea that death means darkness, and that its contamination is " black " (ntima) so long as the cleansing has not taken place.

765 During the five days of the Great Mourning, relatives and
574 friends come to pay the *official mourning visit* (1). They enter the village, the women shouting their lamentations (mikulungwana). Some one leads them to the grave and they walk round it uttering cries of mourning, taking leave of the deceased. At the burial of Sokis, I heard a woman saying with a trembling voice : " Goodbye! You have gone! Do not forget us. Remember Mulalen."

(1) This visit can be paid one, two, or three months later on, because, as they say, " nkosi a psi boli, " — " the mourning does not get rotten." But it is only during the five days that dances take place.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

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the mortar, is a very healthy one and gives the Thonga women a straight and slender figure. In the tribes where the millet is mostly ground between stones, the women who do this work kneeling are shorter and stouter.

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Before putting the mealies on the fire, the women go down to the village well, their round pitchers on their heads, to fetch the water they need. In the Ronga country these wells are simple holes dug in the sand, in the centre of the hollows (1). Wells are generally surrounded by thorny branches so as to prevent the cattle from coming to drink and fouling the water. It must be observed that it is not a spring which feeds the well; it is the underground layer of water which has been reached, and which always maintains the same level except in times of drought.

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Phot. A. de Mauron.

Shiluvane girls returning from the well.

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The sun goes down on the horizon. The long shadows of the trees round the village lengthen on the square. Through the leaves, a few rays still reach the fireplaces and traverse the smoke which rises peacefully from the various kitchens. Between broken pots, or between the pieces of termitine clay which constitute the hearth on which the pots rest, the women place some pieces of dead wood; when these burn away in the centre, they push them further under the pot where the flour is cooking (ba hlanganyeta ndjilo). Evening has come. The men have arrived. With a large spoon (nkombe) the lady of the house

(1) In the Transvaal, where there are rivers, water is taken from them, or from wells dug near the spruit into which the water leaks through the soil, being more or less filtered by this process.

during the first year of her married life a woman is not allowed to plant them. 244 824

Amongst the Ba-Pedi of the Transvaal the planting of Kafir peas is taboo. They are said to prevent rain and to cause intense and injurious heat.

c) *The Kafir bean*, mbawen, yi-tin, (Ro.), nyawa, yi-tin, (Dj.), is a small round brownish seed, with a pleasant flavour, eaten either green or dry. I do not know of any taboo in regard to it. 244

Vegetables of other families also contribute to the food of the Thongas.

Sweet potatoes (nhlata, mu-mi) cultivated either in the sand of the hills or in the richer nyaka of the marshes, are a great resource, especially when they are farinaceous and not too watery. Their leaves (matsimbo) are also used as a vegetable.

Pumpkins also constitute one of the chief articles of diet of the Blacks, from one end of Africa to the other. They are of several kinds : the *ranga* (dji-ma) and *gawana* (dji-ma) of medium size, the *shilutana*, small, sometimes pear-shaped, the *khalabatla* (djima), huge water melons, with white or pink pulp and black pips, which are eaten both cooked and uncooked. Pumpkins are not grown for their fruit alone, as the leaves of certain kinds, especially the ranga, are excellent eating, and make a very good substitute for spinach. The flowers also are greatly appreciated by the Natives. Some kinds of pumpkins are used to make gourds and calabashes. (See I. p. 50.) 415 824

There are some taboos to be mentioned in connection with the *ranga*, which seems to be the oldest kind of pumpkin known to the Bantus (1). We have seen (I. p. 184) that girls are not allowed to walk amongst the leaves and must take special precautions when plucking them. It is taboo to plant any kind of pumpkin before the Chief and the sub-chief. They are subject to the law of hierarchy in the same way as Kafir corn. The prohibition is so conscientiously observed that, should an old man keep the people waiting and be too slow in planting his 244 753 824

(1) See in Meinhof, *Grundriss einer Lautlehre der Bantusprachen*, p. 183, the different forms of this word, which was *tanga* in Ur-Bantu. Compare Torrend, *Comparative Grammar of the South African Languages*, p. 89.

273 warm them, and someone must keep watch all night, removing the scum and preventing the liquid from rising or overflowing. It then ferments and becomes very alcoholic. Where shiwaya-waya is drunk, quarrels and blows are sure to follow. The [415] accompanying plate from a photograph, taken near Antioka (Khosen), shows a primitive Native press used for the preparation

Sugar-cane press, Magule (Khosen country). *Phot. A. Clee.*

of sugar-cane drink. The crushing operation takes place in the large hollowed trunk of a tree and the liquid flows out, through a pipe fixed in its lower extremity, into a pot.

177 The *shikokiyane* is prepared from Golden Syrup bought from
273 the stores. A large quantity of tins of this harmless "missionary jam," as it is called in South Africa, imported into Johannesburg, are used not by missionaries but by Natives of the Compounds who brew shikokiyane in big empty oil cans. Some of the more civilised do quite a trade in this strong drink, selling it illicitly on Sundays to their unsophisticated brethren, who thus

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Ornaments, calabashes, pottery.

Another taboo in connection with the making of a pot is this: when a pot has been fired, it must still be *tested*; this operation is called *ku khangula*, or *kwangula*, and is performed in the following way. A little water is poured into it, and the potteress washes it thoroughly; then some grains of maize are cooked in it and thrown away. This is to remove the *nkwangu*, or *nkhangu*, viz., the danger attending the use of an untested, unpurified pot: people using such an implement would suffer from an eruption on the arms, and even on the whole body. To give any one food to eat from a pot which has not been *khangula* is looked on as an act of hatred.

Phot. D. Lenoh.

Pots used to draw water.

The pot, or boiler, used for cooking is called *nhlambeto* (yin-tin, Ro.) or *mbita* (yin-tin Dj.); it has a very wide opening. Smaller boilers are also made, even quite diminutive ones called *shihlembetwana* or *shimbitana*. The beer jar (khuwana, dji-ma), illustrated on page 101, No. 13, is of the same size as the boiler, but can be easily recognised by its straighter neck. Enormous beer jars are sometimes manufactured, perfect amphoras (hotjo, yin-tin), but they rarely stand the firing and are therefore scarce and expensive, fetching as much as ten shillings each: they may be two feet high; the ordinary cooking pot does not cost more than sixpence. The porringers, or large plates, are called *mbenga* (mu,-mi; No. 12) (1).

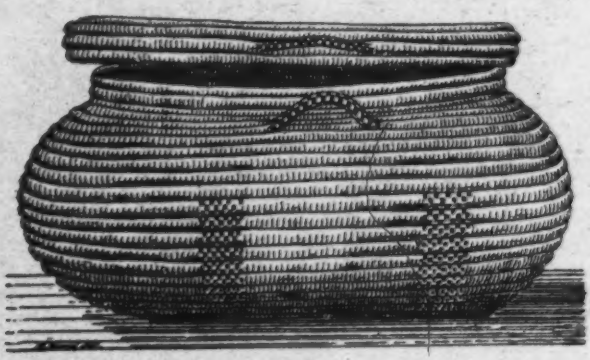
Shibindji clay is also used for making very short *pipes* (shipana), prettily shaped, probably in imitation of the European cutty. Smoking does not seem to be an indigenous habit; in the interior

(1) No. 11, on page 101, shows a small vase modelled by a young Native girl, an invalid from Natal (Station of Inanda).

pot with the red brown milala in alternate layers, until the utensil is full : water is then poured over them and the whole put on to boil ; very soon the straw becomes a brilliant black. The basket-maker has now only to pull up some of the grass growing in the hollow near the lake, dry it, and he is ready to commence work. 285 531 386

In the accompanying plates illustrations will be found of the principal specimens of this art, stereotyped shapes which have passed on from generation to generation, doubtless from 285

[415]



Ngula.

prehistoric times, and are called respectively : *ngula*, *hwama*, *shihundju*, *lihlelo* and *nhluto*.

The *ngula* (yin-tin) (p. 27) takes the place of honour, and is the most prized of all the Ronga baskets. It requires days or even weeks of continuous work to make one, but the result is worthy of the time and labour bestowed upon it ; I brought with me to Europe several *ngula* of various sizes. The particular one shown below, is oval and measures six feet two inches in circumference ; but there are many much larger, both spheroid and ovoid. This is how they make or, to use the technical Native term, "tlhaba" — "pierce" this basket. The workman takes his dried grass and plaits it, lengthening the plait according to requirements, as he goes along : this plait is bound round, and entirely hidden, by a special binding of palm leaf straw, thus forming a thickish cord of about half an inch in diameter ; the cord is soon doubled back upon itself, and forms a centre, around which

285 on the basket pointing upward while those on the cover point downward, so that they meet. Two rings are also plaited, and passed round through each pair of handles, forming simple but solid hinges on which the cover can turn without ever being separated from the basket, of which it is henceforward an integral part. A well-made ngula is absolutely impermeable, and not the smallest hole can be found in it. I think it would even hold water. Such a basket is surely a work of art!

285 The ngula is the Native's Savings Bank. In it he keeps all
415 his riches, the best grains of maize, or the best grown monkey nuts, reserved for seed at the next rainy season ; also the material with which the women will deck themselves on grand occasions, etc. The enormous basket reposes at the far end of the hut, on a low table (buhiri) specially designed for the purpose. The ngula of the northern clans, where palm leaves are not to be found, is more rounded and the palm straw replaced by solid dry grass. (See the adjoining illustration, p. 121.)

285 While the ngula is enthroned in the hut, and is never moved out
415 of it, the *hwama* (yin-tin, Ro.) or *funeko* (Dj.) (p. 124 No. 4 and 6),
293 on the contrary, is the wallet of the traveller. It is a square bag made of plaited palm straw. The cover is about as large as the bag itself and, so that it may not be lost (which might easily happen while travelling), it is secured by the string used as a shoulder strap to carry the *hwama*, this being passed through it. The bag can thus be opened by sliding the cover right along the string, but it cannot be entirely separated from it. These bags are of different sizes, some more ornamental than others. A round variety is also made by a certain basket-maker of Masana. He makes three or four projecting horns to his hwama, which then takes a cylindrical shape, and has the advantage of being able to stand upright when placed on the ground. This bag or basket, is called *shiraba* or *baki* (No. 2) ; it is the kind used by the magicians for carrying their medicines, and bones.

285 The third classic shape of Ronga basket-ware (No. 3) is the
482 *shihundju* (Ro.) *shirundju* (Dj.), the conical basket employed by the women for transporting maize, clay and manure. (It is by no means certain that the shihundju is cleaned out between

these several loads!) It is made in much the same way as the roof of a hut, point downwards, ribs of folioles taking the place of sticks. This basket may be said to be the special property of the women (1) : they are very clever at balancing it on their heads ; it is very rarely that a woman, old or young, lets her shihundju fall. When empty it is turned upside down and serves as a hat. It is a really pretty sight to see the young girls starting out for the fields with their conical baskets standing straight up on their fuzzy locks. When they are travelling and arrive at a friendly village, they hold themselves perfectly upright, shooting glances here and there without stooping or turning their heads, till their friends rush out to meet them, seize their shihundju and place them on the ground, in small holes which they hastily make in the sand. This is the first duty of hospitality amongst women! 285 482 574

The *lihlelo* (No. 8) is used by cooks for winnowing the maize. Palm leaves not being sufficiently strong for this purpose, the lihlelo is made of the roots, of a tree called *nukanhlelo* (a kind of mimosa), cut into strips, and is coated with a reddish brown varnish prepared from mangrove bark. It is the lihlelo, or rather a smaller basket of the same sort called *ndjewane*, that the housewife takes with her when picking the small wild cucumbers, or gathering the various herbs which serve for the supplementary noontide luncheon. 285 415 243

In the northern clans one often meets with a spherical basket made of the same material as the winnowing basket and covered with an ordinary lihlelo. 285

Besides the foregoing, the Ba-Ronga have two or three baskets which are not in such general use : the *nhlaba*, a kind of plaited bag with interstices between the palm straws, for carrying fish, the *ntjaba*, etc.

Another article, which might, at first sight, be taken for a basket, but which serves quite a different purpose, is the *nhluto*, the strainer. (No. 1.) This unusually shaped strainer is a sort of long bag of plaited straw into which is poured the beer made 285 415 273

(1) The male members of the family are called "ba matlhari, those of the assagai" and the female "ba-shihundju, those of the basket," as these objects are characteristic of each sex.

1 [see p. 124 -- Analyst]

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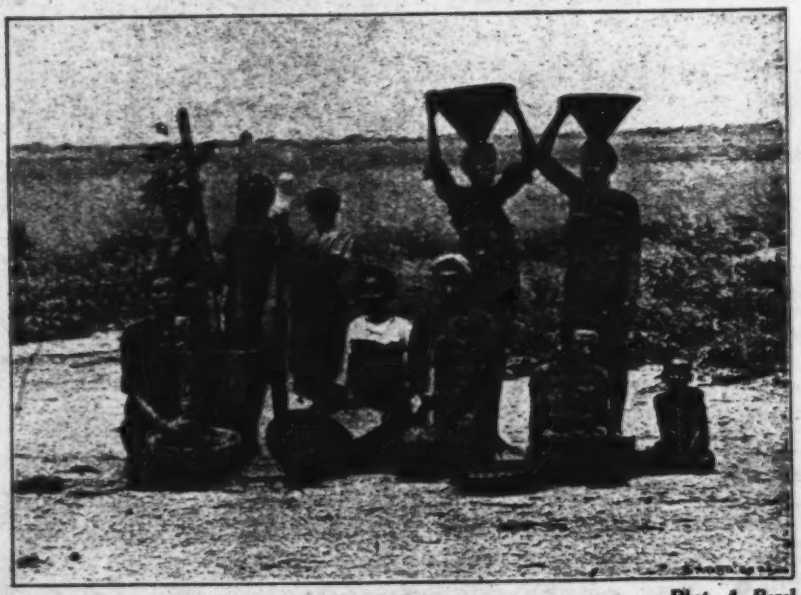
Thonga basket work.
(One sixth of the natural size.)

285 from maize : the particles floating in this liquor are caught by the
415 straws overlapping the top, or accumulate at the bottom, whilst
273 the liquid filters through the interstices of the plait. The thick sediment remaining in the strainer can then be squeezed so as to extract all the beer. This straining and squeezing has the effect of rendering the drink much more alcoholic (p. 40).

285 The art of basket-making is by no means commonplace. Practised by men only, it is, in certain families, in certain villages,



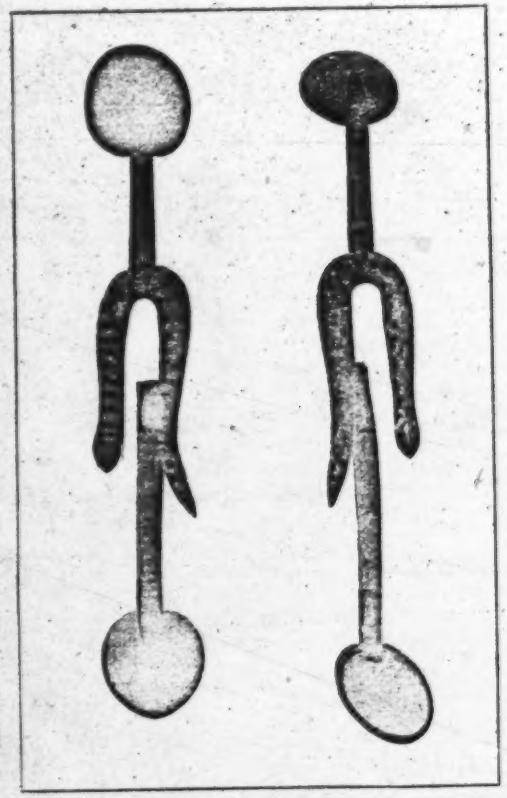
Phot. A. Burel.

Carrying lihlelo baskets, grinding and pounding mealies.

handed down from father to son. Children with a natural taste for this sort of work are initiated into its mysteries by their parents. But no young man is ever forced to take up the profession of a basket-maker. His heart (mbilu) must be in it! Amongst primitive peoples art, and even industry, always remains a matter of individual genius. It never becomes a mechanical output, as is the case in the factories of the civilised world : for this reason it retains a character of individuality, sincerity and natural beauty, not always to be met with in the products of XXth century European industry!

advantage of not easily splitting or cracking when being dried. If Nature had not bestowed on the Thongas this excellent tree, who knows if they would have ever thought of executing the works of art which are depicted in the accompanying illustration! 322 531 415

However before thinking of art, they began by cutting, or fashioning, with their small knives, articles of every day use: *spoons* (nkombe, mu mi) for instance, (see illustrations of carvings, No. 1), made in several sizes; the big one is used for serving out the potful of maize amongst the rightful claimants, and the small one for conveying food to the mouth when the hands are ritually soiled (I. p. 193). One often finds really well carved spoons. I give drawings of two which are particularly interesting; the first shows a sort of spiral, or catherine-wheel decoration at the top of the handle (No. 4); the other, brought by Dr. Audeoud from the Maputju country, has a carved snake as an ornamental motive. Spoons are all ornamented, even the plainest, with designs in black, burnt into the wood with a red-hot iron. For beer, ladles are used, made of a single piece of wood; these are generally decorated with large black triangles (No. 2). In Inhambane and Quelimane, the Natives make them of cocoa nut



Carved spoon from Maputju country.

shells, on which they carve curious geometrical figures (No. 5). *Goblets* (ntcheko, mu-mi) are generally made with a handle. (No. 6). 322 531 415

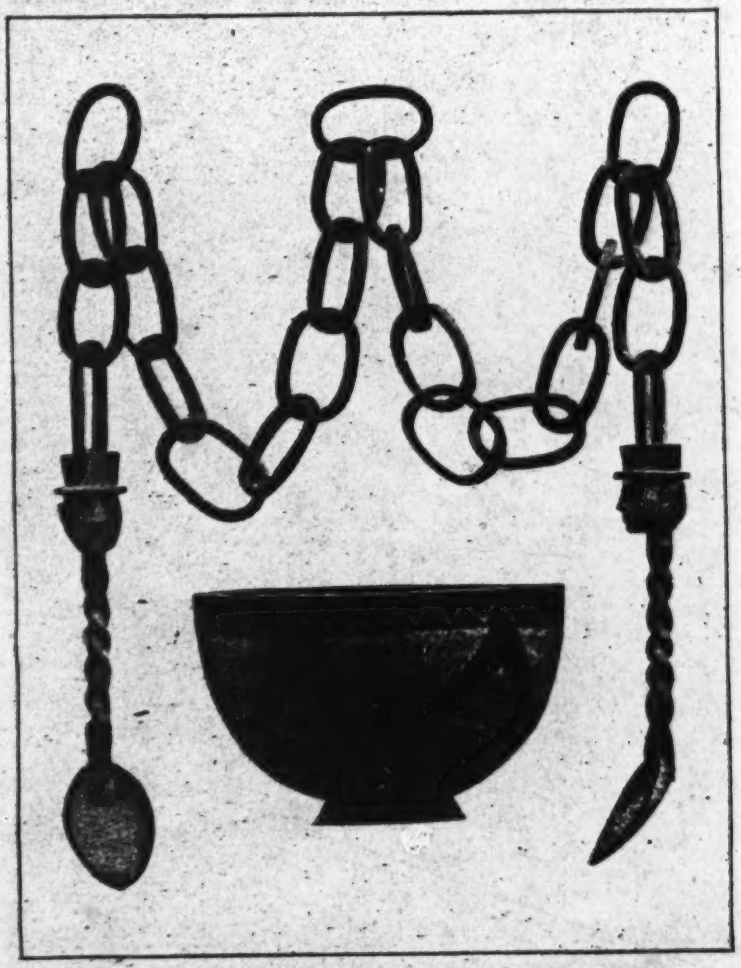
In the accompanying plate, (p. 131), two spoons are seen hanging to a *chain* made of links carved from nkuhlu wood. This is a wonderful product of Native art. These chains are often met with, especially in the Northern clans, some with links of six inches in length, the whole attaining to a length of many yards. The one here shown is six feet long, with links of only three inches. The special point to be noted in this "objet d'art" is that it has been carved from a single piece of wood and the artist had to make no mistake from the very beginning; a single slip of the knife would have broken the whole chain and made it useless. European joiners told me they doubted whether an ordinary workman would be able to carve such a chain. I was told that these spoon-chains were used by two individuals who wished to form an alliance; they passed the chain over their shoulders and, so united, ate from the same plate. This, however, is mere play and has no ritual value.

Between the two spoons, a kind of *bowl* is seen, almost perfectly round and prettily decorated. It was used by a man who had been possessed, and who washed his face in it every day to cool his head and appease the spirits. Thongas also carve large dishes, sometimes prettily decorated, though not so attractive as those of the Ba-Rotse of the Zambezi. I possess one of two feet in length by 10 inches in width. These are used for serving meat.

I must not forget the *mortars* (tshuri, dji-ma) usually made of mahogany, or of nkanye, and the pestles (musi, mu-mi) made of nkonono. The former are often adorned with triangular carvings.

The same style of decoration is to be seen on the *calabashes* which Natives use as bottles. The calabash, as every one knows, is a sort of gourd composed of two spheres of unequal size with a narrow connection between them. By an ingenious system of supports, placed under the gourd during its growth, Natives succeed in imparting to the upper sphere the shape of an elongated neck. There are many varieties of calabash, some small, furnished

with a long projection and used for drawing the bukanye from the large jars. They are specially kept for this purpose! (See p. 101, No. 7, and also I, p. 400). In Vol. I. p. 50, I have given an 322 531 415



Carved chain and bowl, (Neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques).
(One fifth of the natural size.)

illustration of these bukanye calabashes, called *ntjeko* (mu-mi), very prettily decorated by a Tembe artist. The black designs are burnt in and represent huts, birds, palm trees and, last but not least, two warriors fighting! The white dots are beads inserted

415

Phot. H. Grot.

Thonga kitchen ware.

in the soft bark of the calabash. The largest calabash on this plate measures 21 inches in length and 7 in width. 322 531

Some plainer calabashes are Nos. 8 and 9 of the illustration of ornaments. Others are simply shells of sala (shikutja), (p. 16), with a good-sized hole cut in them for an opening (Nos. 6 and 10); a circular piece, say one third the size of the other, makes a capital cover; a string passes through the bottom of the calabash and the middle of the cover, fastening the two together. When this is knotted on top of the latter the *lard tin* is securely closed. This kind of calabash is generally thus designated, for it is in these round balls that the mafureira grease is kept, to which I have previously referred (p. 18). They are hung up in the roof of the hut where they swing to and fro in the smoke and become well browned. The young folks amuse themselves by carving designs on these shells. 415

Mookhelu's stick.

The artistic element is still more striking in the *snuff boxes* (ngulana, yin-tin), carved in ebony, which the chiefs are fond of carrying; the one depicted (p. 128, No. 9) came to me from Mavabaze who was, for a time, chief of the Khosa clan. It is also conspicuous in the strange *pillows* (shidamu) on which the Ba-Ronga rest their heads at night. Let us contemplate this article (No. 8) with the respect it deserves! It is probably on this description of pillow that primitive humanity in all parts of the world has dreamed its dreams! We see it sculptured on the Egyptian monuments, above or by the side of princely couches. We find also among the relics of the lake-dwellers stone objects of a similar shape, which were doubtless used for the same purpose. The Bantu has adhered to this piece of prehistoric furniture all through the ages. 276 532 322 352 322

one or two hundred years ago, gave birth to an entirely new and original decorative art; during the last century, the contest with a tribe better clothed than themselves led them to adopt a different and more decent costume. (Compare "Introduction à la Grammaire ronga" § XXXI.) When copper and brass wire became procurable, they not only made pretty bracelets, but invented quite a new art, the weaving of belts, 176 178

[415]

Phot. Dentan.

Manual work at the Lemana Training School (Northern Transvaal).

(p. 101 No. 1), egg-cups, and cups of various forms very different from those of European make.

The ability of the Native to progress in industry cannot be doubted when one sees the results of the industrial teaching they receive in many Missionary Institutions. The Swiss Romande Missionaries have introduced, in their schools, the manufacture of baskets and mats with the materials found in the country, and the results of the experiment have been altogether in favour of the intelligence of the Natives, as shown in the accompanying illustration. One of the pupils of Shiluvane even invented a new form of basket, made with a single leaf of a big palm tree (mafuwane) growing in the Leydsdorp plain. In those institutions

361 district, fifteen miles to the north, far enough from the town, where the ugly galvanised iron sheds have not yet supplanted the old typical hut. We see, in the bush, on the slope of the sandy dune, a little forest of mimosa, *minkanye*, *mikawakwa* (Strychnos). In its midst nestles a village. Thongas like to build amongst trees, to protect themselves against the terrible south winds which frequently blow across the plain, and perhaps also to shield themselves from the inquisitive eyes of people passing along the road. The little community prefers to live by 361 itself, as it is entirely self-sufficing. This small wood is also used 514 for other purposes. Thongas have not yet learned to build the kind of outhouse which is described in English by two letters (W. C.), and they "go outside" (humela handle) into the little copse. The air is not very pure when we cross it, so we hasten to reach the village. The accompanying plan (p. 312) represents a combination of features observed in many Thonga kraals; it is rare to find a "muti" as complete as this.

361 We first note the external circular fence *(lihlampfu)*. It is 712 made of branches, thorny or otherwise, one and a half to two feet 417 high, more or less rotten. It is not built as a protection against 351 enemies. In this tribe, villages are not fortified, and, in case of war, the only resource is flight. The fence protects against 361 spiritual enemies, witches, as we shall see later on. The path 351 leads us straight to the main entrance (16) the *mharana*, which is three or four feet wide. But the fence is open in some other places for narrower passages called *psiruba* (17), one for about every three huts; these smaller openings lead to the wood and are used only by the inhabitants to "humela handle." Passers by, as a rule, do not enter by such back gates. They are private. On either side of the large gate is often seen a growing tree and some poles, which clearly show the entrance. This is never closed during the day. On our right, a little court with some broken pots which denote a fire-place, is the *bandla* (21), the place where the men congregate. In front of us, at the other extremity of the circle, is the headman's hut (1) or rather the hut of his principal wife. On the way to it, we cross the *hubo* (22) the central square and pass round the *ranga*, (Ro.), *shibaya*

361 together with all the inhabitants of the kraal. The two huts near
513 the entrance are, on the left, the *lao*, where unmarried boys sleep
596 (14) and on the right (15) the *nhangu* where the girls live. Often
356 the nhangu is built behind the huts of the mothers, near the mhala ; in this way the girls are kept under more effective watch. The boys of the *lao* have to guard the door, which they close at night where it is the custom to do so. The *hubo* and the *bandla*, the squares, are generally kept quite clean.

361 In front of each hut is a *yard* (*ndangu* pl. *mindangu*, 23) which
372 is also generally well swept. In the centre of each of these are
417 some broken pots (mapseko), or pieces of hard clay taken from
351 ant-hills (psirubu) ; this is the *fireplace (shitiko)*, where the mistress of the hut cooks her food. The fence round the yard used, as a rule, to be made of poles or even trunks of trees planted near each other and forming a circular wall. Nowadays, especially amongst the Rongas, these yards are enclosed with reeds and may be built square, a single wall fencing off as many as three or four huts. The top of this wall is sometimes crenelated. I rather think this arrangement is modern ; the circular wall of the ndangu
585 is an old custom, as is proved by the following fact. On the day of
538 *hloma*, when the bride's-maids and female relatives bring the bride to her husband, they not only build up the woodpile (shigiyane, see page 112), but, in the northern clans, they must also erect a new ndangu which will be called *tsandana*, and so people will know that in the yard there is a *nhlomi*, a bride, working for her mother-in-law! The ndangu is the place where women tell folk-tales of the tribe to the children and to each other, whilst they attend to their cooking, or after the evening meal.

361 If cleanliness prevails on the square and in the yards, the
356 same cannot be said of the region between the huts and the
235 fence. This is called *mahosi* or *makotini*. It is the place where
351 old baskets and broken pots are kept. The chicken houses
343 (*shihahlu*, 27) are built there ; these are generally little huts, with reed walls, placed on a floor of palmtree boards, supported by four poles forked at their upper extremities. The *ash-heaps* are somewhat further on (24). They are called *tala*, and play a part in certain rites, representing, as it would seem, the place of desolation and of sorrow.

to be harvested. Poor cereals! Many grains are wanting! 241
Those mischievous sparrows have taken more than a tithe! In 417
the marshy lands of Lebombo I noticed the people scaring the birds in a somewhat original manner. A cord was stretched right across the field, for a distance of at least thirty or forty yards, supported at intervals by poles, and on it were strung large snail shells (Achatina lamarkiana) as big as one's fist; when the watchers heard the sparrows chirping on the other side of the field, instead of getting up and running after them, yelling and shouting to scare them away, they merely pulled the cord, which made the shells jingle against one another, the movement and noise frightening the birds and sending them off to attack the crops of some less ingenious neighbour! I have also seen scarecrows set up in some places, the ordinary stuffed figure. During these months of bird scaring it is impossible to get the caretakers to do anything but guard their plantations! The little maidservants scamper away to join in the work and the Christian girls no longer come to school! I can well imagine that the husbands often find empty larders at home!

The attraction of the plantation does not however hinder the 273
labourers from doing full justice to the national beer, the bukanye, which is consumed from the middle of January to the end of February! Besides, it is principally after the bukanye that it is necessary to protect the sorghum from the beaks of these winged destroyers.

The agricultural year ends with the *harvest*. Every one 241
harvests his own fields and keeps, as far as possible, his product 221
separate in his own store house. The ears of maize which have been left to dry on the stalks are broken off (tshobela) and are carefully piled in conical baskets in such a manner as to make them hold large quantities. The precious burden is at once deposited in the storehouse. After this the beans are picked (khaya): these do not ripen much before May, after all the other produce, at a season which is called "the time of beans" (nkama wa timbawen). The ground-nuts are unearthed by 241
pounding on the ground all round the stem, and pulling up the whole plant by the roots. It is curious to see the stalks coming

224 Let me first mention some of the *social rites* connected with
422 hunting.

When a man finds *a dead animal* in the bush, if it is not too heavy, he can hoist it on his shoulders and take it home to eat. We know that Natives are not afraid of eating dead meat and enjoy an extraordinary immunity from its dangers. But if it is an elephant, for instance, the man who has found it, perhaps by following the vultures which gather round the dead body, will first carefully examine the soil all round the beast to be sure that nobody has seen it before him. If no footprints are to be seen, he cuts a piece of meat, places it on a fire and eats to his heart's content. Then he cuts off the tail (tjoba) of the animal and runs home to call his fellow-clansmen. The tail is his "means of notification" (bika) ; they all rush to the spot, cut off the limbs and carry them to the village. Should the animal have fallen in a country which is not that of the finder, the latter will give the owners of the land one of the limbs and the ribs which were in contact with the ground (1).

151 To find a dead animal is not a common occurrence. Generally
224 the hunter meets with *living game*. He at once sets off in pursuit with his dogs. He may pursue the animal for hours, or even days. My friend Spoor (I. p. 7), though suffering from asthma, often succeeded in killing an antelope which had been overcome with fatigue and was found by him lying asleep. But he may often have to start without having seen anything. *The study of footprints* is then of paramount importance. In the sandy plains

(1) The Nkumba clan, 10 Kil. north of Lourenço Marques, lost its independance on account of a dead elephant under the following circumstances. One of the men of this clan had found a dead elephant. He at once cut off the tail and went to the village of the chief to "bika." Whilst he was away a troup of men of the Libombo clan, settled some kilometers further north, came to the spot. They put an axe into the animal's rectum, and when the Nkumbas arrived they said to them : "This beast is ours ! You have cut off the tail, but we had put our axe into its rectum long before." And a big warrior took the axe out triumphantly. The Nkumbas said "goo," i. e. they were greatly embarrassed and answered : "You lie ! We had cut off the tail before you came !" — "Not at all," answered the Libombos ! "Our method of appropriating a dead animal is to put an axe into its rectum." This led to a fight in which the Nkumbas were defeated, and later on, one of them having died and been buried in their sacred wood (ntiñwen), the Libombos dug up the corpse and threw it away. The poor Nkumbas were obliged to bury it in another place : they had lost their country !

The soil of Spelonken is of a similar nature and very well watered. So the Thongas, who settled in Zoutpansberg, found there a soil which was, in certain respects, more favourable to agriculture than their sandy dunes or their hundjusi on the Coast. 134

Such is Mother Earth for the Thongas. They call it *misaba*, the plural form of nsaba, grains of sand. This word plainly shows that they come from sandy regions. For them the earth is a collection of grains of sand.

II. *Native System of Land Tenure.*

The Native population, taken as a whole, is a very sparse one. Let us consider the Ronga territory, for instance: 100,000 in a territory which may be estimated at 5000 square miles ; this gives a population of only 20 per square mile. The country is, however, very unequally peopled. Natives will only settle in spots where water is found, and, the sand dunes to which I have previously referred being exceedingly dry, they mainly inhabit the slopes of the hills and the immediate neighbourhood of the marshes already described. 162 311 361

To confine myself, amongst the Rongas, to the region in which I have principally travelled, that is to say the neighbourhood of Rikatla, the villages of Nondwane, which extend along a somewhat narrow strip (800 yards wide by 5 miles in length), stretching from the border of Mabota as far as Morakwen, contained in 1880 a population which I should estimate at about 1100 (1). This gives over 350 inhabitants to the square mile. Taking everything therefore into consideration, it may be confidently asserted that the country can easily support its population ; in fact it could support one three or four times as large.

It is important to bear all these circumstances in mind in order to be able properly to appreciate the Ba-Ronga laws relating to landed property. 423

(1) This population has very much diminished since the Ronga Portuguese war in 1894.

423 By law the soil belongs to the Chief, but only that, through
693 him, it may become general property. No one can buy land. It is gratuitously assigned to any and all who wish to settle in the country. The mere fact of *kondza*, viz., making submission to the chief (Vol. I, p. 433), entitles the Native to as much land as may be necessary for his subsistence.

423 It will be readily understood, however, that the supreme Chief,
622 however small his territory may be, can hardly assume the duty of marking out the various small allotments for his subjects. In ordinary practice this is done by the headmen of the villages (numzane), the important men of the country, (I will call them A), who obtain the grant of considerable tracts of land, which they apportion amongst those under their jurisdiction. They and their near relatives cultivate the most fertile parts of these tracts, or districts, and when any one (say B) wishes to settle on their reserve, they "cut the bush" for him, "tjemela nhoba," to use the technical expression ; they accompany the would-be-settler to an uncultivated piece of land and together they fix the boundaries of a plot of ground which is then assigned to him. A tree, the corner of a lake, a well, or an anthill, may be used as landmarks in this primitive surveying operation. The new-comer will clear as much of the land as he can, till it, and the fields, together with the trees they contain, will become thenceforth his property. Should any of his relatives wish to settle near him, he will, in his turn, assign to them a portion of his land, which they may clear
423 and cultivate ; and so the distribution continues. Supposing B is
428 not satisfied with his allotment, or is unable to live on neighbourly
622 terms with A, and builds his hut in some other spot, he cannot sell or otherwise dispose of his land, as it must revert to A, the original owner. On the other hand, should B die, his wife would inherit his gardens. Should father or mother die, the property would naturally pass to the sons, who would divide the fields between their wives. Thus we see that real estate is hereditary, but cannot be sold. A similar state of affairs would result should A, the numzane, who ranks almost as a petty chief, leave the country : all his rights in connection with the tract that he may have occupied for the last fifty years will cease with his departure.

It might be supposed that the title to real estate being gratuitously given, was not very secure. Quite the contrary! Once having assigned a plot of ground to B, A has no further interest in it; B is the absolute master of his land and of all that it produces. I recollect one day, at Rikatla, being almost dumbfounded when our own petty chief, Muzila, came to me and humbly asked permission to pick up some of the nkanye fruit, which I had left to rot on the ground! The land at the station (about 5 acres in extent) was granted to us by Maphunga, chief of Nondwane, and here was his relative and representative coming to me, requesting permission to make use of the produce of a tree which was useless to me! And he would, moreover, have made a like polite request to the meanest of his subjects, had he been desirous of making use of anything growing in that man's fields. I must admit that I have often admired the practical character of the Native law in this connection, and, still more so, the respect paid by the original proprietor to the individual to whom he has voluntarily assigned a portion of his land. It is, of course, entirely to the interest of the numzane to keep his protégé on his land, for he adds considerably to its value by cultivating an otherwise useless bush *(nhoba)*. He also helps to people his protector's tract of country, and thus to increase his strength; finally he makes certain payments in kind or rather in labour. The Chief gladly welcomes new-comers, as they will assist in the tilling of his fields each year, and the more labourers he has, the better for him! As for the headman of the village, the possessor of a "small country" (tikwana, dji-ma), his protégés will be always ready to do him a good turn on occasion, and he is therefore quite content to assign to them portions of his domain. Human nature is, however, much the same everywhere, and this system, which appears so perfect at first sight, has also its drawbacks. A numzane, or even a Chief, will give to his favourites the best pieces of land. A clever flatterer, or one knowing how to regale the great man with beer in due season, and thus gain his good graces, will be apt to receive an allotment of good, fertile forest land, while a less fortunate individual, out of favour at Court, will only get a piece of barren hill-side which has

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423 622 already been tilled and abandoned as exhausted. I noticed this at Rikatla. Muzila favoured his pagan subjects, who joined him in his drinking bouts, and invited him to orgies in their villages, at the expense of the Christians who no longer brew the byala beer. Thus interest at Court works here as elsewhere, although it be based on nothing nobler than pots of beer!

423 578 692 The difficulties of this system also become apparent in the more thickly populated parts of the country, where all the land has been assigned and taken up. The women look round for fresh arable land and may, wittingly or unwittingly, encroach on the ground of another numzane. There is, indeed, a neutral zone, vaguely defined, of which no one has as yet taken possession, as it has not been needed : the wild fruits growing there are common property ; any one who likes can gather them. When the population increases, the inhabitants of the more congested districts go and appropriate this land without any kind of formality. Such was the case when the people of Libombo, dwelling on the edge of the palm-marsh, (to the East of Rikatla), sent their women to the hill-side to clear a piece of land which Muzila considered to be his property. This petty chief sent remonstrances to Nkolele, his colleague, headman of the village of Libombo ; but they were not heeded. Then the men of Rikatla hid themselves in the bushes surrounding the spot in question, and, when the women commenced to hoe the ground, rushed out upon them, seized their hoes, and drove them off. This was the "fait patent," the actionable proceeding, which was necessary in order to have the matter brought before the Chief's tribunal. This incident doubtless led the parties interested to define their respective boundaries more carefully.

423 618 To go and till another's land would be quite impossible, even taboo, between people of different clans. In the present case, the Rikatla and Libombo men belonged to the same Nondwane country. There was a good understanding between them. The Rikatla men would not have dared to plough a field without permission on Mabota's ground, the boundary of which was on the other side of the big water-tree (muhlu).

As regards *boundary marks* between the different clans, they

consist of natural objects such as rivers, big trees, etc. To define 423
the boundaries of their gardens, Natives dig an ordinary ditch 618
(ndjilekana, mu-mi) round the field, of about one foot in depth, which can be plainly traced even after the lapse of several years, when the field may have become fallow land and overgrown with vegetation.

The question of *roads* is a somewhat difficult, and often thorny 423
one to settle. Where has one the right to go ? And if, after 487
having used a certain path for years, you suddenly find it blocked by some individual whose field it skirts, and who has taken a fancy to hoe it up, what is to be done ? To try to come to some friendly agreement is always the most practical course. How often have we not experienced this difficulty with our cart ! The agriculturists were the more annoyed because we required a road three or four yards wide, while the Native footpaths are only little tracks of 15 to 20 inches in width. Being the only "carriage folk" in the district, we often had to ask permission to be allowed to pass, and have rarely met with any kind of refusal, for the Black is a reasonable being and quite appreciates the fact that roads are a necessity. If they see that a road is "ripening" (wupfile), viz., that it is more and more frequently used, they bow before the facts ; here, as everywhere else, custom makes the law.

At the present moment matters have been made much more 177
simple as the Portuguese Government has constructed wide 491
highways in all the more frequented parts of the country.

B. PRODUCTS OF THE SOIL.

I. *Cereals.*

"Hosi ya psone i *psithjama*" — "Their king is the *maize*," 243
says Mboza. This cereal is indeed the most widely cultivated in Thongaland. It is called *psifake* in Djonga. In the more fertile regions of the North, the size of the cobs and of the grains (nhleke, yin-tin) is much larger than on the sandy dunes of the Ba-Ronga. So the people of Khosen make fun of the Ba-Ronga and compare

k: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

671 possesses a rich store of *judicial expressions*. Here are the most
644 common : *Nau* (pl. milau) means law, custom. *Ku tlula nau*, to
792 jump over the law, means transgression. *Nandju* (pl. *milandju*) means the fault resulting from transgression. This interesting word comes from *ku landja*, to follow. It applies in the first instance to cases which lead to a prosecution, but secondly to any fault. *Ku doha*, is to be wrong and *ku dohela mhunu*, the applicative derivative, to wrong another. *Ku da*, to eat somebody, or *dela*, is also a picturesque expression employed for injury to property. *Ku ramba* (Dj.), *ku rjamela hosin* (Ro.) is the technical expression to designate a complaint lodged before the chief. *Ku riha* (Dj.), *djiha* (Ro.) means to pay a fine, and *rihisa*, *djihisa* (the factitive derivative), to impose a fine.

672 This strong sense of justice however differs from the European
406 on certain points. Owing to their collectivist notions, the Bantus
614 consider relatives as responsible for the debts of their own kin, as we have already seen (p. 332). Another case in which they entertain ideas which seem very strange to us is this ; when anyone has lent you an implement and you make a bad use of it, the fault is as much the lender's as the borrower's. I remember a queer case which took place in my school in Rikatla. Some boys had to go in the afternoon to work in the vegetable garden under the supervision of their overseer. On the way one of them happened to hurt his foot by treading on a thorn. So, when he arrived in the garden, he borrowed a knife from the overseer and began to make sandals of palm-leaf pith. The elder boy entreated him to work. He refused to obey, so the overseer denounced him publicly, when the weekly inquiry into the conduct of the boys was made, on the following Friday. But the temporary shoemaker did not admit to being guilty of anything at all, and his final argument was this : "I cannot understand how Mr. Overseer can accuse me when he himself lent me the knife which I used to carve my sandals!" D. Kidd tells similar stories about Pondos in his "Essential Kafir."

671 So there are differences between Native and European conceptions of justice, and Bantus do not always draw the same conclusions as we do from given premises. Native Commissioners

It might be supposed that the title to real estate being gratuitously given, was not very secure. Quite the contrary! Once having assigned a plot of ground to B, A has no further interest in it; B is the absolute master of his land and of all that it produces. I recollect one day, at Rikatla, being almost dumbfounded when our own petty chief, Muzila, came to me and humbly asked permission to pick up some of the nkanye fruit, which I had left to rot on the ground! The land at the station (about 5 acres in extent) was granted to us by Maphunga, chief of Nondwane, and here was his relative and representative coming to me, requesting permission to make use of the produce of a tree which was useless to me! And he would, moreover, have made a like polite request to the meanest of his subjects, had he been desirous of making use of anything growing in that man's fields. I must admit that I have often admired the practical character of the Native law in this connection, and, still more so, the respect paid by the original proprietor to the individual to whom he has voluntarily assigned a portion of his land. It is, of course, entirely to the interest of the numzane to keep his protégé on his land, for he adds considerably to its value by cultivating an otherwise useless bush *(nhoba)*. He also helps to people his protector's tract of country, and thus to increase his strength; finally he makes certain payments in kind or rather in labour. The Chief gladly welcomes new-comers, as they will assist in the tilling of his fields each year, and the more labourers he has, the better for him! As for the headman of the village, the possessor of a "small country" (tikwana, dji-ma), his protégés will be always ready to do him a good turn on occasion, and he is therefore quite content to assign to them portions of his domain. Human nature is, however, much the same everywhere, and this system, which appears so perfect at first sight, has also its drawbacks. A numzane, or even a Chief, will give to his favourites the best pieces of land. A clever flatterer, or one knowing how to regale the great man with beer in due season, and thus gain his good graces, will be apt to receive an allotment of good, fertile forest land, while a less fortunate individual, out of favour at Court, will only get a piece of barren hill-side which has

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[765] consequence of the death. If it be the hut of one of the subor-
596 dinates, the roof is simply lifted off and thrown away into the
787 bush.

766 Another very significant rite in connexion with the closing of the hut is accomplished on the death of the master of the village. A branch is cut from the tree of the village, the tree which was revealed by the divinatory bones as the one near which the headman had to build (See Part II Ch. II) ; half of the branch is placed across the great gate of the village, which is then closed and another gate opened, at some distance, in the fence ; the other half is put over the door of the crushed hut.

765 There seem to be great variations in the performance of these
428 ceremonies everywhere. I believe, without being able to vouch for it, that when two family gatherings take place during this last period of the mourning, the first is held to proclaim the new master of the village and the second to distribute the inheritance amongst the heirs-at-law. At any rate these two important acts take place at the gatherings. As the inheritance consists mainly of live stock — human stock, the wives of the deceased, I shall describe the adjudication when treating of the fate of widows.

2) Family rites in the Northern clans.

765 A month after the burial, there is a first gathering of the grave-
574 diggers. They are invited by the widows to a beer-feast. This beer is called : "the beer of the hyenas," as the hyenas also dig graves! No equivocal compliment is intended, the widows merely meaning to thank these men for their services.

765 In the northern clans, *yindlu a yi yili*, the hut is not taboo.
782 It can be slept in again after the five days of the Great Mourning. The plaster of the doorposts is repaired, and a new crown is put on the top when the hut again finds an owner (1). The feast of the

766 (1) The hut of a leper alone is considered irremediably tabooed as the sufferer is buried in it. They dig a hole into which he is pushed by means of sticks. The roof is crushed down over him.

783 washed in the pool and which she will wear again for two days (1).
765 b) *The following days of the Great Mourning.* Without delay a new hut, a small provisional hut, is built in front of the mortuary one. Here the great wife will stay during the whole of her widowhood; the space between this and the old hut is more or less taboo and most of the possessions of the deceased are placed there, under the roof near the door on the outside. (See illustration p. 159.)

The other widows do not leave their huts, but they participate in the other purifying acts, the vapour baths and the general sprinkling of the fifth day. As regards the vapour baths, however, the first wife is associated with the grave-diggers, viz. she must be exposed to the strongest medicinal smoke, while the inferior wives are cleansed with weaker drugs. They all put on the *malopa* and eat with spoons during tne whole year of widowhood.

587 c) *Provisional decision regarding the fate of the widows.* A few
595 days after the Great Mourning, a fresh gathering takes place, not
578 in connection with the defilement of death, which is now provision-
768 ally cleansed, but *to settle provisionally the fate of the widows.* The
604 sisters of the deceased have to play a special part in this gathering. They will lead the discussion with the widows about their new husbands. It is indeed a happy custom to let women decide on the subject. Not that they have unrestricted power in the matter. The law has provided a certain rule for the distribution and this is seldom departed from. However, some liberty is allowed in its application, and modifications can better be made if proposed by female intermediaries. Should the husband possess a harem (tshengwe), that is at least five wives, they will most likely be given to the following heirs. The great wife, being "the pole of the

575 (1) *Widowers* also form a similar society and undergo the same rites; but just as it
783 was only the great wife who was subject to these laws, to the exclusion of the little wives, so it is only when he has lost his first wife that a man is initiated into the
765 widowers' society. After having buried her (he holds her head) he goes to the pool, washes himself, and another widower comes and makes the incision in him in the inguinal region. Then he throws aways his *shifado* (Annotatio 1.) and also carries out the same crossing of the hut in tears. These three acts constitute the actual widower's mourning; the vapour baths and *fahla khombo* are part of his purification as being the principal grave-digger.

1 [See category 116 --Analyst]

787 village," must remain in it and belongs to the younger brother (1)
595 who becomes the master of the kraal. The second goes to the
428 second brother, the third to the third, the fourth to the *ntukulu*,
768 viz. to the son of the sister of the deceased. The fifth will then
604 become the wife of one of the sons of the deceased. This may appear shocking, and is really shocking even to the ideas of the Natives ; but let it be remembered that she is the youngest of all ; she was taken when the father was already old, and the first son is perhaps older than she. As regards the elder wives, the first and second especially, no one would think of keeping them
[835] for the son ! Incestuous relations are very rare amongst the Ba-Ronga. Even in this case, the feelings of both parties are more or less respected. The men advise the son to begin to play with the young widow, to ask her jocularly for tobacco, and he gradually accustoms himself to consider her no longer as a mother (mamana) but as a wife (nsati).

587 Of course the general rule is apt to be very much altered
595 according to circumstances. Should the deceased be the youngest
428 of the family, his elder brother may inherit the first wife. But
768 this is not the regular procedure.

The distribution having thus been decided on, the sisters of the deceased call the widows and say to them : "You so and so, you shall give food to so and so (phamela manyana)." But then the struggle begins. One of the widows, being old, may altogether refuse to have anything to do with any of her brothers-in-law. She may say : "I am taking my young son as a husband" which means : I do not want to be the wife of anybody. Or she will say : "I choose the big tree of the village where my late husband has built his hut." This answer may mean two things. Either : I do not leave this kraal and I will stay here without a husband ; or, on the contrary : I consent to be the wife of the man who becomes the headman of the village, viz. the eldest of the younger brothers. Another will say : "I love my *ntukulu* so and so." Should, however, the first wife desire to go to a man who does not

(1) Amongst the Ba-Ronga, an elder brother of the deceased cannot inherit a widow. It is taboo. He is a father to her, not a husband. He sometimes takes the lead in the discussion, having no personal interest in the matter. (See Part II).

587 393 428 768 live in the village, the family council will certainly object strongly to her wish, as her departure would mean that the village would cease to exist. But in the case of the younger widows it is quite possible that an exception to the ordinary law would be allowed if they insisted upon choosing another husband (1).

After all, this is but a preliminary consultation, and the men who are rejoicing at the idea of getting new wives will perhaps be badly deceived later on, as we shall see. However the man provisionally chosen as the future husband of a widow, will at once pay visits to her, "march to her" (ku mu fambela), according to the technical expression.

765 783 833 d) *The casting away of misfortune.* But before any new and happy life can begin for the widows, they have still to go through a very hard trial. They must perform the *lahla khombo*, the throwing away of the malediction of death, and this is much more difficult for them than for the grave-diggers or the other members of the village. The main point in this strange act of purification is this ; before a widow can become the wife of her new husband, she must have sexual intercourse with another man whom she deceives. Should she succeed in freeing herself from him so that the act keeps its ritual character, s. n. i. (see Annotatio 2), this man will take on himself the malediction of death, and she will be purified. On the contrary, should the man accomplish the whole act, the widow has failed and will return home with shame and in despair! Here is a description of this sad expedition of the widows. It takes place a few days after the gathering just described. The men of the village send the widows away, telling them : "Go and scatter (hangalasa) the malediction through the country and get rid of it before some other misfortune happens to us."

(1) What would happen should the widow choose a husband outside her husband's family? To the mind of a heathen woman the idea would never occur. But suppose a Christian widow, having only married suitors, refuses to become their wife, her conscience forbidding her to contract a polygamic union. Her case would be very hard indeed, as I do not think her wish would be taken into consideration by heathen relatives. It would have to be brought before the White magistrate, who would probably try to help the widow. I think that, even if the woman consented to submit such family matters to the European court, she would have to give the lobola or her children back to her brothers-in-law, and that might be an impossibility for her. It would be interesting to know how Native Commissioners proceed in such cases.

1 [See p. 516 in these categories or in 186 -- Analyst]

587 768 Probably this widow was not pleased with the man to whom they had destined her. Seeing more of him during the year, her affection had not increased. On the other hand, she had some liking for one of the *batukulu*, and she arranged secretly with him, and perhaps also with his mother, that she would keep silent till this day and then choose her nephew. It is quite possible that the mother of the *ntukulu* will say in that case : "Has this widow not been bought with the money which I secured for the family by my marriage ?" Of course the official suitor objects strongly to this spoliation. He becomes angry. During a whole year he has given clothing to the ungrateful one. Things may grow so bad that the *ntukulu* carries off the fractious widow at once, saying : "Good-bye! I go with my wife!" The old men will then follow him and implore him to come back. If they see that the woman is quite decided, they will allow her to go to the husband of her choice. They had better consent to it at once, because it not infrequently happens that the *ntukulu*, if repulsed that day, will go to the family of the woman and claim the money *(lobola)* paid for her by her late husband, saying : "That *lobola* comes from my mother. If you do not give us our wife, if you allow her to stay with another man, then give us back the money." Or it may happen also that the widow, brought perforce to the house of a younger brother-in-law, will run away to the *ntukulu*, and the rightful husband will be helpless. There is a saying to this effect : "A woman inherited cannot be forced." Of course such cases of conflicting interests cause a great deal of friction between members of the family, and the Natives are much distressed about it ; they try to avoid it as much as possible. But the desire of getting one more wife is so strong in the heart of a Ronga that such disputes are by no means rare, and the day of the adjudication of the inheritance is universally dreaded. However, they never go as far as fighting, and if an uncle and a nephew have parted from each other on bad terms, they will very likely try to mend matters by the sacrifice of reconciliation *(hahlelana madjieta)*, which is one of the admirable features of the Ronga religion (See Part VI).

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The widows are truly the most important part of the property

768 left by a man. When they have been distributed, the minor
428 possessions of the deceased are adjudicated. As regards *oxen,*
604 *money,* these have been already remitted to the younger brother or, in his absence, to the sons. The younger brother will use them as family property to buy a wife for his son or for the son of the deceased, when he comes of age. In the distribution of the implements which have been cleansed, but left lying on the ground in front of the hut up to this day, the *ntukulu,* viz. the principal uterine nephew again plays an important part. He has the right of *tjhumba,* viz. of picking out for himself one of the assagais of his uncle, just as the maternal uncle takes (tjhumba) one pound from the lobola money (See Part II). Every warrior possesses at least two assagais ; the big one belongs in principle to the chief, and must be inherited by the eldest son. The nephew takes the smaller one, but he must precede his cousin in choosing ; in appropriating this weapon, he *surrenders* or transmits (nyiketa) the inheritance to the true heirs. This is a very characteristic expression. It seems as if he wished to assert his right ; but he takes the less valuable weapon and leaves the better one to the son. The explanation of this custom is probably to be found in the evolution of the family system which must have taken place amongst the Thongas (See Part II). In fact all the *batukulu* stand in a line and receive a portion of the property of the deceased, a knife, an axe, a small punch, etc. Women never inherit (a ba di
562 pfindla). When no heir exists except females, they may receive
428 something, but the valuable property must be kept by them for their sons, the uterine nephews of the deceased. Why ? Because, in the mind of the Thongas, a woman is not capable of possessing ; she is not able to build an oxen kraal and repair it ; how could she possess oxen ? The only thing she can do is to arrange a pig's kraal. Therefore she can own pigs, but nothing else!

768 The end of the feast of the adjudication of the inheritance is the distribution of the flesh of the victims. The company breaks up, each party having received one of the limbs. They must eat it on their way home, somewhere under a tree, on the road ; neither in the mortuary village, nor in their own kraal. It is

601 reciprocal, means brothers as well as sisters. If he wishes to specify, he adds to makwabu : "of the assagai," or "of the basket." It is never employed except when united with the possessive pronoun : *makweru* means my brother, *makwenu* your brother, *makwabu*, his brother or sister. The elder brother is called *nhondjwa* (plur. tinhondjwa). The nhondjwa is also called *hosi* (plur. tihosi) chief. The hierarchy of age is very strictly observed amongst the Thongas. The elder brother is treated with great respect and gives orders to his younger brothers with almost the same authority as the father. It must be noticed also that the position of elder brother is not only a matter of age, but, in the polygamic family, all the children of a first wife, or of the first house, are *tihosi* to the children of secondary or posterior wives or houses, though they may have been born after them. They take precedence of them. Amongst girls, an elder sister is often called *mamana*, mother, whilst an elder brother is never a tatana (father) but a hosi (chief).

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601 The term *makwabu* is applied to all my first and second cousins who have the same paternal grandfather, or great-grandfather, as I have. Cousins on my mother's side are also bamakwabu, some of them at least, those who are my maternal aunt's children. But cousins on the father's side are more fully bamakwabu than those on the mother's side : Muhambi is more so to Hlangabeza than to Mahlobo, because the two former belong to the same shibongo, family name ; they are men of the Makaneta clan and Muhambi could therefore inherit Hlangabeza's wives ; Muhambi and Mahlobo are not of the same clan, and could not inherit from each other. From this fact we begin to see that the laws of inheritance, and especially the laws of the distribution of the widows amongst the family which has bought them, are closely connected with the system of relationship.

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601 The man who has married my wife's sister is also a makwabu to me, a nhondjwa if he has married her elder sister (Phayindi to Mboza), a ndjisana if the younger (Magwazizen to Mboza). The brothers of Phayindi and Magwazizen are also called brothers by Mboza.

There is a special term in the Northern clans to indicate the

604 782 assagay. The batukulu dispose of the portion of the limbs offered to the gods. They *cut* the prayer and, at that moment they steal the meat or the beer of the sacrifice and run away with them. Why is this? "Because a ntukulu does not fear the saliva of his malume" (Mboza). They live in such intimacy with them that they can eat that which was reserved for the gods (1) (See p. 162).

604 The ntukulu *also takes precedence* in some other rites ; in the circumcision school the uterine nephew of the chief is at the head of the circumcised. In the *luma milomo* (page 146) he starts the purifying ceremony, and "gives to the others" (nyiketa) the use of the food of the deceased.

604 428 178 But it is especially in the question of the inheritance that he shows himself in his characteristic aspect. Father-right has set in and is strongly supported by the lobola custom. Therefore the sons of the deceased have the sole right to the property of their father, wives as well as implements. The batukulu, however, the uterine nephews, refuse to be left out! You will find them everywhere, trying to get something for themselves. They were already planning with the malume's wives to take them as spouses after the death of their husband. Remember how they teased the whole fámily, on the day of the distribution of the widows (page 208). When the implements were distributed, they came and claimed their *tjhumba* (a technical expression, it would seem, which means precisely this kind of claim lodged by a malume or a ntukulu). They were given the small assagay, the big one remaining for the son. In this way *ba nyiketa pfindla, they give over the inheritance to the legal heirs.* This is a most vivid representation of a right which no longer exists, having in fact become

769 602 (1) Some ethnographers have supposed that ancestral worship only began when the father took command of the family and consequently did not exist in the period of mother-right. This seems to me absolutely false. The spirits of the mother's family are invoked as well as the father's ancestors, and the special place of the uterine nephews in worship down to this day is best explained in this way: before the gods of the father were known and prayed to, those of the mother were worshipped, and consequently the batukulu held a special position in the ritual. When the ancestors on the father's side made their appearance in the Bantu Pantheon, beside those on the mother's side, or after the institution of father right, the batukulu preserved that special position.

604 obsolete, but which asserts itself in virtue of the survival of an old
178 custom. I have often been struck by the unconscious way in
428 which they act on all these occasions! They give the impression of people who have been hypnotised and ordered to do something next day, when no longer in the mesmeric sleep. You see them carrying out the act, constrained by a mysterious necessity and without knowing why they do so. The hypnotising factor here is the weight of heredity, of all this hoary antiquity, which belongs indeed to the past, but still influences the subliminal life of the tribe...

643 As regards the chiefs, I may add that the uterine nephew may
604 be given the chieftainship over a certain part of the country. He is well received at the Court, better than the nephews on the brother's side, because, with these, there is always the risk that they may become usurpers. This also explains why a chief, when in danger, will ask help from his bakokwana rather than from the relatives of his own family. The latter may seize the opportunity for "bangana buhosi", i. e. to dispute the chieftainship with him.

611 Mother-right most probably existed amongst the ancestors of
178 the Thongas, whatever may be the country in which they then lived
602 and the name by which they were called. But everything seems to prove that this phase has long ago passed away. No one remembers anything of the kind. Genealogies, which are the oldest records of the tribe, mention only the ancestors of the father. They are recalled much better than those of the mother. The lobola custom, which is the strongest support of the paternal right at the present time, has been practised since time immemorial (1). See also the special names of the great-grandfathers in the paternal line (p. 227).

000 (1) Lobola is however not incompatible with the uterine form of the family. I have been informed by the Rev. E. Allégret, working in the French Congo, that the Mpongwe and Galoa of the Lower Ogowe have still partly preserved the mother-right. But lobola exists. The first lobolo is payed indifferently to the father or the mother of the bride, and the choice is made according to the personal relations existing between the husband's family and the families of the bride's parents. When a second daughter marries, half the lobolo is given to the maternal uncle. The children stay in the father's village, but they are under the guidance of the mother and of her family. They belong to the mother's clan. This system evidently denotés a less advanced stage of evolution. However matriarchy is passing into patriarchy, and the lobola custom will probably hasten the process.

423 643 By law the soil belongs to the Chief, but only that, through him, it may become general property. No one can buy land. It is gratuitously assigned to any and all who wish to settle in the country. The mere fact of *kondza*, viz., making submission to the chief (Vol. I, p. 433), entitles the Native to as much land as may be necessary for his subsistence.

423 622 It will be readily understood, however, that the supreme Chief, however small his territory may be, can hardly assume the duty of marking out the various small allotments for his subjects. In ordinary practice this is done by the headmen of the villages (numzane), the important men of the country, (I will call them A), who obtain the grant of considerable tracts of land, which they apportion amongst those under their jurisdiction. They and their near relatives cultivate the most fertile parts of these tracts, or districts, and when any one (say B) wishes to settle on their reserve, they "cut the bush" for him, "tjemela nhoba," to use the technical expression ; they accompany the would-be-settler to an uncultivated piece of land and together they fix the boundaries of a plot of ground which is then assigned to him. A tree, the corner of a lake, a well, or an anthill, may be used as landmarks in this primitive surveying operation. The new-comer will clear as much of the land as he can, till it, and the fields, together with the trees they contain, will become thenceforth his property. Should any of his relatives wish to settle near him, he will, in his turn, assign to them a portion of his land, which they may clear and cultivate ; and so the distribution continues. Supposing B is not satisfied with his allotment, or is unable to live on neighbourly terms with A, and builds his hut in some other spot, he cannot sell or otherwise dispose of his land, as it must revert to A, the original owner. On the other hand, should B die, his wife would inherit his gardens. Should father or mother die, the property would naturally pass to the sons, who would divide the fields between their wives. Thus we see that real estate is hereditary, but cannot be sold. A similar state of affairs would result should A, the numzane, who ranks almost as a petty chief, leave the country : all his rights in connection with the tract that he may have occupied for the last fifty years will cease with his departure.

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584 mats, drinking, eating, etc. we should say : This rite is also, on the part of the diminished group, a means of asserting its importance, of saving its dignity. But the boys do the same thing on their visit. They maintain the same disdainful attitude... This certainly arises from the fact that the two social groups look upon each other with some distrust, not yet being fully acquainted, and consequently observing a mutual reserve. But further information and a closer comparative study of Thonga rites enables me to give still another explanation.

561 431 The term employed to designate this rite is *kunga*. This verb is of Ngoni (Zulu) origin. Used in a general way, it means to remit a present to a chief who has sent his emissaries to claim it. The chief "*kungisa*" viz. orders to kunga. In its ritual sense, it means to give a present to a person who refuses to do something for ritual reasons. The old Thonga expression is *alula*. This word is the reversive derivative of the verb *ala*, to refuse ; it therefore means to remove the refusal, to overcome it, to cause somebody to yield. The Kunga rite is performed on at least five different occasions : 1) for the circumcised boy on the day when he is received into the community of adults (page 93) ; 2) for the girl who has passed through the khomba initiation ; 3) for the boy who has wooed a girl, when he pays his official visit to her and to her family, and for the girl, when she returns the visit with her maids, but especially when she goes to the domicile of her husband and thus enters the married state ; 4) for the first-born child ; 5) for the woman who has lost many children and consequently is in a state of bereavement (bowumba) when she again gives birth to a child. In all these cases, the person concerned passes from one condition to another ; the circumcised from the childish to the adult stage, the suitor and his bride from the unmarried to the married state, the woman who has had her first child from the state of womanhood to that of motherhood and the bereaved woman from the state of bereavement to the normal position of a mother carrying a child on her shoulders. And here we meet with the old Bantu conception of life. This passage, in the evolution of human life, is fraught with danger. The person concerned stands on the defensive. He or she refuses to speak, to look at other people, to enter their village, or, in the case of the newly married girl, to perform her conjugal duty. Those who wish them to accept their new condition must persuade them to do so by giving them presents, generally presents of little importance, a wire bracelet, a small coin, etc. This will remove the danger.

This rite, which might be called a *defensive rite*, is therefore certainly

561 a rite of passage and this is also proved by the fact that the money or the
431 bracelets given to the persons concerned do not remain their property. As regards the circumcised, they remit them to the chief, and the chief distributes them to the old women who are no longer able to bear children. The girl who has passed through the khomba gives them to her adopted mother, who will use them in the same way. All the money remitted to the bride will go to the master of the village, for the old women and the children. *Married people must have no share in it,* as these presents are taboo. Why ? Because they are connected with a passage, and people who have sexual relations are considered as increasing the dangers connected with these critical phases of human development, when the heart is troubled by a half-conscious fear of a new and unknown future. Amongst civilised people who have reached the era of individualism, these fears find their expression in songs and poetry. In the communistic society they express themselves by means of rites.

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591 Here are some answers to the questions of Professor Frazer on
587 marriage.

611 A man always brings his wife to his own home. This is the *tlhoma,* and it is a law. It is taboo for him to go and live with his parents-in- law, at any rate when he marries his first wife. In the course of time, when the children have grown up, when the *bukoñwana,* viz. the relations with parents-in-law, are of old standing, a man can go and live in his wife's village (See Part II). Another case in which this can be done is when a widow refuses to marry the man who legally inherits her, and gives herself to a stranger, a man of Inhambane, for instance. He does not pay the lobolo, and lives with her in her village ; but the children born of that union will belong to the family of the deceased husband.

585 There is no preparation for marriage amongst the Thongas by fasting, bleeding or keeping awake the night before. No corn or rice is thrown at the bridal pair. The bride or bridegroom is never represented at the marriage by a proxy or dummy. Conjugal relations begin immediately after marriage (see page 113), but the wife does not possess her home and her kitchen for the first year ; during that period she must cook for her mother-in-law.

583 There are no occasions on which men exchange their wives.
See practical conclusions on Marriage Rites at the end of Vol. I.

606 side. She does the same. Then you sit down according to
316 men's fashion, crossing your legs. She also sits down bending
her legs, and putting one knee over the other as women do; then
834 both parties salute each other, you, as a man, clapping your hands
576 against each other, holding them parallel, and the woman holding
hers at right angles. "Then you begin to talk..."

Suppose the son-in-law has had the good luck to reach the village of his wife's relatives without having met his mother-in-law, but sees her sitting somewhere near a hut. This is dreadful. She looks at him and at once covers her breasts with her cloth. He himself turns his eyes aside. I saw in Natal a curious photograph representing the scene. Amongst the Zulus the avoidance of the mother-in-law is perhaps more marked than in any other tribe; the man is shown in the picture hiding his face
606 with his shield. Should the mother-in-law be taking her meal
576 when her son-in-law arrives unexpectedly, she throws away the mouthful she was eating, and he does the same.— Suppose then that he has entered the village without seeing her; then the tinamu, his wife's sisters, come hastily to meet him. They take his sticks, joking with him meanwhile and put them in his mother-in-law's hut. This hut is his; he has the right of staying in it during his whole visit. They spread a mat on the ground, and bring him food. They chat with him. Then the mother-in-law comes in her turn, but she dares not enter the hut. She sits down outside and, without seeing him, salutes him, saying: "Good morning, son of so and so." She must not pronounce his name. He answers in the same style, and must also say: "Daughter of so and so." Should he call her by her name it would be a breach of etiquette and his wife would be angry and say: "How dare you? Did she not bring me forth? Rather say: Mother!" During the first years of his married life, the son-in-law never eats with his wife's mother.

607 This peculiar behaviour is the rule, not only towards the wife's mother, but also towards her sisters.

606 In the course of years there is a *lessening* of this terrible taboo.
431 In the Maputju clan, the son-in-law will provide an ox as soon as
576 possible and he will "communicate" (tlhangana) with her, partaking

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of its meat with all his relatives-in-law. Then both will be allowed to eat together. Until that present was made, it would have been impossible. In this clan, a future son-in-law does not eat at all with his bakoñwana until the marriage is concluded, and this rule is sometimes observed till he has given "the ox for communicating together." Amongst the Zulus it is said that a mother-in-law will never eat with her daughter's husband. In the Khosa clan the custom of lessening the avoidance taboo by offering a present to the mother-in-law also exists. The son-in-law will one day bring a plate of food to her with his gift put on top of it. She will accept it and eat together with him. Then it will be possible for these two persons to "djungulisana" i. e. to tell each other the news of the day when visiting each other's village. But when this monotonous recital is finished and concluded, as is customary, by clapping both hands, this must be done with care, and not in a hurried fashion, as when speaking to an ordinary person, but slowly and respectfully.

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What is the reason of this extraordinary conduct of the son-in-law towards his wife's mother ? The Khosa Native who gave me this last information said : "A wise man will carefully observe the bukoñwana rules, because, if he hurts his parents-in-law by infringing them, they will not give him his tinamu as wives." This is true, but the same may be said of all the taboos of the bukoñwana, and the mother-in-law is not the principal person to be consulted on the question. Another more profound reason was once alluded to by an old Thonga, of Spelonken, Abraham Mabanyisi, who said to me : "I fear my mother-in-law because I shall never marry her : Such a thing has never been seen." This statement has been confirmed since by information gathered in the Maputju clan. Notice the almost reflex action of the mother-in-law in covering her breasts when she sees her son-in-law coming unexpectedly. It shows that there is a sexual element in the behaviour of the woman and also in that of the man, who hides his face in order not to see her in her half nakedness. Dr. Rivers, who has met exactly the same rites of avoidance amongst the Melanesians, supposes that they are dictated by a more or less unconscious desire on the part of both these persons to fight against the temptation to have sexual relations with each other. Bantus also, in the course of the evolution of the family, have come to the deep conviction that such intercourse is bad and must

604 585 womb, the uterus ; this consists not only of that organ, but of the whole belly, from the sternum to the hind legs ; the bride's mother eats the *mbata* and *khondjo*, viz. the extremity of the spine (Mboza).

585 431 On the day of hlomisa, when the bride is led to her husband's village, her maternal relatives receive a special gift, a young cow called *mubya wa mana wa yena*, i. e. the skin in which her mother carried her on her shoulders when she was a baby. This cow will be sent to the family when the first and the third daughter marry. In the case of a second and fourth girl, the nyimba alone is sent.

585 604 In the *equipment of the bride*, the mother's relatives provide her with a hoe, with fat to anoint her body, with a mat and clothing and sometimes with bracelets. The paternal aunt (hahana) does not give anything, neither does the paternal uncle, the latter only helping the father occasionally. Should the mother's relatives not fulfil this duty of providing part of the trousseau, next time they will not be given the *nyimba* to which they were entitled (Viguet).

593 602 604 But the most characteristic prerogative of the bamalume or bakokwana, is *their special right of intercession* on behalf of the uterine nephews. In fact, as Mankhelu said in his picturesque language, "as regards sacrifices (timhamba), the mother's relatives mostly perform them. They are the stem. My father is the stem as regards the oxen, but my mother is the true stem ; she is the god ; she makes me grow. Should she die when I am an infant, I shall not live. The village of my mother is as the home of the gods (ka mamana hi ko psikwembyen)." Simeon Gana added : "We have the special charge of sacrificing for our batukulu ; our sons also are priests to them, and can officiate in our place, even should they be younger than our batukulu. That is the reason why we do not marry them. We are their elders (bakulu)." Of course the bones will always be consulted and they will tell if a sacrifice must be offered to the gods of the mother or to those of the father, but a kokwane will preferably be called upon to sacrifice for a sick child. (See Part VI. Chap. II, II.)

604 611 In the ceremonies following death, especially in the feast of the mourning beer (page 164), the malume will be the officiating person and squeeze the *psanyi* over his batukulu to cleanse them.

A last right possessed by the malume is that *of raising his village*

E. THE LOBOLA CUSTOM.

I. *The History of the Custom. How it is practised.*

436 As far back as Natives can remember, lobola has always been
583 practised. First it consisted of *mats* and *baskets*, in those remote
439 times when white people had not yet made their appearance. *Large iron rings* were procured by barter from sailors who anchored off the shore (see Part IV), and were employed for the purpose. Later on white traders settled in the country. *Beads* were bought from them (nkarara), especially large ones (mubatlwana). A chief used to lobola with ten handfuls of these, a subject with only five. Large *brass rings* were also used in old times. Two of them have been found lately in the Maputju country, and one came into my possession. It weighs more than two pounds. They were called *litlatla* and were very much sought after. One was enough to buy a wife.

436 *Oxen* have also been used for a very long time for lobola.
583 Some say that they were the regular means of getting a wife in the 18th century. When Manukosi came, in 1820, he appropriated all the cattle, and the Thongas were obliged to use beads and hoes for that reason. At any rate the Nkunas, when they emigrated into the Transvaal in 1835, were paying lobolo in oxen. A father claimed ten for his daughter. The Pedis of the country claimed only two or three, and this was one of the reasons why
436 the two tribes did not intermarry. Strange to say, I never heard
583 goats mentioned as having served for this purpose, though the
231 goat is certainly the oldest domestic animal of the South African Bantus! Whatever may have been the objects first used, sooner or later oxen, live stock, became the usual means of lobola. This appears plainly in the technical expressions : to go out with a herd (ntlhambi), viz., to go to lobola,—to eat the oxen, viz., to accept a lobolo,—the woman of my oxen, viz., the one bought with the oxen given by me for my wife, etc.

231 436 583 177 The scarcity of oxen, probably caused by the wars with the Zulus, was no doubt the reason why they were replaced by hoes. *Hoes* were universally employed from 1840-1870, together with oxen, when available. Ten was the regular price for lobola. Later on fathers asked twenty, thirty, fifty. They were first of native make ; the Vendas of Spelonken, near the Iron Mountain, provided the whole tribe for a time with that heavy currency, until the Europeans saw that there was good business to be done by supplying them. (See Part IV). Portuguese traders of Delagoa Bay began to send Natives to Gaza with guns and powder to hunt elephants, and paid them in hoes : twenty, fifty, one hundred hoes for a tusk, according to its size.

436 177 583 464 But hoes have also been superseded by the universal power of the *pound sterling*. After the death of Manukosi (1858), early in the sixties of the last century, some Zulus came to Delagoa Bay from Natal, sent by Englishmen to hunt elephants in Gaza. They told the people of the country that money could be obtained in Pietermaritzburg (Umgundhlovo) by working, and the first Ba-Ronga went *ku berengen*, viz., to serve white people there. In 1870, in the year still called Daiman by the chroniclers of the tribe, many more went to Kimberley, especially from the Transvaal colonies of Thongas, and gold coin began to spread amongst the tribe with all its usefulness and all its dangers. It is now becoming more and more current, as from 50,000 to 70,000 Natives of the Thonga tribe are working in the Johannesburg mines. First

436 177 583 of all £ 1 was worth ten hoes, and the lobolo money was fixed at £ 8 by the chiefs. But this price was soon considered insufficient by the parents. They wanted £ 10.10.0, ten guineas! They had already learned that, amongst cultivated people and in refined transactions, we talk of guineas and not of pounds! Later on it rose as high as £ 20 for an ordinary girl, £ 30 for a chief's daughter. The average round Lourenço Marques was £ 18 at the beginning of this century and in the Transvaal £ 25 (1). When a

(1) There is a tendancy constantly to increase the amount of the lobolo. Nowadays it is nearer £ 30 than £ 20. In this connection I may mention the following fact. A man named Mpunzi had payed £ 28 for his wife, and the matter was looked on as concluded ; but later on his parents-in-law came to claim £ 2 more. Why? They had purchased a wife for their son and had obtained her for £ 28 ; it was all right so

cut, dried and ground "ku djinga," as a foretaste! Then the 249
other leaves are cut, covered with nkuhlu foliage and left for three days to mature (ku pfundja) ; a string is then passed through them and they are hung to a tree to dry. Before they have become brittle, they are rolled up together so as to form the "mfunge," a bunch of tobacco leaves which is sometimes three or four feet long by 4 to 6 inches thick. This bunch is exposed to the sun on the roof for one day. When the process of drying is finished, the leaves are put once more outside in the evening so as to get a little damp, and are then finally rolled up together. The bunch of tobacco is kept inside the house and often used for [436] ●
barter.

The *manioc* (ntjumbulu, mu-mi) is extensively cultivated both in the sand of the hills and near the marshes. The root, dried, and eaten either whole or ground, is very good food, but some plants have a bitter taste. But manioc can hardly be called a vegetable and borders on the domain of trees.

III. *Trees and fruits.*

Fruits play an important part in the diet of the Thongas. 137
but wild fruits alone, the fruit with which Mother Earth 245
presents them. They neither plant nor cultivate the trees ; when clearing the ground, they simply spare the fruit-bearing kinds which grow naturally. It may be that a man will sow some seeds of a particularly good *nkuhlu*, or *nkanye*, in his garden, if that garden happens to be devoid of trees : this is all they do to improve the quality of the fruit. It is no wonder, after all, that tree cultivation is almost entirely absent in Thonga agriculture : villages move so frequently, owing to contamination by death, accusations of witchcraft, or exhaustion of the soil, that nobody takes the trouble to plant trees which he will not be able to carry away with him to his new residence.

As regards the indigenous fruits, they are varied and numerous. 222
Natives systematically spare every fruit tree when clearing their

316 Later on wrecked boats provided Native smiths with iron to make
325 hoes, axes, etc. In certain villages there were regular forges,
412 (Matlharin, near Mbengelen Island, Matjolo etc.). The hoes
436 were in the well-known form of an ace of spades and were fixed into a wooden handle, as are also the axes, and battle axes (I. p. 453). But the principal supply of iron came from the Transvaal Mountains, especially from the Northern Zoutpansberg, where the Bveshas have practised the art of mining iron ore for an unknown period. These Sutho hoes have played a great part in the history of the Thonga tribe, having been extensively used as currency for lobolo purposes.

325 These Bveshas — the word is said to be a Thonga corruption of Venda — built their furnaces in ant-hills, as shown in the accompanying illustration supplied by M. H. Gros, near Iron Mountain, East of the Speionken district. They excavated three holes under the furnace, and blew into them by means of bellows made of a skin, the air being expelled through an antelope horn. The ore, broken in small pieces and mixed with charcoal, was smelted, crushed, smelted a second time, crushed again and made into hoes and axes, etc. Who had taught the Vendas this art? Did they learn it from the Ma-Lemba, that curious tribe, half Semitic in its customs, which invaded the Northern Transvaal during the XVIIIth century? Nobody knows for certain. I am under the impression that this art is older than that, as the Lebombo Natives, who invaded the Nondwane in the XVIth century, seem to have possessed iron weapons. The origin of iron and the date of its introduction into South Africa is still a mystery.

326 Among the ornaments illustrated will be found a very pretty
177 belt (No. 1).[1] It is the work of a young man named Philemon, living in the outskirts of Lourenço Marques, who employed his leisure moments in making objects of this description with twisted wires of iron, brass and copper, bent in festoons and
[177] fastened with small tongues of metal. European influence is doubtless very marked in these belts, but still they possess a certain cachet of their own. Amongst the Zulus as in our tribe, large cups of various descriptions, including egg-cups, are

[1] [p. 101 -- Analyst]

2) Civil cases.

692 I will not assert that Thongas know the exact difference between
622 civil and criminal cases, the same tribunal judging them both and
643 all being called by the same name, milandju.
681 If any distinction is made, it would be between private and official cases, *private cases* being those which are settled by the two parties concerned alone, without the intervention of the chief ; whilst *official cases* are those in which the matter (mhaka) has been brought to the capital. As already explained, the headmen of the village try to settle the difficulties themselves ; if they succeed, all the better, as the fine will be reduced to its minimum, whilst, before the Court, the fine would be doubled and the chief would keep half of it!

691 Ninety per cent of the civil cases are in connection with *lobola*. These are sometimes most intricate and I would refer to the description already given of some of them (p. 282 and Appendix VIII).

691 *Divorce cases* are also common. When a woman has definitely
586 left her husband, her relatives must return the lobolo money.
643 "You must give up to them £ 5 or an ox," says Mankhelu. The
614 chief Mubvesha who was known for his avarice used to arrest the husband and make him pay £ 25 ; he returned £ 15 to the wife's relatives and kept £ 10 for himself.

When money is returned, the children belong to the mother (See page 279).

691 Many cases may occur in connection with *cattle*. The case of
643 *redhibition* is foreseen : when I buy an ox and it dies on my hands
437 from a disease which was not known at the date of my purchase but which already existed, I have the right to go and ask for another in its place. But I bring the skin of the dead ox with me and one hoe inside it for the meat which I have eaten. If the seller refuses to accept my claim, I go to the chief and complain. He will summon the recalcitrant person and say to him : "Did not this man act well when he put a hoe inside the skin ? Give him another ox!" (Mankhelu.)

326 manufactured, and it is evident that, in this branch, Native art is capable of considerable development. Their method of fastening the blades of assagais to the handles with iron wire is also very ingenious. Sometimes they cover their ebony sticks from top to bottom with a delicate network of steel and brass wire. A Native expert in wire work once mended the stock of my sporting [439] gun, which was broken, and made a wonderful job of it. This wire, so extensively used for bracelets, was formerly made by Native blacksmiths, but now they buy it at Lourenço Marques or from the Hindu traders.

D. COMMERCE.

437 Thongas have an inborn inclination for trade and have always been addicted to it. Before there was question of any currency, when hoes were not yet procurable, or the *ritlatla* bracelet brought by the Whites (I. p. 385), or the copper stick called *lirale* (1) melted by the Palaora Ba-Sutho, they knew how to buy (shaba) and to sell (shabisa), viz., to exchange their primitive produce. A mat was bartered for a fowl and the thrifty savage thought : "This is good business ; the hen will lay eggs and hatch chickens and this will bring me a profit (bindjula)." A shihundju basket was also exchanged for a hen. Another way of buying was adopted when dealing with pots ; the pot was filled with mealies by the buyer and the contents left to the potter as corresponding to the value of the pot. For monkey-nuts, not husked, the pot had to be filled twice ; for more precious products, such as sorghum and Kafir corn, half of it only was measured out. I have myself witnessed some transactions of this kind amongst the Nkunas. If the pot broke when first used, the potter had to give another in its place.

439 But this primitive trade became much more extensive when the Whites made their appearance. Delagoa Bay was one of the

(1) Compare my article in *Folklore*, 24 June 1903.

name *Ba-Godji* is still commonly applied by them to English 439
people. After these Whites, the Natives remember the arrival of the Moslems, who came with their "vessels with an elevated tail," (even to-day Arab dhows have a raised stern answering this description), called *mapangayi* and were the first to land and to undertake a regular commercial exploitation of the country. They soon learnt to speak with the Natives, and to make use of them in their trade, sending them far away into the interior to barter ivory and skins against hoes, beads, clothing, and, later on, powder and bullets.

Whatever may have been the order of arrival of these strangers, one fact is certain : the Ba-Ronga of Delagoa Bay have acted as intermediaries between the Whites and the tribes in the interior for a considerable time, the Mpfumo, Nondwane, Mabota and Hlanganu (1) Natives being particularly engaged in this trade, and going as far as Mosapa (Ba-Ndjao country) and Bvesha (Ba-Venda country), to exchange goods.

The *commercial journeyings*, though they are now a thing of the past, are well remembered by the old people, with all the particular customs accompanying them. The Ba-Sutho called these travellers *Makwapa* (Thonga pronunciation of *Magwamba*), perhaps from the name of a Thonga chief who dwelt on the Oliphant (see *Grammaire Ronga*, p. 21), or near Inhambane. The company, called *mpfhumba*, was generally led by a *ndjilashi*, viz, "the master of the expedition," to whom the Banyan entrusted goods for barter. This man had to find a certain number of carriers, who would share in the profits of the venture. The Banyans estimated the value of the goods in pounds sterling. Should the whole be worth £ 60, for instance, he put 60 mealie cobs into a trunk and the ndjilashi did the same in his own hut ; on reaching home again, he had to deliver to the Banyan money or skins or whatever he had sold the goods for, to the value of

(1) The people of Hlanganu, neighbours of Ñwamba, were renowned as commercial travellers. Hence their nickname: "Ba ku hlomula fumo ba tlhaba misaba." — "Those who take the assagai and pierce the earth." They used their weapon not for fighting but for pacific purposes : the assagai served as a walking stick in their commercial journeyings. Another version is this : "Ba shaba ndlela," — "they buy the road," they do not fight, they would rather pay to be allowed to pass (I. p. 362). 437 481

439 £60 ; and, in case of disagreement, the 60 cobs were counted again in corroboration of the contract made. If he brought an elephant's tusk, the Banyan gave him the value of a full lobolo. Carriers received two pieces of calico as reward.

437 After having visited Kimberley, in 1870, some Thongas, having begun to understand better the advantages of trading, attempted to undertake such expeditions on their own account. But they soon gave up the experiment as the Ngonis of Muzila often robbed them of all their goods. When they were working for White men, the Ngonis were afraid to pillage the company ; on the other hand, if by chance there was a loss, it concerned the White merchant. So they preferred the system of trading for the White men.

These travelling companies had to observe many taboos in order to succeed in their expeditions, in particular the *travellers' taboos*, which have been explained I. p. 339.

533 539 437 There are several popular songs which the traders used to sing on the road, or which were sung about them. One of these has already been quoted (p. 102). Here is another in which the tired carriers ask their leader to allow them to return home :

Hoho! hoho! maringele wa mamano!
Hoho! hoho! dla nkambana hi muka!
Hulukati ya ndlopfu yi nga siyi ñwana!

Oho! Oho! Thou who leadest us as a mother!
Oho! Oho! Break the platter and let us go home!
The female-elephant never forsakes her young!

437 The company generally consisted of men only. The allusion to the female elephant, however, may mean that there were sometimes also women amongst them. They address the leader of the expedition, asking him to destroy the platter so that no utensils shall be left in which to prepare food, thus necessitating a return home. They are thinking besides of their little ones left behind in the village, from whom it is unnatural for them to be separated so long. The mother elephant never forsakes her little one!

On their way back, they had carefully to watch a certain bird called *hwati*, fish-eater; if this bird flew in the right direction, homeward, it was a hopeful sign. If it emitted its cry *kwekweru-kweru*, (kweru means at home), or if it settled on the crown of a hut, then the travellers were happy and shouted their joyful *mikulungwane*. On the contrary, if any member of the company had died on the road, another bird, the *magudjwana*, would come and perch on the crown, with a tired air and drooping head... Then there were tears instead of shouts of joy! 437 787 825

These great commercial expeditions were superseded later on by the *trade in skins* which the Ba-Ronga conducted, bartering them in the interior for powder or other European produce. I knew one Native who organised regular expeditions to Bilene, where he bought the skins of civet-cats with which the Zulu warriors delight to deck themselves. Thence he went into the hill country of the Swazis, or Zulus, to sell his merchandise. It was reported that he obtained scores of oxen in exchange for his precious nsimba skins. The last time, however, the venture did not turn out well, and it has not been attempted again. 439

Native trade, fifty years ago, consisted also in selling *wax*, and *rubber*, and tons of *nkampfi* (mafureira almonds) to the business houses at Delagoa, (the supply of ivory was exhausted years ago), but this trade has fallen off almost entirely. My impression is that Native commerce has greatly diminished during the last fifty years. So the fact is evident that civilisation, which at first gave a decided stimulus to the commercial spirit of the Thongas, has latterly almost entirely destroyed their trade. How has this been done?

One reason for this decrease in Native commerce may be found in the advent of a large number of Asiatics, Banyans from Goa and Bombay, who are past masters in the art of shopkeeping, and who set up in business wherever they consider there is a sufficient population to warrant the venture. Living very cheaply (rice and curry are their staple food), in any kind of shanty, selling at enormous profits, keen at making bargains, these people 439 563

1" D.2., Traders--analysis

E. THE LOBOLA CUSTOM.

I. *The History of the Custom. How it is practised.*

436 583 439 As far back as Natives can remember, lobola has always been practised. First it consisted of *mats* and *baskets*, in those remote times when white people had not yet made their appearance. *Large iron rings* were procured by barter from sailors who anchored off the shore (see Part IV), and were employed for the purpose. Later on white traders settled in the country. *Beads* were bought from them (nkarara), especially large ones (mubatlwana). A chief used to lobola with ten handfuls of these, a subject with only five. Large *brass rings* were also used in old times. Two of them have been found lately in the Maputju country, and one came into my possession. It weighs more than two pounds. They were called *litlatla* and were very much sought after. One was enough to buy a wife.

436 583 *Oxen* have also been used for a very long time for lobola. Some say that they were the regular means of getting a wife in the 18th century. When Manukosi came, in 1820, he appropriated all the cattle, and the Thongas were obliged to use beads and hoes for that reason. At any rate the Nkunas, when they emigrated into the Transvaal in 1835, were paying lobolo in oxen. A father claimed ten for his daughter. The Pedis of the country claimed only two or three, and this was one of the reasons why 436 583 231 the two tribes did not intermarry. Strange to say, I never heard goats mentioned as having served for this purpose, though the goat is certainly the oldest domestic animal of the South African Bantus! Whatever may have been the objects first used, sooner or later oxen, live stock, became the usual means of lobola. This appears plainly in the technical expressions : to go out with a herd (ntlhambi), viz., to go to lobola,—to eat the oxen, viz., to accept a lobolo,—the woman of my oxen, viz., the one bought with the oxen given by me for my wife, etc.

713 of palm leaves 5 in. and handle 35 ½ inches. As previously
411 mentioned, the handle of the large sized assagai is broken at the
595 warriors' death, being "he," or his defilement ; but the blade
643 "never dies." It belongs to the chief, as does also the shield, and the son will inherit it. During the warrior's life, it is kept in the hut of his *first wife*. She is called the owner (ñwinyi) of the assagai. It is taboo for the other wives to touch it ; another fact which shows the special position of the first wife. (Comp. p. 284.)

713 Another weapon in more restricted use and which can also
411 be employed for cutting wood, is the *axe* or *hatchet*, of which I
439 have met with two descriptions (No. 3) ; the blade (mbimbi) may be narrow and elongated—it is then called shingwatane,—or broad and rounded,—when it is the shiyema. These hatchets are firmly inserted in their wooden handles like the axes of the lake-dwellers. European manufacturers now export a considerable number of semicircular hatchets, similar to the one on the right in my illustration, to Delagoa. The one here portrayed will be at once recognised as being of Native make. I may also mention the big *knives* (mikwa), a sort of sword ; one sometimes meets brawny fellows walking along the paths, armed with these dangerous looking implements! However they are quite inoffensive.

713 I managed to obtain from a traveller a beautiful *dagger* which
411 he was carrying slung across his breast ; it is a rare specimen
171 and comes, I am told, from the Ba-Ndjao tribe (No. 5). The sheath is made of two pieces of wood, artistically carved and fastened together with a plait of iron wire ; it is slightly hollowed out to allow the blade to enter ; this is firmly fixed in the handle through which it passes from end to end, coming out at the extremity, where it is bent back and thus held tightly in place. The Ba-Pedi in the Zoutpansberg also make similar knives.

714 Finally, when the warrior holds in one hand his large assagai,
171 in the other will be found his *shield* (shitlhangu) (No. 1), which he grasps by the stick around which this piece of defensive armour pivots. The Thonga shield is made like that of the Zulus, of a piece of ox-hide, oval in shape and of varying size, sometimes all of one colour and sometimes variegated. (The several battalions

222 great care being taken to avoid crushing the small tender kernel,
252 the royal delicacy ! In times of famine the *mongo* is in great request, in spite of the trouble involved in obtaining it.

222 Another very valuable tree is the *nkuhlu* (mu-mi) (Trichilia
439 emetica I. p. 395) whose nuts are the *tihuhlu* (yin-tin) (1) the mafureira. This is a curious fruit, the nut itself being of a greenish black colour, bitter and very oily ; on this grows white pulp (bululu), covered with a beautiful skin of a bright orange, which, however, only covers about three quarters of the central black nut. The Natives pick this fruit in November and December, and stuff their cheeks with it ; the saliva softens the pulp, which melts gradually in the mouth, affording them a prolonged enjoyment of its exquisite flavour. One sees children, and also folks of mature age, with their cheeks puffed out as if they were badly swollen and throats contracted with the effort of sucking down the delicious pulp ; when nothing remains but the black nut which is called nkampfi, viz., the product of suction, it is carefully put aside and will be used for making vegetable fat ; or it will be sold to the Whites, who export them to Marseilles where, it appears, they are used for making really good oil. Let us hope these nuts, thus sucked clean by the Blacks, have never supplied any portion of our salad dressing ! But there is no occasion to be alarmed, as they are only used for making machine oil. The Blacks themselves do not use the tihuhlu oil for culinary purposes but for outward application only.

252 The *bululu* can also be made into an edible fat by the following
303 process : whole fruits of nkuhlu are first dried, then softened in water ; when quite soft, they are pressed between the fingers so as to separate the white pulp, which is then called *munyantsi*, from the black nuts (nkampfi). This munyantsi is cooked and the fat is skimmed off (wungula) with spoons as it melts and comes to the surface. This edible fat, as well as that used for smearing the body, is preserved either in calabashes or in sala shells (shikutja). The preparation of nkampfi fat takes place as

(1) A certain number of fruits instead of belonging to the dji-ma class, as is the rule, are incorporated with the yin-tin class, the tihuhlu, the tihlu (fruit of the muhlu tree), the tindjole (fruit of the ndjole), etc.

nostrils and so keep it quiet during the whole operation. The milk is generally taken in a large wooden bowl. It is very seldom consumed as a liquid, but is *eaten* when thickened by coagulation. The fresh milk is poured into a calabash with an opening at the bottom closed by a cork : a certain quantity of whey has been kept in the calabash and this causes the fresh milk to curdle at once. When curdled but not yet set, it is called *shitjubi* and is eaten with spoons by men and women. But it is left to decompose : the whey *(mulaza)* soon separates from the thick part, which becomes entirely solid and is then called *ntjhwamba*. The cork at the bottom of the calabash is removed, the *mulaza* flows out freely and is drunk by the men and herd boys. The *ntjhwamba* is put into a plate and each man or woman, not having her *tihweti* (I. p. 187), approaches and takes a spoonful of it. A woman during menstruation must never drink milk, nor during her confinement or until her child has been presented to the moon (I. p. 52). 234 262 272 272 841 844

The milk of the first week after a cow has calved is taboo. It must not be mixed with other cows' milk, because the umbilical cord of the calf has not yet fallen off. It can, however, be boiled and consumed by children, as they do not count! After that milk is never boiled : not that there is any taboo to fear, but it is not customary. Natives do not give any clear reason for these milk taboos. They have no objection to selling their milk to strangers ; on the contrary, they are so eager to make money out of it that they often add water to it, and any European having had dealings with them in milk matters would have his story to tell! 234 262 272 609 439

Goat's milk is left for the herd boys ; men do not touch it.

II. *Other domestic animals.*

Besides oxen, the Ba-Ronga breed *goats* (mbuti, yin-tin), the care of which is relegated to the small boys (I. p. 62). Practically every one possesses one or more goats, whilst oxen are much more rarely met with. 231

old Egyptian monuments (1). The last mbaya were seen in the 291
neighbourhood of Rikatla, when the war of 1894 broke out. In the Northern clans they were still commonly used by the generation which preceded Viguet, by the Nkunas who fled before Manukosi in 1835. (See Introduction to the *Grammaire Ronga*, page 17). The Kafirs of Cape Colony were still in 1903, at this stage of dress... or rather undress, and the Pedis of the Transvaal, with their *musindu* (a mere piece of skin protecting the genitalia), are not much in advance of the mbaya stage even now. This state of affairs arose in the first place from the fact that, as yet, the sentiment of modesty had hardly been conceived. It must not be supposed, however, that morals were the more depraved for that reason; on the contrary, they were much purer, and innocence far more general, judging from the reports of those who remember those days.

But a second fact which allowed the Thongas to go about 132
without clothing, 'in puris naturalibus,' or nearly so, is the 291
warmth of the climate; the temperature rarely drops below 44° Fahrenheit and frequently rises to 113° F., the annual mean near Lourenço Marques being about 74° F. according to our observations extending over seven years. It is thus easy to dispense with a coat in that part of the world, and it is by no means a rare occurrence to see children in the interior absolutely naked (2).

This very primitive article of attire has, however, been 177
supplanted by one designed by the Zulus, and worn by men up to 291

(1) The "phallic sheath" of the earliest [illegible] statuettes, which is also to be 177
noticed on the engravings of the XIXth dynas[illegible] [illegible]onging to African populations, is not of quite the same pattern as the Thonga [illegible] the Sutho musindu. However there is a real similarity between all these primitive costumes; many of the customs of the Bantu of to-day seem to have existed amongst the early Egyptians, and this fact shows that the origin of Egyptian civilisation is partially African.

(2) The Chopi tribe, which is very industrious, dwelling in the neighbourhood of 439
the Thongas N. E. of the mouth of the Limpopo, has succeeded in obtaining a very superior kind of dress by beating the bark of the *mphoma*, a kind of fig-tree which is wide-spread in the country, and which the Ba-Chopi even planted for this purpose. The pieces of bark become very soft and can be strung together. They are called *ntjala*. Several samples of this curious stuff can be seen in the Neuchâtel Museum. Thongas used to buy the article from their Chopi neighbours, but never knew how to manufacture it.

302 The use of ochre is, however, not restricted to nursing mothers
538 or magicians : it is the special province of young marriageable girls, wishing to attract attention : their brilliant skin shines like a
832 mirror, setting off to perfection the white of their eyes and the black of their hair, which is sometimes made flossy by means of antimony or ground charcoal. A quaint saying puts it thus :

> Shindzingeri pundjene ? -Banhwanyana tolan !...
> What says the pretty bird with the coral neck that sings in the grass ?
> It says : Girls, anoint yourselves with ochre ! (if you wish to be as beautiful as it is).

177 Another ornament, of ancient date, is the *bracelet*. There
301 are several kinds : 1) the big heavy copper rings, called *masindana*, which greatly resemble those of the lake-dwellers, having a similar rather oval shape with an opening for slipping them over the wrist ; 2) the modern bracelets, called *busenga*, which the Rongas first bought in Natal, and which the Ma-Lemba introduced in the Northern clans ; they are made of iron wire twined round a ring of hide ; 3) the *mafowa* are more ancient, being made of seeds strung on thongs of skin, and are wound several times round the leg. This is an ornament for either dance or war.
301 The mafowa are sometimes made of the silvery cocoons of Argema Mimosae, the Queen Moth, which are found on nkanye trees, emptied of the chrysalis which is inside and filled with grains of millet which rattle when dancing!

301 *Beads* (nkarara) are evidently of later date ; they were introduced
439 by the Whites in the XVIth century, when the Portuguese were already in regular communication with Delagoa Bay and trafficked with the Natives, exchanging glassware for gold and ivory. Glass fascinated the Blacks : its brightness and transparency pleased
539 them immensely. An old song echoes their simple transports of delight :

> E ! Bashabi ! Batatana ba shabile ; ba buya ni shintshirimana sha balungoooo !..
> Hi ! Here come the buyers ! Our fathers return with their purchases ; they bring back with them the beautiful glittering things which the Whites sell !...

301 "A few years ago an ordinary glass bottle was thought a wonder by the people in the interior," said Timoteo Mandlati to me.

532 I do not believe any foreign influence was exercised in the
322 conception of the idea. His group is absolutely original, and, as such, shows us to what lengths the sculptural talent of the Ba-Ronga can go. This group is now in the Neuchâtel Museum.
313 While statuettes are the most elaborate products of Native
532 sculpture, *canoes* (shene (Dj.) are the largest. I have already
322 mentioned the taboos connected with the cutting of the mahogany and nkwenga trees when used for this purpose (p. 19). Other trees, the mpfubu and the muhlu, can be cut without these precautions being taken.

IV. *Metallurgy.*

172 When and how did iron reach the Ba-Ronga ? Probably we
412 shall never be able to ascertain. Tradition has it that the primitive
316 inhabitants of Nondwane, the Honwana, who cooked elephants in order to tear them in pieces, had no iron implements. Some authorities tell us that the hoe in use in olden times was of an exceedingly hard wood, wrenched I know not how from a species of teak tree called *ntjhiba*. The Natives of these parts must have passed directly from the age of wood to that of iron. There was certainly a stone age, comparable to that of the lake dwellers, in Cape Colony, where a great quantity of silex and of polished stones have been found. I never heard of any such implements having been used by the Thongas, nor found within their territory. As regards the bronze age, they have known the use of copper for a long time, but it cannot be proved that they knew it before iron.

177 Iron and other metals seem to have been first introduced in
439 Delagoa Bay by the "Godji" traders and whale fishers, of whom
316 I shall shortly speak ; they are the first White visitors whom the Natives now remember. The Ba-Ronga used to exchange fowls and other domestic animals for hoes, brass bracelets, and copper brought by the strangers, and they had found out how to make copper wire by forging (fula) the pieces bought from the "Godji."

326 manufactured, and it is evident that, in this branch, Native art is capable of considerable development. Their method of fastening the blades of assagais to the handles with iron wire is also very ingenious. Sometimes they cover their ebony sticks from top to bottom with a delicate network of steel and brass wire. A Native expert in wire work once mended the stock of my sporting [439] gun, which was broken, and made a wonderful job of it. This wire, so extensively used for bracelets, was formerly made by Native blacksmiths, but now they buy it at Lourenço Marques or from the Hindu traders.

D. COMMERCE.

437 Thongas have an inborn inclination for trade and have always been addicted to it. Before there was question of any currency, when hoes were not yet procurable, or the *ritlatla* bracelet brought by the Whites (I. p. 385), or the copper stick called *lirale* (1) melted by the Palaora Ba-Sutho, they knew how to buy (shaba) and to sell (shabisa), viz., to exchange their primitive produce. A mat was bartered for a fowl and the thrifty savage thought : "This is good business ; the hen will lay eggs and hatch chickens and this will bring me a profit (bindjula)." A shihundju basket was also exchanged for a hen. Another way of buying was adopted when dealing with pots ; the pot was filled with mealies by the buyer and the contents left to the potter as corresponding to the value of the pot. For monkey-nuts, not husked, the pot had to be filled twice ; for more precious products, such as sorghum and Kafir corn, half of it only was measured out. I have myself witnessed some transactions of this kind amongst the Nkunas. If the pot broke when first used, the potter had to give another in its place.

439 But this primitive trade became much more extensive when the Whites made their appearance. Delagoa Bay was one of the

(1) Compare my article in *Folklore*, 24 June 1903.

first spots visited and occupied by Europeans in South Africa, and a considerable Native trade developed there in the XVIth century, according to Portuguese documents. These Portuguese records show that, as far back as 1545, Lourenço Marques and Antonio Caldeira made a commercial exploration of the Bay and tried to establish regular exchanges with the Natives. These relations were not continuous, but in 1650 there were five factories in the vicinity of Delagoa, on the island of Inyak, at Sheffin, on the Nkomati (Manhisa) and on both sides of the Bay. In 1721 the Dutch settled there and remained for fourteen years. The Austrians also stationed a garrison on Inyak Island in 1781, but this stronghold was destroyed by a Portuguese frigate. Since the beginning of the XIXth century the Portuguese occupation has been more continuous. The only reason for Whites settling at Delagoa was, of course, the opportunity of traffic with the Natives, and the presence of foreigners doubtless stimulated a certain commercial development among the Ba-Ronga and the tribes of the interior. This is, at any rate, asserted by a Portuguese who visited Lourenço Marques at the end of the XVIIIth century, and wrote an account of his impressions to Don F. Amaro de San Thomé, Prelate of Mozambique. His description may appear somewhat highly coloured to those who know the localities, but I quote the following passages which bear upon our subject :

"On the Southern shore of the Bay resides King Capella (a surname bestowed by the Portuguese on the royal family of Tembe) who is now known as Antonio, (perhaps the Muhari of the Natives). He is very powerful, and has always with him a merchant who trades in ivory... To the North of the river is our factory, where we have a fort and as many as 170 soldiers. The King of Matolla (Matjolo) is very powerful, and well supplied with all necessaries. His village consists of over 400 huts. (This probably means all the villages of the country collectively). It is here that the inhabitants of the mountains bring for sale gold and copper and ivory, for which they have to pay dues. This Monarch owns a province called Cherinda (Shirindja). He obtains from it quantities of ivory... I saw in the house of the King of Maouote (Mabota) two large chests full of amber. About thirty or forty days' journey up the river (Nkomati) dwells the

439 Grand Caxa (Cacha, doubtless Khosa, in the country of Khosene), who is a kind of emperor. It is here that all trading vessels come (1). He dispenses hospitality to all the merchants who wish to buy ivory, gold, rhinoceros horns, hippopotamus' teeth, or copper, articles which they obtain particularly cheaply. A great number of negroes from the kingdom of Quitève (not far from Beira) come down from the mountains to this village for purposes of barter. They bring a large quantity of gold... The Grand Caxa and his people are in continuous relations with the Imperialists (the Austrians who occupied the Bay in 1781), who make large profits out of them. Every month two or three vessels, laden with black clothing and glass ware, arrive here for traffic with the Natives. These two rivers (the Maputju and the Nkomati) can supply each year, from my observation, sufficient ivory, gold, rhinoceros horns and hippopotamus' teeth to load more than twelve ships... The whole shore of the Bay is thickly inhabited with people who transact a large business in amber, and go to sell it to the King Matolla, Maouote and the Grand Caxa."

This description, though perhaps somewhat extravagant, proves that in the XVIIIth century the Ba-Ronga were doing a considerable trade.

It is interesting, in view of these White records, to note what Natives themselves remember regarding their trade in former times. According to them, the first White people they dealt with did not dare come on shore. They were whalefishers and gave the Makaneta people whale flesh to eat. The Ba-Ronga used to go and meet them in the Bay, on rafts made of stems of trees tied together (p. 127). They said : "We go to Godji ;" *Godji* meant that kind of trade. Blacks and Whites could not understand each other. However, the trade was not " silent trade," as has been the case in other quarters. They managed to communicate by gestures, and the Natives obtained mainly metals from these sailors, the brass ritlatla, iron hoes, pieces of copper which they made into wire, etc. Who were these strangers? The Natives cannot say for certain, but think that they were Englishmen, as the

(1) These ships, it must be understood, were in all probability very small craft carrying at the most about five tons of merchandise. During the greater part of the year it is impossible to ascend the Nkomati higher than Magule (where the river forms an elbow) with anything drawing two feet of water.

name *Ba-Godji* is still commonly applied by them to English 439
people. After these Whites, the Natives remember the arrival of the Moslems, who came with their "vessels with an elevated tail," (even to-day Arab dhows have a raised stern answering this description), called *mapangayi* and were the first to land and to undertake a regular commercial exploitation of the country. They soon learnt to speak with the Natives, and to make use of them in their trade, sending them far away into the interior to barter ivory and skins against hoes, beads, clothing, and, later on, powder and bullets.

Whatever may have been the order of arrival of these strangers, one fact is certain : the Ba-Ronga of Delagoa Bay have acted as intermediaries between the Whites and the tribes in the interior for a considerable time, the Mpfumo, Nondwane, Mabota and Hlanganu (1) Natives being particularly engaged in this trade, and going as far as Mosapa (Ba-Ndjao country) and Bvesha (Ba-Venda country), to exchange goods.

The *commercial journeyings*, though they are now a thing of the past, are well remembered by the old people, with all the particular customs accompanying them. The Ba-Sutho called these travellers *Makwapa* (Thonga pronunciation of *Magwamba*), perhaps from the name of a Thonga chief who dwelt on the Oliphant (see *Grammaire Ronga*, p. 21), or near Inhambane. The company, called *mpfhumba*, was generally led by a *ndjilashi*, viz, "the master of the expedition," to whom the Banyan entrusted goods for barter. This man had to find a certain number of carriers, who would share in the profits of the venture. The Banyans estimated the value of the goods in pounds sterling. Should the whole be worth £ 60, for instance, he put 60 mealie cobs into a trunk and the ndjilashi did the same in his own hut ; on reaching home again, he had to deliver to the Banyan money or skins or whatever he had sold the goods for, to the value of

(1) The people of Hlanganu, neighbours of Nwamba, were renowned as commercial travellers. Hence their nickname: "Ba ku hlomula fumo ba tlhaba misaba." — 437
"Those who take the assagai and pierce the earth." They used their weapon not 481
for fighting but for pacific purposes : the assagai served as a walking stick in their commercial journeyings. Another version is this : "Ba shaba ndlela," — "they buy the road," they do not fight, they would rather pay to be allowed to pass (I. p. 362).

439 £60 ; and, in case of disagreement, the 60 cobs were counted again in corroboration of the contract made. If he brought an elephant's tusk, the Banyan gave him the value of a full lobolo. Carriers received two pieces of calico as reward.

437 After having visited Kimberley, in 1870, some Thongas, having begun to understand better the advantages of trading, attempted to undertake such expeditions on their own account. But they soon gave up the experiment as the Ngonis of Muzila often robbed them of all their goods. When they were working for White men, the Ngonis were afraid to pillage the company ; on the other hand, if by chance there was a loss, it concerned the White merchant. So they preferred the system of trading for the White men.

These travelling companies had to observe many taboos in order to succeed in their expeditions, in particular the *travellers' taboos*, which have been explained I. p. 339.

533 539 437 There are several popular songs which the traders used to sing on the road, or which were sung about them. One of these has already been quoted (p. 102). Here is another in which the tired carriers ask their leader to allow them to return home :

Hoho! hoho! maringele wa mamano!
Hoho! hoho! dla nkambana hi muka!
Hulukati ya ndlopfu yi nga siyi fiwana!

Oho! Oho! Thou who leadest us as a mother!
Oho! Oho! Break the platter and let us go home!
The female-elephant never forsakes her young!

437 The company generally consisted of men only. The allusion to the female elephant, however, may mean that there were sometimes also women amongst them. They address the leader of the expedition, asking him to destroy the platter so that no utensils shall be left in which to prepare food, thus necessitating a return home. They are thinking besides of their little ones left behind in the village, from whom it is unnatural for them to be separated so long. The mother elephant never forsakes her little one!

On their way back, they had carefully to watch a certain bird called *hwati*, fish-eater; if this bird flew in the right direction, homeward, it was a hopeful sign. If it emitted its cry *kwekweru-kweru*, (kweru means at home), or if it settled on the crown of a hut, then the travellers were happy and shouted their joyful *mikulungwane*. On the contrary, if any member of the company had died on the road, another bird, the *magudjwana*, would come and perch on the crown, with a tired air and drooping head... Then there were tears instead of shouts of joy!

These great commercial expeditions were superseded later on by the *trade in skins* which the Ba-Ronga conducted, bartering them in the interior for powder or other European produce. I knew one Native who organised regular expeditions to Bilene, where he bought the skins of civet-cats with which the Zulu warriors delight to deck themselves. Thence he went into the hill country of the Swazis, or Zulus, to sell his merchandise. It was reported that he obtained scores of oxen in exchange for his precious nsimba skins. The last time, however, the venture did not turn out well, and it has not been attempted again.

Native trade, fifty years ago, consisted also in selling *wax*, and *rubber*, and tons of *nkampfi* (mafureira almonds) to the business houses at Delagoa, (the supply of ivory was exhausted years ago), but this trade has fallen off almost entirely. My impression is that Native commerce has greatly diminished during the last fifty years. So the fact is evident that civilisation, which at first gave a decided stimulus to the commercial spirit of the Thongas, has latterly almost entirely destroyed their trade. How has this been done?

One reason for this decrease in Native commerce may be found in the advent of a large number of Asiatics, Banyans from Goa and Bombay, who are past masters in the art of shopkeeping, and who set up in business wherever they consider there is a sufficient population to warrant the venture. Living very cheaply (rice and curry are their staple food), in any kind of shanty, selling at enormous profits, keen at making bargains, these people

1" U.2., Traders--analysis

439 monopolise the retail trade throughout the country, and the
563 Natives are quite unable to meet this competition ; they have consequently almost entirely given up all their earlier attempts at business transactions! (1)

167 A second reason why the trade of former days has almost
439 entirely disappeared is to be found in the *great economic changes* resulting from the fact that Lourenço Marques has become an important seaport, in close relation with the miners of Johannesburg who receive their supplies via Delagoa Bay. Thousands of Natives are employed in discharging the large steamers which arrive by hundreds in the roadstead. At this work a Native can earn fifteen shillings a week or more ; in a short time he has made ample provision for the wants of his family and no longer finds it necessary to go to Bilene, to Zululand or Swaziland to make a living. The women too can make money by selling tomatoes and sweet potatoes to an ever increasing White population. All this is much easier

439 (1) On one occasion, in 1892, I made a list of various articles displayed for sale in and around a Banyan shop, in the district of Mahazule (to the North of Nondwane).
292 This is what Mr. Nala, a Hindu from Goa established for many years amongst the
765 Rongas, offered to the Natives living in the neighbourhood of his primitive store.

584 *Stuffs.* These are sold by measurement taken on the individual ; say, by the *shikumba*, length of one arm, or by the *nkumba* or *bemba* (two arms), or by the *peça*, the entire piece, the equivalent of two bemba. The materials most in demand are called ; *tingidao* (white), *mashita* (black with white stripes), *sh.landana* (all red), *shinwakana* (red and black), *mempana* (a special red stuff worn as mourning) and *malopa* (a navy blue material still more frenquently worn as mourning). Besides these are *handkerchiefs* (minturu) of various colours, principally red, a large proportion coming from the manufacturers of East Switzerland; white *blankets (gampongo*, meaning snow), for three or four shillings ; coloured blankets, thicker, varying from five to seven shillings; towels, called *thawula* (an adaptation of the English word) and even some articles of ready-made clothing such as *djansi* (overcoats) at fifteen shillings! Amongst the stuffs I would more particularly note the *gangisa ntombi*, that is "for use when courting the girls", dark blue with a pattern of white flowers.

439 *Beads.* There are at least a dozen kinds to be found at Nala's; djiridja (black) mbanda (white), shingazana, shimuzana, nkankana, habo, matshimbarole, bafa, tshambo.

Sundries. Rings, fish-hooks, buttons (masowa), thread, needles, snuff boxes to be worn in the ears (tinhlanga), knives, spoons, balls of string, padlocks (makandjate) with key attached ; little chains, to be hung from the belt, which tinkle when walking ; bracelets (busenga, ten for a shilling) ; wooden spoons, combs, coils of fine iron wire ; skins ; a large trap for catching hyenas or other wild animals ; small brass petroleum lamps ; sardines at sixpence a tin, English biscuits, and last but not least, a cask of German brandy diluted (tempora) with 50% of water ! This would now be replaced by three casks of Vitho colonial, one of white wine, one of red wine and one of I do not know what colour !

than collecting mafureira or wax, or tapping trees for rubber (1). 167

Moreover the fashion of going to the *Transvaal mines*, to earn money, has become so universal that a Thonga would think he had in some sort failed if he had not made a stay in town (shilungu). There, in Johannesburg, they earn £ 3 in the mines, or £ 4—£ 5 monthly as kitchen boys ; so they despise the old primitive trading expeditions which brought less money and were attended with more danger. 439

These new economic conditions not only discourage Natives from trading on their own account, reducing them more and more to the condition of mere hired labourers, but are rapidly destroying their picturesque and interesting industry. For a few shillings they can buy European utensils. Their attractively carved spoons are replaced by ugly tin ones ; their wooden tumblers by less artistic enamelled ones, their primitive plates by European ware decorated in doubtful taste. Instead of the piece of reed which they wore in their ears as a snuff box, they now buy brass cartridges, and the Thonga beauties, discarding the *tihuhlu* fat, now anoint themselves with a scented oil imported from Europe. There may be certain advantages in these changes, but the picturesqueness of Bantu life promptly disappears, together with the incentive to develop their Native arts and crafts! 177 439

E. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ON NATIVE INDUSTRY.

It is a strange destiny, that of these African races amongst whom the civilisation of the XIXth century has appeared, effecting the most radical changes in the minds and manners of people who, for centuries, perhaps for tens of centuries, have remained in the same primitive condition, marking time, so to speak, on the same spot, or, at most, 178

(1) There are at least two species of shrubs whose sap, when hardened, produces excellent rubber. These are fairly wide-spread and M. Dewèvre, a Belgian botanist, who has made a special study of rubber plants, and to whom I sent leaves and fruits of the trees, has classified them amongst the Landolphia. One is said to be a Landolphia Petersiana, and the other a variety of the Landolphia Kirki (Dyer) called by others Landolphia Monteiroi. Natives make an incision in the bark of the tree, and a milky sap exudes, which soon thickens and the somewhat sticky filaments are then wound 137 314

136 surrounded with a certain mystery, and this is no doubt why its
825 honey is used in the manufacture of the *nyokwekulu*. Its scientific name is Trigona togoensis, var. Junodi (Friese).

136 Amongst the *Mollusca*, a great many are eaten : the *Mbatsana*
262 (yin-tin) of the sea (bivalve shells), *Likatla* (li-tin) of the lakes, and the *Hwaru* (yi-tin), oysters of the Tembe shore. The land
454 snails are called *Humba* (yi-tin) ; the big ones (Achatina Lamar-
787 kiana) are used as safes for the deposit of pounds sterling and are often buried in the huts ; hence the expression *Humba ya bupfundji*, shell of riches! The smaller ones, resembling our snails (Aerope caffra), are rarer and it is considered a bad omen to meet with them on the road. — "Where you go you will hear cries of mourning!" Their name is *Shikumbukwane*. The slugs are called *Holokompfa* (yin-tin) and the smaller snails, *Shihumbanyana*, diminutive of *humba*.

136 *Fish* all have names, but having never dwelt in the close vicinity
825 of the sea, I have not learnt them. I know the *Mfungwe* (yi-tin). the fish whose mouth ends in a saw, the *Mangapfi* (dji-ma), the
262 name of a kind of hawk given to the flying fish of Delagoa Bay, the *Nhempfane* (yi-tin) found in the fresh water ponds, the *Ntima* (yi-tin) the barbel, the black fish which must not be eaten by lovers before their marriage (I, p. 107).

136 *Amphibia*. *Ntlambya* (mu-mi) is the ordinary frog (Rana oxyrhynca) whose young are known and called *Shilungula* ; another black species is the *Rebya* (dji-ma) ; the tree-frogs are called *Shilungwalungwana* (Rappia marmorata and argus) ; the toad *Kele* (dji-ma), Bufo regularis ; the famous Breviceps mossambicus is *Shinana* (I. p. 87) the great warrior of the tales (p. 221).

136 *Reptilia*. There are many kinds of *Lizards*. The common
825 kind found in the houses, under the verandas is the *Mponondjo* (mu-mi) (Mabuia striata), ; the Lygodactylus capensis, found on the hills, is the *Nkolombya* (mu-mi) ; the little Agama

777 the hole with their wings to prevent water from inundating the nest. When it lasts too long they quickly go down to close the entrance of the nest ; the water then leaks down the pipe which descends into the interior of the earth. He added : "If a man does not belong to a family which "knows" the mbonga and if he happens to find a nest he will meet with misfortune ; one of his relatives will die. The bees will bring him ill-luck (singita)."

301 and knocked out of shape by a blow or if its owner goes through
885 thorny bushes. A *khehla* who has some self-respect will frequently
554 polish and repair this valuable ornament, for it is a sign of mature
482 age. He who has been ordered by the chief to wear it no longer
643 carries burdens on his head; his crown would be spoilt! He will
461 be accompanied by a boy who carries his parcels; he himself will only carry his stick or his assagai. He will at once be known as one of the mature men of the tribe. This is not to say that the mere fact of wearing the *ngiyana* gives the right of taking part in the important affairs of the country; the counsellors alone possess this right; but from amongst the "crowned," will be chosen the man who is sent to another chief to treat of political questions, for instance.

301 When the hair grows (for, though it is curly, it may become long), the crown rises with it and becomes more or less unsteady, which must be most uncomfortable! The best thing would be to cut the ornament off and then replace it. Mr. Mandjia, one of our neighbours at Rikatla, was probably too lazy to undertake this job, so he put a small red handkerchief between his skull and the crown to prevent it from wobbling.

765 At a certain time all the *ngiyana* disappeared from the land of
643 Nondwane. The chief Mapunga was dead! The loss, kept
554 secret for a year, had been made public, and the law requires all the
885 mature men to take off their crowns when the sovereign of the country is dead. They take the wax from the frame, and make a ball of it; this they fix on a little stick, and place this stick in the roof of their hut above the door. The frame is hung up quite close by, and they leave these objects there till the new chief orders his subjects to re-make their crowns. This shows clearly that the crowning custom is in close relation with the national life of the tribe. The "makhehla" also form special battalions in the army.

178 Nowadays, however, this custom is not observed as religiously
554 as in bygone times. Life is harder, one must go and earn pounds sterling in the port of Lourenço Marques, or in the gold mines, and one can no longer indulge in a lazy life! It may therefore happen that a poor man will refuse to wear the crown, and say to

622 by the chief, and dies, his heirs must pay the compensation
596 claimed. All these rules clearly illustrate the communism of
672 family life and family property, under the supervision of the headman.

Should a numzane be absolutely unable to govern his village,
622 *the family council can depose him* and put another man in his
596 place. This council will be formed of old relatives, especially the paternal uncles to whom the younger brothers will go and complain of the misbehaviour of their headman. A younger brother will then be proclaimed and the elder will be despised. They will say : "Hi singe! A fahla muti, a hluli hi muti!" "He is a fool! He breaks the village ; he is overcome by the village," viz., not able to keep up his position.

As regards the *law of succession* to the headmanship, the second brother takes the place of the elder, and so on. The son of the elder cannot become headman until all his paternal uncles are dead. We shall find this principle also observed in the succession of the chiefs. (Part III.)

D. DAILY LIFE IN THE VILLAGE.

461 From the oxen kraal to the huts, from the square to the little wood, through the doors and in the reed yards, black forms are moving to and fro. Everybody seems busy. There is talking, laughing, playing and working. The expression "working like a nigger" is hardly applicable, for they do not kill themselves with work. It would, however, be quite as great a mistake to believe that the Natives spend all their time in loafing about. Far from it!

I. *Women's occupations.*

462 Women, especially, are very busy. When the sun rises, they
511 emerge from their huts, wash their faces, and light a little fire to warm the mealie pap which was left from the evening meal.

825 that the road is not "clean" (Viguet). The flesh of this bird is
777 used in the preparation of the charms carried by travellers. There
484 are also two mammals which give the same warning : the duyker
782 antelope (mhunti) and the polecat (mangobo). Should a boy going to Johannesburg meet with any of these three animals, he will go to his kokwana (grandfather) and ask him for help ; the old man will then take a mouthful of beer or water and project it towards the traveller (to make "phaa") with the following prayer addressed to the ancestor-gods : "You, so and so, look to this child who wants to travel! Bless him in his journey! May the Spirit of the bush (Shikwembo sha nhoba) remain asleep."

517 The *discussion of affairs* (ku khanela timhaka) on the square of
461 the village also fills many an hour in a man's life.

On the whole, men have but little to do. We can fairly estimate at three months the time required for the work which they have to do for the village and for the community. The remaining months are devoted to pastimes and pleasure (1).

III. *Games of adults.*

000 Having already described boys' and girls' games (p. 66 and 172), I now proceed to those of the adults, as forming an important part of the Life of the Village.

462 (1) Much has been said and written about the division of village work between men and women in the Bantu kraal. I shall try to show in the Practical Conclusions, No. V that civilisation is bound to produce great changes in this region. But, as already pointed out, it is certain that to the Natives themselves their system appears perfectly natural and that the women do not at all complain of their fate. The following charming story which is told by a Moravian missionary, The Rev. Th. Bachmann, who lived for a long time amongst the Wa-Nika, between Lake Tanganyika and Nyassa gives fresh proof of this assertion :

000 One day, as the rain was pouring down, I saw Walusangano returning from his garden with his wife, Leya. The wife was walking in front with a big bundle of wood on her head. On the wood was a basket containing maize, cucumbers and beans, as well as the hoe. On her back Leya was carrying her youngest child. The other children followed and the father brought up the rear-guard, carrying only an open umbrella. We were greatly shocked at this sight, and I thought it my duty to intervene on behalf of the women. On Sunday night, at public worship, I spoke of what I had seen in the most expressive terms possible. But my speech did not make the impression I expected. The men looked very much embarrassed ; the women indignant.

The following week, at sunset, I was under my veranda, watching the lightning and

524 but one stone, a poor *tshonga*, he says : "I have only caught women!"

524 Fighting and hunting are great sports for Natives ; hence the
127 popularity of the tshuba game. It has become such a passion
461 with the men that they neglect all their duties to indulge in it, and it has been necessary, in certain Christian villages, to prohibit the tshuba altogether, as the whole male population was abandoning its work for the game!

461 The *evening games* are happily not so dangerous for the moral
538 well-being of the village. Women who have worked the whole
517 day now have their innings. This is the *tha* par excellence, the
876 most refined amusement, the story telling. It takes place at eventide. It is taboo to *tha* in the middle of the day. Those who should transgress the law would become bald (!), and persons affected with loss of hair are commonly and jocosely accused of having told tales at midday. So, when the moon shines, when all the work of the day is ended, all the inhabitants assemble at one of the firesides to amuse themselves. They rarely gather together on the hubo for that purpose, as the square is reserved
524 for the discussion of matters of importance or for dances. The diversions at first consist of a parlour game, which is also known amongst Europeans, *guessing the charcoal piece (mhumhana)*. Two sides are formed opposite each other, women on one side, men on the other. One of the women, holding a piece of charcoal, puts it into the hands of one of the other partners, saying : "Dana, u shura ñwanaaaa'nga," (eat and be satisfied, my child). Then both present their closed hands to the other side saying : "Mhumha!" The man opposite must guess in which hand the charcoal is hidden. He flips one of the four hands with his finger saying ; "Give me! Here it is!" If he has guessed rightly, he has won, and then proceeds in his turn to hide the charcoal in the hand of one of his own side. When they have had enough of this game and wish to finish it in the proper manner, *they pull their fingers* and make them crack *(ku ba tindjwati)*. Each of them pulls a finger in turn. The first who is unable to produce a sound is expelled from his side. Then those who have been beaten make faces, as ugly or funny as they can, at their victors ; these must

177 as with their clothing! How often we have longed to see them adopt
291 some peculiar costume appropriate to the climate and to their occupations! But when they cast off their belt of tails, it is to put on long trousers, and they all dream of a complete khakhi or serge suit! So they will build square houses, and this certainly has its advantages; the dwelling can be divided into many rooms and the different members of the family can all live under the same roof, which, from an educational point of view, is a good thing.

264 The *communism of food* is also a splendid feature and calculated to fill
177 the most sanguine socialistic dreamer with joy! But this custom has
591 been severely criticised from a hygienic point of view. The habit of all
361 plunging their fingers into the same plate fosters tuberculosis and other contagious diseases; but I do not think it is for this reason that the custom will die out. In the modern Native settlement many different families live together. They are not united by any ties of blood. Moreover they are sometimes so numerous that such communism would be practically impossible. The golden age has passed for ever!

177 With it has also passed away the merry lazy life of the half naked
461 *mumumzane*. The coming of civilisation has already deeply changed his mode of living, and the transformation will accentuate itself still further. I have heard Colonists cursing these black people, who believe that they can escape the law of work under which Europeans groan: "these niggers who think that they will be allowed to remain incorrigibly lazy fellows for all time!" I do not share this loudly expressed indignation. First the Native *doda* is by no means an idle man. He has his own occupations for the benefit of the kraal. Secondly, if his wants are few, and if he very soon reaches the happy state of a man who is not obliged to work, I see thousands of Europeans enjoying the life of a "rentier" as much as he does, and without any qualms of conscience. A South African trader who works hard to make his fortune, and hopes to leave the country as quickly as possible, in order to enjoy all the comforts of a European town, theatres, concerts and clubs, has not, after all, a much loftier ideal than the Native he curses... On the other hand, circumstances themselves enforce upon the Native that law of work and teach him that "dignity of labour" of which we so often hear. A civilised Native has increased his wants ten-fold. He requires the wherewithal to satisfy them. This is the only legitimate, the most powerful incentive to work. Fifty, sixty thousand Thongas, the elite of our tribe, are constantly streaming to Johannesburg, where they are considered the best mining boys. Many of them go there to earn

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177 lobola money. But they learn to spend money on other things, and
461 those who are converts to Christianity become regular purchasers of
651 clothing, of better food, of books. The high taxation to which they are subjected also forces them to work. As long as this does not exceed a reasonable limit, and as long as the State causes the Native community to benefit by the high taxes levied on it, it is justifiable although this way of enforcing labour is not so normally healthy as the creation of
241 new wants (1). Another powerful influence which tends to make men
177 work more and to relieve women from the toil of tilling the fields, is
412 this. Wishing to make money by selling grain, the Natives are begin-
462 ning to clear larger fields than before, and we note with pleasure that they have adopted the use of the plough instead of the hoe in a great many quarters. The consequence of this change is that the men now do

466 (1) Another means has been used to obtain the same result, i. e. compulsory labour
P. (in Thonga *shibalu*). It is not at all my intention to treat this important but delicate
177. subject here. The League of Nations created in 1924 a special Slavery Commission
46 which has very ably and fully discussed the whole subject. These discussions have resulted in a Convention which was adopted by the Assembly of 1926; art. 5, which deals with forced labour, runs as follows:

The High Contracting Parties recognise that recourse to compulsory or forced labour may have grave consequences and undertake, each in respect of the territories placed under its sovereignty, jurisdiction, protection, suzerainty or tutelage, to take all necessary measures to prevent compulsory or forced labour from developing into conditions analogous to slavery.

It is agreed that:

(1) Subject to the transitional provisions laid down in paragraph (2) below, compulsory or forced labour may only be exacted for public purposes.

(2) In territories in which compulsory or forced labour for other than public purposes still survives, the High Contracting Parties shall endeavour progressively and as soon as possible to put an end to the practice. So long as such forced or compulsory labour exists, this labour shall invariably be of an exceptional character, shall always receive adequate remuneration, and shall not involve the removal of the labourers from their usual place of residence.

(3) In all cases, the responsibility for any recourse to compulsory or forced labour shall rest with the competent central authorities of the territory concerned.

The League of Nations has thus established the general principles, and nearly thirty States have already signed the Convention; amongst these we note with pleasure Great Britain and Portugal. Now the question has been transferred to the International Labour Office, which must deal with the application of the Convention. A special Committee of experts has been elected and it is hoped that it will fix general principles for Coloured Labour, which shall be submitted to the General Labour Conference in a not distant future.

I am glad to add that the Portuguese Government has recently issued a decree (Nº 12.533) which has been published in the *Bolletim official de Moçambique*, November 1926, and which contains the following article (Art. 5. § unico): *Compulsory labour is only permitted when absolutely indispensable, for works of public interest and of undeniable urgency. This labour will be remunerated according to circumstances.*

533 Rolling it with vigour, the boy imitated the noise of the gurgling all the while, apparently with great pleasure. Natives are very [461] fond of singing and shouting when at work; they evidently find help in the conjunction of music and labour.

[539] Many Thonga songs belong to this category. There are songs sung by women when pounding their mealies (I. p. 334), or when carrying their jars of beer or of bukanye to the capital. One of these *psirwalo* songs, extolling Mzila, the hawk that is in heaven, has been quoted I. p. 402. I heard it in February 1893, when an extraordinary inundation had filled all the little ponds in the hollows, and the lake of Rikatla had swollen to ten times its usual size. Beginning with the word: "Chwe! Chwe!" a descriptive adverb which renders the impression caused by a wide surface of water shining in the sun, the women sang:

> Chwe! Nambyana wu tele!
> The lake has overflowed!
> We seek the hawk who soars in the sky!
> Who is the hawk? It is Mzila!

For the music of the song see tune 17.

On the wharf at Lourenço Marques, one could collect a good number of the carrier songs, sung by the boys who carry loads from the ships to the Custom House. Some are highly impressive, full of guttural sounds such as: Ama-haussa-haussa! There is generally a soloist who intones (sima) and all the boys, covered with dust, clad in sacks, their eyes beaming, seize the heavy piece of iron, the bulky case, raise it rhythmically to their shoulders, and carry it with measured tread to the shed. To have a clever soloist who keeps good time is essential, and I was told that such artists are well paid.

I would remind the reader of the *travellers' songs*, an example of which has been given when speaking of the journeys of the traders in the interior (p. 144).

But the richest collection is that of *sailors' songs*. I heard one of these, (tune 18), on the Nkomati, repeated a hundred times in a monotonous fashion by a boy who was pushing the boat along the shore with his pole, from Morakwen to Lourenço Marques:

"I siloyi, I ndandale," he said — (these words have no more

meaning than tra-la-la) "They are starving at Ntimane, siloyi..." 533
He was journeying from the Ntimane country, near Khosen, and having heard that the crops had failed, went muttering this great news all down the river! Perhaps the song was not of his own composition, but was an old refrain which had been preserved on account of its catching tune.

Mrs Audéoud, during her long journeys on the Maputju river, [461]
noted down many of the tunes, Nos. 19-22, some in two or even three parts, curiously harmonised. The Native sailors seek in this way to vary the monotony of rowing, punting or towing the boat. No doubt a great many more such tunes could be collected.

VII. *Incantations.*

Children, as we saw, (I. p. 68), are fond of singing curious little melodies to various animals : to the big *galagala* lizard, to the *chameleon*, to the *crab* with one claw, to the *owl*. The tune of the words addressed to the owl is No. 36.[a] The boys of Rikatla used to salute our ox-waggon, when it appeared on the plain, with song No. 35.[a] "Gweymanâo! — here are the oxen", they said running all round the span, the girls following them and lifting up the babies in their arms, to show them the strange machine and the long-horned oxen walking slowly, with impassive looks, through the little black throng.

Incantations of a more serious type are the *songs of exorcism*, 533
performed to the accompaniment of rattles, big tins and drums, 789
close to the ears of the person supposed to be possessed, in order to induce the spirit to reveal its name and to " come out". No. 37.[a] is one of the most celebrated songs of this category, and has really a great deal of character. I shall speak of it again when dealing with possession.

VIII. *Songs accompanying tales and games.*

As we shall see, little songs are very frequently introduced 533
into the tales to embellish them, and are generally repeated 538
three or four times over, as if the narrator wished to exhaust

[a] [Errata: read 31 for 36; read 30 for 35; read 32 for 37.--Analyst]

who are beaten in the contest having to pay a forfeit which they 538
redeem by telling a tale. So the tale is the conclusion of the 517
game, the object of the whole entertainment. I have often seen exactly the same order followed in a European company playing parlour games.

This interesting scene may be witnessed from one end of the tribe to the other : "This is their evening prayer" said one of our converts to me, a woman who was also a clever story-teller, i. e. as we Christians have our worship every night before going to sleep, so the heathen gladden their hearts by their tales. Everywhere story-telling (ku tha psihitana) is considered the most refined and most pleasing of the games. The tales are called *shihetana* or *nsingo* (mu-mi) in Ronga, *ntyeketo* (mu-mi) or *nkaringana* (mu-mi) in the Northern clans.

Story-tellers are of all ages and of both sexes. I have heard 538
little girls of ten amusing their play-mates with tales. Those I have collected were told by young girls of eighteen (Nkulunkulu and Ñwanawatilo), young men of twenty, (Khwezu, Maganyele, Simeon Makwakwa), and men of thirty and forty (Spoon, Jim Tandane) ; but the majority come from adult women, the most skillful being Shigiyane-Camilla, Sofia Midomingo, Martha and Lois. Some only know one tale, and repeat it on every occasion, like Jim Tandane, who used to narrate the story of an ogre, Ñwatlakulalambimbi, with such gusto that he was surnamed after his hero! But others can recite six, ten or twenty tales. Shigiyane, for instance, could entertain the company for many nights with her tales, some of which were very long. (See for instance "The little hated one," 24 pages, "Mubia, an ogre tale," 19 pages, in my *Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*). This woman's memory was wonderful, and the graceful manner in which she told her stories was no less astonishing. Nkulukulu had heard *her* tale ("The girl and the whale") only once in the Maputju country, and she had memorised it immediately with the little songs which enliven it.

Strange to say, there is a curious precaution to be observed in 538
connection with story-telling : it is taboo to devote oneself to 461
this occupation at noon ; it must remain an evening entertainment ; 826
if this rule is not followed, the Transgressor will become bald!

538 if this rule is not followed, the transgressor will become bald!
461 This is one of the most surprising of the lesser taboos of the tribe. What is its origin? Have the Natives noticed that famous story-tellers, those who practised their art day and night, were liable to this misfortune? I could get no information on this point. I rather think the prohibition comes from the fact that this game is so popular that they are afraid to devote too much time to it: people would lose all inclination for work, if they started it during the day. So they instinctively forbade story-telling in the day-time!

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Phot. A. Borel.

Martha, a Ronga story-teller.

Another curious custom in connection with tales is this: when a story-teller comes to the end of his tale, he concludes with the following words: "Tju-tju... famba ka Gwambe ni Dzabana!" — "Run away, go to Gwambe and Dzabana." These two personages are believed, at least amongst the Northern clans, to have been the first man and the first woman (see Part VI), and I suppose that the object of this kind of incantation is to prevent the marvellous story haunting the hearers during the night, and troubling their sleep by disagreeable dreams. It is a means of returning from fairyland to the realms of every-day life! All these details tend to show the importance of folk-tales in the Native life, and their popularity amongst the tribe.

854 862 (see page 48.) After her birth she is carried in the skin of a gazelle (mhunti) which her mother ties round her neck and loins. When that skin has become too small, they get one of an antelope (mhala). She begins to walk ; when her mother sends her on an errand she is able to do it. She also begins to talk, and to know her father and mother. Then, when she has grown, they prepare for her a small pot of pounded and cooked mealies so that she may eat of it. After three years she is weaned and goes to stay for a time with her grandmother. After that she returns home.

857 868 "When she has learnt to walk, she is very fond of playing with the shells of the sala. She cooks in them. Then, when she has done with them, she takes small pots and cooks little dinners. She also gets a small calabash, she goes to the lake to draw water and, on coming back, she gives it to her father so that he may wash his face. Here she is now gathering small bits of wood ; she makes small bundles of them and brings them home. Later on she will make heavier bundles.

"When she has grown up more, she will take charge of the work of her mother. She will do the work. But if the mother sees that she cannot do it all, she will help her. It may however be said that the mother needs no longer to crush her mealies, 583 neither to go to the well nor to the fireplace. When she is quite a grown up girl, the suitors come. If they are accepted, they bring the purchase money. They buy her (lobola) and do all they like. If she is prolific, she will bear many children. Now and then she returns to her parents' village, then she comes back to her husband. Her children grow. They go to get water, to cut her wood, to plough her fields. She goes with them. When they are 462 grown up, they get married. If amongst them there is a son, he goes to buy his wife. Thus she looks for a mother-in-law for her son. He will then be truly a man because he has got a mother-in-law! When her children are married, the mother again begins to do all her work. She steeps her mealies, crushes them to make flour, she cuts her wood, cooks her beer ; she prepares the light beer ; she smears the floor of her hut ; this is what she does till she is quite old.

888 "When she is quite old, they feed her. Her grandchildren are

1 [the following page is quoted from an essay by a native girl at the Swiss Mission school at Lourenço Marques -- Analyst]

783 village itself, which must carry out the collective purification of
768 *hlamba ndjaka*.

I must further mention a new custom which is spreading
587 amongst the Ba-Ronga in the neighbourhood of Lourenço
609 Marques. When a widow objects to becoming the wife of the legal
611 inheritor, she goes home and adopts another husband. There are plenty of men of other tribes, coming from Inhambane, Quelimane, Mozambique, who have no wife. They accept the proposal of the widow and go to live in her village. They are generally despised and called by the insulting name of *mugomo*, a Zulu word meaning an empty iron oil-tin. They are as hard and unfeeling as such a tin! If children are born, they belong to the family of the deceased husband, who paid the lobolo.

587 Sometimes also a widow chooses a nephew who is still a child. She gives him food as if she were his wife, but she lives with another man whom she loves. It even happens that she may choose a girl, the daughter of another wife of the deceased. (Annotatio 13.)[1]

C. OLD AGE AND DEATH

888 An old woman, having in some sort gone out from the sexual
782 community, enjoys some privileges which are taboo for her sisters who are still capable of childbearing. She is allowed to put on the clothing of the widows ; contamination of death is not so dangerous for her. She can proceed to the purification of the village, in certain cases of epidemic, and of the weapons of the warriors in war time (Part III). After the sacrifice of the black ram for rain, old women and small girls alone are allowed to eat the flesh of the victim.

462 But old and decrepit women are despised. As long as they
888 can still till their land, they are treated with consideration, but when they have lost all their strength and must be fed by their children, they are looked upon as troublesome burdens. I must say that, as long as she still has an atom of vigour, a Thonga woman goes to her field and tills it. During all her life time

1 [See pp. 518-519 in these categories or in 116 — Analyst]

462/888 she has contracted such an intimate union with Mother Earth that she cannot conceive existence away from her gardens, and she crawls to them with her hoe, by a kind of instinct, till she dies.

764 The death of the woman is accompanied by the same rites as the death of a man. I must mention, however, the custom of *mahloko*, which takes place when a woman dies while still in her prime. Mahloko comes from *nhloko*, head. The explanation of this technical word is this : the parents of the woman say : "Our head (viz. a person belonging to us) has died ; let us go to mourn her."

587 Let us first see how this mourning takes place *in the Ronga clans.*

578 If the two families were very friendly, the parents of the deceased will probably bring with them a little girl, saying : "This is our little green meat (mbuti), our little orange (rather sala, fruit of the nsala tree)." They offer her to the husband to take the place of the deceased wife, and a new contract will be made. The widower will then at once pay a first part of the lobolo, £ 5 for instance, and, in the course of time, he will marry his sister-in-law. But generally the visitors are angry, and the mahloko ceremony is very unpleasant. It may be that the deceased wife had not been entirely paid for. In that case her parents will come at the end of the mourning to "claim the herd" (ramela ntlhambi).

764 But though there may be no difficult lobola question in the way, uneasiness is felt, because the brothers of the deceased cannot help thinking that their sister has been killed by witchcraft. It was not yet time for her to die ; so she must have been bewitched by the husband's family, probably by her co-wives, who were jealous of her. When the Great Mourning took place, they hardly came to the mortuary village. One or two went to see their "head," and mourned her in their own kraal. To day, the day of mahloko, they assemble, and throw bones in order to know who will have to speak, who will receive the mahloko money, whether the money has been bewitched ? The whole company starts for the mortuary village, driving a goat before them. They sit down outside in the bush with dark looks ; there is no longer any hut to receive them... They have been noticed by the

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1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

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of building will be stopped at once and the little community will find another place to which to move! Moreover the guilty woman will have to ask the principal wife for forgiveness. 2) A second great taboo is this : — No one must wash his body during the whole "buhlapfa", as this might cause the rain to fall and it would interfere with the building operations.

5. The building of the huts begins immediately, each man making the circular wall first. When all the walls are ready,

Carrying a roof.

the *roofs are carried* from the old village to the new by all the men together. They lift each roof on to their shoulders, after having removed the old grass, and go out of the village, not by the main entrance, but by one of the back gates which has been widened for the purpose. A broad road has been prepared through the bush. They follow it, marching as fast as they can, and singing the obscene songs which are reserved for special occasions (see Part VI). In these they insult the women who accompany them, carrying the baskets, the mortars, the pestles. "The village is broken in pieces, so are the ordinary laws. The insults which are taboo are now allowed" (Mboza). This suspension of morality in speech is only allowed on the day when roofs are carried to the new village. Some days later, again, the women will take their revenge when they smear the floor of the huts ; then they too will sing their songs, insulting the men. But

622 by the chief, and dies, his heirs must pay the compensation
596 claimed. All these rules clearly illustrate the communism of
622 family life and family property, under the supervision of the headman.

Should a numzane be absolutely unable to govern his village,
622 *the family council can depose him* and put another man in his
596 place. This council will be formed of old relatives, especially the paternal uncles to whom the younger brothers will go and complain of the misbehaviour of their headman. A younger brother will then be proclaimed and the elder will be despised. They will say : "Hi singe! A fahla muti, a hluli hi muti!" "He is a fool! He breaks the village ; he is overcome by the village," viz., not able to keep up his position.

As regards the *law of succession* to the headmanship, the second brother takes the place of the elder, and so on. The son of the elder cannot become headman until all his paternal uncles are dead. We shall find this principle also observed in the succession of the chiefs. (Part III.)

D. DAILY LIFE IN THE VILLAGE.

461 From the oxen kraal to the huts, from the square to the little wood, through the doors and in the reed yards, black forms are moving to and fro. Everybody seems busy. There is talking, laughing, playing and working. The expression "working like a nigger" is hardly applicable, for they do not kill themselves with work. It would, however, be quite as great a mistake to believe that the Natives spend all their time in loafing about. Far from it!

I. *Women's occupations.*

462 Women, especially, are very busy. When the sun rises, they
511 emerge from their huts, wash their faces, and light a little fire to warm the mealie pap which was left from the evening meal.

462 511 482 In a small pot they prepare a fresh sauce of monkey nuts to season it. The family takes its *morning meal* (fihlula) ; then, if it is the season of tillage, *they go to the fields*, with hoes on their shoulders, the shihundju (conic baskets) on their heads, and sometimes their babies on their backs. The whole morning they will dig up sweet potatoes, grub up their future plantation, or weed their

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Phot. H. Gre

Spelonken women preparing the evening meal after their return from the fields.

mealies. In the heat of the day they come back in order to prepare the evening meal. Sometimes, if the gardens are far away, or when they are employed in scaring the birds from their sorghum plantation, they remain the whole day in their fields, and cook their evening food there, bringing it back to the village at sunset quite hot (1).

(1) I saw a Rikatla woman coming home under such conditions, carrying her child on her shoulders and the burning monkey-nut sauce in the shihundju on her head. Her foot caught in a root ; she tottered ; the pot fell on the baby, which was scalded to death.

462 Many other home duties may oblige the woman to leave the
511 fields at noon ; her head still laden with her basket, she may
356 go to the swamps, near by, and dig out a store of black clay
317 (bompfi). She comes back, mixes the clay with the fresh dung which she has taken from the oxen kraal, and, spreading this mixture with her hands, smears the floor of the hut. This work is called *sindja* (Ro) or *kopola* (Dj.). Dust and vermin will at once disappear under this plaster of black earth, which will dry in a few hours time. Woe to the woman who has not put enough dung in this novel kind of cement! The floor will crack. The clay will shrivel and, when people walk on it, it will crumble into dust! The work will have to be done all over again two or three days later. But if the clay is of good quality, it will harden and last at least a week, the more so as neither wooden shoes nor nailed boots will spoil it.

462 Another woman will go with her primitive axe in search of
511 dead wood. She makes a bundle which she ties with grasses,
313 strengthening these grasses by entwining them with small
284 twigs (1). On returning to the village, she throws her burden on to the ground, before the door of her hut, with the exclamation : "Hu!"

462 Others go to their storehouses, the small huts on poles, where
511 mealies, monkey nuts in their husks, millet and sorghum are kept.
343 They take what they need from these stores (tshaha) by lifting up
252 the roof of the little hut, come back and empty the mealies into the
516 mortar, whilst a friend rubs off the grains from the ears of millet or shells the monkey nuts. Two or three women seize their pestles and begin to pound, in measured time, the bottom of their mortars : Gu-gu-gu-gu. Quite a long way off, on the other side of the copse, this pestle song can be heard, resembling the noise of the flails when corn is threshed in the barn. And the busy women stream with perspiration! This method of crushing the mealies in an erect position, by a vigorous up and down movement of the pestle in

284 (1) Men, when they fasten a bundle with a string, make a knot (ba fundju) whilst
313 women twist it with a little stick (sulela hi linhi) ; when a woman ties a knot, the two ends of the string will be at right angles to the string, whilst when a man makes it, the ends will be parallel with it. (Mbora).

516 the mortar, is a very healthy one and gives the Thonga women a straight and slender figure. In the tribes where the millet is mostly ground between stones, the women who do this work kneeling are shorter and stouter.

462 511 312 Before putting the mealies on the fire, the women go down to the village well, their round pitchers on their heads, to fetch the water they need. In the Ronga country these wells are simple holes dug in the sand, in the centre of the hollows (1). Wells are generally surrounded by thorny branches so as to prevent the cattle from coming to drink and fouling the water. It must be observed that it is not a spring which feeds the well; it is the underground layer of water which has been reached, and which always maintains the same level except in times of drought.

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Phot. A. de Meuron.

Shiluvane girls returning from the well.

462 511 372 252 The sun goes down on the horizon. The long shadows of the trees round the village lengthen on the square. Through the leaves, a few rays still reach the fireplaces and traverse the smoke which rises peacefully from the various kitchens. Between broken pots, or between the pieces of termitine clay which constitute the hearth on which the pots rest, the women place some pieces of dead wood; when these burn away in the centre, they push them further under the pot where the flour is cooking (ba hlanganyeta ndjilo). Evening has come. The men have arrived. With a large spoon (nkombe) the lady of the house

(1) In the Transvaal, where there are rivers, water is taken from them, or from wells dug near the spruit into which the water leaks through the soil, being more or less filtered by this process.

462 places the food (phamela) on plates of the size of small basins or
511 dishes (mbenga). We have seen how she distributes it amongst
264 the inhabitants of the village. When all have finished eating, the women wash the plates, put aside the pots which contain the food left for the next morning, and tidy up the yards.

517 Whatever we may say, the day has been a well-filled one for the women. They are very rarely seen playing in the day time. We shall see how they recuperate themselves in the evening.

II. *Men's occupations.*

462 As for the men, their life is far from being as active as that
517 of the women. They have not, like their diligent wives, the regular continuous work of preparing the food, not to mention the care of the children. The duties which fall on them, and which they are willing to perform, only require of them isolated efforts from time to time.

462 As regards *agricultural work*, it is generally believed that
241 men leave this entirely to the women. This is exaggerated. Amongst the Rongas each man possesses his own field which he himself tills, and this is an old custom, a special term even being applied to the field thus tilled: it is called *mpashu*. He may sow seeds in it, but he does not weed it, leaving his wife to do this troublesome work for him and also to reap it. He makes only one exception in the case of the sorghum, of which he consents to go and cut the ears. But he helps his wife in other ways, for ins-
462 tance in the storing of the food; he builds the little huts used as
251 storehouses, prepares the *tjala*, viz., the mat stretched on four poles on which ground nuts are dried in the field, digs holes for the *buhiri*, the shelf at the back of the hut where the basket containing the seeds is placed. His wife does not think him a lazy fellow at
462 all. When the harvest is finished, she takes the smaller cobs of
273 mealies (makunhula), those which will not be kept, or the grains of millet and sorghum which are found on the threshing floor after the threshing, and with them she prepares a special beer to

462 thank (tlangela) her husband for his kind help! This is her
273 method of notifying him that all the grain has been harvested, as, whatever the man's share of the work may have been, the mealies belong to him.

462 The main work of the man is the *building and repairing of the*
356 *huts*. This is truly an arduous job, but it is not of yearly recur-
342 rence. Every third or fourth year they are obliged to re-thatch the roof. The huts are built and repaired during the winter, from May to September.

A second domain, which is exclusively man's, is the *care of the cattle*; the boys milk the cows, construct and repair the kraal: the little boys herd the goats, and the young men the oxen, as has already been mentioned.

462 It is also the men who *make all the utensils and tools* used in the
411 village, pots and other crockery excepted; mortars, pestles,
294 handles for axes or hoes (mimphinyi), wooden platters, carved or forged articles, all this work pertains to them. They must also make the *ntehe* for their wives, or sisters, after the birth of the babies. This is probably the explanation of the curious fact noticed amongst Native Christians, namely that they are much more clever at needlework than their wives. Big fellows are often seen forsaking the hoe to work with the needle, and there are fathers who make their own clothing as well as the dresses for their wives and children!

462 *Hunting and fishing* are, of course, also men's work... or pastime.
224 For some of them hunting is an actual trade, at least such was the case in former times, before the White Governments imposed strict regulations and levied heavy licences on that sport. We shall study, in Part IV, the curious customs relating to these two favourite occupations of the Natives.

574 A great part of their time is devoted by the men to *paying*
517 *visits*. They are very fond of calling on each other, and sometimes
484 they go great distances to see relatives or friends. They do not travel to pay visits only, but they frequently journey to claim payment of their debts (milandju). To regain the possession of a miserable head of cattle they willingly lose whole weeks! And what endless discussions in the *hubo*, when an unfortunate visitor

825 that the road is not "clean" (Viguet). The flesh of this bird is
777 used in the preparation of the charms carried by travellers. There
484 are also two mammals which give the same warning : the duyker
782 antelope (mhunti) and the polecat (mangobo). Should a boy going to Johannesburg meet with any of these three animals, he will go to his kokwana (grandfather) and ask him for help ; the old man will then take a mouthful of beer or water and project it towards the traveller (to make "phaa") with the following prayer addressed to the ancestor-gods : "You, so and so, look to this child who wants to travel! Bless him in his journey! May the Spirit of the bush (Shikwembo sha nhoba) remain asleep."

517 The *discussion of affairs* (ku khanela timhaka) on the square of
461 the village also fills many an hour in a man's life.

On the whole, men have but little to do. We can fairly estimate at three months the time required for the work which they have to do for the village and for the community. The remaining months are devoted to pastimes and pleasure (1).

III. *Games of adults.*

000 Having already described boys' and girls' games (p. 66 and 172), I now proceed to those of the adults, as forming an important part of the Life of the Village.

462 (1) Much has been said and written about the division of village work between men and women in the Bantu kraal. I shall try to show in the Practical Conclusions, No. V that civilisation is bound to produce great changes in this region. But, as already pointed out, it is certain that to the Natives themselves their system appears perfectly natural and that the women do not at all complain of their fate. The following charming story which is told by a Moravian missionary, The Rev. Th. Bachmann, who lived for a long time amongst the Wa-Nika, between Lake Tanganyika and Nyassa gives fresh proof of this assertion :

000 One day, as the rain was pouring down, I saw Walusangano returning from his garden with his wife, Leya. The wife was walking in front with a big bundle of wood on her head. On the wood was a basket containing maize, cucumbers and beans, as well as the hoe. On her back Leya was carrying her youngest child. The other children followed and the father brought up the rear-guard, carrying only an open umbrella. We were greatly shocked at this sight, and I thought it my duty to intervene on behalf of the women. On Sunday night, at public worship, I spoke of what I had seen in the most expressive terms possible. But my speech did not make the impression I expected. The men looked very much embarrassed ; the women indignant.

The following week, at sunset, I was under my veranda, watching the lightning and

177 lobola money. But they learn to spend money on other things, and
461 those who are converts to Christianity become regular purchasers of
651 clothing, of better food, of books. The high taxation to which they are subjected also forces them to work. As long as this does not exceed a reasonable limit, and as long as the State causes the Native community to benefit by the high taxes levied on it, it is justifiable although this way of enforcing labour is not so normally healthy as the creation of
241 new wants (1). Another powerful influence which tends to make men
177 work more and to relieve women from the toil of tilling the fields, is
412 this. Wishing to make money by selling grain, the Natives are begin-
462 ning to clear larger fields than before, and we note with pleasure that they have adopted the use of the plough instead of the hoe in a great many quarters. The consequence of this change is that the men now do

416 (1) Another means has been used to obtain the same result, i. e. compulsory labour
r. (in Thonga *shibalu*). It is not at all my intention to treat this important but delicate
177. subject here. The League of Nations created in 1924 a special Slavery Commission
46 which has very ably and fully discussed the whole subject. These discussions have resulted in a Convention which was adopted by the Assembly of 1926; art. 5, which deals with forced labour, runs as follows:

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The League of Nations has thus established the general principles, and nearly thirty States have already signed the Convention; amongst these we note with pleasure Great Britain and Portugal. Now the question has been transferred to the International Labour Office, which must deal with the application of the Convention. A special Committee of experts has been elected and it is hoped that it will fix general principles for Coloured Labour, which shall be submitted to the General Labour Conference in a not distant future.

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177

the work of preparing the fields. As women have nothing to do with the cattle and as ploughing is done with oxen, men now perform this difficult labour, and so have to work hard. Is not this one splendid result of the spread of civilisation ? The fact cannot be denied that, as regards the mode of living and the distribution of work amongst men and women, a considerable change has already taken place and is being accentuated every day in the Thonga village. What will be the ultimate result of this ?

When discussing the Native problem, the most difficult of all South African problems, politicians, missionaries, civilised Natives and newspapers generally ask this question : "Is Native tribal life to be preserved or, on the contrary, destroyed ?" No clear, satisfactory, convincing reply has as yet been given. Tribal life is composed of two elements : communal life and national life, which ought to be considered separately. I deal here with the first of these elements only. The first remark I would venture to make is that it is somewhat presumptuous on our part to believe that we can exert any very great influence on the solution of this question. Whatever one may hope or fear, the evolution of the Bantu village, which began as soon as civilisation entered the land, will go on. It is not in the power of the Pope, of the Minister of Native Affairs, or of Superintendents of any large Missionary Societies, to prevent the transformation of the primitive patriarchal tribes, which is proceeding as a matter of necessity. Human society evolves continually, and the economic and social changes which have taken place in South Africa are so momentous that they will deeply affect and eventually completely transform the Bantu community. But (this is my second remark) what we can strive for is to control and guide this necessary evolution, and I should like to propose, to all those who can collaborate in the shaping of the future Bantu society, the two following suggestions :

000 1. Though the square house may supplant the round hut, though the hubo, the bandla and the absolute authority of the numzane may disappear, let us do our best to prevent the future Native village from being a servile imitation of our own European settlements. The more original the Natives remain, the more interesting and worthy to live they will be. The "place of jealousy" will disappear together with polygamy. But let us retain all that is pleasing and moral in the picturesque circle of huts : the respect for elders, the sense of family unity, the habit of mutual help, the readiness to share food with others. Cannot these virtues be retained in the Christian village, under the

C. AGRICULTURAL CUSTOMS.

I. *The Agricultural Year.*

137 At the season which is called *shimumu*, the little heat, that
221 is to say in July, when the warm weather begins, the nkuhlu puts forth new shoots. Though rain is still far off, the mahogany and sala trees become covered with leaves of a wonderfully delicate green. A kind of Composita (the Helychrisum parviflorum, shirimbyati), which is wide-spread on the sandy dunes, blossoms all over the country ; a beautiful lily (Crinum Forbesii) will expand its splendid white and pink flowers : the *winter* (bushika) has passed away : soon the *hlobo* (summer) will come.

412 When the Ronga woman notices these signs, she picks up
221 her hoe (shikomo) and starts for the hills, or for the marshes.
462 Her husband has already repaired the implement for her, at home. If the handle was worn out, he has cut a branch of nkonono, (Terminalia sericea), which is the wood invariably used for the purpose, and has shaped it so that one end is thicker than the other ; in this thick end a hole is bored, while the iron hoe head is heated in the fire : the head has, at its base, a long iron point which is inserted nearly red-hot into the hole, burning its way in, and thus solidly fixing the two parts together. This method of fixing on the handle is called ku lumela shikomo. The Ronga hoe has a very short handle, sometimes not more than two feet in length. The Transvaal Thongas use handles three to four feet long. The woman has now nothing to do but to work hard, her lord and master having duly accomplished his share of the labour.

241 It is the end of August. Two or three months must still
221 elapse before the rainy season sets in. This period of the year is devoted to a two-fold work : the clearing of fresh land and the cultivation of marshes.

The *clearing of fresh land*, ku tlhaba lisindje (Ro.), ku khatsha

231 men having relations with women during menstruation (I. p. 187).
562 Should a drop of it fall in the cattle kraal, this would endanger the
841 health of the whole herd. Women are even prohibited from
784 passing through a herd of oxen ; they must go round it, because otherwise the death of the calves would ensue. Amongst the Ba-Ngoni this taboo is so strong that a woman guilty of having transgressed against it was put to death (1).

231 The object of oxen-breeding is not milk but the acquisition
262 of *wealth* ; oxen mean wealth to the Native, a means of purchasing
556 girls and of thus increasing his family. Oxen are also bred for food, the meat being highly appreciated and divided amongst all the members of the family according to the strict rules previously explained (I. p. 329). The slaughtering is done by piercing the heart with an assagai, a painful and sometimes very protracted operation. This occurs at marriage feasts, at other family and national gatherings, at the sacrifice for rain (Part VI), and on special occasions, once a year for instance, when a headman wishes to feast his people. All, even neighbours who are not relatives and travellers, are welcome to the feast. Natives have wonderful olfactory powers. They seem to smell out the *lisuna*, viz., the peculiar odour of the meat, a mile off, and when an ox has been killed you see them emerging from the bush on all sides!

234 As regards *milk*, it certainly plays a part in the food of villages which are fortunate enough to possess a well-filled oxen kraal. The *milking* of the cows presents difficulties unknown in Europe! African cows have not yet learned to submit tamely to this operation! The calf must always be allowed to suck a few mouthfuls, then a boy pulls it away from the teat and the cow consents to be milked. Should a cow be too wild, they pass a string through its

241 (1) We meet here with an interesting instance of a superstition having no scientific
462 basis whatever, which is nevertheless productive of good results. Women must keep apart from oxen. Since the plough was introduced amongst South African Natives, they have been quick to notice that it is a very useful instrument, and have adopted it in many places. The plough has to be drawn by oxen and men alone are allowed to drive them. Thus women are relieved of the heavy work of tilling the fields which had been allotted to them by immemorial custom. It is probable that further knowledge will free the Natives from their old fear and from the taboo which resulted from it ; yet the idea that everything connected with oxen belongs to the domain of man will remain and thus real social progress will have been obtained through an absurd superstition !

double object in view in thus crowning the huts : first to keep the 342
rain from percolating through at the top, and secondly to impart to the building, by means of this highly ornamental addition, a degree of finish, an air of beauty, ease and opulence which it certainly would never have possessed had it terminated in an ordinary point. It is, no doubt, owing to the fact that the crown is the glory of the house that it is removed as soon as the occupant dies!

There are still two more operations to be performed before 333
the hut is finished : *the plastering* (bama (Ro.), phama (Dj.) and the making of the *door*. But these two jobs can be undertaken at the same time for the very good reason that plastering is the work of the wives, while making the door is that of the husband. Accompanied by other women of the village, the future mistress of the hut starts out for the marshes to collect some black clay (bompfi). If the marshes are too far off, she will content herself with digging in one of the ants'nests on the hillside. These terrible ants, which destroy everything, collect large quantities of hard earth, with which to build their nests, and this differs largely from the sand of the surroundings. (It may perhaps be simply sand hardened and changed by the acid secretions of the termites.) The shirundju, the conical basket which women carry [482]
on their heads, will be used to take home clods of red or black clay, and, using the same baskets, they will fetch from the cattle kraal some fresh dung which they mix with the clay, inside the new hut, pouring water on the mixture to reduce it to the proper consistency. They tread the unsavoury mud with their feet, and, with this semi-liquid mortar, plaster the wall on the inside,

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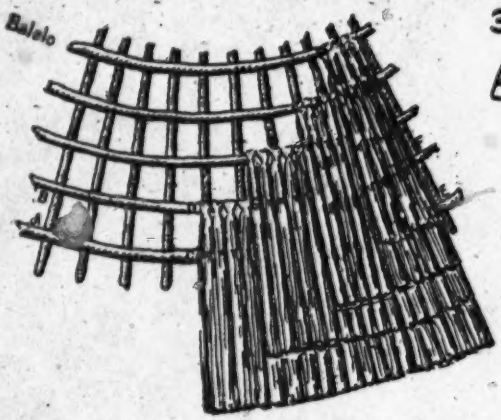
[462]



Construction of the Thonga roof.

231 436 583 177 The scarcity of oxen, probably caused by the wars with the Zulus, was no doubt the reason why they were replaced by hoes. *Hoes* were universally employed from 1840-1870, together with oxen, when available. Ten was the regular price for lobola. Later on fathers asked twenty, thirty, fifty. They were first of native make ; the Vendas of Spelonken, near the Iron Mountain, provided the whole tribe for a time with that heavy currency, until the Europeans saw that there was good business to be done by supplying them. (See Part IV). Portuguese traders of Delagoa Bay began to send Natives to Gaza with guns and powder to hunt elephants, and paid them in hoes : twenty, fifty, one hundred hoes for a tusk, according to its size.

436 177 583 464 But hoes have also been superseded by the universal power of the *pound sterling*. After the death of Manukosi (1858), early in the sixties of the last century, some Zulus came to Delagoa Bay from Natal, sent by Englishmen to hunt elephants in Gaza. They told the people of the country that money could be obtained in Pietermaritzburg (Umgundhlovo) by working, and the first Ba-Ronga went *ku berengen*, viz., to serve white people there. In 1870, in the year still called Daiman by the chroniclers of the tribe, many more went to Kimberley, especially from the Transvaal colonies of Thongas, and gold coin began to spread amongst the tribe with all its usefulness and all its dangers. It is now becoming more and more current, as from 50,000 to 70,000 Natives of the Thonga tribe are working in the Johannesburg mines. First of all £ 1 was worth ten hoes, and the lobolo money was fixed at £ 8 by the chiefs. But this price was soon considered insufficient by the parents. They wanted £ 10.10.0, ten guineas! They had already learned that, amongst cultivated people and in refined transactions, we talk of guineas and not of pounds! Later on it rose as high as £ 20 for an ordinary girl, £ 30 for a chief's daughter. The average round Lourenço Marques was £ 18 at the beginning of this century and in the Transvaal £ 25 (1). When a

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(1) There is a tendency constantly to increase the amount of the lobolo. Nowadays it is nearer £ 30 than £ 20. In this connection I may mention the following fact. A man named Mpumi had payed £ 28 for his wife, and the matter was looked on as concluded ; but later on his parents-in-law came to claim £ 2 more. Why? They had purchased a wife for their son and had obtained her for £ 28 ; it was all right so

judged before the Court, in the capital, because the offender has refused to follow the way of persuasion, he has "mocked the family love" (a yalile bushaka). Such misdemeanours are very frequent in the life of the village. Most of the Natives bear philosophically with these annoyances. Should some one, however, be really ill-natured, and wear out their patience (wa ku karata), he will be forced to build a hut for himself, alone, outside the village. If the damage is done by *children*, if they have stolen sweet potatoes, as we have seen, the wronged proprietor gives them a good thrashing but does not claim a fine. Occasionally the headman himself thrashes them in presence of their father, and the father will say to them: "You see the numzane will beat you if you are not good." Children who mock at cripples are also severely beaten by him, all the more so as, in this case, the offended party has the right of claiming a fine.

3) The headman also possesses *authority over his younger brothers and his children*. He can even confiscate their money if one of them is addicted to drinking and ruins his property. However his authority in this respect must not be overstepped, and the headman must take care how he exercises it, as it is based more or less on sufferance. The younger brothers, for instance, maintain the right of making contracts, especially lobola contracts. Should the numzane restrict their liberty too much, they will leave him and found their own villages. A successful headman is he who knows how to keep the whole family together to the general satisfaction.

4) The headman has also the right of imposing *statute labour*, especially when the oxen kraal must be rebuilt, or when the weeds must be removed from the hubo; he sends his young men to do the work. But he must not exact too much from his people or forget to feast them with beer or with meat when the work is finished.

5) Lastly the headman *presides over all the discussions* which take place in the village. He is the master of the hubo. The discussion can be conducted in three different places; when it deals with a secret matter, the men go *inside the hut*: they debate the matter indoors (ba bulabula ndlwen). Private questions

643 651 In the Northern clans it seems that these payments in kind called *shirwalo* (carrying of beer, from ku rwala, to carry), are expected from all those who are not hunters and bring no meat to the capital.

643 651 224 825 2. The right of the chief *over wild beasts killed in hunting* is not the same for all game. Rhinoceros is not taxed ; it is even taboo to bring its meat to the chief. On the contrary when a man has killed a wild buffalo, an elan, a giraffe or an antelope, he must first cut some joints for the chief. If it is a panther or a lion, he must give up the skin ; if an elephant, the tusk which scratched the soil when it fell belongs to the chief ; it is "the tusk of the soil," and the chief is "the soil." The other tusk is for the hunter (ndlayi). In the Maputju country, it was even forbidden to kill elephants. Ngwanazi, the chief who was deported in 1896, had reserved the monopoly of elephant hunting for himself and his warriors. The hippopotamus is taxed more heavily than any other beast. The hunter who has succeeded in killing one has not the right of cutting it open. Should he do so, it would be considered a serious offence. He might be put to death. (Mankhelu.) He must at once send word to the capital, and the men of the Court will come immediately and cut up the animal, taking half the joints to the chief. As for the crocodile, it must also be opened by the men of the Court, because it contains many things such as marvellous stones used in magic, and bracelets of the women whom it has devoured. The chief appropriates what he pleases amongst these objects.

643 466 3. *Statute labour* is one of the main revenues of the royal kraal. In some cases, subjects must come to the capital, led by their sub-chiefs, and till a field for the chief or rather for the queen who has been bought with the nation's money. In Nondwane, which is a large country, each of the sub-clans must till a field for the wives of the chief in its own territory. For instance, in each of the districts of Mapulangu, Bandi, Manuel, Maghebeza, Malwan, Hlangunyingin, the chief Mubvesha possessed a royal field which his subjects weeded and harvested every year, and the sub-chief Habele, who was in charge of those districts, had to gather the mealies and carry them to the capital. This official tilling is done

643 in the form of a *djimo*. (See Part IV.) Moreover the young
766 men are always at the disposal of the chief to clean his public square, build his huts, repair the thatched roofs of the royal kraal and organise hunting expeditions for him.

643 4. But the greater part of the royal revenue consists now in
651 *money* which the chief receives from his subjects. Mubvesha taxes each village a sum of 500 reis besides the regular basket of mealies. At the end of the bukanye feast, each village must send him another 500 reis to notify him that the feast is ended. When a young man returns from Johannesburg having made enough money to lobola a wife, he must leave £ 1.10.0 in the hands of the chief. The latter also recruits boys whom he sends to the recruiting agents, getting as much as £ 1 or £ 1.10.0 per head. When a sub-chief dies, his people inform the paramount chief of his death, bringing a sum of money (1500 reis). The chief, however, does not receive any portion of the inheritance in the case of a death. There is no taxation on the succession.

643 5. A great deal of money comes into the hands of the chief
651 *owing to fines which he imposes* when acting as supreme judge.
681 When a plaintiff brings a case and the culprit is condemned to pay him £ 25, Mubvesha keeps £ 10 for himself ; he retains £ 5 if the fine is £ 10.

643 Sub-chiefs do not tax their subjects as a rule. They must
631 bring to their superior all the products of taxation. They do
651 not "eat" anything. But in some cases the chief gives them a part of it. Thus Habele, sub-chief of Rikatla, used to "eat" half of the taxes brought to him by young men coming back from Johannesburg.

V. *Dangers and difficulties of the Chieftainship.*

643 Endowed with supernatural power which he owes to his magical
554 medicines, feared and sometimes loved by his subjects, with plenty to eat and richer than any of his people, who readily consent to be taxed, the chief occupies an enviable position. The chieftainship (buhosi), therefore, is very much sought after and no

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CHAPTER III

THE COURT AND TRIBUNAL.

644 Although Royalty makes but little display amongst the Ba-Ronga, still each chief is the centre of a court of more or less brilliancy.

A. THE VILLAGE OF THE CHIEF.

644 466 The village in which he resides is not called *muti* (as is the case with the ordinary hamlets of his subjects), but *ntsindja*, that is "the capital." It is generally larger than the ordinary villages, is built by the young men of the tribe, after the marriage of the chief, and is also kept in repair by them, one of their principal duties being to keep the public square in a state of constant cleanliness and to weed it at certain seasons of the year.

644 One of my countrymen, Dr. J. de Montmollin, visited the capital of the Tembe clan in July 1900 and took some interesting photographs of it. The whole village was surrounded by a high and thorny circular fence, much stronger than is the case with ordinary kraals. The inside of the fence was divided into two parts ; the front part, to which the main entrance gave access, and the back part with the huts of the queens. The front part was the square (hubo and bandla) with shady trees, under which visitors were sitting ; there was only one hut on it, on the left side near the fence ; the back part comprised the huts of the queens, which were separated from the square by a high wall of reeds, carefully built, and in which only a few narrow entrances were left. The traveller was told that access to this kind of gynecium was taboo for all

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misfortunes to a very melodious tune (No. 8) which I once heard 533
in Rikatla repeated a dozen times by children's voices along 539
the bushy paths. The words were in Zulu and were said to mean :

> Stones are very hard to break
> Far from home, in a foreign land.

The tune is so catching that it has become quite popular even in French Switzerland, where I have had the opportunity of singing it on many occasions.

Once when I was walking after sunset in the neighbourhood of a miserable village of two or three huts in Rikatla, I was attracted by a simple melody repeated again and again by a feminine voice. A young woman with a child on her shoulders and engaged in cooking her food was singing. She had just lost her father. Her husband was a very bad character ; she had been obliged to leave him and to take refuge in her father's village, and, lo, he had died! Feeling lonely and abandoned by all her natural helpers, she was expressing her grief in a low tone by the following words sung to a tune full of sadness (No. 41).

Tatana a ndji siya	My father has left me !
Na ndji nga li na mumben !	And I had no other except him !
Ndji se psanga libalen	I remain alone on the earth !
Sha ndji ta ya kwini mbuu !	Where shall I go then, Alas !

I am afraid Bantu lyrics have more than once found occasion 533
to celebrate the selfishness and *rudeness of the White race* ! I 539
remember travelling through the desert with three Zoutpansberg 609
colonists, and some of their black servants. The White masters
were not exactly gentle with their boys. A road had to be cut 466
through the bush and it was hard work to remove the stones, and to cut down the trees. The shambock was sometimes resorted to in order to stimulate the Natives. I once heard one of them, who had just been castigated, murmuring in a low tone his monotonous complaint, whilst chopping at a stem. I caught the following words : (Tune 9)

Ba hi shanisa !	They treat us badly !
Ba ku hi hlupa !	They are hard on us !
Ba nwa makhofi !	They drink their coffee !
Ba nga hi nyike !	And they give us none !

361 in the bandla, and it is strictly reserved for them. Women are
351 allowed to penetrate into it only when they bring food. Boys
562 must remove the ashes from the fireplace, not women. The *hubo*, on the contrary, is open to all. A shed is sometimes built on it to afford shelter during the rainy days. There are special acts always performed on the hubo : the cutting up (shindla), the slaughtering and butchery of animals and the feast of "eating the head." The head of any slaughtered ox belongs to the men, and they eat it together on the hubo (See letter C.). It is the business of the young men to keep the hubo clean, and they sometimes assemble to pull up the grass which may have grown on it. In former times it was taboo to come to the hubo with
292 sandals. Sandals are used for hunting and must be taken off before entering the village.

Another place to which I have already alluded is the *bukucle*,
361 the "place of jealousy," where angry co-wives insult each other!
351 On our diagram it would be located between 5 and 4, for the
595 wives of the headman.

The Thonga village, this closed circle of huts, is a living
361 organism. All its members form a whole whose unity is remark-
596 able. This common life never appears in a more striking form
264 than at the evening meal. Let us look at our diagram. In every
476 yard the mistress of the hut has cooked her mealies and her sauce in different pots, and, when the sun sets, she distributes the contents (phamela) in wooden or earthen plates. The largest is for the husband. He sits on the bandla with his companions, the other men of the village, and the youths waiting for the meal. All these plates, generally carried by small girls or boys, are brought from all sides to the men's gathering. All do not necessarily contain the ordinary mealies pap ; some are filled with manioc, some with sweet potatoes, etc. The men attack the first plate, all of them taking the food with their fingers. They pass on to the second and so on to the last. Meanwhile each mother has filled other smaller plates, one for the girls, one for the boys, one for herself. She has even sent to each of the other women of the village a little of her cooking, and the others have done the same to her ; so each member of the community, when

361 596 264 476 he or she has finished the meal, will have eaten a little of all that has been cooked on all the fires. It is impossible to imagine a more perfect communism than this as regards food! I myself witnessed this custom of the evening meal in Spoon Libombo's village in Rikatla. Amongst the inhabitants of the kraal there were two blind male adults, the wife of one of them being half blind herself ; the wife of the other was an old woman who could hardly till a few square yards of mealies and groundnuts, and keep the birds and the hens away from them. Spoon's wife and the wife of another man of the village alone were healthy and able to work normally. So the whole burden rested on their shoulders, as the share the other women could take in the feeding of the men was necessarily small. However I never heard Spoon grumble ; being the headman, he made it a point of honour that all the people dwelling with him should have enough to eat. Everybody who has lived with South African Natives has admired their wonderful readiness to share any food they may have with those present. Even children are much superior in this respect to White children. I attribute this virtue to the community of food which reigns in the Bantu village, and which is certainly one of the most attractive features of Kafir socialism. Village life has not taught the Thongas merely bad habits.

B. MOVING A VILLAGE AND FOUNDING A NEW ONE.

621 754 596 Large kraals similar to the one shown in our illustration were more numerous in former times than now. It is rare to meet with such a number of huts and so many people under one headman. Why ? Because, say my informants, the superstition of witchcraft has considerably increased in later times. Suppose the wife of one of the younger brothers should [787] die ; the divinatory bones reveal that this death is due to a witch ; they go so far as to designate one of the wives of the headman as guilty. No common life is any longer possible. The widower will move elsewhere and build a fence around his

of the garden with a good vegetable until the first-fruits themselves ripen and furnish a more substantial food. 241 221

When the rains commence, sometimes as early as September, but generally later, it is *time to begin the regular sowing*. Everybody then starts for himself, because, although the fields tilled by the mother are the largest, every member of the family has tilled his own : the husband has his *mpashu* (I. p. 337) and each girl has her plot.

The Native idea is that every owner of a field must sow all principal cereals and vegetables in his garden, except peas, on account of their taboo. So, in a line on the border, are planted sweet potatoes and manioc. Mealie seeds are sown at a given distance from each other, alternating with Kafir corn and sorghum, and in between are planted ground nuts and beans. Watch how the mistress of the field proceeds to sow her maize : she walks along with short steps, at each one digging up a shovelful of well tilled earth, and planting in the holes three or four grains of maize, which she carefully covers over. The work is done in haste so as to take advantage of the last rains. The *lisindje* is first sown ; then begins the hasty tilling of the old fallow fields (pula, dji-ma). The crop is not likely to be so plentiful as that obtained from virgin soil, but the same fields can be used for three or four consecutive years before they become exhausted.

Natives have no idea of *fertilising the ground* in any way whatever ; at the most they may take advantage of the manure which has accumulated in some disused oxen kraal, to plant thereon a few gourds or some tobacco.

The operation of hastily tilling the fallow fields is often carried on by a *djimo* (dji-ma). Knowing that her fallows are very large and that she can hardly cope with them by herself, the owner calls all her neighbours to a djimo, viz., a working party, having wisely prepared a number of large jugs of beer. Neighbours will certainly accept the invitation as they may have to ask for similar help later on. So they come in the morning, and attack the fields with energy, singing and shouting all the time. There are special djimo songs, in particular amongst the Ba-Sutho. One may see them, some fifty black bodies toiling vigorously, 241 476 574 [533]

241 making the sand fly, their hoes working with marvellous rapidity!
476 What excitement, what strenuous work, each one urging the
574 other to still greater exertion and all hurrying to finish the job! They know that, there in the hut, ten big jars of beer brewed to a nicety wait for them, and that they will have a good time at midday, when the heat will be unbearable and the work done.

241 The maize grows and the weeds grow with it ; after the tilling
221 comes the *weeding* ; this is the work for November, December and January.

It is done twice or thrice for the mealies. The first weeding is called *tjutja*, and is done when the mealie stems have reached a height of about one foot. The second is called *hlakula*. By this time the ground nuts and beans have grown, and this weeding is intended to be for their benefit also.

In January it is the *nwebo*, the time for the first ears of maize to ripen : it is also at that time that the fields of maize are apt to be ravaged by a species of coleoptera, called the *nunu*, of which I shall have more to say when treating of the superstitions of the tribe.

In January also the sorghum and millet attain their full growth, and the grain begins to form. *Sparrows*, *finches*, and other chattering birds take up their residence in the fields and begin to plunder them. Then women and children camp out from morning to night, in their plantations, and spend three whole months shouting, yelling and making a most infernal hullabaloo, with tin cans and other musical instruments, in their endeavour to scare the thieves. This is what they call *psaya* or *rindja tinyanyana*. The flocks of sparrows, etc., move on at a single flight to the acacias or mimosas, close by, whence they make a descent on the fields of the next neighbour. This proprietress is also on guard, and, in her turn, drives off the birds with a frightful uproar ; thus the duel between birds and human beings goes on for weeks. The mother and children prevail upon the father to build them a little hut (ntjonga, mu-mi) right in the middle of the field, to enable them to protect their sorghum against the feathered enemy, and there they take up their quarters until the cereals have ripened and are ready to be harvested.

235 made their appearance together with men" — "ti tumbulukile ni banhu," they say. But we know that the critical sense is absent from their minds, so we cannot rely on any such absolute dictum. "The Hoñwanas had them" they add ; and this we may believe, as the Hoñwanas have always kept more or less apart from the invaders of the XVth or XVIth century (I. p. 357) and may have preserved their traditions. This shows that poultry was known in Delagoa Bay 300 or 400 years ago. Not having seen the Portuguese chronicles of 1550-1600, I cannot say whether they make any allusion to the presence of fowls at that date (1).

F. HUNTING AND FISHING.

224 Whatever may be the antiquity of cattle breeding amongst
476 South African Natives, there was a time when they had no domestic animals at all. Then, however, there were plenty of antelopes, elephants, and hippopotami in the country and they satisfied their craving for meat by hunting. Hunting was undoubtedly more developed in those remote times than now, and it was accompanied by customs and rites which are still to be found in some places, though rapidly disappearing, and in which are embodied some of the most curious animistic ideas of the tribe. Moreover, in their primitive state, Bantus only possessed very simple and inadequate weapons. It was hardly possible for an isolated member of the tribe to attack and kill big animals alone. The collaboration of his fellow clansmen was indispensable Hunting therefore was not an individual affair, but a collective concern. This gave rise to social rites, as gene-
224 rally happens when collective acts are performed. These ani-

(1) As regards the Pedi-Suthos of Zoutpansberg, the introduction of fowls amongst them is quite modern and they admit that they owe them to the Ma-Lemba who brought them into the country about 150 years ago. See my paper in *Folklore* Sept. 1908.

When the hunter has chosen, amongst all the prints, those which 224
seem to him the freshest, he follows them up with his dogs, and 476
there is some chance of his being able to overtake the antelope. Should he succeed in killing the animal without having received help from others he can appropriate it without rewarding anybody. Only if it is too heavy to carry home, he will shout loudly, on a high, piercing note : "Hoooooyiooo..." perhaps after having climbed up a tree so as to make himself heard a long way off. Or he will cut off the tail, cover the beast with branches to prevent vultures from damaging it, plant his assegay in the ground to show his right to the possession of his victim and go home to fetch his companions. When they have helped him to carry the animal, he will give each of them a good piece of meat.

But if the hunter who discovered the antelope sees that he will 202
not be able to come up with it, he will blow his trumpet (lihlanga) 224
to call for help. When the men arrive on the spot, he will cry : 476
"Nkuna yowee!.." if he is a Nkuna, and all will repeat after him : "Nkuna yowee!.." to acknowledge his right. He may abandon the pursuit, but his right has been proclaimed and will be remembered. The second hunter who stabs the antelope will do the same ; he will shout "Mabota yowee!.." if he is of the Mabota clan, and so on till the animal has been killed. Then the meat will be distributed amongst the killers in the following way.. The first will receive the body, the second one leg, the third the foreleg and the fourth the throat, a portion being reserved for the chief, the owner of the soil on which the antelope has fallen. This manner of pursuing an animal, in which helpers are summoned by means of the trumpet, is called ku nyikanana, i. e. to surrender to each other.

If the hunter has killed a very big animal and wants his clansmen 224
alone to help him, he has recourse to another method of calling 202
them. Each clan possesses its own rallying cry, and this he 618
shouts loudly. This is intended to exclude men of other clans and to prevent fighting or any dispute about the possession of the animal. For the Ba-Nkuna this cry is : *Nyandlaleyo*! For the Tsungus : *Hi nhlanga*! For the Manukosi clan : *Muyamba ngwenya ya nambu wa tingwenya*! (Crocodile of the river of

224 of the very hard wood of the ntjenga tree, a sort of mimosa shrub,
824 and are anointed with a powder called *tjulu*. This is a deadly poison ; it is obtained from a shrub which has very pretty flowers and grows abundantly in the forests near the sea, the Strophanthus petersianus. Should an elephant fall into the game pit and succeed in escaping, it will soon die from the poisoned wound.

The marindji trap was already known to the Honwanas, three or four centuries ago, before they possessed any iron weapon. They used to kill elephants in this way and, being unable to dismember them, they made a fire all round the beast to cook it on the spot!

224 In order "to make the game forget," viz., to circumvent its
844 wariness (djibata), certain magical charms are used in connection with the trap. The fence which surrounds it is smeared over with a powder made from a human placenta. A hunter's wife carefully preserves the afterbirth of her child ; she bakes it on the evening of the day of delivery, hides it during the following day, dries it the next evening, puts it between two pieces of a broken pot, and hangs it from the roof. When the father returns from his hunting trip, he makes a powder of it, mixes it with other drugs, and uses it to smear the fence of the trap, also his arrows, or his gun. Should an antelope be wounded by a projectile covered with this drug, it is sure to fall at once! This powerful medicine is called *ndzedzena* and is deemed so important that a hunter's wife who loses the afterbirth must pay a fine of one hoe ; the hunter will try to obtain the placenta of another woman ; it is therefore not necessary that the afterbirth be that of his own wife (Viguet).

224 Game pits are not common in Thongaland ; they were still used
476 some years ago in the South of the Maputju country and in the Hlengwe territory, but I never came across any myself. At a more remote period they were employed for the most profitable collective hunting the Thongas ever attempted. All the members of the clan were summoned ; they built a strong fence as much as two kilometers in length, leaving about ten openings at equal distances ; at each of these gates was dug a game pit. In the afternoon the men assembled and prepared torches which they lighted in the evening ; and with loud shouts they chased the game

towards the fence into the pits. My informant asserts that the 224
result was sometimes marvellous ; the pits were soon full and the 476
animals coming behind ran over their comrades and escaped ; the men followed closely and stabbed the antelopes in the neck. But this of course meant the wholesale destruction of game. Happily a stop has been put to this kind of hunting.

Nowadays Natives use *iron traps* which they buy in the European 224
stores, some of which are quite sufficiently strong to catch a duiker 824
or a wild pig. They smear them with another charm, the *butiba*, a kind of brownish moss growing on the roots of a tree called shivumbunkanye. It also is said to have the power of "making the game forget."

I have described some other traps when dealing with boys' games.

Everybody was allowed to hunt in the good old times when the 224
White authorities had not yet introduced so many restrictive 554
regulations. Ordinary hunters are called bahloti or bazingeli 791
(Zulu term). But there were others who had made a kind of trade of hunting, regular, professional hunters, who were called *phisa* (pl. maphisa). They were not satisfied to kill an occasional antelope near their village, but they undertook big expeditions to the great deserts of the Hlengwe country where game was plentiful and where the most precious of all, i. e., elephants, abounded. It cannot be said that the maphisa formed a definite class in the tribe like the bone-throwers, for instance. I never heard of a true initiation taking place prior to their becoming maphisa. Yet they were known and recognized as a kind of superior caste and were very proud of their name of maphisa. They claimed a special power over big game owing to the mysterious rites which they practised; thus they partook more or less of the nature of magicians. I have come across some of them and heard marvellous stories about others. Old Madyashikulu of the Nhlongo clan, whom I met in the Ntimane country, near Antioka, boasted that he could pick out an elephant in a herd and force it to come and fall down at the foot of the tree up which he had climbed. He had then only to stab it from his retreat, and kill it ; after which he came down from the tree to

shorter sticks, which are pushed in here and there as the building 335
proceeds, and the architect ends by obtaining a sort of enormous, 342
pointed hat lying on its apex, all the branches and sticks composing it being solidly tied together with strips of a very resistant bark, that of the bulolo Hibiscus (p. 33) or of other trees. It is now only necessary to turn the big cone over, and place it on a wall, and there you have the typical Thonga hut.

The *wall* is built with stakes, about four feet in length above the ground, planted at intervals along the circumference of a circle which the architect traces with wonderful accuracy in the sand. He then takes two flexible branches and fastens them to the stakes, at a height of one foot above the ground, the whole way round the wall, one on the inside, the other on the outside. Between these branches and in the spaces from stake to stake are inserted reeds of the same height, completing the wall : the reeds are firmly fastened to the supporting branches by a band passing alternately over and underneath them. The same operation is repeated half way up the wall (two feet above the ground), and again at three quarters of the height (three feet). The wall is now ready to put on its large conical hat, which will fit it perfectly : a cone on a cylinder!

Placing the roof in position (ku tlakula yindlu), the next 342
procedure, requires the display of considerable muscular energy. 476
All the men of the village are convened for the job : their strong arms raise the monumental basket and place it triumphantly on the wall. Beer is then given to the helpers, and a little jollification ensues ; the equivalent of the "fête du petit sapin enrubanné" which the carpenters celebrate in Switzerland when they have completed the roof of a house.

The roof must now be *covered* (fulela) *with a thatch* (byanyi) 342
to make it impermeable to the heavy rains of the wet season, [824]
and it is here that considerable ingenuity is displayed in the method adopted. The Thonga pulls up by the roots, in the low lands on the borders of the lakes, a kind of very wide grass (luhlwa), which attains a height of one and a half to two feet : this he separates into small bunches which he lays side by side on the ground and ties together, one by one, with his

323 and, if the result of the firing is good, she will always call the same
777 child on future occasions (1).

787 If all these precautions prove useless, and the woman sees that she is not succeeding, she will go so far as to consult the bones, and, if they so order, she will make an offering to her gods, gods of the father, gods of the mother, or possessing gods (Part VI), if she is a spirit-possessed woman, as the bones may

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Result of the firing. *Phot. A. Borel.*

787 declare. People will say to her : "You manufacture pots and sell them and do not give anything to your gods : that will not do!" So she will offer a piece of clothing, a coin, etc., at the altar *(gandjelo)*.

323 (1) Meta, the Rikatla potteress has entirely given up the manufacture of pottery of
476 late years. All her pots cracked, because, she said, she was the only woman practising this art in the country. In her former home, everybody made pots and in this way the potteresses "strengthened each other (tiyisana)." Moreover when a pot was heard cracking in the furnace, somebody ran to the hut and collected a little of the dust on the floor and threw it into the other pots, and this prevented them from being spoiled. It was too far for Meta to run to her former home to get the dust—so she gave up her trade! The case of poor Meta is a good illustration of the collective character of industrial pursuits amongst primitive peoples.

322 through the ages. The specimen in the illustration[1] was bought
352 from a young man, a traveller, on the road; the bird's claws,
777 beads and other articles tied all round it, doubtless hunting trophies, are plainly to be seen. He had the advantage of literally

Thonga statuettes.
(One third of the natural size.)

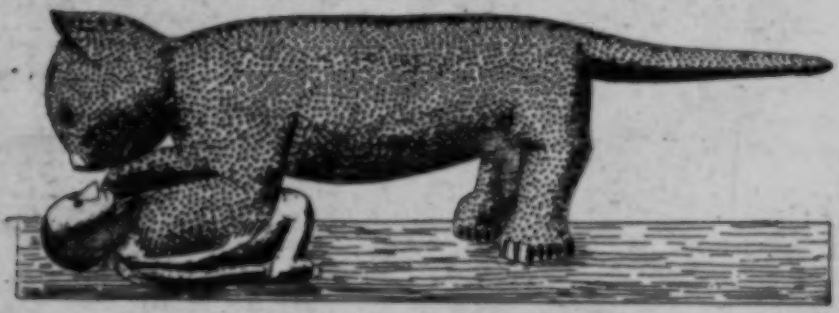
resting on his laurels, and naively believed they would bring him good luck while sleeping.

532 The Thonga artist has even dared to portray the *human form*,
481 and the result of his audacity, however grotesque, is not without
322 originality, and even a certain characteristic style, which may be recognised in all their statuettes. More often they content themselves with carving a man's head, with his crown, on the top of their walking sticks. I here give[2] an illustration of Mankhelu's stick, which was a very old one, dating from 1850,

[1] [The Thonga plow -- See p. 128, No. 8. -- Analyst]

[2] [p. 133]

532 at least, and shows the primitive style without any European
481 influence. Sometimes they carve the whole body from head to
322 foot; (as grapes do not grow in their country the use of the classic vine-leaf is quite unknown). No. 3 represents a stick with a man and a woman, the one standing on the other's head, the stronger sex treading the weaker under foot! Large statuettes, of at least one and a half to two feet in height and broad in proportion, are to be seen in the Neuchâtel Ethnographical Museum, which without doubt contains the largest collection of Thonga implements in the world, having been plentifully provided with them by the mission-



A panther devouring an Englishman.
(One twelfth of the natural size.)

aries of French Switzerland No. 7 is smaller, and represents a woman having on her head the typical conical basket, the pride of
532 the workers in the fields, and of the cooks. The five small figures
322 on the accompanying plate are very amusing indeed. They were carved by an artist of Movumbi (near Rikatla), who asserted that the man on the right was a Banyan. The other figures are Natives, men with their wax crowns, and the ladula garment (p. 96) adorned with beads; one is a woman carrying a child!

The finest specimen of Native art that I ever saw is the carving of a *huge panther* about to devour a human being, the work of Muhlati, a sculptor living in the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques. This artist, who was very proud of his work, and asked a tolerably high price for it, claimed to be able to carve anything and everything: birds, four-footed beasts, or men. He was famous throughout the land for his talent. Nothing more quaint

[see p. 128.— Analyst]

name *Ba-Godji* is still commonly applied by them to English 439
people. After these Whites, the Natives remember the arrival of the Moslems, who came with their "vessels with an elevated tail," (even to-day Arab dhows have a raised stern answering this description), called *mapangayi* and were the first to land and to undertake a regular commercial exploitation of the country. They soon learnt to speak with the Natives, and to make use of them in their trade, sending them far away into the interior to barter ivory and skins against hoes, beads, clothing, and, later on, powder and bullets.

Whatever may have been the order of arrival of these strangers, one fact is certain : the Ba-Ronga of Delagoa Bay have acted as intermediaries between the Whites and the tribes in the interior for a considerable time, the Mpfumo, Nondwane, Mabota and Hlanganu (1) Natives being particularly engaged in this trade, and going as far as Mosapa (Ba-Ndjao country) and Bvesha (Ba-Venda country), to exchange goods.

The *commercial journeyings*, though they are now a thing of the past, are well remembered by the old people, with all the particular customs accompanying them. The Ba-Sutho called these travellers *Makwapa* (Thonga pronunciation of *Magwamba*), perhaps from the name of a Thonga chief who dwelt on the Oliphant (see *Grammaire Ronga*, p. 21), or near Inhambane. The company, called *mpfhumba*, was generally led by a *ndjilashi*, viz, "the master of the expedition," to whom the Banyan entrusted goods for barter. This man had to find a certain number of carriers, who would share in the profits of the venture. The Banyans estimated the value of the goods in pounds sterling. Should the whole be worth £ 60, for instance, he put 60 mealie cobs into a trunk and the ndjilashi did the same in his own hut ; on reaching home again, he had to deliver to the Banyan money or skins or whatever he had sold the goods for, to the value of

(1) The people of Hlanganu, neighbours of Nwamba, were renowned as commercial travellers. Hence their nickname: "Ba ku hlomula fumo ba tlhaba misaba." — "Those who take the assagai and pierce the earth." They used their weapon not for fighting but for pacific purposes : the assagai served as a walking stick in their commercial journeyings. Another version is this : "Ba shaba ndlela," — "they buy the road," they do not fight, they would rather pay to be allowed to pass (I. p. 362). 437 481

301 and knocked out of shape by a blow or if its owner goes through
885 thorny bushes. A *khehla* who has some self-respect will frequently
554 polish and repair this valuable ornament, for it is a sign of mature
482 age. He who has been ordered by the chief to wear it no longer
645 carries burdens on his head; his crown would be spoilt! He will
461 be accompanied by a boy who carries his parcels; he himself will only carry his stick or his assagai. He will at once be known as one of the mature men of the tribe. This is not to say that the mere fact of wearing the *ngiyana* gives the right of taking part in the important affairs of the country; the counsellors alone possess this right; but from amongst the "crowned," will be chosen the man who is sent to another chief to treat of political questions, for instance.

301 When the hair grows (for, though it is curly, it may become long), the crown rises with it and becomes more or less unsteady, which must be most uncomfortable! The best thing would be to cut the ornament off and then replace it. Mr. Mandjia, one of our neighbours at Rikatla, was probably too lazy to undertake this job, so he put a small red handkerchief between his skull and the crown to prevent it from wobbling.

765 At a certain time all the *ngiyana* disappeared from the land of
643 Nondwane. The chief Mapunga was dead! The loss, kept
554 secret for a year, had been made public, and the law requires all the
885 mature men to take off their crowns when the sovereign of the country is dead. They take the wax from the frame, and make a ball of it; this they fix on a little stick, and place this stick in the roof of their hut above the door. The frame is hung up quite close by, and they leave these objects there till the new chief orders his subjects to re-make their crowns. This shows clearly that the crowning custom is in close relation with the national life of the tribe. The "makhehla" also form special battalions in the army.

178 Nowadays, however, this custom is not observed as religiously
554 as in bygone times. Life is harder, one must go and earn pounds sterling in the port of Lourenço Marques, or in the gold mines, and one can no longer indulge in a lazy life! It may therefore happen that a poor man will refuse to wear the crown, and say to

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

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of building will be stopped at once and the little community will find another place to which to move! Moreover the guilty woman will have to ask the principal wife for forgiveness. 2) A second great taboo is this : — No one must wash his body during the whole "buhlapfa", as this might cause the rain to fall and it would interfere with the building operations.

5. The building of the huts begins immediately, each man making the circular wall first. When all the walls are ready,

Carrying a roof.

the *roofs are carried* from the old village to the new by all the men together. They lift each roof on to their shoulders, after having removed the old grass, and go out of the village, not by the main entrance, but by one of the back gates which has been widened for the purpose. A broad road has been prepared through the bush. They follow it, marching as fast as they can, and singing the obscene songs which are reserved for special occasions (see Part VI). In these they insult the women who accompany them, carrying the baskets, the mortars, the pestles. "The village is broken in pieces, so are the ordinary laws. The insults which are taboo are now allowed" (Mboza). This suspension of morality in speech is only allowed on the day when roofs are carried to the new village. Some days later, again, the women will take their revenge when they smear the floor of the huts ; then they too will sing their songs, insulting the men. But

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In a small pot they prepare a fresh sauce of monkey nuts to season it. The family takes its *morning meal* (fihlula) ; then, if it is the season of tillage, *they go to the fields*, with hoes on their shoulders, the shihundju (conic baskets) on their heads, and sometimes their babies on their backs. The whole morning they will dig up sweet potatoes, grub up their future plantation, or weed their

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Phot. H. Gre.

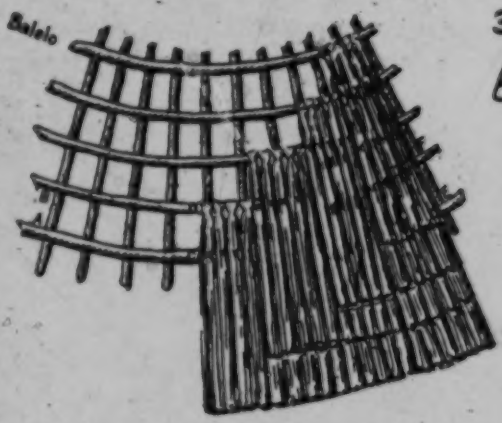
Spelonken women preparing the evening meal after their return from the fields.

mealies. In the heat of the day they come back in order to prepare the evening meal. Sometimes, if the gardens are far away, or when they are employed in scaring the birds from their sorghum plantation, they remain the whole day in their fields, and cook their evening food there, bringing it back to the village at sunset quite hot (1).

(1) I saw a Rikatla woman coming home under such conditions, carrying her child on her shoulders and the burning monkey-nut sauce in the shihundju on her head. Her foot caught in a root; she tottered; the pot fell on the baby, which was scalded to death.

double object in view in thus crowning the huts : first to keep the 342
rain from percolating through at the top, and secondly to impart to the building, by means of this highly ornamental addition, a degree of finish, an air of beauty, ease and opulence which it certainly would never have possessed had it terminated in an ordinary point. It is, no doubt, owing to the fact that the crown is the glory of the house that it is removed as soon as the occupant dies!

There are still two more operations to be performed before 333
the hut is finished : *the plastering* (bama (Ro.), 342
phama (Dj.) and the [462]
making of the *door*. But these two jobs can be undertaken at the same time for the very good reason that plastering is the work of the wives, while making the door is that of the husband. Accompanied by other women of the village, the future mistress of the hut starts out for the marshes to collect some black clay (bompfi). If the marshes are too far off, she will content herself with digging in one of the ants' nests on the hillside. These terrible ants, which destroy everything, collect large quantities of hard earth, with which to build their nests, and this differs largely from the sand of the surroundings. (It may perhaps be simply sand hardened and changed by the acid secretions of the termites.) The shirundju, the conical basket which women carry [482]
on their heads, will be used to take home clods of red or black clay, and, using the same baskets, they will fetch from the cattle kraal some fresh dung which they mix with the clay, inside the new hut, pouring water on the mixture to reduce it to the proper consistency. They tread the unsavoury mud with their feet, and, with this semi-liquid mortar, plaster the wall on the inside,



Construction of the Thonga roof.

285 on the basket pointing upward while those on the cover point downward, so that they meet. Two rings are also plaited, and passed round through each pair of handles, forming simple but solid hinges on which the cover can turn without ever being separated from the basket, of which it is henceforward an integral part. A well-made ngula is absolutely impermeable, and not the smallest hole can be found in it. I think it would even hold water. Such a basket is surely a work of art!

285 415 The ngula is the Native's Savings Bank. In it he keeps all his riches, the best grains of maize, or the best grown monkey nuts, reserved for seed at the next rainy season ; also the material with which the women will deck themselves on grand occasions, etc. The enormous basket reposes at the far end of the hut, on a low table (buhiri) specially designed for the purpose. The ngula of the northern clans, where palm leaves are not to be found, is more rounded and the palm straw replaced by solid dry grass. (See the adjoining illustration, p. 121.)

285 415 293 While the ngula is enthroned in the hut, and is never moved out of it, the *hwama* (yin-tin, Ro.) or *funeko* (Dj.) (p. 124 No. 4 and 6), on the contrary, is the wallet of the traveller. It is a square bag made of plaited palm straw. The cover is about as large as the bag itself and, so that it may not be lost (which might easily happen while travelling), it is secured by the string used as a shoulder strap to carry the *hwama*, this being passed through it. The bag can thus be opened by sliding the cover right along the string, but it cannot be entirely separated from it. These bags are of different sizes, some more ornamental than others. A round variety is also made by a certain basket-maker of Masana. He makes three or four projecting horns to his hwama, which then takes a cylindrical shape, and has the advantage of being able to stand upright when placed on the ground. This bag or basket, is called *shiraba* or *baki* (No. 2) ; it is the kind used by the magicians for carrying their medicines, and bones.

285 482 The third classic shape of Ronga basket-ware (No. 3) is the *shihundju* (Ro.) *shirundju* (Dj.), the conical basket employed by the women for transporting maize, clay and manure. (It is by no means certain that the shihundju is cleaned out between

these several loads!) It is made in much the same way as the roof of a hut, point downwards, ribs of folioles taking the place of sticks. This basket may be said to be the special property of the women (1) : they are very clever at balancing it on their heads ; it is very rarely that a woman, old or young, lets her shihundju fall. When empty it is turned upside down and serves as a hat. It is a really pretty sight to see the young girls starting out for the fields with their conical baskets standing straight up on their fuzzy locks. When they are travelling and arrive at a friendly village, they hold themselves perfectly upright, shooting glances here and there without stooping or turning their heads, till their friends rush out to meet them, seize their shihundju and place them on the ground, in small holes which they hastily make in the sand. This is the first duty of hospitality amongst women! 285 482 574

The *lihlelo* (No. 8) is used by cooks for winnowing the maize. Palm leaves not being sufficiently strong for this purpose, the lihlelo is made of the roots, of a tree called *nukanhlelo* (a kind of mimosa), cut into strips, and is coated with a reddish brown varnish prepared from mangrove bark. It is the lihlelo, or rather a smaller basket of the same sort called *ndjewane*, that the housewife takes with her when picking the small wild cucumbers, or gathering the various herbs which serve for the supplementary noontide luncheon. 285 415 243

In the northern clans one often meets with a spherical basket made of the same material as the winnowing basket and covered with an ordinary lihlelo. 285

Besides the foregoing, the Ba-Ronga have two or three baskets which are not in such general use : the *nhlaba*, a kind of plaited bag with interstices between the palm straws, for carrying fish, the *ntjaba*, etc.

Another article, which might, at first sight, be taken for a basket, but which serves quite a different purpose, is the *nhluto*, the strainer. (No. 1.) This unusually shaped strainer is a sort of long bag of plaited straw into which is poured the beer made 285 415 273

(1) The male members of the family are called "ba matlhari, those of the assagai" and the female "ba-shihundju, those of the basket," as these objects are characteristic of each sex.

1 [see p. 124 -- Analyst]

856 mouthful to drink, then dip her finger into the medecine and let
731 two or three drops fall from it on the fontanella ; then she spits on
757 the lower part of the shell and presses it all along the sternum
854 of the baby as far as the navel. This is said to "nurse the child, to make him grow." Should he be sick, this treatment will be repeated many times a day. If he is well and goes about with his mother, she will pour the *milombyana* into the small calabash and give him a few sups from it from time to time.

The child must never drink ordinary water, but only the
953 *milombyana* decoction. It is a taboo. Should the mother travel
271 far from home and leave behind her the *milombyana* pot, she is
284 allowed to add some water to the calabash, but she must always leave a little of the decoction in the calabash before doing so. The mother herself is not allowed to drink the water of another country. She must only drink water from home and, if she is forced to travel, she must take a little powder from the reed each time she drinks, so that the child may become familiarised with that country (1). These laws must be kept during all the nursing period.

862 The child begins to eat *solid food* as soon as his teeth are cut, and when he is able to take it with his own hands. But some people do not like to give it to him too soon, as they say his stools become fetid. When later on he is able to go outside and to take care of himself, then he can eat any ordinary food.

853 If the mother dies during the nursing period, the little one is almost sure to follow her. The baby is fed with goat's or cow's milk, but the Natives do not know that they must add water to it ; sooner or later therefore the child dies of enteritis.

I have heard of some cases in which another woman has taken charge of the child, nursed him with her own milk and weaned him successfully ; her own child being older, she weaned him earlier than the usual time and nursed the other child in his

261 (1) A similar custom is observed in the case of moving from one country to another.
484 When a Ronga comes back from Kimberley having found a wife there, both bring with them a little of the earth of the place they are leaving, and the woman must eat a little of it every day in her porridge in order to accustom herself to her new abode. This earth provides the transition between the two domiciles !

462 thank (tlangela) her husband for his kind help! This is her
273 method of notifying him that all the grain has been harvested, as, whatever the man's share of the work may have been, the mealies belong to him.

462 The main work of the man is the *building and repairing of the*
356 *huts*. This is truly an arduous job, but it is not of yearly recur-
342 rence. Every third or fourth year they are obliged to re-thatch the roof. The huts are built and repaired during the winter, from May to September.

A second domain, which is exclusively man's, is the *care of the cattle* ; the boys milk the cows, construct and repair the kraal : the little boys herd the goats, and the young men the oxen, as has already been mentioned.

462 It is also the men who *make all the utensils and tools* used in the
411 village, pots and other crockery excepted ; mortars, pestles,
294 handles for axes or hoes (mimphinyi), wooden platters, carved or forged articles, all this work pertains to them. They must also make the *ntehe* for their wives, or sisters, after the birth of the babies. This is probably the explanation of the curious fact noticed amongst Native Christians, namely that they are much more clever at needlework than their wives. Big fellows are often seen forsaking the hoe to work with the needle, and there are fathers who make their own clothing as well as the dresses for their wives and children!

462 *Hunting and fishing* are, of course, also men's work... or pastime.
224 For some of them hunting is an actual trade, at least such was the case in former times, before the White Governments imposed strict regulations and levied heavy licences on that sport. We shall study, in Part IV, the curious customs relating to these two favourite occupations of the Natives.

574 A great part of their time is devoted by the men to *paying*
517 *visits*. They are very fond of calling on each other, and sometimes
484 they go great distances to see relatives or friends. They do not travel to pay visits only, but they frequently journey to claim payment of their debts (milandju). To regain the possession of a miserable head of cattle they willingly lose whole weeks! And what endless discussions in the *hubo*, when an unfortunate visitor

484 comes to ask for his property! What cunning displayed in confusing the real issue and evading payment! (1)

Travelling consequently plays a great part in the life of these tribes, and it is no wonder that it is subject to many rules and that many taboos must be observed on the road in order to succeed in these expeditions.

I may mention first the four following taboos.

484 A traveller must not *take salt* with him when he goes either to
777 pay a visit, or to hunt, or on a business trip, or else he will not succeed in his object ; he must avoid *sharpening assagais* on the
784 road ; this would rouse his enemies and "awaken thorns" on the path ; he must take care *not to pluck milala leaves*, that are used for weaving baskets : it would be an insult to the people on whom he is calling. Let him cut these leaves when returning, or else he will find trouble in the village to which he goes, lamentations, shoutings, disgusting sights. When he finds on the road people occupied in *digging a grave*, he must go at once and help them for a while. If he neglects this duty, he will take upon himself the misfortune (titekela khombo). He will not succeed in his purpose. Should he be in the village when some person dies, he must take part in the purification of the inmates.

825 There are some kinds of animals which bring bad luck to the
777 traveller. In order to "keep the road clean" (basisa ndlela), he
484 must beware of the *mampfana bird*, a kind of crane called "the preventer of the journey" (sibaliyendjo (Ro) shitsinyariendjo (Dj). Should this bird fly across the road, with wide-spread wings, it would be enough to make the party return home : there is danger of death before them and the "mampfana" comes to warn them

609 (1) One day one of my neighbours, named Mandjia, was arranging to start for
484 Bilene to "follow his goods" (landja bukosi) ; he came and requested me to give him a letter. "What for? Your debtors do not know how to read and I do not know anything about your affairs." — "It does not matter," said he. "The important point is that I should have a paper in my hand. They will be afraid. They will think that I come from the White people with their authority." I did not like to refuse a small favour to a neighbour; on the other hand I was somwhat reluctant to help him in a none too moral plan, so I gave him a letter addressed to the Portuguese Intendant of these countries in which I stated that I knew him. It was a kind of pass... What use did he make of it? The fact remains that he came back with his goods, and I believe the sight of the mysterious paper was not without influence in the transactions which ended in the recovery of his property!

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

825 that the road is not "clean" (Viguet). The flesh of this bird is
777 used in the preparation of the charms carried by travellers. There
484 are also two mammals which give the same warning : the duyker
782 antelope (mhunti) and the polecat (mangobo). Should a boy going to Johannesburg meet with any of these three animals, he will go to his kokwana (grandfather) and ask him for help ; the old man will then take a mouthful of beer or water and project it towards the traveller (to make "phaa") with the following prayer addressed to the ancestor-gods : "You, so and so, look to this child who wants to travel! Bless him in his journey! May the Spirit of the bush (Shikwembo sha nhoba) remain asleep."

517 The *discussion of affairs* (ku khanela timhaka) on the square of
461 the village also fills many an hour in a man's life.

On the whole, men have but little to do. We can fairly estimate at three months the time required for the work which they have to do for the village and for the community. The remaining months are devoted to pastimes and pleasure (1).

III. *Games of adults.*

000 Having already described boys' and girls' games (p. 66 and 172), I now proceed to those of the adults, as forming an important part of the Life of the Village.

462 (1) Much has been said and written about the division of village work between men and women in the Bantu kraal. I shall try to show in the Practical Conclusions, No. V that civilisation is bound to produce great changes in this region. But, as already pointed out, it is certain that to the Natives themselves their system appears perfectly natural and that the women do not at all complain of their fate. The following charming story which is told by a Moravian missionary, The Rev. Th. Bachmann, who lived for a long time amongst the Wa-Nika, between Lake Tanganyika and Nyassa gives fresh proof of this assertion :

000 One day, as the rain was pouring down, I saw Walusangano returning from his garden with his wife, Leya. The wife was walking in front with a big bundle of wood on her head. On the wood was a basket containing maize, cucumbers and beans, as well as the hoe. On her back Leya was carrying her youngest child. The other children followed and the father brought up the rear-guard, carrying only an open umbrella. We were greatly shocked at this sight, and I thought it my duty to intervene on behalf of the women. On Sunday night, at public worship, I spoke of what I had seen in the most expressive terms possible. But my speech did not make the impression I expected. The men looked very much embarrassed ; the women indignant.

The following week, at sunset, I was under my veranda, watching the lightning and

The Gods of the Bush, Psikwembu psa Nhoba, are also especially dreaded. There is a little song which is sung as a welcome to travellers who reach their home safely : 776 484 533

> Shikwembu sha ahoba shi etlele !
> Shi etlele, banhwanyana !
> Amadikeo-dikeo-dikeo !
> The god of the bush has remained asleep !
> He has remained asleep, young girls !
> Hurrah ! hurrah ! hurrah !

The spirits of the departed who wander about in the bush, not having been properly buried, try to attack innocent travellers. You are fortunate to escape their anger! For this reason they often say to a relative who is starting out on a journey : "Go with your god," viz., the special ancestor-god who can protect you against the dangers of the bush. 769 776 784

I have also heard mention of *Shikwembu sha tihanye*, the god of quarrels. When an offering prescribed by the bones and presented to a certain ancestor-god has not had the desired result, people say : "This god is a god of quarrels. Let us make an offering to the others so that they may scold him." 776 769.

3) The Abode of the Ancestor-Gods and their Mode of Life.

Ideas on these two points are very confused, even contradictory. Some say that the departed go to a great village *under the earth*, a village where everything is white (or pure, "ku basa") ; there they till the fields, reap great harvests, and live in abundance, and they take of this abundance to give to their descendants on earth. They have also a great many cattle. The place where they live seems to be a kind of Hades or Paradise (1). But it would seem, when we consider the funeral rites, that the deceased, on the contrary, 775 776 787

(1) The Ba-Ila (see Smith and Dale, *The Ila-speaking people*, II p. 119) believe that the ghosts go *Kwiwe*, to the East, to Chilenga, the Creator. But they have the same contradictory ideas as the Thongas concerning the abode of their deceased ancestors. 171

Amongst the Natives of Barotseland, on the Zambezi, it is said that the dead go to Nyambe, the God of Heaven. They pierce the lobe of their ears and make other incisions in their bodies as a sign that they belong to Nyambe. When they die and reach the end of the earth at the great river Walamba (the Styx of the Zambezian tribes) the ferryman who conveys the dead to the other bank looks at them to see if

hlulawumbe grows, (Hlulawumbe means to overcome others) (1). 000

Offerings of the Medicine-men. The Native physicians are, as 782
has already been pointed out, very pious. Their art having been 756
handed down to them by their forefathers, as a family secret, they 484
always implore the blessing of their ancestors on their various treatments. This is done by true offerings, performed with the *tsu* and a liturgical prayer. In Vol. I. p. 55, the religious ceremony which accompanies the monthly vapour bath administered to infants was described ; a religious rite takes place also in the hondola of the weaning (I. p. 59). These are typical cases. Another offering of the same nature is made on behalf of the man who is about to *start out on a journey*, for instance to Johannesburg. The doctor, having prepared the protective drugs in a pot, brings them to the entrance of the traveller's hut, and calls his "patient,"; then, taking a little of the decoction in his mouth, he spits it at him with the sacramental *tsu*, and prays in the following words :

Akhwari! Abusayi! Ndji hlaya psolepso! Khongelwa a nga dlawi. Ku dlawa phalaburena! Khombo a dji suke, dji ya ka Shiburi, dji ya ka Nkhabelane! A a fambe psinene, a kandjetela balala, mitwa mi yetlele, ku yetlela ni tindjau. A a ye nwa mati ya kone, ma mu tjhabisa hi djo tluka ledji.

Gently! Smoothly! I say so. Death does not come to him for whom prayer is made ; death only comes to him who trusts in his own strength! Let misfortune depart, let it go to Shiburi, and Nkhabelane (2). Let him travel safely ; let him trample on his enemies ; let thorns sleep, let lions sleep ; let him drink water wherever he goes, and let that water make him happy, by the strength of this leaf (viz., of my medicinal herbs).

(1) I may mention here another religious ceremony which is also called a mhamba, 135
though I am not sure that a regular prayer is offered. It is the *Offering of a Stone.* 823
Stones are almost totally lacking in Thongaland. But on the Swazi border, in the 782
Lebombo hills, there are porphyreous rocks, and when a Native passes a certain spot, 484
on the Estatuen road, he picks up a stone, spits on it, touches both his knees with it and throws it on a heap made of the stones thrown by those who passed before him. This heap of stones is called *shittane.* This rite is said to be performed in order to call a blessing on the journey ; thus the traveller will find a favourable reception in the villages and be given plenty of food. This custom is wide-spread in many other tribes.

(2) The extremity of the land (Comp. I, p. 55).

782 To these words is generally added an invocation to the medicine-
756 man's gods, who are entreated to bless the drugs they have given
to their descendant, and to join with the traveller's gods in order
484 to insure his success in this undertaking. The decoction is then
used to wash the body of the young man. He will pay the fee on
his return home.

224 *Offerings of Hunters.* This is called *byalwa bya ngenge*; the beer
782 of ngenge. This beer is made of maize grains which have been
crushed but not softened by long steeping in water, as is generally
273 done in brewing ; they are then reduced to flour ; some water is
poured on this and it is offered in that form by the head hunter, all
his companions standing near him. They must start at once ;
there is therefore no time to brew proper beer.

484 *Offerings of Travellers.* These also have their particular mhamba,
782 which is called *Lehika*. It consists of water alone which the officiant
takes in his mouth and spits out, saying : "*Pff*!" (amongst the
Hlengwes : "*Phaaa*"). "My ancestor-gods! May I find no difficulty
578 on my road, etc." This *water offering* is also made by a headman
782 whose village is troubled by endless disputes. The way of
bringing them to an end is not clear. So he entreats his gods to
"open the road, pfula ndlela," so that all hearts may be relieved.
This will help him to "herd his village, ku byisa muti." The idea
of finding a road clearly accounts for the fact that this offering is
made under two sets of circumstances so different from one an-
other. Why water is used to attain this end I do not know.

The offerings hitherto described bear a more or less individual
character. Let us now consider those which are in direct relation
to the life of the family.

782 *Regular Family Sacrifices.* We have seen these performed in
842 connection with the most important events in life. At the *weaning*
(I. p. 58, this might however be termed a medical sacrifice),
on the marriage day, either publicly, as amongst the Ronga clans
(I. p. 110), or privately, by the bride's father alone, as is the
custom amongst the Nkunas (I. p. 118). The gods are entreated
to give the newly married woman "timbeleko," births, i. e.,
children, as it seems that the power of begetting depends directly
600 on the gods. Regular acts of worship are performed also at the

gods of the father). These parts of the victim are called *psirungulo*, the religious amulet. 782 755

When the offering consists of a bracelet, the bones having so ordered, the priest will pour consecrated beer over it, and say his prayer. The bracelet will then be fastened to the child's foot. He may not remove it, nor exchange it for anything else: it belongs to the gods.

This description, given by Viguet, is typical of sacrifices offered in the case of disease. In the Maluleke clan the sacrifice made for a sick person is as follows. The headman takes beer, which has been specially prepared for the gods and is very much diluted, the beer called *byala bosila*, and a twig of male nkanye. He orders the patient to sit near the altar, and after dipping the twig into the beer, sucks it and says the following words:

Phaa! (this word corresponds to tsu): this is byala bosila, you Makhima! Take it and convey it to your father Mashakadzi; call each other and come here together to drink! Let all disease depart! Heal this man!

I must also mention the sacrifice performed in the curious ceremony of *dlaya shilongo*, in the case of marriage between near relatives (I. p. 258), and will now proceed to describe two others, viz., the sacrifice on behalf of the son who has just returned from Johannesburg, and the sacrifice of reconciliation.

When a young man, who has been absent from home for a long time, *returns to his village*, he cannot be received again into the community without special precautions being taken. If there has been a death in the kraal he must be purified from the collective contamination before eating the food of the village. This is the luma milomo (I. p. 146), and is connected with the defilement from death. Some of the provisions of the deceased, kept in a pot and diluted with hot water, must be poured between his two great toes, and he must afterwards rub them together. But, before this, a religious act is performed. Before the boy, who is on the return journey, is allowed to enter his native village, he has to stay for a short time just outside, while his father, seated at the main entrance, cuts open the neck of a hen, which he has 782 783 484

782 previously selected, and throws it on the boy's luggage. The
783 victim leaps about (phuphumela) in its agony. The officiant then
484 plucks out some of the bloodstained feathers, pronounces the tsu, and says :

Here is your son. He has returned home safely, because you have accompanied him! Perhaps he has brought back pounds sterling with him to lobola. Perhaps he will now take a wife! I do not know. The great thing is that he is healthy, and you have brought him back safely.

782 *The Offering of Reconciliation.* One of the most curious of
578 the religious acts performed in connection with the family is
593 called *ku hahlela madjieta*, viz., to perform a sacramental act in connection with the madjieta. *Djieta* (dji-ma) means a *rash oath*, or an oath *with imprecation*. If two brothers quarrel, and the younger believing himself to be the injured one, breaks off all connection with his brother, he may say to the latter in his anger : "Never will I speak to you again, or come any more to your village!" This is a djieta. To give greater weight to the imprecation, the angry brother will put his nail beneath one of his incisor teeth, push it from within outwards and say : "U ta kota u *ñwoo* psi nga yentshekanga!" This probably means : "May you die if this does not happen," viz. if I do not keep my oath. Or he will pinch up the skin below his eye, and pull it out, saying : "U ta kota wao *hum*!" (Same meaning). The two men may remain for years without the slightest intercourse with each other. But if a serious disease should break out in the village of the younger, and the bones order him to make an offering, he is at once in a difficulty. He has no right to present it himself, for, according to the great law of priesthood in ancestrolatry, it is his elder brother who must do it for him. The bones, on being again consulted, give the response : — "There is something in the way. You two have tied a knot. Untie it first, then offer the sacrifice." The younger brother will then go to the elder, and say : "I have sinned in swearing that I would never come again to your village. Let us hahlela djieta, i. e., accomplish the sacrificial act, which will

consist of natural objects such as rivers, big trees, etc. To define 423
the boundaries of their gardens, Natives dig an ordinary ditch 618
(ndjilekana, mu-mi) round the field, of about one foot in depth, which can be plainly traced even after the lapse of several years, when the field may have become fallow land and overgrown with vegetation.

The question of *roads* is a somewhat difficult, and often thorny 423
one to settle. Where has one the right to go ? And if, after 487
having used a certain path for years, you suddenly find it blocked by some individual whose field it skirts, and who has taken a fancy to hoe it up, what is to be done ? To try to come to some friendly agreement is always the most practical course. How often have we not experienced this difficulty with our cart ! The agriculturists were the more annoyed because we required a road three or four yards wide, while the Native footpaths are only little tracks of 15 to 20 inches in width. Being the only "carriage folk" in the district, we often had to ask permission to be allowed to pass, and have rarely met with any kind of refusal, for the Black is a reasonable being and quite appreciates the fact that roads are a necessity. If they see that a road is "ripening" (wupfile), viz., that it is more and more frequently used, they bow before the facts ; here, as everywhere else, custom makes the law.

At the present moment matters have been made much more 177
simple as the Portuguese Government has constructed wide 491
highways in all the more frequented parts of the country.

B. PRODUCTS OF THE SOIL.

I. *Cereals.*

"Hosi ya psone i *psithjama*" — "Their king is the *maize*," 243
says Mboza. This cereal is indeed the most widely cultivated in Thongaland. It is called *psifake* in Djonga. In the more fertile regions of the North, the size of the cobs and of the grains (nhleke, yin-tin) is much larger than on the sandy dunes of the Ba-Ronga. So the people of Khosen make fun of the Ba-Ronga and compare

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"Hosi ya psone i *psithjama*" — "Their king is the *maize*," 243
says Mboza. This cereal is indeed the most widely cultivated in Thongaland. It is called *psifake* in Djonga. In the more fertile regions of the North, the size of the cobs and of the grains (nhleke, yin-tin) is much larger than on the sandy dunes of the Ba-Ronga. So the people of Khosen make fun of the Ba-Ronga and compare

After the war of 1894-1895, the Portuguese Authorities established a camp at Morakwen, and decided to build a town there. To do this it became necessary to widen the primitive pathway which led to Lourenço Marques, and Natives had to cede trees and grass lands, to the extent of several metres on each side of the path ; then a fine road was built of some 20 kilometres in length. This road passed close by the sacred wood, as it had been decided to follow the line of the pathway, which skirted this wood for a distance of about half a mile. Amongst many other trees was one huge mahogany, under whose shade I have frequently passed, which sent out a low branch, right over the path ; it was necessary to cut off this branch, and the people living in the neighbourhood were intrusted with the job. "When they began the work," said Nkolele to me, on the 28th November, 1895, "I went to see what they were doing with the mahogany tree. As I was seated the gods came to me, saying : 'What are you doing here? You ought to have stayed at home.' I fell backwards unconscious, and remained in that state for four days. I couldn't eat : they had closed my mouth. I could not speak! My people picked me up and carried me home. My relatives and my children were all summoned : the villagers said : 'Our medicine-man has left us! He is dead!' Then my eldest son went to offer a sacrifice in the sacred wood. He let loose a fowl, which flew away and never returned ; he prayed : 'Oh! my ancestors! Here is my ox. Do not slay my father!' Then I got up. Ah! It was he, who saved me, Ngeleñwana, my eldest son! I looked around and said : 'What have all these people come here for?' They were terror stricken. Then they told me that the gods of Libombo were angry with me. The gods said to me (doubtless by means of the bones) : 'Take an ox-cock' (meaning an ox, an animal for sacrifice, which may be a cock), 'and go to your brother Shihubane. Let him give you a fowl, and go and sacrifice. Why did you go there? You ought to have stayed at home, and have sent your children.' I did not go any more by the big road. I go by the path through the marshes, and never by the avenue made by the Whites. Now I can go that way, for I have sacrificed, and the gods have said : 'He has asked our pardon by means of his gifts."

Is there not something significant and touching about this tale? Civilisation penetrates irresistibly, crushing everything in its way, and cutting remorselessly, perhaps unwittingly, through the edge of the sacred wood! And there, under the mahogany

Bangela (making) for the *bumana*, a sort of hammock, made of plaited milala which is hung to the branches of the trees and sometimes in summer used for sleeping in, to escape the mosquitoes which swarm inside the huts. 285 513

Runga (sewing) for the boats (byatsho, dji-ma). The ancient Native boats built before the appearance of nails, hammers and saws, were made of pieces of wood securely tied together. Some of these antiquated craft are still to be seen on the Maputju river. 285 501 322

On the rivers up country, boats are frequently made of a large piece of curved bark, bent on both sides, which will hold two or three persons. I crossed the great Letaba in a boat of this description. Such boats are also used for storing water. Where mimale branches (or nervules) are procurable, they are tied together so as to form a raft called *shikhakhafu*. These are used on the Nkomati River, and on the lakes in Ronga territory. Big rafts made of trunks of trees fastened together, and called *magudhlwana*, were used in former times on the sea, when going to meet the White men, the Ba-Godji. (See later.) They are now no longer used and there is scarcely one to be found. In the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques the Natives now build their boats on the European model. The fishermen cut down forked branches, which serve as ribs, to which they nail planks. They are wonderfully clever at this work ; one man, Sam Matlombe, nicknamed the "King of the Bay," was particularly expert at it. [177]

The sewn boats of olden times might well be included under the heading of basket-ware. Those of to-day belong definitely to another branch of industry, and will afford us a natural point of transition from basket work to wooden articles.

III. *Wood-carving*.

It is the *nkuhlu*, mafureira tree, Trichilia emetica, as we have already seen, that is used by the Natives of these parts for their wood-carving. If the name of this tree is very hard to pronounce, its wood is, to an equal degree, soft and possesses the great 322 531

532 could be imagined than this large spotted creature, (the spots being
322 obtained as usual by burning with a hot iron), planting his claws in the flesh of a man, (an Englishman, I was told by the inspired author of this group!), and glaring at him with two great round eyes, not very symmetrical! With touching forethought, this modern Phidias has made the posterior half of the tail quite independent of the rest of the animal. A tenon and circular

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Thonga canoe. *Phot. A. Burd.*

socket allow the caudal appendage to be so neatly adjusted that the joint is hardly visible! Muhlati told me how the idea of a removable tail had occurred to him. He thought that if ever his masterpiece had to be packed up and cross the ocean, it would thus be more easily cased. This can hardly be called the idea of a savage! Besides, the work itself would never have been accomplished had there been no Whites in the country. Evidently the sculptor, indolent like all his race, would not have worked day in and day out at carving such an animal as a play-thing for his children. He concluded that his talent might well bring him in some money ; it was mercenary considerations that urged him on to the execution of the work, and no mere love of art ; nevertheless

622 by the chief, and dies, his heirs must pay the compensation
596 claimed. All these rules clearly illustrate the communism of
672 family life and family property, under the supervision of the headman.

Should a numzane be absolutely unable to govern his village,
622 *the family council can depose him* and put another man in his
596 place. This council will be formed of old relatives, especially the paternal uncles to whom the younger brothers will go and complain of the misbehaviour of their headman. A younger brother will then be proclaimed and the elder will be despised. They will say : "Hi singe! A fahla muti, a hluli hi muti!" "He is a fool! He breaks the village ; he is overcome by the village," viz., not able to keep up his position.

As regards the *law of succession* to the headmanship, the second brother takes the place of the elder, and so on. The son of the elder cannot become headman until all his paternal uncles are dead. We shall find this principle also observed in the succession of the chiefs. (Part III.)

D. DAILY LIFE IN THE VILLAGE.

461 From the oxen kraal to the huts, from the square to the little wood, through the doors and in the reed yards, black forms are moving to and fro. Everybody seems busy. There is talking, laughing, playing and working. The expression "working like a nigger" is hardly applicable, for they do not kill themselves with work. It would, however, be quite as great a mistake to believe that the Natives spend all their time in loafing about. Far from it!

1. *Women's occupations.*

462 Women, especially, are very busy. When the sun rises, they
511 emerge from their huts, wash their faces, and light a little fire to warm the mealie pap which was left from the evening meal.

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511
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In a small pot they prepare a fresh sauce of monkey nuts to season it. The family takes its *morning meal* (fihlula) ; then, if it is the season of tillage, *they go to the fields*, with hoes on their shoulders, the shihundju (conic baskets) on their heads, and sometimes their babies on their backs. The whole morning they will dig up sweet potatoes, grub up their future plantation, or weed their

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Phot. H. Gra.

Spelonken women preparing the evening meal after their return from the fields.

mealies. In the heat of the day they come back in order to prepare the evening meal. Sometimes, if the gardens are far away, or when they are employed in scaring the birds from their sorghum plantation, they remain the whole day in their fields, and cook their evening food there, bringing it back to the village at sunset quite hot (1).

(1) I saw a Rikatla woman coming home under such conditions, carrying her child on her shoulders and the burning monkey-nut sauce in the shihundju on her head. Her foot caught in a root ; she tottered ; the pot fell on the baby, which was scalded to death.

462 511 356 317 Many other home duties may oblige the woman to leave the fields at noon ; her head still laden with her basket, she may go to the swamps, near by, and dig out a store of black clay (bompfi). She comes back, mixes the clay with the fresh dung which she has taken from the oxen kraal, and, spreading this mixture with her hands, smears the floor of the hut. This work is called *sindja* (Ro) or *kopola* (Dj.). Dust and vermin will at once disappear under this plaster of black earth, which will dry in a few hours time. Woe to the woman who has not put enough dung in this novel kind of cement! The floor will crack. The clay will shrivel and, when people walk on it, it will crumble into dust! The work will have to be done all over again two or three days later. But if the clay is of good quality, it will harden and last at least a week, the more so as neither wooden shoes nor nailed boots will spoil it.

462 511 313 284 Another woman will go with her primitive axe in search of dead wood. She makes a bundle which she ties with grasses, strengthening these grasses by entwining them with small twigs (1). On returning to the village, she throws her burden on to the ground, before the door of her hut, with the exclamation : "Hu!"

462 511 343 252 516 Others go to their storehouses, the small huts on poles, where mealies, monkey nuts in their husks, millet and sorghum are kept. They take what they need from these stores (tshaha) by lifting up the roof of the little hut, come back and empty the mealies into the mortar, whilst a friend rubs off the grains from the ears of millet or shells the monkey nuts. Two or three women seize their pestles and begin to pound, in measured time, the bottom of their mortars : Gu-gu-gu-gu. Quite a long way off, on the other side of the copse, this pestle song can be heard, resembling the noise of the flails when corn is threshed in the barn. And the busy women stream with perspiration! This method of crushing the mealies in an erect position, by a vigorous up and down movement of the pestle in

284 313 (1) Men, when they fasten a bundle with a string, make a knot (ba fundju) whilst women twist it with a little stick (sulela hi linhi) ; when a woman ties a knot, the two ends of the string will be at right angles to the string, whilst when a man makes it, the ends will be parallel with it. (Mboza).

1; Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

516 the mortar, is a very healthy one and gives the Thonga women a straight and slender figure. In the tribes where the millet is mostly ground between stones, the women who do this work kneeling are shorter and stouter.

462 511 312 Before putting the mealies on the fire, the women go down to the village well, their round pitchers on their heads, to fetch the water they need. In the Ronga country these wells are simple holes dug in the sand, in the centre of the hollows (1). Wells are generally surrounded by thorny branches so as to prevent the cattle from coming to drink and fouling the water. It must be observed that it is not a spring which feeds the well; it is the underground layer of water which has been reached, and which always maintains the same level except in times of drought.

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Phot. A. de Meuron.

Shiluvane girls returning from the well.

462 511 372 252 The sun goes down on the horizon. The long shadows of the trees round the village lengthen on the square. Through the leaves, a few rays still reach the fireplaces and traverse the smoke which rises peacefully from the various kitchens. Between broken pots, or between the pieces of termitine clay which constitute the hearth on which the pots rest, the women place some pieces of dead wood; when these burn away in the centre, they push them further under the pot where the flour is cooking (ba hlanganyeta ndjilo). Evening has come. The men have arrived. With a large spoon (nkombe) the lady of the house

(1) In the Transvaal, where there are rivers, water is taken from them, or from wells dug near the spruit into which the water leaks through the soil, being more or less filtered by this process.

places the food (phamela) on plates of the size of small basins or dishes (mbenga). We have seen how she distributes it amongst the inhabitants of the village. When all have finished eating, the women wash the plates, put aside the pots which contain the food left for the next morning, and tidy up the yards.

Whatever we may say, the day has been a well-filled one for the women. They are very rarely seen playing in the day time. We shall see how they recuperate themselves in the evening.

II. *Men's occupations.*

As for the men, their life is far from being as active as that of the women. They have not, like their diligent wives, the regular continuous work of preparing the food, not to mention the care of the children. The duties which fall on them, and which they are willing to perform, only require of them isolated efforts from time to time.

As regards *agricultural work*, it is generally believed that men leave this entirely to the women. This is exaggerated. Amongst the Rongas each man possesses his own field which he himself tills, and this is an old custom, a special term even being applied to the field thus tilled: it is called *mpashu*. He may sow seeds in it, but he does not weed it, leaving his wife to do this troublesome work for him and also to reap it. He makes only one exception in the case of the sorghum, of which he consents to go and cut the ears. But he helps his wife in other ways, for instance in the storing of the food; he builds the little huts used as storehouses, prepares the *tjala*, viz., the mat stretched on four poles on which ground nuts are dried in the field, digs holes for the *buhiri*, the shelf at the back of the hut where the basket containing the seeds is placed. His wife does not think him a lazy fellow at all. When the harvest is finished, she takes the smaller cobs of mealies (makunhula), those which will not be kept, or the grains of millet and sorghum which are found on the threshing floor after the threshing, and with them she prepares a special beer to

888 In time of war, old people die in great numbers. During moments of panic, they are hidden in the wood, in the palm-tree swamps, while all the able-bodied population run away. They are killed by the enemy, who spares no one (it is the law of war), or they die in their hiding-places of misery and hunger!

As may be seen, the eve of life is very sad for the poor Thonga. There are however children who, to the end, show much devotion to their parents. The most to be pitied are those who fall to the charge of remote nephews or cousins. They can only repeat in a broken voice the sad refrain : " Ba hi shanisa! " — " They treat us very badly! "

G. DEATH

I. *The last days.*

763 Manyibane, the headman of a big village near Rikatla, is
313 dangerously ill. The men of his kraal, his friends, have come
834 to inquire about the illness (kamba shinyonga) and have learned
761 that it is serious. They issue this order to all the inhabitants : " Tlulan psilawen! " — " Keep each of you in his sleeping place, (viz. the men to the right of the hut, the women to the left) and have no more relations. It is taboo! The man would die! " Should visitors come, they are not allowed to enter the village. They must have kept " pure " for two days at least. Two sticks are planted on either side of the door of the hut, and a third is put over them so as to close the entrance. " It is the way black people have of making their proclamation, " says Mboza. " Everybody will know that a dying man is there and nobody will come in. " Should another man of the village have had relations with the same woman as the patient, he is doubly prohibited from seeing him, because the patient would break out into perspiration and die immediately. This is the great law of *matlulana*, as we shall see.

754 Of course the *ñanga* (doctor) has been called already. He

764 would answer : " How can you propose such a thing to me ?
761 Am I not immature (mbisi, properly raw) ? I am not yet ripe! Is defilement of death not there ? With whom could I wash it away ? " (Viguet). The first digger is also called " the one of the head, " the second, " the one of the feet, " because one of them will carry the corpse by the head, the other by the feet. Women may also bury a corpse upon occasion.

764 So the grave-diggers go back to the hut and begin to wrap the corpse in his rugs and in his mat (ku tjimba). They stitch the mat twice (to prevent it from slipping ?) (Viguet). They generally wait till sunset to perform the burial. When the time has come, they make a hole in the wall of the hut on the right side, as the husband dwells in the right half of the house, the wife in the left half. The corpse must not be carried out of the hut by the door, but by that artificial opening (1). So he leaves the hut head foremost (2). They sometimes stop up their noses with the leaves of a bush called ngupfana, which has a strong scent, in order not to perceive the smell of death (moya wa lifu). They march slowly, without a word, men and women following them silently. The " one of the head " goes down to the first level,
764 the one of the feet follows him. They have already put in the
778 place for the head a piece of wood, a piece of a branch of *nkanye*,
769 their sacred tree, one foot long and three inches broad, to be used as a pillow. At the bottom, on the soil, they stretch some old rugs. They lay the corpse down (3) on its left side, the head on the pillow. The grave has been dug in such a way that its long axis is directed towards that cardinal point whence the ancestors came, so that the deceased, having his head slightly

(1) In the Hlabi clans, the corpse is carried through the door, but the plaster on both sides of the door (marimba) is beaten and falls down. It will be repaired later on. In the Northern clans the hut of the deceased is not so strongly tabooed as amongst the Ba-Ronga. When it has been purified it will be used again.

(2) Comparative Ethnography : In Switzerland it is a common saying that a corpse must leave the house feet foremost.

764 (3) The Ba-Ngoni place their dead in the grave in the sitting position, a knife in
513 their hands, as they are a race of murderers! (Viguet). It may be that the reclining position given to the corpse by the Ba-Ronga, is the result of an evolution. At any rate, this is not the true sleeping position, as Natives generally do not bend their limbs when sleeping.

361 together with all the inhabitants of the kraal. The two huts near
313 the entrance are, on the left, the *lao*, where unmarried boys sleep
346 (14) and on the right (15) the *nhangu* where the girls live. Often
356 the nhangu is built behind the huts of the mothers, near the mhala; in this way the girls are kept under more effective watch. The boys of the *lao* have to guard the door, which they close at night where it is the custom to do so. The *hubo* and the *bandla*, the squares, are generally kept quite clean.

361 In front of each hut is a *yard* (*ndangu* pl. *mindangu*, 23) which
372 is also generally well swept. In the centre of each of these are
417 some broken pots (mapseko), or pieces of hard clay taken from
351 ant-hills (psirubu); this is the *fireplace (shitiko)*, where the mistress of the hut cooks her food. The fence round the yard used, as a rule, to be made of poles or even trunks of trees planted near each other and forming a circular wall. Nowadays, especially amongst the Rongas, these yards are enclosed with reeds and may be built square, a single wall fencing off as many as three or four huts. The top of this wall is sometimes crenelated. I rather think this arrangement is modern; the circular wall of the ndangu
585 is an old custom, as is proved by the following fact. On the day of
538 *hloma*, when the bride's-maids and female relatives bring the bride to her husband, they not only build up the woodpile (shigiyane, see page 112), but, in the northern clans, they must also erect a new ndangu which will be called *tsandana*, and so people will know that in the yard there is a *nhlomi*, a bride, working for her mother-in-law! The ndangu is the place where women tell folk-tales of the tribe to the children and to each other, whilst they attend to their cooking, or after the evening meal.

361 If cleanliness prevails on the square and in the yards, the
356 same cannot be said of the region between the huts and the
235 fence. This is called *mahosi* or *makotini*. It is the place where
351 old baskets and broken pots are kept. The chicken houses
343 (*shihahlu*, 27) are built there; these are generally little huts, with reed walls, placed on a floor of palmtree boards, supported by four poles forked at their upper extremities. The *ash-heaps* are somewhat further on (24). They are called *tala*, and play a part in certain rites, representing, as it would seem, the place of desolation and of sorrow.

247 (L.), with its white or pink blossoms, which have spread all over
351 the coast.

Having now finished our first general inspection, let us add some details about the huts and the open places in the village.

342 The hut, the construction of which we shall describe later on,
784 (Part IV) has an opening (nyangwa) of variable dimensions closed by a door. In some parts of the Gaza country it is so small that one must positively crawl to enter it. Everywhere one must at any rate stoop low (korama). As regards the *threshhold* (ntjandja wa shipfalo), it is not taboo to step over it. The headman's threshhold however is dreaded because it was treated with medicines when the hut was built, so it is taboo to sit on it ; these powerful medicines might do harm and
342 even cause death. In the middle of the black clay floor is a
354 kind of raised circle, in the centre of which fire is occasionally lighted in winter on account of the cold. It is the interior *shitiko*. Cooking may be done here if it rains ; glowing embers sometimes remain on it during the night and numberless babies have been burnt to death by falling into the fire while their mothers were
513 sleeping. On the left, on entering, is the sleeping place (shilawo)
853 of the wife, on the right that of the husband. They both however
841 generally spread their mats on the right and sleep beside each other. It is only during the tabooed periods (menses, nursing), that the husband must keep to his own particular side (p. 188).

353 The back of the hut is generally occupied by the big basket (ngula) in which clothing and seeds are kept. This spot is called *mfungwe*. In the roof *(lwangu)* are fixed or suspended various articles : ears of sorghum or millet, cobs to be used as seed at the next sowing, assagais, sticks and knobkerries etc., and against the walls one frequently observes rough drawings made with white clay, or, in the vicinity of towns, chromos of Queen Victoria, Edward VII, or Don Carlos, as the case may be!

361 The hubo and the bandla differ from each other. *Bandla* is
351 a Zulu word which has supplanted the Ronga term *shisiso*, viz.,
562 "the place where one finds shelter from the wind." Men light a small fire there to warm themselves. They also eat together

themselves, the rest of the body remaining stark naked... except, 177
of course, for the indispensable belt of tails. One day a Rikatla 291
lad came to see me with an eye-glass fixed triumphantly on his forehead, and when I asked him what was the use of that article he replied, really meaning what he said : "Ndji yambalile" — "I have dressed." He intended to do me honour. The same lad came, on another occasion, wearing coquettishly on his head a lady's black lace hat, which he seemed to consider very "chic." I much preferred the get-up of an individual, by name Glas, who put a red lily in his tightly-curled hair, and made a chin strap of a flexible reed which he passed through the holes in his ears on either sides, so that it formed a sort of frame to his face. Every Thonga has already learned to know a *buluku* (trousers), a *djansi* (jacket), a *fascikoti* (apron, a corruption of the word waistcoat), a *hembe* (shirt), *masokisi* and *memeya* (stockings) and *shilembe* (hat). The majority of these words have doubtless come from the Boer dialect, and have changed somewhat in passing into the language of the Natives.

The "civilised" attain the height of bliss when they are able to procure an irreproachable suit of clothes, and it is a sight to behold these young men returning direct from Johannesburg, dressed in the latest style, with a white starched shirt, a silk cummerbund, and jacket and trousers to match. They think themselves handsome, but we do not share their illusion! How often have we not longed to see them adopt some costume suited to their colour, their customs, their occupations, and their climate! But they want to be like us, so what is to be done ? (1) Their 177
idea of costume is evidently different from ours : they consider it 291
as an adornment rather than as an actual protection against cold 613
or heat. If it rains, or if it is cold, they much prefer to wrap

(1) I have heard it asserted that the adoption of European clothing by the Blacks 753
tends to enfeeble them, even to the extent of rendering them liable to new diseases. I was assured that the introduction of tuberculosis amongst them is due to their clothes. This assertion is at least very much exaggerated. However it is certain that the exposure of their skin to the rays of the sun was extremely healthy. On the other hand, they do not know that wet clothing must be changed (they may have no second suit to put on), so they catch cold, and pneumonia or pleurisy sets in... I have also heard it stated that the second-hand, cast-off garments which traders sell them often infect them with syphilis (especially after circumcision), or other poisons.

177 themselves in the big rug (ngubo, mpisi-mpisi), which they all buy
291 to sleep under at night. The end of the process of evolution will
513 certainly be that they will adopt exactly the same dress as their European masters : a complete suit for the men, frocks, hats and boots for the women ; as soon as the majority of them obtain enough money to buy these, they will do so, and seeing how particular most of them are as regards their external appearance, it may be safely anticipated that Bantu beauties will submit to the tyranny of the London or Paris fashions as readily as our European élégantes!

291 It is easy to see the evolution of dress in the Bantu tribe by comparing the illustration of the South African woman (a Sutho, I. p. 46) representing the first stage, those of the Thonga women (I. p. 179 and 195) representing the second, Camilla, depicting a third stage (p. 92), and the ordinary European frock forming the fourth (1).

As for men, I unfortunately possess no picture of the primitive *mbaya*. But the following stages are illustrated by the two Zulu boys (p. 95) by the habitué of the Nkuna Court (I. p. 435), and by Tobane (I. p. 4) and Muhlaba (I. p. 426).

II. *Ornaments.*

301 The taste for decoration, for ornament, is innate with the Black. Ages ago, before he took to fixing a flower in his hair, he used to tatoo himself. We have already described (I. p. 178) the various patterns of *tattooing* of men and women, and have pointed

177 (1) I must however mention a piece of information which was given to me by two trustworthy authorities, according to which Thongas of the Northern clans possessed in
286 former times a kind of primitive *textile industry*. The Rev. Calvin Maphophe, who belongs to the Hlengwe group, asserted that Natives of the Tshobane clan, near the Sabie river, knew how to weave threads of cotton in order to form a kind of cloth called shombe, and another man of the Bilen plain told me that this cloth was worn by women at a time when men were satisfied with the mbayi. This industry has long since disappeared ; European cloth probably killed it as soon as it became procurable. The presence of subspontaneous plants of cotton in various parts of the country is in favour of this assertion. Where and when did these ancient Thongas obtain the precious textile plant and who taught them to use it ? This is an interesting historical point which I am afraid will never be elucidated.

285 In the environs of Lourenço Marques, in our sub-station of Masana, lived the family of Tumbene, famous for its ngula. One of the sons inherited the father's talent. He was an evangelist in our Mission, and, when he was but a lad, people came to him from far and wide, to have their old baskets or broken lihlelo repaired.

Although basket-making is confined to certain families who more or less monopolise the business, without, however, preventing any one from practising the art, the manufacture of *straw mats*, or matting (*likuku*, li-tin (Ro.), *rikuku* (Dj.), is very wide-spread. Many men know how to "tlhaba likuku" — "pierce a mat." For this the Ba-Ronga collect a quantity of solid rushes of at least 3 feet in length, (myriads of them grow in the plains), and pierce holes through them, all along the rush, at intervals of 3 inches, passing strings through the holes. A net-work of string, half an inch wide, is run down the two sides at the edges to prevent fraying. When new, these mats are of a beautiful golden yellow,
285 but the smoke in the huts soon turns them brown. Every Native
●513 possesses his own mat, on which he sleeps rolled up in his rug. Women possess two, an old one, used during menstruation, and a better one on which they usually sleep (I. p. 187).

285 The *string* (ngoti, yin-tin) used for these mats is made as follows : the leaves of the nala palm are picked when very young and tender (nshunya) : a knife is passed all along the folioles, in order to remove the green fleshy covering ; the parenchyma, composed of very light but tough fibres, (nkwampa), then remains. The workman takes two small bundles of these fibres and rolls them (yahliya) together with the palm of his hand along his thigh, twisting, intertwining, firmly uniting them, continually adding fresh fibres as he goes along : in this way he can make a string as long and as thick as he likes.

The following are the technical expressions employed for different kinds of basket-work.

Luka (plaiting) for ntjaba, shihundju, lihlelo, ndjewana, hwama nhalaba, tjala (drying floor), shitlanta (store house).

Tlhaba (piercing) for ngula and likuku.

Betsha (tying) for the small *brooms* also made of palm straws (mpsayelo, No. 5), and the reed walls (khumbi, dji-ma).

Bangela (making) for the *bunana*, a sort of hammock, made of plaited milala which is hung to the branches of the trees and sometimes in summer used for sleeping in, to escape the mosquitoes which swarm inside the huts. 285 513

Runga (sewing) for the boats (byatsho, dji-ma). The ancient Native boats built before the appearance of nails, hammers and saws, were made of pieces of wood securely tied together. Some of these antiquated craft are still to be seen on the Maputju river. 285 501 322

On the rivers up country, boats are frequently made of a large piece of curved bark, bent on both sides, which will hold two or three persons. I crossed the great Letaba in a boat of this description. Such boats are also used for storing water. Where mimale branches (or nervules) are procurable, they are tied together so as to form a raft called *shikhakhafu*. These are used on the Nkomati River, and on the lakes in Ronga territory. Big rafts made of trunks of trees fastened together, and called *magudhlwana*, were used in former times on the sea, when going to meet the White men, the Ba-Godji. (See later.) They are now no longer used and there is scarcely one to be found. In the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques the Natives now build their boats on the European model. The fishermen cut down forked branches, which serve as ribs, to which they nail planks. They are wonderfully clever at this work ; one man, Sam Matlombe, nicknamed the "King of the Bay," was particularly expert at it. [177]

The sewn boats of olden times might well be included under the heading of basket-ware. Those of to-day belong definitely to another branch of industry, and will afford us a natural point of transition from basket work to wooden articles.

III. *Wood-carving.*

It is the *nkuhlu*, mafureira tree, Trichilia emetica, as we have already seen, that is used by the Natives of these parts for their wood-carving. If the name of this tree is very hard to pronounce, its wood is, to an equal degree, soft and possesses the great 322 531

361 district, fifteen miles to the north, far enough from the town, where the ugly galvanised iron sheds have not yet supplanted the old typical hut. We see, in the bush, on the slope of the sandy dune, a little forest of mimosa, *minkanye*, *mikawakwa* (Strychnos). In its midst nestles a village. Thongas like to build amongst trees, to protect themselves against the terrible south winds which frequently blow across the plain, and perhaps also to shield themselves from the inquisitive eyes of people passing along the road. The little community prefers to live by
361 itself, as it is entirely self-sufficing. This small wood is also used
514 for other purposes. Thongas have not yet learned to build the kind of outhouse which is described in English by two letters (W. C.), and they "go outside" (humela handle) into the little copse. The air is not very pure when we cross it, so we hasten to reach the village. The accompanying plan (p. 312) represents a combination of features observed in many Thonga kraals; it is rare to find a "muti" as complete as this.

361 We first note the external circular fence *(lihlampfu)*. It is
712 made of branches, thorny or otherwise, one and a half to two feet
417 high, more or less rotten. It is not built as a protection against
351 enemies. In this tribe, villages are not fortified, and, in case of war, the only resource is flight. The fence protects against
361 spiritual enemies, witches, as we shall see later on. The path
351 leads us straight to the main entrance (16) the *mharana*, which is three or four feet wide. But the fence is open in some other places for narrower passages called *psiruba* (17), one for about every three huts; these smaller openings lead to the wood and are used only by the inhabitants to "humela handle." Passers by, as a rule, do not enter by such back gates. They are private. On either side of the large gate is often seen a growing tree and some poles, which clearly show the entrance. This is never closed during the day. On our right, a little court with some broken pots which denote a fire-place, is the *bandla* (21), the place where the men congregate. In front of us, at the other extremity of the circle, is the headman's hut (1) or rather the hut of his principal wife. On the way to it, we cross the *hubo* (22) the central square and pass round the *ranga*, (Ro.), *shibaya*

727 They have killed... So they are exposed to the mysterious and
775 deadly influence of the *nuru* and must consequently undergo a
828 medical treatment. What is the *nuru* ? *Nuru* is the spirit of the
783 slain which tries to take its revenge on the slayer. It haunts him
789 and may drive him into insanity : his eyes swell, protrude and
761 become inflamed. He will go out of his mind, be attacked by giddiness (ndzululwan) and the thirst for blood may lead him to fall upon members of his own family and to stab them with his assagay. To prevent such misfortunes, a special medication is required : the slayers must *lurulula tiyimpi ta bu*, take away the nuru of their sanguinary expedition. (Lurulula comes from nuru, plur. miluru (1).

In what does this treatment consist ? The slayers must remain for some days at the capital. They are taboo. They put on old clothes, eat with special spoons because their hands are

764 (1) We met with the notion of *nuru* for the first time à propos of the rite of
775 luma (p. 400) ; we shall find it again when dealing with hunting customs (Part IV). The nuru is to be feared not only in the case of slain enemies but in connexion
761 with any human corpse. As a proof, I may quote the following curious story which Spoon told me and of the truth of which he was fully convinced. A traveller died under the great fig-tree of Libombo (near Rikatla). He had climbed on to the tree and fallen on his own stick, which he had planted in the ground. He was not buried, as no one knew him. So his corpse fell into decomposition on the spot; his skull became white. Later on a bush fire burnt all the grass and the skull was
764 seen for years "saying mpha" (it was shining), the teeth "saying bva" (descriptive
775 adverb, same meaning). One day the boys of Libombo went to pick wild figs from the tree and again saw the skull. Spoon was one of them. The fire had just passed
755 by again. "We beat it with our sticks and amused ourselves by rolling it over like a
789 ball. We did not know it was a human skull... When we got home we began to be seized by the drunkenness of nuru, the disease of those who have killed a man. During
761 the night we were delirious (hanta-hanteka), our eyes swelled and were full of exudations (malanga), the four of us, Tsukela, Tlabin, Sibakuze and myself. Next morning my uncle went to the fig-tree and saw that we had killed a man there! The medicine-man who understands the treatment of nuru, Dudela, who had been a slayer in war, called us to his village. We stood in a line before him ; he poured a little of his powder into the hands of each one of us, took a little in his mouth, rubbed his forehead. Then he insulted us saying : "You will die! Who began beating that skull ?" Each of us denied having given the first blow. Then he said : "Take care ! Do not go there any more nor near that nkuhlu tree where another corpse has been burnt under the leaves ! Go away."

514 When a man has murdered another in a scuffle, he can replace this nuru medicine
789 by his own urine. He must drink a little of it and rub his forehead with it. The giddiness will pass away. If the murder has been committed from a distance, as with
775 a gun, the nuru is not so much to be feared, as the enemy was far away. A little of the medicine will be sufficient to treat the murderer. Spoon is ignorant of the compo-
626 sition of the nuru drug.
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of building will be stopped at once and the little community will find another place to which to move! Moreover the guilty woman will have to ask the principal wife for forgiveness. 2) A second great taboo is this : — No one must wash his body during the whole "buhlapfa", as this might cause the rain to fall and it would interfere with the building operations.

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5. The building of the huts begins immediately, each man making the circular wall first. When all the walls are ready,

Carrying a roof.

the *roofs are carried* from the old village to the new by all the men together. They lift each roof on to their shoulders, after having removed the old grass, and go out of the village, not by the main entrance, but by one of the back gates which has been widened for the purpose. A broad road has been prepared through the bush. They follow it, marching as fast as they can, and singing the obscene songs which are reserved for special occasions (see Part VI). In these they insult the women who accompany them, carrying the baskets, the mortars, the pestles. "The village is broken in pieces, so are the ordinary laws. The insults which are taboo are now allowed" (Mboza). This suspension of morality in speech is only allowed on the day when roofs are carried to the new village. Some days later, again, the women will take their revenge when they smear the floor of the huts ; then they too will sing their songs, insulting the men. But

765 anointed with the medicine. As regards adults, the operation of
783 *maganyo* is performed as follows ; the master of the mourning
516 passes his hand down from the knee to the toes. This rite[1] is evidently in connexion with the act of walking, which is thus purified, and with standing upright (yima), which means health and strength.

765 *Cutting the hair* is also a medicinal act amongst the Hlabis.
783 The physician takes a broken pot, pours into it water and a
302 purifying powder, washes the head of the deceased's wife with this preparation and cuts her hair with a razor. Everyone takes a little of the mixture and washes his own head, and they then shave each other. The hair is thrown away into the bush, not on the grave.

765 The Great Mourning is concluded by the *phunga*, the sprinkling,
783 corresponding to the Ronga *shuba*, which is performed exactly in the same way while the water is still boiling. The doctor sprinkles
177 a whole potful on the people ; then he pours fresh water into the
231 pot and sprinkles the doors, the back part of the kraals of the oxen and of the goats. —"How about the pigs ?" I asked Viguet. He laughed heartily! —"The pigs? They are nothing ! They have come from the White people They are so new to the country that lately the Pedis killed them outside the villages and the men only ate their flesh!" The pig has no part in the Bantu ritual!

V. *Sexual rites of purification.*

765 This is a most curious and mysterious subject and, to understand
783 it thoroughly, it is necessary to penetrate deeply into the Bantu mind and to forget our own conceptions of conjugal life. I hope
834 none of my readers will be shocked by ceremonies which are evidently performed with the greatest earnestness and are a real aspiration toward purity, purity as it is conceived by a tribe still plunged in the dim notions of collective morality.

1 [among the Northern clans --Analyst]

606 side. She does the same. Then you sit down according to
[316] men's fashion, crossing your legs. She also sits down bending
834 her legs, and putting one knee over the other as women do; then
576 both parties salute each other, you, as a man, clapping your hands against each other, holding them parallel, and the woman holding hers at right angles. 'Then you begin to talk..."

Suppose the son-in-law has had the good luck to reach the village of his wife's relatives without having met his mother-in-law, but sees her sitting somewhere near a hut. This is dreadful. She looks at him and at once covers her breasts with her cloth. He himself turns his eyes aside. I saw in Natal a curious photograph representing the scene. Amongst the Zulus the avoidance of the mother-in-law is perhaps more marked than in any other tribe; the man is shown in the picture hiding his face
606 with his shield. Should the mother-in-law be taking her meal
576 when her son-in-law arrives unexpectedly, she throws away the mouthful she was eating, and he does the same.— Suppose then that he has entered the village without seeing her; then the tinamu, his wife's sisters, come hastily to meet him. They take his sticks, joking with him meanwhile and put them in his mother-in-law's hut. This hut is his; he has the right of staying in it during his whole visit. They spread a mat on the ground, and bring him food. They chat with him. Then the mother-in-law comes in her turn, but she dares not enter the hut. She sits down outside and, without seeing him, salutes him, saying: "Good morning, son of so and so." She must not pronounce his name. He answers in the same style, and must also say: "Daughter of so and so." Should he call her by her name it would be a breach of etiquette and his wife would be angry and say: "How dare you? Did she not bring me forth? Rather say: Mother!" During the first years of his married life, the son-in-law never eats with his wife's mother.

607 This peculiar behaviour is the rule, not only towards the wife's mother, but also towards her sisters.

606 In the course of years there is a *lessening* of this terrible taboo.
431 In the Maputju clan, the son-in-law will provide an ox as soon as
576 possible and he will "communicate" (tlhangana) with her, partaking

462 Many other home duties may oblige the woman to leave the
511 fields at noon; her head still laden with her basket, she may
356 go to the swamps, near by, and dig out a store of black clay
317 (bompfi). She comes back, mixes the clay with the fresh dung which she has taken from the oxen kraal, and, spreading this mixture with her hands, smears the floor of the hut. This work is called *sindja* (Ro) or *kopola* (Dj.). Dust and vermin will at once disappear under this plaster of black earth, which will dry in a few hours time. Woe to the woman who has not put enough dung in this novel kind of cement! The floor will crack. The clay will shrivel and, when people walk on it, it will crumble into dust! The work will have to be done all over again two or three days later. But if the clay is of good quality, it will harden and last at least a week, the more so as neither wooden shoes nor nailed boots will spoil it.

462 Another woman will go with her primitive axe in search of
511 dead wood. She makes a bundle which she ties with grasses,
313 strengthening these grasses by entwining them with small
284 twigs (1). On returning to the village, she throws her burden on to the ground, before the door of her hut, with the exclamation: "Hu!"

462 Others go to their storehouses, the small huts on poles, where
511 mealies, monkey nuts in their husks, millet and sorghum are kept.
343 They take what they need from these stores (tshaha) by lifting up
252 the roof of the little hut, come back and empty the mealies into the
316 mortar, whilst a friend rubs off the grains from the ears of millet or shells the monkey nuts. Two or three women seize their pestles and begin to pound, in measured time, the bottom of their mortars: Gu-gu-gu-gu. Quite a long way off, on the other side of the copse, this pestle song can be heard, resembling the noise of the flails when corn is threshed in the barn. And the busy women stream with perspiration! This method of crushing the mealies in an erect position, by a vigorous up and down movement of the pestle in

284 (1) Men, when they fasten a bundle with a string, make a knot (ba fundju) whilst
313 women twist it with a little stick (sulela hi linhi); when a woman ties a knot, the two ends of the string will be at right angles to the string, whilst when a man makes it, the ends will be parallel with it. (Mboza).

516 the mortar, is a very healthy one and gives the Thonga women a straight and slender figure. In the tribes where the millet is mostly ground between stones, the women who do this work kneeling are shorter and stouter.

462 511 312 Before putting the mealies on the fire, the women go down to the village well, their round pitchers on their heads, to fetch the water they need. In the Ronga country these wells are simple holes dug in the sand, in the centre of the hollows (1). Wells are generally surrounded by thorny branches so as to prevent the cattle from coming to drink and fouling the water. It must be observed that it is not a spring which feeds the well ; it is the underground layer of water which has been reached, and which always maintains the same level except in times of drought.

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Phot. A. de Meuron.

Shilovane girls returning from the well.

462 511 372 252 The sun goes down on the horizon. The long shadows of the trees round the village lengthen on the square. Through the leaves, a few rays still reach the fireplaces and traverse the smoke which rises peacefully from the various kitchens. Between broken pots, or between the pieces of termitine clay which constitute the hearth on which the pots rest, the women place some pieces of dead wood ; when these burn away in the centre, they push them further under the pot where the flour is cooking (ba hlanganyeta ndjilo). Evening has come. The men have arrived. With a large spoon (nkombe) the lady of the house

(1) In the Transvaal, where there are rivers, water is taken from them, or from wells dug near the spruit into which the water leaks through the soil, being more or less filtered by this process.

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Ntshiba ukulu wa mpfufuti? — Ndjeko yikulu ya balungu.
The tail ntshiba? — The long tumblers of the Whites.

The ntshiba is the tallest tree on the Ronga hills, and casts a grateful shade. The long tumblers used by the Whites answer the same purpose; both conduce to the refreshment of the weary!

Tihuku ta ka Manyisa ta ka nhingena he psisuka?
— Bañwhanyana ba ka Manyisa ba ku kandja ba khisamile.
The fowls of Manyisa enter the fowl-house tails first?
— The Manyisa girls pound maize sitting down.

This is probably a sly hit at the girls of the Manyisa country who are reported to sit down when crushing maize; everywhere else this operation is performed standing up. They don't do things like other people. — Chickens also sometimes do things the wrong way! [516]

Riddles which refer to some *historical event* may be classed in a third category. The best known is that concerning Tembe and his sons. (See I, p. 23.) — Here is another:

Ndji fambi nhlangwa lokulu ndji heketa Mimaleyane?
— Ndji djimi nsimo leyikulu, ndji byala ndlowu yiñwe.
I walked right across a big plain to accompany Memaleyane?
— I hoed a large field and only planted a single pea.

This is doubtless the story of a rejected lover who thus wittily relates his discomfiture. He took all the trouble to accompany Mimaleyane a long way, right to her home, and received no reward for his gallantry. As well hoe a whole field and only plant one pea! A great deal of trouble for nothing!

A fourth category of riddles comprises those in which no real similarity of ideas would seem to exist, but merely a *similitude in sound*, a sort of graceful alliteration which is pleasing to the ear. The two following examples are very popular and very pretty from the point of view of euphony:

He kumi nkuhlu, u wupfa, ka ku sala huhlu yiñwe?
— He kumi mulungu, a wondja-wondja, ka ku sala ndjepfu yiñwe.
We found a *nkuhlu* which ripens, which ripens; only one nut is left?
— We found a White man who gets thinner, thinner: nothing left but a hair of his beard.

The comparison of ideas is not difficult to perceive, but what conclusion or moral can the author mean to convey? None!

533 Of course the colonists, who only knew "Kitchen Kafir," could not understand the complaint of the Nkuna boy!

539 The *song of the crab* is more tragic! (Tune No. 10). In a deep minor key a man cries for help! He went to hunt the big crabs which dwell in the mud of the mangrove forest, or on the sea-shore. He followed one ; the animal hastily hid itself in its hole. The imprudent hunter tried to catch it there ; he put his arm into the hole and attempted to pull the crab out. But the crustacean seized his finger in its claws so firmly that the man could not get free. He remained tightly held down, fixed to the ground. The tide is rising; soon it will cover him! And he cries :

> Yo-o ! Lomo tjukeni ku na mani ? — Hala yi khomi litiho !
> Alas ! - On the shore is there some one ? — The crab has caught me by the finger !

This is almost dramatic poetry and the scene is worthy of a true literary description.

533 The *erotic style* is cultivated by boys and girls on different
832 occasions though it must be said that love, as we understand it,
539 plays but little part in Thonga life. Boys in love generally express their feelings to the accompaniment of the unicord harp (see Chap. III) in the evening in the neighbourhood of the village of their beloved one ; I have never been able to catch the words of these songs, which are said to be sometimes very long, and are sung in a very loud voice ; they are not precisely chaste, according to one of our Native ministers, who considered that the use of the unicord harp ought to be forbidden to Christian boys! But here is a *love song* probably composed by a girl who was not allowed to marry the boy of her choice :

> To-morrow, to-morrow, my mother, I will start,
> To-morrow, father, I will start,
> I will start with an axe ;
> With this axe I will cut the stump,
> The stump on which my friend has hurt his leg,
> My friend whose belt of tails hangs from his waist,
> The one for whom I draw my legs out of the way. (1)

784 (1) Perhaps an allusion to the fact that it is taboo to pass over any one's outstretched
516 legs. She draws in her legs to give him the means of passing and coming to sit beside her.

Nubile girls, during their "tiwheti", must approach the *oxen kraal* and look at them. The cattle might suffer, be attacked
284 by a bad cough (mukhulwane), get thin! This taboo is instituted
825 to protect the oxen, not the human inhabitants of the village, as D.
562 Kidd says is the case amongst the Zulus. (Part IV. Ch. I. E.)
262 When women have passed the time of child-bearing, most of
[886] the taboos cease, and they can eat monkeys and porcupine if they wish!

3) The first year of married life.

581 I shall not return to the subject of marriage rites, which have
562 been fully explained in the preceding chapter. Let me say that, though a Thonga woman cannot imagine life without marriage (ku kandja bukati), she does not enter on the new state with any enthusiasm. Her parents have warned her that she will be illtreated, accused of witchcraft and adultery, etc. Her sisters bewail her fate on her wedding day in song. The fact that she has been paid for, though it does not constitute an actual sale, puts her in an inferior position (See Part II).

562 During the first year, she has no *ndangu*, viz. no fire-place of
264 her own. She cooks for her mother-in-law. During the three
585 first weeks the husband eats with her and with the girl who accompanied her to her new home. Afterwards, he goes back to eat with the men. In some places it would seem that the husband eats with her the whole year, until she has her own pot (hlembeto).

4) Husband and wife.

593 What are the relations between husband and wife after the
371 honey-moon? Of course they vary very much according to
317 the character of both. As a rule however, the married people have very little intimacy with each other; the man remains with his companions on the "bandla," the village square where they meet, and only occasionally comes into the "ndangu," the reed enclosure of the fire-place, which is the true domain of the

462 places the food (phamela) on plates of the size of small basins or
511 dishes (mbenga). We have seen how she distributes it amongst
264 the inhabitants of the village. When all have finished eating, the women wash the plates, put aside the pots which contain the food left for the next morning, and tidy up the yards.

517 Whatever we may say, the day has been a well-filled one for the women. They are very rarely seen playing in the day time. We shall see how they recuperate themselves in the evening.

II. *Men's occupations.*

462 As for the men, their life is far from being as active as that
517 of the women. They have not, like their diligent wives, the regular continuous work of preparing the food, not to mention the care of the children. The duties which fall on them, and which they are willing to perform, only require of them isolated efforts from time to time.

462 As regards *agricultural work*, it is generally believed that
241 men leave this entirely to the women. This is exaggerated. Amongst the Rongas each man possesses his own field which he himself tills, and this is an old custom, a special term even being applied to the field thus tilled: it is called *mpashu*. He may sow seeds in it, but he does not weed it, leaving his wife to do this troublesome work for him and also to reap it. He makes only one exception in the case of the sorghum, of which he consents to go and cut the ears. But he helps his wife in other ways, for ins-
462 tance in the storing of the food; he builds the little huts used as
251 storehouses, prepares the *tjala*, viz., the mat stretched on four poles on which ground nuts are dried in the field, digs holes for the *buhiri*, the shelf at the back of the hut where the basket containing the seeds is placed. His wife does not think him a lazy fellow at
462 all. When the harvest is finished, she takes the smaller cobs of
273 mealies (makunhula), those which will not be kept, or the grains of millet and sorghum which are found on the threshing floor after the threshing, and with them she prepares a special beer to

462 thank (tlangela) her husband for his kind help! This is her
273 method of notifying him that all the grain has been harvested, as, whatever the man's share of the work may have been, the mealies belong to him.

462 The main work of the man is the *building and repairing of the*
356 *huts*. This is truly an arduous job, but it is not of yearly recur-
342 rence. Every third or fourth year they are obliged to re-thatch the roof. The huts are built and repaired during the winter, from May to September.

A second domain, which is exclusively man's, is the *care of the cattle*; the boys milk the cows, construct and repair the kraal: the little boys herd the goats, and the young men the oxen, as has already been mentioned.

462 It is also the men who *make all the utensils and tools* used in the
411 village, pots and other crockery excepted; mortars, pestles,
294 handles for axes or hoes (mimphinyi), wooden platters, carved or forged articles, all this work pertains to them. They must also make the *ntehe* for their wives, or sisters, after the birth of the babies. This is probably the explanation of the curious fact noticed amongst Native Christians, namely that they are much more clever at needlework than their wives. Big fellows are often seen forsaking the hoe to work with the needle, and there are fathers who make their own clothing as well as the dresses for their wives and children!

462 *Hunting and fishing* are, of course, also men's work... or pastime.
224 For some of them hunting is an actual trade, at least such was the case in former times, before the White Governments imposed strict regulations and levied heavy licences on that sport. We shall study, in Part IV, the curious customs relating to these two favourite occupations of the Natives.

574 A great part of their time is devoted by the men to *paying*
517 *visits*. They are very fond of calling on each other, and sometimes
484 they go great distances to see relatives or friends. They do not travel to pay visits only, but they frequently journey to claim payment of their debts (milandju). To regain the possession of a miserable head of cattle they willingly lose whole weeks! And what endless discussions in the *hubo*, when an unfortunate visitor

l: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

825 that the road is not "clean" (Viguet). The flesh of this bird is
777 used in the preparation of the charms carried by travellers. There
484 are also two mammals which give the same warning : the duyker
782 antelope (mhunti) and the polecat (mangobo). Should a boy going to Johannesburg meet with any of these three animals, he will go to his kokwana (grandfather) and ask him for help ; the old man will then take a mouthful of beer or water and project it towards the traveller (to make "phaa") with the following prayer addressed to the ancestor-gods : "You, so and so, look to this child who wants to travel! Bless him in his journey! May the Spirit of the bush (Shikwembo sha nhoba) remain asleep."

517 The *discussion of affairs* (ku khanela timhaka) on the square of
461 the village also fills many an hour in a man's life.

On the whole, men have but little to do. We can fairly estimate at three months the time required for the work which they have to do for the village and for the community. The remaining months are devoted to pastimes and pleasure (1).

III. *Games of adults.*

000 Having already described boys' and girls' games (p. 66 and 172), I now proceed to those of the adults, as forming an important part of the Life of the Village.

462 (1) Much has been said and written about the division of village work between men and women in the Bantu kraal. I shall try to show in the Practical Conclusions, No. V that civilisation is bound to produce great changes in this region. But, as already pointed out, it is certain that to the Natives themselves their system appears perfectly natural and that the women do not at all complain of their fate. The following charming story which is told by a Moravian missionary, The Rev. Th. Bachmann, who lived for a long time amongst the Wa-Nika, between Lake Tanganyika and Nyassa gives fresh proof of this assertion :

000 One day, as the rain was pouring down, I saw Walusangano returning from his garden with his wife, Leya. The wife was walking in front with a big bundle of wood on her head. On the wood was a basket containing maize, cucumbers and beans, as well as the hoe. On her back Leya was carrying her youngest child. The other children followed and the father brought up the rear-guard, carrying only an open umbrella. We were greatly shocked at this sight, and I thought it my duty to intervene on behalf of the women. On Sunday night, at public worship, I spoke of what I had seen in the most expressive terms possible. But my speech did not make the impression I expected. The men looked very much embarrassed ; the women indignant.

The following week, at sunset, I was under my veranda, watching the lightning and

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make the man drunk at once. It is called *shinguandja*, when pure, and is not liked, whilst they say that when it has gone through water, it has an agreeable taste. It makes the smokers cough terribly, but they thoroughly enjoy this exercise.[1] Moreover it excites an abundant flow of saliva which is the chief requisite for their favourite game. They take a hollow grass, called *shenga*, and begin the fight by blowing their saliva through it on to the ground. The simplest form of the game consists in squirting as

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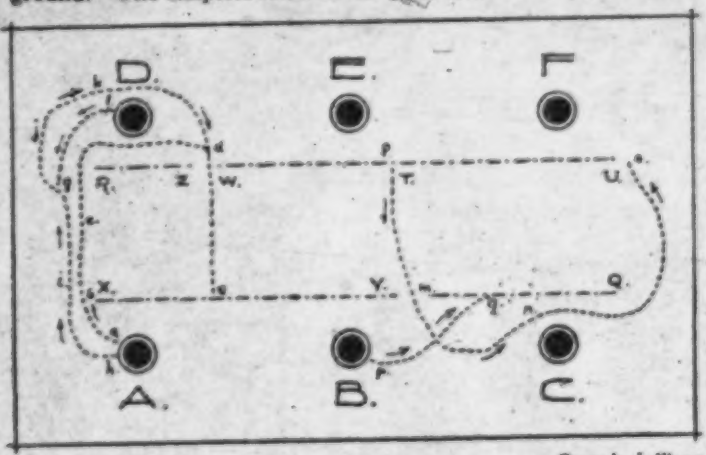

Drawn by J. Weare.

Illustration of the saliva contest of hemp-smokers.

long streams of saliva as possible. He who squirts the furthest wins. But it is sometimes much more complicated. In the accompanying diagram the reader can follow the wonderful combinations of this game, called *ku tjhuma* or *hlazelana*. There are two sides, each with its pipe. Three men, A. B. C. oppose three others, D. E. F. First of all, each side protects itself by making a saliva fence, line X. Q. for the first side, R. U. for the second. Unhappily for D. E. F. the saliva dries up on the point Z. W. and so their fence is broken. A takes his advantage. He begins to squirt out his saliva on the line *a*, *b*, *c*, *d*..., passes through the opening Z. W., and, having come back victoriously to *e*, he has destroyed all the fortifications R. Z. Suppose D. wants to

1 [i.e., hemp smoking -- Analyst]

524 but one stone, a poor *tshonga*, he says : "I have only caught women!"

524 Fighting and hunting are great sports for Natives ; hence the
127 popularity of the tshuba game. It has become such a passion
461 with the men that they neglect all their duties to indulge in it, and it has been necessary, in certain Christian villages, to prohibit the tshuba altogether, as the whole male population was abandoning its work for the game!

461 The *evening games* are happily not so dangerous for the moral
538 well-being of the village. Women who have worked the whole
517 day now have their innings. This is the *tha* par excellence, the
826 most refined amusement, the story telling. It takes place at eventide. It is taboo to *tha* in the middle of the day. Those who should transgress the law would become bald (!), and persons affected with loss of hair are commonly and jocosely accused of having told tales at midday. So, when the moon shines, when all the work of the day is ended, all the inhabitants assemble at one of the firesides to amuse themselves. They rarely gather together on the hubo for that purpose, as the square is reserved
524 for the discussion of matters of importance or for dances. The diversions at first consist of a parlour game, which is also known amongst Europeans, *guessing the charcoal piece (mhumhana)*. Two sides are formed opposite each other, women on one side, men on the other. One of the women, holding a piece of charcoal, puts it into the hands of one of the other partners, saying : "Dana, u shura ñwanaaaa'nga," (eat and be satisfied, my child). Then both present their closed hands to the other side saying : "Mhumha!" The man opposite must guess in which hand the charcoal is hidden. He flips one of the four hands with his finger saying : "Give me! Here it is!" If he has guessed rightly, he has won, and then proceeds in his turn to hide the charcoal in the hand of one of his own side. When they have had enough of this game and wish to finish it in the proper manner, *they pull their fingers* and make them crack *(ku ba tindjwati)*. Each of them pulls a finger in turn. The first who is unable to produce a sound is expelled from his side. Then those who have been beaten make faces, as ugly or funny as they can, at their victors ; these must

644 the men. However he was allowed to visit it Behind these huts were two passages between poles carefully arranged, one leading to the pig-sties, another to the bush. The photographer was told that this was intended to secure an exit for the queens in case of war... I suppose it had a more common and practical use in every day life! They are the *pitruba* of the queens (p. 311). In the royal kraal these back entrances are taboo.

517 It is on the square that the men of the neighbourhood love
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Phot. D' J. de Montroll

Back gate with hen-house.

to meet in the morning, when they come to pay their respects to the chief; they sit down in groups and discuss the news of the day; this is called, as we have seen, "ku ya handla," "to go to the men's square." Everyone is welcome there, not only members of the reigning family, but also those of the clans conquered by the present chiefs, (as the Honwana, Mahlangwane etc., in
273 Nondwane. Page 357). There is no lack of beer, made from
517 maize or millet, when crops have been good, the women
644 frequently bringing brimming jars to the capital; the daily visits of the men are not therefore altogether disinterested.

533 all their charm. Some are very primitive, like No. 33, the
538 murmuring of a little boy who has been swallowed together with his oxen by an ogre called Nyandzumulandengela ; imprisoned in the stomach of the monster, he entreats him to let him out! Another, more elaborate, is the lament of the mother whose child has been stolen by the Baboon, and who follows the animal weeping and asking it to give the little one back to her. (Tune No. 35.) Tune No. 36 belongs to another ogre tale, concerning the suitors of pretty girls who are really only hyenas transformed into men. Some one knows their true nature, and forces them to appear as they really are, by chanting their song :

Manyange, the leg belongs to me !

the song in which they dispute with each other about the leg of the girl they are wooing! The most complicated of these songs is that in the tale of Zili (No. 34) ; it is a duet, and was sung to me by two Mpfumo girls so distinctly that I could easily take it down. It is very interesting as an illustration of the laws of harmony amongst the Thongas.

C. FOLK-TALES.

538 Folk-tales are by far the most interesting and valuable part of the Thonga Folklore, and before citing any new examples of those curious and charming stories, I shall try to show their importance in the Life of the Tribe, their literary, ethnographic and philosophic value.

I. *The place occupied by Folk-tales in the Life of the Tribe.*

538 In Vol. I. p. 350, we have seen the inhabitants of the village,
517 after their evening meal, gathered round the fireplace, devoting themselves to innocent amusements ; first, guessing the piece of charcoal, pulling their fingers, asking each other riddles, — those

who are beaten in the contest having to pay a forfeit which they 538
redeem by telling a tale. So the tale is the conclusion of the 517
game, the object of the whole entertainment. I have often seen exactly the same order followed in a European company playing parlour games.

This interesting scene may be witnessed from one end of the tribe to the other : "This is their evening prayer" said one of our converts to me, a woman who was also a clever story-teller, i. e. as we Christians have our worship every night before going to sleep, so the heathen gladden their hearts by their tales. Everywhere story-telling (ku tha psihitana) is considered the most refined and most pleasing of the games. The tales are called *shihetana* or *nsingo* (mu-mi) in Ronga, *ntyeketo* (mu-mi) or *nkaringana* (mu-mi) in the Northern clans.

Story-tellers are of all ages and of both sexes. I have heard 538
little girls of ten amusing their play-mates with tales. Those I have collected were told by young girls of eighteen (Nkulunkulu and Ñwanawatilo), young men of twenty, (Khwezu, Maganyele, Simeon Makwakwa), and men of thirty and forty (Spoon, Jim Tandane) ; but the majority come from adult women, the most skillful being Shigiyane-Camilla, Sofia Midomingo, Martha and Lois. Some only know one tale, and repeat it on every occasion, like Jim Tandane, who used to narrate the story of an ogre, Ñwatlakulalambimbi, with such gusto that he was surnamed after his hero! But others can recite six, ten or twenty tales. Shigiyane, for instance, could entertain the company for many nights with her tales, some of which were very long. (See for instance "The little hated one," 24 pages, "Mubia, an ogre tale," 19 pages, in my *Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*). This woman's memory was wonderful, and the graceful manner in which she told her stories was no less astonishing. Nkulukulu had heard *her* tale ("The girl and the whale") only once in the Maputju country, and she had memorised it immediately with the little songs which enliven it.

Strange to say, there is a curious precaution to be observed in 538
connection with story-telling : it is taboo to devote oneself to 461
this occupation at noon ; it must remain an evening entertainment ; 826
if this rule is not followed, the transgressor will become bald!

643 It is worthy of notice that no sacrifice is offered on this day, neither is any religious ceremony whatsoever performed. The coronation appears to be a purely military affair, a sort of oath of loyalty taken by the people to their chief and by the chief to his people.

C. THE OFFICIAL MARRIAGE OF THE CHIEF.

643 584 The chief being duly installed, the next thing to do is to provide him with his officially recognised wife, *the wife of the country*, she who is to become the mother of the future king. This wife must be bought with the pennies of the people : a characteristic custom demonstrating forcibly to how great an extent the royal family is at once the property and the pride of the nation.

643 584 571 One fine day, says Tobane, when the counsellors go to visit the new chief, they meet with a very cold reception : "Who do you suppose is going to feed you ? Who will cook the meat ? Who is going to brew the beer ?" They return quite crestfallen, but having perfectly understood the allusion. The chief wishes to remind them that the time has arrived for them to find him a wife. This roundabout way of coming to the point is much in vogue with the Blacks. The matter is at first discussed in secret by the brothers and sisters of the deceased ruler, a family council which holds its conclave "in the hut," i. e. privately. After due consultation, a messenger is dispatched to the principal men of the country, to the heads of the younger branches of the royal family (to Khobo, Pulane, Kupane, if Mpfumo be the clan in question) with the following message : "Has not the moment arrived to set up the chief, to cause him to grow, to increase properly ? For the country is sustained by its cock! (1)" The great ones discuss the affair, each in his own village, and a

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(1) *Dji yima ni nkuku*, a proverbial expression meaning : as the poultry-yard cannot flourish without a cock, so must care be taken of the chief of the country, in order that he may be able to perpetuate the race and secure the succession.

Shinangana had been trained, would he have been a genius in that 803
kind of mathematics where the power of reasoning is needed? 163
It is impossible to say, but it may be noticed that all his achievements were, after all, but masterpieces of memory, and that reasoning had very little to do with them.

The conclusion of our observations is then as follows : in the Bantu mind the literary sense is infinitely more developed than the mathematical. This is probably the case in all uncivilised or half civilised races, but amongst the South Africans it is strikingly apparent.

F. THE LITERARY SENSE OF THE THONGAS.

Let us look more closely into this literary faculty which the 521
Thonga grammar has already revealed to us. It not only consists 537
in the possession of a well constructed language, denoting powers of classification, combination, co-ordination and graphic description, but also shows itself in the poetic expression of their feelings, in a remarkable power of comparison, and in a rich folklore.

The *facility of expression*, amongst the Thongas, is very great. Any one, man or woman, is at any time ready to speak, and speaks correctly with the greatest ease. In this respect, the race is perhaps more advanced than many civilised peoples. There is nothing like the timidity you so often meet with amongst the peasants or workmen of our own lands, who, though they have had a full course of primary education, would be totally unable to deliver an address. A Native can always stand up and say what he thinks on any given question. Even if he has not thought much about it, he can speak! Finding words is no difficulty to him. Knowledge will perhaps be lacking, but fluency of speech never! This ease of elocution has evidently been acquired through a long experience in the discussion of public affairs on the *hubo*, where, as we saw (I, p. 436), every one has the right of expressing his opinion. This habit has developed literary ability,

and the Bantus, as a whole, deserve the compliment once paid to the pupils of the Lovedale Institute by the Rev. J. Henderson, when he said to them : "Your race has certainly received the gift of eloquence!" (1) 521 537

As regards the subject matter of their speeches, it does not always show much reflection, or many new ideas. Nor is there much order or sequence in their discourses. This would require proportion, measure, forethought, and all these virtues belong rather to the arithmetical sense which is so sadly deficient in the Bantu mind. What makes a Bantu address especially interesting is rather the *power of comparison* exhibited by Bantu speakers. They excel in discovering spiritual truths in material facts, or rather in perceiving the relations between the spiritual and the external world. This is one of the characteristics of the poetical faculty, and these so-called savages certainly have some sense of poetry in their minds. Most of the antithetic riddles, which will be quoted shortly, are instances of this power of comparison. When developed by proper training, this faculty will certainly become productive of valuable work. 195 537

So far, the training of Natives has been mostly in religious subjects, and I beg to give my readers some examples of their mode of comparison which I noted while listening to the preaching of evangelists, examples which bear the strong impress of the Bantu character. Sometimes the imagination is so subtle that the result is almost incoherent. They are satisfied even if the point which the two things compared have in common, that which grammarians call the "tertium comparationis," is almost infinitesimal.

(1) This power of elocution is very useful in Mission work, when evangelising the heathen villages all over Thongaland, the converts being always willing to make a speech or deliver an exhortation. They generally do this with great animation, and although the thinking is often poor, and does not show much sequence, they at least are never at a loss for words. I only once witnessed such a sad occurence! One of my pupils had prepared a sermon and was delivering it, when suddenly he stopped and could not proceed. He had lost the thread. Then a good natured smile appeared on his features and all his companions laughed heartily. This was the first time they had seen one of their countrymen in this predicament! The student had prepared a plan for his address, and had forgotten it! In former times plans were entirely absent and consequently there were no threads to lose!

823 regarding its confines and the shore on the other side. Some
791 magicians claim to have gone and stayed for some time down in the depths : to have "crossed the sea" is for them a kind of diploma, which gives them the right of exercising their art. (See Chapter III.)

823 The *tide* (byaela) is considered to be caused by a whale (nkomu) which alternately swallows and vomits the sea-water : this is the common idea. Some Natives, however, connect it with the moon, having noticed that the tide is higher at full moon and at the wane.

The sea must be feared : it is jealous. "When some one is taken away by the great wave, do not shout! Do not exclaim : 'He is lost!', else you will never see him again. On the contrary, if you say : 'All right, let him go', then the returning wave will bring him back." These are the assertions of Spoon. And old Makhani expressed his approval by nodding his head!

372 "It is the same with *fire*," Spoon also remarked. There was
784 a terrible bush fire in Rikatla on the 18th of September 1908. As always happens at the end of winter, the bush was absolutely dry. A leper woman, tilling her fields, wished to cook a little manioc. The fire leapt to the weeds which she had gathered and from these to the bush. Two huts were burnt. "It is their own fault," said Spoon, "when the bush fire comes you must put it out quietly. If you make any noise, if you shout, it comes straight at you. That is what happened. In the first village people fought calmly and succeeded in saving their huts. At Jeck's village, they cried out. The fire leapt on to a hut, the small hut of the son. The mother cried : 'Yo! yo! Where shall I put my child?' She went on crying out until the hut was burnt to the ground. So the fire leapt on to the big hut and burnt it. She has only herself to blame!" (1)

823 The origin of *stones* is absolutely unknown. Pikinini, a Nkuna boy, who was endowed with an extraordinary imagination, once drew my attention to the stratification of a large dolomite boulder on which different concentric layers were visible, and said to me :

[521] (1) Silence is always recommended to prevent misfortune : in the case of war (I, p. 470) women at home must keep silent ; likewise when the husband is hunting hippopotami (p. 69), when a child is seized with convulsions owing to the power of *tilo* (heaven). See also my remarks on the kunga rite. (I. p. 124).

881 the water and must remain in it a long time till the sun appears.
271 The shepherds prevent them from coming out. This is also said to help the wound to heal. (Valdo).

Thirst. It is absolutely forbidden to drink a drop of water during the whole initiation, and this taboo is said to be very painful. Boys sometimes succeed, during their hunting trips, in enticing their shepherds in one direction and in the meantime some of them escape and go to the river to drink. They will be severely punished if caught!

523 *Unsavoury food.* The law is that women, the mothers of the
881 circumcised, must bring plenty of porridge, twice as much as is required for the boys. Should one of them fail to do this she will be punished at a given time. They deposit their pots at some distance, so that they cannot catch any glimpse of the Ngoma, and shout : "Ha tsoo! We are burning." This means : "Our heads are sore from having carried our pots such a long way." Shepherds run to meet them and answer with a great many jokes in rather dubious taste : " We know what is burning with you, etc." Is not this the rule of the Ngoma ? The shepherds bring back with them the empty pots of the day before which the women take back to their homes. Should one of them have provided too little food, her pot will be filled with long grass, and when she goes home with her comrades, they will make fun of her. If she does not learn to do better, the " Mother of the Ngoma " will organise a punitive expedition to her village, and kill goats and fowls, and thus make her obey.

881 All the food is placed on the reed tables, and must be eaten by the boys without any seasoning. Should the indulgent mothers have brought some ground nut sauce, it will be confiscated and eaten by the men. When they hear the order : "Tshai goma," the candidates must rush to the tables, kneel down, and, at the word "Thari," seize the food with both hands and swallow it as quickly as possible. If they delay, they are beaten by the shepherds who superintend the meal. When one batch of boys has finished, they must rush to another table where other boys are still struggling with their heap of porridge and help them to finish their portions. Owing to this emulation, the meal does not last

551 come to this conclusion after a careful investigation. Here are
618 the only facts that I have discovered which may be said to
522 be connected with totemic customs.

The first is that the shibongo sometimes gives an opportunity for *more or less witty jokes*. There is, near Rikatla, a clan called *Shibindji*. Shibindji means liver. When a man of this group meets with others who eat liver, they say to him : "Come along, we are going to run this skewer through you and roast you!" Another clan is the *Ntcheko*; this word means a tumbler or a small calabash with an elongated handle used for drinking purposes (p. 50). At the bukanye time, when everyone is getting these calabashes ready for the feast, they say : "Alas! poor creatures that we are! People are going to carry us from one end of the country to the other, to dip us into their pots and drink out of us!.." And so on. This is not totemism. I have however met with four more facts which must be mentioned, and which are very interesting.

618 1) In the neighbourhood of Pietersburg a Thonga who belongs
551 to the Rikotcho clan, but whose shibongo is *Ñwangwenya*, the son
177 of the crocodile, is said to "dance the crocodile" (tshina ngwenya). These Thonga words are the expression used by the Pedis to indicate their totemic customs, (ho bina kwena), not that there is any special dance or song performed in honour of the sacred animal ; this may have been the case formerly, but is not so now.

2) The laudatory name of the Nkuna clan is also said to be a *ntshupu*, though it does not imply any taboo. This word, which is unknown in other parts of Thongaland, corresponds to the Pedi *muthupu*, which indicates totemic animals. The Nkuna men like to be saluted by these words : "Nkuna! Homu (ox)! Nyari
618 (buffalo)!" There are a number of Pedi tribes who "dance to the
551 buffalo." Mankhelu assured me that, as the Nkunas have the
177 same totem as these tribes, they have a common origin, and have come from the same place in Zululand. This assertion is so evidently erroneous that he could not maintain it. The old man had not the slightest idea of historical accuracy: he had only unconsciously drawn the conclusion of a common origin from a similarity of totem. Moreover, in his set of divinatory bones, he used to represent his own tribe by a small piece of ox bone, just in

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539 power belongs to me." Run, go and tell Mpapalati : "The power is mine." Run, go and tell Mulondjo : "The power is mine!" (1)

Such is the laudatory song of Mawewe, one of the great men at the Nkuna court. Undoubtedly this is one of the best examples of Thonga poetry and a characteristic piece of primitive literature. In the savage tribe the mbongi is the prototype of the poet laureate of civilised Courts. But there is yet another functionary to be considered, whose dutie sare still more strange than those of the herald.

IV. *The Public Vituperator.*

(Shitale sha tiko.)

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522 This is a kind of Court Jester who has the right of casting the vilest insults, the most disgraceful accusations in the teeth of
578 any and all the Natives of the country. He never abuses strangers, but as long as he confines his vituperations to his own countrymen, he enjoys perfect immunity.

Even the chief is not safe from his attacks ; he dares to say anything! "Just see him arriving in your village," said Tobane to me, in his picturesque language. "He begins shouting out the most frightful things. He accuses you of incest, of taking your own sisters as wives! Even if he sees you talking to your 'great sister-in-law,' whom your wife's brother married with your oxen, whom you treat with the greatest respect, he will not hesitate to pass remarks which will make you blush with shame! He will go and take the food you are cooking, will even snatch from the chief's hands the meat he is eating... So, when you see him coming to your village, you hasten to meet him and take him a present to try and avoid having to listen to his horrible insults. Sometimes the *shitale* of the country behaves

(1) Quotation of the words of Muhlaba himself, who sent messengers to all his uncles, to all the petty chiefs under him, to announce officially that he had assumed the chieftainship.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

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himself quite nicely, stays in his own village and attends the national assemblies as quietly as any other person, but, once he begins to rattle off his vituperations, beware! Nothing will stop him! He respects nothing, human or divine!" The Court Jester is of undoubted Thonga origin, as old as the tribe itself, according to Tobane. The position is official and even hereditary. At Zihlahla it was Ñwachapane who held the extraordinary post of Public Vituperator. In Nondwane it was Mutjunkwa of the Shibindji family. He insulted the chief with the word : "Musathanyoko." There was also a woman who dared to do the same to Maphunga.

Phot. P. Berthoud.
Molwele, the dwarf.

It is difficult to understand the raison d'être of this strange institution. Is the *shitale* a public censor, to whom the tribe entrusts the privilege of calling attention to facts which others would not dare to bring to light ? Is there some analogy between this "fool" of an African Court and Triboulet ? (1) I cannot say.

(1) In this connection I reproduce from a photograph, taken at Shiluvane in 1885, the portrait of a remarkable personage who was not a Thonga but a Pedi, a subject of the chief Maaghe. Although this extraordinary dwarf did not act officially as the Vituperator, he was widely famed for his witty sayings and his incomparable mimicry. The Native Commissioner took him to Pretoria and Johannesburg some years ago as a curiosity, and it seems that he was exhibited for money ! The name of this little man is Molwele, a veritable ethnographic phenomenon, although he is not exactly the Public Vituperator of the country.

857 Learning, as they do, the native names of all these creatures and their habits, they certainly acquire a great amount of knowledge during these years.

5) PLAYING.

857 533 Sometimes the weather is bad ; it rains or it is dreadfully hot. Then the goatherd suffers, and his elder brother comfortably sitting in the hut trills this song :

> Far away, there where he is, he weeps, the little boy.
> The keeper of the goats and of the calves !

But the bad days are rare and the boys play more than they cry!

524 The *games* of the Thongas are very numerous and are played either during the day or in the evening, especially when the moon shines. I shall here only consider the boys' games, and speak of the girls' later on.

Ngulube yi da mimphobo. (The pig eats mealie cobs). One child plays the part of the pig ; crawling along, covered with a mortar and a piece of cloth, he goes from one hut to another followed by a troup of his friends, who clap their hands and sing the foregoing words. People give food to the pig. It is received by its friends. When they have visited all the yards, they assemble on the central place of the village and eat the food together. Sometimes the pig suddenly turns round and attacks his followers, who flee in terror.

The game of *nsema.* This is a disk of woven grass made by boys. They pick up sides. The nsema is set rolling by one side and the opponents must run towards it and pierce it with their sticks before it falls to the ground. It is not allowable to touch it when it has fallen (yi holile). This game goes on till the disk is quite spoilt (yi bolile). Then the two sides rush upon each other and exchange a sound cudgelling, after which they all go and bathe in the nearest pool without any ill-feeling.

There is another game played with this disk, the game of the *ndlopfa-ndlopfana* (that is to say " the little elephant"). A boy

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

524 makes a nsema, ties it to a string made of the fibres of certain palm-trees, and hides. His comrades try to pierce his grass disk. But he watches. He has the right to chase them and to beat them with his stick. If the opponent succeeds in piercing the disk, in pulling it and tearing it from the string, ndlopfa-ndlopfana is vanquished.

The game of *homane* is very similar to English hockey. The fruit of a palm tree, which is round and very hard, is used as a ball, and hit with a stick into the opposite camp. If the *homane* falls between the two camps, the players rush upon it and, with their sticks, try to send it into their opponents' quarters.

In another boys' game, the *tlhuba holwane*, which is played mostly by moonlight, they also take two sides. A stick is planted in the earth by one side and a piece of charcoal placed upon it. One of the opponents comes, hopping like a frog, takes out the stick and, still hopping, goes and plants it in his own ground. If he reaches the goal without falling, he has won. An opponent will take his turn, pull out (tlhuba) the stick and bring it back to his partners. Evidently the Ronga children find this amusing!

The game of the *beetle* (shifufunu) is played as follows : one child is the beetle, and, as a distinguishing mark, he puts a handkerchief round his head. A hole is dug in the sand; he enters it and nestles in it as do some insects, until he is nearly covered with earth. He remains there perfectly still whilst his comrades sing to him the following song :

Beetle of mine...
I will marry thee...
For the price of an ox...
} Say "yes" to your brother.

There is another game of the same kind : *the honey pitcher is stirred* (mbita ya bulombe ya reka-reka). The children face each other in two rows and clasp hands. One of them lays himself on their arms, and all swing him, singing the same song.

The boys also play the game of *the man with the huge back who could not get out* (shikulukukwana sha ku ka buhumo). They form a circle, one standing in the centre. He hunches his back

524 and rushes forward, head foremost, trying to break the circle and to get out either between their legs or otherwise. If he does not succeed they give him this long and comical name : shikulu-kukwana sha ku ka buhumo.

533 Quite a number of little melodies are sung by children to certain animals. When we came back in the evening to the plain of Rikatla with our ox-drawn waggon, all the goatherds used to meet us and to accompany us a long stretch of the road, shouting in honour of the oxen : " Gweymanaô, Gweymanaô (1) "! Girls joined in the demonstration, pointing out the strange machine to the babies carried on their shoulders (2).

524 *Nkwama wa ku.* (Your purse)... When they eat green mealies, one of the older goatherds gives to another some of the leaves covering the cob and tells him to go and throw them away. He refuses to do so. Then the elder one collects all these leaves, rolls them up in a ball and throws them to the boy who refused, saying to him : " Your purse ". The boy answers : " It is not mine! " They all run away. He picks up the ball and tries to throw it to another, saying the same thing. Should he miss him, they will mock him and say : " You are not a man, you are but a little boy! "

Shifufunu sha paripari. This is a kind of big Tenebrionida beetle which beats the ground with its abdomen (Psammodes Bertoloni). Groups of children, boys together or girls together, play two by two. One of the two lies down facing the ground and the other sits on his back, looking forwards, to guard the head of the one who is prone. He sings while beating the other's back : " Shifufunu sha paripari ndjuluka hi yetlele!... Beetle turn up that we may lie down! " At once all the children who were sitting throw themselves down and those who were lying down sit on their backs, and so on...

To develop their courage, boys have another more dangerous game; this is *the war on the wasps* (mipfi). In their country there

(1) See for the tunes of these and other songs *Les Chants et les Contes des Ba-Ronga* pages 34 to 64, and also Vol. II. Part V.-Ch. III.

(2) It is customary to show to babies extraordinary and fearful sights, a white man passing, for instance, in order to " open their minds. "

In their country there
524 are big nasty yellow-brown hornets (a kind of Belonogaster)
36 which build more or less circular nests, sometimes attaining to the size of a man's head. On a certain day the boys decide to make war on these enemies. They make shields with the leaves of the *nala* palm tree which they plait together.

524 They cut down branches, which they wave to protect themselves, and one of them goes and strikes a heavy blow on the wasps' nest! The irritated insects rush out on their assailants and sting them. The boys try to kill the wasps with their sticks or to crush them when they light on them. Sometimes, overcome by the pain, they run away; sometimes, resisting to the last, they kill and exterminate their winged enemies.

Besides this there are also *big battles between the shepherds* of the different flocks. The shepherds amuse themselves by taking one another's cattle. Those who are the strongest bring the stolen herd triumphantly back to the neighbourhood of their village, but they would never let it enter the kraal. The vanquished call to their help their elder brothers, who come to recover their property and, if they can, give the thieves a sound thrashing!

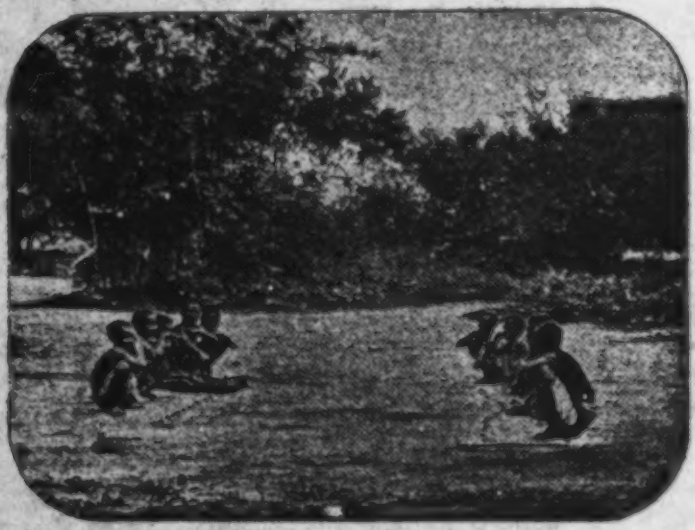
578 Insults and fights are frequent between the clans. The boys
262 of Mpfumu call out to those of Matjolo: "Forest gadders! Eaters
291 of snails and boas, of lizards and tortoises" (all of which are questionable food!) (In Ronga: Balala! Badi ba tihumba ni tinhlaru ni makhwahle ni tinfutchu). Those of Matjolo answer them: "Crowd of women that you are, clad in cotton material!" (Babasati! Matchimbamphela!), in reference to the fact that the inhabitants of Mpfumu, living near the town, some time ago replaced the belt of skins worn by the savages by a piece of cotton tied to the waist and hanging down to the knee (ladula).

855 The custom of frightening children with imaginary beasts is
857 wide spread amongst the Thongas. The bogey man is called
538 *Shingomu-Ngomu* or else *Shikunkununu*, and by this very expressive
761 word they designate a huge and mighty being who walks, swaying his big body from right to left, with a sound like *ngomu-ngomu*. The ogre is *Shitukulumukumba*, a word coming originally from the Zulus, which corresponds to the Ronga *Ñwambilutimhokora*, that is to say: "the one who has scales on the heart." He eats

855 538 human beings. These imaginary creatures play a large part in the native tales, especially the one who " has scales on the heart. " He feeds on vermin, lice and big white beetle larvae, which are his almonds (1).

855 When a child cries and cannot be comforted, someone goes and hides behind the hut and slaps his neck saying; "U-u-u," while

[524]



Boys trying to play Billiards
at Mazulo's near Antioka Station.

those remaining with the lamenting little one say to him: " Be quiet, listen! Shikunkumunu is coming! "

857 There are also the *timbelembele*, a kind of terrible wasp which only exists in the imagination of children. When a boy does not dare to follow his companions up a tree which they have climbed, they shout to him: " Make haste! Here are the timbelembele coming to bite you! " And he is so frightened that he at once finds strength to climb.

(1) We shall given complete ogre tale in Part V.

524 Thonga boys are so fond of games that they even try to imitate
177 those of the Europeans. In the accompanying illustration, they are seen sitting in two rows throwing some projectiles along the ground. I wondered what game this was, and was informed that these boys, having seen Portuguese officials playing billiards at the camp, had attempted to do the same, and this was the result!

C. THE AGE OF PUBERTY

I. *Circumcision rites.*

1) Spread and origin of circumcision amongst the Thongas.

957 As he grows up, the Thonga boy leaves the flock of goats and is entrusted with the care of the big cattle, oxen and cows,
881 when his father owns any. He becomes very proud, and tyran-
882 nises over his younger brothers; he calls himself their "hosi,"
866 their chief, and sends them to work for him; in Maputju, big boys went so far as to scorn water brought from the pool by women, and only to use water specially fetched by small boys. If they grow so important in their own eyes, the reason is that special rites are performed on them during this period, rites which are calculated to give them great self-confidence. Amongst these rites, some have a direct relation with the sexual life and some represent only the entrance upon manhood. Let us begin with a study of circumcision, then we will take the other puberty rites and the habit of *gangisa*.

881 In a great many Bantu tribes, the age of puberty is marked
304 by ceremonies of initiation, often accompanied by circumcision. There is little doubt that circumcision was practised throughout the Thonga tribes in former times. It is still current with those Thongas who emigrated into the Transvaal, and this is not a custom borrowed from the Pedi clans, which have all preserved circumcision. Though the Thongas often receive initiation in Pedi schools, in the Spelonken, they possess their own schools

888 sent to bring her food. When they are hungry, they stop on the way and eat it themselves. On their return they say: 'We have indeed given it to her.' In the morning they put a stick in her hand and help her to get out of her hut, so that she can warm herself in the sun.

"Then when the Ronga woman is quite old she begins to see no more and to hear no more. She falls into second childhood. All she does is to complain and to say, crying, that she is ill treated. And this is the end!"

The girl who wrote this essay was but emerging from childhood, and has consequently enlarged more especially upon the first phase of the life. The life of a woman is not very different from that of a man at that stage. Differences however come in later on, and we shall have to add some important facts relating to the fate of women before marriage, during the conjugal life, and in widowhood.

A. BEFORE MARRIAGE

I. *The Girls' games.*

857 As we have seen from the essay of the schoolgirl, Ronga girls 334 imitate the doings of their mothers, their cooking, their gathering [868] of fuel, etc., just as the boys imitate the fighting and hunting of the 864 men. They also play with *dolls*, nursing them as they see the women nursing babies. These dolls are called *vule*. The origin of the game is as follows. A little girl asks her mother who is carrying a younger child on her shoulders: Mother, where did you find your baby? — Oh! I found it in the bush (ntlhaben). — Please bring me one also, mother. — All right!— Next day the mother plucks a sala in the bush, removes all the stones inside it, lets it dry and fixes it to the end of a stick. She pierces the upper part of the sphere, passes bits of string through the holes to imitate hair, smears them with ochre, ties a little clothing round

857 the stick and gives it to the girl! Or if the mother says : "I found
~~534~~ the baby in the banana grove," the father will cut a banana stem,
864 take the heart of the bulb and beat it so as to separate the fibres, which will then represent the hair of the baby ; the girl will then play with it for a time.

Girls, like boys, have also special games.

524 First the *ntshengu -ntshengu*. A big girl takes the part of the mother and all the little ones hide behind her. She stretches out her arms to protect them against another girl, who is the thief and tries to take the children away. Notwithstanding the mother's efforts, all are taken one by one, and the stealing is done whilst they sing :

> Alack ! Mother ! Protect us, protect us !

The mother answers :

> All my children are taken, all will soon be taken,
> All will soon be taken, there, behind me.
>
> (Yo ! Mamana ! ntshengu-ntshengu ! ba hela hi shiruba .

The capture being effected, all the children sit down in a row and cross their legs. To their right and left they dig small holes which represent wells or pots. The mother passes. She stretches out their legs and they allow her do this. Then she pretends to drink water from their pitchers and says: "My child, where did you find this water ?" The child says : "Oh! I have drawn it over there, at the spring, under the banana trees, in the cool shade." Then comes the girl who plays the part of the thief. She tries to stretch out their legs. But the children refuse ; they stiffen themselves. She tastes their water and enquires where they brought it from. "I drew it in a nasty hole full of frogs, mud and dirt." They add all the different remarks they can think of.

524 As the boys sing to the transport oxen when a wagon comes
136 along the road, so the girls address a kind of *incantation to a big*
533 *grey lizard* called *galagala*, which can turn its head blue at will. The lizard is found lying on a branch, warming itself in the rays

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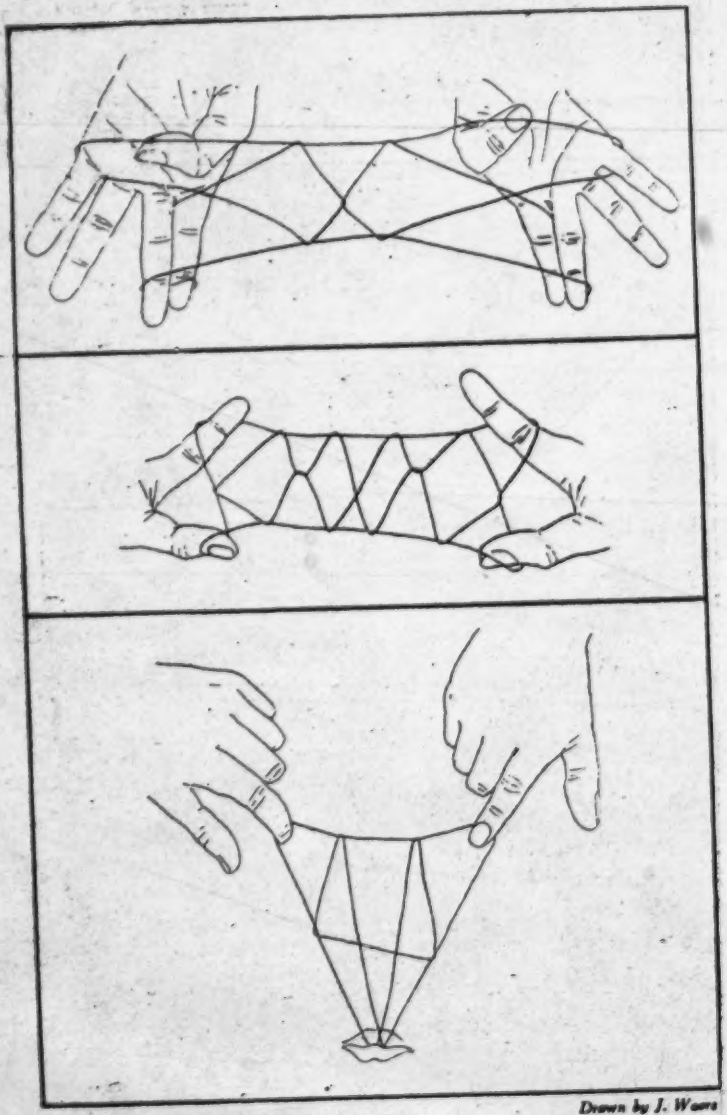

Drawn by J. Weers

Various forms of buhlolo (string game.)

524 of the sun. One girl approaches it, and claps her hands under its nose, singing in a monotonous tone :

> Gala-gala, hana-hana shloko !
> Big lizard, lift up, lift up your head !

It seems that the lizard is so fascinated by the song that he stretches his neck and swings his head to and fro during the whole time that the girl claps her hands.

524 136 226 To the *crabs*, which are very numerous in the slime on the sea-shore, and have only one claw, coloured green, violet or enamel blue, they sing :

> Ba ka mphembemuiwe, tlakula silawuto !
> Come along, you animals with only one claw ! Lift it up and bring it down again.

The little girls who go hunting crabs as a condiment for their food assured me that, on hearing this song, the crustaceans do come out of their holes, and that the harvest is then a large one.

When an *owl*, mistaking the time, comes out of her hiding place at noon, she is received with applause, and they sing to her :

> Shikotana, gsulela fole !
> Owl ! flap your wings ! You will find tobacco !

524 Another girls' game, which is wide-spread, and in which the young Thongas acquire great proficiency is called : *ku tha buhlolo*. They take a string tied at both ends so as to form a large ring, and make all kinds of complicated figures by twisting it with their fingers and even with their lips. I have made a drawing of some of them. Girls compete together and try to surpass each other in inventing new figures. They teach each other this *buhlolo*.

Another old game, which is found under various forms in a great number of countries, is the *mathakisana*, knuckle bones. Girls gather stones of the nkanye fruit (tinfula), dig a hole, and put them into it. One of them takes a kind of ball (shigungu), perhaps a small sala fruit or any other fruit. She throws it in the air and, in the meantime, takes out of the hole four or five stones and puts them back, leaving only one outside. This stone is then

524 put aside. She must be very clever and very quick in removing and replacing all the stones except one, because the ball will soon fall down and she must catch it in her hands. Should she take only one stone out of the hole, she has failed (a tjongolile) ; should she leave more than one stone outside of it, she has again failed (a hoshile). Should the ball fall to the ground, it is taboo. (psa yila)! She has lost her turn. If the ball falls on her body, it is not so bad. Her companions will say to her : "Gangasheta." Then she must throw the ball and catch it two or three times on the upper part of her hand, then again in her hand, and if she succeeds in this, she is allowed to go on. When she has been able to take all the stones from the hole without making any mistake, she has beaten her co-players (a ba mphyinshile).

525 Natives do not play for stakes as a rule, but, if two of them challenge each other, each claiming to be the best at the game, they may arrange that the one who loses must give a fowl to the winner.

The ordinary word for *play* is *ku tlanga*. But there is another word *ku tha*, which is used for the more refined games, the buhlolo, the mathakusana, the tshuba, the reciting of tales, riddles or proverbs (psitekatekisa) and guessing games (mhumhana). We shall describe these four last games when treating of the life of the village and literary life.

II. *Nubility customs.*

1) The Khomba rite.

881 When a girl comes of age, no special ceremony is performed amongst the Ba-Ronga. She is said, just like the boy, to have "drunk the nkanye" (page 95). She confesses to her mother that her menses *(tinwheti, viz. months)* have appeared for the first time, and the mother simply answers : "Hi ku kula"— "this means growth."

276
324
517

make the man drunk at once. It is called *shingwandja*, when pure, and is not liked, whilst they say that when it has gone through water, it has an agreeable taste. It makes the smokers cough terribly, but they thoroughly enjoy this exercise.[1] Moreover it excites an abundant flow of saliva which is the chief requisite for their favourite game. They take a hollow grass, called *shenga*, and begin the fight by blowing their saliva through it on to the ground. The simplest form of the game consists in squirting as

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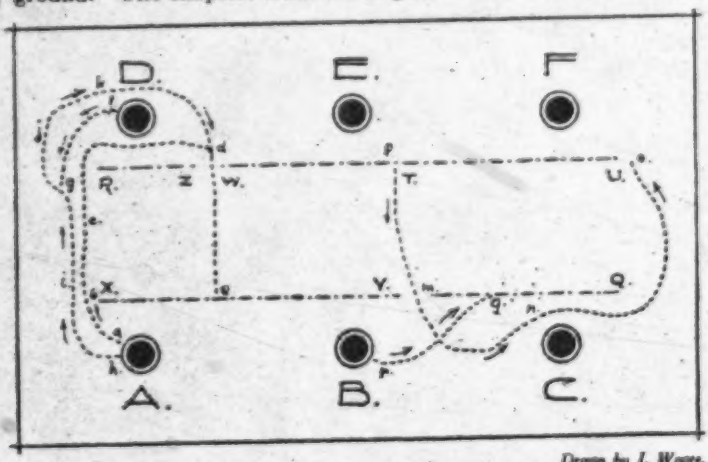


Drawn by J. Weare.

Illustration of the saliva contest of hemp-smokers.

long streams of saliva as possible. He who squirts the furthest wins. But it is sometimes much more complicated. In the accompanying diagram the reader can follow the wonderful combinations of this game, called *ku tjhuma* or *hlazelana*. There are two sides, each with its pipe. Three men, A. B. C. oppose three others, D. E. F. First of all, each side protects itself by making a saliva fence, line X. Q. for the first side, R. U. for the second. Unhappily for D. E. F. the saliva dries up on the point Z. W. and so their fence is broken. A takes his advantage. He begins to squirt out his saliva on the line *a*, *b*, *c*, *d*..., passes through the opening Z. W., and, having come back victoriously to *e*, he has destroyed all the fortifications R. Z. Suppose D. wants to

1 [i.e., hemp smoking -- Analyst]

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

524 protect himself. He tries to close the access to his position by drawing the line *f, g*. But, arrived at *g*, he comes to the end of his saliva (a helela), and A. who started at *h*, having arrived at *i*, turns round the point *g*, where his enemy has stopped miserably, and, going on, *j, k*, reaches the opening *d* and triumphantly ends his campaign in *e*!

But E. of the opposite camp has noticed a gate in the barrier X. Q. The saliva has dried there. He quickly carries his blow-pipe across the battle field, squirting all the time, and passes through the opening Y. He draws the line *l, m, n, o* and so destroys the part Q. Y. of the fortification X. Q. Should B. be quick enough, he might prevent him accomplishing his plan by drawing the line *p. q*... And so on! Young men, even men of ripe age, take an immense delight in these saliva battles. But the saliva must be blackish... It must be *ntjutju* saliva, viz., saliva produced by hemp, and not the ordinary white saliva, called *matjafula*. Should one of the players try to supplement the blackish by the white, he would be disqualified... His enemy would seize him by the forehead, and force him to lift his head and stop his attack. Should he go on, however, the other would say : "What ? You come to me with matjafula!" This may lead to quarrels, even to blows... The hemp-pipe falls down and it all ends in cordial laughter.

276 861 789 This hemp-smoking custom becomes a passion with many young men. To cure them their parents break the pipe, take a little of the soot which is found inside, and mix it with their food without their being aware of it. When this has been done three times, it is said to fill them with disgust for hemp... Similia similibus curantur... We shall often meet with this medical principle in the Thonga superstitions.

524 171 The most interesting game played by men, a game which fascinates them and which is certainly more refined than hemp-smoking, is the *tshuba*. It is at the same time one of the most widespread games of mankind. Mr. Stewart Culin says, in the Report of the Smithsonian Institute for 1893 and 1894, that it is played under the same name by the American Negroes, and that it is but a variety of the *mancala*, the national game of Africa,

524/171 which is found in many other countries, Ceylon, Indo-China, Bombay, Java, Jerusalem, Liberia, Abyssinia, Cairo, Gabon, Angola and amongst the Central African tribes. From the ethnographic point of view and for purposes of comparison it is, therefore, very interesting to note its rules all over the world. 524 I tried (and I think successfully), to discover those of the Thongas, which at first seemed to me incomprehensible. The accompany-

Phot. A. Bore

Men playing tshuba naer Rikatla.

ing illustration will help to explain them. The apparatus required is most simple. Let us imagine it played in its most elementary form, when two men only are engaged in it. Each of them digs two rows of four little holes, behind which he squats. They face each other. So there will be sixteen holes, eight belonging to *A* and eight to *B*. In each hole they put two stones, either real stones or fruit stones. Those of the kanye fruit are mostly used, but, by preference, Natives play with the pretty shining grey seeds of a shrub found near the sea, which resemble the marbles used by European boys.

No. I shows two players ready to commence, with the sixteen

524 holes filled. *A* must always follow the course 4, 3, 2, 1, 5, 6, 7, 8 and *B* 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 7, 6, 5.

II. *B* starts. He takes the two stones out of hole 6 and puts one in 5, one in 1.

III. He goes on taking the stones out of one hole and putting them, always one at a time, into the following holes, till his last stone reaches an empty hole So he chooses three which are in 1 and puts them, one in 2, one in 3, one in 4.

IV. He chooses the three which are in hole 4 and distributes them in 8, 7, 6. The last one having reached an empty hole, he has succeeded ; he wins and takes the stones of *A* in holes 6 and 2, which are opposite the hole he has reached. This taking is called *ku tha*. Moreover he has the right to *kill* (dlaya) another hole by taking its contents. He chooses hole 1. I represent the regular taking (winning) by a black dot, and the supplementary killing by a cross in the hole. Having *beaten* (ku ba, such is the technical word employed when a player has succeeded in taking his enemy's stones), he stops and *A* starts.

V. A starts from hole 5, takes the two stones, and puts one in 6, one in 7.

VI. He takes the three stones in 7 and distributes them in 8, 4 & 3.

VII. He takes the three stones of 3 and puts them in 2, 1, 5 : "A bile!"—"He has beaten." He wins the three stones of hole 5 of *B*, opposite hole 5 which he has reached. Moreover he takes and "kills" the three which are in hole 8.

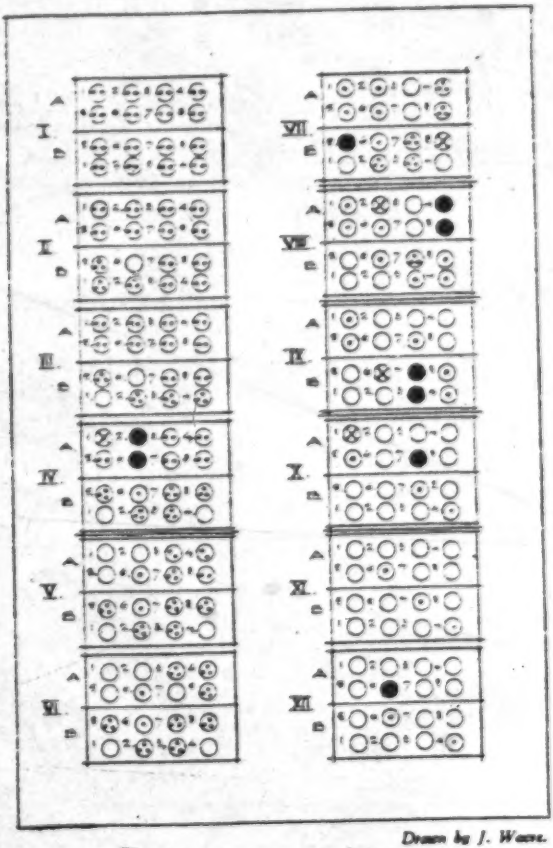
VIII. *B* takes his turn. He starts from 2 and reaches with his last stone 8 : "A bile" : 8 was empty. So he picks up the three stones in his enemy's hole 8 and the three in hole 4. He kills moreover the single stone in 2.

IX. *A* who has now only three stones left, one in 1, one in 5 and one in 6, starts from 6, puts his single stone in 7 and picks up those of holes 7 and 3 of *B*. He moreover "kills" 6.

X. *B* moves his stone from 8 to 7 ; he picks up 7 and in addition he "kills" 1!

524 XI. *A* starts with his last stone from 5 to 6. But there is nothing opposite to him, nothing to pick up, nothing to kill!

XII. *B* moves from 7 to 6. He picks up the last stone of *A*



Drawn by J. Weave.

The tshuba game and its laws.

who is thus beaten (a mphile). He has vanquished him! (A mu mphyinshile!)

The rules are clear enough and this game does not seem to be very difficult. It is, however, most complicated, and I do not

wonder that men sometimes spend half the day, bending down over the ground, talking with animation and sometimes fighting when they think that one of them has transgressed the rules. 524

When the tshuba has only four holes in a row, it is called *shimunana* (from *mune*, four) and is not very exciting. But it can also be played with 8, 10, 16, or even 22 holes, and then it becomes very complicated. Six holes will not do (a psi thi), because successful combinations are impossible. I have also learned the tshuba of 16 holes. Let us suppose our two players to be *A* & *B*; we number their 16 holes from left to right, the outer and inner rows bearing the same numbers. *A* will start from hole 12 outer row, and will follow the prescribed course all round his holes, going from left to right, until he comes back successfully to the same hole. He will shout: "tsheun!", imitating the noise of a gun, and pick up his enemy's stone in holes 12 of the outer and inner row, and "kill" in *B*'s outer row holes 15 & 13. *B* will start from hole 14 of the inner row and reach 12 of the same row. He picks up the stones in the two holes 12 of *A* and "kills" hole 3 in the outer row, etc. etc... Hours will sometimes elapse before one player has beaten the other.

A single stone in a hole is called *tshonga*. Two stones are called *mbiri*. If the following holes are empty, and if these stones cannot lead the players further, *mbiri* takes the name of *mpalati*. It is bad luck! (Compare No. IX, on the drawing.) When you arrive with your last stone opposite two full holes, and consequently pick up 4, 5, 6 stones at a time, it is luck! It is *malu*. When only one hole is occupied and you win only one or two stones, it is *muhaha*. You have beaten in a "muhaha". (U bile muhahen.) When you do not reach the place you aimed at, not having had enough stones, you are said "to sleep on the road." When you start, full of courage, hoping to succeed, you say; "I go to kill meat" (ndji ya dlaya nyama), and this expression shows that the game represents two hunting parties. But it evidently also represents a fight, as do most of the games; hence the cries of triumph which accompany it. When one of the players happens to empty two holes with three stones in each, he says: "The fight is hot! (sha lwa). I have captured warriors!" If they contain

524 but one stone, a poor *tshonga*, he says : "I have only caught women!"

524 Fighting and hunting are great sports for Natives ; hence the
177 popularity of the tshuba game. It has become such a passion
461 with the men that they neglect all their duties to indulge in it, and it has been necessary, in certain Christian villages, to prohibit the tshuba altogether, as the whole male population was abandoning its work for the game!

461 The *evening games* are happily not so dangerous for the moral
538 well-being of the village. Women who have worked the whole
517 day now have their innings. This is the *tha* par excellence, the
826 most refined amusement, the story telling. It takes place at eventide. It is taboo to *tha* in the middle of the day. Those who should transgress the law would become bald (!), and persons affected with loss of hair are commonly and jocosely accused of having told tales at midday. So, when the moon shines, when all the work of the day is ended, all the inhabitants assemble at one of the firesides to amuse themselves. They rarely gather together on the hubo for that purpose, as the square is reserved
524 for the discussion of matters of importance or for dances. The diversions at first consist of a parlour game, which is also known amongst Europeans, *guessing the charcoal piece (mhumhana)*. Two sides are formed opposite each other, women on one side, men on the other. One of the women, holding a piece of charcoal, puts it into the hands of one of the other partners, saying : "Dana, u shura ñwanaaaa'nga," (eat and be satisfied, my child). Then both present their closed hands to the other side saying : "Mhumha!" The man opposite must guess in which hand the charcoal is hidden. He flips one of the four hands with his finger saying : "Give me! Here it is!" If he has guessed rightly, he has won, and then proceeds in his turn to hide the charcoal in the hand of one of his own side. When they have had enough of this game and wish to finish it in the proper manner, *they pull their fingers* and make them crack *(ku ba tindjwati)*. Each of them pulls a finger in turn. The first who is unable to produce a sound is expelled from his side. Then those who have been beaten make faces, as ugly or funny as they can, at their victors ; these must

524 keep serious and not laugh. Should they be unable to keep their countenances, their victory is lost!

538 But these games are only a preliminary. The farther we go, the nearer we get to true literature! Now they ask each other *riddles (psitekatekisa)*, simple and antiphonic. We shall study this form of folklore later on... If the second side is unable to give the right answer to the riddle, it asks permission to propose one in its turn and so the intellectual combat goes on until they have exhausted the series of riddles they know. Those who have had the worst of the duel must pay the forfeit by *telling tales (tha psihetana)*. A woman may be present who is a renowned story-teller and she holds the whole company under the charm of her tale for half an hour, perhaps longer... Children shudder when they hear the terrible story of the bogey man! They burst into laughter when she describes the funny tricks of the Hare, or of the frog *Shinana*. They heartily approve when the younger brother, despised by his elders, becomes their saviour and teaches them a good lesson... Thonga folk-lore is very rich; it is one of the most interesting manifestations of the psychic life of the tribe. We shall study it with the attention it deserves in Part V of this work. Here it is sufficient to show what a great and happy part it plays in the life of the village.

E. RULES OF POLITENESS AND HOSPITALITY.

576 The village life is dominated by the *respect for hierarchy*. I do
769 not think this term is exaggerated. Etymologically hierarchy
593 conveys not only a moral but a religious idea. This religious feeling is not absent in the fear felt by a younger brother for his elder, because the elder member of the family is its priest, the only possible intermediary between the family and its gods (See Part VI). So no wonder if, in their relations with each other, though these are extremely free and natural, Natives follow strict rules of etiquette.

643 a bad chief. He did not even allow "bandla," viz, the gathering of men in the capital, because he was full of jealousy (mona). If he had not been placed in the chieftainship and supported by the White Government, he might have been deposed. Cases in which a chief has been deprived of his right and replaced by another man are not wanting (1). I have even heard of a chief in the Shiridja clan who was put to death. Deposal is generally proclaimed by a council of the royal family.

To reign over a Bantu clan requires much tact, ability and patience. The chief must be a father to his people and not a tyrant (2).

2) The system of government.

643 595 In order to keep in touch with his subjects, a chief generally places his wives in the various provinces of his little kingdom

(1) The annals of the Nkuna tribe provide an instance of the deposal not only of a certain chief but of the elder branch of the royal family, owing to an act which hurt the human feelings of the clan. We have already met with the name of Shithlelana, son of Nkuna, who lived at least 300 years ago. His principal wife was Ñwahubyana. In his old age he was very ill and the woman, fearing lest he should die in her hut, drove him away; he was obliged to take refuge in the hut of another of his wives, Ñwantimba, mother of Rinono, and died there. Then the headmen assembled and said: "As Ñwahubyana has driven away her husband from her hut, she has also driven away the chieftainship from her son. He shall not reign. Rinono shall reign because he is the son of the woman who took care of the sick chief." This story, in which we see the sacred law of succession transgressed for a moral reason, is most interesting because it provides a good illustration of the conception of the clan regarding chieftainship, and proves that, even in ancient times, feelings of humanity could have more weight with the tribe than an article of the royal code.

643 524 (2) Two interesting Thonga riddles illustrate this disposition to criticise chiefs. The first riddle enigmatically describes the characteristics of an unworthy chief; it comes from the banks of the Limpopo:

Bupsa ga shisule. — Hosi leyi i ni mona...
Some cyclamen flour. — This chief is full of hatred...

The shisule — a word which I translate by cyclamen — is a plant which grows on the ant-hills, bearing large tubercles; these can be cooked and ground into flour; but it is only good in appearance. the taste is unpleasant and nauseating. This chief is bad! He is like that flour! Corruptio optimi pessima!

Here is another riddle which holds the chiefs up to ridicule rather wittily:

Tinsiandji tibiri ti rendjeleka tchuka. — Tihosi tibiri ti hleba nandja.
Two mice chase one another round an ant-hill (They will never meet)
— Two chiefs malign a subject. (They also will never meet, i. e. agree.)

Each wants to have the last word and will therefore depreciate the arguments of his opponent. He will seek to disprove the statements of the other chief, making fresh ones which the latter will seek to refute in his turn!

faculty are very rare in primitive Native life, and we ought not 802
to be astonished that this faculty has remained undeveloped. To pretend however that it is altogether wanting would be erroneous. I can give many proofs that it exists, and sometimes manifests itself in an interesting way.

First, in the game called *nyengeli-nyengeli mune*. The players 524
place a number of fruit stones on the ground two by two. One 802
turns his back, and the other player, pointing to the first group of two, asks : "Nyengeli nyengeli mune?" i.e : "How many stones are there?" The one whose back is turned replies : "Take one away and place it elsewhere," specifying where. The same thing is done with the second, and so on. Certain groups have eventually more stones than others. When a group is entirely scattered, the guesser says : "Makua ntsikitane," meaning "There are no more." The questioner then passes rapidly from group to group, over and over again, and the guesser must state how many stones each group contains. The game requires a considerable effort of memory.

Second proof : Shinangana! Shinangana is a man living in 805
Spelonken, near Elim Station, a raw Native who is ignorant of the art of reading and writing, and who never went to school, but who has created a *chronology* embracing the past 70 years. He knows what has happened in each year since 1859, and has arrived unaided at the conception of an era. His era starts from the emigration of the Thonga tribes into the Transvaal,when they fled before Manukosi, on the return of the Ngoni chief from the Mosapa or Gaza country (I. p. 28). The Nkunas, Mavundjas, Tsungus and other Hlabi clans were obliged at that time to take refuge in Spelonken, and this is the beginning of the era. Most of the years after that great event have their special designation. I had the good fortune to have an interview with Shinangana in 1905 and was able to note the details of his chronology, as he dictated them to me. After having enumerated all these years, he concluded in a triumphant tone with the exclamation : "All these years since the return of Manukosi make five hundred, and three hundred, and four months!" This is a most curious piece of Native historiography, I think quite unique in the whole Thonga tribe.

538 Here the sense is at once apparent.

6) Mbuti ya shihaha a yi belekeli ntlhambin.
A good goat does not bring forth in the midst of the flock.

I heard this proverb in one of our Synods. One of the Native members wished to exhort his co-delegates to abstain from giving their advice, and voting precipitately on a certain subject : let us rather go outside, and discuss amongst ourselves, and when we have come to an understanding we will come back and vote as one man!

This last example shows how such proverbs are used... They are sometimes quoted in a low voice, so as to be heard only by those whom it is desired to warn. It is an instance of the *phamba* just referred to.

Compare also the proverb quoted (p. 21) in connection with tilling the fields :

Do not look at the weeds and think : Now! I have tilled a large field!

Do not be satisfied by mere external appearances! Weeds may be plentiful, yet the field be small!

Hundreds of such sayings might be collected (1), though I do not think they are so extensively used as, for instance, in the Sutho tribe, where M. Jacottet told me he collected a thousand of them. The Thongas replace them by riddles, which seem to be more developed amongst this people than in the neighbouring tribes.

II. *Riddles.*

524 I have already described (I. p. 350) the part riddles play in the games of the Thonga village. The riddle, *mhumhana*, consists first in divining where the piece of charcoal is hidden, and in that

671 538 (1) We might also regard as proverbs, and include under this heading, the figurative terminology used to express the principles of right and justice, which are, as it were, a primitive codification of the common law, and to which I have previously referred — as for instance the curious sentence : A cow which has calved is not used for payin a debt. (I. p. 217).

case it is merely a matter of guess work. But it may have a more literary character, when it consists in a more or less witty question requiring a given reply. The answer is here contained in one word ; so these riddles may be called *riddles in one sentence*. 524

Leshi u nga khandjiyiki nsinya ya shone, n'shini? — Hi ndjulu.
What is the thing up the trunk of which one cannot climb? It is the juncus.
Leshi nhaka nenge wa shone u nga rwali hi ku bindja u ya tlhasa shilungwin, n'shini? — Hi nsuna.
What is the animal whose leg is so heavy that you could not carry it to Lourenço Marques? — The mosquito (which is so very light!)
Leshi shi nga heta hubo ya ka Machakene, shi ndjundja, shi kwala hubyen? — Hi nhwala!
What is it that is all over the square at Machakene, that creeps and crawls about on it? It is the louse!

This last is full of malice! The village of Machakene, formerly in the immediate vicinity of Lourenço Marques, where the fashionable European quarter is now situated, was the place where men arriving from the interior to find work at the seaport usually passed the night. They appear to have been somewhat annoyed with unwelcome attentions! Hence the riddle.

Here is a rather more difficult one :

Tiban leshi, nambi mamana wa ñwana a ku mu randja ngopfu, loko a tlhasa kaya a nga hluleka ka ku mu yamukela? — Hi nyimba.
Guess what it is that a mother loves dearly but which could not run to meet her on her return home? — It is the unborn babe in her womb.

Another riddle of the same kind is this :

Tiba leshi, nambi shi shongile, afaka u nga ti wopsana na ye? — Hi makwenu.
Do you know the person to whom you would not make an improper proposal, however handsome she may be? — It is your sister.
Leshi nsinya ya shone yi nga bonekiki, ntshini? — Yendje-yendje.
The thing of which the stem is invisible, what is it? — The cuscuta.

This plant is a cause of wonder to Natives, because its root and stem are so rarely seen. It is known that it grows from a root, but when it has developed, the stem dies and the plant lives on as a parasite.

Leshi nambi wa ba, ntjonsi wa kone wu nga boneki? — I mati.
The thing which you can beat without leaving a scar? — Water.

524 Here is one more which has a more philosophical character and which may be of later origin.

Leshi nga hamba Tilo ni Misaba, hi tshini ? — Ntumbuluko !
The thing which made Heaven and Earth, what is it ? — Nature !

Ntumbuluko comes from ku tumbuluka, to be created, to appear, and is well translated by the word Nature (See Part VI, Chapter I).

The Thongas possess a plentiful supply of *riddles containing two statements*, which they call *psitekatekisana* and of which I have collected about a hundred. I could easily have found ten times as many. One of our female neighbours (Lishanyi) knew a great number of these and could pour them forth without stopping well on into the night.

Whoever is most expert at asking questions takes the lead, and commences with a kind of invocation of which I have not been able to discover the meaning : Ñwanyanga mi[illegible]ti, lit. son of the moon, shadows. Then addressing one of the other players, and speaking very rapidly, he (or she) will say : "Teka, teka, teka (take, guess) heeee...!" following this up with the question to be asked, which forms the first part of the riddle ; the person addressed must immediately reply with the phrase forming the second part. If he is unable to answer, or gives a wrong reply, the questioner says : "Psi ku hlulile" — "you are beaten," and passes on to another player, again beginning with "teka, teka, teka" and asking the same question until some one is able to give the correct rejoinder. Hence the name of this game, psiṭekatekisana, i. e. things which you make others guess.

It will be seen that we are not here dealing with riddles in the true sense of the word, with solutions only to be arrived at by keenness of thought and reflection ; the answers to these must be learnt by heart, and it only requires a good memory to become an adept at the game. The ancestors, however, who composed the riddles, and handed them down to posterity, were by no
115 means lacking in wit and ingenuity. The examples given below I
524 owe mostly to Timotheo Mandlati, a Nkuna of Shiluvane, who wrote them down for me in the dialect of his own tribe ; some of

them are in Hlengwe. I also obtained a good many from my 115
Ronga informants, Spoon and Galu of Libombo, Titus, and 524
Shilati, a blind man who thought himself very learned in the "riddling art," but understood very little of what he was talking about, and, in any case, was quite unable to give any explanation of his riddles. Some are the common property of both Ba-Ronga 524
and Ba-Nkuna ; they seem to be very popular throughout the Thonga tribe.

To begin with, here are some examples of which *the inner meaning is not difficult to discover* :

> Teka-teka-teka-he! Tiba ro pshya hi matlhelo? — Ndlopfu yi fa hi tshembeti.
> The lake drirs up at the edges? — The elephant is killed by a small arrow.

A great result (the drying up of a lake, the death of an elephant) is often produced by a very small cause (the gradual evaporation of water at the edges, a little arrow). The idea is similar to that expressed in the proverb : "Il ne faut pas mépriser les petits commencements," or "small beginnings make great endings."

> Ndja ha batla mpalala? — Ndja ha hleketela...
> I am still carving an iron wood stick? — I am still thinking about it.

An undecided man might reply thus to those urging him to immediate action. The wood of the *mpalala* is extremely hard. "It is a long business to carve a figure of this wood" says the cunning fellow ; "I am not going to make up my mind about it in a hurry!"

> Ndji pfumala tshati; nha ndji ya tjhema nhonga?
> — Ndji pfumala ntlhambi; nha ndji ya lobola munhu lweyo.
> I have no axe, or I would go and cut a stick?
> — I have no oxen, or I would go and lobola this girl.

This is the sigh of the impecunious lover. In the first sentence he laments the want of an ordinary every-day object (an axe) which prevents his obtaining something he wishes for (a stick) ; he lets it be understood that a much more precious article is lacking (oxen, money, a lobolo) which would enable him to obtain something infinitely more to be desired (the girl he loves).

524 Ndji tshukumetele kwakwa, dji ya wa ngolongolo ?
— Ndji yamukele psikomo psi pfa ni Ba-Nhlabi.
I have thrown away my kwakwa; it has rolled away to the ends of the earth (into distant lands) ?
I have accepted the hoes which come from the Ba-Hlabi.

I have sold my daughter in marriage to the people of Hlabi (on the other side of the Limpopo, further up than Bilene, in Gaza); by so doing I have lost my child for ever. She has disappeared like a round fruit (kwakwa) which, when thrown a long distance, rolls and rolls away until it can never again be found.— Moral : Don't let your girls marry foreigners (Compare I, p. 260).

Shiyindlwana mpfontsho ? — Mundjuku milandju.
The little hut falls down ? — To morrow, debts.

If you don't keep your house in good order, you will soon find yourself in difficulties. A disorderly life leads to debt.

In other riddles the meaning is not so self-evident as in the preceding examples. There are some which are simply *a comparison of two objects* or of an object and an idea which resembles it in some one particular. With the rapidity of perception characteristic of the Native mind, some clever individual has been struck by this resemblance, and has thereupon composed a riddle the obscurity of which is in direct proportion to its conciseness.

Ribondjo ra ndlopfu ku mpfara ? — Mushu wa ndlala tihanyi ?
The sound of a cracked elephant-tusk ? — The anger of a hungry man.

Both have a false ring.

This Nkuna riddle is met with amongst the Rongas, in the following form :

Lirimbo la phala ku mbvetsho ? — Amushu wa ndlala mahlandju.
The creaking of the dried sorghum stalk ? — The anger of a hungry man.

Sikiriki dja mbangwe ? — Longoloko dja Ba-Tschwa.
The stem of hemp ? — The Zulu formation (when on the march, in single file).

In the way the leaves grow on the hemp stalks, there is a suggestion of the formation, or rather of the forest of plumes of Zulu warriors on the march...

524

Ntshiba ukulu wa mpfafati? — Ndjoko yikulu ya balungu.
The tall ntshiba? — The long tumblers of the Whites.

The ntshiba is the tallest tree on the Ronga hills, and casts a grateful shade. The long tumblers used by the Whites answer the same purpose; both conduce to the refreshment of the weary!

Tihuku ta ka Manyisa ta ka nhingena he paisuka?
— Baŭwhanyana ba ka Manyisa ba ku kandja ba khisamile.
The fowls of Manyisa enter the fowl-house tails first?
— The Manyisa girls pound maize sitting down.

This is probably a sly hit at the girls of the Manyisa country [516] who are reported to sit down when crushing maize; everywhere else this operation is performed standing up. They don't do things like other people. — Chickens also sometimes do things the wrong way!

Riddles which refer to some *historical event* may be classed in a third category. The best known is that concerning Tembe and his sons. (See I, p. 23.) — Here is another:

Ndji fambi nhlangwa lokulu ndji heketa Mimaleyane?
— Ndji djimi mimo leyikulu, ndji byala ndlowu yiŭwe.
I walked right across a big plain to accompany Mimaleyane?
— I hoed a large field and only planted a single pea.

This is doubtless the story of a rejected lover who thus wittily relates his discomfiture. He took all the trouble to accompany Mimaleyane a long way, right to her home, and received no reward for his gallantry. As well hoe a whole field and only plant one pea! A great deal of trouble for nothing!

A fourth category of riddles comprises those in which no real similarity of ideas would seem to exist, but [illegible] a *similitude in sound*, a sort of graceful alliteration which [illegible]ing to the ear. The two following examples are very popular and very pretty from the point of view of euphony:

He kumi nkuhlu, a wupfa, ka ku sala huhlu yiŭwe?
— He kumi mulungu, a wondja-wondja, ka ku sala ndjepfu yiŭwe.
We found a *nkuhlu* which ripens, which ripens; only one nut is left?
— We found a White man who gets thinner, thinner: nothing left but a hair of his beard.

The comparison of ideas is not difficult to perceive, but what conclusion or moral can the author mean to convey? None!

524 He has been merely led away by the musical charm of the words.

Lastly I would class in a final category *the riddles which are altogether incomprehensible*, of which there are quite a large number.

> Be khumbi? — Mayo! Ku fa.
> The people against the wall? — Ah! if only I were to die!

Zebedea, a very intelligent man, who gave me this riddle, could not tell me what it meant. Possibly the words may have been altered in the course of transmission from generation to generation. I am unable to say. In any case we are discouraged from expending our energy in trying to discover meanings in the *psitekatekisana* when they are too obscure by the fact that several of these questions, or primary phrases, can be answered in different ways; the answer, or second phrase, varies with the informant. Suppose for instance, that the following question be put:

> Makhoi ya nyari yinga-yinga?
> The horns of the buffalo wander hither and thither?

The answer may be the well-known proverb (p. 21).

> U nga hone bibi u ku ndji rimele.
> Do not contemplate the heaps of weeds saying to thyself: I have finished hoeing.

Or it may be:

> Barara ba bambe ndji nabela.
> I covet the fathers of other girls.

It may be that, in the parlour game previously described, when some one fails to give the right answer, he quotes the second sentence of another riddle on the spur of the moment, and so false connections are established between sentences which have no common meaning.

Are these *psitekatekisana* peculiar to our tribe, or are they to be met with elsewhere? I cannot be certain on this point, but I have not heard anything like them quoted from other places. Some bear a strong resemblance to the antithetic proverbs of Solomon. But it must be confessed that they are entirely lacking in the deep religious or moral meaning of most of the Jewish proverbs!

Amongst the first we have already noticed *falling stars* (p. 309) ; 787
the snail (p. 338) : should you meet with it on the road, you will soon hear that one of your relatives has died ; *the stem of cuscuta* (yendje-yendje) ; (1) there are families, however, for which this is not of bad omen, but for other people it foretells misfortune ; *the mbonga bee* belongs to the same class (p. 337) ; the various kinds of *mistletoe* are also of bad omen. So also is the *puff-adder* (p. 340), the *likure* (p. 340), a greyish slender snake : if it blows upon you, or bites you, you will grow thin and turn grey, like the animal itself ; the long-legged bird *shitshinyariendjo* foretells misfortune on the road (I. p. 339) as do also the *buwumati* snake and the *nkangu bird*.

Other objects are of good omen ; the beetle *Eccopteptera* and the *Mutilla* (p. 336), and especially the beetle *Bombolosi*, belonging to the Curculionidae family, a curious insect which drops to the ground and counterfeits death when touched or frightened ; it is the symbol of riches. Natives hang it on a string at their door ; I have heard of others hanging it in their hair ; but in this case it is said to be placed there to eat lice!

All these superstitions are believed in more or less seriously. But, in order to know their fate and what they must do to avoid misfortune, Thongas have recourse to true methods of divination. Amongst these mantic practices some are simple and some more elaborate.

II. *Less important Means of Divination.*

1) Amongst these I may mention first the *pshapsha*, which 524
corresponds to our "drawing lots" and is performed exactly 787
in the same way by placing pieces of grass or sticks of different length between the fingers, and pulling out one of them, having

(1) The cuscuta sometimes covers large patches of ground on the sandy hills of 137
Thongaland ; as is well-known, it has a regular root, but afterwards becomes a parasite 824
on the vegetables to which it attaches itself, whilst its stem and root die. This fact 787
has been noticed by the Natives, and has given the cuscuta a special value in their eyes. When they happen to find a plant which still retains its stem and root, magicians make use of these, especially in their exorcism rites. But this stem, which is so rare, is a bad omen for ordinary people.

524 first decided to act in such and such a way if the longer or the
787 shorter grass be drawn. This is more or less a game and is employed mostly by children.

787 2) Another more serious method of divination is the *mondjo*, the enchanted philter, used as a regular means of procedure to obtain evidence in Court (I. p. 443), especially to discover wizards and adulterous women. It has been described at full length in the preceding paragraph.

3) A third is the *divination by ecstasy* which is employed by the magician when "smelling out" wizards. The old men assert that, in former times, there were diviners who could guess anything when in that peculiar psychological state in which the subliminal faculties may develop to a marvellous extent. Hendrick, a very old Native of Khosen, said to me, speaking of one of these *shintisa* (the term by which these diviners are known) : "He used to travel all through the land, practising his art in the villages. He was able to describe minutely a goat which he had never seen ; or if somebody had buried something in a certain place to test him, he would go straight to the spot and say : 'Dig in the earth here, and you will find it.' Viguet also asserted that there were formerly true and trustworthy diviners in the Hlabi clans, and I myself heard trustworthy witnesses assert that a certain diviner who had been called into a village near Rikatla actually discovered some pounds sterling which had been hidden by their owner, who was no longer in the country.

4 & 5) A young man of the Mabota clan described to me two other methods of divination employed by his father, old Tumben (I. p. 531). One was called the *Small Mug* (shintjekwana). The diviner took a wooden mug in his left hand and held it by the handle. He placed in it an antelope's or goat's horn, and with his right hand he struck his right leg, putting the question to which he wanted an answer. He would say : "Is the matter really as I say?" If he had guessed rightly, the horn began to move to and fro ; if not, it remained quiet. Tumben also consulted the oracles by means of the *Small Calabash* (nhungubane). This calabash had some rags hanging from its neck, and a string was passed round it by which he held it dandling from the thumb of his left hand. He

524 put aside. She must be very clever and very quick in removing and replacing all the stones except one, because the ball will soon fall down and she must catch it in her hands. Should she take only one stone out of the hole, she has failed (a tjongolile); should she leave more than one stone outside of it, she has again failed (a hoshile). Should the ball fall to the ground, it is taboo. (psa yila)! She has lost her turn. If the ball falls on her body, it is not so bad. Her companions will say to her : "Gangasheta." Then she must throw the ball and catch it two or three times on the upper part of her hand, then again in her hand, and if she succeeds in this, she is allowed to go on. When she has been able to take all the stones from the hole without making any mistake, she has beaten her co-players (a ba mphyinshile).

525 Natives do not play for stakes as a rule, but, if two of them challenge each other, each claiming to be the best at the game, they may arrange that the one who loses must give a fowl to the winner.

The ordinary word for *play* is *ku tlanga*. But there is another word *ku tha*, which is used for the more refined games, the buhlolo, the mathakusana, the tshuba, the reciting of tales, riddles or proverbs (psitekatekisa) and guessing games (mhumhana). We shall describe these four last games when treating of the life of the village and literary life.

II. *Nubility customs.*

1) The Khomba rite.

881 When a girl comes of age, no special ceremony is performed amongst the Ba-Ronga. She is said, just like the boy, to have "drunk the nkanye" (page 95). She confesses to her mother that her menses *(tinwheti, viz. months)* have appeared for the first time, and the mother simply answers : "Hi ku kula"— "this means growth."

885 over the country from Maputju to the borders of Gaza, but only
177 during the last hundred years. This black crown is called
554 *ngiyana* (Ro.) or *shidlodlo* (Dj.), and the crowning ceremony is called *khehla*. From this verb has come the term *makhehla*, a name given to all those who wear this ornament.

885 This ceremony is accomplished in the following way. At a
301 given time, the chief informs all the men of a certain age that
527 they must prepare their rings. The counsellors and the sons of the royal family who belong to this " class " must go to the capital. Several oxen are killed ; the back tendons are carefully preserved and made into strings. This being done, the master hairdressers, that is to say those who know how to fix these strange appendages, are called in.

They come, supplied with small sticks (tinhlamalala, the central nervures of the leaves of the milala palm-tree) which they plait together with these strings made of tendons so as to form the skeleton, the circular frame of the crown. These strings are drawn through the curly hair, all round the head, so as to fix the frame of the crown above the temples. The remaining hair on the sides and behind has been previously shaven. The chief possesses a provision of wax ; the wax which is preferred is not that of bees, but the rosy secretion of certain grubs which is found on some bushes, and which the young boys of the capital go and collect. This wax is mixed with different ingredients to make it black. It is fixed on the frame of sticks and shaped into a large round or oval ring, as black as jet, which can be made to shine brightly. When all is finished, they eat the flesh of the oxen, enjoy themselves, dance and celebrate this great occasion!

885 The more humble subjects crown themselves in their own
301 villages, where tonsorial artists come to adorn them. The poor go to the hairdresser, and do not use strings made of tendons (they have no ox to kill), but strings made of the fibres of a palm-tree, which are cheaper. It is said that nowadays palm-tree strings (bukuha) have almost entirely supplanted the others, the more so as they are not spoilt by the washing of the crown ; whilst, if the *ngiyana* is fixed with tendons, no water must fall on it, or it would soften.

Moreover the crown must be taken care of ; it can be spoilt

643 619 seems to have been particularly feared. He had even bought poison from white people and is said to have killed his rival, Musongi, chief of the Maputju clan, with whom he fought the battle of Malangotiba in 1870. He sent a woman of bad life to Maputju. The woman succeeded in winning the confidence of the king and poured this poison into his glass. Nowadays the Ronga chiefs have been taught by the Authorities to sit in council when discussing matters.

643 The two principal prerogatives of the chief are the right of *luma* and taxation.

III. *The right of luma, and the first fruits rites.*

181 241 We come to a set of rites which might be dealt with when considering the Agricultural life, but I prefer to describe them here, as they provide us with a typical illustration of the constitution of the clan ; they are highly characteristic of the Bantu community, a community which is essentially agricultural in its pursuits, animistic in its beliefs, and hierarchic as regards its social and national life.

643 262 784 527 241 We have already met with the word *luma* and noticed that its ordinary meaning is *to bite* ; its ritual sense is to *remove the injurious character of a given food by a certain ceremony*. The luma is a necessity before eating the flesh of certain wild beasts, as we shall see when studying the laws of hunting (See Part IV). But it is of still more importance, and one of the great laws of the clan, that the official luma shall take place before the subjects eat the products of the new year. There seem to be two ideas at the root of this strange taboo :

1) To eat certain kinds of food is dangerous for one's health, and the first mouthful taken must be seasoned with the royal drug.

2) The gods, the chief, and elder brothers, have a prior right to enjoy the products of the soil. To precede them in doing this is a sin which would bring them misfortune. The hierarchy must be absolutely respected.

821 which is also met with in *nyeleti* (star) and in the names of certain rivers. (I. p. 36.) At the present time there is no trace of worship or of mythological conceptions in connection with it. Natives see in its spots a woman carrying a shirundju basket or a bundle of sticks, but they do not attach to that image more importance than we do when we talk of the man in the moon.

821 I have described (I. p. 52) how the new moon is received
527 with exclamations of joy : in the villages the first person who
241 sees it shouts : "Kengelekezeeee,"—"the Crescent! the Crescent!" and this word is passed on from one village to another, and dancers rejoice because they will have moonlight to illuminate their feasts! Such is, at least, the reason now given by the Rongas for this custom. There were perhaps other ideas connected with the new moon in former times. — According to a Nkuna informant the day of the new moon is a *shimusi*, a day of rest. It is taboo to till the fields and cut the roots of the trees with a hoe. The moon must be left to become firm (tiyela). It is still tender as a new born child. Destroying winds might
821 blow and hail fall if this taboo were transgressed. — The
787 appearance of the crescent was also carefully examined, says the
828 same informant. If its horns were turned towards the earth, this showed that there was nothing to fear, all the dangers contained in this month had been poured out : "mafumo ma hangalakile" — "the assagais were dispersed." On the contrary, if the horns were turned towards heaven, this showed that the moon was full of weapons and misfortunes. — The new moon is of great importance in the customs connected with exorcism and possession, as every exorcist must undergo the *haza* purification at each new moon (Chapter III). Moreover Thongas, like many civilised people, also believe that some persons at this time have an attack of madness which is called *rihuhe ra ñhweti*, the lunar madness.

772 When the first quarter appears, the moon is said to *thwaza*,
821 a Zulu word which corresponds to *tjhama* in Thonga, and is very much used in the terminology of possession. Eight days later, it is said to *basa*, to be white or brilliant ; full moon is said to *sima* or to *lata batjongwana*, to put the little children to bed, because when it rises, it finds them already sleeping on their mats.

643 The law of luma seems to have applied to all kinds of food
262 in former times. Nowadays it is not observed for the following
171 products : maize, Kafir beans and peas, rice, sorghum, water
527 melons (makalabatla) and monkey nuts. It is partly observed
241 for mafureira almonds (tihuhlu), strychnos paste (fuma) and pumpkin leaves (magawane). It is strongly enforced for black Kafir corn and bukanye. Such is at any rate the case in the four clans of Nondwane, Mabota, Ñwamba and Tembe. Amongst the Zulus and Swazis on the contrary, I have been told people luma maize and do not luma kafir corn. Kafir corn is probably the most ancient cereal amongst the Ba-Thonga, and bukanye has always existed in the country. This is perhaps the reason why these luma rites, which bear a very old character, are still applied to these products to the exclusion of other more modern cereals.

I. *The luma without a religious ceremony.*

631 Let us first study the less ritualistic kind of luma, the luma
262 of the *mafureira almond*, for instance. It is practised in each
643 sub-chief's village, and, though it is tending to become obsolete,
527 it is still enforced by some "tihosana." Thus my neighbour in Rikatla, Habele, the hosana placed by Mobvesha over this part of the territory, met some time ago a boy who was eating these almonds, the description of which I shall give later on.— "Who gave them to you ?" asked Habele... The child kept silent.—"Come with me to your parents!" Having found their home, the sub-chief scolded them severely : "You have started sucking (munya) the almonds before us. You wanted to kill my head ? Pay a fine!" They answered : "The birds made them fall from the tree... The children were not guilty!" However they had to pay 500 reis.

262 The luma of almonds, which takes place in December, when
643 they are ripe, is performed in the following way. The almonds
527 are dipped into a small calabash full of water to soften them. Some of the powder of the nyokwekulu is added to them. The headman first takes some for himself and then distributes them to his people. They suck the almonds, take in their hands the part

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which is not eaten, and rub their faces with it. But *no religious ceremony is performed.* It is the same for the *fuma*, a paste made with the contents of the kwakwa fruit, a kind of Strychnos very similar to the nsala, but of a different taste. The ceremony was even more simple than with the almonds ; the chief used to send a little of this paste to each village saying : "Let this be the first bite you swallow : the new year has come!" (Luman, ku tlhese nguba.) No powder was used in connexion with it. The magical drug was used, on the other hand, when the luma of pumpkin leaves took place.

II. *The luma of the Kafir corn.*

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The great, the official luma, amongst the Ronga clans, is that performed for the Kafir corn (mabele). The great wife of the chief grinds the first grains of Kafir corn reaped in the fields. She cooks the flour in a pot and pours into it some of the royal powder kept in the calabash, so as to make a *shimhimbi* (See page 42). The chief takes a little of the food and offers it to the spirits of his ancestors, at the main entrance of the royal kraal. He prays to them in the following terms : "Here has the new year come! Precede us, you gods, and luma, so that, for us also, Kafir corn shall help our body, that we may become fat, not thin, that the witches may increase the corn, make it to be plentiful, so that, even if there is only a small field, big baskets may be filled! (Nguba hi yoleyi! Rangan ñwine, mi luma, ñwi Psikwembu! Na hine, mabele ma tjhama amirin yeru psinene, hi kuluka hi nga wondji. Abaloyi ba yandjisa, psi tala ngopfu, nambi shi shisi-ñwanyana shi shiñwe, a ku tale tingula!)"

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After this religious ceremony everyone luma in turn, the chief first, then the sub-chiefs, then the counsellors, then the warriors who have killed enemies in battle, then the headmen of the kraals who have all been summoned to the capital. Should one of the headmen be prevented from coming by illness, his younger brother will not precede him. He will bring him the *shimhimbi* in a leaf ; the elder will take it, and, after him, the other brothers. Women do not eat the magic powder. Neither do strangers,

751 One frequently meets people wearing this ornament, which also
755 aims at making the cure permanent. Sometimes the nails are those from one hand and foot only. The *psirungulo* i. e. the astragalus
783 of the slaughtered goat, or the beak, claws and some feathers of the hen (p. 410) are also tied round the neck of the patient. This is the *religious amulet*, whilst the lizard bag is the *medico-magical* one. Convalescents are moreover provided with the *fowa*, a kind of rattle, consisting of a root called *sungi* (there is no connection between this word and the sungi of the circumcision school, I. p. 77) contained in a kind of round box made of palm leaf which is tied round the ankle. This is intended to protect them against the perspiration of those who have sexual relations (p. 358). They sometimes wear a little piece of reed filled with a protective powder, as do also nursing mothers during the whole nursing period (1) (I. p. 48).

[527] The hondlola rite also marks the moment when sexual relations, which had been suspended during the disease, are resumed. Celebrating as it does the victory over disease, the day of hondlola
756 is regarded as a fête-day. Beer is prepared as a mark of gratitude to the doctor and "to rejoice his heart." It is also the day of reckoning ; the physician must be paid. This individual has not, however, waited until now to ask for a "refresher." From the commencement of the case it has been necessary to *pfula hwama*, that is to say, to lift the cover of the medicine wallet by means of sixpence or a shilling. At times he has been very anxious to change the medicine, in order to produce a greater effect ; on such

751 (1) I may here mention two other articles which are frequently worn by Thonga Natives: one is the dried seed-pod of the flower of the large Protea bush (sugar bush) which is so common on the slopes of the Drakensberg. It looks like a hard brownish cone, all covered with concentric layers of little square ledges. This cures *vertigo*. Why? No doubt because when it is turned round rapidly, it makes the spectator giddy. It is hung round the neck with a string. This curious remedy is brought back from the Barberton mountains by those who go to work in the Transvaal. The second is a bracelet often seen round little children's wrists, and is made from the skin of a kind of tawny mole, called *tju'unyana*, which digs its burrows almost on the level of the ground. You can see the earth a little raised all along its track. The *Filaria* parasite, which is often met with in our tribe, also creeps under the skin in a similar way (p. 343). See illustration No. 5. These are two new instances of the principle "similia similibus curantur." Bags filled with snake powder are also often worn as a preventive.

II. *Basket-work.*

The milala palm, whose sap supplies the tipplers of Pessene with 137
their famous busura (II. p. 42), is a very valuable tree to the 285
Ba-Ronga, as it is of its leaves that the greater part of the baskets in use by this tribe are made. The basket-maker gathers the most perfect leaves. These are not like the mimale folioles, growing opposite one another on a central nerve. The *milala* (plur. of nala) are true palms, the leaves consisting of folioles from half an inch to an inch in width radiating from a common centre, which itself grows on the end of a long peduncle.

These trees are found in the woods of Mabota, Nondwane, Tembe, on the Coast, and in the low plains of the North Eastern Zoutpansberg, etc., sometimes in large numbers. Returning 285
home, the workman (here we employ the masculine, basket-making being essentially man's work) spreads out the leaves in the sun to dry, having previously straightened the folioles somewhat separating (hangela) them one from the other ; when they dry, they turn a light grey colour with a shining polished surface, and are then hung up in the hut where they will be sheltered from the dew and ready for use. When the work is to be started, the folioles are torn (phatlula) from their peduncle, and, with a sharp pointed instrument, are split longitudinally into strips or straws of 1/8 or 2/8 of an inch wide, the ribs of the leaves (nhlamalala, yin-tin) being carefully kept ; these delicate wands have their special use.

The Ronga basket makers are very fond of decorating their 285
baskets with *designs in black*. These triangular and square 531
patterns are produced by artistically plaiting dark and light 386
coloured straws, and are not painted on after the baskets are manufactured. The straw is dyed black in the following manner : it is soaked in the black ooze (ntjhaka) of the marshes for two weeks, and then laid out to dry, which gives it a reddish-brownish colour. This hue is deepened by a second treatment. The leaves of a shrub called *mpsabutimu* are gathered and placed in a

pot with the red brown milala in alternate layers, until the utensil is full : water is then poured over them and the whole put on to boil ; very soon the straw becomes a brilliant black. The basket-maker has now only to pull up some of the grass growing in the hollow near the lake, dry it, and he is ready to commence work. 285 531 386

In the accompanying plates illustrations will be found of the principal specimens of this art, stereotyped shapes which have passed on from generation to generation, doubtless from 285

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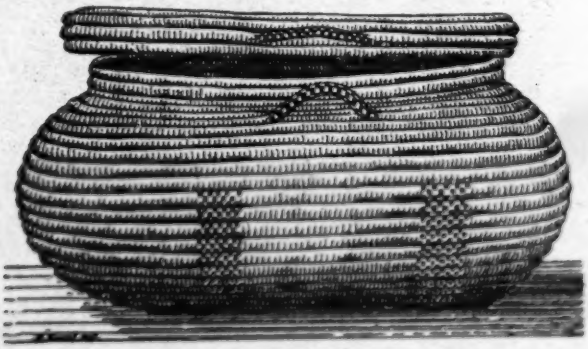

Ngula.

prehistoric times, and are called respectively : *ngula, hwama, shihundju, lihlelo* and *nhluto.*

The *ngula* (yin-tin) (p. 27) takes the place of honour, and is the most prized of all the Ronga baskets. It requires days or even weeks of continuous work to make one, but the result is worthy of the time and labour bestowed upon it ; I brought with me to Europe several *ngula* of various sizes. The particular one shown below, is oval and measures six feet two inches in circumference ; but there are many much larger, both spheroid and ovoid. This is how they make or, to use the technical Native term, "tlhaba" — "pierce" this basket. The workman takes his dried grass and plaits it, lengthening the plait according to requirements, as he goes along : this plait is bound round, and entirely hidden, by a special binding of palm leaf straw, thus forming a thickish cord of about half an inch in diameter ; the cord is soon doubled back upon itself, and forms a centre, around which

Bangela (making) for the *bunana*, a sort of hammock, made 285
of plaited milala which is hung to the branches of the trees and 513
sometimes in summer used for sleeping in, to escape the mosquitoes which swarm inside the huts.

Runga (sewing) for the boats (byatsho, dji-ma). The ancient 285
Native boats built before the appearance of nails, hammers and 501
saws, were made of pieces of wood securely tied together. Some 322
of these antiquated craft are still to be seen on the Maputju river.

On the rivers up country, boats are frequently made of a large piece of curved bark, bent on both sides, which will hold two or three persons. I crossed the great Letaba in a boat of this description. Such boats are also used for storing water. Where mimale branches (or nervules) are procurable, they are tied together so as to form a raft called *shikhakhafu*. These are used on the Nkomati River, and on the lakes in Ronga territory. Big rafts made of trunks of trees fastened together, and called *magudhlwana*, were used in former times on the sea, when going to meet the White men, the Ba-Godji. (See later.) They are now no longer used and there is scarcely one to be found. In the [177] neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques the Natives now build their boats on the European model. The fishermen cut down forked branches, which serve as ribs, to which they nail planks. They are wonderfully clever at this work ; one man, Sam Matlombe, nicknamed the "King of the Bay," was particularly expert at it.

The sewn boats of olden times might well be included under the heading of basket-ware. Those of to-day belong definitely to another branch of industry, and will afford us a natural point of transition from basket work to wooden articles.

III. *Wood-carving*.

It is the *nkuhlu*, mafureira tree, Trichilia emetica, as we have 322
already seen, that is used by the Natives of these parts for their 531
wood-carving. If the name of this tree is very hard to pronounce, its wood is, to an equal degree, soft and possesses the great

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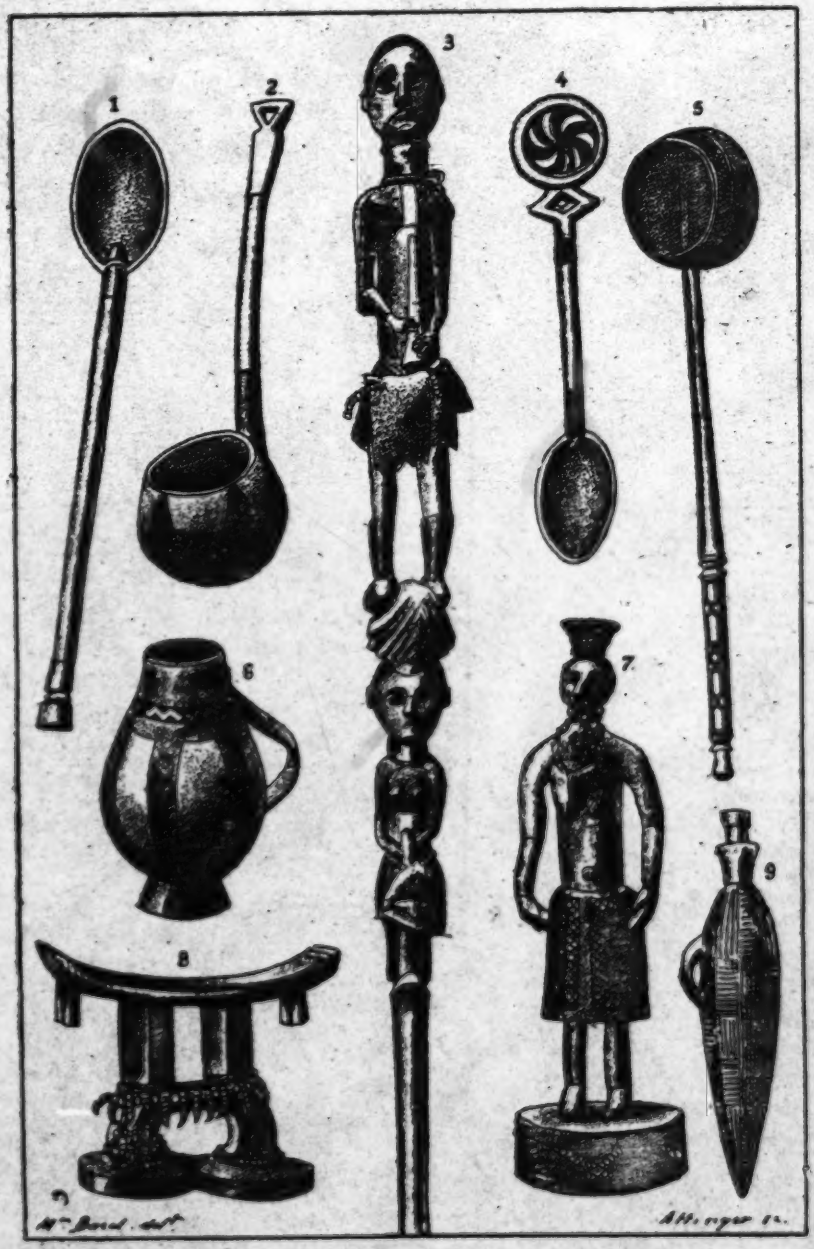
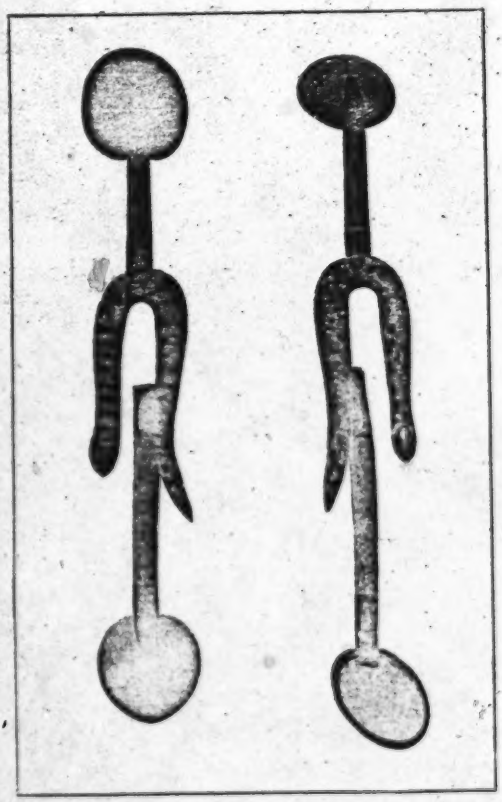


Thonga carvings.

(One seventh of the natural size.)

advantage of not easily splitting or cracking when being dried. 322
If Nature had not bestowed on the Thongas this excellent tree, 531
who knows if they would have ever thought of executing the works 415
of art which are depicted in the accompanying illustration!

However before thinking of art, they began by cutting, or fashioning, with their small knives, articles of every day use: *spoons* (nkombe, mu mi) for instance, (see illustrations of carvings, No. 1), made in several sizes; the big one is used for serving out the potful of maize amongst the rightful claimants, and the small one for conveying food to the mouth when the hands are ritually soiled (I. p. 193). One often finds really well carved spoons. I give drawings of two which are particularly interesting; the first shows a sort of spiral, or catherine-wheel decoration at the top of the handle (No. 4); the other, brought by Dr. Audeoud from the Maputju country, has a carved snake as an ornamental motive. Spoons are all ornamented, even the plainest, with designs in black, burnt into the wood with a red-hot iron. For beer, ladles are used, made of a single piece of wood; these are generally decorated with large black triangles (No. 2). In Inhambane and Quelimane, the Natives make them of cocoa nut



Carved spoon from Maputju country.

shells, on which they carve curious geometrical figures (No. 5). 322
Goblets (ntcheko, mu-mi) are generally made with a handle. 531
(No. 6). 415

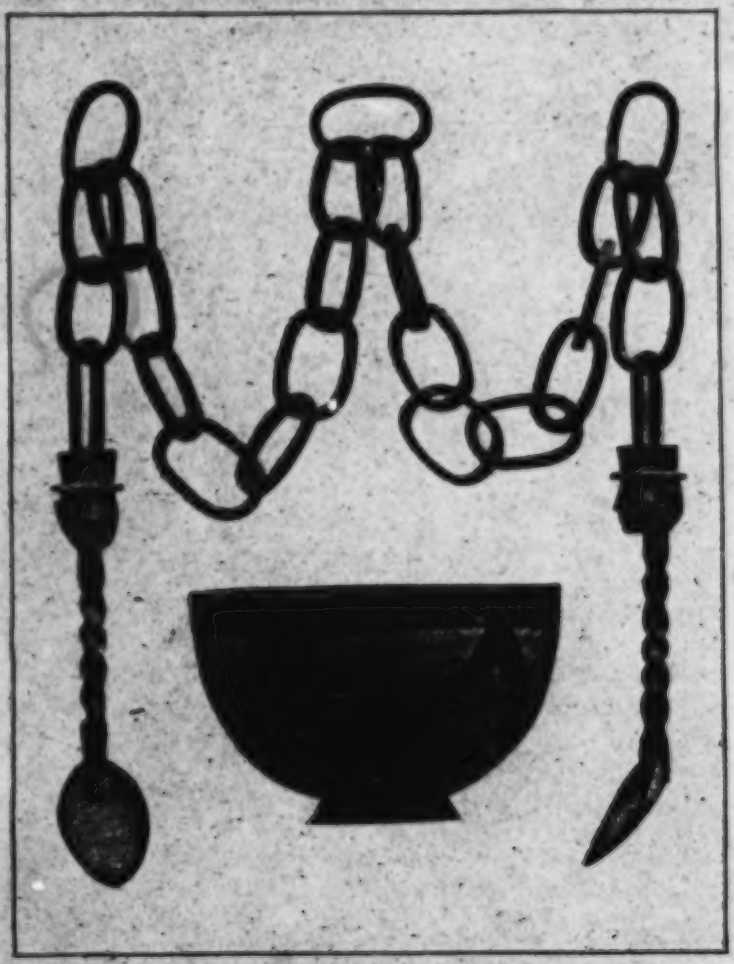
In the accompanying plate, (p. 131), two spoons are seen hanging to a *chain* made of links carved from nkuhlu wood. This is a wonderful product of Native art. These chains are often met with, especially in the Northern clans, some with links of six inches in length, the whole attaining to a length of many yards. The one here shown is six feet long, with links of only three inches. The special point to be noted in this "objet d'art" is that it has been carved from a single piece of wood and the artist had to make no mistake from the very beginning; a single slip of the knife would have broken the whole chain and made it useless. European joiners told me they doubted whether an ordinary workman would be able to carve such a chain. I was told that these spoon-chains were used by two individuals who wished to form an alliance; they passed the chain over their shoulders and, so united, ate from the same plate. This, however, is mere play and has no ritual value.

Between the two spoons, a kind of *bowl* is seen, almost perfectly round and prettily decorated. It was used by a man who had been possessed, and who washed his face in it every day to cool his head and appease the spirits. Thongas also carve large dishes, sometimes prettily decorated, though not so attractive as those of the Ba-Rotse of the Zambezi. I possess one of two feet in length by 10 inches in width. These are used for serving meat.

I must not forget the *mortars* (tshuri, dji-ma) usually made of mahogany, or of nkanye, and the pestles (musi, mu-mi) made of nkonono. The former are often adorned with triangular carvings.

The same style of decoration is to be seen on the *calabashes* which Natives use as bottles. The calabash, as every one knows, is a sort of gourd composed of two spheres of unequal size with a narrow connection between them. By an ingenious system of supports, placed under the gourd during its growth, Natives succeed in imparting to the upper sphere the shape of an elongated neck. There are many varieties of calabash, some small, furnished

with a long projection and used for drawing the bukanye from the large jars. They are specially kept for this purpose! (See p. 101, No. 7, and also I, p. 400). In Vol. I. p. 50, I have given an



Carved chain and bowl, (Neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques).
(One fifth of the natural size.)

illustration of these bukanye calabashes, called *ntjeko* (mu-mi), very prettily decorated by a Tembe artist. The black designs are burnt in and represent huts, birds, palm trees and, last but not least, two warriors fighting! The white dots are beads inserted

in the soft bark of the calabash. The largest calabash on this plate measures 21 inches in length and 7 in width. 322 531

Some plainer calabashes are Nos. 8 and 9 of the illustration of ornaments. Others are simply shells of sala (shikutja), (p. 16), with a good-sized hole cut in them for an opening (Nos. 6 and 10); a circular piece, say one third the size of the other, makes a capital cover; a string passes through the bottom of the calabash and the middle of the cover, fastening the two together. When this is knotted on top of the latter the *lard tin* is securely closed. This kind of calabash is generally thus designated, for it is in these round balls that the mafureira grease is kept, to which I have previously referred (p. 18). They are hung up in the roof of the hut where they swing to and fro in the smoke and become well browned. The young folks amuse themselves by carving designs on these shells. 415

Mankhela's stick.

The artistic element is still more striking in the *snuff boxes* (ngulana, yin-tin), carved in ebony, which the chiefs are fond of carrying; the one depicted (p. 128, No. 9) came to me from Mavabaze who was, for a time, chief of the Khosa clan. It is also conspicuous in the strange *pillows* (shidamu) on which the Ba-Ronga rest their heads at night. Let us contemplate this article (No. 8) with the respect it deserves! It is probably on this description of pillow that primitive humanity in all parts of the world has dreamed its dreams! We see it sculptured on the Egyptian monuments, above or by the side of princely couches. We find also among the relics of the lake-dwellers stone objects of a similar shape, which were doubtless used for the same purpose. The Bantu has adhered to this piece of prehistoric furniture all through the ages. 276 532 322 352 322

881 A few days later, the great doctor administers to the boys a purifying medicine which they drink in a mouthful of beer. This rite seems to be rather a separation than an aggregation rite. We often find, when a marginal period comes to an end, separation rites taking place. They mean separation from the *marginal period* itself; for this also involved a kind of pollution which must be removed. Such is probably the aim of the medicine given by the Manyabe. On the other hand, this is also an aggregation rite, as the boys are allowed to drink again for the first time.

II. *The Mayiwayiwane dance.*

532 535 881 The second true aggregation rite is called the Mayiwayiwane dance. The *Mayiwayiwane* are a sort of masks which cover the whole of the upper part of the body, a kind of armour made of woven palm leaves; on the head, they are like a very high helmet protruding in front like a beak. The boys make these masks with the help of the shepherds and of the men and, in this disguise, must perform a special dance with high jumps before the women summoned on a certain day to attend. The boys must not be recognized. Should one of them let the mask fall, it would be a great misfortune, because women must not know who is dancing. 535 581 Moreover the initiated must appear before them as a kind of supernatural beings and fill them with respect and awe. Therefore they must not fall when they dance. Should one of them totter and lose his equilibrium, the shepherds cover him

A Mayiwayiwane mask (1).

(1) This mask is that worn by Podi boys during the second circumcision school. I cannot guarantee that the Mayiwayiwane mask is of exactly the same pattern.

276 one rarely sees a Native with a pipe in his mouth, tobacco being almost exclusively used in the form of snuff. The only smokers in the country are the old women of Lourenço Marques, a[illegible] youthful dandies who try to imitate the Transvaal Boers!

532 Clay modelling is perhaps the art for which South Africans
857 are best gifted. In all the tribes children amuse themselves by

A young Spelonken artist and his work. *Phot. J. Dentan.*

modelling oxen, human beings, wheels, even waggons, sometimes very cleverly. I knew a boy in Shiluvane who was a true artist and could copy anything he saw, for instance a white lady with her hat on (1). The accompanying plate shows one of these young artists, from Spelonken, with his handiwork.

(1) The same boy, without having received any special training, could cut out a frock, and used to make the dresses of all the brides of the congregation. He had a wonderful eye for form and would have made his mark, had he received a professional training. But he died from consumption contracted in the towns!

in the soft bark of the calabash. The largest calabash on this plate measures 21 inches in length and 7 in width. 322 531

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322 through the ages. The specimen in the illustration[1] was bought
352 from a young man, a traveller, on the road; the bird's claws,
777 beads and other articles tied all round it, doubtless hunting trophies, are plainly to be seen. He had the advantage of literally

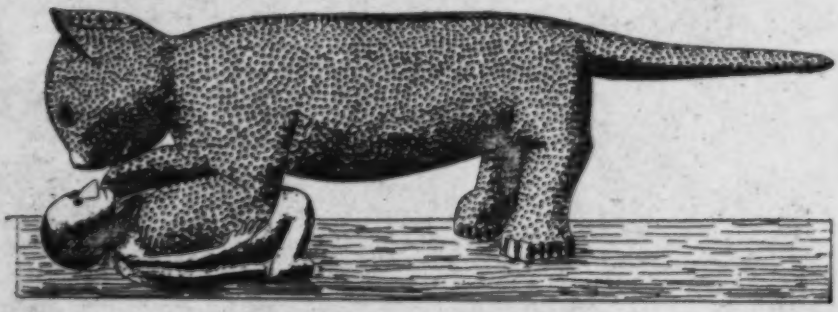
Thonga statuettes.
(One third of the natural size.)

resting on his laurels, and naively believed they would bring him good luck while sleeping.

532 The Thonga artist has even dared to portray the *human form*,
481 and the result of his audacity, however grotesque, is not without
322 originality, and even a certain characteristic style, which may be recognised in all their statuettes. More often they content themselves with carving a man's head, with his crown, on the top of their walking sticks. I here give[2] an illustration of Mankhelu's stick, which was a very old one, dating from 1850,

1 [The Thonga pillow -- see p. 128, No. 8. -- Analyst]
2 [p. 133]

532 at least, and shows the primitive style without any European
481 influence. Sometimes they carve the whole body from head to
322 foot ; (as grapes do not grow in their country the use of the classic vine-leaf is quite unknown). No. 3 represents a stick with a man and a woman, the one standing on the other's head, the stronger sex treading the weaker under foot! Large statuettes, of at least one and a half to two feet in height and broad in proportion, are to be seen in the Neuchâtel Ethnographical Museum, which without doubt contains the largest collection of Thonga implements in the world, having been plentifully provided with them by the mission-



A panther devouring an Englishman.
(One twelfth of the natural size.)

aries of French Switzerland No. 7 is smaller, and represents a woman having on her head the typical conical basket, the pride of
532 the workers in the fields, and of the cooks. The five small figures
322 on the accompanying plate are very amusing indeed. They were carved by an artist of Movumbi (near Rikatla), who asserted that the man on the right was a Banyan. The other figures are Natives, men with their wax crowns, and the ladula garment (p. 96) adorned with beads ; one is a woman carrying a child!

The finest specimen of Native art that I ever saw is the carving of a *huge panther* about to devour a human being, the work of Muhlati, a sculptor living in the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques. This artist, who was very proud of his work, and asked a tolerably high price for it, claimed to be able to carve anything and everything : birds, four-footed beasts, or men. He was famous throughout the land for his talent. Nothing more quaint

[see p. 128.— Analyst]

532 could be imagined than this large spotted creature, (the spots being
322 obtained as usual by burning with a hot iron), planting his claws in the flesh of a man, (an Englishman, I was told by the inspired author of this group!), and glaring at him with two great round eyes, not very symmetrical! With touching forethought, this modern Phidias has made the posterior half of the tail quite independent of the rest of the animal. A tenon and circular

[501]

Thonga canoe. *Phot. A. Burl.*

socket allow the caudal appendage to be so neatly adjusted that the joint is hardly visible! Muhlati told me how the idea of a removable tail had occurred to him. He thought that if ever his masterpiece had to be packed up and cross the ocean, it would thus be more easily cased. This can hardly be called the idea of a savage! Besides, the work itself would never have been accomplished had there been no Whites in the country. Evidently the sculptor, indolent like all his race, would not have worked day in and day out at carving such an animal as a play-thing for his children. He concluded that his talent might well bring him in some money ; it was mercenary considerations that urged him on to the execution of the work, and no mere love of art ; nevertheless

532 I do not believe any foreign influence was exercised in the
322 conception of the idea. His group is absolutely original, and, as such, shows us to what lengths the sculptural talent of the Ba-Ronga can go. This group is now in the Neuchâtel Museum.
313 While statuettes are the most elaborate products of Native
532 sculpture, *canoes* (shene (Dj.) are the largest. I have already
322 mentioned the taboos connected with the cutting of the mahogany and nkwenga trees when used for this purpose (p. 19). Other trees, the mpfubu and the muhlu, can be cut without these precautions being taken.

IV. *Metallurgy.*

172 When and how did iron reach the Ba-Ronga ? Probably we
412 shall never be able to ascertain. Tradition has it that the primitive
316 inhabitants of Nondwane, the Honwana, who cooked elephants in order to tear them in pieces, had no iron implements. Some authorities tell us that the hoe in use in olden times was of an exceedingly hard wood, wrenched I know not how from a species of teak tree called *ntjhiba*. The Natives of these parts must have passed directly from the age of wood to that of iron. There was certainly a stone age, comparable to that of the lake dwellers, in Cape Colony, where a great quantity of silex and of polished stones have been found. I never heard of any such implements having been used by the Thongas, nor found within their territory. As regards the bronze age, they have known the use of copper for a long time, but it cannot be proved that they knew it before iron.

177 Iron and other metals seem to have been first introduced in
439 Delagoa Bay by the "Godji" traders and whale fishers, of whom
316 I shall shortly speak ; they are the first White visitors whom the Natives now remember. The Ba-Ronga used to exchange fowls and other domestic animals for hoes, brass bracelets, and copper brought by the strangers, and they had found out how to make copper wire by forging (fula) the pieces bought from the "Godji."

842 The Thonga child is always received into this world with great joy by the whole family. If it is a girl, it means oxen to buy a wife for one of the sons later on ; therefore it means increase not only in the wealth but in the number of the members of the family. If it is a boy, there is no direct material enrichment, but the clan has been strengthened and the name of the father is glorified and perpetuated. In the case of the birth of a first-born child (ñwana wa matibula), a special ceremony is performed at the end of the first week. When the grandmother has smeared the hut, she goes home, summons all the female relatives, sometimes as many as ten or fifteen ; they take with them food, ochre and fat prepared for this purpose. Two or three men accompany them. They enter the village of the child executing a special dance called *khana*, and singing the following song (which is the proper song to glorify a first-born) :

846 533 851 603

I celebrate my pot which has done *ngelebendje*...

They compare the child with a pot of clay which has gone through the firing process. It has been tried as one always tries a pot by letting it fall to the ground ; but it is not shattered, because it has not cracked in the furnace, it has kept intact ! This is what is meant by the descriptive adverb ngelebendje.

846 851 603 Then they smear the baby, the mother, the father, everybody in the village with ochre. It is a great feast. A goat will be killed, if possible, because the father and mother have "found a village" (kuma muti) by the child, they have "grown roots" (mila mitju). This is a law, but its omission is not taboo. When the grandparents do not perform this ceremony, it is an insult to the parents of the child, but no evil consequence will follow.

765 753 821 is a meteorite ground to fine powder. It is interesting to compare this use of the meteorite with the fact that, amongst the Thongas, this fumigation is intended to prevent convulsions. Convulsions, as we shall see (Part VI. Chap. II. B) are caused by the mysterious power of Heaven. The meteorite has fallen from Heaven. Thus the baptism of smoke aims at bringing the child under the influence of the two main elements of Bantu religion : the ancestor gods and Heaven.

857 Learning, as they do, the native names of all these creatures and their habits, they certainly acquire a great amount of knowledge during these years.

5) PLAYING.

857 533 Sometimes the weather is bad ; it rains or it is dreadfully hot. Then the goatherd suffers, and his elder brother comfortably sitting in the hut trills this song :

> Far away, there where he is, he weeps, the little boy.
> The keeper of the goats and of the calves !

But the bad days are rare and the boys play more than they cry!

524 The *games* of the Thongas are very numerous and are played either during the day or in the evening, especially when the moon shines. I shall here only consider the boys' games, and speak of the girls' later on.

Ngulube yi da mimphobo. (The pig eats mealie cobs). One child plays the part of the pig ; crawling along, covered with a mortar and a piece of cloth, he goes from one hut to another followed by a troup of his friends, who clap their hands and sing the foregoing words. People give food to the pig. It is received by its friends. When they have visited all the yards, they assemble on the central place of the village and eat the food together. Sometimes the pig suddenly turns round and attacks his followers, who flee in terror.

The game of *nsema.* This is a disk of woven grass made by boys. They pick up sides. The nsema is set rolling by one side and the opponents must run towards it and pierce it with their sticks before it falls to the ground. It is not allowable to touch it when it has fallen (yi holile). This game goes on till the disk is quite spoilt (yi bolile). Then the two sides rush upon each other and exchange a sound cudgelling, after which they all go and bathe in the nearest pool without any ill-feeling.

There is another game played with this disk, the game of the *ndlopfa-ndlopfana* (that is to say " the little elephant"). A boy

524 and rushes forward, head foremost, trying to break the circle and to get out either between their legs or otherwise. If he does not succeed they give him this long and comical name: shikulukukwana sha ku ka buhumo.

533 Quite a number of little melodies are sung by children to certain animals. When we came back in the evening to the plain of Rikatla with our ox-drawn waggon, all the goatherds used to meet us, and to accompany us a long stretch of the road, shouting in honour of the oxen: " Gweymanaô, Gweymanaô (1) "! Girls joined in the demonstration, pointing out the strange machine to the babies carried on their shoulders (2).

524 *Nkwama wa ku.* (Your purse)... When they eat green mealies, one of the older goatherds gives to another some of the leaves covering the cob and tells him to go and throw them away. He refuses to do so. Then the elder one collects all these leaves, rolls them up in a ball and throws them to the boy who refused, saying to him: " Your purse ". The boy answers: " It is not mine! " They all run away. He picks up the ball and tries to throw it to another, saying the same thing. Should he miss him, they will mock him and say: " You are not a man, you are but a little boy! "

Shifufunu sha paripari. This is a kind of big Tenebrionida beetle which beats the ground with its abdomen (Psammodes Bertoloni). Groups of children, boys together or girls together, play two by two. One of the two lies down facing the ground and the other sits on his back, looking forwards, to guard the head of the one who is prone. He sings while beating the other's back: " Shifufunu sha paripari ndjuluka hi yetlele!... Beetle turn up that we may lie down! " At once all the children who were sitting throw themselves down and those who were lying down sit on their backs, and so on...

To develop their courage, boys have another more dangerous game; this is *the war on the wasps* (mipfi). In their country there

(1) See for the tunes of these and other songs *Les Chants et les Contes des Ba-Ronga* pages 34 to 64, and also Vol. II. Part V. Ch. III.

(2) It is customary to show to babies extraordinary and fearful sights, a white man passing, for instance, in order to " open their minds. "

821 parents. Some may escape, but if they happen to be at hand on
881 the next occasion, they will be included by consent or by force.
304 Even an adult member of the tribe can be compelled to go through the initiation, if he is found in the country in an uncircumcised state. The *time of year* chosen for the opening of the school is a month during which the morning star appears, in winter. *Ngongomela*, Venus, is the herald of the day. She precedes the sun, so she must lead the boys to their new life, from darkness to the light! (Valdo)

643 One day all the candidates are gathered in the capital ; for this
881 school is the business of the chief, and has been arranged by the council of the headmen (tinduna) over which he presides ; he has the supervision of it, and will receive the fees from the initiated later on. Boys circumcised four years ago must also attend the whole school as shepherds (barisi, psitjiba), namely as servants of the men and watchers over the candidates. They have already partly built the lodge outside the village, in a remote place, not too far away however, because the women must bring food each day for all the inmates of the " yard of mysteries ".

881 After having slept in the capital, early in the morning, when Ngongomela rises in the East, the band of the uncircumcised *goes out* from the inhabited world to the wilderness, to the lodge. This is the first separation rite. The second is this : they find on the road a fire made of strongly scented wood ; when they smell the smoke, they must jump over it. This rite is called : Tlula ritsa, to jump over the firebrand.

533 Later on, when still at some distance from the newly built
881 lodge, they hear a great noise, a song accompanied by the beating of drums and blowing of antelope horns. They must not understand the meaning of the words which are sung by the host of shepherds and the men, as it would frighten them too much :

The little boy cries ! Bird of the winter !

881 Here they are halted. Eight of them are chosen and told to go forward. Each one is given an assagai, and they are pushed between the singers, who hold sticks and stand facing each other

831 and of the hippopotamus are by no means poetic descriptions of
881 these big animals similar to those contained in the book of Job. The first alludes to the manner in which the male crocodile copulates with his female. And the second tells the story of a virgin girl whom the young boys violate in order to open the way to the grown up men who will follow them. Impure allusions are found everywhere in this teaching of the circumcision school.

When the instructor has finished, he lifts his stick with a certain gesture and all the boys shout at once : " Zithari ! " Viguet told me that that exclamation meant : " They are as long as that " and that it was an obscene allusion. The old men take great delight in being flattered and, if the boys wish to add to their pleasure, they will say : " When you spit, the wind from your mouth would kill enemies at the other end of the country ! "

As is plain from these quotations, the teaching of the Ngoma is quite trivial, and the formulae are rather a collection of esoteric words than a true intellectual training.

533 *The songs* of the Ngoma have no deeper meaning. We have
881 seen already the song of the Elephant and of the Winter-bird... Every morning, just after they wake, the circumcised sing for a long time the following words, which they repeat also when coming back from hunting trips.

Sing your song, bird of the morn
Mafé-é-é-é !

The melody is rude, wild but very impressive. Mafé-é-é-é must mean : " We are the initiated, we are the men ! "

224 *Hunting.* Hunting is the only useful thing taught in the
881 Ngoma. Boys go almost every day to the velt and become very
868 clever in catching game. They beat the bush, sometimes climb hills and chase all the game to the top, killing it there with their assagais, knobkerries, etc. Near Shiluvane they even attack the Mamotsuiri mountain once during their three months. All the men of the country are summoned to take part in the big expedition, which requires real strategic skill.

881 To sum up the rites of this marginal period of the Circumcision school, this is the programme of a day in the sungi. The shepherds

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Mulalen was Sokis' little daughter. They bring with them presents, five hundred reis, a hen, a goat, some light beer, perhaps a mat for the widow because hers has been thrown away or a piece of mourning cloth. The inhabitants receive them politely, and spread mats on the ground for them. They tell each other the news (djungulisana). Then after having *luma*, they eat and drink. The Ba-Ronga have their drink already prepared: it is the red wine which Banyan merchants sell to them all over the country. The visitors get drunk. They dance, and the mourning ceremony turns into an orgy with dances and songs of all kinds. The singing during this Great Mourning consists either of war songs executed by the men, which are very impressive, or of ordinary dancing songs, the licentious ones being particularly appropriate and being performed by women. (Annotatio 9)[1]. - In fact they are the proper mourning songs, those which are specially chosen when it is wished duly to lament a great man. I have witnessed these performances at a mourning ceremony of the " breaking of the hut " and shall refer to this subject again. In Vol. II. Part V Ch. II. B. I shall quote some of the mourning songs which have a peculiar stoic character. Here are two others from a collection made by Mrs Audéoud, the wife of one of our missionaries. They were sung at the death of the chief Tshutsha, near Makulane in the Maputju country. One of these was a war song accompanied with drums. It sounded as follows :

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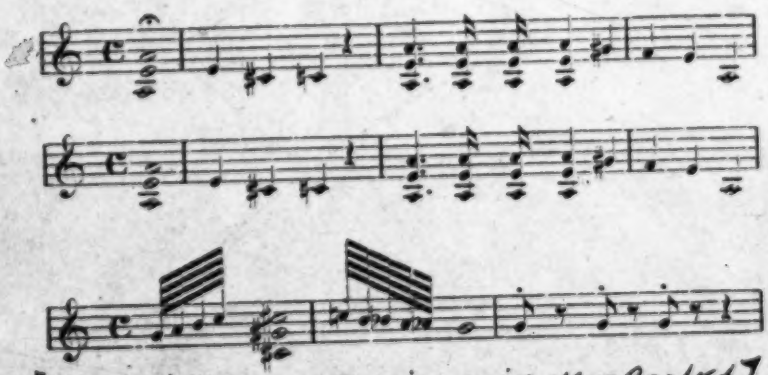

1 [see p. 517 in these categories or in 116--Analyst]

765 The other is a curious apostrophe to the wizards who were
533 believed to have bewitched the deceased, and means : " Good bye, wizard! Good bye, wizard! You will kill people. You come to kill people, you come during the night. "

765 But the *closing day* arrives at last, the *day of the sprinkling*
783 (shuba). When the grave-diggers have well perspired in their vapour bath, the doctor takes the pot in which the medicine is still boiling. All the women sit down with their children on their backs, the men stand in a line, holding their assagais and sticks in their hands. The doctor sprinkles his decoction over them all with a branch covered with leaves. The children cry because the burning drops hurt them. The women try to hide behind each other. The men gesticulate as if striking enemies with their assagais ; this is to show that their arms are strong and that they can now go to the war, as it would have been taboo for them to join the army before this purification had taken place. Should a man be absent from home, his sticks are also brought to the sprinkling to be purified (1). Then the doctor goes with his pot, sprinkling all the village, the huts, the doors, the backs of the roofs, the fence, the belongings of the deceased which are kept to be distributed amongst the heirs. After this operation, the village is pure as far as material things are concerned. The contamination which had fallen on all of them by reason of their owner's death is removed. Before the sprinkling it would have been dangerous to remove anything. Now if any one should have left anything in the kraal before the death, he can come and recover it. This is the act by which " the mourning is scattered " (hangalasa nkosi).

765 Visitors go home, having put on their *malopa*, if they are Ba-
292 Ronga ; strings of milala palm leaves round their heads, their necks, arms, and legs, if they belong to Northern clans. The custom of wearing a white handkerchief round the head is spreading. If a goat is killed, every one wears a bracelet made of its skin round the wrist, and the widow and the principal grave-digger

(1) In the Northern clans, says Viguet, a little of this mixture is kept to sprinkle, visitors during the following days, because " they are taboo for the things of the village, not having been cleansed ; " (ba yila paá le mutin, hikuba a ba basisiwanga.)

857 the stick and gives it to the girl! Or if the mother says : "I found
534 the baby in the banana grove," the father will cut a banana stem,
864 take the heart of the bulb and beat it so as to separate the fibres, which will then represent the hair of the baby ; the girl will then play with it for a time.

Girls, like boys, have also special games.

524 First the *ntshengu -ntshengu*. A big girl takes the part of the mother and all the little ones hide behind her. She stretches out her arms to protect them against another girl, who is the thief and tries to take the children away. Notwithstanding the mother's efforts, all are taken one by one, and the stealing is done whilst they sing :

> Alack ! Mother ! Protect us, protect us !

The mother answers :

> All my children are taken, all will soon be taken,
> All will soon be taken, there, behind me.
>
> (Yo ! Mamana ! ntshengu-ntshengu ! ba hela hi shiruba .

The capture being effected, all the children sit down in a row and cross their legs. To their right and left they dig small holes which represent wells or pots. The mother passes. She stretches out their legs and they allow her do this. Then she pretends to drink water from their pitchers and says: "My child, where did you find this water ?" The child says : "Oh! I have drawn it over there, at the spring, under the banana trees, in the cool shade." Then comes the girl who plays the part of the thief. She tries to stretch out their legs. But the children refuse ; they stiffen themselves. She tastes their water and enquires where they brought it from. "I drew it in a nasty hole full of frogs, mud and dirt." They add all the different remarks they can think of.

524 As the boys sing to the transport oxen when a wagon comes
136 along the road, so the girls address a kind of *incantation to a big*
333 *grey lizard* called *galagala*, which can turn its head blue at will. The lizard is found lying on a branch, warming itself in the rays

final fate will not be known before the last and most important act : the adjudication of the inheritance.

f) *The day of the adjudication of the inheritance.* This is a most typical ceremony prepared for with great care, because the day is full of surprises and dangers. Every precaution is taken to avoid misunderstanding, and to bring the mourning to a peaceful and satisfactory conclusion. It is winter time ; the mealies have been collected from the fields of the widows, the small cobs called *makunula* have been set carefully apart, as they have to be used especially to prepare the beer for the feast. The council of the family is again assembled and decides that the time has come. The divinatory bones are consulted. Should they be favourable, the ceremony can take place. The bones are again asked a number of questions : Who must take the mealies from the granary and put them in the pot to soften them in water ? (first operation of native beer making). A newly married woman who has had only one child is chosen by preference. Then it is asked how long this softening must continue ; who is to shout her *mikulungwane* to accompany the work ; who will have to get the mealies out ; which woman must give the first blow in the mortar to pound the softened mealies, etc.

All the relatives assemble in the mortuary village. One year has elapsed since the death, and the bitter feelings of mourning have passed. Nobody will miss the feast, certainly not the *batukulu*, viz., the nephews, sons of the sisters of the deceased. Some may be disappointed this day, but one of these nephews may return home richer than when he left! Most of the relatives arrive before the great day, to help in the preparation of the beer. When the woman designated by the bones has given the first blow, all her companions start at once pounding with vigour : "Che-ghe-ghe-ghe," and they sing songs of mourning. This is one of these songs, and a very significant one :

> Hi rilo, hi rilo! Hi ta ku yini ku we, Hosi ndjina ?
> We are weeping, we are weeping! What shall we say to thee, King!

This king is without doubt Heaven, the more or less personal being who kills or gives life, and whom we shall often meet with in these pages.

768 The sun is now setting. All the men go to the central place of
575 the village and sit round the fire. The widows remain on the
583 spot, between the deceased's hut and the new hut of the great wife, where all the belongings of the late husband have been kept during the whole year. The other widows of the family surround them once more ; no other woman is allowed to approach. The present ceremony is another secret rite of the company of widows. They sing the following mourning song to recall all the sufferings of the year of widowhood :

> Angoma nkulukumba ! Tatana a nga fa, a ba siya
> Na ngoma a nga si ba byela !
> Our secret law is a great law ! Our father has gone, he has left them,
> And he had not told them about that law !

768 During this song the old women take away all the clothing of
587 the widows, and wash their bodies. Then they lead them into the hut of the great wife and put on them new clothing, the clothes which their suitors and other relatives have brought for them. When they are all seated, the sisters of the deceased proceed to the last distribution. They first ask the great wife : "You, to whom do you belong ?" She answers : "Do you not know him ? It is the man who has taken care of me, who has been visiting me! I choose so and so!" She may also say : "I kill so and so!" *(Ndji dlaya man)*. That means : "As I have killed my first husband, I might do the same for the second," a very promising declaration! As soon as the widow has given her answer, the women in the hut begin shouting loudly, and one of them goes out to the men, and cries : "So and so says she kills so and so !" They proceed to ask another : "You, whom do you choose ?" The woman remains silent. "What do you mean?" — "I do not choose anybody." — "How is that? Be sensible!" — "No! I do not want anybody!" — "Why ?" They begin to press her : "You know well who has taken care of you, who has visited *(kambela)* you the whole year." — "I do not want him!" — "How is that possible ?" — "No, I do not want him. I want the *ntukulu* so and so." A frightful noise is heard in the hut ; they are all shouting together. What has happened ?

595 378 favourite, about another who is perhaps superior to her. He says to her : 'You are much nicer than so and so! She is not like a woman (A nga twali lepsaku i wansati).' The favourite will make haste to report to her superior what she has heard. She will draw her attention to the fact that the husband calls at her hut more frequently than at the others... The superior becomes angry, and people say of the husband : 'A ni gudjulisana, a ni bandjisana,' 'he makes his wives hit each other.' He himself, after a time, will try to regain the goodwill of the despised one (a ta mu batela). She will violently repel him. He may even kill a chicken to bring about a reconciliation!" One can easily imagine the jealous scenes which occur in the village of a polygamist (1)!

595 3) Polygamy, when practised on a large scale, even brings about *the ruin of the family*. Two examples show this clearly. First the case of Bingwana, to which I have already alluded. He had a great number of wives and used to place them in his various villages, viz., in the capital itself and in all the districts of his kingdom, going round from place to place to visit them. But they were so numerous that he could not visit them Frequently enough and they committed adultery wholesale with the men of these villages. The result was that Bingwana had hundreds of children and that, in the end, he married his own daughters without knowing it. He died tragically. The Gungunyana's yimpis surrounded his fortress (hkokholo). His son, Sipenenyana, fled during the night and he remained alone. He then shut himself up in a hut where he had gathered together his treasures and his gunpowder, set fire to it and died amidst the flames.

The second example is that of Mubvesha who died on Nov. 5 th 1910, a man of weak character, whose intrigues caused the war of 1894-1896 and who was installed by the Portuguese as Chief of the Nondwana country at the close of that war. (See

533 595 578 (1) Here is a pretty little Mbuna song about bobwale. A despised wife sings :

Pinahwa ra mina ri khala bi wanuna,
Wanuna a nyika dokwi ya kwa !
My wee little pumpkin has been plucked by my husband !
My husband has given it to his favourite !

She sings this song to excite a quarrel... after which she hopes that she will obtain her rights.

643 chiefs are entitled (1). The *elevation and the presentation* ended,
535 the next proceeding is the *gila* or war dance. The heroes of the army (batlhabani ba fumo), and the young men of blood royal rush one after the other into the enclosure brandishing their weapons, jumping as high as they possibly can, imitating acts of prowess on the battle field and simulating the transfixion of their enemies. The *gila* continues until the cry is heard : "Ye-yi, yé-yi, ye-yi." This murmuring sound uttered by the whole army marks the end of the jumping, and all re-form into line. All the shields must now touch one another, forming an immense unbroken circle, and then comes the *guba*, the intonation of the
643 solemn chant which is at once the principal patriotic song of the
533 tribe, the coronation hymn, the dirge of mourning, the war-song,
539 and the sacred melody par excellence :

> Sabela ! Sabela nkosi ! Ji ! Ji !
> Answer us ! Answer us, O chief ! Ji ! Ji !
> Si ya ku wela mulambu mkulu wa ka nkosi.
> Yes, we will cross the great river, the river of the chief.

This chant, which is in the Zulu language, is difficult to understand. The soloist commences with : "Sabela nkosi" which may be translated "Obey the chief ;" but the meaning would rather seem to be : "Reply to us, chief!" and, if taken in this sense, these words would be a request made by the army

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(1) The word *Bayete* is said to be of Zulu origin and to convey the following meaning : bring thine enemies hither and destroy them ! *Ndjoo* means lion. The warriors employ these terms to extol the power of their chief and, at the same time, to express their allegiance to him. There is a modern tendency to use this solemn salutation in a more general manner : for instance it is addressed to the Whites and not only to those in authority, but more or less to every one, even, in certain cases, to missionaries ! I always remember my arrival at the village of Shiriedo, where I went to call on the chief Mohathane, then unknown to me. I arrived at the gate of the kraal mounted on a most unpretentious little donkey and enquired of two young men who were there, where I could find the chief. "Bayete !" was the salutation I received and there was certainly nothing very regal either in my appearance or my "mount." One of these young men proved to be Mohathane himself ! *Bayete* is also frequently used in acknowledging a gift from a superior and would then be merely the equivalent of "thank you." In Gaza, Gungunyane would not allow Bayete to be said to any one but himself. All the petty chiefs of the Ba-Ronga insisted on their royal salutation and the Ngoni king could not put a stop to it, as they were direct descendants of the Whites and did not derive their authority from him.

1 [For the coronation of a chief --Analyst]

643 533 539 to the chief, to which he will reply by executing the dance which follows. To this exclamation of the soloist the warriors respond by striking their shields with their assagais, producing a hard sharp sound, which the chant tries to render by the syllable "Ji! Ji!" Then they stamp their feet, saying: "Vu! Vu!" and this enigmatic sentence follows: "Yes, we will cross the great river, the river of the chief." What is this river? Can it be that which separates the Mpfumo country from Khosen, namely the Nkomati? Or the Mitembe, marking the frontier between the Northern and the Southern Ba-Ronga? Or do not these mysterious words rather refer to the river of death, which the entire host should cross without hesitation if called to do so by their chief? Whatever the exact meaning may be, this chant must be an assurance of loyalty on the part of the warriors to their king and probably also an appeal to his valour.

643 535 701 The chant ended, no one is allowed to leave the ranks. The chief alone rushes into the enclosure; every warrior holds his shield in his hand and strikes it with hard sharp blows (ku ba ngomana); on hearing these, the chief begins to *gila* in his turn. He executes the war-dance brandishing his assagai, as if killing invisible enemies. The crowd encourages him, inciting him to still further efforts, crying: "Silo! Silo! Silo! Beast of the fields! Lion!" Volleys are fired. The chief redoubles his exertions, gesticulating furiously, perspires profusely, is well nigh exhausted and finally stops! The whole army sits on the ground and the young king is supplied with a jug of beer to quench his thirst.

When the ceremony has lasted long enough, and the warriors have enjoyed at their ease the spectacle of their chief's prowess, the Commander-in-chief dismisses the battalions, one after the other. The circle (mukhumbi) breaks up and all rush to the residence of their respective counsellors, singing as they go the praises of the particular army-corps to which they belong. The members of the royal family return to the capital, where they remain. A counsellor presents each group or regiment with the ox which has been allotted to it; this is accepted with shouts of "bayete." The men cut up the animal, divide the meat and eat it in their respective quarters.

644 534 *shikolombane* is more elongated and has no legs. Its sound is high and piercing, while the tone of the *muntshintshi* is deep and low. The music proper of this dance is provided by the *bunanga*.

II. *The Bunanga.*

533 644 This is the regular *band*, which is met with in every royal clan. The word comes from *nanga*, trumpet (pl. tinanga). But the trumpets composing the bunanga are not the common pierced tibias of goats used by the herdboys. They are larger horns of the mhalamhala (Hippotragus Niger), or of the mhala (Zulu impala), pierced at their base in such a way that they produce different tones. These instruments are made by specialists, (it was Ñwamatshomane in Nondwane), so as to form a kind of orchestra (simo) composed of ten instruments. To play them is a veritable art. The players stand round the two drumbeaters. The big drum gives the time : when it beats slowly, "tu-tu-tu," the ten musicians must dance in a ring, viz., they must march after each other, playing, making certain grimaces and gesticulations. When the drum beats more slowly and more softly, they must retire in a line and march slowly. The drum quickens the time : then they come to the centre once more and dance in a ring, quicker and quicker. The executants follow each other in a given order, the largest and deepest horn being in front, the smallest and highest toned one at the end of the group. Sometimes three or four orchestras perform at the same time (1).

The bunanga is an old Ronga custom and is very picturesque indeed. As for its musical importance, I shall refer to it again in Part V.

533 609 (1) I remember having heard the bunanga practising in the various sub-chiefs of Nondwane in 1891, as each sub-chief had his own. They were preparing to go to the capital to mourn Mughanga whose death had just been announced. I saw the bunanga performing its best melodies before Lord Salisbury, when he came to pay a visit to the Portuguese enclosure of Mozakwen in 1908. The Administrator had organised a "batanga" for him (the name given by the Portuguese to these native dances), and the warriors of Nondwane did their best to interest the White Chief!

726 Before going into battle, certain rites have to be accomplished.
703 In order to stimulate a war-like courage and to imbue the warrior's minds with a certainty of victory, it is necessary to proceed to the performance of the war-songs (guba), of the war dances (gila), and to administer the medicine which will render the soldiers invulnerable.

E. WAR SONGS.

533 The performance of war songs is called *guba*. I have already
539 fully described the Mpfumo national song, (p. 373) which would seem to be more adapted to celebrate a coronation than to serve as an incentive to battle ; it is however used indiscriminately for both purposes.

Another war-song which is very popular in the Mpfumo clan is the following :

Zulu : U ngwa si mu thini, Mayeye ?
U banga muhlaba, u bulala bantu !
Ronga : U ta ku mu yini, Ñwayeye ?
U banga ntlhaba, u dlaya bhanu !
What will you succeed in doing to him, Ñwayeye ?
You take the country and slay the people !

This is a question addressed to Ñwayeye, the rival of the chief Zihlahla ; Ñwayeye was placed in authority near Lourenço Marques by the Portuguese between 1860 and 1870. He accepted the position, but was unable to retain it any length of time, and the recollection of his failure is perpetuated in this song which is intended to extol the royal family of Mpfumo.

A third song, also in vogue with the Mpfumo warriors, runs thus :

Zulu : Zi ni' thini ? A ba ze zi ba bona, abantu bezirwe !
Ronga : Hi ta ku yini ? A ba te hi be bona, bhanu ba matiko !
What shall we say ? Let them come and let us see them, the people of the enemy's country !

This is a defiance hurled at the adversaries.

533/539 In Nondwane, they also sing this last song ; another runs as follows :

Zulu : Ngambala ! ngi file...O..o..o.. Zinkomo zio !
Ronga : Nwamboten, ndji file ! O..o..o.. Tihomu teru !
My friend ! I am killed. Oh ! oh ! oh ! Our oxen !

The warriors doubtless refer to the ruin which would be entailed were the enemy to carry off their cattle, and thus they encourage one another to fight stubbornly!

Another Ronga song performed in the guba ceremony is this :

Zia yi khalelo muhlu ya se manangu
We are weeping for the giraffe of the desert.

The giraffe may be the chief of the clan whom the warriors are determined to protect, or perhaps the enemy's chief whom they will go and kill.

This song is also one of the great guba songs of the Nkuna clan, but the words are slightly different. I have collected two others :

Hi yi kwa makhosi !
Si phuma ku makhosi, Si gambuza !
U mkhonto use sandhlani, Eji ! Eji !
U mkhonto nuso gobee...

War comes from the chiefs !
It is ordered by the chiefs ! We go and kill !
The spear is in our hands ! Eji ! Eji !
The spear kills and bends in the wound !

The oldest of the Nkuna guba songs, which was already in use before the arrival of Manukosi, at the begining of the XIXth century, when the army still formed in line and not in circle, runs as follows :

Hi bo yima hi bo yima !
Mi teka bunsa mi nyika tinuku (?) to hambe.
Let us stand fast, let us stand fast !
Do not let your strength go, it would help the enemy to conquer.

The words of this song are Thonga, as the Zulus had not yet imposed their terminology on the Thonga yimpi.

One of the finest war songs is that sung in the armies of Maputju

533 and Tembe, an antiphon seemingly very ancient, which changes
539 from the minor to the major, producing a truly grandiose effect : (For the music of most of these songs, see Vol. II. Part V.)

> "At break of day," sings the solist.....
> "Who was it that crowned thee, Muwai, king of Maputju?" reply the warriors.

Muwai is the great-great-grandfather of the chief Mabai, deposed in 1896. He reigned at the close of the XVIIIth century, his son Makasana having been chief from 1800 to 1850. Muwai is compared to the rising sun, or at least the song recalls his coronation, which must have taken place very early in the morning, at daybreak. It is evidently in praise of the royal family that the entire army chants this glorious souvenir.

> Loko ku ti qa, loko ku ti qa
> U bekwe ngubane Muwai?
> Muwai, ka Mabudu! Muwai ka Mabudu!
> U bekwe ngubane?
>
> At day break — At day break
> Who was it that crowned thee, Muwai?
> Muwai, king of Maputju! Muwai, king of Maputju
> Who was it that crowned thee?

726 As we see, the war songs are tolerably short ; a declamation of three or four words by a soloist (musimi) who dances in the middle of the circle, and a chorus sung by all the warriors, stamping their feet on the ground and striking their shields with their assagais. (Hence the exclamation "Eji" found at the close of some sentences.) Or sometimes the whole throng brandish the assagai in a rythmical fashion, raising it first to the right, then to the left, afterwards inclining it to the side, and lastly downwards as if to pierce...

When the great war-induna wants the song to stop, he gives a signal. At once all the shields are elevated and a sibilant murmur runs through the ranks : shi-shi-shi-shi, or a special click : nqu-nqu-nqu. Hence the verb *nqunquzela*, to stop a war song.

And then the war dance will take place.

726 prescribed rites. I once witnessed it, when the Nkuna army went
701 to Sikororo's country on a kind of punitive expedition. The great ndjuna of the army, the Commander-in-Chief, Mankhelu, his stern face grimmer than ever, holding a hyena's tail in his hand, clad in a white shirt which was very little in keeping with the whole appearance of the mukhumbi, stepped inside the large circle and raised his tail... Then the *Dhlanazo*, the young bloods, ran towards him shouting : "Kwe-kwe-kwe!" Their cry is the same as that of the *Timbulwana* (lynx), their elders, who came next. Mankhelu pointed the tail in a certain direction and these two regiments started. The *Mafakubi* came in their turn, imitating the galop of the antelopes : "tshwi-tshwi-tshwi! gwu gwu... hwu, hwu!... eka-ka-ka-ka..." and finally shouting : "N'ta dya na man" — "with whom shall I eat it ?" — a strange sentence which may be, as previously mentioned, a reminiscence of a totemic period! (See page 366)... The *Matsyoni*, the seabirds, followed shouting "tswe-tswe-tswe ;" the *Mamphondo*, those of the horn, came shouting "tshuba-tshuba-tshuba" and imitating buffalos and rhinoceroses. The *Maphisi* started last, howling wildly like hyenas : "hum-hum-hum..."

726 If the field of battle is far away, if there is a long march to
533 be made, special *marching songs* are sung on the road. The
539 most impressive is the following : a soloist sings in a very high key :

Abafo! — The enemy!

and the whole army answers in a rich and tuneful melody :

Eneza-e-e! e-e! — Here they are!

All the shields are held straight, ready to meet the foe.
Here are two other marching songs :

Nangu moya wa tshisirwe!
We are the fire which burns the country!
Inkonyana ya ndlopfu inhlezio bum...
The calf of the elephant is exposed on the plain...

This means the chief who is in danger! Let us protect and deliver him.

727 765 killed, "because the whole country would mourn : — they have not been killed by the mat (likuku) at home, but by the assagai on the battle-field! They are men! If any one weeps he will have to pay £ 2." (Mboza.)

726 703 When the Maputju yimpis fought against Nondwane in 1876, in the battle which took place near Malangotiba, (3 km west of Rikatla), they were decimated and eventually repulsed. Their chief Musongi sent them back to fight again. They refused. Then he punished them in the following way : he condemned them to go and fetch water with pots, like women, but they had to go on their knees to the pool, saying : "It is the result of our cowardice" — (Ngi ndaba ya bugwala). Afterwards they had to extinguish a bush fire with their hands, and came home very much scorched and burnt.

When the yimpi is victorious, the return is marked by important 727 533 535 songs called *hubu* (cl. dji-ma). The regiments follow each other, each singing his own *hubu*, and they at once build the mukhumbi when they reach the village of the chief. They dance, dance their doughty deeds. Suddenly silence is required ; the counsellors narrate to the chief how the fighting has proceeded and tell him the names of those who have killed enemies, those who have struck the first blow and their *bahlomuri*, viz., those who transfixed the leg and the arm. After which the heroes "gila" to their heart's content, together with the bahlomuri. They are proud! They are applauded! They are the great men of the day, the *tingwaza*, the saviours of the chief!

This leads me to consider the very curious customs connected with the slayers and the slain on the battle-field.

I. THE FATE OF THE SLAIN AND THE TREATMENT OF THE SLAYERS.

1. *The fate of the slain.*

554 727 When a man has slain an enemy, he has covered himself with the most enviable glory : he has the right to perform the war-dance before the chief. He takes away all the garments from

of the garden with a good vegetable until the first-fruits themselves 241
ripen and furnish a more substantial food. 221

When the rains commence, sometimes as early as September, but generally later, it is *time to begin the regular sowing*. Everybody then starts for himself, because, although the fields tilled by the mother are the largest, every member of the family has tilled his own : the husband has his *mpashu* (I. p. 337) and each girl has her plot.

The Native idea is that every owner of a field must sow all principal cereals and vegetables in his garden, except peas, on account of their taboo. So, in a line on the border, are planted sweet potatoes and manioc. Mealie seeds are sown at a given distance from each other, alternating with Kafir corn and sorghum, and in between are planted ground nuts and beans. Watch how the mistress of the field proceeds to sow her maize : she walks along with short steps, at each one digging up a shovelful of well tilled earth, and planting in the holes three or four grains of maize, which she carefully covers over. The work is done in haste so as to take advantage of the last rains. The *lisindje* is first sown ; then begins the hasty tilling of the old fallow fields (pula, dji-ma). The crop is not likely to be so plentiful as that obtained from virgin soil, but the same fields can be used for three or four consecutive years before they become exhausted.

Natives have no idea of *fertilising the ground* in any way whatever ; at the most they may take advantage of the manure which has accumulated in some disused oxen kraal, to plant thereon a few gourds or some tobacco.

The operation of hastily tilling the fallow fields is often carried 241
on by a *djimo* (dji-ma). Knowing that her fallows are very 476
large and that she can hardly cope with them by herself, the 574
owner calls all her neighbours to a djimo, viz., a working party, having wisely prepared a number of large jugs of beer. Neighbours will certainly accept the invitation as they may have to ask for similar help later on. So they come in the morning, and [533] ●
attack the fields with energy, singing and shouting all the time. There are special djimo songs, in particular amongst the Ba-Sutho. One may see them, some fifty black bodies toiling vigorously,

439 £60 ; and, in case of disagreement, the 60 cobs were counted again in corroboration of the contract made. If he brought an elephant's tusk, the Banyan gave him the value of a full lobolo. Carriers received two pieces of calico as reward.

437 After having visited Kimberley, in 1870, some Thongas, having begun to understand better the advantages of trading, attempted to undertake such expeditions on their own account. But they soon gave up the experiment as the Ngonis of Muzila often robbed them of all their goods. When they were working for White men, the Ngonis were afraid to pillage the company ; on the other hand, if by chance there was a loss, it concerned the White merchant. So they preferred the system of trading for the White men.

These travelling companies had to observe many taboos in order to succeed in their expeditions, in particular the *travellers' taboos*, which have been explained I. p. 339.

533 There are several popular songs which the traders used to
539 sing on the road, or which were sung about them. One of these has already been quoted (p. 102). Here is another in which
437 the tired carriers ask their leader to allow them to return home :

Hoho! hoho! maringele wa mamano!
Hoho! hoho! dla nkambana hi muka!
Hulukati ya ndlopfu yi nga siyi fiwana!

Oho! Oho! Thou who leadest us as a mother!
Oho! Oho! Break the platter and let us go home!
The female-elephant never forsakes her young!

437 The company generally consisted of men only. The allusion to the female elephant, however, may mean that there were sometimes also women amongst them. They address the leader of the expedition, asking him to destroy the platter so that no utensils shall be left in which to prepare food, thus necessitating a return home. They are thinking besides of their little ones left behind in the village, from whom it is unnatural for them to be separated so long. The mother elephant never forsakes her little one!

B. THONGA SONGS.

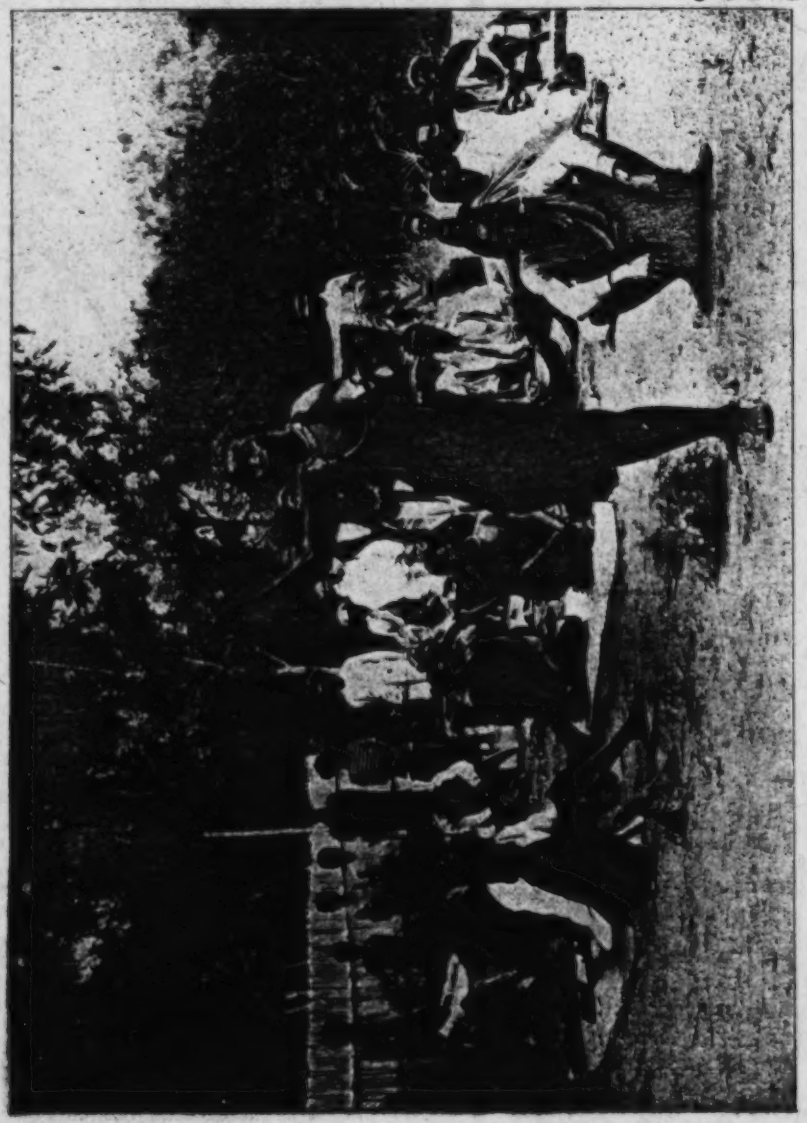
I. *Thonga poetry and Thonga poets.*

Bantu poetry differs widely from our own! So do Bantu 533
poets from our "literary men." I had the good fortune to 538
make the acquaintance of one of them on the same day that I witnessed the crushing down of Mayibane's hut (I, p. 156). Attracted by the big gathering, and knowing that he would have plenty of hearers, and meat to his heart's content, this poet had come to grace the occasion with his presence. He was on a literary tour, going from one village to another, singing his songs and dancing from one end of the land to the other. Tall, his face absolutely clean shaven, his eyes having a kind of absent, semi-conscious look, he at the same time appeared most contemptuous and remained in a state of olympic calm, as if he were a very superior kind of being. He was a man of the Manyisa clan, and all seemed to show him much consideration. When those officiating at the sacrifice were busy cutting open the victim, he appeared in the circle formed by the spectators (see illustration I. p. 159, No. 7), and began his performance. He had put on a skirt of *milala* palm-leaves and imitated a lame man, assuming an air of intense suffering. Suddenly, with wonderful strength, he began to trample the ground with his feet. He had an assagai in his hand, and feigned to pierce his own side, and his thigh. Then, lifting the weapon, he cast an authoritative look on the throng and those who had been laughing stopped and kept perfectly quiet. He remained immovable, regarding them with an air of supreme contempt, impassible... And then he commenced his song (suma).

(Chorus) Oho! Oho! (Soloist) Where are you going, mother (See tune No. 1 in the collection of Thonga tunes.)

The throng joined with him in the chorus, which was really very effective. The women clapped their hands in cadence

533



Phot. A. Bord.

A Thonga minstrel.

(wombela) to encourage him. Judging that they did not do this 533
with sufficient vigour, he scooped up a handful of sand and 538
threatened to throw it into their eyes. They clapped with renewed ardour. One of them, the tall, light-coloured one who had sung the obscene songs referred to I. p. 159, came, and with a peculiar smile wrapped a yellow piece of cloth round his loins. He sang other songs, again trampling furiously on the ground, until the sacrificers had finished their work; then he was made to stop, and the prayer to Manyibane began.

This performance was indeed, wonderful, and its interest was in no wise inferior to the funeral ceremonies themselves. It is a typical example of Thonga poetry, where three elements are generally present: the music, the dance and the words, which are more or less poetical.

This Manyisa bard is by no means a unique specimen. I remember having heard, many years ago, a poet of exactly the same type, from Bilene, who visited the Ronga clans, singing everywhere and asking for old rags as his reward. There are professional poets who earn their living by their art. There are also a number of occasional poets, who compose new songs and perform them in their own villages, not aspiring to a world-wide fame. If their tunes are pleasing, they are spoken of by others, and so become known throughout the land, on the strength of their own merit. In this way songs become popular and a great number of them are constantly sung at beer-parties, after harvest, at the feasts, some gradually falling into oblivion and being replaced by new ones each season (1).

In this chapter I shall not treat of the musical character of the

(1) I met later a blind minstrel, Mungomana, who earned his living in the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques by giving concerts in the yard of an important Native woman named Nwalanga, at which a number of boys from Inhambane and Chopiland used to stop before leaving for Johannesburg. He accompanied their dances with his timbila (xylophone) and was payed 4.800 reis per month. He told me his story. When quite young he showed a quite unusual gift for music and dancing. He went everywhere where a feast was taking place and boys were trying to outdo each other in dancing and singing, and was always proclaimed first. A woman impressed by his wonderful art, asked him to marry her, but he declined on the plea that he was still too young. Once as he was passing along a field where this woman was at work, she said to him: "If you do not marry me, you shall not live." Frightened by this 533 754

533 songs ; that will be considered in the next chapter, in which I
538 intend to publish the forty-one tunes of my collection. Here I shall only consider them as literary products, and in trying to classify them, I have noticed that, though most of them cannot be said to be very elaborate compositions, they pertain to many different styles, lyric, elegiac, epic, dramatic, etc. and, in addition, there are those which are sung while at work, as well as the incantations to animals and spirits. I will give some examples of each of these categories.

II. *Lyric poetry.*

533 Thongas, like most human beings, have felt the need of chanting
539 their joys and sorrows, joining words to music in order the better to express their feelings. These feelings are not as a rule very deep, and their lyrics are rather play than a painful cry of the heart. Here for instance is *the complaint of the childless woman*, who longs ardently for a baby. She has been to other people and asked them to lend her one. But they have refused and only consented to lend her a mortar and a plate. She then sings to a charming melody (Tune 7).

A ba boleki ñwana ! — Ba boleka tshuri ni nkambana !
Ngi ndji mangatlu ! — Ngi ndji shimungwe ! — Ngi n'ta ku utla !
They won't lend me a baby ! — They lend me but a mortar and a plate !
Were I an eagle ! — Were I a bird of prey ! — I would carry thee away !

The thousands of young Thongas *who go to the mines of Johannesburg*, to extract the precious auriferous quartz, seem to be quite contented with their fate. They, however, chant their

533 threat he fled to another country, but soon one of his eyes began to swell. His elder brother told him : "You have been bewitched by that woman," and his paternal aunt
754 tried to heal him. She covered him with a piece of cloth, and made him expose his eye to the steam of a certain drug boiled in a pot below. She claimed to have succeeded, having found an ox-tail hair at the bottom of the pot when she poured out the water. This was however a lie. The eye complaint became worse, till he entirely lost his sight. He then devoted his life to music, and composed many songs to accompany the dances of the magayisa (boys going to work.) These songs became popular ; if a boy wished for one of them, his favourite, to be executed, he would willingly pay 200 reis ! — Mungomana is the only Thonga I heard of who used music in his religious rites. I shall give the words of his canticle in Part VI.

misfortunes to a very melodious tune (No. 8) which I once heard 533
in Rikatla repeated a dozen times by children's voices along 539
the bushy paths. The words were in Zulu and were said to mean :

> Stones are very hard to break
> Far from home, in a foreign land.

The tune is so catching that it has become quite popular even in French Switzerland, where I have had the opportunity of singing it on many occasions.

Once when I was walking after sunset in the neighbourhood of a miserable village of two or three huts in Rikatla, I was attracted by a simple melody repeated again and again by a feminine voice. A young woman with a child on her shoulders and engaged in cooking her food was singing. She had just lost her father. Her husband was a very bad character ; she had been obliged to leave him and to take refuge in her father's village, and, lo, he had died! Feeling lonely and abandoned by all her natural helpers, she was expressing her grief in a low tone by the following words sung to a tune full of sadness (No. 41).

Tatana a ndji siya	My father has left me !
Na ndji nga li na mumben !	And I had no other except him !
Ndji se psanga libalen	I remain alone on the earth !
Sha ndji ta ya kwini mbuu !	Where shall I go then, Alas !

I am afraid Bantu lyrics have more than once found occasion 533
to celebrate the selfishness and *rudeness of the White race* ! I 539
remember travelling through the desert with three Zoutpansberg 609
colonists, and some of their black servants. The White masters 466
were not exactly gentle with their boys. A road had to be cut through the bush and it was hard work to remove the stones, and to cut down the trees. The shambock was sometimes resorted to in order to stimulate the Natives. I once heard one of them, who had just been castigated, murmuring in a low tone his monotonous complaint, whilst chopping at a stem. I caught the following words : (Tune 9)

Ba hi shanisa !	They treat us badly !
Ba ku hi hlupa !	They are hard on us !
Ba nwa makhofi !	They drink their coffee !
Ba nga hi nyike !	And they give us none !

533 Of course the colonists, who only knew "Kitchen Kafir,"
539 could not understand the complaint of the Nkuna boy!

The *song of the crab* is more tragic! (Tune No. 10). In a deep minor key a man cries for help! He went to hunt the big crabs which dwell in the mud of the mangrove forest, or on the sea-shore. He followed one ; the animal hastily hid itself in its hole. The imprudent hunter tried to catch it there ; he put his arm into the hole and attempted to pull the crab out. But the crustacean seized his finger in its claws so firmly that the man could not get free. He remained tightly held down, fixed to the ground. The tide is rising; soon it will cover him! And he cries :

> Yo-o! Lomo tjukeni ku na mani ? — Hala yi khomi litiho!
> Alas! - On the shore is there some one? — The crab has caught me by the finger!

This is almost dramatic poetry and the scene is worthy of a true literary description.

533 The *erotic style* is cultivated by boys and girls on different
832 occasions though it must be said that love, as we understand it,
539 plays but little part in Thonga life. Boys in love generally express their feelings to the accompaniment of the unicord harp (see Chap. III) in the evening in the neighbourhood of the village of their beloved one ; I have never been able to catch the words of these songs, which are said to be sometimes very long, and are sung in a very loud voice ; they are not precisely chaste, according to one of our Native ministers, who considered that the use of the unicord harp ought to be forbidden to Christian boys! But here is a *love song* probably composed by a girl who was not allowed to marry the boy of her choice :

> To-morrow, to-morrow, my mother, I will start,
> To-morrow, father, I will start,
> I will start with an axe ;
> With this axe I will cut the stump,
> The stump on which my friend has hurt his leg,
> My friend whose belt of tails hangs from his waist,
> The one for whom I draw my legs out of the way. (1)

784 (1) Perhaps an allusion to the fact that it is taboo to pass over any one's outstretched
516 legs. She draws in her legs to give him the means of passing and coming to sit beside her.

The stump is perhaps some ill-disposed person whose opposition the energetic maid is determined to overcome! 533 832

As a counterpart, here is the *complaint of a jilted lover*, who gives vent to his annoyance with the girl and her family : 539

> Refuse me if you will, girl!
> The grains of maize you eat in your village are human eyes!
> The tumblers from which you drink are human skulls!
> The manioc roots you eat are human tibia!
> The sweet potatoes are human fingers!
> Refuse me, if you will, girl!

The vexation of a jilted lover is of short duration. He has the money, he is sure to find a girl! But it would be erroneous to think Native lovers or husbands are not capable of deep and lasting affection. I know of a case, near Shiluvane, in which a Nkuna committed suicide because his wife had deceived him, and had relations with another man. 831

See, I. p. 286, the song in which the *despised wife* gives vent to her anger : her husband has plucked her little pumpkin and given it to the wife he preferred. No doubt the *bukwele*, the special feeling of jealousy existing between co-wives, has inspired more than one song which could find no equivalent in our own literature! 533

Mourning songs are numerous ; they are sung just after the burial. They are touching ; note the simple cry : 533 765 539

> Mamane! You have left us! whither have you gone?

The tune (No. 14) is striking : a very high and prolonged note, followed by double crochets sounded very rapidly and ending in another long note with a short sharp conclusion, like a cry of anguish.

One of those present rises and sings, as if he were playing the part of the bereaved :

> A ba ndji ya'ange-ke lepsi?
> Have they not hated me, treating me in this way?

All the throng of the mourners answer :

> Ba ku yalile, wene, wa ka manyana!
> They have hated you, son of so and so!

●533 He answers :

539 Ba tekile nkhao !
765 They have taken my intimate friend !

This is no doubt an allusion to the wizards, who are supposed to cause most of the deaths. They are cursed in another very curious song, half Zulu, noted down by Mrs Audéoud in Maputju. (Tune 16.)

Hamban, Muthakati ! Bulela bantu ! — U teka b'sikwin !
Go away, wizard ! Killer of men ! — You take them during the night !

Or the mourning song may be a complaint, in which the family bewails its bereavement, like the old Nkuna song. (Tune 15) :

Hi bana ba Nhumba ya ntima ! Hi bana ba Malala ni ngobe.
We are the sons of the black house (the house of misfortune and defilement)

The following is strangely stoic :

A li beni mombo ! A li beni mombo !
Ku tshubuka, ku baba ka psone !
Let it beat the face ! Let it beat the face !
To run away, what a bitter thing !

Death is like a foe. Look at it face to face! Do not lose your courage in this last fight.

I quote in Part VI another mourning song, a very curious one, where an allusion is made to Heaven, the mysterious power which kills and gives life, which we have already heard mentioned in the song of the widows (I, p. 209), when they lament their bereavement.

533 This *stoic* song is also a *war* song ; it is customary to sing the
539 war songs at the death of any important personage. The following belongs to the same category, and is used on both occasions :

Kstle-kstle, ntlubane ! Fumo dji wile ! A dlawa hi nomo, Tatana !
Hear this noise of weapons ! The assagai has fallen ! He has been killed on account of his words, father !

The chief has been killed in a fight which had been caused by his imprudent words : he wished to free himself from his

suzerain (the Ngoni chief?); war ensued, and he was put to death! So the sorrow caused by death has certainly furnished Thonga poets with touching themes. 533 539

The heart of the whole tribe was also stirred, at the close of the before-mentioned war of 1894-1896, when the young chief Ñwamantibyane, only 18 or 20 years of age, was caught and deported to West Africa. *The lament of the child* was then composed by an unknown author; but he had so well understood the feelings of the Black nation that it at once became popular; and it was heard everywhere on the wharf, hummed by hundreds of boys carrying loads or pushing trucks, and chanting the sad fate of the child; in the villages, far and wide, they sang the recital of Ñwamantibyane's sufferings:

> Ndumakazulu! The glorious! Known as far as Zululand!
> He fought bravely! He was obliged to fly!
> He was caught and deported... etc.

And ever and again came the chorus, in a sad, resigned tone: (Tune 11).

> Hi ñwanso! Hi ñwana ba dlele! Ñwamantibyane!
> It is the child! The child they have killed! Ñwamantibyane!

Eleven years later, when travelling far away in the Manyisa district, I heard a tall, thin boy playing on his unicord harp in a Banyan store, and muttering some words, which he accompanied by beating his instrument. This was the same old lament of the child:

> It is the child, the child whom they have killed!
> He was not yet grown up!

The melody had greatly changed (tune 12) and the pain had passed out of it. But the national song had not yet entirely died away.

This is a kind of elegy, and forms a transition to the patriotic and epic songs.

III. *Epic poetry.*

The war songs have already been quoted when dealing with the Army (I. p. 460), those performed in the mukhumbi, at the coronation of the chief (I. p. 372) when preparing to go to

533 fight, when returned from battle, as well as those sung during the march of the troop. I give the striking music of some of these in the next chapter. Tune 24 is the "Sabela nkosi" the great Mpfumo song, also adopted by other clans. Tune 25, with its splendid change from the minor to the major key, is the Tembe and Maputju classical war song. No. 29 is an old Nkuna war song, dating as far back as 1820, before the Zulu invasion; No. 27 is the principal modern Nkuna song, and
535 No. 28 the Nkuna equivalent to the Ronga *Giraffe song*. These old chants are sung to the accompaniment of the military dance, which consists in trampling on the ground, while rhythmically brandishing the assagais, lifting them first to the right, then to the left, bending them sideways, then downwards, as if to pierce (I. p. 463). They are certainly wonderfully fine compositions.

533 I include in the same category the laudatory song of the *mbongi*
826 (I. p. 424), a branch of literature in which Court poets display
644 considerable imagination and an extraordinary gift for unbounded hyperbole. All the important chiefs have their mbongi and it is required of the man holding this office that he should have a good chest (shifuba), the chest being to the Thongas the seat of eloquence (as it was to the ancient Romans: Pectus est quod oratorem facit!). The elucubrations of these poet laureates sometimes last a very long time and may have real poetic value.

614 As we saw (I. p. 361) each clan and even each family
553 possesses its own laudatory phrase; this is the *shibongo*, a word which generally means family name, but which etymologically signifies the formula by which the clan or family glorifies (bonga) itself. These formulae are usually short and often contain archaic expressions or allusions to unknown facts which make them very difficult to understand. I have given some of those from the Ronga territory. Here are two others, collected by the Rev. A. Jaques amongst the Transvaal Thongas, who seem to cultivate this custom more than the coast clans; they are perhaps encouraged to do so by their Pedi neighbours, who are very fond of these formulae, called by them *mireto*.

Hlangwini wa ka Shitlhelane; hi ba ka Nkandamani; hi ba ka Manyubele ni Mhowo; hi ba ka Gidjigidji, ba tilo. —. Akane ka peijungi! Lunu akobeni mi ta muka hi kona... 614 553

Hlangwini of (the house of) Shitlhelane; we are of (the house of) Nkandamani; we are of (the house of) Manyubele and Mhowo; we are of (the house of) Gidjigidji, the people of Heaven. —. Build (your huts) on the hills. In the valley you will have to leave (?)

It would seem that these Hlangwinis are a clan of rain-makers, people having the power of Heaven. They advise others to settle on the hills and not in the valleys, because otherwise their huts would be swept away by the floods, owing to the terrible rains which the Hlangwinis have the power of causing to fall.

The second is not very refined, but is characteristic. Erotic allusions are frequent in those formulae :

Nkuna wa Mabutane; mabuta, ba yi bonile ku basa ka yona.
Nkuna of Mabutane; when wooing a girl, he has seen that she was pure.

Mabutane is probably a surname of Nkuna. There is in this formula a play on the word buta which means to woo (I. p. 101). Before choosing a girl, the ancestor first made sure that she was untouched ; this denotes a species of wisdom which his descendants still boast of to-day! 553

In epic poetry may be included also the *pshiphate*, a Zulu expression which means the laudatory sentence with which warriors praise themselves according to the Zulu fashion. Private individuals, and even women sometimes have their shiphato ; for instance a girl bearing the name of Yandea will glorify herself in these words : Yendea, madjaha! Yendea, the young men! This formula does not throw a very favourable light on the habits of the girl, and scarcely belongs to literature!

A more elaborate product of Thonga poetry is found in the *hunting songs*. I have already mentioned these (p. 60) and here give as a typical example the Elephant's song. I have been told by my informant, Zebedea Mbenyana, a Native of Bilen, that the hunters performed it whilst dancing on the body of the enormous beast, after having transfixed it. 533 224 115 539

1st Strophe.

533 They march in single file, the Elephants, the mighty ones,
224 They go to slake their thirst.
539

Antistrophe.

Let us go too! They're drinking amongst the thickets! Hurrah

2nd Strophe.

Hark! the smothered roarings in the forest.

Antistrophe.

'Tis a grand sound, the roaring in the forest. Hurrah!

3rd Strophe.

The crying of the elephant, the mother! 'Tis she who calls the hunters to the thickets.

Antistrophe.

Hurrah! 'tis she who calls the hunters! Ho! Hurrah!

4th Strophe.

Yonder's the one with ears so large and drooping.

Antistrophe.

Hurrah! the big-eared one has just passed us. Hurrah!

5th Strophe.

The boys are there; the sound of knives being sharpened, there from the spot where the elephant has fallen.

Antistrophe.

Hurrah! the sound of knives being sharpened. Hurrah!

This composition certainly exhibits wonderful poetic power and grandeur, describing marvellously the emotions of the courageous band, who have finally succeeded in obtaining the precious tusks of the elephant, and vast quantities of meat. This song of triumph is worthy of a place amongst the best productions of the Muse of primitive races.

195 To the imaginative mind of the Bantu everything that causes a deep impression, even material objects, affords an occasion for the utterance of lofty phrases and words of praise. Once when travelling south of Delagoa Bay through the desert, our party arrived in the neighbourhood of the Umbelozi railway. The

train was heard in the distance. One of my servants was busy 195
cleaning the pots ; I heard him muttering the following words :

The one who roars in the distance... The one who crushes in pieces the braves and smashes them ! The one who debauches our wives : they abandon us, they go (to the towns to lead a bad life) ! The seducer ! And we remain alone.

He was extolling the huge thing and lamenting his misfortune and the curse it has brought upon the country.

IV. *Satiric poetry.*

I have already mentioned the peculiar custom of Thonga 533
literati of speaking in a round-about fashion, and using figurative 195
language, especially when they want to say something disagreeable 574
or to give vent to their humour. It is but one step from such 576
forms to satire. They generally indulge in this satiric vein when 539
dealing with relatives-in-law, women being especially prone to it. When the sisters and aunts of a married woman go to pay a visit to her, they convey all kinds of equivocal compliments. These must not be taken seriously! It is a round-about — exceedingly round-about — way of making graceful allusions and expressing their mutual esteem. I will quote the series of these songs of friendly chaff and invective as it was given to me by Shigiyane, with a running commentary to render them comprehensible. These lively and pointed choruses give a fitting finishing-touch to the marriage customs, and illustrate the curious relations existing between allied families, which I explained in Vol. I, p. 249-253.

On the wedding day the women who take the bride to her 585
husband sing the *tjeka song* : 533

Let us go with her, but let us go back to our homes! 539

This is an ironical way of saying : "She is going to find trouble : we won't follow her as far as that!." The same idea runs through all the songs which these women sing during the next few days.

585 When they accompany the bride to her new home, they sing :

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U ya kwi, Mamano! — Whither goest thou, mother?
U ya kwi shana? — Whither goest thou?
Ba ta tshaha shihundju ni lihlelo, mamano!
They will bring thee the basket full of maize and the fan, my mother!
Ba ta kuma u tlokoli, ba tlokolisa, mamano!
When thou hast finished crushing it, they will make thee crush it again, my mother!
Ba ta kuma u kopoli, ba kopolisa, mamano!
When thou hast plastered the floor, they will make thee plaster it again, my mother!

But when they come on a visit, carrying jars of beer as presents to the newly married couple, they are much less guarded in their language, ridiculing the poor husband and his family, and making fun of every one in general. They begin singing on the way, with the jars on their heads :

He ntshonga, banhwanyana, he nga batjanana
He la libango; fa hi nga labi, we manyana.
Ku laba manyana ka ñwan'a manyana.
We are a small band, young girls; there are few of us.
We are looking for a piece of meat on the spit; formerly we should not have known where to find any, our sister (so and so)!
Now our sister will get some for us from her husband!

Hi kokobisa lobe, hi ya kwihi shana?
Hi bhanu ba ku yalwa!
He fambaka ñi khombo, ni khombo dji le kaya!
Where are we going, thus dragging the hook behind us? (1)
We are the people that are hated.
We walk in misfortune (2), the misfortune that has befallen our house!

Ka ku kandja ñwana a ku na kule.
Wo khunga he lihanyi, we koko!
Ya kokowela : kowe-kowe-kowe.
Where a daughter lives it cannot be very far off.
Go there, grannie, limping and leaning on thy staff!
Listen to the hen cackling. She says : kowe, kowe, kowe. (3)

[222] (1) They compare themselves to women who have been in the fields, picking kwakwa fruits (p. 17), and are so heavily laden that they cannot carry the hook used for pulling the fruit off the trees; they have had to tie it to their belt, and drag it behind them on their way home. The travellers give it to be understood that they are not out for pleasure!

(2) That of having to go and see a brother-in-law who ill-treats their sister.

(3) This line is an encouragement to the old woman who finds the walk long and tiring. The other women promise her a fowl at the end of their journey, which the son-in-law will kill for her. Note the first line of the third verse : it is a kind of proverb.

On arriving at the village they stop at the edge of the stream : 585 533 539 574

Fulamelani, banhwanyana, hi ya nwa mati nkobeni.
Stoop down, young women, let us drink water in the valley.

Finally they settle themselves in the home of their *bakoñwana*, their relatives-in-law, and begin to insult their hosts.

Ba yala na wo mbengana loko a boleka !
Ba li : " Famba, u ya teka kwenu u buya wa ta sila ".
Ba yala ni shudana, ba yala ni musana
Ba li : " U ya teka kwenu u buya wa ta tlokola. "
They won't lend (our sister) a grindstone when she wants to borrow one.
They say to her : " Go home and fetch one and then come back and grind. "
They won't lend her the small pestle and mortar.
They say : " Go home and get your own, and then come back and crush your maize. "

Then they make fun of the mother-in-law, who is whispering with the other women of the village, making arrangements, doubtless, for the good entertainment of the visitors. They pretend to discover in these asides some terrible plot.

A li ñwono-ñwono ! Mabulela ya nati lweyi ! Hi file ! Hi lobile !
That woman over there is whispering ! What can she be saying !
We are dead ! We are lost !

As for the head of the village, these shrewish visitors accost him thus :

Ñwenyi wa muti, hi wene ? A ku hi hi mati, hi ñwene ?
A he hlayi wone, ya nhlobo ! Hi hla byala ne sope !
Are you the master of the village ? Are you not going to give us any water to drink ?
We don't mean well-water ; we mean beer and brandy !

The villagers approach to salute the new-comers, who sulk and refuse to say a word. Large pots are made ready for cooking food.

Mi kokela matambeko, mi kokela bamane ?
Kambe hi balala, hi nga ka manyana !
You prepare the large pots... For whom are you making them ready ?
We are enemies, we are !

585 The young folks catch fowls in order to feast them properly
533 They raise objections.
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A hi djyule kwee! A hi djyule kwee!
Hi djyule nkoka-hi-pindja!
We will have nothing to do with that which cries kwee. (The cry of the fowl when being killed.)
We want the animal which is led with a string (a goat).

But it is the husband who has to put up with the worst insults.

Ha! matinga-tingela ya nhunu lwe! Loko a hi bona a ku tlhanya [illegible]ubu.
Ah! see how he wants to avoid us! As soon as he sees us he runs [illegible]d hides behind the houses! (He is afraid of us!)
Hi laba tima-mbilu! hi djyula mafura ya ku nona phobo.
We want something to satisfy the heart! We must have our fat very rich!
Nyoka ya nyoka! Mbyana ya mbyana! Yi whee!
Serpent that thou art! Dog that thou art! Thou sayest bow-wow!

Then to show him that they really like and appreciate him, they add, with the true untutored rudeness which they maintain to the end of the visit :

A ku hi lobolele? Na wene, bana ba ku ba ku lobolela ki khume ni ntlhanu!
Won't you buy another wife from us! Later on your daughters will bring you a dowry worth fifteen pounds sterling!

Finally, after having had plenty to eat and to drink and a good dance, they will remark, on leaving :

Hi tlhome nyonga ya mbuti, hi muka
Twine the goat's bladder in our hair, that we may go home.

All this is not very high-flown poetry. The general intercourse between relatives-in-law is by no means refined and this rudeness contrasts with the ordinary civility of Native life. Let us remember that this way of speaking is not intended to show a want of politeness on the part of the visitors, but, on the contrary, is the behaviour suited to the occasion! I have the music of some of these songs, which were noted down by Mrs Audéoud, in Maputju. In No. 13, the bridesmaids actually exhort the bride not to follow her husband! But they are the last to expect her to follow their advice.

V. *Dramatic poetry.*

This is perhaps too lofty a term by which to designate the 533
kind of songs, or other literary productions, which I am going 535
to describe. Primitive folk have no theatre, no elaborate tragedies or comedies. But our tribe certainly possesses the rudiments of histrionic art in the dances accompanied by songs, which are called *tinsimu ta Ronge*, the songs of Ronge. The word *Ronge* does not seem to be related in any way to Ronga. It is applied to an old collection of songs in which dancing played the principal part and which were quite peculiar to the clans of the Coast. They were performed after harvest, when the storehouses were full and when the Ba-Ronga bid themselves : "Eat, drink and be merry!" Boys and girls used to remain in the bush for many [177]
weeks learning these dances, in a kind of school, which may have taken the place of the circumcision school ; the latter has been suppressed for more than a century in these districts. I say, these songs *were* performed, — because they are now fast disappearing, having been replaced by Zulu songs, called *mudjatu* and *muthimbo*. These are, in their turn, giving way to new dances called *gumpsa*, in which young boys and girls put on milala palm leaf dresses. These were the great novelty in 1908 and pupils of the Mission schools were deserting them to play gumpsa. Another new dance is called *shiloyi*, and consists in the imitation of boatmen : the performers sit down and execute movements similar to those of sailors pulling a boat, to the accompaniment of song. The *shindjekandjeka* was another dance executed by the wives of Mubvesha (I, p. 287). Most of these dances take place in the capital, and the Chief summons all the boys to take part in them. This is not absolutely obligatory, but should any one begin the training, and then leave before it is finished, he will be fined. No doubt these complicated dances mark the beginning of a theatre, as will be seen shortly : they at any rate give the impression of an organised ballet.

Many of the songs refer to *historical events* in the life of the clan, or to by-gone occurrences, almost forgotten, and it is for

533 this reason that some of them are so difficult to understand ;
535 they also vary from one clan to another. The following, according
539 to Spoon, is the most popular song in Nondwane. An individual performs on a drum to give the time to the dancers. Around the drummer, in a semicircle, are arranged the girls who sing the refrains (tekelela), and clap their hands to encourage the soloist (musimi). Farther away, in concentric semi-circles, stand the

The Ronge dance.

men of the village, dancing but not singing. Between the two semicircular ranks the soloist has free play. He commences by saying :

> Ndji pfumala shigoba sha nakulori.
> Why ? I haven't got a partner for the dance !

The girls reply :

> Hi hlula hi mbilu yi babisaka.
> Our hearts are indeed very sad.

He continues :

> A pei na ntshumu ! Makweru Ñwakubyele a fanaka ni pataka dja balungu.
> Never mind ! My brother Ñwakubyele (will do very well), for he shines like one of the Whites' silver pieces !

Ñwakubyele was a Counsellor whose home was about three quarters of an hour's walk from Rikatla. He was probably a famous dancer. The words of this song would hardly seem very inspiring, but the noise of the drum, the clapping of hands, the dancing, — and the flow of beer, — all helps to account for the intense pleasure which these games afford to the Ba-Ronga. 533 539

Another Ronge song is in praise of another dancer :

Ñwahangwa ! Ñwahangwa ! Loka ba shi bona, shi ne nkaukelo !
Shi bombisa tinsimo ta ku tala ta Ronge !
Ñwahangwa ! Ñwahangwa ! When one sees him (one admires) his beautiful figure. . . .
He is the perfect performer of the numberless Ronge songs.

Still another, on the same theme, celebrates Gilela, a choregraphic artist who must have rejoiced in a marvellously slim figure :

Ú tlanga, Gilela ! Wa tlanga, likhalo li fana ni ngoti !
Ñwatshibeni ! tlanga ! tlanga ! Ku tjhongo ; hi nga tolobele !
Thou dancest, Gilela ! Thou dancest and thy waist is no thicker than a string !
Son of Tshimbeni ! Dance, dance. — That was too little. — We have not yet had enough !

I came across three other songs which seem to refer to actual historical events, but only one of these is sufficiently comprehensible to be worth transcribing. The music of the first phrase is very characteristic. (Tune 37.)

Ndji wela, ndji wela, Ñwatembe ! Ndji wela, ndji tjike ndji wela.
Ndji koka mabyatsho ; ndji tjutjuma, ndji ya tlhasa ka Ntshangane.
Sala muti wa Muhari ! — Ndji tjike, ndji wela !
I cross the stream. I cross the stream. Oh Tembe ! I cross the stream, let me cross the river !
I tow the boats. I fly away as far as Ntshangane.
Good bye, village of Muhari ! — Let me cross the river.

The two men of Tembe, who sang this song to me, telling me that it was a very popular one, were unable to explain its meaning. It is not difficult however to imagine the circumstances under which it was composed. It probably refers to fugitives, coming from the South, arriving at the Bay of Lourenço Marques, and asking the Coast dwellers, subjects of Muhari (a chief of Tembe in the XVIIIth century), for permission to cross the water-

533 and to continue their journey northward to Ntshangane (1), that
539 is to say Bilene, where they wished to take refuge. The memory of their wanderings has thus been preserved in a popular song.

These examples will show that the Ronge repertoire is a varied one, but I have still to transcribe that which is, at least as far as my knowledge goes, the most curious of the whole collection. It was explained to me in detail by Shigiyane who, in the Shirindja country some fifty years ago, in the Mpatshiki district, (on the borders of Nondwane), had often taken part in the performance, always in the rôle of soloist. In her opinion it is an absolutely typical song. It is no exaggeration to say that it is almost a dramatic production, and we might rightly call it the *Shirindja comedy*. It comprises five parts — I was on the point of saying five acts, — which follow one another, but without, it must be admitted, any kind of logical sequence.

The *First Act* may be entitled "The old men's march." All the adults of the village go out into the bush, — let us say to the west, — whence they return to the square, halting and limping and dragging their limbs along, as if suffering from some complaint which prevents their walking. To a monotonous air they sing the following words:

Ndji laba batlhaben ! Angati leyi ya masengwe ya tshabiss !
Lomo kweru, mamana, we, angati leyi yi ndji tsimba ku famba ;
Ndji teka mumphinyi, ndji tshebukela ku djima,
Yi yengeta yi ndji tsimba ku famba !
Psi yengeta, psi ba roma loko ndji tjhama.
Psi ka ne mpuri, nesi wa ku famba.
I am looking for some one to put leeches on me ! This complaint, this cursed lumbago is terrible !
In our village, oh ! my mother ! alas ! this trouble prevents my walking.
Take the handle (of my hoe). I start for the fields to till them. — And this thing stops me !
And it annoys (my relatives) to see me sitting down (doing no work). She may well be annoyed, the beauty, the good walker !

(1) Nishangane is a surname of Manukosi who did not establish himself in Bilene much before 1820 or 1830. But for various reasons it is probable that this name already belonged to an ancient chief of the country, and that Manukosi simply adopted it as his surname. If this song really dated from the time of Muhari (a chief who reigned in the Tembe clan in the middle of the XVIIIth century), it would be the oldest of the Thonga literary productions yet collected. This fact would prove also that *Shangaan*, the name commonly given to Thongas in Johannesburg, is a very ancient one.

During this song, the old folks come to the village; then 533
the young ones go out, in the opposite direction, returning in 539
due course to sing their verse, which forms the second act.

Second Act. Their story is that of a son-in-law who turned his mother-in-law out of his house, because she was suffering from smallpox. The poor old woman went out to die in the bush, in spite of the protestations of her daughter against her husband's cruelty. The husband and wife are heard giving expression to their feelings :

The son-in-law : (Solo) Ndja famba, ndja famba, na ndji nyenyemuka...
Ba mu hlongola, a famba a ya fela ahangale.
I am going away ! I am going away ! I am going away in disgust'
Let her be turned out and let her go and die in the bush !
The daughter : (her part is sung by all the actors in chorus)
Ndji tjetja shitlambutana, shi fambaka shi hona abuhlambo.
Lomo kweru, ka Mpatshiki, hi nga hanyi ! Hi yabana timpasln ni mashaka.
Psi yentsha he yo ngati ya kutane !
Ngati ya kutane ya tshabisa, hosi ya nga !
Psa ku hlongola ni mukonwana, a famba : a buya a kulubisa ku hlaya, shi hundja hi la, ba [illegible]ongola, a famba, a ya fela hangale.
I feel pity (whe[illegible]ce) smallpox making its ravages and ruining the face.
Here, at home, in the village of Mpatshiki we no longer live ! We no longer are kind to each other, even amongst relatives.
It is the fault of this terrible disease.
This disease is truly terrible, my lord !
It has driven the son-in-law from his home ; he goes, but returns with cruel words. The old woman comes this way, she is turned out ; she goes away and dies in the bush !

The Third Act begins when young and old are assembled on the village square. It is a dialogue (shibalekana) introducing a certain Gebuza, a man of Nondwane, who took refuge in Shirindja some time in the middle of the last century, when Zihlahla's warriors, led by Machaquene, went to fight in Nondwane on behalf of the Whites. This Gebuza was much beloved by Mpatshiki, a sub-chief living in the South of Shirindja, as we shall see in the fifth act. In any case he was a great dancer, and also possessed a marvellous faculty of saying a great deal and meaning very little! Listen to the following : a voluble dialogue is kept up between this individual and a young man named Mahlahlane.

533 *Gebuza.* Nanjduwe, Mahlahlane ? My friend, Mahlahlane ?
Mahlahlane. Ha makweru ! Say on, my brother !
539 *G.* Tlanga, makweru ! Dance, my brother !
M. U tlanga, u ndji tlula, You dance better than I do,
makweru ! A pai na ntshumu. my brother ! That doesn't matter.
G. A ndji pai tibanga I did not know that,
lepsako, nambe u le makweru, although you are my brother.
inha ndja ku tlangisile I could please you with my dancing,
Nhaviyana. Nhaviyane.

Here the sense begins to be lacking... it concludes with a cross-fire of utterly meaningless remarks.

Mahlahlane. Eee ! That's it !
Gebuza. Nhaviyana bantsindja. Nhaviyana, the people of the capital.
M. Eee ! That's it !
G. Nhaviyane basurumana. Nhaviyana, the Mahometans.
Yi banga mahlolana ! That works wonders.
Khumbu-khumbu dja Mayingandlela ? ? ? ? ?
A siku dja tolo. Yesterday.
Ku ta wa shikumbu sha ndladla ? ? ? ? ?
Ndji ndjuluka ndji nha, I go back, that's what I do.
Kupa-kupa ha matikeriñwane. Etc. etc...

On hearing this extraordinary production, quite as unintelligible as our Swiss children's "empros" — eena, meena, mina, mo, etc.,— the whole company dance in silence, going through various contortions which are doubtless as full of meaning as the dialogue which precedes them.

In the *Fourth Act* all the actors re-enter the stage and commence the *shiombelane*, the hand-clapping with which they so often accompany their songs. They sing the following chorus :

Mamana, n'ta ku yini ?
Ina, hi tlakula Mpatshiki, ñwa-matlanga-ni-tinsana-ta-batjongwana !
He tlanga psigaba, Mpatshiki !
Ntlhamulo, ndji nyike hi psikwembo, ankulweni !
My mother, what shall I say ?
Oh ! yes ! let us praise our Chief Mpatshiki, he who loves to play with little children !
We dance the Ronge dance, Mpatshiki !
The echo (of our songs) comes back to us from the gods along the whole length of our villages !

Evidently the singers are celebrating the joyous gaiety of this fête, where all are happy, the Chief good-natured, and wherein the gods themselves (the deceased ancestors, probably buried in the sacred wood near the village) join the living.

Fifth Act. A few songs in which Gebuza plays a prominent part, constitute the finale. He was an interminable braggart

when once he started on stories of the contests between the 533
Nondwane and Zihlahla clans. Instead of tilling his fields, he 539
idled away his time in his village, in the shade of a nkanye, the tree of bitter fruits (nunge)... Hence the following dialogue :

Gebuza. Tjikan, ndji hlayô !	Let me tell you...
Chorus of Shirindja : U hlaya tshini ?	What silly tales do you want to tell us ?
G. Tjikan, ndi hlayô.	Let me tell you...
Chorus : He baka Bidjiankomo...	We folks of Bidjiankomo (1) (this is what we say) :
Psigaba psi ne nsiku, i ka leyi ;	There is a day for singing, it is to-day ;
A ku djima, a ku psi koti.	As for work, you are incapable of it.
Gebuza ! Ankanyen lo'kulu lo'wa nunge ; psigaba psi ni nsiku i ka leyi.	Gebuza (you who are lazy), under your big nkanye of bitter fruit there is a day for singing ; this is the day !

The moral of this is sufficiently obvious : "To-day we sing, we dance : but this is not everything. To-morrow we must start with the tillage for the new year."

Doubtless in each small Ronga clan similar songs and dances are performed. They seem to us exceedingly childish, but also very innocent, and show us the taste possessed by these people for musical and literary productions (2).

VI. *Action songs, or songs sung while at work.* 533

I remember once ordering one of my boys to roll along an empty cask, in which we were collecting the rain water. There was a little water in it, and this made a gurgling sound inside.

(1) The forefathers of Mpatshiki, who was the chief then reigning.

(2) I should like to include in this category one of the songs of which Mungamane, the blind minstrel (p. 187) was particularly proud, and which he performed when the dancers paid him an extra fee of 200 reis. It is a dialogue between a husband who is not satisfied with the wife he has bought and the men of his village :

The husband. I have gone to lobola a woman ; I have paid twenty-eight pounds ; I expected she was worth something, and lo ! she is a woman of no account. How did you dare, you, her father, to claim such a big sum, saying that she would be a help to me, when she is so utterly bad ? I will take her ; I will give her back to her parents and claim my money in order to buy another.

The men of the village. No ! Have patience with her ! Do not send her home. Do you not see that you will bring misfortune upon yourself ? Did she not bear you children ? Who will cook your food ? Who will clean your clothing ? When strangers pass through your village, who will give them food ? To go and claim one's herd is troublesome ! Send your children to fetch water ! Send them to gather fuel !

533 Rolling it with vigour, the boy imitated the noise of the gurgling all the while, apparently with great pleasure. Natives are very [461] fond of singing and shouting when at work; they evidently find help in the conjunction of music and labour.

[539] Many Thonga songs belong to this category. There are songs sung by women when pounding their mealies (I. p. 334), or when carrying their jars of beer or of bukanye to the capital. One of these *psirwalo* songs, extolling Mzila, the hawk that is in heaven, has been quoted I. p. 402. I heard it in February 1893, when an extraordinary inundation had filled all the little ponds in the hollows, and the lake of Rikatla had swollen to ten times its usual size. Beginning with the word: "Chwe! Chwe!" a descriptive adverb which renders the impression caused by a wide surface of water shining in the sun, the women sang:

Chwe! Nambyana wu tele!
The lake has overflowed!
We seek the hawk who soars in the sky!
Who is the hawk? It is Mzila!

For the music of the song see tune 17.

On the wharf at Lourenço Marques, one could collect a good number of the carrier songs, sung by the boys who carry loads from the ships to the Custom House. Some are highly impressive, full of guttural sounds such as: Ama-haussa-haussa! There is generally a soloist who intones (sima) and all the boys, covered with dust, clad in sacks, their eyes beaming, seize the heavy piece of iron, the bulky case, raise it rhythmically to their shoulders, and carry it with measured tread to the shed. To have a clever soloist who keeps good time is essential, and I was told that such artists are well paid.

I would remind the reader of the *travellers' songs*, an example of which has been given when speaking of the journeys of the traders in the interior (p. 144).

But the richest collection is that of *sailors' songs*. I heard one of these, (tune 18), on the Nkomati, repeated a hundred times in a monotonous fashion by a boy who was pushing the boat along the shore with his pole, from Morakwen to Lourenço Marques:

"I siloyi, I ndandale," he said — (these words have no more

meaning than tra-la-la) "They are starving at Ntimane, siloyi..." 533
He was journeying from the Ntimane country, near Khosen, and having heard that the crops had failed, went muttering this great news all down the river! Perhaps the song was not of his own composition, but was an old refrain which had been preserved on account of its catching tune.

Mrs Audéoud, during her long journeys on the Maputju river, [461]
noted down many of the tunes, Nos. 19-22, some in two or even three parts, curiously harmonised. The Native sailors seek in this way to vary the monotony of rowing, punting or towing the boat. No doubt a great many more such tunes could be collected.

VII. *Incantations.*

Children, as we saw, (I. p. 68), are fond of singing curious little melodies to various animals : to the big *galagala* lizard, to the *chameleon*, to the *crab* with one claw, to the *owl*. The tune of the words addressed to the owl is No. 36.[1] The boys of Rikatla used to salute our ox-waggon, when it appeared on the plain, with song No. 35 :[1] "Gweymanâo! — here are the oxen", they said running all round the span, the girls following them and lifting up the babies in their arms, to show them the strange machine and the long-horned oxen walking slowly, with impassive looks, through the little black throng.

Incantations of a more serious type are the *songs of exorcism*, 533
performed to the accompaniment of rattles, big tins and drums, 789
close to the ears of the person supposed to be possessed, in order to induce the spirit to reveal its name and to " come out". No. 37[1] is one of the most celebrated songs of this category, and has really a great deal of character. I shall speak of it again when dealing with possession.

VIII. *Songs accompanying tales and games.*

As we shall see, little songs are very frequently introduced 533
into the tales to embellish them, and are generally repeated 538
three or four times over, as if the narrator wished to exhaust

[1] [Errata: read 31 for 36; read 30 for 35; read 32 for 37.-- Analyst]

533 all their charm. Some are very primitive, like No. 33, the
538 murmuring of a little boy who has been swallowed together with his oxen by an ogre called Nyandzumulandengela ; imprisoned in the stomach of the monster, he entreats him to let him out! Another, more elaborate, is the lament of the mother whose child has been stolen by the Baboon, and who follows the animal weeping and asking it to give the little one back to her. (Tune No. 35.) Tune No. 36 belongs to another ogre tale, concerning the suitors of pretty girls who are really only hyenas transformed into men. Some one knows their true nature, and forces them to appear as they really are, by chanting their song :

Manyange, the leg belongs to me !

the song in which they dispute with each other about the leg of the girl they are wooing! The most complicated of these songs is that in the tale of Zili (No. 34) ; it is a duet, and was sung to me by two Mpfumo girls so distinctly that I could easily take it down. It is very interesting as an illustration of the laws of harmony amongst the Thongas.

C. FOLK-TALES.

538 Folk-tales are by far the most interesting and valuable part of the Thonga Folklore, and before citing any new examples of those curious and charming stories, I shall try to show their importance in the Life of the Tribe, their literary, ethnographic and philosophic value.

I. *The place occupied by Folk-tales in the Life of the Tribe.*

538 In Vol. I. p. 350, we have seen the inhabitants of the village,
517 after their evening meal, gathered round the fireplace, devoting themselves to innocent amusements ; first, guessing the piece of charcoal, pulling their fingers, asking each other riddles, — those

CHAPTER III

Music.

533 Music in a more or less rudimentary form, plays a great part in the Life of the Bantu tribe. Some tribes are more gifted than others in this respect. In the Province of Mozambique the Ba-Chopi are certainly the best musicians, as we shall see. But Thongas are also great singers and players, and their dances are invariably accompanied by music. What is its character? The melodies and rhythms are very difficult to catch, and I do not pretend to give here a full and definite description of Thonga music; but the following specimens will convey a fair idea of it, and a study of their musical instruments will help us, in some measure, to understand their musical system.

A. MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS.

1) Wind Instruments.

534 The simplest is the *shiwaya*, an empty sala shell, or the shell of a Kafir orange (p. 19): it has two holes, one through which children sing, another which they alternately shut and open, the withdrawal of the hand allowing the sound to be emitted; the result is a monotonous wu-wu-wu, which is sufficient to amuse little boys.

Next in importance comes the *nanga*, (yi-tin) the goatherd's flute, made of the tibia of a goat, or of some other animal, on which the boys play two notes, generally in thirds. This is truly the infancy of art, but the tone of these little flutes is very sweet and wonderfully in keeping with the bush life, the bleating

of the goats and the nudity of the artist! There are many kinds 534
of goatherds' flutes. One is called *ndjwebe* ; its sound resembles mbvrrr.... mbvrrr.... Natives are in the habit of putting a feather inside their bone flutes in order to keep them clean.

Another more elaborate flute is made of a reed, having a hole at one extremity for the mouth, and three others at the other extremity for the fingers. According to the number of holes stopped, the sound varies. It is called *shitiringo* (Dj.), or *shitloti* (Ro.), and Native artists are capable of producing pleasing tunes upon it. No. 39 in my collection of tunes is a shitiringo melody, heard on the banks of the Great Tabi.

But the true tinanga are the trumpets which compose the *bunanga*, the band already referred to (I. p. 431) as being one of the manifestations of Court Life. They are also called *timhalamhala*, from the name of the mhalamhala (Hippotragus niger), the large, dark antelope whose horns are employed for the manufacture of these trumpets, together with the horns of the mhala (impala) antelope. These instruments are tuned according to rule. Ten of them, each having a different sound, form a *simo*, a kind of orchestra, completed by the big and the small drum already described. They are used to accompany the special 535
dances which take place in the little capital of the Ronga clans, and in which the players are themselves the dancers, marching behind each other, with peculiar contortions, narrowing and widening their circle according to the time beaten by the drum.

The bunanga players receive a regular training before going 533
to the capital, to play before the chief. When they have prepared the numbers of their programme, they all go to the capital, each sub-chief leading his band, for a musical contest. The tinduna act as judges. Each *simo* plays in turn. The judges discuss their respective merits, and when they have come to a decision, they call a young man to proclaim the result of the competition. This proclamation is called *ku tjema shibangu*, to cut the contest, and is performed in a very curious way. The herald has an axe in his hand. With a loud voice, he pronounces the verdict : "So and so played badly ; so and so better ; the one who played best is so and so." — "Nkino hi nkhensa wa ka man." Then he

533 beats the trunk of a tree with his axe, as if he wished to confirm the decision, and runs away. This is to avoid protests and insults from those who did not win!

No. 40 is a tune played by the bunanga. It is very monotonous and the music is evidently not so important as the dance, the rhythm, and the contortions. There are only four notes in this tune. However it is probable that the ten instruments of the simo form a whole octave, with two notes below it, the same as the ten keys of the timbila which will presently be described. Unfortunately I have not been able to ascertain if this is actually so, having only once witnessed the performance of the bunanga. I am afraid the bunanga orchestra of antelope horns has now entirely disappeared from Ronga territory.

2) Stringed Instruments.

534 As regards stringed instruments, they possess the *unicord harp* called *gubu*. There are two different forms of it ; the *shitjendje*, which consists of a bent rod, a bow, both extremities of which are united by a string made of milala palm fibres (nkuha), or a piece of wire. On the lower part of the bow a calabash is fixed as sounding box. The shitjendje is held upright ; one hand grasps it at its lower extremity, whilst the other beats on the lower third of the string with a little stick. The hand which grasps the instrument places its finger on this lower third of the string in different places, so as to vary the length and produce different sounds.

A gubu player.

534 this method? The second hypothesis is highly probable. Of
533 course there may be slight differences between the instruments, which is not astonishing, as they are made with primitive implements by unskilled workmen ; but the proof that they are all made according to a fixed rule is that many timbila are often played together by musicians who form an orchestra. This is rarely the case amongst Thongas but frequently amongst the

A timbila player.

Ba-Chopi, who are the true "masters" of this instrument. It is said that, in this very musical tribe, Native pianists sit in a line along the street of the village (for their villages are built in a straight line) and play together, all the throng of men dancing in front of them. I witnessed a similar performance when the Crown Prince of Portugal visited Lourenço Marques in 1907. Great feasts were given in his honour ; 25,000 armed warriors defiled before him, and thirty timbila played the National Portuguese Anthem. The Administrators who taught these Native artists to play that difficult tune on their xylophones deserve every congratulation! It was wonderful. The melody

534 was quite recognisable and played in perfect tune. If the timbila
533 had not been tuned to the same pitch, this concert would have become a dreadful cacophony! In the Johannesburg Compounds the East Coast boys manufacture timbila themselves, of smaller and larger sizes, some with enormous keys made of common pitch-pine boards, and emitting deep low tones, the sounding boxes being empty oil cans. They succeed in tuning them more or less perfectly. So every citizen of Johannesburg can hear their concerts, and witness their dances, in the Compounds of the Ferreira Mine and elsewhere on Sundays, and, though these ugly pitch pine timbila seem a parody on the beautiful instruments played at home, still the performance is worth a visit! (1)

● 533 The existence of the timbila is a proof that these tribes possess a real musical system. The Ba-Chopi are the "masters," and

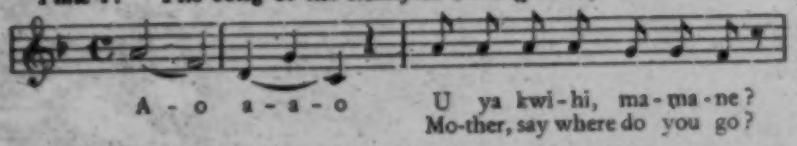
(1) I have lately received some additional information on the timbila from my son, the Rev. H. Ph. Junod, who is living in Manjakaze, not far from the Chopi border. The keys are cut from a very hard tree, the mwendja, which is first put into a big fire in order to make all the sap run out. Large stems of that tree were used by the Ba-Chopi to built their strongholds when they fought against Gungunyana forty years ago. They have been exposed long enough to the rays of the sun to have dried perfectly, and the instrument makers employ them to furnish their keys. The artist begins with the lowest. His father was himself a timbila player and he tunes his keys in accordance with those of the paternal instrument, slightly diminishing the thickness of the little board till it gives exactly the same sound. This explains how all the instruments are tuned to the same pitch. It is not an easy job to find oala shells of all the required sizes. The vibrating membrane is made of the diaphragm of a small rodent called khweva. All the xylophones seen by my informant in Chopiland start from D (or E flat?). Some have 10, some 12, some 14 keys. Some have only four, but they are enormous and emit deep sounds like drums; they are employed to accompany the others. It is rare nowadays to hear orchestras of timbila, as most of the men are constantly away from their villages, working for the Whites; but individual players are still frequently met with, some of them possessing great dexterity.

The xylophone is widely distributed all over the African Continent, Thongaland being the most southern point where this instrument is found. I saw a magnificent example in Vendaland, in the village of a counsellor named Chikhobokhobo. It had no less than 23 keys forming three complete octaves with two supplementary notes at the top. The owner of this piano was very proud of it and kept it in a special hut. I believe it to be the same which was greatly admired at Wembley where it was exhibited in 1925 by Mr C. T. Harries, the Native Commissioner. In Barotseland the xylophone is called *sitinde*, *marimba* amongst many other tribes of Central Africa, *budimba* or *imbila* amongst the Ba-Ila, and *beta* in the French Soudan. Mr Ch. Joyeux, who published an interesting paper on "Quelques manifestations musicales observées en Haute Guinée française" (*Revue d'Ethnographie et des traditions populaires*, Paris, 1924, p. 183-212) has analysed the xylophone of that country and found exactly the same succession of sounds as in the Thonga timbila. The prototype of this instrument is said to be found in the Dutch East Indies and in the Malay Peninsula.

this is generally admitted; the Thongas, however, are not far behind them, some of them having learnt to manufacture the instrument, and a great many playing upon it quite artistically. In order to define this musical system more precisely, let me now give the 41 following tunes as examples, some of which I owe to Mrs Audéoud, whilst the majority have been noted down by myself. 533

B. A COLLECTION OF THONGA TUNES. 533 539

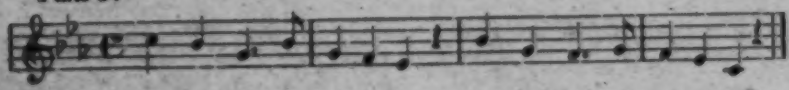
Tune 1. The song of the Manyisa bard (p. 185).



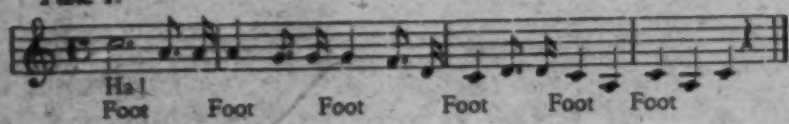
Tunes 2. 3. 4. 5. 6., heard far away through the bush in the village of Muzila, sub-chief of Rikatla, in the years 1890-1893. In N° 4 the singers were beating the ground with their feet to mark the time. In 5 and 6 boys answered to men and girls to women in the usual antiphonic fashion.

Tune 2.

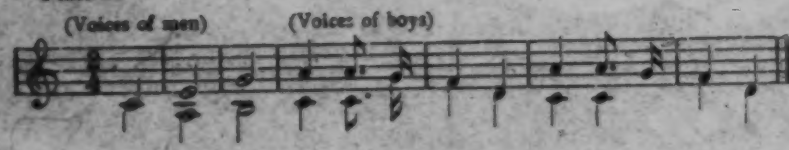
Tune 3.



Tune 4.

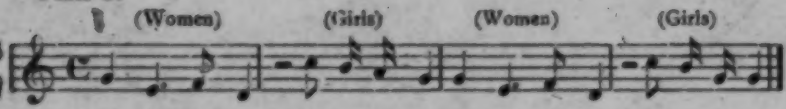


Tune 5.

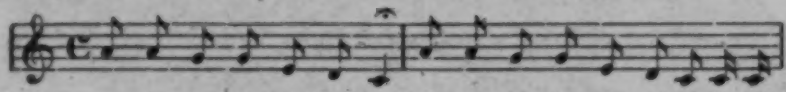


Tune 6.

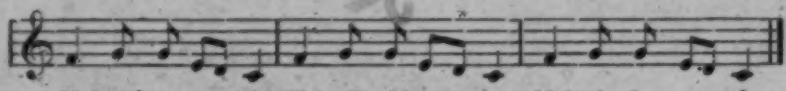
533
539



Tune 7. The Complaint of the childless woman (p. 188).

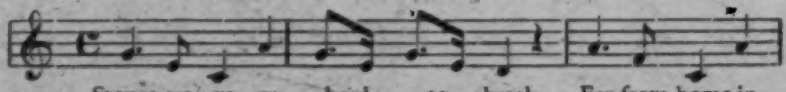


A ba bo-le-ki ñwa-na? Ba bo-le-ka tshu-ri ni nkamba!
They won't lend me a ba-by! They lend me but a mortar...

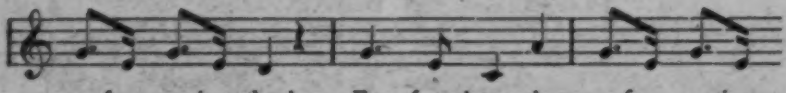


Ngi ndji ma-nga tlu, Ngi ndji shi-mu-ngwe. Ngi n'ta ku u-tla.
Were I an ea-gle! Were I a bird of prey! Quick would I carry it away!

Tune 8. Complaint of the boys going to Johannesburg (p. 189).



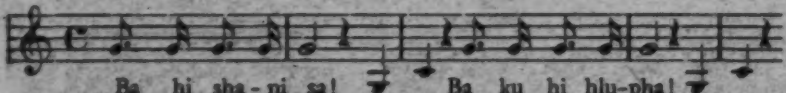
Stones are ve-ry hard to break, Far from home in



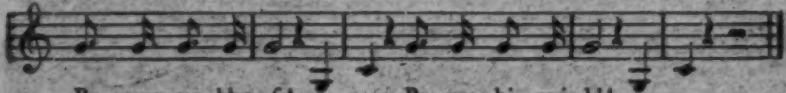
fo-reign land. Far from home, in fo-reign

land, Stones are ve-ry hard to break.

Tune 9. Complaint of the Nkuna boy (p. 189).

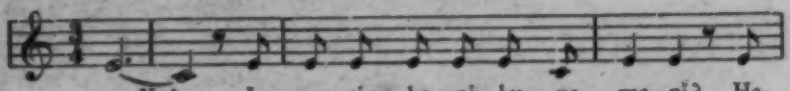


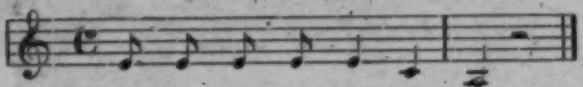
Ba hi sha-ni sa! Ba ku hi hlu-pha!
They treat us bad-ly! E-he! They are hard on us! E-he!



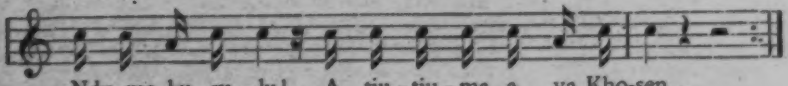
Ba nwa ma-kho-fi! Ba nga hi nyi-ki!
They drink their cof-fee! E-he! And they give us none! E-he!

Tune 10. The song of the Crab (p. 190).

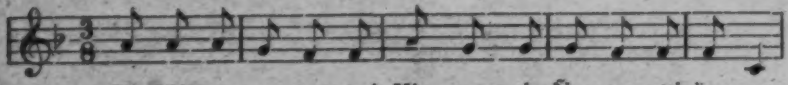


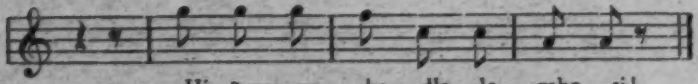


Tune 11. The lament over the deported chief Ñwamantibyane (See I. App. XI.).

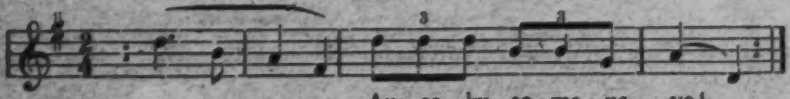


Tune 12. The same lament as sung thirteen years later, with accompaniment of the shitjendje:





Tune 13. The song of the bridesmaids: (p. 200) "Do not go with him". (Mrs. Audéoud, Makulane). (Comp. p. 197).

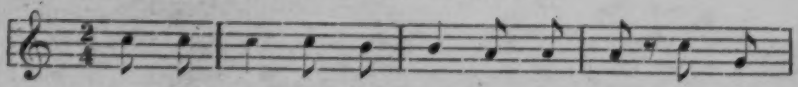


533 539 *Tune 14.* Mourning song heard after the death of Hamunde's wife who was drowned in the lake of Rikatla (1893) (p. 191).

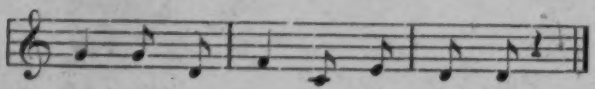
Ma-ma - nee! Ma-ma - nee! U ndji si-
O my mo-ther! O my mo-ther! You have left

yi - le u yi kwi - ni!
me, where did you go?

Tune 15. Old Nkuna mourning song (p. 192).



Hi ba - na ba Nhu - mba ya nti - ma Hi ba-
We are sons of the house, the black house.

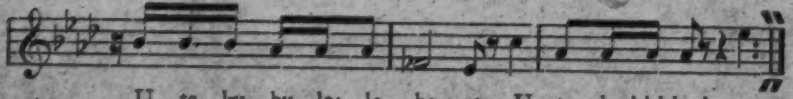


na ba Ma - la - la ni ngo - be.

Tune 16. Mourning song at the death of Chief Tshutsha (Maputju. Mrs Audéoud) (p. 192).

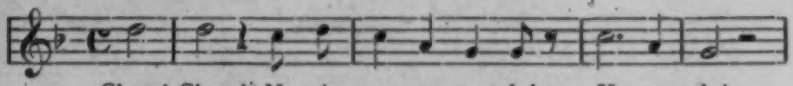
Ha - mban mu-tha - ka - ti, Ha - mban mu-tha - ka - ti,
Good bye, you, wi - zard, Good bye, you, wi-zard!

bu - le - la ba - ntu, Ha - mban mu-tha - ka - ti,
you kil - ler of men! Good bye, you, wi-zard.

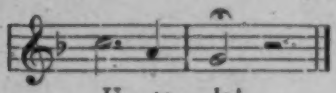


U ta ku bu - le - la ba - ntu U te - ka b'si-kwin.
Why do you come and kill our folk, You come in the night.

Tune 17. Song of the women carrying "makanye" to Muzila (I. p. 402. II. p. 208). 533 539

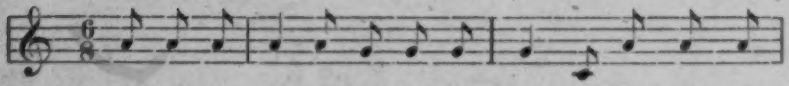


Chwe! Chwe! Na-mbya-na u te - le! U te - le!
Hi la - ba shi-mun-gu Le - shi ka
Shi-mhu-ngu hi ma-ni? Hi Mzi - la!

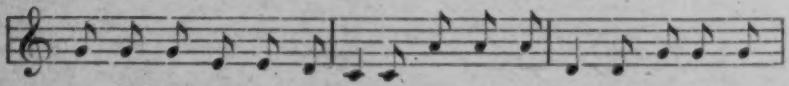


U te - le!
Le ti - lwen!
Hi Mzi- la!

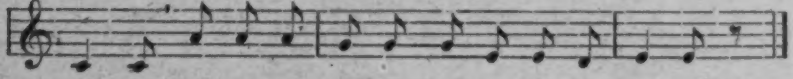
Tune 18. Sailors' song on the Nkomati River (1904) (p. 208).



A hi si - lo - yi, A hi nda - nda - le. Ku ni ndla-
A hi si - lo - yi, A hi nda - nda - le. They are starv-

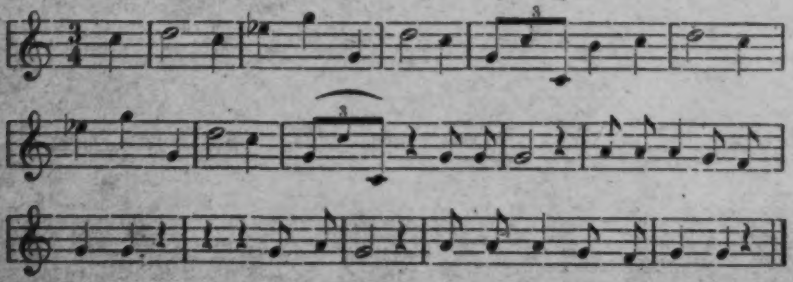


la ka Nti-ma-na, si - lo-yi. A hi si - lo - yi, A hi nda-
ing at Nti-ma-na, si - lo-yi. A hi si - lo - yi, A hi nda-



-nda - le. Ku ni ndla - la ka Nti - ma - na, si - lo - yi.
nda - le. They are starv - ing at Nti - ma - na, si - lo - yi.

Tunes 19, 20, 21, 22. Sailors' songs on the Maputju River. (Mrs. Audéoud. 1906-1907).



Tune 20.

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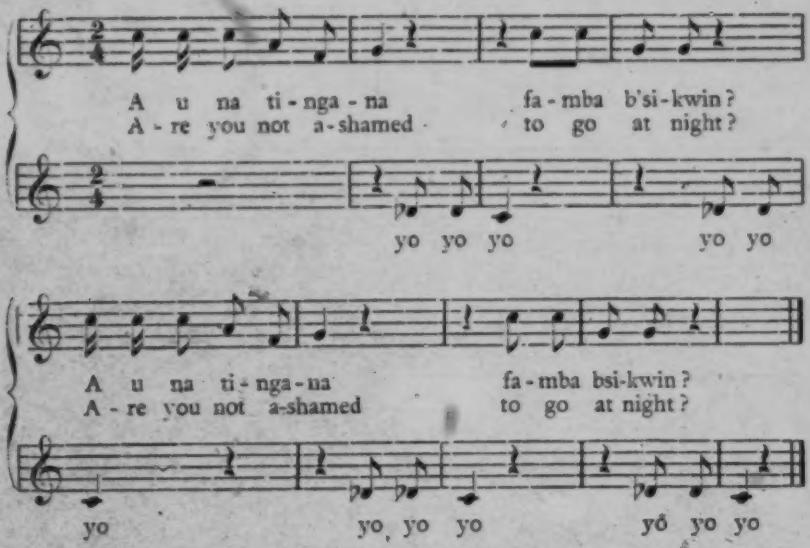
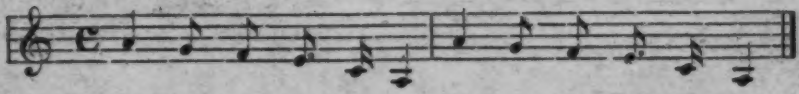
Tune 21.

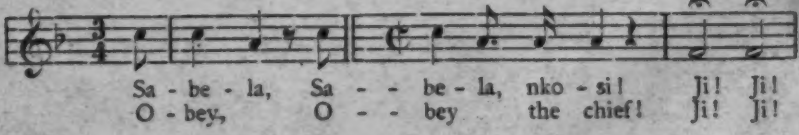


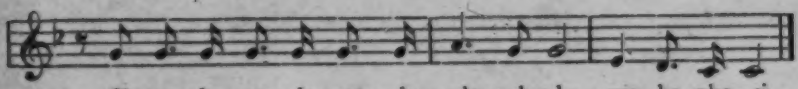
Tune 22.

Tune 23. Carriers song.



Tune 24. War song sung at the coronation of the Mpfumo chiefs (I. p. 373).





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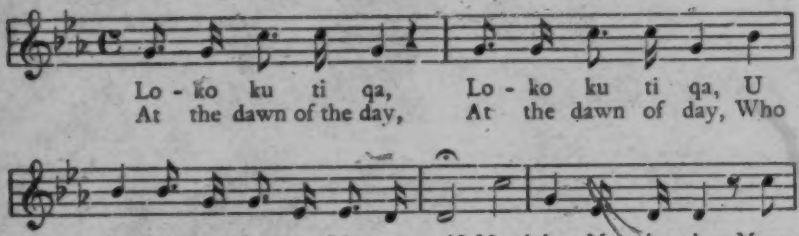
Si ya ku we - la mu - la - mbu mku-lu wa ka nko - si.
Let us go, let us cross the great ri - ver, that of the chief.

Tune 25. The great war song of Maputju (p. 194).

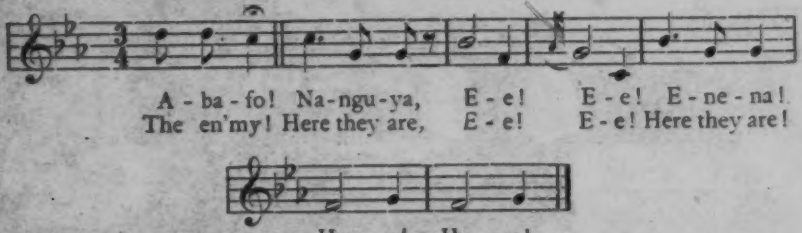


Lo - ko ku ti qa, Lo - ko ku ti qa, U
At the dawn of the day, At the dawn of day, Who

be-kwe ngu-ba - ne Mu-wa - yi? Mwai ka Ma - bu-du, Mwa-
is he that crowned thee, Muwayi? Mwai of Ma - pu-tju, Mwa-

yi, ka Ma - bu - du, U be - kwe ngu - ban!
yi of Ma - pu - tju, Who has crown - ed thee!

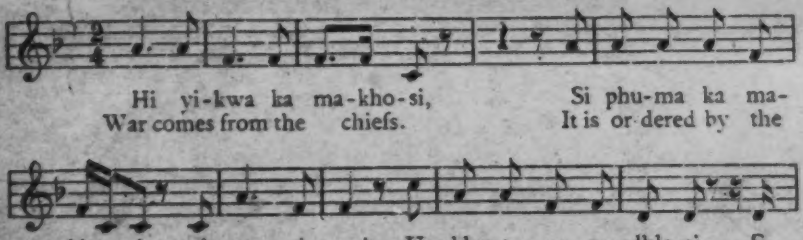
Tune 26. Marching song of the army (I. p. 469).



A - ba - fo! Na-ngu-ya, E - e! E - e! E - ne - na!
The en'my! Here they are, E - e! E - e! Here they are!

Ha - a! Ha - a!
Ha - a! Ha - a!

Tune 27. The song of the spear (Nkuna) (I. p. 461).



Hi yi-kwa ka ma-kho-si, Si phu-ma ka ma-
War comes from the chiefs. It is or dered by the

kho - si, si ga - mbu - za! U-mkhonto se sa-ndhle-ni E-
chiefs. We go and kill! The spear is in our hands. E-

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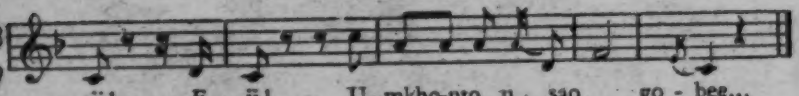
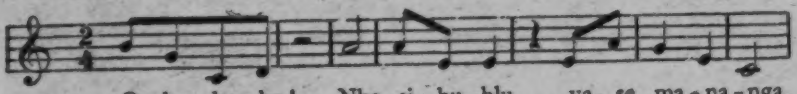
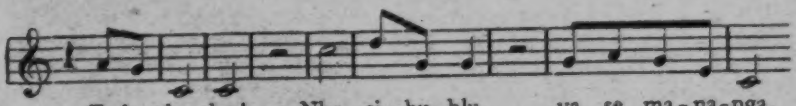


ji! E - ji! U-mkho-nto u sao go - bee...
ji! E - ji! The spear kills and bends in the wound.

Tune 28. The Giraffe of the desert (Nkuna, Nondwane). I. p. 461.

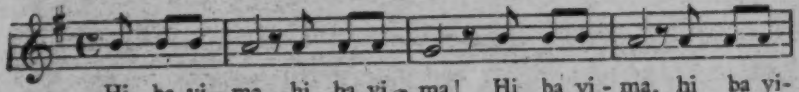


O - ho ho - ho! Nha si hu - hlu, ya se ma - na - nga.
'T is the gi - raffe, far in the de - sert.



E - ho ho - ho! Nha si hu - hlu ya se ma - na - nga.
'T is the gi - raffe, far in the de - sert.

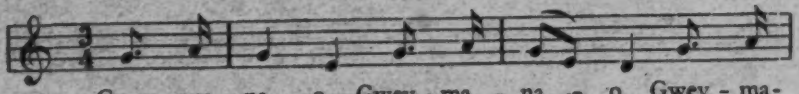
Tune 29. Oldest Nkuna war song (I. p. 461).



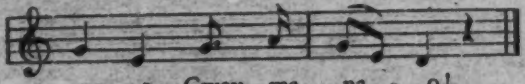
Hi ba yi - ma, hi ba yi - ma! Hi ba yi - ma, hi ba yi-
Let us stand fast, let us stand fast! Let us stand fast, let us stand

ma! Mi te - ka bu - re - na mi nyi - ka ti-nu-ba ta ba-mbe!
fast! Do not let your strength go, it would help the en'my to con-quer!

Tune 30. Childrens'song welcoming the trek oxen (p. 209).

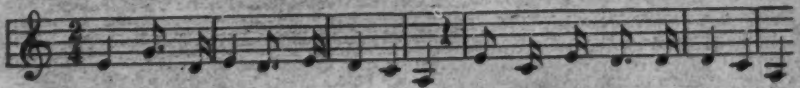


Gwey - ma - na - o, Gwey - ma - na - o, Gwey - ma-
See the o - xen! See the o - xen! See the



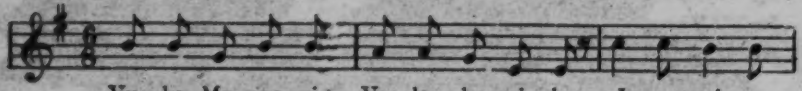
na - o, Gwey - ma - na - o!
o - xen, See the o - xen!

Tune 31. Childrens' song to the owl (p. 209).

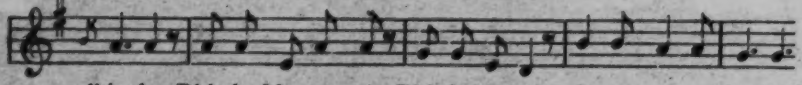


Shi - ko - ta-na gau - le - la fo - le, Ñwa-mbengen gau - le - la fo - le.

Tune 32. Incantation to the spirit during exorcism (p. 209) (Part VI). 533 539



Vu - ka Mu-ngo-ni, Vu-ka, ku - si - le, I - nyo-ni ya
A-wake, o Zu - lu, The day has come, Now the bird is

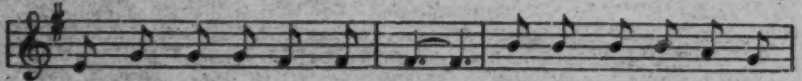


dhla - la. Dhla-la Mu-ngo-ni, Dhla-la va-len, I nyo-ni ya dhla-la.
sing-ing. Play al - so, Zu - lu, Play in the bush, Now the bird is singing.

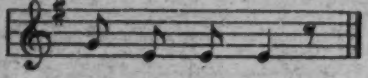
Tune 33. Song of the tale of the ogre Nyandzumulandengela (Timbila song). (p. 210).

Nya-ndzu-mu - la - nde-nge - la, Ndzu-mu - la - nde-nge - la!

Ndji hwe ti - ho - mu ta nga ndji mu-ka! Nya ndzu-mu-la - nde - nge-
Give me my o-xen, please, that I may go!

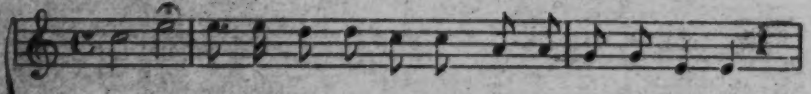


la, Ndzu-mu - la - nde - nge - la! U - te - ki - le mi mhu-
You have ta - ken me and



nu u mi - ta!
you swal-lowed me!

Tune 34. Song in two parts, in the tale of Zili (p. 259).



Zi - li! A - ma - se - se - ndi - ni, a - ma-sen - di { ba - ba!
{ old Man.

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Si - lo - yi - le } se - se - ndi - ni, I nya - ma mu - ne, ya ku
You bad wi-zard } — What's that kind of meat, ve - ry

nha - ti { se - se-ndin, I ka - la nki - la ka li - ho-ndjo,
strange meat { — It has got no tail, it has no horn.

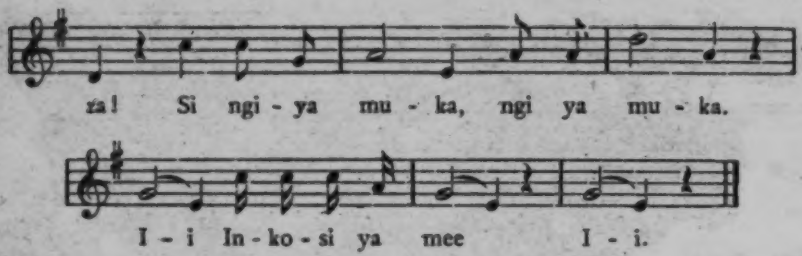
se - se - ndin. Zi - li! A - ma - se - se - ndi - ni, A - ma-

se - ndi } ba - ba! Si - lo - yi - le } se - se - ndin!
} old man, You bad wi - zard }

Tune 35. Song of the mother whose child has been carried off by the Baboon (p. 263).

Mfe - ne sa - ndhle - ni, Mfe - ne sa - ndhle - ni, A

u ngi dhla-yi - se - le mu - nta - na - me, si ya ndo - ndo



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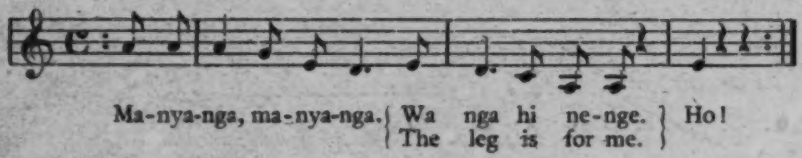
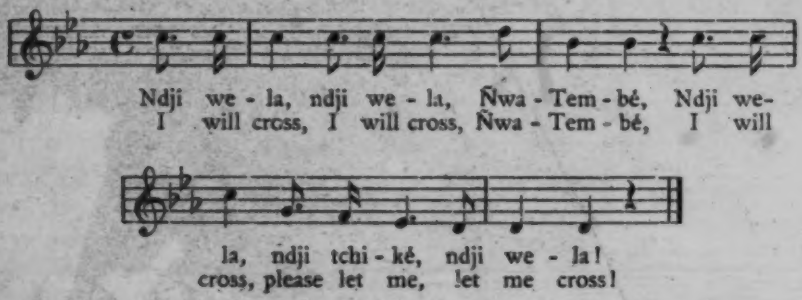
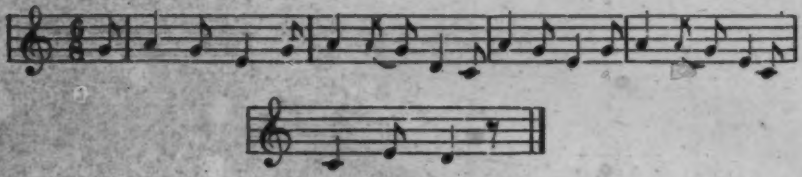
Tune 36. Incantation by which hyena-men are transformed into hyenas, in an ogre-tale (p. 210).



Tune 37. One of the Ronge songs (p. 203).



Tune 38. A tune played on the shitiringo flute on the banks of the Great Tabi (p. 277).



Tune 39. A shitiringo tune from Shiluvane.

533 *Tune 40.* A bunanga tune (I. p. 431, II. p. 277).

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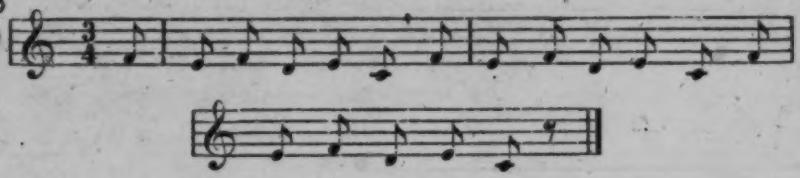
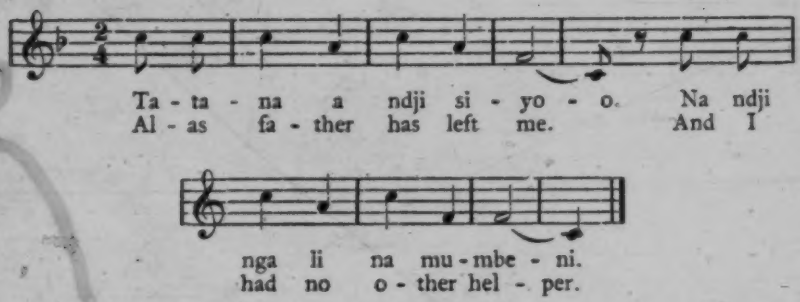


Tune 41 (p. 189).



C. THE MUSICAL SYSTEM OF THE THONGAS.

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Having now studied the instruments used by our tribe, and a certain number of tunes, we can try to come to some conclusions as regards its musical system. Let it be said, first of all, that such conclusions are only provisional, and I do not pretend that they are final. Noting down Native tunes is a very delicate task, as nothing is more plastic than sound, and however accurate we have tried to be, we may have introduced something of our own into this transcript. Nothing but phonograph records would be scientifically beyond suspicion! However between all these tunes there is enough similarity, enough family likeness, to convince students of primitive music that they are genuine, and that we are entitled to draw some deductions from this material.

As regards *rhythm*, it is generally very well marked, being emphasised by the accompanying instruments, and the movements of dancers: arms lowered in cadence, weapons brandished, feet stamping the ground at regular intervals, etc. However I

did not always find it easy to catch, and there are certainly sudden 533
changes in the time which put the hearer out of his reckoning. I have heard people assert that in primitive music rhythm is by far the most interesting element. Anybody having witnessed a war-dance, or the performance of the East Coast boys in the Johannesburg Compounds, will be able to certify that there is a wonderful sense of time in these productions. The binary combinations, 2/4 and 4/4 time, are met with more frequently than the ternary modes, 3/4 and 6/8.

The *melodic system* is evidently based on the scale of seven intervals, just the same as our own music. The presence of the scale underlying all this music is proved by the preceding tunes, but more specially, as we noticed, by the timbila. Most of the tunes could be played on this primitive piano, which is evidently constructed according to the rules of the ordinary scale. I came to the same conclusion when teaching the sol-fa notation to raw Natives, and I remember having a class of boys, just from the bush, in Lourenço Marques, who, at the first lesson, after a quarter of an hour, were singing our scale without difficulty; what seemed to be unknown was the name of the seven notes do, re, mi, etc., but the sounds themselves, in their regular succession, were quite familiar to their ears. One hears sometimes of a scale which has but three or four notes. Does it exist? Is not this succession of sounds "given" to the human ear, as also the succession of colours in the rainbow to the human eye? As we shall see, Natives do not distinguish all the colours. They use the same word, *libungu*, for yellow, and red; black and dark blue are also both *ntima*. Their eye has not yet been fully trained. Their ear seems to me to be more developed, and to have attained a distinct perception of the elementary sounds.

Let it be remarked, however, that there are differences amongst them. Some sing more in tune than others. Often they are a third or a quarter of a tone flat or sharp. I would say that they do not precisely sing out of tune, but they are not yet true on the note. But this will come with due training. I very rarely met with Natives with no idea of tune. This occurrence is, I think, more frequent amongst the Whites than amongst the Blacks. As

533 regards accidentals, I have seen some boys master the chromatic scale without much difficulty. But sharps and flats, viz., sounds which do not bear the ordinary, regular relation to those preceding or following them, are generally very difficult to catch, sometimes altogether beyond their reach. The use of European instruments will raise them to that higher level in the course of time.

But let us confine ourselves to their primitive state. They not only know our *major scale*, but frequently sing in the *minor one*. On the timbila, as we saw, they can play in the eolian method, viz., in a minor scale in which there is no raised seventh. In fact, even in the distinctly minor tunes, this raised seventh is never met with. We often notice the passage from the major to the minor, or vice versa, and our collection affords two striking examples of this musical procedure : in tune No. 33, the melody after 6 bars recommences a third lower : this is a characteristic timbila tune ; the melody, started on the third key, is played again starting on the first, passing from the major to the minor. In No. 25, at the end of the second bar, the reverse phenomenon takes place. The melody was first minor ; it is raised a third higher and becomes major for a while, returning later on to the minor.

The *character* of most of the Bantu melodies is rather sad, and this is generally explained by the assertion that they are in the minor key. I do not think this is true. Most of my tunes, 25, are undoubtedly major, 10 are minor, and 5 are mixed or doubtful. This impression comes rather from the fact that the melody almost invariably begins on a high note and descends to low notes, often ending on the lowest. The song starts brilliantly, triumphantly, and goes down, down, till it dies away on the lowest note. Hence the melancholy impression these tunes convey. The melody is very short, as a rule ; sometimes quite rudimentary ; its constant repetitions also produce a monotonous effect which enhances the sadness of the music. A professional musician, after having perused these tunes, once said to me : "Well, they are not 'jolly good fellows' your black people! Not a single dancing tune! Nothing merry about this music!"

The rules of *Native harmony* are very difficult to detect. They certainly exist. When you hear a chorus beautiful of voices,[1]

[1] [Erratum: Read - of beautiful voices]

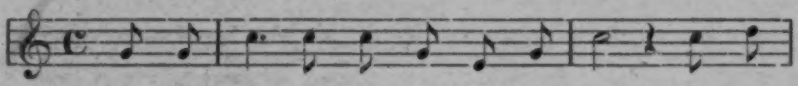
singing in two or three parts, you at once perceive great differences 533
between their system of harmony and ours. These choruses are by no means disagreeable, but are very strange to our European ear. It would be most interesting to seize them and note them down, but it would be a long job! I have succeeded at least in fixing the two parts of the song of Zili, which may be considered typical ; I owe it to two girls of Lourenço Marques, who had clear voices and lent themselves willingly and with great patience to the long investigation. A curious succession of fourths and sixths will be noticed, quite unusual in our music. The professional to whom I submitted this song told me it reminded him of similar chords found in the works of mediaeval composers like Bianchois, and Adam de la Halle. The fourth seems to be more acceptable to the Bantu ear than the third or the fifth. A collection of timbila music would be of great assistance in coming to a conclusion on the subject, as the artists invariably play with two hands, and a score of phonographic records taken in Johannesburg of a good player would be very valuable. Not having had the opportunity of making such an investigation, I must be satisfied to commend it to those who have time to devote themselves to it.

To sum up the result of this inquiry, I may say that Thonga music has certainly reached a certain stage of development, being based upon the seven intervals scale, recognizing the major and minor keys, and following a certain system of harmony ; but the melodies are still short and rudimentary and, although they may attain real grandeur when performed by hundreds of warriors, they are generally monotonous and sad. Notwithstanding this, the black race is essentially musical ; its gifts in this domain are real, and if properly developed they will certainly in time produce remarkable results.

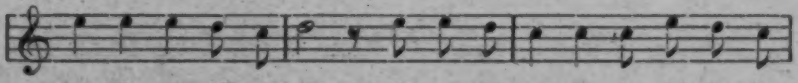
We can guess to some extent what contribution the Blacks will 533
make to the musical treasures of humanity when we hear the Negro 539
artists who travel round Europe singing the striking plantation songs which they learned from their fathers. As far as I know, South African Bantus have not yet published many musical compositions comparable to those of their American brethren ; yet educated Natives, even school children, already invent songs for their own pleasure which

533 are more elaborate than the old ones, but which retain the true Bantu
539 character. I will quote three which I managed to seize in the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques.

The first may be called *the song of the children who no longer wished to attend evening prayer*. I heard them singing it unnoticed on the Lourenço Marques hill. It must be said that on every Mission Station all the converts assemble every evening to attend a short service, bringing their children with them. It seems that, on one occasion, the missionary went away for a furlough and evening prayer was stopped for a while; it was however resumed when he came back home... much to the disappointment of the children, and they composed this song, whose words are perhaps not very edifying, though they ought not to be taken too seriously. The tune, at any rate, is charming:



A - shi - kho - ngo - to sha bu - si - ku! Le - psi
Eve - ning prayer of the mis - sio - na - ry! As he
Eve - ning prayer of the old Fu - ra - ngu! (1) As he



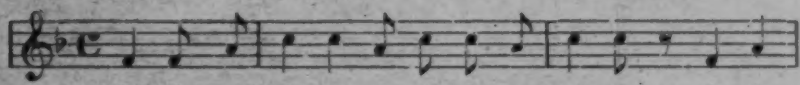
ku tlha - si - ki ye - ne, A ta hi psa - u - la hi ku ba
has now come home a-gain, The bell will ring, ring, ring, and it will
has now come home a-gain, It will say nwe-nwe-nwe, and it will

a - nsi - mbi Ni bu - si - ku: Hi nga ye - tle - li!
vex our ears, Du - ring the night: No sleep a - ny more!
vex our ears Du - ring the night: No sleep a - ny more!

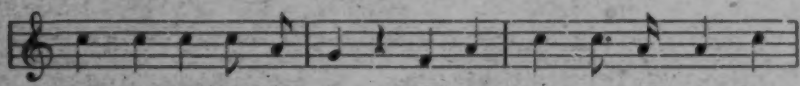
The second was composed *by a blind girl* of the Maputju country at the time of the Murimi Movement of which I shall speak later on (App. V). The prophet of this new god, Murimi, was travelling all over Thongaland to destroy witchcraft and to inaugurate a new

(1) "Old Furangu" is the church elder Frank whose name was transformed according to Thonga phonetics. In the following verses there are a number of descriptive adverbs imitating the ringing of the bell. It will say: go-go-go—rwa-rwa-rwa—nge-nge-nge...

era of prosperity and the chiefs called all their subjects, men and women, to take a snuff of a certain magical tobacco which would rid the country of all the killers by night. The young poetess imagines a woman, a witch, preparing to go to the meeting ordered by the chiefs in order to take the snuff. But she does not at all intend to renounce her criminal ways. She has in her power "psipoko" (see Part. VI, Witchcraft, and App. V), i. e. little folk no bigger than real babies, who are really dead people whom she has bewitched and whom she employs as slaves to till her gardens. During the day she hides them in the bush and during the night she makes them work. Now she takes leave of them before attending the meeting where she is determined to lie, pretending that she has nothing to do with witchcraft, whilst she is secretely determined to go on practising it. The song of the Christian girl reveals her duplicity and concludes by asserting that converts do not believe in this mass of absurdities.

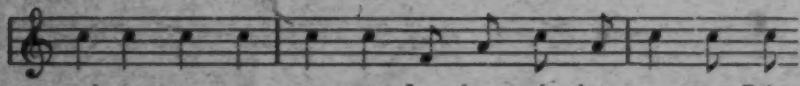


Ka hla - yi ma-ma a ku tjha-ma nho ben, Lo - ko
Their mo - ther told them: Keep quiet in the fo - rest, When I
But we, Chris - tians, we ob - ject, we don't ac - cept. What hea-



ndji da - hl - le fo - le, Ndji ta bu - ya ndji ta ku
have gone to take the snuff, I shall come back and I shall
thens want us to be - lieve, And we an - swer by clo - sing

te - ka, Ndji ya ku pha-me - la psa-ku - da. Lo - ko psi ku
take you, And I shall give you some-thing to eat. They cry, they say:
our ears When we hear from them all this non-sense.



u - we, u - we, u - we, Lo - ko psi ku u - we, Psi
U - we, u - we, u - we! They cry, they say: U - we, As

dji - le - la ku mam' Lo - ku psi ku: U - we! Bu - ya
they call for their mother. They cry, they say: U - we! Come back

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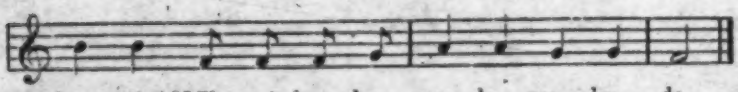
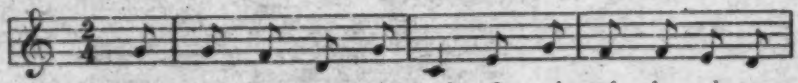


ka - ya! — Ndji ta ku pha - me - la psa - ku - da.
quick - ly! — Yes! I will give you some-thing to eat.

The third song is a sort of hymn whose author is a young evangelist belonging to the Chopi tribe, a tribe particularly gifted for music. This boy, named Onesime, was lame and lay for many years on his bed of suffering; there he composed quite a number of melodies which he taught his pupils. Here is the *Song of the Star*, which he himself wrote for me in Sol-Fa Notation, and in which he expresses the feelings of his pious heart:



Bo - na nye - le - ti le - yi yi ba - ni - nga-
Look to that star a- bove, which has come and is shin-
Let us be - lieve e'en now and we shall find hap - pi-

ka mi - sa - ba. Yi bo - na - ka - la he-
ing on the world. It has ap-peared in high hea-
ness, here and now. If we look to hea - ven a-

nhla Hi ti - mpsa - lu ta Shi-kwe-mbu
ven, By the grace of the Lo-ving God.
bove, We shall gain life and peace.

See at the end of this volume the Practical Conclusion of Part. V: *The Problem of Native Education.*

132 than any other. The life of every individual, and consequently
731 of the whole clan, is threatened. Famine will certainly follow,
789 as cereals can only be sown during these two months and famine means not only suffering and anguish, but often death, in a primitive tribe which is totally ignorant of trade with out-lying countries, and does not possess any means of conveyance for food bought in other lands. No wonder therefore that the imagination of the South African Native has invented ways and means of regularising the rainfall, and that rites, and charms, and all the powers of magic have been resorted to with a view to ensuring the precious rain to the tribe at the right time.

789 These methods may be classified in two categories : the rites which aim at removing the causes which are believed to prevent rain and the charms by which the rain is made to fall, irrespective of any preventing cause.

a) *The causes which prevent rainfall and the rites by which they are removed.*

821 The general view is that rain comes *from the gods* : "Psikwembu
789 psi nisa mpfula" — "the spirits of the ancestors cause rain to fall."
782 So, should the spring showers not come in due time, the first idea will be to offer a sacrifice to the ancestor-gods, especially if the bones consulted have revealed that the anger of the gods is the real
[533] cause. Men will go to the sacred wood where the ancestors have been buried, sing there an ancient mourning song (I suppose No. 15, page 286, is used for the purpose), and some of them will beat the graves with sticks. As regards the sacrifice, it consists of a black victim, or it may even be the offering of a living human being to the gods ; these rites will be described later on.

Or it may be that a certain individual, *a wizard*, endowed with magical power, or rather possessing enchanted drugs, prevents the rain from falling (a siba mpfula) through wickedness, or hatred of his countrymen. This is a rarer occurrence.

000 But the terrible calamity of drought is brought into direct

The Gods of the Bush, Psikwembu psa Nhoba, are also especially dreaded. There is a little song which is sung as a welcome to travellers who reach their home safely : 776 484 533

> Shikwembu sha nhoba shi etlele !
> Shi etlele, banhwanyana !
> Amadikeo-dikeo-dikeo !
> The god of the bush has remained asleep !
> He has remained asleep, young girls !
> Hurrah ! hurrah ! hurrah !

The spirits of the departed who wander about in the bush, not having been properly buried, try to attack innocent travellers. You are fortunate to escape their anger! For this reason they often say to a relative who is starting out on a journey : "Go with your god," viz., the special ancestor-god who can protect you against the dangers of the bush. 769 776 784

I have also heard mention of *Shikwembu sha tihanye*, the god of quarrels. When an offering prescribed by the bones and presented to a certain ancestor-god has not had the desired result, people say : "This god is a god of quarrels. Let us make an offering to the others so that they may scold him." 776 769

3) The Abode of the Ancestor-Gods and their Mode of Life.

Ideas on these two points are very confused, even contradictory. Some say that the departed go to a great village *under the earth*, a village where everything is white (or pure, "ku basa") ; there they till the fields, reap great harvests, and live in abundance, and they take of this abundance to give to their descendants on earth. They have also a great many cattle. The place where they live seems to be a kind of Hades or Paradise (1). But it would seem, when we consider the funeral rites, that the deceased, on the contrary, 775 776 787

(1) The Ba-Ila (see Smith and Dale, *The Ila-speaking people*, II p. 119) believe that the ghosts go *Kwiwe*, to the East, to Chilenga, the Creator. But they have the same contradictory ideas as the Thongas concerning the abode of their deceased ancestors. 171

Amongst the Natives of Barotseland, on the Zambezi, it is said that the dead go to Nyambe, the God of Heaven. They pierce the lobe of their ears and make other incisions in their bodies as a sign that they belong to Nyambe. When they die and reach the end of the earth at the great river Walamba (the Styx of the Zambezian tribes) the ferryman who conveys the dead to the other bank looks at them to see if

gatherings, after a death, the elder brother entreats the gods to 782
bless the family, to prevent bad feeling, or strife, to give wisdom and strength to the new headman, that he may be successful in his rule over the village (1).

When some great misfortune is the occasion for this religious act being performed, the petition is preceded, or followed, by a regular *insulting* of the gods. There are two words used to designate this curious part of the prayer : *holobela*, or *holobisa*, to scold the gods, or *rukatela*, the actual word for "to insult." There is an instance of this strangely impertinent manner of addressing the gods in the sacrifice for the sick nephew (p. 396). These insults are generally uttered while the priest is squeezing the psanyi over the shoulders of his subordinates.

The last part of the prayer is *its sudden termination*, when one of the uterine nephews puts a portion of the victim into the officiant's mouth, thus "cutting his oration" (tjema). This is a true part of the ritual. When the victim is a hen, it is the gizzard, which has been half roasted during the long prayer, that is used for this purpose. The priest eats it, and so is the first to partake of the flesh of the offering.

Prayers to the ancestors do not show very much religious 782
feeling, and are, at any rate, absolutely devoid of awe. Whilst 769

(1) *Music* plays no part in Thonga religious ritual. During the preparation of the 781
offering those present often sing, but these songs are those which accompany the ordi- 533
nary dances and bear no religious character. I only once heard of a true sacred chant. 776
Mungomene, the distinguished dancer and musician who made his living by the exercise of his art in the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques (p. 187) told me that when he presided over the worship in his village, he used to *sing his prayer*. He gave me the words, but unfortunately not the notes. They are worth quoting :

"Let the meat not stick in your throats ! Eat, you chiefs, you ancestor-gods... They are coming (the oxen) ; they see me, whilst I mourn you, my father and my mother, whilst I remain outside, where I receive life from you, who are below ; I remain, I am a miserable wretch.

"The oxen are slain ! Slay the oxen ! Here they are. I mourn you. Let us eat them together, you father and mother. Give me life and give it also to my children. Let us eat these oxen which I possess, but I possess them for you. Let us not suffer from complaints of the chest here in our home.

"This is the song by which we accompany you, as you return below. Let us remain in good health."

At a given moment the uterine nephew answered by saying :

"I magnify you, my father ! You shall see me, father and mother !"

And all those present, seeing that they would have plenty of meat to eat, joined in a chorus of praise, clapping their hands.

782 sacrificing, the Natives laugh, talk in loud tones, dance, sing
769 obscene songs, even interrupt the prayer with their remarks,
781 and insult each other about family matters. The officiant himself
533 sits on the seat designated by the bones, and speaks in a monotonous manner, looking straight in front of him with utter indifference.
776 There is nothing in his demeanour which denotes fear. An exception must perhaps be made in the case of those members of the Makaringe family who clapped their hands during the prayer in the same manner as when saluting "bakonwana" (p. 402). They have as much respect for the ancestor-gods as for their relatives-in-law, and that is, indeed, saying much. I have heard that in the Maputju country people kneel down during the prayer. In Nondwane women alone kneel, whilst the men sit on their heels, the customary attitude in worship (1). If the gods were actually old people, still living, they could not be addressed with more familiarity. This leads us finally to consider in what the divinity of the ancestor-gods consists.

d) The Divine Nature of the Ancestor-Gods.

776 I have brought together in a preceding paragraph (p. 372-386)
769 all that the Natives say about their gods. Now let us return to them, after having studied the religious ritual, and ask : What

(1) The Ma-Lemba, that curious tribe settled amongst the Thongas and Vendas of Spelonken which has certain Semitic customs (I p. 73) are much more respectful towards their ancestor-gods. They have prayer meetings at which the old men of many families assemble together ; one of them, he who knows the ancestors best, leads the others in prayer, "quoting all their mountains" viz. all the sacred hills where the ancestors have been buried, and at the end of each sentence they all answer : "hundjiii..." When the prayer is finished, they each raise an arm and say : "Amen !" This is one of the customs borrowed by them from the Semitic populations with which they came into contact in former times. When they heard Christians pronouncing the same word to conclude their prayers, they were very much astonished. One of them told me ; "This shows that we were Christians formerly and have become back-sliders." One of their formulae when praying is as follows. "You, so and so and so, help us and enable us to reach Mudzimu." Mudzimu is the name by which they designate the Supreme Being in whom they believe and of whom they say : "All that you eat, it is Mudzimu who gives it to you!" If a child refuses to obey, they say to him : "Mudzimu will see you !" For them the ancestor-gods are but intermediaries between themselves and Mudzimu. They often call themselves Basilamusi, Moslems, and claim that there were Moslems belonging to their tribes (A ba ri ba ka hina).

755 will have no effect ; no means of egress for the gods will be found!
787 (Compare Letter D. Divination). But a way will soon be found to get over this difficulty, and it will not be long before the sabbath is in full swing.

755 In the hut, right in the middle, the patient is seated. Dejected, with downcast eyes, and fixed expression, he waits... Everyone throughout the country knows that to-day, to-night, on the appearance of the new moón, the strange and terrible exorcism will begin. All those who have once been possessed will officiate. The director of the ceremony, the *gobela*, who has been appointed by the bones, holds his tambourine, made of the skin of the big varan lizard stretched over a circular wooden frame. (See Illustration p. 124, No. 9.) In the calm quiet of the evening air the first blow is struck. It reverberates, and is heard afar off on all sides ; it penetrates the thickets and reaches the neighbouring villages, where it inspires a strange emotion, a transcendent delight born of curiosity, malice, and I know not what feeling of unconscious satisfaction. All rush in the direction of the well-known sound ; each one hurries to the hut of the possessed ; all desire to take part in this struggle, this conflict with the invisible world.

They all assemble, some with tambourines, others with large tin cases picked up on the outskirts of the town (tins in which kerosine oil is sold in Lourenço Marques), still others with calabashes, filled with small objects, which do duty as rattles (ndjele, yin-tin) ; and now, crowding round the patient, they begin their hideous din, striking, brandishing, shaking their various instruments of torture with all their might and main. Some lightly touch the head or ears of the unfortunate sufferer. It is a frightful hubbub, which continues, with but short interruptions, during the whole night, or until the performers in this fantastic concert are compelled to stop from sheer fatigue.

755 But this is merely the orchestra, the accompaniment. That
533 which is most essential is the *singing*, the human voice, the *chorus of exorcists*, a short refrain, following on a still shorter solo, repeated a hundred or a thousand times, always with the same object in view, toward which all strive seriously and persistently, namely to compel the spiritual being, the mysterious possessing spirit which

is there present, to reveal itself, and declare its name, after which it 755
will be duly overcome. These songs are at the same time both 533
simple and poetic. They address the spirit in laudatory terms, trying to cajole it by flattery, to get on the right side of it, and thus induce it to grant the signal favour of a final surrender. Here follows the first of these songs which I heard. — One day, when I was travelling, hearing the uproar of a sabbath behind some bushes, I jumped off my waggon, and found myself right in the midst of an exorcism ceremony.

> Shibendjana ! u vukele bantu !
> Rhinoceros ! thou attackest men !

These were the words shouted by the singers round a poor woman who appeared to be in some sort of a dream, and was seemingly unconscious ; my arrival had scarcely any effect on the unearthly hubbub, in spite of the fact that the appearance of a White man in the villages of that district was generally regarded as quite an event.

When the hours pass without any visible effect being produced on the patient, the chorus is changed. The night may be far spent, and day-light at hand :

> Come out, spirit, you make us weep till sun-rise !
> Why are we thus ill-treated ?

Or, perhaps by way of bringing greater pressure to bear, they will threaten to leave the spirit, for good and all, if it will not heed the chidings of the frenzied tambourine players :

> Come, let us be off ! bird of the chiefs ! Let us go away (as thou treatest us so harshly).

The melodies of the exorcists' incantations have a singularly persistent, incisive, penetrating character. I had the opportunity of noting down one which was sung with a strange alto accompaniment in fourths. This tune is No. 32 in the collection (p. 291). The disturbing effect of this music was intensified by a very pronounced sforzando when the chorus took up the dominant phrase. This is the song, as universally known and sung in the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques.

> Awake ! Awake ! The daylight breaks ! Now the bird is singing !
> Play also, Zulu, play in the bush. Now the bird is singing.

755 The meaning is not difficult to gather. "Day is dawning.
533 Awake then, sleeping spirit! (This spirit is called Mu-Ngoni, Zulu, for the case is supposed to be one of Zulu possession). The birds are already sporting in the thickets. Soon we shall be obliged to go to our work and leave you! It is your last chance; come out and salute the morning and reveal yourself to us!"

This insistence is renewed. The patient begins to show signs of assent. The shikwembu is preparing to come out. Those present encourage it:

> Shawane! Mu-Ngoni. Huma ha hombe hi tindlela ta hu lulama...
> We salute thee, spirit! Come out gently by the straight way.

Meaning: Do not hurt the afflicted one! Spare him!

755 Overcome at length by this noisy concert the patient enters into a condition of nervous exaltation. The crisis occurs, evidently as a result of hypnotic suggestion. He rises and dances wildly in the hut. The hubbub is redoubled. They implore the spirit to *declare its name*. A name is shouted, a Zulu name, that of some ancient departed chief, such as Manukosi, or Mozila; sometimes, strange to say, the name of Gungunyana himself, although he was still living. An old woman, formerly possessed, told me that she cried out the name of Pitlikeza, and it appeared that this Pitlikesa was an itinerant Zulu bard, who wandered about the district of Delagoa when she was a young girl. She was quite convinced that the spirit of that individual had taken up its abode in her, years after Pitlikeza's passage through the country.

In the case of Mboza the patient was covered with a large piece of calico during the whole drum performance. A first medicinal pellet was burnt under the calico, in a broken pot full of embers, a male pellet (made of the fat of an ox or a he-goat); no result having been obtained, a second pellet, a female one, made from the fat of a she-goat, was introduced. The exorcist, Ňwatshulu prayed to the gods as follows:

> Help us, you Ngoni spirits (or gods, psikwembu). I received this medicine from your hands, so "they" must come out at once from my patient. Should he have swallowed a snake, or a toad, should these prevent the spirits from coming out, let these animals run away, far away, and provide an egress for the spirits.

755 questions put to it : "I entered into this *ligodo*, i. e. into this body, this vessel, in such and such a manner. Her husband had gone to work in the gold mines. I entered into him while he was seated on a stone, and when he returned home I left him and entered into his wife." — "Are you alone, spirit?" is the usual question, to which it may reply : "No, I have my son and my grandson with me ;" and, if the witnesses suspect that there really are several spirits in the patient, the tambourine symphony is again resorted to, in order to dislodge the entire company. Sometimes the possessed pronounces as many as ten different names.

Or it may be that the gobela only asks the name of the father and grandfather of the possessing spirit, in order the better to know the latter with all his genealogy. Such was the case with Mboza. "My father is Ndlebende," said the spirit. — "Ho!" answered the gobela, "then you are Mboza, son of Ndlebende." And he identified the spirit in that way.

755 It may be that, at the first sitting, the spirit will claim some
● 533 satisfaction : a "nturu," a piece of calico of such and such a colour. It is also generally at this time that the patient will *sing his song*. Every possessed person invents a song which will be henceforth *his*, and by means of which crises, or trances will be provoked or cured. Nwashinhwana sang :

> Alas ! my father ! Medicine-men can do nothing for me !
> Who will deliver me ?

Mboza :

I am the one who wanders about, I come out from the body of magicians.

These songs are generally in Zulu, and it is asserted that, even if the patient does not know this language, he will be able to use it in his conversation, by a kind of miracle of tongues!

The first rite is now completed. It has succeeded in forcing the spirit to reveal its name (1).

754 (1) Exorcism by drum beating is the classical method of expelling spirits. Of late
755 years, since 1910, another method has been invented called *ku femba* which, strange to say, is connected with a new word borrowed from European Animism, the word *shipoko*, now current in Thonga terminology. Shipoko comes from the Boer spook, which means ghost. According to the Native idea, wizards have power to enslave ghosts and make them work in their own fields during the night. They can also send them to take possession of their victims and torment them. If a patient is supposed to

C. SUNDRY COURT CUSTOMS

644 The paraphernalia of royalty are very modest in the Thonga courts. However there are some to be mentioned in addition to the regalia which I have described.

I. *The Big Drum* (Muntshintshi).

644 534 237 This is found in every capital, even sometimes in the sub-chief's villages. It is made of a hollowed stem, somewhat like an ordinary mortar; or it may be rounded, and even provided with three legs, as in Nondwane; a piece of skin is stretched over the opening. This may be the skin of an elephant's ear, of a buffalo, of an ox or of an antelope *mangulwe*. This instrument is subject to some taboos; when the skin cracks, it is forbidden to look inside. There is something mysterious about it and nobody must disclose that mystery. People say that a bullet is introduced into it when it is made. In Shiluvane they asserted that the skull of the hostile chief, Sikororo, killed in the battle of Nov. 1901, had been put into the big drum! At any rate, there is a special individual who is summoned to repair it and he receives a fowl as reward.

644 534 731 202 The big drum is beaten on various occasions:

a) To announce a great fatality, especially the death of a chief, or the day of the publication of the mourning; also the approach of the inundation, when the Nkomati river rises, in January or February, and threatens to cover the whole land; again when the bush fire threatens to destroy the capital.

b) To summon warriors to the capital in case of imminent war.

644 534 c) To execute various musical performances. The big drum leads a special dance (nkino), which takes place at the capital during the winter, when the harvest is ended, and the country happy and prosperous. It is accompanied by a smaller drum (shikolombane) which is called the "son" of the big one. The

644 534 *shikolombane* is more elongated and has no legs. Its sound is high and piercing, while the tone of the *muntshintshi* is deep and low. The music proper of this dance is provided by the *bunanga*.

II. *The Bunanga*.

533 644 This is the regular *band*, which is met with in every royal clan. The word comes from *nanga*, trumpet (pl. tinanga). But the trumpets composing the bunanga are not the common pierced tibias of goats used by the herdboys. They are larger horns of the mhalamhala (Hippotragus Niger), or of the mhala (Zulu impala), pierced at their base in such a way that they produce different tones. These instruments are made by specialists, (it was Ñwamatshomane in Nondwane), so as to form a kind of orchestra (simo) composed of ten instruments. To play them is a veritable art. The players stand round the two drumbeaters. The big drum gives the time : when it beats slowly, "tu-tu-tu," the ten musicians must dance in a ring, viz., they must march after each other, playing, making certain grimaces and gesticulations. When the drum beats more slowly and more softly, they must retire in a line and march slowly. The drum quickens the time : then they come to the centre once more and dance in a ring, quicker and quicker. The executants follow each other in a given order, the largest and deepest horn being in front, the smallest and highest toned one at the end of the group. Sometimes three or four orchestras perform at the same time (1).

The bunanga is an old Ronga custom and is very picturesque indeed. As for its musical importance, I shall refer to it again in Part V.

533 609 (1) I remember having heard the bunanga practising in the various sub-clans of Nondwane in 1891, as each sub-chief had his own. They were preparing to go to the capital to mourn Maphunga whose death had just been announced. I saw the bunanga performing its best melodies before Lord Selborne, when he came to pay a visit to the Portuguese settlement of Morakwen in 1908. The Administrator had organised a "batuque" for him (the name given by the Portuguese to these native dances), and the warriors of Nondwane did their best to interest the White Chiefs!

III. *The shipalapala.*

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Speaking of the musical instruments of the Court, I must also mention *the trumpet of assembly, shipalapala,* which is the recognised means of summoning the subjects to the capital. The sound of the big drum, though heard at a great distance, cannot reach to the confines of the country. So, when the chief wants his men to assemble at once, he uses the *shipalapala.* This is a horn of mhalamhala, or of nyala or of phifa antelope, the sound of which is like mpu-ù-u (with an accent on the second syllable). The envoy of the chief runs to the capital of a sub-chief, blowing all the time. When he has reached that village, he transmits his message and a young man starts at once with the shipalapala of the sub-chief to another district. So, in a short time, notice is given to the whole tribe to assemble.

IV. *Visitors.*

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When a stranger passes through the capital, he must sit down outside the central square and at some little distance from it. Some one will come and inquire what he wants ; he replies : "I come from such and such a country, and I wish to pay my respects to the chief." Then the counsellor or "Agent General" charged with the affairs of the traveller's country will come and converse with him and announce him (bika) to the chief, who will receive him affably and possibly assign him a hut to sleep in, in case he wishes to stay the night, at the same time providing him with food. Should the chief be particularly well disposed towards his guest, he will kill a calf or even an ox for him ; and he, on his return, will speak in praise of the hospitality he has received, saying : "The chief made me share his reign," literally : "He made me reign, (a ndji fumisile)." Such is the procedure when the respective countries of guest and host are adjoining and the tribes

CHAPTER III

Music.

533 Music in a more or less rudimentary form, plays a great part in the Life of the Bantu tribe. Some tribes are more gifted than others in this respect. In the Province of Mozambique the Ba-Chopi are certainly the best musicians, as we shall see. But Thongas are also great singers and players, and their dances are invariably accompanied by music. What is its character? The melodies and rhythms are very difficult to catch, and I do not pretend to give here a full and definite description of Thonga music; but the following specimens will convey a fair idea of it, and a study of their musical instruments will help us, in some measure, to understand their musical system.

A. MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS.

1) Wind Instruments.

534 The simplest is the *shiwaya*, an empty sala shell, or the shell of a Kafir orange (p. 19): it has two holes, one through which children sing, another which they alternately shut and open, the withdrawal of the hand allowing the sound to be emitted; the result is a monotonous wu-wu-wu, which is sufficient to amuse little boys.

Next in importance comes the *nanga*, (yi-tin) the goatherd's flute, made of the tibia of a goat, or of some other animal, on which the boys play two notes, generally in thirds. This is truly the infancy of art, but the tone of these little flutes is very sweet and wonderfully in keeping with the bush life, the bleating

of the goats and the nudity of the artist! There are many kinds 534
of goatherds' flutes. One is called *ndjwebe* ; its sound resembles mbvrrr.... mbvrrr.... Natives are in the habit of putting a feather inside their bone flutes in order to keep them clean.

Another more elaborate flute is made of a reed, having a hole at one extremity for the mouth, and three others at the other extremity for the fingers. According to the number of holes stopped, the sound varies. It is called *shitiringo* (Dj.), or *shitloti* (Ro.), and Native artists are capable of producing pleasing tunes upon it. No. 39 in my collection of tunes is a shitiringo melody, heard on the banks of the Great Tabi.

But the true tinanga are the trumpets which compose the *bunanga*, the band already referred to (I. p. 431) as being one of the manifestations of Court Life. They are also called *timhalamhala*, from the name of the mhalamhala (Hippotragus niger), the large, dark antelope whose horns are employed for the manufacture of these trumpets, together with the horns of the mhala (impala) antelope. These instruments are tuned according to rule. Ten of them, each having a different sound, form a *simo*, a kind of orchestra, completed by the big and the small drum already described. They are used to accompany the special 535
dances which take place in the little capital of the Ronga clans, and in which the players are themselves the dancers, marching behind each other, with peculiar contortions, narrowing and widening their circle according to the time beaten by the drum.

The bunanga players receive a regular training before going 533
to the capital, to play before the chief. When they have prepared the numbers of their programme, they all go to the capital, each sub-chief leading his band, for a musical contest. The tinduna act as judges. Each *simo* plays in turn. The judges discuss their respective merits, and when they have come to a decision, they call a young man to proclaim the result of the competition. This proclamation is called *ku tjema shibangu*, to cut the contest, and is performed in a very curious way. The herald has an axe in his hand. With a loud voice, he pronounces the verdict : "So and so played badly ; so and so better ; the one who played best is so and so." — "Nkino hi nkhensa wa ka man." Then he

533 beats the trunk of a tree with his axe, as if he wished to confirm the decision, and runs away. This is to avoid protests and insults from those who did not win!

No. 40 is a tune played by the bunanga. It is very monotonous and the music is evidently not so important as the dance, the rhythm, and the contortions. There are only four notes in this tune. However it is probable that the ten instruments of the simo form a whole octave, with two notes below it, the same as the ten keys of the timbila which will presently be described. Unfortunately I have not been able to ascertain if this is actually so, having only once witnessed the performance of the bunanga. I am afraid the bunanga orchestra of antelope horns has now entirely disappeared from Ronga territory.

2) Stringed Instruments.

534 As regards stringed instruments, they possess the *unicord harp* called *gubu*. There are two different forms of it; the *shitjendje*, which consists of a bent rod, a bow, both extremities of which are united by a string made of milala palm fibres (nkuha), or a piece of wire. On the lower part of the bow a calabash is fixed as sounding box. The shitjendje is held upright; one hand grasps it at its lower extremity, whilst the other beats on the lower third of the string with a little stick. The hand which grasps the instrument places its finger on this lower third of the string in different places, so as to vary the length and produce different sounds.

A gubu player.

534 In the *nkaku*, the sounding box is fixed in the middle of the bow. From it a wire starts and is tied to the middle of the string, thus dividing it into two equal parts. The instrument is grasped near the calabash, and the fingers are extended on either half of the string to differentiate the sounds. The other hand beats on either side with a stick.

The tune No. 12 was accompanied by a shitjendje.

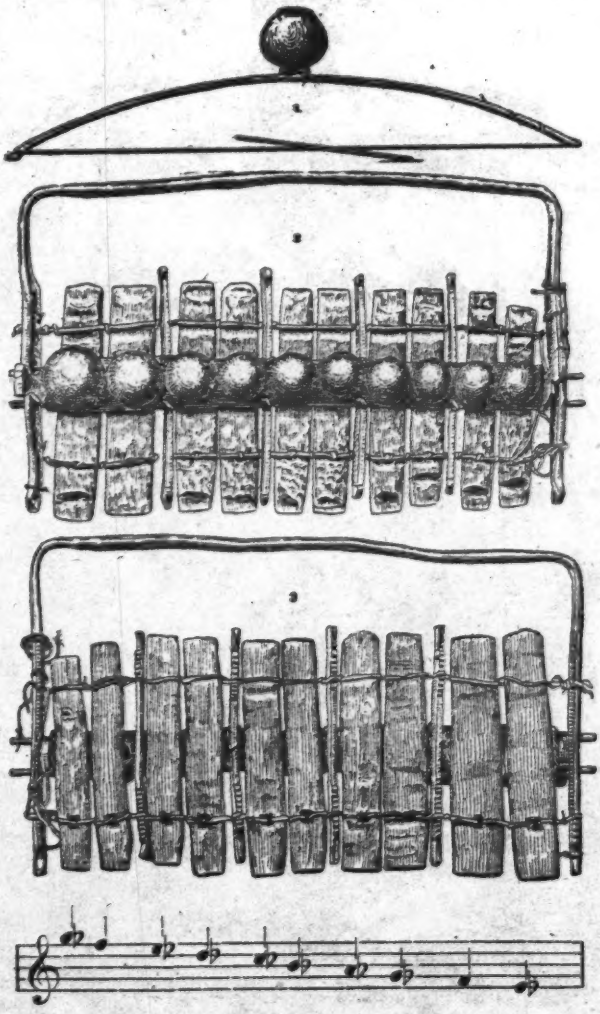
3) The Timbila or Bantu Xylophone.

The most completely characteristic musical instrument of our tribe is the *timbila*, which may be seen on the accompanying plate showing both the upper and the under side of this very interesting Native piano. It is composed of ten keys, made of very hard wood, attached to each other by straps of leather on a wooden frame consisting of a curved branch. The keys rest on shells of sala, which act as sounding boxes, and in which two holes are pierced, one in the upper part to receive the sound, and one at the side, covered by a membrane, generally a piece of a bat's wing, in order to cause the sound to vibrate. This piano is easy to carry. The player places it in front of him and beats on the keys with one or two sticks, furnished at one extremity with an india-rubber or a leather ball. (See the cover of *Les Chants et les Contes des Ba-Ronga*).

Comparing it with a European piano I have ascertained that the third key is a G flat, and that, if we strike the following ones, up to the last, we obtain a regular major scale, that of G flat, with its proper half tones between the third and fourth and the seventh and eighth intervals. The two lower keys are, the first E flat, the second F natural. The interval from E flat to G flat is a minor third, so that, should we start with the lower key and strike the seven following, we should obtain a minor scale of E flat corresponding to the major scale of G flat : but it would not entirely resemble our harmonic minor scale as there is no "sensible," viz., the seventh note of the scale is not raised. Only when descending from the eighth to the first we should have a perfect melodic minor scale. This minor scale, without the

534 raised seventh, is well known in the history of music : it is called the Eolian scale.

So we find this interesting fact as the result of our examination:



The timbila and its ten notes.

the timbila, in its ten notes, contains both the major and minor scales.

Is this accidental ? Or are all the timbila tuned according to

534 533 this method? The second hypothesis is highly probable. Of course there may be slight differences between the instruments, which is not astonishing, as they are made with primitive implements by unskilled workmen ; but the proof that they are all made according to a fixed rule is that many timbila are often played together by musicians who form an orchestra. This is rarely the case amongst Thongas but frequently amongst the

A timbila player.

Ba-Chopi, who are the true "masters" of this instrument. It is said that, in this very musical tribe, Native pianists sit in a line along the street of the village (for their villages are built in a straight line) and play together, all the throng of men dancing in front of them. I witnessed a similar performance when the Crown Prince of Portugal visited Lourenço Marques in 1907. Great feasts were given in his honour ; 25,000 armed warriors defiled before him, and thirty timbila played the National Portuguese Anthem. The Administrators who taught these Native artists to play that difficult tune on their xylophones deserve every congratulation! It was wonderful. The melody

534 was quite recognisable and played in perfect tune. If the timbila
533 had not been tuned to the same pitch, this concert would have become a dreadful cacophony! In the Johannesburg Compounds the East Coast boys manufacture timbila themselves, of smaller and larger sizes, some with enormous keys made of common pitch-pine boards, and emitting deep low tones, the sounding boxes being empty oil cans. They succeed in tuning them more or less perfectly. So every citizen of Johannesburg can hear their concerts, and witness their dances, in the Compounds of the Ferreira Mine and elsewhere on Sundays, and, though these ugly pitch pine timbila seem a parody on the beautiful instruments played at home, still the performance is worth a visit! (1)

533 The existence of the timbila is a proof that these tribes possess a real musical system. The Ba-Chopi are the "masters," and

(1) I have lately received some additional information on the timbila from my son, the Rev. H. Ph. Junod, who is living in Manjakaze, not far from the Chopi border. The keys are cut from a very hard tree, the mwendja, which is first put into a big fire in order to make all the sap run out. Large stems of that tree were used by the Ba-Chopi to built their strongholds when they fought against Gungunyana forty years ago. They have been exposed long enough to the rays of the sun to have dried perfectly, and the instrument makers employ them to furnish their keys. The artist begins with the lowest. His father was himself a timbila player and he tunes his keys in accordance with those of the paternal instrument, slightly diminishing the thickness of the little board till it gives exactly the same sound. This explains how all the instruments are tuned to the same pitch. It is not an easy job to find sala shells of all the required sizes. The vibrating membrane is made of the diaphragm of a small rodent called khweva. All the xylophones seen by my informant in Chopiland start from D (or E flat?). Some have 10, some 12, some 14 keys. Some have only four, but they are enormous and emit deep sounds like drums; they are employed to accompany the others. It is rare nowadays to hear orchestras of timbila, as most of the men are constantly away from their villages, working for the Whites; but individual players are still frequently met with, some of them possessing great dexterity.

The xylophone is widely distributed all over the African Continent, Thongaland being the most southern point where this instrument is found. I saw a magnificent example in Vendaland, in the village of a counsellor named Chikhobokhobo. It had no less than 23 keys forming three complete octaves with two supplementary notes at the top. The owner of this piano was very proud of it and kept it in a special hut. I believe it to be the same which was greatly admired at Wembley where it was exhibited in 1925 by Mr C. T. Harries, the Native Commissioner. In Barotseland the xylophone is called *sirimba*, *marimba* amongst many other tribes of Central Africa, *budimba* or *imbila* amongst the Ba-Ila, and *bala* in the French Soudan. Mr Ch. Joyeux, who published an interesting paper on "Quelques manifestations musicales observées en Haute Guinée française" (*Revue d'Ethnographie et des traditions populaires*, Paris, 1924, p. 161-212) has analysed the xylophone of that country and found exactly the same succession of sounds as in the Thonga timbila. The prototype of this instrument is said to be found in the Dutch East Indies and in the Malay Peninsula.

821 which had caused the flash of lightning, and flies away back to
825 the mountains. The magician who understands the "treatment
791 of Heaven" comes and digs at the spot ; there he finds a kind of gelatinous substance which solidifies after a little time. I possess a little of this curious drug given to me by a Pedi magician, by name Mudjumi ; it resembles a piece of chalk, and is considered very valuable on account of its rareness, and because it is used in the manufacture of the wonderful medicine of Heaven. Should a village have been struck by lightning, the magician of Heaven will come and dig out this foreign body ; if he finds it, the taboo is removed. If he does not, the whole village must move to another place. In the same way, it is taboo to warm oneself at a fire made of the wood of a tree that has been struck by lightning, or to use it as fuel.

The flute of Heaven.
Drawn by J. Weare.

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Happily this dreadful bird can be prevented from killing and burning by magical means. Both the Pedi Mudjumi and the Thonga Makasane possessed the enchanted flute, by which they could force Heaven — or the bird of Heaven — to spare them. Mudjumi having sold me his flute, I can describe it at length. It is made of a hollow bone five inches long, covered with Varan skin, filled at its larger extremity with a black substance like wax. Inside, to keep it clean, there is a vulture's feather. The bone is said to have been taken from the ndlati bird ; the wax substance was made from powder obtained by drying up and pulverising a little of the heart, the eye, the bones, the feathers, and the flesh of the bird. In the wax are embedded three seeds of Abrus precatorius, the "lucky bean" well-known in South Africa, a round seed of a splendid coral colour with a black spot, very much used in Thonga magic. This addition of Abrus precatorius intensifies the sound of the flute and enables it to reach heaven.

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I : Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga
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Photo H. Gros

Dance of the shepherds and men of the Circumcision school. (Spelonken, 1886.)

881 A few days later, the great doctor administers to the boys a purifying medicine which they drink in a mouthful of beer. This rite seems to be rather a separation than an aggregation rite. We often find, when a marginal period comes to an end, separation rites taking place. They mean separation from the *marginal period* itself; for this also involved a kind of pollution which must be removed. Such is probably the aim of the medicine given by the Manyabe. On the other hand, this is also an aggregation rite, as the boys are allowed to drink again for the first time.

A Mayiwayiwane mask (1).

II. *The Mayiwayiwane dance.*

532 535 881 The second true aggregation rite is called the Mayiwayiwane dance. The *Mayiwayiwane* are a sort of masks which cover the whole of the upper part of the body, a kind of armour made of woven palm leaves; on the head, they are like a very high helmet protruding in front like a beak. The boys make these masks with the help of the shepherds and of the men and, in this disguise, must perform a special dance with high jumps before the women summoned on a certain day to attend. The boys must not be recognized. Should one of them let the mask fall, it would be a great misfortune, because women must not know who is dancing. 585 581 Moreover the initiated must appear before them as a kind of supernatural beings and fill them with respect and awe. Therefore they must not fall when they dance. Should one of them totter and lose his equilibrium, the shepherds cover him

(1) This mask is that worn by Fadi boys during the second circumcision school. I cannot guarantee that the Mayiwayiwane mask is of exactly the same pattern.

535/881 with a heap of grass and the men say : " He is dead !," because a circumcised boy cannot fall and live. One of the shepherds goes in haste to a village of the neighbouring tribe and buys a fowl ; this is killed and its blood is sprinkled over the grass ; the boy who fell escapes when the women have gone home, but the next day, when they come back to the spot, they see the blood and are convinced that, in very truth, one of the circumcised dies when he falls!

Sometimes a little child is taken from the arms of its mother and brought to the place where the boys are sitting hidden during the dance. They kiss him and smile at him, because he is innocent; he may see what women are not allowed to contemplate!

III. *The last day.*

881 The last day is marked by the greatest and most difficult trial. During the whole preceding night, the boys are not allowed to sleep. Sleep is the last enemy they must overcome. They stab the Elephant and repeat the formulae till the morning. Then all the bits of skin remaining from the circumcising are picked up by the Manyabe ; he burns them, and makes them into a powder with which he smears the mulagaru pole. All the masks and grass mats are thrown on to the roof of the shed and, at dawn, the troop of circumcised, surrounded by the shepherds and men, is directed towards a pool and made to run to it without looking backwards ; (separation from the sungi, from the seclusion period). If they were to look at what is taking place behind them, their eyes would be pierced, and they would be blind for ever! Fire is set to the whole establishment by some of the men, and all the filth and ignorance of childhood is burnt in this great conflagration. The boys are led into the water, wash away the [302] white clay shouting : " I am a man," cut their hair (separation rite), anoint themselves with ochre, put on new clothing and are addressed by the father of the circumcision :

" You are no longer *shuburu*! Try now to behave like men. It would be unworthy of you to steal sweet potatoes in the fields as you used to do before. Now the Ngoma is closed and it is taboo

585 578 girls, the stout women with strong arms, go and look for the heroine of the day, who is hidden in a hut in one of the neighbouring villages, and who has not yet been seen. At last they succeed in finding her. She refuses to come. The viragos seize her and pull her out by force. Everybody assembles. She is covered with a large cloth which hides her from the gaze of the bystanders. Surrounded on all sides, she sets forward to the village, the crowd forming a kind of procession. " Let us accompany her, then we shall return home " sing the women who bring her. (A hi mu tjekeleni, hi ta muka). This song of the *tjeka*, the only one which is peculiar to the wedding day, is the prelude to a most strange duel.

The bridegroom's family stands on one side, that of the bride on the other, and then begins the exchange of equivocal compliments.

"Ha!" cry the groomsmen to the bride, "as you are becoming the wife of our brother and coming into our village, try and leave all your vices outside. Do not steal any longer! Forsake your bad ways and become a good girl! "

To this the bride's relatives shout in return :

" You have nothing to boast about! Stop wearying the people! She is far too good for you! Does not everybody know the wild pranks of your son and the dishonour of your family! "

And they go on in this way, at first in joke, but often speaking seriously. They sometimes even go so far as to bombard each other with the half digested matter which has been extracted from the goat's stomach, but, if anyone goes too far and exceeds the recognized limit of insult, the old people will tell him to be quiet. 585 535 These proceedings however are looked upon as a game and are accompanied with a particular dance called *khana* which consists in jumping first on one leg and then on the other, gesticulating at the same time.

a) The religious act.

585 782 769 The procession reaches the hut of the bride's mother, where the goat was killed. Mats are stretched outside. The bride and groom sit down on the finest of these. It is now that the father

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

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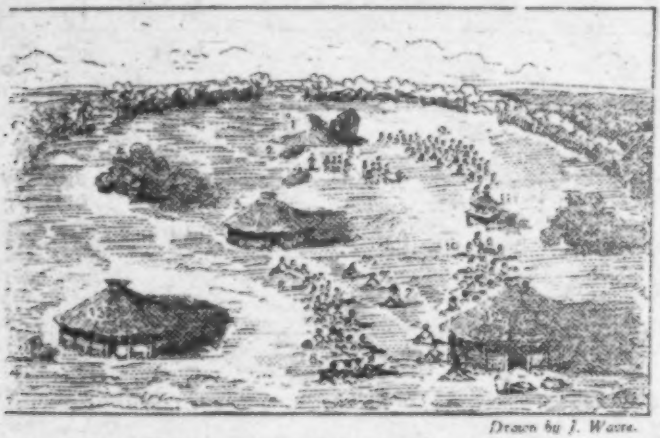
pitifully ; its agony lasted five minutes at least and the whole time the women were shouting with pleasure, because it is necessary that a victim should cry! In the groups, men and women were discussing where and how the sacrificer ought to introduce the blade in order to kill the goat more quickly. His wife came and



Drawn by J. Wavre.

The ceremony of crushing down the hut.

1. Deceased's hut, crushed down. 2. Heap of poles. 3. Provisional hut of the widow. 4. Sacrificer. 5. Uterine nephews. 6. Wives of the uterine nephews. 7. Dancers. 8. Women clapping their hands. 9. Other women. 10. Men. 11. Herdsmen. 12. Hut of the younger brother. 13. Hut of the tall woman who danced. 14. A "digiyane", wood pile built by her daughter-in-law's relatives.

helped him, and not until after ten minutes, at least, did they succeed.

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Then, while the batukulu and the old men were busy with the victims, cutting them up and squeezing the psanyi (half digested grass) out of the bowels, the other mourners began to sing and to dance. First an elderly woman, of a very clear complexion and a mephistophelean face, very tall, with a curiously licentious smile, came into the middle of the place, opened her arms wide and *suma*, began to sing. Together with her song she performed a strange mimicry with her thighs. This mimicry took on a more and more lascivious character ; it became a regular

765 535 831 womb dance, so immoral (Annotatio 9)[1] that the men dropped their eyes, as if they feared that she would take off all her clothing. But the other women seemed thoroughly to enjoy this horrible performance, and encouraged her by clapping their hands and beating their drums. The words of her songs were also of a very questionable character. She described an adulterous woman going during the night from one hut to another, seeking for lovers, knocking on the walls (to attract the notice of the men ?).

> The walls of the huts have deceived her fellow-women when she goes knocking on them...

Another old woman, of at least seventy years of age, followed her, and running with a mincing gait through the place, uttered words of the same kind.

This seems very immoral indeed. Let us remember however that, in the opinion of the Thongas, these songs, which are taboo in ordinary life, are specially appropriate to the mourning period "These women have been uncovered by the death of their husband," said Mboza. "There is no longer any restraint on them. They are full of bitterness when they perform these lascivious dances." The reason is perhaps deeper, as it is not only the widows who sing these words ; we are still in a marginal period, the period of mourning, and these phases of life are marked for the Bantus by this strange contrast : prohibition of sexual intercourse and a shameless outpouring of impure words and gesticulations (Annotatio 10).[2]

765 782 But in the meantime the *batukulu* had finished their work. They had already distributed the various parts of the victim according to rule, to the visitors, who would eat them on their way home, not in the village ; it is taboo. They had put aside one shoulder, the lungs and one of the hoofs for the sacrifice. Relatives had made a provision of *psanyi*. An old man then took a pill made of the *psanyi*, that found in the smallest stomach, called shihlakahla. He pressed it against his lips, took into his mouth a little of the liquid squeezed from it and spit it out again with the sacramental *tsu*. He then proceeded to pray : "You, Manyiban, you have left us. People used to say you were a

1 [See p. 517 in these categories or in 116--Analyst]

2 [See pp. 517-518 in these categories or in 116--Analyst]

643 chiefs are entitled (1). The *elevation and the presentation* ended,
535 the next proceeding is the *gila* or war dance. The heroes of the army (batlhabani ba fumo), and the young men of blood royal rush one after the other into the enclosure brandishing their weapons, jumping as high as they possibly can, imitating acts of prowess on the battle field and simulating the transfixion of their enemies. The *gila* continues until the cry is heard : "Ye-yi, yé-yi, ye-yi." This murmuring sound uttered by the whole army marks the end of the jumping, and all re-form into line. All the shields must now touch one another, forming an immense unbroken circle, and then comes the *guba*, the intonation of the
643 solemn chant which is at once the principal patriotic song of the
533 tribe, the coronation hymn, the dirge of mourning, the war-song,
539 and the sacred melody par excellence :

Sabela ! Sabela nkosi ! Ji ! Ji !
Answer us ! Answer us, O chief ! Ji ! Ji !
Si ya ku wela mulambu mkulu wa ka nkosi.
Yes, we will cross the great river, the river of the chief.

This chant, which is in the Zulu language, is difficult to understand. The soloist commences with : "Sabela nkosi" which may be translated "Obey the chief ;" but the meaning would rather seem to be : "Reply to us, chief!" and, if taken in this sense, these words would be a request made by the army

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(1) The word *Bayete* is said to be of Zulu origin and to convey the following meaning : bring thine enemies hither and destroy them ! *Ndjao* means lion. The warriors employ these terms to extol the power of their chief and, at the same time, to express their allegiance to him. There is a modern tendency to use this solemn salutation in a more general manner : for instance it is addressed to the Whites and not only to those in authority, but more or less to every one, even, in certain cases, to missionaries ! I always remember my arrival at the village of Shirinda, when I went to call on the chief Mahatlane, then unknown to me. I arrived at the gate of the kraal mounted on a most unpretentious little donkey and enquired of two young men who were there, where I could find the chief. "Bayete !" was the salutation I received and there was certainly nothing very regal either in my appearance or my "mount." One of these young men proved to be Mahatlane himself ! *Bayete* is also frequently used in acknowledging a gift from a superior and would then be merely the equivalent of "thank you." In Gaza, Gungunyana would not allow Bayete to be said to any one but himself. All the petty chiefs of the Ba-Ronga insisted on their royal salutation and the Ngoni king could not put a stop to it, as they were direct dependencies of the Whites and did not derive their authority from him.

1 [For the coronation of a chief--Analyst]

643 533 539 to the chief, to which he will reply by executing the dance which follows. To this exclamation of the soloist the warriors respond by striking their shields with their assagais, producing a hard sharp sound, which the chant tries to render by the syllable "Ji! Ji!" Then they stamp their feet, saying: "Vu! Vu!" and this enigmatic sentence follows: "Yes, we will cross the great river, the river of the chief." What is this river? Can it be that which separates the Mpfumo country from Khosen, namely the Nkomati? Or the Mitembe, marking the frontier between the Northern and the Southern Ba-Ronga? Or do not these mysterious words rather refer to the river of death, which the entire host should cross without hesitation if called to do so by their chief? Whatever the exact meaning may be, this chant must be an assurance of loyalty on the part of the warriors to their king and probably also an appeal to his valour.

643 535 701 The chant ended, no one is allowed to leave the ranks. The chief alone rushes into the enclosure; every warrior holds his shield in his hand and strikes it with hard sharp blows (ku ba ngomana); on hearing these, the chief begins to *gila* in his turn. He executes the war-dance brandishing his assagai, as if killing invisible enemies. The crowd encourages him, inciting him to still further efforts, crying: "Silo! Silo! Silo! Beast of the fields! Lion!" Volleys are fired. The chief redoubles his exertions, gesticulating furiously, perspires profusely, is well nigh exhausted and finally stops! The whole army sits on the ground and the young king is supplied with a jug of beer to quench his thirst.

When the ceremony has lasted long enough, and the warriors have enjoyed at their ease the spectacle of their chief's prowess, the Commander-in-chief dismisses the battalions, one after the other. The circle (mukhumbi) breaks up and all rush to the residence of their respective counsellors, singing as they go the praises of the particular army-corps to which they belong. The members of the royal family return to the capital, where they remain. A counsellor presents each group or regiment with the ox which has been allotted to it; this is accepted with shouts of "bayete." The men cut up the animal, divide the meat and eat it in their respective quarters.

F. THE WAR DANCE.

535 The *guba* is itself a kind of war dance, as dancing does not mean a change in the dancer's position. Nodding with the head, gesticulation of the hands and slow motions of the feet constitute a dance (kina). In some guba songs, there may be a backward and forward movement of all the warriors to widen or narrow their circle. I have even seen men crossing the mukhumbi, two by two, or three by three, during the guba.

But the true war-dance is the *gila* (Ro.) or *giya* (Dj.) the representation of deeds of valour by warriors who have killed an enemy in battle. The massed chorus of the guba is most imposing, but still more deeply does the *gila* impress one by its wildness. Look at this elderly man who suddenly detaches himself from the circle, stamping with all his might on the ground. His feet beat the earth in cadence, one blow being long, the three following ones short: '-ooo. He goes on, making the ground shake, brandishing his weapons with all his might, perspiring from his efforts and pronouncing Zulu words which the throng interrupts by wild shoutings, as if to encourage him... Then he returns to his place, and the whole army concludes the performance by a kind of whistling : zu... iiiiii. ..... prolonged on a high and piercing note, which suddenly descends to a deep and guttural tone : i. aaaaa..... He has hardly resumed his place in the ranks when a young man springs into the circle, jumping like an antelope, holding his assagai and gesticulating all the while, as if transfixing an invisible enemy. His eyes glare like those of a wild beast, and immediately the army entones a song, his song, the one which has been composed to glorify his deed. Possibly his return to the ranks will be greeted by another shout : I..a...Nda-u! — Lion! comparing him to a lion returning to his forest which nobody will dare to attack. The encouragement given by the warriors to the *bagili* and their great final cry are called *khuza* or *khunzela*.

535 703 "At that very moment," says Mankhelu, "the hearts of the young men tremble in their breasts! Their hair stands on end...

535 An extraordinary war spirit comes over them all..." And every
703 one having witnessed these performances in the Thonga or Zulu mukhumbi will confess that they are wonderfully impressive. It is a mixture of dramatic, epic and lyric poetry, three literary *genres* which are still confounded, the whole being enhanced by a deep, wild music and subject to the laws of a certain artistic style.

703 The fighting instincts are excited to the highest pitch by these
643 patriotic choruses and dramatic representations. Thus should
726 the troops be slow in making a start, the young men go dancing to the chief and beg him to "grant them permission" to go forth and slay, or rather to "give them men" to slaughter (ku nyika). The Native idea appears to be that the chief holds the lives of the enemies in his hands; without his permission they cannot go forward, but this once given, they rush enthusiastically to the fray. They even go so far as to taunt him with being an old woman, a coward, because he will not let them go at once (1).

When the excitement has reached the culminating point, and it has been definitely decided to fight, the time has arrived for the magic treatment by which the warriors will be rendered invulnerable.

G. ADMINISTERING THE WAR-MEDICINE.

726 This custom is probably of ancient origin, but I have reason
177 to believe that, amongst the Ba-Ronga, it was practised without
789 any great formality until the advent of the Zulu influence, when
751 it was brought into much greater prominence and invested with more solemnity. "Drinking the war-medicine" took place on several occasions during the revolt of 1894 to 1895. At *Zihlahla* this potion was administered to all warriors before the rebel attack

(1) Gungunyana, on one occasion, when his warriors were importuning him with similar requests, sent the more ardent spirits to wage war unarmed against the wild beasts, and I was told they actually succeeded in capturing a leopard alive and brought it back to the chief!

727 765 killed, "because the whole country would mourn : — they have not been killed by the mat (likuku) at home, but by the assagai on the battle-field! They are men! If any one weeps he will have to pay £ 2." (Mboza.)

726 763 When the Maputju yimpis fought against Nondwane in 1876, in the battle which took place near Malangotiba, (3 km west of Rikatla), they were decimated and eventually repulsed. Their chief Musongi sent them back to fight again. They refused. Then he punished them in the following way : he condemned them to go and fetch water with pots, like women, but they had to go on their knees to the pool, saying : "It is the result of our cowardice" — (Ngi ndaba ya bugwala). Afterwards they had to extinguish a bush fire with their hands, and came home very much scorched and burnt.

When the yimpi is victorious, the return is marked by important 727 songs called *hubu* (cl. dji-ma). The regiments follow each other, 533 each singing his own *hubu*, and they at once build the mukhumbi 535 when they reach the village of the chief. They dance, dance their doughty deeds. Suddenly silence is required ; the counsellors narrate to the chief how the fighting has proceeded and tell him the names of those who have killed enemies, those who have struck the first blow and their *bahlomuri*, viz., those who transfixed the leg and the arm. After which the heroes "gila" to their heart's content, together with the bahlomuri. They are proud! They are applauded! They are the great men of the day, the *tingwaza*, the saviours of the chief!

This leads me to consider the very curious customs connected with the slayers and the slain on the battle-field.

1. THE FATE OF THE SLAIN AND THE TREATMENT OF THE SLAYERS.

1. *The fate of the slain.*

554 When a man has slain an enemy, he has covered himself with 727 the most enviable glory : he has the right to perform the war-dance before the chief. He takes away all the garments from

843 her own pudenda with a much befouled intimate garment which
834 she afterwards burns.
841 Going to the fire they both warm their head and their hands. Then the woman mixes the ashes she has collected with fat and smears it over her husband's limbs, rubbing along his fingers, his arms, and his legs, which is called lula. Afterwards, in the two nights following, they will have intercourse. If the husband has had sexual intercourse not with his wife but with some girl from another village from lustful desire he will be given a fossorium so that the rite lula will come to its completion.]

765 "Annotatio octava (P. 155). Si mulieris parentes procul
783 habitant, maritus eius comes itineris erit, quacum superiore
833 nocte coibit, ad aquæ lustrali vim novam dandam."
595 [Note 8 (page 155). If the woman's parents live far away, her husband will be her companion on the way and he will have sexual intercourse with her the night before in order to give the lustral water new power.]

765 "Annotatio nona (P. 160). Faciebat dum 'Khunye khunye';
535 quibus verbis significatur coitus (khunyeta)."
831 [Note 9 (page 160). She was saying Khunye, khunye during
834 this time; these words signify coitus (khunyeta).

"Annotatio decima (P. 160). Carminum, morum temporis marginalis natura eo obscenior est quo nobilior defunctus fuit. Viguetus narrat: [518] 'Duce vel uno ex principibus mortuo, luctuque consueto præterito, luctum privatum, ad quem boves immolentur, celebrari. Carnem ad baculos humi fixos alligari; homines inde mulierem vocare, eamque posteriorem vestem exuere juberi, neque ullam vestem nisi anteriorem habere quam, si velit, exuere ei liceat. Eam, postea, divaricaturam esse ad unam ex carnis particulis dentibus apprehendendam ita prominentem ut omnes viri eius pudenda videant, quod plerumque 'taboo' (id est nefas) sit.'"

[Note 10 (page 160). The nature of the songs, a custom of the marginal period, is the more obscene the greater the nobility of the deceased person was. Viguet relates: [518] "When the leader or one of the chiefs is dead and the usual mourning has passed, they stage a private mourning at which bulls are sacrificed. They tie the flesh to poles fixed in the ground; then the men call a woman and order her to take off the clothes on her back and they do not allow her to have any clothes on except the one in front which, if she wants to, she may also take off. Then she must seize one of the bits of meat with her teeth, bending forward in such a

765
~~535~~ way that all the men can see her pudenda which is
831 much tabooed (that is, sinful)."]
834 "Annotatio undecima (P. 161). Hic, mulier paulo dilutiore
765 colore magnaque statura addit: 'Hi kundjana. id est:
782 coeamus!' "

[Note 11 (page 161). Here a woman with a slightly lighter color and of large stature, adds: Hi kundjana, that is, "let us have intercourse!"]

841 "Annotatio duodecima (P. 187). Hæc sunt ipsissima verba, quibus Makhelu mulieris menstruansis taboo (id est nefas) describit. Mulier menstruans est res, quæ imprimis 'yila' est. Per sex dies 'yila,' id est, nefas est. Septimo die transit flumen ad se lavandam. Octavo ei nondum licet cum marito suo coire; forte enim sanguis pudendis ad hæret, eà insciente. Magis 'refrigescit.' (Verbo phula menstruans mulier comparatur cum aula a foco remota).

Si, ante id tempus, maritus cum uxore cœat, ægrotus fiat, veretrum retro ita recedat ut vir urinam reddere non possit et, brevi tempore, moriatur. Talem vitæ exitum multi habuerunt. Radicibus arboris cui nomen est mayilana vel mulieris menstruantis vestis particulà, a medico ad levem pulverem redactà, quæ ægro bibenda est, morbus sanari potest. Aegrotus multum sanguinis reddet, et veretro exeunte, salvus est."

[Note 12 (page 187). These are the very words with which Makhelu [sic] describes the taboo (that is, the sin) of the menstruating woman. A menstruating woman is something which is, first of all, yila. For six days she is yila, that is to say, taboo. On the seventh day, the flow that cleanses her passes over. On the eighth day she is not yet allowed to have intercourse with her husband; for perhaps some blood is still sticking to her pudenda without her knowledge. She "cools down" even more so. (By the word phula the menstruating woman is compared to the pot removed from the stove.)

841 If the husband should have sexual intercourse with his wife
834 before this time, he will be taken sick, his private parts will
756 decay to such an extent that the man would no longer be able to pass urine and would die within a brief period of time. Many have had such an end to their life. The sick man can be cured by a liquid containing the roots of the tree that is called mayilana or by a particle of the menstruating woman's dress, reduced to a light powder by the medicine man. The sick man loses a lot of blood; after his penis is able to pass water again, the man is well again.

533 fight, when returned from battle, as well as those sung during the march of the troop. I give the striking music of some of these in the next chapter. Tune 24 is the "Sabela nkosi" the great Mpfumo song, also adopted by other clans. Tune 25, with its splendid change from the minor to the major key, is the Tembe and Maputju classical war song. No. 29 is an old Nkuna war song, dating as far back as 1820, before the Zulu invasion ; No. 27 is the principal modern Nkuna song, and
●535 No. 28 the Nkuna equivalent to the Ronga *Giraffe song*. These old chants are sung to the accompaniment of the military dance, which consists in trampling on the ground, while rhythmically brandishing the assagais, lifting them first to the right, then to the left, bending them sideways, then downwards, as if to pierce (I. p. 463). They are certainly wonderfully fine compositions.

533 I include in the same category the laudatory song of the *mbongi*
826 (I. p. 424), a branch of literature in which Court poets display
644 considerable imagination and an extraordinary gift for unbounded hyperbole. All the important chiefs have their mbongi and it is required of the man holding this office that he should have a good chest (shifuba), the chest being to the Thongas the seat of eloquence (as it was to the ancient Romans : Pectus est quod oratorem facit!). The elucubrations of these poet laureates sometimes last a very long time and may have real poetic value.

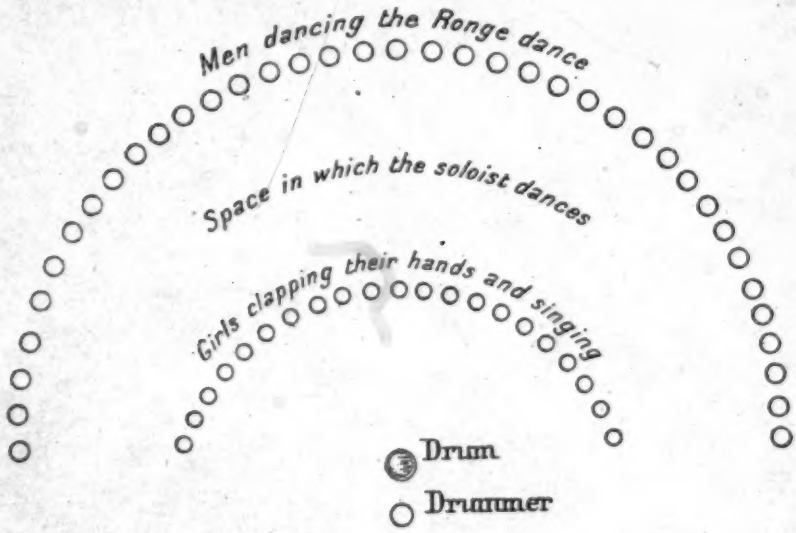
614 As we saw (I. p. 361) each clan and even each family
553 possesses its own laudatory phrase ; this is the *shibongo*, a word which generally means family name, but which etymologically signifies the formula by which the clan or family glorifies (bonga) itself. These formulae are usually short and often contain archaic expressions or allusions to unknown facts which make them very difficult to understand. I have given some of those from the Ronga territory. Here are two others, collected by the Rev. A. Jaques amongst the Transvaal Thongas, who seem to cultivate this custom more than the coast clans ; they are perhaps encouraged to do so by their Pedi neighbours, who are very fond of these formulae, called by them *mireto*.

V. *Dramatic poetry.*

This is perhaps too lofty a term by which to designate the 533
kind of songs, or other literary productions, which I am going 535
to describe. Primitive folk have no theatre, no elaborate tragedies or comedies. But our tribe certainly possesses the rudiments of histrionic art in the dances accompanied by songs, which are called *tinsimu ta Ronge*, the songs of Ronge. The word *Ronge* does not seem to be related in any way to Ronga. It is applied to an old collection of songs in which dancing played the principal part and which were quite peculiar to the clans of the Coast. They were performed after harvest, when the storehouses were full and when the Ba-Ronga bid themselves : "Eat, drink and be merry!" Boys and girls used to remain in the bush for many [177]
weeks learning these dances, in a kind of school, which may have taken the place of the circumcision school ; the latter has been suppressed for more than a century in these districts. I say, these songs *were* performed, — because they are now fast disappearing, having been replaced by Zulu songs, called *mudjatu* and *muthimbo*. These are, in their turn, giving way to new dances called *gumpsa*, in which young boys and girls put on milala palm leaf dresses. These were the great novelty in 1908 and pupils of the Mission schools were deserting them to play gumpsa. Another new dance is called *shiloyi*, and consists in the imitation of boatmen : the performers sit down and execute movements similar to those of sailors pulling a boat, to the accompaniment of song. The *shindjekandjeka* was another dance executed by the wives of Mubvesha (I, p. 287). Most of these dances take place in the capital, and the Chief summons all the boys to take part in them. This is not absolutely obligatory, but should any one begin the training, and then leave before it is finished, he will be fined. No doubt these complicated dances mark the beginning of a theatre, as will be seen shortly : they at any rate give the impression of an organised ballet.

Many of the songs refer to *historical events* in the life of the clan, or to by-gone occurrences, almost forgotten, and it is for

533 this reason that some of them are so difficult to understand ;
535 they also vary from one clan to another. The following, according
to Spoon, is the most popular song in Nondwane. An individual
539 performs on a drum to give the time to the dancers. Around the
drummer, in a semicircle, are arranged the girls who sing the
refrains (tekelela), and clap their hands to encourage the soloist
(musimi). Farther away, in concentric semi-circles, stand the



The Ronge dance.

men of the village, dancing but not singing. Between the two semicircular ranks the soloist has free play. He commences by saying :

> Ndji pfumala shigoba sha nakulori.
> Why ? I haven't got a partner for the dance !

The girls reply :

> Hi hlula hi mbilu yi babisaka.
> Our hearts are indeed very sad.

He continues :

> A pai na ntshumu ! Makweru Ñwakubyele a fanaka ni pataka dja balungu.
> Never mind ! My brother Ñwakubyele (will do very well), for he shines like one of the Whites' silver pieces !

of the goats and the nudity of the artist! There are many kinds 534
of goatherds' flutes. One is called *ndjwebe* ; its sound resembles mbvrrr.... mbvrrr.... Natives are in the habit of putting a feather inside their bone flutes in order to keep them clean.

Another more elaborate flute is made of a reed, having a hole at one extremity for the mouth, and three others at the other extremity for the fingers. According to the number of holes stopped, the sound varies. It is called *shitiringo* (Dj.), or *shitloti* (Ro.), and Native artists are capable of producing pleasing tunes upon it. No. 39 in my collection of tunes is a shitiringo melody, heard on the banks of the Great Tabi.

But the true tinanga are the trumpets which compose the *bunanga*, the band already referred to (I. p. 431) as being one of the manifestations of Court Life. They are also called *timhalamhala*, from the name of the mhalamhala (Hippotragus niger), the large, dark antelope whose horns are employed for the manufacture of these trumpets, together with the horns of the mhala (impala) antelope. These instruments are tuned according to rule. Ten of them, each having a different sound, form a *simo*, a kind of orchestra, completed by the big and the small drum
already described. They are used to accompany the special 535
dances which take place in the little capital of the Ronga clans, and in which the players are themselves the dancers, marching behind each other, with peculiar contortions, narrowing and widening their circle according to the time beaten by the drum.

The bunanga players receive a regular training before going 533
to the capital, to play before the chief. When they have prepared the numbers of their programme, they all go to the capital, each sub-chief leading his band, for a musical contest. The tinduna act as judges. Each *simo* plays in turn. The judges discuss their respective merits, and when they have come to a decision, they call a young man to proclaim the result of the competition. This proclamation is called *ku tjema shibangu*, to cut the contest, and is performed in a very curious way. The herald has an axe in his hand. With a loud voice, he pronounces the verdict : "So and so played badly ; so and so better ; the one who played best is so and so." — "Nkino hi nkhensa wa ka man." Then he

Shinangana had been trained, would he have been a genius in that 803
kind of mathematics where the power of reasoning is needed? 163
It is impossible to say, but it may be noticed that all his achievements were, after all, but masterpieces of memory, and that reasoning had very little to do with them.

The conclusion of our observations is then as follows : in the Bantu mind the literary sense is infinitely more developed than the mathematical. This is probably the case in all uncivilised or half civilised races, but amongst the South Africans it is strikingly apparent.

F. THE LITERARY SENSE OF THE THONGAS.

Let us look more closely into this literary faculty which the 521
Thonga grammar has already revealed to us. It not only consists 537
in the possession of a well constructed language, denoting powers of classification, combination, co-ordination and graphic description, but also shows itself in the poetic expression of their feelings, in a remarkable power of comparison, and in a rich folklore.

The *facility of expression*, amongst the Thongas, is very great. Any one, man or woman, is at any time ready to speak, and speaks correctly with the greatest ease. In this respect, the race is perhaps more advanced than many civilised peoples. There is nothing like the timidity you so often meet with amongst the peasants or workmen of our own lands, who, though they have had a full course of primary education, would be totally unable to deliver an address. A Native can always stand up and say what he thinks on any given question. Even if he has not thought much about it, he can speak! Finding words is no difficulty to him. Knowledge will perhaps be lacking, but fluency of speech never! This ease of elocution has evidently been acquired through a long experience in the discussion of public affairs on the *hubo*, where, as we saw (I, p. 436), every one has the right of expressing his opinion. This habit has developed literary ability,

and the Bantus, as a whole, deserve the compliment once paid to the pupils of the Lovedale Institute by the Rev. J. Henderson, when he said to them : "Your race has certainly received the gift of eloquence!" (1) 521 537

As regards the subject matter of their speeches, it does not always show much reflection, or many new ideas. Nor is there much order or sequence in their discourses. This would require proportion, measure, forethought, and all these virtues belong rather to the arithmetical sense which is so sadly deficient in the Bantu mind. What makes a Bantu address especially interesting is rather the *power of comparison* exhibited by Bantu speakers. They excel in discovering spiritual truths in material facts, or rather in perceiving the relations between the spiritual and the external world. This is one of the characteristics of the poetical faculty, and these so-called savages certainly have some sense of poetry in their minds. Most of the antithetic riddles, which will be quoted shortly, are instances of this power of comparison. When developed by proper training, this faculty will certainly become productive of valuable work. 195 537

So far, the training of Natives has been mostly in religious subjects, and I beg to give my readers some examples of their mode of comparison which I noted while listening to the preaching of evangelists, examples which bear the strong impress of the Bantu character. Sometimes the imagination is so subtle that the result is almost incoherent. They are satisfied even if the point which the two things compared have in common, that which grammarians call the "tertium comparationis," is almost infinitesimal.

(1) This power of elocution is very useful in Mission work, when evangelising the heathen villages all over Thongaland, the converts being always willing to make a speech or deliver an exhortation. They generally do this with great animation, and although the thinking is often poor, and does not show much sequence, they at least are never at a loss for words. I only once witnessed such a sad occurence! One of my pupils had prepared a sermon and was delivering it, when suddenly he stopped and could not proceed. He had lost the thread. Then a good natured smile appeared on his features and all his companions laughed heartily. This was the first time they had seen one of their countrymen in this predicament! The student had prepared a plan for his address, and had forgotten it! In former times plans were entirely absent and consequently there were no threads to lose!

For instance a Tembe Christian exhorting his hearers to fight against evil, says : 195 537

Let us, in this fight, take the shield which has been made from the skin of this ox slaughtered for our sake, Jesus Christ.

A moment of reflection is required to find the logical sequence which unites all these images. The Bantu shield being made of ox-hide, the scriptural image of the slaughtered lamb had to be transformed into that of an ox, for the sake of comparison!

Another evangelist, whose discourses were specially interesting because he was a master in this art, one day spoke for more than half an hour on the text "Charity which is the bond of perfection." In Thonga, bond, string, or rope is expressed by the same word (ngoti). So he showed how a string could be compared to charity by a great number of images, of which I remember at least the two following :

This rope, charity, is the rope which fastens the donkey to the trunk of a tree. In the evening you tie up the donkey ; it can graze the whole night all round the tree without any fear of being lost. So when we remain in connection with our Saviour, who is the tree, then we are happy and protected against all danger.

He evidently remembered the words of Christ : I am the vine. And he added :

Charity is the string, the string which ties up a parcel. You have many precious things in your parcel... But if you possess no string to tie up all these things, they will be lost on the way, one after the other, and you will reach the end of your journey (or of your life) having kept none of your spiritual advantages, etc.

This is how Simeon Gana tried to explain what conscience is :

Conscience resembles two companions who have made an arrangement to plunder, with impunity, another man's field of sweet potatoes. One of them climbs a tree, the other takes the hoe and digs up the potatoes. As soon as the owner of the field appears, the one on the tree whistles and the other promptly runs away, so that he is never

caught. But one day, the climber ran a thorn into his foot and he was obliged to sit down and extract it, as he could not climb to his post of observation in that condition. In the meantime his companion was stealing the potatoes in perfect tranquillity, thinking that his comrade was on guard. The owner arrived on the scene and caught him. Now you see clearly that conscience is the man who climbed up the tree. As long as he was doing his duty, success attended their plan. As soon as he fails to work, the man falls into disgrace. So let our conscience always be awake and warning us !

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537

We Europeans would never have dreamt of such a simile. Conscience represented by a thief helping another to steal! But the Bantu audience was perfectly satisfied...

Here is another comparison bearing on a similar subject :

The words of God are powerful and stir up the heart. They are like intestinal worms (manyokwana) which for a long time remain quiet in the body. But one fine night they awake and man cries out from pain, saying : "I am ill !" For years the man mocked the word of God, but that day he felt its power !

Hundreds of such comparisons, not always denoting a very refined taste, but always picturesque, might be collected from the addresses of Native Christians. I will only add this, which is deeper and more significant than many others, and which occurred to the imagination of one of my pupils :

We, preachers of the Gospel, are messengers of mourning. We have been sent to inform people of the great mourning of Jesus Christ by which He saved the world. Let us not resemble that messenger who had to go to another country to deliver his errand. On the way he passed a village where people were drinking beer. He heard the songs, looked on at the dance, entered and did not deliver his message. Such would we be, if distracted by worldly amusements, we were to neglect our sacred duty of preaching the cross.

Besides this undeniable power of comparison, Native addresses often reveal another curious feature ; the Native tendency to present ideas in a round-about manner. This is called *ku pamba*. Beneath expressions apparently simple they hide other meanings in a manner so ingenious and subtle that some of their hearers

often fail to understand them. This literary device is often apparent in their riddles, or proverbs. 195 537

The literary gifts of the Natives, finally, manifest themselves in the very interesting and rich folklore which will form the subject of our second chapter.

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* *

Is it possible after this rapid study of the Thonga language to fix with greater accuracy the place which the Bantu languages occupy in the historic development of human speech? Languages which are regarded as the most primitive are characterised by a linguistic phenomenon which is called holophrase, viz. a single word means not only a single action, but an action accomplished under a number of peculiar circumstances. Mr. Marett in his excellent little book entitled *Anthropology* (p. 140) quotes some very curious examples of holophrase borrowed from the American languages, especially from the Fuegian. A single expression is said to mean : "to look at each other hoping that either will offer to do something which both parties are unwilling to do." I have found in Thonga only one instance in which traces of the holophrase system might be found, and this is by no means so wonderful. The demonstrative adjectives are met with in three forms, which indicate not only the object referred to, but its place as regards distance and in relation to the person speaking. Tihomu *leti*, means these oxen, near at hand, near me ; tihomu *leto*, these oxen, somewhat further off, near you, my interlocutor ; tihomu *letiya*, those oxen, far away and near a third person. The more the final a is prolonged, the further off are the oxen. Moreover these demonstrative adjectives indicate not only the situation of the oxen in space but also in time ; *leti* are the oxen of to-day, *leto* those of a near past and *letiya* those of which we were speaking a long time ago. But this is an isolated case. In Thonga ideas are differenciated almost as completely as in our Indo-European languages. The language has evolved from the holophrastic to the analytic. My conclusion is therefore that the Bantu languages, though they belong to the agglutinate variety, have reached a high degree of development ; they reveal the existence of intellectual powers not essentially different from those of civilized races. They certainly constitute the greatest achievement of Bantu mental activity and the most precious treasure inherited by the Bantus of to-day from their forefathers. 192

In their country there

524 are big nasty yellow-brown hornets (a kind of Belonogaster)
136 which build more or less circular nests, sometimes attaining to the size of a man's head. On a certain day the boys decide to make war on these enemies. They make shields with the leaves of the *nala* palm tree which they plait together.

524 They cut down branches, which they wave to protect themselves, and one of them goes and strikes a heavy blow on the wasps' nest! The irritated insects rush out on their assailants and sting them. The boys try to kill the wasps with their sticks or to crush them when they light on them. Sometimes, overcome by the pain, they run away; sometimes, resisting to the last, they kill and exterminate their winged enemies.

Besides this there are also *big battles between the shepherds* of the different flocks. The shepherds amuse themselves by taking one another's cattle. Those who are the strongest bring the stolen herd triumphantly back to the neighbourhood of their village, but they would never let it enter the kraal. The vanquished call to their help their elder brothers, who come to recover their property and, if they can, give the thieves a sound thrashing!

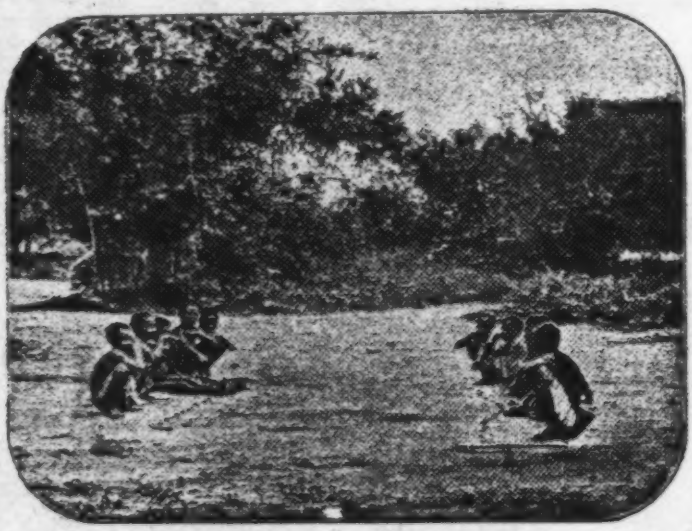
578 Insults and fights are frequent between the clans. The boys
262 of Mpfumu call out to those of Matjolo: " Forest gadders! Eaters
291 of snails and boas, of lizards and tortoises " (all of which are questionable food!) (In Ronga: Balala! Badi ba tihumba ni tinhlaru ni makhwahle ni tinfutchu). Those of Matjolo answer them: " Crowd of women that you are, clad in cotton material! " (Babasati! Matchimbamphela!), in reference to the fact that the inhabitants of Mpfumu, living near the town, some time ago replaced the belt of skins worn by the savages by a piece of cotton tied to the waist and hanging down to the knee (ladula).

855 The custom of frightening children with imaginary beasts is
857 wide spread amongst the Thongas. The bogey man is called
858 *Shingomu-Ngomu* or else *Shikunkunumu*, and by this very expressive
861 word they designate a huge and mighty being who walks, swaying his big body from right to left, with a sound like *ngomu-ngomu*. The ogre is *Shitukulumukumba*, a word coming originally from the Zulus, which corresponds to the Ronga *Ñwambilutimhokora*, that is to say: " the one who has scales on the heart. " He eats

855/538 human beings. These imaginary creatures play a large part in the native tales, especially the one who " has scales on the heart. " He feeds on vermin, lice and big white beetle larvae, which are his almonds (1).

855 When a child cries and cannot be comforted, someone goes and hides behind the hut and slaps his neck saying: "U-u-u," while

[524]



Boys trying to play Billiards
at Magudja's, near Antioka Station.

those remaining with the lamenting little one say to him: " Be quiet, listen! Shikunkununu is coming! "

857 There are also the *timbelembele*, a kind of terrible wasp which only exists in the imagination of children. When a boy does not dare to follow his companions up a tree which they have climbed, they shout to him: " Make haste! Here are the timbelembele coming to bite you! " And he is so frightened that he at once finds strength to climb.

(1) We shall gives complete ogre tale in Part V.

595 Training Institution, asking them to set forth their views frankly on the subject. Most of them were full grown men, some were married, some had been polygamists themselves. I obtained about twenty written answers, and this is the summary of these little essays :

Reasons for :

595 1) A Native proverb says : Wansati muñwe a nga yaki muti, i. e.
538 One woman does not build (constitute) a village. This proverb is confirmed by two others : Litiho liñwe a li nusi hobe, i. e. One finger does not bring the cooked grains of maize to the mouth ; and : One single arrow is not able to kill a snake (Ntumbana muñwe a wu psi koti ku dlaya nyoka).

595 2) To have many wives is the glory of the headman of a village. He is honoured in proportion to the number of his wives.

3) The polygamist can thus practise a generous hospitality, each wife bringing her plate of food for the evening meal.

4) If the first wife dies, he is not left alone.

5) If she is ill, he does not want for food.

6) There are many hands to perform the village duties : his many wives help each other.

7) The polygamist has many children.

8) No woman is left unmarried, which is a good thing, because how could the unmarried ones find money to buy their clothing ?

Reasons against :

1) Tshengwe dja kajata, i. e. Polygamy is troublesome... on account of bukwele, jealousy.

What is the source of this feeling ? A husband shows his preference for one of his wives, either by giving her a more valuable present than he gives the others, by visiting her on two consecutive nights in her hut, or, when he returns from a hunting trip, by giving her a better piece of meat, the leg, for instance. This arouses bukwele in the heart of the others, and, when this has once been the case, a trifle will suffice to kindle the fire anew. And how does this feeling manifest itself ? By mutual insults of these women to each other, going as far as accusations of witchcraft. (One of them will exclaim : "O! May my rival die and I remain alone in possession of everything!" This is almost equivalent to an act of witchcraft) ; by insults and menaces to the husband ; by the refusal on the part of the despised one to cook his food and to get in his harvest ; by deeds of violence against his person : (One of the wives of one of the witnesses went so far as to drag him out of the hut of her rival, and they made life so intolerable to him that he

361 together with all the inhabitants of the kraal. The two huts near
513 the entrance are, on the left, the *lao*, where unmarried boys sleep
596 (14) and on the right (15) the *nhangu* where the girls live. Often
356 the nhangu is built behind the huts of the mothers, near the mhala ; in this way the girls are kept under more effective watch. The boys of the *lao* have to guard the door, which they close at night where it is the custom to do so. The *hubo* and the *bandla*, the squares, are generally kept quite clean.

361 In front of each hut is a *yard* (*ndangu* pl. *mindangu*, 23) which
372 is also generally well swept. In the centre of each of these are
417 some broken pots (mapseko), or pieces of hard clay taken from ant-hills (psirubu) ; this is the *fireplace (shitiko)*, where the
351 mistress of the hut cooks her food. The fence round the yard used, as a rule, to be made of poles or even trunks of trees planted near each other and forming a circular wall. Nowadays, especially amongst the Rongas, these yards are enclosed with reeds and may be built square, a single wall fencing off as many as three or four huts. The top of this wall is sometimes crenelated. I rather think this arrangement is modern ; the circular wall of the ndangu
585 is an old custom, as is proved by the following fact. On the day of
538 *hloma*, when the bride's-maids and female relatives bring the bride to her husband, they not only build up the woodpile (shigiyane, see page 112), but, in the northern clans, they must also erect a new ndangu which will be called *tsandana*, and so people will know that in the yard there is a *nhlomi*, a bride, working for her mother-in-law! The ndangu is the place where women tell folk-tales of the tribe to the children and to each other, whilst they attend to their cooking, or after the evening meal.

361 If cleanliness prevails on the square and in the yards, the
356 same cannot be said of the region between the huts and the
235 fence. This is called *mahosi* or *makotini*. It is the place where
351 old baskets and broken pots are kept. The chicken houses
343 (*shihahlu*, 27) are built there ; these are generally little huts, with reed walls, placed on a floor of palmtree boards, supported by four poles forked at their upper extremities. The *ash-heaps* are somewhat further on (24). They are called *tala*, and play a part in certain rites, representing, as it would seem, the place of desolation and of sorrow.

524 but one stone, a poor *tshonga*, he says : "I have only caught women!"

524 Fighting and hunting are great sports for Natives ; hence the
127 popularity of the tshuba game. It has become such a passion
461 with the men that they neglect all their duties to indulge in it, and it has been necessary, in certain Christian villages, to prohibit the tshuba altogether, as the whole male population was abandoning its work for the game!

461 The *evening games* are happily not so dangerous for the moral
538 well-being of the village. Women who have worked the whole
517 day now have their innings. This is the *tha* par excellence, the most refined amusement, the story telling. It takes place at
826 eventide. It is taboo to *tha* in the middle of the day. Those who should transgress the law would become bald (!), and persons affected with loss of hair are commonly and jocosely accused of having told tales at midday. So, when the moon shines, when all the work of the day is ended, all the inhabitants assemble at one of the firesides to amuse themselves. They rarely gather together on the hubo for that purpose, as the square is reserved
524 for the discussion of matters of importance or for dances. The diversions at first consist of a parlour game, which is also known amongst Europeans, *guessing the charcoal piece (mhumhana)*. Two sides are formed opposite each other, women on one side, men on the other. One of the women, holding a piece of charcoal, puts it into the hands of one of the other partners, saying : "Dana, u shura ñwanaaaa'nga," (eat and be satisfied, my child). Then both present their closed hands to the other side saying : "Mhumha!" The man opposite must guess in which hand the charcoal is hidden. He flips one of the four hands with his finger saying : "Give me! Here it is!" If he has guessed rightly, he has won, and then proceeds in his turn to hide the charcoal in the hand of one of his own side. When they have had enough of this game and wish to finish it in the proper manner, *they pull their fingers* and make them crack *(ku ba tindjwati)*. Each of them pulls a finger in turn. The first who is unable to produce a sound is expelled from his side. Then those who have been beaten make faces, as ugly or funny as they can, at their victors ; these must

524 keep serious and not laugh. Should they be unable to keep their countenances, their victory is lost!

538 But these games are only a preliminary. The farther we go, the nearer we get to true literature! Now they ask each other *riddles (psitekatekisa)*, simple and antiphonic. We shall study this form of folklore later on... If the second side is unable to give the right answer to the riddle, it asks permission to propose one in its turn and so the intellectual combat goes on until they have exhausted the series of riddles they know. Those who have had the worst of the duel must pay the forfeit by *telling tales (tha psihetana)*. A woman may be present who is a renowned story-teller and she holds the whole company under the charm of her tale for half an hour, perhaps longer... Children shudder when they hear the terrible story of the bogey man! They burst into laughter when she describes the funny tricks of the Hare, or of the frog *Shinana*. They heartily approve when the younger brother, despised by his elders, becomes their saviour and teaches them a good lesson... Thonga folk-lore is very rich; it is one of the most interesting manifestations of the psychic life of the tribe. We shall study it with the attention it deserves in Part V of this work. Here it is sufficient to show what a great and happy part it plays in the life of the village.

E. RULES OF POLITENESS AND HOSPITALITY.

576 The village life is dominated by the *respect for hierarchy*. I do
769 not think this term is exaggerated. Etymologically hierarchy
593 conveys not only a moral but a religious idea. This religious feeling is not absent in the fear felt by a younger brother for his elder, because the elder member of the family is its priest, the only possible intermediary between the family and its gods (See Part VI). So no wonder if, in their relations with each other, though these are extremely free and natural, Natives follow strict rules of etiquette.

643 It is worthy of notice that no sacrifice is offered on this day, neither is any religious ceremony whatsoever performed. The coronation appears to be a purely military affair, a sort of oath of loyalty taken by the people to their chief and by the chief to his people.

C. THE OFFICIAL MARRIAGE OF THE CHIEF.

643 584 The chief being duly installed, the next thing to do is to provide him with his officially recognised wife, *the wife of the country*, she who is to become the mother of the future king. This wife must be bought with the pennies of the people : a characteristic custom demonstrating forcibly to how great an extent the royal family is at once the property and the pride of the nation.

643 584 521 One fine day, says Tobane, when the counsellors go to visit the new chief, they meet with a very cold reception : "Who do you suppose is going to feed you ? Who will cook the meat ? Who is going to brew the beer ?" They return quite crestfallen, but having perfectly understood the allusion. The chief wishes to remind them that the time has arrived for them to find him a wife. This roundabout way of coming to the point is much in vogue with the Blacks. The matter is at first discussed in secret by the brothers and sisters of the deceased ruler, a family council which holds its conclave "in the hut," i. e. privately. After due consultation, a messenger is dispatched to the principal men of the country, to the heads of the younger branches of the royal family (to Khobo, Pulane, Kupane, if Mpfumo be the clan in question) with the following message : "Has not the moment arrived to set up the chief, to cause him to grow, to increase properly ? For the country is sustained by its cock! (1)" The great ones discuss the affair, each in his own village, and a

643 584 538

(1) *Dji yima ni nkuku*, a proverbial expression meaning : as the poultry-yard cannot flourish without a cock, so must care be taken of the chief of the country, in order that he may be able to perpetuate the race and secure the succession.

643 538 177 554 one refuses to be a chief. Thonga tales recounting the story of some one who succeeded wonderfully in life often conclude by saying that this person was given a territory and became a chief... which seems to be the highest reward of virtue or wisdom. Nowadays, however, one may meet with cases where the heir to the chieftainship, having become a Christian, renounces that high position because he feels that there is an incompatibility between the Bantu way of ruling and his new faith.

643 But it would be a great error to think that a Thonga chief is, or can be, an autocratic despot. This may have been the case with Chaka, Lobengula or Gungunyana, when the tribe became an amalgamation of clans held together by military power ; in order to maintain their usurped authority, these chiefs had to be cruel despots. But this is a late development in the Bantu political system. I am now only taking into consideration the primitive form of tribal life, which is the clan life.

For a chief dangers may arise from three sources : from his own character, from the Thonga system of government itself, and from the law of succession.

1) The character of the chief.

A chief who wishes to succeed in his government *must have a good character*. If he imposes taxation, he must not use his wealth in a selfish way. For instance, when women bring him a *shirwalo* of a dozen pots of beer, he must give them back one or two to quench their thirst. Moreover he must distribute most of the remaining pots to his men, who are on the *bandla*, always ready to share with him the advantages of his position.

Should he buy oxen with the product of the fines, he will be wise to slaughter one from time to time for his counsellors and for the whole clan. A chief who is good (a ni timpsalu) is said to *maintain* or to *save the country* (bekisa tiko). If he does not do that, he is severely criticised. Mubvesha, who used all his money to buy wives, and prevented all the men from seeing them, whilst he himself was too old to content them, was considered

682 lobola. Viguet explains that this is done according to the old
338 saying of Native law : "Ñwombekazi a yi ambi nandju" viz. "a
826 cow which has calved is not used to pay a fine ; the calf pays it."
672 (See page 217.) He adds that the ten hoes sent with the girl pay for the ribs of the murdered man. (The Ba-Thonga believe that the human body has only ten ribs!) A case of involuntary homicide
682 is generally not brought before the chief, as the law is well known
643 and no one would try to evade his duty. Should however the
672 murderer not have been on good terms with the deceased, the matter will be discussed before the Court.

If the murder was *deliberate*, it is punished by death.
682 At least such was the law in former times, when Natives still
672 possessed the power of condemning to death. Now the fine is also the remittance of a woman. But owing to the existing hatred, and from fear of being obliged to lobola the relative of the murderer, the family of the deceased does not take the girl. She is sold by her parents and only the money is remitted to the plaintiff. (Mankhelu.)

682 Amongst the Ba-Ronga, when a near relative of the murdered
627 man wishes to avenge himself by killing the assassin, his people prevent him from doing so, in order to bring the matter before the chief. When a man called Mashabe was killed by the son of Gigiseka, Maphunga's brother, the murderer, had to pay £ 20. The fine may be as much as £ 25, but the idea is also to help the bereaved family to acquire a new spouse and, through her, new members. As for the murderer, he is regarded with scorn, and despised by the whole community. For a whole week, he must eat apart. He is unclean. So, at the time of luma bukanye, (page 400), he must also take miluru medicine together with the warriors who have killed enemies; but he does not drink it boastfully, extolling his deed! People say of him: "Look at the murderer!" (Mboza.)

The vendetta, the savage custom which makes it incumbent on the relations of a murdered man to avenge his death themselves at all costs and by any means, is absolutely absent from Thonga custom. It may be said that, as regards punishment of murder, they have reached quite a civilised stage in their judicial

685 has been pulled up and the sand nicely smoothed down, so that
343 any traces of a thief would easily be seen. He will possibly be
151 recognised at once by the trackers, owing to some peculiarity in the
625 marks on the sand, the foot-print of each individual being more or less known; clever detectives can even ascertain the height and gait of a man from the length of his stride! If there are no peculiar marks in the foot-prints, the trackers will follow them and reach the village where the thief lives. They will perhaps take him by surprise in his hut. If the matter cannot be settled by the headman of the village and has to be brought before the chief, the guilty party will be fined as much as two, three or even five pounds sterling (Tobane) (1).

When detectives have been unable to trace a thief, they assume a philosophical attitude and say: "Only wait. A man who has stolen will steal again, and you will catch him another time!"

643 *Revolt against the decisions of the chief's hubo* is very rare. Should
687 any person take the part of a condemned man and encourage him to oppose the decision of the Court, he will be beaten with a shambock on the square of the capital. "U onhi hubo," "he has spoilt the Court!" Moreover he may have to pay a fine of £ 2. (Mankhelu.)

643 *Answer to some of Professor Frazer's questions on Government.*
835 There are no separate chiefs for war and peace. But in time
224 of war the great induna, who is the Commander-in-chief of the
701 army, directs all military operations. — The chief is never required to marry his own sister or daughter. The only similar case of which I have heard, is that of a hunter who must have sexual relations with his daughter before going on a hunting trip (Part IV).

643 — The king's mother does not hold any special office.—
778 The chief does not keep any portion of his deceased predecessor excepting the nails and hair used for the mhamba (See page 386 and part VI)

538 (1) The following interesting couplet in two sentences aptly describes the thief:
Shiahlungwa rendjeletane? — The crown on the hut nicely rounded?
Mangatlu a paha ritiho... — The hawk burns his claws...
The thief is like a crown on the top of a hut. He is a lazy person, he attitudinises and will not work. Evil will befall him, as with a hawk who tries to snatch the meat that is roasting and burns his claws!

241 (Dj.), in the bush which has never yet been cultivated, or has
221 been lying fallow for a long time, is very hard work indeed!
313 Beginning in the early morning the woman cuts down the small trees with her axe (khaula, dji-ma); if the stems are too large she lights a fire at their base and leaves them to burn until they fall. Natives have not the slightest idea of the value of trees, if

Tilling the fields near Makulane (Maputju country). *Phot. D. Lanoir.*

these trees do not bear edible fruit, and destroy whole forests without any compunction. As previously mentioned, the labourer spares only the nkanye, mphimbi, nkuhlu, etc., and sometimes the mimosa parasol (gowane, Albizzia fastigiata) which provides a beneficial shade for the maize. Then she breaks the soil with her hoe and piles up in heaps the weeds (bibi, dji-ma) and bushes which she has uprooted, leaving them to dry before burning them.
[538] This is a long job and requires great patience. The old adage says very truly:

> U nga bone bibi a ku ndji rimele. (Don't waste your time in looking at your heaps of rubbish, and fancying that your work is done!)

302 The use of ochre is, however, not restricted to nursing mothers
538 or magicians : it is the special province of young marriageable girls, wishing to attract attention : their brilliant skin shines like a
832 mirror, setting off to perfection the white of their eyes and the black of their hair, which is sometimes made flossy by means of antimony or ground charcoal. A quaint saying puts it thus :

> Shindzingeri pundjene ? -Banhwanyana tolan !...
> What says the pretty bird with the coral neck that sings in the grass ?
> It says : Girls, anoint yourselves with ochre ! (if you wish to be as beautiful as it is).

177 Another ornament, of ancient date, is the *bracelet*. There
301 are several kinds : 1) the big heavy copper rings, called *masindana*, which greatly resemble those of the lake-dwellers, having a similar rather oval shape with an opening for slipping them over the wrist ; 2) the modern bracelets, called *busenga*, which the Rongas first bought in Natal, and which the Ma-Lemba introduced in the Northern clans ; they are made of iron wire twined round a ring of hide ; 3) the *mafowa* are more ancient, being made of seeds strung on thongs of skin, and are wound several times round the leg. This is an ornament for either dance or war.
301 The mafowa are sometimes made of the silvery cocoons of Argema Mimosae, the Queen Moth, which are found on nkanye trees, emptied of the chrysalis which is inside and filled with grains of millet which rattle when dancing!

301 *Beads* (nkarara) are evidently of later date ; they were introduced
439 by the Whites in the XVIth century, when the Portuguese were already in regular communication with Delagoa Bay and trafficked with the Natives, exchanging glassware for gold and ivory. Glass fascinated the Blacks : its brightness and transparency pleased
539 them immensely. An old song echoes their simple transports of delight :

> E ! Bashabi ! Batatana ba shabile ; ba buya ni shintshirimana sha balungoooo !..
> Hi ! Here come the buyers ! Our fathers return with their purchases ; they bring back with them the beautiful glittering things which the Whites sell !...

301 "A few years ago an ordinary glass bottle was thought a wonder by the people in the interior," said Timoteo Mandlati to me.

p. 176

CHAPTER II

THONGA FOLKLORE.

538 Thonga folklore may be said to exhibit three different styles : *didactic* and sometimes *sententious* poetry, in its proverbs and riddles, *narrative* poetry in its manifold tales, and *lyric* poetry in its songs. The two first may be called to a certain extent *collective* or *traditional* : all the riddles or tales are ancient products of the literary activity of the tribe, handed down to the Thongas of to-day by oral tradition. On the other hand, new songs are continually being composed, and bear a much more *personal* or *individual* character. I have given a great many examples of tales and songs, in my "Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga" (324 p.), as well as in "Les Ba-Ronga" (p. 253-363).

My present object is not to compile all the available material, which would be far too long a process, but to give a general idea of Thonga folklore, and to complete my previous study by the publication of some new tales and riddles chosen from those collected since the two preceding works were published. The source is almost inexhaustible, and would suffice for the compilation of two or three volumes. The examples here given will be representative enough to convey a true idea of this rich folklore, and I refer the reader to the two books previously cited if he wishes for more information.

A. PROVERBIAL SAYINGS AND RIDDLES.

Riddles certainly furnish us with a very precious means of gaining an insight into the secret workings of the Native mind, as they form doubtless the quaintest part of their literature, and

that which bears the least resemblance to any portion of our own! I have already quoted some examples of riddles in my first volume, and the obscurity of these sayings has been sufficiently obvious. Without special explanation it would be difficult indeed to discover their meaning. 538

I. *Proverbial sayings.*

As regards *proverbs*, the Ba-Ronga possess a few containing a single statement, as for example :

1) Mumiti wa nhengele a dumba nkolo wa kwe.
He who swallows a large stone has confidence in the size of his throat!

This might be said in any country and will be recognised, at once, as applying to bumptious and pretentious folk!

2) U nga hlaule matjhuna ya mhangela.
One must not point out the male of the guinea-fowl.

Guinea fowls are all alike, male and female. So do not point to one and say : "This is a male." You would be liable to make a mistake, and to be made fun of! This proverb is said to a young husband who might be tempted to prepare the *ntehe* before the birth of his child, which is taboo. (I. p. 46.) Compare this with the proverb : Don't count your chickens before they are hatched.

3) Tinhlange ta le ntjhaku ti tibyiwa hi mutlhabi.
The tattooing marks made on the back are known to the tattooer (not to the tattooed!).

You do not know what may happen when you have turned your back. This warning was given by one of the Church elders, of Lourenço Marques, to a missionary who was leaving on furlough!

4) Matimba ya ngwenya i mati.
The strength of the crocodile is water.

When you are in your own domain you can succeed ; do not try to fight outside it. You would be like "a fish out of water..

5) U nga nwe mati, u seletela nhlobo; mundjuku u ta nwa kwini ?
Do not fill up the well after having drunk. Where would you drink to-morrow?

538 Here the sense is at once apparent.

6) Mbuti ya shihaha a yi belekeli ntlhambin.
A good goat does not bring forth in the midst of the flock.

I heard this proverb in one of our Synods. One of the Native members wished to exhort his co-delegates to abstain from giving their advice, and voting precipitately on a certain subject : let us rather go outside, and discuss amongst ourselves, and when we have come to an understanding we will come back and vote as one man!

This last example shows how such proverbs are used... They are sometimes quoted in a low voice, so as to be heard only by those whom it is desired to warn. It is an instance of the *phamba* just referred to.

Compare also the proverb quoted (p. 21) in connection with tilling the fields :

Do not look at the weeds and think : Now ! I have tilled a large field !

Do not be satisfied by mere external appearances! Weeds may be plentiful, yet the field be small!

Hundreds of such sayings might be collected (1), though I do not think they are so extensively used as, for instance, in the Sutho tribe, where M. Jacottet told me he collected a thousand of them. The Thongas replace them by riddles, which seem to be more developed amongst this people than in the neighbouring tribes.

II. *Riddles.*

524 I have already described (I. p. 350) the part riddles play in the games of the Thonga village. The riddle, *mhumhana*, consists first in divining where the piece of charcoal is hidden, and in that

671 538 (1) We might also regard as proverbs, and include under this heading, the figurative terminology used to express the principles of right and justice, which are, as it were, a primitive codification of the common law, and to which I have previously referred — as for instance the curious sentence : A cow which has calved is not used for payin a debt. (I. p. 217).

B. THONGA SONGS.

I. *Thonga poetry and Thonga poets.*

Bantu poetry differs widely from our own! So do Bantu poets from our "literary men." I had the good fortune to make the acquaintance of one of them on the same day that I witnessed the crushing down of Mayibane's hut (I, p. 156). Attracted by the big gathering, and knowing that he would have plenty of hearers, and meat to his heart's content, this poet had come to grace the occasion with his presence. He was on a literary tour, going from one village to another, singing his songs and dancing from one end of the land to the other. Tall, his face absolutely clean shaven, his eyes having a kind of absent, semi-conscious look, he at the same time appeared most contemptuous and remained in a state of olympic calm, as if he were a very superior kind of being. He was a man of the Manyisa clan, and all seemed to show him much consideration. When those officiating at the sacrifice were busy cutting open the victim, he appeared in the circle formed by the spectators (see illustration I. p. 159, No. 7), and began his performance. He had put on a skirt of *nilala* palm-leaves and imitated a lame man, assuming an air of intense suffering. Suddenly, with wonderful strength, he began to trample the ground with his feet. He had an assagai in his hand, and feigned to pierce his own side, and his thigh. Then, lifting the weapon, he cast an authoritative look on the throng and those who had been laughing stopped and kept perfectly quiet. He remained immovable, regarding them with an air of supreme contempt, impassible... And then he commenced his song (suma).

(Chorus) Oho! Oho! (Soloist) Where are you going, mother (See tune No. 1 in the collection of Thonga tunes.)

The throng joined with him in the chorus, which was really very effective. The women clapped their hands in cadence

(wombela) to encourage him. Judging that they did not do this 533
with sufficient vigour, he scooped up a handful of sand and 538
threatened to throw it into their eyes. They clapped with renewed ardour. One of them, the tall, light-coloured one who had sung the obscene songs referred to I. p. 159, came, and with a peculiar smile wrapped a yellow piece of cloth round his loins. He sang other songs, again trampling furiously on the ground, until the sacrificers had finished their work; then he was made to stop, and the prayer to Manyibane began.

This performance was indeed, wonderful, and its interest was in no wise inferior to the funeral ceremonies themselves. It is a typical example of Thonga poetry, where three elements are generally present: the music, the dance and the words, which are more or less poetical.

This Manyisa bard is by no means a unique specimen. I remember having heard, many years ago, a poet of exactly the same type, from Bilene, who visited the Ronga clans, singing everywhere and asking for old rags as his reward. There are professional poets who earn their living by their art. There are also a number of occasional poets, who compose new songs and perform them in their own villages, not aspiring to a world-wide fame. If their tunes are pleasing, they are spoken of by others, and so become known throughout the land, on the strength of their own merit. In this way songs become popular and a great number of them are constantly sung at beer-parties, after harvest, at the feasts, some gradually falling into oblivion and being replaced by new ones each season (1).

In this chapter I shall not treat of the [illegible]ical character of the

(1) I met later a blind minstrel, Mungomana, who earned his living in the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques by giving concerts in the yard of an important Native woman named Ñwalanga, at which a number of boys from Inhambane and Chopiland used to stop before leaving for Johannesburg. He accompanied their dances with his timbila (xylophone) and was payed 4.800 reis per month. He told me his story. When quite young he showed a quite unusual gift for music and dancing. He went everywhere where a feast was taking place and boys were trying to outdo each other in dancing and singing, and was always proclaimed first. A woman impressed by his wonderful art, asked him to marry her, but he declined on the plea that he was still too young. Once as he was passing along a field where this woman was at work, she said to him: "If you do not marry me, you shall not live." Frightened by this 533 754

533 songs ; that will be considered in the next chapter, in which I
538 intend to publish the forty-one tunes of my collection. Here I shall only consider them as literary products, and in trying to classify them, I have noticed that, though most of them cannot be said to be very elaborate compositions, they pertain to many different styles, lyric, elegiac, epic, dramatic, etc. and, in addition, there are those which are sung while at work, as well as the incantations to animals and spirits. I will give some examples of each of these categories.

II. *Lyric poetry.*

533 Thongas, like most human beings, have felt the need of chanting
539 their joys and sorrows, joining words to music in order the better to express their feelings. These feelings are not as a rule very deep, and their lyrics are rather play than a painful cry of the heart. Here for instance is *the complaint of the childless woman*, who longs ardently for a baby. She has been to other people and asked them to lend her one. But they have refused and only consented to lend her a mortar and a plate. She then sings to a charming melody (Tune 7).

> A ba beleki ŝwana ! — Ba boleka tshuri ni nkambana !
> Ngi adji mangatlu ! — Ngi ndji shimungwe ! — Ngi n'ta ku utla !
> They won't lend me a baby ! — They lend me but a mortar and a plate !
> Were I an eagle ! — Were I a bird of prey ! — I would carry thee away !

The thousands of young Thongas *who go to the mines of Johannesburg*, to extract the precious auriferous quartz, seem to be quite contented with their fate. They, however, chant their

533 threat he fled to another country, but soon one of his eyes began to swell. His elder brother told him : "You have been bewitched by that woman," and his paternal aunt
754 tried to heal him. She covered him with a piece of cloth, and made him expose his eye to the steam of a certain drug boiled in a pot below. She claimed to have succeeded, having found an ox-tail hair at the bottom of the pot when she poured out the water. This was however a lie. The eye complaint became worse, till he entirely lost his sight. He then devoted his life to music, and composed many songs to accompany the dances of the magayisa (boys going to work.) These songs became popular ; if a boy wished for one of them, his favourite, to be executed, he would willingly pay 200 reis ! — Mungomana is the only Thonga I heard of who used music in his religious rites. I shall give the words of his canticle in Part VI.

meaning than tra-la-la) "They are starving at Ntimane, siloyi..." 533
He was journeying from the Ntimane country, near Khosen, and having heard that the crops had failed, went muttering this great news all down the river! Perhaps the song was not of his own composition, but was an old refrain which had been preserved on account of its catching tune.

Mrs Audéoud, during her long journeys on the Maputju river, [461]
noted down many of the tunes, Nos. 19-22, some in two or even three parts, curiously harmonised. The Native sailors seek in this way to vary the monotony of rowing, punting or towing the boat. No doubt a great many more such tunes could be collected.

VII. *Incantations.*

Children, as we saw, (I. p. 68), are fond of singing curious little melodies to various animals : to the big *galagala* lizard, to the *chameleon*, to the *crab* with one claw, to the *owl*. The tune of the words addressed to the owl is No. 36.* The boys of Rikatla used to salute our ox-waggon, when it appeared on the plain, with song No. 35 :* "Gweymanâo! — here are the oxen", they said running all round the span, the girls following them and lifting up the babies in their arms, to show them the strange machine and the long-horned oxen walking slowly, with impassive looks, through the little black throng.

Incantations of a more serious type are the *songs of exorcism*, 533
performed to the accompaniment of rattles, big tins and drums, 789
close to the ears of the person supposed to be possessed, in order to induce the spirit to reveal its name and to " come out". No. 37* is one of the most celebrated songs of this category, and has really a great deal of character. I shall speak of it again when dealing with possession.

VIII. *Songs accompanying tales and games.*

As we shall see, little songs are very frequently introduced 533
into the tales to embellish them, and are generally repeated 538
three or four times over, as if the narrator wished to exhaust

* [Errata: read 31 for 36; read 30 for 35; read 32 for 37. -- Analyst]

533 all their charm. Some are very primitive, like No. 33, the
538 murmuring of a little boy who has been swallowed together with his oxen by an ogre called Nyandzumulandengela ; imprisoned in the stomach of the monster, he entreats him to let him out! Another, more elaborate, is the lament of the mother whose child has been stolen by the Baboon, and who follows the animal weeping and asking it to give the little one back to her. (Tune No. 35.) Tune No. 36 belongs to another ogre tale, concerning the suitors of pretty girls who are really only hyenas transformed into men. Some one knows their true nature, and forces them to appear as they really are, by chanting their song :

Manyange, the leg belongs to me !

the song in which they dispute with each other about the leg of the girl they are wooing! The most complicated of these songs is that in the tale of Zili (No. 34) ; it is a duet, and was sung to me by two Mpfumo girls so distinctly that I could easily take it down. It is very interesting as an illustration of the laws of harmony amongst the Thongas.

C. FOLK-TALES.

538 Folk-tales are by far the most interesting and valuable part of the Thonga Folklore, and before citing any new examples of those curious and charming stories, I shall try to show their importance in the Life of the Tribe, their literary, ethnographic and philosophic value.

I. *The place occupied by Folk-tales in the Life of the Tribe.*

538 In Vol. I. p. 350, we have seen the inhabitants of the village,
517 after their evening meal, gathered round the fireplace, devoting themselves to innocent amusements ; first, guessing the piece of charcoal, pulling their fingers, asking each other riddles, — those

who are beaten in the contest having to pay a forfeit which they 538
redeem by telling a tale. So the tale is the conclusion of the 517
game, the object of the whole entertainment. I have often seen exactly the same order followed in a European company playing parlour games.

This interesting scene may be witnessed from one end of the tribe to the other : "This is their evening prayer" said one of our converts to me, a woman who was also a clever story-teller, i. e. as we Christians have our worship every night before going to sleep, so the heathen gladden their hearts by their tales. Everywhere story-telling (ku tha psihitana) is considered the most refined and most pleasing of the games. The tales are called *shihetana* or *nsingo* (mu-mi) in Ronga, *ntyeketo* (mu-mi) or *nkaringana* (mu-mi) in the Northern clans.

Story-tellers are of all ages and of both sexes. I have heard 538
little girls of ten amusing their play-mates with tales. Those I have collected were told by young girls of eighteen (Nkulunkulu and Ñwanawatilo), young men of twenty, (Khwezu, Maganyele, Simeon Makwakwa), and men of thirty and forty (Spoon, Jim Tandane) ; but the majority come from adult women, the most skillful being Shigiyane-Camilla, Sofia Midomingo, Martha and Lois. Some only know one tale, and repeat it on every occasion, like Jim Tandane, who used to narrate the story of an ogre, Ñwatlakulalambimbi, with such gusto that he was surnamed after his hero! But others can recite six, ten or twenty tales. Shigiyane, for instance, could entertain the company for many nights with her tales, some of which were very long. (See for instance "The little hated one," 24 pages, "Mubia, an ogre tale," 19 pages, in my *Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*). This woman's memory was wonderful, and the graceful manner in which she told her stories was no less astonishing. Nkulukulu had heard *her* tale ("The girl and the whale") only once in the Maputju country, and she had memorised it immediately with the little songs which enliven it.

Strange to say, there is a curious precaution to be observed in 538
connection with story-telling : it is taboo to devote oneself to 461
this occupation at noon ; it must remain an evening entertainment ; 826
if this rule is not followed, the transgressor will become bald!

538 if this rule is not followed, the transgressor will become bald!
461 This is one of the most surprising of the lesser taboos of the tribe. What is its origin? Have the Natives noticed that famous story-tellers, those who practised their art day and night, were liable to this misfortune? I could get no information on this point. I rather think the prohibition comes from the fact that this game is so popular that they are afraid to devote too much time to it: people would lose all inclination for work, if they started it during the day. So they instinctively forbade story-telling in the day-time!

[142
538]

Phot. A. Borel.

Martha, a Ronga story-teller.

Another curious custom in connection with tales is this: when a story-teller comes to the end of his tale, he concludes with the following words: "Tju-tju... famba ka Gwambe ni Dzabana!" — "Run away, go to Gwambe and Dzabana." These two personages are believed, at least amongst the Northern clans, to have been the first man and the first woman (see Part VI), and I suppose that the object of this kind of incantation is to prevent the marvellous story haunting the hearers during the night, and troubling their sleep by disagreeable dreams. It is a means of returning from fairyland to the realms of every-day life! All these details tend to show the importance of folk-tales in the Native life, and their popularity amongst the tribe.

II. *Classification of Thonga Folklore and its literary value.*

538 But of what does this folklore consist? How does it happen that men, girls, youngsters, will sit quietly for hours, listening to an old woman who keeps them under the spell of her tale? In reality, these products of primitive imagination are much more varied than would at first appear. Let us open the casket, whose key is kept by Gwambe and Dzabana, and make an inventory of the "treasures" of this lore, to use the words of the Rev. E. Jacottet in his publications regarding the Ba-Sutho.

It would certainly be pretentious to apply a strictly philosophical, or even literary, classification to our tales. It is, however, obvious that they present many different styles which are, it is true, often combined, but between which it is quite possible to differentiate.

1) The first and most noteworthy class is that of *animal folk-tales*, in which the "Romance (1) of the Hare" takes a prominent place; the Hare, the Tortoise and the Small Toad are seen playing clever tricks upon huge beasts such as the Elephant, the Lion, the Hippopotamus and even upon men, getting the better of them by their cunning.

2) In a second category, the same idea of the victory of the small over powerful enemies is illustrated by stories in which human beings, children, the miserable and despised, triumph over their elders and those who hate them. The type of such tales, amongst ourselves, is Cinderella. Thongas have a number of similar stories, which I would entitle *the wisdom of the little ones*.

3) The third category comprises the *Ogre tales*, where the triumph of the wisdom of feeble creatures over these horrible and cruel monsters is again celebrated.

4) Other tales, to which I may give the name of *moral tales*, are stories which are evidently intended to enforce some moral teaching. The moralising aim may be unconscious, but the

(1) I employ the term *Romance* in the same sense as the corresponding French term is used when speaking of the "Roman du Renard", the celebrated series of deeds performed by Reynard the Fox, the well-known example of mediaeval literature.

538 conclusion of the tales is unquestionably moral, showing, as it does, that bad deeds or bad characters meet with due punishment.

5) Another variety of stories of this kind, though they are called tales and told as such, seems based on *actual facts* which happened somewhere, and have been preserved in the memory of the tribe. But they are not regarded as actual historical traditions. As they are told for the entertainment of the hearers, no difference is made between them and ordinary tales. They cannot be called legends, a legend being an historical fact, transformed by the popular imagination, and held as such by those who narrate it. They are rather the contrary of legends, being regarded *as purely imaginative*, while the facts seem to be more or less historic.

6) The last category of Thonga folk-tales are the *foreign tales*, which have come from Moslem, Portuguese or English sources, but have been altered in a very curious way, thus affording interesting material for the study of the Native mind. Foreign infiltrations can be detected even in those tales which bear most distinctly the Bantu stamp, but in this last category, they seem to constitute the actual subject matter of the story.

These six classes, once more, are by no means sharply defined. One tale might be placed in two or three of them. An animal sometimes appears in a tale where the other actors are all human. Though animal folklore is generally absolutely devoid of moral purpose, a moral idea may be detected in some of the episodes, for instance, when we see the Elephant punished for having contemptuously crushed the spawn of the Small Toad, etc.

The literary value of these stories varies greatly according to the story itself, and to the narrator. Some tales are very short and insignificant, or they may be a hap-hazard collection of episodes without any plan. Others are *true compositions* in which there is order and design, a position is taken up and a conclusion reached. I recommend the perusal of the "Epic of the Small Toad" and the story of the "Little Hated One," in *Les Chants et les Contes des Ba-Ronga*. They are amongst the best and most elaborate examples of Bantu folklore, and show real literary talent. Very often, as already mentioned, *a little song* or several little

songs form the framework of the story. They are repeated at least three times, the story-teller arranging his narrative in such a way that the refrain recurs again and again. Native speakers do not fear repetition ; they seem to think that to hear a catching tune once only is not sufficient, and that upon a second or third occurrence it will be more appreciated. So they make a real art of repetition. While it may make the recital somewhat monotonous, this literary procedure is by no means tedious. Some one once said to me, after having heard the tale of Nabandji, the toad-eating girl : "I should never have thought there could be so much charm in monotony!" 538

As regards the *narrators*, they also vary greatly. Some of them, the beginners, are dull, slow, and tedious. They mingle the episodes without any order, frequently assuming that things are known which have not before been mentioned. But others are full of life, and one feels a true literary pleasure in listening to them. It was a real treat, for instance, to hear Shigiyane, Spoon, his wife, and Simeon Makwakwa! Their gestures, their mimicry, their play of feature, the wealth of descriptive adverbs introduced into the narrative, added a great interest to the story. They imitated little children, or old people without teeth, with great effect. I even saw Spoon's wife have recourse to *imitative action* in order to increase the charm of one of the songs, No. 36, a kind of incantation by which deceitful suitors are transformed into hyenas. This song, according to the story, was sung by a woman whilst grinding her mealies. So Magugu brought with her an earthenware mortar, and vigorously worked with her pestle each time the song was repeated. The listeners seemed to take great delight in this performance.

III. *The Ethnographic Value of the Tales.*

When asked the origin of the tales they tell, Thongas invariably say : "These are old stories which we heard from our fathers. No one would dream of inventing a tale now-a-days." This assertion is certainly true. Bantu tales are very old. It is not without good

538 cause that story-tellers, when afraid of being haunted by the harrowing details, send them back to Gwambe and Dzabana, the first man and the first woman!

Another fact confirms the testimony of the Natives, and shows, at the same time, the ethnographic value of the tales. It has been noticed when comparing tales collected in various parts of South Africa, that there is a great similarity amongst them. Bantu folklore, whatever may be the differences met with amongst the tribes, possesses a true unity. More than that : this similarity is found in the folk-tales of all mankind. A number of stories seem to be found from one end of the planet to the other. Reviewing my book *Les Chants et les Contes des Ba-Ronga* in the *Revue des Traditions populaires* of June 1898, Mr. René Basset, who is perhaps the greatest authority in this domain, showed that certain episodes written in Lourenço Marques, at the dictation of a Ronga story-teller, were to be found in the folklore of the ancient Greeks and Romans, of the modern Germans, French, Greeks, Italians, Lithuanians, Siberians, Kirghizes, Indians ; in Brazil, Portugal, the Punjab, Scotland, Roumania, Guatemala, British Guiana, Morocco, etc! This is a truly wonderful phenomenon and it is very difficult to account for it. Three explanations may be given of the fact, which is one of the most interesting problems of Ethnography :

1) These stories belong to primitive humanity, and all the races carried them with them in their migrations.

2) There was, in a more or less remote past, direct contact between the various human races, by means of which the tales have been transmitted from one tribe to another, in such a way that, in the course of time, they have spread all over the world.

3) There is such a similarity in the mentality of the various races, when still in the primitive phase of their development, that they have all invented the same stories independently of each other. Hence the unity of folklore everywhere.

I do not think any one of these explanations excludes the others. There is probably a portion of truth in each of them. The difficulty is to define that portion exactly, and this cannot be done until we have more material at hand. For South Africa

we have already a great deal of information owing to the work of Callaway, Theal, Torrend for the Zulu-Kafirs, Bleak and Mrs Lloyd for the Hottentots and Bushmen, Casalis, Arbousset, Jacottet for the Ba-Sutho, and my own for the Thongas. But there is still more to be collected. I am under the impression that, having now collected about fifty Thonga tales of different lengths, amounting to a total of 300 pages, in-8vo size, I possess only a fifth, or perhaps a tenth part of the whole folklore of our tribe! 538

However, Science cannot wait until all the tales have been reduced to writing and published. It will try to come to a conclusion as soon as possible, and perhaps the best plan would be to restrict the field of investigation, and to investigate thoroughly one, at least, of the regions of this vast land. That is the suggestion I would take the liberty of making to my fellow-inquirers in the field of Bantu folklore. Let us choose a characteristic portion of it, for instance, that which I have called the "Romance of the Hare", which is more clearly defined than any other section of this primitive and oral literature. Let all the episodes of this long story be first published in a form which may be regarded as typical, preferably in the form in which they are found in any one given tribe ; let a short résumé of each be made and assigned a distinguishing number by which it will henceforth be known. Then let a folklorist, if he has the necessary time and information at his disposal, make the following investigation : — In which tribes are these episodes met with? How do they differ from the typical version? Do they appear outside Africa (amongst American Negroes, for instance) ? This inquiry would throw light on many important points, viz., what is strictly Bantu in the "Romance of the Hare", and what is common to other races ? Are there episodes which belong to one tribe only, to a group of tribes only, or to tribes widely separated from each other ? To what extent do the wording and the content differ ? Are there not new episodes invented, possibly unconsciously, in recent times by Native story-tellers ? I think, that when this was done important conclusions might be drawn which would greatly assist Ethnography in the solution of this problem, and of many questions bearing on primitive humanity. 000

I hope later to publish the résumé and classification, of the 56 episodes of the " Romance of the Hare ", which I have collected. I may be able to make this collection more complete, as I know that a num-

000 ber of other stories are told about the "Wily Trickster", as the Thongas call him! This attempt may serve as a starting point for the inquiry which I propose, and should this inquiry ever be conducted on an extended scale, under the auspices of the S.A.A.A.S., for instance, and the result be published in its Journal, the Science of Folklore would certainly greatly profit by such an undertaking.

538 The antiquity of the tales is beyond any doubt: they are certainly, very old. This antiquity, however, is only relative: that is to say they are constantly transformed by the narrators, and these transformations go much further than is generally supposed, further even than the Natives themselves are aware of. After having heard the same stories told by different story-tellers, I must confess that I never met twice with exactly the same version. First of all *words* differ. Each narrator has his own style, speaks freely and does not feel in any way bound by the expressions used by the person who taught him the tale. It would be a great error to think that, writing a story at the dictation of a Native, we possess the recognized standard form of the tale. There is no standard at all! For this reason I cannot attribute any great importance to the *texts* of the tales. They are examples of the language as spoken by so and so in such and such a district, and therefore have a linguistic value, just as any report or address they may make or deliver. But they are by no means stereotyped texts, transmitted as such from old times. The words of the songs, which occasionally accompany the narration, are probably the most ancient and stable element of the tales. They are often half Zulu in those of the tales which have been borrowed from the neighbouring tribe, and contain archaic expressions. Some sentences also, especially when they are quotations, have the same character and are reproduced by different narrators in an identical form; for instance, when the Small Toad, Shinana, deposits its eggs on the road and says, as a kind of challenge: "Let the passer-by pass. If he crushes them, let him crush them. If he spares them, let him spare them". I heard this sentence repeated in almost exactly the same terms by two Thongas, one from Khosen, the other from Rikatla. But these fixed elements are rare and, as a rule, Natives change the words with the greatest freedom.

The same may be said with regard to *the sequence of the episodes*; 538 ● although these often form definite cycles, it is rare to hear two narrators follow exactly the same order. They arrange their material as they like, sometimes in a very awkward fashion. The tricks of the Hare are sometimes attributed to the Small Toad. In Zulu folklore they are all given as the deeds of a dwarf, called Hlakanyana. I have heard Natives mixing up elements of totally different styles. For instance, in the ritornello of the "Hare's Hoe", which will be found later on and belongs to the animal or semi-animal folklore, the conclusion is borrowed from the well-known episode of the "Year of Famine", which belongs to the class of moral tales (or tales originating in an historic event). New combinations thus constantly take place, sometimes absurd when the literary sense is lacking.

I will go further: *New elements* are also introduced, owing to the tendency of Native story-tellers always to apply the circumstances of their environment to the narrative. This is one of the charms of Native tales. They are living, viz., they are not told as if they were past and remote events, in an abstract manner, but considered as happening amongst the hearers themselves, the names of listeners being often given to the heroes of the story, which is, so to speak, forced into the frame of everyday life. So all the new objects brought in by civilisation are, without the slightest difficulty, made use of by the narrator. He speaks of rifles and guns, of square houses and of clothing, which were not dreamt of by the ancient authors of the tales, and that not only in tales which are distinctly of foreign origin but also in those which are thoroughly Bantu. Thus Magugu, Spoon's wife, in her tale about the hyena-suitors, which otherwise has a strongly Bantu character, concluded by making the girl, the heroine of the story, come to the Missionary Station to be married in the Church! There is not the remotest shadow of historic or ethnographic criticism in the minds of Bantu story-tellers: hence the changes which are constantly deforming old traditions.

Lastly, my experience leads me to think that, in certain cases, the *contents of the stories* themselves are changed by oral transmission, thus giving birth to numerous versions of a tale,

538 often very different from each other and sometimes hardly recognisable. See, for instance, the splendid tale of Zili which I now publish : a man kills his wife and cuts her flesh into strips which he gives to his relatives-in-law to eat. A bird reveals his crime by a little song ; he is found out, and put to death with his whole family. The theme is very popular, and forms one of the most typical moral tales. I possess a version of the story in which it is the wife who calls her parents and, with their help, kills her husband, because he ill-treated her. They cut off the flesh and hang it in strips on the fence of the village. The husband's mother comes to pay a visit to her grandson, and they give her the poor man's flesh to eat. She stays in the village many days, wondering why they feast her with meat of which they do not partake. When she expresses her astonishment, they say to her : "We kept it for you!" When returning home, having taken a supply of meat with her, the old woman hears a bird singing :

> Tsenengu! tsenengu! There is one who fell down!
> He fell down on the square of the village,
> His flesh hangs and swings;
> It is that which you carry on your head.

This song is totally different from that in Zili. The bird repeats it until she understands the words, and then she cries :

> My son! Alas! Alas!

The source of the two stories is evidently the same, but how great are the differences between them! Such alterations have evidently taken place, and are still taking place, every day in Bantu folklore.

How far can these alterations go? To answer this question I would ask my readers to study the charming tale which I have called the "Epic of the Small Toad" (*Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, p. 109). What I call the Small Toad is not our little European green frog but a curious Batrachian, the Breviceps mossambicus, in Ronga the *shinana*. It can swell up to double its natural size and cover itself with an exudation which keeps its enemies away. It buries itself in the ground during the winter, and comes out in spring. This interesting little animal is, in the Ronga folklore,

the equal of the Hare, and even surpasses it. Some of its great 538
deeds are the same as those well known in the "Romance of the Hare." The Small Toad begins by killing an antelope by its tricks, and uses its horn as a trumpet to deceive the other beasts. This brings about a fight between the Small Toad and the Hippopotamus, followed by another between it and the Elephant, which has wilfully crushed its eggs. The Small Toad, accompanied by the Chameleon, forges assagais, kills the Elephant, and all the beasts make their submission. So it becomes a Great Chief. It would seem that the presence in the sandy country of Delagoa Bay of this kind of Batrachian with its curious habits, coupled with the example of the Ngoni chiefs who subjugated the clans of the coast by warlike expeditions, has given birth in our tribe to a new modern type of folklore, the type of the Breviceps : all the tricks previously and still told of the Hare are attributed to it, though it keeps its own definite character, viz., that of a warrior. If this be true, there has been a *real creation*, though most of the elements of the "Epic of the Small Toad" were previously in existence.

In conclusion I would say : — The Bantu tales are very old, at least the material of which they are formed is very ancient. But they are still plastic matter unconsciously undergoing constant and extensive modifications in the hands of the story-tellers. These facts are interesting, as they show the conditions of literary production amongst uncivilised tribes. This production is *essentially collective* : tales are not created on all sides by individual authors ; but they are modified, altered and enriched, as they are transmitted from one person to another, from one tribe to another, from one race to another, to such an extent that new types, new combinations, are adopted and a true development takes place (1). This is obvious if, in addition to these transform-

(1) To illustrate this theory, I published in *Folk-Lore*, Dec. 1924, an article under the title ; *La Genèse des Contes Africains : ou comme quoi les Noirs inventent des Contes sans le savoir*. The reader will find in it three tales differing widely from each other. Yet they are inspired by the same fundamental idea which is frequently met with in Bantu Folklore : "Accept the advice of old, despised people, and do not have confidence in yourself". The present conditions of the country round Delagoa Bay may very well explain the transformation of the old Bantu story and it is quite possible to take the view that these three tales have after all the same origin.

538 ations, that which I have called the fifth category really exists, viz., if it be true that facts which really happened are told in such a way that they come to be classed amongst the fabulous. So it is quite possible that the impression shared by all the story-tellers that all the tales are ancient, that the era of creation has passed, is after all erroneous or, at any rate, only relatively true. A development is still taking place and has perhaps never been more active than now. If this is correct, the hypothesis of Callaway, that our tribes have passed through a stage of greater literary production than is now apparent, cannot be maintained.

IV. *The Moral and Philosophical Value of the Tales.*

In some of the Thonga tales the moral lesson is so clear that I did not hesitate to place them in a special category, the moral tales. They are as wide-spread as the others. I do not pretend that those who tell them have a moral purpose. But the teaching naturally arises from the narratives, and it would be worth while studying them to extract therefrom a kind of code of Native elementary morals. In them we see just punishment following on faults, such as : the *curiosity* of Namashuke (Chants et Contes, p. 22) ; the *jealousy* of Mutipi's friends (p. 158) ; and of Longoloka (Les Ba-Ronga, p. 327) ; *the obstinacy* of Sidiulu's wife ; the *unkindness* of an elder sister (p. 229) ; the *presumption* of a younger sister (p. 337) ; the *disobedience* of Halandi (p. 242) and of the elder brother in the "Disobedient child and the Snake ;" the *self-confidence* of a man who marries against his parents' will (p. 246) ; the *laziness* of the wives (p. 257) ; the *selfishness* of the husband (p. 260) the *homicide* of Zili. On the other hand we also see *kindness rewarded*, and also *pity*, in a tale not yet published, told in connection with that of The disobedient child (1).

(1) After having told how the little child saved his disobedient brother, (see later), the narrator goes on with a totally different story which, originally, had certainly no connection with the other episode. During the famine, the child who was now several years older, went away to another country. A headman received him, and ordered one of his wives to take care of him, but she refused, saying that her own children had nothing to eat. All the others did the same except one, who consented to feed him.

The animal folklore and Ogre tales seem to be absolutely 538
devoid of such moral lessons. But, as we have already pointed out, they are all more or less illustrations of the triumph of wisdom over mere brute force. This seems to be the root idea of all this folklore, and is not this indeed a highly moral and philosophical idea?

To illustrate this very interesting argument, the story-tellers, in the first instance, narrate the doings of the animals, choosing for the heroes of their tales the smallest and most defenceless. Thus we have the Hare, the cunning trickster, up to all sorts of dodges ; the Small Toad, cold and calculating, the Chameleon, with its crafty prudence. The same idea runs through the group of stories which I have called "the wisdom of the little ones ;" those who were thought to be dullards, the disinherited, and the hated, end by succeeding in life better than their persecutors, of whom they often become the benefactors. On the other hand the Ogres, as representing brute force and all that is merely material, are defeated, are punished for their misdeeds and are generally cut open (to provide an exit for the victims they have swallowed!). So the exaltation of wisdom or goodness is clearly noticeable in almost all the tales, and even foreign tales seem to show, beneath a more or less exotic colouring, that they owe their origin to the same idea. The African story-teller undoubtedly endeavours, above all, to interest his hearers by picturesque, laughable or sensational narratives : but, consciously or unconsciously, he is certainly doing work the philosophical bearing of which is undeniable.

Why does this theme of the triumph of wisdom over strength reappear so frequently and under so many aspects in this popular literature? Doubtless because the thought is natural and eminently satisfying to the mind of man. It underlies our fairy tales of *Cinderella, Hop o'my thumb* and many other European

The child sowed seeds of all kinds and, his enchanted hoe having tilled large fields in a moment, a splendid harvest was the result, and the store houses of his adopted mother were well filled. The others said : "If we had only accepted him!" On his way home, he killed an army and took their assagais, killed a troop of merchants and seized their loads of goods, killed all his relatives and took their hoes,—an episode which resembles that of the conclusion of Mutipi's tale. (Chants et Contes p. 160.)

538 fables and stories. But may there not have been, in regard to the African tribes, some special circumstances which contributed to the development of this idea, and impelled them to give vent to it in a hundred different ways?

538 181 Among the Bantus, the Chief is all powerful. Surrounded by Counsellors, protected by warriors always ready to do his bidding, he is an autocrat with power of life and death over his subjects, especially where the primitive clan has evolved into a confederation of tribes united by military power. If the Bantu clan is in a sense democratic, the hierarchy is, nevertheless, all powerful in its midst. Before the Chief and before the invincible custom of which he is the representative, every one bows and trembles. In every village the headman possesses similar power over his subordinates, and elder brothers reign as despots over the younger. From the top to the bottom of the social ladder the strong dominate over the weak and combine, in a wonderful way, to assure the submission of the inferior. In the evening, round the fire, the women and the children take their revenge in the Black man's usual way, i. e., by saying what they think in a round-about manner. They do not try to upset the existing state of affairs. Far from it! But they take a malicious pleasure in telling of the clever tricks of the Hare and his associates! Why? Because Mr. Hare represents the little one, the subject, the ordinary private individual, who has received no special advantages, either by birth or from nature, and yet who, by his own personal wit or common sense, gets the better of the great ones of the community and even of the chiefs. Is it a mere coincidence that three of the tales I have collected conclude with the death of a chief brought about by the machiavellian astuteness of that rascal, the Hare? Or, sometimes, it is the youngest sister who figures in the story; the despised one, covered with a loathsome skin disease; the insignificant little goat-herd; the son of the neglected wife; all of whom accomplish great deeds, entirely unexpectedly.

538 I see in these stories, as it were, a discreet protest of weakness against strength, a protest of spiritual against material force; possibly they may contain a warning to those in power from those

who suffer. And who knows if their ultimate object be not to assert the value of the individual amongst this down-trodden people where the individual counts for nothing? If this is so, then African folklore possesses a greater and more philosophical value than would appear at first sight. In the collective state of human society it represents an aspiration to a state of things where the individual will have his due place. In this way, it is prophetic. It can no longer be classed merely as an amusement for old women during the long evenings, or as a more or less intellectual parlour-game: it is a monument upon which the soul of the race has recorded, unconsciously perhaps, its ideas and its aspirations. It is thus doubly worthy of our study. 538

The scope of this book does not allow me to publish more than one or two tales of each category, and I must also abstain from any technical comment upon them, leaving the work of annotation and comparison to professional folklorists. My aim is to describe the South African tribe, and they constitute a sufficient illustration in themselves of its psychic life. 539

V. *Animal Folklore.*

I have published nearly thirty episodes of the Romance of the Hare in the works already referred to; those which I collected in later years form three cycles: that of the *Wily Trickster*, a collection of episodes told by Martha and heard by her in the Maputju country; the most noteworthy of these describe the victory of the Hare over the Lion; *the Hare and the Lion*, told by Simeon Makwakwa of Bilen, containing episodes quite different from those of the first cycle; *the Hare and the Baboon*, written for me by one of my pupils, Mbike Dzengen from Khosen, a very amusing story also known in Bilen with some variations. To these three cycles I have added the story of the *Hare's Hoe*, a curious specimen of a popular literary genus, the ritornello, or anadiplosis not frequently met with in Bantu folklore.

[See at. 116, pp. 226-275 for texts of folk-Tales]

villages of the living. No woman, and no uterine nephew is 764
buried in the official cemeteries. 769

These woods are taboo. It is forbidden to gather fuel there, 778
to cut down any tree, or to allow the bush fire to enter them. Should anyone have imprudently set fire to the grass in the neighbourhood, and be unable to extinguish the blaze, and should the fire thus pass over a grave, he must provide a goat for sacrifice, in order to "extinguish" (timula) the sacred wood. All entry is strictly prohibited except to the guardian of the wood (mutameli wa ntimu), the priest, who is the descendant of the gods of the forest. He goes there from time to time, to offer the sacrifices. He penetrates into the dense foliage by a narrow path, hardly perceptible. I have often visited one of the most celebrated woods, that of Libombo, two miles east of the Rikatla station. The old Libombo chiefs were buried there, and Nkolele, the proprietor of the forest, was very proud of it. He asserted that Mahazule, the chief of Nondwane, belonging to the reigning family of Mazwaya, whose forefathers had conquered the land of Nondwane, feared the spot and, in order to avoid it, took a circuitous route to Lourenço-Marques, or, if forced to take that road, stopped near the wood to pay his respects to the old chiefs buried there. I did not see anything remarkable in that wood. Forcing my way through the bushes, brambles, and creepers I at length came to a sort of tumulus, but very slightly raised, on which were to be seen some dried leaves of maize, the remains of offerings placed there some time previously. The young man who acted as my guide — considerably against his inclination, I fancy, — turned away his face, with a terrified expression, when we came upon this grave. In another spot I found some other tombs. Snakes thrive, naturally, in these thickets, where they are undisturbed, but I did not see any on that occasion. No mausoleum has been built over any of these venerated sepulchres ; a few pieces of old blackened pottery were all we saw — the remnants of the jugs and plates belonging to the deceased, which were broken on the spot after his death.

The dread in which these sacred woods are held by the Natives 769
is certainly not due to any unusual objects they may have seen 778
538

769 there. It is inculcated, and kept alive, by the truly terrifying tales
778 which are told concerning them. These are related in the evening,
in low tones, and with frightened looks, and the feeling of awe is
538 fed and maintained by these legends. I intend to narrate here
776 those I heard from various informants ; these stories will illustrate
better than any philosophical explanation the ideas of the Natives
concerning their gods. Those connected with the Libombo wood
are the most typical. I owe them to Spoon and the aged Nkolele.
I will begin with those which are of most ancient origin, and
whose legendary character is most unmistakable.

539 One day a woman was passing close by the forest of Libombo : she
plucked a sala (p. 16) from a tree and ate it, after which she went to till
776 her garden. On another occasion, just as she was cracking another sala
769 against the trunk of a tree before eating it, she saw that the fruit, instead
of having a stone inside, was filled with small vipers. She threw it
away, but the vipers said to her : "Go on! Eat away! Haven't we seen you
every day picking sala? And these sala are ours, and not yours. What
shall we gods have to eat? Have we not made this tree to grow?" And
she went home and died, because she had been cursed by the gods.

Another woman was passing by the forest on a rainy day, and saw a child, who had climbed a tree, and was eating berries. She approached the child and said : "Give me some of those berries!" The boy made no reply, so she began to pick some for herself. When she had picked enough, she said : "Are you going on picking berries in such a rain as this! Where is your mother?" He still remained silent. She felt sorry for the child, thinking he was indeed to be pitied : — "Come," said she, "and let me carry you on my back." So she went up to the tree, and lifted down the child, and tied him on her back with her shawl ; then, putting her conical basket on her head, she started for home. On arriving at her hut, she saw that a fire had been lighted on account of the rain. — "Put on some more wood," said she, "for the sake of this little one, whom I found on the road eating berries." She untied the shawl, and tried to place the child on her hips, but he refused to be moved, and clung to her back, where he kept quite still. The folks said to the woman : "Put him down on the ground, so that he can go and warm himself near the embers." He refused. Then they said to him : "Get down!" But he still refused to move. Then the villagers said to the woman : "Didn't you pass by the Libombo forest?" — "Yes! I did," she replied, "and there I found this child gathering berries, and

biha, is regularly used in Djonga to mean *sin*. It also designates 192
the offensive substance which a child or careless person may have 183
left on the path, instead of observing the sanitary regulations of 577
Native villages. (I. p. 311.) But in addition to biha we have *dyoha* (Dj.), *doha* (Ro.), to commit a wrong, *hona* (Ro.), *onha* (Dj.), which means to spoil, but also to sin, and from which comes *shihono*, the true word for sin in Ronga. *Somboloka* means to be irremediably bad, crooked, like a stem which cannot be straightened.

On the contrary the adjective *nene*, corresponding to biha, contains three meanings: good, nice, and true, the derivate *bunene* designating rather goodness and beauty, and another derivative, *psinene*, truth; the verb used for to be good is *shonga* (Ro), or *saseka* (Dj.), and has both the moral and esthetic significance. *Ku lulama* is to be straight, like a stem, and the use of this word indicates a deep and clear sense of right doing. Many other expressions might be quoted, showing that the notion of moral good and evil is certainly present in the Native mind, quite independently of that of taboo. They also recognise the *conscience* (timpfalu), seated in the diaphragm (p. 361).

2) *Intercourse with Natives* proves the same thing. Though 183
their ideas may differ from ours as regards what is good (1), 577
they are undoubtedly moral beings, with a more or lees developed conscience.

3) Their *folklore* is the best and most objective proof that this [538]
is so. Vice is punished and virtue rewarded in all the tales which I have called *moral*, and they certainly contain a whole code of natural and elementary morality (p. 222). The pangs of conscience in a criminal are depicted in a wonderful fashion in Zili, for instance.

However, it must be confessed that this morality is low, that it does not possess a very strong hold on the Native soul, and that the imperative of conscience is by no means the categorical

(1) The idea of charity is particularly low: charity is due only to relatives, or to 577
clansmen, and not to foreigners. I remember a man of the Mazyisa clan who nearly 609
died near the lake of Rikatla, having been hurt when working on the railway; nobody took pity on him, because he belonged to another clan. He was saved by a converted woman, Lois, who had a wonderful understanding of the new principles of universal brotherhood.

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intellectual learning in it, though very scanty and insignificant. Every morning the candidates are brought together to the place of the formulae (nau-milau, law, prescription). There is a tree in the midst of this square. A special instructor, whose father has already exercised this function, climbs up the tree and begins to teach the boys. He says :

Little boys, do you hear me. I say...

Then come the words of the secret formulae which are a great taboo and which they must learn by heart, sentence after sentence. I have collected some of them, Thonga and Pedi. Here I will reproduce only the Thonga. They are partly incomprehensible, even to the initiated. The first is called *Manhengwana*. It is the name of a bird.

Masumanyana a nga suma...
The little bird has sung.
A nga suma tinghala ta tinhingo...
It has stirred the handles of the lances which are like lions...
T'entsha ku ya thabana...
They pierce each other...
Manhengu. Manhengu bentshile. Bentsha tirula...
The bird... ? ?
Fula ngoma... Mukhubela wa hantana...
Forged at the lodge. Clouds come from all parts.
Mihumbyana saben. Sabe khula ra barimi.
Rivulets in the sand, forming the great Sabi.
Ntje-ntje bya ngulube... Bya shinana sha rila...
The running of the wild pig... Of the frog which cries...
Byi longolokile byi ya kamba ntjonga wa mbila.
They are walking in good order, they go to visit the mysterious hut.
Ba kama byi ri bucunga, songa bya timhiri ni tinhamba...
They find it like the twisted rings of the adder.

These words, so far as they have a sense, seem to extol the Ngoma and its lodge. These assagais, which are like lions which are going to tear each other, represent the school which is starting, awakened by the bird of the winter. The clouds coming from all directions are the boys converging on the sungi from all parts of the country, like rivulets which join together to form a great river. The running of the wild pig is the life of the boy who was idling away his time till initiation made a man of him. The croaking of the frog (shinana) is his childish stupidity. The

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shinana is a strange animal indeed, a small Batracian which is able, when attacked, to swell considerably : then it becomes so hard that its enemies, even a cock with a sharp beak, cannot pierce it. The circumcised boy, before initiation, was a shinana before it swelled up. By the trials of the Ngoma, he will become like this frog, an invulnerable and untamable adversary. (1) In the last sentences we see the bukwera, the troup of the circumcised, penetrating into the mysterious hut, into the Ngoma, and wondering at the extraordinary wisdom which is found there. The laws, rites and trials are like the inextricable intermingling of many snakes.

The sungi is then celebrated again in the following sentences :

A mi ri i sungi...
Say, it is the lodge.
Hansi ka rona, i tleketleka,
On the ground, there is a disgusting smell,
Henhla ka rona i thulawula...
On the roof, it is elevated and beautiful...
Makomole i mhandje...
Its supports are poles...
Tinga hi hala n djibalelo...
Long rods unite the poles... etc.

Nwatjabatjabane a nga tjabatjaba...
The heavy body which goes on heavily...
Shikari ka mipungu ni mihlanga...
Through the drifts and the reeds...
Masheka ya le ndjako, marumbu a wela ndjen.
Which must be cut open from behind, because its bowels fall down inside its body.
I ngwenya.
It is the crocodile.

Shiborekeketa mahlaluku makambaku...
The beast which opens the road to the drifts for the elephants...
A ta hi ku nwa ni ku hlamba...
It goes to drink and to bathe...
A mi ri mfubu ?
Do you not say, it is the hippopotamus ?

Nwatjabatjabane makandjya ka ku oma...
The beast which marches slowly on the dry ground...
Ku se ku baleka nhlangasi,
And a marsh is formed by its heavy footsteps,
Ndlopfu, shibangamaphesa a nga riphembe, hi yona...
It is the elephant, the one who provides clothing (by the sale of its teeth) the one who brings wealth, it is he !

(1) Another explanation : The running to and fro of the wild pig describes the coming and going of the men who bring the boys to the "place of the crocodile," like pigs searching for their prey. The "Shinana" which cries is the little circumcised boy whose voice is hardly heard amidst all the noise of that terrible day. He is a small powerless thing, like the frog.

618 the same way as Pedi diviners do for their various tribes, represent-
551 ing them by the astragalus of their totems.
177 As regards these two incidents, they are easily explained by the influence of the Sutho tribes amongst which these Thongas have been living for a long time. Nothing of the kind is met with amongst the Thongas who have remained in their own country, and Maaghe, the Pedi-Khaha chief, assured me that this appellation of the Nkunas, Nyari, buffalo, is modern and borrowed from the Pedis. The Nkunas do not observe any taboo in connexion with the ox, and this shows that their totemic custom is a mere external imitation of that of the Suthos. These two instances might be called cases of *secondary* or *adopted totemism.*
618 Considering only the Thongas as compared with the Pedis, we
551 might be tempted to conclude that the Thongas had preserved
178 the old Bantu custom of naming themselves after their ancestor; just as the Thongas used to add to that name other laudatory expressions, we might suppose that the Pedi tribes had adopted names of animals to glorify themselves; in the course of time, the essentially totemic fears and taboos may have been introduced into the customs, owing to the importance given to the shibongo. This would be a rationalistic explanation of totemism. *A priori* it could not be said to be impossible. Though totemism appears to be a very old custom of humanity, it is not necessary, *per se*, that the Bantu tribes should have all passed through that phase of primitive belief.

618 3) I must, however, mention a third instance which shows
539 that this notion of a community of life between an animal and
178 a human group must have existed also amongst the ancient Thongas. There are, *in their folklore*, tales which seem to have been inspired by such old ideas now lost, especially the tale of Titishan, which I have published in "Les chants et contes des Ba-Ronga," page 253. A girl named Titishan marries a man. When she goes to her husband's home, she asks her parents to give her their cat. They refuse, saying: "You know that our life is attached to it." She insists, and they at last consent. She shuts the animal up in a place where nobody sees it. Her husband even ignores its existence. One day,

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when she goes to the fields, the cat escapes from its kraal, enters the hut, puts on the war ornaments of the husband, dances and sings. Children, attracted by the noise, discover it and inform the master of the village of the strange dancer they have seen... He goes and kills it. At that very moment Titishan falls to the ground, in her garden. She says : "I have been killed at home." She asks her husband to accompany her, with the corpse of the cat wrapped in a mat, to her parents' village. All her relatives attend. They severely reproach their daughter for having insisted on taking the animal. The mat is unrolled and, as soon as they see the dead cat, they all fall lifeless to the ground, one after the other. The Clan-of-the-Cat is destroyed and the husband returns home after having closed the gate of the village with a branch (See Page 323) : "Their life was in the cat."

Folk-tales are very ancient, and this one is by no means unique of its kind. (Compare Jacottet's "Treasury of the Ba-Sutho Lore," Morija 1908, Masilo punished for having eaten zebra's meat.) It shows that the totemic idea existed in former times, in those primitive periods of evolution which some Bantu tribes have now outgrown.

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4) A fourth fact tends to show that a mystic relation between an animal and a clan existed in former times. There is, in the north of the Transvaal, a kind of antelope called by the Natives *Shidyanaman*. It is taboo to kill it : "If a Nkuna does so, his family will die during the year, his wife, his children, his own head. Should he kill one by mistake, he must cry with a loud voice and shout : — Yoo! Shana n'ta da na mane! Alack! with whom shall I eat it ?" Mankhelu says it is taboo to eat its flesh, but the taboo is removed by this formula. The Ba-Nkuna do not know how to explain this custom. It may be a relic of former totemic ideas. However Mankhelu does not call the shidyanaman a ntshupu, a totem, and these customs may perhaps be connected with the *nuru* superstition (Comp. Ch. IV and Part IV, hunting customs). But even supposing that the Thongas have gone through the totemic phase, the present clans have entirely forgotten these ancient beliefs.

643 chiefs are entitled (1). The *elevation and the presentation* ended,
535 the next proceeding is the *gila* or war dance. The heroes of the army (batlhabani ba fumo), and the young men of blood royal rush one after the other into the enclosure brandishing their weapons, jumping as high as they possibly can, imitating acts of prowess on the battle field and simulating the transfixion of their enemies. The *gila* continues until the cry is heard : "Ye-yi, ye-yi, ye-yi." This murmuring sound uttered by the whole army marks the end of the jumping, and all re-form into line. All the shields must now touch one another, forming an immense unbroken circle, and then comes the *guba*, the intonation of the solemn chant which is at once the principal patriotic song of the
643 tribe, the coronation hymn, the dirge of mourning, the war-song,
533 and the sacred melody par excellence :
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> Sabela ! Sabela nkosi ! Ji ! Ji !
> Answer us ! Answer us, O chief ! Ji ! Ji !
> Si ya ku wela mulambu mkulu wa ka nkosi.
> Yes, we will cross the great river, the river of the chief.

This chant, which is in the Zulu language, is difficult to understand. The soloist commences with : "Sabela nkosi" which may be translated "Obey the chief ;" but the meaning would rather seem to be : "Reply to us, chief!" and, if taken in this sense, these words would be a request made by the army

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(1) The word *Bayete* is said to be of Zulu origin and to convey the following meaning : bring thine enemies hither and destroy them ! *Ndjao* means lion. The warriors employ these terms to extol the power of their chief and, at the same time, to express their allegiance to him. There is a modern tendency to use this solemn salutation in a more general manner : for instance it is addressed to the Whites and not only to those in authority, but more or less to every one, even, in certain cases, to missionaries ! I always remember my arrival at the village of Shirinda, when I went to call on the chief Mahatlane, then unknown to me. I arrived at the gate of the kraal mounted on a most unpretentious little donkey and enquired of two young men who were there, where I could find the chief. "Bayete !" was the salutation I received and there was certainly nothing very regal either in my appearance or my "mount." One of these young men proved to be Mahatlane himself ! *Bayete* is also frequently used in acknowledging a gift from a superior and would then be merely the equivalent of "thank you." In Gaza, Gungunyana would not allow Bayete to be said to any one but himself. All the petty chiefs of the Ba-Ronga insisted on their royal salutation and the Ngoni king could not put a stop to it, as they were direct dependencies of the Whites and did not derive their authority from him.

1 [For the coronation of a chief--Analyst]

643 to the chief, to which he will reply by executing the dance which
533 follows. To this exclamation of the soloist the warriors respond
539 by striking their shields with their assagais, producing a hard sharp sound, which the chant tries to render by the syllable "Ji! Ji!" Then they stamp their feet, saying: "Vu! Vu!" and this enigmatic sentence follows: "Yes, we will cross the great river, the river of the chief." What is this river? Can it be that which separates the Mpfumo country from Khosen, namely the Nkomati? Or the Mitembe, marking the frontier between the Northern and the Southern Ba-Ronga? Or do not these mysterious words rather refer to the river of death, which the entire host should cross without hesitation if called to do so by their chief? Whatever the exact meaning may be, this chant must be an assurance of loyalty on the part of the warriors to their king and probably also an appeal to his valour.

643 The chant ended, no one is allowed to leave the ranks. The
535 chief alone rushes into the enclosure; every warrior holds his
701 shield in his hand and strikes it with hard sharp blows (ku ba ngomana); on hearing these, the chief begins to *gila* in his turn. He executes the war-dance brandishing his assagai, as if killing invisible enemies. The crowd encourages him, inciting him to still further efforts, crying: "Silo! Silo! Silo! Beast of the fields! Lion!" Volleys are fired. The chief redoubles his exertions, gesticulating furiously, perspires profusely, is well nigh exhausted and finally stops! The whole army sits on the ground and the young king is supplied with a jug of beer to quench his thirst.

When the ceremony has lasted long enough, and the warriors have enjoyed at their ease the spectacle of their chief's prowess, the Commander-in-chief dismisses the battalions, one after the other. The circle (mukhumbi) breaks up and all rush to the residence of their respective counsellors, singing as they go the praises of the particular army-corps to which they belong. The members of the royal family return to the capital, where they remain. A counsellor presents each group or regiment with the ox which has been allotted to it; this is accepted with shouts of "bayete." The men cut up the animal, divide the meat and eat it in their respective quarters.

796 gait, brandishing sticks with pieces of red cloth attached as
273 pennants. They are in search of full barrels! It must be said
786 that the inebriety produced by the bukanye is of a rather mild type, as this Native beer contains very little alcohol ; but the quantity absorbed is so enormous that it ends by going to their heads : this is more especially so with the bukanye brewed from a species of nkanye called *nunge*, which appears to be stronger and more intoxicating.

796 How far does sexual licence go during the bukanye ? Not to
273 the point of general promiscuity, as amongst the Ba-Pedi after the circumcision school. However many cases of adultery occur.
833 Men and women forget the elementary rules of condvet. They
786 attend to the wants of nature in the same places, which is taboo under ordinary circumstances : "Nau a wa ha tiyi,"—"the law is no longer in force."

796 Still, in the midst of all this carnival, the payment of the tax
273 must not be forgotten... This is the time to carry to the chief the liquor which is flowing so freely on all sides, but of which
643 he claims the lion's share. Each petty chief sends his people
631 to the capital with brimming jars. This is termed "lumisa hosi," supplying the chief with new wine. The women do not enter the capital at once, but go to one of the counsellors, who promptly abstracts a couple of jars for his own use. The chief returns one or two jars to the carriers, as they have come a long way and are doubtless thirsty ; the remainder will be kept to refresh the very numerous guests at the Court ; any coming from afar will spend the night and not return until the next day. I have seen a company of these women carrying baskets
539 full of makanye to Muzila. How graceful was the Indian file winding its way along the path and singing, amongst others, the following chorus : (See for further particulars *Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, page 46.)

Chwe! Chwe! Hi laba shimungu — Leshi ka — Le tilwen!
Chwe! Chwe! Shimungu hi mani? — Hi Mzila! — Hi Mzila!
Hi! Hi! We seek the hawk! — Who soars — In the sky!
Hi! Hi! Who is the hawk? — It is Mzila! — It is Mzila!

539 There is quite a collection of these carriers' songs praising the chiefs. Mzila (or Muzila), whom we saw a short time back scaring sparrows, is here compared to the mythical lightning bird, to the hawk that swoops down from the clouds. (See Part VI.) Why does he not once for all annihilate the sparrows which pillage his fields of sorghum ? But this is poetry! and there is often a wide gap between poetry and reality!

d) The feasting of the chief in the villages.

796 The fourth and final act of the bukanye feasting in which, as we
273 have seen, the chief plays a prominent part, is the *nsungi* which
643 may be called the "fin de saison" orgy. The chief now returns the visits of his subjects and casks of beer are prepared for him in every village. Dancing and singing are in full swing. He is fêted and acclaimed! But the makanye are getting over-ripe ; a new month, a new moon is at hand, which is called *sibandlela* "she who closes the roads ;" the paths leading to the foot of the trees become almost impassable, owing to the grass which grows to an incredible height during the rains prevailing at this season. The fine weather is over. Winter is knocking at the door.

796 Amongst the Nkunas the luma ceremony called "to eat the
789 new year" (dyaka ñwaka) is performed with a special pumpkin
643 (kwembe) cooked at the capital together with the medicine used
262 for rain-making. The chief first eats of it in the evening and makes the sign of a cross on the big drum, which is then beaten
821 to call the people in his village. Then all the men come, bringing the little horns in which they keep the rain medicine (See Part VI). They eat a little and smear the rim of these horns with the medicine ; the horns also must "eat the new year." Then everybody can enjoy the products of the harvest. Should anyone precede the chief, this would be fatal to the latter or make him ill... Such is the testimony of Mankhelu. I suspect these rites to have been influenced by the proximity of the Ba-Pedi. "Now we have no longer any first fruits' feast (mulumo)," says Mankhelu with some melancholy. "White people have killed it. Everybody

644 He shouted like a madman and no one took the slightest notice of him!

When the chief kills an ox and possibly some little delay occurs in distributing the meat, the *mbongi* is the duly qualified beggar who goes to claim the soldiers' share. He addresses the chief much as follows : "Don't you see all those men in your village ? Are they not dogs ? Why do you starve us ? You only give meat to the women... Is it women who will defend you when the enemies attack you ? etc. etc." At the coronation of the chiefs it is this herald who sings their praises in the procession I have already described. Strange to say, the *mbongi* is allowed great licence and may even insult the chief without provoking his anger ; on the contrary, the herald is respected and a special portion of meat is reserved for him. Any one can aspire to the office provided he be sufficiently garrulous.

The most eloquent of the Thonga heralds whom I ever met is Mawewe, the mbongi of the Nkuna clan. He was an elderly man in 1900 and had a long career behind him, having been the mbongi of Manukosi. "I used to praise him from morn to night (ndji peta dambu) and he gave me a heifer as a reward." As the French writer Buffon used to put on his cuffs before writing, so Mawewe, when he intended to praise his chief Muhlaba, adorned himself with the tail of the nsimango antelope, with the feathers of the nkulunkulu (the bird of the chiefs) and of the eagle, with the skins of snakes, of the reed buck, and of the leopard, and with the nails, teeth, or hair of elephants, rhinoceros and hippopotamus ; then he began :

644 539 Muhlaba Shiluvane, (1) you are like the rhinoceros who seizes a man, bites him through and through, rolls him over and cuts him in two! You are like the crocodile which lives in water ; it bites a man! You are like its claws ; it seizes a man by his arms and legs, it drags him into the deep pool to eat him at sunset ; it watches over the entrance to prevent other crocodiles from taking its prey... Muhlaba! You are like the ram ; when it butts with its head, it knocks a man down ; like a goat, like the son of the goat, which is herded by the boys,

(1) Father of Muhlaba.

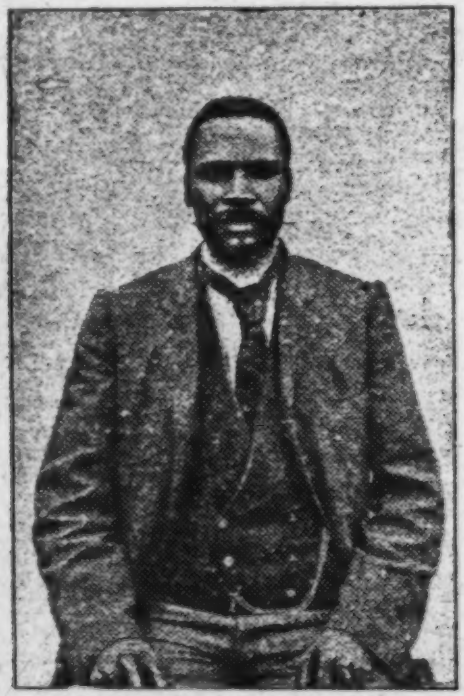
644
539

which is very cunning: it pricks up its ears, it prepares itself for defence, when attacked!

Tail of nsimango, you are like Muhlaba, you are of a great beauty, you are shining inside the forest, the black forest, you are sparkling, kati-kati-kati, (1) a man may truly fear when he sees you!

Give them meat, that they may all eat! Give your men the foreleg,

[142]



Muhlaba, the Chief of the Nkuna clan. *Phot. A. Borel.*

give them the hindleg, that they may all eat to their hearts' content... Pull their legs forward (ba koke milenge), so that they fall back in terror of you!

Why do you govern them so mildly! Look at them with terrible

(1) Descriptive adverb.

r 644 eyes! You are a coward! The Bveshas want to kill you! Act with
339 bravery and defend yourself!

Muhlaba Dabuka! Men are coming, oxen are coming. You are on the top of the hills, you are like heaven which roars... The lightning is like you, it is full of strength, it is terrible! Your saliva is white, your eyes are beaming, your face is elongated, your body is like the stone of gold (auriferous quartz); your fingers are long. You are known in every country. At Gungunyana, they know you. At Ngwana (Swaziland), they know you. The Zulus know you! At Mosilakatse, they know you. You are like the grass on the road; when people trample on it, they crush it to the ground, but when the rain comes, it grows again and covers the earth. You are like the water of the river, how beautiful! The water is clear and pure, though impurities may float upon it, they pass away and the water is pure again!

The Bveshas weep at Sikokoro's kraal! (1) They weep at Sikhukhunu's! You have taken their charms! You have sprinkled your warriors with them. Muhlaba, you have beaten them with the shaft of the assagay, your men crossed the river, they went to kill the enemies in their own kraal!

You are like the ostrich feather, the white one, very white, or the red one of the bird which cries tswe-tswe, the bird called rivi, which adorns the chiefs!

At Nyarin, (2) they dispute chieftainship (banga buhosi); they are going to kill each other. Mapsakomo says: "It is mine!" Muholo says: "It is mine!" Shirundju (3) took him (Muhlaba) in his arms... Mankhelu is like the duiker antelope! They catch him by the ear and he escapes from their hands! He is like the water of the well: they draw it off... it springs up again and fills up the well. (Viz., Mankhelu is never tired when defending the cause of Muhlaba.)

Run, go and tell Mandlamakulu, Shiluvane's brother: "The

(1) In 1901, there was a Native war in which Muhlaba and the Pedi chief Maaghe fought against their neighbour Sikororo and his ally Sikhukhukhu, heir of Sekukuni. On the 7th of November a fierce battle took place in Shiluvane where the assailants were repulsed and more than forty of them were killed. (See App. X)

(2) Here Mawewe makes an allusion to the circumstances in which Muhlaba took over the chieftainship and which have been explained when dealing with the law of succession. The capital of the tribe was still at Nyarin, at that time, viz., in the hills near New Agatha. (See page 413.)

(3) One of the great counsellors who took the part of Muhlaba as did also Mankhelu and Shikhibane.

644 539 power belongs to me." Run, go and tell Mpapalati : "The power is mine." Run, go and tell Mulondjo : "The power is mine!" (1)

Such is the laudatory song of Mawewe, one of the great men at the Nkuna court. Undoubtedly this is one of the best examples of Thonga poetry and a characteristic piece of primitive literature. In the savage tribe the mbongi is the prototype of the poet laureate of civilised Courts. But there is yet another functionary to be considered, whose dutie sare still more strange than those of the herald.

IV. *The Public Vituperator.*

(Shitale sha tiko.)

644 522 578 This is a kind of Court Jester who has the right of casting the vilest insults, the most disgraceful accusations in the teeth of any and all the Natives of the country. He never abuses strangers, but as long as he confines his vituperations to his own countrymen, he enjoys perfect immunity.

Even the chief is not safe from his attacks ; he dares to say anything! "Just see him arriving in your village," said Tobane to me, in his picturesque language. "He begins shouting out the most frightful things. He accuses you of incest, of taking your own sisters as wives! Even if he sees you talking to your 'great sister-in-law,' whom your wife's brother married with your oxen, whom you treat with the greatest respect, he will not hesitate to pass remarks which will make you blush with shame! He will go and take the food you are cooking, will even snatch from the chief's hands the meat he is eating... So, when you see him coming to your village, you hasten to meet him and take him a present to try and avoid having to listen to his horrible insults. Sometimes the *shitale* of the country behaves

(1) Quotation of the words of Muhlaba himself, who sent messengers to all his uncles, to all the petty chiefs under him, to announce officially that he had assumed the chieftainship.

726 Before going into battle, certain rites have to be accomplished.
703 In order to stimulate a war-like courage and to imbue the warrior's minds with a certainty of victory, it is necessary to proceed to the performance of the war-songs (guba), of the war dances (gila), and to administer the medicine which will render the soldiers invulnerable.

E. WAR SONGS.

533 The performance of war songs is called *guba*. I have already
539 fully described the Mpfumo national song, (p. 373) which would seem to be more adapted to celebrate a coronation than to serve as an incentive to battle ; it is however used indiscriminately for both purposes.

Another war-song which is very popular in the Mpfumo clan is the following :

Zulu : U ngwa zi mu thini, Mayeye ?
U banga muhlaba, u bulala bantu !
Ronga : U ta ku mu yini, Ñwayeye ?
U banga nilhaba, u dlaya bhanu !
What will you succeed in doing to him, Ñwayeye ?
You take the country and slay the people !

This is a question addressed to Ñwayeye, the rival of the chief Zihlahla ; Ñwayeye was placed in authority near Lourenço Marques by the Portuguese between 1860 and 1870. He accepted the position, but was unable to retain it any length of time, and the recollection of his failure is perpetuated in this song which is intended to extol the royal family of Mpfumo.

A third song, also in vogue with the Mpfumo warriors, runs thus :

Zulu : Zi m' thini ? A ba ze zi ba bona, abantu bezizwe !
Ronga : Hi ta ku yini ? A ba te hi ba bona, bhanu ba matiko !
What shall we say ? Let them come and let us see them, the people of the enemy's country !

This is a defiance hurled at the adversaries.

533 In Nondwane, they also sing this last song ; another runs as
539 follows :

Zulu : Ngambala ! ngi file...O..o..o.. Zinkomo zito !
Ronga : Nwamboten, ndji file ! O..o..o.. Tihomu teru !
My friend ! I am killed. Oh ! oh ! oh ! Our oxen !

The warriors doubtless refer to the ruin which would be entailed were the enemy to carry off their cattle, and thus they encourage one another to fight stubbornly!

Another Ronga song performed in the guba ceremony is this :

Zia yi khalelo mahlu ya se mazanga
We are weeping for the giraffe of the desert.

The giraffe may be the chief of the clan whom the warriors are determined to protect, or perhaps the enemy's chief whom they will go and kill.

This song is also one of the great guba songs of the Nkuna clan, but the words are slightly different. I have collected two others :

Hi yi kwa makhosi !
Si phuma ka makhosi, Si gambuza !
U mkhonto wa sandhlezi, Eji ! Eji !
U mkhonto wano gobee...

War comes from the chiefs !
It is ordered by the chiefs ! We go and kill !
The spear is in our hands ! Eji ! Eji !
The spear kills and bends in the wound !

The oldest of the Nkuna guba songs, which was already in use before the arrival of Manukosi, at the begining of the XIXth century, when the army still formed in line and not in circle, runs as follows :

Hi bo yima hi bo yima !
Mi teka bumna mi nyika tinsha (?) za bambe.
Let us stand fast, let us stand fast !
Do not let your strength go, it would help the enemy to conquer.

The words of this song are Thonga, as the Zulus had not yet imposed their terminology on the Thonga yimpi.

One of the finest war songs is that sung in the armies of Maputju

533 and Tembe, an antiphon seemingly very ancient, which changes
539 from the minor to the major, producing a truly grandiose effect : (For the music of most of these songs, see Vol. II. Part V.)

"At break of day," sings the solist,....
"Who was it that crowned thee, Muwai, king of Maputju?" reply the warriors.

Muwai is the great-great-grandfather of the chief Mabai, deposed in 1896. He reigned at the close of the XVIIIth century, his son Makasana having been chief from 1800 to 1850. Muwai is compared to the rising sun, or at least the song recalls his coronation, which must have taken place very early in the morning, at daybreak. It is evidently in praise of the royal family that the entire army chants this glorious souvenir.

Loko ku ti qa, loko ku ti qa
U bekwe ngubane Muwai ?
Muwai, ka Mabudu ! Muwai ka Mabudu !
U bekwe ngubane ?

At day break — At day break
Who was it that crowned thee, Muwai ?
Muwai, king of Maputju ! Muwai, king of Maputju
Who was it that crowned thee ?

726 As we see, the war songs are tolerably short ; a declamation of three or four words by a soloist (musimi) who dances in the middle of the circle, and a chorus sung by all the warriors, stamping their feet on the ground and striking their shields with their assagais. (Hence the exclamation "Eji" found at the close of some sentences.) Or sometimes the whole throng brandish the assagai in a rythmical fashion, raising it first to the right, then to the left, afterwards inclining it to the side, and lastly downwards as if to pierce...

When the great war-induna wants the song to stop, he gives a signal. At once all the shields are elevated and a sibilant murmur runs through the ranks : shi-shi-shi-shi, or a special click : nqu-nqu-nqu. Hence the verb *nqunquzela*, to stop a war song.

And then the war dance will take place.

726 prescribed rites. I once witnessed it, when the Nkuna army went
701 to Sikororo's country on a kind of punitive expedition. The great ndjuna of the army, the Commander-in-Chief, Mankhelu, his stern face grimmer than ever, holding a hyena's tail in his hand, clad in a white shirt which was very little in keeping with the whole appearance of the mukhumbi, stepped inside the large circle and raised his tail... Then the *Dhlanazo*, the young bloods, ran towards him shouting : "Kwe-kwe-kwe!" Their cry is the same as that of the *Timbulwana* (lynx), their elders, who came next. Mankhelu pointed the tail in a certain direction and these two regiments started. The *Mafakubi* came in their turn, imitating the galop of the antelopes : "tshwi-tshwi-tshwi! gwu gwu... hwu, hwu!... eka-ka-ka-ka..." and finally shouting : "N'ta dya na man" — "with whom shall I eat it ?" — a strange sentence which may be, as previously mentioned, a reminiscence of a totemic period! (See page 366)... The *Matsyoni*, the seabirds, followed shouting "tswe-tswe-tswe ;" the *Mamphondo*, those of the horn, came shouting "tshuba-tshuba-tshuba" and imitating buffalos and rhinoceroses. The *Maphisi* started last, howling wildly like hyenas : "hum-hum-hum..."

726 If the field of battle is far away, if there is a long march to
533 be made, special *marching songs* are sung on the road. The
539 most impressive is the following : a soloist sings in a very high key :

Abafo! — The enemy!

and the whole army answers in a rich and tuneful melody :

Enena-a-a! a-a! — Here they are!

All the shields are held straight, ready to meet the foe.
Here are two other marching songs :

Nangu moya wa tshisirwe!
We are the fire which burns the country!
Inkonyana ya ndlopfu inhlezio baen...
The calf of the elephant is exposed on the plain...

This means the chief who is in danger! Let us protect and deliver him.

587 her, but nothing could persuade her. She stayed in her parents' village. In a neighbouring village dwelt a young man named Muzila, who was the chief of the Rikatla district (Page 381). He belonged to the Mazwaya clan, to the reigning family. He had two brothers, one of whom, called Gudu, was still a boy. This girl, Gidhlana, began to make friends with the boys of Muzila's village. Gudu sent a woman from the village of Ngwetsa to make proposals to Gidhlana (ku mu wopseta). This woman made proposals on behalf of Gudu (a wopsetela Gudu). The girl agreed. But, in the meantime, Gudu started for Johannesburg and Gidhlana was abducted by the other brother, who took her to the village of Muzila ; it was a case of marriage by theft (tlhuba) (See p. 119). Muzila was grieved at the conduct of these young men, and sent the girl to one of his counsellors to be watched over by him and, going to Ngwetsa, her father, he said : "We have stolen your pot. Look for it in our village, the village of Mazwaya's people." Ngwetsa was greatly puzzled. The first husband had not yet claimed his money back ; it was still in the hands of Ngwetsa and lo! the girl had already been taken by others! This was not right at all! They might have waited a little! All the men of Ngwetsa armed themselves and started as enemies (hi bulala) for the village of the thief.
587 639 They killed a pig, entered the hut of the thief, took all his implements and made a heap of them on the square. The inhabitants all fled into the bush. But one of them came back with 10 . and said : "Have pity on us, please! We clasp your legs! (khomb[illegible]lenge, viz., ask for forgiveness). You know ? To steal is a very old thing on earth!" "Yes, we know. The thief trusted his throat! (This is a proverb : he did not fear to swallow a large stone, thinking that his throat would be wide enough to let it pass!) He knew that he would have to pay this fine! All right! You are saved! Take the implements back into the hut."

587 The Ngwetsas took away with them the flesh of the pig, but they sent one joint to the thief, so that he might eat it with his new wife. In this way they gave their consent to the marriage. "They gave him his wife."

586 But very soon afterwards the first husband, Khandlela, came to Ngwetsa to claim the lobola money, as his wife had gone. Gudu had gone to Johannesburg, so nothing was to be found in that quarter. The discussion began. Ngwetsa said : "All right ; but 10 of the lobola money must remain with us, for the fence of our village (lihlampfu)." This is generally done when a woman has been driven

2: Junod Thonga

539 For texts of folktales, see category 116, pp. 226-275.
773

825 791 The reader must certainly have noticed the curious connection established by Mboza between hippopotami and wizards. As we shall see when studying the witchcraft theory, wizards are supposed to have the power of *sending* wild animals to kill their victims. Here the idea is somewhat different. In the three stories which I have collected and of which I give a literal translation, the wizards have become the masters of the hippopotami and ride upon them during the night : they are the maleficent agents who induce these animals to play havoc in the gardens of the people. Two of the stories are supposed to have taken place in the Khosen country, the other lower down on the river, at a spot called Shihahlu. Let us begin with this one.

825 791 539 *First story.* "The wizards put a bit into the mouth of the hippopotamus and climb upon it. You cannot get the animal unless you first get its master. The 'phisa' knows the wizard because he possesses drugs more powerful than those of the wizard. At Shihahlu there was a hippopotamus which ventured to come out of the river even in daylight; it came on to the road and frightened the women passing there who had gone to buy food on account of the famine. They threw away their baskets in fear. The beast used also to go and plunder the fields. The chiefs called a very clever hunter and showed him where the hippopotamus used to come out of the river. This man, who was from Sihhahlu, swallowed his medicine and put on a great many amulets (timfisa) made of varan skin; he also took his tail, the tail of a young hippopotamus, went during the night to that spot and saw the beast; there was fire on its back; this fire belongs to the wizard. (Where do these lights come from? I do not know. Perhaps it is the work of the Devil!) The hunter returned home. Another day he went again and heard a noise in the water; the hippopotamus came out of the river and the hunter saw rings round its ears and bracelets round its legs. He shot it and it died. Then he went to tell the chiefs. They came, and sure enough they found four bracelets on each leg and six rings on each ear. I saw them myself. It had put on all its ornaments; but it was very thin because it was made to work hard for its master. We went to eat the meat of the hippopotamus which was thus adorned (longile)... During the night cries of mourning were heard on the Lombye rivulet. It was the masters of the hippopotamus who were mourning over it, and the next morning we found pieces of the blue cotton print which

is used by mourners hanging on the reeds where the hippopotamus had been cut open. These people had put them there to mourn their hippopotamus. As regards the hunter, he was given a reward of £ 6." 825 539 791

Second story. "A phisa called Shitjobeke from Matlotlo was called and shown where the hippopotamus used to emerge from the river. He went there during the night and saw its master on its back. He told him : 'So it is your hippopotamus which ravages the gardens. Hold it firm! I am going to kill it.' The wizard answered : 'I beseech you, Khosa, do not kill it ; I will not come any more to spoil the mealies!' The hunter let him go and went away. Next evening the animal came out again, its master on its back. The hunter possessed a drug by which he could kindle the lights on the back of the hippopotamus. He saw the wizard and said : 'My friend, now hold it fast. I am firing! If you do not hold it I will kill you.' He fired and the master went away. The hunter remained on the spot fearing that the wizard might come back and ressuscitate it. Next day he told the chiefs to come and cut it open. He performed the lurulula ; he blew his ndjao over the legs, the belly, the chest, and the ears ; then they turned the beast over on the other side, and he did the same thing. They cut off the tail and gave it to him : the hunter uses this as a medicine ; he will mix it with other drugs and this will help him against the wizards ; they will no longer be able to come to him during the night and make him dream of hippopotami ; it will also give him the power of killing other hippopotami. Then they cooked the meat of the chest, which is a tit-bit. The divinatory bones showed who was to roast it and eat the first mouthful and then distribute their portions to the others. The bones often say also : 'If it is the meat of a male hippopotamus do not eat it in the village, eat it at such and such a place..." [789]

Third story. "There was another hunter, Mundjindji, of the Nyoka clan. His father had been killed by Heaven (lightning), because he possessed charms which he had got from the Ba-Sutho. This man used to dig up the corpses of the dead ; he dissected the skin of their foreheads and killed, (with the drugs thus obtained,) the boys who came back from the mines (magaisa). The Commandant (Portuguese Administrator) arrested him, and he was imprisoned in Lourenço Marques. He said : 'They are telling lies about me,' and he was released. However he killed some more people and was imprisoned for one month. Even now he is still doing it. He is a 'phisa.' They called him in to get rid of a hippopotamus which was annoying them. It was the Commandant who called him. He went to hunt it. For many

539 days he did not see it, but one day, at sunset, he took his canoe and
791 went on to the river. He took a red piece of cotton ; this was reflected
825 at the bottom of the river. The hippopotamus saw it there and came up to see what was the matter. The hunter fired at it ; he fired a second time. And lo! there on its back was the one who rides upon it! One of the balls pierced him whilst the other pierced the hippopotamus. The animal rushed towards the hunter, but he fired a third time and killed it. Next morning they found the hippopotamus floating on the water, dead. In the village also a man had died during the night, and they were mourning there. The hunter had said to the people : 'I have killed a man who was on the hippopotamus.' And on one side of the river people were eating meat whilst on the other side people were crying. But they did not lodge a complaint against him ; no action can be taken in such a case."

224 As regards *the elephant (ndlopfu)* it was the favourite object of
777 the chase, because killing one of these large beasts meant not only abundance of meat but also wealth on account of the ivory. Madyashikulu used to bring the tusks to Manukosi (Gungunyana's grandfather) who returned some of them to him, and with the money thus obtained the hunter could buy a wife. There are different systems of lurulula in the case of the elephant. The hunter takes a little of the tintebe powder (the charm of the slayers) pierces the eye of the beast, mixes the vitreum with the powder, adds drugs prepared from the end of the trunk and the tail and uses this mixture to overcome the nuru. A phisa of the Maputju country employed another method. He cut a piece of meat from the foreleg, cooked it, anointed it with powder from the calabash of the slayers, chewed it and began to blow it over the animal after having "climbed it." He then crept over the elephant in the same way as described above in the case of the hippopotamus, holding his gun in his hand the whole time. His comrades used to anoint him with a white medicine round both eyes. When he had returned home the treatment was continued by the administration of two vapour baths (mahungulo). He had to expose his body to the steam produced first by a decoction of various twigs, secondly by another decoction prepared from medicinal roots mixed with pieces of meat taken from a goat and from the elephant

302 The use of ochre is, however, not restricted to nursing mothers
539 or magicians : it is the special province of young marriageable girls, wishing to attract attention : their brilliant skin shines like a
832 mirror, setting off to perfection the white of their eyes and the black of their hair, which is sometimes made flossy by means of antimony or ground charcoal. A quaint saying puts it thus :

> Shindzingeri pundjene ? -Banhwanyana tolan !...
> What says the pretty bird with the coral neck that sings in the grass ?
> It says : Girls, anoint yourselves with ochre ! (if you wish to be as beautiful as it is).

177 Another ornament, of ancient date, is the *bracelet*. There
301 are several kinds : 1) the big heavy copper rings, called *masindana*, which greatly resemble those of the lake-dwellers, having a similar rather oval shape with an opening for slipping them over the wrist ; 2) the modern bracelets, called *busenga*, which the Rongas first bought in Natal, and which the Ma-Lemba introduced in the Northern clans ; they are made of iron wire twined round a ring of hide ; 3) the *mafowa* are more ancient, being made of seeds strung on thongs of skin, and are wound several times round the leg. This is an ornament for either dance or war.
301 The mafowa are sometimes made of the silvery cocoons of Argema Mimosae, the Queen Moth, which are found on nkanye trees, emptied of the chrysalis which is inside and filled with grains of millet which rattle when dancing!

301 *Beads* (nkarara) are evidently of later date ; they were introduced
439 by the Whites in the XVIth century, when the Portuguese were already in regular communication with Delagoa Bay and trafficked with the Natives, exchanging glassware for gold and ivory. Glass fascinated the Blacks : its brightness and transparency pleased
539 them immensely. An old song echoes their simple transports of delight :

> E ! Bashabi ! Batatana ba shabile ; ba buya ni shintshirimana sha balungoooo !..
> Hi ! Here come the buyers ! Our fathers return with their purchases ; they bring back with them the beautiful glittering things which the Whites sell !...

301 "A few years ago an ordinary glass bottle was thought a wonder by the people in the interior," said Timoteo Mandlati to me.

439 £ 60 ; and, in case of disagreement, the 60 cobs were counted again in corroboration of the contract made. If he brought an elephant's tusk, the Banyan gave him the value of a full lobolo. Carriers received two pieces of calico as reward.

437 After having visited Kimberley, in 1870, some Thongas, having begun to understand better the advantages of trading, attempted to undertake such expeditions on their own account. But they soon gave up the experiment as the Ngonis of Muzila often robbed them of all their goods. When they were working for White men, the Ngonis were afraid to pillage the company ; on the other hand, if by chance there was a loss, it concerned the White merchant. So they preferred the system of trading for the White men.

These travelling companies had to observe many taboos in order to succeed in their expeditions, in particular the *travellers' taboos*, which have been explained I. p. 339.

533 There are several popular songs which the traders used to
539 sing on the road, or which were sung about them. One of these has already been quoted (p. 102). Here is another in which
437 the tired carriers ask their leader to allow them to return home :

Hoho! hoho! maringele wa mamano!
Hoho! hoho! dla nkambana hi muka!
Hulukati ya ndlopfu yi nga siyi ñwana!

Oho! Oho! Thou who leadest us as a mother!
Oho! Oho! Break the platter and let us go home!
The female-elephant never forsakes her young!

437 The company generally consisted of men only. The allusion to the female elephant, however, may mean that there were sometimes also women amongst them. They address the leader of the expedition, asking him to destroy the platter so that no utensils shall be left in which to prepare food, thus necessitating a return home. They are thinking besides of their little ones left behind in the village, from whom it is unnatural for them to be separated so long. The mother elephant never forsakes her little one!

533 songs ; that will be considered in the next chapter, in which I
538 intend to publish the forty-one tunes of my collection. Here I shall only consider them as literary products, and in trying to classify them, I have noticed that, though most of them cannot be said to be very elaborate compositions, they pertain to many different styles, lyric, elegiac, epic, dramatic, etc. and, in addition, there are those which are sung while at work, as well as the incantations to animals and spirits. I will give some examples of each of these categories.

II. *Lyric poetry.*

533 Thongas, like most human beings, have felt the need of chanting
539 their joys and sorrows, joining words to music in order the better to express their feelings. These feelings are not as a rule very deep, and their lyrics are rather play than a painful cry of the heart. Here for instance is *the complaint of the childless woman*, who longs ardently for a baby. She has been to other people and asked them to lend her one. But they have refused and only consented to lend her a mortar and a plate. She then sings to a charming melody (Tune 7).

A ba boleki ñwana ! — Ba boleka tshuri ni nkambana !
Ngi ndji mangatlu ! — Ngi ndji shimungwe ! — Ngi n'ta ku utla !
They won't lend me a baby ! — They lend me but a mortar and a plate !
Were I an eagle ! — Were I a bird of prey ! — I would carry thee away !

The thousands of young Thongas *who go to the mines of Johannesburg*, to extract the precious auriferous quartz, seem to be quite contented with their fate. They, however, chant their

533 thence he fled to another country, but soon one of his eyes began to swell. His elder brother told him : "You have been bewitched by that woman," and his paternal aunt
754 tried to heal him. She covered him with a piece of cloth, and made him expose his eye to the steam of a certain drug boiled in a pot below. She claimed to have succeeded, having found an ox-tail hair at the bottom of the pot when she poured out the water. This was however a lie. The eye complaint became worse, till he entirely lost his sight. He then devoted his life to music, and composed many songs to accompany the dances of the magayisa (boys going to work.) These songs became popular ; if a boy wished for one of them, his favourite, to be executed, he would willingly pay 200 reis ! — Mungomana is the only Thonga I heard of who used music in his religious rites. I shall give the words of his canticle in Part VI.

misfortunes to a very melodious tune (No. 8) which I once heard 533
in Rikatla repeated a dozen times by children's voices along 539
the bushy paths. The words were in Zulu and were said to mean :

> Stones are very hard to break
> Far from home, in a foreign land.

The tune is so catching that it has become quite popular even in French Switzerland, where I have had the opportunity of singing it on many occasions.

Once when I was walking after sunset in the neighbourhood of a miserable village of two or three huts in Rikatla, I was attracted by a simple melody repeated again and again by a feminine voice. A young woman with a child on her shoulders and engaged in cooking her food was singing. She had just lost her father. Her husband was a very bad character ; she had been obliged to leave him and to take refuge in her father's village, and, lo, he had died! Feeling lonely and abandoned by all her natural helpers, she was expressing her grief in a low tone by the following words sung to a tune full of sadness (No. 41).

Tatana a ndji siya	My father has left me !
Na ndji nga li na mumben !	And I had no other except him !
Ndji se psanga libalen	I remain alone on the earth !
Sha ndji ta ya kwini mbuu !	Where shall I go then, Alas !

I am afraid Bantu lyrics have more than once found occasion 533
to celebrate the selfishness and *rudeness of the White race* ! I 539
remember travelling through the desert with three Zoutpansberg 609
colonists, and some of their black servants. The White masters 466
were not exactly gentle with their boys. A road had to be cut through the bush and it was hard work to remove the stones, and to cut down the trees. The shambock was sometimes resorted to in order to stimulate the Natives. I once heard one of them, who had just been castigated, murmuring in a low tone his monotonous complaint, whilst chopping at a stem. I caught the following words : (Tune 9)

Ba hi shanisa !	They treat us badly !
Ba ku hi hlupa !	They are hard on us !
Ba nwa makhofi !	They drink their coffee !
Ba nga hi nyike !	And they give us none !

533 Of course the colonists, who only knew "Kitchen Kafir," could not understand the complaint of the Nkuna boy!

539 The *song of the crab* is more tragic! (Tune No. 10). In a deep minor key a man cries for help! He went to hunt the big crabs which dwell in the mud of the mangrove forest, or on the sea-shore. He followed one ; the animal hastily hid itself in its hole. The imprudent hunter tried to catch it there ; he put his arm into the hole and attempted to pull the crab out. But the crustacean seized his finger in its claws so firmly that the man could not get free. He remained tightly held down, fixed to the ground. The tide is rising ; soon it will cover him! And he cries :

> Yo-o! Lomo tjukeni ku na mani ? — Hala yi khomi litiho!
> Alas! - On the shore is there some one ? — The crab has caught me by the finger!

This is almost dramatic poetry and the scene is worthy of a true literary description.

533 The *erotic style* is cultivated by boys and girls on different
832 occasions though it must be said that love, as we understand it,
539 plays but little part in Thonga life. Boys in love generally express their feelings to the accompaniment of the unicord harp (see Chap. III) in the evening in the neighbourhood of the village of their beloved one ; I have never been able to catch the words of these songs, which are said to be sometimes very long, and are sung in a very loud voice ; they are not precisely chaste, according to one of our Native ministers, who considered that the use of the unicord harp ought to be forbidden to Christian boys! But here is a *love song* probably composed by a girl who was not allowed to marry the boy of her choice :

> To-morrow, to-morrow, my mother, I will start,
> To-morrow, father, I will start,
> I will start with an axe ;
> With this axe I will cut the stump,
> The stump on which my friend has hurt his leg,
> My friend whose belt & tails hangs from his waist,
> The one for whom I draw my legs out of the way. (1)

784 (1) Perhaps an allusion to the fact that it is taboo to pass over any one's outstretched
516 legs. She draws in her legs to give him the means of passing and coming to sit beside her.

The stump is perhaps some ill-disposed person whose opposition the energetic maid is determined to overcome! 533 832

As a counterpart, here is the *complaint of a jilted lover*, who gives vent to his annoyance with the girl and her family : 539

> Refuse me if you will, girl!
> The grains of maize you eat in your village are human eyes!
> The tumblers from which you drink are human skulls!
> The manioc roots you eat are human tibia!
> The sweet potatoes are human fingers!
> Refuse me, if you will, girl!

The vexation of a jilted lover is of short duration. He has the money, he is sure to find a girl! But it would be erroneous to think Native lovers or husbands are not capable of deep and lasting affection. I know of a case, near Shiluvane, in which a Nkuna committed suicide because his wife had deceived him, and had relations with another man. 831

See, I. p. 286, the song in which the *despised wife* gives vent to her anger : her husband has plucked her little pumpkin and given it to the wife he preferred. No doubt the *bukwele*, the special feeling of jealousy existing between co-wives, has inspired more than one song which could find no equivalent in our own literature! 533

Mourning songs are numerous ; they are sung just after the burial. They are touching ; note the simple cry : 533 765 539

> Mamane! You have left us! whither have you gone?

The tune (No. 14) is striking : a very high and prolonged note, followed by double crochets sounded very rapidly and ending in another long note with a short sharp conclusion, like a cry of anguish.

One of those present rises and sings, as if he were playing the part of the bereaved :

> A ba ndji ya'ange-ke lepsi?
> Have they not hated me, treating me in this way?

All the throng of the mourners answer :

> Ba ku yalile, wene, wa ka manyana!
> They have hated you, son of so and so!

533 He answers :

539 Ba tekile nkhao !
765 They have taken my intimate friend !

This is no doubt an allusion to the wizards, who are supposed to cause most of the deaths. They are cursed in another very curious song, half Zulu, noted down by Mrs Audéoud in Maputju. (Tune 16.)

Hamban, Muthakati ! Bulela bantu ! — U teka b'sikwin !
Go away, wizard ! Killer of men ! — You take them during the night !

Or the mourning song may be a complaint, in which the family bewails its bereavement, like the old Nkuna song. (Tune 15) :

Hi bana ba Nhumba ya ntima ! Hi bana ba Malala ni ngobe.
We are the sons of the black house (the house of misfortune and defilement)

The following is strangely stoic :

A li beni mombo ! A li beni mombo !
Ku tshubuka, ku baba ka psone !
Let it beat the face ! Let it beat the face !
To run away, what a bitter thing !

Death is like a foe. Look at it face to face! Do not lose your courage in this last fight.

I quote in Part VI another mourning song, a very curious one, where an allusion is made to Heaven, the mysterious power which kills and gives life, which we have already heard mentioned in the song of the widows (I, p. 209), when they lament their bereavement.

533 This *stoic* song is also a *war* song ; it is customary to sing the
539 war songs at the death of any important personage. The following belongs to the same category, and is used on both occasions :

Ketle-ketle, ntlubane ! Fumo dji wila ! A dlawa hi nomo, Tatana !
Hear this noise of weapons ! The assagai has fallen ! He has been killed on account of his words, father !

The chief has been killed, in a fight which had been caused by his imprudent words : he wished to free himself from his

suzerain (the Ngoni chief?); war ensued, and he was put to death! So the sorrow caused by death has certainly furnished Thonga poets with touching themes. 533 539

The heart of the whole tribe was also stirred, at the close of the before-mentioned war of 1894-1896, when the young chief Ñwamantibyane, only 18 or 20 years of age, was caught and deported to West Africa. *The lament of the child* was then composed by an unknown author; but he had so well understood the feelings of the Black nation that it at once became popular; and it was heard everywhere on the wharf, hummed by hundreds of boys carrying loads or pushing trucks, and chanting the sad fate of the child; in the villages, far and wide, they sang the recital of Ñwamantibyane's sufferings:

> Ndumakazulu! The glorious! Known as far as Zululand!
> He fought bravely! He was obliged to fly!
> He was caught and deported... etc.

And ever and again came the chorus, in a sad, resigned tone: (Tune 11).

> Hi ñwanao! Hi ñwana ba dlele! Ñwamantibyane!
> It is the child! The child they have killed! Ñwamantibyane!

Eleven years later, when travelling far away in the Manyisa district, I heard a tall, thin boy playing on his unicord harp in a Banyan store, and muttering some words, which he accompanied by beating his instrument. This was the same old lament of the child:

> It is the child, the child whom they have killed!
> He was not yet grown up!

The melody had greatly changed (tune 12) and the pain had passed out of it. But the national song had not yet entirely died away.

This is a kind of elegy, and forms a transition to the patriotic and epic songs.

III. *Epic poetry.*

The war songs have already been quoted when dealing with the Army (I. p. 460), those performed in the mukhumbi, at the coronation of the chief (I. p. 372) when preparing to go to

Hlangwini wa ka Shitlhelane; hi ba ka Nkandamuri; hi ba ka Manyubele ni Mbowo; hi ba ka Gidjigidji, ba tilo. —. Akane ka paitjunga! Lomu nkobeni mi ta muka hi kona... 614 553

Hlangwini of (the house of) Shitlhelane; we are of (the house of) Nkandamuri; we are of (the house of) Manyubele and Mbowo; we are of (the house of) Gidjigidji, the people of Heaven. —. Build (your huts) on the hills. In the valley you will have to leave (?)

It would seem that these Hlangwinis are a clan of rain-makers, people having the power of Heaven. They advise others to settle on the hills and not in the valleys, because otherwise their huts would be swept away by the floods, owing to the terrible rains which the Hlangwinis have the power of causing to fall.

The second is not very refined, but is characteristic. Erotic allusions are frequent in those formulae :

Nkuna wa Mabutane; mabuta, ba yi bonile ku basa ka yona.
Nkuna of Mabutane; when wooing a girl, he has seen that she was pure.

Mabutane is probably a surname of Nkuna. There is in this formula a play on the word buta which means to woo (I. p. 101). Before choosing a girl, the ancestor first made sure that she was untouched ; this denotes a species of wisdom which his descendants still boast of to-day! 553

In epic poetry may be included also the *pshiphato*, a Zulu expression which means the laudatory sentence with which warriors praise themselves according to the Zulu fashion. Private individuals, and even women sometimes have their shiphato ; for instance a girl bearing the name of Yandea will glorify herself in these words : Yendea, madjaha! Yendea, the young men! This formula does not throw a very favourable light on the habits of the girl, and scarcely belongs to literature!

A more elaborate product of Thonga poetry is found in the *hunting songs*. I have already mentioned these (p. 60) and here give as a typical example the Elephant's song. I have been told by my informant, Zebedea Mbenyana, a Native of Bilen, that the hunters performed it whilst dancing on the body of the enormous beast, after having transfixed it. 533 224 115 539

1st Strophe.

533 They march in single file, the Elephants, the mighty ones,
They go to slake their thirst.

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Antistrophe.

539 Let us go too! They're drinking amongst the thickets! Hurrah

2nd Strophe.

Hark! the smothered roarings in the forest.

Antistrophe.

'Tis a grand sound, the roaring in the forest. Hurrah!

3rd Strophe.

The crying of the elephant, the mother! 'Tis she who calls the hunters to the thickets.

Antistrophe.

Hurrah! 'tis she who calls the hunters! Ho! Hurrah!

4th Strophe.

Yonder's the one with ears so large and drooping.

Antistrophe.

Hurrah! the big-eared one has just passed us. Hurrah!

5th Strophe.

The boys are there; the sound of knives being sharpened, there from the spot where the elephant lies slain.

Antistrophe.

Hurrah! the sound of knives being sharpened. Hurrah!

This composition certainly exhibits wonderful poetic power and grandeur, describing marvellously the emotions of the courageous band, who have finally succeeded in obtaining the precious tusks of the elephant, and vast quantities of meat. This song of triumph is worthy of a place amongst the best productions of the Muse of primitive races.

195 To the imaginative mind of the Bantu everything that causes a deep impression, even material objects, affords an occasion for the utterance of lofty phrases and words of praise. Once when travelling south of Delagoa Bay through the desert, our party arrived in the neighbourhood of the Umbelozi railway. The

train was heard in the distance. One of my servants was busy 195
cleaning the pots ; I heard him muttering the following words :

The one who roars in the distance... The one who crushes in pieces the braves and smashes them ! The one who debauches our wives : they abandon us, they go (to the towns to lead a bad life) ! The seducer ! And we remain alone.

He was extolling the huge thing and lamenting his misfortune and the curse it has brought upon the country.

IV. *Satiric poetry.*

I have already mentioned the peculiar custom of Thonga 533
literati of speaking in a round-about fashion, and using figurative 195
language, especially when they want to say something disagreeable 574
or to give vent to their humour. It is but one step from such 576
forms to satire. They generally indulge in this satiric vein when 539
dealing with relatives-in-law, women being especially prone to it. When the sisters and aunts of a married woman go to pay a visit to her, they convey all kinds of equivocal compliments. These must not be taken seriously! It is a round-about — exceedingly round-about — way of making graceful allusions and expressing their mutual esteem. I will quote the series of these songs of friendly chaff and invective as it was given to me by Shigiyane, with a running commentary to render them comprehensible. These lively and pointed choruses give a fitting finishing-touch to the marriage customs, and illustrate the curious relations existing between allied families, which I explained in Vol. I, p. 249-253.

On the wedding day the women who take the bride to her 585
husband sing the *tjeka song* : 533

Let us go with her, but let us go back to our homes! 539

This is an ironical way of saying : "She is going to find trouble : we won't follow her as far as that!." The same idea runs through all the songs which these women sing during the next few days.

585 When they accompany the bride to her new home, they sing :

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U ya kwi, Mamano ! — Whither goest thou, mother ?
U ya kwi shana ? — Whither goest thou ?
Ba ta tshaha shihundju ni lihlelo, mamano !
They will bring thee the basket full of maize and the fan, my mother !
Ba ta kuma u tlokoli, ba tlokolisa, mamano !
When thou hast finished crushing it, they will make thee crush it again, my mother !
Ba ta kuma u kopoli, ba kopolisa, mamano !
When thou hast plastered the floor, they will make thee plaster it again, my mother !

But when they come on a visit, carrying jars of beer as presents to the newly married couple, they are much less guarded in their language, ridiculing the poor husband and his family, and making fun of every one in general. They begin singing on the way, with the jars on their heads :

He ntshonga, banhwanyana, he nga batjanana
He la libango ; fa hi nga labi, we manyana.
Ku laba manyana ka ñwan'a manyana.
We are a small band, young girls ; there are few of us.
We are looking for a piece of meat on the spit ; formerly we should not have known where to find any, our sister (so and so) !
Now our sister will get some for us from her husband !

Hi kokobisa lobe, hi ya kwihi shana ?
Hi bhanu ba ku yalwa !
He fambaka ni khombo, ni khombo dji le kaya !
Where are we going, thus dragging the hook behind us ? (1)
We are the people that are hated.
We walk in misfortune (2), the misfortune that has befallen our house !

Ka ku kandja ñwana a ku na kule.
Wo khunga he lihanyi, we koko !
Ya kokowela : kowe-kowe-kowe.
Where a daughter lives it cannot be very far off.
Go there, grannie, limping and leaning on thy staff !
Listen to the hen cackling. She says : kowe, kowe, kowe. (3)

[222] (1) They compare themselves to women who have been in the fields picking kwakwa fruits (p. 17), and are so heavily laden that they cannot carry the hook used for pulling the fruit off the trees ; they have had to tie it to their [illegible] and drag it behind them on their way home. The travellers give it to be understood that they are not out for pleasure !

(2) That of having to go and see a brother-in-law who ill-treats their sister.

(3) This line is an encouragement to the old woman who finds the walk long and tiring. The other women promise her a fowl at the end of their journey, which the son-in-law will kill for her. Note the first line of the third verse : it is a kind of proverb.

On arriving at the village they stop at the edge of the stream : 585 533 539 574

Fulamelani, banhwanyana, hi ya nwa mati nkobeni.
Stoop down, young women, let us drink water in the valley.

Finally they settle themselves in the home of their *bakoñwana*, their relatives-in-law, and begin to insult their hosts.

Ba yala na wo mbengana loko a boleka !
Ba li : " Famba, u ya teka kwenu u buya wa ta sila ".
Ba yala ni shudana, ba yala ni musana
Ba li : " U ya teka kwenu u buya wa ta tlokola. "
They won't lend (our sister) a grindstone when she wants to borrow one.
They say to her : " Go home and fetch one and then come back and grind. "
They won't lend her the small pestle and mortar.
They say : " Go home and get your own, and then come back and crush your maize. "

Then they make fun of the mother-in-law, who is whispering with the other women of the village, making arrangements, doubtless, for the good entertainment of the visitors. They pretend to discover in these asides some terrible plot.

A li ñwono-ñwono ! Mabulela ya nsati lweyi ! Hi file ! Hi lobile !
That woman over there is whispering ! What can she be saying !
We are dead ! We are lost !

As for the head of the village, these shrewish visitors accost him thus :

Ñwenyi wa muti, hi wene ? A ku hi hi mati, hi ñwene ?
A he hlayi wone, ya nhlobo ! Hi hla byala ne sope !
Are you the master of the village ? Are you not going to give us any water to drink ?
We don't mean well-water ; we mean beer and brandy !

The villagers approach to salute the new-comers, who sulk and refuse to say a word. Large pots are made ready for cooking food.

Mi kokela matambeko, mi kokela bamane ?
Kambe hi balala, hi nga ka manyana !
You prepare the large pots... For whom are you making them ready ?
We are enemies, we are !

585 The young folks catch fowls in order to feast them properly
533 They raise objections.
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A hi djyule kwee! A hi djyule kwee!
Hi djyule nkoka-hi-pindja!
We will have nothing to do with that which cries kwee. (The cry of the fowl when being killed.)
We want the animal which is led with a string (a goat).

But it is the husband who has to put up with the worst insults.

Ha! matinga-tingela ya nhunu lwe! Loko a hi bona a ku tlhanya psirubu.
Ah! see how he wants to avoid us! As soon as he sees us he runs and hides behind the houses! (He is afraid of us!)
Hi laba tima-mbilu! hi djyula mafura ya ku nona phobo.
We want something to satisfy the heart! We must have our fat very rich!
Nyoka ya nyoka! Mbyana ya mbyana! Yi whee!
Serpent that thou art! Dog that thou art! Thou sayest bow-wow!

Then to show him that they really like and appreciate him, they add, with the true untutored rudeness which they maintain to the end of the visit :

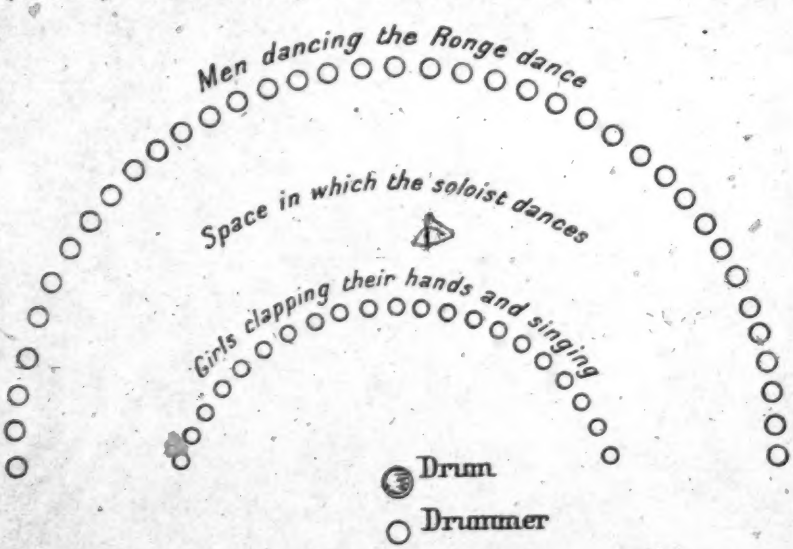
A ku hi lobolele? Na wene, bana ba ku ba ku lobolela ki khume ni ntlhanu!
Won't you buy another wife from us! Later on your daughters will bring you a dowry worth fifteen pounds sterling!

Finally, after having had plenty to eat and to drink and a good dance, they will remark, on leaving :

Hi tlhome nyonga ya mbuti, hi muka
Twine the goat's bladder in our hair, that we may go home.

All this is not very high-flown poetry. The general intercourse between relatives-in-law is by no means refined and this rudeness contrasts with the ordinary civility of Native life. Let us remember that this way of speaking is not intended to show a want of politeness on the part of the visitors, but, on the contrary, is the behaviour suited to the occasion! I have the music of some of these songs, which were noted down by Mrs Audéoud, in Maputju. In No. 13, the bridesmaids actually exhort the bride not to follow her husband! But they are the last to expect her to follow their advice.

533 this reason that some of them are so difficult to understand ;
535 they also vary from one clan to another. The following, according
to Spoon, is the most popular song in Nondwane. An individual
539 performs on a drum to give the time to the dancers. Around the drummer, in a semicircle, are arranged the girls who sing the refrains (tekelela), and clap their hands to encourage the soloist (musimi). Farther away, in concentric semi-circles, stand the



The Ronge dance.

men of the village, dancing but not singing. Between the two semicircular ranks the soloist has free play. He commences by saying :

> Ndji pfumala shigoba sha nakulori.
> Why ? I haven't got a partner for the dance !

The girls reply :

> Hi hlala hi mbilu yi babisaka.
> Our hearts are indeed very sad.

He continues :

> A psi na nishumu ! Makweru Ñwakubyele a fanaka ni pataka dja balungu.
> Never mind ! My brother Ñwakubyele (will do very well), for he shines like one of the Whites' silver pieces !

Ñwakubyele was a Counsellor whose home was about three quarters of an hour's walk from Rikatla. He was probably a famous dancer. The words of this song would hardly seem very inspiring, but the noise of the drum, the clapping of hands, the dancing, — and the flow of beer, — all helps to account for the intense pleasure which these games afford to the Ba-Ronga. 533 539

Another Ronge song is in praise of another dancer :

Ñwahangwa ! Ñwahangwa ! Loka ba shi bona, shi ne nkaukelo !
Shi bombisa tinsimo ta ku tala ta Ronge !
Ñwahangwa ! Ñwahangwa ! When one sees him (one admires) his beautiful figure. . . .
He is the perfect performer of the numberless Ronge songs.

Still another, on the same theme, celebrates Gilela, a choregraphic artist who must have rejoiced in a marvellously slim figure :

U tlanga, Gilela ! Wa tlanga, likhalo li fana ni ngoti !
Ñwatshibeni ! tlanga ! tlanga ! Ku tjhongo ; hi nga tolobele !
Thou dancest, Gilela ! Thou dancest and thy waist is no thicker than a string !
Son of Tshimbeni ! Dance, dance. — That was too little. — We have not yet had enough !

I came across three other songs which seem to refer to actual historical events, but only one of these is sufficiently comprehensible to be worth transcribing. The music of the first phrase is very characteristic. (Tune 37.)

Ndji wela, ndji wela, Ñwatembe ! Ndji wela, ndji tjike ndji wela.
Ndji koka mabyatsho ; ndji tjutjuma, ndji ya tlhasa ka Ntshangane.
Sala muti wa Muhari ! — Ndji tjike, ndji wela !
I cross the stream. I cross the stream. Oh Tembe ! I cross the stream, let me cross the river !
I tow the boats. I fly away as far as Ntshangane.
Good bye, village of Muhari ! — Let me cross the river.

The two men of Tembe who sang this song to me, telling me that it was a very popular one, were unable to explain its meaning. It is not difficult however to imagine the circumstances under which it was composed. It probably refers to fugitives, coming from the South, arriving at the Bay of Lourenço Marques, and asking the Coast dwellers, subjects of Muhari (a chief of Tembe in the XVIIIth century), for permission to cross the water

533 and to continue their journey northward to Ntshangane (1), that
539 is to say Bilene, where they wished to take refuge. The memory of their wanderings has thus been preserved in a popular song.

These examples will show that the Ronge repertoire is a varied one, but I have still to transcribe that which is, at least as far as my knowledge goes, the most curious of the whole collection. It was explained to me in detail by Shigiyane who, in the Shirindja country some fifty years ago, in the Mpatshiki district, (on the borders of Nondwane), had often taken part in the performance, always in the rôle of soloist. In her opinion it is an absolutely typical song. It is no exaggeration to say that it is almost a dramatic production, and we might rightly call it the *Shirindja comedy*. It comprises five parts — I was on the point of saying five acts, — which follow one another, but without, it must be admitted, any kind of logical sequence.

The *First Act* may be entitled "The old men's march." All the adults of the village go out into the bush, — let us say to the west, — whence they return to the square, halting and limping and dragging their limbs along, as if suffering from some complaint which prevents their walking. To a monotonous air they sing the following words :

> Ndji laba batlhaben ! Angati leyi ya masengwe ya tshabim !
> Lomo kweru, mamaza, we, angati leyi yi ndji tsimba ku famba ;
> Ndji teka mumphinyi, ndji tshebukela ku djima,
> Yi yengeta yi ndji tsimba ku famba !
> Psi yengeta, psi ba roma loko ndji tjhema.
> Psi ka se mpuri, ssai wa ku famba.
> I am looking for some one to put leeches on me ! This complaint, this cursed lumbago is terrible !
> In our village, oh ! my mother ! alas ! this trouble prevents my walking.
> Take the handle (of my hoe). I start for the fields to till them. — And this thing stops me !
> And it annoys (my relatives) to see me sitting down (doing no work). She may well be annoyed, the beauty, the good walker !

(1) Ntshangane is a surname of Manukosi who did not establish himself in Bilene much before 1820 or 1830. But for various reasons it is probable that this name already belonged to an ancient chief of the country, and that Manukosi simply adopted it as his surname. If this song really dated from the time of Muhari (a chief who reigned in the Tembe clan in the middle of the XVIIIth century), it would be the oldest of the Thonga literary productions yet collected. This fact would prove also that *Shangana*, the name commonly given to Thonga in Johannesburg, is a very ancient one.

During this song, the old folks come to the village; then the young ones go out, in the opposite direction, returning in due course to sing their verse, which forms the second act. 533 539

Second Act. Their story is that of a son-in-law who turned his mother-in-law out of his house, because she was suffering from smallpox. The poor old woman went out to die in the bush, in spite of the protestations of her daughter against her husband's cruelty. The husband and wife are heard giving expression to their feelings :

The son-in-law : (Solo) Ndja famba, ndja famba, na ndji nyenyemuka...
Ba mu hlongola, a famba a ya fela shangale.
I am going away ! I am going away! I am going away in disgust
Let her be turned out and let her go and die in the bush !
The daughter : (her part is sung by all the actors in chorus)
Ndji tjetja shitlambutana, shi fambaka shi hona abuhlambo.
Lomo kweru, ka Mpatshiki, hi nga hanyi ! Hi yahana timpumu ni mashaka.
Pui yentsha he yo ngati ya kutane !
Ngati ya kutane ya tokabisa, hosi ya nga !
Pua ku hlongola ni mukotwana, a famba : a buya a kulubisa ku hlaya, shi hundja hi la, ba mu hlongola, a famba, a ya fela hangale.
I feel pity (when I see) smallpox making its ravages and ruining the face.
Here, at home, in the village of Mpatshiki we no longer live ! We no longer are kind to each other, even amongst relatives.
It is the fault of this terrible disease.
This disease is truly terrible, my lord !
It has driven the son-in-law from his home; he goes, but returns with cruel words. The old woman comes this way, she is turned out; she goes away and dies in the bush !

The Third Act begins when young and old are assembled on the village square. It is a dialogue (shibalekana) introducing a certain Gebuza, a man of Nondwane, who took refuge in Shirindja some time in the middle of the last century, when Zihlahla's warriors, led by Machaquene, went to fight in Nondwane on behalf of the Whites. This Gebuza was much beloved by Mpatshiki, a sub-chief living in the South of Shirindja, as we shall see in the fifth act. In any case he was a great dancer, and also possessed a marvellous faculty of saying a great deal and meaning very little! Listen to the following : a voluble dialogue is kept up between this individual and a young man named Mahlahlane.

533 *Gebuza.* Nanjduwe, Mahlahlane ? My friend, Mahlahlane ?
Mahlahlane. Ha makweru ! Say on, my brother !
539 *G.* Tlanga, makweru ! Dance, my brother !
M. U tlanga, u ndji thula, You dance better than I do,
makweru ! A psi na ntshumu. my brother ! That doesn't matter.
G. A ndji psi tibanga I did not know that,
lepsako, nambe u le makweru, although you are my brother.
inha ndja ku tlangisile I could please you with my dancing.
Nhaviyane! Nhaviyane.

Here the sense begins to be lacking... it concludes with a cross-fire of utterly meaningless remarks.

Mahlahlane. Ese ! That's it !
Gebuza. Nhaviyana bantsindja. Nhaviyana, the people of the capital.
M. Ese ! That's it !
G. Nhaviyane basurumana. Nhaviyana, the Mahometans.
Yi banga mahlolana ! That works wonders.
Khumbu-khumbu dja Mayingandlela ? ? ? ? ?
A siku dja tolo. Yesterday.
Ku ta wa shikumbu sha ndladla ? ? ? ? ?
Ndji ndjuluka ndji nha, I go back, that's what I do.
Kupa-kupa ha matikerifwane. Etc. etc...

On hearing this extraordinary production, quite as unintelligible as our Swiss children's "empros" — eena, meena, mina, mo, etc.,— the whole company dance in silence, going through various contortions which are doubtless as full of meaning as the dialogue which precedes them.

In the *Fourth Act* all the actors re-enter the stage and commence the *shiombelane*, the hand-clapping with which they so often accompany their songs. They sing the following chorus :

> Mamana, n'ta ku yini ?
> Ina, hi tlakula Mpatshiki, fiwa-matlanga-ni-tinsana-ta-batjongwana !
> He tlanga peigaba, Mpatshiki !
> Ntlhamulo, ndji nyika hi peikwembo, ankulweni !
> My mother, what shall I say ?
> Oh ! yes ! let us praise our Chief Mpatshiki, he who loves to play with little children !
> We dance the Ronge dance, Mpatshiki !
> The echo (of our songs) comes back to us from the gods along the whole length of our villages !

Evidently the singers are celebrating the joyous gaiety of this fête, where all are happy, the Chief good-natured, and wherein the gods themselves (the deceased ancestors, probably buried in the sacred wood near the village) join the living.

Fifth Act. A few songs in which Gebuza plays a prominent part, constitute the finale. He was an interminable braggart

when once he started on stories of the contests between the 533
Nondwane and Zihlahla clans. Instead of tilling his fields, he 539
idled away his time in his village, in the shade of a nkanye, the tree of bitter fruits (nunge)... Hence the following dialogue :

Gebuza. Tjikan, ndji hlayô !	Let me tell you...
Chorus of Shirindja : U hlaya tshini ?	What silly tales do you want to tell us ?
G. Tjikan, ndi hlayô.	Let me tell you...
Chorus : I-le baka Bidjiankomo...	We folks of Bidjiankomo (1) (this is what we say) :
Peigaba pai ne miku, i ka leyi ;	There is a day for singing, it is to-day ;
A ku djima, a ku pai koti.	As for work, you are incapable of it.
Gebuza ! Ankanyen lo'kulu lo'wa nunge ; peigaba pai ni miku i ka leyi.	Gebuza (you who are lazy), under your big nkanye of bitter fruit there is a day for singing ; this is the day !

The moral of this is sufficiently obvious : "To-day we sing, we dance : but this is not everything. To-morrow we must start with the tillage for the new year."

Doubtless in each small Ronga clan similar songs and dances are performed. They seem to us exceedingly childish, but also very innocent, and show us the taste possessed by these people for musical and literary productions (2).

VI. *Action songs, or songs sung while at work.* 533

I remember once ordering one of my boys to roll along an empty cask, in which we were collecting the rain water. There was a little water in it, and this made a gurgling sound inside.

(1) The forefathers of Mpatshiki, who was the chief then reigning.

(2) I should like to include in this category one of the songs of which Mungamane, the blind minstrel (p. 187) was particularly proud, and which he performed when the dancers paid him an extra fee of 200 reis. It is a dialogue between a husband who is not satisfied with the wife he has bought and the men of his village :

The husband. I have gone to lobola a woman ; I have paid twenty-eight pounds ; I expected she was worth something, and lo ! she is a woman of no account. How did you dare, you, her father, to claim such a big sum, saying that she would be a help to me, when she is so utterly bad ? I will take her ; I will give her back to her parents and claim my money in order to buy another.

The men of the village. No ! Have patience with her ! Do not send her home. Do you not see that you will bring misfortune upon yourself ? Did she not bear you children ? Who will cook your food ? Who will clean your clothing ? When strangers pass through your village, who will give them food ? To go and claim one's herd is troublesome ! Send your children to fetch water ! Send them to gather fuel !

533 Rolling it with vigour, the boy imitated the noise of the gurgling all the while, apparently with great pleasure. Natives are very [461] fond of singing and shouting when at work ; they evidently find help in the conjunction of music and labour.

[539] Many Thonga songs belong to this category. There are songs sung by women when pounding their mealies (I. p. 334), or when carrying their jars of beer or of bukanye to the capital. One of these *psirwalo* songs, extolling Mzila, the hawk that is in heaven, has been quoted I. p. 402. I heard it in February 1893, when an extraordinary inundation had filled all the little ponds in the hollows, and the lake of Rikatla had swollen to ten times its usual size. Beginning with the word : "Chwe! Chwe!" a descriptive adverb which renders the impression caused by a wide surface of water shining in the sun, the women sang :

Chwe ! Nambyana wu tele !
The lake has overflowed !
We seek the hawk who soars in the sky !
Who is the hawk ? It is Mzila !

For the music of the song see tune 17.

On the wharf at Lourenço Marques, one could collect a good number of the carrier songs, sung by the boys who carry loads from the ships to the Custom House. Some are highly impressive, full of guttural sounds such as : Ama-haussa-haussa! There is generally a soloist who intones (sima) and all the boys, covered with dust, clad in sacks, their eyes beaming, seize the heavy piece of iron, the bulky case, raise it rhythmically to their shoulders, and carry it with measured tread to the shed. To have a clever soloist who keeps good time is essential, and I was told that such artists are well paid.

I would remind the reader of the *travellers' songs*, an example of which has been given when speaking of the journeys of the traders in the interior (p. 144).

But the richest collection is that of *sailors' songs*. I heard one of these, (tune 18), on the Nkomati, repeated a hundred times in a monotonous fashion by a boy who was pushing the boat along the shore with his pole, from Morakwen to Lourenço Marques :

"I siloyi, I ndandale," he said — (these words have no more

who suffer. And who knows if their ultimate object be not to assert the value of the individual amongst this down-trodden people where the individual counts for nothing? If this is so, then African folklore possesses a greater and more philosophical value than would appear at first sight. In the collective state of human society it represents an aspiration to a state of things where the individual will have his due place. In this way, it is prophetic. It can no longer be classed merely as an amusement for old women during the long evenings, or as a more or less intellectual parlour-game: it is a monument upon which the soul of the race has recorded, unconsciously perhaps, its ideas and its aspirations. It is thus doubly worthy of our study. 538

The scope of this book does not allow me to publish more than one or two tales of each category, and I must also abstain from any technical comment upon them, leaving the work of annotation and comparison to professional folklorists. My aim is to describe the South African tribe, and they constitute a sufficient illustration in themselves of its psychic life. 539

V. *Animal Folklore.*

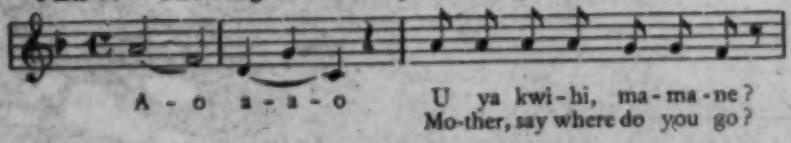
I have published nearly thirty episodes of the Romance of the Hare in the works already referred to; those which I collected in later years form three cycles: that of the *Wily Trickster*, a collection of episodes told by Martha and heard by her in the Maputju country; the most noteworthy of these describe the victory of the Hare over the Lion; *the Hare and the Lion*, told by Simeon Makwakwa of Bilen, containing episodes quite different from those of the first cycle; *the Hare and the Baboon*, written for me by one of my pupils, Mbike Dzengen from Khosen, a very amusing story also known in Bilen with some variations. To these three cycles I have added the story of the *Hare's Hoe*, a curious specimen of a popular literary genus, the ritornello, or anadiplosis not frequently met with in Bantu folklore.

[see cat. 116, pp. 226-235 for texts of folk-Tales]

this is generally admitted; the Thongas, however, are not far 533
behind them, some of them having learnt to manufacture the instrument, and a great many playing upon it quite artistically. In order to define this musical system more precisely, let me now give the 41 following tunes as examples, some of which I owe to Mrs Audéoud, whilst the majority have been noted down by myself.

B. A COLLECTION OF THONGA TUNES. 533 539

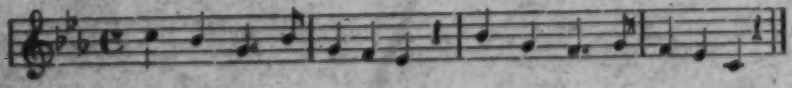
Tune 1. The song of the Manyisa bard (p. 185).



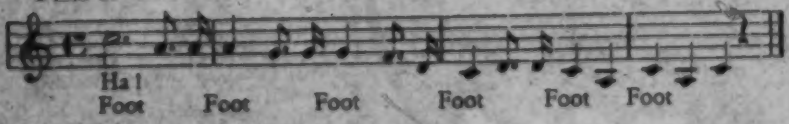
Tunes 2. 3. 4. 5. 6., heard far away through the bush in the village of Muzila, sub-chief of Rikatla, in the years 1890-1893. In N° 4 the singers were beating the ground with their feet to mark the time. In 5 and 6 boys answered to men and girls to women in the usual antiphonic fashion.

Tune 2.

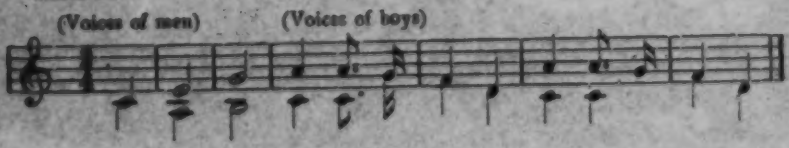
Tune 3.



Tune 4.



Tune 5.



Tune 6.

(Women) (Girls) (Women) (Girls)

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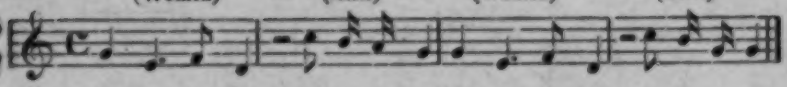
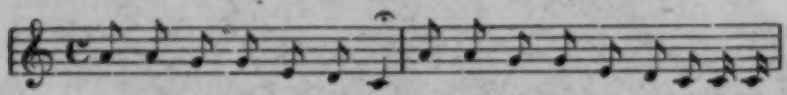
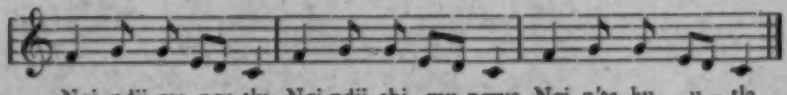


Tune 7. The Complaint of the childless woman (p. 188).

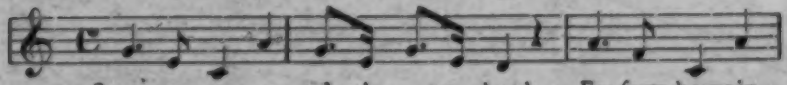


A ba bo - le - ki ñwa - na? Ba bo - le - ka tshu - ri ni nkamba!
They won't lend me a ba-by! They lend me but a mortar...

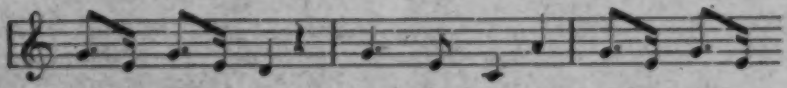


Ngi ndji ma-nga tlu, Ngi ndji shi - mu-ngwe. Ngi n'ta ku u - tla.
Were I an ea-gle! Were I a bird of prey! Quick would I carry it away!

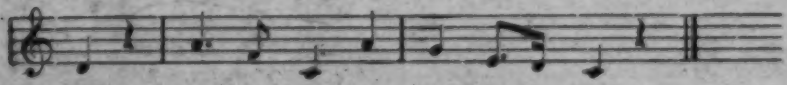
Tune 8. Complaint of the boys going to Johannesburg (p. 189).



Stones are ve - ry hard to break, Far from home in

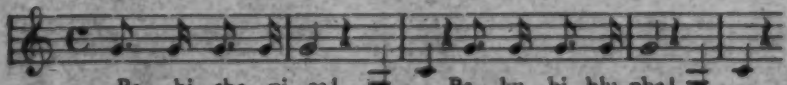


fo - reign land. Far from home, in fo - reign

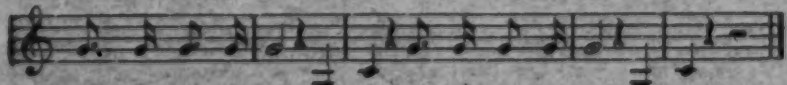


land, Stones are ve - ry hard to break.

Tune 9. Complaint of the Nkuna boy (p. 189).

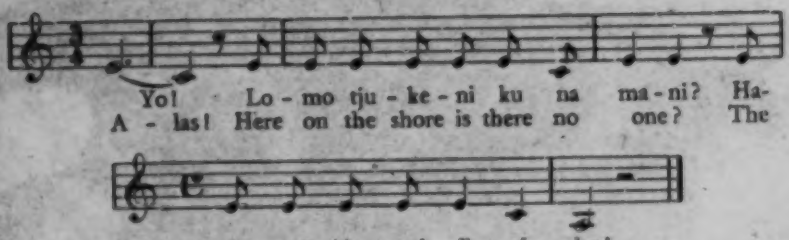


Ba hi sha - ni sa! Ba ku hi hlu-pha!
They treat us bad-ly! E - he! They are hard on us! E - he!



Ba nwa ma-kho-fi! Ba nga hi nyi-ki!
They drink their cof-fee! E-he! And they give us none! E-he!

Tune 10. The song of the Crab (p. 190).



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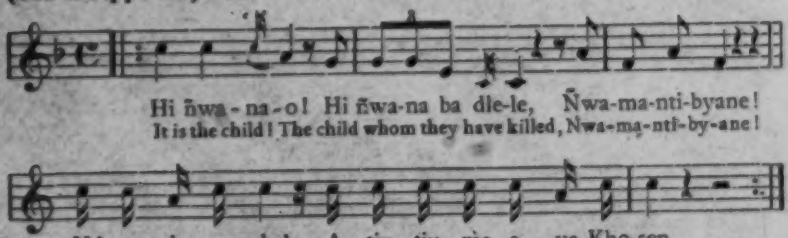
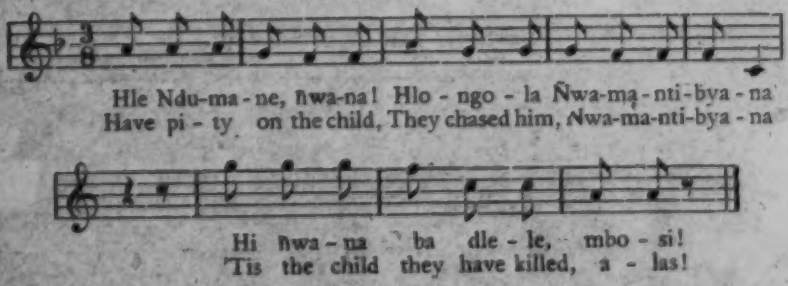
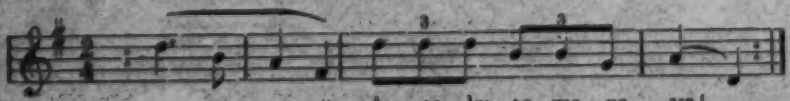
Tune 11. The lament over the deported chief Ñwamantibyane (See I. App. XI.).



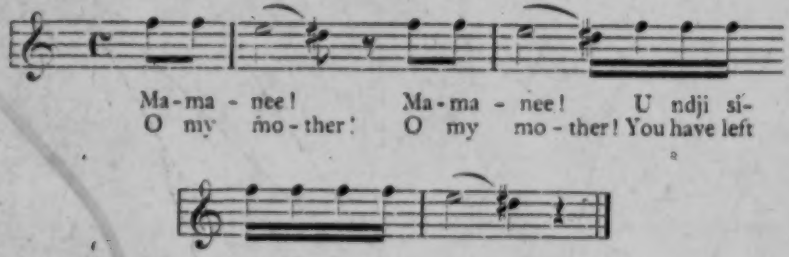
Tune 12. The same lament as sung thirteen years later, with accompaniment of the shitjendje.



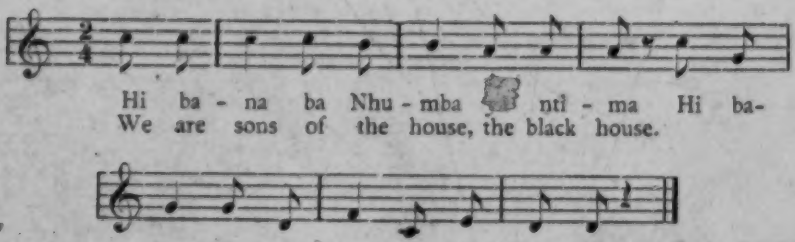
Tune 13. The song of the bridesmaids: (p. 200) "Do not go with him". (Mrs. Audéoud, Makulane). (Comp. p. 197).



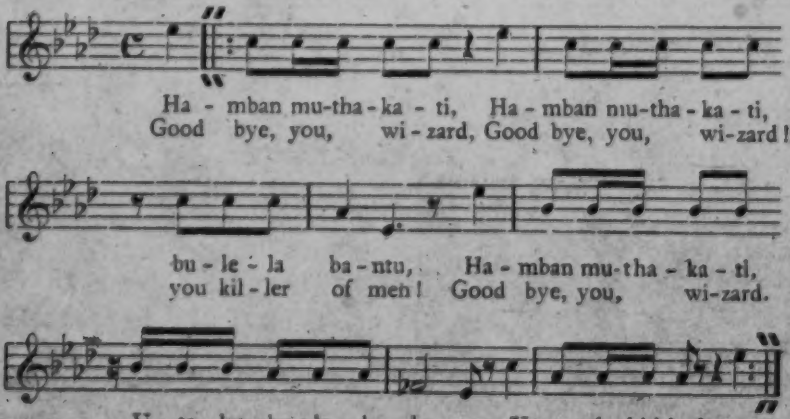
533 *Tune 14.* Mourning song heard after the death of Hamunde's wife
539 who was drowned in the lake of Rikatla (1893) (p. 191).



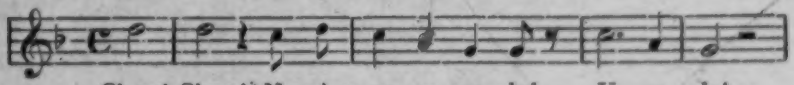
Tune 15. Old Nkuna mourning song (p. 192).



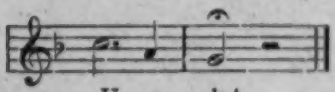
Tune 16. Mourning song at the death of Chief Tshutsha (Maputju. Mrs Audéoud) (p. 192).



Tune 17. Song of the women carrying "makanye" to Muzila (I. p. 402. II. p. 208). 533 539

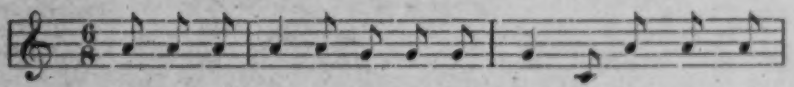


Chwe! Chwe! Na-mbya-na u te-le! U te-le!
Hi la-ba shi-mun-gu Le-shi ka
Shi-mhu-ngu hi ma-ni? Hi Mzi-la!

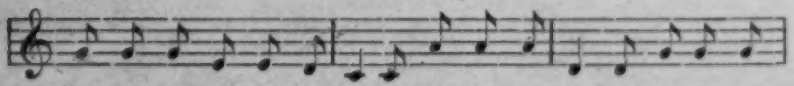


U te-le!
Le ti-lwen!
Hi Mzi-la!

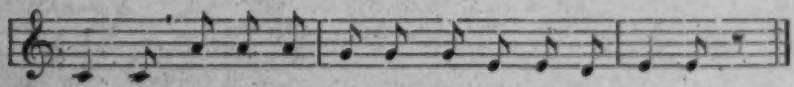
Tune 18. Sailors' song on the Nkomati River (1904) (p. 208).



A hi si-lo-yi, A hi nda-nda-le. Ku ni ndla-
A hi si-lo-yi, A hi nda-nda-le. They are starv-

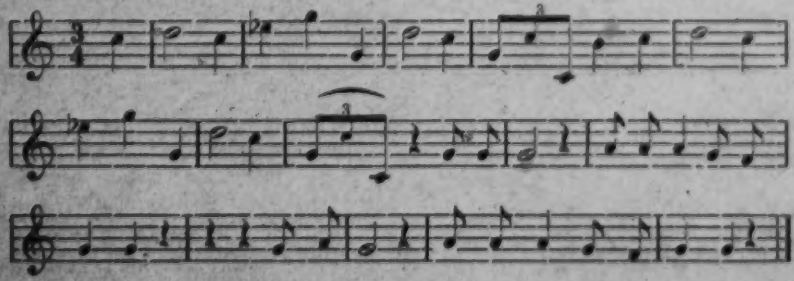


la ka Nti-ma-na, si-lo-yi. A hi si-lo-yi, A hi nda-
ing at Nti-ma-na, si-lo-yi. A hi si-lo-yi, A hi nda-



nda-le. Ku ni ndla-la ka Nti-ma-na, si-lo-yi.
nda-le. They are starv-ing at Nti-ma-na, si-lo-yi.

Tunes 19, 20, 21, 22. Sailors' songs on the Maputju River. (Mrs. Audéoud. 1906-1907).



Tune 20.

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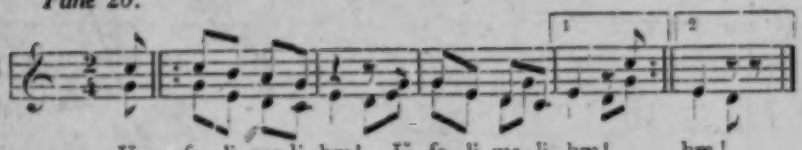
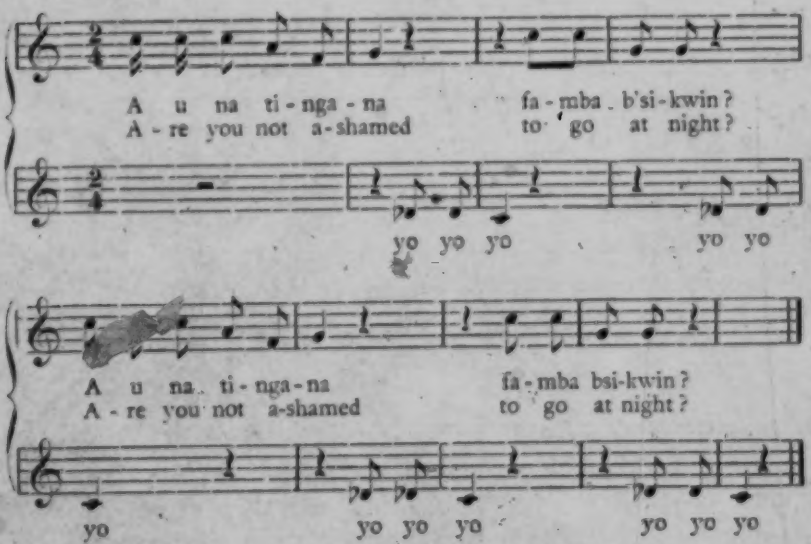
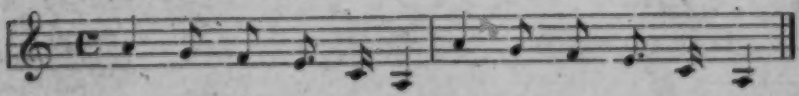


Tune 21.

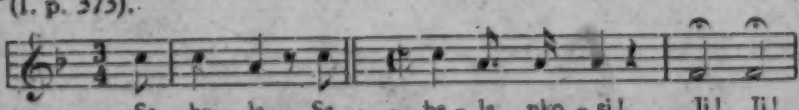


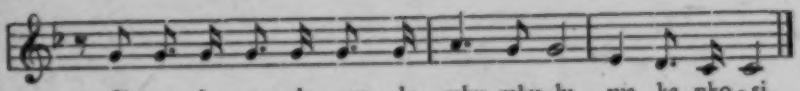
Tune 22.

Tune 23. Carriers song.



Tune 24. War song sung at the coronation of the Mpfumo chiefs (I. p. 373).





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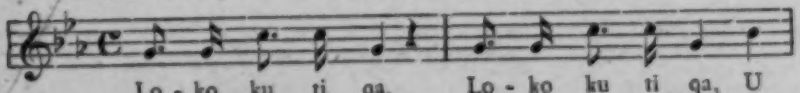
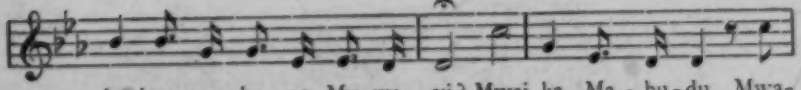
Si ya ku we - la mu - la - mbu mku-lu wa ka nko - si.
Let us go, let us cross the great ri - ver, that of the chief.

Tune 25. The great war song of Maputju (p. 194).



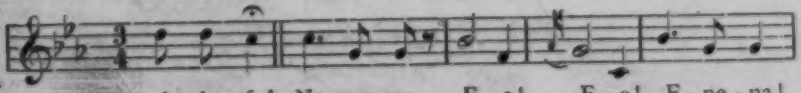
Lo - ko ku ti qa, Lo - ko ku ti qa, U
At the dawn of the day, At the dawn of day, Who



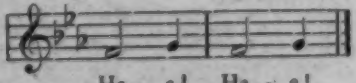
be-kwe ngu-ba - ne Mu-wa - yi? Mwai ka Ma - bu-du, Mwa-
is he that crowned thee, Muwayi? Mwai of Ma - pu-tju, Mwa-

yi, ka Ma - bu - du, U be - kwe ngu - ban!
yi of Ma - pu - tju, Who has crown - ed thee!

Tune 26. Marching song of the army (I. p. 469).

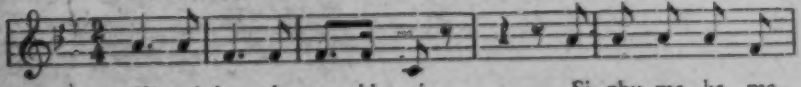


A - ba - fo! Na-ngu-ya, E - e! E - e! E - ne - na!
The en'my! Here they are, E - e! E - e! Here they are!

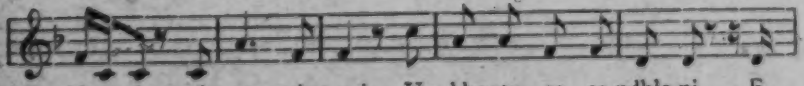


Ha - a! Ha - a!
Ha - a! Ha - a!

Tune 27. The song of the spear (Nkuna) (I. p. 461).



Hi yi-kwa ka ma-kho-si, Si phu-ma ka ma-
War comes from the chiefs. It is or dered by the



kho - si, si ga - mbu - za! U-mkhonto se sa-ndhle-ni E-
chiefs. We go and kill! The spear is in our hands. E-

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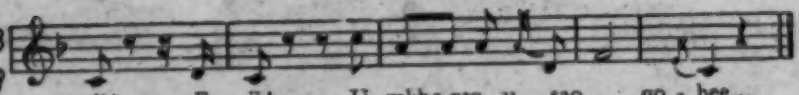
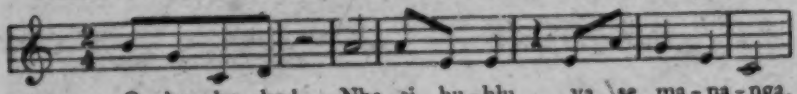
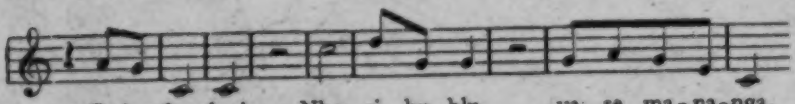


ji! E - ji! U - mkho-nto u sao go - bee...
ji! E - ji! The spear kills and bends in the wound.

Tune 28. The Giraffe of the desert (Nkuna, Nondwane). I. p. 461.

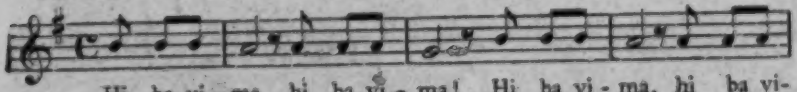


O - ho ho - ho! Nha si hu - hlu, ya se ma - na - nga.
'T is the gi - raffe, far in the de - sert.



E - ho ho - ho! Nha si hu - hlu ya se ma - na - nga.
'T is the gi - raffe, far in the de - sert.

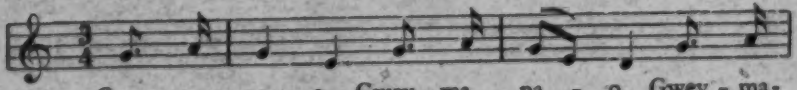
Tune 29. Oldest Nkuna war song (I. p. 461).



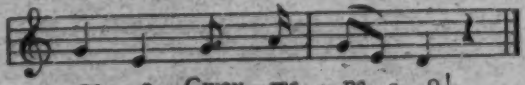
Hi ba yi - ma, hi ba yi - ma! Hi ba yi - ma, hi ba yi-
Let us stand fast, let us stand fast! Let us stand fast, let us stand

ma! Mi te - ka bu - re - na mi nyi - ka ti-nu-ba ta ba-mbe!
fast! Do not let your strength go, it would help the en'my to con-quer!

Tune 30. Childrens' song welcoming the trek oxen (p. 209).

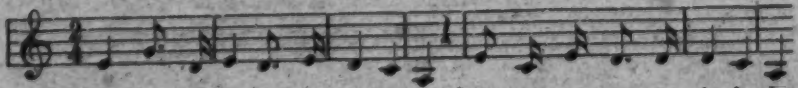


Gwey - ma - na - o, Gwey - ma - na - o, Gwey - ma-
See the o - xen! See the o - xen! See the



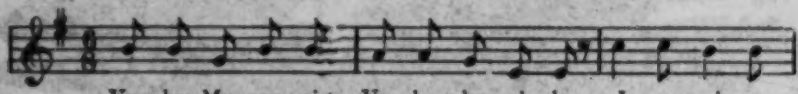
na - o, Gwey - ma - na - o!
o - xen, See the o - xen!

Tune 31. Childrens' song to the owl (p. 209).

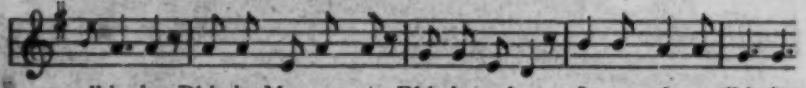


Shi - ko - ta-na gau - le - la fo - le, Ñwa-mbengen gau - le - la fo - le.

Tune 32. Incantation to the spirit during exorcism (p. 209) (Part VI). 533 539

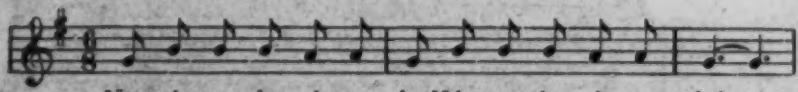


Vu - ka Mu-ngo-ni, Vu - ka, ku - si - le, I - nyo-ni ya
A-wake, o Zu - lu, The day has come, Now the bird is

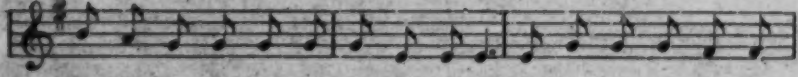


dhla - la. Dhla-la Mu-ngo-ni, Dhla-la va-len, I nyo-ni ya dhla-la.
sing-ing. Play al - so, Zu - lu, Play in the bush, Now the bird is singing.

Tune 33. Song of the tale of the ogre Nyandzumulandengela (Timbila song). (p. 210).

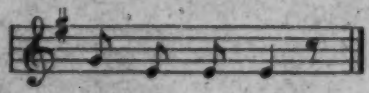


Nya-ndzu-mu - la - nde-nge - la, Ndzu-mu - la - nde-nge - la!



Ndji hwe ti - ho - mu ta nga ndji mu-ka! Nya ndzu-mu-la - nde - nge-
Give me my o-xen, please, that I may go!

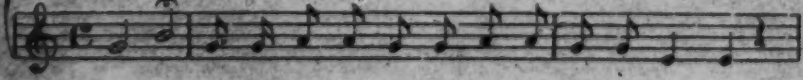
la, Ndzu-mu - la - nde - nge - la! U - te - ki - le mi mhu-
You have ta - ken me and



mu u mi - ta!
you swal-lowed me!

Tune 34. Song in two parts, in the tale of Zili (p. 259).

Zi - li! A - ma - se - se - ndi - ni, a - ma-sen - di { ba - ba!
old Man.



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Si - lo - yi - le } se - se - ndi - ni, I nya - ma mu - ne, ya ku
You bad wi-zard } — What's that kind of meat, ve - ry

nha - ti { se - se-ndin, I ka - la nki - la ka li - ho-ndjo,
strange meat { — It has got no tail, it has no horn.

se - se - ndin. Zi - li! A - ma - se - se - ndi - ni, A - ma-

se - ndi } ba - ba! Si - lo - yi - le } se - se - ndin!
} old man, You bad wi - zard}

Tune 35. Song of the mother whose child has been carried off by the Baboon (p. 263).

Mfe - ne sa - ndhle - ni, Mfe - ne sa - ndhle - ni, A

u ngi dhla-yi - se - le mu - nta - na - me, si ya ndo - ndo

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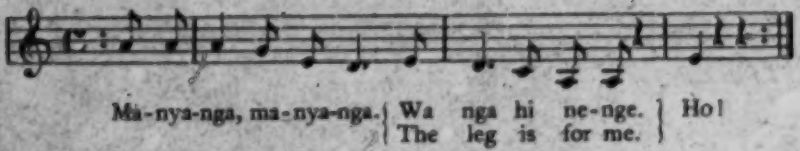
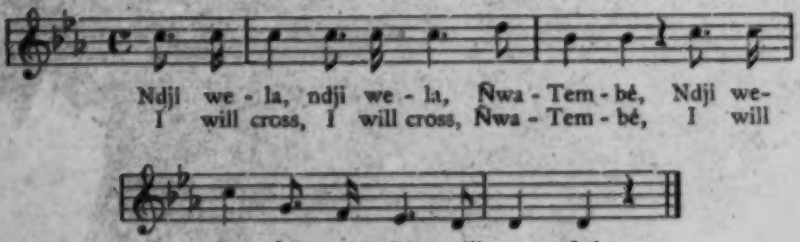
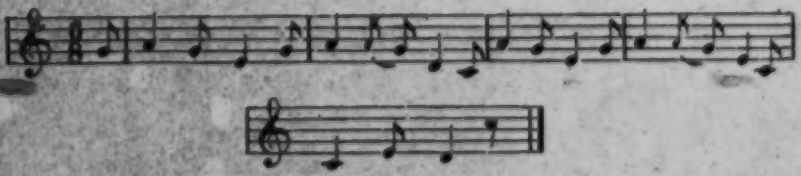
Tune 36. Incantation by which hyena-men are transformed into hyenas, in an ogre-tale (p. 210).



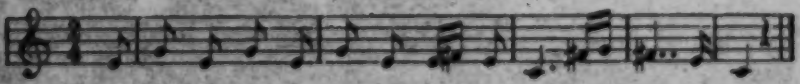
Tune 37. One of the Ronge songs (p. 203).



Tune 38. A tune played on the shitiringo flute on the banks of the Great Tabi (p. 277).



Tune 39. A shitiringo tune from Shiluvane.



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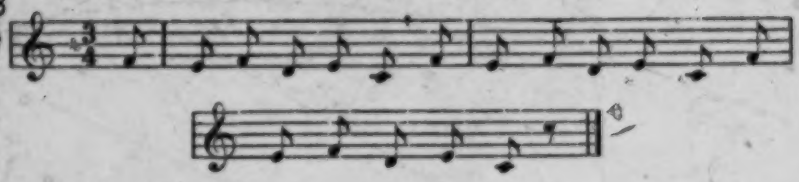
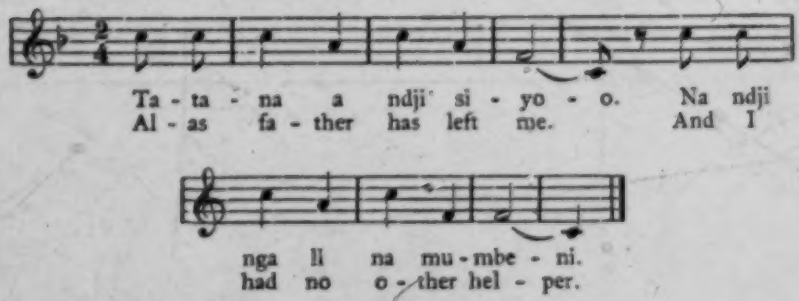
Tune 40. A bunanga tune (I. p. 431, II. p. 277).



Tune 41 (p. 189).



C. THE MUSICAL SYSTEM OF THE THONGAS.

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Having now studied the instruments used by our tribe, and a certain number of tunes, we can try to come to some conclusions as regards its musical system. Let it be said, first of all, that such conclusions are only provisional, and I do not pretend that they are final. Noting down Native tunes is a very delicate task, as nothing is more plastic than sound, and however accurate we have tried to be, we may have introduced something of our own into this transcript. Nothing but phonograph records would be scientifically beyond suspicion! However between all these tunes there is enough similarity, enough family likeness, to convince students of primitive music that they are genuine, and that we are entitled to draw some deductions from this material.

As regards *rhythm*, it is generally very well marked, being emphasised by the accompanying instruments, and the movements of dancers: arms lowered in cadence, weapons brandished, feet stamping the ground at regular intervals, etc. However I

singing in two or three parts, you at once perceive great differences 533
between their system of harmony and ours. These choruses are by no means disagreeable, but are very strange to our European ear. It would be most interesting to seize them and note them down, but it would be a long job! I have succeeded at least in fixing the two parts of the song of Zili, which may be considered typical ; I owe it to two girls of Lourenço Marques, who had clear voices and lent themselves willingly and with great patience to the long investigation. A curious succession of fourths and sixths will be noticed, quite unusual in our music. The professional to whom I submitted this song told me it reminded him of similar chords found in the works of mediaeval composers like Bianchois, and Adam de la Halle. The fourth seems to be more acceptable to the Bantu ear than the third or the fifth. A collection of timbila music would be of great assistance in coming to a conclusion on the subject, as the artists invariably play with two hands, and a score of phonographic records taken in Johannesburg of a good player would be very valuable. Not having had the opportunity of making such an investigation, I must be satisfied to commend it to those who have time to devote themselves to it.

To sum up the result of this inquiry, I may say that Thonga music has certainly reached a certain stage of development, being based upon the seven intervals scale, recognizing the major and minor keys, and following a certain system of harmony ; but the melodies are still short and rudimentary and, although they may attain real grandeur when performed by hundreds of warriors, they are generally monotonous and sad. Notwithstanding this, the black race is essentially musical ; its gifts in this domain are real, and if properly developed they will certainly in time produce remarkable results.

We can guess to some extent what contribution the Blacks will 533
make to the musical treasures of humanity when we hear the Negro 539
artists who travel round Europe singing the striking plantation songs which they learned from their fathers. As far as I know, South African Bantus have not yet published many musical compositions comparable to those of their American brethren ; yet educated Natives, even school children, already invent songs for their own pleasure which

533 are more elaborate than the old ones, but which retain the true Bantu character. I will quote three which I managed to seize in the
539 neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques.

The first may be called *the song of the children who no longer wished to attend evening prayer*. I heard them singing it unnoticed on the Lourenço Marques hill. It must be said that on every Mission Station all the converts assemble every evening to attend a short service, bringing their children with them. It seems that, on one occasion, the missionary went away for a furlough and evening prayer was stopped for a while; it was however resumed when he came back home... much to the disappointment of the children, and they composed this song, whose words are perhaps not very edifying, though they ought not to be taken too seriously. The tune, at any rate, is charming:

A - shi - kho - ngo - to sha bu - si - ku! Le - psi
Eve - ning prayer of the mis - sio - na - ry! As he
Eve - ning prayer of the old Fu - ra - ngu! (1) As he

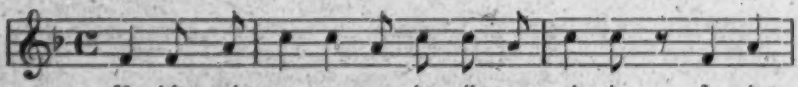
ku tlha - si - ki ye - ne, A ta hi psa - u - la hi ku ba
has now come home a-gain, The bell will ring, ring, ring, and it will
has now come home a-gain, It will say nwe-nwe-nwe, and it will

a - nsi - mbi Ni bu - si - ku: - Hi nga ye - tle - li!
vex our ears, Du - ring the night: No sleep a - ny more!
vex our ears Du - ring the night: No sleep a - ny more!

The second was composed *by a blind girl* of the Maputju country at the time of the Murimi Movement of which I shall speak later on (App. V). The prophet of this new god, Murimi, was travelling all over Thongaland to destroy witchcraft and to inaugurate a new

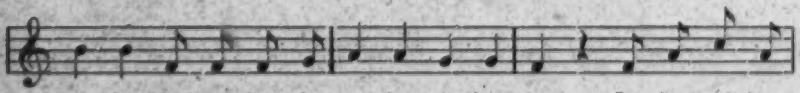
(1) "Old Furangu" is the church elder Frank whose name was transformed according to Thonga phonetics. In the following verses there are a number of descriptive adverbs imitating the ringing of the bell. It will say: go-go-go—rwa-rwa-rwa—nge-nge-nge...

era of prosperity and the chiefs called all their subjects, men and women, to take a snuff of a certain magical tobacco which would rid the country of all the killers by night. The young poetess imagines a woman, a witch, preparing to go to the meeting ordered by the chiefs in order to take the snuff. But she does not at all intend to renounce her criminal ways. She has in her power "psipolo" (see Part. VI, Witchcraft, and App. V), i. e. little folk no bigger than real babies, who are really dead people whom she has bewitched and whom she employs as slaves to till her gardens. During the day she hides them in the bush and during the night she makes them work. Now she takes leave of them before attending the meeting where she is determined to lie, pretending that she has nothing to do with witchcraft, whilst she is secretely determined to go on practising it. The song of the Christian girl reveals her duplicity and concludes by asserting that converts do not believe in this mass of absurdities.



Ka hla - yi ma-ma a ku tjha-ma nho ben, Lo-ko
Their mo - ther told them: Keep quiet in the fo - rest, When I
But we, Chris - tians, we ob - ject, we don't ac - cept. What hea-

ndji da - hi - le fo - le, Ndji ta bu - ya ndji ta ku
have gone to take the snuff, I shall come back and I shall
thens want us to be - lieve, And we an - swer by clo - sing



te - ka, Ndji ya ku pha-me - la psa-ku - da. Lo - ko psi ku
take you, And I shall give you some-thing to eat. They cry, they say:
our ears When we hear from them all this non-sense.

u - we, u - we, u - we, Lo - ko psi ku u - we, Psi
U - we, u - we, u - we! They cry, they say: U - we, As

dji - le - la ku mam' Lo - ku psi ku: U - we! Bu - ya
they call for their mother. They cry, they say: U - we! Come back

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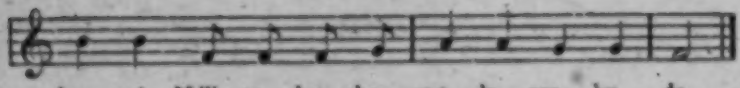
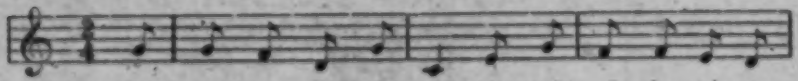
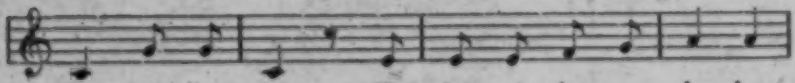


ka - ya!—Ndji ta ku pha - me - la psa - ku - da.
quick - ly!—Yes! I will give you some-thing to eat.

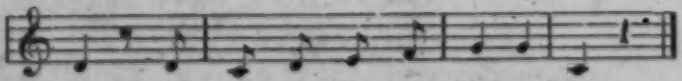
The third song is a sort of hymn whose author is a young evangelist belonging to the Chopi tribe, a tribe particularly gifted for music. This boy, named Onesime, was lame and lay for many years on his bed of suffering; there he composed quite a number of melodies which he taught his pupils. Here is the *Song of the Star*, which he himself wrote for me in Sol-Fa Notation, and in which he expresses the feelings of his pious heart:



Bo - na nye - le - ti le - yi yi ba - ni - nga-
Look to that star a- bove, which has come and is shin-
Let us be - lieve e'en now and we shall find hap - pi-



ka mi - sa - ba. Yi bo - na - ka - la he-
ing on the world. It has ap-peared in high hea-
ness, here and now. If we look to hea - ven a-



nhla Hi ti - mpsa - lù ta Shi-kwe - mbu
ven, By the grace of the Lo-ving God.
bove, We shall gain life and peace.

See at the end of this volume the Practical Conclusion of Part. V: *The Problem of Native Education.*

769 there. It is inculcated, and kept alive, by the truly terrifying tales
778 which are told concerning them. These are related in the evening,
538 in low tones, and with frightened looks, and the feeling of awe is
776 fed and maintained by these legends. I intend to narrate here those I heard from various informants ; these stories will illustrate better than any philosophical explanation the ideas of the Natives concerning their gods. Those connected with the Libombo wood are the most typical. I owe them to Spoon and the aged Nkolele. I will begin with those which are of most ancient origin, and whose legendary character is most unmistakable.

539 One day a woman was passing close by the forest of Libombo : she
776 plucked a sala (p. 16) from a tree and ate it, after which she went to till
769 her garden. On another occasion, just as she was cracking another sala against the trunk of a tree before eating it, she saw that the fruit, instead of having a stone inside, was filled with small vipers. She threw it away, but the vipers said to her : "Go on! Eat away! Haven't we seen you every day picking sala? And these sala are ours, and not yours. What shall we gods have to eat? Have we not made this tree to grow?" And she went home and died, because she had been cursed by the gods.

Another woman was passing by the forest on a rainy day, and saw a child, who had climbed a tree, and was eating berries. She approached the child and said : "Give me some of those berries!" The boy made no reply, so she began to pick some for herself. When she had picked enough, she said : "Are you going on picking berries in such a rain as this! Where is your mother?" He still remained silent. She felt sorry for the child, thinking he was indeed to be pitied : — "Come," said she, "and let me carry you on my back." So she went up to the tree, and lifted down the child, and tied him on her back with her shawl ; then, putting her conical basket on her head, she started for home. On arriving at her hut, she saw that a fire had been lighted on account of the rain. — "Put on some more wood," said she, "for the sake of this little one, whom I found on the road eating berries." She untied the shawl, and tried to place the child on her hips, but he refused to be moved, and clung to her back, where he kept quite still. The folks said to the woman : "Put him down on the ground, so that he can go and warm himself near the embers." He refused. Then they said to him : "Get down!" But he still refused to move. Then the villagers said to the woman : "Didn't you pass by the Libombo forest?" — "Yes! I did," she replied, "and there I found this child gathering berries, and

brought him along with me." — "This is no child! It is a god!" they 539
cried ; "a child never has a hard head like this one has. And look at his 776
legs! What strength! How ever did you come to think it was a child?" 769
—"But," said she, "I certainly thought it was a child — and can it be a god?" — They sent for magicians, who threw the bones. At once the magicians knew what was wrong : — "Ha! Hé! You found him at Libombo, did you not?" They tried to remove him by force, but he clung still more closely to the woman's back, stiffening his legs round her waist, and his arms around her neck. They tried to unclench his hands, but it was impossible! Then they begged her to go back to Libombo, and implore the owners of the forest to set her free from this child. She took her basket, and returned to the tree where she had found him. The guardian of the forest soon appeared. It was Makundju, the ancestor of Nkolele. He inveighed against the woman and those who accompanied her, saying : — "When you find fruit in the forest, do not pick it! If it be maize, leave it alone, or, if you pick it, spare at least one ear. If your chicken flies into the wood, do not go after it. If your goat runs away into it, you must not follow it. We are worn out, we folks of Libombo, with offering sacrifices for you passers-by... Your troubles are the consequences of the sins (psihono) you commit in this place." A white hen was caught, and sacrificed on behalf of the woman. Emitting the "tsu" the priest said : "Behold our ox, by which we present our petition. Let this god leave her back. She did not do it on purpose. She thought it was a child ; she did not know it was a god. Which way can people go henceforth if you, gods, put obstacles in the way?" While this sacrifice was being offered, the being suddenly left her back, disappeared, and no one knew how, or whither he went. As for the woman, she trembled violently and died...

A man once defied the prohibition of cutting dry wood in the forest. Suddenly he was pelted from behind with kwakwa and sala fruits. It was the gods. He tried to fly, but was unable to find the path out of the thicket. He was lost, and tired of wandering about he let his bundle of faggots fall. Then the gods allowed him to find his way out again, but, when he found himself in the open, he perceived that he was carrying nothing, even his axe had been taken from him.

Sometimes the gods made themselves heard ; when they were 776
especially happy they played on trumpets, sang and danced. 778
Passers-by often tried to get a glimpse of them, but the noise

776 on earth. I have nothing to fear or to hope from my neighbour's
769 gods, if I do not belong to the same "shibongo" (I. p. 360). The gods of the royal family are invoked on behalf of the whole country, and have power to give rain to the land ; but it is the chief and his uncles who must approach and sacrifice to them. I have no right to do so. It is true that an exception seems to be made in the case of the gods of bitterness, or of the bush, who attack the traveller, although he belongs to another family. But this is indeed only an exceptional case, it being their kinsfolk, who neglected to bury them, who are most exposed to their wrath.

Another proof that they are men is this : although as gods they have acquired these divine ontological powers, they have made no real moral progress. They are not better than they were as men. Their *character* is that of suspicious old people, who resent any want of respect, or attention, on the part of their descendants. They wish to be thought of, and presented with offerings. It would seem that they are not actually in need of anything, for they live in abundance, but they exact a punctual observance of the duties of their descendants in regard to them. They must *luma*, eat the first fruits, and have their share of the tobacco leaves and also of the ground tobacco. They are jealous,
783 and avenge themselves when forgotten (1). The only sin which
769 seems to be deserving of punishment is to neglect them. There are, however, two other faults which they strongly condemn, and
776 for which they may even kill their descendants : the first is any serious *transgression against the law of hierarchy* (as we saw, when dealing with the sacrifice of reconciliation) ; they punish especially the young man, even though he be the chief, who dares thus to

539 (1) In a very interesting tale, which is unique, and which I owe to Camilla and have published in *Les Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, p. 264, we hear of the people of Mashaken, near Lourenço Marques forgetting for many years to make offerings to their gods. Famine ensues. The men go to the marsh to cut sugar canes. They are unable to break them, and the gods chase them away. The women, who come to a place where honey is flowing from a tree, try to take the combs, but their hands break off and remain fixed to the spot ! The bones order Sabulana, a young girl, to go to the sacred wood to sacrifice. She enters the forest and sees the gods assembled. They say to her : "Tell your people that they have sinned, because they have tilled the ground and harvested without presenting us with any offerings. Now we are glad, because they have come to invoke us." This story was told me as a tale, not as a legend of the sacred woods.

of one of the most intelligent women of our congregation at 772
Lourenço Marques, who was also the best acquainted with all the ancient Ba-Ronga customs. Timotheo Mandlati said to me, on the other hand : "Our fathers all believed that life existed in Heaven" (butomi byi kone tilwen). It is quite certain that, according to the ideas of the Thongas, as well as to those of many other tribes, Heaven was a *place* ; a place much to be desired, where was to be found that which is so seldom met with on earth, namely rest. Hence a song, which is to be found in [539] a very similar form amongst the Zulus (1), and even amongst the Ba-Sutho, and runs thus :

(Solo) Bukali bya ngoti !
(Tutti) Nha ndji yahliya ngoti, ndji ya Tilwen !
Ndji ya kuma ku wisa !
(Solo) What a rare thing is string !
(Tutti) Oh ! how I should love to plait a string, and go up to Heaven, I would go there to find rest !

An old refrain which has come down through the ages, and has in no wise been inspired by the Christian religion : it is pure, authentic Bantu! Thus the warriors, when threatening their adversaries, and hurling defiance from one troop to another, say : "Make ready your string, and climb up to Heaven, there is no place for you here below. Here you will find nothing but misfortune" (I. p. 472) (2).

Thongas, however, never declare as a belief that men go to Heaven after death. They become "psikwembu," and we have already seen where their abode is. Nevertheless Viguet told me the story of a Hlengwe, whom he knew in times long gone by, in the Bilen country, who used to address the people in mysterious tones as follows :

(1) "Who could make a cord, whereby to go to Heaven ?" Such is the Zulu version given by Callaway.

(2) When a bone-thrower has decided that his consultant must make an offering, he often tells him, looking towards heaven : "Go, make the offering and say : It is good if I overcome the people who are below by the country which is afar." The people who are below are the wizards. The country which is afar is heaven. Another version is as follows : "It is good if I overcome the people who are below and reach the country which is far away." In the first case Heaven is considered as possessing a power greater than that of wizards ; in the second it means evidently the place of rest.

Though you eat plenty of fat and of honey, and drink plenty of beer, the day will come when you will say "Huku-huku" (fall on your back, i. e. die) ; people will say "Woo" (i. e. mourn you), and ask you : "Where are you going?" Then answer : "I am going to Ngundju-ya-mapsele, the Source-of-Grace, to the place where the oxen are herded by vultures (because there is no hatred and no death there), where the mosquito is killed with a stick (because everything is so flourishing and big there), where the fowl dies from fat (because there is no disease nor dearth in that blessed land) — to Heaven!" 772

This Hlengwe had either heard these words in his home or had invented them himself.

But Tilo is something more than a place. It is a *power* which acts and manifests itself in various ways. It is sometimes called *Hosi*, Lord. But this power is generally regarded as something entirely impersonal. Thongas appear to think that Heaven regulates and presides over certain great cosmic phenomena to which men must, willingly or unwillingly, submit, more especially those of a sudden and unexpected nature, by which I mean above all rain, storms, and, in human affairs, death, convulsions and the birth of twins. From this idea spring certain very characteristic customs, which I shall proceed to describe briefly.

It is Heaven that afflicts children with those terrible and mysterious *convulsions*, which carry them off without their having been really ill, in a manner of speaking... "He is ill from Heaven" — "A ni Tilo," said an old Native doctor to me in a low tone, referring to a case of this description. So Heaven is the great nombo (infantile disease), (I. p. 48), whilst diarrhea is the small nombo. [753]

But more than this, *it is Heaven which kills and makes live.* Hence the frequent expression : "Heaven loved him," when someone has escaped some deadly danger, or is particularly prosperous, and "Heaven hated him," when he has been very unfortunate, or has died.

The same idea is expressed in the following dirge. 772 539

Wa hi kanganyisa, Tshabane !
Hi yingeli Tilo, dji ku dja buya nininini !
Hi kumi babamuna babiri, ba famba ba hlahluba Tilo.
Wa nga yingela psa bambe, u ta yingela ni psa ku !

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You deceive us, Tshabane!
We have heard Heaven thunder... The roaring will soon come.
We have seen two men who were going to throw the bones with reference to Heaven...
Doubtless you have heard tell of the misfortunes of others:
You will hear them talking of your own!

Enigmatic words, but, with the help of the Natives, I have unravelled their meaning: — You are deceiving us, Tshabane, you who are trying to reassure us. We have heard Heaven. A storm has burst, there was a sudden downpour, a flash of lightning; Heaven has struck! It has killed some one. Two men passed by, terrified; they went to consult the bones, to try and find means to ward off these strokes of Heaven. Useless! If you have seen the sorrow of those who mourn, do not imagine that you will escape. It will soon be your turn!

Another song which contains a similar allusion to Heaven as the power which kills, has already been quoted when describing the customs of widowhood (I. p. 207). "What shall we say to thee! King!"

The tale of "the Road to Heaven" (See *Les Chants et les Contes des Ba-Ronga*, p. 237) is also very significant in this respect. It tells the story of a young girl, who, having broken her jar, and fearing a scolding from her mother, *climbs up her string* and goes to Heaven. (Always the same idea of shelter from all evils.) (1) There she finds a village; a child is given to her, because she is so gentle and obedient. Her sister tries to do the same thing. But she is ill-tempered and wicked. Heaven explodes (baleka), kills her (by lightning), and her bones are blown right to her parents' house. In the tale of the Adventures of Bonawasi (Ch. & C. p. 295) Heaven intervenes to endow a young Native with peculiar wisdom, by means of which he gets the better of the Governor of the town. Possibly some idea of the God of the Europeans may have found its way into the composition of this tale, in which may be recognized certain traces of foreign influence. But this is assuredly not the

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(1) The mention of this string is perhaps due to a tradition common in other African tribes. According to the Ba-Rotse, Leza, God, who dwelt on earth, ascended to Heaven one day by a spider's web. Several human beings tried to climb up the same way, but fell and failed in the attempt. (Comp. A. Jalla, *Foi et Vie*, Oct. 1910.)

case in respect to the story of Ñwahungukuri, which I have published in *Les Ba-Ronga*, p. 312, and in which Heaven is credited with the full knowledge of a hidden crime committed by a murderer. This idea is so far from being an innovation due to European influence that thoughtful Natives all agree that, in former times, it was more usual to attribute death to the power of Heaven. It was a common saying that "Heaven has fallen (ku we Tilo) on such and such a village." Nowadays it is rather the gods, or the wizards, who are believed to cause death. 772 539 [761]

But this belief in Heaven has not only inspired these sayings, songs, and tales; it has also given rise to curious customs, a description of which will throw more light on this conception of the Thongas. Their existence proves that we are not here dealing with the "animatic" invention of some person gifted with a vivid imagination (p. 366), but with a true tribal belief.

II. *Customs Connected with the Conception of Heaven.*

1) Heaven, Twins and Rain.

This power, which causes lightning and death, also presides, in a very special way, at the *birth of twins*, so much so that the mother is called by the name of "Tilo," — "Heaven," — and the children "Bana ba Tilo," — "Children of Heaven" (1). Now the arrival of two or three babies at the same time is looked upon by the Thongas as a great misfortune, a defilement in respect of which very special rites must be performed. I give the details of these rites as practised in the Zihlahla, Nondwane, and Nkuna clans, as they were described to me by Tobane, Mboza, Mankhelu, etc. 845 772

Twins (hahla, or bandjwa, dji-ma) are now both allowed to live. But in former times, one of them, the one which appeared to be the feebler, was always put to death, being left to die of 845 847 766

(1) In our school at Lourenço Marques there was a charming young girl, who was named Nwana-wa-Tilo, Daughter of Heaven, because she had a twin brother.

837 of his father, which is considered as *biha*, very bad), he must not
684 take any part in the burial, though he might be the regular "master
783 of the mourning." Relatives will drive him away because they
578 have pity on him, they know what misfortune threatens him. It is
782 a terrible taboo! There are medicines to remove this contamin-
626 ation ; the *yila* is removed by them, but the *biha* (bad action)
753 remains! However in the case of the disease called *mpondjo*, (which I believe to be the lupus), medicines are of no avail ; should a man visit his rival, who is suffering from it, he will die. We have also seen the terrible complications which are believed to take place at the birth of children, when there has been a question of adultery. (P. 40.)

836 These great taboos show that there is a deep feeling amongst the Thongas that promiscuity of any kind is a bad and a dangerous thing. Even in the case of *gangisa*, boys are censured when two of them court the same girl.

10) Divorce.

586 Adultery is one of the causes of divorce. The guilty woman, instead of obeying her legitimate husband and helping him to get his compensation, may choose to go to her lover and live with him. This leads to an immediate divorce. The husband goes to the parents of the unfaithful wife and claims his lobolo. They have perhaps no money to give. However they will try to get it as soon as possible, even if it is by the dissolution of the marriage of their own son ; they will perhaps send back his young wife to her parents and claim the lobolo paid for her, in order to meet the claim of the angry husband (See Part II). It would seem easier to go to the thief and claim from him the lobola for the adulteress whom he has stolen (tlhuba). But a thief is not a reliable man! If he has stolen, it proves that he had nothing (1). (See Appendix VIII.)

Divorce frequently takes place for more trivial reasons, for

548 (1) Women of low morals are called in Ronga gwababana, prostitute. There are plenty of them all round Lourenço Marques, where morality has sunk to a very low level; but this is the result of degeneration.

583 concluded on the lobola basis, are frequently dissolved (1). The
586 tie being purely material, it is easy to sever it. When the husband
562 "bitana tihomu," claims his oxen, who could refuse to return
593 them ? It is certainly erroneous to say that the lobola is a contract made between two families in order to guarantee the good treatment of the wife by her husband and vice versa, to prevent the husband beating his wife or the wife deserting the conjugal home from mere caprice. It has even been asserted that this sum of money was a pledge, a security, claimed by the wife's parents for the protection of their daughter! There is nothing of the kind in this institution. The exhortations addressed to the bride on the day of her *hloma* (page 118) prove clearly enough that, on the contrary, owing to the lobola, the husband has every right over her, and that she has no right to protest if he uses or abuses this right.

2) Bad consequences of the lobola custom.

583 1) And this is the first *regrettable consequence of the lobolo* : the
562 woman is undoubtedly reduced to an *inferior position* by the fact that she has been lobola. *a)* This appears clearly in the fact that, though she is not looked upon exactly as a head of cattle, a marriageable girl is in principle entirely at the mercy of her family as regards the choice of her husband. In the same way a widow to be inherited is in the hands of her deceased husband's family.

586 (1) I will give only one example which I witnessed amongst my neighbours and
548 which shows that, with women of loose character, at any rate, the payment of lobolo helps very little to strengthen the matrimonial tie. A girl named Hlapfuta, daughter of Bandi, married a first husband. The "bukosi" (name commonly given to the lobolo money) was used to procure a wife for her brother. But she left her husband and was married by Ñwamusi. This second husband paid the lobolo, which was then returned to the first. But Hlapfuta ran away a second time and joined a man called Matshubele. She did the same thing five consecutive times, and finally she moved to Majlangalen, to the suburbs of Lourenzo Marques, the favourite quarter of the prostitutes. There she was lost, and the "bukosi" also. Her paternal uncle, who had been put to any amount of trouble to recover the "bukosi" in order to give it back to the five abandoned husbands, seeing that it would be impossible to satisfy the last, could no longer bear the strain and committed suicide by hanging himself from a tree not far from my house in Rikatla. The debt remained with the girl's brother who "had eaten the bukosi."

l: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

551 609 of the white man. M. Torre do Valle has given a list of nicknames of the merchants and other inhabitants of Lourenço Marques in his Diccionario Shironga-Portuguez. It is well worth consulting, and the only thing wanting is a photograph of the white man and an explanation of the name ; it would be a splendid illustration of Native wit!

551 576 618 So far we have spoken only of *personal* names and nicknames. But, beside these, every man possesses his clan name, or surname, viz., the name of the first of his known ancestors. Grown up men prefer being addressed by this name, which is *shibongo*, viz. the name by which they are "glorified." This subject is treated in Part III (p. 360).

APPENDIX III (See p. 98)

Unnatural Vice in the Johannesburg Compounds.

838 548 588 In January 1915 one of my colleagues passing near one of the Johannesburg Compounds, saw a big company of Natives singing and walking in the direction of another Compound where a great dance was taking place. Amongst them there were a number of women. My colleague asked his Native evangelist how it was possible that so many women should be walking about in that part of the world, where the feminine element is very small. The man told him : "They are not women! They are *tinkhontshana*, boys who have placed on their chests the breasts of women carved in wood, and who are going to the dance in order to play the part of women. To-night when they return to their dormitories, their 'husbands' will have to give them 10/, and only on that condition will the tinkhontshana remove their breasts and comply with the desire of their husbands." I sent for this evangelist who knew everything about the inner life of the Compounds and asked him about it ; this is the information I received :

Unnatural vice (bukhontshana) has become a regular institution in the Compounds. The word *nkhontshana* seems to come from the Ngoni, a Zulu dialect spoken in the Limpopo plain. The nkhontshana is the boy used by another man to satisfy his lust, and the man is called his *nuna*, husband. When a gang of new workers arrives in a Compound, the Native induna, who has the supervision of the Compound, and the Native policemen, who have their rooms at the

838 entrance of the yard, come and "humutsha" i. e. make proposals to the
548 younger ones, not only to little boys (there are only a few of these) but
588 also to boys up to the age of twenty and more. If these lads consent to become their bakhontshana, they will be treated with greater kindness than the others. Their husbands will give them 10/ to woo them (buta) and will choose for them easy occupations, as, for instance, sweeping the dormitories, whilst the others will have to go to the hard underground work. Those who have not been chosen on their arrival by the policemen will probably receive a similar proposal from their older companions in the mine, and these men will then help them in the difficult task of "be hole" i. e. digging their hole. But the "husband" will have not only to woo this peculiar kind of *nsati* (wife) ; he must also *lobola* her, and a feast sometimes takes place when as much as £ 25 is put on the ground, a goat is killed and a real contract made which binds the nkhontshana to his master for the whole time he remains in the Compounds. The elder brother of the boy will receive the money in this disgusting parody of the Bantu marriage.

Sometimes the husband pays his nkhontshana at the end of each month as much as £ 1.10 and this represents a big increase in the earnings of the boy.

What happens when the contract is broken ? The "husband" claims the money remitted by him. If the boy refuses to return it the matter may be brought before the Compound Manager, who generally dismisses the plaintiff, saying : "If the boy does not love you any more, let him go."

839 The cause of the evil is not difficult to detect : it is the segregation
548 of the Native miners in these enormous conglomerations of males, far
588 from home, far from their wives, a most abnormal condition of life for men who have always enjoyed the freedom of the African bush. When prostitutes were allowed to live near the Compounds, unnatural vice was not so common ; when they were driven out, bukhontshana at once increased enormously, and thus the disappearance of one evil brought a new one in its train. On the other hand, my informant asserted that Thongas (Matshanganas, as they are called in Johannesburg) had never much frequented the haunts of prostitution, from fear of venereal diseases. They prefered a nkhontshana ; the danger was not so great! As the word nkontshana comes from the Bilen country, the home of the Matshanganas, it might be thought that this vice was known and practised amongst Natives before it took on such extensive proportions in the Compounds. There is an old Thonga song which

839 177 548 588 says: "You, nkhontshana, get up, the cocks are crowing, be not surprised by the rising sun." This song warns the girl who has gone during the night to sleep in the lao, the boys' hut, that she had better run away at once lest she should be found in a place where she ought not to be. But it is a girl who is meant here and not a Johannesburg nkhontshana! No! Greek heathenism knew this refinement of immorality and indulged in it, but Bantu heathenism, whatever may be its corruption, never dreamed of it. Even to-day, though it is said to have penetrated into some parts (as in the Maputju country), the Native kraal feels a real abhorrence of it. I was told the following story. A man, in Bilen, had married a woman; he came to the Rand and took his wife's brother as his nkhontshana. When he returned home, his parents-in-law were very angry with him; they gave him back the lobolo money and took their daughter from him, saying: "You are a hyena! You are a wizard! You might as well sin with your mother-in-law!"... Unnatural vice was taught to the South African Bantus by 839 177 men of a foreign race; it first invaded the prisons; now it is raging in these big Native miners' settlements, where it is deflouring the Bantu youth. For if it does not immediately destroy their physical strength, this perversion of one of the most essential functions of man corrupts the sources of moral stamina and endangers the foundations of Bantu social life.

Is there no remedy for this terrible evil?

The worst aspect of the situation is that the immense majority of the Natives themselves do not consider this sin as of any importance 839 at all. They speak of it with laughter. I was told that it is severely 684 prohibited by law and that any boy found guilty of bukhontshana is 548 condemned to twelve months' imprisonment. But it is extremely difficult to bring the evidence necessary for conviction. The indunas and Native policemen enter into a conspiration of silence, being themselves the first and greatest sinners in this respect. Happily the Mission is fighting the evil as energetically as possible and the Compound Managers help its agents to secure separate dormitories, where a certain number of boys can find a refuge against contamination. A few hundreds or thousands escape in this way, but what is that in comparison with the tens of thousands who are exposed to this frightful temptation in the Compounds fittingly spoken of, by a wise South African statesman, as the University of crime?

839 548 My informant, who was perfectly acquainted with the circumstances of life in the Compounds, mentioned the following measures which he

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thought might be useful in the repression of this vice. Prohibit the use of curtains enclosing two beds, this being an unmistakable sign that bukhontshana is practised behind them. Arrange the beds so that they do not touch each other. (I hear that some Mining Companies have spent and are still spending large sums of money to secure this end, but the actual sleeping accommodation ought to be entirely transformed if the Companies are determined effectively to check the evil.) Introduce a strict watch during the night. Put in electric light everywhere in order to illuminate the dormitories at any time when required. I do not know how far such measures would be effective. The only conclusion I would offer on this painful subject is this. As white civilisation is responsible for the introduction and the frightful development of this vice amongst the Natives, the Whites must not remain indifferent in the face of an iniquity which threatens the very life of the South African Tribe.

553 608 name to the new-born child ; a friend of the family may do so, but it is also often a traveller who happens to be in the village to whom this privilege is accorded. He will "*name himself in the child*" (ku titshula ka ñwana). This fact will establish a special relation between this person and the child, a relation which bears some resemblance to that of a godfather to his godson. Once a year he will come and give "his name" (viz. the child) presents. When the child is able to travel, the mother will go with him to pay a visit to his "friend in name" (mabitokulobye).

553 4) A fourth way of naming new-born children is to choose a name having some connection with the *circumstances of the birth*. Should a child have seen the light when his mother was travelling, he will be called *Ndlelen* viz. "on the way," "on the road ;" should the birth have taken place under a tree, the name of that tree will be chosen, put in the locative case, and you will meet many Thongas called Nkanyen (under the terebinth), Nkwakwen (under the Strychnos), Nkuwen (under the fig-tree), etc. ; or Mpfulen (in the rain), Marumbin (in the ruins), Mawewe, if the child is born during the war waged by the chief of that name, etc. When General Beyers was over-running Zoutpansberg with his commando, the Natives, admiring the swiftness of his movements, named many children after him (1).

551 The names of the Thongas are the same for the two sexes. There are only two which cannot be employed indiscriminately

553 789 (1) In the case of *bosumbu*, viz. if a woman has lost many children (see Part. I. Ch. II. 8), should she give birth to a new one, a name will be chosen which will protect the new-born infant against the fate of his elder brothers and sisters. I know a boy who was born under such circumstances. His grandfather *Shona* named him after himself in order to bring him good luck. The Rev. H Guye, in an article entitled : "Des noms propres chez les Ba-Ronga" (*Bulletin de la Société Neuchâteloise de Géographie*, 1920) quotes an interesting instance of such a name. A boy was called *Nyamayabu*, viz. their meat. His elders had died and it was thought that they had been eaten by wizards. When this boy came into the world, his parents had abandoned all hope of keeping him alive and said : "It is their meat, the meat which the wizards will eat!" But they evidently thought that this name would be a protection to the child, perhaps because wizards would see that their evil tricks were known, and would fear to be discovered, if they killed it. Such names are called : "names of misery" (mabito ya basiwana, ya ku titjetja), as Bisana or Bisalifu, "the one who hiccoughs death :" wherever he sends his hiccoughs, he spreads death.

551 for girls and boys. *Nhwanin* is a girl's name, as it means "girl" and *Nwandjise* a boy's name as it means "boy" (1).

553 All these birth-names are abandoned later on, generally at
881 the circumcision school, or at the age of puberty, in the clans
787 where the custom of circumcising has disappeared; boys and girls then choose new names. Men and women who undergo initiation adopt a new name. So do those subjected to the treatment for possession; these take the name of their pretended possessor when he has made himself known. I refer the reader to Appendix II for further information regarding Thonga names.

845 *Premature Birth.* When a child is born prematurely and is very small and delicate, he is wrapped in the leaves of the castor-oil plant and put into a big pot, which is then exposed to the heat of the sun. This is a true incubator, and the treatment is said to be attended with success (Tobane).

845 *Protracted Births and Illegitimate Births.* There would seem to be
848 no relation between these; but to the Thonga mind, on the contrary, a protracted and difficult birth proves that the child is not legitimate. This conviction is so strong that when a woman knows that the child which she is going to bear is not the son of her husband (nuna) but of a lover (mbuye), she will admit this secretly to the principal midwife, in order to spare herself the pains of a difficult birth, as it is taboo to bear a "child of adultery" hiding the fact: it would cause the mother untold suffering.

Therefore, if the delivery lasts too long, the midwife will begin to have doubts as to the legitimacy of the child. The first thing she will do is to send word to the husband. He knows
845 what it means. He takes in his *shifado* (2) a little of his *semen*,
848 mixes it with water in a shell of sala (the big round fruit of the
291 Strychnos) and the woman drinks it. It may be that then the child will "feel his father," if the husband is really his father, and that this will bring the birth to a prompt conclusion; but

(1) I know of an exception to this rule. The spirit of the Mabota chief was named Nhwanin, a girl's name, in order to deceive the malevolent powers which had killed his brothers and sisters.

(2) See Annotatio 1 at the end of the volume in the collection of Latin notes written for medical men and ethnographers.

1 [See p. 516 in these categories or in 116 — Analyst]

576 In *addressing* an elder person, it is not becoming to call him
551 by his name. You will say to him: "Tatana," father, or "mamana," mother, as the case may be. Or you address him by the name of his father preceded by Ñwa, if it is a man, Mi, if it is a woman. So Mboza was called Ñwamasuluke, and Nsabula Migogwe. You may also say to a counsellor: "Ndjuna," to the chief: "Hosi," to the headman: "Numzana," to any grown-up man: "Wa-ka-Manyana," viz., man of such a clan, or descendant of such a man. Even speaking of an adult in the third person, you will not use his name but employ similar respectful expressions.
576 After the birth of her first child, the mother is generally called after
553 it, not so universally, however, as amongst the Ba-Sutho. So
551 Magugu, the wife of Spoon, became Mamana wa Modjadju, especially when spoken of in the third person. The names which are the most taboo are those of the mother-in-law, and of the "woman bought with my oxen." Speaking of a deceased person, one puts before his name the expression "*Matjuwa*," which corresponds to our: "late." In the Northern clans, the word *shira*, grave, is employed for "late".

576 The principle *salutations* are; *Shawan*: Be saluted, said by the arriving guest, to which you reply also: *Shawan*: *Hamban*: Good-bye or *Salan*: Remain, is said on leaving, and you answer: *Famban*: Go, or *Famban kahle* (Zulu): Go happily. Other greetings are employed only at certain times of the day: *Avushen*! a kind of locative, "at the dawn," equivalent to "Good morning." (Vusha means dawn). *Hi nhlekanhi*: It is midday! *A dji pelen*: or *a dji hlwen*: At sunset, properly: time when the sun sets. When retiring to sleep: *Yetlelan* (Ro.): Sleep! or *sibaman* (Dj.): lie on your belly; or *hi ta pfushana*: we shall say to each other, good morning to-morrow! A curious salutation addressed to people working is: *A psi fen* (Ro.): Let it die. Its origin is as follows. When a man had killed a large animal, a hippopotamus or an antelope, his companions are in the habit of saluting him thus, hoping to share the meat with him. Now it is said to anybody working in the fields; it then means: "Let your work die." The
576 word "Nkosi," with which Natives salute white men, means
609 Chief in Zulu. They lift up their hand when pronouncing it. It

618 movement of amalgamation would probably not have taken place,
175 and I think we may consider the clan life, as it is still met with
643 amongst the Rongas, (who were never subject to the Ngoni chief), as the typical Bantu political state (1).

B. THE LAUDATORY NAME OF THE CLANS AND TOTEMISM.

618 Each clan is known by the name of the old chief who is believed
551 to have been its original ancestor. So the Nkuna clan comes
101 from Nkuna, who lived four or five hundred years ago, and left Zululand for the Bilen country. The Mazwaya clan descends from Mazwaya, grandfather of Masinga and ancestor of all the heads of the sub-clans, Makaneta, Hlewane, etc. This name is a kind of *family name* for all the members of the clan. In the course of time, when sub-clans begin to aspire to independence, the first ancestor tends to fall into oblivion and is supplanted by the ancestor of the sub-clan. This process is easily noticeable at the present moment in Nondwane, where Mboza, for instance, calls himself a Makaneta. He says : "I am wa ka Makaneta," — "a man of the Makaneta house ;" but if he wants to be more precise, he will say : "I am a Mazwaya Makaneta." — "Shibongo a shi diwi," "the family name is never eaten, it is eternal!" (Mboza.)

618 This old name is called *shibongo* from *ku bonga*, to laud, to
551 praise. It is a *laudatory name*. It is used as such on two diffe-
576 rent occasions : 1) *When people salute each other*. A friend who meets Mboza on the road will say to him : "Shawan, Makaneta," "Good morning Makaneta!" But also : "Shawan Makhetshe!" (Makhetshe is the grandfather of Makaneta) ; or : "Shawan Mazwaya" or "Shawan Nwamasuluke." (Masuluke is the true father of Mboza.)

(1) The objection might be raised that, in former centuries, the celebrated Monomotapa founded a great kingdom. But what this exactly was, nobody knows. The descriptions of the chroniclers of those times are not very trustworthy, as we shall see from a quotation which will be made later on.

854 2) *To soothe babies.* Should Mboza's son cry, his nurse will say :
551 "Miyela, Makaneta ñwa yindlu ya ntima," "Keep quiet Makaneta,
618 of the black hut." It may also happen that some one wishing to console himself in affliction will do the same. Notice these last words : "of the black hut." They mean : "You who belong to a village where the huts have had time to become black ; they have never been destroyed by enemies, as no enemy dares to attack your clan! So the roofs have blackened inside from the effects of the smoke and outside from those of the rain!" It is customary to add to the name of the ancestor words such as these, in order to flatter more highly the man you salute, or the baby you console.

551 Thus each clan has a *laudatory phrase* which is sometimes much
618 longer than the Makaneta one. Masinga is called "wa le hondjo-
576 sin," "the one who reigns over the red earth," (more fertile than the sand). The Matinanas or Ngomanes are lauded thus : "Nkandjetele wa ku woma, ku baleka minambyana" — "the one who tramples on a dry place, and rivers begin to flow," because he is so heavy, so powerful! (Compare p. 87.) A Ngomane man will address his paternal aunt with the same words, when offering her a present.

Here are some of the best known shibongo. Their meaning is sometimes unknown, as they often contain ancient and obsolete expressions :

Hoñwana : Ñwahomu ya ntima ñwa mu-Nondjwana, — The black ox of Nondjwana (or Nondwane).

Shirindja : Mudzunga ntima wa le dzungen, — Black South of the South ?

Mpfumo : Ba hlela misaba ba khabuta, — They winnow the sand ; they eat it. (The sand is so white in their country that it resembles mealies flour : they never lack food.)

Libombo : Libombo la Ndlopfu, — Elephant's face.

Nkuna : Ba homu! Ba nyari! ya makhwiri, Ñwashitjimba buraka, ba mahlwen ka ntima. — Those of the ox! Those of the buffalo, the buffalo with the large belly which rolls in the mud, the one with a black spot on the forehead!

Rikotjo : Ba Nyamasi, — Those of the nyamari tree.

Khosa : Ba ripanga ro sheka ba ntsindja, — Those of the keen

551 618 edged sword which "cuts" disputes brought to the capital. (The Khosa chiefs were reputed for their wisdom in deciding judicial or political matters.)

576 *Hlabi*: Ba Nhlabi ba ku bengwa, Nhlabi ya Makamu ya Mavuse ya nkoñwana, — The Hlabi who are hated, sons of Makamu, of Mavuse, of the calf (?)

Hlengwe: Shikobela sha Matsheme, Tshauke wa Matsheme (names of old chiefs).

551 618 643 576 *Tembe*: Mulao Ngolanyama madlaya a nga di, makhama a nga di, a dlayele bahloti: — Mulao (son of Tembe ?), the lion which kills and does not eat, the hawk which kills, it kills for the hunters, viz., it is so well fed itself, so rich that it can leave the meat for others. Such a sentence was pronounced in former times by subjects entering the royal kraal, crawling on their knees, when they wished to receive food from the chief.

Nhlanganu: Ba ku hlomula fumo, ba renga ndlela: — Those who unsheath the sword in order to buy the road, (the right of passing through a foreign country) (1).

551 In addition to these laudatory phrases of clans, each individual has his own sentence or sentences by which he praises himself or by which others praise his qualities. They are specially common in the case of boys, but even girls possess them. In the case of chiefs, such praises are much longer. See for instance the praise of the Nkuna chief Muhlaba (Part III, Ch. III, III).

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171 If we cross the plain of the Sabi and reach the Drakensberg, we find that all the Pedi tribes dwelling together with the Thongas in the Leydenburg and Zoutpansberg district, possess laudatory

551 609 (1) This custom of praising the various tribes in such terms is so familiar to the Thongas that they have invented similar expressions for the white people. The Portuguese are: Ba ka nãofazmalo, — the Sons of Never mind, because they seem to the Natives to be somewhat careless or indifferent. The English are: Bana ba Nhluleki, a hluleka ku hleka, a tiba ku lwa, — the sons of the one who cannot, he cannot laugh, he knows how to fight! Perhaps Natives consider them, on the contrary, somewhat too earnest, too keen!

171 names which they also call *seboko*, the same word as shibongo ; but most of these names are names of animals, and are called by the technical term *muthupu*, totem ; the animal is the emblem 000 or totem of the group. The Pedi clans are totemic. This means that, not only do they glorify themselves by comparing themselves with an animal and taking its name, but they think that there is a mysterious vital connection between it and their social group. I cannot give here all the facts I collected amongst them on the subject. They were published in *Le Globe*, the organ of the Geneva Geographical Society, Volume LXIII, under the following title : *Le Totemisme chez les Thongas, les Pédis et les Vendas*. Let me merely mention the following details. The Khahas of the Shiluvane valley have the small grey antelope, called duyker, as totem. They salute each other in these words : "Goni! Phudi!" *Goni* is probably the name of an old ancestor, the same as Nkuna for the Ba-Nkuna ; but *phudi* means duyker. They consider it taboo to make a *ntehe* of its skin for their children. Some of them do not eat the flesh of that antelope, fearing that their children would become idiotic, or be covered with boils. They will not sit near a man of another clan who is handling the skin of a duyker. The Mashilas (Sekukuni's people), who have the porcupine as totem, say : "It is taboo even to tread on its dung; the soles of the feet would become sore." Many clans are afraid to kill the animal which is their totem ; this is not a law enforced by the chiefs ; the totem itself punishes them if they trangress it. However, nowhere did I find the idea that they are descended from the totem. They say : "The old people noticed that the flesh of such and such an animal made the people of their clan ill ; so they proclaimed it taboo." Amongst the Vendas, or at any rate amongst certain Venda clans (Ba-Laudzi, Ba-Ngwe, Ba-Shidzibe) the totem is connected with the ancestor-gods. At his death, each member of the clan is transformed into the animal venerated by his clan and joins his congeners in the sacred wood where they live.

618 Nothing of this kind is met with amongst the Thongas. The 551 Thonga clans are *atotemic*. Many men bear the name of animals, 1825 but this is merely a means of glorifying themselves ; there is no taboo with regard to the flesh, skin, or dung of that animal. I have

551 come to this conclusion after a careful investigation. Here are
618 the only facts that I have discovered which may be said to
522 be connected with totemic customs.

The first is that the shibongo sometimes gives an opportunity for *more or less witty jokes*. There is, near Rikatla, a clan called *Shibindji*. Shibindji means liver. When a man of this group meets with others who eat liver, they say to him : "Come along, we are going to run this skewer through you and roast you!" Another clan is the *Ntcheko*; this word means a tumbler or a small calabash with an elongated handle used for drinking purposes (p. 50). At the bukanye time, when everyone is getting these calabashes ready for the feast, they say : "Alas! poor creatures that we are! People are going to carry us from one end of the country to the other, to dip us into their pots and drink out of us!.." And so on. This is not totemism. I have however met with four more facts which must be mentioned, and which are very interesting.

618 1) In the neighbourhood of Pietersburg a Thonga who belongs
551 to the Rikotcho clan, but whose shibongo is *Ñwangwenya*, the son
177 of the crocodile, is said to "dance the crocodile" (tshina ngwenya). These Thonga words are the expression used by the Pedis to indicate their totemic customs, (ho bina kwena), not that there is any special dance or song performed in honour of the sacred animal ; this may have been the case formerly, but is not so now.

2) The laudatory name of the Nkuna clan is also said to be a *ntshupu*, though it does not imply any taboo. This word, which is unknown in other parts of Thongaland, corresponds to the Pedi *muthupu*, which indicates totemic animals. The Nkuna men like to be saluted by these words : "Nkuna! Homu (ox)! Nyari
618 (buffalo)!" There are a number of Pedi tribes who "dance to the
551 buffalo." Mankhelu assured me that, as the Nkunas have the
177 same totem as these tribes, they have a common origin, and have come from the same place in Zululand. This assertion is so evidently erroneous that he could not maintain it. The old man had not the slightest idea of historical accuracy : he had only unconsciously drawn the conclusion of a common origin from a similarity of totem. Moreover, in his set of divinatory bones, he used to represent his own tribe by a small piece of ox bone, just in

618 the same way as Pedi diviners do for their various tribes, represent-
551 ing them by the astragalus of their totems.
177 As regards these two incidents, they are easily explained by the influence of the Sutho tribes amongst which these Thongas have been living for a long time. Nothing of the kind is met with amongst the Thongas who have remained in their own country, and Maaghe, the Pedi-Khaha chief, assured me that this appellation of the Nkunas, Nyari, buffalo, is modern and borrowed from the Pedis. The Nkunas do not observe any taboo in connexion with the ox, and this shows that their totemic custom is a mere external imitation of that of the Suthos. These two instances might be called cases of *secondary* or *adopted totemism*.
618 Considering only the Thongas as compared with the Pedis, we
551 might be tempted to conclude that the Thongas had preserved
178 the old Bantu custom of naming themselves after their ancestor; just as the Thongas used to add to that name other laudatory expressions, we might suppose that the Pedi tribes had adopted names of animals to glorify themselves; in the course of time, the essentially totemic fears and taboos may have been introduced into the customs, owing to the importance given to the shibongo. This would be a rationalistic explanation of totemism. *A priori* it could not be said to be impossible. Though totemism appears to be a very old custom of humanity, it is not necessary, *per se*, that the Bantu tribes should have all passed through that phase of primitive belief.
618 3) I must, however, mention a third instance which shows
539 that this notion of a community of life between an animal and
178 a human group must have existed also amongst the ancient Thongas. There are, *in their folklore*, tales which seem to have been inspired by such old ideas now lost, especially the tale of Titishan, which I have published in "Les chants et contes des Ba-Ronga," page 253. A girl named Titishan marries a man. When she goes to her husband's home, she asks her parents to give her their cat. They refuse, saying: "You know that our life is attached to it." She insists, and they at last consent. She shuts the animal up in a place where nobody sees it. Her husband even ignores its existence. One day,

643 The name of the chief is sacred in so far as it is generally used
695 in oaths. When asked to swear, a Nondwane man will say :
351 "Maphunga!" (1)

II. *The Regalia.*

643 Kings everywhere like to adorn themselves with specially imposing objects, insignia of their office, which differentiate them from their subjects. The Thonga chiefs have no peculiar crown — the shidlodlo belonging to all adults (p. 129)—, no special garment, no sceptre and no throne. We sometimes translate by the word throne *shilubelo* viz., the place where one *luba*, pays the tax; but this is only a hut smaller than the others and subjects can also possess it. (See page 313). However there are, in some of these small kingdoms, royal objects which may be called regalia (bukosi bya hosi).

643 Amongst the Nkunas, the chief possesses a large copper bracelet
301 called *ritlatla*, which was bought a very long time ago, in Lourenço Marques, by the Nkuna clan in exchange for tusks of elephants, says Mankhelu. According to others, the ritlatla was made in old times by Natives from the copper, or perhaps from the gold dug by them. The ritlatla was in the hands of the elder branch of the Nkuna clan; Hoshana was its headman, but he had fled into the Ñwamba country during the troubled period of 1855 to 1860. When he died, his people brought the ritlatla to the chief Shiluvane who belonged to a younger branch, thinking that, at his death, the ritlatla together with the chieftainship would be given back to

643 (1) Kidd, in his *Kafir Socialism*, has asserted that Bantu chiefs are very jealous
681 and kill their subjects when they become too rich and thus overshadow them. This may be the case in other tribes or when a military government has taken the place of the old patriarchal system. Amongst the Thongas it is not true. My informants could not quote a single instance of a murder committed by a chief for that reason alone. I heard of Shiluvane killing a subject called Muhluhluni who had acquired too much power; but Muhluhluni had declared that he wanted to usurp the chieftainship; so it was a case of high treason! A rich nduna, in the territory of Nhandja (Nondwane), was also killed and his oxen taken by the chief because he had tried to abduct one of the chief's wives. But many headmen had as many oxen as Maphunga and were not troubled by him on that account: "Why should he hate them? They could not harm him, as he was protected by the supernatural powers, and they brought him all the more beer as they had plenty of wives and consequently of mealies!"

APPENDIX II (See p. 40)

On Thonga names, nicknames and surnames.

553 As an illustration of the way in which the Thongas change their names, I give the story of those of Mboza and Elias.

Mboza was called at his birth "Mulamule," after his paternal uncle. The whole name was, in Zulu : "Mulamula nkwinzi izilwako," viz., "the man who calms the bull which fights." At about the age of sixteen, he changed it to Mahubula. At that time he was trying to collect divinatory bones in order to become a diviner. He had called one of these bones "Hubula," and after that his comrades began to apply the name to him. He was seized by the "folly of gods." (Part. VI). When he was cured of this pretended possession, the spirit which made itself known called itself Mboza. This was the name of a man of his village, his own nephew, who had gone to Johannesburg and had died there. When he became a Christian, and was baptised,
177 Mboza kept his name. Most of the Natives like to take another name
553 on that occasion, the name of a disciple or of a prophet. We are not very ready to comply with their wish, as we have already too many Daniels, Jonas and Petros, and Mboza probably yielded to this argument.

551 *Elias* was called "Shifenyo" on the day of his birth, after a man who happened to pass through the village. This visitor was a kind of beggar who used to follow people carrying food to the chief, hoping to get something to eat. The child was of a good family, but they gave him the name of this low and despised individual, a truly democratic act! When he was older, one of his friends said to him : "Your name does not suit you. Call yourself *Spoon*." He adopted the new appellation, and the women of his village used to make fun of him saying : "Come along, we will distribute the food with this spoon!"
177 When baptised a Christian he became Elias, a somewhat onerous
551 name, especially as our Elias is not as strong and perfect as a prophet ought to be... But Natives never shrink from assuming great names. They always feel themselves equal to them!

881 The names adopted at puberty by boys are very often European
177 ones. There are scores of Jims, Sams, Bobs, etc. They also adopt as
551 names European words or words of European origin, as : Spoon, Nglazi (glass) Komitshi (cup), Djass (jacket), Fulitshi (forage), Fifteen, etc.

551 The really Native names very often begin with the prefix *mu* which is the personal singular prefix, (Musongi, Muzila, Mungutana, Mukentshe), or *Ñwa* conveying the idea of "son of" (Ñwamitwa, Ñwamashwele Ñwatjubula), or Nya used in the same sense, (Nyakubasa, Nyanise, Nyathi, probably of Zulu origin), or *Ma* which is also a personal prefix, (Marabe, Matende, Mathandana, Makhangala, Makasana, etc.). The prefix *Mi* means "daughter of," and is frequently met with (Misilana, Mintlohen, Mindinyana, etc.). As a rule it is employed only in names of women.

The prefix *Shi* which generally denotes things, objects, and has a neuter significance, is very often found in Ronga names. It is also a diminutive prefix, especially when the word ends in *ana*. So Shiribyana, a very common name, means a small stone (ribye); Shigidana, Shirombe, Shindjubi, etc. belong to the same class.

551 567 Some very curious names begin with the prefix *ba*, the pronoun of the third person plural. These are common amongst girls, generally of Chopi origin, who were slaves of the important Native women of Lourenço Marques and sold by them as concubines. For instance Bamuyeyisa means "they defy her," Bamusonda (Zulu), "they hate her," Batjhamahayena "they gossip about her," etc. In calling themselves by these names the girls express their bitterness.

551 But a great number of names have no prefix at all and often no meaning.

Nicknames are frequent amongst the Thongas and often entirely supplant the regular name. There was in Rikatla an old Mbekwa whom everyone called Nxoko. On inquiring into the origin of this curious name I was told the following story. One day Mbekwa was very happy and expressed his contentment by the exclamation; "Nxoko" (x here denotes a peculiar click of the tongue against the cheek). This interjection was received with favour and he employed it henceforth to manifest his pleasure on other occasions. He even made a regular verb of it, saying: "I go to nxokela in such and such a place," viz. "to enjoy myself there." The word was so fascinating that he was named after it, and I should not be surprised if it were incorporated into the current language, which is enriched every day by new descriptive adverbs like nxoko. (See my Thonga Grammar, p. 84 and Vol. II.)

551 609 Nicknames are more especially applied to white people, as Natives fail to catch their true names. These are very cleverly chosen, being often a verbal description of the chief physical or mental characteristic

551/609 of the white man. M. Torre do Valle has given a list of nicknames of the merchants and other inhabitants of Lourenço Marques in his Diccionario Shironga-Portuguez. It is well worth consulting, and the only thing wanting is a photograph of the white man and an explanation of the name ; it would be a splendid illustration of Native wit!

551 576 618 So far we have spoken only of *personal* names and nicknames. But, beside these, every man possesses his clan name, or surname, viz., the name of the first of his known ancestors. Grown up men prefer being addressed by this name, which is *shibongo*, viz: the name by which they are "glorified." This subject is treated in Part III (p. 360).

APPENDIX III (See p. 98)

Unnatural Vice in the Johannesburg Compounds.

838 548 588 In January 1915 one of my colleagues passing near one of the Johannesburg Compounds, saw a big company of Natives singing and walking in the direction of another Compound where a great dance was taking place. Amongst them there were a number of women. My colleague asked his Native evangelist how it was possible that so many women should be walking about in that part of the world, where the feminine element is very small. The man told him : "They are not women! They are *tinkhontshana*, boys who have placed on their chests the breasts of women carved in wood, and who are going to the dance in order to play the part of women. To-night when they return to their dormitories, their 'husbands' will have to give them 10/, and only on that condition will the tinkhontshana remove their breasts and comply with the desire of their husbands." I sent for this evangelist who knew everything about the inner life of the Compounds and asked him about it ; this is the information I received :

Unnatural vice (bukhontshana) has become a regular institution in the Compounds. The word *nkhontshana* seems to come from the Ngoni, a Zulu dialect spoken in the Limpopo plain. The nkhontshana is the boy used by another man to satisfy his lust, and the man is called his *nuna*, husband. When a gang of new workers arrives in a Compound, the Native induna, who has the supervision of the Compound, and the Native policemen, who have their rooms at the

of the bush are also burnt as soon as the grass dries up, so as to obtain fresh grass as early as possible in the spring. In autumn, after the harvest, oxen are allowed to wander about in the gardens, where they eat the mealies and millet and sorghum stems, and find better grass. 231

The Thongas castrate most of their bulls ; however they keep one or two in each herd for breeding purposes. Strange to say, these beasts are generally very tame ; they are hardly any wilder than the castrated oxen. However, the boys sharpen their horns and excite the bulls of different herds to fight. They pour live ants on their foreheads to irritate them. They give them names ; e. g. Makonyama, the one who threatens on both sides, — Mombomakhele, the one who has curly hair on his head, the terrible one, — Ntlhontlha-ba-tsha, shisa-sha-munga, the one who beats the fire... people are burnt by the sparks as by embers of the mimosa tree, — Mabala-ya-tilo, the "stripes of heaven," — Mabata-bata, the one with many spots, etc. Many of these names are suggested by the colouring of the animals (1). I never heard songs in praise of the cattle similar to those found amongst the Ba-Sutho for instance. It does not seem that oxen have at any time played such an important part in the tribal life of the Thongas as is the case amongst Zulus or Suthos. 231 552

Women, especially those of childbearing age and having sexual relations, are not allowed to take care of oxen. It is taboo. When they require dung to smear the huts, they send little children or girls whose menses have not yet begun or who are at any rate unmarried, to fetch it from the oxen kraal. When oxen are sick, they are entrusted to the care of little girls, who must sometimes stay with them as long as two months without returning home. We have already met with these feminine taboos concerning oxen (I. p. 184) and seen that these prohibitions are based on the idea that the menstrual blood is as dangerous for oxen as for 231 562 841 784

(1) Native cattle are by no means of pure breed. There are many races which have been crossed : a small race with short horns and another with large lyre-shaped horns, probably brought from the Transvaal to the coast of Delagoa Bay. Madagascar oxen, with their strange prominence on the back, resembling zebus, have also been imported in great numbers into Lourenço Marques for butcher's purposes. Possibly some have been used for breeding.

844 As soon as the child has made his appearance one of the
846 midwives ties the *umbilical cord* (likabana) near the navel and cuts it about three inches from it. The little sore is anointed with a kind of fat ; the bit of cord remaining with the baby is attended to with great care : it generally falls off at the end of the first week, and this is the signal for the end of the period of confinement.

The after-birth, the *placenta*, is also looked for with much anxiety : it is called *yindlu ya ñwana*, the "house of the child," or *hlalu*. When it is delayed too long, the midwives begin to fear "because the blood which is inside has not all come out and will kill the mother." In the Khosa clan, should the placenta not come at once, the woman is told to stand on her feet, her body half bent forward, and all the midwives begin to move their index fingers from right to left, emitting at the same time the following sound : tswi-tswi-tswi-tswi. This is said to help the placenta to come. The placenta is generally buried deep behind the hut on the spot where the birth has taken place ; but some prefer to bury it inside the house, fearing the dogs might unearth it, which is taboo.

The child is then washed with water. This water is thrown away as being polluted by the blood of the birth, which is taboo.

553 *Naming the child*. On the day of birth or on one of the following
787 days the child receives his name (bito). There are four principal ways of choosing this.

1) Often the parents give their offspring *the name of a chief* as Musongi, Makasana, Muzila, etc. It flatters their vanity !

2) But frequently the parents like to recall a name of the old times (pfusha bito dja khale), the name of one of the ancestors, because it is a good thing to remember them. They go so far as to consult the bones. A name is proposed, and if the bones in falling do not give a favourable indication, another is tried till they feel sure that the die "has spoken" (1).

553 3) Or it may be that somebody asks the favour of giving his
608

(1) The Christian Natives like to ask their missionary to choose the name, perhaps for a similar reason.

553 608 name to the new-born child ; a friend of the family may do so, but it is also often a traveller who happens to be in the village to whom this privilege is accorded. He will "*name himself in the child*" (ku titshula ka ñwana). This fact will establish a special relation between this person and the child, a relation which bears some resemblance to that of a godfather to his godson. Once a year he will come and give "his name" (viz. the child) presents. When the child is able to travel, the mother will go with him to pay a visit to his "friend in name" (mabitokulobye).

553 4) A fourth way of naming new-born children is to choose a name having some connection with the *circumstances of the birth*. Should a child have seen the light when his mother was travelling, he will be called *Ndlelen* viz. "on the way," "on the road ;" should the birth have taken place under a tree, the name of that tree will be chosen, put in the locative case, and you will meet many Thongas called Nkanyen (under the terebinth), Nkwakwen (under the Strychnos), Nkuwen (under the fig-tree), etc. ; or Mpfulen (in the rain), Marumbin (in the ruins), Mawewe, if the child is born during the war waged by the chief of that name, etc. When General Beyers was over-running Zoutpansberg with his commando, the Natives, admiring the swiftness of his movements, named many children after him (1).

551 The names of the Thongas are the same for the two sexes. There are only two which cannot be employed indiscriminately

553 789 (1) In the case of *boxumba*, viz. if a woman has lost many children (see Part. I. Ch. II. 8), should she give birth to a new one, a name will be chosen which will protect the new-born infant against the fate of his elder brothers and sisters. I know a boy who was born under such circumstances. His grandfather *Shona* named him after himself in order to bring him good luck. The Rev. H Guye, in an article entitled : "Des noms propres chez les Ba-Ronga" (*Bulletin de la Société Neuchâteloise de Géographie*, 1920) quotes an interesting instance of such a name. A boy was called *Nyamayabu*, viz. their meat. His elders had died and it was thought that they had been eaten by wizards. When this boy came into the world, his parents had abandoned all hope of keeping him alive and said : "It is their meat, the meat which the wizards will eat!" But they evidently thought that this name would be a protection to the child, perhaps because wizards would see that their evil tricks were known, and would fear to be discovered, if they killed it. Such names are called : "names of misery" (mabito ya busiwana, ya ku titjetja), as Bisana or Bisalifu, "the one who hiccoughs death :" wherever he sends his hiccoughs, he spreads death.

551 for girls and boys. *Nhwanin* is a girl's name, as it means "girl" and *Nwandjise* a boy's name as it means "boy" (1).

553 All these birth-names are abandoned later on, generally at
881 the circumcision school, or at the age of puberty, in the clans
787 where the custom of circumcising has disappeared; boys and girls then choose new names. Men and women who undergo initiation adopt a new name. So do those subjected to the treatment for possession; these take the name of their pretended possessor when he has made himself known. I refer the reader to Appendix II for further information regarding Thonga names.

845 *Premature Birth.* When a child is born prematurely and is very small and delicate, he is wrapped in the leaves of the castor-oil plant and put into a big pot, which is then exposed to the heat of the sun. This is a true incubator, and the treatment is said to be attended with success (Tobane).

845 *Protracted Births and Illegitimate Births.* There would seem to be
848 no relation between these; but to the Thonga mind, on the contrary, a protracted and difficult birth proves that the child is not legitimate. This conviction is so strong that when a woman knows that the child which she is going to bear is not the son of her husband (nuna) but of a lover (mbuye), she will admit this secretly to the principal midwife, in order to spare herself the pains of a difficult birth, as it is taboo to bear a "child of adultery" hiding the fact: it would cause the mother untold suffering.

Therefore, if the delivery lasts too long, the midwife will begin to have doubts as to the legitimacy of the child. The first thing she will do is to send word to the husband. He knows
845 what it means. He takes in his *shifado* (2) a little of his *semen*,
848 mixes it with water in a shell of sala (the big round fruit of the
291 Strychnos) and the woman drinks it. It may be that then the child will "feel his father," if the husband is really his father, and that this will bring the birth to a prompt conclusion; but

(1) I know of an exception to this rule. The son of the Mabota chief was named Nhwanin, a girl's name, in order to deceive the malevolent powers which had killed his brothers and sisters.

(2) See Annotatio 1 at the end of the volume in the collection of Latin notes written for medical men and ethnographers.

1 [See p. 516 in these categories or in 116 -- Analyst]

881 to pronounce the formulae or to sing the songs of the sungi. Don't reveal a word of them to anybody ; if a boy does so he will be strangled! " etc.

That same day the women bring porridge with sauce flavourings and the shepherds are no longer allowed to use insulting words when they receive the pots from their hands.

IV. *The Chameleon procession.*

553 881 All these are evidently aggregation rites. But the greatest of all is the procession of the initiated into the capital of the chief which takes place on the day of the closing of the sungi and on the following day. Covered with ochre, marching on mats which have been spread on the ground so that they do not touch the dust with their feet, they advance slowly, bowed to the ground, stretching out first one leg and then the other, with a sudden brisk motion, trying to imitate the gait of the chameleon, the wise, the prudent. They are men who think, and no longer boys without intelligence! Then they all sit in the central place of the capital, silent, with their heads still bent, and the sisters and mothers who have come from all the different villages must go and recognize them. Each woman brings with her a bracelet or a shilling or any small present and searches for her boy amongst the throng. When she thinks she has found him, she kisses him on the cheek and gives him the present. The boys have two sticks in their hands. One stick bears some short lateral branches on which the boys will hang the bracelets (busenga). The other is smaller and, when the mother has discovered her son and has kissed him, he strikes her, a soft blow if it is his mother or his grandmother, a much harder one if it is his sister, and utters the new name which he has chosen.

In answer to this demonstration, the mother begins to dance and to sing the praises of her son! This is the typical aggregation rite called *kunga*, the breaking of silence, which we shall meet with more than once in the passage rites of the tribe. These bracelets [843 888] are all given in to the chief, who will distribute them amongst the old women. It would be taboo to give them to childbearing women. According to the same idea the fees paid by the boys to

576 551 In *addressing* an elder person, it is not becoming to call him by his name. You will say to him: "Tatana," father, or "mamana," mother, as the case may be. Or you address him by the name of his father preceded by Ñwa, if it is a man, Mi, if it is a woman. So Mboza was called Ñwamasuluke, and Nsabula Migogwe. You may also say to a counsellor: "Ndjuna," to the chief: "Hosi," to the headman: "Numzana," to any grown-up man: "Wa-ka-Manyana," viz., man of such a clan, or descendant of such a man. Even speaking of an adult in the third person, you will not use his name but employ similar respectful expressions.

576 553 551 After the birth of her first child, the mother is generally called after it, not so universally, however, as amongst the Ba-Sutho. So Magugu, the wife of Spoon, became Mamana wa Modjadju, especially when spoken of in the third person. The names which are the most taboo are those of the mother-in-law, and of the "woman bought with my oxen." Speaking of a deceased person, one puts before his name the expression "*Matjuwa*," which corresponds to our: "late." In the Northern clans, the word *shira*, grave, is employed for "late".

576 The principle *salutations* are: *Shawan*: Be saluted, said by the arriving guest, to which you reply also: *Shawan*. *Hamban*: Good-bye or *Salan*: Remain, is said on leaving, and you answer: *Famban*: Go, or *Famban kahle* (Zulu): Go happily. Other greetings are employed only at certain times of the day: *Avushen*! a kind of locative, "at the dawn," equivalent to "Good morning." (Vusha means dawn). *Hi nhlekanhi*: It is midday! *A dji pelen*: or *a dji hlwen*: At sunset, properly: time when the sun sets. When retiring to sleep: *Yetlelan* (Ro.): Sleep! or *sibaman* (Dj.): lie on your belly; or *hi ta pfushana*: we shall say to each other good morning to-morrow! A curious salutation addressed to people working is: *A psi fen* (Ro.): Let it die. Its origin is as follows. When a man had killed a large animal, a hippopotamus or an antelope, his companions are in the habit of saluting him thus, hoping to share the meat with him. Now it is said to anybody working in the fields; it then means: "Let your work die." The

576 609 word "Nkosi," with which Natives salute white men, means Chief in Zulu. They lift up their hand when pronouncing it. It

APPENDIX II (See p. 40)

On Thonga names, nicknames and surnames.

553 As an illustration of the way in which the Thongas change their names, I give the story of those of Mboza and Elias.

Mboza was called at his birth "Mulamule," after his paternal uncle. The whole name was, in Zulu: "Mulamula nkwinzi izilwako," viz., "the man who calms the bull which fights." At about the age of sixteen, he changed it to Mahubula. At that time he was trying to collect divinatory bones in order to become a diviner. He had called one of these bones "Hubula," and after that his comrades began to apply the name to him. He was seized by the "folly of gods." (Part. VI). When he was cured of this pretended possession, the spirit which made itself known called itself Mboza. This was the name of a man of his village, his own nephew, who had gone to Johannesburg and had died there. When he became a Christian, and was baptised,
177 Mboza kept his name. Most of the Natives like to take another name
553 on that occasion, the name of a disciple or of a prophet. We are not very ready to comply with their wish, as we have already too many Daniels, Jonas and Petros, and Mboza probably yielded to this argument.

551 *Elias* was called "Shifenyo" on the day of his birth, after a man who happened to pass through the village. This visitor was a kind of beggar who used to follow people carrying food to the chief, hoping to get something to eat. The child was of a good family, but they gave him the name of this low and despised individual, a truly democratic act! When he was older, one of his friends said to him: "Your name does not suit you. Call yourself *Spoon*." He adopted the new appellation, and the women of his village used to make fun of him saying: "Come along, we will distribute the food with this spoon!"
177 When baptised a Christian he became Elias, a somewhat onerous
551 name, especially as our Elias is not as strong and perfect as a prophet ought to be... But Natives never shrink from assuming great names. They always feel themselves equal to them!

881 The names adopted at puberty by boys are very often European
177 ones. There are scores of Jims, Sams, Bobs, etc. They also adopt as
551 names European words or words of European origin, as: Spoon, Nglazi (glass) Komits'i (cup), Djass (jacket), Fulitshi (forage), Fifteen, etc.

533 fight, when returned from battle, as well as those sung during the march of the troop. I give the striking music of some of these in the next chapter. Tune 24 is the "Sabela nkosi" the great Mpfumo song, also adopted by other clans. Tune 25, with its splendid change from the minor to the major key, is the Tembe and Maputju classical war song. No. 29 is an old Nkuna war song, dating as far back as 1820, before the Zulu invasion; No. 27 is the principal modern Nkuna song, and
535 No. 28 the Nkuna equivalent to the Ronga *Giraffe song*. These old chants are sung to the accompaniment of the military dance, which consists in trampling on the ground, while rhythmically brandishing the assagais, lifting them first to the right, then to the left, bending them sideways, then downwards, as if to pierce (I. p. 463). They are certainly wonderfully fine compositions.

533 I include in the same category the laudatory song of the *mbongi*
826 (I. p. 424), a branch of literature in which Court poets display
644 considerable imagination and an extraordinary gift for unbounded hyperbole. All the important chiefs have their mbongi and it is required of the man holding this office that he should have a good chest (shifuba), the chest being to the Thongas the seat of eloquence (as it was to the ancient Romans : Pectus est quod oratorem facit!). The elucubrations of these poet laureates sometimes last a very long time and may have real poetic value.

614 As we saw (I. p. 361) each clan and even each family
553 possesses its own laudatory phrase; this is the *shibongo*, a word which generally means family name, but which etymologically signifies the formula by which the clan or family glorifies (bonga) itself. These formulae are usually short and often contain archaic expressions or allusions to unknown facts which make them very difficult to understand. I have given some of those from the Ronga territory. Here are two others, collected by the Rev. A. Jaques amongst the Transvaal Thongas, who seem to cultivate this custom more than the coast clans; they are perhaps encouraged to do so by their Pedi neighbours, who are very fond of these formulae, called by them *mireto*.

Hlangwini wa ka Shitlhelane; hi ba ka Nkandamuri; hi ba ka Manyubele ni Mbowo; hi ba ka Gidjigidji, ba tilo. —. Akane ka paitjunga! Lomu akebeni mi ta muka hi kona... 614 553

Hlangwini of (the house of) Shitlhelane; we are of (the house of) Nkandamuri; we are of (the house of) Manyubele and Mbowo; we are of (the house of) Gidjigidji, the people of Heaven. —. Build (your huts) on the hills. In the valley you will have to leave (?)

It would seem that these Hlangwinis are a clan of rain-makers, people having the power of Heaven. They advise others to settle on the hills and not in the valleys, because otherwise their huts would be swept away by the floods, owing to the terrible rains which the Hlangwinis have the power of causing to fall.

The second is not very refined, but is characteristic. Erotic allusions are frequent in those formulae :

Nkuna wa Mabutane; mabuta, ba yi bonile ku basa ka yona.
Nkuna of Mabutane; when wooing a girl, he has seen that she was pure.

Mabutane is probably a surname of Nkuna. There is in this formula a play on the word buta which means to woo (I. p. 101). Before choosing a girl, the ancestor first made sure that she was untouched ; this denotes a species of wisdom which his descendants still boast of to-day! 553

In epic poetry may be included also the *pshiphato*, a Zulu expression which means the laudatory sentence with which warriors praise themselves according to the Zulu fashion. Private individuals, and even women sometimes have their shiphato ; for instance a girl bearing the name of Yandea will glorify herself in these words : Yendea, madjaha! Yendea, the young men! This formula does not throw a very favourable light on the habits of the girl, and scarcely belongs to literature!

A more elaborate product of Thonga poetry is found in the *hunting songs*. I have already mentioned these (p. 60) and here give as a typical example the Elephant's song. I have been told by my informant, Zebedea Mbenyana, a Native of Bilen, that the hunters performed it whilst dancing on the body of the enormous beast, after having transfixed it. 533 224 115 539

E. MATURE AGE

1. *The Bantu Ideal.*

581 554 562 885 The married man is called " he who has his home " (a ni le kwakwe) in opposition to the single man (nkhwenda). But let us say at once that the kind of individual called bachelor does not abound amongst the Bantus. Only the utterly wretched, invalids, and the weak-minded, are deprived of legal marriage, which for the black man is and remains the one object in life. It is through his wife and children that he becomes somebody in society. This fact does not appear during the first year of wedlock, for the newly married woman must cook at the fireplace of her mother-in-law. She is hardly more than a servant during a whole year ; she does not possess her own pot ; and this must be so because she does not yet eat the mealies of her own garden, having ploughed her fields in her former domicile the previous year. Her husband eats with her. He is not yet 595 a lord. But if he is rich, if he is the heir of an important man, he will not be long in buying a second and third wife.

These new marriages will be contracted like the first, but with less pomp. It may even happen that the feast is held in the husband's village, if he is middle-aged and is celebrating his fifth or sixth wedding.

595 342 556 592 361 For each new wife, he will build a hut. He has begun his village when building the house of his first wife, the great wife, (nsati lwe nkulu) as she is called, who will remain the principal one whatever may happen. While, without compass, he was drawing on the ground, with the marvellous instinct of the South African Native, the circumference of the circle on which the patched reed walls of his dwelling were to rise, while he was covering this circular wall with a conical roof, he was saying to himself : " I establish my home ; I inaugurate my village ". During the following years, the aim of his life will be to complete little by little another wider circle... When he has bought his

556 ed by so many good things! Sycophants are not lacking, "Good
395 evening, son of so and so!" they say. "You are one of the
374 great men of the country." And in return for these and other compliments, the magnanimous Gidja shares his feast with his admirers!

Strangers are crossing the country and inquire where they can be received. "Go to Gidja" they are told. "A ni tshengwe, a fuya tshengwe" viz. "he is the possessor of a harem! He is not killed by famine! He has beer to drink every day! He can give food to poor people. Even then, some of it remains on the plate and is eaten by little boys and dogs in the square. There is always abundance there." And the travellers come and enter (khuleka) his village, after which they will tell in their homes the story of the magnificence of Gidja and extol his hospitality.

Thus the man who has succeeded in life becomes famous, his advice will carry weight in the discussions in which he takes part; he will perhaps be even more esteemed than the chief himself, though he does not enjoy the special prestige which the royal family owes to the blood running in its veins.

Conclusion: the greatness of an African is before all else a matter of pots, and the matter of pots is closely connected with polygamy!

885 During these years of mature age the evolution of a man is not
554 marked by special ceremonies. There is one custom however which is common to all, and which marks an advance in their social position. It is that of fixing the wax ring.

II. *Fixing the wax ring.*

885 Amongst the South Africans, the crown is not the appanage of
177 royalty. All men having reached mature age have the right to
554 adorn themselves with it. It is true, it is not a diadem of precious
301 stones, but a large ring of wax. This custom seems to have a Zulu origin. The Ba-Sutho do not know it and the Ba-Thonga, who all practise it, have taken it from the conquering tribe which owes its fortune to the famous Chaka. This habit has spread all

885 177 554 over the country from Maputju to the borders of Gaza, but only during the last hundred years. This black crown is called *ngiyana* (Ro.) or *shidlodlo* (Dj.), and the crowning ceremony is called *khehla*. From this verb has come the term *makhehla*, a name given to all those who wear this ornament.

885 301 527 This ceremony is accomplished in the following way. At a given time, the chief informs all the men of a certain age that they must prepare their rings. The counsellors and the sons of the royal family who belong to this " class " must go to the capital. Several oxen are killed ; the back tendons are carefully preserved and made into strings. This being done, the master hairdressers, that is to say those who know how to fix these strange appendages, are called in.

They come, supplied with small sticks (tinhlamalala, the central nervures of the leaves of the milala palm-tree) which they plait together with these strings made of tendons so as to form the skeleton, the circular frame of the crown. These strings are drawn through the curly hair, all round the head, so as to fix the frame of the crown above the temples. The remaining hair on the sides and behind has been previously shaven. The chief possesses a provision of wax ; the wax which is preferred is not that of bees, but the rosy secretion of certain grubs which is found on some bushes, and which the young boys of the capital go and collect. This wax is mixed with different ingredients to make it black. It is fixed on the frame of sticks and shaped into a large round or oval ring, as black as jet, which can be made to shine brightly. When all is finished, they eat the flesh of the oxen, enjoy themselves, dance and celebrate this great occasion!

885 301 The more humble subjects crown themselves in their own villages, where tonsorial artists come to adorn them. The poor go to the hairdresser, and do not use strings made of tendons (they have no ox to kill), but strings made of the fibres of a palm-tree, which are cheaper. It is said that nowadays palm-tree strings (bukuha) have almost entirely supplanted the others, the more so as they are not spoilt by the washing of the crown ; whilst, if the *ngiyana* is fixed with tendons, no water must fall on it, or it would soften.

Moreover the crown must be taken care of ; it can be spoilt

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

301 and knocked out of shape by a blow or if its owner goes through
885 thorny bushes. A *khehla* who has some self-respect will frequently
554 polish and repair this valuable ornament, for it is a sign of mature
482 age. He who has been ordered by the chief to wear it no longer
645 carries burdens on his head; his crown would be spoilt! He will
461 be accompanied by a boy who carries his parcels; he himself will only carry his stick or his assagai. He will at once be known as one of the mature men of the tribe. This is not to say that the mere fact of wearing the *ngiyana* gives the right of taking part in the important affairs of the country; the counsellors alone possess this right; but from amongst the "crowned," will be chosen the man who is sent to another chief to treat of political questions, for instance.

301 When the hair grows (for, though it is curly, it may become long), the crown rises with it and becomes more or less unsteady, which must be most uncomfortable! The best thing would be to cut the ornament off and then replace it. Mr. Mandjia, one of our neighbours at Rikatla, was probably too lazy to undertake this job, so he put a small red handkerchief between his skull and the crown to prevent it from wobbling.

765 At a certain time all the *ngiyana* disappeared from the land of
643 Nondwane. The chief Mapunga was dead! The loss, kept
554 secret for a year, had been made public, and the law requires all the
885 mature men to take off their crowns when the sovereign of the country is dead. They take the wax from the frame, and make a ball of it; this they fix on a little stick, and place this stick in the roof of their hut above the door. The frame is hung up quite close by, and they leave these objects there till the new chief orders his subjects to re-make their crowns. This shows clearly that the crowning custom is in close relation with the national life of the tribe. The "makhehla" also form special battalions in the army.

178 Nowadays, however, this custom is not observed as religiously
554 as in bygone times. Life is harder, one must go and earn pounds sterling in the port of Lourenço Marques, or in the gold mines, and one can no longer indulge in a lazy life! It may therefore happen that a poor man will refuse to wear the crown, and say to

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his chief : " What shall I eat ? Will you feed me ? Must I not carry burdens on my head ? I do not know what to do with the ngiyana. " — " Tiko dji bolile, " say the old people shaking their heads, " A ke he na nao, " that is to say : " The country is falling into decay, going to the dogs. There is no longer any law... " Oh! the good old times!

F. OLD AGE

888

The man however grows older, older. His hair and his beard turn white, the wrinkles deepen on his face. He stoops. His skin no longer shines with health and corpulence. His wives die and his glory fades. His crown loses the lustre of bygone times. If a branch scratches it, if a knock spoils it, he has not a shilling to pay the repairer! He is forsaken. He is less respected and often only a burden unwillingly supported. The children laugh at him. If the cook sends them to carry to the lonely grandfather his share of food in his leaky old hut, the young rascals are capable of eating it on the way and of depriving the old man of his meal, afterwards pretending that they have done what they were told! And when, between two huts, under shelter of the hedge of reeds, he warms his round-shouldered back in the rays of the setting sun, huddled there, quite weighed down by his years, lost in some senile dream, they point to the decrepit form and say to each other : " He! Shikhunkununu! " — " It is the bogey-man, the ogre! "

People of mature age show scarcely more consideration for old people than do the young ones. Lately in the district of Matjolo, an old man and an old woman, Kobole and Minyokwana, were forsaken by their children, who were moving to another part of the country. They were left in a miserable shed, merely a roof supported by some poles without any reeds to close in the wall. Some compassionate souls took pity on this poor wretched couple, who had fallen into second childhood and did not even know what they were saying.

765 little of it into a glass and raises it to the lips of the old man. "He
782 cuts his prayer" and while all the attention of the public is
604 concentrated upon this act (which belongs also to the ritual, as the priest must be the first to partake of the offering), the wives of the batukulu rush towards the shoulders, lungs and hoofs of the goats and the bottle of wine, seize them and run away towards the west. They have stolen the meat of the sacrifice! At once all stand up and follow them laughing, shouting and pelting them with the *psanyi*, which they had kept for this purpose. The thieves hide themselves behind some bush and eat the meat. Uterine nephews are representatives of the gods, as we shall see later on, and they assert their right by stealing the offering and eating it up.

This ceremony is highly characteristic as it embodies some of the principal ideas of the Thongas in the domain of religion, social life and taboo. It was worth while describing it, and we shall refer to it later on, when dealing with sacrifices and the position of the uterine nephews in the family.

765 The crushing down of the hut is not performed in exactly
292 the same manner amongst the Ba-Ronga. In the clans *South of*
554 *the Bay*, they only *close* it (pfala yindlu). They dig holes in
825 front of the door, into which they insert poles of the bush called *nhleha*, tying thorny branches horizontally to them. The shield of the deceased is placed against the door. The religious rite then takes place and from the skins of the sacrificed goats strips are cut, which the widows will have to wear *en bandoulière* during the following months of their widowhood. The astragalus bones are kept and hung round the neck. The gall-bladder is also preserved and fixed in the hair of the new master of the village as a sign of his new position.

765 In the *district of Makaneta*, on the estuary of the Nkomati,
596 the ceremony comprises two successive acts. First there is also a *provisory closing* of the hut, which can take place one month after the death and is accompanied by the family gathering and the religious ceremony. One year later, when the inheritance is adjudicated, the hut is crushed down, but only if it belonged to a headman of the village and if the kraal is obliged to move in

622 but it must not become tyrannical. They must govern for the
596 benefit of their subordinates.
264 This peculiar position of the numzane amongst his people is
654 illustrated, in a striking way, by the laws of distribution of the joints of meat on the day when the headman kills an ox to feast them. The various portions must be distributed to the relatives according to the place which they occupy in the family. The headman, nominal proprietor of the ox, will keep the breast (shifuba). This is not only the sternum and the ribs, but most of the viscera which are contained in them. The tripe, the heart, the kidneys will be put all together inside the stomach, and constitute what is called *nkopfu wa homu*. The headman will probably send the heart and the kidneys to his wives (tinkosikazi, his queens!). The brother who comes next will receive one of the hindlegs ; the third in rank one of the forelegs. The elder son will eat the second hindleg, and the younger son the second foreleg. They will eat this meat with their families, or houses (tiyindlu). This custom is very old (1).

Let us continue with the distribution. To the brothers-in-law, or to the relatives-in-law generally, the tail is sent. It is the portion of the sister. But it does not consist only of the tail properly so-called ; it comprises all the hind parts of the animal, especially the rump (kondjo). The malume (maternal uncle) receives part of the loins (muhlubula). The liver is put aside for the grandfather and the old people generally, because it is soft and they have no teeth to gnaw the bones. The head belongs to all the men of the village, who must eat it on the hubo, as we have seen. They may give the tongue (ndjaka) to the old men. It

622 (1) This custom is illustrated in a very interesting manner by the relative position
596 of the three clans occupying the South of the Bay. They are all descended from
264 Tembe (See page 23). *Tembe*, the ancestor, representing the elder branch of the royal family, ate the chest. He was the superior (hosi), and this rank is still held by
554 his descendants in the direct line. *Sabi* or Mpanyele, the second brother, or son of the second brother, ate the hindleg ; he was established later on in the Mathuthweni
618 district, between Tembe and Maputju. *Maputju*, the younger brother, head of the third branch, ate the foreleg. But he revolted against his elder brother and carved out for himself a kingdom which very soon became stronger than those of Tembe and Mathuthweni. Mathuthweni became more or less independent. But when people wish to remind the Maputju people of their inferior origin, they say to them : "Tembe ate the breast, Sabi the hindleg and Maputju the foreleg !"

622 is taboo for the women to eat it, or the under lip (See p. 184).
596 From each limb a small piece is taken (tshumbuta) and
264 placed on a skewer; it is the portion of the shepherds and of
554 the butchers, (makotjo ya babyisi). (See the tale of Piti, *Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, page 152). Sometimes the shepherds also receive the lungs and the spleen.

This way of distributing ox meat is called "ku tlhaba homu ba hamba milao," viz., "to kill an ox according to rule." Should a younger brother or a son kill an ox, he will send the breast to the master of the village, but he keeps all the limbs and does not observe the rules because, as he says: "It is enough to pay taxes to the chief of the country." Often one of the legs is sent to the chief of the clan.

Strange to say when a goat is killed none of these prescribed rules are followed, as they only concern the oxen.

622 These customs show clearly the position of the headman;
596 he is the master but also the father of his subordinates, and their provider.

1) He must *watch* over the village (basopa, Dutch word passop, universally adopted by the Natives). During the night, if his son is away working in Johannesburg, he takes care that no lovers come into the huts of his daughters-in-law, (a langusa bumbuye), and if he happens to catch one, he will make him pay the fine.

622 2) He is a true *justice of peace* amongst the inmates of the
692 village, doing his best to maintain good relations amongst them.
578 Suppose for instance that the pigs belonging to one of the inhab-
685 itants come out of their enclosure and over-run the gardens of another man. This man will go and say to the owner of the pigs:
643 "Such and such a thing has happened, please close the pigs' kraal more carefully." Should the same thing happen a second time, he will complain to the *numzane*. The headman will then go to the culprit and say: "You have not heeded the warning; you must pay compensation (djiha)." If the culprit listens to the "voice of the blood" (bushaka), he will obey and the matter will end smoothly; if not, the headman can only keep silent: he has no soldiers, no means of enforcing his judgment; the plaintiff will then go to the chief of the tribe to complain. The case will be

262 643 527 which is not eaten, and rub their faces with it. But *no religious ceremony is performed.* It is the same for the *fuma*, a paste made with the contents of the kwakwa fruit, a kind of Strychnos very similar to the nsala, but of a different taste. The ceremony was even more simple than with the almonds ; the chief used to send a little of this paste to each village saying : "Let this be the first bite you swallow : the new year has come!" (Luman, ku tlhese nguba.) No powder was used in connexion with it. The magical drug was used, on the other hand, when the luma of pumpkin leaves took place.

II. *The luma of the Kafir corn.*

262 643 782 769 796 The great, the official luma, amongst the Ronga clans, is that performed for the Kafir corn (mabele). The great wife of the chief grinds the first grains of Kafir corn reaped in the fields. She cooks the flour in a pot and pours into it some of the royal powder kept in the calabash, so as to make a *shimhimbi* (See page 42). The chief takes a little of the food and offers it to the spirits of his ancestors, at the main entrance of the royal kraal. He prays to them in the following terms : "Here has the new year come! Precede us, you gods, and luma, so that, for us also, Kafir corn shall help our body, that we may become fat, not thin, that the witches may increase the corn, make it to be plentiful, so that, even if there is only a small field, big baskets may be filled! (Nguba hi yoleyi! Rangan ñwine, mi luma, ñwi Psikwembu! Na hine, mabele ma tjhama amirin yeru psinene, hi kuluka hi nga wondji. Abaloyi ba yandjisa, psi tala ngopfu, nambi shi shisi-ñwanyana shi shiñwe, a ku tale tingula!)"

262 643 796 554 609 After this religious ceremony everyone luma in turn, the chief first, then the sub-chiefs, then the counsellors, then the warriors who have killed enemies in battle, then the headmen of the kraals who have all been summoned to the capital. Should one of the headmen be prevented from coming by illness, his younger brother will not precede him. He will bring him the *shimhimbi* in a leaf ; the elder will take it, and, after him, the other brothers. Women do not eat the magic powder. Neither do strangers,

262 eats freely in his house according to his good pleasure. Formerly
821 we used to take the oxen of the man who had dared to steal the
796 new year."

Conclusion on the luma rite.

796 All these luma rites[1] of first fruits seem to have primarily a *religious*
782 *origin*. The Bantus do not feel that they dare enjoy the products of
554 the soil unless they have first given a portion of them to their gods. Is it not these gods who make the cereals grow? Have they not the power even of controlling the wizards who bewitch the fields? These rites are also evidently dictated by the *sense of hierarchy*. A subject must not precede his chief nor a younger brother the elder in the use of the new harvest, else they would kill those in authority. Such an act is against order. We shall see that, even when the seeds are sown, the elders must take precedence. But the custom seems also to have been actuated by the idea of *passage*. There is a passage from one year to another. For the Thongas, I think the new year begins
805 twice every year: it begins when tilling recommences, in July, August,
796 when the heat returns. This is the hlobo. It begins a second time at
789 harvest, and then there is passage from the food of the last year to the food of this year. This is the nguba (Ro.) or ñwaka (Dj.). Though the luma rites do not bear all the characteristics of a true passage rite, like those of circumcision or moving, we may observe in the luma of bukanye a kind of marginal period of general licence, when the ordinary laws are more or less suspended. The taking of a first mouthful probably signifies the aggregation to the new period, the magical powder used on this occasion being a protective measure to shield them from the calamities of this unknown year... And after all, is it not that feeling of fear which so easily takes possession of the heart of man when entering on a new state and starting something fresh, which has led the savage to surround the use of the first fruit with so many ritual precautions?

IV. *Taxation.*

643 The chief governs (fuma). *Fuma* means to command, but also to live in plenty, to be rich. The subject (nandja, follower) obeys; he follows the chief who marches before him just as the

1 [See pp. 394-404 in these categories or in 116-Analysis]

643 in the form of a *djimo*. (See Part IV.) Moreover the young
466 men are always at the disposal of the chief to clean his public square, build his huts, repair the thatched roofs of the royal kraal and organise hunting expeditions for him.

643 4. But the greater part of the royal revenue consists now in
651 *money* which the chief receives from his subjects. Mubvesha taxes each village a sum of 500 reis besides the regular basket of mealies. At the end of the bukanye feast, each village must send him another 500 reis to notify him that the feast is ended. When a young man returns from Johannesburg having made enough money to lobola a wife, he must leave £ 1.10.0 in the hands of the chief. The latter also recruits boys whom he sends to the recruiting agents, getting as much as £ 1 or £ 1.10.0 per head. When a sub-chief dies, his people inform the paramount chief of his death, bringing a sum of money (1500 reis). The chief, however, does not receive any portion of the inheritance in the case of a death. There is no taxation on the succession.

643 5. A great deal of money comes into the hands of the chief
651 *owing to fines which he imposes* when acting as supreme judge.
681 When a plaintiff brings a case and the culprit is condemned to pay him £ 25, Mubvesha keeps £ 10 for himself ; he retains £ 5 if the fine is £ 10.

643 Sub-chiefs do not tax their subjects as a rule. They must
631 bring to their superior all the products of taxation. They do
651 not "eat" anything. But in some cases the chief gives them a part of it. Thus Habele, sub-chief of Rikatla, used to "eat" half of the taxes brought to him by young men coming back from Johannesburg.

V. *Dangers and difficulties of the Chieftainship.*

643 Endowed with supernatural power which he owes to his magical
554 medicines, feared and sometimes loved by his subjects, with plenty to eat and richer than any of his people, who readily consent to be taxed, the chief occupies an enviable position. The chieftainship (buhosi), therefore, is very much sought after and no

643 538 177 334 one refuses to be a chief. Thonga tales recounting the story of some one who succeeded wonderfully in life often conclude by saying that this person was given a territory and became a chief... which seems to be the highest reward of virtue or wisdom. Nowadays, however, one may meet with cases where the heir to the chieftainship, having become a Christian, renounces that high position because he feels that there is an incompatibility between the Bantu way of ruling and his new faith.

643 But it would be a great error to think that a Thonga chief is, or can be, an autocratic despot. This may have been the case with Chaka, Lobengula or Gungunyana, when the tribe became an amalgamation of clans held together by military power ; in order to maintain their usurped authority, these chiefs had to be cruel despots. But this is a late development in the Bantu political system. I am now only taking into consideration the primitive form of tribal life, which is the clan life.

For a chief dangers may arise from three sources : from his own character, from the Thonga system of government itself, and from the law of succession.

1) The character of the chief.

A chief who wishes to succeed in his government *must have a good character*. If he imposes taxation, he must not use his wealth in a selfish way. For instance, when women bring him a *shiriwalo* of a dozen pots of beer, he must give them back one or two to quench their thirst. Moreover he must distribute most of the remaining pots to his men, who are on the *bandla*, always ready to share with him the advantages of his position.

Should he buy oxen with the product of the fines, he will be wise to slaughter one from time to time for his counsellors and for the whole clan. A chief who is good (a ni timpsalu) is said to *maintain* or to *save the country* (bekisa tiko). If he does not do that, he is severely criticised. Mubvesha, who used all his money to buy wives, and prevented all the men from seeing them, whilst he himself was too old to content them, was considered

be secret, or on the square, if there is no objection to making it public. The chief and his men sit on one side, the visitor on the other; if he wishes to conform strictly to all the laws of etiquette, he will first explain the matter to his own Agent General, who will communicate with the chief's special counsellor, repeating the words of the visitor, sentence by sentence; the counsellor will, in his turn, communicate with the chief, again telling him the whole story, as if he had not heard a word of it before. The affair will thus have passed through three hands and the answer should, in due formality, be given through the same channels. These precautions, which seem eminently superfluous, even somewhat ridiculous, to a person unacquainted with Bantu etiquette, evidently proceed from the fact that there are no stenographers or secretaries to furnish any written record of the proceedings, so that it is necessary to have as many witnesses as possible and that these should thoroughly understand the matter under consideration.

II. *Judicial Cases.*

1) Sense of justice.

As has often been remarked, the Bantus possess a strong sense of justice. They believe in social order and in the observance of the laws and, though these laws are not written, they are universal and perfectly well known. The law is the custom, that which has always been done. The old men, the counsellors and more particularly the counsellors of the capital, are those who can speak authoritatively. But everybody is welcome in the *hubo*, where matters are discussed; even a stranger can take part in the discussion. "No one is excluded, if he speaks rightly; only fools, those who do not know anything" (Mankhelu).

This participation in the discussions of the hubo has developed the sense of law to a wonderful extent amongst the Bantus. They are all born advocates and judges, and take a great interest in this business! No wonder therefore that the Thonga vocabulary

701 726 regiment, with its counsellors at its head, is called in turn by the organisers of the army; (at Zihlahla they were Mahagane, the chief's uncle, and Mpompi), and the several companies of the regiments form ranks one behind the other. I have already described this imposing circle, when treating of the coronation of the chief. Every warrior can take in at a glance the entire assemblage. Seen from the interior, it is an unbroken circle of shields, resting perpendicularly on the ground, and all touching; behind, a crowd of men, the greater the number, the deeper the ranks, a forest of feathers waving above their heads.

701 726 561 554 596 The mukhumbi is not however a perfect circle. It is rather like a *horse shoe*, as there remains an *opening* (nyangwa or sangwa), which gives access into it. On either side of this *door* the regiment of the young men takes up its position; the Dhlanazo in the Nkuna mukhumbi and the Ndumakazulu in that of Zihlahla. At the opposite end, facing the entrance, is the *chest of the army* (shifuba sha yimpi), where the chief stands surrounded by the men of riper age, the strongest of whom act as a body guard. Between the chest and the opening, on both sides, the middle-aged warriors occupy the wings, the elder ones nearer the chest, the younger nearer the entrance. This disposition is highly significant; notice that it is exactly the same as that of the village itself, a large door (mharana); on both sides of the entrance, the huts of the unmarried inhabitants (lao and nhanga); at the back the huts of the headman, and, at the sides, those of his younger brothers. The idea of age and of hierarchy entirely dominates both these social manifestations!

701 As regards the numerical strength of the mukhumbi, one of my informants who belonged to the Ndumakazulu regiment —young men from 19 to 25 years old—told me that he estimated the war strength of his regiment at about 500 men: the entire Zihlahla circle might be put at 2000 strong.

I have often seen the Nkuna mukhumbi assembled. I had even the opportunity of addressing its warriors during the Sikororo war of 1901. They were between five and six hundred in all. But this clan is very much scattered and many warriors were not present.

727 765 killed, "because the whole country would mourn : — they have not been killed by the mat (likuku) at home, but by the assagai on the battle-field! They are men! If any one weeps he will have to pay £ 2." (Mboza.)

726 763 When the Maputju yimpis fought against Nondwane in 1876, in the battle which took place near Malangotiba, (3 km west of Rikatla), they were decimated and eventually repulsed. Their chief Musongi sent them back to fight again. They refused. Then he punished them in the following way : he condemned them to go and fetch water with pots, like women, but they had to go on their knees to the pool, saying : "It is the result of our cowardice" — (Ngi ndaba ya bugwala). Afterwards they had to extinguish a bush fire with their hands, and came home very much scorched and burnt.

When the yimpi is victorious, the return is marked by important 727 songs called *hubu* (cl. dji-ma). The regiments follow each other, 533 each singing his own *hubu*, and they at once build the mukhumbi 535 when they reach the village of the chief. They dance, dance their doughty deeds. Suddenly silence is required ; the counsellors narrate to the chief how the fighting has proceeded and tell him the names of those who have killed enemies, those who have struck the first blow and their *bahlomuri*, viz., those who transfixed the leg and the arm. After which the heroes "gila" to their heart's content, together with the bahlomuri. They are proud! They are applauded! They are the great men of the day, the *tingwaza*, the saviours of the chief!

This leads me to consider the very curious customs connected with the slayers and the slain on the battle-field.

I. THE FATE OF THE SLAIN AND THE TREATMENT OF THE SLAYERS.

I. *The fate of the slain.*

554 When a man has slain an enemy, he has covered himself with 727 the most enviable glory : he has the right to perform the war-dance before the chief. He takes away all the garments from

727 enemy died later on, after his return to his home. Makhani did not
828 know this. One day he became suddenly delirious and rushed about
789 all over the village trying to stab his own people. "Oho!" said those
783 who saw him, "it is because the man he wounded has died!" They at once called the magician who possessed the nuru medicine, a man of the Mapsanganye clan, who came with his calabash. In this calabash there was a carved stick cut from a tree called shiralala, the extremity of which must always remain plunged in the medicine. The magician dipped this stick into a mixture made of honey and the drug, and passed it over the lips of Makhani, who seized it with his tongue, sucking it as the magician moved it from right to left, and licking his lips. A drop of the medicine was then put into each ear, on each upper eye-lid, and below the sternum. He was then cured and, taking a lighted torch, he threw it in the direction of the enemy's country with threatening words: "A ba fe, bafo, ba bola i. e. Let them die, the enemies, let them rot. I will kill still others!" Every day he had to go to the pool and wash his body, treating himself with the tintebe powder.

727 During the weeks following the battle heroes do not only
301 wear the tintebe, besides these miluru amulets, they have the
703 right to wear certain trophies. These are in the first place
554 antelope or goat's horns pierced at the base; they thread a string through the hole thus made and tie them round their necks (See illustrations, p. 33 and 453). They also make necklaces of small pieces of wood, notched in a peculiar manner and burnt in the fire; a hole is made through these and they are strung together like beads and worn round the neck. Sometimes these necklaces are made so long that they are worn as a bandoleer. I recollect seeing the Matjolo warriors returning from their expedition of February 1895: they came to show themselves off to the Whites at Lourenço Marques, gloriously proud of having massacred defenceless women and children whom they had surprised in the early hours of the morning! People threw them pieces of silver which they converted into brandy! (1)

727 (1) The terrible malediction which rests on those who have killed an enemy
775 is well illustrated by the following story which the Rev. C. Maphophe told me of an
761 event that had taken place not long ago in the Shishongi country (Manyisa district). A man of the Ndzindzi family had killed a Ndjao during one of Gungunyana's expedi-

towards the fence into the pits. My informant asserts that the 224
result was sometimes marvellous ; the pits were soon full and the 476
animals coming behind ran over their comrades and escaped ; the men followed closely and stabbed the antelopes in the neck. But this of course meant the wholesale destruction of game. Happily a stop has been put to this kind of hunting.

Nowadays Natives use *iron traps* which they buy in the European 224
stores, some of which are quite sufficiently strong to catch a duiker 824
or a wild pig. They smear them with another charm, the *butiba*, a kind of brownish moss growing on the roots of a tree called shivumbunkanye. It also is said to have the power of "making the game forget."

I have described some other traps when dealing with boys' games.

Everybody was allowed to hunt in the good old times when the 224
White authorities had not yet introduced so many restrictive 554
regulations. Ordinary hunters are called bahloti or bazingeli 791
(Zulu term). But there were others who had made a kind of trade of hunting, regular, professional hunters, who were called *phisa* (pl. maphisa). They were not satisfied to kill an occasional antelope near their village, but they undertook big expeditions to the great deserts of the Hlengwe country where game was plentiful and where the most precious of all, i. e., elephants, abounded. It cannot be said that the maphisa formed a definite class in the tribe like the bone-throwers, for instance. I never heard of a true initiation taking place prior to their becoming maphisa. Yet they were known and recognized as a kind of superior caste and were very proud of their name of maphisa. They claimed a special power over big game owing to the mysterious rites which they practised; thus they partook more or less of the nature of magicians. I have come across some of them and heard marvellous stories about others. Old Madyashikulu of the Nhlongo clan, whom I met in the Ntimane country, near Antioka, boasted that he could pick out an elephant in a herd and force it to come and fall down at the foot of the tree up which he had climbed. He had then only to stab it from his retreat, and kill it ; after which he came down from the tree to

224 554 791 dance over the carcase of his victim! Another was Mubandane, a relation of Mboza, who lived in Nondwana. As is customary with many Natives of the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques, he hunted elephants for a Portuguese trader, named Fonseca, who provided him with guns and powder. When ready to undertake his hunting trip to the north of Gazaland (Mosapa), he had to undergo a purification (hlambo). His medicine-man cooked a pot full of his drugs, washed him with the froth and poured the contents of the pot on the roof, over the entrance of the hunter's hut. Mubandane had then to stoop and enter his hut, the water leaking through the grass and falling on his shoulders. These words were pronounced by the medicine-man, during this ritual entry into the hut: "Go and be happy! Though the rain fall on you, though the dew make you wet, when you sleep, you will be everywhere as in a hut; everywhere it will be like home (kaya). You will have taken your hut with you, you will enter it in a wet state!"

224 784 Other maphisa were the hippopotamus hunters settled on the banks of the Nkomati river, whose customs I shall describe later on.

In connection with their *hunting trips*, these professional hunters are subject to many taboos. As we have just seen, they must undergo a purification before starting, and also be inoculated in the wrists with special drugs, the most important being those of the tintebe (I. p. 479) the same which are used by the slayers of enemies in battle. Another favourite medicine for hunters is made from the piece of meat which is found between the heart and the lungs of big animals. In some cases they have to prepare themselves for their expedition by daily ablutions and by absolute continence for a certain number of days. The sacrifice of a fowl is also sometimes made before starting. It is taboo for adults to eat the meat of this fowl; it might endanger the success of the expedition. Little children may eat it: "they are quiet" (i. e. they have no sexual relations), and so the hunting will not be spoilt. When all these preparations are finished, the hunters start with their rattles, singing special songs, the songs of the hunters (Part V).

The trip itself may last for months, and constitutes a kind of

782 their protection : "May the harvest be plentiful ; may the cattle multiply ; may all our wives become pregnant." He uses by preference negative expressions : "Be not angry against us ; may the cows not slip their calves ; may our wives have no miscarriages, etc." In the meantime the people continue the same clapping of hands (called ku diya or ku losa gupsi, gupsi expressing exactly the hollow sound produced by the curved hands).

Notwithstanding this ritual clapping of hands, not much respect is shown by those present. They chat and joke whilst the chief of the clan is praying. A little tobacco has been spread as a libation on the graves and all help themselves to it. The influence of European ideas can be noticed ; a man cries : "Take off your hats!" and most of the men obey, showing that they are conscious that this is a religious ceremony worthy of respect.

As soon as the ceremony is over, they begin to dance. Immediately the clapping changes. It is now done with the hands held flat. It is chiefly the women, especially the old ones, who dance. Gabaze, the principal wife of the Nkuna chief Muhlaba, who is a Makaringe, the sister of Mugwaleni, makes herself conspicuous by her contortions. These are the ordinary dances.

They eat the roasted meat ; they drink the beer brought by the women. The portions offered to the manes are eaten as well as the rest, and I did not observe that they were reserved to special persons. The skin of the victim is cut into small strips which the men tie round the right wrist, the women round the left."

b) *National Offerings.*

782 These are those offered at the capital, to the ancestors of the
769 chief, but on behalf of, the whole clan, because the gods of the
796 reigning family have control over the clan, just as the chief has
554 over the families of his subjects.

The regular national offering is the *luma* of the first fruits, their consecration, which I have described at length as one of the principal manifestations of the National life (I. p. 396-406). The Bantu conception of hierarchy is clearly illustrated by this custom : the gods must be the first to enjoy the produce of the new year, then the chief, the sub-chiefs, the counsellors, the

782 headmen, then the younger brothers in order of age. There
769 is a stringent taboo directed against the person who precedes
796 his superiors in the enjoyment of the first fruits, this law being
564 applicable to Kafir corn or bukanye in certain clans, and also to sorghum, pumpkin leaves and beer, etc., in others (1).

834 The sexual taboo is also enforced. Those who contravene this
782 law are said to "destroy the efficacity of the offering, nyumbisa mhamba." At the Ngoni Court, where sexual excesses were prevalent (see I. Annotatio 14) it is said that the chiefs used to remain continent for a fortnight at the time of luma. The reason of this taboo is probably the fact that the luma signifies the entering upon a new year, a new season, and is thus a rite of passage.

782 The religious meaning of the rite is clear : the gods, if deprived of the right they possess by virtue of their hierarchical position, would avenge themselves by threatening the harvest ; so they must be given their share first.

In the Maluleke clan, in which the customs seem to have been influenced by the Ba-Nyai, there is also a regular offering at the capital, when *the crops are still growing*. Rangane describes it as follows : "When the chief sees that the Kafir corn is threatened by the vermin in the fields, he says : "Perhaps the masters of the country (i. e. my ancestors who are dead) are angry ; perhaps I have not worshipped them fittingly." He summons the sons of the royal family (mangalakana) from all parts of the country, prepares beer, and selects a goat for the sacrifice ; they assemble around the graves with the sons and the uterine nephews, where they worship, and then, after eating all that is to be eaten, they return."

The special national offerings are those in connection with rain. If the rain falls at the right season, the sacrifice will not be made ; but should it fail to do so, the whole ritual will be gone through. This sacrifice for rain, is, as has already been mentioned (p. 318) called *phokolo* amongst the Bilen clans, and is performed in the

(1) Amongst the Malulekes a *second luma* is necessary after harvest, when brewing the first beer. It seems that the sub-chiefs or even headmen, settled in districts far away from the capital, can obtain a special license to perform the luma ceremony on their own account, but they must first apply for this permission, and after having finished, they must forward the chief's share to him.

E. MATURE AGE

I. *The Bantu Ideal.*

581 The married man is called " he who has his home " (a ni le
554 kwakwe) in opposition to the single man (nkhwenda). But let
562 us say at once that the kind of individual called bachelor does
885 not abound amongst the Bantus. Only the utterly wretched, invalids, and the weak-minded, are deprived of legal marriage, which for the black man is and remains the one object in life. It is through his wife and children that he becomes somebody in society. This fact does not appear during the first year of wedlock, for the newly married woman must cook at the fireplace of her mother-in-law. She is hardly more than a servant during a whole year ; she does not possess her own pot ; and this must be so because she does not yet eat the mealies of her own garden, having ploughed her fields in her former domicile the previous year. Her husband eats with her. He is not yet
595 a lord. But if he is rich, if he is the heir of an important man, he will not be long in buying a second and third wife.

These new marriages will be contracted like the first, but with less pomp. It may even happen that the feast is held in the husband's village, if he is middle-aged and is celebrating his fifth or sixth wedding.

595 For each new wife, he will build a hut. He has begun his
342 village when building the house of his first wife, the great wife,
556 (nsati lwe nkulu) as she is called, who will remain the principal
592 one whatever may happen. While, without compass, he was
361 drawing on the ground, with the marvellous instinct of the South African Native, the circumference of the circle on which the patched reed walls of his dwelling were to rise, while he was covering this circular wall with a conical roof, he was saying to himself : " I establish my home ; I inaugurate my village ". During the following years, the aim of his life will be to complete little by little another wider circle... When he has bought his

when he has brought his

595 556 592 231 361 885

second wife, he will build for her also a hut of the same type. But this second hut, the third, and the fourth which may come afterwards, will not be erected in a straight row like a street. They will form an arc, which will be prolonged so as to constitute first a semi-circle and then a complete circle, if a sufficient number of buildings are added. This is the ideal of the black man, to

Phot. H. Gros

Ndjakandjaka, a headman of Spekoaken, with his men.

become the lord and master of a complete circular village. Most of the men do not realise this ideal. Three or four huts, a wretched quarter of a circle is all that they attain to! Some, better armed for the struggle of life, or more favoured by circumstances, succeed in closing their circle. Their cattle, for which they have also built a circular enclosure right in the middle of the square of the village, multiply and are not carried off by peripneumonia and hematuria,

595 which, in this country, decimate so many herds! Every three
592 years, theirs wives bear children. If they are boys, it is an
361 honour; the village will not lack heirs, neither will the father
556 lack arms to help and to defend him! If they are girls, it means
842 wealth; oxen will come to the family! Their brothers will not lack wives, for the sisters will be sold to provide for the brothers. Meanwhile, the huts are erected, large and small, that of the head of the family being the largest, the *malao*, those of the boys the least well kept.

Let us consider a Ronga favoured by fate, as was Gidja, of the country of Libombo, near Rikatla. His village numbered not less than twenty-four huts, with beautiful shady trees behind; notice the enclosure for the cattle and for the goats on the central place, that for the pigs behind the houses... There are cocks and hens pecking about everywhere, dogs wandering around in search of something to steal, for they receive hardly any food; a crowd of youngsters leading the cattle, and everywhere the noise of the pestles crushing the daily mealies in the large mortars. He walks about proudly in his favoured enclosure, contemplating his prosperity with pleasure. Young men are ready to do the work he gives them to do. He will treat them with beer brewed by his wives. And often the people of the neighbouring villages will join his people for dances and games on the fine square, which is surrounded and enclosed on all sides by huts.

595 And, above all things, in the evening, each of his wives will
556 bring him the pot which she has cooked for him. This is the
574 essential matrimonial duty of the wife. Not one will fail in it. Gidja, the lord of six or seven pots of mealies seasoned with a sauce of monkey nuts, will feast and be satiated (shura) every day, and that means much, for the inner capacity of a Thonga is something wonderful.

He will become large and stout, and shining, which in South Africa is a sure sign of wealth and nobility. The stouter he gets the more will he be respected. But it can easily be imagined that he cannot alone empty all these pots over which he reigns supreme. He feasts his children, but others too come to pay him visits at the evening hour when they know him to be surround-

556 ed by so many good things! Sycophants are not lacking. "Good
595 evening, son of so and so!" they say. "You are one of the
574 great men of the country." And in return for these and other compliments, the magnanimous Gidja shares his feast with his admirers!

Strangers are crossing the country and inquire where they can be received. "Go to Gidja" they are told. "A ni tshengwe, a fuya tshengwe" viz. "he is the possessor of a harem! He is not killed by famine! He has beer to drink every day! He can give food to poor people. Even then, some of it remains on the plate and is eaten by little boys and dogs in the square. There is always abundance there." And the travellers come and enter (khuleka) his village, after which they will tell in their homes the story of the magnificence of Gidja and extol his hospitality.

Thus the man who has succeeded in life becomes famous, his advice will carry weight in the discussions in which he takes part; he will perhaps be even more esteemed than the chief himself, though he does not enjoy the special prestige which the royal family owes to the blood running in its veins.

Conclusion: the greatness of an African is before all else a matter of pots, and the matter of pots is closely connected with polygamy!

885 During these years of mature age the evolution of a man is not
554 marked by special ceremonies. There is one custom however which is common to all, and which marks an advance in their social position. It is that of fixing the wax ring.

II. *Fixing the wax ring.*

885 Amongst the South Africans, the crown is not the appanage of
177 royalty. All men having reached mature age have the right to
554 adorn themselves with it. It is true, it is not a diadem of precious
301 stones, but a large ring of wax. This custom seems to have a Zulu origin. The Ba-Sutho do not know it and the Ba-Thonga, who all practise it, have taken it from the conquering tribe which owes its fortune to the famous Chaka. This habit has spread all

567 of slavery. Hundreds of them still live there and are recognisable by their very broad, coarse features. 2) The *laws of succession* 595 which regulate the present agnatic Thonga family also lead to 336 polygamy as a necessary consequence. A young brother inherits the widow of his elder brother, be he married or not. If polygamy began in this second way, its increase in later times is not to be wondered at. It answers admirably to the Bantu ideal of life. As we saw, a man who has a harem, tshengwe (page 126), is a man who has succeeded in his career! This is the regular method of becoming a rich man, an ideal which is by no means confined to the black race! On the other hand sensuality develops very quickly in the polygamic family and its very development reacts on the custom and tends to foster it.

595 I do not think the origin of polygamy can be traced with 764 certitude. However, there are amongst the Thongas some striking customs, giving to the "first" or "great wife" a special position, which seem to confirm the hypothesis of a primitive monogamy. The first of these is the ritual incision made by the first wife in the inguinal region after the death of the husband; it is not performed by the other widows (p. 200). In the same way the widower carries out this rite only after the death of the first wife and not when "little wives" die. The second is to be found in the rites of the foundation of the village; as we shall see in the next chapter, the first wife has a special part to play in these significant ceremonies. When I asked Magingi, an old Rikatla heathen, why such a difference was made between the first wife and her co-wives, he told me: "The first is the true wife and the others are but thieves. That is why it is said at the death of the first wife: the house of the husband has been crushed (a tjhobekelwi hi yindlu ya kwe). When another dies, it is only said: he has lost a wife (a felwi hi nsati)"...

595 The species of sacredness which surrounds the first wife appears 643 even more plainly in the case of the marriages of chiefs. The principal wife of the chief is in one sense not the actual first wife, but the woman who has been bought with the money collected by his subjects and whose son will be the heir to the chieftainship (See Part III). Generally the "wife of the country" is not the first

231 men having relations with women during menstruation (I. p. 187).
562 Should a drop of it fall in the cattle kraal, this would endanger the
841 health of the whole herd. Women are even prohibited from
784 passing through a herd of oxen ; they must go round it, because otherwise the death of the calves would ensue. Amongst the Ba-Ngoni this taboo is so strong that a woman guilty of having transgressed against it was put to death (1).

231 The object of oxen-breeding is not milk but the acquisition
262 of *wealth* ; oxen mean wealth to the Native, a means of purchasing
556 girls and of thus increasing his family. Oxen are also bred for food, the meat being highly appreciated and divided amongst all the members of the family according to the strict rules previously explained (I. p. 329). The slaughtering is done by piercing the heart with an assagai, a painful and sometimes very protracted operation. This occurs at marriage feasts, at other family and national gatherings, at the sacrifice for rain (Part VI), and on special occasions, once a year for instance, when a headman wishes to feast his people. All, even neighbours who are not relatives and travellers, are welcome to the feast. Natives have wonderful olfactory powers. They seem to smell out the *lisuna*, viz., the peculiar odour of the meat, a mile off, and when an ox has been killed you see them emerging from the bush on all sides!

234 As regards *milk*, it certainly plays a part in the food of villages which are fortunate enough to possess a well-filled oxen kraal. The *milking* of the cows presents difficulties unknown in Europe! African cows have not yet learned to submit tamely to this operation! The calf must always be allowed to suck a few mouthfuls, then a boy pulls it away from the teat and the cow consents to be milked. Should a cow be too wild, they pass a string through its

241 (1) We meet here with an interesting instance of a superstition having no scientific
462 basis whatever, which is nevertheless productive of good results. Women must keep apart from oxen. Since the plough was introduced amongst South African Natives, they have been quick to notice that it is a very useful instrument, and have adopted it in many places. The plough has to be drawn by oxen and men alone are allowed to drive them. Thus women are relieved of the heavy work of tilling the fields which had been allotted to them by immemorial custom. It is probable that further knowledge will free the Natives from their old fear and from the taboo which resulted from it ; yet the idea that everything connected with oxen belongs to the domain of man will remain and thus real social progress will have been obtained through an absurd superstition !

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

881 schools during two consecutive years. The first is called *bulika*, 561 the second *buhwira*. Thongas have only the first, and it is the one described in the following pages.

I was never fortunate enough to penetrate into a lodge, as it is a great taboo. I tried once to obtain admittance, near Shiluvane, but in vain. But the rites have been described to me with such a wealth of detail that I seemed to have lived for three months with the candidates ! (1)

A French anthropologist, Mr A. van Gennep, published some years ago a book on *Les Rites de Passage* (Paris. Nourry 1909) which throws a great deal of light on these mysterious customs. He shows that a great number of rites have been inspired by the idea of passage from one place to another, and that all the rites belonging to this category present the same general features : in the first place the separation from the old state of things is symbolised by certain rites which he calls separation rites ; then begins a period of margin, where the individual or the group concerned is secluded from society and submitted to a number of taboos or rites ; thirdly, at the close of this period, the persons who have been tabooed are again received into the community as regular members by the aggregation rites. This classification applies perfectly to the Circumcision rites, which are a Rite of Passage par excellence, and I shall now try to explain them briefly in their natural sequence. For more details see *Zidji*, a South African novel which I published in 1910 (Foyer solidariste, Saint-Blaise, Switzerland) where a more elaborate description will be found.

3) The three series of rites of circumcision.

a) Separation rites.

821 The circumcision school (Ngoma) is held every fourth or fifth 881 year, and all the boys from ten to sixteen are sent to it by their

(1) A young colleague of mine, the Rev. A. Jaques was more fortunate than I and even succeeded in taking some photographs in the Masume Valley, near Shiluvane, This was a Pedi school, but, as stated above, there is no great difference between Pedi and Thonga " Sungi. " These pictures are of great interest, and I am grateful to my friend for allowing me to reproduce them here.

584 mats, drinking, eating, etc. we should say : This rite is also, on the part of the diminished group, a means of asserting its importance, of saving its dignity. But the boys do the same thing on their visit. They maintain the same disdainful attitude... This certainly arises from the fact that the two social groups look upon each other with some distrust, not yet being fully acquainted, and consequently observing a mutual reserve. But further information and a closer comparative study of Thonga rites enables me to give still another explanation.

561 431 The term employed to designate this rite is *kunga*. This verb is of Ngoni (Zulu) origin. Used in a general way, it means to remit a present to a chief who has sent his emissaries to claim it. The chief "*kungisa*" viz. orders to kunga. In its ritual sense, it means to give a present to a person who refuses to do something for ritual reasons. The old Thonga expression is *alula*. This word is the reversive derivative of the verb *ala*, to refuse ; it therefore means to remove the refusal, to overcome it, to cause somebody to yield. The Kunga rite is performed on at least five different occasions : 1) for the circumcised boy on the day when he is received into the community of adults (page 93) ; 2) for the girl who has passed through the khomba initiation ; 3) for the boy who has wooed a girl, when he pays his official visit to her and to her family, and for the girl, when she returns the visit with her maids, but especially when she goes to the domicile of her husband and thus enters the married state ; 4) for the first-born child ; 5) for the woman who has lost many children and consequently is in a state of bereavement (bowumba) when she again gives birth to a child. In all these cases, the person concerned passes from one condition to another ; the circumcised from the childish to the adult stage, the suitor and his bride from the unmarried to the married state, the woman who has had her first child from the state of womanhood to that of motherhood and the bereaved woman from the state of bereavement to the normal position of a mother carrying a child on her shoulders. And here we meet with the old Bantu conception of life. This passage, in the evolution of human life, is fraught with danger. The person concerned stands on the defensive. He or she refuses to speak, to look at other people, to enter their village, or, in the case of the newly married girl, to perform her conjugal duty. Those who wish them to accept their new condition must persuade them to do so by giving them presents, generally presents of little importance, a wire bracelet, a small coin, etc. This will remove the danger.

This rite, which might be called a *defensive rite*, is therefore certainly

561 a rite of passage and this is also proved by the fact that the money or the
431 bracelets given to the persons concerned do not remain their property. As regards the circumcised, they remit them to the chief, and the chief distributes them to the old women who are no longer able to bear children. The girl who has passed through the khomba gives them to her adopted mother, who will use them in the same way. All the money remitted to the bride will go to the master of the village, for the old women and the children. *Married people must have no share in it,* as these presents are taboo. Why ? Because they are connected with a passage, and people who have sexual relations are considered as increasing the dangers connected with these critical phases of human development, when the heart is troubled by a half-conscious fear of a new and unknown future. Amongst civilised people who have reached the era of individualism, these fears find their expression in songs and poetry. In the communistic society they express themselves by means of rites.

*

* *

591 Here are some answers to the questions of Professor Frazer on
587 marriage.

611 A man always brings his wife to his own home. This is the *tlhoma,* and it is a law. It is taboo for him to go and live with his parents-in- law, at any rate when he marries his first wife. In the course of time, when the children have grown up, when the *bukoñwana,* viz. the relations with parents-in-law, are of old standing, a man can go and live in his wife's village (See Part II). Another case in which this can be done is when a widow refuses to marry the man who legally inherits her, and gives herself to a stranger, a man of Inhambane, for instance. He does not pay the lobolo, and lives with her in her village ; but the children born of that union will belong to the family of the deceased husband.

585 There is no preparation for marriage amongst the Thongas by fasting, bleeding or keeping awake the night before. No corn or rice is thrown at the bridal pair. The bride or bridegroom is never represented at the marriage by a proxy or dummy. Conjugal relations begin immediately after marriage (see page 113), but the wife does not possess her home and her kitchen for the first year ; during that period she must cook for her mother-in-law.

583 There are no occasions on which men exchange their wives.

See practical conclusions on Marriage Rites at the end of Vol. I.

701 726 regiment, with its counsellors at its head, is called in turn by the organisers of the army ; (at Zihlahla they were Mahagane, the chief's uncle, and Mpompi), and the several companies of the regiments form ranks one behind the other. I have already described this imposing circle, when treating of the coronation of the chief. Every warrior can take in at a glance the entire assemblage. Seen from the interior, it is an unbroken circle of shields, resting perpendicularly on the ground, and all touching ; behind, a crowd of men, the greater the number, the deeper the ranks, a forest of feathers waving above their heads.

701 726 561 554 596 The mukhumbi is not however a perfect circle. It is rather like a *horse shoe*, as there remains an *opening* (nyangwa or sangwa), which gives access into it. On either side of this *door* the regiment of the young men takes up its position ; the Dhlanazo in the Nkuna mukhumbi and the Ndumakazulu in that of Zihlahla. At the opposite end, facing the entrance, is the *chest of the army* (shifuba sha yimpi), where the chief stands surrounded by the men of riper age, the strongest of whom act as a body guard. Between the chest and the opening, on both sides, the middle-aged warriors occupy the wings, the elder ones nearer the chest, the younger nearer the entrance. This disposition is highly significant ; notice that it is exactly the same as that of the village itself, a large door (mharana) ; on both sides of the entrance, the huts of the unmarried inhabitants (lao and nhanga) ; at the back the huts of the headman, and, at the sides, those of his younger brothers. The idea of age and of hierarchy entirely dominates both these social manifestations!

701 As regards the numerical strength of the mukhumbi, one of my informants who belonged to the Ndumakazulu regiment —young men from 19 to 25 years old—told me that he estimated the war strength of his regiment at about 500 men : the entire Zihlahla circle might be put at 2000 strong.

I have often seen the Nkuna mukhumbi assembled. I had even the opportunity of addressing its warriors during the Sikororo war of 1901. They were between five and six hundred in all. But this clan is very much scattered and many warriors were not present.

827 surprised at this ignorance ; our forefathers, three hundred years ago, were not much more advanced than the Natives are now.

On the other hand, Bantus, and especially Thongas, have a number of physiological ideas, which are pure superstitions, being devoid of any scientific foundation, but are, nevertheless, firmly believed and give rise to a number of practices, rites, and purifications. This is a most interesting subject and its study throws much light on the condition of primitive man. I have tried to explain these physiological conceptions in an article published in "La Revue d'Ethnographie et de Sociologie, Mai 1910." It is not possible to enter into all the details here, and I am obliged to refer the reader to that article for more particulars. However my description of the Life of the Tribe would not be complete if this subject were entirely omitted ; so I will rapidly give a general idea of this curious Native physiology.

561 In the Thonga mind, human life is composed of a certain number
851 of periods which follow each other, each having its particular character.

827 As we have seen in the Evolution of man (Part I), *the first period* (busahana) extends from birth to the fall of the umbilical cord ; the baby is in a state of contamination owing to the lochia and must not be touched ; from the eighth or ninth day till the weaning takes place, is *the nursing period*, divided into two or three sub-periods by the presentation to the moon and the tying of the cotton string. The child has been progressively received into human society. Up to this day he has been considered as under treatment, because a child is not a complete healthy human being ; he is but *water* (mati), not yet firm ; he is always threatened with disease and so he must continually drink his *milombyana*. The *hondlola* ceremony closes this period and, by the act of weaning, he enters into the *childhood* period. (I. p. 59).

561 Infancy is a *bukhuna*, a state of incompleteness fraught with
827 a certain defilement. Childhood is also a bukhuna, and this contemptible inferiority must be removed by the circumcision rites, the significance of which is both physiological and social. When they wish to marry, viz., *to pass from the class of unmarried to that of married people*, young men and women must again

undergo a number of ceremonies of a social rather than of a physiological character. 561 827

But, in addition to these conceptions of human life, which determine so many acts and customs, there are at least *five physiological phenomena* which are believed to be attended with defilement, and which call for special precautions and rites : the menstrual flow, the lochia, disease, death and the birth of twins. To protect individuals, the family, or the clan, against these dangerous defilements, is one of the main preoccupations of any adult Thonga ; and to gain this end they submit to endless ceremonies of purification,and observe innumerable taboos ; thus it is plain that these physiological conceptions, absolutely unscientific and wrong as they are, play an immense part in their lives and cause them any amount of unnecessary trouble. 783

I need not deal at length with these five greatly dreaded physiological events. As regards menses, the subject has been treated in Vol. I, p. 187. (Compare Vol. II, p. 47) ; as regards lochia, see Vol. I, p. 43 ; concerning disease, we shall hear further in our third chapter. The tremendous contaminating power of death has been shown in the explanation of funeral rites, and the birth of twins will be studied more closely in the next chapter. The importance of these facts in the system of taboos will also be explained in Chap. IV.

The sexual act, though not considered as attended with contamination in the same manner as the five other physiological facts just referred to, is, however, subject to very characteristic restrictions. I have already explained them when dealing with conjugal life (I. p. 188). It will, however, perhaps not be superfluous to treat of this question again, considering it in its physiological aspect and in relation to the Bantu conception of Nature, and giving at the same time precise references to all the cases hitherto met with. 827 834 783

Let us first remark that, as some of my informants said, the sexual act when indulged in before marriage, by boys and girls in their gangisa (I. p. 150) has quite another bearing than when accomplished by married people. It would seem that it is not the physical act in itself which is attended with all these taboos,

idea of defilement through death. *Adultery* is taboo because the 784
husband fears "the bad bloods" by which his wife may have been contaminated through her misconduct. In as far as respect for the *totem* is considered necessary for the maintenance of the health of the clansman, I would also include the taboos of this order in the physiological category ; these are, however, very few in number amongst the Thongas (I. p. 366).

b) Another variety of the same category are *the taboos connected* 561
with growth or *change of condition*, or *with the various initiations* 784
through which a Native may be called on to pass. The whole life of primitive man consists, as has already been stated, in a succession of stages ; he must proceed from one to the other through ceremonies in connection with which a number of taboos are to be noticed. The individual who ascends from an inferior stage to a superior one, always passes through a marginal period by which he is separated from the former and received into the latter. In this case the seclusion is not due to defilement properly speaking ; it is connected with the idea of *growth*. Hence the taboos of *tying the cotton string*, (I. p. 56), *weaning* (I. p. 58), when passing from infancy to childhood, *puberty*, when entering upon adult life through circumcision, *marriage* (p. 124), when being received into the group of married people ; initiation into the society of the possessed, and into the profession of magician, or diviner, is attended with similar taboos.

All the taboos of this category seem to have been actuated by the idea of danger accompanying ritual impurity, or passage from one condition to another.

2) A second category of taboos, much less numerous, are the 821
cosmic taboos. Nature prohibits certain acts ; if they are 784
committed, rain will not fall, and the community will suffer. The prohibition of cutting the roots at the new moon (p. 306), of tilling the fields when a shower falls in the morning (p. 28), of warming oneself at a fire of parasitic plants and at the ntjhopfa (p. 18), and some agricultural taboos belong to this category. Some of the most severe physiological taboos, those connected with twins and with unlawfully buried children, become cosmic, inasmuch as they prevent rain from falling (p. 317).

585 578 goat. Shillings must be given to induce her to enter the hut, to sit down, to accept water for washing her hands and food, to eat. Another ox is killed and the meat is divided as follows : the liver and the heart are for the bride's father, the leg for her mother, the *nyimba*, viz. the womb, which includes the ribs, sternum etc. for the maternal uncle. The women, when they return home, take all these pieces of meat to their several destinations. They put a skewer through the heart and liver and stick it into the ground before the bride's father's hut saying : " This is the notification of the husband's people. "

If the total number of the oxen has been remitted on the lobola day, *the departure of the new wife* for the husband's kraal (thloma) will not be long delayed. But should there be some oxen wanting, a wise father will not allow her to go until the whole lobolo has been paid. The husband works hard to get together the other oxen. He brings them, without ceremony, together with a sovereign, which he places before the bride's father as a present, saying : " This is my spitting for you, my father ! " He does the same for the mother. He now feels the right to claim his wife. They answer : " Give us time to prepare her trousseau." The trousseau consists of two mats, two or three big spoons, some pots, a wooden platter, a pestle and a mortar, and one hoe provided by the maternal uncle, which make up all the equipment of a Nkuna bride. All her female relations meet and, after having exhorted (1) her to be obedient, to accept all the hardships she will find in her new home, they accompany her to her husband's village. This is the *hloma*. The men do not go, except the ntjumi of the bride's family. The father, on the morning before they leave, kills a fowl and *hahla*, viz. makes a sacrifice, telling his ancestors that his daughter goes to be married, and praying for her. The ntjumi,

585 562 593 (1) " Hear ! " the old women say to the bride, " you have been a good girl, so far, henceforth you will be treated as a slave ! You will be accused of adultery and of witchcraft. You will have no more happiness. But accept all that ! They will beat you, kill you and we shall not be able to deliver you, because we have eaten their oxen. " These exhortations are worth reproducing, as they show clearly the conditions under which the girl goes to her husband. She is not protected by the lobolo. On the contrary, the lobolo has made her the possession of the husband's family, from whom she must now accept any treatment. (See Part II).

E. MATURE AGE

1. *The Bantu Ideal.*

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554 kwakwe) in opposition to the single man (nkhwenda). But let
562 us say at once that the kind of individual called bachelor does
885 not abound amongst the Bantus. Only the utterly wretched, invalids, and the weak-minded, are deprived of legal marriage, which for the black man is and remains the one object in life. It is through his wife and children that he becomes somebody in society. This fact does not appear during the first year of wedlock, for the newly married woman must cook at the fireplace of her mother-in-law. She is hardly more than a servant during a whole year ; she does not possess her own pot ; and this must be so because she does not yet eat the mealies of her own garden, having ploughed her fields in her former domicile the previous year. Her husband eats with her. He is not yet
595 a lord. But if he is rich, if he is the heir of an important man, he will not be long in buying a second and third wife.

These new marriages will be contracted like the first, but with less pomp. It may even happen that the feast is held in the husband's village, if he is middle-aged and is celebrating his fifth or sixth wedding.

595 For each new wife, he will build a hut. He has begun his
342 village when building the house of his first wife, the great wife,
556 (naati lwe nkulu) as she is called, who will remain the principal
592 one whatever may happen. While, without compass, he was
361 drawing on the ground, with the marvellous instinct of the South African Native, the circumference of the circle on which the patched reed walls of his dwelling were to rise, while he was covering this circular wall with a conical roof, he was saying to himself : " I establish my home ; I inaugurate my village ". During the following years, the aim of his life will be to complete little by little another wider circle... When he has bought his

says: "Nsati wa mabele u nga nabele loko u nge na bukosi." — "Do not covet a woman with large breasts if you have no money..." This does not mean that she will cost more, but her father, knowing that she will not want for suitors, will not consent to let her go unless the full lobolo is paid at once. On the other hand a girl with an elongated face is admired more than one who is too broad-faced. Of the first they say: "She is pretty, she resembles an antelope" (a kota mhala); of the second: "She is chubby-cheeked, she is like a sow." A light complexion is preferred to a very dark one, because the white or yellow races are regarded as superior, and a Native laying claim to any European or Asiatic blood is proud of it. Parents, who also have their say in the question of marriage, insist on two other points; the working capacity of the girl, and the absence of any witchcraft blot in the family. Should her mother have been convicted of being a witch, the girl will be feared. However, every girl finds a husband in the land where polygamy flourishes. If he be slow in coming, she will apply to her doctor, who will prepare the *love charms*, which will make her "appear," so that she will be noticed by the boys (See page 100). If even that does not succeed, she has other means at her disposal and may go herself to make proposals to a man (wopsana). He is seduced by her, and constitutes himself a thief who has *tlhuba*, viz. "taken in marriage by abduction" (See page 119). The parents will claim the lobolo and he must pay it. Marriage and childbearing remain the only carreer to which a Thonga woman can look forward. Hence a number of special feminine taboos which are very curious.

2) Special feminine taboos.

Some of them concern girls *before childbearing* and cease after parturition. In the Tembe and Maputju clans, girls must not eat pork, because pigs root nervously with their noses; the future child would also move its head from one side to the other, when on the verge of birth, and this would make delivery difficult. Other

Other

animals are taboo for girls : the *hare* because it is too cunning ;
262 and the antelope *nhlengane*. This antelope raises the foot when
825 it hears a noise ; hence the idea that its leg is hollow and that
784 it perceives the sound through it. The child would do the same,
562 if its mother were to eat the meat of the nhlengane. It would be unable to hear with its ears, only with its hands!

The *legs* of fowls (tibias) are also taboo for all women, because the hen scatters the sand... So are the *hoofs of oxen*, and *pigs' feet*. A woman eating them would walk too much... She would go everywhere to look for husbands!

784 It is taboo for a girl to *walk amongst pumpkin plants* (maranga),
562 to pluck the fruits. She is only allowed to pluck those which can
824 *be reached from outside. Were she to transgress this law*, she
751 would emit a bad odour, and no boy would court her. Her mother, having no fear of being despised, can walk amongst the pumpkins. A second taboo relative to pumpkins is this : unmarried women must cut a "pumpkin nose" (nhompfu) viz. the end of the stem, and fix it at their waist when plucking the pumpkins, lest they get abcesses in certain regions of their body.

784 It is taboo for them to eat cooked *oxen blood* (bubendje).
262 The following taboos apply also to *married women*. They are
562 not allowed to eat what is called *nkopfu*, viz. some parts of the
843 bowels which are cooked together with the stomach of the ox. "It would spoil the child inside." The *testicles*, which are generally given to the uterine nephew when the meat is distributed according to the laws, and the *underlip* of any animal are also forbidden to them. So is also the *tongue*... because it is reserved for old people as a mark of respect! The *rectum* (gobana) is taboo for women and children. Children might make unseemly noises from the rectum! Women must abstain from *porcupine* and *monkeys' flesh* ; all their offspr[illegible]uld resemble these animals. Such cases have happened, it [illegible] Women must not eat *eggs* ; they would run a double danger : their child might be born bald and remain so ; or they might be like a hen, which runs in all directions when laying an egg. They would have no peace in child bearing! (See also page 101.)

Nubile girls, during their "tiwheti," must not *approach the*

Nubile girls during their "tiwheti" must approach the oxen *kraal* and look at them. The cattle might suffer, be attacked by a bad cough (mukhulwane), get thin! This taboo is instituted to protect the oxen, not the human inhabitants of the village, as D. Kidd says is the case amongst the Zulus. (Part IV. Ch. I. E.) When women have passed the time of child-bearing, most of the taboos cease, and they can eat monkeys and porcupine if they wish!

3) The first year of married life.

I shall not return to the subject of marriage rites, which have been fully explained in the preceding chapter. Let me say that, though a Thonga woman cannot imagine life without marriage (ku kandja bukati), she does not enter on the new state with any enthusiasm. Her parents have warned her that she will be illtreated, accused of witchcraft and adultery, etc. Her sisters bewail her fate on her wedding day in song. The fact that she has been paid for, though it does not constitute an actual sale, puts her in an inferior position (See Part II).

During the first year, she has no *ndangu*, viz. no fire-place of her own. She cooks for her mother-in-law. During the three first weeks the husband eats with her and with the girl who accompanied her to her new home. Afterwards, he goes back to eat with the men. In some places it would seem that the husband eats with her the whole year, until she has her own pot (hlembeto).

4) Husband and wife.

What are the relations between husband and wife after the honey-moon? Of course they vary very much according to the character of both. As a rule however, the married people have very little intimacy with each other; the man remains with his companions on the "bandla," the village square where they meet, and only occasionally comes into the "ndangu," the reed enclosure of the fire-place, which is the true domain of the

586 mere incompatibility of temper. Heathen men are often hard
362 to their wives. They refuse to give them money to buy
378 clothing. "They are stones," said one of these men to me. "Though you scratch a stone with your nail, the nail will break and the stone will remain!" On the other hand, the women are by no means sweet, obedient creatures ; therefore quarrelling often takes place. When she thinks she is persecuted (shanisa), the wife *runs home*. This is her great weapon. The husband heaves a sigh of relief... But very soon he becomes aware of his misfortune. No food, no cooked meal in the evening! His companions share their own food with him for some days, but they will not consent to feed him long. He will have to go modestly, humbly to his parents-in-law and ask his wife to return. Then they enquire into the matter, and he perhaps receives a good scolding. It may be that the domestic life will improve, both fearing the renewal of the conflict. It may however be that the situation will grow worse and worse, and then it will lead to divorce, viz. the husband will claim his money and, when he gets it back, the marriage is dissolved (ku dlawa ka bukati).

An accusation of witchcraft may also cause divorce, especially after the death of a child ; so also can sterility, as we have seen, p. 190. Gross selfishness on the part of the husband may lead to it ; many tales tell the story of a man who in time of famine succeeded in killing an antelope, kept the meat for himself and did not give any to his wife and children. The wife noticed it and, when the famine came to an end, she invited all her relatives to a beer feast. Then she shewed them the bones of the antelope, telling them how badly her husband had treated her ; her parents took her home together with the children. Sometimes the conclusion of the tale is that the man even lost his lobolo money, as a punishment for his evil deed! (See *Grammaire Ronga*, page 202. *Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, page 260.)

11) Widowhood.

783 When a man dies all his relatives are contaminated by the
765 defilement of death, as we have seen (Page 143). There are concentric circles around him, some people being more affected

783 than others. The wives form the first circle, especially the first
765 wife. They have therefore to perform peculiar purifying cerem-
562 onies which throw great light on the profound feelings of the Thongas regarding life and nature. On the other hand they are the property of the husband's family and they are part of his belongings. How are they to be distributed amongst his heirs ? This is a very delicate matter. It is more or less regulated by the tribal law. Hence there are two series of rites to consider, in the customs relating to widows : 1) The rites of purification, 2) the laws of distribution.

783 Let us describe first the fate of the great wife amongst the
765 Rongas (See for supplementary details : The fate of widows amongst the Ba-Ronga. S.A.A.A.S. 1909).

a) *The first day*. Manyibane is dead! — a sad event for his wife. She is called to inspect his grave. She assists silently at his funeral. But as soon as the younger brother of the deceased has finished praying, she bursts into tears and cries aloud! Her parents cry also : "Our child has fallen into misfortune! Now the cold has come for her! She will learn to know the cold water!" This is an allusion to the kind of life which the new widow will have to lead. Every morning she must go to the lake or the pool, with her companions, to have her whole body washed till the days of purification are completed.

783 The first of these purifying rites is performed just after the
765 burial. The widow, surrounded by other women, goes to the
575 pool and there all must wash their bodies. Most of them return home at once. But the widow remains there with *other widows* who have lost their husbands in former years. They form a *secret society* which assembles only to receive new members into its ranks. Nobody must see the strange rites performed by them. It is a *Ngoma* (the same word as for the circumcision school). However, the mysterious company takes possession of the great road (gondjwen), and every one must take care not to pass along it at that time, for great misfortune might overtake the imprudent one who should approach too near and catch a glimpse of the proceedings. A wise man, on seeing the suspicious group

768 left by a man. When they have been distributed, the minor
428 possessions of the deceased are adjudicated. As regards *oxen,*
604 *money*, these have been already remitted to the younger brother or, in his absence, to the sons. The younger brother will use them as family property to buy a wife for his son or for the son of the deceased, when he comes of age. In the distribution of the implements which have been cleansed, but left lying on the ground in front of the hut up to this day, the *ntukulu*, viz. the principal uterine nephew again plays an important part. He has the right of *tjhumba*, viz. of picking out for himself one of the assagais of his uncle, just as the maternal uncle takes (tjhumba) one pound from the lobola money (See Part II). Every warrior possesses at least two assagais ; the big one belongs in principle to the chief, and must be inherited by the eldest son. The nephew takes the smaller one, but he must precede his cousin in choosing ; in appropriating this weapon, he *surrenders* or transmits (nyiketa) the inheritance to the true heirs. This is a very characteristic expression. It seems as if he wished to assert his right ; but he takes the less valuable weapon and leaves the better one to the son. The explanation of this custom is probably to be found in the evolution of the family system which must have taken place amongst the Thongas (See Part II). In fact all the *batukulu* stand in a line and receive a portion of the property of the deceased, a knife, an axe, a small punch, etc. Women never inherit (a ba di
562 pfindla). When no heir exists except females, they may receive
428 something, but the valuable property must be kept by them for their sons, the uterine nephews of the deceased. Why ? Because, in the mind of the Thongas, a woman is not capable of possessing ; she is not able to build an oxen kraal and repair it ; how could she possess oxen ? The only thing she can do is to arrange a pig's kraal. Therefore she can own pigs, but nothing else !

768 The end of the feast of the adjudication of the inheritance is the distribution of the flesh of the victims. The company breaks up, each party having received one of the limbs. They must eat it on their way home, somewhere under a tree, on the road ; neither in the mortuary village, nor in their own kraal. It is

583 the new conditions, especially when a stay of a year or two in
177 Johannesburg was long enough to save the necessary sum. Boys who had no sister, and who would have been destitute in former times, could then dream of a *tshenwge* viz., of marrying three or four wives! And they had this advantage that, their wives not having been bought with family property (their sister's oxen), no bakoñwana could disturb them in their domestic happiness, as may happen to those who marry by means of the first-mentioned lobolo.

This leads us to consider :

583 II. *The original meaning and the consequences of the lobola.*

As we have said previously, the only way of understanding the lobola, as well as other similar payments in kind which we meet with amongst a great number of uncivilized or half civilized nations, (1) is to consider it as *a compensation given by one group to another group*, in order to restore the equilibrium between the various collective units composing the clan. The first group acquires a new member : the second feels itself diminished, and claims something which permits it to reconstitute itself, in its turn, by the acquisition of another woman. This collectivist conception alone explains all the facts.

583 In this way, the acquired wife, though she keeps her shibongo
562 (clan name), becomes the property of the first group. She is
593 aggregated to it by complicated marriage ceremonies, representing
618 the passage from one family to another. She is owned by the new family, herself and the children who will be born of her. She is not in any way a slave, but she is nevertheless owned. She is not the individual property of one man, but the collective property of a group. Hence the following facts :

1) Her whole family take part in the marriage ceremonies, especially on the day when the lobola is brought by the bridegroom

(1) See A. van Gennep, *Les Rites de passage*, p. 170. The *Kalym* of the Turko-Mongolians, the *Nyen* of Southern Thibet, etc., correspond to the Bantu lobola.

583 concluded on the lobola basis, are frequently dissolved (1). The
586 tie being purely material, it is easy to sever it. When the husband
562 "bitana tihomu," claims his oxen, who could refuse to return
593 them ? It is certainly erroneous to say that the lobola is a contract made between two families in order to guarantee the good treatment of the wife by her husband and vice versa, to prevent the husband beating his wife or the wife deserting the conjugal home from mere caprice. It has even been asserted that this sum of money was a pledge, a security, claimed by the wife's parents for the protection of their daughter! There is nothing of the kind in this institution. The exhortations addressed to the bride on the day of her *hloma* (page 118) prove clearly enough that, on the contrary, owing to the lobola, the husband has every right over her, and that she has no right to protest if he uses or abuses this right.

2) Bad consequences of the lobola custom.

583 1) And this is the first *regrettable consequence of the lobolo* : the
562 woman is undoubtedly reduced to an *inferior position* by the fact that she has been lobola. *a)* This appears clearly in the fact that, though she is not looked upon exactly as a head of cattle, a marriageable girl is in principle entirely at the mercy of her family as regards the choice of her husband. In the same way a widow to be inherited is in the hands of her deceased husband's family.

586 (1) I will give only one example which I witnessed amongst my neighbours and
548 which shows that, with women of loose character, at any rate, the payment of lobolo helps very little to strengthen the matrimonial tie. A girl named Hlapfuta, daughter of Bandi, married a first husband. The "bukosi" (name commonly given to the lobolo money) was used to procure a wife for her brother. But she left her husband and was married by Nwamusi. This second husband paid the lobolo, which was then returned to the first. But Hlapfuta ran away a second time and joined a man called Matshubele. She did the same thing five consecutive times, and finally she moved to Majlangalela, to the suburbs of Lourenzo Marques, the favourite quarter of the prostitutes. There she was lost, and the "bukosi" also. Her paternal uncle, who had been put to any amount of trouble to recover the "bukosi" in order to give it back to the five abandoned husbands, seeing that it would be impossible to satisfy the last, could no longer bear the strain and committed suicide by hanging himself from a tree not far from my house in Rikatla. The debt remained with the girl's brother who "had eaten the bukosi."

583 562 593 Men are often better than their principles, and we have seen in the study of marriage and inheritance customs that the consent of a girl, and of a widow, is generally asked before any decision takes place. This is done as long as the male masters of the woman have no special interest in the choice. But should they have reason to impose a certain husband upon her, they will not hesitate to force her to accept him ; a young girl will be given up to a dirty old man, for whom she has no liking, on account of a lobola debt of twenty years standing! The lobola hardens the heart and the woman is unable to defend herself. She can always run away. But where will she hide, if all her relatives agree on her being sacrificed to the interest of the family ? Or she can threaten to commit suicide, and she occasionally does so. *b)* She must work for her husband, who gives her very little in return. It is true that she is not a *slave*. She is however *owned*. *c)* This is partly the cause of the shocking difference established between a husband and his wife. The married woman is henceforth absolutely prohibited from adulterous relations — which is a very admirable provision — but her husband is quite free in this respect : he has not been bought.
593 562 586 *d)* As regards her children, whatever may be her love for them, she does not in fact possess them. They belong to the father. If divorce takes place and the lobolo is not returned to the husband, he keeps them and the mother will be separated from them for ever (1).

583 606 578 2) A second series of consequences arising from this custom are the *strained relations* between the two contracting groups. We have sufficiently insisted on this subject. What makes dealings with parents-in-law so difficult ? It is the lobolo, the sum of money which has perhaps not been Fully paid, and

(1) The Rev. H. Dieterlen, of Basutoland, in a paper on the lobola, wrote the following words, which apply to the Thongas as well as to the Ba-Sutho : "A woman married under lobola bears children but possesses none. The children belong to those who gave the cattle. Whatever may be her own merits, she can see her children pass into the hands of the rawest heathen and be given over to the cupidity of rapacious and rascally relatives. She can be illtreated, driven away, abandoned, repudiated : she will have to live without children ; she will resemble a woman who has never had any. She is not supposed to have the heart and the feelings of a mother. And her children are treated as if they had no filial affection."

247 (L.), with its white or pink blossoms, which have spread all over
351 the coast.

Having now finished our first general inspection, let us add some details about the huts and the open places in the village.

342 The hut, the construction of which we shall describe later on,
784 (Part IV) has an opening (nyangwa) of variable dimensions closed by a door. In some parts of the Gaza country it is so small that one must positively crawl to enter it. Everywhere one must at any rate stoop low (korama). As regards the *threshhold* (ntjandja wa shipfalo), it is not taboo to step over it. The headman's threshhold however is dreaded because it was treated with medicines when the hut was built, so it is taboo to sit on it ; these powerful medicines might do harm and
342 even cause death. In the middle of the black clay floor is a
354 kind of raised circle, in the centre of which fire is occasionally lighted in winter on account of the cold. It is the interior *shitiko*. Cooking may be done here if it rains ; glowing embers sometimes remain on it during the night and numberless babies have been burnt to death by falling into the fire while their mothers were
513 sleeping. On the left, on entering, is the sleeping place (shilawo)
853 of the wife, on the right that of the husband. They both however
841 generally spread their mats on the right and sleep beside each other. It is only during the tabooed periods (menses, nursing), that the husband must keep to his own particular side (p. 188).

353 The back of the hut is generally occupied by the big basket (ngula) in which clothing and seeds are kept. This spot is called *mfungwe*. In the roof *(lwangu)* are fixed or suspended various articles : ears of sorghum or millet, cobs to be used as seed at the next sowing, assagais, sticks and knobkerries etc., and against the walls one frequently observes rough drawings made with white clay, or, in the vicinity of towns, chromos of Queen Victoria, Edward VII, or Don Carlos, as the case may be!

361 The hubo and the bandla differ from each other. *Bandla* is
351 a Zulu word which has supplanted the Ronga term *shisiso*, viz.,
562 "the place where one finds shelter from the wind." Men light a small fire there to warm themselves. They also eat together

361 in the bandla, and it is strictly reserved for them. Women are
351 allowed to penetrate into it only when they bring food. Boys
562 must remove the ashes from the fireplace, not women. The *hubo*, on the contrary, is open to all. A shed is sometimes built on it to afford shelter during the rainy days. There are special acts always performed on the hubo : the cutting up (shindla), the slaughtering and butchery of animals and the feast of "eating the head." The head of any slaughtered ox belongs to the men, and they eat it together on the hubo (See letter C.). It is the business of the young men to keep the hubo clean, and they sometimes assemble to pull up the grass which may have grown on it. In former times it was taboo to come to the hubo with
292 sandals. Sandals are used for hunting and must be taken off before entering the village.

Another place to which I have already alluded is the *bukwele*,
361 the "place of jealousy," where angry co-wives insult each other!
351 On our diagram it would be located between 5 and 4, for the
595 wives of the headman.

The Thonga village, this closed circle of huts, is a living
361 organism. All its members form a whole whose unity is remark-
596 able. This common life never appears in a more striking form
264 than at the evening meal. Let us look at our diagram. In every
476 yard the mistress of the hut has cooked her mealies and her sauce in different pots, and, when the sun sets, she distributes the contents (phamela) in wooden or earthen plates. The largest is for the husband. He sits on the bandla with his companions, the other men of the village, and the youths waiting for the meal. All these plates, generally carried by small girls or boys, are brought from all sides to the men's gathering. All do not necessarily contain the ordinary mealies pap ; some are filled with manioc, some with sweet potatoes, etc. The men attack the first plate, all of them taking the food with their fingers. They pass on to the second and so on to the last. Meanwhile each mother has filled other smaller plates, one for the girls, one for the boys, one for herself. She has even sent to each of the other women of the village a little of her cooking, and the others have done the same to her ; so each member of the community, when

621 1) *Social rites.* The muti, as we have seen, is a little organised
596 community having its own laws, amongst which the most important
833 seems to be the law of hierarchy. The elder brother is the undisputed
768 master and no one can supersede him. He is the owner of the village. No one must "steal it" from him. Should any one do so, the whole community would suffer and no children would be born ; the life of the organism would be deeply affected. That is the reason why the headman must go first with his principal wife to have relations with her in the new village, and thus *take possession* of it or *tie* it. For this same reason, when the headman dies, the village *must* move. It is taboo to remain in it. Until the inheritance has been distributed, it is still *his home* (kwa kwe) ; but as soon as this ceremony has taken place, the villagers must go away, and close the door with a thorny branch. The part played by the
621 principal wife in all these ceremonies is most remarkable. It is
595 absolutely imperative that the headman should "tie the village" with her,
562 and not with another of his spouses. Should she be very old, the law
768 must be observed all the same ; should she be ill, and unable to have sexual
764 relations, the village simply cannot be moved. In the Northern clans we see her taking the shield and the assagai, closing the village and "giving it" to the inmates, even performing a sacrifice and praying to the gods. It is very rare to see a woman presiding at a public religious ceremony ; but she is the owner of the village as well as the headman. Moving is imperative when she dies as well as after the death of the headman. The main gate must also be closed and a new entrance made in the fence to be used during the year of mourning ; in the case of her death, this opening must be made on the left of the regular *mharana*, whilst, when the husband dies, it is made on the right side ; just as in the hut, when the corpse is removed for burial. (See page 138.)

351 2) *Protective rites.* These are those which concern the fence. This
789 fence does not afford material protection. The branches dry up very
621 soon and, in the case of a bush-fire, for instance, they would do more harm than good. It is a spiritual protection, a barrier of charms, of magic influences, to prevent the entrance of wizards and of all the hostile powers of the bush. We shall understand this better when treating of witchcraft superstitions. (Part VI.)

182 3) *Passage rites.* The reader will have been surprised to observe
621 amongst the ceremonies of the moving of villages, many features which we have already met with in the circumcision school, or in the
829 mourning customs. At first sight there seems to be no relation whatever between the moving of a village, the initiation of boys and the

622 596 affecting the life of the village are generally settled there. Questions discussed with strangers and those regarding which there is no secrecy, and in which every one can take part, are discussed *on the central square*, on the "hubo". *Hubo* means the square, and also the council of the men of the village which the headman summons there to settle matters (ku khanela timhaka). Should they be able to come to an agreement together or with their visitors who have come to bring a claim, the matter is "cut" (ba tjema mhaka), viz., "ended". In the opposite case, when they disagree altogether, the question will be carried to a third place, before the *hubo of the chief*, in the capital. (See Part III).

562 Every one is welcome to take part in the discussions except women. As a rule men speak as little as possible with women on these matters. If a husband has a sensible, discreet wife, he may ask her advice. But if he has agreed with his companions on a point and changes his mind after having spoken with his wife, he will be severely blamed and accused of "spoiling the village" (hona muti).

622 596 672 The headman is more or less *responsible for all the claims* lodged against his subordinates. Should one of his younger brothers be prosecuted for a debt, the creditors will go to the numzane, and he cannot say: "This matter does not concern me." He will say to his brother: "Pay your debt," and, if the brother has no funds, he will help him, if possible, but it is only a loan, and the younger brother will pay back the money. As a rule members of the same family help each other in these matters. This is so much the custom that children are expected to pay the debts of their deceased parents, even if they have not inherited anything from them. This does not however procede from a moral sense of family dignity. They do it because the native authorities hold them responsible. They might be "arrested". In the case of a father who has died still owing some lobola money, the children will try to pay, but they will do it in order to obtain possession of the woman. Should a father have committed adultery with a married woman, and die without having paid the fine, his heirs are not considered responsible. On the other hand, if the father has been condemned as a wizard

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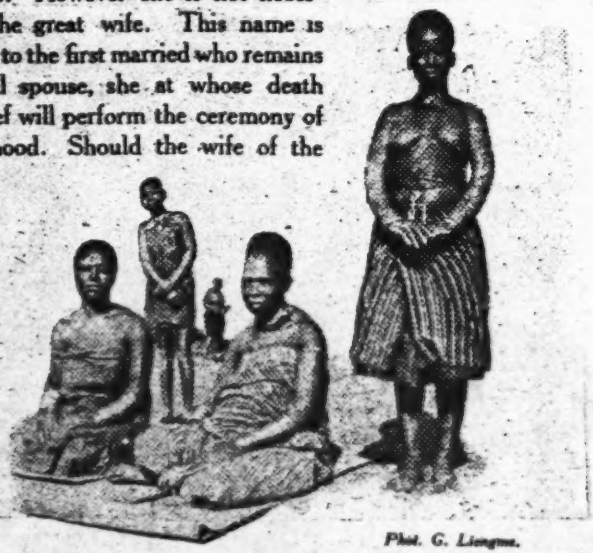
As regards the *queens* (tinkosikazi, a Zulu word), the chief's wives, there is not much to say about them. We have seen that one of them occupies a particularly honourable position, having been bought with the people's money and being "the wife of the country," she whose son will be the heir to the chieftainship. However she is not necessarily the great wife. This name is applied to the first married who remains the real spouse, she at whose death the chief will perform the ceremony of widowhood. Should the wife of the



Phot. G. Liengme.

Ngoni Queens.

country die and should she not be the first married, he will not go through that rite on her account.

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Princesses are lobola with more money than ordinary girls. Except in this, they do not differ from them. It is not common for a woman to be called to the dignity of chieftainship amongst the Thongas; in this respect they differ from the Ba-Pedi, or Transvaal Ba-Sutho, who have had many illustrious reigning queens: Modjadji, Male etc. I only know one such case amongst the Rongas, and the queen was still living in 1912. Her name was Midambuze, daughter of Dambuze. Dambuze was the chief of a part of the Mabota country, northward of Lourenço Marques.

643 On his death, his son Gwaba was put in his place. But he was
~~362~~ deported by the Portuguese and his sister, Midambuze, filled the
582 position. Consequently she was not lobola, but chose a husband for herself, a man of common origin (a titlhuba nuna). Her son may succeed her ; in this case only can a uterine nephew of a chief take his place.

643 At Gungunyana's court queens played a great part. This
834 seems to be in accordance with the Zulu custom. After the death
847 of Chaka's mother, sexual relations were taboo for the whole tribe during one year, and children conceived during that time were put to death by order of the chief! (See Colenso : Ten weeks in Natal.)

643 I know of no case in which a foreigner became chief of a clan through having married one of its princesses. He can become hosana, but the true hosana will be his wife and he himself will be but a prince consort. I have heard of two instances in which this happened.

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726 have given you all my strength ; go and slay." They crossed the
789 river at night and having reached the left bank, at a point about ten
751 kilometers from the Portuguese camp at Morakwene, they were made to observe the strictest silence for a long time. Then they felt that valour (burena) had taken possession of them!

Amongst the Ba-Nkuna the war-medicine is also administered under the form of *sprinkling*. This sprinkling may take place in time of peace, when danger threatens. The chief kills a black ox and the army, summoned to the capital, is sprinkled and eats the flesh of the ox. This will make the country ready for any eventuality. But the ceremony is much more serious when war is at hand. Then the "great medicine of the country," carefully kept in the calabashes of the Court magicians, is mixed with *psanyi* of slaughtered sheep and with white sand taken from the river. During the night, the mukhumbi is formed and all the men sit down, their heads bowed over their knees,
726 their eyes closed, in perfect silence. Then one of the queens,
789 an old woman who no longer has any sexual relations, enters
751 the circle, absolutely naked. She dips a leafy branch into the
562 magical infusion and marches all round, inside and outside, sprinkling all the warriors and muttering the following words : "Kill them, break their pots, kill their dogs, catch their chief, bring him here, bring so-and-so and so-and-so." The warriors tremble with emotion. They pray to their gods in a low tone : "Save me! Help me!" But none of them dares to raise his eyes! They know quite well that they would die!

It is extremely important that the officiating woman should be old and have had no sexual relations for a long time, or "the assagais would lose their strength ; the masculine weapons would become blind and the feminine weapons alone would see... The woman would have untied the knot of the assagai ; she would cross the way (tjemakanya) of the great medicine... She must be a quiet woman (a rula)". (Mankhelu).

726 Similar customs exist in *Maputju*, where the medicine is called
789 "the medicine of hatred,"—that which dispels all natural feeling
828 and makes a man capable of killing his fellow-man! I give the particulars of this curious medical treatment as I have them from

of the bush are also burnt as soon as the grass dries up, so as to obtain fresh grass as early as possible in the spring. In autumn, after the harvest, oxen are allowed to wander about in the gardens, where they eat the mealies and millet and sorghum stems, and find better grass. 231

The Thongas castrate most of their bulls ; however they keep one or two in each herd for breeding purposes. Strange to say, these beasts are generally very tame ; they are hardly any wilder than the castrated oxen. However, the boys sharpen their horns and excite the bulls of different herds to fight. They pour live ants on their foreheads to irritate them. They give them names ; e. g. Makonyama, the one who threatens on both sides, — Mombomakhele, the one who has curly hair on his head, the terrible one, — Ndhontlha-ba-tsha, shisa-sha-munga, the one who beats the fire... people are burnt by the sparks as by embers of the mimosa tree, — Mabala-ya-tilo, the "stripes of heaven," — Mabata-bata, the one with many spots, etc. Many of these names are suggested by the colouring of the animals (1). I never heard songs in praise of the cattle similar to those found amongst the Ba-Sutho for instance. It does not seem that oxen have at any time played such an important part in the tribal life of the Thongas as is the case amongst Zulus or Suthos. 231 552

Women, especially those of childbearing age and having sexual relations, are not allowed to take care of oxen. It is taboo. When they require dung to smear the huts, they send little children or girls whose menses have not yet begun or who are at any rate unmarried, to fetch it from the oxen kraal. When oxen are sick, they are entrusted to the care of little girls, who must sometimes stay with them as long as two months without returning home. We have already met with these feminine taboos concerning oxen (I. p. 184) and seen that these prohibitions are based on the idea that the menstrual blood is as dangerous for oxen as for 231 562 841 784

(1) Native cattle are by no means of pure breed. There are many races which have been crossed : a small race with short horns and another with large lyre-shaped horns, probably brought from the Transvaal to the coast of Delagoa Bay. Madagascar oxen, with their strange prominence on the back, resembling zebus, have also been imported in great numbers into Lourenço Marques for butcher's purposes. Possibly some have been used for breeding.

231 men having relations with women during menstruation (I. p. 187).
562 Should a drop of it fall in the cattle kraal, this would endanger the
841 health of the whole herd. Women are even prohibited from
784 passing through a herd of oxen ; they must go round it, because otherwise the death of the calves would ensue. Amongst the Ba-Ngoni this taboo is so strong that a woman guilty of having transgressed against it was put to death (1).

231 The object of oxen-breeding is not milk but the acquisition
262 of *wealth* ; oxen mean wealth to the Native, a means of purchasing
556 girls and of thus increasing his family. Oxen are also bred for food, the meat being highly appreciated and divided amongst all the members of the family according to the strict rules previously explained (I. p. 329). The slaughtering is done by piercing the heart with an assagai, a painful and sometimes very protracted operation. This occurs at marriage feasts, at other family and national gatherings, at the sacrifice for rain (Part VI), and on special occasions, once a year for instance, when a headman wishes to feast his people. All, even neighbours who are not relatives and travellers, are welcome to the feast. Natives have wonderful olfactory powers. They seem to smell out the *lisuna*, viz., the peculiar odour of the meat, a mile off, and when an ox has been killed you see them emerging from the bush on all sides!

234 As regards *milk*, it certainly plays a part in the food of villages which are fortunate enough to possess a well-filled oxen kraal. The *milking* of the cows presents difficulties unknown in Europe! African cows have not yet learned to submit tamely to this operation! The calf must always be allowed to suck a few mouthfuls, then a boy pulls it away from the teat and the cow consents to be milked. Should a cow be too wild, they pass a string through its

241 (1) We meet here with an interesting instance of a superstition having no scientific
462 basis whatever, which is nevertheless productive of good results. Women must keep apart from oxen. Since the plough was introduced amongst South African Natives, they have been quick to notice that it is a very useful instrument, and have adopted it in many places. The plough has to be drawn by oxen and men alone are allowed to drive them. Thus women are relieved of the heavy work of tilling the fields which had been allotted to them by immemorial custom. It is probable that further knowledge will free the Natives from their old fear and from the taboo which resulted from it ; yet the idea that everything connected with oxen belongs to the domain of man will remain and thus real social progress will have been obtained through an absurd superstition !

a) The Priesthood.

The Thongas have no sacerdotal caste, but, as has already been 782
pointed out, the right of officiating in religious ceremonies is 793
strictly confined to *the eldest brother*. All offerings must be made 593
through him. To supplant him is a great taboo, and would entail the malediction of the gods, and even the death of the offender. There are, however, some minor offerings which anyone is allowed to make to his gods ; for instance, a lover who has been jilted, may, after having consulted the bones, give something to his god in order to obtain his aid in regaining the favour of the girl he loves. But, as a rule, no one must *hahla*, or even *gandjela*, before the death of his parents. If, after their death, their son should happen to dream of them, he must offer worship to the deceased by pouring some ground tobacco on to his wooden pillow, this being the commencement of his religious functions : "he begins to learn to gandjela" (Rangane), and, if he is the eldest, he may in course of time become the priest of the whole family. I heard, however, a man from Tembe assert that he had *hahla* when his father was still living, but in this case he had been designated by the bones. A little child may even perform the office if the bones order it ; his father will then hold him in his arms and pray in his stead. The bones often call on *women* to [562]
pronounce the prayer, especially the elder sister ; there is no anti-feminism in Thonga religion. In the *luma* ceremony, however, it must always be a man, the chief himself, who is the principal officiant. The wives of the clansmen naturally cannot take a prominent part in the offerings made for the clan, being themselves members of another clan and having their own ancestor-gods, to

(I. p. 268), offerings being frequently made to the gods of the mother's family through 782
the agency of the maternal uncle. Hence the fact that uterine nephews take such a 604
peculiar part in the ritual of the worship.

I must add that according to information just received from the Rev. A. Jaques, in the Northern clans uterine nephews do not steal the portion of the offerings put apart for the ancestor-gods. It seems that this custom, which I believe to be ancient, is met with essentially amongst the Ronga clans, where the special term *mupsyana* (an old Bantu word corresponding to *um-tshana* in Xosa and *mochana* in Sutho) has also been preserved to designate the uterine nephew, whilst it has fallen into disuse in the Northern clans. (Compare I. p. 162, 232, 498.)

No special use is made of the *bones* of the victim, except, as we shall see later, in offerings on behalf of those possessed. The only part kept is the *astragalus*, or the *psirungulo* just described, which are tied to the person on whose behalf the sacrifice has been made, probably to insure for him a permanent blessing from the gods. 782 777

It must be observed that the sacrificial ritual, as well as the medical art, lays great stress on the *sex* of the offerings. As a rule, there must be opposition between the sex of the victim and that of the person for whom, or to whom, the sacrifice is made. A woman is prayed for by means of a he-goat or a cock, and a man by a she-goat or a hen. 782 755 562

What is the reason of this rule? — "Psi yaka muti," says my informant. "It builds up the village." As a village can only grow and multiply by the union of the male and the female element, so in order to succeed in any pursuit it is necessary to unite both sexes. This principle is universally applied : when a girl is ill, a boy will bring her medicine, and vice-versa. The rule is also followed in another case. It may be that a mhamba has been wrongly performed and threatens to bring misfortune instead of appeasing the gods. This mhamba must consequently be "quenched, timula" "so that it may keep quiet and cool down, because it might cause annoyance and overcome them" (Mboza). This will be done by offering a mhamba of the opposite sex, which will correct the first. So if a female nkanye twig has been employed in the funeral ceremony, when the ritual ought to have been performed with a twig taken from a male stem, the ceremony will be repeated with a male twig in order to quench the first mhamba.

The last observation to be made about the gifts presented to the ancestor-gods is that the *psirungulo*, viz. the part of the victim which is tied to the person for whose sake it has been sacrificed, must be attached to the left part of the body if this person belongs to the female, to the right if to the male sex ; moreover in the sacrifices offered to maternal gods, the attachment is always done on the left side, whatever may be the sex of the person. Why is this? Because the left side belongs to the woman, the right to the man. We have seen that this is the case in the hut (I. p. 187). 782 562

782 *Shimantji* is the term used for left ; its etymology is unknown.
562 *Shinene* means right ; it also indicates nice, good, true. In this as in many other instances the male sex has arrogated to itself the better part!

782 2) *The magical objects used in worship*. First of all comes *the*
789 *great mhamba*, the nails, hair or faces of deceased chiefs. We are
778 evidently dealing here with a case of *communionist magic*. I explain in the same way the use of roots brought to light by a river which has washed away the ground (p. 387), but it may be that this is also an instance of *imitative magic* : the roots were hidden in the soil and have come to light ; in the same way the ancestor-gods have been buried in the ground and have again come forth to bless or curse their descendants. The curious astragalus bone of an antelope which had been swallowed by a hyena and found later in its stools and which Mankhelu employed to represent the gods in his divinatory set of bones, would favour this second explanation. In fact most of these objects are supposed to act in virtue of the principle of similarity : the nkanye twig, because this venerated tree will ensure respect to the person, living or dead, for whom it is used ; the piece of charcoal, because the enemy will be reduced to impotence just as the piece of wood has been consumed by fire ; the thorn employed by the general of the army, because the warriors will be able to pierce their opponents and kill them, etc. Is the number of magic objects used in this connection limited to those I have mentioned? I do not think so. It is probable that some others may be found in the various parts of the tribe. I even have proof that new objets of a magic character are still invented by worshippers who are gifted with special imaginative powers. My old friend Mankhelu was telling me the particulars of the battle of Nov. 1901, during the Sikororo war (I. p. 513), when suddenly jumping to his feet and taking a small bundle of grass, he said : "Listen! I will show you the mhamba I made when the enemy rushed on us. I took a bundle of grass like those which women use for binding their sticks, and feverishly separated the blades, saying : 'Let them fail to surround us, or decoy us!' Then I scattered them in all directions and said : 'Let them be so dispersed, carried off and destroyed!' And this is exactly what happened.

881 for the Nkunas near Leydsdorp. They have a special word for
304 the physical operation, *yimba*, (in Ronga *soka*) which is used together with *ngoma* (Sutho *goma*), the generic term for all the customs connected with it. (It must not be forgotten that the word *ngoma* is also used for other initiations, especially for the initiation of widows, as will be seen in Chap. II.)

881 Amongst the Ba-Ronga, circumcision was abandoned more
175 than a hundred years ago, before the arrival of Manukosi, and
304 they were called *Ba-butoya*, the cowards, by other Northern clans, who said they feared the sufferings of that cruel school. Mboza has seen some old Ronga men who had been circumcised probably at the begining of the XIXth Century. It is well known that somewhat later Chaka put a stop to the custom amongst the Zulus; it did not fit in with the new military system inaugurated by him. When the Ngoni general Manukosi invaded the plains of the Low Country, it is not surprising that circumcision disappeared in those clans also. The constant fighting which prevailed in those troubled times did not allow men to stay three consecutive months in a circumcision lodge. It was feared also that circumcised boys would be killed by the enemy, being unable to run away in case of an invasion.. But old men in the Bilen country assert that the *Ngoma* is a very old custom amongst the Thongas, and that it has long been practised by all their clans.

881 Is it possible to ascertain its *true origin*? My informants,
177 Viguet especially, were convinced that the Ngoma was brought
363 to the tribes of the Northern Transvaal by the *Ma-Lemba*, and it
304 is a historical fact that, as regards the Ba-Venda of that country, the rite was adopted quite recently under the influence of the Ma-Lemba. These Ma-Lemba are a very curious people, living amongst the Thongas and the Suthos of Zoutpansberg, just like the Jews amongst the European nations, without a chief, without national unity, but with characteristic customs to which they adhere from generation to generation... They resemble the Jews in the fact that they do not eat flesh unless all the blood has been first carefully drained away. They dread eating blood above all else, and they shave at each new moon. They brought with them

1: Junod M-5 .(1895-1909)1927 Thonga

881 the metallurgic art and introduced domestic fowls into the country.
177 All these facts tend to show that they have had intimate relations
663 with Semitic peoples, and they themselves declare that they came from the North by sea and reached the coast after shipwreck. Now they practise circumcision with great assiduity and hold a special position in the lodges of the Spelonken. They are called there the masters of the Ngoma (1). Circumcision is wide-spread amongst Semitic nations, and one might be tempted to infer from these remarks that the custom has been taught to the Bantus by Semitic masters. This is certainly true as regards the Ba-Venda in the Spelonken (2).

In South Africa the Ngoma is much older than the arrival of the Ma-Lemba (which can be fixed some time during the XVIIIth century). What happened in Spelonken, through the agency of the Ma-Lemba, during the XIXth century, may have taken place at some earlier date in the case of other South African tribes, and the Semitic origin of the Ngoma is quite possible, though there is no proof at present extant.

2) General characteristics of the circumcision rites.

881 I am treating here of the rites as they are met with amongst
115 the Thongas of Spelonken especially ; my informants on this point have been Viguet, who was initiated some 60 years ago, and Valdo, a much younger man, who went through the rites 30 years ago; both are from Spelonken. There Thonga and Bvesha (Sutho) candidates enter the same lodges. A boy named Pikinini revealed to me the secret formulae as they are recited amongst the Nkunas
881 (Leydsdorp). The rites certainly vary amongst the tribes and they seem to have been simplified in late years, but there is a general resemblance between them all. Pedis have two circumcision

(1) I note in a paper by the Rev. W. A. Norton on the puberty rites of the Basuto (S. A. *Journal of Science* March 1910) that, if a Bushman is in a lodge, he takes precedence amongst the Suthos and that there circumcision is derived from the Bushmen just as it is from the Ma-Lembain the Zoutpansberg.

(2) See my paper on the "Balemba of the Zoutpansberg" *Folklore*, Sept. 1908 and also, "*Zidji*," my South African novel. Chap. II. (Saint-Blaise, Foyer Solidariste).

On their way back, they had carefully to watch a certain bird 437
called *hwati*, fish-eater; if this bird flew in the right direction, 787
homeward, it was a hopeful sign. If it emitted its cry 825
kwekweru-kweru, (kweru means at home), or if it settled on the crown of a hut, then the travellers were happy and shouted their joyful *mikulungwane*. On the contrary, if any member of the company had died on the road, another bird, the *magudjwana*, would come and perch on the crown, with a tired air and drooping head... Then there were tears instead of shouts of joy!

These great commercial expeditions were superseded later on 439
by the *trade in skins* which the Ba-Ronga conducted, bartering them in the interior for powder or other European produce. I knew one Native who organised regular expeditions to Bilene, where he bought the skins of civet-cats with which the Zulu warriors delight to deck themselves. Thence he went into the hill country of the Swazis, or Zulus, to sell his merchandise. It was reported that he obtained scores of oxen in exchange for his precious nsimba skins. The last time, however, the venture did not turn out well, and it has not been attempted again.

Native trade, fifty years ago, consisted also in selling *wax*, and *rubber*, and tons of *nkampfi* (mafureira almonds) to the business houses at Delagoa, (the supply of ivory was exhausted years ago), but this trade has fallen off almost entirely. My impression is that Native commerce has greatly diminished during the last fifty years. So the fact is evident that civilisation, which at first gave a decided stimulus to the commercial spirit of the Thongas, has latterly almost entirely destroyed their trade. How has this been done?

One reason for this decrease in Native commerce may be 439
found in the advent of a large number of Asiatics, Banyans from 563
Goa and Bombay, who are past masters in the art of shopkeeping, and who set up in business wherever they consider there is a sufficient population to warrant the venture. Living very cheaply (rice and curry are their staple food), in any kind of shanty, selling at enormous profits, keen at making bargains, these people

½ [illegible] 10 L.C., Traders--analysis

439 monopolise the retail trade throughout the country, and the
563 Natives are quite unable to meet this competition; they have consequently almost entirely given up all their earlier attempts at business transactions! (1)

167 A second reason why the trade of former days has almost
439 entirely disappeared is to be found in the *great economic changes* resulting from the fact that Lourenço Marques has become an important seaport, in close relation with the miners of Johannesburg who receive their supplies via Delagoa Bay. Thousands of Natives are employed in discharging the large steamers which arrive by hundreds in the roadstead. At this work a Native can earn fifteen shillings a week or more; in a short time he has made ample provision for the wants of his family and no longer finds it necessary to go to Bilene, to Zululand or Swaziland to make a living. The women too can make money by selling tomatoes and sweet potatoes to an ever increasing White population. All this is much easier

439 (1) On one occasion, in 1892, I made a list of various articles displayed for sale in and around a Banyan shop, in the district of Mahazule (to the North of Noãdwane).
292 This is what Mr. Nala, a Hindu from Goa established for many years amongst the
765 Rongas, offered to the Natives living in the neighbourhood of his primitive store.

Stuffs. These are sold by measurement taken on the individual; say, by the
584 *shikumba*, length of one arm, or by the *nkumba* or *bemba* (two arms), or by the *peça*, the entire piece, the equivalent of two bemba. The materials most in demand are called; *tingidao* (white), *mashita* (black with white stripes), *sh.landana* (all red), *shinwakana* (red and black), *mempana* (a special red stuff worn as mourning) and *malopa* (a navy blue material still more frenquently worn as mourning). Besides these are *handkerchiefs* (minturu) of various colours, principally red, a large proportion coming from the manufacturers of East Switzerland; white *blankets (gampongo*, meaning snow), for three or four shillings; coloured blankets, thicker, varying from five to seven shillings; towels, called *thawula* (an adaptation of the English word) and even some articles of ready-made clothing such as *djansi* (overcoats) at fifteen shillings! Amongst the stuffs I would more particularly note the *gangisa ntombi*, that is "for use when courting the girls", dark blue with a pattern of white flowers.

439 *Beads.* There are at least a dozen kinds to be found at Nala's; djindja (black) mbanda (white), shingazana, shimuzana, nkankana, habo, matshimbarole, bafa, tshambo.

Sundries. Rings, fish-hooks, buttons (masowa), thread, needles, snuff boxes to be worn in the ears (tinhlanga), knives, spoons, balls of string, padlocks (makandjate) with key attached; little chains, to be hung from the belt, which tinkle when walking; bracelets (busenga, ten for a shilling); wooden spoons, combs, coils of fine iron wire; skins; a large trap for catching hyenas or other wild animals; small brass petroleum lamps; sardines at sixpence a tin, English biscuits, and last but not least, a cask of German brandy diluted (tempora) with 50% of water! This would now be replaced by three casks of Vinho colonial, one of white wine, one of red wine and one of I do not know what colour!

595 that of females and which has been recognised by physiology, has
622 its effect also amongst Natives, and, in ordinary circumstances,
643 women are not more numerous than men in Bantu tribes. Many men are monogamists, not from choice, but by force of circumstances. Others are wandering about in Johannesburg, or Kimberley, and marry later in life, whilst girls marry much earlier. In the villages round Lourenço Marques the headman often has two or three wives. Three is however an unusual number. The chiefs, of course, take more, and Mubvesha, for instance, the chief of Nondwane, had as many as thirty. In the Gaza country chiefs go even further, at least they used to do so in the good old times, under Gungunyane. Bingwane, the chief of the Ba-Tswa, had so many wives that he hardly knew them and at any rate did not know all his children.

595 What is the origin of the custom ? It might be assumed to be a remnant of the old system of group marriage, supposing the Bantus to have also passed through that stage of family evolution. At one time all the men of a group would have considered as their wives all the women of another group, and vice versa. It was a state of polygamy and polyandry at the same time. The fear of the matlulana (page 265) put a stop to polyandry, and polygamy alone survived. Or it might be supposed that monogamy existed first and that polygamy appeared later, owing to the following reasons : 1) *Wars* diminished the number of men. As women were not anxious to remain "old maids," and as the tribe wanted to make the most of them, in order to increase and strengthen itself, the unmarried ones were taken by married men and so the polygamic family arose. In fact polygamy was very much fostered by the Gungunyane wars, during the historic
595 period. Every year the Ngoni chief planned expeditions against
567 his Ba-Chopi enemies on the coast, north of the mouth of the Limpopo. Men were killed and women enslaved, and each of these became the wife of her capturer. The position of these slaves was not very bad : however they were called *tinhloko*, heads, (a word which has the same meaning as heads of cattle), and could be sold by their owner. A great many of these Chopi women were bought in and round Lourenço Marques, before the suppression

567 of slavery. Hundreds of them still live there and are recognisable by their very broad, coarse features. 2) The *laws of succession*
595 which regulate the present agnatic Thonga family also lead to
556 polygamy as a necessary consequence. A young brother inherits the widow of his elder brother, be he married or not. If polygamy began in this second way, its increase in later times is not to be wondered at. It answers admirably to the Bantu ideal of life. As we saw, a man who has a harem, tshengwe (page 126), is a man who has succeeded in his career! This is the regular method of becoming a rich man, an ideal which is by no means confined to the black race! On the other hand sensuality develops very quickly in the polygamic family and its very development reacts on the custom and tends to foster it.

595 I do not think the origin of polygamy can be traced with
764 certitude. However, there are amongst the Thongas some striking customs, giving to the "first" or "great wife" a special position, which seem to confirm the hypothesis of a primitive monogamy. The first of these is the ritual incision made by the first wife in the inguinal region after the death of the husband; it is not performed by the other widows (p. 200). In the same way the widower carries out this rite only after the death of the first wife and not when "little wives" die. The second is to be found in the rites of the foundation of the village; as we shall see in the next chapter, the first wife has a special part to play in these significant ceremonies. When I asked Magingi, an old Rikatla heathen, why such a difference was made between the first wife and her co-wives, he told me: "The first is the true wife and the others are but thieves. That is why it is said at the death of the first wife: the house of the husband has been crushed (a tjhobekelwi hi yindlu ya kwe). When another dies, it is only said: he has lost a wife (a felwi hi nsati)"...

595 The species of sacredness which surrounds the first wife appears
643 even more plainly in the case of the marriages of chiefs. The principal wife of the chief is in one sense not the actual first wife, but the woman who has been bought with the money collected by his subjects and whose son will be the heir to the chieftainship (See Part III). Generally the "wife of the country" is not the first

726 to heaven! The vanquishers follow their enemies until they reach their villages. As a rule, *they kill every one*, women, children, old men and tired warriors who have been unable to run away. They take the oxen and burn the huts. However exceptions are made in some instances: Sigaole, the ally of the Whites, ordered his warriors to spare the lives of the people of Zihlahla, during the expedition of February 1895, and to take them prisoners instead. "If you find any inhabitants remaining in the villages" said he "go into them. Let some one draw a line on the ground around the village and forbid the soldiers to cross it and to massacre the people." Generally speaking, however, the only lives spared are those of the younger women 726 and girls of whom they can hope to make some profit, either 567 by taking them as wives or selling them to others for matrimonial purposes. These prisoners are called "heads" (tinhloko) (1). This is the only kind of slavery practised by our tribe. Such wives are not ill-treated, as a rule.

726 So far I have described the war-customs of the Natives when fighting with each other. Let me add some particulars taken from the Thonga-Portuguese war of 1894-1896 (App. X.) which throw some light on the Native modes of fighting against White people.

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726 When opposed to White troops, the attack en masse would be too 175 dangerous: regiments advancing in serried ranks would offer too good a target to the European artillery. From information I have gathered with reference to the battle of Makupe or Magule (Sept. 8 1895), it would appear that the Ba-Ronga advanced in skirmishing order, those provided with guns approaching very close to the lines of the Whites. During this fight, one of the most important of the whole campaign, the Portuguese Commanding Officer, M. F. d'Andrade, shewed great presence of mind: the Zihlahla and Nondwane

(1) Two women, members of our Church, were carried off in this way by some of the Zihlahla men (6th October 1894), and we had the greatest trouble in finding them. They were seized close to the town, while going to their food-stores and their captors had duly married them with the acquiescence of their chief.

551 The really Native names very often begin with the prefix *mu* which is the personal singular prefix, (Musongi, Muzila, Mungutana, Mukentshe), or *Ñwa* conveying the idea of "son of" (Ñwamitwa, Ñwamashwele Ñwatjubula), or Nya used in the same sense, (Nyakubasa, Nyanise, Nyathi, probably of Zulu origin), or *Ma* which is also a personal prefix, (Manabe, Matende, Mathandana, Makhangala, Makasana, etc.). The prefix *Mi* means "daughter of," and is frequently met with (Misilana, Mintlohen, Mindinyana, etc.). As a rule it is employed only in names of women.

The prefix *Shi* which generally denotes things, objects, and has a neuter significance, is very often found in Ronga names. It is also a diminutive prefix, especially when the word ends in *ana*. So Shiribyana, a very common name, means a small stone (ribye); Shigidana, Shirombe, Shindjubi, etc. belong to the same class.

551 567 Some very curious names begin with the prefix *ba*, the pronoun of the third person plural. These are common amongst girls, generally of Chopi origin, who were slaves of the important Native women of Lourenço Marques and sold by them as concubines. For instance Bamuyeyisa means "they defy her," Bamusonda (Zulu), "they hate her," Batjhamahayena "they gossip about her," etc. In calling themselves by these names the girls express their bitterness.

551 But a great number of names have no prefix at all and often no meaning.

Nicknames are frequent amongst the Thongas and often entirely supplant the regular name. There was in Rikatla an old Mbekwa whom everyone called Nxoko. On inquiring into the origin of this curious name I was told the following story. One day Mbekwa was very happy and expressed his contentment by the exclamation; "Nxoko" (x here denotes a peculiar click of the tongue against the cheek). This interjection was received with favour and he employed it henceforth to manifest his pleasure on other occasions. He even made a regular verb of it, saying: "I go to nxokela in such and such a place," viz. "to enjoy myself there." The word was so fascinating that he was named after it, and I should not be surprised if it were incorporated into the current language, which is enriched every day by new descriptive adverbs like nxoko. (See my Thonga Grammar, p. 84 and Vol. II.)

551 609 Nicknames are more especially applied to white people, as Natives fail to catch their true names. These are very cleverly chosen, being often a verbal description of the chief physical or mental characteristic

Nubile girls, during their "tiwheti", must approach the *oxen kraal* and look at them. The cattle might suffer, be attacked by a bad cough (mukhulwane), get thin! This taboo is instituted to protect the oxen, not the human inhabitants of the village, as D. Kidd says is the case amongst the Zulus. (Part IV. Ch. I. E.) When women have passed the time of child-bearing, most of the taboos cease, and they can eat monkeys and porcupine if they wish!

3) The first year of married life.

I shall not return to the subject of marriage rites, which have been fully explained in the preceding chapter. Let me say that, though a Thonga woman cannot imagine life without marriage (ku kandja bukati), she does not enter on the new state with any enthusiasm. Her parents have warned her that she will be illtreated, accused of witchcraft and adultery, etc. Her sisters bewail her fate on her wedding day in song. The fact that she has been paid for, though it does not constitute an actual sale, puts her in an inferior position (See Part II).

During the first year, she has no *ndangu*, viz. no fire-place of her own. She cooks for her mother-in-law. During the three first weeks the husband eats with her and with the girl who accompanied her to her new home. Afterwards, he goes back to eat with the men. In some places it would seem that the husband eats with her the whole year, until she has her own pot (hlembeto).

4) Husband and wife.

What are the relations between husband and wife after the honey-moon ? Of course they vary very much according to the character of both. As a rule however, the married people have very little intimacy with each other ; the man remains with his companions on the "bandla," the village square where they meet, and only occasionally comes into the "ndangu," the reed enclosure of the fire-place, which is the true domain of the

832 576 593 152 572 Even a husband never kissed his wife. On coming back from a journey, a man would hardly greet his wife; she would see him passing through the village, prepare food for him, and when it was cooked, she would come and salute him by presenting it to him. But if he has a good friend in the village, and if this friend sees him coming back after a long absence, their meeting will be much more touching. The friend will go to the main entrance of the village, exclaim: "Ha-Ha," take his parcel from his hands, put his arms round his shoulders (a ku mu buso hi mandla), remove the perspiration from his face, and pat him gently, saying: "Your ancestor-gods have their eyes open! They have worked well! They have brought you back."

574 609 622 *Hospitality.* When strangers enter a village, men sit on the *bandla*, and women go further on and sit on the *hubo*; they remain quietly there till the people of the village come and salute them (losa). Should the inhabitants delay too long, the visitors move on, saying: "These people are not good." But this is very rare. Generally the master of the village comes to them, inquiring who they are, whence they come, where they are going, and asks them: "Do you wish to spend the night here?" If they say: "Yes," the headman will empty one of his huts by putting two of his wives together, and will himself sleep with the visitors. Should there still be food, he will give them some. If not, he says: 574 609 622 203 195 "*Ndlala*!" "Starvation!" After a little while, a mat is unrolled and the official ceremony of "djungulisana" takes place. This is a very amusing custom. The headman sits together with his hosts and enquires about the news of their home. One of the visitors begins in a monotonous tone and pours forth volubly a flow of words with a peculiar cadence and almost without taking breath. His interlocutor interrupts him after each sentence, with "Ahina, hina," that is to say "Indeed, indeed!" till the whole skein is unwound; the two men finish with a longer "*Hina*," the inhabitants of the hut adding an emphatic "*khani*," a heartfelt "thank you;" then the master of the village begins to relate his own news in the same tone. It is impossible to 574 609 imagine anything more curious than this "mélopée" in two parts. This law of hospitality is general all over the tribe. Should

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

584 shillings ; this present " strengthens their bones " (ba tiya marambo) and nothing further remains to be done but to choose the day on which the betrothal visit shall take place. (1)

2) THE BETROTHAL VISITS (Tjekela and koroka).

584 301 This visit (ku ya ku tjekelen) is paid in the following manner. The fiancé chooses his best friend to be his " shangwane " ; the fiancée does the same on her side, and these two " shangwane " must do their best to help them both during the whole of these complicated ceremonies. Then the bridegroom summons, together with his shangwane, three or four other friends of his own age, and a little lad to carry their mats. They go and bathe and put on their finest attire : rich skins, bracelets hung to their belts, horse-hair necklaces with white beads threaded here and there which swing to and fro on neck and breast. Neither do they forget their small shields of skin, which give them a martial appearance without, however, suggesting any thought of war or strife. Before starting they take a good meal cooked at home. In the evening, after sunset, they reach the village of the fiancée. They sit down outside the gate and cough to make known that they have arrived. Then the inhabitants, who were expecting them, come out to meet them and beg them to enter. The visitors make difficulties. They pretend not to wish to do so. The people of the village insist. At last, with apparent reluctance, they advance into the central square. A hut is prepared for them, and they are invited to go and rest there. They begin by refusing. But the young girls take out of their hands their sticks and their miniature shields and carry them into the hut. At last, with a

[293] 584 574

(1) Amongst the Wa-Nyika (a tribe dwelling between the Nyassa and Tanganyika lakes) the betrothal takes place as follows: A female messenger is sent by the suitor's parents to the girl's parents. She brings with her a hoe. The father calls the girl and shows her the tool saying: "This is your hoe; it comes from so and so." If the girl looks at the hoe with a gloomy expression and leaves the hut slowly, still looking at it, it is a sign that she does not accept the proposal. Should she on the contrary cover her face with her hands and run away without looking at the hoe, she thus declares that she consents to become the wife of the boy. (*Journal de l'Unité des Frères*, January 1926).

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

584 574 836 bored air, they enter. Mats are brought and unrolled before them ; this is the act of hospitality par excellence. They remain standing as if they had no wish whatever to sit down. The girls entreat them to rest, and finally they consent to accept the hospitality offered them with such insistence.

The parents of the fiancée then come, squat near them and ask news of their home. They answer, and inquire about the health of their hosts. This is the *djungulisana*, the exchange of greetings which always takes place when a visitor is received. Soon however large pots of well prepared food are brought. "No", say the young men. "We have eaten at home, we are not hungry." The same comedy is gone through again ; the masters of the place insist, the guests refuse systematically according to the Native laws of civility—or incivility! The night, however, has come ; the young men have consented after all to partake of the feast. The old people retire to their huts to sleep ; the young girls remain. The custom requires them to spend the whole night with the young men, according to the law of the *shigango* previously spoken of. The bridegroom's shangwane chooses the bride's shangwane and all the other boys choose their girl. But the fiancée hides behind her friends and takes no part in these games.

584 574 In the early morning the young men go to bathe and the girls, their amphoras on their heads, go to fetch water from the lake. On their return they perform another act of hospitality towards their visitors, namely, they throw water down their backs. The boys wash the whole of their bodies, after which the girls anoint them with fat. The day is spent in a pleasant *far niente*. The fiancé and his friends sit in the shade in the square, clad in all their ornaments. They hum songs, they amuse themselves by swaying to and fro as they sit ; the little girls keep them company. Meanwhile the elder girls prepare savoury food for them and go to the fields. Towards evening, the visitors ask to see the parents, to take leave of them ; but the old people send the following message : "No, you shall not see us. We cannot consent to your going away, we have hardly seen you. Spend another night with us." They must make up their mind to stay a little longer.

584 On the appointed day, they go and sit outside the village of
574 the fiancé and cough to announce their presence. The same strange proceedings begin, but this time it is the damsels who make difficulties and the young men must beg and entreat them to enter first the village, then the hut, and then to sit on the mats and to accept food. Each of the groomsmen is most attentive to the girl he chose at the preceding meeting and, to obtain her good will, he generally gives her a fowl or the equivalent in money. In the early morning the visitors rise, go and get water, warm it a little and pour it into basins before the doors of the huts, so that, on that day, the inhabitants of the village will make their ablutions with water fetched by them. Then they go and do feminine work, acting as servants of the fiancé's parents. Thus they remove the ashes from the fire-place and throw them on the ash-heap close by; they cut the wood for the young men's mothers and light the several fires of the village. They pretend to leave when the sun sets, but no one will hear of it, and they must spend another night. At last, on the following day, they go home, accompanied by the young men and again, at parting, knot grasses together. On the day of the *koroka* definite arrangements are made for the wedding.

3) Taboos of the betrothal period.

584 The two families which enter into relation with each other by
574 marriage must observe many taboos (See Part II). Here are some
784 of those which are enforced during the visits of *tjekela* and *koroka*:

1) The visitors must not eat all the mealie corn on the spike;
262 they must leave a few grains on it.

2) They must not tear off the leaves which are round the spike. When they have eaten all the corn, they rearrange these leaves in such a way that the cob seems not to have been touched.

3) They must not "make a hole in the pot" (bobota hotjo), viz. they leave a portion of the liquid in the beer pot, they do not empty it entirely.

4) It is forbidden to return home in rain when one has gone

584 to *tjekela*. You must wait for fine weather, otherwise it is an
574 insult to the future father-in-law.
784 5) If, during the visit, you eat monkey nuts, you must not
262 take off the thin skin which covers the kernel.

6) The suitor—the owner of the oxen—must not eat black fish that day. Only his friends have the right to do so. These fish, a kind of barbel, are to be found in the lakes (as that of Rikatla) and in the Nkomati river. The suitor will not partake of them for fear lest the girl he wishes to marry should slip through his hands like a fish. Moreover this fish is black : it might bring darkness, unhappiness.

7) Neither must he eat honey during his visit, because honey like the black fish, is slippery... Honey flows...

8) He is also forbidden to eat fowls, because cocks and hens scratch the soil with their claws, scattering it about ; thus the marriage " might be scattered (hangalasa bukati) before it is ripe ". In the Tembe clans, formerly, any solid food was taboo until the families had killed an ox for the feasts.

These taboos are not the proper taboos of a marginal period, as if the betrothal were considered as one of these periods. They are family taboos, belonging to the category of those dictated by the mutual distrust of two allied families.

585 The wedding feast consists of two parts: the *lobola feast*, viz. all the ceremonies connected with the remittance of the lobolo which takes place at the bride's village, and the *tlhoma*, viz. the bringing the bride to the bridegroom's village. Should the lobolo have been entirely paid at once, these two ceremonies will follow each other without much delay. If the sum of money or the number of oxen is not complete, the *tlhoma* will very probably be postponed.

4) Lobola feast.

a) Preparations.

585 On both sides, the friends are informed that the feast is close
273 at hand. The bride's family in particular must prepare in good time, as they have to provide the beer which will be consumed in

585 time it is for good! At last! "Ba mu tlhomile!" that is to say: her parents have duly settled her in her home.

In Nondwane this last surprise is spared the bridegroom. The bride comes to his home on the day of the marriage with her two mats, accompanied by a young girl only, and some days later the mother and female relations bring the rest of her trousseau and erect the wood pile. The young bride, when she has definitely accepted her fate and consented to stay, is called *ntlhoñwa* (Ro.) *nhlomi* (Dj.) (the one who has been brought to her husband). During the first week, she will fill all the pots of the people of the village so that when they awake they will find water for their ablutions and say: "We have found a bride! (He kumi ntlhoñwa!)"; she will remove all the ashes from the fire-places, and smear all the huts.

The first night when she sleeps in the hut with her husband, she may refuse to allow him his conjugal rights. The bridegroom then goes to his father and asks him what he ought to do under the circumstances. The father says: "Give her sixpence or a shilling." Then she consents! (Mboza).

III. *Marriage customs in other Ronga clans.*

The description which we have just given may be considered as typical, but there are many variations to be noticed amongst the clans.

584 In the *Maputju* country, South of Delagoa Bay, there are two 836 informal visits, one of the fiancé, one of the fiancée, to each 574 other's village (ku bona muti). This visit is very short, and they do not accept any food from their hosts. Then the *tjekela* of the boys (the betrothal visit) takes place. They behave in a very dignified manner, do not accept any food the first day and consent to eat on the following day only after having been presented with a gift of 10/ or £ 1! During this visit the girls put 500 reis or sixpence at the bottom of the pots which they fill with water for the ablutions of the boys, otherwise the visitors would say: "The water is too cold. We cannot use it." Sexual

584 relations between boys and girls during these visits were not
836 allowed in former times. Nowadays they are indulged in, and it
574 may be that the fiancé will ask his fiancée to give herself to him " to test her love " (ku kamba lirandju). If she refuses, the whole affair may be compromised.

584 When the girls go to *tjekela* in their turn, they also observe
574 great formality. Money must be given at least ten times to obtain their consent :

1) They refuse to enter the village.
2) To leave the square and go to the hut.
3) To cross the door of the hut.
4) To sit down on the mats. When the other girls consent, the fiancée remains standing.
5) She consents to sit down when given a shilling.
6) They refuse to answer the greetings.
7) When the others have answered, the fiancée still refuses to do so.
8) They do not consent to give news of their home.
9, 10) They still make difficulties about accepting food.

It may be that the fiancé goes to work in the mines during this period, probably in order to complete his lobolo. When he comes back, a special ceremony is performed which is called *hlomula mutwa*, to remove the thorn. The girls pay him a visit. He sits down amidst his companions, having fixed in his hair a long white thorn made of bone. The shangwane of the fiancée (chief bridesmaid) approaches him, dancing, and removes it. This is a way of saluting him on his return, it means the removal of the fatigue and the sufferings he has undergone, of the thorns which have wounded him.

585 The concluding ceremonies of *thloma* and of the *shigiyane* are also more developed in the Maputju country and in Nondwane.

This is the custom in *Nondwane*. Girls accompany the new bride to the conjugal home. They go to the bush to which she has fled, capture her there, and bring her to her husband with songs of mourning (hi ku djila nwana). " Where are you going ? You go to a husband whose heart is jealous! You will bring a

595 which, in this country, decimate so many herds! Every three
592 years, theirs wives bear children. If they are boys, it is an
361 honour; the village will not lack heirs, neither will the father
556 lack arms to help and to defend him! If they are girls, it means
542 wealth; oxen will come to the family! Their brothers will not lack wives, for the sisters will be sold to provide for the brothers. Meanwhile, the huts are erected, large and small, that of the head of the family being the largest, the *malao*, those of the boys the least well kept.

Let us consider a Ronga favoured by fate, as was Gidja, of the country of Libombo, near Rikatla. His village numbered not less than twenty-four huts, with beautiful shady trees behind; notice the enclosure for the cattle and for the goats on the central place, that for the pigs behind the houses... There are cocks and hens pecking about everywhere, dogs wandering around in search of something to steal, for they receive hardly any food; a crowd of youngsters leading the cattle, and everywhere the noise of the pestles crushing the daily mealies in the large mortars. He walks about proudly in his favoured enclosure, contemplating his prosperity with pleasure. Young men are ready to do the work he gives them to do. He will treat them with beer brewed by his wives. And often the people of the neighbouring villages will join his people for dances and games on the fine square, which is surrounded and enclosed on all sides by huts.

595 And, above all things, in the evening, each of his wives will
556 bring him the pot which she has cooked for him. This is the
574 essential matrimonial duty of the wife. Not one will fail in it. Gidja, the lord of six or seven pots of mealies seasoned with a sauce of monkey nuts, will feast and be satiated (shuma) every day, and that means much, for the inner capacity of a Thonga is something wonderful.

He will become large and stout, and shining, which in South Africa is a sure sign of wealth and nobility. The stouter he gets the more will he be respected. But it can easily be imagined that he cannot alone empty all these pots over which he reigns supreme. He feasts his children, but others too come to pay him visits at the evening hour when they know him to be surround-

556 ed by so many good things! Sycophants are not lacking, "Good
395 evening, son of so and so!" they say. "You are one of the
574 great men of the country." And in return for these and other compliments, the magnanimous Gidja shares his feast with his admirers!

Strangers are crossing the country and inquire where they can be received. "Go to Gidja" they are told. "A ni tshengwe, a fuya tshengwe" viz. "he is the possessor of a harem! He is not killed by famine! He has beer to drink every day! He can give food to poor people. Even then, some of it remains on the plate and is eaten by little boys and dogs in the square. There is always abundance there." And the travellers come and enter (khuleka) his village, after which they will tell in their homes the story of the magnificence of Gidja and extol his hospitality.

Thus the man who has succeeded in life becomes famous, his advice will carry weight in the discussions in which he takes part; he will perhaps be even more esteemed than the chief himself, though he does not enjoy the special prestige which the royal family owes to the blood running in its veins.

Conclusion: the greatness of an African is before all else a matter of pots, and the matter of pots is closely connected with polygamy!

885 During these years of mature age the evolution of a man is not
554 marked by special ceremonies. There is one custom however which is common to all, and which marks an advance in their social position. It is that of fixing the wax ring.

II. *Fixing the wax ring.*

885 Amongst the Sotth Africans, the crown is not the appanage of
177 royalty. All men having reached mature age have the right to
554 adorn themselves with it. It is true, it is not a diadem of precious
301 stones, but a large ring of wax. This custom seems to have a Zulu origin. The Ba-Sutho do not know it and the Ba-Thonga, who all practise it, have taken it from the conquering tribe which owes its fortune to the famous Chaka. This habit has spread all

765 this between his great toes. He bends his body and rubs the
783 two great toes against one another. Then he turns his back to
604 the place and goes away. He must not look behind : it is taboo. Then the other relatives say : " Let us all go and *luma milomo*. " He has given them the right to do so.

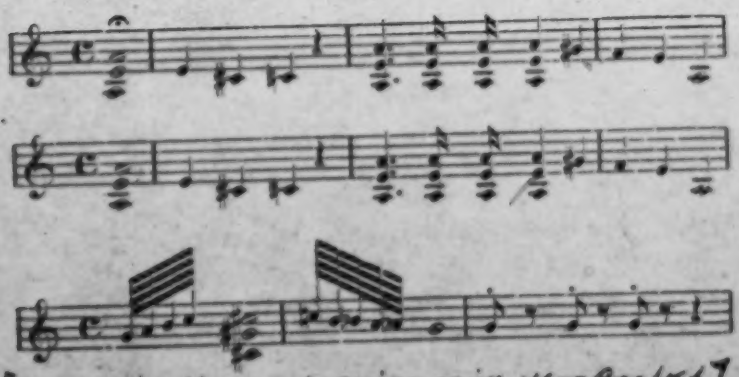
765 A little of the *milomo* is carefully kept in a pot for months.
783 When relatives who were absent on the day of the death come back from Johannesburg or from elsewhere, they must perform this ceremony before entering the village and eating any food in it. " Ba yila muti " — " they are taboo to the village." The rule applies only to relatives. Other people may very well eat from the deceased's store of food without any harm, as its contamination is dangerous only to his family. Another variety of this rite consists in preparing light beer with the mealies of the dead and taking first one mouthful which must be spat out on the right side, then a second one on the left side, after which one is allowed to drink.

765 The *gardens* of the deceased must also be purified, and this is
783 done by the rite called *baninga mabele*, to give light to the mealies.
415 The widows and all the female relatives go to his fields holding an old and empty *shikutja*. The shikutja is the hard shell of a sala fruit, the size of an orange, in which has been kept the provision of vegetable *tihuhlu* fat (see Part [illegible]) and which is still impregnated with it. The women set fire to it and walk through the gardens holding it up and illuminating the fields. This is perhaps in relation to the idea that death means darkness, and that its contamination is " black " (ntima) so long as the cleansing has not taken place.

765 During the five days of the Great Mourning, relatives and
574 friends come to pay the *official mourning visit* (1). They enter the village, the women shouting their lamentations (mikulungwana). Some one leads them to the grave and they walk round it uttering cries of mourning, taking leave of the deceased. At the burial of Sokis, I heard a woman saying with a trembling voice : " Goodbye! You have gone! Do not forget us. Remember Mulalen."

(1) This visit can be paid one, two, or three months later on, because, as they say, " nkosi a pei boli, " — " the mourning does not get rotten." But it is only during the five days that dances take place.

765 Mulalen was Sokis' little daughter. They bring with them
574 presents, five hundred reis, a hen, a goat, some light beer, perhaps
177 a mat for the widow because hers has been thrown away or a piece
273 of mourning cloth. The inhabitants receive them politely, and spread mats on the ground for them. They tell each other the news (djungulisana). Then after having *luma*, they eat and drink. The Ba-Ronga have their drink already prepared: it is the red wine
765 which Banyan merchants sell to them all over the country. The
539 visitors get drunk. They dance, and the mourning ceremony turns into an orgy with dances and songs of all kinds. The singing during this Great Mourning consists either of war songs executed by the men, which are very impressive, or of ordinary dancing songs, the licentious ones being particularly appropriate and being performed by women. (Annotatio 9)[1]. - In fact they are the proper mourning songs, those which are specially chosen when it is wished duly to lament a great man. I have witnessed these performances at a mourning ceremony of the " breaking of the hut " and shall refer to this subject again. In Vol. II. Part V Ch. II. B. I shall quote some of the mourning songs which have a peculiar stoic character. Here are two others from a collection made by Mrs Audéoud, the wife of one of our missionaries. They were sung at the death of the chief Tshutsha, near Makulane in the Maputju country. One of these was a war song accompanied with drums. It sounded as follows :



1 [See p. 517 in these categories or in 116--Analysis]

[765] consequence of the death. If it be the hut of one of the subor-
596 dinates, the roof is simply lifted off and thrown away into the
787 bush.

766 Another very significant rite in connexion with the closing of the hut is accomplished on the death of the master of the village. A branch is cut from the tree of the village, the tree which was revealed by the divinatory bones as the one near which the headman had to build (See Part II Ch. II) ; half of the branch is placed across the great gate of the village, which is then closed and another gate opened, at some distance, in the fence ; the other half is put over the door of the crushed hut.

765 There seem to be great variations in the performance of these
428 ceremonies everywhere. I believe, without being able to vouch for it, that when two family gatherings take place during this last period of the mourning, the first is held to proclaim the new master of the village and the second to distribute the inheritance amongst the heirs-at-law. At any rate these two important acts take place at the gatherings. As the inheritance consists mainly of live stock — human stock, the wives of the deceased, I shall describe the adjudication when treating of the fate of widows.

2) Family rites in the Northern clans.

765 A month after the burial, there is a first gathering of the grave-
574 diggers. They are invited by the widows to a beer-feast. This beer is called : "the beer of the hyenas," as the hyenas also dig graves! No equivocal compliment is intended, the widows merely meaning to thank these men for their services.

765 In the northern clans, *yindlu a yi yili*, the hut is not taboo.
782 It can be slept in again after the five days of the Great Mourning. The plaster of the doorposts is repaired, and a new crown is put on the top when the hut again finds an owner (1). The feast of the

766 (1) The hut of a leper alone is considered irremediably tabooed as the sufferer is buried in it. They dig a hole into which he is pushed by means of sticks. The roof is crushed down over him.

361 air circulate, is the goats' kraal (19). It may be placed somewhere
231 else, behind the huts, for instance ; or sometimes goats are tethered
331 every night by the leg to sticks round the hubo. The pigs are
343 never kept on the hubo, but always behind the hut : they are newcomers in the Thonga village and have hardly yet won their "droit de cité." Let us salute, as we pass by, the tree (25) which
361 is, as we shall see, the mystical stem of the village. We may perhaps
824 see, hanging upon it, a piece of clothing offered to the gods, or at its base a broken pot which is the *gandjelo*, the altar of the village.
782 The gandjelo is often placed, by preference, among the poles of the
351 main entrance on the right. The village tree, which has a ritual significance, is not to be confounded with the trees of the hubo (26), which are but *mindjuti*, shade-trees, under which the inhabitants are fond of sitting.

361 So we reach the main hut which faces the gate. This is the
595 dwelling of the headman. In hut 3 lives his second wife, in 4, his third and in 5 his fourth. 2 is called *shilubelo*. Great personages, men owning a large kraal, like to build such a hut, which is smaller than the ordinary ones and where no woman sleeps. It is the headman's own hut, where people *luba*, viz., pay their homage to him; a kind of office of the master of the village! He may sleep in it and summon his wives to come to him there. But he generally prefers to sleep in his wives' huts, one month in each, according to the polygamic custom.

Behind 4 and 10 is a *mhala*, a shed for the implements. It is
361 built, like the goats' kraal, without plaster walls, and is smaller
343 than a hut. There may be three or four of these in the village.
351 The headman and his wives occupy the back of the village.
596 At the sides live his younger brothers, one, who has two wives, in 7 and 8, two others, those who have but one wife each, in 9 and in 10 respectively. In 11 lives a married son; in 12 it may be a nephew, son of the headman's sister, or a son-in-law; (see page 252). 13 might be the hut of a stranger (mulubeti), who has
361 asked permission to stay with the headman of the village, as he
574 wished to be under his protection. The case is not frequent, but
783 may occur, and in order to be received into the mystic unity of the community, this man will have to "hlamba ndjaka" (See page 153), together with all the inhabitants of the kraal.

621 10) Having closed the village in this way, she *performs a sacrifice*.
595 She sips a mouthful of water from a tumbler, spitting out a
782 portion of it (phahla) towards the people ; then she washes her hands, and throws a little of the water towards them in order *to give them* the village. This act is accompanied by the following words : "Be not tied by the village! Bring forth children ; live and be happy and get everything. You gods, see! I have no bitterness in my heart. It is pure. I was angry because my husband abandoned me, he said I was not his wife ; he loved his younger wives. Now, this is finished in my heart. We shall have friendly relations together..." The prayer being concluded, the headman goes to the main entrance, pushes the thorny branch aside, and opens the village.

621 11) The last act is the *khangula*, the *inauguration ceremony*.
574 Beer is prepared, neighbours are invited and they all drink together, the neighbours coming *to see the new village* (ku bona muti).

As regards the old one, when the moving has been accomplished through the back door widened for the purpose, one of the inhabitants closes the main entrance with a branch. Hence comes the expression which is applied to a village all of whose inmates have died, and which has, on that account, disappeared : "Those people have all died and there was not even one left to close the gate."

II. *In the Ba-Ronga Clans.*

621 The sequence of rites for the removal of a village is very
787 much the same as in the Northern clans.

824 1) The headman examines some spots and consults the bones :
765 "Must I built at such and such a tree ?"

2) When the tree has been designated, he goes to it and places at its foot his furniture (nyundju) and his instrument of worship, his altar, (a pot, a jar, see Part VI). The altar may be placed at the main entrance later on, if the bones so order it. As already mentioned, there will be a mystic relation between him and that tree. He must never cut it down. If any of the branches should be

462 thank (tlangela) her husband for his kind help! This is her
273 method of notifying him that all the grain has been harvested, as, whatever the man's share of the work may have been, the mealies belong to him.

462 The main work of the man is the *building and repairing of the*
356 *huts*. This is truly an arduous job, but it is not of yearly recur-
342 rence. Every third or fourth year they are obliged to re-thatch the roof. The huts are built and repaired during the winter, from May to September.

A second domain, which is exclusively man's, is the *care of the cattle* ; the boys milk the cows, construct and repair the kraal : the little boys herd the goats, and the young men the oxen, as has already been mentioned.

462 It is also the men who *make all the utensils and tools* used in the
411 village, pots and other crockery excepted ; mortars, pestles,
294 handles for axes or hoes (mimphinyi), wooden platters, carved or forged articles, all this work pertains to them. They must also make the *ntehe* for their wives, or sisters, after the birth of the babies. This is probably the explanation of the curious fact noticed amongst Native Christians, namely that they are much more clever at needlework than their wives. Big fellows are often seen forsaking the hoe to work with the needle, and there are fathers who make their own clothing as well as the dresses for their wives and children!

462 *Hunting and fishing* are, of course, also men's work... or pastime.
224 For some of them hunting is an actual trade, at least such was the case in former times, before the White Governments imposed strict regulations and levied heavy licences on that sport. We shall study, in Part IV, the curious customs relating to these two favourite occupations of the Natives.

574 A great part of their time is devoted by the men to *paying*
517 *visits*. They are very fond of calling on each other, and sometimes
484 they go great distances to see relatives or friends. They do not travel to pay visits only, but they frequently journey to claim payment of their debts (milandju). To regain the possession of a miserable head of cattle they willingly lose whole weeks! And what endless discussions in the *hubo*, when an unfortunate visitor

273 1) Men's favourite pastime in South Africa is *drinking beer*.
275 There are no bars on the velt... But every village is from time
574 to time a brewery and a drinking place. Beer is prepared in large
596 quantities. As we shall see, the brewing lasts about nine days. Near Lourenço Marques, Natives fill not only pots but big casks with it! One of the jugs is put aside for the headman to try it. He must pour a little of it into the *gandjelo* ; this religious act is obligatory. Next day the men of the village assemble in the morning to sample it also, and, at noon, all the friends from the
273 neighbouring villages arrive. Everybody is welcome. Even a
574 leper can take part in the beer-drinking ; but he will come with
596 his own calabash and they will fill it with a special ladle. As a rule near neighbours also bring their calabashes, but people coming from afar are not expected to do so. The beer is drunk with great haste. Before it is all finished, the headman puts aside a pot for his father-in-law, his uterine nephew, and the friend who invited him on a previous occasion... Of course after having filled their stomachs, men and women dance on the hubo in the afternoon, and especially in the evening, when the moon shines ; the shouting sometimes becomes dreadful when drunkenness has overcome all

000 the rain which was pouring down. Suddenly I noticed the Walusangano family returning from the garden in the same order as the week before : in front Leya with the bundle of wood, the basket of vegetables, the hoe and the baby on her back, followed by the children, and behind, the father with the protective umbrella. "Such are the fruits of my efforts." I thought ! But I refused to consider myself beaten. I said to myself : "I will speak to them once more ! The women will certainly be on my side, these poor overworked women !"

On the following Sunday Nesheye (one of the best Christian women of the congregation) came to see me after the sermon. She had something to tell me... She said : "You observe us, and you wonder at certain things. We also, on our side are observing you, and we see things which we also do not understand. When your wife does the washing, you remain standing by and do not help her. With us it is the men who do the washing. Again, we have seen your wife sewing and mending your clothes and the clothes of the children, and you beside her, not thinking of helping her. With us it is the men who mend the clothes."

Having spoken thus, Nesheye put her two hands joined together on the mat, then separated them as if she were cutting something in two, and said to me : "That is the way your forefathers distributed the work, a little heap here and another little heap there ; and they said : This is the work of men and that the work of women. Our forefathers proceeded in the same way, and said : This is men's work and that is women's work... We must leave it so. The Gospel has not to concern itself with these matters. We do not wish to have the reputation of being lazy and you do not wish it either."

(From the *Journal de l'Unité des Frères*, January 1926.)

273 musical instinct. Some days later, another headman invites his
574 neighbours to another beer-drinking, and so they eat and drink
622 together (ba delana, ba nwelana) as long as there is plenty in
595 the storehouses. When provisions become scarce, they begin to spare the mealies. But the advantage of the polygamist becomes apparent here ; his storehouses are many and he can feast his friends for many months.

These beer-drinking customs are essentially demoralising ; they

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Phot. A. Bird.

Beer-drinking party in Maputju country.

are one of the curses of primitive Native life. But let me remark that, as the making of the beer takes nine days, these excesses cannot be very frequent, and the habit of drinking wine at the White man's store is ten times more harmful, as in this case alcohol is never lacking. We shall speak later on of alcoholism amongst Natives. (See Part IV.)

276 Another pastime, very much appreciated by some, but not so
248 general, is *hemp smoking* and the accompanying *saliva contest*. Hemp (mbange) has been cultivated for a considerable time amongst the Thongas, especially on the coast, not to make ropes, but for smoking.

832 576 593 152 572 Even a husband never kissed his wife. On coming back from a journey, a man would hardly greet his wife; she would see him passing through the village, prepare food for him, and when it was cooked, she would come and salute him by presenting it to him. But if he has a good friend in the village, and if this friend sees him coming back after a long absence, their meeting will be much more touching. The friend will go to the main entrance of the village, exclaim: "Ha-Ha," take his parcel from his hands, put his arms round his shoulders (a ku mu buso hi mandla), remove the perspiration from his face, and pat him gently, saying: "Your ancestor-gods have their eyes open! They have worked well! They have brought you back."

574 609 622 *Hospitality.* When strangers enter a village, men sit on the *bandla*, and women go further on and sit on the *hubo*; they remain quietly there till the people of the village come and salute them (losa). Should the inhabitants delay too long, the visitors move on, saying: "These people are not good." But this is very rare. Generally the master of the village comes to them, inquiring who they are, whence they come, where they are going, and asks them: "Do you wish to spend the night here?" If they say: "Yes," the headman will empty one of his huts by putting two of his wives together, and will himself sleep with the visitors. Should there still be food, he will give them some. If not, he says: 574 "*Ndlala*!" "Starvation!" After a little while, a mat is unrolled 609 and the official ceremony of "djungulisana" takes place. This is a 622 very amusing custom. The headman sits together with his hosts and enquires about the news of their home. One of the 203 visitors begins in a monotonous tone and pours forth volubly 195 a flow of words with a peculiar cadence and almost without taking breath. His interlocutor interrupts him after each sentence, with "Ahina, hina," that is to say "Indeed, indeed!" till the whole skein is unwound; the two men finish with a longer "*Hina*," the inhabitants of the hut adding an emphatic "*khani*," a heartfelt "thank you;" then the master of the village begins to relate his own news in the same tone. It is impossible to 574 imagine anything more curious than this "mélopée" in two parts. 609 This law of hospitality is general all over the tribe. Should

574/609 travellers be refused the customary hospitality in a village and incur misfortune later on, the chief will make the people of that village responsible and they will have to pay a fine. In Gungunyana's country, warriors were sent to plunder such a village. Lack of hospitality, however, is not considered as a taboo (yila), because "it does not kill ;" it is a bad action (biha).

Now-a-days, customs are beginning to change ; hundreds of young men (magaisa) coming from the towns after working there, pass through the country, and it would be impossible to put them up and feed them all. They sleep on the *bandla* and cook food for themselves, occasionally buying some mealies or a hen from the inhabitants. Moreover they have plenty of money and they can pay !

609 It must also be added that, if they dispense hospitality liberally,
618 the Thongas can be very hard on people who do not belong to
761 their special clan. Feelings of humanity are sometimes strangely deficient. I heard of a boy of the Manyisa district who had fallen down near the lake of Rikatla, unable to proceed further on account of a bad wound received while working on the railway at Lourenço Marques. Nobody took pity on him because he was of another clan, and he would have died there if a Christian woman, named Lois, had not received him in her village and nursed him. Fear of death and its contamination may partly explain this want of compassion for strangers.

784 As already mentioned, it was formerly taboo to enter the
643 village square wearing boots. These boots consist of sandals made by the hunters for their long trips through the thorny
677 bush. They were not allowed on the hubo. A subject was not permitted to sit on a mortar or on anything else ; the chief alone could do so, and it was considered a sign of pride to sit on anything but the bare ground!

609 The habit of offering a concubine to passers-by is never met
177 with amongst the Rongas as it is in other tribes. Now-a-days dissolute women may offer themselves. But they have learnt
574 from white men this new kind of immorality.

On the fate of the Thonga Village, see Practical Conclusions. V.

III. *The shipalapala.*

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Speaking of the musical instruments of the Court, I must also mention *the trumpet of assembly, shipalapala,* which is the recognised means of summoning the subjects to the capital. The sound of the big drum, though heard at a great distance, cannot reach to the confines of the country. So, when the chief wants his men to assemble at once, he uses the *shipalapala.* This is a horn of mhalamhala, or of nyala or of phifa antelope, the sound of which is like mpu-ù-u (with an accent on the second syllable). The envoy of the chief runs to the capital of a sub-chief, blowing all the time. When he has reached that village, he transmits his message and a young man starts at once with the shipalapala of the sub-chief to another district. So, in a short time, notice is given to the whole tribe to assemble.

IV. *Visitors.*

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When a stranger passes through the capital, he must sit down outside the central square and at some little distance from it. Some one will come and inquire what he wants ; he replies : "I come from such and such a country, and I wish to pay my respects to the chief." Then the counsellor or "Agent General" charged with the affairs of the traveller's country will come and converse with him and announce him (bika) to the chief, who will receive him affably and possibly assign him a hut to sleep in, in case he wishes to stay the night, at the same time providing him with food. Should the chief be particularly well disposed towards his guest, he will kill a calf or even an ox for him ; and he, on his return, will speak in praise of the hospitality he has received, saying : "The chief made me share his reign," literally : "He made me reign, (a ndji fumisile)." Such is the procedure when the respective countries of guest and host are adjoining and the tribes

643 on good and friendly terms. Should relations between them be
609 at all strained, or should war be imminent, all the roads would be
574 closed and no one allowed to enter the capital.

V. *The Kondza custom.*

641 The chief is also approached by those who may wish to become
643 subject to him, to be naturalized ; this is called *kondza*, from a Zulu word conveying this meaning. The chief will assign to the new *nandja* a dwelling place, and he will be incorporated in the nation without further ceremony. By this kondza, he binds himself to pay the taxes (See the story of Mutipi. *Les chants et les contes des Ba-Ronga*, page 164).

Naturalised strangers, however, do not eat the first fruits (luma) with the same drug as the people of the country. They have their own medicine and take it according to their own rules. They are however forbidden to luma before the chief of their adopted land (p. 397).

VI. *Diplomatic relations.*

648 We have seen that these are very carefully conducted, each
202 of the neighbouring clans having one counsellor entrusted with
726 the care of its affairs. In case of war, friendly clans frequently
224 make alliances (shinakulobye). They send messages to each other, or they have special means of communicating news in case of war. Supposing, for instance, Ñwamba and Nondwane should fight against Matjolo. They put two traps at their common boundary, on the side of the road, one on the territory of Ñwamba and one on that of Nondwane. These traps consist of a rod bent by a string fastened to the ground. Should the army of Matjolo have made an invasion during the night into Ñwamba territory and put the people to flight, the men of Nwamba

685/721 *Theft* (ku yiba) is universally condemned, not so much for its immoral character as for the fact that it renders a normal social life impossible. The notion of *individual property*, though it is not developed as in more civilised nations, is nevertheless at the base of the whole Bantu system. The Bantus are agriculturists. They believe that the products of their labour belong to them and that no one else is entitled to appropriate them. The notion of property is in direct relation to work accomplished. (Compare Part IV.)

685/574/202 To steal growing mealies is not usual. A thief breaks off the cob, whilst the master of the field first uproots the stalk and then takes the cobs. If a friend of his who happens to be travelling passes through his gardens and wants to eat a cob, he is quite welcome to do so. He also uproots the stalk, puts it on one side of the road or leans it against a tree and draws a line on the ground from the place where the stalk grew to the spot where he has put it. Perhaps the owner of the field will discover the uprooted stalk after a whole month. If he inquires who has helped himself to his mealies, his friend will say to him : "Did you not see the line ?" And they will laugh over it (hlekelelana). A thief acting hastily would not have had time to draw the line!

685/789 There are certain magical drugs with which people smear mealie stalks (see Part IV) and they assert that, if any one tries to penetrate into their garden to steal, he will have his hand caught and will not be able to get rid of the plant! For some reason or another, these magical methods do not always work. So the injured person has recourse to the tribunal.

685/343 Should the thief be caught in the very act, there is no difficulty! His own field will be taken by the owner of the stolen mealies and he will have to pay a fine of one ox, otherwise the matter will be brought before the Court, and the only difference will be that the fine will be of two or three oxen, one of which will remain in the hands of the chief. (Mankhelu.) If the thief has been clever enough to avoid being caught, if he has stolen from a store hut, Natives are clever detectives and he will probably be discovered. These store huts are generally built in the middle of the field, or in the little bush which surrounds the village ; the grass all around

of the garden with a good vegetable until the first-fruits themselves ripen and furnish a more substantial food. 241 221

When the rains commence, sometimes as early as September, but generally later, it is *time to begin the regular sowing*. Everybody then starts for himself, because, although the fields tilled by the mother are the largest, every member of the family has tilled his own : the husband has his *mpashu* (I. p. 337) and each girl has her plot.

The Native idea is that every owner of a field must sow all principal cereals and vegetables in his garden, except peas, on account of their taboo. So, in a line on the border, are planted sweet potatoes and manioc. Mealie seeds are sown at a given distance from each other, alternating with Kafir corn and sorghum, and in between are planted ground nuts and beans. Watch how the mistress of the field proceeds to sow her maize : she walks along with short steps, at each one digging up a shovelful of well tilled earth, and planting in the holes three or four grains of maize, which she carefully covers over. The work is done in haste so as to take advantage of the last rains. The *lisindje* is first sown ; then begins the hasty tilling of the old fallow fields (pula, dji-ma). The crop is not likely to be so plentiful as that obtained from virgin soil, but the same fields can be used for three or four consecutive years before they become exhausted.

Natives have no idea of *fertilising the ground* in any way whatever ; at the most they may take advantage of the manure which has accumulated in some disused oxen kraal, to plant thereon a few gourds or some tobacco.

The operation of hastily tilling the fallow fields is often carried on by a *djimo* (dji-ma). Knowing that her fallows are very large and that she can hardly cope with them by herself, the owner calls all her neighbours to a djimo, viz., a working party, having wisely prepared a number of large jugs of beer. Neighbours will certainly accept the invitation as they may have to ask for similar help later on. So they come in the morning, and attack the fields with energy, singing and shouting all the time. There are special djimo songs, in particular amongst the Ba-Sutho. One may see them, some fifty black bodies toiling vigorously, 241 476 574 [533]

241 making the sand fly, their hoes working with marvellous rapidity!
476 What excitement, what strenuous work, each one urging the
other to still greater exertion and all hurrying to finish the job!
574 They know that, there in the hut, ten big jars of beer brewed to
a nicety wait for them, and that they will have a good time at
midday, when the heat will be unbearable and the work done.

241 The maize grows and the weeds grow with it ; after the tilling
221 comes the *weeding* ; this is the work for November, December and
January.

It is done twice or thrice for the mealies. The first weeding is called *tjutja*, and is done when the mealie stems have reached a height of about one foot. The second is called *hlakula*. By this time the ground nuts and beans have grown, and this weeding is intended to be for their benefit also.

In January it is the *nwebo*, the time for the first ears of maize to ripen : it is also at that time that the fields of maize are apt to be ravaged by a species of coleoptera, called the *nunu*, of which I shall have more to say when treating of the superstitions of the tribe.

In January also the sorghum and millet attain their full growth, and the grain begins to form. *Sparrows*, *finches*, and other chattering birds take up their residence in the fields and begin to plunder them. Then women and children camp out from morning to night, in their plantations, and spend three whole months shouting, yelling and making a most infernal hullabaloo, with tin cans and other musical instruments, in their endeavour to scare the thieves. This is what they call *psaya* or *rindja tinyanyana*. The flocks of sparrows, etc., move on at a single flight to the acacias or mimosas, close by, whence they make a descent on the fields of the next neighbour. This proprietress is also on guard, and, in her turn, drives off the birds with a frightful uproar ; thus the duel between birds and human beings goes on for weeks. The mother and children prevail upon the father to build them a little hut (ntjonga[illegible]mi) right in the middle of the field, to enable them to protect their sorghum against the feathered enemy, and there they take up their quarters until the cereals have ripened and are ready to be harvested.

these several loads!) It is made in much the same way as the roof of a hut, point downwards, ribs of folioles taking the place of sticks. This basket may be said to be the special property of the women (1) : they are very clever at balancing it on their heads ; it is very rarely that a woman, old or young, lets her shihundju fall. When empty it is turned upside down and serves as a hat. It is a really pretty sight to see the young girls starting out for the fields with their conical baskets standing straight up on their fuzzy locks. When they are travelling and arrive at a friendly village, they hold themselves perfectly upright, shooting glances here and there without stooping or turning their heads, till their friends rush out to meet them, seize their shihundju and place them on the ground, in small holes which they hastily make in the sand. This is the first duty of hospitality amongst women! 285 482 574

The *lihlelo* (No. 8) is used by cooks for winnowing the maize. Palm leaves not being sufficiently strong for this purpose, the lihlelo is made of the roots, of a tree called *nukanhlelo* (a kind of mimosa), cut into strips, and is coated with a reddish brown varnish prepared from mangrove bark. It is the lihlelo, or rather a smaller basket of the same sort called *ndjewane*, that the housewife takes with her when picking the small wild cucumbers, or gathering the various herbs which serve for the supplementary noontide luncheon. 285 415 243

In the northern clans one often meets with a spherical basket made of the same material as the winnowing basket and covered with an ordinary lihlelo. 285

Besides the foregoing, the Ba-Ronga have two or three baskets which are not in such general use : the *nhlaba*, a kind of plaited bag with interstices between the palm straws, for carrying fish, the *ntjaba*, etc.

Another article, which might, at first sight, be taken for a basket, but which serves quite a different purpose, is the *nhluto*, the strainer. (No. 1.) This unusually shaped strainer is a sort of long bag of plaited straw into which is poured the beer made 285 415 273

(1) The male members of the family are called "ba matlhari, those of the assagai" and the female "ba-shihundju, those of the basket," as these objects are characteristic of each sex.

1 [see p. 124 -- Analyst]

train was heard in the distance. One of my servants was busy 195
cleaning the pots ; I heard him muttering the following words :

The one who roars in the distance... The one who crushes in pieces the braves and smashes them ! The one who debauches our wives : they abandon us, they go (to the towns to lead a bad life) ! The seducer ! And we remain alone.

He was extolling the huge thing and lamenting his misfortune and the curse it has brought upon the country.

IV. *Satiric poetry.*

I have already mentioned the peculiar custom of Thonga 533
literati of speaking in a round-about fashion, and using figurative 195
language, especially when they want to say something disagreeable 574
or to give vent to their humour. It is but one step from such 576
forms to satire. They generally indulge in this satiric vein when 539
dealing with relatives-in-law, women being especially prone to it. When the sisters and aunts of a married woman go to pay a visit to her, they convey all kinds of equivocal compliments. These must not be taken seriously! It is a round-about — exceedingly round-about — way of making graceful allusions and expressing their mutual esteem. I will quote the series of these songs of friendly chaff and invective as it was given to me by Shigiyane, with a running commentary to render them comprehensible. These lively and pointed choruses give a fitting finishing-touch to the marriage customs, and illustrate the curious relations existing between allied families, which I explained in Vol. I, p. 249-253.

On the wedding day the women who take the bride to her 585
husband sing the *tjeka song* : 633

Let us go with her, but let us go back to our homes! 539

This is an ironical way of saying : "She is going to find trouble : we won't follow her as far as that!." The same idea runs through all the songs which these women sing during the next few days.

585 When they accompany the bride to her new home, they sing :

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U ya kwi, Mamano ! — Whither goest thou, mother ?
U ya kwi shana ? — Whither goest thou ?
Ba ta tshaha shihundju ni lihlelo, mamano !
They will bring thee the basket full of maize and the fan, my mother !
Ba ta kuma u tlokoli, ba tlokolisa, mamano !
When thou hast finished crushing it, they will make thee crush it again, my mother !
Ba ta kuma u kopoli, ba kopolisa, mamano !
When thou hast plastered the floor, they will make thee plaster it again, my mother !

But when they come on a visit, carrying jars of beer as presents to the newly married couple, they are much less guarded in their language, ridiculing the poor husband and his family, and making fun of every one in general. They begin singing on the way, with the jars on their heads :

He ntshonga, banhwanyana, he nga [illegible]anana
He la libango ; fa hi nga labi, we manyana.
Ku laba manyana ka ñwan'a manyana.
We are a small band, young girls ; there are few of us.
We are looking for a piece of meat on the spit ; formerly we should not have known where to find any, our sister (so and so) !
Now our sister will get some for us from her husband !

Hi kokobisa lobe, hi ya kwihi shana ?
Hi bhan[illegible] ba ku yalwa !
He fambaka ni khombo, ni khombo dji le kaya !
Where are we going, thus dragging the hook behind us ? (1)
We are the people that are hated.
We walk in misfortune (2), the misfortune that has befallen our house !

Ka ku kandja ñwana a'ku na kule.
Wo khunga he lihanyi, we koko !
Ya kokowela : kowe-kowe-kowe.
Where a daughter lives it cannot be very far off.
Go there, grannie, limping and leaning on thy staff !
Listen to the hen cackling. She says : kowe, kowe, kowe. (3)

[222] (1) They compare themselves to women who have been in the fields, picking kwakwa fruits (p. 17), and are so heavily laden that they cannot carry the hook used for pulling the fruit off the trees ; they have had to tie it to their belt, and drag it behind them on their way home. The travellers give it to be understood that they are not out for pleasure !

(2) That of having to go and see a brother-in-law who ill-treats their sister.

(3) This line is an encouragement to the old woman who finds the walk long and tiring. The other women promise her a fowl at the end of their journey, which the son-in-law will kill for her. Note the first line of the third verse : it is a kind of proverb.

On arriving at the village they stop at the edge of the stream : 585 533 539 574

Fulamelani, banhwanyana, hi ya nwa mati nkobeni.
Stoop down, young women, let us drink water in the valley.

Finally they settle themselves in the home of their *bakoñwana*, their relatives-in-law, and begin to insult their hosts.

Ba yala na wo mbengana loko a boleka !
Ba li : " Famba, u ya teka kwenu u buya wa ta sila ".
Ba yala ni shudana, ba yala ni musana
Ba li : " U ya teka kwenu u buya wa ta tlokola. "
They won't lend (our sister) a grindstone when she wants to borrow one.
They say to her : " Go home and fetch one and then come back and grind. "
They won't lend her the small pestle and mortar.
They say : " Go home and get your own, and then come back and crush your maize. "

Then they make fun of the mother-in-law, who is whispering with the other women of the village, making arrangements, doubtless, for the good entertainment of the visitors. They pretend to discover in these asides some terrible plot.

A li ñwono-ñwono ! Mabulela ya nsati lweyi ! Hi file ! Hi lobile !
That woman over there is whispering ! What can she be saying !
We are dead ! We are lost !

As for the head of the village, these shrewish visitors accost him thus :

Ñwenyi wa muti, hi wene ? A ku hi hi mati, hi ñwene ?
A he hlayi wone, ya nhlobo ! Hi hla byala ne sope !
Are you the master of the village ? Are you not going to give us any water to drink ?
We don't mean well-water ; we mean beer and brandy !

The villagers approach to salute the new-comers, who sulk and refuse to say a word. Large pots are made ready for cooking food.

Mi kokela matambeko, mi kokela bamane ?
Kambe hi balala, hi nga ka manyana !
You prepare the large pots... For whom are you making them ready ?
We are enemies, we are !

585 The young folks catch fowls in order to feast them properly
583 They raise objections.
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> A hi djyule kwee! A hi djyule kwee!
> Hi djyule nkoka-hi-pindja!
> We will have nothing to do with that which cries kwee. (The cry of the fowl when being killed.)
> We want the animal which is led with a string (a goat).

But it is the husband who has to put up with the worst insults.

> Ha! matinga-tingela ya ehuma lwe! Loko a hi bona a ku tlhanya pirubu.
> Ah! see how he wants to avoid us! As soon as he sees us he runs and hides behind the houses! (He is afraid of us!)
> Hi laba tima-mbilu! hi djyula mafura ya ku nona phobo.
> We want something to satisfy the heart! We must have our fat very rich!
> Nyoka ya nyoka! Mbyana ya mbyana! Yi whee!
> Serpent that thou art! Dog that thou art! Thou sayest bow-wow!

Then to show him that they really like and appreciate him, they add, with the true untutored rudeness which they maintain to the end of the visit :

> A ku hi lobolele? Na wene, bana ba ku ba ku lobolela ki khume ni atlhanu!
> Won't you buy another wife from us! Later on your daughters will bring you a dowry worth fifteen pounds sterling!

Finally, after having had plenty to eat and to drink and a good dance, they will remark, on leaving :

> Hi tlhome nyonga ya mbuti, hi muka
> Twine the goat's bladder in our hair, that we may go home.

All this is not very high-flown poetry. The general intercourse between relatives-in-law is by no means refined and this rudeness contrasts with the ordinary civility of Native life. Let us remember that this way of speaking is not intended to show a want of politeness on the part of the visitors, but, on the contrary, is the behaviour suited to the occasion! I have the music of some of these songs, which were noted down by Mrs Audéoud, in Maputju. In No. 13, the bridesmaids actually exhort the bride not to follow her husband! But they are the last to expect her to follow their advice.

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than others. The wives form the first circle, especially the first wife. They have therefore to perform peculiar purifying ceremonies which throw great light on the profound feelings of the Thongas regarding life and nature. On the other hand they are the property of the husband's family and they are part of his belongings. How are they to be distributed amongst his heirs ? This is a very delicate matter. It is more or less regulated by the tribal law. Hence there are two series of rites to consider, in the customs relating to widows : 1) The rites of purification, 2) the laws of distribution.

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Let us describe first the fate of the great wife amongst the Rongas (See for supplementary details : The fate of widows amongst the Ba-Ronga. S.A.A.A.S. 1909).

a) *The first day*. Manyibane is dead! — a sad event for his wife. She is called to inspect his grave. She assists silently at his funeral. But as soon as the younger brother of the deceased has finished praying, she bursts into tears and cries aloud! Her parents cry also : "Our child has fallen into misfortune! Now the cold has come for her! She will learn to know the cold water!" This is an allusion to the kind of life which the new widow will have to lead. Every morning she must go to the lake or the pool, with her companions, to have her whole body washed till the days of purification are completed.

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The first of these purifying rites is performed just after the burial. The widow, surrounded by other women, goes to the pool and there all must wash their bodies. Most of them return home at once. But the widow remains there with *other widows* who have lost their husbands in former years. They form a *secret society* which assembles only to receive new members into its ranks. Nobody must see the strange rites performed by them. It is a *Ngoma* (the same word as for the circumcision school). However, the mysterious company takes possession of the great road (gondjwen), and every one must take care not to pass along it at that time, for great misfortune might overtake the imprudent one who should approach too near and catch a glimpse of the proceedings. A wise man, on seeing the suspicious group

783 of mourning women sitting on the main road, prudently stops and
765 makes a long detour to avoid the place... What is done at this
525 meeting ? One of the widows makes an incision with a knife or a
787 bit of glass in the skin of the new member of the society, in the inguinal region on the left side, "where the husband was resting." If the blood flows freely, it is a good sign. The women are satisfied ; they say there was a good understanding between husband and wife ; if the blood does not flow it is a bad omen. Then one of them lights a little fire with a handful of dry grass ; this grass has been torn from the roof of the deceased's hut. A little excrement from a cock (not a hen!) is then thrown into the fire, and the widow must expose both hands to the smoke. Afterwards she must extinguish the fire with her own water. Should she be unable to do this, it is a further proof that she has not been faithful to her husband and that she has killed him by her adulteries. These rites are very similar to the first circumcision rites, the incision performed recalling the ablation of the foreskin, and the exposure to the smoke, the jumping over the fire. These are great taboos. Evidently they are initiation rites, accompanying the passage from one condition to another. Why does the ceremony take place on the main road ? Because later on the contamination of death will attach itself to travellers passing that spot, and the mourners themselves will get rid of it in this way.

783 After that, the company returns home. The other widows
765 take every bit of clothing from their companion, and tie a reed or a
575 palm thread around her waist with some broad leaves attached
292 to it. With this scanty garment, they bring her home. She walks surrounded by them. Someone warns the men to leave the road as they are not allowed to see the procession. They hide themselves in their huts. The widow is led to her hut, the hut of the great wife which has now been uncrowned. She must accomplish *the last crossing of the hut*. Entering through the door, she shouts loudly : "My husband! My husband! You have left me alone! What am I to do ?" Then she goes out, not by the door but by the hole which has been made in the wall to carry the corpse to the grave. Behind the hut her friends are waiting for her and give her back her old clothing, which has been

783 washed in the pool and which she will wear again for two days (1).
765 b) *The following days of the Great Mourning.* Without delay a new hut, a small provisional hut, is built in front of the mortuary one. Here the great wife will stay during the whole of her widowhood; the space between this and the old hut is more or less taboo and most of the possessions of the deceased are placed there, under the roof near the door on the outside. (See illustration p. 159.)

The other widows do not leave their huts, but they participate in the other purifying acts, the vapour baths and the general sprinkling of the fifth day. As regards the vapour baths, however, the first wife is associated with the grave-diggers, viz. she must be exposed to the strongest medicinal smoke, while the inferior wives are cleansed with weaker drugs. They all put on the *malopa* and eat with spoons during the whole year of widowhood.

587 c) *Provisional decision regarding the fate of the widows.* A few
595 days after the Great Mourning, a fresh gathering takes place, not
728 in connection with the defilement of death, which is now provision-
768 ally cleansed, but *to settle provisionally the fate of the widows.* The
604 sisters of the deceased have to play a special part in this gathering. They will lead the discussion with the widows about their new husbands. It is indeed a happy custom to let women decide on the subject. Not that they have unrestricted power in the matter. The law has provided a certain rule for the distribution and this is seldom departed from. However, some liberty is allowed in its application, and modifications can better be made if proposed by female intermediaries. Should the husband possess a harem (tshengwe), that is at least five wives, they will most likely be given to the following heirs. The great wife, being "the pole of the

575 (1) *Widowers* also form a similar society and undergo the same rites; but just as it
783 was only the great wife who was subject to these laws, to the exclusion of the little wives, so it is only when he has lost his first wife that a man is initiated into the
765 widowers' society. After having buried her (he holds her head) he goes to the pool, washes himself, and another widower comes and makes the incision in him in the inguinal region. Then he throws aways his *shifodo* (Annotatio 1.) and also carries out the same crossing of the hut in tears. These three acts constitute the actual widower's mourning: the vapour baths and *Yahla khombo* are part of his purification as being the principal grave-digger.

1 [See category 116 --Analyst]

768 The sun is now setting. All the men go to the central place of
575 the village and sit round the fire. The widows remain on the
533 spot, between the deceased's hut and the new hut of the great wife, where all the belongings of the late husband have been kept during the whole year. The other widows of the family surround them once more ; no other woman is allowed to approach. The present ceremony is another secret rite of the company of widows. They sing the following mourning song to recall all the sufferings of the year of widowhood :

> Angoma nkulukumba ! Tatana a nga fa, a ba siya
> Na ngoma a nga si ba byela !
> Our secret law is a great law ! Our father has gone, he has left them,
> And he had not told them about that law !

768 During this song the old women take away all the clothing of
587 the widows, and wash their bodies. Then they lead them into the hut of the great wife and put on them new clothing, the clothes which their suitors and other relatives have brought for them. When they are all seated, the sisters of the deceased proceed to the last distribution. They first ask the great wife : "You, to whom do you belong ?" She answers : "Do you not know him ? It is the man who has taken care of me, who has been visiting me! I choose so and so!" She may also say : "I kill so and so!" *(Ndji dlaya man)*. That means : "As I have killed my first husband, I might do the same for the second," a very promising declaration! As soon as the widow has given her answer, the women in the hut begin shouting loudly, and one of them goes out to the men, and cries : "So and so says she kills so and so !" They proceed to ask another : "You, whom do you choose ?" The woman remains silent. "What do you mean?" — "I do not choose anybody." — "How is that? Be sensible!" — "No! I do not want anybody!" — "Why ?" They begin to press her : "You know well who has taken care of you, who has visited *(hambela)* you the whole year." — "I do not want him!" — "How is that possible ?" — "No, I do not want him. I want the *ntukulu* so and so." A frightful noise is heard in the hut ; they are all shouting together. What has happened ?

601 potential wife of my father (Shaputa to Misaben), not to mention those women of my wife's family who can be so called. An elder sister is also mamana to her younger sister, and sometimes a husband calls his wife mamana (1).

If the mother's sister is a mother, the mother's brother is by no means a father. He is called *malume* or *kokwana*, and here we meet with one of the most characteristic features of the Thonga, and even Bantu, system of relationship. The term kokwana means first the paternal grandfather and all the ancestors on the father's side, and this is its proper essential meaning. The bakokwana are also all my mother's male relatives: her brothers, fathers, uncles, etc. They form a group which I call "ka bakokwana" which means "my mother's home," just as *kweru* means my father's home, my official home. Kweru comes first; ka bakokwana next. "The bushaka on the father's side is the head; on the mother's side, only the legs" (Mboza). 593 Let us remember that a child lives at his father's home and only 602 goes on a visit to his mother's village. He may stay there for [591] years after the weaning, but if he chose to settle there, he would be made fun of and severely censured by his father and his paternal uncles. "You are stupid," they would say, "you leave your own village, you go to the village of your bakokwana to increase it! This is true folly. Has not your mother been bought with money? The children she bore belong to your father, just like the calves of his cows." (Mboza.) But if the home of the mother cannot become the home of the children, the relations they maintain with

601 576 (1) The term mamana is frequently used by an interlocutor, without any idea of relationship, when speaking to married women of a more advanced age than himself. Such an extented meaning is also frequent with tatana, kokwana, ñwana. Any man older than I am can be addressed by me as tatana and will answer by calling me ñwana. If the difference of age is greater, we shall treat each other as kokwana and stukula. Speaking in the third person a child will always put tatana before the name of any grown up man, though he belong to a totally different clan. Women round Lourence Marques often call a White man akata, husband. This shows that kinship terms are employed as expressing moral relations as well as blood or family relations, and we must not draw hasty conclusions from the way in which these terms are applied, or necessarily see in them the traces of a previous social state in which every grown up man or woman was looked on as a true father or mother. The Thongas may give to these terms an extended meaning. Nevertheless they differentiate perfectly between their technical and their derived sense.

b: The bakoñwana.

606 First of all, *the wife's father*. There is a great respect in the heart of his son-in-law towards him, even a certain amount of fear, because, should a quarrel arise between a man and his wife, the father-in-law will preside over the painful discussions which will take place, he being the natural protector of his daughter. However, in normal cases, the two men live on good terms with each other, and very soon the son-in-law calls his father-in-law tatana, father ; of course the word tatana is not used here in its technical sense, but only by extension.

607 192 Secondly the bakoñwana are *the wife's brothers*. When their father dies, they take his place as protectors of their sister. Hence the uneasiness and fear with regard to them, which is, however, less marked in their case. The wife's brothers will never be called bamakweru (as they will never be ba-kweru, those of my house) but they are frequently designated by the term *soar*, or *sibar*, which is merely a corruption of the Dutch word zwager. This curious adoption of a foreign term is modern ; it is spreading more and more amongst the Zulus, Xosas and Suthos of Basutoland. Amongst the Thongas I only once heard the word soar used. The tendency to assimilate that kind of relationship to the European conception is a proof that the old fear of brothers-in-law is disappearing in the new generation.

606 But it is in the relation with two women of the wife's family that the respect of bukoñwana is pushed to the greatest extent : the wife's mother and the wife of the brother-in-law. In these cases there is not only respect but *avoidance*

The wife's mother.

606 576 Let us listen to Viguet telling the story of a man meeting his mother-in-law in the bush. "If one of the two sees the other coming a long way off, soon enough to escape without being noticed, he will speedily hide himself and reach his destination by making a long circuit, half a mile if necessary. But if they have come too near to have recourse to flight, this is what will happen. You leave the road ; you enter the bush on your right

606 side. She does the same. Then you sit down according to
376 men's fashion, crossing your legs. She also sits down bending
834 her legs, and putting one knee over the other as women do; then
576 both parties salute each other, you, as a man, clapping your hands against each other, holding them parallel, and the woman holding hers at right angles. 'Then you begin to talk..."

Suppose the son-in-law has had the good luck to reach the village of his wife's relatives without having met his mother-in-law, but sees her sitting somewhere near a hut. This is dreadful. She looks at him and at once covers her breasts with her cloth. He himself turns his eyes aside. I saw in Natal a curious photograph representing the scene. Amongst the Zulus the avoidance of the mother-in-law is perhaps more marked than in any other tribe; the man is shown in the picture hiding his face
606 with his shield. Should the mother-in-law be taking her meal
576 when her son-in-law arrives unexpectedly, she throws away the mouthful she was eating, and he does the same.— Suppose then that he has entered the village without seeing her; then the tinamu, his wife's sisters, come hastily to meet him. They take his sticks, joking with him meanwhile and put them in his mother-in-law's hut. This hut is his; he has the right of staying in it during his whole visit. They spread a mat on the ground, and bring him food. They chat with him. Then the mother-in-law comes in her turn, but she dares not enter the hut. She sits down outside and, without seeing him, salutes him, saying: "Good morning, son of so and so." She must not pronounce his name. He answers in the same style, and must also say: "Daughter of so and so." Should he call her by her name it would be a breach of etiquette and his wife would be angry and say: "How dare you? Did she not bring me forth? Rather say: Mother!" During the first years of his married life, the son-in-law never eats with his wife's mother.

607 This peculiar behaviour is the rule, not only towards the wife's mother, but also towards her sisters.

606 In the course of years there is a *lessening* of this terrible taboo.
431 In the Maputju clan, the son-in-law will provide an ox as soon as
576 possible and he will "communicate" (tlhangana) with her, partaking

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of its meat with all his relatives-in-law. Then both will be allowed to eat together. Until that present was made, it would have been impossible. In this clan, a future son-in-law does not eat at all with his bakoñwana until the marriage is concluded, and this rule is sometimes observed till he has given "the ox for communicating together." Amongst the Zulus it is said that a mother-in-law will never eat with her daughter's husband. In the Khosa clan the custom of lessening the avoidance taboo by offering a present to the mother-in-law also exists. The son-in-law will one day bring a plate of food to her with his gift put on-top of it. She will accept it and eat together with him. Then it will be possible for these two persons to "djungulisana" i. e. to tell each other the news of the day when visiting each other's village. But when this monotonous recital is finished and concluded, as is customary, by clapping both hands, this must be done with care, and not in a hurried fashion, as when speaking to an ordinary person, but slowly and respectfully.

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What is the reason of this extraordinary conduct of the son-in-law towards his wife's mother ? The Khosa Native who gave me this last information said : "A wise man will carefully observe the bukoñwana rules, because, if he hurts his parents-in-law by infringing them, they will not give him his tinamu as wives." This is true, but the same may be said of all the taboos of the bukoñwana, and the mother-in-law is not the principal person to be consulted on the question. Another more profound reason was once alluded to by an old Thonga, of Spelonken, Abraham Mabanyisi, who said to me : "I fear my mother-in-law because I shall never marry her : Such a thing has never been seen." This statement has been confirmed since by information gathered in the Maputju clan. Notice the almost reflex action of the mother-in-law in covering her breasts when she sees her son-in-law coming unexpectedly. It shows that there is a sexual element in the behaviour of the woman and also in that of the man, who hides his face in order not to see her in her half nakedness. Dr. Rivers, who has met exactly the same rites of avoidance amongst the Melanesians, supposes that they are dictated by a more or less unconscious desire on the part of both these persons to fight against the temptation to have sexual relations with each other. Bantus also, in the course of the evolution of the family, have come to the deep conviction that such intercourse is bad and must

606 be banished from their thoughts. They obey that conviction when
835 practising the avoidance rites.

The wife of the brother-in-law, the Great Mukonwana.

607 This particular respect is even more marked in the relations of a man with the wife of his wife's brother. Indeed the avoidance is pushed further than with the mother-in-law. A Native of the Ndjao tribe (which has the same customs as the Thonga tribe in this respect) described to me vividly the extraordinary marks of fear that these two persons show each other when they meet on the road. The story will be told when speaking of the Ba-Ndjao. Here are some other marks of this extraordinary respect.

607 The wife's brother's wife must always keep her breasts covered
834 in the village of her husband's sister's husband. Only when she has had a child is she permitted to "open her clothing;" but then she must fix a leaf in her hair (as if to show that she does not forget the special reserve which she is bound to maintain). (Khosen region.)

607 When a man travels with his great mukonwana and they have to
576 cross a river, they will avoid entering the same boat. It may
827 happen to anyone to emit an unseemly sound from the rectum; but if the great mukonwana is present, she looks on this as a grave offence. A fine must be paid to her, a hoe, for instance. If the guilty man has nothing to give her, he at once breaks a twig from a tree and presents it to her as a token that the proper fine will be forthcoming in due time! He must never use words of insult in her presence, even if he addresses them to another person.

607 If he loses his temper before her she will go to the old people of
844 her husband's village and tell them: "He has insulted me." On the other hand the great mukonwana is bound to go and assist the wife of this man when she gives birth to a child. At least this is the rule in the Khosa clan and also in Maputju. The two women live on very good terms with each other; they are

607 *tinhombe*. The man himself, when he visits his relatives-in-law, has the right of sleeping in the hut of the great mukonwana. We have seen that, during the first months after his marriage, he is received in the hut of his mother-in-law. Why is this? Because the oxen

182 mourning over the dead. The inner connexion existing between these
621 three events is that, in all of them, there is a passage. Hence the
783 resemblance of the rites. This striking similarity is, to my mind, the best proof that the passage rites constitute a peculiar category. When a
829 headman has decided to move, he leaves his old kraal, he *separates* from it, not by the ordinary gate, but by a special opening made at the back of the village. He is not allowed to return to it again. Then, for him and for all his people, begins a *marginal period* of one month or more, the buhlapfa (notice the prefix *bu* which indicates a period here, as in bussahana [page 42]). We see the village, during these few weeks, put beyond the pale of society. The ordinary laws are suspended, (licencious songs), and many special taboos are enforced (prohibition of sexual relations, fire taboo, water taboo, etc.), just as in the period of mourning; at last the village returns to the ordinary course of life by a final act of purification, the mysterious *hlamba ndjaka*, which seems to be the most powerful means of cleansing the collective life. This last ceremony shows that, here, the marginal period has been instituted on account of the uncleaness, the impurity of the old village. Let us remember that in most cases the village has been moved on account of death! All the adult members of the social organism take part in the cleansing (at least in the Northern clans) and so the village begins a new and purified life. No one can deny the deep significance of all these rites and the mystic conception of the Thonga village.

C. THE HEADMAN AND THE ORGANISATION OF THE VILLAGE.

596 Each village thus possesses its superior (hosi), its master. He
576 is called *munumzane* or *numzane*, a curious expression which is
621 also employed in Zulu; it means owner of a kraal, gentleman,
618 and is often used in saluting grown up men. We have seen the mystic relation between the headman and his *muti*. The village, the muti, is the primitive social organism. The clan (tiko), which is the gathering of all the *miti*, reproduces all the features of the
622 village life on a large scale. So the *numzane* corresponds to the
596 *hosi*, chief of the tribe. Both certainly possess great authority,

524 keep serious and not laugh. Should they be unable to keep their countenances, their victory is lost!

538 But these games are only a preliminary. The farther we go, the nearer we get to true literature! Now they ask each other *riddles (psitekatekisa)*, simple and antiphonic. We shall study this form of folklore later on... If the second side is unable to give the right answer to the riddle, it asks permission to propose one in its turn and so the intellectual combat goes on until they have exhausted the series of riddles they know. Those who have had the worst of the duel must pay the forfeit by *telling tales (tha psihetana)*. A woman may be present who is a renowned story-teller and she holds the whole company under the charm of her tale for half an hour, perhaps longer... Children shudder when they hear the terrible story of the bogey man! They burst into laughter when she describes the funny tricks of the Hare, or of the frog *Shinana*. They heartily approve when the younger brother, despised by his elders, becomes their saviour and teaches them a good lesson... Thonga folk-lore is very rich; it is one of the most interesting manifestations of the psychic life of the tribe. We shall study it with the attention it deserves in Part V of this work. Here it is sufficient to show what a great and happy part it plays in the life of the village.

E. RULES OF POLITENESS AND HOSPITALITY.

576 769 593 The village life is dominated by the *respect for hierarchy*. I do not think this term is exaggerated. Etymologically hierarchy conveys not only a moral but a religious idea. This religious feeling is not absent in the fear felt by a younger brother for his elder, because the elder member of the family is its priest, the only possible intermediary between the family and its gods (See Part VI). So no wonder if, in their relations with each other, though these are extremely free and natural, Natives follow strict rules of etiquette.

576 In *addressing* an elder person, it is not becoming to call him
551 by his name. You will say to him: "Tatana," father, or "mamana," mother, as the case may be. Or you address him by the name of his father preceded by Ñwa, if it is a man, Mi, if it is a woman. So Mboza was called Ñwamasuluke, and Nsabula Migogwe. You may also say to a counsellor: "Ndjuna," to the chief: "Hosi," to the headman: "Numzana," to any grown-up man: "Wa-ka-Manyana," viz., man of such a clan, or descendant of such a man. Even speaking of an adult in the third person, you will not use his name but employ similar respectful expressions.
576 After the birth of her first child, the mother is generally called after
553 it, not so universally, however, as amongst the Ba-Sutho. So
551 Magugu, the wife of Spoon, became Mamana wa Modjadju, especially when spoken of in the third person. The names which are the most taboo are those of the mother-in-law, and of the "woman bought with my oxen." Speaking of a deceased person, one puts before his name the expression "*Matjuwa*," which corresponds to our: "late." In the Northern clans, the word *shira*, grave, is employed for "late".

576 The principle *salutations* are: *Shawan*: Be saluted, said by the arriving guest, to which you reply also: *Shawan*. *Hamban*: Good-bye or *Salan*: Remain, is said on leaving, and you answer: *Famban*: Go, or *Famban kahle* (Zulu): Go happily. Other greetings are employed only at certain times of the day: *Avushen*! a kind of locative, "at the dawn," equivalent to "Good morning." (Vusha means dawn). *Hi nhlekanhi*: It is midday! *A dji pelen*: or *a dji hlwen*: At sunset, properly: time when the sun sets. When retiring to sleep: *Yetlelan* (Ro.): Sleep! or *sibaman* (Dj.): lie on your belly; or *hi ta pfushana*: we shall say to each other good morning to-morrow! A curious salutation addressed to people working is: *A psi fen* (Ro.): Let it die. Its origin is as follows. When a man had killed a large animal, a hippopotamus or an antelope, his companions are in the habit of saluting him thus, hoping to share the meat with him. Now it is said to anybody working in the fields; it then means: "Let your work die." The
576 word "Nkosi," with which Natives salute white men, means
609 Chief in Zulu. They lift up their hand when pronouncing it. It

576 is not as if they were trying to raise their hats, as they do not wear
609 any. The explanation of the gesture is this, according to a Transvaal Native : the Boers taught black people to point to heaven, when saluting a white man, with this meaning : I compare you with the One who is above!

576 In the Northern clans, salutations are generally accompanied
201 by a clapping of hands (omba mandla). Men beat their hands against each other, placing them parallel to each other ; women do the same, placing them crosswise or at right angles. Amongst the Ba-Pedi this salutation with the hands is performed in a somewhat different manner ; when a Pedi enters the hubo, and wishes to greet a gathering of men, he claps his hands before his breast ; but when he salutes only one person, he bows down and claps his hands at the height of his knees, either on the right side or on the left. Amongst the Ba-Ronga, clapping the hands is a sign of thankfulness ; they say as they do so : *I khani mambo*, which probably means : "I dance before you, Sir." ("Mambo"
576 means chief in the Ndjao language.) In Djonga the proper word for thanking is *nkomo*. The etymology of this word seems to be : "I homu," "it is an ox." If anyone gives me a hen, he presents it to me saying : "Take my chick." When he brings a goat he says : "This is my hen." In both cases I answer : "Nkomo," "it is an ox!" The Thonga etiquette requires that the giver depreciate his gift and that the receiver magnify it! Another less polite way of thanking is this : *Yengetani*, — "do it again," or *ni mundjuku*, — "and also to-morrow!"

576 Thongas used not to *shake hands* in former times. Now-a-days
177 the civilised Natives have adopted the European fashion, but this kind of familiarity is not approved of by the old folks, especially by the chiefs. Natives, when they shake hands, often do it in two movements : first they catch the four fingers and then slide on to the thumb. I do not know where they have
832 learnt to do this! *Kissing* was formerly entirely unknown. A good mother would occasionally wipe her baby's nose, but this can hardly be called a kiss. When they saw the custom adopted by the Europeans, they said laughingly : "Look at these people! They suck each other! They eat each other's saliva and dirt!"

832 Even a husband never kissed his wife. On coming back from
576 a journey, a man would hardly greet his wife ; she would see
593 him passing through the village, prepare food for him, and when
152 it was cooked, she would come and salute him by presenting it
572 to him. But if he has a good friend in the village, and if this friend sees him coming back after a long absence, their meeting will be much more touching. The friend will go to the main entrance of the village, exclaim : "Ha-Ha," take his parcel from his hands, put his arms round his shoulders (a ku mu buso hi mandla), remove the perspiration from his face, and pat him gently, saying : "Your ancestor-gods have their eyes open! They have worked well! They have brought you back."

574 *Hospitality*. When strangers enter a village, men sit on the
609 *bandla*, and women go further on and sit on the *hubo* ; they remain
622 quietly there till the people of the village come and salute them (losa). Should the inhabitants delay too long, the visitors move on, saying : "These people are not good." But this is very rare. Generally the master of the village comes to them, inquiring who they are, whence they come, where they are going, and asks them : "Do you wish to spend the night here ?" If they say : "Yes," the headman will empty one of his huts by putting two of his wives together, and will himself sleep with the visitors. Should there still be food, he will give them some. If not, he says :
574 "*Ndlala*!" "Starvation!" After a little while, a mat is unrolled
609 and the official ceremony of "djungulisana" takes place. This is a
622 very amusing custom. The headman sits together with his hosts and enquires about the news of their home. One of the
203 visitors begins in a monotonous tone and pours forth volubly
195 a flow of words with a peculiar cadence and almost without taking breath. His interlocutor interrupts him after each sentence, with "Ahina, hina," that is to say "Indeed, indeed!" till the whole skein is unwound ; the two men finish with a longer "*Hina*," the inhabitants of the hut adding an emphatic "*khani*," a heartfelt "thank you ;" then the master of the village begins to relate his own news in the same tone. It is impossible to
574 imagine anything more curious than this "mélopée" in two parts.
609 This law of hospitality is general all over the tribe. Should

618 movement of amalgamation would probably not have taken place,
175 and I think we may consider the clan life, as it is still met with
643 amongst the Rongas, (who were never subject to the Ngoni chief), as the typical Bantu political state (1).

B. THE LAUDATORY NAME OF THE CLANS AND TOTEMISM.

618 Each clan is known by the name of the old chief who is believed
551 to have been its original ancestor. So the Nkuna clan comes
101 from Nkuna, who lived four or five hundred years ago, and left Zululand for the Bilen country. The Mazwaya clan descends from Mazwaya, grandfather of Masinga and ancestor of all the heads of the sub-clans, Makaneta, Hlewane, etc. This name is a kind of *family name* for all the members of the clan. In the course of time, when sub-clans begin to aspire to independence, the first ancestor tends to fall into oblivion and is supplanted by the ancestor of the sub-clan. This process is easily noticeable at the present moment in Nondwane, where Mboza, for instance, calls himself a Makaneta. He says: "I am wa ka Makaneta," — "a man of the Makaneta house;" but if he wants to be more precise, he will say: "I am a Mazwaya Makaneta." — "Shibongo a shi diwi," "the family name is never eaten, it is eternal!" (Mboza.)

618 This old name is called *shibongo* from *ku bonga*, to laud, to
551 praise. It is a *laudatory name*. It is used as such on two diffe-
576 rent occasions: 1) *When people salute each other*. A friend who meets Mboza on the road will say to him: "Shawan, Makaneta," "Good morning Makaneta!" But also: "Shawan Makhetshe!" (Makhetshe is the grandfather of Makaneta); or: "Shawan Mazwaya" or "Shawan Nwamasuluke." (Masuluke is the true father of Mboza.)

(1) The objection might be raised that, in former centuries, the celebrated Monomotapa founded a great kingdom. But what this exactly was, nobody knows. The descriptions of the chroniclers of those times are not very trustworthy, as we shall see from a quotation which will be made later on.

854 2) *To soothe babies.* Should Mboza's son cry, his nurse will say :
551 "Miyela, Makaneta ñwa yindlu ya ntima," "Keep quiet Makaneta,
618 of the black hut." It may also happen that some one wishing to console himself in affliction will do the same. Notice these last words : "of the black hut." They mean : "You who belong to a village where the huts have had time to become black ; they have never been destroyed by enemies, as no enemy dares to attack your clan! So the roofs have blackened inside from the effects of the smoke and outside from those of the rain!" It is customary to add to the name of the ancestor words such as these, in order to flatter more highly the man you salute, or the baby you console.
551 Thus each clan has a *laudatory phrase* which is sometimes much
618 longer than the Makaneta one. Masinga is called "wa le hondjo-
576 sin," "the one who reigns over the red earth," (more fertile than the sand). The Matinanas or Ngomanes are lauded thus : "Nkandjetele wa ku woma, ku baleka minambyana" — "the one who tramples on a dry place, and rivers begin to flow," because he is so heavy, so powerful! (Compare p. 87.) A Ngomane man will address his paternal aunt with the same words, when offering her a present.

Here are some of the best known shibongo. Their meaning is sometimes unknown, as they often contain ancient and obsolete expressions :

Hoñwana : Ñwahomu ya ntima ñwa mu-Nondjwana, — The black ox of Nondjwana (or Nondwane).

Shirindja : Mudzunga ntima wa le dzungen, — Black South of the South ?

Mpfumo : Ba hlela misaba ba khabuta, — They winnow the sand ; they eat it. (The sand is so white in their country that it resembles mealies flour : they never lack food.)

Libombo : Libombo la Ndlopfu, — Elephant's face.

Nkuna : Ba homu! Ba nyari! ya makhwiri, Ñwashitjimba buraka, ba mahlwen ka ntima. — Those of the ox! Those of the buffalo, the buffalo with the large belly which rolls in the mud, the one with a black spot on the forehead!

Rikotjo : Ba Nyamasi, — Those of the nyamari tree.

Khosa : Ba ripanga ro sheka ba ntsindja, — Those of the keen

551 edged sword which "cuts" disputes brought to the capital. (The
618 Khosa chiefs were reputed for their wisdom in deciding judicial
576 or political matters.)

Hlabi: Ba Nhlabi ba ku bengwa, Nhlabi ya Makamu ya Mavuse ya nkonwana, — The Hlabi who are hated, sons of Makamu, of Mavuse, of the calf (?)

Hlengwe: Shikobela sha Matsheme, Tshauke wa Matsheme (names of old chiefs).

551 *Tembe*: Mulao Ngolanyama madlaya a nga di, makhama a
618 nga di, a dlayele bahloti: — Mulao (son of Tembe ?), the lion
643 which kills and does not eat, the hawk which kills, it kills for
576 the hunters, viz., it is so well fed itself, so rich that it can leave the meat for others. Such a sentence was pronounced in former times by subjects entering the royal kraal, crawling on their knees, when they wished to receive food from the chief.

Nhlanganu: Ba ku hlomula fumo, ba renga ndlela: — Those who unsheath the sword in order to buy the road, (the right of passing through a foreign country) (1).

551 In addition to these laudatory phrases of clans, each individual has his own sentence or sentences by which he praises himself or by which others praise his qualities. They are specially common in the case of boys, but even girls possess them. In the case of chiefs, such praises are much longer. See for instance the praise of the Nkuna chief Muhlaba (Part III, Ch. III, III).

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171 If we cross the plain of the Sabi and reach the Drakensberg, we find that all the Pedi tribes dwelling together with the Thongas in the Leydenburg and Zoutpansberg district, possess laudatory

551 (1) This custom of praising the various tribes in such terms is so familiar to the
609 Thongas that they have invented similar expressions for the white people. The Portuguese are: Ba ka nâofazmalo, — the Sons of Never mind, because they seem to the Natives to be somewhat careless or indifferent. The English are: Bana ba Nhluleki, a hluleka ku hleka, a tiba ku lwa, — the sons of the one who cannot, he cannot laugh, he knows how to fight! Perhaps Natives consider them, on the contrary, somewhat too earnest, too keen!

643 chiefs are entitled (1). The *elevation and the presentation* ended,
535 the next proceeding is the *gila* or war dance. The heroes of the army (batlhabani ba fumo), and the young men of blood royal rush one after the other into the enclosure brandishing their weapons, jumping as high as they possibly can, imitating acts of prowess on the battle field and simulating the transfixion of their enemies. The *gila* continues until the cry is heard : "Ye-yi, yé-yi, ye-yi." This murmuring sound uttered by the whole army marks the end of the jumping, and all re-form into line. All the shields must now touch one another, forming an immense unbroken circle, and then comes the *guba*, the intonation of the
643 solemn chant which is at once the principal patriotic song of the
533 tribe, the coronation hymn, the dirge of mourning, the war-song,
539 and the sacred melody par excellence :

> Sabela ! Sabela nkosi ! Ji ! Ji !
> Answer us ! Answer us, O chief ! Ji ! Ji !
> Si ya ku wela mulambu mkulu wa ka nkosi.
> Yes, we will cross the great river, the river of the chief.

This chant, which is in the Zulu language, is difficult to understand. The soloist commences with : "Sabela nkosi" which may be translated "Obey the chief ;" but the meaning would rather seem to be : "Reply to us, chief!" and, if taken in this sense, these words would be a request made by the army

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(1) The word *Bayete* is said to be of Zulu origin and to convey the following meaning : bring thine enemies hither and destroy them ! *Ndjao* means lion. The warriors employ these terms to extol the power of their chief and, at the same time, to express their allegiance to him. There is a modern tendency to use this solemn salutation in a more general manner : for instance it is addressed to the Whites and not only to those in authority, but more or less to every one, even, in certain cases, to missionaries ! I always remember my arrival at the village of Shirinda, when I went to call on the chief Mahatlane, then unknown to me. I arrived at the gate of the kraal mounted on a most unpretentious little donkey and enquired of two young men who were there, where I could find the chief. "Bayete !" was the salutation I received and there was certainly nothing very regal either in my appearance or my "mount." One of these young men proved to be Mahatlane himself ! *Bayete* is also frequently used in acknowledging a gift from a superior and would then be merely the equivalent of "thank you." In Gaza, Gungunyana would not allow Bayete to be said to any one but himself. All the petty chiefs of the Ba-Ronga insisted on their royal salutation and the Ngoni king could not put a stop to it, as they were direct dependencies of the Whites and did not derive their authority from him.

1 [For the coronation of a chief --Analyst]

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

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their own saliva," (viz., their mouths watering the while). He sometimes throws a piece of meat to one of his favourites, who accepts it with both hands, shouting : "Bayete!" In the Tembe capital, men crawled on their knees before the chief, shouting: "Ngolanyama" "Lion!". Nwangundjuwana, the chief of Nwamba, was known for his more democratic ways. He used to eat with his men.

To shake hands with a chief was also considered as taboo before the days of Christianity. Now Muhlaba somewhat reluctantly accepts the hand which is extended to him by the most modest of his subjects, even by children on Christmas Day. The idea which is at the bottom of the fear is that the chief is a magical being. He possesses special medicines with which he rubs himself or which he swallows, so that his body is taboo (ntjumbu wa hosi wa yila). He is dangerous. "When he points at you with his finger, you are a dead man" (Mboza). Owing to the charms with which he had smeared his body, Maphunga, the chief of Nondwane, made those who discussed State affairs with him, even White people, "unable to answer him or to resist his will" (Mboza). In order to increase this salutary fear, some chiefs had the curious custom of *disappearing for a time* (tumba) "just like a big caterpillar when it enters the ground and becomes a chrysalis." The same Maphunga used to remain invisible during one week each year before the great bukanye feast (1). We shall see the same rite practised by the great magicians, who also aspire to create a deep impression on the imagination of the people. (See Part VI.) As already mentioned, the chief alone must be addressed by the royal salutation "Bayete" or "Baheti." The hosana has no right to it legally, and must be addressed by the term "Baba," "Father." As regards subjects, they are called *malandja*, from the verb ku landja,

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(1) This custom is met with amongst the Pedis, where old chiefs abandon their kraals and go to live in the desert for years, leaving a prince regent in their stead. This kind of hermit life gives them great prestige. The Pedi chief Sikororo, near Shilouane, is the best-known case of such a disappearance. Sexual continence, even repugnance to women, was one of his reasons for this seclusion, which lasted until his death (1903 or 1904).

551/609 of the white man. M. Torre do Valle has given a list of nicknames of the merchants and other inhabitants of Lourenço Marques in his Diccionario Shironga-Portuguez. It is well worth consulting, and the only thing wanting is a photograph of the white man and an explanation of the name ; it would be a splendid illustration of Native wit!

551/576/618 So far we have spoken only of *personal* names and nicknames. But, beside these, every man possesses his clan name, or surname, viz., the name of the first of his known ancestors. Grown up men prefer being addressed by this name, which is *shibongo*, viz. the name by which they are "glorified." This subject is treated in Part III (p. 360).

APPENDIX III (See p. 98)

Unnatural Vice in the Johannesburg Compounds.

938/548/588 In January 1915 one of my colleagues passing near one of the Johannesburg Compounds, saw a big company of Natives singing and walking in the direction of another Compound where a great dance was taking place. Amongst them there were a number of women. My colleague asked his Native evangelist how it was possible that so many women should be walking about in that part of the world, where the feminine element is very small. The man told him : "They are not women! They are *tinkhontshana*, boys who have placed on their chests the breasts of women carved in wood, and who are going to the dance in order to play the part of women. To-night when they return to their dormitories, their 'husbands' will have to give them 10/, and only on that condition will the tinkhontshana remove their breasts and comply with the desire of their husbands." I sent for this evangelist who knew everything about the inner life of the Compounds and asked him about it ; this is the information I received :

Unnatural vice (bukhontshana) has become a regular institution in the Compounds. The word *nkhontshana* seems to come from the Ngoni, a Zulu dialect spoken in the Limpopo plain. The nkhontshana is the boy used by another man to satisfy his lust, and the man is called his *nuna*, husband. When a gang of new workers arrives in a Compound, the Native induna, who has the supervision of the Compound, and the Native policemen, who have their rooms at the

(He was a Nkuna from Shiluvane.) It is not strange therefore 301
that they became enamoured of beads. They give them special 832
names, according to colour and size, and succeed in turning them to very good account. The chief ornament the women make, (beadwork is exclusively done by the women), is the *mugangu* (No. 2); used in love-making (gangisa) ; it is a kind of crown of blue beads with red chevrons, worn by girls when they wish to beautify themselves. Some are wide and some narrow ; the beads are strung on threads which are crossed and knotted as the work proceeds : no canvas foundation is used. The bead necklace 301
is called *shihekisana*. Bead bracelets on the wrist are *shibolisa*, and on the ankles *malawada*. Beads are also used in making large and heavy belts (mugadzi), weighing one to two pounds, and very much appreciated as an ornament when dancing. In the same way calabashes (No. 5) are covered with beads, bags made of hide (No. 4), bottles and even baskets. This bead work calls for a 276
good deal of patience. One of the things which the Ronga most 301
dearly loves to have decorated with beads is his tobacco pouch, (ngulana, No. 3), which is for him not only a means of satisfying his passion for taking snuff, but also one of his most prized ornaments. I do not now refer to the carved ebony tobacco box, worn *en bandoulière*, but to the article consisting of eight or nine large seeds, hollowed out, in which is kept the powder which stimulates the brain. Each of these seeds (which come from another country) is closed with a small piece of reed ; when one is walking they rattle against each other, producing a most delightful sound! The first thing a man will say to a friend on 576
meeting him, will be : "Fole?" — "Tobacco?" and before 276
anything further is said, each will indulge in a pinch. The same act of politeness is essential before beginning any discussion. The Thonga does not smoke the calumet of peace, but uses for a like purpose the many receptacled tobacco pouch, decorated with beads, which hangs from the belt at his hip. He takes from it a pinch of snuff, which he offers to his opponent ; the latter takes another pinch and proceedings then commence under the happiest auspices. Hearts are not far from concord... when noses have already fraternised!

train was heard in the distance. One of my servants was busy 195
cleaning the pots ; I heard him muttering the following words :

The one who roars in the distance... The one who crushes in pieces the braves and smashes them ! The one who debauches our wives : they abandon us, they go (to the towns to lead a bad life) ! The seducer ! And we remain alone.

He was extolling the huge thing and lamenting his misfortune and the curse it has brought upon the country.

IV. *Satiric poetry.*

I have already mentioned the peculiar custom of Thonga 533
literati of speaking in a round-about fashion, and using figurative 195
language, especially when they want to say something disagreeable 574
or to give vent to their humour. It is but one step from such 576
forms to satire. They generally indulge in this satiric vein when 539
dealing with relatives-in-law, women being especially prone to it. When the sisters and aunts of a married woman go to pay a visit to her, they convey all kinds of equivocal compliments. These must not be taken seriously! It is a round-about — exceedingly round-about — way of making graceful allusions and expressing their mutual esteem. I will quote the series of these songs of friendly chaff and invective as it was given to me by Shigiyane, with a running commentary to render them comprehensible. These lively and pointed choruses give a fitting finishing-touch to the marriage customs, and illustrate the curious relations existing between allied families, which I explained in Vol. I, p. 249-253.

On the wedding day the women who take the bride to her 585
husband sing the *tjeka song* : 533
539

Let us go with her, but let us go back to our homes!

This is an ironical way of saying : "She is going to find trouble : we won't follow her as far as that!." The same idea runs through all the songs which these women sing during the next few days.

834 place at a given spot and according to a given order of precedence.
783 This will bring about the definite restoration of the village and a new and pure life will henceforth be possible.

761 I ought perhaps to offer some excuse for having dwelt at some
827 length on a subject which is generally left alone as indelicate. I hope however that my readers will agree with me that all these physiological conceptions and all these strange customs, far from being of a lascivious or licentious character, denote, on the contrary, a deep and earnest conception of life and an aspiration towards purity which it is most interesting to observe. They are at the same time amongst the most striking manifestations of Bantu Dynamism.

827 Beside these great principles of Thonga physiology, I may
576 mention a few other ideas relating to the various secretions of the human body.

578 *Spitting* (ku thuka) is a sign of want of respect, as we have seen (p. 310). It is especially prohibited in the presence of people who are eating, and if any one should spit, they will insult the culprit, saying to him : "Eat your own shikohlolo!" — When some one expectorates, others present will cover the phlegm with sand, not on account of taboo, but from disgust.

826 *Blood* (ngati, yin-tin) is also instinctively covered with sand, as
791 soon as it has been shed. This is a taboo, because wizards might use it to bewitch you! The charms of the wizards are commonly called *tingati*, bloods.

827 As regards *sweat* (nyuku, mu-mi), although I cannot assert that the idea is universal, I think it is conceived as coming from outside and falling on men like the dew (mbere) on the grass. When they enter a place which is close, Natives say : "There is sweat here." The etymology of this word is *ku nyuka*, to melt.

Excrement (matjimba) is looked upon as disgusting, but there is no taboo in connection with it.

Yawning (yahlamula) is attended with no superstition.

Hiccough (shitikwane) is not feared in children, but very much so in the case of sick people.

Belching (bisa) is sometimes considered as the result of having been bewitched, especially if the patient becomes thin. Magicians

574 travellers be refused the customary hospitality in a village and
609 incur misfortune later on, the chief will make the people of that village responsible and they will have to pay a fine. In Gungunyana's country, warriors were sent to plunder such a village. Lack of hospitality, however, is not considered as a taboo (yila), because "it does not kill ;" it is a bad action (biha).

Now-a-days, customs are beginning to change ; hundreds of young men (magaisa) coming from the towns after working there, pass through the country, and it would be impossible to put them up and feed them all. They sleep on the *bandla* and cook food for themselves, occasionally buying some mealies or a hen from the inhabitants. Moreover they have plenty of money and they can pay !

609 It must also be added that, if they dispense hospitality liberally,
618 the Thongas can be very hard on people who do not belong to
761 their special clan. Feelings of humanity are sometimes strangely deficient. I heard of a boy of the Manyisa district who had fallen down near the lake of Rikatla, unable to proceed further on account of a bad wound received while working on the railway at Lourenço Marques. Nobody took pity on him because he was of another clan, and he would have died there if a Christian woman, named Lois, had not received him in her village and nursed him. Fear of death and its contamination may partly explain this want of compassion for strangers.

784 As already mentioned, it was formerly taboo to enter the village square wearing boots. These boots consist of sandals
443 made by the hunters for their long trips through the thorny
677 bush. They were not allowed on the hubo. A subject was not permitted to sit on a mortar or on anything else ; the chief alone could do so, and it was considered a sign of pride to sit on anything but the bare ground!

609 The habit of offering a concubine to passers-by is never met with amongst the Rongas as it is in other tribes. Now-a-days
177 dissolute women may offer themselves. But they have learnt
574 from white men this new kind of immorality.

On the fate of the Thonga Village, see Practical Conclusions. V.

p. 573

CHAPTER IV

Taboo and Morality.

If we take the trouble to make a careful study of the life of so-called savages, we very soon notice that, instead of being free from all law and restraint, as superficial observers believe, their life is, on the contrary, subject to a great number of rules and prohibitions, by which primitive man is held captive in the bonds of custom and tradition. These prohibitions are of two principal kinds. Those which are most obvious are *the taboos*, which we have met with on each page of these two volumes. They play an immense part in the behaviour of the raw Native. But, in addition to these, there are other restraints which seem to spring from a totally different set of ideas, *the moral principles*. The relation between the taboo and moral notions is very difficult to determine. It is at the present time one of the most debated questions of Anthropology ; I shall try to show what the state of things is in that phase of human development to which the Thongas of South Africa have attained. 183 784 577

A. THE TABOO.

I ventured to give a provisional definition of the *yila*, or *taboo*, of the Thongas, when we met with the first interdiction of this type, Vol. I. page 37 : "Any object, act, or person that implies a danger for the individual or for the community, and that must consequently be avoided, this object, act or person being under a kind of ban." After explaining hundreds of taboos, I do not feel that this definition needs any alteration. Its main element is this : 784

183 *shitshabo*, viz., fear, or respect (1). There is no danger in
834 transgressing this law of decency, but to do so is condemned.

3) When a young man has transgressed the taboo of *matlulana* (I. p. 197), having had sexual relations with the same woman as another man, he is not allowed to attend the burial of his rival. It is a taboo. However, if the deceased is his own father, the culprit can be treated with drugs, and so fulfil his duty of grave-digger, being protected against the dangers of his condition : "The *yila* has been removed, but the *biha* remains." *Biha* means that which is bad.

183 So there are three domains, besides the yila, in which the
577 Native is conscious of the restraints imposed upon him : law or custom, respect or decency, and duty or *fanelo*. To these might be added a fourth, the disgust for a certain food (p. 83). The great difference between the taboo and the other prohibitions is that the transgression of the latter is not necessarily attended with danger (2).

Let us consider more closely the idea of *fanelo*, or duty.

192 Fanelo comes from *ku fana*, to be alike ; fanela is what is
183 seemly, becoming. This is not as yet a very high notion of
577 morality. The moral sense, however, certainly exists and this is proved by three facts :

1) The richness of the vocabulary expressive of moral ideas. There are more words applicable to the negative side of the idea and signifying *bad*, than to the positive, signifying *good* ; a phenomenon which may be observed in most primitive languages, even in our French patois. *Ku biha* means to be bad, morally speaking, and to be ugly, esthetically speaking. The distinctiveness of the two domains exists, however, in the mind of the Native. He says : "behile mbilu" — "is bad in his heart," or "behile liso" — "is ugly as regards his face." *Shibi*, the derivative noun of the verb ku

(1) I have heard the mixed bathing of men and women also called a yila, but it is a special kind of yila, *the yila of ts'hahlsa*, the taboo of respect or decency.

(2) I would not, however, insist too strongly on the distinctiveness of these five domains. Theft and murder are prohibited on account of *duty*, but they become taboo if the culprit is discovered, because they will bring punishment upon him. The moral wrong of these acts was perceived *before* their dangerous character, and we have here an instance of a taboo grafted on a moral, or social, prohibition.

biha, is regularly used in Djonga to mean *sin*. It also designates 192
the offensive substance which a child or careless person may have 183
left on the path, instead of observing the sanitary regulations of 577
Native villages. (I. p. 311.) But in addition to biha we have *dyoha* (Dj.), *doha* (Ro.), to commit a wrong, *hona* (Ro.), *onha* (Dj.), which means to spoil, but also to sin, and from which comes *shihono*, the true word for sin in Ronga. *Somboloka* means to be irremediably bad, crooked, like a stem which cannot be straightened.

On the contrary the adjective *nene*, corresponding to biha, contains three meanings: good, nice, and true, the derivate *bunene* designating rather goodness and beauty, and another derivative, *psinene*, truth; the verb used for to be good is *shonga* (Ro), or *saseka* (Dj.), and has both the moral and esthetic significance. *Ku lulama* is to be straight, like a stem, and the use of this word indicates a deep and clear sense of right doing. Many other expressions might be quoted, showing that the notion of moral good and evil is certainly present in the Native mind, quite independently of that of taboo. They also recognise the *conscience* (timpfalu), seated in the diaphragm (p. 361).

2) *Intercourse with Natives* proves the same thing. Though 183
their ideas may differ from ours as regards what is good (1), 577
they are undoubtedly moral beings, with a more or lees developed conscience.

3) Their *folklore* is the best and most objective proof that this [538]
is so. Vice is punished and virtue rewarded in all the tales which I have called *moral*, and they certainly contain a whole code of natural and elementary morality (p. 222). The pangs of conscience in a criminal are depicted in a wonderful fashion in Zili, for instance.

However, it must be confessed that this morality is low, that it does not possess a very strong hold on the Native soul, and that the imperative of conscience is by no means the categorical

(1) The idea of charity is particularly low: charity is due only to relatives, or to 577
clansmen, and not to foreigners. I remember a man of the Manyisa clan who nearly
died near the lake of Rikatla, having been hurt when working on the railway; nobody 609
took pity on him, because he belonged to another clan. He was saved by a converted woman, Lois, who had a wonderful understanding of the new principles of universal brotherhood.

577 imperative of Kant. If you can steal without being caught, you
183 may steal! Such is the advice generally given. To tell lies is mere play, which few people take seriously, especially if the lies are not intended to do harm to your fellow-men. There is a great laxity in Native morals (1). Why is this? I am convinced that this weakness of the moral sense is due to the fact that the moral law is not regarded as having been proclaimed by a personal, transcendental God. No relation is established between duty and the divinity. Religion is non-moral ; the ancestor-gods themselves are non-moral. The absolute character of the moral law can only spring from the absolute character of a God who has established it. For the Bantu the law, *nau*, is the *interest of the clan*. Theft is bad because it ruins individual property, and it is necessary to respect property, otherwise collective life becomes impossible. So theft, blows, insults, murder, and witchcraft are condemned and punished, because these actions endanger society and its recognised modes of life. But if society is not aware of it, you may steal ; you are not guilty ; no one has been offended! This principle gives to the morality of Natives a very curious *legal character*, which White people are sometimes slow to understand. A man is not guilty if he has not been convicted of his fault by a regular judicial pronouncement. He does not even feel himself guilty. But if his sin is proved, he at once gives up all subterfuge (Compare Zidji, p. 206) (2). We thus come to this conclusion : if the great

(1) Let me observe, however, that the domain of morality is also the domain of liberty ; and where there is liberty there are also individual differences. This is certainly the case amongst South African Bantus as regards their moral conduct. Any European having Native servants under his direction will have noticed that some of them show real moral qualities, faithfulness, disinterestedness, straightforwardness, respect, even a capacity for self-sacrifice, whilst others are unmitigated liars and thieves and addicted to vices which endanger the welfare and the purity of the home. Even in the Native village such differences are met with. I knew, for instance, a young man who never adopted the gangisa custom, which almost every boy looks on as the legitimate amusement of his age (I. p. 97) ; something told him that it was not right, and he kept away from the girls.

(2) This tendency of the Bantu mind to consider as right and good any decision which has been taken by the group, irrespective of its real moral value, also accounts for a fact which those who have to deal with pupils of African Native Institutions have frequently observed. It may happen that the Principal of the Institution will voice an opinion, give an order or propose a measure which does not please the Native students, and opposition will manifest itself amongst the group. Some of the more obstinate

Z: Junod M-3 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

fault of Bantu religion is that it is non-moral, that of Bantu morality is that it is non-religious. No supreme legislator has ordained it. Hence the want of the idea of the absolute in the dictates of the Bantu conscience. 577 183

Nevertheless, the rudiments of morality are present in the Thonga conscience, the feeling of duty, the sense of right and wrong, and these are independent of the essentially self-interested idea of taboo.

C. RELATION BETWEEN TABOO, SACREDNESS AND MORALITY.

Some modern Ethnographers see in the taboo idea the origin of that of the sacred, and of morality. Amongst South African Bantus, the idea of sacredness is not a prominent one. It may be said that the person of the chief is sacred to them, being set apart; the law of hierarchy, the right of precedence belonging to the elder brother is also sacred, and this conception is very closely allied to that of taboo, though it does not necessarily contain the idea of danger. But if sacredness has been in certain cases a natural development of taboo, I do not think this is the case with moral ideas. 784 577 183

In some cases, morality distinctly preceded taboo; speaking of theft, we have just seen the taboo conception grafted on to a

succeed in persuading their comrades to a unanimous refusal of obedience, and as soon as they feel themselves thus agreed they will oppose their Principal apparently with a good conscience, despite his most persuasive arguments and all the patience that he may display. Morally speaking, they are clearly wrong; religiously also; the principles which they have themselves adopted indubitably condemn them. Yet they will maintain their resistance as long as they can face their master with a united front. But if the Principal is clever enough to take one or two of them — the most sensible — apart, and convince them, then the charm is broken. Feeling themselves divided, the pupils at once come to the conclusion that they are wrong, and they readily submit to the will of their superior. Such events may take place in other colleges, and amongst other races, I am afraid, but the difference is that amongst Bantus, just emerging from the state of collectivism, where morality depended not on the laws of a clearly conceived, holy God, but on the will of the community, the feeling of being right or wrong is above all determined by the attitude of the group. (See my paper on The Magic Conception of Nature amongst Bantus. *South African Journal of Science*. Nov. 1920).

In their country there

524 are big nasty yellow-brown hornets (a kind of Belonogaster)
36 which build more or less circular nests, sometimes attaining to the size of a man's head. On a certain day the boys decide to make war on these enemies. They make shields with the leaves of the *nala* palm tree which they plait together.

524 They cut down branches, which they wave to protect themselves, and one of them goes and strikes a heavy blow on the wasps' nest! The irritated insects rush out on their assailants and sting them. The boys try to kill the wasps with their sticks or to crush them when they light on them. Sometimes, overcome by the pain, they run away; sometimes, resisting to the last, they kill and exterminate their winged enemies.

Besides this there are also *big battles between the shepherds* of the different flocks. The shepherds amuse themselves by taking one another's cattle. Those who are the strongest bring the stolen herd triumphantly back to the neighbourhood of their village, but they would never let it enter the kraal. The vanquished call to their help their elder brothers, who come to recover their property and, if they can, give the thieves a sound thrashing!

578 Insults and fights are frequent between the clans. The boys
762 of Mpfumu call out to those of Matjolo: "Forest gadders! Eaters
791 of snails and boas, of lizards and tortoises" (all of which are questionable food!) (In Ronga: Balala! Badi ba tihumba ni tinhlaru ni makhwahle ni tinfutchu). Those of Matjolo answer them: "Crowd of women that you are, clad in cotton material!" (Babasati! Matchimbamphela!), in reference to the fact that the inhabitants of Mpfumu, living near the town, some time ago replaced the belt of skins worn by the savages by a piece of cotton tied to the waist and hanging down to the knee (ladula).

855 The custom of frightening children with imaginary beasts is
857 wide spread amongst the Thongas. The bogey man is called
538 *Shingomu-Ngomu* or else *Shikunkumunu*, and by this very expressive
761 word they designate a huge and mighty being who walks, swaying his big body from right to left, with a sound like *ngomu-ngomu*. The ogre is *Shitukulumukumba*, a word coming originally from the Zulus, which corresponds to the Ronga *Ñwambilutimhokora*, that is to say: "the one who has scales on the heart." He eats

585 girls, the stout women with strong arms, go and look for the
578 heroine of the day, who is hidden in a hut in one of the neighbouring villages, and who has not yet been seen. At last they succeed in finding her. She refuses to come. The viragos seize her and pull her out by force. Everybody assembles. She is covered with a large cloth which hides her from the gaze of the bystanders. Surrounded on all sides, she sets forward to the village, the crowd forming a kind of procession. " Let us accompany her, then we shall return home " sing the women who bring her. (A hi mu tjekeleni, hi ta muka). This song of the *tjeka*, the only one which is peculiar to the wedding day, is the prelude to a most strange duel.

The bridegroom's family stands on one side, that of the bride on the other, and then begins the exchange of equivocal compliments.

"Ha!" cry the groomsmen to the bride, "as you are becoming the wife of our brother and coming into our village, try and leave all your vices outside. Do not steal any longer! Forsake your bad ways and become a good girl! "

To this the bride's relatives shout in return :

" You have nothing to boast about! Stop wearying the people! She is far too good for you! Does not everybody know the wild pranks of your son and the dishonour of your family! "

And they go on in this way, at first in joke, but often speaking seriously. They sometimes even go so far as to bombard each other with the half digested matter which has been extracted from the goat's stomach, but, if anyone goes too far and exceeds the recognized limit of insult, the old people will tell him to be quiet.
585 These proceedings however are looked upon as a game and are
535 accompanied with a particular dance called *khana* which consists in jumping first on one leg and then on the other, gesticulating at the same time.

e) The religious act.

585 The procession reaches the hut of the bride's mother, where
782 the goat was killed. Mats are stretched outside. The bride and
769 groom sit down on the finest of these. It is now that the father

585 578 goat. Shillings must be given to induce her to enter the hut, to sit down, to accept water for washing her hands and food, to eat. Another ox is killed and the meat is divided as follows : the liver and the heart are for the bride's father, the leg for her mother, the *nyimba*, viz. the womb, which includes the ribs, sternum etc. for the maternal uncle. The women, when they return home, take all these pieces of meat to their several destinations. They put a skewer through the heart and liver and stick it into the ground before the bride's father's hut saying : " This is the notification of the husband's people. "

If the total number of the oxen has been remitted on the lobolo day, *the departure of the new wife* for the husband's kraal (thloma) will not be long delayed. But should there be some oxen wanting, a wise father will not allow her to go until the whole lobolo has been paid. The husband works hard to get together the other oxen. He brings them, without ceremony, together with a sovereign, which he places before the bride's father as a present, saying : " This is my spitting for you, my father ! " He does the same for the mother. He now feels the right to claim his wife. They answer : " Give us time to prepare her trousseau." The trousseau consists of two mats, two or three big spoons, some pots, a wooden platter, a pestle and a mortar, and one hoe provided by the maternal uncle, which make up all the equipment of a Nkuna bride. All her female relations meet and, after having exhorted (1) her to be obedient, to accept all the hardships she will find in her new home, they accompany her to her husband's village. This is the *hloma*. The men do not go, except the ntjumi of the bride's family. The father, on the morning before they leave, kills a fowl and *hahla*, viz. makes a sacrifice, telling his ancestors that his daughter goes to be married, and praying for her. The ntjumi,

585 562 593 (1) " Hear ! " the old women say to the bride, " you have been a good girl, so far, henceforth you will be treated as a slave ! You will be accused of adultery and of witchcraft. You will have no more happiness. But accept all that ! They will beat you, kill you and we shall not be able to deliver you, because we have eaten their oxen. " These exhortations are worth reproducing, as they show clearly the conditions under which the girl goes to her husband. She is not protected by the lobolo. On the contrary, the lobolo has made her the possession of the husband's family, from whom she must now accept any treatment. (See Part II).

585/578 immediately after his arrival, goes to the husband and to his assembled relatives and tells them roughly : " Here we are ; we bring you your dog. Here it is. With us, she was reputed to be a good girl. Now we shall hear you every day say that she is lazy, does not know how to cook, has a host of lovers... All right! Kill her! Kill your dog! Have you not bought it ? She is a witch! Let her drink the magic philter, etc. " The men keep silent... " Yes, you are right. We shall beat her. But if her husband is too hard on her, we shall try to deliver her. We shall do our best to protect her ".

In the meantime the women cut the logs of the *shigiyane*, and fill the pots with water, and the feast goes on, another ox having been killed by the husband. The married pair sit on a mat and the women of the two families begin the mutual exchange of insults which are never wanting on this day! " You dogs! " one of the aunts of the girl will say, " people of no consequence! You have not even a broken pot to remove the ashes from the fireplace. You can congratulate yourselves on getting such a good wife as this, a hard worker, a splendid cook, a nice and honest girl. " An old woman of the other party answers : " Yes! If you have exhorted her sufficiently! Perhaps she will give up her bad ways, her laziness, etc... "—" Bad ways ? You may well speak of that! Look at your son! What was he? A wild beast! We have come to cut off his tail and make a man of him! "

V. *Marriage by abduction.*

588/583 The ceremonies which we have described belong to the legal marriage (ku teka, ku lobola). But there exists another way of getting a wife, and the poor (psisiwana), those who have no oxen, no pounds sterling for lobola, especially if they have no energy, have recourse to this method. It is called *ku tlhuba*. A young man in such a position, wishing to marry such and such a girl, will send a friend to her and propose a rendez-vous in the

765 wizard (a clever man who could overcome death). In what has
782 your witchcraft resulted ? Are you not dead! You have left us in peace. Go to Tlotlomane ; let Tlotlomane go to X ; let X go to Y, etc. (He utters the names of the ancestors.) Call each other to come here and look. Are we not gathered together ? Here is so and so. The batukulu also are here. Accept this offering and may we live peacefully together ; visit each other (Annotatio 11)[1]. Even if they do not come to pay me visits, let them come to Fenis ; he is their father now. And you, Mugwanu, you remain at the head of the village. You are their headman now. Do not scatter your people. Cultivate good relations with each other."

765 But a woman suddenly stands up and interrupts him : "Bring
593 everything to the light," she says! The old priest stops. She
578 goes on : "They say I am a Muchopi" (a woman of dissolute manners). The mikulungwane are heard on all sides. It is a family drama which we are attending! This woman is the daughter of the deceased : Manyibane has sold her to pay off his debts ; he has not kept the lobola money to buy a wife for one of her brothers ; that is the reason why they hate her. They do not receive her in the village. She pours out her grievances before them in this family gathering, when they are praying to their ancestors. It is the favourable time! She goes on : "Is it my fault ? Did I not obey our father ? I have not fled away. Now what am I to do ? He alone received me here! You despise me. Say everything! Do not hide it!"

Her interruption has lasted five minutes at least and she goes back to her place very angry. Sometimes relatives who have serious complaints to make against their kinsfolk choose this precise moment to vent their anger and leave the gathering with violent words. In such a case, it is said : "The mourning has overcome this family."

765 The old priest is a little disconcerted. He speaks at random,
782 always calling his Tlotlomane. The whole scene is perfectly natural, but the participants do not show the slightest religious awe. Suddenly one of the batukulu rises, takes a bottle of wine which has been also brought there as an offering, pours a

[1] [See p. 518 in these categories or in 46 - Analyst]

837 of his father, which is considered as *biha*, very bad), he must not
684 take any part in the burial, though he might be the regular "master
783 of the mourning." Relatives will drive him away because they
578 have pity on him, they know what misfortune threatens him. It is
782 a terrible taboo! There are medicines to remove this contamin-
626 ation; the *yila* is removed by them, but the *biha* (bad action)
753 remains! However in the case of the disease called *mpondjo*, (which I believe to be the lupus), medicines are of no avail; should a man visit his rival, who is suffering from it, he will die. We have also seen the terrible complications which are believed to take place at the birth of children, when there has been a question of adultery. (P. 40.)

836 These great taboos show that there is a deep feeling amongst the Thongas that promiscuity of any kind is a bad and a dangerous thing. Even in the case of *gangisa*, boys are censured when two of them court the same girl.

10) - Divorce.

586 Adultery is one of the causes of divorce. The guilty woman, instead of obeying her legitimate husband and helping him to get his compensation, may choose to go to her lover and live with him. This leads to an immediate divorce. The husband goes to the parents of the unfaithful wife and claims his lobolo. They have perhaps no money to give. However they will try to get it as soon as possible, even if it is by the dissolution of the marriage of their own son; they will perhaps send back his young wife to her parents and claim the lobolo paid for her, in order to meet the claim of the angry husband (See Part II). It would seem easier to go to the thief and claim from him the lobola for the adulteress whom he has stolen (tlhuba). But a thief is not a reliable man! If he has stolen, it proves that he had nothing (1). (See Appendix VIII.)

Divorce frequently takes place for more trivial reasons, for

548 (1) Women of low morals are called in Ronga gwababana, prostitute. There are plenty of them all round Lourenço Marques, where morality has sunk to a very low level; but this is the result of degeneration.

586 mere incompatibility of temper. Heathen men are often hard
562 to their wives. They refuse to give them money to buy
578 clothing. "They are stones," said one of these men to me. "Though you scratch a stone with your nail, the nail will break and the stone will remain!" On the other hand, the women are by no means sweet, obedient creatures ; therefore quarrelling often takes place. When she thinks she is persecuted (shanisa), the wife *runs home*. This is her great weapon. The husband heaves a sigh of relief... But very soon he becomes aware of his misfortune. No food, no cooked meal in the evening! His companions share their own food with him for some days, but they will not consent to feed him long. He will have to go modestly, humbly to his parents-in-law and ask his wife to return. Then they enquire into the matter, and he perhaps receives a good scolding. It may be that the domestic life will improve, both fearing the renewal of the conflict. It may however be that the situation will grow worse and worse, and then it will lead to divorce, viz. the husband will claim his money and, when he gets it back, the marriage is dissolved (ku dlawa ka bukati).

An accusation of witchcraft may also cause divorce, especially after the death of a child ; so also can sterility, as we have seen, p. 190. Gross selfishness on the part of the husband may lead to it ; many tales tell the story of a man who in time of famine succeeded in killing an antelope, kept the meat for himself and did not give any to his wife and children. The wife noticed it and, when the famine came to an end, she invited all her relatives to a beer feast. Then she shewed them the bones of the antelope, telling them how badly her husband had treated her ; her parents took her home together with the children. Sometimes the conclusion of the tale is that the man even lost his lobolo money, as a punishment for his evil deed! (See *Grammaire Ronga*, page 202. *Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, page 260.)

11) Widowhood.

783 When a man dies all his relatives are contaminated by the
765 defilement of death, as we have seen (Page 143). There are concentric circles around him, some people being more affected

587/768 Probably this widow was not pleased with the man to whom they had destined her. Seeing more of him during the year, her affection had not increased. On the other hand, she had some liking for one of the *batukulu*, and she arranged secretly with him, and perhaps also with his mother, that she would keep silent till this day and then choose her nephew. It is quite possible that the mother of the *ntukulu* will say in that case: "Has this widow not been bought with the money which I secured for the family by my marriage?" Of course the official suitor objects strongly to this spoliation. He becomes angry. During a whole year he has given clothing to the ungrateful one. Things may grow so bad that the *ntukulu* carries off the fractious widow at once, saying: "Good-bye! I go with my wife!" The old men will then follow him and implore him to come back. If they see that the woman is quite decided, they will allow her to go to the husband of her choice. They had better consent to it at once, because it not infrequently happens that the *ntukulu*, if repulsed that day, will go to the family of the woman and claim the money (*lobola*) paid for her by her late husband, saying: "That *lobola* comes from my mother. If you do not give us our wife, if you allow her to stay with another man, then give us back the money." Or it may happen also that the widow, brought perforce to the house of a younger brother-in-law, will run away to the *ntukulu*, and the rightful husband will be helpless. There is a saying to this effect: "A woman inherited cannot be forced." Of course such cases of conflicting interests cause a great deal of friction between members of the family, and the Natives are much distressed about it; they try to avoid it as much as possible. But the desire of getting one more wife is so strong in the heart of a Ronga that such disputes are by no means rare, and the day of the adjudication of the inheritance is universally dreaded. However, they never go as far as fighting, and if an uncle and a nephew have parted from each other on bad terms, they will very likely try to mend matters by the sacrifice of reconciliation (*hahlelana madjieta*), which is one of the admirable features of the Ronga religion (See Part VI).

587/578/768/428

The widows are truly the most important part of the property

462 888 she has contracted such an intimate union with Mother Earth that she cannot conceive existence away from her gardens, and she crawls to them with her hoe, by a kind of instinct, till she dies.

764 The death of the woman is accompanied by the same rites as the death of a man. I must mention, however, the custom of *mahloko*, which takes place when a woman dies while still in her prime. Mahloko comes from *nhloko*, head. The explanation of this technical word is this : the parents of the woman say : "Our head (viz. a person belonging to us) has died ; let us go to mourn her."

587 578 Let us first see how this mourning takes place *in the Ronga clans.* If the two families were very friendly, the parents of the deceased will probably bring with them a little girl, saying : "This is our little green meat (mbuti), our little orange (rather sala, fruit of the nsala tree)." They offer her to the husband to take the place of the deceased wife, and a new contract will be made. The widower will then at once pay a first part of the lobolo, £ 5 for instance, and, in the course of time, he will marry his sister-in-law. But generally the visitors are angry, and the mahloko ceremony is very unpleasant. It may be that the deceased wife had not been entirely paid for. In that case her parents will come at the end of the mourning to "claim the herd" (ramela ntlhambi).

764 578 754 But though there may be no difficult lobola question in the way, uneasiness is felt, because the brothers of the deceased cannot help thinking that their sister has been killed by witchcraft. It was not yet time for her to die ; so she must have been bewitched by the husband's family, probably by her co-wives, who were jealous of her. When the Great Mourning took place, they hardly came to the mortuary village. One or two went to see their "head," and mourned her in their own kraal. To day, the day of mahloko, they assemble, and throw bones in order to know who will have to speak, who will receive the mahloko money, whether the money has been bewitched ? The whole company starts for the mortuary village, driving a goat before them. They sit down outside in the bush with dark looks ; there is no longer any hut to receive them... They have been noticed by the

764 inhabitants of the kraal. One of them, the saluter (mulosi), goes
604 to meet them and offers them a shilling. They keep silence.
578 He tells them the news of the village. They do not answer.
754 He leaves them and comes a second time with a fresh present. Then they consent to tell the news of their home, but they do not enter the village. The same man returns to them a third time with £ 1 ; they refuse to accept it. He adds 10/. (£ 1.10 is considered the normal sum to be paid as a kind of fine by the widower to the parents of the deceased.) They refuse again : this is an insult! Happily the *ntukulu* is there ; he will act as mediator between the two families. The visitors summoned him on their arrival and he has been sitting with them the whole time ; is he not the son of their sister ? But before he went to them, his father has given him his instructions : "Tell them that I have not eaten your mother." The *ntukulu*, as we shall see, is very free with his maternal uncles. He has the right of teasing them, even insulting them. Seeing that they do not accept the money, he stands and gives vent to his grief, throws sand at them, tries to drive them away, weeps. "No! Father has not killed mother! He is not a wizard! She died a natural death!" They see his tears, and then consent to enter the village.

764 In front of the mortuary hut, all the belongings of the deceased
768 wife have been piled up, together with the straw crown of the hut :
595 her pots, plates, baskets, spoons, mortars, etc. The brothers
782 break everything. Should there be any new implements amongst
[578] them, they will perhaps give them to their nieces. Then they lift up the roof of the hut and throw it into the bush. They pick all the plaster from the walls and throw it away where they threw the roof. The sacrifice is then accomplished amidst the ruins of the destroyed hut. Whilst it is being prepared, the women of both families insult each other. The female relatives of the deceased say to the women of the village : "You have killed her because she was a splinter in your eyes" (shilabi). The others answer : "Have you seen us kill her ? Perhaps people do not die with you ?" The *bukwele*, the special jealousy which almost always exists between co-wives, explains how it is possible for them to address such amenities to each other. But the victim is

There is a special term in the Northern clans to indicate the relationship of two men who have married two sisters born of the same mother. They are called : bamakwabu ba shinauma, an expression which is the simplification of the following sentence : shi na wuñwe mamana, i. e. there is only one mother. This term seems to have been borrowed from the Pedis.

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2) Relatives on the mother's side.

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Tobane II calls Mishikombo *mamana*, mother. She is his true mamana and this relation is very deep and tender, combining respect and love. Love however generally exceeds respect. The proper word for tenderness is *timpsalu*, which comes from *psala*, to beget, and the mother is often called *mpsele* (a term which is applied also to the female of all animals). It is the word which answers best to the feelings of a mother for her children. She is generally weak with them and is often accused by the father of spoiling them.

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The mother's sisters are *bamamana* in the second degree, because, if the true mother dies, one of them will probably take care of the children. Their husbands are *batatana* : Phayindi is tatana to Madonge and Muhambi. He calls them *bana*, children. Mboza is also a tatana to Mahlobo and Mathamba, being a makwabu, brother of their father, owing to the fact that he and Phayindi have married sisters.

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All the co-wives are also *bamamana*, mothers by polygamy, (Ñwashihoni and Mishihari to Tobane). They are *bamamana ba shitshengwe*, harem mothers. I respect them but they are further from me than my mother's sisters. A more familiar term for mother, corresponding to roro, father, is *ñwa*, a word always used with the possessive pronoun and only in the second and third person : ñwaku, your mother, ñwakwe, his mother. Ñwaku is employed in certain insults and oaths, and is to be avoided as being vituperative.

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Many other women are mamana : the wife of my paternal uncle (Magugu for Muhambi), though I can inherit her in certain cases ; the daughter of my maternal uncle, because she is the

583 Men are often better than their principles, and we have seen in
562 the study of marriage and inheritance customs that the consent
593 of a girl, and of a widow, is generally asked before any decision takes place. This is done as long as the male masters of the woman have no special interest in the choice. But should they have reason to impose a certain husband upon her, they will not hesitate to force her to accept him ; a young girl will be given up to a dirty old man, for whom she has no liking, on account of a lobola debt of twenty years standing! The lobola hardens the heart and the woman is unable to defend herself. She can always run away. But where will she hide, if all her relatives agree on her being sacrificed to the interest of the family ? Or she can threaten to commit suicide, and she occasionally does so. *b)* She must work for her husband, who gives her very little in return. It is true that she is not a *slave*. She is however *owned*. *c)* This is partly the cause of the shocking difference established between a husband and his wife. The married woman is henceforth absolutely prohibited from adulterous relations — which is a very admirable provision — but her husband is quite free in this respect : he has not been bought.
593 *d)* As regards her children, whatever may be her love for them,
562 she does not in fact possess them. They belong to the father.
586 If divorce takes place and the lobolo is not returned to the husband, he keeps them and the mother will be separated from them for ever (1).

583 2) A second series of consequences arising from this custom
606 are the *strained relations* between the two contracting groups.
578 We have sufficiently insisted on this subject. What makes dealings with parents-in-law so difficult ? It is the lobolo, the sum of money which has perhaps not been Fully paid, and

(1) The Rev. H. Dieterlen, of Basutoland, in a paper on the lobola, wrote the following words, which apply to the Thongas as well as to the Ba-Sutho : "A woman married under lobola bears children but possesses none. The children belong to those who gave the cattle. Whatever may be her own merits, she can see her children pass into the hands of the rawest heathen and be given over to the cupidity of rapacious and rascally relatives. She can be illtreated, driven away, abandoned, repudiated : she will have to live without children ; she will resemble a woman who has never had any. She is not supposed to have the heart and the feelings of a mother. And her children are treated as if they had no filial affection."

583 606 586 578 the debt remains as a permanent cause of irritation. If there is no reason for friction on that point, the threat of quarrels ending in divorce is always impending like the sword of Damocles. If this takes place, the sad event will be made ten times more painful by the terrible dispute which will arise by reason of the lobola being claimed back. And the contending couple will not suffer alone. It may be that another marriage, that of the great mukonwana, which was perhaps a happy one, will be destroyed in consequence of the divorce. (p. 243) "A ba ruli timbilwin," remarked Mboza. "They don't find peace in their hearts."

These complicated relations due to the lobola poison the whole of native life. Life should be easy for South African Natives. Their wants are few and they have enough to satisfy them under their invariably blue sky. They are generally speaking mild and good-natured. But the lobola question fills the African village with hatred and bitterness. *The milandju*, the debts! Milandju comes from landja, to follow, and this etymology is very instructive. A husband whose wife has gone away must *landja* his wife or rather his money. His whole family will help him in following this property until it has been recovered. Natives will go from one end of the country to the other to follow a few pounds, and at least three quarters of the cases which are brought before the Courts are lobola cases.

As regards the attitude to be adopted towards the Lobola custom, see Practical Conclusions. III.

F. POLYGAMY.

I. *Origin and spread of Polygamy amongst the Thongas.*

595 Polygamy is uniformly practised all through the tribe. This is not to say that every man has many wives; the automatic rule, by which the number of males is always about equivalent to

595 643 in date. At her death the chief does not perform the incision : the first in date remains the first from the ritual point of view. All these facts show that, for the Thongas, there is a deeper, more mystical conception of matrimony than at first appears, when we consider their present polygamic family. For them, true, complete matrimony is the union of two persons, not of three or ten, and little wives are not much more than concubines. This feeling may very well be explained by the supposition that the race has passed through a previous monogamic phase.

II. *Consequences of polygamy.*

595 A happy consequence of the custom is that, in the primitive Bantu tribe, no disconsolate old maid is to be found. This is no doubt an advantage. I fear, however, that when monogamy sets in, this unblessed singleness will follow in its train.

But the evils of polygamy by far exceed its few advantages!

1) The first is the dreadful development of sexual passion which occurs amongst polygamists. White people who have lived in close touch with Natives in a head kraal where men have many wives, can bear testimony to the frightful excesses in which they indulge. See Annotatio 14[1] the observations of Dr. Liengme at Gungunyana's residence.

595 578 351 2) A second evil resulting from the custom is the domestic quarrelling which prevails in the villages of polygamists. There is a special term which indicates the peculiar jealousy of a wife towards her co-wives, *bukwele*. The prefix *bu*, in Bantu languages, designates abstract things, ideas, feelings. It is also an indication of place. *Bukwele* therefore also means the special spot between the court yards, where the wives of one man go to insult each other (rukutelana). The story of Leah and Rachel, in the book of Genesis, may give some idea of the reason of such quarrels!

595 578 Sometimes the husband amuses himself by fostering these by no means edifying feelings amongst his spouses. Tobane says : "He will say bad things (psitokoro) to one of his wives, his

1 [See pp. 519-520 in these categories of in 116 - Analysis]

595 578 favourite, about another who is perhaps superior to her. He says to her : 'You are much nicer than so and so! She is not like a woman (A nga twali lepsaku i wansati).' The favourite will make haste to report to her superior what she has heard. She will draw her attention to the fact that the husband calls at her hut more frequently than at the others... The superior becomes angry, and people say of the husband : 'A ni gudjulisana, a ni bandjisana,' 'he makes his wives hit each other.' He himself, after a time, will try to regain the goodwill of the despised one (a ta mu batela). She will violently repel him. He may even kill a chicken to bring about a reconciliation!" One can easily imagine the jealous scenes which occur in the village of a polygamist (1)!

595 3) Polygamy, when practised on a large scale, even brings about *the ruin of the family*. Two examples show this clearly. First the case of Bingwana, to which I have already alluded. He had a great number of wives and used to place them in his various villages, viz., in the capital itself and in all the districts of his kingdom, going round from place to place to visit them. But they were so numerous that he could not visit them Frequently enough and they committed adultery wholesale with the men of these villages. The result was that Bingwana had hundreds of children and that, in the end, he married his own daughters without knowing it. He died tragically. The Gungunyana's yimpis surrounded his fortress (hkokholo). His son, Sipenenyana, fled during the night and he remained alone. He then shut himself up in a hut where he had gathered together his treasures and his gunpowder, set fire to it and died amidst the flames.

The second example is that of Mubvesha who died on Nov. 5 th 1910, a man of weak character, whose intrigues caused the war of 1894-1896 and who was installed by the Portuguese as Chief of the Nondwana country at the close of that war. (See

533 595 578 (1) Here is a pretty little Nkuna song about bukwele. A despised wife sings :

Rirakara ra mina ri khele hi wanuna,
Wanuna a nyika dokori ya kwe !
My nice little pumpkin has been plucked by my husband !
My husband has given it to his favourite !

She sings this song to excite a quarrel... after which she hopes that she will obtain her rights.

622 is taboo for the women to eat it, or the under lip (See p. 184).
596 From each limb a small piece is taken (tshumbuta) and
264 placed on a skewer ; it is the portion of the shepherds and of
554 the butchers, (makotjo ya babyisi). (See the tale of Piti, *Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, page 152). Sometimes the shepherds also receive the lungs and the spleen.

This way of distributing ox meat is called "ku tlhaba homu ba hamba milao," viz., "to kill an ox according to rule." Should a younger brother or a son kill an ox, he will send the breast to the master of the village, but he keeps all the limbs and does not observe the rules because, as he says : "It is enough to pay taxes to the chief of the country." Often one of the legs is sent to the chief of the clan.

Strange to say when a goat is killed none of these prescribed rules are followed, as they only concern the oxen.

622 These customs show clearly the position of the headman ;
596 he is the master but also the father of his subordinates, and their provider.

1) He must *watch* over the village (basopa, Dutch word passop, universally adopted by the Natives). During the night, if his son is away working in Johannesburg, he takes care that no lovers come into the huts of his daughters-in-law, (a langusa bumbuye), and if he happens to catch one, he will make him pay the fine.

622 2) He is a true *justice of peace* amongst the inmates of the
692 village, doing his best to maintain good relations amongst them.
578 Suppose for instance that the pigs belonging to one of the inhab-
685 itants come out of their enclosure and over-run the gardens of another man. This man will go and say to the owner of the pigs :
643 "Such and such a thing has happened, please close the pigs' kraal more carefully." Should the same thing happen a second time, he will complain to the *numzane*. The headman will then go to the culprit and say : "You have not heeded the warning ; you must pay compensation (djiha)." If the culprit listens to the "voice of the blood" (bushaka), he will obey and the matter will end smoothly ; if not, the headman can only keep silent : he has no soldiers, no means of enforcing his judgment ; the plaintiff will then go to the chief of the tribe to complain. The case will be

judged before the Court, in the capital, because the offender has refused to follow the way of persuasion, he has "mocked the family love" (a yalile bushaka). Such misdemeanours are very frequent in the life of the village. Most of the Natives bear philosophically with these annoyances. Should some one, however, be really ill-natured, and wear out their patience (wa ku karata), he will be forced to build a hut for himself, alone, outside the village. If the damage is done by *children*, if they have stolen sweet potatoes, as we have seen, the wronged proprietor gives them a good thrashing but does not claim a fine. Occasionally the headman himself thrashes them in presence of their father, and the father will say to them: "You see the numzane will beat you if you are not good." Children who mock at cripples are also severely beaten by him, all the more so as, in this case, the offended party has the right of claiming a fine.

3) The headman also possesses *authority over his younger brothers and his children*. He can even confiscate their money if one of them is addicted to drinking and ruins his property. However his authority in this respect must not be overstepped, and the headman must take care how he exercises it, as it is based more or less on sufferance. The younger brothers, for instance, maintain the right of making contracts, especially lobola contracts. Should the numzane restrict their liberty too much, they will leave him and found their own villages. A successful headman is he who knows how to keep the whole family together to the general satisfaction.

4) The headman has also the right of imposing *statute labour*, especially when the oxen kraal must be rebuilt, or when the weeds must be removed from the hubo ; he sends his young men to do the work. But he must not exact too much from his people or forget to feast them with beer or with meat when the work is finished.

5) Lastly the headman *presides over all the discussions* which take place in the village. He is the master of the hubo. The discussion can be conducted in three different places ; when it deals with a secret matter, the men go *inside the hut* : they debate the matter indoors (ba bulabula ndlwen). Private questions

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539 power belongs to me." Run, go and tell Mpapalati : "The power is mine." Run, go and tell Mulondjo : "The power is mine!" (1)

Such is the laudatory song of Mawewe, one of the great men at the Nkuna court. Undoubtedly this is one of the best examples of Thonga poetry and a characteristic piece of primitive literature. In the savage tribe the mbongi is the prototype of the poet laureate of civilised Courts. But there is yet another functionary to be considered, whose dutie sare still more strange than those of the herald.

IV. *The Public Vituperator.*

(Shitale sha tiko.)

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578 This is a kind of Court Jester who has the right of casting the vilest insults, the most disgraceful accusations in the teeth of any and all the Natives of the country. He never abuses strangers, but as long as he confines his vituperations to his own countrymen, he enjoys perfect immunity.

Even the chief is not safe from his attacks ; he dares to say anything! "Just see him arriving in your village," said Tobane to me, in his picturesque language. "He begins shouting out the most frightful things. He accuses you of incest, of taking your own sisters as wives! Even if he sees you talking to your 'great sister-in-law,' whom your wife's brother married with your oxen, whom you treat with the greatest respect, he will not hesitate to pass remarks which will make you blush with shame! He will go and take the food you are cooking, will even snatch from the chief's hands the meat he is eating... So, when you see him coming to your village, you hasten to meet him and take him a present to try and avoid having to listen to his horrible insults. Sometimes the *shitale* of the country behaves

(1) Quotation of the words of Muhlaba himself, who sent messengers to all his uncles, to all the petty chiefs under him, to announce officially that he had assumed the chieftainship.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

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himself quite nicely, stays in his own village and attends the national assemblies as quietly as any other person, but, once he begins to rattle off his vituperations, beware! Nothing will stop him! He respects nothing, human or divine!" The Court Jester is of undoubted Thonga origin, as old as the tribe itself, according to Tobane. The position is official and even hereditary. At Zihlahla it was Nwachapane who held the extraordinary post of Public Vituperator. In Nondwane it was Mutjunkwa of the Shibindji family. He insulted the chief with the word : "Musathanyoko." There was also a woman who dared to do the same to Maphunga.

Phot. P. Berthoud.
Molwele, the dwarf.

It is difficult to understand the raison d'être of this strange institution. Is the *shitale* a public censor, to whom the tribe entrusts the privilege of calling attention to facts which others would not dare to bring to light ? Is there some analogy between this "fool" of an African Court and Triboulet ? (1) I cannot say.

(1) In this connection I reproduce from a photograph, taken at Shiluvane in 1885, the portrait of a remarkable personage who was not a Thonga but a Pedi, a subject of the chief Maaghe. Although this extraordinary dwarf did not act officially as the Vituperator, he was widely famed for his witty sayings and his incomparable mimicry. The Native Commissioner took him to Pretoria and Johannesburg some years ago as a curiosity, and it seems that he was exhibited for money ! The name of this little man is Molwele, a veritable ethnographic phenomenon, although he is not exactly the Public Vituperator of the country.

683 754 1906, I ventured to suggest certain means of checking the *buloyi* superstition. The Department of Native Affairs might give the following directions to its subordinates, the Native chiefs :

1) The crime of buloyi is not recognised under penal law.

2) The Native chiefs are prohibited from trying any buloyi case.

3) The plaintiff must be reprimanded as disturbing the peace of the country.

4) The witch doctor or mungoma (magician), who pretends to have smelt out a wizard, must be fined as using his authority to deceive people and foster hatred amongst them.

5) No evidence based on the use of divinatory bones must be accepted.

These rules, if strictly enforced and combined with Christian teaching and the progress of civilisation, will in the course of time put an end to the scourge of witchcraft.

683 695 578 *Insults.* Ku rukana or ruketela, to hurl insults at each other's head, is very frequent amongst Thongas and does not lead to any judicial case, if not accompanied by assault and bruises (1). There are however insulting deeds which are considered as crimes. To take human blood, or spittle, or excrement with a stick and to push it into the mouth of a child, for instance, is considered a very serious insult which must be judged before the Court. A man who committed such an offence would have to pay a fine amounting to a whole lobola. I heard of a woman, who gave a child a butterfly to eat. The parents of the little one were very angry. She denied having done such a thing. They said to her: "Confess your sin and pay a fine of 5/—." She refused and offered to undergo the ordeal, viz., to drink the mondjo philtre. "If you insist" said they, "you will have to pay £ 10." However she persisted and became intoxicated ; this was a proof of her guilt. She was fined to the amount of £ 40, £ 20 for the child and £ 20 for the chief!

683 201 754 To point at any one with the index finger is also a grave insult which may have judicial consequences, because this action is brought into close relation with *buloyi*.

683 578 695 (1) The most common insult which women can cast in each other's teeth is ntlhanhwaku (Ro) or nyanhwaku (Nkuna) which means: the genitals of your mother. A scuffle with blows is sure to arise when that word has been pronounced. It is also used when taking an oath. Men swear by the name of their chief.

726 and Mahazule, who had taken refuge in Gaza, during July-August 1895.
175 Nine regiments, representing a large effective force, were to start from Manzimehlope, the country beyond the Nkomati River; three of these were to ascend the left bank of the river, to cross it in the neighbourhood of Komati-Poort and to enter Swaziland, the Ngoni chief having made alliance with the Swazis. The other regiments were to cross the Nkomati to the West of the Sabie, and thence to go southward by Moveni. The remaining three, with whom were incorporated Zihlahla and Mahazule, were to ravage Shirindja, Ntimane and Nondwane, passing about one hour's march to the West of Lourenço Marques, exterminating the inhabitants of Matjolo (allies of the Whites), whose retreat to the town would be thus cut off... The nine regiments were to effect a junction at a place called Nkobotlwene, to the South of the Bay, where the forces of Gungunyana would fraternise with those of Maputju, with whom they were on good terms. For the space of seven months, tens of thousands of these warriors were to overrun the country
726 and to annihilate all the tribes opposed to Gungunyana. The chief
609 would not massacre the Whites, nor would he attack their town: he
173 calculated on rendering them powerless by depriving them of the assistance of their Black allies, and expected them thus to sue for peace on honourable terms! Such, at least, was the plan of campaign which transpired after Gungunyana had been made prisoner, in the centre of his own country of Gaza, by a party of about forty White soldiers! The whole thing culminated in a single day's skirmish in the Ntimane country. The petty chiefs quarrelled amongst themselves; only a few hardy warriors dared to cross the Nkomati and slaughtered some women at a short distance from the outpost of Chinabane. Finding themselves discovered, they at once recrossed the river and made off to the Northward.

578 The principal causes of the incapacity in military matters so noticeable amongst the Blacks during the war of 1894-1896, are doubtless the *internal jealousies* between the tribes and also, it must be said, the mysterious dread inspired by the White race, their artillery and their superior discipline.

726 The feeling of mistrust existing between Matjolo and Nwamba,
175 Nondwane, Zihlahla and Shirindja, also explains the terrible *panics*
703 which occured during the military operations. On several occasions the Native forces were subject to panics which might have entailed the most serious results. As an instance I relate the following, which nearly led to the partial destruction of the Matjolo army. The Matjolo

727 "hot" and from special plates (mireko) and broken pots. They are
783 forbidden to drink water. Their food must be cold. The chief
834 kills oxen for them (yi ba lumisa hi tihomu); but if the meat
761 were hot it would make them swell internally "because they are hot themselves, they are defiled (ba na nsila)." If they ate hot food, the defilement would enter into them. "They are black (ntima). This black must be removed" (Mankhelu). During all this time sexual relations are absolutely forbidden to them.
727 They must not go home to their wives. In former times the
304 Ba-Ronga used to tatoo them[1] with special marks from one eyebrow to the other. Dreadful medicines were introduced into the incisions and there remained pimples "which gave them the appearance of a buffulo when it frowns" (1).

789 After some days a medicine-man comes to purify them (ku ba
727 phutula), "to remove their black." There seem to be various
783 means of doing it, according to Mankhelu. Seeds of all kinds are put into a broken pot and roasted, together with drugs and *psanyi* of a goat. The slayers inhale the smoke which emanates from the pot. They put their hands into the mixture and rub their limbs with it (ba tilula) especially the joints.

789 Viguet describes this last act thus :—Pieces of medicinal roots
727 are put into the broken pot and roasted. They inhale the smoke.
782 Then cow's milk is poured into the pot on the embers and, when it boils, they have to put their fingers into it, one hand after the other, and pass them across their lips emitting the sacramental : "tsu" (which proves that it is a sacrifice to the gods, a religious act). Afterwards they say : "Phee! phee!" — viz.,
789 phephela phansi, (Dj. tikela hansi), "Go down, sink." This
727 means : "May you go deep into the earth, you, my enemy and
783 not come back to torment me." The last part of the treatment consists in rubbing the biceps, the legs, and the whole body with this milk. The medicinal embers are carefully collected, and reduced to a powder ; this will be put into small bags of skin called *tintebe* which the slayer will wear round his neck. They contain

578 (1) Hence an expression which is still in common use. When a Ronga wants to defy some one he says to him : "You are a coward! If you say you can tackle me come and kiss my forehead."

1[Yes, the slayers returned from battle --Analyst]

423 already been tilled and abandoned as exhausted. I noticed
622 this at Rikatla. Muzila favoured his pagan subjects, who joined him in his drinking bouts, and invited him to orgies in their villages, at the expense of the Christians who no longer brew the byala beer. Thus interest at Court works here as elsewhere, although it be based on nothing nobler than pots of beer!

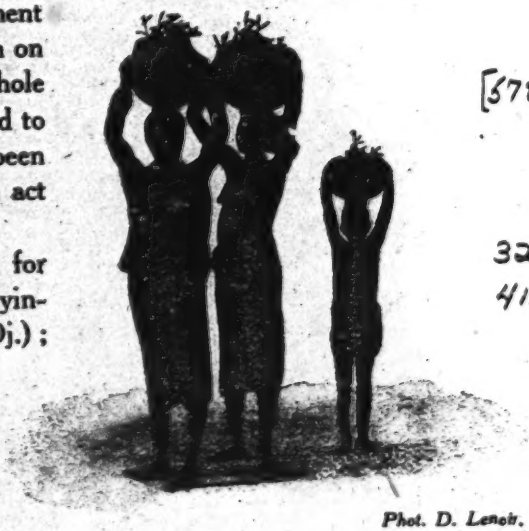
423 The difficulties of this system also become apparent in the more thickly populated parts of the country, where all the land
578 has been assigned and taken up. The women look round for
692 fresh arable land and may, wittingly or unwittingly, encroach on the ground of another numzane. There is, indeed, a neutral zone, vaguely defined, of which no one has as yet taken possession, as it has not been needed : the wild fruits growing there are common property ; any one who likes can gather them. When the population increases, the inhabitants of the more congested districts go and appropriate this land without any kind of formality. Such was the case when the people of Libombo, dwelling on the edge of the palm-marsh, (to the East of Rikatla), sent their women to the hill-side to clear a piece of land which Muzila considered to be his property. This petty chief sent remonstrances to Nkolele, his colleague, headman of the village of Libombo ; but they were not heeded. Then the men of Rikatla hid themselves in the bushes surrounding the spot in question, and, when the women commenced to hoe the ground, rushed out upon them, seized their hoes, and drove them off. This was the "fait patent," the actionable proceeding, which was necessary in order to have the matter brought before the Chief's tribunal. This incident doubtless led the parties interested to define their respective boundaries more carefully.

423 To go and till another's land would be quite impossible, even
618 taboo, between people of different clans. In the present case, the Rikatla and Libombo men belonged to the same Nondwane country. There was a good understanding between them. The Rikatla men would not have dared to plough a field without permission on Mabota's ground, the boundary of which was on the other side of the big water-tree (muhlu).

As regards *boundary marks* between the different clans, they

Another taboo in connection with the making of a pot is this: 323
when a pot has been fired, it must still be *tested*; this operation 753
is called *ku khangula*, or *kwangula*, and is performed in the following way. A little water is poured into it, and the potteress washes it thoroughly; then some grains of maize are cooked in it and thrown away. This is to remove the *nkwangu*, or *nkhangu*, viz., the danger attending the use of an untested, unpurified pot: people using such an implement would suffer from an eruption on the arms, and even on the whole body. To give any one food to eat from a pot which has not been *khangula* is looked on as an act of hatred. [578]

The pot, or boiler, used for cooking is called *nhlambeto* (yin-tin, Ro.) or *mbita* (yin-tin Dj.); 323
it has a very wide opening. 415
Smaller boilers are also made, even quite diminutive ones called *shihlembetwana* or *shimbitana*. The beer jar (khuwana, dji-ma), illustrated on page 101, No. 13, is of the same size as the boiler, but can be easily recognised by its straighter neck. Enormous beer jars are sometimes manufactured, perfect amphoras (hotjo, yin-tin), but they rarely stand the firing and are therefore scarce and expensive, fetching as much as ten shillings each: they may be two feet high; the ordinary cooking pot does not cost more than sixpence. The porringers, or large plates, are called *mbenga* (mu,-mi; No. 12) (1).



Phot. D. Lenoir.

Pots used to draw water.

Shibindji clay is also used for making very short *pipes* (shipana), 276
prettily shaped, probably in imitation of the European cutty. Smoking does not seem to be an indigenous habit; in the interior

(1) No. 11, on page 101, shows a small vase modelled by a young Native girl, an invalid from Natal (Station of Inanda).

821 star is directing its course, and they have a formula of incantation
787 to get rid of the misfortune attending this phenomenon. They
789 say : "Thu! Thu! Nkulunkulu ndjuwee, famba psa ku u nga fa u ku bi." — "You great thing, go away alone (without me, leaving me behind) and die and disappear entirely." This is more an imprecation (shiruketelo) than an incantation. The syllable *thu* indicates, and accompanies, the emission of a little saliva. It is different from the sacramental *tsu*, employed to invoke the spirits of the ancestors : it is an insult. It is spitting *at* something, not an act of respect and an offering, like *tsu* (1). This is the Ronga formula ; the one used in Northern clans has the same meaning : "*Rura, rura weshe*" (Move, move alone!).

821 *Comets* greatly impress the imagination of the Thongas ;
787 they are called *shimusana*, or *nyeleti ya musana*, the star of dust, or *nyeleti ya nkila*, the star with a tail, and when they appear they also mean the death of a chief. People say : "See ! A chief has died, but they have not yet published the mourning" (I. p. 414). The star which is said to have appeared the year of the death of Manukosi was probably a comet. (See Report of the S.A.A.A.S. 1905, Vol. III, p. 232.)

772 These few superstitions and observations comprise all the Astronomy of the Thongas. The sidereal world is almost entirely outside the range of their preoccupations.

III. *Cosmographic and Meteorological Phenonomena.*

1) The Wind.

821 The wind is called *moya*, an interesting word which means
822 also spirit (the human breath and the spiritual part of man), and is applied to the acting, living agent, or to the smell, or taste, of some objects. For instance it is said of an alcoholic beverage

861 (1) They spit at a child who is causing an unpleasant smell, saying to him : "Thu!
578 u ya tinyela matjimba." — "Go away to ease yourself." Should you do this to a person older than yourself, he will say to you : "What ! you make *thu* to me (wa ndji tjhuka), you want me to ease myself !"

834 place at a given spot and according to a given order of precedence.
783 This will bring about the definite restoration of the village and a new and pure life will henceforth be possible.

761 I ought perhaps to offer some excuse for having dwelt at some
827 length on a subject which is generally left alone as indelicate. I hope however that my readers will agree with me that all these physiological conceptions and all these strange customs, far from being of a lascivious or licentious character, denote, on the contrary, a deep and earnest conception of life and an aspiration towards purity which it is most interesting to observe. They are at the same time amongst the most striking manifestations of Bantu Dynamism.

827 Beside these great principles of Thonga physiology, I may
576 mention a few other ideas relating to the various secretions of the human body.

578 *Spitting* (ku thuka) is a sign of want of respect, as we have seen (p. 310). It is especially prohibited in the presence of people who are eating, and if any one should spit, they will insult the culprit, saying to him : "Eat your own shikohlolo!" — When some one expectorates, others present will cover the phlegm with sand, not on account of taboo, but from disgust.

826 *Blood* (ngati, yin-tin) is also instinctively covered with sand, as
791 soon as it has been shed. This is a taboo, because wizards might use it to bewitch you! The charms of the wizards are commonly called *tingati*, bloods.

827 As regards *sweat* (nyuku, mu-mi), although I cannot assert that the idea is universal, I think it is conceived as coming from outside and falling on men like the dew (mbere) on the grass. When they enter a place which is close, Natives say : "There is sweat here." The etymology of this word is *ku nyuka*, to melt.

Excrement (matjimba) is looked upon as disgusting, but there is no taboo in connection with it.

Yawning (yahlamula) is attended with no superstition.

Hiccough (shitikwane) is not feared in children, but very much so in the case of sick people.

Belching (bisa) is sometimes considered as the result of having been bewitched, especially if the patient becomes thin. Magicians

782 To these words is generally added an invocation to the medicine-
756 man's gods, who are entreated to bless the drugs they have given
to their descendant, and to join with the traveller's gods in order
484 to insure his success in this undertaking. The decoction is then used to wash the body of the young man. He will pay the fee on his return home.

224 *Offerings of Hunters.* This is called *byalwa bya ngenge*; the beer
782 of ngenge. This beer is made of maize grains which have been crushed but not softened by long steeping in water, as is generally
273 done in brewing ; they are then reduced to flour ; some water is poured on this and it is offered in that form by the head hunter, all his companions standing near him. They must start at once ; there is therefore no time to brew proper beer.

484 *Offerings of Travellers.* These also have their particular mhamba,
782 which is called *Lehika*. It consists of water alone which the officiant takes in his mouth and spits out, saying : "*Pff!*" (amongst the Hlengwes : "*Phaaa*"). "My ancestor-gods! May I find no difficulty
578 on my road, etc." This *water offering* is also made by a headman
782 whose village is troubled by endless disputes. The way of bringing them to an end is not clear. So he entreats his gods to "open the road, pfula ndlela," so that all hearts may be relieved. This will help him to "herd his village, ku byisa muti." The idea of finding a road clearly accounts for the fact that this offering is made under two sets of circumstances so different from one another. Why water is used to attain this end I do not know.

The offerings hitherto described bear a more or less individual character. Let us now consider those which are in direct relation to the life of the family.

782 *Regular Family Sacrifices.* We have seen these performed in
842 connection with the most important events in life. At the *weaning* (I. p. 58, this might however be termed a medical sacrifice), *on the marriage day*, either publicly, as amongst the Ronga clans (I. p. 110), or privately, by the bride's father alone, as is the custom amongst the Nkunas (I. p. 118). The gods are entreated to give the newly married woman "timbeleko," births, i. e., children, as it seems that the power of begetting depends directly
000 on the gods. Regular acts of worship are performed also at the

782 previously selected, and throws it on the boy's luggage. The
783 victim leaps about (phuphumela) in its agony. The officiant then
484 plucks out some of the bloodstained feathers, pronounces the tsu, and says :

> Here is your son. He has returned home safely, because you have accompanied him! Perhaps he has brought back pounds sterling with him to lobola. Perhaps he will now take a wife! I do not know. The great thing is that he is healthy, and you have brought him back safely.

782 *The Offering of Reconciliation.* One of the most curious of
578 the religious acts performed in connection with the family is
593 called *ku hahlela madjieta*, viz., to perform a sacramental act in connection with the madjieta. *Djieta* (dji-ma) means a *rash oath*, or an oath *with imprecation*. If two brothers quarrel, and the younger believing himself to be the injured one, breaks off all connection with his brother, he may say to the latter in his anger : "Never will I speak to you again, or come any more to your village!" This is a djieta. To give greater weight to the imprecation, the angry brother will put his nail beneath one of his incisor teeth, push it from within outwards and say : "U ta kota u *ñwoo* psi nga yentshekanga!" This probably means : "May you die if this does not happen," viz. if I do not keep my oath. Or he will pinch up the skin below his eye, and pull it out, saying : "U ta kota wao *hum*!" (Same meaning). The two men may remain for years without the slightest intercourse with each other. But if a serious disease should break out in the village of the younger, and the bones order him to make an offering, he is at once in a difficulty. He has no right to present it himself, for, according to the great law of priesthood in ancestrolatry, it is his elder brother who must do it for him. The bones, on being again consulted, give the response : — "There is something in the way. You two have tied a knot. Untie it first, then offer the sacrifice." The younger brother will then go to the elder, and say : "I have sinned in swearing that I would never come again to your village. Let us hahlela djieta, i. e., accomplish the sacrificial act, which will

cancel the rash oath (1). The elder will scold him severely, but will eventually accept his excuses. This meeting for confession and reconciliation is called ku hahlela madjieta, even if no other act, no *tsu*, or prayer, is performed. — The reconciliation may, however, be celebrated in a more solemn manner by a ceremony, which is attended by the elder members of the family. The brother who pronounced the imprecation prepares a decoction of a special herb, called mudahomu, and pours it into a sala shell. Everyone assembles on the square, and the two former enemies sit in the midst, on the bare ground. The offender raises the shell to his lips, sips the decoction, spits it out with the customary tsu, and says : "This is our djieta. We pronounced it, because our hearts were bitter. To-day it must come to an end. It is right that we make peace." The other brother, the offended one, then takes the shell, and after going through the same rite of the tsu, says : "I was justly angry, because it was he who first offended me! But let it be ended to-day ; let us eat out of the same spoon, drink out of the same cup, and be friends again." Then he breaks the shell, and they drink and enjoy themselves together.

782 578 593

In the Northern clans this offering is called *byalwa bya huwa, the beer of noise* (on account of the noise made by those who quarelled). It is considered as necessary, not only to reconcile the estranged brothers, but as a protection against wizards. Wizards might be encouraged to bewitch these men, thinking that, if one of them met with misfortune, people would say that his brother had cast a spell over him ; the wizards would then have an opportunity of killing him without fear of being discovered! The offering consists of *many sorts of cereals*, mealies, millet, sorgho taken from the granaries of all those who have fought ; two handfuls of the

[754]

(1) See also my article on "The Sacrifice of Reconciliation" amongst the Ba-Ronga (*South African Journal of Science*, February 1911). The djieta is any rash oath, and not only one pronounced against a brother. If a man swears that he will never enter a pool again (because he has been stung), or a river (because he has been followed by a crocodile), it is likewise a *djieta*. Should he find it necessary to enter this lake or this river again, he must first hahlela djieta, i. e. cancel his oath by a sacramental act. This is not necessarily a prayer to his gods, but only an invocation addressed to the imprecation itself: "You djieta, I said I would enter this lake no more, but I want to *tjeba* (p. 86) and to eat fish! Don't cause me to suffer for it." Then he takes some water in his hands, and throws it into the pool.

578 grains are brought to the altar and thrown on to it and the brothers
782 who wish to be reconciled recount their grievances. The offering,
593 though called beer of noise, is not really beer at all, (the cereals offered are not ground nor cooked). However, as my informant said, it is truly beer, as these raw cereals *represent* beer. Natives do not think that they have said anything contradictory in expressing themselves in this way! Notice the fact that these cereals are collected from all the granaries (Tembe). In the same manner the members of the whole family must be reconciled.

782 The same offering is resorted to in *cases of protracted births*
(I. p. 40) when it is known that the woman in labour lived on bad
846 terms with another woman. The latter will be called ; she will
578 take a little water in her mouth and spit it out against the hypogastrium of the other, saying *phaa* with the following words : "The angry words which we have spoken must come to an end. May you find help. (Lepsi hi nga bulabula psi fanele ku hela, u pfuneka)". This prayer will not be accompanied by an invocation of the ancestor-gods of either of these women. A similar ceremony is performed when the bones have revealed that delay in parturition or in the child's taking the maternal breast is due to the *bitterness* of its parents in their previous relations. The diviner will tell the father "Hahlela shibiti, make an offering on account of bitterness." This will be performed in the hut. The father will come, and without putting anything into his mouth he will say *tsu* and add the following words : "Let her give birth to the child! What I had (in my heart) I have left! Let us be united again. (A a beleke! Lepsi ndji nga na psu ndji psi tjikile! Hi tlhangana kambe)." In this case the offering is also called an offering of bitterness, though it is very different from the one previously described under that name.

782 *Offering of "the Big millet" (mabele makuku).* The millet (mabele or ñwahuba) is the smallest of the cereals cultivated by the Thongas ; this offering, however, is called "big" on account of its importance and its character. It is a true *thanksgiving offering*. When the family has special cause for rejoicing, for instance if there has been serious illness and the patient has recovered, all its members are called together for the offering of the "big millet."

consider in the choice of his wife is that she should not belong to a 754
family of witches. The accusation: "You are a noyi"[1] is the [578]
gravest insult which one man can utter to another (1).

The activity of the baloyi is almost entirely nocturnal. For this reason they are sometimes called by the euphemism: "ba busiku" — "the men of night." In fact, they possess the faculty of getting out of themselves at night time; they have large wings, and, after having left their huts by the crown of grass which covers the top, or by the closed door, they fly through the air and betake themselves to their horrible work.

As they are active in the darkness of night a connection is [825]
established between them and nocturnal birds, especially *owls* (kuhunu). When the sinister cry of this bird is heard, men take a torch upon which they have spit out of their mouths a little ndjao powder, and chase away the creature. Baloyi are also identified with the little moving lights sometimes seen in the marshes, the will-o'-the-wisps, the fires of the night (mindjilo ya busiku), the belief being that these fires are either the baloyi themselves, or that they are sent by the baloyi as a threat (2). We have seen (p. 720) that the wizards who ride on hippopotami during the night are credited with the power of producing flames similar to lamps.

Two questions here arise. Does the Native mind imagine that 000

(1) Thongas are extremely sensitive in regard to a possible suspicion that they are baloyi. When I proposed to my pupils in the Shiluvane Institution that they should move up for the bad season to the sanatorium which we had set up in the mountains, in order to avoid the dangers of fever in the Low Country, not wishing to abandon their comfortable accomodation at the station, they made great difficulties. I therefore said to them: "But if your devoted teacher, Miss So and So, catches the fever, on account of the heat and moisture of the malarial climate, will you not be responsible for whatever may happen?" This remark caused quite a commotion amongst the pupils. "What?" they said. "We are then baloyi! We have the power of killing people by witchcraft!"

(2) One of my informants says: "We are walking peacefully along the path at night-time, chatting pleasantly with our companions. Suddenly a will-o'-the-wisp appears. We at once stop on seeing this terrible object, for one of us must be the culprit. It cannot arise from any other cause. We organise a meeting for confession (rerela nyiwa, see below), and thus rebuke the noyi who is amongst us. Sometimes people who see the fires of the night trample on the ground, take a pinch of earth between their fingers and put it to their mouths (khabuta)." (This may be a kind of "mhamba" similar to that described on page 391, aimed at obtaining protection against the "enemies of the earth.")

[1] [literally "caster of spells" -- see pp. 504 ff., cat. 116 - Analyst]

One of her daughters, who is one of the twins, is told to throw 241
the whole "catch" of insects into the neighbouring lake. She is 845
accompanied by a woman of mature age, and, without speaking a 772
word, must go straight to the lake in question. Behind her 825
marches the whole crowd of women, arms, waists and heads covered with grass, carrying branches of the big-leaved manioc, which they wave from side to side, and singing the following song, which has been composed for this occasion :

> Nunu, muka! Hi da mabele !
> Nunu, go away! That we may eat mealies !

The twin throws her little calabash into the water without turning round (for she is not allowed to look behind). Then the savage yells are raised louder than ever, and the women sing their impure songs (ta ku ruketela), which they would never dare to utter on ordinary occasions, and which are reserved for these ceremonies, rain seeking and "nunu" hunting.

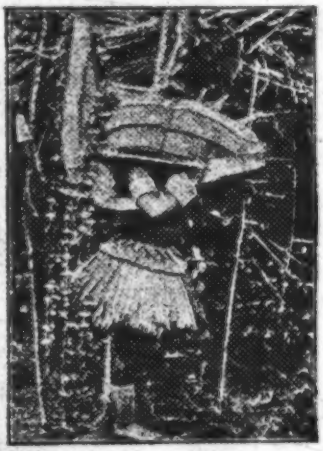
On that day, as during the mbelele, woe to the man who walks 241
along the paths! He is pitilessly attacked by these viragos, who 772
push him to one side, or even maltreat him, and none of his fellows 579
will go to his assistance. They all keep out of the way, for they 825
well know what would be in store for them, should they meet the savage crowd! So they mostly stay quietly at home in their huts!

The "nunu" is not always thrown into the water. Sometimes, to get rid of the plague, or rather to conjure it away, they start out in a band, armed with sticks, to throw these destructive insects on to neighbouring lands. It would seem that the men are mixed up in these underhand tricks, for it is said that this way of handing over the "nunu" to neighbours, often leads to pitched battles, in which sticks are wielded to some purpose, and blows rain thick and heavy! The people of Rikatla, citizens of Nondwane, used to make a present of their pseudo-cockchafers to the inhabitants of the district of Makunyule, belonging to the Mabota clan. But the true 825
way of conjuring away the "nunu" is to drown them in the lake, 772
and this custom, in common with the preceding ones, certainly has some connection with the notion of Heaven, the appearance of these pests being caused by that mysterious power, which

881 A few days later, the great doctor administers to the boys a purifying medicine which they drink in a mouthful of beer. This rite seems to be rather a separation than an aggregation rite. We often find, when a marginal period comes to an end, separation rites taking place. They mean separation from the *marginal period* itself; for this also involved a kind of pollution which must be removed. Such is probably the aim of the medicine given by the Manyabe. On the other hand, this is also an aggregation rite, as the boys are allowed to drink again for the first time.

II. *The Mayiwayiwane dance.*

532 535 881 The second true aggregation rite is called the Mayiwayiwane dance. The *Mayiwayiwane* are a sort of masks which cover the whole of the upper part of the body, a kind of armour made of woven palm leaves; on the head, they are like a very high helmet protruding in front like a beak. The boys make these masks with the help of the shepherds and of the men and, in this disguise, must perform a special dance with high jumps before the women summoned on a certain day to attend. The boys must not be recognized. Should one of them let the mask fall, it would be a great misfortune, because women must not know who is dancing. 535 581 Moreover the initiated must appear before them as a kind of supernatural beings and fill them with respect and awe. Therefore they must not fall when they dance. Should one of them totter and lose his equilibrium, the shepherds cover him



A Mayiwayiwane mask (1).

(1) This mask is that worn by Pedi boys during the second circumcision school. I cannot guarantee that the Mayiwayiwane mask is of exactly the same pattern.

E. MATURE AGE

1. *The Bantu Ideal.*

581 554 562 885 The married man is called " he who has his home " (a ni le kwakwe) in opposition to the single man (nkhwenda). But let us say at once that the kind of individual called bachelor does not abound amongst the Bantus. Only the utterly wretched, invalids, and the weak-minded, are deprived of legal marriage, which for the black man is and remains the one object in life. It is through his wife and children that he becomes somebody in society. This fact does not appear during the first year of wedlock, for the newly married woman must cook at the fireplace of her mother-in-law. She is hardly more than a servant during a whole year ; she does not possess her own pot ; and this must be so because she does not yet eat the mealies of her own garden, having ploughed her fields in her former domicile the previous year. Her husband eats with her. He is not yet 595 a lord. But if he is rich, if he is the heir of an important man, he will not be long in buying a second and third wife.

These new marriages will be contracted like the first, but with less pomp. It may even happen that the feast is held in the husband's village, if he is middle-aged and is celebrating his fifth or sixth wedding.

595 342 556 592 361 For each new wife, he will build a hut. He has begun his village when building the house of his first wife, the great wife, (nsati lwe nkulu) as she is called, who will remain the principal one whatever may happen. While, without compass, he was drawing on the ground, with the marvellous instinct of the South African Native, the circumference of the circle on which the patched reed walls of his dwelling were to rise, while he was covering this circular wall with a conical roof, he was saying to himself : " I establish my home ; I inaugurate my village ". During the following years, the aim of his life will be to complete little by little another wider circle... When he has bought his

3) Pointing of the teeth (Ku hleta).

304 881 This custom is also dying out. It used to be incumbent on all the girls. Now many do not observe it. They have seen that teeth deformed in this way decay more quickly. The operation is performed on the incisors, and girls must keep their mouths closed for two or three days, not showing their teeth to anybody.

Near Rikatla, the hleta custom was still in force in the heathen villages in 1910. It gives the girls a kind of canine aspect.

4) The milebe custom.

304 881 832 171 This is very wide-spread all over South Africa. Though it has disappeared now amongst most of the Ronga clans, it is still practised in the Manyisa country, over the whole of Bilen and in the Northern clans, amongst the Zulus, the Pedi-Suthos, etc. It is probably the origin of the famous "Hottentot apron," which some ethnographers thought to be a congenital malformation, and which is merely the result of this custom (Annotatio 5)[1]. It is a very ugly habit, very immoral from our point of view, fixing the imagination of the girl on sexual relations, but amongst the Thongas it is upheld as being quite the right thing.

B. MARRIAGE AND CONJUGAL LIFE

1) Conditions of Marriage

581 832 In the primitive Bantu tribe every girl gets married, some, however, sooner than others. Suitors prefer pretty girls to ugly ones! But what is their standard of beauty ? The ideal is tall stature, strong limbs and well developed breasts. A proverb

[1] [See p.517 in these categories or in 116-Analyse]

581 says : "Nsati wa mabele u nga nabele loko u nge na bukosi."
832 — "Do not covet a woman with large breasts if you have no money..." This does not mean that she will cost more, but her father, knowing that she will not want for suitors, will not consent to let her go unless the full lobolo is paid at once. On the other hand a girl with an elongated face is admired more than one who is too broad-faced. Of the first they say : "She is pretty, she resembles an antelope" (a kota mhala) ; of the second : "She is
832 chubby-cheeked, she is like a sow." A light complexion is preferred
186 to a very dark one, because the white or yellow races are regarded
754 as superior, and a Native laying claim to any European or Asiatic
581 blood is proud of it. Parents, who also have their say in the
829 question of marriage, insist on two other points ; the working capacity of the girl, and the absence of any witchcraft blot in the family. Should her mother have been convicted of being a witch,
581 the girl will be feared. However, every girl finds a husband in the
583 land where polygamy flourishes. If he be slow in coming, she will apply to her doctor, who will prepare the *love charms*, which will make her "appear," so that she will be noticed by the boys (See page 100). If even that does not succeed, she has other means at her disposal and may go herself to make proposals to a man (wopsana). He is seduced by her, and constitutes himself a thief who has *tlhuba*, viz. "taken in marriage by abduction" (See page 119). The parents will claim the lobolo and he must pay it. Marriage and childbearing remain the only carreer to which a Thonga woman can look forward. Hence a number of special feminine taboos which are very curious.

2) Special feminine taboos.

262
845 Some of them concern girls *before childbearing* and cease after
784 parturition. In the Tembe and Maputju clans, girls must not eat
562 pork, because pigs root nervously with their noses ; the future child
825 would also move its head from one side to the other, when on the verge of birth, and this would make delivery difficult. Other

Nubile girls, during their "tiwheti", must approach the *oxen kraal* and look at them. The cattle might suffer, be attacked
284 by a bad cough (mukhulwane), get thin! This taboo is instituted
825 to protect the oxen, not the human inhabitants of the village, as D.
562 Kidd says is the case amongst the Zulus. (Part IV. Ch. I. E.)
262 When women have passed the time of child-bearing, most of
[886] the taboos cease, and they can eat monkeys and porcupine if they wish!

3) The first year of married life.

581 I shall not return to the subject of marriage rites, which have
562 been fully explained in the preceding chapter. Let me say that, though a Thonga woman cannot imagine life without marriage (ku kandja bukati), she does not enter on the new state with any enthusiasm. Her parents have warned her that she will be illtreated, accused of witchcraft and adultery, etc. Her sisters bewail her fate on her wedding day in song. The fact that she has been paid for, though it does not constitute an actual sale, puts her in an inferior position (See Part II).

562 During the first year, she has no *ndangu*, viz. no fire-place of
264 her own. She cooks for her mother-in-law. During the three
585 first weeks the husband eats with her and with the girl who accompanied her to her new home. Afterwards, he goes back to eat with the men. In some places it would seem that the husband eats with her the whole year, until she has her own pot (hlembeto).

4) Husband and wife.

593 What are the relations between husband and wife after the
571 honey-moon? Of course they vary very much according to
517 the character of both. As a rule however, the married people have very little intimacy with each other; the man remains with his companions on the "bandla," the village square where they meet, and only occasionally comes into the "ndangu," the reed enclosure of the fire-place, which is the true domain of the

843 754 to hinder the child from growing and to put in its place, by means of her enchantments, a snake, a hare, a quail or an antelope!

834 846 [886] After the birth, owing to possible contamination by the lochia, sexual intercourse is prohibited till the rite of tying the cotton string (p. 56) has taken place. It is then allowed, but conception must be avoided till weaning, when relations are resumed in the normal way, and this goes on till the time when the woman is no longer able to bring forth children. I know of no special rules in connection with the menopause.

*

* *

831 But, amongst Bantus, sexual relations are not an individual affair, as amongst nations more advanced in evolution. There is a mysterious relation between them and the collective life of the community. Hence the fact that, on certain given occasions, they are recommended, even ordered, or prohibited.

1) Cases of recommendation.

833 783 587 829 Sexual relations must take place on two principal occasions : when the inmates of a village abandon it and go elsewhere to found a new one, and when the widows perform the painful rite of "lahla khombo" (to cast away misfortune). We shall see, when studying these customs, that sexual relations have here a twofold signification : 1) they "consolidate" the little community in its new abode, viz. they strengthen its structure by confirming the authority of its chief ; 2) they provide the principal means of getting rid of all contamination, especially of the defilement connected with death. (Annotatio 13.)[1]

2) Cases of prohibition.

834 784 581 829 753 Married people are not considered as being in a state of defilement, as mourners are, for example. Yet this class of persons, called "ba-ku-khila," constitute a danger for those members of the community who are in a weak state of health. They must not come in contact with the circumcised, because in that case their wounds would not heal properly.

1 [See pp. 518-519 in these categories or in V6--Analyst]

834 They must not enter the hut of a person dangerously ill ; this would
784 hasten his death. People who are just recovering from a disease, when
581 they walk about on the paths, must tie around their ankles the root
829 called sungi, which will protect them against the perspiration or
753 emanation left by married people in their footprints, because, as one of my informants said, "ba-ku-khila ba hisa," viz. married people are hot.

834 Moreover not only individuals but the whole social life would be
836 endangered if sexual relations took place when the community itself is
581 in a critical position. They are prohibited therefore in wartime, during
829 the whole duration of hunting parties, and also during the marginal periods. Strange to say, this law does not apply so severely to unmarried boys and girls amusing themselves according to the "shigango" custom (p. 97). It seems that it is not the act in itself which is tabooed, but the act in as much as it is accomplished by regularly married people ; in this case only has it a bearing on the life of the community.

What is the reason of these prohibitions ? "Married people are hot." What does this aphorism mean ? The following rite may help us to understand it.

831 In the Maluleke country, when the whole population enters a lake
834 to kill fish according to the tjeba custom (Part IV. Chap. I), a little boy
226 and a little girl are chosen and laid down under a lion's skin, as if they
829 were husband and wife, and told to remain very quiet during all the time
789 the grown up people are fishing. Not knowing anything about sexual
771 intercourse, they will obey ; then the fish also will keep quiet and will be killed easily. Why ? Because there is in the sexual act something wild, fierce, passionate which, according to the law of correspondance which is at the base of all Bantu magic, has an influence on the hostile forces ; these will be excited and more difficult to overcome : enemies in battle, the animals of the bush during hunting and fishing parties, disease, danger of contamination at death and during the marginal periods. Life is, so to speak accelerated by the sexual act, and this acceleration is communicated to the whole of Nature. Therefore : Keep quiet, be continent!

This profound conception of life also explains why so often certain actions must be accomplished by children, not yet able to have sexual relations, or by old women who no longer practise them.

Let us remark that all these rites do not belong to Animism, properly speaking, but to Dynamism (Part VI. Chap. I), which plays a part almost as important as Animism in Bantu primitive philosophy.

777 from you... In the same manner, do not prepare the skin for
784 the child before it is born. Your wife would not bring forth a human being. Should you transgress this rule, you would bring misfortune on yourself (wa tihlolela, wa singita), and on your family. If you go to Moneri (the missionary) and ask him for a skin for this purpose before the birth of your child, he will tell you it is so." Note the deep-rooted conviction of the old heathen, who appeals to the authority of the missionary to strengthen the taboo!

585 10. Later on, when you are married, you must avoid eating
784 honey with your wife for a whole year, till she has had a child.
777 The bride is allowed to eat honey at her parent's home, but not in
262 her new domicile and with her husband. The husband can eat it in the bush, but he must wash his hands when he comes back, lest his wife should notice it. She would run home if she knew of it. We have already met with this prohibition in the tjekela visit, and heard the reason for it : honey flows ; the bride would go! The explanation now given is this : honey is too sweet, and your bride is too sweet also. (Is it not your honey-moon or honey-year ?) The two things do not go together. (Psa yalana, they hate each other.) A third reason is this : Bees, when they have eaten their honey, fly away from the hive. So would your wife do... After a year this misfortune is no longer to be feared.

606 This last idea is very curious. It shows that the bukoñwana
581 taboos *decrease in severity as time passes.* The strained relations between the son-in-law and his wife's mother also become easier. He begins to call her mamana, and she calls him ñwana. This transformation even goes so far that in some cases a mukoñwana can go and dwell in his parents-in-law's village, especially if he has children and if the children are grown up. And this fact gives us the natural explanation of these curious rules.

Marriage, as we have seen, is not an individual affair in the collective stage of family life. It is a contract made between two groups, which enter by it into a special relation towards each other. This relation is fraught with danger, because the interests of both groups are involved ; a bride and bridegroom are inspired with a mutual feeling of fear, knowing that an

606 eventual misunderstanding between them will have its "contre
581 coup" throughout the two groups. The two families regard each other with mistrust, especially the two married couples who depend so closely upon each other, owing to the lobola ; but when they have become acquainted, when they are assured that common life is possible and even agreeable, when the first alliance has been strengthened by others amongst the tinamu, then the bukoñwana taboos more or less *fall off*. This is an explanation of these strange relations between relatives-in-law ; I do not pretend that it is absolutely adequate. There may also be in this domain some remains of previous customs which have now disappeared, and Comparative Ethnography will probably throw more light on this problem in the course of time.

C. MARRIAGE RULES

582 The study of the terms of relationship has shown us the constitution of the Thonga family. We have seen that they are often dictated by the possibility or non-possibility for a man of marrying certain women. There exist distinct marriage rules, and I propose to recapitulate them here, at the risk of some repetition, in order to throw as much light as possible on this difficult but very important subject.

Generally speaking it may be said that the Thongas are *endogamic* as regards the tribe and the clan, and *exogamic* as regards the family. They are *endogamic* as regards the tribe, that is to say
582 they marry within it. Members of clans very remote from each
178 other may find it difficult to contract unions, (see later on), but they do so, especially in Spelonken, where representatives of many different parts of the tribe have met by force of historical circumstances. In the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques you may find Thonga women married to men of other tribes and even to white people. But this is the result of a new state of things, which the old Thongas did not foresee ; nor would they have approved of it, I am sure. In Shiluvane, I was in a very favourable

263 small amount of salt it contains! This is a long process attended
317 with very unsatisfactorily results. During the Anglo-Boer war,
258 Natives round Leydsdorp reverted to it as all the stores were closed and no salt was procurable.

Salt manufacture, Northern Transvaal. *Phot. P. Rosset.*

Nowadays Native manufacture of salt has entirely ceased. The beautiful glistening white article has advantageously replaced the greyish, blackish mixture of former times.

II. *Food.*

252 It is not an exaggeration to speak of a culinary art amongst
581 the Thongas. They give great attention to cooking. Of a woman who knows how to cook well, it is said: "Awa hisa" "she burns;" not that she lets the sauce burn, but this expression corresponds to the French "cordon bleu." A girl who "hisa" will have more chance of being "lobola" than another.

252 This importance given to cooking explains the great richness of
192 the culinary vocabulary. Every variety of dish or of culinary process has its particular name, and to master all these terms

836 837 quite free and the married woman is taboo. Amongst the Pedis it is just the reverse ; girls are absolutely prohibited from having any sexual relation before their marriage and, on the contrary, after marriage a woman who has had children can have intercourse with other men than her husband. I shall try to explain this difference when dealing with Pedi customs. (Part II. Chap. I. G.)

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000 In his book on Kafir Socialism, Dudley Kidd has laid great stress on the fact that the mental development of the African Native is arrested at the time of puberty, and has tried to find remedies for this inferiority. It may be said that the vivacity of mind, the rapidity of comprehension, which is sometimes wonderful amongst the younger boys, decreases when they reach the age of fifteen or sixteen. Cases can even be recorded amongst them of an arrest or slackening in the development of the psychical faculties at the period of puberty. But this is by no means the rule. In all our Institutions we have pupils who show great zeal for study and increased intellectual power between sixteen and twenty. I may say that Dr Mac Vicar of Lovedale concluded as I do, that this assertion of D. Kidd is very much exaggerated.

D. MARRIAGE

582 178 According to the old Thonga idea it was only when a boy was fully grown that he could think of marriage. In former times lads used to enjoy their youth in carelessness and pleasure, going to dance in all the villages, till they were twenty five years old. Nowadays boys marry very early. Money to lobola is obtained more readily and " gangisa " is not as easy as it used to be, two reasons which have advanced the marriage age in the present generation.

604 that I intend to treat it more fully later on in a special paragraph, when considering the traces of older forms of family life amongst the Thongas.

601 The true malume is the mother's full brother. But all her half brothers are also bamalume in the second degree ; so are also the brothers of the true malume.

605 What about the *children of the malume*, my cousins, or rather my
835 cross-cousins, sons and daughters of my mother's brothers, viz.
582 Shaputa and Marangen as opposed to Madonge and Misaben ? In Zulu, Sutho, Pedi there is a special term to indicate this relation, (mzala, motsoala, mudzwala, muzwala). And the main feature of the family system in those tribes is that a cousin has a prior right to marry the daughter of his maternal uncle, his mzala. Amongst the Thongas there is nothing of the kind. The special term does not exist except in the Maputju clan, at the Southern extremity of Thonga territory, where it is met with in the form of *ntale* (corresponding to mzala, according to the law of phonetic permutation) (1) or *shitale* (when preceded by the prefix shi).
605 But the right of marrying this cousin is not recognized in the
835 Thonga tribe. One can play with her, steal some object from
582 her in fun, but never take her as a wife. Such a breach of the
602 custom would be punished by the chief. Later on, when the special relation of cross-cousins has been more or less forgotten, marriage could take place between them, but, at any rate, the ceremony of dlaya shilongo (see p. 256) would be performed, in order to "kill" the previous relationship and to replace it by the new relation of husband and wife.

This being so, how do cross-cousins behave towards each other in the Thonga system ? As regards the daughter of their maternal uncle, the relationship is somewhat different for Misaben, a boy, and for Madonge, a girl. To Misaben the boy, Shaputa, his cousin, is mamana and she will call him son, ñwana, because, as we have seen, Shaputa is a potential wife for Mboza, father of Misaben, and Mboza calls her nkata, nsati, namu. To Madonge,

605 (1) They also employ the cognate form *muzali*, which is more akin to the Zulu regular term, and this tends to show that the Maputjus have borrowed this expression from their Zulu neighbours of Northern Amatongaland.

607 of the lobolo are still in the hands of the father-in-law. But later on these oxen are used to provide a wife for one of the sons, and the woman thus obtained is the great mukoñwana; therefore her hut belongs in a certain sense to the man with whose oxen she was bought. When he arrives, he may first be "shown" (komba) the mother-in-law's hut and rest there for a while, but at once the hut of the great mukoñwana will be prepared and he will move into it for the night; of course the mistress of the house has gone elsewhere, and it is the tinamu who will sleep in her hut to keep him company. (However should the visitor have not yet paid the lobolo, he will not be received in this hut. It may happen that his bakoñwana will say to him: "Where is your hut? Sleep outside!")

607 835 582 Why do the relations of a man with the wife of his brother-in-law resemble so greatly his relations with his wife's mother? Let us remember that this man is the potential husband of the daughter of the first, just as he is the actual husband of the daughter of the second. It is probable that the great principle that "a man must not marry a woman and her mother" dictates this extraordinary fear and avoidance in both cases. But, in the case of the wife of the brother-in-law, there is still another élement: "The oxen!" This woman has been acquired by the oxen paid by the man to obtain his wife, and this explains the uneasiness which characterises their relation.

This second reason is perhaps more readily recognised by the Thongas than the first; they sometimes tell you that it is the only reason. But I think they are wrong, and that the same deep feeling that to marry a woman and her mother is incestuous is certainly at the base of these taboos. I may mention two facts in proof of this:

a) Once when I asked a woman of the Maputju country if her husband would be allowed to marry the wife of his brother-in-law, she seemed extremely shocked by the idea and exclaimed: "What are you thinking of? Marry his mother!" To her it would be incest, as much so as if the man had sexual relations with his own mother.

b) The wife of the brother-in-law is not the only great mukoñwana. The wives of his brothers, and of his sons and grandsons are all classed under that term. Why is this? Because a man has a prior right to marry not only the daughter of this special woman but all the daughters of his bakoñwana, and all these women, who are their mothers, are conse-

607 quently his potential mothers. He avoids them all, not on account
835 of the lobolo oxen, which he did not actually pay for their daughters,
512 but because it is intolerable to think that he might have relations with a woman and her mother.

607 But no doubt the fact that oxen have been paid by the man,
586 oxen by means of which his great mukoñwana was bought, is
835 the principal cause of the fear which they both feel towards each other. These oxen have created a sort of interdependence between them. Mboza says : "Should my home be disturbed by quarrels, should my wife Nsabula leave me and run away to her parents, or should she die without children, I shall go and claim my oxen... But the oxen have been employed to buy a wife for my brother-in-law, (Maphunga for Mahangale). If Gogwe has no other means at his disposal he must separate the pair Maphunga-Mahangale, cancel their marriage, send Maphunga home and claim the money from her parents. Or I might myself take Maphunga as my wife, and in either of these cases the marriage Maphunga-Mahangale would be annulled."

Thus it may happen that Mboza may marry his great mukoñwana, though such a union is really incestuous, according to the deep moral feeling of the tribe. This is truly terrible!

587 But does this ever really happen ? I have put this question to
607 many Thongas, in the various clans of the tribe, and remarked that there are differences amongst them.

Amongst the Nkunas of Shiluvane it is an absolute impossibility. Another woman is offered to meet the claim of the son-in-law who has lost his wife. This is called : "Ku hingakanya ntjandja", i. e. "to put a log across the road." The woman offered may be a little girl, still at the breast of her mother, or even a little boy. This is your wife, his parents will say to the son-in-law, and he must be content to know that, as this male baby will no doubt have a sister in the course of the two following years, the girl to be born will replace his wife. "Ntjandja a ba tluli" i. e. "One does not jump over the log." The man will not persist in his claim, and will not insist on taking the great mukonwana to replace his wife.

Amongst the Khosas and Bilas, such a marriage can take place

607 so far as to sleep in the hut of my great mukonwana together with
835 me (p. 242). Nevertheless sexual relations are not allowed.
595 Should a man commit this sin, and should his sister-in-law
582 become pregnant, he will have to pay a fine, or rather he will go to his father-in-law and say : (Viguet) "Ndi dlele ku dya"-"I have killed in order to eat" which means : I have committed a bad action but with the intention of repairing my wrong by marrying the girl. He brings five hoes when he makes the announcement and will remit the remainder of the lobolo later on. A younger sister when married to the same husband as the elder, is called *nhlampsa* of the latter. This term comes probably from hlampsa, to wash, because she washes the dishes of her sister and works more or less as her servant.

607 The right of marrying one's wife's sisters is by no means an
582 obligation. I am not in any way forced to do so, if I do not like
595 them. Most probably, even if I wished to marry them all, I should not have enough oxen to "lobola" them all. On the other hand, the bakoñwana are not obliged to give them to me. If I am not a good husband to my wife, if she complains that I illtreat her, her parents will not consent to receive my oxen for her sisters. Should my tinamu marry other men, of course the peculiar bulamu relations will cease. I can no longer allow myself the intimacy I previously had with them. But if they have children by these men, they will call me tatana and I shall call them bana, because I might have been their father, having a prior right of marrying their mothers.

607 My wife's elder sisters are not tinamu to me ; they are
582 bakoñwana. Why so ? Because when I married my wife, her elder sisters were already married, according to the law that an elder sister must always marry before the younger. A father would never consent to give away the younger before the elder. Therefore I have never had the opportunity of playing with my wife's elder sisters and considering them as possible wives.

607 By extension the term namu is also applied to my wife's
595 younger brothers. They are bakoñwana, in fact (p. 238). Their daughters are my potential wives. However, the relations I have with them are easier than with the elder brothers and

835 of the first category. Sexual intercourse with them is a great taboo,
595 and a man daring to commit such a sin would be likened to a
607 wizard: he has killed his brother. This is the sin called matlulana (App. VI). My younger brother's wives are not tinamu ; we call each other ñwingi. I do not inherit them except in extraordinary cases when the deceased has no brother younger than himself.

602 There is still a *third kind of bulamu.* I also call tinamu the
835 cousins of my wife who are the daughters of my wife's mother's
582 sisters. These girls do not belong to my wife's clan ; they bear the family name of their father. Therefore I have no right to inherit them : "A hi delani ndjaka," i. e. "we do not inherit from each other." The relations with these tinamu are agreeable, but there is no hope of marriage between us.

2) Relations on the Husband's side.

607 So far we have considered the relation of Mboza with his wife's family. But what about Nsabula and her position towards her husband's relatives ? Nsabula calls Masuluke and Nsengamuñwe *ñwingi*, and the term is reciprocal. It implies great respect. As we saw, the young bride must work a whole year for her mother-in-law. The same respect is shown by Nsabula to Djan, Sam, Fos, her husband's elder brothers. They are also *ñwingi* to each other. "Should I send her to call Djan," says Mboza, "she will kneel down before him and say : 'My father! Mboza calls you!' or : 'Ñwamasuluke (Masuluke's son), you are wanted with us." She will not dare to address him by name. This extraordinary respect is reciprocal. Djan will consider Nsabula as his inferior, but he will never play with her. On the other hand, Komatane, Mboza's younger brother, is only a *namu* to Nsabula. Both will joke together and even occasionally smear each other with ashes. So will Sam, Fos, Mboza and Komatane with Mihlakaza, the wife of their elder brother. Thus we note
607 this law : a woman will generally respect the elder brothers of her
835 husband (benigi), and hold very free intercourse with his younger
595 brothers (tinamu), and vice-versa. A man will keep away from

607 his younger brother's wives (bengi) and play with those of his elder
835 brothers (tinamu). Why tis here this difference ? Because, as
we saw, the wife of an elder brother is a possible wife for all
343 his younger brothers, as they have the right of inheriting
382 her, should this man die. On the contrary, an elder brother inherits his younger brother's wife only under quite exceptional circumstances. One does not marry a ñwingi! This would be an insult to one's wife. Nsabula would leave Mboza if Mboza were to marry Magugu, Komatane's wife, because they have been accustomed to call each other ñwingi.

607 To a wife, her husband's elder sister is also a ñwingi (Ndjibari to Nsabula). The husband's younger sister is a namu or *nhombe*, and two tinhombe have very free relations, just as in the case of the tinamu. This freedom exists between female tinamu as well as between tinamu of different sexes.

606 There is a final term to be mentioned : *bakhoti* or *bakhoti-kulobye*, in Ronga, *basevele* in Djonga, a reciprocal term by which the parents of a husband and wife call each other.

593 How far is a woman incorporated in her husband's family ?
769 She belongs to it till her death, provided the lobolo oxen have been paid, but she does not accept the ancestor-gods of her parents-in-law as being her gods. She keeps her own gods, and prayers are frequently addressed to them by her father or by her brothers in favour of her children. In this respect Thongas differ widely from the old Aryan peoples, where a woman had to adopt the religion of her husband's clan when she married.

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606 Before leaving the subject of relations with parents-in-law, and in order to show to what extent the uneasiness and fear which characterises them are carried, I will briefly mention the taboos of the bukoñwana, which play such a great part in Bantu family life. Let me say that most of these taboos (psiyilayilana, small prohibitions), are not so severe as those connected with sexual relations, disease and death. It is not believed that a breach of

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 [redacted]

606 581 eventual misunderstanding between them will have its "contre coup" throughout the two groups. The two families regard each other with mistrust, especially the two married couples who depend so closely upon each other, owing to the lobola ; but when they have become acquainted, when they are assured that common life is possible and even agreeable, when the first alliance has been strengthened by others amongst the tinamu, then the bukoñwana taboos more or less *fall off*. This is an explanation of these strange relations between relatives-in-law ; I do not pretend that it is absolutely adequate. There may also be in this domain some remains of previous customs which have now disappeared, and Comparative Ethnography will probably throw more light on this problem in the course of time.

C. MARRIAGE RULES

582 The study of the terms of relationship has shown us the constitution of the Thonga family. We have seen that they are often dictated by the possibility or non-possibility for a man of marrying certain women. There exist distinct marriage rules, and I propose to recapitulate them here, at the risk of some repetition, in order to throw as much light as possible on this difficult but very important subject.

Generally speaking it may be said that the Thongas are *endogamic* as regards the tribe and the clan, and *exogamic* as regards the family. They are *endogamic* as regards the tribe, that is to say they marry within it. Members of clans very remote from each other may find it difficult to contract unions, (see later on), but they do so, especially in Spelonken, where representatives of many different parts of the tribe have met by force of historical circumstances. In the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques you may find Thonga women married to men of other tribes and even to white people. But this is the result of a new state of things, which the old Thongas did not foresee ; nor would they have approved of it, I am sure. In Shiluvane, I was in a very favourable

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In Shiluvane, I was in a very favorable
582 position to judge of the real feelings of the Thongas. There
~~777~~ were two tribes there, which had been living side by side for
609 more than seventy years, tribes united by old friendship and
648 military alliance, viz., the Nkuna clan of the Thongas and the Khaha clan of the Pedis. I did not see a single case of intermarriage between them. The difference of language could not account for the fact, because generally speaking, all the men could speak both Thonga and Pedi. When asked why they did not contract unions with the Pedis, the Nkunas answered : "Their customs are too disgusting for us." They meant more especially the freedom with which Khaha women commit adultery. Pedis would probably have made the same objection to the immorality of Thonga boys and girls. Whatever may be the cause, they have not intermarried up to this day.

582 On the other hand the Thongas are *exogamic* as regards the family. To understand properly these exogamic rules, let us classify the cases in the four following categories : Cases of absolute prohibition of marriage ; of conditional permission ; of unconditional permission, and cases in which marriage is recommended.

I. *Cases of absolute prohibition.*

582 As a rule marriage is prohibited between a tatana, mamana,
605 rarana and a ñwana, and between bamakwabu.

On the father's side the prohibition is particularly severe. Amongst the Ba-Ronga, it is taboo for a boy to marry a girl when both can lay claim to a common ancestor in the paternal line. It seems that the rule is not so stringent in the Northern clans. According to Mankhelu, marriage is absolutely prohibited between all the descendants of a grandfather, viz., between first cousins. Between second cousins it is permitted conditionally, "by killing the family tie," and between third cousins it is allowed. "Third cousins" as Mankhelu says, "are *batlandlamani ba tolo* ; they belong to families which were relatives yesterday. We are

582 605 no longer taboo for them, we can go and take a wife amongst them."

On the mother's side, this absolute prohibition extends to first cousins when the mothers are sisters. They are true bamakwabu ; they have been nursed at the same breast. But more remote cousins marry more easily when their relationship is on the mother's side. The bakokwana do not marry their batukulu, owing to their duty of sacrificing for them, but the batukulu have a kind of preferential right to women related to their mother : "Where father has married, I may also go to find my wife," said Gana. However the rule remains that bamakwabu must not intermarry.

When asked : "Why?" the Thongas generally say : "Because it is so. Psa yila. It is our law." It is however possible to find some more satisfactory reasons ; for these prohibitions are dictated to a certain extent *by fear of consanguinity*. Natives have probably noticed that the offspring of such unions are sometimes weak in intellect or altogether wanting. Therefore, in this polygamic family system, they make a careful distinction between relatives who are of the same mother and of the same father, and those whose mothers are different. When a cousin is by another grandmother, though I call her makwabu just as I do my true sister or first cousin, I may contemplate marrying her. She is my half first cousin only. However the fear of consanguinity is not the only nor perhaps the strongest reason for these exogamic rules. If it were so, why should relatives on the father's side be more taboo than those on the mother's side ? Moreover it is strange to see that in the royal families the same prohibitions are not maintained. Ñwamantibyana, chief of Mpfumo, married Mimalengane, his rarana, his first cousin once removed on the father's side. If the physical dangers alone arising from consanguinous unions were thought of, such marriages ought to be doubly feared in the royal family!

It seems to me that there are two other reasons :

582 In the Thonga mind there is *a natural repulsion to confounding and intermingling bushaka and bukoñwana*, relationship by blood and by marriage. Bushaka is a kind of relation which they do not deem compatible with bukoñwana, as we shall presently see.

582 To the Northern clans this is not so repugnant : with them, it is a current saying that bukoñwana revives bushaka when bushaka has become weaker in the course of generations (1).

A third reason for these strong taboos, a reason which explains also why the prohibition is stronger on the father's side than on the mother's, is found in *the lobola custom*. Should a woman who is a relative on my father's side become my wife and should our union be put an end to by quarrels, I should go to her father to claim the lobolo. If her father happens to possess no oxen to return to me, he will have to go to his relatives to get them... He may have to come to my own father, who is his brother and belongs to the same family, a consequence which would be indeed absurd, because then I should myself pay the debt due to me!

On his wife's side, a man cannot marry the elder sister of his wife, who is mukoñwana to him, nor the daughters of his wife's sisters, who are *bana* to him, as we have seen.

II. *Marriages conditionally permitted.*

582 602 588 In some cases a marriage which ought not to take place may be allowed on condition that the whole family will perform the rite called *dlaya shilongo*. This is a most curious custom, and is found all through the tribe. I know of two cases in which it has been resorted to: a certain Mkili, of the Makaneta sub-clan (Nondwane) wished to marry Minsabula, his makwabu. Both had a common ancestor Muwayi. Muwayi had by a first wife a son called Basana, and by a second wife another son called Nsabula. Basana was the father of Mungobo, father of Mkili, and Nsabula

(1) It is also very much against the feeling of the tribe to confound *bukoñwana* and *bulamo*. A man named Filemon had married the daughter of a woman of dissolute habits, and the woman had given herself to a man who was the brother of Filemon's maternal grandmother. This man was therefore a malume for Filemon, and his wives were balamo, even bassati, possible wives for him, as he had the right to inherit them (p. 233). For this reason he said : "My wife's mother cannot marry that man, not only because of the Christian law which we have accepted, but also because of our own old customs. Why? Because she is my mother in-law, my mukoñwana, and by her marriage she would become my namu and I might inherit her. That is impossible."

582 was the father of Minsabula. Mungobo and Nsabula were first
602 cousins or half first cousins (as their grandmothers, wives of
588 Muwayi, were different). Therefore Mkili was the first cousin once removed of Minsabula. Both were ba ka Makaneta. Another case was that of Michel, son of Gana and Ñwashiluvane, who married Djamela, daughter of Mankhelu, who was Ñwashiluvane's brother. Mankhelu was the malume of Michel and Djamela was his mamana, being the possible wife of Gana (See page 233). For a Thonga to marry her malume's daughter, *psa yila*, (See p. 234) whilst for a Pedi it is the proper thing. This is one of the great differences between the law of the two tribes. A Pedi has a real right of pre-emption on his *mudzwala*, whilst amongst the Thongas it is the father who possesses that right. (See later on G.) Possibly this Pedi custom encouraged Michel to entertain an idea which is repulsive to the Thonga mind. But the official *dlaya shilongo* took place in his case also.

I tried to discover in what other cases such a prohibited marriage was rendered possible by the performance of the rite, and found the following.

Conditional marriage is permissible with the daughter of my great-uncle, the younger brother of my grandfather ; and with the daughter of my grandfather by a wife other than my grandmother. Both are rarana. According to Mankhelu, it might also take place between himself and Shiluvane. This Shiluvane (who is not the chief Shiluvane, of course, but an entirely different person), is the daughter of the maternal great-uncle of Mankhelu, brother of Shidyele, who is his true grandfather, the father of his mother. Shiluvane is therefore the first cousin once removed of Mankhelu on his mother's side. She is a mamana.

But what is this rite of *dlaya shilongo* which has such power that it removes the taboo character of such marriages ? *Shilongo or mulongo* is an archaic word retained only in this expression and which corresponds to bushaka, blood relationship. This root exists also with that meaning in the Sutho word *seloko*. The relation by blood must be killed in order that the relation by marriage may be substituted for it.

Let us first see how this is done *in the Northern clans*.

588 607 called *the cat*, because it is like a cat which is put on their shoulders and scratches them. It scratches away the bukoñwana which prevented their marriage. (Viguet.) In this case it is the *shikoñwana* which is killed. So the taboo is removed and they can marry.

III. *Marriages permitted.*

582 609 618 Relatives from the eighth degree of relationship can marry unconditionally (Mankhelu). The choice of a boy is unlimited within the clan and even within the tribe. However, marriages into a *too far distant clan* are not recommended, according to Viguet, for the following reasons: 1) If the marriage were unsuccessful, the parents-in-law against whom the claim would be brought might run away with wife and oxen, and we should lose our herd. 2) If our oxen multiplied in the other clan, we might be tempted to go and make war on our parents-in-law in order to appropriate the cattle. So blood would be shed on account of our own oxen! This would bring shame upon us! Whilst if we marry amongst friends, even amongst remote relatives, should a quarrel occur, we shall try to settle it peacefully. These people are amongst those with whom we discuss in the hut. With strangers we discuss outside, on the square, and we occasionally fight with them and drive them away. So a difficulty can better be dealt with when our bukoñwana are people living close by.

IV. *Marriages recommended.*

582 607 Here we must take into account two different cases: some marriages are contracted on account of a kind of right of pre-emption, others on account of a right of inheritance.

1) Right of pre-emption.

There are amongst the relatives of a man certain women on whom he has a kind of preferential claim, or a right of pre-emption,

582/607 and whom he calls spouses, because he would be welcomed if he were able to lobola them. They are his *tinamu* or *tinhlampsa*, viz., his wife's younger sisters or the daughters of his wife's brother. These marriages are considered as peculiarly appropriate. This does not however constitute an absolute right for the man. Should he not prove a good husband, his parents-in-law will not let him have their other daughters (p. 240).

582 607 595 As regards marriage with the wife's brother's daughter, who is the nhlampsa proper, there are different possibilities to be considered. It may very well happen that a man's wife, wishing to have a young girl to help her in her domestic work, approaches her brother and asks him to lend her his daughter, the woman's niece, to stay in her village for this purpose. He consents, and she grows up there. Later on however the girl's parents say to their sister : If your husband has oxen, he may take her as a wife. She returns home and discusses the matter with her husband. Should the latter be agreed, he will send his wife with £1.10.—to make a proposal to the girl's parents, and he will take the girl at once without much ceremony. The remainder of the lobolo will perhaps be paid afterwards. If a son wants to marry and has no means of buying his wife, then the girl's parents will say to their sister: "Please remind your husband that he has not yet given the oxen." But they will not urge this too strongly as it is their sister who arranged the marriage in order to secure help for herself. On the contrary should the husband have taken the initiative, and sent his wife to ask her parents to give him the girl because he wanted her, then the lobolo oxen will be claimed at once, or at any rate the bakoñwana will be in a position to insist on a speedy remittance of the bride-price. But as my informant says : "Psi ya hi bhanu," i. e. "it goes according to the people." It depends on their character.

586 582 607 595 However there is a reason which militates against such marriages. If I quarrel with my first wife, who may have a particularly difficult character, and she goes home, her younger sisters or nieces, who are her tinhlampsa, will certainly follow her, and I shall remain quite alone without a single dish to eat in the evening. Should the quarrel end in a divorce, I shall lose all my

586 wives at once. The custom of marrying a wife's tinhlampsa is
582 approved of; it is however not very frequently observed in Thonga
607 families at the present time.

595 Other women to whom a man has a special right are his relatives on the mother's side, as we have seen; to take a wife from the family in which the father found the mother is recommended and approved of as long as she is not too near a relative.

2) The right of inheritance.

587 The second class of cases does not concern unmarried women
835 whom I mean to lobola, but widows whom I may inherit after
768 the death of their husband. Those whom I may eventually inherit
595 are generally called by me *namu* or *nsati*, and I have very free
582 relations with them, but as already pointed out this liberty never goes so far as to allow of sexual intercourse (p. 247). "Ndi nga da," viz. "I can eat, inherit by prior right" *my elder brother's widow*: she is my regular legacy. As regards my younger brother's widow, I can only marry her if she is old and no longer able to bear children. But if she is still a childbearing woman, to take her is very much against the feelings of the tribe. The reason of the prohibition is this, says Viguet: suppose that this widow of my younger brother already has children. I take her, and have a child by her. The child takes precedence of the first children of its mother: he is their *hosi*, because I, myself, the father, am the elder brother of the deceased. On the other hand, he is *ndjisana* of his other brothers, because he was born after them by the same mother. This is impossible; it runs counter to the most elementary notions of the family. In exceptional cases, however, when no one else can claim my younger brother's widow, I may take her.

587 Next to my true tinamu comes *the widow of my maternal uncle*.
768 If he had many, one might be alloted to me in the distribution.
595 But of course, in this as in all other cases of inherited women, the
582 children born of our union would belong to the family who paid the lobolo, and not to me. I have, in a sense, only the usufruct of the property. She will till the fields for me and serve me with

587 my daily plate of porridge, but she is not really mine. She is given
768 (nyika) to me by favour, and only under specified conditions.
595 I can also inherit *bakokwana*, the widow of my malume's father
582 (not my true grandmother, of course, but her co-wife), the widow of my father's brothers.

Muhambi can inherit Magugu, *the widow of his cousin* Hlangabeza. This cousin is a brother (makwabu) and the two fathers are brothers. But he could not inherit Debeza, wife of Phusa. Why so? Because Phusa, being a cousin by the father's sister, belongs to another *shibongo*, the shibongo of his own father Muki and not to that of his mother. Should Muhambi lay claim to Debeza, the men of Mashabane (the name of Phusa's clan) would say : "We are opposed to it, because your doing so would in fact mean that you *eat two herds*. You have eaten one herd when we bought Ndjibari from your people. Ndjibari has had two children ; we have sold her daughter Ñwashidjasa to lobola Debeza for Phusa. The oxen were ours. If Phusa dies, Debeza belongs to us and not to you." So Muhambi can inherit the widow of his cousin, the son of his paternal uncle, but not the widow of his cousin, the son of his paternal aunt.

A man can inherit also *one of his father's wives*, as we have seen (page 203), but only under certain circumstances. The dlaya shilongo is never performed in the case of inherited women.

A rule on which Viguet insisted, but which is disappearing, is this : women, when their husband had no younger brothers, must be inherited by *batukulu* and not by *bana* ; batukulu, i. e. either true grandsons, sons of the son, or uterine nephews, sons of the sister of the deceased. The reasons for this law are : 1) Bana, sons, would take liberties with their father's wives and make balamo of them, if they could inherit them regularly. This would spoil the life of the village. 2) If I, being ñwana, a son, inherit my father's wife and have a child by her, this child is ñwana, a son, to me. On the other hand, this inherited woman may have had children by my father, and they are my brothers. So, one of this woman's children is my son, the other my brother ! "A beleki tinshaka timbiri." — "She has had children of two generations!" This must not be.

000 These marriage regulations show us plainly how the family is constituted amongst the Thongas. A glimpse at the system of relationship of the primitive tribes will help us to understand something more of the strange features of this family law.

D. REMNANTS OF PREVIOUS SYSTEMS OF RELATIONSHIP.

582 Modern ethnographers have tried to ascertain how the human family has evolved through the ages, and this is, roughly speaking, the theory adopted by some of them. The first stage was marked by universal promiscuity; there was no family. Then, in a second period, restriction began to be enforced as regards marriage. Definite groups formed; all the women of one group were the regular wives of all the men of another group. This system still prevails in some Australian tribes. It is called *group marriage*. In a third phase, the family constituted itself round the mother. She was the owner of the children, who traced their descent through her and her female ancestors. In this form, which is called the *uterine family*, or matriarchy, the mother's brothers bore a special relation to the children: the father being hardly known or without authority, these male relatives of the mother had to defend the offspring of their sisters. In the end, the uterine family passed into the *patriarchal or agnatic family*. The father became the head, and descent was traced through the males. The development of property seems to have favoured this last evolution. The husband, who owned the property, became the master of the family, and he therefore took his wife to himself and made a home. (Compare p. 122.)

593 Whatever may be the truth of this theory, we must recognise
582 the fact that the Thongas have now reached this fourth stage. The family is definitely agnatic. The father's right is paramount. However, there are in this family system some features which appear to be a relic of former periods.

I. *Original promiscuity.*

582 As regards the idea that promiscuity prevailed originally—a supposition which is combated by some scientists (see W. H. R. Rivers, "On the origin of the classificatory system of relationship," Anthropological Essays), I see no trace of it amongst the Thongas. Amongst the Pedis, there is one day when free intercourse is allowed all through the clans ; it is the closing day of the second circumcision school. But this custom can be explained on a totally different basis.

II. *Group marriage.*

178 As regards *group marriage*, we may see a remnant of the system
582 in the fact that a man has a special preferential right to certain
595 women of his wife's family, the tinamu. His son will also consider
837 it peculiarly appropriate to take a wife from his mother's clan, the one into which his father married.

The tinamu custom might be explained in that way. There is however a very marked difference between the group-marriage system and the Thonga family law. Amongst Australian aborigenes, whilst a man of a group has the right of marrying all the women of the other group, a woman of the other group has the same right to marry all the men of the first. Amongst the Thongas it is absolutely taboo for a married woman to have relations with anybody except her own husband. Polygamy exists and is approved of, but polyandry is strongly censured and considered a disgusting custom. The main reason for this is no doubt the *matlulana* superstition, which bears all the character of a very ancient idea in the Thonga system. The story of P. K. which I relate in Appendix IV, will show how deeply the sin of polyandry is felt (1).

(1) It is true that the Ba-Pedi who are neighbours of the Thongas, have a kind of polyandry (See page 99). But this has nothing to do with group marriage, and the wives of a rich man whom he allows to have intercourse with other men, choose their lovers as they like and not according to a law of preferential right binding two groups.

582 593 835 Though laying much stress on this very important difference we must notice, nevertheless, that there is a certain correspondence between the rights of men and women in this respect. A man has a preferential right to his wife's younger sisters, and to the daughters of his wife's brothers, be these men younger or older than his wife. He is a potential husband for all these tinamu. It results from this fact, that, as regards a woman, she is also a potential wife for all her husband's younger brothers, who can inherit her and are also called tinamu by her, and for the sons of her husband's sisters, be they older or younger than her husband.

601 582 Another feature of these early Australian forms of society is that all the persons belonging to a given generation call each other brothers (or sisters), and call the preceding generation fathers and mothers and the following generation sons indiscriminately. We may compare with this classificatory system the Thonga custom of calling all the father's wives and all the mother's sisters mothers; and all the father's brothers fathers. But this is not necessarily a trace of group marriage. As we have seen before, the meaning of kinship terms is very often extended to other people as a sign of respect or of love; the Thongas, nevertheless, know perfectly well the difference existing between the technical use of these terms and their wider connotation. There is something natural in these appellations. When we call such and such a person Father Morton, Mother Fuller, Brother James or Sister Agnes, no one would take this to be a relic of the group marriage phase! On this point my conclusion would therefore be: certain customs may be considered as traces of this old system, but it is not absolutely necessary to explain them by this hypothesis. The preference accorded to a wife's sisters, or nieces, may very well owe its origin to the following cause: when a group has ascertained that its women are well treated in another group, it welcomes new alliances with that group, thinking that, in this dreadful lottery of marriage, the guarantee given by a previous happy union is not to be despised!

643 584 day is fixed for a visit to the capital where it will be concluded.

Let us consider the procedure in the case of the marriage of Ñwamantibyane, the youthful chief of Mpfumo, who has since been exiled. The following account of the discussion preparatory to the marriage is given on the authority of Tobane, a witness of the proceedings, and will aptly illustrate the etiquette observed on such occasions.

643 584 651 622 The dignitaries are assembled, and one of them, the brother of the deceased chief, commences thus : "Well, you the chiefs of Mpfumo! In truth! If we are assembled here to-day, is it not that we have truly seen that we must, in fact, increase the chief, and give him the wife of the country ? This is all the business, you, the chiefs." One of those addressed replies : "In putting the matter before us, hast thou been unequal to the task ? (No! understood.) And we, what further words could we add ? Nothing remains to be said... You then tell us what we shall have to give you, dwellers in the capital!" Then the secondary chiefs say : "For our part, we will give each one pound sterling or an ox, as you may prefer." The headmen of the villages will each contribute ten shillings and each village one shilling besides. In former times, before the circulation of money in the country, each one gave a hoe.

The secondary chiefs go back to their own districts and get together the money or the oxen as the case may be. This done, the fact is duly notified to the capital and all the contributions are conveyed to the chief. An account is kept of all monies or cattle contributed. When Ñwamantibyane was married the special subscription amounted to thirty pounds sterling and twenty oxen.

643 582 The future queen was chosen from the royal family of Matjolo ; her name was Mimalengane. The young chief had only seen her on one occasion, when she was returning from Gaza. Nevertheless she was his first cousin once removed ; Hamule, father of Zihlala and grandfather of Ñwamantibyane, married the sister of Malengane, chief of Matjolo, and his daughter was Mimalengane (the prefix *mi* signifies daughter of), who was now

643 to become Ñwamantibyane's wife. We have already mentioned
382 the fact that marriages between relatives are sanctioned in the
royal families. The chiefs of Mpfumo generally marry into the reigning families of Mabota and Matjolo, and these latter seek their wives at the court of Maputju.

643 All the preliminaries being settled, the purchase money
584 collected, the young girl chosen, Matshibi, the Mpfumo counsellor acting as Agent General for Matjolo, sent Ñwamatshabane, the boy who was his messenger, to Sigaolé, chief of Matjolo, to make the actual proposals for the marriage. The messenger did not address himself directly to the chief, but made his approach through the Matjolo Counsellor in charge of Mpfumo's affairs, whose name was Mambene. The request was made thus : "We have come to ask our *kokwana*, (that is to say our relative on the mother's side, p. 231) in marriage." — "It is well," replied Sigaole, when Mambene had transmitted to him the honourable proposal. — "Go home again, thou shalt come for our reply." A meeting of the members of the Matjolo royal family was then convened, matters discussed, the demand agreed to and the same envoy, attended by a companion, came, as arranged, to receive the reply. The hut was carefully swept and the enquirers renewed their message : "Our chief is still celibate... He sleeps in his bachelor's quarters" (This was not true, as he had already several wives, but they did not count!) "He is anxious to get married. Make haste to give him Mimalengane." — "It is well," said the others, "on one of these days we will go and discuss the affair at your place. When will you expect us ?"

A day is fixed and the great ones of Matjolo go to see Ñwamantibyane. A gorgeous reception has been prepared for them : an ox has been killed in their honour, but they are at first treated in a niggardly manner, and are given very short commons for breakfast ; for, before anything else can be done, the tiresome money question must be settled.

In the large hut all these important personages take their places with some constraint... The suitor is not present. The real business of the purchase money is not immediately referred to ; endless compliments, all sorts of circumlocutions are indulged

64/3 582 The reason why it is not taboo for a chief to marry a near relative is this, according to Mankhelu : "Nothing is taboo for him because he is the earth (hosi i misaba, a yi yili ntshumu). He may even take a girl from the houses of his younger brothers because everything is allowable for him. He has no sin. He is the one who makes the laws. Even if they are bad, people must accept them..." This identification of the chief with the earth is most curious and we shall speak of it again when treating of the sacred character of the chief.

64/3 595 The wife paid for by the money of the country, though on the one hand she is the official wife, is on the other hand inferior to the first wife married by the chief. He does not perform the rites of widowhood when she dies (See page 202).

A chief, when he travels, always takes his wives with him.

D. THE REIGN.

1. *The sacred character of the Chief.*

64/3 Let me say at once that, amongst the Ba-Ronga, the paraphernalia of royalty are reduced to a minimum. The chief is as scantily attired as are his subjects ; possibly his belt of tails may be more plentifully garnished with these appendages. His huts are built on the same lines as the others ; his village may be larger, but is sometimes smaller (1).

(1) One day when taking a walk on the hill of Rikatla, I came to a field where, in the shade of a magnificent tree, I found three individuals — the three most powerful personages of the country — modestly squatting on their haunches and scaring the sparrows from their plantation of sorghum. The trio consisted of Muzila, the young chief, his brother and Makhani, his chief counsellor, who were devoting themselves to this tiresome occupation in the same way as the meanest of their subjects !

This same Muzila had several younger brothers, one of whom was engaged to look after our oxen, at a salary of ten shillings a month. One day the boy was ill. It happened to pour in torrents on that particular day, and whom should I see about ten o'clock in the morning, coming along absolutely drenched through and through, but the chief Muzila ! "I am looking after your oxen to day" said he "in place of my brother... Here I am, and I have just come to let you know that I am going to water them !"

643 On his death, his son Gwaba was put in his place. But he was deported by the Portuguese and his sister, Midambuze, filled the position. Consequently she was not lobola, but chose a husband for herself, a man of common origin (a titlhuba nuna). Her son may succeed her ; in this case only can a uterine nephew of a chief take his place.

643 At Gungunyana's court queens played a great part. This seems to be in accordance with the Zulu custom. After the death of Chaka's mother, sexual relations were taboo for the whole tribe during one year, and children conceived during that time were put to death by order of the chief! (See Colenso : Ten weeks in Natal.)

643 I know of no case in which a foreigner became chief of a clan through having married one of its princesses. He can become hosana, but the true hosana will be his wife and he himself will be but a prince consort. I have heard of two instances in which this happened.

832 hut and tie the bag round his neck. What remains of the *timhoroia*
735 will be used to smear the hut. Then all the girls will love him ;
783 or in the case of a girl, she will soon be asked in marriage.
584 This ceremony is a characteristic *hondlola*, the same which is performed on the weaning day (see page 59) and after any serious disease ; it is a rite of removal of impurity. (Notice the termination ola, ula, ulula in these verbs ; it means generally to undo, to take away).

832 If the love charms do not obtain the desired result, the angry
754 boy will perhaps try to avenge himself. He will take a fowl, or
262 perhaps only an egg, treat it with special drugs and give it to the girl in order to bewitch her. This kind of witchcraft is called *ku dambikela*. (See the Chapter on Witchcraft, Part VI). The girl will give birth not to a child, but to an animal, a pigeon, or a snake. Or her genitalia will be changed and take the appearance of the male organ. This is one of the causes why eggs and fowls are taboo for girls.

Let us now hear from Tobane the description of the marriage rites amongst the Mpfumo clan. We shall afterwards see how the customs differ in other Ronga and Thonga clans.

II. *Marriage ceremonies of the Mpfumo clan.*

1) The betrothal (Buta).

584 When a young man has made up his mind to get married, and when he is in possession of the necessary lobola (1) cattle, he starts, one fine day, with two or three of his friends to look for a wife in the villages. He puts on his most brilliant ornaments and his most precious skins. Here they are, arriving in the village

583 1) *Ku lobola* means to buy in marriage. *Ku lobola* (a factitive derivative of the verb) is said of a father who claims a sum of money from his daughter's suitor. *Lobolo* or *ndjobolo* or *bukosi* (wealth) is the sum paid, the oxen, the hoes, or the pounds sterling. We shall use these words, which are employed in Thonga as well as in Zulu and ought to be adopted as technical ethnographic terms. I use the verb for the act of paying and the noun for the sum itself.

535/578 immediately after his arrival, goes to the husband and to his assembled relatives and tells them roughly : " Here we are ; we bring you your dog. Here it is. With us, she was reputed to be a good girl. Now we shall hear you every day say that she is lazy, does not know how to cook, has a host of lovers... All right! Kill her! Kill your dog! Have you not bought it ? She is a witch! Let her drink the magic philter, etc. " The men keep silent... " Yes, you are right. We shall beat her. But if her husband is too hard on her, we shall try to deliver her. We shall do our best to protect her ".

In the meantime the women cut the logs of the *shigiyane*, and fill the pots with water, and the feast goes on, another ox having been killed by the husband. The married pair sit on a mat and the women of the two families begin the mutual exchange of insults which are never wanting on this day! " You dogs! " one of the aunts of the girl will say, " people of no consequence! You have not even a broken pot to remove the ashes from the fireplace. You can congratulate yourselves on getting such a good wife as this, a hard worker, a splendid cook, a nice and honest girl. " An old woman of the other party answers : " Yes! If you have exhorted her sufficiently! Perhaps she will give up her bad ways, her laziness, etc... "—" Bad ways ? You may well speak of that! Look at your son! What was he? A wild beast! We have come to cut off his tail and make a man of him! "

V. *Marriage by abduction.*

588/383 The ~~usual~~ ceremonies which we have described belong to the legal marriage (ku teka, ku lobola). But there exists another way of getting a wife, and the poor (psisiwana), those who have no oxen, no pounds sterling for lobola, especially if they have no energy, have recourse to this method. It is called *ku tlhuba*. A young man in such a position, wishing to marry such and such a girl, will send a friend to her and propose a rendez-vous in the

588 583 bush. If she agrees to become his wife in this irregular manner, she goes there and meets him. They have relations together and run to one of the relatives of the girl's mother. The family of the mother will be more lenient than the family of the father, having no right to the lobolo. The transgressors of the law will probably choose the village of the maternal uncle and settle there. The parents look everywhere for their daughter and try to get her to return home. If she is quite determined to remain with her ravisher, they let her go free, deploring their misfortune and their shame. But it is rare in the primitive state of the tribe for such a marriage not to be regularised. The thief, if he has retained any feeling of decency, will try to collect the lobolo. One morning he goes to the village of his wife's parents, and deposits a sovereign or a goat or a cock on the threshold of the hut of the girl's mother ; or he hangs a half-sovereign on the goat's neck, rubs its lips with salt to prevent it from bleating, and then shouts loudly : " We have stolen, we of such and such a clan "... People wake from their sleep, not knowing what animal has made such a noise, come out of their huts and see the culprit standing outside the fence. When he has been duly recognised, he runs away. He will perhaps bring some other presents till he has definitely 588 " lobola " his wife. This is called the *nshonshonela*. Should he 611 not succeed in bringing the regular payment, the first girl born 597 of that marriage will be the lobolo. " Nwana a ta lobola mamana wa kwe " : the child will pay for her mother. In law, all the children of such a union belong to the girl's family : a man who has not lobola has no right of property in his children. (See Part III.)

Should the woman who has been stolen by *tlhuba* go at once to live with her irregular husband in his village, her parents will arrange matters in another way. They will " go as enemies " (hi bulala), make a regular descent on the village of the thief, kill a pig, threaten to take all the furniture. The men of that village will then intercede and, in the course of time, the lobolo will be paid. (See App. VIII.)

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

SOME REMARKS ON THE MARRIAGE CUSTOMS OF THE THONGAS

583 Though somewhat different in the various clans, the marriage customs show a strong resemblance in them all and differ only in details. There are three great "moments" to be distinguished in the sequence of the rites: 1) the *buta*, betrothal, with the two official visits of the fiancé and the fiancée. 2) The *lobola*, remittance of the purchase money on which the two families have agreed and 3) the *hloma*, the ceremony of taking the bride to her husband's home. Some of the customs accompanying these principal acts are very strange and seem at first quite incomprehensible.

1) To understand them, we must observe that marriage in primitive or semi-civilised tribes is not an individual affair as it has become with us. It is an affair of the community. It is a kind of contract between two groups, the husband's family and the wife's family. What is the respective position of the two groups or families ? One of the groups loses a member, the other gains one. To save itself from undue diminution, the first group claims compensation, and the second grants it under the form of the lobolo. This remittance of money, oxen or hoes, will allow the first group to acquire a new member in place of the one lost, and so the balance will be kept. This conception of the lobola as a compensation, a means of restoring the equilibrium between the two groups, is certainly the right one.

This need of maintaining the importance of a group, the tendency to resist a lessening of that group, accounts also for some of the other customs ; all the rites which emphasise the value of the bride find their explanation there. "A hi si kola ha yene", "we are not tired of her, we would gladly keep her", say her parents by means of these rites. The reciprocal insults which take place on the day of the hloma have the same origin. The relatives of the bride do their best to show the immense superiority of their own family over the other and of their daughter over her husband. The second group defends itself as well as it can ; hence the challenges which sometimes end in a real fight.

The sham fight is probably to be explained in the same way. The boys, the brothers of the bride, soundly thrash the brothers of the husband who dare to come and take away one of the girls of the kraal. They do not like to see their family impoverished, diminished. The

583 old men carry the hoes and show them to the defenders of the kraal saying: "This is our ox!" Or they hide themselves amidst the cattle as claiming their protection, because this is certainly the only condition upon which the bride's clan would consent to receive the invaders. Mr. van Gennep is right, I think, in rejecting the old explanation of the sham fight as being a remnant of the marriage by capture, which would have been the primitive form of marriage amongst these tribes. The Thongas possess the marriage by abduction, but this is quite another thing, as we have seen.

583 591 178 2) But it is probable that some of the rites of the Thonga marriage must be explained by an older form of marriage. The Rev. W. C. Willoughby in this book on *Race Problems in the New Africa* calls the type of marriage which we have described, and which is met with in all the South African tribes, *marriage of dominion*. The system of family life which results from the marriage of dominion is patrilineal :— children will trace their descent through their father and inherit his property,— patrilocal—the mother lives in the village of the father— patripotestal—the father possesses the children and has full power over them. But in other Bantu tribes, especially in Central Africa, the system is different. There we meet with what the same author calls the *matrilineal theory of marriage*. This system is matrilocal—the wife remains in the village of her group ; matrilineal—children trace their descent through their female ancestors ; avunculipotestal—the mother's brother has power over them, not the father. They belong to the mother's group and inherit its property. Under this system, the hloma, viz. the third "moment" of the marriage of dominion, does not take place, and the lobola, the bride-price, is not so important. The husband is only a lodger or a frequent visitor in his wife's village; he is a mere begetter of other people's children, and pays for this privilege by working for his wife's group or occasionally presenting it with gifts.

It is probable that this matrilineal theory of marriage is the older and that it has developed, under various influences, into the marriage of dominion. Mr. Willoughby supposes that men having captured women in raids and brought them to their homes found that system more convenient for them, and wished to possess their regular wives in the same manner. Change in the economic conditions must have had the same result. When, owing to a more settled way of living, property increased and cattle became plentiful, it is easy to conceive that the men of the husband's group made a kind of social contract with the men of

583 the wife's group, offering a higher bride-price in order to obtain the
591 transfer of the bride to her suitor's home.

178 Now, if this is the history of the evolution of the Bantu marriage (and we shall see later on, in studying the relation of the uterine nephew with his mother's brother, that it is quite probable that it is), we may find, in comparing these two forms of marriage, the explanation of some of the Thonga rites. The position of the wife was certainly much more satisfactory, from her point of view, under the old system. She could remain with her people and her husband had but little power over her, whilst, in the marriage of dominion, she must stay in the village of another group, work for it, and perhaps be ill-treated. Does this fact not account for her flight to the bush or to another village the day before hloma, when the female relatives of the husband go and seize her by force ? She tries to hide herself under a veil, as if she wished not to be recognised; but the husband's aunts remorselessly take it from her, and as she goes to the conjugal dwelling, her friends accompany her, singing songs of mourning. These rites are certainly more readily explained if there was, in a remote past, entirely forgotten by individuals, yet still influencing the mind of the community, another state of things, when the married woman was much freer and more happy.

585 3) We find the explanation of some other ceremonies when we apply to them the theory of the *Rites of passage*. For both bridegroom and bride, there is in fact passage to a new condition of life. They pass from the position of single to that of married persons. Hence the part taken by their best friends and by the bridesmaids, from whom they are separated by their marriage. For the bride there is passage from one family to another, from one village to another.

I cannot say that I have found distinct *separation* and *marginal* rites, but aggregation rites are numerous. The *aggregation rites* are first of all the common participation in the flesh of the oxen during the feasts. Nothing makes Natives more friendly towards each other than to eat meat together. Then come the building of the wood pile, the girl's acts of civility to the husband's friends during the *tjekela* and the day after the *hloma*. These rites being collective seem to represent the union of the two families. The new wife performs them herself individually during the first week of her marriage.

584 How is it possible to explain the calculated resistance to acts of politeness on the part of both male and female visitors during the betrothal ceremonies, and even later on ? If the girls alone made a difficulty about entering the village, the hut, and sitting down on the

561 431 a rite of passage and this is also proved by the fact that the money or the bracelets given to the persons concerned do not remain their property. As regards the circumcised, they remit them to the chief, and the chief distributes them to the old women who are no longer able to bear children. The girl who has passed through the khomba gives them to her adopted mother, who will use them in the same way. All the money remitted to the bride will go to the master of the village, for the old women and the children. *Married people must have no share in it,* as these presents are taboo. Why ? Because they are connected with a passage, and people who have sexual relations are considered as increasing the dangers connected with these critical phases of human development, when the heart is troubled by a half-conscious fear of a new and unknown future. Amongst civilised people who have reached the era of individualism, these fears find their expression in songs and poetry. In the communistic society they express themselves by means of rites.

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561 387 611 Here are some answers to the questions of Professor Frazer on marriage.

A man always brings his wife to his own home. This is the *tlhoma,* and it is a law. It is taboo for him to go and live with his parents-in- law, at any rate when he marries his first wife. In the course of time, when the children have grown up, when the *bukoñwana,* viz. the relations with parents-in-law, are of old standing, a man can go and live in his wife's village (See Part II). Another case in which this can be done is when a widow refuses to marry the man who legally inherits her, and gives herself to a stranger, a man of Inhambane, for instance. He does not pay the lobolo, and lives with her in her village ; but the children born of that union will belong to the family of the deceased husband.

585 There is no preparation for marriage amongst the Thongas by fasting, bleeding or keeping awake the night before. No corn or rice is thrown at the bridal pair. The bride or bridegroom is never represented at the marriage by a proxy or dummy. Conjugal relations begin immediately after marriage (see page 113), but the wife does not possess her home and her kitchen for the first year ; during that period she must cook for her mother-in-law.

583 There are no occasions on which men exchange their wives.

See practical conclusions on Marriage Rites at the end of Vol. I.

854 862 (see page 48.)[1] After her birth she is carried in the skin of a gazelle (mhunti) which her mother ties round her neck and loins. When that skin has become too small, they get one of an antelope (mhala). She begins to walk ; when her mother sends her on an errand she is able to do it. She also begins to talk, and to know her father and mother. Then, when she has grown, they prepare for her a small pot of pounded and cooked mealies so that she may eat of it. After three years she is weaned and goes to stay for a time with her grandmother. After that she returns home.

857 868 "When she has learnt to walk, she is very fond of playing with the shells of the sala. She cooks in them. Then, when she has done with them, she takes small pots and cooks little dinners. She also gets a small calabash, she goes to the lake to draw water and, on coming back, she gives it to her father so that he may wash his face. Here she is now gathering small bits of wood ; she makes small bundles of them and brings them home. Later on she will make heavier bundles.

"When she has grown up more, she will take charge of the work of her mother. She will do the work. But if the mother sees that she cannot do it all, she will help her. It may however be said that the mother needs no longer to crush her mealies, 583 neither to go to the well nor to the fireplace. When she is quite a grown up girl, the suitors come. If they are accepted, they bring the purchase money. They buy her (lobola) and do all they like. If she is prolific, she will bear many children. Now and then she returns to her parents' village, then she comes back to her husband. Her children grow. They go to get water, to cut her wood, to plough her fields. She goes with them. When they are 462 grown up, they get married. If amongst them there is a son, he goes to buy his wife. Thus she looks for a mother-in-law for her son. He will then be truly a man because he has got a mother-in-law! When her children are married, the mother again begins to do all her work. She steeps her mealies, crushes them to make flour, she cuts her wood, cooks her beer ; she prepares the light beer ; she smears the floor of her hut ; this is what she does till she is quite old.

888 "When she is quite old, they feed her. Her grandchildren are

1 [The following page is quoted from an essay by a native girl at the Swiss Mission school at Lourenço Marques -- Analyst]

581 says : "Nsati wa mabele u nga nabele loko u nge na bukosi."
832 — "Do not covet a woman with large breasts if you have no money..." This does not mean that she will cost more, but her father, knowing that she will not want for suitors, will not consent to let her go unless the full lobolo is paid at once. On the other hand a girl with an elongated face is admired more than one who is too broad-faced. Of the first they say : "She is pretty, she resembles an antelope" (a kota mhala) ; of the second : "She is
832 chubby-cheeked, she is like a sow." A light complexion is preferred
186 to a very dark one, because the white or yellow races are regarded
734 as superior, and a Native laying claim to any European or Asiatic
581 blood is proud of it. Parents, who also have their say in the
824 question of marriage, insist on two other points ; the working capacity of the girl, and the absence of any witchcraft blot in the family. Should her mother have been convicted of being a witch,
581 the girl will be feared. However, every girl finds a husband in the
583 land where polygamy flourishes. If he be slow in coming, she will apply to her doctor, who will prepare the *love charms*, which will make her "appear," so that she will be noticed by the boys (See page 100). If even that does not succeed, she has other means at her disposal and may go herself to make proposals to a man (wopsana). He is seduced by her, and constitutes himself a thief who has *tlhuba*, viz. "taken in marriage by abduction" (See page 119). The parents will claim the lobolo and he must pay it. Marriage and childbearing remain the only carreer to which a Thonga woman can look forward. Hence a number of special feminine taboos which are very curious.

2) Special feminine taboos.

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845 Some of them concern girls *before childbearing* and cease after
784 parturition. In the Tembe and Maputju clans, girls must not eat
562 pork, because pigs root nervously with their noses ; the future child
825 would also move its head from one side to the other, when on the verge of birth, and this would make delivery difficult. Other

III. *Matriarchy.*

178 But as regards *mother-right* and the *uterine family*, I must confess
602 that I have altered my views since writing Les Ba-Ronga, and would testify my gratitude to Mr. S. Hartland, who encouraged me to study this subject more attentively. I had not then gathered all the facts, and the identity of the *ntukulu* and the *mupsyana* only became clearly apparent to me when studying the Northern clans. Now, having inquired with special care into this most curious feature of the Thonga system, I have come to the conclusion that the most probable explanation is that, in former and very remote times, our tribe passed through the matriarchal stage. Let us carefully consider the relation of a malume with his uterine nephews, recapitulating all the facts.

1) Duties and rights of the maternal uncle.

604 As we have seen, the uterine nephew all through his career
391 is the object of special care on the part of his uncle : if he is a first-born child, the malume prepares his ntehe. (See page 46.) When weaned, he goes to stay in the village of his mother's relatives for many years, a girl sometimes till she is grown up.
604 Later on, when she marries, the maternal uncle claims a right
583 called *tjhumba*, £ 1, on the total amount of the lobolo. It is taboo to refuse it ; should a father dare to keep that £ 1, his brothers will say to him : "Do you not fear the gods ? The mother's gods will kill you! Your daughter will have no children. Did you alone bring her into the world ? Did not these people help you in bringing her forth ? And has not your wife grown with the assistance of those gods ? Her brother must be allowed to have his *tjhumba*" (Mboza).

585 On the day of the remittance of the lobolo, the maternal uncle
604 and all the mother's relatives are invited to the feast, and for them a special part of the festal ox is reserved, called *nyimba*, viz. the

E. THE LOBOLA CUSTOM.

I. *The History of the Custom. How it is practised.*

436 583 439 As far back as Natives can remember, lobola has always been practised. First it consisted of *mats* and *baskets*, in those remote times when white people had not yet made their appearance. *Large iron rings* were procured by barter from sailors who anchored off the shore (see Part IV), and were employed for the purpose. Later on white traders settled in the country. *Beads* were bought from them (nkarara), especially large ones (mubatlwana). A chief used to lobola with ten handfuls of these, a subject with only five. Large *brass rings* were also used in old times. Two of them have been found lately in the Maputju country, and one came into my possession. It weighs more than two pounds. They were called *litlatla* and were very much sought after. One was enough to buy a wife.

436 583 *Oxen* have also been used for a very long time for lobola. Some say that they were the regular means of getting a wife in the 18th century. When Manukosi came, in 1820, he appropriated all the cattle, and the Thongas were obliged to use beads and hoes for that reason. At any rate the Nkunas, when they emigrated into the Transvaal in 1835, were paying lobolo in oxen. A father claimed ten for his daughter. The Pedis of the country claimed only two or three, and this was one of the reasons why 436 583 231 the two tribes did not intermarry. Strange to say, I never heard goats mentioned as having served for this purpose, though the goat is certainly the oldest domestic animal of the South African Bantus! Whatever may have been the objects first used, sooner or later oxen, live stock, became the usual means of lobola. This appears plainly in the technical expressions : to go out with a herd (ntlhambi), viz., to go to lobola,—to eat the oxen, viz., to accept a lobolo,—the woman of my oxen, viz., the one bought with the oxen given by me for my wife, etc.

231 436 583 177 The scarcity of oxen, probably caused by the wars with the Zulus, was no doubt the reason why they were replaced by hoes. *Hoes* were universally employed from 1840-1870, together with oxen, when available. Ten was the regular price for lobola. Later on fathers asked twenty, thirty, fifty. They were first of native make; the Vendas of Spelonken, near the Iron Mountain, provided the whole tribe for a time with that heavy currency, until the Europeans saw that there was good business to be done by supplying them. (See Part IV). Portuguese traders of Delagoa Bay began to send Natives to Gaza with guns and powder to hunt elephants, and paid them in hoes: twenty, fifty, one hundred hoes for a tusk, according to its size.

436 177 583 464 But hoes have also been superseded by the universal power of the *pound sterling*. After the death of Manukosi (1858), early in the sixties of the last century, some Zulus came to Delagoa Bay from Natal, sent by Englishmen to hunt elephants in Gaza. They told the people of the country that money could be obtained in Pietermaritzburg (Umgundhlovo) by working, and the first Ba-Ronga went *ku berengen*, viz., to serve white people there. In 1870, in the year still called Daiman by the chroniclers of the tribe, many more went to Kimberley, especially from the Transvaal colonies of Thongas, and gold coin began to spread amongst the tribe with all its usefulness and all its dangers. It is now becoming more and more current, as from 50,000 to 70,000 Natives of the Thonga tribe are working in the Johannesburg mines. First

436 177 583 of all £ 1 was worth ten hoes, and the lobolo money was fixed at £ 8 by the chiefs. But this price was soon considered insufficient by the parents. They wanted £ 10.10.0, ten guineas! They had already learned that, amongst cultivated people and in refined transactions, we talk of guineas and not of pounds! Later on it rose as high as £ 20 for an ordinary girl, £ 30 for a chief's daughter. The average round Lourenço Marques was £ 18 at the beginning of this century and in the Transvaal £ 25 (1). When a

(1) There is a tendancy constantly to increase the amount of the lobolo. Nowadays it is nearer £ 30 than £ 20. In this connection I may mention the following fact. A man named Mpunzi had payed £ 28 for his wife, and the matter was looked on as concluded; but later on his parents-in-law came to claim £ 2 more. Why? They had purchased a wife for their son and had obtained her for £ 28; it was all right so

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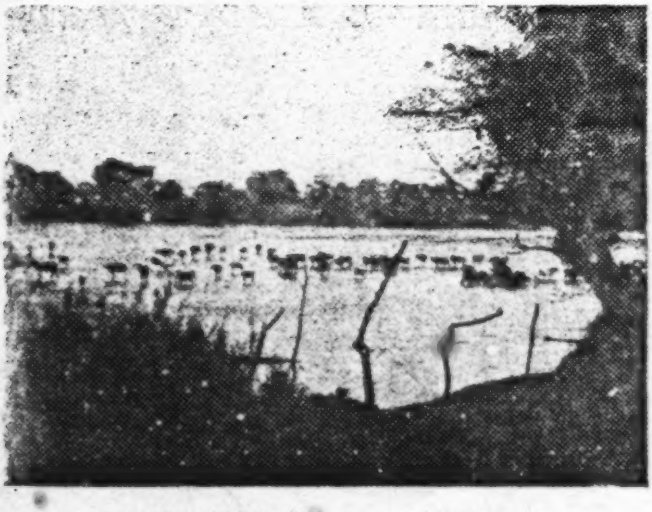
when a

Banyan takes a native wife (or rather a concubine), he can get her for £ 10, and the father consents to this lower price, first because a "white man's" wife is better treated and fed than ordinary native women, and secondly because the Banyan will soon go home, to India, and this kind of marriage is tacitly looked upon as temporary. The influx of money had also the following unexpect-



Cattle in the Nhomati River near Antioka.

ed effect on the native custom. There are two kinds of lobolo: 1) the lobolo which a boy obtains from his sister's marriage, and which he employs with the consent of the family to buy a wife for himself; this is the true old-fashioned way for him to contract a marriage; 2) the acquired lobolo won by a boy who has worked for it, and who has *started a herd for himself* (tisungulela ntlhambi). This second kind of lobolo became much easier to procure under

far. But the people who had given their daughter for that sum wanted to lobola a girl and were asked £ 30. Therefore they claimed £ 2 from the bakoliwana of Mpunzi and these, in their turn, came to him asking for £ 2 more. And it was so arranged. This story fittingly illustrates the explanation of the lobolo which I set forth below: it is a compensation.

583/177 the new conditions, especially when a stay of a year or two in Johannesburg was long enough to save the necessary sum. Boys who had no sister, and who would have been destitute in former times, could then dream of a *tshenwge* viz., of marrying three or four wives! And they had this advantage that, their wives not having been bought with family property (their sister's oxen), no bakoñwana could disturb them in their domestic happiness, as may happen to those who marry by means of the first-mentioned lobolo.

This leads us to consider :

583 II. *The original meaning and the consequences of the lobola.*

As we have said previously, the only way of understanding the lobola, as well as other similar payments in kind which we meet with amongst a great number of uncivilized or half civilized nations, (1) is to consider it as *a compensation given by one group to another group*, in order to restore the equilibrium between the various collective units composing the clan. The first group acquires a new member : the second feels itself diminished, and claims something which permits it to reconstitute itself, in its turn, by the acquisition of another woman. This collectivist conception alone explains all the facts.

583 In this way, the acquired wife, though she keeps her shibongo 562 (clan name), becomes the property of the first group. She is 593 aggregated to it by complicated marriage ceremonies, representing 618 the passage from one family to another. She is owned by the new family, herself and the children who will be born of her. She is not in any way a slave, but she is nevertheless owned. She is not the individual property of one man, but the collective property of a group. Hence the following facts :

1) Her whole family take part in the marriage ceremonies, especially on the day when the lobola is brought by the bridegroom

(1) See A. van Gennep, *Les Rites de passage*, p. 170. The *Kalym* of the Turko-Mongolians, the *Nyen* of Southern Thibet, etc., correspond to the Bantu lobola.

583 (See page 109). Every male member of the group has his say in
835 the matter.

593 2) Brothers will always be ready to help a poor relative to
618 lobola : they work for their group.

3) The acquired wife is their presumptive spouse, though they cannot have sexual relations with her (matlulana). They will inherit her if the husband dies, according to the laws which I have explained in the preceding paragraphs.

583 4) Children will belong to the father, live with him, bear his
593 shibongo (family name), and owe him obedience : boys will
611 strengthen this group, girls will be lobota (factitive of lobola—
618 sold in marriage) for his profit. Father-right rests on the lobola. This is so plain that any child born of a woman who has not been paid for belongs to the mother's family, bears her shibongo name and will live in the malume's village. In Appendix VII, I relate the story of Spoon Libombo as an instance of this primordial law. This is the reason why, when the question is discussed, men insist so much on the preservation of the lobola. They say : "Who will guarantee us the possession of our children if lobola is suppressed ?"

So the lobola is by no means a purchase made by the husband, and still less a present given to the wife's parents.

1) Advantages of the lobola custom.

583 In the primitive collective stage of society the custom has
593 certainly *great advantages* : 1) It strengthens the family, I mean
586 the patriarchal family, the right of the father. 2) It marks the difference between a legitimate and an illegitimate marriage and, in this sense, takes the place of an official marriage register. 3) It puts hindrances in the way of dissolving the matrimonial union, as a wife cannot definitely leave her husband without her group returning the lobola. Therefore it obliges the married pair to have a certain regard one for the other.

However, these advantages must not be exaggerated. Marriages

583 concluded on the lobola basis, are frequently dissolved (1). The
586 tie being purely material, it is easy to sever it. When the husband
562 "bitana tihomu," claims his oxen, who could refuse to return
593 them ? It is certainly erroneous to say that the lobola is a contract made between two families in order to guarantee the good treatment of the wife by her husband and vice versa, to prevent the husband beating his wife or the wife deserting the conjugal home from mere caprice. It has even been asserted that this sum of money was a pledge, a security, claimed by the wife's parents for the protection of their daughter! There is nothing of the kind in this institution. The exhortations addressed to the bride on the day of her *hloma* (page 118) prove clearly enough that, on the contrary, owing to the lobola, the husband has every right over her, and that she has no right to protest if he uses or abuses this right.

2) Bad consequences of the lobola custom.

583 1) And this is the first *regrettable consequence of the lobolo* : the
562 woman is undoubtedly reduced to an *inferior position* by the fact that she has been lobola. *a)* This appears clearly in the fact that, though she is not looked upon exactly as a head of cattle, a marriageable girl is in principle entirely at the mercy of her family as regards the choice of her husband. In the same way a widow to be inherited is in the hands of her deceased husband's family.

586 (1) I will give only one example which I witnessed amongst my neighbours and
548 which shows that, with women of loose character, at any rate, the payment of lobolo helps very little to strengthen the matrimonial tie. A girl named Hlapfuta, daughter of Bandi, married a first husband. The "bukosi" (name commonly given to the lobolo money) was used to procure a wife for her brother. But she left her husband and was married by Nwamusi. This second husband paid the lobolo, which was then returned to the first. But Hlapfuta ran away a second time and joined a man called Matshubele. She did the same thing five consecutive times, and finally she moved to Majlangalen, to the suburbs of Lourenzo Marques, the favourite quarter of the prostitutes. There she was lost, and the "bukosi" also. Her paternal uncle, who had been put to any amount of trouble to recover the "bukosi" in order to give it back to the five abandoned husbands, seeing that it would be impossible to satisfy the last, could no longer bear the strain and committed suicide by hanging himself from a tree not far from my house in Rikatla. The debt remained with the girl's brother who "had eaten the bukosi."

583 Men are often better than their principles, and we have seen in
562 the study of marriage and inheritance customs that the consent
593 of a girl, and of a widow, is generally asked before any decision takes place. This is done as long as the male masters of the woman have no special interest in the choice. But should they have reason to impose a certain husband upon her, they will not hesitate to force her to accept him ; a young girl will be given up to a dirty old man, for whom she has no liking, on account of a lobola debt of twenty years standing! The lobola hardens the heart and the woman is unable to defend herself. She can always run away. But where will she hide, if all her relatives agree on her being sacrificed to the interest of the family ? Or she can threaten to commit suicide, and she occasionally does so. *b)* She must work for her husband, who gives her very little in return. It is true that she is not a *slave*. She is however *owned*. *c)* This is partly the cause of the shocking difference established between a husband and his wife. The married woman is henceforth absolutely prohibited from adulterous relations — which is a very admirable provision — but her husband is quite free in this respect : he has not been bought.
593 *d)* As regards her children, whatever may be her love for them,
562 she does not in fact possess them. They belong to the father.
586 If divorce takes place and the lobolo is not returned to the husband, he keeps them and the mother will be separated from them for ever (1).

583 2) A second series of consequences arising from this custom
606 are the *strained relations* between the two contracting groups.
578 We have sufficiently insisted on this subject. What makes dealings with parents-in-law so difficult ? It is the lobolo, the sum of money which has perhaps not been Fully paid, and

(1) The Rev. H. Dieterlen, of Basutoland, in a paper on the lobola, wrote the following words, which apply to the Thongas as well as to the Ba-Sutho : "A woman married under lobola bears children but possesses none. The children belong to those who gave the cattle. Whatever may be her own merits, she can see her children pass into the hands of the rawest heathen and be given over to the cupidity of rapacious and rascally relatives. She can be illtreated, driven away, abandoned, repudiated : she will have to live without children ; she will resemble a woman who has never had any. She is not supposed to have the heart and the feelings of a mother. And her children are treated as if they had no filial affection."

583 the debt remains as a permanent cause of irritation. If there
606 is no reason for friction on that point, the threat of quarrels
586 ending in divorce is always impending like the sword of Damo-
578 cles. If this takes place, the sad event will be made ten times more painful by the terrible dispute which will arise by reason of the lobola being claimed back. And the contending couple will not suffer alone. It may be that another marriage, that of the great mukonwana, which was perhaps a happy one, will be destroyed in consequence of the divorce. (p. 243) "A ba ruli timbilwin," remarked Mboza. "They don't find peace in their hearts."

These complicated relations due to the lobola poison the whole of native life. Life should be easy for South African Natives. Their wants are few and they have enough to satisfy them under their invariably blue sky. They are generally speaking mild and good-natured. But the lobola question fills the African village with hatred and bitterness. *The milandju*, the debts! Milandju comes from landja, to follow, and this etymology is very instructive. A husband whose wife has gone away must *landja* his wife or rather his money. His whole family will help him in following this property until it has been recovered. Natives will go from one end of the country to the other to follow a few pounds, and at least three quarters of the cases which are brought before the Courts are lobola cases.

As regards the attitude to be adopted towards the Lobola custom, see Practical Conclusions. III.

F. POLYGAMY.

I. *Origin and spread of Polygamy amongst the Thongas.*

595 Polygamy is uniformly practised all through the tribe. This is not to say that every man has many wives ; the automatic rule, by which the number of males is always about equivalent to

202 will at once go and undo the trap which is on their side ; in the
726 morning, the people of Nondwane will know that they must also fly.

D. THE TRIBUNAL OF THE CHIEF.

642 In the Thonga Court there is no separation of powers. The legislative, executive, and judicial powers are all in the hands of the chief, aided by his counsellors. The chief is the supreme authority and his decisions are without appeal.

1. *Legislative affairs.*

671 The *chief* makes the laws (p. 382) and presides at discussions
643 which end in a resolution. But his counsellors assist him.
583 Here is an example of such a decision taken at Maphunga's court. There was no uniformity as to the money to be paid for a lobolo, and some fathers claimed as much as £ 20 or £ 30 for their daughters. The great counsellors of the capital decided (tjimba mhaka, viz., to tie the matter) that a lobolo should be £ 15.10 as the maximum. They "tied the matter" with the assent of the chief. Then all the sub-chiefs and counsellors were summoned to the capital. The chief called the roll to ascertain if they were all present. The great counsellor then said to the assembly : "The herds which people claim are too large. Have you gold mines and do you know how to make coins ? Henceforth do not lobola with too much money. £ 15.10 is quite enough!" Every sub-chief, on his return home, called his men and informed them of the decision : "Hi to timhaka! Such are the matters!" said they. The subjects were disappointed. They wept! But they had to accept the decision. To oppose it is taboo! "Psa yila!"

643 A *native debate* or discussion is conducted on very different
645 lines from those to which we are generally accustomed, nothing
671 ever being put to the vote. The chief presides. A proposition is

587 the chief of our Mazwaya family, Magomanyama, says that no claim is accepted for a leper, for one drowned in the river, or for anyone who dies from smallpox or from the assagay."

692 177 Of course the Ngwetsas did not accept such an answer, but this is a typical Bantu affair (nandju), showing the many blessings of the lobola custom. The matter will have to be decided by the chief, or rather by the Portuguese Administrator, who must take a good deal of trouble, if he wishes to understand it rightly and to deliver an equitable judgment!

APPENDIX IX (See p. 530).

The story of Mboza and Muhambi and of the women inherited by them, illustrating the consequences of lobola and of its suppression.

177 Compare the genealogy of the Masuluke family (page 225).

545 583 Mboza had four brothers, three elder and a younger: Sam, the elder, had a son, Hlangabeza, who married by lobola a first wife and by abduction a second, Bukutje II. Fos, the second brother, married Bukutje I and had four children: three girls, Tshakaza, Estelle, Nhwanin, and one boy, Muhambi. Sam and Fos both died, so Bukutje I was inherited by Mboza and her four children went to live in his village. In the meantime Mboza became a Christian, as also did Muhambi and the three girls. Wishing to lead a Christian life, he separated from Bukutje I, who, being still a heathen, committed herself with "an empty oil-tin" (p. 213), viz., a man of Inhambane who became her servant-husband. In 1904 a Christian young man, Moses, wooed the elder of the three girls and brought £ 20 to lobola her. This money was naturally due to Muhambi in order to allow him to lobola a wife for himself, and indeed Muhambi was betrothed to Ntshelebeti, daughter of Phulan Ngwetsa. This man was still a heathen and consequently wished his daughter to be paid for.

Having been told that it is not right for a Christian to accept lobolo money, Mboza and Muhambi, actuated by a most praiseworthy scruple, decided to return the money to Moses, and Muhambi started for Johannesburg in order to earn the lobolo due to Phulan. But this was not the end of this famous "bukosi!" The younger brother, Komatan, a consistent heathen, came to Mboza, very angry with him for his

I [See pp. 504-509 -- Analyst]

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foolishness. "This is family property," said he, "and I do not consent to its being lost." So he claimed the £ 20, which was given to him, and out of which Mboza did not get a penny. Komatan himself did not intend to use it for his own benefit, as we shall see presently.

The following year, whilst Muhambi was still working in Johannesburg, Hlangabeza died. Muhambi was his heir, being his *makwabu*, first cousin on the paternal side. He was informed of his good luck, but answered that it was taboo for him (yila), as a Christian, to accept this inheritance. So Komatan took the first of Hlangabeza's wives, not as a wife, however, but because she had children and he wanted them to remain in the Masuluke family. The woman herself also took "an empty oil-tin," in the form of another Inhambane man. The second of Hlangabeza's wives, having been married by him by abduction, was not really the property of the Masulukes. But she had one child; so Komatan took the lobolo money of Moses and remitted it to Denisa, this woman's father, and, in this way, he secured the property of both mother and child to the Masulukes. The woman, however, went to live with a Chopi in an irregular manner and had a second child by him. On January 29th, 1909, this woman of the Denisa family came to Muhambi. Her child had to be weaned, which is done by means of a rite in which the husband must take part. She had no true husband, so she vented all her anger before Mboza and Muhambi saying: "I have no husband, nobody to give me clothing, to pay my hut-tax, to repair my house. Have you indeed forsaken me?" — "Yes" answered Muhambi, "you cannot be my wife. I have married Ntshelebeti and, for us Christians, it is not allowable to take many wives." — "Then do not be surprised if I go and take another husband, and do not go and accuse me *shikanekiswen*, before the Portuguese Administrator, saying I have spoilt your property." — "We shall not *follow* you," said Muhambi, "you are free." — "But" added Mboza, "we are not sending you to commit sin! Go and think the matter over."

This was the end of the discussion. Mboza's answer is no answer at all. It only shows the great complexity and difficulty of the position. The whole story fitly illustrates how utterly bad the custom of lobola is, and what immense difficulties its suppression entails. Let me, however, remark that these difficulties would not have arisen had there not been a heathen relative (Komatan) to uphold the claim which the Christians had foregone. During the stage of transition many hard cases such as this must unfortunately occur!

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

000 The obligation however is not the same for both. A *civil Government*, undertaking to rule a tribe brought into subjection by war or placed under the Protectorate of a European power, dealing with Natives who still retain their primitive way of living, cannot pretend to govern them immediately according to the laws of civilised nations. This would be an impossibility. Such a Colonial Government must respect Native laws and judge cases in accordance with them, otherwise it would not appear to the Natives as just ; and it is indispensable that, in their dealings with uncivilised people, White Authorities should always satisfy this sense of justice, which is so strong amongst Natives. However, I do not think that this consideration ought to be pushed too far.

Native Commissioners are quite right when they aim at a progressive change in the laws and customs of primitive collectivist people in the direction of more individual liberty, so that the principles of Native society may be amended, and founded on the same basis as ours, in course of time. The State has no power to produce this evolution, but is must be favourable to it, and consider with sympathy every effort that is made to elevate and purify the social and family system of the tribe. It has many means at its disposal to collaborate in this work, as we shall very soon see.

177 583 The *Christian Missions* can alone bring about this transformation, acting, as they do, on the hearts of the Natives, producing individual conviction in the conscience, opening a new horizon to the mind, creating amongst them a new society. For them the duty of fighting lobola is absolute, and I cannot understand how some missionaries think it may be tolerated in a Christian Church. The following reasons ought to be taken into consideration by them, in addition to those already mentioned :

1. The lobola, being a material method of concluding a marriage, tends to degrade the moral foundation of a true Christian union, mutual love in particular. We know by experience that individual *love* of a young man for a young girl, love as we conceive it, which was scarcely to be met with in the original collective Bantu society, is beginning to appear amongst the best of our converts. This will become the true and powerful bond which will more effectually strengthen conjugal union amongst them.

2. Lobola is intimately connected with polygamy, as the woman bought belongs to the husband's family and must be inherited by his younger brothers. If this man is already married, he is bound to become a polygamist. So is the only brother of many girls, who is

l: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

177 doomed by the custom to lobola for himself as many wives as the sisters
583 he possesses.

So all Missions working amongst the Natives practising the lobola, ought to agree upon a determined campaign against it, with those moral weapons which spiritual bodies ought alone to use. And I would recommend *the following rules* to be universally adopted :

1. *Lobola* (p. 101) should be prohibited, viz., no Christian father should be allowed to ask for a lobolo when giving his daughter in marriage. He is converted ; he calls himself a Christian ; he cannot be permitted a practice which is the negation of the moral character of the human being.

2. In the case of *widows*, let it be well understood that, in Christian communities, they are free as soon as their husband is dead ; that they keep their children and that, when they go home with them, no money can be claimed by the heirs, whether the woman has been paid for or not.

3. As regards *children*, the *moral right* of possession of both father and mother in regard to them should be maintained to the exclusion of a special right arising from the lobolo.

4. In the case of *a boy marrying the daughter of a heathen*, we cannot prevent him from paying a lobolo. The father is the master and, as we have no moral jurisdiction over him, we cannot oppose his claim. But, let it be well understood, that this payment will not give the new husband, who is a Christian, all the rights which accompany the lobolo under Native law. It would be wise to ask for a written stipulation from the husband in this case, as well as from the Christian father who gives his girl without lobolo. Let us be on our guard here! The lobolo being family property, if the father or the elder brothers, being Christians, do not claim it, another heathen relative will always appear on the scene and say : "If you do not want it, I claim it! The girl is *ours*!" I shall discuss this case later on.

5. When Christian girls, dependant upon a heathen father, wish to free themselves from the lobola, which appears to some of them as a degrading sale, they ought to be encouraged to savé money in order to redeem themselves. We have seen many cases in which this proof of energy given by girls has been a blessing for them and for the Church. The same applies to a young widow who wishes to lead a pure life and to avoid becoming the wife of a polygamist heir.

000 If all missionaries agreed on these points, the practice of lobola would soon disappear. But *the aid of the State*, which I think is desirable and quite legitimate, if it keeps within the limits of its proper

000 will lodge their claim for the sum which the man had generously foregone. For this reason we should recommend that a statement be drawn up in each case of renunciation of lobola. This paper could always be shown to anybody trying to interfere with a lawful marriage celebrated without lobola. In the same way the heathen heirs of a Christian husband who had paid a lobolo to his father-in-law, would be unable to lay claim to the widow.

Amongst Christian Natives a middle course has sometimes been adopted. The bridegroom gives the father of the bride a present which is called *tjakisa*, i.e. to make joyful. It consists generally of a certain number of pounds sterling, inferior to the number required by the customary bride-price. By this means the suitor "soothes the heart" of his father-in-law, who would find it too hard to give his daughter for nothing. What are we to think of this expedient? Nobody can prevent one man from making a present to another. As long as it is clearly understood that this tjakisa is not a lobolo, and that it does not carry with it the evil consequences of the heathen lobolo, it may be accepted as a kind of transitory measure. But there are dangers in the adoption of this custom. As the idea of lobolo is always more or less present in the mind of all, you will find the father-in-law coming from time to time to ask for some more pounds, a fact which shows that his heart has not been sufficiently soothed .. and bad feeling is sure to arise and disturb the relationship, so much so that the worried husband will say : "I had better have paid a full lobolo at once!" I do not think we can absolutely prohibit the tjakisa, but I consider it as a "pis-aller" and greatly prefer to see the father of a Christian girl courageously renounce his claim to any special present. Such cases are happily frequent in the Native Congregations.

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The eradication of the lobola will take long, but it must take place if Native society is to pass beyond the level of collective social life, and to be raised to the status of a civilised community. There will be a transition period during which both Natives and their civilisers will have to show much patience, tact and ability ; many hard cases will arise. The story of Fos and Mboza, which I narrate in Appendix IX, illustrates these difficulties. But, whatever they may be, the reform is worth every effort and I will borrow my conclusion from a Native whom I once heard speak with splendid clearness and conviction on the

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subject. This man, an evangelist called Zebedea, brought an old Native to me, named Tumben, a Christian who was still very much attached to heathen customs. They discussed before me this question : Must Tumben claim a lobolo owed to him, in order to pay a lobolo which he owes to somebody else ? The old man thought he was entitled to make his claim. Zebedea asserted that he was not, and the evangelist was right. Christian spirituality required of Tumben that he should renounce the lobolo because he was a convert ; on the other hand he could not decline to pay his lobola debt to his creditor who was a heathen, and could not consequently accept the Christian point of view. The case was hard for the old man and the fight between his conscience and his interest was sad to witness. Zebedea found convincing arguments : "These lobola debts," he said, "are ropes which start from the neck of one and go to the neck of the other. Though your father dies, this rope still ties you, you are kept tied to your father's bones by this accursed rope! Others will get drawn into its coils and the strands become entangled round you! Cut it and be free!"

IV. ON POLYGAMY (See p. 289).

000 Practically, what must be the attitude of the Government and of Missions towards this custom ?

1. As regards civilised Governments, having still to reckon with Native law, they cannot at once prohibit all forms of polygamy.

But when they have established marriage registration, it would seem that they ought not to allow unions posterior to the first to be considered as legitimate. These marriages ought not to be registered, and if this distinction were strictly enforced, by and by Natives would become more aware of the illegitimate character of polygamic marriages. In the Transvaal, the Native Affairs Department at one time tried to fight directly against the custom in the following manner. As every man has to pay taxes according to the number of his wives, the tax for the first wife was fixed at £ 2, and he had to pay double that sum for each extra wife. But the provision was abandoned later on. Taxation however, has everywhere the effect of limiting polygamy. In Portuguese territory, Natives are taxed according to the number of huts they possess. As each wife lives in a separate house, polygamists are more heavily taxed than others.

Enactments such as these are, I suppose, all that a Government can

1. *Love charms.*

832 584 If a boy has not been successful in his " gangisa ", if he is despised by the girls and has no chance of being accepted, a special rite is performed to help him to find a wife. The Ba-Ronga do not know the love-philter as such, but they have a substitute for it ; the old village cock is put on the lad's head and kept there for a long time ; the cock scratches him with his claws ; he is then allowed to go. The boy will now succeed ; he will be like the cock, who never lacks spouses! (Mboza).

Other charms are used for girls, especially a certain medicine which produces an abundant lather when boiled in water. The physician washes the girl's body with it, after which she will " appear " (a ta boneka) to the eyes of would-be suitors (Tobane).

755 832 584 Should however a girl not find a husband in the lawful way, she has another means at her disposal—marriage by abduction, and thus no one, or hardly any one, remains unmarried amongst the Thongas. Mankhelu, who was a great doctor, treated this " complaint of singleness " with more seriousness! He used his strongest medicines to heal the boy or the girl who was unable to find a partner in life. This is the treatment followed by him. He takes a she-goat, in the case of a boy, a he-goat in that of girl, and anoints it with fat mixed with his precious medicinal powder ; he rubs the animal (hondla) from the mouth to the tail, stretches out all its limbs and kills it. No prayer is offered, but the *psanyi* (the half digested grass which is found in the stomach) is carefully collected. The boy is then called, enters his own hut, spreads a mat on the ground, sits on it quite naked and rubs his whole body with this substance. " A tihorola, a tilurulula " says Mankhelu. He rubs away from himself all his filth. When he has finished, he coughs to call the doctor, who comes and gathers into a pot all the " timhorola," the particles which have fallen on the mat ; he takes a portion of this and squeezes it into a small bag of lizard-skin so as to make a *shitjungulu* or amulet. The sister must come after sunset without any clothing into the boy's

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

832 hut and tie the bag round his neck. What remains of the *timhoroia*
133 will be used to smear the hut. Then all the girls will love him ;
783 or in the case of a girl, she will soon be asked in marriage.
584 This ceremony is a characteristic *hondlola*, the same which is performed on the weaning day (see page 59) and after any serious disease ; it is a rite of removal of impurity. (Notice the termination ola, ula, ulula in these verbs ; it means generally to undo, to take away).

832 If the love charms do not obtain the desired result, the angry
754 boy will perhaps try to avenge himself. He will take a fowl, or
262 perhaps only an egg, treat it with special drugs and give it to the girl in order to bewitch her. This kind of witchcraft is called *ku dambikela*. (See the Chapter on Witchcraft, Part VI). The girl will give birth not to a child, but to an animal, a pigeon, or a snake. Or her genitalia will be changed and take the appearance of the male organ. This is one of the causes why eggs and fowls are taboo for girls.

Let us now hear from Tobane the description of the marriage rites amongst the Mpfumo clan. We shall afterwards see how the customs differ in other Ronga and Thonga clans.

II. *Marriage ceremonies of the Mpfumo clan.*

1) The betrothal (Buta).

584 When a young man has made up his mind to get married, and when he is in possession of the necessary lobola (1) cattle, he starts, one fine day, with two or three of his friends to look for a wife in the villages. He puts on his most brilliant ornaments and his most precious skins. Here they are, arriving in the village

583 1) *Ku lobola* means to buy in marriage. *Ku lobola* (a factitive derivative of the verb) is said of a father who claims a sum of money from his daughter's suitor. *Lobolo* or *ndjobolo* or *bukosi* (wealth) is the sum paid, the oxen, the hoes, or the pounds sterling. We shall use these words, which are employed in Thonga as well as in Zulu and ought to be adopted as technical ethnographic terms. I use the verb for the act of paying and the noun for the sum itself.

584 square ; they sit down in the shade. They are asked : " What do you want ? " " We have come to see the girls ", they answer bluntly. And the reply is : " All right. Look at them. "

584 Of course the girls do their very best to be as pleasing as
292 possible, as the mother has told them that these are suitors.
361 The suitor is easily known by his special attire, a belt of skins either of leopard or tiger-cat. He goes from one yard to the other, and talks with the cooks, inquiring their names, and looking at them as, with vigourous and graceful movements of the body, they crush the mealies in their mortar. If the seekers find what they want, they return home, if not, they go to the next hamlet. (Let us say here that each village consists of not more than six to twelve huts built in a circle, leaving a central circular place, the shaded " square ", of which the oxen kraal occupies the middle.) (See Part II.)

584 When he is satisfied, the suitor goes home and says to his parents : "So and so pleases me. Go and woo her. (Ku buta)." Then a middle aged man of the village is sent to the parents of the young girl. He is received in the father's hut and, with all the circumlocutions required by etiquette, he discharges his errand. The girl is called and told that the visitor who came the other day has chosen her ; she is asked if she also loves him (or if she wants him... for there is only one word in Ronga to express these two kindred notions, ku randja). " Oh! is it the one who looked thus and so and who wore this and that ? Yes, I consent to accept (to eat) the money out of his hands (ku da bukosi ku yene). " If she does not care for him, she will declare it quite as plainly : the suitor will have to seek elsewhere. It is a fact worth noting that, amongst these so-called savages, a father very seldom obliges his daughter to accept a husband whom she dislikes, except in the case of debt. If the matter is arranged to the satisfaction of all parties the buta (1) or betrothal is concluded and the messenger is feasted, while he, on his part, gives a present (shihlengwe) to the girl's parents of the value of a hoe or ten

(1) *Buta* may be a factitive derivative of the verb *bula*, to speak: to cause somebody to speak, to give an answer.

584 shillings ; this present " strengthens their bones " (ba tiyã marambo) and nothing further remains to be done but to choose the day on which the betrothal visit shall take place. (1)

2) THE BETROTHAL VISITS (Tjekela and koroka).

584 301 This visit (ku ya ku tjekelen) is paid in the following manner. The fiancé chooses his best friend to be his " shangwane " ; the fiancée does the same on her side, and these two " shangwane " must do their best to help them both during the whole of these complicated ceremonies. Then the bridegroom summons, together with his shangwane, three or four other friends of his own age, and a little lad to carry their mats. They go and bathe and put on their finest attire : rich skins, bracelets hung to their belts, horse-hair necklaces with white beads threaded here and there which swing to and fro on neck and breast. Neither do they forget their small shields of skin, which give them a martial appearance without, however, suggesting any thought of war or strife. Before starting they take a good meal cooked at home. In the evening, after sunset, they reach the village of the fiancée. They sit down outside the gate and cough to make known that they have arrived. Then the inhabitants, who were expecting them, come out to meet them and beg them to enter. The visitors make difficulties. They pretend not to wish to do so. The people of the village insist. At last, with apparent reluctance, they advance into the central square. A hut is prepared for them, and they are invited to go and rest there. They begin by refusing. But the young girls take out of their hands their sticks and their miniature shields and carry them into the hut. At last, with a

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(1) Amongst the Wa-Nyika (a tribe dwelling between the Nyassa and Tanganyika lakes) the betrothal takes place as follows : A female messenger is sent by the suitor's parents to the girl's parents. She brings with her a hoe. The father calls the girl and shows her the tool saying : " This is your hoe ; it comes from so and so. " If the girl looks at the hoe with a gloomy expression and leaves the hut slowly, still looking at it, it is a sign that she does not accept the proposal. Should she on the contrary cover her face with her hands and run away without looking at the hoe, she thus declares that she consents to become the wife of the boy. (*Journal de l'Unité des Frères*, January 1926).

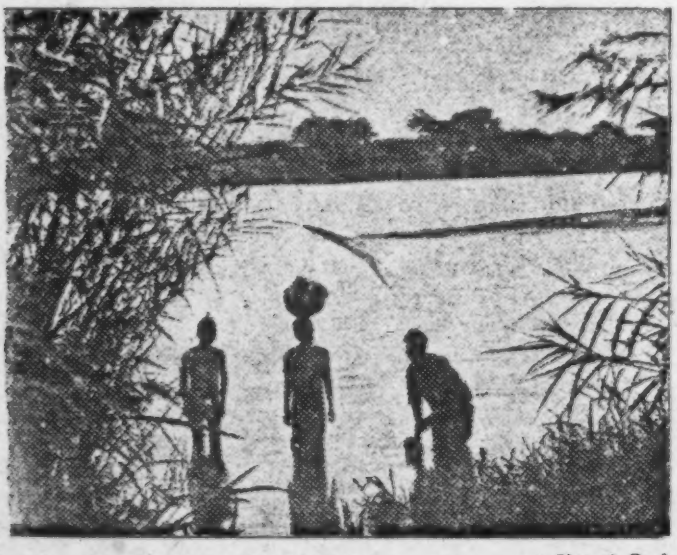
584 574 836 bored air, they enter. Mats are brought and unrolled before them ; this is the act of hospitality par excellence. They remain standing as if they had no wish whatever to sit down. The girls entreat them to rest, and finally they consent to accept the hospitality offered them with such insistence.

The parents of the fiancée then come, squat near them and ask news of their home. They answer, and inquire about the health of their hosts. This is the *djungulisana*, the exchange of greetings which always takes place when a visitor is received. Soon however large pots of well prepared food are brought. " No ", say the young men. " We have eaten at home, we are not hungry. " The same comedy is gone through again ; the masters of the place insist, the guests refuse systematically according to the Native laws of civility—or incivility! The night, however, has come ; the young men have consented after all to partake of the feast. The old people retire to their huts to sleep ; the young girls remain. The custom requires them to spend the whole night with the young men, according to the law of the *shigango* previously spoken of. The bridegroom's shangwane chooses the bride's shangwane and all the other boys choose their girl. But the fiancée hides behind her friends and takes no part in these games.

584 574 In the early morning the young men go to bathe and the girls, their amphoras on their heads, go to fetch water from the lake. On their return they perform another act of hospitality towards their visitors, namely, they throw water down their backs. The boys wash the whole of their bodies, after which the girls anoint them with fat. The day is spent in a pleasant *far niente*. The fiancé and his friends sit in the shade in the square, clad in all their ornaments. They hum songs, they amuse themselves by swaying to and fro as they sit ; the little girls keep them company. Meanwhile the elder girls prepare savoury food for them and go to the fields. Towards evening, the visitors ask to see the parents, to take leave of them ; but the old people send the following message : " No, you shall not see us. We cannot consent to your going away, we have hardly seen you. Spend another night with us. " They must make up their mind to stay a little longer.

584 In fact this is exactly what the young men want, and the second night is spent like the first.

The third day they go away. All the young girls accompany them along the paths, for a long distance, and, when they part, boys and girls tie together the high standing grasses on the veldt (ku ba mafundju hi byanyi), a touching symbol of their loves! Seeing these knots during the whole season at a crossroads,



Phot. A. Borel

Drawing water from the Maputju river.

passers-by will know that lovers parted there. On taking leave, the young people arrange another meeting. The girls will go after a week or two to return the visit.

292 301 584 In fact, to the *tjekela* of the boys corresponds the *koroka* of the girls. " They make the betrothal visit to see the husband (ba ya ku koroken, ku ya bona nuna) ". They also put on their finest attire ; red and white cloth, in their curled hair a small crown of blue and red beads, looking really pretty, on ankles and wrists bracelets of twisted iron wire.

584 On the appointed day, they go and sit outside the village of
574 the fiancé and cough to announce their presence. The same strange proceedings begin, but this time it is the damsels who make difficulties and the young men must beg and entreat them to enter first the village, then the hut, and then to sit on the mats and to accept food. Each of the groomsmen is most attentive to the girl he chose at the preceding meeting and, to obtain her good will, he generally gives her a fowl or the equivalent in money. In the early morning the visitors rise, go and get water, warm it a little and pour it into basins before the doors of the huts, so that, on that day, the inhabitants of the village will make their ablutions with water fetched by them. Then they go and do feminine work, acting as servants of the fiancé's parents. Thus they remove the ashes from the fire-place and throw them on the ash-heap close by; they cut the wood for the young men's mothers and light the several fires of the village. They pretend to leave when the sun sets, but no one will hear of it, and they must spend another night. At last, on the following day, they go home, accompanied by the young men and again, at parting, knot grasses together. On the day of the *koroka* definite arrangements are made for the wedding.

3) Taboos of the betrothal period.

584 The two families which enter into relation with each other by
574 marriage must observe many taboos (See Part II). Here are some
784 of those which are enforced during the visits of *tjekela* and *koroka*:

1) The visitors must not eat all the mealie corn on the spike;
262 they must leave a few grains on it.

2) They must not tear off the leaves which are round the spike. When they have eaten all the corn, they rearrange these leaves in such a way that the cob seems not to have been touched.

3) They must not "make a hole in the pot" (bobota hotjo), viz. they leave a portion of the liquid in the beer pot, they do not empty it entirely.

4) It is forbidden to return home in rain when one has gone

584 to *tjekela*. You must wait for fine weather, otherwise it is an
574 insult to the future father-in-law.
784 5) If, during the visit, you eat monkey nuts, you must not
262 take off the thin skin which covers the kernel.

6) The suitor—the owner of the oxen—must not eat black fish that day. Only his friends have the right to do so. These fish, a kind of barbel, are to be found in the lakes (as that of Rikatla) and in the Nkomati river. The suitor will not partake of them for fear lest the girl he wishes to marry should slip through his hands like a fish. Moreover this fish is black : it might bring darkness, unhappiness.

7) Neither must he eat honey during his visit, because honey like the black fish, is slippery... Honey flows...

8) He is also forbidden to eat fowls, because cocks and hens scratch the soil with their claws, scattering it about ; thus the marriage " might be scattered (hangalasa bukati) before it is ripe ". In the Tembe clans, formerly, any solid food was taboo until the families had killed an ox for the feasts.

These taboos are not the proper taboos of a marginal period, as if the betrothal were considered as one of these periods. They are family taboos, belonging to the category of those dictated by the mutual distrust of two allied families.

585 The wedding feast consists of two parts : the *lobola feast*, viz. all the ceremonies connected with the remittance of the lobolo which takes place at the bride's village, and the *tlhoma*, viz. the bringing the bride to the bridegroom's village. Should the lobolo have been entirely paid at once, these two ceremonies will follow each other without much delay. If the sum of money or the number of oxen is not complete, the *tlhoma* will very probably be postponed.

4) Lobola feast.

a) Preparations.

585 On both sides, the friends are informed that the feast is close
273 at hand. The bride's family in particular must prepare in good time, as they have to provide the beer which will be consumed in

585 time it is for good! At last! "Ba mu tlhomile!" that is to say: her parents have duly settled her in her home.

In Nondwane this last surprise is spared the bridegroom. The bride comes to his home on the day of the marriage with her two mats, accompanied by a young girl only, and some days later the mother and female relations bring the rest of her trousseau and erect the wood pile. The young bride, when she has definitely accepted her fate and consented to stay, is called *ntlhoñwa* (Ro.) *nhlomi* (Dj.) (the one who has been brought to her husband). During the first week, she will fill all the pots of the people of the village so that when they awake they will find water for their ablutions and say: "We have found a bride! (He kumi ntlhoñwa!)"; she will remove all the ashes from the fire-places, and smear all the huts.

The first night when she sleeps in the hut with her husband, she may refuse to allow him his conjugal rights. The bridegroom then goes to his father and asks him what he ought to do under the circumstances. The father says: "Give her sixpence or a shilling." Then she consents! (Mboza).

III. *Marriage customs in other Ronga clans.*

The description which we have just given may be considered as typical, but there are many variations to be noticed amongst the clans.

584 In the *Maputju* country, South of Delagoa Bay, there are two
836 informal visits, one of the fiancé, one of the fiancée, to each
574 other's village (ku bona muti). This visit is very short, and they do not accept any food from their hosts. Then the *tjekela* of the boys (the betrothal visit) takes place. They behave in a very dignified manner, do not accept any food the first day and consent to eat on the following day only after having been presented with a gift of 10/ or £ 1! During this visit the girls put 500 reis or sixpence at the bottom of the pots which they fill with water for the ablutions of the boys, otherwise the visitors would say: "The water is too cold. We cannot use it." Sexual

584/836/574 relations between boys and girls during these visits were not allowed in former times. Nowadays they are indulged in, and it may be that the fiancé will ask his fiancée to give herself to him " to test her love " (ku kamba lirandju). If she refuses, the whole affair may be compromised.

584/574 When the girls go to *tjekela* in their turn, they also observe great formality. Money must be given at least ten times to obtain their consent :

1) They refuse to enter the village.
2) To leave the square and go to the hut.
3) To cross the door of the hut.
4) To sit down on the mats. When the other girls consent, the fiancée remains standing.
5) She consents to sit down when given a shilling.
6) They refuse to answer the greetings.
7) When the others have answered, the fiancée still refuses to do so.
8) They do not consent to give news of their home.
9, 10) They still make difficulties about accepting food.

It may be that the fiancé goes to work in the mines during this period, probably in order to complete his lobolo. When he comes back, a special ceremony is performed which is called *hlomula mutwa*, to remove the thorn. The girls pay him a visit. He sits down amidst his companions, having fixed in his hair a long white thorn made of bone. The shangwane of the fiancée (chief bridesmaid) approaches him, dancing, and removes it. This is a way of saluting him on his return, it means the removal of the fatigue and the sufferings he has undergone, of the thorns which have wounded him.

585 The concluding ceremonies of *thloma* and of the *shigiyane* are also more developed in the Maputju country and in Nondwane.

This is the custom in *Nondwane*. Girls accompany the new bride to the conjugal home. They go to the bush to which she has fled, capture her there, and bring her to her husband with songs of mourning (hi ku djila nwana). " Where are you going ? You go to a husband whose heart is jealous! You will bring a

IV. *Marriage ceremonies in the Northern clans.*

115 584 I have succeeded in getting the whole description of the Nkuna marriage from a very good and clear-headed informant, Simeon Gana. It is somewhat different from that of the Rongas.

584 Here is the resumé (1) of the whole sequence of these rites :

The betrothal visit. (Ku buta). The suitor arrives with his shangwane and an old man who will act as his official representative or go-between (ntjumi). He has already made his choice, and the *ntjumi* at once woos the girl in his name. Her father calls her apart and asks her if she consents. If she is disposed to say yes, she begs to speak with the boy. She chooses a provisional shangwane. They are both shown into the hut of the girl's mother with their respective shangwane. Let us suppose they come to an understanding ; the suitor announces his success to his ntjumi, who goes to the girl's father and informs him that she has consented. But the father refuses to accept this notification ; he must also choose a ntjumi. This is done the same day. The following day, the two parties meet each in a different hut and the first ntjumi again comes and repeats the whole story, the second ntjumi being present.

Then a long discussion takes place (between the grown up people) as to the lobolo. This discussion is conducted by the two ntjumi, who go constantly from one hut to the other, the one conveying the questions: "How many oxen do you claim, etc", the other going in his turn to give an answer. So the two parties never see each other during this disagreeable debate about money. When they are agreed, the suitor and his friends return home and the ntjumi receives £ 1 for his assistance. There is no other *tjekela* than this. The word tjekela is unknown in Nkuna.

The fiancée's visit. As soon as they have gone, the women of the village begin to prepare pots of beer for the lobola feast. But

(1) I have explained these rites in detail in a novel entitled *Fazana*, published in *La Semaine Littéraire*, Geneva, Nov. & Dec. 1910.

584 before this feast takes place, six days later, the girl and her friends go to the young man's village to return the visit. The fiancée has been warned by her mother to be very cautious, not to accept the proposals of her suitor too readily. Boys and girls enjoy themselves thoroughly. A goat is killed for them, a goat called *the feather* because it is as it were a feather in the fiancée's hair, " a feather in her cap "!

The action of lobola follows immediately. The girls have stayed three days and gone home. Six had elapsed before they came. This makes nine days, just enough for the brewing of the beer. It is prepared in the girl's village. All the suitor's family make for it, driving the herd of cattle, fifteen head strong, which is the lobola money. The sham-fight takes place, some of the invaders, the young ones, going steadily forward, the others, the adults, hiding behind the oxen and urging them on under a shower of blows. Huts are offered to the visitors. One is especially reserved for the great *mukoñwana*, the man who has married the fiancé's sister, and whose oxen are used to buy the bride of the day. He has come to see where *his* oxen go. In the evening the girls choose their *shigango*. The next morning they will fetch water for their ablutions. This is the day when the lobolo is officially remitted by one family to the other. Long discussions take place through the intermediary of the two ntjumi, at the end of which the male relations of the bride leave their hut to inspect the cattle and criticise them, the others endeavouring to emphasise their beauty. Two oxen have been killed for the feast, one brought by the fiancé, another provided by the father of the fiancée. Dancing and singing goes on the whole afternoon ; the visitors go home at sunset ; the girls accompany them and tie knots of grass where they part.

585 A month after the lobola ceremony[1] a new feast takes place, called *the beer which washes the hoofs of the oxen*. The fiancée, together with the women of the family, (not only the girls), bring pots of beer to the husband's village. They stay outside. When the inhabitants ask them to enter, they run back some distance and only consent on being urged... and so on! The fiancée does not put down the pot she carries until her suitor has brought a

1 [among the Northern clans--Analyst]

583 the wife's group, offering a higher bride-price in order to obtain the
591 transfer of the bride to her suitor's home.
170 Now, if this is the history of the evolution of the Bantu marriage (and we shall see later on, in studying the relation of the uterine nephew with his mother's brother, that it is quite probable that it is), we may find, in comparing these two forms of marriage, the explanation of some of the Thonga rites. The position of the wife was certainly much more satisfactory, from her point of view, under the old system. She could remain with her people and her husband had but little power over her, whilst, in the marriage of dominion, she must stay in the village of another group, work for it, and perhaps be ill-treated. Does this fact not account for her flight to the bush or to another village the day before hloma, when the female relatives of the husband go and seize her by force ? She tries to hide herself under a veil, as if she wished not to be recognised; but the husband's aunts remorselessly take it from her, and as she goes to the conjugal dwelling, her friends accompany her, singing songs of mourning. These rites are certainly more readily explained if there was, in a remote past, entirely forgotten by individuals, yet still influencing the mind of the community, another state of things, when the married woman was much freer and more happy.

585 3) We find the explanation of some other ceremonies when we apply to them the theory of the *Rites of passage*. For both bride-groom and bride, there is in fact passage to a new condition of life. They pass from the position of single to that of married persons. Hence the part taken by their best friends and by the bridesmaids, from whom they are separated by their marriage. For the bride there is passage from one family to another, from one village to another.

I cannot say that I have found distinct *separation* and *marginal* rites, but aggregation rites are numerous. The *aggregation rites* are first of all the common participation in the flesh of the oxen during the feasts. Nothing makes Natives more friendly towards each other than to eat meat together. Then come the building of the wood pile, the girl's acts of civility to the husband's friends during the *tjekela* and the day after the *hloma*. These rites being collective seem to represent the union of the two families. The new wife performs them herself individually during the first week of her marriage.

584 How is it possible to explain the calculated resistance to acts of politeness on the part of both male and female visitors during the betrothal ceremonies, and even later on ? If the girls alone made a difficulty about entering the village, the hut, and sitting down on the

584 mats, drinking, eating, etc. we should say : This rite is also, on the part of the diminished group, a means of asserting its importance, of saving its dignity. But the boys do the same thing on their visit. They maintain the same disdainful attitude... This certainly arises from the fact that the two social groups look upon each other with some distrust, not yet being fully acquainted, and consequently observing a mutual reserve. But further information and a closer comparative study of Thonga rites enables me to give still another explanation.

561 2/31 The term employed to designate this rite is *kunga*. This verb is of Ngoni (Zulu) origin. Used in a general way, it means to remit a present to a chief who has sent his emissaries to claim it. The chief "*kungisa*" viz. orders to kunga. In its ritual sense, it means to give a present to a person who refuses to do something for ritual reasons. The old Thonga expression is *alula*. This word is the reversive derivative of the verb *ala*, to refuse ; it therefore means to remove the refusal, to overcome it, to cause somebody to yield. The kunga rite is performed on at least five different occasions : 1) for the circumcised boy on the day when he is received into the community of adults (page 93) ; 2) for the girl who has passed through the khomba initiation ; 3) for the boy who has wooed a girl, when he pays his official visit to her and to her family, and for the girl, when she returns the visit with her maids, but especially when she goes to the domicile of her husband and thus enters the married state ; 4) for the first-born child ; 5) for the woman who has lost many children and consequently is in a state of bereavement (bowumba) when she again gives birth to a child. In all these cases, the person concerned passes from one condition to another ; the circumcised from the childish to the adult stage, the suitor and his bride from the unmarried to the married state, the woman who has had her first child from the state of womanhood to that of motherhood and the bereaved woman from the state of bereavement to the normal position of a mother carrying a child on her shoulders. And here we meet with the old Bantu conception of life. This passage, in the evolution of human life, is fraught with danger. The person concerned stands on the defensive. He or she refuses to speak, to look at other people, to enter their village, or, in the case of the newly married girl, to perform her conjugal duty. Those who wish them to accept their new condition must persuade them to do so by giving them presents, generally presents of little importance, a wire bracelet, a small coin, etc. This will remove the danger.

This rite, which might be called a *defensive rite*, is therefore certainly

606 these bukoñwana rules would cause death. Yet they are religiously kept as necessary to ensure normal relations between the two families.

We have already seen the taboos which must be observed during the betrothal period (p. 106). Later on, during the gatherings which take place *before marriage*, other taboos are imposed.

606 802 201 584 784 1. In the discussion concerning the lobola, when oxen are counted, the bridegroom's parents must never offer eight head of cattle, because one of them will be killed for the feast, and so eight means only seven. *Seven* is counted by raising, one after the other, the five fingers of the left hand and the thumb and index-finger of the right. In raising the index-finger, they might point it at the bakoñwana, and this would be a mortal offence. To point at anyone with the index-finger is as bad as bewitching him. It is done only in anger, and all the preceding discussions might be nullified if such an imprudence were committed.

2. Should one of the oxen be frightened by the shouts of joy with which the arrival of the herd is greeted and by the sham-fight of the lobola day, and run away home, it is taboo. The ox has seen that something is wrong and has consequently fled. Even should they succeed in bringing it back, "timpfalo ti tjukile," the conscience (or the diaphragm) has been stirred!

584 825 777 784 3. If one of the oxen has no horns (homu ya mhulu), or only abortive horns, psa yila : *bukoñwana byi ta pfumala timpsalu*, viz., the relations with relatives-in-law will have no tenderness, *because such an ox moves its* head to and fro as it wanders in the night ; it is abnormal. The bride's family will not accept it.

4. Should the lobolo consist of hoes, and should the rain fall on them while they are being carried to the bakoñwana, it is taboo. The lobolo must not be brought in a wet condition, otherwise the new relations will be spoilt (bukoñwana byi ta tshipa) ; the young people will not be able to marry.

5. Do not bring with you tobacco in the leaf when going *bukwen* as a fiancé, bring only ground tobacco, or misfortune will happen. Later on, when you have married your wife, it is allowable.

6. Never eat zebra or reedbuck's meat when staying with your parents-in-law. Should they kill one of these animals while

584 you are there, or on the road, have nothing to do with it. The
825 zebra is *mbalamberi*, an animal of two colours; moreover it has no
777 horns. The same holds good for the giraffe. It has two colours,
784 it has too long bowels. Psa yila! The reedbuck cries: "Dzoo."
It is a witch: a mukoñwana must not eat it. For the same reason
a sheep without horns is never given to bakoñwana.

7. When you go with women to the parents of your fiancée
for a *shiwalo*, viz., to bring them beer, should one of the jugs
fall to the ground, psa yila! Return home!

606 8. From a Thonga of the Maputju country I once heard that it
609 was a great taboo in that district for a man to drink milk with
784 his parents-in-law; let us say rather to *eat* milk, as Natives
618 always take it in its solid form, i. e. curdled. This man was a
825 Christian; he had given up many heathen customs and had gone
177 so far as to partake of milk with his mother-in-law, but, the people
all round were very much shocked at his conduct. Pushing my
inquiry further, I heard that the milk taboo was observed not only
with bakoñwana, but with all the inhabitants of the country who
did not belong to one's clan; curdled milk was to be eaten only
with people bearing the same family name. In other words, it is
forbidden to eat milk *in any village where one can take a wife*. In a
very interesting paper published in the *South African Journal of
Science*, 1925, p. 481, Mrs A. W. *Hoernlé* says that this custom is
wide-spread amongst many Bantu tribes of Central and South
Africa, and explains it by the very intimate relationship which is
thought to exist between human beings and cattle. The oxen are
one with the clan to which they belong, and only members of that
clan can partake of the milk of their cows. I never met with this idea
in the other parts of the Thonga tribe, and I may remark that, as
the Maputju clan is settled very near to the Zulus and has been more
or less "zuluised", this custom might very well have been borrowed
from its neighbours. Further researches will show whether the
other Thonga clans have preserved what seems to be a very old
Bantu idea, or at any rate traces of it. This is quite possible.

584 9. Do not build a hut for your wife before you have married
777 her. Mankhelu says: "Even if you have plenty of money
784 as lobola, if you make such a blunder your wife will be taken
from you.

643 It is worthy of notice that no sacrifice is offered on this day, neither is any religious ceremony whatsoever performed. The coronation appears to be a purely military affair, a sort of oath of loyalty taken by the people to their chief and by the chief to his people.

C. THE OFFICIAL MARRIAGE OF THE CHIEF.

643 584 The chief being duly installed, the next thing to do is to provide him with his officially recognised wife, *the wife of the country*, she who is to become the mother of the future king. This wife must be bought with the pennies of the people : a characteristic custom demonstrating forcibly to how great an extent the royal family is at once the property and the pride of the nation.

643 584 571 One fine day, says Tobane, when the counsellors go to visit the new chief, they meet with a very cold reception : "Who do you suppose is going to feed you ? Who will cook the meat ? Who is going to brew the beer ?" They return quite crestfallen, but having perfectly understood the allusion. The chief wishes to remind them that the time has arrived for them to find him a wife. This roundabout way of coming to the point is much in vogue with the Blacks. The matter is at first discussed in secret by the brothers and sisters of the deceased ruler, a family council which holds its conclave "in the hut," i. e. privately. After due consultation, a messenger is dispatched to the principal men of the country, to the heads of the younger branches of the royal family (to Khobo, Pulane, Kupane, if Mpfumo be the clan in question) with the following message : "Has not the moment arrived to set up the chief, to cause him to grow, to increase properly ? For the country is sustained by its cock ! (1)" The great ones discuss the affair, each in his own village, and a

643 584 538

(1) *Dji gima ni nkuku*, a proverbial expression meaning : as the poultry-yard cannot flourish without a cock, so must care be taken of the chief of the country, in order that he may be able to perpetuate the race and secure the succession.

643 584 day is fixed for a visit to the capital where it will be concluded.

Let us consider the procedure in the case of the marriage of Ñwamantibyane, the youthful chief of Mpfumo, who has since been exiled. The following account of the discussion preparatory to the marriage is given on the authority of Tobane, a witness of the proceedings, and will aptly illustrate the etiquette observed on such occasions.

643 584 651 622 The dignitaries are assembled, and one of them, the brother of the deceased chief, commences thus: "Well, you the chiefs of Mpfumo! In truth! If we are assembled here to-day, is it not that we have truly seen that we must, in fact, increase the chief, and give him the wife of the country? This is all the business, you, the chiefs." One of those addressed replies: "In putting the matter before us, hast thou been unequal to the task? (No! understood.) And we, what further words could we add? Nothing remains to be said... You then tell us what we shall have to give you, dwellers in the capital!" Then the secondary chiefs say: "For our part, we will give each one pound sterling or an ox, as you may prefer." The headmen of the villages will each contribute ten shillings and each village one shilling besides. In former times, before the circulation of money in the country, each one gave a hoe.

The secondary chiefs go back to their own districts and get together the money or the oxen as the case may be. This done, the fact is duly notified to the capital and all the contributions are conveyed to the chief. An account is kept of all monies or cattle contributed. When Ñwamantibyane was married the special subscription amounted to thirty pounds sterling and twenty oxen.

643 582 The future queen was chosen from the royal family of Matjolo; her name was Mimalengane. The young chief had only seen her on one occasion, when she was returning from Gaza. Nevertheless she was his first cousin once removed; Hamule, father of Zihlala and grandfather of Ñwamantibyane, married the sister of Malengane, chief of Matjolo, and his daughter was Mimalengane (the prefix *mi* signifies daughter of), who was now

643/382 to become Ñwamantibyane's wife. We have already mentioned the fact that marriages between relatives are sanctioned in the royal families. The chiefs of Mpfumo generally marry into the reigning families of Mabota and Matjolo, and these latter seek their wives at the court of Maputju.

643/584 All the preliminaries being settled, the purchase money collected, the young girl chosen, Matshibi, the Mpfumo counsellor acting as Agent General for Matjolo, sent Ñwamatshabane, the boy who was his messenger, to Sigaolé, chief of Matjolo, to make the actual proposals for the marriage. The messenger did not address himself directly to the chief, but made his approach through the Matjolo Counsellor in charge of Mpfumo's affairs, whose name was Mambene. The request was made thus : "We have come to ask our *kokwana*, (that is to say our relative on the mother's side, p. 231) in marriage." — "It is well," replied Sigaole, when Mambene had transmitted to him the honourable proposal. — "Go home again, thou shalt come for our reply." A meeting of the members of the Matjolo royal family was then convened, matters discussed, the demand agreed to and the same envoy, attended by a companion, came, as arranged, to receive the reply. The hut was carefully swept and the enquirers renewed their message : "Our chief is still celibate... He sleeps in his bachelor's quarters" (This was not true, as he had already several wives, but they did not count!) "He is anxious to get married. Make haste to give him Mimalengane." — "It is well," said the others, "on one of these days we will go and discuss the affair at your place. When will you expect us ?"

A day is fixed and the great ones of Matjolo go to see Ñwamantibyane. A gorgeous reception has been prepared for them : an ox has been killed in their honour, but they are at first treated in a niggardly manner, and are given very short commons for breakfast ; for, before anything else can be done, the tiresome money question must be settled.

In the large hut all these important personages take their places with some constraint... The suitor is not present. The real business of the purchase money is not immediately referred to ; endless compliments, all sorts of circumlocutions are indulged

643 in, of which the following is a resumé. One of the chief men
584 of Matjolo commences by saying :
545 "It is quite right that you of Mpfumu have desired to renew today the old ties of relationship... Hamule your grandfather took his wife from Matjolo. Well! we are obliged to you. Nevertheless Sigaole has sent us to enquire how you intend to make payment for her ?"

— "We have thirty pounds sterling" reply the representatives of Mpfumo.

— "Ah! Thirty pounds ? That means that Mimalengane will have to chop her own wood and draw her own water ?" (That is to say: Thirty pounds suffice for the princess... but payment must also be made for two girls, the younger sisters (tinhlampsa), who must accompany her, to help her in the household duties, as is customary.)

— "We will ask Ñwamantibyane what he has to say to this" continues the headman of Mpfumo.

— "How about those twenty oxen ?" says the chief to his representatives, when the matter is put before him. The envoy returns to the hut and announces : "There are also twenty oxen!"

— "It is well," say the men of Matjolo, "that will do for two girls to help in the work of the household."

643 Thus this delicate business is transacted without any great
584 difficulty. The feasting then begins in earnest. All eat until
261 they *shura*, that is until satiated, the stomach protruding in a gentle curve beneath the sternum, which is the black man's idea of a thoroughly satisfactory meal!

The betrothal being duly arranged, there still remain the betrothal visits to be paid and the wedding to be celebrated. Strange to say the chief, in these ceremonies, is conspicuous by his absence! His male friends alone go to see the betrothed, mainly with a view to reporting on her appearance, etc., to their royal master. Moreover when a chief is concerned, the betrothal visit of the suitor's friends is not returned by the girls, as in the case of ordinary mortals.

643 The marriage feast takes place, of course, at the bride's home.
585 In Matjolo quantities of beer have been prepared, and the people

643 583 644 during the whole of the first year of married life. The chief, immediately on the home-coming of his bride, calls together his young men, who rapidly build for him a new village, his village, which will henceforth become the capital of the country and will be given a distinctive name.

Nwamantibyane's royal kraal was known as Hlanzini, and he had chosen a site for it on the confines of the Nwamba country in order to avoid a too close proximity to the Portuguese Commandant living at Hangwana.

Crowned, married, installed in his new residence, the chief has now nothing to do but reign.

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* *

643 584 622 Mankhelu relates the proceedings of the official marriage amongst the Ba-Nkuna in the following manner : — All the principal headmen send an ox to the capital, assemble there, kill one of the oxen, eat it and discuss who shall be the "wife of the country (1)." They ask the chief : "Whom do you love ?" He answers : "The daughter of such and such a chief." They go to the father of this girl and say : "Eat the lobolo and give your daughter to the chief." The man may refuse. Should he consent, the girl will become the wife of the country : "the earth has bought her ;" she will give birth to the future chief.

Should a great number of oxen be provided by the country, those which are in excess of the lobola price will go with the chief and princess to their new village "in order to provide milk for them."

(1) In the case of Muhlaba, Mankhelu himself received the fifteen oxen of the lobolo of the village and kept them for a time. Other subjects had given £ 1, a hoe, a goat, or nothing, if they could not afford to contribute. Nobody refused, but some had nothing to give ! No matter ! In the meantime one of the oxen broke its leg. The mother of Muhlaba said to Mankhelu : "See ! the oxen of the lobolo die. Take a wife for the chief." Muhlaba was consulted and chose a girl from the Makaringe clan. Mankhelu had already taken a wife amongst these people, who were consequently his bakokwana. He went to them with the proposal ; they consented. Then Muhlaba accompanied Mankhelu on a second visit to the Makaringe people, who killed an ox for him and helped him to eat it !

684 782 584 836 VI.) If found guilty, he will have to pay an extra fine of two oxen (1).

When the abducted woman is an unmarried girl, the matter is not serious. No trouble is entailed, provided she does not become pregnant. In the latter case, the seducer can say: "Ndji dlele ku dya: I have killed to eat," viz. "I am ready to lobola the girl" (p. 97). If the girl does not consent, the man is free. But if the man does not wish to marry the girl by paying a full lobolo, whilst the girl and her relatives want him to do so, he will have to pay as much as £ 30 and an ox. "He has spoilt his cause!" His own relatives will be arrested and forced to pay. They are responsible for him and will scold him severely. (Mankhelu).

683 643 *Fighting ending in blows.* The wounded man runs to the square of the capital and shows himself. The assailants will have to pay a fine of £ 8, three for the chief and five for the victim, or of two oxen, one for the chief and one for the plaintiff. (Mankhelu).

682 672 *Murder.* A distinction is made between involuntary murder, which is an accident (mhango, Dj.), and a deliberate assassination.

In the case of *involuntary murder*, Mankhelu describes the proceedings as follows:—Should you have killed a man by accident in a hunting trip, for instance, you will try to arrange matters directly with his relatives, if you were good friends; your relatives will give them a girl.. You dare not offer your own daughter, because they may refuse her, on account of their bad feelings! The same objection will not be made if your people provide the girl. They will accompany her with ten hoes and an ox, saying: "This is fat to smear our daughter." The notion which is at the base of this custom is not that a human person is the natural compensation for another human person, but that you give the diminished family a means of making good its loss. In fact as soon as the girl has born a child to the relatives of the deceased, she is free. If these men wish to keep her as their wife, they must

(1) The neighbouring Chopi tribe, on the contrary, leaves the husband to arrange matters as he likes. Formerly he used to kill the adulterer. But cases of adultery are never brought before the chief.

439 monopolise the retail trade throughout the country, and the
563 Natives are quite unable to meet this competition ; they have consequently almost entirely given up all their earlier attempts at business transactions! (1)

167 A second reason why the trade of former days has almost
439 entirely disappeared is to be found in the *great economic changes* resulting from the fact that Lourenço Marques has become an important seaport, in close relation with the miners of Johannesburg who receive their supplies via Delagoa Bay. Thousands of Natives are employed in discharging the large steamers which arrive by hundreds in the roadstead. At this work a Native can earn fifteen shillings a week or more ; in a short time he has made ample provision for the wants of his family and no longer finds it necessary to go to Bilene, to Zululand or Swaziland to make a living. The women too can make money by selling tomatoes and sweet potatoes to an ever increasing White population. All this is much easier

439 (1) On one occasion, in 1892, I made a list of various articles displayed for sale in and around a Banyan shop, in the district of Mahazule (to the North of Nondwane).
292 This is what Mr. Nala, a Hindu from Goa established for many years amongst the
765 Rongas, offered to the Natives living in the neighbourhood of his primitive store.

584 *Stuffs.* These are sold by measurement taken on the individual ; say, by the *shikumba*, length of one arm, or by the *nkumba* or *bemba* (two arms), or by the *peça*, the entire piece, the equivalent of two bemba. The materials most in demand are called ; *tingidao* (white), *mashita* (black with white stripes), *sh landana* (all red), *shinwakana* (red and black), *mempana* (a special red stuff worn as mourning) and *malopa* (a navy blue material still more frenquently worn as mourning). Besides these are *handkerchiefs* (minturu) of various colours, principally red, a large proportion coming from the manufacturers of East Switzerland ; white *blankets (gampongo*, meaning snow), for three or four shillings ; coloured blankets, thicker, varying from five to seven shillings ; towels, called *thawala* (an adaptation of the English word) and even some articles of ready-made clothing such as *djansi* (overcoats) at fifteen shillings! Amongst the stuffs I would more particularly note the *gangisa ntembi*, that is "for use when courting the girls", dark blue with a pattern of white flowers.

439 *Beads.* There are at least a dozen kinds to be found at Nala's ; djiridja (black) mbanda (white), shingazana, shimuzana, nkankana, habo, matshimbarole, bafa, tshambo.

Sundries. Rings, fish-hooks, buttons (masowa), thread, needles, snuff boxes to be worn in the ears (tinhlangu), knives, spoons, balls of string, padlocks (makandjate) with key attached ; little chains, to be hung from the belt, which tinkle when walking ; bracelets (busenga, ten for a shilling) ; wooden spoons, combs, coils of fine iron wire ; skins ; a large trap for catching hyenas or other wild animals ; small brass petroleum lamps ; sardines at sixpence a tin, English biscuits, and last but not least, a cask of German brandy diluted (tempora) with 50% of water ! This would now be replaced by three casks of Vinho colonial, one of white wine, one of red wine and one of I do not know what colour !

584 to *tjekela*. You must wait for fine weather, otherwise it is an
574 insult to the future father-in-law.

784 5) If, during the visit, you eat monkey nuts, you must not
262 take off the thin skin which covers the kernel.

6) The suitor—the owner of the oxen—must not eat black fish that day. Only his friends have the right to do so. These fish, a kind of barbel, are to be found in the lakes (as that of Rikatla) and in the Nkomati river. The suitor will not partake of them for fear lest the girl he wishes to marry should slip through his hands like a fish. Moreover this fish is black: it might bring darkness, unhappiness.

7) Neither must he eat honey during his visit, because honey like the black fish, is slippery... Honey flows...

8) He is also forbidden to eat fowls, because cocks and hens scratch the soil with their claws, scattering it about; thus the marriage " might be scattered (hangalasa bukati) before it is ripe ". In the Tembe clans, formerly, any solid food was taboo until the families had killed an ox for the feasts.

These taboos are not the proper taboos of a marginal period, as if the betrothal were considered as one of these periods. They are family taboos, belonging to the category of those dictated by the mutual distrust of two allied families.

585 The wedding feast consists of two parts: the *lobola feast*, viz. all the ceremonies connected with the remittance of the lobolo which takes place at the bride's village, and the *tlhoma*, viz. the bringing the bride to the bridegroom's village. Should the lobolo have been entirely paid at once, these two ceremonies will follow each other without much delay. If the sum of money or the number of oxen is not complete, the *tlhoma* will very probably be postponed.

4) Lobola feast.

a) Preparations.

585 On both sides, the friends are informed that the feast is close
273 at hand. The bride's family in particular must prepare in good time, as they have to provide the beer which will be consumed in

585/273 great quantities. The brewing requires several days. All the relations of the young girl agree on a day to begin operations in the several villages they inhabit. First of all the grains must be taken out of all the mealie spikes which were kept in the small cellar huts (ku hula). The following day these mealie seeds are steeped in cold water, in large pots. When they have become sufficiently soft, they are pounded (kandja) in wooden mortars, the yeast of millet is added (kandela) and the preparation is then boiled (pseka). On the day of the boiling, the family of the fiancé is informed that the next day the beer will be drained off and that on the following day the wedding will begin.

585 That same day the bridegroom with his friends goes to his future parents-in-law. He does not find his sweetheart there; she has wisely been hidden in the neighbourhood. He brings with him a goat which will subsequently play an important part in the proceedings. The next day the whole family of the fiancé assembles and makes sure that the provision of hoes or the number of pounds sterling for the lobolo is complete. The third day they all start.

b) The assault of the village.

Let us describe this most curious feature of the feast as it took place forty years ago, when English gold was not yet known in the country, and when the price of a wife was paid in hoes. These hoes, to the number of forty or fifty, were distributed among the relatives, who carried them on their heads. In a long row, they wind along the path. When they approach close to the bride's village, most of them sit down in the shade, whilst a few young men go on before to make the assault. The bride's brothers guard the doors of the circular thorny fence which generally surrounds the villages. Provided with their sticks, they try to prevent the aggressors from entering. In vain! The assailants leap here and there in the bush, hurl themselves over the barriers, are pursued by the sentinels, run across the square, and try to steal pitchers of beer, whilst the boys of the village hit them as hard as they can.

Taking advantage of this tumult the older men arrive, and

585 pointing with their fingers to the hoes they carry on their heads, they murmur the following words : " Here is our ox! It does not know how to drink! It does not know how to drink! (Homu a yi nwi! a yi nwi!)" The others rush towards them, and try to steal their burdens and to bar the way ; all this goes on amidst laughter, and until one of the old people of the bride's village says : " Let us leave them! (A hi ba tjikene!)" Then the company enters, laden with the precious hoes.

c) The counting of the lobolo.

585 The implements are deposited in the centre of the square and
4/12 fixed into the ground by tens. The hoes used by the Thongas, whether of Native or European make, are lengthened and pointed in such a way that they can be introduced into a wooden handle, something like the tools of the lake dwellers. They have a very remote resemblance to an ace of spades with a pointed shaft.

585 The bride's family gathers to ascertain if the number agreed upon is there. They remark to one another that there are so and so many of them. " Look, they say, they have paid such and such a lobolo. (Labisan ba lobolile ha kukari.) " It is very important that there should be a large number of witnesses, for who knows to how many discussions and quarrels these hoes will give rise if the marriage turns out badly ? When this counting is done, all hearts being gladdened by the sight of the wealth which will eventually allow the bride's brother to get married himself, the jugs of beer, which were brought the day before by the aunts, sisters, and relations of the bride, are fetched in. They pass from one hand to another ; the old people, and the men, prefer going into a hut, where they talk over the latest news whilst they quench their thirst.

d) The wedding procession.

Whilst the old people rest, a goat is taken for the sacrifice and slaughtered at the door of the hut of the bride's mother. Whilst the goat is being cut into pieces, the bridegroom's sisters, the big

585 girls, the stout women with strong arms, go and look for the
578 heroine of the day, who is hidden in a hut in one of the neighbouring villages, and who has not yet been seen. At last they succeed in finding her. She refuses to come. The viragos seize her and pull her out by force. Everybody assembles. She is covered with a large cloth which hides her from the gaze of the bystanders. Surrounded on all sides, she sets forward to the village, the crowd forming a kind of procession. " Let us accompany her, then we shall return home " sing the women who bring her. (A hi mu tjekeleni, hi ta muka). This song of the *tjeka*, the only one which is peculiar to the wedding day, is the prelude to a most strange duel.

The bridegroom's family stands on one side, that of the bride on the other, and then begins the exchange of equivocal compliments.

"Ha!" cry the groomsmen to the bride, "as you are becoming the wife of our brother and coming into our village, try and leave all your vices outside. Do not steal any longer! Forsake your bad ways and become a good girl! "

To this the bride's relatives shout in return :

" You have nothing to boast about! Stop wearying the people! She is far too good for you! Does not everybody know the wild pranks of your son and the dishonour of your family! "

And they go on in this way, at first in joke, but often speaking seriously. They sometimes even go so far as to bombard each other with the half digested matter which has been extracted from the goat's stomach, but, if anyone goes too far and exceeds the recognized limit of insult, the old people will tell him to be quiet.
585 These proceedings however are looked upon as a game and are
535 accompanied with a particular dance called *khana* which consists in jumping first on one leg and then on the other, gesticulating at the same time.

e) The religious act.

585 The procession reaches the hut of the bride's mother, where
782 the goat was killed. Mats are stretched outside. The bride and
769 groom sit down on the finest of these. It is now that the father

585 782 769 performs the religious rite (hahla). He takes between his first finger and thumb a small quantity of the half digested grass which has been taken from the paunch of the animal, makes a little ball of it, touches his tongue with it and emits a sound resembling " tsu "... as if he were slightly spitting. This is the customary sacramental act in most of the sacrifices. (See Part VI.) He stands behind the wedding pair and, looking straight in front of him towards them, speaks to the gods, that is to say to the spirits of his ancestors, and says : " My fathers, my grandfathers (he calls them by their names) look! To-day my child is leaving me. She enters the wedded life (bukatin). Look at her, accompany her where she will live. May she also found a village, may she have many children (mu nyikan timbeleko), may she be happy, good and just. May she be on good terms with those with whom she will be ". Here it may happen that a brother of the bridegroom will interrupt and say : " Yes, we will live peacefully with her if she does her duty well and does not worry her husband ". The old man goes on with his patriarchal prayer without taking any notice of the interruption and everybody listens quietly and attentively. This prayer which he pronounces with his eyes wide open and in a most natural manner is sometimes very long. When the people have had enough of it and wish him to stop, they send a young man to cut a piece of meat and to put it into the old man's mouth. Thus they " cut " his prayer and he keeps still. The person officiating must be the first to partake of the meat of the sacrifice.

f) The symbolical belt.

585 777 825 The astragalus (nhlolo) of the right leg of the sacrificed goat has been carefully kept. All along the belly they cut a strip of skin reaching as far as the neck and up to the chin, which is cut so as to form a kind of pocket at the end of the strip. The astragalus is put into this pocket and the father ties the belt around the waist of the young woman. He must not look at her face to face in doing this. On the contrary, she must turn her

585 back to him. This is doubtless done to wish her good luck and
777 so that she may have many descendants. Natives have a special
825 veneration for the astragalus bone which is also used in the divinatory system.

5) The tlhoma, departure of the bride for the conjugal dwelling.

585 If the lobolo business has been duly concluded, the bride will start on the following day for the conjugal dwelling, accompanied by her friends. (1) The next day, she will be joined by the women of her village, who will help her to erect the wood pile (ku koroka shigiyane). They will all go together into the bush to cut a large quantity of branches, and will pile them up between two poles covered with ochre in the bride's village. Each of the husband's relations will take one of these logs during the following months. It is, it seems, a symbolic present from one family to the other.

As for the wood cutters, they take their leave and go home. But what a surprise! Here is the bride going with them! Her sisters are taking her home again! The husband entreats, but in vain! He pursues the woman who, two days before, became his legal wife. To no purpose! He offers her a present to induce her to stay with him. She refuses... This was foreseen ; she must go to her mother to fetch her basket (shihundju), her mat, her spoon and other utensils which make up her small trousseau. A last lesson must also be given to the husband : " If we have given you our daughter, do not believe that we have had enough of her! (hi kolile). She is very precious to us and we take her back! "

Patience! To morrow she will come back accompanied by one young girl only who helps to carry her furniture. This

(1) It is taboo for the bride's parents to keep their daughter in their village when the lobolo has been entirely delivered ; because, should the bride die with them, they would have to return all the cattle, whilst if she dies in the husband's village, the consequences will not be so dreadful (See Part I. Ch. II. C.).

585 time it is for good! At last! "Ba mu tlhomile!" that is to say: her parents have duly settled her in her home.

In Nondwane this last surprise is spared the bridegroom. The bride comes to his home on the day of the marriage with her two mats, accompanied by a young girl only, and some days later the mother and female relations bring the rest of her trousseau and erect the wood pile. The young bride, when she has definitely accepted her fate and consented to stay, is called *ntlhoñwa* (Ro.) *nhlomi* (Dj.) (the one who has been brought to her husband). During the first week, she will fill all the pots of the people of the village so that when they awake they will find water for their ablutions and say: "We have found a bride! (He kumi ntlhoñwa!)"; she will remove all the ashes from the fire-places, and smear all the huts.

The first night when she sleeps in the hut with her husband, she may refuse to allow him his conjugal rights. The bridegroom then goes to his father and asks him what he ought to do under the circumstances. The father says: "Give her sixpence or a shilling." Then she consents! (Mboza).

Marriage customs in other Ronga clans.

The description which we have just given may be considered as typical, but there are many variations to be noticed amongst the clans.

584 In the *Mapatju* country, South of Delagoa Bay, there are two
836 informal visits, one of the fiancé, one of the fiancée, to each
574 other's village (ku bona muti). This visit is very short, and they do not accept any food from their hosts. Then the *tjekela* of the boys (the betrothal visit) takes place. They behave in a very dignified manner, do not accept any food the first day and consent to eat on the following day only after having been presented with a gift of 10/ or £ 11 During this visit the girls put 500 reis or sixpence at the bottom of the pots which they fill with water for the ablutions of the boys, otherwise the visitors would say: "The water is too cold. We cannot use it." Sexual

584 836 574 relations between boys and girls during these visits were not allowed in former times. Nowadays they are indulged in, and it may be that the fiancé will ask his fiancée to give herself to him " to test her love " (ku kamba lirandju). If she refuses, the whole affair may be compromised.

584 574 When the girls go to *tjekela* in their turn, they also observe great formality. Money must be given at least ten times to obtain their consent :

1) They refuse to enter the village.
2) To leave the square and go to the hut.
3) To cross the door of the hut.
4) To sit down on the mats. When the other girls consent, the fiancée remains standing.
5) She consents to sit down when given a shilling.
6) They refuse to answer the greetings.
7) When the others have answered, the fiancée still refuses to do so.
8) They do not consent to give news of their home.
9, 10) They still make difficulties about accepting food.

It may be that the fiancé goes to work in the mines during this period, probably in order to complete his lobolo. When he comes back, a special ceremony is performed which is called *hlomula mutwa*, to remove the thorn. The girls pay him a visit. He sits down amidst his companions, having fixed in his hair a long white thorn made of bone. The shangwane of the fiancée (chief bridesmaid) approaches him, dancing, and removes it. This is a way of saluting him on his return, it means the removal of the fatigue and the sufferings he has undergone, of the thorns which have wounded him.

585 The concluding ceremonies of *thloma* and of the *shigiyane* are also more developed in the Maputju country and in Nondwane.

This is the custom in *Nondwane*. Girls accompany the new bride to the conjugal home. They go to the bush to which she has fled, capture her there, and bring her to her husband with songs of mourning (hi ku djila nwana). " Where are you going ? You go to a husband whose heart is jealous! You will bring a

585 basket full of mealies to crush : they will say it is but a handful! You will learn to steal and to bewitch (viz. they will accuse you of doing it). " The bride covers her head with a piece of clothing and weeps. So the sad procession reaches the door of the hut of the husband's mother. There the bride sits down. The husband sits near her, but she withdraws from him. Then the men of the village insult her and say : " Come near him "! The old women, the husband's aunts, come and try to remove the veil from her head : " Take it away that we may see you " they say! Two days later they will come again and give her sixpence to take away the clothing with which she has covered her breast, and then she will go about the village in the ordinary dress—or undress.

The building of the wood pile in *Maputju* is also very characteristic. The ceremony takes place on the day of the *tlhoma*. When the procession is heard coming, far away, the friends of the new husband go to meet it. But the girls who accompany the bride refuse to approach the village. They must be enticed by money ; money at each crossway, at the door, in the village square, at the entrance of the hut, etc., money to put down the logs they bring, the pots of beer they carry... And when all the women have consented to unload themselves, the chief bridesmaid still refuses to do so, and must be induced to by a larger sum of money! When they have arranged the wood pile, they dance behind it, hiding the bride in their midst. The husband and his friends are sitting on the other side of the pile. Three girls come closer to them, always dancing. One of them is the shangwane. She puts tobacco into the hand of the bride. Then the bride kneels down before her husband at a little distance and stretches out her hand to offer him snuff. He rises to receive it, but, when he has approached quite close to her and has taken a little of the tobacco between his fingers, she throws the remainder of the snuff into his eyes ; then she runs away pursued by the husband's friends. If she is swift enough, she succeeds in taking hold of a tuft of grass outside the village. Then no one dares to catch her. It will be necessary to bring more money to induce her to relinquish her hold on the grass. After this, she re-enters the village which will be her new abode, and this is really the end!

584 before this feast takes place, six days later, the girl and her friends go to the young man's village to return the visit. The fiancée has been warned by her mother to be very cautious, not to accept the proposals of her suitor too readily. Boys and girls enjoy themselves thoroughly. A goat is killed for them, a goat called *the feather* because it is as it were a feather in the fiancée's hair, "a feather in her cap"!

The action of lobola follows immediately. The girls have stayed three days and gone home. Six had elapsed before they came. This makes nine days, just enough for the brewing of the beer. It is prepared in the girl's village. All the suitor's family make for it, driving the herd of cattle, fifteen head strong, which is the lobola money. The sham-fight takes place, some of the invaders, the young ones, going steadily forward, the others, the adults, hiding behind the oxen and urging them on under a shower of blows. Huts are offered to the visitors. One is especially reserved for the great *mukoñwana*, the man who has married the fiancé's sister, and whose oxen are used to buy the bride of the day. He has come to see where *his* oxen go. In the evening the girls choose their *shigango*. The next morning they will fetch water for their ablutions. This is the day when the lobolo is officially remitted by one family to the other. Long discussions take place through the intermediary of the two ntjumi, at the end of which the male relations of the bride leave their hut to inspect the cattle and criticise them, the others endeavouring to emphasise their beauty. Two oxen have been killed for the feast, one brought by the fiancé, another provided by the father of the fiancée. Dancing and singing goes on the whole afternoon; the visitors go home at sunset; the girls accompany them and tie knots of grass where they part.

585 A month after the lobola ceremony a new feast takes place, called *the beer which washes the hoofs of the oxen*. The fiancée, together with the women of the family, (not only the girls), bring pots of beer to the husband's village. They stay outside. When the inhabitants ask them to enter, they run back some distance and only consent on being urged... and so on! The fiancée does not put down the pot she carries until her suitor has brought a

1 [among the Northern clans--Analyst]

585 578 goat. Shillings must be given to induce her to enter the hut, to sit down, to accept water for washing her hands and food, to eat. Another ox is killed and the meat is divided as follows : the liver and the heart are for the bride's father, the leg for her mother, the *nyimba*, viz. the womb, which includes the ribs, sternum etc. for the maternal uncle. The women, when they return home, take all these pieces of meat to their several destinations. They put a skewer through the heart and liver and stick it into the ground before the bride's father's hut saying : " This is the notification of the husband's people. "

If the total number of the oxen has been remitted on the lobolo day, *the departure of the new wife* for the husband's kraal (thloma) will not be long delayed. But should there be some oxen wanting, a wise father will not allow her to go until the whole lobolo has been paid. The husband works hard to get together the other oxen. He brings them, without ceremony, together with a sovereign, which he places before the bride's father as a present, saying : " This is my spitting for you, my father ! " He does the same for the mother. He now feels the right to claim his wife. They answer : " Give us time to prepare her trousseau." The trousseau consists of two mats, two or three big spoons, some pots, a wooden platter, a pestle and a mortar, and one hoe provided by the maternal uncle, which make up all the equipment of a Nkuna bride. All her female relations meet and, after having exhorted (1) her to be obedient, to accept all the hardships she will find in her new home, they accompany her to her husband's village. This is the *hloma*. The men do not go, except the ntjumi of the bride's family. The father, on the morning before they leave, kills a fowl and *hahla*, viz. makes a sacrifice, telling his ancestors that his daughter goes to be married, and praying for her. The ntjumi,

585 562 593 (1) " Hear ! " the old women say to the bride, " you have been a good girl, so far, henceforth you will be treated as a slave ! You will be accused of adultery and of witchcraft. You will have no more happiness. But accept all that ! They will beat you, kill you and we shall not be able to deliver you, because we have eaten their oxen. " These exhortations are worth reproducing, as they show clearly the conditions under which the girl goes to her husband. She is not protected by the lobolo. On the contrary, the lobolo has made her the possession of the husband's family, from whom she must now accept any treatment. (See Part II).

585/378 immediately after his arrival, goes to the husband and to his assembled relatives and tells them roughly : " Here we are ; we bring you your dog. Here it is. With us, she was reputed to be a good girl. Now we shall hear you every day say that she is lazy, does not know how to cook, has a host of lovers... All right! Kill her! Kill your dog! Have you not bought it ? She is a witch! Let her drink the magic philter, etc. " The men keep silent... " Yes, you are right. We shall beat her. But if her husband is too hard on her, we shall try to deliver her. We shall do our best to protect her ".

In the meantime the women cut the logs of the *shigiqane*, and fill the pots with water, and the feast goes on, another ox having been killed by the husband. The married pair sit on a mat and the women of the two families begin the mutual exchange of insults which are never wanting on this day! " You dogs! " one of the aunts of the girl will say, " people of no consequence! You have not even a broken pot to remove the ashes from the fireplace. You can congratulate yourselves on getting such a good wife as this, a hard worker, a splendid cook, a nice and honest girl. " An old woman of the other party answers : " Yes! If you have exhorted her sufficiently! Perhaps she will give up her bad ways, her laziness, etc... "—" Bad ways ? You may well speak of that! Look at your son! What was he? A wild beast! We have come to cut off his tail and make a man of him! "

V. *Marriage by abduction.*

588/583 The ~~usual~~ ceremonies which we have described belong to the legal marriage (ku teka, ku lobola). But there exists another way of getting a wife, and the poor (psisiwana), those who have no oxen, no pounds sterling for lobola, especially if they have no energy, have recourse to this method. It is called *ku tlhuba*. A young man in such a position, wishing to marry such and such a girl, will send a friend to her and propose a rendez-vous in the

583 the wife's group, offering a higher bride-price in order to obtain the
591 transfer of the bride to her suitor's home.

170 Now, if this is the history of the evolution of the Bantu marriage (and we shall see later on, in studying the relation of the uterine nephew with his mother's brother, that it is quite probable that it is), we may find, in comparing these two forms of marriage, the explanation of some of the Thonga rites. The position of the wife was certainly much more satisfactory, from her point of view, under the old system. She could remain with her people and her husband had but little power over her, whilst, in the marriage of dominion, she must stay in the village of another group, work for it, and perhaps be ill-treated. Does this fact not account for her flight to the bush or to another village the day before hloma, when the female relatives of the husband go and seize her by force ? She tries to hide herself under a veil, as if she wished not to be recognised; but the husband's aunts remorselessly take it from her, and as she goes to the conjugal dwelling, her friends accompany her, singing songs of mourning. These rites are certainly more readily explained if there was, in a remote past, entirely forgotten by individuals, yet still influencing the mind of the community, another state of things, when the married woman was much freer and more happy.

585 3) We find the explanation of some other ceremonies when we apply to them the theory of the *Rites of passage*. For both bridegroom and bride, there is in fact passage to a new condition of life. They pass from the position of single to that of married persons. Hence the part taken by their best friends and by the bridesmaids, from whom they are separated by their marriage. For the bride there is passage from one family to another, from one village to another.

I cannot say that I have found distinct *separation* and *marginal* rites, but aggregation rites are numerous. The *aggregation rites* are first of all the common participation in the flesh of the oxen during the feasts. Nothing makes Natives more friendly towards each other than to eat meat together. Then come the building of the wood pile, the girl's acts of civility to the husband's friends during the *tjekela* and the day after the *hloma*. These rites being collective seem to represent the union of the two families. The new wife performs them herself individually during the first week of her marriage.

584 How is it possible to explain the calculated resistance to acts of politeness on the part of both male and female visitors during the betrothal ceremonies, and even later on ? If the girls alone made a difficulty about entering the village, the hut, and sitting down on the

561 a rite of passage and this is also proved by the fact that the money or the
931 bracelets given to the persons concerned do not remain their property. As regards the circumcised, they remit them to the chief, and the chief distributes them to the old women who are no longer able to bear children. The girl who has passed through the khomba gives them to her adopted mother, who will use them in the same way. All the money remitted to the bride will go to the master of the village, for the old women and the children. *Married people must have no share in it*, as these presents are taboo. Why ? Because they are connected with a passage, and people who have sexual relations are considered as increasing the dangers connected with these critical phases of human development, when the heart is troubled by a half-conscious fear of a new and unknown future. Amongst civilised people who have reached the era of individualism, these fears find their expression in songs and poetry. In the communistic society they express themselves by means of rites.

* * *

561 Here are some answers to the questions of Professor Frazer on
587 marriage.
611 A man always brings his wife to his own home. This is the *tlhoma*, and it is a law. It is taboo for him to go and live with his parents-in- law, at any rate when he marries his first wife. In the course of time, when the children have grown up, when the *bukoñanana*, viz. the relations with parents-in-law, are of old standing, a man can go and live in his wife's village (See Part II). Another case in which this can be done is when a widow refuses to marry the man who legally inherits her, and gives herself to a stranger, a man of Inhambane, for instance. He does not pay the lobolo, and lives with her in her village ; but the children born of that union will belong to the family of the deceased husband.
585 There is no preparation for marriage amongst the Thongas by fasting, bleeding or keeping awake the night before. No corn or rice is thrown at the bridal pair. The bride or bridegroom is never represented at the marriage by a proxy or dummy. Conjugal relations begin immediately after marriage (see page 113), but the wife does not possess her home and her kitchen for the first year ; during that period she must cook for her mother-in-law.
583 There are no occasions on which men exchange their wives.
See practical conclusions on Marriage Rites at the end of Vol. I.

Nubile girls, during their "tiwheti," must approach the oxen *kraal* and look at them. The cattle might suffer, be attacked
284 by a bad cough (mukhulwane), get thin! This taboo is instituted
825 to protect the oxen, not the human inhabitants of the village, as D.
562 Kidd says is the case amongst the Zulus. (Part IV. Ch. I. E.)
262 When women have passed the time of child-bearing, most of
[886] the taboos cease, and they can eat monkeys and porcupine if they wish!

3) The first year of married life.

581 I shall not return to the subject of marriage rites, which have
562 been fully explained in the preceding chapter. Let me say that, though a Thonga woman cannot imagine life without marriage (ku kandja bukati), she does not enter on the new state with any enthusiasm. Her parents have warned her that she will be illtreated, accused of witchcraft and adultery, etc. Her sisters bewail her fate on her wedding day in song. The fact that she has been paid for, though it does not constitute an actual sale, puts her in an inferior position (See Part II).

562 During the first year, she has no *ndangu*, viz. no fire-place of
264 her own. She cooks for her mother-in-law. During the three
585 first weeks the husband eats with her and with the girl who accompanied her to her new home. Afterwards, he goes back to eat with the men. In some places it would seem that the husband eats with her the whole year, until she has her own pot (hlembeto).

4) Husband and wife.

593 What are the relations between husband and wife after the
571 honey-moon? Of course they vary very much according to
517 the character of both. As a rule however, the married people have very little intimacy with each other; the man remains with his companions on the "bandla," the village square where they meet, and only occasionally comes into the "ndangu," the reed enclosure of the fire-place; which is the true domain of the

777 from you... In the same manner, do not prepare the skin for
784 the child before it is born. Your wife would not bring forth a human being. Should you transgress this rule, you would bring misfortune on yourself (wa tihlolela, wa singita), and on your family. If you go to Moneri (the missionary) and ask him for a skin for this purpose before the birth of your child, he will tell you it is so." Note the deep-rooted conviction of the old heathen, who appeals to the authority of the missionary to strengthen the taboo!

585 10. Later on, when you are married, you must avoid eating
784 honey with your wife for a whole year, till she has had a child.
777 The bride is allowed to eat honey at her parent's home, but not in
262 her new domicile and with her husband. The husband can eat it in the bush, but he must wash his hands when he comes back, lest his wife should notice it. She would run home if she knew of it. We have already met with this prohibition in the tjekela visit, and heard the reason for it : honey flows ; the bride would go! The explanation now given is this : honey is too sweet, and your bride is too sweet also. (Is it not your honey-moon or honey-year ?) The two things do not go together. (Psa yalana, they hate each other.) A third reason is this : Bees, when they have eaten their honey, fly away from the hive. So would your wife do... After a year this misfortune is no longer to be feared.

606 This last idea is very curious. It shows that the bukoñwana
581 taboos *decrease in severity as time passes.* The strained relations between the son-in-law and his wife's mother also become easier. He begins to call her mamana, and she calls him ñwana. This transformation even goes so far that in some cases a mukoñwana can go and dwell in his parents-in-law's village, especially if he has children and if the children are grown up. And this fact gives us the natural explanation of these curious rules.

Marriage, as we have seen, is not an individual affair in the collective stage of family life. It is a contract made between two groups, which enter by it into a special relation towards each other. This relation is fraught with danger, because the interests of both groups are involved ; a bride and bridegroom are inspired with a mutual feeling of fear, knowing that an

III. *Matriarchy*.

178 602 But as regards *mother-right* and the *uterine family*, I must confess that I have altered my views since writing Les Ba-Ronga, and would testify my gratitude to Mr. S. Hartland, who encouraged me to study this subject more attentively. I had not then gathered all the facts, and the identity of the *ntukulu* and the *mupsyana* only became clearly apparent to me when studying the Northern clans. Now, having inquired with special care into this most curious feature of the Thonga system, I have come to the conclusion that the most probable explanation is that, in former and very remote times, our tribe passed through the matriarchal stage. Let us carefully consider the relation of a malume with his uterine nephews, recapitulating all the facts.

1) Duties and rights of the maternal uncle.

604 391 As we have seen, the uterine nephew all through his career is the object of special care on the part of his uncle : if he is a first-born child, the malume prepares his ntehe. (See page 46.) When weaned, he goes to stay in the village of his mother's relatives for many years, a girl sometimes till she is grown up. 604 Later on, when she marries, the maternal uncle claims a right 583 called *tjhumba*, £ 1, on the total amount of the lobolo. It is taboo to refuse it ; should a father dare to keep that £ 1, his brothers will say to him : "Do you not fear the gods ? The mother's gods will kill you! Your daughter will have no children. Did you alone bring her into the world ? Did not these people help you in bringing her forth ? And has not your wife grown with the assistance of those gods ? Her brother must be allowed to have his *tjhumba*" (Mboza).

585 604 On the day of the remittance of the lobolo, the maternal uncle and all the mother's relatives are invited to the feast, and for them a special part of the festal ox is reserved, called *nyimba*, viz. the

604 585 womb, the uterus ; this consists not only of that organ, but of the whole belly, from the sternum to the hind legs ; the bride's mother eats the *mbata* and *khondjo*, viz. the extremity of the spine (Mboza).

585 431 On the day of hlomisa, when the bride is led to her husband's village, her maternal relatives receive a special gift, a young cow called *mubya wa mana wa yena*, i. e. the skin in which her mother carried her on her shoulders when she was a baby. This cow will be sent to the family when the first and the third daughter marry. In the case of a second and fourth girl, the nyimba alone is sent.

585 604 In the *equipment of the bride*, the mother's relatives provide her with a hoe, with fat to anoint her body, with a mat and clothing and sometimes with bracelets. The paternal aunt (hahana) does not give anything, neither does the paternal uncle, the latter only helping the father occasionally. Should the mother's relatives not fulfil this duty of providing part of the trousseau, next time they will not be given the *nyimba* to which they were entitled (Viguet).

593 602 604 But the most characteristic prerogative of the bamalume or bakokwana, is *their special right of intercession* on behalf of the uterine nephews. In fact, as Mankhelu said in his picturesque language, "as regards sacrifices (timhamba), the mother's relatives mostly perform them. They are the stem. My father is the stem as regards the oxen, but my mother is the true stem ; she is the god ; she makes me grow. Should she die when I am an infant, I shall not live. The village of my mother is as the home of the gods (ka mamana hi ko psikwembyen)." Simeon Gana added : "We have the special charge of sacrificing for our batukulu ; our sons also are priests to them, and can officiate in our place, even should they be younger than our batukulu. That is the reason why we do not marry them. We are their elders (bakulu)." Of course the bones will always be consulted and they will tell if a sacrifice must be offered to the gods of the mother or to those of the father, but a kokwane will preferably be called upon to sacrifice for a sick child. (See Part VI. Chap. II, II.)

604 611 In the ceremonies following death, especially in the feast of the mourning beer (page 164), the malume will be the officiating person and squeeze the *psanyi* over his batukulu to cleanse them.

A last right possessed by the malume is that *of raising his village*

361 together with all the inhabitants of the kraal. The two huts near
313 the entrance are, on the left, the *lao*, where unmarried boys sleep
596 (14) and on the right (15) the *nhangu* where the girls live. Often
356 the nhangu is built behind the huts of the mothers, near the mhala ; in this way the girls are kept under more effective watch. The boys of the *lao* have to guard the door, which they close at night where it is the custom to do so. The *hubo* and the *bandla*, the squares, are generally kept quite clean.

361 In front of each hut is a *yard* (*ndangu* pl. *mindangu*, 23) which
372 is also generally well swept. In the centre of each of these are
417 some broken pots (mapseko), or pieces of hard clay taken from ant-hills (psirubu) ; this is the *fireplace (shitiko)*, where the
351 mistress of the hut cooks her food. The fence round the yard used, as a rule, to be made of poles or even trunks of trees planted near each other and forming a circular wall. Nowadays, especially amongst the Rongas, these yards are enclosed with reeds and may be built square, a single wall fencing off as many as three or four huts. The top of this wall is sometimes crenelated. I rather think this arrangement is modern ; the circular wall of the ndangu
585 is an old custom, as is proved by the following fact. On the day of
338 *hloma*, when the bride's-maids and female relatives bring the bride to her husband, they not only build up the woodpile (shigiyane, see page 112), but, in the northern clans, they must also erect a new ndangu which will be called *tsandana*, and so people will know that in the yard there is a *nhlomi*, a bride, working for her mother-in-law! The ndangu is the place where women tell folk-tales of the tribe to the children and to each other, whilst they attend to their cooking, or after the evening meal.

361 If cleanliness prevails on the square and in the yards, the
356 same cannot be said of the region between the huts and the
235 fence. This is called *mahosi* or *makotini*. It is the place where
351 old baskets and broken pots are kept. The chicken houses
343 (*shihahlu*, 27) are built there ; these are generally little huts, with reed walls, placed on a floor of palmtree boards, supported by four poles forked at their upper extremities. The *ash-heaps* are somewhat further on (24). They are called *tala*, and play a part in certain rites, representing, as it would seem, the place of desolation and of sorrow.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

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of Mpfumo are notified when it is sufficiently fermented ; the latter then mobilise their military contingent, consisting of a picked battalion of youths and men wearing the wax-crown. They are magnificently attired in skins of civet-cat and other warlike apparel, but carry sticks only and small toy shields (mahahu), as the object of the expedition is eminently peaceful and entirely actuated by friendship. They go first to the house of their Agent General, Mambene, where they are met and conducted to the capital, taking with them the money and oxen which must be handed over to the parents of the princess. The curious sham-fight, details of which we have already given when describing ordinary marriages, also takes place on this occasion, the Matjolos trying to carry off the oxen and the Mpfumos defending themselves and endeavouring to appropriate the jugs of beer which are in the capital. This mock engagement is fairly lively, sticks are wielded with some force and the blows fall heavily until a few wounds are apparent and a little blood is let, when hostilities are at once stopped and friendship reigns supreme.

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The money and oxen are given to Sigaole, chief of Matjolo, in the presence of witnesses. Mpfumo kills a bull for Matjolo and Matjolo slaughters a cow for Mpfumo, without any kind of religious ceremony : a sacrifice has previously been offered in Matjolo to propitiate their gods in favour of Mimalengane. On the other hand the young folks of the two countries execute the dances peculiar to each clan, trying to outrival one another, for the honour of their country. The guests pass one night at the capital of Matjolo and return to their homes the following day.

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The relatives of the bride prepare her trousseau, which is not much richer than in the case of ordinary people ; a *ngula*, large basket, in which are placed some maize and other cereals which she will plant in her new home, sundry cooking utensils, saucepans, winnowing baskets, a hoe, an axe ; on the subsequent day, all the women accompany her to her husband's dwelling and then go to perform the ceremony of building the wood pile (p. 112). They are regaled with a couple of oxen and return to their home.

The chief's wife is not compelled, as are young married women generally, to live with the mother-in-law and to wait upon her

643 ~~383~~ 644 during the whole of the first year of married life. The chief, immediately on the home-coming of his bride, calls together his young men, who rapidly build for him a new village, his village, which will henceforth become the capital of the country and will be given a distinctive name.

Ñwamantibyane's royal kraal was known as Hlanzini, and he had chosen a site for it on the confines of the Ñwamba country in order to avoid a too close proximity to the Portuguese Commandant living at Hangwana.

Crowned, married, installed in his new residence, the chief has now nothing to do but reign.

* * *

643 584 622 Mankhelu relates the proceedings of the official marriage amongst the Ba-Nkuna in the following manner : All the principal headmen send an ox to the capital, assemble there, kill one of the oxen, eat it and discuss who shall be the "wife of the country (1)." They ask the chief : "Whom do you love ?" He answers : "The daughter of such and such a chief." They go to the father of this girl and say : "Eat the lobolo and give your daughter to the chief." The man may refuse. Should he consent, the girl will become the wife of the country : "the earth has bought her ;" she will give birth to the future chief.

Should a great number of oxen be provided by the country, those which are in excess of the lobola price will go with the chief and princess to their new village "in order to provide milk for them."

(1) In the case of Muhlaba, Mankhelu himself received the fifteen oxen of the lobolo of the village and kept them for a time. Other subjects had given £ 1, a hoe, a goat, or nothing, if they could not afford to contribute. Nobody refused, but some had nothing to give ! No matter ! In the meantime one of the oxen broke its leg. The mother of Muhlaba said to Mankhelu : "See ! the oxen of the lobolo die. Take a wife for the chief." Muhlaba was consulted and chose a girl from the Makaringe clan. Mankhelu had already taken a wife amongst these people, who were consequently his bakolwana. He went to them with the proposal ; they consented. Then Muhlaba accompanied Mankhelu on a second visit to the Makaringe people, who killed an ox for him and helped him to eat it !

000 it, as the Churches of all the Continent are. Is not the Church abandoning its true domain in taking circumcision under its patronage ? The operation is no doubt hygienic in most cases. Surgeons sometimes deem it necessary to prevent complications. It seems therefore more natural to leave circumcision to the province of medicine rather than to impose it as a collective rite on all Christian boys. I think that a deeper study of the question is necessary.

III. ON MARRIAGE CUSTOMS AND LOBOLA

(See p. 125 and 282).

177 What will be the fate of all these very picturesque marriage customs
386 with the advent of civilisation ? Let us notice that amongst Christian converts, many of them have been abandoned as a matter of course, the bad habits of tjekela, the assault on the village, the preparation of beer, for instance. The part played by adult go-betweens is sometimes taken over by the elders of the Church, but often young people do not care for interference and conduct their own business.

Some other rites are preserved ; the feast, of course, is amongst these, and we see boys ruining themselves in order to prepare a glorious wedding with splendid costumes and abundance of meat. On this point they are rather too conservative!

The religious ceremony has now become the Christian blessing which has taken the place of the heathen sacrifice to the ancestors ; it is followed generally by a procession of the best men and the bridesmaids singing popular hymns, sometimes very solemnly worded, songs of repentance for instance, as they march to and fro in the nuptial village ; the women, even the men, of the two families hurling at each other's heads amenities of the same kind as in former times. This is a most peculiar mixture of the old and new elements and often filled us with wonder (See Zidji, p. 212). I think however that these rites are doomed to die out, because Christian marriage is no longer a collective act, but has been individualised together with the many other acts of social life. It remains a social act indeed, but an act accomplished by two individuals on their own responsibility and in mutual love. "Ceci tuera cela." This Christian or Western individualism will kill primitive
000 collectivism and all its rites. However original and interesting the marriage ceremonies may be amongst the Bantus, I do not think they

train was heard in the distance. One of my servants was busy 195
cleaning the pots ; I heard him muttering the following words :

The one who roars in the distance... The one who crushes in pieces the braves and smashes them ! The one who debauches our wives : they abandon us, they go (to the towns to lead a bad life) ! The seducer ! And we remain alone.

He was extolling the huge thing and lamenting his misfortune and the curse it has brought upon the country.

IV. *Satiric poetry.*

I have already mentioned the peculiar custom of Thonga 533
literati of speaking in a r[illegible]-about fashion, and using figurative 195
language, especially when they want to say something disagreeable 574
or to give vent to their humour. It is but one step from such 576
forms to satire. They generally indulge in this satiric vein when 539
dealing with relatives-in-law, women being especially prone to it. When the sisters and aunts of a married woman go to pay a visit to her, they convey all kinds of equivocal compliments. These must not be taken seriously! It is a round-about — exceedingly round-about — way of making graceful allusions and expressing their mutual esteem. I will quote the series of these songs of friendly chaff and invective as it was given to me by Shigiyane, with a running commentary to render them comprehensible. These lively and pointed choruses give a fitting finishing-touch to the marriage customs, and illustrate the curious relations existing between allied families, which I explained in Vol. I, p. 249-253.

On the wedding day the women who take the bride to her 585
husband sing the *tjeka song* : 533

Let us go with her, but let us go back to our homes! 539

This is an ironical way of saying : "She is going to find trouble : we won't follow her as far as that!." The same idea runs through all the songs which these women sing during the next few days.

585 When they accompany the bride to her new home, they sing :

533 U ya kwi, Mamano ! — Whither goest thou, mother ?
539 U ya kwi shana ? — Whither goest thou ?
Ba ta tshaha shihundju ni lihlelo, mamano !
574 They will bring thee the basket full of maize and the fan, my mother !
Ba ta kuma u tlokoli, ba tlokolisa, mamano !
When thou hast finished crushing it, they will make thee crush it again, my mother !
Ba ta kuma u kopoli, ba kopolisa, mamano !
When thou hast plastered the floor, they will make thee plaster it again, my mother !

But when they come on a visit, carrying jars of beer as presents to the newly married couple, they are much less guarded in their language, ridiculing the poor husband and his family, and making fun of every one in general. They begin singing on the way, with the jars on their heads :

He ntshonga, banhwanyana, he nga batjanana
He la libango ; fa hi nga labi, we manyana.
Ku laba manyana ka fiwan'a manyana.
We are a small band, young girls ; there are few of us.
We are looking for a piece of meat on the spit ; formerly we should not have known where to find any, our sister (so and so) !
Now our sister will get some for us from her husband !

Hi kokobisa lobe, hi ya kwihi shana ?
Hi bhanu ba ku yalwa !
He fambaka ni khombo, ni khombo dji le kaya !
Where are we going, thus dragging the hook behind us ? (1)
We are the people that are hated.
We walk in misfortune (2), the misfortune that has befallen our house !

Ka ku kandja fiwana a ku na kule.
Wo khunga he lihanyi, we koko !
Ya kokowela : kowe-kowe-kowe.
Where a daughter lives it cannot be very far off.
Go there, grannie, limping and leaning on thy staff !
Listen to the hen cackling. She says : kowe, kowe, kowe. (3)

[222] (1) They compare themselves to women who have been in the fields, picking kwakwa fruits (p. 17), and are so heavily laden that they cannot carry the hook used for pulling the fruit off the trees ; they have had to tie it to their belt, and drag it behind them on their way home. The travellers give it to be understood that they are not out for pleasure !

(2) That of having to go and see a brother-in-law who ill-treats their sister.

(3) This line is an encouragement to the old woman who finds the walk long and tiring. The other women promise her a fowl at the end of their journey, which the son-in-law will kill for her. Note the first line of the third verse : it is a kind of proverb.

On arriving at the village they stop at the edge of the stream : 585 533 539 574

Fulamelani, bashwanyana, hi ya nwa mati nkobeni.
Stoop down, young women, let us drink water in the valley.

Finally they settle themselves in the home of their *bakoñwana*, their relatives-in-law, and begin to insult their hosts.

Ba yala na wo mbengana loko a boleka !
Ba li : " Famba, u ya teka kwenu u buya wa ta sila ".
Ba yala ni shudana, ba yala ni musana
Ba li : " U ya teka kwenu u buya wa ta tlokola. "
They won't lend (our sister) a grindstone when she wants to borrow one.
They say to her : " Go home and fetch one and then come back and grind. "
They won't lend her the small pestle and mortar.
They say : " Go home and get your own, and then come back and crush your maize. "

Then they make fun of the mother-in-law, who is whispering with the other women of the village, making arrangements, doubtless, for the good entertainment of the visitors. They pretend to discover in these asides some terrible plot.

A li ñwono-ñwono ! Mabulela ya nati lweyi ! Hi file ! Hi lobile !
That woman over there is whispering ! What can she be saying !
We are dead ! We are lost !

As for the head of the village, these shrewish visitors accost him thus :

Ñwenyi wa muti, hi wene ? A ku hi hi mati, hi ñwene ?
A he hlayi wone, ya nhlobo ! Hi hla byala ne sope !
Are you the master of the village ? Are you not going to give us any water to drink ?
We don't mean well-water ; we mean beer and brandy !

The villagers approach to salute the new-comers, who sulk and refuse to say a word. Large pots are made ready for cooking food.

Mi kokela matambeko, mi kokela bamane ?
Kambe hi balala, hi nga ka manyana !
You prepare the large pots... For whom are you making them ready ?
We are enemies, we are !

585 The young folks catch fowls in order to feast them properly
533 They raise objections.
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A hi djyule kwee ! A hi djyule kwee !
Hi djyule nkoka-hi-pindja !
We will have nothing to do with that which cries kwee. (The cry of the fowl when being killed.)
We want the animal which is led with a string (a goat).

But it is the husband who has to put up with the worst insults.

Ha ! matinga-tingela ya nhunu lwe ! Loko a hi bona a ku tlhanya psirubu.
Ah ! see how he wants to avoid us ! As soon as he sees us he runs and hides behind the houses ! (He is afraid of us !)
Hi laba tima-mbilu ! hi djyula mafura ya ku nona phobo.
We want something to satisfy the heart ! We must have our fat very rich !
Nyoka ya nyoka ! Mbyana ya mbyana ! Yi whee !
Serpent that thou art ! Dog that thou art ! Thou sayest bow-wow !

Then to show him that they really like and appreciate him, they add, with the true untutored rudeness which they maintain to the end of the visit :

A ku hi lobolele ? Na wene, bana ba ku ba ku lobolela ki khume ni ntlhanu !
Won't you buy another wife from us ! Later on your daughters will bring you a dowry worth fifteen pounds sterling !

Finally, after having had plenty to eat and to drink and a good dance, they will remark, on leaving :

Hi tlhome nyonga ya mbuti, hi muka
Twine the goat's bladder in our hair, that we may go home.

All this is not very high-flown poetry. The general intercourse between relatives-in-law is by no means refined and this rudeness contrasts with the ordinary civility of Native life. Let us remember that this way of speaking is not intended to show a want of politeness on the part of the visitors, but, on the contrary, is the behaviour suited to the occasion ! I have the music of some of these songs, which were noted down by Mrs Audéoud, in Maputju. In No. 13, the bridesmaids actually exhort the bride not to follow her husband ! But they are the last to expect her to follow their advice.

5) Sterility.

842 782 In the Northern clans, when a woman does not conceive, a special sacrifice is offered, very similar to the one made by the Rongas on the day of the conclusion of the marriage. A goat is killed; a long piece, one foot in width, is cut from the skin of the animal in the ventral region, and three openings are made, one for the head and the two others for the arms. The three openings converge to a point where the astragalus bone of the goat is fixed to a strap. The sterile woman puts on this skin; the astragalus will be seen on her breast. She will also fix the gall-bladder in her hair and wear these ornaments for a time. To the mind of the Thongas, it seems evident that children are given by the gods; hence the idea of a sacrifice in case of sterility. But in addition to the religious rite, native doctors have many drugs to militate against this misfortune (1). The special porridge cooked for a sterile woman (mhika, shimhiko) is called *shiboleko* amongst the Ba-Ronga. The poor woman is despised.

586 Sterility can be a cause of divorce; the husband has the right of sending his wife home. But generally the parents of the woman find a *nhlampsa*, viz. a younger girl, and give her to the husband as a second wife.

6) Pregnancy and Miscarriage.

843 A special treatment is followed for the first pregnancy when the breasts begin to swell, a condition which is called *munyama* (darkness). The physician makes small incisions near the breast and on the legs, and draws out a little blood. The pregnant woman also drinks a decoction for the same purpose, i. e. to

(1) A Pedi man told me that in his tribe the first thing to do was to ascertain if sterility were due to the husband or to the wife. For this purpose a little bit of the clothing of the husband and of the wife was cut off and placed near a spider's nest. This spider is a kind of mygale of enormous size. If the spider took the piece of the husband's clothing down to its nest, it meant that he was at fault, and vice versa.

846 A demonstration of joy takes place at the birth of any subsequent
831 child, but the kunga is only performed for the first-born. It does not seem that in the case of the first-born child, as in the case of bowumba (see p. 125) the gifts of kunga are subject to any taboo.

8) Loss of children.

766 A woman who loses an infant (wa ku felwa) is deeply contam-
783 inated with the defilement of death. She must bury it herself
834 without aid from her husband. Next day, she goes behind the
853 hut, kneels down and draws off her own milk on to the ground. She does this until the secretion has ceased. This is taboo; her milk is polluted; no drop of it must fall in the gardens. She must avoid crossing the fields and going to the storehouses to fetch food.
[364] Until she has been "put right again (busetela)," she eats with a spoon. To use a spoon is a bad omen for a woman, because it reminds her of death. That is the reason why men adopt this civilized custom more readily than women. During her mourning, no sexual relations are allowed. When menstruation begins again, she first keeps silent, and does not tell her husband. Only on the second or third occasion does she inform him of the fact. He can then purify her; this is done in the same way as in the case of widows. (See p. 154.) Then he buys new clothing for her and she resumes her ordinary mode of life. Everybody seeing her with this new attire will know that "she has been repaired." Should any one else than the husband give her this clothing, the latter will be greatly offended and accuse her of having relations with a lover.

765 A man does not put on *malopa*, mourning clothing, for a child
586 who was not yet of age. The woman alone does so. However a husband is always grieved at the death of his child and a sad event like this often leads to dreadful results. He will begin to think that his wife is a witch and has eaten her own child by her magical powers. Such an accusation is almost sure to end in a divorce.

A woman who has *lost many children*, three or four, is considered

837 of his father, which is considered as *biha*, very bad), he must not
687 take any part in the burial, though he might be the regular "master
783 of the mourning." Relatives will drive him away because they
378 have pity on him, they know what misfortune threatens him. It is
782 a terrible taboo! There are medicines to remove this contamin-
626 ation; the *yila* is removed by them, but the *biha* (bad action)
753 remains! However in the case of the disease called *mpondjo*, (which I believe to be the lupus), medicines are of no avail; should a man visit his rival, who is suffering from it, he will die. We have also seen the terrible complications which are believed to take place at the birth of children, when there has been a question of adultery. (P. 40.)

836 These great taboos show that there is a deep feeling amongst the Thongas that promiscuity of any kind is a bad and a dangerous thing. Even in the case of *gangisa*, boys are censured when two of them court the same girl.

10) Divorce.

586 Adultery is one of the causes of divorce. The guilty woman, instead of obeying her legitimate husband and helping him to get his compensation, may choose to go to her lover and live with him. This leads to an immediate divorce. The husband goes to the parents of the unfaithful wife and claims his lobolo. They have perhaps no money to give. However they will try to get it as soon as possible, even if it is by the dissolution of the marriage of their own son; they will perhaps send back his young wife to her parents and claim the lobolo paid for her, in order to meet the claim of the angry husband (See Part II). It would seem easier to go to the thief and claim from him the lobola for the adulteress whom he has stolen (tlhuba). But a thief is not a reliable man! If he has stolen, it proves that he had nothing (1). (See Appendix VIII.)

Divorce frequently takes place for more trivial reasons, for

548 (1) Women of low morals are called in Ronga gwababana, prostitute. There are plenty of them all round Lourenço Marques, where morality has sunk to a very low level; but this is the result of degeneration.

586 mere incompatibility of temper. Heathen men are often hard
362 to their wives. They refuse to give them money to buy
578 clothing. "They are stones," said one of these men to me. "Though you scratch a stone with your nail, the nail will break and the stone will remain!" On the other hand, the women are by no means sweet, obedient creatures ; therefore quarrelling often takes place. When she thinks she is persecuted (shanisa), the wife runs *home*. This is her great weapon. The husband heaves a sigh of relief... But very soon he becomes aware of his misfortune. No food, no cooked meal in the evening! His companions share their own food with him for some days, but they will not consent to feed him long. He will have to go modestly, humbly to his parents-in-law and ask his wife to return. Then they enquire into the matter, and he perhaps receives a good scolding. It may be that the domestic life will improve, both fearing the renewal of the conflict. It may however be that the situation will grow worse and worse, and then it will lead to divorce, viz. the husband will claim his money and, when he gets it back, the marriage is dissolved (ku dlawa ka bukati).

An accusation of witchcraft may also cause divorce, especially after the death of a child ; so also can sterility, as we have seen, p. 190. Gross selfishness on the part of the husband may lead to it ; many tales tell the story of a man who in time of famine succeeded in killing an antelope, kept the meat for himself and did not give any to his wife and children. The wife noticed it and, when the famine came to an end, she invited all her relatives to a beer feast. Then she shewed them the bones of the antelope, telling them how badly her husband had treated her ; her parents took her home together with the children. Sometimes the conclusion of the tale is that the man even lost his lobolo money, as a punishment for his evil deed! (See *Grammaire Ronga*, page 202. *Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, page 260.)

11) Widowhood.

783 When a man dies all his relatives are contaminated by the
765 defilement of death, as we have seen (Page 143). There are concentric circles around him, some people being more affected

607 quently his potential mothers. He avoids them all, not on account
835 of the lobolo oxen, which he did not actually pay for their daughters,
582 but because it is intolerable to think that he might have relations with a woman and her mother.

607 But no doubt the fact that oxen have been paid by the man,
586 oxen by means of which his great mukonwana was bought, is
835 the principal cause of the fear which they both feel towards each other. These oxen have created a sort of interdependence between them. Mboza says : "Should my home be disturbed by quarrels, should my wife Nsabula leave me and run away to her parents, or should she die without children, I shall go and claim my oxen... But the oxen have been employed to buy a wife for my brother-in-law, (Maphunga for Mahangale). If Gogwe has no other means at his disposal he must separate the pair Maphunga-Mahangale, cancel their marriage, send Maphunga home and claim the money from her parents. Or I might myself take Maphunga as my wife, and in either of these cases the marriage Maphunga-Mahangale would be annulled."

Thus it may happen that Mboza may marry his great mukonwana, though such a union is really incestuous, according to the deep moral feeling of the tribe. This is truly terrible!

587 But does this ever really happen ? I have put this question to
607 many Thongas, in the various clans of the tribe, and remarked that there are differences amongst them.

Amongst the Nkunas of Shiluvane it is an absolute impossibility. Another woman is offered to meet the claim of the son-in-law who has lost his wife. This is called : "Ku hingakanya ntjandja", i. e. "to put a log across the road." The woman offered may be a little girl, still at the breast of her mother, or even a little boy. This is your wife, his parents will say to the son-in-law, and he must be content to know that, as this male baby will no doubt have a sister in the course of the two following years, the girl to be born will replace his wife. "Ntjandja a ba tluli" i. e. "One does not jump over the log." The man will not persist in his claim, and will not insist on taking the great mukonwana to replace his wife.

Amongst the Khosas and Bilas, such a marriage can take place

582 607 and whom he calls spouses, because he would be welcomed if he were able to lobola them. They are his *tinomu* or *tinhlampsa*, viz., his wife's younger sisters or the daughters of his wife's brother. These marriages are considered as peculiarly appropriate. This does not however constitute an absolute right for the man. Should he not prove a good husband, his parents-in-law will not let him have their other daughters (p. 240).

582 607 595 As regards marriage with the wife's brother's daughter, who is the nhlampsa proper, there are different possibilities to be considered. It may very well happen that a man's wife, wishing to have a young girl to help her in her domestic work, approaches her brother and asks him to lend her his daughter, the woman's niece, to stay in her village for this purpose. He consents, and she grows up there. Later on however the girl's parents say to their sister: If your husband has oxen, he may take her as a wife. She returns home and discusses the matter with her husband. Should the latter be agreed, he will send his wife with £1.10.—to make a proposal to the girl's parents, and he will take the girl at once without much ceremony. The remainder of the lobolo will perhaps be paid afterwards. If a son wants to marry and has no means of buying his wife, then the girl's parents will say to their sister: "Please remind your husband that he has not yet given the oxen." But they will not urge this too strongly as it is their sister who arranged the marriage in order to secure help for herself. On the contrary should the husband have taken the initiative, and sent his wife to ask her parents to give him the girl because he wanted her, then the lobolo oxen will be claimed at once, or at any rate the bakonwana will be in a position to insist on a speedy remittance of the bride-price. But as my informant says: "Pai ya hi bhanu," i. e. "it goes according to the people." It depends on their character.

586 582 607 595 However there is a reason which militates against such marriages. If I quarrel with my first wife, who may have a particularly difficult character, and she goes home, her younger sisters or nieces, who are her tinhlampsa, will certainly follow her, and I shall remain quite alone without a single dish to eat in the evening. Should the quarrel end in a divorce, I shall lose all my

586 wives at once. The custom of marrying a wife's tinhlampsa is
582 approved of; it is however not very frequently observed in Thonga
607 families at the present time.

595 Other women to whom a man has a special right are his relatives on the mother's side, as we have seen; to take a wife from the family in which the father found the mother is recommended and approved of as long as she is not too near a relative.

2) The right of inheritance.

587 The second class of cases does not concern unmarried women
835 whom I mean to lobola, but widows whom I may inherit after
768 the death of their husband. Those whom I may eventually inherit
595 are generally called by me *namu* or *naati*, and I have very free
582 relations with them, but as already pointed out this liberty never goes so far as to allow of sexual intercourse (p. 247). "Ndi nga da," viz. "I can eat, inherit by prior right" *my elder brother's widow*: she is my regular legacy. As regards my younger brother's widow, I can only marry her if she is old and no longer able to bear children. But if she is still a childbearing woman, to take her is very much against the feelings of the tribe. The reason of the prohibition is this, says Viguet: suppose that this widow of my younger brother already has children. I take her, and have a child by her. The child takes precedence of the first children of its mother: he is their *hosi*, because I, myself, the father, am the elder brother of the deceased. On the other hand, he is *ndjisana* of his other brothers, because he was born after them by the same mother. This is impossible; it runs counter to the most elementary notions of the family. In exceptional cases, however, when no one else can claim my younger brother's widow, I may take her.

587 Next to my true tinamu comes *the widow of my maternal uncle*.
768 If he had many, one might be alloted to me in the distribution.
595 But of course, in this as in all other cases of inherited women, the
582 children born of our union would belong to the family who paid the lobolo, and not to me. I have, in a sense, only the usufruct of the property. She will till the fields for me and serve me with

583 (See page 109). Every male member of the group has his say in
835 the matter.

593 2) Brothers will always be ready to help a poor relative to
618 lobola : they work for their group.

3) The acquired wife is their presumptive spouse, though they cannot have sexual relations with her (matlulana). They will inherit her if the husband dies, according to the laws which I have explained in the preceding paragraphs.

583 4) Children will belong to the father, live with him, bear his
593 shibongo (family name), and owe him obedience : boys will
611 strengthen this group, girls will be lobota (factitive of lobola—
618 sold in marriage) for his profit. Father-right rests on the lobola. This is so plain that any child born of a woman who has not been paid for belongs to the mother's family, bears her shibongo name and will live in the malume's village. In Appendix VII, I relate the story of Spoon Libombo as an instance of this primordial law. This is the reason why, when the question is discussed, men insist so much on the preservation of the lobola. They say : "Who will guarantee us the possession of our children if lobola is suppressed ?"

So the lobola is by no means a purchase made by the husband, and still less a present given to the wife's parents.

1) Advantages of the lobola custom.

583 In the primitive collective stage of society the custom has
593 certainly *great advantages* : 1) It strengthens the family, I mean
586 the patriarchal family, the right of the father. 2) It marks the difference between a legitimate and an illegitimate marriage and, in this sense, takes the place of an official marriage register. 3) It puts hindrances in the way of dissolving the matrimonial union, as a wife cannot definitely leave her husband without her group returning the lobola. Therefore it obliges the married pair to have a certain regard one for the other.

However, these advantages must not be exaggerated. Marriages

583 concluded on the lobola basis, are frequently dissolved (1). The
586 tie being purely material, it is easy to sever it. When the husband
562 "bitana tihomu," claims his oxen, who could refuse to return
593 them ? It is certainly erroneous to say that the lobola is a contract made between two families in order to guarantee the good treatment of the wife by her husband and vice versa, to prevent the husband beating his wife or the wife deserting the conjugal home from mere caprice. It has even been asserted that this sum of money was a pledge, a security, claimed by the wife's parents for the protection of their daughter! There is nothing of the kind in this institution. The exhortations addressed to the bride on the day of her *hloma* (page 118) prove clearly enough that, on the contrary, owing to the lobola, the husband has every right over her, and that she has no right to protest if he uses or abuses this right.

2) Bad consequences of the lobola custom.

583 1) And this is the first *regrettable consequence of the lobolo* : the
562 woman is undoubtedly reduced to an *inferior position* by the fact that she has been lobola. *a)* This appears clearly in the fact that, though she is not looked upon exactly as a head of cattle, a marriageable girl is in principle entirely at the mercy of her family as regards the choice of her husband. In the same way a widow to be inherited is in the hands of her deceased husband's family.

586 (1) I will give only one example which I witnessed amongst my neighbours and
548 which shows that, with women of loose character, at any rate, the payment of lobolo helps very little to strengthen the matrimonial tie. A girl named Hlapfuta, daughter of Bandi, married a first husband. The "bukosi" (name commonly given to the lobolo money) was used to procure a wife for her brother. But she left her husband and was married by Nwamuni. This second husband paid the lobolo, which was then returned to the first. But Hlapfuta ran away a second time and joined a man called Matshubele. She did the same thing five consecutive times, and finally she moved to Majlangalen, to the suburbs of Lourenzo Marques, the favourite quarter of the prostitutes. There she was lost, and the "bukosi" also. Her paternal uncle, who had been put to any amount of trouble to recover the "bukosi" in order to give it back to the five abandoned husbands, seeing that it would be impossible to satisfy the last, could no longer bear the strain and committed suicide by hanging himself from a tree not far from my house in Rikatla. The debt remained with the girl's brother who "had eaten the bukosi."

583 Men are often better than their principles, and we have seen in
562 the study of marriage and inheritance customs that the consent
593 of a girl, and of a widow, is generally asked before any decision takes place. This is done as long as the male masters of the woman have no special interest in the choice. But should they have reason to impose a certain husband upon her, they will not hesitate to force her to accept him; a young girl will be given up to a dirty old man, for whom she has no liking, on account of a lobola debt of twenty years standing! The lobola hardens the heart and the woman is unable to defend herself. She can always run away. But where will she hide, if all her relatives agree on her being sacrificed to the interest of the family? Or she can threaten to commit suicide, and she occasionally does so. *b)* She must work for her husband, who gives her very little in return. It is true that she is not a *slave*. She is however *owned*. *c)* This is partly the cause of the shocking difference established between a husband and his wife. The married woman is henceforth absolutely prohibited from adulterous relations — which is a very admirable provision — but her husband is quite free in this respect: he has not been bought.
593 *d)* As regards her children, whatever may be her love for them,
562 she does not in fact possess them. They belong to the father.
586 If divorce takes place and the lobolo is not returned to the husband, he keeps them and the mother will be separated from them for ever (1).

583 2) A second series of consequences arising from this custom
606 are the *strained relations* between the two contracting groups.
578 We have sufficiently insisted on this subject. What makes dealings with parents-in-law so difficult? It is the lobolo, the sum of money which has perhaps not been Fully paid, and

(1) The Rev. H. Dieterlen, of Basutoland, in a paper on the lobola, wrote the following words, which apply to the Thongas as well as to the Ba-Sutho: "A woman married under lobola bears children but possesses none. The children belong to those who gave the cattle. Whatever may be her own merits, she can see her children pass into the hands of the rawest heathen and be given over to the cupidity of rapacious and rascally relatives. She can be illtreated, driven away, abandoned, repudiated: she will have to live without children; she will resemble a woman who has never had any. She is not supposed to have the heart and the feelings of a mother. And her children are treated as if they had no filial affection."

583 606 586 578 the debt remains as a permanent cause of irritation. If there is no reason for friction on that point, the threat of quarrels ending in divorce is always impending like the sword of Damocles. If this takes place, the sad event will be made ten times more painful by the terrible dispute which will arise by reason of the lobola being claimed back. And the contending couple will not suffer alone. It may be that another marriage, that of the great mukoñwana, which was perhaps a happy one, will be destroyed in consequence of the divorce. (p. 243) "A ba ruli timbilwin," remarked Mboza. "They don't find peace in their hearts."

These complicated relations due to the lobola poison the whole of native life. Life should be easy for South African Natives. Their wants are few and they have enough to satisfy them under their invariably blue sky. They are generally speaking mild and good-natured. But the lobola question fills the African village with hatred and bitterness. *The milandju*, the debts! Milandju comes from landja, to follow, and this etymology is very instructive. A husband whose wife has gone away must *landja* his wife or rather his money. His whole family will help him in following this property until it has been recovered. Natives will go from one end of the country to the other to follow a few pounds, and at least three quarters of the cases which are brought before the Courts are lobola cases.

As regards the attitude to be adopted towards the Lobola custom, see Practical Conclusions. III.

F. POLYGAMY.

I. *Origin and spread of Polygamy amongst the Thongas.*

595 Polygamy is uniformly practised all through the tribe. This is not to say that every man has many wives; the automatic rule, by which the number of males is always about equivalent to

2) Civil cases.

692 I will not assert that Thongas know the exact difference between
622 civil and criminal cases, the same tribunal judging them both and
643 all being called by the same name, milandju.
681 If any distinction is made, it would be between private and official cases, *private cases* being those which are settled by the two parties concerned alone, without the intervention of the chief; whilst *official cases* are those in which the matter (mhaka) has been brought to the capital. As already explained, the headmen of the village try to settle the difficulties themselves; if they succeed, all the better, as the fine will be reduced to its minimum, whilst, before the Court, the fine would be doubled and the chief would keep half of it!

691 Ninety per cent of the civil cases are in connection with *lobola*. These are sometimes most intricate and I would refer to the description already given of some of them (p. 282 and Appendix VIII).

691 *Divorce cases* are also common. When a woman has definitely
586 left her husband, her relatives must return the lobolo money.
643 "You must give up to them £ 5 or an ox," says Mankhelu. The
614 chief Mubvesha who was known for his avarice used to arrest the husband and make him pay £ 25; he returned £ 15 to the wife's relatives and kept £ 10 for himself.

When money is returned, the children belong to the mother (See page 279).

691 Many cases may occur in connection with *cattle*. The case of
643 *redhibition* is foreseen: when I buy an ox and it dies on my hands
437 from a disease which was not known at the date of my purchase but which already existed, I have the right to go and ask for another in its place. But I bring the skin of the dead ox with me and one hoe inside it for the meat which I have eaten. If the seller refuses to accept my claim, I go to the chief and complain. He will summon the recalcitrant person and say to him: "Did not this man act well when he put a hoe inside the skin? Give him another ox!" (Mankhelu.)

611 597 604 This man died during a war with the Portuguese, having been killed on Mbengelen island. The widow was "fambeliwa" (chosen) by Nsiki, Khobete's brother, who was to inherit her. But Nsiki did not really care for the widow. He did not prepare a *ntehe* for the baby nor provide the mother with ochre. Seeing this, Shibaninge went back to her relatives. When the time for the weaning of the little one arrived, a man named Mbobobo had irregular relations with the woman in order to "lumula" the child (See page 60). Mbobobo went so far as to take her to his home, upon which Nsiki claimed the lobolo paid by the Mazwayas and the Libombos gave it back to them. After that, Spoon lived in his mother's family and was called : "wa ka Libombo," "man of Libombo." But he had no real home (a nga na kwakwe). Being on the spot he was always chosen to help in the sacrifices : drinking the beer which remained in the pot after the libations to the gods in the gandelo, near the gate, stealing the offerings when the victims were killed in the sacred bush, etc. He was the "great ntukulu," because his mother belonged to the elder branch or first house of the family. So he took precedence of the other uterine nephews when they had to take part in the sacrifices.

APPENDIX VIII (See p. 281)

The story of Gidhlana Ngwetsa of Rikatla; a typical case illustrating the lobola, divorce, and leper customs of the Ba-Ronga.

587 586 Gidhlana was the sister of a man named Mubene. Both were the children of a fine old Ronga named Ngwetsa and one of his wives. Gidhlana was bought with lobola by a man named Khandlela (candle), son of Ñwamanghele, a man of the Manyisa clan settled near Rikatla. The marriage took place probably in 1893. The new pair did not live in peace. Gidhlana quarrelled with her husband. "Why ? Nobody knows! Are the affairs of the huts and the villages known to outsiders ?" She returned home to her father Ngwetsa. The husband waited a while. Then he followed her (landjela) and asked her to come back to the conjugal home. Her parents told her to obey. She went. But quarrelling soon recommenced. She fled a second time ; her husband and her parents-in-law did their best to induce her to go back. She refused. An uncle of hers took a stick and thrashed her but nothing could persuade her.

587 her, but nothing could persuade her. She stayed in her parents' village. In a neighbouring village dwelt a young man named Muzila, who was the chief of the Rikatla district (Page 381). He belonged to the Mazwaya clan, to the reigning family. He had two brothers, one of whom, called Gudu, was still a boy. This girl, Gidhlana, began to make friends with the boys of Muzila's village. Gudu sent a woman from the village of Ngwetsa to make proposals to Gidhlana (ku mu wopseta). This woman made proposals on behalf of Gudu (a wopsetela Gudu). The girl agreed. But, in the meantime, Gudu started for Johannesburg and Gidhlana was abducted by the other brother, who took her to the village of Muzila ; it was a case of marriage by theft (tlhuba) (See p. 119). Muzila was grieved at the conduct of these young men, and sent the girl to one of his counsellors to be watched over by him and, going to Ngwetsa, her father, he said : "We have stolen your pot. Look for it in our village, the village of Mazwaya's people." Ngwetsa was greatly puzzled. The first husband had not yet claimed his money back ; it was still in the hands of Ngwetsa and lo! the girl had already been taken by others! This was not right at all! They might have waited a little! All the men of Ngwetsa armed themselves and started as enemies (hi bulala) for the village of the thief.

587 639 They killed a pig, entered the hut of the thief, took all his implements and made a heap of them on the square. The inhabitants all fled into the bush. But one of them came back with 10 . and said : "Have pity on us, please! We clasp your legs! (khoma milenge, viz., ask for forgiveness). You know ? To steal is a very old thing on earth!" "Yes, we know. The thief trusted his throat! (This is a proverb : he did not fear to swallow a large stone, thinking that his throat would be wide enough to let it pass!) He knew that he would have to pay this fine! All right! You are saved! Take the implements back into the hut."

587 The Ngwetsas took away with them the flesh of the pig, but they sent one joint to the thief, so that he might eat it with his new wife. In this way they gave their consent to the marriage. "They gave him his wife."

586 But very soon afterwards the first husband, Khandlela, came to Ngwetsa to claim the lobola money, as his wife had gone. Gudu had gone to Johannesburg, so nothing was to be found in that quarter. The discussion began. Ngwetsa said : "All right ; but 10 of the lobola money must remain with us, for the fence of our village (lihlampfu)." This is generally done when a woman has been driven

586 away by her husband. Sometimes he must forego as much as £ 1. or £ 2 of the lobolo, because he has not brought the woman back in peace. He has spoilt the fence of the village by ill-treating a girl coming from it. He must repair it with that money... Khandlela refused, saying : "We have not driven her away! She went back of her own accord ; you have even found a new husband for her!" What could the Ngwetsas do ? They had just used the lobolo of Gidhlana to buy a wife for Mubene, her brother. The money had already been given to the Moyane clan from which a girl had been chosen by Mubene. They consequently went to the Moyanes and asked them to return the money. But the Moyanes said : "Your money has already gone further. We have used it to buy a girl of Madjieta for our son. We will go and fetch it." So two projected marriages were prevented ; they would have been annulled, had they been already concluded! In this way Khandlela found his money!

587 Later on Gudu came back from Johannesburg and took Gidhlana as his wife. Hoping that he had earned some money, the Nwgetsas went to him and said : "You have spoilt our flock (ntlhambi)" viz., the oxen which we hoped to get by the sale of our daughter. "Now pay!" Muzila said to them : "Look at Shaputa ; we trust in her!" Shaputa was a little girl, the sister of Gudu. Muzila proposed to Ngwetsa's people to consider her as theirs : "They would find money through her." They consented to wait till she was of age. Some years elapsed.

766 Muzila moved to the Mabota country with Gudu. Gidhlana was suddenly taken ill with leprosy and the disease made rapid progress. She died. Muzila, the master of the village, informed Ngwetsa. Ngwetsa did not come to the burial, neither did any member of the family attend it. Was it not leprosy ? Is not the contagion terrible for members of the family ?... Other people can bury a leper ; his relatives never. However they allowed their fears to go too far, for decency required that, in such a case, some relatives at least should go and witness the burial, even though they might keep far away from the grave. Their behaviour greatly grieved Muzila and entailed unexpected consequences!

587 Shaputa grew to be a young woman and a suitor, of the Honwana
766 clan, came and bought her. The Ngwetsas heard of it and at once put in their claim. Muzila informed Gudu, who was then staying near Lourenço Marques. "He fell on his back from the shock!" (o gaa hi le ntjhaku!) and refused to pay. Muzila said to Ngwetsa : "You have forfeited your claim, as you did not attend the funeral. Moreover

561 a rite of passage and this is also proved by the fact that the money or the
431 bracelets given to the persons concerned do not remain their property. As regards the circumcised, they remit them to the chief, and the chief distributes them to the old women who are no longer able to bear children. The girl who has passed through the khomba gives them to her adopted mother, who will use them in the same way. All the money remitted to the bride will go to the master of the village, for the old women and the children. *Married people must have no share in it,* as these presents are taboo. Why ? Because they are connected with a passage, and people who have sexual relations are considered as increasing the dangers connected with these critical phases of human development, when the heart is troubled by a half-conscious fear of a new and unknown future. Amongst civilised people who have reached the era of individualism, these fears find their expression in songs and poetry. In the communistic society they express themselves by means of rites.

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541 Here are some answers to the questions of Professor Frazer on
387 marriage.
611 A man always brings his wife to his own home. This is the *tlhoma,* and it is a law. It is taboo for him to go and live with his parents-in- law, at any rate when he marries his first wife. In the course of time, when the children have grown up, when the *bukoñwana,* viz. the relations with parents-in-law, are of old standing, a man can go and live in his wife's village (See Part II). Another case in which this can be done is when a widow refuses to marry the man who legally inherits her, and gives herself to a stranger, a man of Inhambane, for instance. He does not pay the lobolo, and lives with her in her village ; but the children born of that union will belong to the family of the deceased husband.
585 There is no preparation for marriage amongst the Thongas by fasting, bleeding or keeping awake the night before. No corn or rice is thrown at the bridal pair. The bride or bridegroom is never represented at the marriage by a proxy or dummy. Conjugal relations begin immediately after marriage (see page 113), but the wife does not possess her home and her kitchen for the first year ; during that period she must cook for her mother-in-law.
583 There are no occasions on which men exchange their wives.
See practical conclusions on Marriage Rites at the end of Vol. I.

843 754 to hinder the child from growing and to put in its place, by means of her enchantments, a snake, a hare, a quail or an antelope!

834 846 [886] After the birth, owing to possible contamination by the lochia, sexual intercourse is prohibited till the rite of tying the cotton string (p. 56) has taken place. It is then allowed, but conception must be avoided till weaning, when relations are resumed in the normal way, and this goes on till the time when the woman is no longer able to bring forth children. I know of no special rules in connection with the menopause.

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831 But, amongst Bantus, sexual relations are not an individual affair, as amongst nations more advanced in evolution. There is a mysterious relation between them and the collective life of the community. Hence the fact that, on certain given occasions, they are recommended, even ordered, or prohibited.

1) Cases of recommendation.

833 783 587 829 Sexual relations must take place on two principal occasions : when the inmates of a village abandon it and go elsewhere to found a new one, and when the widows perform the painful rite of "lahla khombo" (to cast away misfortune). We shall see, when studying these customs, that sexual relations have here a twofold signification : 1) they "consolidate" the little community in its new abode, viz. they strengthen its structure by confirming the authority of its chief ; 2) they provide the principal means of getting rid of all contamination, especially of the defilement connected with death. (Annotatio 13.)[1]

2) Cases of prohibition.

834 784 581 829 753 Married people are not considered as being in a state of defilement, as mourners are, for example. Yet this class of persons, called "ba-kukhila," constitute a danger for those members of the community who are in a weak state of health. They must not come in contact with the circumcised, because in that case their wounds would not heal properly.

1 [See pp. 518-519 in these categories or in V6--Analyst]

783 washed in the pool and which she will wear again for two days (1).
765 b) *The following days of the Great Mourning.* Without delay a new hut, a small provisional hut, is built in front of the mortuary one. Here the great wife will stay during the whole of her widowhood; the space between this and the old hut is more or less taboo and most of the possessions of the deceased are placed there, under the roof near the door on the outside. (See illustration p. 159.)

The other widows do not leave their huts, but they participate in the other purifying acts, the vapour baths and the general sprinkling of the fifth day. As regards the vapour baths, however, the first wife is associated with the grave-diggers, viz. she must be exposed to the strongest medicinal smoke, while the inferior wives are cleansed with weaker drugs. They all put on the *malopa* and eat with spoons during the whole year of widowhood.

587 c) *Provisional decision regarding the fate of the widows.* A few
595 days after the Great Mourning, a fresh gathering takes place, not
428 in connection with the defilement of death, which is now provision-
768 ally cleansed, but *to settle provisionally the fate of the widows.* The
604 sisters of the deceased have to play a special part in this gathering. They will lead the discussion with the widows about their new husbands. It is indeed a happy custom to let women decide on the subject. Not that they have unrestricted power in the matter. The law has provided a certain rule for the distribution and this is seldom departed from. However, some liberty is allowed in its application, and modifications can better be made if proposed by female intermediaries. Should the husband possess a harem (tshengwe), that is at least five wives, they will most likely be given to the following heirs. The great wife, being "the pole of the

575 (1) *Widowers* also form a similar society and undergo the same rites; but just as it
783 was only the great wife who was subject to these laws, to the exclusion of the little wives, so it is only when he has lost his first wife that a man is initiated into the
765 widowers' society. After having buried her (he holds her head) he goes to the pool, washes himself, and another widower comes and makes the incision in him in the inguinal region. Then he throws aways his *shifado* (Annotatio 1.) and also carries out the same crossing of the hut in tears. These three acts constitute the actual widower's mourning: the vapour baths and *fahla khombo* are part of his purification as being the principal grave-digger.

1 [See category 116 --Analyst]

787 village," must remain in it and belongs to the younger brother (1)
595 who becomes the master of the kraal. The second goes to the
428 second brother, the third to the third, the fourth to the *ntukulu*,
768 viz. to the son of the sister of the deceased. The fifth will then
604 become the wife of one of the sons of the deceased. This may appear shocking, and is really shocking even to the ideas of the Natives ; but let it be remembered that she is the youngest of all ; she was taken when the father was already old, and the first son is perhaps older than she. As regards the elder wives, the first and second especially, no one would think of keeping them for the son! Incestuous relations are very rare amongst the
[835] Ba-Ronga. Even in this case, the feelings of both parties are more or less respected. The men advise the son to begin to play with the young widow, to ask her jocularly for tobacco, and he gradually accustoms himself to consider her no longer as a mother (mamana) but as a wife (nsati).

587 Of course the general rule is apt to be very much altered
595 according to circumstances. Should the deceased be the youngest
428 of the family, his elder brother may inherit the first wife. But
768 this is not the regular procedure.

The distribution having thus been decided on, the sisters of the deceased call the widows and say to them : "You so and so, you shall give food to so and so (phamela manyana)." But then the struggle begins. One of the widows, being old, may altogether refuse to have anything to do with any of her brothers-in-law. She may say : "I am taking my young son as a husband" which means : I do not want to be the wife of anybody. Or she will say : "I choose the big tree of the village where my late husband has built his hut." This answer may mean two things. Either : I do not leave this kraal and I will stay here without a husband ; or, on the contrary : I consent to be the wife of the man who becomes the headman of the village, viz. the eldest of the younger brothers. Another will say : "I love my *ntukulu* so and so." Should, however, the first wife desire to go to a man who does not

(1) Amongst the Ba-Ronga, an elder brother of the deceased cannot inherit a widow. It is taboo. He is a father to her, not a husband. He sometimes takes the lead in the discussion, having no personal interest in the matter. (See Part II).

587 395 428 768 live in the village, the family council will certainly object strongly to her wish, as her departure would mean that the village would cease to exist. But in the case of the younger widows it is quite possible that an exception to the ordinary law would be allowed if they insisted upon choosing another husband (1).

After all, this is but a preliminary consultation, and the men who are rejoicing at the idea of getting new wives will perhaps be badly deceived later on, as we shall see. However the man provisionally chosen as the future husband of a widow, will at once pay visits to her, "march to her" (ku mu fambela), according to the technical expression.

765 783 833 d) *The casting away of misfortune.* But before any new and happy life can begin for the widows, they have still to go through a very hard trial. They must perform the *lahla khombo*, the throwing away of the malediction of death, and this is much more difficult for them than for the grave-diggers or the other members of the village. The main point in this strange act of purification is this ; before a widow can become the wife of her new husband, she must have sexual intercourse with another man whom she deceives. Should she succeed in freeing herself from him so that the act keeps its ritual character, s. n. i. (see Annotatio 2), this man will take on himself the malediction of death, and she will be purified. On the contrary, should the man accomplish the whole act, the widow has failed and will return home with shame and in despair! Here is a description of this sad expedition of the widows. It takes place a few days after the gathering just described. The men of the village send the widows away, telling them : "Go and scatter (hangalasa) the malediction through the country and get rid of it before some other misfortune happens to us."

(1) What would happen should the widow choose a husband outside her husband's family? To the mind of a heathen woman the idea would never occur. But suppose a Christian widow, having only married suitors, refuses to become their wife, her conscience forbidding her to contract a polygamic union. Her case would be very hard indeed, as I do not think her wish would be taken into consideration by heathen relatives. It would have to be brought before the White magistrate, who would probably try to help the widow. I think that, even if the woman consented to submit such family matters to the European court, she would have to give the *labola* or her children back to her brothers-in-law, and that might be an impossibility for her. It would be interesting to know how Native Commissioners proceed in such cases.

1 [See p. 516 in these categories or in 116 -- Analysed]

124 The description I have given of the *lahla khombo*, translating
178 exactly the narratives of Mbozà, Elias, and an old widower called
164 Magingi, refers to the rite as it was performed in the normal
783 fashion some twenty years ago amongst the Ba-Ronga. Now
765 customs are changing. There is, all around the town of Lourenço Marques, an agglomeration of Natives coming from many tribes. Immorality there has become terrible owing especially to alcoholic excesses, a free and enormous sale of adulterated wine taking place in this region. The widows are sure to find there a hundred men for each of them, when they wish to cast away their defilement. But in this promiscuity the poison of syphilis makes terrible ravages. According to our medical missionary, 90 % of the
783 Natives are contaminated by this disease. When the men up
765 country saw that their wives came back ritually purified but
178 physically contaminated, they began themselves to accomplish the necessary act. This has become the general custom to such an
833 extent that, when a widow goes to Majlangalen, (such is the name of that hell of drunkenness and immorality), it is now said of her : "She will refuse to stay with her legal heirs!" However the law of the *lahla khombo nhoben*, to cast away the malediction in the bush, remains inexorable in the three cases where the defilement is considered as being of the worst kind : if the
[845] husband died of phthisis or of leprosy, or if the woman has had twins.

Old widows who can find no lovers may be purified by means of drugs.

765 e) *The year of widowhood*. Though the widows have found
587 new husbands, they still remain in the old kraal. They must accomplish there "a full hoe," viz. a whole year of ploughing. In their new fields they leave the dry sticks of the mealies of the year before, in such a way that everybody passing by will know at once that this is the field of a widow. But what they harvest this year will belong to the new husband. They have now the right to *fambelana*, viz. to go to each other. The suitor brings clothing to the woman, and the woman pays him visits with jars of beer. They belong more or less to each other. But the marriage of the inherited woman is not absolutely settled. Her

final fate will not be known before the last and most important act : the adjudication of the inheritance.

f) *The day of the adjudication of the inheritance.* This is a most typical ceremony prepared for with great care, because the day is full of surprises and dangers. Every precaution is taken to avoid misunderstanding, and to bring the mourning to a peaceful and satisfactory conclusion. It is winter time ; the mealies have been collected from the fields of the widows, the small cobs called *makunula* have been set carefully apart, as they have to be used especially to prepare the beer for the feast. The council of the family is again assembled and decides that the time has come. The divinatory bones are consulted. Should they be favourable, the ceremony can take place. The bones are again asked a number of questions : Who must take the mealies from the granary and put them in the pot to soften them in water ? (first operation of native beer making). A newly married woman who has had only one child is chosen by preference. Then it is asked how long this softening must continue ; who is to shout her *mikulungwane* to accompany the work ; who will have to get the mealies out ; which woman must give the first blow in the mortar to pound the softened mealies, etc.

All the relatives assemble in the mortuary village. One year has elapsed since the death, and the bitter feelings of mourning have passed. Nobody will miss the feast, certainly not the *batukulu*, viz., the nephews, sons of the sisters of the deceased. Some may be disappointed this day, but one of these nephews may return home richer than when he left! Most of the relatives arrive before the great day, to help in the preparation of the beer. When the woman designated by the bones has given the first blow, all her companions start at once pounding with vigour : "Che-ghe-ghe-ghe," and they sing songs of mourning. This is one of these songs, and a very significant one :

> Hi ñlo, hi rilo! Hi ta ku yini ku we, Hosi ndjina ?
> We are weeping, we are weeping! What shall we say to thee, King!

This king is without doubt Heaven, the more or less personal being who kills or gives life, and whom we shall often meet with in these pages.

768 The sun is now setting. All the men go to the central place of
575 the village and sit round the fire. The widows remain on the
533 spot, between the deceased's hut and the new hut of the great wife, where all the belongings of the late husband have been kept during the whole year. The other widows of the family surround them once more ; no other woman is allowed to approach. The present ceremony is another secret rite of the company of widows. They sing the following mourning song to recall all the sufferings of the year of widowhood :

> Angoma nkulukumba ! Tatana a nga fa, a ba siya
> Na ngoma a nga si ba byela !
> Our secret law is a great law ! Our father has gone, he has left them,
> And he had not told them about that law !

768 During this song the old women take away all the clothing of
58 the widows, and wash their bodies. Then they lead them into the hut of the great wife and put on them new clothing, the clothes which their suitors and other relatives have brought for them. When they are all seated, the sisters of the deceased proceed to the last distribution. They first ask the great wife : "You, to whom do you belong ?" She answers : "Do you not know him ? It is the man who has taken care of me, who has been visiting me! I choose so and so!" She may also say : "I kill so and so!" *(Ndji dlaya man)*. That means : "As I have killed my first husband, I might do the same for the second," a very promising declaration! As soon as the widow has given her answer, the women in the hut begin shouting loudly, and one of them goes out to the men, and cries : "So and so says she kills so and so !" They proceed to ask another : "You, whom do you choose ?" The woman remains silent. "What do you mean?" — "I do not choose anybody." — "How is that? Be sensible!" — "No! I do not want anybody!" — "Why ?" They begin to press her : "You know well who has taken care of you, who has visited *(hambela)* you the whole year." — "I do not want him!" — "How is that possible ?" — "No, I do not want him. I want the *ntukulu* so and so." A frightful noise is heard in the hut ; they are all shouting together. What has happened ?

587 768 Probably this widow was not pleased with the man to whom they had destined her. Seeing more of him during the year, her affection had not increased. On the other hand, she had some liking for one of the *hatukulu*, and she arranged secretly with him, and perhaps also with his mother, that she would keep silent till this day and then choose her nephew. It is quite possible that the mother of the *ntukulu* will say in that case: "Has this widow not been bought with the money which I secured for the family by my marriage?" Of course the official suitor objects strongly to this spoliation. He becomes angry. During a whole year he has given clothing to the ungrateful one. Things may grow so bad that the *ntukulu* carries off the fractious widow at once, saying: "Good-bye! I go with my wife!" The old men will then follow him and implore him to come back. If they see that the woman is quite decided, they will allow her to go to the husband of her choice. They had better consent to it at once, because it not infrequently happens that the *ntukulu*, if repulsed that day, will go to the family of the woman and claim the money *(lobola)* paid for her by her late husband, saying: "That *lobola* comes from my mother. If you do not give us our wife, if you allow her to stay with another man, then give us back the money." Or it may happen also that the widow, brought perforce to the house of a younger brother-in-law, will run away to the *ntukulu*, and the rightful husband will be helpless. There is a saying to this effect: "A woman inherited cannot be forced." Of course 587 such cases of conflicting interests cause a great deal of friction 578 between members of the family, and the Natives are much distress- 768 ed about it; they try to avoid it as much as possible. But the desire of getting one more wife is so strong in the heart of a Ronga 428 that such disputes are by no means rare, and the day of the adjudication of the inheritance is universally dreaded. However, they never go as far as fighting, and if an uncle and a nephew have parted from each other on bad terms, they will very likely try to mend matters by the sacrifice of reconciliation *(hahlelana madjieta)*, which is one of the admirable features of the Ronga religion (See Part VI).

The widows are truly the most important part of the property

783 village itself, which must carry out the collective purification of
768 *hlamba ndjaka*.

I must further mention a new custom which is spreading
587 amongst the Ba-Ronga in the neighbourhood of Lourenço
609 Marques. When a widow objects to becoming the wife of the legal
611 inheritor, she goes home and adopts another husband. There are plenty of men of other tribes, coming from Inhambane, Quelimane, Mozambique, who have no wife. They accept the proposal of the widow and go to live in her village. They are generally despised and called by the insulting name of *mugomo*, a Zulu word meaning an empty iron oil-tin. They are as hard and unfeeling as such a tin! If children are born, they belong to the family of the deceased husband, who paid the lobolo.

587 Sometimes also a widow chooses a nephew who is still a child. She gives him food as if she were his wife, but she lives with another man whom she loves. It even happens that she may choose a girl, the daughter of another wife of the deceased. (Annotatio 13.)[1]

C. OLD AGE AND DEATH

888 An old woman, having in some sort gone out from the sexual
782 community, enjoys some privileges which are taboo for her sisters who are still capable of childbearing. She is allowed to put on the clothing of the widows ; contamination of death is not so dangerous for her. She can proceed to the purification of the village, in certain cases of epidemic, and of the weapons of the warriors in war time (Part III). After the sacrifice of the black ram for rain, old women and small girls alone are allowed to eat the flesh of the victim.

462 But old and decrepit women are despised. As long as they
888 can still till their land, they are treated with consideration, but when they have lost all their strength and must be fed by their children, they are looked upon as troublesome burdens. I must say that, as long as she still has an atom of vigour, a Thonga woman goes to her field and tills it. During all her life time

1 [See pp. 518-519 in these categories or in 116 — Analyst]

462 888 she has contracted such an intimate union with Mother Earth that she cannot conceive existence away from her gardens, and she crawls to them with her hoe, by a kind of instinct, till she dies.

764 The death of the woman is accompanied by the same rites as the death of a man. I must mention, however, the custom of *mahloko*, which takes place when a woman dies while still in her prime. Mahloko comes from *nhlokó*, head. The explanation of this technical word is this : the parents of the woman say : "Our head (viz. a person belonging to us) has died ; let us go to mourn her."

587 578 Let us first see how this mourning takes place *in the Ronga clans*. If the two families were very friendly, the parents of the deceased will probably bring with them a little girl, saying : "This is our little green meat (mbuti), our little orange (rather sala, fruit of the nsala tree)." They offer her to the husband to take the place of the deceased wife, and a new contract will be made. The widower will then at once pay a first part of the lobolo, £ 5 for instance, and, in the course of time, he will marry his sister-in-law. But generally the visitors are angry, and the mahloko ceremony is very unpleasant. It may be that the deceased wife had not been entirely paid for. In that case her parents will come at the end of the mourning to "claim the herd" (ramela ntlhambi).

764 578 754 But though there may be no difficult lobola question in the way, uneasiness is felt, because the brothers of the deceased cannot help thinking that their sister has been killed by witchcraft. It was not yet time for her to die ; so she must have been bewitched by the husband's family, probably by her co-wives, who were jealous of her. When the Great Mourning took place, they hardly came to the mortuary village. One or two went to see their "head," and mourned her in their own kraal. To day, the day of mahloko, they assemble, and throw bones in order to know who will have to speak, who will receive the mahloko money, whether the money has been bewitched ? The whole company starts for the mortuary village, driving a goat before them. They sit down outside in the bush with dark looks ; there is no longer any hut to receive them... They have been noticed by the

765 as usual in the house of the deceased wife's mother, and the parley takes place through the go-between (tintjumi), as in the discussions which precede marriage. Let us call the husband's family A and that of the wife B. A sends two hoes to B as a notification : "Your child died with us last year." B answers "All right! Then pay the fine for her head (nhloko). Because you had only bought her legs. Her brain, her head, her name was still ours." A sends five hoes to B, to pay for the brains of the deceased. B takes two of the five and sends them back to A, saying : "One of them is to cleanse you from the misfortune, and we shave your head with the second." A accepts the two hoes and returns home. Should the wife have died childless, there will be a second act to the procedure: A has "opened the door of the claim" (a pfurile nyangwa wa nandju). He will come back shortly to lodge it with B.

587 768 Here he comes. Using his go-between (ntjumi) as a mouth piece, he says to B : "Look at us! We gather our ashes with our own hands and we dig water in small shells of sala,— viz. we have no wife to do this feminine work for us!" It means : "Please give us another wife or repay the money to buy one." If B happens to have a girl of marriageable age, he will say : "Do not kill us ; we put a log of wood across the road" (hi hingakanya ntjandja). This means : "We have put something to prevent you from coming to us as enemies. Here is a new wife for you." A understands quite well and goes home satisfied. He comes back without delay and brings twenty or thirty hoes, which is a beginning of lobola payment. He says : "We thank you for the wife." The girl then follows him at once, if she is of marriageable age ; if not, she stays at home until she is grown up, and during all this time her new husband provides her with clothing. When, having gone to live with him, she gives birth to a child, B comes to A and says : "Nwombekazi a yi ambi nandju," viz. "A cow which has calved is not used to pay a debt," that is to say : she must be paid for herself. This technical expression means therefore : As our daughter has given you posterity, pay the full lobolo for her! A will certainly do it "hi bushaka," on account of the friendly relation existing between B and himself. But if B has no girl to give in compensation, if he has no money, what will happen ? A will

587 768 follow his oxen where they have gone, namely into the family of the girl who has been bought by B for one of his sons. This woman is for the widower his great *mukoñwana*, the woman he fears the most in all the tribe. We shall see what will then happen when treating of the extraordinary relations existing between these two individuals. This wonderful story of the consequences of the death of a wife, so characteristically told by Viguet, provides us with an excellent opportunity for transition to Part II of this work, which will explain the relations between all the members of the Thonga family.

604 with his friends. The malume comes back and is angry. But when he hears that the trick has been played by his mupsyana, he shrugs his shoulders and says : "Oh it is all right if it is the ntukulu who has done it ! A shi biwi ntukulu! The nephew must never be beaten!" When another day the nephew comes again, the malume says : "You starved us to death the other day!" — "Is there any more food handy that I may do it again ?" answers the boy. The sons of the malume seem to have
605 less patience with their cousin than their father has. When the cousin goes definitely beyond the limits of their endurance, they will chase him out of the village saying : "Go away, you dog!" The niece is sometimes as troublesome as the nephew. If she is married and pays a visit to her malume with her husband, she will leave the latter comfortably settled in the malume's hut and search the whole village to discover pots of beer, which she will bring to him as if she were the mistress of the home. She may even catch a fowl and give it to him.

604 Sometimes the malume himself points to one of his wives and
837 says to the ntukulu : "This is your wife. Let her feast you
587 well!" The woman much enjoys the situation, which she finds quite entertaining. She makes a feast for the ntukulu and calls him *nkata*, husband. It will sometimes go so far that the nephew will say to the uncle : "Please make haste and die that I may have your wife!" — "Do you intend to kill me with a gun ?" says the malume... But all this talking is a mere joke. The nephew can take many liberties with this aunt, especially in the Ronga clans. He will never however have relations with her during the life of her husband. Should he do so, he will have to pay the high fine due for a true adultery. Possibly he will inherit her when the malume dies, but she will not be his full property : she will only be given (nyika) to him, and the children will eventually belong to the malume's male relatives. All over the tribe this right of inheriting a malume's wife is recognized. In the Northern clans she is called *kokwana* ; in Ronga territory she is called kokwana by her nieces only, but her nephews call her *nsati* (wife), and this term seems also to be an old feature of the relationship system. This relation of malume and mupsyana is so important

607 quently his potential mothers. He avoids them all, not on account
835 of the lobolo oxen, which he did not actually pay for their daughters,
582 but because it is intolerable to think that he might have relations with a woman and her mother.

607 But no doubt the fact that oxen have been paid by the man,
586 oxen by means of which his great mukoñwana was bought, is
835 the principal cause of the fear which they both feel towards each other. These oxen have created a sort of interdependence between them. Mboza says : "Should my home be disturbed by quarrels, should my wife Nsabula leave me and run away to her parents, or should she die without children, I shall go and claim my oxen... But the oxen have been employed to buy a wife for my brother-in-law, (Maphunga for Mahangale). If Gogwe has no other means at his disposal he must separate the pair Maphunga-Mahangale, cancel their marriage, send Maphunga home and claim the money from her parents. Or I might myself take Maphunga as my wife, and in either of these cases the marriage Maphunga-Mahangale would be annulled."

Thus it may happen that Mboza may marry his great mukoñwana, though such a union is really incestuous, according to the deep moral feeling of the tribe. This is truly terrible!

587 But does this ever really happen ? I have put this question to
607 many Thongas, in the various clans of the tribe, and remarked that there are differences amongst them.

Amongst the Nkunas of Shiluvane it is an absolute impossibility. Another woman is offered to meet the claim of the son-in-law who has lost his wife. This is called : "Ku hingakanya ntjandja", i. e. "to put a log across the road." The woman offered may be a little girl, still at the breast of her mother, or even a little boy. This is your wife, his parents will say to the son-in-law, and he must be content to know that, as this male baby will no doubt have a sister in the course of the two following years, the girl to be born will replace his wife. "Ntjandja a ba tluli" i. e. "One does not jump over the log." The man will not persist in his claim, and will not insist on taking the great mukonwana to replace his wife.

Amongst the Khosas and Bilas, such a marriage can take place

587/607 if there is really no means of avoiding it. In the Maputju clan, it is also prohibited ; but "owing to the Whites," owing to civilisation, which alters the old, sound laws of the tribe, it sometimes occurs. Everywhere such an occurence is looked on as a great misfortune.

It is in the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques, ka Mpfumo, that the reluctance is least pronounced. I have from Mboza the description of what will happen in that part of the tribe when a woman dies without children. Viguet has told us the first half of the story (p. 217). The husband has paid the *mahloko* ; the mourning is over ; but the parents of the deceased wife have no money, no young girl to give as compensation. Here is the second part of this family drama. The father of the deceased wife having no other resource "opens the way of bukoñwana to his son-in-law, the widower." Let us suppose it is Nsabula who has died. Gogwe goes, together with Mboza and his official go-between, to the father of Maphunga. Let us call him Mbekwa. He gives him two hoes and says : "We have brought your mukoñwana (Mboza) because we have had a sad affair (hi humele)." Mbekwa asks Mboza : "How many hoes did you pay for your deceased wife" ? — "Fifty," says Mboza. — "Well, we have received from Gogwe as yet only thirty for Maphunga!" Gogwe acknowledges that it is so. He must at once find the missing twenty hoes and give them back to Mboza, who returns to Mbekwa taking them with him, so as to complete the lobola. All this was only preparatory. Now Gogwe has no further interest in the matter, and returns home. It concerns Mboza alone. Mbekwa calls Maphunga and says : "Look ! this is your great mukoñwana ! Now he is your husband." She may say : "Yes, very well." Then Mboza fetches a goat, and a most curious ceremony takes place, which we shall describe later on, the rite of *killing bukoñwana* or *shikoñwana*, the aim being to kill a certain kind of relationship which must be replaced by another, after which Mboza can marry Maphunga. But most probably Maphunga will say : "No! I fear him too much! It is taboo!" Her feelings cannot accept such a change in their relations. Viguet does not say : "She loves her own husband too much to go willingly to another!" This seems to be a minor consideration. If she definitely refuses, Mbekwa will try

587 607 to find another woman. Maphunga may perhaps have a daughter who will do. Or Mbekwa may have a married son whose daughter can also be offered. If the great mukoñwana is only pregnant, the child about to be born is quite enough *ku hingakanya ntjandja*, to put a log across the road and an end to the claim. But the child will perhaps be a boy... not a girl. Never mind! Mboza will wait patiently for a girl ; Shaputa will be born ; he will wait again until she is of age, then he will marry her and she will *pfusha yindlu ya rarana*, viz. raise up the house of her aunt Nsabula (1). Naturally if matters take this course, Gogwe will have to pay the lobola of the girl who has taken the place of the deceased. Nowadays it is not very difficult : he will work, or send one of his sons to work, for the money.

c) The tinamu.

607 When a man goes bukoñwanen, his heart is full of mixed feelings. He trembles lest he may meet the two terrible bakoñwana whom he wishes to avoid ; but, on the other hand, he is greatly rejoiced at the idea that his *tinamu* will welcome him with hearty laughter and jokes and make much of him. Who are these tinamu ? They belong to three categories, which correspond to three kinds of *bulamu*. First of all *the younger sisters of the wife*.

607 835 *Namu*, plur. *tinamu*, in Ronga, *balamo* in Djonga, comes from the archaic verb *yalama*, which means to *follow*, to come after. My tinamu are those who follow my wife, who have been born after her, her younger sisters in particular. They are my *presumptive wives*, therefore I can play with them with the greatest freedom ; I eat together with them from the same plate. They go so far as to smear my face with ashes (tota hi nkuma) and afterwards wash it with water. I have the right to pat their shoulders gently, to snatch something from their hands, to force them to give me something to eat ; and, if they refuse, I will say to them : "How dare you stint me, you, my wives!" They go

(1) One more fact. If Muhangala has taken another wife besides Maphunga, his daughter born of this second wife cannot be used to meet the claim of the widower.

586 wives at once. The custom of marrying a wife's tinhlampsa is
582 approved of; it is however not very frequently observed in Thonga
607 families at the present time.
595 Other women to whom a man has a special right are his relatives on the mother's side, as we have seen; to take a wife from the family in which the father found the mother is recommended and approved of as long as she is not too near a relative.

2) The right of inheritance.

587 The second class of cases does not concern unmarried women
835 whom I mean to lobola, but widows whom I may inherit after
768 the death of their husband. Those whom I may eventually inherit
595 are generally called by me *namu* or *nsati*, and I have very free
582 relations with them, but as already pointed out this liberty never goes so far as to allow of sexual intercourse (p. 247). "Ndi nga da," viz. "I can eat, inherit by prior right" *my elder brother's widow*: she is my regular legacy. As regards my younger brother's widow, I can only marry her if she is old and no longer able to bear children. But if she is still a childbearing woman, to take her is very much against the feelings of the tribe. The reason of the prohibition is this, says Viguet: suppose that this widow of my younger brother already has children. I take her, and have a child by her. The child takes precedence of the first children of its mother: he is their *hosi*, because I, myself, the father, am the elder brother of the deceased. On the other hand, he is *ndjisana* of his other brothers, because he was born after them by the same mother. This is impossible; it runs counter to the most elementary notions of the family. In exceptional cases, however, when no one else can claim my younger brother's widow, I may take her.

587 Next to my true tinamu comes *the widow of my maternal uncle*.
768 If he had many, one might be alloted to me in the distribution.
595 But of course, in this as in all other cases of inherited women, the
582 children born of our union would belong to the family who paid the lobolo, and not to me. I have, in a sense, only the usufruct of the property. She will till the fields for me and serve me with

587 my daily plate of porridge, but she is not really mine. She is given
768 (nyika) to me by favour, and only under specified conditions.
595 I can also inherit *bakokwana*, the widow of my malume's father
582 (not my true grandmother, of course, but her co-wife), the widow of my father's brothers.

Muhambi can inherit Magugu, *the widow of his cousin* Hlangabeza. This cousin is a brother (makwabu) and the two fathers are brothers. But he could not inherit Debeza, wife of Phusa. Why so? Because Phusa, being a cousin by the father's sister, belongs to another *shibongo*, the shibongo of his own father Muki and not to that of his mother. Should Muhambi lay claim to Debeza, the men of Mashabane (the name of Phusa's clan) would say : "We are opposed to it, because your doing so would in fact mean that you *eat two herds*. You have eaten one herd when we bought Ndjibari from your people. Ndjibari has had two children ; we have sold her daughter Ñwashidjasa to lobola Debeza for Phusa. The oxen were ours. If Phusa dies, Debeza belongs to us and not to you." So Muhambi can inherit the widow of his cousin, the son of his paternal uncle, but not the widow of his cousin, the son of his paternal aunt.

A man can inherit also *one of his father's wives*, as we have seen (page 203), but only under certain circumstances. The dlaya shilongo is never performed in the case of inherited women.

A rule on which Viguet insisted, but which is disappearing, is this : women, when their husband had no younger brothers, must be inherited by *batukulu* and not by *bana* ; batukulu, i. e. either true grandsons, sons of the son, or uterine nephews, sons of the sister of the deceased. The reasons for this law are : 1) Bana, sons, would take liberties with their father's wives and make balamo of them, if they could inherit them regularly. This would spoil the life of the village. 2) If I, being ñwana, a son, inherit my father's wife and have a child by her, this child is ñwana, a son, to me. On the other hand, this inherited woman may have had children by my father, and they are my brothers. So, one of this woman's children is my son, the other my brother ! "A beleki tinshaka timbiri." — "She has had children of two generations!" This must not be.

611 597 604 This man died during a war with the Portuguese, having been killed on Mbengelen island. The widow was "fambeliwa" (chosen) by Nsiki, Khobete's brother, who was to inherit her. But Nsiki did not really care for the widow. He did not prepare a *ntehe* for the baby nor provide the mother with ochre. Seeing this, Shibaninge went back to her relatives. When the time for the weaning of the little one arrived, a man named Mbobobo had irregular relations with the woman in order to "lumula" the child (See page 60). Mbobobo went so far as to take her to his home, upon which Nsiki claimed the lobolo paid by the Mazwayas and the Libombos gave it back to them. After that, Spoon lived in his mother's family and was called : "wa ka Libombo," "man of Libombo." But he had no real home (a nga na kwakwe). Being on the spot he was always chosen to help in the sacrifices : drinking the beer which remained in the pot after the libations to the gods in the gandelo, near the gate, stealing the offerings when the victims were killed in the sacred bush, etc. He was the "great ntukulu," because his mother belonged to the elder branch or first house of the family. So he took precedence of the other uterine nephews when they had to take part in the sacrifices.

APPENDIX VIII (See p. 281)

The story of Gidhlana Ngwetsa of Rikatla; a typical case illustrating the lobola, divorce, and leper customs of the Ba-Ronga.

587 586 Gidhlana was the sister of a man named Mubene. Both were the children of a fine old Ronga named Ngwetsa and one of his wives. Gidhlana was bought with lobola by a man named Khandlela (candle), son of Ñwamanghele, a man of the Manyisa clan settled near Rikatla. The marriage took place probably in 1893. The new pair did not live in peace. Gidhlana quarrelled with her husband. "Why ? Nobody knows! Are the affairs of the huts and the villages known to outsiders ?" She returned home to her father Ngwetsa. The husband waited a while. Then he followed her (landjela) and asked her to come back to the conjugal home. Her parents told her to obey. She went. But quarrelling soon recommenced. She fled a second time ; her husband and her parents-in-law did their best to induce her to go back. She refused. An uncle of hers took a stick and thrashed her but nothing could persuade her.

587 her, but nothing could persuade her. She stayed in her parents' village. In a neighbouring village dwelt a young man named Muzila, who was the chief of the Rikatla district (Page 381). He belonged to the Mazwaya clan, to the reigning family. He had two brothers, one of whom, called Gudu, was still a boy. This girl, Gidhlana, began to make friends with the boys of Muzila's village. Gudu sent a woman from the village of Ngwetsa to make proposals to Gidhlana (ku mu wopseta). This woman made proposals on behalf of Gudu (a wopsetela Gudu). The girl agreed. But, in the meantime, Gudu started for Johannesburg and Gidhlana was abducted by the other brother, who took her to the village of Muzila : it was a case of marriage by theft (tlhuba) (See p. 119). Muzila was grieved at the conduct of these young men, and sent the girl to one of his counsellors to be watched over by him and, going to Ngwetsa, her father, he said : "We have stolen your pot. Look for it in our village, the village of Mazwaya's people." Ngwetsa was greatly puzzled. The first husband had not yet claimed his money back ; it was still in the hands of Ngwetsa and lo! the girl had already been taken by others! This was not right at all! They might have waited a little! All the men of Ngwetsa armed themselves and started as enemies (hi bulala) for the village of the thief.
587 They killed a pig, entered the hut of the thief, took all his implements
639 and made a heap of them on the square. The inhabitants all fled into the bush. But one of them came back with 10 . and said : "Have pity on us, please! We clasp your legs! (khoma milenge, viz., ask for forgiveness). You know ? To steal is a very old thing on earth!" "Yes, we know. The thief trusted his throat! (This is a proverb : he did not fear to swallow a large stone, thinking that his throat would be wide enough to let it pass!). He knew that he would have to pay this fine! All right! You are saved! Take the implements back into the hut."

587 The Ngwetsas took away with them the flesh of the pig, but they sent one joint to the thief, so that he might eat it with his new wife. In this way they gave their consent to the marriage. "They gave him his wife."

586 But very soon afterwards the first husband, Khandlela, came to Ngwetsa to claim the lobola money, as his wife had gone. Gudu had gone to Johannesburg, so nothing was to be found in that quarter. The discussion began. Ngwetsa said : "All right ; but 10 of the lobola money must remain with us, for the fence of our village (lihlampfu)." This is generally done when a woman has been driven

586 away by her husband. Sometimes he must forego as much as £ 1. or £ 2 of the lobolo, because he has not brought the woman back in peace. He has spoilt the fence of the village by ill-treating a girl coming from it. He must repair it with that money... Khandlela refused, saying : "We have not driven her away! She went back of her own accord ; you have even found a new husband for her!" What could the Ngwetsas do ? They had just used the lobolo of Gidhlana to buy a wife for Mubene, her brother. The money had already been given to the Moyane clan from which a girl had been chosen by Mubene. They consequently went to the Moyanes and asked them to return the money. But the Moyanes said : "Your money has already gone further. We have used it to buy a girl of Madjieta for our son. We will go and fetch it." So two projected marriages were prevented ; they would have been annulled, had they been already concluded! In this way Khandlela found his money!

587 Later on Gudu came back from Johannesburg and took Gidhlana as his wife. Hoping that he had earned some money, the Nwgetsas went to him and said : "You have spoilt our flock (ntlhambi)" viz., the oxen which we hoped to get by the sale of our daughter. "Now pay!" Muzila said to them : "Look at Shaputa ; we trust in her!" Shaputa was a little girl, the sister of Gudu. Muzila proposed to Ngwetsa's people to consider her as theirs : "They would find money through her." They consented to wait till she was of age. Some years elapsed.

766 Muzila moved to the Mabota country with Gudu. Gidhlana was suddenly taken ill with leprosy and the disease made rapid progress. She died. Muzila, the master of the village, informed Ngwetsa. Ngwetsa did not come to the burial, neither did any member of the family attend it. Was it not leprosy ? Is not the contagion terrible for members of the family ?... Other people can bury a leper ; his relatives never. However they allowed their fears to go too far, for decency required that, in such a case, some relatives at least should go and witness the burial, even though they might keep far away from the grave. Their behaviour greatly grieved Muzila and entailed unexpected consequences!

587 Shaputa grew to be a young woman and a suitor, of the Honwana
766 clan, came and bought her. The Ngwetsas heard of it and at once put in their claim. Muzila informed Gudu, who was then staying near Lourenço Marques. "He fell on his back from the shock!" (o gaa hi le ntjhaku!) and refused to pay. Muzila said to Ngwetsa : "You have forfeited your claim, as you did not attend the funeral. Moreover

587 the chief of our Mazwaya family, Magomanyama, says that no claim is accepted for a leper, for one drowned in the river, or for anyone who dies from smallpox or from the assagay."

692 Of course the Ngwetsas did not accept such an answer, but this is a
177 typical Bantu affair (nandju), showing the many blessings of the lobola custom. The matter[1] will have to be decided by the chief, or rather by the Portuguese Administrator, who must take a good deal of trouble, if he wishes to understand it rightly and to deliver an equitable judgment!

APPENDIX IX (See p. 530).

The story of Mboza and Muhambi and of the women inherited by them, illustrating the consequences of lobola and of its suppression.

177 Compare the genealogy of the Masuluke family (page 225).

595 Mboza had four brothers, three elder and a younger; Sam, the
583 elder, had a son, Hlangabeza, who married by lobola a first wife and by abduction a second, Bukutje II. Fos, the second brother, married Bukutje I and had four children: three girls, Tshakaza, Estelle, Nhwaanin, and one boy, Muhambi. Sam and Fos both died, so Bukutje I was inherited by Mboza and her four children went to live in his village. In the meantime Mboza became a Christian, as also did Muhambi and the three girls. Wishing to lead a Christian life, he separated from Bukutje I, who, being still a heathen, committed herself with "an empty oil-tin" (p. 213), viz., a man of Inhambane who became her servant-husband. In 1904 a Christian young man, Moses, wooed the elder of the three girls and brought £ 20 to lobola her. This money was naturally due to Muhambi in order to allow him to lobola a wife for himself, and indeed Muhambi was betrothed to Ntshelebeti, daughter of Phulan Ngwetsa. This man was still a heathen and consequently wished his daughter to be paid for.

Having been told that it is not right for a Christian to accept lobolo money, Mboza and Muhambi, actuated by a most praiseworthy scruple, decided to return the money to Moses, and Muhambi started for Johannesburg in order to earn the lobolo due to Phulan. But this was not the end of this famous "bukosi!" The younger brother, Komatan, a consistent heathen, came to Mboza, very angry with him for his

1 [See pp. 504-509 -- Analyst]

765 "Annotatio tertia decima (P. 213). Cærimoniis purification-
783 is, ubi res genitales primas obtinent partes, ita explicatis,
833 quaeramus quid significent ritus illi.
587 Mors est res quæ imprimis homines contaminat. Omnia polluit quae tangit, non homines tantum ipsos sed etiam quæ mortui fuerunt.

Apud homines, propinqui mors vitæ fontes imprimis afficit, id est membrorum succos qui vitam creant. Itaque et mulieris succi vaginales et viri succi spermatici tollendi sunt: in coitu autem, sub legibus certis sunt tollendi.

Cum vidua lustratur, aut a peregrino aut a novo marito purificatur.

1) Ut recta viduæ purificatio fiat, abrumpendus est coitus, et vir, antequam semen emittat, repellendus; vir erit tum contaminatus at mulier purgata. Vir si in coitu feminam eludentem animadverterit, eam viduam esse et ipsum occidere velle intelleget, tum comites vocat qui, mulierem apprehendentes, dum vir in sinum ejus semen emiterit, vi continebunt; mulier tum polluta manebit; quod querebat, non habebit. Vir contra erit sine damno: contaminatus non erit. [519]

2) Cum purificatio a novo efficitur marito, tum ambo in casam se includunt. Res agitur permagna: tabacum ne hauriant! Medicamenta potant singularia. Tum toties cœunt deinceps quoties vir ferre valet, decies et sæpius si potest. Sed toties vir semen extrinsecus emittit: 'bayisanyana ba fanela ku huma, i.e. amovendi sunt pueri (spermatozoa),' ut dicit unus ex eis qui me de his rebus certiorem fecerunt. Nunc sunt fontes vitæ apud virum purgati, quod fieri necesse erat, cum esset et ipse contaminatione impurus. Mulier quoque pura est, haud dubie medicamentorum beneficio quæ, antequam coirent, potaverunt ambo.

Quæ interpretatio ritum recte explicat cum ab impuris hominibus perpetratur. Sed cum a puris parentibus perpetratur, ut de 'boha puri' agitur (p. 56), tum res alio modo est explananda. Pater et mater cingulum infantis e lino xylino factum genitalibus succis inlinunt, ut infans eorum vitalibus succis corroboretur et in vitam gentis ita recipiatur.

These physiological conceptions, though they may be absolutely false from the scientific point of view, certainly proceed from deep intuitions regarding the mystery of life. I insist on the fact that they are not derived from religious ideas. It is a mistake to attempt to explain the whole life of the Bantus by their religion alone, as many writers are inclined to do. These sexual practices are not more religious than those prophylactic measures which we ourselves employ to preserve ourselves from tuberculosis or small pox. They

765 are dictated by a special notion of contagion which is admittedly
723 false, scientifically speaking."
833 [Note 13 (page 213). After we have thus explained the cere-
587 monies of purification in which genital matters play the primary role, we shall inquire into the significance of these rites.

Death is something that contaminates men above all. It pollutes everything that it touches, not men themselves only, but also the things that belonged to a dead person.

Among men, the death of a relative affects first of all the sources of life, that is to say, the juices of the limbs that create life. Therefore both the vaginal juices of a woman and the man's spermatic fluid must be removed: in coitus, however, they must be removed according to certain rules:

When a widow purifies herself, she is purified by a stranger or by a new husband.

1) In order that the purification of the widow proceeds correctly, the intercourse must be broken off and the man must be pushed back before he ejaculates his semen; then the man will be contaminated and the woman will be purged. If the man notices that the woman is trying to evade him during coitus he realizes that she is a widow and that she wants him to perish. Immediately he calls his companions who, seizing the woman, will hold her by force while the man ejects his semen into her vagina; in that case the woman will remain polluted and what she wanted she will not have. The man, on the other hand, will be without blame: he will not be contaminated. [519]

2) When the purification is effected by the new husband, then both seclude themselves in the house. One matter is urged particularly strongly: that they do not smoke any tobacco! They drink curious medicines. Then they have intercourse as many times in a row as the man can last, ten times and more if he is able. But as many times as they have intercourse the man ejaculates his semen externally: bayisanyana ba fanela ku huma, that is, "the children (spermatozoa) must be removed," as one of those who informed me about these things said. Now the sources of life of the man are purged, something which had to be done while he was impure with contamination. The woman is also pure, doubtless on account of the medicines which they drank together before they had sexual intercourse.

This interpretation explains the rite correctly, provided it is carried out by impure men. But when it is executed by pure parents, as when it is concerned with the boha puri (page 56), then the matter must be explained in a different

765 fashion. The father and mother smear the infant's girdle
783 made of cotton flax with their genital juices so that the infant
833 becomes invigorated by their vital juices and thus may be
587 received into the life of the tribe.

These physiological conceptions, though they may be absolutely false from the scientific point of view, certainly proceed from deep intuitions regarding the mystery of life. I insist on the fact that they are not derived from religious ideas. It is a mistake to attempt to explain the whole life of the Bantus by their religion alone, as many writers are inclined to do. These sexual practices are not more religious than those prophylactic measures which we ourselves employ to preserve ourselves from tuberculosis or small pox. They are dictated by a special notion of contagion which is admittedly false, scientifically speaking.]

595 "Annotatio quarta decima (P. 285). Doctori G. Liengmei,
833 nostro medico, cum sæpe curaret viros qui medicinam
842 petebant qua infantes procrearent, fassi sunt se singulis noctibus cum tribus vel quatuor uxoribus coire. (A monogamis quibusdam audivimus uxorem adeo fatigari ut noctu exiret laboratum ut a marito evaderet.) Cum medicus eos hortaretur ut quinque dies concubitu omnino abstinerent, nunquam id concedere potuerunt. Volebant enim facultatem generandi recuperare libidine non omissa. Dicuntur etiam cum vires cupiditatibus nondum pares esse videantur, remedia quædam adhibere sive ut venerem excitent sive ut uxores prægnantes fiant. Duplex fit medicatio. Primum secti testiculi hirci—(quod animal fatigari negatur, mbuti a yi karali)—cum plurimis herbis mixti coquuntur et a viro eduntur. Deinde alias herbas collectas in cerevisiam injicit. Tantum aiunt esse effectum ut viro qui non amplius duas uxores habeat, non sit ea re [520] utendum, ne, illis non sufficientibus, cum aliorum uxoribus stuprum committat, quod ei sit offensioni.

Viri casti, ut in loco Mpfumo videre licet, in sua casa dormiunt et interdum uxorem quam cupiunt ad se vocant. Plerique tamen, lege sibi imposita, ne discordia inter uxores erumpat, mensem unum in casa singularum uxorum vicissim agunt.

Qui plures habent uxores aliis etiam medicaments utuntur ad libidinem excitandam. Quorum unum putant ad effectum maxime valere: Medicus, cum se ipse curavit, in locum montium secedit, quo cynocephali feminæ urinam menstruali sanguine mixtam emittere solent. Quod manet in saxis et fœdissimam diffundit odorem, medicus excipiens coquit, et ex eo magnas conficit pillas quas emptoribus vendit. Hi eas

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585/378 immediately after his arrival, goes to the husband and to his assembled relatives and tells them roughly : "Here we are ; we bring you your dog. Here it is. With us, she was reputed to be a good girl. Now we shall hear you every day say that she is lazy, does not know how to cook, has a host of lovers... All right! Kill her! Kill your dog! Have you not bought it ? She is a witch! Let her drink the magic philter, etc." The men keep silent... "Yes, you are right. We shall beat her. But if her husband is too hard on her, we shall try to deliver her. We shall do our best to protect her".

In the meantime the women cut the legs of the *shigiane*, and fill the pots with water, and the feast goes on, another ox having been killed by the husband. The married pair sit on a mat and the women of the two families begin the mutual exchange of insults which are never wanting on this day! "You dogs!" one of the aunts of the girl will say, "people of no consequence! You have not even a broken pot to remove the ashes from the fireplace. You can congratulate yourselves on getting such a good wife as this, a hard worker, a splendid cook, a nice and honest girl." An old woman of the other party answers : "Yes! If you have exhorted her sufficiently! Perhaps she will give up her bad ways, her laziness, etc..."—"Bad ways ? You may well speak of that! Look at your son! What was he? A wild beast! We have come to cut off his tail and make a man of him!"

V. *Marriage by abduction.*

584/383 The ~~account~~ ceremonies which we have described belong to the legal marriage (ku teka, ku lobola). But there exists another way of getting a wife, and the poor (psisiwana), those who have no cows, no pounds sterling for lobola, especially if they have no energy, have recourse to this method. It is called *ku tlhuba*. A young man in such a position, wishing to marry such and such a girl, will send a friend to her and propose a rendez-vous in the

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588 583 bush. If she agrees to become his wife in this irregular manner, she goes there and meets him. They have relations together and run to one of the relatives of the girl's mother. The family of the mother will be more lenient than the family of the father, having no right to the lobolo. The transgressors of the law will probably choose the village of the maternal uncle and settle there. The parents look everywhere for their daughter and try to get her to return home. If she is quite determined to remain with her ravisher, they let her go free, deploring their misfortune and their shame. But it is rare in the primitive state of the tribe for such a marriage not to be regularised. The thief, if he has retained any feeling of decency, will try to collect the lobolo. One morning he goes to the village of his wife's parents, and deposits a sovereign or a goat or a cock on the threshold of the hut of the girl's mother; or he hangs a half-sovereign on the goat's neck, rubs its lips with salt to prevent it from bleating, and then shouts loudly: "We have stolen, we of such and such a clan"... People wake from their sleep, not knowing what animal has made such a noise, come out of their huts and see the culprit standing outside the fence. When he has been duly recognised, he runs away. He will perhaps bring some other presents till he has definitely "lobola" his wife. This is called the *nshonshonela*. Should he 588 611 not succeed in bringing the regular payment, the first girl born 597 of that marriage will be the lobolo. "Nwana a ta lobola mamana wa kwe": the child will pay for her mother. In law, all the children of such a union belong to the girl's family: a man who has not lobola has no right of property in his children. (See Part III.)

Should the woman who has been stolen by *tlhuba* go at once to live with her irregular husband in his village, her parents will arrange matters in another way. They will "go as enemies" (hi bulala), make a regular descent on the village of the thief, kill a pig, threaten to take all the furniture. The men of that village will then intercede and, in the course of time, the lobolo will be paid. (See App. VIII.)

582 To the Northern clans this is not so repugnant : with them, it is a current saying that bukoñwana revives bushaka when bushaka has become weaker in the course of generations (1).

A third reason for these strong taboos, a reason which explains also why the prohibition is stronger on the father's side than on the mother's, is found in *the lobola custom*. Should a woman who is a relative on my father's side become my wife and should our union be put an end to by quarrels, I should go to her father to claim the lobolo. If her father happens to possess no oxen to return to me, he will have to go to his relatives to get them... He may have to come to my own father, who is his brother and belongs to the same family, a consequence which would be indeed absurd, because then I should myself pay the debt due to me!

On his wife's side, a man cannot marry the elder sister of his wife, who is mukoñwana to him, nor the daughters of his wife's sisters, who are *bana* to him, as we have seen.

II. *Marriages conditionally permitted.*

582 602 588 In some cases a marriage which ought not to take place may be allowed on condition that the whole family will perform the rite called *dlaya shilongo*. This is a most curious custom, and is found all through the tribe. I know of two cases in which it has been resorted to: a certain Mkili, of the Makaneta sub-clan (Nondwane) wished to marry Minsabula, his makwabu. Both had a common ancestor Muwayi. Muwayi had by a first wife a son called Basana, and by a second wife another son called Nsabula. Basana was the father of Mungobo, father of Mkili, and Nsabula

(1) It is also very much against the feeling of the tribe to confound *bukoñwana* and *balamo*. A man named Filemon had married the daughter of a woman of dissolute habits, and the woman had given herself to a man who was the brother of Filemon's maternal grandmother. This man was therefore a malume for Filemon, and his wives were balamo, even basati, possible wives for him, as he had the right to inherit them (p. 233). For this reason he said: "My wife's mother cannot marry that man, not only because of the Christian law which we have accepted, but also because of our own old customs. Why? Because she is my mother in-law, my mukoñwana, and by her marriage she would become my mama and I might inherit her. That is impossible."

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602
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was the father of Minsabula. Mungobo and Nsabula were first cousins or half first cousins (as their grandmothers, wives of Muwayi, were different). Therefore Mkili was the first cousin once removed of Minsabula. Both were ba ka Makaneta. Another case was that of Michel, son of Gana and Ñwashiluvane, who married Djamela, daughter of Mankhelu, who was Ñwashiluvane's brother. Mankhelu was the malume of Michel and Djamela was his mamana, being the possible wife of Gana (See page 233). For a Thonga to marry her malume's daughter, *psa yila*, (See p. 234) whilst for a Pedi it is the proper thing. This is one of the great differences between the law of the two tribes. A Pedi has a real right of pre-emption on his *mudzwala*, whilst amongst the Thongas it is the father who possesses that right. (See later on G.) Possibly this Pedi custom encouraged Michel to entertain an idea which is repulsive to the Thonga mind. But the official *dlaya shilongo* took place in his case also.

I tried to discover in what other cases such a prohibited marriage was rendered possible by the performance of the rite, and found the following.

Conditional marriage is permissible with the daughter of my great-uncle, the younger brother of my grandfather ; and with the daughter of my grandfather by a wife other than my grandmother. Both are rarana. According to Mankhelu, it might also take place between himself and Shiluvane. This Shiluvane (who is not the chief Shiluvane, of course, but an entirely different person), is the daughter of the maternal great-uncle of Mankhelu, brother of Shidyele, who is his true grandfather, the father of his mother. Shiluvane is therefore the first cousin once removed of Mankhelu on his mother's side. She is a mamana.

But what is this rite of *dlaya shilongo* which has such power that it removes the taboo character of such marriages ? *Shilongo or mulongo* is an archaic word retained only in this expression and which corresponds to bushaka, blood relationship. This root exists also with that meaning in the Sutho word *seloko*. The relation by blood must be killed in order that the relation by marriage may be substituted for it.

Let us first see how this is done *in the Northern clans*.

588 A young man who has the courage to think of marrying a near relation is regarded as a wizard. *A lowa*, he bewitches! This term, which is applied only to actual witches, is not too strong to designate his action. He was not allowed to *gangisa* her, and now he wants to take her as his wife! But this word lowa, or loya, is used here in another sense: "Bushaka byi lowa hi tihomu" (the blood relationship is bewitched by the oxen). "Bumamana byi lowa" (the mother relationship is bewitched). (Viguet.) Those who consent to such an act must be prayed for publicly and anointed with psanyi (the grass found in the bowels of a sacrificed goat.)

588 782 So the young man goes to his uncle, the father of the girl, to announce his intention of marrying her; he must *be homu*, beat an ox, viz. bring an ox with him as a first step to appease his uncle. This ox is said to "open the hut." The ox may be only a goat, the goat which will be used for the sacrifice, — because a religious ceremony is necessary. All the relatives assemble on a certain day in the girl's village. The wedding pair are inside the hut, the goat is killed, the offering prepared, the psanyi put aside. Then the bridegroom and the bride are called outside and made to sit on the same mat; the man's leg is passed over the girl's leg; (this is done to "kill the shame" *ku dlaya tingana*); they are both anointed with the green liquid of the psanyi; the skin of the goat is then taken, a hole is cut in its middle and it is put on the heads of the two cousins. Through the opening the liver of the animal is handed down to them, quite raw. They must tear it with their teeth. It must not be cut with a knife; this is taboo. They have to bite it, to pull vigourously on both sides so as really to tear it, and then they must eat it. Shibindji, liver, means also patience, determination. "You have acted with strong determination! Now eat the liver! Eat it in the full light of day, not in the dark! It will be a mhamba, an offering to the gods (Gana)." The priest of the family will then say: "You, our gods, so and so, look! We have done it in the daylight. It has not been done by stealth. Bless them, give them children." Should this sacrifice not be made, misfortune would indeed come upon them and the woman would remain childless. When the prayer is ended, those present take all the solid psanyi, put

588 it on the wife's head and say to her : "Go and bear children."
782 *In the Ronga clans* the *dlaya shilongo* is somewhat different. The bridegroom must first give £ 1 to the father ; this is over and above the lobolo, of course. Both families provide a goat. These goats are killed without the assistance of the uterine nephews, in front of the hut of the girl's mother. The grandfather prays to the gods of the girl's father : "So be it! They have decided to marry each other ; you, gods of the boy and the girl, unite them together so that they do not hate each other ; let them not remind each other that they are brother and sister ; let their union not be spoilt by such remembrances, nor by other people saying to them: "You have been guilty of witchcraft! You have married your relative!" By this prayer a general notification is given to everybody, and the feeling of shame is removed. Afterwards the officiating relative continues, exhorting the new wife, telling her all that she must do for her husband, mentioning all the details of her conjugal duties with such realism that she begins to cry. The bridegroom bows his head in shame. The preacher goes on till somebody puts a piece of meat into his mouth to stop the exhortation!

The whole country has gathered to see the proceedings and to eat the meat. The wedding pair do not partake of it, because *the goats have been sacrificed for them* (ba hahlela bone). The relatives go home, roasting on the way the joint of meat they have received so as to eat it before reaching their village.

602 The aim of the *dlaya shilongo* is lawfully to kill one kind of relationship and to replace it by another, because the two are not compatible. However, in the case of inheritance of a rarana, for instance, when a blood relative has to change his relationship and to become a relative by marriage, he can inherit without any rite being performed, if there is no nearer legal heir ; in this case it is said : "Bushaka byi ta pfuka — the blood relationship will be revived." It will be strengthened by the new marriage relationship.

588 In the case of marriage with the great mukoñwana, this rite
607 is also performed, as previously mentioned (p. 244). The wedding pair are also covered with the goat's skin. This goat is

588/607 called *the cat*, because it is like a cat which is put on their shoulders and scratches them. It scratches away the bukonwana which prevented their marriage. (Viguet.) In this case it is the *shikonwana* which is killed. So the taboo is removed and they can marry.

III. *Marriages permitted.*

582 609 618 Relatives from the eighth degree of relationship can marry unconditionally (Mankhelu). The choice of a boy is unlimited within the clan and even within the tribe. However, marriages into a *too far distant clan* are not recommended, according to Viguet, for the following reasons: 1) If the marriage were unsuccessful, the parents-in-law against whom the claim would be brought might run away with wife and oxen, and we should lose our herd. 2) If our oxen multiplied in the other clan, we might be tempted to go and make war on our parents-in-law in order to appropriate the cattle. So blood would be shed on account of our own oxen! This would bring shame upon us! Whilst if we marry amongst friends, even amongst remote relatives, should a quarrel occur, we shall try to settle it peacefully. These people are amongst those with whom we discuss in the hut. With strangers we discuss outside, on the square, and we occasionally fight with them and drive them away. So a difficulty can better be dealt with when our bukonwana are people living close by.

IV. *Marriages recommended.*

582 607 Here we must take into account two different cases: some marriages are contracted on account of a kind of right of pre-emption, others on account of a right of inheritance.

1) Right of pre-emption.

There are amongst the relatives of a man certain women on whom he has a kind of preferential claim, or a right of pre-emption,

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643 857 However, specially appointed persons watch over him and report of his well being to his father. His youthful playmates are taught to respect him ; he is surrounded in his games by a miniature court, from which he chooses his favourites (tinxekwa) ; some of his companions act as counsellors and reprimand those who do not treat him with due respect. They play at court... also at soldiers ; the juvenile troop wage war with the wasps, and also with the boys of the adjoining villages.

643 787 777 751 782 When the child reaches boyhood, the bones are consulted, and sacrifices offered in order to ascertain from the gods whether it be well to take him to the capital. Should the answer be in the negative, there is nothing to do but wait. When the dice declare the propitious moment to have arrived, the transfer is effected and the boy taken to his father. This is a great occasion for the counsellors who have watched over the boy and who thenceforward supervise his education. They feast themselves well (ba fumisana), kill goats, perhaps even an ox, and offer a sacrifice to proclaim to the gods the return to the capital of the heir to the throne ; to his ankle is tied the astragalus of a slaughtered goat, as a protective amulet.

643 881 836 At puberty the boy undergoes, in the same manner as his companions, all the ceremonial rites usual at that period. The principal doctors of the country treat him, in order that henceforth he may be a man (ba mu yimisa a ba wanuna), having full right to enter into the sexual relations of gangisa (p. 97). Care is taken, however, to attach to his person comrades of riper age, who will prevent him giving way to excesses, (suka banhwanyana la bakulu ba ta mu gema, ba mu sibela ku kula), which would arrest his growth and render him small and feeble. He thus lives in relative continence, participating in the play and in the work of boys of his own age, and looking after the herds. At times he gives a feast, when his father happens to have presented him with an ox with which to make merry.

643 538 595 Now we see him arrived at manhood, at the age when the Blacks take a wife. If his father is still living, the young man is not allowed to marry officially. He may certainly lobola, viz., contract regular marriage in the usual way, and possibly

643 some woman may come and live with him (titlhuba), as in cases of
588 elopement — in which case he must go, according to the law,
595 early in the morning to the parents of the girl and denounce himself as the abductor (p. 119); but none of these women can be his official wife; they may bear him children, but these will be *makohlwa*, those who have no right to royalty; the young chief may not wed his official wife, she who is to become the mother of the heir to the throne, until after the death of his father.

643 There is a saying, a precept of the royal code as follows:
603 "Hosi a yi faneli ku bona ntukulu," a chief must never see his
595 grandson, i. e. the one who will eventually succeed his son in the royal line. The Ba-Ngoni of Gungunyana (in Gaza) have the same custom; but with them things are arranged differently. The eldest son of the chief's principal wife, when at the requisite age for marriage, takes a wife and loses the right of succession; it is the youngest son, still young at the time of his father's death, who inherits the throne, because he has no children of his own. This leads to jealousy and civil war between brothers; it has brought numberless misfortunes to the royal family of Gaza, and it was one of the causes of the downfall of Gungunyana. The Thonga custom is much more simple and less dangerous to the maintenance of peace; the chief must not see his grandson, therefore his son will not be officially married until after his father's death. Any wives he may previously have taken will be morganatic and their children are not entitled to inherit.

I have been told by Mankhelu that when a chief lives to be very old and does not wish to delay the marriage of his son and heir, he can himself pay the lobolo and acquire, for his son, the official wife who will be considered as being "the wife of the country." But this seems to be an exceptional occurrence.

B. CORONATION OF THE CHIEF.

643 In all Thonga clans the death of a chief is kept secret for one
766 year or more, as we shall see. Amongst the Nkunas the official mourning for the deceased takes place the same day as the coron-

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551 609 of the white man. M. Torre do Valle has given a list of nicknames of the merchants and other inhabitants of Lourenço Marques in his Diccionario Shironga-Portuguez. It is well worth consulting, and the only thing wanting is a photograph of the white man and an explanation of the name ; it would be a splendid illustration of Native wit!

551 576 618 So far we have spoken only of *personal* names and nicknames. But, beside these, every man possesses his clan name, or surname, viz., the name of the first of his known ancestors. Grown up men prefer being addressed by this name, which is *shibongo*, viz. the name by which they are "glorified." This subject is treated in Part III (p. 360).

APPENDIX III (See p. 98)

Unnatural Vice in the Johannesburg Compounds.

938 548 588 In January 1915 one of my colleagues passing near one of the Johannesburg Compounds, saw a big company of Natives singing and walking in the direction of another Compound where a great dance was taking place. Amongst them there were a number of women. My colleague asked his Native evangelist how it was possible that so many women should be walking about in that part of the world, where the feminine element is very small. The man told him : "They are not women! They are *tinkhontshana*, boys who have placed on their chests the breasts of women carved in wood, and who are going to the dance in order to play the part of women. To-night when they return to their dormitories, their 'husbands' will have to give them 10/, and only on that condition will the tinkhontshana remove their breasts and comply with the desire of their husbands." I sent for this evangelist who knew everything about the inner life of the Compounds and asked him about it ; this is the information I received :

Unnatural vice (bukhontshana) has become a regular institution in the Compounds. The word *nkhontshana* seems to come from the Ngoni, a Zulu dialect spoken in the Limpopo plain. The nkhontshana is the boy used by another man to satisfy his lust, and the man is called his *nuna*, husband. When a gang of new workers arrives in a Compound, the Native induna, who has the supervision of the Compound, and the Native policemen, who have their rooms at the

838 entrance of the yard, come and "humutsha" i. e. make proposals to the
548 younger ones, not only to little boys (there are only a few of these) but
588 also to boys up to the age of twenty and more. If these lads consent to become their bakhontshana, they will be treated with greater kindness than the others. Their husbands will give them 10/ to woo them (buta) and will choose for them easy occupations, as, for instance, sweeping the dormitories, whilst the others will have to go to the hard underground work. Those who have not been chosen on their arrival by the policemen will probably receive a similar proposal from their older companions in the mine, and these men will then help them in the difficult task of "be hole" i. e. digging their hole. But the "husband" will have not only to woo this peculiar kind of *nsati* (wife) ; he must also *lobola* her, and a feast sometimes takes place when as much as £ 25 is put on the ground, a goat is killed and a real contract made which binds the nkhontshana to his master for the whole time he remains in the Compounds. The elder brother of the boy will receive the money in this disgusting parody of the Bantu marriage.

Sometimes the husband pays his nkhontshana at the end of each month as much as £ 1.10 and this represents a big increase in the earnings of the boy.

What happens when the contract is broken ? The "husband" claims the money remitted by him. If the boy refuses to return it the matter may be brought before the Compound Manager, who generally dismisses the plaintiff, saying : "If the boy does not love you any more, let him go."

839 The cause of the evil is not difficult to detect : it is the segregation
177 of the Native miners in these enormous conglomerations of males, far
548 from home, far from their wives, a most abnormal condition of life for
588 men who have always enjoyed the freedom of the African bush. When prostitutes were allowed to live near the Compounds, unnatural vice was not so common ; when they were driven out, bukhontshana at once increased enormously, and thus the disappearance of one evil brought a new one in its train. On the other hand, my informant asserted that Thongas (Matshanganas, as they are called in Johannesburg) had never much frequented the haunts of prostitution, from fear of venereal diseases. They prefered a nkhontshana ; the danger was not so great! As the word nkontshana comes from the Bilen country, the home of the Matshanganas, it might be thought that this vice was known and practised amongst Natives before it took on such extensive proportions in the Compounds. There is an old Thonga song which

839 177 548 588 says: "You, nkhontshana, get up, the cocks are crowing, be not surprised by the rising sun." This song warns the girl who has gone during the night to sleep in the lao, the boys' hut, that she had better run away at once lest she should be found in a place where she ought not to be. But it is a girl who is meant here and not a Johannesburg nkhontshana! No! Greek heathenism knew this refinement of immorality and indulged in it, but Bantu heathenism, whatever may be its corruption, never dreamed of it. Even to-day, though it is said to have penetrated into some parts (as in the Maputju country), the Native kraal feels a real abhorrence of it. I was told the following story. A man, in Bilen, had married a woman; he came to the Rand and took his wife's brother as his nkhontshana. When he returned home, his parents-in-law were very angry with him; they gave him back the lobolo money and took their daughter from him, saying: "You are a hyena! You are a wizard! You might as well sin with your mother-in-law!"— Unnatural vice was taught to the South African Bantus by 839 177 men of a foreign race; it first invaded the prisons; now it is raging in these big Native miners' settlements, where it is deflouring the Bantu youth. For if it does not immediately destroy their physical strength, this perversion of one of the most essential functions of man corrupts the sources of moral stamina and endangers the foundations of Bantu social life.

Is there no remedy for this terrible evil?

The worst aspect of the situation is that the immense majority of the Natives themselves do not consider this sin as of any importance at all. They speak of it with laughter. I was told that it is severely 839 684 548 prohibited by law and that any boy found guilty of bukhontshana is condemned to twelve months' imprisonment. But it is extremely difficult to bring the evidence necessary for conviction. The indunas and Native policemen enter into a conspiration of silence, being themselves the first and greatest sinners in this respect. Happily the Mission is fighting the evil as energetically as possible and the Compound Managers help its agents to secure separate dormitories, where a certain number of boys can find a refuge against contamination. A few hundreds or thousands escape in this way, but what is that in comparison with the tens of thousands who are exposed to this frightful temptation in the Compounds fittingly spoken of, by a wise South African statesman, as the University of crime?

839 548 My informant, who was perfectly acquainted with the circumstances of life in the Compounds, mentioned the following measures which he

862 842 see that conception has taken place before the child is weaned, they will hasten the ceremony. But they will be severely judged by the old people. Should the little one be sick, the husband will be scolded by the parents of the mother. They will say: "A djambeli ñwana," he has caused damage to the child! If a man forces his wife to transgress the law, she will run during the night to the hut of her husband's father to tell him. Actually this is a very rare occurrence. Children follow each other regularly at an interval of two and a half or three years, and seldom is the law transgressed which says: A mother must nurse her child during three "hoes," viz. three ploughing seasons.

B. CHILDHOOD

591 861 857 The infant, shiputja (Ro.) shihlangi (Dj.) is on the way to become a boy, mufana. During the first years of this period, which extends from the third to the fourteenth year, he stays with his grandparents. They do not give him much "education." He grows at Mother Nature's good pleasure. And as Nature is not always synonymous with morality, he sometimes commits bad actions. Sometimes also, fearing chastisement for a particularly wicked deed, he flees from the kraal of the grandparents and goes home, where the paternal hand will hold him a little more firmly. But the father does not bother much with these little boys and they enjoy an immense amount of liberty. These years are perhaps the happiest of their whole life. They spend their time in the following occupations: herding the goats, stealing, catching game, learning the science of the velt, playing.

1) Herding the goats.

231 Just as the Kaffir corn is the old Thonga cereal which is used alone in the rites, so the goat is the domestic animal par excellence, no doubt the first which the tribe knew and that which is always employed in the sacrifices. Goats are very common; everybody

583 old men carry the hoes and show them to the defenders of the kraal saying: "This is our ox!" Or they hide themselves amidst the cattle as claiming their protection, because this is certainly the only condition upon which the bride's clan would consent to receive the invaders. Mr. van Gennep is right, I think, in rejecting the old explanation of the sham fight as being a remnant of the marriage by capture, which would have been the primitive form of marriage amongst these tribes. The Thongas possess the marriage by abduction, but this is quite another thing, as we have seen.

583 591 178 2) But it is probable that some of the rites of the Thonga marriage must be explained by an older form of marriage. The Rev. W. C. Willoughby in this book on *Race Problems in the New Africa* calls the type of marriage which we have described, and which is met with in all the South African tribes, *marriage of dominion*. The system of family life which results from the marriage of dominion is patrilineal :— children will trace their descent through their father and inherit his property,— patrilocal—the mother lives in the village of the father— patripotestal—the father possesses the children and has full power over them. But in other Bantu tribes, especially in Central Africa, the system is different. There we meet with what the same author calls the *matrilineal theory of marriage*. This system is matrilocal—the wife remains in the village of her group ; matrilineal—children trace their descent through their female ancestors ; avunculipotestal—the mother's brother has power over them, not the father. They belong to the mother's group and inherit its property. Under this system, the hloma, viz. the third "moment" of the marriage of dominion, does not take place, and the lobola, the bride-price, is not so important. The husband is only a lodger or a frequent visitor in his wife's village; he is a mere begetter of other people's children, and pays for this privilege by working for his wife's group or occasionally presenting it with gifts.

It is probable that this matrilineal theory of marriage is the older and that it has developed, under various influences, into the marriage of dominion. Mr. Willoughby supposes that men having captured women in raids and brought them to their homes found that system more convenient for them, and wished to possess their regular wives in the same manner. Change in the economic conditions must have had the same result. When, owing to a more settled way of living, property increased and cattle became plentiful, it is easy to conceive that the men of the husband's group made a kind of social contract with the men of

583 the wife's group, offering a higher bride-price in order to obtain the
591 transfer of the bride to her suitor's home.
178 Now, if this is the history of the evolution of the Bantu marriage (and we shall see later on, in studying the relation of the uterine nephew with his mother's brother, that it is quite probable that it is), we may find, in comparing these two forms of marriage, the explanation of some of the Thonga rites. The position of the wife was certainly much more satisfactory, from her point of view, under the old system. She could remain with her people and her husband had but little power over her, whilst, in the marriage of dominion, she must stay in the village of another group, work for it, and perhaps be ill-treated. Does this fact not account for her flight to the bush or to another village the day before hloma, when the female relatives of the husband go and seize her by force ? She tries to hide herself under a veil, as if she wished not to be recognised; but the husband's aunts remorselessly take it from her, and as she goes to the conjugal dwelling, her friends accompany her, singing songs of mourning. These rites are certainly more readily explained if there was, in a remote past, entirely forgotten by individuals, yet still influencing the mind of the community, another state of things, when the married woman was much freer and more happy.

585 3) We find the explanation of some other ceremonies when we apply to them the theory of the *Rites of passage*. For both bridegroom and bride, there is in fact passage to a new condition of life. They pass from the position of single to that of married persons. Hence the part taken by their best friends and by the bridesmaids, from whom they are separated by their marriage. For the bride there is passage from one family to another, from one village to another.

I cannot say that I have found distinct *separation* and *marginal* rites, but aggregation rites are numerous. The *aggregation rites* are first of all the common participation in the flesh of the oxen during the feasts. Nothing makes Natives more friendly towards each other than to eat meat together. Then come the building of the wood pile, the girl's acts of civility to the husband's friends during the *tjekela* and the day after the *hloma*. These rites being collective seem to represent the union of the two families. The new wife performs them herself individually during the first week of her marriage.

584 How is it possible to explain the calculated resistance to acts of politeness on the part of both male and female visitors during the betrothal ceremonies, and even later on ? If the girls alone made a difficulty about entering the village, the hut, and sitting down on the

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561 a rite of passage and this is also proved by the fact that the money or the
431 bracelets given to the persons concerned do not remain their property. As regards the circumcised, they remit them to the chief, and the chief distributes them to the old women who are no longer able to bear children. The girl who has passed through the khomba gives them to her adopted mother, who will use them in the same way. All the money remitted to the bride will go to the master of the village, for the old women and the children. *Married people must have no share in it,* as these presents are taboo. Why ? Because they are connected with a passage, and people who have sexual relations are considered as increasing the dangers connected with these critical phases of human development, when the heart is troubled by a half-conscious fear of a new and unknown future. Amongst civilised people who have reached the era of individualism, these fears find their expression in songs and poetry. In the communistic society they express themselves by means of rites.

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591 Here are some answers to the questions of Professor Frazer on
587 marriage.

611 A man always brings his wife to his own home. This is the *tlhoma,* and it is a law. It is taboo for him to go and live with his parents-in- law, at any rate when he marries his first wife. In the course of time, when the children have grown up, when the *bukoñwana,* viz. the relations with parents-in-law, are of old standing, a man can go and live in his wife's village (See Part II). Another case in which this can be done is when a widow refuses to marry the man who legally inherits her, and gives herself to a stranger, a man of Inhambane, for instance. He does not pay the lobolo, and lives with her in her village ; but the children born of that union will belong to the family of the deceased husband.

585 There is no preparation for marriage amongst the Thongas by fasting, bleeding or keeping awake the night before. No corn or rice is thrown at the bridal pair. The bride or bridegroom is never represented at the marriage by a proxy or dummy. Conjugal relations begin immediately after marriage (see page 113), but the wife does not possess her home and her kitchen for the first year ; during that period she must cook for her mother-in-law.

583 There are no occasions on which men exchange their wives.

See practical conclusions on Marriage Rites at the end of Vol. I.

601 potential wife of my father (Shaputa to Misaben), not to mention those women of my wife's family who can be so called. An elder sister is also mamana to her younger sister, and sometimes a husband calls his wife mamana (1).

If the mother's sister is a mother, the mother's brother is by no means a father. He is called *malume* or *kokwana*, and here we meet with one of the most characteristic features of the Thonga, and even Bantu, system of relationship. The term kokwana means first the paternal grandfather and all the ancestors on the father's side, and this is its proper essential meaning. The bakokwana are also all my mother's male relatives: her brothers, fathers, uncles, etc. They form a group which I call "ka bakokwana" which means "my mother's home," just as *kweru* means my father's home, my official home. Kweru comes first; ka bakokwana next. "The bushaka on the father's side is the head; on the mother's side, only the legs" (Mboza). 593 Let us remember that a child lives at his father's home and only 602 goes on a visit to his mother's village. He may stay there for [591] years after the weaning, but if he chose to settle there, he would be made fun of and severely censured by his father and his paternal uncles. "You are stupid," they would say, "you leave your own village, you go to the village of your bakokwana to increase it! This is true folly. Has not your mother been bought with money? The children she bore belong to your father, just like the calves of his cows." (Mboza.) But if the home of the mother cannot become the home of the children, the relations they maintain with

601 576 (1) The term mamana is frequently used by an interlocutor, without any idea of relationship, when speaking to married women of a more advanced age than himself. Such an extented meaning is also frequent with tatana, kokwana, ñwana. Any man older than I am can be addressed by me as tatana and will answer by calling me ñwana. If the difference of age is greater, we shall treat each other as kokwana and ntukulu. Speaking in the third person a child will always put tatana before the name of any grown up man, though he belong to a totally different clan. Women round Lourenco Marques often call a White man nkata, husband. This shows that kinship terms are employed as expressing moral relations as well as blood or family relations, and we must not draw hasty conclusions from the way in which these terms are applied, or necessarily see in them the traces of a previous social state in which every grown up man or woman was looked on as a true father or mother. The Thongas may give to these terms an extended meaning. Nevertheless they differentiate perfectly between their technical and their derived sense.

III. *Matriarchy*.

178 602 But as regards *mother-right* and the *uterine family*, I must confess that I have altered my views since writing Les Ba-Ronga, and would testify my gratitude to Mr. S. Hartland, who encouraged me to study this subject more attentively. I had not then gathered all the facts, and the identity of the *ntukulu* and the *mupsyana* only became clearly apparent to me when studying the Northern clans. Now, having inquired with special care into this most curious feature of the Thonga system, I have come to the conclusion that the most probable explanation is that, in former and very remote times, our tribe passed through the matriarchal stage. Let us carefully consider the relation of a malume with his uterine nephews, recapitulating all the facts.

1) Duties and rights of the maternal uncle.

604 391 As we have seen, the uterine nephew all through his career is the object of special care on the part of his uncle : if he is a first-born child, the malume prepares his ntehe. (See page 46.) When weaned, he goes to stay in the village of his mother's relatives for many years, a girl sometimes till she is grown up. 604 Later on, when she marries, the maternal uncle claims a right 583 called *tjhumba*, £ 1, on the total amount of the lobolo. It is taboo to refuse it ; should a father dare to keep that £ 1, his brothers will say to him : "Do you not fear the gods ? The mother's gods will kill you ! Your daughter will have no children. Did you alone bring her into the world ? Did not these people help you in bringing her forth ? And has not your wife grown with the assistance of those gods ? Her brother must be allowed to have his *tjhumba*" (Mboza).

585 604 On the day of the remittance of the lobolo, the maternal uncle and all the mother's relatives are invited to the feast, and for them a special part of the festal ox is reserved, called *nyimba*, viz. the

177 as with their clothing! How often we have longed to see them adopt
291 some peculiar costume appropriate to the climate and to their occupations! But when they cast off their belt of tails, it is to put on long trousers, and they all dream of a complete khakhi or serge suit! So they will build square houses, and this certainly has its advantages; the dwelling can be divided into many rooms and the different members of the family can all live under the same roof, which, from an educational point of view, is a good thing.

264 The *communism of food* is also a splendid feature and calculated to fill
177 the most sanguine socialistic dreamer with joy! But this custom has been severely criticised from a hygienic point of view. The habit of all
591 plunging their fingers into the same plate fosters tuberculosis and
361 other contagious diseases; but I do not think it is for this reason that the custom will die out. In the modern Native settlement many different families live together. They are not united by any ties of blood. Moreover they are sometimes so numerous that such communism would be practically impossible. The golden age has passed for ever!

177 With it has also passed away the merry lazy life of the half naked
461 *munumzane*. The coming of civilisation has already deeply changed his mode of living, and the transformation will accentuate itself still further. I have heard Colonists cursing these black people, who believe that they can escape the law of work under which Europeans groan: "these niggers who think that they will be allowed to remain incorrigibly lazy fellows for all time!" I do not share this loudly expressed indignation. First the Native *doda* is by no means an idle man. He has his own occupations for the benefit of the kraal. Secondly, if his wants are few, and if he very soon reaches the happy state of a man who is not obliged to work, I see thousands of Europeans enjoying the life of a "rentier" as much as he does, and without any qualms of conscience. A South African trader who works hard to make his fortune, and hopes to leave the country as quickly as possible, in order to enjoy all the comforts of a European town, theatres, concerts and clubs, has not, after all, a much loftier ideal than the Native he curses... On the other hand, circumstances themselves enforce upon the Native that law of work and teach him that "dignity of labour" of which we so often hear. A civilised Native has increased his wants ten-fold. He requires the wherewithal to satisfy them. This is the only legitimate, the most powerful incentive to work. Fifty, sixty thousand Thongas, the elite of our tribe, are constantly streaming to Johannesburg, where they are considered the best mining boys. Many of them go there to earn

E. MATURE AGE

I. *The Bantu Ideal.*

581 The married man is called " he who has his home " (a ni le
357 kwakwe) in opposition to the single man (nkhwenda). But let
562 us say at once that the kind of individual called bachelor does
885 not abound amongst the Bantus. Only the utterly wretched, invalids, and the weak-minded, are deprived of legal marriage, which for the black man is and remains the one object in life. It is through his wife and children that he becomes somebody in society. This fact does not appear during the first year of wedlock, for the newly married woman must cook at the fireplace of her mother-in-law. She is hardly more than a servant during a whole year ; she does not possess her own pot ; and this must be so because she does not yet eat the mealies of her own garden, having ploughed her fields in her former domicile the previous year. Her husband eats with her. He is not yet
595 a lord. But if he is rich, if he is the heir of an important man, he will not be long in buying a second and third wife.

These new marriages will be contracted like the first, but with less pomp. It may even happen that the feast is held in the husband's village, if he is middle-aged and is celebrating his fifth or sixth wedding.

595 For each new wife, he will build a hut. He has begun his
342 village when building the house of his first wife, the great wife,
556 (nsati lwe nkulu) as she is called, who will remain the principal
592 one whatever may happen. While, without compass, he was
361 drawing on the ground, with the marvellous instinct of the South African Native, the circumference of the circle on which the patched reed walls of his dwelling were to rise, while he was covering this circular wall with a conical roof, he was saying to himself : " I establish my home ; I inaugurate my village ". During the following years, the aim of his life will be to complete little by little another wider circle... When he has bought his

when he has brought his

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second wife, he will build for her also a hut of the same type. But this second hut, the third, and the fourth which may come afterwards, will not be erected in a straight row like a street. They will form an arc, which will be prolonged so as to constitute first a semi-circle and then a complete circle, if a sufficient number of buildings are added. This is the ideal of the black man, to

Phot. H. Grant

Mfakandjaka, a headman of Spelonken, with his sons.

become the lord and master of a complete circular village. Most of the men do not realise this ideal. Three or four huts, a wretched quarter of a circle is all that they attain to! Some, better armed for the struggle of life, or more favoured by circumstances, succeed in closing their circle. Their cattle, for which they have also built a circular enclosure right in the middle of the square of the village, multiply and are not carried off by peripneumonia and hematuria,

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which, in this country, decimate so many herds! Every three years, theirs wives bear children. If they are boys, it is an honour; the village will not lack heirs, neither will the father lack arms to help and to defend him! If they are girls, it means wealth; oxen will come to the family! Their brothers will not lack wives, for the sisters will be sold to provide for the brothers. Meanwhile, the huts are erected, large and small, that of the head of the family being the largest, the *malao*, those of the boys the least well kept.

Let us consider a Ronga favoured by fate, as was Gidja, of the country of Libombo, near Rikatla. His village numbered not less than twenty-four huts, with beautiful shady trees behind; notice the enclosure for the cattle and for the goats on the central place, that for the pigs behind the houses... There are cocks and hens pecking about everywhere, dogs wandering around in search of something to steal, for they receive hardly any food; a crowd of youngsters leading the cattle, and everywhere the noise of the pestles crushing the daily mealies in the large mortars. He walks about proudly in his favoured enclosure, contemplating his prosperity with pleasure. Young men are ready to do the work he gives them to do. He will treat them with beer brewed by his wives. And often the people of the neighbouring villages will join his people for dances and games on the fine square, which is surrounded and enclosed on all sides by huts.

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And, above all things, in the evening, each of his wives will bring him the pot which she has cooked for him. This is the essential matrimonial duty of the wife. Not one will fail in it. Gidja, the lord of six or seven pots of mealies seasoned with a sauce of monkey nuts, will feast and be satiated (shura) every day, and that means much, for the inner capacity of a Thonga is something wonderful.

He will become large and stout, and shining, which in South Africa is a sure sign of wealth and nobility. The stouter he gets the more will he be respected. But it can easily be imagined that he cannot alone empty all these pots over which he reigns supreme. He feasts his children, but others too come to pay him visits at the evening hour when they know him to be surround-

l: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

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SECOND PART

THE LIFE OF THE FAMILY AND OF THE VILLAGE

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621 Having followed a man and a woman from the beginning to
592 the end of their existence, I now come to the Life of the Family and of the Village. Both subjects are in close connexion. As a rule, a village is but a family composed of the headman, the father; his wives, his children and the old folk who depend upon him; but in many cases his younger brothers live with him, sometimes a son-in-law, or even a stranger, and all these inmates compose the village, *muti* (1). In the first chapter we shall consider the family itself, its constitution, the system of relationship, and in the second, the village, the concrete embodiment of the family, its foundation, its main laws and the respective occupations of its members.

CHAPTER I

THE LIFE OF THE FAMILY

121 The kinship system of the Thongas and, I suppose, of all the
601 Bantus is widely different from ours, and greatly surprises the

(1) Native villages are generally called *kraals* by South African colonists. This expression comes from the Portuguese word *curral* which means properly stable. I shall employ it to designate the enclosure where oxen are kept, the cattle-kraal, but it does not seem right to apply it to the *muti* which is a *village*, however small and poor it may be. The Portuguese call native villages *povoação*.

585 578 goat. Shillings must be given to induce her to enter the hut, to sit down, to accept water for washing her hands and food, to eat. Another ox is killed and the meat is divided as follows : the liver and the heart are for the bride's father, the leg for her mother, the *nyimba*, viz. the womb, which includes the ribs, sternum etc. for the maternal uncle. The women, when they return home, take all these pieces of meat to their several destinations. They put a skewer through the heart and liver and stick it into the ground before the bride's father's hut saying : " This is the notification of the husband's people. "

If the total number of the oxen has been remitted on the lobolo day, *the departure of the new wife* for the husband's kraal (thloma) will not be long delayed. But should there be some oxen wanting, a wise father will not allow her to go until the whole lobolo has been paid. The husband works hard to get together the other oxen. He brings them, without ceremony, together with a sovereign, which he places before the bride's father as a present, saying : " This is my spitting for you, my father ! " He does the same for the mother. He now feels the right to claim his wife. They answer : " Give us time to prepare her trousseau." The trousseau consists of two mats, two or three big spoons, some pots, a wooden platter, a pestle and a mortar, and one hoe provided by the maternal uncle, which make up all the equipment of a Nkuna bride. All her female relations meet and, after having exhorted (1) her to be obedient, to accept all the hardships she will find in her new home, they accompany her to her husband's village. This is the *hloma*. The men do not go, except the ntjumi of the bride's family. The father, on the morning before they leave, kills a fowl and *hahla*, viz. makes a sacrifice, telling his ancestors that his daughter goes to be married, and praying for her. The ntjumi,

585 562 593 (1) " Hear ! " the old women say to the bride, " you have been a good girl, so far, henceforth you will be treated as a slave ! You will be accused of adultery and of witchcraft. You will have no more happiness. But accept all that ! They will beat you, kill you and we shall not be able to deliver you, because we have eaten their oxen. " These exhortations are worth reproducing, as they show clearly the conditions under which the girl goes to her husband. She is not protected by the lobolo. On the contrary, the lobolo has made her the possession of the husband's family, from whom she must now accept any treatment. (See Part II).

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765 wizard (a clever man who could overcome death). In what has
782 your witchcraft resulted ? Are you not dead! You have left us in peace. Go to Tlotlomane ; let Tlotlomane go to X ; let X go to Y, etc. (He utters the names of the ancestors.) Call each other to come here and look. Are we not gathered together ? Here is so and so. The batukulu also are here. Accept this offering and may we live peacefully together ; visit each other (Annotatio 11)[1]. Even if they do not come to pay me visits, let them come to Fenis ; he is their father now. And you, Mugwanu, you remain at the head of the village. You are their headman now. Do not scatter your people. Cultivate good relations with each other."

765 But a woman suddenly stands up and interrupts him : "Bring
543 everything to the light," she says! The old priest stops. She
578 goes on : "They say I am a Muchopi" (a woman of dissolute manners). The mikulungwane are heard on all sides. It is a family drama which we are attending! This woman is the daughter of the deceased ; Manyibane has sold her to pay off his debts ; he has not kept the lobola money to buy a wife for one of her brothers ; that is the reason why they hate her. They do not receive her in the village. She pours out her grievances before them in this family gathering, when they are praying to their ancestors. It is the favourable time! She goes on : "Is it my fault ? Did I not obey our father ? I have not fled away. Now what am I to do ? He alone received me here! You despise me. Say everything! Do not hide it!"

Her interruption has lasted five minutes at least and she goes back to her place very angry. Sometimes relatives who have serious complaints to make against their kinsfolk choose this precise moment to vent their anger and leave the gathering with violent words. In such a case, it is said : "The mourning has overcome this family."

765 The old priest is a little disconcerted. He speaks at random,
782 always calling his Tlotlomane. The whole scene is perfectly natural, but the participants do not show the slightest religious awe. Suddenly one of the batukulu rises, takes a bottle of wine which has been also brought there as an offering, pours a

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1 [See p. 518 in these categories or in UL--Analyst]

Nubile girls, during their "tiwheti," must approach the *oxen kraal* and look at them. The cattle might suffer, be attacked
284 by a bad cough (mukhulwane), get thin! This taboo is instituted
825 to protect the oxen, not the human inhabitants of the village, as D.
562 Kidd says is the case amongst the Zulus. (Part IV. Ch. I. E.)
262 When women have passed the time of child-bearing, most of
[886] the taboos cease, and they can eat monkeys and porcupine if they wish!

3) The first year of married life.

581 I shall not return to the subject of marriage rites, which have
562 been fully explained in the preceding chapter. Let me say that, though a Thonga woman cannot imagine life without marriage (ku kandja bukati), she does not enter on the new state with any enthusiasm. Her parents have warned her that she will be illtreated, accused of witchcraft and adultery, etc. Her sisters bewail her fate on her wedding day in song. The fact that she has been paid for, though it does not constitute an actual sale, puts her in an inferior position (See Part II).

562 During the first year, she has no *ndangu*, viz. no fire-place of
264 her own. She cooks for her mother-in-law. During the three
585 first weeks the husband eats with her and with the girl who accompanied her to her new home. Afterwards, he goes back to eat with the men. In some places it would seem that the husband eats with her the whole year, until she has her own pot (hlembeto).

4) Husband and wife.

593 What are the relations between husband and wife after the
371 honey-moon? Of course they vary very much according to
517 the character of both. As a rule however, the married people have very little intimacy with each other; the man remains with his companions on the "bandla," the village square where they meet, and only occasionally comes into the "ndangu," the reed enclosure of the fire-place, which is the true domain of the

602 that these appellations are expressive of many different things, one of the main considerations dictating them being the right of a man to marry his wife's relatives, or to inherit the women belonging to his own family.

I. *Blood relationships.*

601 The general term to indicate this relationship is *bushaka* (from *shaka, mashaka*), relatives.

1) Relatives on the father's side.

(Bakweru : *ba*, those, *ku*, at, *eru* possessive pronoun of the first person plur. means those *with us*, in our home.)

Let us first consult Tobane, called Tobane II in the genealogy.

601 He calls Magugu his father, *tatana*. The relation implies
593 respect and even fear. The father, though he does not take much
611 trouble with his children, is nevertheless their instructor, the one who scolds and punishes. Absolute obedience is due to him on the part of his sons and daughters (App. V). So also in the case of the *father's brothers*, who are also called "batatana ba shirare :" the elder brother who is a "great father" to Tobane, and the younger
601 brother Nkale, "tatana lwe'ntjongo", a "little father." Their
611 wives, Matshini for instance, are mothers to him, though he can in certain cases marry them by inheritance. The cousins of the father are also fathers (Muhambi to Thakusa, for instance, Gen. B.), provided the father calls them brothers.

There is another term for father, *rara* in Djonga, *roro* in Ronga ; roro is only employed with the possessive pronoun in the three following forms : rorwa'nga, my father, rorwa'ku, your father, rorwa'bu, their father. The correlative of tatana is *ñwana*, son or daughter.

Tobane II calls Shitsimbo *kokwana*, grandfather, Tobane I kokwane wa tatana, grandfather of father, and Nkwangana kokwana wa kokwana, grandfather of grandfather. The expression

601 reciprocal, means brothers as well as sisters. If he wishes to specify, he adds to makwabu : "of the assagai," or "of the basket." It is never employed except when united with the possessive pronoun : *makweru* means my brother, *makwenu* your brother, *makwabu*, his brother or sister. The elder brother is called *nhondjwa* (plur. tinhondjwa). The nhondjwa is also called *hosi* (plur. tihosi) chief. The hierarchy of age is very strictly
601 observed amongst the Thongas. The elder brother is treated
593 with great respect and gives orders to his younger brothers with
595 almost the same authority as the father. It must be noticed also that the position of elder brother is not only a matter of age, but, in the polygamic family, all the children of a first wife, or of the first house, are *tihosi* to the children of secondary or posterior wives or houses, though they may have been born after them. They take precedence of them. Amongst girls, an elder sister is often called *mamana*, mother, whilst an elder brother is never a tatana (father) but a hosi (chief).

601 The term *makwabu* is applied to all my first and second cousins
4/28 who have the same paternal grandfather, or great-grandfather,
605 as I have. Cousins on my mother's side are also bamakwabu, some of them at least, those who are my maternal aunt's children. But cousins on the father's side are more fully bamakwabu than those on the mother's side : Muhambi is more so to Hlangabeza than to Mahlobo, because the two former belong to the same shibongo, family name ; they are men of the Makaneta clan and Muhambi could therefore inherit Hlangabeza's wives ; Muhambi and Mahlobo are not of the same clan, and could not inherit from each other. From this fact we begin to see that the laws of inheritance, and especially the laws of the distribution of the widows amongst the family which has bought them, are closely connected with the system of relationship.

601 The man who has married my wife's sister is also a makwabu to me, a nhondjwa if he has married her elder sister (Phayindi to Mboza), a ndjisana if the younger (Magwazizen to Mboza). The brothers of Phayindi and Magwazizen are also called brothers by Mboza.

There is a special term in the Northern clans to indicate the

There is a special term in the Northern clans to indicate the relationship of two men who have married two sisters born of the same mother. They are called : bamakwabu ba shinauma, an expression which is the simplification of the following sentence : shi na wuñwe mamana, i. e. there is only one mother. This term seems to have been borrowed from the Pedis.

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2) Relatives on the mother's side.

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Tobane II calls Mishikombo *mamana*, mother. She is his true mamana and this relation is very deep and tender, combining respect and love. Love however generally exceeds respect. The proper word for tenderness is *timpsalu*, which comes from *psala*, to beget, and the mother is often called *mpsele* (a term which is applied also to the female of all animals). It is the word which answers best to the feelings of a mother for her children. She is generally weak with them and is often accused by the father of spoiling them.

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The mother's sisters are *bamamana* in the second degree, because, if the true mother dies, one of them will probably take care of the children. Their husbands are *batatana* : Phayindi is tatana to Madonge and Muhambi. He calls them *bana*, children. Mboza is also a tatana to Mahlobo and Mathamba, being a makwabu, brother of their father, owing to the fact that he and Phayindi have married sisters.

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All the co-wives are also *bamamana*, mothers by polygamy, (Ñwashihoni and Mishihari to Tobane). They are *bamamana ba shitshengwe*, harem mothers. I respect them but they are further from me than my mother's sisters. A more familiar term for mother, corresponding to roro, father, is *ñwa*, a word always used with the possessive pronoun and only in the second and third person : ñwaku, your mother, ñwakwe, his mother. Ñwaku is employed in certain insults and oaths, and is to be avoided as being vituperative.

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Many other women are mamana : the wife of my paternal uncle (Magugu for Muhambi), though I can inherit her in certain cases ; the daughter of my maternal uncle, because she is the

601 potential wife of my father (Shaputa to Misaben), not to mention those women of my wife's family who can be so called. An elder sister is also mamana to her younger sister, and sometimes a husband calls his wife mamana (1).

If the mother's sister is a mother, the mother's brother is by no means a father. He is called *malume* or *kokwana*, and here we meet with one of the most characteristic features of the Thonga, and even Bantu, system of relationship. The term kokwana means first the paternal grandfather and all the ancestors on the father's side, and this is its proper essential meaning. The bakokwana are also all my mother's male relatives: her brothers, fathers, uncles, etc. They form a group which I call "ka bakokwana" which means "my mother's home," just as *kweru* means my father's home, my official home. Kweru comes first; ka bakokwana next. "The bushaka on the father's side is the head; on the mother's side, only the legs" (Mboza). 593 Let us remember that a child lives at his father's home and only 602 goes on a visit to his mother's village. He may stay there for [591] years after the weaning, but if he chose to settle there, he would be made fun of and severely censured by his father and his paternal uncles. "You are stupid," they would say, "you leave your own village, you go to the village of your bakokwana to increase it! This is true folly. Has not your mother been bought with money? The children she bore belong to your father, just like the calves of his cows." (Mboza.) But if the home of the mother cannot become the home of the children, the relations they maintain with

601 576 (1) The term mamana is frequently used by an interlocutor, without any idea of relationship, when speaking to married women of a more advanced age than himself. Such an extented meaning is also frequent with tatana, kokwana, ñwana. Any man older than I am can be addressed by me as tatana and will answer by calling me ñwana. If the difference of age is greater, we shall treat each other as kokwana and ntukulu. Speaking in the third person a child will always put tatana before the name of any grown up man, though he belong to a totally different clan. Women round Lourenco Marques often call a White man nkata, husband. This shows that kinship terms are employed as expressing moral relations as well as blood or family relations, and we must not draw hasty conclusions from the way in which these terms are applied, or necessarily see in them the traces of a previous social state in which every grown up man or woman was looked on as a true father or mother. The Thongas may give to these terms an extended meaning. Nevertheless they differentiate perfectly between their technical and their derived sense.

602 their bakokwana are of a much freer, more agreeable and kindlier
593 nature than those with their father's relatives.

Amongst the Thongas of the North the maternal grandfather and the maternal uncles are called indiscriminately kokwana. The Ronga dialect makes a distinction between kokwana, maternal grandfather, and malume, mother's brother; but the malume is often
601 called kokwana. In the Northern clans the *uterine nephews*, viz. the sons of my sister, are always called *ntukulu*, which is the term corresponding to kokwana, as we have seen; amongst the Ba-Ronga, they bear a special name, *mupsyana*, which seems to be becoming obsolete, being often replaced by ntukulu (1).

Let us consider these various relatives on the mother's side.
603 The maternal grandfather is the great, the true kokwana. He is respected for his age. He is however more lenient to his grandson by his daughter than to his grandson by his son. If the first damages anything, he will say: "That is no business of mine. Let the father of the child scold him, as he does harm to his property. I have nothing to do with their affairs. It is not my village." But if it were his grandson by his son, it would be a totally different matter, and he would be hard on him. However, should a child take too great a liberty with his kokwana, the old man will say to him: "Go and play with your malume."
604 The malume, indeed, for his uterine nephew, is quite different from any other relative. No respect at all is necessary towards him! "You go to *bombela* in his village; you do what you please. You take all the food you want without asking permission. If you are ill, he will take special care of you and will sacrifice for you" (Viguet). In the Ronga dialect this bombela is called *nyenyela*. When the mupsyana goes to his maternal uncle, accompanied by his comrades who scent a good meal, the wives of the malume call to him: "Come along, husband (nkata)! Look here, your malume has hidden some food in the back part of the hut (mfungwe), behind the large basket (ngula). Go and take it." The boy steals the food, runs away with it and eats it up to the last morsel

(1) This is one of many proofs that the Ronga clans have preserved some old customs better than their Northern compatriots. Their language also possesses certain archaic features which are wanting in the Northern dialects.

601 stretch them out. I must leave Zulu linguists to decide if it is really the same root. If so, the etymological idea would be that of a person worn out and paralyzed by old age.

The only explanation that I can give of the common use of the terms kokwana-ntukulu for both relations is this. Both the paternal grandparents and the mother's relatives are similar in their dealings with a child in the fact that they are more lenient towards him than his father. The two grandmothers are equally kind to him. The maternal grandfather is more lenient than the paternal grandfather ; but, according to the explanation given above, it is because the latter belongs to the same family (shibongo) as his grandchild and may be called on to scold him if his conduct is prejudicial to the interests of their common village, whilst the maternal grandfather does not worry himself if the child damages the property or the good reputation of his parents. It is not his business.

The malume is the most indulgent of all. We shall see how this fact can be explained by the matriarchy hypothesis.

Another connotation of these two terms, when applied to social groups, i. e. to two different families, is this. The bakokwana are those from whose family the batukulu have the right of taking their wives. As we shall see, this meaning is much more marked in the category of tribes which belong to the Pedi-Venda group than amongst the Thongas and other tribes of the same category.

II. *Relations with parents-in-law.*

1) Relationship on the Wife's side.

a) General characteristics.

606 593 Once, when speaking on this subject, old Viguet told me solemnly : "By your betrothal, as soon as you have been accepted, you enter into a new kind of respect and must remain in it till your death." This relationship is called *bukonwana*, a word that is generally pronounced with a peculiar feeling of uneasiness. Why is this? On account of the relations of husband and wife. Mboza calls

606 Nsabula *nsati* (a term corresponding to *nuna*, husband) or *nkata*,
593 a reciprocal term, or *nkosikazi*, a Zulu word which means queen, or *ntjibeli*, cook, even *mamana*. I have already described the moral relation which the word nsati implies : no very great tenderness, not much intimacy, but a certain amount of love mingled with respect, and even fear, because a wife can get her husband into endless trouble if she begins to quarrel and runs home ; then all the bukoñwana relations will be spoilt by interminable discussions.

The word bukoñwana is composed of three elements : the root *ko*, which is an ancient Bantu root, found also in Zulu-Xosa (kwe), in Sutho (hoe) and Pedi (γwe). Its meaning is etymologically unknown. To it is added a suffix, *ñwana*, and a prefix *bu*. The prefix bu has a double meaning ; the meaning of abstraction (and then bukoñwana indicates the relationship between a man and his relatives-in-law) and the meaning of place (when bukoñwana indicates the village where relatives-in-law dwell). They say, employing this word in the locative case : To go bukoñwanen, or in an abbreviated form : bukwen.

601 I have been fortunate enough to obtain from Mboza the full
607 nomenclature of his wife's relatives. It so happens that the Gogwe family is extraordinarily complete. Nsabula has both an elder brother and elder sister, a younger brother and a younger sister. Owing to this, I have been able to study all the possible kinds of relationship of Mboza with his wife's relatives.

The terms used to express these kinds of relationship fall into two categories, which present a striking contrast. On the one hand a man, when he goes to his wife's village, meets with the persons he fears most in the world : these are his *bakoñwana*, properly speaking ; on the other hand he finds there the women towards whom he behaves with the greatest liberty ; these are the *tinamu*. Describing these two sets of relatives-in-law, one of my informants said : "Bakoñwana are those persons who produce wives for you ; tinamu are those persons who produce children for you, because they are your presumptive wives. Even if you do not marry them, their children will call you father."

Let us study these two categories in detail.

607 his younger brother's wives (bengi) and play with those of his elder
835 brothers (tinamu). Why tis here this difference ? Because, as
593 we saw, the wife of an elder brother is a possible wife for all
582 his younger brothers, as they have the right of inheriting her, should this man die. On the contrary, an elder brother inherits his younger brother's wife only under quite exceptional circumstances. One does not marry a ñwingi! This would be an insult to one's wife. Nsabula would leave Mboza if Mboza were to marry Magugu, Komatane's wife, because they have been accustomed to call each other ñwingi.

607 To a wife, her husband's elder sister is also a ñwingi (Ndjibari to Nsabula). The husband's younger sister is a namu or *nhombe*, and two tinhombe have very free relations, just as in the case of the tinamu. This freedom exists between female tinamu as well as between tinamu of different sexes.

606 There is a final term to be mentioned : *bakhoti* or *bakhoti-kulobye*, in Ronga, *basevele* in Djonga, a reciprocal term by which the parents of a husband and wife call each other.

593 How far is a woman incorporated in her husband's family ?
769 She belongs to it till her death, provided the lobolo oxen have been paid, but she does not accept the ancestor-gods of her parents-in-law as being her gods. She keeps her own gods, and prayers are frequently addressed to them by her father or by her brothers in favour of her children. In this respect Thongas differ widely from the old Aryan peoples, where a woman had to adopt the religion of her husband's clan when she married.

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606 Before leaving the subject of relations with parents-in-law, and in order to show to what extent the uneasiness and fear which characterises them are carried, I will briefly mention the taboos of the bukoñwana, which play such a great part in Bantu family life. Let me say that most of these taboos (psiyilayilana, small prohibitions), are not so severe as those connected with sexual relations, disease and death. It is not believed that a breach of

000 These marriage regulations show us plainly how the family is constituted amongst the Thongas. A glimpse at the system of relationship of the primitive tribes will help us to understand something more of the strange features of this family law.

D. REMNANTS OF PREVIOUS SYSTEMS OF RELATIONSHIP.

582 Modern ethnographers have tried to ascertain how the human family has evolved through the ages, and this is, roughly speaking, the theory adopted by some of them. The first stage was marked by universal promiscuity; there was no family. Then, in a second period, restriction began to be enforced as regards marriage. Definite groups formed; all the women of one group were the regular wives of all the men of another group. This system still prevails in some Australian tribes. It is called *group marriage*. In a third phase, the family constituted itself round the mother. She was the owner of the children, who traced their descent through her and her female ancestors. In this form, which is called the *uterine family*, or matriarchy, the mother's brothers bore a special relation to the children: the father being hardly known or without authority, these male relatives of the mother had to defend the offspring of their sisters. In the end, the uterine family passed into the *patriarchal or agnatic family*. The father became the head, and descent was traced through the males. The development of property seems to have favoured this last evolution. The husband, who owned the property, became the master of the family, and he therefore took his wife to himself and made a home. (Compare p. 122.)

593/582 Whatever may be the truth of this theory, we must recognise the fact that the Thongas have now reached this fourth stage. The family is definitely agnatic. The father's right is paramount. However, there are in this family system some features which appear to be a relic of former periods.

604 585 womb, the uterus ; this consists not only of that organ, but of the whole belly, from the sternum to the hind legs ; the bride's mother eats the *mbata* and *khondjo*, viz. the extremity of the spine (Mboza).

585 431 On the day of hlomisa, when the bride is led to her husband's village, her maternal relatives receive a special gift, a young cow called *mubya wa mana wa yena*, i. e. the skin in which her mother carried her on her shoulders when she was a baby. This cow will be sent to the family when the first and the third daughter marry. In the case of a second and fourth girl, the nyimba alone is sent.

585 604 In the *equipment of the bride*, the mother's relatives provide her with a hoe, with fat to anoint her body, with a mat and clothing and sometimes with bracelets. The paternal aunt (hahana) does not give anything, neither does the paternal uncle, the latter only helping the father occasionally. Should the mother's relatives not fulfil this duty of providing part of the trousseau, next time they will not be given the *nyimba* to which they were entitled (Viguet).

593 603 604 But the most characteristic prerogative of the bamalume or bakokwana, is *their special right of intercession* on behalf of the uterine nephews. In fact, as Mankhelu said in his picturesque language, "as regards sacrifices (timhamba), the mother's relatives mostly perform them. They are the stem. My father is the stem as regards the oxen, but my mother is the true stem ; she is the god ; she makes me grow. Should she die when I am an infant, I shall not live. The village of my mother is as the home of the gods (ka mamana hi ko psikwembyen)." Simeon Gana added : "We have the special charge of sacrificing for our batukulu ; our sons also are priests to them, and can officiate in our place, even should they be younger than our batukulu. That is the reason why we do not marry them. We are their elders (bakulu)." Of course the bones will always be consulted and they will tell if a sacrifice must be offered to the gods of the mother or to those of the father, but a kokwane will preferably be called upon to sacrifice for a sick child. (See Part VI. Chap. II, II.)

604 611 In the ceremonies following death, especially in the feast of the mourning beer (page 164), the malume will be the officiating person and squeeze the *psanyi* over his batukulu to cleanse them.

A last right possessed by the malume is that *of raising his village*

583 177 the new conditions, especially when a stay of a year or two in Johannesburg was long enough to save the necessary sum. Boys who had no sister, and who would have been destitute in former times, could then dream of a *tshenwge* viz., of marrying three or four wives! And they had this advantage that, their wives not having been bought with family property (their sister's oxen), no bakoñwana could disturb them in their domestic happiness, as may happen to those who marry by means of the first-mentioned lobolo.

This leads us to consider :

583 II. *The original meaning and the consequences of the lobola.*

As we have said previously, the only way of understanding the lobola, as well as other similar payments in kind which we meet with amongst a great number of uncivilized or half civilized nations, (1) is to consider it as *a compensation given by one group to another group*, in order to restore the equilibrium between the various collective units composing the clan. The first group acquires a new member : the second feels itself diminished, and claims something which permits it to reconstitute itself, in its turn, by the acquisition of another woman. This collectivist conception alone explains all the facts.

583 562 593 618 In this way, the acquired wife, though she keeps her shibongo (clan name), becomes the property of the first group. She is aggregated to it by complicated marriage ceremonies, representing the passage from one family to another. She is owned by the new family, herself and the children who will be born of her. She is not in any way a slave, but she is nevertheless owned. She is not the individual property of one man, but the collective property of a group. Hence the following facts :

1) Her whole family take part in the marriage ceremonies, especially on the day when the lobola is brought by the bridegroom

(1) See A. van Gennep, *Les Rites de passage*, p. 170. The *Kalym* of the Turko-Mongolians, the *Nyen* of Southern Thibet, etc., correspond to the Bantu lobola.

583 (See page 109). Every male member of the group has his say in
835 the matter.
593 2) Brothers will always be ready to help a poor relative to
618 lobola : they work for their group.

3) The acquired wife is their presumptive spouse, though they cannot have sexual relations with her (matlulana). They will inherit her if the husband dies, according to the laws which I have explained in the preceding paragraphs.

583 4) Children will belong to the father, live with him, bear his
593 shibongo (family name), and owe him obedience : boys will
611 strengthen this group, girls will be lobota (factitive of lobola—
618 sold in marriage) for his profit. Father-right rests on the lobola. This is so plain that any child born of a woman who has not been paid for belongs to the mother's family, bears her shibongo name and will live in the malume's village. In Appendix VII, I relate the story of Spoon Libombo as an instance of this primordial law. This is the reason why, when the question is discussed, men insist so much on the preservation of the lobola. They say : "Who will guarantee us the possession of our children if lobola is suppressed ?"

So the lobola is by no means a purchase made by the husband, and still less a present given to the wife's parents.

1) Advantages of the lobola custom.

583 In the primitive collective stage of society the custom has
593 certainly *great advantages* : 1) It strengthens the family, I mean
586 the patriarchal family, the right of the father. 2) It marks the difference between a legitimate and an illegitimate marriage and, in this sense, takes the place of an official marriage register. 3) It puts hindrances in the way of dissolving the matrimonial union, as a wife cannot definitely leave her husband without her group returning the lobola. Therefore it obliges the married pair to have a certain regard one for the other.

However, these advantages must not be exaggerated. Marriages

583 concluded on the lobola basis, are frequently dissolved (1). The
586 tie being purely material, it is easy to sever it. When the husband
562 "bitana tihomu," claims his oxen, who could refuse to return
593 them ? It is certainly erroneous to say that the lobola is a contract made between two families in order to guarantee the good treatment of the wife by her husband and vice versa, to prevent the husband beating his wife or the wife deserting the conjugal home from mere caprice. It has even been asserted that this sum of money was a pledge, a security, claimed by the wife's parents for the protection of their daughter! There is nothing of the kind in this institution. The exhortations addressed to the bride on the day of her *hloma* (page 118) prove clearly enough that, on the contrary, owing to the lobola, the husband has every right over her, and that she has no right to protest if he uses or abuses this right.

2) Bad consequences of the lobola custom.

583 1) And this is the first *regrettable consequence of the lobolo* : the
562 woman is undoubtedly reduced to an *inferior position* by the fact that she has been lobola. *a)* This appears clearly in the fact that, though she is not looked upon exactly as a head of cattle, a marriageable girl is in principle entirely at the mercy of her family as regards the choice of her husband. In the same way a widow to be inherited is in the hands of her deceased husband's family.

586 (1) I will give only one example which I witnessed amongst my neighbours and
548 which shows that, with women of loose character, at any rate, the payment of lobolo helps very little to strengthen the matrimonial tie. A girl named Hlapfuta, daughter of Bandi, married a first husband. The "bukosi" (name commonly given to the lobolo money) was used to procure a wife for her brother. But she left her husband and was married by Nwamusi. This second husband paid the lobolo, which was then returned to the first. But Hlapfuta ran away a second time and joined a man called Matshubele. She did the same thing five consecutive times, and finally she moved to Majlangalen, to the suburbs of Lourenzo Marques, the favourite quarter of the prostitutes. There she was lost, and the "bukosi" also. Her paternal uncle, who had been put to any amount of trouble to recover the "bukosi" in order to give it back to the five abandoned husbands, seeing that it would be impossible to satisfy the last, could no longer bear the strain and committed suicide by hanging himself from a tree not far from my house in Rikatla. The debt remained with the girl's brother who "had eaten the bukosi."

583 Men are often better than their principles, and we have seen in
562 the study of marriage and inheritance customs that the consent
593 of a girl, and of a widow, is generally asked before any decision takes place. This is done as long as the male masters of the woman have no special interest in the choice. But should they have reason to impose a certain husband upon her, they will not hesitate to force her to accept him; a young girl will be given up to a dirty old man, for whom she has no liking, on account of a lobola debt of twenty years standing! The lobola hardens the heart and the woman is unable to defend herself. She can always run away. But where will she hide, if all her relatives agree on her being sacrificed to the interest of the family? Or she can threaten to commit suicide, and she occasionally does so. *b)* She must work for her husband, who gives her very little in return. It is true that she is not a *slave*. She is *however owned*. *c)* This is partly the cause of the shocking difference established between a husband and his wife. The married woman is henceforth absolutely prohibited from adulterous relations — which is a very admirable provision — but her husband is quite free in this respect: he has not been bought.
593 *d)* As regards her children, whatever may be her love for them,
562 she does not in fact possess them. They belong to the father.
586 If divorce takes place and the lobolo is not returned to the husband, he keeps them and the mother will be separated from them for ever (1).

583 2) A second series of consequences arising from this custom
606 are the *strained relations* between the two contracting groups.
578 We have sufficiently insisted on this subject. What makes dealings with parents-in-law so difficult? It is the lobolo, the sum of money which has perhaps not been Fully paid, and

(1) The Rev. H. Dieterlen, of Basutoland, in a paper on the lobola, wrote the following words, which apply to the Thongas as well as to the Ba-Suthu: "A woman married under lobola bears children but possesses none. The children belong to those who gave the cattle. Whatever may be her own merits, she can see her children pass into the hands of the rowest heathen and be given over to the cupidity of rapacious and rascally relatives. She can be illtreated, driven away, abandoned, repudiated; she will have to live without children; she will resemble a woman who has never had any. She is not supposed to have the heart and the feelings of a mother. And her children are treated as if they had no filial affection."

524 keep serious and not laugh. Should they be unable to keep their countenances, their victory is lost!

538 But these games are only a preliminary. The farther we go, the nearer we get to true literature! Now they ask each other *riddles (paitekatekisa)*, simple and antiphonic. We shall study this form of folklore later on... If the second side is unable to give the right answer to the riddle, it asks permission to propose one in its turn and so the intellectual combat goes on until they have exhausted the series of riddles they know. Those who have had the worst of the duel must pay the forfeit by *telling tales (tha paiketana)*. A woman may be present who is a renowned story-teller and she holds the whole company under the charm of her tale for half an hour, perhaps longer... Children shudder when they hear the terrible story of the bogey man! They burst into laughter when she describes the funny tricks of the Hare, or of the frog *Shinana*. They heartily approve when the younger brother, despised by his elders, becomes their saviour and teaches them a good lesson... Thonga folk-lore is very rich; it is one of the most interesting manifestations of the psychic life of the tribe. We shall study it with the attention it deserves in Part V of this work. Here it is sufficient to show what a great and happy part it plays in the life of the village.

E. RULES OF POLITENESS AND HOSPITALITY.

576 The village life is dominated by the *respect for hierarchy*. I do
769 not think this term is exaggerated. Etymologically hierarchy
593 conveys not only a moral but a religious idea. This religious feeling is not absent in the fear felt by a younger brother for his elder, because the elder member of the family is its priest, the only possible intermediary between the family and its gods (See Part VI). So no wonder if, in their relations with each other, though these are extremely free and natural, Natives follow strict rules of etiquette.

832 576 593 152 572 Even a husband never kissed his wife. On coming back from a journey, a man would hardly greet his wife; she would see him passing through the village, prepare food for him, and when it was cooked, she would come and salute him by presenting it to him. But if he has a good friend in the village, and if this friend sees him coming back after a long absence, their meeting will be much more touching. The friend will go to the main entrance of the village, exclaim: "Ha-Ha," take his parcel from his hands, put his arms round his shoulders (a ku mu buso hi mandla), remove the perspiration from his face, and pat him gently, saying: "Your ancestor-gods have their eyes open! They have worked well! They have brought you back."

574 609 622 *Hospitality.* When strangers enter a village, men sit on the *bandla*, and women go further on and sit on the *hubo*; they remain quietly there till the people of the village come and salute them (losa). Should the inhabitants delay too long, the visitors move on, saying: "These people are not good." But this is very rare. Generally the master of the village comes to them, inquiring who they are, whence they come, where they are going, and asks them: "Do you wish to spend the night here?" If they say: "Yes," the headman will empty one of his huts by putting two of his wives together, and will himself sleep with the visitors. Should there still be food, he will give them some. If not, he says: 574 "*Ndlala*!" "Starvation!" After a little while, a mat is unrolled 609 and the official ceremony of "djungulisana" takes place. This is a 622 very amusing custom. The headman sits together with his hosts and enquires about the news of their home. One of the 203 visitors begins in a monotonous tone and pours forth volubly 195 a flow of words with a peculiar cadence and almost without taking breath. His interlocutor interrupts him after each sentence, with "Ahina, hina," that is to say "Indeed, indeed!" till the whole skein is unwound; the two men finish with a longer "*Hina*," the inhabitants of the hut adding an emphatic "*khani*," a heartfelt "thank you;" then the master of the village begins to relate his own news in the same tone. It is impossible to 574 imagine anything more curious than this "mélopée" in two parts. 609 This law of hospitality is general all over the tribe. Should

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

APPENDIX V (See p. 226)

593 858 177 797 As an example of *the absolute obedience due to the father*, I may quote the testimony of the Rev. Calvin Maphophe, one of the Native ministers of the Swiss Mission, now living in Lourenço Marques. It illustrates vividly the painful conflict which takes place in the heart of a Bantu boy when he is faced with the dilemma of either obeying a heathen father who forbids him to become a Christian, or going against the paternal will and joining the Church.

One day one of the little shepherds belonging to Maphophe's village in the Spelonken brought to his comrades an astonishing piece of news. He had gone to the missionary station and heard a white man say that there is a God in heaven and that this God created all things. His words were received with absolute incredulity by the company of [773] boys herding the goats ; they answered : "It is an impossibility! Do we not know that the first man and woman came out of a reed ?" However young Matsivi (this was the name of Calvin Maphophe) and his brother Shihosi wished to set their minds at rest about the matter and they began to attend the service on Sundays. They were so struck by the message heard in the little church that they decided to learn more of this extraordinary teaching of the White people, and every Sunday they went to the Station. One of the men of the tribe informed their father that they were assiduous attendants at the Christian services. Maphophe called together all the men of his village and summoned the two boys before this tribunal. Pointing his finger at them he said : "These boys have dared to go to the White people and hear things which are dangerous to us. We do not wish them to become insane! Take it to heart both of you. It is over. Henceforth you must never go again to the village of the Whites. If you disobey, you will be beaten."

The two boys were terribly moved by their father's words. It is a recognised principle in the Bantu tribe that a child who wishes to do right must obey his father, and they were anxious to behave well... But the attraction they felt for the new teaching was too great. They solved the problem by running away from their home. This is not the place to tell the end of the story. It may be found in a little pamphlet "Le Pasteur Calvin Mapopé" published by the headquarters of the Swiss Romande Mission (2, Chemin des Cèdres, Lausanne).

782 previously selected, and throws it on the boy's luggage. The
783 victim leaps about (phuphumela) in its agony. The officiant then
484 plucks out some of the bloodstained feathers, pronounces the tsu, and says :

> Here is your son. He has returned home safely, because you have accompanied him! Perhaps he has brought back pounds sterling with him to lobola. Perhaps he will now take a wife! I do not know. The great thing is that he is healthy, and you have brought him back safely.

782 *The Offering of Reconciliation.* One of the most curious of
578 the religious acts performed in connection with the family is
593 called *ku hahlela madjieta*, viz., to perform a sacramental act in connection with the madjieta. *Djieta* (dji-ma) means a *rash oath*, or an oath *with imprecation*. If two brothers quarrel, and the younger believing himself to be the injured one, breaks off all connection with his brother, he may say to the latter in his anger : "Never will I speak to you again, or come any more to your village!" This is a djieta. To give greater weight to the imprecation, the angry brother will put his nail beneath one of his incisor teeth, push it from within outwards and say : "U ta kota u *ñwoo* psi nga yentshekanga!" This probably means : "May you die if this does not happen," viz. if I do not keep my oath. Or he will pinch up the skin below his eye, and pull it out, saying : "U ta kota wao *hum*!" (Same meaning). The two men may remain for years without the slightest intercourse with each other. But if a serious disease should break out in the village of the younger, and the bones order him to make an offering, he is at once in a difficulty. He has no right to present it himself, for, according to the great law of priesthood in ancestrolatry, it is his elder brother who must do it for him. The bones, on being again consulted, give the response : — "There is something in the way. You two have tied a knot. Untie it first, then offer the sacrifice." The younger brother will then go to the elder, and say : "I have sinned in swearing that I would never come again to your village. Let us hahlela djieta, i. e., accomplish the sacrificial act, which will

cancel the rash oath (1). The elder will scold him severely, but will eventually accept his excuses. This meeting for confession and reconciliation is called ku hahlela madjieta, even if no other act, no *tsu*, or prayer, is performed. — The reconciliation may, however, be celebrated in a more solemn manner by a ceremony, which is attended by the elder members of the family. The brother who pronounced the imprecation prepares a decoction of a special herb, called mudahomu, and pours it into a sala shell. Everyone assembles on the square, and the two former enemies sit in the midst, on the bare ground. The offender raises the shell to his lips, sips the decoction, spits it out with the customary tsu, and says : "This is our djieta. We pronounced it, because our hearts were bitter. To-day it must come to an end. It is right that we make peace." The other brother, the offended one, then takes the shell, and after going through the same rite of the tsu, says : "I was justly angry, because it was he who first offended me! But let it be ended to-day ; let us eat out of the same spoon, drink out of the same cup, and be friends again." Then he breaks the shell, and they drink and enjoy themselves together. 782 578 593

In the Northern clans this offering is called *byalwa bya huwa, the beer of noise* (on account of the noise made by those who quarelled). It is considered as necessary, not only to reconcile the estranged brothers, but as a protection against wizards. Wizards might be encouraged to bewitch these men, thinking that, if one of them met with misfortune, people would say that his brother had cast a spell over him ; the wizards would then have an opportunity of killing him without fear of being discovered! The offering consists of *many sorts of cereals*, mealies, millet, sorgho taken from the granaries of all those who have fought ; two handfuls of the [754]

(1) See also my article on "The Sacrifice of Reconciliation" amongst the Ba-Ronga (*South African Journal of Science*, February 1911). The djieta is any rash oath, and not only one pronounced against a brother. If a man swears that he will never enter a pool again (because he has been stung), or a river (because he has been followed by a crocodile), it is likewise a *djieta*. Should he find it necessary to enter this lake or this river again, he must first hahlela djieta, i. e. cancel his oath by a sacramental act. This is not necessarily a prayer to his gods, but only an invocation addressed to the imprecation itself: "You djieta, I said I would enter this lake no more, but I want to *tjeba* (p. 86) and to eat fish! Don't cause me to suffer for it." Then he takes some water in his hands, and throws it into the pool.

578 grains are brought to the altar and thrown on to it and the brothers
782 who wish to be reconciled recount their grievances. The offering,
593 though called beer of noise, is not really beer at all, (the cereals offered are not ground nor cooked). However, as my informant said, it is truly beer, as these raw cereals *represent* beer. Natives do not think that they have said anything contradictory in expressing themselves in this way! Notice the fact that these cereals are collected from all the granaries (Tembe). In the same manner the members of the whole family must be reconciled.

782 The same offering is resorted to in *cases of protracted births*
846 (I. p. 40) when it is known that the woman in labour lived on bad
578 terms with another woman. The latter will be called ; she will take a little water in her mouth and spit it out against the hypogastrium of the other, saying *phaa* with the following words : "The angry words which we have spoken must come to an end. May you find help. (Lepsi hi nga bulabula psi fanele ku hela, u pfuneka)". This prayer will not be accompanied by an invocation of the ancestor-gods of either of these women. A similar ceremony is performed when the bones have revealed that delay in parturition or in the child's taking the maternal breast is due to the *bitterness* of its parents in their previous relations. The diviner will tell the father "Hahlela shibiti, make an offering on account of bitterness." This will be performed in the hut. The father will come, and without putting anything into his mouth he will say *tsu* and add the following words : "Let her give birth to the child! What I had (in my heart) I have left! Let us be united again. (A a beleke! Lepsi ndji nga na psu ndji psi tjikile! Hi tlhangana kambe)." In this case the offering is also called an offering of bitterness, though it is very different from the one previously described under that name.

782 *Offering of "the Big millet" (mabele makuku).* The millet (mabele or ñwahuba) is the smallest of the cereals cultivated by the Thongas ; this offering, however, is called "big" on account of its importance and its character. It is a true *thanksgiving offering*. When the family has special cause for rejoicing, for instance if there has been serious illness and the patient has recovered, all its members are called together for the offering of the "big millet."

a) The Priesthood.

The Thongas have no sacerdotal caste, but, as has already been 782
pointed out, the right of officiating in religious ceremonies is 798
strictly confined to *the eldest brother*. All offerings must be made 593
through him. To supplant him is a great taboo, and would entail the malediction of the gods, and even the death of the offender. There are, however, some minor offerings which anyone is allowed to make to his gods ; for instance, a lover who has been jilted, may, after having consulted the bones, give something to his god in order to obtain his aid in regaining the favour of the girl he loves. But, as a rule, no one must *hahla*, or even *gandjela*, before the death of his parents. If, after their death, their son should happen to dream of them, he must offer worship to the deceased by pouring some ground tobacco on to his wooden pillow, this being the commencement of his religious functions : "he begins to learn to gandjela" (Rangane), and, if he is the eldest, he may in course of time become the priest of the whole family. I heard, however, a man from Tembe assert that he had *hahla* when his father was still living, but in this case he had been designated by the bones. A little child may even perform the office if the bones order it ; his father will then hold him in his arms and pray in his stead. The bones often call on *women* to [562]
pronounce the prayer, especially the elder sister ; there is no anti-feminism in Thonga religion. In the *luma* ceremony, however, it must always be a man, the chief himself, who is the principal officiant. The wives of the clansmen naturally cannot take a prominent part in the offerings made for the clan, being themselves members of another clan and having their own ancestor-gods, to

(I. p. 268), offerings being frequently made to the gods of the mother's family through 782
the agency of the maternal uncle. Hence the fact that uterine nephews take such a 604
peculiar part in the ritual of the worship.

I must add that according to information just received from the Rev. A. Jaques, in the Northern clans uterine nephews do not steal the portion of the offerings put apart for the ancestor-gods. It seems that this custom, which I believe to be ancient, is met with essentially amongst the Ronga clans, where the special term *mupsyana* (an old Bantu word corresponding to *um-tshana* in Xosa and *mochana* in Sutho) has also been preserved to designate the uterine nephew, whilst it has fallen into disuse in the Northern clans. (Compare I. p. 162, 232, 498.)

782 whom they sometimes pray in the hut (See App. IV). Amongst
593 Thongas the wife does not adopt the gods of her husband's
793 family (1).

The beginnings of the *constitution of a sacerdotal caste* may be seen in the fact that in each clan, the mhamba, the sacred object used by the royal family to invoke its gods, or the drug on which national invulnerability depends, is entrusted to the care of a certain man, whose office is hereditary. As soon as the political tie becomes stronger, and the power of the paramount chief greater, the religious acts which are performed at the capital gain in importance, and the person who officiates becomes a kind of high priest. Should this evolution continue, it is easy to see how a sacerdotal class may be formed at the expense of the primitive family worship, which thus increasingly loses its importance. Amongst the Thongas this has not yet taken place, and their religious system seems to correspond to a very ancient state of things ; it is in all probability the pure form of primitive Ancestrolatry.

b) The Thonga Conception of the Offerings.

782 With the help of new information obtained since writing the
778 first edition of this book, I think it now possible to attain to a fuller
789 understanding of the meaning of this great Thonga word *mhamba* which I have translated either by offering or by sacrifice, in connection with the killing of a victim. Under this designation come objects of two distinct categories : articles of food, clothing, etc. which are of immediate service to human existence and which are *given* to the ancestor-gods, and magic or magico-religious objects which are not given but only employed in the act of worship. The aim is the same, whatever may be the nature of the object, viz. to obtain the favour and help of the ancestor-gods, but in the first case the officiant adresses himself to living, conscious

(1) There seems to be a profound difference between Thongas and Suthos on this point. The Rev. P. Ramseyer assured me on very good evidence that in Basutoland "a wife takes the family name (seboko) of her husband and abandons her *mtdimo*." The midimo, says my informant, are not only the *badimo* proper, i. e. the ancestor-gods, but all the supernatural powers in which a given clan trusts, the totem, the spirit (moea) of hail, of rain, of lightning, of disease. A Sutho woman can become a Tebele by marriage, though this seldom actually happens.

E. MATURE AGE

I. *The Bantu Ideal.*

581 The married man is called " he who has his home " (a ni le
554 kwakwe) in opposition to the single man (nkhwenda). But let
562 us say at once that the kind of individual called bachelor does
885 not abound amongst the Bantus. Only the utterly wretched, invalids, and the weak-minded, are deprived of legal marriage, which for the black man is and remains the one object in life. It is through his wife and children that he becomes somebody in society. This fact does not appear during the first year of wedlock, for the newly married woman must cook at the fireplace of her mother-in-law. She is hardly more than a servant during a whole year ; she does not possess her own pot ; and this must be so because she does not yet eat the mealies of her own garden, having ploughed her fields in her former domicile the previous year. Her husband eats with her. He is not yet
595 a lord. But if he is rich, if he is the heir of an important man, he will not be long in buying a second and third wife.

These new marriages will be contracted like the first, but with less pomp. It may even happen that the feast is held in the husband's village, if he is middle-aged and is celebrating his fifth or sixth wedding.

595 For each new wife, he will build a hut. He has begun his
342 village when building the house of his first wife, the great wife,
556 (nsati lwe nkulu) as she is called, who will remain the principal
592 one whatever may happen. While, without compass, he was
361 drawing on the ground, with the marvellous instinct of the South African Native, the circumference of the circle on which the patched reed walls of his dwelling were to rise, while he was covering this circular wall with a conical roof, he was saying to himself : " I establish my home ; I inaugurate my village ". During the following years, the aim of his life will be to complete little by little another wider circle... When he has bought his

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

when he has brought his

595 556 592 231 361 885

second wife, he will build for her also a hut of the same type. But this second hut, the third, and the fourth which may come afterwards, will not be erected in a straight row like a street. They will form an arc, which will be prolonged so as to constitute first a semi-circle and then a complete circle, if a sufficient number of buildings are added. This is the ideal of the black man, to

Phot. H. Grant

Ndjakandjaka, a headman of Spelonken, with his men.

become the lord and master of a complete circular village. Most of the men do not realise this ideal. Three or four huts, a wretched quarter of a circle is all that they attain to! Some, better armed for the struggle of life, or more favoured by circumstances, succeed in closing their circle. Their cattle, for which they have also built a circular enclosure right in the middle of the square of the village, multiply and are not carried off by peripneumonia and hæmaturia,

595 which, in this country, decimate so many herds! Every three
592 years, theirs wives bear children. If they are boys, it is an
361 honour; the village will not lack heirs, neither will the father
556 lack arms to help and to defend him! If they are girls, it means
842 wealth; oxen will come to the family! Their brothers will not lack wives, for the sisters will be sold to provide for the brothers. Meanwhile, the huts are erected, large and small, that of the head of the family being the largest, the *malao*, those of the boys the least well kept.

Let us consider a Ronga favoured by fate, as was Gidja, of the country of Libombo, near Rikatla. His village numbered not less than twenty-four huts, with beautiful shady trees behind; notice the enclosure for the cattle and for the goats on the central place, that for the pigs behind the houses... There are cocks and hens pecking about everywhere, dogs wandering around in search of something to steal, for they receive hardly any food; a crowd of youngsters leading the cattle, and everywhere the noise of the pestles crushing the daily mealies in the large mortars. He walks about proudly in his favoured enclosure, contemplating his prosperity with pleasure. Young men are ready to do the work he gives them to do. He will treat them with beer brewed by his wives. And often the people of the neighbouring villages will join his people for dances and games on the fine square, which is surrounded and enclosed on all sides by huts.

595 And, above all things, in the evening, each of his wives will
556 bring him the pot which she has cooked for him. This is the
574 essential matrimonial duty of the wife. Not one will fail in it. Gidja, the lord of six or seven pots of mealies seasoned with a sauce of monkey nuts, will feast and be satiated (shura) every day, and that means much, for the inner capacity of a Thonga is something wonderful.

He will become large and stout, and shining, which in South Africa is a sure sign of wealth and nobility. The stouter he gets the more will he be respected. But it can easily be imagined that he cannot alone empty all these pots over which he reigns supreme. He feasts his children, but others too come to pay him visits at the evening hour when they know him to be surround-

556 ed by so many good things! Sycophants are not lacking. "Good
395 evening, son of so and so!" they say. "You are one of the
574 great men of the country." And in return for these and other compliments, the magnanimous Gidja shares his feast with his admirers!

Strangers are crossing the country and inquire where they can be received. "Go to Gidja" they are told. "A ni tshengwe, a fuya tshengwe" viz. "he is the possessor of a harem! He is not killed by famine! He has beer to drink every day! He can give food to poor people. Even then, some of it remains on the plate and is eaten by little boys and dogs in the square. There is always abundance there." And the travellers come and enter (khuleka) his village, after which they will tell in their homes the story of the magnificence of Gidja and extol his hospitality.

Thus the man who has succeeded in life becomes famous, his advice will carry weight in the discussions in which he takes part; he will perhaps be even more esteemed than the chief himself, though he does not enjoy the special prestige which the royal family owes to the blood running in its veins.

Conclusion: the greatness of an African is before all else a matter of pots, and the matter of pots is closely connected with polygamy!

885 During these years of mature age the evolution of a man is not
554 marked by special ceremonies. There is one custom however which is common to all, and which marks an advance in their social position. It is that of fixing the wax ring.

II. *Fixing the wax ring.*

885 Amongst the South Africans, the crown is not the appanage of
177 royalty. All men having reached mature age have the right to
554 adorn themselves with it. It is true, it is not a diadem of precious
301 stones, but a large ring of wax. This custom seems to have a Zulu origin. The Ba-Sutho do not know it and the Ba-Thonga, who all practise it, have taken it from the conquering tribe which owes its fortune to the famous Chaka. This habit has spread all

765 to the bush. There they have sexual relations in the ritual
783 fashion, viz. s. n. i. (See Annotatio 2).[1] They come back by
833 separate ways. The woman has taken with her a pot full of water ; she goes straight with it to a certain spot, which has been decided upon during the discussion, either in front of the main entrance of the village or at the door of the hut. There she washes her hands which contain "their impurity" (thyaka ra bona). All the other couples do the same, each woman coming in her turn to cleanse her impurity at the same place. When this is over, the men also come to this spot and stamp on the ground. Sticks belonging to absent young men, or a piece of clothing of a girl who happens to be away from home, are also brought to this spot and are purified. The same is done to the straps of the ntehe of the infant, as we have seen, but he is not allowed to be present, as it might cause his death. When the purifying act is finished in all its phases, men and women go to the river and bathe; the men higher up, the women lower down. (Annotatio 6).[2]

Such is the *hlamba ndjaka* amongst the Thongas of the North, when the life of the village has been deeply affected by the death of an important member of the community. The rite is performed with less publicity when a child dies. Then the act takes place, not outside, in the bush, but inside the hut, as it is a private mourning. Should the husband have had regular intercourse with his wife before this purification has been carried out, it is a very great sin. His wife will go and confess their fault to one of the women of the village. This woman will tell it to her husband's mother, who will have to find the remedy. The guilty husband must not eat at all... If he eats, he will have eaten the contamination of death (u mitile rifu). The *hlamba ndjaka* of the whole village will have to take place. (Annotatio 7).[1]

765 The hlamba ndjaka concerns first of all the inhabitants of the
783 mortuary village, but it sometimes extends to the parents of the
595 women of that village, who dwell, of course, in other places. If the first wife of a man dies, his second wife, the one with whom the widower has begun the purifying operation at home, will have to go to her own parents *to give them water* (ku ha mati), as they say, viz. to cleanse them. She takes with her in a pot a portion of the

1 [See p. 516 in these categories or in 116--Analyst]
2 [See p. 577 in these categories or in 116--Analyst]

765 water used for the purification, arriving early in the morning in the
783 neighbourhood of the paternal kraal, and calls her mother. Then
595 she washes her hands on the spot and all her relatives will come and stamp on the ground. This is considered a great duty which a married daughter ought never to forget, otherwise she is said to have turned her back on her parents (a ba fularelile). They will be angry with her and not visit her for at least a year (Annotatio 8).[1] The woman who has done this is called "the one who has cleansed the inheritance" (muhlantsi wa ndjaka). She has taken upon her the contamination, but she will not suffer from it, because she belongs to another family, and the contamination of death is dangerous more especially to the people who are of the same blood as the deceased. This woman will assuredly be praised and even rewarded with two hoes. When she goes to her relatives "to give them water," she will make a present of these two hoes to her father, who will say: "All right! You have cleansed those people." Then she will have the right of adorning herself with the bracelets of her deceased co-wife! Old women no longer having sexual intercourse are allowed to appropriate the old clothing of a deceased woman.

765 The Ba-Ronga do not know the expression hlamba ndjaka.
783 They have a corresponding rite, performed in the same manner,
833 which they call *lahla khombo*. *Khombo* means misfortune, *lahla* to throw away. It is the medicine of death (muri wa lifu), said Magingi, an old heathen of Rikatla. It is also said "to heal the mourning" (daha nkosi). This rite more especially concerns the grave-diggers. The one who carried the legs of the deceased begins. The sexual relations take place very early in the morning. When his wife comes back, she washes her hands at the door of her hut, and all the inhabitants of the village come and stamp on the wet place; then they enter the hut. The doctor comes and prepares a steam bath for the man. Then the second grave-digger performs his *lahla khombo*, and the same gathering of all the members of the community takes place before his hut. Afterwards the village is pure. But if the grave-diggers are cleansed, the widows are not yet purified, and we shall see that, for them, the *lahla hkombo* will last much longer.

1 [See p. 677 In these categories or in 116.-Amehyst]

595 lady of the hut. The first wife is certainly the most respected; she is called the "great one" (nsati lwe' nkulu); those who are taken in marriage afterwards being the "little wives." She is the true wife and acts as such in some old rites, those which accompany widowhood and the foundation of the village, as we shall see.

When speaking of divorce, we shall notice the principal causes of quarrel between married people and how they are dealt with.

As regards conjugal relations, I have explained them as fully as was possible to me in the paper already quoted *(Revue d'ethnologie et de sociologie*, Paris. Ernest Leroux, 1910, p. 143-151). This paper however being now very difficult to obtain, I am obliged to treat this subject here also, as it is of paramount importance. No one could pretend to know the life of an African tribe if he were ignorant of these facts. I do not give them to satisfy mere curiosity, but because they play an immense part in the social life of the Bantus and reveal to us some of their most characteristic physiological ideas.

833 It is generally asserted that Bantus, especially the men, have the sexual instinct very strongly developed. This is true to a certain extent. Polygamy has increased it enormously. In a royal kraal like that of Gungunyana, the excesses were awful. (See Annotatio 14). But even amongst monogamists the indulgence in sexual relations is sometimes very great. We often heard women pounding their mealies in the middle of the night in order to escape from the assiduities of their husbands. However this statement must not be exaggerated. Amongst Bantus as amongst other races there are great differences between individuals in this domain and I have already pointed to the fact that hundreds, and even thousands of young and grown up men can remain continent for months and years in the Institutions and the Compounds of South Africa.

The fact that heathens also submit themselves readily to the prohibition of sexual intercourse during more or less protracted periods for the welfare of the community shows that even in the primitive state Bantus are capable of exercising control over themselves in that domain.

1 [See p. 519 in those categories or in 16--Analyst]

789 "*ringela bowumba,*" from the verb ringa, to try ; it is the attempt
761 to bring some influence to bear on the misfortune of the bereaved mother.)

9) ADULTERY.

~~837~~ Amongst the Thongas *true* adultery for a *man*, married or
595 unmarried (bumbuye), consists in committing sin with a married woman. Should he have relations with a girl, it leads to no consequences at all. Nobody will blame him, if the girl does not conceive. Should she have a child, he will only be forced to marry her ; she will become his second wife. His first wife will not at all resent his bad conduct. Sometimes she will herself get him the girl he wants. There is nothing in her heart like the jealous dignity of a European spouse! She will keep all her capacity for jealousy (bukwele) for the time when the second wife comes to the village, and shares with her the affection of their common husband! Adultery with an unmarried woman is nothing more than "gangisa."

837 But should a man have abducted a *married woman*, a woman
684 who has a master (nwinyi), who has been paid for, then the
692 matter becomes very serious. The husband is very skilful at discovering her misdoing. As soon as he begins to have doubts about the fidelity of his wife, he chooses a friend and asks him to watch her. She is very cunning, her lover also ; but the friend is on the watch and some time perhaps, catches them in the bush, when she goes to gather fuel, or near the pool, where she draws her water. He comes back to the husband and informs him that he has caught them in the very act. Then the husband tells his wife that proof has been obtained and that she had better go at once to her lover and take something from his hut ; she obeys, and comes back with his blanket or any other object. This is "la pièce à conviction." The husband goes with it to the counsellor who is in charge of his village ; together they apply to the chief. The chief sends the counsellor who is responsible for the village of the lover to summon him. The confrontation takes place and the story of the case is investigated.

783 washed in the pool and which she will wear again for two days (1).
765 b) *The following days of the Great Mourning.* Without delay a new hut, a small provisional hut, is built in front of the mortuary one. Here the great wife will stay during the whole of her widowhood; the space between this and the old hut is more or less taboo and most of the possessions of the deceased are placed there, under the roof near the door on the outside. (See illustration p. 159.)

The other widows do not leave their huts, but they participate in the other purifying acts, the vapour baths and the general sprinkling of the fifth day. As regards the vapour baths, however, the first wife is associated with the grave-diggers, viz. she must be exposed to the strongest medicinal smoke, while the inferior wives are cleansed with weaker drugs. They all put on the *malopa* and eat with spoons during the whole year of widowhood.

587 c) *Provisional decision regarding the fate of the widows.* A few
595 days after the Great Mourning, a fresh gathering takes place, not
~~438~~ in connection with the defilement of death, which is now provision-
768 ally cleansed, but *to settle provisionally the fate of the widows.* The
604 sisters of the deceased have to play a special part in this gathering. They will lead the discussion with the widows about their new husbands. It is indeed a happy custom to let women decide on the subject. Not that they have unrestricted power in the matter. The law has provided a certain rule for the distribution and this is seldom departed from. However, some liberty is allowed in its application, and modifications can better be made if proposed by female intermediaries. Should the husband possess a harem (tshengwe), that is at least five wives, they will most likely be given to the following heirs. The great wife, being "the pole of the

575 (1) *Widowers* also form a similar society and undergo the same rites; but just as it
783 was only the great wife who was subject to these laws, to the exclusion of the little wives, so it is only when he has lost his first wife that a man is initiated into the
765 widowers' society. After having buried her (he holds her head) he goes to the pool, washes himself, and another widower comes and makes the incision in him in the inguinal region. Then he throws aways his *shifado* (Annotatio 1.) and also carries out the same crossing of the hut in tears. These three acts constitute the actual widower's mourning; the vapour baths and *tahla khombo* are part of his purification as being the principal grave-digger.

1[See category 116--Analyst]

787 village," must remain in it and belongs to the younger brother (1)
595 who becomes the master of the kraal. The second goes to the
428 second brother, the third to the third, the fourth to the *ntukulu*,
768 viz. to the son of the sister of the deceased. The fifth will then
604 become the wife of one of the sons of the deceased. This may appear shocking, and is really shocking even to the ideas of the Natives ; but let it be remembered that she is the youngest of all ; she was taken when the father was already old, and the first son is perhaps older than she. As regards the elder wives, the first and second especially, no one would think of keeping them for the son! Incestuous relations are very rare amongst the [825] Ba-Ronga. Even in this case, the feelings of both parties are more or less respected. The men advise the son to begin to play with the young widow, to ask her jocularly for tobacco, and he gradually accustoms himself to consider her no longer as a mother (mamana) but as a wife (nsati).

587 Of course the general rule is apt to be very much altered
595 according to circumstances. Should the deceased be the youngest
428 of the family, his elder brother may inherit the first wife. But
768 this is not the regular procedure.

The distribution having thus been decided on, the sisters of the deceased call the widows and say to them : "You so and so, you shall give food to so and so (phamela manyana)." But then the struggle begins. One of the widows, being old, may altogether refuse to have anything to do with any of her brothers-in-law. She may say : "I am taking my young son as a husband" which means : I do not want to be the wife of anybody. Or she will say : "I choose the big tree of the village where my late husband has built his hut." This answer may mean two things. Either : I do not leave this kraal and I will stay here without a husband ; or, on the contrary : I consent to be the wife of the man who becomes the headman of the village, viz. the eldest of the younger brothers. Another will say : "I love my *ntukulu* so and so." Should, however, the first wife desire to go to a man who does not

(1) Amongst the Ba-Ronga, an elder brother of the deceased cannot inherit a widow. It is taboo. He is a father to her, not a husband. He sometimes takes the lead in the discussion, having no personal interest in the matter. (See Part II).

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live in the village, the family council will certainly object strongly to her wish, as her departure would mean that the village would cease to exist. But in the case of the younger widows it is quite possible that an exception to the ordinary law would be allowed if they insisted upon choosing another husband (1).

After all, this is but a preliminary consultation, and the men who are rejoicing at the idea of getting new wives will perhaps be badly deceived later on, as we shall see. However the man provisionally chosen as the future husband of a widow, will at once pay visits to her, "march to her" (ku mu fambela), according to the technical expression.

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d) *The casting away of misfortune.* But before any new and happy life can begin for the widows, they have still to go through a very hard trial. They must perform the *lahla khombo*, the throwing away of the malediction of death, and this is much more difficult for them than for the grave-diggers or the other members of the village. The main point in this strange act of purification is this ; before a widow can become the wife of her new husband, she must have sexual intercourse with another man whom she deceives. Should she succeed in freeing herself from him so that the act keeps its ritual character, s. n. i. (see Annotation 2)[1], this man will take on himself the malediction of death, and she will be purified. On the contrary, should the man accomplish the whole act, the widow has failed and will return home with shame and in despair! Here is a description of this sad expedition of the widows. It takes place a few days after the gathering just described. The men of the village send the widows away, telling them : "Go and scatter (hangalasa) the malediction through the country and get rid of it before some other misfortune happens to us."

(1) What would happen should the widow choose a husband outside her husband's family? To the mind of a heathen woman the idea would never occur. But suppose a Christian widow, having only married sinners, refuses to become their wife, her conscience forbidding her to contract a polygamic union. Her case would be very hard indeed, as I do not think her wish would be taken into consideration by heathen relatives. It would have to be brought before the White magistrate, who would probably try to help the widow. I think that, even if the woman consented to submit such family matters to the European court, she would have to give the lobolo or her children back to her brothers-in-law, and that might be an impossibility for her. It would be interesting to know how Native Commissioners proceed in such cases.

1 [See p. 516 in these categories or in MC -- Analysis]

764 inhabitants of the kraal. One of them, the saluter (mulou), goes
604 to meet them and offers them a shilling. They keep silence.
342 He tells them the news of the village. They do not answer.
754 He leaves them and comes a second time with a fresh present. Then they consent to tell the news of their home, but they do not enter the village. The same man returns to them a third time with £ 1 ; they refuse to accept it. He adds 10/. (£ 1.10 is considered the normal sum to be paid as a kind of fine by the widower to the parents of the deceased.) They refuse again : this is an insult! Happily the *ntukulu* is there ; he will act as mediator between the two families. The visitors summoned him on their arrival and he has been sitting with them the whole time ; is he not the son of their sister ? But before he went to them, his father has given him his instructions : "Tell them that I have not eaten your mother." The *ntukulu*, as we shall see, is very free with his maternal uncles. He has the right of teasing them, even insulting them. Seeing that they do not accept the money, he stands and gives vent to his grief, throws sand at them, tries to drive them away, weeps. "No! Father has not killed mother! He is not a wizard! She died a natural death!" They see his tears, and then consent to enter the village.

764 In front of the mortuary hut, all the belongings of the deceased
768 wife have been piled up, together with the straw crown of the hut :
343 her pots, plates, baskets, spoons, mortars, etc. The brothers
782 break everything. Should there be any new implements amongst
[578] them, they will perhaps give them to their nieces. Then they lift up the roof of the hut and throw it into the bush. They pick all the plaster from the walls and throw it away where they threw the roof. The sacrifice is then accomplished amidst the ruins of the destroyed hut. Whilst it is being prepared, the women of both families insult each other. The female relatives of the deceased say to the women of the village : "You have killed her because she was a splinter in your eyes" (shilabi). The others answer : "Have you seen us kill her ? Perhaps people do not die with you ?" The *bukwele*, the special jealousy which almost always exists between co-wives, explains how it is possible for them to address such amenities to each other. But the victim is

764 prepared, all the limbs cut off, the portion of the gods set apart.
782 The elder brother of the deceased woman prays in these words:
768 "My sister, go in peace, be not angry; because we love you, we
595 have come to mourn you to-day. Do not say we have not mourned you. Go to so and so (father, grandfather, etc.), call them here, give us good sleep and good health, etc." The batukulu appropriate the offering and the mourning ends in laughter, dancing and drinking. The neighbours come and take part in the rejoicings.

When they return home, the mourners spend all the mahloko money in buying wine. They sometimes become quite intoxicated. Afterwards both families begin to visit each other again.
764 This custom of the mahloko fine is so strong that converts
768 will adhere to it. But they usually send the money to the wife's family when informing them of the death, and no other ceremony is performed.

In the Northern clans the mahloko are also paid, but it seems that the family of the widower considers that it has the right to claim the repayment of the whole lobolo, when the deceased wife has left no child to compensate for the loss. In Nondwane, though we are still in Ronga territory, when the woman dies
765 shortly after marriage the lobolo must be repaid. Further north
782 the procedure is as follows: the deceased woman is buried by her husband according to the ordinary rules; one year elapses and a special feast is celebrated, similar to the "beer of mourning" (page 164), in the village of the wife's parents, where both families gather together and provide the necessary victims. It commences with a sacrifice in which the father of the deceased wife squeezes the *psunui* of the goat on to those present, all the time insulting the gods who have killed his child and made trouble between the two families. He ends with words addressed to the widower's relations: "I cleanse you from your misfortune." The widower's father does the same thing, insulting also his own gods, and every one rubs his body with the green liquid squeezed from the *psunui*. Then prayer for new blessings is offered and the sacrifice is made, as
765 customary, and the actual discussion as to claims takes place. Each family takes possession of a hut, the widower's family assembling

601 reciprocal, means brothers as well as sisters. If he wishes to specify, he adds to makwabu : "of the assagai," or "of the basket." It is never employed except when united with the possessive pronoun : *makweru* means my brother, *makwenu* your brother, *makwabu*, his brother or sister. The elder brother is called *nhondjwa* (plur. tinhondjwa). The nhondjwa is also called *hosi* (plur. tihosi) chief. The hierarchy of age is very strictly
601 observed amongst the Thongas. The elder brother is treated
593 with great respect and gives orders to his younger brothers with
595 almost the same authority as the father. It must be noticed also that the position of elder brother is not only a matter of age, but, in the polygamic family, all the children of a first wife, or of the first house, are *tihosi* to the children of secondary or posterior wives or houses, though they may have been born after them. They take precedence of them. Amongst girls, an elder sister is often called *mamana*, mother, whilst an elder brother is never a tatana (father) but a hosi (chief).

601 The term *makwabu* is applied to all my first and second cousins
4/28 who have the same paternal grandfather, or great-grandfather,
605 as I have. Cousins on my mother's side are also bamakwabu, some of them at least, those who are my maternal aunt's children. But cousins on the father's side are more fully bamakwabu than those on the mother's side : Muhambi is more so to Hlangabeza than to Mahlobo, because the two former belong to the same shibongo, family name ; they are men of the Makaneta clan and Muhambi could therefore inherit Hlangabeza's wives ; Muhambi and Mahlobo are not of the same clan, and could not inherit from each other. From this fact we begin to see that the laws of inheritance, and especially the laws of the distribution of the widows amongst the family which has bought them, are closely connected with the system of relationship.

601 The man who has married my wife's sister is also a makwabu to me, a nhondjwa if he has married her elder sister (Phayindi to Mboza), a ndjisana if the younger (Magwazizen to Mboza). The brothers of Phayindi and Magwazizen are also called brothers by Mboza.

There is a special term in the Northern clans to indicate the

There is a special term in the Northern clans to indicate the relationship of two men who have married two sisters born of the same mother. They are called : bamakwabu ba shinauma, an expression which is the simplification of the following sentence : shi na wuñwe mamana, i. e. there is only one mother. This term seems to have been borrowed from the Pedis.

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2) Relatives on the mother's side.

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Tobane II calls Mishikombo *mamana*, mother. She is his true mamana and this relation is very deep and tender, combining respect and love. Love however generally exceeds respect. The proper word for tenderness is *timpsalu*, which comes from *psala*, to beget, and the mother is often called *mpsele* (a term which is applied also to the female of all animals). It is the word which answers best to the feelings of a mother for her children. She is generally weak with them and is often accused by the father of spoiling them.

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The mother's sisters are *bamamana* in the second degree, because, if the true mother dies, one of them will probably take care of the children. Their husbands are *batatana* : Phayindi is tatana to Madonge and Muhambi. He calls them *bana*, children. Mboza is also a tatana to Mahlobo and Mathamba, being a makwabu, brother of their father, owing to the fact that he and Phayindi have married sisters.

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All the co-wives are also *bamamana*, mothers by polygamy, (Ñwashihoni and Mishihari to Tobane). They are *bamamana ba shitshengwe*, harem mothers. I respect them but they are further from me than my mother's sisters. A more familiar term for mother, corresponding to roro, father, is *ñwa*, a word always used with the possessive pronoun and only in the second and third person : ñwaku, your mother, ñwakwe, his mother. Ñwaku is employed in certain insults and oaths, and is to be avoided as being vituperative.

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Many other women are mamana : the wife of my paternal uncle (Magugu for Muhambi), though I can inherit her in certain cases ; the daughter of my maternal uncle, because she is the

607 so far as to sleep in the hut of my great mukonwana together with
833 me (p. 242). Nevertheless sexual relations are not allowed.
595 Should a man commit this sin, and should his sister-in-law
582 become pregnant, he will have to pay a fine, or rather he will go to his father-in-law and say : (Viguet) "Ndi dlele ku dya"-"I have killed in order to eat" which means : I have committed a bad action but with the intention of repairing my wrong by marrying the girl. He brings five hoes when he makes the announcement and will remit the remainder of the lobolo later on. A younger sister when married to the same husband as the elder, is called *nhlampsa* of the latter. This term comes probably from hlampsa, to wash, because she washes the dishes of her sister and works more or less as her servant.

607 The right of marrying one's wife's sisters is by no means an
582 obligation. I am not in any way forced to do so, if I do not like
595 them. Most probably, even if I wished to marry them all, I should not have enough oxen to "lobola" them all. On the other hand, the bakoñwana are not obliged to give them to me. If I am not a good husband to my wife, if she complains that I illtreat her, her parents will not consent to receive my oxen for her sisters. Should my tinamu marry other men, of course the peculiar bulamu relations will cease. I can no longer allow myself the intimacy I previously had with them. But if they have children by these men, they will call me tatana and I shall call them bana, because I might have been their father, having a prior right of marrying their mothers.

607 My wife's elder sisters are not tinamu to me ; they are
582 bakoñwana. Why so ? Because when I married my wife, her elder sisters were already married, according to the law that an elder sister must always marry before the younger. A father would never consent to give away the younger before the elder. Therefore I have never had the opportunity of playing with my wife's elder sisters and considering them as possible wives.

607 By extension the term namu is also applied to my wife's
595 younger brothers. They are bakoñwana, in fact (p. 238). Their daughters are my potential wives. However, the relations I have with them are easier than with the elder brothers and

607 with the father of my wife, as these are her natural protectors.
835 In this first category is included the daughter of my wife's
595 brother (Shaputa versus Mboza). With her the relations are perhaps even more free than with my wife's younger sisters. I call her *nsati*. The intimacy is so great that I can hold her breasts (tamele mabele). I can do so even in the presence of my wife, who is her paternal aunt. She will be pleased to see that I am disposed to avail myself of my right to marry her, because her niece will thus become her nhlampsa, she will hlampsela rarana, i. e. become a second wife by the side of her father's sister. But I dare not take such a liberty with the girl if her father is on the spot and sees me. I probably do not possess the oxen to pay for her, and the father looks chiefly to the oxen.

As already pointed out, all the girls belonging to my bakoñwana are in the same position towards me. I can marry them all... if I am rich enough to "lobola" them. The grand-daughter of my wife's brother is a namu, a nsati. She will probably be a baby whilst I am a grown-up man. Never mind! If I meet her, a little girl on her mother's back, I go and take her in my arms, and
602 say to her : "Good morning, my wife!" As regards my wife's
607 cousins, those whose father is a brother of my wife's father and
835 who bear the same family name as my wife, they are also tinamu,
595 but here a distinction must be made. Should the father of one of these girls be younger than my wife's father, I can marry her ; but should he be older I must not do so. Why is this? Because the girl, belonging to an elder branch of my wife's family, takes precedence of my wife ; she is her "hosi", her chief. On the other hand my wife, being my first wife, is the mistress of the house ; this cousin of hers ought therefore to obey her. But she is her chief! That would not be right. The natural family relations would be disturbed.. Such a union is not taboo (a psi yili) but it must be avoided.

835 The *second category of tinamu* includes those women whom I
595 might marry, not on account of the prior right of a group to the
607 women of another group, but because I might *inherit them*. They are the wives of my elder brothers. If their husbands die, I am their legal heir. Relations with them are easy. We joke together, but there is more reserve towards these tinamu than towards those

835 of the first category. Sexual intercourse with them is a great taboo,
595 and a man daring to commit such a sin would be likened to a
607 wizard: he has killed his brother. This is the sin called matlulana (App. VI). My younger brother's wives are not tinamu ; we call each other ñwingi. I do not inherit them except in extraordinary cases when the deceased has no brother younger than himself.

602 There is still a *third kind of bulamu.* I also call tinamu the
835 cousins of my wife who are the daughters of my wife's mother's
582 sisters. These girls do not belong to my wife's clan ; they bear the family name of their father. Therefore I have no right to inherit them : "A hi delani ndjaka," i. e. "we do not inherit from each other." The relations with these tinamu are agreeable, but there is no hope of marriage between us.

2) Relations on the Husband's side.

607 So far we have considered the relation of Mboza with his wife's family. But what about Nsabula and her position towards her husband's relatives ? Nsabula calls Masuluke and Nsengamuñwe *ñwingi*, and the term is reciprocal. It implies great respect. As we saw, the young bride must work a whole year for her mother-in-law. The same respect is shown by Nsabula to Djan, Sam, Fos, her husband's elder brothers. They are also *ñwingi* to each other. "Should I send her to call Djan," says Mboza, "she will kneel down before him and say : 'My father! Mboza calls you!' or : 'Ñwamasuluke (Masuluke's son), you are wanted with us." She will not dare to address him by name. This extraordinary respect is reciprocal. Djan will consider Nsabula as his inferior, but he will never play with her. On the other hand, Komatane, Mboza's younger brother, is only a *namu* to Nsabula. Both will joke together and even occasionally smear each other with ashes. So will Sam, Fos, Mboza and Komatane with Mihlakaza, the wife of their elder brother. Thus we note
607 this law : a woman will generally respect the elder brothers of her
835 husband (beñgi), and hold very free intercourse with his younger
595 brothers (tinamu), and vice-versa. A man will keep away from

607 his younger brother's wives (bengi) and play with those of his elder
835 brothers (tinamu). Why tis here this difference ? Because, as
we saw, the wife of an elder brother is a possible wife for all
343 his younger brothers, as they have the right of inheriting
512 her, should this man die. On the contrary, an elder brother inherits his younger brother's wife only under quite exceptional circumstances. One does not marry a ñwingi! This would be an insult to one's wife. Nsabula would leave Mboza if Mboza were to marry Magugu, Komatane's wife, because they have been accustomed to call each other ñwingi.

607 To a wife, her husband's elder sister is also a ñwingi (Ndjibari to Nsabula). The husband's younger sister is a namu or *nhombe*, and two tinhombe have very free relations, just as in the case of the tinamu. This freedom exists between female tinamu as well as between tinamu of different sexes.

606 There is a final term to be mentioned : *bakhoti* or *bakhoti-kulobye*, in Ronga, *basevele* in Djonga, a reciprocal term by which the parents of a husband and wife call each other.

593 How far is a woman incorporated in her husband's family ?
769 She belongs to it till her death, provided the lobolo oxen have been paid, but she does not accept the ancestor-gods of her parents-in-law as being her gods. She keeps her own gods, and prayers are frequently addressed to them by her father or by her brothers in favour of her children. In this respect Thongas differ widely from the old Aryan peoples, where a woman had to adopt the religion of her husband's clan when she married.

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606 Before leaving the subject of relations with parents-in-law, and in order to show to what extent the uneasiness and fear which characterises them are carried, I will briefly mention the taboos of the bukoñwana, which play such a great part in Bantu family life. Let me say that most of these taboos (psiyilayilana, small prohibitions), are not so severe as those connected with sexual relations, disease and death. It is not believed that a breach of

582 607 and whom he calls spouses, because he would be welcomed if he were able to lobola them. They are his *tinamu* or *tinhlampsa*, viz., his wife's younger sisters or the daughters of his wife's brother. These marriages are considered as peculiarly appropriate. This does not however constitute an absolute right for the man. Should he not prove a good husband, his parents-in-law will not let him have their other daughters (p. 240).

582 607 595 As regards marriage with the wife's brother's daughter, who is the nhlampsa proper, there are different possibilities to be considered. It may very well happen that a man's wife, wishing to have a young girl to help her in her domestic work, approaches her brother and asks him to lend her his daughter, the woman's niece, to stay in her village for this purpose. He consents, and she grows up there. Later on however the girl's parents say to their sister : If your husband has oxen, he may take her as a wife. She returns home and discusses the matter with her husband. Should the latter be agreed, he will send his wife with £ 1.10.—to make a proposal to the girl's parents, and he will take the girl at once without much ceremony. The remainder of the lobolo will perhaps be paid afterwards. If a son wants to marry and has no means of buying his wife, then the girl's parents will say to their sister : "Please remind your husband that he has not yet given the oxen." But they will not urge this too strongly as it is their sister who arranged the marriage in order to secure help for herself. On the contrary should the husband have taken the initiative, and sent his wife to ask her parents to give him the girl because he wanted her, then the lobolo oxen will be claimed at once, or at any rate the bakoñwana will be in a position to insist on a speedy remittance of the bride-price. But as my informant says : "Psi ya hi bhanu," i. e. "it goes according to the people." It depends on their character.

586 582 607 595 However there is a reason which militates against such marriages. If I quarrel with my first wife, who may have a particularly difficult character, and she goes home, her younger sisters or nieces, who are her tinhlampsa, will certainly follow her, and I shall remain quite alone without a single dish to eat in the evening. Should the quarrel end in a divorce, I shall lose all my

586 wives at once. The custom of marrying a wife's tinhlampsa is
582 approved of; it is however not very frequently observed in Thonga
607 families at the present time.
595 Other women to whom a man has a special right are his relatives on the mother's side, as we have seen; to take a wife from the family in which the father found the mother is recommended and approved of as long as she is not too near a relative.

2) The right of inheritance.

587 The second class of cases does not concern unmarried women
835 whom I mean to lobola, but widows whom I may inherit after
768 the death of their husband. Those whom I may eventually inherit
595 are generally called by me *namu* or *nsati*, and I have very free
582 relations with them, but as already pointed out this liberty never goes so far as to allow of sexual intercourse (p. 247). "Ndi nga da," viz. "I can eat, inherit by prior right" *my elder brother's widow*: she is my regular legacy. As regards my younger brother's widow, I can only marry her if she is old and no longer able to bear children. But if she is still a childbearing woman, to take her is very much against the feelings of the tribe. The reason of the prohibition is this, says Viguet: suppose that this widow of my younger brother already has children. I take her, and have a child by her. The child takes precedence of the first children of its mother: he is their *hosi*, because I, myself, the father, am the elder brother of the deceased. On the other hand, he is *ndjisana* of his other brothers, because he was born after them by the same mother. This is impossible; it runs counter to the most elementary notions of the family. In exceptional cases, however, when no one else can claim my younger brother's widow, I may take her.

587 Next to my true tinamu comes *the widow of my maternal uncle*.
768 If he had many, one might be alloted to me in the distribution.
595 But of course, in this as in all other cases of inherited women, the
582 children born of our union would belong to the family who paid the lobolo, and not to me. I have, in a sense, only the usufruct of the property. She will till the fields for me and serve me with

587 768 595 582

my daily plate of porridge, but she is not really mine. She is given (nyika) to me by favour, and only under specified conditions. I can also inherit *bakokwana*, the widow of my malume's father (not my true grandmother, of course, but her co-wife), the widow of my father's brothers.

Muhambi can inherit Magugu, *the widow of his cousin* Hlangabeza. This cousin is a brother (makwabu) and the two fathers are brothers. But he could not inherit Debeza, wife of Phusa. Why so? Because Phusa, being a cousin by the father's sister, belongs to another *shibongo*, the shibongo of his own father Muki and not to that of his mother. Should Muhambi lay claim to Debeza, the men of Mashabane (the name of Phusa's clan) would say : "We are opposed to it, because your doing so would in fact mean that you *eat two herds*. You have eaten one herd when we bought Ndjibari from your people. Ndjibari has had two children ; we have sold her daughter Ñwashidjasa to lobola Debeza for Phusa. The oxen were ours. If Phusa dies, Debeza belongs to us and not to you." So Muhambi can inherit the widow of his cousin, the son of his paternal uncle, but not the widow of his cousin, the son of his paternal aunt.

A man can inherit also *one of his father's wives*, as we have seen (page 203), but only under certain circumstances. The dlaya shilongo is never performed in the case of inherited women.

A rule on which Viguet insisted, but which is disappearing, is this : women, when their husband had no younger brothers, must be inherited by *batukulu* and not by *bana* ; batukulu, i. e. either true grandsons, sons of the son, or uterine nephews, sons of the sister of the deceased. The reasons for this law are : 1) Bana, sons, would take liberties with their father's wives and make balamo of them, if they could inherit them regularly. This would spoil the life of the village. 2) If I, being ñwana, a son, inherit my father's wife and have a child by her, this child is ñwana, a son, to me. On the other hand, this inherited woman may have had children by my father, and they are my brothers. So, one of this woman's children is my son, the other my brother ! "A beleki tinshaka timbiri." — "She has had children of two generations!" This must not be.

I. *Original promiscuity.*

582 As regards the idea that promiscuity prevailed originally—a supposition which is combated by some scientists (see W. H. R. Rivers, "On the origin of the classificatory system of relationship," Anthropological Essays), I see no trace of it amongst the Thongas. Amongst the Pedis, there is one day when free intercourse is allowed all through the clans ; it is the closing day of the second circumcision school. But this custom can be explained on a totally different basis.

II. *Group marriage.*

178, 582, 595, 837 As regards *group marriage*, we may see a remnant of the system in the fact that a man has a special preferential right to certain women of his wife's family, the tinamu. His son will also consider it peculiarly appropriate to take a wife from his mother's clan, the one into which his father married.

The tinamu custom might be explained in that way. There is however a very marked difference between the group-marriage system and the Thonga family law. Amongst Australian aborigenes, whilst a man of a group has the right of marrying all the women of the other group, a woman of the other group has the same right to marry all the men of the first. Amongst the Thongas it is absolutely taboo for a married woman to have relations with anybody except her own husband. Polygamy exists and is approved of, but polyandry is strongly censured and considered a disgusting custom. The main reason for this is no doubt the *matlulana* superstition, which bears all the character of a very ancient idea in the Thonga system. The story of P. K. which I relate in Appendix IV, will show how deeply the sin of polyandry is felt (1).

(1) It is true that the Ba-Pedi who are neighbours of the Thongas, have a kind of polyandry (See page 99). But this has nothing to do with group marriage, and the wives of a rich man whom he allows to have intercourse with other men, choose their lovers as they like and not according to a law of preferential right binding two groups.

582 595 835 Though laying much stress on this very important difference we must notice, nevertheless, that there is a certain correspondence between the rights of men and women in this respect. A man has a preferential right to his wife's younger sisters, and to the daughters of his wife's brothers, be these men younger or older than his wife. He is a potential husband for all these tinamu. It results from this fact, that, as regards a woman, she is also a potential wife for all her husband's younger brothers, who can inherit her and are also called tinamu by her, and for the sons of her husband's sisters, be they older or younger than her husband.

601 582 Another feature of these early Australian forms of society is that all the persons belonging to a given generation call each other brothers (or sisters), and call the preceding generation fathers and mothers and the following generation sons indiscriminately. We may compare with this classificatory system the Thonga custom of calling all the father's wives and all the mother's sisters mothers; and all the father's brothers fathers. But this is not necessarily a trace of group marriage. As we have seen before, the meaning of kinship terms is very often extended to other people as a sign of respect or of love; the Thongas, nevertheless, know perfectly well the difference existing between the technical use of these terms and their wider connotation. There is something natural in these appellations. When we call such and such a person Father Morton, Mother Fuller, Brother James or Sister Agnes, no one would take this to be a relic of the group marriage phase! On this point my conclusion would therefore be: certain customs may be considered as traces of this old system, but it is not absolutely necessary to explain them by this hypothesis. The preference accorded to a wife's sisters, or nieces, may very well owe its origin to the following cause: when a group has ascertained that its women are well treated in another group, it welcomes new alliances with that group, thinking that, in this dreadful lottery of marriage, the guarantee given by a previous happy union is not to be despised!

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when a

Banyan takes a native wife (or rather a concubine), he can get her for £ 10, and the father consents to this lower price, first because a "white man's" wife is better treated and fed than ordinary native women, and secondly because the Banyan will soon go home, to India, and this kind of marriage is tacitly looked upon as temporary. The influx of money had also the following unexpect-

Cattle in the Nkomati River near Antioka.

ed effect on the native custom. There are two kinds of lobolo: 1) the lobolo which a boy obtains from his sister's marriage, and which he employs with the consent of the family to buy a wife for himself; this is the true old-fashioned way for him to contract a marriage; 2) the acquired lobolo won by a boy who has worked for it, and who has *started a herd for himself* (tisungulela ntlhambi). This second kind of lobolo became much easier to procure under

far. But the people who had given their daughter for that sum wanted to lobola a girl and were asked £ 30. Therefore they claimed £ 2 from the bakohwana of Mpunzi and these, in their turn, came to him asking for £ 2 more. And it was so arranged. This story fittingly illustrates the explanation of the lobolo which I set forth below: it is a compensation.

583 the debt remains as a permanent cause of irritation. If there
606 is no reason for friction on that point, the threat of quarrels
586 ending in divorce is always impending like the sword of Damo-
578 cles. If this takes place, the sad event will be made ten times more painful by the terrible dispute which will arise by reason of the lobola being claimed back. And the contending couple will not suffer alone. It may be that another marriage, that of the great mukoriwana, which was perhaps a happy one, will be destroyed in consequence of the divorce. (p. 243) "A ba ruli timbilwin," remarked Mboza. "They don't find peace in their hearts."

These complicated relations due to the lobola poison the whole of native life. Life should be easy for South African Natives. Their wants are few and they have enough to satisfy them under their invariably blue sky. They are generally speaking mild and good-natured. But the lobola question fills the African village with hatred and bitterness. *The milandju*, the debts! Milandju comes from landja, to follow, and this etymology is very instructive. A husband whose wife has gone away must *landja* his wife or rather his money. His whole family will help him in following this property until it has been recovered. Natives will go from one end of the country to the other to follow a few pounds, and at least three quarters of the cases which are brought before the Courts are lobola cases.

As regards the attitude to be adopted towards the Lobola custom, see Practical Conclusions. III.

F. POLYGAMY.

I. *Origin and spread of Polygamy amongst the Thongas.*

595 Polygamy is uniformly practised all through the tribe. This is not to say that every man has many wives; the automatic rule, by which the number of males is always about equivalent to

595 that of females and which has been recognised by physiology, has
622 its effect also amongst Natives, and, in ordinary circumstances,
643 women are not more numerous than men in Bantu tribes. Many men are monogamists, not from choice, but by force of circumstances. Others are wandering about in Johannesburg, or Kimberley, and marry later in life, whilst girls marry much earlier. In the villages round Lourenço Marques the headman often has two or three wives. Three is however an unusual number. The chiefs, of course, take more, and Mubvesha, for instance, the chief of Nondwane, had as many as thirty. In the Gaza country chiefs go even further, at least they used to do so in the good old times, under Gungunyane. Bingwane, the chief of the Ba-Tswa, had so many wives that he hardly knew them and at any rate did not know all his children.

595 What is the origin of the custom ? It might be assumed to be a remnant of the old system of group marriage, supposing the Bantus to have also passed through that stage of family evolution. At one time all the men of a group would have considered as their wives all the women of another group, and vice versa. It was a state of polygamy and polyandry at the same time. The fear of the matlulana (page 265) put a stop to polyandry, and polygamy alone survived. Or it might be supposed that monogamy existed first and that polygamy appeared later, owing to the following reasons : 1) *Wars* diminished the number of men. As women were not anxious to remain "old maids," and as the tribe wanted to make the most of them, in order to increase and strengthen itself, the unmarried ones were taken by married men and so the polygamic family arose. In fact polygamy was very much fostered by the Gungunyane wars, during the historic
595 period. Every year the Ngoni chief planned expeditions against
567 his Ba-Chopi enemies on the coast, north of the mouth of the Limpopo. Men were killed and women enslaved, and each of these became the wife of her capturer. The position of these slaves was not very bad : however they were called *tinhloko*, heads, (a word which has the same meaning as heads of cattle), and could be sold by their owner. A great many of these Chopi women were bought in and round Lourenço Marques, before the suppression

567 of slavery. Hundreds of them still live there and are recognisable by their very broad, coarse features. 2) The *laws of succession* ~~595~~ 336 which regulate the present agnatic Thonga family also lead to polygamy as a necessary consequence. A young brother inherits the widow of his elder brother, be he married or not. If polygamy began in this second way, its increase in later times is not to be wondered at. It answers admirably to the Bantu ideal of life. As we saw, a man who has a harem, tshengwe (page 126), is a man who has succeeded in his career! This is the regular method of becoming a rich man, an ideal which is by no means confined to the black race! On the other hand sensuality develops very quickly in the polygamic family and its very development reacts on the custom and tends to foster it.

595 764 I do not think the origin of polygamy can be traced with certitude. However, there are amongst the Thongas some striking customs, giving to the "first" or "great wife" a special position, which seem to confirm the hypothesis of a primitive monogamy. The first of these is the ritual incision made by the first wife in the inguinal region after the death of the husband; it is not performed by the other widows (p. 200). In the same way the widower carries out this rite only after the death of the first wife and not when "little wives" die. The second is to be found in the rites of the foundation of the village; as we shall see in the next chapter, the first wife has a special part to play in these significant ceremonies. When I asked Magingi, an old Rikatla heathen, why such a difference was made between the first wife and her co-wives, he told me: "The first is the true wife and the others are but thieves. That is why it is said at the death of the first wife: the house of the husband has been crushed (a tjhobekelwi hi yindlu ya kwe). When another dies, it is only said: he has lost a wife (a felwi hi nsati)"...

595 643 The species of sacredness which surrounds the first wife appears even more plainly in the case of the marriages of chiefs. The principal wife of the chief is in one sense not the actual first wife, but the woman who has been bought with the money collected by his subjects and whose son will be the heir to the chieftainship (See Part III). Generally the "wife of the country" is not the first

595/643 in date. At her death the chief does not perform the incision : the first in date remains the first from the ritual point of view. All these facts show that, for the Thongas, there is a deeper, more mystical conception of matrimony than at first appears, when we consider their present polygamic family. For them, true, complete matrimony is the union of two persons, not of three or ten, and little wives are not much more than concubines. This feeling may very well be explained by the supposition that the race has passed through a previous monogamic phase.

II. *Consequences of polygamy.*

595 A happy consequence of the custom is that, in the primitive Bantu tribe, no disconsolate old maid is to be found. This is no doubt an advantage. I fear, however, that when monogamy sets in, this unblessed singleness will follow in its train.

But the evils of polygamy by far exceed its few advantages!

1) The first is the dreadful development of sexual passion which occurs amongst polygamists. White people who have lived in close touch with Natives in a head kraal where men have many wives, can bear testimony to the frightful excesses in which they indulge. See Annotatio 14[1], the observations of Dr. Liengme at Gungunyana's residence.

595/578/351 2) A second evil resulting from the custom is the domestic quarrelling which prevails in the villages of polygamists. There is a special term which indicates the peculiar jealousy of a wife towards her co-wives, *bukwele*. The prefix *bu*, in Bantu languages, designates abstract things, ideas, feelings. It is also an indication of place. *Bukwele* therefore also means the special spot between the court yards, where the wives of one man go to insult each other (rukutelana). The story of Leah and Rachel, in the book of Genesis, may give some idea of the reason of such quarrels!

595/578 Sometimes the husband amuses himself by fostering these by no means edifying feelings amongst his spouses. Tobane says : "He will say bad things (psitokoro) to one of his wives, his

1 [See pp. 519-520 in these categories of in 116-Analyst]

595 578 favourite, about another who is perhaps superior to her. He says to her : 'You are much nicer than so and so! She is not like a woman (A nga twali lepsaku i wansati).' The favourite will make haste to report to her superior what she has heard. She will draw her attention to the fact that the husband calls at her hut more frequently than at the others... The superior becomes angry, and people say of the husband : 'A ni gudjulisana, a ni bandjisana,' 'he makes his wives hit each other.' He himself, after a time, will try to regain the goodwill of the despised one (a ta mu batela). She will violently repel him. He may even kill a chicken to bring about a reconciliation!" One can easily imagine the jealous scenes which occur in the village of a polygamist (1)!

595 3) Polygamy, when practised on a large scale, even brings about *the ruin of the family*. Two examples show this clearly. First the case of Bingwana, to which I have already alluded. He had a great number of wives and used to place them in his various villages, viz., in the capital itself and in all the districts of his kingdom, going round from place to place to visit them. But they were so numerous that he could not visit them Frequently enough and they committed adultery wholesale with the men of these villages. The result was that Bingwana had hundreds of children and that, in the end, he married his own daughters without knowing it. He died tragically. The Gungunyana's yimpis surrounded his fortress (hkokholo). His son, Sipenenyana, fled during the night and he remained alone. He then shut himself up in a hut where he had gathered together his treasures and his gunpowder, set fire to it and died amidst the flames.

The second example is that of Mubvesha who died on Nov. 5 th 1910, a man of weak character, whose intrigues caused the war of 1894-1896 and who was installed by the Portuguese as Chief of the Nondwana country at the close of that war. (See

533 595 578 (1) Here is a pretty little Nhana song about bukwele. A despised wife sings :

Rirakara ra mina ri khala hi wanuna,
Wanuna a xyika dokori ya kwe !
My nice little pumpkin has been plucked by my husband !
My husband has given it to his favourite !

She sings this song to excite a quarrel... after which she hopes that she will obtain her rights.

595 Appendix X.) He used to lobola the younger sisters of his wives (tinhlampsa) when they were still little girls, and had between thirty and fifty spouses. But he was terribly jealous, keeping them in their villages, away from all the world, under the supervision of a trustworthy induna. All the men were forbidden to cross the large road which separated this

Phot. A. Bavel.

Chief Mulweiha with some of his [illegible] (Nondwane 1908).

district from the rest of the country. The result is to be seen in the photograph taken in 1908, when I paid him a visit in his kraal. He was a man of sixty-five [illegible] seventy. His younger wives were over thirty ; I saw *one* child only, called Ñwadambu, after the surname of the Nondwane Portuguese Administrator. One child and thirty wives! This shows the result of polygamy when practised under such conditions. It ruins the family.

What is the opinion of Christianised and civilised Natives about Polygamy ? I made an inquiry amongst the pupils of the Rikatla

595 Training Institution, asking them to set forth their views frankly on the subject. Most of them were full grown men, some were married, some had been polygamists themselves. I obtained about twenty written answers, and this is the summary of these little essays :

Reasons for :

595 538 1) A Native proverb says : Wansati muñwe a ngà yaki muti, i. e. One woman does not build (constitute) a village. This proverb is confirmed by two others : Litiho liñwe a li nusi hobe, i. e. One finger does not bring the cooked grains of maize to the mouth ; and : One single arrow is not able to kill a snake (Ntumbana muñwe a wu psi koti ku dlaya nyoka).

595 2) To have many wives is the glory of the headman of a village. He is honoured in proportion to the number of his wives.

3) The polygamist can thus practise a generous hospitality, each wife bringing her plate of food for the evening meal.

4) If the first wife dies, he is not left alone.

5) If she is ill, he does not want for food.

6) There are many hands to perform the village duties : his many wives help each other.

7) The polygamist has many children.

8) No woman is left unmarried, which is a good thing, because how could the unmarried ones find money to buy their clothing ?

Reasons against :

1) Tshengwe dja kajata, i. e. Polygamy is troublesome... on account of bukwele, jealousy.

What is the source of this feeling ? A husband shows his preference for one of his wives, either by giving her a more valuable present than he gives the others, by visiting her on two consecutive nights in her hut, or, when he returns from a hunting trip, by giving her a better piece of meat, the leg, for instance. This arouses bukwele in the heart of the others, and, when this has once been the case, a trifle will suffice to kindle the fire anew. And how does this feeling manifest itself ? By mutual insults of these women to each other, going as far as accusations of witchcraft. (One of them will exclaim : "O! May my rival die and I remain alone in possession of everything!" This is almost equivalent to an act of witchcraft) ; by insults and menaces to the husband ; by the refusal on the part of the despised one to cook his food and to get in his harvest ; by deeds of violence against his person : (One of the wives of one of the witnesses went so far as to drag him out of the hut of her rival, and they made life so intolerable to him that he

595 fled from his village and went to Johannesburg to find rest) ; by criminal attempts on his life ; by hatred manifested to the children of the co-wives. (These children are called *mabokengo*, which is a term of contempt. They are taught to hate each other and to hate their father, as the angry mothers give vent to their grievances before them without 762 shame.) Finally bukwele sometimes ends in the suicide of the despised wife.

595 2) Polygamy encourages drunkenness on account of the great abundance of corn harvested and of beer brewed by so many hands.

3) It develops pride in the heart of the polygamist.

4) It is expensive, as the husband must pay £ 1, the hut tax, for each wife.

5) It destroys the man's strength owing to sexual excesses. (However this reason put forward by one of the witnesses seemed to have little weight in the eyes of the others. It rather made them laugh.)

On the attitude to be adopted towards Polygamy see Practical Conclusions IV. I shall there add some remarks about this interesting inquiry.

G. SOME FEATURES OF THE RELATIONSHIP SYSTEM AMONGST OTHER SOUTH AFRICAN TRIBES.

000 The tribes that I have studied can be classified into two categories as regards their relationship system : those in which a man has the right of marrying the daughter of his wife's brother, and those in which it is his son who marries the girl, who is his cross-cousin, the daughter of his maternal uncle. This difference is absolute as regards marriage between cross-cousins. In the first category such a marriage is taboo and never happens unless the rite of *dlaya shilongo* is performed, an exception which confirms the rule. As regards marriage of the uncle with his wife's niece, it is prohibited in the second category, but may eventually take place, at least amongst the Pedis and Venda, if the man has no son to marry the girl. This difference is deep enough to provide a principle of classification, as it has important consequences in the respective life of the two allied groups. However both customs are manifestations of the same general law existing in all the South African tribes, i. e. the right of a family which has taken a wife in another family to marry more wives belonging to the allied family.

361 air circulate, is the goats' kraal (19). It may be placed somewhere
231 else, behind the huts, for instance ; or sometimes goats are tethered
331 every night by the leg to sticks round the hubo. The pigs are
343 never kept on the hubo, but always behind the hut : they are newcomers in the Thonga village and have hardly yet won their "droit de cité." Let us salute, as we pass by, the tree (25) which
361 is, as we shall see, the mystical stem of the village. We may perhaps
824 see, hanging upon it, a piece of clothing offered to the gods, or at its
782 base a broken pot which is the *gandjelo*, the altar of the village.
351 The gandjelo is often placed, by preference, among the poles of the main entrance on the right. The village tree, which has a ritual significance, is not to be confounded with the trees of the hubo (26), which are but *mindjuti*, shade-trees, under which the inhabitants are fond of sitting.

361 So we reach the main hut which faces the gate. This is the
595 dwelling of the headman. In hut 3 lives his second wife, in 4, his third and in 5 his fourth. 2 is called *shilubelo*. Great personages, men owning a large kraal, like to build such a hut, which is smaller than the ordinary ones and where no woman sleeps. It is the headman's own hut, where people *luba*, viz., pay their homage to him; a kind of office of the master of the village! He may sleep in it and summon his wives to come to him there. But he generally prefers to sleep in his wives' huts, one month in each, according to the polygamic custom.

361 *Behind 4 and 10 is a mbala*, a shed for the implements. It is
343 built, like the goats' kraal, without plaster walls, and is smaller
351 than a hut. There may be three or four of these in the village.
596 The headman and his wives occupy the back of the village. At the sides live his younger brothers, one, who has two wives, in 7 and 8, two others, those who have but one wife each, in 9 and in 10 respectively. In 11 lives a married son; in 12 it may be a nephew, son of the headman's sister, or a son-in-law; (see page 252). 13 ~~might~~ be the hut of a stranger (mulubeti), who has
361 asked permission to stay with the headman of the village, as he
574 wished to be under his protection. The case is not frequent, but
783 may occur, and in order to be received into the mystic unity of the community, this man will have to "hlambe ndjaka" (See page 153).
together with all the inhabitants of the kraal.

361 in the bandla, and it is strictly reserved for them. Women are
351 allowed to penetrate into it only when they bring food. Boys
562 must remove the ashes from the fireplace, not women. The *hubo*, on the contrary, is open to all. A shed is sometimes built on it to afford shelter during the rainy days. There are special acts always performed on the hubo : the cutting up (shindla), the slaughtering and butchery of animals and the feast of "eating the head." The head of any slaughtered ox belongs to the men, and they eat it together on the hubo (See letter C.). It is the business of the young men to keep the hubo clean, and they sometimes assemble to pull up the grass which may have grown on it. In former times it was taboo to come to the hubo with
292 sandals. Sandals are used for hunting and must be taken off before entering the village.

Another place to which I have already alluded is the *bukwele*,
361 the "place of jealousy," where angry co-wives insult each other!
351 On our diagram it would be located between 5 and 4, for the
595 wives of the headman.

The Thonga village, this closed circle of huts, is a living
361 organism. All its members form a whole whose unity is remark-
596 able. This common life never appears in a more striking form
264 than at the evening meal. Let us look at our diagram. In every
476 yard the mistress of the hut has cooked her mealies and her sauce in different pots, and, when the sun sets, she distributes the contents (phamela) in wooden or earthen plates. The largest is for the husband. He sits on the bandla with his companions, the other men of the village, and the youths waiting for the meal. All these plates, generally carried by small girls or boys, are brought from all sides to the men's gathering. All do not necessarily contain the ordinary mealies pap ; some are filled with manioc, some with sweet potatoes, etc. The men attack the first plate, all of them taking the food with their fingers. They pass on to the second and so on to the last. Meanwhile each mother has filled other smaller plates, one for the girls, one for the boys, one for herself. She has even sent to each of the other women of the village a little of her cooking, and the others have done the same to her ; so each member of the community, when

621 396 nature of that social unit, the Thonga *muti*. I shall give the sequence of these rites first in the Northern clans, according to the description of Viguet, and secondly amongst the Ba-Ronga, according to Mboza.

I. *In the Northern clans.*

621 787 784 1) The headman goes first to examine some spots where he would like to build. He *breaks small twigs* from various trees and brings them home.

833 2) The bones are consulted and help in *making a choice*. The twigs are placed on a mat one after the other. When the stone of the *kanye* (see Part VI) falls in a certain way in front of one of the twigs, this shows that the tree from which it has been broken is the one near which the hut of the headman must be built.

3) Building material is collected. When everything is ready to proceed to the construction of the huts, the headman goes with his principal wife to the spot chosen. They leave the old village for ever ; they must not return to it any more. In the evening they have *sexual relations* in the new place and in the morning they tie together some tufts of living grass. Next day all the people of the old village must come and step upon this grass. This rite is called to *tie the village* (boha muti).

621 595 784 834 4) Then begins the period, of about one month, called *buhlapfa*, time of moving, which has its laws. Two great taboos dominate it : 1) Sexual relations are absolutely prohibited. Should any one transgress this law, he has sinned gravely against the headman ; he has stolen the village (yiba muti). The headman will be ill, perhaps paralysed. The guilty woman will also be punished : she will not be able to bear children again ; she will be "tied by the village" (bohiwa hi muti). The culprits have "crossed the way of the master of the village" (tjemakanya). Strange to say, the headman himself is bound by this law. He must have no relations *with his younger wives*, because the village belongs to the principal spouse. Should such a transgression be discovered, the work

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

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of building will be stopped at once and the little community will find another place to which to move! Moreover the guilty woman will have to ask the principal wife for forgiveness. 2) A second great taboo is this : — No one must wash his body during the whole "buhlapfa", as this might cause the rain to fall and it would interfere with the building operations.

5. The building of the huts begins immediately, each man making the circular wall first. When all the walls are ready,

Carrying a roof.

the *roofs are carried* from the old village to the new by all the men together. They lift each roof on to their shoulders, after having removed the old grass, and go out of the village, not by the main entrance, but by one of the back gates which has been widened for the purpose. A broad road has been prepared through the bush. They follow it, marching as fast as they can, and singing the obscene songs which are reserved for special occasions (see Part VI). In these they insult the women who accompany them, carrying the baskets, the mortars, the pestles. "The village is broken in pieces, so are the ordinary laws. The insults which are taboo are now allowed" (Mboza). This suspension of morality in speech is only allowed on the day when roofs are carried to the new village. Some days later, again, the women will take their revenge when they smear the floor of the huts ; then they too will sing their songs, insulting the men. But

621 831 all this is done in fun. It is a great day of rejoicing for the "tinamu", who tease each other as much as they like. A man may be wanting in respect even to his great mukonwana on these days!

621 756 357 789 6) When the huts are ready, the *fence* is built. The family doctor is summoned. The medicine man throws leaves or stones treated with his drugs along the circular line, where the headman intends to place the branches which will form the future fence of the village. This being done, the men erect the fence.

7) Special precautions are taken for *the main entrance*. Poles are erected on both sides, but before they are put in place, the doctor pours medicine into the holes in the ground and also smears the poles with it at the bottom and at the top. Mankhelu used to bury a black stone, taken out of the river, at the gate. This stone had also been smeared with drugs. "In this way, I prevent enemies from entering. Those who come to try their charms against us (ku hi ringa hi maringo) will be attacked by disease and go and die in their houses."

783 834 621 8) The building is finished. Nothing remains to be done but to *ripen the village* (wupfisa muti). Men and women assemble in two separate groups and ask each other if they have been continent during the whole "buhlapfa". If one of them confesses to having sinned, he has stolen the village from the headman; the whole work is spoiled and must be recommenced elsewhere. If all the members of the community have behaved well, they proceed to a purifying ceremony exactly similar to the *hlamba ndjaka* which takes place during the mourning ceremonies. Each couple has sexual relations according to a fixed order of precedence, one every night, and they all go to trample on the spot where the women wash their hands. The principal wife is the last to perform these rites.

621 595 9) Then comes the *drawing to himself of the village by the headman* (kokotela muti). At dawn, after the night when she has had her ritual sexual relations with the headman, his principal wife takes his shield and his assagais and stands at the main entrance, everyone being present. Outside is a thorny branch prepared for the occasion. In her martial attire, she drags this branch to the entrance and closes it.

621 10) Having closed the village in this way, she *performs a sacrifice*.
595 She sips a mouthful of water from a tumbler, spitting out a
782 portion of it (phahla) towards the people ; then she washes her hands, and throws a little of the water towards them in order *to give them* the village. This act is accompanied by the following words : "Be not tied by the village! Bring forth children ; live and be happy and get everything. You gods, see! I have no bitterness in my heart. It is pure. I was angry because my husband abandoned me, he said I was not his wife ; he loved his younger wives. Now, this is finished in my heart. We shall have friendly relations together..." The prayer being concluded, the headman goes to the main entrance, pushes the thorny branch aside, and opens the village.

621 11) The last act is the *khangula*, the *inauguration ceremony*.
574 Beer is prepared, neighbours are invited and they all drink together, the neighbours coming *to see the new village* (ku bona muti).

As regards the old one, when the moving has been accomplished through the back door widened for the purpose, one of the inhabitants closes the main entrance with a branch. Hence comes the expression which is applied to a village all of whose inmates have died, and which has, on that account, disappeared : "Those people have all died and there was not even one left to close the gate."

II. *In the Ba-Ronga Clans.*

621 The sequence of rites for the removal of a village is very
787 much the same as in the Northern clans.
824 1) The headman examines some spots and consults the bones :
765 "Must I built at such and such a tree ?"

2) When the tree has been designated, he goes to it and places at its foot his furniture (nyundju) and his instrument of worship, his altar, (a pot, a jar, see Part VI). The altar may be placed at the main entrance later on, if the bones so order it. As already mentioned, there will be a mystic relation between him and that tree. He must never cut it down. If any of the branches should be

621 entrance and finishes his walk at the other, hanging upon it the
789 branch with which he has been sprinkling.

782 10) Then he sacrifices a hen. A young man accompanying
756 him cuts its throat ; the doctor plucks some feathers from the neck, sacrifices in the ordinary way and invokes his gods : "You used to treat villages (daha miti) with these drugs and I do the same. I do not act of my own wisdom ; you have given it to me. Bless this place, etc." Then he plucks a feather from the hen's right wing, and suspends it at the main entrance or in the main hut, inside, over the door, according to the directions given by the bones. This is the *shirungulo* (see Part VI) and the act is called : "to tie the village" (tjimba muti).

621 Amongst the Rongas, there are some other *buhlapfa taboos*. It
372 is not allowable to light any fire in a village until it is completely
784 built. During the whole building period, cooking is done outside the fence ; crushing mealies in the mortars and dancing are also
789 prohibited. Whistling (ku ba noti) is forbidden, as it might call
198 the wizards inside the village before it has been protected by the charms.

621 If a man has many wives, he may build a second village for
595 himself and establish one of them there. A grown-up son, the son of the woman, will represent the headman in that village, but the law of "tying the village" will also be observed in this case. The headman will perform the act with this woman, and preside at the burning of the dried grass and of the medicinal pill, by which he *gives* the village to the inhabitants.

When a younger brother, or a son, leaves the headman and founds a village for himself (tihambela muti), he does it according to the same laws as those observed at the regular moving of a village.

III. *Some remarks on the rules of moving.*

621 Let us now analyse the two parallel sequences of rites which we have just described, and which complete each other. It is easy to discover amongst them three series of rites, social, protective and passage rites.

621 1) *Social rites.* The muti, as we have seen, is a little organised
596 community having its own laws, amongst which the most important
833 seems to be the law of hierarchy. The elder brother is the undisputed
768 master and no one can supersede him. He is the owner of the village. No one must "steal it" from him. Should any one do so, the whole community would suffer and no children would be born ; the life of the organism would be deeply affected. That is the reason why the headman must go first with his principal wife to have relations with her in the new village, and thus *take possession* of it or *tie* it. For this same reason, when the headman dies, the village *must* move. It is taboo to remain in it. Until the inheritance has been distributed, it is still *his home* (kwa kwe) ; but as soon as this ceremony has taken place, the villagers must go away, and close the door with a thorny branch. The part played by the
621 principal wife in all these ceremonies is most remarkable. It is
595 absolutely imperative that the headman should "tie the village" with her,
562 and not with another of his spouses. Should she be very old, the law
768 must be observed all the same ; should she be ill, and unable to have sexual
764 relations, the village simply cannot be moved. In the Northern clans we see her taking the shield and the assagai, closing the village and "giving it" to the inmates, even performing a sacrifice and praying to the gods. It is very rare to see a woman presiding at a public religious ceremony ; but she is the owner of the village as well as the headman. Moving is imperative when she dies as well as after the death of the headman. The main gate must also be closed and a new entrance made in the fence to be used during the year of mourning ; in the case of her death, this opening must be made on the left of the regular *mharana*, whilst, when the husband dies, it is made on the right side ; just as in the hut, when the corpse is removed for burial. (See page 138.)

351 2) *Protective rites.* These are those which concern the fence. This
789 fence does not afford material protection. The branches dry up very
621 soon and, in the case of a bush-fire, for instance, they would do more harm than good. It is a spiritual protection, a barrier of charms, of magic influences, to prevent the entrance of wizards and of all the hostile powers of the bush. We shall understand this better when treating of witchcraft superstitions. (Part VI.)

182 3) *Passage rites.* The reader will have been surprised to observe
621 amongst the ceremonies of the moving of villages, many features which we have already met with in the circumcision school, or in the
829 mourning customs. At first sight there seems to be no relation whatever between the moving of a village, the initiation of boys and the

273 musical instinct. Some days later, another headman invites his
574 neighbours to another beer-drinking, and so they eat and drink
622 together (ba delana, ba nwelana) as long as there is plenty in
595 the storehouses. When provisions become scarce, they begin to spare the mealies. But the advantage of the polygamist becomes apparent here; his storehouses are many and he can feast his friends for many months.

These beer-drinking customs are essentially demoralising; they

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Phot. A. Béril.

Beer-drinking party in Maputju country.

are one of the curses of primitive Native life. But let me remark that, as the making of the beer takes nine days, these excesses cannot be very frequent, and the habit of drinking wine at the White man's store is ten times more harmful, as in this case alcohol is never lacking. We shall speak later on of alcoholism amongst Natives. (See Part IV.)

276 Another pastime, very much appreciated by some, but not so
248 general, is *hemp smoking* and the accompanying *saliva contest*. Hemp (mbange) has been cultivated for a considerable time amongst the Thongas, especially on the coast, not to make ropes, but for smoking.

643 857 However, specially appointed persons watch over him and report of his well being to his father. His youthful playmates are taught to respect him ; he is surrounded in his games by a miniature court, from which he chooses his favourites (tinxekwa) ; some of his companions act as counsellors and reprimand those who do not treat him with due respect. They play at court... also at soldiers ; the juvenile troop wage war with the wasps, and also with the boys of the adjoining villages.

643 787 777 751 782 When the child reaches boyhood, the bones are consulted, and sacrifices offered in order to ascertain from the gods whether it be well to take him to the capital. Should the answer be in the negative, there is nothing to do but wait. When the dice declare the propitious moment to have arrived, the transfer is effected and the boy taken to his father. This is a great occasion for the counsellors who have watched over the boy and who thenceforward supervise his education. They feast themselves well (ba fumisana), kill goats, perhaps even an ox, and offer a sacrifice to proclaim to the gods the return to the capital of the heir to the throne ; to his ankle is tied the astragalus of a slaughtered goat, as a protective amulet.

643 881 836 At puberty the boy undergoes, in the same manner as his companions, all the ceremonial rites usual at that period. The principal doctors of the country treat him, in order that henceforth he may be a man (ba mu yimisa a ba wanuna), having full right to enter into the sexual relations of gangisa (p. 97). Care is taken, however, to attach to his person comrades of riper age, who will prevent him giving way to excesses, (suka banhwanyana la bakulu ba ta mu gema, ba mu sibela ku kula), which would arrest his growth and render him small and feeble. He thus lives in relative continence, participating in the play and in the work of boys of his own age, and looking after the herds. At times he gives a feast, when his father happens to have presented him with an ox with which to make merry.

643 588 595 Now we see him arrived at manhood, at the age when the Blacks take a wife. If his father is still living, the young man is not allowed to marry officially. He may certainly lobola, viz., contract regular marriage in the usual way, and possibly

643 588 595 some woman may come and live with him (titlhuba), as in cases of elopement — in which case he must go, according to the law, early in the morning to the parents of the girl and denounce himself as the abductor (p. 119) ; but none of these women can be his official wife ; they may bear him children, but these will be *makohlwa*, those who have no right to royalty ; the young chief may not wed his official wife, she who is to become the mother of the heir to the throne, until after the death of his father.

643 603 595 There is a saying, a precept of the royal code as follows : "Hosi a yi faneli ku bona ntukulu," a chief must never see his grandson, i. e. the one who will eventually succeed his son in the royal line. The Ba-Ngoni of Gungunyana (in Gaza) have the same custom ; but with them things are arranged differently. The eldest son of the chief's principal wife, when at the requisite age for marriage, takes a wife and loses the right of succession ; it is the youngest son, still young at the time of his father's death, who inherits the throne, because he has no children of his own. This leads to jealousy and civil war between brothers ; it has brought numberless misfortunes to the royal family of Gaza, and it was one of the causes of the downfall of Gungunyana. The Thonga custom is much more simple and less dangerous to the maintenance of peace ; the chief must not see his grandson, therefore his son will not be officially married until after his father's death. Any wives he may previously have taken will be morganatic and their children are not entitled to inherit.

I have been told by Mankhelu that when a chief lives to be very old and does not wish to delay the marriage of his son and heir, he can himself pay the lobolo and acquire, for his son, the official wife who will be considered as being "the wife of the country." But this seems to be an exceptional occurrence.

B. CORONATION OF THE CHIEF.

643 766 In all Thonga clans the death of a chief is kept secret for one year or more, as we shall see. Amongst the Nkunas the official mourning for the deceased takes place the same day as the coron-

643 in, of which the following is a resumé. One of the chief men
584 of Matjolo commences by saying :
595 "It is quite right that you of Mpfumu have desired to renew today the old ties of relationship... Hamule your grandfather took his wife from Matjolo. Well! we are obliged to you. Nevertheless Sigaole has sent us to enquire how you intend to make payment for her ?"

— "We have thirty pounds sterling" reply the representatives of Mpfumo.

— "Ah! Thirty pounds ? That means that Mimalengane will have to chop her own wood and draw her own water ?" (That is to say: Thirty pounds suffice for the princess... but payment must also be made for two girls, the younger sisters (tinhlampsa), who must accompany her, to help her in the household duties, as is customary.)

— "We will ask Nwamantibyane what he has to say to this" continues the headman of Mpfumo.

— "How about those twenty oxen ?" says the chief to his representatives, when the matter is put before him. The envoy returns to the hut and announces : "There are also twenty oxen!"

— "It is well," say the men of Matjolo, "that will do for two girls to help in the work of the household."

643 Thus this delicate business is transacted without any great
584 difficulty. The feasting then begins in earnest. All eat until
261 they *shura*, that is until satiated, the stomach protruding in a gentle curve beneath the sternum, which is the black man's idea of a thoroughly satisfactory meal!

The betrothal being duly arranged, there still remain the betrothal visits to be paid and the wedding to be celebrated. Strange to say the chief, in these ceremonies, is conspicuous by his absence! His male friends alone go to see the betrothed, mainly with a view to reporting on her appearance, etc., to their royal master. Moreover when a chief is concerned, the betrothal visit of the suitor's friends is not returned by the girls, as in the case of ordinary mortals.

643 The marriage feast takes place, of course, at the bride's home.
585 In Matjolo quantities of beer have been prepared, and the people

643 582 The reason why it is not taboo for a chief to marry a near relative is this, according to Mankhelu : "Nothing is taboo for him because he is the earth (hosi i misaba, a yi yili ntshumu). He may even take a girl from the houses of his younger brothers because everything is allowable for him. He has no sin. He is the one who makes the laws. Even if they are bad, people must accept them..." This identification of the chief with the earth is most curious and we shall speak of it again when treating of the sacred character of the chief.

643 595 The wife paid for by the money of the country, though on the one hand she is the official wife, is on the other hand inferior to the first wife married by the chief. He does not perform the rites of widowhood when she dies (See page 202).

A chief, when he travels, always takes his wives with him.

D. THE REIGN.

1. *The sacred character of the Chief.*

643 Let me say at once that, amongst the Ba-Ronga, the paraphernalia of royalty are reduced to a minimum. The chief is as scantily attired as are his subjects ; possibly his belt of tails may be more plentifully garnished with these appendages. His huts are built on the same lines as the others ; his village may be larger, but is sometimes smaller (1).

(1) One day when taking a walk on the hill of Rikatla, I came to a field where, in the shade of a magnificent tree, I found three individuals — the three most powerful personages of the country — modestly squatting on their haunches and scaring the sparrows from their plantation of sorghum. The trio consisted of Muzila, the young chief, his brother and Makhasi, his chief counsellor, who were devoting themselves to this tiresome occupation in the same way as the meanest of their subjects !

This same Muzila had several younger brothers, one of whom was engaged to look after our oxen, at a salary of ten shillings a month. One day the boy was ill. It happened to pour in torrents on that particular day, and whom should I see about ten o'clock in the morning, coming along absolutely drenched through and through, but the chief Muzila ! "I am looking after your oxen to day" said he "in place of my brother... Here I am, and I have just come to let you know that I am going to water them !"

789 of most people! This honey comes from below. It is a hidden,
825 a mysterious thing. A little of it is added to the drug and the
787 mixture is poured into a double horn, viz., two horns whose large ends are firmly fixed to each other, the point where they meet being carefully covered with dung, which acts as glue. A hole has been made in the upper horn and the drug is introduced through this. It is a great means of divination. When war is imminent, the nyokwekulu begins to ferment, and exudes through the hole : "It knows all about war." So the country can prepare for it. No wonder that this powerful medicine is preserved with superstitious awe and the greatest care.

643 A place of honour is reserved for the magical horn in the
595 hut of the first wife of the chief. In the middle of the hearth
372 a perpetual fire burns ; it must never be allowed to go out ; it
824 is taboo. The wood used for it must be that of a tree found on the sea shore, and called ntjobori. The Makaneta sub-clan must furnish it regularly. It is taboo to take embers from this fireplace, which is called the royal fire, the medicinal fire (ndjilo wa buhosi, wa muri). Should the principal wife let the fire go out, then Godlela must be called on to light it again, rubbing together two sticks of a shrub called ntjopfa. The fire produced by burning this shrub is considered dangerous. It is taboo to cut its branches or to use them for the purpose of warming oneself ; the genitalia are said to swell when this law is transgressed (See Part IV). But Godlela does not fear ; has he not his drugs to protect himself ? He can and must use ntjopfa to re-light the nyokwekulu fire, and he will be given a good reward for his work! The ntjobori, in burning, produces an abundant smoke which leaves a deposit on the horn, on the forked branch and on all the calabashes containing the provision of powder.

643 The queen Mimpanyanhoba who was in charge of the
372 nyokwekulu had no sexual relations with the chief on that account.
595 I do not know if absolute continence is always enforced on the
784 keeper of the sacred fire, as was the case for the Roman Vestal Virgins. But I have been told by Mboza that this woman prevented her co-wives from coming near her hut ; it was taboo.

643 a bad chief. He did not even allow "bandla," viz, the gathering of men in the capital, because he was full of jealousy (mona). If he had not been placed in the chieftainship and supported by the White Government, he might have been deposed. Cases in which a chief has been deprived of his right and replaced by another man are not wanting (1). I have even heard of a chief in the Shiridja clan who was put to death. Deposal is generally proclaimed by a council of the royal family.

To reign over a Bantu clan requires much tact, ability and patience. The chief must be a father to his people and not a tyrant (2).

2) The system of government.

643 595 In order to keep in touch with his subjects, a chief generally places his wives in the various provinces of his little kingdom

(1) The annals of the Nkuna tribe provide an instance of the deposal not only of a certain chief but of the elder branch of the royal family, owing to an act which hurt the human feelings of the clan. We have already met with the name of Shithlelana, son of Nkuna, who lived at least 300 years ago. His principal wife was Ñwahubyana. In his old age he was very ill and the woman, fearing lest he should die in her hut, drove him away; he was obliged to take refuge in the hut of another of his wives, Ñwantimba, mother of Rinono, and died there. Then the headmen assembled and said: "As Ñwahubyana has driven away her husband from her hut, she has also driven away the chieftainship from her son. He shall not reign. Rinono shall reign because he is the son of the woman who took care of the sick chief." This story, in which we see the sacred law of succession transgressed for a moral reason, is most interesting because it provides a good illustration of the conception of the clan regarding chieftainship, and proves that, even in ancient times, feelings of humanity could have more weight with the tribe than an article of the royal code.

643 524 (2) Two interesting Thonga riddles illustrate this disposition to criticise chiefs. The first riddle enigmatically describes the characteristics of an unworthy chief; it comes from the banks of the Limpopo:

Bupsa ga shisule. — Hosi leyi i ni mona...
Some cyclamen flour. — This chief is full of hatred...

The shisule — a word which I translate by cyclamen — is a plant which grows on the ant-hills, bearing large tubercles; these can be cooked and ground into flour; but it is only good in appearance, the taste is unpleasant and nauseating. This chief is bad! He is like that flour! Corruptio optimi pessima!

Here is another riddle which holds the chiefs up to ridicule rather wittily:

Tinindji tibiri ti rendjeleka tchuka. — Tihosi tibiri ti hleba nandja.
Two mice chase one another round an ant-hill (They will never meet)
— Two chiefs malign a subject. (They also will never meet, i. e. agree.)

Each wants to have the last word and will therefore depreciate the arguments of his opponent. He will seek to disprove the statements of the other chief, making fresh ones which the latter will seek to refute in his turn!

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and pays them regular visits, staying some days in these secondary capitals.

But a more effective way of holding the country is to place his son or his near relatives as sub-chiefs in all these districts. If the son is still young, the chief will send along with him a trustworthy counsellor to watch over him. Thus, when he dies, and when the elder son is called to the succession, the new chief will have his brothers as co-chiefs or sub-chiefs. Should they be ambitious, should they have acquired some power during the last years of their father's government, they may refuse to obey and proclaim themselves independent. This has happened many times amongst the Rongas. Let me shortly recapitulate the three instances already mentioned. In the Tembe kingdom Maputju, who "ate the foreleg," made himself king of the greater part of the territory. The separated brothers became fierce enemies and often fought against each other, all the more as Tembe greatly resented the revolt of Maputju, and Maputju knew he had not been fair to his elder brother (p. 329). The same thing happened when Matjolo became independent of Mpfumo, his elder brother ; both were sons of Nhlaruti. The origin of the war of 1894-1896 was the same ; Mubvesha, belonging to the Hlewana branch of the Mazwaya family, wished to become independent... even to take the chieftainship from the elder branch to which Maphunga and his successor Mahazule belonged.

So the Thonga clan has a tendency to fall to pieces, just like the Thonga village, and it requires a good deal of firmness and diplomacy on the part of a chief to keep his kingdom intact.

3) The law of succession.

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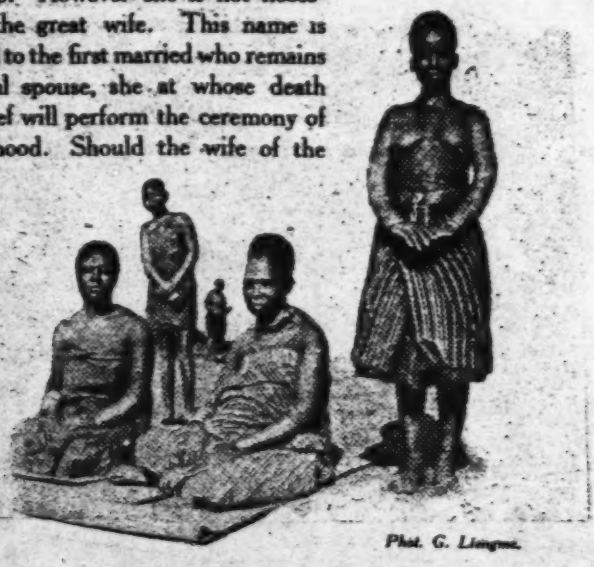
Its main provision is this ; when a chief dies, his elder son is the regular heir, but all his younger brothers must reign before the son, the true heir, is crowned. This system attempts to reconcile two principles which we have already met with as governing the family life : 1) the absolute preeminent right of the elder branch, 2) the community of property amongst brothers.

643
595 As regards the queens (tinkosikazi, a Zulu word), the chief's wives, there is not much to say about them. We have seen that one of them occupies a particularly honourable position, having been bought with the people's money and being "the wife of the country," she whose son will be the heir to the chieftainship. However she is not necessarily the great wife. This name is applied to the first married who remains the real spouse, she at whose death the chief will perform the ceremony of widowhood. Should the wife of the



Phot. G. Liengme.

Ngoni Queens.

country die and should she not be the first married, he will not go through that rite on her account.

643
562 Princesses are lobola with more money than ordinary girls. Except in this, they do not differ from them. It is not common for a woman to be called to the dignity of chieftainship amongst the Thongas; in this respect they differ from the Ba-Pedi, or Transvaal Ba-Sutho, who have had many illustrious reigning queens: Modjadji, Male etc. I only know one such case amongst the Rongas, and the queen was still living in 1912. Her name was Midambuze, daughter of Dambuze. Dambuze was the chief of a part of the Mabota country, northward of Lourenço Marques.

713 of palm leaves 5 in. and handle 35 ½ inches. As previously
711 mentioned, the handle of the large sized assagai is broken at the
595 warriors' death, being "he," or his defilement; but the blade
643 "never dies." It belongs to the chief, as does also the shield, and the son will inherit it. During the warrior's life, it is kept in the hut of his *first wife*. She is called the owner (ñwinyi) of the assagai. It is taboo for the other wives to touch it; another fact which shows the special position of the first wife. (Comp. p. 284.)

713 Another weapon in more restricted use and which can also
411 be employed for cutting wood, is the *axe* or *hatchet*, of which I
439 have met with two descriptions (No. 3); the blade (mbimbi) may be narrow and elongated—it is then called shingwatane,—or broad and rounded,—when it is the shiyema. These hatchets are firmly inserted in their wooden handles like the axes of the lake-dwellers. European manufacturers now export a considerable number of semicircular hatchets, similar to the one on the right in my illustration, to Delagoa. The one here portrayed will be at once recognised as being of Native make. I may also mention the big *knives* (mikwa), a sort of sword; one sometimes meets brawny fellows walking along the paths, armed with these dangerous looking implements! However they are quite inoffensive.

713 I managed to obtain from a traveller a beautiful *dagger* which
411 he was carrying slung across his breast; it is a rare specimen
171 and comes, I am told, from the Ba-Ndjao tribe (No. 5). The sheath is made of two pieces of wood, artistically carved and fastened together with a plait of iron wire; it is slightly hollowed out to allow the blade to enter; this is firmly fixed in the handle through which it passes from end to end, coming out at the extremity, where it is bent back and thus held tightly in place. The Ba-Pedi in the Zoutpansberg also make similar knives.

714 Finally, when the warrior holds in one hand his large assagai,
171 in the other will be found his *shield* (shitlhangu) (No. 1), which he grasps by the stick around which this piece of defensive armour pivots. The Thonga shield is made like that of the Zulus, of a piece of ox-hide, oval in shape and of varying size, sometimes all of one colour and sometimes variegated. (The several battalions

587 the chief of our Mazwaya family, Magomanyama, says that no claim is accepted for a leper, for one drowned in the river, or for anyone who dies from smallpox or from the assagay."

692 177 Of course the Ngwetsas did not accept such an answer, but this is a typical Bantu affair (nandju), showing the many blessings of the lobola custom. The matter will have to be decided by the chief, or rather by the Portuguese Administrator, who must take a good deal of trouble, if he wishes to understand it rightly and to deliver an equitable judgment!

APPENDIX IX (See p. 530).

The story of Mboza and Muhambi and of the women inherited by them, illustrating the consequences of lobola and of its suppression.

177 Compare the genealogy of the Masuluke family (page 225).

595 583 Mboza had four brothers, three elder and a younger; Sam, the elder, had a son, Hlangabeza, who married by lobola a first wife and by abduction a second, Bukutje II. Fos, the second brother, married Bukutje I and had four children: three girls, Tshakaza, Estelle, Nhwaanin, and one boy, Muhambi. Sam and Fos both died, so Bukutje I was inherited by Mboza and her four children went to live in his village. In the meantime Mboza became a Christian, as also did Muhambi and the three girls. Wishing to lead a Christian life, he separated from Bukutje I, who, being still a heathen, committed herself with "an empty oil-tin" (p. 213), viz., a man of Inhambane who became her servant-husband. In 1904 a Christian young man, Moses, wooed the elder of the three girls and brought £ 20 to lobola her. This money was naturally due to Muhambi in order to allow him to lobola a wife for himself, and indeed Muhambi was betrothed to Ntshelebeti, daughter of Phulan Ngwetsa. This man was still a heathen and consequently wished his daughter to be paid for.

Having been told that it is not right for a Christian to accept lobolo money, Mboza and Muhambi, actuated by a most praiseworthy scruple, decided to return the money to Moses, and Muhambi started for Johannesburg in order to earn the lobolo due to Phulan. But this was not the end of this famous "bukosi!" The younger brother, Komatan, a consistent heathen, came to Mboza, very angry with him for his

I [see pp. 504-509 -- Analyst]

177
595
583

foolishness. "This is family property," said he, "and I do not consent to its being lost." So he claimed the £ 20, which was given to him, and out of which Mboza did not get a penny. Komatan himself did not intend to use it for his own benefit, as we shall see presently.

The following year, whilst Muhambi was still working in Johannesburg, Hlangabeza died. Muhambi was his heir, being his *makwabu*, first cousin on the paternal side. He was informed of his good luck, but answered that it was taboo for him (yila), as a Christian, to accept this inheritance. So Komatan took the first of Hlangabeza's wives, not as a wife, however, but because she had children and he wanted them to remain in the Masuluke family. The woman herself also took "an empty oil-tin," in the form of another Inhambane man. The second of Hlangabeza's wives, having been married by him by abduction, was not really the property of the Masulukes. But she had one child; so Komatan took the lobolo money of Moses and remitted it to Denisa, this woman's father, and, in this way, he secured the property of both mother and child to the Masulukes. The woman, however, went to live with a Chopi in an irregular manner and had a second child by him. On January 29th, 1909, this woman of the Denisa family came to Muhambi. Her child had to be weaned, which is done by means of a rite in which the husband must take part. She had no true husband, so she vented all her anger before Mboza and Muhambi saying: "I have no husband, nobody to give me clothing, to pay my hut-tax, to repair my house. Have you indeed forsaken me?" — "Yes" answered Muhambi, "you cannot be my wife. I have married Ntshelebeti and, for us Christians, it is not allowable to take many wives." — "Then do not be surprised if I go and take another husband, and do not go and accuse me *shikanekiswen*, before the Portuguese Administrator, saying I have spoilt your property." — "We shall not *follow* you," said Muhambi, "you are free." — "But" added Mboza, "we are not sending you to commit sin! Go and think the matter over."

This was the end of the discussion. Mboza's answer is no answer at all. It only shows the great complexity and difficulty of the position. The whole story fitly illustrates how utterly bad the custom of lobola is, and what immense difficulties its suppression entails. Let me, however, remark that these difficulties would not have arisen had there not been a heathen relative (Komatan) to uphold the claim which the Christians had foregone. During the stage of transition many hard cases such as this must unfortunately occur!

843 her own pudenda with a much befouled intimate garment which
834 she afterwards burns.
841 Going to the fire they both warm their head and their hands. Then the woman mixes the ashes she has collected with fat and smears it over her husband's limbs, rubbing along his fingers, his arms, and his legs, which is called lula. Afterwards, in the two nights following, they will have intercourse. If the husband has had sexual intercourse not with his wife but with some girl from another village from lustful desire he will be given a fossorium so that the rite lula will come to its completion.

765 "Annotatio octava (P. 155). Si mulieris parentes procul
783 habitant, maritus eius comes itineris erit, quacum superiore
833 nocte coibit, ad aquæ lustrali vim novam dandam."
842 [Note 8 (page 155). If the woman's parents live far away, her husband will be her companion on the way and he will have sexual intercourse with her the night before in order to give the lustral water new power.]

765 "Annotatio nona (P. 160). Faciebat dum 'Khunye khunye';
535 quibus verbis significatur coitus (khunyeta)."
831 [Note 9 (page 160). She was saying Khunye, khunye during
834 this time; these words signify coitus (khunyeta).

"Annotatio decima (P. 160). Carminum, morum temporis marginalis natura eo obscenior est quo nobilior defunctus fuit. Viguetus narrat: [518] 'Duce vel uno ex principibus mortuo, luctuque consueto præterito, luctum privatum, ad quem boves immolentur, celebrari. Carnem ad baculos humi fixos alligari; homines inde mulierem vocare, eamque posteriorem vestem exuere juberi, neque ullam vestem nisi anteriorem habere quam, si velit, exuere ei liceat. Eam, postea, divaricaturam esse ad unam ex carnis particulis dentibus apprehendendam ita prominentem ut omnes viri eius pudenda videant, quod plerumque 'taboo' (id est nefas) sit.'"

[Note 10 (page 160). The nature of the songs, a custom of the marginal period, is the more obscene the greater the nobility of the deceased person was. Viguet relates: [518] "When the leader or one of the chiefs is dead and the usual mourning has passed, they stage a private mourning at which bulls are sacrificed. They tie the flesh to poles fixed in the ground; then the men call a woman and order her to take off the clothes on her back and they do not allow her to have any clothes on except the one in front which, if she wants to, she may also take off. Then she must seize one of the bits of meat with her teeth, bending forward in such a

765 fashion. The father and mother smear the infant's girdle
783 made of cotton flax with their genital juices so that the infant
833 becomes invigorated by their vital juices and thus may be
587 received into the life of the tribe.

These physiological conceptions, though they may be absolutely false from the scientific point of view, certainly proceed from deep intuitions regarding the mystery of life. I insist on the fact that they are not derived from religious ideas. It is a mistake to attempt to explain the whole life of the Bantus by their religion alone, as many writers are inclined to do. These sexual practices are not more religious than those prophylactic measures which we ourselves employ to preserve ourselves from tuberculosis or small pox. They are dictated by a special notion of contagion which is admittedly false, scientifically speaking.]

595 "Annotatio quarta decima (P. 285). Doctori G. Liengmei,
833 nostro medico, cum sæpe curaret viros qui medicinam
842 petebant qua infantes procrearent, fassi sunt se singulis noctibus cum tribus vel quatuor uxoribus coire. (A monogamis quibusdam audivimus uxorem adeo fatigari ut noctu exiret laboratum ut a marito evaderet.) Cum medicus eos hortaretur ut quinque dies concubitu omnino abstinerent, nunquam id concedere potuerunt. Volebant enim facultatem generandi recuperare libidine non omissa. Dicuntur etiam cum vires cupiditatibus nondum pares esse videantur, remedia quædam adhibere sive ut venerem excitent sive ut uxores prægnantes fiant. Duplex fit medicatio. Primum secti testiculi hirci—(quod animal fatigari negatur, mbuti a yi karali)—cum plurimis herbis mixti coquuntur et a viro eduntur. Deinde alias herbas collectas in cerevisiam injicit. Tantum aiunt esse effectum ut viro qui non amplius duas uxores habeat, non sit ea re [520] utendum, ne, illis non sufficientibus, cum aliorum uxoribus stuprum committat, quod ei sit offensioni.

Viri casti, ut in loco Mpfumo videre licet, in sua casa dormiunt et interdum uxorem quam cupiunt ad se vocant. Plerique tamen, lege sibi imposita, ne discordia inter uxores erumpat, mensem unum in casa singularum uxorum vicissim agunt.

Qui plures habent uxores aliis etiam medicamentis utuntur ad libidinem excitandam. Quorum unum putant ad effectum maxime valere: Medicus, cum se ipse curavit, in locum montium secedit, quo cynocephali feminæ urinam menstrualis sanguine mixtam emittere solent. Quod manet in saxis et fœdissimam diffundit odorem, medicus excipiens coquit, et ex eo magnas conficit pillas quas emptoribus vendit. Hi eas

595 in cerevisiam injiciunt.
833 Quod medicamentum ad gravia vulnera curanda quoque
842 conferunt, et liberis praebent cum caput ut cynocephali jactant."

[Note 14 (page 285). Doctor G. Liengmei, our physician, often took care of men who asked for medicine that would produce children. They confessed to him that they often slept with three or four wives in one single night. (From some monogamous men we heard that a wife would get so tired that she would go out at night to work just to escape from her husband.) When the doctor told them to abstain altogether from intercourse for five days they were never able to agree to that. For they wanted to regain their generative faculty without giving up their lust. They are said to employ certain remedies even when their powers no longer appear equal to their desires, either in order to excite their sexual desire or to make their wives pregnant. There is a two-fold remedy. First, a man cuts the testicles off a goat--(this animal does not tire, it is asserted, mbuti a yi karali)--and boils them mixed with numerous herbs; then he eats them. Next he collects other herbs and puts them into his beer. They claim that this has such an effect that the man who has no more than two wives should not use this remedy [520] lest, because his own would not be enough for him, he should commit fornication with the wives of others, which would be a grave offense on his part.

595 Virtuous men such as one can find in the village of Mpfumo sleep in their own houses and call for the wife whom they desire. Most of them have imposed upon themselves the law not to let any discord break out among their wives: therefore they spend one month in turn in the house of a particular wife.

595 Those who have several wives use still other remedies to
756 excite their sexual desire. Of these remedies they believe
833 one to be particularly effective: The medicine man, after
278 he has rested, retreats into the hills where the female baboons are wont to emit their urine mixed with the menstrual blood. That which remains on the rocks and which gives off an abominable smell the medicine man takes up and boils; from this he makes large pills that he sells to all buyers. The latter put them into their beer.

They also use this remedy to cure grave wounds, and they give it to their children when they shake their heads like baboons.]

800 Annotatio quinta decima (P. 477). Veretro fabricatur pulvis, cuius effectus mirabilis est. Qui, bellatorum carpis

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga
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PRACTICAL CONCLUSIONS

I. ON THE RITES OF INFANCY (P. 36-61).

853 The rule that a mother "must plough for her child three hoes" is
595 excellent. It is undoubtedly a splendid preparation for future life to
177 have been fed during three years on mother's milk. Will it be possible to maintain this law under the new conditions of civilized life which are being adopted more and more throughout the tribes? Let us notice that this provision, though it was inspired partly in the interest of the child itself, is dictated mainly by a superstition concerning the lochia secretion, which is regarded as highly noxious and as keeping the mother in an unclean state for a long time. This superstition will not withstand the test of science and will pass away. On the other hand, polygamy was invented and flourishes partly on account of this law. A husband separated from the wife who is nursing a child wishes to have other women at his disposal. Polygamy is doomed to pass also. For both these reasons, it is to be feared that this healthy custom will not be maintained in the future. This is a pity, and we ought to do our best to encourage its continuance.

843 Many young married Natives leave their homes and go to Johannes-
177 burg to the mines for one or two years as soon as they see that their wife is pregnant. This is certainly on account of the above rule; but this desertion of the conjugal home is hardly to be approved.

164 As regards the whole medical treatment characteristic of this period,
751 which is considered more or less as a disease, it has no value at all.
177 The big intestinal worm is, of course, merely a product of Native imagination. The children sometimes suffer from lombrics, but not more than white children. Convulsions are frequent as a result of malaria and dysentery, and neither the ever present *milombyana* nor the

765 little of it into a glass and raises it to the lips of the old man. "He
782 cuts his prayer" and while all the attention of the public is
604 concentrated upon this act (which belongs also to the ritual, as the priest must be the first to partake of the offering), the wives of the batukulu rush towards the shoulders, lungs and hoofs of the goats and the bottle of wine, seize them and run away towards the west. They have stolen the meat of the sacrifice! At once all stand up and follow them laughing, shouting and pelting them with the *psanyi*, which they had kept for this purpose. The thieves hide themselves behind some bush and eat the meat. Uterine nephews are representatives of the gods, as we shall see later on, and they assert their right by stealing the offering and eating it up.

This ceremony is highly characteristic as it embodies some of the principal ideas of the Thongas in the domain of religion, social life and taboo. It was worth while describing it, and we shall refer to it later on, when dealing with sacrifices and the position of the uterine nephews in the family.

765 The crushing down of the hut is not performed in exactly
292 the same manner amongst the Ba-Ronga. In the clans *South of*
554 *the Bay*, they only *close* it (pfala yindlu). They dig holes in
825 front of the door, into which they insert poles of the bush called *nhleha*, tying thorny branches horizontally to them. The shield of the deceased is placed against the door. The religious rite then takes place and from the skins of the sacrificed goats strips are cut, which the widows will have to wear *en bandoulière* during the following months of their widowhood. The astragalus bones are kept and hung round the neck. The gall-bladder is also preserved and fixed in the hair of the new master of the village as a sign of his new position.

765 In the *district of Makaneta*, on the estuary of the Nkomati,
596 the ceremony comprises two successive acts. First there is also a *provisory closing* of the hut, which can take place one month after the death and is accompanied by the family gathering and the religious ceremony. One year later, when the inheritance is adjudicated, the hut is crushed down, but only if it belonged to a headman of the village and if the kraal is obliged to move in

[765] consequence of the death. If it be the hut of one of the subor-
596 dinates, the roof is simply lifted off and thrown away into the
787 bush.

Another very significant rite in connexion with the closing of
766 the hut is accomplished on the death of the master of the village. A branch is cut from the tree of the village, the tree which was revealed by the divinatory bones as the one near which the headman had to build (See Part II Ch. II) ; half of the branch is placed across the great gate of the village, which is then closed and another gate opened, at some distance, in the fence ; the other half is put over the door of the crushed hut.

765 There seem to be great variations in the performance of these
428 ceremonies everywhere. I believe, without being able to vouch for it, that when two family gatherings take place during this last period of the mourning, the first is held to proclaim the new master of the village and the second to distribute the inheritance amongst the heirs-at-law. At any rate these two important acts take place at the gatherings. As the inheritance consists mainly of live stock — human stock, the wives of the deceased, I shall describe the adjudication when treating of the fate of widows.

2) Family rites in the Northern clans.

765 A month after the burial, there is a first gathering of the grave-
574 diggers. They are invited by the widows to a beer-feast. This beer is called : "the beer of the hyenas," as the hyenas also dig graves! No equivocal compliment is intended, the widows merely meaning to thank these men for their services.

765 In the northern clans, *yindlu a yi yili*, the hut is not taboo.
782 It can be slept in again after the five days of the Great Mourning. The plaster of the doorposts is repaired, and a new crown is put on the top when the hut again finds an owner (1). The feast of the

766 (1) The hut of a leper alone is considered irremediably tabooed as the sufferer is buried in it. They dig a hole into which he is pushed by means of sticks. The roof is crushed down over him.

CHAPTER II

THE LIFE OF THE VILLAGE.

621 596 The Thonga village (muti) is not a hap-hazard agglomeration of people. It is a social organism with a well-defined construction and is regulated by strict laws. After all, it is merely an enlarged family: the headman and the old people who have fallen to his charge, his wives, his younger brothers and their wives, his married sons, his unmarried sons and daughters. All these people form a community whose life it is most interesting to study.

Let us describe its outward appearance, the laws of its "foundation" and "moving", its organisation under the headman, the doings of its different members and the rules of etiquette which are observed. While our first chapter gave us an insight into the internal constitution of the Thonga family, this will show us how the social organism, which is at the base of all the tribal life, manifests itself outwardly in the village.

A. THE THONGA VILLAGE.

361 We have already caught a glimpse of it, from the inside, through the eyes of the headman Gidja (p. 128). Now we enter it from outside, as foreigners, with the curiosity of the ethnographer and the philosophical interests of the sociologist.

The Thonga villages present a remarquable uniformity all through the tribe. The same laws regulate their construction in the Ronga as in the Northern clans. Let us suppose that we have left Lourenço Marques and reached the Mabota and Nondwane

361 air circulate, is the goats' kraal (19). It may be placed somewhere
231 else, behind the huts, for instance ; or sometimes goats are tethered
337 every night by the leg to sticks round the hubo. The pigs are
343 never kept on the hubo, but always behind the hut : they are newcomers in the Thonga village and have hardly yet won their "droit de cité." Let us salute, as we pass by, the tree (25) which
361 is, as we shall see, the mystical stem of the village. We may perhaps
824 see, hanging upon it, a piece of clothing offered to the gods, or at its
782 base a broken pot which is the *gandjelo*, the altar of the village.
351 The gandjelo is often placed, by preference, among the poles of the main entrance on the right. The village tree, which has a ritual significance, is not to be confounded with the trees of the hubo (26), which are but *mindjuti*, shade-trees, under which the inhabitants are fond of sitting.

361 So we reach the main hut which faces the gate. This is the
595 dwelling of the headman. In hut 3 lives his second wife, in 4, his third and in 5 his fourth. 2 is called *shilubelo*. Great personages, men owning a large kraal, like to build such a hut, which is smaller than the ordinary ones and where no woman sleeps. It is the headman's own hut, where people *luba*, viz., pay their homage to him ; a kind of office of the master of the village! He may sleep in it and summon his wives to come to him there. But he generally prefers to sleep in his wives' huts, one month in each, according to the polygamic custom.

361 Behind 4 and 10 is a *mhala*, a shed for the implements. It is
343 built, like the goats' kraal, without plaster walls, and is smaller
337 than a hut. There may be three or four of these in the village.
596 The headman and his wives occupy the back of the village. At the sides live his younger brothers, one, who has two wives, in 7 and 8, two others, those who have but one wife each, in 9 and in 10 respectively. In 11 lives a married son ; in 12 it may be a nephew, son of the headman's sister, or a son-in-law ; (see
361 page 252). 13 might be the hut of a stranger (mulubeti), who has
574 asked permission to stay with the headman of the village, as he
783 wished to be under his protection. The case is not frequent, but may occur, and in order to be received into the mystic unity of the community, this man will have to "hlamba ndjaka" (See page 153), together with all the inhabitants of the kraal.

361 together with all the inhabitants of the kraal. The two huts near
313 the entrance are, on the left, the *lao*, where unmarried boys sleep
596 (14) and on the right (15) the *nhangu* where the girls live. Often
356 the nhangu is built behind the huts of the mothers, near the mhala ; in this way the girls are kept under more effective watch. The boys of the *lao* have to guard the door, which they close at night where it is the custom to do so. The *hubo* and the *bandla*, the squares, are generally kept quite clean.

361 In front of each hut is a *yard* (*ndangu* pl. *mindangu*, 23) which
372 is also generally well swept. In the centre of each of these are
417 some broken pots (mapseko), or pieces of hard clay taken from
351 ant-hills (psirubu) ; this is the *fireplace (shitiko)*, where the mistress of the hut cooks her food. The fence round the yard used, as a rule, to be made of poles or even trunks of trees planted near each other and forming a circular wall. Nowadays, especially amongst the Rongas, these yards are enclosed with reeds and may be built square, a single wall fencing off as many as three or four huts. The top of this wall is sometimes crenelated. I rather think this arrangement is modern ; the circular wall of the ndangu
585 is an old custom, as is proved by the following fact. On the day of
538 *hloma*, when the bride's-maids and female relatives bring the bride to her husband, they not only build up the woodpile (shigiyane, see page 112), but, in the northern clans, they must also erect a new ndangu which will be called *tsandana*, and so people will know that in the yard there is a *nhlomi*, a bride, working for her mother-in-law! The ndangu is the place where women tell folk-tales of the tribe to the children and to each other, whilst they attend to their cooking, or after the evening meal.

361 If cleanliness prevails on the square and in the yards, the
356 same cannot be said of the region between the huts and the
235 fence. This is called *mahosi* or *makotini*. It is the place where
351 old baskets and broken pots are kept. The chicken houses
343 (*shihahlu*, 27) are built there ; these are generally little huts, with reed walls, placed on a floor of palmtree boards, supported by four poles forked at their upper extremities. The *ash-heaps* are somewhat further on (24). They are called *tala*, and play a part in certain rites, representing, as it would seem, the place of desolation and of sorrow.

361 in the bandla, and it is strictly reserved for them. Women are
351 allowed to penetrate into it only when they bring food. Boys
562 must remove the ashes from the fireplace, not women. The *hubo*, on the contrary, is open to all. A shed is sometimes built on it to afford shelter during the rainy days. There are special acts always performed on the hubo : the cutting up (shindla), the slaughtering and butchery of animals and the feast of "eating the head." The head of any slaughtered ox belongs to the men, and they eat it together on the hubo (See letter C.). It is the business of the young men to keep the hubo clean, and they sometimes assemble to pull up the grass which may have grown on it. In former times it was taboo to come to the hubo with
292 sandals. Sandals are used for hunting and must be taken off before entering the village.

Another place to which I have already alluded is the *bukwele*,
361 the "place of jealousy," where angry co-wives insult each other!
351 On our diagram it would be located between 5 and 4, for the
595 wives of the headman.

The Thonga village, this closed circle of huts, is a living
361 organism. All its members form a whole whose unity is remark-
596 able. This common life never appears in a more striking form
264 than at the evening meal. Let us look at our diagram. In every
476 yard the mistress of the hut has cooked her mealies and her sauce in different pots, and, when the sun sets, she distributes the contents (phamela) in wooden or earthen plates. The largest is for the husband. He sits on the bandla with his companions, the other men of the village, and the youths waiting for the meal. All these plates, generally carried by small girls or boys, are brought from all sides to the men's gathering. All do not necessarily contain the ordinary mealies pap ; some are filled with manioc, some with sweet potatoes, etc. The men attack the first plate, all of them taking the food with their fingers. They pass on to the second and so on to the last. Meanwhile each mother has filled other smaller plates, one for the girls, one for the boys, one for herself. She has even sent to each of the other women of the village a little of her cooking, and the others have done the same to her ; so each member of the community, when

361 596 264 476 he or she has finished the meal, will have eaten a little of all that has been cooked on all the fires. It is impossible to imagine a more perfect communism than this as regards food! I myself witnessed this custom of the evening meal in Spoon Libombo's village in Rikatla. Amongst the inhabitants of the kraal there were two blind male adults, the wife of one of them being half blind herself ; the wife of the other was an old woman who could hardly till a few square yards of mealies and groundnuts, and keep the birds and the hens away from them. Spoon's wife and the wife of another man of the village alone were healthy and able to work normally. So the whole burden rested on their shoulders, as the share the other women could take in the feeding of the men was necessarily small. However I never heard Spoon grumble ; being the headman, he made it a point of honour that all the people dwelling with him should have enough to eat. Everybody who has lived with South African Natives has admired their wonderful readiness to share any food they may have with those present. Even children are much superior in this respect to White children. I attribute this virtue to the community of food which reigns in the Bantu village, and which is certainly one of the most attractive features of Kafir socialism. Village life has not taught the Thongas merely bad habits.

B. MOVING A VILLAGE AND FOUNDING A NEW ONE.

621 754 596 Large kraals similar to the one shown in our illustration were more numerous in former times than now. It is rare to meet with such a number of huts and so many people under one headman. Why ? Because, say my informants, the superstition of witchcraft has considerably increased in later times. Suppose the wife of one of the younger brothers should [787] die ; the divinatory bones reveal that this death is due to a witch ; they go so far as to designate one of the wives of the headman as guilty. No common life is any longer possible. The widower will move elsewhere and build a fence around his

621 754 596 own huts to protect them against would-be-witches. In this way many villages are broken up by fear of witchcraft. Generally speaking the Thonga village cannot long remain of any considerable size ; it tends to fall to pieces.

But there are other causes which may destroy the village and the idyllic life of the small community. The death of the headman, and lightning striking the village, are the two main causes which may bring about this event.

765 596 621 787 *Death of the headman.* There is a mystic tie between this man and the social organism which is under him. Should he die, the village dies also... It is not abandoned at once. The whole year of mourning will elapse before the moving. But as soon as the widows and property have been distributed, the successor of the deceased will go and found his own village and the old one will remain a ruin (rumbi). Should any one else die, his hut will merely be thrown into the bush and the village will not be abandoned. But should these deaths increase, then the divinatory bones may order the place to be deserted, as it is defiled and dangerous.

821 756 787 621 If *lightning* strikes the hubo, it is a very bad omen. The medicine man who has the power to "treat the place struck by lightning" is called in. Should he be able to exhume from the ground the mysterious bird which causes lightning, or at least the coagulated urine which it has deposited, and which is called Heaven (See Part VI), the people are allowed to stay. But if he does not discover it deep down in the soil, the village must move, as the presence of the mysterious power of Heaven inside the circle of huts would bring disaster. This is a taboo.

621 787 596 Another cause of moving is the *exhaustion of the gardens.* When the fields are "tired" (karala) and do not produce sufficient food for the inhabitants, they leave the place and look for pastures new. In that case the bones will be consulted. Sometimes, even, the village may be transported elsewhere for the sole reason that the people are tired of the place and want to change. If the bones confirm their wishes, they will move.

621 596 *The founding of a new village* is the occasion of most interesting and characteristic rites, which afford us a new [illegible]

621
596

nature of that social unit, the Thonga *muti*. I shall give the sequence of these rites first in the Northern clans, according to the description of Viguet, and secondly amongst the Ba-Ronga, according to Mboza.

I. *In the Northern clans.*

621 1) The headman goes first to examine some spots where he
787 would like to build. He *breaks small twigs* from various trees
784 and brings them home.

2) The bones are consulted and help in *making a choice*. The
833 twigs are placed on a mat one after the other. When the stone of the *kanye* (see Part VI) falls in a certain way in front of one of the twigs, this shows that the tree from which it has been broken is the one near which the hut of the headman must be built.

3) Building material is collected. When everything is ready to proceed to the construction of the huts, the headman goes with his principal wife to the spot chosen. They leave the old village for ever ; they must not return to it any more. In the evening they have *sexual relations* in the new place and in the morning they tie together some tufts of living grass. Next day all the people of the old village must come and step upon this grass. This rite is called to *tie the village* (boha muti).

621 4) Then begins the period, of about one month, called *buhlapfa*,
595 time of moving, which has its laws. Two great taboos dominate
784 it : 1) Sexual relations are absolutely prohibited. Should any
834 one transgress this law, he has sinned gravely against the headman ; he has stolen the village (yiba muti). The headman will be ill, perhaps paralysed. The guilty woman will also be punished : she will not be able to bear children again ; she will be "tied by the village" (bohiwa hi muti). The culprits have "crossed the way of the master of the village" (tjemakanya). Strange to say, the headman himself is bound by this law. He must have no relations *with his younger wives*, because the village belongs to the principal spouse. Should such a transgression be discovered, the work

621 1) *Social rites.* The muti, as we have seen, is a little organised
596 community having its own laws, amongst which the most important
833 seems to be the law of hierarchy. The elder brother is the undisputed
768 master and no one can supersede him. He is the owner of the village. No one must "steal it" from him. Should any one do so, the whole community would suffer and no children would be born ; the life of the organism would be deeply affected. That is the reason why the headman must go first with his principal wife to have relations with her in the new village, and thus *take possession* of it or *tie* it. For this same reason, when the headman dies, the village *must* move. It is taboo to remain in it. Until the inheritance has been distributed, it is still *his home* (kwa kwe) ; but as soon as this ceremony has taken place, the villagers must go away, and close the door with a thorny branch. The part played by the
621 principal wife in all these ceremonies is most remarkable. It is
595 absolutely imperative that the headman should "tie the village" with her,
562 and not with another of his spouses. Should she be very old, the law
768 must be observed all the same ; should she be ill, and unable to have sexual
764 relations, the village simply cannot be moved. In the Northern clans we see her taking the shield and the assagai, closing the village and "giving it" to the inmates, even performing a sacrifice and praying to the gods. It is very rare to see a woman presiding at a public religious ceremony ; but she is the owner of the village as well as the headman. Moving is imperative when she dies as well as after the death of the headman. The main gate must also be closed and a new entrance made in the fence to be used during the year of mourning ; in the case of her death, this opening must be made on the left of the regular *mharana*, whilst, when the husband dies, it is made on the right side ; just as in the hut, when the corpse is removed for burial. (See page 138.)

351 2) *Protective rites.* These are those which concern the fence. This
789 fence does not afford material protection. The branches dry up very
621 soon and, in the case of a bush-fire, for instance, they would do more harm than good. It is a spiritual protection, a barrier of charms, of magic influences, to prevent the entrance of wizards and of all the hostile powers of the bush. We shall understand this better when treating of witchcraft superstitions. (Part VI.)

182 3) *Passage rites.* The reader will have been surprised to observe
621 amongst the ceremonies of the moving of villages, many features which we have already met with in the circumcision school, or in the
829 mourning customs. At first sight there seems to be no relation whatever between the moving of a village, the initiation of boys and the

182 mourning over the dead. The inner connexion existing between these
621 three events is that, in all of them, there is a passage. Hence the
783 resemblance of the rites. This striking similarity is, to my mind, the
829 best proof that the passage rites constitute a peculiar category. When a headman has decided to move, he leaves his old kraal, he *separates* from it, not by the ordinary gate, but by a special opening made at the back of the village. He is not allowed to return to it again. Then, for him and for all his people, begins a *marginal period* of one month or more, the buhlapfa (notice the prefix *bu* which indicates a period here, as in busahana (page 42.). We see the village, during these few weeks, put beyond the pale of society. The ordinary laws are suspended, (licencious songs), and many special taboos are enforced (prohibition of sexual relations, fire taboo, water taboo, etc.), just as in the period of mourning; at last the village returns to the ordinary course of life by a final act of purification, the mysterious *hlamba ndjaka*, which seems to be the most powerful means of cleansing the collective life. This last ceremony shows that, here, the marginal period has been instituted on account of the uncleaness, the impurity of the old village. Let us remember that in most cases the village has been moved on account of death! All the adult members of the social organism take part in the cleansing (at least in the Northern clans) and so the village begins a new and purified life. No one can deny the deep significance of all these rites and the mystic conception of the Thonga village.

C. THE HEADMAN AND THE ORGANISATION OF THE VILLAGE.

596 Each village thus possesses its superior (hosi), its master. He
576 is called *munumzane* or *numzane*, a curious expression which is
621 also employed in Zulu; it means owner of a kraal, gentleman,
618 and is often used in saluting grown up men. We have seen the mystic relation between the headman and his *muti*. The village, the muti, is the primitive social organism. The clan (tiko), which is the gathering of all the *miti*, reproduces all the features of the
622 village life on a large scale. So the *numzane* corresponds to the
596 *hosi*, chief of the tribe. Both certainly possess great authority,

622 but it must not become tyrannical. They must govern for the
596 benefit of their subordinates.
264 This peculiar position of the numzane amongst his people is
554 illustrated, in a striking way, by the laws of distribution of the joints of meat on the day when the headman kills an ox to feast them. The various portions must be distributed to the relatives according to the place which they occupy in the family. The headman, nominal proprietor of the ox, will keep the breast (shifuba). This is not only the sternum and the ribs, but most of the viscera which are contained in them. The tripe, the heart, the kidneys will be put all together inside the stomach, and constitute what is called *nkopfu wa homu*. The headman will probably send the heart and the kidneys to his wives (tinkosikazi, his queens!). The brother who comes next will receive one of the hindlegs ; the third in rank one of the forelegs. The elder son will eat the second hindleg, and the younger son the second foreleg. They will eat this meat with their families, or houses (tiyindlu). This custom is very old (1).

Let us continue with the distribution. To the brothers-in-law, or to the relatives-in-law generally, the tail is sent. It is the portion of the sister. But it does not consist only of the tail properly so-called ; it comprises all the hind parts of the animal, especially the rump (kondjo). The malume (maternal uncle) receives part of the loins (muhlubula). The liver is put aside for the grandfather and the old people generally, because it is soft and they have no teeth to gnaw the bones. The head belongs to all the men of the village, who must eat it on the hubo, as we have seen. They may give the tongue (ndjaka) to the old men. It

622 (1) This custom is illustrated in a very interesting manner by the relative position
596 of the three class occupying the South of the Bay. They are all descended from
264 Tembe (See page 23). *Tembe*, the ancestor, representing the elder branch of the
554 royal family, ate the chest. He was the superior (hosi), and this rank is still held by
618 his descendants in the direct line. *Sabi* or Mpanyele, the second brother, or son of the second brother, ate the hindleg ; he was established later on in the Mathuthweni district, between Tembe and Maputju. *Maputju*, the younger brother, head of the third branch, ate the foreleg. But he revolted against his elder brother and carved out for himself a kingdom which very soon became stronger than those of Tembe and Mathuthweni. Mathuthweni became more or less independent. But when people wish to remind the Maputju people of their inferior origin, they say to them : "Tembe ate the breast, Sabi the hindleg and Maputju the foreleg !"

622 is taboo for the women to eat it, or the under lip (See p. 184).
576 From each limb a small piece is taken (tshumbuta) and
264 placed on a skewer; it is the portion of the shepherds and of
554 the butchers, (makotjo ya babyisi). (See the tale of Piti, *Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, page 152). Sometimes the shepherds also receive the lungs and the spleen.

This way of distributing ox meat is called "ku tlhaba homu ba hamba milao," viz., "to kill an ox according to rule." Should a younger brother or a son kill an ox, he will send the breast to the master of the village, but he keeps all the limbs and does not observe the rules because, as he says: "It is enough to pay taxes to the chief of the country." Often one of the legs is sent to the chief of the clan.

Strange to say when a goat is killed none of these prescribed rules are followed, as they only concern the oxen.

622 These customs show clearly the position of the headman;
596 he is the master but also the father of his subordinates, and their provider.

1) He must *watch* over the village (basopa, Dutch word passop, universally adopted by the Natives). During the night, if his son is away working in Johannesburg, he takes care that no lovers come into the huts of his daughters-in-law, (a langusa bumbuye), and if he happens to catch one, he will make him pay the fine.

622 2) He is a true *justice of peace* amongst the inmates of the
692 village, doing his best to maintain good relations amongst them.
578 Suppose for instance that the pigs belonging to one of the inhab-
685 itants come out of their enclosure and over-run the gardens of another man. This man will go and say to the owner of the pigs:
643 "Such and such a thing has happened, please close the pigs' kraal more carefully." Should the same thing happen a second time, he will complain to the *numzane*. The headman will then go to the culprit and say: "You have not heeded the warning; you must pay compensation (djiha)." If the culprit listens to the "voice of the blood" (bushaka), he will obey and the matter will end smoothly; if not, the headman can only keep silent: he has no soldiers, no means of enforcing his judgment; the plaintiff will then go to the chief of the tribe to complain. The case will be

578 judged before the Court, in the capital, because the offender has
685 refused to follow the way of persuasion, he has "mocked the family
643 love" (a yalile bushaka). Such misdemeanours are very frequent
692 in the life of the village. Most of the Natives bear philosophically with these annoyances. Should some one, however, be really ill-natured, and wear out their patience (wa ku karata), he will be
685 forced to build a hut for himself, alone, outside the village. If the
672 damage is done by *children*, if they have stolen sweet potatoes, as
693 we have seen, the wronged proprietor gives them a good thrash-
732 ing but does not claim a fine. Occasionally the headman himself
689 thrashes them in presence of their father, and the father will say to them: "You see the numzane will beat you if you are not good." Children who mock at cripples are also severely beaten by him, all the more so as, in this case, the offended party has the right of claiming a fine.

622 3) The headman also possesses *authority over his younger brothers*
596 *and his children*. He can even confiscate their money if one of
675 them is addicted to drinking and ruins his property. However his authority in this respect must not be overstepped, and the headman must take care how he exercises it, as it is based more or less on sufferance. The younger brothers, for instance, maintain the right of making contracts, especially lobola contracts. Should the numzane restrict their liberty too much, they will leave him and found their own villages. A successful headman is he who knows how to keep the whole family together to the general satisfaction.

622 4) The headman has also the right of imposing *statute labour*,
596 especially when the oxen kraal must be rebuilt, or when the
466 weeds must be removed from the hubo ; he sends his young men to do the work. But he must not exact too much from his people or forget to feast them with beer or with meat when the work is finished.

622 5) Lastly the headman *presides over all the discussions* which take
596 place in the village. He is the master of the hubo. The discussion can be conducted in three different places ; when it deals with a secret matter, the men go *inside the hut* ; they debate the matter indoors (ba bulabula ndlwen). Private questions

622 596 affecting the life of the village are generally settled there. Questions discussed with strangers and those regarding which there is no secrecy, and in which every one can take part, are discussed *on the central square*, on the "hubo". *Hubo* means the square, and also the council of the men of the village which the headman summons there to settle matters (ku khanela timhaka). Should they be able to come to an agreement together or with their visitors who have come to bring a claim, the matter is "cut" (ba tjema mhaka), viz., "ended". In the opposite case, when they disagree altogether, the question will be carried to a third place, before the *hubo of the chief*, in the capital. (See Part III).

562 Every one is welcome to take part in the discussions except women. As a rule men speak as little as possible with women on these matters. If a husband has a sensible, discreet wife, he may ask her advice. But if he has agreed with his companions on a point and changes his mind after having spoken with his wife, he will be severely blamed and accused of "spoiling the village" (hona muti).

622 596 672 The headman is more or less *responsible for all the claims* lodged against his subordinates. Should one of his younger brothers be prosecuted for a debt, the creditors will go to the numzane, and he cannot say: "This matter does not concern me." He will say to his brother: "Pay your debt," and, if the brother has no funds, he will help him, if possible, but it is only a loan, and the younger brother will pay back the money. As a rule members of the same family help each other in these matters. This is so much the custom that children are expected to pay the debts of their deceased parents, even if they have not inherited anything from them. This does not however procede from a moral sense of family dignity. They do it because the native authorities hold them responsible. They might be "arrested". In the case of a father who has died still owing some lobola money, the children will try to pay, but they will do it in order to obtain possession of the woman. Should a father have committed adultery with a married woman, and die without having paid the fine, his heirs are not considered responsible. On the other hand, if the father has been condemned as a wizard

622 by the chief, and dies, his heirs must pay the compensation
596 claimed. All these rules clearly illustrate the communism of
672 family life and family property, under the supervision of the headman.

Should a numzane be absolutely unable to govern his village,
622 *the family council can depose him* and put another man in his
596 place. This council will be formed of old relatives, especially the paternal uncles to whom the younger brothers will go and complain of the misbehaviour of their headman. A younger brother will then be proclaimed and the elder will be despised. They will say : "Hi singe! A fahla muti, a hluli hi muti!" "He is a fool! He breaks the village ; he is overcome by the village," viz., not able to keep up his position.

As regards the *law of succession* to the headmanship, the second brother takes the place of the elder, and so on. The son of the elder cannot become headman until all his paternal uncles are dead. We shall find this principle also observed in the succession of the chiefs. (Part III.)

D. DAILY LIFE IN THE VILLAGE.

461 From the oxen kraal to the huts, from the square to the little wood, through the doors and in the reed yards, black forms are moving to and fro. Everybody seems busy. There is talking, laughing, playing and working. The expression "working like a nigger" is hardly applicable, for they do not kill themselves with work. It would, however, be quite as great a mistake to believe that the Natives spend all their time in loafing about. Far from it!

I. *Women's occupations.*

462 Women, especially, are very busy. When the sun rises, they
511 emerge from their huts, wash their faces, and light a little fire to warm the mealie pap which was left from the evening meal.

273 l) Men's favourite pastime in South Africa is *drinking beer*.
273 There are no bars on the velt... But every village is from time
574 to time a brewery and a drinking place. Beer is prepared in large
596 quantities. As we shall see, the brewing lasts about nine days.
Near Lourenço Marques, Natives fill not only pots but big casks
with it! One of the jugs is put aside for the headman to try it.
He must pour a little of it into the *gandjelo* ; this religious act is
obligatory. Next day the men of the village assemble in the
morning to sample it also, and, at noon, all the friends from the
273 neighbouring villages arrive. Everybody is welcome. Even a
574 leper can take part in the beer-drinking ; but he will come with
596 his own calabash and they will fill it with a special ladle. As a rule
near neighbours also bring their calabashes, but people coming
from afar are not expected to do so. The beer is drunk with great
haste. Before it is all finished, the headman puts aside a pot for
his father-in-law, his uterine nephew, and the friend who invited
him on a previous occasion... Of course after having filled their
stomachs, men and women dance on the hubo in the afternoon,
and especially in the evening, when the moon shines ; the shouting
sometimes becomes dreadful when drunkenness has overcome all

000 the rain which was pouring down. Suddenly I noticed the Wahwangano family returning from the garden in the same order as the week before : in front Leye, with the bundle of wood, the basket of vegetables, the hoe and the baby on her back, followed by the children, and behind, the father with the protective umbrella. "Such are the fruits of my efforts," I thought! But I refused to consider myself beaten. I said to myself : "I will speak to them once more! The women will certainly be on my side, these poor over-worked women!"

On the following Sunday Nesheye (one of the best Christian women of the congregation) came to see me after the sermon. She had something to tell me... She said : "You observe us, and you wonder at certain things. We also, on our side are observing you, and we see things which we also do not understand. When your wife does the washing, you remain standing by and do not help her. With us it is the men who do the washing. Again, we have seen your wife sewing and mending your clothes and the clothes of the children, and you beside her, not thinking of helping her. With us it is the men who mend the clothes."

Having spoken thus, Nesheye put her two hands joined together on the mat, then separated them as if she were cutting something in two, and said to me : "That is the way your forefathers distributed the work, a little heap here and another little heap there ; and they said : This is the work of men and that the work of women. Our forefathers proceeded in the same way, and said : This is men's work and that is women's work... We must leave it so. The Gospel has not to concern itself with these matters. We do not wish to have the reputation of being lazy and you do not wish it either."

(From the *Journal de l'Unité des Frères*, January 1926.)

701 726 regiment, with its counsellors at its head, is called in turn by the organisers of the army; (at Zihlahla they were Mahagane, the chief's uncle, and Mpompi), and the several companies of the regiments form ranks one behind the other. I have already described this imposing circle, when treating of the coronation of the chief. Every warrior can take in at a glance the entire assemblage. Seen from the interior, it is an unbroken circle of shields, resting perpendicularly on the ground, and all touching; behind, a crowd of men, the greater the number, the deeper the ranks, a forest of feathers waving above their heads.

701 726 561 334 396 The mukhumbi is not however a perfect circle. It is rather like a *horse shoe*, as there remains an *opening* (nyangwa or sangwa), which gives access into it. On either side of this *door* the regiment of the young men takes up its position; the Dhlanazo in the Nkuna mukhumbi and the Ndumakazulu in that of Zihlahla. At the opposite end, facing the entrance, is the *chest of the army* (shifuba sha yimpi), where the chief stands surrounded by the men of riper age, the strongest of whom act as a body guard. Between the chest and the opening, on both sides, the middle-aged warriors occupy the wings, the elder ones nearer the chest, the younger nearer the entrance. This disposition is highly significant; notice that it is exactly the same as that of the village itself, a large door (mharana); on both sides of the entrance, the huts of the unmarried inhabitants (lao and nhanga); at the back the huts of the headman, and, at the sides, those of his younger brothers. The idea of age and of hierarchy entirely dominates both these social manifestations!

701 As regards the numerical strength of the mukhumbi, one of my informants who belonged to the Ndumakazulu regiment —young men from 19 to 25 years old—told me that he estimated the war strength of his regiment at about 500 men: the entire Zihlahla circle might be put at 2000 strong.

I have often seen the Nkuna mukhumbi assembled. I had even the opportunity of addressing its warriors during the Sikororo war of 1901. They were between five and six hundred in all. But this clan is very much scattered and many warriors were not present.

588 583 bush. If she agrees to become his wife in this irregular manner, she goes there and meets him. They have relations together and run to one of the relatives of the girl's mother. The family of the mother will be more lenient than the family of the father, having no right to the lobolo. The transgressors of the law will probably choose the village of the maternal uncle and settle there. The parents look everywhere for their daughter and try to get her to return home. If she is quite determined to remain with her ravisher, they let her go free, deploring their misfortune and their shame. But it is rare in the primitive state of the tribe for such a marriage not to be regularised. The thief, if he has retained any feeling of decency, will try to collect the lobolo. One morning he goes to the village of his wife's parents, and deposits a sovereign or a goat or a cock on the threshold of the hut of the girl's mother ; or he hangs a half-sovereign on the goat's neck, rubs its lips with salt to prevent it from bleating, and then shouts loudly : " We have stolen, we of such and such a clan "... People wake from their sleep, not knowing what animal has made such a noise, come out of their huts and see the culprit standing outside the fence. When he has been duly recognised, he runs away. He will perhaps bring some other presents till he has definitely 588 " lobola " his wife. This is called the *nshonshonela*. Should he 611 not succeed in bringing the regular payment, the first girl born 597 of that marriage will be the lobolo. " Nwana a ta lobola mamana wa kwe " : the child will pay for her mother. In law, all the children of such a union belong to the girl's family : a man who has not lobola has no right of property in his children. (See Part III.)

Should the woman who has been stolen by *tlhuba* go at once to live with her irregular husband in his village, her parents will arrange matters in another way. They will " go as enemies " (hi bulala), make a regular descent on the village of the thief, kill a pig, threaten to take all the furniture. The men of that village will then intercede and, in the course of time, the lobolo will be paid. (See App. VIII.)

604 611 597 *(pfusha muti) by means of a ntukulu.* Should he see that he has no children, that his village is in danger of "dying," he will take his unmarried sister to his village and refuse to accept the lobolo for her. He will say to her : "Do not fear! If you die, I will bury you!" This duty falls in the first place to the husband ; but the brother is ready to fulfil it. She will have lovers, and perhaps give birth to a son. As she has not been lobola, this child belongs to the mother's family, according to the great rule of Native law. The uncle will appropriate this male offspring of his family, who will bear the *shibongo* of his kokwana. A uterine nephew, adopted under these circumstances, can save the family of his mother from extinction.

2) Rights of the uterine nephew.

604 782 The attitude of the ntukulu wa shisati (the uterine nephew) to his malume is quite peculiar. "Ntukulu i hosi, a nyenyela hikwapsu ku malume." — "The uterine nephew is a chief! He takes any liberty he likes with his maternal uncle" (Mboza). These prerogatives of uterine nephews with regard to relatives on their mother's side, their bamalume and bakokwana, appear clearly in the religious ceremonies. We have seen the prominent part which batukulu take in these rites. "Ba yima mahlwen ka psikwembu" — "they stand before the gods, in their stead" (Viguet). They must be the servants of the altar, and the consumers of the offering. In the great sacrifice for rain, as accomplished in the Northern clans, an offering of beer is made, together with the sacrifice of the black victim. (See Part VI.) It is the uterine niece of the chief who must fetch the mealies from the granary, pour them into the pot, take the first handful to crush it in the mortar, give the first blow with the pestle, and begin each of the complicated acts of the brewing. When the black victim is brought, some one puts an assagay into her hand and helps her to stab the animal. She it is who "gives over to the gods" (nyiketa psikwembu). The same thing happens in the great family gatherings : one ntukulu holds the leg, another the

APPENDIX VI (See p. 265)

The story of Paulus K., illustrating the matlulana superstition and the Thonga horror of polyandry.

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One of my pupils, who was already a married man of, perhaps, thirty-two years of age, once came to me, very much distressed, to confess a fault which seemed to weigh very heavy on his conscience. On a day of feasting he had drunk too freely and had commited adultery with the wife of his elder brother Guga. He fought with himself for years, not daring to avow an action which seemed to him not merely ordinary adultery but an incestuous act. He finally wrote to his brother: "Though I know that we shall not be able to love each other any more as before, though it pains me so much to separate from you, I will confess! Please forgive me, as I intended to commit suicide on account of my fault!"

The special gravity of the fault consisted in two circumstances: 1) She was his brother's wife and he was now unable to visit his brother when ill, to take part in his burial, or to maintain friendly relations with him. 2) Guga was his elder brother. This made the case still worse.

The letter of Paulus to his fellow evangelists is touching: "I have no right to stay in your assembly, because I have been overcome by the Enemy and committed adultery with my elder brother's wife. I have been long prevented (from confessing) by the Enemy's power. Now I have wept before Jesus that He may help me to pierce the abscess... Satan came and said to me: 'Will you not be ashamed to confess such a thing before men'?' I nearly retreated. But at sunrise I made haste to write to you, and now I feel peace and joy. It seems to me that I am going to receive the Spirit of God."

APPENDIX VII (See p. 279)

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The story of Spoon Libombo, showing that, when the lobolo has not been paid or has been returned, the children belong to the mother's and not to the father's family.

Spoon was the son of Shibaninge, a woman of the Libombo family, and of Khobete of the Mazwaya family, who had lobola Shibaninge.

611 597 604 This man died during a war with the Portuguese, having been killed on Mbengelen island. The widow was "Iambeliwa" (chosen) by Nsiki, Khebete's brother, who was to inherit her. But Nsiki did not really care for the widow. He did not prepare a *ntehe* for the baby nor provide the mother with ochre. Seeing this, Shibaninge went back to her relatives. When the time for the weaning of the little one arrived, a man named Mbobobo had irregular relations with the woman in order to "lumula" the child (See page 60). Mbobobo went so far as to take her to his home, upon which Nsiki claimed the lobolo paid by the Mazwayas and the Libombos gave it back to them. After that, Spoon lived in his mother's family and was called: "wa ka Libombo," "man of Libombo." But he had no real home (a nga na kwakwe). Being on the spot he was always chosen to help in the sacrifices: drinking the beer which remained in the pot after the libations to the gods in the gandelo, near the gate, stealing the offerings when the victims were killed in the sacred bush, etc. He was the "great ntukulu," because his mother belonged to the elder branch or first house of the family. So he took precedence of the other uterine nephews when they had to take part in the sacrifices.

APPENDIX VIII (See p. 281)

The story of Gidhlana Ngwetsa of Rikatla; a typical case illustrating the lobola, divorce, and leper customs of the Ba-Ronga.

587 586 Gidhlana was the sister of a man named Mubene. Both were the children of a fine old Ronga named Ngwetsa and one of his wives. Gidhlana was bought with lobola by a man named Khandlela (candle), son of Ñwamanghele, a man of the Manyisa clan settled near Rikatla. The marriage took place probably in 1893. The new pair did not live in peace. Gidhlana quarrelled with her husband. "Why? Nobody knows! Are the affairs of the huts and the villages known to outsiders?" She returned home to her father Ngwetsa. The husband waited a while. Then he followed her (landjela) and asked her to come back to the conjugal home. Her parents told her to obey. She went. But quarrelling soon recommenced. She fled a second time; her husband and her parents-in-law did their best to induce her to go back. She refused. An uncle of hers took a stick and thrashed her but nothing could persuade her.

l: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 . Thonga

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SECOND PART

THE LIFE OF THE FAMILY AND OF THE VILLAGE

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621 592 Having followed a man and a woman from the beginning to the end of their existence, I now come to the Life of the Family and of the Village. Both subjects are in close connexion. As a rule, a village is but a family composed of the headman, the father, his wives, his children and the old folk who depend upon him; but in many cases his younger brothers live with him, sometimes a son-in-law, or even a stranger, and all these inmates compose the village, *muti* (1). In the first chapter we shall consider the family itself, its constitution, the system of relationship, and in the second, the village, the concrete embodiment of the family, its foundation, its main laws and the respective occupations of its members.

CHAPTER I

THE LIFE OF THE FAMILY

121 601 The kinship system of the Thongas and, I suppose, of all the Bantus is widely different from ours, and greatly surprises the

(1) Native villages are generally called *kraals* by South African colonists. This expression comes from the Portuguese word *curral* which means properly stable. I shall employ it to designate the enclosure where oxen are kept, the cattle-kraal, but it does not seem right to apply it to the *muti* which is a *village*, however small and poor it may be. The Portuguese call native villages *povoação*.

121 uninitiated student who tries to understand it. It is a very complicated matter indeed. In *Les Ba-Ronga* I have given the genealogy of Tobane and tried to sketch the system, and even to explain it. I cannot say that I was altogether satisfied with this first attempt. When later on I had an opportunity of studying the subject in the Northern clans, I found that a comparison between the customs of the different parts of the tribe helped greatly to an understanding of the whole matter. This led me to extend my investigation to neighbouring tribes, and, after the publication of the first edition of this book, I made inquiries amongst the Vendas, Pedi-Khahas, Suthos, Chopis, Ndjaos and Tongas. I then conceived the ambitious plan of drawing up a table of the terms of relationship in all these tribes or sub-tribes, being convinced that it would be of great interest, both from the linguistic and from the ethnographic point of view. I publish it in Appendix IV, at the end of this Volume. My chief concern remains with the Thonga tribe, but after having described in detail the kinship system amongst the Thongas, I intend to sketch some of the most characteristic customs met with amongst their fellow Bantus in South Africa.

May I add that though it is comparatively easy to discover the main ideas in relation to the family in the Thonga tribe, yet the whole tangle is extraordinarily difficult to unravel. I had believed that it was composed of two threads only, twisted together and knotted a hundred times : the lobola and polygamy customs. But I saw that many other threads were entwined with these : remnants of an ancient state of society where the mother-right prevailed, and perhaps traces of the old group-marriage system which is still extant amongst Australian natives. My aim is more modest to-day. I do not claim to explain everything, but to present a wider, more complete statement of facts, which I offer to professional anthropologists in order that they may fix the place of the present Thonga system of relationship in the evolution of the human family.

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601 193 Grammatically speaking, most of the Thonga terms of kinship belong to the class mu-ba, the personal class. They form their plural in *ba* (batatana, bana, bamakwabu, batukulu). Some however are of the class yin-tin which comprises mostly animals, but also names of trades and of family relations : Ndjisana, nhondjwa, namu, nhombe, nhlantsa forming their plural in *ti*. The five following terms, Tatana, Mamana, Rarana, Malume, Kokwana, are treated as proper nouns when they are used as such. For instance when I say Tatana, it means *my* father, the one to whom this term applies par excellence. In this case Tatana is not preceeded by the initial vowel *a* or *e*, which is always prefixed to the common nouns (See Elementary Grammar ot the Thonga-Shangaan Language, page 26 § 65). If I wish to say "his father," I should say : Atatana wa kwe (Ro.), or Etata wa yena (Dj.) etc.

B. EXPLANATION OF THONGA TERMS OF RELATIONSHIP

602 Let us go deeper into the study of each of these terms, trying to ascertain their principal and derivative meanings. We shall consult the three genealogies here given, those of Tobane (A), of Mboza (B) and of his wife Nsabula (C), endeavouring to ascertain not only the social but also the moral relation existing between these several people. There are two kinds of relationship : blood relationship or consanguinity and marriage relationship, relationship on the wife's side or affinity. Amongst blood relatives, there are two categories which differ more from each other amongst the Bantus than amongst us, relatives on the father's side and on the mother's side. On the father's side, the relatives are called bakweru (Ro.), barikweru (Dj.), those of our home ; and on the mother's side, bakokwana, the ancestors.

We shall consider each of these three relationships separately, though it will be found impossible to isolate them entirely from each other. In each of them, we shall find two sets of terms : terms of correspondence and of reciprocity. We shall see also

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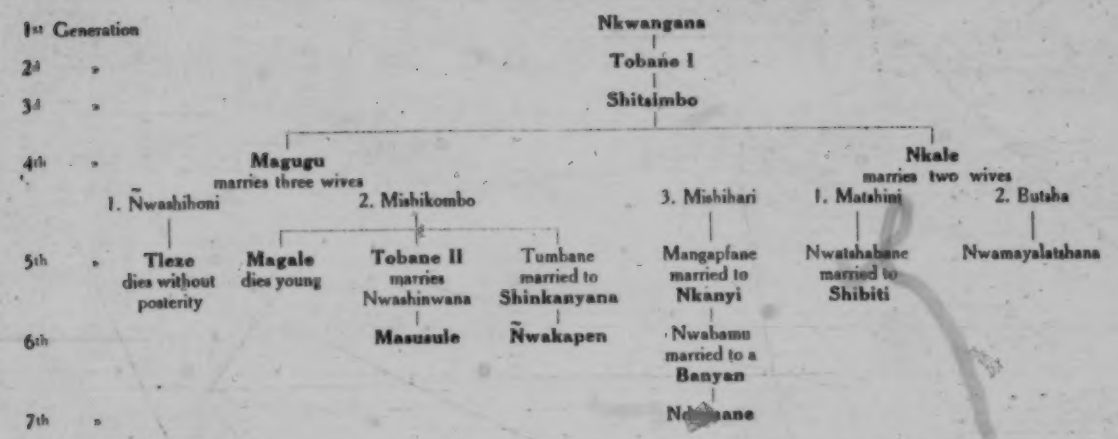
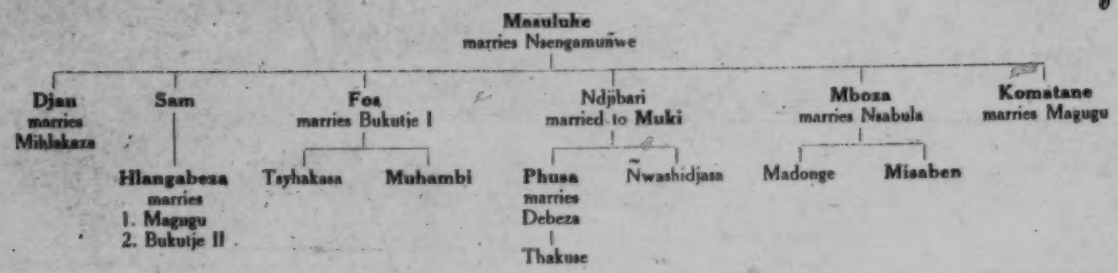
A. Genealogy of Tobane



Mishikombo has two brothers, **Shigwalati** and **Mahwayi** and one sister Budiulu, **Shigwalati** has one daughter, Mintshale. Ñwashihoni has a brother, **Madyondjo** and a sister, Ntungwen.

B. Near Relatives of Mboza



C. Near Relatives of Nsabula Migogwe, wife of Mboza

N. B. The names of the male members of the family are printed in dark type.

602 that these appellations are expressive of many different things, one of the main considerations dictating them being the right of a man to marry his wife's relatives, or to inherit the women belonging to his own family.

I. *Blood relationships.*

601 The general term to indicate this relationship is *bushaka* (from *shaka, mashaka*), relatives.

1) Relatives on the father's side.

(Bakweru : *ba*, those, *ku*, at, *eru* possessive pronoun of the first person plur. means those *with us*, in our home.)

Let us first consult Tobane, called Tobane II in the genealogy.

601 He calls Magugu his father, *tatana*. The relation implies
593 respect and even fear. The father, though he does not take much
611 trouble with his children, is nevertheless their instructor, the one who scolds and punishes. Absolute obedience is due to him on the part of his sons and daughters (App. V). So also in the case of the *father's brothers*, who are also called "batatana ba shirare :" the elder brother who is a "great father" to Tobane, and the younger
601 brother Nkale, "tatana lwe'ntjongo", a "little father." Their
611 wives, Matshini for instance, are mothers to him, though he can in certain cases marry them by inheritance. The cousins of the father are also fathers (Muhambi to Thakusa, for instance, Gen. B.), provided the father calls them brothers.

There is another term for father, *rara* in Djonga, *roro* in Ronga ; roro is only employed with the possessive pronoun in the three following forms : rorwa'nga, my father, rorwa'ku, your father, rorwa'bu, their father. The correlative of tatana is *ñwana*, son or daughter.

Tobane II calls Shitsimbo *kokwana*, grandfather, Tobane I kokwane wa tatana, grandfather of father, and Nkwangana kokwana wa kokwana, grandfather of grandfather. The expression

601 tatana wa kokwana, father of grandfather, is never employed.
611 The great-grandfather and the great-great-grandfather are sometimes designated as follows : he who does not see his grandson when he has been sent by the women to bring him food ; the boy eats it on the way and the old man does not notice it! (Page 132). These progenitors call Tobane *ntukulu*, grandson. He is the true ntukulu of Shitsimbo ; to Tobane I, he is the *ntukulu wa shikandjatjolo*, "the one who sits on the knees ;" to Nkwangwana, the *ntukulu wo shikandjamirombo*, a word which seems to mean "the one who sits on the toes." In Djonga there is one more of these curious expressions applied to batukulu, *ntukulu wa shinguhe*. "When he pronounces that name," says Gana, "my great-grandfather points near by ; when he says *ntukulu wa shikandjatjolo*, he points further down." To understand this properly, we must imagine the following patriarchal scene : a very, very old man is sitting on the ground, holding his son (ñwana) in his arms, and with his grandson (ntukulu) on his thigh, his great-grandson (wa shikandjatjolo) on his knees and his great-great-grandson on his toes (1). The fact that these terms have become almost obsolete shows that the system of counting descent from the father is at any rate very old in our tribe. There must even have been a time when the ancestors in the paternal line were better known than now. The wives of these bakokwana are also bakokwana, in the same way as their husbands.

601 The father's sister is *rarana* (Ro.) *hahane* (Dj.). The two
604 words are the same, as *r* often changes into *h* in Thonga phonetics : the prefix of the first class, *mu* or *n*, now dropped, may have caused this change. Rarana approaches very closely to rara, father. It is employed in this form when it means *my* aunt. When we wish to say your aunt, his aunt, rarana becomes rarakati wa ku, rarakati

601 (1) There is another interpretation of these terms as applied to the grandparents :
888 *kokwana wa shinguhe* : he is poor, miserable! When an ox is killed in the village, they do not even send him his share ; he is far away. *Kokwana wa shikandjatjolo* : he is almost blind. When he wants to see his great-grandson he calls him and tells him : "Sit down on my knees." *Kokwana wa shikandja-mirombo* : mirombo or mitjombo means the small ears of maalies used to prepare the beer of the offerings. This kokwana, the great-great-grandfather, is already almost like one of the ancestor-gods to whom sacrifices are made !

601 604 wa kwe. This word means exactly female father. (See the meaning of this suffix *ati*, page 36, foot note.) Tumbane is rarana of Masusule. Masusule, to her, is also ñwana. He shows her great respect. However, she is in no way a mother (mamana). Yet, amongst the paternal relatives, she is the one to whom a boy or a girl will tell their secrets; her nephew or niece will go to her in order to get advice and help in their difficulties. Occasionally she will intercede for them with their father and her influence may be decisive. The rarana may be called on to officiate in a sacrifice offered on behalf of her nephews, the children of her brothers, if the latter are all dead.

Any female who is a near relation of my father or of my paternal ancestors, is also by extension a rarana: the daughters of my paternal grand-uncle, for instance, who are like sisters to my father, etc.

The husband of my paternal aunt is neither a father nor an uncle, but a *mukoñwana* or *namu*, brother-in-law, because, as we shall see, he has a kind of prior right to marry my sister (1). (Shinkanyana versus Masusule, Gen.A; or Muki versus Muhambi, Gen. B.). To Madonge, Muki is *nkata*, husband, on account of this possibility. He is a potential husband for her. Consequently Madonge is a potential co-wife of her paternal aunt, a co-wife of a particular kind, and the term used to indicate that relation is *nhlampsa*. We shall explain this term more fully by and by.

601 Tobane !I calls Tumbane *makwabu*; this term, which is

(1) Though the husband of the paternal aunt is a mukoñwana, a term which implies respect, the respect shown to him is not great. Gana says: "When he passes through our village, I shall say to him: Good morning, namu! We tell each other freely the news of the day (djungulisana). He eats with us. We buy for him a little rice, a fowl. If I go to his village, I open the door of his hut and put my stick inside without asking permission... a thing which I would never do in the village of my wife's parents, who are my true bakoñwana. I sit down and say to him: 'Give me this or that..., for instance your hat.' He may refuse, but if he possesses two hats of the same shape, I insist and say: 'Give me one! We shall be like each other.' Thus we make fun together, we jest together (mpfhabelana)." — Would the uterine nephew behave in the same way towards his maternal uncle? — Not at all! The behaviour of the uterine nephew is called nyenyela. He shows no restraint at all; he comes and catches a fowl, a goat; he steals a pot of beer. When they see him coming, they say: "Here is the wizard, etc." (See later on. p. 232).

601 reciprocal, means brothers as well as sisters. If he wishes to specify, he adds to makwabu : "of the assagai," or "of the basket." It is never employed except when united with the possessive pronoun : *makweru* means my brother, *makwenu* your brother, *makwabu*, his brother or sister. The elder brother is called *nhondjwa* (plur. tinhondjwa). The nhondjwa is also called *hosi* (plur. tihosi) chief. The hierarchy of age is very strictly
601 observed amongst the Thongas. The elder brother is treated
593 with great respect and gives orders to his younger brothers with
595 almost the same authority as the father. It must be noticed also that the position of elder brother is not only a matter of age, but, in the polygamic family, all the children of a first wife, or of the first house, are *tihosi* to the children of secondary or posterior wives or houses, though they may have been born after them. They take precedence of them. Amongst girls, an elder sister is often called *mamana*, mother, whilst an elder brother is never a tatana (father) but a hosi (chief).

601 The term *makwabu* is applied to all my first and second cousins
4/28 who have the same paternal grandfather, or great-grandfather,
605 as I have. Cousins on my mother's side are also bamakwabu, some of them at least, those who are my maternal aunt's children. But cousins on the father's side are more fully bamakwabu than those on the mother's side : Muhambi is more so to Hlangabeza than to Mahlobo, because the two former belong to the same shibongo, family name ; they are men of the Makaneta clan and Muhambi could therefore inherit Hlangabeza's wives ; Muhambi and Mahlobo are not of the same clan, and could not inherit from each other. From this fact we begin to see that the laws of inheritance, and especially the laws of the distribution of the widows amongst the family which has bought them, are closely connected with the system of relationship.

601 The man who has married my wife's sister is also a makwabu to me, a nhondjwa if he has married her elder sister (Phayindi to Mboza), a ndjisana if the younger (Magwazizen to Mboza). The brothers of Phayindi and Magwazizen are also called brothers by Mboza.

There is a special term in the Northern clans to indicate the

There is a special term in the Northern clans to indicate the relationship of two men who have married two sisters born of the same mother. They are called : bamakwabu ba shinauma, an expression which is the simplification of the following sentence : shi na wuñwe mamana, i. e. there is only one mother. This term seems to have been borrowed from the Pedis.

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2) Relatives on the mother's side.

601 Tobane II calls Mishikombo *mamana*, mother. She is his
593 true mamana and this relation is very deep and tender, combining respect and love. Love however generally exceeds respect. The proper word for tenderness is *timpsalu*, which comes from *psala*, to beget, and the mother is often called *mpsele* (a term which is applied also to the female of all animals). It is the word which answers best to the feelings of a mother for her children. She is generally weak with them and is often accused by the father of spoiling them.

601 The mother's sisters are *bamamana* in the second degree,
664 because, if the true mother dies, one of them will probably take care of the children. Their husbands are *batatana* : Phayindi is tatana to Madonge and Muhambi. He calls them *bana*, children. Mboza is also a tatana to Mahlobo and Mathamba, being a makwabu, brother of their father, owing to the fact that he and Phayindi have married sisters.

601 All the co-wives are also *bamamana*, mothers by polygamy,
578 (Ñwashihoni and Mishihari to Tobane). They are *bamamana*
595 *ba shitshengwe*, harem mothers. I respect them but they are further from me than my mother's sisters. A more familiar term for mother, corresponding to roro, father, is *ñwa*, a word always used with the possessive pronoun and only in the second and third person : ñwaku, your mother, ñwakwe, his mother. Ñwaku is employed in certain insults and oaths, and is to be avoided as being vituperative.

601 Many other women are mamana : the wife of my paternal uncle (Magugu for Muhambi), though I can inherit her in certain cases ; the daughter of my maternal uncle, because she is the

601 potential wife of my father (Shaputa to Misaben), not to mention those women of my wife's family who can be so called. An elder sister is also mamana to her younger sister, and sometimes a husband calls his wife mamana (1).

If the mother's sister is a mother, the mother's brother is by no means a father. He is called *malume* or *kokwana*, and here we meet with one of the most characteristic features of the Thonga, and even Bantu, system of relationship. The term kokwana means first the paternal grandfather and all the ancestors on the father's side, and this is its proper essential meaning. The bakokwana are also all my mother's male relatives: her brothers, fathers, uncles, etc. They form a group which I call "ka bakokwana" which means "my mother's home," just as *kweru* means my father's home, my official home. Kweru comes first; ka bakokwana next. "The bushaka on the father's side is the head; on the mother's side, only the legs" (Mboza).
593 Let us remember that a child lives at his father's home and only
602 goes on a visit to his mother's village. He may stay there for
[591] years after the weaning, but if he chose to settle there, he would be made fun of and severely censured by his father and his paternal uncles. "You are stupid," they would say, "you leave your own village, you go to the village of your bakokwana to increase it! This is true folly. Has not your mother been bought with money? The children she bore belong to your father, just like the calves of his cows." (Mboza.) But if the home of the mother cannot become the home of the children, the relations they maintain with

601 (1) The term mamana is frequently used by an interlocutor, without any idea of
576 relationship, when speaking to married women of a more advanced age than himself. Such an extented meaning is also frequent with tatana, kokwana, ñwana. Any man older than I am can be addressed by me as tatana and will answer by calling me ñwana. If the difference of age is greater, we shall treat each other as kokwana and ntukulu. Speaking in the third person a child will always put tatana before the name of any grown up man, though he belong to a totally different clan. Women round Lourenco Marques often call a White man nkata, husband. This shows that kinship terms are employed as expressing moral relations as well as blood or family relations, and we must not draw hasty conclusions from the way in which these terms are applied, or necessarily see in them the traces of a previous social state in which every grown up man or woman was looked on as a true father or mother. The Thongas may give to these terms an extended meaning. Nevertheless they differentiate perfectly between their technical and their derived sense.

602 their bakokwana are of a much freer, more agreeable and kindlier
593 nature than those with their father's relatives.

Amongst the Thongas of the North the maternal grandfather and the maternal uncles are called indiscriminately kokwana. The Ronga dialect makes a distinction between kokwana, maternal grandfather, and malume, mother's brother; but the malume is often
601 called kokwana. In the Northern clans the *uterine nephews*, viz. the sons of my sister, are always called *ntukulu*, which is the term corresponding to kokwana, as we have seen ; amongst the Ba-Ronga, they bear a special name, *mupsyana*, which seems to be becoming obsolete, being often replaced by ntukulu (1).

Let us consider these various relatives on the mother's side.
603 The maternal grandfather is the great, the true kokwana. He is respected for his age. He is however more lenient to his grandson by his daughter than to his grandson by his son. If the first damages anything, he will say : "That is no business of mine. Let the father of the child scold him, as he does harm to his property. I have nothing to do with their affairs. It is not my village." But if it were his grandson by his son, it would be a totally different matter, and he would be hard on him. However, should a child take too great a liberty with his kokwana, the old man will say to him : "Go and play with your malume."
604 The malume, indeed, for his uterine nephew, is quite different from any other relative. No respect at all is necessary towards him! "You go to *bombela* in his village ; you do what you please. You take all the food you want without asking permission. If you are ill, he will take special care of you and will sacrifice for you" (Viguet). In the Ronga dialect this bombela is called *nyenyela*. When the mupsyana goes to his maternal uncle, accompanied by his comrades who scent a good meal, the wives of the malume call to him : "Come along, husband (nkata)! Look here, your malume has hidden some food in the back part of the hut (mfungwe), behind the large basket (ngula). Go and take it." The boy steals the food, runs away with it and eats it up to the last morsel

(1) This is one of many proofs that the Ronga clans have preserved some old customs better than their Northern compatriots. Their language also possesses certain archaic features which are wanting in the Northern dialects.

604 that I intend to treat it more fully later on in a special paragraph, when considering the traces of older forms of family life amongst the Thongas.

601 The true malume is the mother's full brother. But all her half brothers are also bamalume in the second degree ; so are also the brothers of the true malume.

605 What about the *children of the malume*, my cousins, or rather my
835 cross-cousins, sons and daughters of my mother's brothers, viz.
582 Shaputa and Marangen as opposed to Madonge and Misaben ? In Zulu, Sutho, Pedi there is a special term to indicate this relation, (mzala, motsoala, mudzwala, muzwala). And the main feature of the family system in those tribes is that a cousin has a prior right to marry the daughter of his maternal uncle, his mzala. Amongst the Thongas there is nothing of the kind. The special term does not exist except in the Maputju clan, at the Southern extremity of Thonga territory, where it is met with in the form of *ntale* (corresponding to mzala, according to the law of phonetic permutation) (1) or *shitale* (when preceded by the prefix shi).
605 But the right of marrying this cousin is not recognized in the
835 Thonga tribe. One can play with her, steal some object from
582 her in fun, but never take her as a wife. Such a breach of the
602 custom would be punished by the chief. Later on, when the special relation of cross-cousins has been more or less forgotten, marriage could take place between them, but, at any rate, the ceremony of dlaya shilongo (see p. 256) would be performed, in order to "kill" the previous relationship and to replace it by the new relation of husband and wife.

This being so, how do cross-cousins behave towards each other in the Thonga system ? As regards the daughter of their maternal uncle, the relationship is somewhat different for Misaben, a boy, and for Madonge, a girl. To Misaben the boy, Shaputa, his cousin, is mamana and she will call him son, ñwana, because, as we have seen, Shaputa is a potential wife for Mboza, father of Misaben, and Mboza calls her nkata, nsati, namu. To Madonge,

605 (1) They also employ the cognate form *muzali*, which is more akin to the Zulu regular term, and this tends to show that the Maputjus have borrowed this expression from their Zulu neighbours of Northern Amatongaland.

605 the girl, Shaputa is also a mamana ; but the term makweru, my sister, is more frequently used. So we find this strange fact : Maphunga, the mother of Shaputa is a wife to Misaben, while her daughter, Shaputa, is a mother to him!

As regards the son of my malume, he is also a malume or a kokwana, though he may be of the same age or even younger than I, because he belongs to the family from which we take wives and also because he has a kind of right to offer sacrifices for his ntukulu, as we shall see. Totally different is the relationship between Misaben and Mahlobo and Mathamba, *children of his mother's sister*. They are *bamakwabu* as truly as the children of rarana, the paternal aunt, because they have sucked from the same breast (ba yanwele bele djinwe).

601 At this point of my treatise I must stop for a moment to consider more closely the use of these two terms, *kokwana and ntukulu*, which are so widely employed in the Thonga kinship system. They are applied first to the relation between a grandson and his grandparents on the father's side, i. e. his paternal grandfather and his paternal grandmother; secondly to the relation between that same grandson and his maternal grandfather and grandmother and to the relation of a nephew to his maternal uncle and to all the male members of his mother's family. Now my informants point out very decidedly that these two relations are very different from each other, and they call the bakokwana on the father's side *bakokwana ba shinene* (the true bakokwana), whilst the bakokwana on the mother's side are *bakokwana ba shisati* (the bakokwana on the female side) ; one also speaks of *batukulu ba shinene*, the real batukulu and of *batukulu ba shisati*, the batukulu by females. How is it possible for them to make such an identification, an identification which we find in almost all the South African tribes (See Table. App. IV) ? They recognize that the two relations are not the same, and the description which we have just given clearly shows the difference.

It would be useful to know the etymology of these two terms. Unhappily my informants could not ascertain it. Kokwana is the diminutive of koko, which has been preserved in its original form in the Zulu word gogo and in the Khosa koko. This root, associated with prefixes which are not those of the personal class, means either the dried carcase of a dead animal, or a person with stiff limbs, who cannot

601 stretch them out. I must leave Zulu linguists to decide if it is really the same root. If so, the etymological idea would be that of a person worn out and paralyzed by old age.

The only explanation that I can give of the common use of the terms kokwana-ntukulu for both relations is this. Both the paternal grandparents and the mother's relatives are similar in their dealings with a child in the fact that they are more lenient towards him than his father. The two grandmothers are equally kind to him. The maternal grandfather is more lenient than the paternal grandfather ; but, according to the explanation given above, it is because the latter belongs to the same family (shibongo) as his grandchild and may be called on to scold him if his conduct is prejudicial to the interests of their common village, whilst the maternal grandfather does not worry himself if the child damages the property or the good reputation of his parents. It is not his business.

The malume is the most indulgent of all. We shall see how this fact can be explained by the matriarchy hypothesis.

Another connotation of these two terms, when applied to social groups, i. e. to two different families, is this. The bakokwana are those from whose family the batukulu have the right of taking their wives. As we shall see, this meaning is much more marked in the category of tribes which belong to the Pedi-Venda group than amongst the Thongas and other tribes of the same category.

II. *Relations with parents-in-law.*

1) Relationship on the Wife's side.

a) General characteristics.

606 593 Once, when speaking on this subject, old Viguet told me solemnly : "By your betrothal, as soon as you have been accepted, you enter into a new kind of respect and must remain in it till your death." This relationship is called *bukonwana*, a word that is generally pronounced with a peculiar feeling of uneasiness. Why is this? On account of the relations of husband and wife. Mboza calls

606 393 Nsabula *nsati* (a term corresponding to *nuna*, husband) or *nkata*, a reciprocal term, or *nkosikazi*, a Zulu word which means queen, or *ntjibeli*, cook, even *mamana*. I have already described the moral relation which the word nsati implies : no very great tenderness, not much intimacy, but a certain amount of love mingled with respect, and even fear, because a wife can get her husband into endless trouble if she begins to quarrel and runs home ; then all the bukoñwana relations will be spoilt by interminable discussions.

The word bukoñwana is composed of three elements : the root *ko*, which is an ancient Bantu root, found also in Zulu-Xosa (kwe), in Sutho (hoe) and Pedi (χwe). Its meaning is etymologically unknown. To it is added a suffix, *ñwana*, and a prefix *bu*. The prefix bu has a double meaning ; the meaning of abstraction (and then bukoñwana indicates the relationship between a man and his relatives-in-law) and the meaning of place (when bukoñwana indicates the village where relatives-in-law dwell). They say, employing this word in the locative case : To go bukoñwanen, or in an abbreviated form : bukwen.

601 607 I have been fortunate enough to obtain from Mboza the full nomenclature of his wife's relatives. It so happens that the Gogwe family is extraordinarily complete. Nsabula has both an elder brother and elder sister, a younger brother and a younger sister. Owing to this, I have been able to study all the possible kinds of relationship of Mboza with his wife's relatives.

The terms used to express these kinds of relationship fall into two categories, which present a striking contrast. On the one hand a man, when he goes to his wife's village, meets with the persons he fears most in the world : these are his *bakoñwana*, properly speaking ; on the other hand he finds there the women towards whom he behaves with the greatest liberty ; these are the *tinamu*. Describing these two sets of relatives-in-law, one of my informants said : "Bakoñwana are those persons who produce wives for you ; tinamu are those persons who produce children for you, because they are your presumptive wives. Even if you do not marry them, their children will call you father."

Let us study these two categories in detail.

582 595 835 Though laying much stress on this very important difference we must notice, nevertheless, that there is a certain correspondence between the rights of men and women in this respect. A man has a preferential right to his wife's younger sisters, and to the daughters of his wife's brothers, be these men younger or older than his wife. He is a potential husband for all these tinamu. It results from this fact, that, as regards a woman, she is also a potential wife for all her husband's younger brothers, who can inherit her and are also called tinamu by her, and for the sons of her husband's sisters, be they older or younger than her husband.

601 582 Another feature of these early Australian forms of society is that all the persons belonging to a given generation call each other brothers (or sisters), and call the preceding generation fathers and mothers and the following generation sons indiscriminately. We may compare with this classificatory system the Thonga custom of calling all the father's wives and all the mother's sisters mothers ; and all the father's brothers fathers. But this is not necessarily a trace of group marriage. As we have seen before, the meaning of kinship terms is very often extended to other people as a sign of respect or of love ; the Thongas, nevertheless, know perfectly well the difference existing between the technical use of these terms and their wider connotation. There is something natural in these appellations. When we call such and such a person Father Morton, Mother Fuller, Brother James or Sister Agnes, no one would take this to be a relic of the group marriage phase! On this point my conclusion would therefore be : certain customs may be considered as traces of this old system, but it is not absolutely necessary to explain them by this hypothesis. The preference accorded to a wife's sisters, or nieces, may very well owe its origin to the following cause : when a group has ascertained that its women are well treated in another group, it welcomes new alliances with that group, thinking that, in this dreadful lottery of marriage, the guarantee given by a previous happy union is not to be despised!

APPENDIX IV (See p. 221).

South African Bantu

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I. *Ancestors and Descendants*

	Thonga-Ronga	Thonga-Djonga	Chopi	Zulu
Father	Tata. Roro	Tatana. Rara	Tate	Baba
Mother	Mamana. Ñhwa	Manana. Mana	Mame	Mame. Ma
Father's Father	Kokwana	Kokwana	Kokwana	Baba mkulu
Mother's Father	»	»	»	»
Father's Mother	»	»	»	»
Mother's Mother	»	»	»	»
Great Grandfather & Grandmother	Kokwana wa Tatana	»	»	Gogo
Son	Ñwana (wa ndjisanyana)	Ñwana (wa mufana)	Mwanana	Ndodana
Son's wife	Ñwingi	Ñwingi		Makoti. Malukazane
Daughter	Ñwana (wa wanhonyana)	Ñwana (wa wanhwana)	Mwanana	Ndodakazi
Daughter's husband	Mukoñwana	Mukoñwana		Umkwenyane
Grandson, granddaughter	Ntukulu	Ntukulu	Mutukulu	Umzukulu
Grandson's son	Ntukulu wa shi kandjatjolo	Ntukulu shinguhe	Mutukulu wa shinguha	

II. *Brothers and Sisters*

Elder Brother (of a boy)	Nhondjwa. Hosi	Nhondjwa. Hosi	Nkoma	Umnewetu
» » (of a girl)	»	»	Ndi ya ngu. Tate	»
Younger Brother (of a boy)	Ndjisana	Ndjisana	Nanda	Umfowetu
» » (of a girl)	»	»	Ndi ya ngu	»
Elder Sister (of a boy)	Nhondjwa. Hosi	Nhondjwa. Hosi	Ndi ya ngu	Dadewetu
» » (of a girl)	»	»	Nkoma	»
Younger Sister (of a boy)	Ndjisana	Ndjisana	Ndi ya ngu	»
» » (of a girl)	»	»	Nanda	»
Elder Brother's Wife (for a boy)	Namu	Namu	Ndombi	Makoti
» » » (for a girl)	» Nhombe	»	»	»
Younger Brother's Wife (for a boy)	Ñwingi	Ñwingi	Ndombi	»
» » » (for a girl)	Namu. Nhombe			»
Elder Sister's Husband (for a boy)	Namu. Mukoñwana	Mukoñwana	Mukwana	Umkwenyane
Younger Sister's Husband (for a boy)	Namu. Mukoñwana	Mukoñwana	Mukwana	Umkwenyane
General name of Brothers and Sisters	Ba-Makwerju	Ba-Makweru	Ba-Ndi-ya-ngu	

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Kinship System.

in the direct Line.

Xosa	Sutho (Basutoland)	Pedi-Khaha	Venda	Tonga (Inhambane)	Njao
u-Bawo	Ntate. Ra	Baba. Bê-papa	Khotsi	Nyebe. Baba	Baba
u-Ma	'Me (= Mme)	Mma. Bô-mmê	Mme	Mayime. Mayi	Mayi
u-Baw'omkulu	Ntate mohôlô	Kuku. Makgolo	Makhulu	Koko. Kokwe	Tshekulu
»	»	Makgolo	»	»	»
u-Makulu	Nkhônô. 'Me mohôlô	Makgolo	»	»	Mbiya
	Nkhonô 'Me mohôlô	Kuku	»	»	»
u-Koko	Ntate mohôlô-hôlô	Makgoloko-toane	Makhulukuku	Koko wa baba	
u-Nyana	Mora	Moroa	Mwana	Mwana	Mwana
u-Molokazana	Ngoetsi	Ngoeci	Mazwale	Ngadja mwana	Nyamwana
u-Tombi	Morali	Moradi	Mwana	Mwana	Mwana
um-Kwenyana	Mokhoenyana	Mokgonyana	Muduhulu	Mwane	Mukwambo
um-Zukulwana	Setlôholô	Motlogolo	Muduhulu	Ntugulu	Muzukulu
	Setlôholoana	Motlogolo-tlogolwane		Ntugulu ginguha	Muzukulu shinguha

Their Wives and Husbands.

um-Kahwa	Mohôloane	Mogolo	Mukomana	Nkoma	Mukulu
um-Nakwetu (Buti)	Khaitseli	Kgaecadi	Khaladzi		
um-Ninawe	Moena	Morathô	Murathu	Nanda	Munukuna
um-Nakwetu (Buti)	Khaitseli	Kgaecadi	Khaladzi		
um-Dade (omkulu)	Khaitseli	Kgaecadi	Khaladzi	Ndi ya ngu	Mukulu
u-Dade wetu (Sisi)	Mohôloane	Mogolo	Mukomana		
u-Dade (omcisci)	Khaitseli	Kgaecadi	Khaladzi		Munukuna
um-Sakwetu (Sisi)	Moena	Morathô	Murathu		
um-Kulwakazi	Mohatu'a mohôloane	Musadi oa mogolo	Mwane		Mayi
um-Kulwakazi (Sisi)	Molanô	Mogadibo Mmamusa	Mubuye		
um-Ninawekazi	Mohatu'a ngoan'esu	Musadi oa morathô	Musali wa murathu	Ngadja mwana	Nyamwana
um-Ninawekazi (Sisi)	Molanô	Mogadibo Mmamusa	Mubuye		
u-Sibani	Sear. Khaitseli	Mogoê	Mukwasha. Muduhulu	Mwane	Mukwambo
u-Sibani	Sear. Khaitseli	Mogoê	Mukwasha. Muduhulu	Mwane	Mukwambo
	Bana banu	Bo-ngoan'esu			

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III. *Children of*

	Thonga-Ronga	Thonga-Djonga	Chopi	Zulu
Elder Brother's son (for a man) .	Ñwana	Ñwana	Mwana	Ndodana. Mtanami
» » (for a woman)	»	»	Tsandzana	Ndodana. Mtanami
Younger Brother's son (for a man).	»	»	Mwana	Ndodana. Mtanami
» » (for a woman)	»	»	Tsandzana	Ndodana. Mtanami
Sister's son (for a man)	Ntukulu. Mupsyana	Ntukulu	Mutukulu	Ndodana. Mtanami
» (for a woman) . . .	Ñwana	Ñwana	Mwana	Ndodana. Mtanami
Brother's daughter (for a man). .	Ñwana	Ñwana	Mwana	Ndodakazi. Mtanami
» » (for a woman) .	Ñwana. Nhlampsa	Ñwana. Nhlampsa	Tsandzana	Ndodakazi. Mtanami
Sister's daughter (for a man) . . .	Ntukulu	Ntukulu	Mutukulu	Ndodakazi. Mtanami
» » (for a woman) .	Ñwana	Ñwana	Mwana	Ndodakazi. Mtanami

IV. *Relatives on*

Father's Elder Brother	Tatana lwe' nkulu	Tatana lo' nkulu	Tata wa hombe	Baba mkulu
His wife	Mamana	Manana	Mame	Mame
Father's Younger Brother . . .	Tatane lwe' ntjongo	Tatana 'lo' ntjongo	Tata wa mudoto	Baba m'cane
His wife	Mamana	Manana	Mame	Mame m'cane
Father's Brother's Son.	Makwerju	Makweru	Nkoma. Nanda.	Umfowetu
His wife (for a man)	Namu. Ñwingi	Namu. Ñwingi	Ndombi	Makoti
Father's Brother's Daughter . .	Makwerju	Makweru	Ndi ya ngu	Dadawetu
Her husband (for a boy) . . .	Mukoñwana	Mukoñwana	Mukwasa	Umkwenyana
» » (for a girl) . . .	Namu	Namu		
Father's Sister	Rarana. Rarakati	Habena	Hahani	Babekazi
Her Husband (for a boy) . . .	Namu	Mukoñwana	Mukwasa	Baba. Umkwenyane
» » (for a girl). . . .	Nkata. Nuna	Namu. Nuna	Ndombi	Baba
Father's Sister's Son (for a man).	Ntukulu. Shitale	Ntukulu	Mutukulu	Umzala
» » (for a woman)	Ñwana. Shitale	Ñwana	Mwana	»
Father's Sister's Daughter (for a man)	Ntukulu. Shitale	Ntukulu	Mutukulu	»
Father's Sister's Daughter (for a woman)	Ñwana. Shitale	Ñwana		»
The wife of Father's Sister's Son	Ntukulu	Ntukulu	Mutukulu	»
The Husband of Father's Sister's Daughter.	»	»	»	»

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Brothers and Sisters.

Xosa	Sutho (Basutoland)	Pedi-Khaba	Venda	Tonga (Inhambane)	Njao
u-Nyana	Ngoana	Ngoana oa mogolo	Mwana wa mukomana	Mwana	Mwana
»	»	Ngoana oa mogolo	Mwana wa khadzi	»	»
»	»	Ngoana oa morathó	Mwana wa murathu	»	»
»	»	Ngoana oa morathó	Mwana wa khadzi	»	»
u-Nyana. um-Tshana	Mochana	Motlogolo	Muduhulu	Ntugulu	Muzukulu
u-Nyana. um-Tshana	»	»	Mwana	Nyahama	
in-Tombi	Morali		Mwana	Mwana	
	»				
in-Tombi. um-Tshana	Mochana	Motlogolo	Muduhulu	Ntugulu	Muzukulu
in-Tombi. um-Tshana	Ngoana				

the Father's Side.

u-Tata omkulu	Ntate mohólo	Ramogolo	Khotsi muhulu	Baba kongolo	Baba mukulu
u-Ma-omkulu	Nkhónó	Mamogolo	Mme muhulu	Mayi kongolo	Mayi
u-Tata-omcinci	Rangoane	Rangoanê	Khotsi munene	Baba dugwane	Baba muloko
u-Ma-omcinci	Rangoane. Mangoane	Mmanê	Mme munene	Mayi dugwane	Mayi
u-Kayise	Ngoan'esu	Ngoana ramogolo	Mukomana	Nwanduye	Hama
	Mohats'a ngoan'esu		Mmane	Namu	
u-Kayise	Khaitseli	Kgaecadi	Khaladzi	Gogadji	
u-Sibari	Scar. Khaitseli	Scar. Kgaecadi	Muduhulu	Mwane	
»				Nyahama	
u-Dadobawo	Rakhali	Rakgadi	Makhadzi	Hahani	Thethadji
u-Malume	Rakhali (oa monna)	Motlogolo	Mukwasha. Muduhulu	Mwane	Mukwambo
»				Namu	
um-Za	Motsoala	Motsoala	Muzwala	Ntugulu	
»	»	»	»	Nyahama	Muzukulu
»	Motsoala	»	Muzwala	Ntugulu	
»	»	»	»		
»		Mosadi oa motsoala	Muzwala	Ngandja mwana	Nyamwana
»	Motsoala		Mukwasha Muduhulu	Ntugulu	

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V. *Relatives on*

	Thonga-Ronga	Thonga-Djonga	Chopi	Zulu
Mother's Brother	Malume	Malume. Kokwana	Kokwana	Malume
Mother's Brother's Wife (for a man)	Nsati	Kokwana	»	Mamekazi
» » (for a woman)	Malume	»	»	»
Mother's Brother's Son	Malume. Ntale	Kokwana	»	Umzala
His wife	Namu		»	»
Mother's Brother's Daughter	Mamana. Ntale	Manana	Mamanyana	»
Her Husband	Tatana	Tatana	Tate	»
Mother's Brother's Grandchildren	Bakokwana	Bakokwana		Ndodana. Ndodakazi
Mother's Elder Sister	Mamana	Mamana	Mame	Mamekazi
Mother's Younger Sister	»	»	»	»
Mother's Sister's Husband	Tatana	Tatana	Tate	Malume
Mother's Sister's Son (for a boy)	Makwerju	Makwerju	Ndi ya ngu	Umzala
» » » (for a girl)	»	»	»	
His Wife	Namu	Namu	Ndombi	Umzala. Kanina
Mother's Sister's Daughter (for a boy)	Makwerju	Makweru	Ndi ya ngu	»
Mother's Sister's Daughter (for a girl)	»	»	»	»
Her Husband (for a boy)	Namu. Mukoñwana	Mukoñwana	Mwane. Mukwana	»
» » (for a girl)	Mukoñwana	Namu. Nuna	Ndombi	»

VI. *Relatives on*

Wife	Nsati. Nkata	Nsati	Musikati	Umfazi
Wife's Father	Mukoñwana. Tatana	Mukoñwana. Tatana	Tate	Umkwe
Wife's Mother	Mukoñwana. Mamana	Mukoñwana. Mamana	Mame	Umkwekazi
Wife's Elder Brother	Mukoñwana	Mukoñwana	Musade	Umlamu. Sivar
His Wife	Mukoñwana lwe'nkulu	Mukoñwana lo'nkulu	Nkokati	»
Wife's Younger Brother	Namu	Namu. Mukoñwana	Musade. Ndombi	»
His Wife	Mukoñwana lwe'nkulu	Mukoñwana lwe'nkulu	Nkokati	»
Wife's Elder Sister	Mukoñwana. Mamana	Namu	Ndombi	»
Her Husband	Makwerju	Makweru wa shinauma	Nkoma	Umnakwetu

the Mother's Side.

Xosa	Sutho (Basutoland)	Pedi-Khaha	Venda	Tonga (Inhambane)	Ndjao
u-Malume	Malōme	Malome	Malume	Koko	Tsbekulu
u-Malume wesifazi	Malōme. Nkhōnō	Makgolo	Makhulu	»	Mbiya nkadji
u-Malume wesifazi	Malōme. Nkhōnō	»		»	
um Za	Motsoala	Motsoala	Muzwala	»	
»	Mosali oa motsoala	Makgolo		»	
»	Motsoala	Motsoala	Muzwala	Ngadja mwana	Mayi
»	Monna oá motsoala	Mogadjea oa motsoala	Mukwasha	Baba	
	Bana ba motsoala	Bana ba makgolo		Ba mwana mayi	
u-Makazi	Nkhōnō. Me	Mmê-mogolo	Mme muhulu	Mayi kongolo	Mayi mukulu
»	Mangoane	Mmê ngoanê	Mmane	Mayi dugwane	Mayi muloko
u-Malume	Rangoane	Ramogolo. Rangoanê	Monna wa mme muhulu	Koko	
u-Kanima	Ngoan'esu	Mogolo. Morathó	Mukomana. Murathu	Wanduye	Hama
»	Khaitseli	Kgaecadi	Khaladzi		
»	Mosali oa ngoan'esu	Mogadjea oa mogolo		Namu. Mayana	
»	Khaitseli	Kgaecadi		Ntugulu	
»	Ngoan'esu	Mogolo. Morathó			
»	Monna oa khaitseli	Mogoê		Ntugulu	
»	Monna oa ngoan'esu	Mokgonyana		Nyahama	Hama

the Wife's Side.

um-Fazi	Mosali	Mosadi	Musadzi	Mwangadji	Mukadji
u-Bawozala	Mohoe. Mokhoenyana	Makgolo. Ratsoale	Makhulu	Baba. Sade	Mukwambo. Babe
u-Mazala. um-Kwekazi	Mohoehali	Mogoêgadi	Makhulu	Mayi	Mukwambo. Ba-Mbiya
um-Kwe. u-Sibari	Soar. Khaitseli	Mogoê	Malume	Babe	Mukwambo
u-Sibari	Khaitseli	Makgolo	Makhulu	Mayi gogadji	Ba-Mbiya
um-Kwe. u-Sibari	Soar. Khaitseli	Mogoê	Malume	Baba. Sadeuyana	Mukwambo
u-Sibari	Khaitseli	Makgolo	Makhulu	Mayi gogadji	Ba-Mbiya
um-Lazyakazi	Molamō	Makgolo. Molamo	Mme muhulu	Mayi gogadji	Mwalamo. Mukadji muhulu
um-Nakwetu	Fube	Makgolo. Molamo	Khotsi muhulu	Ndi ya ngu	Hama

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VI. *Relatives on*

	Thonga-Ronga	Thonga-Djonga	Chopi	Zulu
Wife's Younger Sister	Namu. Nhombe	Namu	Ndombi	Umlamu
Her Husband	Makwerju	Makweru wa shinauma	Nanda	Umnakwetu
Wife's Brother's Son	Namu	Mukoñwana	Musade	Ndodane. Mtanami
His Wife	Mukoñwana lwe'nkulu	Mukoñwana	Nhokati	Makoti
Wife's Brother's Daughter	Namu. Nsati	Namu. Nsati	Ndombi	Mtanami
Her Husband		Makweru	Ndi ya ngu	Umkwenyana
Wife's Sister's Son	Ñwana	Ñwana	Mwana	Mtanami
His Wife	Ñwingi	Ñwingi	Mwingi	Makoti
Wife's Sister's Daughter	Ñwana	Ñwana	Mwana	Mtanami
Her Husband	Ñwana	Ñwana	Mwana	Umkwenyana
Daughter of Wife's Brother's Son	Nsati. Namu	Nsati	Musikati	Umzukulu

VII. *Relatives on*

Husband	Nuna. Nkata	Nuna	Mwamna	Ndoda. Umyeni
Husband's Father	Ñwingi	Ñwingi	Mwingi. Tate	Baba
Husband's Mother	Ñwingi	Ñwingi. Manana.	Mwingi. Mame	Mame
Husband's Elder Brother	Ñwingi	Ñwingi. Namu.	Ndombi	Umnewetu
His Wife	Makwerju	Makweru wa shinauma	Ndi ya ngu	Dadewetu
Husband's Younger Brother	Namu	Namu	Ndombi	Umnewetu
His Wife	Makwerju	Makweru wa shinauma	Mnanda	Dadewetu
Husband's Elder Sister	Mamana. Nhombe	Namu	Ndombi	Dadwetu
Her Husband	Mukoñwana lwe'nkulu	Mukoñwana lo'nkulu	Mukwam	Umkwenyana
Husband's Younger Sister	Namu. Nhombe	Namu	Ndombi	Dadewetu
Her Husband	Mukoñwana lwe'nkulu	Mukoñwana lo'nkulu	Mukwana	Umkwenyana
Husband's Brother's Son	Ñwana	Ñwana	Mwana	Mtanami
His Wife	Ñwingi	Ñwingi	Mwana	Makoti
Husband's Brother's Daughter	Ñwana	Ñwana	Mwana	Mtanami
Her Husband	Ñwana	Mukoñwana		Umkwenyane
Husband's Sister's Son	Ntukulu. Nkata	Ntukulu. Nkata	Mutukulu	Mtanami
His Wife	Ntukulu	Ntukulu	»	Makoti
Husband's Sister's Daughter	Ntukulu	Ntukulu	»	Mtanami
Her Husband	»	»	»	Umkwenyane

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

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601 193 Grammatically speaking, most of the Thonga terms of kinship belong to the class mu-ba, the personal class. They form their plural in *ba* (batatana, bana, bamakwabu, batukulu). Some however are of the class yin-tin which comprises mostly animals, but also names of trades and of family relations : Ndjisana, nhondjwa, namu, nhombe, nhlantsa forming their plural in *ti*. The five following terms, Tatana, Mamana, Rarana, Malume, Kokwana, are treated as proper nouns when they are used as such. For instance when I say Tatana, it means *my* father, the one to whom this term applies par excellence. In this case Tatana is not preceeded by the initial vowel *a* or *e*, which is always prefixed to the common nouns (See Elementary Grammar ot the Thonga-Shangaan Language, page 26 § 65). If I wish to say "his father," I should say : Atatana wa kwe (Ro.), or Etata wa yena (Dj.) etc.

B. EXPLANATION OF THONGA TERMS OF RELATIONSHIP

602 Let us go deeper into the study of each of these terms, trying to ascertain their principal and derivative meanings. We shall consult the three genealogies here given, those of Tobane (A), of Mboza (B) and of his wife Nsabula (C), endeavouring to ascertain not only the social but also the moral relation existing between these several people. There are two kinds of relationship : blood relationship or consanguinity and marriage relationship, relationship on the wife's side or affinity. Amongst blood relatives, there are two categories which differ more from each other amongst the Bantus than amongst us, relatives on the father's side and on the mother's side. On the father's side, the relatives are called bakweru (Ro.), barikweru (Dj.), those of our home ; and on the mother's side, bakokwana, the ancestors.

We shall consider each of these three relationships separately, though it will be found impossible to isolate them entirely from each other. In each of them, we shall find two sets of terms : terms of correspondence and of reciprocity. We shall see also

602 that these appellations are expressive of many different things, one of the main considerations dictating them being the right of a man to marry his wife's relatives, or to inherit the women belonging to his own family.

I. *Blood relationships.*

601 The general term to indicate this relationship is *bushaka* (from *shaka, mashaka*), relatives.

1) Relatives on the father's side.

(Bakweru : *ba*, those, *ku*, at, *eru* possessive pronoun of the first person plur. means those *with us*, in our home.)

Let us first consult Tobane, called Tobane II in the genealogy.

601 He calls Magugu his father, *tatana*. The relation implies
593 respect and even fear. The father, though he does not take much
611 trouble with his children, is nevertheless their instructor, the one who scolds and punishes. Absolute obedience is due to him on the part of his sons and daughters (App. V). So also in the case of the *father's brothers*, who are also called "batatana ba shirare :" the elder brother who is a "great father" to Tobane, and the younger
601 brother Nkale, "tatana lwe'ntjongo", a "little father." Their
611 wives, Matshini for instance, are mothers to him, though he can in certain cases marry them by inheritance. The cousins of the father are also fathers (Muhambi to Thakusa, for instance, Gen. B.), provided the father calls them brothers.

There is another term for father, *rara* in Djonga, *roro* in Ronga ; roro is only employed with the possessive pronoun in the three following forms : rorwa'nga, my father, rorwa'ku, your father, rorwa'bu, their father. The correlative of tatana is *ñwana*, son or daughter.

Tobane II calls Shitsimbo *kokwana*, grandfather, Tobane I kokwane wa tatana, grandfather of father, and Nkwangana kokwana wa kokwana, grandfather of grandfather. The expression

601 potential wife of my father (Shaputa to Misaben), not to mention those women of my wife's family who can be so called. An elder sister is also mamana to her younger sister, and sometimes a husband calls his wife mamana (1).

If the mother's sister is a mother, the mother's brother is by no means a father. He is called *malume* or *kokwana*, and here we meet with one of the most characteristic features of the Thonga, and even Bantu, system of relationship. The term kokwana means first the paternal grandfather and all the ancestors on the father's side, and this is its proper essential meaning. The bakokwana are also all my mother's male relatives: her brothers, fathers, uncles, etc. They form a group which I call "ka bakokwana" which means "my mother's home," just as *kweru* means my father's home, my official home. Kweru comes first; ka bakokwana next. "The bushaka on the father's side is the head; on the mother's side, only the legs" (Mboza). 593 Let us remember that a child lives at his father's home and only 602 goes on a visit to his mother's village. He may stay there for 591 years after the weaning, but if he chose to settle there, he would be made fun of and severely censured by his father and his paternal uncles. "You are stupid," they would say, "you leave your own village, you go to the village of your bakokwana to increase it! This is true folly. Has not your mother been bought with money? The children she bore belong to your father, just like the calves of his cows." (Mboza.) But if the home of the mother cannot become the home of the children, the relations they maintain with

601 576 (1) The term mamana is frequently used by an interlocutor, without any idea of relationship, when speaking to married women of a more advanced age than himself. Such an extented meaning is also frequent with tatana, kokwana, ñwana. Any man older than I am can be addressed by me as tatana and will answer by calling me ñwana. If the difference of age is greater, we shall treat each other as kokwana and ntukulu. Speaking in the third person a child will always put tatana before the name of any grown up man, though he belong to a totally different clan. Women round Lourenco Marques often call a White man nkata, husband. This shows that kinship terms are employed as expressing moral relations as well as blood or family relations, and we must not draw hasty conclusions from the way in which these terms are applied, or necessarily see in them the traces of a previous social state in which every grown up man or woman was looked on as a true father or mother. The Thongas may give to these terms an extended meaning. Nevertheless they differentiate perfectly between their technical and their derived sense.

602 their bakokwana are of a much freer, more agreeable and kindlier
593 nature than those with their father's relatives.

Amongst the Thongas of the North the maternal grandfather and the maternal uncles are called indiscriminately kokwana. The Ronga dialect makes a distinction between kokwana, maternal grandfather, and malume, mother's brother; but the malume is often
601 called kokwana. In the Northern clans the *uterine nephews*, viz. the sons of my sister, are always called *ntukulu*, which is the term corresponding to kokwana, as we have seen; amongst the Ba-Ronga, they bear a special name, *mupsyana*, which seems to be becoming obsolete, being often replaced by ntukulu (1).

Let us consider these various relatives on the mother's side.
603 The maternal grandfather is the great, the true kokwana. He is respected for his age. He is however more lenient to his grandson by his daughter than to his grandson by his son. If the first damages anything, he will say: "That is no business of mine. Let the father of the child scold him, as he does harm to his property. I have nothing to do with their affairs. It is not my village." But if it were his grandson by his son, it would be a totally different matter, and he would be hard on him. However, should a child take too great a liberty with his kokwana, the old man will say to him: "Go and play with your malume."
604 The malume, indeed, for his uterine nephew, is quite different from any other relative. No respect at all is necessary towards him! "You go to *bombela* in his village; you do what you please. You take all the food you want without asking permission. If you are ill, he will take special care of you and will sacrifice for you" (Viguet). In the Ronga dialect this bombela is called *nyenyela*. When the mupsyana goes to his maternal uncle, accompanied by his comrades who scent a good meal, the wives of the malume call to him: "Come along, husband (nkata)! Look here, your malume has hidden some food in the back part of the hut (mfungwe), behind the large basket (ngula). Go and take it." The boy steals the food, runs away with it and eats it up to the last morsel

(1) This is one of many proofs that the Ronga clans have preserved some old customs better than their Northern compatriots. Their language also possesses certain archaic features which are wanting in the Northern dialects.

604 that I intend to treat it more fully later on in a special paragraph, when considering the traces of older forms of family life amongst the Thongas.

601 The true malume is the mother's full brother. But all her half brothers are also bamalume in the second degree; so are also the brothers of the true malume.

605 What about the *children of the malume*, my cousins, or rather my
835 cross-cousins, sons and daughters of my mother's brothers, viz.
582 Shaputa and Marangen as opposed to Madonge and Misaben? In Zulu, Sutho, Pedi there is a special term to indicate this relation, (mzala, motsoala, mudzwala, muzwala). And the main feature of the family system in those tribes is that a cousin has a prior right to marry the daughter of his maternal uncle, his mzala. Amongst the Thongas there is nothing of the kind. The special term does not exist except in the Maputju clan, at the Southern extremity of Thonga territory, where it is met with in the form of *ntale* (corresponding to mzala, according to the law of phonetic permutation) (1) or *shitale* (when preceded by the prefix shi).
605 But the right of marrying this cousin is not recognized in the
835 Thonga tribe. One can play with her, steal some object from
582 her in fun, but never take her as a wife. Such a breach of the
602 custom would be punished by the chief. Later on, when the special relation of cross-cousins has been more or less forgotten, marriage could take place between them, but, at any rate, the ceremony of dlaya shilongo (see p. 256) would be performed, in order to "kill" the previous relationship and to replace it by the new relation of husband and wife.

This being so, how do cross-cousins behave towards each other in the Thonga system? As regards the daughter of their maternal uncle, the relationship is somewhat different for Misaben, a boy, and for Madonge, a girl. To Misaben the boy, Shaputa, his cousin, is mamana and she will call him son, ñwana, because, as we have seen, Shaputa is a potential wife for Mboza, father of Misaben, and Mboza calls her nkata, naati, namu. To Madonge,

605 (1) They also employ the cognate form *mzeli*, which is more akin to the Zulu regular term, and this tends to show that the Maputjus have borrowed this expression from their Zulu neighbours of Northern Amatongaland.

607 with the father of my wife, as these are her natural protectors.
835 In this first category is included the daughter of my wife's
595 brother (Shaputa versus Mboza). With her the relations are perhaps even more free than with my wife's younger sisters. I call her *nsati*. The intimacy is so great that I can hold her breasts (tamele mabele). I can do so even in the presence of my wife, who is her paternal aunt. She will be pleased to see that I am disposed to avail myself of my right to marry her, because her niece will thus become her nhlampsa, she will hlampsela rarana, i. e. become a second wife by the side of her father's sister. But I dare not take such a liberty with the girl if her father is on the spot and sees me. I probably do not possess the oxen to pay for her, and the father looks chiefly to the oxen.

As already pointed out, all the girls belonging to my bakoñwana are in the same position towards me. I can marry them all... if I am rich enough to "lobola" them. The grand-daughter of my wife's brother is a namu, a nsati. She will probably be a baby whilst I am a grown-up man. Never mind! If I meet her, a little girl on her mother's back, I go and take her in my arms, and
602 say to her: "Good morning, my wife!" As regards my wife's
607 cousins, those whose father is a brother of my wife's father and
835 who bear the same family name as my wife, they are also tinamu,
595 but here a distinction must be made. Should the father of one of these girls be younger than my wife's father, I can marry her; but should he be older I must not do so. Why is this? Because the girl, belonging to an elder branch of my wife's family, takes precedence of my wife; she is her "hosi", her chief. On the other hand my wife, being my first wife, is the mistress of the house; this cousin of hers ought therefore to obey her. But she is her chief! That would not be right. The natural family relations would be disturbed.. Such a union is not taboo (a psi yili) but it must be avoided.

835 The *second category of tinamu* includes those women whom I
595 might marry, not on account of the prior right of a group to the
607 women of another group, but because I might *inherit them*. They are the wives of my elder brothers. If their husbands die, I am their legal heir. Relations with them are easy. We joke together, but there is more reserve towards these tinamu than towards those

835 of the first category. Sexual intercourse with them is a great taboo,
595 and a man daring to commit such a sin would be likened to a
607 wizard: he has killed his brother. This is the sin called matlulana (App. VI). My younger brother's wives are not tinamu ; we call each other ñwingi. I do not inherit them except in extraordinary cases when the deceased has no brother younger than himself.

602 There is still a *third kind of bulamu.* I also call tinamu the
835 cousins of my wife who are the daughters of my wife's mother's
582 sisters. These girls do not belong to my wife's clan ; they bear the family name of their father. Therefore I have no right to inherit them : "A hi delani ndjaka," i. e. "we do not inherit from each other." The relations with these tinamu are agreeable, but there is no hope of marriage between us.

2) Relations on the Husband's side.

607 So far we have considered the relation of Mboza with his wife's family. But what about Nsabula and her position towards her husband's relatives ? Nsabula calls Masuluke and Nsengamuñwe *ñwingi*, and the term is reciprocal. It implies great respect. As we saw, the young bride must work a whole year for her mother-in-law. The same respect is shown by Nsabula to Djan, Sam, Fos, her husband's elder brothers. They are also *ñwingi* to each other. "Should I send her to call Djan," says Mboza, "she will kneel down before him and say : 'My father! Mboza calls you!' or : 'Ñwamasuluke (Masuluke's son), you are wanted with us." She will not dare to address him by name. This extraordinary respect is reciprocal. Djan will consider Nsabula as his inferior, but he will never play with her. On the other hand, Komatane, Mboza's younger brother, is only a *namu* to Nsabula. Both will joke together and even occasionally smear each other with ashes. So will Sam, Fos, Mboza and Komatane with Mihlakaza, the wife of their elder brother. Thus we note
607 this law : a woman will generally respect the elder brothers of her
835 husband (beñgi), and hold very free intercourse with his younger
595 brothers (tinamu), and vice-versa. A man will keep away from

582 To the Northern clans this is not so repugnant : with them, it is a current saying that bukoñwana revives bushaka when bushaka has become weaker in the course of generations (1).

A third reason for these strong taboos, a reason which explains also why the prohibition is stronger on the father's side than on the mother's, is found in *the lobola custom*. Should a woman who is a relative on my father's side become my wife and should our union be put an end to by quarrels, I should go to her father to claim the lobolo. If her father happens to possess no oxen to return to me, he will have to go to his relatives to get them... He may have to come to my own father, who is his brother and belongs to the same family, a consequence which would be indeed absurd, because then I should myself pay the debt due to me!

On his wife's side, a man cannot marry the elder sister of his wife, who is mukoñwana to him, nor the daughters of his wife's sisters, who are *bana* to him, as we have seen.

II. *Marriages conditionally permitted.*

582 602 588 In some cases a marriage which ought not to take place may be allowed on condition that the whole family will perform the rite called *dlaya shilongo*. This is a most curious custom, and is found all through the tribe. I know of two cases in which it has been resorted to: a certain Mkili, of the Makaneta sub-clan (Nondwane) wished to marry Minsabula, his makwabu. Both had a common ancestor Muwayi. Muwayi had by a first wife a son called Basana, and by a second wife another son called Nsabula. Basana was the father of Mungobo, father of Mkili, and Nsabula

(1) It is also very much against the feeling of the tribe to confound *bukoñwana* and *bulume*. A man named Filemon had married the daughter of a woman of dissolute habits, and the woman had given herself to a man who was the brother of Filemon's maternal grandmother. This man was therefore a malume for Filemon, and his wives were bulume, even basati, possible wives for him, as he had the right to inherit them (p. 233). For this reason he said : "My wife's mother cannot marry that man, not only because of the Christian law which we have accepted, but also because of our own old customs. Why? Because she is my mother in-law, my mukoñwana, and by her marriage she would become my nana and I might inherit her. That is impossible."

582 was the father of Minsabula. Mungobo and Nsabula were first
602 cousins or half first cousins (as their grandmothers, wives of
588 Muwayi, were different). Therefore Mkili was the first cousin once removed of Minsabula. Both were ba ka Makaneta. Another case was that of Michel, son of Gana and Ñwashiluvane, who married Djamela, daughter of Mankhelu, who was Ñwashiluvane's brother. Mankhelu was the malume of Michel and Djamela was his mamana, being the possible wife of Gana (See page 233). For a Thonga to marry her malume's daughter, *psa yila*, (See p. 234) whilst for a Pedi it is the proper thing. This is one of the great differences between the law of the two tribes. A Pedi has a real right of pre-emption on his *mudzwala*, whilst amongst the Thongas it is the father who possesses that right. (See later on G.) Possibly this Pedi custom encouraged Michel to entertain an idea which is repulsive to the Thonga mind. But the official *dlaya shilongo* took place in his case also.

I tried to discover in what other cases such a prohibited marriage was rendered possible by the performance of the rite, and found the following.

Conditional marriage is permissible with the daughter of my great-uncle, the younger brother of my grandfather ; and with the daughter of my grandfather by a wife other than my grandmother. Both are rarana. According to Mankhelu, it might also take place between himself and Shiluvane. This Shiluvane (who is not the chief Shiluvane, of course, but an entirely different person), is the daughter of the maternal great-uncle of Mankhelu, brother of Shidyele, who is his true grandfather, the father of his mother. Shiluvane is therefore the first cousin once removed of Mankhelu on his mother's side. She is a mamana.

But what is this rite of *dlaya shilongo* which has such power that it removes the taboo character of such marriages ? *Shilongo or mulongo* is an archaic word retained only in this expression and which corresponds to bushaka, blood relationship. This root exists also with that meaning in the Sutho word *seloko*. The relation by blood must be killed in order that the relation by marriage may be substituted for it.

Let us first see how this is done *in the Northern clans*.

it on the wife's head and say to her : "Go and bear children."

In the Ronga clans the *dlaya shilongo* is somewhat different. The bridegroom must first give £ 1 to the father ; this is over and above the lobolo, of course. Both families provide a goat. These goats are killed without the assistance of the uterine nephews, in front of the hut of the girl's mother. The grandfather prays to the gods of the girl's father : "So be it! They have decided to marry each other ; you, gods of the boy and the girl, unite them together so that they do not hate each other ; let them not remind each other that they are brother and sister ; let their union not be spoilt by such remembrances, nor by other people saying to them: "You have been guilty of witchcraft! You have married your relative!" By this prayer a general notification is given to everybody, and the feeling of shame is removed. Afterwards the officiating relative continues, exhorting the new wife, telling her all that she must do for her husband, mentioning all the details of her conjugal duties with such realism that she begins to cry. The bridegroom bows his head in shame. The preacher goes on till somebody puts a piece of meat into his mouth to stop the exhortation!

The whole country has gathered to see the proceedings and to eat the meat. The wedding pair do not partake of it, because *the goats have been sacrificed for them* (ba hahlela bone). The relatives go home, roasting on the way the joint of meat they have received so as to eat it before reaching their village.

The aim of the *dlaya shilongo* is lawfully to kill one kind of relationship and to replace it by another, because the two are not compatible. However, in the case of inheritance of a rarana, for instance, when a blood relative has to change his relationship and to become a relative by marriage, he can inherit without any rite being performed, if there is no nearer legal heir ; in this case it is said : "Bushaka byi ta pfuka — the blood relationship will be revived." It will be strengthened by the new marriage relationship.

In the case of marriage with the great mukonwana, this rite is also performed, as previously mentioned (p. 244). The wedding pair are also covered with the goat's skin. This goat is

III. *Matriarchy*.

178 But as regards *mother-right* and the *uterine family*, I must confess
602 that I have altered my views since writing Les Ba-Ronga, and would testify my gratitude to Mr. S. Hartland, who encouraged me to study this subject more attentively. I had not then gathered all the facts, and the identity of the *ntukulu* and the *mupsyana* only became clearly apparent to me when studying the Northern clans. Now, having inquired with special care into this most curious feature of the Thonga system, I have come to the conclusion that the most probable explanation is that, in former and very remote times, our tribe passed through the matriarchal stage. Let us carefully consider the relation of a malume with his uterine nephews, recapitulating all the facts.

1) Duties and rights of the maternal uncle.

604 As we have seen, the uterine nephew all through his career
591 is the object of special care on the part of his uncle : if he is a first-born child, the malume prepares his ntehe. (See page 46.) When weaned, he goes to stay in the village of his mother's relatives for many years, a girl sometimes till she is grown up.
604 Later on, when she marries, the maternal uncle claims a right
583 called *tjhumba*, £ l, on the total amount of the lobolo. It is taboo to refuse it ; should a father dare to keep that £ l, his brothers will say to him : "Do you not fear the gods ? The mother's gods will kill you! Your daughter will have no children. Did you alone bring her into the world ? Did not these people help you in bringing her forth ? And has not your wife grown with the assistance of those gods ? Her brother must be allowed to have his *tjhumba*" (Mboza).

585 On the day of the remittance of the lobolo, the maternal uncle
604 and all the mother's relatives are invited to the feast, and for them a special part of the festal ox is reserved, called *ngimba*, viz. the

604 585 womb, the uterus ; this consists not only of that organ, but of the whole belly, from the sternum to the hind legs ; the bride's mother eats the *mbata* and *khondjo*, viz. the extremity of the spine (Mboza).

585 431 On the day of hlomisa, when the bride is led to her husband's village, her maternal relatives receive a special gift, a young cow called *mubya wa mana wa yena*, i. e. the skin in which her mother carried her on her shoulders when she was a baby. This cow will be sent to the family when the first and the third daughter marry. In the case of a second and fourth girl, the nyimba alone is sent.

585 604 In the *equipment of the bride*, the mother's relatives provide her with a hoe, with fat to anoint her body, with a mat and clothing and sometimes with bracelets. The paternal aunt (hahana) does not give anything, neither does the paternal uncle, the latter only helping the father occasionally. Should the mother's relatives not fulfil this duty of providing part of the trousseau, next time they will not be given the *nyimba* to which they were entitled (Viguet).

593 603 604 But the most characteristic prerogative of the bamalume or bakokwana, is *their special right of intercession* on behalf of the uterine nephews. In fact, as Mankhelu said in his picturesque language, "as regards sacrifices (timhamba), the mother's relatives mostly perform them. They are the stem. My father is the stem as regards the oxen, but my mother is the true stem ; she is the god ; she makes me grow. Should she die when I am an infant, I shall not live. The village of my mother is as the home of the gods (ka mamana hi ko psikwembyen)." Simeon Gana added : "We have the special charge of sacrificing for our batukulu ; our sons also are priests to them, and can officiate in our place, even should they be younger than our batukulu. That is the reason why we do not marry them. We are their elders (bakulu)." Of course the bones will always be consulted and they will tell if a sacrifice must be offered to the gods of the mother or to those of the father, but a kokwane will preferably be called upon to sacrifice for a sick child. (See Part VI. Chap. II, II.)

604 611 In the ceremonies following death, especially in the feast of the mourning beer (page 164), the malume will be the officiating person and squeeze the *psanyi* over his batukulu to cleanse them.

A last right possessed by the malume is that *of raising his village*

604 782 assagay. The batukulu dispose of the portion of the limbs offered to the gods. They *cut* the prayer and, at that moment they steal the meat or the beer of the sacrifice and run away with them. Why is this? "Because a ntukulu does not fear the saliva of his malume" (Mboza). They live in such intimacy with them that they can eat that which was reserved for the gods (1) (See p. 162).

604 The ntukulu *also takes precedence* in some other rites ; in the circumcision school the uterine nephew of the chief is at the head of the circumcised. In the *luma milomo* (page 146) he starts the purifying ceremony, and "gives to the others" (nyiketa) the use of the food of the deceased.

604 428 178 But it is especially in the question of the inheritance that he shows himself in his characteristic aspect. Father-right has set in and is strongly supported by the lobola custom. Therefore the sons of the deceased have the sole right to the property of their father, wives as well as implements. The batukulu, however, the uterine nephews, refuse to be left out! You will find them everywhere, trying to get something for themselves. They were already planning with the malume's wives to take them as spouses after the death of their husband. Remember how they teased the whole fámily, on the day of the distribution of the widows (page 208). When the implements were distributed, they came and claimed their *tjhumba* (a technical expression, it would seem, which means precisely this kind of claim lodged by a malume or a ntukulu). They were given the small assagay, the big one remaining for the son. In this way *ba nyiketa pfindla, they give over the inheritance to the legal heirs.* This is a most vivid representation of a right which no longer exists, having in fact become

769 602 (1) Some ethnographers have supposed that ancestral worship only began when the father took command of the family and consequently did not exist in the period of mother-right. This seems to me absolutely false. The spirits of the mother's family are invoked as well as the father's ancestors, and the special place of the uterine nephews in worship down to this day is best explained in this way: before the gods of the father were known and prayed to, those of the mother were worshipped, and consequently the batukulu held a special position in the ritual. When the ancestors on the father's side made their appearance in the Bantu Pantheon, beside those on the mother's side, or after the institution of father right, the batukulu preserved that special position.

604 obsolete, but which asserts itself in virtue of the survival of an old
178 custom. I have often been struck by the unconscious way in
428 which they act on all these occasions! They give the impression of people who have been hypnotised and ordered to do something next day, when no longer in the mesmeric sleep. You see them carrying out the act, constrained by a mysterious necessity and without knowing why they do so. The hypnotising factor here is the weight of heredity, of all this hoary antiquity, which belongs indeed to the past, but still influences the subliminal life of the tribe...

643 As regards the chiefs, I may add that the uterine nephew may
604 be given the chieftainship over a certain part of the country. He is well received at the Court, better than the nephews on the brother's side, because, with these, there is always the risk that they may become usurpers. This also explains why a chief, when in danger, will ask help from his bakokwana rather than from the relatives of his own family. The latter may seize the opportunity for "bangana buhosi", i. e. to dispute the chieftainship with him.

611 Mother-right most probably existed amongst the ancestors of
178 the Thongas, whatever may be the country in which they then lived
602 and the name by which they were called. But everything seems to prove that this phase has long ago passed away. No one remembers anything of the kind. Genealogies, which are the oldest records of the tribe, mention only the ancestors of the father. They are recalled much better than those of the mother. The lobola custom, which is the strongest support of the paternal right at the present time, has been practised since time immemorial (1). See also the special names of the great-grandfathers in the paternal line (p. 227).

000 (1) Lobola is however not incompatible with the uterine form of the family. I have been informed by the Rev. E. Allégret, working in the French Congo, that the Mpongwe and Galoa of the Lower Ogowe have still partly preserved the mother-right. But lobola exists. The first lobolo is payed indifferently to the father or the mother of the bride, and the choice is made according to the personal relations existing between the husband's family and the families of the bride's parents. When a second daughter marries, half the lobolo is given to the maternal uncle. The children stay in the father's village, but they are under the guidance of the mother and of her family. They belong to the mother's clan. This system evidently denotes a less advanced stage of evolution. However matriarchy is passing into patriarchy, and the lobola custom will probably hasten the process.

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does not belong to him, and, whatever the child may do in this respect, the ease and indulgence which characterises his relations with his nephew will not be altered. Thus whatever influence the natural feelings of tenderness of the mother towards her children may have had on the special mode of behaviour of the batukulu towards their bakokwana, they are not the only factor, nor perhaps the most important factor to be considered: Property plays a greater part in the determination of that kind of relationship in the present circumstances, and as regards its first origin, the matriarchy hypothesis goes a long way to explain its characteristics.

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But let me frankly recognise that the matriarchy theory is but a hypothesis. As Mr. Brown rightly shows, there is not a tribe amongst the Bantus, as far as we know, where that family system exists in its integrity, i. e. matrilineal, matrilocal, matripotestal. Everywhere there seems to prevail a mixture of the two systems. However if there has been an evolution (and an evolution has certainly taken place) and if one system preceded the other, it must certainly have been matriarchy, as its traces, in the present patriarchal system, bear all the character of relics of a former period.

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I have tried to look far back into the past of the Thonga family system. Now I would ask: What about its future ? The question must be asked, because we are not considering the South African tribe only as a subject of scientific study. We are deeply interested in its welfare and in its destiny. New forces have appeared which act in a new way on primitive society.

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776 which there is no very clear explanation ; doubtless the matter did
769 not seem worthy of inquiry!

The two great categories of gods are *those of the family*, and *those of the country*, the latter being those of the reigning family. They do not differ as regards their nature. In national calamities those of the country are invoked, whilst, for purely family matters, those of the family are called upon.

769 Moreover, each family has two sets of gods, those *on the father's side* and *those on the mother's*, those of "kweru" and those of
776 "bakokwana" (I. p. 268). They are equal in dignity. Both can
602 be invoked, and the divinatory bones are always called on to decide to which the offering must be made. It would seem, however, as if the gods of the mother's side were more tender-hearted and more popular than those of the father's. The reason for this is, perhaps, that relations are easier with the family of the mother than with that of the father. It is also just possible that it is a relic of the matriarchal period, when the ancestors of the mother alone were known, and consequently invoked. At any rate, the part played by batukulu nephews in the offerings shows that they are the true representatives of the gods, not of those of their father, but of their mother.

776 Two other categories of gods, which I have sometimes heard
769 mentioned, are the *Gods of assagais* (psikwembu psa matlhari) and *the Gods of bitterness* (psa shibiti). The former are those who
766 have been killed in battle ; the latter are those who have been drowned, killed by a wild beast, or who have committed suicide, or the pregnant woman who has been buried without being cut open (I. p. 166). In most of these cases, as is evident, the corpse has not been buried with the due rites and ceremonies ; the deceased has not been properly cared for : hence his bitterness ; or, as in the case of the pregnant woman, something has been buried without having first breathed its last breath (I. p. 140). In the case of the suicide, the poor man who hanged himself was full of sadness : "The great bitterness is the rope", said Mboza. In most of these cases no one was present at the death! These gods are therefore angry, and are the most to be feared.

000 The *Gods of the Bush, Psikwembu psa Nhoba*, are also especially

842 The Thonga child is always received into this world with great joy by the whole family. If it is a girl, it means oxen to buy a wife for one of the sons later on ; therefore it means increase not only in the wealth but in the number of the members of the family. If it is a boy, there is no direct material enrichment, but the clan has been strengthened and the name of the father is glorified and perpetuated. In the case of the birth of a first-born child (ñwana wa matibula), a special ceremony is performed at the end of the first week. When the grandmother has smeared the hut, she goes home, summons all the female relatives, sometimes as many as ten or fifteen ; they take with them food, ochre and fat prepared for this purpose. Two or three men accompany them. They enter the village of the child executing a special dance called *khana*, and singing the following song (which is the proper song to glorify a first-born) :

846 533 851 603

I celebrate my pot which has done *ngelebendje*...

They compare the child with a pot of clay which has gone through the firing process. It has been tried as one always tries a pot by letting it fall to the ground ; but it is not shattered, because it has not cracked in the furnace, it has kept intact ! This is what is meant by the descriptive adverb ngelebendje.

846 851 603 Then they smear the baby, the mother, the father, everybody in the village with ochre. It is a great feast. A goat will be killed, if possible, because the father and mother have "found a village" (kuma muti) by the child, they have "grown roots" (mila mitju). This is a law, but its omission is not taboo. When the grandparents do not perform this ceremony, it is an insult to the parents of the child, but no evil consequence will follow.

765 753 851 is a meteorite ground to fine powder. It is interesting to compare this use of the meteorite with the fact that, amongst the Thongas, this fumigation is intended to prevent convulsions. Convulsions, as we shall see (Part VI. Chap. II. B) are caused by the mysterious power of Heaven. The meteorite has fallen from Heaven. Thus the baptism of smoke aims at bringing the child under the influence of the two main elements of Bantu religion : the ancestor gods and Heaven.

846 For any subsequent children, the feast will be reduced to the
851 presentation by the grandmother of a basket of food to "*tlangela*
603 *ñwana*," viz. to "celebrate the child."

III. *The Nursing Period.*

853 The little child has been taken out of the confinement hut (humesha busahanen). He is now allowed to go outside. The nursing period then begins and will last two and a half or three years ; but before we study the rites which mark it, let us consider the manner in which the baby is carried and his diet during this period.

A South-African woman with her child in the ntehe.

1) The Ntehe.

854 A little child is not carried by his mother in her arms, but in a softened skin which is called *ntehe*. The preparation of the ntehe is subject to many prescribed customs.

The first of these is this : the ntehe must not be looked out before the birth of the child, or it would bring misfortune. This is a taboo which I might call a "taboo of prevision." Some other taboos of this kind are met with in our tribe.

[604] For a first-born child, the skin must be provided by the maternal uncle. This is a rule, but the custom is not tabooed (1). The father may also prepare it, if necessary.

The ntehe must not be a sheep skin.
825 That is taboo. Let them take the skin of a duiker (blue
854 antelope), of a goat or of a mhala (impala). Sheep skins are

(1) Though the term taboo generally means a prohibition, I take the liberty of using it in a positive sense : A custom is taboo or is tabooed when its transgression is a taboo.

862 603 The very day of his weaning, the child must leave the village of his parents and go to stay with his grandparents. A little mat and a few clothes have been prepared for him and the grandmother comes to take him. If he is the first-born, he must go to the parents of the mother ; the second child will be received by the parents of the father. Sometimes father and mother accompany their offspring themselves, during the night, to make the separation easier. It is a sad day for them as well as for the child! The following day the parents go again to see how the little one has stood their absence. They do not enter the village. They remain hidden in the little copse and look at their child through the branches! He must not see his mother, otherwise he would cry... A touching scene indeed!

862 Should the weaned child be obliged to stay with his parents, the mother will smear her breast with Jamaica pepper (biribiri) so that he may lose his taste for the maternal milk as quickly as possible.

862 842 753 The act of weaning is called *lumula*. It comes from the verb *luma* to bite, followed by the reversive suffix *ula* which means to take away, to undo (like *un* in undo). The mother as well as the child are said to have *lumuka* viz. to be in that state when weaning has been accomplished. This word is pronounced with a curious smile, because the act of weaning is in direct relation with the sexual life. As we have seen, sexual intercourse is absolutely prohibited before the tying of the cotton string, viz. for one year after the birth. Afterwards it is allowed, but the mother must not conceive another child before she has weaned the one she is nursing. The law is even more stringent : she must not conceive before her milk has entirely passed away (phya mabelen), after the weaning ceremony, because if she became pregnant, that would "cross the way of the weaned child" (tjemakanya ñwana), cut "his road" (tjemela), "go beforehand" (rangela) ; he would become thin, paralysed, with big holes below the shoulders. He must first be firm (tiyela), then a new pregnancy will not be able to cause him to suffer from dysentery or other ailments!

Often the parents do not observe this very hard law! If they

602 their bakokwana are of a much freer, more agreeable and kindlier
593 nature than those with their father's relatives.

Amongst the Thongas of the North the maternal grandfather and the maternal uncles are called indiscriminately kokwana. The Ronga dialect makes a distinction between kokwana, maternal grandfather, and malume, mother's brother; but the malume is often
601 called kokwana. In the Northern clans the *uterine nephews*, viz. the sons of my sister, are always called *ntukulu*, which is the term corresponding to kokwana, as we have seen; amongst the Ba-Ronga, they bear a special name, *mupsyana*, which seems to be becoming obsolete, being often replaced by ntukulu (1).

Let us consider these various relatives on the mother's side.
603 The maternal grandfather is the great, the true kokwana. He is respected for his age. He is however more lenient to his grandson by his daughter than to his grandson by his son. If the first damages anything, he will say: "That is no business of mine. Let the father of the child scold him, as he does harm to his property. I have nothing to do with their affairs. It is not my village." But if it were his grandson by his son, it would be a totally different matter, and he would be hard on him. However, should a child take too great a liberty with his kokwana, the old man will say to him: "Go and play with your malume."
604 The malume, indeed, for his uterine nephew, is quite different from any other relative. No respect at all is necessary towards him! "You go to *bombela* in his village; you do what you please. You take all the food you want without asking permission. If you are ill, he will take special care of you and will sacrifice for you" (Viguet). In the Ronga dialect this bombela is called *nyenyela*. When the mupsyana goes to his maternal uncle, accompanied by his comrades who scent a good meal, the wives of the malume call to him: "Come along, husband (nkata)! Look here, your malume has hidden some food in the back part of the hut (mfungwe), behind the large basket (ngula). Go and take it." The boy steals the food, runs away with it and eats it up to the last morsel

(1) This is one of many proofs that the Ronga clans have preserved some old customs better than their Northern compatriots. Their language also possesses certain archaic features which are wanting in the Northern dialects.

604 very highly respected, that he has the right of life and death over his nephews." The relation between a maternal uncle and his nephews is totally different in that Central African tribe from what it is amongst our South African tribes. There, at any rate, the pattern of behaviour inspired by the mother does not apply to her brother, and Mr. Brown's theory is at fault. On the matriarchy hypothesis, on the contrary, it is not impossible to explain this fact. There has been an evolution (whilst there has probably been no change in the feelings of a mother towards her child from the beginning of the human race up to the present day). If, in the course of this evolution, there was a time when the family system was matrilocal, a time when a child dwelt in its mother's village, close to its mother's brother, one can understand that the latter, at that time, took upon himself the duty of educating the child, of reproving him. His attitude, in such circumstances, was more severe, more dominating than now. As the Ba-Ila have preserved a kind of matriarchy, possessing, as they do, totemic clans in which matriarchal customs prevail, we ought not to be astonished if the relations of uncle and nephew are so different amongst them. In the South African tribes the authority has completely passed to the father. Hence the great respect shown to him by the children ; hence also the want of respect and the great ease in the relations with the maternal uncle.

603/611 At the end of this argument, may I allow a Native to give his opinion ? Natives often refuse if asked to explain these mysterious customs of theirs. Yet when we have the chance of hearing an intelligent Bantu formulate a reason for one of them, we are bound to consider such testimony as very valuable. Natives feel what we, Europeans, can only guess, and they have actual experience of the Bantu kraal life... Speaking on this very subject of the mode of behaviour of a Thonga toward his father's and mother's family my informant said : "If the paternal grandfather is less lenient with his grandson than the maternal grandfather, it is on account of property" (p. 232). The paternal grandfather and his grandson belong to the same clan, or sib, or family. They bear the same name (shibongo). They possess in common certain property, oxen, implements, etc, which all of them have the duty of preserving, increasing, defending. If a child spoils or destroys this property, he commits a wrong which is resented by all the other members of the clan. His paternal grandfather will reprove him. He will do so also if the honour, the good reputation of the clan is at stake. But the maternal grandfather has nothing to do with such matters. The spoiled property

603 611 does not belong to him, and, whatever the child may do in this respect, the ease and indulgence which characterises his relations with his nephew will not be altered. Thus whatever influence the natural feelings of tenderness of the mother towards her children may have had on the special mode of behaviour of the batukulu towards their bakokwana, they are not the only factor, nor perhaps the most important factor to be considered: Property plays a greater part in the determination of that kind of relationship in the present circumstances, and as regards its first origin, the matriarchy hypothesis goes a long way to explain its characteristics.

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643 some woman may come and live with him (titlhuba), as in cases of
588 elopement — in which case he must go, according to the law,
595 early in the morning to the parents of the girl and denounce himself as the abductor (p. 119); but none of these women can be his official wife; they may bear him children, but these will be *makohlwa*, those who have no right to royalty; the young chief may not wed his official wife, she who is to become the mother of the heir to the throne, until after the death of his father.

643 There is a saying, a precept of the royal code as follows:
603 "Hosi a yi faneli ku bona ntukulu," a chief must never see his
595 grandson, i. e. the one who will eventually succeed his son in the royal line. The Ba-Ngoni of Gungunyana (in Gaza) have the same custom; but with them things are arranged differently. The eldest son of the chief's principal wife, when at the requisite age for marriage, takes a wife and loses the right of succession; it is the youngest son, still young at the time of his father's death, who inherits the throne, because he has no children of his own. This leads to jealousy and civil war between brothers; it has brought numberless misfortunes to the royal family of Gaza, and it was one of the causes of the downfall of Gungunyana. The Thonga custom is much more simple and less dangerous to the maintenance of peace; the chief must not see his grandson, therefore his son will not be officially married until after his father's death. Any wives he may previously have taken will be morganatic and their children are not entitled to inherit.

I have been told by Mankhelu that when a chief lives to be very old and does not wish to delay the marriage of his son and heir, he can himself pay the lobolo and acquire, for his son, the official wife who will be considered as being "the wife of the country." But this seems to be an exceptional occurrence.

B. CORONATION OF THE CHIEF.

643 In all Thonga clans the death of a chief is kept secret for one
766 year or more, as we shall see. Amongst the Nkunas the official mourning for the deceased takes place the same day as the coron-

846 For any subsequent children, the feast will be reduced to the
851 presentation by the grandmother of a basket of food to "*tlangela*
603 *ñuxna*," viz. to "celebrate the child."

III. *The Nursing Period.*

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765 well as the obligation of using special spoons, refer only to the
783 diggers and the widows.
302 Other rites must be performed by the whole community.

First the *cutting of the hair*, which must be complete for the widows and the near relations. Men sometimes cut only one strand on each side, women cut from the forehead to the nape of the neck. The operation is performed either by the doctor or by anybody who is familiar with it, and the instrument used is either an iron razor or a bit of glass. They say this shaving is an act of respect for the dead, also a sign of sadness and a means of preventing the *mayiha*, the impression of the hair standing on end from fear of death. Should mourners forget to cut their hair, they might lose their senses, and become delirious (hahama).

765 Then they put on *malopa*, viz, pieces of dark blue cotton
783 cloth which have been used for a long time amongst the Ba-Ronga.
604 The first widow must have them before she enters the enclosure of the second vapour bath.

A third general rite is the *luma milomo*, the purification of the food of the deceased. This is not a medicinal operation, but it seems that, by this act, every relative removes from himself the danger which is in the contaminated food. The word *luma*, which we shall often find in the Thonga ritual, means originally to bite (like a dog) or to cause violent, internal pain (colic or pains of labour). But in the ritual terminology it means to accomplish certain rites in relation to some given food in order to remove the danger which is attached to it. The *milomo* are seeds of each kind of cereal which the deceased had in his storehouses. Some beans, grains of maize, kaffir corn, kaffir peas, etc., are cooked and poured into one of the baskets (lihlelo) of the deceased. The *ntukulu*, viz. the uterine nephew, the son of the sister of the deceased, is first called. It is he who must begin the rite and this is so important that, when people go to pay their mourning visit, they always take with them a girl or a boy who is a " ntukulu " of the one they mourn. The child stands before the pot, his feet together. The master of the mourning, (in this case, the first widow) kneels before him, takes a few drops from the pot, and some of the cooked food which remains at the bottom, and pours

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

765 this between his great toes. He bends his body and rubs the
783 two great toes against one another. Then he turns his back to
604 the place and goes away. He must not look behind : it is taboo. Then the other relatives say : " Let us all go and *luma milomo*. " He has given them the right to do so.

765 A little of the *milomo* is carefully kept in a pot for months.
783 When relatives who were absent on the day of the death come back from Johannesburg or from elsewhere, they must perform this ceremony before entering the village and eating any food in it. " Ba yila muti " — " they are taboo to the village." The rule applies only to relatives. Other people may very well eat from the deceased's store of food without any harm, as its contamination is dangerous only to his family. Another variety of this rite consists in preparing light beer with the mealies of the dead and taking first one mouthful which must be spat out on the right side, then a second one on the left side, after which one is allowed to drink.

765 The *gardens* of the deceased must also be purified, and this is
783 done by the rite called *baninga mabele*, to give light to the mealies.
415 The widows and all the female relatives go to his fields holding an old and empty *shikutja*. The shikutja is the hard shell of a sala fruit, the size of an orange, in which has been kept the provision of vegetable *tihuhlu* fat (see Part IV) and which is still impregnated with it. The women set fire to it and walk through the gardens holding it up and illuminating the fields. This is perhaps in relation to the idea that death means darkness, and that its contamination is " black " (ntima) so long as the cleansing has not taken place.

765 During the five days of the Great Mourning, relatives and
574 friends come to pay the *official mourning visit* (1). They enter the village, the women shouting their lamentations (mikulungwana). Some one leads them to the grave and they walk round it uttering cries of mourning, taking leave of the deceased. At the burial of Sokis, I heard a woman saying with a trembling voice : " Goodbye! You have gone! Do not forget us. Remember Mulalen."

(1) This visit can be paid one, two, or three months later on, because, as they say, " nkosi a pai boli, " — " the mourning does not get rotten. " But it is only during the five days that dances take place.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

765 little of it into a glass and raises it to the lips of the old man. "He
782 cuts his prayer" and while all the attention of the public is
604 concentrated upon this act (which belongs also to the ritual, as the priest must be the first to partake of the offering), the wives of the batukulu rush towards the shoulders, lungs and hoofs of the goats and the bottle of wine, seize them and run away towards the west. They have stolen the meat of the sacrifice! At once all stand up and follow them laughing, shouting and pelting them with the *psanyi*, which they had kept for this purpose. The thieves hide themselves behind some bush and eat the meat. Uterine nephews are representatives of the gods, as we shall see later on, and they assert their right by stealing the offering and eating it up.

This ceremony is highly characteristic as it embodies some of the principal ideas of the Thongas in the domain of religion, social life and taboo. It was worth while describing it, and we shall refer to it later on, when dealing with sacrifices and the position of the uterine nephews in the family.

765 The crushing down of the hut is not performed in exactly
292 the same manner amongst the Ba-Ronga. In the clans *South of*
554 *the Bay*, they only *close* it (pfala yindlu). They dig holes in
825 front of the door, into which they insert poles of the bush called *nhleha*, tying thorny branches horizontally to them. The shield of the deceased is placed against the door. The religious rite then takes place and from the skins of the sacrificed goats strips are cut, which the widows will have to wear *en bandoulière* during the following months of their widowhood. The astragalus bones are kept and hung round the neck. The gall-bladder is also preserved and fixed in the hair of the new master of the village as a sign of his new position.

765 In the *district of Makaneta*, on the estuary of the Nkomati,
596 the ceremony comprises two successive acts. First there is also a *provisory closing* of the hut, which can take place one month after the death and is accompanied by the family gathering and the religious ceremony. One year later, when the inheritance is adjudicated, the hut is crushed down, but only if it belonged to a headman of the village and if the kraal is obliged to move in

783 washed in the pool and which she will wear again for two days (1).
765 b) *The following days of the Great Mourning.* Without delay a new hut, a small provisional hut, is built in front of the mortuary one. Here the great wife will stay during the whole of her widowhood; the space between this and the old hut is more or less taboo and most of the possessions of the deceased are placed there, under the roof near the door on the outside. (See illustration p. 159.)

The other widows do not leave their huts, but they participate in the other purifying acts, the vapour baths and the general sprinkling of the fifth day. As regards the vapour baths, however, the first wife is associated with the grave-diggers, viz. she must be exposed to the strongest medicinal smoke, while the inferior wives are cleansed with weaker drugs. They all put on the *malopa* and eat with spoons during the whole year of widowhood.

587 c) *Provisional decision regarding the fate of the widows.* A few
595 days after the Great Mourning, a fresh gathering takes place, not
728 in connection with the defilement of death, which is now provision-
768 ally cleansed, but *to settle provisionally the fate of the widows.* The
604 sisters of the deceased have to play a special part in this gathering. They will lead the discussion with the widows about their new husbands. It is indeed a happy custom to let women decide on the subject. Not that they have unrestricted power in the matter. The law has provided a certain rule for the distribution and this is seldom departed from. However, some liberty is allowed in its application, and modifications can better be made if proposed by female intermediaries. Should the husband possess a harem (tshengwe), that is at least five wives, they will most likely be given to the following heirs. The great wife, being "the pole of the

575 (1) *Widowers* also form a similar society and undergo the same rites; but just as it
783 was only the great wife who was subject to these laws, to the exclusion of the little
765 wives, so it is only when he has lost his first wife that a man is initiated into the widowers' society. After having buried her (he holds her head) he goes to the pool, washes himself, and another widower comes and makes the incision in him in the inguinal region. Then he throws aways his *shifado* (Annotatio 1.) and also carries out the same crossing of the hut in tears. These three acts constitute the actual widower's mourning; the vapour baths and *tahla khombo* are part of his purification as being the principal grave-digger.

1[See category 116 --Analyst]

787 village," must remain in it and belongs to the younger brother (1)
595 who becomes the master of the kraal. The second goes to the
428 second brother, the third to the third, the fourth to the *ntukulu*,
768 viz. to the son of the sister of the deceased. The fifth will then
604 become the wife of one of the sons of the deceased. This may appear shocking, and is really shocking even to the ideas of the Natives ; but let it be remembered that she is the youngest of all ; she was taken when the father was already old, and the first son is perhaps older than she. As regards the elder wives, the first and second especially, no one would think of keeping them for the son! Incestuous relations are very rare amongst the
[835] Ba-Ronga. Even in this case, the feelings of both parties are more or less respected. The men advise the son to begin to play with the young widow, to ask her jocularly for tobacco, and he gradually accustoms himself to consider her no longer as a mother (mamana) but as a wife (nsati).

587 Of course the general rule is apt to be very much altered
595 according to circumstances. Should the deceased be the youngest
428 of the family, his elder brother may inherit the first wife. But
768 this is not the regular procedure.

The distribution having thus been decided on, the sisters of the deceased call the widows and say to them : "You so and so, you shall give food to so and so (phamela manyana)." But then the struggle begins. One of the widows, being old, may altogether refuse to have anything to do with any of her brothers-in-law. She may say : "I am taking my young son as a husband" which means : I do not want to be the wife of anybody. Or she will say : "I choose the big tree of the village where my late husband has built his hut." This answer may mean two things. Either : I do not leave this kraal and I will stay here without a husband ; or, on the contrary : I consent to be the wife of the man who becomes the headman of the village, viz. the eldest of the younger brothers. Another will say : "I love my *ntukulu* so and so." Should, however, the first wife desire to go to a man who does not

(1) Amongst the Ba-Ronga, an elder brother of the deceased cannot inherit a widow. It is taboo. He is a father to her, not a husband. He sometimes takes the lead in the discussion, having no personal interest in the matter. (See Part II).

768 left by a man. When they have been distributed, the minor
428 possessions of the deceased are adjudicated. As regards *oxen*,
604 *money*, these have been already remitted to the younger brother or, in his absence, to the sons. The younger brother will use them as family property to buy a wife for his son or for the son of the deceased, when he comes of age. In the distribution of the implements which have been cleansed, but left lying on the ground in front of the hut up to this day, the *ntukulu*, viz. the principal uterine nephew again plays an important part. He has the right of *tjhumba*, viz. of picking out for himself one of the assagais of his uncle, just as the maternal uncle takes (tjhumba) one pound from the lobola money (See Part II). Every warrior possesses at least two assagais ; the big one belongs in principle to the chief, and must be inherited by the eldest son. The nephew takes the smaller one, but he must precede his cousin in choosing ; in appropriating this weapon, he *surrenders* or transmits (nyiketa) the inheritance to the true heirs. This is a very characteristic expression. It seems as if he wished to assert his right ; but he takes the less valuable weapon and leaves the better one to the son. The explanation of this custom is probably to be found in the evolution of the family system which must have taken place amongst the Thongas (See Part II). In fact all the *batukulu* stand in a line and receive a portion of the property of the deceased, a knife, an axe, a small punch, etc. Women never inherit (a ba di
562 pfindla). When no heir exists except females, they may receive
428 something, but the valuable property must be kept by them for their sons, the uterine nephews of the deceased. Why ? Because, in the mind of the Thongas, a woman is not capable of possessing ; she is not able to build an oxen kraal and repair it ; how could she possess oxen ? The only thing she can do is to arrange a pig's kraal. Therefore she can own pigs, but nothing else!

768 The end of the feast of the adjudication of the inheritance is the distribution of the flesh of the victims. The company breaks up, each party having received one of the limbs. They must eat it on their way home, somewhere under a tree, on the road ; neither in the mortuary village, nor in their own kraal. It is

764 inhabitants of the kraal. One of them, the saluter (mulosi), goes
604 to meet them and offers them a shilling. They keep silence.
578 He tells them the news of the village. They do not answer.
754 He leaves them and comes a second time with a fresh present. Then they consent to tell the news of their home, but they do not enter the village. The same man returns to them a third time with £ 1 ; they refuse to accept it. He adds 10/. (£ 1.10 is considered the normal sum to be paid as a kind of fine by the widower to the parents of the deceased.) They refuse again : this is an insult! Happily the *ntukulu* is there ; he will act as mediator between the two families. The visitors summoned him on their arrival and he has been sitting with them the whole time ; is he not the son of their sister ? But before he went to them, his father has given him his instructions : "Tell them that I have not eaten your mother." The *ntukulu*, as we shall see, is very free with his maternal uncles. He has the right of teasing them, even insulting them. Seeing that they do not accept the money, he stands and gives vent to his grief, throws sand at them, tries to drive them away, weeps. "No! Father has not killed mother! He is not a wizard! She died a natural death!" They see his tears, and then consent to enter the village.

764 In front of the mortuary hut, all the belongings of the deceased
768 wife have been piled up, together with the straw crown of the hut :
595 her pots, plates, baskets, spoons, mortars, etc. The brothers
787 break everything. Should there be any new implements amongst
[578] them, they will perhaps give them to their nieces. Then they lift up the roof of the hut and throw it into the bush. They pick all the plaster from the walls and throw it away where they threw the roof. The sacrifice is then accomplished amidst the ruins of the destroyed hut. Whilst it is being prepared, the women of both families insult each other. The female relatives of the deceased say to the women of the village : "You have killed her because she was a splinter in your eyes" (shilabi). The others answer : "Have you seen us kill her ? Perhaps people do not die with you ?" The *bukwele*, the special jealousy which almost always exists between co-wives, explains how it is possible for them to address such amenities to each other. But the victim is

601 tatana wa kokwana, father of grandfather, is never employed.
611 The great-grandfather and the great-great-grandfather are sometimes designated as follows : he who does not see his grandson when he has been sent by the women to bring him food : the boy eats it on the way and the old man does not notice it! (Page 132). These progenitors call Tobane *ntukulu*, grandson. He is the true ntukulu of Shitsimbo ; to Tobane I, he is the *ntukulu wa shikandjatjolo*, "the one who sits on the knees ;" to Nkwangwana, the *ntukulu wo shikandjamirombo*, a word which seems to mean "the one who sits on the toes." In Djonga there is one more of these curious expressions applied to batukulu, *ntukulu wa shinguhe*. "When he pronounces that name," says Gana, "my great-grandfather points near by ; when he says *ntukulu wa shikandjatjolo*, he points further down." To understand this properly, we must imagine the following patriarchal scene : a very, very old man is sitting on the ground, holding his son (ñwana) in his arms, and with his grandson (ntukulu) on his thigh, his great-grandson (wa shikandjatjolo) on his knees and his great-great-grandson on his toes (1). The fact that these terms have become almost obsolete shows that the system of counting descent from the father is at any rate very old in our tribe. There must even have been a time when the ancestors in the paternal line were better known than now. The wives of these bakokwana are also bakokwana, in the same way as their husbands.

601 The father's sister is *rarana* (Ro.) *hahane* (Dj.). The two
604 words are the same, as *r* often changes into *h* in Thonga phonetics ; the prefix of the first class, *mu* or *n*, now dropped, may have caused this change. Rarana approaches very closely to rara, father. It is employed in this form when it means *my* aunt. When we wish to say your aunt, his aunt, rarana becomes rarakati wa ku, rarakati

601 (1) There is another interpretation of these terms as applied to the grandparents :
888 *kokwana wa shinguhe* : he is poor, miserable! When an ox is killed in the village, they do not even send him his share ; he is far away. *Kokwana wa shikandjatjolo* : he is almost blind. When he wants to see his great-grandson he calls him and tells him : "Sit down on my knees." *Kokwana wa shikandja-mirombo* : mirombo or mitjombo means the small ears of mealies used to prepare the beer of the offerings. This kokwana, the great-great-grandfather, is already almost like one of the ancestor-gods to whom sacrifices are made !

601 604 wa kwe. This word means exactly female father. (See the meaning of this suffix *ati*, page 36, foot note.) Tumbane is rarana of Masusule. Masusule, to her, is also ñwana. He shows her great respect. However, she is in no way a mother (mamana). Yet, amongst the paternal relatives, she is the one to whom a boy or a girl will tell their secrets; her nephew or niece will go to her in order to get advice and help in their difficulties. Occasionally she will intercede for them with their father and her influence may be decisive. The rarana may be called on to officiate in a sacrifice offered on behalf of her nephews, the children of her brothers, if the latter are all dead.

Any female who is a near relation of my father or of my paternal ancestors, is also by extension a rarana: the daughters of my paternal grand-uncle, for instance, who are like sisters to my father, etc.

The husband of my paternal aunt is neither a father nor an uncle, but a *mukoñwana* or *namu*, brother-in-law, because, as we shall see, he has a kind of prior right to marry my sister (1). (Shinkanyana versus Masusule, Gen. A; or Muki versus Muhambi, Gen. B.). To Madonge, Muki is *nkata*, husband, on account of this possibility. He is a potential husband for her. Consequently Madonge is a potential co-wife of her paternal aunt, a co-wife of a particular kind, and the term used to indicate that relation is *nhlampsa*. We shall explain this term more fully by and by.

601 Tobane II calls Tumbane *makwabu*; this term, which is

(1) Though the husband of the paternal aunt is a mukoñwana, a term which implies respect, the respect shown to him is not great. Gana says: "When he passes through our village, I shall say to him: Good morning, namu! We tell each other freely the news of the day (djungulisana). He eats with us. We buy for him a little rice, a fowl. If I go to his village, I open the door of his hut and put my stick inside without asking permission... a thing which I would never do in the village of my wife's parents, who are my true bakoñwana. I sit down and say to him: 'Give me this or that..., for instance your hat.' He may refuse, but if he possesses two hats of the same shape, I insist and say: 'Give me one! We shall be like each other.' Thus we make fun together, we jest together (mpfhabelana)." — Would the uterine nephew behave in the same way towards his maternal uncle? — Not at all! The behaviour of the uterine nephew is called nyenyela. He shows no restraint at all; he comes and catches a fowl, a goat; he steals a pot of beer. When they see him coming, they say: "Here is the wizard, etc." (See later on, p. 232).

There is a special term in the Northern clans to indicate the relationship of two men who have married two sisters born of the same mother. They are called : bamakwabu ba shinauma, an expression which is the simplification of the following sentence : shi na wuñwe mamana, i. e. there is only one mother. This term seems to have been borrowed from the Pedis.

601 177

2) Relatives on the mother's side.

601 593 Tobane II calls Mishikombo *mamana*, mother. She is his true mamana and this relation is very deep and tender, combining respect and love. Love however generally exceeds respect. The proper word for tenderness is *timpsalu*, which comes from *psala*, to beget, and the mother is often called *mpsele* (a term which is applied also to the female of all animals). It is the word which answers best to the feelings of a mother for her children. She is generally weak with them and is often accused by the father of spoiling them.

601 664 The mother's sisters are *bamamana* in the second degree, because, if the true mother dies, one of them will probably take care of the children. Their husbands are *batatana* : Phayindi is tatana to Madonge and Muhambi. He calls them *bana*, children. Mboza is also a tatana to Mahlobo and Mathamba, being a makwabu, brother of their father, owing to the fact that he and Phayindi have married sisters.

601 578 595 All the co-wives are also *bamamana*, mothers by polygamy, (Ñwashihoni and Mishihari to Tobane). They are *bamamana ba shitshengwe*, harem mothers. I respect them but they are further from me than my mother's sisters. A more familiar term for mother, corresponding to roro, father, is *ñwa*, a word always used with the possessive pronoun and only in the second and third person : ñwaku, your mother, ñwakwe, his mother. Ñwaku is employed in certain insults and oaths, and is to be avoided as being vituperative.

601 Many other women are mamana : the wife of my paternal uncle (Magugu for Muhambi), though I can inherit her in certain cases ; the daughter of my maternal uncle, because she is the

602 their bakokwana are of a much freer, more agreeable and kindlier
343 nature than those with their father's relatives.

Amongst the Thongas of the North the maternal grandfather and the maternal uncles are called indiscriminately kokwana. The Ronga dialect makes a distinction between kokwana, maternal grandfather, and malume, mother's brother; but the malume is often
601 called kokwana. In the Northern clans the *uterine nephews*, viz. the sons of my sister, are always called *ntukulu*, which is the term corresponding to kokwana, as we have seen; amongst the Ba-Ronga, they bear a special name, *mupsyana*, which seems to be becoming obsolete, being often replaced by ntukulu (1).

Let us consider these various relatives on the mother's side.
603 The maternal grandfather is the great, the true kokwana. He is respected for his age. He is however more lenient to his grandson by his daughter than to his grandson by his son. If the first damages anything, he will say: "That is no business of mine. Let the father of the child scold him, as he does harm to his property. I have nothing to do with their affairs. It is not my village." But if it were his grandson by his son, it would be a totally different matter, and he would be hard on him. However, should a child take too great a liberty with his kokwana, the old man will say to him: "Go and play with your malume."
604 The malume, indeed, for his uterine nephew, is quite different from any other relative. No respect at all is necessary towards him! "You go to *bombela* in his village; you do what you please. You take all the food you want without asking permission. If you are ill, he will take special care of you and will sacrifice for you" (Viguet). In the Ronga dialect this bombela is called *nyenyela*. When the mupsyana goes to his maternal uncle, accompanied by his comrades who scent a good meal, the wives of the malume call to him: "Come along, husband (nkata)! Look here, your malume has hidden some food in the back part of the hut (mfungwe), behind the large basket (ngula). Go and take it." The boy steals the food, runs away with it and eats it up to the last morsel

(1) This is one of many proofs that the Ronga clans have preserved some old customs better than their Northern compatriots. Their language also possesses certain archaic features which are wanting in the Northern dialects.

604 with his friends. The malume comes back and is angry. But when he hears that the trick has been played by his mupsyana, he shrugs his shoulders and says : "Oh it is all right if it is the ntukulu who has done it ! A shi biwi ntukulu! The nephew must never be beaten!" When another day the nephew comes again, the malume says : "You starved us to death the other day!" — "Is there any more food handy that I may do it again ?" answers the boy. The sons of the malume seem to have
605 less patience with their cousin than their father has. When the cousin goes definitely beyond the limits of their endurance, they will chase him out of the village saying : "Go away, you dog!" The niece is sometimes as troublesome as the nephew. If she is married and pays a visit to her malume with her husband, she will leave the latter comfortably settled in the malume's hut and search the whole village to discover pots of beer, which she will bring to him as if she were the mistress of the home. She may even catch a fowl and give it to him.

604 Sometimes the malume himself points to one of his wives and
837 says to the ntukulu : "This is your wife. Let her feast you
587 well!" The woman much enjoys the situation, which she finds quite entertaining. She makes a feast for the ntukulu and calls him *nkata*, husband. It will sometimes go so far that the nephew will say to the uncle : "Please make haste and die that I may have your wife!" — "Do you intend to kill me with a gun ?" says the malume... But all this talking is a mere joke. The nephew can take many liberties with this aunt, especially in the Ronga clans. He will never however have relations with her during the life of her husband. Should he do so, he will have to pay the high fine due for a true adultery. Possibly he will inherit her when the malume dies, but she will not be his full property : she will only be given (nyika) to him, and the children will eventually belong to the malume's male relatives. All over the tribe this right of inheriting a malume's wife is recognized. In the Northern clans she is called *kokwana* ; in Ronga territory she is called kokwana by her nieces only, but her nephews call her *nsati* (wife), and this term seems also to be an old feature of the relationship system. This relation of malume and mupsyana is so important

604 that I intend to treat it more fully later on in a special paragraph, when considering the traces of older forms of family life amongst the Thongas.

601 The true malume is the mother's full brother. But all her half brothers are also bamalume in the second degree ; so are also the brothers of the true malume.

605 What about the *children of the malume*, my cousins, or rather my
835 cross-cousins, sons and daughters of my mother's brothers, viz.
582 Shaputa and Marangen as opposed to Madonge and Misaben ? In Zulu, Sutho, Pedi there is a special term to indicate this relation, (mzala, motsoala, mudzwala, muzwala). And the main feature of the family system in those tribes is that a cousin has a prior right to marry the daughter of his maternal uncle, his mzala. Amongst the Thongas there is nothing of the kind. The special term does not exist except in the Maputju clan, at the Southern extremity of Thonga territory, where it is met with in the form of *ntale* (corresponding to mzala, according to the law of phonetic permutation) (1) or *shitale* (when preceded by the prefix shi).
605 But the right of marrying this cousin is not recognized in the
835 Thonga tribe. One can play with her, steal some object from
582 her in fun, but never take her as a wife. Such a breach of the
602 custom would be punished by the chief. Later on, when the special relation of cross-cousins has been more or less forgotten, marriage could take place between them, but, at any rate, the ceremony of dlaya shilongo (see p. 256) would be performed, in order to "kill" the previous relationship and to replace it by the new relation of husband and wife.

This being so, how do cross-cousins behave towards each other in the Thonga system ? As regards the daughter of their maternal uncle, the relationship is somewhat different for Misaben, a boy, and for Madonge, a girl. To Misaben the boy, Shaputa, his cousin, is mamana and she will call him son, ñwana, because, as we have seen, Shaputa is a potential wife for Mboza, father of Misaben, and Mboza calls her nkata, nsati, namu. To Madonge,

605 (1) They also employ the cognate form *muzali*, which is more akin to the Zulu regular term, and this tends to show that the Maputjus have borrowed this expression from their Zulu neighbours of Northern Amatongaland.

III. *Matriarchy*.

178 But as regards *mother-right* and the *uterine family*, I must confess
602 that I have altered my views since writing Les Ba-Ronga, and would testify my gratitude to Mr. S. Hartland, who encouraged me to study this subject more attentively. I had not then gathered all the facts, and the identity of the *ntukulu* and the *mupsyana* only became clearly apparent to me when studying the Northern clans. Now, having inquired with special care into this most curious feature of the Thonga system, I have come to the conclusion that the most probable explanation is that, in former and very remote times, our tribe passed through the matriarchal stage. Let us carefully consider the relation of a malume with his uterine nephews, recapitulating all the facts.

1) Duties and rights of the maternal uncle.

604 As we have seen, the uterine nephew all through his career
341 is the object of special care on the part of his uncle : if he is a first-born child, the malume prepares his ntehe. (See page 46.) When weaned, he goes to stay in the village of his mother's relatives for many years, a girl sometimes till she is grown up.
604 Later on, when she marries, the maternal uncle claims a right
583 called *tjhumba*, £ 1, on the total amount of the lobolo. It is taboo to refuse it ; should a father dare to keep that £ 1, his brothers will say to him : "Do you not fear the gods ? The mother's gods will kill you! Your daughter will have no children. Did you alone bring her into the world ? Did not these people help you in bringing her forth ? And has not your wife grown with the assistance of those gods ? Her brother must be allowed to have his *tjhumba*" (Mboza).

585 On the day of the remittance of the lobolo, the maternal uncle
604 and all the mother's relatives are invited to the feast, and for them a special part of the festal ox is reserved, called *nyimba*, viz. the

604 585 womb, the uterus ; this consists not only of that organ, but of the whole belly, from the sternum to the hind legs ; the bride's mother eats the *mbaia* and *khondjo*, viz. the extremity of the spine (Mboza).

585 431 On the day of hlomisa, when the bride is led to her husband's village, her maternal relatives receive a special gift, a young cow called *mubya wa mana wa yena*, i. e. the skin in which her mother carried her on her shoulders when she was a baby. This cow will be sent to the family when the first and the third daughter marry. In the case of a second and fourth girl, the nyimba alone is sent.

585 604 In the *equipment of the bride*, the mother's relatives provide her with a hoe, with fat to anoint her body, with a mat and clothing and sometimes with bracelets. The paternal aunt (hahana) does not give anything, neither does the paternal uncle, the latter only helping the father occasionally. Should the mother's relatives not fulfil this duty of providing part of the trousseau, next time they will not be given the *nyimba* to which they were entitled (Viguet).

593 602 604 But the most characteristic prerogative of the bamalume or bakokwana, is *their special right of intercession* on behalf of the uterine nephews. In fact, as Mankhelu said in his picturesque language, "as regards sacrifices (timhamba), the mother's relatives mostly perform them. They are the stem. My father is the stem as regards the oxen, but my mother is the true stem ; she is the god ; she makes me grow. Should she die when I am an infant, I shall not live. The village of my mother is as the home of the gods (ka mamana hi ko psikwembyen)." Simeon Gana added : "We have the special charge of sacrificing for our batukulu ; our sons also are priests to them, and can officiate in our place, even should they be younger than our batukulu. That is the reason why we do not marry them. We are their elders (bakulu)." Of course the bones will always be consulted and they will tell if a sacrifice must be offered to the gods of the mother or to those of the father, but a kokwane will preferably be called upon to sacrifice for a sick child. (See Part VI. Chap. II, II.)

604 611 In the ceremonies following death, especially in the feast of the mourning beer (page 164), the malume will be the officiating person and squeeze the *psanyi* over his batukulu to cleanse them.

A last right possessed by the malume is that *of raising his village*

604 611 597 *(pfusha mati) by means of a ntukulu.* Should he see that he has no children, that his village is in danger of "dying," he will take his unmarried sister to his village and refuse to accept the lobolo for her. He will say to her : "Do not fear! If you die, I will bury you!" This duty falls in the first place to the husband; but the brother is ready to fulfil it. She will have lovers, and perhaps give birth to a son. As she has not been lobola, this child belongs to the mother's family, according to the great rule of Native law. The uncle will appropriate this male offspring of his family, who will bear the *shibongo* of his kokwana. A uterine nephew, adopted under these circumstances, can save the family of his mother from extinction.

2) Rights of the uterine nephew.

604 782 The attitude of the ntukulu wa shisati (the uterine nephew) to his malume is quite peculiar. "Ntukulu i hosi, a nyenyela hikwapsu ku malume." — "The uterine nephew is a chief! He takes any liberty he likes with his maternal uncle" (Mboza). These prerogatives of uterine nephews with regard to relatives on their mother's side, their bamalume and bakokwana, appear clearly in the religious ceremonies. We have seen the prominent part which batukulu take in these rites. "Ba yima mahlwen ka psikwembu" — "they stand before the gods, in their stead" (Viguet). They must be the servants of the altar, and the consumers of the offering. In the great sacrifice for rain, as accomplished in the Northern clans, an offering of beer is made, together with the sacrifice of the black victim. (See Part VI.) It is the uterine niece of the chief who must fetch the mealies from the granary, pour them into the pot, take the first handful to crush it in the mortar, give the first blow with the pestle, and begin each of the complicated acts of the brewing. When the black victim is brought, some one puts an assagay into her hand and helps her to stab the animal. She it is who "gives over to the gods" (nyiketa psikwembu). The same thing happens in the great family gatherings : one ntukulu holds the leg, another the

604 782 assagay. The batukulu dispose of the portion of the limbs offered to the gods. They *cut* the prayer and, at that moment they steal the meat or the beer of the sacrifice and run away with them. Why is this? "Because a ntukulu does not fear the saliva of his malume" (Mboza). They live in such intimacy with them that they can eat that which was reserved for the gods (1) (See p. 162).

604 The ntukulu *also takes precedence* in some other rites ; in the circumcision school the uterine nephew of the chief is at the head of the circumcised. In the *luma milomo* (page 146) he starts the purifying ceremony, and "gives to the others" (nyiketa) the use of the food of the deceased.

604 428 178 But it is especially in the question of the inheritance that he shows himself in his characteristic aspect. Father-right has set in and is strongly supported by the lobola custom. Therefore the sons of the deceased have the sole right to the property of their father, wives as well as implements. The batukulu, however, the uterine nephews, refuse to be left out! You will find them everywhere, trying to get something for themselves. They were already planning with the malume's wives to take them as spouses after the death of their husband. Remember how they teased the whole family, on the day of the distribution of the widows (page 208). When the implements were distributed, they came and claimed their *tjhumba* (a technical expression, it would seem, which means precisely this kind of claim lodged by a malume or a ntukulu). They were given the small assagay, the big one remaining for the son. In this way *ba nyiketa pfindla, they give over the inheritance to the legal heirs.* This is a most vivid representation of a right which no longer exists, having in fact become

769 602 (1) Some ethnographers have supposed that ancestral worship only began when the father took command of the family and consequently did not exist in the period of mother-right. This seems to me absolutely false. The spirits of the mother's family are invoked as well as the father's ancestors, and the special place of the uterine nephews in worship down to this day is best explained in this way: before the gods of the father were known and prayed to, those of the mother were worshipped, and consequently the batukulu held a special position in the ritual. When the ancestors on the father's side made their appearance in the Bantu Pantheon, beside those on the mother's side, or after the institution of father right, the batukulu preserved that special position.

604 obsolete, but which asserts itself in virtue of the survival of an old
178 custom. I have often been struck by the unconscious way in
428 which they act on all these occasions! They give the impression of people who have been hypnotised and ordered to do something next day, when no longer in the mesmeric sleep. You see them carrying out the act, constrained by a mysterious necessity and without knowing why they do so. The hypnotising factor here is the weight of heredity, of all this hoary antiquity, which belongs indeed to the past, but still influences the subliminal life of the tribe...

643 As regards the chiefs, I may add that the uterine nephew may
604 be given the chieftainship over a certain part of the country. He is well received at the Court, better than the nephews on the brother's side, because, with these, there is always the risk that they may become usurpers. This also explains why a chief, when in danger, will ask help from his bakokwana rather than from the relatives of his own family. The latter may seize the opportunity for "bangana buhosi", i. e. to dispute the chieftainship with him.

611 Mother-right most probably existed amongst the ancestors of
178 the Thongas, whatever may be the country in which they then lived
602 and the name by which they were called. But everything seems to prove that this phase has long ago passed away. No one remembers anything of the kind. Genealogies, which are the oldest records of the tribe, mention only the ancestors of the father. They are recalled much better than those of the mother. The lobola custom, which is the strongest support of the paternal right at the present time, has been practised since time immemorial (1). See also the special names of the great-grandfathers in the paternal line (p. 227).

000 (1) Lobola is however not incompatible with the uterine form of the family. I have been informed by the Rev. E. Allégret, working in the French Congo, that the Mpongwe and Galoa of the Lower Ogowe have still partly preserved the mother-right. But lobola exists. The first lobolo is payed indifferently to the father or the mother of the bride, and the choice is made according to the personal relations existing between the husband's family and the familiss of the bride's parents. When a second daughter marries, half the lobolo is given to the maternal uncle. The children stay in the father's village, but they are under the guidance of the mother and of her family. They belong to the mother's clan. This system evidently denotes a less advanced stage of evolution. However matriarchy is passing into patriarchy, and the lobola custom will probably hasten the process.

114 In a paper published in the *South African Journal of Science*, 1925, under the title "The Mother's Brother in South Africa," Professor R. Brown deals at length with the facts related above and strongly opposes the matriarchy hypothesis. In his opinion the peculiar relation of a nephew with his maternal uncle is the result of the natural tenderness and indulgence which characterises the relation of a mother and her child. The feelings of the child towards its mother are extended to all the relatives of the mother, and a certain pattern of behaviour is thus created, the behaviour of a ntukulu towards all his bakokwana.

I cannot here enter upon a full discussion of Mr. Brown's theory, but I must confess that it does not seem to me entirely satisfactory. I will mention only three reasons why I find myself unable to accept it :

1) If the peculiar relation existing between a child and his bakokwana really originated from the feelings of that child towards his mother, feelings which are extended to all her relatives, why should the *paternal* grandfather and grandmother be classified amongst the bakokwana as well as the maternal relatives ? (See p. 227, 235.)

604 2) There is a term which Mr. Brown's theory does not explain, the word *nyiketa*, which is the technical expression used by the Thongas to describe the part played by the uterine nephew in the ceremonies connected with the adjudication of the inheritance. My distinguished opponent, summing up what I wrote on the subject, says: "The nephew claims some of the property of his mother's brother when the latter dies, and may sometimes claim one of the widows." There is much more than that in the Thonga custom. The nephew *nyiketa* the inheritance to the sons of his mother's brother, who are the actual legal heirs. Nyiketa comes from nyika, to give. It is a derivative which reinforces the meaning of the simple form nyika, and may be translated by the English word *surrender* or *transmit*. What does it mean in this connection ? It means that, consciously or unconnsciously, the nephew considers himself as the legitimate heir ; but on account of a change which has taken place in the laws of the tribe, as the recognised heirs are now the sons, he gives up his right and transmits it to the sons. The fact that he does so is best explained by the supposition that he possessed that right in a previous phase of family relations. I do not see how this "nyiketa" could be accounted for if these customs were dictated only by the natural feelings of a child towards his mother, feelings which nad been extended to the mother's brother.

3) In the Rev. Ed. W. Smith's book on the Ba-Ila speaking people (Vol. I, p. 317) we see that amongst the Ba-Ila the mother's brother "is

604 very highly respected, that he has the right of life and death over his nephews." The relation between a maternal uncle and his nephews is totally different in that Central African tribe from what it is amongst our South African tribes. There, at any rate, the pattern of behaviour inspired by the mother does not apply to her brother, and Mr. Brown's theory is at fault. On the matriarchy hypothesis, on the contrary, it is not impossible to explain this fact. There has been an evolution (whilst there has probably been no change in the feelings of a mother towards her child from the beginning of the human race up to the present day). If, in the course of this evolution, there was a time when the family system was matrilocal, a time when a child dwelt in its mother's village, close to its mother's brother, one can understand that the latter, at that time, took upon himself the duty of educating the child, of reproving him. His attitude, in such circumstances, was more severe, more dominating than now. As the Ba-Ila have preserved a kind of matriarchy, possessing, as they do, totemic clans in which matriarchal customs prevail, we ought not to be astonished if the relations of uncle and nephew are so different amongst them. In the South African tribes the authority has completely passed to the father. Hence the great respect shown to him by the children ; hence also the want of respect and the great ease in the relations with the maternal uncle.

603 At the end of this argument, may I allow a Native to give his opinion ?
611 Natives often refuse if asked to explain these mysterious customs of theirs. Yet when we have the chance of hearing an intelligent Bantu formulate a reason for one of them, we are bound to consider such testimony as very valuable. Natives feel what we, Europeans, can only guess, and they have actual experience of the Bantu kraal life... Speaking on this very subject of the mode of behaviour of a Thonga toward his father's and mother's family my informant said : "If the paternal grandfather is less lenient with his grandson than the maternal grandfather, it is on account of property" (p. 232). The paternal grandfather and his grandson belong to the same clan, or sib, or family. They bear the same name (shibongo). They possess in common certain property, oxen, implements, etc, which all of them have the duty of preserving, increasing, defending. If a child spoils or destroys this property, he commits a wrong which is resented by all the other members of the clan. His paternal grandfather will reprove him. He will do so also if the honour, the good reputation of the clan is at stake. But the maternal grandfather has nothing to do with such matters. The spoiled property

643 604 778 "when the Ba-Khosa had emerged from the reed" (See Vol. II, Part VI, III). Nobody might see it except the chief, who kept it hidden somewhere in a hole amongst the rocks. His uterine nephew alone (ntukulu) knew the place, and when it was necessary to use it in order to pray to the deceased chiefs, the chief and his nephew alone were permitted to approach the hiding place ; those 643 who accompanied them had to stop at a distance. This mhamba 778 is lost. Even the chief Ntshongi, who was the paramount chief of 789 the Ba-Khosa at the beginning of this century, had never seen it. It had been taken by his predecessor Mavabaze and had disappeared during the political troubles of the Gungunyana's war. Thus it is impossible to say of what it consisted, and this will probably never be known. There is no doubt however, that it was used for the same purpose as the mhamba of the Tembe and Shirindja. Its magical and religious power came from the fact that it was anointed with the "nsila" of the deceased chiefs. On the death of a chief, his "nsila" i. e. the layer of filth resting on his body, was taken away and the mhamba was rubbed with it. This gave the reigning [769] chief the power to influence his ancestor-gods, in accordance with the magic principle : the part influences the whole. It is said that in former times the Khosa chief Shihanyisane having ill-treated his two younger brothers, Malashwane and Shalati, these two men succeeded in taking the chieftainship away from him with the aid of the Ñwamba clan. Eventually Shihanyisane made peace with his brothers and gave over the mhamba to Malashwane : a proof that this mysterious object was in truth considered as the most important attribute of chieftainship.

643 These regalia are not indeed very imposing [illegible]. Thonga 789 royalty had no brilliant insignia... But it had more than that! 751 Each clan possessed a special medicine whose magical virtues were greatly esteemed ; its possession made the chief invincible, the warriors invulnerable, the country unconquerable. This powerful charm is called *mbhulo* (Dj.), *mphulo* (Ro.).

Amongst the Nkunas, the mbhulo is called *Ñwantikalala*. It is kept by those belonging to the Mushwane house, and a man called Papalati is responsible for it. It consists of four calabashes, two male and two female (medicines are considered as having sex,

APPENDIX VI (See p. 265)

The story of Paulus K., illustrating the matlulana superstition and the Thonga horror of polyandry.

607/835 One of my pupils, who was already a married man of, perhaps, thirty-two years of age, once came to me, very much distressed, to confess a fault which seemed to weigh very heavy on his conscience. On a day of feasting he had drunk too freely and had commited adultery with the wife of his elder brother Guga. He fought with himself for years, not daring to avow an action which seemed to him not merely ordinary adultery but an incestuous act. He finally wrote to his brother: "Though I know that we shall not be able to love each other any more as before, though it pains me so much to separate from you, I will confess! Please forgive me, as I intended to commit suicide on account of my fault!"

The special gravity of the fault consisted in two circumstances: 1) She was his brother's wife and he was now unable to visit his brother when ill, to take part in his burial, or to maintain friendly relations with him. 2) Guga was his elder brother. This made the case still worse.

The letter of Paulus to his fellow evangelists is touching: "I have no right to stay in your assembly, because I have been overcome by the Enemy and committed adultery with my elder brother's wife. I have been long prevented (from confessing) by the Enemy's power. Now I have wept before Jesus that He may help me to pierce the abscess... Satan came and said to me: 'Will you not be ashamed to confess such a thing before men?' I nearly retreated. But at sunrise I made haste to write to you, and now I feel peace and joy. It seems to me that I am going to receive the Spirit of God."

APPENDIX VII (See p. 279)

611/597/604 *The story of Spoon Libombo, showing that, when the lobolo has not been paid or has been returned, the children belong to the mother's and not to the father's family.*

Spoon was the son of Shibaninge, a woman of the Libombo family, and of Khobete of the Mazwaya family, who had lobola Shibaninge.

611 597 604 This man died during a war with the Portuguese, having been killed on Mbengelen island. The widow was "fambeliwa" (chosen) by Nsiki, Khobete's brother, who was to inherit her. But Nsiki did not really care for the widow. He did not prepare a *ntehe* for the baby nor provide the mother with ochre. Seeing this, Shibaninge went back to her relatives. When the time for the weaning of the little one arrived, a man named Mbobobo had irregular relations with the woman in order to "lumula" the child (See page 60). Mbobobo went so far as to take her to his home, upon which Nsiki claimed the lobolo paid by the Mazwayas and the Libombos gave it back to them. After that, Spoon lived in his mother's family and was called: "wa ka Libombo," "man of Libombo." But he had no real home (a nga na kwakwe). Being on the spot he was always chosen to help in the sacrifices: drinking the beer which remained in the pot after the libations to the gods in the gandelo, near the gate, stealing the offerings when the victims were killed in the sacred bush, etc. He was the "great ntukulu," because his mother belonged to the elder branch or first house of the family. So he took precedence of the other uterine nephews when they had to take part in the sacrifices.

APPENDIX VIII (See p. 281)

The story of Gidhlana Ngwetsa of Rikatla; a typical case illustrating the lobola, divorce, and leper customs of the Ba-Ronga.

587 586 Gidhlana was the sister of a man named Mubene. Both were the children of a fine old Ronga named Ngwetsa and one of his wives. Gidhlana was bought with lobola by a man named Khandlela (candle), son of Nwamanghele, a man of the Manyisa clan settled near Rikatla. The marriage took place probably in 1893. The new pair did not live in peace. Gidhlana quarrelled with her husband. "Why? Nobody knows! Are the affairs of the huts and the villages known to outsiders?" She returned home to her father Ngwetsa. The husband waited a while. Then he followed her (landjela) and asked her to come back to the conjugal home. Her parents told her to obey. She went. But quarrelling soon recommenced. She fled a second time; her husband and her parents-in-law did their best to induce her to go back. She refused. An uncle of hers took a stick and thrashed her but nothing could persuade her.

782 knife, the uterine nephews utter their cries of joy (1). This
769 is their way of consenting (pfumela) or answering, for they accept the offering on behalf of the gods (2). The whole crowd joins in these manifestations of joy.

6) The victim is cut open, and one limb, or small pieces of each limb, are put aside for the gods ; the half digested grass, *psanyi*, found in the intestines, especially in the *shihlakahla* stomach, is carefully put aside.

7) The priest takes a little of the psanyi mixed with the blood of the victim, puts it to his lips, emits a little saliva, and spits out the whole, pronouncing the *tsu*, this being the means of consecrating the offering, or, as we may say, despatching it to the gods.

8) He pronounces the prayer — occasionally interrupted by some member of the family, who has a complaint to make.

9) In certain cases of special misfortune, whilst praying he squeezes the green liquid contained in the psanyi over his hearers, who rub their bodies with it.

10) One of the nephews "cuts his prayer" (i. e. brings it to an end) by taking in his mouth a little of the consecrated beer or wine, or part of the hen's gizzard.

11) The uterine nephews steal the offering and run away, followed by the throng, who throw pellets of psanyi at them. They eat the portion of the gods.

12) Should the offering have been made on behalf of a particular individual, the astragalus of the goat, or some portions of the hen are tied to him and worn for a time on the left or right side of the body : the left if the offering was made to the maternal ancestors, the right if it was made to the paternal gods.

Let us examine more closely some of these acts, so that we may better understand the elements of this ceremony.

(1) Amongst the Ba Nyai they clap their hands and shout : "Ndiyo !" — "all right."

782 (2) It is not necessary to add more about the part played by the uterine nephews in
604 the sacrifice, for it has been explained in detail in Vol. I, p. 269 when treating of the family system. The two great reasons for their taking such a prominent part in the religious ritual seem to be the following : 1) during the life of their maternal uncle, and also of all their mother's family, they were on very intimate terms with them, "even eating from the same piece of food, not fearing their saliva." Therefore they now eat the flesh of the victim instead of the ancestor-gods of their mother. 2) Maternal relatives have a special religious duty towards their nephews. They act as their priests

a) The Priesthood.

The Thongas have no sacerdotal caste, but, as has already been 782
pointed out, the right of officiating in religious ceremonies is 798
strictly confined to *the eldest brother*. All offerings must be made 593
through him. To supplant him is a great taboo, and would entail the malediction of the gods, and even the death of the offender. There are, however, some minor offerings which anyone is allowed to make to his gods ; for instance, a lover who has been jilted, may, after having consulted the bones, give something to his god in order to obtain his aid in regaining the favour of the girl he loves. But, as a rule, no one must *hahla*, or even *gandjela*, before the death of his parents. If, after their death, their son should happen to dream of them, he must offer worship to the deceased by pouring some ground tobacco on to his wooden pillow, this being the commencement of his religious functions : "he begins to learn to gandjela" (Rangane), and, if he is the eldest, he may in course of time become the priest of the whole family. I heard, however, a man from Tembe assert that he had *hahla* when his father was still living, but in this case he had been designated by the bones. A little child may even perform the office if the bones order it ; his father will then hold him in his arms and pray in his stead. The bones often call on *women* to [562]
pronounce the prayer, especially the elder sister ; there is no anti-feminism in Thonga religion. In the *luma* ceremony, however, it must always be a man, the chief himself, who is the principal officiant. The wives of the clansmen naturally cannot take a prominent part in the offerings made for the clan, being themselves members of another clan and having their own ancestor-gods, to

(I. p. 268), offerings being frequently made to the gods of the mother's family through 782
the agency of the maternal uncle. Hence the fact that uterine nephews take such a 604
peculiar part in the ritual of the worship.

I must add that according to information just received from the Rev. A. Jaques, in the Northern clans uterine nephews do not steal the portion of the offerings put apart for the ancestor-gods. It seems that this custom, which I believe to be ancient, is met with essentially amongst the Ronga clans, where the special term *mupsyana* (an old Bantu word corresponding to *um-tshana* in Xosa and *mochana* in Sutho) has also been preserved to designate the uterine nephew, whilst it has fallen into disuse in the Northern clans. (Compare I. p. 162, 232, 498.)

3) How are taboos *dealt with?* 784

Happily the danger of taboos can be removed, otherwise 789
life would be almost impossible! The medicine-men have the necessary drugs to protect their poor fellow-men against the misfortune (khombo) which is always threatening them! Is not the whole arsenal of magic at their disposal? Rites in great numbers provide the necessary protection, especially the *luma rite*, which is the proper method of avoiding the special dangers connected with the *first use* of anything. The wish to obtain protection against all these dangers explains the immenre influence of the medicine-men, of those who know the preventive drugs to be used against defilement and misfortune.

It is impossible to attain to a true knowledge of the taboos 784
without studying the laws of *their suspension*. Taboos are sometimes suspended. The chief, for instance, is above them, at any rate above some of them, being himself a magical being, a tabooed personage (I. p. 382). The collectivity has a still greater power over them and can cancel them. There are times when all these prohibitions, or at least some of them, are withdrawn; these are the marginal periods, when we behold the strange spectacle that ordinary taboos are suspended (language taboos, relatives-in-law taboos), whilst others are enforced (sexual taboos). I have often drawn attention to this curious phenomenon.

B. MORAL RESTRAINTS.

But taboos are not the only kind of restraint to which primitive 183
Bantus submit themselves. The following statements have been 604
collected from old or young informants who were urged to express their inner feelings on this question:

1) The maternal uncle must provide the ntehe for the first child of his sister. However this is not *yila*, it is a *nau*, a law, and if it is transgressed no direct harm will follow. (I. p. 46.)

2) Men and women do not bathe in the same spot in the lake 183
of Rikatla. Why? Not on account of a yila, but on account of 834

601 reciprocal, means brothers as well as sisters. If he wishes to specify, he adds to makwabu : "of the assagai," or "of the basket." It is never employed except when united with the possessive pronoun : *makweru* means my brother, *makwenu* your brother, *makwabu*, his brother or sister. The elder brother is called *nhondjwa* (plur. tinhondjwa). The nhondjwa is also called *hosi* (plur. tihosi) chief. The hierarchy of age is very strictly 601 observed amongst the Thongas. The elder brother is treated 593 with great respect and gives orders to his younger brothers with 595 almost the same authority as the father. It must be noticed also that the position of elder brother is not only a matter of age, but, in the polygamic family, all the children of a first wife, or of the first house, are *tihosi* to the children of secondary or posterior wives or houses, though they may have been born after them. They take precedence of them. Amongst girls, an elder sister is often called *mamana*, mother, whilst an elder brother is never a tatana (father) but a hosi (chief).

601 The term *makwabu* is applied to all my first and second cousins 428 who have the same paternal grandfather, or great-grandfather, 605 as I have. Cousins on my mother's side are also bamakwabu, some of them at least, those who are my maternal aunt's children. But cousins on the father's side are more fully bamakwabu than those on the mother's side : Muhambi is more so to Hlangabeza than to Mahlobo, because the two former belong to the same shibongo, family name ; they are men of the Makaneta clan and Muhambi could therefore inherit Hlangabeza's wives ; Muhambi and Mahlobo are not of the same clan, and could not inherit from each other. From this fact we begin to see that the laws of inheritance, and especially the laws of the distribution of the widows amongst the family which has bought them, are closely connected with the system of relationship.

601 The man who has married my wife's sister is also a makwabu to me, a nhondjwa if he has married her elder sister (Phayindi to Mboza), a ndjisana if the younger (Magwazizen to Mboza). The brothers of Phayindi and Magwazizen are also called brothers by Mboza.

There is a special term in the Northern clans to indicate the

604 with his friends. The malume comes back and is angry. But when he hears that the trick has been played by his mupsyana, he shrugs his shoulders and says : "Oh it is all right if it is the ntukulu who has done it ! A shi biwi ntukulu! The nephew must never be beaten!" When another day the nephew comes again, the malume says : "You starved us to death the other day!" — "Is there any more food handy that I may do it again ?" answers the boy. The sons of the malume seem to have
605 less patience with their cousin than their father has. When the cousin goes definitely beyond the limits of their endurance, they will chase him out of the village saying : "Go away, you dog!" The niece is sometimes as troublesome as the nephew. If she is married and pays a visit to her malume with her husband, she will leave the latter comfortably settled in the malume's hut and search the whole village to discover pots of beer, which she will bring to him as if she were the mistress of the home. She may even catch a fowl and give it to him.

604 Sometimes the malume himself points to one of his wives and
837 says to the ntukulu : "[illegible]is is your wife. Let her feast you
587 well!" The woman much enjoys the situation, which she finds quite entertaining. She makes a feast for the ntukulu and calls him *nkata*, husband. It will sometimes go so far that the nephew will say to the uncle : "Please make haste and die that I may have your wife!" — "Do you intend to kill me with a gun ?" says the malume... But all this talking is a mere joke. The nephew can take many liberties with this aunt, especially in the Ronga clans. He will never however have relations with her during the life of her husband. Should he do so, he will have to pay the high fine due for a true adultery. Possibly he will inherit her when the malume dies, but she will not be his full property : she will only be given (nyika) to him, and the children will eventually belong to the malume's male relatives. All over the tribe this right of inheriting a malume's wife is recognized. In the Northern clans she is called *kokwana* ; in Ronga territory she is called kokwana by her nieces only, but her nephews call her *nsati* (wife), and this term seems also to be an old feature of the relationship system. This relation of malume and mupsyana is so important

604 that I intend to treat it more fully later on in a special paragraph, when considering the traces of older forms of family life amongst the Thongas.

601 The true malume is the mother's full brother. But all her half brothers are also bamalume in the second degree ; so are also the brothers of the true malume.

605 What about the *children of the malume*, my cousins, or rather my
835 cross-cousins, sons and daughters of my mother's brothers, viz.
582 Shaputa and Marangen as opposed to Madonge and Misaben ? In Zulu, Sutho, Pedi there is a special term to indicate this relation, (mzala, motsoala, mudzwala, muzwala). And the main feature of the family system in those tribes is that a cousin has a prior right to marry the daughter of his maternal uncle, his mzala. Amongst the Thongas there is nothing of the kind. The special term does not exist except in the Maputju clan, at the Southern extremity of Thonga territory, where it is met with in the form of *ntale* (corresponding to mzala, according to the law of phonetic permutation) (1) or *shitale* (when preceded by the prefix shi).
605 But the right of marrying this cousin is not recognized in the
835 Thonga tribe. One can play with her, steal some object from
582 her in fun, but never take her as a wife. Such a breach of the
602 custom would be punished by the chief. Later on, when the special relation of cross-cousins has been more or less forgotten, marriage could take place between them, but, at any rate, the ceremony of dlaya shilongo (see p. 256) would be performed, in order to "kill" the previous relationship and to replace it by the new relation of husband and wife.

This being so, how do cross-cousins behave towards each other in the Thonga system ? As regards the daughter of their maternal uncle, the relationship is somewhat different for Misaben, a boy, and for Madonge, a girl. To Misaben the boy, Shaputa, his cousin, is mamana and she will call him son, ñwana, because, as we have seen, Shaputa is a potential wife for Mboza, father of Misaben, and Mboza calls her nkata, nsati, namu. To Madonge,

605 (1) They also employ the cognate form *muzali*, which is more akin to the Zulu regular term, and this tends to show that the Maputjus have borrowed this expression from their Zulu neighbours of Northern Amatongaland.

605 the girl, Shaputa is also a mamana ; but the term makweru, my sister, is more frequently used. So we find this strange fact : Maphunga, the mother of Shaputa is a wife to Misaben, while her daughter, Shaputa, is a mother to him!

As regards the son of my malume, he is also a malume or a kokwana, though he may be of the same age or even younger than I, because he belongs to the family from which we take wives and also because he has a kind of right to offer sacrifices for his ntukulu, as we shall see. Totally different is the relationship between Misaben and Mahlobo and Mathamba, *children of his mother's sister*. They are *bamakwabu* as truly as the children of rarana, the paternal aunt, because they have sucked from the same breast (ba yañwele bele djinwe).

601 At this point of my treatise I must stop for a moment to consider more closely the use of these two terms, *kokwana and ntukulu*, which are so widely employed in the Thonga kinship system. They are applied first to the relation between a grandson and his grandparents on the father's side, i. e. his paternal grandfather and his paternal grandmother; secondly to the relation between that same grandson and his maternal grandfather and grandmother and to the relation of a nephew to his maternal uncle and to all the male members of his mother's family. Now my informants point out very decidedly that these two relations are very different from each other, and they call the bakokwana on the father's side *bakokwana ba shinene* (the true bakokwana), whilst the bakokwana on the mother's side are *bakokwana ba shisati* (the bakokwana on the female side) ; one also speaks of *batukulu ba shinene*, the real batukulu and of *batukulu ba shisati*, the batukulu by females. How is it possible for them to make such an identification, an identification which we find in almost all the South African tribes (See Table. App. IV) ? They recognize that the two relations are not the same, and the description which we have just given clearly shows the difference.

It would be useful to know the etymology of these two terms. Unhappily my informants could not ascertain it. Kokwana is the diminutive of koko, which has been preserved in its original form in the Zulu word gogo and in the Khosa koko. This root, associated with prefixes which are not those of the personal class, means either the dried carcase of a dead animal, or a person with stiff limbs, who cannot

In Shiluvane, I was in a very favorable

582 position to judge of the real feelings of the Thongas. There
177 were two tribes there, which had been living side by side for
609 more than seventy years, tribes united by old friendship and
648 military alliance, viz., the Nkuna clan of the Thongas and the Khaha clan of the Pedis. I did not see a single case of intermarriage between them. The difference of language could not account for the fact, because generally speaking, all the men could speak both Thonga and Pedi. When asked why they did not contract unions with the Pedis, the Nkunas answered : "Their customs are too disgusting for us." They meant more especially the freedom with which Khaha women commit adultery. Pedis would probably have made the same objection to the immorality of Thonga boys and girls. Whatever may be the cause, they have not intermarried up to this day.

582 On the other hand the Thongas are *exogamic* as regards the family. To understand properly these exogamic rules, let us classify the cases in the four following categories : Cases of absolute prohibition of marriage ; of conditional permission ; of unconditional permission, and cases in which marriage is recommended.

I. *Cases of absolute prohibition.*

582 As a rule marriage is prohibited between a tatana, mamana,
605 rarana and a ñwana, and between bamakwabu.

On the father's side the prohibition is particularly severe. Amongst the Ba-Ronga, it is taboo for a boy to marry a girl when both can lay claim to a common ancestor in the paternal line. It seems that the rule is not so stringent in the Northern clans. According to Mankhelu, marriage is absolutely prohibited between all the descendants of a grandfather, viz., between first cousins. Between second cousins it is permitted conditionally, "by killing the family tie," and between third cousins it is allowed. "Third cousins" as Mankhelu says, "are *batlandlamani ba tolo* ; they belong to families which were relatives yesterday. We are

582 605 no longer taboo for them, we can go and take a wife amongst them."

On the mother's side, this absolute prohibition extends to first cousins when the mothers are sisters. They are true bamakwabu ; they have been nursed at the same breast. But more remote cousins marry more easily when their relationship is on the mother's side. The bakokwana do not marry their batukulu, owing to their duty of sacrificing for them, but the batukulu have a kind of preferential right to women related to their mother : "Where father has married, I may also go to find my wife," said Gana. However the rule remains that bamakwabu must not intermarry.

When asked : "Why?" the Thongas generally say : "Because it is so. Psa yila. It is our law." It is however possible to find some more satisfactory reasons ; for these prohibitions are dictated to a certain extent *by fear of consanguinity*. Natives have probably noticed that the offspring of such unions are sometimes weak in intellect or altogether wanting. Therefore, in this polygamic family system, they make a careful distinction between relatives who are of the same mother and of the same father, and those whose mothers are different. When a cousin is by another grandmother, though I call her makwabu just as I do my true sister or first cousin, I may contemplate marrying her. She is my half first cousin only. However the fear of consanguinity is not the only nor perhaps the strongest reason for these exogamic rules. If it were so, why should relatives on the father's side be more taboo than those on the mother's side ? Moreover it is strange to see that in the royal families the same prohibitions are not maintained. Ñwamantibyana, chief of Mpfumo, married Mimalengane, his rarana, his first cousin once removed on the father's side. If the physical dangers alone arising from consanguinous unions were thought of, such marriages ought to be doubly feared in the royal family!

It seems to me that there are two other reasons :

582 In the Thonga mind there is *a natural repulsion to confounding and intermingling bushaka and bukoñwana*, relationship by blood and by marriage. Bushaka is a kind of relation which they do not deem compatible with bukoñwana, as we shall presently see.

601 stretch them out. I must leave Zulu linguists to decide if it is really the same root. If so, the etymological idea would be that of a person worn out and paralyzed by old age.

The only explanation that I can give of the common use of the terms kokwana-ntukulu for both relations is this. Both the paternal grandparents and the mother's relatives are similar in their dealings with a child in the fact that they are more lenient towards him than his father. The two grandmothers are equally kind to him. The maternal grandfather is more lenient than the paternal grandfather ; but, according to the explanation given above, it is because the latter belongs to the same family (shibongo) as his grandchild and may be called on to scold him if his conduct is prejudicial to the interests of their common village, whilst the maternal grandfather does not worry himself if the child damages the property or the good reputation of his parents. It is not his business.

The malume is the most indulgent of all. We shall see how this fact can be explained by the matriarchy hypothesis.

Another connotation of these two terms, when applied to social groups, i. e. to two different families, is this. The bakokwana are those from whose family the batukulu have the right of taking their wives. As we shall see, this meaning is much more marked in the category of tribes which belong to the Pedi-Venda group than amongst the Thongas and other tribes of the same category.

II. *Relations with parents-in-law.*

1) Relationship on the Wife's side.

a) General characteristics.

606 543 Once, when speaking on this subject, old Viguet told me solemnly : "By your betrothal, as soon as you have been accepted, you enter into a new kind of respect and must remain in it till your death." This relationship is called *bukoñwana*, a word that is generally pronounced with a peculiar feeling of uneasiness. Why is this? On account of the relations of husband and wife. Mboza calls

606 593 Nsabula *nsati* (a term corresponding to *nuna*, husband) or *nkata*, a reciprocal term, or *nkosikazi*, a Zulu word which means queen, or *ntjibeli*, cook, even *mamana*. I have already described the moral relation which the word nsati implies : no very great tenderness, not much intimacy, but a certain amount of love mingled with respect, and even fear, because a wife can get her husband into endless trouble if she begins to quarrel and runs home ; then all the bukoñwana relations will be spoilt by interminable discussions.

The word bukoñwana is composed of three elements : the root *ko*, which is an ancient Bantu root, found also in Zulu-Xosa (kwe), in Sutho (hoe) and Pedi (χwe). Its meaning is etymologically unknown. To it is added a suffix, *ñwana*, and a prefix *bu*. The prefix bu has a double meaning ; the meaning of abstraction (and then bukoñwana indicates the relationship between a man and his relatives-in-law) and the meaning of place (when bukoñwana indicates the village where relatives-in-law dwell). They say, employing this word in the locative case : To go bukoñwanen, or in an abbreviated form : bukwen.

601 607 I have been fortunate enough to obtain from Mboza the full nomenclature of his wife's relatives. It so happens that the Gogwe family is extraordinarily complete. Nsabula has both an elder brother and elder sister, a younger brother and a younger sister. Owing to this, I have been able to study all the possible kinds of relationship of Mboza with his wife's relatives.

The terms used to express these kinds of relationship fall into two categories, which present a striking contrast. On the one hand a man, when he goes to his wife's village, meets with the persons he fears most in the world : these are his *bakoñwana*, properly speaking ; on the other hand he finds there the women towards whom he behaves with the greatest liberty ; these are the *tinamu*. Describing these two sets of relatives-in-law, one of my informants said : "Bakoñwana are those persons who produce wives for you ; tinamu are those persons who produce children for you, because they are your presumptive wives. Even if you do not marry them, their children will call you father."

Let us study these two categories in detail.

b) The bakoñwana.

606 First of all, *the wife's father*. There is a great respect in the heart of his son-in-law towards him, even a certain amount of fear, because, should a quarrel arise between a man and his wife, the father-in-law will preside over the painful discussions which will take place, he being the natural protector of his daughter. However, in normal cases, the two men live on good terms with each other, and very soon the son-in-law calls his father-in-law tatana, father ; of course the word tatana is not used here in its technical sense, but only by extension.

607 Secondly the bakoñwana are *the wife's brothers*. When their
192 father dies, they take his place as protectors of their sister. Hence the uneasiness and fear with regard to them, which is, however, less marked in their case. The wife's brothers will never be called bamakweru (as they will never be ba-kweru, those of my house) but they are frequently designated by the term *soar*, or *sibar*, which is merely a corruption of the Dutch word zwager. This curious adoption of a foreign term is modern ; it is spreading more and more amongst the Zulus, Xosas and Suthos of Basutoland. Amongst the Thongas I only once heard the word soar used. The tendency to assimilate that kind of relationship to the European conception is a proof that the old fear of brothers-in-law is disappearing in the new generation.

606 But it is in the relation with two women of the wife's family that the respect of bukoñwana is pushed to the greatest extent : the wife's mother and the wife of the brother-in-law. In these cases there is not only respect but *avoidance*

The wife's mother.

606 Let us listen to Viguet telling the story of a man meeting his
576 mother-in-law in the bush. "If one of the two sees the other coming a long way off, soon enough to escape without being noticed, he will speedily hide himself and reach his destination by making a long circuit, half a mile if necessary. But if they have come too near to have recourse to flight, this is what will happen. You leave the road ; you enter the bush on your right

606 side. She does the same. Then you sit down according to
[576] men's fashion, crossing your legs. She also sits down bending
834 her legs, and putting one knee over the other as women do; then
576 both parties salute each other, you, as a man, clapping your hands against each other, holding them parallel, and the woman holding hers at right angles. 'Then you begin to talk..."

Suppose the son-in-law has had the good luck to reach the village of his wife's relatives without having met his mother-in-law, but sees her sitting somewhere near a hut. This is dreadful. She looks at him and at once covers her breasts with her cloth. He himself turns his eyes aside. I saw in Natal a curious photograph representing the scene. Amongst the Zulus the avoidance of the mother-in-law is perhaps more marked than in any other tribe; the man is shown in the picture hiding his face
606 with his shield. Should the mother-in-law be taking her meal
576 when her son-in-law arrives unexpectedly, she throws away the mouthful she was eating, and he does the same.— Suppose then that he has entered the village without seeing her; then the tinamu, his wife's sisters, come hastily to meet him. They take his sticks, joking with him meanwhile and put them in his mother-in-law's hut. This hut is his; he has the right of staying in it during his whole visit. They spread a mat on the ground, and bring him food. They chat with him. Then the mother-in-law comes in her turn, but she dares not enter the hut. She sits down outside and, without seeing him, salutes him, saying: "Good morning, son of so and so." She must not pronounce his name. He answers in the same style, and must also say: "Daughter of so and so." Should he call her by her name it would be a breach of etiquette and his wife would be angry and say: "How dare you? Did she not bring me forth? Rather say: Mother!" During the first years of his married life, the son-in-law never eats with his wife's mother.

607 This peculiar behaviour is the rule, not only towards the wife's mother, but also towards her sisters.

606 In the course of years there is a *lessening* of this terrible taboo.
431 In the Maputju clan the son-in-law will provide an ox as soon as
576 possible and he will "communicate" (tlhangana) with her, partaking

606 431 576 of its meat with all his relatives-in-law. Then both will be allowed to eat together. Until that present was made, it would have been impossible. In this clan, a future son-in-law does not eat at all with his bakoñwana until the marriage is concluded, and this rule is sometimes observed till he has given "the ox for communicating together." Amongst the Zulus it is said that a mother-in-law will never eat with her daughter's husband. In the Khosa clan the custom of lessening the avoidance taboo by offering a present to the mother-in-law also exists. The son-in-law will one day bring a plate of food to her with his gift put on top of it. She will accept it and eat together with him. Then it will be possible for these two persons to "djungulisana" i. e. to tell each other the news of the day when visiting each other's village. But when this monotonous recital is finished and concluded, as is customary, by clapping both hands, this must be done with care, and not in a hurried fashion, as when speaking to an ordinary person, but slowly and respectfully.

115 606 835 What is the reason of this extraordinary conduct of the son-in-law towards his wife's mother ? The Khosa Native who gave me this last information said : "A wise man will carefully observe the bukoñwana rules, because, if he hurts his parents-in-law by infringing them, they will not give him his tinamu as wives." This is true, but the same may be said of all the taboos of the bukoñwana, and the mother-in-law is not the principal person to be consulted on the question. Another more profound reason was once alluded to by an old Thonga, of Spelonken, Abraham Mabanyisi, who said to me : "I fear my mother-in-law because I shall never marry her : Such a thing has never been seen." This statement has been confirmed since by information gathered in the Maputju clan. Notice the almost reflex action of the mother-in-law in covering her breasts when she sees her son-in-law coming unexpectedly. It shows that there is a sexual element in the behaviour of the woman and also in that of the man, who hides his face in order not to see her in her half nakedness. Dr. Rivers, who has met exactly the same rites of avoidance amongst the Melanesians, supposes that they are dictated by a more or less unconscious desire on the part of both these persons to fight against the temptation to have sexual relations with each other. Bantus also, in the course of the evolution of the family, have come to the deep conviction that such intercourse is bad and must

606 be banished from their thoughts. They obey that conviction when
835 practising the avoidance rites.

The wife of the brother-in-law, the Great Mukoñwana.

607 This particular respect is even more marked in the relations of a man with the wife of his wife's brother. Indeed the avoidance is pushed further than with the mother-in-law. A Native of the Ndjao tribe (which has the same customs as the Thonga tribe in this respect) described to me vividly the extraordinary marks of fear that these two persons show each other when they meet on the road. The story will be told when speaking of the Ba-Ndjao. Here are some other marks of this extraordinary respect.

607 The wife's brother's wife must always keep her breasts covered
834 in the village of her husband's sister's husband. Only when she has had a child is she permitted to "open her clothing;" but then she must fix a leaf in her hair (as if to show that she does not forget the special reserve which she is bound to maintain). (Khosen region.)

607 When a man travels with his great mukoñwana and they have to
876 cross a river, they will avoid entering the same boat. It may
827 happen to anyone to emit an unseemly sound from the rectum; but if the great mukoñwana is present, she looks on this as a grave offence. A fine must be paid to her, a hoe, for instance. If the guilty man has nothing to give her, he at once breaks a twig from a tree and presents it to her as a token that the proper fine will be forthcoming in due time! He must never use words of insult in her presence, even if he addresses them to another person.

607 If he loses his temper before her she will go to the old people of
844 her husband's village and tell them: "He has insulted me." On the other hand the great mukoñwana is bound to go and assist the wife of this man when she gives birth to a child. At least this is the rule in the Khosa clan and also in Maputju. The two women live on very good terms with each other; they are

607 *tinhombe*. The man himself, when he visits his relatives-in-law, has the right of sleeping in the hut of the great mukoñwana. We have seen that, during the first months after his marriage, he is received in the hut of his mother-in-law. Why is this? Because the oxen

his younger brother's wives (bengi) and play with those of his elder brothers (tinamu). Why tis here this difference? Because, as we saw, the wife of an elder brother is a possible wife for all his younger brothers, as they have the right of inheriting her, should this man die. On the contrary, an elder brother inherits his younger brother's wife only under quite exceptional circumstances. One does not marry a ñwingi! This would be an insult to one's wife. Nsabula would leave Mboza if Mboza were to marry Magugu, Komatane's wife, because they have been accustomed to call each other ñwingi.

To a wife, her husband's elder sister is also a ñwingi (Ndjibari to Nsabula). The husband's younger sister is a namu or *nhombe*, and two tinhombe have very free relations, just as in the case of the tinamu. This freedom exists between female tinamu as well as between tinamu of different sexes.

There is a final term to be mentioned: *bakhoti* or *bakhoti-bulobye*, in Ronga, *basevele* in Djonga, a reciprocal term by which the parents of a husband and wife call each other.

How far is a woman incorporated in her husband's family? She belongs to it till her death, provided the lobolo oxen have been paid, but she does not accept the ancestor-gods of her parents-in-law as being her gods. She keeps her own gods, and prayers are frequently addressed to them by her father or by her brothers in favour of her children. In this respect Thongas differ widely from the old Aryan peoples, where a woman had to adopt the religion of her husband's clan when she married.

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Before leaving the subject of relations with parents-in-law, and in order to show to what extent the uneasiness and fear which characterises them are carried, I will briefly mention the taboos of the bukoñwana, which play such a great part in Bantu family life. Let me say that most of these taboos (psiyilayilana, small prohibitions), are not so severe as those connected with sexual relations, disease and death. It is not believed that a breach of

606 these bakoñwana rules would cause death. Yet they are religiously kept as necessary to ensure normal relations between the two families.

We have already seen the taboos which must be observed during the betrothal period (p. 106). Later on, during the gatherings which take place *before marriage*, other taboos are imposed.

606 1. In the discussion concerning the lobola, when oxen are counted,
802 the bridegroom's parents must never offer eight head of cattle,
201 because one of them will be killed for the feast, and so eight means
584 only seven. *Seven* is counted by raising, one after the other, the
784 five fingers of the left hand and the thumb and index-finger of the right. In raising the index-finger, they might point it at the bakoñwana, and this would be a mortal offence. To point at anyone with the index-finger is as bad as bewitching him. It is done only in anger, and all the preceding discussions might be nullified if such an imprudence were committed.

2. Should one of the oxen be frightened by the shouts of joy with which the arrival of the herd is greeted and by the sham-fight of the lobola day, and run away home, it is taboo. The ox has seen that something is wrong and has consequently fled. Even should they succeed in bringing it back, "timpfalo ti tjukile," the conscience (or the diaphragm) has been stirred!

584 3. If one of the oxen has no horns (homu ya mhulu), or only
825 abortive horns, psa yila : *bakoñwana byi ta pfumala timpsalu*,
777 viz., the relations with relatives-in-law will have no tenderness,
784 because such an ox moves its head to and fro as it wanders in the night ; it is abnormal. The bride's family will not accept it.

4. Should the lobolo consist of hoes, and should the rain fall on them while they are being carried to the bakoñwana, it is taboo. The lobolo must not be brought in a wet condition, otherwise the new relations will be spoilt (bukoñwana byi ta tshipa) ; the young people will not be able to marry.

5. Do not bring with you tobacco in the leaf when going *bukwen* as a fiancé, bring only ground tobacco, or misfortune will happen. Later on, when you have married your wife, it is allowable.

6. Never eat zebra or reedbuck's meat when staying with your parents-in-law. Should they kill one of these animals while

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584 you are there, or on the road, have nothing to do with it. The
825 zebra is *mbalamberi*, an animal of two colours; moreover it has no
777 horns. The same holds good for the giraffe. It has two colours,
784 it has too long bowels. Psa yila! The reedbuck cries: "Dzoo."
It is a witch: a mukoñwana must not eat it. For the same reason
a sheep without horns is never given to bakoñwana.

7. When you go with women to the parents of your fiancée for a *shirwalo*, viz., to bring them beer, should one of the jugs fall to the ground, psa yila! Return home!

606 8. From a Thonga of the Maputju country I once heard that it
609 was a great taboo in that district for a man to drink milk with
784 his parents-in-law; let us say rather to *eat* milk, as Natives
618 always take it in its solid form, i. e. curdled. This man was a
825 Christian; he had given up many heathen customs and had gone
177 so far as to partake of milk with his mother-in-law, but, the people all round were very much shocked at his conduct. Pushing my inquiry further, I heard that the milk taboo was observed not only with bakoñwana, but with all the inhabitants of the country who did not belong to one's clan; curdled milk was to be eaten only with people bearing the same family name. In other words, it is forbidden to eat milk *in any village where one can take a wife*. In a very interesting paper published in the *South African Journal of Science*, 1925, p. 481, Mrs A. W. Hoernlé says that this custom is wide-spread amongst many Bantu tribes of Central and South Africa, and explains it by the very intimate relationship which is thought to exist between human beings and cattle. The oxen are one with the clan to which they belong, and only members of that clan can partake of the milk of their cows. I never met with this idea in the other parts of the Thonga tribe, and I may remark that, as the Maputju clan is settled very near to the Zulus and has been more or less "zuluised", this custom might very well have been borrowed from its neighbours. Further researches will show whether the other Thonga clans have preserved what seems to be a very old Bantu idea, or at any rate traces of it. This is quite possible.

584 9. Do not build a hut for your wife before you have married
777 her. Mankhelu says: "Even if you have plenty of money
784 to lobola, if you make such a blunder your wife will be taken
from you.

777 from you... In the same manner, do not prepare the skin for
784 the child before it is born. Your wife would not bring forth a human being. Should you transgress this rule, you would bring misfortune on yourself (wa tihlolela, wa singita), and on your family. If you go to Moneri (the missionary) and ask him for a skin for this purpose before the birth of your child, he will tell you it is so." Note the deep-rooted conviction of the old heathen, who appeals to the authority of the missionary to strengthen the taboo!

585 10. Later on, when you are married, you must avoid eating
784 honey with your wife for a whole year, till she has had a child.
777 The bride is allowed to eat honey at her parent's home, but not in her new domicile and with her husband. The husband can eat
262 it in the bush, but he must wash his hands when he comes back, lest his wife should notice it. She would run home if she knew of it. We have already met with this prohibition in the tjekela visit, and heard the reason for it : honey flows ; the bride would go! The explanation now given is this : honey is too sweet, and your bride is too sweet also. (Is it not your honey-moon or honey-year ?) The two things do not go together. (Psa yalana, they hate each other.) A third reason is this : Bees, when they have eaten their honey, fly away from the hive. So would your wife do... After a year this misfortune is no longer to be feared.

606 This last idea is very curious. It shows that the bukoñwana
581 taboos *decrease in severity as time passes*. The strained relations between the son-in-law and his wife's mother also become easier. He begins to call her mamana, and she calls him ñwana. This transformation even goes so far that in some cases a mukoñwana can go and dwell in his parents-in-law's village, especially if he has children and if the children are grown up. And this fact gives us the natural explanation of these curious rules.

Marriage, as we have seen, is not an individual affair in the collective stage of family life. It is a contract made between two groups, which enter by it into a special relation towards each other. This relation is fraught with danger, because the interests of both groups are involved ; a bride and bridegroom are inspired with a mutual feeling of fear, knowing that an

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606 eventual misunderstanding between them will have its "contre
581 coup" throughout the two groups. The two families regard each other with mistrust, especially the two married couples who depend so closely upon each other, owing to the lobola ; but when they have become acquainted, when they are assured that common life is possible and even agreeable, when the first alliance has been strengthened by others amongst the tinamu, then the bukoñwana taboos more or less *fall off*. This is an explanation of these strange relations between relatives-in-law ; I do not pretend that it is absolutely adequate. There may also be in this domain some remains of previous customs which have now disappeared, and Comparative Ethnography will probably throw more light on this problem in the course of time.

C. MARRIAGE RULES

582 The study of the terms of relationship has shown us the constitution of the Thonga family. We have seen that they are often dictated by the possibility or non-possibility for a man of marrying certain women. There exist distinct marriage rules, and I propose to recapitulate them here, at the risk of some repetition, in order to throw as much light as possible on this difficult but very important subject.

Generally speaking it may be said that the Thongas are *endogamic* as regards the tribe and the clan, and *exogamic* as regards the family. They are *endogamic* as regards the tribe, that is to say
582 they marry within it. Members of clans very remote from each
178 other may find it difficult to contract unions, (see later on), but they do so, especially in Spelonken, where representatives of many different parts of the tribe have met by force of historical circumstances. In the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques you may find Thonga women married to men of other tribes and even to white people. But this is the result of a new state of things, which the old Thongas did not foresee ; nor would they have approved of it, I am sure. In Shiluvane, I was in a very favourable

583 Men are often better than their principles, and we have seen in
562 the study of marriage and inheritance customs that the consent
593 of a girl, and of a widow, is generally asked before any decision takes place. This is done as long as the male masters of the woman have no special interest in the choice. But should they have reason to impose a certain husband upon her, they will not hesitate to force her to accept him ; a young girl will be given up to a dirty old man, for whom she has no liking, on account of a lobola debt of twenty years standing! The lobola hardens the heart and the woman is unable to defend herself. She can always run away. But where will she hide, if all her relatives agree on her being sacrificed to the interest of the family ? Or she can threaten to commit suicide, and she occasionally does so. *b)* She must work for her husband, who gives her very little in return. It is true that she is not a *slave*. She is however *owned*. *c)* This is partly the cause of the shocking difference established between a husband and his wife. The married woman is henceforth absolutely prohibited from adulterous relations — which is a very admirable provision — but her husband is quite free in this respect : he has not been bought.
593 *d)* As regards her children, whatever may be her love for them,
562 she does not in fact possess them. They belong to the father.
586 If divorce takes place and the lobolo is not returned to the husband, he keeps them and the mother will be separated from them for ever (1).

583 2) A second series of consequences arising from this custom
606 are the *strained relations* between the two contracting groups.
578 We have sufficiently insisted on this subject. What makes dealings with parents-in-law so difficult ? It is the lobolo, the sum of money which has perhaps not been Fully paid, and

(1) The Rev. H. Dieterlen, of Basutoland, in a paper on the lobola, wrote the following words, which apply to the Thongas as well as to the Ba-Sutho : "A woman married under lobola bears children but possesses none. The children belong to those who gave the cattle. Whatever may be her own merits, she can see her children pass into the hands of the rawest heathen and be given over to the cupidity of rapacious and rascally relatives. She can be illtreated, driven away, abandoned, repudiated : she will have to live without children ; she will resemble a woman who has never had any. She is not supposed to have the heart and the feelings of a mother. And her children are treated as if they had no filial affection."

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583 the debt remains as a permanent cause of irritation. If there
606 is no reason for friction on that point, the threat of quarrels
586 ending in divorce is always impending like the sword of Damo-
578 cles. If this takes place, the sad event will be made ten times more painful by the terrible dispute which will arise by reason of the lobola being claimed back. And the contending couple will not suffer alone. It may be that another marriage, that of the great mukonwana, which was perhaps a happy one, will be destroyed in consequence of the divorce. (p. 243) "A ba ruli timbilwin," remarked Mboza. "They don't find peace in their hearts."

These complicated relations due to the lobola poison the whole of native life. Life should be easy for South African Natives. Their wants are few and they have enough to satisfy them under their invariably blue sky. They are generally speaking mild and good-natured. But the lobola question fills the African village with hatred and bitterness. *The milandju*, the debts! Milandju comes from landja, to follow, and this etymology is very instructive. A husband whose wife has gone away must *landja* his wife or rather his money. His whole family will help him in following this property until it has been recovered. Natives will go from one end of the country to the other to follow a few pounds, and at least three quarters of the cases which are brought before the Courts are lobola cases.

As regards the attitude to be adopted towards the Lobola custom, see Practical Conclusions. III.

F. POLYGAMY.

I. *Origin and spread of Polygamy amongst the Thongas.*

595 Polygamy is uniformly practised all through the tribe. This is not to say that every man has many wives ; the automatic rule, by which the number of males is always about equivalent to

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593 a reciprocal term, or *nkosikazi*, a Zulu word which means queen, or *ntjibeli*, cook, even *mamana*. I have already described the moral relation which the word nsati implies : no very great tenderness, not much intimacy, but a certain amount of love mingled with respect, and even fear, because a wife can get her husband into endless trouble if she begins to quarrel and runs home ; then all the bukoñwana relations will be spoilt by interminable discussions.

The word bukoñwana is composed of three elements : the root *ko*, which is an ancient Bantu root, found also in Zulu-Xosa (kwe), in Sutho (hoe) and Pedi (χwe). Its meaning is etymologically unknown. To it is added a suffix, *ñwana*, and a prefix *bu*. The prefix bu has a double meaning ; the meaning of abstraction (and then bukoñwana indicates the relationship between a man and his relatives-in-law) and the meaning of place (when bukoñwana indicates the village where relatives-in-law dwell). They say, employing this word in the locative case : To go bukoñwanen, or in an abbreviated form : bukwen.

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The terms used to express these kinds of relationship fall into two categories, which present a striking contrast. On the one hand a man, when he goes to his wife's village, meets with the persons he fears most in the world : these are his *bakoñwana*, properly speaking ; on the other hand he finds there the women towards whom he behaves with the greatest liberty ; these are the *tinamu*. Describing these two sets of relatives-in-law, one of my informants said : "Bakoñwana are those persons who produce wives for you ; tinamu are those persons who produce children for you, because they are your presumptive wives. Even if you do not marry them, their children will call you father."

Let us study these two categories in detail.

b: The bakoñwana.

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607 192 Secondly the bakoñwana are *the wife's brothers*. When their father dies, they take his place as protectors of their sister. Hence the uneasiness and fear with regard to them, which is, however, less marked in their case. The wife's brothers will never be called bamakweru (as they will never be ba-kweru, those of my house) but they are frequently designated by the term *soar*, or *sibar*, which is merely a corruption of the Dutch word zwager. This curious adoption of a foreign term is modern ; it is spreading more and more amongst the Zulus, Xosas and Suthos of Basutoland. Amongst the Thongas I only once heard the word soar used. The tendency to assimilate that kind of relationship to the European conception is a proof that the old fear of brothers-in-law is disappearing in the new generation.

606 But it is in the relation with two women of the wife's family that the respect of bukoñwana is pushed to the greatest extent : the wife's mother and the wife of the brother-in-law. In these cases there is not only respect but *avoidance*

The wife's mother.

606 576 Let us listen to Viguet telling the story of a man meeting his mother-in-law in the bush. "If one of the two sees the other coming a long way off, soon enough to escape without being noticed, he will speedily hide himself and reach his destination by making a long circuit, half a mile if necessary. But if they have come too near to have recourse to flight, this is what will happen. You leave the road ; you enter the bush on your right

606 side. She does the same. Then you sit down according to
376 men's fashion, crossing your legs. She also sits down bending
834 her legs, and putting one knee over the other as women do; then
576 both parties salute each other, you, as a man, clapping your hands against each other, holding them parallel, and the woman holding hers at right angles. 'Then you begin to talk..."

Suppose the son-in-law has had the good luck to reach the village of his wife's relatives without having met his mother-in-law, but sees her sitting somewhere near a hut. This is dreadful. She looks at him and at once covers her breasts with her cloth. He himself turns his eyes aside. I saw in Natal a curious photograph representing the scene. Amongst the Zulus the avoidance of the mother-in-law is perhaps more marked than in any other tribe; the man is shown in the picture hiding his face
606 with his shield. Should the mother-in-law be taking her meal
576 when her son-in-law arrives unexpectedly, she throws away the mouthful she was eating, and he does the same.— Suppose then that he has entered the village without seeing her; then the tinamu, his wife's sisters, come hastily to meet him. They take his sticks, joking with him meanwhile and put them in his mother-in-law's hut. This hut is his; he has the right of staying in it during his whole visit. They spread a mat on the ground, and bring him food. They chat with him. Then the mother-in-law comes in her turn, but she dares not enter the hut. She sits down outside and, without seeing him, salutes him, saying: "Good morning, son of so and so." She must not pronounce his name. He answers in the same style, and must also say: "Daughter of so and so." Should he call her by her name it would be a breach of etiquette and his wife would be angry and say: "How dare you? Did she not bring me forth? Rather say: Mother!" During the first years of his married life, the son-in-law never eats with his wife's mother.

607 This peculiar behaviour is the rule, not only towards the wife's mother, but also towards her sisters.

606 In the course of years there is a *lessening* of this terrible taboo.
431 In the Maputju clan, the son-in-law will provide an ox as soon as
576 possible and he will "communicate" (tlhangana) with her, partaking

606 be banished from their thoughts. They obey that conviction when
835 practising the avoidance rites.

The wife of the brother-in-law, the Great Mukoñwana.

607 This particular respect is even more marked in the relations of a man with the wife of his wife's brother. Indeed the avoidance is pushed further than with the mother-in-law. A Native of the Ndjao tribe (which has the same customs as the Thonga tribe in this respect) described to me vividly the extraordinary marks of fear that these two persons show each other when they meet on the road. The story will be told when speaking of the Ba-Ndjao. Here are some other marks of this extraordinary respect.

607 The wife's brother's wife must always keep her breasts covered
834 in the village of her husband's sister's husband. Only when she has had a child is she permitted to "open her clothing;" but then she must fix a leaf in her hair (as if to show that she does not forget the special reserve which she is bound to maintain). (Khosen region.)

607 When a man travels with his great mukoñwana and they have to
876 cross a river, they will avoid entering the same boat. It may
827 happen to anyone to emit an unseemly sound from the rectum; but if the great mukoñwana is present, she looks on this as a grave offence. A fine must be paid to her, a hoe, for instance. If the guilty man has nothing to give her, he at once breaks a twig from a tree and presents it to her as a token that the proper fine will be forthcoming in due time! He must never use words of insult in her presence, even if he addresses them to another person.

607 If he loses his temper before her she will go to the old people of
844 her husband's village and tell them: "He has insulted me." On the other hand the great mukoñwana is bound to go and assist the wife of this man when she gives birth to a child. At least this is the rule in the Khosa clan and also in Maputju. The two women live on very good terms with each other; they are

607 *tinhombe*. The man himself, when he visits his relatives-in-law, has the right of sleeping in the hut of the great mukoñwana. We have seen that, during the first months after his marriage, he is received in the hut of his mother-in-law. Why is this? Because the oxen

607 of the lobolo are still in the hands of the father-in-law. But later on these oxen are used to provide a wife for one of the sons, and the woman thus obtained is the great mukoñwana; therefore her hut belongs in a certain sense to the man with whose oxen she was bought. When he arrives, he may first be "shown" (komba) the mother-in-law's hut and rest there for a while, but at once the hut of the great mukoñwana will be prepared and he will move into it for the night; of course the mistress of the house has gone elsewhere, and it is the tinamu who will sleep in her hut to keep him company. (However should the visitor have not yet paid the lobolo, he will not be received in this hut. It may happen that his bakoñwana will say to him: "Where is your hut? Sleep outside!")

607 835 582 Why do the relations of a man with the wife of his brother-in-law resemble so greatly his relations with his wife's mother? Let us remember that this man is the potential husband of the daughter of the first, just as he is the actual husband of the daughter of the second. It is probable that the great principle that "a man must not marry a woman and her mother" dictates this extraordinary fear and avoidance in both cases. But, in the case of the wife of the brother-in-law, there is still another élement: "The oxen!" This woman has been acquired by the oxen paid by the man to obtain his wife, and this explains the uneasiness which characterises their relation.

This second reason is perhaps more readily recognised by the Thongas than the first; they sometimes tell you that it is the only reason. But I think they are wrong, and that the same deep feeling that to marry a woman and her mother is incestuous is certainly at the base of these taboos. I may mention two facts in proof of this:

a) Once when I asked a woman of the Maputju country if her husband would be allowed to marry the wife of his brother-in-law, she seemed extremely shocked by the idea and exclaimed: "What are you thinking of? Marry his mother!" To her it would be incest, as much so as if the man had sexual relations with his own mother.

b) The wife of the brother-in-law is not the only great mukoñwana. The wives of his brothers, and of his sons and grandsons are all classed under that term. Why is this? Because a man has a prior right to marry not only the daughter of this special woman but all the daughters of his bakoñwana, and all these women, who are their mothers, are conse-

607 quently his potential mothers. He avoids them all, not on account
835 of the lobolo oxen, which he did not actually pay for their daughters,
582 but because it is intolerable to think that he might have relations with a woman and her mother.

607 But no doubt the fact that oxen have been paid by the man,
586 oxen by means of which his great mukoñwana was bought, is
835 the principal cause of the fear which they both feel towards each other. These oxen have created a sort of interdependence between them. Mboza says : "Should my home be disturbed by quarrels, should my wife Nsabula leave me and run away to her parents, or should she die without children, I shall go and claim my oxen... But the oxen have been employed to buy a wife for my brother-in-law, (Maphunga for Mahangale). If Gogwe has no other means at his disposal he must separate the pair Maphunga-Mahangale, cancel their marriage, send Maphunga home and claim the money from her parents. Or I might myself take Maphunga as my wife, and in either of these cases the marriage Maphunga-Mahangale would be annulled."

Thus it may happen that Mboza may marry his great mukoñwana, though such a union is really incestuous, according to the deep moral feeling of the tribe. This is truly terrible!

587 But does this ever really happen ? I have put this question to
607 many Thongas, in the various clans of the tribe, and remarked that there are differences amongst them.

Amongst the Nkunas of Shiluvane it is an absolute impossibility. Another woman is offered to meet the claim of the son-in-law who has lost his wife. This is called : "Ku hingakanya ntjandja", i. e. "to put a log across the road." The woman offered may be a little girl, still at the breast of her mother, or even a little boy. This is your wife, his parents will say to the son-in-law, and he must be content to know that, as this male baby will no doubt have a sister in the course of the two following years, the girl to be born will replace his wife. "Ntjandja a ba tluli" i. e. "One does not jump over the log." The man will not persist in his claim, and will not insist on taking the great mukonwana to replace his wife.

Amongst the Khosas and Bilas, such a marriage can take place

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if there is really no means of avoiding it. In the Maputju clan, it is also prohibited ; but "owing to the Whites," owing to civilisation, which alters the old, sound laws of the tribe, it sometimes occurs. Everywhere such an occurence is looked on as a great misfortune.

It is in the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques, ka Mpfumo, that the reluctance is least pronounced. I have from Mboza the description of what will happen in that part of the tribe when a woman dies without children. Viguet has told us the first half of the story (p. 217). The husband has paid the *mahloko* ; the mourning is over ; but the parents of the deceased wife have no money, no young girl to give as compensation. Here is the second part of this family drama. The father of the deceased wife having no other resource "opens the way of bukoñwana to his son-in-law, the widower." Let us suppose it is Nsabula who has died. Gogwe goes, together with Mboza and his official go-between, to the father of Maphunga. Let us call him Mbekwa. He gives him two hoes and says : "We have brought your mukoñwana (Mboza) because we have had a sad affair (hi humele)." Mbekwa asks Mboza : "How many hoes did you pay for your deceased wife" ? — "Fifty," says Mboza. — "Well, we have received from Gogwe as yet only thirty for Maphunga!" Gogwe acknowledges that it is so. He must at once find the missing twenty hoes and give them back to Mboza, who returns to Mbekwa taking them with him, so as to complete the lobola. All this was only preparatory. Now Gogwe has no further interest in the matter, and returns home. It concerns Mboza alone. Mbekwa calls Maphunga and says : "Look ! this is your great mukoñwana ! Now he is your husband." She may say : "Yes, very well." Then Mboza fetches a goat, and a most curious ceremony takes place, which we shall describe later on, the rite of *killing bukoñwana* or *shikoñwana*, the aim being to kill a certain kind of relationship which must be replaced by another, after which Mboza can marry Maphunga. But most probably Maphunga will say : "No! I fear him too much! It is taboo!" Her feelings cannot accept such a change in their relations. Viguet does not say : "She loves her own husband too much to go willingly to another!" This seems to be a minor consideration. If she definitely refuses, Mbekwa will try

587 607 to find another woman. Maphunga may perhaps have a daughter who will do. Or Mbekwa may have a married son whose daughter can also be offered. If the great mukoñwana is only pregnant, the child about to be born is quite enough *ku hingakanya ntjandja*, to put a log across the road and an end to the claim. But the child will perhaps be a boy... not a girl. Never mind! Mboza will wait patiently for a girl ; Shaputa will be born ; he will wait again until she is of age, then he will marry her and she will *pfusha yindlu ya rarana*, viz. raise up the house of her aunt Nsabula (1). Naturally if matters take this course, Gogwe will have to pay the lobola of the girl who has taken the place of the deceased. Nowadays it is not very difficult : he will work, or send one of his sons to work, for the money.

c) The tinamu.

607 When a man goes bukoñwanen, his heart is full of mixed feelings. He trembles lest he may meet the two terrible bakoñwana whom he wishes to avoid ; but, on the other hand, he is greatly rejoiced at the idea that his *tinamu* will welcome him with hearty laughter and jokes and make much of him. Who are these tinamu ? They belong to three categories, which correspond to three kinds of *bulamu*. First of all *the younger sisters of the wife*.

607 835 *Namu*, plur. *tinamu*, in Ronga, *balamo* in Djonga, comes from the archaic verb *yalama*, which means to *follow*, to come after. My tinamu are those who follow my wife, who have been born after her, her younger sisters in particular. They are my *presumptive wives*, therefore I can play with them with the greatest freedom ; I eat together with them from the same plate. They go so far as to smear my face with ashes (tota hi nkuma) and afterwards wash it with water. I have the right to pat their shoulders gently, to snatch something from their hands, to force them to give me something to eat ; and, if they refuse, I will say to them : "How dare you stint me, you, my wives!" They go

(1) One more fact. If Muhangala has taken another wife besides Maphunga, his daughter born of this second wife cannot be used to meet the claim of the widower.

607 so far as to sleep in the hut of my great mukonwana together with
835 me (p. 242). Nevertheless sexual relations are not allowed.
595 Should a man commit this sin, and should his sister-in-law
582 become pregnant, he will have to pay a fine, or rather he will go to his father-in-law and say : (Viguet) "Ndi dlele ku dya"-"I have killed in order to eat" which means : I have committed a bad action but with the intention of repairing my wrong by marrying the girl. He brings five hoes when he makes the announcement and will remit the remainder of the lobolo later on. A younger sister when married to the same husband as the elder, is called *nhlampsa* of the latter. This term comes probably from hlampsa, to wash, because she washes the dishes of her sister and works more or less as her servant.

607 The right of marrying one's wife's sisters is by no means an
582 obligation. I am not in any way forced to do so, if I do not like
595 them. Most probably, even if I wished to marry them all, I should not have enough oxen to "lobola" them all. On the other hand, the bakoñwana are not obliged to give them to me. If I am not a good husband to my wife, if she complains that I illtreat her, her parents will not consent to receive my oxen for her sisters. Should my tinamu marry other men, of course the peculiar bulamu relations will cease. I can no longer allow myself the intimacy I previously had with them. But if they have children by these men, they will call me tatana and I shall call them bana, because I might have been their father, having a prior right of marrying their mothers.

607 My wife's elder sisters are not tinamu to me ; they are
582 bakoñwana. Why so ? Because when I married my wife, her elder sisters were already married, according to the law that an elder sister must always marry before the younger. A father would never consent to give away the younger before the elder. Therefore I have never had the opportunity of playing with my wife's elder sisters and considering them as possible wives.

607 By extension the term namu is also applied to my wife's
595 younger brothers. They are bakoñwana, in fact (p. 238). Their daughters are my potential wives. However, the relations I have with them are easier than with the elder brothers and

607 with the father of my wife, as these are her natural protectors.
835 In this first category is included the daughter of my wife's
595 brother (Shaputa versus Mboza). With her the relations are perhaps even more free than with my wife's younger sisters. I call her *nsati*. The intimacy is so great that I can hold her breasts (tamele mabele). I can do so even in the presence of my wife, who is her paternal aunt. She will be pleased to see that I am disposed to avail myself of my right to marry her, because her niece will thus become her nhlampsa, she will hlampsela rarana, i. e. become a second wife by the side of her father's sister. But I dare not take such a liberty with the girl if her father is on the spot and sees me. I probably do not possess the oxen to pay for her, and the father looks chiefly to the oxen.

As already pointed out, all the girls belonging to my bakoñwana are in the same position towards me. I can marry them all... if I am rich enough to "lobola" them. The grand-daughter of my wife's brother is a namu, a nsati. She will probably be a baby whilst I am a grown-up man. Never mind! If I meet her, a little girl on her mother's back, I go and take her in my arms, and
602 say to her : "Good morning, my wife!" As regards my wife's
607 cousins, those whose father is a brother of my wife's father and
835 who bear the same family name as my wife, they are also tinamu,
595 but here a distinction must be made. Should the father of one of these girls be younger than my wife's father, I can marry her ; but should he be older I must not do so. Why is this? Because the girl, belonging to an elder branch of my wife's family, takes precedence of my wife ; she is her "hosi", her chief. On the other hand my wife, being my first wife, is the mistress of the house ; this cousin of hers ought therefore to obey her. But she is her chief! That would not be right. The natural family relations would be disturbed.. Such a union is not taboo (a psi yili) but it must be avoided.

835 The *second category of tinamu* includes those women whom I
595 might marry, not on account of the prior right of a group to the
607 women of another group, but because I might *inherit them*. They are the wives of my elder brothers. If their husbands die, I am their legal heir. Relations with them are easy. We joke together, but there is more reserve towards these tinamu than towards those

835 of the first category. Sexual intercourse with them is a great taboo,
595 and a man daring to commit such a sin would be likened to a
607 wizard : he has killed his brother. This is the sin called matlulana (App. VI). My younger brother's wives are not tinamu ; we call each other ñwingi. I do not inherit them except in extraordinary cases when the deceased has no brother younger than himself.

602 There is still a *third kind of bulamu*. I also call tinamu the
835 cousins of my wife who are the daughters of my wife's mother's
582 sisters. These girls do not belong to my wife's clan ; they bear the family name of their father. Therefore I have no right to inherit them : "A hi delani ndjaka," i. e. "we do not inherit from each other." The relations with these tinamu are agreeable, but there is no hope of marriage between us.

2) Relations on the Husband's side.

607 So far we have considered the relation of Mboza with his wife's family. But what about Nsabula and her position towards her husband's relatives ? Nsabula calls Masuluke and Nsengamuñwe *ñwingi*, and the term is reciprocal. It implies great respect. As we saw, the young bride must work a whole year for her mother-in-law. The same respect is shown by Nsabula to Djan, Sam, Fos, her husband's elder brothers. They are also *ñwingi* to each other. "Should I send her to call Djan," says Mboza, "she will kneel down before him and say : 'My father! Mboza calls you!' or : 'Ñwamasuluke (Masuluke's son), you are wanted with us." She will not dare to address him by name. This extraordinary respect is reciprocal. Djan will consider Nsabula as his inferior, but he will never play with her. On the other hand, Komatane, Mboza's younger brother, is only a *namu* to Nsabula. Both will joke together and even occasionally smear each other with ashes. So will Sam, Fos, Mboza and Komatane with Mihlakaza, the wife of their elder brother. Thus we note
607 this law : a woman will generally respect the elder brothers of her
835 husband (beñgi), and hold very free intercourse with his younger
595 brothers (tinamu), and vice-versa. A man will keep away from

607 his younger brother's wives (bengi) and play with those of his elder
835 brothers (tinamu). Why tis here this difference ? Because, as
we saw, the wife of an elder brother is a possible wife for all
595 his younger brothers, as they have the right of inheriting
582 her, should this man die. On the contrary, an elder brother inherits his younger brother's wife only under quite exceptional circumstances. One does not marry a ñwingi! This would be an insult to one's wife. Nsabula would leave Mboza if Mboza were to marry Magugu, Komatane's wife, because they have been accustomed to call each other ñwingi.

607 To a wife, her husband's elder sister is also a ñwingi (Ndjibari to Nsabula). The husband's younger sister is a namu or *nhombe*, and two tinhombe have very free relations, just as in the case of the tinamu. This freedom exists between female tinamu as well as between tinamu of different sexes.

606 There is a final term to be mentioned : *bakhoti* or *bakhoti-kulobye*, in Ronga, *basevele* in Djonga, a reciprocal term by which the parents of a husband and wife call each other.

593 How far is a woman incorporated in her husband's family ?
769 She belongs to it till her death, provided the lobolo oxen have been paid, but she does not accept the ancestor-gods of her parents-in-law as being her gods. She keeps her own gods, and pr[illegible] are frequently addressed to them by her father or by her brothers in favour of her children. In this respect Thongas differ widely from the old Aryan peoples, where a woman had to adopt the religion of her husband's clan when she married.

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606 Before leaving the subject of relations with parents-in-law, and in order to show to what extent the uneasiness and fear which characterises them are carried, I will briefly mention the taboos of the bukoñwana, which play such a great part in Bantu family life. Let me say that most of these taboos (psiyilayilana, small prohibitions), are not so severe as those connected with sexual relations, disease and death. It is not believed that a breach of

588 it on the wife's head and say to her : "Go and bear children."
782 *In the Ronga clans* the *dlaya shilongo* is somewhat different. The bridegroom must first give £ 1 to the father ; this is over and above the lobolo, of course. Both families provide a goat. These goats are killed without the assistance of the uterine nephews, in front of the hut of the girl's mother. The grandfather prays to the gods of the girl's father : "So be it! They have decided to marry each other ; you, gods of the boy and the girl, unite them together so that they do not hate each other ; let them not remind each other that they are brother and sister ; let their union not be spoilt by such remembrances, nor by other people saying to them : "You have been guilty of witchcraft! You have married your relative!" By this prayer a general notification is given to everybody, and the feeling of shame is removed. Afterwards the officiating relative continues, exhorting the new wife, telling her all that she must do for her husband, mentioning all the details of her conjugal duties with such realism that she begins to cry. The bridegroom bows his head in shame. The preacher goes on till somebody puts a piece of meat into his mouth to stop the exhortation!

The whole country has gathered to see the proceedings and to eat the meat. The wedding pair do not partake of it, because *the goats have been sacrificed for them* (ba hahlela bone). The relatives go home, roasting on the way the joint of meat they have received so as to eat it before reaching their village.

602 The aim of the *dlaya shilongo* is lawfully to kill one kind of relationship and to replace it by another, because the two are not compatible. However, in the case of inheritance of a rarana, for instance, when a blood relative has to change his relationship and to become a relative by marriage, he can inherit without any rite being performed, if there is no nearer legal heir ; in this case it is said : "Bushaka byi ta pfuka — the blood relationship will be revived." It will be strengthened by the new marriage relationship.

588 In the case of marriage with the great mukoñwana, this rite
607 is also performed, as previously mentioned (p. 244). The wedding pair are also covered with the goat's skin. This goat is

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called *the cat*, because it is like a cat which is put on their shoulders and scratches them. It scratches away the bukoñwana which prevented their marriage. (Viguet.) In this case it is the *shikoñwana* which is killed. So the taboo is removed and they can marry.

III. *Marriages permitted.*

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Relatives from the eighth degree of relationship can marry unconditionally (Mankhelu). The choice of a boy is unlimited within the clan and even within the tribe. However, marriages into a *too far distant clan* are not recommended, according to Viguet, for the following reasons: 1) If the marriage were unsuccessful, the parents-in-law against whom the claim would be brought might run away with wife and oxen, and we should lose our herd. 2) If our oxen multiplied in the other clan, we might be tempted to go and make war on our parents-in-law in order to appropriate the cattle. So blood would be shed on account of our own oxen! This would bring shame upon us! Whilst if we marry amongst friends, even amongst remote relatives, should a quarrel occur, we shall try to settle it peacefully. These people are amongst those with whom we discuss in the hut. With strangers we discuss outside, on the square, and we occasionally fight with them and drive them away. So a difficulty can better be dealt with when our bukoñwana are people living close by.

IV. *Marriages recommended.*

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Here we must take into account two different cases: some marriages are contracted on account of a kind of right of pre-emption, others on account of a right of inheritance.

1) Right of pre-emption.

There are amongst the relatives of a man certain women on whom he has a kind of preferential claim, or a right of pre-emption,

582 607 and whom he calls spouses, because he would be welcomed if he were able to lobola them. They are his *tinamu* or *tinhlampsa*, viz., his wife's younger sisters or the daughters of his wife's brother. These marriages are considered as peculiarly appropriate. This does not however constitute an absolute right for the man. Should he not prove a good husband, his parents-in-law will not let him have their other daughters (p. 240).

582 607 595 As regards marriage with the wife's brother's daughter, who is the nhlampsa proper, there are different possibilities to be considered. It may very well happen that a man's wife, wishing to have a young girl to help her in her domestic work, approaches her brother and asks him to lend her his daughter, the woman's niece, to stay in her village for this purpose. He consents, and she grows up there. Later on however the girl's parents say to their sister : If your husband has oxen, he may take her as a wife. She returns home and discusses the matter with her husband. Should the latter be agreed, he will send his wife with £ 1.10.—to make a proposal to the girl's parents, and he will take the girl at once without much ceremony. The remainder of the lobolo will perhaps be paid afterwards. If a son wants to marry and has no means of buying his wife, then the girl's parents will say to their sister : "Please remind your husband that he has not yet given the oxen." But they will not urge this too strongly as it is their sister who arranged the marriage in order to secure help for herself. On the contrary should the husband have taken the initiative, and sent his wife to ask her parents to give him the girl because he wanted her, then the lobolo oxen will be claimed at once, or at any rate the bakoñwana will be in a position to insist on a speedy remittance of the bride-price. But as my informant says : "Pai ya hi bhanu," i. e. "it goes according to the people." It depends on their character.

586 582 607 595 However there is a reason which militates against such marriages. If I quarrel with my first wife, who may have a particularly difficult character, and she goes home, her younger sisters or nieces, who are her tinhlampsa, will certainly follow her, and I shall remain quite alone without a single dish to eat in the evening. Should the quarrel end in a divorce, I shall lose all my

586 wives at once. The custom of marrying a wife's tinhlampsa is
582 approved of; it is however not very frequently observed in Thonga
607 families at the present time.
595 Other women to whom a man has a special right are his relatives on the mother's side, as we have seen; to take a wife from the family in which the father found the mother is recommended and approved of as long as she is not too near a relative.

2) The right of inheritance.

587 The second class of cases does not concern unmarried women
835 whom I mean to lobola, but widows whom I may inherit after
768 the death of their husband. Those whom I may eventually inherit
595 are generally called by me *namu* or *nsati*, and I have very free
582 relations with them, but as already pointed out this liberty never goes so far as to allow of sexual intercourse (p. 247). "Ndi nga da," viz. "I can eat, inherit by prior right" *my elder brother's widow*: she is my regular legacy. As regards my younger brother's widow, I can only marry her if she is old and no longer able to bear children. But if she is still a childbearing woman, to take her is very much against the feelings of the tribe. The reason of the prohibition is this, says Viguet: suppose that this widow of my younger brother already has children. I take her, and have a child by her. The child takes precedence of the first children of its mother: he is their *hosi*, because I, myself, the father, am the elder brother of the deceased. On the other hand, he is *ndjisana* of his other brothers, because he was born after them by *the same mother*. This is impossible; it runs counter to the most elementary notions of the family. In exceptional cases, however, when no one else can claim my younger brother's widow, I may take her.

587 Next to my true tinamu comes *the widow of my maternal uncle*.
768 If he had many, one might be alloted to me in the distribution.
595 But of course, in this as in all other cases of inherited women, the
582 children born of our union would belong to the family who paid the lobola, and not to me. I have, in a sense, only the usufruct of the property. She will till the fields for me and serve me with

APPENDIX VI (See p. 265)

The story of Paulus K., illustrating the matlulana superstition and the Thonga horror of polyandry.

607 835 One of my pupils, who was already a married man of, perhaps, thirty-two years of age, once came to me, very much distressed, to confess a fault which seemed to weigh very heavy on his conscience. On a day of feasting he had drunk too freely and had commited adultery with the wife of his elder brother Guga. He fought with himself for years, not daring to avow an action which seemed to him not merely ordinary adultery but an incestuous act. He finally wrote to his brother: "Though I know that we shall not be able to love each other any more as before, though it pains me so much to separate from you, I will confess! Please forgive me, as I intended to commit suicide on account of my fault!"

The special gravity of the fault consisted in two circumstances: 1) She was his brother's wife and he was now unable to visit his brother when ill, to take part in his burial, or to maintain friendly relations with him. 2) Guga was his elder brother. This made the case still worse.

The letter of Paulus to his fellow evangelists is touching: "I have no right to stay in your assembly, because I have been overcome by the Enemy and committed adultery with my elder brother's wife. I have been long prevented (from confessing) by the Enemy's power. Now I have wept before Jesus that He may help me to pierce the abscess... Satan came and said to me: 'Will you not be ashamed to confess such a thing before men'? I nearly retreated. But at sunrise I made haste to write to you, and now I feel peace and joy. It seems to me that I am going to receive the Spirit of God."

APPENDIX VII (See p. 279)

611 597 604 *The story of Spoon Libombo, shewing that, when the lobolo has not been paid or has been returned, the children belong to the mother's and not to the father's family.*

Spoon was the son of Shibaninge, a woman of the Libombo family, and of Khobete of the Mazwaya family, who had lobola Shibaninge.

844 As soon as the child has made his appearance one of the
846 midwives ties the *umbilical cord* (likabana) near the navel and cuts it about three inches from it. The little sore is anointed with a kind of fat ; the bit of cord remaining with the baby is attended to with great care : it generally falls off at the end of the first week, and this is the signal for the end of the period of confinement.

The after-birth, the *placenta*, is also looked for with much anxiety : it is called *yindlu ya ñwana*, the "house of the child," or *hlalu*. When it is delayed too long, the midwives begin to fear "because the blood which is inside has not all come out and will kill the mother." In the Khosa clan, should the placenta not come at once, the woman is told to stand on her feet, her body half bent forward, and all the midwives begin to move their index fingers from right to left, emitting at the same time the following sound : tswi-tswi-tswi-tswi. This is said to help the placenta to come. The placenta is generally buried deep behind the hut on the spot where the birth has taken place ; but some prefer to bury it inside the house, fearing the dogs might unearth it, which is taboo.

The child is then washed with water. This water is thrown away as being polluted by the blood of the birth, which is taboo.

553 *Naming the child*. On the day of birth or on one of the following
787 days the child receives his name (bito). There are four principal ways of choosing this.

1) Often the parents give their offspring *the name of a chief* as Musongi, Makasana, Muzila, etc. It flatters their vanity !

2) But frequently the parents like to recall a name of the old times (pfusha bito dja khale), the name of one of the ancestors, because it is a good thing to remember them. They go so far as to consult the bones. A name is proposed, and if the bones in falling do not give a favourable indication, another is tried till they feel sure that the die "has spoken" (1).

553 3) Or it may be that somebody asks the favour of giving his
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(1) The Christian Natives like to ask their missionary to choose the name, perhaps for a similar reason.

553 608 name to the new-born child ; a friend of the family may do so, but it is also often a traveller who happens to be in the village to whom this privilege is accorded. He will "*name himself in the child*" (ku titshula ka ñwana). This fact will establish a special relation between this person and the child, a relation which bears some resemblance to that of a godfather to his godson. Once a year he will come and give "his name" (viz. the child) presents. When the child is able to travel, the mother will go with him to pay a visit to his "friend in name" (mabitokulobye).

553 4) A fourth way of naming new-born children is to choose a name having some connection with the *circumstances of the birth*. Should a child have seen the light when his mother was travelling, he will be called *Ndlelen* viz. "on the way," "on the road ;" should the birth have taken place under a tree, the name of that tree will be chosen, put in the locative case, and you will meet many Thongas called Nkanyen (under the terebinth), Nkwakwen (under the Strychnos), Nkuwen (under the fig-tree), etc. ; or Mpfulen (in the rain), Marumbin (in the ruins), Mawewe, if the child is born during the war waged by the chief of that name, etc. When General Beyers was over-running Zoutpansberg with his commando, the Natives, admiring the swiftness of his movements, named many children after him (1).

551 The names of the Thongas are the same for the two sexes. There are only two which cannot be employed indiscriminately

553 789 (1) In the case of *hanumbu*, viz. if a woman has lost many children (see Part. I. Ch. II. 8), should she give birth to a new one, a name will be chosen which will protect the new-born infant against the fate of his older brothers and sisters. I know a boy who was born under such circumstances. His grandfather *Shona* named him after himself in order to bring him good luck. The Rev. H Gaye, in an article entitled : "Des noms propres chez les Ba-Ronga" *(Bulletin de la Société Neuchâteloise de Géographie*, 1920) quotes an interesting instance of such a name. A boy was called *Nyamayabu*, viz. their meat. His elders had died and it was thought that they had been eaten by wizards. When this boy came into the world, his parents had abandoned all hope of keeping him alive and said : "It is their meat, the meat which the wizards will eat !" But they evidently thought that this name would be a protection to the child, perhaps because wizards would see that their evil tricks were known, and would fear to be discovered, if they killed it. Such names are called : "names of misery" (mabito ya bujwana, ya ku tijotja), as Binza or Bisalifa, "the one who hiccoughs death ;" whenever he emits his hiccoughs, he spreads death.

837 684 692 The woman is questioned, and confesses when, where, and how many times he has sinned with her. If he denies this, the object taken from the hut is exhibited. The adulterer is condemned by the chief to pay a *whole lobolo*, £ 15 to £ 20, as much as is necessary to buy a wife. He is rebuked before the whole assembly. "If you had taken a girl, it would not have mattered at all. Why did you abduct a married woman ? Do you not know that it breeds endless trouble at court (tindaba) ?"

The counsellor of the deceived husband goes to the counsellor of the lover to claim the money. The latter must go to the guilty man. The parents of the adulterer insult their son : "You see! All this money lost now! If only you had lobola a wife with it!" They must help him to find it at once, because this is a law universally recognised : the price of adultery must be forthcoming. (Nandju wa bumbuye a wu pfumali). The poor man will have to pay ; he will even have to add a hoe to "drive away" (hlongola) the counsellor, who keeps it for his reward!

837 684 783 753 608 Why is adultery so strongly prohibited and punished ? Not at all from any moral consideration of purity or chastity, but for two other reasons. First a social one. Adultery with a married woman is a theft, because she is owned by a master. She is not punished herself, except when the watcher finds her out and gives himself the pleasure of thrashing her to his heart's content. The whole punishment falls on the man ; he is the thief. But there is also a physical reason for it : the *matlulana*! We have already met with this word. *Tlulana* means to jump over each other, to compete with each other. In the sexual domain it is said of two men who have relations with the same woman. "They have met [826] together in one life through the blood of that woman ; they have drunk from the same pool" (Viguet). This establishes between them a most curious mutual dependence : should one of them be ill, the other must not visit him ; the patient might die. If he runs a thorn into his foot, the other must not help him to extract it ; it is taboo ; the wound would not heal. If he dies, his rival must not be present at his mourning or he would himself die (See page 137). Should he even be the actual son (sometimes it happens that a son commits adultery with one of the younger wives

783 village itself, which must carry out the collective purification of
768 *hlamba ndjaka*.

I must further mention a new custom which is spreading
587 amongst the Ba-Ronga in the neighbourhood of Lourenço
609 Marques. When a widow objects to becoming the wife of the legal
611 inheritor, she goes home and adopts another husband. There are plenty of men of other tribes, coming from Inhambane, Quelimane, Mozambique, who have no wife. They accept the proposal of the widow and go to live in her village. They are generally despised and called by the insulting name of *mugomo*, a Zulu word meaning an empty iron oil-tin. They are as hard and unfeeling as such a tin! If children are born, they belong to the family of the deceased husband, who paid the lobolo.

587 Sometimes also a widow chooses a nephew who is still a child. She gives him food as if she were his wife, but she lives with another man whom she loves. It even happens that she may choose a girl, the daughter of another wife of the deceased. (Annotatio 13.)[1]

C. OLD AGE AND DEATH

888 An old woman, having in some sort gone out from the sexual
782 community, enjoys some privileges which are taboo for her sisters who are still capable of childbearing. She is allowed to put on the clothing of the widows ; contamination of death is not so dangerous for her. She can proceed to the purification of the village, in certain cases of epidemic, and of the weapons of the warriors in war time (Part III). After the sacrifice of the black ram for rain, old women and small girls alone are allowed to eat the flesh of the victim.

462 But old and decrepit women are despised. As long as they
888 can still till their land, they are treated with consideration, but when they have lost all their strength and must be fed by their children, they are looked upon as troublesome burdens. I must say that, as long as she still has an atom of vigour, a Thonga woman goes to her field and tills it. During all her life time

1 [See pp. 518-519 in these categories or in III — Analyst]

584 you are there, or on the road, have nothing to do with it. The
825 zebra is *mbalamberi*, an animal of two colours; moreover it has no
777 horns. The same holds good for the giraffe. It has two colours,
784 it has too long bowels. Psa yila! The reedbuck cries: "Dzoo." It is a witch: a mukoñwana must not eat it. For the same reason a sheep without horns is never given to bakoñwana.

7. When you go with women to the parents of your fiancée for a *shirwalo*, viz., to bring them beer, should one of the jugs fall to the ground, psa yila! Return home!

606 8. From a Thonga of the Maputju country I once heard that it
609 was a great taboo in that district for a man to drink milk with
784 his parents-in-law; let us say rather to *eat* milk, as Natives
618 always take it in its solid form, i. e. curdled. This man was a
825 Christian; he had given up many heathen customs and had gone
177 so far as to partake of milk with his mother-in-law, but, the people all round were very much shocked at his conduct. Pushing my inquiry further, I heard that the milk taboo was observed not only with bakoñwana, but with all the inhabitants of the country who did not belong to one's clan; curdled milk was to be eaten only with people bearing the same family name. In other words, it is forbidden to eat milk *in any village where one can take a wife*. In a very interesting paper published in the *South African Journal of Science*, 1925, p. 481, Mrs A. W. Hoernlé says that this custom is wide-spread amongst many Bantu tribes of Central and South Africa, and explains it by the very intimate relationship which is thought to exist between human beings and cattle. The oxen are one with the clan to which they belong, and only members of that clan can partake of the milk of their cows. I never met with this idea in the other parts of the Thonga tribe, and I may remark that, as the Maputju clan is settled very near to the Zulus and has been more or less "zuluised", this custom might very well have been borrowed from its neighbours. Further researches will show whether the other Thonga clans have preserved what seems to be a very old Bantu idea, or at any rate traces of it. This is quite possible.

584 9. Do not build a hut for your wife before you have married
777 her. Mankhelu says: "Even if you have plenty of money
784 to lobola, if you make such a blunder your wife will be taken from you.

In Shiluvane, I was in a very favorable
582 position to judge of the real feelings of the Thongas. There
~~777~~ were two tribes there, which had been living side by side for
609 more than seventy years, tribes united by old friendship and
648 military alliance, viz., the Nkuna clan of the Thongas and the Khaha clan of the Pedis. I did not see a single case of intermarriage between them. The difference of language could not account for the fact, because generally speaking, all the men could speak both Thonga and Pedi. When asked why they did not contract unions with the Pedis, the Nkunas answered : "Their customs are too disgusting for us." They meant more especially the freedom with which Khaha women commit adultery. Pedis would probably have made the same objection to the immorality of Thonga boys and girls. Whatever may be the cause, they have not intermarried up to this day.

582 On the other hand the Thongas are *exogamic* as regards the family. To understand properly these exogamic rules, let us classify the cases in the four following categories : Cases of absolute prohibition of marriage ; of conditional permission ; of unconditional permission, and cases in which marriage is recommended.

I. *Cases of absolute prohibition.*

582 As a rule marriage is prohibited between a tatana, mamana,
605 rarana and a ñwana, and between bamakwabu.

On the father's side the prohibition is particularly severe. Amongst the Ba-Ronga, it is taboo for a boy to marry a girl when both can lay claim to a common ancestor in the paternal line. It seems that the rule is not so stringent in the Northern clans. According to Mankhelu, marriage is absolutely prohibited between all the descendants of a grandfather, viz., between first cousins. Between second cousins it is permitted conditionally, "by killing the family tie," and between third cousins it is allowed. "Third cousins" as Mankhelu says, "are *batlandlamani ba tolo* ; they belong to families which were relatives yesterday. We are

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called *the cat*, because it is like a cat which is put on their shoulders and scratches them. It scratches away the bukoñwana which prevented their marriage. (Viguet.) In this case it is the *shikoñwana* which is killed. So the taboo is removed and they can marry.

III. *Marriages permitted.*

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Relatives from the eighth degree of relationship can marry unconditionally (Mankhelu). The choice of a boy is unlimited within the clan and even within the tribe. However, marriages into a *too far distant clan* are not recommended, according to Viguet, for the following reasons: 1) If the marriage were unsuccessful, the parents-in-law against whom the claim would be brought might run away with wife and oxen, and we should lose our herd. 2) If our oxen multiplied in the other clan, we might be tempted to go and make war on our parents-in-law in order to appropriate the cattle. So blood would be shed on account of our own oxen! This would bring shame upon us! Whilst if we marry amongst friends, even amongst remote relatives, should a quarrel occur, we shall try to settle it peacefully. These people are amongst those with whom we discuss in the hut. With strangers we discuss outside, on the square, and we occasionally fight with them and drive them away. So a difficulty can better be dealt with when our bukoñwana are people living close by.

IV. *Marriages recommended.*

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Here we must take into account two different cases: some marriages are contracted on account of a kind of right of pre-emption, others on account of a right of inheritance.

1) Right of pre-emption.

There are amongst the relatives of a man certain women on whom he has a kind of preferential claim, or a right of pre-emption,

484 comes to ask for his property! What cunning displayed in confusing the real issue and evading payment! (1)

Travelling consequently plays a great part in the life of these tribes, and it is no wonder that it is subject to many rules and that many taboos must be observed on the road in order to succeed in these expeditions.

I may mention first the four following taboos.

484 A traveller must not *take salt* with him when he goes either to
777 pay a visit, or to hunt, or on a business trip, or else he will not succeed in his object ; he must avoid *sharpening assagais* on the
784 road ; this would rouse his enemies and "awaken thorns" on the path ; he must take care *not to pluck milala leaves*, those used for weaving baskets : it would be an insult to the people on whom he is calling. Let him cut these leaves when returning, or else he will find trouble in the village to which he goes, lamentations, shoutings, disgusting sights. When he finds on the road people occupied in *digging a grave*, he must go at once and help them for a while. If he neglects this duty, he will take upon himself the misfortune (titekela khombo). He will not succeed in his purpose. Should he be in the village when some person dies, he must take part in the purification of the inmates.

825 There are some kinds of animals which bring bad luck to the
777 traveller. In order to "keep the road clean" (basisa ndlela), he
484 must beware of the *mampfana bird*, a kind of crane called "the preventer of the journey" (sibaliyendjo (Ro) shitsinyariendjo (Dj). Should this bird fly across the road, with wide-spread wings, it would be enough to make the party return home : there is danger of death before them and the "mampfana" comes to warn them

609 (1) One day one of my neighbours, named Mandjia, was arranging to start for
784 Bilene to "follow his goods" (landja bukosi) ; he came and requested me to give him a letter. "What for? Your debtors do not know how to read and I do not know anything about your affairs." — "It does not matter," said he. "The important point is that I should have a paper in my hand. They will be afraid. They will think that I come from the White people with their authority." I did not like to refuse a small favour to a neighbour; on the other hand I was somwhat reluctant to help him in a none too moral plan, so I gave him a letter addressed to the Portuguese Intendant of these countries in which I stated that I knew him. It was a kind of pass... What use did he make of it? The fact remains that he came back with his oxen, and I believe the sight of the mysterious paper was not without influence in the transactions which ended in the recovery of his property!

576 551 In *addressing* an elder person, it is not becoming to call him by his name. You will say to him: "Tatana," father, or "mamana," mother, as the case may be. Or you address him by the name of his father preceded by Ñwa, if it is a man, Mi, if it is a woman. So Mboza was called Ñwamasuluke, and Nsabula Migogwe. You may also say to a counsellor: "Ndjuna," to the chief: "Hosi," to the headman: "Numzana," to any grown-up man: "Wa-ka-Manyana," viz., man of such a clan, or descendant of such a man. Even speaking of an adult in the third person, you will not use his name but employ similar respectful expressions.

576 553 551 After the birth of her first child, the mother is generally called after it, not so universally, however, as amongst the Ba-Sutho. So Magugu, the wife of Spoon, became Mamana wa Modjadju, especially when spoken of in the third person. The names which are the most taboo are those of the mother-in-law, and of the "woman bought with my oxen." Speaking of a deceased person, one puts before his name the expression "*Matjuwa*," which corresponds to our: "late." In the Northern clans, the word *shira*, grave, is employed for "late".

576 The principle *salutations* are: *Shawan*: Be saluted, said by the arriving guest, to which you reply also: *Shawan*. *Hamban*: Good-bye or *Salan*: Remain, is said on leaving, and you answer: *Famban*: Go, or *Famban kahle* (Zulu): Go happily. Other greetings are employed only at certain times of the day: *Avushen*! a kind of locative, "at the dawn," equivalent to "Good morning." (Vusha means dawn). *Hi nhlekanhi*: It is midday! *A dji pelen*: or *a dji hlwen*: At sunset, properly: time when the sun sets. When retiring to sleep: *Yetlelan* (Ro.): Sleep! or *sibaman* (Dj.): lie on your belly; or *hi ta pfushana*: we shall say to each other good morning to-morrow! A curious salutation addressed to people working is: *A psi fen* (Ro.): Let it die. Its origin is as follows. When a man had killed a large animal, a hippopotamus or an antelope, his companions are in the habit of saluting him thus, hoping to share the meat with him. Now it is said to anybody working in the fields; it then means: "Let your work die." The

576 609 word "Nkosi," with which Natives salute white men, means Chief in Zulu. They lift up their hand when pronouncing it. It

576 is not as if they were trying to raise their hats, as they do not wear
609 any. The explanation of the gesture is this, according to a Transvaal Native : the Boers taught black people to point to heaven, when saluting a white man, with this meaning : I compare you with the One who is above!

576 In the Northern clans, salutations are generally accompanied
201 by a clapping of hands (omba mandla). Men beat their hands against each other, placing them parallel to each other ; women do the same, placing them crosswise or at right angles. Amongst the Ba-Pedi this salutation with the hands is performed in a somewhat different manner ; when a Pedi enters the hubo, and wishes to greet a gathering of men, he claps his hands before his breast ; but when he salutes only one person, he bows down and claps his hands at the height of his knees, either on the right side or on the left. Amongst the Ba-Ronga, clapping the hands is a sign of thankfulness ; they say as they do so : *I khani mambo*, which probably means : "I dance before you, Sir." ("Mambo"
576 means chief in the Ndjao language.) In Djonga the proper word for thanking is *nkomo*. The etymology of this word seems to be : "I homu," "it is an ox." If anyone gives me a hen, he presents it to me saying : "Take my chick." When he brings a goat he says : "This is my hen." In both cases I answer : "Nkomo," "it is an ox!" The Thonga etiquette requires that the giver depreciate his gift and that the receiver magnify it! Another less polite way of thanking is this : *Yengetan*!, — "do it again," or *ni mundjuku*, — "and also to-morrow!"

576 Thongas used not to *shake hands* in former times. Now-a-days
177 the civilised Natives have adopted the European fashion, but this kind of familiarity is not approved of by the old folks, especially by the chiefs. Natives, when they shake hands, often do it in two movements : first they catch the four fingers and then slide on to the thumb. I do not know where they have
832 learnt to do this! *Kissing* was formerly entirely unknown. A good mother would occasionally wipe her baby's nose, but this can hardly be called a kiss. When they saw the custom adopted by the Europeans, they said laughingly : "Look at these people! They suck each other! They eat each other's saliva and dirt!"

832 576 593 152 572 Even a husband never kissed his wife. On coming back from a journey, a man would hardly greet his wife; she would see him passing through the village, prepare food for him, and when it was cooked, she would come and salute him by presenting it to him. But if he has a good friend in the village, and if this friend sees him coming back after a long absence, their meeting will be much more touching. The friend will go to the main entrance of the village, exclaim: "Ha-Ha," take his parcel from his hands, put his arms round his shoulders (a ku mu buso hi mandla), remove the perspiration from his face, and pat him gently, saying: "Your ancestor-gods have their eyes open! They have worked well! They have brought you back."

574 609 622 *Hospitality.* When strangers enter a village, men sit on the *bandla*, and women go further on and sit on the *hubo*; they remain quietly there till the people of the village come and salute them (losa). Should the inhabitants delay too long, the visitors move on, saying: "These people are not good." But this is very rare. Generally the master of the village comes to them, inquiring who they are, whence they come, where they are going, and asks them: "Do you wish to spend the night here?" If they say: "Yes," the headman will empty one of his huts by putting two of his wives together, and will himself sleep with the visitors. Should there still be food, he will give them some. If not, he says: 574 "*Ndlala*!" "Starvation!" After a little while, a mat is unrolled 609 and the official ceremony of "djungulisana" takes place. This is a 622 very amusing custom. The headman sits together with his hosts and enquires about the news of their home. One of the 203 visitors begins in a monotonous tone and pours forth volubly 195 a flow of words with a peculiar cadence and almost without taking breath. His interlocutor interrupts him after each sentence, with "Ahina, hina," that is to say "Indeed, indeed!" till the whole skein is unwound; the two men finish with a longer "*Hina*," the inhabitants of the hut adding an emphatic "*khani*," a heartfelt "thank you;" then the master of the village begins to relate his own news in the same tone. It is impossible to 574 imagine anything more curious than this "mélopée" in two parts. 609 This law of hospitality is general all over the tribe. Should

574 travellers be refused the customary hospitality in a village and
609 incur misfortune later on, the chief will make the people of that village responsible and they will have to pay a fine. In Gungunyana's country, warriors were sent to plunder such a village. Lack of hospitality, however, is not considered as a taboo (yila), because "it does not kill;" it is a bad action (biha).

Now-a-days, customs are beginning to change; hundreds of young men (magaisa) coming from the towns after working there, pass through the country, and it would be impossible to put them up and feed them all. They sleep on the *bandla* and cook food for themselves, occasionally buying some mealies or a hen from the inhabitants. Moreover they have plenty of money and they can pay!

609 It must also be added that, if they dispense hospitality liberally,
618 the Thongas can be very hard on people who do not belong to
761 their special clan. Feelings of humanity are sometimes strangely deficient. I heard of a boy of the Manyisa district who had fallen down near the lake of Rikatla, unable to proceed further on account of a bad wound received while working on the railway at Lourenço Marques. Nobody took pity on him because he was of another clan, and he would have died there if a Christian woman, named Lois, had not received him in her village and nursed him. Fear of death and its contamination may partly explain this want of compassion for strangers.

784 As already mentioned, it was formerly taboo to enter the
643 village square wearing boots. These boots consist of sandals
677 made by the hunters for their long trips through the thorny bush. They were not allowed on the hubo. A subject was not permitted to sit on a mortar or on anything else; the chief alone could do so, and it was considered a sign of pride to sit on anything but the bare ground!

609 The habit of offering a concubine to passers-by is never met
177 with amongst the Rongas as it is in other tribes. Now-a-days dissolute women may offer themselves. But they have learnt
574 from white men this new kind of immorality.

On the fate of the Thonga Village, see Practical Conclusions. V.

551 edged sword which "cuts" disputes brought to the capital. (The
618 Khosa chiefs were reputed for their wisdom in deciding judicial
576 or political matters.)

Hlabi: Ba Nhlabi ba ku bengwa, Nhlabi ya Makamu ya Mavuse ya nkoñwana, — The Hlabi who are hated, sons of Makamu, of Mavuse, of the calf (?)

Hlengwe: Shikobela sha Matsheme, Tshauke wa Matsheme (names of old chiefs).

551 *Tembe*: Mulao Ngolanyama madlaya a nga di, makhama a
618 nga di, a dlayele bahloti: — Mulao (son of Tembe ?), the lion
643 which kills and does not eat, the hawk which kills, it kills for
576 the hunters, viz., it is so well fed itself, so rich that it can leave the meat for others. Such a sentence was pronounced in former times by subjects entering the royal kraal, crawling on their knees, when they wished to receive food from the chief.

Nhlanganu: Ba ku hlomula fumo, ba renga ndlela: — Those who unsheath the sword in order to buy the road, (the right of passing through a foreign country) (1).

551 In addition to these laudatory phrases of clans, each individual has his own sentence or sentences by which he praises himself or by which others praise his qualities. They are specially common in the case of boys, but even girls possess them. In the case of chiefs, such praises are much longer. See for instance the praise of the Nkuna chief Muhlaba (Part III, Ch. III, III).

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171 If we cross the plain of the Sabi and reach the Drakensberg, we find that all the Pedi tribes dwelling together with the Thongas in the Leydenburg and Zoutpansberg district, possess laudatory

551 (1) This custom of praising the various tribes in such terms is so familiar to the
609 Thongas that they have invented similar expressions for the white people. The Portuguese are: Ba ka nkofaxmalo, — the Sons of Never mind, because they seem to the Natives to be somewhat careless or indifferent. The English are: Bana ba Nhlulelki, a hluleka ku hleka, a tiba ku lwa, — the sons of the one who cannot, he cannot laugh, he knows how to fight! Perhaps Natives consider them, on the contrary, somewhat too earnest, too keen!

643 766 701 ation of his successor. All the regiments of the army are summoned, together with groups of warriors delegated by foreign clans. The mourning ceremonies are first performed. (See later on). Then, at the end of the afternoon, says Mankhelu, the great counsellors send a herald to the circle of warriors. He shouts: "Khaula!" viz., "keep silent!" The new chief comes out of the hut and stands alone in the midst of the circle. "Do you see him," says the herald... "It is the chief!" — "Who is he?" ask the warriors, who wish to know his new name. — "It is Muhlaba Dabuka," he answered, when the present Nkuna chief was proclaimed. Formerly his name was Shikuna. Now he adopted this new name, borrowed from one of the Ngoni chiefs of Bilen. "He who wants to fight, can fight," he adds. This is an invitation to those who wish to protest against the coronation to state the fact plainly. When Muhlaba was proclaimed, the Masakomo family left the capital in anger, as they thought they were deprived of their right. (See later on.) Such an occurrence is not rare owing to the irregularities which so frequently take place in the succession.

If the chief is still a child he is carried on a shield, or put on the roof of a hut, so that everybody may see him.

In the Ronga clans the ceremony is conducted as follows. Let me describe it with all the details supplied by Tobane.

643 608 648 First of all sacrifices are made to the gods to ask that this ceremony may pass off quietly, happily, without quarrelling, and then the date is fixed. Invitations are sent to the surrounding little kingdoms, or at least to all those who are on friendly relations with the tribe. For instance, supposing the installation to be that of the chief of Mpfumo, invitations would be sent to Maputju, Tembe, Matjolo, Nondwane, Ñwamba and Shirinda. Manyisa and Ntimane are regarded as "being of a different mind" (moya muñwana), and "good will only reaches as far as the river Nkomati," to give a literal translation of the expression used by my informant; this means that relations with the more distant countries are hardly those of even ordinary civility. The warriors of the invited tribes assemble, in greater or smaller numbers; sometimes only a few delegates attend, but they do not proceed at once to the capital. Etiquette requires that each one should

643 first go to the Mpfumo Counsellor, who now acts as an Agent
609 General for his own tribe ; they are well received by him and fed while waiting for the day of the coronation.

643 When it is known that all the foreign military contingents
701 have arrived,[2] then the Mpfumo army is also assembled and all together march to the capital. The royal family council, composed of uncles and the older relatives of the new chief, meets in a separate hut. The presiding member opens the proceedings as follows : "Si hi humelilili : si hi humililiki, hi fanela ku beka hosi kutani! (See what has happened! This having happened to us we must install a new chief!)" The rest approve and reply according to etiquette. On an immense open space, all the warriors form a circle (biya mukhumbi). Battalion after battalion
643 takes up its position within this living enclosure. An opening is
714 left in this otherwise perfect circle, and through it enters the bodyguard, composed of young men of the same age as the new chief, with the chief himself hidden in their midst, wearing his full military uniform and accoutrements : ostrich feathers on his head, strands of hair from cow's tails on his biceps and the calves of his legs, etc.

643 A specially appointed functionary, the bearer of the chiefs
701 (mutlakuli wa tihosi), penetrates into the middle of the bodyguard and raises the young chief on his shoulders in the presence of the assembled armies. The great counsellors, the secondary chiefs, and all the young men of the royal family, then accompany the bearer of the king and with him march round the inner side of the circle of warriors, shouting as they go :

> Hosi hi leyi ! Dlayan ! Dlayan !
> Behold the chief ! Kill him ! Kill him !
> A ku na yimbeni.
> There is no other than he !
> Hi tiba yoleyi.
> We recognise none other.
> Dlayan ! Lwa nga ni yimpi !
> Kill him ! if there be any here who can raise an army (to oppose him).

To these shouts of defiance the several battalions reply consecutively as the procession passes them : "Bayete! Bayete! Ndjao!" These words form the royal salute, to which all the independent chiefs are entitled (1).

2 [for the coronation of a chief—Analyst]

643 chiefs are entitled (1). The *elevation and the presentation* ended,
535 the next proceeding is the *gila* or war dance. The heroes of the army (hatlhabani ba fumo), and the young men of blood royal rush one after the other into the enclosure brandishing their weapons, jumping as high as they possibly can, imitating acts of prowess on the battle field and simulating the transfixion of their enemies. The *gila* continues until the cry is heard : "Ye-yi, yé-yi, ye-yi." This murmuring sound uttered by the whole army marks the end of the jumping, and all re-form into line. All the shields must now touch one another, forming an immense unbroken circle, and then comes the *guba*, the intonation of the
643 solemn chant which is at once the principal patriotic song of the
533 tribe, the coronation hymn, the dirge of mourning, the war-song,
539 and the sacred melody par excellence :

Sabela ! Sabela shosi ! Ji ! Ji !
Answer us ! Answer us, O chief ! Ji ! Ji !
Si ya ku wela mukumbe ukulu wa ku shosi.
Yes, we will cross the great river, the river of the chief.

This chant, which is in the Zulu language, is difficult to understand. The soloist commences with : "Sabela nkosi" which may be translated "Obey the chief ;" but the meaning would rather seem to be : "Reply to us, chief!" and, if taken in this sense, these words would be a request made by the army

643 (1) The word *Bayete* is said to be of Zulu origin and to convey the following
609 meaning : bring chiefs enemies hither and destroy them ! *Ndjao* means lion. The
576 ancients employ these terms to extol the power of their chief and, at the same time, to
express their allegiance to him. There is a modern tendency to use this salutation
in a more general manner ; for instance it is addressed to the Whites and not
only to those in authority, but more or less to every one, even, in certain cases, to
myself ! I always remember my arrival at the village of Shiriada, where I went
to call on the chief Mahobhoo, then unknown to me. I arrived at the gate of the
kraal encumbered on sweet expectations little donkey and escorted of two young men
who were there, where I could find the chief. "Bayete !" was the salutation I received
and there was certainly nothing very regal either in my appearance or my "mount."
One of these young men proved to be Mahobhoo himself ! *Bayete* is also frequently
used in acknowledging a gift from a superior and would then be merely the equivalent
of "thank you." In Gaza, Gungunyane would not allow *Bayete* to be said to any
one but himself. All the petty chiefs of the Ba-Ronga insisted on their royal salutation
and the Ngoni king could not put a stop to it, as they were direct dependencies of the
Whites and did not derive their authority from him.

1 [For the coronation of a chief--Analyst]

262 643 527 which is not eaten, and rub their faces with it. But *no religious ceremony is performed*. It is the same for the *fuma*, a paste made with the contents of the kwakwa fruit, a kind of Strychnos very similar to the nsala, but of a different taste. The ceremony was even more simple than with the almonds ; the chief used to send a little of this paste to each village saying : "Let this be the first-bite you swallow : the new year has come!" (Luman, ku tlhese nguba.) No powder was used in connexion with it. The magical drug was used, on the other hand, when the luma of pumpkin leaves took place.

II. *The luma of the Kafir corn.*

262 643 782 769 796 The great, the official luma, amongst the Ronga clans, is that performed for the Kafir corn (mabele). The great wife of the chief grinds the first grains of Kafir corn reaped in the fields. She cooks the flour in a pot and pours into it some of the royal powder kept in the calabash, so as to make a *shimhimbi* (See page 42). The chief takes a little of the food and offers it to the spirits of his ancestors, at the main entrance of the royal kraal. He prays to them in the following terms : "Here has the new year come! Precede us, you gods, and luma, so that, for us also, Kafir corn shall help our body, that we may become fat, not thin, that the witches may increase the corn, make it to be plentiful, so that, even if there is only a small field, big baskets may be filled! (Nguba hi yoleyi! Rangan ñwine, mi luma, ñwi Psikwembu! Na hine, mabele ma tjhama amirin yeru painene, hi kuluka hi nga wondji. Ahaloyi ba yandjisa, psi tala ngopfu, nambi shi shisiñwanyana shi shiñwe, a ku tale tingula!)"

262 643 796 554 609 After this religious ceremony everyone luma in turn, the chief first, then the sub-chiefs, then the counsellors, then the warriors who have killed enemies in battle, then the headmen of the kraals who have all been summoned to the capital. Should one of the headmen be prevented from coming by illness, his younger brother will not precede him. He will bring him the *shimhimbi* in a leaf ; the elder will take it, and, after him, the other brothers. Women do not eat the magic powder. Neither do strangers,

262 even those who are settled in the clan. They have their own
643 medicine and luma for themselves, though they must not do it
609 before the chief of the country.
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III. *The luma of bukanye and the great national feast.*

137 The most characteristic of all these ceremonies connected with
273 the first fruits is the luma of bukanyi. Tobane has given me a
796 circumstantial description of this feast and it deserves to be
824 reproduced in all its details, as being a typical manifestation of Bantu national life.

The *nkanye* (1) is a large tree, one of the finest in the country. Its botanical name is Sclerocarya caffra (Sond); it is generally known amongst the English of Natal as the Kafir plum.

It bears fruit of the size of a greengage, which when ripe is a beautiful golden yellow and has a strong flavour of turpentine and a penetrating odour. It is a dioecian tree, the male bearing bunches of flowers while the female has single flowers. The Natives are quite aware of this; they cut down the male plants but take care to keep a few in each district to fecundate the female. The fruit — the kanye — begins to ripen in the month of January and falls to the ground. The odour is perceptible everywhere, and it is then that the principal men of the country approach the chief and say to him: "The time has come to luma."

In the luma of the bukanye it is easy to discover four consecutive ceremonies:

a) The luma of the gods and of the chief.

262 The first ripe makanye are gathered and pressed at the capital,
782 and the sour liquor thus obtained is poured out on the tomb of the deceased chiefs in the sacred wood; they are invoked to
273 bless this new year and the feast which is about to be celebrated.
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(1) Nkanye, plural minkanye, is the tree in question. Kanye, plural makanye, is the fruit of this tree; bukanye is the drink made from this fruit. In the same way the wild apricot tree is called mphimbi, plural miniphimbi. The fruit himbi, plural mehimbi; the drink made from the fruit, bukimbi.

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shikolombane is more elongated and has no legs. Its sound is high and piercing, while the tone of the *muntshintshi* is deep and low. The music proper of this dance is provided by the *bunanga*.

II. *The Bunanga*.

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This is the regular *band*, which is met with in every royal clan. The word comes from *nanga*, trumpet (pl. tinanga). But the trumpets composing the bunanga are not the common pierced tibias of goats used by the herdboys. They are larger horns of the mhalamhala (Hippotragus Niger), or of the mhala (Zulu impala), pierced at their base in such a way that they produce different tones. These instruments are made by specialists, (it was Nwamatshomane in Nondwane), so as to form a kind of orchestra (simo) composed of ten instruments. To play them is a veritable art. The players stand round the two drumbeaters. The big drum gives the time : when it beats slowly, "tu-tu-tu," the ten musicians must dance in a ring, viz., they must march after each other, playing, making certain grimaces and gesticulations. When the drum beats more slowly and more softly, they must retire in a line and march slowly. The drum quickens the time : then they come to the centre once more and dance in a ring, quicker and quicker. The executants follow each other in a given order, the largest and deepest horn being in front, the smallest and highest toned one at the end of the group. Sometimes three or four orchestras perform at the same time (1).

The bunanga is an old Ronga custom and is very picturesque indeed. As for its musical importance, I shall refer to it again in Part V.

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(1) I remember having heard the bunanga practising in the various sub-chiefs of Nondwane in 1891, as each sub-chief had his own. They were preparing to go to the capital to mourn Muphanga, whose death had just been announced. I saw the bunanga performing its best melodies before Lord Selborne, when he came to pay a visit to the Portuguese settlement of Mambweni in 1908. The Administrator had received a "bunanga" for him (the name given by the Portuguese to these native dances), and the musicians of Nondwane did their best to interest the White Chief!

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III. *The shipalapala.*

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Speaking of the musical instruments of the Court, I must also mention *the trumpet of assembly, shipalapala*, which is the recognised means of summoning the subjects to the capital. The sound of the big drum, though heard at a great distance, cannot reach to the confines of the country. So, when the chief wants his men to assemble at once, he uses the *shipalapala*. This is a horn of mhalamhala, or of nyala or of phifa antelope, the sound of which is like mpu-ù-u (with an accent on the second syllable). The envoy of the chief runs to the capital of a sub-chief, blowing all the time. When he has reached that village, he transmits his message and a young man starts at once with the shipalapala of the sub-chief to another district. So, in a short time, notice is given to the whole tribe to assemble.

IV. *Visitors.*

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When a stranger passes through the capital, he must sit down outside the central square and at some little distance from it. Some one will come and inquire what he wants; he replies: "I come from such and such a country, and I wish to pay my respects to the chief." Then the counsellor or "Agent General" charged with the affairs of the traveller's country will come and converse with him and announce him (bika) to the chief, who will receive him affably and possibly assign him a hut to sleep in, in case he wishes to stay the night, at the same time providing him with food. Should the chief be particularly well disposed towards his guest, he will kill a calf or even an ox for him; and he, on his return, will speak in praise of the hospitality he has received, saying: "The chief made me share his reign," literally: "He made me reign, (a ndji fumisile)." Such is the procedure when the respective countries of guest and host are adjoining and the tribes

643 on good and friendly terms. Should relations between them be
609 at all strained, or should war be imminent, all the roads would be
574 closed and no one allowed to enter the capital.

V. *The Kondza custom.*

641 The chief is also approached by those who may wish to become
643 subject to him, to be naturalized ; this is called *kondza*, from a Zulu word conveying this meaning. The chief will assign to the new *nandja* a dwelling place, and he will be incorporated in the nation without further ceremony. By this kondza, he binds himself to pay the taxes. (See the story of Mutipi. *Les chants et les contes des Ba-Ronga*, page 164).

Naturalised strangers, however, do not eat the first fruits (luma) with the same drug as the people of the country. They have their own medicine and take it according to their own rules. They are however forbidden to luma before the chief of their adopted land (p. 397).

VI. *Diplomatic relations.*

648 We have seen that these are very carefully conducted, each
202 of the neighbouring clans having one counsellor entrusted with
726 the care of its affairs. In case of war, friendly clans frequently
224 make alliances (shinakulobye). They send messages to each other, or they have special means of communicating news in case of war. Supposing, for instance, Ñwamba and Nondwane should fight against Matjolo. They put two traps at their common boundary, on the side of the road, one on the territory of Ñwamba and one on that of Nondwane. These traps consist of a rod bent by a string fastened to the ground. Should the army of Matjolo have made an invasion during the night into Ñwamba territory and put the people to flight, the men of Nwamba

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put forward in short sentences, generally interrogative, by one of the counsellors. The assembly listens in silence until the mover concludes with an energetic "Ahina," being the equivalent of "That's all right." (See p. 354.) Another individual elaborates the matter further, saying: "Did you not hear what he said? He said so and so." This is the way of seconding the motion. The debate proceeds, and, little by little, objections are brought forward and the assembly comes to a decision.

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It often happens that the chief does not say a word; when he see that the counsellors are agreed and if he has no objection, he merely shows his assent by nodding his head. So the decision is arrived at without his intervention and without any vote being taken. The voice of the majority has not been ascertained by any show of hands, but it is generally perceived by intuition in a very remarkable way, and grave counsellors, who have been squatting in a circle all through the discussion, jump to their feet and disperse, knowing perfectly well what has been decided. If however the counsellors do not agree, they put the matter into the hands of the chief, and the chief, after having listened to the arguments pro and con, "cuts the matter" (tjema mhaka) by some short sentences, after which everybody must shout the royal salutation: "Bayete!"

Phot. A. Burd.
An habitué of the Nkosa Court.

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When there are two parties present, the debate is conducted according to other rules. For instance, if a stranger wishes to have speech with a chief or to proffer some request, he is generally accompanied by a counsellor. The chief, together with some of his men, receives him either in the hut, if the affair must

be secret, or on the square, if there is no objection to making it public. The chief and his men sit on one side, the visitor on the other; if he wishes to conform strictly to all the laws of etiquette, he will first explain the matter to his own Agent General, who will communicate with the chief's special counsellor, repeating the words of the visitor, sentence by sentence; the counsellor will, in his turn, communicate with the chief, again telling him the whole story, as if he had not heard a word of it before. The affair will thus have passed through three hands and the answer should, in due formality, be given through the same channels. These precautions, which seem eminently superfluous, even somewhat ridiculous, to a person unacquainted with Bantu etiquette, evidently proceed from the fact that there are no stenographers or secretaries to furnish any written record of the proceedings, so that it is necessary to have as many witnesses as possible and that these should thoroughly understand the matter under consideration.

II. *Judicial Cases.*

1) Sense of justice.

As has often been remarked, the Bantus possess a strong sense of justice. They believe in social order and in the observance of the laws and, though these laws are not written, they are universal and perfectly well known. The law is the custom, that which has always been done. The old men, the counsellors and more particularly the counsellors of the capital, are those who can speak authoritatively. But everybody is welcome in the *hubo*, where matters are discussed; even a stranger can take part in the discussion. "No one is excluded, if he speaks rightly; only fools, those who do not know anything" (Mankhelu).

This participation in the dircussions of the hubo has developed the sense of law to a wonderful extent amongst the Bantus. They are all born advocates and judges, and take a great interest in this business! No wonder therefore that the Thonga vocabulary

726 175 and Mahazule, who had taken refuge in Gaza, during July-August 1895. Nine regiments, representing a large effective force, were to start from Manzimehlope, the country beyond the Nkomati River; three of these were to ascend the left bank of the river, to cross it in the neighbourhood of Komati-Poort and to enter Swaziland, the Ngoni chief having made alliance with the Swazis. The other regiments were to cross the Nkomati to the West of the Sabie, and thence to go southward by Moveni. The remaining three, with whom were incorporated Zihlahla and Mahazule, were to ravage Shirindja, Ntimane and Nondwane, passing about one hour's march to the West of Lourenço Marques, exterminating the inhabitants of Matjolo (allies of the Whites), whose retreat to the town would be thus cut off... The nine regiments were to effect a junction at a place called Nkobotlwene, to the South of the Bay, where the forces of Gungunyana would fraternise with those of Maputju, with whom they were on good terms. For the space of seven months, tens of thousands of these warriors were to overrun the country and to annihilate all the tribes opposed to Gungunyana. The chief would not massacre the Whites, nor would he attack their town: he calculated on rendering them powerless by depriving them of the assistance of their Black allies, and expected them thus to sue for peace on honourable terms! Such, at least, was the plan of campaign which transpired after Gungunyana had been made prisoner, in the centre of his own country of Gaza, by a party of about forty White soldiers! The whole thing culminated in a single day's skirmish in the Ntimane country. The petty chiefs quarrelled amongst themselves; only a few hardy warriors dared to cross the Nkomati and slaughtered some women at a short distance from the outpost of Chinabane. Finding themselves discovered, they at once recrossed the river and made off to the Northward.

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[578] The principal causes of the incapacity in military matters so noticeable amongst the Blacks during the war of 1894-1896, are doubtless the *internal jealousies* between the tribes and also, it must be said, the mysterious dread inspired by the White race, their artillery and their superior discipline.

726 175 703 The feeling of mistrust existing between Matjolo and Nwamba, Nondwane, Zihlahla and Shirindja, also explains the terrible *panics* which occured during the military operations. On several occasions the Native forces were subject to panics which might have entailed the most serious results. As an instance I relate the following, which nearly led to the partial destruction of the Matjolo army. The Matjolo

551 The really Native names very often begin with the prefix *mu* which is the personal singular prefix, (Musongi, Muzila, Mungutana, Mukentshe), or *Ñwa* conveying the idea of "son of" (Ñwamitwa, Ñwamashwele Ñwatjubula), or Nya used in the same sense, (Nyakubasa, Nyanise, Nyathi, probably of Zulu origin), or *Ma* which is also a personal prefix, (Manabe, Matende, Mathandana, Makhangala, Makasana, etc.). The prefix *Mi* means "daughter of," and is frequently met with (Misilana, Mintlohen, Mindinyana, etc.). As a rule it is employed only in names of women.

The prefix *Shi* which generally denotes things, objects, and has a neuter significance, is very often found in Ronga names. It is also a diminutive prefix, especially when the word ends in *ana*. So Shiribyana, a very common name, means a small stone (ribye); Shigidana, Shirombe, Shindjubi, etc. belong to the same class.

551 567 Some very curious names begin with the prefix *ba*, the pronoun of the third person plural. These are common amongst girls, generally of Chopi origin, who were slaves of the important Native women of Lourenço Marques and sold by them as concubines. For instance Bamuyeyisa means "they defy her," Bamusonda (Zulu), "they hate her," Batjhamahayena "they gossip about her," etc. In calling themselves by these names the girls express their bitterness.

551 But a great number of names have no prefix at all and often no meaning.

Nicknames are frequent amongst the Thongas and often entirely supplant the regular name. There was in Rikatla an old Mbekwa whom everyone called Nxoko. On inquiring into the origin of this curious name I was told the following story. One day Mbekwa was very happy and expressed his contentment by the exclamation; "Nxoko" (x here denotes a peculiar click of the tongue against the cheek). This interjection was received with favour and he employed it henceforth to manifest his pleasure on other occasions. He even made a regular verb of it, saying: "I go to nxokela in such and such a place," viz. "to enjoy myself there." The word was so fascinating that he was named after it, and I should not be surprised if it were incorporated into the current language, which is enriched every day by new descriptive adverbs like nxoko. (See my Thonga Grammar, p. 84 and Vol. II.)

551 609 Nicknames are more especially applied to white people, as Natives fail to catch their true names. These are very cleverly chosen, being often a verbal description of the chief physical or mental characteristic

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551 609 of the white man. M. Torre do Valle has given a list of nicknames of the merchants and other inhabitants of Lourenço Marques in his Diccionario Shironga-Portuguez. It is well worth consulting, and the only thing wanting is a photograph of the white man and an explanation of the name ; it would be a splendid illustration of Native wit!

551 576 618 So far we have spoken only of *personal* names and nicknames. But, beside these, every man possesses his clan name, or surname, viz., the name of the first of his known ancestors. Grown up men prefer being addressed by this name, which is *shibongo*, viz. the name by which they are "glorified." This subject is treated in Part III (p. 360).

APPENDIX III (See p. 98)

Unnatural Vice in the Johannesburg Compounds.

938 548 588 In January 1915 one of my colleagues passing near one of the Johannesburg Compounds, saw a big company of Natives singing and walking in the direction of another Compound where a great dance was taking place. Amongst them there were a number of women. My colleague asked his Native evangelist how it was possible that so many women should be walking about in that part of the world, where the feminine element is very small. The man told him : "They are not women! They are *tinkhontshana*, boys who have placed on their chests the breasts of women carved in wood, and who are going to the dance in order to play the part of women. To-night when they return to their dormitories, their 'husbands' will have to give them 10/, and only on that condition will the tinkhontshana remove their breasts and comply with the desire of their husbands." I sent for this evangelist who knew everything about the inner life of the Compounds and asked him about it ; this is the information I received :

Unnatural vice (bukhontshana) has become a regular institution in the Compounds. The word *nkhontshana* seems to come from the Ngoni, a Zulu dialect spoken in the Limpopo plain. The nkhontshana is the boy used by another man to satisfy his lust, and the man is called his *nima*, husband. When a gang of new workers arrives in a Compound, the Native induna, who has the supervision of the Compound, and the Native policemen, who have their rooms at the

nostrils and so keep it quiet during the whole operation. The milk is generally taken in a large wooden bowl. It is very seldom consumed as a liquid, but is *eaten* when thickened by coagulation. The fresh milk is poured into a calabash with an opening at the bottom closed by a cork : a certain quantity of whey has been kept in the calabash and this causes the fresh milk to curdle at once. When curdled but not yet set, it is called *shitjubi* and is eaten with spoons by men and women. But it is left to decompose : the whey *(mulaza)* soon separates from the thick part, which becomes entirely solid and is then called *ntjhwamba*. The cork at the bottom of the calabash is removed, the *mulaza* flows out freely and is drunk by the men and herd boys. The *ntjhwamba* is put into a plate and each man or woman, not having her *tihweti* (I. p. 187), approaches and takes a spoonful of it. A woman during menstruation must never drink milk, nor during her confinement or until her child has been presented to the moon (I. p. 52).

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The milk of the first week after a cow has calved is taboo. It must not be mixed with other cows' milk, because the umbilical cord of the calf has not yet fallen off. It can, however, be boiled and consumed by children, as they do not count! After that milk is never boiled : not that there is any taboo to fear, but it is not customary. Natives do not give any clear reason for these milk taboos. They have no objection to selling their milk to strangers ; on the contrary, they are so eager to make money out of it that they often add water to it, and any European having had dealings with them in milk matters would have his story to tell!

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Goat's milk is left for the herd boys ; men do not touch it.

II. *Other domestic animals.*

Besides oxen, the Ba-Ronga breed *goats* (mbuti, yin-tin), the care of which is relegated to the small boys (I. p. 62). Practically every one possesses one or more goats, whilst oxen are much more rarely met with.

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misfortunes to a very melodious tune (No. 8) which I once heard 533
in Rikatla repeated a dozen times by children's voices along 539
the bushy paths. The words were in Zulu and were said to mean :

> Stones are very hard to break
> Far from home, in a foreign land.

The tune is so catching that it has become quite popular even in French Switzerland, where I have had the opportunity of singing it on many occasions.

Once when I was walking after sunset in the neighbourhood of a miserable village of two or three huts in Rikatla, I was attracted by a simple melody repeated again and again by a feminine voice. A young woman with a child on her shoulders and engaged in cooking her food was singing. She had just lost her father. Her husband was a very bad character ; she had been obliged to leave him and to take refuge in her father's village, and, lo, he had died! Feeling lonely and abandoned by all her natural helpers, she was expressing her grief in a low tone by the following words sung to a tune full of sadness (No. 41).

Tatana a ndji siya	My father has left me !
Na ndji nga li na mumben !	And I had no other except him !
Ndji se pesnga libelen	I remain alone on the earth !
Sha ndji ta ya kwini mbuu !	Where shall I go then, Alas !

I am afraid Bantu lyrics have more than once found occasion 533
to celebrate the selfishness and *rudeness of the White race* ! I 539
remember travelling through the desert with three Zoutpansberg 609
colonists, and some of their black servants. The White masters
were not exactly gentle with their boys. A road had to be cut 466
through the bush and it was hard work to remove the stones, and to cut down the trees. The shambock was sometimes resorted to in order to stimulate the Natives. I once heard one of them, who had just been castigated, murmuring in a low tone his monotonous complaint, whilst chopping at a stem. I caught the following words : (Tune 9)

Ba hi shanisa !	They treat us badly !
Ba ku hi hlupa !	They are hard on us !
Ba nwa makhofi !	They drink their coffee !
Ba nga hi nyika !	And they give us none !

accepted another message." That is why men are subject to death. 773 825

This myth is so strongly believed that shepherds, when they see a chameleon climbing slowly up a tree, begin to tease it, and, when it opens its mouth, throw a pinch of tobacco into it, and are greatly amused to see the poor thing change colour, passing from green to orange, and from orange to black, in agony, to the great delight of the little boys ; they thus avenge themselves on the chameleon! (p. 339). 761

The same story is told amongst the Zulus, and other myths of a similar character are found all over Africa, especially amongst the Ba-Rotsi (1). It would be an interesting study to collect them all, and thus to compile the African Genesis. We should probably find that the origin of man and death are the two great subjects on which the imagination of the Bantus has tried to throw some light, and that, though the moral element is strangely lacking in these myths, yet there is a striking resemblance between them and the Biblical story, where an answer to the same questions is given. 171 773

II. *The various human races.*

Have Bantus a clear idea of the human race? What they call *banhu* in Thonga, *bantu* in Zulu, evidently means "black people," the first inhabitants of the country. The Zulus are regarded, owing to their military ability, as a superior race, not however to such an extent as they themselves believe to be the case! Whatever may be their hostility or repugnance to their fellow blacks, they know that they belong to the same species. I am not sure that they hold this idea regarding White people, who are not *banhu* but *balungu*. 609 829

What is the origin of this word? As it is also used in Zulu (abelungo), the etymology suggested is the verb *ku lunga*, to be right, good. White people would then be correct, nice people, to

(1) Compare *Foi et Vie*. Oct. 1910. Les Origines. A. Jalla.

½ [about the original cause of death. See p. 350, cat. 116-Analyst]

609 the Native (1). However complimentary to us this explanation
829 may be, I very much doubt its accuracy. Firstly, Black people have not generally such a good opinion of us. They admit our superiority in intelligence, but unfortunately have not always found that White people behaved correctly in their dealings with them. Secondly, when we compare the word balungu with *Ñwalungu*, North, *balungwena*, inhabitants of Heaven, (see Chapter II), and with *Mulungu*, the great name for God in Central Africa, we are led to suppose that there may have been ancient mythological traditions, now forgotten, relating to White people, when they were not yet well known.

773 To account for the superiority of the White race, Mankhelu
829 assured me he had heard the following story many years ago, told by his grandfather in the village of Shiluvane, long before the arrival of the missionaries. When Ñwali created the first man, from whom both Whites and Blacks are descended, they were all naked. Gwambe slept with his sister, an act which had been forbidden, and she had a child. Since that time children are born; but this was not the intention of Ñwali, who wished to create adult human beings only! The Gwambe (first ancestor) of the White people showed respect to his father, who was naked, whilst the Gwambe of the Blacks did not; hence the deterioration (onhakala) of the Blacks. "We were fools and have been deprived of everything, and Ñwali said: You Blacks shall wear down your nails to the quick by digging the earth to find food!" As already pointed out, Mankhelu had not the slightest trace of the critical sense. This is evidently the Biblical story very curiously transformed. The idea of an original fault committed by the Black race in the beginning having resulted in the inferior position it now occupies, is, however, met with in many parts of Africa, and is probably autochthonous amongst the Thongas.

"Balungu ba hlulwa hi lifu ntsena" has become a kind of proverb, quoted by Natives when they see the marvels of

(1) Others say that their forefather named the White people *balungu* because they were *clean* (lunga having also that meaning). "They are always clean though they do not wash their bodies! They have no dirt." But these explanations are not quite satisfactory.

civilisation and means : "White people are only overcome by 773
death." I once heard a little boy muttering it when I was playing 829
the harmonium.

Their notions regarding the several European races are very 609
crude. Once when I asked one of them if he knew whence the Whites came, he told me : "The Portuguese came from the sea, the Boers from the mountains." — "And we, missionaries, who are neither Portuguese nor Boers?" — "You come from Heaven," he answered with a charming smile!

Pikinini, who knew how to converse with the cock, once told me what the Bilen people think of the Whites. It was just after the deportation of Gungunyana :

— "Gungunyana is dead. The Portuguese have eaten him!"

— "How is that?"

— "Certainly! The Portuguese eat human flesh. Every one knows it. They have no legs ; they are fishes (tinhlampfi). They have a tail instead of legs. They live in water."

— "Then how do they manage to fight with you and to beat you if they are fishes and have no legs?"

— "Ho! Those who come to fight against us are the young men ; they have legs. They take us and put us all in a steamer which goes far away, far away. This steamer reaches a large rock which is surrounded by water on all sides. This is their country. We are taken out and placed on an island, whilst the soldiers go and fire shots to announce to the great White men-fishes that we have arrived. They choose one of us and make a little cut in his little finger to see if he is fat enough ; if not, he is put into a big basket full of ground-nuts which he must eat in order to become fat. When he is fat enough, they place him in a big, elongated pot of the size of a man, and red-hot. We know these particulars because a man, Ngomongomo, gave us the full explanation. He had been caught, but on the road his gods helped him ; he was covered with an eruption of pimples which was so disgusting that he was left in the island, and brought back here. He saw everything. We first refused to believe that. Now we know that it is the truth!"

Evidently Pikinini was in earnest and these absurd ideas were

609 accepted as facts by the majority of his countrymen in Bilen. Is it not strange to notice that, whilst a great number of Europeans think of the Blacks as being all cannibals, these savages, on the other hand, believe exactly the same thing of us! Of course a closer contact with White people has already led them to a truer knowledge of what we really are, and they have discovered that, after all, there is not such a great difference between the various human races!

In former times the Thongas would seem to have believed that all White people, not only the Portuguese, dwelt in water. They were said to have eyes in front and behind and to see on all sides, so that it was impossible to escape from them. They used to kidnap Black people and take them away.

III. *The human body.*

1) Ideas of Anatomy.

815 826 The Thongas have never made an anatomic study of a human corpse. They have a riddle to this effect: "Ku pfura ndjilo mungema? — Ba lahla munhu wa ku fa." — "A fire of live coals? — They bury a dead man." As you never put your hand in the fire, so you would not touch a corpse. Nor have they ever made a post mortem examination! What they know of the human body is entirely derived from the inductions they have drawn from oxen, pigs and game which they cut open. Considering that the source of their knowledge is so indirect, one wonders that they have learnt so much of the human physical structure.

192 826 Having taught a little anatomy to the students of our Institute, I can bear testimony that they have names for most of the bones of the skeleton. *Pala* (dji-ma) means skull; *lihlaya* (li-ti), maxillary bone; *tinyo*, pl. menyo, teeth; *tshuri* (dji-ma), molar tooth (same word as mortar); *litlatla*, clavicle; *likhongotlo*, spine; *khatla* (dji-ma), shoulder blade; *shintjintji*, sternum; *shikangana*, extremity of the sternum; *libambo*, rib; (they believe there are *ten* ribs on each side!); *shikukwana*, humerus; *nkono* (mu-mi), cubitus;

identical with their image. This notion seems to be at the root of 774
the fear they show of being photographed, as we shall see directly.

We see therefore that Thongas are not at all dogmatic on this subject. The soul is at the same time the breath, viz., something of the nature of the wind, the shadow, the image, the external likeness, or fashion of man as opposed to his flesh.

Whatever may be the original notion, they consider the human being as double and capable of unsheathing itself on certain occasions ; their conception on this point may throw more light on their ideas concerning the nature of the soul.

Some believe that the *unsheathing* always takes place during the night and that the soul comes back when its owner awakes ; this is, par excellence, the case in regard to witches, who unsheath by their magical power and bewitch people during the night, as we shall see. But, though the belief is not universal, some think that all souls go away (or die) during sleep. I heard a boy earnestly praying one evening that his soul might come back to him next morning! This is a kind of physiological normal unsheathing which is attended with no bad results. But a pathological unsheathing also exists, and is very dangerous. It may be caused by the photograph of a man being taken. Ignorant Natives [609] instinctively object to being photographed. They say : "These White people want to steal us (pepula) and take us with them, far away into lands which we do not know, and we shall remain only incomplete beings." When shown the magic lantern, you hear them pitying the men shown on the pictures, and saying : "That is how they ill-treat us when they take our photographs! (1)"

But the great and dangerous parting of soul and body, which 774
causes certain death, is that which wizards operate by their magic 754
charms. We shall study these strange conceptions in Chapter 761
III. They firmly believe that such is the result of witchcraft ; so, when some one is dying, and the divinatory bones have revealed that the disease was caused by a certain *noyi* (witch or wizard), the

(1) The following reflection well illustrates the superstitious fear which Natives have of likenesses of the dead. Before the 1894 war broke out, I had gone to show the magic lantern in remote heathen villages, and people accused me of having caused the disturbance by bringing to life again (pfuka) men who had died long ago.

biha, is regularly used in Djonga to mean *sin*. It also designates 192
the offensive substance which a child or careless person may have 183
left on the path, instead of observing the sanitary regulations of 577
Native villages. (I. p. 311.) But in addition to biha we have *dyoha* (Dj.), *doha* (Ro.), to commit a wrong, *hona* (Ro.), *onha* (Dj.), which means to spoil, but also to sin, and from which comes *shihono*, the true word for sin in Ronga. *Somboloka* means to be irremediably bad, crooked, like a stem which cannot be straightened.

On the contrary the adjective *nene*, corresponding to biha, contains three meanings: good, nice, and true, the derivate *bunene* designating rather goodness and beauty, and another derivative, *psinene*, truth; the verb used for to be good is *shonga* (Ro), or *saseka* (Dj.), and has both the moral and esthetic significance. *Ku lulama* is to be straight, like a stem, and the use of this word indicates a deep and clear sense of right doing. Many other expressions might be quoted, showing that the notion of moral good and evil is certainly present in the Native mind, quite independently of that of taboo. They also recognise the *conscience* (timpfalu), seated in the diaphragm (p. 361).

2) *Intercourse with Natives* proves the same thing. Though 183
their ideas may differ from ours as regards what is good (1), 577
they are undoubtedly moral beings, with a more or lees developed conscience.

3) Their *folklore* is the best and most objective proof that this [538]
is so. Vice is punished and virtue rewarded in all the tales which I have called *moral*, and they certainly contain a whole code of natural and elementary morality (p. 222). The pangs of conscience in a criminal are depicted in a wonderful fashion in Zili, for instance.

However, it must be confessed that this morality is low, that it does not possess a very strong hold on the Native soul, and that the imperative of conscience is by no means the categorical

(1) The idea of charity is particularly low: charity is due only to relatives, or to clansmen, and not to foreigners. I remember a man of the Manyisa clan who nearly 577
died near the lake of Rikatla, having been hurt when working on the railway; nobody 609
took pity on him, because he belonged to another clan. He was saved by a converted woman, Lois, who had a wonderful understanding of the new principles of universal brotherhood.

588 bush. If she agrees to become his wife in this irregular manner,
583 she goes there and meets him. They have relations together and run to one of the relatives of the girl's mother. The family of the mother will be more lenient than the family of the father, having no right to the lobolo. The transgressors of the law will probably choose the village of the maternal uncle and settle there. The parents look everywhere for their daughter and try to get her to return home. If she is quite determined to remain with her ravisher, they let her go free, deploring their misfortune and their shame. But it is rare in the primitive state of the tribe for such a marriage not to be regularised. The thief, if he has retained any feeling of decency, will try to collect the lobolo. One morning he goes to the village of his wife's parents, and deposits a sovereign or a goat or a cock on the threshold of the hut of the girl's mother; or he hangs a half-sovereign on the goat's neck, rubs its lips with salt to prevent it from bleating, and then shouts loudly: "We have stolen, we of such and such a clan"... People wake from their sleep, not knowing what animal has made such a noise, come out of their huts and see the culprit standing outside the fence. When he has been duly recognised, he runs away. He will perhaps bring some other presents till he has definitely
588 "lobola" his wife. This is called the *nshonshonela*. Should he
611 not succeed in bringing the regular payment, the first girl born
597 of that marriage will be the lobolo. "Nwana a ta lobola mamana wa kwe": the child will pay for her mother. In law, all the children of such a union belong to the girl's family: a man who has not lobola has no right of property in his children. (See Part III.)

Should the woman who has been stolen by *tlhuba* go at once to live with her irregular husband in his village, her parents will arrange matters in another way. They will "go as enemies" (hi bulala), make a regular descent on the village of the thief, kill a pig, threaten to take all the furniture. The men of that village will then intercede and, in the course of time, the lobolo will be paid. (See App. VIII.)

561 a rite of passage and this is also proved by the fact that the money or the
431 bracelets given to the persons concerned do not remain their property. As regards the circumcised, they remit them to the chief, and the chief distributes them to the old women who are no longer able to bear children. The girl who has passed through the khomba gives them to her adopted mother, who will use them in the same way. All the money remitted to the bride will go to the master of the village, for the old women and the children. *Married people must have no share in it*, as these presents are taboo. Why ? Because they are connected with a passage, and people who have sexual relations are considered as increasing the dangers connected with these critical phases of human development, when the heart is troubled by a half-conscious fear of a new and unknown future. Amongst civilised people who have reached the era of individualism, these fears find their expression in songs and poetry. In the communistic society they express themselves by means of rites.

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584 Here are some answers to the questions of Professor Frazer on
587 marriage.
611 A man always brings his wife to his own home. This is the *tlhuma*, and it is a law. It is taboo for him to go and live with his parents-in-law, at any rate when he marries his first wife. In the course of time, when the children have grown up, when the *hukoñwana*, viz. the relations with parents-in-law, are of old standing, a man can go and live in his wife's village (See Part II). Another case in which this can be done is when a widow refuses to marry the man who legally inherits her, and gives herself to a stranger, a man of Inhambane, for instance. He does not pay the lobolo, and lives with her in her village ; but the children born of that union will belong to the family of the deceased husband.
585 There is no preparation for marriage amongst the Thongas by fasting, bleeding or keeping awake the night before. No corn or rice is thrown at the bridal pair. The bride or bridegroom is never represented at the marriage by a proxy or dummy. Conjugal relations begin immediately after marriage (see page 113), but the wife does not possess her home and her kitchen for the first year ; during that period she must cook for her mother-in-law.
583 There are no occasions on which men exchange their wives.
See practical conclusions on Marriage Rites at the end of Vol. I.

783 village itself, which must carry out the collective purification of
768 *hlamba ndjaka*.

I must further mention a new custom which is spreading
587 amongst the Ba-Ronga in the neighbourhood of Lourenço
609 Marques. When a widow objects to becoming the wife of the legal
611 inheritor, she goes home and adopts another husband. There are plenty of men of other tribes, coming from Inhambane, Quelimane, Mozambique, who have no wife. They accept the proposal of the widow and go to live in her village. They are generally despised and called by the insulting name of *mugomo*, a Zulu word meaning an empty iron oil-tin. They are as hard and unfeeling as such a tin! If children are born, they belong to the family of the deceased husband, who paid the lobolo.

587 Sometimes also a widow chooses a nephew who is still a child. She gives him food as if she were his wife, but she lives with another man whom she loves. It even happens that she may choose a girl, the daughter of another wife of the deceased. (Annotatio 13.)

C. OLD AGE AND DEATH

888 An old woman, having in some sort gone out from the sexual
782 community, enjoys some privileges which are taboo for her sisters who are still capable of childbearing. She is allowed to put on the clothing of the widows ; contamination of death is not so dangerous for her. She can proceed to the purification of the village, in certain cases of epidemic, and of the weapons of the warriors in war time (Part III). After the sacrifice of the black ram for rain, old women and small girls alone are allowed to eat the flesh of the victim.

462 But old and decrepit women are despised. As long as they
888 can still till their land, they are treated with consideration, but when they have lost all their strength and must be fed by their children, they are looked upon as troublesome burdens. I must say that, as long as she still has an atom of vigour, a Thonga woman goes to her field and tills it. During all her life time

1 [See pp. 518-519 in these categories or in 116 — Analyst]

602 that these appellations are expressive of many different things, one of the main considerations dictating them being the right of a man to marry his wife's relatives, or to inherit the women belonging to his own family.

I. *Blood relationships.*

601 The general term to indicate this relationship is *bushaka* (from *shaka, mashaka*), relatives.

1) Relatives on the father's side.

(Bakweru : *ba*, those, *ku*, at, *eru* possessive pronoun of the first person plur. means those *with us*, in our home.)

Let us first consult Tobane, called Tobane II in the genealogy.

601 He calls Magugu his father, *tatana*. The relation implies
593 respect and even fear. The father, though he does not take much
611 trouble with his children, is nevertheless their instructor, the one who scolds and punishes. Absolute obedience is due to him on the part of his sons and daughters (App. V). So also in the case of the *father's brothers*, who are also called "batatana ba shirare :" the elder brother who is a "great father" to Tobane, and the younger
601 brother Nkale, "tatana lwe'ntjongo", a "little father." Their
611 wives, Matshini for instance, are mothers to him, though he can in certain cases marry them by inheritance. The cousins of the father are also fathers (Muhambi to Thakusa, for instance, Gen. B.), provided the father calls them brothers.

There is another term for father, *rara* in Djonga, *roro* in Ronga ; roro is only employed with the possessive pronoun in the three following forms : rorwa'nga, my father, rorwa'ku, your father, rorwa'bu, their father. The correlative of tatana is *ñwana*, son or daughter.

Tobane II calls Shitsimbo *kokwana*, grandfather, Tobane I kokwane wa tatana, grandfather of father, and Nkwangana kokwana wa kokwana, grandfather of grandfather. The expression

601 611 tatana wa kokwana, father of grandfather, is never employed. The great-grandfather and the great-great-grandfather are sometimes designated as follows: he who does not see his grandson when he has been sent by the women to bring him food; the boy eats it on the way and the old man does not notice it! (Page 132). These progenitors call Tobane *ntukulu*, grandson. He is the true ntukulu of Shitsimbo; to Tobane I, he is the *ntukulu wa shikandjatjolo*, "the one who sits on the knees;" to Nkwangwana, the *ntukulu wo shikandjamirombo*, a word which seems to mean "the one who sits on the toes." In Djonga there is one more of these curious expressions applied to batukulu, *ntukulu wa shinguhe*. "When he pronounces that name," says Gana, "my great-grandfather points near by; when he says *ntukulu wa shikandjatjolo*, he points further down." To understand this properly, we must imagine the following patriarchal scene: a very, very old man is sitting on the ground, holding his son (ñwana) in his arms, and with his grandson (ntukulu) on his thigh, his great-grandson (wa shikandjatjolo) on his knees and his great-great-grandson on his toes (!). The fact that these terms have become almost obsolete shows that the system of counting descent from the father is at any rate very old in our tribe. There must even have been a time when the ancestors in the paternal line were better known than now. The wives of these bakokwana are also bakokwana, in the same way as their husbands.

601 604 The father's sister is *rarana* (Ro.) *hahane* (Dj.). The two words are the same, as *r* often changes into *h* in Thonga phonetics; the prefix of the first class, *mu* or *n*, now dropped, may have caused this change. Rarana approaches very closely to rara, father. It is employed in this form when it means *my* aunt. When we wish to say your aunt, his aunt, rarana becomes rarakati wa ku, rarakati

601 888 (!) There is another interpretation of these terms as applied to the grandparents: *kokwana wa shinguhe*: he is poor, miserable! When an ox is killed in the village, they do not even send him his share; he is far away. *Kokwana wa shikandjatjolo*: he is almost blind. When he wants to see his great-grandson he calls him and tells him: "*Sit down on my knees.*" *Kokwana wa shikandja-mirombo*: mirombo or mirombo means the small ears of mealies used to prepare the beer of the offerings. This kokwana, the great-great-grandfather, is already almost like one of the ancestor-gods to whom sacrifices are made!

604 585 womb, the uterus ; this consists not only of that organ, but of the whole belly, from the sternum to the hind legs ; the bride's mother eats the *mbata* and *khondjo*, viz. the extremity of the spine (Mboza).

585 431 On the day of hlomisa, when the bride is led to her husband's village, her maternal relatives receive a special gift, a young cow called *mubya wa mana wa yena*, i. e. the skin in which her mother carried her on her shoulders when she was a baby. This cow will be sent to the family when the first and the third daughter marry. In the case of a second and fourth girl, the nyimba alone is sent.

585 604 In the *equipment of the bride*, the mother's relatives provide her with a hoe, with fat to anoint her body, with a mat and clothing and sometimes with bracelets. The paternal aunt (hahana) does not give anything, neither does the paternal uncle, the latter only helping the father occasionally. Should the mother's relatives not fulfil this duty of providing part of the trousseau, next time they will not be given the *nyimba* to which they were entitled (Viguet).

583 602 604 But the most characteristic prerogative of the bamalume or bakokwana, is *their special right of intercession* on behalf of the uterine nephews. In fact, as Mankhelu said in his picturesque language, "as regards sacrifices (timhamba), the mother's relatives mostly perform them. They are the stem. My father is the stem as regards the oxen, but my mother is the true stem ; she is the god ; she makes me grow. Should she die when I am an infant, I shall not live. The village of my mother is as the home of the gods (ka mamana hi ko psikwembyen)." Simeon Gana added : "We have the special charge of sacrificing for our batukulu ; our sons also are priests to them, and can officiate in our place, even should they be younger than our batukulu. That is the reason why we do not marry them. We are their elders (bakulu)." Of course the bones will always be consulted and they will tell if a sacrifice must be offered to the gods of the mother or to those of the father, but a kokwane will preferably be called upon to sacrifice for a sick child. (See Part VI. Chap. II, II.)

604 611 In the ceremonies following death, especially in the feast of the mourning beer (page 164), the malume will be the officiating person and squeeze the *psanyi* over his batukulu to cleanse them.

A last right possessed by the malume is that *of raising his village*

604 *(pfusha muti) by means of a ntukulu.* Should he see that he
611 has no children, that his village is in danger of "dying," he will
597 take his unmarried sister to his village and refuse to accept the lobolo for her. He will say to her : "Do not fear! If you die, I will bury you!" This duty falls in the first place to the husband; but the brother is ready to fulfil it. She will have lovers, and perhaps give birth to a son. As she has not been lobola, this child belongs to the mother's family, according to the great rule of Native law. The uncle will appropriate this male offspring of his family, who will bear the *shibongo* of his kokwana. A uterine nephew, adopted under these circumstances, can save the family of his mother from extinction.

2) Rights of the uterine nephew.

604 The attitude of the ntukulu wa shisati (the uterine nephew)
782 to his malume is quite peculiar. "Ntukulu i hosi, a nyenyela hikwapsu ku malume." — "The uterine nephew is a chief! He takes any liberty he likes with his maternal uncle" (Mboza). These prerogatives of uterine nephews with regard to relatives on their mother's side, their bamalume and bakokwana, appear clearly in the religious ceremonies. We have seen the prominent part which batukulu take in these rites. "Ba yima mahlwen ka psikwembu" — "they stand before the gods, in their stead" (Viguet). They must be the servants of the altar, and the consumers of the offering. In the great sacrifice for rain, as accomplished in the Northern clans, an offering of beer is made, together with the sacrifice of the black victim. (See Part VI.) It is the uterine niece of the chief who must fetch the mealies from the granary, pour them into the pot, take the first handful to crush it in the mortar, give the first blow with the pestle, and begin each of the complicated acts of the brewing. When the black victim is brought, some one puts an assagay into her hand and helps her to stab the animal. She it is who "gives over to the gods" (nyiketa psikwembu). The same thing happens in the great family gatherings : one ntukulu holds the leg, another the

604 obsolete, but which asserts itself in virtue of the survival of an old
178 custom. I have often been struck by the unconscious way in
428 which they act on all these occasions! They give the impression of people who have been hypnotised and ordered to do something next day, when no longer in the mesmeric sleep. You see them carrying out the act, constrained by a mysterious necessity and without knowing why they do so. The hypnotising factor here is the weight of heredity, of all this hoary antiquity, which belongs indeed to the past, but still influences the subliminal life of the tribe...

643 As regards the chiefs, I may add that the uterine nephew may
604 be given the chieftainship over a certain part of the country. He is well received at the Court, better than the nephews on the brother's side, because, with these, there is always the risk that they may become usurpers. This also explains why a chief, when in danger, will ask help from his bakokwana rather than from the relatives of his own family. The latter may seize the opportunity for "bangana buhosi", i. e. to dispute the chieftainship with him.

611 Mother-right most probably existed amongst the ancestors of
178 the Thongas, whatever may be the country in which they then lived
602 and the name by which they were called. But everything seems to prove that this phase has long ago passed away. No one remembers anything of the kind. Genealogies, which are the oldest records of the tribe, mention only the ancestors of the father. They are recalled much better than those of the mother. The lobola custom, which is the strongest support of the paternal right at the present time, has been practised since time immemorial (1). See also the special names of the great-grandfathers in the paternal line (p. 227).

000 (1) Lobola is however not incompatible with the uterine form of the family. I have been informed by the Rev. E. Allégret, working in the French Congo, that the Mpongwe and Galoa of the Lower Ogowe have still partly preserved the mother-right. But lobola exists. The first lobolo is payed indifferently to the father or the mother of the bride, and the choice is made according to the personal relations existing between the husband's family and the families of the bride's parents. When a second daughter marries, half the lobolo is given to the maternal uncle. The children stay in the father's village, but they are under the guidance of the mother and of her family. They belong to the mother's clan. This system evidently denotes a less advanced stage of evolution. However matriarchy is passing into patriarchy, and the lobola custom will probably hasten the process.

604 very highly respected, that he has the right of life and death over his nephews." The relation between a maternal uncle and his nephews is totally different in that Central African tribe from what it is amongst our South African tribes. There, at any rate, the pattern of behaviour inspired by the mother does not apply to her brother, and Mr. Brown's theory is at fault. On the matriarchy hypothesis, on the contrary, it is not impossible to explain this fact. There has been an evolution (whilst there has probably been no change in the feelings of a mother towards her child from the beginning of the human race up to the present day). If, in the course of this evolution, there was a time when the family system was matrilocal, a time when a child dwelt in its mother's village, close to its mother's brother, one can understand that the latter, at that time, took upon himself the duty of educating the child, of reproving him. His attitude, in such circumstances, was more severe, more dominating than now. As the Ba-Ila have preserved a kind of matriarchy, possessing, as they do, totemic clans in which matriarchal customs prevail, we ought not to be astonished if the relations of uncle and nephew are so different amongst them. In the South African tribes the authority has completely passed to the father. Hence the great respect shown to him by the children ; hence also the want of respect and the great ease in the relations with the maternal uncle.

603 611 At the end of this argument, may I allow a Native to give his opinion ? Natives often refuse if asked to explain these mysterious customs of theirs. Yet when we have the chance of hearing an intelligent Bantu formulate a reason for one of them, we are bound to consider such testimony as very valuable. Natives feel what we, Europeans, can only guess, and they have actual experience of the Bantu kraal life... Speaking on this very subject of the mode of behaviour of a Thonga toward his father's and mother's family my informant said : "If the paternal grandfather is less lenient with his grandson than the maternal grandfather, it is on account of property" (p. 232). The paternal grandfather and his grandson belong to the same clan, or sib, or family. They bear the same name (shibongo). They possess in common certain property, oxen, implements, etc, which all of them have the duty of preserving, increasing, defending. If a child spoils or destroys this property, he commits a wrong which is resented by all the other members of the clan. His paternal grandfather will reprove him. He will do so also if the honour, the good reputation of the clan is at stake. But the maternal grandfather has nothing to do with such matters. The spoiled property

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does not belong to him, and, whatever the child may do in this respect, the ease and indulgence which characterises his relations with his nephew will not be altered. Thus whatever influence the natural feelings of tenderness of the mother towards her children may have had on the special mode of behaviour of the batukulu towards their bakokwana, they are not the only factor, nor perhaps the most important factor to be considered: Property plays a greater part in the determination of that kind of relationship in the present circumstances, and as regards its first origin, the matriarchy hypothesis goes a long way to explain its characteristics.

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But let me frankly recognise that the matriarchy theory is but a hypothesis. As Mr. Brown rightly shows, there is not a tribe amongst the Bantus, as far as we know, where that family system exists in its integrity, i. e. matrilineal, matrilocal, matripotestal. Everywhere there seems to prevail a mixture of the two systems. However if there has been an evolution (and an evolution has certainly taken place) and if one system preceded the other, it must certainly have been matriarchy, as its traces, in the present patriarchal system, bear all the character of relics of a former period.

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I have tried to look far back into the past of the Thonga family system. Now I would ask: What about its future ? The question must be asked, because we are not considering the South African tribe only as a subject of scientific study. We are deeply interested in its welfare and in its destiny. New forces have appeared which act in a new way on primitive society.

What will be, what must be the nature of the evolution ? How must it be directed by those who have a responsibility for the shaping of the future Bantu society ?

We shall answer this question in our Practical Conclusions, at the end of this Volume. For the present we shall be satisfied with a scientific collection of the facts in relation to the two great customs which lie at the base of the whole family system of the Bantus : Lobola and Polygamy.

583 835 (See page 109). Every male member of the group has his say in the matter.

593 618 2) Brothers will always be ready to help a poor relative to lobola : they work for their group.

3) The acquired wife is their presumptive spouse, though they cannot have sexual relations with her (matlulana). They will inherit her if the husband dies, according to the laws which I have explained in the preceding paragraphs.

583 593 611 618 4) Children will belong to the father, live with him, bear his shibongo (family name), and owe him obedience : boys will strengthen this group, girls will be lobota (factitive of lobola—sold in marriage) for his profit. Father-right rests on the lobola. This is so plain that any child born of a woman who has not been paid for belongs to the mother's family, bears her shibongo name and will live in the malume's village. In Appendix VII, I relate the story of Spoon Libombo as an instance of this primordial law. This is the reason why, when the question is discussed, men insist so much on the preservation of the lobola. They say : "Who will guarantee us the possession of our children if lobola is suppressed ?"

So the lobola is by no means a purchase made by the husband, and still less a present given to the wife's parents.

1) Advantages of the lobola custom.

583 593 586 In the primitive collective stage of society the custom has certainly *great advantages* : 1) It strengthens the family, I mean the patriarchal family, the right of the father. 2) It marks the difference between a legitimate and an illegitimate marriage and, in this sense, takes the place of an official marriage register. 3) It puts hindrances in the way of dissolving the matrimonial union, as a wife cannot definitely leave her husband without her group returning the lobola. Therefore it obliges the married pair to have a certain regard one for the other.

However, these advantages must not be exaggerated. Marriages

APPENDIX VI (See p. 265)

The story of Paulus K., illustrating the matlulana superstition and the Thonga horror of polyandry.

607 835 One of my pupils, who was already a married man of, perhaps, thirty-two years of age, once came to me, very much distressed, to confess a fault which seemed to weigh very heavy on his conscience. On a day of feasting he had drunk too freely and had commited adultery with the wife of his elder brother Guga. He fought with himself for years, not daring to avow an action which seemed to him not merely ordinary adultery but an incestuous act. He finally wrote to his brother: "Though I know that we shall not be able to love each other any more as before, though it pains me so much to separate from you, I will confess! Please forgive me, as I intended to commit suicide on account of my fault!"

The special gravity of the fault consisted in two circumstances: 1) She was his brother's wife and he was now unable to visit his brother when ill, to take part in his burial, or to maintain friendly relations with him. 2) Guga was his elder brother. This made the case still worse.

The letter of Paulus to his fellow evangelists is touching: "I have no right to stay in your assembly, because I have been overcome by the Enemy and committed adultery with my elder brother's wife. I have been long prevented (from confessing) by the Enemy's power. Now I have wept before Jesus that He may help me to pierce the abscess... Satan came and said to me: 'Will you not be ashamed to confess such a thing before men'?' I nearly retreated. But at sunrise I made haste to write to you, and now I feel peace and joy. It seems to me that I am going to receive the Spirit of God."

APPENDIX VII (See p. 279)

611 597 604 *The story of Spoon Libombo, showing that, when the lobolo has not been paid or has been returned, the children belong to the mother's and not to the father's family.*

Spoon was the son of Shibaninge, a woman of the Libombo family, and of Khobete of the Mazwaya family, who had lobola Shibaninge.

611 597 604 This man died during a war with the Portuguese, having been killed on Mbengelen island. The widow was "fambeliwa" (chosen) by Nsiki, Khobete's brother, who was to inherit her. But Nsiki did not really care for the widow. He did not prepare a *ntehe* for the baby nor provide the mother with ochre. Seeing this, Shibaninge went back to her relatives. When the time for the weaning of the little one arrived, a man named Mbobobo had irregular relations with the woman in order to "lumula" the child (See page 60). Mbobobo went so far as to take her to his home, upon which Nsiki claimed the lobolo paid by the Mazwayas and the Libombos gave it back to them. After that, Spoon lived in his mother's family and was called : "wa ka Libombo," "man of Libombo." But he had no real home (a nga na kwakwe). Being on the spot he was always chosen to help in the sacrifices : drinking the beer which remained in the pot after the libations to the gods in the gandelo, near the gate, stealing the offerings when the victims were killed in the sacred bush, etc. He was the "great ntukulu," because his mother belonged to the elder branch or first house of the family. So he took precedence of the other uterine nephews when they had to take part in the sacrifices.

APPENDIX VIII (See p. 281)

The story of Gidhlana Ngwetsa of Rikatla; a typical case illustrating the lobola, divorce, and leper customs of the Ba-Ronga.

587 586 Gidhlana was the sister of a man named Mubene. Both were the children of a fine old Ronga named Ngwetsa and one of his wives. Gidhlana was bought with lobola by a man named Khandlela (candle), son of Ñwamanghele, a man of the Manyisa clan settled near Rikatla. The marriage took place probably in 1893. The new pair did not live in peace. Gidhlana quarrelled with her husband. "Why ? Nobody knows! Are the affairs of the huts and the villages known to outsiders ?" She returned home to her father Ngwetsa. The husband waited a while. Then he followed her (landjela) and asked her to come back to the conjugal home. Her parents told her to obey. She went. But quarrelling soon recommenced. She fled a second time ; her husband and her parents-in-law did their best to induce her to go back. She refused. An uncle of hers took a stick and thrashed her but nothing could persuade her.

671 possesses a rich store of *judicial expressions*. Here are the most
644 common : *Nau* (pl. milau) means law, custom. *Ku tlula nau*, to
192 jump over the law, means transgression. *Nandju* (pl. *milandju*) means the fault resulting from transgression. This interesting word comes from *ku landja*, to follow. It applies in the first instance to cases which lead to a prosecution, but secondly to any fault. *Ku doha*, is to be wrong and *ku dohela mhunu*, the applicative derivative, to wrong another. *Ku da*, to eat somebody, or *dela*, is also a picturesque expression employed for injury to property. *Ku ramba* (Dj.), *ku rjamela hosin* (Ro.) is the technical expression to designate a complaint lodged before the chief. *Ku riha* (Dj.), *djiha* (Ro.) means to pay a fine, and *rihisa*, *djihisa* (the factitive derivative), to impose a fine.

672 This strong sense of justice however differs from the European
426 on certain points. Owing to their collectivist notions, the Bantus
614 consider relatives as responsible for the debts of their own kin, as we have already seen (p. 332). Another case in which they entertain ideas which seem very strange to us is this ; when anyone has lent you an implement and you make a bad use of it, the fault is as much the lender's as the borrower's. I remember a queer case which took place in my school in Rikatla. Some boys had to go in the afternoon to work in the vegetable garden under the supervision of their overseer. On the way one of them happened to hurt his foot by treading on a thorn. So, when he arrived in the garden, he borrowed a knife from the overseer and began to make sandals of palm-leaf pith. The elder boy entreated him to work. He refused to obey, so the overseer denounced him publicly, when the weekly inquiry into the conduct of the boys was made, on the following Friday. But the temporary shoemaker did not admit to being guilty of anything at all, and his final argument was this : "I cannot understand how Mr. Overseer can accuse me when he himself lent me the knife which I used to carve my sandals!" D. Kidd tells similar stories about Pondos in his "Essential Kafir."

671 So there are differences between Native and European conceptions of justice, and Bantus do not always draw the same conclusions as we do from given premises. Native Commissioners

2) Civil cases.

692 I will not assert that Thongas know the exact difference between
622 civil and criminal cases, the same tribunal judging them both and
643 all being called by the same name, milandju.
681 If any distinction is made, it would be between private and official cases, *private cases* being those which are settled by the two parties concerned alone, without the intervention of the chief ; whilst *official cases* are those in which the matter (mhaka) has been brought to the capital. As already explained, the headmen of the village try to settle the difficulties themselves ; if they succeed, all the better, as the fine will be reduced to its minimum, whilst, before the Court, the fine would be doubled and the chief would keep half of it!

691 Ninety per cent of the civil cases are in connection with *lobola*. These are sometimes most intricate and I would refer to the description already given of some of them (p. 282 and Appendix VIII).

691 *Divorce cases* are also common. When a woman has definitely
586 left her husband, her relatives must return the lobolo money.
643 "You must give up to them £ 5 or an ox," says Mankhelu. The
614 chief Mubvesha who was known for his avarice used to arrest the husband and make him pay £ 25 ; he returned £ 15 to the wife's relatives and kept £ 10 for himself.

When money is returned, the children belong to the mother (See page 279).

691 Many cases may occur in connection with *cattle*. The case of
643 *redhibition* is foreseen : when I buy an ox and it dies on my hands
437 from a disease which was not known at the date of my purchase but which already existed, I have the right to go and ask for another in its place. But I bring the skin of the dead ox with me and one hoe inside it for the meat which I have eaten. If the seller refuses to accept my claim, I go to the chief and complain. He will summon the recalcitrant person and say to him : "Did not this man act well when he put a hoe inside the skin ? Give him another ox!" (Mankhelu.)

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Listen! This is what Nwamantibyane says,
He whom the people of Nkupane do not love, (1)
The son of the Great Forest (Sihlahla) of Hamule, (2)
He who took a wife and used the sword in the country of
his parents-in-law, in Mbukwane's country.

Gwalagwala a libuvu,
Ilihlengo ngo kubekeka,
Umpathi we sibamo,
U za ku debula Mangole ni Maputukizi.

The royal bird with red plumage (3),
Magnificent to contemplate,
He who holds in his hand a gun
With which he will fire on the Angoless and the Portuguese.

Nduma kuti, lo wa khiti,
Mo nga ngesilwana,
U ti ka: a yi funule!

He whose fame spreads afar, our chief,
Who is as a wild beast,
It is he who says: "To arms!".

701 This final exclamation, prolonged and finishing abruptly on
726 the last syllable, carries a long distance; all the warriors jump to their feet and, brandishing their assagais and shields, run to the chief's village, where the circle is to be formed. Each

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(1) The people of Nkupane are one of the younger branches of the royal family of Mpfumo. They lived close to Lourenço Marques, on the other slope of the hill, to the West of the town. They would have liked undoubtedly, in common with many others, to assert their independence by throwing off the yoke of the elder branch, and even attempted to do so when Mabombole tried, in 1867 or in 1869, to overthrow Zihlahla. But the elder branch, whose chiefs were energetic men, succeeded in maintaining its authority over the whole clan. The fact that the people of Nkupane "do not love" Nwamantibyane redounds rather to the credit of the latter.

(2) Nwamantibyane's father was Zihlahla, his grandfather was Hamule. Sihlahla, or Zihlahla, in Zulu means forest, hence the herald's play on the word. The reign of Zihlahla, which we may place at from 1867 to 1883, was very troubled, at least during its first few years. The young chief, on his return from Natal, after the death of his father Hamule, married Mbilwana, a princess of the royal family of Mabota. During the bloody wars then raging, Zihlahla was angry with Mabota (whose chief was Mbukwana), for playing him false, and, one fine day, he made a raid into the country of his parents-in-law, killing many people. To have thus treated his "bakoswana," who are ordinarily held in such great respect, (see Part II) was a proof of valour which is remembered to this day, more than fifty years after the event. It must be said that, after this exploit, Zihlahla left his residence near the town and took refuge in the Nwamba territory; the Whites with whom he was fighting put in his place a certain Nwayeye whose name we shall find in a war song to which we shall have occasion to refer later on.

(3) The nkulunkulu is a bird which is shot in the forest on the borders of the Nkomati; its feathers are red, and only chiefs are allowed to wear them.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

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(Since the sib is the true national unit of the Thonga, all information on the organization of governmental institutions will be filed in the appropriate 64 category instead of category 614 and all information on the chief of the sib will be filed in category 643--analyst)

533 fight, when returned from battle, as well as those sung during the march of the troop. I give the striking music of some of these in the next chapter. Tune 24 is the "Sabela nkosi" the great Mpfumo song, also adopted by other clans. Tune 25, with its splendid change from the minor to the major key, is the Tembe and Maputju classical war song. No. 29 is an old Nkuna war song, dating as far back as 1820, before the Zulu invasion ; No. 27 is the principal modern Nkuna song, and
535 No. 28 the Nkuna equivalent to the Ronga *Giraffe song*. These old chants are sung to the accompaniment of the military dance, which consists in trampling on the ground, while rhythmically brandishing the assagais, lifting them first to the right, then to the left, bending them sideways, then downwards, as if to pierce (I. p. 463). They are certainly wonderfully fine compositions.

533 I include in the same category the laudatory song of the *mbongi*
826 (I. p. 424), a branch of literature in which Court poets display
644 considerable imagination and an extraordinary gift for unbounded hyperbole. All the important chiefs have their mbongi and it is required of the man holding this office that he should have a good chest (shifuba), the chest being to the Thongas the seat of eloquence (as it was to the ancient Romans : Pectus est quod oratorem facit!). The elucubrations of these poet laureates sometimes last a very long time and may have real poetic value.

614 As we saw (I. p. 361) each clan and even each family
553 possesses its own laudatory phrase ; this is the *shibongo*, a word which generally means family name, but which etymologically signifies the formula by which the clan or family glorifies (bonga) itself. These formulae are usually short and often contain archaic expressions or allusions to unknown facts which make them very difficult to understand. I have given some of those from the Ronga territory. Here are two others, collected by the Rev. A. Jaques amongst the Transvaal Thongas, who seem to cultivate this custom more than the coast clans ; they are perhaps encouraged to do so by their Pedi neighbours, who are very fond of these formulae, called by them *mireto*.

Hlangwini wa ka Shitlhelane; hi ba ka Nkandamuri; hi ba ka Manyubele ni Mbowo; hi ba ka Gidjigidji, ba tilo. —. Akane ka paitjunga! Lomu ukobeni mi ta muka hi kona... 614 553

Hlangwini of (the house of) Shitlhelane; we are of (the house of) Nkandamuri; we are of (the house of) Manyubele and Mbowo; we are of (the house of) Gidjigidji, the people of Heaven. —. Build (your huts) on the hills. In the valley you will have to leave (?)

It would seem that these Hlangwinis are a clan of rain-makers, people having the power of Heaven. They advise others to settle on the hills and not in the valleys, because otherwise their huts would be swept away by the floods, owing to the terrible rains which the Hlangwinis have the power of causing to fall.

The second is not very refined, but is characteristic. Erotic allusions are frequent in those formulae :

Nkuna wa Mabutane; mabuta, ba yi bonile ku basa ka yona.
Nkuna of Mabutane; when wooing a girl, he has seen that she was pure.

Mabutane is probably a surname of Nkuna. There is in this formula a play on the word buta which means to woo (I. p. 101). Before choosing a girl, the ancestor first made sure that she was untouched ; this denotes a species of wisdom which his descendants still boast of to-day! 553

In epic poetry may be included also the *pshiphato*, a Zulu expression which means the laudatory sentence with which warriors praise themselves according to the Zulu fashion. Private individuals, and even women sometimes have their shiphato ; for instance a girl bearing the name of Yandea will glorify herself in these words : Yendea, madjaha! Yendea, the young men! This formula does not throw a very favourable light on the habits of the girl, and scarcely belongs to literature!

A more elaborate product of Thonga poetry is found in the *hunting songs*. I have already mentioned these (p. 60) and here give as a typical example the Elephant's song. I have been told by my informant, Zebedea Mbenyana, a Native of Bilen, that the hunters performed it whilst dancing on the body of the enormous beast, after having transfixed it. 533 224 115. 539

II. *Tribe, Groups and Clans.*

101/618 It is necessary first of all to define clearly the precise meaning of these three terms.

We reserve the term *tribe* for the totality of the Thonga nation. This word is frequently used to designate the smaller national units, which are called after some old chief whose descendants are still reigning, like Tembe, Khosa, Nkuna, etc. We prefer for the sake of clearness to call these small units *clans*, as there is certainly a great resemblance between them and the Scottish clans. As a rule all men belonging to a clan bear the name of the old chief, who is more or less considered the ancestor of them all. In the Tembe country, most of the inhabitants will salute each other with these words: "Shawan Tembe, good morning, Tembe"! But Tembe, the name of the clan, means not only a group of people, but a certain part of the country south of Delagoa Bay. In that country men of other clans have settled. There are also sub-clans of the Tembe clan which have already adopted special salutations, because they have formed collateral branches of the big Tembe family. However the term *clan* is the best, I think, to designate this kind of national unit, as its origin is essentially familial. Now some of these clans, those which occupy the same tract of country, form *groups* because they speak the same dialect of the Thonga language.

III. *The generic Name of the Tribe.*

101/619 As we shall see, there is no true national unity amongst the Thongas (1). They are hardly conscious that they form a definite

193 (1) What orthography are we to adopt when using the Bantu proper names in the plural? Different systems are used in ethnographic books, but the following appears to me the most rational. When a Bantu proper name is used with its plural prefix, the addition of a final *s* is not justified; but in that case the prefix ought to be separated from the rest by a hyphen, in order that the uninitiated reader may understand at once that he is dealing with a plural. Thus I would write: Ama-Zulu, Ba-Ronga, etc.

. Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

584 825 777 784 you are there, or on the road, have nothing to do with it. The zebra is *mbalamberi*, an animal of two colours; moreover it has no horns. The same holds good for the giraffe. It has two colours, it has too long bowels. Psa yila! The reedbuck cries: "Dzoo." It is a witch: a mukoñwana must not eat it. For the same reason a sheep without horns is never given to bakoñwana.

7. When you go with women to the parents of your fiancée for a *shirwulo*, viz., to bring them beer, should one of the jugs fall to the ground, psa yila! Return home!

606 609 784 618 825 177 8. From a Thonga of the Maputju country I once heard that it was a great taboo in that district for a man to drink milk with his parents-in-law; let us say rather to *eat* milk, as Natives always take it in its solid form, i. e. curdled. This man was a Christian; he had given up many heathen customs and had gone so far as to partake of milk with his mother-in-law, but, the people all round were very much shocked at his conduct. Pushing my inquiry further, I heard that the milk taboo was observed not only with bakoñwana, but with all the inhabitants of the country who did not belong to one's clan; curdled milk was to be eaten only with people bearing the same family name. In other words, it is forbidden to eat milk *in any village where one can take a wife*. In a very interesting paper published in the *South African Journal of Science*, 1925, p. 481, Mrs A. W. Hoernlé says that this custom is wide-spread amongst many Bantu tribes of Central and South Africa, and explains it by the very intimate relationship which is thought to exist between human beings and cattle. The oxen are one with the clan to which they belong, and only members of that clan can partake of the milk of their cows. I never met with this idea in the other parts of the Thonga tribe, and I may remark that, as the Maputju clan is settled very near to the Zulus and has been more or less "zuluised", this custom might very well have been borrowed from its neighbours. Further researches will show whether the other Thonga clans have preserved what seems to be a very old Bantu idea, or at any rate traces of it. This is quite possible.

584 777 784 9. Do not build a hut for your wife before you have married her. Mankhelu says: "Even if you have plenty of money to lobola, if you make such a blunder your wife will be taken from you.

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called *the cat*, because it is like a cat which is put on their shoulders and scratches them. It scratches away the bukonwana which prevented their marriage. (Viguet.) In this case it is the *shikonwana* which is killed. So the taboo is removed and they can marry.

III. *Marriages permitted.*

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Relatives from the eighth degree of relationship can marry unconditionally (Mankhelu). The choice of a boy is unlimited within the clan and even within the tribe. However, marriages into a *too far distant clan* are not recommended, according to Viguet, for the following reasons: 1) If the marriage were unsuccessful, the parents-in-law against whom the claim would be brought might run away with wife and oxen, and we should lose our herd. 2) If our oxen multiplied in the other clan, we might be tempted to go and make war on our parents-in-law in order to appropriate the cattle. So blood would be shed on account of our own oxen! This would bring shame upon us! Whilst if we marry amongst friends, even amongst remote relatives, should a quarrel occur, we shall try to settle it peacefully. These people are amongst those with whom we discuss in the hut. With strangers we discuss outside, on the square, and we occasionally fight with them and drive them away. So a difficulty can better be dealt with when our bukonwana are people living close by.

IV. *Marriages recommended.*

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Here we must take into account two different cases: some marriages are contracted on account of a kind of right of pre-emption, others on account of a right of inheritance.

1) Right of pre-emption.

There are amongst the relatives of a man certain women on whom he has a kind of preferential claim, or a right of pre-emption,

583 the new conditions, especially when a stay of a year or two in
177 Johannesburg was long enough to save the necessary sum. Boys who had no sister, and who would have been destitute in former times, could then dream of a *tshenwge* viz., of marrying three or four wives! And they had this advantage that, their wives not having been bought with family property (their sister's oxen), no bakoñwana could disturb them in their domestic happiness, as may happen to those who marry by means of the first-mentioned lobolo.

This leads us to consider :

583 II. *The original meaning and the consequences of the lobola.*

As we have said previously, the only way of understanding the lobola, as well as other similar payments in kind which we meet with amongst a great number of uncivilized or half civilized nations, (1) is to consider it as *a compensation given by one group to another group*, in order to restore the equilibrium between the various collective units composing the clan. The first group acquires a new member : the second feels itself diminished, and claims something which permits it to reconstitute itself, in its turn, by the acquisition of another woman. This collectivist conception alone explains all the facts.

583 In this way, the acquired wife, though she keeps her shibongo
562 (clan name), becomes the property of the first group. She is
593 aggregated to it by complicated marriage ceremonies, representing
618 the passage from one family to another. She is owned by the new family, herself and the children who will be born of her. She is not in any way a slave, but she is nevertheless owned. She is not the individual property of one man, but the collective property of a group. Hence the following facts :

1) Her whole family take part in the marriage ceremonies, especially on the day when the lobola is brought by the bridegroom

(1) See A. van Gennep, *Les Rites de passage*, p. 170. The *Kalym* of the Turko-Mongolians, the *Nyen* of Southern Thibet, etc., correspond to the Bantu lobola.

583 (See page 109). Every male member of the group has his say in
835 the matter.
593 2) Brothers will always be ready to help a poor relative to
618 lobola : they work for their group.

3) The acquired wife is their presumptive spouse, though they cannot have sexual relations with her (matlulana). They will inherit her if the husband dies, according to the laws which I have explained in the preceding paragraphs.

583 4) Children will belong to the father, live with him, bear his
593 shibongo (family name), and owe him obedience : boys will
611 strengthen this group, girls will be lobota (factitive of lobola—
618 sold in marriage) for his profit. Father-right rests on the lobola. This is so plain that any child born of a woman who has not been paid for belongs to the mother's family, bears her shibongo name and will live in the malume's village. In Appendix VII, I relate the story of Spoon Libombo as an instance of this primordial law. This is the reason why, when the question is discussed, men insist so much on the preservation of the lobola. They say : "Who will guarantee us the possession of our children if lobola is suppressed ?"

So the lobola is by no means a purchase made by the husband, and still less a present given to the wife's parents.

1) Advantages of the lobola custom.

583 In the primitive collective stage of society the custom has
593 certainly *great advantages* : 1) It strengthens the family, I mean
586 the patriarchal family, the right of the father. 2) It marks the difference between a legitimate and an illegitimate marriage and, in this sense, takes the place of an official marriage register. 3) It puts hindrances in the way of dissolving the matrimonial union, as a wife cannot definitely leave her husband without her group returning the lobola. Therefore it obliges the married pair to have a certain regard one for the other.

However, these advantages must not be exaggerated. Marriages

182 mourning over the dead. The inner connexion existing between these
621 three events is that, in all of them, there is a passage. Hence the
783 resemblance of the rites. This striking similarity is, to my mind, the
829 best proof that the passage rites constitute a peculiar category. When a headman has decided to move, he leaves his old kraal, he *separates* from it, not by the ordinary gate, but by a special opening made at the back of the village. He is not allowed to return to it again. Then, for him and for all his people, begins a *marginal period* of one month or móre, the buhlapfa (notice the prefix *bu* which indicates a period here, as in busahana [page 42]). We see the village, during these few weeks, put beyond the pale of society. The ordinary laws are suspended, (licencious songs), and many special taboos are enforced (prohibition of sexual relations, fire taboo, water taboo, etc.), just as in the period of mourning; at last the village returns to the ordinary course of life by a final act of purification, the mysterious *hlamba ndjaka*, which seems to be the most powerful means of cleansing the collective life. This last ceremony shows that, here, the marginal period has been instituted on account of the uncleaness, the impurity of the old village. Let us remember that in most cases the village has been moved on account of death! All the adult members of the social organism take part in the cleansing (at least in the Northern clans) and so the village begins a new and purified life. No one can deny the deep significance of all these rites and the mystic conception of the Thonga village.

C. THE HEADMAN AND THE ORGANISATION OF THE VILLAGE.

596 Each village thus possesses its superior (hosi), its master. He
576 is called *munumzane* or *numzane*, a curious expression which is
621 also employed in Zulu ; it means owner of a kraal, gentleman,
618 and is often used in saluting grown up men. We have seen the mystic relation between the headman and his *muti*. The village, the muti, is the primitive social organism. The clan (tiko), which is the gathering of all the *miti*, reproduces all the features of the
622 village life on a large scale. So the *numzane* corresponds to the
596 *hosi*, chief of the tribe. Both certainly possess great authority,

622 but it must not become tyrannical. They must govern for the
596 benefit of their subordinates.
264 This peculiar position of the numzane amongst his people is
554 illustrated, in a striking way, by the laws of distribution of the joints of meat on the day when the headman kills an ox to feast them. The various portions must be distributed to the relatives according to the place which they occupy in the family. The headman, nominal proprietor of the ox, will keep the breast (shifuba). This is not only the sternum and the ribs, but most of the viscera which are contained in them. The tripe, the heart, the kidneys will be put all together inside the stomach, and constitute what is called *nkopfu wa homu*. The headman will probably send the heart and the kidneys to his wives (tinkosikazi, his queens!). The brother who comes next will receive one of the hindlegs ; the third in rank one of the forelegs. The elder son will eat the second hindleg, and the younger son the second foreleg. They will eat this meat with their families, or houses (tiyindlu). This custom is very old (1).

Let us continue with the distribution. To the brothers-in-law, or to the relatives-in-law generally, the tail is sent. It is the portion of the sister. But it does not consist only of the tail properly so-called ; it comprises all the hind parts of the animal, especially the rump (kondjo). The malume (maternal uncle) receives part of the loins (muhlubula). The liver is put aside for the grandfather and the old people generally, because it is soft and they have no teeth to gnaw the bones. The head belongs to all the men of the village, who must eat it on the hubo, as we have seen. They may give the tongue (ndjaka) to the old men. It

622 (1) This custom is illustrated in a very interesting manner by the relative position
596 of the three clans occupying the South of the Bay. They are all descended from
264 Tembe (See page 23). *Tembe*, the ancestor, representing the elder branch of the royal family, ate the chest. He was the superior (hosi), and this rank is still held by
554 his descendants in the direct line. *Sabi* or Mpanyele, the second brother, or son of the second brother, ate the hindleg ; he was established later on in the Mathuthweni
618 district, between Tembe and Maputju. *Maputju*, the younger brother, head of the third branch, ate the foreleg. But he revolted against his elder brother and carved out for himself a kingdom which very soon became stronger than those of Tembe and Mathuthweni. Mathuthweni became more or less independent. But when people wish to remind the Maputju people of their inferior origin, they say to them : "Tembe ate the breast, Sabi the hindleg and Maputju the foreleg !"

574 travellers be refused the customary hospitality in a village and
609 incur misfortune later on, the chief will make the people of that village responsible and they will have to pay a fine. In Gungunyana's country, warriors were sent to plunder such a village. Lack of hospitality, however, is not considered as a taboo (yila), because "it does not kill ;" it is a bad action (biha).

Now-a-days, customs are beginning to change ; hundreds of young men (magaisa) coming from the towns after working there, pass through the country, and it would be impossible to put them up and feed them all. They sleep on the *bandla* and cook food for themselves, occasionally buying some mealies or a hen from the inhabitants. Moreover they have plenty of money and they can pay !

609 It must also be added that, if they dispense hospitality liberally,
618 the Thongas can be very hard on people who do not belong to
761 their special clan. Feelings of humanity are sometimes strangely deficient. I heard of a boy of the Manyisa district who had fallen down near the lake of Rikatla, unable to proceed further on account of a bad wound received while working on the railway at Lourenço Marques. Nobody took pity on him because he was of another clan, and he would have died there if a Christian woman, named Lois, had not received him in her village and nursed him. Fear of death and its contamination may partly explain this want of compassion for strangers.

784 As already mentioned, it was formerly taboo to enter the village square wearing boots. These boots consist of sandals
643 made by the hunters for their long trips through the thorny
677 bush. They were not allowed on the hubo. A subject was not permitted to sit on a mortar or on anything else ; the chief alone could do so, and it was considered a sign of pride to sit on anything but the bare ground!

609 The habit of offering a concubine to passers-by is never met with amongst the Rongas as it is in other tribes. Now-a-days
177 dissolute women may offer themselves. But they have lea
574 from white men this new kind of immorality.

On the fate of the Thonga Village, see Practical Conclusions. V.

THIRD PART

NATIONAL LIFE.

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618 Having sketched the Individual and Communal life of the
619 Thongas, we will now consider the National life. We have seen
186 what the *muti*, the Village, means to a Thonga. What does the Nation, *tiko* mean to him ? As we have already pointed out, what we call the nation, tiko, is not the big tribe, numbering many hundred thousand people, but the special clan to which this Thonga belongs. There is no feeling of national unity in the tribe as a whole ; its unity consists only in a language and in certain customs which are common to all the clans. So the true national unit is the clan.

CHAPTER I

THE CLAN.

A. THE ACTUAL ORGANISATION OF THE CLAN.

618 Whatever may have been the social system of the Bantus in past ages, the existing clan can be directly traced from the patriarchal family. I have particularly studied the composition of two of the Thonga clans, the Nkunas of Zoutpansberg and the Mazwayas of the estuary of the Nkomati. Let us see how the clan is composed in both these instances.

l: Junod M-5 (1895-1909):927 Thonga

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The *Nkuna clan*, which migrated from the confluence of the Oliphant and the Limpopo to the country round Leydsdorp, in or about 1835, is certainly of purer descent than most of the other Thonga clans, owing to its disturbed history, and its numerous migrations, which prevented other people from joining it, and strengthened the national tie. The common ancestor is Nkuna who, some centuries ago, left Zululand to settle in the plain of the Lower Limpopo. His son was Shitlhelana, his grandson Rinono. All the sons of Rinono are still known. One of them was the founder of the present royal family, and the present *hosi*, or chief, Muhlaba, is descended from him. The descendants of the others, who call themselves by their names, are the Mhuntanyanas, the Mashonganas, the Mbhalatis, the Kulalas, the Mushwanas, etc ; they form what is called the *doors* (tinyangwa) of the clan, each of these districts being under a petty chief, who is *hosana* (diminutive of hosi). So the nation is but an enlarged family, and everyone depends on his *hosana* and his *hosi*, the members of the royal family alone having only a *hosi*.

In the *Nondwane country*, on either side of the estuary of the Nkomati river, the situation is somewhat different. The whole land was first occupied in the XIIth and XIIIth centuries by three independant clans, the Mahlangwan, Hoñwana and Nkumba, which were on a lower scale of civilisation, having no iron weapons nor oxhide shields. They were scattered as far as the Mabota country and their numbers must have been very small. The first invasion took place before 1500, when a chief of the Lebombo hills, called Libombo, settled almost without fighting on the Western part of the estuary. This is the chief whom the old Portuguese chronicler Perestrello met in 1554, and who said to him : "Mena Libombo," — "I am Libombo." The original clans submitted to the invaders who mixed with them, being of a race not very different from them. Then, later on, came the clan now reigning, the Mazwaya, which conquered the whole country. According to the custom generally observed, the Mazwaya chief placed his relatives and his sons in the various parts of the land as petty chiefs (tihosana), retaining the old Libombo chiefs as counsellors (tindjuna) to watch over them and assist them.

~~618~~ 1/3 This is a wise method of procedure ; the old deposed chief becomes responsible for the welfare of the new one! Thus many *doors*, or provinces, were formed, and each of the petty chiefs founded a house and had his *shibongo*, his laudatory name. There were the Mazwayas Masinga, the main branch, near Morakwen ; the Mazwayas Tjakame, not far from them ; the Mazwayas Hlewane, Mazwayas Matinana, Mazwayas Makaneta, etc. As the complicated law of succession frequently leads to disorders, as we shall see, the main branch lost its paramount power and became secondary. The kingship passed to the Matinana branch. However the Masingas retained their authority in their own jurisdiction, and it would be taboo to place a member of a younger branch over them. The religious regard for hierarchical order prevents such an offence from being committed. Lately, as a consequence of the war of 1904, the Hlewane branch has in its turn supplanted the Matinana. Thus, from all these facts, it appears that two hundred years ago the population of Nondwane was already composed of three different and successive strata. Since then, the situation has become even more complex. A great number of immigrants has settled in the country during the last century, coming in groups and asking the Mazwaya chiefs and headmen to receive them. This is a very frequent occurrence amongst Thongas. They leave their clan, either because they want change, or because an accusation of witchcraft has induced them to flee, and they settle in another country. When I was living in Rikatla, one of the outside districts of the Mazwaya country, before the war of 1894, the hosana was Muzila, a young man of the reigning family ; but there were very few Mazwayas under him. He had as induna a Tembe man, called Mandjia, whose father, Mankhere, had come long ago to Rikatla and was so well known that people used to call the district : "Ka Mankhere," "at Mankhere's." Another village belonged to Hamunde, a Djonga from the Shiburi country. A third had been built by people from the Manyisa clan, Nwamangele being their headman. So the population of the estuary of the Nkomati, which, at that time, had reached the number of six to eight thousand, became very mixed. However the country continued to be called

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

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"At Mazwaya's." It belongs to the Mazwaya clan. Such is the composition of most of the Thonga clans. Though their origin is certainly the patriarchal family, they are far from being of pure descent.

I am under the impression that this is the old, normal political state of the Bantus; small tribes of some thousand persons with a tendency to break up when they become too numerous, as happened in the cases of the Tembe-Mapute and also with the Mpfumo-Matjolo, who were first united under Nhlaruti. (See p. 23.) During the first half of the XIXth century, South Africa witnessed the birth of many great Native kingdoms, in which a large number of tribes were amalgamated, thus forming much larger political units. This process began in the country now called Zululand, in 1800. There were then ninety-four different small tribes comparable with our Thonga clans, that of the Zulus numbering only 2000. They were amalgamated from 1818 to 1820, by the well-known military raids of Chaka, to such an extent that, in 1820, this terrible despot had more than 100,000 warriors, and had added half a million people to his tribe, having deprived three hundred clans of their independance. Two Zulu generals followed the exemple of Chaka; Moselekatsi amalgamated the tribes of Mashonaland, and Manukosi the Thonga clans, not to mention Songandaba and the Angoni of Nyassa. The same process was accomplished more or less peacefully for the Bantus of Basutoland by Moshesh, and for the Ba-Pedi by Sekukuni, so that the original state of autonomy of the South African clans was generally replaced by large kingdoms in the greater part of South Africa.

Was this development a natural evolution of the Bantu clan? I do not think so. We must not forget that the first idea of transforming the clan into a conquering army, the idea which inspired Chaka, was brought to Zululand by the Umtetwa chief Dingiswayo, and that he conceived it on seeing an English regiment in Cape Town. The military spirit of the Bantus, which might have remained quiescent for a few more centuries, was awakened or stirred up by this sight. The seed found a wonderfully well-prepared soil, I confess. But without that seed, this terrible

618 movement of amalgamation would probably not have taken place,
175 and I think we may consider the clan life, as it is still met with
643 amongst the Rongas, (who were never subject to the Ngoni chief), as the typical Bantu political state (1).

B. THE LAUDATORY NAME OF THE CLANS AND TOTEMISM.

618 Each clan is known by the name of the old chief who is believed
551 to have been its original ancestor. So the Nkuna clan comes
101 from Nkuna, who lived four or five hundred years ago, and left Zululand for the Bilen country. The Mazwaya clan descends from Mazwaya, grandfather of Masinga and ancestor of all the heads of the sub-clans, Makaneta, Hlewane, etc. This name is a kind of *family name* for all the members of the clan. In the course of time, when sub-clans begin to aspire to independence, the first ancestor tends to fall into oblivion and is supplanted by the ancestor of the sub-clan. This process is easily noticeable at the present moment in Nondwane, where Mboza, for instance, calls himself a Makaneta. He says : "I am wa ka Makaneta," — "a man of the Makaneta house ;" but if he wants to be more precise, he will say : "I am a Mazwaya Makaneta." — "Shibongo a shi diwi," "the family name is never eaten, it is eternal!" (Mboza.)

618 This old name is called *shibongo* from *ku bonga*, to laud, to
551 praise. It is a *laudatory name*. It is used as such on two diffe-
576 rent occasions : 1) *When people salute each other*. A friend who meets Mboza on the road will say to him : "Shawan, Makaneta," "Good morning Makaneta!" But also : "Shawan Makhetshe!" (Makhetshe is the grandfather of Makaneta) ; or : "Shawan Mazwaya" or "Shawan Nwamasuluke." (Masuluke is the true father of Mboza.)

(1) The objection might be raised that, in former centuries, the celebrated Monomotapa founded a great kingdom. But what this exactly was, nobody knows. The descriptions of the chroniclers of those times are not very trustworthy, as we shall see from a quotation which will be made later on.

854 2) *To soothe babies.* Should Mboza's son cry, his nurse will say :
551 "Miyela, Makaneta ñwa yindlu ya ntima," "Keep quiet Makaneta,
618 of the black hut." It may also happen that some one wishing to console himself in affliction will do the same. Notice these last words : "of the black hut." They mean : "You who belong to a village where the huts have had time to become black ; they have never been destroyed by enemies, as no enemy dares to attack your clan! So the roofs have blackened inside from the effects of the smoke and outside from those of the rain!" It is customary to add to the name of the ancestor words such as these, in order to flatter more highly the man you salute, or the baby you console.

551 Thus each clan has a *laudatory phrase* which is sometimes much
618 longer than the Makaneta one. Masinga is called "wa le hondjo-
576 sin," "the one who reigns over the red earth," (more fertile than the sand). The Matinanas or Ngomanes are lauded thus : "Nkandjetele wa ku woma, ku baleka minambyana" — "the one who tramples on a dry place, and rivers begin to flow," because he is so heavy, so powerful! (Compare p. 87.) A Ngomane man will address his paternal aunt with the same words, when offering her a present.

Here are some of the best known shibongo. Their meaning is sometimes unknown, as they often contain ancient and obsolete expressions :

Hoñwana : Ñwahomu ya ntima ñwa mu-Nondjwana, — The black ox of Nondjwana (or Nondwane).

Shirindja : Mudzunga ntima wa le dzungen, — Black South of the South ?

Mpfumo : Ba hlela misaba ba khabuta, — They winnow the sand ; they eat it. (The sand is so white in their country that it resembles mealies flour : they never lack food.)

Libombo : Libombo la Ndlopfu, — Elephant's face.

Nkuna : Ba homu! Ba nyari! ya makhwiri, Ñwashitjimba buraka, ba mahlwen ka ntima. — Those of the ox! Those of the buffalo, the buffalo with the large belly which rolls in the mud, the one with a black spot on the forehead!

Rikotjo : Ba Nyamasi, — Those of the nyamari tree.

Khosa : Ba ripanga ro sheka ba ntsindja, — Those of the keen

551 618 576 edged sword which "cuts" disputes brought to the capital. (The Khosa chiefs were reputed for their wisdom in deciding judicial or political matters.)

Hlabi: Ba Nhlabi ba ku bengwa, Nhlabi ya Makamu ya Mavuse ya nkoñwana, — The Hlabi who are hated, sons of Makamu, of Mavuse, of the calf (?)

Hlengwe: Shikobela sha Matsheme, Tshauke wa Matsheme (names of old chiefs).

551 618 643 576 *Tembe*: Mulao Ngolanyama madlaya a nga di, makhama a nga di, a dlayele bahloti: — Mulao (son of Tembe ?), the lion which kills and does not eat, the hawk which kills, it kills for the hunters, viz., it is so well fed itself, so rich that it can leave the meat for others. Such a sentence was pronounced in former times by subjects entering the royal kraal, crawling on their knees, when they wished to receive food from the chief.

Nhlanganu: Ba ku hlomula fumo, ba renga ndlela: — Those who unsheath the sword in order to buy the road, (the right of passing through a foreign country) (1).

551 In addition to these laudatory phrases of clans, each individual has his own sentence or sentences by which he praises himself or by which others praise his qualities. They are specially common in the case of boys, but even girls possess them. In the case of chiefs, such praises are much longer. See for instance the praise of the Nkuna chief Muhlaba (Part III, Ch. III, III).

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171 If we cross the plain of the Sabi and reach the Drakensberg, we find that all the Pedi tribes dwelling together with the Thongas in the Leydenburg and Zoutpansberg district, possess laudatory

551 609 (1) This custom of praising the various tribes in such terms is so familiar to the Thongas that they have invented similar expressions for the white people. The Portuguese are: Ba ka nâofazmalo, — the Sons of Never mind, because they seem to the Natives to be somewhat careless or indifferent. The English are: Bana ba Nhluleki, a hluleka ku hleka, a tiba ku lwa, — the sons of the one who cannot, he cannot laugh, he knows how to fight! Perhaps Natives consider them, on the contrary, somewhat too earnest, too keen!

171 names which they also call *seboko*, the same word as shibongo; but most of these names are names of animals, and are called by the technical term *muthupu*, totem; the animal is the emblem 000 or totem of the group. The Pedi clans are totemic. This means that, not only do they glorify themselves by comparing themselves with an animal and taking its name, but they think that there is a mysterious vital connection between it and their social group. I cannot give here all the facts I collected amongst them on the subject. They were published in *Le Globe*, the organ of the Geneva Geographical Society, Volume LXIII, under the following title: *Le Totemisme chez les Thongas, les Pédis et les Vendas*. Let me merely mention the following details. The Khahas of the Shiluvane valley have the small grey antelope, called duyker, as totem. They salute each other in these words: "Goni! Phudi!" *Goni* is probably the name of an old ancestor, the same as Nkuna for the Ba-Nkuna; but *phudi* means duyker. They consider it taboo to make a *ntehe* of its skin for their children. Some of them do not eat the flesh of that antelope, fearing that their children would become idiotic, or be covered with boils. They will not sit near a man of another clan who is handling the skin of a duyker. The Mashilas (Sekukuni's people), who have the porcupine as totem, say: "It is taboo even to tread on its dung; the soles of the feet would become sore." Many clans are afraid to kill the animal which is their totem; this is not a law enforced by the chiefs; the totem itself punishes them if they trangress it. However, nowhere did I find the idea that they are descended from the totem. They say: "The old people noticed that the flesh of such and such an animal made the people of their clan ill; so they proclaimed it taboo." Amongst the Vendas, or at any rate amongst certain Venda clans (Ba-Laudzi, Ba-Ngwe, Ba-Shidzibe) the totem is connected with the ancestor-gods. At his death, each member of the clan is transformed into the animal venerated by his clan and joins his congeners in the sacred wood where they live.

618 Nothing of this kind is met with amongst the Thongas. The 55 Thonga clans are *atotemic*. Many men bear the name of animals, [825] but this is merely a means of glorifying themselves; there is no taboo with regard to the flesh, skin, or dung of that animal. I have

551 come to this conclusion after a careful investigation. Here are
618 the only facts that I have discovered which may be said to
522 be connected with totemic customs.

The first is that the shibongo sometimes gives an opportunity for *more or less witty jokes*. There is, near Rikatla, a clan called *Shibindji*. Shibindji means liver. When a man of this group meets with others who eat liver, they say to him : "Come along, we are going to run this skewer through you and roast you!" Another clan is the *Ntcheko*; this word means a tumbler or a small calabash with an elongated handle used for drinking purposes (p. 50). At the bukanye time, when everyone is getting these calabashes ready for the feast, they say : "Alas! poor creatures that we are! People are going to carry us from one end of the country to the other, to dip us into their pots and drink out of us!.." And so on. This is not totemism. I have however met with four more facts which must be mentioned, and which are very interesting.

618 1) In the neighbourhood of Pietersburg a Thonga who belongs
551 to the Rikotcho clan, but whose shibongo is *Ñwangwenya*, the son
177 of the crocodile, is said to "dance the crocodile" (tshina ngwenya). These Thonga words are the expression used by the Pedis to indicate their totemic customs, (ho bina kwena), not that there is any special dance or song performed in honour of the sacred animal ; this may have been the case formerly, but is not so now.

2) The laudatory name of the Nkuna clan is also said to be a *ntshupu*, though it does not imply any taboo. This word, which is unknown in other parts of Thongaland, corresponds to the Pedi *muthupu*, which indicates totemic animals. The Nkuna men like to be saluted by these words : "Nkuna! Homu (ox)! Nyari
618 (buffalo)!" There are a number of Pedi tribes who "dance to the
551 buffalo." Mankhelu assured me that, as the Nkunas have the
177 same totem as these tribes, they have a common origin, and have come from the same place in Zululand. This assertion is so evidently erroneous that he could not maintain it. The old man had not the slightest idea of historical accuracy: he had only unconsciously drawn the conclusion of a common origin from a similarity of totem. Moreover, in his set of divinatory bones, he used to represent his own tribe by a small piece of ox bone, just in

618 the same way as Pedi diviners do for their various tribes, representing them by the astragalus of their totems.
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177 As regards these two incidents, they are easily explained by the influence of the Sutho tribes amongst which these Thongas have been living for a long time. Nothing of the kind is met with amongst the Thongas who have remained in their own country, and Maaghe, the Pedi-Khaha chief, assured me that this appellation of the Nkunas, Nyari, buffalo, is modern and borrowed from the Pedis. The Nkunas do not observe any taboo in connexion with the ox, and this shows that their totemic custom is a mere external imitation of that of the Suthos. These two instances might be called cases of *secondary* or *adopted totemism*.

618 Considering only the Thongas as compared with the Pedis, we
551 might be tempted to conclude that the Thongas had preserved
178 the old Bantu custom of naming themselves after their ancestor; just as the Thongas used to add to that name other laudatory expressions, we might suppose that the Pedi tribes had adopted names of animals to glorify themselves; in the course of time, the essentially totemic fears and taboos may have been introduced into the customs, owing to the importance given to the shibongo. This would be a rationalistic explanation of totemism. *A priori* it could not be said to be impossible. Though totemism appears to be a very old custom of humanity, it is not necessary, *per se*, that the Bantu tribes should have all passed through that phase of primitive belief.

618 3) I must, however, mention a third instance which shows
539 that this notion of a community of life between an animal and
178 a human group must have existed also amongst the ancient Thongas. There are, *in their folklore*, tales which seem to have been inspired by such old ideas now lost, especially the tale of Titishan, which I have published in "Les chants et contes des Ba-Ronga," page 253. A girl named Titishan marries a man. When she goes to her husband's home, she asks her parents to give her their cat. They refuse, saying: "You know that our life is attached to it." She insists, and they at last consent. She shuts the animal up in a place where nobody sees it. Her husband even ignores its existence. One day,

618 539 178 when she goes to the fields, the cat escapes from its kraal, enters the hut, puts on the war ornaments of the husband, dances and sings. Children, attracted by the noise, discover it and inform the master of the village of the strange dancer they have seen... He goes and kills it. At that very moment Titishan falls to the ground, in her garden. She says : "I have been killed at home." She asks her husband to accompany her, with the corpse of the cat wrapped in a mat, to her parents' village. All her relatives attend. They severely reproach their daughter for having insisted on taking the animal. The mat is unrolled and, as soon as they see the dead cat, they all fall lifeless to the ground, one after the other. The Clan-of-the-Cat is destroyed and the husband returns home after having closed the gate of the village with a branch (See Page 323) : "Their life was in the cat."

Folk-tales are very ancient, and this one is by no means unique of its kind. (Compare Jacottet's "Treasury of the Ba-Sutho Lore," Morija 1908, Masilo punished for having eaten zebra's meat.) It shows that the totemic idea existed in former times, in those primitive periods of evolution which some Bantu tribes have now outgrown.

618 178 825 4) A fourth fact tends to show that a mystic relation between an animal and a clan existed in former times. There is, in the north of the Transvaal, a kind of antelope called by the Natives *Shidyanaman*. It is taboo to kill it : "If a Nkuna does so, his family will die during the year, his wife, his children, his own head. Should he kill one by mistake, he must cry with a loud voice and shout : — Yoo! Shana n'ta da na mane! Alack! with whom shall I eat it ?" Mankhelu says it is taboo to eat its flesh, but the taboo is removed by this formula. The Ba-Nkuna do not know how to explain this custom. It may be a relic of former totemic ideas. However Mankhelu does not call the shidyanaman a ntshupu, a totem, and these customs may perhaps be connected with the *nuru* superstition (Comp. Ch. IV and Part IV, hunting customs). But even supposing that the Thongas have gone through the totemic phase, the present clans have entirely forgotten these ancient beliefs.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

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My aim in the following chapter is to describe the typical Bantu clan, that small community of some hundreds or thousands of souls, with its hereditary chief, and not the larger tribe, formed by the amalgamation of many clans by a military despot (Chaka), or a cunning diplomat (Moshesh). Some of us have seen the court of Gungunyana at Mandlakazi, before this last South African military Empire was destroyed by the Portuguese in 1895 and 1896. Dr. Liengme, one of my colleagues, has described some of the striking customs of this court in the Report of the S. A. A. A. S. of 1904 and in the *Bulletin de la Société Neuchâteloise de Géographie*, of 1901. I refer the reader to these publications and shall be satisfied with the more modest, but not less interesting life, of the old Thonga clan.

In this small community the *Chief* forms the centre of national life. It is in him that the clan becomes conscious of its unity. Without him it loses its bearings ; it has lost its head. The republican conception is as far removed as possible from the ideas and instincts of these people! So it will be necessary to study first the customs relating to the chief. Then we shall see the part played by the *Counsellors*, a second institution which strengthens and limits the first. The political system of these tiny kingdoms having been sketched, we shall consider the *Court* and the *Army*, these being the two domains in which national life chiefly manifests itself.

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644 789 When they have chosen it—it must be the stem of a nkonono tree—they cut it and bring it back to the capital. In front walks the master of the ceremonies, Godlela, and behind him four men carrying the shiphandje. Those who accompany them have the right of entering the villages and stealing fowls. Woe to those who meet with this troop! They will be relieved of all they carry, "because the forked branch of the great medicine of the chief is taboo."

644 789 826 237 The sacred branch having duly reached the capital, Godlela proceeds to the second operation, the *burning of the drugs*. Mboza saw the magician take pieces of skin cut from buffaloes, lions, hyenas, elans, panthers, snakes of various kinds and, last but not least, from the bodies of men, enemies killed in the wars: part of the skin of the forehead, the heart, the diaphragm, the nails, a finger, some ears... All these are roasted

644 789 in a large pot. On some mats are spread various magical roots cut into small pieces; these are also thrown into the pot. The chief and all the sub-chiefs approach and, with hollow reeds, inhale and swallow the vapour and the smoke which emanates from it (1).

The preparation of the great medicine having been sucessfully accomplished, the great drum (nhumburi) of the capital is brought on to the square, and everybody dances, even women, who take assagais in their hands and sing: "We are thankful if we die (hi tlangela ku fa)" viz., "The country is in security, our invincible medicine is ready! We shall not be killed by enemies

644 789 782 but will die a natural death." Before extinguishing the fire which was used to roast the medicines, Godlela takes a little water, pours it on the glowing embers and, when it vaporises with the customary sound, he emits the sacramental *tsu* and prays to his gods, the departed spirits of the Tlhaltha family, as doctors always do, in order to obtain their blessing on the nyokwekulu.

618 (1) The Hlewane sub-clan, which revolted many times against the legal chief and succeeded by its intrigues in provoking the war of 1894, after which it became the reigning family of Nondwane, used to abstain from participating in this "swallowing of the smoke," because, in former years, it had been defeated by Maphunga's people and some of its men killed; their flesh had been used in the concoction of the nyokwekulu. So they feared to go and inhale the odour of their fellow clansmen.

551 609 of the white man. M. Torre do Valle has given a list of nicknames of the merchants and other inhabitants of Lourenço Marques in his Diccionario Shironga-Portuguez. It is well worth consulting, and the only thing wanting is a photograph of the white man and an explanation of the name ; it would be a splendid illustration of Native wit!

551 576 618 So far we have spoken only of *personal* names and nicknames. But, beside these, every man possesses his clan name, or surname, viz., the name of the first of his known ancestors. Grown up men prefer being addressed by this name, which is *shibongo*, viz. the name by which they are "glorified." This subject is treated in Part III (p. 360).

APPENDIX III (See p. 98)

Unnatural Vice in the Johannesburg Compounds.

838 548 588 In January 1915 one of my colleagues passing near one of the Johannesburg Compounds, saw a big company of Natives singing and walking in the direction of another Compound where a great dance was taking place. Amongst them there were a number of women. My colleague asked his Native evangelist how it was possible that so many women should be walking about in that part of the world, where the feminine element is very small. The man told him : "They are not women! They are *tinkhontshana*, boys who have placed on their chests the breasts of women carved in wood, and who are going to the dance in order to play the part of women. To-night when they return to their dormitories, their 'husbands' will have to give them 10/, and only on that condition will the tinkhontshana remove their breasts and comply with the desire of their husbands." I sent for this evangelist who knew everything about the inner life of the Compounds and asked him about it ; this is the information I received :

Unnatural vice (bukhontshana) has become a regular institution in the Compounds. The word *nkhontshana* seems to come from the Ngoni, a Zulu dialect spoken in the Limpopo plain. The nkhontshana is the boy used by another man to satisfy his lust, and the man is called his *nima*, husband. When a gang of new workers arrives in a Compound, the Native induna, who has the supervision of the Compound, and the Native policemen, who have their rooms at the

423 already been tilled and abandoned as exhausted. I noticed
622 this at Rikatla. Muzila favoured his pagan subjects, who joined him in his drinking bouts, and invited him to orgies in their villages, at the expense of the Christians who no longer brew the byala beer. Thus interest at Court works here as elsewhere, although it be based on nothing nobler than pots of beer!

423 The difficulties of this system also become apparent in the
578 more thickly populated parts of the country, where all the land has been assigned and taken up. The women look round for
692 fresh arable land and may, wittingly or unwittingly, encroach on the ground of another numzane. There is, indeed, a neutral zone, vaguely defined, of which no one has as yet taken possession, as it has not been needed : the wild fruits growing there are common property ; any one who likes can gather them. When the population increases, the inhabitants of the more congested districts go and appropriate this land without any kind of formality. Such was the case when the people of Libombo, dwelling on the edge of the palm-marsh, (to the East of Rikatla), sent their women to the hill-side to clear a piece of land which Muzila considered to be his property. This petty chief sent remonstrances to Nkolele, his colleague, headman of the village of Libombo ; but they were not heeded. Then the men of Rikatla hid themselves in the bushes surrounding the spot in question, and, when the women commenced to hoe the ground, rushed out upon them, seized their hoes, and drove them off. This was the "fait patent," the actionable proceeding, which was necessary in order to have the matter brought before the Chief's tribunal. This incident doubtless led the parties interested to define their respective boundaries more carefully.

423 To go and till another's land would be quite impossible, even
618 taboo, between people of different clans. In the present case, the Rikatla and Libombo men belonged to the same Nondwane country. There was a good understanding between them. The Rikatla men would not have dared to plough a field without permission on Mabota's ground, the boundary of which was on the other side of the big water-tree (muhlu).

As regards *boundary marks* between the different clans, they

consist of natural objects such as rivers, big trees, etc. To define 423
the boundaries of their gardens, Natives dig an ordinary ditch 618
(ndjilekana, mu-mi) round the field, of about one foot in depth, which can be plainly traced even after the lapse of several years, when the field may have become fallow land and overgrown with vegetation.

The question of *roads* is a somewhat difficult, and often thorny 423
one to settle. Where has one the right to go ? And if, after 487
having used a certain path for years, you suddenly find it blocked by some individual whose field it skirts, and who has taken a fancy to hoe it up, what is to be done ? To try to come to some friendly agreement is always the most practical course. How often have we not experienced this difficulty with our cart ! The agriculturists were the more annoyed because we required a road three or four yards wide, while the Native footpaths are only little tracks of 15 to 20 inches in width. Being the only "carriage folk" in the district, we often had to ask permission to be allowed to pass, and have rarely met with any kind of refusal, for the Black is a reasonable being and quite appreciates the fact that roads are a necessity. If they see that a road is "ripening" (wupfile), viz., that it is more and more frequently used, they bow before the facts ; here, as everywhere else, custom makes the law.

At the present moment matters have been made much more 177
simple as the Portuguese Government has constructed wide 491
highways in all the more frequented parts of the country.

B. PRODUCTS OF THE SOIL.

I. *Cereals.*

"Hosi ya psone i *psithjama*" — "Their king is the *maize*," 243
says Mboza. This cereal is indeed the most widely cultivated in Thongaland. It is called *psifake* in Djonga. In the more fertile regions of the North, the size of the cobs and of the grains (nhleke, yin-tin) is much larger than on the sandy dunes of the Ba-Ronga. So the people of Khosen make fun of the Ba-Ronga and compare

When the hunter has chosen, amongst all the prints, those which 224
seem to him the freshest, he follows them up with his dogs, and 476
there is some chance of his being able to overtake the antelope. Should he succeed in killing the animal without having received help from others he can appropriate it without rewarding anybody. Only if it is too heavy to carry home, he will shout loudly, on a high, piercing note: "Hoooooyiooo..." perhaps after having climbed up a tree so as to make himself heard a long way off. Or he will cut off the tail, cover the beast with branches to prevent vultures from damaging it, plant his assegay in the ground to show his right to the possession of his victim and go home to fetch his companions. When they have helped him to carry the animal, he will give each of them a good piece of meat.

But if the hunter who discovered the antelope sees that he will 202
not be able to come up with it, he will blow his trumpet (lihlanga) 224
to call for help. When the men arrive on the spot, he will cry: 476
"Nkuna yowee!.." if he is a Nkuna, and all will repeat after him: "Nkuna yowee!.." to acknowledge his right. He may abandon the pursuit, but his right has been proclaimed and will be remembered. The second hunter who stabs the antelope will do the same; he will shout "Mabota yowee!.." if he is of the Mabota clan, and so on till the animal has been killed. Then the meat will be distributed amongst the killers in the following way. The first will receive the body, the second one leg, the third the foreleg and the fourth the throat, a portion being reserved for the chief, the owner of the soil on which the antelope has fallen. This manner of pursuing an animal, in which helpers are summoned by means of the trumpet, is called ku nyikanana, i. e. to surrender to each other.

If the hunter has killed a very big animal and wants his clansmen 224
alone to help him, he has recourse to another method of calling 202
them. Each clan possesses its own rallying cry, and this he 618
shouts loudly. This is intended to exclude men of other clans and to prevent fighting or any dispute about the possession of the animal. For the Ba-Nkuna this cry is: *Nyandlaleyo*! For the Tsungus: *Hi nhlanga*! For the Manukosi clan: *Muyamba ngwenya ya nambu wa tingwenya*! (Crocodile of the river of

202 618 crocodiles.) For the Mavundjas: *Kahlamba ntjhaba yo nonoha!* (The big mountain, difficult to climb.) (1)

224 643 825 845 I have already described the part of a slain animal which is to be given to the chief, when speaking of the prerogatives of the master of the country (I. p. 406). Here are some supplementary details: The general idea is that he must receive that part of the body which was in contact with the soil, because the chief is the owner of the soil. In the case of smaller antelopes however he does not claim anything. For the eland he requires, in addition to the ordinary tribute, half of the *bofu* i. e. of the paunch of fat which is found round the heart of this animal and which is believed to possess precious medicinal properties (especially for new-born children born with a membrane round the head). As regards buffaloes and other big animals, should they be killed far away from home, their meat is cut into strips (mishakatsu) and two bundles are brought back to the chief; it is also the rule that the head of any beast of great size should be eaten on the bandla, the meeting-place of the men in the capital.

224 643

Buffalo hunter with his victim.

224 824 So far I have described hunting with assegais, sticks and dogs. But Thongas possess another method of killing big animals, a method which is perhaps more ancient and which has sometimes proved very useful. This is the *marindji trap*, i. e. a large pit dug in the earth, covered with branches and full of pointed stakes upon which the animal falls and impales itself. These stakes are made

(1) The Pedis have the same custom. The Ba-Khaha cry: "Haratsha! Mugoni! We"! This expression comes from the verb *ratsha*, to cross a river on a tree trunk, as the Khaha clan is said to have been held back in its ancient migrations by a swollen river and to have *ratsha* it successfully. The remembrance of this feat of their ancestors has remained and has given rise to this rallying cry. Other Pedis say: '*Sioantja khomo*," viz., "the killer will be given an ox for his reward."

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 FTL Thonga FTL

II. *Tribe, Groups and Clans.*

101 618 It is necessary first of all to define clearly the precise meaning of these three terms.

We reserve the term *tribe* for the totality of the Thonga nation. This word is frequently used to designate the smaller national units, which are called after some old chief whose descendants are still reigning, like Tembe, Khosa, Nkuna, etc. We prefer for the sake of clearness to call these small units *clans*, as there is certainly a great resemblance between them and the Scottish clans. As a rule all men belonging to a clan bear the name of the old chief, who is more or less considered the ancestor of them all. In the Tembe country, most of the inhabitants will salute each other with these words : "Shawan Tembe, good morning, Tembe" ! But Tembe, the name of the clan, means not only a group of people, but a certain part of the country south of Delagoa Bay. In that country men of other clans have settled. There are also sub-clans of the Tembe clan which have already adopted special salutations, because they have formed collateral branches of the big Tembe family. However the term *clan* is the best, I think, to designate this kind of national unit, as its origin is essentially familial. Now some of these clans, those which occupy the same tract of country, form *groups* because they speak the same dialect of the Thonga language.

III. *The generic Name of the Tribe.*

101 619 As we shall see, there is no true national unity amongst the Thongas (1). They are hardly conscious that they form a definite

193 (1) What orthography are we to adopt when using the Bantu proper names in the plural? Different systems are used in ethnographic books, but the following appears to me the most rational. When a Bantu proper name is used with its plural prefix, the addition of a final *s* is not justified ; but in that case the prefix ought to be separated from the root by a hyphen, in order that the uninitiated reader may understand at once that he is dealing with a plural. Thus I would write : Ama-Zulu, Ba-Ronga, etc.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

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nation, and therefore they possess no common name for it. The name *Thonga* (pronounce *t* + aspirated *h*, not the English *th*) was applied to them by the Zulu or Ngoni invaders, who enslaved most of their clans between 1815 and 1830. The origin of this Zulu name is probably the term *Ronga*, which means Orient (buronga = dawn) and by which the clans round Lourenço Marques used to call themselves. According to the phonetic laws of the two languages *R* in Ronga becomes *Th* when pronounced by the Zulus. (Ex. Randja, to love, in Ronga, is thanda in Zulu; raru, three, thathu.) This word Thonga became a nickname which, in the mouth of the Zulus, was almost the equivalent of slave, and they applied it to the whole Thonga stock; the appellation is not liked by the Thongas, but I know of no other which would be preferable to it.

Strange to say, the Thongas of the Northern Clans, especially those of the Bilen and Djonga groups, like to call themselves *Tjongas*, the Hlengwes *Tsongas*. This word is perhaps originally the same as Ronga and may have meant also people of the East, although the *R* of the Ronga dialect does not permute regularly into *Tj* and *Ts* in the Northern clans; but this meaning is doubtful, and has at any rate been forgotten. Another name, which is much used amongst white people to designate the Thongas, is the word *Shangaan*. Shangaan or Tshangaan was one of the surnames of Manukosi, the Zulu chief who settled on the East Coast and subjugated most of the Thongas at the time of Chaka. It is possible that this name was even older, and that it belonged to a chief who lived in the valley of the Lower Limpopo before Manukosi. At any rate, this valley was called Ka Tshangaan and its inhabitants Matshangaan. But this term was never accepted by the Ba-Ronga, who consider it as an

193 (in the singular: Mu-Ronga, Ma-Sutho), but never Ama-Zulus, Ba-Rongas. As however ordinary readers are not acquainted with Bantu grammar, I think it is more advisable to use these Bantu proper names without their prefixes, treating them as if they were English words, and, in that case it is necessary to add the final *s*, as we generally do according to the rules of European spelling. Many writers do not adopt this system in their books; but write the plural in exactly the same form as the singular, and it is therefore impossible to distinguish between the two. This may lead to confusion. I therefore propose to write: a Thonga, the Thongas, one Hlengwe, two Hlengwes, but it should be remembered that the final *s* must not be pronounced.

101 619 insult. It is applied in Johannesburg roughly to all the East Coast "boys," even to the Ba-Chopi, who are considered by the Ba-Ronga of Delagoa Bay as much inferior to them. Its adoption would be objectionable on that account. I recognise that the word Ba-Thonga does not enjoy much more favour and is not quite satisfactory ; however considering that it means originally "people of the East" and that the tribe is indeed living in the eastern part of South Africa, it ought to be accepted in the course of time without much difficulty.

Let us remark that another tribe, quite different in language and ethnographic features, dwelling near Inhambane, quite close to our Thonga tribe, calls itself Ba-Tonga. But there is no aspirate after the *T* and this is enough to distinguish it from the Ba-Thonga.

IV. *The six Groups of the Thonga Clans.*

101 197 Let us consider briefly, with the aid of the accompanying map, these six main groups.

131 1. All round the Bay of Delagoa, we find the *Ronga group*. This word Ronga is a very old one and very convenient, as all these clans consent to be called by it. The real Rongas are, I think, the Mpfumo and the Matjolo clans, who are settled on the west of the Bay. South of the Bay is the Tembe clan and its two sub-clans, which have become independent : Matutwen and Maputju. North of Lourenço Marques are the Mabota and Mazwaya clans, the country of the latter, which extends on both sides of the estuary of the Nkomati, being called Nondwane. Further north are the two clans of Shirindja and Manyisa which form the transition to the following group. The new generation speaks a purer Ronga dialect, the old one more the Djonga.

Continuing our survey in a northerly direction, we cross two rivers : the Nkomati and the Olifant. From the Nkomati to the Olifant we meet with the Djonga group, and from the Olifant northward with the Nwalungu group. Djonga means

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THIRD PART

NATIONAL LIFE.

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618 619 186 Having sketched the Individual and Communal life of the Thongas, we will now consider the National life. We have seen what the *muti*, the Village, means to a Thonga. What does the Nation, *tiko* mean to him ? As we have already pointed out, what we call the nation, tiko, is not the big tribe, numbering many hundred thousand people, but the special clan to which this Thonga belongs. There is no feeling of national unity in the tribe as a whole ; its unity consists only in a language and in certain customs which are common to all the clans. So the true national unit is the clan.

CHAPTER I

THE CLAN.

A. THE ACTUAL ORGANISATION OF THE CLAN.

618 Whatever may have been the social system of the Bantus in past ages, the existing clan can be directly traced from the patriarchal family. I have particularly studied the composition of two of the Thonga clans, the Nkunas of Zoutpansberg and the Mazwayas of the estuary of the Nkomati. Let us see how the clan is composed in both these instances.

789 the fat collected in order to mix it with the war medicine, the flesh
726 being left to the dogs to eat and destroy.

In some clans, chiefs possess *other personal charms* which are
643 very much dreaded and called *psitjemba*. So, in the Maluleke
789 clan, each of the children of the ancient chief Mashakadzi received
237 from him one of these psitjemba. It consists of a part of the skull of a child, the top of the head, where the pulse is seen beating at the fontanella. This has been smeared with the vitreous humour taken from the eyes of lions or elephants, and powders made from the skins of wild beasts. The possession of this charm gives the chief a supernatural power. If, being irritated with you, he invokes his gods by sucking it and emits the sacramental tsu, he can call on any wild beast he likes to kill you... He has sacrified with the psitjemba ; you will die!

643 Some chiefs of the Northern clans used to *swallow one of the*
787 *stones* found in the stomach of a crocodile. It is said that
825 crocodiles, when cut open, are found to contain a certain number of stones, as they are supposed to eat one each year, when the rainy season comes on. One of them is chosen and smeared with special medicines and swallowed by the chief. Natives firmly believe that this stone remains in the body of the chief, and that it is "his head, his life" (Viguet). When it is passed in his stools the first time, this is a premonitory warning. When it occurs a second time, it is a clear announcement that the chief is about to die. So chiefs can always know when their time is near. In other clans the crocodile stone is replaced by what is called *ndjalama*. Amongst Nkunas this word designates a kind of bright copper button, which the Pedis of the Palaora mine used to make and sell. But ndjalama also means large sized beads. Whatever it is, some chiefs swallowed the ndjalama and were warned by it of their death. This object, as well as the crocodile stone, is taboo for subjects to swallow. They would die. It is "buloyi bya hosi" — "the magical power of the chief."

643 On account of these powerful and dangerous charms possessed
619 by them, chiefs of different clans regarded it as a taboo to stay in each other's company ; they were afraid lest they might be killed by the magical power of their colleagues. Maphunga

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

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SECOND PART

THE LIFE OF THE FAMILY AND OF THE VILLAGE

621/592 Having followed a man and a woman from the beginning to the end of their existence, I now come to the Life of the Family and of the Village. Both subjects are in close connexion. As a rule, a village is but a family composed of the headman, the father, his wives, his children and the old folk who depend upon him; but in many cases his younger brothers live with him, sometimes a son-in-law, or even a stranger, and all these inmates compose the village, *muti* (1). In the first chapter we shall consider the family itself, its constitution, the system of relationship, and in the second, the village, the concrete embodiment of the family, its foundation, its main laws and the respective occupations of its members.

CHAPTER I

THE LIFE OF THE FAMILY

121/601 The kinship system of the Thongas and, I suppose, of all the Bantus is widely different from ours, and greatly surprises the

(1) Native villages are generally called *kraals* by South African colonists. This expression comes from the Portuguese word *curral* which means properly stable. I shall employ it to designate the enclosure where oxen are kept, the cattle-kraal, but it does not seem right to apply it to the *muti* which is a *village*, however small and poor it may be. The Portuguese call native villages *povoação*.

CHAPTER II

THE LIFE OF THE VILLAGE.

621/596 The Thonga village (muti) is not a hap-hazard agglomeration of people. It is a social organism with a well-defined construction and is regulated by strict laws. After all, it is merely an enlarged family: the headman and the old people who have fallen to his charge, his wives, his younger brothers and their wives, his married sons, his unmarried sons and daughters. All these people form a community whose life it is most interesting to study.

Let us describe its outward appearance, the laws of its "foundation" and "moving", its organisation under the headman, the doings of its different members and the rules of etiquette which are observed. While our first chapter gave us an insight into the internal constitution of the Thonga family, this will show us how the social organism, which is at the base of all the tribal life, manifests itself outwardly in the village.

A. THE THONGA VILLAGE.

361 We have already caught a glimpse of it, from the inside, through the eyes of the headman Gidja (p. 128). Now we enter it from outside, as foreigners, with the curiosity of the ethnographer and the philosophical interests of the sociologist.

The Thonga villages present a remarquable uniformity all through the tribe. The same laws regulate their construction in the Ronga as in the Northern clans. Let us suppose that we have left Lourenço Marques and reached the Mabota and Nondwane

361 596 264 476 he or she has finished the meal, will have eaten a little of all that has been cooked on all the fires. It is impossible to imagine a more perfect communism than this as regards food! I myself witnessed this custom of the evening meal in Spoon Libombo's village in Rikatla. Amongst the inhabitants of the kraal there were two blind male adults, the wife of one of them being half blind herself ; the wife of the other was an old woman who could hardly till a few square yards of mealies and groundnuts, and keep the birds and the hens away from them. Spoon's wife and the wife of another man of the village alone were healthy and able to work normally. So the whole burden rested on their shoulders, as the share the other women could take in the feeding of the men was necessarily small. However I never heard Spoon grumble ; being the headman, he made it a point of honour that all the people dwelling with him should have enough to eat. Everybody who has lived with South African Natives has admired their wonderful readiness to share any food they may have with those present. Even children are much superior in this respect to White children. I attribute this virtue to the community of food which reigns in the Bantu village, and which is certainly one of the most attractive features of Kafir socialism. Village life has not taught the Thongas merely bad habits.

B. MOVING A VILLAGE AND FOUNDING A NEW ONE.

621 754 596 Large kraals similar to the one shown in our illustration were more numerous in former times than now. It is rare to meet with such a number of huts and so many people under one headman. Why ? Because, say my informants, the superstition of witchcraft has considerably increased in later times. Suppose the wife of one of the younger brothers should [787] die ; the divinatory bones reveal that this death is due to a witch ; they go so far as to designate one of the wives of the headman as guilty. No common life is any longer possible. The widower will move elsewhere and build a fence around his

621 754 596 own huts to protect them against would-be-witches. In this way many villages are broken up by fear of witchcraft. Generally speaking the Thonga village cannot long remain of any considerable size ; it tends to fall to pieces.

But there are other causes which may destroy the village and the idyllic life of the small community. The death of the headman, and lightning striking the village, are the two main causes which may bring about this event.

765 596 621 787 *Death of the headman.* There is a mystic tie between this man and the social organism which is under him. Should he die, the village dies also... It is not abandoned at once. The whole year of mourning will elapse before the moving. But as soon as the widows and property have been distributed, the successor of the deceased will go and found his own village and the old one will remain a ruin (rumbi). Should any one else die, his hut will merely be thrown into the bush and the village will not be abandoned. But should these deaths increase, then the divinatory bones may order the place to be deserted, as it is defiled and dangerous.

821 756 787 621 If *lightning* strikes the hubo, it is a very bad omen. The medicine man who has the power to "treat the place struck by lightning" is called in. Should he be able to exhume from the ground the mysterious bird which causes lightning, or at least the coagulated urine which it has deposited, and which is called Heaven (See Part VI), the people are allowed to stay. But if he does not discover it deep down in the soil, the village must move, as the presence of the mysterious power of Heaven inside the circle of huts would bring disaster. This is a taboo.

621 787 596 Another cause of moving is the *exhaustion of the gardens.* When the fields are "tired" (karala) and do not produce sufficient food for the inhabitants, they leave the place and look for pastures new. In that case the bones will be consulted. Sometimes, even, the village may be transported elsewhere for the sole reason that the people are tired of the place and want to change. If the bones confirm their wishes, they will move.

621 596 *The founding of a new village* is the occasion of most interesting and characteristic rites, which afford us a new insight into the

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

621 596 nature of that social unit, the Thonga *muti*. I shall give the sequence of these rites first in the Northern clans, according to the description of Viguet, and secondly amongst the Ba-Ronga, according to Mboza.

I. *In the Northern clans.*

621 787 784 1) The headman goes first to examine some spots where he would like to build. He *breaks small twigs* from various trees and brings them home.

833 2) The bones are consulted and help in *making a choice*. The twigs are placed on a mat one after the other. When the stone of the *kanye* (see Part VI) falls in a certain way in front of one of the twigs, this shows that the tree from which it has been broken is the one near which the hut of the headman must be built.

3) Building material is collected. When everything is ready to proceed to the construction of the huts, the headman goes with his principal wife to the spot chosen. They leave the old village for ever ; they must not return to it any more. In the evening they have *sexual relations* in the new place and in the morning they tie together some tufts of living grass. Next day all the people of the old village must come and step upon this grass. This rite is called to *tie the village* (boha muti).

621 595 784 834 4) Then begins the period, of about one month, called *buhlapfa*, time of moving, which has its laws. Two great taboos dominate it : 1) Sexual relations are absolutely prohibited. Should any one transgress this law, he has sinned gravely against the headman ; he has stolen the village (yiba muti). The headman will be ill, perhaps paralysed. The guilty woman will also be punished : she will not be able to bear children again ; she will be "tied by the village" (bohiwa hi muti). The culprits have "crossed the way of the master of the village" (tjemakanya). Strange to say, the headman himself is bound by this law. He must have no relations *with his younger wives*, because the village belongs to the principal spouse. Should such a transgression be discovered, the work

595 515 784 821 621 342 482 831 462

of building will be stopped at once and the little community will find another place to which to move! Moreover the guilty woman will have to ask the principal wife for forgiveness. 2) A second great taboo is this : — No one must wash his body during the whole "buhlapfa", as this might cause the rain to fall and it would interfere with the building operations.

5) The building of the huts begins immediately, each man making the circular wall first. When all the walls are ready,

Carrying a roof.

the *roofs are carried* from the old village to the new by all the men together. They lift each roof on to their shoulders, after having removed the old grass, and go out of the village, not by the main entrance, but by one of the back gates which has been widened for the purpose. A broad road has been prepared through the bush. They follow it, marching as fast as they can, and singing the obscene songs which are reserved for special occasions (see Part VI). In these they insult the women who accompany them, carrying the baskets, the mortars, the pestles. "The village is broken in pieces, so are the ordinary laws. The insults which are taboo are now allowed" (Mboza). This suspension of morality in speech is only allowed on the day when roofs are carried to the new village. Some days later, again, the women will take their revenge when they smear the floor of the huts ; then they too will sing their songs, insulting the men. But

621 831 all this is done in fun. It is a great day of rejoicing for the "tinamu", who tease each other as much as they like. A man may be wanting in respect even to his great mukonwana on these days!

621 756 351 789 6) When the huts are ready, the *fence* is built. The family doctor is summoned. The medicine man throws leaves or stones treated with his drugs along the circular line, where the headman intends to place the branches which will form the future fence of the village. This being done, the men erect the fence.

7) Special precautions are taken for *the main entrance*. Poles are erected on both sides, but before they are put in place, the doctor pours medicine into the holes in the ground and also smears the poles with it at the bottom and at the top. Mankhelu used to bury a black stone, taken out of the river, at the gate. This stone had also been smeared with drugs. "In this way, I prevent enemies from entering. Those who come to try their charms against us (ku hi ringa hi maringo) will be attacked by disease and go and die in their houses."

783 834 621 8) The building is finished. Nothing remains to be done but to *ripen the village* (wupfisa muti). Men and women assemble in two separate groups and ask each other if they have been continent during the whole "buhlapfa". If one of them confesses to having sinned, he has stolen the village from the headman; the whole work is spoiled and must be recommenced elsewhere. If all the members of the community have behaved well, they proceed to a purifying ceremony exactly similar to the *hlamba ndjaka* which takes place during the mourning ceremonies. Each couple has sexual relations according to a fixed order of precedence, one every night, and they all go to trample on the spot where the women wash their hands. The principal wife is the last to perform these rites.

621 595 9) Then comes the *drawing to himself of the village by the headman* (kokotela muti). At dawn, after the night when she has had her ritual sexual relations with the headman, his principal wife takes his shield and his assagais and stands at the main entrance, everyone being present. Outside is a thorny branch prepared for the occasion. In her martial attire, she drags this branch to the entrance and closes it.

621 10) Having closed the village in this way, she *performs a sacrifice*.
595 She sips a mouthful of water from a tumbler, spitting out a
782 portion of it (phahla) towards the people ; then she washes her hands, and throws a little of the water towards them in order *to give them* the village. This act is accompanied by the following words : "Be not tied by the village! Bring forth children ; live and be happy and get everything. You gods, see! I have no bitterness in my heart. It is pure. I was angry because my husband abandoned me, he said I was not his wife ; he loved his younger wives. Now, this is finished in my heart. We shall have friendly relations together..." The prayer being concluded, the headman goes to the main entrance, pushes the thorny branch aside, and opens the village.

621 11) The last act is the *khangula*, the *inauguration ceremony*.
574 Beer is prepared, neighbours are invited and they all drink together, the neighbours coming *to see the new village* (ku bona muti).

As regards the old one, when the moving has been accomplished through the back door widened for the purpose, one of the inhabitants closes the main entrance with a branch. Hence comes the expression which is applied to a village all of whose inmates have died, and which has, on that account, disappeared : "Those people have all died and there was not even one left to close the gate."

II. *In the Ba-Ronga Clans.*

621 The sequence of rites for the removal of a village is very
787 much the same as in the Northern clans.

824 1) The headman examines some spots and consults the bones :
765 "Must I built at such and such a tree ?"

2) When the tree has been designated, he goes to it and places at its foot his furniture (nyundju) and his instrument of worship, his altar, (a pot, a jar, see Part VI). The altar may be placed at the main entrance later on, if the bones so order it. As already mentioned, there will be a mystic relation between him and that tree. He must never cut it down. If any of the branches should be

621 824 765 troublesome and he should wish to remove them, he must ask some one else to do it. On the day of his death, or rather when his hut is crushed down, a branch of that tree will be put on the place where the threshhold was, and another used to close the main entrance of the village, a new entrance being then made through the fence and used as the gate during the rest of the mourning period.

621 833 3) He has sexual relations on the new spot on the first night with his principal wife ; in this way he will *fuya muri*, viz. "possess this tree," and also *fuya muti*, "possess the village." The Ronga *fuya* corresponds here also to the *boha* of the Northern clans (Compare boha puri and fuya ñwana, page 57). If someone precedes him in sexual intercourse, he is guilty ; he has "preceded the village" (rangela muti). By this act the headman has definitely left the old village. The others can go back to it to fetch what remains ; for him it is taboo.

621 831 834 342 4) The same day, all the inhabitants come and move all the roofs, if it is possible to do this in one day. One hut is rapidly built to afford shelter to the inhabitants, in case of rain. The first roof to be transported is that of the hut of the principal wife. This is also done to the accompaniment of obscene songs. These songs are not allowed when only one hut is transported, which may happen when some one goes to live in another village.

It is definitely a custom which goes with the moving of a whole village.

5) The following day two huts are erected, one for the men, the other for the women, because they must not sleep together. "They are still in the bush ; it is buhlapfa ; the village is not yet firm." Those who break this law cause injury to the headman. The bones will soon reveal that "he has been preceded as regards the village ; (a rangeliwile muti)." All the huts are smeared twice ; the women begin to sleep in them, but not the men. The fence and the main entrance must first be prepared.

621 789 6) The *main entrance* (mharana). The men pull up the grass all the way from the back hut to the place where the main entrance must be, so as to make a road all through the village. All the dried plants weeded out during this operation are carefully

621 gathered in a heap. The headman, on the advice of the medicine
789 man, cuts from certain very vigorous trees such as the nkanye
824 and the ntjondjo, two branches which can live when transplanted. He digs holes on both sides of the entrance and puts the branches into them. Across the gateway, he buries a third branch of the ntjopfa tree, "which causes oblivion" (p. 58): this will be smeared with special drugs in order to increase its efficacy ; it is intended to prevent the baloyi, witches and people speaking bad words. (lit "with bad lips"), from thinking about the village and spoiling it.

621 7) On the evening of that day, the headman and his principal
833 wife have intercourse in their hut and, at dawn, while it is still
789 dark, they go and wash their hands at the main entrance. Mboza does not say that all the other couples must do the same, or trample on the spot. In Nondwane this is sufficient and the rite does not apply to the other couples. But at Manyisa, midway between Lourenço Marques and Khosen, where the Djonga customs are sometimes met with, all the couples must have relations, one after the other, according to order of precedence. It is deemed so important to keep the due order in this "giving to each other the right of resuming sexual life" that, should an elder brother have been absent when the village moved, on his return he must undergo a special treatment in a neighbouring village, during a few days, to avoid any bad consequences resulting from having been unlawfully "preceded" (rangeliwa).

621 8) After the night during which this sexual rite has taken
789 place, at daybreak, all the dried grass is piled in front of the main hut and burnt ritually. The headman throws into the
782 fire a special medicinal pill in order to *give the village over* to his
756 people (nyiketa muti). They all warm their bodies at the blaze, and go and set fire to all the other heaps of dried grass which they made when clearing the soil.

9) The medicine man comes on that same day, and sprinkles the fence with his drugs, in order to protect the village against bush fires, wizards and disease. He walks all round the fence saying : "Happy village! May misfortune not enter here! These are my drugs!" — He starts from one of the poles of the main

621 entrance and finishes his walk at the other, hanging upon it the
789 branch with which he has been sprinkling.

782 10) Then he sacrifices a hen. A young man accompanying
him cuts its throat ; the doctor plucks some feathers from the
756 neck, sacrifices in the ordinary way and invokes his gods : "You used to treat villages (daha miti) with these drugs and I do the same. I do not act of my own wisdom ; you have given it to me. Bless this place, etc." . Then he plucks a feather from the hen's right wing, and suspends it at the main entrance or in the main hut, inside, over the door, according to the directions given by the bones. This is the *shirungulo* (see Part VI) and the act is called : "to tie the village" (tjimba muti).

621 Amongst the Rongas, there are some other *buhlapfa taboos*. It
372 is not allowable to light any fire in a village until it is completely
784 built. During the whole building period, cooking is done outside
the fence ; crushing mealies in the mortars and dancing are also
789 prohibited. Whistling (ku ba noti) is forbidden, as it might call
198 the wizards inside the village before it has been protected by the charms.

621 If a man has many wives, he may build a second village for
595 himself and establish one of them there. A grown-up son, the son of the woman, will represent the headman in that village, but the law of "tying the village" will also be observed in this case. The headman will perform the act with this woman, and preside at the burning of the dried grass and of the medicinal pill, by which he *gives* the village to the inhabitants.

When a younger brother, or a son, leaves the headman and founds a village for himself (tihambela muti), he does it according to the same laws as those observed at the regular moving of a village.

III. *Some remarks on the rules of moving.*

621 Let us now analyse the two parallel sequences of rites which we have just described, and which complete each other. It is easy to discover amongst them three series of rites, social, protective and passage rites.

621 1) *Social rites.* The muti, as we have seen, is a little organised
596 community having its own laws, amongst which the most important
833 seems to be the law of hierarchy. The elder brother is the undisputed
768 master and no one can supersede him. He is the owner of the village. No one must "steal it" from him. Should any one do so, the whole community would suffer and no children would be born ; the life of the organism would be deeply affected. That is the reason why the headman must go first with his principal wife to have relations with her in the new village, and thus *take possession* of it or *tie* it. For this same reason, when the headman dies, the village *must* move. It is taboo to remain in it. Until the inheritance has been distributed, it is still *his home* (kwa kwe) ; but as soon as this ceremony has taken place, the villagers must go away, and close the door with a thorny branch. The part played by the
621 principal wife in all these ceremonies is most remarkable. It is
595 absolutely imperative that the headman should "tie the village" with her,
562 and not with another of his spouses. Should she be very old, the law
768 must be observed all the same ; should she be ill, and unable to have sexual
764 relations, the village simply cannot be moved. In the Northern clans we see her taking the shield and the assagai, closing the village and "giving it" to the inmates, even performing a sacrifice and praying to the gods. It is very rare to see a woman presiding at a public religious ceremony ; but she is the owner of the village as well as the headman. Moving is imperative when she dies as well as after the death of the headman. The main gate must also be closed and a new entrance made in the fence to be used during the year of mourning ; in the case of her death, this opening must be made on the left of the regular *mharana*, whilst, when the husband dies, it is made on the right side ; just as in the hut, when the corpse is removed for burial. (See page 138.)

351 2) *Protective rites.* These are those which concern the fence. This
789 fence does not afford material protection. The branches dry up very
621 soon and, in the case of a bush-fire, for instance, they would do more harm than good. It is a spiritual protection, a barrier of charms, of magic influences, to prevent the entrance of wizards and of all the hostile powers of the bush. We shall understand this better when treating of witchcraft superstitions. (Part VI.)

182 3) *Passage rites.* The reader will have been surprised to observe
621 amongst the ceremonies of the moving of villages, many features which we have already met with in the circumcision school, or in the
829 mourning customs. At first sight there seems to be no relation whatever between the moving of a village, the initiation of boys and the

182 mourning over the dead. The inner connexion existing between these
621 three events is that, in all of them, there is a passage. Hence the
783 resemblance of the rites. This striking similarity is, to my mind, the
829 best proof that the passage rites constitute a peculiar category. When a headman has decided to move, he leaves his old kraal, he *separates* from it, not by the ordinary gate, but by a special opening made at the back of the village. He is not allowed to return to it again. Then, for him and for all his people, begins a *marginal period* of one month or more, the buhlapfa (notice the prefix *bu* which indicates a period here, as in busahana page 42). We see the village, during these few weeks, put beyond the pale of society. The ordinary laws are suspended, (licencious songs), and many special taboos are enforced (prohibition of sexual relations, fire taboo, water taboo, etc.), just as in the period of mourning; at last the village returns to the ordinary course of life by a final act of purification, the mysterious *hlamba ndjaka*, which seems to be the most powerful means of cleansing the collective life. This last ceremony shows that, here, the marginal period has been instituted on account of the uncleaness, the impurity of the old village. Let us remember that in most cases the village has been moved on account of death! All the adult members of the social organism take part in the cleansing (at least in the Northern clans) and so the village begins a new and purified life. No one can deny the deep significance of all these rites and the mystic conception of the Thonga village.

C. THE HEADMAN AND THE ORGANISATION OF THE VILLAGE.

596 Each village thus possesses its superior (hosi), its master. He
576 is called *munumzane* or *numzane*, a curious expression which is
621 also employed in Zulu ; it means owner of a kraal, gentleman,
618 and is often used in saluting grown up men. We have seen the mystic relation between the headman and his *muti*. The village, the muti, is the primitive social organism. The clan (tiko), which is the gathering of all the *miti*, reproduces all the features of the
622 village life on a large scale. So the *numzane* corresponds to the
596 *hosi*, chief of the tribe. Both certainly possess great authority,

782 1) *Individual and family offerings* — those which concern a man or his family alone, — and *national offerings* — those which concern the whole clan.

2) The *simple offerings* called *gandjela*, and the *sacramental ones*, accompanied by the famous *tsu* which constitutes them a *hahla* (Ro.) or a *phahla* (Dj.).

3) Offerings attended with *bloodshed*, and those where no victim is killed.

4) The *regular offerings*, made at certain dates, or in connection with definite events in the life of the family or of the clan, and those made in *special* circumstances.

a) *Individual and Family Offerings.*

Simple Offerings (Gandjela).

782 Here the ritual is reduced to its minimum. The offering is
778 made by the father of the family at the gandjelo, the altar, or place of worship. This is, as has already been pointed out, a little pot, placed at the right side of the entrance to the village, or under the tree designated by the bones (I. p. 320) (1). In some cases, especially if the headman is a medicine-man or magician, the gandjelo consists of a forked branch planted in the ground, either inside his hut, or in the very middle of the square. Such was the case in the village of Mankhelu (See illustration I. p. 5). His gandjelo was a branch of *nkonola* (or *nkonono*); this tree, the *mpfilu* and *shisalala* are the only trees which are used for the purpose. He had removed the bark in some places, and smeared the stems with his black powders, so that there were two dark rings of about 3 inches wide on the branch. A lot of curious things were to be seen hanging from the lateral branches : bags

621 (1) If there are people of different clans inhabiting the same village owing to the fact that foreigners have "kondza" i. e, have put themselves under the authority of the
778 headman (I. p. 433), there will be a central gandjelo, the altar of the master of the village, at the foot of the sacred tree where offerings will be made for himself and his
782 relatives; but people of the other clans will have their own altars which will be placed near the main entrance, on the spot where the representatives of each of these clans assemble when discussing their own affairs.

595 that of females and which has been recognised by physiology, has
622 its effect also amongst Natives, and, in ordinary circumstances,
643 women are not more numerous than men in Bantu tribes. Many men are monogamists, not from choice, but by force of circumstances. Others are wandering about in Johannesburg, or Kimberley, and marry later in life, whilst girls marry much earlier. In the villages round Lourenço Marques the headman often has two or three wives. Three is however an unusual number. The chiefs, of course, take more, and Mubvesha, for instance, the chief of Nondwane, had as many as thirty. In the Gaza country chiefs go even further, at least they used to do so in the good old times, under Gungunyane. Bingwane, the chief of the Ba-Tswa, had so many wives that he hardly knew them and at any rate did not know all his children.

595 What is the origin of the custom ? It might be assumed to be a remnant of the old system of group marriage, supposing the Bantus to have also passed through that stage of family evolution. At one time all the men of a group would have considered as their wives all the women of another group, and vice versa. It was a state of polygamy and polyandry at the same time. The fear of the matlulana (page 265) put a stop to polyandry, and polygamy alone survived. Or it might be supposed that monogamy existed first and that polygamy appeared later, owing to the following reasons : 1) *Wars* diminished the number of men. As women were not anxious to remain "old maids," and as the tribe wanted to make the most of them, in order to increase and strengthen itself, the unmarried ones were taken by married men and so the polygamic family arose. In fact polygamy was very much fostered by the Gungunyane wars, during the historic
595 period. Every year the Ngoni chief planned expeditions against
567 his Ba-Chopi enemies on the coast, north of the mouth of the Limpopo. Men were killed and women enslaved, and each of these became the wife of her capturer. The position of these slaves was not very bad : however they were called *tinhloko*, heads, (a word which has the same meaning as heads of cattle), and could be sold by their owner. A great many of these Chopi women were bought in and round Lourenço Marques, before the suppression

182 mourning over the dead. The inner connexion existing between these
621 three events is that, in all of them, there is a passage. Hence the
783 resemblance of the rites. This striking similarity is, to my mind, the
829 best proof that the passage rites constitute a peculiar category. When a headman has decided to move, he leaves his old kraal, he *separates* from it, not by the ordinary gate, but by a special opening made at the back of the village. He is not allowed to return to it again. Then, for him and for all his people, begins a *marginal period* of one month or more, the buhlapfa (notice the prefix *bu* which indicates a period here, as in busahana [page 42]). We see the village, during these few weeks, put beyond the pale of society. The ordinary laws are suspended, (licencious songs), and many special taboos are enforced (prohibition of sexual relations, fire taboo, water taboo, etc.), just as in the period of mourning; at last the village returns to the ordinary course of life by a final act of purification, the mysterious *hlamba ndjaka*, which seems to be the most powerful means of cleansing the collective life. This last ceremony shows that, here, the marginal period has been instituted on account of the uncleaness, the impurity of the old village. Let us remember that in most cases the village has been moved on account of death! All the adult members of the social organism take part in the cleansing (at least in the Northern clans) and so the village begins a new and purified life. No one can deny the deep significance of all these rites and the mystic conception of the Thonga village.

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622 village life on a large scale. So the *numzane* corresponds to the
596 *hosi*, chief of the tribe. Both certainly possess great authority,

622 but it must not become tyrannical. They must govern for the
596 benefit of their subordinates.

264 This peculiar position of the numzane amongst his people is
554 illustrated, in a striking way, by the laws of distribution of the joints of meat on the day when the headman kills an ox to feast them. The various portions must be distributed to the relatives according to the place which they occupy in the family. The headman, nominal proprietor of the ox, will keep the breast (shifuba). This is not only the sternum and the ribs, but most of the viscera which are contained in them. The tripe, the heart, the kidneys will be put all together inside the stomach, and constitute what is called *nkopfu wa homu*. The headman will probably send the heart and the kidneys to his wives (tinkosikazi, his queens!). The brother who comes next will receive one of the hindlegs ; the third in rank one of the forelegs. The elder son will eat the second hindleg, and the younger son the second foreleg. They will eat this meat with their families, or houses (tiyindlu). This custom is very old (1).

Let us continue with the distribution. To the brothers-in-law, or to the relatives-in-law generally, the tail is sent. It is the portion of the sister. But it does not consist only of the tail properly so-called ; it comprises all the hind parts of the animal, especially the rump (kondjo). The malume (maternal uncle) receives part of the loins (muhlubula). The liver is put aside for the grandfather and the old people generally, because it is soft and they have no teeth to gnaw the bones. The head belongs to all the men of the village, who must eat it on the hubo, as we have seen. They may give the tongue (ndjaka) to the old men. It

622 (1) This custom is illustrated in a very interesting manner by the relative position
596 of the three clans occupying the South of the Bay. They are all descended from
264 Tembe (See page 23). *Tembe*, the ancestor, representing the elder branch of the
554 royal family, ate the chest. He was the superior (hosi), and this rank is still held by
618 his descendants in the direct line. *Sabi* or Mpanyele, the second brother, or son of the second brother, ate the hindleg ; he was established later on in the Mathuthweni district, between Tembe and Maputju. *Maputju*, the younger brother, head of the third branch, ate the foreleg. But he revolted against his elder brother and carved out for himself a kingdom which very soon became stronger than those of Tembe and Mathuthweni. Mathuthweni became more or less independent. But when people wish to remind the Maputju people of their inferior origin, they say to them : "Tembe ate the breast, Sabi the hindleg and Maputju the foreleg !"

622 is taboo for the women to eat it, or the under lip (See p. 184).
576 From each limb a small piece is taken (tshumbuta) and
264 placed on a skewer ; it is the portion of the shepherds and of
554 the butchers, (makotjo ya babyisi). (See the tale of Piti, *Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, page 152). Sometimes the shepherds also receive the lungs and the spleen.

This way of distributing ox meat is called "ku tlhaba homu ba hamba milao," viz., "to kill an ox according to rule." Should a younger brother or a son kill an ox, he will send the breast to the master of the village, but he keeps all the limbs and does not observe the rules because, as he says : "It is enough to pay taxes to the chief of the country." Often one of the legs is sent to the chief of the clan.

Strange to say when a goat is killed none of these prescribed rules are followed, as they only concern the oxen.

622 These customs show clearly the position of the headman ;
596 he is the master but also the father of his subordinates, and their provider.

1) He must *watch* over the village (basopa, Dutch word passop, universally adopted by the Natives). During the night, if his son is away working in Johannesburg, he takes care that no lovers come into the huts of his daughters-in-law, (a langusa bumbuye), and if he happens to catch one, he will make him pay the fine.

622 2) He is a true *justice of peace* amongst the inmates of the
692 village, doing his best to maintain good relations amongst them.
578 Suppose for instance that the pigs belonging to one of the inhab-
685 itants come out of their enclosure and over-run the gardens of another man. This man will go and say to the owner of the pigs :
643 "Such and such a thing has happened, please close the pigs' kraal more carefully." Should the same thing happen a second time, he will complain to the *numzane*. The headman will then go to the culprit and say : "You have not heeded the warning ; you must pay compensation (djiha)." If the culprit listens to the "voice of the blood" (bushaka), he will obey and the matter will end smoothly ; if not, the headman can only keep silent : he has no soldiers, no means of enforcing his judgment ; the plaintiff will then go to the chief of the tribe to complain. The case will be

judged before the Court, in the capital, because the offender has refused to follow the way of persuasion, he has "mocked the family love" (a yalile bushaka). Such misdemeanours are very frequent in the life of the village. Most of the Natives bear philosophically with these annoyances. Should some one, however, be really ill-natured, and wear out their patience (wa ku karata), he will be forced to build a hut for himself, alone, outside the village. If the damage is done by *children*, if they have stolen sweet potatoes, as we have seen, the wronged proprietor gives them a good thrashing but does not claim a fine. Occasionally the headman himself thrashes them in presence of their father, and the father will say to them: "You see the numzane will beat you if you are not good." Children who mock at cripples are also severely beaten by him, all the more so as, in this case, the offended party has the right of claiming a fine.

3) The headman also possesses *authority over his younger brothers and his children*. He can even confiscate their money if one of them is addicted to drinking and ruins his property. However his authority in this respect must not be overstepped, and the headman must take care how he exercises it, as it is based more or less on sufferance. The younger brothers, for instance, maintain the right of making contracts, especially lobola contracts. Should the numzane restrict their liberty too much, they will leave him and found their own villages. A successful headman is he who knows how to keep the whole family together to the general satisfaction.

4) The headman has also the right of imposing *statute labour*, especially when the oxen kraal must be rebuilt, or when the weeds must be removed from the hubo ; he sends his young men to do the work. But he must not exact too much from his people or forget to feast them with beer or with meat when the work is finished.

5) Lastly the headman *presides over all the discussions* which take place in the village. He is the master of the hubo. The discussion can be conducted in three different places ; when it deals with a secret matter, the men go *inside the hut* : they debate the matter indoors (ba bulabula ndlwen). Private questions

622 affecting the life of the village are generally settled there.
596 Questions discussed with strangers and those regarding which there is no secrecy, and in which every one can take part, are discussed *on the central square*, on the "hubo". *Hubo* means the square, and also the council of the men of the village which the headman summons there to settle matters (ku khanela timhaka). Should they be able to come to an agreement together or with their visitors who have come to bring a claim, the matter is "cut" (ba tjema mhaka), viz., "ended". In the opposite case, when they disagree altogether, the question will be carried to a third place, before the *hubo of the chief*, in the capital. (See Part III).

562 Every one is welcome to take part in the discussions except women. As a rule men speak as little as possible with women on these matters. If a husband has a sensible, discreet wife, he may ask her advice. But if he has agreed with his companions on a point and changes his mind after having spoken with his wife, he will be severely blamed and accused of "spoiling the village" (hona muti).

622 The headman is more or less *responsible for all the claims*
596 lodged against his subordinates. Should one of his younger brothers be prosecuted for a debt, the creditors will go to the
672 numzane, and he cannot say : "This matter does not concern me." He will say to his brother : "Pay your debt," and, if the brother has no funds, he will help him, if possible, but it is only a loan, and the younger brother will pay back the money. As a rule members of the same family help each other in these matters. This is so much the custom that children are expected to pay the debts of their deceased parents, even if they have not inherited anything from them. This does not however procede from a moral sense of family dignity. They do it because the native authorities hold them responsible. They might be "arrested". In the case of a father who has died still owing some lobola money, the children will try to pay, but they will do it in order to obtain possession of the woman. Should a father have committed adultery with a married woman, and die without having paid the fine, his heirs are not considered responsible. On the other hand, if the father has been condemned as a wizard

622 by the chief, and dies, his heirs must pay the compensation
596 claimed. All these rules clearly illustrate the communism of
672 family life and family property, under the supervision of the headman.

Should a numzane be absolutely unable to govern his village,
622 *the family council can depose him* and put another man in his
596 place. This council will be formed of old relatives, especially the paternal uncles to whom the younger brothers will go and complain of the misbehaviour of their headman. A younger brother will then be proclaimed and the elder will be despised. They will say : "Hi singe! A fahla muti, a hluli hi muti!" "He is a fool! He breaks the village ; he is overcome by the village," viz., not able to keep up his position.

As regards the *law of succession* to the headmanship, the second brother takes the place of the elder, and so on. The son of the elder cannot become headman until all his paternal uncles are dead. We shall find this principle also observed in the succession of the chiefs. (Part III.)

D. DAILY LIFE IN THE VILLAGE.

461 From the oxen kraal to the huts, from the square to the little wood, through the doors and in the reed yards, black forms are moving to and fro. Everybody seems busy. There is talking, laughing, playing and working. The expression "working like a nigger" is hardly applicable, for they do not kill themselves with work. It would, however, be quite as great a mistake to believe that the Natives spend all their time in loafing about. Far from it!

I. *Women's occupations.*

462 Women, especially, are very busy. When the sun rises, they
511 emerge from their huts, wash their faces, and light a little fire to warm the mealie pap which was left from the evening meal.

273 musical instinct. Some days later, another headman invites his
574 neighbours to another beer-drinking, and so they eat and drink
together (ba delana, ba nwelana) as long as there is plenty in
622 the storehouses. When provisions become scarce, they begin
595 to spare the mealies. But the advantage of the polygamist
becomes apparent here; his storehouses are many and he can
feast his friends for many months.

These beer-drinking customs are essentially demoralising; they

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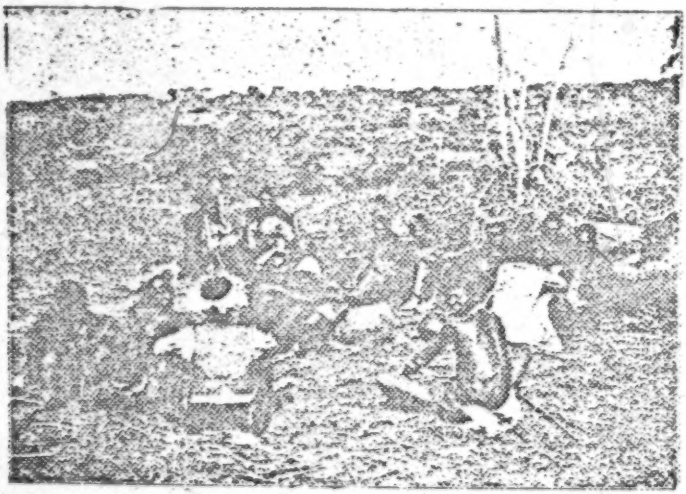

Phot. A. Bird.

Beer-drinking party in Maputju country.

are one of the curses of primitive Native life. But let me remark that, as the making of the beer takes nine days, these excesses cannot be very frequent, and the habit of drinking wine at the White man's store is ten times more harmful, as in this case alcohol is never lacking. We shall speak later on of alcoholism amongst Natives. (See Part IV.)

276 Another pastime, very much appreciated by some, but not so
248 general, is *hemp smoking* and the accompanying *saliva contest*. Hemp
(mbange) has been cultivated for a considerable time amongst
the Thongas, especially on the coast, not to make ropes, but for
smoking.

832 576 593 152 572 Even a husband never kissed his wife. On coming back from a journey, a man would hardly greet his wife ; she would see him passing through the village, prepare food for him, and when it was cooked, she would come and salute him by presenting it to him. But if he has a good friend in the village, and if this friend sees him coming back after a long absence, their meeting will be much more touching. The friend will go to the main entrance of the village, exclaim : "Ha-Ha," take his parcel from his hands, put his arms round his shoulders (a ku mu buso hi mandla), remove the perspiration from his face, and pat him gently, saying : "Your ancestor-gods have their eyes open! They have worked well! They have brought you back."

574 609 622 *Hospitality.* When strangers enter a village, men sit on the *bandla*, and women go further on and sit on the *hubo* ; they remain quietly there till the people of the village come and salute them (losa). Should the inhabitants delay too long, the visitors move on, saying : "These people are not good." But this is very rare. Generally the master of the village comes to them, inquiring who they are, whence they come, where they are going, and asks them : "Do you wish to spend the night here ?" If they say : "Yes," the headman will empty one of his huts by putting two of his wives together, and will himself sleep with the visitors. Should there still be food, he will give them some. If not, he says : 574 "*Ndlala*!" "Starvation!" After a little while, a mat is unrolled 609 and the official ceremony of "djungulisana" takes place. This is a 622 very amusing custom. The headman sits together with his hosts and enquires about the news of their home. One of the 203 visitors begins in a monotonous tone and pours forth volubly 195 a flow of words with a peculiar cadence and almost without taking breath. His interlocutor interrupts him after each sentence, with "Ahina, hina," that is to say "Indeed, indeed!" till the whole skein is unwound ; the two men finish with a longer "*Hina*," the inhabitants of the hut adding an emphatic "*khani*," a heartfelt "thank you ;" then the master of the village begins to relate his own news in the same tone. It is impossible to 574 imagine anything more curious than this "mélopée" in two parts. 609 This law of hospitality is general all over the tribe. Should

643 584 day is fixed for a visit to the capital where it will be concluded.

Let us consider the procedure in the case of the marriage of Ñwamantibyane, the youthful chief of Mpfumo, who has since been exiled. The following account of the discussion preparatory to the marriage is given on the authority of Tobane, a witness of the proceedings, and will aptly illustrate the etiquette observed on such occasions.

643 584 651 622 The dignitaries are assembled, and one of them, the brother of the deceased chief, commences thus : "Well, you the chiefs of Mpfumo! In truth! If we are assembled here to-day, is it not that we have truly seen that we must, in fact, increase the chief, and give him the wife of the country ? This is all the business, you, the chiefs." One of those addressed replies : "In putting the matter before us, hast thou been unequal to the task ? (No! understood.) And we, what further words could we add ? Nothing remains to be said... You then tell us what we shall have to give you, dwellers in the capital!" Then the secondary chiefs say : "For our part, we will give each one pound sterling or an ox, as you may prefer." The headmen of the villages will each contribute ten shillings and each village one shilling besides. In former times, before the circulation of money in the country, each one gave a hoe.

The secondary chiefs go back to their own districts and get together the money or the oxen as the case may be. This done, the fact is duly notified to the capital and all the contributions are conveyed to the chief. An account is kept of all monies or cattle contributed. When Ñwamantibyane was married the special subscription amounted to thirty pounds sterling and twenty oxen.

643 582 The future queen was chosen from the royal family of Matjolo ; her name was Mimalengane. The young chief had only seen her on one occasion, when she was returning from Gaza. Nevertheless she was his first cousin once removed ; Hamule, father of Žihlala and grandfather of Ñwamantibyane, married the sister of Malengane, chief of Matjolo, and his daughter was Mimalengane (the prefix *mi* signifies daughter of), who was now

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during the whole of the first year of married life. The chief, immediately on the home-coming of his bride, calls together his young men, who rapidly build for him a new village, his village, which will henceforth become the capital of the country and will be given a distinctive name.

Ñwamantibyane's royal kraal was known as Hlanzini, and he had chosen a site for it on the confines of the Ñwamba country in order to avoid a too close proximity to the Portuguese Commandant living at Hangwana.

Crowned, married, installed in his new residence, the chief has now nothing to do but reign.

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Mankhelu relates the proceedings of the official marriage amongst the Ba-Nkuna in the following manner : — All the principal headmen send an ox to the capital, assemble there, kill one of the oxen, eat it and discuss who shall be the "wife of the country (1)." They ask the chief : "Whom do you love ?" He answers : "The daughter of such and such a chief." They go to the father of this girl and say : "Eat the lobolo and give your daughter to the chief." The man may refuse. Should he consent, the girl will become the wife of the country : "the earth has bought her ;" she will give birth to the future chief.

Should a great number of oxen be provided by the country, those which are in excess of the lobola price will go with the chief and princess to their new village "in order to provide milk for them."

(1) In the case of Muhlaba, Mankhelu himself received the fifteen oxen of the lobolo of the village and kept them for a time. Other subjects had given £ 1, a hoe, a goat, or nothing, if they could not afford to contribute. Nobody refused, but some had nothing to give ! No matter ! In the meantime one of the oxen broke its leg. The mother of Muhlaba said to Mankhelu : "See ! the oxen of the lobolo die. Take a wife for the chief." Muhlaba was consulted and chose a girl from the Makaringe clan. Mankhelu had already taken a wife amongst these people, who were consequently his bakolwana. He went to them with the proposal ; they consented. Then Muhlaba accompanied Mankhelu on a second visit to the Makaringe people, who killed an ox for him and helped him to eat it !

2) Civil cases.

692 I will not assert that Thongas know the exact difference between civil and criminal cases, the same tribunal judging them both and all being called by the same name, milandju.

643 681 If any distinction is made, it would be between private and official cases, *private cases* being those which are settled by the two parties concerned alone, without the intervention of the chief ; whilst *official cases* are those in which the matter (mhaka) has been brought to the capital. As already explained, the headmen of the village try to settle the difficulties themselves ; if they succeed, all the better, as the fine will be reduced to its minimum, whilst, before the Court, the fine would be doubled and the chief would keep half of it!

691 Ninety per cent of the civil cases are in connection with *lobola*. These are sometimes most intricate and I would refer to the description already given of some of them (p. 282 and Appendix VIII).

691 586 643 614 *Divorce cases* are also common. When a woman has definitely left her husband, her relatives must return the lobolo money. "You must give up to them £ 5 or an ox," says Mankhelu. The chief Mubvesha who was known for his avarice used to arrest the husband and make him pay £ 25 ; he returned £ 15 to the wife's relatives and kept £ 10 for himself.

When money is returned, the children belong to the mother (See page 279).

691 643 437 Many cases may occur in connection with *cattle*. The case of *redhibition* is foreseen : when I buy an ox and it dies on my hands from a disease which was not known at the date of my purchase but which already existed, I have the right to go and ask for another in its place. But I bring the skin of the dead ox with me and one hoe inside it for the meat which I have eaten. If the seller refuses to accept my claim, I go to the chief and complain. He will summon the recalcitrant person and say to him : "Did not this man act well when he put a hoe inside the skin ? Give him another ox!" (Mankhelu.)

423 643 By law the soil belongs to the Chief, but only that, through him, it may become general property. No one can buy land. It is gratuitously assigned to any and all who wish to settle in the country. The mere fact of *kondza*, viz., making submission to the chief (Vol. I, p. 433), entitles the Native to as much land as may be necessary for his subsistence.

423 622 It will be readily understood, however, that the supreme Chief, however small his territory may be, can hardly assume the duty of marking out the various small allotments for his subjects. In ordinary practice this is done by the headmen of the villages (numzane), the important men of the country, (I will call them A), who obtain the grant of considerable tracts of land, which they apportion amongst those under their jurisdiction. They and their near relatives cultivate the most fertile parts of these tracts, or districts, and when any one (say B) wishes to settle on their reserve, they "cut the bush" for him, "tjemela nhoba," to use the technical expression ; they accompany the would-be-settler to an uncultivated piece of land and together they fix the boundaries of a plot of ground which is then assigned to him. A tree, the corner of a lake, a well, or an anthill, may be used as landmarks in this primitive surveying operation. The new-comer will clear as much of the land as he can, till it, and the fields, together with the trees they contain, will become thenceforth his property. Should any of his relatives wish to settle near him, he will, in his turn, assign to them a portion of his land, which they may clear and cultivate ; and so the distribution continues. Supposing B is not satisfied with his allotment, or is unable to live on neighbourly terms with A, and builds his hut in some other spot, he cannot sell or otherwise dispose of his land, as it must revert to A, the original owner. On the other hand, should B die, his wife would inherit his gardens. Should father or mother die, the property would naturally pass to the sons, who would divide the fields between their wives. Thus we see that real estate is hereditary, but cannot be sold. A similar state of affairs would result should A, the numzane, who ranks almost as a petty chief, leave the country : all his rights in connection with the tract that he may have occupied for the last fifty years will cease with his departure.

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It might be supposed that the title to real estate being gratuitously given, was not very secure. Quite the contrary! Once having assigned a plot of ground to B, A has no further interest in it; B is the absolute master of his land and of all that it produces. I recollect one day, at Rikatla, being almost dumbfounded when our own petty chief, Muzila, came to me and humbly asked permission to pick up some of the nkanye fruit, which I had left to rot on the ground! The land at the station (about 5 acres in extent) was granted to us by Maphunga, chief of Nondwane, and here was his relative and representative coming to me, requesting permission to make use of the produce of a tree which was useless to me! And he would, moreover, have made a like polite request to the meanest of his subjects, had he been desirous of making use of anything growing in that man's fields. I must admit that I have often admired the practical character of the Native law in this connection, and, still more so, the respect paid by the original proprietor to the individual to whom he has voluntarily assigned a portion of his land. It is, of course, entirely to the interest of the numzane to keep his protégé on his land, for he adds considerably to its value by cultivating an otherwise useless bush *(nhoba)*. He also helps to people his protector's tract of country, and thus to increase his strength; finally he makes certain payments in kind or rather in labour. The Chief gladly welcomes new-comers, as they will assist in the tilling of his fields each year, and the more labourers he has, the better for him! As for the headman of the village, the possessor of a "small country" (tikwana, dji-ma), his protégés will be always ready to do him a good turn on occasion, and he is therefore quite content to assign to them portions of his domain. Human nature is, however, much the same everywhere, and this system, which appears so perfect at first sight, has also its drawbacks. A numzane, or even a Chief, will give to his favourites the best pieces of land. A clever flatterer, or one knowing how to regale the great man with beer in due season, and thus gain his good graces, will be apt to receive an allotment of good, fertile forest land, while a less fortunate individual, out of favour at Court, will only get a piece of barren hill-side which has

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423 already been tilled and abandoned as exhausted. I noticed
622 this at Rikatla. Muzila favoured his pagan subjects, who joined him in his drinking bouts, and invited him to orgies in their villages, at the expense of the Christians who no longer brew the byala beer. Thus interest at Court works here as elsewhere, although it be based on nothing nobler than pots of beer!

423 The difficulties of this system also become apparent in the
578 more thickly populated parts of the country, where all the land has been assigned and taken up. The women look round for
692 fresh arable land and may, wittingly or unwittingly, encroach on the ground of another numzane. There is, indeed, a neutral zone, vaguely defined, of which no one has as yet taken possession, as it has not been needed : the wild fruits growing there are common property ; any one who likes can gather them. When the population increases, the inhabitants of the more congested districts go and appropriate this land without any kind of formality. Such was the case when the people of Libombo, dwelling on the edge of the palm-marsh, (to the East of Rikatla), sent their women to the hill-side to clear a piece of land which Muzila considered to be his property. This petty chief sent remonstrances to Nkolele, his colleague, headman of the village of Libombo ; but they were not heeded. Then the men of Rikatla hid themselves in the bushes surrounding the spot in question, and, when the women commenced to hoe the ground, rushed out upon them, seized their hoes, and drove them off. This was the "fait patent," the actionable proceeding, which was necessary in order to have the matter brought before the Chief's tribunal. This incident doubtless led the parties interested to define their respective boundaries more carefully.

423 To go and till another's land would be quite impossible, even
618 taboo, between people of different clans. In the present case, the Rikatla and Libombo men belonged to the same Nondwane country. There was a good understanding between them. The Rikatla men would not have dared to plough a field without permission on Mabota's ground, the boundary of which was on the other side of the big water-tree (muhlu).

As regards *boundary marks* between the different clans, they

685 has been pulled up and the sand nicely smoothed down, so that
343 any traces of a thief would easily be seen. He will possibly be
151 recognised at once by the trackers, owing to some peculiarity in the
625 marks on the sand, the foot-print of each individual being more or less known ; clever detectives can even ascertain the height and gait of a man from the length of his stride! If there are no peculiar marks in the foot-prints, the trackers will follow them and reach the village where the thief lives. They will perhaps take him by surprise in his hut. If the matter cannot be settled by the headman of the village and has to be brought before the chief, the guilty party will be fined as much as two, three or even five pounds sterling (Tobane) (1).

When detectives have been unable to trace a thief, they assume a philosophical attitude and say : "Only wait. A man who has stolen will steal again, and you will catch him another time!"

643 *Revolt against the decisions of the chief's hubo* is very rare. Should
687 any person take the part of a condemned man and encourage him to oppose the decision of the Court, he will be beaten with a shambock on the square of the capital. "U onhi hubo," "he has spoilt the Court!" Moreover he may have to pay a fine of £ 2. (Mankhelu.)

643 *Answer to some of Professor Frazer's questions on Government.*
835 There are no separate chiefs for war and peace. But in time
224 of war the great induna, who is the Commander-in-chief of the
701 army, directs all military operations. — The chief is never required to marry his own sister or daughter. The only similar case of which I have heard, is that of a hunter who must have sexual relations with his daughter before going on a hunting trip (Part IV).

643 — The king's mother does not hold any special office. —
778 The chief does not keep any portion of his deceased predecessor excepting the nails and hair used for the mhamba (See page 386 and part VI)

638 (1) The following interesting couplet in two sentences aptly describes the thief :
Shishlungwa rendjeletane ? — The crown on the hat nicely rounded ?
Mangatlu a psha ritiho... — The hawk burns his claws...
The thief is like a crown on the top of a hat. He is a lazy person, he attitudinises and will not work. Evil will befall him, as with a hawk who tries to snatch the meat that is roasting and burns his claws !

243 their mealies with the small pimples of their tattooing (tinhleke ta Ba-Ronga). If maize is the most appreciated cereal, it is certainly not the most ancient known to the tribe. Owing to its modernity, no doubt, it is not subject to any taboo. It is sown and harvested [252] without any rite. At Christmas time, when the first cobs are edible, people joyfully feast on the new crop. They cook some of them in the ashes, but they allow the rest to ripen and dry upon [626] the stalks. Although no taboo prevents any owner of a field from eating the first mealies whenever it suits him, Mboza asserts that people who have obtained green mealies before the other inhabitants of the village, do not precede them in the enjoyment of this much appreciated food : "It would cause jealousy amongst them." This reason is perhaps at the bottom of the luma taboo (I, p. 394). Moreover they fear lest they might have to share their good luck with all their friends !

243 Next in importance comes the *mabele*, plur. of bele, dji-ma 278 (Ro.), ñwahuba (Dj.), the *millet* or *Kafir corn*. This is the well-known millet which we give to birds in cages, small, round, blackish grains which grow on a stem 3 to 5 feet high, in elongated cylindrical ears. Kafir corn is pounded, or ground, and may be eaten in the form of flour. But its main use is to provide the 243 yeast for the Kafir beer. As already pointed out (I. p. 42) the 825 mabele is one of the oldest cereals known to the Thongas. It is the ritual cereal, that used for the "shimhimbi," the dish offered to the confined mother or prepared for the luma ceremony. Its seeds undergo a certain treatment before being sown : the sub-chief blows upon them after having taken a small piece of a certain root in his mouth ; this root obtained from a kind of juncus found in the mountains, is supposed to have the power of keeping the ants away from the seeds. He distributes the seeds thus treated amongst his people, and every one mixes some of them with his own supply. Men of the reigning family alone possess 243 this root. Later on, when the time for sowing has come, it is 787 taboo for subjects to precede their chiefs or sub-chiefs in sowing mabele. The bones are consulted. Should the "madjuma" fall showing their mouths (see Part VI), it is the answer of the gods. They say: "Yes! this is the proper time! The mabele will do well!"

low, the fish is imprisoned between the reeds and the bank. 226
The construction of this trap is governed by strict laws : no 834
sexual relation is allowed during the five or six weeks of the fishing. The owner of the shibaba must cut the first reed. Women must not approach the spot. On the day of inauguration there is also a luma ceremony similar to that for the nhangu.

But the most curious fishing custom is the *tjeba*. "Ku tjeba" 226
means to kill fish in company in lakes which are drying up. At the end of the winter most of the small lakes scattered all over Thongaland, get smaller on account of the drought, and the fish they contain, consisting mostly of carp and barbel, are obliged to congregate in much smaller spaces. Natives take advantage of this and the whole country-side is summoned to go and tjeba, on a certain day, as it is important to be as numerous as possible in order to ensure success. The chief orders all his men to make *shiranga*, a kind of conical basket, a foot and a half high, whose upper end is open and wide enough to admit the hand. The shiranga must be very strong ; the tree used for the purpose is called ntjangari. When the shiranga are ready, a messenger is 202
sent to all the villages, crying : 226
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> Kho ! Khooo ! Hobe ! Hobeee ! U yala mateeee ! Na nati a randja nyamooo ! A randja mihlobeee ! Kho ! Hobe !
> You hate your wife ! Your wife also is fond of flesh food ! She is fond of the flesh of the tail of fishes !

Every male member of the tribe must answer to this summons by going to the shore. Should he refuse the call, he is blamed and despised, and his companions will sing to him a mocking song :

> U yala ku tjeba, nyathwaka !
> You refuse to fish, nyathwaka (1).

In the evening his wife will scold him, on seeing that he brings no fish home! She will punish him by giving him mealie pap without any sauce!

Before the throng enters the lake, someone must *make an* 226
offering ; he must be a descendant of the inhabitants of the country, 782

(1) Nyathwaka is a formula of insult (I. p. 445).

committed! Now, no one ought ever to rob me. What shall I do!" Then the Chief assembles his subjects and invites the guilty one to confess. If all deny it, Ñwagwalen starts off, with all his apparatus, for the place where the theft was committed, and "treats it medicinally" (a dahela mbangu). He spreads out his drugs, raises his stick in the air, and addresses Heaven as follows : 772 821 789 627

> We, Tilo, hi wene u ka ni mahlu, u bonaka busiku ni nhlekanhi!
> Ba tekile psa nga ba kaneta! Tana u ba komba ba psha!
> Oh Heaven, thou it is who hast eyes which see as well by night as by day...
> They have stolen my goods, and they deny it! Come and discover them; may they be consumed!

Then the clouds begin to gather, and, towards evening, the storm breaks. Lightning strikes the thief in his hut, and causes the stolen articles to reappear. — "I saw this happen at Hoñwana," declared Spoon, "but of late years such occurrences have been less frequent."

According to Camilla, the guilty person is sometimes punished by a terrible attack of vermin, of which he is unable to rid himself ; or he is confronted with several palm leaves, which, by a kind of supernatural judgment, turn into snakes, if he be truly guilty of having stolen the missing property.

The intervention of Heaven in the matter of detecting thieves is also an accepted fact in Khosen. My colleague, the Rev. A. Grandjean, told me of the following significant custom. When there is a storm, those who have missed any belongings go and stand at the door of the hut of the suspected thief, and it is quite possible that the inmate, terrified by the thunder, may throw out the stolen articles.

It may be concluded, from these perfectly authenticated customs, that the Natives attribute to Heaven the power of *omniscience*, more especially in respect to the detection of theft. The basket of bones is never consulted for this purpose. Moreover as Heaven guarantees property and makes people afraid to steal, it acts as a kind of *moralising influence*. [626]

I have also been told by witnesses from the Nkuna region that into the composition of the charm used to protect gardens against thieves, (p. 30) there enters a little powder obtained by burning a 789 772

784 vertige intellectuel). Prof. Raoul Allier, in his valuable book on
152 *La Psychologie de la Conversion chez les peuples non civilisés* (Vol. I. p. 250-260), ably describes the psychological process which takes place in the soul of the savage. Suppose some event to have happened which has caused a deep emotion in the tribe, the arrival for instance of the first Europeans with a number of unknown objects which arouse fear in the Native population. This emotion may perhaps subside and eventually be forgotten, and the tribe will accustom itself to the presence of the new comers ; but if some great misfortune supervenes, for instance if a serious epidemic breaks out, a new emotion will be produced throughout the country. This will remind the people of the emotion previously experienced on the arrival of the Europeans, and, in the disturbed state of mind thus created, the association established between the two emotions will be extended to the two facts which gave birth to these emotions, and the tribe will declare that the first fact is the cause of the second. Europeans and everything they brought with them will henceforth be considered as taboo. This is utterly illogical and the conclusion absurd. Yet this is what actually happens amongst people whose reasoning faculties are but little developed. These observations help us greatly in our understanding of primitive mentality, and many taboos may be psychologically explained in this way. Most of them, however, are inexplicable. They originate in the animistic or dynamistic collective representations of the tribe (p. 368) and these representations are instinctive, unconscious and consequently unaccountable.

784 2) How are they *enforced*? In as far as taboos have been
● 626 proclaimed by conscious agents, their transgression will meet with punishment by those agents. A chief will sue a subject
753 using a hlonipha word. The gods will punish those who transgress the law of hierarchy, who pass all bounds in incontinence, who forget their duties towards them (p. 426). But, in most cases, the decree is not enforced by a conscious agent. The *taboo avenges itself directly*. Consumption, swelling of the legs, the impossibility of passing water, disease of one kind or another will follow the transgression, or the children will be covered with an eruption of pimples.

825 presides over all unaccountable and unavoidable phenomena of the
772 atmosphere and of the life of the fields, or of human existence.

We have seen how the two sets of religious customs play their part side by side in the rites of rain-making. A similar coincidence may be noticed here. The removal of the "nunu," a rite which originated in the conception of Heaven, corresponds to the sacrifice of the chief in the Maluleke country, who gathers his sons together to pray to his ancestor-gods for the destruction of the vermin (psidi) which eat the mealies and endanger the harvest (p. 404).

3) Heaven, Storms and Robbers.

772 The most characteristic manifestation of Heaven is in the
821 storm. According to the statement of the credulous Natives, after
789 the women have finished cleaning the wells, and have watered the graves of twins, clouds appear, a whirlwind arises, and "Heaven
627 begins to thunder" — "Tilo dji djuma." — I have already described Thonga ideas about thunder and the lightning bird (p. 313), and the powerful charm made from the flesh, feathers and urine of this marvellous creature! There is still another use made of this extraordinary drug. It is a powerful aid in *tracing thieves*! The magician who possesses this powder of Heaven, (Ñwagwalen of Shikhabele in the Mabota clan), when called upon to point out the thief, acts in the following way. Suppose some one finds that some valuable article has disappeared from his hut, he will say to his near relatives, to those whom he suspects of having committed the larceny : "Take care! If you don't confess, we will go to Ñwagwalen, who lives at Shikhabele!" This threat may possibly be sufficient to elicit an avowal. If not, the individual who has been wronged goes to the diviner, and asks his assistance ; the latter takes his "bag of tricks," his drugs, and his big black stick, i. e., the stick which he was carrying when he dug in the earth and found the urine of the bird, or the bird itself. A notch has been made in the stick, to show the depth of the hole in which he has discovered Heaven. Carrying these charms, he goes to find the chief. An audience being granted, he cries aloud : "O Chief! a theft has been

committed! Now, no one ought ever to rob me. What shall I do!" Then the Chief assembles his subjects and invites the guilty one to confess. If all deny it, Ñwagwalen starts off, with all his apparatus, for the place where the theft was committed, and "treats it medicinally" (a dahela mbangu). He spreads out his drugs, raises his stick in the air, and addresses Heaven as follows : 772 821 789 627

> We, Tilo, hi wene u ka ni mahlu, u bonaka busiku ni nhlekanhi!
> Ba tekile psa nga ba kaneta! Tana u ba komba ba psha!
> Oh Heaven, thou it is who hast eyes which see as well by night as by day...
> They have stolen my goods, and they deny it! Come and discover them ; may they be consumed!

Then the clouds begin to gather, and, towards evening, the storm breaks. Lightning strikes the thief in his hut, and causes the stolen articles to reappear. — "I saw this happen at Hoñwana," declared Spoon, "but of late years such occurrences have been less frequent."

According to Camilla, the guilty person is sometimes punished by a terrible attack of vermin, of which he is unable to rid himself ; or he is confronted with several palm leaves, which, by a kind of supernatural judgment, turn into snakes, if he be truly guilty of having stolen the missing property.

The intervention of Heaven in the matter of detecting thieves is also an accepted fact in Khosen. My colleague, the Rev. A. Grandjean, told me of the following significant custom. When there is a storm, those who have missed any belongings go and stand at the door of the hut of the suspected thief, and it is quite possible that the inmate, terrified by the thunder, may throw out the stolen articles.

It may be concluded, from these perfectly authenticated customs, that the Natives attribute to Heaven the power of *omniscience*, more especially in respect to the detection of theft. The basket of bones is never consulted for this purpose. Moreover as Heaven guarantees property and makes people afraid to steal, it acts as a kind of *moralising influence*. [626]

I have also been told by witnesses from the Nkuna region that into the composition of the charm used to protect gardens against thieves, (p. 30) there enters a little powder obtained by burning a 789 772

64/3 In the old Portuguese documents, and in particular in an account written by a military commandant to the prelate of Mozambique, at the end of the XVIIIth century, the chiefs of the countries in the vicinity of the Bay were described in grandiloquent terms : "They are very powerful, very rich, most honourable, generous and respected." The Chief of Khosen is called the Grand Cacha, and is described as "a kind of Emperor." Though it is probable that, in former times, the regal paraphernalia of the Thonga chiefs were more brillant than now, these are manifest exaggerations, such as are often met with in the tales of the old explorers ; nevertheless there is a good deal of truth in these accounts. "Royalty," in the mind of the Native, is a venerable and sacred institution ; respect for the Chief, and obedience to his commands are universal ; his prestige is maintained, not by a great display of riches and of power, but by the mystical idea that, as the body lives by nourishment taken through its head, so the life of the nation is sustained through its chief.

The Thongas do not explain this in abstract words, but by images which are very striking. The chief is the Earth, as we have seen. He is the cock by which the country is sustained. (Tobane.) Mankhelu adds : "He is the bull ; without him the cows cannot bring forth. He is the husband ; the country without him is like a woman without a husband. He is the man of the village. Should a dog bark, if there is no man, nobody will dare to go out of the hut and ascertain the danger that threatens, nobody will have the courage to chase away the hyena. A clan without a chief has lost its reason (hungukile). It is dead. Because who will call the army together ? There is no longer any army! The chief is our great warrior (nhena), he is our forest where we hide ourselves and from whom we ask for laws. The counsellors (tinduna) cannot proclaim laws."

Conscious of this position, the chief does his best to maintain and to increase his prestige. He must not be too familiar. He does not eat with his subjects, except with certain favourites. Sometimes he eats alone in his hut. Or, when he has slaughtered an ox, he chooses amongst the various joints those he prefers, and feasts before his subjects, who look on respectfully, "swallowing

64/3 their own saliva," (viz., their mouths watering the while). He sometimes throws a piece of meat to one of his favourites, who accepts it with both hands, shouting : "Bayete!" In the Tembe capital, men crawled on their knees before the chief, shouting: "Ngolanyama" "Lion!". Ñwangundjuwana, the chief of Ñwamba, was known for his more democratic ways. He used to eat with his men.

To shake hands with a chief was also considered as taboo before the days of Christianity. Now Muhlaba somewhat reluctantly accepts the hand which is extended to him by the most modest of his subjects, even by children on Christmas Day. The idea which is at the bottom of the fear is that the chief is a magical being. He possesses special medicines with which he rubs himself or which he swallows, so that his body is taboo (ntjumbu wa hosi wa yila). He is dangerous. "When he points at you with his finger, you are a dead man" (Mboza). Owing to the charms with which he had smeared his body, Maphunga, the chief of Nondwane, made those who discussed State affairs with him, even White people, "unable to answer him or to resist
64/3 his will" (Mboza). In order to increase this salutary fear, some
171 chiefs had the curious custom of *disappearing for a time* (tumba) "just like a big caterpillar when it enters the ground and becomes a chrysalis." The same Maphunga used to remain invisible during one week each year before the great bukanye feast (1). We shall see the same rite practised by the great magicians, who also aspire to create a deep impression on the imagination of the people. (See Part VI.) As already mentioned,
64/3 the chief alone must be addressed by the royal salutation "Bayete"
576 or "Baheti." The hosana has no right to it legally, and must be addressed by the term "Baba," "Father." As regards subjects, they are called *malandja*, from the verb ku landja,

(1) This custom is met with amongst the Pedis, where old chiefs abandon their kraals and go to live in the desert for years, leaving a prince regent in their stead. This kind of hermit life gives them great prestige. The Pedi chief Sikororo, near Shiluvane, is the best-known case of such a disappearance. Sexual continence, even repugnance to women, was one of his reasons for this seclusion, which lasted until his death. (1903 or 1904).

643 to follow, the followers. The Chief is the one who walks in front, whom the malandja, the ordinary folk, follow from motives of submission and fidelity, much as a dog follows his master from attachment, but is ready to fight for him should occasion arise.

643 551 The *name of the chief* must not be pronounced on any and every occasion. Should it contain a word which designates another object, the name of this object must be changed. So the Mpfumu chief *Ñwamantibyane* felt that his name was too similar to *ntibu* (diminutive *ntibyane*),a certain antelope. It was henceforth taboo to call this animal ntibu in his territory. It had to be called nguya. Zihlahla, the father of Ñwamantibyane, had gone even further than his son ; his counsellors complained that he gave them no meat to eat, keeping all for himself. "He is a dog," they said. The chief overheard the remark and took action in the following decree : "Let it be know all over the country that *mbyana*, the dog, is I. When you pronounce this word, you will be referring to your chief. I therefore command you hereafter to call real dogs *kalawana*." And this was done for some time. So, in Nondwane, people proclaimed as taboo the verb *ku phunga*, to sprinkle, and replaced it by *ku kweba*, which means to drink, in order not to offend *Maphunga*. This custom of showing respect by avoiding the use of the name of a chief in connexion with ordinary objects, is even extended to other men, if they are of particular note. So a great personage of the Maputju clan having been named Mahlahla, which means small branches, these had to be called mavinda. The prohibition to pronounce the name of the chief can go so far that even names of deceased chiefs are taboo, at least in the Bilen region. So the petty chief of Rikatla had been called *Muzila* after the great Ngoni chief, son of Manukosi and father of Gungunyana. But people used to call him *Mbozin*, fearing lest the warriors of Bilen might say : "What is this ? Where have you hidden him ? Show us Muzila. We assert that he died long ago!"

171 These are traces of the *hlonipha* custom, which is, however, not so much developed amongst Thongas as amongst Zulus.

643/695/551 The name of the chief is sacred in so far as it is generally used in oaths. When asked to swear, a Nondwane man will say: "Maphunga!" (1)

II. *The Regalia.*

643 Kings everywhere like to adorn themselves with specially imposing objects, insignia of their office, which differentiate them from their subjects. The Thonga chiefs have no peculiar crown — the shidlodlo belonging to all adults (p. 129)—, no special garment, no sceptre and no throne. We sometimes translate by the word throne *shilubelo* viz., the place where one *luba*, pays the tax; but this is only a hut smaller than the others and subjects can also possess it. (See page 313). However there are, in some of these small kingdoms, royal objects which may be called regalia (bukosi bya hosi).

643/301 Amongst the Nkunas, the chief possesses a large copper bracelet called *ritlatla*, which was bought a very long time ago, in Lourenço Marques, by the Nkuna clan in exchange for tusks of elephants, says Mankhelu. According to others, the ritlatla was made in old times by Natives from the copper, or perhaps from the gold dug by them. The ritlatla was in the hands of the elder branch of the Nkuna clan; Hoshana was its headman, but he had fled into the Ñwamba country during the troubled period of 1855 to 1860. When he died, his people brought the ritlatla to the chief Shiluvane who belonged to a younger branch, thinking that, at his death, the ritlatla together with the chieftainship would be given back to

643/681 (1) Kidd, in his *Kafir Socialism*, has asserted that Bantu chiefs are very jealous and kill their subjects when they become too rich and thus overshadow them. This may be the case in other tribes or when a military government has taken the place of the old patriarchal system. Amongst the Thongas it is not true. My informants could not quote a single instance of a murder committed by a chief for that reason alone. I heard of Shiluvane killing a subject called Muhluhlumi who had acquired too much power; but Muhluhlumi had declared that he wanted to usurp the chieftainship; so it was a case of high treason! A rich nduna, in the territory of Nhandja (Nondwane), was also killed and his oxen taken by the chief because he had tried to abduct one of the chief's wives. But many headmen had as many oxen as Maphunga and were not troubled by him on that account: "Why should he hate them? They could not harm him, as he was protected by the supernatural powers, and they brought him all the more beer as they had plenty of wives and consequently of mealies!"

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643 301 them. But they were disappointed in their hope : Shiluvane kept both the ritlatla and the power and bequeathed them to his son, Muhlaba, as we shall see. Legends are current about the ritlatla. It is said to be able to move of its own will. "This piece of metal is indeed a wonderful thing," wrote a young Nkuna, to me "because when it is buried in the soil, as black people are in the habit of doing with their treasures, a piece of iron must be put inside it to prevent it from going away; if this precaution is not taken, the ritlatla may leave the place where it was and go somewhere else. In the space of one year, it may go as far as the Masetana spruit (about one mile)."

643 Another royal property of the Nkuna family was an *elephant's tusk*, which vanquished enemies had brought as a token of their submission.

643 302 787 In Nondwana, the old chief Papele who preceded Maphunga and lived in the middle of the last century, wore a *kind of chignon* or bun made by plaiting his hair, which was a sign of royalty (shifoko). But this custom has passed away. There was also *a long stick* which was kept exposed to the smoke of the royal fire in the sacred hut of *nyokwekulu*, which I shall describe presently, and which was called *ntjobo* and also *mhamba*, viz., offering; this was evidently of religious value to the clan, and was taken outside when the army assembled. It possessed the power of becoming invisible to enemies. Moreover this magical stick was very useful because it warned the clan when some danger was threatening. The ntjobo was then put into a fire; if it did not burn, this showed that the clan had nothing to fear from its enemies ; if it burned, it meant that the clan would be attacked and defeated. Then another stick would be prepared and put into the fire with the hope that it would resist it.

643 778 We shall speak in Part VI of another sacred *mhamba* which most of the Thonga clans possessed, made of the nails and hair of the deceased chiefs in the Tembe clan, and of the dried skin of their faces in the Shirindja clan. It was used as a means of propitiation in national calamities. In the Khosen country, the chief also possessed the *mhamba*. This was a mysterious object which the clan had always possessed, from time immemorial, from the beginning

643 "when the Ba-Khosa had emerged from the reed" (See Vol. II,
604 Part VI, III). Nobody might see it except the chief, who kept it
778 hidden somewhere in a hole amongst the rocks. His uterine nephew alone (ntukulu) knew the place, and when it was necessary to use it in order to pray to the deceased chiefs, the chief and his nephew alone were permitted to approach the hiding place ; those
643 who accompanied them had to stop at a distance. This mhamba
778 is lost. Even the chief Ntshongi, who was the paramount chief of
789 the Ba-Khosa at the beginning of this century, had never seen it. It had been taken by his predecessor Mavabaze and had disappeared during the political troubles of the Gungunyana's war. Thus it is impossible to say of what it consisted, and this will probably never be known. There is no doubt however, that it was used for the same purpose as the mhamba of the Tembe and Shirindja. Its magical and religious power came from the fact that it was anointed with the "nsila" of the deceased chiefs. On the death of a chief, his "nsila" i. e. the layer of filth resting on his body, was taken away and the mhamba was rubbed with it. This gave the reigning
[769] chief the power to influence his ancestor-gods, in accordance with the magic principle : the part influences the whole. It is said that in former times the Khosa chief Shihanyisane having ill-treated his two younger brothers, Malashwane and Shalati, these two men succeeded in taking the chieftainship away from him with the aid of the Ñwamba clan. Eventually Shihanyisane made peace with his brothers and gave over the mhamba to Malashwane : a proof that this mysterious object was in truth considered as the most important attribute of chieftainship.

643 These regalia are not in[illegible] very imposing to the eye. Thonga
789 royalty had no brilliant insignia... But it had more than that!
751 Each clan possessed a special medicine whose magical virtues were greatly esteemed ; its possession made the chief invincible, the warriors invulnerable, the country unconquerable. This powerful charm is called *mbhulo* (Dj.), *mphulo* (Ro.).

Amongst the Nkunas, the mbhulo is called *Ñwantikalala*. It is kept by those belonging to the Mushwane house, and a man called Papalati is responsible for it. It consists of four calabashes, two male and two female (medicines are considered as having sex,

643 789 751 see Part VI) called Madyakakulu, Ñwahondyane, Mbengatamilomu, Masemane. The bones are always consulted to ascertain which calabash (nhungubane) must be employed. The uses of this medicine are as follows. Every year it is mixed with the first fruits in the ceremony of *luma*, which will be described later on. In war time the mbhulo is employed to "fence the country." Envoys go to all the drifts on the boundary, take stones out of the river, smear them with the magical powder and place them on the roads, at the crossways ; should enemies invade the country, they will be deprived of their strength. The weapons also are sprinkled with a decoction made of this royal medicine, as we shall see, and it 643 687 is given to the chief to prevent disease. The father of Papalati was accused of having sold some of this powerful national drug to the Pedi chief Sikororo, an act which amounted to high treason.

643 I have been fortunate enough to be informed of all the rites connected with the royal medicine in the Marwaya clan. There, it is called *nyokwekulu*, a word which is probably derived from the verb ku nyuka, to melt. Let Mboza tell us, with awe and profound conviction, of the marvels of this wonderful drug. He was present at its preparation in the year 1893, before the war scattered the clan and destroyed its military power.

644 789 Each year the nyokwekulu is renewed. Its exact composition is known only to one man, Godlela, the royal magician and priest, to whom the care of preparing it is entrusted. This man belongs to the house, or sub-clan, of Tlhatlha. He is very much feared. Nobody dares to dispute with him, and he has the right of cursing even the chief. His function is *hereditary*. His father Malubatilo was in charge of the nyokwekulu before him. The law of succession is this ; when the elder brother dies, the position is held by his younger brother. The headmen of the tribe box his ears and say to him : "You will be the master of the medicine! Take great care of it." When all the brothers are dead, it passes to the sons.

So, when the right time of the year has come, the chief consults the bones. The first thing to do is to send messengers all over the country to find a *forked branch*, a "shiphandje," to which the calabash containing the medicines will be hung.

643 789 The royal drug, having been burnt, is reduced to powder and this powder is poured into the calabashes. The forked branch is planted in the sacred hut, which I shall shortly describe, and the calabashes hung upon it. Each sub-chief receives a calabash and takes it to his kraal, where it will help the district in which he reigns to perform the *luma* ceremony. But the greater part of the powder remains at the capital. There it will be used not only for the luma, and for the sprinkling of the warriors (see Chapter IV), but also for two other purposes : 1) for the protection of the country by means of the wooden pegs ; 2) for the filling up of the magical horn.

1) *The wooden pegs* (timhiko). A certain day is fixed for planting the forked branch in the house where the great medicine is kept. Then the doctor, accompanied by some members of the royal family, steals out secretly during the night and goes to the crossways, to the strategic points on the borders of the Mazwaya territory. It is taboo for anyone to meet with the party. He plants wooden pegs, and smears them with the powder. As soon as they have been smeared, they become invisible. No one can see them nor tear them out except Godlela. They do not rot. White ants do not attack them. The country is fenced by them.

Should there be any dispute as regards the boundaries of the country, Godhlela will be called. At once the pegs which were invisible appear ; they come out as much as a foot above the ground. If a hostile army was approaching, it will turn back at once, seized with fear at the sight of these pegs.

789 825 787 2) *The magical horn*. The remainder of the powder is mixed with a special kind of honey, the honey made by the small black bee called *mbonga*. This bee makes a large spherical nest deep in the ground. Natives have a number of superstitions regarding it. They say the mbonga honey may be eaten by anybody, but it is only members of certain families who can see the nest and dig for it. For other people it is invisible. (See Part VI.) The Ngwetsa family, in Rikatla, was one of the favoured ones! It must be said that the hole through which the mbonga bees penetrate into the soil is in truth very small and escapes the notice

789 of most people! This honey comes from below. It is a hidden,
823 a mysterious thing. A little of it is added to the drug and the
787 mixture is poured into a double horn, viz., two horns whose large ends are firmly fixed to each other, the point where they meet being carefully covered with dung, which acts as glue. A hole has been made in the upper horn and the drug is introduced through this. It is a great means of divination. When war is imminent, the nyokwekulu begins to ferment, and exudes through the hole: "It knows all about war." So the country can prepare for it. No wonder that this powerful medicine is preserved with superstitious awe and the greatest care.

643 A place of honour is reserved for the magical horn in the
595 hut of the first wife of the chief. In the middle of the hearth
372 a perpetual fire burns; it must never be allowed to go out; it
824 is taboo. The wood used for it must be that of a tree found on the sea shore, and called ntjobori. The Makaneta sub-clan must furnish it regularly. It is taboo to take embers from this fireplace, which is called the royal fire, the medicinal fire (ndjilo wa buhosi, wa muri). Should the principal wife let the fire go out, then Godlela must be called on to light it again, rubbing together two sticks of a shrub called ntjopfa. The fire produced by burning this shrub is considered dangerous. It is taboo to cut its branches or to use them for the purpose of warming oneself; the genitalia are said to swell when this law is transgressed (See Part IV). But Godlela does not fear; has he not his drugs to protect himself? He can and must use ntjopfa to re-light the nyokwekulu fire, and he will be given a good reward for his work! The ntjobori, in burning, produces an abundant smoke which leaves a deposit on the horn, on the forked branch and on all the calabashes containing the provision of powder.

643 The queen Mimpanyanhoba who was in charge of the
372 nyokwekulu had no sexual relations with the chief on that account.
595 I do not know if absolute continence is always enforced on the
784 keeper of the sacred fire, as was the case for the Roman Vestal Virgins. But I have been told by Mboza that this woman prevented her co-wives from coming near her hut; it was taboo.

643 The grass of the roof of this hut must never be removed, though
784 it may rot owing to the rains. It is taboo. One simply puts
356 a layer of new grass over the old one, a thing which is rarely done in the case of ordinary roofs.

643 In case of war, should the clan be obliged to leave the country,
789 a special little hut is hastily built in the bush and the precious medicine is deposited therein. There is no fear that the enemy
722 will take it, either Whites or Natives, because this hut also has the attribute of invisibility. This happened during the war of 1894 (1). In the case of the *mhamba* of the Tembe and Zihlahla clans it is different; the man who keeps it must run away with it and with the chief.

643 Such are the laws of the mphulo. This great medicine may
789 certainly be regarded as a part of the regalia, and the most important part. It is, for the chief and sub-chiefs, a means of strengthening their authority, as will be seen in the description of the luma rite. On the other hand the mphulo is a collective possession, the powerful magic means by which the clan resists its enemies or conquers them. It occupies the very centre of the national life.

789 In the Manyisa clan the war-medicine is called *mabophe*, and is
726 kept by a man called Chikiza, who belongs to the Ntjeko clan, not
643 to the royal family. He is said to have inherited it from his
787 forefathers. The medicine however belongs to the chief. It is administered as follows. The *ñanga* prepares small heaps of wood on the road, pours a little of the drug over them, sets fire to them and the warriors tread on the embers and extinguish the fire with their feet. This makes them invulnerable or at least protects them against fatal wounds. When they are ready to start for battle, the bones are thrown, and give the following intimation:
643 "Do not kill the first enemy you meet with, but catch him alive, be
789 it a man or a woman, and bring him to the chief." The chief, accompanied by some indumas, must stab him outside the royal
726 kraal; the body of the deceased enemy will then be cut open, and

(1) In the Nondwane the nyokwekulu is still kept by the heir of Maphunga, Magomanyana. The new chief, the usurper, tried to find it, but Godlela refused to give it to him. Thus Mabvasha has no *mphulo*.

789 the fat collected in order to mix it with the war medicine, the flesh
726 being left to the dogs to eat and destroy.

In some clans, chiefs possess *other personal charms* which are
643 very much dreaded and called *psitjemba*. So, in the Maluleke
789 clan, each of the children of the ancient chief Mashakadzi received
237 from him one of these psitjemba. It consists of a part of the skull of a child, the top of the head, where the pulse is seen beating at the fontanella. This has been smeared with the vitreous humour taken from the eyes of lions or elephants, and powders made from the skins of wild beasts. The possession of this charm gives the chief a supernatural power. If, being irritated with you, he invokes his gods by sucking it and emits the sacramental tsu, he can call on any wild beast he likes to kill you... He has sacrified with the psitjemba ; you will die!

643 Some chiefs of the Northern clans used to *swallow one of the*
787 *stones* found in the stomach of a crocodile. It is said that
825 crocodiles, when cut open, are found to contain a certain number of stones, as they are supposed to eat one each year, when the rainy season comes on. One of them is chosen and smeared with special medicines and swallowed by the chief. Natives firmly believe that this stone remains in the body of the chief, and that it is "his head, his life" (Viguet). When it is passed in his stools the first time, this is a premonitory warning. When it occurs a second time, it is a clear announcement that the chief is about to die. So chiefs can always know when their time is near. In other clans the crocodile stone is replaced by what is called *ndjalama*. Amongst Nkunas this word designates a kind of bright copper button, which the Pedis of the Palaora mine used to make and sell. But ndjalama also means large sized beads. Whatever it is, some chiefs swallowed the ndjalama and were warned by it of their death. This object, as well as the crocodile stone, is taboo for subjects to swallow. They would die. It is "buloyi bya hosi" — "the magical power of the chief."

643 On account of these powerful and dangerous charms possessed
619 by them, chiefs of different clans regarded it as a taboo to stay in each other's company ; they were afraid lest they might be killed by the magical power of their colleagues. Maphunga

643/619 seems to have been particularly feared. He had even bought poison from white people and is said to have killed his rival, Musongi, chief of the Maputju clan, with whom he fought the battle of Malangotiba in 1870. He sent a woman of bad life to Maputju. The woman succeeded in winning the confidence of the king and poured this poison into his glass. Nowadays the Ronga chiefs have been taught by the Authorities to sit in council when discussing matters.

643 The two principal prerogatives of the chief are the right of *luma* and taxation.

III. *The right of luma, and the first fruits rites.*

181/241 We come to a set of rites which might be dealt with when considering the Agricultural life, but I prefer to describe them here, as they provide us with a typical illustration of the constitution of the clan ; they are highly characteristic of the Bantu community, a community which is essentially agricultural in its pursuits, animistic in its beliefs, and hierarchic as regards its social and national life.

643/262/784/527/241 We have already met with the word *luma* and noticed that its ordinary meaning is *to bite* ; its ritual sense is to *remove the injurious character of a given food by a certain ceremony*. The luma is a necessity before eating the flesh of certain wild beasts, as we shall see when studying the laws of hunting (See Part IV). But it is of still more importance, and one of the great laws of the clan, that the official luma shall take place before the subjects eat the products of the new year. There seem to be two ideas at the root of this strange taboo :

1) To eat certain kinds of food is dangerous for one's health, and the first mouthful taken must be seasoned with the royal drug.

2) The gods, the chief, and elder brothers, have a prior right to enjoy the products of the soil. To precede them in doing this is a sin which would bring them misfortune. The hierarchy must be absolutely respected.

643 The law of luma seems to have applied to all kinds of food
262 in former times. Nowadays it is not observed for the following
171 products : maize, Kafir beans and peas, rice, sorghum, water
527 melons (makalabatla) and monkey nuts. It is partly observed
241 for mafureira almonds (tihuhlu), strychnos paste (fuma) and pumpkin leaves (magawane). It is strongly enforced for black Kafir corn and bukanye. Such is at any rate the case in the four clans of Nondwane, Mabota, Ñwamba and Tembe. Amongst the Zulus and Swazis on the contrary, I have been told people luma maize and do not luma kafir corn. Kafir corn is probably the most ancient cereal amongst the Ba-Thonga, and bukanye has always existed in the country. This is perhaps the reason why these luma rites, which bear a very old character, are still applied to these products to the exclusion of other more modern cereals.

I. *The luma without a religious ceremony.*

631 Let us first study the less ritualistic kind of luma, the luma
262 of the *mafureira almond*, for instance. It is practised in each
643 sub-chief's village, and, though it is tending to become obsolete,
527 it is still enforced by some "tihosana." Thus my neighbour in Rikatla, Habele, the hosana placed by Mobvesha over this part of the territory, met some time ago a boy who was eating these almonds, the description of which I shall give later on.— "Who gave them to you ?" asked Habele... The child kept silent.—"Come with me to your parents!" Having found their home, the sub-chief scolded them severely : "You have started sucking (munya) the almonds before us. You wanted to kill my head ? Pay a fine!" They answered :-"The birds made them fall from the tree... The children were not guilty!" However they had to pay 500 reis.

262 The luma of almonds, which takes place in December, when
643 they are ripe, is performed in the following way. The almonds
527 are dipped into a small calabash full of water to soften them. Some of the powder of the nyokwekulu is added to them. The headman first takes some for himself and then distributes them to his people. They suck the almonds, take in their hands the part

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which is not eaten, and rub their faces with it. But *no religious ceremony is performed*. It is the same for the *fuma*, a paste made with the contents of the kwakwa fruit, a kind of Strychnos very similar to the nsala, but of a different taste. The ceremony was even more simple than with the almonds ; the chief used to send a little of this paste to each village saying : "Let this be the first bite you swallow : the new year has come!" (Luman, ku tlhese nguba.) No powder was used in connexion with it. The magical drug was used, on the other hand, when the luma of pumpkin leaves took place.

II. *The luma of the Kafir corn.*

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The great, the official luma, amongst the Ronga clans, is that performed for the Kafir corn (mabele). The great wife of the chief grinds the first grains of Kafir corn reaped in the fields. She cooks the flour in a pot and pours into it some of the royal powder kept in the calabash, so as to make a *shimhimbi* (See page 42). The chief takes a little of the food and offers it to the spirits of his ancestors, at the main entrance of the royal kraal. He prays to them in the following terms : "Here has the new year come! Precede us, you gods, and luma, so that, for us also, Kafir corn shall help our body, that we may become fat, not thin, that the witches may increase the corn, make it to be plentiful, so that, even if there is only a small field, big baskets may be filled! (Nguba hi yoleyi! Rangan ñwine, mi luma, ñwi Psikwembu! Na hine, mabele ma tjhama amirin yeru psinene, hi kuluka hi nga wondji. Abaloyi ba yandjisa, psi tala ngopfu, nambi shi shisiñwanyana shi shiñwe, a ku tale tingula!)"

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After this religious ceremony everyone luma in turn, the chief first, then the sub-chiefs, then the counsellors, then the warriors who have killed enemies in battle, then the headmen of the kraals who have all been summoned to the capital. Should one of the headmen be prevented from coming by illness, his younger brother will not precede him. He will bring him the *shimhimbi* in a leaf ; the elder will take it, and, after him, the other brothers. Women do not eat the magic powder. Neither do strangers,

262 even those who are settled in the clan. They have their own
643 medicine and luma for themselves, though they must not do it
609 before the chief of the country.
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III. *The luma of bukanye and the great national feast.*

137 The most characteristic of all these ceremonies connected with
273 the first fruits is the luma of bukanyi. Tobane has given me a
796 circumstantial description of this feast and it deserves to be
824 reproduced in all its details, as being a typical manifestation of Bantu national life.

The *nkanye* (1) is a large tree, one of the finest in the country. Its botanical name is Sclerocarya caffra (Sond); it is generally known amongst the English of Natal as the Kafir plum.

It bears fruit of the size of a greengage, which when ripe is a beautiful golden yellow and has a strong flavour of turpentine and a penetrating odour. It is a dioecian tree, the male bearing bunches of flowers while the female has single flowers. The Natives are quite aware of this; they cut down the male plants but take care to keep a few in each district to fecundate the female. The fruit — the kanye — begins to ripen in the month of January and falls to the ground. The odour is perceptible everywhere, and it is then that the principal men of the country approach the chief and say to him: "The time has come to luma."

In the luma of the bukanye it is easy to discover four consecutive ceremonies:

a) The luma of the gods and of the chief.

262 The first ripe makanye are gathered and pressed at the capital,
782 and the sour liquor thus obtained is poured out on the tomb of the deceased chiefs in the sacred wood; they are invoked to
273 bless this new year and the feast which is about to be celebrated.
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(1) Nkanye, plural minkanye, is the tree in question. Kanye, plural makanye, is the fruit of this tree; bukanye is the drink made from this fruit. In the same way the wild apricot tree is called mphimbi, plural mimphimbi. The fruit himbi, plural malimbi; the drink made from the fruit, buhimbi.

796 gait, brandishing sticks with pieces of red cloth attached as
273 pennants. They are in search of full barrels! It must be said
786 that the inebriety produced by the bukanye is of a rather mild type, as this Native beer contains very little alcohol; but the quantity absorbed is so enormous that it ends by going to their heads: this is more especially so with the bukanye brewed from a species of nkanye called *nunge*, which appears to be stronger and more intoxicating.

796 How far does sexual licence go during the bukanye? Not to
273 the point of general promiscuity, as amongst the Ba-Pedi after the circumcision school. However many cases of adultery occur.
833 Men and women forget the elementary rules of condvet. They
786 attend to the wants of nature in the same places, which is taboo under ordinary circumstances: "Nau a wa ha tiyi,"—"the law is no longer in force."

796 Still, in the midst of all this carnival, the payment of the tax
273 must not be forgotten... This is the time to carry to the chief the liquor which is flowing so freely on all sides, but of which
643 he claims the lion's share. Each petty chief sends his people
637 to the capital with brimming jars. This is termed "lumisa hosi," supplying the chief with new wine. The women do not enter the capital at once, but go to one of the counsellors, who promptly abstracts a couple of jars for his own use. The chief returns one or two jars to the carriers, as they have come a long way and are doubtless thirsty; the remainder will be kept to refresh the very numerous guests at the Court; any coming from afar will spend the night and not return until the next day. I have seen a company of these women carrying baskets
539 full of makanye to Muzila. How graceful was the Indian file winding its way along the path and singing, amongst others, the following chorus: (See for further particulars *Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, page 46.)

Chwe! Chwe! Hi laba shimungu — Leshi ka — Le tilwen!
Chwe! Chwe! Shimungu hi mani? — Hi Mzila! — Hi Mzila!
Hi! Hi! We seek the hawk! — Who soars — In the sky!
Hi! Hi! Who is the hawk? — It is Mzila! — It is Mzila!

539 There is quite a collection of these carriers' songs praising the chiefs. Mzila (or Muzila), whom we saw a short time back scaring sparrows, is here compared to the mythical lightning bird, to the hawk that swoops down from the clouds. (See Part VI.) Why does he not once for all annihilate the sparrows which pillage his fields of sorghum ? But this is poetry! and there is often a wide gap between poetry and reality!

d) The feasting of the chief in the villages.

796 The fourth and final act of the bukanye feasting in which, as we
273 have seen, the chief plays a prominent part, is the *nsungi* which
643 may be called the "fin de saison" orgy. The chief now returns the visits of his subjects and casks of beer are prepared for him in every village. Dancing and singing are in full swing. He is fêted and acclaimed! But the makanye are getting over-ripe ; a new month, a new moon is at hand, which is called *sibandlela* "she who closes the roads ;" the paths leading to the foot of the trees become almost impassable, owing to the grass which grows to an incredible height during the rains prevailing at this season. The fine weather is over. Winter is knocking at the door.

796 Amongst the Nkunas the luma ceremony called "to eat the
789 new year" (dyaka ñwaka) is performed with a special pumpkin
643 (kwembe) cooked at the capital together with the medicine used
262 for rain-making. The chief first eats of it in the evening and
821 makes the sign of a cross on the big drum, which is then beaten to call the people in his village. Then all the men come, bringing the little horns in which they keep the rain medicine (See Part VI). They eat a little and smear the rim of these horns with the medicine ; the horns also must "eat the new year." Then everybody can enjoy the products of the harvest. Should anyone precede the chief, this would be fatal to the latter or make him ill... Such is the testimony of Mankhelu. I suspect these rites to have been influenced by the proximity of the Ba-Pedi. "Now we have no longer any first fruits' feast (mulumo)," says Mankhelu with some melancholy. "White people have killed it. Everybody

262 eats freely in his house according to his good pleasure. Formerly
821 we used to take the oxen of the man who had dared to steal the
796 new year."

Conclusion on the luma rite.

796 All these luma rites[1] of first fruits seem to have primarily a *religious*
782 *origin*. The Bantus do not feel that they dare enjoy the products of
534 the soil unless they have first given a portion of them to their gods.
Is it not these gods who make the cereals grow ? Have they not the power even of controlling the wizards who bewitch the fields ? These rites are also evidently dictated by the *sense of hierarchy*. A subject must not precede his chief nor a younger brother the elder in the use of the new harvest, else they would kill those in authority. Such an act is against order. We shall see that, even when the seeds are sown, the elders must take precedence. But the custom seems also to have been actuated by the idea of *passage*. There is a passage from one year to another. For the Thongas, I think the new year begins
805 twice every year : it begins when tilling recommences, in July, August,
796 when the heat returns. This is the hlobo. It begins a second time at
789 harvest, and then there is passage from the food of the last year to the food of this year. This is the nguba (Ro.) or ñwaka (Dj.). Though the luma rites do not bear all the characteristics of a true passage rite, like those of circumcision or moving, we may observe in the luma of bukanye a kind of marginal period of general licence, when the ordinary laws are more or less suspended. The taking of a first mouthful probably signifies the aggregation to the new period, the magical powder used on this occasion being a protective measure to shield them from the calamities of this unknown year... And after all, is it not that feeling of fear which so easily takes possession of the heart of man when entering on a new state and starting something fresh, which has led the savage to surround the use of the first fruit with so many ritual precautions ?

IV. *Taxation.*

643 The chief governs (fuma). *Fuma* means to command, but also to live in plenty, to be rich. The subject (nandja, follower) obeys ; he follows the chief who marches before him just as the

1 [see pp. 394-404 in these categories c. in 116-Analysis]

643 wife in the path follows her husband who walks at his ease, with
651 his stick in his hand, whilst she carries his belongings in her basket
641 on her head... If the prerogative of the chief is to live in abundance, the duty of the subject is to pay taxes! This duty is expressed by the word *luba* (Dj.), *hlenga* (Ro.). It is so true that this is the principal function of the subject that, when a man leaves his clan and goes to live in another clan, he comes to the chief and says : "I want to *luba* or *nkonza* (a word borrowed by the Rongas from the Zulus), to pay the tax..." This is the proper way of making his submission.

643 The explanation of the rites of the first fruits throws much light on the Bantu conception of the chief's position in respect to his subjects. For them he is certainly endowed with the divine right more fully than the King or the Kaiser in any European country ; he is the *son* of the gods, not only their protégé... The gods are the lords of everything... He shares this lordship with them. Hence his right of taxing his subjects. On the other hand we saw that he is the *soil*! He is more than Lewis XIV, who could say: "L'État c'est moi!" The Bantu chief can say : "I am the earth! — Le sol c'est moi!" Hence, on the part of the subjects, the duty of sharing with him the products of the soil and also of their hunting.

643 The Thonga chief taxes his subjects in four different ways :
651 he takes a regular portion of the harvest ; he claims a part of
241 most of the wild beasts killed ; he makes his people work for him ;
273 he also taxes the revenue of those who go away to work for the Whites. A fifth source of his revenue is found in the fines imposed in judicial cases.

1. As regards *taxation of the products of the soil*, it consists in a basket (shihundju) of mealies contributed by each village at harvest time. This is the regular taxation. Moreover those who brew a great quantity of beer for a feast always send some jars to the chief, especially when the season of tilling the fields or threshing the grain has come. This is not a regular tax, at least amongst the Ba-Ronga, and is considered as *moshobo*, an act of civility, and not as *hlenga* proper. Bukanye must be brought to the capital in great quantities during the great national feast.

643 651 In the Northern clans it seems that these payments in kind called *shirwalo* (carrying of beer, from ku rwala, to carry), are expected from all those who are not hunters and bring no meat to the capital.

643 651 204 825 2. The right of the chief *over wild beasts killed in hunting* is not the same for all game. Rhinoceros is not taxed ; it is even taboo to bring its meat to the chief. On the contrary when a man has killed a wild buffalo, an elan, a giraffe or an antelope, he must first cut some joints for the chief. If it is a panther or a lion, he must give up the skin ; if an elephant, the tusk which scratched the soil when it fell belongs to the chief ; it is "the tusk of the soil," and the chief is "the soil." The other tusk is for the hunter (ndlayi). In the Maputju country, it was even forbidden to kill elephants. Ngwanazi, the chief who was deported in 1896, had reserved the monopoly of elephant hunting for himself and his warriors. The hippopotamus is taxed more heavily than any other beast. The hunter who has succeeded in killing one has not the right of cutting it open. Should he do so, it would be considered a serious offence. He might be put to death. (Mankhelu.) He must at once send word to the capital, and the men of the Court will come immediately and cut up the animal, taking half the joints to the chief. As for the crocodile, it must also be opened by the men of the Court, because it contains many things such as marvellous stones used in magic, and bracelets of the women whom it has devoured. The chief appropriates what he pleases amongst these objects.

643 466 3. *Statute labour* is one of the main revenues of the royal kraal. In some cases, subjects must come to the capital, led by their sub-chiefs, and till a field for the chief or rather for the queen who has been bought with the nation's money. In Nondwane, which is a large country, each of the sub-clans must till a field for the wives of the chief in its own territory. For instance, in each of the districts of Mapulangu, Bandi, Manuel, Maghebeza, Malwan, Hlangunyingin, the chief Mubvesha possessed a royal field which his subjects weeded and harvested every year, and the sub-chief Habele, who was in charge of those districts, had to gather the mealies and carry them to the capital. This official tilling is done

643/466 in the form of a *djimo*. (See Part IV.) Moreover the young men are always at the disposal of the chief to clean his public square, build his huts, repair the thatched roofs of the royal kraal and organise hunting expeditions for him.

643 651 4. But the greater part of the royal revenue consists now in *money* which the chief receives from his subjects. Mubvesha taxes each village a sum of 500 reis besides the regular basket of mealies. At the end of the bukanye feast, each village must send him another 500 reis to notify him that the feast is ended. When a young man returns from Johannesburg having made enough money to lobola a wife, he must leave £ 1.10.0 in the hands of the chief. The latter also recruits boys whom he sends to the recruiting agents, getting as much as £ 1 or £ 1.10.0 per head. When a sub-chief dies, his people inform the paramount chief of his death, bringing a sum of money (1500 reis). The chief, however, does not receive any portion of the inheritance in the case of a death. There is no taxation on the succession.

643 651 681 5. A great deal of money comes into the hands of the chief *owing to fines which he imposes* when acting as supreme judge. When a plaintiff brings a case and the culprit is condemned to pay him £ 25, Mubvesha keeps £ 10 for himself ; he retains £ 5 if the fine is £ 10.

643 631 651 Sub-chiefs do not tax their subjects as a rule. They must bring to their superior all the products of taxation. They do not "eat" anything. But in some cases the chief gives them a part of it. Thus Habele, sub-chief of Rikatla, used to "eat" half of the taxes brought to him by young men coming back from Johannesburg.

V. *Dangers and difficulties of the Chieftainship.*

643 554 Endowed with supernatural power which he owes to his magical medicines, feared and sometimes loved by his subjects, with plenty to eat and richer than any of his people, who readily consent to be taxed, the chief occupies an enviable position. The chieftainship (buhosi), therefore, is very much sought after and no

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

643 538 177 554 one refuses to be a chief. Thonga tales recounting the story of some one who succeeded wonderfully in life often conclude by saying that this person was given a territory and became a chief... which seems to be the highest reward of virtue or wisdom. Nowadays, however, one may meet with cases where the heir to the chieftainship, having become a Christian, renounces that high position because he feels that there is an incompatibility between the Bantu way of ruling and his new faith.

643 But it would be a great error to think that a Thonga chief is, or can be, an autocratic despot. This may have been the case with Chaka, Lobengula or Gungunyana, when the tribe became an amalgamation of clans held together by military power ; in order to maintain their usurped authority, these chiefs had to be cruel despots. But this is a late development in the Bantu political system. I am now only taking into consideration the primitive form of tribal life, which is the clan life.

For a chief dangers may arise from three sources : from his own character, from the Thonga system of government itself, and from the law of succession.

1) The character of the chief.

A chief who wishes to succeed in his government *must have a good character*. If he imposes taxation, he must not use his wealth in a selfish way. For instance, when women bring him a *shiriwalo* of a dozen pots of beer, he must give them back one or two to quench their thirst. Moreover he must distribute most of the remaining pots to his men, who are on the *bandla*, always ready to share with him the advantages of his position.

Should he buy oxen with the product of the fines, he will be wise to slaughter one from time to time for his counsellors and for the whole clan. A chief who is good (a ni timpsalu) is said to *maintain* or to *save the country* (bekisa tiko). If he does not do that, he is severely criticised. Mubvesha, who used all his money to buy wives, and prevented all the men from seeing them, whilst he himself was too old to content them, was considered

643 a bad chief. He did not even allow "bandla," viz, the gathering of men in the capital, because he was full of jealousy (mona). If he had not been placed in the chieftainship and supported by the White Government, he might have been deposed. Cases in which a chief has been deprived of his right and replaced by another man are not wanting (1). I have even heard of a chief in the Shiridja clan who was put to death. Deposal is generally proclaimed by a council of the royal family.

To reign over a Bantu clan requires much tact, ability and patience. The chief must be a father to his people and not a tyrant (2).

2) The system of government.

643 595 In order to keep in touch with his subjects, a chief generally places his wives in the various provinces of his little kingdom

(1) The annals of the Nkuna tribe provide an instance of the deposal not only of a certain chief but of the elder branch of the royal family, owing to an act which hurt the human feelings of the clan. We have already met with the name of Shithlelana, son of Nkuna, who lived at least 300 years ago. His principal wife was Ñwahubyana. In his old age he was very ill and the woman, fearing lest he should die in her hut, drove him away; he was obliged to take refuge in the hut of another of his wives, Ñwantimba, mother of Rinono, and died there. Then the headmen assembled and said: "As Ñwahubyana has driven away her husband from her hut, she has also driven away the chieftainship from her son. He shall not reign. Rinono shall reign because he is the son of the woman who took care of the sick chief." This story, in which we see the sacred law of succession transgressed for a moral reason, is most interesting because it provides a good illustration of the conception of the clan regarding chieftainship, and proves that, even in ancient times, feelings of humanity could have more weight with the tribe than an article of the royal code.

643 524 (2) Two interesting Thonga riddles illustrate this disposition to criticise chiefs. The first riddle enigmatically describes the characteristics of an unworthy chief; it comes from the banks of the Limpopo:

Bupas ga shisule. — Hosi leyi i ni mona...
Sonse cyclamen flour. — This chief is full of hatred...

The shisule — a word which I translate by cyclamen — is a plant which grows on the ant-hills, bearing large tubercles; these can be cooked and ground into flour; but it is only good in appearance. the taste is unpleasant and nauseating. This chief is bad! He is like that flour! Corruptio optimi pessima!

Here is another riddle which holds the chiefs up to ridicule rather wittily:

Tinindji tibiri ti rendjeleka tchuka. — Tihosi tibiri ti hleba nandja.
Two mice chase one another round an ant-hill (They will never meet)
— Two chiefs malign a subject. (They also will never meet, i. e. agree.)

Each wants to have the last word and will therefore depreciate the arguments of his opponent. He will seek to disprove the statements of the other chief, making fresh ones which the latter will seek to refute in his turn!

643/595 and pays them regular visits, staying some days in these secondary capitals.

643/631/171 But a more effective way of holding the country is to place his son or his near relatives as sub-chiefs in all these districts. If the son is still young, the chief will send along with him a trustworthy counsellor to watch over him. Thus, when he dies, and when the elder son is called to the succession, the new chief will have his brothers as co-chiefs or sub-chiefs. Should they be ambitious, should they have acquired some power during the last years of their father's government, they may refuse to obey and proclaim themselves independent. This has happened many times amongst the Rongas. Let me shortly recapitulate the three instances already mentioned. In the Tembe kingdom Maputju, who "ate the foreleg," made himself king of the greater part of the territory. The separated brothers became fierce enemies and often fought against each other, all the more as Tembe greatly resented the revolt of Maputju, and Maputju knew he had not been fair to his elder brother (p. 329). The same thing happened when Matjolo became independent of Mpfumo, his elder brother ; both were sons of Nhlaruti. The origin of the war of 1894-1896 was the same ; Mubvesha, belonging to the Hlewana branch of the Mazwaya family, wished to become independent... even to take the chieftainship from the elder branch to which Maphunga and his successor Mahazule belonged.

So the Thonga clan has a tendency to fall to pieces, just like the Thonga village, and it requires a good deal of firmness and diplomacy on the part of a chief to keep his kingdom intact.

3) The law of succession.

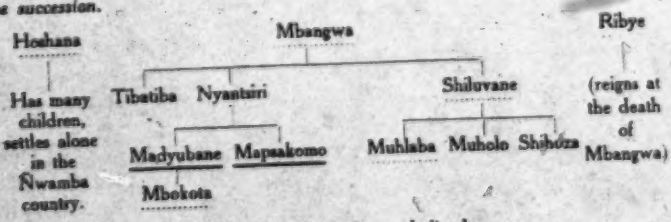
643 Its main provision is this ; when a chief dies, his elder son is the regular heir, but all his younger brothers must reign before the son, the true heir, is crowned. This system attempts to reconcile two principles which we have already met with as governing the family life : 1) the absolute preeminent right of the elder branch, 2) the community of property amongst brothers.

643 But whilst they may be reconciled in ordinary life, these two principles become antagonistic when carried into politics, and this law of succession has been the source of endless disturbances amongst the Thonga clans. It is true that the younger brothers of the chief, when taking his place, are looked on more or less as princes regent, holding office on behalf of their nephew, who is the lawful heir to the throne. They are said to "make him grow" (kurisa) to "keep his tumbler" (hlayisa ndyelo).

But if the former chief died in youth, and if his younger brother has lived and reigned for a long time, and has become very popular, he is very much tempted to appropriate the chieftainship for his own family and to order the tribe to crown his son, to the exclusion of the son of the first chief, who belonged to the elder branch, but who has been more or less forgotten during all these years. This leads to conflicts and fighting. The lawful heir will contest (*banga*, a Zulu word) and a *mubango* (civil war) will follow. Or, if he is not able to fight, he will keep to himself, full of bitterness, and ready to seize the first opportunity of asserting his rights.

643 Such a usurpation has twice taken place in the Nkuna tribe.
175 It is not easy to know exactly what happened, because there
721 are conflicting statements. Those who hold the chieftainship do not tell the story in the same way as those who consider that they were robbed of their right. This is the testimony of one of the latter, Mbokota, son of Madjubane. There were three brothers, Hoshana, Mbangwa and Ribye (1). During

(1) *Genealogy of the Nkuna family showing why and how contests arose for the succession.*



The names of the chiefs who reigned are thus underlined ————
The names of those who were deprived of the chieftainship, thus ————

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the disturbances caused by the Ngoni invasion, Hoshana fled to the Ñwamba country and lost touch with the main body of the clan which settled in the Transvaal. He however possessed the *ritlatla* (p. 385). On his death the royal appanage was brought to Shiluvane, but it never went back to Hoshana's children, who lost their right for ever. Mbangwa had three children, a daughter, Tibatiba, and two sons, Nyantsiri and Shiluvane. On his death, his younger brother Ribye reigned. He died, and then the chieftainship came back to Mbangwa's children. In the meantime Nyantsiri had died, but he had left two children, Madyubane and Mapsakomo. Madyubane, the elder, was still a child. So Tibatiba, the elder sister, said to Shiluvane : "Take the elephant tusk belonging to the Nkuna royal family and reign in the place of Nyantsiri ; but you have only to 'keep the tumbler' of Madyubane." Shiluvane sold the tusk and bought wives, beads and clothing for himself. Madyubane died some years later ; but he had a younger brother, Mapsakomo, and also a son called Mbokota. The chieftainship ought certainly to have returned to the elder branch. Mbokota told me himself that Shiluvane, before he died, ordered his counsellors to proclaim him as chief. So, on Shiluvane's death, a great contest arose. The headmen came to the capital and asked which son of Shiluvane had been designated by the late chief as his successor. No one dared reply, because there were four men who claimed the chieftainship : Mapsakomo, a younger brother of the legal heir Madyubane, Mbokota the son of Madyubane, Muhlaba and Muholo, both sons of Shiluvane. The great counsellor Shikhibane then said : "I heard Shiluvane say he wished Muhlaba to reign." The headmen accepted this statement, but the other pretenders greatly resented it. Seeing that many Ba-Nkuna were opposed to Muhlaba, Shikhibane assembled the whole tribe in arms to proclaim his protégé. He wanted the army itself to manifest its will. Mbokota, Mapsakomo and Muholo protested. But the warriors took Muhlaba, who was still a young man, and brought him to his new residence in an epic march all through the country during which they sang the war songs. The contest was finally settled by the Boer Authorities ; Captain Dahl, then Native Commissioner for Zoutpansberg,

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643 175 confirmed the choice of Muhlaba. The Pedi queen Magayibia, of the Nyarin clan, also asserted that she had heard Shiluvane designate this young man as his successor, and the other pretenders were obliged to keep quiet. But they remained very discontented (1).

I have seen another similar case of the elder branch losing its right on account of a younger brother placing his son on the throne, to the exclusion of the legal heir. It happened amongst the Ba-ka-Baloyi who took refuge in the Mudjadji country. The sons of Nkami, younger brother of Shitshabe, tried to seize the chieftainship to the detriment of Munyamana, son of Shitshabe, and this gave rise to a war in consequence of which, however, Munyamana regained his right. (See S. A. A. A. S. Report of the Meeting of 1905. Vol. III, page 251.)

All these facts tend to show that the position of the chief is attended with many dangers and difficulties, not to mention those which arise from the presence of the White Government, with which I shall deal later on.

643 So it must be recognised that the Thongas have not been able to discover a political system guaranteeing the peace of the country in a satisfactory way. The habit of dividing the power between brothers who soon become rivals, and of allowing the younger brothers to reign before the legal heir, both tend to destroy the unity of the clan and give rise to quarrels and unrest. Another bad consequence of these features of the royal right is this ; a chief, when he ascends the throne, will do his best to *get rid of troublesome brothers* in order to reign alone and to ensure the chieftainship to his son. This has often happened, especially in the case of Maphunga, chief of Nondwane, who killed as many as four brothers or near relations : Sitjobela, Ñwanambalana, Zulu and

(1) I remember one day paying a visit to Mbokota, and hearing him complain bitterly about his fate. He had tried to show his independence by establishing a separate circumcision school for his people so that they should not go to the "sungi" of Muhlaba. The chief did not prevent him from doing this, but he had just sent a messenger to claim the fees paid by the boys. Mbokota was much grieved at being obliged to remit them, and, if he had had enough men, he would certainly have revolted. But he had but a handful of warriors. He was not popular amongst the tribe, so he did not think it wise to "banga" and eventually submitted to Muhlaba.

643 Gigiseka. The last named was very courageous, and the cunning Maphunga succeeded in poisoning him treacherously, through the agency of a dissolute woman.

E. DEATH.

643 When a chief has grown very old, he no longer goes out of
[763] the royal hut. His counsellors take his place in the management
764 of affairs and he dies surrounded by mystery. It must be so, as his death must remain unknown during a whole year. "We reap and we bow down (korama)" viz. "we till the ground and reap again before the event is made public (palusha)" says Mankhelu.

So the chief is buried during the night; no lamentations are heard; his wives and his grave-diggers undergo the purification ceremonies and take the vapour baths in secret. It may be that the wives who dwell in remote places will not hear a word of their husband's death. The fire of the royal hut will not be kindled in the usual and ritual way, but it will be kept burning the whole year. The decease is formally announced to some few individuals, to the White Government officials, to the heir (who views the corpse), and to the counsellors, but the rest of the country is supposed to be in ignorance of the occurrence. Of course the secret will not be kept absolutely. The truth will leak out... But no one will dare to speak openly on the subject (1).

643 A special hut is set apart into which the counsellors enter under
645 pretext of discussing matters of state with the chief, who is said to be very ill and unable to show himself. As a matter of fact, he has been buried for some time.

(1) I was staying at Nwalwane when Mapunga, the chief who preceded Mahunde, died, and I heard on several occasions, in June and July 1891, the warriors practising on their antelope horns the airs to be played when the mourning should be made public. The death must have occurred during 1890, but nothing was said about it. After the news had been published, Mangayela, a young heathen of the district of Lihombo, remarked to me one day: "When last season (about Xmas 1890) we saw the mujinjili (trees bearing fruit similar to an apricot) so heavily laden with fruit, (there had been an exceptionally heavy crop), we felt sure the chief must have died and that he had sent us this plentiful supply..." A typical remark, aptly illustrating the semi-ignorance in which the tribe is kept of the death of the chief.

643 What is the reason for this silence ? According to the old
643 men I consulted, it is to prevent enemies taking advantage of the
766 confusion consequent on the death of the chief to attack the country. Undoubtedly this custom is also intended to give the principal counsellors time to prepare for the installation of the new chief and to prevent bloody contests.

643 The grave of the chief does not differ from those of his subjects.
766 As it has been dug secretly in the sacred wood (ntimu), its whereabouts are not known to most of the people. In some clans or sub-clans the earth of the tumulus is levelled, so that no sign whatever remains to show where the body has been buried. This is said to be done in order to prevent enemies from exhuming the corpse and cutting off the ears, the diaphragm and other parts of the body to make powerful war-charms (See Chapter IV). The graves of the chiefs of Nondwane are said to be invisible, just like the hut of the nyokwekulu. They are known by Magomanyana alone (Mboza). (Magomanyana is the nearest relative of the late Maphunga, the only brother whom he spared).

When the year of secrecy is over, the official proclamation of the mourning is made. (Ba palusha nkosi.) The people come to the capital, clan after clan, sounding their fanfares on trumpets of antelope horns (bunanga, see Chapter III), and bringing with them an ox or a goat. These animals are slaughtered and their bladders are presented to the heir, who pins them into his hair, so that, without any official proclamation having been made, every warrior at once recognises the future chief. All heads are shaven in sign of mourning, the adult men remove their wax crown (p. 129) and the people are clothed in *malepa* (a blue cloth) ; but as the death is not of recent date and has been known more or less for some time, the outward manifestations of grief are reduced to a minimum and dances follow in their train. The delegates from the adjoining countries also come to express their condolences. When all have paid their respects, the mourning is really ended (nkosi wu yu l). The King is dead, long live the King!

As we saw, amongst the Nkunas the proclamation of the death of a chief is made on the same day as the installation of his successor.

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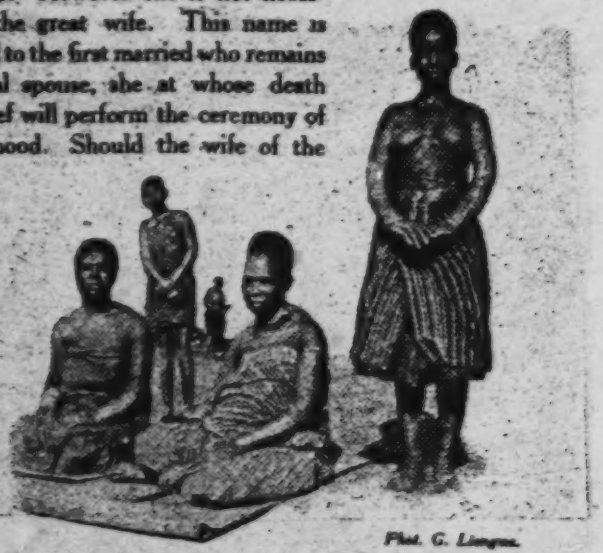
As regards the queens (tinkosikazi, a Zulu word), the chief's wives, there is not much to say about them. We have seen that one of them occupies a particularly honourable position, having been bought with the people's money and being "the wife of the country," she whose son will be the heir to the chieftainship. However she is not necessarily the great wife. This name is applied to the first married who remains the real spouse, she at whose death the chief will perform the ceremony of widowhood. Should the wife of the



Phot. G. Limpus.

Ngwi Queens.

country die and should she not be the first married, he will not go through that rite on her account.

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Princesses are lobola with more money than ordinary girls. Except in this, they do not differ from them. It is not common for a woman to be called to the dignity of chieftainship amongst the Thongas; in this respect they differ from the Ba-Pedi, or Transvaal Ba-Sutho, who have had many illustrious reigning queens: Modjadji, Male etc. I only know one such case amongst the Rongas, and the queen was still living in 1912. Her name was Midambuze, daughter of Dambuze. Dambuze was the chief of a part of the Mabota country, northward of Lourenço Marques.

643 On his death, his son Gwaba was put in his place. But he was
362 deported by the Portuguese and his sister, Midambuze, filled the
582 position. Consequently she was not lobola, but chose a husband for herself, a man of common origin (a titlhuba nuna). Her son may succeed her; in this case only can a uterine nephew of a chief take his place.

643 At Gungunyana's court queens played a great part. This
834 seems to be in accordance with the Zulu custom. After the death
847 of Chaka's mother, sexual relations were taboo for the whole tribe during one year, and children conceived during that time were put to death by order of the chief! (See Colenso: Ten weeks in Natal.)

643 I know of no case in which a foreigner became chief of a clan through having married one of its princesses. He can become hosana, but the true hosana will be his wife and he himself will be but a prince consort. I have heard of two instances in which this happened.

III. *The shipalapala.*

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Speaking of the musical instruments of the Court, I must also mention *the trumpet of assembly, shipalapala,* which is the recognised means of summoning the subjects to the capital. The sound of the big drum, though heard at a great distance, cannot reach to the confines of the country. So, when the chief wants his men to assemble at once, he uses the *shipalapala.* This is a horn of mhalamhala, or of nyala or of phifa antelope, the sound of which is like mpu-ù-u (with an accent on the second syllable). The envoy of the chief runs to the capital of a sub-chief, blowing all the time. When he has reached that village, he transmits his message and a young man starts at once with the shipalapala of the sub-chief to another district. So, in a short time, notice is given to the whole tribe to assemble.

IV. *Visitors.*

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When a stranger passes through the capital, he must sit down outside the central square and at some little distance from it. Some one will come and inquire what he wants ; he replies : "I come from such and such a country, and I wish to pay my respects to the chief." Then the counsellor or "Agent General" charged with the affairs of the traveller's country will come and converse with him and announce him (bika) to the chief, who will receive him affably and possibly assign him a hut to sleep in, in case he wishes to stay the night, at the same time providing him with food. Should the chief be particularly well disposed towards his guest, he will kill a calf or even an ox for him ; and he, on his return, will speak in praise of the hospitality he has received, saying : "The chief made me share his reign," literally : "He made me reign, (a ndji fumisile)." Such is the procedure when the respective countries of guest and host are adjoining and the tribes

643 609 574 on good and friendly terms. Should relations between them be at all strained, or should war be imminent, all the roads would be closed and no one allowed to enter the capital.

V. *The Kondza custom.*

641 643 The chief is also approached by those who may wish to become subject to him, to be naturalized ; this is called *kondza*, from a Zulu word conveying this meaning. The chief will assign to the new *nandja* a dwelling place, and he will be incorporated in the nation without further ceremony. By this kondza, he binds himself to pay the taxes (See the story of Mutipi. *Les chants et les contes des Ba-Ronga*, page 164).

Naturalised strangers, however, do not eat the first fruits (luma) with the same drug as the people of the country. They have their own medicine and take it according to their own rules. They are however forbidden to luma before the chief of their adopted land (p. 397).

VI. *Diplomatic relations.*

648 202 726 224 We have seen that these are very carefully conducted, each of the neighbouring clans having one counsellor entrusted with the care of its affairs. In case of war, friendly clans frequently make alliances (shinakulobye). They send messages to each other, or they have special means of communicating news in case of war. Supposing, for instance, Ñwamba and Nondwane should fight against Matjolo. They put two traps at their common boundary, on the side of the road, one on the territory of Ñwamba and one on that of Nondwane. These traps consist of a rod bent by a string fastened to the ground. Should the army of Matjolo have made an invasion during the night into Ñwamba territory and put the people to flight, the men of Nwamba

202 726 will at once go and undo the trap which is on their side ; in the morning, the people of Nondwane will know that they must also fly.

D. THE TRIBUNAL OF THE CHIEF.

642 In the Thonga Court there is no separation of powers. The legislative, executive, and judicial powers are all in the hands of the chief, aided by his counsellors. The chief is the supreme authority and his decisions are without appeal.

I. *Legislative affairs.*

671 643 583 The *chief* makes the laws (p. 382) and presides at discussions which end in a resolution. But his counsellors assist him.

Here is an example of such a decision taken at Maphunga's court. There was no uniformity as to the money to be paid for a lobolo, and some fathers claimed as much as £ 20 or £ 30 for their daughters. The great counsellors of the capital decided (tjimba mhaka, viz., to tie the matter) that a lobolo should be £ 15.10 as the maximum. They "tied the matter" with the assent of the chief. Then all the sub-chiefs and counsellors were summoned to the capital. The chief called the roll to ascertain if they were all present. The great counsellor then said to the assembly : "The herds which people claim are too large. Have you gold mines and do you know how to make coins ? Henceforth do not lobola with too much money. £ 15.10 is quite enough!" Every sub-chief, on his return home, called his men and informed them of the decision : "Hi to timhaka! Such are the matters!" said they. The subjects were disappointed. They wept! But they had to accept the decision. To oppose it is taboo! "Psa yila!"

643 645 671 A *native debate* or discussion is conducted on very different lines from those to which we are generally accustomed, nothing ever being put to the vote. The chief presides. A proposition is

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643 645 671 put forward in short sentences, generally interrogative, by one of the counsellors. The assembly listens in silence until the mover concludes with an energetic "Ahina," being the equivalent of "That's all right." (See p. 354.) Another individual elaborates the matter further, saying: "Did you not hear what he said? He said so and so." This is the way of seconding the motion. The debate proceeds, and, little by little, objections are brought forward and the assembly comes to a decision. [142]

It often happens that the chief does not say a word; when he see that the counsellors are agreed and if he has no objection, he merely shows his assent by nodding his head. So the decision is arrived at without his intervention and without any vote being taken. The voice of the majority has not been ascertained by any show of hands, but it is generally perceived by intuition in a very remarkable way, and grave counsellors, who have been squatting in a circle all through the discussion, jump to their feet and disperse, knowing perfectly well what has been decided. If however the counsellors do not agree, they put the matter into the hands of the chief, and the chief, after having listened to the arguments pro and con, "cuts the matter" (tjema mhaka) by some short sentences, after which everybody must shout the royal salutation: "Bayete!"

Phot. A. Burel.

An habitué of the Nhuma Court.

643 609 645 671 When there are two parties present, the debate is conducted according to other rules. For instance, if a stranger wishes to have speech with a chief or to proffer some request, he is generally accompanied by a counsellor. The chief, together with some of his men, receives him either in the hut, if the affair must

643 be secret, or on the square, if there is no objection to making it
609 public. The chief and his men sit on one side, the visitor on
645 the other; if he wishes to conform strictly to all the laws of
671 etiquette, he will first explain the matter to his own Agent General, who will communicate with the chief's special counsellor, repeating the words of the visitor, sentence by sentence; the counsellor will, in his turn, communicate with the chief, again telling him the whole story, as if he had not heard a word of it before. The affair will thus have passed through three hands and the answer should, in due formality, be given through the same channels. These precautions, which seem eminently superfluous, even somewhat ridiculous, to a person unacquainted with Bantu etiquette, evidently proceed from the fact that there are no stenographers or secretaries to furnish any written record of the proceedings, so that it is necessary to have as many witnesses as possible and that these should thoroughly understand the matter under consideration.

II. *Judicial Cases.*

1) Sense of justice.

671 As has often been remarked, the Bantus possess a strong sense
183 of justice. They believe in social order and in the observance
641 of the laws and, though these laws are not written, they are
609 universal and perfectly well known. The law is the custom,
554 that which has always been done. The old men, the counsellors and more particularly the counsellors of the capital, are those who can speak authoritatively. But everybody is welcome in the hubo, where matters are discussed; even a stranger can take part in the discussion. "No one is excluded, if he speaks rightly; only fools, those who do not know anything" (Mankhelu).

671 This participation in the discussions of the hubo has developed
641 the sense of law to a wonderful extent amongst the Bantus. They are all born advocates and judges, and take a great interest in this
192 business! No wonder therefore that the Thonga vocabulary

2) Civil cases.

692 I will not assert that Thongas know the exact difference between
622 civil and criminal cases, the same tribunal judging them both and
643 all being called by the same name, milandju.
687 If any distinction is made, it would be between private and official cases, *private cases* being those which are settled by the two parties concerned alone, without the intervention of the chief ; whilst *official cases* are those in which the matter (mhaka) has been brought to the capital. As already explained, the headmen of the village try to settle the difficulties themselves ; if they succeed, all the better, as the fine will be reduced to its minimum, whilst, before the Court, the fine would be doubled and the chief would keep half of it!

691 Ninety per cent of the civil cases are in connection with *lobola*. These are sometimes most intricate and I would refer to the description already given of some of them (p. 282 and Appendix VIII).

691 *Divorce cases* are also common. When a woman has definitely
586 left her husband, her relatives must return the lobolo money.
643 "You must give up to them £ 5 or an ox," says Mankhelu. The
614 chief Mubvesha who was known for his avarice used to arrest the husband and make him pay £ 25 ; he returned £ 15 to the wife's relatives and kept £ 10 for himself.

When money is returned, the children belong to the mother (See page 279).

691 Many cases may occur in connection with *cattle*. The case of
643 *redhibition* is foreseen : when I buy an ox and it dies on my hands
487 from a disease which was not known at the date of my purchase but which already existed, I have the right to go and ask for another in its place. But I bring the skin of the dead ox with me and one hoe inside it for the meat which I have eaten. If the seller refuses to accept my claim, I go to the chief and complain. He will summon the recalcitrant person and say to him : "Did not this man act well when he put a hoe inside the skin ? Give him another ox!" (Mankhelu.)

681 When goats have damaged somebody's garden, there is no
685 fine to pay. The shepherds are whipped and the matter is
643 thus concluded. Should the father of the boys, however, take their part and protect them with his weapons, he will be summoned to the tribunal of the chief and have to pay a fine of £ 5 or two or three goats.

643 Thonga Natives who have but a few head of cattle, are
231 accustomed to entrust them to the care of neighbours possessing
686 a large herd, in order to spare themselves the trouble of finding herding boys. There are some laws regulating this matter. If the owner of the cow, or the pig, or the goat, gives money in advance to the master of the large herd, all the calwes, pigs, and kids, which may be born revert to him. But if he has not paid anything, the master of the herd is entitled to choose one pig out of the first litter ; or he can keep the third or fourth calf or kid. If it be a hen, one of its chickens will belong to the man who took care of it. Should the owner forget to remit the due reward, there will be trouble (pongwe). When he goes to take his cattle back, the master of the herd will keep one head for himself, and, if a dispute arises, both will go to the chief, at least if the matter is important, if the animal in question, for instance, is an ox.

If an ox incorporated with another man's herd dies, the master of the herd will inform the owner in order that he may go and dispose of the meat. Should he be living too far off, the ox will be eaten on the spot and the skin will be sent to the owner.
231 Suppose the master of the herd pretends that the ox is dead, but
685 has only put it with another herd, and sent a skin to the owner to deceive him, it is a case of theft, which will be judged as such.

3) Criminal cases.

684 *Adultery*. Our tribe punishes adultery very severely indeed,
787 at least when the woman is married. The fine is a full lobolo.
837 (See page 197.) Amongst the Nkunas if the accused man denies his guilt when questioned indoors, the bones are consulted, or even the magicians who practise the "vumisa" divination. (Part

684 782 584 836 VI.) If found guilty, he will have to pay an extra fine of two oxen (1).

When the abducted woman is an unmarried girl, the matter is not serious. No trouble is entailed, provided she does not become pregnant. In the latter case, the seducer can say: "Ndji dlele ku dya: I have killed to eat," viz. "I am ready to lobola the girl" (p. 97). If the girl does not consent, the man is free. But if the man does not wish to marry the girl by paying a full lobolo, whilst the girl and her relatives want him to do so, he will have to pay as much as £ 30 and an ox. "He has spoilt his cause!" His own relatives will be arrested and forced to pay. They are responsible for him and will scold him severely. (Mankhelu).

683 649 *Fighting ending in blows.* The wounded man runs to the square of the capital and shows himself. The assailants will have to pay a fine of £ 8, three for the chief and five for the victim, or of two oxen, one for the chief and one for the plaintiff. (Mankhelu).

682 672 *Murder.* A distinction is made between involuntary murder, which is an accident (mhango, Dj.), and a deliberate assassination.

In the case of *involuntary murder*, Mankhelu describes the proceedings as follows: —Should you have killed a man by accident in a hunting trip, for instance, you will try to arrange matters directly with his relatives, if you were good friends; your relatives will give them a girl. You dare not offer your own daughter, because they may refuse her, on account of their bad feelings! The same objection will not be made if your people provide the girl. They will accompany her with ten hoes and an ox, saying: "This is fat to smear our daughter." The notion which is at the base of this custom is not that a human person is the natural compensation for another human person, but that you give the diminished family a means of making good its loss. In fact as soon as the girl has born a child to the relatives of the deceased, she is free. If these men wish to keep her as their wife, they must

(1) The neighbouring Chopi tribe, on the contrary, leaves the husband to arrange matters as he likes. Formerly he used to kill the adulterer. But cases of adultery are never brought before the chief.

682 lobola. Viguet explains that this is done according to the old
338 saying of Native law: "Ñwombekazi a yi ambi nandju" viz. "a
826 cow which has calved is not used to pay a fine; the calf pays it."
672 (See page 217.) He adds that the ten hoes sent with the girl pay for the ribs of the murdered man. (The Ba-Thonga believe that the human body has only ten ribs!) A case of involuntary homicide
682 is generally not brought before the chief, as the law is well known
643 and no one would try to evade his duty. Should however the
672 murderer not have been on good terms with the deceased, the matter will be discussed before the Court.

If the murder was *deliberate*, it is punished by death.
682 At least such was the law in former times, when Natives still
672 possessed the power of condemning to death. Now the fine is also the remittance of a woman. But owing to the existing hatred, and from fear of being obliged to lobola the relative of the murderer, the family of the deceased does not take the girl. She is sold by her parents and only the money is remitted to the plaintiff. (Mankhelu.)

682 Amongst the Ba-Ronga, when a near relative of the murdered
627 man wishes to avenge himself by killing the assassin, his people prevent him from doing so, in order to bring the matter before the chief. When a man called Mashabe was killed by the son of Gigiseka, Maphunga's brother, the murderer, had to pay £ 20. The fine may be as much as £ 25, but the idea is also to help the bereaved family to acquire a new spouse and, through her, new members. As for the murderer, he is regarded with scorn, and despised by the whole community. For a whole week, he must eat apart. He is unclean. So, at the time of luma bukanye, (page 400), he must also take miluru medicine together with the warriors who have killed enemies; but he does not drink it boastfully, extolling his deed! People say of him: "Look at the murderer!" (Mboza.)

The vendetta, the savage custom which makes it incumbent on the relations of a murdered man to avenge his death themselves at all costs and by any means, is absolutely absent from Thonga custom. It may be said that, as regards punishment of murder, they have reached quite a civilised stage in their judicial

685 has been pulled up and the sand nicely smoothed down, so that
343 any traces of a thief would easily be seen. He will possibly be
151 recognised at once by the trackers, owing to some peculiarity in the
625 marks on the sand, the foot-print of each individual being more or less known; clever detectives can even ascertain the height and gait of a man from the length of his stride! If there are no peculiar marks in the foot-prints, the trackers will follow them and reach the village where the thief lives. They will perhaps take him by surprise in his hut. If the matter cannot be settled by the headman of the village and has to be brought before the chief, the guilty party will be fined as much as two, three or even five pounds sterling (Tobane) (1).

When detectives have been unable to trace a thief, they assume a philosophical attitude and say: "Only wait. A man who has stolen will steal again, and you will catch him another time!"

643 *Revolt against the decisions of the chief's hubo* is very rare. Should
687 any person take the part of a condemned man and encourage him to oppose the decision of the Court, he will be beaten with a shambock on the square of the capital. "U onhi hubo," "he has spoilt the Court!" Moreover he may have to pay a fine of £ 2. (Mankhelu.)

643 *Answer to some of Professor Frazer's questions on Government.*
835 There are no separate chiefs for war and peace. But in time
224 of war the great induna, who is the Commander-in-chief of the
701 army, directs all military operations. — The chief is never required to marry his own sister or daughter. The only similar case of which I have heard, is that of a hunter who must have sexual relations with his daughter before going on a hunting trip (Part IV).

643 — The king's mother does not hold any special office.—
778 The chief does not keep any portion of his deceased predecessor excepting the nails and hair used for the mhamba (See page 386 and part VI)

538 (1) The following interesting couplet in two sentences aptly describes the thief:
Shikhongwa rendjelezane ? — The crown on the hat nicely rounded ?
Mangetla a pala ritiko... — The hawk burns his claws...
The thief is like a crown on the top of a hat. He is a lazy person, he attitudinises and will not work. Evil will befall him, as with a hawk who tries to snatch the meat that is roasting and burns his claws!

643/754/787/789 and Part VI). — To protect and to prolong his life, diviners sometimes call together the whole clan in order to discover and eventually arrest those who might bewitch and kill the chief. This gathering is called *nyiwa* (See Part VI). — As for rain making, it is in the hands of the proper rain doctors (Nkuna) or is done by the ceremonies of *mbelele* (Part VI). — He is not held responsible for public calamities. — If his bodily or mental powers fail, the tinduna discuss matters in his stead and he is not deposed.

643/769 Chiefs are never worshipped during life time. After death, they are deified for their own family, who worship them, but not for their subjects. — They are not supposed to turn into wild beasts after their death. — The custom of appointing mock kings does not exist. Only on the death of a chief can one of his relatives be nominated to take his place, and watch over his property until the adjudication of the inheritance.

713 411 595 643 of palm leaves 5 in. and handle 35 ½ inches. As previously mentioned, the handle of the large sized assagai is broken at the warriors' death, being "he," or his defilement; but the blade "never dies." It belongs to the chief, as does also the shield, and the son will inherit it. During the warrior's life, it is kept in the hut of his *first wife*. She is called the owner (ñwinyi) of the assagai. It is taboo for the other wives to touch it; another fact which shows the special position of the first wife. (Comp. p. 284.)

713 411 439 Another weapon in more restricted use and which can also be employed for cutting wood, is the *axe* or *hatchet*, of which I have met with two descriptions (No. 3); the blade (mbimbi) may be narrow and elongated—it is then called shingwatane,—or broad and rounded,—when it is the shiyema. These hatchets are firmly inserted in their wooden handles like the axes of the lake-dwellers. European manufacturers now export a considerable number of semicircular hatchets, similar to the one on the right in my illustration, to Delagoa. The one here portrayed will be at once recognised as being of Native make. I may also mention the big *knives* (mikwa), a sort of sword; one sometimes meets brawny fellows walking along the paths, armed with these dangerous looking implements! However they are quite inoffensive.

713 411 171 I managed to obtain from a traveller a beautiful *dagger* which he was carrying slung across his breast; it is a rare specimen and comes, I am told, from the Ba-Ndjao tribe (No. 5). The sheath is made of two pieces of wood, artistically carved and fastened together with a plait of iron wire; it is slightly hollowed out to allow the blade to enter; this is firmly fixed in the handle through which it passes from end to end, coming out at the extremity, where it is bent back and thus held tightly in place. The Ba-Pedi in the Zoutpansberg also make similar knives.

714 171 Finally, when the warrior holds in one hand his large assagai, in the other will be found his *shield* (shitlhangu) (No. 1), which he grasps by the stick around which this piece of defensive armour pivots. The Thonga shield is made like that of the Zulus, of a piece of ox-hide, oval in shape and of varying size, sometimes all of one colour and sometimes variegated. (The several battalions

714 in the Chaka army were distinguished by differently coloured shields.) On either side of the central line, from top to bottom, two parallel rows of small square incisions are made (magabela) through which are run strips of hide of a different colour, the effect being a series of oblongs. By an ingenious device the ends of these strips are so tied at the back of the shield as to form several sheath-like nooses into which is inserted the stick by which it is held. The space between the two lines of oblongs is called the back (nhlana) of the shield. The nooses or sheaths are four or six in number : two or three at the top, and two or three at the bottom, a space being left in the middle, where the warrior grasps the stick. This stick tends to strengthen the shield, but, being merely passed through the nooses, it acts also as a pivot around which it can turn ; it is this pivoting action which gives to the shield its chief value as a protection. An assagai (usually thrown with considerable strength) would easily penetrate the ox-hide, but when it strikes the shield, the force of the impact causes it to pivot and the weapon is deflected to one side: should it strike exactly in the middle, it would hit the stick, break it and lose all further impetus. It is hardly necessary to add that the *shitlhangu* of the South African Black is absolutely useless when opposed to bullets ; it was invented to protect the warrior against the dreaded assagai, at a time when firearms were not yet thought of!

713 177 During the last century the Ba-Ronga have begun to use guns for hunting and also for war. Although the sale of firearms to the Natives has often been prohibited, the Ba-Ronga were reported to possess several hundreds of rifles at the commencement of the 1894 war, and also to be fairly proficient in their use... very different from the Madagascans, who removed the sights from their rifles on the score that they were in the way when taking aim!

C. THE MOBILISATION OF THE ARMY.

202 726 643 In the Zihlahla country, when the chief wished to muster his forces, he did so by means of the *shipalapala*, the rudimentary trumpet which I described in the preceding chapter. A swift

202 726 643 messenger (shigidjimi) ran from village to village, blowing this instrument ; when he was tired he passed it on to some other good runner, who carried the summons further afield ; he ran and ran until he was exhausted, when he handed the trumpet to a third, and so on until the whole country had been covered.

At the sound of the well-known call of the shipalapala, the warriors shout : "A hi hlomen!" — "to arms!" They at once put on their war costumes and repair to the capital.

In Nondwane all the sub-chiefs possessed their shipalapala, and each of them summoned his own people. There the shipalapala mostly sounded to call for dances and for feasts. When the army was mobilised merely to discuss matters quietly, messengers ran through the country shouting : "Mayivonule!" — "take the shields!"..., to which the warriors answered : "A hi hlomen!" — "to arms!" The messenger had to go quickly. "He did not lose time in grinding tobacco ;" he only indicated the time when the army was expected in the capital.

Should matters be more serious, should a hostile yimpi have invaded the territory, every one can give the alarm (tlhabela mukhosi), shouting : "Yi ngeeneeeeeee!" "It has entered!" (viz., the hostile army has invaded our territory). All the women flee away and the men run to the capital.

D. THE MUKHUMBI, THE CIRCLE OF WARRIORS.

643 701 726 Decked out like wild animals, the warriors hasten with all speed to the chief's village, where the regiments muster. The army (1) is divided into a certain number of *battalions*, *mabotshu*, or *meboko*, all men of about the same age forming a *botshu*. The *botshu* itself is made up of several *companies*, *mitlawa* or *mabandla*, and may therefore vary very much in numbers.

(1) Yimpi (pl. tiyimpi) in Thonga corresponds to impi in Zulu.

535 703 An extraordinary war spirit comes over them all..." And every one having witnessed these performances in the Thonga or Zulu mukhumbi will confess that they are wonderfully impressive. It is a mixture of dramatic, epic and lyric poetry, three literary *genres* which are still confounded, the whole being enhanced by a deep, wild music and subject to the laws of a certain artistic style.

703 643 726 The fighting instincts are excited to the highest pitch by these patriotic choruses and dramatic representations. Thus should the troops be slow in making a start, the young men go dancing to the chief and beg him to "grant them permission" to go forth and slay, or rather to "give them men" to slaughter (ku nyika). The Native idea appears to be that the chief holds the lives of the enemies in his hands; without his permission they cannot go forward, but this once given, they rush enthusiastically to the fray. They even go so far as to taunt him with being an old woman, a coward, because he will not let them go at once (1).

When the excitement has reached the culminating point, and it has been definitely decided to fight, the time has arrived for the magic treatment by which the warriors will be rendered invulnerable.

G. ADMINISTERING THE WAR-MEDICINE.

726 177 789 751 This custom is probably of ancient origin, but I have reason to believe that, amongst the Ba-Ronga, it was practised without any great formality until the advent of the Zulu influence, when it was brought into much greater prominence and invested with more solemnity. "Drinking the war-medicine" took place on several occasions during the revolt of 1894 to 1895. At *Zihlahla* this potion was administered to all warriors before the rebel attack

(1) Gungunyana, on one occasion, when his warriors were importuning him with similar requests, sent the more ardent spirits to wage war unarmed against the wild beasts, and I was told they actually succeeded in capturing a leopard alive and brought it back to the chief!

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one of the Natives of the country : there are no fewer than seven acts in this grand performance of "preparation for battle."

a) In the first place when the chief foresees that a campaign is imminent, he has water drawn, and all the necessary ingredients gathered together : then he goes into retirement for one month, during which he is busy preparing the medicine with the magician who knows all about the recipe.

b) At the end of this time the entire army is summoned to the capital. A bull is brought out before the assembled soldiers and the chief strikes it on the head with a stick : this infuriates the animal, which must be caught and thrown down by the men unarmed ; the chief then approaches and kills it with an axe. They dismember the carcase, cutting off the flesh in strips, which they cook in a large battered pot, stirring it with their assagais and pouring into it at the same time "the medicine of hatred."

c) On this day the army is mustered and formed in a circle. The Commander-in-Chief takes the meat, cuts it into small pieces and mixes with it certain human ingredients : a finger taken from a hostile petty chief killed in battle has been carefully preserved ; the dried up phalange is scraped and the bone-dust thus obtained is mixed with the medicine. This additional ingredient is to prevent any feeling of remorse, any prickings of conscience : "ku susa lipfalo," literally "to remove the diaphragm," the seat of the conscience, according to Ronga ideas. (See later on a more probable explanation of this rite.) The Commander-in-Chief takes the pieces of meat thus seasoned and throws them into the mouths of the soldiers, who must not touch them with their hands. The food must be received between the teeth ; any meat falling to the ground is picked up by the children.

d) On the following day, the whole army proceeds to a large lake (the lake of Shika, near the village of Nhlampfukazi) to be treated with another medicine, an emetic. This is placed on a skin in the middle of the lake : the skin is withdrawn, leaving the particles of the drug floating on the water ; each warrior must stoop down and swallow a mouthful of the emetic. He will vomit yesterday's meat : "fear will be thrown up and valour will remain"

726/643 (ku hlantiwile butoya, ku sele burena). The chief having meanwhile taken up his position on a neighbouring hill, the several regiments rush towards him, surround him and beg to be sent as soon as possible to fight and to slay.

726 643 372 789 *e)* But, before this can be done, the chief returns to the capital, the army following him. A double trial has still to be undergone. A large broom is made of small branches of trees soaked in fat from sheep's tails and is then set on fire. The chief walks round carrying his flaming torch, passing it rapidly before the faces of the warriors formed in a circle. Some of the helmets catch fire and the wearers are promptly ordered to fall out of the ranks. The chief addresses them in angry tones : "Deliver up to me," he says, "the charms you are concealing! 'Tis only I, the chief, who may possess enchanted drugs. You certainly have some, as your plumes took fire... Look at the other warriors ; the feathers on their heads are not burnt!" This trial is probably a means of frightening suspected traitors or of expelling wizards (baloyi).

726 643 789 *f)* All shields are now "presented" all round the circle. The chief bends back the point of an assagai and with it strikes each shield, but not with sufficient force to pierce it... This "consecration" of the shields will doubtless make them a more secure protection against the enemy's weapons.

g) Lastly the series is closed by the "aspersion." A mortar is produced in which some leaves are soaking ; these are stirred round in water and the chief sprinkles the whole army. This is the final ceremony. The chief remains at home : the warriors thus fortified and protected against all dangers start on their expedition.

This last act only is performed in the clans of Shirindja, Ñwamba and Zihlahla.

H. ON THE WAR PATH. THE BATTLE. STRATEGY. PANICS. RETURN HOME.

726 The *mukhumbi* has been "built" for the last time. Proclamations have all been issued. Nothing remains but to start.

This *starting of the army* (ku thethwa) is also done according to

726 As regards the *order of the march*, the battalions of the young
701 men, stationed on either side of the entrance, go first; they
643 form the advanced guard, the post of greatest danger. The scouts, tinhlori (Dj.) tinhloli (Ro.), go in front; each company has its leader to whom these scouts bring reports. It is the duty of the young men to surround the position to be carried and to make the assault. The two sides of the circle then follow, and lastly the chest of the army, forming the rear guard. The chief thus brings up the rear, protected by the battalions of veterans. But generally the chief does not go to battle; he remains at home.

726 During the campaign, *the whole clan is subjected to many taboos.*
784 Those who remain at home must *keep quiet* (rula). No noise
777 must be heard in the villages. The women must not close the
722 doors of the huts. It is taboo: their husbands might meet with "bitterness" (shibiti). They might lack strength to run away. Fire must be lit in the huts in the evening, in order that the warriors may "have light" where they are. It is taboo to omit this precaution. Work in the fields must be more or less suspended; women may attend to it in the morning only, before the heat of the day, while the air is still fresh. "Then, if a warrior has stepped on a thorn, the thorn will be cool (titimeta); if he has knocked against a stump, the stump will be quiet and not hurt him. (Mbóza.)" Old men who remain at home must keep watch, and if they see a messenger coming, they follow him to the chief.
765 Should he bring bad news, they do not inform the women, as it is
726 taboo to mourn over warriors killed in war before the return of the
834 army. A fine is imposed upon those who contravene this law. It is taboo also to have sexual relations as long as the army is on the
777 war-path. This would cause thorns to hurt the warriors and they
784 would be defeated. (Mankhelu.)

722 According to Mankhelu, the mukhumbi may be again formed after arriving in the proximity of the hostile army. The
643 battalions will be sent one after the other by the great ndjuma who
726 will watch the progress of the fight. If he sees his men giving way, he "pours" (tshelela) new companies to help those who are fighting until they rush the position (gwabula) and put the enemy to flight. Then the pursuit begins. The dust flies up

J. SOME REMARKS ABOUT WAR RITES.

177/726 The war rites of the Thongas, whatever may be their origin — and they seem to be a mixture of old Thonga and new Zulu customs, — form a very interesting and complete whole.

The most noticeable are the *national rites*. In war time, the very 643/726/829 existence of the clan is threatened, because the chief, the central and vital cell of this organism, is in danger. Hence the readiness of all the warriors to answer to the first call of the *shipalapala*, and to gather round him, "building the circle," which protects him, the whole clan forming a single village and binding itself by the striking ceremonies of *guba* and by patriotic songs, to die for him. Notice that most of the *guba* songs extol the chief. All these customs in which the individual or collective courage is stimulated, the *guba* and the *gila*, are national or social rites directed towards the salvation of the clan. They owe their origin to the national idea.

But war also brings dangers to every warrior. Hence the *protective* rites of sprinkling the mukhumbi with the war-medicine of the clan, or of giving each man some of it to swallow. The rite is inspired by the notion *similia similibus curantur*, the idea being that the warrior, having eaten a small portion of the enemy, will become invulnerable to his blows.

But other rites, especially the war taboos, seem to owe their origin to the *idea of passage*.

726/829/834 The *whole clan* enters upon a special phase as soon as war has been decided upon by the chief, "who gives it" to his warriors. Hence the taboos observed at home, many of which are exactly the same as those of the circumcision school and of the period of mourning. We notice the same contrast already so often mentioned : certain sexual prohibitions are removed (e. g. a queen will enter quite naked into the mukhumbi!)

727/775/761 tions (before 1890). Three persons of that family died. The bones were consulted and the diviner asked : "Have you not slain a Ndjao?" They answered : "Yes." — "Then," said the bone-thrower "you will all die as this man has followed you." The bones showed that, in order to avoid the destruction of their family, the Nhlondlo had to offer a girl to the ghost of the slain, a living sacrifice. This girl would not be allowed to marry, or even to be courted by boys. Should she have relations with a man it would be necessary to replace her by another. Thus the angry ghost would be propitiated.

177 Governments have everywhere placed Native Commissioners to watch over their coloured subjects. This has put *an end to the tribal wars.* Natives are no longer allowed to indulge in their old fighting customs. They may avail themselves of a war between Europeans to square up old accounts with each other, as happened during the Anglo-Boer war, but they are forbidden to follow the war-path any longer. In many parts of South Africa they have even been disarmed. This change, as a whole, is a favourable one. Native wars never brought blessing to the race. It tends however to destroy one of the springs of patriotism, and in this way it impoverishes the Native mind.

643 175 631 P. 177. 64 *c)* These Native Commissioners have placed a very effective check, not only upon the military tendencies of the tribe, but upon *the power of its chiefs.* The authority of the chief in the clan has certainly been diminished. In some instances he has been deposed, or banished in consequence of war, and the tribe has remained without a head and without force, as it were emasculated, and unable to guide itself. As Mankhelu said: "Our chief is the forest into which we retreat! Without him we are but women!" This was sadly noticeable in the case of the Zihlahla or Mpfumo-dlan, which was perhaps the most developed of all the Ronga kingdoms and which suffered most from the 1894-96 war. Its young chief Ñwamantibyane was caught and deported to some spot in Eastern Africa, and the clan was dismembered, a great number of men emigrating to the Transvaal; the others remained dissatisfied but powerless in their old territory, and were incorporated with Matjolo or Mabota.

643 681 692 P. 177. 69 Even when the Native chief is maintained in his position by the Whites, his power is curtailed. As a judge, he is no longer allowed to inflict capital punishment. His tribunal only judges minor cases, and beside and beyond him, there is a further appeal, the Court of the White Commissioner, which is ready to consider every important case. Should the Native chief be unjust or selfish in his decisions, the subjects will go more and more to the White tribunal. It may be that their claims will not be so well understood as in their own *hubo*, but they will perhaps meet with fairer treatment. Shrewd and clever Native Commissioners thus succeed in attracting more applicants to their residences than the chief to his capital (1). This dual control leads to a progressive loosening of the tribal tie.

(1) This was the case for instance in Nondwane. The unjust and equivocal rule of Mdzwedu compelled many of his subjects to go "dzikanelowen," viz., to the Portuguese Administrator of Marabwa.

423 By law the soil belongs to the Chief, but only that, through
643 him, it may become general property. No one can buy land. It is gratuitously assigned to any and all who wish to settle in the country. The mere fact of *kondza*, viz., making submission to the chief (Vol. I, p. 433), entitles the Native to as much land as may be necessary for his subsistence.

423 It will be readily understood, however, that the supreme Chief,
622 however small his territory may be, can hardly assume the duty of marking out the various small allotments for his subjects. In ordinary practice this is done by the headmen of the villages (numzane), the important men of the country, (I will call them A), who obtain the grant of considerable tracts of land, which they apportion amongst those under their jurisdiction. They and their near relatives cultivate the most fertile parts of these tracts, or districts, and when any one (say B) wishes to settle on their reserve, they "cut the bush" for him, "tjemela nhoba," to use the technical expression ; they accompany the would-be-settler to an uncultivated piece of land and together they fix the boundaries of a plot of ground which is then assigned to him. A tree, the corner of a lake, a well, or an anthill, may be used as landmarks in this primitive surveying operation. The new-comer will clear as much of the land as he can, till it, and the fields, together with the trees they contain, will become thenceforth his property. Should any of his relatives wish to settle near him, he will, in his turn, assign to them a portion of his land, which they may clear
423 and cultivate ; and so the distribution continues. Supposing B is
428 not satisfied with his allotment, or is unable to live on neighbourly
622 terms with A, and builds his hut in some other spot, he cannot sell or otherwise dispose of his land, as it must revert to A, the original owner. On the other hand, should B die, his wife would inherit his gardens. Should father or mother die, the property would naturally pass to the sons, who would divide the fields between their wives. Thus we see that real estate is hereditary, but cannot be sold. A similar state of affairs would result should A, the numzane, who ranks almost as a petty chief, leave the country : all his rights in connection with the tract that he may have occupied for the last fifty years will cease with his departure.

231 Native goats are very small and frequently attacked by a disease called ndlwabane which decimates whole herds. They are not tended with sufficient care, although a special hut (mhala) is sometimes built to protect them from the rain.

Goats are killed by piercing the heart : this is at any rate the ritual way of killing them (I. p. 158). The officiating person stands on the right of the animal and stabs it in the left side, holding the left leg. The animal suffers acutely ; goats are however often slaughtered by cutting the throat, not from any feelings of compassion, but in order to prevent them crying too long, as "this would surely bring many people on the spot and you would have to share the meat with them!" (Mboza.)

231 782 If the ox plays an important part in *social life*, the goat seems to be specially reserved for sacrifices, that is to say for *religious usages*. This ritual use entitles us to suppose that, as millet seems to be the oldest cereal, the goat is the most ancient domestic animal amongst the Thongas, and, no doubt, amongst all South African Bantus.

The gall bladder, the astragalus, the half digested grass found in its intestines, strips made of its skin, all play a special part in the ceremonies and superstitious practices of the tribe previously mentioned. The gall bladder (nyongwa) is fixed in the hair of the person in whose honour the goat was slaughtered. The astragalus (nhlolo) is fastened to the wrist, the ankle or the waist as a means of protection. The *psanyi* (half digested grass) is taken from the shihlakahla stomach, and is used in connection with the invocation of the gods in the sacrifices. (See Part VI, Compare also I. p. 111, 160-162.)

136 231 643 782 *Sheep*, hamba, yin-tin, (Ro.) nyimpfu, yin-tin, (Dj.) are scarce in our tribe, and are mostly without wool. The wool sheep is called *shitlapu*. It is not taboo for subjects to possess sheep, but this animal is connected in a special manner with the chiefs. Its astragalus designates royal personages in the set of divinatory bones. It is used in the national sacrifices, those offered to the chief's ancestors at the capital. (See Part VI.) Let us remind the reader that its skin is used to carry a child in case of *bovumba* (I. p. 194).

202 crocodiles.) For the Mavundjas: *Kahlamba ntjhaba yo nonoha!*
618 (The big mountain, difficult to climb.) (1)

224 I have already described the part of a slain animal which is to
643 be given to the chief, when speaking of the prerogatives of the
825 master of the country (I. p. 406). Here are some supplementary
845 details: The general idea is that he must receive that part of the body which was in contact with the soil, because the chief is the owner of the soil. In the case of smaller antelopes however he does not claim anything. For the eland he requires, in addition to the ordinary tribute, half of the *bofu* i. e. of the paunch of fat which is found round the heart of this animal and which is believed to possess precious medicinal properties (especially for new-born children born with a membrane round the
224 head). As regards
643 buffaloes and other big animals, should they be killed far away from home, their meat is cut into strips (mishakatsu) and two bundles are brought back to the chief; it is also the rule that the head of any beast of great size should be eaten on the bandla, the meeting-place of the men in the capital.

Buffalo hunter with his victim.

224 So far I have described hunting with assegais, sticks and dogs.
824 But Thongas possess another method of killing big animals, a method which is perhaps more ancient and which has sometimes proved very useful. This is the *marindji trap*, i. e. a large pit dug in the earth, covered with branches and full of pointed stakes upon which the animal falls and impales itself. These stakes are made

(1) The Pedis have the same custom. The Ba-Khaba cry: "Haratsha! Mugosi! We"! This expression comes from the verb *ratsha*, to cross a river on a tree trunk, as the Khaba clan is said to have been held back in its ancient migrations by a swollen river and to have *ratsha* it successfully. The remembrance of this feat of their ancestors has remained and has given rise to this rallying cry. Other Pedis say: "*Sipondja kkomo*," viz., "the killer will be given an ox for his reward."

itself. Afterwards he had to drink the broth and eat the meat. 224
The aim of the treatment was to enable him to kill more elephants. 777
In the case of the elephant as well as of the hippopotamus the chief 643
of the country has to perform the lurulula as well as the hunter "because he is the chief of all the animals of the country and he would be unable to govern it successfully if he did not do this."

The *rhinoceros (shibetshana)* is not common in Thongaland ; a 224
few of these animals are found in the extreme south of the Maputju 825
country. The same rules were observed when the hunters had succeeded in killing one ; but this is no easy task because, as Muvumbi said, the rhinoceros is terribly wild, as it has no "mapfalo." The mapfalo is a piece of cartilage which is found in all animals between the ribs, beneath the sternum ; it is the diaphragm ; it is also the seat of fear or of the conscience. It is this particular cartilage which throbs in the case of great fear. The rhinoceros has no mapfalo ; therefore it fears nothing and rushes savagely upon the hunter. Its meat is so delicious that when a man has tasted it he no longer wishes to drink water!

I never heard mention of the lurulula in connection with the 224
lion (*nghala* (Djo.), *ndjau* (Ro.). To avoid being mauled by lions 782
the hunters put into their mouths a little of every kind of food 825
mixed with their powerful drugs and spit it out to the four winds in order to appease the ancestor-gods of the country. Then if they meet with a lion, the wild beast, instead of rushing upon them, will look at them quietly, its saliva dropping from its mouth, and will do them no harm.

Strange to say the *buffalo* (nyari) has no nuru, and when I asked 825
why this was, my Maputju informant told me : "The buffalo is an ox." This answer may perhaps help us to understand something more about the nuru idea.

The statement regarding the *zebra* (mhangwa) is more curious still. "Mhangwa a yi lubiwi! Yi ni mabala ; i nala ; a yi ngeni hosin" viz. "No tax is paid for the zebra ; it is an animal with many colours (stripes) ; it is an enemy ; it must not enter the village of the chief." We have met with the same prohibition in connection with the village of the parents-in-law (I. p. 250).

As regards the *crocodile (ngwenya)* also called *shiwutlani-*

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

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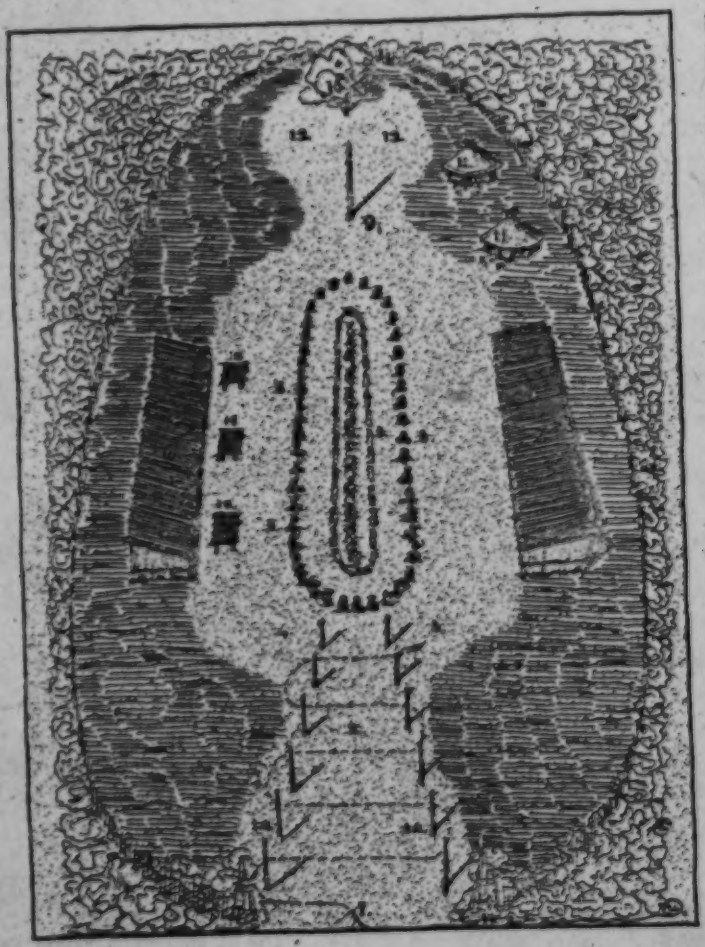
and not the candidates' gate, which is on the opposite side (4). Further on is the central court of the sungi, with the long fireplace built with stones and called the Elephant (5) round which the boys must sit (8), warming their right hips at the fire. The uterine



Plan of the circumcision lodge. *Drawn by J. Wann.*

[544] 881 349 nephew of the chief, the son of his sister, who takes precedence in all the rites, and who is the first to be circumcised, sits on a special stone with the others behind him. He is called the *Hwatye*. Near the fireside are the tables made of hurdles of reeds on which the porridge of the boys is served every day (15). The central court is occupied on both sides by two square sheds hastily and roughly built, the one on the right (7) being the hut of the shepherds and of the men, the one on the left (6) the hut of the circumcised. The soil is not smeared in these houses. Some of the men also sleep in separate huts behind (11). It is behind the Elephant that the big Mulagaru pole will be raised at the close of the school (9). Further at the back of the sungi is the place of the formulæ where the boys are taught (12). A tree sometimes grows in the middle and the instructor climbs up it to impart his teaching (10)!

I have drawn this plan of the sungi with the help of Viguet. Having never seen it with my own eyes, I cannot guarantee that it does not omit many details... But it is correct as a whole.

881 The inmates of the lodge fall into three categories : 1. the " bukwera " viz. the troop of candidates who are to be initiated ; 2. the shepherds (barisi or psitjiba, the boys who light (tjibela) the fire of the Elephant) who waken the circumcised in the morning, accompany them on their hunting trips, watch them when they eat, etc. 3. The grown up men who have volunteered to come and stay in the sungi during the whole school. They eat the flesh of the animals killed by the bukwera, carve pestles, weave baskets, enjoy themselves, and form the council which looks after the well-being of the school. Amongst them are the so-called father and mother of the Ngoma, two men who are specially in charge of the school. The " father " has a difficult task ; he must keep discipline, administer punishment, etc. These two men are paid, as are also the Lion-men and the Manyabe. The Manyabe is the great doctor of the school. He has poured his charms on the fence to protect the lodge against wizards. He does not stay in the sungi, but can be called at any time to administer medicine to the boys who are unwell or whose wounds do not heal properly.

836 of rattles, they sometimes stay with them till late in the night.
832 They bring them small presents, articles of clothing or other things, and thus obtain permission to have intercourse with them. Mboza described to me a very immoral meeting which sometimes takes place in these huts in connection with the *milebe* habit, and which is connected with this gangisa. It is impossible to give the details here. (Annotatio 5.)[1]

836 The gangisa custom is, from our point of view, very immoral.
831 Amongst Natives it is not censured at all, and it would be more accurate to speak of *amorality* then of *immorality*, amongst them, on this particular point. A boy who has no such flirt, no *shigango*, is laughed at as a coward; a girl who refuses to accept such advances is accused of being malformed. However Mboza told me he had never had a shigango himself and the abuse in this respect is not approved of by old people. In Manyisa, I heard of a young chief who was leading all the lads to gangisa and forcing the girls to accept them. The extent of this evil depends very much
[644] on the character of the boys and girls. I may add that, as regards the young people of the capital, they are not allowed to practise the gangisa because they belong to the royal family and are closely watched.

When they become Christians, Natives readily accept our standard of morality, but cases of fornication are very frequent amongst converts, so much so that this has been rightly called the African sin! I mention this fact, but I must say on the other hand that thousands of pupils in our Native Institutions lead a very moral and continent life and do not seem to find any great difficulty in doing so.

839 If the gangisa spoils the whole life of the young heathen, it is
177 only just to add that they do not practise two vices which are prevalent amongst certain civilised nations, onanism and sodomy. These immoral customs were entirely unknown in the Thonga tribe before the coming of civilisation. Unhappily it is no longer so now, as we shall see in Appendix III on unnatural vice in Johannesburg.

836 Comparing the habits of the Pedis and the Thongas we observe
837 this strange fact: amongst the Thongas the unmarried girl is

1 [See p.517 in these categories or in 116 --Analyst]

643 583 644 during the whole of the first year of married life. The chief, immediately on the home-coming of his bride, calls together his young men, who rapidly build for him a new village, his village, which will henceforth become the capital of the country and will be given a distinctive name.

Nwamantibyane's royal kraal was known as Hlanzini, and he had chosen a site for it on the confines of the Nwamba country in order to avoid a too close proximity to the Portuguese Commandant living at Hangwana.

Crowned, married, installed in his new residence, the chief has now nothing to do but reign.

* * *

643 584 622 Mankhelu relates the proceedings of the official marriage amongst the Ba-Nkuna in the following manner : — All the principal headmen send an ox to the capital, assemble there, kill one of the oxen, eat it and discuss who shall be the "wife of the country (1)." They ask the chief : "Whom do you love ?" He answers : "The daughter of such and such a chief." They go to the father of this girl and say : "Eat the lobolo and give your daughter to the chief." The man may refuse. Should he consent, the girl will become the wife of the country : "the earth has bought her ;" she will give birth to the future chief.

Should a great number of oxen be provided by the country, those which are in excess of the lobola price will go with the chief and princess to their new village "in order to provide milk for them."

(1) In the case of Muhlaba, Mankhelu himself received the fifteen oxen of the lobolo of the village and kept them for a time. Other subjects had given £ 1, a hoe, a goat, or nothing, if they could not afford to contribute. Nobody refused, but some had nothing to give ! No matter ! In the meantime one of the oxen broke its leg. The mother of Muhlaba said to Mankhelu : "See ! the oxen of the lobolo die. Take a wife for the chief." Muhlaba was consulted and chose a girl from the Makaringe clan. Mankhelu had already taken a wife amongst these people, who were consequently his bakokwana. He went to them with the proposal ; they consented. Then Muhlaba accompanied Mankhelu on a second visit to the Makaringe people, who killed an ox for him and helped him to eat it !

643 789 751 see Part VI) called Madyakakulu, Ñwahondyane, Mbengatamilomu, Masemane. The bones are always consulted to ascertain which calabash (nhungubane) must be employed. The uses of this medicine are as follows. Every year it is mixed with the first fruits in the ceremony of *luma*, which will be described later on. In war time the mbhulo is employed to "fence the country." Envoys go to all the drifts on the boundary, take stones out of the river, smear them with the magical powder and place them on the roads, at the crossways ; should enemies invade the country, they will be deprived of their strength. The weapons also are sprinkled with a decoction made of this royal medicine, as we shall see, and it 643 is given to the chief to prevent disease. The father of Papalati was 687 accused of having sold some of this powerful national drug to the Pedi chief Sikororo, an act which amounted to high treason.

643 I have been fortunate enough to be informed of all the rites connected with the royal medicine in the Mazwaya clan. There, it is called *nyokwekulu*, a word which is probably derived from the verb ku nyuka, to melt. Let Mboza tell us, with awe and profound conviction, of the marvels of this wonderful drug. He was present at its preparation in the year 1893, before the war scattered the clan and destroyed its military power.

644 789 Each year the nyokwekulu is renewed. Its exact composition is known only to one man, Godlela, the royal magician and priest, to whom the care of preparing it is entrusted. This man belongs to the house, or sub-clan, of Tlhatlha. He is very much feared. Nobody dares to dispute with him, and he has the right of cursing even the chief. His function is *hereditary*. His father Malubatilo was in charge of the nyokwekulu before him. The law of succession is this ; when the elder brother dies, the position is held by his younger brother. The headmen of the tribe box his ears and say to him : "You will be the master of the medicine! Take great care of it." When all the brothers are dead, it passes to the sons.

So, when the right time of the year has come, the chief consults the bones. The first thing to do is to send messengers all over the country to find a *forked branch*, a "shiphandje," to which the calabash containing the medicines will be hung.

644/789 When they have chosen it—it must be the stem of a nkonono tree—they cut it and bring it back to the capital. In front walks the master of the ceremonies, Godlela, and behind him four men carrying the shiphandje. Those who accompany them have the right of entering the villages and stealing fowls. Woe to those who meet with this troop! They will be relieved of all they carry, "because the forked branch of the great medicine of the chief is taboo."

644/789/826/237 The sacred branch having duly reached the capital, Godlela proceeds to the second operation, the *burning of the drugs*. Mboza saw the magician take pieces of skin cut from buffaloes, lions, hyenas, elans, panthers, snakes of various kinds and, last but not least, from the bodies of men, enemies killed in the wars: part of the skin of the forehead, the heart, the diaphragm, the nails, a finger, some ears... All these are roasted 644/789 in a large pot. On some mats are spread various magical roots cut into small pieces; these are also thrown into the pot. The chief and all the sub-chiefs approach and, with hollow reeds, inhale and swallow the vapour and the smoke which emanates from it (1).

The preparation of the great medicine having been sucessfully accomplished, the great drum (nhumburi) of the capital is brought on to the square, and everybody dances, even women, who take assagais in their hands and sing: "We are thankful if we die (hi tlangela ku fa)" viz., "The country is in security, our invincible medicine is ready! We shall not be killed by enemies 644/789/782 but will die a natural death." Before extinguishing the fire which was used to roast the medicines, Godlela takes a little water, pours it on the glowing embers and, when it vaporises with the customary sound, he emits the sacramental *tsu* and prays to his gods, the departed spirits of the Tlhaltha family, as doctors always do, in order to obtain their blessing on the nyokwekulu.

618 (1) The Hlewane sub-clan, which revolted many times against the legal chief and succeeded by its intrigues in provoking the war of 1894, after which it became the reigning family of Nondwane, used to abstain from participating in this "swallowing of the smoke," because, in former years, it had been defeated by Maphunga's people and some of its men killed; their flesh had been used in the concoction of the nyokwekulu. So they feared to go and inhale the odour of their fellow clansmen.

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CHAPTER III

THE COURT AND TRIBUNAL.

644 Although Royalty makes but little display amongst the Ba-Ronga, still each chief is the centre of a court of more or less brilliancy.

A. THE VILLAGE OF THE CHIEF.

644 466 The village in which he resides is not called *muti* (as is the case with the ordinary hamlets of his subjects), but *ntsindja*, that is "the capital." It is generally larger than the ordinary villages, is built by the young men of the tribe, after the marriage of the chief, and is also kept in repair by them, one of their principal duties being to keep the public square in a state of constant cleanliness and to weed it at certain seasons of the year.

644 One of my countrymen, Dr. J. de Montmollin, visited the capital of the Tembe clan in July 1900 and took some interesting photographs of it. The whole village was surrounded by a high and thorny circular fence, much stronger than is the case with ordinary kraals. The inside of the fence was divided into two parts ; the front part, to which the main entrance gave access, and the back part with the huts of the queens. The front part was the square (hubo and bandla) with shady trees, under which visitors were sitting ; there was only one hut on it, on the left side near the fence ; the back part comprised the huts of the queens, which were separated from the square by a high wall of reeds, carefully built, and in which only a few narrow entrances were left. The traveller was told that access to this kind of gynecium was taboo for all

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

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Phot. Dr J. de Montmollin.

Main gate of the Tembe capital.

Phot. Dr J. de Montmollin.

The "lubo," square of the Tembe capital
(The huts of the queens in the background, behind the reed wall).

644 the men. However he was allowed to visit it Behind these huts were two passages between poles carefully arranged, one leading to the pig-sties, another to the bush. The photographer was told that this was intended to secure an exit for the queens in case of war... I suppose it had a more common and practical use in every day life! They are the *pairuba* of the queens (p. 311). In the royal kraal these back entrances are taboo.

517 It is on the square that the men of the neighbourhood love

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Phot. D' J. de Montmollin

Back gate with hen-house.

to meet in the morning, when they come to pay their respects to the chief; they sit down in groups and discuss the news of the day; this is called, as we have seen, "ku ya bandla," "to go to the men's square." Everyone is welcome there, not only members of the reigning family, but also those of the clans conquered by the present chiefs, (as the Honwana, Mahlangwane etc., in
273 Nondwane. Page 357). There is no lack of beer, made from
517 maize or millet, when crops have been good, the women frequently bringing brimming jars to the capital; the daily visits
644 of the men are not therefore altogether disinterested.

B. COURT PERSONAGES.

644 Amongst those most frequently seen at the Court, must be mentioned the Counsellors, the Favourites, the Herald and the Official Vituperator.

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Phot. Dr J. de Montmollin.

Back gate.

The Counsellors.

645 The Counsellors, tindjuna (1), constitute a Cabinet which assists the chief in carrying on the functions of Royalty. There are several grades of these functionaries; first the Principal Counsellors (letikulu) whose province it is to discuss and decide

(1) The Zulu word *induna* is well known and has been more or less adopted in current speech in South Africa. The Thonga form is ndjuna, pl. tindjuna. I employ both these forms indiscriminately.

645 If these men are intelligent, they acquire great influence with the chief and may even be able to impose their will upon him. This was the case in September 1894, when the young king Ñwamantibyane was prevented by his counsellors from obeying the summons of the Portuguese Government, who claimed his assistance in fighting Mahazule (See App. XI). They often act as a useful counterpoise to the autocratic power of the chief.

Lastly we find another category of Counsellors, those appointed by the chief in the various districts to act as overseers or magistrates, to adjudicate the petty differences of the people; they must refer to the capital all important affairs (timhaka), the quarrels which the head of the village is unable to settle, and all matters which can only be judged by the chief, to whom they are of the greatest assistance in his decisions, being past masters in the art of Bantu reasoning.

The tindjuna are thus a complete organisation, as necessary to the chief as they are to the orderly development of tribal life.

II. *The Favourites, or Messengers.*

646 When the chief is crowned while still young, he gathers around him a circle of personal friends of his own age who are called *tinxekua*. This is a Zulu word, and it would seem that this custom has been borrowed from the Zulu court procedure. In Ronga they are called *tinyumi*, which means messengers, and they generally build a *lao*, viz., a bachelor's house, near the capital, to be ready to answer any call. They partake in the games of their royal comrade and also in his feasts, but they have no official authority.

III. *The Herald.*

On one occasion I happened to be the guest, together with one of my colleagues, of the chief Ñwamantibyane, long before there was any question of the war of Lourenço Marques. Stretched in

644 our hammocks, which we had fixed to the roof inside a hut placed at our disposal for the night, we were trying to sleep when, about 4 a. m., we were awakened by an extraordinary sound; it was in a very high key, words sung, shouted, volubly and monotonously, in fact a most peculiar and never-to-be-forgotten musical production! Further sleep was impossible, and for more than half an hour we were obliged to submit to this ear-splitting performance:

"Yethi (Bayete), we hosi, wene shitlangu sho ringana tilo, mathathala i tinyeleti, nkungu wa shone i hweti! We! nkandji wa ku wona, ku baleka minambyana!" — "Bahete! O chief! You shield us as heaven! The marks of this shield are like the stars! You who trample dry ground so that rivers at once spring forth!"

644 826 It was the *mbongi wa ku pfusha*, the herald sounding the reveille; an individual who has "the chest well developed," as they say in Ronga, which does not mean that he is sound in the wind and possesses healthy lungs, but that he is a man of great eloquence. In our tribe the chest (pectus) is held to be the seat of knowledge 644 and of the gift of oratory! Every morning, before sunrise, this royal flatterer comes to the door of the chief's hut and sings the glorious deeds of his ancestors, recalling their names and acts of prowess; to these praises, he adds a general disparagement (sandja) of the chief himself, referring to him as a coward, a child in comparison with his father, his grandfather and all his noble deceased progeniters. "Lead us to battle! Show us what you can do!" And the chief must be awakened every day by this strange concert, which sometimes lasts for hours!

The flatterer likes to accompany his chief when he goes to visit the Whites. In front of the offices of the Municipal Council of Lourenço Marques, I once witnessed the arrival of Sigaole, chief of Matjolo, who came thither to look at Gungunyana, taken prisoner by the Portuguese in January 1896; his *mbongi* was among his following. This was an old man, named Mabobo. Dressed up in a jacket, by no means too clean, and with a cap on his head, he yelled the praises of the royal family of Matjolo; this was in Zulu and doubtless in a special terminology.

644 He shouted like a madman and no one took the slightest notice of him!

When the chief kills an ox and possibly some little delay occurs in distributing the meat, the *mbongi* is the duly qualified beggar who goes to claim the soldiers' share. He addresses the chief much as follows : "Don't you see all those men in your village ? Are they not dogs ? Why do you starve us ? You only give meat to the women... Is it women who will defend you when the enemies attack you ? etc. etc." At the coronation of the chiefs it is this herald who sings their praises in the procession I have already described. Strange to say, the *mbongi* is allowed great licence and may even insult the chief without provoking his anger ; on the contrary, the herald is respected and a special portion of meat is reserved for him. Any one can aspire to the office provided he be sufficiently garrulous.

The most eloquent of the Thonga heralds whom I ever met is Mawewe, the mbongi of the Nkuna clan. He was an elderly man in 1900 and had a long career behind him, having been the mbongi of Manukosi. "I used to praise him from morn to night (ndji peta dambu) and he gave me a heifer as a reward." As the French writer Buffon used to put on his cuffs before writing, so Mawewe, when he intended to praise his chief Muhlaba, adorned himself with the tail of the nsimango antelope, with the feathers of the nkulunkulu (the bird of the chiefs) and of the eagle, with the skins of snakes, of the reed buck, and of the leopard, and with the nails, teeth, or hair of elephants, rhinoceros and hippopotamus ; then he began :

644 539 Muhlaba Shiluvane, (1) you are like the rhinoceros who seizes a man, bites him through and through, rolls him over and cuts him in two! You are like the crocodile which lives in water ; it bites a man! You are like its claws ; it seizes a man by his arms and legs, it drags him into the deep pool to eat him at sunset ; it watches over the entrance to prevent other crocodiles from taking its prey... Muhlaba! You are like the ram ; when it butts with its head, it knocks a man down ; like a goat, like the son of the goat, which is herded by the boys,

(1) Father of Muhlaba.

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which is very cunning: it pricks up its ears, it prepares itself for defence, when attacked!

Tail of mainwange, you are like Muhlaba, you are of a great beauty, you are shining inside the forest, the black forest, you are sparkling, hati-hati-hati, (1) a man may truly fear when he sees you!

Give them meat, that they may all eat! Give your men the foreleg,

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Muhlaba, the Chief of the Nkuna clan. *Phot. A. Burd.*

give them the hindleg, that they may all eat to their hearts' content... Pull their legs forward (ha koke milenge), so that they fall back in terror of you!

Why do you govern them so mildly! Look at them with terrible

(1) Descriptive adverb.

644/237 eyes! You are a coward! The Bveshas want to kill you! Act with bravery and defend yourself!

Muhlaba Dabuka! Men are coming, oxen are coming. You are on the top of the hills, you are like heaven which roars... The lightning is like you, it is full of strength, it is terrible! Your saliva is white, your eyes are beaming, your face is elongated, your body is like the stone of gold (auriferous quartz); your fingers are long. You are known in every country. At Gungunyana, they know you. At Ngwana (Swaziland), they know you. The Zulus know you! At Mosilakatse, they know you. You are like the grass on the road; when people trample on it, they crush it to the ground, but when the rain comes, it grows again and covers the earth. You are like the water of the river, how beautiful! The water is clear and pure, though impurities may float upon it, they pass away and the water is pure again!

The Bveshas weep at Sikokoro's kraal! (1) They weep at Sikhuchuru's! You have taken their charms! You have sprinkled your warriors with them. Muhlaba, you have beaten them with the shaft of the assagay, your men crossed the river, they went to kill the enemies in their own kraal!

You are like the ostrich feather, the white one, very white, or the red one of the bird which cries tswe-tswe, the bird called rivi, which adorns the chiefs!

At Nyarin, (2) they dispute chieftainship (banga buhosi); they are going to kill each other. Mapeakomo says: "It is mine!" Muholo says: "It is mine!" Shirundju (3) took him (Muhlaba) in his arms... Mankhelu is like the duiker antelope! They catch him by the ear and he escapes from their hands! He is like the water of the well: they draw it off... it springs up again and fills up the well. (Viz., Mankhelu is never tired when defending the cause of Muhlaba.)

Run, go and tell Mandlamakulu, Shiluvane's brother: "The

(1) In 1901, there was a Native war in which Muhlaba and the Pedi chief Maaghe fought against their neighbour Sikwawo and his ally Sikhukhukhu, heir of Sekukuni. On the 7th of November a fierce battle took place in Shiluvane where the assailants were repulsed and more than forty of them were killed. (See App. X)

(2) Here Mawewe makes an allusion to the circumstances in which Muhlaba took over the chieftainship and which have been explained when dealing with the law of succession. The capital of the tribe was still at Nyarin, at that time, viz., in the hills near New Agatha. (See page 413.)

(3) One of the great counsellors who took the part of Muhlaba as did also Mashiabe and Shikhlhane.

644 539 power belongs to me." Run, go and tell Mpapalati: "The power is mine." Run, go and tell Mulondjo: "The power is mine!" (1)

Such is the laudatory song of Mawewe, one of the great men at the Nkuna court. Undoubtedly this is one of the best examples of Thonga poetry and a characteristic piece of primitive literature. In the savage tribe the mbongi is the prototype of the poet laureate of civilised Courts. But there is yet another functionary to be considered, whose duties are still more strange than those of the herald.

IV. *The Public Vituperator.*

(Shitale sha tiko.)

644 522 578 This is a kind of Court Jester who has the right of casting the vilest insults, the most disgraceful accusations in the teeth of any and all the Natives of the country. He never abuses strangers, but as long as he confines his vituperations to his own countrymen, he enjoys perfect immunity.

Even the chief is not safe from his attacks; he dares to say anything! "Just see him arriving in your village," said Tobane to me, in his picturesque language. "He begins shouting out the most frightful things. He accuses you of incest, of taking your own sisters as wives! Even if he sees you talking to your 'great sister-in-law,' whom your wife's brother married with your oxen, whom you treat with the greatest respect, he will not hesitate to pass remarks which will make you blush with shame! He will go and take the food you are cooking, will even snatch from the chief's hands the meat he is eating... So, when you see him coming to your village, you hasten to meet him and take him a present to try and avoid having to listen to his horrible insults. Sometimes the *shitale* of the country behaves

(1) Quotation of the words of Mzilikazi himself, who sent messengers to all his uncles, to all the petty chiefs under him, to announce officially that he had assumed the chieftainship.

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himself quite nicely, stays in his own village and attends the national assemblies as quietly as any other person, but, once he begins to rattle off his vituperations, beware! Nothing will stop him! He respects nothing, human or divine!" The Court Jester is of undoubted Thonga origin, as old as the tribe itself, according to Tobane. The position is official and even hereditary. At Zihlahla it was Ñwachapane who held the extraordinary post of Public Vituperator. In Nondwane it was Mutjunkwa of the Shibindji family. He insulted the chief with the word : "Musathanyoko.". There was also a woman who dared to do the same to Maphunga.

Phot. P. Bethend.
Mohwele, the dwarf.

It is difficult to understand the raison d'être of this strange institution. Is the *shitale* a public censor, to whom the tribe entrusts the privilege of calling attention to facts which others would not dare to bring to light ? Is there some analogy between this "fool" of an African Court and Triboulet ? (1) I cannot say.

(1) In this connection I reproduce from a photograph, taken at Shilouane in 1885, the portrait of a remarkable personage who was not a Thonga but a Pedi, a subject of the chief Maughe. Although this extraordinary dwarf did not act officially as the Vituperator, he was widely famed for his witty sayings and his incomparable mimicry. The Native Commissioner took him to Pretoria and Johannesburg some years ago as a curiosity, and it seems that he was exhibited for money! The name of this little man is Mohwele, a veritable ethnographic phenomenon, although he is not exactly the Public Vituperator of the country.

C. SUNDRY COURT CUSTOMS

644 The paraphernalia of royalty are very modest in the Thonga courts. However there are some to be mentioned in addition to the regalia which I have described.

I. *The Big Drum* (Muntshintshi).

644 534 237 This is found in every capital, even sometimes in the sub-chief's villages. It is made of a hollowed stem, somewhat like an ordinary mortar; or it may be rounded, and even provided with three legs, as in Nondwane; a piece of skin is stretched over the opening. This may be the skin of an elephant's ear, of a buffalo, of an ox or of an antelope *mongulwe*. This instrument is subject to some taboos; when the skin cracks, it is forbidden to look inside. There is something mysterious about it and nobody must disclose that mystery. People say that a bullet is introduced into it when it is made. In Shiluvane they asserted that the skull of the hostile chief, Sikororo, killed in the battle of Nov. 1901, had been put into the big drum! At any rate, there is a special individual who is summoned to repair it and he receives a fowl as reward.

644 534 731 202 The big drum is beaten on various occasions:

a) To announce a great fatality, especially the death of a chief, or the day of the publication of the mourning; also the approach of the inundation, when the Nkomati river rises, in January or February, and threatens to cover the whole land; again when the bush fire threatens to destroy the capital.

b) To summon warriors to the capital in case of imminent war.

644 534 c) To execute various musical performances. The big drum leads a special dance (nkino), which takes place at the capital during the winter, when the harvest is ended, and the country happy and prosperous. It is accompanied by a smaller drum (shikolombane) which is called the "son" of the big one. The

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

644 534 *shikolombane* is more elongated and has no legs. Its sound is high and piercing, while the tone of the *muntshintshi* is deep and low. The music proper of this dance is provided by the *bunanga*.

II. *The Bunanga.*

533 644 This is the regular *band*, which is met with in every royal clan. The word comes from *nanga*, trumpet (pl. tinanga). But the trumpets composing the bunanga are not the common pierced tibias of goats used by the herdboys. They are larger horns of the mhalamhala (Hippotragus Niger), or of the mhala (Zulu impala), pierced at their base in such a way that they produce different tones. These instruments are made by specialists, (it was Nwamatshomane in Nondwane), so as to form a kind of orchestra (simo) composed of ten instruments. To play them is a veritable art. The players stand round the two drumbeaters. The big drum gives the time : when it beats slowly, "tu-tu-tu," the ten musicians must dance in a ring, viz., they must march after each other, playing, making certain grimaces and gesticulations. When the drum beats more slowly and more softly, they must retire in a line and march slowly. The drum quickens the time : then they come to the centre once more and dance in a ring, quicker and quicker. The executants follow each other in a given order, the largest and deepest horn being in front, the smallest and highest toned one at the end of the group. Sometimes three or four orchestras perform at the same time (1).

The bunanga is an old Ronga custom and is very picturesque indeed. As for its musical importance, I shall refer to it again in Part V.

533 609 (1) I remember having heard the bunanga practising in the various sub-class of Nondwane in 1891, as each sub-chief had his own. They were preparing to go to the capital to mourn Maphunga whose death had just been announced. I saw the bunanga performing its best melodies before Lord Selborne, when he came to pay a visit to the Portuguese settlement of Morakwen in 1906. The Administrator had organised a "batuque" for him (the name given by the Portuguese to these native dances), and the warriors of Nondwane did their best to interest the White Chiefs!

533 fight, when returned from battle, as well as those sung during the march of the troop. I give the striking music of some of these in the next chapter. Tune 24 is the "Sabela nkosi" the great Mpfumo song, also adopted by other clans. Tune 25, with its splendid change from the minor to the major key, is the Tembe and Maputju classical war song. No. 29 is an old Nkuna war song, dating as far back as 1820, before the Zulu invasion ; No. 27 is the principal modern Nkuna song, and
535 No. 28 the Nkuna equivalent to the Ronga *Giraffe song*. These old chants are sung to the accompaniment of the military dance, which consists in trampling on the ground, while rhythmically brandishing the assagais, lifting them first to the right, then to the left, bending them sideways, then downwards, as if to pierce (I. p. 463). They are certainly wonderfully fine compositions.

533 I include in the same category the laudatory song of the *mbongi*
826 (I. p. 424), a branch of literature in which Court poets display
644 considerable imagination and an extraordinary gift for unbounded hyperbole. All the important chiefs have their mbongi and it is required of the man holding this office that he should have a good chest (shifuba), the chest being to the Thongas the seat of eloquence (as it was to the ancient Romans : Pectus est quod oratorem facit!). The elucubrations of these poet laureates sometimes last a very long time and may have real poetic value.

614 As we saw (I. p. 361) each clan and even each family
553 possesses its own laudatory phrase ; this is the *shibongo*, a word which generally means family name, but which etymologically signifies the formula by which the clan or family glorifies (bonga) itself. These formulae are usually short and often contain archaic expressions or allusions to unknown facts which make them very difficult to understand. I have given some of those from the Ronga territory. Here are two others, collected by the Rev. A. Jaques amongst the Transvaal Thongas, who seem to cultivate this custom more than the coast clans ; they are perhaps encouraged to do so by their Pedi neighbours, who are very fond of these formulae, called by them *mireto*.

301 and knocked out of shape by a blow or if its owner goes through
883 thorny bushes. A *khehla* who has some self-respect will frequently
554 polish and repair this valuable ornament, for it is a sign of mature
482 age. He who has been ordered by the chief to wear it no longer
645 carries burdens on his head; his crown would be spoilt! He will
461 be accompanied by a boy who carries his parcels; he himself will only carry his stick or his assagai. He will at once be known as one of the mature men of the tribe. This is not to say that the mere fact of wearing the *ngiyana* gives the right of taking part in the important affairs of the country; the counsellors alone possess this right; but from amongst the "crowned," will be chosen the man who is sent to another chief to treat of political questions, for instance.

301 When the hair grows (for, though it is curly, it may become long), the crown rises with it and becomes more or less unsteady, which must be most uncomfortable! The best thing would be to cut the ornament off and then replace it. Mr. Mandjia, one of our neighbours at Rikatla, was probably too lazy to undertake this job, so he put a small red handkerchief between his skull and the crown to prevent it from wobbling.

765 At a certain time all the *ngiyana* disappeared from the land of
643 Nondwane. The chief Mapunga was dead! The loss, kept
554 secret for a year, had been made public, and the law requires all the
885 mature men to take off their crowns when the sovereign of the country is dead. They take the wax from the frame, and make a ball of it; this they fix on a little stick, and place this stick in the roof of their hut above the door. The frame is hung up quite close by, and they leave these objects there till the new chief orders his subjects to re-make their crowns. This shows clearly that the crowning custom is in close relation with the national life of the tribe. The "makhehla" also form special battalions in the army.

178 Nowadays, however, this custom is not observed as religiously
554 as in bygone times. Life is harder, one must go and earn pounds sterling in the port of Lourenço Marques, or in the gold mines, and one can no longer indulge in a lazy life! It may therefore happen that a poor man will refuse to wear the crown, and say to

643 Gigiseka. The last named was very courageous, and the cunning Maphunga succeeded in poisoning him treacherously, through the agency of a dissolute woman.

E. DEATH.

643 When a chief has grown very old, he no longer goes out of
[763] the royal hut. His counsellors take his place in the management
766 of affairs and he dies surrounded by mystery. It must be so, as his death must remain unknown during a whole year. "We reap and we bow down (korama)" viz. "we till the ground and reap again before the event is made public (palusha)" says Mankhelu.

So the chief is buried during the night ; no lamentations are heard ; his wives and his grave-diggers undergo the purification ceremonies and take the vapour baths in secret. It may be that the wives who dwell in remote places will not hear a word of their husband's death. The fire of the royal hut will not be kindled in the usual and ritual way, but it will be kept burning the whole year. The decease is formally announced to some few individuals, to the White Government officials, to the heir (who views the corpse), and to the counsellors, but the rest of the country is supposed to be in ignorance of the occurrence. Of course the secret will not be kept absolutely. The truth will leak out... But no one will dare to speak openly on the subject (1).

643 A special hut is set apart into which the counsellors enter under
645 pretext of discussing matters of state with the chief, who is said to be very ill and unable to show himself. As a matter of fact, he has been buried for some time.

(1) I was staying at Nondwane when Mapunga, the chief who preceded Mahazule, died, and I heard on several occasions, in June and July 1891, the warriors practising on their antelope horns the airs to be played when the mourning should be made public. The death must have occurred during 1890, but nothing was said about it. After the news had been published, Mangasyele, a young heathen of the district of Libombo, remarked to me one day: "When last season (about Xmas 1890) we saw the miphimbi (trees bearing fruit similar to an apricot) so heavily laden with fruit, (there had been an exceptionally heavy crop), we felt sure the chief must have died and that he had sent us this plentiful supply.." A typical remark, aptly illustrating the semi-ignorance in which the tribe is kept of the death of the chief.

643 What is the reason for this silence ? According to the old
643 men I consulted, it is to prevent enemies taking advantage of the
766 confusion consequent on the death of the chief to attack the country. Undoubtedly this custom is also intended to give the principal counsellors time to prepare for the installation of the new chief and to prevent bloody contests.

643 The grave of the chief does not differ from those of his subjects.
766 As it has been dug secretly in the sacred wood (ntimu), its whereabouts are not known to most of the people. In some clans or sub-clans the earth of the tumulus is levelled, so that no sign whatever remains to show where the body has been buried. This is said to be done in order to prevent enemies from exhuming the corpse and cutting off the ears, the diaphragm and other parts of the body to make powerful war-charms (See Chapter IV). The graves of the chiefs of Nondwane are said to be invisible, just like the hut of the nyokwekulu. They are known by Magomanyana alone (Mboza). (Magomanyana is the nearest relative of the late Maphunga, the only brother whom he spared).

When the year of secrecy is over, the official proclamation of the mourning is made. (Ba palusha nkosi.) The people come to the capital, clan after clan, sounding their fanfares on trumpets of antelope horns (bunanga, see Chapter III), and bringing with them an ox or a goat. These animals are slaughtered and their bladders are presented to the heir, who pins them into his hair, so that, without any official proclamation having been made, every warrior at once recognises the future chief. All heads are shaven in sign of mourning, the adult men remove their wax crown (p. 129) and the people are clothed in *malopa* (a blue cloth) ; but as the death is not of recent date and has been known more or less for some time, the outward manifestations of grief are reduced to a minimum and dances follow in their train. The delegates from the adjoining countries also come to express their condolences. When all have paid their respects, the mourning is really ended (nkosi wu yu !). The King is dead, long live the King !

As we saw, amongst the Nkunas the proclamation of the death of a chief is made on the same day as the installation of his successor.

B. COURT PERSONAGES.

644 Amongst those most frequently seen at the Court, must be mentioned the Counsellors, the Favourites, the Herald and the Official Vituperator.

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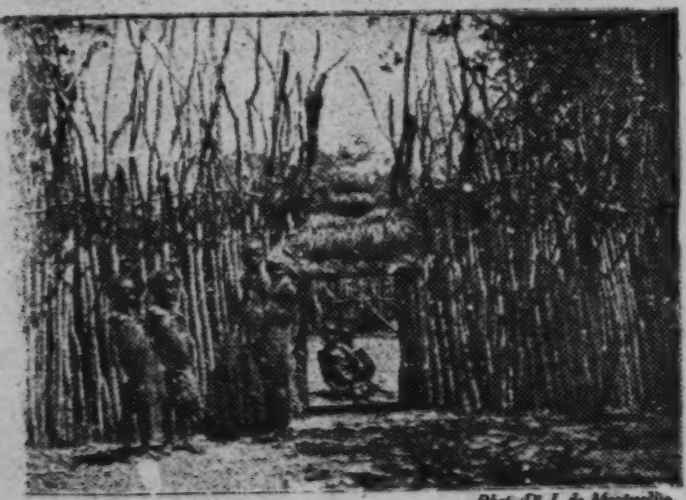


Phot. Dr J. de Montmollin.

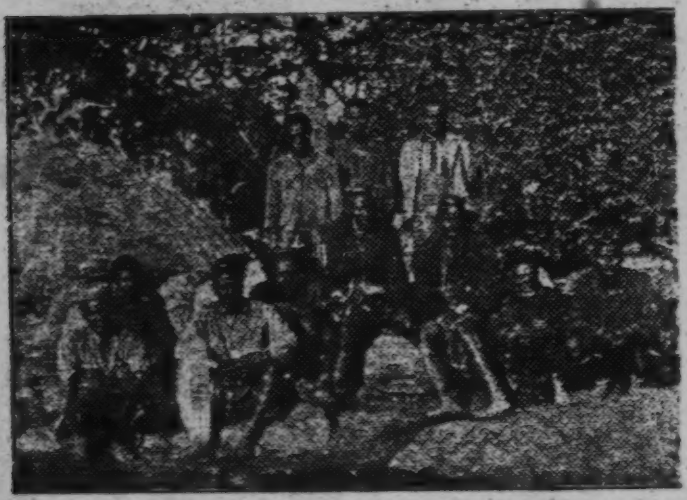
Back gate.

The Counsellors.

645 The Counsellors, tindjuna (1), constitute a Cabinet which assists the chief in carrying on the functions of Royalty. There are several grades of these functionaries; first the Principal Counsellors (letikulu) whose province it is to discuss and decide

(1) The Zulu word *induna* is well known and has been more or less adopted in current speech in South Africa. The Thonga form is ndjuna, pl. tindjuna. I employ both these forms indiscriminately.

645 the more serious questions which affect the country. These are generally the uncles of the chief, or men of riper age from the collateral branches of his family. In Nondwane, during the war of 1894, it was Magomanyana and Mundulukele, brothers of the late Maphunga, uncles of the then reigning chief Mahazule, and later on Ñwakubyele, who had charge of the interests of the eastern portion of the country, together with Ñwambalane.



Sandum, Chief of the Mahlele clan, with his Counsellors (N.E. Transvaal).

These tindjuna watch over the chief, and have the right of finding fault with him if they are not satisfied with his conduct.

In the second place come the Military Counsellors, the Generals of the army (tindjuna ta yimpi) who direct fighting operations, (Shitleñwana in Nondwane, Mpompi and Mahagane in Zihlahla).

Then there are Counsellors who are especially entrusted with the business of the adjoining countries, whom we might call Agents General, one being appointed to represent each country. We have already seen that these officials form an indispensable link in the diplomatic, and even in the matrimonial relations, between one kingdom and another.

645 If these men are intelligent, they acquire great influence with the chief and may even be able to impose their will upon him. This was the case in September 1894, when the young king Ñwamantibyane was prevented by his counsellors from obeying the summons of the Portuguese Government, who claimed his assistance in fighting Mahazule (See App. XI). They often act as a useful counterpoise to the autocratic power of the chief.

Lastly we find another category of Counsellors, those appointed by the chief in the various districts to act as overseers or magistrates, to adjudicate the petty differences of the people; they must refer to the capital all important affairs (timhaka), the quarrels which the head of the village is unable to settle, and all matters which can only be judged by the chief, to whom they are of the greatest assistance in his decisions, being past masters in the art of Bantu reasoning.

The tindjuna are thus a complete organisation, as necessary to the chief as they are to the orderly development of tribal life.

II. *The Favourites, or Messengers.*

644 177 When the chief is crowned while still young, he gathers around him a circle of personal friends of his own age who are called *tinxekwa*. This is a Zulu word, and it would seem that this custom has been borrowed from the Zulu court procedure. In Ronga they are called *tinyumi*, which means messengers, and they generally build a *lao*, viz., a bachelor's house, near the capital, to be ready to answer any call. They partake in the games of their royal comrade and also in his feasts, but they have no official authority.

III. *The Herald.*

On one occasion I happened to be the guest, together with one of my colleagues, of the chief Ñwamantibyane, long before there was any question of the war of Lourenço Marques. Stretched in

202/726 will at once go and undo the trap which is on their side ; in the morning, the people of Nondwane will know that they must also fly.

D. THE TRIBUNAL OF THE CHIEF.

642 In the Thonga Court there is no separation of powers. The legislative, executive, and judicial powers are all in the hands of the chief, aided by his counsellors. The chief is the supreme authority and his decisions are without appeal.

I. *Legislative affairs.*

671 The *chief* makes the laws (p. 382) and presides at discussions
643 which end in a resolution. But his counsellors assist him.
583 Here is an example of such a decision taken at Maphunga's court. There was no uniformity as to the money to be paid for a lobolo, and some fathers claimed as much as £ 20 or £ 30 for their daughters. The great counsellors of the capital decided (tjimba mhaka, viz., to tie the matter) that a lobolo should be £ 15.10 as the maximum. They "tied the matter" with the assent of the chief. Then all the sub-chiefs and counsellors were summoned to the capital. The chief called the roll to ascertain if they were all present. The great counsellor then said to the assembly : "The herds which people claim are too large. Have you gold mines and do you know how to make coins ? Henceforth do not lobola with too much money. £ 15.10 is quite enough!" Every sub-chief, on his return home, called his men and informed them of the decision : "Hi to timhaka! Such are the matters!" said they. The subjects were disappointed. They wept! But they had to accept the decision. To oppose it is taboo! "Psa yila!"

643 A *native debate* or discussion is conducted on very different
645/671 lines from those to which we are generally accustomed, nothing ever being put to the vote. The chief presides. A proposition is

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

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put forward in short sentences, generally interrogative, by one of the counsellors. The assembly listens in silence until the mover concludes with an energetic "Ahina," being the equivalent of "That's all right." (See p. 354.) Another individual elaborates the matter further, saying: "Did you not hear what he said? He said so and so." This is the way of seconding the motion. The debate proceeds, and, little by little, objections are brought forward and the assembly comes to a decision.

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It often happens that the chief does not say a word; when he see that the counsellors are agreed and if he has no objection, he merely shows his assent by nodding his head. So the decision is arrived at without his intervention and without any vote being taken. The voice of the majority has not been ascertained by any show of hands, but it is generally perceived by intuition in a very remarkable way, and grave counsellors, who have been squatting in a circle all through the discussion, jump to their feet and disperse, knowing perfectly well what has been decided. If however the counsellors do not agree, they put the matter into the hands of the chief, and the chief, after having listened to the arguments pro and con, "cuts the matter" (tjema mhaka) by some short sentences, after which everybody must shout the royal salutation: "Bayete!"

Phot. A. Burd.
An habitué of the Nkuna Court.

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When there are two parties present, the debate is conducted according to other rules. For instance, if a stranger wishes to have speech with a chief or to proffer some request, he is generally accompanied by a counsellor. The chief, together with some of his men, receives him either in the hut, if the affair must

be secret, or on the square, if there is no objection to making it public. The chief and his men sit on one side, the visitor on the other; if he wishes to conform strictly to all the laws of etiquette, he will first explain the matter to his own Agent General, who will communicate with the chief's special counsellor, repeating the words of the visitor, sentence by sentence; the counsellor will, in his turn, communicate with the chief, again telling him the whole story, as if he had not heard a word of it before. The affair will thus have passed through three hands and the answer should, in due formality, be given through the same channels. These precautions, which seem eminently superfluous, even somewhat ridiculous, to a person unacquainted with Bantu etiquette, evidently proceed from the fact that there are no stenographers or secretaries to furnish any written record of the proceedings, so that it is necessary to have as many witnesses as possible and that these should thoroughly understand the matter under consideration.

II. *Judicial Cases.*

1) Sense of justice.

As has often been remarked, the Bantus possess a strong sense of justice. They believe in social order and in the observance of the laws and, though these laws are not written, they are universal and perfectly well known. The law is the custom, that which has always been done. The old men, the counsellors and more particularly the counsellors of the capital, are those who can speak authoritatively. But everybody is welcome in the *hubo*, where matters are discussed; even a stranger can take part in the discussion. "No one is excluded, if he speaks rightly; only fools, those who do not know anything" (Mankhelu).

This participation in the discussions of the hubo has developed the sense of law to a wonderful extent amongst the Bantus. They are all born advocates and judges, and take a great interest in this business! No wonder therefore that the Thonga vocabulary

In Shiluvane, I was in a very favorable
582 position to judge of the real feelings of the Thongas. There
177 were two tribes there, which had been living side by side for
609 more than seventy years, tribes united by old friendship and
648 military alliance, viz., the Nkuna clan of the Thongas and the Khaha clan of the Pedis. I did not see a single case of intermarriage between them. The difference of language could not account for the fact, because generally speaking, all the men could speak both Thonga and Pedi. When asked why they did not contract unions with the Pedis, the Nkunas answered : "Their customs are too disgusting for us." They meant more especially the freedom with which Khaha women commit adultery. Pedis would probably have made the same objection to the immorality of Thonga boys and girls. Whatever may be the cause, they have not intermarried up to this day.

582 On the other hand the Thongas are *exogamic* as regards the family. To understand properly these exogamic rules, let us classify the cases in the four following categories : Cases of absolute prohibition of marriage ; of conditional permission ; of unconditional permission, and cases in which marriage is recommended.

I. *Cases of absolute prohibition.*

582 As a rule marriage is prohibited between a tatana, mamana,
605 rarana and a ñwana, and between bamakwabu.

On the father's side the prohibition is particularly severe. Amongst the Ba-Ronga, it is taboo for a boy to marry a girl when both can lay claim to a common ancestor in the paternal line. It seems that the rule is not so stringent in the Northern clans. According to Mankhelu, marriage is absolutely prohibited between all the descendants of a grandfather, viz., between first cousins. Between second cousins it is permitted conditionally, "by killing the family tie," and between third cousins it is allowed. "Third cousins" as Mankhelu says, "are *batlandlamani ba tolo* ; they belong to families which were relatives yesterday. We are

643 766 701 ation of his successor. All the regiments of the army are summoned, together with groups of warriors delegated by foreign clans. The mourning ceremonies are first performed. (See later on). Then, at the end of the afternoon, says Mankhelu, the great counsellors send a herald to the circle of warriors. He shouts: "Khaula!" viz., "keep silent!" The new chief comes out of the hut and stands alone in the midst of the circle. "Do you see him," says the herald... "It is the chief!" — "Who is he?" ask the warriors, who wish to know his new name. — "It is Muhlaba Dabuka," he answered, when the present Nkuna chief was proclaimed. Formerly his name was Shikuna. Now he adopted this new name, borrowed from one of the Ngoni chiefs of Bilen. "He who wants to fight, can fight," he adds. This is an invitation to those who wish to protest against the coronation to state the fact plainly. When Muhlaba was proclaimed, the Masakomo family left the capital in anger, as they thought they were deprived of their right. (See later on.) Such an occurrence is not rare owing to the irregularities which so frequently take place in the succession.

If the chief is still a child he is carried on a shield, or put on the roof of a hut, so that everybody may see him.

In the Ronga clans the ceremony is conducted as follows. Let me describe it with all the details supplied by Tobane.

643 609 648 First of all sacrifices are made to the gods to ask that this ceremony may pass off quietly, happily, without quarrelling, and then the date is fixed. Invitations are sent to the surrounding little kingdoms, or at least to all those who are on friendly relations with the tribe. For instance, supposing the installation to be that of the chief of Mpfumo, invitations would be sent to Maputju, Tembe, Matjolo, Nondwane, Ñwamba and Shirinda. Manyisa and Ntimane are regarded as "being of a different mind" (moya muñwana), and "good will only reaches as far as the river Nkomati," to give a literal translation of the expression used by my informant; this means that relations with the more distant countries are hardly those of even ordinary civility. The warriors of the invited tribes assemble, in greater or smaller numbers; sometimes only a few delegates attend, but they do not proceed at once to the capital. Etiquette requires that each one should

643 on good and friendly terms. Should relations between them be
609 at all strained, or should war be imminent, all the roads would be
574 closed and no one allowed to enter the capital.

V. *The Kondza custom.*

641 The chief is also approached by those who may wish to become
643 subject to him, to be naturalized ; this is called *kondza*, from a Zulu word conveying this meaning. The chief will assign to the new *nandja* a dwelling place, and he will be incorporated in the nation without further ceremony. By this kondza, he binds himself to pay the taxes (See the story of Mutipi. *Les chants et les contes des Ba-Ronga*, page 164).

Naturalised strangers, however, do not eat the first fruits (luma) with the same drug as the people of the country. They have their own medicine and take it according to their own rules. They are however forbidden to luma before the chief of their adopted land (p. 397).

VI. *Diplomatic relations.*

648 We have seen that these are very carefully conducted, each
202 of the neighbouring clans having one counsellor entrusted with
726 the care of its affairs. In case of war, friendly clans frequently
224 make alliances (shinakulobye). They send messages to each other, or they have special means of communicating news in case of war. Supposing, for instance, Ñwamba and Nondwane should fight against Matjolo. They put two traps at their common boundary, on the side of the road, one on the territory of Ñwamba and one on that of Nondwane. These traps consist of a rod bent by a string fastened to the ground. Should the army of Matjolo have made an invasion during the night into Ñwamba territory and put the people to flight, the men of Ñwamba

643 584 day is fixed for a visit to the capital where it will be concluded.

Let us consider the procedure in the case of the marriage of Ñwamantibyane, the youthful chief of Mpfumo, who has since been exiled. The following account of the discussion preparatory to the marriage is given on the authority of Tobane, a witness of the proceedings, and will aptly illustrate the etiquette observed on such occasions.

643 584 651 622 The dignitaries are assembled, and one of them, the brother of the deceased chief, commences thus : "Well, you the chiefs of Mpfumo! In truth! If we are assembled here to-day, is it not that we have truly seen that we must, in fact, increase the chief, and give him the wife of the country ? This is all the business, you, the chiefs." One of those addressed replies : "In putting the matter before us, hast thou been unequal to the task ? (No! understood.) And we, what further words could we add ? Nothing remains to be said... You then tell us what we shall have to give you, dwellers in the capital!" Then the secondary chiefs say : "For our part, we will give each one pound sterling or an ox, as you may prefer." The headmen of the villages will each contribute ten shillings and each village one shilling besides. In former times, before the circulation of money in the country, each one gave a hoe.

The secondary chiefs go back to their own districts and get together the money or the oxen as the case may be. This done, the fact is duly notified to the capital and all the contributions are conveyed to the chief. An account is kept of all monies or cattle contributed. When Ñwamantibyane was married the special subscription amounted to thirty pounds sterling and twenty oxen.

643 582 The future queen was chosen from the royal family of Matjolo ; her name was Mimalengane. The young chief had only seen her on one occasion, when she was returning from Gaza. Nevertheless she was his first cousin once removed ; Hamule, father of Žihlala and grandfather of Ñwamantibyane, married the sister of Malengane, chief of Matjolo, and his daughter was Mimalengane (the prefix *mi* signifies daughter of), who was now

796 gait, brandishing sticks with pieces of red cloth attached as
273 pennants. They are in search of full barrels! It must be said
786 that the inebriety produced by the bukanye is of a rather mild type, as this Native beer contains very little alcohol ; but the quantity absorbed is so enormous that it ends by going to their heads : this is more especially so with the bukanye brewed from a species of nkanye called *nunge*, which appears to be stronger and more intoxicating.

796 How far does sexual licence go during the bukanye ? Not to
273 the point of general promiscuity, as amongst the Ba-Pedi after the circumcision school. However many cases of adultery occur.
833 Men and women forget the elementary rules of condvet. They
786 attend to the wants of nature in the same places, which is taboo under ordinary circumstances : "Nau a wa ha tiyi,"—"the law is no longer in force."

796 Still, in the midst of all this carnival, the payment of the tax
273 must not be forgotten... This is the time to carry to the chief the liquor which is flowing so freely on all sides, but of which
643 he claims the lion's share. Each petty chief sends his people
637 to the capital with brimming jars. This is termed "lumisa hosi," supplying the chief with new wine. The women do not enter the capital at once, but go to one of the counsellors, who promptly abstracts a couple of jars for his own use. The chief returns one or two jars to the carriers, as they have come a long way and are doubtless thirsty ; the remainder will be kept to refresh the very numerous guests at the Court ; any coming from afar will spend the night and not return until the next day. I have seen a company of these women carrying baskets
539 full of makanye to Muzila. How graceful was the Indian file winding its way along the path and singing, amongst others, the following chorus : (See for further particulars *Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, page 46.)

Chwe! Chwe! Hi laba shimungu — Leshi ka — Le tilwen!
Chwe! Chwe! Shimungu hi mani? — Hi Mzila! — Hi Mzila!
Hi! Hi! We seek the hawk! — Who soars — In the sky!
Hi! Hi! Who is the hawk? — It is Mzila! — It is Mzila!

643 wife in the path follows her husband who walks at his ease, with
651 his stick in his hand, whilst she carries his belongings in her basket
641 on her head... If the prerogative of the chief is to live in abundance, the duty of the subject is to pay taxes! This duty is expressed by the word *luba* (Dj.), *hlenga* (Ro.). It is so true that this is the principal function of the subject that, when a man leaves his clan and goes to live in another clan, he comes to the chief and says : "I want to *luba* or *nkonza* (a word borrowed by the Rongas from the Zulus), to pay the tax..." This is the proper way of making his submission.

643 The explanation of the rites of the first fruits throws much light on the Bantu conception of the chief's position in respect to his subjects. For them he is certainly endowed with the divine right more fully than the King or the Kaiser in any European country ; he is the *son* of the gods, not only their protégé... The gods are the lords of everything... He shares this lordship with them. Hence his right of taxing his subjects. On the other hand we saw that he is the *soil*! He is more than Lewis XIV, who could say: "L'État c'est moi!" The Bantu chief can say : "I am the earth! — Le sol c'est moi!" Hence, on the part of the subjects, the duty of sharing with him the products of the soil and also of their hunting.

643 The Thonga chief taxes his subjects in four different ways :
651 he takes a regular portion of the harvest ; he claims a part of
241 most of the wild beasts killed ; he makes his people work for him ;
273 he also taxes the revenue of those who go away to work for the Whites. A fifth source of his revenue is found in the fines imposed in judicial cases.

1. As regards *taxation of the products of the soil*, it consists in a basket (shihundju) of mealies contributed by each village at harvest time. This is the regular taxation. Moreover those who brew a great quantity of beer for a feast always send some jars to the chief, especially when the season of tilling the fields or threshing the grain has come. This is not a regular tax, at least amongst the Ba-Ronga, and is considered as *mashobo*, an act of civility, and not as *hlenga* proper. Bukanye must be brought to the capital in great quantities during the great national feast.

643 651 In the Northern clans it seems that these payments in kind called *shirwalo* (carrying of beer, from ku rwala, to carry), are expected from all those who are not hunters and bring no meat to the capital.

643 651 224 825 2. The right of the chief *over wild beasts killed in hunting* is not the same for all game. Rhinoceros is not taxed ; it is even taboo to bring its meat to the chief. On the contrary when a man has killed a wild buffalo, an elan, a giraffe or an antelope, he must first cut some joints for the chief. If it is a panther or a lion, he must give up the skin ; if an elephant, the tusk which scratched the soil when it fell belongs to the chief ; it is "the tusk of the soil," and the chief is "the soil." The other tusk is for the hunter (ndlayi). In the Maputju country, it was even forbidden to kill elephants. Ngwanazi, the chief who was deported in 1896, had reserved the monopoly of elephant hunting for himself and his warriors. The hippopotamus is taxed more heavily than any other beast. The hunter who has succeeded in killing one has not the right of cutting it open. Should he do so, it would be considered a serious offence. He might be put to death. (Mankhelu.) He must at once send word to the capital, and the men of the Court will come immediately and cut up the animal, taking half the joints to the chief. As for the crocodile, it must also be opened by the men of the Court, because it contains many things such as marvellous stones used in magic, and bracelets of the women whom it has devoured. The chief appropriates what he pleases amongst these objects.

643 466 3. *Statute labour* is one of the main revenues of the royal kraal. In some cases, subjects must come to the capital, led by their sub-chiefs, and till a field for the chief or rather for the queen who has been bought with the nation's money. In Nondwane, which is a large country, each of the sub-clans must till a field for the wives of the chief in its own territory. For instance, in each of the districts of Mapulangu, Bandi, Manuel, Maghebeza, Malwan, Hlangunyingin, the chief Mubvesha possessed a royal field which his subjects weeded and harvested every year, and the sub-chief Habele, who was in charge of those districts, had to gather the mealies and carry them to the capital. This official tilling is done

643 in the form of a *djimo*. (See Part IV.) Moreover the young
766 men are always at the disposal of the chief to clean his public square, build his huts, repair the thatched roofs of the royal kraal and organise hunting expeditions for him.

643 4. But the greater part of the royal revenue consists now in
651 *money* which the chief receives from his subjects. Mubvesha taxes each village a sum of 500 reis besides the regular basket of mealies. At the end of the bukanye feast, each village must send him another 500 reis to notify him that the feast is ended. When a young man returns from Johannesburg having made enough money to lobola a wife, he must leave £ 1.10.0 in the hands of the chief. The latter also recruits boys whom he sends to the recruiting agents, getting as much as £ 1 or £ 1.10.0 per head. When a sub-chief dies, his people inform the paramount chief of his death, bringing a sum of money (1500 reis). The chief, however, does not receive any portion of the inheritance in the case of a death. There is no taxation on the succession.

643 5. A great deal of money comes into the hands of the chief
651 *owing to fines which he imposes* when acting as supreme judge.
681 When a plaintiff brings a case and the culprit is condemned to pay him £ 25, Mubvesha keeps £ 10 for himself ; he retains £ 5 if the fine is £ 10.

643 Sub-chiefs do not tax their subjects as a rule. They must
631 bring to their superior all the products of taxation. They do
651 not "eat" anything. But in some cases the chief gives them a part of it. Thus Habele, sub-chief of Rikatla, used to "eat" half of the taxes brought to him by young men coming back from Johannesburg.

V. *Dangers and difficulties of the Chieftainship.*

643 Endowed with supernatural power which he owes to his magical
654 medicines, feared and sometimes loved by his subjects, with plenty to eat and richer than any of his people, who readily consent to be taxed, the chief occupies an enviable position. The chieftainship (buhosi), therefore, is very much sought after and no

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177 lobola money. But they learn to spend money on other things, and
461 those who are converts to Christianity become regular purchasers of
631 clothing, of better food, of books. The high taxation to which they are subjected also forces them to work. As long as this does not exceed a reasonable limit, and as long as the State causes the Native community to benefit by the high taxes levied on it, it is justifiable although this way of enforcing labour is not so normally healthy as the creation of
241 new wants (1). Another powerful influence which tends to make men
177 work more and to relieve women from the toil of tilling the fields, is
412 this. Wishing to make money by selling grain, the Natives are begin-
462 ning to clear larger fields than before, and we note with pleasure that they have adopted the use of the plough instead of the hoe in a great many quarters. The consequence of this change is that the men now do

466 (1) Another means has been used to obtain the same result, i. e. compulsory labour
P. (in Thonga *shibalu*). It is not at all my intention to treat this important but delicate
177 subject here. The League of Nations created in 1924 a special Slavery Commission
46 which has very ably and fully discussed the whole subject. These discussions have resulted in a Convention which was adopted by the Assembly of 1926; art. 5, which deals with forced labour, runs as follows:

The High Contracting Parties recognise that recourse to compulsory or forced labour may have grave consequences and undertake, each in respect of the territories placed under its sovereignty, jurisdiction, protection, suzerainty or tutelage, to take all necessary measures to prevent compulsory or forced labour from developing into conditions analogous to slavery.

It is agreed that:

(1) Subject to the transitional provisions laid down in paragraph (2) below, compulsory or forced labour may only be exacted for public purposes.

(2) In territories in which compulsory or forced labour for other than public purposes still survives, the High Contracting Parties shall endeavour progressively and as soon as possible to put an end to the practice. So long as such forced or compulsory labour exists, this labour shall invariably be of an exceptional character, shall always receive adequate remuneration, and shall not involve the removal of the labourers from their usual place of residence.

(3) In all cases, the responsibility for any recourse to compulsory or forced labour shall rest with the competent central authorities of the territory concerned.

The League of Nations has thus established the general principles, and nearly thirty States have already signed the Convention; amongst these we note with pleasure Great Britain and Portugal. Now the question has been transferred to the International Labour Office, which must deal with the application of the Convention. A special Committee of experts has been elected and it is hoped that it will fix general principles for Coloured Labour, which shall be submitted to the General Labour Conference in a not distant future.

I am glad to add that the Portuguese Government has recently issued a decree (No 12.533) which has been published in the *Bolletim official de Moçambique*, November 1926, and which contains the following article (Art. 5, § unico): *Compulsory labour is only permitted when absolutely indispensable, for works of public interest and of undeniable urgency. This labour will be remunerated according to circumstances.*

137 4) The *ntjopfa* (mu-mi), the wild custard tree, employed to
372 light the sacred fire of nyokwekulu (I. p. 388). It is taboo to use it for ordinary purposes, or to warm oneself at its embers. Medicine-men alone are allowed to make ntjopfa fire, having drugs to prevent the disease caused by its use.

372 Dealing with fire taboos, I may add that it is taboo to use
784 branches of a tree which has been struck by lightning ; taboo also to keep alight the fire of a deceased person after the conclusion of the great mourning. It must be ritually extinguished (I. p. 135). In case of misfortune also (khombo), if the bones order it, the old fire must be put out and a new fire be lighted on the central fire-place of the first wife by means of the wooden flint. Each woman will go and take an ember from it and start her own fire again. These laws show that in the eyes of the Bantus there is an intimate connection between fire and the life of the village. When death or misfortune contaminates the community, fire is affected also, and it must be destroyed if the village is to resume its normal life.

372 Gungunyana used to levy a tax on fire : he ordered all the
651 fires of his kingdom to be extinguished at a certain time, and sent messengers to relight them by means of embers procured from the royal kraal. Each village had to pay a tax for the new fire. It seems that this kind of royal right was exercised in the old times by the famous Monomotapa king. Nothing of the kind is met with amongst the more modest Thonga chiefs.

372 The manner of producing fire with the wooden flint is as follows. A dry branch of the tree is secured, from half an inch to an inch thick, and cut into two pieces, each of about 18 inches in length ; one half is called the wife (nsati), the other half, the husband (nuna). The first piece, the female, is laid on the ground and a notch is made in it with a knife ; the notch is cut in two movements : first on the upper part of the wood, secondly on the side of it. The male is then somewhat rounded, inserted perpendicularly in the notch, held firmly between the palms of the hands and made to revolve by a rapid motion of the hands from top to bottom. The operator having reached the bottom of

when

226 the fishing is finished, they all sit down and compare their catches.
651 Perhaps an enormous barbel has been caught, "the king of the lake," as these fish sometimes attain a very large size. "Woo! a dle ñhwakwe!" — "Oh! he has killed his mother," say the men, making fun of the fortunate fisherman! But the chief sends an induna who levies the tax. Each fisherman unties one fish from his string and gives it to him.

226 The tjeba fishing is practised all over Thongaland, in Ronga
782 territory, where such ponds are numerous in the sandy hollows, amongst the Hlabis, and in the neighbourhood of rivers where there are lagoons which dry up, as far as the Maluleke country. Should there be crocodiles in the pond, which may very well happen when the lake is connected with the Limpopo or the Nkomati, the religious ceremony is more important on account of the danger incurred. Then the bones are thrown and declare who must make the offering in order to secure adequate protection from the ancestor-gods. The officiator enters the lake first, and, plunging his shiranga into the water, says : "If you are here, crocodile, go away! you hyena, do not bite." Amongst the Maluleke, a man of the Ba-Nyai tribe must perform the religious ceremony, as the Ba-Nyai were in the country before the Thongas. He must go first and catch a fish, bring it out alive, and then, surrounded by his fellow Ba-Nyai, offer it to his ancestor-gods. Then he throws it back into the water. The Thonga chief, having ordered his men to keep silence, then makes the following proclamation in a loud voice : "Let the fish abound, and kill them all, but do not bewitch each other!"

226 The Hlengwes have a very curious custom which I have already
825 explained when discussing the Bantu notion of sexual relations
834 (I. p. 189). When they *tjeba* they take a little boy and a little girl, and lay them down together under a lion's skin, as if they were husband and wife, during all the time that they are fishing. The children keep quiet, — so the fish will also keep quiet and not swim away. When the fishing is concluded, these children are "awakened," and are given a part of the catch : they are praised and thanked, as they are supposed to have secured the fish by their action... or rather by their inaction! This very significant

202 726 will at once go and undo the trap which is on their side ; in the morning, the people of Nondwane will know that they must also fly.

D. THE TRIBUNAL OF THE CHIEF.

642 In the Thonga Court there is no separation of powers. The legislative, executive, and judicial powers are all in the hands of the chief, aided by his counsellors. The chief is the supreme authority and his decisions are without appeal.

I. *Legislative affairs.*

671 The *chief* makes the laws (p. 382) and presides at discussions
643 which end in a resolution. But his counsellors assist him.
583 Here is an example of such a decision taken at Maphunga's court. There was no uniformity as to the money to be paid for a lobolo, and some fathers claimed as much as £ 20 or £ 30 for their daughters. The great counsellors of the capital decided (tjimba mhaka, viz., to tie the matter) that a lobolo should be £ 15.10 as the maximum. They "tied the matter" with the assent of the chief. Then all the sub-chiefs and counsellors were summoned to the capital. The chief called the roll to ascertain if they were all present. The great counsellor then said to the assembly : "The herds which people claim are too large. Have you gold mines and do you know how to make coins ? Henceforth do not lobola with too much money. £ 15.10 is quite enough!" Every sub-chief, on his return home, called his men and informed them of the decision : "Hi to timhaka! Such are the matters!" said they. The subjects were disappointed. They wept! But they had to accept the decision. To oppose it is taboo! "Psa yila!"

643 A *native debate* or discussion is conducted on very different
645 lines from those to which we are generally accustomed, nothing
671 ever being put to the vote. The chief presides. A proposition is

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put forward in short sentences, generally interrogative, by one of the counsellors. The assembly listens in silence until the mover concludes with an energetic "Ahina," being the equivalent of "That's all right." (See p. 354.) Another individual elaborates the matter further, saying: "Did you not hear what he said? He said so and so." This is the way of seconding the motion. The debate proceeds, and, little by little, objections are brought forward and the assembly comes to a decision.

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It often happens that the chief does not say a word; when he see that the counsellors are agreed and if he has no objection, he merely shows his assent by nodding his head. So the decision is arrived at without his intervention and without any vote being taken. The voice of the majority has not been ascertained by any show of hands, but it is generally perceived by intuition in a very remarkable way, and grave counsellors, who have been squatting in a circle all through the discussion, jump to their feet and disperse, knowing perfectly well what has been decided. If however the counsellors do not agree, they put the matter into the hands of the chief, and the chief, after having listened to the arguments pro and con, "cuts the matter" (tjema mhaka) by some short sentences, after which everybody must shout the royal salutation: "Bayete!"

Phot. A. Burel.

An habitué of the Nkuna Court.

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When there are two parties present, the debate is conducted according to other rules. For instance, if a stranger wishes to have speech with a chief or to proffer some request, he is generally accompanied by a counsellor. The chief, together with some of his men, receives him either in the hut, if the affair must

be secret, or on the square, if there is no objection to making it public. The chief and his men sit on one side, the visitor on the other; if he wishes to conform strictly to all the laws of etiquette, he will first explain the matter to his own Agent General, who will communicate with the chief's special counsellor, repeating the words of the visitor, sentence by sentence; the counsellor will, in his turn, communicate with the chief, again telling him the whole story, as if he had not heard a word of it before. The affair will thus have passed through three hands and the answer should, in due formality, be given through the same channels. These precautions, which seem eminently superfluous, even somewhat ridiculous, to a person unacquainted with Bantu etiquette, evidently proceed from the fact that there are no stenographers or secretaries to furnish any written record of the proceedings, so that it is necessary to have as many witnesses as possible and that these should thoroughly understand the matter under consideration.

II. *Judicial Cases.*

1) Sense of justice.

As has often been remarked, the Bantus possess a strong sense of justice. They believe in social order and in the observance of the laws and, though these laws are not written, they are universal and perfectly well known. The law is the custom, that which has always been done. The old men, the counsellors and more particularly the counsellors of the capital, are those who can speak authoritatively. But everybody is welcome in the *hubo*, where matters are discussed; even a stranger can take part in the discussion. "No one is excluded, if he speaks rightly; only fools, those who do not know anything" (Mankhelu).

This participation in the discussions of the hubo has developed the sense of law to a wonderful extent amongst the Bantus. They are all born advocates and judges, and take a great interest in this business! No wonder therefore that the Thonga vocabulary

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671 possesses a rich store of *judicial expressions*. Here are the most
641 common : *Nau* (pl. milau) means law, custom. *Ku tlula nau*, to
192 jump over the law, means transgression. *Nandju* (pl. *milandju*) means the fault resulting from transgression. This interesting word comes from *ku landja*, to follow. It applies in the first instance to cases which lead to a prosecution, but secondly to any fault. *Ku doha*, is to be wrong and *ku dohela mhunu*, the applicative derivative, to wrong another. *Ku da*, to eat somebody, or *dela*, is also a picturesque expression employed for injury to property. *Ku ramba* (Dj.), *ku rjamela hosin* (Ro.) is the technical expression to designate a complaint lodged before the chief. *Ku riha* (Dj.), *djiha* (Ro.) means to pay a fine, and *rihisa*, *djihisa* (the factitive derivative), to impose a fine.

672 This strong sense of justice however differs from the European
426 on certain points. Owing to their collectivist notions, the Bantus
614 consider relatives as responsible for the debts of their own kin, as we have already seen (p. 332). Another case in which they entertain ideas which seem very strange to us is this ; when anyone has lent you an implement and you make a bad use of it, the fault is as much the lender's as the borrower's. I remember a queer case which took place in my school in Rikatla. Some boys had to go in the afternoon to work in the vegetable garden under the supervision of their overseer. On the way one of them happened to hurt his foot by treading on a thorn. So, when he arrived in the garden, he borrowed a knife from the overseer and began to make sandals of palm-leaf pith. The elder boy entreated him to work. He refused to obey, so the overseer denounced him publicly, when the weekly inquiry into the conduct of the boys was made, on the following Friday. But the temporary shoemaker did not admit to being guilty of anything at all, and his final argument was this : "I cannot understand how Mr. Overseer can accuse me when he himself lent me the knife which I used to carve my sandals!" D. Kidd tells similar stories about Pondos in his "Essential Kafir."

671 So there are differences between Native and European conceptions of justice, and Bantus do not always draw the same conclusions as we do from given premises. Native Commissioners

671 must remember this and, in order to enlighten the Native mind, they must try to find where these differences lie. But these are minor points, and the sense of justice is nevertheless one of the most striking and promising characteristics of the Bantu.

157 Before enumerating the various cases which can be brought
674 before the Native Court, let me remark that, generally speaking, Bantus are very peaceful, law-abiding people, under normal circumstances; when protected against alcoholic excesses they are little addicted to crime. In the Blue Book for Native Affairs of Cape Colony, 1908, the Chief Magistrate of the Transkeian Territory comments on "the general docility of the Natives, the perfect immunity from crimes of violence, which the European population, male and female, enjoys amongst them, and the cheapness of police administration." He adds: "The policing of the Territories, including the Detective Force, costs only 7d. per head of the territorial population, or, counting Chiefs and Headmen whose functions are mainly administrative, 10d., against 6s. 3d. per head for policing the Colony proper. Reports from twenty districts comment on the paucity or absence of crime. Kentani, with a population of 34,000 did not furnish a single case for the Circuit Court. The Magistrates of four districts remark on 'the peaceable and law-abiding character of the Native,' the Magistrate of Kentani adding: 'when kept away from the drink curse'." (*Christ. Express*, Aug. 1908.)

I think the same report might be made in most of the districts of South Africa where Natives still live by themselves.

674 The state of affairs would be very different in the Town
177 locations, where we meet with a great number of men and women of dissolute morals. They are often backsliders who have left the Mission Stations because they did not like to submit to the Christian rule of morality. So they have freed themselves from all restraints, tribal as well as Christian, and, if they have not entirely lost all sense of justice, they, at any rate, do not walk "in the paths of righteousness." I am here only concerned with clan Natives.

538 Here the sense is at once apparent.

6) Mbuti ya shihaha a yi belekeli ntlhambin.
A good goat does not bring forth in the midst of the flock.

I heard this proverb in one of our Synods. One of the Native members wished to exhort his co-delegates to abstain from giving their advice, and voting precipitately on a certain subject : let us rather go outside, and discuss amongst ourselves, and when we have come to an understanding we will come back and vote as one man!

This last example shows how such proverbs are used... They are sometimes quoted in a low voice, so as to be heard only by those whom it is desired to warn. It is an instance of the *phamba* just referred to.

Compare also the proverb quoted (p. 21) in connection with tilling the fields :

Do not look at the weeds and think : Now ! I have tilled a large field !

Do not be satisfied by mere external appearances! Weeds may be plentiful, yet the field be small!

Hundreds of such sayings might be collected (1), though I do not think they are so extensively used as, for instance, in the Sutho tribe, where M. Jacottet told me he collected a thousand of them. The Thongas replace them by riddles, which seem to be more developed amongst this people than in the neighbouring tribes.

II. *Riddles.*

524 I have already described (I. p. 350) the part riddles play in the games of the Thonga village. The riddle, *mhumhana*, consists first in divining where the piece of charcoal is hidden, and in that

671 538 (1) We might also regard as proverbs, and include under this heading, the figurative terminology used to express the principles of right and justice, which are, as it were, a primitive codification of the common law, and to which I have previously referred — as for instance the curious sentence : A cow which has calved is not used for payin a debt. (I. p. 217).

alone (See *Les Ba-Ronga*, p. 414). He pours his drugs into 845
one of the pots brought by the women, adds to them the psanyi 756
of the goat sacrificed for the occasion, and pours all the contents 783
on to the shoulders of the mother, who holds the babes in her lap. After this he pours from some other pot, which contains pure water, and the woman conscientiously washes herself and her children all the while. Until her purification no inhabitant of the village is allowed to eat anything, and the following day it is taboo to work in the fields, for this would prevent the rain from falling.

Amongst the *Nkunas*, the mother of twins sits at the entrance of the hut, and the drug is poured over the roof above the doorway; it leaks through the thatch on to her, and thus both the mother and the hut are purified at the same time.

This preliminary purification being thus accomplished, the 845
woman goes to live in "her shelter," outside the village. She 853
is absolutely shut off from all the other inhabitants. She has her own pots, axe, mortar, pestle, and does all her own cooking. Nobody even pays her a visit, and people only speak to her from a distance. Her children see no one but her. To each is allotted one breast, always the same. To help her in the nursing of twins [671]
the mother must "buy" a girl, to whom the care of one of the children is committed. This is a law. It is taboo for a girl, even [784]
should she be the elder sister, to "play" with a twin. The payment of £ 1 or ten shillings removes this taboo and the defilement (shisila) connected with it.

Women fear that, if they touch anything belonging to the 845
mother of twins, if they smear themselves with her provision 784
of fat, or if the defiled one smears herself with their fat, they will also incur the dreadful misfortune of giving birth to twins. For this reason it is taboo for a mother of twins to draw water except at a certain spot. She must select one place and always go there. When she returns from drawing water, she must pay attention to the little wreath of grass which she wears on her head to help her balance her pot; it must not be thrown away with those used by other women, for fear that they also should become contaminated (tekela).

685 857 Generally speaking the elder boys send the younger to commit these thefts, and the plunder is enjoyed by the whole company. They threaten to beat them if they return empty-handed. A sad fate for the youngsters—blows on all sides ; blows from the owners of the fields if they are caught, blows from their comrades if they bring nothing back with them!

Here are one or two tricks employed by the little thieves. In order to take a water-melon (khalsbatla) out of a field without being noticed by the women who are busy pulling up their ground nuts, they cut the stalk and fasten it to a piece of string. The other end of this is attached to the leg of the thief, who moves away slowly, drawing the water-melon after him. When he is out of reach of the women, he hastily puts it under his arm and makes off at top speed.

To catch a hen without its making a sound, they dig a little hole behind the huts of the village, and put a few grains of maize in it. The fowl puts its head into the hole to eat the grains, and immediately the little rascal who was watching from behind a bush, rushes out, seizes it by the neck and carries it off before it can utter a single cry!

672 685 The penalty when a boy is caught is a good whipping without a fine. "Psa batjongwana ! It is an action of little boys !" These minor thefts are not considered serious.

3) Catching game.

262 203 857 Hunger is the constant companion of these boys, who do not get enough to eat at home. It is true they ate to their heart's content (shura) yesterday evening, but this morning they had only a very scanty breakfast (fihluta). They try to satisfy their never satisfied appetite by catching game : not big game of course, as they have no real weapons, but birds, field-mice, eggs in the nests (the less fresh they are, the better, because there is more meat inside!) etc. To get birds they throw their sticks at them, and are very clever at killing a partridge as it rises heavily from the grass ; or they make traps with a flexible stick to which they tie a string with a bait. They bend the stick, set the trap by means

578 judged before the Court, in the capital, because the offender has
685 refused to follow the way of persuasion, he has "mocked the family
643 love" (a yalile bushaka). Such misdemeanours are very frequent
692 in the life of the village. Most of the Natives bear philosophically with these annoyances. Should some one, however, be really ill-natured, and wear out their patience (wa ku karata), he will be
685 forced to build a hut for himself, alone, outside the village. If the
672 damage is done by *children*, if they have stolen sweet potatoes, as
622 we have seen, the wronged proprietor gives them a good thrash-
732 ing but does not claim a fine. Occasionally the headman himself
689 thrashes them in presence of their father, and the father will say to them: "You see the numzane will beat you if you are not good." Children who mock at cripples are also severely beaten by him, all the more so as, in this case, the offended party has the right of claiming a fine.

622 3) The headman also possesses *authority over his younger brothers*
596 *and his children*. He can even confiscate their money if one of
675 them is addicted to drinking and ruins his property. However his authority in this respect must not be overstepped, and the headman must take care how he exercises it, as it is based more or less on sufferance. The younger brothers, for instance, maintain the right of making contracts, especially lobola contracts. Should the numzane restrict their liberty too much, they will leave him and found their own villages. A successful headman is he who knows how to keep the whole family together to the general satisfaction.

622 4) The headman has also the right of imposing *statute labour*,
596 especially when the oxen kraal must be rebuilt, or when the
466 weeds must be removed from the hubo ; he sends his young men to do the work. But he must not exact too much from his people or forget to feast them with beer or with meat when the work is finished.

622 5) Lastly the headman *presides over all the discussions* which take
596 place in the village. He is the master of the hubo. The discussion can be conducted in three different places ; when it deals with a secret matter, the men go *inside the hut* : they debate the matter indoors (ba bulabula ndlwen). Private questions

622 596 affecting the life of the village are generally settled there. Questions discussed with strangers and those regarding which there is no secrecy, and in which every one can take part, are discussed *on the central square*, on the "hubo". *Hubo* means the square, and also the council of the men of the village which the headman summons there to settle matters (ku khanela timhaka). Should they be able to come to an agreement together or with their visitors who have come to bring a claim, the matter is "cut" (ba tjema mhaka), viz., "ended". In the opposite case, when they disagree altogether, the question will be carried to a third place, before the *hubo of the chief*, in the capital. (See Part III).

562 Every one is welcome to take part in the discussions except women. As a rule men speak as little as possible with women on these matters. If a husband has a sensible, discreet wife, he may ask her advice. But if he has agreed with his companions on a point and changes his mind after having spoken with his wife, he will be severely blamed and accused of "spoiling the village" (hona muti).

622 596 672 The headman is more or less *responsible for all the claims* lodged against his subordinates. Should one of his younger brothers be prosecuted for a debt, the creditors will go to the numzane, and he cannot say: "This matter does not concern me." He will say to his brother: "Pay your debt," and, if the brother has no funds, he will help him, if possible, but it is only a loan, and the younger brother will pay back the money. As a rule members of the same family help each other in these matters. This is so much the custom that children are expected to pay the debts of their deceased parents, even if they have not inherited anything from them. This does not however procede from a moral sense of family dignity. They do it because the native authorities hold them responsible. They might be "arrested". In the case of a father who has died still owing some lobola money, the children will try to pay, but they will do it in order to obtain possession of the woman. Should a father have committed adultery with a married woman, and die without having paid the fine, his heirs are not considered responsible. On the other hand, if the father has been condemned as a wizard

622 by the chief, and dies, his heirs must pay the compensation
596 claimed. All these rules clearly illustrate the communism of
672 family life and family property, under the supervision of the headman.

Should a numzane be absolutely unable to govern his village,
622 *the family council can depose him* and put another man in his
596 place. This council will be formed of old relatives, especially the paternal uncles to whom the younger brothers will go and complain of the misbehaviour of their headman. A younger brother will then be proclaimed and the elder will be despised. They will say : "Hi singe! A fahla muti, a hluli hi muti!" "He is a fool! He breaks the village ; he is overcome by the village," viz., not able to keep up his position.

As regards the *law of succession* to the headmanship, the second brother takes the place of the elder, and so on. The son of the elder cannot become headman until all his paternal uncles are dead. We shall find this principle also observed in the succession of the chiefs. (Part III.)

D. DAILY LIFE IN THE VILLAGE.

461 From the oxen kraal to the huts, from the square to the little wood, through the doors and in the reed yards, black forms are moving to and fro. Everybody seems busy. There is talking, laughing, playing and working. The expression "working like a nigger" is hardly applicable, for they do not kill themselves with work. It would, however, be quite as great a mistake to believe that the Natives spend all their time in loafing about. Far from it!

1. *Women's occupations.*

462 Women, especially, are very busy. When the sun rises, they
511 emerge from their huts, wash their faces, and light a little fire to warm the mealie pap which was left from the evening meal.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

671 possesses a rich store of *judicial expressions*. Here are the most
671 common : *Nau* (pl. milau) means law, custom. *Ku thula nau*, to
192 jump over the law, means transgression. *Nandju* (pl. *milandju*) means the fault resulting from transgression. This interesting word comes from *ku landja*, to follow. It applies in the first instance to cases which lead to a prosecution, but secondly to any fault. *Ku doha*, is to be wrong and *ku dohela mhunu*, the applicative derivative, to wrong another. *Ku da*, to eat somebody, or *dela*, is also a picturesque expression employed for injury to property. *Ku ramba* (Dj.), *ku rjamela hosin* (Ro.) is the technical expression to designate a complaint lodged before the chief. *Ku riha* (Dj.), *djiha* (Ro.) means to pay a fine, and *rihisa*, *djihisa* (the factitive derivative), to impose a fine.

672 This strong sense of justice however differs from the European
426 on certain points. Owing to their collectivist notions, the Bantus
614 consider relatives as responsible for the debts of their own kin, as we have already seen (p. 332). Another case in which they entertain ideas which seem very strange to us is this ; when anyone has lent you an implement and you make a bad use of it, the fault is as much the lender's as the borrower's. I remember a queer case which took place in my school in Rikatla. Some boys had to go in the afternoon to work in the vegetable garden under the supervision of their overseer. On the way one of them happened to hurt his foot by treading on a thorn. So, when he arrived in the garden, he borrowed a knife from the overseer and began to make sandals of palm-leaf pith. The elder boy entreated him to work. He refused to obey, so the overseer denounced him publicly, when the weekly inquiry into the conduct of the boys was made, on the following Friday. But the temporary shoemaker did not admit to being guilty of anything at all, and his final argument was this : "I cannot understand how Mr. Overseer can accuse me when he himself lent me the knife which I used to carve my sandals!" D. Kidd tells similar stories about Pondos in his "Essential Kafir."

671 So there are differences between Native and European conceptions of justice, and Bantus do not always draw the same conclusions as we do from given premises. Native Commissioners

684 VI.) If found guilty, he will have to pay an extra fine of two
782 oxen (1).

584 When the abducted woman is an unmarried girl, the matter
836 is not serious. No trouble is entailed, provided she does not become pregnant. In the latter case, the seducer can say: "Ndji dlele ku dya: I have killed to eat," viz. "I am ready to lobola the girl" (p. 97). If the girl does not consent, the man is free. But if the man does not wish to marry the girl by paying a full lobolo, whilst the girl and her relatives want him to do so, he will have to pay as much as £ 30 and an ox. "He has spoilt his cause!" His own relatives will be arrested and forced to pay. They are responsible for him and will scold him severely. (Mankhelu).

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649 square of the capital and shows himself. The assailants will have to pay a fine of £ 8, three for the chief and five for the victim, or of two oxen, one for the chief and one for the plaintiff. (Mankhelu).

682 *Murder.* A distinction is made between involuntary murder,
672 which is an accident (mhango, Dj.), and a deliberate assassination.

In the case of *involuntary murder*, Mankhelu describes the proceedings as follows: —Should you have killed a man by accident in a hunting trip, for instance, you will try to arrange matters directly with his relatives, if you were good friends; your relatives will give them a girl. You dare not offer your own daughter, because they may refuse her, on account of their bad feelings! The same objection will not be made if your people provide the girl. They will accompany her with ten hoes and an ox, saying: "This is fat to smear our daughter." The notion which is at the base of this custom is not that a human person is the natural compensation for another human person, but that you give the diminished family a means of making good its loss. In fact as soon as the girl has born a child to the relatives of the deceased, she is free. If these men wish to keep her as their wife, they must

(1) The neighbouring Chopi tribe, on the contrary, leaves the husband to arrange matters as he likes. Formerly he used to kill the adulterer. But cases of adultery are never brought before the chief.

682 lobola. Viguet explains that this is done according to the old
338 saying of Native law: "Nwombekazi a yi ambi nandju" viz. "a
826 cow which has calved is not used to pay a fine; the calf pays it."
672 (See page 217.) He adds that the ten hoes sent with the girl pay for the ribs of the murdered man. (The Ba-Thonga believe that the human body has only ten ribs!) A case of involuntary homicide
682 is generally not brought before the chief, as the law is well known
643 and no one would try to evade his duty. Should however the
672 murderer not have been on good terms with the deceased, the matter will be discussed before the Court.

If the murder was *deliberate*, it is punished by death.
682 At least such was the law in former times, when Natives still
672 possessed the power of condemning to death. Now the fine is also the remittance of a woman. But owing to the existing hatred, and from fear of being obliged to lobola the relative of the murderer, the family of the deceased does not take the girl. She is sold by her parents and only the money is remitted to the plaintiff. (Mankhelu.)

682 Amongst the Ba-Ronga, when a near relative of the murdered
627 man wishes to avenge himself by killing the assassin, his people prevent him from doing so, in order to bring the matter before the chief. When a man called Mashabe was killed by the son of Gigiseka, Maphunga's brother, the murderer, had to pay £ 20. The fine may be as much as £ 25, but the idea is also to help the bereaved family to acquire a new spouse and, through her, new members. As for the murderer, he is regarded with scorn, and despised by the whole community. For a whole week, he must eat apart. He is unclean. So, at the time of luma bukanye, (page 400), he must also take miluru medicine together with the warriors who have killed enemies; but he does not drink it boastfully, extolling his deed! People say of him: "Look at the murderer!" (Mboza.)

The vendetta, the savage custom which makes it incumbent on the relations of a murdered man to avenge his death themselves at all costs and by any means, is absolutely absent from Thonga custom. It may be said that, as regards punishment of murder, they have reached quite a civilised stage in their judicial

671 must remember this and, in order to enlighten the Native mind, they must try to find where these differences lie. But these are minor points, and the sense of justice is nevertheless one of the most striking and promising characteristics of the Bantu.

157 674 Before enumerating the various cases which can be brought before the Native Court, let me remark that, generally speaking, Bantus are very peaceful, law-abiding people, under normal circumstances; when protected against alcoholic excesses they are little addicted to crime. In the Blue Book for Native Affairs of Cape Colony, 1908, the Chief Magistrate of the Transkeian Territory comments on "the general docility of the Natives, the perfect immunity from crimes of violence, which the European population, male and female, enjoys amongst them, and the cheapness of police administration." He adds: "The policing of the Territories, including the Detective Force, costs only 7d. per head of the territorial population, or, counting Chiefs and Headmen whose functions are mainly administrative, 10d., against 6s. 3d. per head for policing the Colony proper. Reports from twenty districts comment on the paucity or absence of crime. Kentani, with a population of 34,000 did not furnish a single case for the Circuit Court. The Magistrates of four districts remark on 'the peaceable and law-abiding character of the Native,' the Magistrate of Kentani adding: 'when kept away from the drink curse'." (*Christ. Express*, Aug. 1908.)

I think the same report might be made in most of the districts of South Africa where Natives still live by themselves.

674 177 The state of affairs would be very different in the Town locations, where we meet with a great number of men and women of dissolute morals. They are often backsliders who have left the Mission Stations because they did not like to submit to the Christian rule of morality. So they have freed themselves from all restraints, tribal as well as Christian, and, if they have not entirely lost all sense of justice, they, at any rate, do not walk "in the paths of righteousness." I am here only concerned with clan Natives.

judged before the Court, in the capital, because the offender has refused to follow the way of persuasion, he has "mocked the family love" (a yalile bushaka). Such misdemeanours are very frequent in the life of the village. Most of the Natives bear philosophically with these annoyances. Should some one, however, be really ill-natured, and wear out their patience (wa ku karata), he will be forced to build a hut for himself, alone, outside the village. If the damage is done by *children*, if they have stolen sweet potatoes, as we have seen, the wronged proprietor gives them a good thrashing but does not claim a fine. Occasionally the headman himself thrashes them in presence of their father, and the father will say to them: "You see the numzane will beat you if you are not good." Children who mock at cripples are also severely beaten by him, all the more so as, in this case, the offended party has the right of claiming a fine.

3) The headman also possesses *authority over his younger brothers and his children*. He can even confiscate their money if one of them is addicted to drinking and ruins his property. However his authority in this respect must not be overstepped, and the headman must take care how he exercises it, as it is based more or less on sufferance. The younger brothers, for instance, maintain the right of making contracts, especially lobola contracts. Should the numzane restrict their liberty too much, they will leave him and found their own villages. A successful headman is he who knows how to keep the whole family together to the general satisfaction.

4) The headman has also the right of imposing *statute labour*, especially when the oxen kraal must be rebuilt, or when the weeds must be removed from the hubo ; he sends his young men to do the work. But he must not exact too much from his people or forget to feast them with beer or with meat when the work is finished.

5) Lastly the headman *presides over all the discussions* which take place in the village. He is the master of the hubo. The discussion can be conducted in three different places ; when it deals with a secret matter, the men go *inside the hut* : they debate the matter indoors (ba bulabula ndlwen). Private questions

643 The name of the chief is sacred in so far as it is generally used
695 in oaths. When asked to swear, a Nondwane man will say :
331 "Maphunga!" (1)

II. *The Regalia.*

643 Kings everywhere like to adorn themselves with specially imposing objects, insignia of their office, which differentiate them from their subjects. The Thonga chiefs have no peculiar crown — the shidlodlo belonging to all adults (p. 129)—, no special garment, no sceptre and no throne. We sometimes translate by the word throne *shilubelo* viz., the place where one *luba*, pays the tax; but this is only a hut smaller than the others and subjects can also possess it. (See page 313). However there are, in some of these small kingdoms, royal objects which may be called regalia (bukosi bya hosi).

643 Amongst the Nkunas, the chief possesses a large copper bracelet
301 called *ritlatla*, which was bought a very long time ago, in Lourenço Marques, by the Nkuna clan in exchange for tusks of elephants, says Mankhelu. Accosding to others, the ritlatla was made in old times by Natives from the copper, or perhaps from the gold dug by them. The ritlatla was in the hands of the elder branch of the Nkuna clan; Hoshana was its headman, but he had fled into the Ñwamba country during the troubled period of 1855 to 1860. When he died, his people brought the ritlatla to the chief Shiluvane who belonged to a younger branch, thinking that, at his death, the ritlatla together with the chieftainship would be given back to

643 (1) Kidd, in his *Kafir Socialism*, has asserted that Bantu chiefs are very jealous
681 and kill their subjects when they become too rich and thus overshadow them. This may be the case in other tribes or when a military government has taken the place of the old patriarchal system. Amongst the Thongas it is not true. My informants could not quote a single instance of a murder committed by a chief for that reason alone. I heard of Shiluvane killing a subject called Muhluhluni who had acquired too much power; but Muhluhluni had declared that he wanted to usurp the chieftainship; so it was a case of high treason! A rich nduna, in the territory of Nhandja (Nondwane), was also killed and his oxen taken by the chief because he had tried to abduct one of the chief's wives. But many headmen had as many oxen as Maphunga and were not troubled by him on that account: "Why should he hate them? They could not harm him, as he was protected by the supernatural powers, and they brought him all the more beer as they had plenty of wives and consequently of mealies!"

643 in the form of a *djimo*. (See Part IV.) Moreover the young
466 men are always at the disposal of the chief to clean his public square, build his huts, repair the thatched roofs of the royal kraal and organise hunting expeditions for him.

643 4. But the greater part of the royal revenue consists now in
651 *money* which the chief receives from his subjects. Mubvesha taxes each village a sum of 500 reis besides the regular basket of mealies. At the end of the bukanye feast, each village must send him another 500 reis to notify him that the feast is ended. When a young man returns from Johannesburg having made enough money to lobola a wife, he must leave £ 1.10.0 in the hands of the chief. The latter also recruits boys whom he sends to the recruiting agents, getting as much as £ 1 or £ 1.10.0 per head. When a sub-chief dies, his people inform the paramount chief of his death, bringing a sum of money (1500 reis). The chief, however, does not receive any portion of the inheritance in the case of a death. There is no taxation on the succession.

643 5. A great deal of money comes into the hands of the chief
651 *owing to fines which he imposes* when acting as supreme judge.
681 When a plaintiff brings a case and the culprit is condemned to pay him £ 25, Mubvesha keeps £ 10 for himself ; he retains £ 5 if the fine is £ 10.

643 Sub-chiefs do not tax their subjects as a rule. They must
631 bring to their superior all the products of taxation. They do
651 not "eat" anything. But in some cases the chief gives them a part of it. Thus Habele, sub-chief of Rikatla, used to "eat" half of the taxes brought to him by young men coming back from Johannesburg.

V. *Dangers and difficulties of the Chieftainship.*

643 Endowed with supernatural power which he owes to his magical
554 medicines, feared and sometimes loved by his subjects, with plenty to eat and richer than any of his people, who readily consent to be taxed, the chief occupies an enviable position. The chieftainship (buhosi), therefore, is very much sought after and no

2) Civil cases.

692 I will not assert that Thongas know the exact difference between
622 civil and criminal cases, the same tribunal judging them both and
643 all being called by the same name, milandju.
681 If any distinction is made, it would be between private and official cases, *private cases* being those which are settled by the two parties concerned alone, without the intervention of the chief ; whilst *official cases* are those in which the matter (mhaka) has been brought to the capital. As already explained, the headmen of the village try to settle the difficulties themselves ; if they succeed, all the better, as the fine will be reduced to its minimum, whilst, before the Court, the fine would be doubled and the chief would keep half of it!

691 Ninety per cent of the civil cases are in connection with *lobola*. These are sometimes most intricate and I would refer to the description already given of some of them (p. 282 and Appendix VIII).

691 *Divorce cases* are also common. When a woman has definitely
586 left her husband, her relatives must return the lobolo money.
643 "You must give up to them £ 5 or an ox," says Mankhelu. The
614 chief Mubvesha who was known for his avarice used to arrest the husband and make him pay £ 25 ; he returned £ 15 to the wife's relatives and kept £ 10 for himself.

When money is returned, the children belong to the mother (See page 279).

691 Many cases may occur in connection with *cattle*. The case of
643 *redhibition* is foreseen : when I buy an ox and it dies on my hands
437 from a disease which was not known at the date of my purchase but which already existed, I have the right to go and ask for another in its place. But I bring the skin of the dead ox with me and one hoe inside it for the meat which I have eaten. If the seller refuses to accept my claim, I go to the chief and complain. He will summon the recalcitrant person and say to him : "Did not this man act well when he put a hoe inside the skin ? Give him another ox!" (Mankhelu.)

681 685 643 When goats have damaged somebody's garden, there is no fine to pay. The shepherds are whipped and the matter is thus concluded. Should the father of the boys, however, take their part and protect them with his weapons, he will be summoned to the tribunal of the chief and have to pay a fine of £ 5 or two or three goats.

643 231 686 Thonga Natives who have but a few head of cattle, are accustomed to entrust them to the care of neighbours possessing a large herd, in order to spare themselves the trouble of finding herding boys. There are some laws regulating this matter. If the owner of the cow, or the pig, or the goat, gives money in advance to the master of the large herd, all the calves, pigs, and kids, which may be born revert to him. But if he has not paid anything, the master of the herd is entitled to choose one pig out of the first litter ; or he can keep the third or fourth calf or kid. If it be a hen, one of its chickens will belong to the man who took care of it. Should the owner forget to remit the due reward, there will be trouble (pongwe). When he goes to take his cattle back, the master of the herd will keep one head for himself, and, if a dispute arises, both will go to the chief, at least if the matter is important, if the animal in question, for instance, is an ox.

If an ox incorporated with another man's herd dies, the master of the herd will inform the owner in order that he may go and dispose of the meat. Should he be living too far off, the ox will be eaten on the spot and the skin will be sent to the owner. 231 685 Suppose the master of the herd pretends that the ox is dead, but has only put it with another herd, and sent a skin to the owner to deceive him, it is a case of theft, which will be judged as such.

3) Criminal cases.

684 787 837 *Adultery.* Our tribe punishes adultery very severely indeed, at least when the woman is married. The fine is a full lobolo. (See page 197.) Amongst the Nkunas if the accused man denies his guilt when questioned indoors, the bones are consulted, or even the magicians who practise the "vumisa" divination. (Part

682 procedure. They are in advance of many tribes. The same
627 cannot be asserted when dealing with witchcraft!

Witchcraft (Buloyi). To the Thonga mind this is one of the
754 greatest crimes which a man can commit. It is equivalent to
683 assassination, even worse than murder, as a dim idea of anthro-
787 pophagy is added to the simple charge of killing. A wizard
694 kills human beings to eat their flesh. We shall study the conceptions of *buloyi* later on (Part VI) from a psychological point of view. Here it is mentioned only in as far as it gives rise to judicial cases. This particular crime being committed in great secrecy during the night, and in most instances even unconsciously, the Bantu tribunal uses two or three magical methods for discovering it. These *methods of inquiry*, which civilised nations have long ago abandoned, are :

1) *Divination by casting lots*. The objects used in our tribe for this purpose are the magic bones, the astragalus of goats, antelopes, etc, and shells, which I intend to study in a special chapter. When they have designated (ku ba, to beat) the wizard or witch (noyi) who has killed such and such a person, they are consulted a second time. If they confirm their verdict, the relatives of the deceased go to the chief and lodge their complaint. The accusation becomes official and is now in the hands of the tribunal.

2) The chief sends the plaintiff and accused to the magician who proceeds to the *divination by questioning* them and working himself up into an ecstatic condition (vumisa).

683 3) Should the accused be again designated and should he
695 deny his crime, he may request to be submitted to the *ordeal*,
824 viz, the trial by the solaneous plant called mondjo. If the drug
787 intoxicates him, his guilt is confirmed for the third time and the
754 tribunal will condemn him. The punishment for *buloyi* is death, either by hanging, or by empaling, or by drowning in the river, if the wizard was in the habit of perpetrating his murders by sending crocodiles to kill his victims.

[177 Nowadays Native chiefs dare not put to death suspected witches.
681] Since the Ba-Ronga have been under the jurisdiction of the Whites, the *death penalty* has been abolished. On the other hand, under

627 683 754 Gungunyana, executions were of frequent occurrence. When the chief had condemned a man to death, he merely made a sign to one of his executioners, who followed the unfortunate individual, as he went away into the bush, possibly quite unconscious of the fate awaiting him, and dealt him a heavy blow from behind with either club or assagay, killing him on the spot. Chiefs now only expel wizards or witches from the country, accompanying them to the boundary, or impose a high fine on them, keeping half of the amount. However there are still individuals who avenge themselves for the death of a relative on the suspected murderer by killing him. Such cases are not infrequently brought before the Courts of Pretoria and Johannesburg.

177 681 627 683 754 What is the duty of the civilised tribunal in such instances ? White judges generally condemn to death a man who has killed a "noyi". I know of cases in which even an induna who had hanged a "noyi," duly condemned by the Native Court, was himself considered a criminal and condemned as such. This happened to our friend Mankhelu, one of the pillars of the Nkuna tribe, the General of the army... He only escaped death owing to petitions sent to the Boer Authorities by both Blacks and Whites. This happened, I think, in 1888. Are European judges right in pronouncing the capital punishment in such cases ? This is questionable. It is certainly erroneous to assimilate Mankhelu's act which, in his own eyes, is an act of justice, to an ordinary murder, and to punish him as an assassin. He did what he thought to be right according to his knowledge. The husband of a bewitched woman who kills the murderer of his wife is more blamable, because his act is not sanctioned by the authority of a regular Court. However neither one nor the other deserves death.

683 754 I fully recognise that such acts of the Native tribunals must be stopped. A chief who accepts accusations of witchcraft ought to be punished, especially if it has been duly explained to him that a White Government does not allow any such case to be judged in the country. In the course of time Natives will understand this and the witchcraft superstition will dwindle away. But let us be patient with them, remembering that our forefathers of 300 years ago did exactly the same thing and burnt hundreds of suspected witches after having subjected them to horrible tortures.

In an essay on the subject published in the S.A.A.A.S Report of

177 Governments have everywhere placed Native Commissioners to watch over their coloured subjects. This has put *an end to the tribal wars.* Natives are no longer allowed to indulge in their old fighting customs. They may avail themselves of a war between Europeans to square up old accounts with each other, as happened during the Anglo-Boer war, but they are forbidden to follow the war-path any longer. In many parts of South Africa they have even been disarmed. This change, as a whole, is a favourable one. Native wars never brought blessing to the race. It tends however to destroy one of the springs of patriotism, and in this way it impoverishes the Native mind.

643 175 631 P. 177. 64 *c)* These Native Commissioners have placed a very effective check, not only upon the military tendencies of the tribe, but upon *the power of its chiefs.* The authority of the chief in the clan has certainly been diminished. In some instances he has been deposed, or banished in consequence of war, and the tribe has remained without a head and without force, as it were emasculated, and unable to guide itself. As Mankhelu said: "Our chief is the forest into which we retreat! Without him we are but women!" This was sadly noticeable in the case of the Zihlahla or Mpfumo clan, which was perhaps the most developed of all the Ronga kingdoms and which suffered most from the 1894-96 war. Its young chief Ñwamantibyane was caught and deported to some spot in Eastern Africa, and the clan was dismembered, a great number of men emigrating to the Transvaal; the others remained dissatisfied but powerless in their old territory, and were incorporated with Matjolo or Mabota.

643 681 692 P. 177. 69 Even when the Native chief is maintained in his position by the Whites, his power is curtailed. As a judge, he is no longer allowed to inflict capital punishment. His tribunal only judges minor cases, and beside and beyond him, there is a further appeal, the Court of the White Commissioner, which is ready to consider every important case. Should the Native chief be unjust or selfish in his decisions, the subjects will go more and more to the White tribunal. It may be that their claims will not be so well understood as in their own *hubo*, but they will perhaps meet with fairer treatment. Shrewd and clever Native Commissioners thus succeed in attracting more applicants to their residences than the chief to his capital (1). This dual control leads to a progressive loosening of the tribal tie.

(1) This was the case for instance in Nondwane. The unjust and egoistical rule of Mubwesha compelled many of his subjects to go "shikazakwena," viz., to the Portuguese Administrator of Moralven.

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338 saying of Native law: "Nwombekazi a yi ambi nandju" viz. "a
826 cow which has calved is not used to pay a fine; the calf pays it."
672 (See page 217.) He adds that the ten hoes sent with the girl pay for the ribs of the murdered man. (The Ba-Thonga believe that the human body has only ten ribs!) A case of involuntary homicide
682 is generally not brought before the chief, as the law is well known
643 and no one would try to evade his duty. Should however the
672 murderer not have been on good terms with the deceased, the matter will be discussed before the Court.

If the murder was *deliberate*, it is punished by death.
682 At least such was the law in former times, when Natives still
672 possessed the power of condemning to death. Now the fine is also the remittance of a woman. But owing to the existing hatred, and from fear of being obliged to lobola the relative of the murderer, the family of the deceased does not take the girl. She is sold by her parents and only the money is remitted to the plaintiff. (Mankhelu.)

682 Amongst the Ba-Ronga, when a near relative of the murdered
627 man wishes to avenge himself by killing the assassin, his people prevent him from doing so, in order to bring the matter before the chief. When a man called Mashabe was killed by the son of Gigiseka, Maphunga's brother, the murderer, had to pay £ 20. The fine may be as much as £ 25, but the idea is also to help the bereaved family to acquire a new spouse and, through her, new members. As for the murderer, he is regarded with scorn, and despised by the whole community. For a whole week, he must eat apart. He is unclean. So, at the time of luma bukanye, (page 400), he must also take miluru medicine together with the warriors who have killed enemies; but he does not drink it boastfully, extolling his deed! People say of him: "Look at the murderer!" (Mboza.)

The vendetta, the savage custom which makes it incumbent on the relations of a murdered man to avenge his death themselves at all costs and by any means, is absolutely absent from Thonga custom. It may be said that, as regards punishment of murder, they have reached quite a civilised stage in their judicial

682 procedure. They are in advance of many tribes. The same
627 cannot be asserted when dealing with witchcraft!

Witchcraft (Buloyi). To the Thonga mind this is one of the
754 greatest crimes which a man can commit. It is equivalent to
683 assassination, even worse than murder, as a dim idea of anthro-
787 pophagy is added to the simple charge of killing. A wizard
694 kills human beings to eat their flesh. We shall study the conceptions of *buloyi* later on (Part VI) from a psychological point of view.. Here it is mentioned only in as far as it gives rise to judicial cases. This particular crime being committed in great secrecy during the night, and in most instances even unconsciously, the Bantu tribunal uses two or three magical methods for discovering it. These *methods of inquiry*, which civilised nations have long ago abandoned, are :

1) *Divination by casting lots*. The objects used in our tribe for this purpose are the magic bones, the astragalus of goats, antelopes, etc, and shells, which I intend to study in a special chapter. When they have designated (ku ba, to beat) the wizard or witch (noyi) who has killed such and such a person, they are consulted a second time. If they confirm their verdict, the relatives of the deceased go to the chief and lodge their complaint. The accusation becomes official and is now in the hands of the tribunal.

2) The chief sends the plaintiff and accused to the magician who proceeds to the *divination by questioning* them and working himself up into an ecstatic condition (vumisa).

683 3) Should the accused be again designated and should he
695 deny his crime, he may request to be submitted to the *ordeal*,
824 viz, the trial by the solaneous plant called mondjo. If the drug
787 intoxicates him, his guilt is confirmed for the third time and the
754 tribunal will condemn him. The punishment for *buloyi* is death either by hanging, or by empaling, or by drowning in the river, if the wizard was in the habit of perpetrating his murders by sending crocodiles to kill his victims.

[177 681] Nowadays Native chiefs dare not put to death suspected witches. Since the Ba-Ronga have been under the jurisdiction of the Whites, the *death penalty* has been abolished. On the other hand, under

684/782 VI.) If found guilty, he will have to pay an extra fine of two oxen (1).

584/836 When the abducted woman is an unmarried girl, the matter is not serious. No trouble is entailed, provided she does not become pregnant. In the latter case, the seducer can say: "Ndji dlele ku dya: I have killed to eat," viz. "I am ready to lobola the girl" (p. 97). If the girl does not consent, the man is free. But if the man does not wish to marry the girl by paying a full lobolo, whilst the girl and her relatives want him to do so, he will have to pay as much as £ 30 and an ox. "He has spoilt his cause!" His own relatives will be arrested and forced to pay. They are responsible for him and will scold him severely. (Mankhelu).

683/649 *Fighting ending in blows.* The wounded man runs to the square of the capital and shows himself. The assailants will have to pay a fine of £ 8, three for the chief and five for the victim, or of two oxen, one for the chief and one for the plaintiff. (Mankhelu).

682/672 *Murder.* A distinction is made between involuntary murder, which is an accident (mhango, Dj.), and a deliberate assassination.

In the case of *involuntary murder*, Mankhelu describes the proceedings as follows:—Should you have killed a man by accident in a hunting trip, for instance, you will try to arrange matters directly with his relatives, if you were good friends; your relatives will give them a girl.. You dare not offer your own daughter, because they may refuse her, on account of their bad feelings! The same objection will not be made if your people provide the girl. They will accompany her with ten hoes and an ox, saying: "This is fat to smear our daughter." The notion which is at the base of this custom is not that a human person is the natural compensation for another human person, but that you give the diminished family a means of making good its loss. In fact as soon as the girl has born a child to the relatives of the deceased, she is free. If these men wish to keep her as their wife, they must

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[177 681] Nowadays Native chiefs dare not put to death suspected witches. Since the Ba-Ronga have been under the jurisdiction of the Whites, the *death penalty* has been abolished. On the other hand, under

627 683 754 Gungunyana, executions were of frequent occurrence. When the chief had condemned a man to death, he merely made a sign to one of his executioners, who followed the unfortunate individual, as he went away into the bush, possibly quite unconscious of the fate awaiting him, and dealt him a heavy blow from behind with either club or assagay, killing him on the spot. Chiefs now only expel wizards or witches from the country, accompanying them to the boundary, or impose a high fine on them, keeping half of the amount. However there are still individuals who avenge themselves for the death of a relative on the suspected murderer by killing him. Such cases are not infrequently brought before the Courts of Pretoria and Johannesburg.

177 681 627 683 754 What is the duty of the civilised tribunal in such instances ? White judges generally condemn to death a man who has killed a "noyi". I know of cases in which even an induna who had hanged a "noyi," duly condemned by the Native Court, was himself considered a criminal and condemned as such. This happened to our friend Mankhelu, one of the pillars of the Nkuna tribe, the General of the army... He only escaped death owing to petitions sent to the Boer Authorities by both Blacks and Whites. This happened, I think, in 1888. Are European judges right in pronouncing the capital punishment in such cases ? This is questionable. It is certainly erroneous to assimilate Mankhelu's act which, in his own eyes, is an act of justice, to an ordinary murder, and to punish him as an assassin. He did what he thought to be right according to his knowledge. The husband of a bewitched woman who kills the murderer of his wife is more blamable, because his act is not sanctioned by the authority of a regular Court. However neither one nor the other deserves death.

683 754 I fully recognise that such acts of the Native tribunals must be stopped. A chief who accepts accusations of witchcraft ought to be punished, especially if it has been duly explained to him that a White Government does not allow any such case to be judged in the country. In the course of time Natives will understand this and the witchcraft superstition will dwindle away. But let us be patient with them, remembering that our forefathers of 300 years ago did exactly the same thing and burnt hundreds of suspected witches after having subjected them to horrible tortures.

In an essay on the subject published in the S.A.A.A.S Report of

683 754 1906, I ventured to suggest certain means of checking the *buloyi* superstition. The Department of Native Affairs might give the following directions to its subordinates, the Native chiefs :

1) The crime of buloyi is not recognised under penal law.

2) The Native chiefs are prohibited from trying any buloyi case.

3) The plaintiff must be reprimanded as disturbing the peace of the country.

4) The witch doctor or mungoma (magician), who pretends to have smelt out a wizard, must be fined as using his authority to deceive people and foster hatred amongst them.

5) No evidence based on the use of divinatory bones must be accepted.

These rules, if strictly enforced and combined with Christian teaching and the progress of civilisation, will in the course of time put an end to the scourge of witchcraft.

683 695 578 *Insults.* Ku rukana or ruketela, to hurl insults at each other's head, is very frequent amongst Thongas and does not lead to any judicial case, if not accompanied by assault and bruises (1). There are however insulting deeds which are considered as crimes. To take human blood, or spittle, or excrement with a stick and to push it into the mouth of a child, for instance, is considered a very serious insult which must be judged before the Court. A man who committed such an offence would have to pay a fine amounting to a whole lobola. I heard of a woman, who gave a child a butterfly to eat. The parents of the little one were very angry. She denied having done such a thing. They said to her: "Confess your sin and pay a fine of 5/—." She refused and offered to undergo the ordeal, viz., to drink the mondjo philtre. "If you insist" said they, "you will have to pay £ 10." However she persisted and became intoxicated ; this was a proof of her guilt. She was fined to the amount of £ 40, £ 20 for the child and £ 20 for the chief!

683 201 754 To point at any one with the index finger is also a grave insult which may have judicial consequences, because this action is brought into close relation with *buloyi*.

683 578 695 (1) The most common insult which women can cast in each other's teeth is nihashwaku (Ro) or nyahwaku (Nkuna) which means: the genitals of your mother. A scuffle with blows is sure to arise when that word has been pronounced. It is also used when taking an oath. Men swear by the name of their chief.

3) The Punishment of Witchcraft.

754 683 What is the punishment inflicted on those convicted of the crime of witchcraft? Let us remember that this is a crime, an act of homicide, doubly punishable by the Court. Chief Shiluvane had definitely prohibited it by a decree in the following words: "I do not allow anyone to die in my country except on account of old age. So let the baloyi at once cease their enchantments, or I shall kill them all." In former times the crime of witchcraft was punished by death and the culprit was immediately hanged. The last to be punished in this way, in the Nkuna clan, was Mudebane (I. p. 443), and Mankhelu himself executed him. The wizards are impaled or drowned, as the case may be. Flogging and banishment were also resorted to when the crime was not so heinous. In Khosen wizards were expelled from the villages and roamed about the country, sleeping in the ruins, mocked at and insulted by the children, and oxen sinews were tied round their biceps so tightly that they entered their flesh and caused great suffering.

177.68 One of my informants (Fenis), who drank the mondjo at the death of Zihlahla, chief of the Mpfumo district, about 1870, told me that the heaviest penalty imposed on the wizards on that occasion was a fine of one or two goats, or of one pound sterling. He attributed this leniency to the proximity of the Whites. The civilised Governments in Africa have certainly done their best to put down this method of smelling-out wizards, and their efforts have been by no means without result. Native chiefs are now content with fining the wizards £ 10 or £ 15, half of which remains in their own pockets. I heard of one of them who claimed to be a Christian, but did not object to the substantial increase to his civil list brought about by witchcraft suits.

IV. *Concluding Remarks on Witchcraft.*

754 182 Witchcraft is one of the greatest curses of Native Life. I attribute the enormous hold which this superstition has taken on the mind of the Bantu to three causes: 1) The *Animistic beliefs* explained on p. 367

3) The Gangisa.

832 When a boy has gone through the puberty rites, he is grown
836 up and is allowed to practise the *gangisa*. This word comes
882 from *ganga*, which means " to choose a lover." Each girl is asked by the boys to choose one of them ; they *make them choose* (gangisa, factitive derivative). I once observed some boys—they were still very young—flirting round three or four girls just like bees round ripe plums, running after them, and saying repeatedly : " Choose me! Choose me! " There is a special blue cotton print with a large white pattern which is called " gangisa ntombi " viz. to make a girl choose, as it is offered by the lover to the damsel of
836 his choice in order to obtain her favour. When a girl has made
848 her choice, her boy plays with her like husband and wife, first
684 building little huts, etc. but later on in a less platonic fashion. In fact nothing is prohibited in the relations between young people
[837] of the two sexes. A married woman is sacred amongst the Thongas, but an unmarried girl is not. However, she must not become pregnant. (1) If this happens, the parents will say to the lover : "You have spoiled our daughter, you must buy her in marriage." If he refuses, the child will belong to the family of the girl. Excesses in gangisa are condemned. A boy who commits them is said to be an adulterer (a ni bupse) ; of a girl they say : " She will lose her head (a ta ba singe). "

882 As the unmarried boys and girls live in special huts, the *lao*
836 of the boys and the *nhanga* of the girls, at the entrance of the village, it is easy for them to meet during the night. During the day, they generally behave themselves becomingly. But when the lads pay visits to their girls, who sing to the accompaniment

(1) When a girl becomes pregnant, having had relations with her lover inside her parents' village, it is very serious; it is taboo. The boy will have to find a goat, to kill it during the night in the girl's kraal, and to rise very early; then both the boy and the girl, quite naked, must go round the village and sprinkle the fence from inside with a special decoction. None must come out of the huts to look at them. This will prevent the inhabitants from contracting the disease called mukuhlwane (cough, lung complaint) which would otherwise attack them. Moreover the guilty boy will have to pay a fine of £ 5 in cattle of the sun of the lobola.

789 "*ringela bowumba*," from the verb ringa, to try ; it is the attempt
761 to bring some influence to bear on the misfortune of the bereaved mother.)

9) ADULTERY.

837 Amongst the Thongas *true* adultery for a *man*, married or
595 unmarried (bumbuye), consists in committing sin with a married woman. Should he have relations with a girl, it leads to no consequences at all. Nobody will blame him, if the girl does not conceive. Should she have a child, he will only be forced to marry her ; she will become his second wife. His first wife will not at all resent his bad conduct. Sometimes she will herself get him the girl he wants. There is nothing in her heart like the jealous dignity of a European spouse! She will keep all her capacity for jealousy (bukwele) for the time when the second wife comes to the village, and shares with her the affection of their common husband! Adultery with an unmarried woman is nothing more than "gangisa."

837 But should a man have abducted a *married woman*, a woman
684 who has a master (ñwinyi), who has been paid for, then the
692 matter becomes very serious. The husband is very skilful at discovering her misdoing. As soon as he begins to have doubts about the fidelity of his wife, he chooses a friend and asks him to watch her. She is very cunning, her lover also ; but the friend is on the watch and some time perhaps, catches them in the bush, when she goes to gather fuel, or near the pool, where she draws her water. He comes back to the husband and informs him that he has caught them in the very act. Then the husband tells his wife that proof has been obtained and that she had better go at once to her lover and take something from his hut ; she obeys, and comes back with his blanket or any other object. This is "la pièce à conviction." The husband goes with it to the counsellor who is in charge of his village ; together they apply to the chief. The chief sends the counsellor who is responsible for the village of the lover to summon him. The confrontation takes place and the story of the case is investigated.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

837 684 692 The woman is questioned, and confesses when, where, and how many times he has sinned with her. If he denies this, the object taken from the hut is exhibited. The adulterer is condemned by the chief to pay a *whole lobolo*, £ 15 to £ 20, as much as is necessary to buy a wife. He is rebuked before the whole assembly. "If you had taken a girl, it would not have mattered at all. Why did you abduct a married woman ? Do you not know that it breeds endless trouble at court (tindaba) ?"

The counsellor of the deceived husband goes to the counsellor of the lover to claim the money. The latter must go to the guilty man. The parents of the adulterer insult their son : "You see! All this money lost now! If only you had lobola a wife with it!" They must help him to find it at once, because this is a law universally recognised : the price of adultery must be forthcoming. (Nandju wa bumbuye a wu pfumali). The poor man will have to pay ; he will even have to add a hoe to "drive away" (hlongola) the counsellor, who keeps it for his reward!

837 684 783 753 608 Why is adultery so strongly prohibited and punished ? Not at all from any moral consideration of purity or chastity, but for two other reasons. First a social one. Adultery with a married woman is a theft, because she is owned by a master. She is not punished herself, except when the watcher finds her out and gives himself the pleasure of thrashing her to his heart's content. The whole punishment falls on the man ; he is the thief. But there is also a physical reason for it : the *matlulana*! We have already met with this word. *Tlulana* means to jump over each other, to compete with each other. In the sexual domain it is said of two men who have relations with the same woman. "They have met [826] together in one life through the blood of that woman ; they have drunk from the same pool" (Viguet). This establishes between them a most curious mutual dependence : should one of them be ill, the other must not visit him ; the patient might die. If he runs a thorn into his foot, the other must not help him to extract it ; it is tabéo ; the wound would not heal. If he dies, his rival must not be present at his mourning or he would himself die (See page 137). Should he even be the actual son (sometimes it happens that a son commits adultery with one of the younger wives

837 of his father, which is considered as *biha*, very bad), he must not
684 take any part in the burial, though he might be the regular "master
783 of the mourning." Relatives will drive him away because they
578 have pity on him, they know what misfortune threatens him. It is
182 a terrible taboo! There are medicines to remove this contamin-
626 ation; the *yila* is removed by them, but the *biha* (bad action)
753 remains! However in the case of the disease called *mpondjo*, (which I believe to be the lupus), medicines are of no avail; should a man visit his rival, who is suffering from it, he will die. We have also seen the terrible complications which are believed to take place at the birth of children, when there has been a question of adultery. (P. 40.)

836 These great taboos show that there is a deep feeling amongst the Thongas that promiscuity of any kind is a bad and a dangerous thing. Even in the case of *gangisa*, boys are censured when two of them court the same girl.

10) Divorce.

586 Adultery is one of the causes of divorce. The guilty woman, instead of obeying her legitimate husband and helping him to get his compensation, may choose to go to her lover and live with him. This leads to an immediate divorce. The husband goes to the parents of the unfaithful wife and claims his lobolo. They have perhaps no money to give. However they will try to get it as soon as possible, even if it is by the dissolution of the marriage of their own son; they will perhaps send back his young wife to her parents and claim the lobolo paid for her, in order to meet the claim of the angry husband (See Part II). It would seem easier to go to the thief and claim from him the lobola for the adulteress whom he has stolen (tlhuba). But a thief is not a reliable man! If he has stolen, it proves that he had nothing (1). (See Appendix VIII.)

Divorce frequently takes place for more trivial reasons, for

548 (1) Women of low morals are called in Ronga gwababana, prostitute. There are plenty of them all round Lourenço Marques, where morality has sunk to a very low level; but this is the result of degeneration.

681 When goats have damaged somebody's garden, there is no
685 fine to pay. The shepherds are whipped and the matter is
643 thus concluded. Should the father of the boys, however, take their part and protect them with his weapons, he will be summoned to the tribunal of the chief and have to pay a fine of £ 5 or two or three goats.

643 Thonga Natives who have but a few head of cattle, are
231 accustomed to entrust them to the care of neighbours possessing
686 a large herd, in order to spare themselves the trouble of finding herding boys. There are some laws regulating this matter. If the owner of the cow, or the pig, or the goat, gives money in advance to the master of the large herd, all the calves, pigs, and kids, which may be born revert to him. But if he has not paid anything, the master of the herd is entitled to choose one pig out of the first litter ; or he can keep the third or fourth calf or kid. If it be a hen, one of its chickens will belong to the man who took care of it. Should the owner forget to remit the due reward, there will be trouble (pongwe). When he goes to take his cattle back, the master of the herd will keep one head for himself, and, if a dispute arises, both will go to the chief, at least if the matter is important, if the animal in question, for instance, is an ox.

If an ox incorporated with another man's herd dies, the master of the herd will inform the owner in order that he may go and dispose of the meat. Should he be living too far off, the ox will be eaten on the spot and the skin will be sent to the owner.
231 Suppose the master of the herd pretends that the ox is dead, but
685 has only put it with another herd, and sent a skin to the owner to deceive him, it is a case of theft, which will be judged as such.

3) Criminal cases.

684 *Adultery*. Our tribe punishes adultery very severely indeed,
787 at least when the woman is married. The fine is a full lobolo.
837 (See page 197.) Amongst the Nkunas if the accused man denies his guilt when questioned indoors, the bones are consulted, or even the magicians who practise the "vumisa" divination. (Part

684 VI.) If found guilty, he will have to pay an extra fine of two
782 oxen (1).

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836 is not serious. No trouble is entailed, provided she does not become pregnant. In the latter case, the seducer can say: "Ndji dlele ku dya: I have killed to eat," viz. "I am ready to lobola the girl" (p. 97). If the girl does not consent, the man is free. But if the man does not wish to marry the girl by paying a full lobolo, whilst the girl and her relatives want him to do so, he will have to pay as much as £ 30 and an ox. "He has spoilt his cause!" His own relatives will be arrested and forced to pay. They are responsible for him and will scold him severely. (Mankhelu).

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(1) The neighbouring Chopi tribe, on the contrary, leaves the husband to arrange matters as he likes. Formerly he used to kill the adulterer. But cases of adultery are never brought before the chief.

839 177 548 588 says: "You, nkhontshana, get up, the cocks are crowing, be not surprised by the rising sun." This song warns the girl who has gone during the night to sleep in the lao, the boys' hut, that she had better run away at once lest she should be found in a place where she ought not to be. But it is a girl who is meant here and not a Johannesburg nkhontshana! No! Greek heathenism knew this refinement of immorality and indulged in it, but Bantu heathenism, whatever may be its corruption, never dreamed of it. Even to-day, though it is said to have penetrated into some parts (as in the Maputju country), the Native kraal feels a real abhorrence of it. I was told the following story. A man, in Bilen, had married a woman; he came to the Rand and took his wife's brother as his nkhontshana. When he returned home, his parents-in-law were very angry with him; they gave him back the lobolo money and took their daughter from him, saying: "You are a hyena! You are a wizard! You might as well sin with your mother-in-law!"... 839 177 Unnatural vice was taught to the South African Bantus by men of a foreign race; it first invaded the prisons; now it is raging in these big Native miners' settlements, where it is deflouring the Bantu youth. For if it does not immediately destroy their physical strength, this perversion of one of the most essential functions of man corrupts the sources of moral stamina and endangers the foundations of Bantu social life.

Is there no remedy for this terrible evil?

The worst aspect of the situation is that the immense majority of the Natives themselves do not consider this sin as of any importance at all. 839 They speak of it with laughter. I was told that it is severely prohibited by law and that any boy found guilty of bukhontshana is 684 548 condemned to twelve months' imprisonment. But it is extremely difficult to bring the evidence necessary for conviction. The indunas and Native policemen enter into a conspiration of silence, being themselves the first and greatest sinners in this respect. Happily the Mission is fighting the evil as energetically as possible and the Compound Managers help its agents to secure separate dormitories, where a certain number of boys can find a refuge against contamination. A few hundreds or thousands escape in this way, but what is that in comparison with the tens of thousands who are exposed to this frightful temptation in the Compounds fittingly spoken of, by a wise South African statesman, as the University of crime?

839 548 My informant, who was perfectly acquainted with the circumstances of life in the Compounds, mentioned the following measures which he

231 857 867 "cut the road" from the goats (tjemetela) to keep them away, from the gardens. They safely reach the little plain where nothing but hard Gramineae grow. There the boys begin to play, having handed over the charge of the goats to the youngest of the party. The little chap gets tired of watching; little by little the whole herd goes back to the forbidden garden and eats greedily of the savoury stems of the mealies! After a while, the boys discover that the goats are gone. They run after them, and bring them back. But the mistress of the garden passes near by, coming back from the well with her pitcher on her head. She sees the harm done, inspects the traces of the goats, knows by them which herd has plundered her field, uproots some of the spoiled stems and with great clamour goes to the village of the guilty boys and throws down the mealies right before the hut of the father. No compensation is claimed in such a case, generally, but the father will thrash the boys when they come back; or should there be a recurrence of the offence, the husband of the owner of the garden will himself administer a correction to the careless goatherds.

827 857 Boys herding the goats have certain customs. When one of them emits a certain unseemly sound from the rectum, the others say to him: "Fakisa!" He must answer: "Cita munyakanya goben." (I have let out my wind by the rectum). This formula, which is Zulu, is secret. If he does not know it, they beat him and make him look after the goats till the end of the day. Should another boy reveal the answer to the uninitiated, they will punish him in the same way.

2) Stealing.

685 857 What were they doing when the goats escaped? They had probably themselves succeeded in stealing some sweet potatoes and were roasting them on a little fire, well hidden in the velt. Or they had discovered in the bush a broken pot, an old disused and perforated mortar, which some one had placed there to attract bees. And indeed there was honey inside. They had stolen it... Goatherds are regular thieves and known as such.

685 857 Generally speaking the elder boys send the younger to commit these thefts, and the plunder is enjoyed by the whole company. They threaten to beat them if they return empty-handed. A sad fate for the youngsters—blows on all sides ; blows from the owners of the fields if they are caught, blows from their comrades if they bring nothing back with them!

Here are one or two tricks employed by the little thieves. In order to take a water-melon (khalabatla) out of a field without being noticed by the women who are busy pulling up their ground nuts, they cut the stalk and fasten it to a piece of string. The other end of this is attached to the leg of the thief, who moves away slowly, drawing the water-melon after him. When he is out of reach of the women, he hastily puts it under his arm and makes off at top speed.

To catch a hen without its making a sound, they dig a little hole behind the huts of the village, and put a few grains of maize in it. The fowl puts its head into the hole to eat the grains, and immediately the little rascal who was watching from behind a bush, rushes out, seizes it by the neck and carries it off before it can utter a single cry!

672 685 The penalty when a boy is caught is a good whipping without a fine. "Psa batjongwana ! It is an action of little boys !" These minor thefts are not considered serious.

3) Catching game.

262 223 857 Hunger is the constant companion of these boys, who do not get enough to eat at home. It is true they ate to their heart's content (shura) yesterday evening, but this morning they had only a very scanty breakfast (fihluta). They try to satisfy their never satisfied appetite by catching game : not big game of course, as they have no real weapons, but birds, field-mice, eggs in the nests (the less fresh they are, the better, because there is more meat inside!) etc. To get birds they throw their sticks at them, and are very clever at killing a partridge as it rises heavily from the grass ; or they make traps with a flexible stick to which they tie a string with a bait. They bend the stick, set the trap by means

622 is taboo for the women to eat it, or the under lip (See p. 184).
596 From each limb a small piece is taken (tshumbuta) and
264 placed on a skewer ; it is the portion of the shepherds and of
554 the butchers, (makotjo ya babyisi). (See the tale of Piti, *Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, page 152). Sometimes the shepherds also receive the lungs and the spleen.

This way of distributing ox meat is called "ku tlhaba homu ba hamba milao," viz., "to kill an ox according to rule." Should a younger brother or a son kill an ox, he will send the breast to the master of the village, but he keeps all the limbs and does not observe the rules because, as he says : "It is enough to pay taxes to the chief of the country." Often one of the legs is sent to the chief of the clan.

Strange to say when a goat is killed none of these prescribed rules are followed, as they only concern the oxen.

622 These customs show clearly the position of the headman ;
596 he is the master but also the father of his subordinates, and their provider.

1) He must *watch* over the village (basopa, Dutch word passop, universally adopted by the Natives). During the night, if his son is away working in Johannesburg, he takes care that no lovers come into the huts of his daughters-in-law, (a langusa bumbuye), and if he happens to catch one, he will make him pay the fine.

622 2) He is a true *justice of peace* amongst the inmates of the
692 village, doing his best to maintain good relations amongst them.
578 Suppose for instance that the pigs belonging to one of the inhab-
685 itants come out of their enclosure and over-run the gardens of
643 another man. This man will go and say to the owner of the pigs : "Such and such a thing has happened, please close the pigs' kraal more carefully." Should the same thing happen a second time, he will complain to the *numzane*. The headman will then go to the culprit and say : "You have not heeded the warning ; you must pay compensation (djiha)." If the culprit listens to the "voice of the blood" (bushaka), he will obey and the matter will end smoothly ; if not, the headman can only keep silent : he has no soldiers, no means of enforcing his judgment ; the plaintiff will then go to the chief of the tribe to complain. The case will be

judged before the Court, in the capital, because the offender has refused to follow the way of persuasion, he has "mocked the family love" (a yalile bushaka). Such misdemeanours are very frequent in the life of the village. Most of the Natives bear philosophically with these annoyances. Should some one, however, be really ill-natured, and wear out their patience (wa ku karata), he will be forced to build a hut for himself, alone, outside the village. If the damage is done by *children*, if they have stolen sweet potatoes, as we have seen, the wronged proprietor gives them a good thrashing but does not claim a fine. Occasionally the headman himself thrashes them in presence of their father, and the father will say to them: "You see the numzane will beat you if you are not good." Children who mock at cripples are also severely beaten by him, all the more so as, in this case, the offended party has the right of claiming a fine.

3) The headman also possesses *authority over his younger brothers and his children*. He can even confiscate their money if one of them is addicted to drinking and ruins his property. However his authority in this respect must not be overstepped, and the headman must take care how he exercises it, as it is based more or less on sufferance. The younger brothers, for instance, maintain the right of making contracts, especially lobola contracts. Should the numzane restrict their liberty too much, they will leave him and found their own villages. A successful headman is he who knows how to keep the whole family together to the general satisfaction.

4) The headman has also the right of imposing *statute labour*, especially when the oxen kraal must be rebuilt, or when the weeds must be removed from the hubo; he sends his young men to do the work. But he must not exact too much from his people or forget to feast them with beer or with meat when the work is finished.

5) Lastly the headman *presides over all the discussions* which take place in the village. He is the master of the hubo. The discussion can be conducted in three different places; when it deals with a secret matter, the men go *inside the hut*: they debate the matter indoors (ba bulabula ndlwen). Private questions

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643 thus concluded. Should the father of the boys, however, take their part and protect them with his weapons, he will be summoned to the tribunal of the chief and have to pay a fine of £ 5 or two or three goats.

643 Thonga Natives who have but a few head of cattle, are
231 accustomed to entrust them to the care of neighbours possessing
686 a large herd, in order to spare themselves the trouble of finding herding boys. There are some laws regulating this matter. If the owner of the cow, or the pig, or the goat, gives money in advance to the master of the large herd, all the calves, pigs, and kids, which may be born revert to him. But if he has not paid anything, the master of the herd is entitled to choose one pig out of the first litter ; or he can keep the third or fourth calf or kid. If it be a hen, one of its chickens will belong to the man who took care of it. Should the owner forget to remit the due reward, there will be trouble (pongwe). When he goes to take his cattle back, the master of the herd will keep one head for himself, and, if a dispute arises, both will go to the chief, at least if the matter is important, if the animal in question, for instance, is an ox.

If an ox incorporated with another man's herd dies, the master of the herd will inform the owner in order that he may go and dispose of the meat. Should he be living too far off, the ox will be eaten on the spot and the skin will be sent to the owner.
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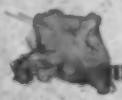

[illegible]INAL CASES.

684 *Adultery.* Our tribe punishes adultery very severely indeed,
787 at least when the woman is married. The fine is a full lobolo.
937 (See page 197.) Amongst the Nkunas if the accused man denies his guilt when questioned indoors, the bones are consulted, or even the magicians who practise the "vumisa" divination. (Part

685/721 *Theft* (ku yiba) is universally condemned, not so much for its immoral character as for the fact that it renders a normal social life impossible. The notion of *individual property*, though it is not developed as in more civilised nations, is nevertheless at the base of the whole Bantu system. The Bantus are agriculturists. They believe that the products of their labour belong to them and that no one else is entitled to appropriate them. The notion of property is in direct relation to work accomplished. (Compare Part IV.)

685/574/202 To steal growing mealies is not usual. A thief breaks off the cob, whilst the master of the field first uproots the stalk and then takes the cobs. If a friend of his who happens to be travelling passes through his gardens and wants to eat a cob, he is quite welcome to do so. He also uproots the stalk, puts it on one side of the road or leans it against a tree and draws a line on the ground from the place where the stalk grew to the spot where he has put it. Perhaps the owner of the field will discover the uprooted stalk after a whole month. If he inquires who has helped himself to his mealies, his friend will say to him : "Did you not see the line ?" And they will laugh over it (hlekelelana). A thief acting hastily would not have had time to draw the line!

685/789 There are certain magical drugs with which people smear mealie stalks (see Part IV) and they assert that, if any one tries to penetrate into their garden to steal, he will have his hand caught and will not be able to get rid of the plant! For some reason or another, these magical methods do not always work. So the injured person has recourse to the tribunal.

685/343 Should the thief be caught in the very act, there is no difficulty! His own field will be taken by the owner of the stolen mealies and he will have to pay a fine of one ox, otherwise the matter will be brought before the Court, and the only difference will be that the fine will be of two or three oxen, one of which will remain in the hands of the chief. (Mankhelu.) If the thief has been clever enough to avoid being caught, if he has stolen from a store hut, Natives are clever detectives and he will probably be discovered. These store huts are generally built in the middle of the field, or in the little bush which surrounds the village ; the grass all around

685 has been pulled up and the sand nicely smoothed down, so that
343 any traces of a thief would easily be seen. He will possibly be
151 recognised at once by the trackers, owing to some peculiarity in the
625 marks on the sand, the foot-print of each individual being more or less known; clever detectives can even ascertain the height and gait of a man from the length of his stride! If there are no peculiar marks in the foot-prints, the trackers will follow them and reach the village where the thief lives. They will perhaps take him by surprise in his hut. If the matter cannot be settled by the headman of the village and has to be brought before the chief, the guilty party will be fined as much as two, three or even five pounds sterling (Tobane) (1).

When detectives have been unable to trace a thief, they assume a philosophical attitude and say: "Only wait. A man who has stolen will steal again, and you will catch him another time!"

643 *Revolt against the decisions of the chief's hubo* is very rare. Should
687 any person take the part of a condemned man and encourage him to oppose the decision of the Court, he will be beaten with a shambock on the square of the capital. "U onhi hubo," "he has spoilt the Court!" Moreover he may have to pay a fine of £2. (Mankhelu.)

643 *Answer to some of Professor Frazer's questions on Government.*
835 There are no separate chiefs for war and peace. But in time
224 of war the great induna, who is the Commander-in-chief of the
701 army, directs all military operations. — The chief is never required to marry his own sister or daughter. The only similar case of which I have heard, is that of a hunter who must have sexual relations with his daughter before going on a hunting trip (Part IV).

643 — The king's mother does not hold any special office. —
778 The chief does not keep any portion of his deceased predecessor excepting the nails and hair used for the mhamba (See page 386 and part VI)

538 (1) The following interesting couplet in two sentences aptly describes the thief:
Shikhongwa vendjelelanu ? — The crown on the hut nicely rounded ?
Mangatla a puka ritsho... — The hawk burns his claws...
The thief is like a crown on the top of a hut. He is a lazy person, he embellishes and will not work. Evil will befall him, as with a hawk who tries to snatch the meat that is roasting and burns his claws!

245 the cause of the desolation. Planting new trees is consequently
784 a taboo! Nowadays however, this superstition has died out,
824 and one may see a great number of mango, orange, lemon (1), and pho-pho trees in Thonga fields, on the Coast as well as in Zoutpansberg.

[351] Natives do not generally fence their gardens. Stealing is therefore very easy and it is no wonder that they have recourse to
685 magical means to protect themselves. Here are some of them ;
789 they are characteristic instances of Bantu magic.

The *rihehlo*. This consists of a kind of mysterious influence exerted on the thief by throwing a magical powder into his footprints or by taking a little of the earth found in these footprints and treating it with the drugs. The inhabitants of the village where the thief lives will be seized by disease ; this will induce them to come to the owners of the garden to confess their fault and pay a fine. Then the magician who had furnished the drug will give them a counter-drug and they will be healed! Amongst the Pedis, the magician anoints with his drugs the stem from which a cob has been stolen. Then the thief will feel intolerable suffering in his little finger and come to the village of the people whom he has robbed crying : "I have stolen!" He pays the fine, receives in exchange the counter-drug and the pain ceases! (Spelonken)

The tinhlamalala. This is the name of the central nervules of the leaves of the Hyphaene palm tree. They are like little snakes, very slender, and flexible. To make the resemblance still greater, the owner of a field makes a knot at the extremity of the rod : this represents the head of the snake. Then he looks for the dried skin which has been cast off by a real snake ; he reduces this to ashes, makes a powder with these ashes and anoints the rods. He weaves the rods together to form a kind of crown and places it on one of the mealies stems in his garden. When the thief

137 (1) The lemon tree is called mbomu (mu-mi). This seems to be a Native word and the tree also may be indigenous in the country. It grows wild on the banks of the Lower Nkomati to such an extent that there is an island in the river, some distance above Morakwen, which is called Ilha dos Limões, Lemon Island. The lemons are of large size and their rind resembles that of the orange.

enters the field, the tinhlamalala at once transform themselves 685
into small snakes which also bear the name of tinhlamalala. 789
(Notice the correspondence of names: a curious instance of verbal magic.) These snakes rush towards the thief, who runs away, seized with terror. Should he take the stolen cobs with him instead of throwing them on to the ground, the tinhlamalala would follow him to his village! This dreadful powder was prepared by a Nkuna named Ñwadjokwane and the people of his village used to inoculate themselves with the drug ; in this way they had nothing to fear from the snakes.

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Answers to some of Professor Frazer's questions on Agriculture. 241

There are no special ceremonies at the clearance of land for cultivation; no grafting, nor artificial fertilisation of fruit trees is practised. (They think that trees fecundate each other by means of their roots. See, later on, paragraph on Thonga Botany). They do not believe that a deity animates the crops, only that baloyi (wizards) can increase or diminish the product of the fields (See Part VI). As regards the rite of driving away the vermin from the fields, we shall describe it in Part VI. There are no superstitions about the last corn cut, and no special ceremony practised on the harvest field. Except the rule of silence which must be kept by women threshing rice and Kafir corn, there are no special regulations for persons engaged in agricultural operations, and no sexual taboos. The plough, the hoe, the pestle and the winnowing basket are not used in ceremonial purifications or to avoid dangers.

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As regards Agriculture, it cannot be said that the Thonga tribe is in a very backward stage. Thongas, as well as most of

good luck ; he will say : "My god has blessed me and shown me this gandjelo," and he is quite welcome to help himself to the wine. On the other hand, it is prohibited to touch the shell and to drink from it. It is taboo. A stranger doing so would be addressed as follows : "Are you a bee, are you a butterfly to go and help yourself from a shikutja, which does not belong to you?" He would be tied up, arms and legs, and left to sleep in the open for the whole night. On leaving him they will taunt him, saying : "Go and drink from the shikutja." He may even be condemned to pay a fine, a goat, or a hoe. This palm wine has a very sweet and agreeable taste. 273 685

According to the Native idea, *honey* (bulombe) is also a drink! The prefix *bu* classifies this product amongst liquids. It is very much appreciated and Natives readily submit to be stung in order to collect it (hakula) from the holes in old trees or rocks. They generally burn some grass which they hold in one hand, keeping the bees away with the smoke and the flame, and gathering the honey combs into a pot with the other hand. Thongas frequently secure honey in an artificial way by placing a broken pot upside-down in the bush. Bees are attracted and a swarm will occasionally make its home in the pot. In the Ñwambukota region (near Morakwen) I saw a Ronga who even had bee hives of his own invention and succeeded in securing plenty of honey. Native honey is of a brownish, blackish hue. When eating it, Thongas do not at all despise the larvae : are they not meat? 222 231 272

3) *The Shiwayawaya and Shikokiyane drinks.* The various kinds of beer and drinks made from fruit were not, however, enough for the Thongas. They saw that White people used sugar-cane to distil rum and they attempted to do the same. The result of their attempt is called *Shiwayawaya*. Inhambane Natives seem to have been the first to brew it ; their kinsmen of the Lourenço Marques district soon followed their example. They crush the sugar-cane in a mortar, after having poured some water into it ; they then collect the crushed cane in a sack, press it, and extract all the liquid they can in one or two barrels. During the night a fire is lighted in a hut, near the barrels, to 273

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3) Criminal cases.

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1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

881 long. Sometimes, when game has been plentiful, one of the men comes and squeezes the half-digested grass found in the bowels of an antelope over the porridge, saying to the boys : " You must have something of the results of your hunting too! "

This diet nauseates them at first. They sometimes vomit right on the table. No matter, every particle of the porridge must be eaten all the same. When they are accustomed to the diet, they grow fat, and it is wonderful how their physical appearance sometimes improves during these few months.

Punishments. Blows are punishments for minor offences. Should some more serious fault have been committed, the father of the circumcision condemns the boy to "drink goat's milk." There is a shrub called " mbuti ;" the same word also means goat. Three sticks of it are taken. The boy must present his hands, put them against each other and separate the fingers. The sticks are introduced between the fingers and a strong man, taking both ends of the sticks in his hands, presses them together and lifts the poor boy, squeezing and half crushing his fingers.

[688] In former times, the boys who had tried to escape or who had revealed the secrets of the sungi to women, or to the uninitiated, were hanged on the last day of the school and burnt to ashes, together with all the contents of the lodge.

766 *Death.* The circumcised must also be prepared to die if their
881 wound does not heal properly and if the Manyabe's medicine is not successful. Many of them have actually died. It is absolutely forbidden to mourn over them. The mother of the deceased is informed of his death by a notch cut in the edge of the pot in which she brings the food. She must not cry. The corpse is buried in a wet place, in a grave dug with sticks, as it would make people suspicious if the shepherds were to go to the village and fetch spades for this work.

IV. *The teaching of formulae.*

881 So the boys are taught endurance, obedience, manliness. But there is another side to the training of the Ngoma. It has sometimes been compared to a school, and it is true that there is some

judged before the Court, in the capital, because the offender has refused to follow the way of persuasion, he has "mocked the family love" (a yalile bushaka). Such misdemeanours are very frequent in the life of the village. Most of the Natives bear philosophically with these annoyances. Should some one, however, be really ill-natured, and wear out their patience (wa ku karata), he will be forced to build a hut for himself, alone, outside the village. If the damage is done by *children*, if they have stolen sweet potatoes, as we have seen, the wronged proprietor gives them a good thrashing but does not claim a fine. Occasionally the headman himself thrashes them in presence of their father, and the father will say to them: "You see the numzane will beat you if you are not good." Children who mock at cripples are also severely beaten by him, all the more so as, in this case, the offended party has the right of claiming a fine.

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2) Civil cases.

692 I will not assert that Thongas know the exact difference between
622 civil and criminal cases, the same tribunal judging them both and
643 all being called by the same name, milandju.

If any distinction is made, it would be between private and
681 official cases, *private cases* being those which are settled by the two parties concerned alone, without the intervention of the chief ; whilst *official cases* are those in which the matter (mhaka) has been brought to the capital. As already explained, the headmen of the village try to settle the difficulties themselves ; if they succeed, all the better, as the fine will be reduced to its minimum, whilst, before the Court, the fine would be doubled and the chief would keep half of it!

691 Ninety per cent of the civil cases are in connection with *lobola*. These are sometimes most intricate and I would refer to the description already given of some of them (p. 282 and Appendix VIII).

691 *Divorce* cases are also common. When a woman has definitely
586 left her husband, her relatives must return the lobolo money.
643 "You must give up to them £ 5 or an ox," says Mankhelu. The
614 chief Mubvesha who was known for his avarice used to arrest the husband and make him pay £ 25 ; he returned £ 15 to the wife's relatives and kept £ 10 for himself.

When money is returned, the children belong to the mother (See page 279).

691 Many cases may occur in connection with *cattle*. The case of
643 *redhibition* is foreseen : when I buy an ox and it dies on my hands
437 from a disease which was not known at the date of my purchase but which already existed, I have the right to go and ask for another in its place. But I bring the skin of the dead ox with me and one hoe inside it for the meat which I have eaten. If the seller refuses to accept my claim, I go to the chief and complain. He will summon the recalcitrant person and say to him : "Did not this man act well when he put a hoe inside the skin ? Give him another ox!" (Mankhelu.)

789 761 "*ringela bowumba,*" from the verb ringa, to try ; it is the attempt to bring some influence to bear on the misfortune of the bereaved mother.)

9) ADULTERY.

837 595 Amongst the Thongas *true* adultery for a *man*, married or unmarried (bumbuye), consists in committing sin with a married woman. Should he have relations with a girl, it leads to no consequences at all. Nobody will blame him, if the girl does not conceive. Should she have a child, he will only be forced to marry her ; she will become his second wife. His first wife will not at all resent his bad conduct. Sometimes she will herself get him the girl he wants. There is nothing in her heart like the jealous dignity of a European spouse! She will keep all her capacity for jealousy (bukwele) for the time when the second wife comes to the village, and shares with her the affection of their common husband! Adultery with an unmarried woman is nothing more than "gangisa."

837 684 692 But should a man have abducted a *married woman*, a woman who has a master (ñwinyi), who has been paid for, then the matter becomes very serious. The husband is very skilful at discovering her misdoing. As soon as he begins to have doubts about the fidelity of his wife, he chooses a friend and asks him to watch her. She is very cunning, her lover also ; but the friend is on the watch and some time perhaps, catches them in the bush, when she goes to gather fuel, or near the pool, where she draws her water. He comes back to the husband and informs him that he has caught them in the very act. Then the husband tells his wife that proof has been obtained and that she had better go at once to her lover and take something from his hut ; she obeys, and comes back with his blanket or any other object. This is "la pièce à conviction." The husband goes with it to the counsellor who is in charge of his village ; together they apply to the chief. The chief sends the counsellor who is responsible for the village of the lover to summon him. The confrontation takes place and the story of the case is investigated.

837 684 692 The woman is questioned, and confesses when, where, and how many times he has sinned with her. If he denies this, the object taken from the hut is exhibited. The adulterer is condemned by the chief to pay a *whole lobolo*, £ 15 to £ 20, as much as is necessary to buy a wife. He is rebuked before the whole assembly. "If you had taken a girl, it would not have mattered at all. Why did you abduct a married woman ? Do you not know that it breeds endless trouble at court (tindaba) ?"

The counsellor of the deceived husband goes to the counsellor of the lover to claim the money. The latter must go to the guilty man. The parents of the adulterer insult their son : "You see! All this money lost now! If only you had lobola a wife with it!" They must help him to find it at once, because this is a law universally recognised : the price of adultery must be forthcoming. (Nandju wa bumbuye a wu pfumali). The poor man will have to pay ; he will even have to add a hoe to "drive away" (hlongola) the counsellor, who keeps it for his reward!

837 684 783 753 608 Why is adultery so strongly prohibited and punished ? Not at all from any moral consideration of purity or chastity, but for two other reasons. First a social one. Adultery with a married woman is a theft, because she is owned by a master. She is not punished herself, except when the watcher finds her out and gives himself the pleasure of thrashing her to his heart's content. The whole punishment falls on the man ; he is the thief. But there is also a physical reason for it : the *matlulana*! We have already met with this word. *Tlulana* means to jump over each other, to compete with each other. In the sexual domain it is said of two men who have relations with the same woman. "They have met [826] together in one life through the blood of that woman ; they have drunk from the same pool" (Viguet). This establishes between them a most curious mutual dependence : should one of them be ill, the other must not visit him ; the patient might die. If he runs a thorn into his foot, the other must not help him to extract it ; it is taboo ; the wound would not heal. If he dies, his rival must not be present at his mourning or he would himself die (See page 137). Should he even be the actual son (sometimes it happens that a son commits adultery with one of the younger wives

622 is taboo for the women to eat it, or the under lip (See p. 184).
596 From each limb a small piece is taken (tshumbuta) and
264 placed on a skewer; it is the portion of the shepherds and of
554 the butchers, (makotjo ya babyisi). (See the tale of Piti, *Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, page 152). Sometimes the shepherds also receive the lungs and the spleen.

This way of distributing ox meat is called "ku tlhaba homu ba hamba milao," viz., "to kill an ox according to rule." Should a younger brother or a son kill an ox, he will send the breast to the master of the village, but he keeps all the limbs and does not observe the rules because, as he says: "It is enough to pay taxes to the chief of the country." Often one of the legs is sent to the chief of the clan.

Strange to say when a goat is killed none of these prescribed rules are followed, as they only concern the oxen.

622 These customs show clearly the position of the headman;
596 he is the master but also the father of his subordinates, and their provider.

1) He must *watch* over the village (basopa, Dutch word passop, universally adopted by the Natives). During the night, if his son is away working in Johannesburg, he takes care that no lovers come into the huts of his daughters-in-law, (a langusa bumbuye), and if he happens to catch one, he will make him pay the fine.

622 2) He is a true *justice of peace* amongst the inmates of the
692 village, doing his best to maintain good relations amongst them.
578 Suppose for instance that the pigs belonging to one of the inhab-
685 itants come out of their enclosure and over-run the gardens of another man. This man will go and say to the owner of the pigs:
643 "Such and such a thing has happened, please close the pigs' kraal more carefully." Should the same thing happen a second time, he will complain to the *numzane*. The headman will then go to the culprit and say: "You have not heeded the warning; you must pay compensation (djiha)." If the culprit listens to the "voice of the blood" (bushaka), he will obey and the matter will end smoothly; if not, the headman can only keep silent: he has no soldiers, no means of enforcing his judgment; the plaintiff will then go to the chief of the tribe to complain. The case will be

judged before the Court, in the capital, because the offender has refused to follow the way of persuasion, he has "mocked the family love" (a yalile bushaka). Such misdemeanours are very frequent in the life of the village. Most of the Natives bear philosophically with these annoyances. Should some one, however, be really ill-natured, and wear out their patience (wa ku karata), he will be forced to build a hut for himself, alone, outside the village. If the damage is done by *children*, if they have stolen sweet potatoes, as we have seen, the wronged proprietor gives them a good thrashing but does not claim a fine. Occasionally the headman himself thrashes them in presence of their father, and the father will say to them: "You see the numzane will beat you if you are not good." Children who mock at cripples are also severely beaten by him, all the more so as, in this case, the offended party has the right of claiming a fine.

3) The headman also possesses *authority over his younger brothers and his children*. He can even confiscate their money if one of them is addicted to drinking and ruins his property. However his authority in this respect must not be overstepped, and the headman must take care how he exercises it, as it is based more or less on sufferance. The younger brothers, for instance, maintain the right of making contracts, especially lobola contracts. Should the numzane restrict their liberty too much, they will leave him and found their own villages. A successful headman is he who knows how to keep the whole family together to the general satisfaction.

4) The headman has also the right of imposing *statute labour*, especially when the oxen kraal must be rebuilt, or when the weeds must be removed from the hubo ; he sends his young men to do the work. But he must not exact too much from his people or forget to feast them with beer or with meat when the work is finished.

5) Lastly the headman *presides over all the discussions* which take place in the village. He is the master of the hubo. The discussion can be conducted in three different places ; when it deals with a secret matter, the men go *inside the hut* : they debate the matter indoors (ba bulabula ndlwen). Private questions

2) Civil cases.

692 I will not assert that Thongas know the exact difference between
622 civil and criminal cases, the same tribunal judging them both and
643 all being called by the same name, milandju.

681 If any distinction is made, it would be between private and official cases, *private cases* being those which are settled by the two parties concerned alone, without the intervention of the chief ; whilst *official cases* are those in which the matter (mhaka) has been brought to the capital. As already explained, the headmen of the village try to settle the difficulties themselves ; if they succeed, all the better, as the fine will be reduced to its minimum, whilst, before the Court, the fine would be doubled and the chief would keep half of it!

691 Ninety per cent of the civil cases are in connection with *lobola*. These are sometimes most intricate and I would refer to the description already given of some of them (p. 282 and Appendix VIII).

691 *Divorce* cases are also common. When a woman has definitely
586 left her husband, her relatives must return the lobolo money.
643 "You must give up to them £ 5 or an ox," says Mankhelu. The
614 chief Mubvesha who was known for his avarice used to arrest the husband and make him pay £ 25 ; he returned £ 15 to the wife's relatives and kept £ 10 for himself.

When money is returned, the children belong to the mother (See page 279).

691 Many cases may occur in connection with *cattle*. The case of
643 *redhibition* is foreseen : when I buy an ox and it dies on my hands
487 from a disease which was not known at the date of my purchase but which already existed, I have the right to go and ask for another in its place. But I bring the skin of the dead ox with me and one hoe inside it for the meat which I have eaten. If the seller refuses to accept my claim, I go to the chief and complain. He will summon the recalcitrant person and say to him : "Did not this man act well when he put a hoe inside the skin ? Give him another ox!" (Mankhelu.)

587 the chief of our Mazwaya family, Magomanyama, says that no claim is accepted for a leper, for one drowned in the river, or for anyone who dies from smallpox or from the assagay."

692 177 Of course the Ngwetsas did not accept such an answer, but this is a typical Bantu affair (sandja), showing the many blessings of the lobola custom. The matter will have to be decided by the chief, or rather by the Portuguese Administrator, who must take a good deal of trouble, if he wishes to understand it rightly and to deliver an equitable judgment!

APPENDIX IX (See p. 530).

The story of Mboza and Muhambi and of the women inherited by them, illustrating the consequences of lobola and of its suppression.

177 Compare the genealogy of the Mazuluke family (page 225).

545 583 Mboza had four brothers, three elder and a younger; Sam, the elder, had a son, Hlangabeza, who married by lobola a first wife and by abduction a second, Bukutje II. Fos, the second brother, married Bukutje I and had four children: three girls, Tshakaza, Estelle, Nhwanin, and one boy, Muhambi. Sam and Fos both died, so Bukutje I was inherited by Mboza and her four children went to live in his village. In the meantime Mboza became a Christian, as also did Muhambi and the three girls. Wishing to lead a Christian life, he separated from Bukutje I, who, being still a heathen, committed herself with "an empty oil-tin" (p. 213), viz., a man of Inhambane who became her servant-husband. In 1904 a Christian young man, Moses, wooed the elder of the three girls and brought £ 20 to lobola her. This money was naturally due to Muhambi in order to allow him to lobola a wife for himself, and indeed Muhambi was betrothed to Ntshelebeti, daughter of Phulan Ngwetsa. This man was still a heathen and consequently wished his daughter to be paid for.

Having been told that it is not right for a Christian to accept lobolo money, Mboza and Muhambi, actuated by a most praiseworthy scruple, decided to return the money to Moses, and Muhambi started for Johannesburg in order to earn the lobolo due to Phulan. But this was not the end of this famous "bukesi!" The younger brother, Komatan, a consistent heathen, came to Mboza, very angry with him for his

I [see pp. 506-509 -- Analyst]

177 Governments have everywhere placed Native Commissioners to watch over their coloured subjects. This has put *an end to the tribal wars.* Natives are no longer allowed to indulge in their old fighting customs. They may avail themselves of a war between Europeans to square up old accounts with each other, as happened during the Anglo-Boer war, but they are forbidden to follow the war-path any longer. In many parts of South Africa they have even been disarmed. This change, as a whole, is a favourable one. Native wars never brought blessing to the race. It tends however to destroy one of the springs of patriotism, and in this way it impoverishes the Native mind.

643 176 631 P. 177. 64 *c)* These Native Commissioners have placed a very effective check, not only upon the military tendencies of the tribe, but upon *the power of its chiefs.* The authority of the chief in the clan has certainly been diminished. In some instances he has been deposed, or banished in consequence of war, and the tribe has remained without a head and without force, as it were emasculated, and unable to guide itself. As Mankhelu said: "Our chief is the forest into which we retreat! Without him we are but women!" This was sadly noticeable in the case of the Zihlahla or Mpfumo clan, which was perhaps the most developed of all the Ronga kingdoms and which suffered most from the 1894-96 war. Its young chief Ñwamantibyane was caught and deported to some spot in Eastern Africa, and the clan was dismembered, a great number of men emigrating to the Transvaal; the others remained dissatisfied but powerless in their old territory, and were incorporated with Matjolo or Mabota.

643 681 692 P. 177. 69 Even when the Native chief is maintained in his position by the Whites, his power is curtailed. As a judge, he is no longer allowed to inflict capital punishment. His tribunal only judges minor cases, and beside and beyond him, there is a further appeal, the Court of the White Commissioner, which is ready to consider every important case. Should the Native chief be unjust or selfish in his decisions, the subjects will go more and more to the White tribunal. It may be that their claims will not be so well understood as in their own *hubo*, but they will perhaps meet with fairer treatment. Shrewd and clever Native Commissioners thus succeed in attracting more applicants to their residences than the chief to his capital (1). This dual control leads to a progressive loosening of the tribal tie.

(1) This was the case for instance in Nondwane. The unjust and egoistical rule of Mudwedu compelled many of his subjects to go "dikanakhwane," viz., to the Portuguese Administrator of Moralowa.

423 already been tilled and abandoned as exhausted. I noticed
622 this at Rikatla. Muzila favoured his pagan subjects, who joined him in his drinking bouts, and invited him to orgies in their villages, at the expense of the Christians who no longer brew the byala beer. Thus interest at Court works here as elsewhere, although it be based on nothing nobler than pots of beer!

423 The difficulties of this system also become apparent in the
578 more thickly populated parts of the country, where all the land has been assigned and taken up. The women look round for
692 fresh arable land and may, wittingly or unwittingly, encroach on the ground of another numzane. There is, indeed, a neutral zone, vaguely defined, of which no one has as yet taken possession, as it has not been needed : the wild fruits growing there are common property ; any one who likes can gather them. When the population increases, the inhabitants of the more congested districts go and appropriate this land without any kind of formality. Such was the case when the people of Libombo, dwelling on the edge of the palm-marsh, (to the East of Rikatla), sent their women to the hill-side to clear a piece of land which Muzila considered to be his property. This petty chief sent remonstrances to Nkolele, his colleague, headman of the village of Libombo ; but they were not heeded. Then the men of Rikatla hid themselves in the bushes surrounding the spot in question, and, when the women commenced to hoe the ground, rushed out upon them, seized their hoes, and drove them off. This was the "fait patent," the actionable proceeding, which was necessary in order to have the matter brought before the Chief's tribunal. This incident doubtless led the parties interested to define their respective boundaries more carefully.

423 To go and till another's land would be quite impossible, even
618 taboo, between people of different clans. In the present case, the Rikatla and Libombo men belonged to the same Nondwane country. There was a good understanding between them. The Rikatla men would not have dared to plough a field without permission on Mabota's ground, the boundary of which was on the other side of the big water-tree (muhlu).

As regards *boundary marks* between the different clans, they

682 procedure. They are in advance of many tribes. The same
627 cannot be asserted when dealing with witchcraft!

Witchcraft (Buloyi). To the Thonga mind this is one of the
754 greatest crimes which a man can commit. It is equivalent to
683 assassination, even worse than murder, as a dim idea of anthro-
787 pophagy is added to the simple charge of killing. A wizard
694 kills human beings to eat their flesh. We shall study the conceptions of *buloyi* later on (Part VI) from a psychological point of view. Here it is mentioned only in as far as it gives rise to judicial cases. This particular crime being committed in great secrecy during the night, and in most instances even unconsciously, the Bantu tribunal uses two or three magical methods for discovering it. These *methods of inquiry*, which civilised nations have long ago abandoned, are :

1) *Divination by casting lots*. The objects used in our tribe for this purpose are the magic bones, the astragalus of goats, antelopes, etc, and shells, which I intend to study in a special chapter. When they have designated (ku ba, to beat) the wizard or witch (noyi) who has killed such and such a person, they are consulted a second time. If they confirm their verdict, the relatives of the deceased go to the chief and lodge their complaint. The accusation becomes official and is now in the hands of the tribunal.

2) The chief sends the plaintiff and accused to the magician who proceeds to the *divination by questioning* them and working himself up into an ecstatic condition (vumisa).

683 3) Should the accused be again designated and should he
695 deny his crime, he may request to be submitted to the *ordeal*,
824 viz. the trial by the solaneous plant called mondjo. If the drug
787 intoxicates him, his guilt is confirmed for the third time and the
754 tribunal will condemn him. The punishment for *buloyi* is death, either by hanging, or by empaling, or by drowning in the river, if the wizard was in the habit of perpetrating his murders by sending crocodiles to kill his victims.

[177 681] Nowadays Native chiefs dare not put to death suspected witches. Since the Ba-Ronga have been under the jurisdiction of the Whites, the *death penalty* has been abolished. On the other hand, under

643 695 331 The name of the chief is sacred in so far as it is generally used in oaths. When asked to swear, a Nondwane man will say: "Maphunga!" (1)

II. *The Regalia.*

643 Kings everywhere like to adorn themselves with specially imposing objects, insignia of their office, which differentiate them from their subjects. The Thonga chiefs have no peculiar crown — the shidlodlo belonging to all adults (p. 129)—, no special garment, no sceptre and no throne. We sometimes translate by the word throne *shilubelo* viz., the place where one *luba*, pays the tax; but this is only a hut smaller than the others and subjects can also possess it. (See page 313). However there are, in some of these small kingdoms, royal objects which may be called regalia (bukosi bya hosi).

643 301 Amongst the Nkunas, the chief possesses a large copper bracelet called *ritlatla*, which was bought a very long time ago, in Lourenço Marques, by the Nkuna clan in exchange for tusks of elephants, says Mankhelu. According to others, the ritlatla was made in old times by Natives from the copper, or perhaps from the gold dug by them. The ritlatla was in the hands of the elder branch of the Nkuna clan; Hoshana was its headman, but he had fled into the Ñwamba country during the troubled period of 1855 to 1860. When he died, his people brought the ritlatla to the chief Shiluvane who belonged to a younger branch, thinking that, at his death, the ritlatla together with the chieftainship would be given back to

643 681 (1) Kidd, in his *Kafir Socialism*, has asserted that Bantu chiefs are very jealous and kill their subjects when they become too rich and thus overshadow them. This may be the case in other tribes or when a military government has taken the place of the old patriarchal system. Amongst the Thongas it is not true. My informants could not quote a single instance of a murder committed by a chief for that reason alone. I heard of Shiluvane killing a subject called Muhluhlani who had acquired too much power; but Muhluhlani had declared that he wanted to usurp the chieftainship; so it was a case of high treason! A rich nduna, in the territory of Nhandja (Nondwane), was also killed and his oxen taken by the chief because he had tried to abduct one of the chief's wives. But many headmen had as many oxen as Maphunga and were not troubled by him on that account: "Why should he hate them? They could not harm him, as he was protected by the supernatural powers, and they brought him all the more beer as they had plenty of wives and consequently of mealies!"

682 procedure. They are in advance of many tribes. The same
627 cannot be asserted when dealing with witchcraft!

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754 greatest crimes which a man can commit. It is equivalent to
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787 pophagy is added to the simple charge of killing. A wizard
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[177 681] Nowadays Native chiefs dare not put to death suspected witches. Since the Ba-Ronga have been under the jurisdiction of the Whites, the *death penalty* has been abolished. On the other hand, under

683 754 1906, I ventured to suggest certain means of checking the *buloyi* superstition. The Department of Native Affairs might give the following directions to its subordinates, the Native chiefs :

1) The crime of buloyi is not recognised under penal law.

2) The Native chiefs are prohibited from trying any buloyi case.

3) The plaintiff must be reprimanded as disturbing the peace of the country.

4) The witch doctor or mungoma (magician), who pretends to have smelt out a wizard, must be fined as using his authority to deceive people and foster hatred amongst them.

5) No evidence based on the use of divinatory bones must be accepted.

These rules, if strictly enforced and combined with Christian teaching and the progress of civilisation, will in the course of time put an end to the scourge of witchcraft.

683 695 578 *Insults.* Ku rukana or ruketela, to hurl insults at each other's head, is very frequent amongst Thongas and does not lead to any judicial case, if not accompanied by assault and bruises (1). There are however insulting deeds which are considered as crimes. To take human blood, or spittle, or excrement with a stick and to push it into the mouth of a child, for instance, is considered a very serious insult which must be judged before the Court. A man who committed such an offence would have to pay a fine amounting to a whole lobola. I heard of a woman, who gave a child a butterfly to eat. The parents of the little one were very angry. She denied having done such a thing. They said to her: "Confess your sin and pay a fine of 5/—." She refused and offered to undergo the ordeal, viz., to drink the mondjo philtre. "If you insist" said they, "you will have to pay £ 10." However she persisted and became intoxicated ; this was a proof of her guilt. She was fined to the amount of £ 40, £ 20 for the child and £ 20 for the chief!

683 201 754 To point at any one with the index finger is also a grave insult which may have judicial consequences, because this action is brought into close relation with *buloyi*.

683 578 695 (1) The most common insult which women can cast in each other's teeth is nikuthwaka (Ro) or nyathwaka (Nkuna) which means: the genitals of your mother. A scuffle with blows is sure to arise when that word has been pronounced. It is also used when taking an oath. Men swear by the name of their chief.

"You see! Stones also grow!" Another Native geologist, who 823
had heard the European story of creation, coming from the Coast, a country of sand and sand only, and visiting the Drakensberg Mountains near Shiluvane, was amazed by the enormous cliffs of the Mamotswiri and gave vent to the following reflection : "No wonder we have no stones in our sandy land. When God created the earth, he used them all to build these mountains!"

Fossils are rare in Thongaland, where sand covers almost the 136
whole country. There is however in the southern part of the 823
Maputju region an outcrop of cretaceous rock which belongs to the 777
Gault and which contains ammonites, Nautillus etc. Natives call them *nsongo stones* and are very much afraid of them. They say that "these stones with ribs" can walk. They bring bad luck (singita). Should a child pick up one of these fossils and bring it into the village, he will fall ill ; he must therefore undergo a special treatment.

Crystal greatly pleases the Natives. It is rare in South Africa. 135
When magicians can secure a white or a black crystal they generally 301
wear it round their necks together with the claws, or teeth, of wild animals, or with their little skin bags which they use as amulets. For this reason I once had the good fortune to be able to exchange a crystal I had brought from Switzerland for one of these charms!

The *earth* (misaba) is also a great and important thing. First 823
because it is identified with the people dwelling on it, with the clan. 695
Tiko, the land, means both the soil and the people. Further than 787
this, the earth is the chief (I. p. 382) ; hence many laws : e. g. the tusk of the elephant which fell on the earth when the beast was killed, belongs to the chief, etc. (p. 57). The most solemn oath is that which is taken with earth (ku funga u hahla hi misaba). Should a man be accused of stealing or of being a wizard, if he puts a little earth in his mouth, says *tsu*, and declares : "I do not know anything about it," those who care for his safety will look for a medicine-man to treat him : it is a *mondjo* (a magical method of divination. See Chapter III). The same thing is done when an oath has been taken by sucking a piece of iron.

A curious superstition regarding the earth is this : after moving 823
from one country to another, you should for some days mix with

d) *The smelling-out procedure.*

754 But should it be desirable to ascertain the name of the noyi,
●675 in order to punish him (for instance, in a case of death, where
787 nothing remains but to avenge oneself on the murderer), the mungoma will proceed to the *shinusa divination*, the regular smelling-out. This can be done in two ways, either by questioning or by ecstasy.

1) *Smelling-out by questioning.* The relatives of the bewitched come to the shinusa, pay him £ 1, and ask him to find out the murderer. He makes them sit down in a half-circle, and, facing them, begins to put questions to them. They always answer by the word *mamoo*, which means yes, in the language of *bungoma*. Hence the Zulu term *vumisa* viz., "to make somebody say yes," applied to this ceremony. The *mamoo* is cool or warm, doubtful or convinced, and the clever diviner easily perceives every shade of meaning in this perpetual *mamoo*. He is well aware of all the disputes and hatred between the people and, in his investigation, he draws nearer and nearer to the man of whom the consulting party is thinking. Their *mamoo* becomes bolder. The questions are more precise. At last, when he feels himself in agreement with the consultants, the *mungoma* pronounces the name and lets his tail fall. He is bathed in perspiration after the great strain, and remains silent, as if he were indeed infallible ; he has triumphantly "smelt out" the culprit. Next day, relatives of the patient go to the kraal of the noyi, waving branches, dance before him, and say : "So you are killing us!" The accused keeps silent. Then he says : "All right. We shall come to-morrow and also consult our *mungoma*." Both parties then go to another diviner. The performance of "smelling out" is again gone through, and very likely the verdict of the second *mungoma* will confirm that of the first ; the augurs know that they must not contradict each other if they wish to maintain their authority, and the terrible tail falls on the head of the accused. As soon as proof and counterproof have been obtained, the case becomes a judicial one. The plaintiff brings the matter before the chief, who will not condemn until the

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guilt of the pretended noyi is confirmed by ordeal, the trial by the famous philter called *mondjo*.

2) *Smelling-out by ecstasy* partakes more or less of the character of the rera nyiwa. All the people have been assembled in the Capital. The chief wishes to collect together all the baloyi of the land. The diviner arrives, decked out with amulets and all the insignia of his power. In his hands he carries his magical

Photo D. Lanoir.

Smelling-out a wizard.

tail, by way of a whip, and an assagay. He begins to dance, the crowd seated all round him, clapping their hands (wombela), and singing a chorus peculiar to the occasion :

> Nwashongana khale ! Fambe u ya teka, u ya teka, mungoma !
> Beautiful dancer of slender figure ! Seek for it, seek for it, diviner !

He goes on dancing ; like Pythia of old he falls into a condition of extreme nervous excitement, ecstasy, inspiration. He brandishes his tail, dilates his nostrils, inhales the air on all sides, as if to smell out the spot from whence the evil influence has emanated, then takes to his heels in a certain direction, the assembly

754 still clapping their hands and singing. He approaches a hut,
695 enters, and triumphantly plants his assagay in one corner. A hole
787 is dug in that spot and — just where so and so places his wooden pillow when retiring to rest for the night — there are discovered a small gourd full of blood, packets of suspicious objects connected with enchantment, and perhaps a snake. It is quite possible that the diviner may have previously hidden these articles; nevertheless he carries them exultingly away; they are the wizards' weapons, the "bloods" (tingati) which they throw over their victims at night.

The shinusa returns to the village of the chief, who is veryangry, and orders him to go and show these objects to their owner. Then the magician, making a sign to the crowd to stop singing, will go and throw the articles in front of the occupant of the hut to put him to shame before the whole assembly. The mysterious charms, and the noyi's gourd, must in every case be consumed by fire, and then the sickness and deaths in the village should cease.

e) *The Mondjo ordeal.*

754 As already pointed out, the final and supreme method of
695 unmasking baloyi is the *mondjo ordeal*. This is a legal procedure ordered by the chief, a true method of obtaining information in a criminal case. This custom calls to mind the judgment of God in the Middle Ages (ordeal is derived from "urtheil," judgment); it is practised by the majority of the Bantu tribes, varying from one tribe to another, but everywhere it has the same end in view, namely the discovery of the casters of spells by the imposition of an ordeal which is supposed to be fatal to such as are guilty.

This ordeal is called amongst the Ba-Ronga (as also from one end of the Thonga tribe to the other) *drinking the mondjo* (ku nwa
[137] mondjo). The mondjo is a plant of the Solaneae family, probably a Datura, which possesses intoxicating properties. With it a special magician prepares a beverage which is to act as a means of revelation. It can be resorted to by any individual accused of witchcraft, or of any other crime. A woman accused of adultery,

for instance, may say : "Let us go and drink the mondjo." The mondjo magician will give both the accused and the plaintiff a little of his drug, and the one who becomes intoxicated, or unconscious, after having drunk the magic beverage will be convicted of guilt. But the mondjo ordeal can also be ordered by the chiefs, just the same as the rera nyiwa, not only as a warning, but with the object of revealing the wizards and in order to get rid of them. 754 695

This is how the ceremony is performed in Nondwane. When it has been decided at the capital that all subjects shall undergo this ordeal, the chief sends word to the Shihahu folk to prepare the mondjo. These particular folk are a small clan inhabiting the left bank of the Nkomati, not far from the sea, northward of the district of Manyisa. The mondjo is cultivated by the medicine-men of Shihahu, but they have by no means the monopoly of it, for my neighbour, Hamunde, who lived at Rikatla, a few steps from the station, had one of these plants growing in his village, where I myself saw it. But it is at Shihahu that the recipe is known for the preparation of this magic philter. This is very complicated and intricate. It contains several strange ingredients, amongst others, it may be noted, *the fat of a leper long since deceased*, or a little of his powdered bones! To make sure of the efficacy of the drink, the Shihahu folk experiment upon a certain individual named Mudlayi. This man is considered the very chief, the "bull" of all the wizards of the country (nkunzi ya baloyi). He is more powerful than all the others in casting spells. If, therefore, the decoction produces in him the characteristic intoxicating effect by which the spell-casters are discovered, it is certain that the brewing has been a success. If, by any chance, Mudlayi should not have been intoxicated, word will be sent to the chief that the decoction has failed (yi hi hlulile), and another brew will be made, until the mondjo has attained the strength required. Then the people of Shihahu do not go directly to the chief, but, according to the rules of etiquette, to the counsellor who looks after the interests of their country. The other counsellors come to greet them, but the whole business is kept a great secret. Messengers are then sent to all the sub-chiefs, telling them to assemble at a

754 certain time, in a given place, bringing all their people with them.
695 This general assembly takes place on the borders of a lake. Every man and every woman must defile before the proprietors of the decoction and take a small mouthful of it, tepid, from a particular receptacle. Already at this stage of the proceedings some few, terror-stricken, make a confession : "Ndja loya!" — "I am a caster of spells," they cry. These persons are then collected together and placed on one side under a tree. The rest sit down in a line, in the fiery glare of the noon-day sun. There they are, then, all seated and exposed to the torrid heat of the sun's rays. They have received the following order : "Do not move! You must not scratch yourselves! Remain motionless!"

Mudlayi begins to dance in front of them. With widely opened eyes he glares in a peculiar manner at those who have sipped the mondjo. In his hair is fixed a large feather, which he waves up and down by moving his head. Everyone gazes at him intently.

Suddenly some one scratches his arm. Sounding his trumpet, *nte-nte-nte*, Mudlayi approaches the individual and places the feather in his hair over the forehead. The man tries to pull it out, but only clutches the air on one side or the other, in front of the feather. He is quite incapable of catching hold of it. A second individual begins to show the same symptoms of intoxication (popya) a little way down the line. Mudlayi continues his comings and goings to the sound of his trumpet. A third and a fourth are overcome in turn. They try to get up, clutching the grass to assist them to do so, but fall to the ground, or crawl feebly about. The others keep away from them. It seems that the mondjo dries up the saliva of all who drink it, but, in the case of the truly guilty, this effect is greatly accentuated ; the jaws become locked. They try to speak, but can only say *be-be-be-be* (they stammer). They are carried off, and all placed together under the tree, where they are guarded by the chief's counsellors, who will not allow their friends or relations to come near them.

"*Selekan*!" — "Get up!" is the order given to all the others, the seated crowd who have not become intoxicated. Jumping to their feet, they must run at full tilt to the lake and bathe.

Some get into difficulties on the way, they jostle each other, fall to the ground, and remain there, unable to regain their legs. Some even fall down in the water ; all such are baloyi. The rest, who have successfully undergone the trial of the mondjo, come back and are restored to freedom, after having received three pinches of a special powder ; one of these is thrown over the right shoulder, another over the left, and the third is swallowed, in order to counteract the defilement consequent on having imbibed this drink of the wizards, which contained in solution... the fat of a human being! As to the poor, unfortunate hypnotised folk, their affair is settled. The magic potion has revealed their criminal character. They must be made to admit their evil deeds. The counsellors interrogate them. To restore the power of speech, a particular tisane, prepared from the herb called *tjeke*, is poured into the mouth ; they are shampooed *(tlhema)* on the cheeks and all over the body with its leaves. The saliva returns. They gradually revive and then begin to speak : "Yes! I devour men! I ate so and so and I still have some of his flesh in store!.. I hate so and so, and I would like to kill him, but I haven't done so yet... I bewitched the maize to hinder its growth." They are well reprimanded and told : "Cease your witchcraft and enchantments. Remove your spells from the cereals, let them grow properly, or we will kill you!" 754 695

How can the effect of the mondjo be explained? According to an old Native, the intoxication of the baloyi comes from the presence of these elements of human flesh contained in the solution. The noyi, who swallows them in drinking the philter, thus does during the day what he is accustomed to do during the night : hence the loss of his senses. As a matter of fact the man who administers the drug is clever enough to give a larger dose to those who are more or less supposed to be baloyi. Moreover there is a regular process of hypnotisation in Mudlayi's performance, and that is why some people fall into what seems to be a true cataleptic state.

643 ation of his successor. All the regiments of the army are summon-
766 ed, together with groups of warriors delegated by foreign clans.
701 The mourning ceremonies are first performed. (See later on).
Then, at the end of the afternoon, says Mankhelu, the great counsellors send a herald to the circle of warriors. He shouts: "Khaula!" viz., "keep silent!" The new chief comes out of the hut and stands alone in the midst of the circle. "Do you see him," says the herald... "It is the chief!" — "Who is he?" ask the warriors, who wish to know his new name. — "It is Muhlaba Dabuka," he answered, when the present Nkuna chief was proclaimed. Formerly his name was Shikuna. Now he adopted this new name, borrowed from one of the Ngoni chiefs of Bilen. "He who wants to fight, can fight," he adds. This is an invitation to those who wish to protest against the coronation to state the fact plainly. When Muhlaba was proclaimed, the Masakomo family left the capital in anger, as they thought they were deprived of their right. (See later on.) Such an occurrence is not rare owing to the irregularities which so frequently take place in the succession.

If the chief is still a child he is carried on a shield, or put on the roof of a hut, so that everybody may see him.

In the Ronga clans the ceremony is conducted as follows. Let me describe it with all the details supplied by Tobane.

643 First of all sacrifices are made to the gods to ask that this
609 ceremony may pass off quietly, happily, without quarrelling, and
648 then the date is fixed. Invitations are sent to the surrounding little kingdoms, or at least to all those who are on friendly relations with the tribe. For instance, supposing the installation to be that of the chief of Mpfumo, invitations would be sent to Maputju, Tembe, Matjolo, Nondwane, Ñwamba and Shirinda. Manyisa and Ntimane are regarded as "being of a different mind" (moya muñwana), and "good will only reaches as far as the river Nkomati," to give a literal translation of the expression used by my informant; this means that relations with the more distant countries are hardly those of even ordinary civility. The warriors of the invited tribes assemble, in greater or smaller numbers; sometimes only a few delegates attend, but they do not proceed at once to the capital. Etiquette requires that each one should

643 first go to the Mpfumo Counsellor, who now acts as an Agent
609 General for his own tribe ; they are well received by him and fed while waiting for the day of the coronation.

643 When it is known that all the foreign military contingents
701 have arrived,[2] then the Mpfumo army is also assembled and all together march to the capital. The royal family council, composed of uncles and the older relatives of the new chief, meets in a separate hut. The presiding member opens the proceedings as follows : "Si hi humililiki : si hi humililiki, hi fanela ku beka hosi kutani! (See what has happened! This having happened to us we must install a new chief!)" The rest approve and reply according to etiquette. On an immense open space, all the warriors form a circle (biya mukhumbi). Battalion after battalion
643 takes up its position within this living enclosure. An opening is
714 left in this otherwise perfect circle, and through it enters the bodyguard, composed of young men of the same age as the new chief, with the chief himself hidden in their midst, wearing his full military uniform and accoutrements : ostrich feathers on his head, strands of hair from cow's tails on his biceps and the calves of his legs, etc.

643 A specially appointed functionary, the bearer of the chiefs
701 (mutlakuli wa tihosi), penetrates into the middle of the bodyguard and raises the young chief on his shoulders in the presence of the assembled armies. The great counsellors, the secondary chiefs, and all the young men of the royal family, then accompany the bearer of the king and with him march round the inner side of the circle of warriors, shouting as they go :

Hosi hi leyi ! Dlayan ! Dlayan !
Behold the chief ! Kill him ! Kill him !
A ku na yimbeni !
There is no other than he !
Hi tiba yoleyi.
We recognise none other.
Dlayan ! Lwa nga ni yimpi !
Kill him ! if there be any here who can raise an army (to oppose him).

To these shouts of defiance the several battalions reply consecutively as the procession passes them : "Bayete! Bayete! Ndjao!" These words form the royal salute, to which all the independent chiefs are entitled (1).

2 [for the coronation of a chief --Analyst]

643 to the chief, to which he will reply by executing the dance which
533 follows. To this exclamation of the soloist the warriors respond
539 by striking their shields with their assagais, producing a hard sharp sound, which the chant tries to render by the syllable "Ji! Ji!" Then they stamp their feet, saying: "Vu! Vu!" and this enigmatic sentence follows: "Yes, we will cross the great river, the river of the chief." What is this river? Can it be that which separates the Mpfumo country from Khosen, namely the Nkomati? Or the Mitembe, marking the frontier between the Northern and the Southern Ba-Ronga? Or do not these mysterious words rather refer to the river of death, which the entire host should cross without hesitation if called to do so by their chief? Whatever the exact meaning may be, this chant must be an assurance of loyalty on the part of the warriors to their king and probably also an appeal to his valour.

643 The chant ended, no one is allowed to leave the ranks. The
535 chief alone rushes into the enclosure; every warrior holds his
701 shield in his hand and strikes it with hard sharp blows (ku ba ngomana); on hearing these, the chief begins to *gila* in his turn. He executes the war-dance brandishing his assagai, as if killing invisible enemies. The crowd encourages him, inciting him to still further efforts, crying: "Silo! Silo! Silo! Beast of the fields! Lion!" Volleys are fired. The chief redoubles his exertions, gesticulating furiously, perspires profusely, is well nigh exhausted and finally stops! The whole army sits on the ground and the young king is supplied with a jug of beer to quench his thirst.

When the ceremony has lasted long enough, and the warriors have enjoyed at their ease the spectacle of their chief's prowess, the Commander-in-chief dismisses the battalions, one after the other. The circle (mukhumbi) breaks up and all rush to the residence of their respective counsellors, singing as they go the praises of the particular army-corps to which they belong. The members of the royal family return to the capital, where they remain. A counsellor presents each group or regiment with the ox which has been allotted to it; this is accepted with shouts of "bayete." The men cut up the animal, divide the meat and eat it in their respective quarters.

262 formula : "May this bukanyi do no harm! May we not slay each
782 other under its influence. May it cause no serious quarrels."
796 They are afraid that, during the general intoxication which will
273 shortly prevail, quarrels will arise, some of which may terminate fatally. During the whole month of bukanye drinking, all business is at a standstill, just as with us all bankruptcy proceedings and all prosecutions for debt are held in abeyance for two weeks during the New Year holidays!

The gods having luma first, the bones are consulted. Should the throw be propitious, the chief will luma next ; thus the opening ceremony of the feast is concluded.

b) The luma of the army.

796 The young people are now assembled to clean up the public
273 square and all the roads, the ball room must be prepared! The women of the capital start out early in the morning, beating the *paibubutwana*, that is to say sounding the call that is produced by striking the lips (bu-bu-bu-bu), and they go all over the country gathering the golden fruit ; this is piled up in an enormous heap on the public square and the brew is proceeded with in the following manner. The makanye are pierced (tshunya) with a pointed wooden splinter ; the stone falls covered with a transparent white pulp into the jar ; into this jar is also squeezed out with the fingers all the juice which remains in the pulp adhering to the skin ; this is continued until the jar is half full, when the stones are taken out, and on the following day the pressing is resumed until the jar is full. On the third day the beer has sufficiently fermented to be pungent and agreeable to the taste and is ready for consumption. Empty barrels are easily procurable in the environs of Lourenço Marques. The women of the capital brew ten or fifteen huge casks of the precious liquor! This accomplished, the second ceremony begins.

796 A convocation of the entire male portion of the tribe is held in
273 the capital, but the first to respond to the call must be the men,
789 the warriors of the army, who come in full array, with all their
701 ornaments, and carrying their small play shields. One cask of

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beer is selected, into which is thrown the black powder, the great medicine of the land, called in this case *bubinga bya miluru*, the powder of the miluru. The muru, plur. miluru, is the mysterious spiritual influence which a man or a beast killed by the assagais can exert on the slayer, making him lose his head and commit acts of folly, or, at least, have red eyes (shenga mahlo). We shall again meet with this curious conception when

Bukanye drinking tea: Ratifo. (Portuguese East Africa.) *Phot. A. Ilsed.*

studying the rites of the army and of hunting. All those who are proudly conscious of having killed a man in war must first drink the new beer which has been medicated to keep them from killing any of their compatriots during the ensuing weeks of the bukanye. They approach one after the other, the chief also, if he be a man-slayer. Each of them receives a small calabash, (nzichelo, p. 50) full of the fermented liquid. He jumps and runs in the direction of the entrance, drinks a mouthful, spits it out with *tsu* and says: "Father and mother! May I live! May I hold the calabash! Even to morrow! For ever!" People laugh. He is very happy! Others sing and dance the war dance:

796 "We drink the bukanye anew! Who would have thought that
273 we should drink again from this cup", viz., "that we should have
789 escaped all the dangers of war" (Hi nwa nkanyi lomu'mpsa! Afa
701 hi nga hlayi epsaku hi ta nwa ntcheko lo kambe).

After this, the casks are distributed to the other warriors, who drink to their hearts' content. The addition of the black powder is not absolutely necessary in their case. They can luma without it. Then the war circle is formed and the principal counsellors harangue the assembled warriors, giving them the following advice: "Drink in peace (ha hombe). Let no one spoil this bukanye by transfixing his brother with his assagai. Go and drink in your villages. Do not pick quarrels with strangers passing through the country, etc." The gathering then disperses.

c) The luma in the village.

796 The preparatory luma is accomplished. The *yila* has been
273 removed. Now comes the third act: the drinking in the villages.
786 The women who remained at home while the men-slayers went to luma at the bidding of the chief, have gathered large quantities of makanye. The tree is to be found extensively all over the country, as no female plant is ever cut down; there is one or more in every field, and every one possesses such a tree, as every one owns a field; when all the trees in the gardens have been stripped of fruit, the women pass to the trees growing in the bush far from the villages.

But here also everything must be done in right order of precedence; the petty chief of such a district must commence to luma in the presence of his subjects, and not until after he has done so can the people drink freely in the villages. From this moment, however, there is no further restriction. Drinking continues day and night, night and day! When the supply is finished in one village, they go to the next. These feasts are the saturnalia, the bacchanalia, the carnival of the tribe! During these weeks some individuals are in a continuous state of semi-intoxication. Orgies on all sides, songs and dances! The younger men run along the paths, with a more or less unsteady

685 has been pulled up and the sand nicely smoothed down, so that
343 any traces of a thief would easily be seen. He will possibly be
151 recognised at once by the trackers, owing to some peculiarity in the
625 marks on the sand, the foot-print of each individual being more or less known ; clever detectives can even ascertain the height and gait of a man from the length of his stride! If there are no peculiar marks in the foot-prints, the trackers will follow them and reach the village where the thief lives. They will perhaps take him by surprise in his hut. If the matter cannot be settled by the headman of the village and has to be brought before the chief, the guilty party will be fined as much as two, three or even five pounds sterling (Tobane) (1).

When detectives have been unable to trace a thief, they assume a philosophical attitude and say : "Only wait. A man who has stolen will steal again, and you will catch him another time!"

643 *Revolt against the decisions of the chief's hubo* is very rare. Should
687 any person take the part of a condemned man and encourage him to oppose the decision of the Court, he will be beaten with a shambock on the square of the capital. "U onhi hubo," "he has spoilt the Court!" Moreover he may have to pay a fine of £ 2. (Mankhelu.)

643 *Answer to some of Professor Frazer's questions on Government.*
835 There are no separate chiefs for war and peace. But in time
224 of war the great induna, who is the Commander-in-chief of the
701 army, directs all military operations. — The chief is never required to marry his own sister or daughter. The only similar case of which I have heard, is that of a hunter who must have sexual relations with his daughter before going on a hunting trip (Part IV).

643 — The king's mother does not hold any special office.—
778 The chief does not keep any portion of his deceased predecessor excepting the nails and hair used for the mhamba (See page 386 and part VI.)

538 (1) The following interesting couplet in two sentences aptly describes the thief :
Shikhongwa rendjelelele ? — The crown on the hat nicely rounded ?
Mangelo a pako ritho... — The hawk burns his claws...
The thief is like a crown on the top of a hat. He is a lazy person, he misbehaves and will not work. Evil will befall him, as with a hawk who tries to snatch the meat that is roasting and burns his claws!

202 726 643 messenger (shigidjimi) ran from village to village, blowing this instrument ; when he was tired he passed it on to some other good runner, who carried the summons further afield ; he ran and ran until he was exhausted, when he handed the trumpet to a third, and so on until the whole country had been covered.

At the sound of the well-known call of the shipalapala, the warriors shout : "A hi hlomen!" — "to arms!" They at once put on their war costumes and repair to the capital.

In Nondwane all the sub-chiefs possessed their shipalapala, and each of them summoned his own people. There the shipalapala mostly sounded to call for dances and for feasts. When the army was mobilised merely to discuss matters quietly, messengers ran through the country shouting : "Mayivonule!" — "take the shields!"..., to which the warriors answered : "A hi hlomen!" — "to arms!" The messenger had to go quickly. "He did not lose time in grinding tobacco ;" he only indicated the time when the army was expected in the capital.

Should matters be more serious, should a hostile yimpi have invaded the territory, every one can give the alarm (tlhabela mukhosi), shouting : "Yi ngeeneeeeeee!" "It has entered!" (viz., the hostile army has invaded our territory). All the women flee away and the men run to the capital.

D. THE MUKHUMBI, THE CIRCLE OF WARRIORS.

643 701 726 Decked out like wild animals, the warriors hasten with all speed to the chief's village, where the regiments muster. The army (1) is divided into a certain number of *battalions*, *mabotshu*, or *meboko*, all men of about the same age forming a *botshu*. The *botshu* itself is made up of several *companies*, *mitlawa* or *mabandla*, and may therefore vary very much in numbers.

(1) Yimpi (pl. tiyimpi) in Thonga corresponds to impi in Zulu.

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701/726 In the army of Matjolo there were nine battalions, commencing with that composed of youths from sixteen to twenty years old, up to that of "crown men" (makehla) and the grey beards who where still capable of handling an assagai; for every able-bodied man is a soldier and makes it a point of honour to join the army when it is mobilised. In the Zihlahla clan, the battalions of young men were called *Megajlela* and also *Ndumakazulu*, "the one who is celebrated as far as Zululand," surname of the chief Ñwamantibyane. After them came the *Nyonibovu*, *Giva*, *Malwabo*, *Djanungwana*.

Mankhelu, the Commander of the Nkuna yimpi, gave me the names of his battalions and the explanation of them. The old men formed the regiment called *Mamphondo*, those of the horns. Some of them used to tie a horn on their foreheads; they imitated the rhinoceros or the buffalo. The following regiment was the *Mamphisi* (timhisi), the hyenas; then the *Machoni*, the sea birds, a kind of duck, very swift; then the *Timbulwane*, a sort of lynx, the *Mafakubi*, representing the ndakazi antelope and, lastly, the most numerous regiment, the *Dhlanazo*, "those who eat with others (dya na bu)." Each regiment has, as we shall see, its own war-cry, in which it imitates the animal whose name it bears.

701/726/202 When all have reached the capital the first procedure is the "formation of the circle," in Thonga *biya mukhumbi*, to fence the circle or *aka mukhumbi*, to build the circle. This is accomplished in the Zihlahla army by a special summons which I might call "the order to fall in." Heralds scatter in all directions, enter the huts, approach the groups encamped around the capital, and shout in a high and monotonous key the following Zulu words. It will be noticed that the formula given is that which was made use of by the heralds in the Mpfumo clan during the war of 1894.

Inwana! Oyo ndjalo, Mavelu, (1)
Be nga m'thandi ba ka Nkupane,
Unta'ka Sihlahla, ondjalo ai ka Hamule,
Malebola ga dyosa o balandla ka Mbokwana.

(1) Mavelu, the Zulu surname for Ñwamantibyane.

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Listen! This is what Nwamantibyane says,
He whom the people of Nkupane do not love, (1)
The son of the Great Forest (Sihlahla) of Hamule, (2)
He who took a wife and used the sword in the country of
his parents-in-law, in Mbukwane's country.

Gwalagwala a liburu,
Ilihlengo ago kubekeka,
Umpathi we sibamo,
U za ku debula Mangole ni Maputukiri.

The royal bird with red plumage (3),
Magnificent to contemplate,
He who holds in his hand a gun
With which he will fire on the Angolese and the Portuguese.

Nduma kati, lo wa khiti,
Mo nga ngenilwana,
U ti ka: a yi funule!

He whose fame spreads afar, our chief,
Who is as a wild beast,
It is he who says: "To arms!".

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This final exclamation, prolonged and finishing abruptly on the last syllable, carries a long distance; all the warriors jump to their feet and, brandishing their assagais and shields, run to the chief's village, where the circle is to be formed. Each

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(1) The people of Nkupane are one of the younger branches of the royal family of Mpfumo. They lived close to Lourenço Marques, on the other slope of the hill, to the West of the town. They would have liked undoubtedly, in common with many others, to assert their independence by throwing off the yoke of the elder branch, and even attempted to do so when Mahombole tried, in 1867 or in 1869, to overthrow Zihlahla. But the elder branch, whose chiefs were energetic men, succeeded in maintaining its authority over the whole clan. The fact that the people of Nkupane "do not love" Nwamantibyane redounds rather to the credit of the latter.

(2) Nwamantibyane's father was Zihlahla, his grandfather was Hamule. Sihlahla, or Zihlahla, in Zulu means forest, hence the herald's play on the word. The reign of Zihlahla, which we may place at from 1867 to 1883, was very troubled, at least during its first few years. The young chief, on his return from Natal, after the death of his father Hamule, married Mbilwana, a princess of the royal family of Mabota. During the bloody wars then raging, Zihlahla was angry with Mabota (whose chief was Mbukwane), for playing him false, and, one fine day, he made a raid into the country of his parents-in-law, killing many people. To have thus treated his "bakofwana," who are ordinarily held in such great respect, (see Part II) was a proof of valour which is remembered to this day, more than fifty years after the event. It must be said that, after this exploit, Zihlahla left his residence near the town and took refuge in the Nwambe territory; the Whites with whom he was fighting put in his place a certain Nwayeye whose name we shall find in a war song to which we shall have occasion to refer later on.

(3) The ukulenkula is a bird which is shot in the forest on the borders of the Nkomati; its feathers are red, and only chiefs are allowed to wear them.

761 726 regiment, with its counsellors at its head, is called in turn by the organisers of the army; (at Zihlahla they were Mahagane, the chief's uncle, and Mpompi), and the several companies of the regiments form ranks one behind the other. I have already described this imposing circle, when treating of the coronation of the chief. Every warrior can take in at a glance the entire assemblage. Seen from the interior, it is an unbroken circle of shields, resting perpendicularly on the ground, and all touching; behind, a crowd of men, the greater the number, the deeper the ranks, a forest of feathers waving above their heads.

701 726 561 554 596 The mukhumbi is not however a perfect circle. It is rather like a *horse shoe*, as there remains an *opening* (nyangwa or sangwa), which gives access into it. On either side of this *door* the regiment of the young men takes up its position; the Dhlanazo in the Nkuna mukhumbi and the Ndumakazulu in that of Zihlahla. At the opposite end, facing the entrance, is the *chest of the army* (shifuba sha yimpi), where the chief stands surrounded by the men of riper age, the strongest of whom act as a body guard. Between the chest and the opening, on both sides, the middle-aged warriors occupy the wings, the elder ones nearer the chest, the younger nearer the entrance. This disposition is highly significant; notice that it is exactly the same as that of the village itself, a large door (mharana); on both sides of the entrance, the huts of the unmarried inhabitants (lao and nhanga); at the back the huts of the headman, and, at the sides, those of his younger brothers. The idea of age and of hierarchy entirely dominates both these social manifestations!

701 As regards the numerical strength of the mukhumbi, one of my informants who belonged to the Ndumakazulu regiment —young men from 19 to 25 years old—told me that he estimated the war strength of his regiment at about 500 men: the entire Zihlahla circle might be put at 2000 strong.

I have often seen the Nkuna mukhumbi assembled. I had even the opportunity of addressing its warriors during the Sikororo war of 1901. They were between five and six hundred in all. But this clan is very much scattered and many warriors were not present.

726 prescribed rites. I once witnessed it, when the Nkuna army went
701 to Sikororo's country on a kind of punitive expedition. The great ndjuna of the army, the Commander-in-Chief, Mankhelu, his stern face grimmer than ever, holding a hyena's tail in his hand, clad in a white shirt which was very little in keeping with the whole appearance of the mukhumbi, stepped inside the large circle and raised his tail... Then the *Dhlanazo*, the young bloods, ran towards him shouting : "Kwe-kwe-kwe!" Their cry is the same as that of the *Timbulwana* (lynx), their elders, who came next. Mankhelu pointed the tail in a certain direction and these two regiments started. The *Mafakubi* came in their turn, imitating the galop of the antelopes : "tshwi-tshwi-tshwi! gwu gwu... hwu, hwu!... eka-ka-ka-ka..." and finally shouting : "N'ta dya na man" — "with whom shall I eat it ?" — a strange sentence which may be, as previously mentioned, a reminiscence of a totemic period! (See page 366)... The *Matsyoni*, the seabirds, followed shouting "tswe-tswe-tswe ;" the *Mamphondo*, those of the horn, came shouting "tshuba-tshuba-tshuba" and imitating buffalos and rhinoceroses. The *Maphisi* started last, howling wildly like hyenas : "hum-hum-hum..."

726 If the field of battle is far away, if there is a long march to
533 be made, special *marching songs* are sung on the road. The
539 most impressive is the following : a soloist sings in a very high key :

Abafo! — The enemy!

and the whole army answers in a rich and tuneful melody :

Eneee-e-e! e-e! — Here they are!

All the shields are held straight, ready to meet the foe.
Here are two other marching songs :

Nanga moya wa tshisirwe!
We are the fire which burns the country!
Inkonyana ya ndlopfu inhlezio baen...
The calf of the elephant is exposed on the plain...

This means the chief who is in danger! Let us protect and deliver him.

726 As regards the *order of the march*, the battalions of the young
701 men, stationed on either side of the entrance, go first ; they
643 form the advanced guard, the post of greatest danger. The scouts, tinhlori (Dj.) tinhloli (Ro.), go in front ; each company has its leader to whom these scouts bring reports. It is the duty of the young men to surround the position to be carried and to make the assault. The two sides of the circle then follow, and lastly the chest of the army, forming the rear guard. The chief thus brings up the rear, protected by the battalions of veterans. But generally the chief does not go to battle ; he remains at home.

726 During the campaign, *the whole clan is subjected to many taboos.*
784 Those who remain at home must *keep quiet* (rula). No noise
777 must be heard in the villages. The women must not close the
722 doors of the huts. It is taboo : their husbands might meet with "bitterness" (shibiti). They might lack strength to run away. Fire must be lit in the huts in the evening, in order that the warriors may "have light" where they are. It is taboo to omit this precaution. Work in the fields must be more or less suspended ; women may attend to it in the morning only, before the heat of the day, while the air is still fresh. "Then, if a warrior has stepped on a thorn, the thorn will be cool (titimeta) ; if he has knocked against a stump, the stump will be quiet and not hurt him. (Mboza.)" Old men who remain at home must keep watch, and if they see a messenger coming, they follow him to the chief.
765 Should he bring bad news, they do not inform the women, as it is
726 taboo to mourn over warriors killed in war before the return of the
834 army. A fine is imposed upon those who contravene this law. It is taboo also to have sexual relations as long as the army is on the
777 war-path. This would cause thorns to hurt the warriors and they
784 would be defeated. (Mankhelu.)

722 According to Mankhelu, the mukhumbi may be again formed after arriving in the proximity of the hostile army. The
643 battalions will be sent one after the other by the great ndjuna who
726 will watch the progress of the fight. If he sees his men giving way, he "pours" (tshelela) new companies to help those who are fighting until they rush the position (gwabula) and put the enemy to flight. Then the pursuit begins. The dust flies up

J. Junod M-S (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

197 and Moselekatsi amalgamated clans and tribes under their military rule, and could not subsist unless they maintained a despotic domination over them ; they were an aristocratic race and considered their language as superior. Ruling by fear and by the sword, they purposely remained aliens amongst the enslaved tribes. Quite different was the spirit of the ancient invaders of 1400 or 1500 A. D. They had not such an ideal of vast domination ; they operated on a much smaller scale : they were satisfied to take the chieftainship from the aborigines, and quickly mingled with them, married their daughters (as they still do) and so became one with them.

Would the Ba-Ngoni have been able, in course of time, to establish their Zulu dialect instead of the Thonga, if the Portuguese had not broken their power ? It is impossible to say. They had succeeded in imposing all their Zulu terminology in military matters. Meanwhile the women were not learning Zulu and the women are the best safeguards of the purity of the language amongst primitive peoples. Therefore I do not think they would have been able to uproot the old language, which must have been spoken for many centuries in Thonga territory.

My conclusion is then that the Thonga language was already spoken by the primitive occupants of the country more than 500 years ago and that, together with a certain number of customs, it formed the great bond which bound the Thonga clans together in past centuries.

181 703 2) *Mental characteristics of the Thongas.* We shall only ask how the Thongas compare with the Zulus or Suthos as regards character, and especially from a military point of view.

Having had the opportunity to witness a war in which the Nkuna chief Muhlaba was allied with the Pedi chief Maaghe, in the Zoutpansberg, I can testify that the Thongas had ten times as much military spirit

Phot. C. Liesegang

"Subdued" Thonga warrior.

the Pedis. I saw the two armies, the same day, preparing for the same battle. The Thongas were armed to the teeth, forming a great circle, all standing, shouting their war songs, gesticulating, jumping, imploring their chief to allow them to start. The Pedi warriors were sitting under trees, taking their snuff and apparently as calm as any other day.

During the Gungunyane war, the Thongas were brave, at least those not entirely dependent on the Ngoni king, who had not allowed his warriors to kill white men. The Rongas of Mpfumu especially showed great courage and endurance, and those who served the Portuguese in their Angola war have been praised as being very steady and reliable.

On the other hand everything seems to prove that military ability is not an ancient feature of the Thonga character, and that it has been imparted to them by the Zulus, who taught them the art of fighting during the last century, pushing them to the front in their battles and calling them "Mabuyandlela," "those who open the way." Before the Ngoni invasion, the Thonga armies were ignorant of the *mukhumbi* viz. the armed circle of warriors which is the basis of the Zulu military system; (See Part IV) : they used to form themselves into a straight line and, in their battles, very few men were killed. They were normal Bantu clans, viz. people living peacefully, occasionally quarrelling with their neighbours. The idea of conquest, of vast dominion, the system of an armed nation which Chaka and his followers pursued, was something new amongst South African Natives and was probably borrowed by Dingiswayo from the Whites. This fact ought not to be ignored.

Under a just European supervision, there is no probability that the Thonga tribe will change its peaceful and mild charcter.

3) *Physical characteristics of the Thongas.* It cannot be said that the Thongas possess a very distinct and unique physical type. They are generally of a dark brown colour, sometimes purely black, much darker than the Suthos. As a whole, their external appearance bears a much closer resemblance to that of the Zulus, but, as regards face and stature, they vary very much. You may meet Thongas with typical negro faces, broad lips, flat

175 These Zulus or Ngonis taught the tribes of the plain a system
177 of war much more cruel than the old one : "kill everything,"
726 — such is the rule. No exception is made except in the case
703 of women, who are taken prisoners. The Thonga clans readily accepted this new mode of fighting. They adopted the Zulu system wholesale, the proof of which is that all their military terminology is pure Zulu. Their apprenticeship began during the invasion ; the Ba-Ngoni seeing that the Thongas had a certain aptness for war, incorporated them into their own regiments and used to send them forward to the attack, as previously mentioned. They praised them by calling them the *Mabuyandlela* — those who prepare the way, — a kind of nickname which the Thongas have kept to this day and of which they were very proud.

721 However I do not think it would be unfair to the Thongas
175 to assert that the old peaceful basis of their character is still
703 preserved, notwithstanding this influence. We have had an opportunity of judging of their warlike capabilities during the war of 1894-1896 with the Portuguese. (See Appendix X, Short account of two South African wars.) The Natives did not fight from choice. While some of them gave proof of great endurance, and the army fought in some cases with a certain tenacity, Thongas and especially Ba-Ronga did not show themselves very able warriors. Want of discipline, mutual distrust, timidity resulting in frequent retreats, inability to follow up their successes, such were the main causes of their defeat. The wild soldiers of Maputju, who considered themselves the equals of the genuine Zulus, showed their courage only when there was no danger!

B. WAR COSTUME AND WEAPONS.

714 One day when we were comfortably seated under the beautiful tree at our station of Rikatla, a strange looking monster suddenly appeared on the scene, running towards us! The children fled and the women hid themselves... It was Charley, our milk-man, who, with some other warriors, was going to a military review, to be

726 Before going into battle, certain rites have to be accomplished.
703 In order to stimulate a war-like courage and to imbue the warrior's minds with a certainty of victory, it is necessary to proceed to the performance of the war-songs (guba), of the war dances (gila), and to administer the medicine which will render the soldiers invulnerable.

E. WAR SONGS.

533 The performance of war songs is called *guba*. I have already
539 fully described the Mpfumo national song, (p. 373) which would seem to be more adapted to celebrate a coronation than to serve as an incentive to battle ; it is however used indiscriminately for both purposes.

Another war-song which is very popular in the Mpfumo clan is the following :

Zulu : U ngwa si mu thini, Mayeye ?
U banga muhlaba, u bulala bantu !
Ronga : U ta ku mu yini, Ñwayeye ?
U banga ntlhaba, u dlaya bhanu !
What will you succeed in doing to him, Ñwayeye ?
You take the country and slay the people !

This is a question addressed to Ñwayeye, the rival of the chief Zihlahla ; Ñwayeye was placed in authority near Lourenço Marques by the Portuguese between 1860 and 1870. He accepted the position, but was unable to retain it any length of time, and the recollection of his failure is perpetuated in this song which is intended to extol the royal family of Mpfumo.

A third song, also in vogue with the Mpfumo warriors, runs thus :

Zulu : Zi m' thini ? A ba ze zi ba bona, abantu bezizwe !
Ronga : Hi ta ku yini ? A ba ta hi ba bona, bhanu ba matiko !
What shall we say ? Let them come and let us see them, the people of the enemy's country !

This is a defiance hurled at the adversaries.

F. THE WAR DANCE.

535 The *guba* is itself a kind of war dance, as dancing does not mean a change in the dancer's position. Nodding with the head, gesticulation of the hands and slow motions of the feet constitute a dance (kina). In some guba songs, there may be a backward and forward movement of all the warriors to widen or narrow their circle. I have even seen men crossing the mukhumbi, two by two, or three by three, during the guba.

But the true war-dance is the *gila* (Ro.) or *giya* (Dj.) the representation of deeds of valour by warriors who have killed an enemy in battle. The massed chorus of the guba is most imposing, but still more deeply does the *gila* impress one by its wildness. Look at this elderly man who suddenly detaches himself from the circle, stamping with all his might on the ground. His feet beat the earth in cadence, one blow being long, the three following ones short: -ooo. He goes on, making the ground shake, brandishing his weapons with all his might, perspiring from his efforts and pronouncing Zulu words which the throng interrupts by wild shoutings, as if to encourage him... Then he returns to his place, and the whole army concludes the performance by a kind of whistling : zu... iiiiii. ..... prolonged on a high and piercing note, which suddenly descends to a deep and guttural tone : i. aaaaa..... He has hardly resumed his place in the ranks when a young man springs into the circle, jumping like an antelope, holding his assagai and gesticulating all the while, as if transfixing an invisible enemy. His eyes glare like those of a wild beast, and immediately the army entones a song, his song, the one which has been composed to glorify his deed. Possibly his return to the ranks will be greeted by another shout : I..a...Nda-u! — Lion! comparing him to a lion returning to his forest which nobody will dare to attack. The encouragement given by the warriors to the *bagili* and their great final cry are called *khuza* or *khunzela*.

535 "At that very moment," says Mankhelu, "the hearts of the
703 young men tremble in their breasts! Their hair stands on end...

535 703 An extraordinary war spirit comes over them all..." And every one having witnessed these performances in the Thonga or Zulu mukhumbi will confess that they are wonderfully impressive. It is a mixture of dramatic, epic and lyric poetry, three literary *genres* which are still confounded, the whole being enhanced by a deep, wild music and subject to the laws of a certain artistic style.

703 643 726 The fighting instincts are excited to the highest pitch by these patriotic choruses and dramatic representations. Thus should the troops be slow in making a start, the young men go dancing to the chief and beg him to "grant them permission" to go forth and slay, or rather to "give them men" to slaughter (ku nyika). The Native idea appears to be that the chief holds the lives of the enemies in his hands; without his permission they cannot go forward, but this once given, they rush enthusiastically to the fray. They even go so far as to taunt him with being an old woman, a coward, because he will not let them go at once (1).

When the excitement has reached the culminating point, and it has been definitely decided to fight, the time has arrived for the magic treatment by which the warriors will be rendered invulnerable.

G. ADMINISTERING THE WAR-MEDICINE.

726 177 789 751 This custom is probably of ancient origin, but I have reason to believe that, amongst the Ba-Ronga, it was practised without any great formality until the advent of the Zulu influence, when it was brought into much greater prominence and invested with more solemnity. "Drinking the war-medicine" took place on several occasions during the revolt of 1894 to 1895. At *Zihlahla* this potion was administered to all warriors before the rebel attack

(1) Gungunyana, on one occasion, when his warriors were importuning him with similar requests, sent the more ardent spirits to wage war unarmed against the wild beasts, and I was told they actually succeeded in capturing a leopard alive and brought it back to the chief!

726 and Mahazule, who had taken refuge in Gaza, during July-August 1895.
175 Nine regiments, representing a large effective force, were to start from Manzimehlope, the country beyond the Nkomati River; three of these were to ascend the left bank of the river, to cross it in the neighbourhood of Komati-Poort and to enter Swaziland, the Ngoni chief having made alliance with the Swazis. The other regiments were to cross the Nkomati to the West of the Sabie, and thence to go southward by Moveni. The remaining three, with whom were incorporated Zihlahla and Mahazule, were to ravage Shirindja, Ntimane and Nondwane, passing about one hour's march to the West of Lourenço Marques, exterminating the inhabitants of Matjolo (allies of the Whites), whose retreat to the town would be thus cut off... The nine regiments were to effect a junction at a place called Nkobotlwene, to the South of the Bay, where the forces of Gungunyana would fraternise with those of Maputju, with whom they were on good terms. For the space of seven months, tens of thousands of these warriors were to overrun the country
726 and to annihilate all the tribes opposed to Gungunyana. The chief
609 would not massacre the Whites, nor would he attack their town: he
175 calculated on rendering them powerless by depriving them of the assistance of their Black allies, and expected them thus to sue for peace on honourable terms! Such, at least, was the plan of campaign which transpired after Gungunyana had been made prisoner, in the centre of his own country of Gaza, by a party of about forty White soldiers! The whole thing culminated in a single day's skirmish in the Ntimane country. The petty chiefs quarrelled amongst themselves; only a few hardy warriors dared to cross the Nkomati and slaughtered some women at a short distance from the outpost of Chinabane. Finding themselves discovered, they at once recrossed the river and made off to the Northward.

578 The principal causes of the incapacity in military matters so noticeable amongst the Blacks during the war of 1894-1896, are doubtless the *internal jealousies* between the tribes and also, it must be said, the mysterious dread inspired by the White race, their artillery and their superior discipline.

726 The feeling of mistrust existing between Matjolo and Nwamba,
175 Nondwane, Zihlahla and Shirindja, also explains the terrible *panics*
703 which occured during the military operations. On several occasions the Native forces were subject to panics which might have entailed the most serious results. As an instance I relate the following, which nearly led to the partial destruction of the Matjolo army. The Matjolo

726 warriors, as also those of Ñwamba, had received orders from the
175 Whites, at the end of January 1895, to attack Zihlahla and Mahazule.
703 One of the young men of Matjolo, who was present during the operations, told me this story : "We were to have joined the men of Ñwamba at a village called Mukapan, but did not find them at the rendez-vous. As they had made common cause with Zihlahla at the beginning of the revolt, we had not much confidence in them. It looked as if they were in hiding and intended to attack us treacherously and kill us. At this time two panics occured. The first was at Hukwen, when a man dreamt that he was being killed, and cried out : "Yo! Uwe! There are people who are killing me!" It was pitch dark. Every one jumped to his feet. Some ran to hide in the forest, but others shouted : "The enemy are here!" Fighting began in the regiment of Geba, (composed of men of the same age as Sigaole, the chief), but no one was killed. A few individuals who kept their presence of mind restored order, but we came very near exterminating each other! The next night a Chopi of our troop had a fright, and cried out : "Why do you want to kill me, you men of Matjolo ? I will tell Sigaole's mother." He was promptly secured and forced to keep quiet for fear that he would rouse the Nondwane people, etc. A similar panic seized the troops of Mahazule, when they went to lay waste the country round Lourenço Marques (October 1894).

726 To avoid these panics, as far as possible, the Ba-Ronga arrange a
192 *password* before starting on an expedition. I was able to learn two of these countersigns, after the war, by questioning some young men who had taken part in certain military operations. On one occasion the pass-word was as follows : "Be ge pi ?" These are Zulu words signifying : "What are you looking at ?" The requisite answer being : "Be ge pezulu"—"We are looking at the sky." In the famous attack made by the Zihlahla warriors on the town of Lourenço Marques, on 14th October 1894, the word was : "U landu bane ?"—"With whom have you a quarrel ?"—and the reply : "Ngi landa Mlungu!"—"I have a quarrel with the white man!"

727 *Return from the battle.* When a yimpi has been defeated in
765 battle, but is not pursued by the enemy, it returns silently and disperses before reaching the capital, each warrior going back ashamed to his village. Mourning takes place in the villages of the deceased. But much lamenting is not allowed. It may be that the chief will prohibit any mourning if many have been

727 765 killed, "because the whole country would mourn : — they have not been killed by the mat (likuku) at home, but by the assagai on the battle-field! They are men! If any one weeps he will have to pay £ 2." (Mboza.)

726 703 When the Maputju yimpis fought against Nondwane in 1876, in the battle which took place near Malangotiba, (3 km west of Rikatla), they were decimated and eventually repulsed. Their chief Musongi sent them back to fight again. They refused. Then he punished them in the following way : he condemned them to go and fetch water with pots, like women, but they had to go on their knees to the pool, saying : "It is the result of our cowardice" — (Ngi ndaba ya bugwala). Afterwards they had to extinguish a bush fire with their hands, and came home very much scorched and burnt.

When the yimpi is victorious, the return is marked by important 727 songs called *hubu* (cl. dji-ma). The regiments follow each other, 533 each singing his own *hubu*, and they at once build the mukhumbi 535 when they reach the village of the chief. They dance, dance their doughty deeds. Suddenly silence is required ; the counsellors narrate to the chief how the fighting has proceeded and tell him the names of those who have killed enemies, those who have struck the first blow and their *bahlomuri*, viz., those who transfixed the leg and the arm. After which the heroes "gila" to their heart's content, together with the bahlomuri. They are proud! They are applauded! They are the great men of the day, the *tingwaza*, the saviours of the chief!

This leads me to consider the very curious customs connected with the slayers and the slain on the battle-field.

1. THE FATE OF THE SLAIN AND THE TREATMENT OF THE SLAYERS.

1. *The fate of the slain.*

554 When a man has slain an enemy, he has covered himself with 727 the most enviable glory : he has the right to perform the war-dance before the chief. He takes away all the garments from

727 enemy died later on, after his return to his home. Makhani did not
828 know this. One day he became suddenly delirious and rushed about
789 all over the village trying to stab his own people. "Oho!" said those
783 who saw him, "it is because the man he wounded has died!" They at once called the magician who possessed the nuru medicine, a man of the Mapsanganye clan, who came with his calabash. In this calabash there was a carved stick cut from a tree called shiralala, the extremity of which must always remain plunged in the medicine. The magician dipped this stick into a mixture made of honey and the drug, and passed it over the lips of Makhani, who seized it with his tongue, sucking it as the magician moved it from right to left, and licking his lips. A drop of the medicine was then put into each ear, on each upper eye-lid, and below the sternum. He was then cured and, taking a lighted torch, he threw it in the direction of the enemy's country with threatening words: "A ba fe, bafo, ba bola i. e. Let them die, the enemies, let them rot. I will kill still others!" Every day he had to go to the pool and wash his body, treating himself with the tintebe powder.

727 During the weeks following the battle heroes do not only
301 wear the tintebe, besides these miluru amulets, they have the
703 right to wear certain trophies. These are in the first place
554 antelope or goat's horns pierced at the base; they thread a string through the hole thus made and tie them round their necks (See illustrations, p. 33 and 453). They also make necklaces of small pieces of wood, notched in a peculiar manner and burnt in the fire; a hole is made through these and they are strung together like beads and worn round the neck. Sometimes these necklaces are made so long that they are worn as a bandoleer. I recollect seeing the Matjolo warriors returning from their expedition of February 1895: they came to show themselves off to the Whites at Lourenço Marques, gloriously proud of having massacred defenceless women and children whom they had surprised in the early hours of the morning! People threw them pieces of silver which they converted into brandy! (1)

727 (1) The terrible malediction which rests on those who have killed an enemy,
775 is well illustrated by the following story which the Rev. C. Maphophe told me of an
761 event that had taken place not long ago in the Shishongi country (Manyisa district). A man of the Ndzindzin family had killed a Ndjao during one of Gungunyana's expedi-

361 district, fifteen miles to the north, far enough from the town, where the ugly galvanised iron sheds have not yet supplanted the old typical hut. We see, in the bush, on the slope of the sandy dune, a little forest of mimosa, *mikunge*, *mikuwakuwa* (Strychnos). In its midst nestles a village. Thongas like to build amongst trees, to protect themselves against the terrible south winds which frequently blow across the plain, and perhaps also to shield themselves from the inquisitive eyes of people passing along the road. The little community prefers to live by
361 itself, as it is entirely self-sufficing. This small wood is also used
514 for other purposes. Thongas have not yet learned to build the kind of outhouse which is described in English by two letters (W. C.), and they "go outside" (humela handle) into the little copse. The air is not very pure when we cross it, so we hasten to reach the village. The accompanying plan (p. 312) represents a combination of features observed in many Thonga kraals; it is rare to find a "muti" as complete as this.

361 We first note the external circular fence *(lihlampfu)*. It is
712 made of branches, thorny or otherwise, one and a half to two feet
417 high, more or less rotten. It is not built as a protection against
351 enemies. In this tribe, villages are not fortified, and, in case of war, the only resource is flight. The fence protects against
361 spiritual enemies, witches, as we shall see later on. The path
351 leads us straight to the main entrance (16) the *mharana*, which is three or four feet wide. But the fence is open in some other places for narrower passages called *pairuba* (17), one for about every three huts; these smaller openings lead to the wood and are used only by the inhabitants to "humela handle." Passers by, as a rule, do not enter by such back gates. They are private. On either side of the large gate is often seen a growing tree and some poles, which clearly show the entrance. This is never closed during the day. On our right, a little court with some broken pots which denote a fire-place, is the *bandla* (21), the place where the men congregate. In front of us, at the other extremity of the circle, is the headman's hut (1) or rather the hut of his principal wife. On the way to it, we cross the *hubo* (22) the central square and pass round the *ranga*, (Ro.), *shibaya*

714 heavily or stamped his feet on the ground, it sounded like the tread of an elephant.

714 This costume is a warm one, and the warrior carries a sort of
321 bone curry-comb, made of the rib of an ox, shaped and sharpened,
302 which he uses to scrape the perspiration from his face and body, when taking violent exercice or indulging in the dances descriptive of his prowess. Such is the native pocket-handkerchief!

714 The several component parts of the war-dress are kept in a little hut raised on poles, near the owner's dwelling, and are carefully looked after, being frequently dusted and exposed to the sun to preserve them from moths and weevils. A complete uniform is worth several pounds sterling!

713 *Arms* among the Ba-Ronga are of a very primitive kind, those
411 of most ancient date being doubtless the *club* (nhonga) and the *knobkerrie* (gungwe) (1) of which two specimens are given in the accompanying illustration (No. 4). The Native never journeys without his stick, using it to kill snakes, should any cross his path, and should fortune smile on him, to knock over any quail that may rise at his feet. In quarrels or in war time this *nhonga* can be a dangerous weapon. The stick with the fluted head comes, I am told, from Bilen, and it seems that this style is in great favour in Gaza. It may have a phallic significance.

But the most formidable weapon of the South African Black is the *assagai* (tlhari, fumo (No. 2), of which there are two kinds; the larger (likhalo) consisting of a sharp, pointed, double edged steel blade, fixed on to a stick with iron or brass wire, and the smaller (tindjombi) with a blade of the size of our arrow-head, fastened to the handle with strips of bark or of palm leaves. The former is for hand-to-hand combat, and the warrior never releases his hold of it, while the latter—of which three or four may be held in the hand when entering the fight—are thrown at the enemy from a distance (2). The length of the large assagai on the right of the illustration is as follows: Blade 14 inches; binding of iron

797 (1) These sticks were given to me as dentistry fees for the extraction of decayed
713 teeth!

(2) I once had an opportunity to observe the effects of the assagai. A young evangelist of our Mission was surprised on the railway line by some Zululds warriors

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

713/411 wire, 4 ½ inches and handle 34 ½ inches. The small one, on the left, measures: blade 7 in., iron stem adjoining blade 7 in., binding

Thonga weapons.

1. Shield; 2. Assagais; 3. Battle axes; 4. Knobkerries; 5. Dagger; 6 and 7. Necklace and little knee wear by men dancers.

797 in ambush during the 1894 war, and was transfixed at one blow. (7 th January 1895).
713 He had fallen on his knees and the wretches struck him in the back; the assagai was only prevented from going right through his body by a note book which he was carrying in the breast pocket of his coat.

713 of palm leaves 5 in. and handle 35 ½ inches. As previously
411 mentioned, the handle of the large sized assagai is broken at the
595 warriors' death, being "he," or his defilement; but the blade
643 "never dies." It belongs to the chief, as does also the shield, and the son will inherit it. During the warrior's life, it is kept in the hut of his *first wife*. She is called the owner (ñwinyi) of the assagai. It is taboo for the other wives to touch it; another fact which shows the special position of the first wife. (Comp. p. 284.)

713 Another weapon in more restricted use and which can also
411 be employed for cutting wood, is the *axe* or *hatchet*, of which I
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714 in the Chaka army were distinguished by differently coloured shields.) On either side of the central line, from top to bottom, two parallel rows of small square incisions are made (magabela) through which are run strips of hide of a different colour, the effect being a series of oblongs. By an ingenious device the ends of these strips are so tied at the back of the shield as to form several sheath-like nooses into which is inserted the stick by which it is held. The space between the two lines of oblongs is called the back (nhlana) of the shield. The nooses or sheaths are four or six in number : two or three at the top, and two or three at the bottom, a space being left in the middle, where the warrior grasps the stick. This stick tends to strengthen the shield, but, being merely passed through the nooses, it acts also as a pivot around which it can turn ; it is this pivoting action which gives to the shield its chief value as a protection. An assagai (usually thrown with considerable strength) would easily penetrate the ox-hide, but when it strikes the shield, the force of the impact causes it to pivot and the weapon is deflected to one side : should it strike exactly in the middle, it would hit the stick, break it and lose all further impetus. It is hardly necessary to add that the *shitlhangu* of the South African Black is absolutely useless when opposed to bullets ; it was invented to protect the warrior against the dreaded assagai, at a time when firearms were not yet thought of!

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C. THE MOBILISATION OF THE ARMY.

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643 609 first go to the Mpfumo Counsellor, who now acts as an Agent General for his own tribe ; they are well received by him and fed while waiting for the day of the coronation.

643 701 When it is known that all the foreign military contingents have arrived,[1] then the Mpfumo army is also assembled and all together march to the capital. The royal family council, composed of uncles and the older relatives of the new chief, meets in a separate hut. The presiding member opens the proceedings as follows : "Si hi humeliliki : si hi humililiki, hi fanela ku beka hosi kutani! (See what has happened! This having happened to us we must install a new chief!)" The rest approve and reply according to etiquette. On an immense open space, all the warriors form a circle (biya mukhumbi). Battalion after battalion 643 takes up its position within this living enclosure. An opening is 714 left in this otherwise perfect circle, and through it enters the bodyguard, composed of young men of the same age as the new chief, with the chief himself hidden in their midst, wearing his full military uniform and accoutrements : ostrich feathers on his head, strands of hair from cow's tails on his biceps and the calves of his legs, etc.

643 701 A specially appointed functionary, the bearer of the chiefs (mutlakuli wa tihosi), penetrates into the middle of the bodyguard and raises the young chief on his shoulders in the presence of the assembled armies. The great counsellors, the secondary chiefs, and all the young men of the royal family, then accompany the bearer of the king and with him march round the inner side of the circle of warriors, shouting as they go :

Hosi hi leyi ! Dlayan ! Dlayan !
Behold the chief ! Kill him ! Kill him !
A ku na yimbeni !
There is no other than he !
Hi tiba yoleyi.
We recognise none other.
Dlayan ! Lwa nga ni yimpi !
Kill him ! if there be any here who can raise an army (to oppose him).

To these shouts of defiance the several battalions reply consecutively as the procession passes them : "Bayete! Bayete! Ndjao!" These words form the royal salute, to which all the independent chiefs are entitled (1).

1 [For the coronation of a chief --Analyst]

175 177 726 703 These Zulus or Ngonis taught the tribes of the plain a system of war much more cruel than the old one : "kill everything," — such is the rule. No exception is made except in the case of women, who are taken prisoners. The Thonga clans readily accepted this new mode of fighting. They adopted the Zulu system wholesale, the proof of which is that all their military terminology is pure Zulu. Their apprenticeship began during the invasion ; the Ba-Ngoni seeing that the Thongas had a certain aptness for war, incorporated them into their own regiments and used to send them forward to the attack, as previously mentioned. They praised them by calling them the *Mabuyandlela* — those who prepare the way, — a kind of nickname which the Thongas have kept to this day and of which they were very proud.

721 175 703 However I do not think it would be unfair to the Thongas to assert that the old peaceful basis of their character is still preserved, notwithstanding this influence. We have had an opportunity of judging of their warlike capabilities during the war of 1894-1896 with the Portuguese. (See Appendix X, Short account of two South African wars.) The Natives did not fight from choice. While some of them gave proof of great endurance, and the army fought in some cases with a certain tenacity, Thongas and especially Ba-Ronga did not show themselves very able warriors. Want of discipline, mutual distrust, timidity resulting in frequent retreats, inability to follow up their successes, such were the main causes of their defeat. The wild soldiers of Maputju, who considered themselves the equals of the genuine Zulus, showed their courage only when there was no danger!

B. WAR COSTUME AND WEAPONS.

714 One day when we were comfortably seated under the beautiful tree at our station of Rikatla, a strange looking monster suddenly appeared on the scene, running towards us! The children fled and the women hid themselves... It was Charley, our milk-man, who, with some other warriors, was going to a military review, to be

714 held by his chief Mahazule. He approached us, a giant of 6 ft. in height, decked out in a costume which was certainly grotesque, but of which I at once caught the general idea ; he had evidently tried to resemble a wild animal and had succeeded admirably in the attempt. Such is most likely the origin of the war costume in mankind! As for Charley, he was thoroughly delighted to note the terrorising effect produced by his appearance on the youngsters and folk of weak nerves.

He was, admittedly, the handsomest warrior in our locality, and condescended on one occasion to allow us to photograph him, when he explained in detail the several component parts of his costume, which, as a whole, was certainly formidable! The photograph was a failure, but the get-up has remained imprinted on my memory.

714 825 To begin with the top ; the head was decorated with three plumes of long slender feathers, taken from a bird called *sakabonyi*, the widow bird, which is only to be found in the mountains ; sometimes the feathers of other birds are added (magalu, mafukwana); one of these plumes is worn in the centre, the others one on each side, and all three are fixed on to a conical helmet (shintlontlo) trimmed with ostrich feathers. This helmet is set on a kind of toque of another skin, which is held in place by a chin-strap. This style of head gear makes the head look about twice the natural size, and, to give it a still more ferocious appearance, it is adorned here and there with porcupine quills.

714 301 825 Round his neck Charley wore a necklace of plaited thongs of black calf skin (tinkocho). Armlets of long white ox hairs, carefully selected from the tail, ornamented his biceps, and garters of a similar make were on the calves of his legs.

The belt around his loins was very rich, the beautiful skin of a civet cat (nsimba), with its fine yellow stripes, hanging down in front to the middle of his thighs, and small antelopes' skins behind (madjobo ya nhlengane). Finally, to complete the wild animal appearance, calves and ankles were covered with bracelets of large black seeds, which come from the North (timbavu), each seed being as large as a cherry. The size of the legs is thus considerably increased and conveys the idea of a pachyderm ; when he jumped

714 heavily or stamped his feet on the ground, it sounded like the tread of an elephant.

714 This costume is a warm one, and the warrior carries a sort of
321 bone curry-comb, made of the rib of an ox, shaped and sharpened,
302 which he uses to scrape the perspiration from his face and body, when taking violent exercice or indulging in the dances descriptive of his prowess. Such is the native pocket-handkerchief!

714 The several component parts of the war-dress are kept in a little hut raised on poles, near the owner's dwelling, and are carefully looked after, being frequently dusted and exposed to the sun to preserve them from moths and weevils. A complete uniform is worth several pounds sterling!

713 *Arms* among the Ba-Ronga are of a very primitive kind, those
411 of most ancient date being doubtless the *club* (nhonga) and the *knobkerrie* (gungwe) (1) of which two specimens are given in the accompanying illustration (No. 4). The Native never journeys without his stick, using it to kill snakes, should any cross his path, and should fortune smile on him, to knock over any quail that may rise at his feet. In quarrels or in war time this *nhonga* can be a dangerous weapon. The stick with the fluted head comes, I am told, from Bilen, and it seems that this style is in great favour in Gaza. It may have a phallic significance.

But the most formidable weapon of the South African Black is the *assagai* (tlhari, fumo (No. 2), of which there are two kinds ; the larger (likhalo) consisting of a sharp, pointed, double edged steel blade, fixed on to a stick with iron or brass wire, and the smaller (tindjombi) with a blade of the size of our arrow-head, fastened to the handle with strips of bark or of palm leaves. The former is for hand-to-hand combat, and the warrior never releases his hold of it, while the latter—of which three or four may be held in the hand when entering the fight—are thrown at the enemy from a distance (2). The length of the large assagai on the right of the illustration is as follows : Blade 14 inches ; binding of iron

797 (1) These sticks were given to me as dentistry fees for the extraction of decayed
713 teeth !

(2) I once had an opportunity to observe the effects of the assagai. A young evangelist of our Mission was surprised on the railway line by some Zihlahla warriors

713 of palm leaves 5 in. and handle 35 ½ inches. As previously
411 mentioned, the handle of the large sized assagai is broken at the
595 warriors' death, being "he," or his defilement; but the blade
643 "never dies." It belongs to the chief, as does also the shield, and the son will inherit it. During the warrior's life, it is kept in the hut of his *first wife*. She is called the owner (ñwinyi) of the assagai. It is taboo for the other wives to touch it; another fact which shows the special position of the first wife. (Comp. p. 284.)

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411 be employed for cutting wood, is the *axe* or *hatchet*, of which I
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181 703 the Pedis. I saw the two armies, the same day, preparing for the same battle. The Thongas were armed to the teeth, forming a great circle, all standing, shouting their war songs, gesticulating, jumping, imploring their chief to allow them to start. The Pedi warriors were sitting under trees, taking their snuff and apparently as calm as any other day.

During the Gungunyane war, the Thongas were brave, at least those not entirely dependent on the Ngoni king, who had not allowed his warriors to kill white men. The Rongas of Mpfumu especially showed great courage and endurance, and those who served the Portuguese in their Angola war have been praised as being very steady and reliable.

177 181 725 721 On the other hand everything seems to prove that military ability is not an ancient feature of the Thonga character, and that it has been imparted to them by the Zulus, who taught them the art of fighting during the last century, pushing them to the front in their battles and calling them "Mabuyandlela," "those who open the way." Before the Ngoni invasion, the Thonga armies were ignorant of the *mukhumbi* viz. the armed circle of warriors which is the basis of the Zulu military system; (See Part IV) : they used to form themselves into a straight line and, in their battles, very few men were killed. They were normal Bantu clans, viz. people living peacefully, occasionally quarrelling with their neighbours. The idea of conquest, of vast dominion, the system of an armed nation which Chaka and his followers pursued, was something new amongst South African Natives and was probably borrowed by Dingiswayo from the Whites. This fact ought not to be ignored.

Under a just European supervision, there is no probability that the Thonga tribe will change its peaceful and mild charcter.

3) *Physical characteristics of the Thongas.* It cannot be said 142 that the Thongas possess a very distinct and unique physical type. They are generally of a dark brown colour, sometimes purely black, much darker than the Suthos. As a whole, their external appearance bears a much closer resemblance to that of the Zulus, but, as regards face and stature, they vary very much. You may meet Thongas with typical negro faces, broad lips, flat

643 But whilst they may be reconciled in ordinary life, these two principles become antagonistic when carried into politics, and this law of succession has been the source of endless disturbances amongst the Thonga clans. It is true that the younger brothers of the chief, when taking his place, are looked on more or less as princes regent, holding office on behalf of their nephew, who is the lawful heir to the throne. They are said to "make him grow" (kurisa) to "keep his tumbler" (hlayisa ndyelo).

But if the former chief died in youth, and if his younger brother has lived and reigned for a long time, and has become very popular, he is very much tempted to appropriate the chieftainship for his own family and to order the tribe to crown his son, to the exclusion of the son of the first chief, who belonged to the elder branch, but who has been more or less forgotten during all these years. This leads to conflicts and fighting. The lawful heir will contest (*banga*, a Zulu word) and a *mubango* (civil war) will follow. Or, if he is not able to fight, he will keep to himself, full of bitterness, and ready to seize the first opportunity of asserting his rights.

643 Such a usurpation has twice taken place in the Nkuna tribe.
175 It is not easy to know exactly what happened, because there
721 are conflicting statements. Those who hold the chieftainship do not tell the story in the same way as those who consider that they were robbed of their right. This is the testimony of one of the latter, Mbokota, son of Madjubane. There were three brothers, Hoshana, Mbangwa and Ribye (1). During

(1) *Genealogy of the Nkuna family showing why and how contests arose for the succession.*

The names of the chiefs who reigned are thus underlined .....
The names of those who were deprived of the chieftainship, thus ———

643
173
721

the disturbances caused by the Ngoni invasion, Hoshana fled to the Ñwamba country and lost touch with the main body of the clan which settled in the Transvaal. He however possessed the *ritlatla* (p. 385). On his death the royal appanage was brought to Shiluvane, but it never went back to Hoshana's children, who lost their right for ever. Mbangwa had three children, a daughter, Tibatiba, and two sons, Nyantsiri and Shiluvane. On his death, his younger brother Ribye reigned. He died, and then the chieftainship came back to Mbangwa's children. In the meantime Nyantsiri had died, but he had left two children, Madyubane and Mapsakomo. Madyubane, the elder, was still a child. So Tibatiba, the elder sister, said to Shiluvane : "Take the elephant tusk belonging to the Nkuma royal family and reign in the place of Nyantsiri ; but you have only to 'keep the tumbler' of Madyubane." Shiluvane sold the tusk and bought wives, beads and clothing for himself. Madyubane died some years later ; but he had a younger brother, Mapsakomo, and also a son called Mbokota. The chieftainship ought certainly to have returned to the elder branch. Mbokota told me himself that Shiluvane, before he died, ordered his counsellors to proclaim him as chief. So, on Shiluvane's death, a great contest arose. The headmen came to the capital and asked which son of Shiluvane had been designated by the late chief as his successor. No one dared reply, because there were four men who claimed the chieftainship : Mapsakomo, a younger brother of the legal heir Madyubane, Mbokota the son of Madyubane, Muhlaba and Muholo, both sons of Shiluvane. The great counsellor Shikhibane then said : "I heard Shiluvane say he wished Muhlaba to reign." The headmen accepted this statement, but the other pretenders greatly resented it. Seeing that many Ba-Nkuna were opposed to Muhlaba, Shikhibane assembled the whole tribe in arms to proclaim his protégé. He wanted the army itself to manifest its will. Mbokota, Mapsakomo and Muholo protested. But the warriors took Muhlaba, who was still a young man, and brought him to his new residence in an epic march all through the country during which they sang the war songs. The contest was finally settled by the Boer Authorities ; Captain Dahl, then Native Commissioner for Zoutpansberg,

685 721 *Theft* (ku yiba) is universally condemned, not so much for its immoral character as for the fact that it renders a normal social life impossible. The notion of *individual property*, though it is not developed as in more civilised nations, is nevertheless at the base of the whole Bantu system. The Bantus are agriculturists. They believe that the products of their labour belong to them and that no one else is entitled to appropriate them. The notion of property is in direct relation to work accomplished. (Compare Part IV.)

685 574 202 To steal growing mealies is not usual. A thief breaks off the cob, whilst the master of the field first uproots the stalk and then takes the cobs. If a friend of his who happens to be travelling passes through his gardens and wants to eat a cob, he is quite welcome to do so. He also uproots the stalk, puts it on one side of the road or leans it against a tree and draws a line on the ground from the place where the stalk grew to the spot where he has put it. Perhaps the owner of the field will discover the uprooted stalk after a whole month. If he inquires who has helped himself to his mealies, his friend will say to him : "Did you not see the line ?" And they will laugh over it (hlekelelana). A thief acting hastily would not have had time to draw the line!

685 789 There are certain magical drugs with which people smear mealie stalks (see Part IV) and they assert that, if any one tries to penetrate into their garden to steal, he will have his hand caught and will not be able to get rid of the plant! For some reason or another, these magical methods do not always work. So the injured person has recourse to the tribunal.

685 343 Should the thief be caught in the very act, there is no difficulty! His own field will be taken by the owner of the stolen mealies and he will have to pay a fine of one ox, otherwise the matter will be brought before the Court, and the only difference will be that the fine will be of two or three oxes, one of which will remain in the hands of the chief. (Mankhelu.) If the thief has been clever enough to avoid being caught, if he has stolen from a store hut, Natives are clever detectives and he will probably be discovered. These store huts are generally built in the middle of the field, or in the little bush which surrounds the village ; the grass all around

CHAPTER IV

THE ARMY.

A. WAR-LIKE PROCLIVITIES OF THE THONGAS.

721 As mentioned in the preliminary chapter (p. 34), in former
726 times the war-like spirit seems to have been but little developed
175 amongst the Thongas. The primitive population possessed no iron weapons, and the invasions which took place from the XVth to the XVIIIth century seem to have been peaceful. Conquerors and subjects soon intermarried and no recollection of bloody contests remained. When clans fought against each other, in those remote times, namely before the arrival of the Zulus (1820), they thought they had done doughty deeds when two or three warriors had been killed, and the vanquishers returned home saying: "None of the enemy is left!!" The army used to form in a straight line, not in a circle, as was the case later on under Zulu influence.

175 When the cruel hordes of Manukosi subjugated the plain of Delagoa, all that was changed. Of course the Thonga yimpis were defeated very easily. First of all, those of Maputju and Tembe; in the country of Matjolo, which was afterwards invaded, the chief Mashekane was so stout that he had been surnamed "Mitahomu ni timhondjo" — "the one who swallows an ox, horns and all..." He fought bravely but was also defeated. In Khosen, says Hendrick, an old man who stayed for years in Rikatla and who was then a child, the aborigines were deceived by the perpendicular sticks which the Ba-Ngoni invaders had fixed to their ox-hide shields; they mistook them for reeds and thought they could break them easily; but their three united yimpis, that of Khosen under Mbanyele, of Rikotsho under Makwakwa, and of Shiburi under Shitlhama, were repulsed, broken through by the Zulu phalanx.

175 177 726 703 These Zulus or Ngonis taught the tribes of the plain a system of war much more cruel than the old one : "kill everything," — such is the rule. No exception is made except in the case of women, who are taken prisoners. The Thonga clans readily accepted this new mode of fighting. They adopted the Zulu system wholesale, the proof of which is that all their military terminology is pure Zulu. Their apprenticeship began during the invasion ; the Ba-Ngoni seeing that the Thongas had a certain aptness for war, incorporated them into their own regiments and used to send them forward to the attack, as previously mentioned. They praised them by calling them the *Mabuyandlela* — those who prepare the way, — a kind of nickname which the Thongas have kept to this day and of which they were very proud.

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following way. The bones are consulted, and a special pot, called 782
phokolo, is buried just below the surface of the ground, in the middle of a clean spot well hidden in a dense thicket of thorny shrubs. The victim, a black ram without any white spot, is brought there, and killed in accordance with the ceremonial rites. The grass of the paunch is squeezed over the pot, so that the green liquid drips into it, and the blood is spread all over the ground. Four furrows have been dug in the form of a cross with the pot as a centre, and pointing towards the four cardinal points. Little girls ("who are not yet wise," i. e. they are not yet informed regarding sexual matters) are sent to fetch water and fill the pot until it overflows into the furrows. This being done, they go back to their mothers. The *mbelele* rite will immediately follow (p. 318). This phokolo sacrifice is the religious act in connection with ancestrolatry, the mbelele being actuated by entirely different ideas. The phokolo rite is replaced in the Nkuna clan by the official visit to the graves, accompanied by an old mourning song, and the custom of beating the mounds with sticks ; (whether to awaken the gods or to show them the dissatisfaction of the worshippers, I do not know). In many sacred woods, a living *human victim* is offered to the gods, as already mentioned (p. 383). The phokolo rite is a regular sacrifice attended with bloodshed.

In the case of war threatening the country, another offering is 721
made which is called *Mhamba ya Burena, the Offering of Valour.* 782
The general of the army chooses a thorn, a large thorn taken from a munga tree (the Accacia horrida), not a crooked one ; he sucks it without biting it, and emits his saliva saying : "Tsu! You, the ancestor-gods, so and so and so, enemies wish to take your country! Give us valour! May we stab them with this thorn, with the assegai! (Ñwi, psikwembu, man, man, man. Yimpi yi ta, yi ta teka tiko djenu! Hi nyikan burena, hi ba tlhaba hi mutwa lo, hi tlhari!)" This offering resembles the offering of the thorn made by the headman, but it has an entirely different meaning, and it is probable that the kind of thorn employed is different.

Another national act of worship, which recalls the rite of 778
the nkanye twig in funeral ceremonies, is performed with the 782
aid of the *great mhamba*, to which I have already referred

643 The grass of the roof of this hut must never be removed, though
784 it may rot owing to the rains. It is taboo. One simply puts
356 a layer of new grass over the old one, a thing which is rarely done in the case of ordinary roofs.

643 In case of war, should the clan be obliged to leave the country,
789 a special little hut is hastily built in the bush and the precious
722 medicine is deposited therein. There is no fear that the enemy will take it, either Whites or Natives, because this hut also has the attribute of invisibility. This happened during the war of 1894 (1). In the case of the *mhamba* of the Tembe and Zihlahla clans it is different; the man who keeps it must run away with it and with the chief.

643 Such are the laws of the mphulo. This great medicine may
789 certainly be regarded as a part of the regalia, and the most important part. It is, for the chief and sub-chiefs, a means of strengthening their authority, as will be seen in the description of the luma rite. On the other hand the mphulo is a collective possession, the powerful magic means by which the clan resists its enemies or conquers them. It occupies the very centre of the national life.

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726 kept by a man called Chikiza, who belongs to the Ntjeko clan, not
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643 "Do not kill the first enemy you meet with, but catch him alive, be
789 it a man or a woman, and bring him to the chief." The chief, accompanied by some indumas, must stab him outside the royal
726 kraal; the body of the deceased enemy will then be cut open, and

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726 As regards the *order of the march*, the battalions of the young
701 men, stationed on either side of the entrance, go first; they
643 form the advanced guard, the post of greatest danger. The scouts, tinhlori (Dj.) tinhloli (Ro.), go in front; each company has its leader to whom these scouts bring reports. It is the duty of the young men to surround the position to be carried and to make the assault. The two sides of the circle then follow, and lastly the chest of the army, forming the rear guard. The chief thus brings up the rear, protected by the battalions of veterans. But generally the chief does not go to battle; he remains at home.

726 During the campaign, *the whole clan is subjected to many taboos.*
784 Those who remain at home must *keep quiet* (rula). No noise
777 must be heard in the villages. The women must not close the
722 doors of the huts. It is taboo: their husbands might meet with "bitterness" (shibiti). They might lack strength to run away. Fire must be lit in the huts in the evening, in order that the warriors may "have light" where they are. It is taboo to omit this precaution. Work in the fields must be more or less suspended; women may attend to it in the morning only, before the heat of the day, while the air is still fresh. "Then, if a warrior has stepped on a thorn, the thorn will be cool (titimeta); if he has knocked against a stump, the stump will be quiet and not hurt him. (Mboza.)" Old men who remain at home must keep watch, and if they see a messenger coming, they follow him to the chief.
765 Should he bring bad news, they do not inform the women, as it is
726 taboo to mourn over warriors killed in war before the return of the
834 army. A fine is imposed upon those who contravene this law.
777 It is taboo also to have sexual relations as long as the army is on the
784 war-path. This would cause thorns to hurt the warriors and they would be defeated. (Mankhelu.)

722 According to Mankhelu, the mukhumbi may be again formed after arriving in the proximity of the hostile army. The
643 battalions will be sent one after the other by the great ndjuna who
726 will watch the progress of the fight. If he sees his men giving way, he "pours" (tshelela) new companies to help those who are fighting until they rush the position (gwabula) and put the enemy to flight. Then the pursuit begins. The dust flies up

the Pedis. I saw the two armies, the same day, preparing for the same battle. The Thongas were armed to the teeth, forming a great circle, all standing, shouting their war songs, gesticulating, jumping, imploring their chief to allow them to start. The Pedi warriors were sitting under trees, taking their snuff and apparently as calm as any other day.

During the Gungunyane war, the Thongas were brave, at least those not entirely dependent on the Ngoni king, who had not allowed his warriors to kill white men. The Rongas of Mpfumu especially showed great courage and endurance, and those who served the Portuguese in their Angola war have been praised as being very steady and reliable.

On the other hand everything seems to prove that military ability is not an ancient feature of the Thonga character, and that it has been imparted to them by the Zulus, who taught them the art of fighting during the last century, pushing them to the front in their battles and calling them "Mabuyandlela," "those who open the way." Before the Ngoni invasion, the Thonga armies were ignorant of the *mukhumbi* viz. the armed circle of warriors which is the basis of the Zulu military system; (See Part IV) : they used to form themselves into a straight line and, in their battles, very few men were killed. They were normal Bantu clans, viz. people living peacefully, occasionally quarrelling with their neighbours. The idea of conquest, of vast dominion, the system of an armed nation which Chaka and his followers pursued, was something new amongst South African Natives and was probably borrowed by Dingiswayo from the Whites. This fact ought not to be ignored.

Under a just European supervision, there is no probability that the Thonga tribe will change its peaceful and mild charcter.

3) *Physical characteristics of the Thongas.* It cannot be said that the Thongas possess a very distinct and unique physical type. They are generally of a dark brown colour, sometimes purely black, much darker than the Suthos. As a whole, their external appearance bears a much clear resemblance to that of the Zulus, but, as regards face and stature, they vary very much. You may meet Thongas with typical negro faces, broad lips, flat

643 The grass of the roof of this hut must never be removed, though
784 it may rot owing to the rains. It is taboo. One simply puts
356 a layer of new grass over the old one, a thing which is rarely done in the case of ordinary roofs.

643 In case of war, should the clan be obliged to leave the country,
784 a special little hut is hastily built in the bush and the precious
722 medicine is deposited therein. There is no fear that the enemy will take it, either Whites or Natives, because this hut also has the attribute of invisibility. This happened during the war of 1894 (1). In the case of the *mhamba* of the Tembe and Zihlahla clans it is different; the man who keeps it must run away with it and with the chief.

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789 the fat collected in order to mix it with the war medicine, the flesh
726 being left to the dogs to eat and destroy.

In some clans, chiefs possess *other personal charms* which are
643 very much dreaded and called *psitjemba*. So, in the Maluleke
789 clan, each of the children of the ancient chief Mashakadzi received
237 from him one of these psitjemba. It consists of a part of the skull of a child, the top of the head, where the pulse is seen beating at the fontanella. This has been smeared with the vitreous humour taken from the eyes of lions or elephants, and powders made from the skins of wild beasts. The possession of this charm gives the chief a supernatural power. If, being irritated with you, he invokes his gods by sucking it and emits the sacramental tsu, he can call on any wild beast he likes to kill you... He has sacrified with the psitjemba ; you will die!

643 Some chiefs of the Northern clans used to *swallow one of the*
787 *stones* found in the stomach of a crocodile. It is said that
825 crocodiles, when cut open, are found to contain a certain number of stones, as they are supposed to eat one each year, when the rainy season comes on. One of them is chosen and smeared with special medicines and swallowed by the chief. Natives firmly believe that this stone remains in the body of the chief, and that it is "his head, his life" (Viguet). When it is passed in his stools the first time, this is a premonitory warning. When it occurs a second time, it is a clear announcement that the chief is about to die. So chiefs can always know when their time is near. In other clans the crocodile stone is replaced by what is called *ndjalama*. Amongst Nkunas this word designates a kind of bright copper button, which the Pedis of the Palaora mine used to make and sell. But ndjalama also means large sized beads. Whatever it is, some chiefs swallowed the ndjalama and were warned by it of their death. This object, as well as the crocodile stone, is taboo for subjects to swallow. They would die. It is "buloyi bya hosi" — "the magical power of the chief."

643 On account of these powerful and dangerous charms possessed
619 by them, chiefs of different clans regarded it as a taboo to stay in each other's company ; they were afraid lest they might be killed by the magical power of their colleagues. Maphunga

643 on good and friendly terms. Should relations between them be
609 at all strained, or should war be imminent, all the roads would be
574 closed and no one allowed to enter the capital.

V. *The Kondza custom.*

641 The chief is also approached by those who may wish to become
643 subject to him, to be naturalized ; this is called *kondza*, from a Zulu word conveying this meaning. The chief will assign to the new *nandja* a dwelling place, and he will be incorporated in the nation without further ceremony. By this kondza, he binds himself to pay the taxes (See the story of Mutipi. *Les chants et les contes des Ba-Ronga*, page 164).

Naturalised strangers, however, do not eat the first fruits (luma) with the same drug as the people of the country. They have their own medicine and take it according to their own rules. They are however forbidden to luma before the chief of their adopted land (p. 397).

VI. *Diplomatic relations.*

648 We have seen that these are very carefully conducted, each
502 of the neighbouring clans having one counsellor entrusted with
726 the care of its affairs. In case of war, friendly clans frequently
224 make alliances (shinakulobye). They send messages to each other, or they have special means of communicating news in case of war. Supposing, for instance, Ñwamba and Nondwane should fight against Matjolo. They put two traps at their common boundary, on the side of the road, one on the territory of Ñwamba and one on that of Nondwane. These traps consist of a rod bent by a string fastened to the ground. Should the army of Matjolo have made an invasion during the night into Ñwamba territory and put the people to flight, the men of Ñwamba

202 726 will at once go and undo the trap which is on their side ; in the morning, the people of Nondwane will know that they must also fly.

D. THE TRIBUNAL OF THE CHIEF.

642 In the Thonga Court there is no separation of powers. The legislative, executive, and judicial powers are all in the hands of the chief, aided by his counsellors. The chief is the supreme authority and his decisions are without appeal.

I. *Legislative affairs.*

671 The *chief* makes the laws (p. 382) and presides at discussions
643 which end in a resolution. But his counsellors assist him.
583 Here is an example of such a decision taken at Maphunga's court. There was no uniformity as to the money to be paid for a lobolo, and some fathers claimed as much as £ 20 or £ 30 for their daughters. The great counsellors of the capital decided (tjimba mhaka, viz., to tie the matter) that a lobolo should be £ 15.10 as the maximum. They "tied the matter" with the assent of the chief. Then all the sub-chiefs and counsellors were summoned to the capital. The chief called the roll to ascertain if they were all present. The great counsellor then said to the assembly : "The herds which people claim are too large. Have you gold mines and do you know how to make coins ? Henceforth do not lobola with too much money. £ 15.10 is quite enough!" Every sub-chief, on his return home, called his men and informed them of the decision : "Hi to timhaka! Such are the matters!" said they. The subjects were disappointed. They wept! But they had to accept the decision. To oppose it is taboo! "Psa yila!"

643 A *native debate* or discussion is conducted on very different
645 lines from those to which we are generally accustomed, nothing
671 ever being put to the vote. The chief presides. A proposition is

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

CHAPTER IV

THE ARMY.

A. WAR-LIKE PROCLIVITIES OF THE THONGAS.

721 726 175 As mentioned in the preliminary chapter (p. 34), in former times the war-like spirit seems to have been but little developed amongst the Thongas. The primitive population possessed no iron weapons, and the invasions which took place from the XVth to the XVIIIth century seem to have been peaceful. Conquerors and subjects soon intermarried and no recollection of bloody contests remained. When clans fought against each other, in those remote times, namely before the arrival of the Zulus (1820), they thought they had done doughty deeds when two or three warriors had been killed, and the vanquishers returned home saying : "None of the enemy is left!!" The army used to form in a straight line, not in a circle, as was the case later on under Zulu influence.

175 When the cruel hordes of Manukosi subjugated the plain of Delagoa, all that was changed. Of course the Thonga yimpis were defeated very easily. First of all, those of Maputju and Tembe ; in the country of Matjolo, which was afterwards invaded, the chief Mashekane was so stout that he had been surnamed "Mitahomu ni timhondjo" — "the one who swallows an ox, horns and all..." He fought bravely but was also defeated. In Khosen, says Hendrick, an old man who stayed for years in Rikatla and who was then a child, the aborigines were deceived by the perpendicular sticks which the Ba-Ngoni invaders had fixed to their ox-hide shields ; they mistook them for reeds and thought they could break them easily ; but their three united yimpis, that of Khosen under Mbanyele, of Rikotsho under Makwakwa, and of Shiburi under Shitlhama, were repulsed, broken through by the Zulu phalanx.

175 / 177 / 726 / 703 These Zulus or Ngonis taught the tribes of the plain a system of war much more cruel than the old one : "kill everything," — such is the rule. No exception is made except in the case of women, who are taken prisoners. The Thonga clans readily accepted this new mode of fighting. They adopted the Zulu system wholesale, the proof of which is that all their military terminology is pure Zulu. Their apprenticeship began during the invasion ; the Ba-Ngoni seeing that the Thongas had a certain aptness for war, incorporated them into their own regiments and used to send them forward to the attack, as previously mentioned. They praised them by calling them the *Mabuyandlela* — those who prepare the way, — a kind of nickname which the Thongas have kept to this day and of which they were very proud.

721 / 175 / 703 However I do not think it would be unfair to the Thongas to assert that the old peaceful basis of their character is still preserved, notwithstanding this influence. We have had an opportunity of judging of their warlike capabilities during the war of 1894-1896 with the Portuguese. (See Appendix X, Short account of two South African wars.) The Natives did not fight from choice. While some of them gave proof of great endurance, and the army fought in some cases with a certain tenacity, Thongas and especially Ba-Ronga did not show themselves very able warriors. Want of discipline, mutual distrust, timidity resulting in frequent retreats, inability to follow up their successes, such were the main causes of their defeat. The wild soldiers of Maputju, who considered themselves the equals of the genuine Zulus, showed their courage only when there was no danger!

B. WAR COSTUME AND WEAPONS.

714 One day when we were comfortably seated under the beautiful tree at our station of Rikatla, a strange looking monster suddenly appeared on the scene, running towards us! The children fled and the women hid themselves... It was Charley, our milk-man, who, with some other warriors, was going to a military review, to be

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

714 in the Chaka army were distinguished by differently coloured shields.) On either side of the central line, from top to bottom, two parallel rows of small square incisions are made (magabela) through which are run strips of hide of a different colour, the effect being a series of oblongs. By an ingenious device the ends of these strips are so tied at the back of the shield as to form several sheath-like nooses into which is inserted the stick by which it is held. The space between the two lines of oblongs is called the back (nhlana) of the shield. The nooses or sheaths are four or six in number : two or three at the top, and two or three at the bottom, a space being left in the middle, where the warrior grasps the stick. This stick tends to strengthen the shield, but, being merely passed through the nooses, it acts also as a pivot around which it can turn ; it is this pivoting action which gives to the shield its chief value as a protection. An assagai (usually thrown with considerable strength) would easily penetrate the ox-hide, but when it strikes the shield, the force of the impact causes it to pivot and the weapon is deflected to one side: should it strike exactly in the middle, it would hit the stick, break it and lose all further impetus. It is hardly necessary to add that the *shitlhangu* of the South African Black is absolutely useless when opposed to bullets ; it was invented to protect the warrior against the dreaded assagai, at a time when firearms were not yet thought of!

713/177 During the last century the Ba-Ronga have begun to use guns for hunting and also for war. Although the sale of firearms to the Natives has often been prohibited, the Ba-Ronga were reported to possess several hundreds of rifles at the commencement of the 1894 war, and also to be fairly proficient in their use... very different from the Madagascans, who removed the sights from their rifles on the score that they were in the way when taking aim!

C. THE MOBILISATION OF THE ARMY.

202/726/643 In the Zihlahla country, when the chief wished to muster his forces, he did so by means of the *shipalapala*, the rudimentary trumpet which I described in the preceding chapter. A swift

202 726 643 messenger (shigidjimi) ran from village to village, blowing this instrument; when he was tired he passed it on to some other good runner, who carried the summons further afield; he ran and ran until he was exhausted, when he handed the trumpet to a third, and so on until the whole country had been covered.

At the sound of the well-known call of the shipalapala, the warriors shout: "A hi hlomen!" — "to arms!" They at once put on their war costumes and repair to the capital.

In Nondwane all the sub-chiefs possessed their shipalapala, and each of them summoned his own people. There the shipalapala mostly sounded to call for dances and for feasts. When the army was mobilised merely to discuss matters quietly, messengers ran through the country shouting: "Mayivonule!" — "take the shields!"..., to which the warriors answered: "A hi hlomen!" — "to arms!" The messenger had to go quickly. "He did not lose time in grinding tobacco;" he only indicated the time when the army was expected in the capital.

Should matters be more serious, should a hostile yimpi have invaded the territory, every one can give the alarm (tlhabela mukhosi), shouting: "Yi ngeeneeeeeee!" "It has entered!" (viz., the hostile army has invaded our territory). All the women flee away and the men run to the capital.

D. THE MUKHUMBI, THE CIRCLE OF WARRIORS.

643 701 726 Decked out like wild animals, the warriors hasten with all speed to the chief's village, where the regiments muster. The army (1) is divided into a certain number of *battalions, mabotshu, or meboko*, all men of about the same age forming a *botshu*. The *botshu* itself is made up of several *companies, mitlawa* or *mabandla*, and may therefore vary very much in numbers.

(1) Yimpi (pl. tiyimpi) in Thonga corresponds to impi in Zulu.

701 726 In the army of Matjolo there were nine battalions, commencing with that composed of youths from sixteen to twenty years old, up to that of "crown men" (makehla) and the grey beards who where still capable of handling an assagai ; for every able-bodied man is a soldier and makes it a point of honour to join the army when it is mobilised. In the Zihlahla clan, the battalions of young men were called *Megajlela* and also *Ndumakazulu*, "the one who is celebrated as far as Zululand," surname of the chief Ñwamantibyane. After them came the *Nyonibovu*, *Giva*, *Malwabo*, *Djanungwana*.

Mankhelu, the Commander of the Nkuna yimpi, gave me the names of his battalions and the explanation of them. The old men formed the regiment called *Mamphondo*, those of the horns. Some of them used to tie a horn on their foreheads ; they imitated the rhinoceros or the buffalo. The following regiment was the *Mamphisi* (timhisi), the hyenas ; then the *Machoni*, the sea birds, a kind of duck, very swift ; then the *Timbulwane*, a sort of lynx, the *Mafakubi*, representing the ndakazi antelope and, lastly, the most numerous regiment, the *Dhlanazo*, "those who eat with others (dya na bu)." Each regiment has, as we shall see, its own war-cry, in which it imitates the animal whose name it bears.

701 726 202 When all have reached the capital the first procedure is the "formation of the circle," in Thonga *biya mukhumbi*, to fence the circle or *aka mukhumbi*, to build the circle. This is accomplished in the Zihlahla army by a special summons which I might call "the order to fall in." Heralds scatter in all directions, enter the huts, approach the groups encamped around the capital, and shout in a high and monotonous key the following Zulu words. It will be noticed that the formula given is that which was made use of by the heralds in the Mpfumo clan during the war of 1894.

Izwana ! Otyo ndjalo, Muvelu, (1)
Be nga m'thandi ba ka Nkupane,
Umta'ka Sihlahla, ewikulu si ka Hamule,
Malobola ge dyose e bulandin ka Mbukwana.

(1) Muvelu, the Zulu surname for Ñwamantibyane.

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726
202

Listen! This is what Nwamantibyane says,
He whom the people of Nkupane do not love, (1)
The son of the Great Forest (Sihlahla) of Hamule, (2)
He who took a wife and used the sword in the country of
his parents-in-law, in Mbukwane's country.

Gwalagwala a libuvu,
Ilihlengo ngo kubekeka,
Umpathi we sibamo,
U za ku debula Mangole ni Maputukizi.

The royal bird with red plumage (3),
Magnificent to contemplate,
He who holds in his hand a gun
With which he will fire on the Angolese and the Portuguese.

Nduma kuti, lo wa khiti,
Mo nga ngesilwana,
U ti ka: a yi funule!

He whose fame spreads afar, our chief,
Who is as a wild beast,
It is he who says: "To arms!".

701 This final exclamation, prolonged and finishing abruptly on
726 the last syllable, carries a long distance; all the warriors jump to their feet and, brandishing their assagais and shields, run to the chief's village, where the circle is to be formed. Each

[614]

(1) The people of Nkupane are one of the younger branches of the royal family of Mpfumo. They lived close to Lourenço Marques, on the other slope of the hill, to the West of the town. They would have liked undoubtedly, in common with many others, to assert their independence by throwing off the yoke of the elder branch, and even attempted to do so when Mahombole tried, in 1867 or in 1869, to overthrow Zihlahla. But the elder branch, whose chiefs were energetic men, succeeded in maintaining its authority over the whole clan. The fact that the people of Nkupane "do not love" Nwamantibyane redounds rather to the credit of the latter.

(2) Nwamantibyane's father was Zihlahla, his grandfather was Hamule. Sihlahla, or Zihlahla, in Zulu means forest, hence the herald's play on the word. The reign of Zihlahla, which we may place at from 1867 to 1883, was very troubled, at least during its first few years. The young chief, on his return from Natal, after the death of his father Hamule, married Mbilwana, a princess of the royal family of Mabota. During the bloody wars then raging, Zihlahla was angry with Mabota (whose chief was Mbukwana), for playing him false, and, one fine day, he made a raid into the country of his parents-in-law, killing many people. To have thus treated his "bakoswana," who are ordinarily held in such great respect, (see Part II) was a proof of valour which is remembered to this day, more than fifty years after the event. It must be said that, after this exploit, Zihlahla left his residence near the town and took refuge in the Nwamba territory; the Whites with whom he was fighting put in his place a certain Nwayeye whose name we shall find in a war song to which we shall have occasion to refer later on.

(3) The nkulunkulu is a bird which is shot in the forest on the borders of the Nkomati; its feathers are red, and only chiefs are allowed to wear them.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

701 726 regiment, with its counsellors at its head, is called in turn by the organisers of the army; (at Zihlahla they were Mahagane, the chief's uncle, and Mpompi), and the several companies of the regiments form ranks one behind the other. I have already described this imposing circle, when treating of the coronation of the chief. Every warrior can take in at a glance the entire assemblage. Seen from the interior, it is an unbroken circle of shields, resting perpendicularly on the ground, and all touching; behind, a crowd of men, the greater the number, the deeper the ranks, a forest of feathers waving above their heads.

701 726 561 554 596 The mukhumbi is not however a perfect circle. It is rather like a *horse shoe*, as there remains an *opening* (nyangwa or sangwa), which gives access into it. On either side of this *door* the regiment of the young men takes up its position; the Dhlanazo in the Nkuna mukhumbi and the Ndumakazulu in that of Zihlahla. At the opposite end, facing the entrance, is the *chest of the army* (shifuba sha yimpi), where the chief stands surrounded by the men of riper age, the strongest of whom act as a body guard. Between the chest and the opening, on both sides, the middle-aged warriors occupy the wings, the elder ones nearer the chest, the younger nearer the entrance. This disposition is highly significant; notice that it is exactly the same as that of the village itself, a large door (mharana); on both sides of the entrance, the huts of the unmarried inhabitants (lao and nhanga); at the back the huts of the headman, and, at the sides, those of his younger brothers. The idea of age and of hierarchy entirely dominates both these social manifestations!

701 As regards the numerical strength of the mukhumbi, one of my informants who belonged to the Ndumakazulu regiment —young men from 19 to 25 years old—told me that he estimated the war strength of his regiment at about 500 men: the entire Zihlahla circle might be put at 2000 strong.

I have often seen the Nkuna mukhumbi assembled. I had even the opportunity of addressing its warriors during the Sikororo war of 1901. They were between five and six hundred in all. But this clan is very much scattered and many warriors were not present.

726 Before going into battle, certain rites have to be accomplished.
703 In order to stimulate a war-like courage and to imbue the warrior's minds with a certainty of victory, it is necessary to proceed to the performance of the war-songs (guba), of the war dances (gila), and to administer the medicine which will render the soldiers invulnerable.

E. WAR SONGS.

533 The performance of war songs is called *guba*. I have already
539 fully described the Mpfumo national song, (p. 373) which would seem to be more adapted to celebrate a coronation than to serve as an incentive to battle ; it is however used indiscriminately for both purposes.

Another war-song which is very popular in the Mpfumo clan is the following :

Zulu : U ngwa si mu thini, Mayeye ?
U banga muhlaba, u bulala bantu !
Ronga : U ta ku mu yini, Ñwayeye ?
U banga ntlhaba, u dlaya bhanu !
What will you succeed in doing to him, Ñwayeye ?
You take the country and slay the people !

This is a question addressed to Ñwayeye, the rival of the chief Zihlahla ; Ñwayeye was placed in authority near Lourenço Marques by the Portuguese between 1860 and 1870. He accepted the position, but was unable to retain it any length of time, and the recollection of his failure is perpetuated in this song which is intended to extol the royal family of Mpfumo.

A third song, also in vogue with the Mpfumo warriors, runs thus :

Zulu : Zi m' thini ? A ba ze zi ba bona, abantu bezizwe !
Ronga : Hi ta ku yini ? A ba te hi ba bona, bhanu ba matiko !
What shall we say ? Let them come and let us see them, the people of the enemy's country !

This is a defiance hurled at the adversaries.

533 and Tembe, an antiphon seemingly very ancient, which changes
539 from the minor to the major, producing a truly grandiose effect : (For the music of most of these songs, see Vol. II. Part V.)

> "At break of day," sings the solist.....
> "Who was it that crowned thee, Muwai, king of Maputju?" reply the warriors.

Muwai is the great-great-grandfather of the chief Mabai, deposed in 1896. He reigned at the close of the XVIIIth century, his son Makasana having been chief from 1800 to 1850. Muwai is compared to the rising sun, or at least the song recalls his coronation, which must have taken place very early in the morning, at daybreak. It is evidently in praise of the royal family that the entire army chants this glorious souvenir.

> Loko ku ti qa, loko ku ti qa
> U bekwe ngubane Muwai?
> Muwai, ka Mabudu! Muwai ka Mabudu!
> U bekwe ngubane?
>
> At day break — At day break
> Who was it that crowned thee, Muwai?
> Muwai, king of Maputju! Muwai, king of Maputju
> Who was it that crowned thee?

726 As we see, the war songs are tolerably short ; a declamation of three or four words by a soloist (musimi) who dances in the middle of the circle, and a chorus sung by all the warriors, stamping their feet on the ground and striking their shields with their assagais. (Hence the exclamation "Eji" found at the close of some sentences.) Or sometimes the whole throng brandish the assagai in a rythmical fashion, raising it first to the right, then to the left, afterwards inclining it to the side, and lastly downwards as if to pierce...

When the great war-induna wants the song to stop, he gives a signal. At once all the shields are elevated and a sibilant murmur runs through the ranks : shi-shi-shi-shi, or a special click : nqu-nqu-nqu. Hence the verb *nqunquzela*, to stop a war song.

And then the war dance will take place.

535 703 An extraordinary war spirit comes over them all..." And every one having witnessed these performances in the Thonga or Zulu mukhumbi will confess that they are wonderfully impressive. It is a mixture of dramatic, epic and lyric poetry, three literary *genres* which are still confounded, the whole being enhanced by a deep, wild music and subject to the laws of a certain artistic style.

703 643 726 The fighting instincts are excited to the highest pitch by these patriotic choruses and dramatic representations. Thus should the troops be slow in making a start, the young men go dancing to the chief and beg him to "grant them permission" to go forth and slay, or rather to "give them men" to slaughter (ku nyika). The Native idea appears to be that the chief holds the lives of the enemies in his hands; without his permission they cannot go forward, but this once given, they rush enthusiastically to the fray. They even go so far as to taunt him with being an old woman, a coward, because he will not let them go at once (1).

When the excitement has reached the culminating point, and it has been definitely decided to fight, the time has arrived for the magic treatment by which the warriors will be rendered invulnerable.

G. ADMINISTERING THE WAR-MEDICINE.

726 177 789 751 This custom is probably of ancient origin, but I have reason to believe that, amongst the Ba-Ronga, it was practised without any great formality until the advent of the Zulu influence, when it was brought into much greater prominence and invested with more solemnity. "Drinking the war-medicine" took place on several occasions during the revolt of 1894 to 1895. At *Zihlahla* this potion was administered to all warriors before the rebel attack

(1) Gungunyana, on one occasion, when his warriors were importuning him with similar requests, sent the more ardent spirits to wage war unarmed against the wild beasts, and I was told they actually succeeded in capturing a leopard alive and brought it back to the chief!

726 on the town of the 14th October 1894 ; also prior to the ambuscade
789 in the outskirts of Lourenço Marques, on the 7th January 1895,
751 and before the battle of Morakwen, the 2nd February following. According to my informant, the chief doctor of the army prepared the medicine in a huge dish with leaves and roots cut into slices. These ingredients possessed an effervescent quality ; the medicine-man stirred up the decoction and with it sprinkled the whole army formed in a circle. After this every warrior was fully persuaded that he was invulnerable, that the bullets would be deflected on either side of him, or, even should they hit him, they would be flattened against his body and fall harmless to the ground. The charm could only be broken by the warrior turning his back to the foe. Then the bullets might pass through him. I have met with very intelligent Natives who were perfectly convinced of this fact, although open to reasonable argument on all other points. They told me that certain Natives who were bowled over by grapeshot, picked themselves up after the fight, came to life again, or rather regained consciousness and then, with their fingers, extracted the bullets, which had all remained imbedded in the skin!

A *Nondwane* warrior described to me, in the following terms, the administering of the magic potion, as it was done on the 7th January 1895 before the battle of Morakwen. The whole army was assembled at Nkanyen, on the bank of the Nkomati. It was there that the magician prepared the medicine, with two young girls as assistants. While he was brewing the mixture and making it froth, the soldiers, formed in a semi-circle, looked on, standing erect, poising their assagais on a level with their
726 heads. Then a *ntjhopfa* was cut down (the shrub of oblivion,
789 often employed by Native doctors and of which we have already
751 noted the use in other ceremonials) and a branch laid across the
824 road. The several battalions were called up, one after the other, and every man had to jump over the branch and take a mouthful of the medicine, which he spat out again, pronouncing the sacramental *tsu* which accompanies the offerings made to the gods : he subsequently went off, running and dancing and getting ready to go forth and kill. When each one had taken his share of the medicine and it was all finished, the doctor said to them : "Now I

726 have given you all my strength ; go and slay." They crossed the
789 river at night and having reached the left bank, at a point about ten
751 kilometers from the Portuguese camp at Morakwene, they were made to observe the strictest silence for a long time. Then they felt that valour (burena) had taken possession of them!

Amongst the Ba-Nkuna the war-medicine is also administered under the form of *sprinkling*. This sprinkling may take place in time of peace, when danger threatens. The chief kills a black ox and the army, summoned to the capital, is sprinkled and eats the flesh of the ox. This will make the country ready for any eventuality. But the ceremony is much more serious when war is at hand. Then the "great medicine of the country," carefully kept in the calabashes of the Court magicians, is mixed with *psanyi* of slaughtered sheep and with white sand taken from the river. During the night, the mukhumbi is formed and all the men sit down, their heads bowed over their knees,
726 their eyes closed, in perfect silence. Then one of the queens,
789 an old woman who no longer has any sexual relations, enters
751 the circle, absolutely naked. She dips a leafy branch into the
562 magical infusion and marches all round, inside and outside, sprinkling all the warriors and muttering the following words : "Kill them, break their pots, kill their dogs, catch their chief, bring him here, bring so-and-so and so-and-so." The warriors tremble with emotion. They pray to their gods in a low tone : "Save me! Help me!" But none of them dares to raise his eyes! They know quite well that they would die!

It is extremely important that the officiating woman should be old and have had no sexual relations for a long time, or "the assagais would lose their strength ; the masculine weapons would become blind and the feminine weapons alone would see... The woman would have untied the knot of the assagai ; she would cross the way (tjemakanya) of the great medicine... She must be a quiet woman (a rula)". (Mankhelu).

726 Similar customs exist in *Mapatju*, where the medicine is called
789 "the medicine of hatred,"—that which dispels all natural feeling
828 and makes a man capable of killing his fellow-man! I give the particulars of this curious medical treatment as I have them from

726
789
643
828

one of the Natives of the country : there are no fewer than seven acts in this grand performance of "preparation for battle."

a) In the first place when the chief foresees that a campaign is imminent, he has water drawn, and all the necessary ingredients gathered together : then he goes into retirement for one month, during which he is busy preparing the medicine with the magician who knows all about the recipe.

b) At the end of this time the entire army is summoned to the capital. A bull is brought out before the assembled soldiers and the chief strikes it on the head with a stick : this infuriates the animal, which must be caught and thrown down by the men unarmed ; the chief then approaches and kills it with an axe. They dismember the carcase, cutting off the flesh in strips, which they cook in a large battered pot, stirring it with their assagais and pouring into it at the same time "the medicine of hatred."

c) On this day the army is mustered and formed in a circle. The Commander-in-Chief takes the meat, cuts it into small pieces and mixes with it certain human ingredients : a finger taken from a hostile petty chief killed in battle has been carefully preserved ; the dried up phalange is scraped and the bone-dust thus obtained is mixed with the medicine. This additional ingredient is to prevent any feeling of remorse, any prickings of conscience : "ku susa lipfalo," literally "to remove the diaphragm," the seat of the conscience, according to Ronga ideas. (See later on a more probable explanation of this rite.) The Commander-in-Chief takes the pieces of meat thus seasoned and throws them into the mouths of the soldiers, who must not touch them with their hands. The food must be received between the teeth ; any meat falling to the ground is picked up by the children.

d) On the following day, the whole army proceeds to a large lake (the lake of Shika, near the village of Nhlampfukazi) to be treated with another medicine, an emetic. This is placed on a skin in the middle of the lake : the skin is withdrawn, leaving the particles of the drug floating on the water ; each warrior must stoop down and swallow a mouthful of the emetic. He will vomit yesterday's meat : "fear will be thrown up and valour will remain"

726/643 (ku hlantiwile butoya, ku sele burena). The chief having meanwhile taken up his position on a neighbouring hill, the several regiments rush towards him, surround him and beg to be sent as soon as possible to fight and to slay.

726 643 372 789 *e)* But, before this can be done, the chief returns to the capital, the army following him. A double trial has still to be undergone. A large broom is made of small branches of trees soaked in fat from sheep's tails and is then set on fire. The chief walks round carrying his flaming torch, passing it rapidly before the faces of the warriors formed in a circle. Some of the helmets catch fire and the wearers are promptly ordered to fall out of the ranks. The chief addresses them in angry tones : "Deliver up to me," he says, "the charms you are concealing! 'Tis only I, the chief, who may possess enchanted drugs. You certainly have some, as your plumes took fire... Look at the other warriors ; the feathers on their heads are not burnt!" This trial is probably a means of frightening suspected traitors or of expelling wizards (baloyi).

726 643 789 *f)* All shields are now "presented" all round the circle. The chief bends back the point of an assagai and with it strikes each shield, but not with sufficient force to pierce it... This "consecration" of the shields will doubtless make them a more secure protection against the enemy's weapons.

g) Lastly the series is closed by the "aspersion." A mortar is produced in which some leaves are soaking ; these are stirred round in water and the chief sprinkles the whole army. This is the final ceremony. The chief remains at home : the warriors thus fortified and protected against all dangers start on their expedition.

This last act only is performed in the clans of Shirindja, Nwamba and Zihlahla.

H. ON THE WAR PATH. THE BATTLE. STRATEGY. PANICS. RETURN HOME.

726 The *mukhumbi* has been "built" for the last time. Proclamations have all been issued. Nothing remains but to start.

This *starting of the army* (ku thethwa) is also done according to

726 prescribed rites. I once witnessed it, when the Nkuna army went
701 to Sikororo's country on a kind of punitive expedition. The great ndjuna of the army, the Commander-in-Chief, Mankhelu, his stern face grimmer than ever, holding a hyena's tail in his hand, clad in a white shirt which was very little in keeping with the whole appearance of the mukhumbi, stepped inside the large circle and raised his tail... Then the *Dhlanazo*, the young bloods, ran towards him shouting : "Kwe-kwe-kwe!" Their cry is the same as that of the *Timbulwana* (lynx), their elders, who came next. Mankhelu pointed the tail in a certain direction and these two regiments started. The *Mafakubi* came in their turn, imitating the galop of the antelopes : "tshwi-tshwi-tshwi! gwu gwu... hwu, hwu!... eka-ka-ka-ka..." and finally shouting : "N'ta dya na man" — "with whom shall I eat it ?" — a strange sentence which may be, as previously mentioned, a reminiscence of a totemic period! (See page 366)... The *Matsyoni*, the seabirds, followed shouting "tswe-tswe-tswe ;" the *Mamphondo*, those of the horn, came shouting "tshuba-tshuba-tshuba" and imitating buffalos and rhinoceroses. The *Maphisi* started last, howling wildly like hyenas : "hum-hum-hum..."

726 If the field of battle is far away, if there is a long march to
533 be made, special *marching songs* are sung on the road. The
539 most impressive is the following : a soloist sings in a very high key :

Abafo! — The enemy!

and the whole army answers in a rich and tuneful melody :

Enena-a-a! a-a! — Here they are!

All the shields are held straight, ready to meet the foe.
Here are two other marching songs :

Nangu moya wa tshisizwe!
We are the fire which burns the country!
Inkonyana ya ndlopfu inhlezio baen...
The calf of the elephant is exposed on the plain...

This means the chief who is in danger! Let us protect and deliver him.

726 As regards the *order of the march*, the battalions of the young
701 men, stationed on either side of the entrance, go first; they
643 form the advanced guard, the post of greatest danger. The scouts, tinhlori (Dj.) tinhloli (Ro.), go in front; each company has its leader to whom these scouts bring reports. It is the duty of the young men to surround the position to be carried and to make the assault. The two sides of the circle then follow, and lastly the chest of the army, forming the rear guard. The chief thus brings up the rear, protected by the battalions of veterans. But generally the chief does not go to battle; he remains at home.

726 During the campaign, *the whole clan is subjected to many taboos.*
784 Those who remain at home must *keep quiet* (rula). No noise
777 must be heard in the villages. The women must not close the
722 doors of the huts. It is taboo: their husbands might meet with "bitterness" (shibiti). They might lack strength to run away. Fire must be lit in the huts in the evening, in order that the warriors may "have light" where they are. It is taboo to omit this precaution. Work in the fields must be more or less suspended; women may attend to it in the morning only, before the heat of the day, while the air is still fresh. "Then, if a warrior has stepped on a thorn, the thorn will be cool (titimeta); if he has knocked against a stump, the stump will be quiet and not hurt him. (Mboza.)" Old men who remain at home must keep watch, and if they see a messenger coming, they follow him to the chief.
765 Should he bring bad news, they do not inform the women, as it is
726 taboo to mourn over warriors killed in war before the return of the
834 army. A fine is imposed upon those who contravene this law.
777 It is taboo also to have sexual relations as long as the army is on the
784 war-path. This would cause thorns to hurt the warriors and they would be defeated. (Mankhelu.)

722 According to Mankhelu, the mukhumbi may be again formed after arriving in the proximity of the hostile army. The
643 battalions will be sent one after the other by the great ndjuna who
726 will watch the progress of the fight. If he sees his men giving way, he "pours" (tshelela) new companies to help those who are fighting until they rush the position (gwabula) and put the enemy to flight. Then the pursuit begins. The dust flies up

726 to heaven! The vanquishers follow their enemies until they reach their villages. As a rule, *they kill every one*; women, children, old men and tired warriors who have been unable to run away. They take the oxen and burn the huts. However exceptions are made in some instances: Sigaole, the ally of the Whites, ordered his warriors to spare the lives of the people of Zihlahla, during the expedition of February 1895, and to take them prisoners instead. "If you find any inhabitants remaining in the villages" said he "go into them. Let some one draw a line on the ground around the village and forbid the soldiers to cross it and to massacre the people." Generally speaking, however, the only lives spared are those of the younger women
726 and girls of whom they can hope to make some profit, either
567 by taking them as wives or selling them to others for matrimonial purposes. These prisoners are called "heads" (tinhloko) (1). This is the only kind of slavery practised by our tribe. Such wives are not ill-treated, as a rule.

726 So far I have described the war-customs of the Natives when fighting with each other. Let me add some particulars taken from the Thonga-Portuguese war of 1894-1896 (App. X.) which throw some light on the Native modes of fighting against White people.

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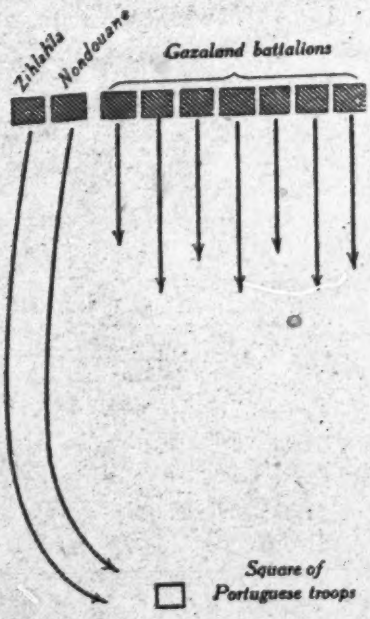
726 When opposed to White troops, the attack en masse would be too
175 dangerous: regiments advancing in serried ranks would offer too good a target to the European artillery. From information I have gathered with reference to the battle of Makupe or Magule (Sept. 8 1895), it would appear that the Ba-Ronga advanced in skirmishing order, those provided with guns approaching very close to the lines of the Whites. During this fight, one of the most important of the whole campaign, the Portuguese Commanding Officer, M. F. d'Andrade, shewed great presence of mind: the Zihlahla and Nondwane

(1) Two women, members of our Church, were carried off in this way by some of the Zihlahla men (6th October 1894), and we had the greatest trouble in finding them. They were seized close to the town, while going to their food-stores and their captors had duly married them with the acquiescence of their chief.

726/175 warriors came into almost actual contact with the Portuguese square, whilst the Gaza regiments, which were in greatly superior force, remained at a distance and then retreated. They had been told by Gungunyana that they were not to kill White men, so their presence was a mere parade. The Ba-Ronga finding themselves thus deserted followed the same tactics! One of the warriors present on this occasion drew me a plan of the engagement on the floor of a hut! (See accompanying sketch).



On the whole it must be admitted that the Natives of these parts seem greatly to prefer surprise attacks, sudden descents upon peaceful and unsuspecting folk, to any kind of regular pitched battle.

The Swazis used to arrive in the Delagoa plain very early in the morning, surround the villages and massacre indiscriminately all the inhabitants, in the years 1860-1870. The Ngonis of Gungunyana adopted the same method. The Matjolo warriors, whom the Portuguese sent against Zihlahla in February 1895, encamped in perfect silence within one hour's march of the spot where Ñwamantibyane had taken refuge (Nhlalalene) and attacked his people when they least expected them. They indulged in the pleasure of killing numbers of women and children, whilst their male enemies fled into the palm marshes, shouting vociferously : "Make ready your rope to climb up to heaven... There will be no more rest on earth for you! Cook three meals : you may eat two but never a third." Empty threats! The greater part of the Native fights during this war consisted in ambuscades and treacherous slaughterings : lots of noise, plenty of bluster, but not much real bravery.

We shall arrive at the same estimate of Native valour if we consider *the great campaign* planned by Gungunyana in concert with Zihlahla

726 175 and Mahazule, who had taken refuge in Gaza, during July-August 1895. Nine regiments, representing a large effective force, were to start from Manzimehlope, the country beyond the Nkomati River; three of these were to ascend the left bank of the river, to cross it in the neighbourhood of Komati-Poort and to enter Swaziland, the Ngoni chief having made alliance with the Swazis. The other regiments were to cross the Nkomati to the West of the Sabie, and thence to go southward by Moveni. The remaining three, with whom were incorporated Zihlahla and Mahazule, were to ravage Shirindja, Ntimane and Nondwane, passing about one hour's march to the West of Lourenço Marques, exterminating the inhabitants of Matjolo (allies of the Whites), whose retreat to the town would be thus cut off... The nine regiments were to effect a junction at a place called Nkobotlwene, to the South of the Bay, where the forces of Gungunyana would fraternise with those of Maputju, with whom they were on good terms. For the space of seven months, tens of thousands of these warriors were to overrun the country and to annihilate all the tribes opposed to Gungunyana. The chief would not massacre the Whites, nor would he attack their town: he calculated on rendering them powerless by depriving them of the assistance of their Black allies, and expected them thus to sue for peace on honourable terms! Such, at least, was the plan of campaign which transpired after Gungunyana had been made prisoner, in the centre of his own country of Gaza, by a party of about forty White soldiers! The whole thing culminated in a single day's skirmish in the Ntimane country. The petty chiefs quarrelled amongst themselves; only a few hardy warriors dared to cross the Nkomati and slaughtered some women at a short distance from the outpost of Chinabane. Finding themselves discovered, they at once recrossed the river and made off to the Northward.

726 609 175

[578] The principal causes of the incapacity in military matters so noticeable amongst the Blacks during the war of 1894-1896, are doubtless the *internal jealousies* between the tribes and also, it must be said, the mysterious dread inspired by the White race, their artillery and their superior discipline.

726 175 703 The feeling of mistrust existing between Matjolo and Ñwamba, Nondwane, Zihlahla and Shirindja, also explains the terrible *panics* which occured during the military operations. On several occasions the Native forces were subject to panics which might have entailed the most serious results. As an instance I relate the following, which nearly led to the partial destruction of the Matjolo army. The Matjolo

726 175 703 warriors, as also those of Ñwamba, had received orders from the Whites, at the end of January 1895, to attack Zihlahla and Mahazule. One of the young men of Matjolo, who was present during the operations, told me this story : "We were to have joined the men of Ñwamba at a village called Mukapan, but did not find them at the rendez-vous. As they had made common cause with Zihlahla at the beginning of the revolt, we had not much confidence in them. It looked as if they were in hiding and intended to attack us treacherously and kill us. At this time two panics occured. The first was at Hukwen, when a man dreamt that he was being killed, and cried out : "Yo! Uwe! There are people who are killing me!" It was pitch dark. Every one jumped to his feet. Some ran to hide in the forest, but others shouted : "The enemy are here!" Fighting began in the regiment of Geba, (composed of men of the same age as Sigaole, the chief), but no one was killed. A few individuals who kept their presence of mind restored order, but we came very near exterminating each other! The next night a Chopi of our troop had a fright, and cried out : "Why do you want to kill me, you men of Matjolo ? I will tell Sigaole's mother." He was promptly secured and forced to keep quiet for fear that he would rouse the Nondwane people, etc. A similar panic seized the troops of Mahazule, when they went to lay waste the country round Lourenço Marques (October 1894).

726 192 To avoid these panics, as far as possible, the Ba-Ronga arrange a *password* before starting on an expedition. I was able to learn two of these countersigns, after the war, by questioning some young men who had taken part in certain military operations. On one occasion the pass-word was as follows : "Be ge pi ?" These are Zulu words signifying : "What are you looking at ?" The requisite answer being : "Be ge pezulu"—"We are looking at the sky." In the famous attack made by the Zihlahla warriors on the town of Lourenço Marques, on 14th October 1894, the word was : "U landu bane ?"—"With whom have you a quarrel ?"—and the reply : "Ngi landa Mlungu!"—"I have a quarrel with the white man!"

727 765 *Return from the battle.* When a yimpi has been defeated in battle, but is not pursued by the enemy, it returns silently and disperses before reaching the capital, each warrior going back ashamed to his village. Mourning takes place in the villages of the deceased. But much lamenting is not allowed. It may be that the chief will prohibit any mourning if many have been

727 765 killed, "because the whole country would mourn : — they have not been killed by the mat (likuku) at home, but by the assagai on the battle-field! They are men! If any one weeps he will have to pay £ 2." (Mboza.)

726 703 When the Maputju yimpis fought against Nondwane in 1876, in the battle which took place near Malangotiba, (3 km west of Rikatla), they were decimated and eventually repulsed. Their chief Musongi sent them back to fight again. They refused. Then he punished them in the following way : he condemned them to go and fetch water with pots, like women, but they had to go on their knees to the pool, saying : "It is the result of our cowardice" — (Ngi ndaba ya bugwala). Afterwards they had to extinguish a bush fire with their hands, and came home very much scorched and burnt.

When the yimpi is victorious, the return is marked by important 727 songs called *hubu* (cl. dji-ma). The regiments follow each other, 533 each singing his own *hubu*, and they at once build the mukhumbi 535 when they reach the village of the chief. They dance, dance their doughty deeds. Suddenly silence is required ; the counsellors narrate to the chief how the fighting has proceeded and tell him the names of those who have killed enemies, those who have struck the first blow and their *bahlomuri*, viz., those who transfixed the leg and the arm. After which the heroes "gila" to their heart's content, together with the bahlomuri. They are proud! They are applauded! They are the great men of the day, the *tingwaza*, the saviours of the chief!

This leads me to consider the very curious customs connected with the slayers and the slain on the battle-field.

I. THE FATE OF THE SLAIN AND THE TREATMENT OF THE SLAYERS.

1. *The fate of the slain.*

554 When a man has slain an enemy, he has covered himself with 727 the most enviable glory : he has the right to perform the war-dance before the chief. He takes away all the garments from

000 smoke, and rub the incisions with the powder. They will then be able to aim straight (See Annotatio 15). The powder specially prepared from the tendons of slain enemies will be spread on the paths during future wars ; foes marching on it unknowingly will suddenly become unable to walk and will easily be killed.

The Zulus are said to have the same customs as the Pedis.

726 I cannot guarantee that all the Thonga clans observe all these
789 customs.[1] The Nkuna magicians, in olden times, before they were
278 influenced by their Pedi neighbours, used to dissect the tendons
751 of the back (riringa) of the slain enemy, which they smeared
826 with his medulla and hung to the shields of the warriors... Enemies seeing these shields would "tjemeka nhlana" — "have their backs broken," a figurative expression which means to be terror stricken. A part of the body was also preserved and mixed with the war-medicine ; the idea which underlies this custom being evidently this : when you have eaten the flesh of your enemies, you have absorbed all their strength and they are unable to do you any further harm (1). We have seen that the "mbhulo," the "nyokwekulu," all the powerful "medicines of the country" carefully kept in each clan, contain a little human flesh. These drugs are used as protective war medicines ; most probably owing to the same principle.

II. *The treatment of the slayers.*

727 To have killed an enemy on the battle-field entails an immense
775 glory for the slayers ; but that glory is fraught with great danger.

266 (1) This custom is the only remnant of anthropophagy remaining amongst the Thongas, and I wonder if this superstition is not the true explanation of the origin of cannibalism. Where cannibalism still prevails, as amongst the Faŭ of the Congo, I am told that the bodies eaten are generally those of hostile clans, or occasionally that of a wife (who belongs to another clan according to the laws of exogamy). Is it not probable that, in the beginning, these feasts had a ritual and military value similar to that which we find in the administering of the war-medicine in South African tribes? In the course of time, the Faŭ acquired a taste for human flesh and ate it for their own pleasure. Dealing with anthropophagy, I must not forget that it occurred in several instances in South Africa after the devastation brought about by the Zulu expeditions of 1820-1830. In Zoutpansberg, in the mountains of Drakensberg, Natives reduced to starvation began to eat their fellow men. This also happened in the Bokhakha during the reign of Queen Male. (See Part IV.)

1 [See pp. 476-477 -- Analyst]

J. SOME REMARKS ABOUT WAR RITES.

177 726 The war rites of the Thongas, whatever may be their origin — and they seem to be a mixture of old Thonga and new Zulu customs, — form a very interesting and complete whole.

The most noticeable are the *national rites*. In war time, the very 643 existence of the clan is threatened, because the chief, the central and 726 vital cell of this organism, is in danger. Hence the readiness of all 829 the warriors to answer to the first call of the *shipalapala*, and to gather round him, "building the circle," which protects him, the whole clan forming a single village and binding itself by the striking ceremonies of *guba* and by patriotic songs, to die for him. Notice that most of the *guba* songs extol the chief. All these customs in which the individual or collective courage is stimulated, the *guba* and the *gila*, are national or social rites directed towards the salvation of the clan. They owe their origin to the national idea.

But war also brings dangers to every warrior. Hence the *protective* rites of sprinkling the mukhumbi with the war-medicine of the clan, or of giving each man some of it to swallow. The rite is inspired by the notion *similia similibus curantur*, the idea being that the warrior, having eaten a small portion of the enemy, will become invulnerable to his blows.

But other rites, especially the war taboos, seem to owe their origin to the *idea of passage*.

726 The *whole clan* enters upon a special phase as soon as war has been 829 decided upon by the chief, "who gives it" to his warriors. Hence the 834 taboos observed at home, many of which are exactly the same as those of the circumcision school and of the period of mourning. We notice the same contrast already so often mentioned : certain sexual prohibitions are removed (e. g. a queen will enter quite naked into the mukhumbi!)

727 tions (before 1890). Three persons of that family died. The bones were consulted 775 and the diviner asked : "Have you not slain a Ndjao?" They answered: "Yes." — 761 "Then," said the bone-thrower "you will all die as this man has followed you." The bones showed that, in order to avoid the destruction of their family, the Ndzindzis had to offer a girl to the ghost of the slain, a living sacrifice. This girl would not be allowed to marry, or even to be courted by boys. Should she have relations with a man it would be necessary to replace her by another. Thus the angry ghost would be propitiated.

726 On the other hand sexual relations, which are allowed in ordinary
829 life, become taboo. This period of fighting seems really to be
834 considered as a marginal period for the whole tribe.

It is so par excellence *for the warriors* and I think that many of the rites imposed upon them are to be explained in this way. As we saw, the period of margin is generally preceded by separation rites. (See page 74.) Some of these, which are very characteristic, are performed when the army starts: the leave-taking from the General with wild shouts, the custom of swallowing a piece of meat without touching it with the hands and taking an emetic afterwards, that of jumping over the ntjhopfa branch, the medicine of oblivion! etc. The triumphant return, the partaking of the meat of the oxen which have been taken, may be the aggregation ceremonies, viz., the acts by which the warriors return to their ordinary life.

726 Passage rites are still more distinct *in the case of the slayers*; but
829 their condition is worse, as it implies the idea of defilement following
304 upon murder and is attended with the danger proceeding from the *nuru*.
182 They are "hot" (an expression which also applies to the tabooed woman
783 during her menses etc.); they are "black" (an epithet which also designates the grave-diggers, the bereaved mother, etc.). Hence a *seclusion* much more complete, a true period of margin with many alimentary and sexual (1) taboos. Possibly the incisions on the brow are an old kind of tatooing in connexion with this marginal period, similar to the inguinal incision of the widows (p. 201). The purification rites are of the same kind as those of the mourners, and particularly of the grave-diggers. The return to society, after their seclusion, is marked by rites of separation from the marginal period, which no doubt aim at getting rid of the defilement connected therewith. (Exposure of the *mizilo* outside the village in the bush.) Is it not striking to notice the correspondence between these rites in their peculiar sequence and those of the circumcision school, of mourning, of moving a village?

See, as a conclusion to Part III, Practical Conclusions, No. VI: "The New era and the Future of the South African Tribe."

834 (1) The sexual taboos are so severe that, after the Mooudi battle, one of the slayers
727 took great offence at a man who dared to touch his food, as the man was living in his home and had relations with his wife. The slayer was afraid that this contact might cause his own death or bring misfortune to his family.

778 the ceremony of tying the cotton string (I. p. 56. Sexual relations
782 have been prohibited to her from the birth of her child up to the performance of this rite. She is consequently pure). The chief may penetrate into it, but only if he has abstained from intercourse with his wives for a whole week. Mankentwane himself must observe this law, otherwise the "medicine, muri" would be spoiled and lose all its virtue. (The sexual taboo, in this case, is evidently dictated by the fact that the mhamba is directly connected with military matters, as we shall see. Compare I. p. 470.) In this sacred hut the old woman constantly keeps up a fire which is maintained with the logs of a certain tree, called shibondjwane, cut by the subjects at the command of the chief. Now and again she exposes the skins to the rays of the sun in order to kill the worms which attack them. Should enemies invade the country, she escapes, carrying the bundle in a mat. If they come up with her, she at once disappears (nyumba) leaving the mat on the spot. As soon as an enemy has taken hold of it, he becomes insane ; he begins to wander about in the bush, unable to return home. When the war is over, the old woman goes to the place where she left the mhamba ; if she does not immediately find it there, her heart is not in the least troubled. The bones are thrown, and reveal where the mhamba has been put by the enemy. Two days
778 do not elapse before it is found! The great mhamba is used first
782 of all for the preparation of military expeditions. A small portion
726 of the fingers and of the faces is cut off and these pieces are mixed with the other war charms ; a pill is made and placed on a piece of broken pottery over a fire in the sacred wood. All the warriors pass by one after the other and expose their assegais, their legs, and their faces to the smoke ; finally the great ñanga puts the fire out and the army is ready to start. But the Shirindja mhamba also plays a great part in the National religious ceremonies, as in the other clans (1).

171 (1) It is interesting to compare the Thonga *great mhamba* with two objects found amongst other Bantu tribes. The first of these is the *byiri* of the Pahuins of the French
778 Congo. This is a most powerful fetish consisting of a skull kept in a box in the huts of these people, in a dark corner; it is used as a means of obtaining wealth and of discovering wizards. In former times it is said to have been the skull of the father of the owner of the hut which had been dug up by him and smeared with drugs. In

726 175 703 warriors, as also those of Ñwamba, had received orders from the Whites, at the end of January 1895, to attack Zihlahla and Mahazule. One of the young men of Matjolo, who was present during the operations, told me this story : "We were to have joined the men of Ñwamba at a village called Mukapan, but did not find them at the rendez-vous. As they had made common cause with Zihlahla at the beginning of the revolt, we had not much confidence in them. It looked as if they were in hiding and intended to attack us treacherously and kill us. At this time two panics occured. The first was at Hukwen, when a man dreamt that he was being killed, and cried out : "Yo! Uwe! There are people who are killing me!" It was pitch dark. Every one jumped to his feet. Some ran to hide in the forest, but others shouted : "The enemy are here!" Fighting began in the regiment of Geba, (composed of men of the same age as Sigaole, the chief), but no one was killed. A few individuals who kept their presence of mind restored order, but we came very near exterminating each other! The next night a Chopi of our troop had a fright, and cried out : "Why do you want to kill me, you men of Matjolo ? I will tell Sigaole's mother." He was promptly secured and forced to keep quiet for fear that he would rouse the Nondwane people, etc. A similar panic seized the troops of Mahazule, when they went to lay waste the country round Lourenço Marques (October 1894).

726 192 To avoid these panics, as far as possible, the Ba-Ronga arrange a *password* before starting on an expedition. I was able to learn two of these countersigns, after the war, by questioning some young men who had taken part in certain military operations. On one occasion the pass-word was as follows : "Be ge pi ?" These are Zulu words signifying : "What are you looking at ?" The requisite answer being : "Be ge pezulu"—"We are looking at the sky." In the famous attack made by the Zihlahla warriors on the town of Lourenço Marques, on 14th October 1894, the word was : "U landu bane ?"—"With whom have you a quarrel ?"—and the reply : "Ngi landa Mlungu!"—"I have a quarrel with the white man!"

727 765 *Return from the battle.* When a yimpi has been defeated in battle, but is not pursued by the enemy, it returns silently and disperses before reaching the capital, each warrior going back ashamed to his village. Mourning takes place in the villages of the deceased. But much lamenting is not allowed. It may be that the chief will prohibit any mourning if many have been

727 765 killed, "because the whole country would mourn : — they have not been killed by the mat (likuku) at home, but by the assagai on the battle-field! They are men! If any one weeps he will have to pay £ 2." (Mboza.)

726 763 When the Maputju yimpis fought against Nondwane in 1876, in the battle which took place near Malangotiba, (3 km west of Rikatla), they were decimated and eventually repulsed. Their chief Musongi sent them back to fight again. They refused. Then he punished them in the following way : he condemned them to go and fetch water with pots, like women, but they had to go on their knees to the pool, saying : "It is the result of our cowardice" — (Ngi ndaba ya bugwala). Afterwards they had to extinguish a bush fire with their hands, and came home very much scorched and burnt.

When the yimpi is victorious, the return is marked by important 727 songs called *hubu* (cl. dji-ma). The regiments follow each other, 533 each singing his own *hubu*, and they at once build the mukhumbi 535 when they reach the village of the chief. They dance, dance their doughty deeds. Suddenly silence is required ; the counsellors narrate to the chief how the fighting has proceeded and tell him the names of those who have killed enemies, those who have struck the first blow and their *bahlomuri*, viz., those who transfixed the leg and the arm. After which the heroes "gila" to their heart's content, together with the bahlomuri. They are proud! They are applauded! They are the great men of the day, the *tingwaza*, the saviours of the chief!

This leads me to consider the very curious customs connected with the slayers and the slain on the battle-field.

I. THE FATE OF THE SLAIN AND THE TREATMENT OF THE SLAYERS.

1. *The fate of the slain.*

554 When a man has slain an enemy, he has covered himself with 727 the most enviable glory : he has the right to perform the war-dance before the chief. He takes away all the garments from

727 the dead body, which remains quite naked; should the slain be a Pedi wearing the piece of skin called nsindo round his genitalia, the slayer takes it with him as a proof that he has killed a man. A second warrior passing the dying or dead enemy will transfix (hlomula) his arm. A third passing will pierce his leg. These two last have not done so meritorious a deed as the first: they have not slain but merely finished off (huhula) the enemy. They act as witnesses to the first man, who is the actual possessor of the corpse; they acquire, however, an equal right to dance: they are the *bahlomuri* of the real slayer. Should a fourth man pass by and again stab the dead, he is credited with no glory at all.

171 Besides the stabbing in the arm and leg, the dead bodies of
727 enemies are subjected to still further *mutilations*; they are ripped open and eventually disembowelled, an operation designated by the Zulu word "qanza." This revolting custom seems to be carried out in a more complete way amongst the Ba-Pedi than
000 amongst the Thongas. In the battle of Nov. 6 1901, when the Sikororo and Sekukuni forces were repulsed by Maaghe and Muhlaba at Shiluvane, and forty foes were killed (App. X), their corpses disappeared entirely, cut into pieces by the medicine men of the victorious clan; magicians from all Zoutpansberg came and asked to buy parts of the slain in order to prepare their powerful charms. In fact, in their opinion, the flesh and blood of an enemy killed in battle is the most efficacious of all charms and makes a *first rate drug* called *nwumelo*. This medicine is also used for other purposes: with it the seeds are smeared in order to ensure a good harvest. When the mealies are two feet high, the magician ties together leaves on stems at the four corners of the field, after having treated them with the drug; the blacksmiths from the Iron Mountain of Zoutpansberg buy it and mix it with their mineral ore, in order to strengthen the iron which they melt in their furnaces (nonisa nsimbi). Without this help they would obtain but slag. The hunters inoculate themselves in the following way with the powder obtained from the tendons and the bones: they make incisions in the skin of their wrists and elbows, draw a little blood, mix it with the drug, cook both in a pot, expose their arrows and assagais to the

000 smoke, and rub the incisions with the powder. They will then be able to aim straight (See Annotatio 15). The powder specially prepared from the tendons of slain enemies will be spread on the paths during future wars ; foes marching on it unknowingly will suddenly become unable to walk and will easily be killed.

The Zulus are said to have the same customs as the Pedis.

726 I cannot guarantee that all the Thonga clans observe all these
789 customs.[1] The Nkuna magicians, in olden times, before they were
278 influenced by their Pedi neighbours, used to dissect the tendons
751 of the back (riringa) of the slain enemy, which they smeared
826 with his medulla and hung to the shields of the warriors... Enemies seeing these shields would "tjemeka nhlana" — "have their backs broken," a figurative expression which means to be terror stricken. A part of the body was also preserved and mixed with the war-medicine ; the idea which underlies this custom being evidently this : when you have eaten the flesh of your enemies, you have absorbed all their strength and they are unable to do you any further harm (1). We have seen that the "mbhulo," the "nyokwekulu," all the powerful "medicines of the country" carefully kept in each clan, contain a little human flesh. These drugs are used as protective war medicines ; most probably owing to the same principle.

II. *The treatment of the slayers.*

727 To have killed an enemy on the battle-field entails an immense
775 glory for the slayers ; but that glory is fraught with great danger.

266 (1) This custom is the only remnant of anthropophagy remaining amongst the Thongas, and I wonder if this superstition is not the true explanation of the origin of cannibalism. Where cannibalism still prevails, as amongst the Fan of the Congo, I am told that the bodies eaten are generally those of hostile clans, or occasionally that of a wife (who belongs to another clan according to the laws of exogamy). Is it not probable that, in the beginning, these feasts had a ritual and military value similar to that which we find in the administering of the war-medicine in South African tribes? In the course of time, the Fan acquired a taste for human flesh and ate it for their own pleasure. Dealing with anthropophagy, I must not forget that it occurred in several instances in South Africa after the devastation brought about by the Zulu expeditions of 1820-1830. In Zoutpansberg, in the mountains of Drakensberg, Natives reduced to starvation began to eat their fellow men. This also happened in the Bokhakha during the reign of Queen Mala. (See Part IV.)

[See pp. 476-477 -- Analyst]

727 They have killed... So they are exposed to the mysterious and
775 deadly influence of the *nuru* and must consequently undergo a
828 medical treatment. What is the *nuru* ? *Nuru* is the spirit of the
783 slain which tries to take its revenge on the slayer. It haunts him
789 and may drive him into insanity : his eyes swell, protrude and
761 become inflamed. He will go out of his mind, be attacked by giddiness (ndzululwan) and the thirst for blood may lead him to fall upon members of his own family and to stab them with his assagay. To prevent such misfortunes, a special medication is required : the slayers must *lurulula tiyimpi ta bu*, take away the nuru of their sanguinary expedition. (Lurulula comes from nuru, plur. miluru (1).

In what does this treatment consist ? The slayers must remain for some days at the capital. They are taboo. They put on old clothes, eat with special spoons because their hands are

764 (1) We met with the notion of *nuru* for the first time à propos of the rite of
775 luma (p. 400) ; we shall find it again when dealing with hunting customs (Part IV).
761 The nuru is to be feared not only in the case of slain enemies but in connexion with any human corpse. As a proof, I may quote the following curious story which Spoon told me and of the truth of which he was fully convinced. A traveller died under the great fig-tree of Libombo (near Rikatla). He had climbed on to the tree and fallen on his own stick, which he had planted in the ground. He was not buried, as no one knew him. So his corpse fell into decomposition on the spot; his skull became white. Later on a bush fire burnt all the grass and the skull was
764 seen for years "saying mpha" (it was shining), the teeth "saying bva" (descriptive
775 adverb, same meaning). One day the boys of Libombo went to pick wild figs from the tree and again saw the skull. Spoon was one of them. The fire had just passed
755 by again. "We beat it with our sticks and amused ourselves by rolling it over like a
789 ball. We did not know it was a human skull... When we got home we began to be
761 seized by the drunkenness of nuru, the disease of those who have killed a man. During the night we were delirious (hanta-hanteka), our eyes swelled and were full of exudations (malanga), the four of us, Tsukela, Tlabin, Sibakuze and myself. Next morning my uncle went to the fig-tree and saw that we had killed a man there! The medicine-man who understands the treatment of nuru, Dudela, who had been a slayer in war, called us to his village. We stood in a line before him ; he poured a little of his powder into the hands of each one of us, took a little in his mouth, rubbed his forehead. Then he insulted us saying : "You will die! Who began beating that skull ?" Each of us denied having given the first blow. Then he said : "Take care! Do not go there any more nor near that akubla tree where another corpse has been burnt under the leaves! Go away."

514 When a man has murdered another in a scuffle, he can replace this nuru medicine
789 by his own urine. He must drink a little of it and rub his forehead with it. The
775 giddiness will pass away. If the murder has been committed from a distance, as with a gun, the nuru is not so much to be feared, as the enemy was far away. A little of
626 the medicine will be sufficient to treat the murderer. Spoon is ignorant of the composition of the nuru drug.
761

727 "hot" and from special plates (mireko) and broken pots. They are
783 forbidden to drink water. Their food must be cold. The chief
834 kills oxen for them (yi ba lumisa hi tihomu); but if the meat
761 were hot it would make them swell internally "because they are hot themselves, they are defiled (ba na nsila)." If they ate hot food, the defilement would enter into them. "They are black (ntima). This black must be removed" (Mankhelu). During all this time sexual relations are absolutely forbidden to them.
727 They must not go home to their wives. In former times the
304 Ba-Ronga used to tatoo them[1] with special marks from one eyebrow to the other. Dreadful medicines were introduced into the incisions and there remained pimples "which gave them the appearance of a buffulo when it frowns" (1).

789 After some days a medicine-man comes to purify them (ku ba
727 phutula), "to remove their black." There seem to be various
783 means of doing it, according to Mankhelu. Seeds of all kinds are put into a broken pot and roasted, together with drugs and *psanyi* of a goat. The slayers inhale the smoke which emanates from the pot. They put their hands into the mixture and rub their limbs with it (ba tilula) especially the joints.

789 Viguet describes this last act thus :—Pieces of medicinal roots
727 are put into the broken pot and roasted. They inhale the smoke.
782 Then cow's milk is poured into the pot on the embers and, when it boils, they have to put their fingers into it, one hand after the other, and pass them across their lips emitting the sacramental : "tsu" (which proves that it is a sacrifice to the gods, a religious act). Afterwards they say : "Phee! phee!" — viz., phephela phansi, (Dj. tikela hansi), "Go down, sink." This
789 means : "May you go deep into the earth, you, my enemy and
727 not come back to torment me." The last part of the treatment
789 consists in rubbing the biceps, the legs, and the whole body with this milk. The medicinal embers are carefully collected, and reduced to a powder ; this will be put into small bags of skin called *tintebe* which the slayer will wear round his neck. They contain

578 (1) Hence an expression which is still in common use. When a Ronga wants to defy some one he says to him : "You are a coward! If you say you can tackle me come and kiss my forehead."

[1] [Ba, the slayers returned from battle--Analyst]

789 the medicine of the slayers of men. At bukanye time they can
727 use it to *luma*, viz., to season the first calabash they drink (See
828 page 400). For this purpose it is as good as the great mbhulo,
783 "the medicine of the country," provided by the chief, and it will prevent them attacking their own people under the influence of drink. The *tintebe* will also be helpful in future battles. The insanity which threatens those who shed blood might begin early. So, on the battle-field itself, just after their deed, warriors are given a preventive dose of the medicine by those who have killed on previous occasions and who wear tintebe.

789 The period of seclusion having been concluded by the final
783 purification, all the implements (mizilo) used by the slayers
727 during these days, and their old garments, are tied together and hung by a string to a tree, at some distance from the capital, where they are left to rot (1).

Having reached their homes, the slayers have still to complete the cure by chewing a piece of root called monungwane every morning and evening, and spitting it out in the direction of the rising or the setting sun with the same exclamation : "Phee! phee!" — "Go down, sink!" The piece of root is tied to the assagay (2).

727 The description of the rites performed for the treatment of the slayers
828 applies especially to the Northern clans. But the following narrative
789 of an old man named Makhani from the Rikatla region shows that
783 similar customs were also in existence amongst the Ba-Ronga. This man had wounded an enemy in a battle ; the wound proved fatal and the

(1) I had the good luck to find those which were used for the purification of the slayers after the Mooudi fight during the Sikororo war and they are now in the Ethnographical Museum of Neuchâtel. They consist of half a dozen old calabashes, a pair of sandals, etc.

171 (2) Purification customs for the warriors are somewhat different amongst the Pedis. After the Mooudi battle, the slayers of Maaghe's yimpi had to undergo the following medicinal treatment : the heart of the slain having been torn out, the muscles of their faces sliced off, their limbs amputated, all these portions of human flesh mixed with drugs and ox-flesh were cooked in a pot, the assagais being used to stir the horrible broth. This was poured into a flat basket which it is taboo to touch ; some one drew it with a curved assagay as far as the middle of the square. Then the slayers, having been previously white-washed with clay, advanced on their knees, and, with vociferations or cries imitating vultures, caught a piece of meat in their teeth, not touching it with their hands. Their wives are said to participate in this meal, as being also contaminated by the defilement of their glorious husbands.

727 enemy died later on, after his return to his home. Makhani did not
828 know this. One day he became suddenly delirious and rushed about
789 all over the village trying to stab his own people. "Oho!" said those
783 who saw him, "it is because the man he wounded has died!" They at once called the magician who possessed the muru medicine, a man of the Mapsanganye clan, who came with his calabash. In this calabash there was a carved stick cut from a tree called shiralala, the extremity of which must always remain plunged in the medicine. The magician dipped this stick into a mixture made of honey and the drug, and passed it over the lips of Makhani, who seized it with his tongue, sucking it as the magician moved it from right to left, and licking his lips. A drop of the medicine was then put into each ear, on each upper eye-lid, and below the sternum. He was then cured and, taking a lighted torch, he threw it in the direction of the enemy's country with threatening words : "A ba fe, bafo, ba bola i. e. Let them die, the enemies, let them rot. I will kill still others!" Every day he had to go to the pool and wash his body, treating himself with the tintebe powder.

727 During the weeks following the battle heroes do not only
301 wear the tintebe, besides these miluru amulets, they have the
703 right to wear certain trophies. These are in the first place
534 antelope or goat's horns pierced at the base ; they thread a string through the hole thus made and tie them round their necks (See illustrations, p. 33 and 453). They also make necklaces of small pieces of wood, notched in a peculiar manner and burnt in the fire ; a hole is made through these and they are strung together like beads and worn round the neck. Sometimes these necklaces are made so long that they are worn as a bandoleer. I recollect seeing the Matjolo warriors returning from their expedition of February 1895: they came to show themselves off to the Whites at Lourenço Marques, gloriously proud of having massacred defenceless women and children whom they had surprised in the early hours of the morning! People threw them pieces of silver which they converted into brandy! (1)

727 (1) The terrible malediction which rests on those who have killed an enemy
775 is well illustrated by the following story which the Rev. C. Maphophe told me of an
event that had taken place not long ago in the Shishongi country (Manyisa district).
761 A man of the Ndzindzi family had killed a Ndjso during one of Gungunyana's expedi-

J. SOME REMARKS ABOUT WAR RITES.

177 726 The war rites of the Thongas, whatever may be their origin — and they seem to be a mixture of old Thonga and new Zulu customs, — form a very interesting and complete whole.

The most noticeable are the *national rites*. In war time, the very 643 existence of the clan is threatened, because the chief, the central and 726 vital cell of this organism, is in danger. Hence the readiness of all the warriors to answer to the first call of the *shipalapala*, and to gather 829 round him, "building the circle," which protects him, the whole clan forming a single village and binding itself by the striking ceremonies of *guba* and by patriotic songs, to die for him. Notice that most of the *guba* songs extol the chief. All these customs in which the individual or collective courage is stimulated, the *guba* and the *gila*, are national or social rites directed towards the salvation of the clan. They owe their origin to the national idea.

But war also brings dangers to every warrior. Hence the *protective* rites of sprinkling the mukhumbi with the war-medicine of the clan, or of giving each man some of it to swallow. The rite is inspired by the notion *similia similibus curantur*, the idea being that the warrior, having eaten a small portion of the enemy, will become invulnerable to his blows.

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727 775 761 tions (before 1890). Three persons of that family died. The bones were consulted and the diviner asked : "Have you not slain a Ndjao?" They answered: "Yes." — "Then," said the bone-thrower "you will all die as this man has followed you." The bones showed that, in order to avoid the destruction of their family, the Ndzindzis had to offer a girl to the ghost of the slain, a living sacrifice. This girl would not be allowed to marry, or even to be courted by boys. Should she have relations with a man it would be necessary to replace her by another. Thus the angry ghost would be propitiated.

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829 life, become taboo. This period of fighting seems really to be
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It is so par excellence *for the warriors* and I think that many of the rites imposed upon them are to be explained in this way. As we saw, the period of margin is generally preceded by separation rites. (See page 74.) Some of these, which are very characteristic, are performed when the army starts: the leave-taking from the General with wild shouts, the custom of swallowing a piece of meat without touching it with the hands and taking an emetic afterwards, that of jumping over the ntjhopfa branch, the medicine of oblivion! etc. The triumphant return, the partaking of the meat of the oxen which have been taken, may be the aggregation ceremonies, viz., the acts by which the warriors return to their ordinary life.

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See, as a conclusion to Part III, Practical Conclusions, No. VI: "The New era and the Future of the South African Tribe."

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727 took great offence at a man who dared to touch his food, as the man was living in his home and had relations with his wife. The slayer was afraid that this contact might cause his own death or bring misfortune to his family.

843 remove the blood. The Thongas think that, as the menses are suspended, the blood accumulates in the body and must be taken away.

Pregnancy is not considered as a tabooed period. As we have just seen, sexual relations are allowed during that time, even recommended as favourable to the growth of the child. However, in view of the impending birth, some special taboos have been added to those which apply to all women.

A pregnant woman *must not drink water when standing up*. She must kneel down, otherwise the water would fall violently on the head of the child and hurt it!

843 It is taboo for her to *wrap her body* in too much clothing.
845 She must keep her belly bare and never throw her dress (kapulane) over her shoulders, lest the baby come to the light with its head covered with membranes, a complication which is very much dreaded by Thonga women.

She must not take *the sauce* of her porridge *too hot*. The child might be scalded inside and have black spots when born.

It is also taboo to *prepare the ntche before the birth*, as no one knows what will happen. The child might die!

843 The future mother must not eat *pigeon's meat*, because pigeons
825 have no blood in the muscles of their breast. She would have no milk herself wherewith to nurse the baby. Nor must she even *look at a monkey*, lest she "take to herself" (tekela) the form of the animal and the child be like it!

A woman, in the beginning of pregnancy, must not visit a sick person. The latter might die.

843 As regards women dying during pregnancy, see page 166.

766 *Miscarriages* are very much feared amongst South Africans,
731 not for themselves, but because they are accompanied by an
789 uncontrolled effusion of a blood which is a terrible taboo. The discharged foetus must be buried in wet soil, otherwise the rain
826 will not fall: the country having been polluted will be dried up by hot winds. A strange rite called *mbelele* is performed in times of drought, when all the graves of children born prematurely and buried on the hill are searched, and their contents thrown into the mud, near the river. We shall discuss in Part VI the

C. SUNDRY COURT CUSTOMS

644 The paraphernalia of royalty are very modest in the Thonga courts. However there are some to be mentioned in addition to the regalia which I have described.

1. *The Big Drum* (Muntshintshi).

644 534 237 This is found in every capital, even sometimes in the sub-chief's villages. It is made of a hollowed-stem, somewhat like an ordinary mortar; or it may be rounded, and even provided with three legs, as in Nondwane; a piece of skin is stretched over the opening. This may be the skin of an elephant's ear, of a buffalo, of an ox or of an antelope *mangulwe*. This instrument is subject to some taboos; when the skin cracks, it is forbidden to look inside. There is something mysterious about it and nobody must disclose that mystery. People say that a bullet is introduced into it when it is made. In Shiluvane they asserted that the skull of the hostile chief, Sikororo, killed in the battle of Nov. 1901, had been put into the big drum! At any rate, there is a special individual who is summoned to repair it and he receives a fowl as reward.

644 534 731 202 The big drum is beaten on various occasions:

a) To announce a great fatality, especially the death of a chief, or the day of the publication of the mourning; also the approach of the inundation, when the Nkomati river rises, in January or February, and threatens to cover the whole land; again when the bush fire threatens to destroy the capital.

b) To summon warriors to the capital in case of imminent war.

644 534 c) To execute various musical performances. The big drum leads a special dance (nkino), which takes place at the capital during the winter, when the harvest is ended, and the country happy and prosperous. It is accompanied by a smaller drum (shikolombane) which is called the "son" of the big one. The

rite may explain why sexual relations are prohibited during all 226
important hunting and fishing operations. With their magic 825
conception of Nature, Bantus do not separate the domain of man 834
from the animal world ; human actions have their immediate effect amongst animals. So if men and women keep strict control over themselves, hippopotami, fish or elephants will not be so wild, and hunters will have more success!

*
* *

Meat is either boiled (pseka), or roasted (wosha). When 252
boiled, the broth is called *muru*, (Ro.) or *sheshebo*, (Dj.) the same name that is given to monkey nut sauce or any other seasoning. When roasted, it is either placed on the embers, or skewered on sticks (lihanga) and exposed to the heat of the fire.

The blood of animals (bubendje) is also eaten by most men. 262
However, many fear it (tshaba), not on account of a yila, as if it were taboo, but rather from individual loathing. There are no special laws to be observed as regards bones. The meat of sacrifices, offered in the funeral rites, must be eaten *on the road*, not in the mortuary nor in the guests' villages, as we have already seen.

Meat is welcome, and eagerly sought after in time of famine 262
(ndlala). Should the October rains fail, or the crops be destroyed 731
by grasshoppers, as has been, alas, frequently the case since the [136]
first appearance of these pests in August 1894 (1), the Natives are bereft of every resource (2). They dig up all the edges of the

(1) Just at the commencement of the war between the Natives and the Portuguese, grasshoppers arrived in thick clouds in the district of Lourenço Marques. They had not been seen for a great number of years: old folk only recollected having seen them in bygone times. Since then the scourge has never entirely disappeared. The coincidence of their coming and the beginning of hostilities struck the Blacks very forcibly; they often said, at the sight of the grasshoppers: "They announce the armies of Gungunyana."

(2) Here is a pretty couplet with reference to famine:

Nkondjo wa nhlengana shipopokwana ?

— Lembe ra ndlala a he ngume kusuhe !

The traces of the little antelope (nhlengana) (which one sees in the desert a long way from its lair) recall the year of famine, when one does not stay near home ; (one must go a long way to search for food). See also the several allusions to the year of famine in *Les Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, p. 158, 160 et seq.

262 lakes, to find the tubers of the nenuphars (Nymphea stellata), and
731 cook these indigestible roots (matibu). They have also gone so far as to make flour of the pith of the palm trees (mimale). They disinter the bodies of dead animals, or cram themselves with *masala*, which often engenders serious vomiting. Some eat big Copris beetles.

Such famines were frequent in former times, and special years are still known as having been years of *ndlala*. So, in the chronology of Shinangana (Part IV) the year 1875 (?) was called "the year of the Magadingele famine." On the Coast the Goñhwen famine is still remembered (1). The proximity of a seaport which is easily provisioned, and the possibility of earning money wherewith to buy rice and maize constitute a real advantage which Natives are the first to recognise. In this respect civilisation has rendered signal service to the Thonga commissariat!

266 (1) It does not appear that starvation ever induced Thongas to practise cannibalism on any considerable scale. Cases are known of this happening as when, during the war of 1895, a Ronga killed a man and ate his lungs and kidneys quite raw. He was prosecuted and deported to Mozambique. In the mountains, the Ba-Pedi and Ba-Sutho began to consume human flesh after the raids of Chaka and his generals. They first ate the corpses; then, having acquired a taste for this food, they began to attack travellers, springing out from the caves in the mountains, where they were hiding; they even made organised expeditions in search of men to devour. These cannibals are known by the name of Makhema and caused the Queen of the Bokhaha, Male, to change her residence (I. p. 477).

reach heaven. The magician, seeing the thunderstorm approaching, climbs up the hill without any fear, blows in his flute: psee... psee... psee..., and shouts: "You! Heaven! Go further! I have nothing against you! I do not fight against you!" He may add in a threatening tone: "If you are sent by my enemies against me, I will cut you open with this knife of mine." The thunderstorm will then pass away! 821 791 789

This invocation to Heaven is curious, and we shall better understand it when studying the part played by Heaven in Thonga religion. Here I am merely considering the superstition as an attempt at explaining a natural phenomenon. And we may well ask: how is it possible for such absurdities to be believed, and firmly believed, by men who are not at all devoid of a sense of observation? The idea that lightning is a bird comes perhaps from the fact that its movements in falling from above resemble the evolutions of a bird in the air. After all the phenomenon is so sudden that this explanation could easily be accepted by the imagination of the savage. As regards the statements about the coagulated urine of the bird, I must admit that I was unable to understand on what they could be based, until I saw some samples of fulgurites found where lightning had struck the ground; the heat of the electric current vitrifies the sand, forming a kind of pipe, which enters the soil, where it ramifies to a certain depth. These fulgurites, though not perfectly answering to the description given by Native magicians, may have been the natural substratum upon which Bantu imagination built up all the other superstitions. 821

5) The problem of rain and the way Thongas deal with it.

All over the earth the question of rainfall is of primary importance, but this is especially the case in Subtropical Africa, even more than anywhere else. Rain may not fall during seven months, from April to October, and nobody worries about it. But if it fails in November and December, at the beginning of the rainy season, it is a dreadful misfortune, a calamity more serious 132 731 789

132 than any other. The life of every individual, and consequently
731 of the whole clan, is threatened. Famine will certainly follow,
789 as cereals can only be sown during these two months and famine means not only suffering and anguish, but often death, in a primit.ve tribe which is totally ignorant of trade with out-lying countries, and does not possess any means of conveyance for food bought in other lands. No wonder therefore that the imagination of the South African Native has invented ways and means of regularising the rainfall, and that rites, and charms, and all the powers of magic have been resorted to with a view to ensuring the precious rain to the tribe at the right time.

789 These methods may be classified in two categories : the rites which aim at removing the causes which are believed to prevent rain and the charms by which the rain is made to fall, irrespective of any preventing cause.

a) *The causes which prevent rainfall and the rites by which they are removed.*

821 The general view is that rain comes *from the gods* : "Psikwembu
789 psi nisa mpfula" — "the spirits of the ancestors cause rain to fall."
782 So, should the spring showers not come in due time, the first idea will be to offer a sacrifice to the ancestor-gods, especially if the bones consulted have revealed that the anger of the gods is the real
[533] cause. Men will go to the sacred wood where the ancestors have been buried, sing there an ancient mourning song (I suppose No. 15, page 286, is used for the purpose), and some of them will beat the graves with sticks. As regards the sacrifice, it consists of a black victim, or it may even be the offering of a living human being to the gods ; these rites will be described later on.

Or it may be that a certain individual, *a wizard*, endowed with magical power, or rather possessing enchanted drugs, prevents the rain from falling (a siba mpfula) through wickedness, or hatred of his countrymen. This is a rarer occurrence.

100 But the terrible calamity of drought is brought into direct

judged before the Court, in the capital, because the offender has refused to follow the way of persuasion, he has "mocked the family love" (a yalile bushaka). Such misdemeanours are very frequent in the life of the village. Most of the Natives bear philosophically with these annoyances. Should some one, however, be really ill-natured, and wear out their patience (wa ku karata), he will be forced to build a hut for himself, alone, outside the village. If the damage is done by *children*, if they have stolen sweet potatoes, as we have seen, the wronged proprietor gives them a good thrashing but does not claim a fine. Occasionally the headman himself thrashes them in presence of their father, and the father will say to them: "You see the numzane will beat you if you are not good." Children who mock at cripples are also severely beaten by him, all the more so as, in this case, the offended party has the right of claiming a fine.

3) The headman also possesses *authority over his younger brothers and his children*. He can even confiscate their money if one of them is addicted to drinking and ruins his property. However his authority in this respect must not be overstepped, and the headman must take care how he exercises it, as it is based more or less on sufferance. The younger brothers, for instance, maintain the right of making contracts, especially lobola contracts. Should the numzane restrict their liberty too much, they will leave him and found their own villages. A successful headman is he who knows how to keep the whole family together to the general satisfaction.

4) The headman has also the right of imposing *statute labour*, especially when the oxen kraal must be rebuilt, or when the weeds must be removed from the hubo ; he sends his young men to do the work. But he must not exact too much from his people or forget to feast them with beer or with meat when the work is finished.

5) Lastly the headman *presides over all the discussions* which take place in the village. He is the master of the hubo. The discussion can be conducted in three different places ; when it deals with a secret matter, the men go *inside the hut* : they debate the matter indoors (ba bulabula ndlwen). Private questions

PRACTICAL CONCLUSIONS

I. On Alcoholism and the South African tribe. (See p. 46)

The craving of the Bantu of South Africa for alcohol is by no means a result of civilisation. The race, being of a weak character, has always given way to drunkenness. Deprived of true religious and moral principles, it was exposed, as all primitive races are, to the excesses of that dangerous passion. The beer-drinking parties are as old as the tribe itself, or at any rate, as ancient as the introduction of cereals! 733

But it must be confessed that civilisation has developed this natural instinct to a terrible degree. In former times, Natives were able to get intoxicated from time to time, the chiefs more frequently than their subjects, owing to the shirwalo taxation (I. p. 405). But the brewing took nine days, and in the meantime the inmates of the village were obliged to keep sober. Now all that is changed. Where the law does not prohibit the sale of liquor to Natives, they can buy as much as they like at all times; some of them are therefore constantly under the influence of drink as long as they have money to purchase it, and the progressive alcoholisation of the entire population is already to be observed. I lived for many years in a Colony where there is no liquor law. Formerly German rum was sold all over the country by thousands of flagons, and I even saw children drinking it with avidity, although they shivered whilst swallowing the deadly drug! Later on it was prohibited and replaced by what is called "Vinho colonial", which, however, was no great improvement. According to the late E. Torre do Valle, a great friend of the Ba-Ronga, who strongly deprecated this liquor trade, it is an adulterated mixture in which tobacco, India-pepper, etc. are used to give pungency to the taste, and containing but little natural wine. When a White man enters an upcountry store and wants something to drink, the Banyan who retails this mixture from three barrels standing on the end of the counter, refuses to serve him with it, saying: "This is for Natives and not for White men". Round Lourenço Marques there are hundreds of such bars, and although the Authorities have tried to diminish their number, the drunkenness in the Native Location is terrible and almost incredible in extent. Let the visitor go on Saturday night or Sunday along the avenues of Majlanganen (I. p. 206), where the galvanised iron stores extend without interruption in all directions, and observe the women, men, youngsters dancing on the road in front of the

733 bars, falling on the ground, spending their last penny to get drink beneath the eyes of the amused storekeeper, and he will realise what the unrestricted sale of drink to the Blacks means. It is simply horrible to contemplate ; morally it is a most reprehensible, economically a most deplorable, physically a most dangerous state of things. I shall not deal here with the moral side of the question ; let us merely consider what is the effect of this liquor trade on the health and on the economic future of the Black race.

1) There can be no doubt that it *kills* hundreds of Natives. Whatever stamina the race may possess, it cannot long resist the deadly effects of an inferior, unwholesome type of liquor absorbed in such enormous quantities. Coffee must be *kweba*, drunk in sips, but wine according to Natives, must be *nwa*, viz., drunk "à plein gosier" like water ! We saw the young chief Shongele, heir of the Klosen clan, son of Magudju, die a miserable death from delirium tremens, and many other chiefs and sub-chiefs followed his example. For years they led a disgusting life, half drunk all the time, no longer able to preside over the tribal court, or to govern their people, having entirely lost the dignity of manner and the sense of position which was so remarkable amongst Bantu rulers, clapping their hands and abjectly entreating the White visitor to give them *sope* (the Native name for brandy).

[164] Hand in hand with drunkenness goes immorality, and immorality as practised in that hell means the unchecked propagation of syphilis. According to medical authority, ninety per cent of the Natives round the town of Lourenço Marques are now contaminated. The girls who come on Saturday to sell their produce in the market and sleep two nights in the Native town, give themselves, for a few pence, to one of the hundreds of boys working on the wharf, and thus propagate the disease in the interior, and all this means the rapid destruction of a race which was made for life, and has great possibilities before it.

During the war of 1894, a merchant in the town of Lourenço Marques said to me cynically : "The Natives are a nuisance ! Let them be given as much alcohol as they want and we shall soon get rid of them."

2) Alcohol will kill the Black race in the long run. It is already *ruining the kafir trade*. Those who uphold the liquor traffic, in order to increase the Revenue of the Colony, ought to obtain the opinion of the traders who do not deal in liquor. These merchants, who try to create new wants, to develop a healthy and useful trade amongst Natives, in a word to civilise them, would testify that selling strong drink to the Natives prevents their buying anything else. The craving for

alcohol is such that they spend all their money on it and no longer care for clothing, better food, ploughs, live stock, etc. The *consuming power* of the Black race as regards European goods, which might become enormous, is thus curtailed ; and at the same time its capacity for work is destroyed. When drink was allowed to be sold in the Compounds of Johannesburg, the Mine Managers soon found that a third of their Black workers were constantly in a state of intoxication and unfit to go down into the mine. So the sale was happily stopped, not so much on moral as on purely practical grounds. 733

So, if we study the question seriously, we are forced to the conclusion that total prohibition of European liquor, and any similar product, is the one chance of salvation for the Natives. I know of only two classes of people who would oppose this conclusion : the liquor traders — whose judgment is not disinterested — and some educated Natives, and negrophiles, who resent any colour legislation and think such prohibition an insult to the Black race. There is no need to reply to the former. Let them consider the heavy responsibility which they incur when they enrich themselves by slowly killing a primitive, childish race which has not enough moral force to resist the danger ! To the second I would say : "Even if some of you have in reality attained that moral status in which you can use and not abuse your liberty, you must confess that your race, as a whole, has not yet reached this level. A great number of the best Native Christians have fallen irretrievably and been lost owing to the passion for drink ; how much more defenceless are the rank and file, raw heathen or weak Christians ! Accept the testimony of facts and recognize that the Black race, just emerging from savagery, is still in a state of moral infancy and must be treated with great consideration. Later on, let us hope, the time will come when it will have grown in strength and moral vigour, and no legal restrictions will be required."

As regards *Native drinks*, the use of *byala*, strong beer, is generally prohibited in Christian Congregations. Some Missions also exclude light beer, *buputju*, whilst some (amongst them the Swiss Romande Mission) allow it. *Buputju* proper, the Suto *leting*, is not very objectionable, containing but little alcohol ; but I have already pointed out the great difficulty of establishing a clear line of demarcation between buputju and byala. Our experience is that Native Christians readily approve the prohibition of byala... but, after a while, they begin to brew a buputju which is almost the equivalent of it, and the morality of their congregations sinks in proportion to the increase of alcohol in

733 their drink. So, in a Synod held in Shiluvane in 1908, the question was earnestly discussed during a whole day. The following were the confessions made by the delegates "We have deceived our leaders! What we drink is byala, and not buputju! We ourselves, the elders, are drinking and leading the others into temptation ; thus we give strength to the beer. The beer is the hyena. It kills the soul ! It kills the work of salvation! Let it die once for all, the wild beast. Let a knife be provided to cut the throat of the wild beast", viz., let strict regulations be adopted to prevent drunkenness in the Church.

When Natives arrive at such a conviction of the danger of alcohol for their race, and take up such a position in regard to their own beer, should not we Whites be greatly to blame if we increased their difficulties by providing them with European drinks which are ten times more dangerous for them!

At the International Conference on Alcoholism which took place in Geneva, 1st to 3d September 1925, regulations for the Colonies were discussed and I had the honour of putting forward the following suggestions, especially as regards Mozambique ; they were supported by Gen. A Freire d'Andrade, the Portuguese delegate to this Conference.

"The ideal would be total prohibition of any foreign alcoholic liquor, as Natives already possess sufficient national drinks. If, however, it is felt to be impossible to adopt such a radical measure at the present time, the following restrictions are suggested, bearing on two categories of drinks, imported drinks and those manufactured in the Colony.

First Category. Imported drinks.

a) Prohibition of importation and sale of all *distilled* liquors.

b) Prohibition of adulterated wines, prepared for Native consumption (trade spirits, vinho colonial).

c) Compulsory analysis of all *fermented* drinks offered for sale and prohibition of all those which contain more than 12 % of alcohol and of those which are of a harmful character.

Second Category. Drinks manufactured in the Colony.

a) Prohibition of distillation of any liquors destined for consumption, whether manufactured by European or Native processes.

b) Periodical examination by the Sanitary Service of the Colony of all fermented drinks manufactured by Europeans or Natives, and prohi-

bition of those which are prejudicial to public health, whether on account of a too high percentage of alcohol, on account of their mode of manufacture, or on account of the physical and moral disorders which they produce." 733

These proposals were favourably received by the Committee for the Colonies, but no vote was taken on details, only a general resolution being passed. It is clear that these recommendations are intended for the whole Native population. In the domain of the Church we should go much further, as pointed out above.

II. On the Problem of Native Education.

The study which we have made of the Bantu Intellect in Part V has paved the way for a consideration of this great question, which is one of the most important features of the Native problem in South Africa. 871 177-87

The wild buffalo has been made prisoner! A yoke has been placed on its neck. — The savage mind of the Bantu is now being trained to civilised methods, and the Elementary School gathers in the goatherds of the bush, all over South Africa. More than 220,000 children are attending a course of instruction. The wild buffalo has bowed its neck to the yoke with wonderful readiness! It is one of the promising features of the present situation of the Black race that it has so quickly accepted the school. This acceptance proves its vitality; it understands that the acquisition of knowledge is, for it, the only way of adapting itself to altered circumstances. So, though primary education has nowhere yet been made compulsory, children are leaving their flocks and learning reading, writing, and arithmetic. This phenomenon is universal, and is to be observed not only in the towns, where big boys of twenty or thirty years of age crowd to the evening schools, patiently writing letters on slates with clumsy fingers, but in the most remote parts of the country, wherever a missionary or a Native teacher opens a school.

This spread of instruction is bound to have great results for the future of the race, and its intellectual development; it is therefore of the utmost importance that rational and wise methods should be adopted in the conduct of this work, in order to help rather than injure the Bantu mind. Unfortunately it cannot be said that such has always been the case in past times. To avoid mistakes and errors I beg to put forward the following suggestion as to the first principle of Native Education.

000 smoke, and rub the incisions with the powder. They will then be able to aim straight (See Annotatio 15). The powder specially prepared from the tendons of slain enemies will be spread on the paths during future wars ; foes marching on it unknowingly will suddenly become unable to walk and will easily be killed.

The Zulus are said to have the same customs as the Pedis.

726 I cannot guarantee that all the Thonga clans observe all these
789 customs.[1] The Nkuna magicians, in olden times, before they were
278 influenced by their Pedi neighbours, used to dissect the tendons
751 of the back (riringa) of the slain enemy, which they smeared
826 with his medulla and hung to the shields of the warriors... Enemies seeing these shields would "tjemeka nhlana" — "have their backs broken," a figurative expression which means to be terror stricken. A part of the body was also preserved and mixed with the war-medicine ; the idea which underlies this custom being evidently this : when you have eaten the flesh of your enemies, you have absorbed all their strength and they are unable to do you any further harm (1). We have seen that the "mbhulo," the "nyokwekulu," all the powerful "medicines of the country" carefully kept in each clan, contain a little human flesh. These drugs are used as protective war medicines ; most probably owing to the same principle.

II. *The treatment of the slayers.*

727 To have killed an enemy on the battle-field entails an immense
775 glory for the slayers ; but that glory is fraught with great danger.

266 (1) This custom is the only remnant of anthropophagy remaining amongst the Thongas, and I wonder if this superstition is not the true explanation of the origin of cannibalism. Where cannibalism still prevails, as amongst the Faß of the Congo, I am told that the bodies eaten are generally those of hostile clans, or occasionally that of a wife (who belongs to another clan according to the laws of exogamy). Is it not probable that, in the beginning, these feasts had a ritual and military value similar to that which we find in the administering of the war-medicine in South African tribes? In the course of time, the Faß acquired a taste for human flesh and ate it for their own pleasure. Dealing with anthropophagy, I must not forget that it occurred in several instances in South Africa after the devastation brought about by the Zulu expeditions of 1820-1830. In Zoutpansberg, in the mountains of Drakensberg, Natives reduced to starvation began to eat their fellow men. This also happened in the Bokhakha during the reign of Queen Male. (See Part IV.)

1[See pp. 476-477 -- Analyst]

PRACTICAL CONCLUSIONS

I. ON THE RITES OF INFANCY (P. 36-61).

853 The rule that a mother "must plough for her child three hoes" is
545 excellent. It is undoubtedly a splendid preparation for future life to
177 have been fed during three years on mother's milk. Will it be possible to maintain this law under the new conditions of civilized life which are being adopted more and more throughout the tribes? Let us notice that this provision, though it was inspired partly in the interest of the child itself, is dictated mainly by a superstition concerning the lochia secretion, which is regarded as highly noxious and as keeping the mother in an unclean state for a long time. This superstition will not withstand the test of science and will pass away. On the other hand, polygamy was invented and flourishes partly on account of this law. A husband separated from the wife who is nursing a child wishes to have other women at his disposal. Polygamy is doomed to pass also. For both these reasons, it is to be feared that this healthy custom will not be maintained in the future. This is a pity, and we ought to do our best to encourage its continuance.

843 Many young married Natives leave their homes and go to Johannes-
177 burg to the mines for one or two years as soon as they see that their wife is pregnant. This is certainly on account of the above rule; but this desertion of the conjugal home is hardly to be approved.

164 As regards the whole medical treatment characteristic of this period,
751 which is considered more or less as a disease, it has no value at all.
177 The big intestinal worm is, of course, merely a product of Native imagination. The children sometimes suffer from lombrics, but not more than white children. Convulsions are frequent as a result of malaria and dysentery, and neither the ever present *milombyana* nor the

l: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

164 bi-monthly *biyeketa* nor the powder of the reed can do anything to
751 prevent them. The habit of always carrying water in the calabash and
177 of never emptying it entirely is harmful. Dr Garin, our medical missionary, examined some of these milombyana calabashes with the microscope and found them full of bacteria of all kinds. It is a splendid *milieu de culture* for them. This milombyana custom is however hard to eradicate as the principle is deeply rooted in the Thonga mind : "The child grows by means of medicine" and even Christian converts respect it. They will relinquish it when a clearer notion of medical science has entered their heads — a time which is still remote, I fear!

000 From the missionary point of view, let us notice the analogy between the rite of the broken pot and Christian baptism as administered to children by most of the Churches. Natives readily accept a ceremony of benediction for the little ones, be it baptism proper or presentation with laying on of hands. But the heathen baptism is a baptism of smoke, and not of water — and is in relation to merely external dangers, while the Christian rite represents the purification of the soul from its sin and the new and pure life. Whatever may be the difference between the two customs, we find in the animistic rite a point of analogy which may help us to explain the spiritual sacrament and its deep significance.

II. ON CIRCUMCISION (See p. 94).

177 What judgment are we to pass on this custom to which some tribes
797 still cling with great pertinacity ? The teaching of endurance and of hunting has certainly some value, but these rites as a whole have very little worth and are useless in the new economy of South Africa. The obcene language allowed during the Ngoma certainly tends to pervert the mind of the boys and constitutes an immoral preparation for sexual life.

Have we nothing to learn from the Ngoma ? More than two hundred thousand children of black South Africa are now attending our schools... more or less regularly. Hundreds of young men are boarding in our Normal Institutions. Do we always succeed in this great educational work ? Its results are not entirely satisfactory, because most of the children do not stay long enough in the school to be properly taught. As soon as they have acquired some knowledge of reading and writing, they leave and go to the towns to earn money.

refused to communicate his secret. He belonged to the Chopi tribe. The Ba-Pedi forbid sexual relations to lepers. 757

A nursing woman who has no milk must take a certain Euphorbiacea shrub called *nete*, containing a milky juice, crush it in the mortar, cook it in water and drink it. When a cow refuses to feed her calf Natives smear the calf with the *ribvumbara* herb, which has a pleasant odour. The cow smells this, and allows the calf to suck. 853

The treatment of *sterility* has already been described (I. p. 190) Mankhelu tried to cure it by digging a root of *Nembe-nembe* and one of *Nhlangowume* ; he cooked both together, and ordered the woman to eat them during a period of six days, mixing them with her food. This drug was considered as "closing her" (pfala), so that she would no longer have her "tihweti, "and thus be enabled to conceive. In the meantime, she had to undergo the horola or hondlola rite, which I shall describe presently. 842 278

Small-pox, nyedzane, was on several occasions introduced by the Whites, or by the Zulu armies on their return from their Northern raids. There have been at least five or six epidemics in the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques during the last fifty years. 164

I had the opportunity of witnessing the last in 1918 in Rikatla and thus obtained first-hand information on the way Natives treat this disease and on their strange ideas concerning it. I published a detailed account of these in the S. A. *Journal of Science*, July 1919, and will give here a description of the most important of these *customs connected with small-pox amongst the Ba-Ronga*. When small-pox has invaded the country and reached the borders of the territory of a clan, the headmen assemble at the chief's residence and decide to proceed to the general inoculation of the population. This is a remedy which they have long been accustomed to use. They have noticed that the disease is milder when produced by inoculation with the virus than when it *hahela*, i. e. flies to the person. (There is some truth in this assertion ; the protection afforded however is not very effective, and severe and even fatal cases often follow the inoculation. It does not always secure immunity from a second attack.) The virus is provided by the people of a neighbouring clan who have already been attacked by 751

751 the disease, and it is the *batukulu* of the chief, his nephews, the sons of his sisters, who are sent to procure it. Are they not the favourites of their maternal uncle? (I. p. 222). Nobody could suspect them of bringing misfortune into the village of their *bakokwana*! The particular ntukulu who must render this service to the country is designated by the bones. The bones also indicate the village of the neighbouring clan to which he must go to fetch the virus. The serous fluid is taken from old people or from children, who have no sexual intercourse ; we already know the reason for this. The ntukulu inoculates himself and his comrades and returns home ; when their pustules are ripe, they inoculate all the members of the clan who have not yet suffered [784] from the disease.[1] From this day begins for the whole clan a distinct marginal period, with all the taboos accompanying the critical phases of the life of the community. No one is allowed to wash his body. Absolute continence is imposed on all. Salt is prohibited, as it is said to make the blood flow more quickly in the body and it may cause the wounds to become sore.

164 But in addition to the ordinary taboos, some other measures are
751 taken which are dictated by the special nature of small-pox. This
755 disease, amongst Black people, manifests itself in two forms, which may be called the white and the black. The former is much milder than the latter. In it the pustules are large, superficial, scattered all over the body and well separated from each other ; the skin is discoloured over them and becomes whitish ; they soon dry up and do not leave deep marks. In the second form, which is the confluent and haemorrhagic type of the disease, the pustules are small, black, continuous with each other, and full of blood ; they soon discharge a nasty fluid ; fever is high and death may intervene.
751 The whole aim of the treatment is to promote the mild, white form
755 of small-pox and to prevent the black form. It is therefore taboo to eat any meat containing blood, which is black and must therefore be avoided. On the contrary, fish meat is allowed because it is white and contains no dark blood. Another device of Native doctors to obtain this result is to place before the eyes of their patients grains of mealies, which are white like the desired pustules and are also similar to them in form, and to prevent their

[1] [Small-pox--analyst]

846 As regards *the child*, the umbilical cord is anointed every day ;
853 he begins to take the breast and drink the "*milombyana*," the great medicine which we shall describe later on.

During these days many taboos must be observed :

The *husband* is not allowed to enter the hut on any pretext ; this is not on account of his being unclean, quite the contrary. A birth does not contaminate the father amongst the Ba-Thonga as it does in other tribes. He is not obliged to undergo any medication. His exclusion from the conjugal hut is due entirely to the fact that his wife is polluted by the blood of the lochia, and he would run the greatest danger to himself if he came near.

846 *All married people* are also excluded (bakhili) viz. all those
854 who have regular sexual intercourse. Should they touch the child, he would die. If however a woman wishes very much to go and see the new-born, she must abstain from relations with her husband during two days. Then she can be admitted into the hut. On the other hand young girls are welcome in the hut, but they must not kiss the baby during these first days. "It is not yet firm ; it is only water," as they say ; later on, when it begins to laugh and to play, they may kiss it. Even the father may do so then ; when he comes back from a journey, he holds it in his arms and kisses it on the temple. Supposing that the
846 umbilical cord has now fallen off normally, the confinement period will be at an end. This termination is marked by two rites.

The mother of the delivered woman will have *to smear with clay the floor of the hut*. This is the great cleansing act which brings to an end a marginal period. It takes away all the dangerous blood, and the husband as well as all the other dwellers in the village will be allowed to enter the hut.

846 The second act is *the rite of the broken pot* (ku tjibelela shi-
751 rengelen, viz. to make fire under the shirengele, the bit of broken
278 pot used for the purpose). This is a medical treatment and a
825 religious ceremony combined. It is performed by the family doctor on the threshold of the hut in the following way : he puts into this piece of broken pottery pieces of skin of all the beasts of the bush : antelopes, wild cats, elephants, hippopotami, rats, civet cats, hyenas, elands and snakes of dangerous kinds, and roasts

846 them till they burn. The smoke then rises, and he exposes the
751 child to it for a long time : the body, face, nose and mouth. The
825 baby begins to cry ; he sneezes, he coughs ; this is just what is
278 wanted. Then the doctor takes what remains of the pieces of
856 skin, grinds them, makes a powder, mixes it with *tihuhlu* (1) grease of the year before last and consequently hard enough to make an ointment. With this ointment he rubs the whole body of the child, especially the joints, which he extends gently in order to assist the baby's growth.

846 All this fumigation and manipulation is intended to act as a
751 preventive. Having been thus exposed to all external dangers,
853 dangers which are represented by the beasts of the bush, the child may go out of the hut. He is now able "to cross the foot prints of wild beasts" (tjemakanya mitila) without harm. Snakes will not bite him, at any rate their bite will not hurt him ; lions will not kill him. The remainder of the powder is put into a little bit of reed closed at both ends, which the mother has to carry with her during the whole nursing period in order to continue the treatment.

846 This rite of the broken pot is also the great preventive remedy
755 against the much dreaded ailment of babies, *convulsions*. If a
763 child suffers from this, they will say : "a tlalile shirengelen,"
821 viz. "he did not find any help in the broken pot" and the parents will go to another doctor whose drugs are more powerful, to have the child once more exposed to the smoke. It may even be that a grown-up man will undergo this treatment again, if he has been ill with convulsions, but, in this case, the broken pot with its pieces of skin is put on the head of the patient, which has been first covered with a wisp of cuscuta (hare dja yendjeyendje). The great aim of all the medication of children by the "milombyana" is also to fight against convulsions, as we shall see (2).

(1) The tihuhlu are the seeds of the nkuhlu tree known under the name of mafureira. They are oleaginous and the fat (mafura) obtained from them is very much used for external applications amongst the Thongas.

(2) In *Savage Childhood* p. 12, Dudley Kidd describes this "baptism of smoke" amongst Zulus. Some dirt is scraped from the father's body and is mixed with other drugs in order to impart to the child his ancestral spirit. Another ingredient

853 824 *neta* as a medecine. The shrub, which is an Euphorbiacea, contains milky sap. It is a treatment based on the principle : Similia similibus curantur.

751 278 753 854 The Thongas believe that milk alone would never suffice to make a child grow : *Ñwana a ku̱la hi miri, the child grows by medicine*, such is the adage which is universally met with. When you see a woman carrying a child on her back, you will notice hanging to the *ntehe* the reed (lihlanga) containing the black powder which protects against the dangers of the bush, and a little calabash half filled with water. This water is not pure water, it is the medicine called *milombyana*. This word is the plural and diminutive form of *nombo*, which means baby's ailment. There is a great *nombo*, convulsions, also called *tilo*, heaven, because this complaint is brought into a mysterious connection with the influence of Heaven (See Part VI). There is a small *nombo* ; this is the infantile diarrhea which so often troubles little children ; but both diseases are supposed to be caused by the *nyoka*, the intestinal parasite, the worm or snake (nyoka means both) which is in every child and must always be combated because, if unchecked, it will pass from the bowels to the stomach ; it will come and beat the fontanella (1) and will finally penetrate the chest. Then the little one will turn up his eyes, be seized by [278] convulsions and die. Happily there are some drugs which have a 751 wonderful effect on this dangerous guest ! One of my neighbours, 757 who was a convert in Rikatla, gave me their names. The first is a 854 very common Protacea (?) with large husks called the Dlanyoka, "the one which kills worms." Mixed with the roots of a Leguminacea called *Ñwamahlanga* and with two other plants found near the sea, it forces the worm to keep quiet. These drugs are boiled and the decoction is carefully poured into a special little pot called *hlembetwana ya milombyana* which will be kept in the hut. Every morning the mother will warm the pot a little, pour some of its contents into a shell of sala and give the child a

757 826 (1) Tjaba-tjaba, the fontanella, plays a great part in the diagnosis of children's doctors and they often cover it with black wax. When the child hiccoughs, his mother or somebody else will blow on the fontanella to prevent vomiting. This will "make his heart stand" (yimisa mbilu).

856 mouthful to drink, then dip her finger into the medecine and let
731 two or three drops fall from it on the fontanella ; then she spits on
757 the lower part of the shell and presses it all along the sternum
854 of the baby as far as the navel. This is said to "nurse the child, to make him grow." Should he be sick, this treatment will be repeated many times a day. If he is well and goes about with his mother, she will pour the *milombyana* into the small calabash and give him a few sups from it from time to time.

The child must never drink ordinary water, but only the
853 *milombyana* decoction. It is a taboo. Should the mother travel
271 far from home and leave behind her the *milombyana* pot, she is
2/84 allowed to add some water to the calabash, but she must always leave a little of the decoction in the calabash before doing so. The mother herself is not allowed to drink the water of another country. She must only drink water from home and, if she is forced to travel, she must take a little powder from the reed each time she drinks, so that the child may become familiarised with that country (1). These laws must be kept during all the nursing period.

862 The child begins to eat *solid food* as soon as his teeth are cut, and when he is able to take it with his own hands. But some people do not like to give it to him too soon, as they say his stools become fetid. When later on he is able to go outside and to take care of himself, then he can eat any ordinary food.

853 If the mother dies during the nursing period, the little one is almost sure to follow her. The baby is fed with goat's or cow's milk, but the Natives do not know that they must add water to it ; sooner or later therefore the child dies of enteritis.

I have heard of some cases in which another woman has taken charge of the child, nursed him with her own milk and weaned him successfully ; her own child being older, she weaned him earlier than the usual time and nursed the other child in his

261 (1) A similar custom is observed in the case of moving from one country to another.
4/84 When a Ronga comes back from Kimberley having found a wife there, both bring with them a little of the earth of the place they are leaving, and the woman must eat a little of it every day in her porridge in order to accustom herself to her new abode. This earth provides the transition between the two domiciles!

852 [854] permissible to push him gently by his elbows and 3) to sing him songs to console him (khongota) when he cries. This was taboo before the presentation to the moon.

There is another custom which seems to be confounded sometimes with the yandla. It is also performed for small children and is called : *kulakulisa*. When a friend of the family passes through the village coming from afar, from Johannesburg for instance, he takes the new-born child in his arms, throws him up and says : "Kula-kula-kula, u ya tlhasa Johan." (Grow, grow, grow and reach Johannesburg.) This is a minor custom (nau nyana) ; it is more or less play and is not tabooed like the yandla.

854 278 751 832 After the yandla, a new therapeutic agent is added to the decoction of milombyana, the *biyeketa*. *Ku biyeketa* means : "to put inside an enclosure." Twice a month during the afternoon, when the moon is new and when it is full, the family doctor goes to the kraal of the baby, he lights a fire before the door of the hut and cooks his medicines with water in a pot till they boil. Then he draws the embers to one side of the pot and lays on them a big pill, a *mhula*. The *mhula* is made of fat from an ox paunch or from a goat's paunch mixed with medicinal powder. Then he places a mat on end so as to make a small round enclosure : mother and baby enter it, and he covers them with a piece of cotton cloth. They expose themselves to the steam which comes from the pot and to the smoke which emanates from the mhula. When both have copiously perspired and the emanation has come to an end, the mother tells the doctor to uncover them, and they emerge from the vapour bath. Then the doctor cuts both of them with a razor on the forehead, on the sternum, on the spine between the shoulders, on the elbow, on the wrist, on the knees and introduces a little of his medicinal powder into the small wounds. The pot with the hot decoction is then taken by the doctor behind the hut, the mother accompanying him. She pours a little of the water into his hands : he spits into it, uttering the sound *tsu* (which is the sacramental act in ordinary worship) and throws it on the child. The mother rubs the whole body of the little one with it ; in the meantime the doctor prays to his gods, viz. the spirits of his ancestors. Begining with the formula of invocation which doctors

852 always use, he says: "Abušayi, akhwari! This is the child!
834 May he grow! May he become a man by means of this medicine
751 of mine! May his perspiration be good; may the impurity go away; may it go to Shiburi, to Nkhabelane! (1) May the child play well, be like his companions. This is not my first attempt! You have given me these drugs; may they protect him against disease so that nobody may say there is no power in them, etc." After this prayer the doctor takes the little child and goes back to the central place of the village. The mother stays and washes her own body with the decoction, praying also to her gods (but without the *tsu*, as this has been uttered by the "master of the drugs").

751 The treatment of the biyeketa is also called "hungulo dja
854 milombo," "the vapour bath for infantile diseases;" it is not a
177 curative, but a preventive; it aims at ascertaining if the child is
757 all right. If he has bad stools (a nga tlambi psinene) the mother will perhaps remember that she has forgotten to enclose him and she will call the doctor in at once. Should he fall sick, the biyeketa will not be performed again but the milombyana will be administered more frequently. However, it is of importance for the growth of the child. To neglect it is taboo! (2)

757 As for the cuts, sometimes they are followed by a second vapour
854 bath, as if the doctor wished to cause the medicine contained in the smoke to penetrate through them into the body, in which case he will only "close" them later on by introducing a healing powder into them. Children generally cry when they see the physician... They dread the pain of the cuts. When the mother goes to the doctor's village, she takes with her the wood, the mat and a pot of beer or a fowl in payment. The physician's charge for a biyeketa is sixpence to one shilling or a hen or a pot of beer.

(1) Viz. to the end of the world. These clans are far away to the north, outside the Ronga country.

(2) I hear that the converts generally have not abandoned the biyeketa, but they do not allow the doctor to perform the sacrificial act and to pray to the spirits. Sam Ngwetsa, the children's physician of Rikatla used to pray thus: "O Father of mercy! I pray thee! I do not pray the dead but thee only who art in heaven! Grant us to see this child in good health, standing firm, this little lamb!"

1) The custom of the erotic dream (Tilorela).

881 When a young man has noticed for the first time an emissio
195 seminis, he is said to have become an adult (a kulile, a thombile)
751 to have "drunk the nkanye." The nkanye is the tree from which the bukanye is made. It is prepared for the great feast of the new year. *To drink the nkanye* is an euphemism to designate the entrance into a new phase of life, into the age of puberty. According to Mboza, the lad must go early in the morning to wash his body, and that is all. But Tobane says that, in the Mpfumo clan, the family doctor is called; in a broken pot, he roasts pieces of skin of all the beasts of the veldt, together with some half digested grass taken from the stomach of a goat (psanyi). The boy must eat a little of this medicine and rub all his joints with it. This will strengthen him so that, when he has relations with girls, he will not be overcome (gemiwa) by them. This rite, which is very similar to the rite of the broken pot performed for infants, is connected with the "gangisa," the sexual habits of young people which begin at the time of puberty, as we shall see later on.

881 At this time also, the boy begins to wear the very primitive
291 clothing called *shifado* (sha ku siba, the thing with which one
177 closes, see Annotatio I). In former times they wore only the *mbayi*,
789 a small cylindrical or conical object of woven palm leaves, which
832 was the national dress of the Thongas; the *shifado* seems to be of Zulu origin. It is very much valued as preventing contact with the earth, as a protection against ants and an aid to continence; the lads who do not wear it are blamed and accused of being *ba-nato*. The word *nato* means a magical medicine by means of which men of low morals throw men or women into a deep sleep during the night, enter the huts of other people and commit adultery with their wives.

2) The piercing of the ears (Ku tjunya, (Ro.), boshela. (Dj.).

881 This also takes place at this period. There are two ways of
304 performing it, either by an actual piercing of the lower lobe
177 with a thorn, or by cutting it with a knife. The first method

[See p. 516 In these categories or in 116 -- Analyst]

Other

animals are taboo for girls : the *hare* because it is too cunning ;
262 and the antelope *nhlengane*. This antelope raises the foot when
823 it hears a noise ; hence the idea that its leg is hollow and that
784 it perceives the sound through it. The child would do the same,
562 if its mother were to eat the meat of the nhlengane. It would be unable to hear with its ears, only with its hands!

The *legs* of fowls (tibias) are also taboo for all women, because the hen scatters the sand... So are the *hoofs of oxen*, and *pigs' feet*. A woman eating them would walk too much... She would go everywhere to look for husbands!

784 It is taboo for a girl to *walk amongst pumpkin plants* (maranga),
562 to pluck the fruits. She is only allowed to pluck those which can
824 be reached from outside. Were she to transgress this law, she
751 would emit a bad odour, and no boy would court her. Her mother, having no fear of being despised, can walk amongst the pumpkins. A second taboo relative to pumpkins is this : unmarried women must cut a "pumpkin nose" (nhompfu) viz. the end of the stem, and fix it at their waist when plucking the pumpkins, lest they get abcesses in certain regions of their body.

784 It is taboo for them to eat cooked *oxen blood* (bubendje).
262 The following taboos apply also to *married women*. They are
562 not allowed to eat what is called *nkopfu*, viz. some parts of the
843 bowels which are cooked together with the stomach of the ox. "It would spoil the child inside." The *testicles*, which are generally given to the uterine nephew when the meat is distributed according to the laws, and the *underlip* of any animal are also forbidden to them. So is also the *tongue*... because it is reserved for old people as a mark of respect! The *rectum* (gobana) is taboo for women and children. Children might make unseemly noises from the rectum! Women must abstain from *porcupine* and *monkeys' flesh* ; all their offspring would resemble these animals. Such cases have happened, it is said! Women must not eat *eggs* ; they would run a double danger : their child might be born bald and remain so ; or they might be like a hen, which runs in all directions when laying an egg. They would have no peace in child bearing! (See also page 101.)

Nubile girls, during their "tiwheti," must not *approach the*

643 857 However, specially appointed persons watch over him and report of his well being to his father. His youthful playmates are taught to respect him ; he is surrounded in his games by a miniature court, from which he chooses his favourites (tinxekwa) ; some of his companions act as counsellors and reprimand those who do not treat him with due respect. They play at court... also at soldiers ; the juvenile troop wage war with the wasps, and also with the boys of the adjoining villages.

643 787 777 751 782 When the child reaches boyhood, the bones are consulted, and sacrifices offered in order to ascertain from the gods whether it be well to take him to the capital. Should the answer be in the negative, there is nothing to do but wait. When the dice declare the propitious moment to have arrived, the transfer is effected and the boy taken to his father. This is a great occasion for the counsellors who have watched over the boy and who thenceforward supervise his education. They feast themselves well (ba fumisana), kill goats, perhaps even an ox, and offer a sacrifice to proclaim to the gods the return to the capital of the heir to the throne ; to his ankle is tied the astragalus of a slaughtered goat, as a protective amulet.

643 881 836 At puberty the boy undergoes, in the same manner as his companions, all the ceremonial rites usual at that period. The principal doctors of the country treat him, in order that henceforth he may be a man (ba mu yimisa a ba wanuna), having full right to enter into the sexual relations of gangisa (p. 97). Care is taken, however, to attach to his person comrades of riper age, who will prevent him giving way to excesses, (suka banhwanyana la' bakulu ba ta mu gema, ba mu sibela ku kula), which would arrest his growth and render him small and feeble. He thus lives in relative continence, participating in the play and in the work of boys of his own age, and looking after the herds. At times he gives a feast, when his father happens to have presented him with an ox with which to make merry.

643 588 595 Now we see him arrived at manhood, at the age when the Blacks take a wife. If his father is still living, the young man is not allowed to marry officially. He may certainly lobola, viz., contract regular marriage in the usual way, and possibly

643 604 778 "when the Ba-Khosa had emerged from the reed" (See Vol. II, Part VI, III). Nobody might see it except the chief, who kept it hidden somewhere in a hole amongst the rocks. His uterine nephew alone (ntukulu) knew the place, and when it was necessary to use it in order to pray to the deceased chiefs, the chief and his nephew alone were permitted to approach the hiding place ; those who accompanied them had to stop at a distance. This mhamba is lost. Even the chief Ntshongi, who was the paramount chief of the Ba-Khosa at the beginning of this century, had never seen it. It had been taken by his predecessor Mavabaze and had disappeared during the political troubles of the Gungunyana's war. Thus it is impossible to say of what it consisted, and this will probably never be known. There is no doubt however, that it was used for the same purpose as the mhamba of the Tembe and Shirindja. Its magical and religious power came from the fact that it was anointed with the "nsila" of the deceased chiefs. On the death of a chief, his "nsila" i. e. the layer of filth resting on his body, was taken away and the mhamba was rubbed with it. This gave the reigning chief the power to influence his ancestor-gods, in accordance with the magic principle : the part influences the whole. It is said that in former times the Khosa chief Shihanyisane having ill-treated his two younger brothers, Malashwane and Shalati, these two men succeeded in taking the chieftainship away from him with the aid of the Ñwamba clan. Eventually Shihanyisane made peace with his brothers and gave over the mhamba to Malashwane : a proof that this mysterious object was in truth considered as the most important attribute of chieftainship.

643 789 757 These regalia are not indeed very imposing to the eye. Thonga royalty had no brilliant insignia... But it had more than that! Each clan possessed a special medicine whose magical virtues were greatly esteemed ; its possession made the chief invincible, the warriors invulnerable, the country unconquerable. This powerful charm is called *mbhulo* (Dj.), *mphulo* (Ro.).

Amongst the Nkunas, the mbhulo is called *Ñwantikalala*. It is kept by those belonging to the Mushwane house, and a man called Papalati is responsible for it. It consists of four calabashes, two male and two female (medicines are considered as having sex,

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

643 789 751 see Part VI) called Madyakakulu, Ñwahondyane, Mbengatamilomu, Masemane. The bones are always consulted to ascertain which calabash (nhungubane) must be employed. The uses of this medicine are as follows. Every year it is mixed with the first fruits in the ceremony of *luma*, which will be described later on. In war time the mbhulo is employed to "fence the country." Envoys go to all the drifts on the boundary, take stones out of the river, smear them with the magical powder and place them on the roads, at the crossways ; should enemies invade the country, they will be deprived of their strength. The weapons also are sprinkled with a decoction made of this royal medicine, as we shall see, and it 643 is given to the chief to prevent disease. The father of Papalati was 687 accused of having sold some of this powerful national drug to the Pedi chief Sikororo, an act which amounted to high treason.

643 I have been fortunate enough to be informed of all the rites connected with the royal medicine in the Mazwaya clan. There, it is called *nyokwekulu*, a word which is probably derived from the verb ku nyuka, to melt. Let Mboza tell us, with awe and profound conviction, of the marvels of this wonderful drug. He was present at its preparation in the year 1893, before the war scattered the clan and destroyed its military power.

644 789 Each year the nyokwekulu is renewed. Its exact composition is known only to one man, Godlela, the royal magician and priest, to whom the care of preparing it is entrusted. This man belongs to the house, or sub-clan, of Tlhatlha. He is very much feared. Nobody dares to dispute with him, and he has the right of cursing even the chief. His function is *hereditary*. His father Malubatilo was in charge of the nyokwekulu before him. The law of succession is this ; when the elder brother dies, the position is held by his younger brother. The headmen of the tribe box his ears and say to him : "You will be the master of the medicine! Take great care of it." When all the brothers are dead, it passes to the sons.

So, when the right time of the year has come, the chief consults the bones. The first thing to do is to send messengers all over the country to find a *forked branch*, a "shiphandje," to which the calabash containing the medicines will be hung.

535 An extraordinary war spirit comes over them all..." And every
703 one having witnessed these performances in the Thonga or Zulu mukhumbi will confess that they are wonderfully impressive. It is a mixture of dramatic, epic and lyric poetry, three literary *genres* which are still confounded, the whole being enhanced by a deep, wild music and subject to the laws of a certain artistic style.

703 The fighting instincts are excited to the highest pitch by these
643 patriotic choruses and dramatic representations. Thus should
726 the troops be slow in making a start, the young men go dancing to the chief and beg him to "grant them permission" to go forth and slay, or rather to "give them men" to slaughter (ku hyika). The Native idea appears to be that the chief holds the lives of the enemies in his hands; without his permission they cannot go forward, but this once given, they rush enthusiastically to the fray. They even go so far as to taunt him with being an old woman, a coward, because he will not let them go at once (1).

When the excitement has reached the culminating point, and it has been definitely decided to fight, the time has arrived for the magic treatment by which the warriors will be rendered invulnerable.

G. ADMINISTERING THE WAR-MEDICINE.

726 This custom is probably of ancient origin, but I have reason
177 to believe that, amongst the Ba-Ronga, it was practised without
789 any great formality until the advent of the Zulu influence, when
751 it was brought into much greater prominence and invested with more solemnity. "Drinking the war-medicine" took place on several occasions during the revolt of 1894 to 1895. At *Zihlahla* this potion was administered to all warriors before the rebel attack

(1) Gungunyana, on one occasion, when his warriors were importuning him with similar requests, sent the more ardent spirits to wage war unarmed against the wild beasts, and I was told they actually succeeded in capturing a leopard alive and brought it back to the chief!

726 on the town of the 14th October 1894 ; also prior to the ambuscade
789 in the outskirts of Lourenço Marques, on the 7th January 1895,
751 and before the battle of Morakwen, the 2nd February following.
According to my informant, the chief doctor of the army prepared the medicine in a huge dish with leaves and roots cut into slices. These ingredients possessed an effervescent quality ; the medicine-man stirred up the decoction and with it sprinkled the whole army formed in a circle. After this every warrior was fully persuaded that he was invulnerable, that the bullets would be deflected on either side of him, or, even should they hit him, they would be flattened against his body and fall harmless to the ground. The charm could only be broken by the warrior turning his back to the foe. Then the bullets might pass through him. I have met with very intelligent Natives who were perfectly convinced of this fact, although open to reasonable argument on all other points. They told me that certain Natives who were bowled over by grapeshot, picked themselves up after the fight, came to life again, or rather regained consciousness and then, with their fingers, extracted the bullets, which had all remained imbedded in the skin!

A *Nondwane* warrior described to me, in the following terms, the administering of the magic potion, as it was done on the 7th January 1895 before the battle of Morakwen. The whole army was assembled at Nkanyen, on the bank of the Nkomati. It was there that the magician prepared the medicine, with two young girls as assistants. While he was brewing the mixture and making it froth, the soldiers, formed in a semi-circle, looked on, standing erect, poising their assagais on a level with their
726 heads. Then a *ntjhopfa* was cut down (the shrub of oblivion,
789 often employed by Native doctors and of which we have already
751 noted the use in other ceremonials) and a branch laid across the
824 road. The several battalions were called up, one after the other, and every man had to jump over the branch and take a mouthful of the medicine, which he spat out again, pronouncing the sacramental *tsu* which accompanies the offerings made to the gods : he subsequently went off, running and dancing and getting ready to go forth and kill. When each one had taken his share of the medicine and it was all finished, the doctor said to them : "Now I

726 have given you all my strength ; go and slay." They crossed the
789 river at night and having reached the left bank, at a point about ten
751 kilometers from the Portuguese camp at Morakwene, they were made to observe the strictest silence for a long time. Then they felt that valour (burena) had taken possession of them!

Amongst the Ba-Nkuna the war-medicine is also administered under the form of *sprinkling*. This sprinkling may take place in time of peace, when danger threatens. The chief kills a black ox and the army, summoned to the capital, is sprinkled and eats the flesh of the ox. This will make the country ready for any eventuality. But the ceremony is much more serious when war is at hand. Then the "great medicine of the country," carefully kept in the calabashes of the Court magicians, is mixed with *pawyi* of slaughtered sheep and with white sand taken from the river. During the night, the mukhumbi is formed and all the men sit down, their heads bowed over their knees,
726 their eyes closed, in perfect silence. Then one of the queens,
789 an old woman who no longer has any sexual relations, enters
751 the circle, absolutely naked. She dips a leafy branch into the
562 magical infusion and marches all round, inside and outside, sprinkling all the warriors and muttering the following words : "Kill them, break their pots, kill their dogs, catch their chief, bring him here, bring so-and-so and so-and-so." The warriors tremble with emotion. They pray to their gods in a low tone : "Save me! Help me!" But none of them dares to raise his eyes! They know quite well that they would die!

It is extremely important that the officiating woman should be old and have had no sexual relations for a long time, or "the assagais would lose their strength ; the masculine weapons would become blind and the feminine weapons alone would see... The woman would have untied the knot of the assagai ; she would cross the way (tjemakanya) of the great medicine... She must be a quiet woman (a rula)". (Mankhelu).

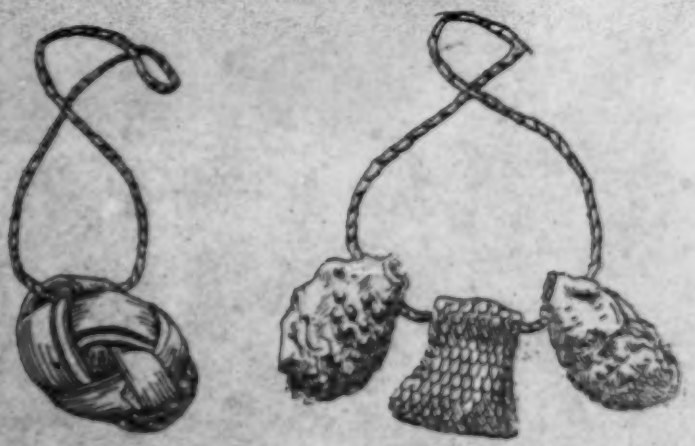
726 Similar customs exist in *Mapatju*, where the medicine is called
789 "the medicine of hatred,"—that which dispels all natural feeling
828 and makes a man capable of killing his fellow-man! I give the particulars of this curious medical treatment as I have them from

seeing grains of Kafir corn, which are of a dark colour. Grains of 751
mealies are softened in water, pierced through and made into 755
necklaces which patients wear round their necks, whilst the spikes of Kafir corn, which are to be found in every hut fixed to the reeds of the roof as seeds for the next season, are carefully taken away and hidden somewhere in the bush during the whole time of the epidemic. Should the malignant form of small-pox develop 755
notwithstanding all these precautions, the headman will shake his 782
head and tell the parents of the patient : "Hahlani! — Make an 783
offering." But in this particular hahla no real offering will be made, and the prayer will not be addressed to the ancestor-gods. The principal words of this prayer are : "Mavuzane, dhlula!" These are Zulu expressions which correspond in Ronga to : "Mabutise, thula!" i. e. "Questioner, pass on your way!" Who is this Questioner? It is small-pox itself, Nyedzana, which is more or less personified and looked on as a real and terrible visitor coming at given intervals to examine the country and search for sinners. The great sin which Questioner especially wishes to discover is *baloyi*, murder by witchcraft. Let the patient then confess the acts of bewitchment which he has committed, and he will be spared. If he conceals them, small-pox will kill him. Suppose that the patient so seriously ill is a grown-up woman, the wife of one of the men of the village. Her parents will first be called. The headman and all the inmates of the village will attend the meeting in the hut. "Confess your guilt!" they will all say to the woman. She may answer : "No! I am not a witch" [illegible] *i noyi!)* They insist : "Do not hide anything." And un[illegible] strain of their questions she may say : "Yes! I am a walker in the night! I have eaten so-and-so! I have eaten my own child!" If the patient is a little child, his father will have to make the confession in his stead. He will take the infant in his arms and say : "Mavuzane dhlula! Questioner, pass on your way! Yes! We are baloyi. I have taught my child to eat human bodies! But we will not persist in our bad doings! Go away and leave us in peace!" (1).

(1) We have here one of the cases in which an impersonal force of Nature is treated as 782
if it were a personal being endowed with superhuman power, and invoked. The prayer

timbhorola) which fall on the mat are carefully gathered together, 783
and the bones are consulted to know where they must be thrown 755
(See Letter D). This is the *tumba* rite, following the hondlola. The bones may perhaps have indicated a hole in the trunk of a tree, or the river, or the mud of the marsh, or an ants' nest, or the entrance to a molehill. The physician takes the timbhorola in a piece of broken pot, or sala shell, and introduces them into the hole, which he closes with a little clay ; he has with him water in a little calabash, of which he takes a sip and says : "Tsuu! or

[751]



Fowa and timfisa, medico-magical amulets.

pheuuu! Let the misfortune remain here." On the way home no looking back is allowed : this is taboo. Should the tumba be made in an ants' nest, and should the ants themselves close the hole, this is a very good sign! The bones may perhaps order the particles contained in the sala shell to be placed in another kind of ants' nest, made of grass ; the ñanga will go during the day and prepare a place for the shell. In the evening, when it is dark, he will put the shell into the hole without looking back towards it. The ants will take all the timbhorola down into their nest, and so "the misfortune will remain with them." (Mboza.) — The 751
hondlola rite is generally accompanied by the preparation of 755
protective amulets (timfisa). The nails and hair of the patient are 783
cut, put into small bags of lizard skin and tied round his neck.

751 One frequently meets people wearing this ornament, which also
755 aims at making the cure permanent. Sometimes the nails are those
783 from one hand and foot only. The *psirungulo* i. e. the astragalus of the slaughtered goat, or the beak, claws and some feathers of the hen (p. 410) are also tied round the neck of the patient. This is the *religious amulet*, whilst the lizard bag is the *medico-magical* one. Convalescents are moreover provided with the *fowa*, a kind of rattle, consisting of a root called *sungi* (there is no connection between this word and the sungi of the circumcision school, I. p. 77) contained in a kind of round box made of palm leaf which is tied round the ankle. This is intended to protect them against the perspiration of those who have sexual relations (p. 358). They sometimes wear a little piece of reed filled with a protective powder, as do also nursing mothers during the whole nursing period (1) (I. p. 48).

[527] The hondlola rite also marks the moment when sexual relations, which had been suspended during the disease, are resumed. Celebrating as it does the victory over disease, the day of hondlola
756 is regarded as a fête-day. Beer is prepared as a mark of gratitude to the doctor and "to rejoice his heart." It is also the day of reckoning ; the physician must be paid. This individual has not, however, waited until now to ask for a "refresher." From the commencement of the case it has been necessary to *pfula hwama*, that is to say, to lift the cover of the medicine wallet by means of sixpence or a shilling. At times he has been very anxious to change the medicine, in order to produce a greater effect ; on such

751 (1) I may here mention two other articles which are frequently worn by Thonga Natives: one is the dried seed-pod of the flower of the large Protea bush (sugar bush) which is so common on the slopes of the Drakensberg. It looks like a hard brownish cone, all covered with concentric layers of little square ledges. This cures *vertigo*. Why? No doubt because when it is turned round rapidly, it makes the spectator giddy. It is hung round the neck with a string. This curious remedy is brought back from the Barberton mountains by those who go to work in the Transvaal. The second is a bracelet often seen round little children's wrists, and is made from the skin of a kind of tawny mole, called *tfu'usyana*, which digs its burrows almost on the level of the ground. You can see the earth a little raised all along its track. The *Filaria* parasite, which is often met with in our tribe, also creeps under the skin in a similar way (p. 343). See illustration No. 5. These are two new instances of the principle "similia similibus curantur." Bags filled with snake powder are also often worn as a preventive.

we have just studied, they are attributed either to Heaven or to 753
evil spirits or to the winds. The name of the *wutleka* disease 827
is worthy of notice. This word comes from *wutla*, which means to rob, to seize; wutleka, the qualificative derivative (Thonga Grammar § 196) means the condition of something taken away. This would seem to be a passive meaning, as if the patient had been robbed by some agent. However, Mankhelu explains the term by saying: "The patient has stolen the *rirabi*" — "a wutle rirabi". *Rirabi* is very closely allied to a word meaning stick; the old doctor says it is the name of the disease. If this etymology be correct the patient would be considered as having taken the disease by a kind of robbery. But Native etymology must always be accepted with caution.

All these names show how unprecise is the pathological knowledge of the Thongas.

2) As regards the *causes of diseases*, Thongas are groping in 753
the grossest superstition. When a medical man wishes to treat a 787
disease, he first tries to diagnose its cause. The Bantu ñanga does the same, only the difference is that he takes very little notice of the physical symptoms. There is no auscultation, no palpation, no examination of the secretions, blood, saliva, or urine, as these are disgusting and must be covered with sand as soon as possible! The great means of diagnosing a disease is the throwing of bones. There are three great causes of disease: the spirits of the gods, the wizards and the makhumo, defilement from death or from impure persons. A fourth less common cause is Heaven. The bones will reveal by the way in which they fall which is the one to be combated.

3) Their ideas of *contagion* are not much in advance of their 753
other pathological conceptions. The two most dreaded diseases 164
in this respect are consumption (lifuba) and leprosy (nhlokonho). 751
Consumption is by no means a new ailment due to civilisation, though it has increased enormously since Thonga boys have gone to the towns. A proof that it has been known for a long time is to be found in its great importance in the ritual. To the Thonga mind it is caused by the *makhumo*, i. e., the contamination of death, or the defilement resulting from contact with a woman in

753 a state of physiological impurity. Hence the law ordering
164 people affected with any of these kinds of makhumo to eat with
751 spoons ; they thus protect themselves against the poison which might cause them to become consumptive. A curious feature in the conception of *contagion* is the following. When Sokis died (I. p. 139) I heard some of those present saying to his sister, who was carrying a child on her shoulders : "Do not cry! If you cry the disease will jump to your baby!" There were two reasons for this warning ; to cry in the presence of misfortune increases
753 the danger tenfold (compare p. 326) ; moreover the contagion of
768 disease is especially to be feared in connection with the relatives of the sick or dead person. Hence the strange custom illustrated on plate p. 26 : when a man dies of consumption his relatives are absolutely forbidden to eat any of the food he may have left. The "luma milomo" ceremony (I. p. 146) is of no use in this case. In former times all his mealies were burnt. Nowadays, however, it is allowable for people outside his family to buy and consume his provision. The large storehouse, illustrated on p. 26, contained the mealies harvested in Sokis' fields. These were sold to strangers, whilst relatives bought other mealies which were stored in the small hut for the use of his widow and children (p. 111). The same reason no doubt explains why the widow of a consumptive must *lahla khombo* with strangers, and not with men of the village (I. p. 206).

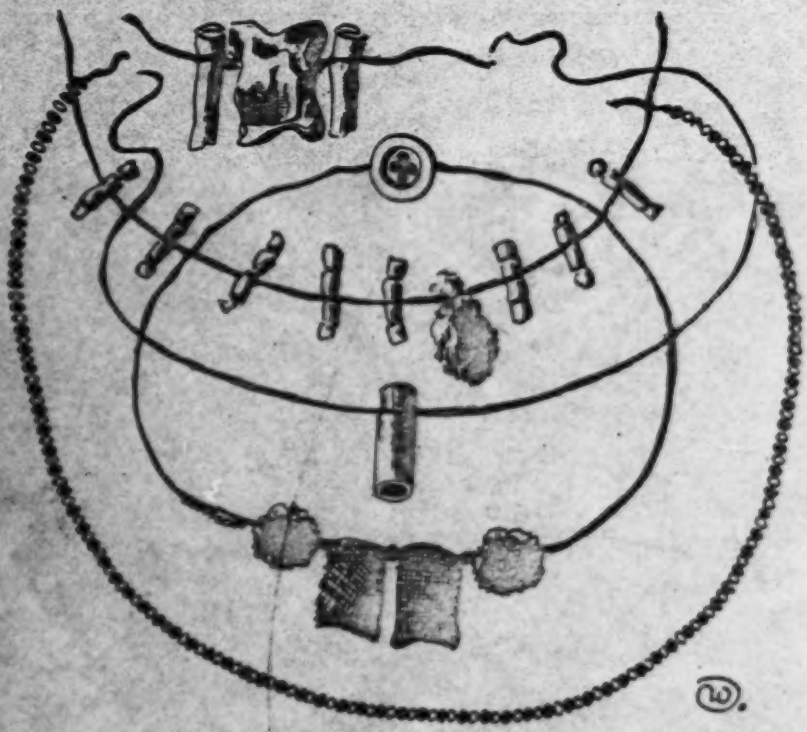
758 This peculiar idea of contagion also gives rise to the rules
766 for *burying lepers*. Their relatives must not have anything to do with the burial (I. p. 508). Relatives-in-law can perform
768 this painful duty, or possibly the family of the deceased leper will ask a friend to help them in their distress. "Have you prepared something as a reward for me?" he asks, and if this is the case he digs a grave just outside the wall of the hut where the patient died, removes the reeds of the wall, and pulls the corpse down into the hole without any funeral ceremony. The relatives are assembled far away on the square, and do not even dare to look on at the burial. All the implements are broken in the depths of the forest, at a great distance, for fear that a relative might touch one of them and die. Or they are left in the hut, and the whole village is at once removed.

756 Henceforth he will lead a special life, characterised by protective
184 and propitiatory rites, which tend to the development of his subliminal faculties.

1) Protective rites.

756 As soon as he was "born again" in the thwaza ceremony,
751 but to a still higher degree later on, after being elevated to the
789 dignity of the magician, the exorcised, having entered the mysterious world of those endowed with powers, becomes the butt of all his colleagues in the magical arts ; first the baloyi, the witches, who *try* him, to see if he is able to discover their evil deeds, and secondly the other magicians, who are annoyed at seeing a rival ready to dispute their practice with them. So he must be continually on his guard ; in the evening, especially, he must protect himself against their nightly charms. The great protective medicine is a pellet made of the powder of many roots, which have been burned and bound together with fat taken from the bowels of a goat. The first of these roots comes from a tree called *mabophe*, found in the Bilen country. This has the power of tying (bopha, in Zulu, means to tie) the knees of the wizards who come during the night, so that they will be found in the morning, stark naked, in the hut of the exorcised. The *nulu* root seems to be used for the same purpose ; the *nsala*, which also enters into the composition of the protective pellets, rather aims at ensuring the success of the treatment undertaken by the new gobela ; as its fruits are plentiful (p. 16), so will the possessed come in great numbers to the doctor. The pellet is used for medical treatment, but the same drugs are also kept in the form of powder, in a piece of reed, or in the calabashes hanging from the forked pole. Every night the exorcised swallows a pinch, and throws another pinch on the fire in his hut. This will prevent enemies from entering, or make them prisoners. Before eating, he must also protect himself by chewing (phora) a little of the *manono*, a kind of antiseptic or anti-witchcraft root as big as a stick, which he always carries with him ; this is the special *luma* (I. p. 146) of the exorcised. Who knows if his food has not been poisoned by the malpractices of his rivals?

When undertaking a journey, he must always chew his *ndjao*, the juncus root which has often been mentioned and which "cleans roads;" this is "his shield," because the ndjao knows and tries (djinga) everything, and overcomes the hostility of man and things. It is the universal remedy against any hostile influence. So, after having chewed, he spits on his stick, rubs it and starts on



Protective amulets worn by exorcised.

his journey, saying: "The road is ripe (wupfile), let us go!" — The astragalus will be the principal charm that the possessed will have to wear, and will be tied round his neck between two little amulet bags or reeds.

The exorcised leads a life of constant fighting against evil spiritual influences. These protective rites are observed all through the year of convalescence.

Another rite, which is observed after the hondlola only, is

756 Another rite, which is observed after the hondlola only, is
the *haza*, viz., the monthly purification of the exorcist. He
783 fills his gobo calabash with a decoction made of the roots of the
821 mphesu and ntjebe trees, drinks the whole, tickles his throat with a feather and vomits the medicine. "A tibasisa ndjen" — "he purifies his inside." This is done at every new moon. The connection between the possessed and the moon, which was first established by the fact that he had *thwaza*[1] as well as the moon, is maintained and intensified by this rite.

2) Propitiatory rites.

751 Besides these protective drugs, the exorcised wears a necklace
756 made of little pieces of a creeper called *mayambatju;* tied together with a munganazi string. See the second necklace in the
782 illustration. This is intended *to calm his gods*, and to scatter
158 them when they desire to come upon him with violence. This is indeed a great danger ; the exorcised is liable to nervous attacks of a dangerous nature, especially during the first few weeks following the exorcism. Perhaps his song is heard in the distance. Then suddenly he is seized with madness, and furiously assaults his neighbours with the small hatchet, or the assagay used in the dances. People run away ; or, on the contrary, they collect and begin to clap their hands, and make their infuriated companion dance and sing his own song. This may help to dispel the spirits, and calm him down. Sometimes, feeling uneasy, foreseeing a crisis, the poor man himself asks them to sing. But he may also be led, in his frenzy, to the bush, far away, unconscious, quite mad, tearing his clothes and his skin with the thorns. This often happened to Ñwashinhwana. Her husband then followed her, and, when the crisis was over, saw her fall down exhausted and brought her home ; there, having returned to her senses, she became very sad and wept bitterly. So, in order to avoid being tormented, the exorcised propitiate their spirits ; they worship them, in truth, and this gives birth to *a new religion* totally different from ancestrolatry, which has its rites and its duties.

756 As already pointed out, the exorcised has *his own altar* in his
778 hut. It is the forked branch, round which a circle of raised clay
782

[1] [See p. 495 -- Analyst]

752 in two rows, leaving a passage between them. They thus run the
881 gauntlet and receive a good whipping ; (the flagellation is often also a separation rite) ; having gone through this unexpected experience they are caught at the other end by four men and deprived of all their clothing. Their hair is also cut, (they must evidently sever themselves from all their past), and they are brought to eight stones and seated on them. These eight stones are not far from the entrance of the yard, in a spot called " the place of the crocodile ". Opposite them are eight other stones on which eight men are sitting. These men are called *Nyahambe*, the Lion-men. They have a fearful appearance, their heads being covered with lions' manes. As soon as the boy is seated on the stone facing the Lion-man, he receives a severe blow from behind ; he turns his head to see who struck him, and sees one of the shepherds laughing at him. The operator snatches his opportunity ; while the attention of the boy is diverted, he seizes the foreskin and cuts it in two movements, first the upper part (this is quickly done and does not cause very much pain), secondly the lower part and the string, a longer and much more painful operation. The surgeons now use an ordinary European knife ; formerly they had only native-made knives. Often the boy falls down unconscious ; they then throw a jar of cold water over him. All the circumcised receive rings of woven, very soft grass which they put on their wounds, tying them round the loins with a string (shondlo). Formerly they did not anoint the sore with medicaments : the boys used only to drink a decoction which is said to stop hemorrhage ; now they use paraffin externally.

881 The boy has now *crossed* (*wela*, like a boat across a river), a technical expression which shows clearly the character of this rite of passage. He is introduced into the lodge.

The removal of the foreskin, though it cannot have the high spiritual meaning of the Jewish circumcision, seems to me also distinctly a separation rite, this part of the body representing the ancient contemptible childish life from which the initiated emerges to-day.

marginal period during which the maphisa must use protective 224
medicines against the dangers of the bush, and keep certain rules. 784

As a protection they carry their charms, especially the *ndjao*, the root of a certain juncus which is used on many other occasions. As regards the taboos which they must observe, I will first mention those applying to travellers in general, especially the *salt taboo* (I. p. 339). Should they take salt with them, this would "precede them" (rangela), and they would kill no game. It will be soon enough to look for salt when they have killed. But the great 224
taboo of these hunting trips is the *sexual taboo*. This was already 784
imposed before starting and it must be observed Phroughout the 834
expedition. The necessity of avoiding anything connected with 825
sexual relations is so great that maphisa will take with them to cook their food little boys under marriageable age. What is the reason of this prohibition? I have explained it in dealing with the Thonga idea of sexual relations (I. p. 189). If the hunters transgress the law, the big animals will be so wild that it will be impossible to approach them ; they will furiously attack the men who have sinned, because they know them, and woe upon them! So much so that if the hunters see an elephant or a hippopotamus in obstinate pursuit of one of their number, they will begin to insult him for having spoilt the whole trip by his misbehaviour, and send him home.

The law of continence is also binding on *the hunters' wives* at 224
home. It is true that when the absence of their husbands is 784
prolonged for a very long time they may become unfaithful to 837
them and the men, on their return, will find babies waiting for 851
them which are not their true children. This will cause them no 752
unhappiness, as these babies none the less belong to them, their wives having been duly bought, and the time for fear is now passed, as they have returned home safely. The fact that these men welcome the children born during their absence caused me to think that hunters' wives were not subject to the sexual taboo as their husbands are. But further inquiry has shown that this is not true. Old Makhani assured me that incontinence on the part of the wife at home would have as a consequence that the husband would be attacked and killed by wild beasts far away in the desert.

825 *Shipyahla* (Ro.), *Mhiri* (yin-tin, Dj.) is the big, lazy, grey puff adder,
136 which creeps along the ground, and is one of the most venomous kinds, together with the *Mhamba* (yin-tin), a slender species, very swift and often found on trees. "When you meet a mhiri," say the Nkunas, "throw a little earth on it and you will soon see
[752] its brother!" Of course magicians have plenty of drugs to cure snake bites. For this purpose they use the head of the adder roasted and pulverised. *Shibatlankombe*, (Naja nigricollis), "the one which carves a spoon" is the name of a species which
[262] curves its neck till it looks like a spoon. The *Hhlaru* (yin-tin) is the boa. It is eaten. Another member of the Clapidae family is the *Likure*, a pretty greyish violet species (Causus Lichtensteinii).
[769] Amongst the harmless snakes are those little blue ones, *Shihundje* (Dendrophis subcarinatus), which are considered as emissaries of the ancestor spirits. I shall mention them again later on. The *Nsoma* (yin-tin), very common and harmless, is probably Dispholidus typus. Some small ones, not larger than worms, but hard and shining like metal, are called *Tumbi-tumbi*, because they hide (tumba) in the sand. One of them seems to be Xenocalamus bicolor.

825 There are also the legendary snakes of the Thongas. On the
777 Coast they speak of the *Buwumati*, which dwells in the lakes and is invisible. It is only heard crying "bu-wu-bu-wu" when rain is falling, and its voice is as loud as that of an antelope. If it shows itself to a traveller, it is a very bad sign. The story is told of a man who came back from consulting a bone-thrower. He saw the buwumati lying on the ground, its coils extending to a great distance, closing all the passages. He retraced his steps, but after three days he died. In the Transvaal, this dreadful snake is called *Shimhemhemhe*, the name being an imitation of its cry.
825 This superstition is perhaps of Pedi origin, but it has been accepted by the Nkunas. The shimhemhemhe dwells in certain dark woody ravines on the slopes of the Drakensberg mountains. If anyone imprudently penetrates there, the snake pursues him, creeping along the branches above, and bites him on the top of the head. A man met with it once on the way to Thabina; he saw it on the road, its head raised, a shining head of two colours. There

755 seen another instance of this (p. 188). It is in keeping with two ideas
756 which are very familiar to Natives and which we shall meet with again later, viz. that disease is a material thing and that it is generally caused by this thing being introduced into the body by wizards.

The mixed character of the medical art of the primitives, which is so evident in their medicine-men, will appear clearly as we continue our study.

II. *Medical Practices.*

752 *Surgical cases* are treated in the worst possible way, any intervention with a knife being looked on as absurd, if not culpable (1). When dealing with *sores*, the aim of the ñanga seems to be to conceal them under a black powder, so as to give the patient a false impression; he thinks himself healed, as he can no longer see his sore. Mankhelu used to grind the bark of the *Ndjupfura* tree (a tree with a white sap), and put the powder on the sore to make it dry up, renewing the application on the fourth day, then five days later, then six days later. — For *wounds* Kokolo used the sap of the *Shilangamahlo*, letting it fall in drops on the bleeding wound. The *Nkahlu* (p. 329), with its milky sap, is commonly used for this purpose. — "But," says Kokolo, "the chief is *Shilangamahlo*." *Bruises* are treated by the *rimba* method. When a person has fallen and some complication is feared, a fire is made; when there are enough glowing embers, and the soil is very hot, the ashes are pushed aside and a little sand taken from the river is poured on the spot, and some nkuhlu leaves on top of it. The patient leans over the place "which has been so treated;" this is an unexpected application of the principle "similia similibus curantur;" — as the soil has been burnt, but afterwards "quenched" (timula) by the cool sand, so the bruise will be prevented from burning him dangerously! — *Decayed teeth* are not extracted, properly speaking; they are broken down with a piece of iron, on which the Native dentist beats with a hammer

(1) Gungunyana, who killed thousands of poor Ba-Chepi without the slightest remorse, could not conceal his horror of Dr. Liengme, who dared to amputate limbs, or to cut open the body in order to cure patients!

752 until he has removed as much as he can of the tooth! Sometimes he breaks the jaw also ; the jaw may even pass through the cheek, causing a frightful wound! Once one of my colleagues had to perform the operation of the removal of the inferior maxillary bone, which was protruding as the result of the so-called extraction of a tooth by a ñanga! — *Snake bites* are treated with a powder made of a snake burnt to ashes, and some ingredients mixed with it, the whole being *salted* with common salt. Incisions are made in all the joints, wrist, ankle, elbow, and also in front of the neck, and the powder introduced into them. Children are inoculated as a means of prevention, so that, when bitten, the venom will not affect them ; the doctor has "preceded the snake" (yi yi rangerile).

757 *Medical cases* are generally treated more rationally than surgical
278 cases. Here are some of Kokolo's and Spoon's prescriptions.

To begin with the drug used when one "feels his head," in other words has a *headache*; this is the root of a shrub called *Nhlangula*, which seems to be a regular anaesthetic, and is used as follows. The fresh bark is scraped with a knife, and a certain quantity is folded up in a cloth and applied to the forehead for half a day. In case of *toothache* the same drug is used together with another called *Ndjenga* : they are boiled ; a little of the decoction thus obtained is held in the mouth, and the pain should disappear.

When it "bites inside," that is to say when one suffers from *colic* or looseness of the bowels, the remedy is *Munwangati*, *Shimbyati* and *Shidlanyoka* made up into a bunch. The doctor prepares this medicine with great care, cutting the roots into equal lengths and tying them together with a band of palm leaf. (See illustration, No. 2.) [1] He concocts his remedy with a larger quantity of the roots of the milder type, and only a few pieces of those which act more violently. The bunch called *shitsimbo* is then boiled to bring out the active principles of the drugs, and the decoction is taken by the patient, just as it is. Sometimes it is mixed with maize, when preparing the meal, and taken in that way. As the bunch, or packet, of these roots retains its medicinal properties for a long time, a single packet may be used over and over again during a whole week.

The prescription for *dysentery* is as follows : *Shimbyati*, *Shi-*

[1] [p. 460 -- analyst]

II. *The first week ; Confinement Period.*

846 From the day of birth till the moment when the umbilical
733 cord falls, seven days may elapse : this forms a special period
853 called *busahana*, which is the period of confinement for both mother and child. It will be concluded by the special ceremony of the child's first outing, marked by the rite of the broken pot. During these seven or eight days, *the mother* is restricted to a special diet, and this is a true "marginal period" for her. She is absolutely outside the pale of society. The diet is prescribed by the family doctor, who knows how to treat children, and consists of a special dish prepared with Kafir corn (1) (mabele) and called *shimhimbi*, with which special medicines have been mixed. The aim of this medication (khwebela busahana) is twofold : first to expel the unclean blood which follows the birth, and which is a very great taboo, and secondly to stimulate the production of the milk. This food is cooked in a special pot (shikhwebelo sha busahana) and is eaten not with the hands, as some particles of the unclean blood might enter it and cause the mother to become phthisic, but with a special spoon.

846 Both the pot and the spoon will be fastened over the entrance of the hut, inside (shirangen sha nyangwa), at the end of this period of seclusion.

A fowl is also killed during these first days, a hen if the child is a girl, a cock if it is a boy. Some medicinal powder is poured into the broth, and the mother drinks it and eats part of the meat, the husband eating the remainder. This little luxury is indulged in as it helps the mother to recover her strength sooner ; she is attended to by her own mother, who has been summoned as soon as the birth has been satisfactorily effected, and who helps her to feed the child.

262 (1) This use of Kafir corn in this and other old rites proves the antiquity of this cereal. It is probably the first which was known to the Natives. Maize is quite a modern food amongst the Thongas, though the time of its introduction is not known. See Part IV.

846 751 them till they burn. The smoke then rises, and he exposes the child to it for a long time : the body, face, nose and mouth. The baby begins to cry ; he sneezes, he coughs ; this is just what is wanted. Then the doctor takes what remains of the pieces of skin, grinds them, makes a powder, mixes it with *tihuhlu* (1) grease of the year before last and consequently hard enough to make an ointment. With this ointment he rubs the whole body of the child, especially the joints, which he extends gently in order to assist the baby's growth.

825 278 856

846 751 853 All this fumigation and manipulation is intended to act as a preventive. Having been thus exposed to all external dangers, dangers which are represented by the beasts of the bush, the child may go out of the hut. He is now able "to cross the foot prints of wild beasts" (tjemakanya mitila) without harm. Snakes will not bite him, at any rate their bite will not hurt him ; lions will not kill him. The remainder of the powder is put into a little bit of reed closed at both ends, which the mother has to carry with her during the whole nursing period in order to continue the treatment.

846 755 753 821 This rite of the broken pot is also the great preventive remedy against the much dreaded ailment of babies, *convulsions*. If a child suffers from this, they will say : "a tlalile shirengelen," viz. "he did not find any help in the broken pot" and the parents will go to another doctor whose drugs are more powerful, to have the child once more exposed to the smoke. It may even be that a grown-up man will undergo this treatment again, if he has been ill with convulsions, but, in this case, the broken pot with its pieces of skin is put on the head of the patient, which has been first covered with a wisp of cuscuta (hare dja yendjeyendje). The great aim of all the medication of children by the "milombyana" is also to fight against convulsions, as we shall see (2).

(1) The tihahlu are the seeds of the akuhlu tree known under the name of mafurera. They are oleaginous and the fat (mafura) obtained from them is very much used for external applications amongst the Thongas.

(2) In *Savage Childhood* p. 12, Dudley Kidd describes this "baptism of smoke" amongst Zulus. Some dirt is scraped from the father's body and is mixed with other drugs in order to impart to the child his ancestral spirit. Another ingredient

842 The Thonga child is always received into this world with great joy by the whole family. If it is a girl, it means oxen to buy a wife for one of the sons later on ; therefore it means increase not only in the wealth but in the number of the members of the family. If it is a boy, there is no direct material enrichment, but the clan has been strengthened and the name of the father is glorified and perpetuated. In the case of the birth of a first-born child (ñwana wa matibula), a special ceremony is performed at the end of the first week. When the grandmother has smeared the hut, she goes home, summons all the female relatives, sometimes as many as ten or fifteen ; they take with them food, ochre and fat prepared for this purpose. Two or three men accompany them. They enter the village of the child executing a special dance called *khana*, and singing the following song (which is the proper song to glorify a first-born) :

846 533 851 603

I celebrate my pot which has done *ngelebendje*...

They compare the child with a pot of clay which has gone through the firing process. It has been tried as one always tries a pot by letting it fall to the ground ; but it is not shattered, because it has not cracked in the furnace, it has kept intact ! This is what is meant by the descriptive adverb ngelebendje.

846 851 603 Then they smear the baby, the mother, the father, everybody in the village with ochre. It is a great feast. A goat will be killed, if possible, because the father and mother have "found a village" (kuma muti) by the child, they have "grown roots" (mila mitju). This is a law, but its omission is not taboo. When the grandparents do not perform this ceremony, it is an insult to the parents of the child, but no evil consequence will follow.

755 753 851 is a meteorite ground to fine powder. It is interesting to compare this use of the meteorite with the fact that, amongst the Thongas, this fumigation is intended to prevent convulsions. Convulsions, as we shall see (Part VI. Chap. II. B) are caused by the mysterious power of Heaven. The meteorite has fallen from Heaven. Thus the baptism of smoke aims at bringing the child under the influence of the two main elements of Bantu religion : the ancestor gods and Heaven.

853 824 *neta* as a medecine. The shrub, which is an Euphorbiacea, contains milky sap. It is a treatment based on the principle : Similia similibus curantur.

751 278 763 854 The Thongas believe that milk alone would never suffice to make a child grow : *Ñwana a kula hi miri, the child grows by medicine*, such is the adage which is universally met with. When you see a woman carrying a child on her back, you will notice hanging to the *ntéhe* the reed (lihlanga) containing the black powder which protects against the dangers of the bush, and a little calabash half filled with water. This water is not pure water, it is the medicine called *milombyana*. This word is the plural and diminutive form of *nombo*, which means baby's ailment. There is a great *nombo*, convulsions, also called *tilo*, heaven, because this complaint is brought into a mysterious connection with the influence of Heaven (See Part VI). There is a small *nombo* ; this is the infantile diarrhea which so often troubles little children ; but both diseases are supposed to be caused by the *nyoka*, the intestinal parasite, the worm or snake (nyoka means both) which is in every child and must always be combated because, if unchecked, it will pass from the bowels to the stomach ; it will come and beat the fontanella (1) and will finally penetrate the chest. Then the little one will turn up his eyes, be seized by [278] convulsions and die. Happily there are some drugs which have a 751 wonderful effect on this dangerous guest ! One of my neighbours, 757 who was a convert in Rikatla, gave me their names. The first is a 854 very common Protacea (?) with large husks called the Dlanyoka, "the one which kills worms." Mixed with the roots of a Leguminacea called *Ñwamahlanga* and with two other plants found near the sea, it forces the worm to keep quiet. These drugs are boiled and the decoction is carefully poured into a special little pot called *hlembetwana ya milombyana* which will be kept in the hut. Every morning the mother will warm the pot a little, pour some of its contents into a shell of sala and give the child a

757 826 (1) Tjaba-tjaba, the fontanella, plays a great part in the diagnosis of children's doctors and they often cover it with black wax. When the child hiccoughs, his mother or somebody else will blow on the fontanella to prevent vomiting. This will "make his heart stand" (yimisa mbilu).

862 603 The very day of his weaning, the child must leave the village of his parents and go to stay with his grandparents. A little mat and a few clothes have been prepared for him and the grandmother comes to take him. If he is the first-born, he must go to the parents of the mother ; the second child will be received by the parents of the father. Sometimes father and mother accompany their offspring themselves, during the night, to make the separation easier. It is a sad day for them as well as for the child! The following day the parents go again to see how the little one has stood their absence. They do not enter the village. They remain hidden in the little copse and look at their child through the branches! He must not see his mother, otherwise he would cry... A touching scene indeed!

862 Should the weaned child be obliged to stay with his parents, the mother will smear her breast with Jamaica pepper (biribiri) so that he may lose his taste for the maternal milk as quickly as possible.

862 842 753 The act of weaning is called *lumula*. It comes from the verb *luma* to bite, followed by the reversive suffix *ula* which means to take away, to undo (like *un* in undo). The mother as well as the child are said to have *lumuka* viz. to be in that state when weaning has been accomplished. This word is pronounced with a curious smile, because the act of weaning is in direct relation with the sexual life. As we have seen, sexual intercourse is absolutely prohibited before the tying of the cotton string, viz. for one year after the birth. Afterwards it is allowed, but the mother must not conceive another child before she has weaned the one she is nursing. The law is even more stringent : she must not conceive before her milk has entirely passed away (phya mabelen), after the weaning ceremony, because if she became pregnant, that would "cross the way of the weaned child" (tjemakanya ñwana), cut "his road" (tjemela), "go beforehand" (rangela) ; he would become thin, paralysed, with big holes below the shoulders. He must first be hymo(tiyela), then a new pregnancy will not be able to cause him to suffer from dysentery or other ailments!

Often the parents do not observe this very hard law! If they

843 754 to hinder the child from growing and to put in its place, by means of her enchantments, a snake, a hare, a quail or an antelope!

834 After the birth, owing to possible contamination by the lochia, sexual intercourse is prohibited till the rite of tying the cotton 846 string (p. 56) has taken place. It is then allowed, but conception [886] must be avoided till weaning, when relations are resumed in the normal way, and this goes on till the time when the woman is no longer able to bring forth children. I know of no special rules in connection with the menopause.

* * *

831 But, amongst Bantus, sexual relations are not an individual affair, as amongst nations more advanced in evolution. There is a mysterious relation between them and the collective life of the community. Hence the fact that, on certain given occasions, they are recommended, even ordered, or prohibited.

1) Cases of recommendation.

833 Sexual relations must take place on two principal occasions : when 783 the inmates of a village abandon it and go elsewhere to found a new 587 one, and when the widows perform the painful rite of "lahla khombo" 829 (to cast away misfortune). We shall see, when studying these customs, that sexual relations have here a twofold signification : 1) they "consolidate" the little community in its new abode, viz. they strengthen its structure by confirming the authority of its chief ; 2) they provide the principal means of getting rid of all contamination, especially of the defilement connected with death. (Annotatio 13.)[2]

2) Cases of prohibition.

834 Married people are not considered as being in a state of defilement, as 784 mourners are, for example. Yet this class of persons, called "ba-ku-581 khila," constitute a danger for those members of the community who 829 are in a weak state of health. They must not come in contact with the circumcised, because in that case their wounds would not heal properly. 753

2 [See pp. 518-519 in these "stagnation" or in vol.--Analyst]

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

834 They must not enter the hut of a person dangerously ill ; this would
784 hasten his death. People who are just recovering from a disease, when
581 they walk about on the paths, must tie around their ankles the root
829 called sungi, which will protect them against the perspiration or
753 emanation left by married people in their footprints, because, as one of my informants said, "ba-ku-khila ba hisa," viz. married people are hot.

834 Moreover not only individuals but the whole social life would be
836 endangered if sexual relations took place when the community itself is
581 in a critical position. They are prohibited therefore in wartime, during
829 the whole duration of hunting parties, and also during the marginal periods. Strange to say, this law does not apply so severely to unmarried boys and girls amusing themselves according to the "shigango" custom (p. 97). It seems that it is not the act in itself which is tabooed, but the act in as much as it is accomplished by regularly married people ; in this case only has it a bearing on the life of the community.

What is the reason of these prohibitions ? "Married people are hot." What does this aphorism mean ? The following rite may help us to understand it.

831 In the Malulcke country, when the whole population enters a lake
834 to kill fish according to the tjeba custom (Part IV. Chap. I), a little boy
226 and a little girl are chosen and laid down under a lion's skin, as if they were husband and wife, and told to remain very quiet during all the time
829 the grown up people are fishing. Not knowing anything about sexual
789 intercourse, they will obey ; then the fish also will keep quiet and
771 will be killed easily. Why ? Because there is in the sexual act something wild, fierce, passionate which, according to the law of correspondance which is at the base of all Bantu magic, has an influence on the hostile forces ; these will be excited and more difficult to overcome : enemies in battle, the animals of the bush during hunting and fishing parties, disease, danger of contamination at death and during the marginal periods. Life is, so to speak accelerated by the sexual act, and this acceleration is communicated to the whole of Nature. Therefore : Keep quiet, be continent!

This profound conception of life also explains why so often certain actions must be accomplished by children, not yet able to have sexual relations, or by old women who no longer practise them.

Let us remark that all these rites do not belong to Animism, properly speaking, but to Dynamism (Part VI. Chap. I), which plays a part almost as important as Animism in Bantu primitive philosophy.

we shall discuss in Part VI the
843 origin of this extraordinary idea. A woman who has had a
834 miscarriage is impure for three months at least. Menstruation
841 must have taken place two or three times and have cleansed her before her husband can have any sexual relation with her. (Compare Annotatio 7,[1] which applies to the transgression of this rule.)

7) Parturition.

846 We have described, when treating of birth, the many taboos
753 which accompany parturition. The *busahana* period, from the moment of delivery till the fall of the umbilical cord, is very much dreaded. When a woman is suffering from *shilumi* (a disease which sometimes follows delivery, probably owing to a displacement of the organs) she must not enter the hut of a woman who has been confined. The ailment would "jump over to her" (tlulela). There is however a way of preventing contagion. The visitor must take the piece of clothing which she uses as a girdle and throw it to the patient, and the patient throws back her own girdle to the visitor. Then she can enter : "They have acted according to the law, there is no more *yila*."

846 A mother must not drink any milk from the birth of the child
851 until its presentation to the moon. Afterwards she is allowed to drink only milk from cows which have calved many times.

The rite of *kunga* is performed in the case of a first-born child. This child is called *nwana wa matibula*, the child by which the woman has *tibula*, viz. has become a mother. The etymology of this word *tibula* (Zulu zibula) is not known. When people come to greet the baby, its parents will not allow them to take it in their arms. They must pay something for permission to do so, even a brother, a sister, or a grandmother. The father is not subject to this rule ; "the child is his, belongs to him." Nowadays this ceremony means only that these people are happy to receive the new born child amongst them. There is no taboo in it. But it is certainly related to the fact that in giving birth to a child for the first time, the woman has passed from womanhood to motherhood.

1 [See p. 517 in these categories or in 116 - Analysis]

837 684 692 The woman is questioned, and confesses when, where, and how many times he has sinned with her. If he denies this, the object taken from the hut is exhibited. The adulterer is condemned by the chief to pay a *whole lobolo*, £ 15 to £ 20, as much as is necessary to buy a wife. He is rebuked before the whole assembly. "If you had taken a girl, it would not have mattered at all. Why did you abduct a married woman ? Do you not know that it breeds endless trouble at court (tindaba) ?"

The counsellor of the deceived husband goes to the counsellor of the lover to claim the money. The latter must go to the guilty man. The parents of the adulterer insult their son : "You see! All this money lost now! If only you had lobola a wife with it!" They must help him to find it at once, because this is a law universally recognised : the price of adultery must be forthcoming. (Nandju wa bumbuye a wu pfumali). The poor man will have to pay ; he will even have to add a hoe to "drive away" (hlongola) the counsellor, who keeps it for his reward!

837 684 783 753 608 Why is adultery so strongly prohibited and punished ? Not at all from any moral consideration of purity or chastity, but for two other reasons. First a social one. Adultery with a married woman is a theft, because she is owned by a master. She is not punished herself, except when the watcher finds her out and gives himself the pleasure of thrashing her to his heart's content. The whole punishment falls on the man ; he is the thief. But there is also a physical reason for it : the *matlulana*! We have already met with this word. *Tlulana* means to jump over each other, to compete with each other. In the sexual domain it is said of two men who have relations with the same woman. "They have met [826] together in one life through the blood of that woman ; they have drunk from the same pool" (Viguet). This establishes between them a most curious mutual dependence : should one of them be ill, the other must not visit him ; the patient might die. If he runs a thorn into his foot, the other must not help him to extract it ; it is tabéo ; the wound would not heal. If he dies, his rival must not be present at his mourning or he would himself die (See page 137). Should he even be the actual son (sometimes it happens that a son commits adultery with one of the younger wives

837 of his father, which is considered as *biha*, very bad), he must not
684 take any part in the burial, though he might be the regular "master
783 of the mourning." Relatives will drive him away because they
378 have pity on him, they know what misfortune threatens him. It is
782 a terrible taboo! There are medicines to remove this contamin-
626 ation; the *yila* is removed by them, but the *biha* (bad action)
753 remains! However in the case of the disease called *mpondjo*, (which I believe to be the lupus), medicines are of no avail; should a man visit his rival, who is suffering from it, he will die. We have also seen the terrible complications which are believed to take place at the birth of children, when there has been a question of adultery. (P. 40.)

836 These great taboos show that there is a deep feeling amongst the Thongas that promiscuity of any kind is a bad and a dangerous thing. Even in the case of *gangisa*, boys are censured when two of them court the same girl.

10) Divorce.

586 Adultery is one of the causes of divorce. The guilty woman, instead of obeying her legitimate husband and helping him to get his compensation, may choose to go to her lover and live with him. This leads to an immediate divorce. The husband goes to the parents of the unfaithful wife and claims his lobolo. They have perhaps no money to give. However they will try to get it as soon as possible, even if it is by the dissolution of the marriage of their own son; they will perhaps send back his young wife to her parents and claim the lobolo paid for her, in order to meet the claim of the angry husband (See Part II). It would seem easier to go to the thief and claim from him the lobola for the adulteress whom he has stolen (tlhuba). But a thief is not a reliable man! If he has stolen, it proves that he had nothing (1). (See Appendix VIII.)

Divorce frequently takes place for more trivial reasons, for

548 (1) Women of low morals are called in Ronga gwababana, prostitute. There are plenty of them all round Lourenço Marques, where morality has sunk to a very low level; but this is the result of degeneration.

244 being of every day use in the Thonga culinary art, in which it provides the fatty principles. This curious Papillonacea, after having blossomed, elongates the peduncle of the flower, which enters the ground, and the seed grows in the soil, well protected against the rays of the sun. Its taste is delicious, either prepared [754] as a sauce to season mealie flour, or roasted. When there are no nuts inside the shells, which often happens, Thongas call the empty shells *maboobo*. They say: "The ground nuts have refused" — "Ma yalile marumane." But this is a euphemism. They mean that the *baloyi*, the wizards, have refused to let them grow or, rather, have stolen them from their shells during the night (See Part VI).

244 824 *b)* Another Leguminosa frequently cultivated is the *nyume* (yi-tin (Ro.), *ndlowu*, yi-tin, (Dj.), the *Kafir pea*. This also grows in the earth, like the ground nut. It is much coarser than the European pea, but is twice or three times as large and very nourishing. This vegetable is subject to very curious taboos amongst the Rongas. Whilst all other seeds are sown in one and the same garden, this must be planted in a separate patch, and the tinyume field must be shut off from the others by a fence of thorns. Men [753] are allowed to plant them, but, as soon as they have grown a little, only women can enter the field. Should a man imprudently do so, he would transgress a severe taboo. The danger is twofold: firstly the man himself would be punished; he would get a hydrocele. But the owners of the field would also suffer: the crops would fail. They would reproach the transgressor with these words: "You have taken away (hungula) the strength of our peas!" In order to prevent any such mischance, the husband of the woman who owns the field goes and treats (daha) it in the following manner: he throws his assagay across the field, in the direction of the four cardinal points. Then the danger is removed and men can pass through the plot. It might be supposed that this taboo was of the same kind as that which rested on bananas, for instance, when they were still new in the country and feared on that account. But it would not seem that the Kafir pea is a recent innovation in Thonga agriculture. It has been known for a long time. Another taboo in connection with Kafir peas is this:

during the first year of her married life a woman is not allowed to plant them. 244 824

Amongst the Ba-Pedi of the Transvaal the planting of Kafir peas is taboo. They are said to prevent rain and to cause intense and injurious heat.

c) The Kafir bean, mbawen, yi-tin, (Ro.), nyawa, yi-tin, (Dj.), is a small round brownish seed, with a pleasant flavour, eaten either green or dry. I do not know of any taboo in regard to it. 244

Vegetables of other families also contribute to the food of the Thongas.

Sweet potatoes (nhlata, mu-mi) cultivated either in the sand of the hills or in the richer nyaka of the marshes, are a great resource, especially when they are farinaceous and not too watery. Their leaves (matsimbo) are also used as a vegetable.

Pumpkins also constitute one of the chief articles of diet of the Blacks, from one end of Africa to the other. They are of several kinds : the *ranga* (dji-ma) and *gawana* (dji-ma) of medium size, the *shilutana*, small, sometimes pear-shaped, the *khalabatla* (djima), huge water melons, with white or pink pulp and black pips, which are eaten both cooked and uncooked. Pumpkins are not grown for their fruit alone, as the leaves of certain kinds, especially the ranga, are excellent eating, and make a very good substitute for spinach. The flowers also are greatly appreciated by the Natives. Some kinds of pumpkins are used to make gourds and calabashes. (See I. p. 50.) 415 824

There are some taboos to be mentioned in connection with the *ranga*, which seems to be the oldest kind of pumpkin known to the Bantus (1). We have seen (I. p. 184) that girls are not allowed to walk amongst the leaves and must take special precautions when plucking them. It is taboo to plant any kind of pumpkin before the Chief and the sub-chief. They are subject to the law of hierarchy in the same way as Kafir corn. The prohibition is so conscientiously observed that, should an old man keep the people waiting and be too slow in planting his 244 753 824

(1) See in Meinhof, *Grundriss einer Lautlehre der Bantusprachen*, p. 183, the different forms of this word, which was *tanga* in Ur-Bantu. Compare Torrend, *Comparative Grammar of the South African Languages*, p. 89.

244 pumpkins, another will go to the field and plant some seeds in
753 it without the old man's knowledge ; then people will venture to
824 plant in their own gardens. Transgression of this taboo is said to be punished by lumbago.

222 There are, besides, many wild plants which the housewives
824 collect and of which they make excellent dishes : the *tjeke*, a
828 kind of Chenopodiacea, which is also used as a medicine to induce forgetfulness ; the *nkakana*, a pretty plant of the Cucurbitaceae family, which climbs up the dried stems of maize after the harvest, and of which they eat the leaves and also the pretty little oval pointed fruit.

137 *Tomatoes* (shimati) are also found growing round the villages,
285 where they propagate themselves, and seem to prosper the better the less they are cared for : the Natives take them to Lourenço Marques for sale in very original baskets made of a single palm leaf, with the follicles artistically twisted. I am unable to say when they were introduced. There is a agreeable kind of small tomato which grows wild in Khosen, about the size of a cherry.

244 Natives also cultivate a kind of *onion* (nyala, yi-tin), smaller than the European varieties, which they very much appreciate in their sauces.

249 *The sugar cane* (moba, mu-mi) is never grown in large plantations, but you find it on the Coast, as well as in Zoutpansberg, cultivated on a small scale, either for eating, or for preparing the strong *shiwayawaya* drink, which I shall describe later on.

245 The *pine-apple* (lalasi, dji-ma) has spread as far as the Bilene country and must be of ancient date ; it differs considerably from the Natal pine-apple, being longer, coarser and not so sweet. In many villages large plantations are to be seen.

249 *Tobacco* (fole, dji-ma) is also wide-spread and seems to have been cultivated for a long time. A curious fact is that its cultivation is the business of the men, and women have nothing to do with it. Amongst the Ba-Ronga it is sown first in a damp spot in the marsh, in a special little garden called *shibibi*, and, when it has grown a little, is planted out (simeka) on the hill, near the villages. When nearly ripe the lower leaves are first

themselves, the rest of the body remaining stark naked... except, 177
of course, for the indispensable belt of tails. One day a Rikatla 291
lad came to see me with an eye-glass fixed triumphantly on his forehead, and when I asked him what was the use of that article he replied, really meaning what he said : "Ndji yambalile" — "I have dressed." He intended to do me honour. The same lad came, on another occasion, wearing coquettishly on his head a lady's black lace hat, which he seemed to consider very "chic." I much preferred the get-up of an individual, by name Glas, who put a red lily in his tightly-curled hair, and made a chin strap of a flexible reed which he passed through the holes in his ears on either sides, so that it formed a sort of frame to his face. Every Thonga has already learned to know a *buluku* (trousers), a *djansi* (jacket), a *fascikoti* (apron, a corruption of the word waistcoat), a *hembe* (shirt), *masokisi* and *memeya* (stockings) and *shilembe* (hat). The majority of these words have doubtless come from the Boer dialect, and have changed somewhat in passing into the language of the Natives.

The "civilised" attain the height of bliss when they are able to procure an irreproachable suit of clothes, and it is a sight to behold these young men returning direct from Johannesburg, dressed in the latest style, with a white starched shirt, a silk cummerbund, and jacket and trousers to match. They think themselves handsome, but we do not share their illusion! How often have we not longed to see them adopt some costume suited to their colour, their customs, their occupations, and their climate! But they want to be like us, so what is to be done ? (1) Their 177
idea of costume is evidently different from ours : they consider it 291
as an adornment rather than as an actual protection against cold 613
or heat. If it rains, or if it is cold, they much prefer to wrap

(1) I have heard it asserted that the adoption of European clothing by the Blacks 753
tends to enfeeble them, even to the extent of rendering them liable to new diseases. I was assured that the introduction of tuberculosis amongst them is due to their clothes. This assertion is at least very much exaggerated. However it is certain that the exposure of their skin to the rays of the sun was extremely healthy. On the other hand, they do not know that wet clothing must be changed (they may have no second suit to put on), so they catch cold, and pneumonia or pleurisy sets in... I have also heard it stated that the second-hand, cast-off garments which traders sell them often infect them with syphilis (especially after circumcision), or other poisons.

Another taboo in connection with the making of a pot is this: when a pot has been fired, it must still be *tested*; this operation is called *ku khangula*, or *kwangula*, and is performed in the following way. A little water is poured into it, and the potteress washes it thoroughly; then some grains of maize are cooked in it and thrown away. This is to remove the *nkwangu*, or *nkhangu*, viz., the danger attending the use of an untested, unpurified pot: people using such an implement would suffer from an eruption on the arms, and even on the whole body. To give any one food to eat from a pot which has not been *khangula* is looked on as an act of hatred.

Phot. D. Lenoir.

Pots used to draw water.

The pot, or boiler, used for cooking is called *nhlambeto* (yin-tin, Ro.) or *mbita* (yin-tin Dj.); it has a very wide opening. Smaller boilers are also made, even quite diminutive ones called *shihlembetwana* or *shimbitana*. The beer jar (khuwana, dji-ma), illustrated on page 101, No. 13, is of the same size as the boiler, but can be easily recognised by its straighter neck. Enormous beer jars are sometimes manufactured, perfect amphoras (hotjo, yin-tin), but they rarely stand the firing and are therefore scarce and expensive, fetching as much as ten shillings each: they may be two feet high; the ordinary cooking pot does not cost more than sixpence. The porringers, or large plates, are called *mbenga* (mu,-mi; No. 12) (1).

Shibindji clay is also used for making very short *pipes* (shipana), prettily shaped, probably in imitation of the European cutty. Smoking does not seem to be an indigenous habit; in the interior

(1) No. 11, on page 101, shows a small vase modelled by a young Native girl, an invalid from Natal (Station of Inanda).

137 in the case of the Hibiscus genus. Its name is *Ntjhesi*; there
824 are the Ntjhesi of the hill (Hibiscus surratensis, etc.), the Ntjhensi
757 of the nyaka, another species found in Morakwen in the black
815 earth; and there is the *shitjhesinyana sha ntlhaba*, double diminutive of ntjhesi, the Sida cordifolia, a pretty little Malvacea, a near relative of the Hibiscus, very much used in treating children's complaints, a panacea for babies, as it cures their vomiting, headache, wounds and internal troubles!

137 I find the same correct connection established between two
824 Anonaceae shrubs, the Artabotrys brachypetala, called *Ntiti*, and
815 the Art. Monteiroae, called *Shintitane*, little Ntiti, of the same genus, but a shrub of a very different appearance.

However there is, of course, no anatomical study at the base of this classification: so their ideas of genus are not always, scientifically speaking, correct. They call any parasite *Phakama*, whatever may be its form, and have a superstitious fear of them, especially of the larger ones, growing on other trees, such as the nkanye and nkuhlu: "Phakama dja singita!" (1)

137 *Nkushe* means sea-weed, either the true algae, as Lagarosiphon muscoides, or other plants growing in water and belonging to totally different families, such as Urticularia stellaris, found in the same locality. *Nkaka*, or *Nkakana*, is the little Cucumber already described (p. 14), whilst *Nkaka wa tjhobo* is a Convolvulvus (Ipomea cairica). The *Shirimbyati*, one of the names most employed, designates first the Helichrysum parviflorum, a yellow Composita which covers the sandy dunes, and blossoms during the winter; but *Shirimbyati sha tjhune*, the male one, is Gnaphalium stenophyllum, and *Shirimbyati sha mutju*, the one of the forest, an Indigofera belonging to the Leguminosae family; these three plants have in common small hard leaves: hence the same name is given to them, although they are by no means related botanically speaking. So shirimbyati corresponds to our word heath, which is applied to many forms of evergreen undergrowth.

777 (1) "The parasite stem *singita*," i. e. is of bad omen. They do not say *yila*, is
824 taboo, though some rules apply to it similar to those concerning the tree struck by lightning. One does not warm oneself at its fire; its wood is not employed to cook
753 food, for fear lest men should suffer from hydrocele.

136 birth to the big green moth with long tails, the Queen Moth. The
815 reason why butterflies, though plentiful in Thongaland, have so little attracted the attention of Natives is, no doubt, the fact that they do not in any way contribute to their food. I have told the story of a woman who tried to force a child to eat a butterfly. (I. p. 445.)

136 *Coleoptera.* The general term for Coleoptera is *Shifufununu*, and it especially applies to the big Tenebrionidae (Psammodes
825 Bertoloni), called *shifufununu sha paripari* (p. 68) and to the large
777 black Carabidae of the Anthia genus which abound on the roads in spring ; one of them, marked with small depressions on the elytra is, for that reason, called the small-pox shifufununu (sha nyedzane). Travelling once with a grown-up Thonga we saw a black Carabida which had four white spots on the back. It was the charming Eccoptoptera mutilloides. I saw him trace a circle round it in the sand saying : "To-day I shall eat to my heart's content!" — "Namunhla ndji ta shura!" — "What are you doing?" I said. — "Oh! This is the *Shurwa-shurwane*," he answered. "When you meet it it is a sign that you will have plenty to eat!" He was mistaken! The real shurwa-shurwane is the Mutilla, a kind of apterous wasp, which has also four white spots on its back, and the beetle we met was so similar to it that he mistook it for a Mutilla ; is it not called mutilloides, pseudo-mutilla? (1)

136 — The Copridæ are called *Gadlen* (dji-ma) and these strange
[753] dung-eaters, which are extremely abundant in the country, are thought to be under the command of the wizards who can introduce
825 them into your body to kill you. The pretty Cerambycidæ,
262 with their long horns, are the *Ñwahamurikotjo*, the ox of Rikotcho, or, according to a truer etymology, the ox with horns bent backwards (kotjeka). Children sing an incantation before them, clapping their hands (I, p. 68). Their big white larvae, the *Shipungwana*, dig channels in the stems of nkanye, nkuhlu, mphesa, etc., and are readily eaten as well as the *Shimhukuta*, the

(1) This custom reminds one of the action of Swiss children when they send the ladybird to heaven, to ask God to give them fine weather to-morrow, or of their saying that crushing a golden Carabus on the road will cause rain to fall. Certain Coleoptera are of good omen everywhere! Only, if in Europe they foretell fine weather, in Africa they announce a good meal. The difference is significant!

769 with. I never heard it said that the gods were in heaven, not-
776 withstanding the Sutho term badimo, which is believed by some to mean those who are above.

5. Relations between Ancestor-gods and their living descendants.

769 The apparitions of ancestor-gods in a human form in the
776 sacred woods are not of frequent occurrence. The gods reveal
825 themselves to their descendants by other and more common means; first, by their appearance *in the form of animals*, such
753 as the Mantis (p. 335) or more often as little bluish green snakes called *shihundje* (p. 340). These charming and harmless reptiles are frequently seen in the huts, crawling in the thatch of the roof, or along the reeds of the walls (1). Natives never touch them, thinking that they are some of their gods who have come to pay them a visit. It is taboo to kill them. If a disease breaks out in the village the bones may reveal that some one in the hut has hurt the gods, and a sacrifice will be required in order to appease them. They also appear in the form of the large grey puff-adder (shiphyahla) (2).

769 Secondly, the ancestor-gods communicate with the living
776 *in their dreams*. If some one dreams of one of his dead relatives,
787 he is very much frightened, and consults the bones, in order

769 (1) This is the story which I heard from one of my informants of the Khosa
825 country: All his family was once assembled together for a marriage feast. The people were playing on the village square and enjoying themselves. The old women had remained in the hut, and suddenly they saw two little green snakes crawling along the reeds of the wall. They were much afraid, and at once called the headman. He came in, saw the snakes, and said: "Do not fear! These are our ancestor-gods! They have come to share in our feast."

(2) Describing to me a sacrifice at which he officiated either in September or October 1895, the old priest Nkolele told me as a fact the following story, which I will now quote word for word:

"I myself went into the wood with the offering I had prepared for the gods, and then *it came out*. It was a snake; it was the father of Makundju, the Master of the Forest, Mombo-wa-ndlopfu, Elephant's-Face. He came out and circled round all those present. The women rushed away terrified. But he had only come to thank us. He didn't come to bite us. He thanked us saying: 'Thank you! Thank you! So you are still there, my children! You came to load me with presents, and to

787 see, why divination plays such an important part in their life.
769 It is of the utmost importance to know what their gods think
776 and do, as the very existence of the village, and of the clan, and the welfare of every member of the clan depends on them. Is not Łukwembo, Divinity "the power of killing or of making alive, of enriching or of making poor?" Natives believe firmly in these two opposite actions of their gods. They are the masters of everything: earth, fields, trees, rain, men, children, even of baloyi, wizards! They have full control over all these objects or persons.

769 The gods can *bless*: if the trees bear plenty of fruit, it is because
776 they have made it grow (I. p. 414); if the crops are plentiful, it is because they forced wizards to increase them, or hindered them
777 from spoiling them (I. p. 396); if you come across a pot of palm wine, it is your god who has sent you that windfall (p. 44). When Mboza escaped from the Morakwen battle, one of his relatives exclaimed on his return home: "The gods of Makaneta have still been with you!" (Psikwembu psa ka Makaneta psa ha ku yimelele.) Often when a man has narrowly escaped drowning, or spraining his ankle on a stump which has caught his foot, he will say: "The gods have saved me."

769 But they can also *curse*, and bring untold misfortune on their
776 descendants. If the rain fails, it is owing to their anger; if a tree
789 falls on you, they have directed its fall; if a crocodile bites you, the
753 gods have sent it; if your child has fever and is delirious, they are in him, tormenting his soul; if your wife is sterile, they have prevented her from childbearing; perhaps the gods of your mother have done this, because you had not given your maternal uncle the *tjhumba* part of the lobolo, which he has the right to claim (I. p. 267); in fact any disease, any calamity may come from them. There are, of course, other sources of misfortune: the baloyi, for instance, or Heaven, and the bones will show who has caused the mischief; but the ancestor-gods are certainly the most powerful spiritual agency acting on man's life. Hence the necessity of propitiating them by prayers and sacrifices.

Though you eat plenty of fat and of honey, and drink plenty of beer, the day will come when you will say "Huku-huku" (fall on your back, i. e. die); people will say "Woo" (i. e. mourn you), and ask you: "Where are you going?" Then answer: "I am going to Ngundju-ya-mapsele, the Source-of-Grace, to the place where the oxen are herded by vultures (because there is no hatred and no death there), where the mosq·ito is killed with a stick (because everything is so flourishing and big there), where the fowl dies from fat (because there is no disease nor dearth in that blessed land) — to Heaven!" 772

This Hlengwe had either heard these words in his home or had invented them himself.

But Tilo is something more than a place. It is a *power* which acts and manifests itself in various ways. It is sometimes called *Hosi*, Lord. But this power is generally regarded as something entirely impersonal. Thongas appear to think that Heaven regulates and presides over certain great cosmic phenomena to which men must, willingly or unwillingly, submit, more especially those of a sudden and unexpected nature, by which I mean above all rain, storms, and, in human affairs, death, convulsions and the birth of twins. From this idea spring certain very characteristic customs, which I shall proceed to describe briefly.

It is Heaven that afflicts children with those terrible and mysterious *convulsions*, which carry them off without their having been really ill, in a manner of speaking... "He is ill from Heaven" — "A ni Tilo," said an old Native doctor to me in a low tone, referring to a case of this description. So Heaven is the great nombo (infantile disease), (I. p. 48), whilst diarrhea is the small nombo. [753]

But more than this, *it is Heaven which kills and makes live.* Hence the frequent expression: "Heaven loved him," when someone has escaped some deadly danger, or is particularly prosperous, and "Heaven hated him," when he has been very unfortunate, or has died.

The same idea is expressed in the following dirge. 772 539

Wa hi kanganyisa, Tshabane!
Hi yingeli Tilo, dji ku dja buya nininini!
Hi kumi babanuna babiri, ba famba ba hlahluba Tilo.
Wa nga yingela psa bambe, u ta yingela ni psa ku!

757 *dlambangi*, *Likalahumba*, *Nkonono* (Terminalia sericea) and *Nsala*
278 (Strychnos spinosa). That for *bronchitis*, or for a cold in the head, is *Menyomamba*, *Mphesu* (a kind of mimosa, Albizzia versicolor) *Shongwe*, *Ntshatshe* (a papilionaceous shrub), *Gowane* (Zygia fastigiata, a large mimosa) and *Muhlandlopfu*. The last is a very
[753] powerful drug; the last but one less so. For *hydrocele* the following are used: *Lihlehlwa*, *Ntshatshe*, *Nkonono*, *Mamuntana*.

Thonga Pharmacopoeia.

1. Box made of maize bracts, containing medicine. 2. Shituimbo. 3. Skin of a mole, containing powdered drugs. 4. Pill (Mhula). 5. Bracelet of *tjukunyane*. 6. *Timfisa*, amulets. 7. *Sungi* root tied round the ankle.

The Natives regard this complaint as contagious, and as being transmitted by matrimonial relations.

I obtained two *purgatives* from my Native doctors. The first is *an aloe*, or cactus, a species of which grows plentifully on the sand dunes. The sap is squeezed on to grains of millet or sorghum, which are kept in neatly constructed boxes of maize leaves; these are made by plucking an ear of maize, breaking off the cob and leaving the large bracts which enclose it and which adhere to

on live embers, a pot containing leaves which are supposed to 757
possess medicinal properties. A second mat is then spread over the top of the enclosure, thus shutting the patient up in a sort of small hut. The smoke from the live embers makes him cough terribly. The hot vapour from the pot induces profuse perspiration from every pore, and the victim of this treatment is left for a very considerable time in this intensely uncomfortable condition! When, at length, the remedy is supposed to have had sufficient time to act efficaciously, the mats are removed. The patient suddenly finds himself in the open air, absolutely dripping with perspiration. I saw a man remain in this condition, in the chill of the evening, apparently risking inflamation of the lungs. The doctor rubs his cheeks, or some other parts of his body, with either a white or a black powder. Such is the Thonga Turkish bath, which is frequently referred to in their folklore. — The [753] phungulo is administered in most cases where ritual defilement is feared, or is believed to have caused the disease. The kind of poisoning caused by the impurities connected with death, menses, lochia, etc., manifests itself by swelling of the joints, of the hands and feet, pains in the bones, etc. This vapour bath is also resorted [842] to in order to cure married people who do not succeed in having children. The physician makes for them a shitsimbo packet of the following roots : *Nhlangawume, Mpoñwana, Ritiyi* ; he cooks this in the pot inside the mat enclosure ; and into the fire, under the pot, he puts part of the flesh of the goat which has been sacrificed for the occasion, in particular the uterus. This flesh has been previously smeared with drugs. So, by means either of the vapour, or of the smoke, the medicine enters the patients. "Ba wupfa," — "they ripen" or "are cooked." When the mat is removed, a pot full of cold water is poured over them and extinguishes the phungulo which has "cooked them." They will have to take home the meat, and cook it in their hut together with the packet of roots. Another packet is put into the pot in which they keep their beer.

A third practice, quite as old as the foregoing, is the *tlhema* or *cautery*. This may be done with a packet of roots, which are heated and applied to the part affected. But, as a general rule,

occasions he has been presented with a chicken as an encouragment; 756
but on the day of the hondlola, when his skill is joyfully affirmed, and the cure an accomplished fact, accounts must be definitely settled with the ñanga, who will henceforth discontinue his visits.

III. *Conception of Disease.*

The preceding details make it possible for us to understand the 753
conceptions which underlie these rites and ceremonies. Possessing as they do so few and such inaccurate notions regarding Anatomy or Physiology, it is not surprising that correct pathological knowledge is absolutely non-existent amongst South African Bantus. In fact this knowledge is both superficial and superstitious. I shall try to prove this by a study of the *names* given to the diseases, the *causes* to which they are attributed, the *notion* of contagion, and the ideas underlying the *rites which mark the end of a disease.*

1) As regards the method of *naming diseases*, it is most childish. 753
Thongas call the complaint from which they suffer by the name 827
of the organ affected ; for instance "I have a foot, I have a hand, I have a neck" (ndji ni nenge, boko, nkolo) means "I have a pain in my foot, my hand or my neck." These curious expressions doubtless arise from the fact that no notice is taken of the existence of any particular organ until something goes wrong with it. "He has a head" means "He is mad." For "I have a headache," the expression "ndji yingela nhloko," meaning "I feel my head," would generally be used. Very often one hears complaints of "a blood" (ngati) which moves from spot to spot, finally taking up its abode in the side or in the stomach, or elsewhere. This is an idea similar to that of the morbid humours of olden days. There are then as many diseases as there are organs, and we are often asked for remedies for the "nape of the neck complaint," or for the "inside trouble." This latter might be gastritis, congestion of the liver, or dysentery, and we should often be wholly at a loss how to prescribe were it not for the highly picturesque, and often particularly appropriate, imagery used by the patients, or by their friends, in describing the various symptoms ; for instance when

753 a sufferer from "inside trouble" says that "it bites" (luma),
827 we know that it is a case of intestinal colic. But it becomes somewhat puzzling when a patient declares that he suffers from an intestinal worm which passes from his stomach into his neck and returns through his lungs, when it does not happen to take a fancy to remain in his head! "It makes a sound like *pfie...pfie...*," said an old man to me when describing this animal, which plays an important part in the medical science of the Natives (1). (I. p. 48.)

[164] There are, however, certain technical terms which are used to designate some diseases ; thus *mukuhlwana* means cough and the mucous catarrh of the throat and nose. The ordinary *mbukulu* seems to be tonsilitis, while the special *mbukulu* is an affliction accompanied by fever, vertigo, delirium and madness, which is generally attributed to the malign influences of the spirits of the departed. — Hydrocele *(masangu*, or *masenge)* is wide-spread and well-known, as is also bilharzia, a form of haematuria called *shinyalu* or *ndjandjwane*, which appears in severe forms and is due to a special parasite. Rheumatism is called *shifambo*, the runner, as it moves from spot to spot. Syphilis, imported long ago by Europeans, is universally known, and is, alas, so general in the neighbourhood of the town of Lourenço Marques that almost all Natives suffer from it. The Natives call it *buba* (probably from bubo). Gonorrhea is of more recent importation, and dates — according to my informant Tobane — from the time of the construction of the Pretoria Railway ; it is called *shikandjameti*, the disease which crushes the villages.

The eruptive diseases are perhaps those best recognized by the Natives. *Shintshinana* is the name for measles, but seems also applicable to scarlet fever. Small-pox is called *nyedzana*, and, as regards psychic or nervous troubles, the treatment of which

(1) I may here mention that the tape worm and the lumbric, both called *tinyokana*, small snakes, are very common amongst Natives, and are well known to them. They even think that these worms are necessary for digestion. An old woman had asked one of my colleagues to give her a vermifuge, and the drug had been successful. But she came back to ask him to give her another medicine to prevent all the inhabitants from escaping. Some of them must remain in her body "because," as the old woman said, "who would eat my food afterwards" ?

we have just studied, they are attributed either to Heaven or to evil spirits or to the winds. The name of the *wutleka* disease is worthy of notice. This word comes from *wutla*, which means to rob, to seize; wutleka, the qualificative derivative (Thonga Grammar § 196) means the condition of something taken away. This would seem to be a passive meaning, as if the patient had been robbed by some agent. However, Mankhelu explains the term by saying: "The patient has stolen the *rirabi*" — "a wutle rirabi". *Rirabi* is very closely allied to a word meaning stick; the old doctor says it is the name of the disease. If this etymology be correct the patient would be considered as having taken the disease by a kind of robbery. But Native etymology must always be accepted with caution. 753 827

All these names show how unprecise is the pathological knowledge of the Thongas.

2) As regards the *causes of diseases*, Thongas are groping in the grossest superstition. When a medical man wishes to treat a disease, he first tries to diagnose its cause. The Bantu ñanga does the same, only the difference is that he takes very little notice of the physical symptoms. There is no auscultation, no palpation, no examination of the secretions, blood, saliva, or urine, as these are disgusting and must be covered with sand as soon as possible! The great means of diagnosing a disease is the throwing of bones. There are three great causes of disease: the spirits of the gods, the wizards and the makhumo, defilement from death or from impure persons. A fourth less common cause is Heaven. The bones will reveal by the way in which they fall which is the one to be combated. 753 787

3) Their ideas of *contagion* are not much in advance of their other pathological conceptions. The two most dreaded diseases in this respect are consumption (lifuba) and leprosy (nhlokonho). *Consumption* is by no means a new ailment due to civilisation, though it has increased enormously since Thonga boys have gone to the towns. A proof that it has been known for a long time is to be found in its great importance in the ritual. To the Thonga mind it is caused by the *makhumo*, i. e., the contamination of death, or the defilement resulting from contact with a woman in 753 164 751

753 a state of physiological impurity. Hence the law ordering
164 people affected with any of these kinds of makhumo to eat with
751 spoons ; they thus protect themselves against the poison which might cause them to become consumptive. A curious feature in the conception of *contagion* is the following. When Sokis died (I. p. 139) I heard some of those present saying to his sister, who was carrying a child on her shoulders : "Do not cry! If you cry the disease will jump to your baby!" There were two reasons for this warning ; to cry in the presence of misfortune increases
753 the danger tenfold (compare p. 326) ; moreover the contagion of
768 disease is especially to be feared in connection with the relatives of the sick or dead person. Hence the strange custom illustrated on plate p. 26 : when a man dies of consumption his relatives are absolutely forbidden to eat any of the food he may have left. The "luma milomo" ceremony (I. p. 146) is of no use in this case. In former times all his mealies were burnt. Nowadays, however, it is allowable for people outside his family to buy and consume his provision. The large storehouse, illustrated on p. 26, contained the mealies harvested in Sokis' fields. These were sold to strangers, whilst relatives bought other mealies which were stored in the small hut for the use of his widow and children (p. 111). The same reason no doubt explains why the widow of a consumptive must *lahla khombo* with strangers, and not with men of the village (I. p. 206).

758 This peculiar idea of contagion also gives rise to the rules
766 for *burying lepers*. Their relatives must not have anything to do with the burial (I. p. 508). Relatives-in-law can perform
768 this painful duty, or possibly the family of the deceased leper will ask a friend to help them in their distress. "Have you prepared something as a reward for me?" he asks, and if this is the case he digs a grave just outside the wall of the hut where the patient died, removes the reeds of the wall, and pulls the corpse down into the hole without any funeral ceremony. The relatives are assembled far away on the square, and do not even dare to look on at the burial. All the implements are broken in the depths of the forest, at a great distance, for fear that a relative might touch one of them and die. Or they are left in the hut, and the whole village is at once removed.

village is at once removed. Leprosy is called *nhlulabadahi*, 758
the disease which is stronger than the doctors. It is very much dreaded; lepers are not, however, segregated; they live in the village with other people and even attend beer-parties, but they bring their own mugs, whilst every other guest receives a drinking utensil from the master of the village.

Another disease which is believed to be contagious is 753
"possession" by the *Bandjoo spirits*. Should you pick up on 828
the road some object which belonged to one of the possessed, his madness will jump to you (tlulela). — Epilepsy is also dreaded on that account. A nursing woman must not see any one suffering from an attack of this disease, or the child which is on her shoulders will become epileptic.

Speaking of the conception of disease, I must remind the reader 753
of the fact that *sexual relations* between the inhabitants of the 839
village are believed to aggravate the condition of the patient dwelling in it (I. p. 133, II. p. 358), and are consequently forbidden during epidemics and in any case of serious illness. Hence the precautions which convalescents must take of wearing the *sungi*, as we have just seen.

4) The special rites which mark the end of an illness throw much 753
light on the Thonga conception of disease. A serious illness 783
constitutes a marginal period either for the individual concerned, 184
or, in the case of an epidemic, for the community, and the hondlola 755
rite is the method by which the patient is reintegrated into society; it clearly has the character of a passage rite. The rubbing with peanyi, the removal of the defilement of disease, the throwing away of the "timbhorola," the cutting of nails and hair, all these are rites of separation from the period of disease, whilst the feast of the hondlola day, and the resuming of sexual relations (1) are rites of reintegration. In the disease of possession, as we shall see it is the reintegration into the society of spirit-possessed persons and amounts to an initiation.

(1) We often hear of a Christian woman, who has gone to a heathen medicine-man for treatment, having sexual intercourse with him. We generally attribute this fact to immorality alone, but it was probably a part of the treatment, at the precise moment when sexual taboos were removed.

753 In the case of an epidemic, it is the whole clan which passes
184 through the marginal period, and all its members have to perform
755 the reintegration rites, by means of which they re-inter upon
783 normal life.

But these rites have another meaning as well. They aim at "dispersing the disease." In the hondlola proper, the particles which have fallen on the mat during the rubbing operation are cast away into an ants' nest; this is the *tumba*, which corresponds to the throwing away of all the "nsila", i. e. the "filth" of the small-pox patients at a cross-roads. In this case the body of the patient is also washed at that spot; this is likewise done at the conclusion of measles. The same idea underlies all these customs, that by their means the patient or clan will *definitely get rid of the disease*. Disease forms an organic whole, an important element of which consists of the dried perspiration of the patient, the dirt covering his skin, the implements he has used during his confinement, the dust of his hut, etc. All these are thrown either into an ants' nest to be disposed of there by the insects, or on to the road to be trampled under foot by travellers. The latter, by coming into contact with this filth, will at the same time take upon themselves the disease which it represents and carry it away into far distant countries. Thus the request of the medicine man will be granted, (I. p. 55, II. p. 393): "Let the bad blood go to Nkhabelene, to Shiburi... to the ends of the earth." I do not think that in this apparently hostile act of throwing the dust of a contaminated hut on to the road Thongas are actuated by the wish that travellers should be infected with the disease. Their principal aim is to disperse the contagion according to the principles of communionist and imitative magic. It is however dangerous to tread upon it. It is one of those "makhumo" which can cause disease.

000 The medical system of the Bantus is mingled to such an extent with superstition and error that very little reliance can be placed upon it. The question which I put at the beginning of this section is therefore very difficult to answer. What is the duty of the White Government in regard to the Native quacks? The ideal would be to replace them by fully qualified, civilised doctors. As this is impossible, let medical missionaries at least be encouraged, and their number increased, and

000 a medical course be open to educated Natives, if not a complete University course, at least such instruction as would allow them to treat their fellow men in a scientific manner, the medicine-men being gradually prevented from practising their very questionable art.

B. POSSESSION.

753 The curious psychic phenomenon which I am now about to describe belongs to the domain of medecine ; it is "the disease," or rather the "madness of the gods" (bubabyi bya psikwembu). But at the same time it bears a distinctly religious character, the spirits which are believed to cause the disease being *psikwembu*, spirits of deceased people, to whom worship will be addressed. On the other hand, the rites connected with the treatment of this kind of madness are definitely magical, and those who have suffered from it often become recognised magicians, claiming to possess supernatural powers.

This is a very interesting subject from the point of view of psychology and psychiatry. Phenomena of possession exist amongst most uncivilised races, even amongst more advanced peoples, and it would be useful to compare the manifestations of this disease amongst Bantus with those met with in other parts of the world. I shall however leave this task to professionals, and only try faithfully and clearly to describe and, if possible, to understand, the facts which I witnessed myself. This disease has spread enormously amongst the Thongas in the last fifty years. It is said to have been previously very rare, or even unknown ; since that time it has become quite an epidemic, although it is at the present moment rather on the decrease. Possession is more frequent amongst the Ba-Ronga than in the Northern clans.

1. *The Spirits which Cause the Disease.*

753 776 Strange to say, the gods or spirits which are credited with the power of possessing people, are not the ancestors of the Thongas themselves, the ancestor-gods, but Zulu spirits and those

753 776 of the Ba-Ndjao tribe, who inhabit the country beyond the Sabie, as far as the neighbourhood of Beira. It appears that the possessions which first occurred were due to the Zulu and Ngoni spirits ; possibly they coincided with the invasion of the warriors of Manukosi, and with the ever-increasing exodus of young men who go to work in the diamond mines at Kimberley, or the gold mines at Johannesburg, or Natal, and travel through territory occupied by Zulus. As regards the Ba-Ndjao spirits they are sometimes called *amandiki*, and are said to have followed the Thonga and Ngoni soldiers of Gungunyana, who established themselves for some years at Mosapa, right in the middle of the Ndjao country, to the North of the Sabie, and who, later on, came down again from that mountainous region into the fertile plain of Bilene. (Lower Limpopo.) On the other hand, when the war of 1894 to 1895 compelled the Northern Ba-Ronga, those from Mabota, Zihlahla and Nondwane to flee, they took with them, so the story goes, the gods who had possessed them, and "scattered" them so thoroughly in the countries of the North that, when they returned to their own homes, they were no longer molested by these *psikwembu*. That is what I was told by a Native. We must carefully note, at the outset, these two ideas : the tormenting spirits are the *manes of strangers* and not of the people of the country, and they frequently attack Thongas who happen to be travelling in such countries, and follow them in their further migrations (1).

The Ndjao possessions appear to be worse than the Zulu. "Bundjao bya karata" — "the Ndjao possession is painful." If the incantations used are in Zulu for Zulu possessions, they are in the Ndjao language when such are caused by Ndjao spirits, and those who suffer from this affliction are known by the large white beads which they wear in their hair. Sometimes they have merely a short string of small beads, hanging down somewhere from the head. I well remember on the banks of a stream, in a

(1) However, in the case of Mholombo, the spirit was an old Tembe chief, a true ancestor, and in that of Nwashinhwana there was a throng of occupants, amongst them her own son, Manuel, who had died some time before. In the case of Mboza it was also a Ronga, but he had died in a foreign country (See later).

wooded valley called Nhlalalene, where we had made a halt during 753
one of our journeyings, seeing a good-looking young woman 776
wearing one of these curious ornaments. I was struck with the sight, and asked my companion why she was thus decorated. — "She invokes the spirits of the Ba-Ndjao," was the reply.

II. *Beginning and Diagnosis of the Disease.*

I have carefully studied the story of many cases of possession 168
amongst the Ba-Ronga (See *Bulletin de la Société Neuchâteloise* 753
de Géographie. Tome X, p. 388). Most of them began by a distinct crisis, in which the patient was unconscious, but this does not seem to have been brought about by any previous nervous trouble. A woman of the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques, *Ñwashinhwana*, fled from her home and threw herself into the Bay. The contact with the cold water restored her to her senses, after which the bones declared that she had *psikwembu*. Another, *Mholombo*, heard a voice calling her during a dream ; it was the possessing spirit, which revealed itself later on as a chief long since dead. I will now give full details of the case of *Mboza*, who was himself possessed at one time, and later on became a regular exorcist. After having worked in Kimberley for some time, he returned home in good health. Soon afterwards, however, he became lame for six months. He attributed his difficulty in walking to rheumatism (shifambo). There was some improvement in his condition, but he began to feel other symptoms ; he lost his appetite and almost entirely ceased to eat. Here is his testimony : "One day, having gone with another young man to gather juncus, in order to manufacture a mat, the psikwembu suddenly started in me" (ndji sunguleka hi psikwembu psikañwe). I came back home, trembling in all my limbs. I entered the hut, but suddenly I rose to my feet and began to attack the people of the village ; then I ran away, followed by my friends, who seized me, and at once the spirits were scattered (hangalaka). When I became conscious again, I was told I had hurt a *khehla* (a man with the wax crown (I. p. 129), and had struck other people on their backs :

158 "Ha!" they said, "he has the gods (or he is sick from the gods, a ni
753 psikwembu)." Thus the first signs of possession seem to be a
756 nervous crisis, but also the occurence of certain suspicious symptoms : a persistant pain in the chest, irrepressible hiccough, unusual yawning, emaciation without apparent cause, etc. These symptoms, however, are not sufficient grounds for a diagnosis, and the bones are always consulted in order to arrive at a conclusion. The amulets of the patient (called "his shade") are placed on the mat, and the bones thrown near them. We shall see, under letter D, how they must fall to confirm the diagnosis. Should they do so, a second consultation takes place in order to ascertain to what doctor the treatment must be entrusted. There are medicine-men who are specialists for this disease. They are not true *ñanga*, but are called *gobela* (dji-ma), at least amongst the Ba-Ronga, who suffer from possession more than the other clans. These gobela have formed many rival schools in which the drugs used, and the rites followed, differ slightly ; the schools of Kkongosa, Sindondondo, Ñwatshulu, who are men, and those of Ñwamutheto (in the Shifimbatello district) and of Thambulanyoka, viz., Snake-bone, both of whom are women, etc. Ñwashinhwana was treated by a disciple of Khongosa ; Mboza by Ñwatshulu.

III. *The Treatment of Possession, or Exorcism.*

755 In former times, the only remedy was waving a large palm-leaf (milala) in front of the patient. This was deemed sufficient to "scatter the spirits." Now the treatment is much more complicated. Though it varies slightly in the various schools above mentioned, it comprises four principal rites : the drum performance, the ablution in the gobo calabash, the drinking of the blood and the hondlola ceremony. In the Khongosa treatment the gobo rite comes first, and is called *baselo*. A certain root, the *phuphumane*, is prepared, and dipped into water in a big calabash cut in two so as to form a large basin. The mixture is stirred ; an abundant foam is thus produced and the patient must

thus remain in the grave, and not trouble other people. Moreover 766
a little hut is built on the grave itself, as was the case for Sokis 756
(I. p. 141), with the same intention, to protect the exorcised against heat and fatigue. If the deceased was not only a disciple but a master, his drugs will be stored in the hut till the adjudication of the inheritance. The most skilful of his followers, the one who best knows the use of these charms, will dance on the grave, all his companions clapping their hands to encourage him, and, when the mourning is ended, he will "raise the drugs," burning them as is done at the annual feast, and will eventually succeed his master.

6) Conclusion on Possession.

Cases of possession, such as those which occur amongst the Thongas, 158
are met with in a great many other countries. A Swiss missionary, the 753
Rev. H. Rusillon, working in the Paris Mission in Madagascar, has drawn attention to practices very similar to these, called the Tromba, amongst Hovas. It is impossible not to note the striking resemblance between the Thonga disease and that of the demoniacs of the New Testament. On hearing the story of the madman in Gadara, whose spirit called itself Legion, the Natives at once identify the phenomenon, and say: "These demoniacs had psikwembu."

These psychological phenomena are certainly of a morbid character. The fact that they generally appear in an epidemic form is significant. It has been noticed that similar epidemics have broken out in populations which have been weakened by the sufferings of a long war, when the nervous resistance had been reduced by privations. May not the progress of Alcoholism, together with the disintegration of the old social order caused by the influence of European civilisation, account for the spread of the disease amongst the Ba-Ronga in the last fifty years?

Whilst not pretending to analyse these phenomena scientifically and fully, I will here add two observations:

1) In the Jewish conception, phenomena of possession were due to *evil spirits*, devilish agencies, which tormented poor humanity, and were cured by the power of the real and true God. Dualism prevailed in their religious conceptions. This idea of dualism is altogether absent from the Thonga belief. South African Bantus have not yet reached that stage of religion where the antagonistic ideas of right and wrong are

158 transported into the realm of divinity, thus giving rise to the true gods
753 and the devils. Possessing spirits are not worse than ancestor-gods. They all are non-moral. They can bless and curse, and their moral character is not taken into account at all.

2) The progress of modern psychology gives an explanation of many of these phenomena. The disease of the personality which manifests itself in the presence of a double psychological consciousness is well-known ; the hypnotic suggestion which the tambourine players unconsciously exert on their victims, sufficiently explains the origin of the disease, and the kind of life led by the exorcised is well calculated to develop their mediumistic faculties. So many of the so-called miracles of possession are easily accounted for. It would however be going too far to exclude, a priori, any possibility of external spiritual influences in
[797] those phenomena. There is one very striking fact which is a source of great wonder to the Natives. These patients, as soon as they put themselves under Christian influence, are healed at once and for ever. We have, amongst our converts, exorcists who had acquired great fame, and who recount, with glowing eyes, how they have been delivered from their terrible anguish by their new faith. For, whatever success they may have obtained in their career of exorcists, their condition was a disease, a painful disease, and they are extremely glad to have been delivered from it. This fact must certainly be remembered when trying to arrive at an explanation of possession.

C. WITCHCRAFT.

789 I have pointed out, in an article published in the Report of
754 the S. A. A. A. S., of 1906, how little comprehension most White people have of this important but difficult subject. A confusion is almost always made between the *witches* and the *witch-doctors*. The French word *sorcier* and the English term *sorcerer*, indiscriminately used for those who cast spells and for magicians, lead to the same misconception. In order to avoid errors it is, I think, imperative first of all clearly to distinguish between *Black Magic* and *White Magic*. The adjectives black and white are not employed in this connection amongst South African Natives, but Thongas certainly do make the distinction and possess different terms for each. Black magic is called *Buloyi* ; it consists of the

784 vertige intellectuel). Prof. Raoul Allier, in his valuable book on
152 *La Psychologie de la Conversion chez les peuples non civilisés* (Vol. I. p. 250-260), ably describes the psychological process which takes place in the soul of the savage. Suppose some event to have happened which has caused a deep emotion in the tribe, the arrival for instance of the first Europeans with a number of unknown objects which arouse fear in the Native population. This emotion may perhaps subside and eventually be forgotten, and the tribe will accustom itself to the presence of the new comers ; but if some great misfortune supervenes, for instance if a serious epidemic breaks out, a new emotion will be produced throughout the country. This will remind the people of the emotion previously experienced on the arrival of the Europeans, and, in the disturbed state of mind thus created, the association established between the two emotions will be extended to the two facts which gave birth to these emotions, and the tribe will declare that the first fact is the cause of the second. Europeans and everything they brought with them will henceforth be considered as taboo. This is utterly illogical and the conclusion absurd. Yet this is what actually happens amongst people whose reasoning faculties are but little developed. These observations help us greatly in our understanding of primitive mentality, and many taboos may be psychologically explained in this way. Most of them, however, are inexplicable. They originate in the animistic or dynamistic collective representations of the tribe (p. 368) and these representations are instinctive, unconscious and consequently unaccountable.

784 2) How are they *enforced*? In as far as taboos have been
626 proclaimed by conscious agents, their transgression will meet with punishment by those agents. A chief will sue a subject
●753 using a hlonipha word. The gods will punish those who transgress the law of hierarchy, who pass all bounds in incontinence, who forget their duties towards them (p. 426). But, in most cases, the decree is not enforced by a conscious agent. The *taboo avenges itself directly*. Consumption, swelling of the legs, the impossibility of passing water, disease of one kind or another will follow the transgression, or the children will be covered with an eruption of pimples.

832 hut and tie the bag round his neck. What remains of the *timhoroia*
753 will be used to smear the hut. Then all the girls will love him ;
783 or in the case of a girl, she will soon be asked in marriage.
584 This ceremony is a characteristic *hondlola*, the same which is performed on the weaning day (see page 59) and after any serious disease ; it is a rite of removal of impurity. (Notice the termination ola, ula, ulula in these verbs ; it means generally to undo, to take away).

832 If the love charms do not obtain the desired result, the angry
754 boy will perhaps try to avenge himself. He will take a fowl, or
262 perhaps only an egg, treat it with special drugs and give it to the girl in order to bewitch her. This kind of witchcraft is called *ku dambikela*. (See the Chapter on Witchcraft, Part VI). The girl will give birth not to a child, but to an animal, a pigeon, or a snake. Or her genitalia will be changed and take the appearance of the male organ. This is one of the causes why eggs and fowls are taboo for girls.

Let us now hear from Tobane the description of the marriage rites amongst the Mpfumo clan. We shall afterwards see how the customs differ in other Ronga and Thonga clans.

II. *Marriage ceremonies of the Mpfumo clan.*

1) The betrothal (Buta).

584 When a young man has made up his mind to get married, and when he is in possession of the necessary lobola (1) cattle, he starts, one fine day, with two or three of his friends to look for a wife in the villages. He puts on his most brilliant ornaments and his most precious skins. Here they are, arriving in the village

583 1) *Ku lobola* means to buy in marriage. *Ku lobola* (a factitive derivative of the verb) is said of a father who claims a sum of money from his daughter's suitor. *Lobola* or *ndjobolo* or *bukosi* (wealth) is the sum paid, the ozen, the hoes, or the pounds sterling. We shall use these words, which are employed in Thonga as well as in Zulu and ought to be adopted as technical ethnographic terms. I use the verb for the act of paying and the noun for the sum itself.

888 In time of war, old people die in great numbers. During moments of panic, they are hidden in the wood, in the palm-tree swamps, while all the able-bodied population run away. They are killed by the enemy, who spares no one (it is the law of war), or they die in their hiding-places of misery and hunger!

As may be seen, the eve of life is very sad for the poor Thonga. There are however children who, to the end, show much devotion to their parents. The most to be pitied are those who fall to the charge of remote nephews or cousins. They can only repeat in a broken voice the sad refrain : " Ba hi shanisa! " — " They treat us very badly! "

G. DEATH

1. *The last days.*

763 Manyibane, the headman of a big village near Rikatla, is
513 dangerously ill. The men of his kraal, his friends, have come
834 to inquire about the illness (kamba shinyonga) and have learned
761 that it is serious. They issue this order to all the inhabitants : " Tlulan psilawen! " — " Keep each of you in his sleeping place, (viz. the men to the right of the hut, the women to the left) and have no more relations. It is taboo! The man would die! " Should visitors come, they are not allowed to enter the village. They must have kept " pure " for two days at least. Two sticks are planted on either side of the door of the hut, and a third is put over them so as to close the entrance. " It is the way black people have of making their proclamation, " says Mboza. " Everybody will know that a dying man is there and nobody will come in. " Should another man of the village have had relations with the same woman as the patient, he is doubly prohibited from seeing him, because the patient would break out into perspiration and die immediately. This is the great law of *matlulana*, as we shall see.

754 Of course the *ñanga* (doctor) has been called already. He

754 has tried his best. The bone-thrower also! He has perhaps discovered that the disease was due to a wizard. He has found him out by his art. The suspected one is called and solemnly ordered to heal the patient. He is shut up in the hut with him, and he must recall his deadly spells and restore the man to health. But this has not succeeded, any more than the doctor's drugs!

The dying man calls together all his relations, and utters his last wishes before them : " Somebody has not come ; go and fetch him " he says. When they are all present, he says to them : " All right, my brethren, my children. I wanted to see you before dying. I wanted you, especially so and so, who has been so good to me. The others hated me ; you always showed me love. Henceforth I entrust to you the care of my people. " He will probably designate his successor, who is to be the great one (nkulukumba), and recommend the others to obey him.

763 Then he reminds them of his debts, those he owes and those which are owing to him. " So and so has lobola our daughter and has not paid all the oxen... " He reveals to them also the place where he has buried some treasure. " Go to such a place, in such a hut, and you will find it. " He does not say a word about his wives and about their future, as such questions will be settled according to the laws relating to widows, which are well known.

When the breathing becomes shorter, those who watch over him begin to *bend his limbs* (ku khondla psiro (Ro.) ; ku putja (Dj.).) This is a very old custom, and is deemed so important that the operation begins before death, lest the rigidity of the body should prevent its being accomplished. When the bending of the limbs had been too long delayed, it has sometimes been necessary to break them. To avoid this disagreeable possibility, one may see those attending to the dying man take his hands gently and bring them close up to his chin, and fold his legs against his body. When asked why they do so, they will say : " It is the law. This is the way of caring for the dead (bekisa). " Or : " It is in order to have smaller graves to dig... " But I do not think this utilitarian reason to be the true one. Amongst the Ba-Ronga, where graves are dug in the soft sand, there would not be the least difficulty in making a larger hole.

581 says : "Nsati wa mabele u nga nabele loko u nge na bukosi."
832 — "Do not covet a woman with large breasts if you have no money..." This does not mean that she will cost more, but her father, knowing that she will not want for suitors, will not consent to let her go unless the full lobolo is paid at once. On the other hand a girl with an elongated face is admired more than one who is too broad-faced. Of the first they say : "She is pretty, she resembles an antelope" (a kota mhala) ; of the second : "She is
832 chubby-cheeked, she is like a sow." A light complexion is preferred
186 to a very dark one, because the white or yellow races are regarded
732 as superior, and a Native laying claim to any European or Asiatic
581 blood is proud of it. Parents, who also have their say in the
824 question of marriage, insist on two other points ; the working capacity of the girl, and the absence of any witchcraft blot in the family. Should her mother have been convicted of being a witch,
581 the girl will be feared. However, every girl finds a husband in the
583 land where polygamy flourishes. If he be slow in coming, she will apply to her doctor, who will prepare the *love charms*, which will make her "appear," so that she will be noticed by the boys (See page 100). If even that does not succeed, she has other means at her disposal and may go herself to make proposals to a man (wopsana). He is seduced by her, and constitutes himself a thief who has *tlhuba*, viz. "taken in marriage by abduction" (See page 119). The parents will claim the lobolo and he must pay it. Marriage and childbearing remain the only carreer to which a Thonga woman can look forward. Hence a number of special feminine taboos which are very curious.

2) Special feminine taboos.

262
845 Some of them concern girls *before childbearing* and cease after
784 parturition. In the Tembe and Maputju clans, girls must not eat
562 pork, because pigs root nervously with their noses ; the future child
825 would also move its head from one side to the other, when on the verge of birth, and this would make delivery difficult. Other

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* *

841 Let us consider first how conjugal relations are regulated in normal circumstances.

Every month during her "tihweti" the woman is taboo and no intercourse is allowed. This is one of the severest taboos. Should a husband infringe this law, his health would fail, and, should he be called to go to war, "his knees would shake," he would tremble and be unable to fight (1). As regards the woman, these days constitute a real marginal period during which she is absolutely secluded from her husband. She must keep to the left half of the hut and not trepass across the centre line. If she wants snuff, she is not allowed to go to her husband in the part in which he lies; she must send a child to fetch the tobacco she wants! During these days she sleeps on a special mat and puts on special clothes, the old ones which she brought with her for this purpose on the day she first came to the conjugal dwelling. When cooking, she must not touch the mealie meal with her hands, but with a spoon. A rich man who has plenty of spouses, and therefore plenty of food, will not touch the pot of the tabooed wife! At the end of the period, she smears the floor of the hut and puts on her ordinary clothing. (Annotatio 12)[1]. This is evidently the aggregation rite by which the woman returns to everyday life.

843 754 Normal relations continue during the first year of married life. Should the wife become pregnant, they are not suspended. It would even seem that they are rather recommended, as is shown by the following story: A young man once complained to me that he had been bewitched by his maternal aunt. The result of the spell she had cast over him was that he was no longer able to have sexual intercourse with his wife; and he was very angry, as he asserted that the aim of his aunt, in doing this, had been to prevent the successful issue of the pregnancy. She wanted

(1) The woman during her tihweti is also taboo for other persons. I heard of the case of a child who suffered from a hernia in the scrotum five days after birth. People said that it was the fault of certain women who had taken it in their arms during menstruation.

1 [See p. 618 in these categories or in 116—Analyst]

843 754 to hinder the child from growing and to put in its place, by means of her enchantments, a snake, a hare, a quail or an antelope!

834 After the birth, owing to possible contamination by the lochia, sexual intercourse is prohibited till the rite of tying the cotton 846 string (p. 56) has taken place. It is then allowed, but conception [886] must be avoided till weaning, when relations are resumed in the normal way, and this goes on till the time when the woman is no longer able to bring forth children. I know of no special rules in connection with the menopause.

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831 But, amongst Bantus, sexual relations are not an individual affair, as amongst nations more advanced in evolution. There is a mysterious relation between them and the collective life of the community. Hence the fact that, on certain given occasions, they are recommended, even ordered, or prohibited.

1) Cases of recommendation.

833 Sexual relations must take place on two principal occasions : when 783 the inmates of a village abandon it and go elsewhere to found a new one, and when the widows perform the painful rite of "lahla khombo" 587 (to cast away misfortune). We shall see, when studying these customs, 829 that sexual relations have here a twofold signification : 1) they "consolidate" the little community in its new abode, viz. they strengthen its structure by confirming the authority of its chief ; 2) they provide the principal means of getting rid of all contamination, especially of the defilement connected with death. (Annotatio 13.)[1]

2) Cases of prohibition.

834 Married people are not considered as being in a state of defilement, as 784 mourners are, for example. Yet this class of persons, called "ba-ku- 581 khila," constitute a danger for those members of the community who 829 are in a weak state of health. They must not come in contact with the 753 circumcised, because in that case their wounds would not heal properly.

1 [See pp. 518-519 in these categories or in VL--Analyst]

462 888 she has contracted such an intimate union with Mother Earth that she cannot conceive existence away from her gardens, and she crawls to them with her hoe, by a kind of instinct, till she dies.

764 The death of the woman is accompanied by the same rites as the death of a man. I must mention, however, the custom of *mahloko*, which takes place when a woman dies while still in her prime. Mahloko comes from *nhloko*, head. The explanation of this technical word is this : the parents of the woman say : "Our head (viz. a person belonging to us) has died ; let us go to mourn her."

587 578 Let us first see how this mourning takes place *in the Ronga clans*. If the two families were very friendly, the parents of the deceased will probably bring with them a little girl, saying : "This is our little green meat (mbuti), our little orange (rather sala, fruit of the nsala tree)." They offer her to the husband to take the place of the deceased wife, and a new contract will be made. The widower will then at once pay a first part of the lobolo, £ 5 for instance, and, in the course of time, he will marry his sister-in-law. But generally the visitors are angry, and the mahloko ceremony is very unpleasant. It may be that the deceased wife had not been entirely paid for. In that case her parents will come at the end of the mourning to "claim the herd" (ramela ntlhambi).

764 578 754 But though there may be no difficult lobola question in the way, uneasiness is felt, because the brothers of the deceased cannot help thinking that their sister has been killed by witchcraft. It was not yet time for her to die ; so she must have been bewitched by the husband's family, probably by her co-wives, who were jealous of her. When the Great Mourning took place, they hardly came to the mortuary village. One or two went to see their "head," and mourned her in their own kraal. To day, the day of mahloko, they assemble, and throw bones in order to know who will have to speak, who will receive the mahloko money, whether the money has been bewitched ? The whole company starts for the mortuary village, driving a goat before them. They sit down outside in the bush with dark looks ; there is no longer any hut to receive them... They have been noticed by the

764 inhabitants of the kraal. One of them, the saluter (mulosi), goes
604 to meet them and offers them a shilling. They keep silence.
He tells them the news of the village. They do not answer.
He leaves them and comes a second time with a fresh present.
754 Then they consent to tell the news of their home, but they do not enter the village. The same man returns to them a third time with £ 1 ; they refuse to accept it. He adds 10/. (£ 1.10 is considered the normal sum to be paid as a kind of fine by the widower to the parents of the deceased.) They refuse again : this is an insult! Happily the *ntukulu* is there ; he will act as mediator between the two families. The visitors summoned him on their arrival and he has been sitting with them the whole time ; is he not the son of their sister ? But before he went to them, his father has given him his instructions : "Tell them that I have not eaten your mother." The *ntukulu*, as we shall see, is very free with his maternal uncles. He has the right of teasing them, even insulting them. Seeing that they do not accept the money, he stands and gives vent to his grief, throws sand at them, tries to drive them away, weeps. "No! Father has not killed mother! He is not a wizard! She died a natural death!" They see his tears, and then consent to enter the village.

764 In front of the mortuary hut, all the belongings of the deceased
768 wife have been piled up, together with the straw crown of the hut :
595 her pots, plates, baskets, spoons, mortars, etc. The brothers
787 break everything. Should there be any new implements amongst
[578] them, they will perhaps give them to their nieces. Then they lift up the roof of the hut and throw it into the bush. They pick all the plaster from the walls and throw it away where they threw the roof. The sacrifice is then accomplished amidst the ruins of the destroyed hut. Whilst it is being prepared, the women of both families insult each other. The female relatives of the deceased say to the women of the village : "You have killed her because she was a splinter in your eyes" (shilabi). The others answer : "Have you seen us kill her ? Perhaps people do not die with you ?" The *bukwele*, the special jealousy which almost always exists between co-wives, explains how it is possible for them to address such amenities to each other. But the victim is

361 596 264 476 he or she has finished the meal, will have eaten a little of all that has been cooked on all the fires. It is impossible to imagine a more perfect communism than this as regards food! I myself witnessed this custom of the evening meal in Spoon Libombo's village in Rikatla. Amongst the inhabitants of the kraal there were two blind male adults, the wife of one of them being half blind herself ; the wife of the other was an old woman who could hardly till a few square yards of mealies and groundnuts, and keep the birds and the hens away from them. Spoon's wife and the wife of another man of the village alone were healthy and able to work normally. So the whole burden rested on their shoulders, as the share the other women could take in the feeding of the men was necessarily small. However I never heard Spoon grumble ; being the headman, he made it a point of honour that all the people dwelling with him should have enough to eat. Everybody who has lived with South African Natives has admired their wonderful readiness to share any food they may have with those present. Even children are much superior in this respect to White children. I attribute this virtue to the community of food which reigns in the Bantu village, and which is certainly one of the most attractive features of Kafir socialism. Village life has not taught the Thongas merely bad habits.

B. MOVING A VILLAGE AND FOUNDING A NEW ONE.

621 754 596 Large kraals similar to the one shown in our illustration were more numerous in former times than now. It is rare to meet with such a number of huts and so many people under one headman. Why ? Because, say my informants, the superstition of witchcraft has considerably increased in later times. Suppose the wife of one of the younger brothers should [787] die ; the divinatory bones reveal that this death is due to a witch ; they go so far as to designate one of the wives of the headman as guilty. No common life is any longer possible. The widower will move elsewhere and build a fence around his

621 own huts to protect them against would-be-witches. In this way
754 many villages are broken up by fear of witchcraft. Generally
596 speaking the Thonga village cannot long remain of any considerable size ; it tends to fall to pieces.

But there are other causes which may destroy the village and the idyllic life of the small community. The death of the headman, and lightning striking the village, are the two main causes which may bring about this event.

765 *Death of the headman.* There is a mystic tie between this man
596 and the social organism which is under him. Should he die, the village dies also... It is not abandoned at once. The whole
621 year of mourning will elapse before the moving. But as soon
787 as the widows and property have been distributed, the successor of the deceased will go and found his own village and the old one will remain a ruin (rumbi). Should any one else die, his hut will merely be thrown into the bush and the village will not be abandoned. But should these deaths increase, then the divinatory bones may order the place to be deserted, as it is defiled and dangerous.

821 If *lightning* strikes the hubo, it is a very bad omen. The
756 medicine man who has the power to "treat the place struck by
787 lightning" is called in. Should he be able to exhume from the
621 ground the mysterious bird which causes lightning, or at least the coagulated urine which it has deposited, and which is called Heaven (See Part VI), the people are allowed to stay. But if he does not discover it deep down in the soil, the village must move, as the presence of the mysterious power of Heaven inside the circle of huts would bring disaster. This is a taboo.

621 Another cause of moving is the *exhaustion of the gardens.* When
787 the fields are "tired" (karala) and do not produce sufficient food
596 for the inhabitants, they leave the place and look for pastures new. In that case the bones will be consulted. Sometimes, even, the village may be transported elsewhere for the sole reason that the people are tired of the place and want to change. If the bones confirm their wishes, they will move.

621 *The founding of a new village* is the occasion of most interesting
596 and characteristic rites, which afford us a new [illegible]

682 procedure. They are in advance of many tribes. The same
627 cannot be asserted when dealing with witchcraft!

Witchcraft (Buloyi). To the Thonga mind this is one of the
754 greatest crimes which a man can commit. It is equivalent to
683 assassination, even worse than murder, as a dim idea of anthro-
787 pophagy is added to the simple charge of killing. A wizard
694 kills human beings to eat their flesh. We shall study the conceptions of *buloyi* later on (Part VI) from a psychological point of view. Here it is mentioned only in as far as it gives rise to judicial cases. This particular crime being committed in great secrecy during the night, and in most instances even unconsciously, the Bantu tribunal uses two or three magical methods for discovering it. These *methods of inquiry*, which civilised nations have long ago abandoned, are :

1) *Divination by casting lots.* The objects used in our tribe for this purpose are the magic bones, the astragalus of goats, antelopes, etc, and shells, which I intend to study in a special chapter. When they have designated (ku ba, to beat) the wizard or witch (noyi) who has killed such and such a person, they are consulted a second time. If they confirm their verdict, the relatives of the deceased go to the chief and lodge their complaint. The accusation becomes official and is now in the hands of the tribunal.

2) The chief sends the plaintiff and accused to the magician who proceeds to the *divination by questioning* them and working himself up into an ecstatic condition (vumisa).

683 3) Should the accused be again designated and should he
695 deny his crime, he may request to be submitted to the *ordeal*,
824 viz, the trial by the solaneous plant called mondjo. If the drug
787 intoxicates him, his guilt is confirmed for the third time and the
754 tribunal will condemn him. The punishment for *buloyi* is death, either by hanging, or by empaling, or by drowning in the river, if the wizard was in the habit of perpetrating his murders by sending crocodiles to kill his victims.

[177] Nowadays Native chiefs dare not put to death suspected witches.
[681] Since the Ba-Ronga have been under the jurisdiction of the Whites, the *death penalty* has been abolished. On the other hand, under

627 683 754 Gungunyana, executions were of frequent occurrence. When the chief had condemned a man to death, he merely made a sign to one of his executioners, who followed the unfortunate individual, as he went away into the bush, possibly quite unconscious of the fate awaiting him, and dealt him a heavy blow from behind with either club or assagay, killing him on the spot. Chiefs now only expel wizards or witches from the country, accompanying them to the boundary, or impose a high fine on them, keeping half of the amount. However there are still individuals who avenge themselves for the death of a relative on the suspected murderer by killing him. Such cases are not infrequently brought before the Courts of Pretoria and Johannesburg.

177 681 627 683 754 What is the duty of the civilised tribunal in such instances? White judges generally condemn to death a man who has killed a "noyi". I know of cases in which even an induna who had hanged a "noyi," duly condemned by the Native Court, was himself considered a criminal and condemned as such. This happened to our friend Mankhelu, one of the pillars of the Nkuna tribe, the General of the army... He only escaped death owing to petitions sent to the Boer Authorities by both Blacks and Whites. This happened, I think, in 1888. Are European judges right in pronouncing the capital punishment in such cases? This is questionable. It is certainly erroneous to assimilate Mankhelu's act which, in his own eyes, is an act of justice, to an ordinary murder, and to punish him as an assassin. He did what he thought to be right according to his knowledge. The husband of a bewitched woman who kills the murderer of his wife is more blamable, because his act is not sanctioned by the authority of a regular Court. However neither one nor the other deserves death.

683 754 I fully recognise that such acts of the Native tribunals must be stopped. A chief who accepts accusations of witchcraft ought to be punished, especially if it has been duly explained to him that a White Government does not allow any such case to be judged in the country. In the course of time Natives will understand this and the witchcraft superstition will dwindle away. But let us be patient with them, remembering that our forefathers of 300 years ago did exactly the same thing and burnt hundreds of suspected witches after having subjected them to horrible tortures.

In an essay on the subject published in the S.A.A.A.S Report of

683 754 1906, I ventured to suggest certain means of checking the *buloyi* superstition. The Department of Native Affairs might give the following directions to its subordinates, the Native chiefs :

1) The crime of buloyi is not recognised under penal law.

2) The Native chiefs are prohibited from trying any buloyi case.

3) The plaintiff must be reprimanded as disturbing the peace of the country.

4) The witch doctor or mungoma (magician), who pretends to have smelt out a wizard, must be fined as using his authority to deceive people and foster hatred amongst them.

5) No evidence based on the use of divinatory bones must be accepted.

These rules, if strictly enforced and combined with Christian teaching and the progress of civilisation, will in the course of time put an end to the scourge of witchcraft.

683 695 578 *Insults.* Ku rukana or ruketela, to hurl insults at each other's head, is very frequent amongst Thongas and does not lead to any judicial case, if not accompanied by assault and bruises (1). There are however insulting deeds which are considered as crimes. To take human blood, or spittle, or excrement with a stick and to push it into the mouth of a child, for instance, is considered a very serious insult which must be judged before the Court. A man who committed such an offence would have to pay a fine amounting to a whole lobola. I heard of a woman, who gave a child a butterfly to eat. The parents of the little one were very angry. She denied having done such a thing. They said to her : "Confess your sin and pay a fine of 5/—." She refused and offered to undergo the ordeal, viz., to drink the mondjo philtre. "If you insist" said they, "you will have to pay £ 10." However she persisted and became intoxicated ; this was a proof of her guilt. She was fined to the amount of £ 40, £ 20 for the child and £ 20 for the chief!

683 201 754 To point at any one with the index finger is also a grave insult which may have judicial consequences, because this action is brought into close relation with *buloyi*.

683 578 695 (1) The most dispute insult which women can cast in each other's teeth is nhwilhwaku (Ro) or nyahwaku (Nkuna) which means : the genitals of your mother. A scuffle with blows is sure to arise when that word has been pronounced. It is also used when taking an oath. Men swear by the name of their chief.

643 754 787 789 and Part VI). — To protect and to prolong his life, diviners sometimes call together the whole clan in order to discover and eventually arrest those who might bewitch and kill the chief. This gathering is called *nyiwa* (See Part VI). — As for rain making, it is in the hands of the proper rain doctors (Nkuna) or is done by the ceremonies of *mbelele* (Part VI). — He is not held responsible for public calamities. — If his bodily or mental powers fail, the tinduna discuss matters in his stead and he is not deposed.

643 769 Chiefs are never worshipped during life time. After death, they are deified for their own family, who worship them, but not for their subjects. — They are not supposed to turn into wild beasts after their death. — The custom of appointing mock kings does not exist. Only on the death of a chief can one of his relatives be nominated to take his place, and watch over his property until the adjudication of the inheritance.

244 being of every day use in the Thonga culinary art, in which it provides the fatty principles. This curious Papillonacea, after having blossomed, elongates the peduncle of the flower, which enters the ground, and the seed grows in the soil, well protected against the rays of the sun. Its taste is delicious, either prepared [754] as a sauce to season mealie flour, or roasted. When there are no nuts inside the shells, which often happens, Thongas call the empty shells *mabvobo*. They say: "The ground nuts have refused" — "Ma yalile marumane." But this is a euphemism. They mean that the *baloyi*, the wizards, have refused to let them grow or, rather, have stolen them from their shells during the night (See Part VI).

244 824 *b)* Another Leguminosa frequently cultivated is the *nyume* (yi-tin (Ro.), *ndlowu*, yi-tin, (Dj.), the *Kafir pea*. This also grows in the earth, like the ground nut. It is much coarser than the European pea, but is twice or three times as large and very nourishing. This vegetable is subject to very curious taboos amongst the Rongas. Whilst all other seeds are sown in one and the same garden, this must be planted in a separate patch, and the tinyume field must be shut off from the others by a fence of thorns. Men [753] are allowed to plant them, but, as soon as they have grown a little, only women can enter the field. Should a man imprudently do so, he would transgress a severe taboo. The danger is twofold: firstly the man himself would be punished; he would get a hydrocele. But the owners of the field would also suffer: the crops would fail. They would reproach the transgressor with these words: "You have taken away (hungula) the strength of our peas!" In order to prevent any such mischance, the husband of the woman who owns the field goes and treats (daha) it in the following manner: he throws his assagay across the field, in the direction of the four cardinal points. Then the danger is removed and men can pass through the plot. It might be supposed that this taboo was of the same kind as that which rested on bananas, for instance, when they were still new in the country and feared on that account. But it would not seem that the Kafir pea is a recent innovation in Thonga agriculture. It has been known for a long time. Another taboo in connection with Kafir peas is this:

343 or in small storehouses hung to the branches of trees (mfunge). When the harvest has been plentiful and all the storehouses have been filled, then begins the happy time of winter, of beer drinking, *bunanga* playing, (I. p. 431) paying visits, etc.

II. *Agricultural taboos.*

241 The first category of agricultural taboos are those previously
784 mentioned, which spring from the idea of *hierarchy* : the prohibition to sow pumpkin seeds before the elder members of the family, the prohibition to enjoy the first-fruits (Kafir corn, bukanye, etc.) before the gods, the chief, the headman, and the elder brothers have *luma* (I, p. 394). Others belong to the *special feminine taboos*, (girls not allowed to walk amongst the pumpkins, to pluck their fruit or to pick their leaves without certain precautions, I. p. 184). Another category is that of *shimusi*. Certain days are proclaimed by the chief, or fixed by custom, as sabbath days, on which no one is allowed to till the soil. In Ñwamba, when there has been a little rain, it is taboo for the people of the clan to work in the fields ; they must remain
241 at home. Amongst the Nkunas the day on which the new
754 moon appears is also shimusi. The moon must be left to "become
784 firm" (tiyela, hola) ; to cut roots while it is still "soft" is taboo : it
821 would cause strong winds and hail. Complete rest is also customary in Khosen the day following the birth of twins. (See Part VI. Chap. II). Some other taboos are due to the fear of *wizards* : it is forbidden to whistle in the fields after having sown or until the mealies are grown. This would call the "baloyi" and endanger the harvest.

241 It is a taboo for a woman to remain in a standing position when
784 she borrows a living ember (woka) from people cooking their food in their gardens ; she must sit down when she takes the ember. Should she break this law, it would cause the mealies of the owners of that garden to be burnt (psha) ; the women has "crossed their gardens" (tjemakanya). If however she does this, they

(wombela) to encourage him. Judging that they did not do this 533
with sufficient vigour, he scooped up a handful of sand and 533
threatened to throw it into their eyes. They clapped with renewed ardour. One of them, the tall, light-coloured one who had sung the obscene songs referred to I. p. 159, came, and with a peculiar smile wrapped a yellow piece of cloth round his loins. He sang other songs, again trampling furiously on the ground, until the sacrificers had finished their work; then he was made to stop, and the prayer to Manyibane began.

This performance was indeed, wonderful, and its interest was in no wise inferior to the funeral ceremonies themselves. It is a typical example of Thonga poetry, where three elements are generally present: the music, the dance and the words, which are more or less poetical.

This Manyisa bard is by no means a unique specimen. I remember having heard, many years ago, a poet of exactly the same type, from Bilene, who visited the Ronga clans, singing everywhere and asking for old rags as his reward. There are professional poets who earn their living by their art. There are also a number of occasional poets, who compose new songs and perform them in their own villages, not aspiring to a world-wide fame. If their tunes are pleasing, they are spoken of by others, and so become known throughout the land, on the strength of their own merit. In this way songs become popular and a great number of them are constantly sung at beer-parties, after harvest, at the feasts, some gradually falling into oblivion and being replaced by new ones each season (1).

In this chapter I shall not treat of the musical character of the

(1) I met later a blind minstrel, Mungomana, who earned his living in the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques by giving concerts in the yard of an important Native 533
woman named Nwalanga, at which a number of boys from Inhambane and Chopiland 754
used to stop before leaving for Johannesburg. He accompanied their dances with his timbila (xylophone) and was payed 4.800 reis per month. He told me his story. When quite young he shewed a quite unusual gift for music and dancing. He went everywhere where a feast was taking place and boys were trying to outdo each other in dancing and singing, and was always proclaimed first. A woman impressed by his wonderful art, asked him to marry her, but he declined on the plea that he was still too young. Once as he was passing along a field where this woman was at work, she said to him: "If you do not marry me, you shall not live." Frightened by this

533 songs; that will be considered in the next chapter, in which I
538 intend to publish the forty-one tunes of my collection. Here I shall only consider them as literary products, and in trying to classify them, I have noticed that, though most of them cannot be said to be very elaborate compositions, they pertain to many different styles, lyric, elegiac, epic, dramatic, etc. and, in addition, there are those which are sung while at work, as well as the incantations to animals and spirits. I will give some examples of each of these categories.

II. *Lyric poetry.*

533 Thongas, like most human beings, have felt the need of chanting
539 their joys and sorrows, joining words to music in order the better to express their feelings. These feelings are not as a rule very deep, and their lyrics are rather play than a painful cry of the heart. Here for instance is *the complaint of the childless woman*, who longs ardently for a baby. She has been to other people and asked them to lend her one. But they have refused and only consented to lend her a mortar and a plate. She then sings to a charming melody (Tune 7).

> A be boleki ŭwana! — Ba boleka tshuri ni ukambana!
> Ngi ndji mangatla! — Ngi ndji shimungwe! — Ngi n'ta ka utla!
> They won't lend me a baby! — They lend me but a mortar and a plate!
> Were I an eagle! — Were I a bird of prey! — I would carry thee away!

The thousands of young Thongas *who go to the mines of Johannesburg*, to extract the precious auriferous quartz, seem to be quite contented with their fate. They, however, chant their

533 threat be fled to another country, but soon one of his eyes began to swell. His elder
754 brother told him: "You have been bewitched by that woman," and his paternal aunt tried to heal him. She covered him with a piece of cloth, and made him expose his eye to the steam of a certain drug boiled in a pot below. She claimed to have succeeded, having found an ox-tail hair at the bottom of the pot when she poured out the water. This was however a lie. The eye complaint became worse, till he entirely lost his sight. He then devoted his life to music, and composed many songs to accompany the dances of the magayisa (boys going to work.) These songs became popular; if a boy wished for one of them, his favourite, to be executed, he would willingly pay 200 reis! — Mungomaza is the only Thonga I heard of who used music in his religious rites. I shall give the words of his canticle in Part VI.

identical with their image. This notion seems to be at the root of 774
the fear they show of being photographed, as we shall see directly.

We see therefore that Thongas are not at all dogmatic on this subject. The soul is at the same time the breath, viz., something of the nature of the wind, the shadow, the image, the external likeness, or fashion of man as opposed to his flesh.

Whatever may be the original notion, they consider the human being as double and capable of unsheathing itself on certain occasions ; their conception on this point may throw more light on their ideas concerning the nature of the soul.

Some believe that the *unsheathing* always takes place during the night and that the soul comes back when its owner awakes ; this is, par excellence, the case in regard to witches, who unsheath by their magical power and bewitch people during the night, as we shall see. But, though the belief is not universal, some think that all souls go away (or die) during sleep. I heard a boy earnestly praying one evening that his soul might come back to him next morning! This is a kind of physiological normal unsheathing which is attended with no bad results. But a pathological unsheathing also exists, and is very dangerous. It may be caused by the photograph of a man being taken. Ignorant Natives [609]
instinctively object to being photographed. They say : "These White people want to steal us (pepula) and take us with them, far away into lands which we do not know, and we shall remain only incomplete beings." When shown the magic lantern, you hear them pitying the men shown on the pictures, and saying : "That is how they ill-treat us when they take our photographs! (1)"

But the great and dangerous parting of soul and body, which 774
causes certain death, is that which wizards operate by their magic 754
charms. We shall study these strange conceptions in Chapter 761
III. They firmly believe that such is the result of witchcraft ; so, when some one is dying, and the divinatory bones have revealed that the disease was caused by a certain *noyi* (witch or wizard), the

(1) The following reflection well illustrates the superstitious fear which Natives have of likenesses of the dead. Before the 1894 war broke out, I had gone to show the magic lantern in remote heathen villages, and people accused me of having caused the disturbance by bringing to life again (pfusha) men who had died long ago.

754 magician shuts him in with the dying man in the hut and gives him
774 the following command : "Bring back the spirit which you have taken and hidden somewhere." Some magicians, who are more
761 powerful than the wizards, pretend to be able to find the stolen spirit and so to restore the patient to health. In cases of epilepsy, or of any psychic trouble attended with unconsciousness, when the sick person returns to his senses, they triumph : have they not brought back the soul? But they say that this must be done in haste. No time must be lost!

775 Lastly, the final unsheathing of personality takes place at death. The body becomes rotten, but the shadow goes away and continues its life as a god, shikwembu. The belief in the continuation of life after death is universal, being at the base of Ancestrolatry, which is the religion of the tribe. We shall study the ideas relating to the future life when dealing with the gods.

What Thongas can absolutely not understand is the resurrection of the body. "Mbuti yi fa, yi bola ; homu yi fa, yi bola ; munhu a fa, a bola!" — "The goat dies and rots, the ox dies and rots, man dies and rots!" answers the sceptical Thonga when he hears the story of the resurrection.

On the whole their ideas of future life are not so very different from those of the ancient Greeks, who believed that the human soul went after death to the realm of shadows.

787 *Dreams* are not generally liked by the Thongas. If something
828 they happened to dream really takes place, it "disgusts" them (nyenyetsa). When a man has seen a woman several times in his dreams, especially if she was pregnant, he will consult the bones. If he dreams that he has relations with her, he may go next day and hit her with a stick. He leaves the stick on the ground and goes away without a word. According to Mboza, this is done to get rid of the obsession, and to prevent the dream from becoming reality. That is the reason, I suppose, why a Christian boy once said to his missionary : "I dream of many people, but I keep quiet!" Amongst Thongas dreams do not seem to play the great part which the animistic theory attributes to them in the formation of primitive beliefs.

lightning), or animistic (Son-of-the-Moth). But they are not of much 771
importance. They belong to the same category as the description given 774
by the Psalmist of the sun as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, or to that of Homer comparing the break of the day to a young damsel with rosy fingers. This is poetry, mere personification of natural objects, or forces, and not beliefs. The poetical tendency is very marked amongst primitive races. It may be that ideas of this kind were more firmly held in former times, if the tribe has really passed through a more mythological phase, a hypothesis for which there are some grounds.

2) Collective beliefs.

The beliefs of the Thongas which deserve to be called by that name 771
because they are universal and express themselves in important rites and 769
customs, are the following :

1. The human soul continues its existence after death, when it is 775
endowed with new powers which make it an object of awe and fear. *The spirits of the ancestors* are the main objects of religious worship. They form the principal category of spirits (psikwembu).

2. Although the spirits of the departed generally have nothing to [789]
do with people other than their descendants, some of them, especially *those belonging to foreign tribes*, can take possession of living men and cause troubles which must be cured by a process of exorcism. This is the second category of spirits.

3. Some individuals have the power of magically unsheathing them- 774
selves during the night, and their spirit goes out to torment, or to kill 754
and eat other people. These are *the wizards* (baloyi) ; this third cate- 791
gory of spirits accomplish their wicked deeds when separated from the body, but their body is still living and they re-enter it. These three beliefs are distinctly animistic.

4. There is in man, and in a few large animals, a semi-spiritual 771
principle, the *nuru*, which escapes from the body when the individual is 774
killed in war, or in hunting, and through which the dead man, or animal, 828
avenges himself or itself on the murderer. What is the relation between the nuru and the shadow (sitjhuti)? This is not stated. The nuru seems to be of a more material nature, as it can enter a root, and it remains attached to the corpse and the bones of the person or animal killed. This category of spiritual enemies, probably invented under the influence of fear and remorse, has no connection with ordinary people,

cancel the rash oath (1). The elder will scold him severely, but will eventually accept his excuses. This meeting for confession and reconciliation is called ku hahlela madjieta, even if no other act, no *tsu*, or prayer, is performed. — The reconciliation may, however, be celebrated in a more solemn manner by a ceremony, which is attended by the elder members of the family. The brother who pronounced the imprecation prepares a decoction of a special herb, called mudahomu, and pours it into a sala shell. Everyone assembles on the square, and the two former enemies sit in the midst, on the bare ground. The offender raises the shell to his lips, sips the decoction, spits it out with the customary tsu, and says : "This is our djieta. We pronounced it, because our hearts were bitter. To-day it must come to an end. It is right that we make peace." The other brother, the offended one, then takes the shell, and after going through the same rite of the tsu, says : "I was justly angry, because it was he who first offended me! But let it be ended to-day ; let us eat out of the same spoon, drink out of the same cup, and be friends again." Then he breaks the shell, and they drink and enjoy themselves together.

782 578 593

In the Northern clans this offering is called *byalwa bya huwa, the beer of noise* (on account of the noise made by those who quarelled). It is considered as necessary, not only to reconcile the estranged brothers, but as a protection against wizards. Wizards might be encouraged to bewitch these men, thinking that, if one of them met with misfortune, people would say that his brother had cast a spell over him ; the wizards would then have an opportunity of killing him without fear of being discovered! The offering consists of *many sorts of cereals*, mealies, millet, sorgho taken from the granaries of all those who have fought ; two handfuls of the

[754]

(1) See also my article on "The Sacrifice of Reconciliation" amongst the Ba-Ronga (*South African Journal of Science*, February 1911). The djieta is any rash oath, and not only one pronounced against a brother. If a man swears that he will never enter a pool again (because he has been stung), or a river (because he has been followed by a crocodile), it is likewise a *djieta*. Should he find it necessary to enter this lake or this river again, he must first hahlela djieta, i. e. cancel his oath by a sacramental act. This is not necessarily a prayer to his gods, but only an invocation addressed to the imprecation itself: "You djieta, I said I would enter this lake no more, but I want to *tjeba* (p. 86) and to eat fish! Don't cause me to suffer for it." Then he takes some water in his hands, and throws it into the pool.

755 questions put to it : "I entered into this *ligodo*, i. e. into this body, this vessel, in such and such a manner. Her husband had gone to work in the gold mines. I entered into him while he was seated on a stone, and when he returned home I left him and entered into his wife." — "Are you alone, spirit?" is the usual question, to which it may reply : "No, I have my son and my grandson with me ;" and, if the witnesses suspect that there really are several spirits in the patient, the tambourine symphony is again resorted to, in order to dislodge the entire company. Sometimes the possessed pronounces as many as ten different names.

Or it may be that the gobela only asks the name of the father and grandfather of the possessing spirit, in order the better to know the latter with all his genealogy. Such was the case with Mboza. "My father is Ndlebende," said the spirit. — "Ho!" answered the gobela, "then you are Mboza, son of Ndlebende." And he identified the spirit in that way.

755 It may be that, at the first sitting, the spirit will claim some
533 satisfaction, a "nturu," a piece of calico of such and such a colour. It is also generally at this time that the patient will *sing his song*. Every possessed person invents a song which will be henceforth *his*, and by means of which crises, or trances will be provoked or cured. Nwashinhwana sang :

Alas! my father! Medicine-men can do nothing for me!
Who will deliver me?

Mboza :

I am the one who wanders about, I come out from the body of magicians.

These songs are generally in Zulu, and it is asserted that, even if the patient does not know this language, he will be able to use it in his conversation, by a kind of miracle of tongues!

The first rite is now completed. It has succeeded in forcing the spirit to reveal its name (1).

754 (1) Exorcism by drum beating is the classical method of expelling spirits. Of late
755 years, since 1910, another method has been invented called *ku famba* which, strange to say, is connected with a new word borrowed from European Animism, the word *shipoko*, now current in Thonga terminology. Shipoko comes from the Boer spook, which means ghost. According to the Native idea, wizards have power to enslave ghosts and make them work in their own fields during the night. They can also send them to take possession of their victims and torment them. If a patient is supposed to

2) The rite of the gobo basin.

When Mboza had finished revealing the name of the spirit possessing him, he had to undergo the rite of the *gobo*. His head was dipped into this, not entirely, but so that his eyes, at least, were plunged in the water. Then the gobela said : "Open your eyes." He felt a sensation of burning, and saw nothing but a red space with black dots running to and fro through the field of vision. He was kept in that position for a good long time. Then he raised his head, and the water ran all over his face and on to his body : he was purified (a basile). But this rite does not seem to be strictly a purification rite. By this kind of baptism the patient is said to have "crossed the sea." He enters upon a new life, and it is clearly a rite of passage. Now he will be able to speak, because "he has seen everything." It is the drug which "makes one see" (muri wa ku bonisa). Some are said to have learnt divination by this gobo ablution. 755

Having undergone these two first parts of the treatment, Mboza says he slept soundly. Next day, came the third.

3) The appeasement by blood (ku thwaza).

During the confabulation following the concert of tambourines, the spirits speaking through the mouth of the patient, although

be possessed by one of these shipoko, the exorcist will proceed with the femba in the following manner. He prepares a little crown made of medicinal roots woven together, similar to the *hari* which women place on their heads when carrying their water jugs. The patient lies down in his hut, surrounded by the mathwaza beating their drums. The magician touches one of his limbs with the hari, blows upon it, brings it close to his lips and draws in his breath. If nothing happens, he touches another limb, the arm, the side, the leg, the head, drawing in his breath each time, searching for the ghost. Suddenly he is seized by a fit, and falls down unconscious ! The ghost has entered him, he has swallowed it. His attendants raise him up and take him outside the hut. They begin to ask him : "Who are you ?" He tells them his name ; he also informs them that he has been sent by so and so, a wizard. This wizard may be "an inhabitant of your village, someone with whom you eat porridge every day !" The shipoko continues his confession :" Yes ! this man has sent me to kill the patient." 754 755

We shall hear more of these shipoko when dealing with witchcraft. We find here a curious mixture of witchcraft and the ideas of possession, with the addition of a European element. My informant assures me that this femba rite is quite modern, and I can readily believe it.

158 transported into the realm of divinity, thus giving rise to the true gods
753 and the devils. Possessing spirits are not worse than ancestor-gods. They all are non-moral. They can bless and curse, and their moral character is not taken into account at all.

2) The progress of modern psychology gives an explanation of many of these phenomena. The disease of the personality which manifests itself in the presence of a double psychological consciousness is well-known ; the hypnotic suggestion which the tambourine players unconsciously exert on their victims, sufficiently explains the origin of the disease, and the kind of life led by the exorcised is well calculated to develop their mediumistic faculties. So many of the so-called miracles of possession are easily accounted for. It would however be going too far to exclude, a priori, any possibility of external spiritual influences in
[797] those phenomena. There is one very striking fact which is a source of great wonder to the Natives. These patients, as soon as they put themselves under Christian influence, are healed at once and for ever. We have, amongst our converts, exorcists who had acquired great fame, and who recount, with glowing eyes, how they have been delivered from their terrible anguish by their new faith. For, whatever success they may have obtained in their career of exorcists, their condition was a disease, a painful disease, and they are extremely glad to have been delivered from it. This fact must certainly be remembered when trying to arrive at an explanation of possession.

C. WITCHCRAFT.

789 I have pointed out, in an article published in the Report of
754 the S. A. A. A. S., of 1906, how little comprehension most White people have of this important but difficult subject. A confusion is almost always made between the *witches* and the *witch-doctors*. The French word *sorcier* and the English term *sorcerer*, indiscriminately used for those who cast spells and for magicians, lead to the same misconception. In order to avoid errors it is, I think, imperative first of all clearly to distinguish between *Black Magic* and *White Magic*. The adjectives black and white are not employed in this connection amongst South African Natives, but Thongas certainly do make the distinction and possess different terms for each. Black magic is called *Buloyi* ; it consists of the

criminal magical practices by which wizards and witches bewitch 789
innocent folk. Buloyi is a crime. White Magic is called *Bungoma*, 754
and means the magical operations of those who combat evil influences and use their powers for the benefit, and not for the ruin, of their countrymen. The *mungoma* (magician) is consequently the great enemy of the *noyi* (caster of spells). It may be that the power of both is at bottom of the same nature. But the use they make of it is entirely opposed, the one exerting it in the interests of Society, the other against it. We shall therefore have to deal with these two categories of persons in two separate paragraphs.

I. *Black Magic (Buloyi)*.

Buloyi, an abstract noun of the bu-ma class, as well as *noyi* [192]
(pl. *baloyi*), is derived from the verb *ku loya* (Ro.), *lowa* (Dj.), to bewitch. This word is very interesting. It seems to have been known already in the Ur-Bantu (Comp. Meinhof, *Grundriss*, p. 173) and exists in Swaheli, Herero, Xosa, Sutho, Thonga, etc. Strange to say, the stem is absent in Zulu, where it is replaced by *thakata*. In Thonga its most common meaning is to bewitch. But the word is also applied to the act of a man who marries his near cousin (I. p. 258). Moreover Nkolele, describing to me the sacrifice in the sacred wood, and speaking of the *ntukulu* who prepares to steal the offering, said : "Here is the *noyi*, ready to come and steal the beer..." I also heard the crocodile stone, used by the chief as a charm to protect his life, called *buloyi bya hosi*, the magical power of the chief (I. p. 393) ; these instances show that the word loya is sometimes, though rarely, used in a more general sense. Its technical meaning, however, is and remains : to injure or kill by enchantment. Who are these baloyi, and what crime do they perpetrate?

1) The Baloyi.

The *baloyi*, or people possessing the evil eye, are numerous 754
in each tribe. Their power is hereditary, but, strange to say, it is transmitted by the mother and not by the father. Therefore

754 should a polygamist have three wives, one of whom is a noyi, all the children he will have by that "noyi" wife will be baloyi, and his other children will not be so. This dreadful power is sucked in at their mother's breast when they are still infants, but it must be strengthened by special medicines in order to be really efficient. The "noyi" mother chooses one of her sons to whom she does not give these drugs, and he will be free from buloyi. She does this in order that, if one of her offspring should later on be accused of having killed by witchcraft and be called to pass through the ordeal (of which we shall speak hereafter), the immune child may be sent in his place to undergo the trial. The chief will consent to this substitution, as it is well known that all the sons of a "noyi" woman are equally baloyi. But the intoxicating medicine of the ordeal will have no effect on the substitute, and therefore the true noyi will escape!

These baloyi know each other. They form a kind of *secret society* within the tribe, and they assemble during the night — in their spiritual bodies — to eat human flesh in the desert. There they form a true "hubo," that is, a meeting for discussion. They discuss what they will do to injure property or destroy life. They sometimes fight. If one of them is defeated in the discussion, suggesting, for instance, that there should be no mealies this year, a proposal which is not accepted by the others, they condemn him to pay a fine, and this fine will consist of a human body, which he will have to provide, after having killed it by witchcraft. It may be that he will choose his own child to bring to the horrible banquet! This shows that there are more and less powerful baloyi, and they are constantly trying to overcome each other in finding out more efficient charms.

As regards the other members of the tribe who are not witches, or wizards, they are regarded by them as stupid beings who deserve no better fate than to be eaten wholesale by the clever baloyi! These man-eaters are the truly intelligent, the superior, the wise ones! (Ba tlharihile). They are also called for that reason "bahanyi" — "those who live," no doubt because they possess a kind of superior life. They are, however, greatly feared by the others, and when a boy wishes to marry, the main thing to

consider in the choice of his wife is that she should not belong to a 754
family of witches. The accusation: "You are a noyi"[1] is the [578]
gravest insult which one man can utter to another (1).

The activity of the baloyi is almost entirely nocturnal. For this reason they are sometimes called by the euphemism: "ba busiku" — "the men of night." In fact, they possess the faculty of getting out of themselves at night time; they have large wings, and, after having left their huts by the crown of grass which covers the top, or by the closed door, they fly through the air and betake themselves to their horrible work.

As they are active in the darkness of night a connection is [825]
established between them and nocturnal birds, especially *owls* (kuhunu). When the sinister cry of this bird is heard, men take a torch upon which they have spit out of their mouths a little ndjao powder, and chase away the creature. Baloyi are also identified with the little moving lights sometimes seen in the marshes, the will-o'-the-wisps, the fires of the night (mindjilo ya busiku), the belief being that these fires are either the baloyi themselves, or that they are sent by the baloyi as a threat (2). We have seen (p. 720) that the wizards who ride on hippopotami during the night are credited with the power of producing flames similar to lamps.

Two questions here arise. Does the Native mind imagine that 000

(1) Thongas are extremely sensitive in regard to a possible suspicion that they are baloyi. When I proposed to my pupils in the Shiluvane Institution that they should move up for the bad season to the sanatorium which we had set up in the mountains, in order to avoid the dangers of fever in the Low Country, not wishing to abandon their comfortable accomodation at the station, they made great difficulties. I therefore said to them: "But if your devoted teacher, Miss So and So, catches the fever, on account of the heat and moisture of the malarial climate, will you not be responsible for whatever may happen?" This remark caused quite a commotion amongst the pupils. "What?" they said. "We are then baloyi! We have the power of killing people by witchcraft!"

(2) One of my informants says: "We are walking peacefully along the path at night-time, chatting pleasantly with our companions. Suddenly a will-o'-the-wisp appears. We at once stop on seeing this terrible object, for one of us must be the culprit. It cannot arise from any other cause. We organise a meeting for confession (rerela nyiwa, see below), and thus rebuke the noyi who is amongst us. Sometimes people who see the fires of the night trample on the ground, take a pinch of earth between their fingers and put it to their mouths (khabuta)." (This may be a kind of "mhamba" similar to that described on page 391, aimed at obtaining protection against the "enemies of the earth.")

1 [literally "caster of spells" -- See pp. 504 ff., cat. 116 - Analyst]

754 Two questions here arise. Does the Native mind imagine that
828 a true unsheathing of the personality takes place when the baloyi go on their nocturnal expedition, or that they leave the hut themselves, in their entirety, in their ordinary persons? As far as I could make out, the Sutho theory is different from the Thonga. The Ba-Sutho say that the wizard goes altogether, soul and body. Nothing remains on the mat when he has departed for his nocturnal ride! He casts spells over the other inhabitants of the hut, and they sleep so heavily that they notice nothing. The Thongas tell a different story. According to them, the noyi is but a part of the personality. When he flies away, his "ntjhuti," his shadow, remains behind, lying on the mat. But it is not the true body that remains. It appears as such only to the foolish non-initiated. In reality what remains is a *wild beast*, with which the noyi has chosen to identify himself. This fact was disclosed to me by the following striking confession of S. Gana, a very intelligent Nkuna. "Suppose," he said, "my father is a noyi and I am not. I wish to marry a certain girl whom I love. My father knows that she is a noyi, because they all know each other, and he tells me : 'Don't do that! She is *clever* ; you will repent!' However, I persist in my idea. He urges me to abandon the plan, and threatens me with great misfortune. I marry her. One night, my father enters my hut and awakens me. He says to me : 'What did I tell you! Look! Your wife has gone!' I look at her place and find her sleeping calmly — 'No. Here she is.' — 'That is not she! She is away! Take this assagai and stab her. — 'No, father, I dare not.' — 'Do as I say!' And he puts the assagai into my hand and makes me strike her violently in her leg. A cry, the cry of a wild beast, is heard, and a hyena appears in the place of my wife, a hyena which deposits its faeces in its fear, and escapes from the hut, howling. My father gives me some powder to swallow so that I shall be able to recognise the baloyi and their ways and habits. He leaves me — trembling greatly from fear — and goes home. When the sun is about to rise, I hear a noise like that of the wind in the branches, and suddenly something falls down from the top of the hut beside me. It is my wife. She lies sleeping, but her leg shows a wound, the wound that had been made in the hyena!"

From this dramatic story it must be inferred that, according to the idea of the Ba-Thonga, there is a true unsheathing of the personality when the noyi goes about its nightly work. 754 828

A second question arises, which is this. As the baloyi lead a double existence, a day-light existence in which they are merely men, and a nightly existence, in which they perform their work as witches, are they aware, during the day, of what they have done during the night? In other words, are they conscious of their doings as witches? The question is difficult to answer, as there seems to be no clear idea on this point in the Native mind. The old, genuine view is that a noyi *does not know what he is doing*; he is not even aware that he is a noyi until he has been revealed as such by the methods which will be explained later. Therefore he is unconscious. His nightly activity is unknown to him when he returns to his ordinary daily life. For instance, my informants assure me that a man may have sent a crocodile to kill another, during his noyi existence, but that he will be the first to show sympathy to the poor sufferer, and to deplore this sad accident. And he will be amazed when the diviner points him out as having caused the death by his buloyi, of which he was in entire ignorance. But those baloyi who have long practised their horrible tricks would seem to be aware and even proud of their doings, and therefore more or less conscious of their double life. Some of them go even further; they renounce their evil deeds and become magicians, using the knowledge they have acquired to baffle the enchantments of other baloyi, as we shall see.

But let us hear what the dreadful acts are which they commit in their baloyi form.

2) The Crimes of the Baloyi.

(a) The baloyi are in the first place *thieves*. This is the least criminal aspect of their activity. They steal mostly mealies or the products of the fields. They empty the ground-nuts of their contents (p. 12). The magicians have a kind of medicine with which they plaster their mealie cobs in the gardens, and the noyi, when he wants to tear them from the stalk, remains a prisoner 754

754 on the spot, unable to withdraw his hand from the cob! But, what is even more curious, the baloyi of one country assemble and form an army and go to fight with the baloyi of another, in order to deprive them of their mealies and carry them away to their own fields. For instance, in 1900, there was a great war between the baloyi of Mpfumu, near Lourenço Marques, and those of the peninsula of Inyack, at the entrance of Delagoa Bay. That year the Kafir beans were plentiful at Mpfumu, and this was explained by the fact that the Mpfumu baloyi had won the victory over their Inyack enemies. They owed their success to the following trick. They gathered a large number of seeds of the little cucumber, called nkakana, and made with them a kind of enormous ladder, which was suspended midway between sky and sea ; upon it they crossed the 20 or 30 miles of the bay of Delagoa and stole all the Kafir beans of Inyack (1). If a tempest has uprooted trees and broken branches, people are sure to say that the "army (yimpi) of the baloyi" has passed in the shape of a terrific storm during the night.

754 789 *b)* But the great crime of the baloyi is that of *killing*. They are murderers, and all the more to be feared as they act unconsciously, without being seen or known. Two motives inspire their crimes — hatred and jealousy. If one of them has been offended, he is sure to revenge himself by putting his enemy to death. During the night he escapes from his hut (as we have seen above), opens his wings and flies directly to the dwelling of the man he hates. But the habitation of this man is well protected ; all round it there is a spiritual fence made up of charms, various

(1) On one of these expeditions to the Inyak Islands the baloyi of the Movumbi district wished to buy food from their colleagues beyond the Bay. A certain woman, who was a great noyi, took her daughter-in-law with her, but the latter was not a noyi. However she was led through the air, along the nkakana ladder, to the village of Magilankinsin, a headman of Inyak. This man refused to accept her, as she was ignorant of the buloyi art, and sent her back home. In the meantime the husband, Midlalen, noticed that his wife was not sleeping in the hut. When she reappeared in the morning he asked her : "Where have you been ?" — "To Inyaka." — "Indeed !" — "Yes ! I saw everything there." — "How did you go ?" — "I do not know." — "How did you return ?" — "I do not know." — "Have you seen Magilankinsin ?" — "Yes !" The husband suggested that his mother had played this trick by means of her buloyi and chased her away from his village. Mboza told the story as absolutely authentic, and added "these events occurred some ten years ago."

medicines which close the kraal against any invasion of witches. 754
What must he do in order to perpetrate his crime? He has first 789
made an agreement with another noyi residing in that village, who has made an opening in this spiritual fence, similar to one of the small holes in the material one! He then gets into the kraal, tries to penetrate into the hut by the door, finds it closed; beats on it and, being unable to enter that way, flies to the crown of the hut and descends through it into the abode of the enemy, calmly sleeping on his mat. Then he proceeds to the bewitching operation, and the poor bewitched man is condemned to die! "O loyiwile," — "he has been bewitched ;" "ku sa ntjhuti ntsena," — "only his shadow remains." They also say that only the "ntjhumbu," the corpse, has been left, his true self having been stolen and eaten. He is sometimes called *ntungulu*, a word used to designate a wasp whose nest has been destroyed, and which flies about disconcerted, not knowing where to go, unable to sting, because it has no home... The heart of the bewitched has been stolen and put somewhere in a hole or a cavern (mhakwen). "Ba mu pepulile," they have ravished him, (like a feather taken away by the wind). He will get up in the morning, and die some days later, but what will die will be only his shadow. He himself was killed during that frightful night. He is already eaten! Or he will become mad (lihlanyi) and people will say : "The living have had the better of him" — "Ba mu kotile bahanyi." Here we find again, in an even more mysterious form, the idea of the duality of the human personality. How it is possible for a man who has still some days or months to live to be regarded as already entirely eaten up, I do not pretend to explain. Such is however the Native idea. One of my informants tried to overcome the difficulty by saying that what the noyi takes with him to eat is the inside, the bowels ; the outward frame alone remains, and the man will soon die! Most of the Natives, when the absurdity of the idea is pointed out to them, laugh and say nothing.

In order to attain his criminal ends, the noyi may resort to 754
various means ; he may point at his enemy *with the index finger*, which is a common method of bewitching in many nations. If, later on, you are overtaken by misfortune, you will remember

754 that so and so has "shown you with the finger" (komba hi litiho), and will suspect him of having cast a spell over you. (Comp. I. p. 250.) Or he may obtain a hold on you by *taking your own blood*, if this has by chance been shed on the ground, and using it as a means of bewitching you, (a ku loyela ha yone). Hence the precaution universally taken of covering one's blood with earth, should any have dripped from a wound (p. 360). But the five chief methods which a noyi has at his disposal are the following : ruma, mitisa, matshelwa, ntshutshu and mpfulo.

The *ruma* (to send) consists in sending either a crocodile, or a lion, or more often a snake, to the place where the enemy is about to pass. He will be killed or wounded. We may recall the story of Gebuza, whose nose was torn off by a hyena ; this is a typical case of ruma. In Maputju, the heathen accused the converts of bewitching them by means of the owls which took shelter under the roof of the chapel! In Khosen also the Christians were charged with having sent a crocodile from Nkomati River into the Sokotiba lake to kill those who refused to be converted to Christianity! If the noyi does not wish to kill, he may only send antelopes to destroy the fields and eat the sweet potatoes. Even in the Christian village of Shiluvane, during the days when the "duykers" are plentiful, and become a nuisance, you may hear some one say : "*They* are sending us their duikers!" Who are *they*? A mystery! *They* are the baloyi! But do not call them by their name!

The *mitisa* (ku *mita*, to swallow, ku *mitisa*, to make somebody swallow) is the only one of these five methods of bewitching used during the day. It consists in giving to a visitor something to eat or drink into which certain drugs have been introduced. The mealie pap or the beer look just as usual, but, owing to the enchantments of buloyi, as soon as you have swallowed them, they are transformed, in your throat, into any kind of noxious creature, which threatens to suffocate you, and gives rise to a disease and perhaps produces death! You may thus have swallowed a snake, a beetle of the Copris genus, one of those strange dung-eaters, a big fly, or certain kinds of flesh of animals. The great effort of the magician to whom you will apply for treatment will be to remove

these foreign bodies, and, when you vomit, he will show you with triumph a bit of bone, a tooth, the famous beetle, or other objects which he himself had cleverly placed there beforehand (p. 457). There is a medicine which Natives are fond of having inoculated into their tongues, and which has the wonderful property of forcing the bewitched food to reveal its true character when you eat it. If you have been treated with this, you will hear the cracking of the elytra of the beetle, and at once be able to spit out of your mouth the death-containing food! 754

The *matshelwa* (ku tshela, to throw) are not only these foreign bodies which the noyi introduces into you by means of poisoned food, but may be *tingati* (blood) poured on you during the night in such quantity that the floor of the hut will be found quite wet in the morning (1).

The *ntchutchu* (ku tchutcha, to inspire) is another way of getting rid of an enemy. It is a *bewitching of the will* by which the noyi inspires his enemy with the idea of leaving the country. Without any motive, the poor bewitched person prepares to go to Johannesburg, or anywhere else. There he will become the prey of other baloyi, who will kill him. When a boy dies in the mines, as hundreds of them do, his parents think : — "He has been killed by such and such a disease." But the author of his death is not in Johannesburg, he is here at home ; it is the noyi who hated him and made him go by "ntchutchu."

The *mpfulo* is still worse. This word, which comes from the verb ku pfula, to open, designates the mysterious power which the baloyi possess of *opening* all kinds of things. One of them, a Nkuna, named Ñwayekeyeke, had charms to open *the oxen kraals* ;

(1) The following story fittingly illustrates this kind of "buloyi." An evangelist of the Manyisa region, named Abel M. had taken into his house his wife's daughter. He was himself without children. The girl fell on the threshold of the hut and injured her leg. Her parents took her home again, but found the leg very much emaciated, and consulted the bones. The diviner told them that Abel had "loya" his niece through sheer jealousy because he had no children ; he had "eaten the girl's leg," but, being a hunter, he had killed an antelope and introduced the femur of the animal into the leg in place of the bone ; the true bone was however still somewhere in Abel's hut and the magician offered to go to the evangelist's village, and boasted that he would be able to find it. Fearing a scandal, Abel entreated his wife's parents not to allow this. They said : "Then take the girl back into your home and treat her." He did so, and the girl eventually recovered.

754 during the night, he would come into a village holding a hyena tail daubed over with peculiar medicines, and would throw all the inhabitants into a deep sleep. Then, waving the tail, he would open the kraal and call the cattle out. Flying with the rapidity of the wind, he would then be followed by the whole herd which he had bewitched. When tired, he would jump on to a tree and rest for a while, fearing lest the oxen should run over him and tread him down, they being irresistibly attracted by the tail. Should anyone see him on his way, he would say: "Take an ox, I give it to you," until he reached his village, and housed the stolen oxen in his own kraal. But there are other kinds of *mpfulo*: the power of *opening the hut*, removing the husband sleeping there without waking him, and committing adultery with his wife. However the great *mpfulo* consists in *opening a man*. The following story will show how this criminal act is accomplished. Some fifty years ago, a young man called Nkokana, the uncle of my informant, astonished the whole tribe by his marvellous skill in dancing like a chameleon. The circumcision school was just over, and on the last day of it all the boys had to enter solemnly the kraal of the chief, performing the ceremony which has been described I. p. 93, and which is called ku nenga. One of the men of the tribe, who was a noyi, was struck by the perfect performance of Nkokana, and, filled with jealousy, resolved to bewitch him. As the boys were going home that same day, happy to have reached the end of all their trials, they had to cross a thick wood; suddenly a voice was heard calling: "Nkokana!" The boy said: "Yes, I am coming," and went to the place from which the voice came. But he found nobody. Instead of going back to his companions, who were waiting for him, he ran all through the bush, as if possessed by a kind of madness, always following the voice, but with no success. The night passed. He came back home entirely worn out, a mere shadow of himself, and died some days later. He had been "opened up" by the witch. When this sort of bewitching takes place it is probable that the noyi wishes to enslave his victim, and make him work for him.

c) This leads us to the last of the crimes of the baloyi. Their object may not be to kill their victims, but *to use them as their*

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servants, for ploughing their fields, cutting their wood, and so on. One day the footprints of a leopard were seen in a mealie garden near the Shiluvane station. People were convinced that this was nothing but a bewitched person, sent there during the night in the form of an animal (1) to serve the owner of the field ; it is said that the baloyi, when assembled in their hubo, choose those whom they like amongst the victims they have overcome by the ntshutshu, by their magical inspiration, and change them into leopards, hyenas and snakes, compelling them either to till the fields, or to uproot mealies in the gardens of others, and to "lead" (byisa) the stems and plant them in the gardens of baloyi. A Nkuna of Thabina once claimed to have witnessed such a case of nocturnal theft, — and he was expelled from the country because, as people said, he could not know of such deeds if he were not himself a noyi. Of late years, since the word *shipoko* has been adopted by the Rongas (see p. 488, note 1) it is believed that these nocturnal servants of the baloyi are the ghosts of dead people and that they resemble little children. The baloyi hide them in the forests during the day and take them during the night to till their fields. As we shall see, these baby workers bewitched by the wizards were much spoken of during the strange Murimi revival which I shall describe later on. (See also the song of the Christian girl who ridicules the deceitful witch (p. 299) and compare with App. V.)

To be fair towards the wizards I must add that there are also some *good baloyi*, viz., baloyi who use their power to bless. They can do this when sent by the ancestor-spirits to increase the produce of the fields, if the prayer of the luma day has been heard by the gods (I. p. 396). In this case the wizards are said to have *loyela masimu*, bewitched the fields to make them produce more (loyela, applicative derivative of loya). This would seem to show

(1) The connection established between animals and baloyi is pushed even further in Maputju. My colleague, the late Rev. W. Audéoud, heard of baloyi who really look on themselves as the possessors of certain beasts. One of them owned a wild boar. A hunter killed the son of this wild boar and the noyi bewitched him, as he considered that he had a vested right of property in the son as well as in the father ! We have seen, when dealing with hunting rites, that baloyi domesticate the hippopotami of the Khosati river and use them as mounts (p. 72-74).

754 that baloyi are more or less subject to the ancestral gods. It may happen also that if somebody shows kindness to a noyi, this noyi will take him under his protection, and prevent his comrades from doing harm to his friend. But these are rare occurrences, and the baloyi are, and remain, criminals in the view of the Thongas.

Stealing, killing, enslaving are the principal crimes of these maleficent beings. But they can also cause any other species of harm to their infortunate victims. I have told the story of a young man who complained to me of having been deprived by the tricks of a noyi aunt of the power of having sexual intercourse with his wife; she was pregnant and the witch wished to act on the offspring in such a way as to change it into a snake, a hare, a quail, or a duiker, so that the mother should die on the day of the birth. (I. p. 187.)

II. *White Magic and Magicians.*

1) Distinction between Magicians and Wizards.

754 As previously stated, the power which the magicians claim to
791 possess is perhaps not essentially different from that of the baloyi.
756 They even sometimes boast that they are themselves baloyi, baloyi more powerful than the ordinary witches, and that they are thus able to discover them and baffle all their tricks. So Mathuza, one of the most celebrated Ronga witch-doctors, used to say: "I am the great Noyi! I am the one who kills. I can fly. So I know them all and I disclose them." But magicians differ absolutely from wizards in four ways, at least:

1) Their activity is not secret, nocturnal and more or less unconscious. They act openly, in the light, during the day, and do not hide their magical powers; on the contrary, they make a show of them, covering themselves with any number of charms; most of them wear "tingoya" and smear themselves with ochre (p. 100).

2) They all undergo a preparation, or pass through an initiation, differing according to the different kinds of magic they practise.

So they possess, so to speak, letters patent, either because they have been received into the society of their fellow-magicians (as is the case with medicine-men, exorcists, and throwers of bones), or because they have found new and powerful drugs during a sojourn, real or pretended, in the sea, the desert, or elsewhere. 754 791 756

3) Whilst baloyi are said to use *tingati* (blood) poisons, the magicians employ *miri*, i. e., medicinal herbs or objects, drugs which, however, are all thought to possess special powers. I do not say "supernatural" powers, as the notion conveyed by this word cannot exist in any definite form amongst people who have hardly a true conception of Nature. The stronger the miri, the stronger the magician. — In addition to their drugs, they certainly believe themselves endowed with personal power due to the development of their faculties of second sight, etc., which they also attribute to the spirits (ancestor-gods) from whom they have inherited their drugs.

4) The last point of difference but by no means the least important, is this : magicians are the supporters and upholders of the social order, and not criminals attempting to destroy it. They foretell the future, cure diseases, prevent misfortune of all kinds, fight against baloyi, and are regularly consulted by the Native Court for the detection of wizards.

Between the unconscious baloyi whose crimes are purely imaginary and the bangoma who use their magical powers for the benefit of those who have recourse to them, there certainly exists another category, i. e. wicked individuals who kill their fellow-men by means of real poisons or by criminal practices and do this quite consciously, either to avenge themselves on their enemies or to help others to get rid of those whom they hate. Such acts may be called ku loya, by an extended use of the term ; but there is another word to designate these crimes, the word *ku dambika*, which we already met with when speaking of the jilted lover who wishes to play an evil trick on the girl who despised him (I. p. 101). In the neighbourhood of Rikatla, there was a man who claimed to be a noyi of this type, and to have at the same time the power of "treating" (daha) buloyi. He was a Mu-Sutho, a stranger. Wishing to kill an enemy, a Ronga of the country asked his help ; 754 791

754 the magician bade him first bring a sheep ; this he slew, took part
791 of its fat, and smeared with it and with some very black drugs a root of the ntjhopfa tree (I. p. 58). This fat and these drugs were to give to the root the power of "taking away" the heart of the enemy ; the magician buried it in the road and assured his client that when the root was rotten his enemy would be dead. This root was discovered later on, owing to a revelation given by the bones, and the man who had consulted the magician had to pay a fine of £ 1. No doubt such conscious acts of witchcraft exist, but this is not the typical loya.

2) Various categories of magicians.

756 Some magicians specialise in one division of the immense domain
791 of magic, but others claim to practise the magic arts in all their diversity.

1) Those whose activity bears a less magical character. These are the *ñanga* (yin-tin), or *ba-muri*, whom we met with when dealing with the medical art (Compare Chapter I. the Medicine-men).

2) Those who have passed through the ceremony of exorcism and have become exorcists. They are called *gobela*, and the character of their initiation has been sufficiently explained in Chapter II.

3) Those called *mungoma*, magicians proper, who have divinatory powers and can perform wonders, fight the baloyi, cause rain to fall, influence Heaven, etc., even if there has been no exorcism episode in their previous career.

4) Those whose principal qualification is the power to detect baloyi, and who are called for that reason *shinusa*, "smellers-out."

5) The bone-throwers *(ba-bula)*, whom we shall describe in Chapter IV.

The priests, *ba ku hahla*, do not enter into any of these categories, their specific activity being of a totally different character ; they have recourse to Religion and not to Magic.

III. *The Method of dealing with Wizards.*

754 All the power of the magicians is resorted to in order to check
756 the enchantments of the baloyi. Their drugs are used with two
791 objects, — protection and cure, the cure consisting mainly in the disclosure of the wizard.

1) Protective methods.

789 The village, as we have seen, (I. p. 311) is well protected with
754 *anti-baloyi drugs*. The fence itself, the main entrance and the threshold of the headman's hut, have been magically treated when first built. But the magician, when he thinks it necessary, "revives" the drugs by burning his powder in a little fire on the road which enters the village. This protects the main entrance, and he does the same at the threshold of the headman's hut. The smoke will keep the wizards away. Stones, daubed with the powder, are placed in all directions to close the openings.

"These medicines act wonderfully," says Mankhelu. "Should a *noyi* succeed in entering the hut, the power of the smoke will be such that he will at once be revealed. The *noyi* will suddenly be seen there without any clothing, apparently dreaming, seeing nothing, knowing nothing. If it is a woman, I shall call her husband and show him his wife... 'What are you doing here?' he will say to her. She will not utter a word. Then I shall say to him : 'Look here, my friend... I might be hard on you. But I have pity. Do not allow your wife to do anything of the kind again. Pay me one or two oxen, and I will keep silent.' He will consent. Then I beat the woman with my stick. She awakes, and, quite ashamed of being in another hut without any clothing, she will fly away home!" Such is the testimony of Mankhelu, and he is certain of having succeeded more than once!!

Mboza asserted to me that he had witnessed a similar case

789 in Muthiyane (near Rikatla). A woman had been thus "surprised
754 by the rising sun" (shwela, p. 307). She was stark naked and had something red, like fire, on both shoulders ; these were the remnants of her wings. Having been overcome by the magical drugs she had been unable to reabsorb these wings into her flesh, and part of them remained outside. Every one ran away at this sight, and the chief ordered the woman to be shut up in her hut.

Some magicians used to fight the baloyi by *running through the bush during the night* and catching them as they flew by with their wings of fire. Note how Mholombo prevented two wizards from killing a woman (p. 500), and how the exorcised protect themselves by means of the mabophe drug, and by swallowing their nulu powder (p. 496). 1/A

2) Method of disclosing the Baloyi.

754 But should all the protective medicines which surround the village, together with those which have been swallowed by the inhabitants, or by which they have been inoculated, remain without effect, and should a serious case of illness occur, one of those evils which are generally attributed to the baloyi, the first thing to do is to *detect* the culprit.

Who may he be? The patient's relatives have most probably already some idea on this point, because, at the beginning of most buloyi cases, something happens which arouses *suspicion*, and this is a very important point to be noted if we wish to find the psychological explanation of these customs. Perhaps there has been a quarrel between two persons, and one of them, in his anger, has said to the other : "N'ta ku bona" i. e. "I shall see you." On hearing this the people immediately say : "This man is a noyi. He has revealed by daylight his crimes of the night." The man himself had perhaps not the slightest idea of such a thing. The same conclusion will be drawn if he points to another person with his index finger (I. p. 250). An imprudent word which at first sight would appear quite innocent may have the same

1/A [For further information on methods of dealing with wizards see pp. 525-535 -- Analyst]

result if hostile feelings already existed between two persons (1). 754

Jealousy alone is sufficient to give rise to the suspicion even without a word having been uttered (2).

The fact of a woman having lost many children is also a reason [761] for suspecting her of being a witch, as the death of a baby is constantly considered as having been caused by its own mother, who wished "to eat it." The fact of belonging to a family of baloyi is also an indication to the same effect, buloyi being hereditary, as we have seen.

But a mere suspicion is not sufficient to warrant action being 754 taken against the suspected noyi. An objective proof, a piece of 787 convincing evidence is required, and this the magicians are asked to supply. The patient's relatives go *to the diviner* who will cast the 791 bones and discover whether the disease is due to witchcraft or not. This consultation is secret, and is merely preliminary. There are, in the sets of bones employed in Thonga divination, some which,

(1) The evangelist Silas G. was one day speaking to Saul N., an elder of his Church, about Church contributions and said: "So and so does not pay his dues. It would be good to show him his duty." Saul answered: "I do not wonder; that man has a bad wife and you are sure to fail in your duty when you have a bad wife." — "No", said Silas. "Everyone ought to pay his contribution. You, for example, would certainly do your duty even if you had a bad wife!" — "Nevertheless I maintain that a wife who behaves badly takes away her husband's courage. Look at your own case, Silas. Your wife does harm to your work as an evangelist. Did she not say the other day when she saw my baby: 'How fat it is! It is like a pumpkin!'" On hearing these words Silas starts! They are an accusation of buloyi. To say that the baby was as fat as a pumpkin showed that the woman who used these words was ready to eat its body during the night; the evangelist's wife was a noyi! An enquiry was at once started to ascertain if she had really pronounced these words, and the whole little Church was upset. Finally the elder was blamed for having brought an accusation of buloyi, which is forbidden in the Native Congregations, and he resigned his office. The evangelist and his wife "became thin" owing to the mental suffering caused by the insinuation of the elder.

(2) I had amongst my evangelists a very active and intelligent man who cultivated large gardens and was well provided with everything. His neighbours began to suspect him for this reason. He said to them: "We ought not to work on Sundays," and this increased their suspicions. "It is evident", they said, "that *he is not alone!* How does he manage to have such splendid harvests when he does not work on Sundays? Surely he has others to till for him. He takes our backs and uses them to cultivate his big fields. And the reason why he has such wonderful crops is that he has taken our own mealies from our gardens by his witchcraft" — "But," said others, "you cannot complain! Mealies are plentiful in your gardens too!" — "No," answered the enemies of the evangelist. "Though you see mealies in our gardens, they are no longer mealies; they have been taken away by him." They meant that, just as a bewitched person is no longer normal but has been emptied of his viscera, so the cereals had been robbed of their virtue by buloyi.

754 represent the *baloyi*, in particular the astragalus of the reedbuck, or
787 of the duiker, the small antelope which rambles about during
the night, just at the time when witches are at work. Should
791 this bone fall in a certain way near the bone representing the patient, or near his amulets, which have been placed on the mat, this shows that his disease is the result of buloyi. The name of the noyi will be sought, and perhaps ascertained, on that first day, but the parents of the victim will never venture to accuse him merely on the testimony of the bones. The next step will be to go to the *mungoma*, the magician who "smells out" the *baloyi*.

The magician employs various means to find out a noyi.

a) *The Enchanted Horn.*

754 In the Murchison Range there is a magician who possesses an
791 enchanted horn, into which he introduces a short twig smeared with an anti-baloyi medicine. Persons suspected of having killed by witchcraft must try to pull the twig out of the horn. The noyi will be unable to do this, though he may declare, like the others : "I have not killed." Amongst the Nkunas, the magician who has succeeded in finding out a wizard, takes his coat and hangs it on a tree as a trophy.

b) *The Enchanted Flute.*

When some one dies and his relatives think he has been bewitched, they can call a certain mungoma who "treats the grave" with his drugs. If he thinks that he has discovered the noyi, he gives to the bereaved a small flute, telling him to go and play on it in the neighbourhood. This helps not only to detect the wizard but to punish him ; he will die. This rite is called "to play on the little flute (ku yimbelela shinangana) for somebody."

c) *The rera nyiwa, or ba hungwe.*

Rera nyiwa or *ba hungwe* means to summon an assembly for discovering wizards. This is done when the chief is ill, or when an epidemic has broken out and threatens the villages. The headman, or sub-chief, assembles all his people and says: "Hungwe!" (this word has the meaning of: "Take care!"). "The bones have declared it: It is so and so: a woman having two, three or four children... or married twice... or a widow... or a girl... or a man... or a medicine-man..... Cease your enchantments and make the patient live! We know you! Do not bring upon him bad influences during the night! If you do not restore him to health, we shall kill you!" All the people look at each other and try to discover who is meant by the bones and by the speaker. The rera nyiwa acts as a solemn warning to all the baloyi of the country, and may thus prolong the life of the chief. 754

This method of combating baloyi is also resorted to in connection with the products of the soil when some fields are in good condition and others not, or when caterpillars or locusts have spoiled some whilst others have been spared. This unequality is due to the baloyi! In the region of Matalane, near Rikatla, this kind of nyiwa was performed as follows at the end of 1918. The clansmen assembled in the little capital, whilst the women were ordered to stay at home. The men visited all the gardens, those in the marshes as well as those on the sandy hill, and took from each of them food of all the different kinds, sweet potatoes, manioc, mealies, pumpkins, even pine-apples. Then the whole throng assembled somewhere in the bush, a big pot was brought, and they all ate from it, the man who had been designated by the bones taking the first mouthful (luma) and offering a "mhamba." Then he said to the people: "We have seen where food is plentiful and where it is wanting!" The aim of the whole performance was evidently to show the supposed wizards that they must cease their bewitching of the fields. It was at the same time a symbolical meal in which all the members of the little community ate some food from each of the fields, thus asserting that all must remain equal (ba fanana) and that this equality must not be destroyed by the wizards' robbing the others by their enchantments, and becoming rich at their expense.

d) *The smelling-out procedure.*

754 But should it be desirable to ascertain the name of the noyi, in order to punish him (for instance, in a case of death, where nothing remains but to avenge oneself on the murderer), the mungoma will proceed to the *shinusa divination*, the regular smelling-out. This can be done in two ways, either by questioning or by ecstasy.

1) *Smelling-out by questioning*. The relatives of the bewitched come to the shinusa, pay him £ 1, and ask him to find out the murderer. He makes them sit down in a half-circle, and, facing them, begins to put questions to them. They always answer by the word *mamoo*, which means yes, in the language of *bungoma*. Hence the Zulu term *vumisa* viz., "to make somebody say yes," applied to this ceremony. The *mamoo* is cool or warm, doubtful or convinced, and the clever diviner easily perceives every shade of meaning in this perpetual *mamoo*. He is well aware of all the disputes and hatred between the people and, in his investigation, he draws nearer and nearer to the man of whom the consulting party is thinking. Their *mamoo* becomes bolder. The questions are more precise. At last, when he feels himself in agreement with the consultants, the *mungoma* pronounces the name and lets his tail fall. He is bathed in perspiration after the great strain, and remains silent, as if he were indeed infallible ; he has triumphantly "smelt out" the culprit. Next day, relatives of the patient go to the kraal of the noyi, waving branches, dance before him, and say : "So you are killing us!" The accused keeps silent. Then he says : "All right. We shall come to-morrow and also consult our *mungoma*." Both parties then go to another diviner. The performance of "smelling out" is again gone through, and very likely the verdict of the second *mungoma* will confirm that of the first ; the augurs know that they must not contradict each other if they wish to maintain their authority, and the terrible tail falls on the head of the accused. As soon as proof and counterproof have been obtained, the case becomes a judicial one. The plaintiff brings the matter before the chief, who will not condemn until the

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guilt of the pretended noyi is confirmed by ordeal, the trial by the famous philter called *mondjo*.

2) *Smelling-out by ecstasy* partakes more or less of the character of the rera nyiwa. All the people have been assembled in the Capital. The chief wishes to collect together all the baloyi of the land. The diviner arrives, decked out with amulets and all the insignia of his power. In his hands he carries his magical

Photo D. Lemair.

Smelling-out a wizard.

tail, by way of a whip, and an assagay. He begins to dance, the crowd seated all round him, clapping their hands (wombela), and singing a chorus peculiar to the occasion :

> Nwashengana khalo ! Fumba u ya teka, u ya teka, mongoma !
> Beautiful dancer of slender figure ! Seek for it, seek for it, diviner !

He goes on dancing ; like Pythia of old he falls into a condition of extreme nervous excitement, ecstasy, inspiration. He brandishes his tail, dilates his nostrils, inhales the air on all sides, as if to smell out the spot from whence the evil influence has emanated, then takes to his heels in a certain direction, the assembly

754 still clapping their hands and singing. He approaches a hut,
695 enters, and triumphantly plants his assagay in one corner. A hole
787 is dug in that spot and — just where so and so places his wooden pillow when retiring to rest for the night — there are discovered a small gourd full of blood, packets of suspicious objects connected with enchantment, and perhaps a snake. It is quite possible that the diviner may have previously hidden these articles; nevertheless he carries them exultingly away; they are the wizards' weapons, the "bloods" (tingati) which they throw over their victims at night.

The shinusa returns to the village of the chief, who is veryangry, and orders him to go and show these objects to their owner. Then the magician, making a sign to the crowd to stop singing, will go and throw the articles in front of the occupant of the hut to put him to shame before the whole assembly. The mysterious charms, and the noyi's gourd, must in every case be consumed by fire, and then the sickness and deaths in the village should cease.

e) *The Mondjo ordeal.*

754 As already pointed out, the final and supreme method of
695 unmasking baloyi is the *mondjo ordeal*. This is a legal procedure ordered by the chief, a true method of obtaining information in a criminal case. This custom calls to mind the judgment of God in the Middle Ages (ordeal is derived from "urtheil," judgment); it is practised by the majority of the Bantu tribes, varying from one tribe to another, but everywhere it has the same end in view, namely the discovery of the casters of spells by the imposition of an ordeal which is supposed to be fatal to such as are guilty.

This ordeal is called amongst the Ba-Ronga (as also from one end of the Thonga tribe to the other) *drinking the mondjo* (ku nwa
[137] mondjo). The mondjo is a plant of the Solaneae family, probably a Datura, which possesses intoxicating properties. With it a special magician prepares a beverage which is to act as a means of revelation. It can be resorted to by any individual accused of witchcraft, or of any other crime. A woman accused of adultery,

for instance, may say : "Let us go and drink the mondjo." The mondjo magician will give both the accused and the plaintiff a little of his drug, and the one who becomes intoxicated, or unconscious, after having drunk the magic beverage will be convicted of guilt. But the mondjo ordeal can also be ordered by the chiefs, just the same as the rera nyiwa, not only as a warning, but with the object of revealing the wizards and in order to get rid of them. 754 695

This is how the ceremony is performed in Nondwane. When it has been decided at the capital that all subjects shall undergo this ordeal, the chief sends word to the Shihahu folk to prepare the mondjo. These particular folk are a small clan inhabiting the left bank of the Nkomati, not far from the sea, northward of the district of Manyisa. The mondjo is cultivated by the medicine-men of Shihahu, but they have by no means the monopoly of it, for my neighbour, Hamunde, who lived at Rikatla, a few steps from the station, had one of these plants growing in his village, where I myself saw it. But it is at Shihahu that the recipe is known for the preparation of this magic philter. This is very complicated and intricate. It contains several strange ingredients, amongst others, it may be noted, *the fat of a leper long since deceased*, or a little of his powdered bones! To make sure of the efficacy of the drink, the Shihahu folk experiment upon a certain individual named Mudlayi. This man is considered the very chief, the "bull" of all the wizards of the country (nkunzi ya baloyi). He is more powerful than all the others in casting spells. If, therefore, the decoction produces in him the characteristic intoxicating effect by which the spell-casters are discovered, it is certain that the brewing has been a success. If, by any chance, Mudlayi should not have been intoxicated, word will be sent to the chief that the decoction has failed (yi hi hlulile), and another brew will be made, until the mondjo has attained the strength required. Then the people of Shihahu do not go directly to the chief, but, according to the rules of etiquette, to the counsellor who looks after the interests of their country. The other counsellors come to greet them, but the whole business is kept a great secret. Messengers are then sent to all the sub-chiefs, telling them to assemble at a

754 certain time, in a given place, bringing all their people with them.
695 This general assembly takes place on the borders of a lake. Every man and every woman must defile before the proprietors of the decoction and take a small mouthful of it, tepid, from a particular receptacle. Already at this stage of the proceedings some few, terror-stricken, make a confession : "Ndja loya!" — "I am a caster of spells," they cry. These persons are then collected together and placed on one side under a tree. The rest sit down in a line, in the fiery glare of the noon-day sun. There they are, then, all seated and exposed to the torrid heat of the sun's rays. They have received the following order : "Do not move! You must not scratch yourselves! Remain motionless!"

Mudlayi begins to dance in front of them. With widely opened eyes he glares in a peculiar manner at those who have sipped the mondjo. In his hair is fixed a large feather, which he waves up and down by moving his head. Everyone gazes at him intently.

Suddenly some one scratches his arm. Sounding his trumpet, *nte-nte-nte*, Mudlayi approaches the individual and places the feather in his hair over the forehead. The man tries to pull it out, but only clutches the air on one side or the other, in front of the feather. He is quite incapable of catching hold of it. A second individual begins to show the same symptoms of intoxication (popya) a little way down the line. Mudlayi continues his comings and goings to the sound of his trumpet. A third and a fourth are overcome in turn. They try to get up, clutching the grass to assist them to do so, but fall to the ground, or crawl feebly about. The others keep away from them. It seems that the mondjo dries up the saliva of all who drink it, but, in the case of the truly guilty, this effect is greatly accentuated ; the jaws become locked. They try to speak, but can only say *be-be-be-be* (they stammer). They are carried off, and all placed together under the tree, where they are guarded by the chief's counsellors, who will not allow their friends or relations to come near them.

"*Selekan*!" — "Get up!" is the order given to all the others, the seated crowd who have not become intoxicated. Jumping to their feet, they must run at full tilt to the lake and bathe.

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Some get into difficulties on the way, they jostle each other, fall to the ground, and remain there, unable to regain their legs. Some even fall down in the water ; all such are baloyi. The rest, who have successfully undergone the trial of the mondjo, come back and are restored to freedom, after having received three pinches of a special powder ; one of these is thrown over the right shoulder, another over the left, and the third is swallowed, in order to counteract the defilement consequent on having imbibed this drink of the wizards, which contained in solution... the fat of a human being! As to the poor, unfortunate hypnotised folk, their affair is settled. The magic potion has revealed their criminal character. They must be made to admit their evil deeds. The counsellors interrogate them. To restore the power of speech, a particular tisane, prepared from the herb called *tjeke*, is poured into the mouth ; they are shampooed *(tlhema)* on the cheeks and all over the body with its leaves. The saliva returns. They gradually revive and then begin to speak : "Yes! I devour men! I ate so and so and I still have some of his flesh in store!.. I hate so and so, and I would like to kill him, but I haven't done so yet... I bewitched the maize to hinder its growth." They are well reprimanded and told : "Cease your witchcraft and enchantments. Remove your spells from the cereals, let them grow properly, or we will kill you!"

How can the effect of the mondjo be explained? According to an old Native, the intoxication of the baloyi comes from the presence of these elements of human flesh contained in the solution. The noyi, who swallows them in drinking the philter, thus does during the day what he is accustomed to do during the night : hence the loss of his senses. As a matter of fact the man who administers the drug is clever enough to give a larger dose to those who are more or less supposed to be baloyi. Moreover there is a regular process of hypnotisation in Mudlayi's performance, and that is why some people fall into what seems to be a true cataleptic state.

3) The Punishment of Witchcraft.

754 683 What is the punishment inflicted on those convicted of the crime of witchcraft? Let us remember that this is a crime, an act of homicide, doubly punishable by the Court. Chief Shiluvane had definitely prohibited it by a decree in the following words : "I do not allow anyone to die in my country except on account of old age. So let the baloyi at once cease their enchantments, or I shall kill them all." In former times the crime of witchcraft was punished by death and the culprit was immediately hanged. The last to be punished in this way, in the Nkuna clan, was Mudebane (I. p. 443), and Mankhelu himself executed him. The wizards are impaled or drowned, as the case may be. Flogging and banishment were also resorted to when the crime was not so heinous. In Khosen wizards were expelled from the villages and roamed about the country, sleeping in the ruins, mocked at and insulted by the children, and oxen sinews were tied round their biceps so tightly that they entered their flesh and caused great suffering.

177.68 One of my informants (Fenis), who drank the mondjo at the death of Zihlahla, chief of the Mpfumo district, about 1870, told me that the heaviest penalty imposed on the wizards on that occasion was a fine of one or two goats, or of one pound sterling. He attributed this leniency to the proximity of the Whites. The civilised Governments in Africa have certainly done their best to put down this method of smelling-out wizards, and their efforts have been by no means without result. Native chiefs are now content with fining the wizards £ 10 or £ 15, half of which remains in their own pockets. I heard of one of them who claimed to be a Christian, but did not object to the substantial increase to his civil list brought about by witchcraft suits.

IV. *Concluding Remarks on Witchcraft.*

754 182 Witchcraft is one of the greatest curses of Native Life. I attribute the enormous hold which this superstition has taken on the mind of the Bantu to three causes : 1) The *Animistic beliefs* explained on p. 367

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which are at the root of the idea of the double existence of the baloyi. 2) *Cannibalism*, which has perhaps never existed as a general custom in South Africa, but has been practised sporadically in times of famine, and has left a feeling of disgust and horror in the minds of later generations ; this feeling is also manifested in the numerous Ogre tales. 3) The *terrible hatred* of which the Native mind is capable. If some people venture to accuse members of these tribes of such awful acts as those of killing and eating human beings, it is because they know that a Native who hates would not shrink from anything to satisfy his desire of vengeance. [52]

We must however remember that the witchcraft superstition was universally found amongst our own forefathers, and that there were epidemics of it in the XIVth, XVth and even the XVIth centuries, hundreds of wizards having been tortured and burnt in most European countries, after having been tried before regular Courts. I have tried to establish a parallel between the ideas and practices of witchcraft in French Switzerland and those of the Thongas. The results of the comparison are very curious. I cannot give them all here, and must refer the reader to the Paris Revue *Foi et Vie*, No. of October, 1910, in which they were published. The most striking difference is this. Amongst Thongas, we are still in the *predualistic age*, viz., the opposition between a good, moral Spirit (God) and bad, wicked spirits (demons, Satan) does not yet exist in Religion. So the power of God is not invoked to reveal the wizards, or to protect the innocent against their spells. But the same animistic conceptions evidently formed the basis of European as of African witchcraft.

This superstition has a deadly effect on Native life. It is a continual source of trouble, fear, quarrels, sorrow. Strange to say, it has been on the increase in recent years. It ruins the villages. — "Formerly," say my informants, "you could see villages of ten or twenty huts. Now the accusations of witchcraft have broken them up. Each man builds his own hut apart, from fear of being bewitched, or because he is suspected of being a noyi (1)."

(1) The evil affects the Native Christian communities also, fostering hatred amongst them, and this animistic doctrine is much more difficult to overcome than ancestrolatry, which is very quickly and completely abandoned by converts.

Some Christian Natives are so convinced that witchcraft is a reality that they interpret Matt. X. 28 by saying that "those who kill the body and who must not be feared" are the baloyi. Unhappily a Zulu translation of the Greek word φαρμακοί by the word corresponding to baloyi, in Revelation XXII, v. 15, confirmed them in

754 The Thonga tribe really suffers from the results of the witchcraft superstition and this explains a curious magico-religious movement which took place in the years 1914-1917, in which the tribe made a serious and touching attempt to free itself from this scourge. The story of "The Murimi Movement" will be found in Appendix V.

I have already explained how I think Government can and must interfere in order to check this terrible superstition. (I. p. 445.) But its eradication will only be possible under a twofold influence, the increase of the scientific spirit, which will conquer and destroy the absurdities of the animistic magical conceptions involved in these practices, and the Christian Religion, the Religion of Love and of Light, which banishes fear and hatred.

D. DIVINATION.

787 Divinatory practices are extremely common amongst Thongas. Surrounded by so many evil influences, having very little or no scientific knowledge, possessing no notion of a God capable of illumining the path of their life, they try to obtain directions by the various methods of divination which they have invented, and it must be confessed that they have reached a high degree of proficiency in this domain. The anxiety to know the future lies at the foundation both of omens and divinatory practices. Let us first briefly consider the former.

I. *Omens.*

These are of two kinds ; some objects are ill-omened, they *singita* or *hlolela*, foretell bad luck ; others are favourable and announce happiness and, more especially, plenty of meat!

their idea that wizards certainly exist, since they are even mentioned in the Bible! Of course those who are further advanced see the absurdity of the witchcraft theory, but a great many do not. As a proof of this I may quote this letter addressed by a young convert to his father from Johannesburg: "If the Lord agrees with it, I shall return home in the month of February; expect me that month. I entreat you not to tell anyone, less they bewitch me by preparing (lit. placing) snakes for me (ba ndji bekela finyoka)."

APPENDIX V (See p. 536).

The Murimi Movement, an attempt on the part of the Thonga Tribe to get rid of witchcraft.

In the year 1913 (or 1914) the members of one of the Hlengwe clans living near the Sabie River, in the extreme north of the Thonga territory, seeing that the crops were bad, game wanting, and that even honey was scarce, contributed each of them a small sum of money, collected £ 10 and sent messengers to Myali, the Kalanga god who dwells in a cave in Machonaland, in order to regain prosperity. They were well received by the priests of Myali, who introduced them to the god they serve. They had to pass through a tunnel, with a big rock hanging over their heads. On the other side of this tunnel there was a kind of amphitheatre of rocks, enclosing a very clean and well-swept space. A voice from the rocks above greeted them in Zulu : "Good morning, my children", and they were given a pouch full of tobacco with the following instructions : "When you reach your home, take a snuff of this tobacco ; then go to your gardens, blow your noses and spread the nasal mucus in the soil ; henceforth you will have abundant harvests." The Hlengwe messengers returned home and began to use the precious drug, but this tobacco of Murimi, as it was called, had a marvellous fate. It found purchasers throughout the Thonga tribe, and during four years all the Thonga clans performed the new rite, the rite of Murimi, in the conviction that a new era had set in in which there would be no more famine and in which witchcraft, that great enemy of humanity, which causes disease, robs, and kills, would be expelled for ever. 754 776 771

Who is this Myali? He is the same personage who is called Ñwali in other parts of the country, the same also as Ra-Luvimbi, the god of the Ba-Venda, to whom they pray to obtain rain (See p. 321). His sacred cave is in the Matoppo hills, in the midst of that extraordinary desert of rocks in which Cecil Rhodes chose the spot for his grave, some fifteen miles further south. Mr Eliott, who was Native Commissioner in this region, told me that the description of the cave given above was exact. I will not discuss here the origin of the cult of Myali, called also Mlimo, a term probably corresponding to the Sutho Modimo, which would seem to have been transformed into Murimi when it was adopted by the Thongas. This is a most interesting subject to which I would draw the attention of our Rhodesian colleagues. Myali has med-

754 iums, consecrated girls (bampouka) set apart from their youth to be-
776 come the wives of his priests ; the rite of the magical tobacco, which is
771 a fecundation rite, is unknown in South African ancestrolatry. Every-
thing would appear to suggest that this cult is of foreign origin. A fact which is worthy of special notice is this : *Myali is the enemy of wizards.* If anyone guilty of witchcraft approaches his cave, he will be struck dead, and his priests will have nothing to do with witchcraft cases.

I cannot explain in detail how the new cult spread from the Hlengwe country down to the Maputju region, thus creating in the Thonga tribe a unity which has but seldom been attained. Certain individuals appear to have availed themselves of the new belief to do a profitable piece of business. They bought a part of the original tobacco of Murimi, mixed it with ordinary tobacco and went to the chiefs offering to let their subjects snuff the miraculous drug. I happened to meet one of these prophets of Murimi, who also called himself Murimi and who had been arrested by the Portuguese Administrator of Morakwen, as the Authorities seem to have feared at a certain moment that the agitation caused by this movement might have a political character. This particular Murimi appeared to be a very simple type of man. He was half lame, his arms were crooked, and he told me that his reason for fighting the wizards was that it was they who had reduced him to that miserable condition ; he was convinced that his efforts to combat them were very beneficial to the country. But notwithstanding these altruistic inclinations, he did not neglect his own interests ; anyone admitted to snuff the tobacco had to give the chief a fowl or a "nkinyenta", i. e. 500 reis, then of the value of I s. 6d, and Murimi received a considerable share of the fee.

Wonderful rumours preceded the distributor of tobacco. It was said that he had been emprisoned by one of the Administrators, further north, but had suffered nothing through this infringement of his liberty; the following night he had been miraculously transported to the bed of the Commandant, whilst the latter had taken his place in the gaol! He was now approaching the town of Lourenço Marques in the form of a gigantic dragon before whom everyone fled!

754 The following is the description of the manner in which the Murimi
771 rite was performed in the Matalane region, some 15 miles north of Lourenço Marques. The chief Magebeza summons all his subjects to assemble early in the morning in a forest (Sept. 1916). His counsellors are present and bring with them the lame prophet holding in his hands a sala shell containing the tobacco. A woman comes and, kneels down in front of him; she holds out her open hand, palm upwards. Murimi takes

hold of one of the fingers in order that the hand may remain well open, pours a little tobacco into it and asks : "Are you a witch?" She answers: "No!" — "Then," says the prophet, "snuff!" The woman draws up all the precious tobacco into her nose, taking care not to let the least particle fall on the ground. If she carries a baby on her back, she puts a little of the powder into his nostrils, and if she is pregnant, she rubs her hypogastrium on both sides with the drug in order to "let the child who is inside snuff." Another woman comes; she answers in a hesitating manner, which does not escape the prophet; she may go so far as to say : "I do not know ; perhaps I am a witch". Murimi looks at her with terrible eyes : "Take care," he says, "cast away your witchcraft immediately. If you do not do so, this goat's skin in which you are carrying your child will come to life again and belabour your breasts with its hoofs! And the day you begin to cast your spells again, you will be split in two (handjuka hi le makari)!" The worst case is when a woman who is a witch accepts the tobacco without confessing her evil deeds. Then, such was the rumour, the tobacco poured into her hand would suddenly increase in quantity, and upon that sign, Murimi would give her hand a blow from beneath, throwing all the tobacco over her shoulder, and the woman would fall to the ground unable to get up again and on the point of splitting in two.

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When all the subjects had passed through the trial, Ndonga, one of the counsellors, addressed the throng in these words : "Now witchcraft is destroyed! You have all cast it far away. But let it not come back again. If any of you has *psipoko* (pl. of shipoko, p. 488) kill them, cut them in pieces with your axes or with your big knives, and let them not come back, because, if they do so, it would be a great calamity for you. They would beg you: 'Mother! give me something to eat' and if you should do so, you would die" He added: "A new era has begun. You have no longer anything to fear from wizards. If one of them approaches you to bewitch you, he will immediately split in two. Murimi has cut off the wings of the baloyi. They will not be able to come to do harm to you during the night. Henceforth we are free from the calamities which caused us to suffer so greatly."

This is the first part of the rite, which aims at destroying witchcraft for ever. But it has also a second aim, the bringing in of a new prosperity, a golden age in which everyone will have plenty to eat, in which even, according to some, death will no longer exist. The second part of the rite is connected with this great hope.

Whilst Murimi proceeded with the examination of the people, another

754 771 counsellor, Phayindi, was preparing "the leaves"; these are the large bracts protecting mealie-cobs which he has torn from the stem and in the centre of which he has placed a little of the tobacco. These are now lying on the ground, and each woman must go to fetch one and return home with her husband. Keeping silent all the while, she takes a little pot full of water, pours a little of the drug into it and carries it to the threshold of the hut, where both husband and wife wash their hands and feet. She must not enter the hut herself ; the husband enters, and carefully places the pot in the back part of the hut. The woman then sets out for her gardens, carrying the leaf. She follows the boundaries of each field, digging in the ground here and there, throws into the hole a little mucus from her nose, which is still full of the tobacco, and covers it with earth. She keeps to the end the largest field, in which there may be a nkuhlu tree (p. 18), the mafureira tree which is apparently preferred by Murimi. She digs a little hole at the foot of this tree and buries the leaf in it, in such a way that only the middle of the leaf which contains the tobacco will be covered with earth ; both ends will remain visible. Thus the fields are "fattened (nonisa)" for ever. But if the mistress of the field should again begin to practise witchcraft, the leaf will come out of the soil and fly up to the chief's village, where the guilty woman will have to redeem it by paying a fine of £ 1.. Having finished performing the fecundation rite, the woman claps her hands and says : "Murimi! I ask thee to help me here in my gardens in order that I may have a plentiful harvest and become fat!". She then returns home, and leans her hoe against the sacred tree of the village. Her husband, who has waited for her, again washes her feet with the lustral water and the injunction of silence is removed.

These are the rites of the first day. But now begins a sacred period which lasts from ten to fifteen days, and is marked by three strong taboos. The labour taboo ; no work is allowed in the fields until agricultural occupations are resumed by the collective tilling of the chief's field. The sexual taboo ; at the end of the period the great wife will smear her hut with clay and have relations with her husband the following night ; next day the other women will do the same, but woe to the one who should precede the great wife (I p. 324). The travelling taboo ; travelling is forbidden during these days and everyone must stay at home till the chief has cancelled the prohibition by himself undertaking a journey.

This is still not the end. Those who have snuffed the tobacco of

Murimi constitute in some sort a new humanity; they have been *initiated* into a new life; they must abstain from relations with those who do not belong to their society, and observe peculiar rules which will distinguish them from the uninitiated. If a man has not snuffed whilst his wife has done so, she must not allow him to have conjugal relations with her; if he was away from the country when Murimi passed, the husband must go to the capital and snuff there, a little of the tobacco having been preserved for those who were absent. He will be subject to the law of silence until he has ritually washed his hands and feet. (This is a form of the kunga rite as observed in the initiation ceremonies. (See I, p. 124.) If strangers pass through the village, no food will be offered to them unless they have snuffed, at any rate no food coming from the fields which have been "treated (daha)" with the drug. The following are some of the taboos regulating the life of the initiated. Language taboos: the word *fole*, which means tobacco, must only be used to designate the tobacco of Murimi; ordinary tobacco must be called by a new word, *shilandi*. The word *mpfula*, rain, is prohibited and must be replaced by *magayisa*, (which means a party of boys going to work). Alimentary taboos: no special food is prohibited, but certain articles of diet must be eaten according to new rules. This is particularly the case for the fruit of the nsala tree (p. 16). The shell must be broken in such a way that it forms two halves; the eater must lie on his belly, place the upper half of the shell on the soil, suck out the pulp round the stones to his heart's content and put all the stones back into the first half of the shell; when he has finished, he must place the second half over the first and deposit the fruit thus reconstituted at the foot of the tree, saying: "Murimi!" in order to show his gratefulness to his new god. If there are many ripe sala fruits on the stem, one must be left for Murimi. When digging sweet potatoes, sticks must be used rather than the hoe for the first ten days, during which tilling the ground with hoes is taboo; later on the hoe may be used, but one potato must be left in the earth as the share of Murimi. There are a number of other less important taboos to be observed; the stem of the cuscuta must not be employed to tie the bundle of dead wood gathered in the bush for fuel, because the cuscuta is the mat of Murimi. Certain kinds of snakes, the big Varan lizard, the tortoise and the small turtledove called shivambalane must not be killed. Should a hunter kill a shivambalane by mistake, he must place it on the branch of a tree, saying: "Murimi!". Above all, the initiated, the members of the new humanity, delivered from the fears of witchcraft by the all-powerful Murimi, must invoke him upon every

754 occasion. At the conclusion of their speeches they pronounce his name.
771 Though no special offering is made except the sweet potato and the sala fruit just referred to, and no special ceremony of worship is performed, Murimi has clearly become the object of adoration of his devotees and is much nearer their hearts and consciences than the ancestor-gods.

A year or two went by and the Thongas were obliged to confess that the produce of the fields in the meagre sand of their hills was not richer than in former years. People died just as before; the great salvation which the worshippers of Murimi had expected did not come, and the tribe understood vaguely that it had been the victim of a gigantic hoax. At least when the question was put to the devotees of the new cult: "What about Murimi?" they smiled and did not answer a word, and very soon Murimi was forgotten.

754 It might be thought that this strange movement was the result of Euro-
771 pean influence; it bears a strongly monotheistic character, and Murimi is certainly very different from the ancestor-gods and from Tilo, Heaven,
776 and much more akin to the Christian God. It must however be observed that very little information was given about this god, who was to a certain extent identified with his prophets, the latter being named Murimi as well as himself. But setting aside the small part played by Murimi, we are forced to recognise that the new rite is essentially and authentically Bantu. It is directly connected with witchcraft, the old Thonga animistic belief; we have already met, in connection with the treatment of smallpox, with the idea of destroying witchcraft by means of a collective confession and repudiation (p. 465). The taboos accompanying the new rite are those we have everywhere found in the marginal periods or when an initiation was taking place. The Murimi Movement is thus a genuine creation of primitive Thonga mentality. Changes are taking place so rapidly that it is probably the last. I am glad therefore to have had an opportunity of witnessing it and of publishing the record of such an interesting event. Further details will be found in a paper which appeared in *Le Journal de Psychologie normale et pathologique*. 15 Décembre 1924. Paris.

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846 751 them till they burn. The smoke then rises, and he exposes the child to it for a long time : the body, face, nose and mouth. The baby begins to cry ; he sneezes, he coughs ; this is just what is 825 278 wanted. Then the doctor takes what remains of the pieces of skin, grinds them, makes a powder, mixes it with *tihuhlu* (1) 856 grease of the year before last and consequently hard enough to make an ointment. With this ointment he rubs the whole body of the child, especially the joints, which he extends gently in order to assist the baby's growth.

846 751 853 All this fumigation and manipulation is intended to act as a preventive. Having been thus exposed to all external dangers, dangers which are represented by the beasts of the bush, the child may go out of the hut. He is now able "to cross the foot prints of wild beasts" (tjemakanya mitila) without harm. Snakes will not bite him, at any rate their bite will not hurt him ; lions will not kill him. The remainder of the powder is put into a little bit of reed closed at both ends, which the mother has to carry with her during the whole nursing period in order to continue the treatment.

846 755 753 821 This rite of the broken pot is also the great preventive remedy against the much dreaded ailment of babies, *convulsions*. If a child suffers from this, they will say : "a tlalile shirengelen," viz. "he did not find any help in the broken pot" and the parents will go to another doctor whose drugs are more powerful, to have the child once more exposed to the smoke. It may even be that a grown-up man will undergo this treatment again, if he has been ill with convulsions, but, in this case, the broken pot with its pieces of skin is put on the head of the patient, which has been first covered with a wisp of cuscuta (hare dja yendjeyendje). The great aim of all the medication of children by the "milombyana" is also to fight against convulsions, as we shall see (2).

(1) The tihuhlu are the seeds of the ntuhlu tree known under the name of mafuseira. They are oleaginous and the fat (mafura) obtained from them is very much used for external applications amongst the Thongas.

(2) In *Savage Childhood* p. 12, Dudley Kidd describes this "baptism of smoke" amongst Zulus. Some dirt is scraped from the father's body and is mixed with other drugs in order to impart to the child his ancestral spirit. Another ingredient

842 The Thonga child is always received into this world with great joy by the whole family. If it is a girl, it means oxen to buy a wife for one of the sons later on ; therefore it means increase not only in the wealth but in the number of the members of the family. If it is a boy, there is no direct material enrichment, but the clan has been strengthened and the name of the father is glorified and perpetuated. In the case of the birth of a first-born child (ñwana wa matibula), a special ceremony is performed at the end of the first week. When the grandmother has smeared the hut, she goes home, summons all the female relatives, sometimes as many as ten or fifteen ; they take with them food, ochre and fat prepared for this purpose. Two or three men accompany them. They enter the village of the child executing a special dance called *khana*, and singing the following song (which is the proper song to glorify a first-born) :

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I celebrate my pot which has done *ngelebendje*...

They compare the child with a pot of clay which has gone through the firing process. It has been tried as one always tries a pot by letting it fall to the ground ; but it is not shattered, because it has not cracked in the furnace, it has kept intact ! This is what is meant by the descriptive adverb ngelebendje.

846 851 603 Then they smear the baby, the mother, the father, everybody in the village with ochre. It is a great feast. A goat will be killed, if possible, because the father and mother have "found a village" (kuma muti) by the child, they have "grown roots" (mila mitju). This is a law, but its omission is not taboo. When the grandparents do not perform this ceremony, it is an insult to the parents of the child, but no evil consequence will follow.

765 753 821 is a meteorite ground to fine powder. It is interesting to compare this use of the meteorite with the fact that, amongst the Thongas, this fumigation is intended to prevent convulsions. Convulsions, as we shall see (Part VI. Chap. II. B) are caused by the mysterious power of Heaven. The meteorite has fallen from Heaven. Thus the baptism of smoke aims at bringing the child under the influence of the two main elements of Bantu religion : the ancestor gods and Heaven.

851 a grown up child (1). The expression *fuya ñwana* confirms our explanation. This custom is not a protective rite : the physician has nothing to do with it ; it is really an act by which the new-born child becomes a regular member of the community. The strict prohibition of renewed conception before this rite has been accomplished is evidently dictated by the feeling that another child must not appear before this one has been duly received into the family.

6) The weaning.

862 856 A whole year, even more, will elapse after the *boha puri* before the little one can be weaned. He will learn to speak and to walk, and it is only when his intelligence is sufficiently developed to allow him to run small errands that the date of the weaning will be fixed. When his parents can send him to the next hut to ask for snuff and see him coming back holding the tobacco, they say : "Now the time has come !"

The rite of weaning is accomplished in the following manner in Nondwane. (Mboza).

862 824 First of all, the father looks for a young *ntjopfa* tree which has only one root. The ntjopfa is an anonacea bush, which colonists sometimes call the wild custard. (Its fruit is very much like custard fruit and it is said that the true cultivated custard can be grafted on it). The root of this tree is said to have the property of making people forget. The mother cooks a pot of Kafir corn in which she has put the medicine. This 862 will help the child to forget the breast. But the great act is the 782 *hondlola* which takes place under the direction of the physician. 755 The mother pounds some mealies, pours water on them and adds some leaven ; in this way she makes a little light beer (buputju). She keeps a little of the bran of the pounded mealies. The doctor comes, kills a chicken and sprinkles this bran with the blood and *hahla*, viz. offers a regular sacrifice. He prays to the spirits of his own family and asks those of the child's family to

(1) This word *khuna* is also employed to designate boys who have not yet gone through the circumcision school. *Bukhuna* is the despicable state of uncircumcision. The state of a child before the ceremony of *boha puri* is another kind of bukhuna.

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862 join with them in blessing the little one. The beak of the sacrificed
782 hen, one of the claws and one of the feathers (psirungulo) will be
755 tied together round the child's neck. A mat is spread on the ground ; the child is laid on it and greased with oil and powder brought by the physician. Then he is smeared and rubbed with the bran. The particles which fall on the mat are called *timhore*. They are gathered by the mother who makes a ball of them. In the meantime the father looks for the nest of a certain kind of large ant which is common in the bush. It lives in the earth, but the opening of its hole is tolerably large. There the mother goes at sunset. She introduces the ball into the hole so that the ant will be obliged to take all the *timhore* into the nest. Then she returns home without looking behind her. It is taboo ; should she transgress this rule, she would bring back disease to her child.

This rite is the ordinary *hondlola rite* which is performed in this or in a similar way at the close of any serious disease as the conclusion of the treatment, with the view of taking away the defilement of disease. After having *hondlola*, the physician asks for the payment of his fees. For a child he will ask ten shillings or five coins of five hundred reis (1).

854 This hondlola reveals to us the true conception of the nursing period held by the Natives. For them these three first years of the child's life are a period of disease ; so many perils threaten the little one's well-being that he can hardly be considered healthy. He is during the whole time under the supervision of the physician, who takes leave of the little patient on the day of the weaning.

854 This view of infancy accounts also for some other taboos. It
789 is *yila* for instance to say of a child who is particularly fat : Wa tika, he is heavy : this would bring mishap to him. One must say : A kota ribye, he is like a stone! It is taboo also in Shiluvane to make use before a child of the word *mfene*, baboon. There is a disease which is called by that name and it would come upon him. One must say : the thing which inhabits the hills, and so on...

(1) In the Mpfumu clan the rite of weaning is somewhat different. I have published in " Les Ba-Ronga " a description of it given by Tobane. It seems that the elements of the cotton string rite and of the broken pot rite are mixed with the proper weaning rite. I think that the description of Mboza is more trustworthy.

I. *Love charms.*

832 584 If a boy has not been successful in his " gangisa ", if he is despised by the girls and has no chance of being accepted, a special rite is performed to help him to find a wife. The Ba-Ronga do not know the love-philter as such, but they have a substitute for it ; the old village cock is put on the lad's head and kept there for a long time ; the cock scratches him with his claws ; he is then allowed to go. The boy will now succeed ; he will be like the cock, who never lacks spouses! (Mboza).

Other charms are used for girls, especially a certain medicine which produces an abundant lather when boiled in water. The physician washes the girl's body with it, after which she will " appear " (a ta boneka) to the eyes of would-be suitors (Tobane).

755 832 584 Should however a girl not find a husband in the lawful way, she has another means at her disposal—marriage by abduction, and thus no one, or hardly any one, remains unmarried amongst the Thongas. Mankhelu, who was a great doctor, treated this " complaint of singleness " with more seriousness! He used his strongest medicines to heal the boy or the girl who was unable to find a partner in life. This is the treatment followed by him. He takes a she-goat, in the case of a boy, a he-goat in that of girl, and anoints it with fat mixed with his precious medicinal powder ; he rubs the animal (hondla) from the mouth to the tail, stretches out all its limbs and kills it. No prayer is offered, but the *psanyi* (the half digested grass which is found in the stomach) is carefully collected. The boy is then called, enters his own hut, spreads a mat on the ground, sits on it quite naked and rubs his whole body with this substance. " A tihorola, a tilurulula " says Mankhelu. He rubs away from himself all his filth. When he has finished, he coughs to call the doctor, who comes and gathers into a pot all the " timhorola," the particles which have fallen on the mat ; he takes a portion of this and squeezes it into a small bag of lizard-skin so as to make a *shitjungulu* or amulet. The sister must come after sunset without any clothing into the boy's

832 hut and tie the bag round his neck. What remains of the *timhorola*
~~133~~ will be used to smear the hut. Then all the girls will love him ;
783 or in the case of a girl, she will soon be asked in marriage.
584 This ceremony is a characteristic *hondlola*, the same which is performed on the weaning day (see page 59) and after any serious disease ; it is a rite of removal of impurity. (Notice the termination ola, ula, ulula in these verbs ; it means generally to undo, to take away).

832 If the love charms do not obtain the desired result, the angry
754 boy will perhaps try to avenge himself. He will take a fowl, or
262 perhaps only an egg, treat it with special drugs and give it to the girl in order to bewitch her. This kind of witchcraft is called *ku dambikela*. (See the Chapter on Witchcraft, Part VI). The girl will give birth not to a child, but to an animal, a pigeon, or a snake. Or her genitalia will be changed and take the appearance of the male organ. This is one of the causes why eggs and fowls are taboo for girls.

Let us now hear from Tobane the description of the marriage rites amongst the Mpfumo clan. We shall afterwards see how the customs differ in other Ronga and Thonga clans.

II. *Marriage ceremonies of the Mpfumo clan.*

1) The betrothal (Buta).

584 When a young man has made up his mind to get married, and when he is in possession of the necessary lobola (1) cattle, he starts, one fine day, with two or three of his friends to look for a wife in the villages. He puts on his most brilliant ornaments and his most precious skins. Here they are, arriving in the village

583 1) *Ku lobola* means to buy in marriage. *Ku lobola* (a factitive derivative of the verb) is said of a father who claims a sum of money from his daughter's suitor. *Lobolo* or *ndjobolo* or *bukosi* (wealth) is the sum paid, the oxen, the hoes, or the pounds sterling. We shall use these words, which are employed in Thonga as well as in Zulu and ought to be adopted as technical ethnographic terms. I use the verb for the act of paying and the noun for the sum itself.

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764 783 them in the next chapter. When they come back from the pool, one of the men climbs on the hut and removes from its top the crown of woven grass, which was its glory during the life of its master. The hut participates in the general state of uncleanness of all his belongings. This crown will be put before the door to close it, and no one will dare to enter any more till the day of the crushing of the hut.

In the Mpfumo clans, that first evening, the grave diggers have some preliminary purification rites to go through : 1) a *hondla*, viz. an ablution with leaves of the nkuhlu tree which have been crushed in a mortar with some water ; 2) in former times they used to make a pipe with the shell of a raw sala, place in it an ember and a little hen's dung, and *smoke* this disgusting mixture.

765 783 From that first day, the grave diggers and the widows, when eating, must use special spoons *(psihanti)* made from old broken calabashes. It is taboo for them to take food with their fingers from the common plate during the five days of the Great Mourning.

The night comes. All the widows sleep in the open, their huts, which belonged to the deceased, being taboo. If it rains, they sleep in the other huts of the village.

765 755 783 On the following day, the *doctor* comes and proceeds to the medical purification of the widows and of the grave-diggers. This will consist in three successive *vapour baths*, on the first, third and fifth day after death. These *mahungulo* are administered in the same way as the one I have already described in connection with the infantile rites (p. 55). But the drugs boiled in the pot and the pills burnt in the fire are considered very powerful, especially those of the first day, so much so that the pot in which they have been prepared must be broken on the grave. The two grave-diggers and the first widow must be exposed together to this particularly powerful disinfectant, the widow keeping on her old clothing during the operation. The second and third bath, those provided for the other widows, are not so strong, and the pot can be kept. In the case of these the widow does not enter together with the grave-diggers. These rites, as

727 They have killed... So they are exposed to the mysterious and
775 deadly influence of the *nuru* and must consequently undergo a
828 medical treatment. What is the *nuru* ? *Nuru* is the spirit of the
783 slain which tries to take its revenge on the slayer. It haunts him
789 and may drive him into insanity : his eyes swell, protrude and
761 become inflamed. He will go out of his mind, be attacked by giddiness (ndzululwan) and the thirst for blood may lead him to fall upon members of his own family and to stab them with his assagay. To prevent such misfortunes, a special medication is required : the slayers must *lurulula tiyimpi ta bu*, take away the nuru of their sanguinary expedition. (Lurulula comes from nuru, plur. miluru (1).

In what does this treatment consist ? The slayers must remain for some days at the capital. They are taboo. They put on old clothes, eat with special spoons because their hands are

764 (1) We met with the notion of *nuru* for the first time à propos of the rite of
775 luma (p. 400) ; we shall find it again when dealing with hunting customs (Part IV).
761 The nuru is to be feared not only in the case of slain enemies but in connexion with any human corpse. As a proof, I may quote the following curious story which Spoon told me and of the truth of which he was fully convinced. A traveller died under the great fig-tree of Libombo (near Rikatla). He had climbed on to the tree and fallen on his own stick, which he had planted in the ground. He was not buried, as no one knew him. So his corpse fell into decomposition on the spot; his skull became white. Later on a bush fire burnt all the grass and the skull was
764 seen for years "saying mpha" (it was shining), the teeth "saying bva" (descriptive
775 adverb, same meaning). One day the boys of Libombo went to pick wild figs from the tree and again saw the skull. Spoon was one of them. The fire had just passed
755 by again. "We beat it with our sticks and amused ourselves by rolling it over like a
789 ball. We did not know it was a human skull... When we got home we began to be seized by the drunkenness of nuru, the disease of those who have killed a man. During
761 the night we were delirious (hanta-hanteka), our eyes swelled and were full of exudations (malanga), the four of us, Trukela, Tlabin, Sibakuze and myself. Next morning my uncle went to the fig-tree and saw that we had killed a man there! The medicine-man who understands the treatment of nuru, Dudela, who had been a slayer in war, called us to his village. We stood in a line before him ; he poured a little of his powder into the hands of each one of us, took a little in his mouth, rubbed his forehead. Then he insulted us saying ; "You will die! Who began beating that skull?" Each of us denied having given the first blow. Then he said : "Take care! Do not go there any more not near that nkuhlu tree where another corpse has been burnt under the leaves! Go away."

514 When a man has murdered another in a scuffle, he can replace this nuru medicine
789 by his own urine. He must drink a little of it and rub his forehead with it. The giddiness will pass away. If the murder has been committed from a distance, as with
775 a gun, the nuru is not so much to be feared, as the enemy was far away. A little of the medicine will be sufficient to treat the murderer. Spoon is ignorant of the composition of the nuru drug.
626
761

136 larva of a large Calandra which swarms in the stems of the palm
825 trees of the marsh (p. 4). The *Shitambela*, a big Buprestida
262 (Sternocera Orissa) is roasted by the shepherds and eaten after they have torn off its elytra.

136 *Hymenoptera*. *Wasps* are called *Mupfi* or *Mupfu* (mu-mi),
755 and are divided into four different classes : the *Mupfu* proper (Belonogaster), the *Tlatlanhongana*, the *Bamaandlopfu*, a grey species, and the *Mumpfundlopfu*, a large black species which burrows in the soil. When someone has been stung by a wasp, the others laugh at him. If he resents being made fun of, they say to him : "Be not angry ; we do this to help you." They are really trying to divert his attention from the pain in order to
136 comfort him. *Bees* are called *Nyoshi* (yin-tin) and are greatly
262 appreciated for their honey (p. 44). Natives know the males
815 (*djongwe*, dji-ma) the larvae *(shipungwa)*, which they eat with as much pleasure as the honey itself. They call the honeycombs *hahla* (dji-ma) or *shihlenga*, the wax *mumpfu* (mu-mi) and the
136 pollen brought by the bees, *nsindjo*. The curious *Mbonga* (yin-tin)
825 *Bee* is worth special mention, owing to the superstitions which are current regarding it, and the part it plays in certain rites (I. p. 390). This species, which does not sting, digs a narrow passage of two or three feet deep in the soil and excavates a hole of one or two feet broad where it builds its round nest. Natives say that nobody knows what the mbonga does with the earth which it digs out of the cavity in which it makes its nest. No heap of earth is ever seen in the vicinity. The hole is continued under the nest and has no end. It probably extends to subterranean pools where the insects go to drink, — as it is said that no one has ever seen a mbonga drinking from the lake or the well, as the other bees do. Moreover the entrance to a mbonga nest is invisible to the majority of people. It is only certain families who can see it and consequently dig out the precious honey (1). For all these reasons the mbonga is

777 (1) The Libombo family was one of those "which the mbonga loves" (randja). Elias who belongs to it told me that he once paid a visit to one of his neighbours who had just cleaned his village; he discovered a mbonga hole and said to his friend: "There is a mbonga nest in your village." But the man was unable to find it. Elias then dug as deep as his shoulders and found the nest all surrounded by "calabashes" full of honey. He says that when rain falls the little bees cover the entrance of

circulation (p. 63-76). I shall have to content myself with giving the names of some Mammalia and relating some superstitions concerning them. 136

Edentata : two kinds are known, the *Mpandjana* (yin-tin), the ant-bear, which is covered with hair, and the *Kwara* (dji-ma) which has scales. The only Cetacea known is the *Nkomu* (yin-tin), the whale.

Solipedes : *Mangwa* (yin-tin) means zebra, and this term is sometimes applied to horses ; this latter animal is called *Hanshi* (dji-ma), evidently a corruption of the English word. *Mbongolo* (yin-tin), donkey. *Mula* or *Mewula*, mule.

Pachyderma : *Ngulube* (yin-tin), wild boar and also, by extension, domesticated pig. *Mpfubu* (yin-tin), hippopotamus.

Ruminantia : *Homu* (yin-tin), ox. *Nyari* (yin-tin), buffalo. *Hamba* (yin-tin, Ro.), *Nyimpfu* (yin-tin, Dj.), sheep. *Mbuti* (yin-tin), goat. *Mhalamhala* (yin-tin), sable antelope, Hippotragus niger. *Mhala* (yin-tin) (Zulu impala). *Mhunti* (yin-tin), duiker *Hongonyi* (yin-tin), gnu. *Mangulwe* (mu-ba). *Mhetlwa* (yin-tin), water buck. *Nhlangu* (yin-tin), reed buck. *Mhofu* (yin-tin), eland, *Nhutlwa* (yin-tin), giraffe, etc.

Proboscidea : *Ndlopfu* (yin-tin), elephant.

Rodentia : *Mpfundla* (mu-mi), hare, *Nhlolo* (yin-tin), rabbit. *Khondlo* (dj -ma), mouse. *Vondo* (dj -ma), *Phephe* (dj-ma), *Ngole* (yin-tin), etc.

Insectivora : *Shitlulandlela*, mole, lit. the one which crosses the road ; it is a bad omen for a mole to cross your path. *Tjukunyana*, a brownish mole which digs its burrows just below the surface of the ground. Hence the fact that a bracelet made of its skin is employed as medicine against the Filaria, a parasite which makes its way under the skin! 136 777 825 755

Carnivora : *Nsimba* (yin-tin), civet cat. *Shipakana*, cat. *Mbyana* (yin-tin), dog. *Mhisi* (yin-tin), hyena. *Hlolwa*, *Nhlati* (mu-ba), fox. *Yingwe* (yin-tin), leopard. *Ndjau* (Ro.), *nghala* (Dj.), lion, etc. 136

Chiroptera : *Tangadana* (dji-ma, Ro.), *Mangadyana*, (mu-ba. Dj.), bat.

Primates : *Mfene* (yin-tin), baboon. *Habu* (yin-tin), monkey.

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them. Whatever may be their origin, they form a part of the mental make up of every Native. A careful study of the rites reveals at least three such axioms: Like acts on like and produces like; the part represents the whole and acts on the whole; the spoken wish produces the desired result. 82 789

1) *Like acts on like and produces like.* All the elements of Nature are dependent on each other, and if there is a similarity between two of them, they are at once brought into a special relation with each other and begin to influence each other. The application of this principle is universal, in the religious as well as in the dynamistic domain. The Native mind is extremely quick at perceiving a similarity between the most heterogeneous objects or phenomena, and immediately establishes a causal relation between them. We have already met with scores of instances of this law. *Colour* acts on colour; black sheep and black smoke produce a black cloud full of rain (p. 318). *Form* produces a similar form; a necklace of maize grains round the neck of a small-pox patient produces an eruption of small, transparent, pustules which are not dangerous, in place of the large, thick, deadly ones. (See Chapter III. A.) *Disintegration* produces disintegration; the chewing of a bean ensures the melting of the iron ore in the kiln (p. 359). *A certain state of mind* produces a similar condition in living beings, and even in material phenomena; the continence of little children ensures control over the flame of the furnace (p. 115) whilst the passion of married people accelerates disease, and increases the fury of wild beasts, (p. 61) etc. (1)

This kind of magic has been [illegible]d *imitative magic.* A corollary of this principle is that the image or object representing a thing is in close relation with the thing itself, and any action performed on the image will have its repercussion on the thing represented.

(1) To show how far this action of like on like can go, let me quote this final example which I gave in my paper on *The Magic Conception of Nature amongst Bantus (South African Journal of Science*, Nov. 1920). A magician has had the good luck to discover a crow's nest full of young. He climbs up the tree, and ties all the little birds together by their feet. The mother crow, however, is not at a loss to deliver her progeny. She brings each day a leaf taken from different trees, and places it in the nest. The magician keeps watch. He climbs the tree, looks at the leaf, and recognizes the tree from which it has been taken. He then goes and digs up a piece of root from that tree. After a few days he will have collected quite a bundle of different roots. By that time the little crows will be free, the string which bound them having given way, or having rotted, and the magician will possess a medicine of first rate quality. By means of it he will be able to free any patient from any disease or worry by which he is held fast. 825 755

Regular acts of worship are performed also at the
burial (I. p. 142), at the *crushing of the hut* (I. p. 158-163), on the 782
days of *mahloko* (I. p. 215), and at the *adjudication of the inheritance* 765
(I. p. 208). 262

I have already mentioned the stringent taboo in regard to the victims killed in these sacrifices. The portions distributed amongst the different relations must not be eaten either in the village of the deceased, or in those of the various visitors. This meat must be roasted on the road, and eaten on the spot, and it is likewise taboo to season it in any way. The inhabitants of the deceased's village can eat the meat boiled, but it is prohibited to add ground-nuts to the broth.

These are the great family sacrifices, in which the uterine 782
nephews play their curious part, and on the occasion of which family matters are brought up and settled. They play a most important part in the life of the family, and I have therefore described them at length, when treating of the social life of the tribe, as religion and social life are here intimately united. There is therefore no need for me to add much more regarding them here. With their clearly established and typical ritual they form the most definite and settled element of the religious life of the tribe.

Rangane asserts that another offering is regularly performed in the Maluleke district. On the first occasion of the *cooking of the new mealies*, each headman prepares a little of the flour, takes a spoonful of it, and throws it away, praying at the same time to the Ba-Nyai spirits, i. e., the gods of the Ba-Nyai, who have been conquered by the Malulekes. He calls this "magandjelo ya ku ñwantseka," i. e., "sacrifice tasted and thrown away." This is evidently to propitiate the gods, who were the first owners of the country and who might harm or destroy the invaders. Compare p. 377 the respect shown by Mahazule to the Libombo sacred wood, and also the curious request of the Samaritans, II Kings. XVII.

Special Family Sacrifices. By these, I mean particularly those 782
offered in cases of disease. The bones having revealed that the 755
disease is caused by the gods (and not by wizards, nor by Heaven, nor by contamination, which are three other possibilities), and also that it comes from such and such a god, a god of bitterness, or a god

782 of the paternal or the maternal line, now indicate the nature of
755 the offering which must be made, the place, and sometimes even the person who must make it. Here is the detailed description, given by Viguet, of a sacrifice made for a ntukulu, a uterine nephew, who is ill : — "Suppose," says Viguet, "that I am the sick child. The bones have said that an offering must be made to the gods of our *bakokwana* (mother's family) ; so we go to our maternal relatives, to my *malume*, and ask him to perform the sacrifice. The offering may consist of a hen or an ornament like a bracelet. If it is a hen, my malume will kill it in accordance with the ceremonial rite, take a few of the feathers of the neck, which have been soiled by the blood, put them to his mouth, and spit on them, making *tsu* (the blood of the victim thus mingles with the saliva of the priest), and say (bulabulela) :

You, our gods, and you so and so, here is our mhamba (offering)! Bless this child, and make him live and grow ; make him rich, so that when we visit him, he may be able to kill an ox for us... You are useless, you gods ; you only give us trouble! For, although we give you offerings, you do not listen to us! We are deprived of everything! You, so and so (naming the god, to whom the offering must be addressed in accordance with the decree pronounced by the bones, i. e., the god who was angry, and who induced the other gods to come and do harm to the village, by making the child ill), you are full of hatred! You do not enrich us! All those who succeed, do so by the help of their gods! — Now we have made you this gift! Call your ancestors so and so ; call also the gods of this sick boy's father, because his father's people did not steal his mother : these people, of such and such a clan, came in the daylight (to lobola the mother). So come here to the altar! Eat and distribute amongst yourselves our ox (the hen!) according to your wisdom.

Then the priest takes a feather from one of the wings, a claw of the left foot and the beak, and after tying them together, attaches them to the left wrist or left ankle of the child, or to his neck, passing the string over the shoulder and under the left arm ; (all is on the left side, because it is an offering to the gods of the mother's family ; it would be on the right side if it were to the

gods of the father). These parts of the victim are called *psirungulo*, the religious amulet. 782 755

When the offering consists of a bracelet, the bones having so ordered, the priest will pour consecrated beer over it, and say his prayer. The bracelet will then be fastened to the child's foot. He may not remove it, nor exchange it for anything else : it belongs to the gods.

This description, given by Viguet, is typical of sacrifices offered in the case of disease. In the Maluleke clan the sacrifice made for a sick person is as follows. The headman takes beer, which has been specially prepared for the gods and is very much diluted, the beer called *byala bosila*, and a twig of male nkanye. He orders the patient to sit near the altar, and after dipping the twig into the beer, sucks it and says the following words :

Phaa! (this word corresponds to tsu) : this is byala bosila, you Makhima! Take it and convey it to your father Mashakadzi ; call each other and come here together to drink! Let all disease depart! Heal this man!

I must also mention the sacrifice performed in the curious ceremony of *dlaya shilongo*, in the case of marriage between near relatives (I. p. 258), and will now proceed to describe two others, viz., the sacrifice on behalf of the son who has just returned from Johannesburg, and the sacrifice of reconciliation.

When a young man, who has been absent from home for a long time, *returns to his village*, he cannot be received again into the community without special precautions being taken. If there has been a death in the kraal he must be purified from the collective contamination before eating the food of the village. This is the luma milomo (I. p. 146), and is connected with the defilement from death. Some of the provisions of the deceased, kept in a pot and diluted with hot water, must be poured between his two great toes, and he must afterwards rub them together. But, before this, a religious act is performed. Before the boy, who is on the return journey, is allowed to enter his native village, he has to stay for a short time just outside, while his father, seated at the main entrance, cuts open the neck of a hen, which he has 782 783 484

No special use is made of the *bones* of the victim, except, as we shall see later, in offerings on behalf of those possessed. The only part kept is the *astragalus*, or the *psirungulo* just described, which are tied to the person on whose behalf the sacrifice has been made, probably to insure for him a permanent blessing from the gods. 782 777

It must be observed that the sacrificial ritual, as well as the medical art, lays great stress on the sex of the offerings. As a rule, there must be opposition between the sex of the victim and that of the person for whom, or to whom, the sacrifice is made. A woman is prayed for by means of a he-goat or a cock, and a man by a she-goat or a hen. 782 755 562

What is the reason of this rule? — "Psi yaka muti," says my informant. "It builds up the village." As a village can only grow and multiply by the union of the male and the female element, so in order to succeed in any pursuit it is necessary to unite both sexes. This principle is universally applied : when a girl is ill, a boy will bring her medicine, and vice-versa. The rule is also followed in another case. It may be that a mhamba has been wrongly performed and threatens to bring misfortune instead of appeasing the gods. This mhamba must consequently be "quenched, timula" "so that it may keep quiet and cool down, because it might cause annoyance and overcome them" (Mboza). This will be done by offering a mhamba of the opposite sex, which will correct the first. So if a female nkanye twig has been employed in the funeral ceremony, when the ritual ought to have been performed with a twig taken from a male stem, the ceremony will be repeated with a male twig in order to quench the first mhamba.

The last observation to be made about the gifts presented to the ancestor-gods is that the *psirungulo*, viz. the part of the victim which is tied to the person for whose sake it has been sacrificed, must be attached to the left part of the body if this person belongs to the female, to the right if to the male sex ; moreover in the sacrifices offered to maternal gods, the attachment is always done on the left side, whatever may be the sex of the person. Why is this? Because the left side belongs to the woman, the right to the man. We have seen that this is the case in the hut (I. p. 187). 782 562

787 brother will be so called." Nkolele, the father of these two men,
793 was the Libombo mhamba before them. This is another meaning of this great word mhamba. Klass was neither a gift made to the ancestor-gods of the Libombos, nor a magic object employed to win their favour, but he was the elder member of the family, the one who was the official and indispensable intermediary between all the Libombos and their gods. For this reason he was a mhamba. This leads me to propose the following definition of the word : *A mhamba is any object or act or even person which is used to establish a bond between the gods and their worshippers.*

Having thus analysed all the elements contained in the Thonga mhamba, we may safely conclude that its spiritual and religious value cannot be denied. Whatever place ritual may hold in the ceremonies of ancestrolatry, whatever mixture of devotional and magic elements may be found in them, the offering is not a mere external gift which appeases the gods by its material value, nor a simple means of coercion which forces them to submit to the will of the worshipper. By means of the mhamba the Thonga really aims at entering into relationship with those powerful spirits who control his life (1).

may be true, but as regards Bantus, they have long outgrown this stage. Even when they have recourse to magic processes in order to influence their ancestor-gods, these have a distinctive character, different from that of the ordinary magic which they practise when they wish to affect the impersonal forces of Nature. Everything done in order to obtain the favour of the ancestor-gods is a *mhamba*, not a *muri*, as I have already pointed out.

782 (1) Religious and magic practices are more or less mingled in Thonga ritual and it
789 is evident that the smaller the degree of magic contained in a rite, the more genuine religious feeling there will be in it. I owe to my Venda informant the description of
755 a sacrifice performed in his tribe for a sick child, where the two elements are combined to an extraordinary extent. It is called *the offering of the goat with clothes* (mbudzi ya u dzwindisa).

A goat is provided. It is placed before a basin of water mixed with certain drugs and forced to drink, to drink till it is fully distended, and dies. It is then skinned and cut open. The large intestine is extracted from the body, and a part of it is cut off and stitched up at one end so as to form a kind of pouch. From each limb a bit of meat is taken, and a provision of the seeds of various cereals, brought to the spot together with drugs. All these different kinds of food are introduced into the pouch, the process of filling it being accompanied by prayers to the ancestor-god. The officiant, whilst proceeding with his task, puts seeds into the goat's intestine with one hand, and, with the other, takes other seeds and places them apart. These he will keep carefully in order to sow them later on. And continually he prays: "Eat your fill and be satisfied, and leave us some for our use." Thus the ancestor-god has been fed, well and duly stuffed. The pouch is then stitched at its other end. But now the ancestor-god must be clothed

c) Prayers.

The act of prayer is called *khongota* (Ro.), *khongela* (Dj.) 782
(the same word being also employed to mean "supplicate"); or *bulabulela*, to speak to, or scold the gods; *bukutjela* means a long, meandering prayer in which the officiant says the same thing over and over again. I have given twenty-two different forms of prayer when describing the manifold religious acts of the Thongas: two prayers of medicine men (I. 55, II. 393); those pronounced on the day of marriage (I. p. 111); of death, with the nkanye twig (I. p. 142); in the ceremony of crushing down the hut (I. 161); at the distribution of the widows (I. 208); at the death of a sister (I. 216); in the ceremony of killing the tie of consanguinity (I. 258); on journeys (I. p. 340. II. p. 394, 398); on offering the first fruits (I. 396); before the tjeba fishing (II. p. 87); when sneezing (II. 361); on offering tobacco at the altar (II. p. 390); for a sick nephew (II. p. 396); at the sacrifice of reconciliation (II. p. 399); at the worship of the Makaringe family (II. p. 403);

also! A strap is cut from the goat's skin and the sacrificer winds it all round the 782
pouch. Carrying the offering with him he now goes to the grave of the grandfather, digs, and lays the pouch in the earth parallel to the body beneath; he then prays again: 789
"We worship you, grandfather! And we have clothed you. This is your food. Eat and be full and be contented. And leave us food, plenty of food that we also 755
may be contented, and bless the sick child."

Let us try to analyse this rite according to the ideas of magic which we have explained, p. 369. We are dealing here with the ancestor-god complexus. A goat is provided, a gift made. This is religion. This goat has now become one of the possessions of the ancestor-god, a part of him. Henceforth the goat represents the god and an action performed upon it will be at the same time performed on the god. The goat is filled with water to quench the thirst of the god. A pouch is made of the intestine, a part of the animal which will now represent the whole, and food is introduced into it to feed the god. All these acts are instances of *communionist magic*, and the prayer which accompanies them is the religious element of the sacrifice. Some seeds are put apart to be sown later on. As they belonged to the provision made for the offering, these seeds partake of the nature of the whole of that provision; they have entered into the ancestor-god complexus; they are therefore particularly suitable for sowing, since the blessing of the powerful god will rest upon them. This is communionist magic again, whilst the filling up of the goat with water and food and the clothing its intestine with a strap may be regarded as *imitative magic*. The placing of the pouch in the grave facing the same way as the body of the ancestor once more signifies the identity of both, and the sacrificer is definitely persuaded that by all these rites he has really exercised a strong and compelling influence on his god (See my paper on "Some Features of the Religion of the Ba-Venda" *S. A. Journal of Science*, April 1921).

756 *Rihinga ra ndlela* : a root found on the path ; it helps you to go
789 on, though others may seek to hinder you in your progress.

Shivunge : that which attracts patients to the doctor.

278 *Nandjiyane* : that which makes his words agreeable, so that
824 patients will like them ; (from ku nandjiya, to be agreeable).

Mvakazi, phuphuma ra matlhari : that which is used to make the slayers vomit the main drug of the *tintebe* (I. p. 479).

Mbendjula : that which strengthens all the other drugs.

These are the principal trees, or plants, used for the preparation of the powder. They must be *salted* by the addition of the *sea*, viz., of the medicines taken from the sea, which Mankhelu uses to cause rain to fall (p. 321).

The sexual character of the drugs is essential. The female are used principally for sprinkling the army and the assagais, the male for treating diseases. We find here again the law of opposition of sexes ; the military domain is the male domain par excellence : it must be treated by means of female drugs. On the contrary, when slaughtering a she-goat for the sacrifice, a little of the male drugs must be placed in its mouth and the weapon used to kill it must be smeared with the same, and vice-versa for the he-goat. "To act otherwise is taboo. All the ñanga do this" (p. 417).

755 There may be some true scientific elements in Thonga medical
757 practice. Experiments have been made in using certain roots to cure certain diseases, and tradition has handed down some prescriptions from father to son. Why should there not be effective curative properties in plants of their country just as in the Cinchona bark, or in Castor oil seeds? And why should they not have discovered them?
756 However the Native ñanga is by no means a scientific man, and the best,
789 the most renowned, are perhaps the least scientific. Those who treat only one complaint, and only know one drug, are perhaps those most resembling real physicians ; they act on the results of experiment. But the line between science and superstition is very soon crossed, and the medical art passes with the greatest ease into the domain of magic, all the more so as the difference between Science and Magic is not perceived. *Muri*, which means originally tree, plant, medicinal herb, is at the same time any means of producing any effect, natural or super-

natural, on any influence, hostile or favourable, personal or 756
impersonal (1). That is why the *ntjebe* shrub helps Mankhelu to attain 789
three objects at the same time : cure a bad cough, protect the mealies, and rout the enemy.

The question has often been put : Are these medicine-men sincere? 755
or are they mere quacks living on the stupidity of the patients whom 756
they deceive? I am convinced, after having listened to their talk, that most of them thoroughly believe in the value of their drugs ; this does not prevent them from occasionally using tricks in order to impress their patients with their miraculous power. One of my pupils, who had accompanied a ñanga for a long time, wishing to enter the profession himself, and had thus had an opportunity to watch his master in his medical work, assured me that, as a rule, the man administered his drugs honestly and in good faith ; but if somebody came suffering from toothache and asked for relief, the doctor first procured a little worm found in the berry of a solaneous shrub called rulane. This he placed in a pot filled with boiling water. The patient had then to inhale the vapour from the pot, his head being covered with a cloth. When the inhalation was over the ñanga took a piece of charcoal and rubbed his forehead with it ; he did the same all round his eyes and told him : "Now your eyes are open and you will be able to see what it was that caused your suffering." He emptied the pot and the little white worm appeared at the bottom, resembling the caries of a decaying tooth : "This is what they had brought on you" the ñanga would add." ("They" evidently means the wizards.) This is clearly a trick pure and simple. But, according to my informant, it was also a medical treatment, because the aim of the trick was to convince the patient that he had been cured. It was thus what we should call a means of suggestion. If, after that, the suffering did not cease, the ñanga would tell his patient that he had not paid enough to effect the cure, that his ancestor-gods (those of the ñanga, who had given him his drugs) were angry at receiving such a small fee, etc. The trick of making patients believe that a harmful object has been extracted from their body is frequently used. We have

(1) The following story, which I owe to one of my colleagues, fittingly illustrates the ideas held by most of the Thongas concerning *muri*, remedy. A man of the Libombo clan found a bottle filled with a white salt which he at once recognized as being most probably a *muri*. He picked up the bottle and kept it carefully in his hut. One day, feeling unwell, he thought the occasion had come to use his precious drug. His wife bade him be careful, but he secretly swallowed a good dose. Was it not a *muri* ? He was poisoned, and would have died if my colleague had not succeeded in saving him by means of an antidote.

755 seen another instance of this (p. 188). It is in keeping with two ideas
756 which are very familiar to Natives and which we shall meet with again later, viz. that disease is a material thing and that it is generally caused by this thing being introduced into the body by wizards.

The mixed character of the medical art of the primitives, which is so evident in their medicine-men, will appear clearly as we continue our study.

II. *Medical Practices.*

752 *Surgical cases* are treated in the worst possible way, any intervention with a knife being looked on as absurd, if not culpable (1). When dealing with *sores*, the aim of the ñanga seems to be to conceal them under a black powder, so as to give the patient a false impression; he thinks himself healed, as he can no longer see his sore. Mankhelu used to grind the bark of the *Ndjupfura* tree (a tree with a white sap), and put the powder on the sore to make it dry up, renewing the application on the fourth day, then five days later, then six days later. — For *wounds* Kokolo used the sap of the *Shilangamahlo*, letting it fall in drops on the bleeding wound. The *Nkahlu* (p. 329), with its milky sap, is commonly used for this purpose. — "But," says Kokolo, "the chief is *Shilangamahlo*." *Bruises* are treated by the *rimba* method. When a person has fallen and some complication is feared, a fire is made; when there are enough glowing embers, and the soil is very hot, the ashes are pushed aside and a little sand taken from the river is poured on the spot, and some nkuhlu leaves on top of it. The patient leans over the place "which has been so treated;" this is an unexpected application of the principle "similia similibus curantur;" — as the soil has been burnt, but afterwards "quenched" (timula) by the cool sand, so the bruise will be prevented from burning him dangerously! — *Decayed teeth* are not extracted, properly speaking; they are broken down with a piece of iron, on which the Native dentist beats with a hammer

(1) Gungunyana, who killed thousands of poor Ba-Chopi without the slightest remorse, could not conceal his horror of Dr. Liengme, who dared to amputate limbs, or to cut open the body in order to cure patients!

751 the disease, and it is the *batukulu* of the chief, his nephews, the sons of his sisters, who are sent to procure it. Are they not the favourites of their maternal uncle? (I. p. 222). Nobody could suspect them of bringing misfortune into the village of their *bakokwana*! The particular ntukulu who must render this service to the country is designated by the bones. The bones also indicate the village of the neighbouring clan to which he must go to fetch the virus. The serous fluid is taken from old people or from children, who have no sexual intercourse ; we already know the reason for this. The ntukulu inoculates himself and his comrades and returns home ; when their pustules are ripe, they inoculate all the members of the clan who have not yet suffered [784] from the disease.[1] From this day begins for the whole clan a distinct marginal period, with all the taboos accompanying the critical phases of the life of the community. No one is allowed to wash his body. Absolute continence is imposed on all. Salt is prohibited, as it is said to make the blood flow more quickly in the body and it may cause the wounds to become sore.

164 But in addition to the ordinary taboos, some other measures are 751 taken which are dictated by the special nature of small-pox. This disease, amongst Black people, manifests itself in two forms, ●755 which may be called the white and the black. The former is much milder than the latter. In it the pustules are large, superficial, scattered all over the body and well separated from each other ; the skin is discoloured over them and becomes whitish ; they soon dry up and do not leave deep marks. In the second form, which is the confluent and haemorrhagic type of the disease, the pustules are small, black, continuous with each other, and full of blood ; they soon discharge a nasty fluid ; fever is high and death may intervene. 751 The whole aim of the treatment is to promote the mild, white form 755 of small-pox and to prevent the black form. It is therefore taboo to eat any meat containing blood, which is black and must therefore be avoided. On the contrary, fish meat is allowed because it is white and contains no dark blood. Another device of Native doctors to obtain this result is to place before the eyes of their patients grains of mealies, which are white like the desired pustules and are also similar to them in form, and to prevent their

[1] [Small-pox--analyst]

seeing grains of Kafir corn, which are of a dark colour. Grains of 751
mealies are softened in water, pierced through and made into 755
necklaces which patients wear round their necks, whilst the spikes of Kafir corn, which are to be found in every hut fixed to the reeds of the roof as seeds for the next season, are carefully taken away and hidden somewhere in the bush during the whole time of the epidemic. Should the malignant form of small-pox develop 755
notwithstanding all these precautions, the headman will shake his 782
head and tell the parents of the patient : "Hahlani! — Make an 783
offering." But in this particular hahla no real offering will be made, and the prayer will not be addressed to the ancestor-gods. The principal words of this prayer are : "Mavuzane, dhlula!" These are Zulu expressions which correspond in Ronga to : "Mabutise, tlula!" i. e. "Questioner, pass on your way!" Who is this Questioner? It is small-pox itself, Nyedzana, which is more or less personified and looked on as a real and terrible visitor coming at given intervals to examine the country and search for sinners. The great sin which Questioner especially wishes to discover is *buloyi*, murder by witchcraft. Let the patient then confess the acts of bewitchment which he has committed, and he will be spared. If he conceals them, small-pox will kill him. Suppose that the patient so seriously ill is a grown-up woman, the wife of one of the men of the village. Her parents will first be called. The headman and all the inmates of the village will attend the meeting in the hut. "Confess your guilt!" they will all say to the woman. She may answer : "No! I am not a witch" *(A ndi noyi!)* They insist : "Do not hide anything." And under the strain of their questions she may say : "Yes! I am a walker in the night! I have eaten so-and-so! I have eaten my own child!" If the patient is a little child, his father will have to make the confession in his stead. He will take the infant in his arms and say : "Mavuzane dhlula! Questioner, pass on your way! Yes! We are baloyi. I have taught my child to eat human bodies! But we will not persist in our bad doings! Go away and leave us in peace!" (1).

(1) We have here one of the cases in which an impersonal force of Nature is treated as 782
if it were a personal being endowed with superhuman power, and invoked. The prayer

755 When the disease has run its course, and the pustules have dried
783 up, a day is appointed on which the marginal period will come to an end, and the clan return to its regular life. This return is marked by the special *Reintegration and Purification rites*, which aim at removing the defilement acquired by the disease. The main purificatory rite, that which regularly closes a marginal period, is *the smearing of all the huts* with a new layer of clay, either mixed with cow's dung or not. The old ground is for ever covered. It is a way of saying : "Behold, the former things are passed away, everything has become new." On the morning of that day, every patient must go and wash his body *on the road*, as if to pour all the filth of the disease on to it. Moreover, the ashes found in the fire-places inside the huts, the necklaces of mealie grains, the implements used by the people who have been seriously ill, sometimes their garments, the ochre with which they anointed themselves, all the things which were employed in connection with the scourge, are collected and thrown indiscriminately on to the large paths, preferably on the places where two roads cross each other, a rite which is by no means altruistic, and still less antiseptic! We shall see shortly how it is to be explained.

828 *Nervous diseases* are peculiarly feared by Natives. *Melancholia*
755 is believed to be caused by those spirits of possession which will form the subject of the next paragraph. *Idiocy* has no remedy ; nothing can be done with an idiot : "It is death! It has found him!" (Mankhelu). *Delirium* (mihahamo) is cured by *Mbulula khutla*. The patient must enter the hole from which clay is taken for smearing the huts, and is washed with a decoction of the drug when in this hole. Moreover a stick of the same tree is cut and kept in the roof of the hut, and the person who sleeps with the patient will take it every night and place it near his head. "Thus we kill delirium." (Mankhelu). — Another form of insanity is called *rihuhe*, "the disease which comes from far away with the winds" — "ri pfa timhehwen" (Mankhelu). A drug is prepared with the *shiromo* root, mixed with the lung of a sheep and the blood

782 to Small-Pox (with capital letters) may be compared with that pronounced when an imprecation has been uttered or when someone wishes to cancel his oath (p. 399).

found inside its heart. All these things are burnt in a broken pot, and made into a medicinal powder. The patient is brought to the broken pot; a cut is made in his head, so that it bleeds abundantly until the pot is filled with blood; the blood boils in the pot, it solidifies and is burnt. The ñanga takes it and buries it in an ant's nest, according to the timula rite described below. The wound of the patient is filled with the medicine; he eats the meat, he sleeps: — "If you have been equal to the occasion, he will be cured; you have given him lots of sleep. — You have killed the *rihuhe*" (Mankhelu). The *wutleka* disease means both the *convulsions* of little children generally explained by the agency of Heaven, called Tilo (p. 431), and epilepsy. The great remedy for the latter disease, which greatly terrifies the Natives, is provided by monkeys and baboons. Pieces of their skin and their excrement are roasted in a broken pot. Some pieces of lion's skin are added; when the powder is prepared, the limbs of the patient are smeared with it; his body is also sprinkled with a decoction made of these drugs, or an ointment is prepared from them and applied to the head, the fingers, and all the limbs, which are then pulled with some force (olola). The patient is laid down and leaves of the hlampfura tree (Kigelia pinnata) are put on his head: — "He sleeps, he passes water, he evacuates stools, he is cured!" But to confirm the healing, a very curious ceremony is performed which reminds one of the rite of the scapegoat, so often met with amongst primitives. The doctor makes the image of a monkey (habu) with a kind of grass called *muhulane*; this image is smeared with the drugs just described, and fastened to a long rope; a little boy must then drag the dummy out of the village, and all his comrades hit him with sticks, saying: "Go away! Go away!" He runs until he reaches a tree far away in the bush. All the boys hang the figure to it, and it remains there swinging in the wind. The disease has thus been expelled. 828 755

When folly is accompanied by great excitement, and there is danger of the people of the village being mishandled by the sufferer, he is prevented from doing harm by means of fetters. These consist of a log of wood pierced through by a lozenge-shaped hole into which the foot of the madman is introduced; a wooden bolt is 828 758

757 cautery is done *with the foot*. This is undoubtedly a curious proceeding! Kokolo gave me a detailed description of it. A hoe is made red-hot ; an obliging individual lends his foot, a foot which has rarely been encased in a shoe and possesses a sole with a skin like leather! This natural sole is rubbed with the leaves of a plant called *Shungwe*, which has been chewed and mixed in the palm of the hand with saliva and grease. For the same purpose Mankhelu employed a fat containing among other ingredients, the following drugs : *Hlampfura* and *Ñwambula-wamitwa*. Then the obliging operator places his foot on the red-hot hoe and, with a quick movement, plants it on the spot to be cauterised, the patient being hardly able to bear the contact. As for the owner of the foot, the horny sole is apparently so thick that he feels no pain at all. This is the remedy for the *shitjebe blood*, probably pleurisy.

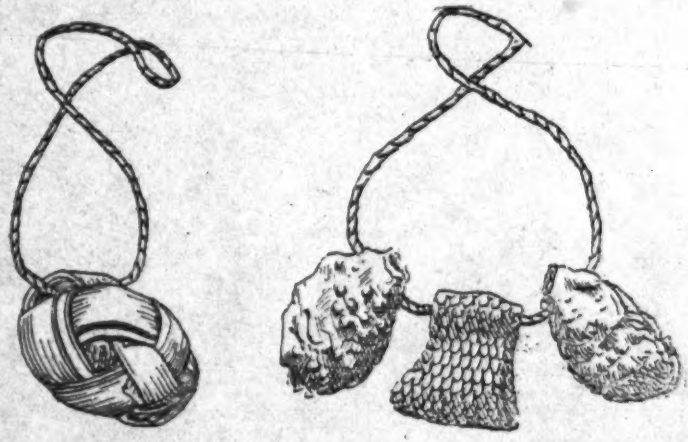
● 755 783 The last practice to be noticed, the one by which the doctor gives his patient a clean bill of health, is the *hondlola* or *hondla* (Ro.) or *horola* (Dj.) ; it is a ceremony of purification, performed *after the cure is effected*, to remove the defilement (nsila) of disease. "In this way," says Mankhelu, "we disperse (hulurisa) the blood which has made the patient ill, so that it cannot return to him violently." The hondla is obligatory after all serious diseases and after weaning. I have described how it is performed in this latter case (I. p. 59). According to Mankhelu, a sacrifice is always made in connection with the hondlola. In the case of adults, a goat is slaughtered. The doctor having carefully taken a piece of each limb of the goat, prays "by means of them" to his gods, saying :

> You so and so! This is my ox which I have slaughtered... Give me strength (ndji thwasane matimba) that I may cure this man. I have no other drugs! I do not add any others to those which you gave me. So give me strength ; accept me with both hands, that I may be able to cure.

The psanyi of the goat is then mixed with various drugs, especially the *Shireti* and the powder of the calabashes. The patient, sitting on a mat, rubs his whole body (tihorola) vigorously with this psanyi; all the particles (timhore, or timhorola, or

timbhorola) which fall on the mat are carefully gathered together, 783
and the bones are consulted to know where they must be thrown 755
(See Letter D). This is the *tumba* rite, following the hondlola. The bones may perhaps have indicated a hole in the trunk of a tree, or the river, or the mud of the marsh, or an ants' nest, or the entrance to a molehill. The physician takes the timbhorola in a piece of broken pot, or sala shell, and introduces them into the hole, which he closes with a little clay ; he has with him water in a little calabash, of which he takes a sip and says : "Tsuu! or

[751]



Fowa and timfisa, medico-magical amulets.

pheuuu! Let the misfortune remain here." On the way home no looking back is allowed : this is taboo. Should the tumba be made in an ants' nest, and should the ants themselves close the hole, this is a very good sign! The bones may perhaps order the particles contained in the sala shell to be placed in another kind of ants' nest, made of grass ; the ñanga will go during the day and prepare a place for the shell. In the evening, when it is dark, he will put the shell into the hole without looking back towards it. The ants will take all the timbhorola down into their nest, and so "the misfortune will remain with them." (Mboza.) — The 751
hondlola rite is generally accompanied by the preparation of 755
protective amulets (timfisa). The nails and hair of the patient are 783
cut, put into small bags of lizard skin and tied round his neck.

751 One frequently meets people wearing this ornament, which also
755 aims at making the cure permanent. Sometimes the nails are those
783 from one hand and foot only. The *psirungulo* i. e. the astragalus of the slaughtered goat, or the beak, claws and some feathers of the hen (p. 410) are also tied round the neck of the patient. This is the *religious amulet*, whilst the lizard bag is the *medico-magical* one. Convalescents are moreover provided with the *fowa*, a kind of rattle, consisting of a root called *sungi* (there is no connection between this word and the sungi of the circumcision school, I. p. 77) contained in a kind of round box made of palm leaf which is tied round the ankle. This is intended to protect them against the perspiration of those who have sexual relations (p. 358). They sometimes wear a little piece of reed filled with a protective powder, as do also nursing mothers during the whole nursing period (1) (I. p. 48).

[527] The hondlola rite also marks the moment when sexual relations, which had been suspended during the disease, are resumed. Celebrating as it does the victory over disease, the day of hondlola
756 is regarded as a fête-day. Beer is prepared as a mark of gratitude to the doctor and "to rejoice his heart." It is also the day of reckoning ; the physician must be paid. This individual has not, however, waited until now to ask for a "refresher." From the commencement of the case it has been necessary to *pfula hwama*, that is to say, to lift the cover of the medicine wallet by means of sixpence or a shilling. At times he has been very anxious to change the medicine, in order to produce a greater effect ; on such

751 (1) I may here mention two other articles which are frequently worn by Thonga Natives : one is the dried seed-pod of the flower of the large Protea bush (sugar bush) which is so common on the slopes of the Drakensberg. It looks like a hard brownish cone, all covered with concentric layers of little square ledges. This cures *vertigo*. Why? No doubt because when it is turned round rapidly, it makes the spectator giddy. It is hung round the neck with a string. This curious remedy is brought back from the Barberton mountains by those who go to work in the Transvaal. The second is a bracelet often seen round little children's wrists, and is made from the skin of a kind of tawny mole, called *tju'unyana*, which digs its burrows almost on the level of the ground. You can see the earth a little raised all along its track. The *Filaria* parasite, which is often met with in our tribe, also creeps under the skin in a similar way (p. 343). See illustration No. 5. These are two new instances of the principle "similia similibus curantur." Bags filled with snake powder are also often worn as a preventive.

village is at once removed. Leprosy is called *nhlulabadahi*, the disease which is stronger than the doctors. It is very much dreaded ; lepers are not, however, segregated ; they live in the village with other people and even attend beer-parties, but they bring their own mugs, whilst every other guest receives a drinking utensil from the master of the village. 758

Another disease which is believed to be contagious is "possession" by the *Bandjao spirits*. Should you pick up on the road some object which belonged to one of the possessed, his madness will jump to you (tlulela). — Epilepsy is also dreaded on that account. A nursing woman must not see any one suffering from an attack of this disease, or the child which is on her shoulders will become epileptic. 753 828

Speaking of the conception of disease, I must remind the reader of the fact that *sexual relations* between the inhabitants of the village are believed to aggravate the condition of the patient dwelling in it (I. p. 133, II. p. 358), and are consequently forbidden during epidemics and in any case of serious illness. Hence the precautions which convalescents must take of wearing the *sungi*, as we have just seen. 753 834

4) The special rites which mark the end of an illness throw much light on the Thonga conception of disease. A serious illness constitutes a marginal period either for the individual concerned, or, in the case of an epidemic, for the community, and the hondlola rite is the method by which the patient is reintegrated into society ; it clearly has the character of a passage rite. The rubbing with psanyi, the removal of the defilement of disease, the throwing away of the "timbhorola," the cutting of nails and hair, all these are rites of separation from the period of disease, whilst the feast of the hondlola day, and the resuming of sexual relations (1) are rites of reintegration. In the disease of possession, as we shall see it is the reintegration into the society of spirit-possessed persons and amounts to an initiation. 753 783 184 756

(1) We often hear of a Christian woman, who has gone to a heathen medicine-man for treatment, having sexual intercourse with him. We generally attribute this fact to immorality alone, but it was probably a part of the treatment, at the precise moment when sexual taboos were removed.

753 In the case of an epidemic, it is the whole clan which passes
184 through the marginal period, and all its members have to perform
755 the reintegration rites, by means of which they re-inter upon
783 normal life.

But these rites have another meaning as well. They aim at "dispersing the disease." In the hondlola proper, the particles which have fallen on the mat during the rubbing operation are cast away into an ants' nest; this is the *tumba*, which corresponds to the throwing away of all the "nsila", i. e. the "filth" of the small-pox patients at a cross-roads. In this case the body of the patient is also washed at that spot; this is likewise done at the conclusion of measles. The same idea underlies all these customs, that by their means the patient or clan will *definitely get rid of the disease*. Disease forms an organic whole, an important element of which consists of the dried perspiration of the patient, the dirt covering his skin, the implements he has used during his confinement, the dust of his hut, etc. All these are thrown either into an ants' nest to be disposed of there by the insects, or on to the road to be trampled under foot by travellers. The latter, by coming into contact with this filth, will at the same time take upon themselves the disease which it represents and carry it away into far distant countries. Thus the request of the medicine man will be granted, (I. p. 55, II. p. 393): "Let the bad blood go to Nkhabelene, to Shiburi... to the ends of the earth." I do not think that in this apparently hostile act of throwing the dust of a contaminated hut on to the road Thongas are actuated by the wish that travellers should be infected with the disease. Their principal aim is to disperse the contagion according to the principles of communionist and imitative magic. It is however dangerous to tread upon it. It is one of those "makhumo" which can cause disease.

000 The medical system of the Bantus is mingled to such an extent with superstition and error that very little reliance can be placed upon it. The question which I put at the beginning of this section is therefore very difficult to answer. What is the duty of the White Government in regard to the Native quacks? The ideal would be to replace them by fully qualified, civilised doctors. As this is impossible, let medical missionaries at least be encouraged, and their number increased, and

158 "Ha!" they said, "he has the gods (or he is sick from the gods, a ni
753 psikwembu)." Thus the first signs of possession seem to be a
756 nervous crisis, but also the occurence of certain suspicious symptoms : a persistant pain in the chest, irrepressible hiccough, unusual yawning, emaciation without apparent cause, etc. These symptoms, however, are not sufficient grounds for a diagnosis, and the bones are always consulted in order to arrive at a conclusion. The amulets of the patient (called "his shade") are placed on the mat, and the bones thrown near them. We shall see, under letter D, how they must fall to confirm the diagnosis. Should they do so, a second consultation takes place in order to ascertain to what doctor the treatment must be entrusted. There are medicine-men who are specialists for this disease. They are not true *ñanga*, but are called *gobela* (dji-ma), at least amongst the Ba-Ronga, who suffer from possession more than the other clans. These gobela have formed many rival schools in which the drugs used, and the rites followed, differ slightly ; the schools of Kkongosa, Sindondondo, Ñwatshulu, who are men, and those of Ñwamutheto (in the Shifimbatello district) and of Thambulanyoka, viz., Snake-bone, both of whom are women, etc. Ñwashinhwana was treated by a disciple of Khongosa ; Mboza by Ñwatshulu.

III. *The Treatment of Possession, or Exorcism.*

755 In former times, the only remedy was waving a large palm-leaf (milala) in front of the patient. This was deemed sufficient to "scatter the spirits." Now the treatment is much more complicated. Though it varies slightly in the various schools above mentioned, it comprises four principal rites : the drum performance, the ablution in the gobo calabash, the drinking of the blood and the hondlola ceremony. In the Khongosa treatment the gobo rite comes first, and is called *baselo*. A certain root, the *phuphumane*, is prepared, and dipped into water in a big calabash cut in two so as to form a large basin. The mixture is stirred ; an abundant foam is thus produced and the patient must

wash himself with it ; or he must take the basin on his knees, suck 755
in a little of this foam between his lips and spit it out in the direction of the four winds, saying *tsu*, evidently as a preliminary means of propitiating the possessing spirits, which will be invoked and entreated to reveal themselves in the following rite.

In the case of Mboza, the calabash came as the second phase of the treatment, the first being the drum performance.

1) The drum performance (gongondjela).

This extraordinary rite reminds one of the witches' sabbaths 755
of medieval times by the infernal din and uproar through which 787
the possessed will have to pass. However, notwithstanding the external resemblance, it is totally different, having nothing to do with witchcraft proper, and being only a "medical practice" in the eyes of the Thongas. — A strange medical practice, indeed, devised rather to kill than to heal the patient!

In the first place the bones must be consulted to find out in what spot the sabbath should be held. If the bone which represents the patient falls in the middle of all the rest, this shows that the tambourines, or "tom-toms," must be beaten in the interior of the hut itself. If the bone falls on the outer edge, the sabbath must be in the doorway ; if it falls further to one side, beyond all the others, the treatment must take place on the village square (hubyen) ; if it rolls still further off, and if the astragalus of the roaming gazelle is also separated from the rest, this shows that the meeting must take place in the bush, quite away from the village. If the bones remain silent, revealing nothing, then the throwing will be continued behind the hut, or on the square, until they speak. It is also necessary that the four shells Oliva, and Cypraea, which form part of the set of bones, should fall on their backs, exposing their crack or mouth. This signifies that the possessing gods, the spirits, will come out ; there will be an egress for them, whilst if, on the contrary, the shells fall differently, shewing their convex sides, the diviner will say : "Ma tikarata ntsena" — "all your trouble is in vain :" the sabbath

755 will have no effect ; no means of egress for the gods will be found!
787 (Compare Letter D. Divination). But a way will soon be found to get over this difficulty, and it will not be long before the sabbath is in full swing.

755 In the hut, right in the middle, the patient is seated. Dejected, with downcast eyes, and fixed expression, he waits... Everyone throughout the country knows that to-day, to-night, on the appearance of the new moon, the strange and terrible exorcism will begin. All those who have once been possessed will officiate. The director of the ceremony, the *gobela*, who has been appointed by the bones, holds his tambourine, made of the skin of the big varan lizard stretched over a circular wooden frame. (See Illustration p. 124, No. 9.) In the calm quiet of the evening air the first blow is struck. It reverberates, and is heard afar off on all sides ; it penetrates the thickets and reaches the neighbouring villages, where it inspires a strange emotion, a transcendent delight born of curiosity, malice, and I know not what feeling of unconscious satisfaction. All rush in the direction of the well-known sound ; each one hurries to the hut of the possessed ; all desire to take part in this struggle, this conflict with the invisible world.

They all assemble, some with tambourines, others with large tin cases picked up on the outskirts of the town (tins in which kerosine oil is sold in Lourenço Marques), still others with calabashes, filled with small objects, which do duty as rattles (ndjele, yin-tin) ; and now, crowding round the patient, they begin their hideous din, striking, brandishing, shaking their various instruments of torture with all their might and main. Some lightly touch the head or ears of the unfortunate sufferer. It is a frightful hubbub, which continues, with but short interruptions, during the whole night, or until the performers in this fantastic concert are compelled to stop from sheer fatigue.

755 But this is merely the orchestra, the accompaniment. That
533 which is most essential is the *singing*, the human voice, the *chorus of exorcists*, a short refrain, following on a still shorter solo, repeated a hundred or a thousand times, always with the same object in view, toward which all strive seriously and persistently, namely to compel the spiritual being, the mysterious possessing spirit which

is there present, to reveal itself, and declare its name, after which it will be duly overcome. These songs are at the same time both simple and poetic. They address the spirit in laudatory terms, trying to cajole it by flattery, to get on the right side of it, and thus induce it to grant the signal favour of a final surrender. Here follows the first of these songs which I heard. — One day, when I was travelling, hearing the uproar of a sabbath behind some bushes, I jumped off my waggon, and found myself right in the midst of an exorcism ceremony. 755 533

> Shibendjana ! u vukele bantu !
> Rhinoceros ! thou attackest men !

These were the words shouted by the singers round a poor woman who appeared to be in some sort of a dream, and was seemingly unconscious ; my arrival had scarcely any effect on the unearthly hubbub, in spite of the fact that the appearance of a White man in the villages of that district was generally regarded as quite an event.

When the hours pass without any visible effect being produced on the patient, the chorus is changed. The night may be far spent, and day-light at hand :

> Come out, spirit, you make us weep till sun-rise !
> Why are we thus ill-treated ?

Or, perhaps by way of bringing greater pressure to bear, they will threaten to leave the spirit, for good and all, if it will not heed the chidings of the frenzied tambourine players :

> Come, let us be off ! bird of the chiefs ! Let us go away (as thou treatest us so harshly).

The melodies of the exorcists' incantations have a singularly persistent, incisive, penetrating character. I had the opportunity of noting down one which was sung with a strange alto accompaniment in fourths. This tune is No. 32 in the collection (p. 291). The disturbing effect of this music was intensified by a very pronounced sforzando when the chorus took up the dominant phrase. This is the song, as universally known and sung in the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques.

> Awake ! Awake ! The daylight breaks ! Now the bird is singing !
> Play also, Zulu, play in the bush. Now the bird is singing.

755 The meaning is not difficult to gather. "Day is dawning.
533 Awake then, sleeping spirit! (This spirit is called Mu-Ngoni, Zulu, for the case is supposed to be one of Zulu possession). The birds are already sporting in the thickets. Soon we shall be obliged to go to our work and leave you! It is your last chance; come out and salute the morning and reveal yourself to us!"

This insistence is renewed. The patient begins to show signs of assent. The shikwembu is preparing to come out. Those present encourage it:

> Shawane! Mu-Ngoni. Huma ha hombe hi tindlela ta hu lulama...
> We salute thee, spirit! Come out gently by the straight way.

Meaning: Do not hurt the afflicted one! Spare him!

755 Overcome at length by this noisy concert the patient enters into a condition of nervous exaltation. The crisis occurs, evidently as a result of hypnotic suggestion. He rises and dances wildly in the hut. The hubbub is redoubled. They implore the spirit to *declare its name*. A name is shouted, a Zulu name, that of some ancient departed chief, such as Manukosi, or Mozila; sometimes, strange to say, the name of Gungunyana himself, although he was still living. An old woman, formerly possessed, told me that she cried out the name of Pitlikeza, and it appeared that this Pitlikesa was an itinerant Zulu bard, who wandered about the district of Delagoa when she was a young girl. She was quite convinced that the spirit of that individual had taken up its abode in her, years after Pitlikeza's passage through the country.

In the case of Mboza the patient was covered with a large piece of calico during the whole drum performance. A first medicinal pellet was burnt under the calico, in a broken pot full of embers, a male pellet (made of the fat of an ox or a he-goat); no result having been obtained, a second pellet, a female one, made from the fat of a she-goat, was introduced. The exorcist, Ñwatshulu prayed to the gods as follows:

> Help us, you Ngoni spirits (or gods, psikwembu). I received this medicine from your hands, so "they" must come out at once from my patient. Should he have swallowed a snake, or a toad, should these prevent the spirits from coming out, let these animals run away, far away, and provide an egress for the spirits.

When the second pellet was nearly all burnt, Mboza began to tremble ; the women sang louder. The *gobela* shouted amidst the uproar : "Come out, Ngoni!" Then he ordered the singers to keep quiet, crept beneath the veil and said : "You who dance there, who are you? A Zulu? A Ndjao? Are you a hyena?" The patient nodded his head and answered : "No!" — "Then you are a Zulu?" — "Yes, I am..." And, during a pause, he said : "I am Mboza." Mboza was a Ronga who died in Kimberley many years ago. The uproar was resumed and the third pellet was introduced. This is the "pellet par excellence," neither male nor female, the one which is expected to have the strongest effect. Mboza suddenly rose, threw himself upon those present, beat them on the head, scattered them all right and left, and ran out of the hut under the impression that the spirits were beating him! "Every one saw that day that I had terrible spirits in me." In the crisis of madness the patient sometimes throws himself into the fire and feels no pain, or falls in catalepsy (a womile, lit. becomes dry), and strikes his head against wood, or the ground, without feeling anything. 755

Sometimes the concert of tambourines continues for three or four days, a week, or a fortnight. I know a woman (since converted to Christianity under the name of Monica) who underwent a seven days treatment of this description. All depends upon the patient's nervous condition, and upon the degree of depression to which fasting and suffering have reduced him.

The spirit, having disclosed its name and title, is henceforward known and can be interrogated. Spoon, the diviner, whose wife had been twice possessed, once by the Zulus and once by the Ba-Ndjao, told me the story of one of these conversations. He happened to be in one of the neighbouring villages when he was suddenly sent for in great haste and told that his wife, who had attended a sabbath at such and such a spot, was taken with the madness of the gods. He went as fast as he could to the place indicated, and found that his wife was really beside herself, and dancing like a person possessed. He had never before noticed in her the slightest sign of possession. The spirit began to speak, as soon as she was somewhat calmed down, and gave answers to the

755 questions put to it : "I entered into this *ligodo*, i. e. into this body, this vessel, in such and such a manner. Her husband had gone to work in the gold mines. I entered into him while he was seated on a stone, and when he returned home I left him and entered into his wife." — "Are you alone, spirit?" is the usual question, to which it may reply : "No, I have my son and my grandson with me ;" and, if the witnesses suspect that there really are several spirits in the patient, the tambourine symphony is again resorted to, in order to dislodge the entire company. Sometimes the possessed pronounces as many as ten different names.

Or it may be that the gobela only asks the name of the father and grandfather of the possessing spirit, in order the better to know the latter with all his genealogy. Such was the case with Mboza. "My father is Ndlebende," said the spirit. — "Ho!" answered the gobela, "then you are Mboza, son of Ndlebende." And he identified the spirit in that way.

755 It may be that, at the first sitting, the spirit will claim some
533 satisfaction : a "nturu," a piece of calico of such and such a colour. It is also generally at this time that the patient will *sing his song*. Every possessed person invents a song which will be henceforth *his*, and by means of which crises, or trances will be provoked or cured. Nwashinhwana sang :

Alas! my father! Medicine-men can do nothing for me!
Who will deliver me?

Mboza :

I am the one who wanders about, I come out from the body of magicians.

These songs are generally in Zulu, and it is asserted that, even if the patient does not know this language, he will be able to use it in his conversation, by a kind of miracle of tongues!

The first rite is now completed. It has succeeded in forcing the spirit to reveal its name (1).

754 (1) Exorcism by drum beating is the classical method of expelling spirits. Of late
755 years, since 1910, another method has been invented called *ku fomba* which, strange to say, is connected with a new word borrowed from European Animism, the word *shipoko*, now current in Thonga terminology. Shipoko comes from the Boer spook, which means ghost. According to the Native idea, wizards have power to enslave ghosts and make them work in their own fields during the night. They can also send them to take possession of their victims and torment them. If a patient is supposed to

2) The rite of the gobo basin.

When Mboza had finished revealing the name of the spirit possessing him, he had to undergo the rite of the *gobo*. His head was dipped into this, not entirely, but so that his eyes, at least, were plunged in the water. Then the gobela said : "Open your eyes." He felt a sensation of burning, and saw nothing but a red space with black dots running to and fro through the field of vision. He was kept in that position for a good long time. Then he raised his head, and the water ran all over his face and on to his body : he was purified (a basile). But this rite does not seem to be strictly a purification rite. By this kind of baptism the patient is said to have "crossed the sea." He enters upon a new life, and it is clearly a rite of passage. Now he will be able to speak, because "he has seen everything." It is the drug which "makes one see" (muri wa ku bonisa). Some are said to have learnt divination by this gobo ablution. 755

Having undergone these two first parts of the treatment, Mboza says he slept soundly. Next day, came the third.

3) The appeasement by blood (ku thwaza).

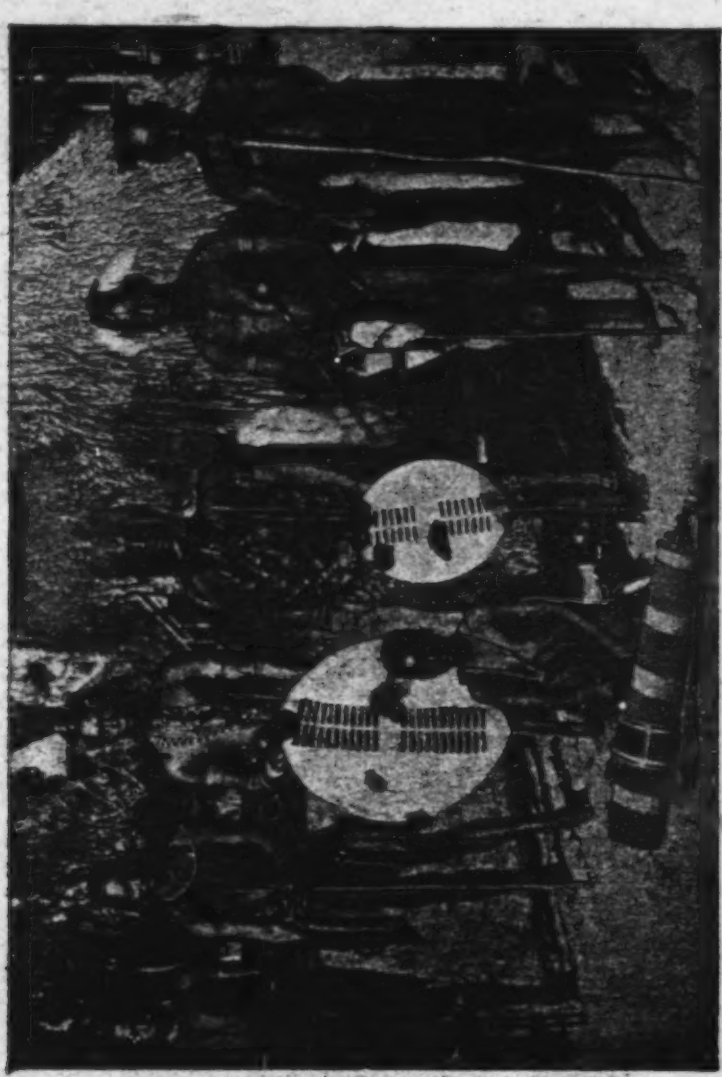
During the confabulation following the concert of tambourines, the spirits speaking through the mouth of the patient, although

be possessed by one of these shipoko, the exorcist will proceed with the femba in the following manner. He prepares a little crown made of medicinal roots woven together, similar to the *hari* which women place on their heads when carrying their water jugs. The patient lies down in his hut, surrounded by the mathwaza beating their drums. The magician touches one of his limbs with the hari, blows upon it, brings it close to his lips and draws in his breath. If nothing happens, he touches another limb, the arm, the side, the leg, the head, drawing in his breath each time, searching for the ghost. Suddenly he is seized by a fit, and falls down unconscious ! The ghost has entered him, he has swallowed it. His attendants raise him up and take him outside the hut. They begin to ask him : "Who are you ?" He tells them his name ; he also informs them that he has been sent by so and so, a wizard. This wizard may be "an inhabitant of your village, someone with whom you eat porridge every day !" The shipoko continues his confession :" Yes ! this man has sent me to kill the patient." 754 755

We shall hear more of these shipoko when dealing with witchcraft. We find here a curious mixture of witchcraft and the ideas of possession, with the addition of a European element. My informant assures me that this femba rite is quite modern, and I can readily believe it.

755 perfectly distinct from him, had already demanded some presents; but there is one in particular that must be given in order to

[756]



The great exorcist Hokoza with his companions (Tembe).

propitiate them and to get rid of them (hangulasa). The refrain of the second verse of the exorcists' song, which I have already quoted, mentions this offering, and half promises it, as soon

755 inducement to the spirit to disclose its name. This is what is called the *thwaza*.

Aba ka Khongosa ba thwaza hi huku!

meaning : the patients of Khongosa's school treat with fowl's blood. Blood, an abundance of blood, is necessary to effect the cure of the patient, and to obtain an assurance from the objectionable tenant in possession that it will do no further harm. As a general rule it is given something better than fowl's blood. In most schools a she-goat is taken, if the patient be a man, or a he-goat in the case of a woman. The exorcist who has been in charge of the cure orders the by-standers to repeat the song which had induced the first crisis. The possessed again shows excitement, and exhibits the same symptoms of raving madness that I have previously described. Then the animal is pierced beneath the foreleg (in the case of Mboza this took place at the entrance of his own hut), and the patient throws himself on the wound, greedily sucking the flowing blood, and, in frenzy, filling his stomach with it. When he has drunk his fill, he has to be dragged away from the animal by main force ; certain medicines (one of which is called *ntshatshu*, apparently an emetic) are administered, his throat is tickled with a feather and he retires behind the hut to vomit all the blood he has absorbed. By this means the spirit, or spirits, have been duly appeased and expelled.

The sufferer, who is now recovering, is next washed again, and smeared with ochre. The spirits will have ochre on the day of thwaza, and torment him if he does not satisfy their desire ; Sometimes the *kunga* rite is also practised for the exorcised, viz., no one is allowed to speak to him before having given him a present. (Compare I. p. 124) (1).

756 (1) The accompanying illustration represents a well known exorcist named Hokoza, who had won great fame in the Tembe and Maputju regions, a kindly man who had even some sympathy for Christianity, to which most of these magicians are strongly opposed, as may easily be understood. According to the Rev. A. Aubert, Hokoza used to begin teaching the magic art to his patients on the day of thwaza. Whilst the exorcised was seated in his hut, after having vomited the blood, some of the disciples of the magician took that part of the skull of the goat to which the horns are attached, its astragalus and gall-bladder, and went to a certain spot to hide these objects. When they returned to the patient's village, the latter began to dance, to sing his song, to put

755 It is interesting to note what is done with the different parts of the sacrificed goat : the *bile-bladder* is stuck in the patient's hair according to custom (p. 50), to symbolise the happiness and good fortune that the sacrifice has ensured ; afterwards he is clothed with *strips of the skin* of the animal. All the tambourine players, who are themselves *mathwaza*, i. e. who have already gone through the torture of possession, decorate themselves also with these strips of skin, crossing them over the breast. The strips must be tied together with *munganazi*, i. e. strings made from the roots of the munga tree, which have a pleasant odour ; this has the property of "rejoicing the nose" of the spirits, and is always used in the ritual of possession. In former times people wearing strips were often met with, as these ornaments had to be worn, at that time, during *a whole year*, until the hondlola. — The *flesh* of the sacrificed goat also supplies the means of finally exorcising these mysterious spirit powers. From each limb a small piece is cut, and these pieces are cooked in a separate saucepan, with a powdered drug prepared for this special purpose. The head exorcist breaks off the branch of an acacia bearing enormous shiny white thorns, on each of which is spitted a piece of meat. The patient runs at full speed towards the branch, and seizes a piece of meat between his teeth in passing. While eating it, he rushes towards the East. He comes back, seizes another piece in the same manner, and runs towards the West, and so on towards all the four cardinal points. In this way he propitiates the gods, the spirits of every country, in whatever direction they may lie. The young *mathwaza*, viz., those who have lately passed through this initiation, must also seize the pieces of meat with their teeth, but not the gobela, nor the old mathwaza. This is one of the rites of the Khongosa school. Ñwatshulu used not to observe it. The remainder of the goat is then cooked and eaten. A feast is celebrated, in which the chief exorcist dances and sings his song,

756 himself into a state of trance, and ran outside in search of the hidden objects. It was a species of trial ; Hokoza wished to know if the exorcised possessed the gift of divination. If he succeeded in finding the astragalus, he tied it to his left foot ; the gall-bladder he fixed in his hair. Hokoza was then satisfied and predicted a bright future for his pupil.

all the people clapping their hands (wombela), to encourage him, as an accompaniment. — The *horns and hoofs* will be carefully kept, and placed on the roof of the hut, just over the door (shiranwin) by which the afflicted one enters, evidently to protect the abode from malign influences. — The *astragalus* will be tied, together with the strips, on the sternum of the patient. — The *bones* of the goat are the objects of special care. They must not be broken to eat the marrow, but burnt in the shade of a large tree, where it is "cool." So the possessing spirit will also be cool (titimela) and not too wild. Sometimes they are preserved in a special pot, and burnt on the day of the hondlola. 755

The period of convalescence[1] then begins. It lasts one year, and is a distinct marginal period, as clearly appears from the fact that sexual relations are absolutely forbidden during that phase, and until the hondlola. It is also, more or less, a period of apprenticeship, as the possessed will become an exorcist himself, if his magical powers become sufficiently developed. He accompanies the gobela everywhere, assists him in his cures, and so learns the art of exorcism. The apprentice will also have to practise the rites of protection, which I shall shortly describe, and which are obligatory during the whole period of convalescence, and even later. 758 834 756

4) The final purification of the hondlola and investing with amulets (timfisa).

As we saw, the hondlola, the removal of defilement of disease, is necessary at the close of any illness. So, when a possessed person is regarded as healed, he will have to pass through this rite. It can however only be carried out on the one condition that the possessed husband, or wife, has remained in a state of continence during the period of convalescence. In order to know if they have obeyed this law, a fowl will be placed on the head of the patient. If he, or she, has been continent according to order, the bird will remain quiet; it will not fly away, even should someone approach and pass close by. If it flies off making a great noise, the angry exorcist will also take his leave, saying: 755 758 787

[1] [For the individual whose spirit was possessed — Analyst]

755 "You have sinned and, in so doing, have marred the efficacy of all
758 my medicines (mi honile miri)." On the other hand, if the rule
787 has been properly observed, the bird will remain quite still, when it will be stabbed with a knife and its blood will be used in connection with the hondlola friction. Afterwards the fowl will be plucked and eaten by the village folk, but neither the patient, nor his spouse, nor the exorcist-in-chief will be allowed to partake of it. Thenceforth the husband and wife are permitted to live together as in the past.

755 The hondlola rites seem particularly complicated in cases of possession. Their sequence was as follows in that of Mboza. 1) He had to pay £ 1 to Ñwatshulu, as a reward for his medical attendance. He gave him the money, together with a pot of beer. 2) Then the doctor took his *gobo* calabash, stirred the medicine in order to make it froth abundantly, invoking his gods all the time, and saying : "Awake, you who spit on the road, you, Zulus, who have ears capable of hearing, etc... 3) Then he shouted : "Mboza! Eat!" The exorcised had to kneel down and swallow the froth. 4) The exorcist took mafureira fat, mixed it in his hand with medicinal powder, smeared and rubbed the body of the convalescent, from the knees to the feet, the arms, the chest, the belly, and the head. 5) He cut the nails of the hands and feet with a knife, and also a little of the hair on the forehead, and put the whole into the timfisa bags (p. 471) together with medicinal powder. 6) Then followed the ordinary hondlola friction. A pellet (shibuwu) had been prepared by crushing roots of the *bamhuntane* and *shilewana* trees in a mortar, and a hen had been killed. Mboza sat on a mat and the doctor rubbed his whole body with the pellet. He gathered the *timhora*, the particles fallen on the mat, mixed them with the blood of the hen, and again rubbed the patient. 7) Fresh timhora fell on the mat. They were gathered up a second time. Some were put into the amulet bags, the remainder were made into a ball, which was not thrown away as in ordinary diseases, but carefully placed at the back of the hut, where the forked branch was to be planted.

ooo Let us remember that, in the case of the exorcised, the hondlola

Let us remember that, in the case of the exorcised, the hondlola
does not only mean the re-introduction of the patient into the 755
society of the healthy, but his reception into the society of the 756
magicians. It is the last act of *initiation* : he himself becomes a magician, a doctor able to treat those who are possessed. This new dignity is symbolised by the *shiphandje* (forked branch) which will be given to him to-day, as it is to medicine-men (p. 388), or diviners (See later on). It was Ñwatshulu who chose and cut the branch for Mboza from the tree called *shiralala*. He dug a hole in the back part of Mboza's hut, chewed his sungi or ndjao root, and blew against the foot of the branch before planting it in the hole. Then he made the branch firm in the ground, and hung to it the baskets full of drugs and calabashes full of medicinal powders which he gave to his disciple. This branch will be the drug store of the new magician, the place where he keeps all his magic drugs ; it will also be his *altar* (gandjelo), not the altar of the ancestor-gods, who have no part here, but that of the possessing spirits, to whom he will also henceforth address his worship. (Compare with Mankhelu's forked branch, letter D). This leads us on to the next division of the subject.

IV. *The new Condition of the Exorcised.*

It is interesting to note the stages in the process of initiation 756
through which the possessed passes in the different acts of his 184
treatment. The tambourine performance has provoked, or accentuated, the manifestation of his dual personality, viz., the person possessed and the spirit possessing. The baptism in the calabash has helped him to cross the sea and to reach the land beyond, the land of miracles and of magic powers! By the drinking of blood, he has become a superior being, a man who does not fear that which makes others tremble ; he has *thwaza*. This word is the same as that employed for the renewal of the moon (p. 306) ; like the moon, he has been born again ; a new light has appeared after a period of darkness. He has entered a new life. The period of convalescence, with its taboos, is his last trial ; by the hondlola he finally enters the society of the initiated.

between the animal and these objects, and we know how quick the 787
Bantu mind is at discovering such relations between men and animals.

2) The Consultation of the divinatory bones and the rules for their interpretation.

I owe to a Tembe informant the following full description of the 787
sequence of acts performed in a consultation of the divinatory 755
bones. Suppose one of the inmates of the village to have been 791
suddenly taken ill. The people who dwell in the same hut will at once go to the headman, even if it is night-time ; he will come, inspect the patient, and, having convinced himself of the seriousness of the case, he will start immediately for the diviner's village, not forgetting to take with him the necklace of the patient with his protective amulets (timfisa p. 471) ; if the man did not wear timfisa, the headman will replace these by some roots of a common plant, the tjeke, p. 14, or even of a common grass, the ntlangi ; these roots will be rubbed against his forehead and against his chest and will then be called his *ntjuleko*. Having reached the diviner's village, the consultant briefly states the object of his visit. A mat is unrolled and the ntjuleko placed on it, somewhere at the side ; the diviner takes all his bones in his hand, holds them firmly, and having chewed a little piece of a magic root, (1) spits on them and throws them on to the mat, saying with emphasis : "Mhamoo!" Those attending the consultation answer in the same tone : "Hizwaa! Si ya vuma!" — "Yes! We are agreed." This throwing is only preliminary. By spitting over his bones the diviner wishes to awaken them (pfusha) to make them see (hanyanyisa). He then passes them to the consultant, who will himself throw them throughout the whole consultation, the diviner only holding his little stick and pointing to them in order to explain their significance.

In the first place the consultant takes the necklace of the patient 787
755

(1) Mankhelu used for this purpose the bulb of a Liliacea called shirungulu, which has an agreeable scent.

787 or the above-mentioned roots, and rubs three or four bones against
755 them. These objects having been in close contact with the patient and containing his "nsila," the exudation of his body, establish a connection between him and the bones. The bones will then "know him" and throughout the operation these astragalus, which have been, so to speak, anointed with the "nsila" of the patient, will be watched with special interest; if they are "doubtful," hesitating (gome), the diviner will also have doubts about the revelations made by the others (1).

The consultant throws the bones for the first time, the diviner having asked: "What about the patient?" If the bones fall in a manner which corresponds to the state of the patient, all is well. The diviner will show with his stick that this correspondence exists. It is a proof that the bones have really awakened and are disposed to speak. The question is then put a second time in order that the first reply may be confirmed.

The way is now open for further inquiries; in the first place, what is the cause of the disease? Does it come from the ancestor-gods? From a male ancestor-god? From one on the paternal side? From great-grandfather so and so? From great-grandmother so and so? When the bones answer in the negative, another name is tried, and so the consultation proceeds by a process of elimination; the names of deceased great-uncles, parents, uncles, even of a son who may have died quite young are pronounced successively. If the ancestor-god who caused the disease is not found in the paternal line, then the same questions are put regarding the maternal ancestors, the bakokwana, the diviner himself suggesting to the consultant the names which are to be mentioned. It may be that the bones, which are often thrown two or three times for each name, will designate one of the ancestors. Then begins another series of questions. Why is the god angry? Is it because the patient has neglected his duties towards him? What does he ask for in order that he may be appeased? Goat's flesh? Clothing? Beer? Mealies? Who shall bring (tamela)

(1) If the diviner or his client consults for himself, he rubs these bones against his own forehead and his chest before throwing them on to the mat, and the connection is thus established.

787 the offering? The headman? An adult? A child? A certain
755 relation who is on bad terms with the patient and has sworn never to enter his village again? If the latter is designated he will have to come, after having first made the offering of reconciliation (described p. 398). The bones must likewise designate the person who will have to stab the victim, as also the person who will say tsu and pronounce the prayer. This may be a baby, and, in

Consulting the bones. *Phot. A. Borel.*

that case, his father will take him in his arms and pray instead of him. Women are often designated, as we saw on p. 411.

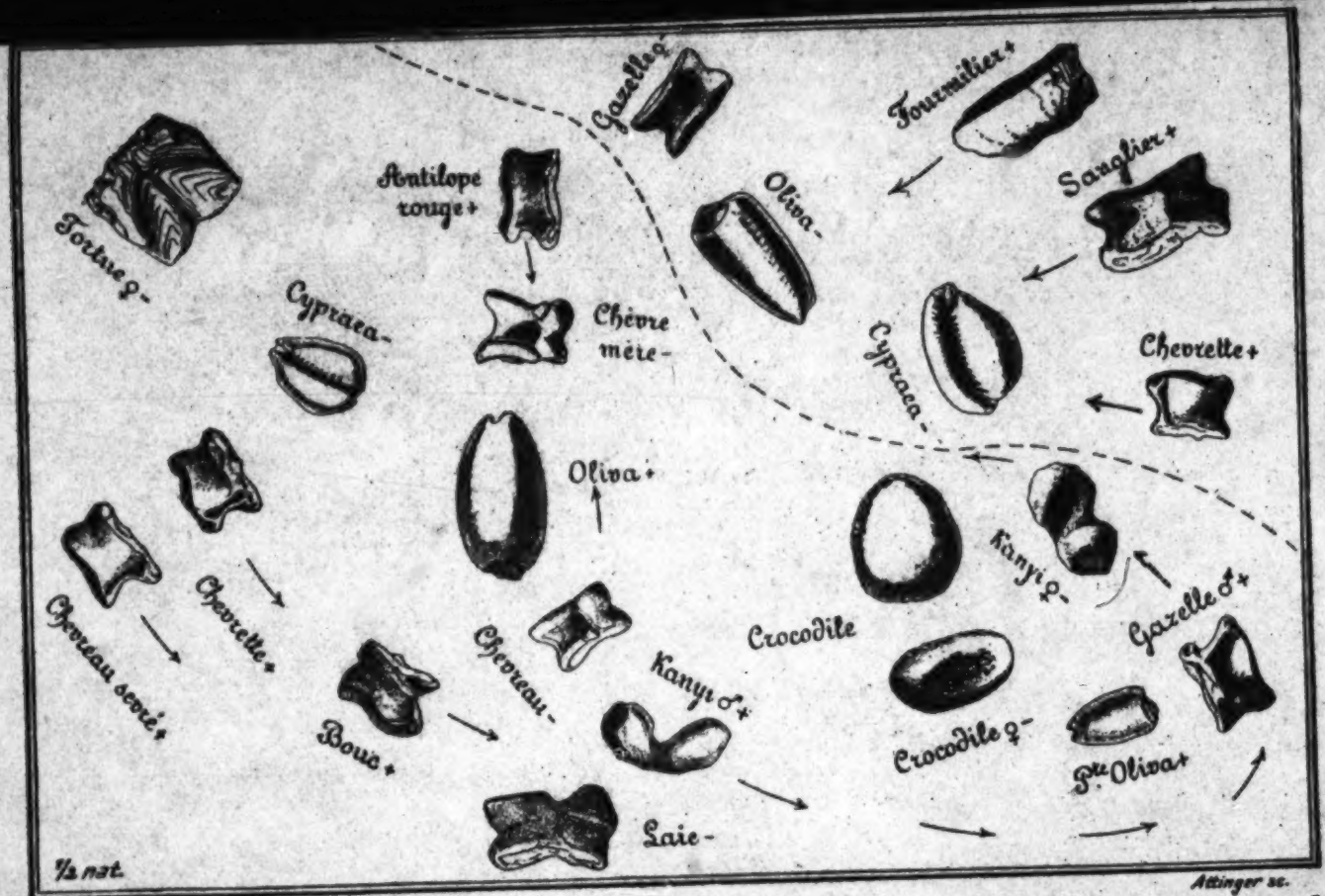
But it may happen that the bones do not agree that the disease has been caused by an ancestor-god at all. The consultation then takes another turn. Was it caused by a wizard? By a witch? Is it so and so? Or so and so? If no affirmative answer is given there then remains still another alternative. Has the patient been contaminated by the defilement of the bush (the dust of conta-

787 minated huts thrown down at crossroads) or of the footprints
755 (mitila, p. 478)?

Such is the procedure followed in a consultation regarding disease. It will be modified according to circumstances, when the advice of the bones is asked for in other difficulties.

If from the beginning there is no correspondance whatever between the manner in which the bones have fallen and the case for which they are consulted, if they "refuse to speak," the diviner will perhaps roll up his mat and leave the hut ; he will then try to throw the bones on the square, or in the bush, or behind the hut, and the consultation will be continued there till a clear answer is given.

787 In order to see if the bones have really consented to speak, three or four things are specially examined : the *side* on which the bones have fallen, the *direction* towards which they look, their *disposition* or the position they have taken in regard to each other, and the *relation* of the male and the female bones towards each other, viz., are all the male or all the female bones on the same side? Each object can fall on two sides, all of them having a *convex* and a *concave* side. If they fall so as to show the convex side (bukhatsha position), they are said *to be full* (ku tala), or *to stand on their legs* and to *march forward* (ku famba) ; this is the *positive side*, which I indicate by + ; if they fall showing their concave side (lwandla position) they are *empty* (ku pshya, image of a lake which has dried up), or lie *on their back* : this is the *negative position* which I indicate by —. In the first case, the person or principal represented by the bones is happy (tjaka), at peace (rula), active, marching, powerful ; in the second he is tired (karala), ashamed (tingana), powerless, dying (fa). Astragalus of goats, and sheep on their convex side, show that the inhabitants of the village, or the chief, are in good health and good spirits, working, succeeding ; if on their concave side, they show that those persons are lying ill or dying. On the other hand, the astragalus of the ant-bear in the positive position indicates that the digger is digging a grave, that the ancestor-gods are awake and probably ready to punish, etc. So it would not be correct to call the convex the favourable, and the concave the unfavourable side. The first is the *active*



Reproduced from "Les Ba Ronga."

The case of the sick mother.

a) *The case of the sick mother* (p. 557).

787
755

In the centre we see *She-Goat* —; the mother is sick, on her back! Above, the red Antelope, Malumbi + and below, Oliva +, are looking towards her ; these are the malignant influences which have thrown her into this state. *Cypraea* — wide-open, on her left, shows that she is suffering from dysentery! On the extreme left we see *Weaned Kid* + and *Young Goat* + on their legs, walking ; they are going towards *He-goat*, the father, who is also +, not quite discouraged, and pointing toward the *kanye*, the medicine by which he hopes to cure his wife. By so doing he keeps in check *Wild Sow* — the ancestor-god, who is thus prevented from adding his hostile influence to those already active. Near him is *Kid* — a young boy on his back, quite in despair, who keeps close to his mother. The father, having spoken with his children, starts for the bush, following the three arrows shown at the bottom of the plate. On the right, we see *Gazelle, Duiker* + ; this is he again returning from his walk as a traveller (the duiker, being always on his legs, often represents travellers). He holds the drug he has dug up *(Kanye —)*. But this kanye stone is on the bad side ; itwas difficult to find the roots, which penetrated into the soil, as do the two protuberances of the stone! Moreover two *Crocodiles' stones* speak of death, and the little *Oliva* + looks at the father in a hostile manner. The bones of the upper part, on the right, contain no encouragement whatever. *Wild Pig* + is an old relative coming to pay a visit to the sick woman ; he is accompanied by a girl, *Young She-Goat*, below him, who also goes towards the village with lamentations, shown by the open *Cypraea* in front of her ; on the top, *Ant-bear* + comes to dig the grave! Near him *Duiker* — is on its back, without strength, whilst *Tortoise* —, in the left hand corner, is also lying on her back ; no agreeable perspiration, no peace, no happiness.

The bones here give a triple revelation ; they depict the actual position, show its cause, and indicate its course and the remedy ; the disease is serious, but there is ground for hope if the father finds the right drug. If the astragalus of the He-Goat had been on its back, and that of the Wild Sow on its legs, directed against the patient, the case would have been hopeless.

621 754 596 own huts to protect them against would-be-witches. In this way many villages are broken up by fear of witchcraft. Generally speaking the Thonga village cannot long remain of any considerable size ; it tends to fall to pieces.

But there are other causes which may destroy the village and the idyllic life of the small community. The death of the headman, and lightning striking the village, are the two main causes which may bring about this event.

765 596 621 787 *Death of the headman.* There is a mystic tie between this man and the social organism which is under him. Should he die, the village dies also... It is not abandoned at once. The whole year of mourning will elapse before the moving. But as soon as the widows and property have been distributed, the successor of the deceased will go and found his own village and the old one will remain a ruin (rumbi). Should any one else die, his hut will merely be thrown into the bush and the village will not be abandoned. But should these deaths increase, then the divinatory bones may order the place to be deserted, as it is defiled and dangerous.

821 756 787 621 If *lightning* strikes the hubo, it is a very bad omen. The medicine man who has the power to "treat the place struck by lightning" is called in. Should he be able to exhume from the ground the mysterious bird which causes lightning, or at least the coagulated urine which it has deposited, and which is called Heaven (See Part VI), the people are allowed to stay. But if he does not discover it deep down in the soil, the village must move, as the presence of the mysterious power of Heaven inside the circle of huts would bring disaster. This is a taboo.

621 787 596 Another cause of moving is the *exhaustion of the gardens.* When the fields are "tired" (karala) and do not produce sufficient food for the inhabitants, they leave the place and look for pastures new. In that case the bones will be consulted. Sometimes, even, the village may be transported elsewhere for the sole reason that the people are tired of the place and want to change. If the bones confirm their wishes, they will move.

621 596 *The founding of a new village* is the occasion of most interesting and characteristic rites, which afford us a new [illegible]

621 831 all this is done in fun. It is a great day of rejoicing for the "tinamu", who tease each other as much as they like. A man may be wanting in respect even to his great mukonwana on these days!

621 756 337 789 6) When the huts are ready, the *fence* is built. The family doctor is summoned. The medicine man throws leaves or stones treated with his drugs along the circular line, where the headman intends to place the branches which will form the future fence of the village. This being done, the men erect the fence.

7) Special precautions are taken for *the main entrance*. Poles are erected on both sides, but before they are put in place, the doctor pours medicine into the holes in the ground and also smears the poles with it at the bottom and at the top. Mankhelu used to bury a black stone, taken out of the river, at the gate. This stone had also been smeared with drugs. "In this way, I prevent enemies from entering. Those who come to try their charms against us (ku hi ringa hi maringo) will be attacked by disease and go and die in their houses."

783 834 621 8) The building is finished. Nothing remains to be done but to *ripen the village* (wupfisa muti). Men and women assemble in two separate groups and ask each other if they have been continent during the whole "buhlapfa". If one of them confesses to having sinned, he has stolen the village from the headman; the whole work is spoiled and must be recommenced elsewhere. If all the members of the community have behaved well, they proceed to a purifying ceremony exactly similar to the *hlamba ndjaka* which takes place during the mourning ceremonies. Each couple has sexual relations according to a fixed order of precedence, one every night, and they all go to trample on the spot where the women wash their hands. The principal wife is the last to perform these rites.

621 595 9) Then comes the *drawing to himself of the village by the headman* (kokotela muti). At dawn, after the night when she has had her ritual sexual relations with the headman, his principal wife takes his shield and his assagais and stands at the main entrance, everyone being present. Outside is a thorny branch prepared for the occasion. In her martial attire, she drags this branch to the entrance and closes it.

621 gathered in a heap. The headman, on the advice of the medicine
789 man, cuts from certain very vigorous trees such as the nkanye
824 and the ntjondjo, two branches which can live when transplanted. He digs holes on both sides of the entrance and puts the branches into them. Across the gateway, he buries a third branch of the ntjopfa tree, "which causes oblivion" (p. 58): this will be smeared with special drugs in order to increase its efficacy ; it is intended to prevent the baloyi, witches and people speaking bad words. (lit "with bad lips"), from thinking about the village and spoiling it.

621 7) On the evening of that day, the headman and his principal
833 wife have intercourse in their hut and, at dawn, while it is still
789 dark, they go and wash their hands at the main entrance. Mboza does not say that all the other couples must do the same, or trample on the spot. In Nondwane this is sufficient and the rite does not apply to the other couples. But at Manyisa, midway between Lourenço Marques and Khosen, where the Djonga customs are sometimes met with, all the couples must have relations, one after the other, according to order of precedence. It is deemed so important to keep the due order in this "giving to each other the right of resuming sexual life" that, should an elder brother have been absent when the village moved, on his return he must undergo a special treatment in a neighbouring village, during a few days, to avoid any bad consequences resulting from having been unlawfully "preceded" (rangeliwa).

621 8) After the night during which [illegible] sexual rite has taken
789 place, at daybreak, all the dried [illegible] piled in front of the main hut and burnt ritually. The headman throws into the
782 fire a special medicinal pill in order to *give the village over* to his
756 people (nyiketa muti). They all warm their bodies at the blaze, and go and set fire to all the other heaps of dried grass which they made when clearing the soil.

9) The medicine man comes on that same day, and sprinkles the fence with his drugs, in order to protect the village against bush fires, wizards and disease. He walks all round the fence saying : "Happy village! May misfortune not enter here! These are my drugs!" — He starts from one of the poles of the main

621 entrance and finishes his walk at the other, hanging upon it the
789 branch with which he has been sprinkling.

782 10) Then he sacrifices a hen. A young man accompanying
him cuts its throat ; the doctor plucks some feathers from the
756 neck, sacrifices in the ordinary way and invokes his gods : "You used to treat villages (daha miti) with these drugs and I do the same. I do not act of my own wisdom ; you have given it to me. Bless this place, etc." Then he plucks a feather from the hen's right wing, and suspends it at the main entrance or in the main hut, inside, over the door, according to the directions given by the bones. This is the *shirungalo* (see Part VI) and the act is called : "to tie the village" (tjimba muti).

621 Amongst the Rongas, there are some other *buhlapfa taboos*. It
372 is not allowable to light any fire in a village until it is completely
784 built. During the whole building period, cooking is done outside
789 the fence ; crushing mealies in the mortars and dancing are also prohibited. Whistling (ku ba noti) is forbidden, as it might call
198 the wizards inside the village before it has been protected by the charms.

621 If a man has many wives, he may build a second village for
595 himself and establish one of them there. A grown-up son, the son of the woman, will represent the headman in that village, but the law of "tying the village" will also be observed in this case. The headman will perform the act with this woman, and preside at the burning of the dried grass and of the medicinal pill, by which he gives the village to the inhabitants.

When a younger brother, or a son, leaves the headman and founds a village for himself (tihambela muti), he does it according to the same laws as those observed at the regular moving of a village.

III. *Some remarks on the rules of moving.*

621 Let us now analyse the two parallel sequences of rites which we have just described, and which complete each other. It is easy to discover amongst them three series of rites, social, protective and passage rites.

765
535 way that all the men can see her pudenda which is
831 much tabooed (that is, sinful)."]
834 "Annotatio undecima (P. 161). Hic, mulier paulo dilutiore
765 colore magnaque statura addit: 'Hi kundjana, id est:
782 coeamus!' "

[Note 11 (page 161). Here a woman with a slightly lighter color and of large stature, adds: Hi kundjana, that is, "let us have intercourse!"]

841 "Annotatio duodecima (P. 187). Hæc sunt ipsissima verba, quibus Makhelu mulieris menstruansis taboo (id est nefas) describit. Mulier menstruans est res, quæ imprimis 'yila' est. Per sex dies 'yila,' id est, nefas est. Septimo die transit flumen ad se lavandam. Octavo ei nondum licet cum marito suo coire; forte enim sanguis pudendis ad hæret, eà insciente. Magis 'refrigescit.' (Verbo phula menstruans mulier comparatur cum aula a foco remota).

Si, ante id tempus, maritus cum uxore cœat, ægrotus fiat, veretrum retro ita recedat ut vir urinam reddere non possit et, brevi tempore, moriatur. Talem vitæ exitum multi habuerunt. Radicibus arboris cui nomen est mayilana vel mulieris menstruantis vestis particulâ, a medico ad levem pulverem redactâ, quæ ægro bibenda est, morbus sanari potest. Aegrotus multum sanguinis reddet, et veretro exeunte, salvus est."

[Note 12 (page 187). These are the very words with which Makhelu [sic] describes the taboo (that is, the sin) of the menstruating woman. A menstruating woman is something which is, first of all, yila. For six days she is yila, that is to say, taboo. On the seventh day, the flow that cleanses her passes over. On the eighth day she is not yet allowed to have intercourse with her husband; for perhaps some blood is still sticking to her pudenda without her knowledge. She "cools down" even more so. (By the word phula the menstruating woman is compared to the pot removed from the stove.)

841 If the husband should have sexual intercourse with his wife
834 before this time, he will be taken sick, his private parts will
756 decay to such an extent that the man would no longer be able to pass urine and would die within a brief period of time. Many have had such an end to their life. The sick man can be cured by a liquid containing the roots of the tree that is called mayilana or by a particle of the menstruating woman's dress, reduced to a light powder by the medicine man. The sick man loses a lot of blood; after his penis is able to pass water again, the man is well again.

595 in cerevisiam injiciunt.
833 Quod medicamentum ad gravia vulnera curanda quoque
842 conferunt, et liberis praebent cum caput ut cynocephali jactant."

[Note 14 (page 285). Doctor G. Liengmei, our physician, often took care of men who asked for medicine that would produce children. They confessed to him that they often slept with three or four wives in one single night. (From some monogamous men we heard that a wife would get so tired that she would go out at night to work just to escape from her husband.) When the doctor told them to abstain altogether from intercourse for five days they were never able to agree to that. For they wanted to regain their generative faculty without giving up their lust. They are said to employ certain remedies even when their powers no longer appear equal to their desires, either in order to excite their sexual desire or to make their wives pregnant. There is a two-fold remedy. First, a man cuts the testicles off a goat--(this animal does not tire, it is asserted, mbuti a yi karali)--and boils them mixed with numerous herbs; then he eats them. Next he collects other herbs and puts them into his beer. They claim that this has such an effect that the man who has no more than two wives should not use this remedy [520] lest, because his own would not be enough for him, he should commit fornication with the wives of others, which would be a grave offense on his part.

595 Virtuous men such as one can find in the village of Mpfumo sleep in their own houses and call for the wife whom they desire. Most of them have imposed upon themselves the law not to let any discord break out among their wives; therefore they spend one month in turn in the house of a particular wife.

595 Those who have several wives use still other remedies to
756 excite their sexual desire. Of these remedies they believe
833 one to be particularly effective: The medicine man, after
278 he has rested, retreats into the hills where the female baboons are wont to emit their urine mixed with the menstrual blood. That which remains on the rocks and which gives off an abominable smell the medicine man takes up and boils; from this he makes large pills that he sells to all buyers. The latter put them into their beer.

They also use this remedy to cure grave wounds, and they give it to their children when they shake their heads like baboons.]

000 Annotatio quinta decima (P. 477). Veretro fabricatur pulvis, cuius effectus mirabilis est. Qui, bellatorum carpis

your food a little of the earth of the country which you have left ; 823
this will provide the transition between the old and the new domicile (See I. p. 49).

Metals known to the tribe before the coming of the Whites 135
were few. (See page 137). *Nhumbu* or *nsimbi*, iron, *nsuku*, copper, and *ntchopfa*, a name applied to all white metals (tin, silver, etc.) are the only Native names for metals. There is no word for gold.

V. *The Vegetable World. Thonga Botany.*

While Bantus possess a very limited knowledge of Astronomy, 815
Geography, Mineralogy, etc., while their ideas in these domains are in no way deserving of the name of Science, they are much more advanced as regards Plants. Here it is quite allowable to speak of a Science, a rudimentary Science, no doubt, but a true, precise knowledge which has been transmitted from past ages and which denotes a real power of observation.

The Delagoa flora is not very rich. I have succeeded in 137
collecting between four and five hundred different kinds in a 124
herbarium which I sent many years ago for classification to the 815
Herbier Boissier in Geneva. In February 1893, before forwarding the second lot of exsiccata, I gathered together some Natives of Rikatla in the hut which I had pompously styled a Museum and, having promised them 1 s. each if they consented to remain till the end of the examination, I submitted the dried plants to them, asking them their names, their uses, etc. The result of the inquiry was marvellous. My areopagus did not seem to be a very choice one : an old woman, as dry as my exsiccata and smoking her pipe, another with ochre-smeared hair, a young one, with a baby on her shoulder, an elderly one-eyed man named Hamunde, my milkman. After them came the young chief Muzila, walking 815
slowly, swinging the tails of his belt. This chief, notwithstanding 750
his social rank, showed gross ignorance of botany ; but some of the 824
others knew the name of almost every plant ; had I had a *ñanga*, a medicine-man, amongst them, I am sure I should have obtained

the names of all the specimens of the collection, for they are the great connoisseurs in this domain, their drugs being almost entirely obtained from the vegetable world. 815 756 824

A study of these names undoubtedly proves that Natives have the notion of the *genus*. This had been denied ; it seems that, when naming animals, Bantus distinguish correctly between species, but do not classify species into genera. In Botany it is not so. Under the same name they bring together forms which are sometimes widely different, but which belong to the same genus. Here are some of these names. 137 815 824

Tsuna means fern and applies to the Acrostichum tenuifolium, which climbs up the palm trees in the marsh, as well as to the few other kinds of Filicea found in the district of Lourenço Marques ; *gonhwa* is the name for Liliaceae, many kinds of which blossom in the spring : the Crinum Forbesii, with its big white and pink flower, and other kinds forming a bowl at the extremity of the stem ; there are five kinds of Commelina in my collection, which were called *Nkompfana*, both those with blue flowers, and the yellow ; a certain Papillionaceae genus, the Eriosema, is called *Rongole*. All the Strigae, a genus of the Scrophulariaceae family, are known under the name of *Shitshinyambita*, those which prevent the pot from boiling, as they are believed to have this effect when put into the fire. The Lobeliae are called *Shilawana*, etc.

The notion of the *genus* is so truly present that Thongas distinguish between various species in the same genus. So the tree called *Nkahlu*, an Apocynea, the Tabaernaemontana ventricosa, a valuable tree whose sap is used as a styptic, and whose roots are used to make a decoction for lung complaints, has a congener, found in the palm-tree marsh, the Voacanga Dregei, which is called *Nkahlutjobo*, nkahlu of the marsh. The two genera are very closely akin to each other. 815 137 824 757

Cognate species found in various regions are thus distinguished by the mention of their habitat, either the hill (ntlhaba), or the black earth (nyaka), or the forest (mutju). There is the *Muhlu wa ntlhaba*, of the hill, and *Muhlu-tjhobo*, of the marsh (Secamone sp. tree of the Asclepiadaceae family). This is even more striking

hlulawumbe grows, (Hlulawumbe means to overcome others) (1). 000

Offerings of the Medicine-men. The Native physicians are, as 782
has already been pointed out, very pious. Their art having been 756
handed down to them by their forefathers, as a family secret, they 484
always implore the blessing of their ancestors on their various treatments. This is done by true offerings, performed with the *tsu* and a liturgical prayer. In Vol. I. p. 55, the religious ceremony which accompanies the monthly vapour bath administered to infants was described ; a religious rite takes place also in the hondola of the weaning (I. p. 59). These are typical cases. Another offering of the same nature is made on behalf of the man who is about to *start out on a journey*, for instance to Johannesburg. The doctor, having prepared the protective drugs in a pot, brings them to the entrance of the traveller's hut, and calls his "patient,"; then, taking a little of the decoction in his mouth, he spits it at him with the sacramental *tsu*, and prays in the following words :

Akhwari! Abusayi! Ndji hlaya psolepso! Khongelwa a nga dlawi. Ku dlawa phalaburena! Khombo a dji suke, dji ya ka Shiburi, dji ya ka Nkhabelane! A a fambe psinene, a kandjetela balala, mitwa mi yetlele, ku yetlela ni tindjau. A a ye nwa mati ya kone, ma mu tjhabisa hi djo tluka ledji.

Gently! Smoothly! I say so. Death does not come to him for whom prayer is made ; death only comes to him who trusts in his own strength! Let misfortune depart, let it go to Shiburi, and Nkhabelane (2). Let him travel safely ; let him trample on his enemies ; let thorns sleep, let lions sleep ; let him drink water wherever he goes, and let that water make him happy, by the strength of this leaf (viz., of my medicinal herbs).

(1) I may mention here another religious ceremony which is also called a mhamba, 135
though I am not sure that a regular prayer is offered. It is the *Offering of a Stone.* Stones are almost totally lacking in Thongaland. But on the Swazi border, in the 823
Lebombo hills, there are porphyreous rocks, and when a Native passes a certain spot, 782
on the Estatsen road, he picks up a stone, spits on it, touches both his knees with it and throws it on a heap made of the stones thrown by those who passed before him. 484
This heap of stones is called *shittitane.* This rite is said to be performed in order to call a blessing on the journey ; thus the traveller will find a favourable reception in the villages and be given plenty of food. This custom is wide-spread in many other tribes.

(2) The extremity of the land (Comp. I, p. 55).

782 To these words is generally added an invocation to the medicine-
756 man's gods, who are entreated to bless the drugs they have given
484 to their descendant, and to join with the traveller's gods in order to insure his success in this undertaking. The decoction is then used to wash the body of the young man. He will pay the fee on his return home.

224 *Offerings of Hunters.* This is called *byalwa bya ngenge*; the beer
782 of ngenge. This beer is made of maize grains which have been crushed but not softened by long steeping in water, as is generally
273 done in brewing ; they are then reduced to flour ; some water is poured on this and it is offered in that form by the head hunter, all his companions standing near him. They must start at once ; there is therefore no time to brew proper beer.

484 *Offerings of Travellers.* These also have their particular mhamba,
782 which is called *Lehika*. It consists of water alone which the officiant takes in his mouth and spits out, saying : "*Pff!*" (amongst the Hlengwes : "*Phaaa*"). "My ancestor-gods! May I find no difficulty
578 on my road, etc." This *water offering* is also made by a headman
782 whose village is troubled by endless disputes. The way of bringing them to an end is not clear. So he entreats his gods to "open the road, pfula ndlela," so that all hearts may be relieved. This will help him to "herd his village, ku byisa muti." The idea of finding a road clearly accounts for the fact that this offering is made under two sets of circumstances so different from one another. Why water is used to attain this end I do not know.

The offerings hitherto described bear a more or less individual character. Let us now consider those which are in direct relation to the life of the family.

782 *Regular Family Sacrifices.* We have seen these performed in
842 connection with the most important events in life. At the *weaning* (I. p. 58, this might however be termed a medical sacrifice), *on the marriage day*, either publicly, as amongst the Ronga clans (I. p. 110), or privately, by the bride's father alone, as is the custom amongst the Nkunas (I. p. 118). The gods are entreated to give the newly married woman "timbeleko," births, i. e., children, as it seems that the power of begetting depends directly
000 on the gods. Regular acts of worship are performed also at the

845 starvation, or strangled by a rope. It was buried in a broken
847 pot, like other infants (I. p. 165), just below the surface of the
766 ground, a hole being left for the air to enter, so that the "spirit (moya) may go out," in order that, for the mother also, the "spirit may get out," may be able to fly out and not close (the passages), this being a primary condition of her having other children (1).

845 But even the death of one of the twins is not considered sufficient
756 to remove the curse. Directly after birth a particular doctor is
783 sent for, who keeps the drugs needed in such a case. Shimhuntana and Manganyele were the medicine-men who were capable of dealing with the twin defilement in the district of Lebombo, and Ñwashihuhuri of the Matimela family in the Zihlahla clan. They were held only to be surpassed by the medicine-man who treated cases of leprosy. The mother has to leave the village immediately, and they build for her a miserable little hut behind the others, where she goes to live with her twins. Her former hut is burnt with all her possessions.

In *Zihlahla*, all the women assemble that same day and start out in all directions, North, South, East and West to draw water in old calabashes from all the lakes and wells of the neighbourhood. They go skipping along, and singing

"Mbelele! Mbelele! Let rain fall"

This is the mbelele song (p. 318).

Then they return. The mother is seated with her two babes in her arms. They throw the water over her, intoning all the while the same monotonous refrain. This ceremony is to begin the removal of the "misfortune of twin birth, which is a death," (khombo dja lihahla, dji nga lifu). To complete the purification the magician gives to the father and mother a certain drug, which is kept in the Matimela family. The mother will put some of this into the little milombyana calabash, containing the diet-drink of newly born infants.

In *Khosen* the purification is performed by the medicine-man

(1) Even if a child dies at the age of ten days or more, if it is buried in the ground, its grave must be quite shallow; for if it were buried too deep the mother would have no other children.

alone (See *Les Ba-Ronga*, p. 414). He pours his drugs into 845
one of the pots brought by the women, adds to them the psanyi 756
of the goat sacrificed for the occasion, and pours all the contents 783
on to the shoulders of the mother, who holds the babes in her lap. After this he pours from some other pot, which contains pure water, and the woman conscientiously washes herself and her children all the while. Until her purification no inhabitant of the village is allowed to eat anything, and the following day it is taboo to work in the fields, for this would prevent the rain from falling.

Amongst the *Nkunas*, the mother of twins sits at the entrance of the hut, and the drug is poured over the roof above the doorway; it leaks through the thatch on to her, and thus both the mother and the hut are purified at the same time.

This preliminary purification being thus accomplished, the 845
woman goes to live in "her shelter," outside the village. She 853
is absolutely shut off from all the other inhabitants. She has her own pots, axe, mortar, pestle, and does all her own cooking. Nobody even pays her a visit, and people only speak to her from a distance. Her children see no one but her. To each is allotted one breast, always the same. To help her in the nursing of twins [671]
the mother must "buy" a girl, to whom the care of one of the children is committed. This is a law. It is taboo for a girl, even [784]
should she be the elder sister, to "play" with a twin. The payment of £ 1 or ten shillings removes this taboo and the defilement (shisila) connected with it.

Women fear that, if they touch anything belonging to the 845
mother of twins, if they smear themselves with her provision 784
of fat, or if the defiled one smears herself with their fat, they will also incur the dreadful misfortune of giving birth to twins. For this reason it is taboo for a mother of twins to draw water except at a certain spot. She must select one place and always go there. When she returns from drawing water, she must pay attention to the little wreath of grass which she wears on her head to help her balance her pot; it must not be thrown away with those used by other women, for fear that they also should become contaminated (tekela).

789 and prays to the ancestors who transmitted their charms to him. The magician (mungoma) is sometimes a kind of priest when he undertakes to exorcise the spirits of possession. The diviner (wa bula), whose art is entirely based on magical conceptions, occasionally prays to his ancestor-gods to help him in throwing the bones which he has received from them. I am convinced that the three domains are essentially distinct, and that the Thongas have a dim perception of this distinction. But they grade into each other with the greatest ease, and I shall try to follow these gradations, faithfully endeavouring not to alter the original ideas, whilst trying to explain them intelligibly.

A. MEDICAL ART.

756 The medicinal practices of the South African Bantus are very interesting from the ethnographic point of view, but their study has also a practical importance. In all civilised lands the medical profession is subject to restrictions; the candidate must pass examinations showing that he is capable of treating his future patients. Nothing of this kind is to be found amongst the Thongas. The only qualification of the doctor is that of having inherited some recipes from one of his ancestors, and of using them with more or less success on voluntary patients. Should steps be taken by Colonial Governments to stop, or at any rate to regularise, the action of the medicine-men?

A precise knowledge of their practices is necessary in order to come to a conclusion on this point. Missionaries have also a great interest in this study. They have all noticed how often their converts, when sickness overcomes them, abandon the Mission Station and run to their quacks, sometimes brusquely interrupting a treatment which had been prescribed to them by a fully trained medical missionary. The result is almost sure to be the eventual loss of their health and of their faith. Let us, therefore, try to understand the Native medical art and see how far we can trust its representatives.

I. *The Medicine-men.*

I came across a good many *ñanga* (yin-tin), the technical name given to Native physicians. They are all very proud of their

knowledge, and it must be remarked that this knowledge is mostly 756
hereditary. Certain drugs have been tried, and used for years, by a certain individual, who probably owed them to his father, or to another of his ancestors. Before his death he transmitted his art to his son, or to his uterine nephew, the one of his descendants who seemed to be "induced by his heart" (mbilu) to enter the profession. This being the case, medicine-men differ very greatly as regards competence. Some only treat one complaint, or one category of patients, because they only know the medicine which applies to them. For instance *Eliashib*, one of our first converts, a native of Khosen, had only one drug, the bark of a certain tree which possessed terrible purgative powers, and he prescribed it in every case, half killing those who came to him for treatment, and who had all the more confidence in the drug because it came from a distant land. Eliashib was hardly a nanga. *Sam Ngwetsa*, my Rikatla neighbour, was a physician for infantile diseases only. He knew the milombyana prescription and how to biyeketa (I. p. 48, 54), and people used to ask for his assistance as a specialist in this domain alone. We have seen that there is also a special doctor who boasts of being able to treat the dangerous condition of the mother of twins, and another who treats leprosy, this latter being regarded as the most skilful of all. *Spoon-Elias* had a more extensive knowledge of the popular "materia medica" than Sam, but he was still only a beginner. His Nondwane colleague, *Kokolo*, was vastly superior, — an individual in the prime of life, wearing the black crown which distinguishes the notables of the land. He belonged to an ancient family of doctors; his father Mankena and his grandfather Mahlahlana practised before him, and bequeathed to him the valuable legacy of their experience. Tobane, to whom I applied to put me in touch with some really clever practitioners, said of this man: "Awa daha!" — "He is one who succeeds in his cures!", adding with a look of profound respect: "It seems that even the Whites of Lourenço Marques consult him!" And Kokolo, without too much persuasion, showed me his drugs, and went to "dig" for some for my special benefit. I had to pay him fairly generously, as the gentleman does not work for nothing, and it was with an

756 evident consciousness of his talent and powers that he explained to me the uses of his medicines.

278 But the most distinguished medicine-man I ever met was old
756 *Mankhelu*, who may be looked upon as one of the masters of the profession in the Thonga tribe. "It is no play, what I am
789 doing! I have beaten an ox (i. e. made a present of an ox)
782 to my maternal uncle Hlomendhlen! I even gave him two oxen, and he taught me his medical art! He led me everywhere, showing me all his drugs." So Mankhelu became a regular ñanga, in addition to being a diviner, a master of the art of throwing bones, a rain-maker, a counsellor, and general of the army. His whole family shared his professional character, and helped him in his work. Every year, at the time of bukanye, the drugs had to be renewed. His wives went all over the bush to dig out the medicinal roots and to collect them in their *lihlelo* baskets (p. 123). On their return home the bones were consulted to find out who was to cut the roots in pieces (gemela). This having been done, they pounded them in their mortars ; a portion of this material was dried outside, and reduced to powder without having been cooked ; these were the *male medicines*. The other portion was roasted in pieces of broken pots, burnt until it was like charcoal, ground and made into a black powder ; these were the *female medicines*. The whole village assembled and inhaled the smoke through reeds during the operation. A goat was killed and a sacrifice performed ; the liquid contained in the *psanyi* (p. 410) was squeezed on the burning drugs to put them out ; a little bukanye beer was also used for the same purpose. In the meantime Mankhelu said "*tsu*," and addressed this prayer to his gods, and especially to the ancestor who had taught him his science :

"You! so and so! Let these drugs of yours rise (pfuka, i. e. find new strength). Let people come from the Zulus, from Mosilekatse, from Mpfumu! Let them think of our leaves (matluka, the common name for drugs). Let them bring elephant tusks, marriageable girls, etc. Let them dream of us!"

756 This operation of renewing the drugs aims at giving them
278 new strength. Mankhelu said : "We let our drugs *luma* for
789

the new year ; we raise our calabashes, so that the new season may not be too difficult for us... This will consolidate our home ; bad coughs will not attack us too severely. It will shut out the wind ; we shall no longer be very ill, because these are new drugs. As regards the old ones, they have been contaminated (khuma) by the misfortunes of last year. They are mad (hungukile). A new rain falls ; let there be also new drugs, and we can undertake our journeys to sell our goods." So the ñanga removed a little of the old powder from each calabash ; he threw this on the path at a crossway ; then he washed the calabashes at the same spot : "Misfortune is thus thrown away. Passers-by will take it with them as it has been thrown out there by us." Then the new powder was added to the remainder of the old, which was "raised" by it.

In order to throw more light on the nature of Mankhelu's art, let me briefly mention *the roots* (rimetju), or *the leaves* (tluka, ri-ma), or, to use the great, the generic name, *the drugs* (muri, mu-mi) which composed the marvellous powder of the calabashes. He was not a man of one drug. He claimed to be a universal physician, so he mixed together all kinds of drugs, being sure that, in this way, they would certainly be effective in any case brought to him. Here is the description given by him.

Ntjebe : that by which we find strength to trample on our enemies ; we trample also on the winds which spoil the mealies ; we drive out the bad cold (or wind) which has come to us and made us cough. (Notice the triple use of this drug).

Shikuku : that which tramples on misfortune.

Mpoñwana wa burisi matuba-tubana : vanquisher of the enemy and of misfortune.

Shinano : that which induces the enemies to sleep ; you hang some leaves of it on your shield and they are overcome by drowsiness, they do not see you coming towards them.

Nembe-nembe. By it you reach your enemy while he still sleeps and kill him before he can defend himself.

Mpetshu wa milomo : that of the lips! It overcomes the curses and the assagais of the others!

756 *Rihinga ra ndlela* : a root found on the path ; it helps you to go
789 on, though others may seek to hinder you in your progress.

278 *Shivunge* : that which attracts patients to the doctor.

824 *Nandjiyane* : that which makes his words agreeable, so that patients will like them ; (from ku nandjiya, to be agreeable).

Mvakazi, phuphuma ra matlhari : that which is used to make the slayers vomit the main drug of the *tintebe* (I. p. 479).

Mbendjula : that which strengthens all the other drugs.

These are the principal trees, or plants, used for the preparation of the powder. They must be *salted* by the addition of the *sea*, viz., of the medicines taken from the sea, which Mankhelu uses to cause rain to fall (p. 321).

The sexual character of the drugs is essential. The female are used principally for sprinkling the army and the assagais, the male for treating diseases. We find here again the law of opposition of sexes ; the military domain is the male domain par excellence : it must be treated by means of female drugs. On the contrary, when slaughtering a she-goat for the sacrifice, a little of the male drugs must be placed in its mouth and the weapon used to kill it must be smeared with the same, and vice-versa for the he-goat. "To act otherwise is taboo. All the ñanga do this" (p. 417).

755 There may be some true scientific elements in Thonga medical
757 practice. Experiments have been made in using certain roots to cure certain diseases, and tradition has handed down some prescriptions from father to son. Why should there not be effective curative properties in plants of their country just as in the Cinchona bark, or in Castor oil seeds? And why should they not have discovered them?
756 However the Native ñanga is by no means a scientific man, and the best,
789 the most renowned, are perhaps the least scientific. Those who treat only one complaint, and only know one drug, are perhaps those most resembling real physicians ; they act on the results of experiment. But the line between science and superstition is very soon crossed, and the medical art passes with the greatest ease into the domain of magic, all the more so as the difference between Science and Magic is not perceived. *Muri*, which means originally tree, plant, medicinal herb, is at the same time any means of producing any effect, natural or super-

natural, on any influence, hostile or favourable, personal or impersonal (1). That is why the *ntjebe* shrub helps Mankhelu to attain three objects at the same time : cure a bad cough, protect the mealies, and rout the enemy. 756 789

The question has often been put : Are these medicine-men sincere? or are they mere quacks living on the stupidity of the patients whom they deceive? I am convinced, after having listened to their talk, that most of them thoroughly believe in the value of their drugs ; this does not prevent them from occasionally using tricks in order to impress their patients with their miraculous power. One of my pupils, who had accompanied a ñanga for a long time, wishing to enter the profession himself, and had thus had an opportunity to watch his master in his medical work, assured me that, as a rule, the man administered his drugs honestly and in good faith ; but if somebody came suffering from toothache and asked for relief, the doctor first procured a little worm found in the berry of a solaneous shrub called rulane. This he placed in a pot filled with boiling water. The patient had then to inhale the vapour from the pot, his head being covered with a cloth. When the inhalation was over the ñanga took a piece of charcoal and rubbed his forehead with it ; he did the same all round his eyes and told him : "Now your eyes are open and you will be able to see what it was that caused your suffering." He emptied the pot and the little white worm appeared at the bottom, resembling the caries of a decaying tooth : "This is what they had brought on you" the ñanga would add." ("They" evidently means the wizards.) This is clearly a trick pure and simple. But, according to my informant, it was also a medical treatment, because the aim of the trick was to convince the patient that he had been cured. It was thus what we should call a means of suggestion. If, after that, the suffering did not cease, the ñanga would tell his patient that he had not paid enough to effect the cure, that his ancestor-gods (those of the ñanga, who had given him his drugs) were angry at receiving such a small fee, etc. The trick of making patients believe that a harmful object has been extracted from their body is frequently used. We have 755 756

(1) The following story, which I owe to one of my colleagues, fittingly illustrates the ideas held by most of the Thongas concerning *muri*, remedy. A man of the Libombo clan found a bottle filled with a white salt which he at once recognized as being most probably a *muri*. He picked up the bottle and kept it carefully in his hut. One day, feeling unwell, he thought the occasion had come to use his precious drug. His wife bade him be careful, but he secretly swallowed a good dose. Was it not a *muri* ? He was poisoned, and would have died if my colleague had not succeeded in saving him by means of an antidote.

755 seen another instance of this (p. 188). It is in keeping with two ideas
756 which are very familiar to Natives and which we shall meet with again later, viz. that disease is a material thing and that it is generally caused by this thing being introduced into the body by wizards.

The mixed character of the medical art of the primitives, which is so evident in their medicine-men, will appear clearly as we continue our study.

II. *Medical Practices.*

752 *Surgical cases* are treated in the worst possible way, any intervention with a knife being looked on as absurd, if not culpable (1). When dealing with *sores*, the aim of the ñanga seems to be to conceal them under a black powder, so as to give the patient a false impression; he thinks himself healed, as he can no longer see his sore. Mankhelu used to grind the bark of the *Ndjupfura* tree (a tree with a white sap), and put the powder on the sore to make it dry up, renewing the application on the fourth day, then five days later, then six days later. — For *wounds* Kokolo used the sap of the *Shilangamahlo*, letting it fall in drops on the bleeding wound. The *Nkahlu* (p. 329), with its milky sap, is commonly used for this purpose. — "But," says Kokolo, "the chief is *Shilangamahlo*." *Bruises* are treated by the *rimba* method. When a person has fallen and some complication is feared, a fire is made; when there are enough glowing embers, and the soil is very hot, the ashes are pushed aside and a little sand taken from the river is poured on the spot, and some nkuhlu leaves on top of it. The patient leans over the place "which has been so treated;" this is an unexpected application of the principle "similia similibus curantur;" — as the soil has been burnt, but afterwards "quenched" (timula) by the cool sand, so the bruise will be prevented from burning him dangerously! — *Decayed teeth* are not extracted, properly speaking; they are broken down with a piece of iron, on which the Native dentist beats with a hammer

(1) Gungunyana, who killed thousands of poor Ba-Chopi without the slightest remorse, could not conceal his horror of Dr. Liengme, who dared to amputate limbs, or to cut open the body in order to cure patients!

751 One frequently meets people wearing this ornament, which also
755 aims at making the cure permanent. Sometimes the nails are those
from one hand and foot only. The *psirungulo* i. e. the astragalus
783 of the slaughtered goat, or the beak, claws and some feathers of the
hen (p. 410) are also tied round the neck of the patient. This is the
religious amulet, whilst the lizard bag is the *medico-magical* one.
Convalescents are moreover provided with the *fowa*, a kind of
rattle, consisting of a root called *sungi* (there is no connection
between this word and the sungi of the circumcision school,
I. p. 77) contained in a kind of round box made of palm leaf which
is tied round the ankle. This is intended to protect them against
the perspiration of those who have sexual relations (p. 358). They
sometimes wear a little piece of reed filled with a protective
powder, as do also nursing mothers during the whole nursing
period (1) (I. p. 48).

[527] The hondlola rite also marks the moment when sexual relations,
which had been suspended during the disease, are resumed.
Celebrating as it does the victory over disease, the day of hondlola
756 is regarded as a fête-day. Beer is prepared as a mark of gratitude
to the doctor and "to rejoice his heart." It is also the day of
reckoning ; the physician must be paid. This individual has not,
however, waited until now to ask for a "refresher." From the
commencement of the case it has been necessary to *pfula hwama*,
that is to say, to lift the cover of the medicine wallet by means of
sixpence or a shilling. At times he has been very anxious to
change the medicine, in order to produce a greater effect ; on such

751 (1) I may here mention two other articles which are frequently worn by Thonga Natives: one is the dried seed-pod of the flower of the large Protea bush (sugar bush) which is so common on the slopes of the Drakensberg. It looks like a hard brownish cone, all covered with concentric layers of little square ledges. This cures *vertigo*. Why? No doubt because when it is turned round rapidly, it makes the spectator giddy. It is hung round the neck with a string. This curious remedy is brought back from the Barberton mountains by those who go to work in the Transvaal. The second is a bracelet often seen round little children's wrists, and is made from the skin of a kind of tawny mole, called *tju'unyana*, which digs its burrows almost on the level of the ground. You can see the earth a little raised all along its track. The *Filaria* parasite, which is often met with in our tribe, also creeps under the skin in a similar way (p. 343). See illustration No. 5. These are two new instances of the principle "similia similibus curantur." Bags filled with snake powder are also often worn as a preventive.

occasions he has been presented with a chicken as an encouragment; 756
but on the day of the hondlola, when his skill is joyfully affirmed, and the cure an accomplished fact, accounts must be definitely settled with the ñanga, who will henceforth discontinue his visits.

III. *Conception of Disease.*

The preceding details make it possible for us to understand the 753
conceptions which underlie these rites and ceremonies. Possessing as they do so few and such inaccurate notions regarding Anatomy or Physiology, it is not surprising that correct pathological knowledge is absolutely non-existent amongst South African Bantus. In fact this knowledge is both superficial and superstitious. I shall try to prove this by a study of the *names* given to the diseases, the *causes* to which they are attributed, the *notion* of contagion, and the ideas underlying the *rites which mark the end of a disease.*

1) As regards the method of *naming diseases*, it is most childish. 753
Thongas call the complaint from which they suffer by the name 827
of the organ affected ; for instance "I have a foot, I have a hand, I have a neck" (ndji ni nenge, boko, nkolo) means "I have a pain in my foot, my hand or my neck." These curious expressions doubtless arise from the fact that no notice is taken of the existence of any particular organ until something goes wrong with it. "He has a head" means "He is mad." For "I have a headache," the expression "ndji yingela nhloko," meaning "I feel my head," would generally be used. Very often one hears complaints of "a blood" (ngati) which moves from spot to spot, finally taking up its abode in the side or in the stomach, or elsewhere. This is an idea similar to that of the morbid humours of olden days. There are then as many diseases as there are organs, and we are often asked for remedies for the "nape of the neck complaint," or for the "inside trouble." This latter might be gastritis, congestion of the liver, or dysentery, and we should often be wholly at a loss how to prescribe were it not for the highly picturesque, and often particularly appropriate, imagery used by the patients, or by their friends, in describing the various symptoms ; for instance when

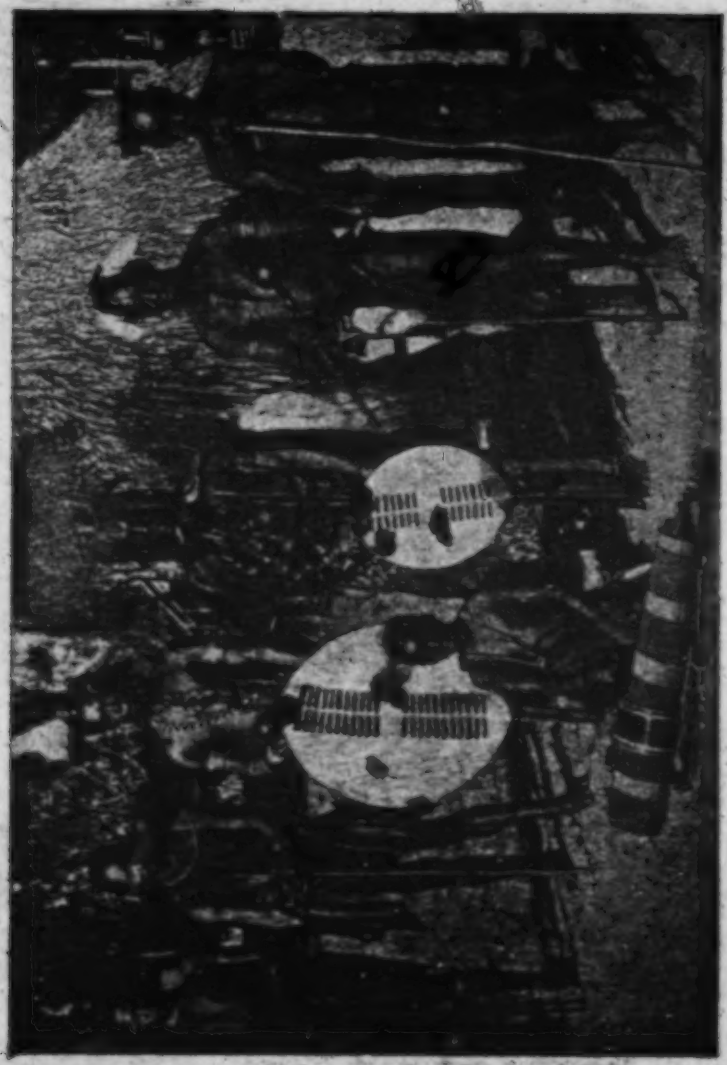
158 "Ha!" they said, "he has the gods (or he is sick from the gods, a ni
753 psikwembu)." Thus the first signs of possession seem to be a
756 nervous crisis, but also the occurence of certain suspicious symptoms : a persistant pain in the chest, irrepressible hiccough, unusual yawning, emaciation without apparent cause, etc. These symptoms, however, are not sufficient grounds for a diagnosis, and the bones are always consulted in order to arrive at a conclusion. The amulets of the patient (called "his shade") are placed on the mat, and the bones thrown near them. We shall see, under letter D, how they must fall to confirm the diagnosis. Should they do so, a second consultation takes place in order to ascertain to what doctor the treatment must be entrusted. There are medicine-men who are specialists for this disease. They are not true *ñanga*, but are called *gobela* (dji-ma), at least amongst the Ba-Ronga, who suffer from possession more than the other clans. These gobela have formed many rival schools in which the drugs used, and the rites followed, differ slightly ; the schools of Kkongosa, Sindondondo, Ñwatshulu, who are men, and those of Ñwamutheto (in the Shifimbatello district) and of Thambula-nyoka, viz., Snake-bone, both of whom are women, etc. Ñwashinhwana was treated by a disciple of Khongosa ; Mboza by Ñwatshulu.

III. *The Treatment of Possession, or Exorcism.*

755 In form[illegible] times, the only remedy was waving a large palm-leaf (milala) [illegible] front of the patient. This was deemed sufficient to "scatter the spirits." Now the treatment is much more complicated. Though it varies slightly in the various schools above mentioned, it comprises four principal rites : the drum performance, the ablution in the gobo calabash, the drinking of the blood and the hondlola ceremony. In the Khongosa treatment the gobo rite comes first, and is called *baselo*. A certain root, the *phuphumane*, is prepared, and dipped into water in a big calabash cut in two so as to form a large basin. The mixture is stirred ; an abundant foam is thus produced and the patient must

755 perfectly distinct from him, had already demanded some presents; but there is one in particular that must be given in order to

[756]



The great exorcist Hokoza with his companions (Tembe).

propitiate them and to get rid of them (hungulusa). The refrain of the second verse of the exorcists' song, which I have already quoted, mentions this offering, and itself promises it to an

755 inducement to the spirit to disclose its name. This is what is called the *thwaza*.

Aba ka Khongosa ba thwaza hi huku!

meaning : the patients of Khongosa's school treat with fowl's blood. Blood, an abundance of blood, is necessary to effect the cure of the patient, and to obtain an assurance from the objectionable tenant in possession that it will do no further harm. As a general rule it is given something better than fowl's blood. In most schools a she-goat is taken, if the patient be a man, or a he-goat in the case of a woman. The exorcist who has been in charge of the cure orders the by-standers to repeat the song which had induced the first crisis. The possessed again shows excitement, and exhibits the same symptoms of raving madness that I have previously described. Then the animal is pierced beneath the foreleg (in the case of Mboza this took place at the entrance of his own hut), and the patient throws himself on the wound, greedily sucking the flowing blood, and, in frenzy, filling his stomach with it. When he has drunk his fill, he has to be dragged away from the animal by main force ; certain medicines (one of which is called *ntshatshu*, apparently an emetic) are administered, his throat is tickled with a feather and he retires behind the hut to vomit all the blood he has absorbed. By this means the spirit, or spirits, have been duly appeased and expelled.

The sufferer, who is now recovering, is next washed again, and smeared with ochre. The spirits will have ochre on the day of thwaza, and torment him if he does not satisfy their desire ; Sometimes the *ḳunga* rite is also practised for the exorcised, viz., no one is allowed to speak to him before having given him a present. (Compare I. p. 124) (1).

756 (1) The accompanying illustration represents a well known exorcist named Hokoza, who had won great fame in the Tembe and Maputju regions, a kindly man who had even some sympathy for Christianity, to which most of these magicians are strongly opposed, as may easily be understood. According to the Rev. A. Aubert, Hokoza used to begin teaching the magic art to his patients on the day of thwaza. Whilst the exorcised was seated in his hut, after having vomited the blood, some of the disciples of the magician took that part of the skull of the goat to which the horns are attached, its astragalus and gall-bladder, and went to a certain spot to hide these objects. When they returned to the patient's village, the latter began to dance, to sing his song, to put

755 It is interesting to note what is done with the different parts of the sacrificed goat : the *bile-bladder* is stuck in the patient's hair according to custom (p. 50), to symbolise the happiness and good fortune that the sacrifice has ensured ; afterwards he is clothed with *strips of the skin* of the animal. All the tambourine players, who are themselves *mathwaza*, i. e. who have already gone through the torture of possession, decorate themselves also with these strips of skin, crossing them over the breast. The strips must be tied together with *munganazi*, i. e. strings made from the roots of the munga tree, which have a pleasant odour ; this has the property of "rejoicing the nose" of the spirits, and is always used in the ritual of possession. In former times people wearing strips were often met with, as these ornaments had to be worn, at that time, during *a whole year*, until the hondlola. — The *flesh* of the sacrificed goat also supplies the means of finally exorcising these mysterious spirit powers. From each limb a small piece is cut, and these pieces are cooked in a separate saucepan, with a powdered drug prepared for this special purpose. The head exorcist breaks off the branch of an acacia bearing enormous shiny white thorns, on each of which is spitted a piece of meat. The patient runs at full speed towards the branch, and seizes a piece of meat between his teeth in passing. While eating it, he rushes towards the East. He comes back, seizes another piece in the same manner, and runs towards the West, and so on towards all the four cardinal points. In this way he propitiates the gods, the spirits of every country, in whatever direction they may lie. The young *mathwaza*, viz., those who have lately passed through this initiation, must also seize the pieces of meat with their teeth, but not the gobela, nor the old mathwaza. This is one of the rites of the Khongosa school. Ñwatshulu used not to observe it. The remainder of the goat is then cooked and eaten. A feast is celebrated, in which the chief exorcist dances and sings his song,

756 himself into a state of trance, and ran outside in search of the hidden objects. It was a species of trial ; Hokoza wished to know if the exorcised possessed the gift of divination. If he succeeded in finding the astragalus, he tied it to his left foot ; the gall-bladder he fixed in his hair. Hokoza was then satisfied and predicted a bright future for his pupil.

all the people clapping their hands (wombela), to encourage him 755
as an accompaniment. — The *horns and hoofs* will be carefully kept, and placed on the roof of the hut, just over the door (shirañwin) by which the afflicted one enters, evidently to protect the abode from malign influences. — The *astragalus* will be tied, together with the strips, on the sternum of the patient. — The *bones* of the goat are the objects of special care. They must not be broken to eat the marrow, but burnt in the shade of a large tree, where it is "cool." So the possessing spirit will also be cool (titimela) and not too wild. Sometimes they are preserved in a special pot, and burnt on the day of the hondlola.

The period of convalescence[1] then begins. It lasts one year, 758
and is a distinct marginal period, as clearly appears from the 834
fact that sexual relations are absolutely forbidden during that 756
phase, and until the hondlola. It is also, more or less, a period of apprenticeship, as the possessed will become an exorcist himself, if his magical powers become sufficiently developed. He accompanies the gobela everywhere, assists him in his cures, and so learns the art of exorcism. The apprentice will also have to practise the rites of protection, which I shall shortly describe, and which are obligatory during the whole period of convalescence, and even later.

4) The final purification of the hondlola and investing with amulets (timfisa).

As we saw, the hondlola, the removal of defilement of disease, 755
is necessary at the close of any illness. So, when a possessed 758
person is regarded as healed, he will have to pass through this 787
rite. It can however only be carried out on the one condition that the possessed husband, or wife, has remained in a state of continence during the period of convalescence. In order to know if they have obeyed this law, a fowl will be placed on the head of the patient. If he, or she, has been continent according to order, the bird will remain quiet; it will not fly away, even should someone approach and pass close by. If it flies off making a great noise, the angry exorcist will also take his leave, saying:

[1] [For the individual whose spirit was possessed — Analyst]

Let us remember that, in the case of the exorcised, the hondlola
does not only mean the re-introduction of the patient into the 755
society of the healthy, but his reception into the society of the 756
magicians. It is the last act of *initiation* : he himself becomes a magician, a doctor able to treat those who are possessed. This new dignity is symbolised by the *shiphandje* (forked branch) which will be given to him to-day, as it is to medicine-men (p. 388), or diviners (See later on). It was Ñwatshulu who chose and cut the branch for Mboza from the tree called *shiralala*. He dug a hole in the back part of Mboza's hut, chewed his sungi or ndjao root, and blew against the foot of the branch before planting it in the hole. Then he made the branch firm in the ground, and hung to it the baskets full of drugs and calabashes full of medicinal powders which he gave to his disciple. This branch will be the drug store of the new magician, the place where he keeps all his magic drugs ; it will also be his *altar* (gandjelo), not the altar of the ancestor-gods, who have no part here, but that of the possessing spirits, to whom he will also henceforth address his worship. (Compare with Mankhelu's forked branch, letter D). This leads us on to the next division of the subject.

IV. *The new Condition of the Exorcised.*

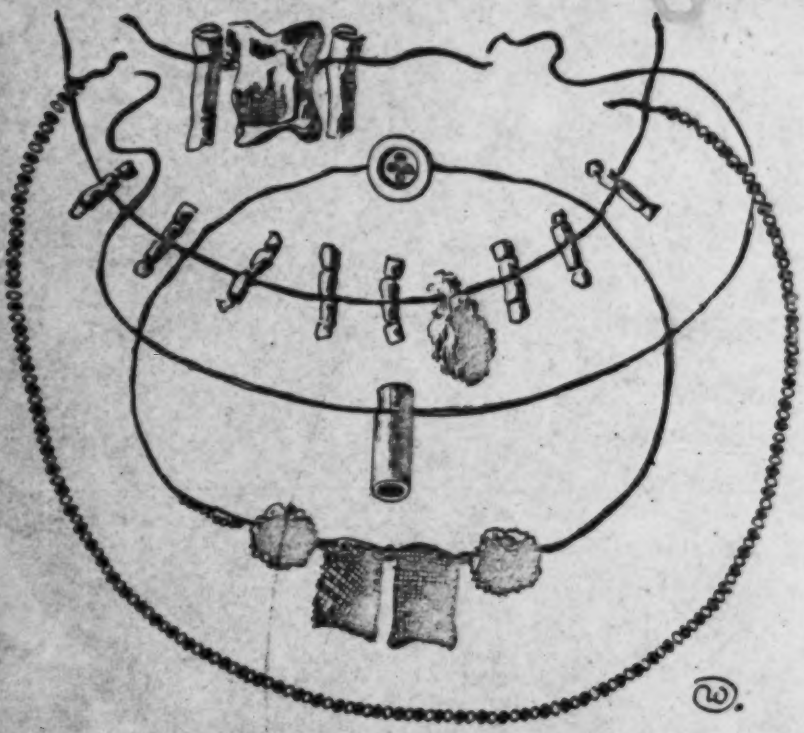
It is interesting to note the stages in the process of initiation 756
through which the possessed passes in the different acts of his 184
treatment. The tambourine performance has provoked, or accentuated, the manifestation of his dual personality, viz., the person possessed and the spirit possessing. The baptism in the calabash has helped him to cross the sea and to reach the land beyond, the land of miracles and of magic powers! By the drinking of blood, he has become a superior being, a man who does not fear that which makes others tremble ; he has *thwaza*. This word is the same as that employed for the renewal of the moon (p. 306) ; like the moon, he has been born again ; a new light has appeared after a period of darkness. He has entered a new life. The period of convalescence, with its taboos, is his last trial ; by the hondlola he finally enters the society of the initiated.

756 184 Henceforth he will lead a special life, characterised by protective and propitiatory rites, which tend to the development of his subliminal faculties.

1) Protective rites.

756 751 789 As soon as he was "born again" in the thwaza ceremony, but to a still higher degree later on, after being elevated to the dignity of the magician, the exorcised, having entered the mysterious world of those endowed with powers, becomes the butt of all his colleagues in the magical arts ; first the baloyi, the witches, who *try* him, to see if he is able to discover their evil deeds, and secondly the other magicians, who are annoyed at seeing a rival ready to dispute their practice with them. So he must be continually on his guard ; in the evening, especially, he must protect himself against their nightly charms. The great protective medicine is a pellet made of the powder of many roots, which have been burned and bound together with fat taken from the bowels of a goat. The first of these roots comes from a tree called *mabophe*, found in the Bilen country. This has the power of tying (bopha, in Zulu, means to tie) the knees of the wizards who come during the night, so that they will be found in the morning, stark naked, in the hut of the exorcised. The *nulu* root seems to be used for the same purpose ; the *nsala*, which also enters into the composition of the protective pellets, rather aims at ensuring the success of the treatment undertaken by the new gobela ; as its fruits are plentiful (p. 16), so will the possessed come in great numbers to the doctor. The pellet is used for medical treatment, but the same drugs are also kept in the form of powder, in a piece of reed, or in the calabashes hanging from the forked pole. Every night the exorcised swallows a pinch, and throws another pinch on the fire in his hut. This will prevent enemies from entering, or make them prisoners. Before eating, he must also protect himself by chewing (phora) a little of the *manono*, a kind of antiseptic or anti-witchcraft root as big as a stick, which he always carries with him ; this is the special *luma* (I. p. 146) of the exorcised. Who knows if his food has not been poisoned by the malpractices of his rivals?

When undertaking a journey, he must always chew his *ndjao*, the juncus root which has often been mentioned and which "cleans roads;" this is "his shield," because the ndjao knows and tries (djinga) everything, and overcomes the hostility of man and things. It is the universal remedy against any hostile influence. So, after having chewed, he spits on his stick, rubs it and starts on



Protective amulets worn by exorcised.

his journey, saying: "The road is ripe (wupfile), let us go!" — The astragalus will be the principal charm that the possessed will have to wear, and will be tied round his neck between two little amulet bags or reeds.

The exorcised leads a life of constant fighting against evil spiritual influences. These protective rites are observed all through the year of convalescence.

Another rite, which is observed after the hondlola only, is

756 Another rite, which is observed after the homdlola only, is
783 the *haza*, viz., the monthly purification of the exorcist. He
821 fills his gobo calabash with a decoction made of the roots of the mphesu and ntjebe trees, drinks the whole, tickles his throat with a feather and vomits the medicine. "A tibasisa ndjen" — "he purifies his inside." This is done at every new moon. The connection between the possessed and the moon, which was first established by the fact that he had *thwaza*[1] as well as the moon, is maintained and intensified by this rite.

2) Propitiatory rites.

751 Besides these protective drugs, the exorcised wears a necklace
756 made of little pieces of a creeper called *mayambatju;* tied together with a munganazi string. See the second necklace in the
782 illustration. This is intended *to calm his gods*, and to scatter
158 them when they desire to come upon him with violence. This is indeed a great danger ; the exorcised is liable to nervous attacks of a dangerous nature, especially during the first few weeks following the exorcism. Perhaps his song is heard in the distance. Then suddenly he is seized with madness, and furiously assaults his neighbours with the small hatchet, or the assagay used in the dances. People run away ; or, on the contrary, they collect and begin to clap their hands, and make their infuriated companion dance and sing his own song. This may help to dispel the spirits, and calm him down. Sometimes, feeling uneasy, foreseeing a crisis, the poor man himself asks them to sing. But he may also be led, in his frenzy, to the bush, far away, unconscious, quite mad, tearing his clothes and his skin with the thorns. This often happened to Ñwashinhwana. Her husband then followed her, and, when the crisis was over, saw her fall down exhausted and brought her home ; there, having returned to her senses, she became very sad and wept bitterly. So, in order to avoid being tormented, the exorcised propitiate their spirits ; they worship them, in truth, and this gives birth to *a new religion* totally different from ancestrolatry, which has its rites and its duties.

756 As already pointed out, the exorcised has *his own altar* in his
778 hut. It is the forked branch, round which a circle of raised clay
782

[1] [See p. 495 -- Analyst]

is carefully maintained, and regularly smeared. He puts his 756
offerings there, principally tobacco. The snuff box is deposited 778
there. Does he want snuff? He enters the hut clapping his 782
hands, saluting his spirits, and, taking the box, throws a pinch of it at the foot of the branch, and says: "You! Ngoni, you see that I have not stolen! I first gave you your share." His wife will do the same. This is a "mhamba." — When ready to undertake a journey, he will come to the altar, sit on his ankles (a woman will kneel down) and take leave of the spirits. Holding his assagay, and his manono root, he says: "Good-bye, Ba-Ngoni! This hut is yours; keep it well! I go to such and such a place," and asks them to bless his journeying. On his return he will inform the spirits that he has succeeded in his trip. If he is sick, and the bones have revealed that the disease has been caused by the spirits, he again comes to the altar, and says: "You! Ba-Ngoni, why are you angry with me?" These acts of worship are not only performed at the altar. Wherever he may be, before drinking beer, the exorcised will pour out a little for his spirits. He will also throw a little food for them before eating. This will be *a daily worship*, much more constant and individual than the rites of ancestrolatry, a real communion with the spirits who, after having tormented the exorcist, have become his benefactors, giving him the power of healing others and thus of making money! There is much more religiosity in the exorcised than in ordinary people.

3) Development of subliminal faculties.

All these nervous crises, natural or provoked, the double 756
psychological existence which is fostered by them, the regular 158
participation in the exorcism of others, generally greatly injure 791
the mind of the exorcised; they have an extraordinary look, something wild about them, as if they were not in their right senses. They may be heard sometimes groaning, or emitting a sudden cry without any reason. This nervous instability may pass away and they may return to their normal state, but it may be that if they possess those strange mental powers, which modern psychology

756 calls subliminal, and which are more or less dormant in every
158 individual, these faculties will suddenly develop and the exorcised
791 will become a real magician. A faculty of *second sight* may reveal itself. Or he will become a *diviner*, either by ecstasy or by bone throwing (See Letter D). Or he will be a *wonder-worker*, a *prophet*, etc. Mholombo, who was an extraordinarily acute woman, had possessed all these gifts. She could discover wizards ; one night, crossing the Mabota country, she met one of the indunas of the chief accompanied by two other men, leading his own wife to the marsh, in order to eat her. They were acting in their capacity of wizards (See Letter C). Mholombo knew them at once and said to them : "No use eating her. Her meat is bitter sour." Terrified, the wizards fled, and confessed their guilt next morning! I have related in the *Bulletin de la Société Neuchâteloise de Géographie*, of 1910, how she received divinatory bones from her possessing spirit, prophesied the arrival of missionaries, showed up the man who had stolen £ 8 to the Mpfumo chief, was given the power to cross the Nkomati river by walking on the water, etc. By this same power Shidzabalane was able to leave his body, and to go and dwell in his own shadow (p. 362). Reference will again be made to the profession of magician when dealing with witchcraft.

4) The society of the exorcised.

756 If the power of an exorcised person becomes very great, if he succeeds in his cures, all his *mathwaza* join him, and he becomes the founder of a school. He starts new rites, discovers more powerful drugs, and so attracts patients to himself from all parts. We have seen that five or six schools existed northward of Lourenço Marques, in the Mabota and Nondwane countries. Mboza might have started a new one, as he had already cured two patients.

Each school of exorcists celebrates *an annual feast*, in winter, at the close of the harvest season, a feast to which all the disciples of the master are summoned. This is the rite of the *renewal of the drugs*, which we have already noticed as a medical practice in the

case of ordinary medicine-men. Mboza, who was the favourite of Ñwatshulu, was entrusted with the organisation of the feast. He stood at the main entrance of the village and welcomed the exorcised coming with their empty calabashes ; on their arrival, each of them gave two shillings, or half a crown, or a mat, or a fowl for the master ; this was their annual fee. Next day they all gathered fuel and burnt the drugs in broken pots, two or three mathwazana around each fire. Then they all inhaled the smoke through reeds, and absorbed the froth of the phuphumana and psekamafura decoction from the gobo basin. In the evening the old inhabitants began to grind the carbonised roots, and Mboza filled the calabashes of the disciples with the new protective medicines, after which dancing began, each of the exorcised singing his own song as well as the universally known refrains, such as : "Vuka Mungoni," etc. This was a great day of rejoicing! 756

As already pointed out, great rivalry exists between these schools. Professional hatred is carried to its extreme limits amongst magicians ; they not only *test* their colleagues, entering their huts during the night, but they steal each other's drugs. I have been told how Sindondondo overcame Khongosa. Sindondondo was a wonderful man, dwelling on the Western border of the Nkomati, at Shifukundju. He had disappeared for two or three years, and was regarded as dead, but he unexpectedly reappeared, saying that he had lived at the bottom of the sea during the whole time. There he had not eaten anything ; he was like a fish. The chiefs of that country, under the water, had given him his great drug called *ndzundzu*, and he returned home bringing with him a bunch of the precious roots. His people welcomed him and made a feast on his return. He then became a great magician, and exorcised a number of people. He and his one wife were the sole inhabitants of his village ; he was very particular as regards his food, eating only mealies of the preceding year, and drinking no beer. (The exorcised often observe special, individual alimentary taboos.) His forked pole was outside, on his hubo, not in the hut; and when he went on a journey, he ordered a neighbour to keep watch over his drugs and his fowls. Should some other man try to enter his [262]

756 village, he would find it full of enormous snakes, surrounding the magic branch. Khongosa, who inhabited the district called Nkanyen, on the Eastern border of the Nkomati, wished to possess the marvellous *ndzundzu* drug ; so one night he crossed the river and tried to steal it. But Sindondondo was on his guard, his protective charms were working. They caught his rival, who was *shwela*, viz., imprisoned till after sunrise. Sindondondo behaved magnanimously : "Why, my friend (gobelakulori), did you not come in daylight to ask for my medicine? I would have given it to you! I could cover you with shame now, and show all the people what kind of an exorcist you are! But I have pity on you! Go home." And he released him. Mboza was fully persuaded of the truth of this story.

It may happen that a disciple emancipates himself and founds a new society of the exorcised ; this is, of course, very unpleasant for his master, as the new doctor will start a dangerous competition and refuse to pay any more fees to his initiator ; he will proclaim himself as his superior. So the old gobela goes to his altar and prays his Ngoni gods to make the drugs of his rival powerless. This prayer is heard, and the young gobela is obliged to ask for forgiveness, and to pay a fine of £ 1 in order to obtain success in his future cures. He may perhaps *succeed* his master, but only when the latter is dead.

5) Funeral rites of the exorcised.

766 The burial of the exorcised is attended by other mathwazana,
756 and by his disciples, if he was an exorcist, and special rites are observed for his funeral. The corpse is taboo. It must be covered with ochre. The grave is smeared with clay, and the body is not laid down on its side, but is placed in a sitting position, its hand holding the assagay, or hatchet, which the deceased used when dancing and singing the songs of exorcism. A bunch of *shibowa*, a Urticaria which grows in water, is placed on his head : "*This is to cool him*, because his poor head has been so tired, it has suffered so much from anguish, pain, excitement!" The grass, being taken from the water, also appears *to cool the spirits*, who will

thus remain in the grave, and not trouble other people. Moreover 766
a little hut is built on the grave itself, as was the case for Sokis 756
(I. p. 141), with the same intention, to protect the exorcised against heat and fatigue. If the deceased was not only a disciple but a master, his drugs will be stored in the hut till the adjudication of the inheritance. The most skilful of his followers, the one who best knows the use of these charms, will dance on the grave, all his companions clapping their hands to encourage him, and, when the mourning is ended, he will "raise the drugs," burning them as is done at the annual feast, and will eventually succeed his master.

6) Conclusion on Possession.

Cases of possession, such as those which occur amongst the Thongas, 158
are met with in a great many other countries. A Swiss missionary, the 753
Rev. H. Rusillon, working in the Paris Mission in Madagascar, has drawn attention to practices very similar to these, called the Tromba, amongst Hovas. It is impossible not to note the striking resemblance between the Thonga disease and that of the demoniacs of the New Testament. On hearing the story of the madman in Gadara, whose spirit called itself Legion, the Natives at once identify the phenomenon, and say: "These demoniacs had psikwembu."

These psychological phenomena are certainly of a morbid character. The fact that they generally appear in an epidemic form is significant. It has been noticed that similar epidemics have broken out in populations which have been weakened by the sufferings of a long war, when the nervous resistance had been reduced by privations. May not the progress of Alcoholism, together with the disintegration of the old social order caused by the influence of European civilisation, account for the spread of the disease amongst the Ba-Ronga in the last fifty years?

Whilst not pretending to analyse these phenomena scientifically and fully, I will here add two observations:

1) In the Jewish conception, phenomena of possession were due to *evil spirits*, devilish agencies, which tormented poor humanity, and were cured by the power of the real and true God. Dualism prevailed in their religious conceptions. This idea of dualism is altogether absent from the Thonga belief. South African Bantus have not yet reached that stage of religion where the antagonistic ideas of right and wrong are

754 that baloyi are more or less subject to the ancestral gods. It may happen also that if somebody shows kindness to a noyi, this noyi will take him under his protection, and prevent his comrades from doing harm to his friend. But these are rare occurrences, and the baloyi are, and remain, criminals in the view of the Thongas.

Stealing, killing, enslaving are the principal crimes of these maleficent beings. But they can also cause any other species of harm to their infortunate victims. I have told the story of a young man who complained to me of having been deprived by the tricks of a noyi aunt of the power of having sexual intercourse with his wife; she was pregnant and the witch wished to act on the offspring in such a way as to change it into a snake, a hare, a quail, or a duiker, so that the mother should die on the day of the birth. (I. p. 187.)

II. *White Magic and Magicians.*

1) Distinction between Magicians and Wizards.

754 As previously stated, the power which the magicians claim to
791 possess is perhaps not essentially different from that of the baloyi.
They even sometimes boast that they are themselves baloyi, baloyi
756 more powerful than the ordinary witches, and that they are thus able to discover them and baffle all their tricks. So Mathuza, one of the most celebrated Ronga witch-doctors, used to say: "I am the great Noyi! I am the one who kills. I can fly. So I know them all and I disclose them." But magicians differ absolutely from wizards in four ways, at least:

1) Their activity is not secret, nocturnal and more or less unconscious. They act openly, in the light, during the day, and do not hide their magical powers; on the contrary, they make a show of them, covering themselves with any number of charms; most of them wear "tingoya" and smear themselves with ochre (p. 100).

2) They all undergo a preparation, or pass through an initiation, differing according to the different kinds of magic they practise.

So they possess, so to speak, letters patent, either because they have been received into the society of their fellow-magicians (as is the case with medicine-men, exorcists, and throwers of bones), or because they have found new and powerful drugs during a sojourn, real or pretended, in the sea, the desert, or elsewhere. 754 791 756

3) Whilst baloyi are said to use *tingati* (blood) poisons, the magicians employ *miri*, i. e., medicinal herbs or objects, drugs which, however, are all thought to possess special powers. I do not say "supernatural" powers, as the notion conveyed by this word cannot exist in any definite form amongst people who have hardly a true conception of Nature. The stronger the miri, the stronger the magician. — In addition to their drugs, they certainly believe themselves endowed with personal power due to the development of their faculties of second sight, etc., which they also attribute to the spirits (ancestor-gods) from whom they have inherited their drugs.

4) The last point of difference but by no means the least important, is this : magicians are the supporters and upholders of the social order, and not criminals attempting to destroy it. They foretell the future, cure diseases, prevent misfortune of all kinds, fight against baloyi, and are regularly consulted by the Native Court for the detection of wizards.

Between the unconscious baloyi whose crimes are purely imaginary and the bangoma who use their magical powers for the benefit of those who have recourse to them, there certainly exists another category, i. e. wicked individuals who kill their fellow-men by means of real poisons or by criminal practices and do this quite consciously, either to avenge themselves on their enemies or to help others to get rid of those whom they hate. Such acts may be called ku loya, by an extended use of the term ; but there is another word to designate these crimes, the word *ku dambika*, which we already met with when speaking of the jilted lover who wishes to play an evil trick on the girl who despised him (I. p. 101). In the neighbourhood of Rikatla, there was a man who claimed to be a noyi of this type, and to have at the same time the power of "treating" (daha) buloyi. He was a Mu-Sutho, a stranger. Wishing to kill an enemy, a Ronga of the country asked his help ; 754 791

754 the magician bade him first bring a sheep ; this he slew, took part
791 of its fat, and smeared with it and with some very black drugs a root of the ntjhopfa tree (I. p. 58). This fat and these drugs were to give to the root the power of "taking away" the heart of the enemy ; the magician buried it in the road and assured his client that when the root was rotten his enemy would be dead. This root was discovered later on, owing to a revelation given by the bones, and the man who had consulted the magician had to pay a fine of £ 1. No doubt such conscious acts of witchcraft exist, but this is not the typical loya.

2) Various categories of magicians.

●756 Some magicians specialise in one division of the immense domain
791 of magic, but others claim to practise the magic arts in all their diversity.

1) Those whose activity bears a less magical character. These are the *ñanga* (yin-tin), or *ba-muri*, whom we met with when dealing with the medical art (Compare Chapter I. the Medicine-men).

2) Those who have passed through the ceremony of exorcism and have become exorcists. They are called *gobela*, and the character of their initiation has been sufficiently explained in Chapter II.

3) Those called *mungoma*, magicians proper, who have divinatory powers and can perform wonders, fight the baloyi, cause rain to fall, influence Heaven, etc., even if there has been no exorcism episode in their previous career.

4) Those whose principal qualification is the power to detect baloyi, and who are called for that reason *shinusa*, "smellers-out."

5) The bone-throwers *(ba-bula)*, whom we shall describe in Chapter IV.

The priests, *ba ku hahla*, do not enter into any of these categories, their specific activity being of a totally different character ; they have recourse to Religion and not to Magic.

3) Some Thonga Magicians.

On calling to mind the various magicians with whom I came in contact, I observe that very few limited themselves to the medical art alone ; *Sam Ngwetsa* and *Kokolo* alone did this. The aim of the magician is to combine as many branches of the business as possible. — *Mankhelu*, with his forked branch, was a medicine-man of the highest rank, owing to his calabashes containing a mixture of all the most powerful drugs, salted with Rivimbi's sea charms. He was a magician, being a rain-maker, a detector of baloyi, and, in particular, a successful bone-thrower, but he seemed to be entirely ignorant of the art of exorcism. — *Makasana*, on the contrary, a Thonga from the Leydenburg district, had acquired his power after passing through the ordeal of exorcism and had obtained the drugs of his exorcist. This had made him into a regular *mungoma*. Round his neck he wore three necklaces of half transparent yellow beads, between which were small square lizard-skin bags, timfisa, containing : 1) drugs against snake bites ; 2) charms against the baloyi ; 3) the *maringo ya tilo*, the charms of Heaven. Birds' claws and a crocodile's tooth also hung round his neck ; his hair was pulled out, the *tingoya* radiating in all directions, and in the very middle, on the top of his head, he wore a little chain, in the form of a narrow turban, to which a brass cartridge was fixed ; this was his snuff box, resting comfortably on his thick thatch ! Possessing all these drugs Makasana was at the same time exorcist, witch-doctor, medicine-man, and magician of Heaven. The last qualification was perhaps his principal one ; he told me that he had to fight against his colleagues, who wished to test him by means of their own charms. — "At noon," he said, "when the sky is quite clear, I see a little cloud appearing over my head, quite black. The lightning bird is in it, and wants to kill me, having been sent by one of my enemies. Then I pour a little of the medicine of Heaven into the palm of my hand ; when I see the bird moving its wings and ready to rush down upon me, I blow a little of my drug towards the cloud and the bird will come and fall down powerless quite close to me. Then I take it, and cut

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756

756 it in half. I take a little of the heart, and of the eyes, I crush the
791 bones, I make a powder with all these ingredients, and this is my great medicine. With one of the bones I make a flute ; I put a little powder into it, and, when a thunderstorm breaks, I go outside without danger and conjure the lightning by playing on my flute, etc." (p. 314).

Mathuza, the magician of Nondwane to whom I have just alluded, was essentially a detector of baloyi. — So was also *Ñwashihandjime*, the great Nkuna magician, a splendid creature, tall, his eyes beaming with a kind of supernatural light. I once saw him, after having performed the "smelling out" rite, point out a woman with the tail he always carried with him, an enormous tail fixed on a handle richly decorated with beads and copper wire.
[825] This tail, which is one of the most common attributes of the mungoma, is generally *a gnu tail*. It is said that when a mother gnu has dropped her offspring, she beats it (phyita) with her tail and thus gives the new-born gnu the necessary strength to walk and follow its mother. Hence the peculiar magic use of the gnu tail. In its very middle are hidden certain drugs which possess a revelatory virtue ; the magician puts his nose right amongst the hair before pronouncing his sentence and beating (phyita) the noyi. Ñwashihandjime is said to have disappeared from his village for months, and to have come back from the desert emaciated but full of new magical powers. I once tried to draw his attention to things more spiritual than his art and his drugs. He gazed at me with wild eyes, as if unable to follow my demonstration ; suddenly he emitted a cry very similar to a hiccough and turned his back.
[827] (Hiccoughing is a well-known symptom, showing either that one has been bewitched by "mitisa," or that one possesses magical power).

At the station of Shiluvane I once made an inventory of the charms of another Nkuna magician. In his hair the man wore a brass bracelet and some rings, and a necklace with a sixpence attached, all these objects having been inherited from his father, who was himself a mungoma ; moreover he hung round his neck a little piece of the skin of a goat, which had been sacrificed after the death of his father ; in this way he tried to acquire and keep

the power of his initiator and of his god. Two panther's claws were fixed on his head, pointing towards each other, as if they wished to catch something ; this helped him to go and seize (to ba) the wizard in the *vumisa* rite, which I shall now describe. Two empty goats' bladders swung amidst his crop of tingoya as he walked, an unmistakable sign that he had cured patients and received goats as a reward. The noise they made in hitting against each other "called other goats to come to him." From his neck hung two crocodile's teeth, a piece of buffalo's horn, "psiboho psa nga" — "that which ties me, viz., makes me firm ;" another horn which had been broken by a bullet and in which he kept the *nulu* medicine (p. 496), the root of a white sea-weed, used to produce the foam of the *gobo* rite in the exorcism, and a goat's horn full of a powder which cures the "burwa" disease. The burwa is the strong Westerly wind in Shiluvane (I. p. 18) which the baloyi are said to use for bewitching through the ears. He rubbed the patient with the horn and placed it near one ear, then near the other, and could cure the bewitched in that way. Another drug, called "rishwala," helped him to acquire many wives, and to have many children ; a cock's spur was also worn in order to give him "courage and weight." This mungoma, who called at Shiluvane on the 28th of June 1899, sold me a "kaross" (a rug) made of skins of rock rabbits, the work of the Ba Pedi, worth £ 6. He had earned it by the practice of his art.

I here give the picture of a true Ronga *gobela*, from Tembe, who once passed through Rikatla with two assistants ; he was on a tour to exorcise the possessed of the land. He had a terrifying appearance with all his military and magical attire, his big snake skins, and his gnu tail ; he hardly condescended to pronounce a word, maintaining all the time a most dignified demeanour. He was, before all else, an exorcist.

These few descriptions are sufficient to illustrate the composite character of the magicians. There is no end to their charms and their tricks, but they are certainly in earnest as regards the practice of their art, and are convinced that they are very useful and powerful personages.

III. *The Method of dealing with Wizards.*

754 All the power of the magicians is resorted to in order to check
756 the enchantments of the baloyi. Their drugs are used with two
791 objects, — protection and cure, the cure consisting mainly in the disclosure of the wizard.

1) Protective methods.

789 The village, as we have seen, (I. p. 311) is well protected with
754 *anti-baloyi drugs*. The fence itself, the main entrance and the threshold of the headman's hut, have been magically treated when first built. But the magician, when he thinks it necessary, "revives" the drugs by burning his powder in a little fire on the road which enters the village. This protects the main entrance, and he does the same at the threshold of the headman's hut. The smoke will keep the wizards away. Stones, daubed with the powder, are placed in all directions to close the openings.

"These medicines act wonderfully," says Mankhelu. "Should a *noyi* succeed in entering the hut, the power of the smoke will be such that he will at once be revealed. The *noyi* will suddenly be seen there without any clothing, apparently dreaming, seeing nothing, knowing nothing. If it is a woman, I shall call her husband and show him his wife... 'What are you doing here?' he will say to her. She will not utter a word. Then I shall say to him : 'Look here, my friend... I might be hard on you. But I have pity. Do not allow your wife to do anything of the kind again. Pay me one or two oxen, and I will keep silent.' He will consent. Then I beat the woman with my stick. She awakes, and, quite ashamed of being in another hut without any clothing, she will fly away home!" Such is the testimony of Mankhelu, and he is certain of having succeeded more than once!!

Mboza asserted to me that he had witnessed a similar case

853 *neta* as a medecine. The shrub, which is an Euphorbiacea,
824 contains milky sap. It is a treatment based on the principle : Similia similibus curantur.

751 The Thongas believe that milk alone would never suffice to
278 make a child grow : *Ñwana a kula hi miri, the child grows by*
753 *medicine*, such is the adage which is universally met with. When
854 you see a woman carrying a child on her back, you will notice hanging to the *ntehe* the reed (lihlanga) containing the black powder which protects against the dangers of the bush, and a little calabash half filled with water. This water is not pure water, it is the medicine called *milombyana*. This word is the plural and diminutive form of *nombo*, which means baby's ailment. There is a great *nombo*, convulsions, also called *tilo*, heaven, because this complaint is brought into a mysterious connection with the influence of Heaven (See Part VI). There is a small *nombo* ; this is the infantile diarrhea which so often troubles little children ; but both diseases are supposed to be caused by the *nyoka*, the intestinal parasite, the worm or snake (nyoka means both) which is in every child and must always be combated because, if unchecked, it will pass from the bowels to the stomach ; it will come and beat the fontanella (1) and will finally penetrate the chest. Then the little one will turn up his eyes, be seized by
[278] convulsions and die. Happily there are some drugs which have a
751 wonderful effect on this dangerous guest ! One of my neighbours,
757 who was a convert in Rikatla, gave me their names. The first is a
834 very common Protacea (?) with large husks called the Dlanyoka, "the one which kills worms." Mixed with the roots of a Leguminacea called *Ñwamahlango* and with two other plants found near the sea, it forces the worm to keep quiet. These drugs are boiled and the decoction is carefully poured into a special little pot called *hlambetwana ya milombyana* which will be kept in the hut. Every morning the mother will warm the pot a little, pour some of its contents into a shell of sala and give the child a

757 (1) Tjuba-tjuba, the fontanelle, plays a great part in the diagnosis of children's
826 diseases and they often cover it with black wax. When the child hiccoughs, his mother or somebody else will blow on the fontanelle to prevent vomiting. This will "make his heart stand" (yindwa nhlilo).

856 mouthful to drink, then dip her finger into the medecine and let
731 two or three drops fall from it on the fontanella ; then she spits on
737 the lower part of the shell and presses it all along the sternum
854 of the baby as far as the navel. This is said to "nurse the child, to make him grow." Should he be sick, this treatment will be repeated many times a day. If he is well and goes about with his mother, she will pour the *milombyana* into the small calabash and give him a few sups from it from time to time.

The child must never drink ordinary water, but only the
853 *milombyana* decoction. It is a taboo. Should the mother travel
271 far from home and leave behind her the *milombyana* pot, she is
2/84 allowed to add some water to the calabash, but she must always leave a little of the decoction in the calabash before doing so. The mother herself is not allowed to drink the water of another country. She must only drink water from home and, if she is forced to travel, she must take a little powder from the reed each time she drinks, so that the child may become familiarised with that country (1). These laws must be kept during all the nursing period.

862 The child begins to eat *solid food* as soon as his teeth are cut, and when he is able to take it with his own hands. But some people do not like to give it to him too soon, as they say his stools become fetid. When later on he is able to go outside and to take care of himself, then he can eat any ordinary food.

853 If the mother dies during the nursing period, the little one is almost sure to follow her. The baby is fed with goat's or cow's milk, but the Natives do not know that they must add water to it ; sooner or later therefore the child dies of enteritis.

I have heard of some cases in which another woman has taken charge of the child, nursed him with her own milk and weaned him successfully ; her own child being older, she weaned him earlier than the usual time and nursed the other child in his

861 (1) A similar custom is observed in the case of moving from one country to another.
2/84 When a Rongo comes back from Kimberley having found a wife there, both being with them a little of the earth of the place they are leaving, and the woman must eat a little of it every day in her porridge in order to accustom herself to her new abode. This earth provides the transition between the two domiciles !

852 always use, he says: "Abušayi, akhwari! This is the child!
854 May he grow! May he become a man by means of this medicine
751 of mine! May his perspiration be good; may the impurity go away; may it go to Shiburi, to Nkhabelane! (1) May the child play well, be like his companions. This is not my first attempt! You have given me these drugs; may they protect him against disease so that nobody may say there is no power in them; etc." After this prayer the doctor takes the little child and goes back to the central place of the village. The mother stays and washes her own body with the decoction, praying also to her gods (but without the *tsu*, as this has been uttered by the "master of the drugs").

751 The treatment of the biyeketa is also called "hungulo dja
854 milombo," "the vapour bath for infantile diseases;" it is not a
177 curative, but a preventive; it aims at ascertaining if the child is
757 all right. If he has bad stools (a nga tlambi psinene) the mother will perhaps remember that she has forgotten to enclose him and she will call the doctor in at once. Should he fall sick, the biyeketa will not be performed again but the milombyana will be administered more frequently. However, it is of importance for the growth of the child. To neglect it is taboo! (2)

757, As for the cuts, sometimes they are followed by a second vapour
854 bath, as if the doctor wished to cause the medicine contained in the smoke to penetrate through them into the body, in which case he will only "close" them later on by introducing a healing powder into them. Children generally cry when they see the physician... They dread the pain of the cuts. When the mother goes to the doctor's village, she takes with her the wood, the mat and a pot of beer or a fowl in payment. The physician's charge for a biyeketa is sixpence to one shilling or a hen or a pot of beer.

(1) Viz. to the end of the world. These clans are far away to the north, outside the Ronga country.

(2) I hear that the converts generally have not abandoned the biyeketa, but they do not allow the doctor to perform the sacrificial act and to pray to the spirits. Sam Ngwetsa, the children's physician of Rikatla used to pray thus: "O Father of mercy! I pray thee! I do not pray the dead but thee only who art in heaven! Grant us to see this child in good health, standing firm, this little lamb!"

the names of all the specimens of the collection, for they are the great connoisseurs in this domain, their drugs being almost entirely obtained from the vegetable world. 815 756 824

A study of these names undoubtedly proves that Natives have the notion of the *genus*. This had been denied ; it seems that, when naming animals, Bantus distinguish correctly between species, but do not classify species into genera. In Botany it is not so. Under the same name they bring together forms which are sometimes widely different, but which belong to the same genus. Here are some of these names. 137 815 824

Tsuna means fern and applies to the Acrostichum tenuifolium, which climbs up the palm trees in the marsh, as well as to the few other kinds of Filicea found in the district of Lourenço Marques ; *goñhwa* is the name for Liliaceae, many kinds of which blossom in the spring : the Crinum Forbesii, with its big white and pink flower, and other kinds forming a bowl at the extremity of the stem ; there are five kinds of Commelina in my collection, which were called *Nkompfana*, both those with blue flowers, and the yellow ; a certain Papillionaceae genus, the Eriosema, is called *Rongole*. All the Strigae, a genus of the Scrophulariaceae family, are known under the name of *Shitshinyambita*, those which prevent the pot from boiling, as they are believed to have this effect when put into the fire. The Lobeliae are called *Shilawana*, etc.

The notion of the *genus* is so truly present that Thongas distinguish between various species in the same genus. So the tree called *Nkahlu*, an Apocynea, the Tabaernaemontana ventricosa, a valuable tree whose sap is used as a styptic, and whose roots are used to make a decoction for lung complaints, has a congener, found in the palm-tree marsh, the Voacanga Dregei, which is called *Nkahlutjobo*, nkahlu of the marsh. The two genera are very closely akin to each other. 815 137 824 757

Cognate species found in various regions are thus distinguished by the mention of their habitat, either the hill (ntlhaba), or the black earth (nyaka), or the forest (mutju). There is the *Muhlu wa ntlhaba*, of the hill, and *Muhlu-tjhobo*, of the marsh (Secamone sp. tree of the Asclepiadaceae family). This is even more striking

137 in the case of the Hibiscus genus. Its name is *Ntjhesi*; there
824 are the Ntjhesi of the hill (Hibiscus surratensis, etc.), the Ntjhensi
757 of the nyaka, another species found in Morakwen in the black
815 earth; and there is the *shitjhesinyana sha ntlhaba*, double diminutive of ntjhesi, the Sida cordifolia, a pretty little Malvacea, a near relative of the Hibiscus, very much used in treating children's complaints, a panacea for babies, as it cures their vomiting, headache, wounds and internal troubles!

137 I find the same correct connection established between two
824 Anonaceae shrubs, the Artabotrys brachypetala, called *Ntiti*, and
815 the Art. Monteiroae, called *Shintitane*, little Ntiti, of the same genus, but a shrub of a very different appearance.

However there is, of course, no anatomical study at the base of this classification: so their ideas of genus are not always, scientifically speaking, correct. They call any parasite *Phakama*, whatever may be its form, and have a superstitious fear of them, especially of the larger ones, growing on other trees, such as the nkanye and nkuhlu: "Phakama dja singita!" (1)

137 *Nkushe* means sea-weed, either the true algae, as Lagarosiphon muscoides, or other plants growing in water and belonging to totally different families, such as Urticularia stellaris, found in the same locality. *Nkaka*, or *Nkakana*, is the little Cucumber already described (p. 14), whilst *Nkaka wa tjhobo* is a Convolvulvus (Ipomea cairica). The *Shirimbyati*, one of the names most employed, designates first the Helichrysum parviflorum, a yellow Composita which covers the sandy dunes, and blossoms during the winter; but *Shirimbyati sha tjhune*, the male one, is Gnaphalium stenophyllum, and *Shirimbyati sha mutju*, the one of the forest, an Indigofera belonging to the Leguminosae family; these three plants have in common small hard leaves: hence the same name is given to them, although they are by no means related botanically speaking. So shirimbyati corresponds to our word heath, which is applied to many forms of evergreen undergrowth.

777 (1) "The parasite stem *singita*," i. e. is of bad omen. They do not say *yila*, is
824 taboo, though some rules apply to it similar to those concerning the tree struck by
753 lightning. One does not warm oneself at its fire; its wood is not employed to cook food, for fear lest men should suffer from hydrocele.

756 *Rihinga ra ndlela* : a root found on the path ; it helps you to go
789 on, though others may seek to hinder you in your progress.

278 *Shivunge* : that which attracts patients to the doctor.

824 *Nandjiyane* : that which makes his words agreeable, so that patients will like them ; (from ku nandjiya, to be agreeable).

Mvakazi, phuphuma ra matlhari : that which is used to make the slayers vomit the main drug of the *tintebe* (I. p. 479).

Mbendjula : that which strengthens all the other drugs.

These are the principal trees, or plants, used for the preparation of the powder. They must be *salted* by the addition of the *sea*, viz., of the medicines taken from the sea, which Mankhelu uses to cause rain to fall (p. 321).

The sexual character of the drugs is essential. The female are used principally for sprinkling the army and the assagais, the male for treating diseases. We find here again the law of opposition of sexes ; the military domain is the male domain par excellence : it must be treated by means of female drugs. On the contrary, when slaughtering a she-goat for the sacrifice, a little of the male drugs must be placed in its mouth and the weapon used to kill it must be smeared with the same, and vice-versa for the he-goat. "To act otherwise is taboo. All the ñanga do this" (p. 417).

755 There may be some true scientific elements in Thonga medical
757 practice. Experiments have been made in using certain roots to cure certain diseases, and tradition has handed down some prescriptions from father to son. Why should there not be effective curative properties in plants of their country just as in the Cinchona bark, or in Castor oil seeds? And why should they not have discovered them?
756 However the Native ñanga is by no means a scientific man, and the best,
789 the most renowned, are perhaps the least scientific. Those who treat only one complaint, and only know one drug, are perhaps those most resembling real physicians ; they act on the results of experiment. But the line between science and superstition is very soon crossed, and the medical art passes with the greatest ease into the domain of magic, all the more so as the difference between Science and Magic is not perceived. *Muri*, which means originally tree, plant, medicinal herb, is at the same time any means of producing any effect, natural or super-

752 until he has removed as much as he can of the tooth! Sometimes he breaks the jaw also ; the jaw may even pass through the cheek, causing a frightful wound! Once one of my colleagues had to perform the operation of the removal of the inferior maxillary bone, which was protruding as the result of the so-called extraction of a tooth by a ñanga! — *Snake bites* are treated with a powder made of a snake burnt to ashes, and some ingredients mixed with it, the whole being *salted* with common salt. Incisions are made in all the joints, wrist, ankle, elbow, and also in front of the neck, and the powder introduced into them. Children are inoculated as a means of prevention, so that, when bitten, the venom will not affect them ; the doctor has "preceded the snake" (yi yi rangerile).

757 *Medical cases* are generally treated more rationally than surgical
278 cases. Here are some of Kokolo's and Spoon's prescriptions.

To begin with the drug used when one "feels his head," in other words has a *headache*; this is the root of a shrub called *Nhlangula*, which seems to be a regular anaesthetic, and is used as follows. The fresh bark is scraped with a knife, and a certain quantity is folded up in a cloth and applied to the forehead for half a day. In case of *toothache* the same drug is used together with another called *Ndjenga* : they are boiled ; a little of the decoction thus obtained is held in the mouth, and the pain should disappear.

When it "bites inside," that is to say when one suffers from *colic* or looseness of the bowels, the remedy is *Munwangati*, *Shimbyati* and *Shidlanyoka* made up into a bunch. The doctor prepares this medicine with great care, cutting the roots into equal lengths and tying them together with a band of palm leaf. (See illustration, No. 2.)[1] He concocts his remedy with a larger quantity of the roots of the milder type, and only a few pieces of those which act more violently. The bunch called *shitsimbo* is then boiled to bring out the active principles of the drugs, and the decoction is taken by the patient, just as it is. Sometimes it is mixed with maize, when preparing the meal, and taken in that way. As the bunch, or packet, of these roots retains its medicinal properties for a long time, a single packet may be used over and over again during a whole week.

The prescription for *dysentery* is as follows : *Shimbyati*, *Shi-*

1. [p. 460 -- analyst]

757 *dlambangi, Likalahumba, Nkonono* (Terminalia sericea) and *Nsala*
278 (Strychnos spinosa). That for *bronchitis*, or for a cold in the head, is *Menyomamba, Mphesu* (a kind of mimosa, Albizzia versicolor) *Shongwe, Ntshatshe* (a papilionaceous shrub), *Gowane* (Zygia fastigiata, a large mimosa) and *Muhlandlopfu*. The last is a very
[753] powerful drug; the last but one less so. For *hydrocele* the following are used: *Lihlehlwa, Ntshatshe, Nkonono, Mamuntana*.

Thonga Pharmacopoeia.

1. Box made of maize bracts, containing medicine. 2. Shimimbo. 3. Skin of a male, containing powdered drugs. 4. Pill (Mhala). 5. Bracelet of *tjukunjana*. 6. *Timfwa*, amulets. 7. *Sungi* root tied round the ankle.

The Natives regard this complaint as contagious, and as being transmitted by matrimonial relations.

I obtained two *purgatives* from my Native doctors. The first is *an aloe*, or cactus, a species of which grows plentifully on the sand dunes. The sap is squeezed on to grains of millet or sorghum, which are kept in neatly constructed boxes of maize leaves; these are made by plucking an ear of maize, breaking off the cob and leaving the large bracts which enclose it and which adhere to

the stalk at its base. This is a very primitive receptacle, and easily procurable (No. 1). The medicine is thus kept until required for use, when it is ground to a powder and taken in water. The second of these purgatives is the bark of a tree growing in the Nkomati valley in the Khosen country. This is the one, already alluded to, which was appropriated by one of our Christians, named Eliashib, who administered it to the Rikatla folk in such generous doses that it generally did more harm than good.

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278

Three or four other roots form part of the packet for children ; these are called, as previously explained (I. p. 48), by the general term milombyana, medicines to promote the growth of newly-born infants. If an intestinal parasite be expelled by *dlanyoka*, it is burnt to cinders and reduced to a powder ; an incision is made in the belly and loins of the child, into which the powder is rubbed. This is a kind of inoculation, a further application of the principle "like cures like."

The packet used for treating *haematuria* contains six drugs : *Humbutlo, Ntshopfa, Shintitana* (an Apocynea shrub related to the Artabotrys, p. 330), *Likalahumba, Ndjindjila* and *Shimbyati*. According to doctor's directions these are boiled in a pot with beans ; after a while the packet is taken out. The patient must then transfix one bean with a thorn and throw it over his left shoulder ; he pierces a second in the same way and throws it over his right shoulder, then a third, which he swallows. The first two beans are used to "try the earth," that is to say, to propitiate the several evil influences existing in the soil, which have probably been the cause of the illness. Such is the first part of the treatment. The second part consists in pounding large white tubers (something like elongated potatoes) in a mortar. The paste thus obtained is squeezed into a jar, and the patient must take this juice as well as the beans, seasoned as aforesaid! Every evening he must drink a cup of the bitter mixture (the packet broth), and also a cup of the sweet medicine made from the tubers. If, after this, the haematuria does not stop, the patient will be given a *phungulo*, a turkish bath, which I shall describe later on. The foregoing is Spoon's method of treatment. — Dr. Kokolo had another cure for the same complaint ; he

757 used *Shirole, Nembe-nembe, Likumba-kumba* and *Nhlanhlana,*
278 which he recommended to be taken in the usual way as a tisane, cutting them up in small pieces in a pot. They are roasted on a brazier and the smoke inhaled through a hollow reed ; the carbonised pieces are ground to a powder which is mixed with ordinary food. A curious fact to be noted with regard to this complaint is that the patient's wife, if he be married, has to undergo the same treatment. — *Gonorrhea* is treated with *Shilangamahlo, Hlahlana, Nembe-nembe* (Cassia petersiana) and *Ntinti* (Artabotrys Monteiroi): If necessary *Shimbyati* is added as an adjuvant. It is with the leaves of this latter plant that Kokolo made the huge pill which he presented to me (No. 4).

For the last named illness, as for haematuria, if internal treatment does not suffice, a more efficacious method "for outward application only," is resorted to. A certain number of roots will be burned and pulverised, the black powder thus obtained being mixed with fat taken from the paunch of an ox. This is rolled up into a ball and placed on red-hot embers, and the patient must expose the part affected to the heat thrown out, and to the smoke thus engendered.

Fever is not considered very dangerous by the Thongas, and strange to say, has no special name. It is called "to feel one's head", or "to have a hot body". Natives are so accustomed to it, and its attacks are generally so mild, that they do not take much heed of it. They lie on the ground, exposed to the burning sun, wrapped in a blanket, and perspire to their heart's content. "Take the root of *Mbalatangati*, cook it in a little pot and drink it with a spoon ; you will have a good sleep," says Mankhelu.

Consumption (lifuba) is treated as follows by Mankhelu. Part of the lungs of a crocodile, and of a sheep, is mixed with fat taken from a gnu and a root of the *Khawa* tree. All the ingredients are burnt in a broken pot and the patient must inhale the smoke through a reed ; this will dry up his chest, because the fat of the gnu is always dry and cannot melt!

757 *Leprosy*, "the vanquisher of physicians," is treated by some specialists. There was one near Rikatla, but he absolutely

refused to communicate his secret. He belonged to the Chopi 757
tribe. The Ba-Pedi forbid sexual relations to lepers.

A nursing woman who has no milk must take a certain 853
Euphorbiacea shrub called *nete*, containing a milky juice, crush it in the mortar, cook it in water and drink it. When a cow refuses to feed her calf Natives smear the calf with the *ribvumbara* herb, which has a pleasant odour. The cow smells this, and allows the calf to suck.

The treatment of *sterility* has already been described (I. p. 190) 842
Mankhelu tried to cure it by digging a root of *Nembe-nembe* 278
and one of *Nhlangowume* ; he cooked both together, and ordered the woman to eat them during a period of six days, mixing them with her food. This drug was considered as "closing her" (pfala), so that she would no longer have her "tihweti, "and thus be enabled to conceive. In the meantime, she had to undergo the horola or hondlola rite, which I shall describe presently.

Small-pox, nyedzane, was on several occasions introduced by the 164
Whites, or by the Zulu armies on their return from their Northern raids. There have been at least five or six epidemics in the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques during the last fifty years.

I had the opportunity of witnessing the last in 1918 in Rikatla and 751
thus obtained first-hand information on the way Natives treat this disease and on their strange ideas concerning it. I published a detailed account of these in the S. A. *Journal of Science*, July 1919, and will give here a description of the most important of these *customs connected with small-pox amongst the Ba-Ronga*. When small-pox has invaded the country and reached the borders of the territory of a clan, the headmen assemble at the chief's residence and decide to proceed to the general inoculation of the population. This is a remedy which they have long been accustomed to use. They have noticed that the disease is milder when produced by inoculation with the virus than when it *hahela*, i. e. flies to the person. (There is some truth in this assertion ; the protection afforded however is not very effective, and severe and even fatal cases often follow the inoculation. It does not always secure immunity from a second attack.) The virus is provided by the people of a neighbouring clan who have already been attacked by

128 then fixed across the hole in such a way that he will be unable to
758 withdraw it. When he wishes to walk he is obliged to drag along the heavy log. He very soon loses his strength, being ill-fed, and covered with vermin, and dies in a terrible condition.

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757 In our study of these various treatments, we have met with about twenty different prescriptions of Native physicians, containing, in all, some 40 to 50 different drugs, to be made use of in various ways : outward application, inhalation, fumigation, infusion, decoction, inoculation, manducation of carbonised or pulverised drugs, etc. We are then entitled to assert that, up to a certain point, the Blacks do possess an *ars medica*. To complete our review of medical matters, I must further mention a few curious practices of the Thonga doctors, which forcibly remind us of those to which our own practitioners sometimes have recourse.

Let us begin with *cupping*. A full account of this will be found in the story of the "Gambadeur de la Plaine" (*Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, page 357) where a young girl resuscitates a buffalo by performing this operation. She proceeds as follows. Water is boiled and in it is placed the packet of roots required ; a spot in the temporal region is carefully washed, and a few incisions are made with a razor (likari). A particular horn (nhluku ya ku lumeka), which is open at both ends, is placed over the incisions and the operator, putting his mouth to the horn, draws in his breath, causing the blood to flow freely. The wound is then exposed to the vapour emanating from the boiling *shitsimbo* packet, and smeared with a particular ointment, kept in a calabash.

[793] The next in order of the practices which we are noticing, is the *phungulo* (Dj.), or *hungulo* (Ro.), a kind of *Turkish or vapour bath*, which is administered in certain complaints and also after the funeral rites, in order to remove the contamination of death (I. p. 145). A circular enclosure is made, with a screen of matting, in the middle of which the patient is placed, and, close by him,

on live embers, a pot containing leaves which are supposed to 757
possess medicinal properties. A second mat is then spread over the top of the enclosure, thus shutting the patient up in a sort of small hut. The smoke from the live embers makes him cough terribly. The hot vapour from the pot induces profuse perspiration from every pore, and the victim of this treatment is left for a very considerable time in this intensely uncomfortable condition! When, at length, the remedy is supposed to have had sufficient time to act efficaciously, the mats are removed. The patient suddenly finds himself in the open air, absolutely dripping with perspiration. I saw a man remain in this condition, in the chill of the evening, apparently risking inflamation of the lungs. The doctor rubs his cheeks, or some other parts of his body, with either a white or a black powder. Such is the Thonga Turkish bath, which is frequently referred to in their folklore. — The [753]
phungulo is administered in most cases where ritual defilement is feared, or is believed to have caused the disease. The kind of poisoning caused by the impurities connected with death, menses, lochia, etc., manifests itself by swelling of the joints, of the hands and feet, pains in the bones, etc. This vapour bath is also resorted [842]
to in order to cure married people who do not succeed in having children. The physician makes for them a shitsimbo packet of the following roots : *Nhlangawume, Mpoñwana, Ritiyi* ; he cooks this in the pot inside the mat enclosure ; and into the fire, under the pot, he puts part of the flesh of the goat which has been sacrificed for the occasion, in particular the uterus. This flesh has been previously smeared with drugs. So, by means either of the vapour, or of the smoke, the medicine enters the patients. "Ba wupfa," — "they ripen" or "are cooked." When the mat is removed, a pot full of cold water is poured over them and extinguishes the phungulo which has "cooked them." They will have to take home the meat, and cook it in their hut together with the packet of roots. Another packet is put into the pot in which they keep their beer.

A third practice, quite as old as the foregoing, is the *tlhema* or *cautery*. This may be done with a packet of roots, which are heated and applied to the part affected. But, as a general rule,

757 cautery is done *with the foot*. This is undoubtedly a curious proceeding! Kokolo gave me a detailed description of it. A hoe is made red-hot ; an obliging individual lends his foot, a foot which has rarely been encased in a shoe and possesses a sole with a skin like leather! This natural sole is rubbed with the leaves of a plant called *Shungwe*, which has been chewed and mixed in the palm of the hand with saliva and grease. For the same purpose Mankhelu employed a fat containing among other ingredients, the following drugs : *Hlampfura* and *Ñwambula-wamitwa*. Then the obliging operator places his foot on the red-hot hoe and, with a quick movement, plants it on the spot to be cauterised, the patient being hardly able to bear the contact. As for the owner of the foot, the horny sole is apparently so thick that he feels no pain at all. This is the remedy for the *shitjebe blood*, probably pleurisy.

755 783 The last practice to be noticed, the one by which the doctor gives his patient a clean bill of health, is the *hondlola* or *hondla* (Ro.) or *horola* (Dj.) ; it is a ceremony of purification, performed *after the cure is effected*, to remove the defilement (nsila) of disease. "In this way," says Mankhelu, "we disperse (hulurisa) the blood which has made the patient ill, so that it cannot return to him violently." The hondla is obligatory after all serious diseases and after weaning. I have described how it is performed in this latter case (I. p. 59). According to Mankhelu, a sacrifice is always made in connection with the hondlola. In the case of adults, a goat is slaughtered. The doctor having carefully taken a piece of each limb of the goat, prays "by means of them" to his gods, saying :

> You so and so! This is my ox which I have slaughtered... Give me strength (ndji thwasane matimba) that I may cure this man. I have no other drugs! I do not add any others to those which you gave me. So give me strength ; accept me with both hands, that I may be able to cure.

The psanyi of the goat is then mixed with various drugs, especially the *Shireti* and the powder of the calabashes. The patient, sitting on a mat, rubs his whole body (tihorola) vigorously with this psanyi; all the particles (timhore, or timhorola, or

found inside its heart. All these things are burnt in a broken pot, 828
and made into a medicinal powder. The patient is brought to the 755
broken pot; a cut is made in his head, so that it bleeds abundantly until the pot is filled with blood; the blood boils in the pot, it solidifies and is burnt. The ñanga takes it and buries it in an ant's nest, according to the timula rite described below. The wound of the patient is filled with the medicine; he eats the meat, he sleeps: — "If you have been equal to the occasion, he will be cured; you have given him lots of sleep. — You have killed the *rihuhe*" (Mankhelu). The *wutleka* disease means both the *convulsions* of little children generally explained by the agency of Heaven, called Tilo (p. 431), and epilepsy. The great remedy for the latter disease, which greatly terrifies the Natives, is provided by monkeys and baboons. Pieces of their skin and their excrement are roasted in a broken pot. Some pieces of lion's skin are added; when the powder is prepared, the limbs of the patient are smeared with it; his body is also sprinkled with a decoction made of these drugs, or an ointment is prepared from them and applied to the head, the fingers, and all the limbs, which are then pulled with some force (olola). The patient is laid down and leaves of the hlampfura tree (Kigelia pinnata) are put on his head: — "He sleeps, he passes water, he evacuates stools, he is cured!" But to confirm the healing, a very curious ceremony is performed which reminds one of the rite of the scapegoat, so often met with amongst primitives. The doctor makes the image of a monkey (habu) with a kind of grass called *ñuhulane*; this image is smeared with the drugs just described, and fastened to a long rope; a little boy must then drag the dummy out of the village, and all his comrades hit him with sticks, saying: "Go away! Go away!" He runs until he reaches a tree far away in the bush. All the boys hang the figure to it, and it remains there swinging in the wind. The disease has been expelled.

When folly is accompanied by great excitement, and there is 828
danger of the people of the village being mishandled by the sufferer, 758
he is prevented from doing harm by means of fetters. These consist of a log of wood pierced through by a lozenge-shaped hole into which the foot of the madman is introduced; a wooden bolt is

128 then fixed across the hole in such a way that he will be unable to
758 withdraw it. When he wishes to walk he is obliged to drag along the heavy log. He very soon loses his strength, being ill-fed, and covered with vermin, and dies in a terrible condition.

*

* *

757 In our study of these various treatments, we have met with about twenty different prescriptions of Native physicians, containing, in all, some 40 to 50 different drugs, to be made use of in various ways : outward application, inhalation, fumigation, infusion, decoction, inoculation, manducation of carbonised or pulverised drugs, etc. We are then entitled to assert that, up to a certain point, the Blacks do possess an *ars medica*. To complete our review of medical matters, I must further mention a few curious practices of the Thonga doctors, which forcibly remind us of those to which our own practitioners sometimes have recourse.

Let us begin with *cupping*. A full account of this will be found in the story of the "Gambadeur de la Plaine" (*Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, page 357) where a young girl resuscitates a buffalo by performing this operation. She proceeds as follows. Water is boiled and in it is placed the packet of roots required ; a spot in the temporal region is carefully washed, and a few incisions are made with a razor (likari). A particular horn (nhluku ya ku lumeka), which is open at both ends, is placed over the incisions and the operator, putting his mouth to the horn, draws in his breath, causing the blood to flow freely. The wound is then exposed to the vapour emanating from the boiling *shitsimbo* packet, and smeared with a particular ointment, kept in a calabash.

[793] The next in order of the practices which we are noticing, is the *phungulo* (Dj.), or *hungulo* (Ro.), a kind of *Turkish or vapour bath*, which is administered in certain complaints and also after the funeral rites, in order to remove the contamination of death (I. p. 145). A circular enclosure is made, with a screen of matting, in the middle of which the patient is placed, and, close by him,

753 a state of physiological impurity. Hence the law ordering
164 people affected with any of these kinds of makhumo to eat with
751 spoons ; they thus protect themselves against the poison which might cause them to become consumptive. A curious feature in the conception of *contagion* is the following. When Sokis died (I. p. 139) I heard some of those present saying to his sister, who was carrying a child on her shoulders : "Do not cry! If you cry the disease will jump to your baby!" There were two reasons for this warning ; to cry in the presence of misfortune increases
753 the danger tenfold (compare p. 326) ; moreover the contagion of
768 disease is especially to be feared in connection with the relatives of the sick or dead person. Hence the strange custom illustrated on plate p. 26 : when a man dies of consumption his relatives are absolutely forbidden to eat any of the food he may have left. The "luma milomo" ceremony (I. p. 146) is of no use in this case. In former times all his mealies were burnt. Nowadays, however, it is allowable for people outside his family to buy and consume his provision. The large storehouse, illustrated on p. 26, contained the mealies harvested in Sokis' fields. These were sold to strangers, whilst relatives bought other mealies which were stored in the small hut for the use of his widow and children (p. 111). The same reason no doubt explains why the widow of a consumptive must *lahla khombo* with strangers, and not with men of the village (I. p. 206).

758 This peculiar idea of contagion also gives rise to the rules
766 for *burying lepers*. Their relatives must not have anything to do with the burial (I. p. 508). Relatives-in-law can perform
768 this painful duty, or possibly the family of the deceased leper will ask a friend to help them in their distress. "Have you prepared something as a reward for me?" he asks, and if this is the case he digs a grave just outside the wall of the hut where the patient died, removes the reeds of the wall, and pulls the corpse down into the hole without any funeral ceremony. The relatives are assembled far away on the square, and do not even dare to look on at the burial. All the implements are broken in the depths of the forest, at a great distance, for fear that a relative might touch one of them and die. Or they are left in the hut, and the whole village is at once removed.

village is at once removed. Leprosy is called *nhlulabadahi*, the disease which is stronger than the doctors. It is very much dreaded; lepers are not, however, segregated; they live in the village with other people and even attend beer-parties, but they bring their own mugs, whilst every other guest receives a drinking utensil from the master of the village. 758

Another disease which is believed to be contagious is "possession" by the *Bandjao spirits*. Should you pick up on the road some object which belonged to one of the possessed, his madness will jump to you (tlulela). — Epilepsy is also dreaded on that account. A nursing woman must not see any one suffering from an attack of this disease, or the child which is on her shoulders will become epileptic. 753 828

Speaking of the conception of disease, I must remind the reader of the fact that *sexual relations* between the inhabitants of the village are believed to aggravate the condition of the patient dwelling in it (I. p. 133, II. p. 358), and are consequently forbidden during epidemics and in any case of serious illness. Hence the precautions which convalescents must take of wearing the *sungi*, as we have just seen. 753 839

4) The special rites which mark the end of an illness throw much light on the Thonga conception of disease. A serious illness constitutes a marginal period either for the individual concerned, or, in the case of an epidemic, for the community, and the hondlola rite is the method by which the patient is reintegrated into society; it clearly has the character of a passage rite. The rubbing with psanyi, the removal of the defilement of disease, the throwing away of the "timbhorola," the cutting of nails and hair, all these are rites of separation from the period of disease, whilst the feast of the hondlola day, and the resuming of sexual relations (1) are rites of reintegration. In the disease of possession, as we shall see it is the reintegration into the society of spirit-possessed persons and amounts to an initiation. 753 783 184 755

(1) We often hear of a Christian woman, who has gone to a heathen medicine-man for treatment, having sexual intercourse with him. We generally attribute this fact to immorality alone, but it was probably a part of the treatment, at the precise moment when sexual taboos were removed.

all the people clapping their hands (wombela), to encourage him, as an accompaniment. — The *horns and hoofs* will be carefully kept, and placed on the roof of the hut, just over the door (shiranwin) by which the afflicted one enters, evidently to protect the abode from malign influences. — The *astragalus* will be tied, together with the strips, on the sternum of the patient. — The *bones* of the goat are the objects of special care. They must not be broken to eat the marrow, but burnt in the shade of a large tree, where it is "cool." So the possessing spirit will also be cool (titimela) and not too wild. Sometimes they are preserved in a special pot, and burnt on the day of the hondlola. 755

The period of convalescence[1] then begins. It lasts one year, and is a distinct marginal period, as clearly appears from the fact that sexual relations are absolutely forbidden during that phase, and until the hondlola. It is also, more or less, a period of apprenticeship, as the possessed will become an exorcist himself, if his magical powers become sufficiently developed. He accompanies the gobela everywhere, assists him in his cures, and so learns the art of exorcism. The apprentice will also have to practise the rites of protection, which I shall shortly describe, and which are obligatory during the whole period of convalescence, and even later. 758 834 756

4) The final purification of the hondlola and investing with amulets (timfisa).

As we saw, the hondlola, the removal of defilement of disease, is necessary at the close of any illness. So, when a possessed person is regarded as healed, he will have to pass through this rite. It can however only be carried out on the one condition that the possessed husband, or wife, has remained in a state of continence during the period of convalescence. In order to know if they have obeyed this law, a fowl will be placed on the head of the patient. If he, or she, has been continent according to order, the bird will remain quiet; it will not fly away, even should someone approach and pass close by. If it flies off making a great noise, the angry exorcist will also take his leave, saying: 755 758 787

1 [For the individual whose spirit was possessed — Analyst]

755 "You have sinned and, in so doing, have marred the efficacy of all
●758 my medicines (mi honile miri)." On the other hand, if the rule
787 has been properly observed, the bird will remain quite still, when it will be stabbed with a knife and its blood will be used in connection with the hondlola friction. Afterwards the fowl will be plucked and eaten by the village folk, but neither the patient, nor his spouse, nor the exorcist-in-chief will be allowed to partake of it. Thenceforth the husband and wife are permitted to live together as in the past.

755 The hondlola rites seem particularly complicated in cases of possession. Their sequence was as follows in that of Mboza. 1) He had to pay £ 1 to Ñwatshulu, as a reward for his medical attendance. He gave him the money, together with a pot of beer. 2) Then the doctor took his *gobo* calabash, stirred the medicine in order to make it froth abundantly, invoking his gods all the time, and saying : "Awake, you who spit on the road, you, Zulus, who have ears capable of hearing, etc... 3) Then he shouted : "Mboza! Eat!" The exorcised had to kneel down and swallow the froth. 4) The exorcist took mafureira fat, mixed it in his hand with medicinal powder, smeared and rubbed the body of the convalescent, from the knees to the feet, the arms, the chest, the belly, and the head. 5) He cut the nails of the hands and feet with a knife, and also a little of the hair on the forehead, and put the whole into the timfisa bags (p. 471) together with medicinal powder. 6) Then followed the ordinary hondlola friction. A pellet (shibuwu) had been prepared by crushing roots of the *bamhuntane* and *shilawana* trees in a mortar, and a hen had been killed. Mboza sat on a mat and the doctor rubbed his whole body with the pellet. He gathered the *timhora*, the particles fallen on the mat, mixed them with the blood of the hen, and again rubbed the patient. 7) Fresh timhora fell on the mat. They were gathered up a second time. Some were put into the amulet bags, the remainder were made into a ball, which was not thrown away as in ordinary diseases, but carefully placed at the back of the hut, where the forked branch was to be planted.

●●● Let us remember that, in the case of the exorcised, the hondlola

858 In time of war, old people die in great numbers. During moments of panic, they are hidden in the wood, in the palm-tree swamps, while all the able-bodied population run away. They are killed by the enemy, who spares no one (it is the law of war), or they die in their hiding-places of misery and hunger!

As may be seen, the eve of life is very sad for the poor Thonga. There are however children who, to the end, show much devotion to their parents. The most to be pitied are those who fall to the charge of remote nephews or cousins. They can only repeat in a broken voice the sad refrain : " Ba hi shanisa! " — " They treat us very badly! "

G. DEATH

1. *The last days.*

763 Manyibane, the headman of a big village near Rikatla, is
313 dangerously ill. The men of his kraal, his friends, have come
834 to inquire about the illness (kamba shinyonga) and have learned
761 that it is serious. They issue this order to all the inhabitants : " Tlulan psilawen! " — " Keep each of you in his sleeping place, (viz. the men to the right of the hut, the women to the left) and have no more relations. It is taboo! The man would die! " Should visitors come, they are not allowed to enter the village. They must have kept " pure " for two days at least. Two sticks are planted on either side of the door of the hut, and a third is put over them so as to close the entrance. " It is the way black people have of making their proclamation, " says Mooza. " Everybody will know that a dying man is there and nobody will come in. " Should another man of the village have had relations with the same woman as the patient, he is doubly prohibited from seeing him, because the patient would break out into perspiration and die immediately. This is the great law of *matlulana*, as we shall see.

754 Of course the *ñanga* (doctor) has been called already. He

1: Junod M-5 (1895-190911927 Thonga

763 Some ethnographers have adopted the "embryonic explanation" to account for this custom, which is found all through primitive humanity, from the Mousterian age down to the first inhabitants of Egypt, and amongst a great many uncivilised tribes all over the earth (1). They say: "Primitive man placed the corpse in the attitude of the child before birth because he believed that death is but a new birth, the beginning of a new life..." I asked Viguet if he thought this to be the true original [843] explanation. He told me he did not know ; he would not deny it. But there is one fact which prevents its acceptance ; the Thongas have never done any dissection, and are ignorant of the position of the foetus in the womb. So probably are all primitive peoples. This kind of knowledge came much later in the evolution of mankind. The intention of this rite is more probably to place a dying man in the sitting position which a Thonga generally adopts when in his hut, as the grave is *but a hut in the earth* and he is meant to continue his life in it exactly as before. All the other burial rites confirm this explanation, as we shall see.

Manyibane is dead... In some districts they see that he does not die with *closed hands*. It is taboo, because then the children of the dead will quarrel (Viguet). They close his eyes and take away all his clothes. In the Mpfumo clan, they *wash the body*. Afterwards they cover him with an old rug. No one cries. Lamentations are absolutely prohibited before the burial is over ; it is taboo. It would " break the back " of the men who have to perform the funeral rites.

764 Should there be *strangers* in the village when the death takes
761 place, they will run away quickly to avoid defilement ; otherwise
783 they would have to take part in all the purifying ceremonies of the
372 following days.

Without delay, the *fire* which was burning in the funeral hut is removed and carried out into the square. It must be carefully kept alight. This is a taboo. Should there be rain, it must be protected. All the inhabitants must use this fire during the next five days. It will be put out by the doctor, with sand or water, on the day of the dispersion of the mourners. He will then

(1) See my paper in *Anthropos* Sept. 1910 : " Two burials at twenty thousand years distance."

764 light a new one, and everyone will take from it embers to kindle
761 his own fire in the different huts. It is one of the conditions of the purification of the village.

783 The same day young people are sent to all the relatives in
262 the neighbourhood to announce the death. Even the relations who are absent far away, in Johannesburg, must be informed; this is done in the following way. Someone takes a handful of grass, lights it and, when it is on fire, throws it in the direction of the absent one, saying: "Your brother, here, is dead. Do not fear. May your enemies (viz. your white employers) have consideration and love for you, that you may find sleep and health."

II. *The grave.*

764 The men of the village then go out to dig the grave. They choose a place behind the hut of the deceased or somewhere further off in the little forest which generally surrounds the village; or in the *ntimu*, the sacred wood, if he were one of the guardians of the forest (1), one belonging to the elder branch of the family.

First of all the diggers see that a tree is near the grave on which to hang some of the belongings of the deceased (those which will be kept but will have to be purified); they dig a hole of about six feet in length, four in width, and two and half or three deep. This first hole can be dug with ordinary hoes. Then, at the side of it, they excavate a second hole, more or less circular in form, using for this a light wooden board, generally the rim of an old basket. The sides of the hole are well smoothed by means of this instrument. In the Northern clans they sometimes smear it with mud taken from the river; they also put a reed beside the corpse, and grass, which grew in water, is spread at the bottom of the grave (2). So the grave, is in a way, double. It presents

(1) In the Southern clans the grave of the husband or the wife is dug in front of the hut in which they were living (as this hut is to be abandoned); in the case of a child, he will be buried at the side of the hut (as, in this case, the hut will not be destroyed.) The grave is surrounded by a fence made of sticks and plastered with clay. Thus people will remember where the corpse has been buried.

(2) Compare this custom with the rite of burying little children and twins in wet soil.

764 two levels, the higher, the large hole, gives access to the smaller,
775 the circular ovoid grave. The first is called *the square* (hubo) of the deceased, the second is *his hut* (yindlu or shinyatu). He will dwell in the hut, but come out from it and sit in his square underground, just as he did when living in his village (1). (Elias.)

764 When the grave has been duly dug, the diggers call the relatives
787 to inspect their work, and show them that their deceased relation has been well cared for. The lower grave, being excavated in the wall of the higher, forms a kind of vault. It seems as if it were considered necessary that the earth which will protect the head should not be disturbed. When all the mourners have come at the call of the diggers, it sometimes happens that the vault of the grave falls in. This is a very bad sign. The cause of the accident is this ; either the person who has bewitched the deceased is present or, amongst the assistants, there is one who has been guilty of " matlulana " against him (2)! The grave is a *mondjo*, a magical means of divination.

III. *The burial.*

764 The diggers may be four in number, but they are generally
761 only two ; the master of the mourning (nwinyi wa nkosi), who is the brother next to the deceased, and another younger, near relative, for instance a son. Both must be married, because married people alone can get rid of the defilement of death by the " lahla khombo, " which we shall explain later. Should an unmarried son be asked to undertake the work of burial, he

(1) In some clans of the North there is only one hole and no excavation at the side. But what I have described here is the rule amongst the Ba-Ronga, except where civilisation has already modified the old custom.

(2) On this point Mboza and Elias did not agree. Mboza said that the falling in of the grave can only be caused by the presence of the wizard who killed the deceased. Elias asserts that the same accident happens if one of those present has *tjemakonya* the deceased, viz. crossed his way, that is to say has had sexual relations with the same woman as the deceased. (This is matlulana). As the hut of the deceased knew this man, so his new hut in the ground recognises and reveals him !

764 would answer : " How can you propose such a thing to me ? Am I not immature (mbisi, properly raw) ? I am not yet ripe! Is defilement of death not there ? With whom could I wash it away ? " (Viguet). The first digger is also called " the one of the head, " the second, " the one of the feet, " because one of them will carry the corpse by the head, the other by the feet. Women may also bury a corpse upon occasion.

764 So the grave-diggers go back to the hut and begin to wrap the corpse in his rugs and in his mat (ku tjimba). They stitch the mat twice (to prevent it from slipping ?) (Viguet). They generally wait till sunset to perform the burial. When the time has come, they make a hole in the wall of the hut on the right side, as the husband dwells in the right half of the house, the wife in the left half. The corpse must not be carried out of the hut by the door, but by that artificial opening (1). So he leaves the hut head foremost (2). They sometimes stop up their noses with the leaves of a bush called ngupfana, which has a strong scent, in order not to perceive the smell of death (moya wa lifu). They march slowly, without a word, men and women following them silently. The " one of the head " goes down to the first level, the one of the feet follows him. They have already put in the 764 778 place for the head a piece of wood, a piece of a branch of *nkanye*, 769 their sacred tree, one foot long and three inches broad, to be used as a pillow. At the bottom, on the soil, they stretch some old rugs. They lay the corpse down (3) on its left side, the head on the pillow. The grave has been dug in such a way that its long axis is directed towards that cardinal point whence the ancestors came, so that the deceased, having his head slightly

(1) In the Hlabi clans, the corpse is carried through the door, but the plaster on both sides of the door (marimba) is beaten and falls down. It will be repaired later on. In the Northern clans the hut of the deceased is not so strongly tabooed as amongst the Ba-Ronga. When it has been purified it will be used again.

(2) Comparative Ethnography : In Switzerland it is a common saying that a corpse must leave the house feet foremost.

764 (3) The Ba-Ngoni place their dead in the grave in the sitting position, a knife in 513 their hands, as they are a race of murderers! (Viguet). It may be that the reclining position given to the corpse by the Ba-Ronga, is the result of an evolution. At any rate, this is not the true sleeping position, as Natives generally do not bend their limbs when sleeping.

764 we may remain in peace. He did not leave us in anger. Let us mourn him gently, in peace. Let us help each other to mourn
769 him well, even our parents-in-law from amongst whom he has taken his wife." It may be that he forgets to say something which ought to be said ; then some of his hearers remind him quietly of the omission and he adds the words to his prayer.

764 *The wailing* (ku djila nkosi). As soon as he has finished praying, those present commence crying ; the wailing begins. The women get to their feet and shout loudly, throwing themselves on the ground. The wife of the deceased cries more than any one else : "I remain alone in the lonely plain (libalen). Where have you gone? You have left me." The wailing generally starts on a very high note and finishes a little lower, expressing the pain of the heart in a touching, penetrating manner. Here is one of these sentences, which can hardly be called a song. I heard it in 1893 at the burial of a young woman who was found drowned in the lake of Rikatla.

O my mother ! O my mother ! You have left me, where have you gone ? ! (1)

The parents-in-law lament over their daughter, the new widow. Everyone then begins to lament over his own relations who have recently died. The brothers weep together without shouting. They say : "You have gone first. We shall soon follow you, because there is attraction in death."

It is during the mourning that pots, handles of assagais, etc. are broken over the grave.

761 Let us stop a little while at this point.

783 We have seen enough already to observe that, for the Thongas, death (lifu) is not only a sad event, a great cause of pain on account of the
765 bereavement, but a dreadful contaminating power which puts all objects and people in the neighbourhood of the deceased, all his relatives, even those dwelling far away, working in Johannesburg for instance, into a state of uncleanness. This uncleanness is very dangerous indeed. It kills, if not properly treated. All are not affected in the same way. There are concentric circles round the deceased : the widows are the

(1) See for the notes of this song Part V. Ch. III. B.

765 inner circle and will undergo a very rigorous purification ; the grave
783 diggers come next ; then the inhabitants of the bereaved village, the
761 relations residing in other villages, even the relatives of the wives of the
834 deceased. All these being unclean are placed beyond the pale of
839 society : "Muti wu tjumile," "the village is dark," is the technical expression. This marginal period lasts longer for those who are most affected ; one year and more for the widows, one month for the village, five or six days only for the mourners from outside. But there are many taboos in connexion with this period. Sexual relations are severely prohibited amongst married people, but the *gangisa* is not so strongly objected to, at any rate in some districts. We shall also meet with the aggregation rites by which re-entry into the ordinary mode of life is secured. The funeral rites may last for one year and are very complex. There are three great moments in the sequence of these rites : 1) *The Great Mourning* which lasts a few days, just after the burial, generally only five days. Here the purification is essentially medical and aims at cleansing the persons and the objects which were directly in contact with the deceased. 2) *The sexual rites* which tend to purify the collective life of the village by the removal of its defilement. 3) *The family rites*, consisting in gatherings of all the relatives, and accompanied by religious ceremonies. These seem to aim at restoring the life of the family, viz. of the social group, which has been diminished by the death of one of its members.

768 This general sequence is found in all the clans. But the rites themselves differ greatly ; I shall try to depict these differences clearly. My information is more complete as regards the Ronga clans, but I owe to Viguet some entirely new and very interesting material regarding the Hlabi rites.

IV. *The Great Mourning of the first five days.*

1) The Great Mourning amongst the Ba-Ronga.

764 Just after the burial, all the inhabitants of the village go to
783 the lake or the river to bathe. The grave-diggers nibble a
[824] *ndjao*, the root of a juncus which has magical power. Special rites will then be performed for the widows. We shall describe

769 The bones of the dead are never disinterred. It is a taboo ; grave is respected and women do not dare to till the ground over it. Often one comes across a small thick bush in the midst of mealie gardens, and one sees broken pots under the branches. It is an old grave. Later on, when no one remembers who has been buried there, agriculture regains its sway. If a bush fire has reached the sacred wood and damaged it, the person who lit it must atone by sacrificing a fowl in order to "quench" (timula) it.

REMARKS ABOUT DEATH AND BURIAL

761 These very complicated funeral rites of the Thongas clearly show the existence of three great intuitions in their minds :

783 1) Man is immortal and becomes a god through death.

775 2) There is extreme danger attached to the defilement which accompanies death. This uncleanness contaminates the community and can only be removed by collective purification.

3) The social group, being diminished by death, must be reinforced by special means (family gatherings, choice of a successor, etc.). Hence three categories of rites : *religious*, *purificatory* and *social*.

On the other hand some of the rites we have described present unmistakably the character of *passage rites*, because death also means a passage : for the deceased, passage from the world of the living to the world of the dead ; for his relations, passage from one phase of life to another.

764 Separation from terrestrial life is symbolised for the deceased by the
775 rite of piercing the wall of the hut in order to solemnise, as it were, his official departure from his former dwelling. I should consider also as a separation rite the custom of cutting through all his garments and mats, in order to make them "draw the last breath." To effect aggregation to the new world, the grave-diggers prepare for him an underground hut and square place, they place him in his new dwelling in a sitting position (if such is the true explanation of the folding of the limbs), they direct his eyes towards the cardinal point whence his
765 ancestors have come. I have sometimes had the impression that even
775 in these rites, the idea of a marginal period, or of a period of transition, was not lacking : the deceased is not prayed to prior to the great family gatherings, which take place three, six, or twelve months after the death. Then his hut is crushed or closed. It would seem that he has gone

775 through an evolution towards deity, as his corpse was decaying in the
765 grave, and the closing of his hut, with the placing of his shield before the door, might well mean his definite incorporation into the world of the dead, and also a means of preventing him from returning to this world and bringing misfortune to his relatives.

765 As regards the relatives, they separate from the former phase by the
783 cutting of the hair, putting out the old fire, leaving off their clothing and wearing mourning attire. A very distinct period of margin then begins, marked by the sexual taboos accompanying it, and they are aggregated again to the ordinary world and to the new phase of their life by all the ceremonies which I have explained at length. Here, however, as the seclusion was caused by a certain most dreaded defilement, the aggregation rites all bear the character of removal of uncleanness: uncleanness of the food, of the gardens, of the bereaved, chiefly grave-diggers and widows, of the whole community, which is cleansed by the sexual rite of hlamba ndjaka, etc.

797 If classification were equivalent to understanding, we might say that
761 we have fairly well understood the complicated Thonga rites which accompany death... But who can boast of having fully understood so profound and mysterious a subject? Death is the great shadow which hovers over life and chills the human heart. Outside of an enlightened faith, it is, and remains, the King of Terrors. Never more than at the graveside did I pity my poor black brethren, wondering how they tried to calm their hearts and overcome their sorrow. There is something profoundly touching in their most absurd rites, because, after all, they are all imposed by a craving for life and purity. Will my readers allow me to conclude this subject by a personal reminiscence? The day I attended the burial of Sokis, when his relatives had finished filling in the grave, they asked me to lead them in worship. Bantu heathenism is so poor, it feels itself so weak that it readily accepts the help of a higher religion. So I tried to turn the eyes of my hearers away from the underground hut, and to fix them on the eternal dwellings of the Father's house. Then Sokis's youngest brother took the nkanye twig and performed the heathen religious ceremony, calling his ancestors to come and bless them and entreating the deceased to leave them in peace. The contrast between these two prayers made at the same grave was indeed striking. And, whatever we may think, even if we had no religious convictions at all, should we not earnestly desire that, for these people, the bright comforting Christian hope may dispel the darkness of their thoughts and the sufferings involved in their rites?

A woman who has lost many children, three or four, is considered as being in a special position, called *bowumba*, and there are many rules to be observed in order to deal with this "state of bereavement." Should a child be born after the death of many elder brothers, he must be carried in a *ntehe* made of a sheep's skin instead of an antelope or goat skin. (See p. 46.) To carry him in an ordinary ntehe is taboo. Should it be a boy, the mother will put girl's clothing on it, and vice-versa. The mother's breast will be smeared with a special medicine, because they are "breasts of the dead (mabele ya bafi)." The child, if it lives, will be weaned as early as possible and be taken to its grandmother. Two curious rites are also practised to protect it against bad luck. The first is the *kunga*; the second, *rangela bowumba*, seems to belong rather to the Northern clans.

The *kunga* rite which we have already met many times (see p. 124) is also performed in the case of a mother who has given birth to a new child whilst in the state of bowumba. To neglect it is taboo. The bereaved mother keeps silent before her visitors until they have deposited their gifts at her feet and have thus "opened her mouth." Old women having no means to buy a present take a bit of grass and fix it in her hair. Then she consents to speak. She gathers all the bracelets thus obtained and puts them on the ntehe, carrying them everywhere with her.

Another rite is observed in the Northern clans. The child whose elder brothers and sisters have died is taken by the mother to the village of her own parents. There it is buried in the ash-heap up to its neck. Then somebody runs to the village, takes a handful of grains of maize and throws them on the child. Afterwards it is dug up, washed, smeared with ochre and brought home. This rite is called *rangela bowumba*, viz. to *precede* bowumba, to cut it, to treat it: the bowumba will not now come as it has been "preceded". It will be deceived, it will no longer desire the baby, as the baby has been thrown away together with all the refuse of the village on to the ash-heap. It is no longer able to eat mealies, even if it is given grains of mealies; it is dead! Let the bowumba take no notice of it! (This description of the "rangela bowumba" was given to me by an old Thonga from Spelonken. Mankhelu, my Nkuna informant, called this rite

789 "*ringela bocumba,*" from the verb ringa, to try ; it is the attempt
761 to bring some influence to bear on the misfortune of the bereaved mother.)

9) ADULTERY.

837 Amongst the Thongas *true* adultery for a *man*, married or
595 unmarried (bumbuye), consists in committing sin with a married woman. Should he have relations with a girl, it leads to no consequences at all. Nobody will blame him, if the girl does not conceive. Should she have a child, he will only be forced to marry her ; she will become his second wife. His first wife will not at all resent his bad conduct. Sometimes she will herself get him the girl he wants. There is nothing in her heart like the jealous dignity of a European spouse! She will keep all her capacity for jealousy (bukwele) for the time when the second wife comes to the village, and shares with her the affection of their common husband! Adultery with an unmarried woman is nothing more than "gangisa."

837 But should a man have abducted a *married woman*, a woman
684 who has a master (ñwinyi), who has been paid for, then the
692 matter becomes very serious. The husband is very skilful at discovering her misdoing. As soon as he begins to have doubts about the fidelity of his wife, he chooses a friend and asks him to watch her. She is very cunning, her lover also ; but the friend is on the watch and some time perhaps, catches them in the bush, when she goes to gather fuel, or near the pool, where she draws her water. He comes back to the husband and informs him that he has caught them in the very act. Then the husband tells his wife that proof has been obtained and that she had better go at once to her lover and take something from his hut ; she obeys, and comes back with his blanket or any other object. This is "la pièce à conviction." The husband goes with it to the counsellor who is in charge of his village ; together they apply to the chief. The chief sends the counsellor who is responsible for the village of the lover to summon him. The confrontation takes place and the story of the case is investigated.

574 travellers be refused the customary hospitality in a village and
609 incur misfortune later on, the chief will make the people of that village responsible and they will have to pay a fine. In Gungunyana's country, warriors were sent to plunder such a village. Lack of hospitality, however, is not considered as a taboo (yila), because "it does not kill ;" it is a bad action (biha).

Now-a-days, customs are beginning to change ; hundreds of young men (magaisa) coming from the towns after working there, pass through the country, and it would be impossible to put them up and feed them all. They sleep on the *bandla* and cook food for themselves, occasionally buying some mealies or a hen from the inhabitants. Moreover they have plenty of money and they can pay !

609 It must also be added that, if they dispense hospitality liberally,
618 the Thongas can be very hard on people who do not belong to
761 their special clan. Feelings of humanity are sometimes strangely deficient. I heard of a boy of the Manyisa district who had fallen down near the lake of Rikatla, unable to proceed further on account of a bad wound received while working on the railway at Lourenço Marques. Nobody took pity on him because he was of another clan, and he would have died there if a Christian woman, named Lois, had not received him in her village and nursed him. Fear of death and its contamination may partly explain this want of compassion for strangers.

784 As already mentioned, it was formerly taboo to enter the village square wearing boots. These boots consist of sandals
643 made by the hunters for their long trips through the thorny
677 bush. They were not allowed on the hubo. A subject was not permitted to sit on a mortar or on anything else ; the chief alone could do so, and it was considered a sign of pride to sit on anything but the bare ground!

609 The habit of offering a concubine to passers-by is never met with amongst the Rongas as it is in other tribes. Now-a-days
177 dissolute women may offer themselves. But they have learnt
574 from white men this new kind of immorality.

On the fate of the Thonga Village, see Practical Conclusions. V.

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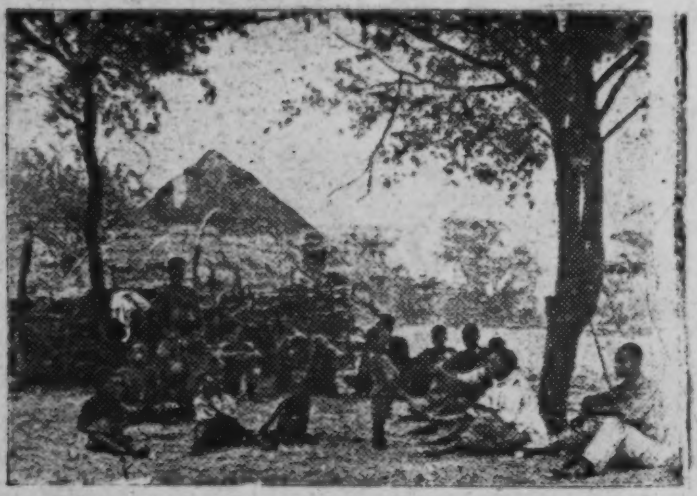
beer is selected, into which is thrown the black powder, the great medicine of the land, called in this case *bahlungu bya miluru*, the powder of the miluru. The nuru, plur. miluru, is the mysterious spiritual influence which a man or a beast killed by the assagais can exert on the slayer, making him lose his head and commit acts of folly, or, at least, have red eyes (shenga mahlo). We shall again meet with this curious conception when



Bukanye drinking near Antioka. (Portuguese East Africa.) *Phot. A. Burd.*

studying the rites of the army and of hunting. All those who are proudly conscious of having killed a man in war must first drink the new beer which has been medicated to keep them from killing any of their compatriots during the ensuing weeks of the bukanye. They approach one after the other, the chief also, if he be a man-slayer. Each of them receives a small calabash, (ntcheko, p. 50) full of the fermented liquid. He jumps and runs in the direction of the entrance, drinks a mouthful, spits it out with *tsu* and says : "Father and mother! May I live! May I hold the calabash! Even to morrow! For ever!" People laugh. He is very happy! Others sing and dance the war dance :

727 They have killed... So they are exposed to the mysterious and
775 deadly influence of the *nuru* and must consequently undergo a
828 medical treatment. What is the *nuru* ? *Nuru* is the spirit of the
783 slain which tries to take its revenge on the slayer. It haunts him
789 and may drive him into insanity : his eyes swell, protrude and
761 become inflamed. He will go out of his mind, be attacked by giddiness (ndzululwan) and the thirst for blood may lead him to fall upon members of his own family and to stab them with his assagay. To prevent such misfortunes, a special medication is required : the slayers must *lurulula tiyimpi ta bu*, take away the nuru of their sanguinary expedition. (Lurulula comes from nuru, plur. miluru (1).

In what does this treatment consist ? The slayers must remain for some days at the capital. They are taboo. They put on old clothes, eat with special spoons because their hands are

764 (1) We met with the notion of *nuru* for the first time à propos of the rite of
775 luma (p. 400) ; we shall find it again when dealing with hunting customs (Part IV).
761 The nuru is to be feared not only in the case of slain enemies but in connexion with any human corpse. As a proof, I may quote the following curious story which Spoon told me and of the truth of which he was fully convinced. A traveller died under the great fig-tree of Libombo (near Rikatla). He had climbed on to the tree and fallen on his own stick, which he had planted in the ground. He was not buried, as no one knew him. So his corpse fell into decomposition on the spot ; his skull became white. Later on a bush fire burnt all the grass and the skull was
764 seen for years "saying mpha" (it was shining), the teeth "saying bva" (descriptive
775 adverb, same meaning). One day the boys of Libombo went to pick wild figs from the tree and again saw the skull. Spoon was one of them. The fire had just passed
755 by again. "We beat it with our sticks and amused ourselves by rolling it over like a
789 ball. We did not know it was a human skull... When we got home we began to be seized by the drunkenness of nuru, the disease of those who have killed a man. During
761 the night we were delirious (hanta-hanteka), our eyes swelled and were full of exudations (malanga), the four of us, Tsukela, Tlabin, Sibakuze and myself. Next morning my uncle went to the fig-tree and saw that we had killed a man there ! The medicine-man who understands the treatment of nuru, Dudela, who had been a slayer in war, called us to his village. We stood in a line before him ; he poured a little of his powder into the hands of each one of us, took a little in his mouth, rubbed his forehead. Then he insulted us saying ; "You will die ! Who began beating that skull ?" Each of us denied having given the first blow. Then he said : "Take care ! Do not go there any more nor near that nkuhlu tree where another corpse has been burnt under the leaves ! Go away."

514 When a man has murdered another in a scuffle, he can replace this nuru medicine
789 by his own urine. He must drink a little of it and rub his forehead with it. The giddiness will pass away. If the murder has been committed from a distance, as with
775 a gun, the nuru is not so much to be feared, as the enemy was far away. A little of the medicine will be sufficient to treat the murderer. Spoon is ignorant of the compo-
626 sition of the nuru drug.
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727 "hot" and from special plates (mireko) and broken pots. They are
783 forbidden to drink water. Their food must be cold. The chief
834 kills oxen for them (yi ba lumisa hi tihomu); but if the meat
761 were hot it would make them swell internally "because they are hot themselves, they are defiled (ba na nsila)." If they ate hot food, the defilement would enter into them. "They are black (ntima). This black must be removed" (Mankhelu). During all this time sexual relations are absolutely forbidden to them.
727 They must not go home to their wives. In former times the
304 Ba-Ronga used to tatoo them[1] with special marks from one eyebrow to the other. Dreadful medicines were introduced into the incisions and there remained pimples "which gave them the appearance of a buffulo when it frowns" (1).

789 After some days a medicine-man comes to purify them (ku ba
727 phutula), "to remove their black." There seem to be various
783 means of doing it, according to Mankhelu. Seeds of all kinds are put into a broken pot and roasted, together with drugs and *psanyi* of a goat. The slayers inhale the smoke which emanates from the pot. They put their hands into the mixture and rub their limbs with it (ba tilula) especially the joints.

789 Viguet describes this last act thus :—Pieces of medicinal roots
727 are put into the broken pot and roasted. They inhale the smoke.
782 Then cow's milk is poured into the pot on the embers and, when it boils, they have to put their fingers into it, one hand after the other, and pass them across their lips emitting the sacramental : "tsu" (which proves that it is a sacrifice to the gods, a religious act). Afterwards they say : "Phee! phee!" — viz.,
789 phephela phansi, (Dj. tikela hansi), "Go down, sink." This
727 means : "May you go deep into the earth, you, my enemy and
783 not come back to torment me." The last part of the treatment consists in rubbing the biceps, the legs, and the whole body with this milk. The medicinal embers are carefully collected, and reduced to a powder ; this will be put into small bags of skin called *tintebe* which the slayer will wear round his neck. They contain

578 (1) Hence an expression which is still in common use. When a Ronga wants to defy some one he says to him : "You are a coward! If you say you can tackle me come and kiss my forehead."

1[i.e., the slayers returned from battle --Analyst]

727 enemy died later on, after his return to his home. Makhani did not
828 know this. One day he became suddenly delirious and rushed about
789 all over the village trying to stab his own people. "Oho!" said those
783 who saw him, "it is because the man he wounded has died!" They at once called the magician who possessed the nuru medicine, a man of the Mapsangmye clan, who came with his calabash. In this calabash there was a carved stick cut from a tree called shiralala, the extremity of which must always remain plunged in the medicine. The magician dipped this stick into a mixture made of honey and the drug, and passed it over the lips of Makhani, who seized it with his tongue, sucking it as the magician moved it from right to left, and licking his lips. A drop of the medicine was then put into each ear, on each upper eye-lid, and below the sternum. He was then cured and, taking a lighted torch, he threw it in the direction of the enemy's country with threatening words: "A ba fe, bafo, ba bola i. e. Let them die, the enemies, let them rot. I will kill still others!" Every day he had to go to the pool and wash his body, treating himself with the tintebe powder.

727 During the weeks following the battle heroes do not only
301 wear the tintebe, besides these miluru amulets, they have the
763 right to wear certain trophies. These are in the first place
554 antelope or goat's horns pierced at the base; they thread a string through the hole thus made and tie them round their necks (See illustrations, p. 33 and 453). They also make necklaces of small pieces of wood, notched in a peculiar manner and burnt in the fire; a hole is made through these and they are strung together like beads and worn round the neck. Sometimes these necklaces are made so long that they are worn as a bandoleer. I recollect seeing the Matjolo warriors returning from their expedition of February 1895: they came to show themselves off to the Whites at Lourenço Marques, gloriously proud of having massacred defenceless women and children whom they had surprised in the early hours of the morning! People threw them pieces of silver which they converted into brandy! (1)

727 (1) The terrible malediction which rests on those who have killed an enemy
775 is well illustrated by the following story which the Rev. C. Maphophe told me of an
761 event that had taken place not long ago in the Shishongi country (Manyisa district). A man of the Ndzindzi family had killed a Ndjao during one of Gungunyane's expedi-

J. SOME REMARKS ABOUT WAR RITES.

177 726 The war rites of the Thongas, whatever may be their origin — and they seem to be a mixture of old Thonga and new Zulu customs, — form a very interesting and complete whole.

The most noticeable are the *national rites*. In war time, the very existence of the clan is threatened, because the chief, the central and vital cell of this organism, is in danger. Hence the readiness of all the warriors to answer to the first call of the *shipalapala*, and to gather round him, "building the circle," which protects him, the whole clan forming a single village and binding itself by the striking ceremonies of *guba* and by patriotic songs, to die for him. Notice that most of the *guba* songs extol the chief. All these customs in which the individual or collective courage is stimulated, the *guba* and the *gila*, are national or social rites directed towards the salvation of the clan. They owe their origin to the national idea.

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But war also brings dangers to every warrior. Hence the *protective* rites of sprinkling the mukhumbi with the war-medicine of the clan, or of giving each man some of it to swallow. The rite is inspired by the notion *similia similibus curantur*, the idea being that the warrior, having eaten a small portion of the enemy, will become invulnerable to his blows.

But other rites, especially the war taboos, seem to owe their origin to the *idea of passage*.

726 829 834 The *whole clan* enters upon a special phase as soon as war has been decided upon by the chief, "who gives it" to his warriors. Hence the taboos observed at home, many of which are exactly the same as those of the circumcision school and of the period of mourning. We notice the same contrast already so often mentioned : certain sexual prohibitions are removed (e. g. a queen will enter quite naked into the mukhumbi!)

727 725 761 tions (before 1890). Three persons of that family died. The bones were consulted and the diviner asked : "Have you not slain a Ndjao?" They answered : "Yes." — "Then," said the bone-thrower "you will all die as this man has followed you." The bones showed that, in order to avoid the destruction of their family, the Ndzindzis had to offer a girl to the ghost of the slain, a living sacrifice. This girl would not be allowed to marry, or even to be courted by boys. Should she have relations with a man it would be necessary to replace her by another. Thus the angry ghost would be propitiated.

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[For purification rites performed after the death of a Thonga, see category 765 and 783--analyst]

778 introduced fire and the culinary art into the world! This idea is
826 interesting and seems to show that, to the Native mind, the cooking of food is the pursuit which differentiates man from the animals.

177 In the clans of Maluleke and Spelonken there is a third tradition
773 relating to the first man, but it has certainly been borrowed from the Venda or Pedi tribes. They say the first man was *Rivimbi* and his son *Khudjana* (name transformed into Hobyana according to Thonga phonetics). The Thongas only say that Hobyana is the creator of Heaven and Earth and the first ancestor of the race. But the Vendas and Pedis have a number of traditions about these two heroes (1).

2) The cause of death.

773 When the first human beings emerged from the marsh of
825 reeds, the chief of this marsh sent the Chameleon (Lumpfana)
761 to them, with this message: "Men will die, but they will rise again." The Chameleon started walking slowly, according to his habit. Then the big lizard with the blue head, the Galagala, was sent to tell men: "You shall die and rot." Galagala started with his swift gait and soon passed Lumpfana. He delivered his message, and when Lumpfana arrived with his errand, men said to him: "You are too late. We have already

773 (1) Here is one of the most curious of these traditions, a strange story indeed,
776 when we reflect that these two personages are the great gods who created the universe! Once, in olden times, Khudjana planted a big pole in the earth, and passed
177 spokes through it, right to the top. Rivimbi having climbed up, Khudjana took out the lower spokes and went home. His father being unable to get down, the son stole the food prepared for him and ate it at his ease. Then he again put the spokes in their places and the old man came home. But when he wished to have his meal, he found that nothing was left. His wife then gave him Khudjana's portion!

There is great confusion amongst these traditions. According to Mazkhela this Rivimbi, or Luvimbi, is the same as the great rain-maker to whose descendants he went to obtain the rain medicine (p. 320). He is not only the creator of the earth, but the protector of all men, who are his sons. So, if some one wishes to harm a man who is not guilty, the Vendas say to him: "Do not kill Luvimbi's man." If you steal a partridge caught in a trap which was not set by you, they say: "Luvimbi, who stands on that tree, sees you." He would seem to be a superior being, a god (shikwembu), even the chief of gods, endowed with omnipresence and omniscience. Moreover there is a relation between Rivimbi and Nwali, the Ba-Nyai god, who is represented either as father or son of Rivimbi, or identical with him. It may be that the Rivimbi tradition, which is both Pedi and Venda and seems to refer definitely to a first ancestor who has become the great god, has been mixed with the Nwali tradition, which is Nyai, so that ideas of different origins have been intermingled.

accepted another message." That is why men are subject to death. 773 825

This myth is so strongly believed that shepherds, when they see a chameleon climbing slowly up a tree, begin to tease it, and, when it opens its mouth, throw a pinch of tobacco into it, and are greatly amused to see the poor thing change colour, passing from green to orange, and from orange to black, in agony, to the great delight of the little boys ; they thus avenge themselves on the chameleon! (p. 339). 761

The same story[1] is told amongst the Zulus, and other myths of a similar character are found all over Africa, especially amongst the Ba-Rotsi (1). It would be an interesting study to collect them all, and thus to compile the African Genesis. We should probably find that the origin of man and death are the two great subjects on which the imagination of the Bantus has tried to throw some light, and that, though the moral element is strangely lacking in these myths, yet there is a striking resemblance between them and the Biblical story, where an answer to the same questions is given. 171 773

II. *The various human races.*

Have Bantus a clear idea of the human race? What they call *banhu* in Thonga, *bantu* in Zulu, evidently means "black people," the first inhabitants of the country. The Zulus are regarded, owing to their military ability, as a superior race, not however to such an extent as they themselves believe to be the case! Whatever may be their hostility or repugnance to their fellow blacks, they know that they belong to the same species. I am not sure that they hold this idea regarding White people, who are not *banhu* but *balungu*. 609 829

What is the origin of this word? As it is also used in Zulu (abelungo), the etymology suggested is the verb *ku lunga*, to be right, good. White people would then be correct, nice people, to

(1) Compare *Fet et Vie*. Oct. 1910. Les Origines. A. Jalla.

[1] [about the original cause of death. See p. 350, cat. 116-Analyst]

the potteress fires her pots (1) (p. 115). Why is this so? No 834
doubt because if married people, who are hot, did it, the fire would 783
become uncontrollable and all the pots would crack. The same 827
reason explains why sexual relations are so strongly prohibited in hunting and fishing. The game or fish would be so wild that it would be impossible to catch it ; big game would probably kill the hunters (p. 61).

This conception of the sexual act explains why certain functions in the ritual must be performed by young children, still without knowledge of sexual matters, or by old women past the time of childbearing and consequently belonging to the asexual class (I. p. 466).

How is it possible to explain, on the other hand, that this act, so severely prohibited on so many occasions, should be the great purifying act by which the community gets rid of the defilement of death and returns to normal life? We have seen that this is the case after the death of an important person in the village as well as when the village itself moves to another place, probably in consequence of defilement by the loss of some of its members. Notice that the sexual act, in order to obtain the desired result, must be accomplished in the ritual fashion, i. e. s. n. i. (I. Annotatio 2 and 13). It would seem that, in the Thonga mind, death defiles not 834
only the belongings of the deceased, his implements, his assegais, 783
even his fire, but also his parents, even the parents of his wife, and 761
above all, those secretions of the genital organs which are the very 827
fountain of their life, and through which the community is maintained and multiplied. They must be cleansed in order that the social group may re-enter upon a normal state. The ceremonies which we have described (I. p. 152-156 and 320-328) are highly significant. Each couple must perform the rite in turn and all must participate in a collective lustration which takes

(1) According to the Rev. Ed. W. Smith the same rule is observed in the smelting operations of the Ba-Ila. A little boy and a little girl are put into the kiln when it is about a foot high and they must crack a bean in their mouths and swallow it. We have here a very good example of Bantu primitive philosophy. The innocence or, as we may say, the coolness, of the little ones will prevent the flame from being too fierce and spoiling the whole operation, whilst the slow cracking of the bean will ensure the success of the smelting process (Smith and Dale, *The Ila-Speaking People*, I. p. 205).

834 place at a given spot and according to a given order of precedence.
783 This will bring about the definite restoration of the village and a new and pure life will henceforth be possible.

761 I ought perhaps to offer some excuse for having dwelt at some
827 length on a subject which is generally left alone as indelicate. I hope however that my readers will agree with me that all these physiological conceptions and all these strange customs, far from being of a lascivious or licentious character, denote, on the contrary, a deep and earnest conception of life and an aspiration towards purity which it is most interesting to observe. They are at the same time amongst the most striking manifestations of Bantu Dynamism.

827 Beside these great principles of Thonga physiology, I may
576 mention a few other ideas relating to the various secretions of the human body.

578 *Spitting* (ku thuka) is a sign of want of respect, as we have seen (p. 310). It is especially prohibited in the presence of people who are eating, and if any one should spit, they will insult the culprit, saying to him : "Eat your own shikohlolo!" — When some one expectorates, others present will cover the phlegm with sand, not on account of taboo, but from disgust.

826 *Blood* (ngati, yin-tin) is also instinctively covered with sand, as
791 soon as it has been shed. This is a taboo, because wizards might use it to bewitch you! The charms of the wizards are commonly called *tingati*, bloods.

827 As regards *sweat* (nyuku, mu-mi), although I cannot assert that the idea is universal, I think it is conceived as coming from outside and falling on men like the dew (mbere) on the grass. When they enter a place which is close, Natives say : "There is sweat here." The etymology of this word is *ku nyuka*, to melt.

Excrement (matjimba) is looked upon as disgusting, but there is no taboo in connection with it.

Yawning (yahlamula) is attended with no superstition.

Hiccough (shitikwane) is not feared in children, but very much so in the case of sick people.

Belching (bisa) is sometimes considered as the result of having been bewitched, especially if the patient becomes thin. Magicians

identical with their image. This notion seems to be at the root of the fear they show of being photographed, as we shall see directly. 774

We see therefore that Thongas are not at all dogmatic on this subject. The soul is at the same time the breath, viz., something of the nature of the wind, the shadow, the image, the external likeness, or fashion of man as opposed to his flesh.

Whatever may be the original notion, they consider the human being as double and capable of unsheathing itself on certain occasions ; their conception on this point may throw more light on their ideas concerning the nature of the soul.

Some believe that the *unsheathing* always takes place during the night and that the soul comes back when its owner awakes ; this is, par excellence, the case in regard to witches, who unsheath by their magical power and bewitch people during the night, as we shall see. But, though the belief is not universal, some think that all souls go away (or die) during sleep. I heard a boy earnestly praying one evening that his soul might come back to him next morning! This is a kind of physiological normal unsheathing which is attended with no bad results. But a pathological unsheathing also exists, and is very dangerous. It may be caused by the photograph of a man being taken. Ignorant Natives [609] instinctively object to being photographed. They say : "These White people want to steal us (pepula) and take us with them, far away into lands which we do not know, and we shall remain only incomplete beings." When shown the magic lantern, you hear them pitying the men shown on the pictures, and saying : "That is how they ill-treat us when they take our photographs! (1)"

But the great and dangerous parting of soul and body, which 774 causes certain death, is that which wizards operate by their magic 754 charms. We shall study these strange conceptions in Chapter 761 III. They firmly believe that such is the result of witchcraft ; so, when some one is dying, and the divinatory bones have revealed that the disease was caused by a certain *noyi* (witch or wizard), the

(1) The following reflection well illustrates the superstitious fear which Natives have of likenesses of the dead. Before the 1894 war broke out, I had gone to show the magic lantern in remote heathen villages, and people accused me of having caused the disturbance by bringing to life again (pfusha) men who had died long ago.

754 magician shuts him in with the dying man in the hut and gives him
774 the following command : "Bring back the spirit which you have taken and hidden somewhere." Some magicians, who are more
761 powerful than the wizards, pretend to be able to find the stolen spirit and so to restore the patient to health. In cases of epilepsy, or of any psychic trouble attended with unconsciousness, when the sick person returns to his senses, they triumph : have they not brought back the soul? But they say that this must be done in haste. No time must be lost!

775 Lastly, the final unsheathing of personality takes place at death. The body becomes rotten, but the shadow goes away and continues its life as a god, shikwembu. The belief in the continuation of life after death is universal, being at the base of Ancestrolatry, which is the religion of the tribe. We shall study the ideas relating to the future life when dealing with the gods.

What Thongas can absolutely not understand is the resurrection of the body. "Mbuti yi fa, yi bola ; homu yi fa, yi bola ; munhu a fa, a bola!" — "The goat dies and rots, the ox dies and rots, man dies and rots!" answers the sceptical Thonga when he hears the story of the resurrection.

On the whole their ideas of future life are not so very different from those of the ancient Greeks, who believed that the human soul went after death to the realm of shadows.

787 *Dreams* are not generally liked by the Thongas. If something
828 they happened to dream really takes place, it "disgusts" them (nyenyetsa). When a man has seen a woman several times in his dreams, especially if she was pregnant, he will consult the bones. If he dreams that he has relations with her, he may go next day and hit her with a stick. He leaves the stick on the ground and goes away without a word. According to Mboza, this is done to get rid of the obsession, and to prevent the dream from becoming reality. That is the reason, I suppose, why a Christian boy once said to his missionary : "I dream of many people, but I keep quiet!" Amongst Thongas dreams do not seem to play the great part which the animistic theory attributes to them in the formation of primitive beliefs.

case in respect to the story of Ñwahungukuri, which I have published in *Les Ba-Ronga*, p. 312, and in which Heaven is credited with the full knowledge of a hidden crime committed by a murderer. This idea is so far from being an innovation due to European influence that thoughtful Natives all agree that, in former times, it was more usual to attribute death to the power of Heaven. It was a common saying that "Heaven has fallen (ku we Tilo) on such and such a village." Nowadays it is rather the gods, or the wizards, who are believed to cause death. 772 539 [761]

But this belief in Heaven has not only inspired these sayings, songs, and tales; it has also given rise to curious customs, a description of which will throw more light on this conception of the Thongas. Their existence proves that we are not here dealing with the "animatic" invention of some person gifted with a vivid imagination (p. 366), but with a true tribal belief.

II. *Customs Connected with the Conception of Heaven.*

1) Heaven, Twins and Rain.

This power, which causes lightning and death, also presides, in a very special way, at the *birth of twins*, so much so that the mother is called by the name of "Tilo," — "Heaven," — and the children "Bana ba Tilo," — "Children of Heaven" (1). Now the arrival of two or three babies at the same time is looked upon by the Thongas as a great misfortune, a defilement in respect of which very special rites must be performed. I give the details of these rites as practised in the Zihlahla, Nondwane, and Nkuna clans, as they were described to me by Tobane, Mboza, Mankhelu, etc. 845 772

Twins (hahla, or bandjwa, dji-ma) are now both allowed to live. But in former times, one of them, the one which appeared to be the feebler, was always put to death, being left to die of 845 847 766

(1) In our school at Lourenço Marques there was a charming young girl, who was named Nwana-wa-Tilo, Daughter of Heaven, because she had a twin brother.

845 *made Heaven* (a hambi Tilo), to have *carried Heaven* (a rwi Tilo), to
772 have *ascended to Heaven* (a khandjiyi Tilo). This connection
789 established between her and Heaven is clearly seen in the *rain customs* previously described. Notice that the day following the
766 birth of twins is a *shimusi*, i. e. a day of rest. Nobody tills the ground, fearing that it would prevent rain from falling. When the *mbelele* takes place in Nondwane and Zihlahla (p. 318), the half naked women who are sent to clean the wells take with them a mother of twins. This is no doubt in order to show them where the graves of twins are. But there is also another reason. In the sacred wood of Libombo there is a hole into which the woman is put ; her sisters then pour on to her the water which they have drawn from all the wells, till the hole is half full, and the water comes up to her breasts. This will cause the rain to fall. Why is this? No doubt because, the woman of Heaven being wet, Heaven itself will be wet. Spoon did not give this explanation himself, but, when I suggested it to him, he accepted it readily. For the same reason the graves of twins are watered. In certain cases water is poured on the graves of the ancestors also, because rain is attributed both to them and to Heaven, and this watering the graves is meant to induce either Heaven or the ancestor-gods to cause rain to fall. Hence again the precaution taken of burying twins in damp places, and of exhuming them in times of drought if they have been buried in dry ground (1).

845 The connection between twins and Heaven, so clearly to
772 be seen in these customs, appears again in respect to thunder-
821 storms, which, as we shall see, are another manifestation of Heaven.
789 When lightning threatens a village, people say to a twin : "Help us! You are a Child of Heaven! You can therefore cope with Heaven (mi kota Tilo), it will hear you when you speak." So the child

845 (1) In other clans this law is extended to children prematurely born, even though they are not twins, and even to children who have not had the cotton string tied round their
761 waist or who have cut their upper teeth first. On the other hand, among the Nkunas no special connection seems to be established between twins and Heaven. These dif-
772 ferences may be explained by the fact that all these abnormal cases were ascribed to Heaven in former times, and the connection has been preserved in the various clans in
766 respect to one or the other of these categories. Note that, in the song of the widows (I. p. 207), the king Heaven appears to have caused the death of the husband; this is another proof that Heaven was formerly considered the most frequent cause of death.

result if hostile feelings already existed between two persons (1). 754

Jealousy alone is sufficient to give rise to the suspicion even without a word having been uttered (2).

The fact of a woman having lost many children is also a reason for suspecting her of being a witch, as the death of a baby is constantly considered as having been caused by its own mother, who wished "to eat it." The fact of belonging to a family of baloyi is also an indication to the same effect, buloyi being hereditary, as we have seen. [761]

But a mere suspicion is not sufficient to warrant action being taken against the suspected noyi. An objective proof, a piece of convincing evidence is required, and this the magicians are asked to supply. The patient's relatives go *to the diviner* who will cast the bones and discover whether the disease is due to witchcraft or not. This consultation is secret, and is merely preliminary. There are, in the sets of bones employed in Thonga divination, some which, 754 787 791

(1) The evangelist Silas G. was one day speaking to Saul N., an elder of his Church, about Church contributions and said: "So and so does not pay his dues. It would be good to show him his duty." Saul answered: "I do not wonder; that man has a bad wife and you are sure to fail in your duty when you have a bad wife." — "No", said Silas. "Everyone ought to pay his contribution. You, for example, would certainly do your duty even if you had a bad wife!" — "Nevertheless I maintain that a wife who behaves badly takes away her husband's courage. Look at your own case, Silas. Your wife does harm to your work as an evangelist. Did she not say the other day when she saw my baby: 'How fat it is! It is like a pumpkin!'" On hearing these words Silas starts! They are an accusation of buloyi. To say that the baby was as fat as a pumpkin showed that the woman who used these words was ready to eat its body during the night; the evangelist's wife was a noyi! An enquiry was at once started to ascertain if she had really pronounced these words, and the whole little Church was upset. Finally the elder was blamed for having brought an accusation of buloyi, which is forbidden in the Native Congregations, and he resigned his office. The evangelist and his wife "became thin" owing to the mental suffering caused by the insinuation of the elder.

(2) I had amongst my evangelists a very active and intelligent man who cultivated large gardens and was well provided with everything. His neighbours began to suspect him for this reason. He said to them: "We ought not to work on Sundays," and this increased their suspicions. "It is evident", they said, "that *he is not alone!* How does he manage to have such splendid harvests when he does not work on Sundays? Surely he has others to till for him. He takes our backs and uses them to cultivate his big fields. And the reason why he has such wonderful crops is that he has taken our own mealies from our gardens by his witchcraft" — "But," said others, "you cannot complain! Mealies are plentiful in your gardens too!" — "No," answered the enemies of the evangelist. "Though you see mealies in our gardens, they are no longer mealies; they have been taken away by him." They meant that, just as a bewitched person is no longer normal but has been emptied of his viscera, so the cereals had been robbed of their virtue by buloyi.

595 fled from his village and went to Johannesburg to find rest) ; by criminal attempts on his life ; by hatred manifested to the children of the co-wives. (These children are called *mabokonyo*, which is a term of contempt. They are taught to hate each other and to hate their father, as the angry mothers give vent to their grievances before them without 762 shame.) Finally bukwele sometimes ends in the suicide of the despised wife.

595 2) Polygamy encourages drunkenness on account of the great abundance of corn harvested and of beer brewed by so many hands.

3) It develops pride in the heart of the polygamist.

4) It is expensive, as the husband must pay £ 1, the hut tax, for each wife.

5) It destroys the man's strength owing to sexual excesses. (However this reason put forward by one of the witnesses seemed to have little weight in the eyes of the others. It rather made them laugh.)

On the attitude to be adopted towards Polygamy see Practical Conclusions IV. I shall there add some remarks about this interesting inquiry.

G. SOME FEATURES OF THE RELATIONSHIP SYSTEM AMONGST OTHER SOUTH AFRICAN TRIBES.

000 The tribes that I have studied can be classified into two categories as regards their relationship system : those in which a man has the right of marrying the daughter of his wife's brother, and those in which it is his son who marries the girl, who is his cross-cousin, the daughter of his maternal uncle. This difference is absolute as regards marriage between cross-cousins. In the first category such a marriage is taboo and never happens unless the rite of *dlaya shilongo* is performed, an exception which confirms the rule. As regards marriage of the uncle with his wife's niece, it is prohibited in the second category, but may eventually take place, at least amongst the Pedis and Vendas, if the man has no son to marry the girl. This difference is deep enough to provide a principle of classification, as it has important consequences in the respective life of the two allied groups. However both customs are manifestations of the same general law existing in all the South African tribes, i. e. the right of a family which has taken a wife in another family to marry more wives belonging to the allied family.

888 In time of war, old people die in great numbers. During moments of panic, they are hidden in the wood, in the palm-tree swamps, while all the able-bodied population run away. They are killed by the enemy, who spares no one (it is the law of war), or they die in their hiding-places of misery and hunger!

As may be seen, the eve of life is very sad for the poor Thonga. There are however children who, to the end, show much devotion to their parents. The most to be pitied are those who fall to the charge of remote nephews or cousins. They can only repeat in a broken voice the sad refrain : " Ba hi shanisa! " — " They treat us very badly! "

G. DEATH

I. *The last days.*

763 Manyibane, the headman of a big village near Rikatla, is
513 dangerously ill. The men of his kraal, his friends, have come
834 to inquire about the illness (kamba shinyonga) and have learned
761 that it is serious. They issue this order to all the inhabitants : " Tlulan psilawen! " — " Keep each of you in his sleeping place, (viz. the men to the right of the hut, the women to the left) and have no more relations. It is taboo! The man would die! " Should visitors come, they are not allowed to enter the village. They must have kept " pure " for two days at least. Two sticks are planted on either side of the door of the hut, and a third is put over them so as to close the entrance. " It is the way black people have of making their proclamation, " says Mboza. " Everybody will know that a dying man is there and nobody will come in. " Should another man of the village have had relations with the same woman as the patient, he is doubly prohibited from seeing him, because the patient would break out into perspiration and die immediately. This is the great law of *matlulana*, as we shall see.

754 Of course the *ñanga* (doctor) has been called already. He

754 has tried his best. The bone-thrower also! He has perhaps discovered that the disease was due to a wizard. He has found him out by his art. The suspected one is called and solemnly ordered to heal the patient. He is shut up in the hut with him, and he must recall his deadly spells and restore the man to health. But this has not succeeded, any more than the doctor's drugs!

The dying man calls together all his relations, and utters his last wishes before them : " Somebody has not come ; go and fetch him " he says. When they are all present, he says to them : " All right, my brethren, my children. I wanted to see you before dying. I wanted you, especially so and so, who has been so good to me. The others hated me ; you always showed me love. Henceforth I entrust to you the care of my people. " He will probably designate his successor, who is to be the great one (nkulukumba), and recommend the others to obey him.

763 Then he reminds them of his debts, those he owes and those which are owing to him. " So and so has lobola our daughter and has not paid all the oxen... " He reveals to them also the place where he has buried some treasure. " Go to such a place, in such a hut, and you will find it. " He does not say a word about his wives and about their future, as such questions will be settled according to the laws relating to widows, which are well known.

When the breathing becomes shorter, those who watch over him begin to *bend his limbs* (ku khondla psiro (Ro.) ; ku putja (Dj.).) This is a very old custom, and is deemed so important that the operation begins before death, lest the rigidity of the body should prevent its being accomplished. When the bending of the limbs had been too long delayed, it has sometimes been necessary to break them. To avoid this disagreeable possibility, one may see those attending to the dying man take his hands gently and bring them close up to his chin, and fold his legs against his body. When asked why they do so, they will say : " It is the law. This is the way of caring for the dead (bekisa). " Or : " It is in order to have smaller graves to dig... " But I do not think this utilitarian reason to be the true one. Amongst the Ba-Ronga, where graves are dug in the soft sand, there would not be the least difficulty in making a larger hole.

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763 Some ethnographers have adopted the "embryonic explanation" to account for this custom, which is found all through primitive humanity, from the Mousterian age down to the first inhabitants of Egypt, and amongst a great many uncivilised tribes all over the earth (1). They say: "Primitive man placed the corpse in the attitude of the child before birth because he believed that death is but a new birth, the beginning of a new life..." I asked Viguet if he thought this to be the true original [843] explanation. He told me he did not know ; he would not deny it. But there is one fact which prevents its acceptance ; the Thongas have never done any dissection, and are ignorant of the position of the foetus in the womb. So probably are all primitive peoples. This kind of knowledge came much later in the evolution of mankind. The intention of this rite is more probably to place a dying man in the sitting position which a Thonga generally adopts when in his hut, as the grave is *but a hut in the earth* and he is meant to continue his life in it exactly as before. All the other burial rites confirm this explanation, as we shall see.

Manyibane is dead... In somé districts they see that he does not die with *closed hands*. It is taboo, because then the children of the dead will quarrel (Viguet). They close his eyes and take away all his clothes. In the Mpfumo clan, they *wash the body*. Afterwards they cover him with an old rug. No one cries. Lamentations are absolutely prohibited before the burial is over ; it is taboo. It would " break the back " of the men who have to perform the funeral rites.

764 Should there be *strangers* in the village when the death takes
761 place, they will run away quickly to avoid defilement ; otherwise
783 they would have to take part in all the purifying ceremonies of the following days.

372 Without delay, the *fire* which was burning in the funeral hut is removed and carried out into the square. It must be carefully kept alight. This is a taboo. Should there be rain, it must be protected. All the inhabitants must use this fire during the next five days. It will be put out by the doctor, with sand or water, on the day of the dispersion of the mourners. He will then

(1) See my paper in *Anthropos* Sept. 1910 : " Two burials at twenty thousand years distance."

643 Gigiseka. The last named was very courageous, and the cunning Maphunga succeeded in poisoning him treacherously, through the agency of a dissolute woman.

E. DEATH.

643 [763] 766 When a chief has grown very old, he no longer goes out of the royal hut. His counsellors take his place in the management of affairs and he dies surrounded by mystery. It must be so, as his death must remain unknown during a whole year. "We reap and we bow down (korama)" viz. "we till the ground and reap again before the event is made public (palusha)" says Mankhelu.

So the chief is buried during the night; no lamentations are heard; his wives and his grave-diggers undergo the purification ceremonies and take the vapour baths in secret. It may be that the wives who dwell in remote places will not hear a word of their husband's death. The fire of the royal hut will not be kindled in the usual and ritual way, but it will be kept burning the whole year. The decease is formally announced to some few individuals, to the White Government officials, to the heir (who views the corpse), and to the counsellors, but the rest of the country is supposed to be in ignorance of the occurrence. Of course the secret will not be kept absolutely. The truth will leak out... But no one will dare to speak openly on the subject (1).

643 646 A special hut is set apart into which the counsellors enter under pretext of discussing matters of state with the chief, who is said to be very ill and unable to show himself. As a matter of fact, he has been buried for some time.

(1) I was staying at Nondwane when Mapunga, the chief who preceded Mahazule, died, and I heard on several occasions, in June and July 1891, the warriors practising on their antelope horns the airs to be played when the mourning should be made public. The death must have occurred during 1890, but nothing was said about it. After the news had been published, Manganyele, a young heathen of the district of Libombo, remarked to me one day: "When last season (about Xmas 1890) we saw the miphimbi (trees bearing fruit similar to an apricot) so heavily laden with fruit, (there had been an exceptionally heavy crop), we felt sure the chief must have died and that he had sent us this plentiful supply..." A typical remark, aptly illustrating the semi-ignorance in which the tribe is kept of the death of the chief.

774 But although Natives locate the psychic faculties in the different
763 organs, they certainly believe in an independent psychic principle, in a *soul*. On this point, however, their ideas are most confused. They call it *moya*, spirit, and in the Ronga clans, *hika*, breath (the plurai mahika, in the expression "ku ba ni mahika," means to be out of breath). This is the vital principle of man, and when a person is dying, his relatives sit near him "waiting for the departure of breath" (langusela ku suka ka hika). "The spirit has gone," — "moya wu sukile," they say, when death has come. They have no theory as regards the way the breath goes out of the body, nor do they stop the nostrils or the mouth to prevent its escape (1).

774 A third name for soul is *ntjhuti* (mu-mi), or *shitjhuti* (Ro.), *ndjuti* (Dj.) *shadow*. It seems to apply more especially to the departed soul rather than to the psychic principle of the living. I have been assured that one cannot dream of the shintjuti of any one still alive, but only if he is dead. The shadow, as such, is not subject to many taboos or superstitious fears. They do not fear to tread on the shadow of a chief, for instance. It may even be questioned if they identify the material shadow with the shitjhuti, the spiritual part of man which separates from his body at death (2). At any rate many think that it is the shitjhuti which becomes shikwembu, the ancestor god.

In former times Thongas feared to look at their own reflection in a pool. They seem to have passed that stage now. The reason was perhaps that they thought their spiritual principle to be

775 (1) A Native of Botshabelo, near Middleburg, Transvaal, asserted in my hearing
825 that in this part of the Sutho nation it was believed that the human soul escaped from the body at death in the form of a Copris beetle. The grave is not filled up with earth until a Copris has been seen in the neighbourhood; and if a hawk appears at the same time the satisfaction is still greater; the beetle has transformed itself into a hawk and the soul has in truth found its way out. Strange to say, when these Ba-Sutho give a patient medicine and see that it has had the desired effect, they say: "It has agreed with the Copris;" whilst if the patient dies they say: "The Copris has refused the medicine."

774 (2) In the following story a direct relation is established between the real shadow and the vital principle. A Ronga magician, Shidzabalana, used to show his supernatural power in the following way: he slept on the ground and ordered a mortar to be placed on his chest and three women to pound mealies in it. This seemed to make no impression on him (a fact which can easily be explained if he was in a state of catalepsy). But it suddenly occurred to one of these women that he had perhaps passed into his shadow, so she hit the shadow with her pestle. The magician at once rose, crying out; he had really left his body and entered into his shadow!

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173 returned north, to the country of the Ba-Loyi, led by their ancestor,
793 Mashakatsi. This man, who was a great hunter, saw that he could easily defeat the Ba-Nyai who were settled in those parts, and brought back his followers with him. He became the founder of the dynasty of Maluleke. (For further details about these legends, see Addresses and Papers of the Joint Meeting of British and South African Associations for the Advancement of Science, Johannesburg 1905.)

As regards the Tembe clan, it is said to have come down as far as Delagoa Bay from the Kalanga country by the Nkomati river on a floating island of papyrus, and to have crossed the Tembe river and settled to the south of the Bay. An old saying alludes to this arrival and to the conquest of the country :

Phandje, phandje ra nala—Tembe kulu a wela.

As the palm leaf with its numerous feelers—so did the ancestor Tembe when he crossed.

He placed his sons in all the districts of the plain to govern in his name. The Tembe people, when they greet each other, sometimes use the salutation Nkalanga, i. e. man of the north or of the Kalanga country, and there is little doubt that, notwithstanding the legendary traits in this tradition, the fact itself of the northern origin of these clans is true. In the course of time the chiefs of Matutwen and Maputju, descendants of Tembe, became independent.

173 Most of the other clans point to Zululand or to Swaziland as having been their first abode, which they left to invade the low country of the coast. Mpfumu and Matjolo are both sons of Nhlaruti, who is said to have been the first invader ; from him sprang their two clans which have become independent of and even hostile to each other. The Nondwane families point to the
[764] neighbourhood of Komati Port as being the place from which they came. There were successive invasions of a peaceful character. These people still turn the face of their dead to the west, because the clan came from the Lebombo hills, and this rite proves that the tradition is well founded. The Nkuna, Khosa, and Hlabi clans also claim the same western or south-western origin. Amongst the Ba-Nkuna, some old men say they know

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(1) See my paper in *Anthropos* Sept. 1910 : " Two burials at twenty thousand years distance."

764 light a new one, and everyone will take from it embers to kindle
761 his own fire in the different huts. It is one of the conditions of the
purification of the village.

783 The same day young people are sent to all the relatives in
262 the neighbourhood to announce the death. Even the relations
who are absent far away, in Johannesburg, must be informed;
this is done in the following way. Someone takes a handful of
grass, lights it and, when it is on fire, throws it in the direction
of the absent one, saying: "Your brother, here, is dead. Do
not fear. May your enemies (viz. your white employers) have con-
sideration and love for you, that you may find sleep and health."

II. *The grave.*

764 The men of the village then go out to dig the grave. They
choose a place behind the hut of the deceased or somewhere
further off in the little forest which generally surrounds the village;
or in the *ntimu*, the sacred wood, if he were one of the guardians
of the forest (1), one belonging to the elder branch of the family.

First of all the diggers see that a tree is near the grave on which
to hang some of the belongings of the deceased (those which
will be kept but will have to be purified); they dig a hole of
about six feet in length, four in width, and two and half or three
deep. This first hole can be dug with ordinary hoes. Then, at
the side of it, they excavate a second hole, more or less circular in
form, using for this a light wooden board, generally the rim of an
old basket. The sides of the hole are well smoothed by means of
this instrument. In the Northern clans they sometimes smear it
with mud taken from the river; they also put a reed beside the
corpse, and grass, which grew in water, is spread at the bottom
of the grave (2). So the grave, is in a way, double. It presents

(1) In the Southern clans the grave of the husband or the wife is dug in front of the hut in which they were living (as this hut is to be abandoned); in the case of a child, he will be buried at the side of the hut (as, in this case, the hut will not be destroyed.) The grave is surrounded by a fence made of sticks and plastered with clay. Thus people will remember where the corpse has been buried.

(2) Compare this custom with the rite of burying little children and twins in wet soil.

764/775 two levels, the higher, the large hole, gives access to the smaller, the circular ovoid grave. The first is called *the square* (hubo) of the deceased, the second is *his hut* (yindlu or shinyatu). He will dwell in the hut, but come out from it and sit in his square underground, just as he did when living in his village (1). (Elias.)

764/787 When the grave has been duly dug, the diggers call the relatives to inspect their work, and show them that their deceased relation has been well cared for. The lower grave, being excavated in the wall of the higher, forms a kind of vault. It seems as if it were considered necessary that the earth which will protect the head should not be disturbed. When all the mourners have come at the call of the diggers, it sometimes happens that the vault of the grave falls in. This is a very bad sign. The cause of the accident is this ; either the person who has bewitched the deceased is present or, amongst the assistants, there is one who has been guilty of " matlulana " against him (2)! The grave is a *mondjo*, a magical means of divination.

III. *The burial.*

764/761 The diggers may be four in number, but they are generally only two ; the master of the mourning (nwinyi wa nkosi), who is the brother next to the deceased, and another younger near relative, for instance a son. Both must be married, because married people alone can get rid of the defilement of death by the " lahla khombo, " which we shall explain later. Should an unmarried son be asked to undertake the work of burial, he

(1) In some clans of the North there is only one hole and no excavation at the side. But what I have described here is the rule amongst the Ba-Ronga, except where civilisation has already modified the old custom.

(2) On this point Mboza and Elias did not agree. Mboza said that the falling in of the grave can only be caused by the presence of the wizard who killed the deceased. Elias asserts that the same accident happens if one of those present has *tjemakanya* the deceased, viz. crossed his way, that is to say has had sexual relations with the same woman as the deceased. (This is matlulana). As the hut of the deceased knew this man, so his new hut in the ground recognises and reveals him !

764 would answer : " How can you propose such a thing to me ? Am I not immature (mbisi, properly raw) ? I am not yet ripe! Is defilement of death not there ? With whom could I wash it away ? " (Viguet). The first digger is also called " the one of the head, " the second, " the one of the feet, " because one of them will carry the corpse by the head, the other by the feet. Women may also bury a corpse upon occasion.

764 So the grave-diggers go back to the hut and begin to wrap the corpse in his rugs and in his mat (ku tjimba). They stitch the mat twice (to prevent it from slipping ?) (Viguet). They generally wait till sunset to perform the burial. When the time has come, they make a hole in the wall of the hut on the right side, as the husband dwells in the right half of the house, the wife in the left half. The corpse must not be carried out of the hut by the door, but by that artificial opening (1). So he leaves the hut head foremost (2). They sometimes stop up their noses with the leaves of a bush called ngupfana, which has a strong scent, in order not to perceive the smell of death (moya wa lifu). They march slowly, without a word, men and women following them silently. The " one of the head " goes down to the first level, 764 the one of the feet follows him. They have already put in the 778 place for the head a piece of wood, a piece of a branch of *nkanye*, 769 their sacred tree, one foot long and three inches broad, to be used as a pillow. At the bottom, on the soil, they stretch some old rugs. They lay the corpse down (3) on its left side, the head on the pillow. The grave has been dug in such a way that its long axis is directed towards that cardinal point whence the ancestors came, so that the deceased, having his head slightly

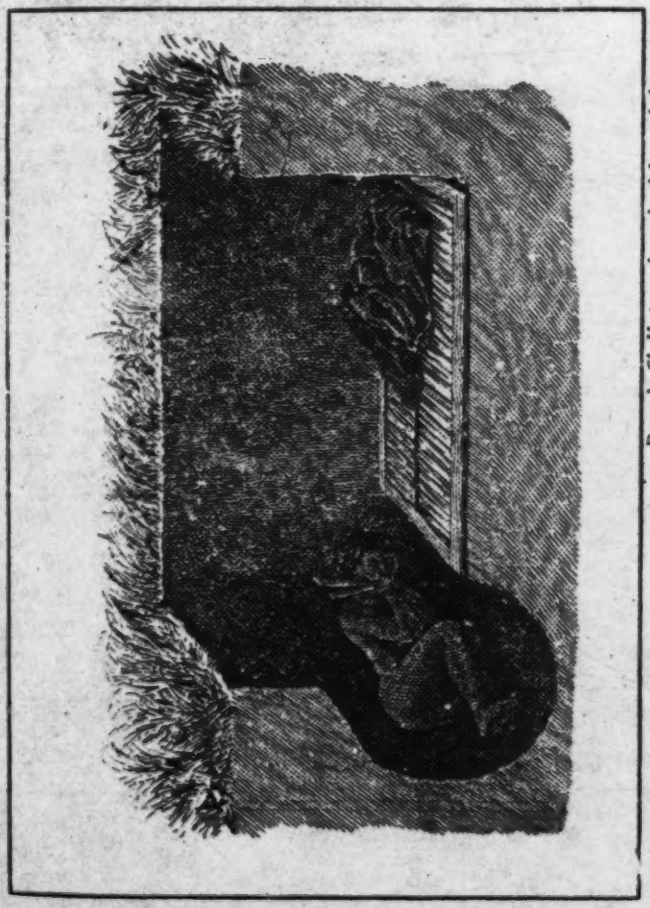
(1) In the Hlabi clans, the corpse is carried through the door, but the plaster on both sides of the door (marimba) is beaten and falls down. It will be repaired later on. In the Northern clans the hut of the deceased is not so strongly tabooed as amongst the Ba-Ronga. When it has been purified it will be used again.

(2) Comparative Ethnography : In Switzerland it is a common saying that a corpse must leave the house feet foremost.

764 (3) The Ba-Ngoni place their dead in the grave in the sitting position, a knife in 513 their hands, as they are a race of murderers! (Viguet). It may be that the reclining position given to the corpse by the Ba-Ronga, is the result of an evolution. At any rate, this is not the true sleeping position, as Natives generally do not bend their limbs when sleeping.

764/769

bent backwards, is intended to look in that direction (1). Now they take away from the deceased all those rugs in which they



Drawn by Cl. Heston and reproduced from « Anthropos ».
A Ronga in his grave.

had wrapped him, and cut them through the middle with a knife, making a large opening in each of them as well as in the mats, also

(1) I attended on December 17th 1908, the burial of one of my neighbours at Rikatla, called Sokin, and described the rites which I witnessed that day in the paper already quoted, published by *Anthropos*, September 1910.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

764
823

in the pieces of clothing which have all been brought and which must be thrown into the grave. "Everything must *hefemula*, breathe its last, just the same as the deceased," said Spoon. "It is taboo." No iron must be put into the grave. Iron, black iron, is *ndjoba*; it is dangerous to the deceased, because it does not decay as quickly as the corpse, the rugs and the mats... It must not be buried. Copper and brass still less! Because they do not even change colour. "These would call Death to the village because they remain shining; they would shine for Death and point out other people of the kraal saying: Kill!" (Viguet) Copper and brass bracelets as well as white snuff boxes are called *nhlale*, not *ndjoba* (1).

It is interesting to notice how the different belongings of the dead are dealt with, and where they are put. There are two categories. Some must disappear with the deceased, some will be kept.

To the first category belong above all his rugs; they are wrapped round his body. He sleeps in them; they must not be tied, however, because it is taboo to tie a corpse; the spirit, *shikwembu*, would become angry at being imprisoned and would cause evil (2). The mats are spread in the first hole, as well as the old jackets and trousers, because there the deceased will come and sit on them, when he goes out of his hut to rest in his square. The earthen pots, especially the old ones, are broken on the grave afterwards "to show anger against death" (Elias). The mug, which is one of them, may be occasionally put on the grave, pierced at the bottom, and offerings of beer will be poured into it later on for the dead. All these perishables are to die with him. They are called his filth (thyaka ra yena). Objects of the first category are sometimes burnt in the Northern clans.

(1) It is sometimes a matter of discussion to know what is *ndjoba* and what is not. I saw the digger tear off the buttons from the trousers of Sokis, when he was cutting them through, and throw them out of the grave. An old woman, thinking perhaps that they were not of such an incorruptible nature as iron, put them in again, and again he threw them out.

(2) It would even seem that no knot must enter a grave. Two bits of skin tied together and forming the clothing of Sokis round the loins were first untied and then thrown into the grave.

764 *The second category* includes the articles which are preserved as having still some value ; they will be hung on the tree, or placed at the foot of the tree near the grave, or in front of the abandoned hut, and will be duly purified during the next few days, as we shall see. Good baskets, new pots, assagais (1), knives, hoes etc., belong to the second category. They will afterwards be distributed amongst

Drawn by Cl. Hooton from a photo of H. A. Junod and reproduced from "Anthropos".

The grave of Sokis, a man of Rikatla.

(Sokis being an exorcist, a little hut has been built on his grave).

the heirs. In the Northern clans, seeds taken from the store of the deceased are sometimes also thrown into the grave with the words : " Go with your seeds. "

764 But let us return to the burial. The " one of the head " officiates
769 in the grave ; then all the relations help him to fill the hole. They

(1) The blade but not the handle, which is included in his " filth " and which is broken. " The handle is *he*, the blade is not *he*. "

764/769

push the sandy soil with their hands. With great care they remove every piece of root, as if to make the sand perfectly clean. This is a taboo dictated by respect for the deceased. To do otherwise would mean "to throw him away" (tshukumeta). The head has been covered with a towel and the earth is brought near it very gently. Now the digger takes two twigs from the branch of a male nkanye (the nkanye is a dioecious vegetable) and puts them into the right hand of the deceased, which is seen emerging from the rugs near his cheek. When the earth reaches the level of this arm, the latter is stretched out slowly so as to cause the two twigs to emerge. This stretching process goes on as long as it is possible to draw the arm outwards, the hole being gradually filled in. When the arm is fully extended, the digger clutches (wutla) one of the twigs and gives it to one of his helpers, who keeps it; the second remains in the hand of the deceased. Such is, at any rate, the regular way of performing the *rite of the twig*. But often one twig only is put in the hand and it is taken away as soon as the earth reaches it, without any stretching out of the arm; or it is made to emerge from the sand by gently pulling all the time, till the grave is filled in, so that, when the tumulus is formed, the end of the twig is still to be seen. The younger brother will then take it to perform the religious rite. The twig is called the *mhamba*, a word which we translate generally by offering, but which designates any object by means of which men enter into relation with the spirits of the ancestors. The officiating person sits at the foot of the tumulus. All the people sit round the grave silently, the men nearer, the women farther off. He holds the twig with the right hand and turns it round his head, making circular figures in the air (1). Then he pronounces the sacramental syllable *Tsu, tsu, tsu*, two or three times, prolonging the sound; he has called the spirits. He prays: "You, my ancestors, who are assembled to day... Do you not see this? You have taken him. I am alone now. I am dead! I pray you, who are yonder (kolaho), as he has gone back to you, that

(1) This is the kind of sacrifice called *litsañwa*, explained in Part VI, Chap. II. Its aim is to secure a good reception for the deceased on the part of the psikwembu, viz. the ancestor gods.

764 we may remain in peace. He did not leave us in anger. Let
769 us mourn him gently, in peace. Let us help each other to mourn him well, even our parents-in-law from amongst whom he has taken his wife." It may be that he forgets to say something which ought to be said ; then some of his hearers remind him quietly of the omission and he adds the words to his prayer.

764 *The wailing* (ku djila nkosi). As soon as he has finished praying, those present commence crying ; the wailing begins. The women get to their feet and shout loudly, throwing themselves on the ground. The wife of the deceased cries more than any one else : "I remain alone in the lonely plain (libalen). Where have you gone? You have left me." The wailing generally starts on a very high note and finishes a little lower, expressing the pain of the heart in a touching, penetrating manner. Here is one of these sentences, which can hardly be called a song. I heard it in 1893 at the burial of a young woman who was found drowned in the lake of Rikatla.

O my mother ! O my mother ! You have left me, where have you gone? ! (1)

The parents-in-law lament over their daughter, the new widow. Everyone then begins to lament over his own relations who have recently died. The brothers weep together without shouting. They say : "You have gone first. We shall soon follow you, because there is attraction in death."

It is during the mourning that pots, handles of assagais, etc. are broken over the grave.

761 Let us stop a little while at this point.

783 We have seen enough already to observe that, for the Thongas, death
765 (lifu) is not only a sad event, a great cause of pain on account of the bereavement, but a dreadful contaminating power which puts all objects and people in the neighbourhood of the deceased, all his relatives, even those dwelling far away, working in Johannesburg for instance, into a state of uncleanness. This uncleanness is very dangerous indeed. It kills, if not properly treated. All are not affected in the same way. There are concentric circles round the deceased : the widows are the

(1) See for the notes of this song Part V. Ch. III. B.

765 783 761 834 829 inner circle and will undergo a very rigorous purification ; the grave diggers come next ; then the inhabitants of the bereaved village, the relations residing in other villages, even the relatives of the wives of the deceased. All these being unclean are placed beyond the pale of society : "Muti wu tjumile," "the village is dark," is the technical expression. This marginal period lasts longer for those who are most affected ; one year and more for the widows, one month for the village, five or six days only for the mourners from outside. But there are many taboos in connexion with this period. Sexual relations are severely prohibited amongst married people, but the *gangisa* is not so strongly objected to, at any rate in some districts. We shall also meet with the aggregation rites by which re-entry into the ordinary mode of life is secured. The funeral rites may last for one year and are very complex. There are three great moments in the sequence of these rites : 1) *The Great Mourning* which lasts a few days, just after the burial, generally only five days. Here the purification is essentially medical and aims at cleansing the persons and the objects which were directly in contact with the deceased. 2) *The sexual rites* which tend to purify the collective life of the village by the removal of its defilement. 3) *The family rites*, consisting in gatherings of all the relatives, and accompanied by religious ceremonies. These seem to aim at restoring the life of the family, viz. of the social group, which has been diminished by the death of one of its members.

768 This general sequence is found in all the clans. But the rites themselves differ greatly ; I shall try to depict these differences clearly. My information is more complete as regards the Ronga clans, but I owe to Viguet some entirely new and very interesting material regarding the Hlabi rites.

IV. *The Great Mourning of the first five days.*

1) The Great Mourning amongst the Ba-Ronga.

764 783 [824] Just after the burial, all the inhabitants of the village go to the lake or the river to bathe. The grave-diggers nibble a *ndjao*, the root of a juncus which has magical power. Special rites will then be performed for the widows. We shall describe

764 783 them in the next chapter. When they come back from the pool, one of the men climbs on the hut and removes from its top the crown of woven grass, which was its glory during the life of its master. The hut participates in the general state of uncleanness of all his belongings. This crown will be put before the door to close it, and no one will dare to enter any more till the day of the crushing of the hut.

In the Mpfumo clans, that first evening, the grave diggers have some preliminary purification rites to go through : 1) a *hondla*, viz. an ablution with leaves of the nkuhlu tree which have been crushed in a mortar with some water ; 2) in former times they used to make a pipe with the shell of a raw sala, place in it an ember and a little hen's dung, and *smoke* this disgusting mixture.

765 783 From that first day, the grave diggers and the widows, when eating, must use special spoons *(psihanti)* made from old broken calabashes. It is taboo for them to take food with their fingers from the common plate during the five days of the Great Mourning.

The night comes. All the widows sleep in the open, their huts, which belonged to the deceased, being taboo. If it rains, they sleep in the other huts of the village.

765 755 783 On the following day, the *doctor* comes and proceeds to the medical purification of the widows and of the grave-diggers. This will consist in three successive *vapour baths*, on the first, third and fifth day after death. These *mahungulo* are administered in the same way as the one I have already described in connection with the infantile rites (p. 55). But the drugs boiled in the pot and the pills burnt in the fire are considered very powerful, especially those of the first day, so much so that the pot in which they have been prepared must be broken on the grave. The two grave-diggers and the first widow must be exposed together to this particularly powerful disinfectant, the widow keeping on her old clothing during the operation. The second and third bath, those provided for the other widows, are not so strong, and the pot can be kept. In the case of these the widow does not enter together with the grave-diggers. These rites, as

769 The bones of the dead are never disinterred. It is a taboo; grave is respected and women do not dare to till the ground over it. Often one comes across a small thick bush in the midst of mealie gardens, and one sees broken pots under the branches. It is an old grave. Later on, when no one remembers who has been buried there, agriculture regains its sway. If a bush fire has reached the sacred wood and damaged it, the person who lit it must atone by sacrificing a fowl in order to "quench" (timula) it.

REMARKS ABOUT DEATH AND BURIAL

761 These very complicated funeral rites of the Thongas clearly show the existence of three great intuitions in their minds:

783 1) Man is immortal and becomes a god through death.

775 2) There is extreme danger attached to the defilement which accompanies death. This uncleanness contaminates the community and can only be removed by collective purification.

3) The social group, being diminished by death, must be reinforced by special means (family gatherings, choice of a successor, etc.). Hence three categories of rites: *religious, purificatory* and *social*.

On the other hand some of the rites we have described present unmistakably the character of *passage rites*, because death also means a passage: for the deceased, passage from the world of the living to the world of the dead; for his relations, passage from one phase of life to another.

764 Separation from terrestrial life is symbolised for the deceased by the 775 rite of piercing the wall of the hut in order to solemnise, as it were, his official departure from his former dwelling. I should consider also as a separation rite the custom of cutting through all his garments and mats, in order to make them "draw the last breath." To effect aggregation to the new world, the grave-diggers prepare for him an underground hut and square place, they place him in his new dwelling in a sitting position (if such is the true explanation of the folding of the limbs), they direct his eyes towards the cardinal point whence his 765 ancestors have come. I have sometimes had the impression that even 775 in these rites, the idea of a marginal period, or of a period of transition, was not lacking; the deceased is not prayed to prior to the great family gatherings, which take place three, six, or twelve months after the death. Then his hut is crushed or closed. It would seem that he has gone

462 888 she has contracted such an intimate union with Mother Earth that she cannot conceive existence away from her gardens, and she crawls to them with her hoe, by a kind of instinct, till she dies.

764 The death of the woman is accompanied by the same rites as the death of a man. I must mention, however, the custom of *mahloko*, which takes place when a woman dies while still in her prime. Mahloko comes from *nhloko*, head. The explanation of this technical word is this : the parents of the woman say : "Our head (viz. a person belonging to us) has died ; let us go to mourn her."

587 Let us first see how this mourning takes place *in the Ronga clans.*

578 If the two families were very friendly, the parents of the deceased will probably bring with them a little girl, saying : "This is our little green meat (mbuti), our little orange (rather sala, fruit of the nsala tree)." They offer her to the husband to take the place of the deceased wife, and a new contract will be made. The widower will then at once pay a first part of the lobolo, £ 5 for instance, and, in the course of time, he will marry his sister-in-law. But generally the visitors are angry, and the mahloko ceremony is very unpleasant. It may be that the deceased wife had not been entirely paid for. In that case her parents will come at the end of the mourning to "claim the herd" (ramela ntlhambi).

764 578 754 But though there may be no difficult lobola question in the way, uneasiness is felt, because the brothers of the deceased cannot help thinking that their sister has been killed by witchcraft. It was not yet time for her to die ; so she must have been bewitched by the husband's family, probably by her co-wives, who were jealous of her. When the Great Mourning took place, they hardly came to the mortuary village. One or two went to see their "head," and mourned her in their own kraal. To day, the day of mahloko, they assemble, and throw bones in order to know who will have to speak, who will receive the mahloko money, whether the money has been bewitched ? The whole company starts for the mortuary village, driving a goat before them. They sit down outside in the bush with dark looks ; there is no longer any hut to receive them... They have been noticed by the

764 inhabitants of the kraal. One of them, the saluter (mulosi), goes
604 to meet them and offers them a shilling. They keep silence.
578 He tells them the news of the village. They do not answer.
754 He leaves them and comes a second time with a fresh present. Then they consent to tell the news of their home, but they do not enter the village. The same man returns to them a third time with £ 1 ; they refuse to accept it. He adds 10/. (£ 1.10 is considered the normal sum to be paid as a kind of fine by the widower to the parents of the deceased.) They refuse again : this is an insult! Happily the *ntukulu* is there ; he will act as mediator between the two families. The visitors summoned him on their arrival and he has been sitting with them the whole time ; is he not the son of their sister ? But before he went to them, his father has given him his instructions : "Tell them that I have not eaten your mother." The *ntukulu*, as we shall see, is very free with his maternal uncles. He has the right of teasing them, even insulting them. Seeing that they do not accept the money, he stands and gives vent to his grief, throws sand at them, tries to drive them away, weeps. "No! Father has not killed mother! He is not a wizard! She died a natural death!" They see his tears, and then consent to enter the village.

764 In front of the mortuary hut, all the belongings of the deceased
768 wife have been piled up, together with the straw crown of the hut :
545 her pots, plates, baskets, spoons, mortars, etc. The brothers
782 break everything. Should there be any new implements amongst
[578] them, they will perhaps give them to their nieces. Then they lift up the roof of the hut and throw it into the bush. They pick all the plaster from the walls and throw it away where they threw the roof. The sacrifice is then accomplished amidst the ruins of the destroyed hut. Whilst it is being prepared, the women of both families insult each other. The female relatives of the deceased say to the women of the village : "You have killed her because she was a splinter in your eyes" (shilabi). The others answer : "Have you seen us kill her ? Perhaps people do not die with you ?" The *bukwele*, the special jealousy which almost always exists between co-wives, explains how it is possible for them to address such amenities to each other. But the victim is

764 prepared, all the limbs cut off, the portion of the gods set apart.
782 The elder brother of the deceased woman prays in these words :
768 "My sister, go in peace, be not angry ; because we love you, we
595 have come to mourn you to-day. Do not say we have not mourned you. Go to so and so (father, grandfather, etc.), call them here, give us good sleep and good health, etc." The batukulu appropriate the offering and the mourning ends in laughter, dancing and drinking. The neighbours come and take part in the rejoicings.

When they return home, the mourners spend all the mahloko money in buying wine. They sometimes become quite intoxicated. Afterwards both families begin to visit each other again.
764 This custom of the mahloko fine is so strong that converts
768 still adhere to it. But they usually send the money to the wife's family when informing them of the death, and no other ceremony is performed.

In the Northern clans the mahloko are also paid, but it seems that the family of the widower considers that it has the right to claim the repayment of the whole lobolo, when the deceased wife has left no child to compensate for the loss. In Nondwane, though we are still in Ronga territory, when the woman dies
765 shortly after marriage the lobolo must be repaid. Further north
782 the procedure is as follows : the deceased woman is buried by her husband according to the ordinary rules ; one year elapses and a special feast is celebrated, similar to the "beer of mourning" (page 164), in the village of the wife's parents, where both families gather together and provide the necessary victims. It commences with a sacrifice in which the father of the deceased wife squeezes the *psanyi* of the goat on to those present, all the time insulting the gods who have killed his child and made trouble between the two families. He ends with words addressed to the widower's relations : "I cleanse you from your misfortune." The widower's father does the same thing, insulting also his own gods, and every one rubs his body with the green liquid squeezed from the *psanyi*. Then prayer for new blessings is offered and the sacrifice is made, as
765 customary, and the actual discussion as to claims takes place. Each family takes possession of a hut, the widower's family assembling

567 of slavery. Hundreds of them still live there and are recognisable by their very broad, coarse features. 2) The *laws of succession* 595 which regulate the present agnatic Thonga family also lead to 556 polygamy as a necessary consequence. A young brother inherits the widow of his elder brother, be he married or not. If polygamy began in this second way, its increase in later times is not to be wondered at. It answers admirably to the Bantu ideal of life. As we saw, a man who has a harem, tshengwe (page 126), is a man who has succeeded in his career! This is the regular method of becoming a rich man, an ideal which is by no means confined to the black race! On the other hand sensuality develops very quickly in the polygamic family and its very development reacts on the custom and tends to foster it.

595 I do not think the origin of polygamy can be traced with 764 certitude. However, there are amongst the Thongas some striking customs, giving to the "first" or "great wife" a special position, which seem to confirm the hypothesis of a primitive monogamy. The first of these is the ritual incision made by the first wife in the inguinal region after the death of the husband; it is not performed by the other widows (p. 200). In the same way the widower carries out this rite only after the death of the first wife and not when "little wives" die. The second is to be found in the rites of the foundation of the village; as we shall see in the next chapter, the first wife has a special part to play in these significant ceremonies. When I asked Magingi, an old Rikatla heathen, why such a difference was made between the first wife and her co-wives, he told me: "The first is the true wife and the others are but thieves. That is why it is said at the death of the first wife: the house of the husband has been crushed (a tjhobekelwi hi yindlu ya kwe). When another dies, it is only said: he has lost a wife (a felwi hi nsati)"...

595 The species of sacredness which surrounds the first wife appears 643 even more plainly in the case of the marriages of chiefs. The principal wife of the chief is in one sense not the actual first wife, but the woman who has been bought with the money collected by his subjects and whose son will be the heir to the chieftainship (See Part III). Generally the "wife of the country" is not the first

621 596 833 768 1) *Social rites.* The muti, as we have seen, is a little organised community having its own laws, amongst which the most important seems to be the law of hierarchy. The elder brother is the undisputed master and no one can supersede him. He is the owner of the village. No one must "steal it" from him. Should any one do so, the whole community would suffer and no children would be born ; the life of the organism would be deeply affected. That is the reason why the headman must go first with his principal wife to have relations with her in the new village, and thus *take possession* of it or *tie* it. For this same reason, when the headman dies, the village *must* move. It is taboo to remain in it. Until the inheritance has been distributed, it is still *his home* (kwa kwe) ; but as soon as this ceremony has taken place, the villagers must go away, and close the door with a thorny branch. The part played by the principal wife in all these ceremonies is most remarkable. It is absolutely imperative that the headman should "tie the village" with her, and not with another of his spouses. Should she be very old, the law must be observed all the same ; should she be ill, and unable to have sexual relations, the village simply cannot be moved. In the Northern clans we see her taking the shield and the assagai, closing the village and "giving it" to the inmates, even performing a sacrifice and praying to the gods. It is very rare to see a woman presiding at a public religious ceremony ; but she is the owner of the village as well as the headman. Moving is imperative when she dies as well as after the death of the headman. The main gate must also be closed and a new entrance made in the fence to be used during the year of mourning ; in the case of her death, this opening must be made on the left of the regular *mharana*, whilst, when the husband dies, it is made on the right side ; just as in the hut, when the corpse is removed for burial. (See page 138.)

621 595 562 768 764

351 789 621 2) *Protective rites.* These are those which concern the fence. This fence does not afford material protection. The branches dry up very soon and, in the case of a bush-fire, for instance, they would do more harm than good. It is a spiritual protection, a barrier of charms, of magic influences, to prevent the entrance of wizards and of all the hostile powers of the bush. We shall understand this better when treating of witchcraft superstitions. (Part VI.)

182 621 829 3) *Passage rites.* The reader will have been surprised to observe amongst the ceremonies of the moving of villages, many features which we have already met with in the circumcision school, or in the mourning customs. At first sight there seems to be no relation whatever between the moving of a village, the initiation of boys and the

727 They have killed... So they are exposed to the mysterious and
775 deadly influence of the *nuru* and must consequently undergo a
828 medical treatment. What is the *nuru* ? *Nuru* is the spirit of the
783 slain which tries to take its revenge on the slayer. It haunts him
789 and may drive him into insanity : his eyes swell, protrude and
761 become inflamed. He will go out of his mind, be attacked by giddiness (ndzululwan) and the thirst for blood may lead him to fall upon members of his own family and to stab them with his assagay. To prevent such misfortunes, a special medication is required : the slayers must *lurulula tiyimpi ta bu*, take away the nuru of their sanguinary expedition. (Lurulula comes from nuru, plur. miluru (1).

In what does this treatment consist ? The slayers must remain for some days at the capital. They are taboo. They put on old clothes, eat with special spoons because their hands are

764 (1) We met with the notion of *nuru* for the first time à propos of the rite of
775 luma (p. 400) ; we shall find it again when dealing with hunting customs (Part IV).
761 The nuru is to be feared not only in the case of slain enemies but in connexion with any human corpse. As a proof, I may quote the following curious story which Spoon told me and of the truth of which he was fully convinced. A traveller died under the great fig-tree of Libombo (near Rikatla). He had climbed on to the tree and fallen on his own stick, which he had planted in the ground. He was not buried, as no one knew him. So his corpse fell into decomposition on the spot; his skull became white. Later on a bush fire burnt all the grass and the skull was
764 seen for years "saying mpha" (it was shining), the teeth "saying bva" (descriptive
775 adverb, same meaning). One day the boys of Libombo went to pick wild figs from the tree and again saw the skull. Spoon was one of them. The fire had just passed
755 by again. "We beat it with our sticks and amused ourselves by rolling it over like a
789 ball. We did not know it was a human skull... When we got home we began to be seized by the drunkenness of nuru, the disease of those who have killed a man. During
761 the night we were delirious (hanta-hanteka), our eyes swelled and were full of exudations (malanga), the four of us, Tsukela, Tlabin, Sibakuze and myself. Next morning my uncle went to the fig-tree and saw that we had killed a man there! The medicine-man who understands the treatment of nuru, Dudela, who had been a slayer in war, called us to his village. We stood in a line before him ; he poured a little of his powder into the hands of each one of us, took a little in his mouth, rubbed his forehead. Then he insulted us saying : "You will die! Who began beating that skull ?" Each of us denied having given the first blow. Then he said : "Take care! Do not go there any more nor near that nkuhlu tree where another corpse has been burnt under the leaves! Go away."

514 When a man has murdered another in a scuffle, he can replace this nuru medicine
789 by his own urine. He must drink a little of it and rub his forehead with it. The giddiness will pass away. If the murder has been committed from a distance, as with
775 a gun, the nuru is not so much to be feared, as the enemy was far away. A little of the medicine will be sufficient to treat the murderer. Spoon is ignorant of the compo-
626 sition of the nuru drug.
761

775 remains *in his grave*. Is not his grave his house (I. p. 137)? Does
776 he not sit on his square, where his mats have been unrolled? Thus
787 the life of the shikwembu seems to be the exact continuation of his earthly existence. That such is the idea is proved by the two bones which represent the gods in the set of divinatory bones : 1) the astragalus or nail of an ant-bear, because ant-bears live in the earth, and come out only during the night ; 2) the astragalus of an antelope, found in the excrement of a hyena ; the hyena ate the antelope, and swallowed the bone, which came to light again ; in the same way the gods have been buried in the ground, and reveal themselves later on. (Compare Ch. III. D.) A third idea, more or less intermediate between the other two, is that the gods reside *in the sacred woods*, and there lead their family life in human form, parents and children, even little children, who are carried on their mothers' shoulders. Mboza went so far as to say that they are married and bring forth children, as children are seen on their mothers' backs. Here again, we find the life of the other world regarded as the exact reproduction of this terrestrial existence.

4) The Sacred Woods.

764 These are vast, almost impenetrable thickets, in which the
769 ancient chiefs have been buried ; they are called *ntimu*, (mu-mi) cemeteries. Every clan owns one or more of these burying places.
778 The ntimu is reserved for the men of the royal family, those who have been the owners of the land. They are buried in different sections of the forest, "according to their villages," in such a way that the wood represents separate cemeteries, corresponding to the

171 they bear the marks, and only in that case does he take them to Nyambe (See *Ames primitives*, Th. Burnier, Paris Mission, 102, Boulevard Arago).

The Ba-Chopi believe that their ancestor-gods dwell in rivers. They have no fear of the graves where the deceased have been buried, and even till the ground over them, asserting that the bones alone remain in the earth, the ghosts themselves having departed into the river where they are heard singing, dancing, and playing on antelope horns. When the chiefs make a national offering, they mix the meat with water when they present it to their gods, and the one officiating turns his eyes towards the river when he prays. He places the part of the victim which has been cut out for the gods on the bank of the river, and everybody goes home. The gods come when all have gone and take the offering. It is taboo to remain on the spot and to be seen by them!

villages of the living. No woman, and no uterine nephew is buried in the official cemeteries. 764 769

These woods are taboo. It is forbidden to gather fuel there, to cut down any tree, or to allow the bush fire to enter them. Should anyone have imprudently set fire to the grass in the neighbourhood, and be unable to extinguish the blaze, and should the fire thus pass over a grave, he must provide a goat for sacrifice, in order to "extinguish" (timula) the sacred wood. All entry is strictly prohibited except to the guardian of the wood (mutameli wa ntimu), the priest, who is the descendant of the gods of the forest. He goes there from time to time, to offer the sacrifices. He penetrates into the dense foliage by a narrow path, hardly perceptible. I have often visited one of the most celebrated woods, that of Libombo, two miles east of the Rikatla station. The old Libombo chiefs were buried there, and Nkolele, the proprietor of the forest, was very proud of it. He asserted that Mahazule, the chief of Nondwane, belonging to the reigning family of Mazwaya, whose forefathers had conquered the land of Nondwane, feared the spot and, in order to avoid it, took a circuitous route to Lourenço-Marques, or, if forced to take that road, stopped near the wood to pay his respects to the old chiefs buried there. I did not see anything remarkable in that wood. Forcing my way through the bushes, brambles, and creepers I at length came to a sort of tumulus, but very slightly raised, on which were to be seen some dried leaves of maize, the remains of offerings placed there some time previously. The young man who acted as my guide — considerably against his inclination, I fancy, — turned away his face, with a terrified expression, when we came upon this grave. In another spot I found some other tombs. Snakes thrive, naturally, in these thickets, where they are undisturbed, but I did not see any on that occasion. No mausoleum has been built over any of these venerated sepulchres ; a few pieces of old blackened pottery were all we saw — the remnants of the jugs and plates belonging to the deceased, which were broken on the spot after his death. 778

The dread in which these sacred woods are held by the Natives is certainly not due to any unusual objects they may have seen 769 778 538

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301 and knocked out of shape by a blow or if its owner goes through
885 thorny bushes. A *khehla* who has some self-respect will frequently
554 polish and repair this valuable ornament, for it is a sign of mature
482 age. He who has been ordered by the chief to wear it no longer
645 carries burdens on his head; his crown would be spoilt! He will
461 be accompanied by a boy who carries his parcels; he himself will only carry his stick or his assagai. He will at once be known as one of the mature men of the tribe. This is not to say that the mere fact of wearing the *ngiyana* gives the right of taking part in the important affairs of the country; the counsellors alone possess this right; but from amongst the "crowned," will be chosen the man who is sent to another chief to treat of political questions, for instance.

301 When the hair grows (for, though it is curly, it may become long), the crown rises with it and becomes more or less unsteady, which must be most uncomfortable! The best thing would be to cut the ornament off and then replace it. Mr. Mandjia, one of our neighbours at Rikatla, was probably too lazy to undertake this job, so he put a small red handkerchief between his skull and the crown to prevent it from wobbling.

765 At a certain time all the *ngiyana* disappeared from the land of
643 Nondwane. The chief Mapunga was dead! The loss, kept
554 secret for a year, had been made public, and the law requires all the
885 mature men to take off their crowns when the sovereign of the country is dead. They take the wax from the frame, and make a ball of it; this they fix on a little stick, and place this stick in the roof of their hut above the door. The frame is hung up quite close by, and they leave these objects there till the new chief orders his subjects to re-make their crowns. This shows clearly that the crowning custom is in close relation with the national life of the tribe. The "makhehla" also form special battalions in the army.

178 Nowadays, however, this custom is not observed as religiously
854 as in bygone times. Life is harder, one must go and earn pounds sterling in the port of Lourenço Marques, or in the gold mines, and one can no longer indulge in a lazy life! It may therefore happen that a poor man will refuse to wear the crown, and say to

764 we may remain in peace. He did not leave us in anger. Let us mourn him gently, in peace. Let us help each other to mourn
769 him well, even our parents-in-law from amongst whom he has taken his wife." It may be that he forgets to say something which ought to be said ; then some of his hearers remind him quietly of the omission and he adds the words to his prayer.

764 *The wailing* (ku djila nkosi). As soon as he has finished praying, those present commence crying ; the wailing begins. The women get to their feet and shout loudly, throwing themselves on the ground. The wife of the deceased cries more than any one else : "I remain alone in the lonely plain (libalen). Where have you gone? You have left me." The wailing generally starts on a very high note and finishes a little lower, expressing the pain of the heart in a touching, penetrating manner. Here is one of these sentences, which can hardly be called a song. I heard it in 1893 at the burial of a young woman who was found drowned in the lake of Rikatla.

O my mother ! O my mother ! You have left me, where have you gone? ! (1)

The parents-in-law lament over their daughter, the new widow. Everyone then begins to lament over his own relations who have recently died. The brothers weep together without shouting. They say : "You have gone first. We shall soon follow you, because there is attraction in death."

It is during the mourning that pots, handles of assagais, etc. are broken over the grave.

761 Let us stop a little while at this point.

783 We have seen enough already to observe that, for the Thongas, death
765 (lifu) is not only a sad event, a great cause of pain on account of the bereavement, but a dreadful contaminating power which puts all objects and people in the neighbourhood of the deceased, all his relatives, even those dwelling far away, working in Johannesburg for instance, into a state of uncleanness. This uncleanness is very dangerous indeed. It kills, if not properly treated. All are not affected in the same way. There are concentric circles round the deceased : the widows are the

(1) See for the notes of this song Part V. Ch. III. B.

765 inner circle and will undergo a very rigorous purification ; the grave
783 diggers come next ; then the inhabitants of the bereaved village, the
relations residing in other villages, even the relatives of the wives of the
761 deceased. All these being unclean are placed beyond the pale of
834 society : "Muti wu tjumile," "the village is dark," is the technical
expression. This marginal period lasts longer for those who are
829 most affected ; one year and more for the widows, one month for the village, five or six days only for the mourners from outside. But there are many taboos in connexion with this period. Sexual relations are severely prohibited amongst married people, but the *gangisa* is not so strongly objected to, at any rate in some districts. We shall also meet with the aggregation rites by which re-entry into the ordinary mode of life is secured. The funeral rites may last for one year and are very complex. There are three great moments in the sequence of these rites : 1) *The Great Mourning* which lasts a few days, just after the burial, generally only five days. Here the purification is essentially medical and aims at cleansing the persons and the objects which were directly in contact with the deceased. 2) *The sexual rites* which tend to purify the collective life of the village by the removal of its defilement. 3) *The family rites*, consisting in gatherings of all the relatives, and accompanied by religious ceremonies. These seem to aim at restoring the life of the family, viz. of the social group, which has been diminished by the death of one of its members.

768 This general sequence is found in all the clans. But the rites themselves differ greatly ; I shall try to depict these differences clearly. My information is more complete as regards the Ronga clans, but I owe to Viguet some entirely new and very interesting material regarding the Hlabi rites.

IV. *The Great Mourning of the first five days.*

1) The Great Mourning amongst the Ba-Ronga.

764 Just after the burial, all the inhabitants of the village go to
783 the lake or the river to bathe. The grave-diggers nibble a
[824] *ndjao*, the root of a juncus which has magical power. Special rites will then be performed for the widows. We shall describe

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764 783 them in the next chapter. When they come back from the pool, one of the men climbs on the hut and removes from its top the crown of woven grass, which was its glory during the life of its master. The hut participates in the general state of uncleanness of all his belongings. This crown will be put before the door to close it, and no one will dare to enter any more till the day of the crushing of the hut.

In the Mpfumo clans, that first evening, the grave diggers have some preliminary purification rites to go through: 1) a *hondla*, viz. an ablution with leaves of the nkuhlu tree which have been crushed in a mortar with some water; 2) in former times they used to make a pipe with the shell of a raw sala, place in it an ember and a little hen's dung, and *smoke* this disgusting mixture.

765 783 From that first day, the grave diggers and the widows, when eating, must use special spoons *(psihanti)* made from old broken calabashes. It is taboo for them to take food with their fingers from the common plate during the five days of the Great Mourning.

The night comes. All the widows sleep in the open, their huts, which belonged to the deceased, being taboo. If it rains, they sleep in the other huts of the village.

765 755 783 On the following day, the *doctor* comes and proceeds to the medical purification of the widows and of the grave-diggers. This will consist in three successive *vapour baths*, on the first, third and fifth day after death. These *mahungulo* are administered in the same way as the one I have already described in connection with the infantile rites (p. 55). But the drugs boiled in the pot and the pills burnt in the fire are considered very powerful, especially those of the first day, so much so that the pot in which they have been prepared must be broken on the grave. The two grave-diggers and the first widow must be exposed together to this particularly powerful disinfectant, the widow keeping on her old clothing during the operation. The second and third bath, those provided for the other widows, are not so strong, and the pot can be kept. In the case of these the widow does not enter together with the grave-diggers. These rites, as

765 well as the obligation of using special spoons, refer only to the
783 diggers and the widows.

Other rites must be performed by the whole community.

302 First the *cutting of the hair*, which must be complete for the widows and the near relations. Men sometimes cut only one strand on each side, women cut from the forehead to the nape of the neck. The operation is performed either by the doctor or by anybody who is familiar with it, and the instrument used is either an iron razor or a bit of glass. They say this shaving is an act of respect for the dead, also a sign of sadness and a means of preventing the *mayiha*, the impression of the hair standing on end from fear of death. Should mourners forget to cut their hair, they might lose their senses, and become delirious (hahama).

765 Then they put on *malopo*, viz, pieces of dark blue cotton
783 cloth which have been used for a long time amongst the Ba-Ronga.
604 The first widow must have them before she enters the enclosure of the second vapour bath.

A third general rite is the *luma milomo*, the purification of the food of the deceased. This is not a medicinal operation, but it seems that, by this act, every relative removes from himself the danger which is in the contaminated food. The word *luma*, which we shall often find in the Thonga ritual, means originally to bite (like a dog) or to cause violent, internal pain (colic or pains of labour). But in the ritual terminology it means to accomplish certain rites in relation to some given food in order to remove the danger which is attached to it. The *milomo* are seeds of each kind of cereal which the deceased had in his storehouses. Some beans, grains of maize, kaffir corn, kaffir peas, etc., are cooked and poured into one of the baskets (lihlelo) of the deceased. The *ntukulu*, viz. the uterine nephew, the son of the sister of the deceased, is first called. It is he who must begin the rite and this is so important that, when people go to pay their mourning visit, they always take with them a girl or a boy who is a " ntukulu " of the one they mourn. The child stands before the pot, his feet together. The master of the mourning, (in this case, the first widow) kneels before him, takes a few drops from the pot, and some of the cooked food which remains at the bottom, and pours

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765 this between his great toes. He bends his body and rubs the
783 two great toes against one another. Then he turns his back to
604 the place and goes away. He must not look behind : it is taboo. Then the other relatives say : " Let us all go and *luma milomo.* " He has given them the right to do so.

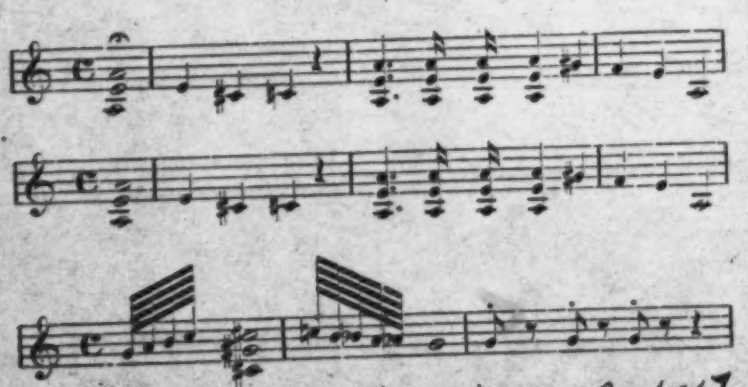
765 A little of the *milomo* is carefully kept in a pot for months.
783 When relatives who were absent on the day of the death come back from Johannesburg or from elsewhere, they must perform this ceremony before entering the village and eating any food in it. " Ba yila muti " — " they are taboo to the village." The rule applies only to relatives. Other people may very well eat from the deceased's store of food without any harm, as its contamination is dangerous only to his family. Another variety of this rite consists in preparing light beer with the mealies of the dead and taking first one mouthful which must be spat out on the right side, then a second one on the left side, after which one is allowed to drink.

765 The *gardens* of the deceased must also be purified, and this is
783 done by the rite called *baninga mabele*, to give light to the mealies.
415 The widows and all the female relatives go to his fields holding an old and empty *shikutja*. The shikutja is the hard shell of a sala fruit, the size of an orange, in which has been kept the provision of vegetable *tihuhlu* fat (see Part IV) and which is still impregnated with it. The women set fire to it and walk through the gardens holding it up and illuminating the fields. This is perhaps in relation to the idea that death means darkness, and that its contamination is " black " (ntima) so long as the cleansing has not taken place.

765 During the five days of the Great Mourning, relatives and
574 friends come to pay the *official mourning visit* (1). They enter the village, the women shouting their lamentations (mikulungwana). Some one leads them to the grave and they walk round it uttering cries of mourning, taking leave of the deceased. At the burial of Sokis, I heard a woman saying with a trembling voice : " Goodbye! You have gone! Do not forget us. Remember Mulalen."

(1) This visit can be paid one, two, or three months later on, because, as they say, " nkosi a pei boli, " — " the mourning does not get rotten." But it is only during the five days that dances take place.

765 Mulalen was Sokis' little daughter. They bring with them
574 presents, five hundred reis, a hen, a goat, some light beer, perhaps
177 a mat for the widow because hers has been thrown away or a piece
273 of mourning cloth. The inhabitants receive them politely, and spread mats on the ground for them. They tell each other the news (djungulisana). Then after having *luma*, they eat and drink. The Ba-Ronga have their drink already prepared: it is the red wine
765 which Banyan merchants sell to them all over the country. The
533 visitors get drunk. They dance, and the mourning ceremony turns into an orgy with dances and songs of all kinds. The singing during this Great Mourning consists either of war songs executed by the men, which are very impressive, or of ordinary dancing songs, the licentious ones being particularly appropriate and being performed by women. (Annotatio 9)[1]. In fact they are the proper mourning songs, those which are specially chosen when it is wished duly to lament a great man. I have witnessed these performances at a mourning ceremony of the " breaking of the hut " and shall refer to this subject again. In Vol. II. Part V Ch. II. B. I shall quote some of the mourning songs which have a peculiar stoic character. Here are two others from a collection made by Mrs Audéoud, the wife of one of our missionaries. They were sung at the death of the chief Tshutsha, near Makulane in the Maputju country. One of these was a war song accompanied with drums. It sounded as follows :



1 [see p. 517 in these categories or in 116--Analysis]

765 533 The other is a curious apostrophe to the wizards who were believed to have bewitched the deceased, and means : " Good bye, wizard! Good bye, wizard! You will kill people. You come to kill people, you come during the night. "

765 783 But the *closing day* arrives at last, the *day of the sprinkling* (shuba). When the grave-diggers have well perspired in their vapour bath, the doctor takes the pot in which the medicine is still boiling. All the women sit down with their children on their backs, the men stand in a line, holding their assagais and sticks in their hands. The doctor sprinkles his decoction over them all with a branch covered with leaves. The children cry because the burning drops hurt them. The women try to hide behind each other. The men gesticulate as if striking enemies with their assagais ; this is to show that their arms are strong and that they can now go to the war, as it would have been taboo for them to join the army before this purification had taken place. Should a man be absent from home, his sticks are also brought to the sprinkling to be purified (1). Then the doctor goes with his pot, sprinkling all the village, the huts, the doors, the backs of the roofs, the fence, the belongings of the deceased which are kept to be distributed amongst the heirs. After this operation, the village is pure as far as material things are concerned. The contamination which had fallen on all of them by reason of their owner's death is removed. Before the sprinkling it would have been dangerous to remove anything. Now if any one should have left anything in the kraal before the death, he can come and recover it. This is the act by which " the mourning is scattered " (hangalasa nkosi).

765 292 Visitors go home, having put on their *malopa*, if they are Ba-Ronga ; strings of milala palm leaves round their heads, their necks, arms, and legs, if they belong to Northern clans. The custom of wearing a white handkerchief round the head is spreading. If a goat is killed, every one wears a bracelet made of its skin round the wrist, and the widow and the principal grave-digger

(1) In the Northern clans, says Viguet, a little of this mixture is kept to sprinkle, visitors during the following days, because " they are taboo for the things of the village, not having been cleansed ; " (ba yila psa le mutin, hikuba a ba basiswanga.)

765 put strings, made from the same skin, over their breasts. The
292 widow adds new strings when other goats are killed during the mourning visits which will take place later on, and until the adjudication of the inheritance. It is a sign that her husband is dead (a feliwile).

2) The Great Mourning in the Northern clans.

765 The foregoing is the sequence of the rites of the Great Mourning
783 in the Ronga clans. In the Northern clans, according to Viguet, the same elements are found, but in another form.

825 As soon as the mourning lamentations begin, the grave-diggers
278 send some men to fetch the *tinyele*, which are bits of skin taken from the soles of elephants' feet. These are burnt on charcoal, together with cocks' dung, and the mourners come and inhale the smoke with reeds, when they are tired of wailing. The *tinyele* are considered to be a powerful medicine. It is taboo to eat or even to snuff before having inhaled this smoke.

765 That first night, everyone sleeps in the open, and the
783 grave-diggers are not allowed to use their mats. They must cut grass to cover them for fear that their impurity might contaminate the mats. As usual, sexual relations are suspended between married people, but the *bugango* is not taboo in the Northern clans, as girls (psigango) are not wives (basati). When, on the following days, visitors come to the mourning, they go straight to the grave with a small basket of mealies and spread them over it saying. "Go! Die! You have left us." This spreading of mealies is a *mhamba*, an offering. Then the doctor comes. It seems that his operations last only three days. There are no vapour baths properly speaking, but the doctor burns his powders together with bits of bark in broken pots, and all the mourners come and inhale the smoke through reeds, as they did on the first day.

The *purification of the food* is performed by a rite which corresponds with the *lumisa milomo* of the Rongas. The doctor

765/783

cooks the mealie pap together with a certain drug. He prepares "bupsa bya muri," the medicinal porridge. The grave-diggers make a ball of this food, while it is still hot, and act as if they were throwing some of it into their mouths, but in reality they throw it over their shoulders. Then they put some more porridge into their mouths and eat it. The master of the mourning then takes the food and goes all over the village to perform this ceremony for all present. This is done also for the visitors arriving during the following days. Under no other condition would they be allowed to eat food in the village!

As regards the purification of the food for relatives who may come for a visit later on, after the Great Mourning, it is obtained by the rite called *mafularela*. "Fularela" means to turn one's back to another person. The day the absent one comes back to the mortuary village, the master of the mourning, the woman who has begun the *hlamba ndjaka* (see later on), takes one of the big wooden spoons which are used to distribute the porridge ; she pours water into it and puts salt into the water. Then she puts into it a glowing cinder. The water partly evaporates. She then kneels down in front of the new comer, turning her back to him, passes the spoon round her waist from left to right and afterwards gives it to him to drink; this ceremony removes the *yila* of the food. Should it not be performed the food would cause disease or even death to the returning relative.

The master of the mourning, or of the death (ñwinyi wa rifu), the wife of the deceased or the grave-digger who held the head in the burial, accomplishes a second act of purification or of strengthening for all the mourners ; it is called the *nganganya*. The doctor takes a bulb of a big Lilliacea called *gonwa* (Crinum Forbesii), crushes it, adds to it some medecine and warms it on a stone which has been heated in the fire. The operation then begins with the infants. The grave-digger covers his fingers with this substance and, standing behind the child, puts the fingers of both hands into its umbilicus and brings them round its waist, pressing them firmly against the skin until they meet again on the spine. Should a child not yet have had the string tied round his loins (boha puri, see page 56), the strap of its ntehe alone will be

765 anointed with the medicine. As regards adults, the operation of
783 *maganyo* is performed as follows ; the master of the mourning
516 passes his hand down from the knee to the toes. This rite[1] is evidently in connexion with the act of walking, which is thus purified, and with standing upright (yima), which means health and strength.

765 *Cutting the hair* is also a medicinal act amongst the Hlabis.
783 The physician takes a broken pot, pours into it water and a
302 purifying powder, washes the head of the deceased's wife with this preparation and cuts her hair with a razor. Everyone takes a little of the mixture and washes his own head, and they then shave each other. The hair is thrown away into the bush, not on the grave.

765 The Great Mourning is concluded by the *phunga*, the sprinkling,
783 corresponding to the Ronga *shuba*, which is performed exactly in the same way while the water is still boiling. The doctor sprinkles
177 a whole potful on the people ; then he pours fresh water into the
231 pot and sprinkles the doors, the back part of the kraals of the oxen and of the goats. —"How about the pigs ?" I asked Viguet. He laughed heartily! —"The pigs? They are nothing ! They have come from the White people They are so new to the country that lately the Pedis killed them outside the villages and the men only ate their flesh!" The pig has no part in the Bantu ritual!

V. *Sexual rites of purification.*

765 This is a most curious and mysterious subject and, to understand
783 it thoroughly, it is necessary to penetrate deeply into the Bantu mind and to forget our own conceptions of conjugal life. I hope
834 none of my readers will be shocked by ceremonies which are evidently performed with the greatest earnestness and are a real aspiration toward purity, purity as it is conceived by a tribe still plunged in the dim notions of collective morality.

1 [among the Northern clans --Analyst]

765 These rites are somewhat different in the Hlabi and Ronga clans.
783 They are called in the Northern clans *hlamba ndjaka*, in the
834 Southern *lahla khombo*. I will begin with the description of the first, as being the most characteristic. Viguet, who has seen them practised, and who took part in them himself, gave me a graphic description of them.

Ndjaka means two things. Firstly, the objects left by the deceased, which will pass to his heirs in the course of time. The heirs are called *badyi ba ndjaka*, the eaters of the ndjaka. But *ndjaka* also signifies the frightful malediction accompanying death: "it is something which kills a great many men." Therefore the *ndjaka* must be washed away; *hlamba* means precisely to wash away.

This malediction or dangerous impurity contaminates objects, which must be cleansed by the sprinkling (phunga) as we have seen; but it affects still more deeply the village as a whole, the *muti*, the organism which is at the base of all Thonga society, and which has a life of its own, a collective life. That life must be purified. During the whole mourning, and even during the last days of the deceased, when death was threatening, all sexual relations have been forbidden. Why? Because the village was in a state of contamination... "Muti wu tjumile." It cannot return to the ordinary course of life without a special collective purification.

765 Let us see how this is managed on a particularly serious occasion,
783 when the headman or other great personage dies. Some weeks
835 after the burial, all the married people of the village assemble, the men apart, the women apart. They discuss in what order the different couples must proceed to the purifying act. They question each other to know if each one has duly observed the law of continence. Should one of them confess that he has sinned (dyoha), he will have to take the lead. Should he have sinned and not confess it, he will be very guilty. But he himself will suffer for his bad action; he has stolen the inheritance (a yibe ndjaka), and it will not be wonderful if he begins to cough, grows thin and dies of consumption! If there has been no transgression of the law, then the master of the mourning will have to begin. He goes out of the village with his wife

765 to the bush. There they have sexual relations in the ritual
783 fashion, viz. s. n. i. (See Annotatio 2)[1] They come back by
833 separate ways. The woman has taken with her a pot full of water ; she goes straight with it to a certain spot, which has been decided upon during the discussion, either in front of the main entrance of the village or at the door of the hut. There she washes her hands which contain "their impurity" (thyaka ra bona). All the other couples do the same, each woman coming in her turn to cleanse her impurity at the same place. When this is over, the men also come to this spot and stamp on the ground. Sticks belonging to absent young men, or a piece of clothing of a girl who happens to be away from home, are also brought to this spot and are purified. The same is done to the straps of the ntehe of the infant, as we have seen, but he is not allowed to be present, as it might cause his death. When the purifying act is finished in all its phases, men and women go to the river and bathe; the men higher up, the women lower down. (Annotatio 6)[2]

Such is the *hlamba ndjaka* amongst the Thongas of the North, when the life of the village has been deeply affected by the death of an important member of the community. The rite is performed with less publicity when a child dies. Then the act takes place, not outside, in the bush, but inside the hut, as it is a private mourning. Should the husband have had regular intercourse with his wife before this purification has been carried out, it is a very great sin. His wife will go and confess their fault to one of the women of the village. This woman will tell it to her husband's mother, who will have to find the remedy. The guilty husband must not eat at all... If he eats, he will have eaten the contamination of death (u mitile rifu). The *hlamba ndjaka* of the whole village will have to take place. (Annotatio 7)[1]

765 The hlamba ndjaka concerns first of all the inhabitants of the
783 mortuary village, but it sometimes extends to the parents of the
595 women of that village, who dwell, of course, in other places. If the first wife of a man dies, his second wife, the one with whom the widower has begun the purifying operation at home, will have to go to her own parents *to give them water* (ku ha mati), as they say, viz, to cleanse them. She takes with her in a pot a portion of the

1 [See p. 516 in these categories or in 116--Analyst]
2 [See p. 577 in these categories or in 116--Analyst]

765 water used for the purification, arriving early in the morning in the
783 neighbourhood of the paternal kraal, and calls her mother. Then
595 she washes her hands on the spot and all her relatives will come and stamp on the ground. This is considered a great duty which a married daughter ought never to forget, otherwise she is said to have turned her back on her parents (a ba fularelile). They will be angry with her and not visit her for at least a year (Annotatio 8).[1] The woman who has done this is called "the one who has cleansed the inheritance" (muhlantsi wa ndjaka). She has taken upon her the contamination, but she will not suffer from it, because she belongs to another family, and the contamination of death is dangerous more especially to the people who are of the same blood as the deceased. This woman will assuredly be praised and even rewarded with two hoes. When she goes to her relatives "to give them water," she will make a present of these two hoes to her father, who will say: "All right! You have cleansed those people." Then she will have the right of adorning herself with the bracelets of her deceased co-wife! Old women no longer having sexual intercourse are allowed to appropriate the old clothing of a deceased woman.

765 The Ba-Ronga do not know the expression hlamba ndjaka.
783 They have a corresponding rite, performed in the same manner,
833 which they call *lahla khombo*. *Khombo* means misfortune, *lahla*, to throw away. It is the medicine of death (muri wa lifu), said Magingi, an old heathen of Rikatla. It is also said "to heal the mourning" (daha nkosi). This rite more especially concerns the grave-diggers. The one who carried the legs of the deceased begins. The sexual relations take place very early in the morning. When his wife comes back, she washes her hands at the door of her hut, and all the inhabitants of the village come and stamp on the wet place; then they enter the hut. The doctor comes and prepares a steam bath for the man. Then the second grave-digger performs his *lahla khombo*, and the same gathering of all the members of the community takes place before his hut. Afterwards the village is pure. But if the grave-diggers are cleansed, the widows are not yet purified, and we shall see that, for them, the *lahla hkombo* will last much longer.

1 [See p. 677 In these categories or in 116--Analyst]

765 A man who transgresses the law of continence before the lahla
783 khombo is said in Ronga to have "crossed the village" (a
834 tjemakanya muti). He has taken the mourning (nkosi), the misfortune (khombo) upon himself. He will have sores all over his body and will begin to cough (consumption).

Amongst the Rongas, it seems also that the *bugango* is prohibited in mortuary villages during the marginal period. The men even
[115] prevent boys going to the villages to see their girls, says Mbekwa, an old inhabitant of Nondwane.

VI. *Family rites.*

765 After two or three months, a first gathering of the whole family of the deceased takes place. Amongst the Ba-Ronga its function is to close or break down the mortuary hut. Amongst the Northern clans, no relation is established between this family gathering and the fate of the hut. But everywhere its principal aim seems to be to restore the family whose head has been removed by death, and which must be reorganised.

1) Amongst the Ba-Ronga.

For the Ba-Ronga the habitation of the deceased is tabooed. It is a *shira* (grave), as well as the place in which he has been buried and, for this reason, it must be destroyed. But this destruction is not accomplished at once. Some time must elapse (1), two, three, nine months, before the family gathering takes place. I witnessed it near Rikatla on December 15th 1907 and can therefore describe this rite in detail.

Manyibane had died five or six months previously. He was

(1) At any rate, such is the old law. But nowadays the Rongas sometimes crush the hut at once during the five days to save trouble. This was done in the case of Soka.

765 the headman of a large village in the Shifimbatlelo district (18 miles North of Lourenço Marques). His son Mugwanu had been chosen to take his place, but Manyibane had a younger brother, called Fenis, who had taken care of the village in the meantime. All the relatives were assembled. Groups were formed under all the trees. At 4. 30 p. m. the men began to gather near the old black-roofed hut ; one of them, an elderly man, took between [824] his teeth a piece of a root of a special juncus, called *sungi*, bit off a little of it and, after having chewed this substance, rubbed both his legs with it (evidently to find courage and strength for the work he was undertaking) and penetrated into the old hut. He came back bringing with him a dozen beautiful white eggs!.. The hen did not know that the habitation of the deceased was a tabooed grave, and had laid her eggs in this convenient refuge! Then all the men approached and began to pull out the poles of the wall, digging on both sides of each pole ; some of them lifted the roof so as to make room enough for the poles to be pulled out. This work was accomplished with great care ; the earth was carefully placed in a pot and slowly poured out some distance away ; the poles were gently laid down in front of the entrance, on the top of the door, which had been previously placed there, thus forming a regular heap. These precautions are taken out of respect for the deceased. . It would be an insult to him to do otherwise, and a relation guilty of such an offence "would at once be seized by colic, the disease of the wolves (masule)." Some boys, clad in European dress, threw the poles violently on the ground. Spoon laughed : "They know the *shilungo*, the ways of the White men," he said. "They have lost their respect!"

765 342 When all the poles were removed and there remained only the reeds of the wall, the men jumped on the roof. The roof is a big conical basket made of sticks tied together and covered with grass. It at once sank down under their weight. But they wished to flatten the cone, to crush it down to the level of the 765 soil. Therefore some of the men pulled the sticks out of the roof to lessen the resistance ; some kicked it in order to break the sticks. They could not succeed ; the cone was still there more or

765 less out of shape. In the end they brought axes and chopped all round, about half way up the cone, and with loud shouts brought the destroyed hut level with the ground. Everything belonging to it will be left there to rot. No one dares to remove or to burn this ruin. It is a taboo (1).

The men were satisfied. They had succeeded : "The mourning had not overcome them," (nkosi a wu ba hlulanga), as would have been the case had one of them met with an accident during the operation. Some pots full of water were brought and they washed their hands and their faces conscientiously. They retired a while and all the members of the family, the women included, came and settled themselves as shown on the accompanying illustration of the scene. In front of the crushed hut *(1)*, in the space between it and the small hut of the first widow *(3)*, the old men sat down *(4)*, near them the *batukulu*, viz. the uterine nephews of the deceased *(5)*, their wives, and a few old women *(6)*. The other men *(10)* and women of mature age *(9)* took their places between the neighbouring huts, leaving a wide place for the dance.

765 The brother of the deceased, Fenis, brought on his shoulders a
782 young goat. Two hens and a cock were provided, in all two male and two female offerings. Some branches covered with leaves were spread before the heaps of poles *(2)*, and the *batukulu* began to kill the victims. One of them took the cock by the legs, his brother held the head and cut the neck half through. At each cut of the knife, all the women uttered their *mikulungwana* (piercing cries). He threw the fowl down, still alive and panting. They did the same with the three fowls, everybody laughing and amused at seeing them jump before they died. Then one of the *batukulu* seized the goat by one of the forelegs, lifted it up as high as he could, and planted an assagai under its shoulders, trying to reach the heart. The face of the goat was turned towards the North (2). At once more mikulugwane! The animal was crying

(1) In a neighbouring district, one of our evangelists built a chapel near the ruin of the chief Gwabe. For months it was impossible to remove that ugly decaying roof; those on the spot were opposed to it and the chieftainess of the Mabota district gave permission only because the evangelist was connected with White people.

(2) I suppose the Manyibane family came from the North, and they wanted the goat to cry in this direction to call the spirits of the ancestors to the sacrifice.

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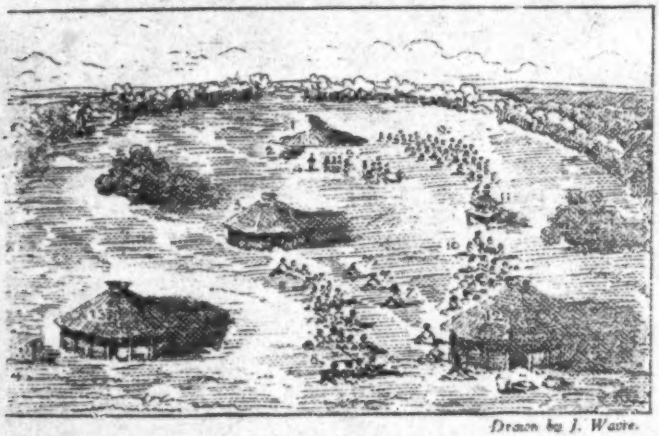
pitifully ; its agony lasted five minutes at least and the whole time the women were shouting with pleasure, because it is necessary that a victim should cry! In the groups, men and women were discussing where and how the sacrificer ought to introduce the blade in order to kill the goat more quickly. His wife came and



Drawn by J. Waite.

The ceremony of crushing down the hut.

► 1. Deceased's hut, crushed down. 2. Heap of poles. 3. Provisional hut of the widow. 4. Sacrificer. 5. Uterine nephews. 6. Wives of the uterine nephews. 7. Dancers. 8. Women clapping their hands. 9. Other women. 10. Men. 11. Henhouse. 12. Hut of the younger brother. 13. Hut of the tall woman who danced. 14. A "shigiyane", wood pile built by her daughter-in-law's relatives.

helped him, and not until after ten minutes, at least, did they succeed.

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Then, while the batukulu and the old men were busy with the victims, cutting them up and squeezing the psanyi (half digested grass) out of the bowels, the other mourners began to sing and to dance. First an elderly woman, of a very clear complexion and a mephistophelean face, very tall, with a curiously licentious smile, came into the middle of the place, opened her arms wide and *suma*, began to sing. Together with her song she performed a strange mimicry with her thighs. This mimicry took on a more and more lascivious character ; it became a regular

765 535 831 womb dance, so immoral (Annotatio 9)[1] that the men dropped their eyes, as if they feared that she would take off all her clothing. But the other women seemed thoroughly to enjoy this horrible performance, and encouraged her by clapping their hands and beating their drums. The words of her songs were also of a very questionable character. She described an adulterous woman going during the night from one hut to another, seeking for lovers, knocking on the walls (to attract the notice of the men ?).

> The walls of the huts have deceived her fellow-women when she goes knocking on them...

Another old woman, of at least seventy years of age, followed her, and running with a mincing gait through the place, uttered words of the same kind.

This seems very immoral indeed. Let us remember however that, in the opinion of the Thongas, these songs, which are taboo in ordinary life, are specially appropriate to the mourning period "These women have been uncovered by the death of their husband," said Mboza. "There is no longer any restraint on them. They are full of bitterness when they perform these lascivious dances." The reason is perhaps deeper, as it is not only the widows who sing these words ; we are still in a marginal period, the period of mourning, and these phases of life are marked for the Bantus by this strange contrast : prohibition of sexual intercourse and a shameless outpouring of impure words and gesticulations (Annotatio 10).[2]

765 782 But in the meantime the *batukulu* had finished their work. They had already distributed the various parts of the victim according to rule, to the visitors, who would eat them on their way home, not in the village ; it is taboo. They had put aside one shoulder, the lungs and one of the hoofs for the sacrifice. Relatives had made a provision of *psanyi*. An old man then took a pill made of the *psanyi*, that found in the smallest stomach, called shihlakahla. He pressed it against his lips, took into his mouth a little of the liquid squeezed from it and spit it out again with the sacramental *tsu*. He then proceeded to pray : "You, Manyiban, you have left us. People used to say you were a

1 [See p. 517 in these categories or in 116--Analyst]

2 [See pp 517-518 in these categories or in 116--Analyst]

765 782 wizard (a clever man who could overcome death). In what has your witchcraft resulted ? Are you not dead! You have left us in peace. Go to Tlotlomane ; let Tlotlomane go to X ; let X go to Y, etc. (He utters the names of the ancestors.) Call each other to come here and look. Are we not gathered together ? Here is so and so. The batukulu also are here. Accept this offering and may we live peacefully together ; visit each other (Annotatio 11)[1]. Even if they do not come to pay me visits, let them come to Fenis ; he is their father now. And you, Mugwanu, you remain at the head of the village. You are their headman now. Do not scatter your people. Cultivate good relations with each other."

765 543 578 But a woman suddenly stands up and interrupts him : "Bring everything to the light," she says! The old priest stops. She goes on : "They say I am a Muchopi" (a woman of dissolute manners). The mikulungwane are heard on all sides. It is a family drama which we are attending! This woman is the daughter of the deceased ; Manyibane has sold her to pay off his debts ; he has not kept the lobola money to buy a wife for one of her brothers ; that is the reason why they hate her. They do not receive her in the village. She pours out her grievances before them in this family gathering, when they are praying to their ancestors. It is the favourable time! She goes on : "Is it my fault ? Did I not obey our father ? I have not fled away. Now what am I to do ? He alone received me here! You despise me. Say everything! Do not hide it!"

Her interruption has lasted five minutes at least and she goes back to her place very angry. Sometimes relatives who have serious complaints to make against their kinsfolk choose this precise moment to vent their anger and leave the gathering with violent words. In such a case, it is said : "The mourning has overcome this family."

765 782 The old priest is a little disconcerted. He speaks at random, always calling his Tlotlomane. The whole scene is perfectly natural, but the participants do not show the slightest religious awe. Suddenly one of the batukulu rises, takes a bottle of wine which has been also brought there as an offering, pours a

[1] [See p. 518 in these categories or in the Analyse]

765 little of it into a glass and raises it to the lips of the old man. "He
782 cuts his prayer" and while all the attention of the public is
604 concentrated upon this act (which belongs also to the ritual, as the priest must be the first to partake of the offering), the wives of the batukulu rush towards the shoulders, lungs and hoofs of the goats and the bottle of wine, seize them and run away towards the west. They have stolen the meat of the sacrifice! At once all stand up and follow them laughing, shouting and pelting them with the *psanyi*, which they had kept for this purpose. The thieves hide themselves behind some bush and eat the meat. Uterine nephews are representatives of the gods, as we shall see later on, and they assert their right by stealing the offering and eating it up.

This ceremony is highly characteristic as it embodies some of the principal ideas of the Thongas in the domain of religion, social life and taboo. It was worth while describing it, and we shall refer to it later on, when dealing with sacrifices and the position of the uterine nephews in the family.

765 The crushing down of the hut is not performed in exactly
292 the same manner amongst the Ba-Ronga. In the clans *South of*
554 *the Bay*, they only *close* it (pfala yindlu). They dig holes in
825 front of the door, into which they insert poles of the bush called *nhleha*, tying thorny branches horizontally to them. The shield of the deceased is placed against the door. The religious rite then takes place and from the skins of the sacrificed goats strips are cut, which the widows will have to wear *en bandoulière* during the following months of their widowhood. The astragalus bones are kept and hung round the neck. The gall-bladder is also preserved and fixed in the hair of the new master of the village as a sign of his new position.

765 In the *district of Makaneta*, on the estuary of the Nkomati,
596 the ceremony comprises two successive acts. First there is also a *provisory closing* of the hut, which can take place one month after the death and is accompanied by the family gathering and the religious ceremony. One year later, when the inheritance is adjudicated, the hut is crushed down, but only if it belonged to a headman of the village and if the kraal is obliged to move in

[765] consequence of the death. If it be the hut of one of the subor-
596 dinates, the roof is simply lifted off and thrown away into the
787 bush.

766 Another very significant rite in connexion with the closing of the hut is accomplished on the death of the master of the village. A branch is cut from the tree of the village, the tree which was revealed by the divinatory bones as the one near which the headman had to build (See Part II Ch. II) ; half of the branch is placed across the great gate of the village, which is then closed and another gate opened, at some distance, in the fence ; the other half is put over the door of the crushed hut.

765 There seem to be great variations in the performance of these
428 ceremonies everywhere. I believe, without being able to vouch for it, that when two family gatherings take place during this last period of the mourning, the first is held to proclaim the new master of the village and the second to distribute the inheritance amongst the heirs-at-law. At any rate these two important acts take place at the gatherings. As the inheritance consists mainly of live stock — human stock, the wives of the deceased, I shall describe the adjudication when treating of the fate of widows.

2) Family rites in the Northern clans.

765 A month after the burial, there is a first gathering of the grave-
574 diggers. They are invited by the widows to a beer-feast. This beer is called : "the beer of the hyenas," as the hyenas also dig graves! No equivocal compliment is intended, the widows merely meaning to thank these men for their services.

765 In the northern clans, *yindlu a yi yili*, the hut is not taboo.
782 It can be slept in again after the five days of the Great Mourning. The plaster of the doorposts is repaired, and a new crown is put on the top when the hut again finds an owner (1). The feast of the

766 (1) The hut of a leper alone is considered irremediably tabooed as the sufferer is buried in it. They dig a hole into which he is pushed by means of sticks. The roof is crushed down over him.

765 782 closing of the hut is therefore replaced by what is called the *beer of the mourning* (byala bya nkosi). All the relatives, brothers, brothers-in-law, nephews, etc., bring a goat, or half a sovereign, or a sovereign, to the master of the mourning, the heir of the village. That individual must give them back as much as he receives from them, a goat for a goat, (timbuti ti labana), a sovereign for a sovereign, and all the animals are killed according to rule. There were fourteen of them at a certain gathering held in the Nkuna capital to mourn one of the wives of the chief Shiluvane in 1905. A sacrifice is offered ; the men sit on one side, the women on the other ; the *kokwane*, viz. the maternal uncle of the deceased, takes the *psanyi* and squeezes it on them all while praying, or rather insulting the gods who have afflicted them with such a bereavement. All rub their chests with this green liquid and add their insults to those of the priest.

[775] According to Viguet, this is the first occasion on which the deceased is treated as a god and prayed to : "Look! You have left the village without a head to lead it! Keep them! Bless them and increase them." The *batukulu* then come to take that portion of the victim which has been put aside for the gods. It does not appear that they steal it, as is the case amongst the Ba-Ronga.

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765 Such is the story of the mourning. Here are some technical expressions in connexion with it : Hamba nkosi, to conduct the mourning. Djila nkosi, to utter mourning lamentations. Daha nkosi, to treat it by purification ceremonies. Kota nkosi, to cope with it. Nkosi wu wupfa, it ripens. Nkosi wu hela, it comes to an end. A wu boli, it does not get rotten, viz. it is always possible to pay a mourning visit.

The name of the deceased when quoted is often preceded by the word "Matjuwa," exactly as with *feu* in French and *late* in English. In the Northern clans the expression employed is "Sira" which means grave : Grave so and so.

775 through an evolution towards deity, as his corpse was decaying in the
765 grave, and the closing of his hut, with the placing of his shield before the door, might well mean his definite incorporation into the world of the dead, and also a means of preventing him from returning to this world and bringing misfortune to his relatives.

765 As regards the relatives, they separate from the former phase by the
783 cutting of the hair, putting out the old fire, leaving off their clothing and wearing mourning attire. A very distinct period of margin then begins, marked by the sexual taboos accompanying it, and they are aggregated again to the ordinary world and to the new phase of their life by all the ceremonies which I have explained at length. Here, however, as the seclusion was caused by a certain most dreaded defilement, the aggregation rites all bear the character of removal of uncleanness: uncleanness of the food, of the gardens, of the bereaved, chiefly grave-diggers and widows, of the whole community, which is cleansed by the sexual rite of hlamba ndjaka, etc.

797 If classification were equivalent to understanding, we might say that
761 we have fairly well understood the complicated Thonga rites which accompany death... But who can boast of having fully understood so profound and mysterious a subject? Death is the great shadow which hovers over life and chills the human heart. Outside of an enlightened faith, it is, and remains, the King of Terrors. Never more than at the graveside did I pity my poor black brethren, wondering how they tried to calm their hearts and overcome their sorrow. There is something profoundly touching in their most absurd rites, because, after all, they are all imposed by a craving for life and purity. Will my readers allow me to conclude this subject by a personal reminiscence? The day I attended the burial of Sokis, when his relatives had finished filling in the grave, they asked me to lead them in worship. Bantu heathenism is so poor, it feels itself so week that it readily accepts the help of a higher religion. So I tried to turn the eyes of my hearers away from the underground hut, and to fix them on the eternal dwellings of the Father's house. Then Sokis's youngest brother took the nkanye twig and performed the heathen religious ceremony, calling his ancestors to come and bless them and entreating the deceased to leave them in peace. The contrast between these two prayers made at the same grave was indeed striking. And, whatever we may think, even if we had no religious convictions at all, should we not earnestly desire that, for these people, the bright comforting Christian hope may dispel the darkness of their thoughts and the sufferings involved in their rites?

846 A demonstration of joy takes place at the birth of any subsequent
831 child, but the kunga is only performed for the first-born. It does not seem that in the case of the first-born child, as in the case of bowumba (see p. 125) the gifts of kunga are subject to any taboo.

8) Loss of children.

766 A woman who loses an infant (wa ku felwa) is deeply contam-
783 inated with the defilement of death. She must bury it herself
834 without aid from her husband. Next day, she goes behind the
833 hut, kneels down and draws off her own milk on to the ground. She does this until the secretion has ceased. This is taboo ; her milk is polluted ; no drop of it must fall in the gardens. She must avoid crossing the fields and going to the storehouses to fetch food.
E364 Until she has been "put right again (busetela)," she eats with a spoon. To use a spoon is a bad omen for a woman, because it reminds her of death. That is the reason why men adopt this civilized custom more readily than women. During her mourning, no sexual relations are allowed. When menstruation begins again, she first keeps silent, and does not tell her husband. Only on the second or third occasion does she inform him of the fact. He can then purify her ; this is done in the same way as in the case of widows. (See p. 154.) Then he buys new clothing for her and she resumes her ordinary mode of life. Everybody seeing her with this new attire will know that "she has been repaired." Should any one else than the husband give her this clothing, the latter will be greatly offended and accuse her of having relations with a lover.

765 A man does not put on *malopa*, mourning clothing, for a child
586 who was not yet of age. The woman alone does so. However a husband is always grieved at the death of his child and a sad event like this often leads to dreadful results. He will begin to think that his wife is a witch and has eaten her own child by her magical powers. Such an accusation is almost sure to end in a divorce.

A woman who has *lost many children*, three or four, is considered

A woman who has lost many children, three or four, is considered as being in a special position, called *bowumba*, and there are many rules to be observed in order to deal with this "state of bereavement." Should a child be born after the death of many elder brothers, he must be carried in a *ntehe* made of a sheep's skin instead of an antelope or goat skin. (See p. 46.) To carry him in an ordinary ntehe is taboo. Should it be a boy, the mother will put girl's clothing on it, and vice-versa. The mother's breast will be smeared with a special medicine, because they are "breasts of the dead (mabele ya bafi)." The child, if it lives, will be weaned as early as possible and be taken to its grandmother. Two curious rites are also practised to protect it against bad luck. The first is the *kunga* ; the second, *rangela bowumba*, seems to belong rather to the Northern clans.

765 854 761 844 [862]

The *kunga* rite which we have already met many times (see p. 124) is also performed in the case of a mother who has given birth to a new child whilst in the state of bowumba. To neglect it is a taboo. The bereaved mother keeps silent before her visitors until they have deposited their gifts at her feet and have thus "opened her mouth." Old women having no means to buy a present take a bit of grass and fix it in her hair. Then she consents to speak. She gathers all the bracelets thus obtained and puts them on the ntehe, carrying them everywhere with her.

789 761 854 844

Another rite is observed in the Northern clans. The child whose elder brothers and sisters have died is taken by the mother to the village of her own parents. There it is buried in the ash-heap up to its neck. Then somebody runs to the village, takes a handful of grains of maize and throws them on the child. Afterwards it is dug up, washed, smeared with ochre and brought home. This rite is called *rangela bowumba*, viz. to *precede* bowumba, to cut it, to treat it : the bowumba will not now come as it has been "preceded". It will be deceived, it will no longer desire the baby, as the baby has been thrown away together with all the refuse of the village on to the ash-heap. It is no longer able to eat mealies, even if it is given grains of mealies ; it is dead! Let the bowumba take no notice of it! (This description of the "rangela bowumba" was given to me by an old Thonga from Spelonken. Mankhelu, my Nkuna informant, called this rite

789 761

586 mere incompatibility of temper. Heathen men are often hard
562 to their wives. They refuse to give them money to buy
578 clothing. "They are stones," said one of these men to me. "Though you scratch a stone with your nail, the nail will break and the stone will remain!" On the other hand, the women are by no means sweet, obedient creatures ; therefore quarrelling often takes place. When she thinks she is persecuted (shanisa), the wife *runs home*. This is her great weapon. The husband heaves a sigh of relief... But very soon he becomes aware of his misfortune. No food, no cooked meal in the evening! His companions share their own food with him for some days, but they will not consent to feed him long. He will have to go modestly, humbly to his parents-in-law and ask his wife to return. Then they enquire into the matter, and he perhaps receives a good scolding. It may be that the domestic life will improve, both fearing the renewal of the conflict. It may however be that the situation will grow worse and worse, and then it will lead to divorce, viz. the husband will claim his money and, when he gets it back, the marriage is dissolved (ku dlawa ka bukati).

An accusation of witchcraft may also cause divorce, especially after the death of a child ; so also can sterility, as we have seen, p. 190. Gross selfishness on the part of the husband may lead to it ; many tales tell the story of a man who in time of famine succeeded in killing an antelope, kept the meat for himself and did not give any to his wife and children. The wife noticed it and, when the famine came to an end, she invited all her relatives to a beer feast. Then she shewed them the bones of the antelope, telling them how badly her husband had treated her ; her parents took her home together with the children. Sometimes the conclusion of the tale is that the man even lost his lobolo money, as a punishment for his evil deed! (See *Grammaire Ronga*, page 202. *Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, page 260.)

11) Widowhood.

783 When a man dies all his relatives are contaminated by the
765 defilement of death, as we have seen (Page 143). There are concentric circles around him, some people being more affected

783 765 562 than others. The wives form the first circle, especially the first wife. They have therefore to perform peculiar purifying ceremonies which throw great light on the profound feelings of the Thongas regarding life and nature. On the other hand they are the property of the husband's family and they are part of his belongings. How are they to be distributed amongst his heirs ? This is a very delicate matter. It is more or less regulated by the tribal law. Hence there are two series of rites to consider, in the customs relating to widows : 1) The rites of purification, 2) the laws of distribution.

783 765 Let us describe first the fate of the great wife amongst the Rongas (See for supplementary details : The fate of widows amongst the Ba-Ronga. S.A.A.A.S. 1909).

a) *The first day*. Manyibane is dead! — a sad event for his wife. She is called to inspect his grave. She assists silently at his funeral. But as soon as the younger brother of the deceased has finished praying, she bursts into tears and cries aloud! Her parents cry also : "Our child has fallen into misfortune! Now the cold has come for her! She will learn to know the cold water!" This is an allusion to the kind of life which the new widow will have to lead. Every morning she must go to the lake or the pool, with her companions, to have her whole body washed till the days of purification are completed.

783 765 575 The first of these purifying rites is performed just after the burial. The widow, surrounded by other women, goes to the pool and there all must wash their bodies. Most of them return home at once. But the widow remains there with *other widows* who have lost their husbands in former years. They form a *secret society* which assembles only to receive new members into its ranks. Nobody must see the strange rites performed by them. It is a *Ngoma* (the same word as for the circumcision school). However, the mysterious company takes possession of the great road (gondjwen), and every one must take care not to pass along it at that time, for great misfortune might overtake the imprudent one who should approach too near and catch a glimpse of the proceedings. A wise man, on seeing the suspicious group

783 of mourning women sitting on the main road, prudently stops and
765 makes a long detour to avoid the place... What is done at this
575 meeting ? One of the widows makes an incision with a knife or a
787 bit of glass in the skin of the new member of the society, in the inguinal region on the left side, "where the husband was resting." If the blood flows freely, it is a good sign. The women are satisfied ; they say there was a good understanding between husband and wife ; if the blood does not flow it is a bad omen. Then one of them lights a little fire with a handful of dry grass ; this grass has been torn from the roof of the deceased's hut. A little excrement from a cock (not a hen!) is then thrown into the fire, and the widow must expose both hands to the smoke. Afterwards she must extinguish the fire with her own water. Should she be unable to do this, it is a further proof that she has not been faithful to her husband and that she has killed him by her adulteries. These rites are very similar to the first circumcision rites, the incision performed recalling the ablation of the foreskin, and the exposure to the smoke, the jumping over the fire. These are great taboos. Evidently they are initiation rites, accompanying the passage from one condition to another. Why does the ceremony take place on the main road ? Because later on the contamination of death will attach itself to travellers passing that spot, and the mourners themselves will get rid of it in this way.

783 After that, the company returns home. The other widows
765 take every bit of clothing from their companion, and tie a reed or a
575 palm thread around her waist with some broad leaves attached
292 to it. With this scanty garment, they bring her home. She walks surrounded by them. Someone warns the men to leave the road as they are not allowed to see the procession. They hide themselves in their huts. The widow is led to her hut, the hut of the great wife which has now been uncrowned. She must accomplish *the last crossing of the hut*. Entering through the door, she shouts loudly : "My husband! My husband! You have left me alone! What am I to do ?" Then she goes out, not by the door but by the hole which has been made in the wall to carry the corpse to the grave. Behind the hut her friends are waiting for her and give her back her old clothing, which has been

783 washed in the pool and which she will wear again for two days (1).
765 b) *The following days of the Great Mourning.* Without delay a new hut, a small provisional hut, is built in front of the mortuary one. Here the great wife will stay during the whole of her widowhood; the space between this and the old hut is more or less taboo and most of the possessions of the deceased are placed there, under the roof near the door on the outside. (See illustration p. 159.)

The other widows do not leave their huts, but they participate in the other purifying acts, the vapour baths and the general sprinkling of the fifth day. As regards the vapour baths, however, the first wife is associated with the grave-diggers, viz. she must be exposed to the strongest medicinal smoke, while the inferior wives are cleansed with weaker drugs. They all put on the *malopa* and eat with spoons during the whole year of widowhood.

587 c) *Provisional decision regarding the fate of the widows.* A few
595 days after the Great Mourning, a fresh gathering takes place, not
128 in connection with the defilement of death, which is now provision-
768 ally cleansed, but *to settle provisionally the fate of the widows.* The
604 sisters of the deceased have to play a special part in this gathering. They will lead the discussion with the widows about their new husbands. It is indeed a happy custom to let women decide on the subject. Not that they have unrestricted power in the matter. The law has provided a certain rule for the distribution and this is seldom departed from. However, some liberty is allowed in its application, and modifications can better be made if proposed by female intermediaries. Should the husband possess a harem (tshengwe), that is at least five wives, they will most likely be given to the following heirs. The great wife, being "the pole of the

575 (1) *Widowers* also form a similar society and undergo the same rites; but just as it
783 was only the great wife who was subject to these laws, to the exclusion of the little wives, so it is only when he has lost his first wife that a man is initiated into the
765 widowers' society. After having buried her (he holds her head) he goes to the pool, washes himself, and another widower comes and makes the incision in him in the inguinal region. Then he throws aways his *shifado* (Annotatio 1.) and also carries out the same crossing of the hut in tears. These three acts constitute the actual widower's mourning: the vapour baths and *tahla khombo* are part of his purification as being the principal grave-digger.

1 [See category 116 --Analyst]

587 393 428 768

live in the village, the family council will certainly object strongly to her wish, as her departure would mean that the village would cease to exist. But in the case of the younger widows it is quite possible that an exception to the ordinary law would be allowed if they insisted upon choosing another husband (1).

After all, this is but a preliminary consultation, and the men who are rejoicing at the idea of getting new wives will perhaps be badly deceived later on, as we shall see. However the man provisionally chosen as the future husband of a widow, will at once pay visits to her, "march to her" (ku mu fambela), according to the technical expression.

765 783 833

d) *The casting away of misfortune.* But before any new and happy life can begin for the widows, they have still to go through a very hard trial. They must perform the *lahla khombo*, the throwing away of the malediction of death, and this is much more difficult for them than for the grave-diggers or the other members of the village. The main point in this strange act of purification is this ; before a widow can become the wife of her new husband, she must have sexual intercourse with another man whom she deceives. Should she succeed in freeing herself from him so that the act keeps its ritual character, s. n. i. (see Annotatio 2)[1], this man will take on himself the malediction of death, and she will be purified. On the contrary, should the man accomplish the whole act, the widow has failed and will return home with shame and in despair! Here is a description of this sad expedition of the widows. It takes place a few days after the gathering just described. The men of the village send the widows away, telling them : "Go and scatter (hangalasa) the malediction through the country and get rid of it before some other misfortune happens to us."

(1) What would happen should the widow choose a husband outside her husband's family? To the mind of a heathen woman the idea would never occur. But suppose a Christian widow, having only married suitors, refuses to become their wife, her conscience forbidding her to contract a polygamic union. Her case would be very hard indeed, as I do not think her wish would be taken into consideration by heathen relatives. It would have to be brought before the White magistrate, who would probably try to help the widow. I think that, even if the woman consented to submit such family matters to the European court, she would have to give the *lobola* or her children back to her brothers-in-law, and that might be an impossibility for her. It would be interesting to know how Native Commissioners proceed in such cases.

1 [See p. 516 in these categories on in ink -- Analysis]

765 783 833 With their conical baskets on their heads they all go, each accompanied by a friend who will act as witness. They pay a visit to some distant relative and try to flirt with the men of the village. Their aim is clearly understood ; morals are so dissolute that it is not difficult for them to attain their desire. (But the purifying act is useless unless interrupted abruptly before its completion). If the widow succeeds, she is full of joy, and comes back saying : "I have coped with the mourning, I have overcome it." Should she not succeed, she has then been "overcome by the mourning." This is a serious condition, which can only be dealt with by special medicines. The man who has unconsciously purified a widow and who becomes aware of it, will also have recourse to the *ñanga* to get rid of the pollution of death (1). The widows endeavour to come back all together ; they stand by the main entrance of the village and announce their success with the *mikulungwana* shouts, which mean at the same time joy and sorrow. Everyone meets them there, and they form a procession to the grave to tell the deceased what has happened : "You have left us in the open field ; we have had to go through a painful trial ; it would not have been so if you had not left us!" But, after all, this is a day of rejoicing, and the men, the heirs to the widows, are particularly pleased. The same day the widows put on a new undergarment and complete their purification by another steam bath.

At this time the mourning is said *to have ripened* (wupfile). The widow's hair has grown again. What remains is to *kill the mourning* (dlaya nkosi). This is done by the man who "marches to" or visits the widow. In the evening, he is allowed into her hut : they make a fire in it, put into the fire two pills of a purifying medicine, and expose their limbs to the smoke. Then they put it out with their own water, after which they can have sexual relations without harm. A certain time must, however, elapse before the adjudication of the inheritance takes place.

(1) He may also avoid the danger of being killed by the contamination of death in the following manner : Supposing that the woman who tries to seduce him is a widow, he tears off a little piece of her most intimate undergarment before the act. Later on he asks a *ñanga* to prepare a medicine into which this bit of clothing will be introduced. Then he covers himself with a blanket, burns the medicinal pill on a live charcoal and inhales the smoke. He is safe, and the woman also has been cleansed.

124 The description I have given of the *lahla khombo*, translating
128 exactly the narratives of Mbozà, Elias, and an old widower called
164 Magingi, refers to the rite as it was performed in the normal
783 fashion some twenty years ago amongst the Ba-Ronga. Now
765 customs are changing. There is, all around the town of Lourenço Marques, an agglomeration of Natives coming from many tribes. Immorality there has become terrible owing especially to alcoholic excesses, a free and enormous sale of adulterated wine taking place in this region. The widows are sure to find there a hundred men for each of them, when they wish to cast away their defilement. But in this promiscuity the poison of syphilis makes terrible ravages. According to our medical missionary, 90 % of the
783 Natives are contaminated by this disease. When the men up
765 country saw that their wives came back ritually purified but
178 physically contaminated, they began themselves to accomplish the
833 necessary act. This has become the general custom to such an extent that, when a widow goes to Majlangalen, (such is the name of that hell of drunkenness and immorality), it is now said of her : "She will refuse to stay with her legal heirs!" However the law of the *lahla khombo nhoben*, to cast away the malediction in the bush, remains inexorable in the three cases where the defilement is considered as being of the worst kind : if the
[845] husband died of phthisis or of leprosy, or if the woman has had twins.

Old widows who can find no lovers may be purified by means of drugs.

765 e) *The year of widowhood.* Though the widows have found
587 new husbands, they still remain in the old kraal. They must accomplish there "a full hoe," viz. a whole year of ploughing. In their new fields they leave the dry sticks of the mealies of the year before, in such a way that everybody passing by will know at once that this is the field of a widow. But what they harvest this year will belong to the new husband. They have now the right to *fambelana*, viz. to go to each other. The suitor brings clothing to the woman, and the woman pays him visits with jars of beer. They belong more or less to each other. But the marriage of the inherited woman is not absolutely settled. Her

768 taboo. Those who have received a wife go home rejoicing. When he has reached home, the fortunate husband kills a fowl or even a goat to make a fitting reception for his new wife. This is the end of the long period of widowhood, in which it is easy to discover the whole sequence of the passage rites.

783 Such is the old normal way of reinstating a widow in society.
765 But there are special cases where the rites are slightly different. If a widow is old and cannot expect to deceive a man, she simply buys medicines which are supposed to cleanse her.

The case of the wife of Sokis (see page 139, footnote) was more difficult. She had a baby, and sexual relations were consequently prohibited. Moreover the man who legally inherited her was in Johannesburg and could not provide for her purification. One of the grave-diggers took his place and "ran for her" (tjutjumela). This is a different expression for *fambela*. As far as I could understand, this man had ritual relations with his own wife in order to *lahla khombo*, to be purified himself. Then he tied the cotton string (boha nshale) round the waist of the widow. A sick widow will also be treated by *tjutjumela*. The grave-digger possesses the means of cleansing them, having gone through the mourning together with them.

These attenuated processes of purification seem the rule amongst the *Northern clans*. According to Viguet, the widows must also go to the bush (hula ni nhoba) to meet with a man who will free them of the defilement of death. The man who performs this act is called the *shikomho* of the widows. There are certain individuals who make a real business of this. Knowing drugs with which to cleanse themselves (ku tirulula), they claim a reward for their help... The widows remove their mourning attire (bracelets of strings on that occasion), and return home adorned with beads.
768 In the Djonga dialect the adjudication of the inheritance is called
783 *pandja ndjaka*. It is not accompanied by a sacrifice. There seem to be some differences in the ideas of the Rongas and of the Northern clans. For the former the defilement of death contaminates the hut to a greater extent. This must be destroyed, and the widow has to undergo the very hard casting away of misfortune (lahla khombo). For the latter the impurity rests more on the

764 prepared, all the limbs cut off, the portion of the gods set apart.
782 The elder brother of the deceased woman prays in these words :
768 "My sister, go in peace, be not angry ; because we love you, we
595 have come to mourn you to-day. Do not say we have not mourned you. Go to so and so (father, grandfather, etc.), call them here, give us good sleep and good health, etc." The batukulu appropriate the offering and the mourning ends in laughter, dancing and drinking. The neighbours come and take part in the rejoicings.

When they return home, the mourners spend all the mahloko money in buying wine. They sometimes become quite intoxicated. Afterwards both families begin to visit each other again.
764 This custom of the mahloko fine is so strong that converts
768 still adhere to it. But they usually send the money to the wife's family when informing them of the death, and no other ceremony is performed.

In the Northern clans the mahloko are also paid, but it seems that the family of the widower considers that it has the right to claim the repayment of the whole lobolo, when the deceased wife has left no child to compensate for the loss. In Nondwane, though we are still in Ronga territory, when the woman dies shortly after marriage the lobolo must be repaid. Further north
765 the procedure is as follows : the deceased woman is buried by her
782 husband according to the ordinary rules ; one year elapses and a special feast is celebrated, similar to the "beer of mourning" (page 164), in the village of the wife's parents, where both families gather together and provide the necessary victims. It commences with a sacrifice in which the father of the deceased wife squeezes the *psanyi* of the goat on to those present, all the time insulting the gods who have killed his child and made trouble between the two families. He ends with words addressed to the widower's relations : "I cleanse you from your misfortune." The widower's father does the same thing, insulting also his own gods, and every one rubs his body with the green liquid squeezed from the *psanyi*. Then prayer for new blessings is offered and the sacrifice is made, as
765 customary, and the actual discussion as to claims takes place. Each family takes possession of a hut, the widower's family assembling

765 as usual in the house of the deceased wife's mother, and the parley takes place through the go-between (tintjumi), as in the discussions which precede marriage. Let us call the husband's family A and that of the wife B. A sends two hoes to B as a notification : "Your child died with us last year." B answers "All right! Then pay the fine for her head (nhloko). Because you had only bought her legs. Her brain, her head, her name was still ours." A sends five hoes to B, to pay for the brains of the deceased. B takes two of the five and sends them back to A, saying : "One of them is to cleanse you from the misfortune, and we shave your head with the second." A accepts the two hoes and returns home. Should the wife have died childless, there will be a second act to the procedure: A has "opened the door of the claim" (a pfurile nyangwa wa nandju). He will come back shortly to lodge it with B.

587 Here he comes. Using his go-between (ntjumi) as a mouth piece,
768 he says to B : "Look at us! We gather our ashes with our own hands and we dig water in small shells of sala,— viz. we have no wife to do this feminine work for us!" It means : "Please give us another wife or repay the money to buy one." If B happens to have a girl of marriageable age, he will say : "Do not kill us ; we put a log of wood across the road" (hi hingakanya ntjandja). This means : "We have put something to prevent you from coming to us as enemies. Here is a new wife for you." A understands quite well and goes home satisfied. He comes back without delay and brings twenty or thirty hoes, which is a beginning of lobola payment. He says : "We thank you for the wife." The girl then follows him at once, if she is of marriageable age ; if not, she stays at home until she is grown up, and during all this time her new husband provides her with clothing. When, having gone to live with him, she gives birth to a child, B comes to A and says : "Nwombekazi a yi ambi nandju," viz. "A cow which has calved is not used to pay a debt," that is to say : she must be paid for herself. This technical expression means therefore : As our daughter has given you posterity, pay the full lobolo for her! A will certainly do it "hi bushaka," on account of the friendly relation existing between B and himself. But if B has no girl to give in compensation, if he has no money, what will happen ? A will

621 754 596 own huts to protect them against would-be-witches. In this way many villages are broken up by fear of witchcraft. Generally speaking the Thonga village cannot long remain of any considerable size ; it tends to fall to pieces.

But there are other causes which may destroy the village and the idyllic life of the small community. The death of the headman, and lightning striking the village, are the two main causes which may bring about this event.

765 596 621 787 *Death of the headman.* There is a mystic tie between this man and the social organism which is under him. Should he die, the village dies also... It is not abandoned at once. The whole year of mourning will elapse before the moving. But as soon as the widows and property have been distributed, the successor of the deceased will go and found his own village and the old one will remain a ruin (rumbi). Should any one else die, his hut will merely be thrown into the bush and the village will not be abandoned. But should these deaths increase, then the divinatory bones may order the place to be deserted, as it is defiled and dangerous.

821 756 787 621 If *lightning* strikes the hubo, it is a very bad omen. The medicine man who has the power to "treat the place struck by lightning" is called in. Should he be able to exhume from the ground the mysterious bird which causes lightning, or at least the coagulated urine which it has deposited, and which is called Heaven (See Part VI), the people are allowed to stay. But if he does not discover it deep down in the soil, the village must move, as the presence of the mysterious power of Heaven inside the circle of huts would bring disaster. This is a taboo.

621 787 596 Another cause of moving is the *exhaustion of the gardens.* When the fields are "tired" (karala) and do not produce sufficient food for the inhabitants, they leave the place and look for pastures new. In that case the bones will be consulted. Sometimes, even, the village may be transported elsewhere for the sole reason that the people are tired of the place and want to change. If the bones confirm their wishes, they will move.

621 596 *The founding of a new village* is the occasion of most interesting and characteristic rites, which afford us a new [illegible]

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

621 10) Having closed the village in this way, she *performs a sacrifice.*
595 She sips a mouthful of water from a tumbler, spitting out a
782 portion of it (phahla) towards the people ; then she washes her hands, and throws a little of the water towards them in order *to give them* the village. This act is accompanied by the following words : "Be not tied by the village! Bring forth children ; live and be happy and get everything. You gods, see! I have no bitterness in my heart. It is pure. I was angry because my husband abandoned me, he said I was not his wife ; he loved his younger wives. Now, this is finished in my heart. We shall have friendly relations together..." The prayer being concluded, the headman goes to the main entrance, pushes the thorny branch aside, and opens the village.

621 11) The last act is the *khangula*, the *inauguration ceremony*.
574 Beer is prepared, neighbours are invited and they all drink together, the neighbours coming *to see the new village* (ku bona muti).

As regards the old one, when the moving has been accomplished through the back door widened for the purpose, one of the inhabitants closes the main entrance with a branch. Hence comes the expression which is applied to a village all of whose inmates have died, and which has, on that account, disappeared : "Those people have all died and there was not even one left to close the gate."

II. *In the Ba-Ronga Clans.*

621 The sequence of rites for the removal of a village is very
787 much the same as in the Northern clans.

824 1) The headman examines some spots and consults the bones :
765 "Must I built at such and such a tree ?"

2) When the tree has been designated, he goes to it and places at its foot his furniture (nyundju) and his instrument of worship, his altar, (a pot, a jar, see Part VI). The altar may be placed at the main entrance later on, if the bones so order it. As already mentioned, there will be a mystic relation between him and that tree. He must never cut it down. If any of the branches should be

621 824 765 troublesome and he should wish to remove them, he must ask some one else to do it. On the day of his death, or rather when his hut is crushed down, a branch of that tree will be put on the place where the threshhold was, and another used to close the main entrance of the village, a new entrance being then made through the fence and used as the gate during the rest of the mourning period.

621 833 3) He has sexual relations on the new spot on the first night with his principal wife ; in this way he will *fuya muri*, viz. "possess this tree," and also *fuya muti*, "possess the village." The Ronga *fuya* corresponds here also to the *boha* of the Northern clans (Compare boha puri and fuya ñwana, page 57). If someone precedes him in sexual intercourse, he is guilty ; he has "preceded the village" (rangela muti). By this act the headman has definitely left the old village. The others can go back to it to fetch what remains ; for him it is taboo.

621 831 834 342 4) The same day, all the inhabitants come and move all the roofs, if it is possible to do this in one day. One hut is rapidly built to afford shelter to the inhabitants, in case of rain. The first roof to be transported is that of the hut of the principal wife. This is also done to the accompaniment of obscene songs. These songs are not allowed when only one hut is transported, which may happen when some one goes to live in another village.

It is definitely a custom which goes with the moving of a whole village.

5) The following day two huts are erected, one for the men, the other for the women, because they must not sleep together. "They are still in the bush ; it is buhlapfa ; the village is not yet firm." Those who break this law cause injury to the headman. The bones will soon reveal that "he has been preceded as regards the village ; (a rangeliwile muti)." All the huts are smeared twice ; the women begin to sleep in them, but not the men. The fence and the main entrance must first be prepared.

621 789 6) The *main entrance* (mharana). The men pull up the grass all the way from the back hut to the place where the main entrance must be, so as to make a road all through the village. All the dried plants weeded out during this operation are carefully

726 As regards the *order of the march*, the battalions of the young
701 men, stationed on either side of the entrance, go first ; they
643 form the advanced guard, the post of greatest danger. The scouts, tinhlori (Dj.) tinhloli (Ro.), go in front ; each company has its leader to whom these scouts bring reports. It is the duty of the young men to surround the position to be carried and to make the assault. The two sides of the circle then follow, and lastly the chest of the army, forming the rear guard. The chief thus brings up the rear, protected by the battalions of veterans. But generally the chief does not go to battle ; he remains at home.

726 During the campaign, *the whole clan is subjected to many taboos.*
784 Those who remain at home must *keep quiet* (rula). No noise
777 must be heard in the villages. The women must not close the
722 doors of the huts. It is taboo : their husbands might meet with "bitterness" (shibiti). They might lack strength to run away. Fire must be lit in the huts in the evening, in order that the warriors may "have light" where they are. It is taboo to omit this precaution. Work in the fields must be more or less suspended ; women may attend to it in the morning only, before the heat of the day, while the air is still fresh. "Then, if a warrior has stepped on a thorn, the thorn will be cool (titimeta) ; if he has knocked against a stump, the stump will be quiet and not hurt him. (Mboza.)" Old men who remain at home must keep watch, and if they see a messenger coming, they follow him to the chief.
765 Should he bring bad news, they do not inform the women, as it is
726 taboo to mourn over warriors killed in war before the return of the
834 army. A fine is imposed upon those who contravene this law.
777 It is taboo also to have sexual relations as long as the army is on the
784 war-path. This would cause thorns to hurt the warriors and they would be defeated. (Mankhelu.)

722 According to Mankhelu, the mukhumbi may be again formed after arriving in the proximity of the hostile army. The
643 battalions will be sent one after the other by the great ndjuna who
726 will watch the progress of the fight. If he sees his men giving way, he "pours" (tshelela) new companies to help those who are fighting until they rush the position (gwabula) and put the enemy to flight. Then the pursuit begins. The dust flies up

726 warriors, as also those of Ñwamba, had received orders from the
175 Whites, at the end of January 1895, to attack Zihlahla and Mahazule.
703 One of the young men of Matjolo, who was present during the operations, told me this story : "We were to have joined the men of Ñwamba at a village called Mukapan, but did not find them at the rendez-vous. As they had made common cause with Zihlahla at the beginning of the revolt, we had not much confidence in them. It looked as if they were in hiding and intended to attack us treacherously and kill us. At this time two panics occured. The first was at Hukwen, when a man dreamt that he was being killed, and cried out : "Yo! Uwe! There are people who are killing me!" It was pitch dark. Every one jumped to his feet. Some ran to hide in the forest, but others shouted : "The enemy are here!" Fighting began in the regiment of Geba, (composed of men of the same age as Sigaole, the chief), but no one was killed. A few individuals who kept their presence of mind restored order, but we came very near exterminating each other! The next night a Chopi of our troop had a fright, and cried out : "Why do you want to kill me, you men of Matjolo ? I will tell Sigaole's mother." He was promptly secured and forced to keep quiet for fear that he would rouse the Nondwane people, etc. A similar panic seized the troops of Mahazule, when they went to lay waste the country round Lourenço Marques (October 1894).

726 To avoid these panics, as far as possible, the Ba-Ronga arrange a
192 password before starting on an expedition. I was able to learn two of these countersigns, after the war, by questioning some young men who had taken part in certain military operations. On one occasion the pass-word was as follows : "Be ge pi ?" These are Zulu words signifying : "What are you looking at ?" The requisite answer being : "Be ge pezulu"—"We are looking at the sky." In the famous attack made by the Zihlahla warriors on the town of Lourenço Marques, on 14th October 1894, the word was : "U landu bane ?"—"With whom have you a quarrel ?"—and the reply : "Ngi landa Mlungu!"—"I have a quarrel with the white man!"

727 *Return from the battle.* When a yimpi has been defeated in
765 battle, but is not pursued by the enemy, it returns silently and disperses before reaching the capital, each warrior going back ashamed to his village. Mourning takes place in the villages of the deceased. But much lamenting is not allowed. It may be that the chief will prohibit any mourning if many have been

727 765 killed, "because the whole country would mourn ; — they have not been killed by the mat (likuku) at home, but by the assagai on the battle-field! They are men! If any one weeps he will have to pay £ 2." (Mboza.)

726 703 When the Maputju yimpis fought against Nondwane in 1876, in the battle which took place near Malangotiba, (3 km west of Rikatla), they were decimated and eventually repulsed. Their chief Musongi sent them back to fight again. They refused. Then he punished them in the following way : he condemned them to go and fetch water with pots, like women, but they had to go on their knees to the pool, saying : "It is the result of our cowardice" — (Ngi ndaba ya bugwala). Afterwards they had to extinguish a bush fire with their hands, and came home very much scorched and burnt.

When the yimpi is victorious, the return is marked by important 727 533 535 songs called *hubu* (cl. dji-ma). The regiments follow each other, each singing his own *hubu*, and they at once build the mukhumbi when they reach the village of the chief. They dance, dance their doughty deeds. Suddenly silence is required ; the counsellors narrate to the chief how the fighting has proceeded and tell him the names of those who have killed enemies, those who have struck the first blow and their *bahlomuri*, viz., those who transfixed the leg and the arm. After which the heroes "gila" to their heart's content, together with the bahlomuri. They are proud! They are applauded! They are the great men of the day, the *tinguaza*, the saviours of the chief!

This leads me to consider the very curious customs connected with the slayers and the slain on the battle-field.

I. THE FATE OF THE SLAIN AND THE TREATMENT OF THE SLAYERS.

1. *The fate of the slain.*

534 727 When a man has slain an enemy, he has covered himself with the most enviable glory : he has the right to perform the war-dance before the chief. He takes away all the garments from

Latin Notes for Medical Men and Ethnographers

291 "Annotatio prima (P. 40). --'Shifado' quo quisque Thonga
845 extremum penem vestit, spheroides excavataque res est;
848 quod tegimentum ex iis, quae ad pudorem et munditiem perti-
881 nent, postulatur. Si quis schifado suum amisit, ei dedecoriest."

Note 1 (page 40). Shifado, with which every Thonga covers the end of his penis, is a spherical and hollowed-out object; this covering is demanded from those who are concerned with decency and cleanliness. If anyone has lost his schifado [sic] he is disgraced.

"Olim apud Thonga, qui a populo Zulo illum morem acceperunt, viri, quod linguâ 'mbayi' id est fistulam quandam ex foliis textis palmae quae 'milala' dicitur, ferre solebant.

[At one time among the Thonga, who took over this custom from the Zulu people, the men used to wear what in their language is called mbayi, that is, some kind of tube made of palm leaves woven together which is called milala.]

"Ultima 'mbayi' anno 1895 vel 1896 post Christum natum visa sunt. Quod shifado ex parvae cucurbitae cortice aut duro et excavato accurateque polito ligno factum, summo veretro affixum, minime incommode ferre videntur."

[The last mbayi were seen in the year 1895 or 1896. Because the shifado is made of the rind of a small gourd or of hard, hollowed-out and carefully polished wood, and attached at the top of the private parts, it seems that it can be worn with the minimum of discomfort.]

833 "Annotatio secunda (P. 56). S. n. i, sc. semine non im-
851 misso. Ad hoc, marito sperma foras spargendum est (a nga
842 mu weleri): hic est coitus rite factus et quasi lustralis. Inde,
765 uxor in manus utriusque sordes (thyaka ra bona) sumit, qui-
783 bus umbilicum illinit."

[Note 2 (page 56). S. n. i., that is, the semen has not been injected. Moreover the husband must eject his sperms outside of the body (a nga mu weleri): this is the coitus properly executed and, as it were, lustral. Then the wife takes in her hands the filth of both (thyaka ra bona) and smears the navel with it.]

"Annotatio tertia (P. 57). Corpus infimum pueri ex adverso et a tergo peni pater tangit.

[Note 3 (page 57). The father touches with his penis the lowest part of the boy's body from the front and from behind.]

831 "Annotatio quarta (P. 88). Hae sunt formulae:
881 Shaea kholoiwane ma ri tiba le'ri onhaka milebe?
Novistisne avem quae labra minora laedit?

832 Sometimes the girls measure their labia with small sticks
836 and boast of their length to their companions and even to their
304 bridegrooms. The girls follow these perverse practices for
881 no other reason than for the sake of their future husband.
171 Among the Ba-Pedi the husband may, if he thinks that his bride has not sufficiently stretched her labia, send her home and demand his bulls back. The girls keep a pot full of food ready and cover it with a lid. In the evening the boys come to the girls and give them a small gift in order to be admitted. In the house they sit down on the floor and watch the girls eating from a pot with their fingers. The girls whose milebe are four digits long eat using four fingers: they are bakulu, that is, adult, and they enjoy their lovers. Or they use only three fingers and sometimes two. The young girls eat with the palms of their hands.]

765 "Annotatio sexta (P. 154). Seu quis per ætatem iam pro-
783 vectam imbecillior factus erit, sive qualibet de causa tam
833 impotens ut sperma emittere non possit (a nga kumi mati), ceteri viri quid fiat sciscitabuntur. Quod si utique parum procedit, tota inhibetur cærimonia. Qui vero se invicem eodem ritu miscere debebant, iis ritum conficere non fas est. Ille jejunio, per quinque dies, prout res postulat, artissime utetur, cui medicinæ ad rem accommodatæ exquirentur.

[Note 6 (page 154). If someone should have become feeble because of advanced age, or if for some reason he should be so impotent that he cannot emit sperms (a nga kumi mati), other men ask what should be done. For if it proceeds quite insufficiently, the whole ceremony is held up. And those who should have had intercourse in turn in the same ritual fashion are not permitted to complete the rite. He [the impotent man] has to fast very strictly for five days as the situation requires and the remedies appropriate to the situation will be sought.]

843 "Annotatio septima (P. 154). Nocens maritus uxorque sui
834 purgandi causâ alium ritum peragent. Uxor mariti suaque
841 pudenda veste intima et inquinatissima tergebit, quam postea comburet.

Ambo, ad ignem accedentes, caput manusque calefacient. Inde cinerem collectum mulier adipe miscet, quo mariti artus illinit, digitis bracchiis cruribusque tractis, quod 'lula' dicitur. Postea, noctibus duabus sequentibus, coibunt. Si maritus, non cum uxore sua, sed cum puella quadam ex alio vico, stupri consuetudinem junxerit, huic fossorium donabitur, ut ritum 'lula' perfectum veniat.

[Note 7 (page 154). If the husband and the wife are guilty of an offense, they perform another rite for the sake of purging themselves. The wife will cover her husband's and

843 her own pudenda with a much befouled intimate garment which
834 she afterwards burns.
841 Going to the fire they both warm their head and their hands. Then the woman mixes the ashes she has collected with fat and smears it over her husband's limbs, rubbing along his fingers, his arms, and his legs, which is called lula. Afterwards, in the two nights following, they will have intercourse. If the husband has had sexual intercourse not with his wife but with some girl from another village from lustful desire he will be given a fossorium so that the rite lula will come to its completion.]

765 "Annotatio octava (P. 155). Si mulieris parentes procul
783 habitant, maritus eius comes itineris erit, quacum superiore
833 nocte coibit, ad aquæ lustrali vim novam dandam."
505 [Note 8 (page 155). If the woman's parents live far away, her husband will be her companion on the way and he will have sexual intercourse with her the night before in order to give the lustral water new power.]

765 "Annotatio nona (P. 160). Faciebat dum 'Khunye khunye';
535 quibus verbis significatur coitus (khunyeta)."
831 [Note 9 (page 160). She was saying Khunye, khunye during
834 this time; these words signify coitus (khunyeta).

"Annotatio decima (P. 160). Carminum, morum temporis marginalis natura eo obscenior est quo nobilior defunctus fuit. Viguetus narrat: [518] 'Duce vel uno ex principibus mortuo, luctuque consueto præterito, luctum privatum, ad quem boves immolentur, celebrari. Carnem ad baculos humi fixos alligari; homines inde mulierem vocare, eamque posteriorem vestem exuere juberi, neque ullam vestem nisi anteriorem habere quam, si velit, exuere ei liceat. Eam, postea, divaricaturam esse ad unam ex carnis particulis dentibus apprehendendam ita prominentem ut omnes viri eius pudenda videant, quod plerumque 'taboo' (id est nefas) sit.' "

[Note 10 (page 160). The nature of the songs, a custom of the marginal period, is the more obscene the greater the nobility of the deceased person was. Viguet relates: [518] "When the leader or one of the chiefs is dead and the usual mourning has passed, they stage a private mourning at which bulls are sacrificed. They tie the flesh to poles fixed in the ground; then the men call a woman and order her to take off the clothes on her back and they do not allow her to have any clothes on except the one in front which, if she wants to, she may also take off. Then she must seize one of the bits of meat with her teeth, bending forward in such a

765
535 way that all the men can see her pudenda which is
831 much tabooed (that is, sinful).''
834 "Annotatio undecima (P. 161). Hic, mulier paulo dilutiore
765 colore magnaque statura addit: 'Hi kundjana. id est:
792 coeamus!' "

[Note 11 (page 161). Here a woman with a slightly lighter color and of large stature, adds: Hi kundjana, that is, "let us have intercourse!"]

841 "Annotatio duodecima (P. 187). Hæc sunt ipsissima verba, quibus Makhelu mulieris menstruansis taboo (id est nefas) describit. Mulier menstruans est res, quæ imprimis 'yila' est. Per sex dies 'yila,' id est, nefas est. Septimo die transit flumen ad se lavandam. Octavo ei nondum licet cum marito suo coire; forte enim sanguis pudendis ad hæret, eà insciente. Magis 'refrigescit.' (Verbo phula menstruans mulier comparatur cum aula a foco remota).

Si, ante id tempus, maritus cum uxore coeat, ægrotus fiat, veretrum retro ita recedat ut vir urinam reddere non possit et, brevi tempore, moriatur. Talem vitæ exitum multi habuerunt. Radicibus arboris cui nomen est mayilana vel mulieris menstruantis vestis particulà, a medico ad levem pulverem redactà, quæ ægro bibenda est, morbus sanari potest. Aegrotus multum sanguinis reddet, et veretro exeunte, salvus est."

[Note 12 (page 187). These are the very words with which Makhelu [sic] describes the taboo (that is, the sin) of the menstruating woman. A menstruating woman is something which is, first of all, yila. For six days she is yila, that is to say, taboo. On the seventh day, the flow that cleanses her passes over. On the eighth day she is not yet allowed to have intercourse with her husband; for perhaps some blood is still sticking to her pudenda without her knowledge. She "cools down" even more so. (By the word phula the menstruating woman is compared to the pot removed from the stove.)

841 If the husband should have sexual intercourse with his wife
834 before this time, he will be taken sick, his private parts will
756 decay to such an extent that the man would no longer be able to pass urine and would die within a brief period of time. Many have had such an end to their life. The sick man can be cured by a liquid containing the roots of the tree that is called mayilana or by a particle of the menstruating woman's dress, reduced to a light powder by the medicine man. The sick man loses a lot of blood; after his penis is able to pass water again, the man is well again.

765 "Annotatio tertia decima (P. 213). Cærimoniis purification-
783 is, ubi res genitales primas obtinent partes, ita explicatis,
833 quaeramus quid significent ritus illi.
587 Mors est res quæ imprimis homines contaminat. Omnia polluit quae tangit, non homines tantum ipsos sed etiam quæ mortui fuerunt.

Apud homines, propinqui mors vitæ fontes imprimis afficit, id est membrorum succos qui vitam creant. Itaque et mulieris succi vaginales et viri succi spermatici tollendi sunt: in coitu autem, sub legibus certis sunt tollendi.

Cum vidua lustratur, aut a peregrino aut a novo marito purificatur.

1) Ut recta viduæ purificatio fiat, abrumpendus est coitus, et vir, antequam semen emittat, repellendus; vir erit tum contaminatus at mulier purgata. Vir si in coitu feminam eludentem animadverterit, eam viduam esse et ipsum occidere velle intelleget, tum comites vocat qui, mulierem apprehendentes, dum vir in sinum ejus semen emiterit, vi continebunt; mulier tum polluta manebit; quod querebat, non habebit. Vir contra erit sine damno: contaminatus non erit. [519]

2) Cum purificatio a novo efficitur marito, tum ambo in casam se includunt. Res agitur permagna: tabacum ne hauriant! Medicamenta potant singularia. Tum toties cœunt deinceps quoties vir ferre valet, decies et sæpius si potest. Sed toties vir semen extrinsecus emittit: 'bayisanyana ba fanela ku huma, i.e. amovendi sunt pueri (spermatozoa),' ut dicit unus ex eis qui me de his rebus certiorem fecerunt. Nunc sunt fontes vitæ apud virum purgati, quod fieri necesse erat, cum esset et ipse contaminatione impurus. Mulier quoque pura est, haud dubie medicamentorum beneficio quæ, antequam coirent, potaverunt ambo.

Quæ interpretatio ritum recte explicat cum ab impuris hominibus perpetratur. Sed cum a puris parentibus perpetratur, ut de 'boha puri' agitur (p. 56), tum res alio modo est explananda. Pater et mater cingulum infantis e lino xylino factum genitalibus succis inlinunt, ut infans eorum vitalibus succis corroboretur et in vitam gentis ita recipiatur.

These physiological conceptions, though they may be absolutely false from the scientific point of view, certainly proceed from deep intuitions regarding the mystery of life. I insist on the fact that they are not derived from religious ideas. It is a mistake to attempt to explain the whole life of the Banjus by their religion alone, as many writers are inclined to do. These sexual practices are not more religious than those prophylactic measures which we ourselves employ to preserve ourselves from tuberculosis or small pox. They

765 are dictated by a special notion of contagion which is admittedly
723 false, scientifically speaking."
833 [Note 13 (page 213). After we have thus explained the cere-
587 monies of purification in which genital matters play the primary role, we shall inquire into the significance of these rites.

Death is something that contaminates men above all. It pollutes everything that it touches, not men themselves only, but also the things that belonged to a dead person.

Among men, the death of a relative affects first of all the sources of life, that is to say, the juices of the limbs that create life. Therefore both the vaginal juices of a woman and the man's spermatic fluid must be removed: in coitus, however, they must be removed according to certain rules:

When a widow purifies herself, she is purified by a stranger or by a new husband.

1) In order that the purification of the widow proceeds correctly, the intercourse must be broken off and the man must be pushed back before he ejaculates his semen; then the man will be contaminated and the woman will be purged. If the man notices that the woman is trying to evade him during coitus he realizes that she is a widow and that she wants him to perish. Immediately he calls his companions who, seizing the woman, will hold her by force while the man ejects his semen into her vagina; in that case the woman will remain polluted and what she wanted she will not have. The man, on the other hand, will be without blame: he will not be contaminated. [519]

2) When the purification is effected by the new husband, then both seclude themselves in the house. One matter is urged particularly strongly: that they do not smoke any tobacco! They drink curious medicines. Then they have intercourse as many times in a row as the man can last, ten times and more if he is able. But as many times as they have intercourse the man ejaculates his semen externally: bayisanyana ba fanela ku huma, that is, "the children (spermatozoa) must be removed," as one of those who informed me about these things said. Now the sources of life of the man are purged, something which had to be done while he was impure with contamination. The woman is also pure, doubtless on account of the medicines which they drank together before they had sexual intercourse.

This interpretation explains the rite correctly, provided it is carried out by impure men. But when it is executed by pure parents, as when it is concerned with the boha puri (page 56), then the matter must be explained in a different

765 fashion. The father and mother smear the infant's girdle
783 made of cotton flax with their genital juices so that the infant
833 becomes invigorated by their vital juices and thus may be
587 received into the life of the tribe.

These physiological conceptions, though they may be absolutely false from the scientific point of view, certainly proceed from deep intuitions regarding the mystery of life. I insist on the fact that they are not derived from religious ideas. It is a mistake to attempt to explain the whole life of the Bantus by their religion alone, as many writers are inclined to do. These sexual practices are not more religious than those prophylactic measures which we ourselves employ to preserve ourselves from tuberculosis or small pox. They are dictated by a special notion of contagion which is admittedly false, scientifically speaking.]

595 "Annotatio quarta decima (P. 285). Doctori G. Liengmei,
833 nostro medico, cum sæpe curaret viros qui medicinam
842 petebant qua infantes procrearent, fassi sunt se singulis noctibus cum tribus vel quatuor uxoribus coire. (A monogamis quibusdam audivimus uxorem adeo fatigari ut noctu exiret laboratum ut a marito evaderet.) Cum medicus eos hortaretur ut quinque dies concubitu omnino abstinerent, nunquam id concedere potuerunt. Volebant enim facultatem generandi recuperare libidine non omissa. Dicuntur etiam cum vires cupiditatibus nondum pares esse videantur, remedia quædam adhibere sive ut venerem excitent sive ut uxores prægnantes fiant. Duplex fit medicatio. Primum secti testiculi hirci—(quod animal fatigari negatur, mbuti a yi karali)—cum plurimis herbis mixti coquuntur et a viro eduntur. Deinde alias herbas collectas in cerevisiam injicit. Tantum aiunt esse effectum ut viro qui non amplius duas uxores habeat, non sit ea re [520] utendum, ne, illis non sufficientibus, cum aliorum uxoribus stuprum committat, quod ei sit offensioni.

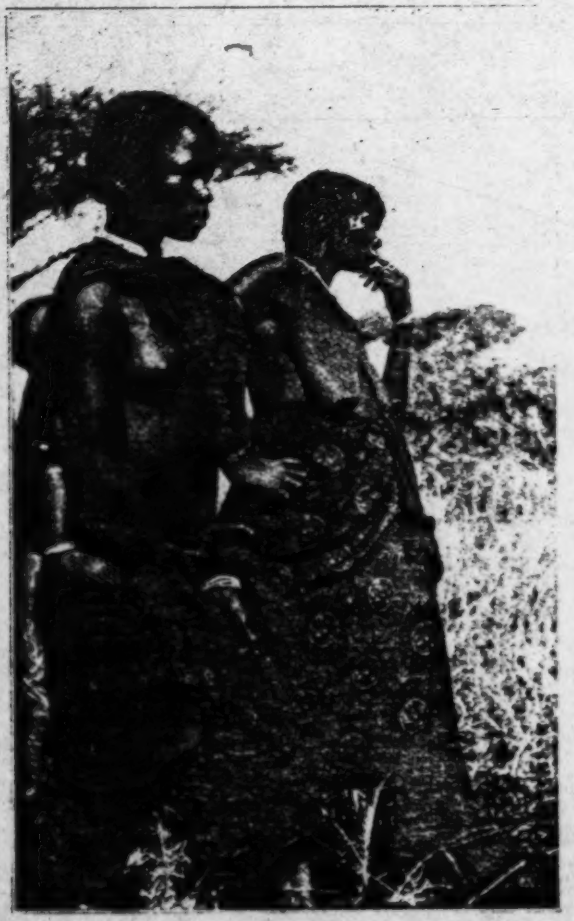
Viri casti, ut in loco Mpfumo videre licet, in sua casa dormiunt et interdum uxorem quam cupiunt ad se vocant. Plerique tamen, lege sibi imposita, ne discordia inter uxores erumpat, mensem unum in casa singularum uxorum vicissim agunt.

Qui plures habent uxores aliis etiam medicaments utuntur ad libidinem excitandam. Quorum unum putant ad effectum maxime valere: Medicus, cum se ipse curavit, in locum montium secedit, quo cynocephali feminæ urinam menstruali sanguine mixtam emittere solent. Quod manet in saxis et fœdissimam diffundit odorem, medicus excipiens coquit, et ex eo magnas conficit pillas quas emptoribus vendit. Hi eas-

301 out that this custom probably had a social significance in former times, though at present it is practised as an adornment.

302 As regards *hair* (nsisi, mu-mi), women often cut it, men less

142



Maputju women with "tingoya." *Photo P. Aubert.*

302 frequently. A man only cuts his hair when his wife dies, as a
[765] sign of mourning : it is a taboo (I. p. 146). In former times they never shaved their beards. People made fun of those who did so, saying : "Are you an Angolese?" (The Angolese, who are numerous in the neighbourhood of Lourenço-Marques,

439 monopolise the retail trade throughout the country, and the
563 Natives are quite unable to meet this competition; they have consequently almost entirely given up all their earlier attempts at business transactions! (1)

167 A second reason why the trade of former days has almost
439 entirely disappeared is to be found in the *great economic changes* resulting from the fact that Lourenço Marques has become an important seaport, in close relation with the miners of Johannesburg who receive their supplies via Delagoa Bay. Thousands of Natives are employed in discharging the large steamers which arrive by hundreds in the roadstead. At this work a Native can earn fifteen shillings a week or more; in a short time he has made ample provision for the wants of his family and no longer finds it necessary to go to Bilene, to Zululand or Swaziland to make a living. The women too can make money by selling tomatoes and sweet potatoes to an ever increasing White population. All this is much easier

439 (1) On one occasion, in 1892, I made a list of various articles displayed for sale in and around a Banyan shop, in the district of Mahazule (to the North of Nondwane).
292 This is what Mr. Nala, a Hindu from Goa established for many years amongst the Rongas, offered to the Natives living in the neighbourhood of his primitive store.
765 *Stuffs.* These are sold by measurement taken on the individual; say, by the
584 *shikumba*, length of one arm, or by the *nkumba* or *bemba* (two arms), or by the *peça*, the entire piece, the equivalent of two bemba. The materials most in demand are called; *tingidao* (white), *mashita* (black with white stripes), *sh landana* (all red), *shinwakana* (red and black), *mempana* (a special red stuff worn as mourning) and *malopa* (a navy blue material still more frenquently worn as mourning). Besides these are *handkerchiefs* (minturu) of various colours, principally red, a large proportion coming from the manufacturers of East Switzerland; white *blankets (gampongo*, meaning snow), for three or four shillings; coloured blankets, thicker, varying from five to seven shillings; towels, called *thawula* (an adaptation of the English word) and even some articles of ready-made clothing such as *djansi* (overcoats) at fifteen shillings! Amongst the stuffs I would more particularly note the *gangisa ntombi*, that is "for use when courting the girls", dark blue with a pattern of white flowers.
439 *Beads.* There are at least a dozen kinds to be found at Nala's; djiridja (black) mbanda (white), shingazana, shimuzana, nkankana, habo, matshimbarole, bafa, tshambo.
Sundries. Rings, fish-hooks, buttons (masowa), thread, needles, snuff boxes to be worn in the ears (tinhlanga), knives, spoons, balls of string, padlocks (makandjate) with key attached; little chains, to be hung from the belt, which tinkle when walking; bracelets (busenga, ten for a shilling); wooden spoons, combs, coils of fine iron wire; skins; a large trap for catching hyenas or other wild animals; small brass petroleum lamps; sardines at sixpence a tin, English biscuits, and last but not least, a cask of German brandy diluted (tempora) with 50% of water! This would now be replaced by three casks of Vinho colonial, one of white wine, one of red wine and one of I do not know what colour!

The stump is perhaps some ill-disposed person whose opposition the energetic maid is determined to overcome! 533 832

As a counterpart, here is the *complaint of a jilted lover*, who gives vent to his annoyance with the girl and her family : 539

> Refuse me if you will, girl!
> The grains of maize you eat in your village are human eyes!
> The tumblers from which you drink are human skulls!
> The manioc roots you eat are human tibia!
> The sweet potatoes are human fingers!
> Refuse me, if you will, girl!

The vexation of a jilted lover is of short duration. He has the money, he is sure to find a girl! But it would be erroneous to think Native lovers or husbands are not capable of deep and lasting affection. I know of a case, near Shiluvane, in which a Nkuna committed suicide because his wife had deceived him, and had relations with another man. 831

See, I. p. 286, the song in which the *despised wife* gives vent to her anger : her husband has plucked her little pumpkin and given it to the wife he preferred. No doubt the *bukwele*, the special feeling of jealousy existing between co-wives, has inspired more than one song which could find no equivalent in our own literature! 533

Mourning songs are numerous ; they are sung just after the burial. They are touching ; note the simple cry : 533 765 539

> Mamane! You have left us! whither have you gone?

The tune (No. 14) is striking : a very high and prolonged note, followed by double crochets sounded very rapidly and ending in another long note with a short sharp conclusion, like a cry of anguish.

One of those present rises and sings, as if he were playing the part of the bereaved :

> A la adji ya'ange-ke lepsi?
> Have they not hated me, treating me in this way?

All the throng of the mourners answer :

> Ba ku yalile, wena, wa ka manyana!
> They have hated you, son of so and so!

533 He answers :

539 Ba tekile nkhao !
765 They have taken my intimate friend !

This is no doubt an allusion to the wizards, who are supposed to cause most of the deaths. They are cursed in another very curious song, half Zulu, noted down by Mrs Audéoud in Maputju. (Tune 16.)

Hamban, Muthakati ! Bulela bantu ! — U teka b'sikwin !
Go away, wizard ! Killer of men ! — You take them during the night !

Or the mourning song may be a complaint, in which the family bewails its bereavement, like the old Nkuna song. (Tune 15) :

Hi bana ba Nhumba ya ntima ! Hi bana ba Malala ni ngobe.
We are the sons of the black house (the house of misfortune and defilement)

The following is strangely stoic :

A li beni mombo ! A li beni mombo !
Ku tshubuka, ku baba ka psone !
Let it beat the face ! Let it beat the face !
To run away, what a bitter thing !

Death is like a foe. Look at it face to face! Do not lose your courage in this last fight.

I quote in Part VI another mourning song, a very curious one, where an allusion is made to Heaven, the mysterious power which kills and gives life, which we have already heard mentioned in the song of the widows (I, p. 209), when they lament their bereavement.

533 This *stoic* song is also a *war* song ; it is customary to sing the
539 war songs at the death of any important personage. The following belongs to the same category, and is used on both occasions :

Ketle-ketle, nhubane ! Fumo dji wile ! A dlawa hi nomo, Tatana !
Hear this noise of weapons ! The assagai has fallen ! He has been killed on account of his words, father !

The chief has been killed in a fight which had been caused by his imprudent words : he wished to free himself from his

825 was working one day together with some little Pedi boys, I heard him talking volubly. Evidently he did not expect any answer from his helpers, who knew Thonga but imperfectly :

— "What are you saying?" I asked him. — "Oh! I am speaking to the cock." — "What do you mean?" — "I am asking it if it knows what is going on in our country, at Gungunyana. It answers that it does. This cock is a clever cock. It is a man. When cocks do not know what one asks them, they say *hwi* (descriptive adverb meaning to keep quiet)." — "Are there any other beasts to which one can talk?" — "Certainly, those which belong [765] to the village." — "Dogs?" — "No! Pigeons! When someone dies in the village, the headman must go and gather together all the pigeons, giving them some water or some food, and tell them about the death. Then they begin to coo ; they are satisfied to have been informed, treated like people of the home. If this precaution is omitted, the pigeons will leave the village in the afternoon and never return (1). This happened to a Ngoni of Bilen."

Enchanted animals can also speak, for instance a hyena which has been sent by a wizard. In Rikatla there was a man named Gebuza whose face was entirely disfigured, his nose having been torn off by a hyena ; his story was told as follows. Once a hyena entered the village in the early morning when every one was still asleep. It saluted the people saying :

— "Good morning, you people." — "Good morning" answered the people in the hut. — "Give me fire" demanded the hyena. — "Open the door and take an ember" they said. — "No, open it yourselves!" Gebuza opened the door and the hyena seized his nose in its teeth, and bit it off. This is one of the countless wizard stories. With the exception of these instances I do not think the Natives, as a rule, believe that animals have a language, or that men can speak with them. They do not, however, feel

(1) A curious resemblance may be noted here. Amongst French Swiss peasants and in parts of England and of Germany, when the master of the farm dies the bees must be officially informed of the fact, and some one goes to the bee hives and tells them what has happened; misfortune would otherwise befall them.

Regular acts of worship are performed also at the
burial (I. p. 142), at the *crushing of the hut* (I. p. 158-163), on the 782
days of *mahloko* (I. p. 215), and at the *adjudication of the inheritance* 765
(I. p. 208). 262

I have already mentioned the stringent taboo in regard to the victims killed in these sacrifices. The portions distributed amongst the different relations must not be eaten either in the village of the deceased, or in those of the various visitors. This meat must be roasted on the road, and eaten on the spot, and it is likewise taboo to season it in any way. The inhabitants of the deceased's village can eat the meat boiled, but it is prohibited to add ground-nuts to the broth.

These are the great family sacrifices, in which the uterine 782
nephews play their curious part, and on the occasion of which family matters are brought up and settled. They play a most important part in the life of the family, and I have therefore described them at length, when treating of the social life of the tribe, as religion and social life are here intimately united. There is therefore no need for me to add much more regarding them here. With their clearly established and typical ritual they form the most definite and settled element of the religious life of the tribe.

Rangane asserts that another offering is regularly performed in the Maluleke district. On the first occasion of the *cooking of the new mealies*, each headman prepares a little of the flour, takes a spoonful of it, and throws it away, praying at the same time to the Ba-Nyai spirits, i. e., the gods of the Ba-Nyai, who have been conquered by the Malulekes. He calls this "magandjelo ya ku ñwantseka," i. e., "sacrifice tasted and thrown away." This is evidently to propitiate the gods, who were the first owners of the country and who might harm or destroy the invaders. Compare p. 377 the respect shown by Mahazule to the Libombo sacred wood, and also the curious request of the Samaritans, II Kings. XVII.

Special Family Sacrifices. By these, I mean particularly those 782
offered *in cases of disease*. The bones having revealed that the 755
disease is caused by the gods (and not by wizards, nor by Heaven, nor by contamination, which are three other possibilities), and also that it comes from such and such a god, a god of bitterness, or a god

Special precautions are taken in respect to twins when they pay a mourning visit. One of the grave-diggers meets them at the entrance of the village and says: "Do not fear, Children of Heaven." He then puts some ashes on their heads and on their fontanelles. This is done because twins are feeble (ma ni bushapu) and the defilement might affect them more than other children. They must therefore be protected by smearing the middle of the head, and the "extremity of the tree of life," viz., the fontanelle, with a preventive. The mother also undergoes a similar treatment. She must prostrate herself near the hut of the deceased, at the place where the wall has been pierced to make an exit for the corpse. Then the grave-digger brings some live embers in a broken pot, pours a little water on to them, and dips his fingers into the water; he then presses both his hands against the woman's belly and brings them round her waist, pressing them all the while against the skin, until they meet on the spine; thus she is "cured inside" (dahiwa ndjen). This will prevent her from suffering from internal troubles, to which she, having given birth to Tilo, Heaven, is particularly liable. (Comp. I. p. 151) (1).

From this brief description of the customs connected with twins in most of the Thonga clans, it may be seen that their explanation is twofold: 1) The birth of twins is a death, consequently a defilement, indeed the worst of all defilements. Hence the *purificatory rites* which bear the character of *passage rites*: the mother is secluded and passes through a period of isolation, after which she is again admitted to society after a painful "casting away of her misfortune." 2) But the cause of the defilement is not an ordinary death, but Heaven. *She is Heaven*; she is said to have

(1) Another category of persons bearing a special relation to Heaven are the *albinos*. Cases of albinism are not frequent amongst South African Natives, yet they are sometimes met with. They are called in Thonga *Khalandlati*, a word which means literally *charcoal-lightning*. It is believed that they have been burnt (hisa) by lightning in their mother's womb before their birth. "Ba tlalile, a ba wupfanga, ba bengiwi hi tilo," viz. "they are uncomplete beings, they are not ripe, they have been hated by Heaven"; these are the terms in which they are described. They are not however regarded as taboo (yila), they merely inspire disgust (nyenya) (p. 83). As regards women suffering from this kind of disgrace, other women do not smear themselves with the same ochre as they, lest they should give birth to albinos; they do not drink from the same cup. Men do not marry them, and in this respect they are classed with leper women and witches, who are also looked on as repugnant.

853 grandmother, by name Mishidohi, who had an adult son and had had no other child since, prepared light beer and other appropriate food and succeeded in secreting milk in her own breast ; so the child was saved !

856 826 A child during these first months of its existence is regarded as a very weak creature. "I mati !" i. e. "It is nothing but water !" Hence perhaps the curious idea that a baby, just like a new born animal, is able to swim, at any rate it cannot be drowned : it floats on the water. When a woman carrying a little child on her back crosses a river and is in danger of being swept away by the stream, people shout to her from the shore : "Untie the 'ntehe' and let the baby cross. Think of yourself, the little one will follow all right." They say: "Psa yila, it is taboo that a baby should sink." Note the curious use of the word "yila" in this sentence.

3) Dentition.

856 364 351 As soon as the child has cut the two lower and upper incisors, the mother takes a white bead (tjambu) and ties it to one of the child's hairs above the forehead. This white bead is said to help the other teeth to come out normally. If this precaution were not taken, the child would not become intelligent ; he would shiver instead of smiling ; he would bring forward his lips and his tongue to prevent the air from getting into his mouth ! When all the teeth are duly cut, the bead is removed and thrown away *talen*, viz. on the *tala*. The *tala* is the ash-heap, the place behind the hut on which everyone throws ashes and dirt. It plays a great part in the customs of the Thongas and other South African Bantus.

195 The teeth (tinyo-menyo) of the children are called figuratively *hobe*. The *hobe* (pl. *tihobe*) means the grain of pounded maize which is white and very similar to a tooth. Hence the expression : "A humi hobe," "he has got out a grain of maize," employed to indicate the cutting of the teeth.

787 766 836 When a child cuts his upper teeth first, it is a bad omen. In the Northern clans and especially amongst the Ba-Pedi, it is a great taboo. At his death the child must be buried in wet soil.

5) The tying of the cotton string.

854 When the child "tiyelanyana" viz. "becomes a little firm,"
857 the mother, having to plough her fields and to cook the food, begins to seat him on the sandy soil, after having made a kind of hole of about five inches in depth. We have seen Thonga babies already sitting at the age of two months. But this "dumping" hardly meets all the requirements, and the mother looks for a girl to help her to take care of the baby (wa ku tlanga na ye, to play with him). She puts the child in the charge of an elder sister or a cousin ; a girl of five to ten is quite strong enough for the purpose. I have often admired the patience of these miniature nurses, sometimes not very much bigger than the child they carry, with their very troublesome babies.

852 But very soon the child begins to crawl (kasa) and this is the
715 time when a very striking rite is performed. This rite seems to be practised all over the tribe, but it has more importance in the Northern clans than amongst the Ba-Ronga. I shall here give the description of Viguet, who belonged to the Tsungu clan and had emigrated to the Spelonken. My readers must forgive me if I cannot tell the story with all its details and if I am obliged to write some of them in Latin (1).

851 These are the ipsissima verba of my informant : "This is a
833 great law amongst the Thongas. When a child begins to crawl,
766 even before, the *puri* is tied round his waist. The *puri* is a
842 cotton (2) string. Father and mother fix the day ; if they forget to do so, their parents, (the grandparents) will remind them of the law. They must have sexual intercourse, but in such a way that the mother will not become pregnant, s. n. i. (Annotatio 2)[1]. The mother will have to take in her hands "their filth" (thyaka ra bona) smear the string with it and tie it round the child. It will

(1) A more complete description of this rite and of some others related to the taboos of the Thongas will be found in the Revue d'Ethnographie et de Sociologie, Oct. 1910, Paris.

(2) There are plants of cotton probably subspontaneous in the Low Country of the Transvaal of Delagoa Bay.

1 [See p. 676 in these categories or in 116--Analyst]

851 remain there till it falls to pieces. After this operation the
766 child is "grown up" and three things are allowed which were
833 taboo before :

1) The child, if he dies, can be buried on the hill, in dry soil. Before the *boha puri* he would have been buried in wet soil, near the river, as is customary with twins and children who have cut their upper teeth first.

2) He can participate in the strange purification called *hlamba ndjaka* which takes place after the death of one of the inhabitants of the village (See ceremonies of death).

852 3) The parents can again have conjugal intercourse, though
766 they must avoid conception till the child is weaned. Before this
833 ceremony it was absolutely prohibited, and should they have
821 sinned in this respect and the mother have conceived, they would
842 be very guilty! It is a dangerous taboo! They would have "stolen" the child, stolen it from the law (yiba nawen). The child would not have "entered the law." It would be useless to tie the string round him in order to repair the evil done. Should he live long, should he even become an old man, he will have to be buried in wet soil, otherwise the rain would be prevented from falling.

Amongst the Malulekes and the Hlengwes such children are even burnt after their death. We shall speak later on about the mysterious relation established by the Thongas between these children, their burial, and the rain.

852 Amongst the Ba-Ronga this rite is called *boha nshale* (to tie
854 the cotton) and can be performed in the same way or even more simply by the father (Annotatio 3).[1] Parents, when they have duly tied the string on the little one, are said to have *fuya ñwana*, viz. taken possession of the child.

Amongst them again, another thing is then allowed which was taboo before. The child can be carried on the shoulders without ntehe by the arms alone (hi minkono).

851 It is clear that the tying of the cotton string means the official reception of the child into the family, even into human society. Before that, he was hardly considered as a human being, he was *shilo* (a thing), *khuna* (an incomplete being). Now he is *nkulu*,

2 [See p. 516 in these categories or in 116 - Analyst]

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881 long. Sometimes, when game has been plentiful, one of the men comes and squeezes the half-digested grass found in the bowels of an antelope over the porridge, saying to the boys : " You must have something of the results of your hunting too! "

This diet nauseates them at first. They sometimes vomit right on the table. No matter, every particle of the porridge must be eaten all the same. When they are accustomed to the diet, they grow fat, and it is wonderful how their physical appearance sometimes improves during these few months.

Punishments. Blows are punishments for minor offences. Should some more serious fault have been committed, the father of the circumcision condemns the boy to "drink goat's milk." There is a shrub called " mbuti ;" the same word also means goat. Three sticks of it are taken. The boy must present his hands, put them against each other and separate the fingers. The sticks are introduced between the fingers and a strong man, taking both ends of the sticks in his hands, presses them together and lifts the poor boy, squeezing and half crushing his fingers.

[688] In former times, the boys who had tried to escape or who had revealed the secrets of the sungi to women, or to the uninitiated, were hanged on the last day of the school and burnt to ashes, together with all the contents of the lodge.

766 881 *Death.* The circumcised must also be prepared to die if their wound does not heal properly and if the Manyabe's medicine is not successful. Many of them have actually died. It is absolutely forbidden to mourn over them. The mother of the deceased is informed of his death by a notch cut in the edge of the pot in which she brings the food. She must not cry. The corpse is buried in a wet place, in a grave dug with sticks, as it would make people suspicious if the shepherds were to go to the village and fetch spades for this work.

IV. *The teaching of formulae.*

881 So the boys are taught endurance, obedience, manliness. But there is another side to the training of the Ngoma. It has sometimes been compared to a school, and it is true that there is some

765 consequence of the death. If it be the hut of one of the subor-
596 dinates, the roof is simply lifted off and thrown away into the
787 bush.
766 Another very significant rite in connexion with the closing of the hut is accomplished on the death of the master of the village. A branch is cut from the tree of the village, the tree which was revealed by the divinatory bones as the one near which the headman had to build (See Part II Ch. II) ; half of the branch is placed across the great gate of the village, which is then closed and another gate opened, at some distance, in the fence ; the other half is put over the door of the crushed hut.

765 There seem to be great variations in the performance of these
428 ceremonies everywhere. I believe, without being able to vouch for it, that when two family gatherings take place during this last period of the mourning, the first is held to proclaim the new master of the village and the second to distribute the inheritance amongst the heirs-at-law. At any rate these two important acts take place at the gatherings. As the inheritance consists mainly of live stock — human stock, the wives of the deceased, I shall describe the adjudication when treating of the fate of widows.

2) Family rites in the Northern clans.

765 A month after the burial, there is a first gathering of the grave-
574 diggers. They are invited by the widows to a beer-feast. This beer is called : "the beer of the hyenas," as the hyenas also dig graves! No equivocal compliment is intended, the widows merely meaning to thank these men for their services.

765 In the northern clans, *yindlu a yi yili*, the hut is not taboo.
782 It can be slept in again after the five days of the Great Mourning. The plaster of the doorposts is repaired, and a new crown is put on the top when the hut again finds an owner (1). The feast of the

766 (1) The hut of a leper alone is considered irremediably tabooed as the sufferer is buried in it. They dig a hole into which he is pushed by means of sticks. The roof is crushed down over him.

VII. *Various cases of death.*

766 So far I have treated specially of the death of a headman, who had reached adult age, and died at home. There are a few other cases to describe.

Should the man *have died far away from home*, in Johannesburg for instance, no ceremony will take place before the news is entirely confirmed. Then all the relatives assemble. A grave is dug and all his mats and his clothing are buried in it. These objects which he was in the habit of using every day, and which have been soiled by the exudations from his body, are *himself*. A sacrifice will be made over the grave, not by means of the nkanye twig but with a fowl which is thrown on the grave. Formerly the fowl was left on the ground, but nowadays the uterine nephews steal it. The widow will eat with her hands till the burial, though death took place long before and was already publicly known ; she will begin to use a spoon only after the burial has taken place. This fact illustrates strangely the ritualistic notion which is at the base of all these mourning customs! The steam baths, the sprinkling on the fifth day, the singing, dancing and condolence visits take place just the same as in ordinary mourning.

In the Northern clans, the belongings of a man who dies far away (matikwen, in the lands) are burnt. The purifying sprinklings are performed. The same is done for relatives who die accidentally and whose corpses have not been buried ; for instance, if they were killed by a wild beast or in battle.

When a *stranger* dies in a Thonga village, and no one knows him, "*a nga na ntshumu*"—"he does not matter," says Viguet. The grown-up men will bury him. They dig a hole and drag the corpse into it with a rope. They do not touch it. There is no contagion, therefore no ceremony of purification. Amongst the Malulekes and Hlengwes, such a corpse is burnt. They attend to the cremation and do not leave the spot till they hear an explosion (boom!), which shows that all danger (khombo) has departed.

766 When an *infant* dies, it must be buried in a broken pot. The

766 pot is placed in the earth, the opening being half covered with a layer of ashes, in such a way that there remains a passage for the air. It is taboo to bury it otherwise, until it has passed through the rite of presentation to the moon (page 53). *An older child* is buried in the ordinary way, but with very few ceremonies. There is no religious act. The mother alone attends the funeral. The father digs the grave, but he does nothing else. He says : "We, holders of the assagai, do not bury such little ones. They are but water, they are but a womb, (nyimba) they are but a *ntehe*."
854 A father pays very little attention to little children. It is only when they begin to smile that he will show them some affection. Then it may be that he will press his little one against his breast and kiss its temple, especially when he returns home from a journey.

766 *In the case of suicide*, the corpse is buried according to ordinary rules. But the tree on which the man hanged himself is cut down. It is taboo : other people might commit suicide at the same place. Its wood is not used for fuel.

If a woman dies during pregnancy, she must be cut open to see what the sex of her child is. This must be done inside the grave, before the earth is covered in. As Mboza said : "The air (moya) must come out." He told me the story of a husband in the Mabota country who nearly fainted when obliged to perform this painful operation. But it is a great taboo, as the woman might become a god of bitterness (shikwembo sha shibiti), if buried without this precaution (See Part VI). In the Maluleke clan women who die pregnant, or in confinement, are cremated.

Lepers alone are buried in the hut. In Maputju the father and the mother are buried in front of the hut whilst the regular place in other parts of the Ronga territory is behind the hut, *mahosi*. The members of the reigning family are buried in the *ntimu*, the sacred wood which belongs to them. Every big family may have its *ntimu* and the men are buried there according to their villages; each village has its place and the place is called after the name of the headman of the village. So in the Lebombo sacred wood, there was "the village of Nkolele, to the south, the village of Shihubane, to the north, etc."

843 remove the blood. The Thongas think that, as the menses are suspended, the blood accumulates in the body and must be taken away.

Pregnancy is not considered as a tabooed period. As we have just seen, sexual relations are allowed during that time, even recommended as favourable to the growth of the child. However, in view of the impending birth, some special taboos have been added to those which apply to all women.

A pregnant woman *must not drink water when standing up*. She must kneel down, otherwise the water would fall violently on the head of the child and hurt it!

843 It is taboo for her to *wrap her body* in too much clothing.
845 She must keep her belly bare and never throw her dress (kapulane) over her shoulders, lest the baby come to the light with its head covered with membranes, a complication which is very much dreaded by Thonga women.

She must not take *the sauce* of her porridge *too hot*. The child might be scalded inside and have black spots when born.

It is also taboo to *prepare the ntche before the birth*, as no one knows what will happen. The child might die!

843 The future mother must *not* eat *pigeon's meat*, because pigeons
825 have no blood in the muscles of their breast. She would have no milk herself wherewith to nurse the baby. Nor must she even *look at a monkey*, lest she "take to herself" (tekela) the form of the animal and the child be like it!

A woman, in the beginning of pregnancy, must not visit a sick person. The latter might die.

843 As regards women dying during pregnancy, see page 166.

766 *Miscarriages* are very much feared amongst South Africans,
731 not for themselves, but because they are accompanied by an
789 uncontrolled effusion of a blood which is a terrible taboo. The
826 discharged foetus must be buried in wet soil, otherwise the rain will not fall; the country having been polluted will be dried up by hot winds. A strange rite called *mbelele* is performed in times of drought, when all the graves of children born prematurely and buried on the hill are searched, and their contents thrown into the mud, near the river. We shall discuss in Part VI the

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846 A demonstration of joy takes place at the birth of any subsequent
831 child, but the kunga is only performed for the first-born. It does not seem that in the case of the first-born child, as in the case of bowumba (see p. 125) the gifts of kunga are subject to any taboo.

8) Loss of children.

766 A woman who loses an infant (wa ku felwa) is deeply contam-
783 inated with the defilement of death. She must bury it herself
834 without aid from her husband. Next day, she goes behind the
853 hut, kneels down and draws off her own milk on to the ground. She does this until the secretion has ceased. This is taboo ; her milk is polluted ; no drop of it must fall in the gardens. She must avoid crossing the fields and going to the storehouses to fetch food.
864 Until she has been "put right again (busetela)," she eats with a spoon. To use a spoon is a bad omen for a woman, because it reminds her of death. That is the reason why men adopt this civilized custom more readily than women. During her mourning, no sexual relations are allowed. When menstruation begins again, she first keeps silent, and does not tell her husband. Only on the second or third occasion does she inform him of the fact. He can then purify her ; this is done in the same way as in the case of widows. (See p. 154.) Then he buys new clothing for her and she resumes her ordinary mode of life. Everybody seeing her with this new attire will know that "she has been repaired." Should any one else than the husband give her this clothing, the latter will be greatly offended and accuse her of having relations with a lover.

765 A man does not put on *malopa*, mourning clothing, for a child
586 who was not yet of age. The woman alone does so. However a husband is always grieved at the death of his child and a sad event like this often leads to dreadful results. He will begin to think that his wife is a witch and has eaten her own child by her magical powers. Such an accusation is almost sure to end in a divorce.

A woman who has *lost many children*, three or four, is considered

643 some woman may come and live with him (titlhuba), as in cases of
588 elopement — in which case he must go, according to the law,
595 early in the morning to the parents of the girl and denounce himself as the abductor (p. 119); but none of these women can be his official wife; they may bear him children, but these will be *makohlwa*, those who have no right to royalty; the young chief may not wed his official wife, she who is to become the mother of the heir to the throne, until after the death of his father.

643 There is a saying, a precept of the royal code as follows:
663 "Hosi a yi faneli ku bona ntukulu," a chief must never see his
595 grandson, i. e. the one who will eventually succeed his son in the royal line. The Ba-Ngoni of Gungunyana (in Gaza) have the same custom; but with them things are arranged differently. The eldest son of the chief's principal wife, when at the requisite age for marriage, takes a wife and loses the right of succession; it is the youngest son, still young at the time of his father's death, who inherits the throne, because he has no children of his own. This leads to jealousy and civil war between brothers; it has brought numberless misfortunes to the royal family of Gaza, and it was one of the causes of the downfall of Gungunyana. The Thonga custom is much more simple and less dangerous to the maintenance of peace; the chief must not see his grandson, therefore his son will not be officially married until after his father's death. Any wives he may previously have taken will be morganatic and their children are not entitled to inherit.

I have been told by Mankhelu that when a chief lives to be very old and does not wish to delay the marriage of his son and heir, he can himself pay the lobolo and acquire, for his son, the official wife who will be considered as being "the wife of the country." But this seems to be an exceptional occurrence.

B. CORONATION OF THE CHIEF.

643 In all Thonga clans the death of a chief is kept secret for one
766 year or more, as we shall see. Amongst the Nkunas the official mourning for the deceased takes place the same day as the coron-

643 766 701 ation of his successor. All the regiments of the army are summoned, together with groups of warriors delegated by foreign clans. The mourning ceremonies are first performed. (See later on). Then, at the end of the afternoon, says Mankhelu, the great counsellors send a herald to the circle of warriors. He shouts: "Khaula!" viz., "keep silent!" The new chief comes out of the hut and stands alone in the midst of the circle. "Do you see him," says the herald... "It is the chief!" — "Who is he?" ask the warriors, who wish to know his new name. — "It is Muhlaba Dabuka," he answered, when the present Nkuna chief was proclaimed. Formerly his name was Shikuna. Now he adopted this new name, borrowed from one of the Ngoni chiefs of Bilen. "He who wants to fight, can fight," he adds. This is an invitation to those who wish to protest against the coronation to state the fact plainly. When Muhlaba was proclaimed, the Masakomo family left the capital in anger, as they thought they were deprived of their right. (See later on.) Such an occurrence is not rare owing to the irregularities which so frequently take place in the succession.

If the chief is still a child he is carried on a shield, or put on the roof of a hut, so that everybody may see him.

In the Ronga clans the ceremony is conducted as follows. Let me describe it with all the details supplied by Tobane.

643 609 648 First of all sacrifices are made to the gods to ask that this ceremony may pass off quietly, happily, without quarrelling, and then the date is fixed. Invitations are sent to the surrounding little kingdoms, or at least to all those who are on friendly relations with the tribe. For instance, supposing the installation to be that of the chief of Mpfumo, invitations would be sent to Maputju, Tembe, Matjolo, Nondwane, Ñwamba and Shirinda. Manyisa and Ntimane are regarded as "being of a different mind" (moya muñwana), and "good will only reaches as far as the river Nkomati," to give a literal translation of the expression used by my informant; this means that relations with the more distant countries are hardly those of even ordinary civility. The warriors of the invited tribes assemble, in greater or smaller numbers; sometimes only a few delegates attend, but they do not proceed at once to the capital. Etiquette requires that each one should

643 Gigiseka. The last named was very courageous, and the cunning Maphunga succeeded in poisoning him treacherously, through the agency of a dissolute woman.

E. DEATH.

643 When a chief has grown very old, he no longer goes out of
[763] the royal hut. His counsellors take his place in the management
766 of affairs and he dies surrounded by mystery. It must be so, as his death must remain unknown during a whole year. "We reap and we bow down (korama)" viz. "we till the ground and reap again before the event is made public (palusha)" says Mankhelu.

So the chief is buried during the night ; no lamentations are heard ; his wives and his grave-diggers undergo the purification ceremonies and take the vapour baths in secret. It may be that the wives who dwell in remote places will not hear a word of their husband's death. The fire of the royal hut will not be kindled in the usual and ritual way, but it will be kept burning the whole year. The decease is formally announced to some few individuals, to the White Government officials, to the heir (who views the corpse), and to the counsellors, but the rest of the country is supposed to be in ignorance of the occurrence. Of course the secret will not be kept absolutely. The truth will leak out... But no one will dare to speak openly on the subject (1).

643 A special hut is set apart into which the counsellors enter under
645 pretext of discussing matters of state with the chief, who is said to be very ill and unable to show himself. As a matter of fact, he has been buried for some time.

(1) I was staying at Nondwane when Mapunga, the chief who preceded Mahazule, died, and I heard on several occasions, in June and July 1891, the warriors practising on their antelope horns the airs to be played when the mourning should be made public. The death must have occurred during 1890, but nothing was said about it. After the news had been published, Manganyele, a young heathen of the district of Libombo, remarked to me one day: "When last season (about Xmas 1890) we saw the miphimbi (trees bearing fruit similar to an apricot) so heavily laden with fruit, (there had been an exceptionally heavy crop), we felt sure the chief must have died and that he had sent us this plentiful supply.." A typical remark, aptly illustrating the semi-ignorance in which the tribe is kept of the death of the chief.

643 What is the reason for this silence ? According to the old
643 men I consulted, it is to prevent enemies taking advantage of the
766 confusion consequent on the death of the chief to attack the country. Undoubtedly this custom is also intended to give the principal counsellors time to prepare for the installation of the new chief and to prevent bloody contests.

643 The grave of the chief does not differ from those of his subjects.
766 As it has been dug secretly in the sacred wood (ntimu), its whereabouts are not known to most of the people. In some clans or sub-clans the earth of the tumulus is levelled, so that no sign whatever remains to show where the body has been buried. This is said to be done in order to prevent enemies from exhuming the corpse and cutting off the ears, the diaphragm and other parts of the body to make powerful war-charms (See Chapter IV). The graves of the chiefs of Nondwane are said to be invisible, just like the hut of the nyokwekulu. They are known by Magomanyana alone (Mboza). (Magomanyana is the nearest relative of the late Maphunga, the only brother whom he spared).

When the year of secrecy is over, the official proclamation of the mourning is made. (Ba palusha nkosi.) The people come to the capital, clan after clan, sounding their fanfares on trumpets of antelope horns (bunanga, see Chapter III), and bringing with them an ox or a goat. These animals are slaughtered and their bladders are presented to the heir, who pins them into his hair, so that, without any official proclamation having been made, every warrior at once recognises the future chief. All heads are shaven in sign of mourning, the adult men remove their wax crown (p. 129) and the people are clothed in *malopa* (a blue cloth) ; but as the death is not of recent date and has been known more or less for some time, the outward manifestations of grief are reduced to a minimum and dances follow in their train. The delegates from the adjoining countries also come to express their condolences. When all have paid their respects, the mourning is really ended (nkosi wu yu l). The King is dead, long live the King!

As we saw, amongst the Nkunas the proclamation of the death of a chief is made on the same day as the installation of his successor.

586 away by her husband. Sometimes he must forego as much as £ 1. or £ 2 of the lobolo, because he has not brought the woman back in peace. He has spoilt the fence of the village by ill-treating a girl coming from it. He must repair it with that money... Khandlela refused, saying : "We have not driven her away! She went back of her own accord ; you have even found a new husband for her!" What could the Ngwetsas do ? They had just used the lobolo of Gidhlana to buy a wife for Mubene, her brother. The money had already been given to the Moyane clan from which a girl had been chosen by Mubene. They consequently went to the Moyanes and asked them to return the money. But the Moyanes said : "Your money has already gone further. We have used it to buy a girl of Madjieta for our son. We will go and fetch it." So two projected marriages were prevented ; they would have been annulled, had they been already concluded! In this way Khandlela found his money!

587 Later on Gudu came back from Johannesburg and took Gidhlana as his wife. Hoping that he had earned some money, the Nwgetsas went to him and said : "You have spoilt our flock (ntlhambi)" viz., the oxen which we hoped to get by the sale of our daughter. "Now pay!" Muzila said to them : "Look at Shaputa ; we trust in her!" Shaputa was a little girl, the sister of Gudu. Muzila proposed to Ngwetsa's people to consider her as theirs : "They would find money through her." They consented to wait till she was of age. Some years elapsed.

766 Muzila moved to the Mabota country with Gudu. Gidhlana was suddenly taken ill with leprosy and the disease made rapid progress. She died. Muzila, the master of the village, informed Ngwetsa. Ngwetsa did not come to the burial, neither did any member of the family attend it. Was it not leprosy ? Is not the contagion terrible for members of the family ?... Other people can bury a leper ; his relatives never. However they allowed their fears to go too far, for decency required that, in such a case, some relatives at least should go and witness the burial, even though they might keep far away from the grave. Their behaviour greatly grieved Muzila and entailed unexpected consequences!

587 Shaputa grew to be a young woman and a suitor, of the Honwana
766 clan, came and bought her. The Ngwetsas heard of it and at once put in their claim. Muzila informed Gudu, who was then staying near Lourenço Marques. "He fell on his back from the shock!" (o gaa hi le ntjhaku!) and refused to pay. Muzila said to Ngwetsa : "You have forfeited your claim, as you did not attend the funeral. Moreover

But the terrible calamity of drought is brought into direct
relation with some physiological phenomena which no one would 789
have thought of in this connection : the miscarriage of women 821
when the foetus has not been dealt with according to rule, the 843
birth of twins, the death of children not yet received into the tribe 845
by the ceremony of *boha puri* (I. p. 56) and not buried in wet 766
ground ; these are the great natural causes which prevent rain 171
from falling! I have met with this conception all over the
Thonga tribe. I found it also amongst the Pedis of the Transvaal, who firmly believe it, and it would be most interesting to know if Suthos, Zulus, and Hottentots have the same superstitions. Let me quote the *ipsissima verba* of Mankhelu, the great 789
medicine-man of the Nkuna Court. I shall never forget the 821
earnest tone of his voice, his deep conviction, when he uttered 843
to me the following words, as a kind of revelation : "When a 783
woman has had a miscarriage, when she has let her blood flow secretly and has buried the abortive child in an unknown place, it is enough to make the burning winds blow, and to dry up all the land : the rain can no longer fall, because the country is no longer right (tiko a ra ha lulami). Rain fears that spot. It must stop at that very place and can go no further. This woman has been very guilty. She has spoilt the country of the chief, because she has hidden blood which had not yet properly united to make a human being. That blood is taboo! What she has done is taboo. It causes starvation."

"What then must be done?" — "The chief will collect his men and ask them : 'Are you in a normal state?' (lit. are you right?). They answer : 'Such and such a woman was pregnant but nobody knows what she has brought forth.' This woman will be arrested and told to go and show us where she has put it. The earth is dug up ; the hole is sprinkled with a decoction made of two drugs prepared in a special pot, the *mbendula* and *nyangale* ; the woman herself must wash her body every day with that medicine. Then a little of the earth taken from the hole will be scraped up and thrown into the river ; water drawn from the river will be poured into the hole : the country will be well again, and then the rain will come.

"Moreover, we, the medicine-men, after having sent old

"it is the law of the country!" Every one consents to the suspension of the ordinary laws! (1)

Amongst the Rongas, I did not hear of any connection between prematurely born children and rain. When the mbelele rite is performed, a mother of twins must lead the procession of women who draw water and pour it on the graves of the twins in order to secure the rain. They also clean all the wells (kuha tinhlobo), digging them afresh and removing any filth in the water. It may be that the corpse of a twin, if it has been buried in dry ground, will be dug out of its grave and buried again near the river, or they will go in procession and pour water on the grave. This will influence Heaven, which is killing the earth by the terrible heat of the sun. The burning October winds will cease and the rain will fall.

There is something mysterious about all these customs. Considered merely as ideas regarding Nature and natural phenomena, I believe their essential meaning to be this : — there are some cases of human birth which are taboo. While any birth is taboo, owing to the lochia, that of children prematurely born is doubly dangerous. Abnormal children, such as twins, children who have died before the "boha puri" rite (I. p. 56), in some clans also children who cut their upper teeth first, share this noxious character. They are a calamity for the whole land as they are connected with the mysterious power of Heaven, and so prevent the rain from falling. The great remedy for the evil, the only means of counteracting this influence, is to bury these children in wet ground. Should this not have been done, the chief must order these little corpses to be exhumed and buried near the river : this is the aim and object of the mbelele. If wet, these graves will cause no harm (2).

How did these extraordinary conceptions first originate ?

(1) This rite of *mbelele* shows striking analogies with the Passage rites which we have already often met with in Thonga customs. This is a special period, a mourning period for the land, says Viguet, a marginal period which, as such, is accompanied by obscene manifestations, both in speech and in absence of clothing.

(2) In the Maluleke clan, as previously mentioned, these three categories of children must be *cremated*, and foreigners dying in the midst of the clan are also burnt after their death, from fear that they might belong to one of these categories and so prevent the rain from falling, if they were buried in dry ground. The mbelele rite there is called *nkalenkala*. Rangane describes it as follows : — Women collect the bones of twins,

stem *kwemba* is never used, and its meaning is unknown. There 769
is another form, *nkwembu*, of the class mu-mi, very rarely used, and 776
having the same meaning, and the word *bukwembu*, the abstract 193
noun derived from the same root. Bukwembu is the "power which creates life and death, which gives riches, or which makes poor," says Viguet. In Pedi the ancestor-gods are called *badimo*, a word which seems to be related to *Khedimo* (above, in heaven). But I have heard this connection doubted (1). In Zulu the etymology of *indhlozi* and *itongo*, employed to designate the ancestor-gods, is also unknown, which is a pity, as it would have been interesting to see if the stem from which they come also means above. Is it not strange that in these three closely- [171]
connected languages the terms used for the spirits, about which they have exactly the same ideas, are absolutely without any linguistic relation? In Sutho, these spirits belong to the class "mu-ba," the class of persons, which seems natural. In Zulu their two names are of the class yin-tin and dji-ma, respectively ; in Thonga they belong to the shi-psi class. This dissimilarity is indeed curious.

2) Categories of Ancestor-Gods.

Since every human being becomes a shikwembu after death, [766]
there are consequently many categories of these. What is the fate
of little children? If they die in infancy no religious ceremony is 776
performed over their grave, nor are any prayers offered to them. 769
The twig rite (I. p. 142) only begins for children who have died at the age of puberty. Infants are, however, seen in the sacred woods amongst the adult gods. This is one of the points about

(1) The Vendas call the ancestor-gods *badzimo*, which is evidently the same word as the Sutho badimo. The Rev. Th. Schwellnus told me he thought that the etymology of this word was the verb dzima (in Thonga tima) which means to extinguish (Tsula tora means to quench the thirst). The badzimo would thus be those who bring relief, who remove anguish. As this stem dzimo under various forms is widespread amongst the Bantu tribes to designate the ancestor-gods, it would be interesting to know if the corresponding verb dzima also exists and if this etymology is clearly established. The word *ntimu*, sacred wood, in Thonga, may perhaps come from the same root.

776 which there is no very clear explanation ; doubtless the matter did
769 not seem worthy of inquiry!

The two great categories of gods are *those of the family*, and *those of the country*, the latter being those of the reigning family. They lo not differ as regards their nature. In national calamities those of the country are invoked, whilst, for purely family matters, those of the family are called upon.

769 Moreover, each family has two sets of gods, those *on the father's side* and *those on the mother's*, those of "kweru" and those of
776 "bakokwana" (I. p. 268). They are equal in dignity. Both can
602 be invoked, and the divinatory bones are always called on to decide to which the offering must be made. It would seem, however, as if the gods of the mother's side were more tender-hearted and more popular than those of the father's. The reason for this is, perhaps, that relations are easier with the family of the mother than with that of the father. It is also just possible that it is a relic of the matriarchal period, when the ancestors of the mother alone were known, and consequently invoked. At any rate, the part played by batukulu nephews in the offerings shows that they are the true representatives of the gods, not of those of their father, but of their mother.

776 Two other categories of gods, which I have sometimes heard
769 mentioned, are the *Gods of assagais* (psikwembu psa matlhari) and *the Gods of bitterness* (psa shibiti). The former are those who
766 have been killed in battle ; the latter are those who have been drowned, killed by a wild beast, or who have committed suicide, or the pregnant woman who has been buried without being cut open (I. p. 166). In most of these cases, as is evident, the corpse has not been buried with the due rites and ceremonies ; the deceased has not been properly cared for : hence his bitterness ; or, as in the case of the pregnant woman, something has been buried without having first breathed its last breath (I. p. 140). In the case of the suicide, the poor man who hanged himself was full of sadness : "The great bitterness is the rope", said Mboza. In most of these cases no one was present at the death! These gods are therefore angry, and are the most to be feared.

000 The *Gods of the Bush, Psikwembu psa Nhoba*, are also especially

case in respect to the story of Ñwahungukuri, which I have published in *Les Ba-Ronga*, p. 312, and in which Heaven is credited with the full knowledge of a hidden crime committed by a murderer. This idea is so far from being an innovation due to European influence that thoughtful Natives all agree that, in former times, it was more usual to attribute death to the power of Heaven. It was a common saying that "Heaven has fallen (ku we Tilo) on such and such a village." Nowadays it is rather the gods, or the wizards, who are believed to cause death.

But this belief in Heaven has not only inspired these sayings, songs, and tales; it has also given rise to curious customs, a description of which will throw more light on this conception of the Thongas. Their existence proves that we are not here dealing with the "animatic" invention of some person gifted with a vivid imagination (p. 366), but with a true tribal belief.

II. *Customs Connected with the Conception of Heaven.*

1) Heaven, Twins and Rain.

This power, which causes lightning and death, also presides, in a very special way, at the *birth of twins*, so much so that the mother is called by the name of "Tilo," — "Heaven," — and the children "Bana ba Tilo," — "Children of Heaven" (1). Now the arrival of two or three babies at the same time is looked upon by the Thongas as a great misfortune, a defilement in respect of which very special rites must be performed. I give the details of these rites as practised in the Zihlahla, Nondwane, and Nkuna clans, as they were described to me by Tobane, Mboza, Mankhelu, etc.

Twins (bahla, or bandjwa, dji-ma) are now both allowed to live. But in former times, one of them, the one which appeared to be the feebler, was always put to death, being left to die of

(1) In our school at Lourenço Marques there was a charming young girl, who was named Nwana-wa-Tilo, Daughter of Heaven, because she had a twin brother.

845 starvation, or strangled by a rope. It was buried in a broken
847 pot, like other infants (l. p. 165), just below the surface of the
766 ground, a hole being left for the air to enter, so that the "spirit (moya) may go out," in order that, for the mother also, the "spirit may get out," may be able to fly out and not close (the passages), this being a primary condition of her having other children (1).

845 But even the death of one of the twins is not considered sufficient
756 to remove the curse. Directly after birth a particular doctor is
783 sent for, who keeps the drugs needed in such a case. Shimhuntana and Manganyele were the medicine-men who were capable of dealing with the twin defilement in the district of Lebombo, and Ñwashihuhuri of the Matimela family in the Zihlahla clan. They were held only to be surpassed by the medicine-man who treated cases of leprosy. The mother has to leave the village immediately, and they build for her a miserable little hut behind the others, where she goes to live with her twins. Her former hut is burnt with all her possessions.

In *Zihlahla*, all the women assemble that same day and start out in all directions, North, South, East and West to draw water in old calabashes from all the lakes and wells of the neighbourhood. They go skipping along, and singing

"Mbelele ! Mbelele ! Let rain fall"

This is the mbelele song (p. 318).

Then they return. The mother is seated with her two babes in her arms. They throw the water over her, intoning all the while the same monotonous refrain. This ceremony is to begin the removal of the "misfortune of twin birth, which is a death," (khombo dja lihahla, dji nga lifu). To complete the purification the magician gives to the father and mother a certain drug, which is kept in the Matimela family. The mother will put some of this into the little milombyana calabash, containing the diet-drink of newly born infants.

In *Khosen* the purification is performed by the medicine-man

(1) Even if a child dies at the age of ten days or more, if it is buried in the ground, its grave must be quite shallow ; for if it were buried too deep the mother would have no other children.

845 *made Heaven* (a hambi Tilo), to have *carried Heaven* (a rwi Tilo), to
772 have *ascended to Heaven* (a khandjiyi Tilo). This connection
789 established between her and Heaven is clearly seen in the *rain customs* previously described. Notice that the day following the
766 birth of twins is a *shimusi*, i. e. a day of rest. Nobody tills the ground, fearing that it would prevent rain from falling. When the *mbelele* takes place in Nondwane and Zihlahla (p. 318), the half naked women who are sent to clean the wells take with them a mother of twins. This is no doubt in order to show them where the graves of twins are. But there is also another reason. In the sacred wood of Libombo there is a hole into which the woman is put ; her sisters then pour on to her the water which they have drawn from all the wells, till the hole is half full, and the water comes up to her breasts. This will cause the rain to fall. Why is this? No doubt because, the woman of Heaven being wet, Heaven itself will be wet. Spoon did not give this explanation himself, but, when I suggested it to him, he accepted it readily. For the same reason the graves of twins are watered. In certain cases water is poured on the graves of the ancestors also, because rain is attributed both to them and to Heaven, and this watering the graves is meant to induce either Heaven or the ancestor-gods to cause rain to fall. Hence again the precaution taken of burying twins in damp places, and of exhuming them in times of drought if they have been buried in dry ground (1).

845 The connection between twins and Heaven, so clearly to
772 be seen in these customs, appears again in respect to thunder-
821 storms, which, as we shall see, are another manifestation of Heaven.
789 When lightning threatens a village, people say to a twin : "Help us! You are a Child of Heaven! You can therefore cope with Heaven (mi kota Tilo), it will hear you when you speak." So the child

845 (1) In other clans this law is extended to children prematurely born, even though they are not twins, and even to children who have not had the cotton string tied round their
761 waist or who have cut their upper teeth first. On the other hand, among the Nkunas no special connection seems to be established between twins and Heaven. These dif-
772 ferences may be explained by the fact that all these abnormal cases were ascribed to Heaven in former times, and the connection has been preserved in the various clans in
766 respect to one or the other of these categories. Note that, in the song of the widows (I. p. 207), the king Heaven appears to have caused the death of the husband; this is another proof that Heaven was formerly considered the most frequent cause of death.

756 village, he would find it full of enormous snakes, surrounding the magic branch. Khongosa, who inhabited the district called Nkanyen, on the Eastern border of the Nkomati, wished to possess the marvellous *ndzundzu* drug ; so one night he crossed the river and tried to steal it. But Sindondondo was on his guard, his protective charms were working. They caught his rival, who was *shwela*, viz., imprisoned till after sunrise. Sindondondo behaved magnanimously : "Why, my friend (gobelakulori), did you not come in daylight to ask for my medicine? I would have given it to you! I could cover you with shame now, and show all the people what kind of an exorcist you are! But I have pity on you! Go home." And he released him. Mboza was fully persuaded of the truth of this story.

It may happen that a disciple emancipates himself and founds a new society of the exorcised ; this is, of course, very unpleasant for his master, as the new doctor will start a dangerous competition and refuse to pay any more fees to his initiator ; he will proclaim himself as his superior. So the old gobela goes to his altar and prays his Ngoni gods to make the drugs of his rival powerless. This prayer is heard, and the young gobela is obliged to ask for forgiveness, and to pay a fine of £ 1 in order to obtain success in his future cures. He may perhaps *succeed* his master, but only when the latter is dead.

5) Funeral rites of the exorcised.

766 The burial of the exorcised is attended by other mathwazana,
756 and by his disciples, if he was an exorcist, and special rites are observed for his funeral. The corpse is taboo. It must be covered with ochre. The grave is smeared with clay, and the body is not laid down on its side, but is placed in a sitting position, its hand holding the assagay, or hatchet, which the deceased used when dancing and singing the songs of exorcism. A bunch of *shibowa*, a Urticaria which grows in water, is placed on his head : "*This is to cool him*, because his poor head has been so tired, it has suffered so much from anguish, pain, excitement!" The grass, being taken from the water, also appears *to cool the spirits*, who will

thus remain in the grave, and not trouble other people. Moreover 766
a little hut is built on the grave itself, as was the case for Sokis 756
(I. p. 141), with the same intention, to protect the exorcised against heat and fatigue. If the deceased was not only a disciple but a master, his drugs will be stored in the hut till the adjudication of the inheritance. The most skilful of his followers, the one who best knows the use of these charms, will dance on the grave, all his companions clapping their hands to encourage him, and, when the mourning is ended, he will "raise the drugs," burning them as is done at the annual feast, and will eventually succeed his master.

6) Conclusion on Possession.

Cases of possession, such as those which occur amongst the Thongas, 158
are met with in a great many other countries. A Swiss missionary, the 753
Rev. H. Rusillon, working in the Paris Mission in Madagascar, has drawn attention to practices very similar to these, called the Tromba, amongst Hovas. It is impossible not to note the striking resemblance between the Thonga disease and that of the demoniacs of the New Testament. On hearing the story of the madman in Gadara, whose spirit called itself Legion, the Natives at once identify the phenomenon, and say: "These demoniacs had psikwembu."

These psychological phenomena are certainly of a morbid character. The fact that they generally appear in an epidemic form is significant. It has been noticed that similar epidemics have broken out in populations which have been weakened by the sufferings of a long war, when the nervous resistance had been reduced by privations. May not the progress of Alcoholism, together with the disintegration of the old social order caused by the influence of European civilisation, account for the spread of the disease amongst the Ba-Ronga in the last fifty years?

Whilst not pretending to analyse these phenomena scientifically and fully, I will here add two observations:

1) In the Jewish conception, phenomena of possession were due to *evil spirits*, devilish agencies, which tormented poor humanity, and were cured by the power of the real and true God. Dualism prevailed in their religious conceptions. This idea of dualism is altogether absent from the Thonga belief. South African Bantus have not yet reached that stage of religion where the antagonistic ideas of right and wrong are

1:Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

768

[For information on purification rites and on social readjustments to death see categories 765 and 783--analyst]

765 inner circle and will undergo a very rigorous purification ; the grave
783 diggers come next ; then the inhabitants of the bereaved village, the
761 relations residing in other villages, even the relatives of the wives of the
834 deceased. All these being unclean are placed beyond the pale of
829 society : "Muti wu tjumile," "the village is dark," is the technical expression. This marginal period lasts longer for those who are most affected ; one year and more for the widows, one month for the village, five or six days only for the mourners from outside. But there are many taboos in connexion with this period. Sexual relations are severely prohibited amongst married people, but the *gangisa* is not so strongly objected to, at any rate in some districts. We shall also meet with the aggregation rites by which re-entry into the ordinary mode of life is secured. The funeral rites may last for one year and are very complex. There are three great moments in the sequence of these rites : 1) *The Great Mourning* which lasts a few days, just after the burial, generally only five days. Here the purification is essentially medical and aims at cleansing the persons and the objects which were directly in contact with the deceased. 2) *The sexual rites* which tend to purify the collective life of the village by the removal of its defilement. 3) *The family rites*, consisting in gatherings of all the relatives, and accompanied by religious ceremonies. These seem to aim at restoring the life of the family, viz. of the social group, which has been diminished by the death of one of its members.

768 This general sequence is found in all the clans. But the rites themselves differ greatly ; I shall try to depict these differences clearly. My information is more complete as regards the Ronga clans, but I owe to Viguet some entirely new and very interesting material regarding the Hlabi rites.

IV. *The Great Mourning of the first five days.*

1) The Great Mourning amongst the Ba-Ronga.

764 Just after the burial, all the inhabitants of the village go to
783 the lake or the river to bathe. The grave-diggers nibble a
[824] *ndjoo*, the root of a juncus which has magical power. Special rites will then be performed for the widows. We shall describe

783 washed in the pool and which she will wear again for two days (1).
765 b) *The following days of the Great Mourning.* Without delay a new hut, a small provisional hut, is built in front of the mortuary one. Here the great wife will stay during the whole of her widowhood; the space between this and the old hut is more or less taboo and most of the possessions of the deceased are placed there, under the roof near the door on the outside. (See illustration p. 159.)

The other widows do not leave their huts, but they participate in the other purifying acts, the vapour baths and the general sprinkling of the fifth day. As regards the vapour baths, however, the first wife is associated with the grave-diggers, viz. she must be exposed to the strongest medicinal smoke, while the inferior wives are cleansed with weaker drugs. They all put on the *malopa* and eat with spoons during the whole year of widowhood.

587 c) *Provisional decision regarding the fate of the widows.* A few
595 days after the Great Mourning, a fresh gathering takes place, not
728 in connection with the defilement of death, which is now provision-
768 ally cleansed, but *to settle provisionally the fate of the widows.* The
604 sisters of the deceased have to play a special part in this gathering. They will lead the discussion with the widows about their new husbands. It is indeed a happy custom to let women decide on the subject. Not that they have unrestricted power in the matter. The law has provided a certain rule for the distribution and this is seldom departed from. However, some liberty is allowed in its application, and modifications can better be made if proposed by female intermediaries. Should the husband possess a harem (tshengwe), that is at least five wives, they will most likely be given to the following heirs. The great wife, being "the pole of the

575 (1) *Widowers* also form a similar society and undergo the same rites; but just as it
783 was only the great wife who was subject to these laws, to the exclusion of the little
765 wives, so it is only when he has lost his first wife that a man is initiated into the widowers' society. After having buried her (he holds her head) he goes to the pool, washes himself, and another widower comes and makes the incision in him in the inguinal region. Then he throws away his *shifado* (Appendix 1.) and also carries out the same crossing of the hut in tears. These three acts constitute the actual widower's mourning; the vapour baths and fokla khombo are part of his purification as being the principal grave-digger.

3 [See category 116 --Analyst]

787 village," must remain in it and belongs to the younger brother (1)
595 who becomes the master of the kraal. The second goes to the
428 second brother, the third to the third, the fourth to the *ntukulu*,
768 viz. to the son of the sister of the deceased. The fifth will then
604 become the wife of one of the sons of the deceased. This may appear shocking, and is really shocking even to the ideas of the Natives ; but let it be remembered that she is the youngest of all ; she was taken when the father was already old, and the first son is perhaps older than she. As regards the elder wives, the first and second especially, no one would think of keeping them
[835] for the son! Incestuous relations are very rare amongst the Ba-Ronga. Even in this case, the feelings of both parties are more or less respected. The men advise the son to begin to play with the young widow, to ask her jocularly for tobacco, and he gradually accustoms himself to consider her no longer as a mother (mamana) but as a wife (nsati).

587 Of course the general rule is apt to be very much altered
595 according to circumstances. Should the deceased be the youngest
428 of the family, his elder brother may inherit the first wife. But
768 this is not the regular procedure.

The distribution having thus been decided on, the sisters of the deceased call the widows and say to them : "You so and so, you shall give food to so and so (phamela manyana)." But then the struggle begins. One of the widows, being old, may altogether refuse to have anything to do with any of her brothers-in-law. She may say : "I am taking my young son as a husband" which means : I do not want to be the wife of anybody. Or she will say : "I choose the big tree of the village where my late husband has built his hut:" This answer may mean two things. Either : I do not leave this kraal and I will stay here without a husband ; or, on the contrary : I consent to be the wife of the man who becomes the headman of the village, viz. the eldest of the younger brothers. Another will say : "I love my *ntukulu* so and so." Should, however, the first wife desire to go to a man who does not

(1) Amongst the Ba-Ronga, an elder brother of the deceased cannot inherit a widow. It is taboo. He is a father to her, not a husband. He sometimes takes the lead in the discussion, having no personal interest in the matter. (See Part II).

587 393 428 768

live in the village, the family council will certainly object strongly to her wish, as her departure would mean that the village would cease to exist. But in the case of the younger widows it is quite possible that an exception to the ordinary law would be allowed if they insisted upon choosing another husband (1).

After all, this is but a preliminary consultation, and the men who are rejoicing at the idea of getting new wives will perhaps be badly deceived later on, as we shall see. However the man provisionally chosen as the future husband of a widow, will at once pay visits to her, "march to her" (ku mu fambela), according to the technical expression.

765 783 833

d) *The casting away of misfortune.* But before any new and happy life can begin for the widows, they have still to go through a very hard trial. They must perform the *lahla khombo*, the throwing away of the malediction of death, and this is much more difficult for them than for the grave-diggers or the other members of the village. The main point in this strange act of purification is this ; before a widow can become the wife of her new husband, she must have sexual intercourse with another man whom she deceives. Should she succeed in freeing herself from him so that the act keeps its ritual character, s. n. i. (see Annotatio 2), this man will take on himself the malediction of death, and she will be purified. On the contrary, should the man accomplish the whole act, the widow has failed and will return home with shame and in despair! Here is a description of this sad expedition of the widows. It takes place a few days after the gathering just described. The men of the village send the widows away, telling them : "Go and scatter (hangalasa) the malediction through the country and get rid of it before some other misfortune happens to us."

(1) What would happen should the widow choose a husband outside her husband's family? To the mind of a heathen woman the idea would never occur. But suppose a Christian widow, having only married unions, refuses to become their wife, her conscience forbidding her to contract a polygamic union. Her case would be very hard indeed, as I do not think her wish would be taken into consideration by heathen relatives. It would have to be brought before the White magistrate, who would probably try to help the widow. I think that, even if the woman consented to submit such family matters to the European court, she would have to give the lobolo or her children back to her brothers-in-law, and that might be an impossibility for her. It would be interesting to know how Native Commissioners proceed in such cases.

1 [See p. 516 in these categories or in MK -- Analyst]

final fate will not be known before the last and most important act : the adjudication of the inheritance.

f) *The day of the adjudication of the inheritance.* This is a most typical ceremony prepared for with great care, because the day is full of surprises and dangers. Every precaution is taken to avoid misunderstanding, and to bring the mourning to a peaceful and satisfactory conclusion. It is winter time ; the mealies have been collected from the fields of the widows, the small cobs called *makunula* have been set carefully apart, as they have to be used especially to prepare the beer for the feast. The council of the family is again assembled and decides that the time has come. The divinatory bones are consulted. Should they be favourable, the ceremony can take place. The bones are again asked a number of questions : Who must take the mealies from the granary and put them in the pot to soften them in water ? (first operation of native beer making). A newly married woman who has had only one child is chosen by preference. Then it is asked how long this softening must continue ; who is to shout her *mikulungwane* to accompany the work ; who will have to get the mealies out ; which woman must give the first blow in the mortar to pound the softened mealies, etc.

All the relatives assemble in the mortuary village. One year has elapsed since the death, and the bitter feelings of mourning have passed. Nobody will miss the feast, certainly not the *batukula*, viz., the nephews, sons of the sisters of the deceased. Some may be disappointed this day, but one of these nephews may return home richer than when he left! Most of the relatives arrive before the great day, to help in the preparation of the beer. When the woman designated by the bones has given the first blow, all her companions start at once pounding with vigour : "Ghe-ghe-ghe-ghe," and they sing songs of mourning. This is one of these songs, and a very significant one :

> Hi rile, hi rile! Hi ta ku yisi ku we, Hosi ndjina ?
> We are weeping, we are weeping! What shall we say to thee, King!

This king is without doubt Heaven, the more or less personal being who kills or gives life, and whom we shall often meet with in these pages.

768 782 The first of the ceremonies of this day[1] is the sacrifice on the grave. The master of the mourning takes a pot of beer, and followed by the crowd, especially by the *batukulu*, goes to the place where the deceased has been buried. He stops there and prays : "See this jar of beer! We bring it to thee ; we have gathered to tear to pieces the mourning. We beseech thee that this ceremony may be performed in peace and good understanding." Then he pours a little of the drink into the cup which is on the grave, the same which the deceased used when alive. One *ntukulu* then takes the jar, which is still almost full, and drinks the contents with the other *batukulu*. This has been done calmly. But this act has made the *batukulu* bolder. They become troublesome. As soon as the crowd has come back from the grave, they steal another pot of beer. They insult the masters of the village. They say : "Why! You have never sent us any notice about the decisions concerning the mourning! We are tired! We will go and take our wives with us!" But some of the old men go to them and say : "Be good! Do not spoil the feast!"

By the end of the afternoon all the relatives assemble near the door of the mortuary hut, and bring the goats which they have given for the feast. Here the true sacrifice, the living offering, is made, very much in the same style as that described when treating of the crushing down of the hut (p. 158). The old man who prays, says : "See us here! We have come together to conclude our mourning. May there be no noise, no misunderstanding, no anger amongst the *batukulu*! This is our ox (the goat). It has been provided by so and so. Many others have been brought. See! You have died as a great chief!" At this very moment a *ntukulu* rises and begins to insult the old man who is praying : "You have no concern for us! Why do you leave us out ? You do not give us our wives! You are killing us!" And the other *batukulu* join in chorus. The end of the sacrifice and of the prayer is always the same in these big, religious, family gatherings of the Ba-Ronga : the *batukulu* steal the part of the victim set apart for the gods. The throng pursues them laughing, and pelts them with balls of *psanyi*.

1 [i.e., the day of the adjudication of the inheritance -- Analyst]

768 The sun is now setting. All the men go to the central place of
575 the village and sit round the fire. The widows remain on the
533 spot, between the deceased's hut and the new hut of the great wife, where all the belongings of the late husband have been kept during the whole year. The other widows of the family surround them once more ; no other woman is allowed to approach. The present ceremony is another secret rite of the company of widows. They sing the following mourning song to recall all the sufferings of the year of widowhood :

> Angoma nkulukumba ! Tataza a nga fa, a ba siya
> Na ngoma a nga si ba byela !
> Our secret law is a great law ! Our father has gone, he has left them,
> And he had not told them about that law !

768 During this song the old women take away all the clothing of
587 the widows, and wash their bodies. Then they lead them into the hut of the great wife and put on them new clothing, the clothes which their suitors and other relatives have brought for them. When they are all seated, the sisters of the deceased proceed to the last distribution. They first ask the great wife : "You, to whom do you belong ?" She answers : "Do you not know him ? It is the man who has taken care of me, who has been visiting me! I choose so and so!" She may also say : "I kill so and so!" *(Ndji dlaya man)*. That means : "As I have killed my first husband, I might do the same for the second," a very promising declaration! As soon as the widow has given her answer, the women in the hut begin shouting loudly, and one of them goes out to the men, and cries : "So and so says she kills so and so !" They proceed to ask another : "You, whom do you choose ?" The woman remains silent. "What do you mean?" — "I do not choose anybody." — "How is that? Be sensible!" — "No! I do not want anybody!" — "Why ?" They begin to press her : "You know well who has taken care of you, who has visited *(hambela)* you the whole year." — "I do not want him!" — "How is that possible ?" — "No, I do not want him, I want the *ntukulu* so and so." A frightful noise is heard in the hut ; they are all shouting together. What has happened ?

587/768 Probably this widow was not pleased with the man to whom they had destined her. Seeing more of him during the year, her affection had not increased. On the other hand, she had some liking for one of the *batukulu*, and she arranged secretly with him, and perhaps also with his mother, that she would keep silent till this day and then choose her nephew. It is quite possible that the mother of the *ntukulu* will say in that case: "Has this widow not been bought with the money which I secured for the family by my marriage?" Of course the official suitor objects strongly to this spoliation. He becomes angry. During a whole year he has given clothing to the ungrateful one. Things may grow so bad that the *ntukulu* carries off the fractious widow at once, saying: "Good-bye! I go with my wife!" The old men will then follow him and implore him to come back. If they see that the woman is quite decided, they will allow her to go to the husband of her choice. They had better consent to it at once, because it not infrequently happens that the *ntukulu*, if repulsed that day, will go to the family of the woman and claim the money *(lobola)* paid for her by her late husband, saying: "That *lobola* comes from my mother. If you do not give us our wife, if you allow her to stay with another man, then give us back the money." Or it may happen also that the widow, brought perforce to the house of a younger brother-in-law, will run away to the *ntukulu*, and the rightful husband will be helpless. There is a saying to this effect: "A woman inherited cannot be forced." Of course such cases of conflicting interests cause a great deal of friction between members of the family, and the Natives are much distressed about it; they try to avoid it as much as possible. But the desire of getting one more wife is so strong in the heart of a Ronga that such disputes are by no means rare, and the day of the adjudication of the inheritance is universally dreaded. However, they never go as far as fighting, and if an uncle and a nephew have parted from each other on bad terms, they will very likely try to mend matters by the sacrifice of reconciliation *(hahlelana madjieta)*, which is one of the admirable features of the Ronga religion (See Part VI).

587 578 768 428

The widows are truly the most important part of the property

768 left by a man. When they have been distributed, the minor
428 possessions of the deceased are adjudicated. As regards *oxen,*
604 *money*, these have been already remitted to the younger brother or, in his absence, to the sons. The younger brother will use them as family property to buy a wife for his son or for the son of the deceased, when he comes of age. In the distribution of the implements which have been cleansed, but left lying on the ground in front of the hut up to this day, the *ntukulu*, viz. the principal uterine nephew again plays an important part. He has the right of *tjhumba*, viz. of picking out for himself one of the assagais of his uncle, just as the maternal uncle takes (tjhumba) one pound from the lobola money (See Part II). Every warrior possesses at least two assagais ; the big one belongs in principle to the chief, and must be inherited by the eldest son. The nephew takes the smaller one, but he must precede his cousin in choosing ; in appropriating this weapon, he *surrenders* or transmits (nyiketa) the inheritance to the true heirs. This is a very characteristic expression. It seems as if he wished to assert his right ; but he takes the less valuable weapon and leaves the better one to the son. The explanation of this custom is probably to be found in the evolution of the family system which must have taken place amongst the Thongas (See Part II). In fact all the *batukulu* stand in a line and receive a portion of the property of the deceased, a knife, an axe, a small punch, etc. Women never inherit (a ba di
562 pfndla). When no heir exists except females, they may receive
428 something, but the valuable property must be kept by them for their sons, the uterine nephews of the deceased. Why ? Because, in the mind of the Thongas, a woman is not capable of possessing ; she is not able to build an oxen kraal and repair it ; how could she possess oxen ? The only thing she can do is to arrange a pig's kraal. Therefore she can own pigs, but nothing else!

768 The end of the feast of the adjudication of the inheritance is the distribution of the flesh of the victims. The company breaks up, each party having received one of the limbs. They must eat it on their way home, somewhere under a tree, on the road ; neither in the mortuary village, nor in their own kraal. It is

768 taboo. Those who have received a wife go home rejoicing. When he has reached home, the fortunate husband kills a fowl or even a goat to make a fitting reception for his new wife. This is the end of the long period of widowhood, in which it is easy to discover the whole sequence of the passage rites.

783 Such is the old normal way of reinstating a widow in society.
765 But there are special cases where the rites are slightly different. If a widow is old and cannot expect to deceive a man, she simply buys medicines which are supposed to cleanse her.

The case of the wife of Sokis (see page 139, footnote) was more difficult. She had a baby, and sexual relations were consequently prohibited. Moreover the man who legally inherited her was in Johannesburg and could not provide for her purification. One of the grave-diggers took his place and "ran for her" (tjutjumela). This is a different expression for *fambela*. As far as I could understand, this man had ritual relations with his own wife in order to *lahla khombo*, to be purified himself. Then he tied the cotton string (boha nshale) round the waist of the widow. A sick widow will also be treated by *tjutjumela*. The grave-digger possesses the means of cleansing them, having gone through the mourning together with them.

These attenuated processes of purification seem the rule amongst the *Northern clans*. According to Viguet, the widows must also go to the bush (hula ni nhoba) to meet with a man who will free them of the defilement of death. The man who performs this act is called the *shikomho* of the widows. There are certain individuals who make a real business of this. Knowing drugs with which to cleanse themselves (ku tirulula), they claim a reward for their help... The widows remove their mourning attire (bracelets of strings on that occasion), and return home adorned with beads.
768 In the Djonga dialect the adjudication of the inheritance is called
783 *pandja ndjaka*. It is not accompanied by a sacrifice. There seem to be some differences in the ideas of the Rongas and of the Northern clans. For the former the defilement of death contaminates the hut to a greater extent. This must be destroyed, and the widow has to undergo the very hard casting away of misfortune (lahla khombo). For the latter the impurity rests more on the

783 village itself, which must carry out the collective purification of
768 *hlamba ndjaka*.

I must further mention a new custom which is spreading
587 amongst the Ba-Ronga in the neighbourhood of Lourenço
609 Marques. When a widow objects to becoming the wife of the legal
611 inheritor, she goes home and adopts another husband. There are plenty of men of other tribes, coming from Inhambane, Quelimane, Mozambique, who have no wife. They accept the proposal of the widow and go to live in her village. They are generally despised and called by the insulting name of *mugomo*, a Zulu word meaning an empty iron oil-tin. They are as hard and unfeeling as such a tin! If children are born, they belong to the family of the deceased husband, who paid the lobolo.

587 Sometimes also a widow chooses a nephew who is still a child. She gives him food as if she were his wife, but she lives with another man whom she loves. It even happens that she may choose a girl, the daughter of another wife of the deceased. (Annotatio 13.)

C. OLD AGE AND DEATH

888 An old woman, having in some sort gone out from the sexual
782 community, enjoys some privileges which are taboo for her sisters who are still capable of childbearing. She is allowed to put on the clothing of the widows ; contamination of death is not so dangerous for her. She can proceed to the purification of the village, in certain cases of epidemic, and of the weapons of the warriors in war time (Part III). After the sacrifice of the black ram for rain, old women and small girls alone are allowed to eat the flesh of the victim.

462 But old and decrepit women are despised. As long as they
888 can still till their land, they are treated with consideration, but when they have lost all their strength and must be fed by their children, they are looked upon as troublesome burdens. I must say that, as long as she still has an atom of vigour, a Thonga woman goes to her field and tills it. During all her life time

1 [See pp. 518-519 in these categories or in 116 — Analyst]

764 inhabitants of the kraal. One of them, the saluter (mulosi), goes
604 to meet them and offers them a shilling. They keep silence.
578 He tells them the news of the village. They do not answer.
754 He leaves them and comes a second time with a fresh present. Then they consent to tell the news of their home, but they do not enter the village. The same man returns to them a third time with £ 1; they refuse to accept it. He adds 10/. (£ 1.10 is considered the normal sum to be paid as a kind of fine by the widower to the parents of the deceased.) They refuse again : this is an insult! Happily the *ntukulu* is there; he will act as mediator between the two families. The visitors summoned him on their arrival and he has been sitting with them the whole time ; is he not the son of their sister ? But before he went to them, his father has given him his instructions : "Tell them that I have not eaten your mother." The *ntukulu*, as we shall see, is very free with his maternal uncles. He has the right of teasing them, even insulting them. Seeing that they do not accept the money, he stands and gives vent to his grief, throws sand at them, tries to drive them away, weeps. "No! Father has not killed mother! He is not a wizard! She died a natural death!" They see his tears, and then consent to enter the village.

764 In front of the mortuary hut, all the belongings of the deceased
768 wife have been piled up, together with the straw crown of the hut :
595 her pots, plates, baskets, spoons, mortars, etc. The brothers
782 break everything. Should there be any new implements amongst
[578] them, they will perhaps give them to their nieces. Then they lift up the roof of the hut and throw it into the bush. They pick all the plaster from the walls and throw it away where they threw the roof. The sacrifice is then accomplished amidst the ruins of the destroyed hut. Whilst it is being prepared, the women of both families insult each other. The female relatives of the deceased say to the women of the village : "You have killed her because she was a splinter in your eyes" (shilabi). The others answer : "Have you seen us kill her ? Perhaps people do not die with you ?" The *bukwele*, the special jealousy which almost always exists between co-wives, explains how it is possible for them to address such amenities to each other. But the victim is

764 prepared, all the limbs cut off, the portion of the gods set apart.
782 The elder brother of the deceased woman prays in these words :
768 "My sister, go in peace, be not angry ; because we love you, we
545 have come to mourn you to-day. Do not say we have not mourned you. Go to so and so (father, grandfather, etc.), call them here, give us good sleep and good health, etc." The batukulu appropriate the offering and the mourning ends in laughter, dancing and drinking. The neighbours come and take part in the rejoicings.

When they return home, the mourners spend all the mahloko money in buying wine. They sometimes become quite intoxicated. Afterwards both families begin to visit each other again.
764 This custom of the mahloko fine is so strong that converts
768 still adhere to it. But they usually send the money to the wife's family when informing them of the death, and no other ceremony is performed.

In the Northern clans the mahloko are also paid, but it seems that the family of the widower considers that it has the right to claim the repayment of the whole lobolo, when the deceased wife has left no child to compensate for the loss. In Nondwane, though we are still in Ronga territory, when the woman dies
765 shortly after marriage the lobolo must be repaid. Further north
782 the procedure is as follows : the deceased woman is buried by her husband according to the ordinary rules ; one year elapses and a special feast is celebrated, similar to the "beer of mourning" (page 164), in the village of the wife's parents, where both families gather together and provide the necessary victims. It commences with a sacrifice in which the father of the deceased wife squeezes the *psanyi* of the goat on to those present, all the time insulting the gods who have killed his child and made trouble between the two families. He ends with words addressed to the widower's relations : "I cleanse you from your misfortune." The widower's father does the same thing, insulting also his own gods, and every one rubs his body with the green liquid squeezed from the *psanyi*. Then prayer for new blessings is offered and the sacrifice is made, as
765 customary, and the actual discussion as to claims takes place. Each family takes possession of a hut, the widower's family assembling

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765 as usual in the house of the deceased wife's mother, and the parley takes place through the go-between (tintjumi), as in the discussions which precede marriage. Let us call the husband's family A and that of the wife B. A sends two hoes to B as a notification : "Your child died with us last year." B answers "All right! Then pay the fine for her head (nhloko). Because you had only bought her legs. Her brain, her head, her name was still ours." A sends five hoes to B, to pay for the brains of the deceased. B takes two of the five and sends them back to A, saying : "One of them is to cleanse you from the misfortune, and we shave your head with the second." A accepts the two hoes and returns home. Should the wife have died childless, there will be a second act to the procedure: A has "opened the door of the claim" (a pfurile nyangwa wa nandju). He will come back shortly to lodge it with B.

587 768 Here he comes. Using his go-between (ntjumi) as a mouth piece, he says to B : "Look at us! We gather our ashes with our own hands and we dig water in small shells of sala,— viz. we have no wife to do this feminine work for us!" It means : "Please give us another wife or repay the money to buy one." If B happens to have a girl of marriageable age, he will say : "Do not kill us ; we put a log of wood across the road" (hi hingakanya ntjandja). This means : "We have put something to prevent you from coming to us as enemies. Here is a new wife for you." A understands quite well and goes home satisfied. He comes back without delay and brings twenty or thirty hoes, which is a beginning of lobola payment. He says : "We thank you for the wife." The girl then follows him at once, if she is of marriageable age ; if not, she stays at home until she is grown up, and during all this time her new husband provides her with clothing. When, having gone to live with him, she gives birth to a child, B comes to A and says : "Nwombekazi a yi ambi nandju," viz. "A cow which has calved is not used to pay a debt," that is to say : she must be paid for herself. This technical expression means therefore : As our daughter has given you posterity, pay the full lobolo for her! A will certainly do it "hi bushaka," on account of the friendly relation existing between B and himself. But if B has no girl to give in compensation, if he has no money, what will happen ? A will

587 768 follow his oxen where they have gone, namely into the family of the girl who has been bought by B for one of his sons. This woman is for the widower his great *mukoñwana*, the woman he fears the most in all the tribe. We shall see what will then happen when treating of the extraordinary relations existing between these two individuals. This wonderful story of the consequences of the death of a wife, so characteristically told by Viguet, provides us with an excellent opportunity for transition to Part II of this work, which will explain the relations between all the members of the Thonga family.

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586 wives at once. The custom of marrying a wife's tinhlampsa is
582 approved of; it is however not very frequently observed in Thonga
607 families at the present time.
595 Other women to whom a man has a special right are his relatives on the mother's side, as we have seen; to take a wife from the family in which the father found the mother is recommended and approved of as long as she is not too near a relative.

2) The right of inheritance.

587 The second class of cases does not concern unmarried women
835 whom I mean to lobola, but widows whom I may inherit after
768 the death of their husband. Those whom I may eventually inherit
595 are generally called by me *namu* or *nsati*, and I have very free
582 relations with them, but as already pointed out this liberty never goes so far as to allow of sexual intercourse (p. 247). "Ndi nga da," viz. "I can eat, inherit by prior right" *my elder brother's widow*: she is my regular legacy. As regards my younger brother's widow, I can only marry her if she is old and no longer able to bear children. But if she is still a childbearing woman, to take her is very much against the feelings of the tribe. The reason of the prohibition is this, says Viguet: suppose that this widow of my younger brother already has children. I take her, and have a child by her. The child takes precedence of the first children of its mother: he is their *hosi*, because I, myself, the father, am the elder brother of the deceased. On the other hand, he is *ndjisana* of his other brothers, because he was born after them by the same mother. This is impossible; it runs counter to the most elementary notions of the family. In exceptional cases, however, when no one else can claim my younger brother's widow, I may take her.

587 Next to my true tinamu comes *the widow of my maternal uncle*.
768 If he had many, one might be alloted to me in the distribution.
595 But of course, in this as in all other cases of inherited women, the
582 children born of our union would belong to the family who paid the lobolo, and not to me. I have, in a sense, only the usufruct of the property. She will till the fields for me and serve me with

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my daily plate of porridge, but she is not really mine. She is given (nyika) to me by favour, and only under specified conditions. I can also inherit *bakokwana*, the widow of my malume's father (not my true grandmother, of course, but her co-wife), the widow of my father's brothers.

Muhambi can inherit Magugu, *the widow of his cousin* Hlangabeza. This cousin is a brother (makwabu) and the two fathers are brothers. But he could not inherit Debeza, wife of Phusa. Why so? Because Phusa, being a cousin by the father's sister, belongs to another *shibongo*, the shibongo of his own father Muki and not to that of his mother. Should Muhambi lay claim to Debeza, the men of Mashabane (the name of Phusa's clan) would say : "We are opposed to it, because your doing so would in fact mean that you *eat two herds*. You have eaten one herd when we bought Ndjibari from your people. Ndjibari has had two children ; we have sold her daughter Nwashidjasa to lobola Debeza for Phusa. The oxen were ours. If Phusa dies, Debeza belongs to us and not to you." So Muhambi can inherit the widow of his cousin, the son of his paternal uncle, but not the widow of his cousin, the son of his paternal aunt.

A man can inherit also *one of his father's wives*, as we have seen (page 203), but only under certain circumstances. The dlaya shilongo is never performed in the case of inherited women.

A rule on which Viguet insisted, but which is disappearing, is this : women, when their husband had no younger brothers, must be inherited by *batukulu* and not by *bana* ; batukulu, i. e. either true grandsons, sons of the son, or uterine nephews, sons of the sister of the deceased. The reasons for this law are : 1) Bana, sons, would take liberties with their father's wives and make balamo of them, if they could inherit them regularly. This would spoil the life of the village. 2) If I, being ñwana, a son, inherit my father's wife and have a child by her, this child is ñwana, a son, to me. On the other hand, this inherited woman may have had children by my father, and they are my brothers. So, one of this woman's children is my son, the other my brother ! "A beleki tinshaka timbiri." — "She has had children of two generations!" This must not be.

621 1) *Social rites.* The muti, as we have seen, is a little organised
596 community having its own laws, amongst which the most important
833 seems to be the law of hierarchy. The elder brother is the undisputed
768 master and no one can supersede him. He is the owner of the village. No one must "steal it" from him. Should any one do so, the whole community would suffer and no children would be born ; the life of the organism would be deeply affected. That is the reason why the headman must go first with his principal wife to have relations with her in the new village, and thus *take possession* of it or *tie* it. For this same reason, when the headman dies, the village *must* move. It is taboo to remain in it. Until the inheritance has been distributed, it is still *his home* (kwa kwe) ; but as soon as this ceremony has taken place, the villagers must go away, and close the door with a thorny branch. The part played by the
621 principal wife in all these ceremonies is most remarkable. It is
595 absolutely imperative that the headman should "tie the village" with her,
562 and not with another of his spouses. Should she be very old, the law
768 must be observed all the same ; should she be ill, and unable to have sexual
764 relations, the village simply cannot be moved. In the Northern clans we see her taking the shield and the assagai, closing the village and "giving it" to the inmates, even performing a sacrifice and praying to the gods. It is very rare to see a woman presiding at a public religious ceremony ; but she is the owner of the village as well as the headman. Moving is imperative when she dies as well as after the death of the headman. The main gate must also be closed and a new entrance made in the fence to be used during the year of mourning ; in the case of her death, this opening must be made on the left of the regular *mharana*, whilst, when the husband dies, it is made on the right side ; just as in the hut, when the corpse is removed for burial. (See page 138.)

351 2) *Protective rites.* These are those which concern the fence. This
789 fence does not afford material protection. The branches dry up very
621 soon and, in the case of a bush-fire, for instance, they would do more harm than good. It is a spiritual protection, a barrier of charms, of magic influences, to prevent the entrance of wizards and of all the hostile powers of the bush. We shall understand this better when treating of witchcraft superstitions. (Part VI.)

182 3) *Passage rites.* The reader will have been surprised to observe
621 amongst the ceremonies of the moving of villages, many features
829 which we have already met with in the circumcision school, or in the mourning customs. At first sight there seems to be no relation whatever between the moving of a village, the initiation of boys and the

753 a state of physiological impurity. Hence the law ordering
164 people affected with any of these kinds of makhumo to eat with
751 spoons ; they thus protect themselves against the poison which might cause them to become consumptive. A curious feature in the conception of *contagion* is the following. When Sokis died (I. p. 139) I heard some of those present saying to his sister, who was carrying a child on her shoulders : "Do not cry! If you cry the disease will jump to your baby!" There were two reasons for this warning ; to cry in the presence of misfortune increases
753 the danger tenfold (compare p. 326) ; moreover the contagion of
768 disease is especially to be feared in connection with the relatives of the sick or dead person. Hence the strange custom illustrated on plate p. 26 : when a man dies of consumption his relatives are absolutely forbidden to eat any of the food he may have left. The "luma milomo" ceremony (I. p. 146) is of no use in this case. In former times all his mealies were burnt. Nowadays, however, it is allowable for people outside his family to buy and consume his provision. The large storehouse, illustrated on p. 26, contained the mealies harvested in Sokis' fields. These were sold to strangers, whilst relatives bought other mealies which were stored in the small hut for the use of his widow and children (p. 111). The same reason no doubt explains why the widow of a consumptive must *lahla khombo* with strangers, and not with men of the village (I. p. 206).

758 This peculiar idea of contagion also gives rise to the rules
766 for *burying lepers*. Their relatives must not have anything to do with the burial (I. p. 508). Relatives-in-law can perform
768 this painful duty, or possibly the family of the deceased leper will ask a friend to help them in their distress. "Have you prepared something as a reward for me?" he asks, and if this is the case he digs a grave just outside the wall of the hut where the patient died, removes the reeds of the wall, and pulls the corpse down into the hole without any funeral ceremony. The relatives are assembled far away on the square, and do not even dare to look on at the burial. All the implements are broken in the depths of the forest, at a great distance, for fear that a relative might touch one of them and die. Or they are left in the hut, and the whole village is at once removed.

881 awaken the boys very early. They sing for one hour the Winter-bird. Then they learn the formulae for one or two hours. Afterwards the order : "Tshayi goma" is given and they throw away the leaves of the day before and put on a new "shondlo." They go and sit round the Elephant and stab him for two hours till a shout is heard : the women bringing the food announce that they have come. The boys eat for the first time, and sing again to help digestion. At the command : "Khedi goma," they smear their bodies with white clay. The sun is already high in the sky when they start for their hunting trip. They come back at sunset, eat for the second time, stab the Elephant again for one hour and at the command "Khwerere, Mayise, Mafefo," they go to their beds on the dirty soil of their but.

c) Aggregation Rites.

1. *The Mulagaru.*

769/881 The first aggregation rite takes place many days before the conclusion of the school. One morning, very early, the men and the shepherds raise a very big pole in the yard of the formulae and fix it into a hole. At its extremity is a man, half hidden in white hair (1). The boys are awakened and led by the shepherds into the yard. They are told to lie down on their backs, all their heads turned towards the pole, which is called *mulagaru*, and to say : "Good morning, grandfather." Then a voice comes from the top of the pole and says : "I greet you, my grand-children." They must remain a long time in that position in the biting cold of the morning, talking with the "grand-father." They are allowed even to complain of their sufferings and to ask permission to return home. But they still have to stay some days in the sungi. Every morning this ceremony will be repeated. It clearly means that the boys are being put into communication with the ancestor who represents the clan, that they are beginning to be admitted to the adult life of the tribe.

(1) In some circumcision schools this man is called bokwana Masinde, a name which is applied to old women.

585 578 girls, the stout women with strong arms, go and look for the heroine of the day, who is hidden in a hut in one of the neighbouring villages, and who has not yet been seen. At last they succeed in finding her. She refuses to come. The viragos seize her and pull her out by force. Everybody assembles. She is covered with a large cloth which hides her from the gaze of the bystanders. Surrounded on all sides, she sets forward to the village, the crowd forming a kind of procession. " Let us accompany her, then we shall return home " sing the women who bring her. (A hi mu tjekeleni, hi ta muka). This song of the *tjeka*, the only one which is peculiar to the wedding day, is the prelude to a most strange duel.

The bridegroom's family stands on one side, that of the bride on the other, and then begins the exchange of equivocal compliments.

"Ha!" cry the groomsmen to the bride, "as you are becoming the wife of our brother and coming into our village, try and leave all your vices outside. Do not steal any longer! Forsake your bad ways and become a good girl! "

To this the bride's relatives shout in return :

" You have nothing to boast about! Stop wearying the people! She is far too good for you! Does not everybody know the wild pranks of your son and the dishonour of your family! "

And they go on in this way, at first in joke, but often speaking seriously. They sometimes even go so far as to bombard each other with the half digested matter which has been extracted from the goat's stomach, but, if anyone goes too far and exceeds the recognized limit of insult, the old people will tell him to be quiet. 585 These proceedings however are looked upon as a game and are 585 accompanied with a particular dance called *khana* which consists in jumping first on one leg and then on the other, gesticulating at the same time.

e) The religious act.

585 782 769 The procession reaches the hut of the bride's mother, where the goat was killed. Mats are stretched outside. The bride and groom sit down on the finest of these. It is now that the father

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585 782 769 performs the religious rite (hahla). He takes between his first finger and thumb a small quantity of the half digested grass which has been taken from the paunch of the animal, makes a little ball of it, touches his tongue with it and emits a sound resembling " tsu "... as if he were slightly spitting. This is the customary sacramental act in most of the sacrifices. (See Part VI.) He stands behind the wedding pair and, looking straight in front of him towards them, speaks to the gods, that is to say to the spirits of his ancestors, and says : " My fathers, my grandfathers (he calls them by their names) look! To-day my child is leaving me. She enters the wedded life (bukatin). Look at her, accompany her where she will live. May she also found a village, may she have many children (mu nyikan timbeleko), may she be happy, good and just. May she be on good terms with those with whom she will be ". Here it may happen that a brother of the bridegroom will interrupt and say : " Yes, we will live peacefully with her if she does her duty well and does not worry her husband ". The old man goes on with his patriarchal prayer without taking any notice of the interruption and everybody listens quietly and attentively. This prayer which he pronounces with his eyes wide open and in a most natural manner is sometimes very long. When the people have had enough of it and wish him to stop, they send a young man to cut a piece of meat and to put it into the old man's mouth. Thus they " cut " his prayer and he keeps still. The person officiating must be the first to partake of the meat of the sacrifice.

f) The symbolical belt.

585 777 825 The astragalus (nhlolo) of the right leg of the sacrificed goat has been carefully kept. All along the belly they cut a strip of skin reaching as far as the neck and up to the chin, which is cut so as to form a kind of pocket at the end of the strip. The astragalus is put into this pocket and the father ties the belt around the waist of the young woman. He must not look at her face to face in doing this. On the contrary, she must turn her

764 would answer : " How can you propose such a thing to me ?
761 Am I not immature (mbisi, properly raw) ? I am not yet ripe! Is defilement of death not there ? With whom could I wash it away ? " (Viguet). The first digger is also called " the one of the head, " the second, " the one of the feet, " because one of them will carry the corpse by the head, the other by the feet. Women may also bury a corpse upon occasion.

764 So the grave-diggers go back to the hut and begin to wrap the corpse in his rugs and in his mat (ku tjimba). They stitch the mat twice (to prevent it from slipping ?) (Viguet). They generally wait till sunset to perform the burial. When the time has come, they make a hole in the wall of the hut on the right side, as the husband dwells in the right half of the house, the wife in the left half. The corpse must not be carried out of the hut by the door, but by that artificial opening (1). So he leaves the hut head foremost (2). They sometimes stop up their noses with the leaves of a bush called ngupfana, which has a strong scent, in order not to perceive the smell of death (moya wa lifu). They march slowly, without a word, men and women following them silently. The " one of the head " goes down to the first level,
764 the one of the feet follows him. They have already put in the
778 place for the head a piece of wood, a piece of a branch of *nkanye*,
769 their sacred tree, one foot long and three inches broad, to be used as a pillow. At the bottom, on the soil, they stretch some old rugs. They lay the corpse down (3) on its left side, the head on the pillow. The grave has been dug in such a way that its long axis is directed towards that cardinal point whence the ancestors came, so that the deceased, having his head slightly

(1) In the Hlabi clans, the corpse is carried through the door, but the plaster on both sides of the door (marimba) is beaten and falls down. It will be repaired later on. In the Northern clans the hut of the deceased is not so strongly tabooed as amongst the Ba-Ronga. When it has been purified it will be used again.

(2) Comparative Ethnography : In Switzerland it is a common saying that a corpse must leave the house feet foremost.

764 (3) The Ba-Nguni place their dead in the grave in the sitting position, a knife in
513 their hands, as they are a race of murderers! (Viguet). It may be that the reclining position given to the corpse by the Ba-Ronga, is the result of an evolution. At any rate, this is not the true sleeping position, as Natives generally do not bend their limbs when sleeping.

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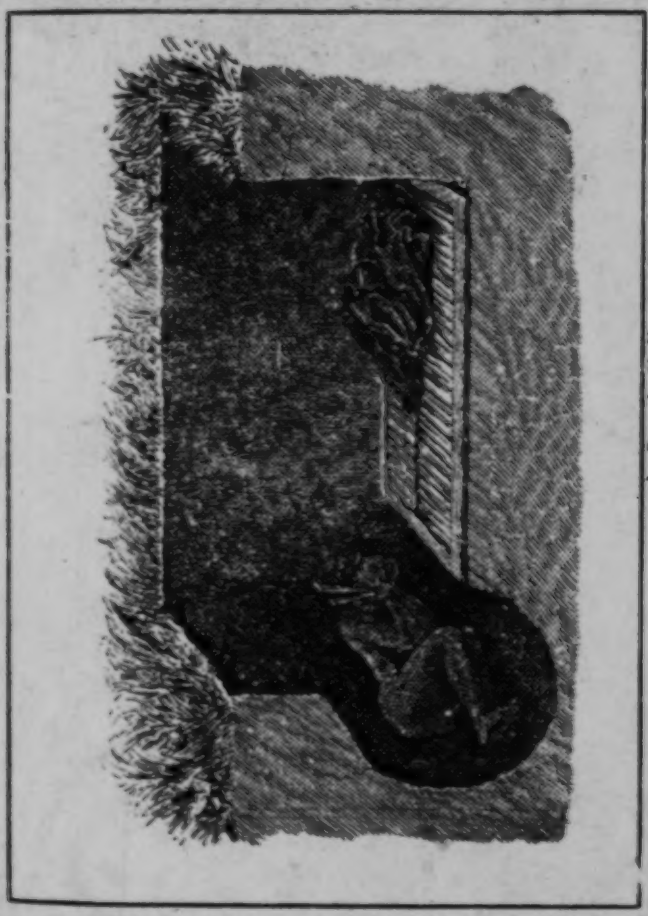
bent backwards, is intended to look in that direction (1). Now they take away from the deceased all those rugs in which they



A Ronga in his grave. Drawn by Cl. Hudson and reproduced from « Anthropos ».

had wrapped him, and cut them through the middle with a knife, making a large opening in each of them as well as in the mats, also

(1) I attended on December 17th 1908, the burial of one of my neighbours at Rikatla, called Sokia, and described the rites which I witnessed that day in the paper already quoted, published by *Anthropos*, September 1910.

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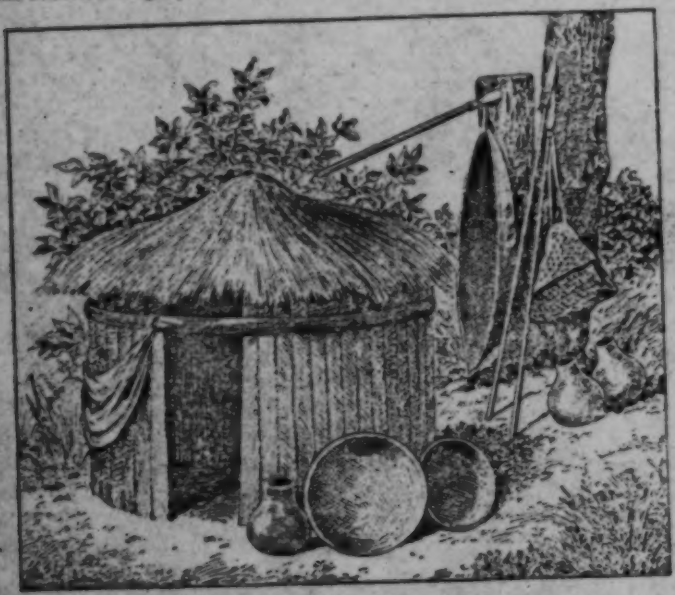
764 *The second category* includes the articles which are preserved as having still some value ; they will be hung on the tree, or placed at the foot of the tree near the grave, or in front of the abandoned hut, and will be duly purified during the next few days, as we shall see. Good baskets, new pots, assagais (1), knives, hoes etc., belong to the second category. They will afterwards be distributed amongst



Drawn by Cl. Hentze from a photo of H. A. Junod and reproduced from "Anthropos".

The grave of Sokis, a man of Rikatla.

(Sokis being an exorcist, a little hut has been built on his grave).

the heirs. In the Northern clans, seeds taken from the store of the deceased are sometimes also thrown into the grave with the words : "Go with your seeds."

764 But let us return to the burial. The "one of the head" officiates
769 in the grave ; then all the relations help him to fill the hole. They

(1) The blade but not the handle, which is included in his "filth" and which is broken. "The handle is *he*, the blade is not *he*."

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push the sandy soil with their hands. With great care they remove every piece of root, as if to make the sand perfectly clean. This is a taboo dictated by respect for the deceased. To do otherwise would mean "to throw him away" (tshukumeta). The head has been covered with a towel and the earth is brought near it very gently. Now the digger takes two twigs from the branch of a male nkanye (the nkanye is a dioecious vegetable) and puts them into the right hand of the deceased, which is seen emerging from the rugs near his cheek. When the earth reaches the level of this arm, the latter is stretched out slowly so as to cause the two twigs to emerge. This stretching process goes on as long as it is possible to draw the arm outwards, the hole being gradually filled in. When the arm is fully extended, the digger clutches (wutla) one of the twigs and gives it to one of his helpers, who keeps it; the second remains in the hand of the deceased. Such is, at any rate, the regular way of performing the *rite of the twig*. But often one twig only is put in the hand and it is taken away as soon as the earth reaches it, without any stretching out of the arm; or it is made to emerge from the sand by gently pulling all the time, till the grave is filled in, so that, when the tumulus is formed, the end of the twig is still to be seen. The younger brother will then take it to perform the religious rite. The twig is called the *mhamba*, a word which we translate generally by offering, but which designates any object by means of which men enter into relation with the spirits of the ancestors. The officiating person sits at the foot of the tumulus. All the people sit round the grave silently, the men nearer, the women farther off. He holds the twig with the right hand and turns it round his head, making circular figures in the air (1). Then he pronounces the sacramental syllable *Tsu, tsu, tsu*, two or three times, prolonging the sound; he has called the spirits. He prays: "You, my ancestors, who are assembled to day... Do you not see this? You have taken him. I am alone now. I am dead! I pray you, who are yonder (kolaho), as he has gone back to you, that

(1) This is the kind of sacrifice called *litsañwa*, explained in Part VI, Chap. II. Its aim is to secure a good reception for the deceased on the part of the psikwemba, viz. the ancestor gods.

764 we may remain in peace. He did not leave us in anger. Let
769 us mourn him gently, in peace. Let us help each other to mourn him well, even our parents-in-law from amongst whom he has taken his wife." It may be that he forgets to say something which ought to be said ; then some of his hearers remind him quietly of the omission and he adds the words to his prayer.

764 *The wailing* (ku djila nkosi). As soon as he has finished praying, those present commence crying ; the wailing begins. The women get to their feet and shout loudly, throwing themselves on the ground. The wife of the deceased cries more than any one else : "I remain alone in the lonely plain (libalen). Where have you gone? You have left me." The wailing generally starts on a very high note and finishes a little lower, expressing the pain of the heart in a touching, penetrating manner. Here is one of these sentences, which can hardly be called a song. I heard it in 1893 at the burial of a young woman who was found drowned in the lake of Rikatla.

O my mother ! O my mother ! You have left me, where have you gone? ! (1)

The parents-in-law lament over their daughter, the new widow. Everyone then begins to lament over his own relations who have recently died. The brothers weep together without shouting. They say : "You have gone first. We shall soon follow you, because there is attraction in death."

It is during the mourning that pots, handles of assagais, etc. are broken over the grave.

761 Let us stop a little while at this point.

783 We have seen enough already to observe that, for the Thongas, death
765 (lifu) is not only a sad event, a great cause of pain on account of the bereavement, but a dreadful contaminating power which puts all objects and people in the neighbourhood of the deceased, all his relatives, even those dwelling far away, working in Johannesburg for instance, into a state of uncleanness. This uncleanness is very dangerous indeed. It kills, if not properly treated. All are not affected in the same way. There are concentric circles round the deceased : the widows are the

(1) See for the notes of this song Part V. Ch. III. B.

769 The bones of the dead are never disinterred. It is a taboo; grave is respected and women do not dare to till the ground over it. Often one comes across a small thick bush in the midst of mealie gardens, and one sees broken pots under the branches. It is an old grave. Later on, when no one remembers who has been buried there, agriculture regains its sway. If a bush fire has reached the sacred wood and damaged it, the person who lit it must atone by sacrificing a fowl in order to "quench" (timula) it.

REMARKS ABOUT DEATH AND BURIAL

761 These very complicated funeral rites of the Thongas clearly show the
783 existence of three great intuitions in their minds:

1) Man is immortal and becomes a god through death.

775 2) There is extreme danger attached to the defilement which accompanies death. This uncleanness contaminates the community and can only be removed by collective purification.

3) The social group, being diminished by death, must be reinforced by special means (family gatherings, choice of a successor, etc.). Hence three categories of rites: *religious*, *purificatory* and *social*.

On the other hand some of the rites we have described present unmistakably the character of *passage rites*, because death also means a passage: for the deceased, passage from the world of the living to the world of the dead; for his relations, passage from one phase of life to another.

764 Separation from terrestrial life is symbolised for the deceased by the
775 rite of piercing the wall of the hut in order to solemnise, as it were, his official departure from his former dwelling. I should consider also as a separation rite the custom of cutting through all his garments and mats, in order to make them "draw the last breath." To effect aggregation to the new world, the grave-diggers prepare for him an underground hut and square place, they place him in his new dwelling in a sitting position (if such is the true explanation of the folding of the limbs), they direct his eyes towards the cardinal point whence his
765 ancestors have come. I have sometimes had the impression that even
775 in these rites, the idea of a marginal period, or of a period of transition, was not lacking; the deceased is not prayed to prior to the great family gatherings, which take place three, six, or twelve months after the death. Then his hut is crushed or closed. It would seem that he has gone

607 his younger brother's wives (bengi) and play with those of his elder
835 brothers (tinamu). Why tis here this difference ? Because, as
we saw, the wife of an elder brother is a possible wife for all
595 his younger brothers, as they have the right of inheriting
512 her, should this man die. On the contrary, an elder brother inherits his younger brother's wife only under quite exceptional circumstances. One does not marry a ñwingi! This would be an insult to one's wife. Nsabula would leave Mboza if Mboza were to marry Magugu, Komatane's wife, because they have been accustomed to call each other ñwingi.

607 To a wife, her husband's elder sister is also a ñwingi (Ndjibari to Nsabula). The husband's younger sister is a namu or *nhombe*, and two tinamu have very free relations, just as in the case of the tinamu. This freedom exists between female tinamu as well as between tinamu of different sexes.

606 There is a final term to be mentioned : *bakhoti* or *bakhoti-kulobye*, in Ronga, *basevele* in Djonga, a reciprocal term by which the parents of a husband and wife call each other.

593 How far is a woman incorporated in her husband's family ?
769 She belongs to it till her death, provided the lobolo oxen have been paid, but she does not accept the ancestor-gods of her parents-in-law as being her gods. She keeps her own gods, and prayers are frequently addressed to them by her father or by her brothers in favour of her children. In this respect Thongas differ widely from the old Aryan peoples, where a woman had to adopt the religion of her husband's clan when she married.

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606 Before leaving the subject of relations with parents-in-law, and in order to show to what extent the uneasiness and fear which characterises them are carried, I will briefly mention the taboos of the bukoñwana, which play such a great part in Bantu family life. Let me say that most of these taboos (psiyilayilana, small prohibitions), are not so severe as those connected with sexual relations, disease and death. It is not believed that a breach of

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

604 782 assagay. The batukulu dispose of the portion of the limbs offered to the gods. They *cut* the prayer and, at that moment they steal the meat or the beer of the sacrifice and run away with them. Why is this? "Because a ntukulu does not fear the saliva of his malume" (Mboza). They live in such intimacy with them that they can eat that which was reserved for the gods (1) (See p. 162).

604 The ntukulu *also takes precedence* in some other rites; in the circumcision school the uterine nephew of the chief is at the head of the circumcised. In the *luma milomo* (page 146) he starts the purifying ceremony, and "gives to the others" (nyiketa) the use of the food of the deceased.

604 428 178 But it is especially in the question of the inheritance that he shows himself in his characteristic aspect. Father-right has set in and is strongly supported by the lobola custom. Therefore the sons of the deceased have the sole right to the property of their father, wives as well as implements. The batukulu, however, the uterine nephews, refuse to be left out! You will find them everywhere, trying to get something for themselves. They were already planning with the malume's wives to take them as spouses after the death of their husband. Remember how they teased the whole fámily, on the day of the distribution of the widows (page 208). When the implements were distributed, they came and claimed their *tjhumba* (a technical expression, it would seem, which means precisely this kind of claim lodged by a malume or a ntukulu). They were given the small assagay, the big one remaining for the son. In this way *ba nyiketa pfindla, they give over the inheritance to the legal heirs.* This is a most vivid representation of a right which no longer exists, having in fact become

769 602 (1) Some ethnographers have supposed that ancestral worship only began when the father took command of the family and consequently did not exist in the period of mother-right. This seems to me absolutely false. The spirits of the mother's family are invoked as well as the father's ancestors, and the special place of the uterine nephews in worship down to this day is best explained in this way: before the gods of the father were known and prayed to, those of the mother were worshipped, and consequently the batukulu held a special position in the ritual. When the ancestors on the father's side made their appearance in the Bantu Pantheon, beside those on the mother's side, or after the institution of father right, the batukulu preserved that special position.

524 keep serious and not laugh. Should they be unable to keep their countenances, their victory is lost!

538 But these games are only a preliminary. The farther we go, the nearer we get to true literature! Now they ask each other *riddles (psitekatekisa)*, simple and antiphonic. We shall study this form of folklore later on... If the second side is unable to give the right answer to the riddle, it asks permission to propose one in its turn and so the intellectual combat goes on until they have exhausted the series of riddles they know. Those who have had the worst of the duel must pay the forfeit by *telling tales (tha psihetana)*. A woman may be present who is a renowned story-teller and she holds the whole company under the charm of her tale for half an hour, perhaps longer... Children shudder when they hear the terrible story of the bogey man! They burst into laughter when she describes the funny tricks of the Hare, or of the frog *Shinana*. They heartily approve when the younger brother, despised by his elders, becomes their saviour and teaches them a good lesson... Thonga folk-lore is very rich; it is one of the most interesting manifestations of the psychic life of the tribe. We shall study it with the attention it deserves in Part V of this work. Here it is sufficient to show what a great and happy part it plays in the life of the village.

E. RULES OF POLITENESS AND HOSPITALITY.

576 The village life is dominated by the *respect for hierarchy*. I do
769 not think this term is exaggerated. Etymologically hierarchy
593 conveys not only a moral but a religious idea. This religious feeling is not absent in the fear felt by a younger brother for his elder, because the elder member of the family is its priest, the only possible intermediary between the family and its gods (See Part VI). So no wonder if, in their relations with each other, though these are extremely free and natural, Natives follow strict rules of etiquette.

643 604 778 "when the Ba-Khosa had emerged from the reed" (See Vol. II, Part VI, III). Nobody might see it except the chief, who kept it hidden somewhere in a hole amongst the rocks. His uterine nephew alone (ntukulu) knew the place, and when it was necessary to use it in order to pray to the deceased chiefs, the chief and his nephew alone were permitted to approach the hiding place ; those 643 who accompanied them had to stop at a distance. This mhamba 778 is lost. Even the chief Ntshongi, who was the paramount chief of 789 the Ba-Khosa at the beginning of this century, had never seen it. It had been taken by his predecessor Mavabaze and had disappeared during the political troubles of the Gungunyana's war. Thus it is impossible to say of what it consisted, and this will probably never be known. There is no doubt however, that it was used for the same purpose as the mhamba of the Tembe and Shirindja. Its magical and religious power came from the fact that it was anointed with the "nsila" of the deceased chiefs. On the death of a chief, his "nsila" i. e. the layer of filth resting on his body, was taken away and the mhamba was rubbed with it. This gave the reigning [769] chief the power to influence his ancestor-gods, in accordance with the magic principle : the part influences the whole. It is said that in former times the Khosa chief Shihanyisane having ill-treated his two younger brothers, Malashwane and Shalati, these two men succeeded in taking the chieftainship away from him with the aid of the Ñwamba clan. Eventually Shihanyisane made peace with his brothers and gave over the mhamba to Malashwane : a proof that this mysterious object was in truth considered as the most important attribute of chieftainship.

643 These regalia are not indeed very imposing to the eye. Thonga 789 royalty had no brilliant insignia... But it had more than that! 751 Each clan possessed a special medicine, whose magical virtues were greatly esteemed ; its possession made the chief invincible, the warriors invulnerable, the country unconquerable. This powerful charm is called *mbhulo* (Dj.), *mphulo* (Ro.).

Amongst the Nkunas, the mbhulo is called *Ñwantikalala*. It is kept by those belonging to the Mushwane house, and a man called Papalati is responsible for it. It consists of four calabashes, two male and two female (medicines are considered as having sex,

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which is not eaten, and rub their faces with it. But *no religious ceremony is performed.* It is the same for the *luma*, a paste made with the contents of the kwakwa fruit, a kind of Strychnos very similar to the nsala, but of a different taste. The ceremony was even more simple than with the almonds ; the chief used to send a little of this paste to each village saying : "Let this be the first bite you swallow : the new year has come!" (Luman, ku tlhese nguba.) No powder was used in connexion with it. The magical drug was used, on the other hand, when the luma of pumpkin leaves took place.

II. *The luma of the Kafir corn.*

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The great, the official luma, amongst the Ronga clans, is that performed for the Kafir corn (mabele). The great wife of the chief grinds the first grains of Kafir corn reaped in the fields. She cooks the flour in a pot and pours into it some of the royal powder kept in the calabash, so as to make a *shimhimbi* (See page 42). The chief takes a little of the food and offers it to the spirits of his ancestors, at the main entrance of the royal kraal. He prays to them in the following terms : "Here [illegible] the new year come! Precede us, you gods, and luma, so that, for us also, Kafir corn shall help our body, that we may become fat, not thin, that the witches may increase the corn, make it to be plentiful, so that, even if there is only a small field, big baskets may be filled! (Nguba hi yoleyi! Rangan ñwine, mi luma, ñwi Psikwembu! Na hine, mabele ma tjhama amirin yeru psinene, hi kuluka hi nga wondji. Abaloyi ba yandjisa, psi tala ngopfu, nambi shi shisiñwanyana shi shiñwe, a ku tale tingula!)"

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After this religious ceremony everyone luma in turn, the chief first, then the sub-chiefs, then the counsellors, then the warriors who have killed enemies in battle, then the headmen of the kraals who have all been summoned to the capital. Should one of the headmen be prevented from coming by illness, his younger brother will not precede him. He will bring him the *shimhimbi* in a leaf ; the elder will take it, and, after him, the other brothers. Women do not eat the magic powder. Neither do strangers,

643 754 787 789 and Part VI). — To protect and to prolong his life, diviners sometimes call together the whole clan in order to discover and eventually arrest those who might bewitch and kill the chief. This gathering is called *nyiwa* (See Part VI). — As for rain making, it is in the hands of the proper rain doctors (Nkuna) or is done by the ceremonies of *mbelele* (Part VI). — He is not held responsible for public calamities. — If his bodily or mental powers fail, the tinduna discuss matters in his stead and he is not deposed.

643 769 Chiefs are never worshipped during life time. After death, they are deified for their own family, who worship them, but not for their subjects. — They are not supposed to turn into wild beasts after their death. — The custom of appointing mock kings does not exist. Only on the death of a chief can one of his relatives be nominated to take his place, and watch over his property until the adjudication of the inheritance.

the ant-eater was sleeping. Attacked by the dog, the sambana 224
begins to burrow deeper into the earth; it reaches the spot where the hunter has dug his hole and tries to escape through this; but seeing that a man is waiting for it there, it suddenly turns back and returns to the opening of its burrow, where it is easily killed, notwithstanding the hard scales which cover its body.

Conclusion on the nuru idea and the lurulula rite.

I once asked old Makhani, the hunter who had suffered from an 775
attack of insanity because he had slain an enemy: "What is the nuru?" He burst out laughing, and this was the only answer I could get from him. I suppose an uneducated peasant of any European country would do the same if he were abruptly asked: "What is the soul?" An ethnologist, however, cannot rest satisfied with this avowal of ignorance or this utter want of interest. He must try to find an explanation, and some sort of an explanation is always likely to be found when we are dealing with beliefs which are not purely individual but which belong to a community.

The *nuru* (pl. miluru)—to sum up all the above accounts (see also I. 769
p. 478)—is a peculiar power possessed by man and by several wild 775
animals in virtue of which they avenge themselves on the person who 783
has killed them. This power resides in their body and appears to pass 825
out of it through their nostrils with their last breath. The fact of having killed a person or an animal *possessing the nuru* places the slayer in a state of dangerous contamination. It would sometimes appear as if the nuru had entered into him and remained sleeping in him, ready to awake in certain circumstances (I. p. 400). The danger connected with the nuru must be overcome by a special treatment; if this is not done, the nuru will cause an attack of madness and may even do great harm to the family of the slayer or hunter.

Let us try to go a step further in our analysis by putting the following 769
question: What is the relation between the *nuru* and the *shikwembu*, 775
first in relation to man, and secondly, as regards animals?

As regards man, we know that, for the Bantus, every human being at his death turns into a *shikwembu* and becomes an ancestor-god for his descendants and a hostile spirit as regards his former enemies. The shikwembu, roughly speaking, is the ghost of a deceased person. This

769 notion is clearly animistic. The shikwembu, as we shall see in the
775 VIth. Part, is a personal spirit to which prayers are addressed and offerings presented. The *nuru* is not personal. It is a power, an influence, a force of Nature. This is not a distinctly animistic idea. It belongs rather to the domain of Dynamism (See Part VI, Chapter I). Moreover any deceased person becomes a shikwembu, whilst the term nuru is used only in the case of a slain enemy, or in relation to strangers who died in a foreign country and were not properly buried. It is consequently clear that these two words nuru and shikwembu have not the same meaning ; they cannot be employed one for the other.

On the other hand there is a resemblance between the two ideas. Thongas believe that any shikwembu of a hostile tribe, and not only the shikwembu of an enemy slain in battle, can take possession of a man of their tribe and cause a disease very similar to that of the nuru at the outset (although it develops into something very different later on). This disease is a possession in the full sense of the word, and must be treated by exorcism, as we shall see in the Chapter on Possessions. Thus it is also clear that there is a similarity between the action of the nuru and of a hostile shikwembu. In the story told concerning slayers (I. p. 481, Note) we met with a typical case of nuru, ending in a sacrifice offered to the slain enemy. Undoubtedly the two ideas are connected, though not identical.

775 As regards wild beasts, the question does not arise, at least amongst
825 the Thongas. Despite the green snake found between the horns of the Kodoe, which my Maputju informant called its shikwembu, animals do not turn into shikwembu. They have only the nuru.

It would be interesting to know what the ideas of other Bantu tribes on the subject are, and I would urge students of African anthropology to inquire if the root *luru* exists in other Bantu languages and what its significance is. In his book on the *Ila-speaking people*, the Rev. Ed. W. Smith does not mention the exact corresponding term ; but he describes hunting rites which bear a close analogy to those we have met amongst the Thongas. I may mention specially the two following facts (Compare his Vol. I, p. 167 and II, p. 136). 1) When a hunter has killed an elephant and has "climbed" its body, a prayer is addressed to Leza, the Supreme Being, to the ancestral spirits (mizhimo) and to the ghost (muzhimo) of the deceased elephant. These are the words of this last prayer : "O spirit, have you no brothers and fathers who will come to be killed? Go and fetch them!" Here we meet with a tribe

to the sacrifice of the black victim and to the mbelele rite of purification of the land, which are characteristic Thonga customs, it seems that another old Thonga way of obtaining rain was the *tjeba fishing* which I described on p. 86. When the whole clan had gone to catch the barbels in the almost dried up ponds, a thunderstorm would come and rain would fall. This was especially the case with certain small lakes such as Malangotiba in Nondwane, and that in Nsime near Morakwen, because battles had taken place on their borders and the enemies' corpses had been thrown into the water. So these lakes had become "great sacred woods" (ntimu). I suppose the spirits of the deceased, which were certainly "gods of bitterness," (see next chapter), were supposed to prevent the rain, and the *tjeba* either appeased them or made them powerless.

To sum up this very complicated subject, I would say rain rites belong to three different categories: 1) The religious rites connected with ancestor worship (black offering, visit to the sacred woods, old songs and sometimes offering of a human victim). 2) Rites of purification of the land, those which are derived from the mysterious relations established between the power of Heaven and abnormal births (mbelele, cleaning of wells by women accompanied by the mother of twins); these present some features of the ordinary passage rites, either because the fall of rain inaugurates a new season, or because drought is a calamity comparable with death and attended with contamination. 3) The magic rites, in which sea charms play the most important part.

Hail, shihangu (Dj.), mabyana, lit. little stones (Ro.), is frequent in Thongaland; according to Mboza, it is not the object of any peculiar superstitions. Amongst the Pedis the day on which it has fallen must be kept as a sabbath. It is taboo to till the fields on that day.

IV. *The Inorganic World.*

Water is called *mati*, a noun of the bu-ma class, the class of liquids, employed only in the plural form. Notice the suffix *ti*, which seems to show that, at a period when mythological

193 conceptions were still current, it was considered as a feminine principle. This supposition is confirmed by the fact that *rivers* (nambu. pl. milambu) also have the feminine termination (I. p. 36, Note). I find the following names of rivers ending in *ti* : Nkomati, Nfoloti (Umbelosi), Ñwebeti, Shalati, Timbati ; the termination *etsi*, *edzi*, may be another form of the same suffix (Ñwanetsi, Ntsatsi, Shingwedzi, Madzi, etc.). A very curious fact, which shows the same conception, is that the river which crosses the territory of the Tembe clan is called Mi-Tembe. I first thought this to be a plural form of the mu-mi class ; but it is more natural to explain this *mi* as the feminine prefix (1) which means daughter of, as Migogwe, etc. (I. p. 352).

823 *Crossing rivers* is subject to a curious rule. It is taboo to bathe
784 in the stream before crossing it ; taboo also for the traveller to
824 cook his food on the hither side of the river ; he must first cross,
789 and then take his meal. This rule is still universally observed by
133 waggon trekkers in South Africa. In this case there may be a reason for the taboo : South African rivers are apt to be swollen in a moment by sudden rain, and the crossing made impossible for days : the traveller therefore makes haste ; he will have plenty of time to stop on the other side! When the river is dangerous, a Thonga will first chew (phora) a little of his *ndjao*, the root of a juncus, which is supposed to increase courage and to ensure victory over hostile influences. (See Part VI.)

823 Some *Lakes* and *Rivers* are believed to be inhabited by spirits,
769 but not in the ordinary fetichistic way, in which a special spiritual
776 being is incorporated with the natural object ; these spirits are
782 *psikwembo*, spirits of the deceased ancestors of the owners of the land, and are propitiated by their descendants. Should another clan have invaded the territory where these lakes are, and crocodiles threaten the fishermen, (p. 88) they will call some one belonging to the clan of the old possessors of the country and ask him to make an offering to appease *his* gods. This is the ordinary course, and the more closely we search the more completely these lake and

(1) A number of river names have the prefix *li* or *ri*, especially those which are of Sutho origin : Lebvubye. Ritabi (Letaba) Ritshindjele (Letsitele), Rimbelule (Lepelule, Olifant). Others begin with *ñwa*, *mu*, and may be ancient names of men.

river spirits become identified with ancestor-gods. In my investigations I found one case, however, where a special spirit, a kind of Nature spirit seemed to be invoked. This was on the sea shore, in the northern part of Nondwane, at a place called Mahilane, where there are two great rocks on the beach. When the great waves dash against them, with a fearful roar, people go and sacrifice (hahla); they pray thus: "Tsu! Oh sea! Let vessels be wrecked, and steamers also, and let their riches come to us and help us." In former times, a young girl was sometimes exposed there as a prey, or an offering to the power of Mahilane. Now this is exactly what is done in the sacred woods for the ancestor gods and, in fact, Mboza asserts that: "When abandoning the girl, the officiant says: You, Psikwembo, ancestor-gods, drive on the sea that it may wreck vessels."

When urged to speak with more precision, my informant answered: "Mahilane and the sea are one and the same thing (ntshumu muñwe). When the sea is roaring people exclaim: 'Mahilane roars'! Near the island of Shefin, where two branches of the Nkomati river meet in the estuary, people say: 'Makaneta is roaring'. Here it is Makaneta and no longer Mahilane."

This information is extremely interesting. As regards Makaneta, we know him perfectly well; he is the ancestor of Mboza and descendant of Mazwaya (I. p. 360). This ancestor-god begins to be confused with a natural phenomenon taking place in the country where he lived. The religious fear of the spirit of the deceased mingles with the awe inspired by the roaring of the sea to such an extent that both notions coincide in the imagination of the savage. We here note the exact point where *an ancestral spirit evolves into a Nature spirit*, and this instance proves, in the clearest possible manner, that the conception of the ancestor spirit preceded that of the Nature spirit. Here, at any rate, Ancestrolatry is anterior to both Fetichism and Naturism. These later forms of the belief can be easily accounted for by the development of Ancestrolatry: the reverse process would be much more difficult to explain.

The sea, with its immensity and its wonderful power, deeply impresses the Thongas dwelling near it. They do not however tell many stories about it, nor did I hear of any explanation

When travelling through the country, you may come across a tree round which a rag has been tied, evidently for some religious purpose. One's first idea would be that this tree is worshipped, but this is by no means the case. The tree is probably that which the divinatory bones have singled out as the one around which the village should be built, and the offering of this rag is made to the spirits of the ancestors, exactly as is done when the rag is placed near the grave, or at the door of the little hut built on it, in the case of those possessed. (See I. p. 141 and later on Chapter III). The tree is only sacred on account of this association. I have sometimes called the *Nkanye* a sacred tree, and the Thongas call it the king of trees, but it is not so in itself, or in virtue of any Nature spirit dwelling in it ; anybody can cut it without transgressing a taboo ; it is venerated because it provides the tribe with the national beer, and because its branches are used as pillows for the dead and its twigs as *mhamba* in the funeral service (I. p. 138). The religious and social *luma*, to which the bukanyi is subject (I. p. 397), is observed from fear of the ancestral spirits and not because the tree itself is in any way worshipped. In fact I never met with any worship offered to a plant as such. 824 769 778

VI. *The Animal World.*

Plants, *psimili or psa-ku-mila*, things which grow (ku mila), are distinguished from animals, called *psibandjana*, or *psihari*, which are said to *kula*, become great, and not *mila*. 815 136 825

The knowledge possessed by the Thongas with regard to animals is extensive. They give names to all the larger ones, especially, of course, to those which are eaten, but also to some which are smaller, insignificant and useless.

The *Annelida* are called by the generic name of *tinyokana*, diminutive of *nyoka* (yin-tin), snake ; leeches, *ntjundju* (mumi) ; lumbrics, *nshikwa* (yin-tin), both those living in the earth and parasites in the intestines of children.

Amongst *Myriapoda* the Julidese are called *Khongoloti* (dji-ma) ; the Millepedes, *Ndlandlalati* (yin-tin). When one of these has stung a Native, you will see him swallow a little earth, and a

815 mouthful of water after it, to prevent swelling. "The milleped
136 will die at once and you will not suffer much, because you have
825 been wiser than it (u yi rangelile butlharin)."

The same precaution is taken with regard to Scorpions, *shiphame* (Dj.), *mubalane* (Ro.). Other Arachnida are Spiders (*pume* (dji-ma) *ripe* (dji-ma), Ticks *(shikalana)*, and the Itch *(shinwayana)*, which Thongas know but too well without being aware that it is caused by a microscopic animal. To this group probably belongs the *maroda*, a parasite met with in the huts of Bilen and other remote parts of the country, whose bite causes actual disease.

The *insect world*, so richly represented in Tropical countries (1) is pretty well known, though many of its representatives are of no practical use to the Natives.

Orthoptera. Acridius peregrinus, the locust which ravages the fields, is called *humbi* (yin-tin) in Ronga and *ndjiya* (yin-tin) in Djonga. (See p. 81). The first "clouds" which appeared greatly impressed the Natives when they were seen at the beginning of the war of 1894. I heard some one say that this phenomenon had been foretold by a "mulungwana," a little man fallen from heaven to announce this calamity which threatened the land. (See next Chapter). Other Acridians are called *mhera* (yin-tin); the larvae of locusts, which abound at certain times in the gardens, are the *hondje* (yin-tin). The Pamphygus, a fat, heavy, grey locust, the female apterous, are called *phuphu* (dji-ma). The Grillus is *Shiyendlwa* (shi- pai), and is eaten by some. But the best known Orthoptera are those of the Mantidae family whose representatives are numerous in the country. They are called *Ñwambyevu* (Dj.) or *Ñwambyevulane* (Ro.), viz., the one which cuts the hair, probably on account of its claws, which move like
825 scissors. This insect plays a great part in the superstitions of the
769 Bushmen, who worship it. Amongst the Thongas there is a similar custom; young shepherds, when they meet with a Mantis,

(1) See my publications on the Entomology of Delagoa Bay; I. *Coleoptera*, in collaboration with Dr. Bugnion; II *Orthoptera*, by Dr. A. von Schulthess Rechberg; III *Hemiptera* by Prof. Montandon in the "Bulletin de la Société vaudoise des Sciences Naturelles." XXV, p. 132-220; IV), *Lepidoptera*, "Bulletin de la Société Neuchâteloise des Sciences Naturelles" Tome XXVII, p. 177-250.

tear out a little hair from the skins of their belt and offer it to the 825
insect saying : "Take, Grandfather!" They say that in old times 768
they were looked on as gods (psikwembu), or rather emissaries of the ancestor-gods, just like the little green snakes (Chapter II) ; their name was Mahulwahulwane, and when one of them entered a hut, no one interfered with it, as it was thought that perhaps some god had come to pay a visit to his descendants. These ideas regarding Mantidae seem to be now disappearing and the offering made to them is merely a little children's game. Another 136
Orthoptera is the *Shipfalapfapfa*, an onomatopoeia, describing a 825
flying locust, and the *Shishirikoko*, a large species which emits 815
saliva through its thorax. When it flies the Thongas say to it : "Go to the place where people eat meat!"

Hemiptera. Bugs are well, too well, known in Thongaland, having taken up their abode in most of the huts, where they are tolerated. They are called *Nsiketi* (yin-tin) and the wild bugs *Nsiketi ya nhoba*, bug of the bush. Lice, *Nhwala* (yin-tin), are regarded as vermin, and often as the result of bewitchment, especially when seen swarming on children. Many Aphidae (grubs) cause an exudation on certain shrubs, a kind of wax, the *Mubodi*, which is used for the manufacture of the black crowns (I, p. 130) ; others are called *Shibungubungu*, the red ones, probably a kind of cochineal.

Neuroptera. Diptera. The equivalent of these names of flies is 815
Nhongana (yin-tin). Mosquitoes are called *Busuna* and fleas 136
Butsaka, with the prefix *bu* which here means a collection, a great number. *Basokoti*, a similar word, designates ants. The big gad-flies are the *Bawa* (dji-ma). The Libellulidae are called *Mungutane* (mu-ba) and the Termitideae *Muhlwa* (mu-mi).

Lepidoptera. Butterflies and moths are designated by a single word, *Phaphalati* (Dj. Notice the feminine suffix), or *Phaphatane* (Ro.) (dji-ma), and their caterpillars by the term *Hukwa* (yin-tin) or *Tomane* (dji-ma), this last word especially applying to the large Saturnidae caterpillars which are eaten by the Natives (p. 80). The relation between the caterpillar and the butterfly is not generally known ; only once did I find a boy who knew that a certain white cocoon, used as an ornament in dances (p. 102) gave

825 *Shipyahla* (Ro.), *Mhiri* (yin-tin, Dj.) is the big, lazy, grey puff adder,
136 which creeps along the ground, and is one of the most venomous kinds, together with the *Mhamba* (yin-tin), a slender species, very swift and often found on trees. "When you meet a mhiri," say the Nkunas, "throw a little earth on it and you will soon see
[752] its brother!" Of course magicians have plenty of drugs to cure snake bites. For this purpose they use the head of the adder roasted and pulverised. *Shibatlankombe*, (Naja nigricollis), "the one which carves a spoon" is the name of a species which
[762] curves its neck till it looks like a spoon. The *Hhlaru* (yin-tin) is the boa. It is eaten. Another member of the Clapidae family is the *Likure*, a pretty greyish violet species (Causus Lichtensteinii).
[769] Amongst the harmless snakes are those little blue ones, *Shihundje* (Dendrophis subcarinatus), which are considered as emissaries of the ancestor spirits. I shall mention them again later on. The *Nsoma* (yin-tin), very common and harmless, is probably Dispholidus typus. Some small ones, not larger than worms, but hard and shining like metal, are called *Tumbi-tumbi*, because they hide (tumba) in the sand. One of them seems to be Xenocalamus bicolor.

825 There are also the legendary snakes of the Thongas. On the
777 Coast they speak of the *Buwumati*, which dwells in the lakes and is invisible. It is only heard crying "bu-wu-bu-wu" when rain is falling, and its voice is as loud as that of an antelope. If it shows itself to a traveller, it is a very bad sign. The story is told of a man who came back from consulting a bone-thrower. He saw the buwumati lying on the ground, its coils extending to a great distance, closing all the passages. He retraced his steps, but after three days he died. In the Transvaal, this dreadful snake is called *Shimhemhemhe*, the name being an imitation of its cry.
825 This superstition is perhaps of Pedi origin, but it has been accepted by the Nkunas. The shimhemhembe dwells in certain dark woody ravines on the slopes of the Drakensberg mountains. If anyone imprudently penetrates there, the snake pursues him, creeping along the branches above, and bites him on the top of the head. A man met with it once on the way to Thabina; he saw it on the road, its head raised, a shining head of two colours. There

lightning), or animistic (Son-of-the-Moth). But they are not of much 771
importance. They belong to the same category as the description given 774
by the Psalmist of the sun as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, or to that of Homer comparing the break of the day to a young damsel with rosy fingers. This is poetry, mere personification of natural objects, or forces, and not beliefs. The poetical tendency is very marked amongst primitive races. It may be that ideas of this kind were more firmly held in former times, if the tribe has really passed through a more mythological phase, a hypothesis for which there are some grounds.

2) Collective beliefs.

The beliefs of the Thongas which deserve to be called by that name 771
because they are universal and express themselves in important rites and 769
customs, are the following :

1. The human soul continues its existence after death, when it is 775
endowed with new powers which make it an object of awe and fear. *The spirits of the ancestors* are the main objects of religious worship. They form the principal category of spirits (psikwembu).

2. Although the spirits of the departed generally have nothing to [789]
do with people other than their descendants, some of them, especially *those belonging to foreign tribes*, can take possession of living men and cause troubles which must be cured by a process of exorcism. This is the second category of spirits.

3. Some individuals have the power of magically unsheathing them- 774
selves during the night, and their spirit goes out to torment, or to kill 754
and eat other people. These are *the wizards* (baloyi) ; this third cate- 791
gory of spirits accomplish their wicked deeds when separated from the body, but their body is still living and they re-enter it. These three beliefs are distinctly animistic.

4. There is in man, and in a few large animals, a semi-spiritual 771
principle, the *nuru*, which escapes from the body when the individual is 774
killed in war, or in hunting, and through which the dead man, or animal, 828
avenges himself or itself on the murderer. What is the relation between the nuru and the shadow (sitjhuti)? This is not stated. The nuru seems to be of a more material nature, as it can enter a root, and it remains attached to the corpse and the bones of the person or animal killed. This category of spiritual enemies, probably invented under the influence of fear and remorse, has no connection with ordinary people,

771 easy to perceive. In the quartz of the South African veldt, miners, in their investigations, sometimes strike a reef : they crush the hard stone, wash it, apply to it certain chemical tests and find there is gold in the reef. This is similar to an experience which I once had when conversing with Thonga natives. Quite unexpectedly I heard them speaking of *Heaven*, not as a kind of impersonal being, but as a king, endowed with great power and omniscience, who must be feared by thieves, because he knows them. Persevering in my inquiries, I discovered this second set of religious intuitions, quite distinct from the first, viz., the *Deistic Conception of Heaven*. I intend now to describe these two parts of the Thonga religious system. Later on we may discuss their relation to each other. "System" is perhaps too big a word, for no Native philosopher or theologian has ever classified this somewhat confused mass of religious ideas, and we must not look for anything logical and organic. We may even meet with contradictions, conflicting statements... While trying to bring some order into the subject, I will endeavour at the same time to give a faithful and reverent explanation of Native ideas.[1]

A. ANCESTROLATRY.

1. *The Ancestor-Gods (Psikwembu).*

1) The name of the ancestor-gods.

769 Any man who has departed this earthly life, becomes a
776 *shikwembu*, a god. We shall show, later on, that to translate
193 "shikwembu" by god (with a small "g") is by no means incorrect. The word is indeed interesting, but unhappily no light is thrown on it by etymology. It belongs to the shi-psi class, the class of instruments. Take the verb "famba" to walk ; put the prefix "shi" in front of it, and change the final "a" into "o" and you obtain "shifambo" — "the thing with which one walks!" So shikwembu would mean "the thing with which one *kwemba*." Only this

[1] [For complete discussion of Thonga religion, see pp. 372-450, Category 116.-- Analyst]

stem *kwemba* is never used, and its meaning is unknown. There is another form, *nkwembu*, of the class mu-mi, very rarely used, and having the same meaning, and the word *bukwembu*, the abstract noun derived from the same root. Bukwembu is the "power which creates life and death, which gives riches, or which makes poor," says Viguet. In Pedi the ancestor-gods are called *badimo*, a word which seems to be related to *Khedimo* (above, in heaven). But I have heard this connection doubted (1). In Zulu the etymology of *indhlozi* and *itongo*, employed to designate the ancestor-gods, is also unknown, which is a pity, as it would have been interesting to see if the stem from which they come also means above. Is it not strange that in these three closely-connected languages the terms used for the spirits, about which they have exactly the same ideas, are absolutely without any linguistic relation? In Sutho, these spirits belong to the class "mu-ba," the class of persons, which seems natural. In Zulu their two names are of the class yin-tin and dji-ma, respectively ; in Thonga they belong to the shi-psi class. This dissimilarity is indeed curious.

769 776 193 [171]

2) Categories of Ancestor-Gods.

Since every human being becomes a shikwembu after death, there are consequently many categories of these. What is the fate of little children? If they die in infancy no religious ceremony is performed over their grave, nor are any prayers offered to them. The twig rite (I. p. 142) only begins for children who have died at the age of puberty. Infants are, however, seen in the sacred woods amongst the adult gods. This is one of the points about

[766] 776 769

(1) The Vendas call the ancestor-gods *badzimo*, which is evidently the same word as the Sutho badimo. The Rev. Th. Schwellnus told me he thought that the etymology of this word was the verb dzima (in Thonga tima) which means to extinguish (Timula tora means to quench the thirst). The badzimo would thus be those who bring relief, who remove anguish. As this stem dzimo under various forms is widespread amongst the Bantu tribes to designate the ancestor-gods, it would be interesting to know if the corresponding verb dzima also exists and if this etymology is clearly established. The word *ntimu*, sacred wood, in Thonga, may perhaps come from the same root.

776 which there is no very clear explanation ; doubtless the matter did
769 not seem worthy of inquiry!

The two great categories of gods are *those of the family*, and *those of the country*, the latter being those of the reigning family. They lo not differ as regards their nature. In national calamities those of the country are invoked, whilst, for purely family matters, those of the family are called upon.

769 Moreover, each family has two sets of gods, those *on the father's*
side and *those on the mother's*, those of "kweru" and those of
776 "bakokwana" (I. p. 268). They are equal in dignity. Both can
602 be invoked, and the divinatory bones are always called on to decide to which the offering must be made. It would seem, however, as if the gods of the mother's side were more tender-hearted and more popular than those of the father's. The reason for this is, perhaps, that relations are easier with the family of the mother than with that of the father. It is also just possible that it is a relic of the matriarchal period, when the ancestors of the mother alone were known, and consequently invoked. At any rate, the part played by batukulu nephews in the offerings shows that they are the true representatives of the gods, not of those of their father, but of their mother.

776 Two other categories of gods, which I have sometimes heard
769 mentioned, are the *Gods of assagais* (psikwembu psa matlhari)
and *the Gods of bitterness* (psa shibiti). The former are those who
766 have been killed in battle ; the latter are those who have been drowned, killed by a wild beast, or who have committed suicide, or the pregnant woman who has been buried without being cut open (I. p. 166). In most of these cases, as is evident, the corpse has not been buried with the due rites and ceremonies ; the deceased has not been properly cared for : hence his bitterness ; or, as in the case of the pregnant woman, something has been buried without having first breathed its last breath (I. p. 140). In the case of the suicide, the poor man who hanged himself was full of sadness : "The great bitterness is the rope", said Mboza. In most of these cases no one was present at the death! These gods are therefore angry, and are the most to be feared.

000 The *Gods of the Bush, Psikwembu psa Nhoba*, are also especially

The Gods of the Bush, Psikwembu psa Nhoba, are also especially dreaded. There is a little song which is sung as a welcome to travellers who reach their home safely : 776 484 533

> Shikwembu sha nhoba shi etlele !
> Shi etlele, banhwanyana !
> Amadikeo-dikeo-dikeo !
> The god of the bush has remained asleep !
> He has remained asleep, young girls !
> Hurrah ! hurrah ! hurrah !

The spirits of the departed who wander about in the bush, not having been properly buried, try to attack innocent travellers. You are fortunate to escape their anger! For this reason they often say to a relative who is starting out on a journey : "Go with your god," viz., the special ancestor-god who can protect you against the dangers of the bush. 769 776 784

I have also heard mention of *Shikwembu sha tihanye*, the god of quarrels. When an offering prescribed by the bones and presented to a certain ancestor-god has not had the desired result, people say : "This god is a god of quarrels. Let us make an offering to the others so that they may scold him." 776 769

3) The Abode of the Ancestor-Gods and their Mode of Life.

Ideas on these two points are very confused, even contradictory. Some say that the departed go to a great village *under the earth*, a village where everything is white (or pure, "ku basa") ; there they till the fields, reap great harvests, and live in abundance, and they take of this abundance to give to their descendants on earth. They have also a great many cattle. The place where they live seems to be a kind of Hades or Paradise (1). But it would seem, when we consider the funeral rites, that the deceased, on the contrary, 775 776 787

(1) The Ba-Ila (see Smith and Dale, *The Ila-speaking people*, II p. 119) believe that the ghosts go *Kwiwe*, to the East, to Chilenga, the Creator. But they have the same contradictory ideas as the Thongas concerning the abode of their deceased ancestors. 171

Amongst the Natives of Barotseland, on the Zambezi, it is said that the dead go to Nyambe, the God of Heaven. They pierce the lobe of their ears and make other incisions in their bodies as a sign that they belong to Nyambe. When they die and reach the end of the earth at the great river Walamba (the Styx of the Zambezian tribes) the ferryman who conveys the dead to the other bank looks at them to see if

775 remains *in his grave*. Is not his grave his house (I. p. 137)? Does
776 he not sit on his square, where his mats have been unrolled? Thus
the life of the shikwembu seems to be the exact continuation of his
787 earthly existence. That such is the idea is proved by the two bones which represent the gods in the set of divinatory bones : 1) the astragalus or nail of an ant-bear, because ant-bears live in the earth, and come out only during the night ; 2) the astragalus of an antelope, found in the excrement of a hyena ; the hyena ate the antelope, and swallowed the bone, which came to light again ; in the same way the gods have been buried in the ground, and reveal themselves later on. (Compare Ch. III. D.) A third idea, more or less intermediate between the other two, is that the gods reside *in the sacred woods*, and there lead their family life in human form, parents and children, even little children, who are carried on their mothers' shoulders. Mboza went so far as to say that they are married and bring forth children, as children are seen on their mothers' backs. Here again, we find the life of the other world regarded as the exact reproduction of this terrestrial existence.

4) The Sacred Woods.

764 These are vast, almost impenetrable thickets, in which the
769 ancient chiefs have been buried ; they are called *ntimu*, (mu-mi)
cemeteries. Every clan owns one or more of these burying places.
778 The ntimu is reserved for the men of the royal family, those who have been the owners of the land. They are buried in different sections of the forest, "according to their villages," in such a way that the wood represents separate cemeteries, corresponding to the

171 they bear the marks, and only in that case does he take them to Nyambe (See *Ames primitives*, Th. Burnier, Paris Mission, 102, Boulevard Arago).

The Ba-Chopi believe that their ancestor-gods dwell in rivers. They have no fear of the graves where the deceased have been buried, and even till the ground over them, asserting that the bones alone remain in the earth, the ghosts themselves having departed into the river where they are heard singing, dancing, and playing on antelope horns. When the chiefs make a national offering, they mix the meat with water when they present it to their gods, and the one officiating turns his eyes towards the river when he prays. He places the part of the victim which has been cut out for the gods on the bank of the river, and everybody goes home. The gods come when all have gone and take the offering. It is taboo to remain on the spot and to be seen by them!

villages of the living. No woman, and no uterine nephew is buried in the official cemeteries. 764 769

These woods are taboo. It is forbidden to gather fuel there, to cut down any tree, or to allow the bush fire to enter them. Should anyone have imprudently set fire to the grass in the neighbourhood, and be unable to extinguish the blaze, and should the fire thus pass over a grave, he must provide a goat for sacrifice, in order to "extinguish" (timula) the sacred wood. All entry is strictly prohibited except to the guardian of the wood (mutameli wa ntimu), the priest, who is the descendant of the gods of the forest. He goes there from time to time, to offer the sacrifices. He penetrates into the dense foliage by a narrow path, hardly perceptible. I have often visited one of the most celebrated woods, that of Libombo, two miles east of the Rikatla station. The old Libombo chiefs were buried there, and Nkolele, the proprietor of the forest, was very proud of it. He asserted that Mahazule, the chief of Nondwane, belonging to the reigning family of Mazwaya, whose forefathers had conquered the land of Nondwane, feared the spot and, in order to avoid it, took a circuitous route to Lourenço-Marques, or, if forced to take that road, stopped near the wood to pay his respects to the old chiefs buried there. I did not see anything remarkable in that wood. Forcing my way through the bushes, brambles, and creepers I at length came to a sort of tumulus, but very slightly raised, on which were to be seen some dried leaves of maize, the remains of offerings placed there some time previously. The young man who acted as my guide — considerably against his inclination, I fancy, — turned away his face, with a terrified expression, when we came upon this grave. In another spot I found some other tombs. Snakes thrive, naturally, in these thickets, where they are undisturbed, but I did not see any on that occasion. No mausoleum has been built over any of these venerated sepulchres ; a few pieces of old blackened pottery were all we saw — the remnants of the jugs and plates belonging to the deceased, which were broken on the spot after his death. 778

The dread in which these sacred woods are held by the Natives is certainly not due to any unusual objects they may have seen 769 778 538

769 there. It is inculcated, and kept alive, by the truly terrifying tales
778 which are told concerning them. These are related in the evening,
538 in low tones, and with frightened looks, and the feeling of awe is
776 fed and maintained by these legends. I intend to narrate here those I heard from various informants ; these stories will illustrate better than any philosophical explanation the ideas of the Natives concerning their gods. Those connected with the Libombo wood are the most typical. I owe them to Spoon and the aged Nkolele. I will begin with those which are of most ancient origin, and whose legendary character is most unmistakable.

539 One day a woman was passing close by the forest of Libombo : she
plucked a sala (p. 16) from a tree and ate it, after which she went to till
776 her garden. On another occasion, just as she was cracking another sala
769 against the trunk of a tree before eating it, she saw that the fruit, instead of having a stone inside, was filled with small vipers. She threw it away, but the vipers said to her : "Go on! Eat away! Haven't we seen you every day picking sala? And these sala are ours, and not yours. What shall we gods have to eat? Have we not made this tree to grow?" And she went home and died, because she had been cursed by the gods.

Another woman was passing by the forest on a rainy day, and saw a child, who had climbed a tree, and was eating berries. She approached the child and said : "Give me some of those berries!" The boy made no reply, so she began to pick some for herself. When she had picked enough, she said : "Are you going on picking berries in such a rain as this! Where is your mother?" He still remained silent. She felt sorry for the child, thinking he was indeed to be pitied : — "Come," said she, "and let me carry you on my back." So she went up to the tree, and lifted down the child, and tied him on her back with her shawl ; then, putting her conical basket on her head, she started for home. On arriving at her hut, she saw that a fire had been lighted on account of the rain. — "Put on some more wood," said she, "for the sake of this little one, whom I found on the road eating berries." She untied the shawl, and tried to place the child on her hips, but he refused to be moved, and clung to her back, where he kept quite still. The folks said to the woman : "Put him down on the ground, so that he can go and warm himself near the embers." He refused. Then they said to him : "Get down!" But he still refused to move. Then the villagers said to the woman : "Didn't you pass by the Libombo forest?" — "Yes! I did," she replied, "and there I found this child gathering berries, and

brought him along with me." — "This is no child! It is a god!" they 539
cried ; "a child never has a hard head like this one has. And look at his 776
legs! What strength! How ever did you come to think it was a child?"
—"But," said she, "I certainly thought it was a child — and can it 769
be a god?" — They sent for magicians, who threw the bones. At once the magicians knew what was wrong : — "Ha! Hé! You found him at Libombo, did you not?" They tried to remove him by force, but he clung still more closely to the woman's back, stiffening his legs round her waist, and his arms around her neck. They tried to unclench his hands, but it was impossible! Then they begged her to go back to Libombo, and implore the owners of the forest to set her free from this child. She took her basket, and returned to the tree where she had found him. The guardian of the forest soon appeared. It was Makundju, the ancestor of Nkolele. He inveighed against the woman and those who accompanied her, saying : — "When you find fruit in the forest, do not pick it! If it be maize, leave it alone, or, if you pick it, spare at least one ear. If your chicken flies into the wood, do not go after it. If your goat runs away into it, you must not follow it. We are worn out, we folks of Libombo, with offering sacrifices for you passers-by... Your troubles are the consequences of the sins (psihono) you commit in this place." A white hen was caught, and sacrificed on behalf of the woman. Emitting the "tsu" the priest said : "Behold our ox, by which we present our petition. Let this god leave her back. She did not do it on purpose. She thought it was a child ; she did not know it was a god. Which way can people go henceforth if you, gods, put obstacles in the way?" While this sacrifice was being offered, the being suddenly left her back, disappeared, and no one knew how, or whither he went. As for the woman, she trembled violently and died...

A man once defied the prohibition of cutting dry wood in the forest. Suddenly he was pelted from behind with kwakwa and sala fruits. It was the gods. He tried to fly, but was unable to find the path out of the thicket. He was lost, and tired of wandering about he let his bundle of faggots fall. Then the gods allowed him to find his way out again, but, when he found himself in the open, he perceived that he was carrying nothing, even his axe had been taken from him.

Sometimes the gods made themselves heard ; when they were 776
especially happy they played on trumpets, sang and danced. 778
Passers-by often tried to get a glimpse of them, but the noise

It is said that, in olden days, there was an anchor there, and before 776
sacrificing, the priest always used to lift it up, and let it fall to the 778
ground, saying: "Shawan! (I salute thee) Tembe!" If the sacrifice was acceptable the sound of a trumpet: "bvé... bvé...," was heard, far away in the depths of the woods, but no form was ever seen. This anchor also possessed extraordinary powers. When the country was at war with its neighbours, and matters did not go well with Tembe, the anchor would move off by itself into the Matjolo district. This was the portent of some terrible catastrophe!

No one ever penetrated very far into the sacred wood of [789]
Tiyini, of the Matjolo clan, for it was said that any one doing so would be lost, and unable to find his way out. When the people of Matjolo were in need of rain, they took a young man of the country into the wood, and there abandoned him. The gods accepted their offering, and the young man, struck with paralysis, was unable to follow in their retreat those who had led him to martyrdom! He saw them going away, but remained behind to be devoured by the gods. The others hastened to sacrifice and returned home; they were forbidden to look behind them. Once home, they told how they had seen on the ground, in the wood, foot-prints of adults, and even of little ones who must have been old enough to crawl on their hands and knees! Often, they say, they brought back the rain with them!

According to all these stories, it is evident that, in the Thonga 769
mind, the ancestor-gods dwell in the sacred woods, and lead a life 776
there in the earth, and occasionally outside, very similar to the 778
terrestrial one. Mankhelu had, however, another idea, which is 789
difficult to reconcile with this representation. On his forked magic pole he had a long shining grey branch of a climbing shrub called *ñwabola*. This has enormous thorns, which are supposed to have the power of calling the precious things which are far away, and of gathering them in the hut: money, oxen, girls to marry, etc., and also the ancestor-gods: "When they pass through the country, coming from our old domicile, near the Limpopo, they are caught by the thorns, and settle here to bless us." This idea that the gods fly through the air, is very rarely met 769
776

769 with. I never heard it said that the gods were in heaven, not-
776 withstanding the Sutho term badimo, which is believed by some to mean those who are above.

5. Relations between Ancestor-gods and their living descendants.

769 The apparitions of ancestor-gods in a human form in the
776 sacred woods are not of frequent occurrence. The gods reveal
825 themselves to their descendants by other and more common means; first, by their appearance *in the form of animals*, such
753 as the Mantis (p. 335) or more often as little bluish green snakes called *shihundje* (p. 340). These charming and harmless reptiles are frequently seen in the huts, crawling in the thatch of the roof, or along the reeds of the walls (1). Natives never touch them, thinking that they are some of their gods who have come to pay them a visit. It is taboo to kill them. If a disease breaks out in the village the bones may reveal that some one in the hut has hurt the gods, and a sacrifice will be required in order to appease them. They also appear in the form of the large grey puff-adder (shiphyahla) (2).

769 Secondly, the ancestor-gods communicate with the living
776 *in their dreams*. If some one dreams of one of his dead relatives,
787 he is very much frightened, and consults the bones, in order

769 (1) This is the story which I heard from one of my informants of the Khosen country: All his family was once assembled together for a marriage feast. The
825 people were playing on the village square and enjoying themselves. The old woman had remained in the hut, and suddenly they saw two little green snakes crawling along the reeds of the wall. They were much afraid, and at once called the headman. He came in, saw the snakes, and said: "Do not fear! These are our ancestor-gods! They have come to share in our feast."

(2) Describing to me a sacrifice at which he officiated either in September or October 1895, the old priest Nkolele told me as a fact the following story, which I will now quote word for word:

"I myself went into the wood with the offering I had prepared for the gods, and then *it came out*. It was a snake; it was the father of Makundju, the Master of the Forest, Mombo-wa-ndlopfu, Elephant's-Face. He came out and circled round all those present. The women rushed away terrified. But he had only come to thank us. He didn't come to bite us. He thanked us saying: 'Thank you! Thank you! So you are still there, my children! You came to load me with presents, and to

to know exactly what the god desires of him (Viguet). If the apparition was painful, if the god came as an enemy, fighting, the dreamer, when he awakes, will take some tobacco, or a small piece of cloth, and hang it somewhere in the reeds of the wall, near the door, as an offering. Or possibly the god has ordered him to give him something to drink. He will then buy a bottle of ginor wine, and pour a little outside the door ; whatever remains he will drink with his companions. If the dream takes place during a journey and the ancestor-god seems to be happy, the traveller will throw some tobacco on the ground when he awakes and say : "I had prayed thee to help me on my road ; thou hast come indeed! Help me to go further." But if the ancestor-god has an angry look and tells him : "Why do you not give me a piece of calico print? You have forgotten me"—the traveller will fetch a piece and tie it round a tree and say : "When I return home after making money, I will give thee some."

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But the great means by which the will of the gods is revealed is the *set of divinatory bones*, which are cast on every occasion, and are called the "Bula," the Word. Does this mean the Word of the gods? Not precisely, but in most cases the diviner thinks he owes his divinatory power to a dead relative, who used to cast lots himself, and who transmitted his spirit of interpretation to him. Whatever may be the real explanation, the fact remains that it is by means of the bones that Thongas believe they know what their gods think and wish, and this is the reason, as we shall

bring me fruit! T'is well!' — He came to thank us for our chicken. Even if one only kills a chicken, he is quite content. For him, it has just the same value as an ox. It was an enormous viper, as thick as my leg, down there (he pointed to his ankle). It came close up to me, and kept quite still, never biting me. I looked at it. It said: 'Thank you! So you are still there, my grandson!'"

769 825

— "But," said I to Nkolele, "what you are telling me, is it really fact, or just fancy?"

— "Undoubted fact! These are great truths! After that I prayed, and said: 'Thou, Mombo-wa-Ndlopfu, the Master of this land, thou who hast given it to thy son Makundju; Makundju gave it to his son Hati; Hati gave it to Makhumbi; Makhumbi gave it to Kinini; Kinini gave it to Mikabyana; Mikabyana gave it to Mawatle... ('Ma'watle gave it to me, his son' is here understood)... Look upon my offering. Is it not a beautiful one? And here am I, left all alone. If I had not brought this with me, who would have given you anything? Is it not just so? I ask of thee, my ancestor, I ask of thee all the trees; the palm trees for building, the trunks which can be hollowed out for canoes; and let it be that these trunks shall not fall on the people and crush them, when they go to cut them down, even those in the marsh.'"

787 see, why divination plays such an important part in their life.
769 It is of the utmost importance to know what their gods think
776 and do, as the very existence of the village, and of the clan, and the welfare of every member of the clan depends on them. Is not Łukwembo, Divinity "the power of killing or of making alive, of enriching or of making poor?" Natives believe firmly in these two opposite actions of their gods. They are the masters of everything : earth, fields, trees, rain, men, children, even of baloyi, wizards! They have full control over all these objects or persons.

769 The gods can *bless* : if the trees bear plenty of fruit, it is because
776 they have made it grow (I. p. 414) ; if the crops are plentiful, it is because they forced wizards to increase them, or hindered them
777 from spoiling them (I. p. 396) ; if you come across a pot of palm wine, it is your god who has sent you that windfall (p. 44). When Mboza escaped from the Morakwen battle, one of his relatives exclaimed on his return home : "The gods of Makaneta have still been with you!" (Psikwembu psa ka Makaneta psa ha ku yimelele.) Often when a man has narrowly escaped drowning, or spraining his ankle on a stump which has caught his foot, he will say : "The gods have saved me."

769 But they can also *curse*, and bring untold misfortune on their
776 descendants. If the rain fails, it is owing to their anger ; if a tree
789 falls on you, they have directed its fall ; if a crocodile bites you, the gods have sent it ; if your child has fever and is delirious, they are
753 in him, tormenting his soul ; if your wife is sterile, they have prevented her from childbearing ; perhaps the gods of your mother have done this, because you had not given your maternal uncle the *tjhumba* part of the lobolo, which he has the right to claim (I. p. 267) ; in fact any disease, any calamity may come from them. There are, of course, other sources of misfortune : the baloyi, for instance, or Heaven, and the bones will show who has caused the mischief ; but the ancestor-gods are certainly the most powerful spiritual agency acting on man's life. Hence the necessity of propitiating them by prayers and sacrifices.

II. *The Means of Propitiation. Offerings and Sacrifices.*

It is no wonder, since these spirits are so terrible, that their descendants have sought means of propitiating them. The study of these rites is very interesting, and will throw more light on the ideas of the Bantus concerning their ancestor-gods. Some of these means of propitiation bear a magical character. For instance, when Mankhelu wished to induce the gods to sleep and leave him in peace, he took roots which had been brought to light naturally by a swollen river that had washed away the ground. The reason is clear ; the gods are in the earth, therefore things found in the earth can influence them. So he cut these roots in small pieces, cooked them with the flesh of a goat, and drank the broth ; the assagai which killed the goat had been first smeared with a powder made of these roots. He fastened the astragalus of the goat on his ankle, on the right side if the god to be propitiated belonged to his father's family, and on the left if it was one of his mother's ancestors. If the propitiatory ceremony was performed for a woman, the astragalus was tied with a strap "en bandouillère" round her body. 769 782 789

We shall often see such *magic acts* performed in the ancestor worship of the Thongas. This is in keeping with their general conception of Nature, as already explained (p. 369), and with the magic principles or axioms of primitive mentality. But to the magic element is added the religious ; the officiant is aware that he intends to influence living, conscious and superior beings, therefore he has recourse above all to specifically *religious means*, viz., to offerings and prayers. He presents to his gods what he calls a *mhamba*, and not *miri*, charms or medicines similar to those employed in magic proper. We shall understand more fully what the word mhamba means when we have described the various kinds of offerings.

1) Classification of Offerings.

These offerings are much more complicated and varied than they at first seem. The following principles of classification may be applied to them : 782

782 their protection : "May the harvest be plentiful ; may the cattle multiply ; may all our wives become pregnant." He uses by preference negative expressions : "Be not angry against us ; may the cows not slip their calves ; may our wives have no miscarriages, etc." In the meantime the people continue the same clapping of hands (called ku diya or ku losa gupsi, gupsi expressing exactly the hollow sound produced by the curved hands).

Notwithstanding this ritual clapping of hands, not much respect is shown by those present. They chat and joke whilst the chief of the clan is praying. A little tobacco has been spread as a libation on the graves and all help themselves to it. The influence of European ideas can be noticed ; a man cries : "Take off your hats!" and most of the men obey, showing that they are conscious that this is a religious ceremony worthy of respect.

As soon as the ceremony is over, they begin to dance. Immediately the clapping changes. It is now done with the hands held flat. It is chiefly the women, especially the old ones, who dance. Gabaze, the principal wife of the Nkuna chief Muhlaba, who is a Makaringe, the sister of Mugwaleni, makes herself conspicuous by her contortions. These are the ordinary dances.

They eat the roasted meat ; they drink the beer brought by the women. The portions offered to the manes are eaten as well as the rest, and I did not observe that they were reserved to special persons. The skin of the victim is cut into small strips which the men tie round the right wrist, the women round the left."

b) *National Offerings.*

782 These are those offered at the capital, to the ancestors of the
769 chief, but on behalf of the whole clan, because the gods of the
796 reigning family have control over the clan, just as the chief has
554 over the families of his subjects.

The regular national offering is the *luma* of the first fruits, their consecration, which I have described at length as one of the principal manifestations of the National life (I. p. 396-406). The Bantu conception of hierarchy is clearly illustrated by this custom : the gods must be the first to enjoy the produce of the new year, then the chief, the sub-chiefs, the counsellors, the

782 headmen, then the younger brothers in order of age. There
769 is a stringent taboo directed against the person who precedes
796 his superiors in the enjoyment of the first fruits, this law being
554 applicable to Kafir corn or bukanye in certain clans, and also to sorghum, pumpkin leaves and beer, etc., in others (1).

834 The sexual taboo is also enforced. Those who contravene this
782 law are said to "destroy the efficacity of the offering, nyumbisa mhamba." At the Ngoni Court, where sexual excesses were prevalent (see I. Annotatio 14) it is said that the chiefs used to remain continent for a fortnight at the time of luma. The reason of this taboo is probably the fact that the luma signifies the entering upon a new year, a new season, and is thus a rite of passage.

782 The religious meaning of the rite is clear : the gods, if deprived of the right they possess by virtue of their hierarchical position, would avenge themselves by threatening the harvest ; so they must be given their share first.

In the Maluleke clan, in which the customs seem to have been influenced by the Ba-Nyai, there is also a regular offering at the capital, when *the crops are still growing*. Rangane describes it as follows : "When the chief sees that the Kafir corn is threatened by the vermin in the fields, he says : "Perhaps the masters of the country (i. e. my ancestors who are dead) are angry ; perhaps I have not worshipped them fittingly." He summons the sons of the royal family (mangalakana) from all parts of the country, prepares beer, and selects a goat for the sacrifice ; they assemble around the graves with the sons and the uterine nephews, where they worship, and then, after eating all that is to be eaten, they return."

The special national offerings are those in connection with rain. If the rain falls at the right season, the sacrifice will not be made ; but should it fail to do so, the whole ritual will be gone through. This sacrifice for rain, is, as has already been mentioned (p. 318) called *phokolo* amongst the Bilen clans, and is performed in the

(1) Amongst the Malulekes a *second luma* is necessary after harvest, when brewing the first beer. It seems that the sub-chiefs or even headmen, settled in districts far away from the capital, can obtain a special license to perform the luma ceremony on their own account, but they must first apply for this permission, and after having finished, they must forward the chief's share to him.

2) The Main Elements of Ancestor Worship.

The sequence of the religious ceremonies in a typical sacrifice, like that performed at the crushing of the hut, is as follows : 769 782

1) The bones are first consulted, and reveal to what god, when, how, and by whom the sacrifice must be made.

2) The officiant, who is as a rule the eldest male member of the family, comes and presides over the sacrifice.

3) The victims are brought by those who have either been designated, or who have volunteered to provide them.

4) They are killed by the uterine nephews, the goats or sheep by piercing the heart, the hens by cutting the throat. Sometimes the face of the goat is directed to a certain point of the horizon.

5) The victim bleats, or if it is a hen, jumps about on the ground in its agony. At each thrust of the assagay, or of the

order to secure this much desired object as soon as possible, the son would go so far as to poison his father. Now, according to the testimony of Mr. F. Grébert (*Au Gabon*, p. 154), the byeri is not necessarily the skull of an ancestor. Any skull can be used, either that of a traveller found dead on the caravan route or even the skull of a man belonging to a foreign clan who has been assassinated. The byeri, whatever may be its origin, acts by its own power and no longer on account of its connection with the spirit of an ancestor. It is a true fetish, a material, magical object which is able to kill or to enrich in virtue of its own power. The Thonga mhamba is not a fetish. Its power is never dissociated from the spirits of the old chiefs whose nails, hair or faces have been used to produce it. Whatever action it may have is due to the fact that these nails, hair or faces influence the dead chiefs to whom they belonged, according to the magic principle that the part acts on the whole. The origin of the byeri is certainly ancestor-worship, but here ancestrolatry has evolved into fetichism, and I conclude from these facts that Thonga ancestrolatry is simpler, more spiritualistic and must therefore be more ancient than the present Pahuin system. 171 778

Amongst the Ba-Ganda (see Rev. J. Roscoe, *the Baganda*) there are powerful gods who have their priests and mediums, and are worshipped according to a complicated ritual, one of them being the war-god Kibuka. They have their temples, in which there is a sacred shrine placed on a stool. The shrine of Kibuka was secured and sent to the Museum of Ethnology at Cambridge, and it was found to contain, together with other objects, a bag with a human jawbone, the male organ and a decorated umbilical cord. This is a proof that the god Kibuka is an ancestor-god, whatever may be the splendour to which his worship has attained in the course of time. And here again we are in presence of what seems to be a later form of ancestrolatry, most probably evolved in consequence of the development of the social system of the Baganda. They form a nation with a powerful royal family, more than one thousand years old. With them the spirits of the dead kings hover round their jawbones, just as they are influenced by their nails, hair or faces amongst the Thongas, who would seem to be in a less advanced stage of evolution.

782 knife, the uterine nephews utter their cries of joy (1). This
769 is their way of consenting (pfumela) or answering, for they accept the offering on behalf of the gods (2). The whole crowd joins in these manifestations of joy.

6) The victim is cut open, and one limb, or small pieces of each limb, are put aside for the gods ; the half digested grass, *psanyi*, found in the intestines, especially in the *shihlakahla* stomach, is carefully put aside.

7) The priest takes a little of the psanyi mixed with the blood of the victim, puts it to his lips, emits a little saliva, and spits out the whole, pronouncing the *tsu*, this being the means of consecrating the offering, or, as we may say, despatching it to the gods.

8) He pronounces the prayer — occasionally interrupted by some member of the family, who has a complaint to make.

9) In certain cases of special misfortune, whilst praying he squeezes the green liquid contained in the psanyi over his hearers, who rub their bodies with it.

10) One of the nephews "cuts his prayer" (i. e. brings it to an end) by taking in his mouth a little of the consecrated beer or wine, or part of the hen's gizzard.

11) The uterine nephews steal the offering and run away, followed by the throng, who throw pellets of psanyi at them. They eat the portion of the gods.

12) Should the offering have been made on behalf of a particular individual, the astragalus of the goat, or some portions of the hen are tied to him and worn for a time on the left or right side of the body : the left if the offering was made to the maternal ancestors, the right if it was made to the paternal gods.

Let us examine more closely some of these acts, so that we may better understand the elements of this ceremony.

(1) Amongst the Ba Nyai they clap their hands and shout : "Ndiyo !" — "all right."

782 (2) It is not necessary to add more about the part played by the uterine nephews in
604 the sacrifice, for it has been explained in detail in Vol. I, p. 269 when treating of the family system. The two great reasons for their taking such a prominent part in the religious ritual seem to be the following : 1) during the life of their maternal uncle, and also of all their mother's family, they were on very intimate terms with them, "even eating from the same piece of food, not fearing their saliva." Therefore they now eat the flesh of the victim instead of the ancestor-gods of their mother. 2) Maternal relatives have a special religious duty towards their nephews. They act as their priests

gatherings, after a death, the elder brother entreats the gods to bless the family, to prevent bad feeling, or strife, to give wisdom and strength to the new headman, that he may be successful in his rule over the village (1). 782

When some great misfortune is the occasion for this religious act being performed, the petition is preceded, or followed, by a regular *insulting* of the gods. There are two words used to designate this curious part of the prayer : *holobela*, or *holobisa*, to scold the gods, or *rukatela*, the actual word for "to insult." There is an instance of this strangely impertinent manner of addressing the gods in the sacrifice for the sick nephew (p. 396). These insults are generally uttered while the priest is squeezing the psanyi over the shoulders of his subordinates.

The last part of the prayer is *its sudden termination*, when one of the uterine nephews puts a portion of the victim into the officiant's mouth, thus "cutting his oration" (tjema). This is a true part of the ritual. When the victim is a hen, it is the gizzard, which has been half roasted during the long prayer, that is used for this purpose. The priest eats it, and so is the first to partake of the flesh of the offering.

Prayers to the ancestors do not show very much religious feeling, and are, at any rate, absolutely devoid of awe. Whilst 782 769

(1) *Music* plays no part in Thonga religious ritual. During the preparation of the offering those present often sing, but these songs are those which accompany the ordinary dances and bear no religious character. I only once heard of a true sacred chant. Mungomane, the distinguished dancer and musician who made his living by the exercise of his art in the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques (p. 187) told me that when he presided over the worship in his village, he used to *sing his prayer*. He gave me the words, but unfortunately not the notes. They are worth quoting : 781 533 776

"Let the meat not stick in your throats ! Eat, you chiefs, you ancestor-gods... They are coming (the oxen) ; they see me, whilst I mourn you, my father and my mother, whilst I remain outside, where I receive life from you, who are below ; I remain, I am a miserable wretch.

"The oxen are slain ! Slay the oxen ! Here they are. I mourn you. Let us eat them together, you father and mother. Give me life and give it also to my children. Let us eat these oxen which I possess, but I possess them for you. Let us not suffer from complaints of the chest here in our home.

"This is the song by which we accompany you, as you return below. Let us remain in good health."

At a given moment the uterine nephew answered by saying :

"I magnify you, my father ! You shall see me, father and mother !"

And all those present, seeing that they would have plenty of meat to eat, joined in a chorus of praise, clapping their hands.

782 sacrificing, the Natives laugh, talk in loud tones, dance, sing
769 obscene songs, even interrupt the prayer with their remarks,
781 and insult each other about family matters. The officiant himself
533 sits on the seat designated by the bones, and speaks in a monotonous manner, looking straight in front of him with utter indifference.
776 There is nothing in his demeanour which denotes fear. An exception must perhaps be made in the case of those members of the Makaringe family who clapped their hands during the prayer in the same manner as when saluting "bakonwana" (p. 402). They have as much respect for the ancestor-gods as for their relatives-in-law, and that is, indeed, saying much. I have heard that in the Maputju country people kneel down during the prayer. In Nondwane women alone kneel, whilst the men sit on their heels, the customary attitude in worship (1). If the gods were actually old people, still living, they could not be addressed with more familiarity. This leads us finally to consider in what the divinity of the ancestor-gods consists.

d) The Divine Nature of the Ancestor-Gods.

776 I have brought together in a preceding paragraph (p. 372-386)
769 all that the Natives say about their gods. Now let us return to them, after having studied the religious ritual, and ask : What

(1) The Ma-Lemba, that curious tribe settled amongst the Thongas and Vendas of Spelonken which has certain Semitic customs (I p. 73) are much more respectful towards their ancestor-gods. They have prayer meetings at which the old men of many families assemble together; one of them, he who knows the ancestors best, leads the others in prayer, "quoting all their mountains" viz. all the sacred hills where the ancestors have been buried, and at the end of each sentence they all answer : "hundjiii..." When the prayer is finished, they each raise an arm and say : "Amen !" This is one of the customs borrowed by them from the Semitic populations with which they came into contact in former times. When they heard Christians pronouncing the same word to conclude their prayers, they were very much astonished. One of them told me; "This shows that we were Christians formerly and have become back-sliders." One of their formulae when praying is as follows. "You, so and so and so, help us and enable us to reach Mudzimu." Mudzimu is the name by which they designate the Supreme Being in whom they believe and of whom they say : "All that you eat, it is Mudzimu who gives it to you!" If a child refuses to obey, they say to him : "Mudzimu will see you !" For them the ancestor-gods are but intermediaries between themselves and Mudzimu. They often call themselves Basilamusi, Moslems, and claim that there were Moslems belonging to their tribes (A ba ri ba ka hina).

do all these ceremonies reveal as to the conceptions of the Thongas concerning the ancestral spirits which they worship? A striking contrast exists in their ideas. On the one hand, the ancestor-gods are *true gods*, endowed with the attributes of divinity, whilst, on the other, they seem to be merely *human beings*, exactly on the same level as their worshippers. 776 769

1) *They are divine!* When an old decrepit man or woman dies, he at once becomes a god : he has entered the domain of infinity. The Thongas have no very clear idea of infinity. They have, however, a technical term for it : "lepsi nga yiki helo (Dj.), or mbangu (Ro.)" — "that which does not reach the point where it ends." This idea has certainly been extented to the shades which have attained the rank of psikwembu. The psikwembu are *omnipresent*. As Mankelu says : "For them there is no such thing as distance (a psi na kule) ; they are everywhere present (psi kone hikwaku). They are like heaven, the sun and the moon. There is no place where it can be said that the moon is not." The notion of *omnipresence* is perhaps that which has been understood most clearly. *Omniscience* is also believed in : the gods know what their descendants do, though they may be separated from them, perhaps dwelling in distant lands. *Omnipotence* results from the fact that they control everything in the life of their descendants. They are superior to wizards in this respect. As regards their connection with Heaven, I have never heard the point discussed. Natives do not philosophise. Thus the ancestral spirits are true gods endowed with divine attributes.

2) *They are still, however, only men!* They are not transcendent beings before whom miserable sinners tremble and offer prayers. The attitude of the worshippers, which I have just described, the freedom they show in insulting their gods, indicates that they consider them as exactly on the same level as themselves. This human nature of the gods is clearly shown by two facts : the limits of their power and their want of moral character. The domain in which they exercise their power is limited, being only *that of their own family* ; they watch over their descendants, bless or punish them, but they are absolutely indifferent to other men, and do not trouble about their affairs more than they did when still alive

776 on earth. I have nothing to fear or to hope from my neighbour's
769 gods, if I do not belong to the same "shibongo" (I. p. 360). The gods of the royal family are invoked on behalf of the whole country, and have power to give rain to the land ; but it is the chief and his uncles who must approach and sacrifice to them. I have no right to do so. It is true that an exception seems to be made in the case of the gods of bitterness, or of the bush, who attack the traveller, although he belongs to another family. But this is indeed only an exceptional case, it being their kinsfolk, who neglected to bury them, who are most exposed to their wrath.

Another proof that they are men is this : although as gods they have acquired these divine ontological powers, they have made no real moral progress. They are not better than they were as men. Their *character* is that of suspicious old people, who resent any want of respect, or attention, on the part of their descendants. They wish to be thought of, and presented with offerings. It would seem that they are not actually in need of anything, for they live in abundance, but they exact a punctual observance of the duties of their descendants in regard to them. They must *luma*, eat the first fruits, and have their share of the tobacco leaves and also of the ground tobacco. They are jealous,
783 and avenge themselves when forgotten (1). The only sin which
769 seems to be deserving of punishment is to neglect them. There are, however, two other faults which they strongly condemn, and
776 for which they may even kill their descendants : the first is any serious *transgression against the law of hierarchy* (as we saw, when dealing with the sacrifice of reconciliation) ; they punish especially the young man, even though he be the chief, who dares thus to

539 (1) In a very interesting tale, which is unique, and which I owe to Camilla and have published in *Les Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, p. 264, we hear of the people of Mashaken, near Lourenço Marques forgetting for many years to make offerings to their gods. Famine ensues. The men go to the marsh to cut sugar canes. They are unable to break them, and the gods chase them away. The women, who come to a place where honey is flowing from a tree, try to take the combs, but their hands break off and remain fixed to the spot ! The bones order Sabulana, a young girl, to go to the sacred wood to sacrifice. She enters the forest and sees the gods assembled. They say to her : "Tell your people that they have sinned, because they have tilled the ground and harvested without presenting us with any offerings. Now we are glad, because they have come to invoke us." This story was told me as a tale, not as a legend of the sacred woods.

encroach upon the rights of the *regular priest*, which is a great taboo ; secondly, they kill a man who loses all restraint in sexual relations ; when any one yields to that sin, people say : "The gods will lead him into the thick bush and kill him there." To other sins they are quite indifferent. Mboza even asserted, with a sadness which reminded me of the complaints of Asaph in Ps. LXXII, that men of bad habits do not fall ill or meet with misfortune ; the cough only attacks the good ; wizards bewitch them and do not go to the bad fellows, "for the gods see that they are not worth anything!"

In conclusion, I should say that what is wanting in the conception of the ancestor-gods, as compared with the God of higher religions, is both transcendence and the moral attributes.

III. *General Characteristics of Ancestrolatry.*

If I had to characterise Thonga ancestrolatry, I would say :

It is a *spiritualistic* religion, in the sense that no idols are adored ; there is neither idolatry nor fetichism in it. Spirits and spirits alone are worshipped.

It is an *animistic* religion, as defined in the preceding chapter, the categories of spirit gods being numerous, and these spirits being worshipped in order to win their favour, and propitiated when they are angry.

Though consisting essentially of offerings and prayers, which are distinctly religious acts, *it is mingled with magic* to a considerable extent.

It is a *particularistic family* religion, each family having its own particular gods. We may also see in it the beginings of a *particularistic national* religion (the great mhamba).

It is a *social* religion, its prescriptions being aimed at keeping alive and strengthening the hierarchy, which is the main feature of the social order.

It is an *unsacerdotal* religion, there being no sacerdotal order, but at the same time the priesthood of the elder brother is strictly enforced.

It is a *non-moral* religion, by which I do not mean that it is *immoral*, i. e. opposed to the laws of morality, but that it has no, or at least very

diminutive of *Mulungu, balungu*, by which are designated, amongst the 771
Zulus and Thongas, White people of every description, whether 772
Europeans or Asiatics. Could the inhabitants of Heaven have been
called "balungwana," on account of their resemblance to the Whites? It 776
would hardly seem probable, for the name of the balungwana, and the 171
ideas connected with them, were in existence long before White people were generally known, or had settled in the country. It is much more reasonable to suppose that the name of these mythical beings, as also that by which the Whites are designated, is a derivative of some other pre-existent term ; and what should this be if not the famous vocable "Mulungu," which stands for God, the One Supreme God, in so many of the Bantu dialects of East Africa, from Lake Victoria Nyanza to the Zambesi, to Senna and Quilimane? I should be inclined to think that the tribes in the neighbourhood of Delagoa were also acquainted with this name, which is so widely known, and that it has, in the course of centuries, disappeared from their theology, only leaving, as a last trace, the term balungwana, applied to the heavenly beings who occasionally descend to earth, and balungu, designating that superior race whose wisdom has always impressed the Blacks as supernatural. If this hypothesis were confirmed, we should have the right to conclude that the idea of Heaven, such as it is described in this chapter, is the disfigured remnant of a higher and monotheistic conception, held by the primitive Bantus before their dispersion, which has evolved in various ways amongst the different tribes.

II. *The Antiquity of Ancestrolatry.*

Ancestor Worship seems, on the other hand, to be an extremely 171
ancient religion amongst mankind. There have been discovered of late 769
years sepulchres of prehistoric date, which seem to show that the funeral rites of the first races were very similar to those practised by the Bantus of the present day. In comparing the burial of Sokis (I. p. 139) with that of a human being of the Mousterian age, whose remains were recently discovered by Hauser in the celebrated "Abri du Moustier" (Dordogne) (1) I noticed the following resemblances :

(1) See my paper "Deux enterrements à 20,000 ans de distance." *Anthropos*, 1900, I. v. Comp. also *L'homme préhistorique*. January, 1909.

171 769 1) In both cases, the corpse was treated with great, even affectionate care, protected against the earth, and provided with a pillow.

2) The legs and arms had been bent towards the body, a custom widespread amongst primitive races, and directly due to the belief in an after-life.

3) The deceased is regarded as sleeping : hence the pillow provided for him.

4) His after-life is believed to be an exact continuation of his existence on earth. Hence the fact that the articles which he was accustomed to use are put on to, or inside, his grave, the mats, rugs, mug in one case, and silex or "coups de poing" in the other.

5) If the rites performed for Sokis may be explained by the hypothesis that he has become a *shikwembu*, a god endowed with divine powers, if they are in truth acts of worship, it is but reasonable to suppose that the same religious conceptions gave birth to the similar rites of the Mousterian Primitives. The Mousterian Age is one of the first periods of the Quaternary. Some palaeontologists believe it to be anterior to the last glacial period, and think that the dwellers in la Dordogne lived 20,000, even 50,000 years ago! They possessed, then, a religion, and this religion was probably Ancestrolatry.

III. *The Relation between Ancestrolatry and the Conception of Heaven.*

769 772 776 The conclusion which may be drawn from the two preceding paragraphs is that both Ancestor Worship and the Conception of a Supreme Being are of very ancient date, and the question naturally arises as to which is the older. I do not pretend here to be able to supply a solution to this great problem, but merely to draw the attention of my readers to the following facts.

1) When questioned as to the relative antiquity of their two sets of religious ideas, Thongas reply that they are unable to give an answer. Their conception of Heaven is so impersonal that they cannot draw any comparison between the two. Their neighbours, the Swazis and the Zulus, however, are very decided upon this point. The Rev. W. Challis, in *The East and the West* of July, 1908, summarises their statements as follows :

"Long ago a great and noble Bantu king was in the habit of climbing a twin-peaked mountain at daybreak, there to intercede with the Great Great One (Unkulunkulu) on behalf of his people. His son, who succeeded him, was afraid to draw near to the Great God whom his father worshipped, so he called upon the spirit of his father to intercede for him and his people before the Creator of all. Gradually each head of a house adopted this method of approaching God, until each family had its own ancestral spirits as mediators first, then merely as beings who brought good or bad luck, and who needed to be propitiated by sacrifice and constant flattery and attention. But God is not in their thoughts now ; only a vague tradition among the old men survives as to the existence of the Great Great One." 769 772 776

The Zulus affirm, so Callaway says, that the same proceeding took place amongst their ancestors. This seems to be a phenomenon similar to the adoration of saints in medieval times, after a period when religion had had a much purer and more transcendental character.

2) A second fact, which points in the same direction, is the contrast which exists in the conception of the ancestral spirits. On the one hand they are but men, who may be insulted (as was often the case with the saints to whom reference has just been made ; take, for instance, the incident of the striking of the image of St Antony of Padua by a worshipper, because the saint had not helped him to recover some lost property) ; on the other hand they are endowed with the qualities of omnipresence, omniscience and omnipotence in their relations with their descendants. It would seem as if the idea of divinity, which was not originally connected with the spirits of the departed, had been applied to them in an awkward and merely external fashion.

3) It is wonderful to notice how easily the idea of the Christian God is accepted by the Bantus. They have scarcely any difficulty in believing that this is the real God to whom worship is due. Livingstone long ago remarked this, and the truth of it has been confirmed by Miss Kingsley, for one, in regard to the Northern Bantus, and also by most of those who have endeavoured to win over these tribes to Christianity. It seems as if one were telling them an old story, with which they had been quite familiar but had now half forgotten. In regard to the Thongas I believe the psychological process to be as follows. When they hear of the *Shikwembu*, who is *in Heaven*, there at once takes place in their minds a coalescence, or reunion of the two main characteristics of their two religions ; — their *shikwembu* is personal but not transcendental ; their *Heaven* is transcendental but not personal.

769 God, the real God who is preached to them, is both personal and
772 transcendental ; it is as if two different kinds of electricity suddenly
776 came in contact with each other in their minds and produced a flash of light... The result is decisive. The two ideas can no longer be kept apart. When the Native has adopted the living God of Christianity, he either understands Him more and more fully, and is able to find great joy and satisfaction of soul in his new religion, or he abandons Him, and becomes godless, if he is unwilling to accept the morality of a true Christian life ; he very seldom returns to Ancestrolatry, nor to his former deistic and naturalistic conceptions. This is another proof that the knowledge of the one and only God, who reigns over all, was indeed sleeping in his heart and conscience, no doubt as a result of the ancient monotheistic conceptions of the Bantus.

The evolution of mankind has been a long one! Even if the Bantus formerly had the idea of God, this would not go to prove anything as regards the primitive religion of humanity. This question is entirely beyond the range of the present work, and even Science may perhaps never be able to answer it. I can therefore leave it out of consideration.

My last observation has shown the caducity of the Thonga religion. It is not able to stand before the advance of the higher revealed religions, Mohammedanism and Christianity. Hence the facility with which Thongas are converted to one or other of these beliefs. This fact is of considerable importance in respect to the future of the tribe, and it will be necessary for us to consider it in our Conclusion.

(See also *Some additional remarks on the idea of the Supreme Being and on Ancestor-worship in relation to Religious History*. App. IV.)

APPENDIX III (See p. 428).

On Personal Religion amongst the Thongas.

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The following facts prove that though ancestor-worship is above all a collective and ritual affair, religious acts of a personal and individual character are not wanting.

A young man of the Hobyana family told me that when he was still a boy, he was employed by his father to convey travellers over the river in a boat. He was accused by his brothers of stealing the money paid to him for this service. His brothers did not like him; they took from him the money which he received from the travellers and accused him of keeping it for himself and of deceiving the owner of the boat. One evening, as he was returning home after his day's work, he heard a great noise in the village ; people were speaking of him in angry tones. A Portuguese official had passed through the country some time before and had shown him kindness. He decided to run away and seek refuge amongst the Whites. The night was pitch dark when he arrived on the borders of a great plain. He felt very lonely and was seized by a terrible fear of this great, empty space which he had to cross. Then "another heart" told him to pray to the ancestor-gods to help him in his anguish. He remembered how his father used to *hahla*, and thought of saying "tsu." But he did not dare to pronounce the sacramental syllable. A feeling of shame (tingana) prevented him from doing so. However, he kneeled down, put the parcel containing his clothes under his left arm, crossed his hands before his breast and joined them (fumbarela). He decided not to address his prayer to his paternal ancestors, those of the Hobyana family, as it was his father and his brothers who were ill-treating him, but rather to those of his mother. One of these maternal ancestors bore a special relation to him, as his parents had named him after this ancestor, who had died without posterity and whose name they wished to "revive" (pfusha) in this way. The boy prayed as follows : "You, my ancestor-god, after whom I have been named, save me and lead me where I am going." While pronouncing these words, he kept his eyes towards the East, where the moon was just rising, and, adds the boy, "I felt a great peace and joy in my heart and continued my journey."

Another boy of the Mashaba family, going for the first time to work in Johannesburg, was suddenly seized by fear in the railway carriage,

remembering that he had been told that the mines were full of water and that boys working underground contracted fatal diseases. Overcome by the idea that he was going to his death, he jumped out of the train at the third station after Komati Poort and began to walk in the direction of Barberton through the desert. Feeling tired, he lay down and tried to sleep. But he heard antelopes running about quite near him, saying "mpfi! mpfi!" — "If these animals were hyenas," thought he, "I should be lost." Then the idea came to him that he ought to call upon the psikwembu to help him, which he did without pronouncing the official tsu, saying: "My gods! Help me! Save me from dangers and from wild beasts! Keep me alive!" 781 769

One of my pupils of the Khosa clan had a great affection for his mother. He said that she frequently prayed in her hut when he was sick, asking the psikwembu to heal him (p. 412). She used to offer them a little of a special mealie pap, prepared with particular care, and to throw a pinch of ground tobacco on the threshold of the hut in the morning. When she was tilling her garden and felt very tired and unwell, she used to pray "according to what her heart instructed her to say."

An Inhambane boy told me that, when travellers cross the Inharrime drift, many take a little water in their mouths, say tsu, and pray to their ancestor-gods to take care of them in this dangerous passage. Though his father and mother were still living and it is the custom not to hahla before their death, he said tsu, as the others did.

At the Morakwen drift the river Nkomati is very broad, and when the South wind begins to blow in fury the ferryman who rows travellers across to the opposite side runs great danger. One of his relatives told me that when this happens, he spits out a little saliva (as an offering of bitterness) and says: "Tsu! Do not hate me! These heads are not mine," meaning: "The children I convey do not belong to me, and I should have a great responsibility towards their parents if they perished in the river." Another witness assured me that this ferryman also begged all those in the canoe to join in his prayer and to entreat their own ancestor-gods to save them.

A Native of the Manyisa country added: "Individual prayer undoubtedly exists! During the heat of battle, a warrior, feeling himself in great danger, will kneel down, plant his shield in front of him and invoke his ancestor-gods. Some have remained in this position so long that the enemy have been able to stab them while they were still kneeling."

Such spontaneous appeals to the ancestor-gods do certainly occur,

2: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

and this shows that ancestrolatry, notwithstanding its strongly ritualistic character, sometimes affords religious souls real help and relief. 781

When asked what they wish to obtain by their ancestor-worship, Thongas often answer : *Butomi*. This word comes from the adjective *ntomi*, to which is prefixed *bu*, the prefix of abstraction. *Ntomi* designates a man who is in good health, and butomi means above all *good health* ; but it has also a wider connotation and may well be translated by *life*. Life for the greater number is merely good health, plenty to eat, the possession of many children, material blessings ; but for the finer types it means something more ; it is the full happiness, to which they vaguely aspire and from which the moral element is not altogether absent. At least such is the impression I sometimes had when I heard them speak about butomi. 769

APPENDIX IV (See p. 450).

Additional Remarks on the idea of the Supreme Being and on Ancestor-worship amongst Bantus in relation to the History of Religion.

Much new light has been thrown of late years on the subject of the relation between ancestrolatry and the belief in a Supreme Being, a subject which remains one of the greatest problems of the History of Religion. In the paragraph which I devoted to this question in my first edition and which is reproduced in the second (p. 448), I refrained from attempting a definite solution of the problem of the order of priority of these two beliefs. I still believe that it is safer to maintain an attitude of reserve on the subject, as such a solution ought to take into account not only Bantus, of whom I know something, but the whole of primitive humanity. I should like only to add a few remarks which have been suggested to me by a comparison with some other Bantu tribes, and to put forward tentatively an explanation which may be applicable to the Bantu domain.

As already pointed out, the belief in a Supreme Being is found in various forms amongst all the Bantus, but it is perhaps nowhere more clearly defined than amongst the Ba-Ila, so minutely described by the Rev. Ed. W. Smith in his book, already quoted, on the Ba-Ila speaking people. *Leza* is designated by a number of typical praise-names : the Creator, the Moulder, the Constructor, the One who has no end, the Guardian the Giver, the One who gives and who causes to rot, the

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

834 784 581 829 753 They must not enter the hut of a person dangerously ill ; this would hasten his death. People who are just recovering from a disease, when they walk about on the paths, must tie around their ankles the root called sungi, which will protect them against the perspiration or emanation left by married people in their footprints, because, as one of my informants said, "ba-ku-khila ba hisa," viz. married people are hot.

834 836 581 829 Moreover not only individuals but the whole social life would be endangered if sexual relations took place when the community itself is in a critical position. They are prohibited therefore in wartime, during the whole duration of hunting parties, and also during the marginal periods. Strange to say, this law does not apply so severely to unmarried boys and girls amusing themselves according to the "shigango" custom (p. 97). It seems that it is not the act in itself which is tabooed, but the act in as much as it is accomplished by regularly married people ; in this case only has it a bearing on the life of the community.

What is the reason of these prohibitions ? "Married people are hot." What does this aphorism mean ? The following rite may help us to understand it.

831 834 226 829 789 771 In the Maluleke country, when the whole population enters a lake to kill fish according to the tjeba custom (Part IV. Chap. I), a little boy and a little girl are chosen and laid down under a lion's skin, as if they were husband and wife, and told to remain very quiet during all the time the grown up people are fishing. Not knowing anything about sexual intercourse, they will obey ; then the fish also will keep quiet and will be killed easily. Why ? Because there is in the sexual act something wild, fierce, passionate which, according to the law of correspondance which is at the base of all Bantu magic, has an influence on the hostile forces ; these will be excited and more difficult to overcome : enemies in battle, the animals of the bush during hunting and fishing parties, disease, danger of contamination at death and during the marginal periods. Life is, so to speak accelerated by the sexual act, and this acceleration is communicated to the whole of Nature. Therefore : Keep quiet, be continent!

This profound conception of life also explains why so often certain actions must be accomplished by children, not yet able to have sexual relations, or by old women who no longer practise them.

Let us remark that all these rites do not belong to Animism, properly speaking, but to Dynamism (Part VI. Chap. I), which plays a part almost as important as Animism in Bantu primitive philosophy.

What is the connection between abnormal births of human beings and the rain-fall? I think it can be found in the conception of Heaven which has inspired so many curious rites, and which I shall explain in the next chapter. So it is possible that, after all, the mbelele rite has a religious idea at its base.

b) *Rain charms.*

The removal of the corpses of abnormal children from dry ground and their burial near the river probably sometimes proves ineffective to produce rain. So Bantu magicians have invented a great many charms to obtain the greatly desired showers, and the power of the rain-makers is enormous. Our tribe does not seem to have developed this art as much as others. The Sutho-Pedis are masters in this domain and Mankhelu, who had been taught by them and had become a great and renowned rain-maker, revealed all his secrets to me. He possessed the drug and used it frequently, he said, having often been called in by Sutho chiefs dwelling in far distant districts, as far off as Pretoria. He assured me that he had met with so much success that these chiefs had given him oxen, horses, a waggon, precious beads, etc.! Where had he found this marvellous drug? At Rivimbi (in Venda : Luvimbi), a country north of Spelonken, not far from the Limpopo and to which he went, as far as I could make out, in 1865 or 1866. The Luvimbi people are the descendants of Luvimbi, (1) a chief of the old times (as old as Nkuna, says Mankhelu) who, after his death, went to heaven and became king of heaven ; he still exists there as a spirit, hearing and knowing everything that is done on earth. This Luvimbi is probably the same whom the Vendas call the first man, and concerning whom they have a number of traditions which I shall mention a little later.

and those of still-born children or those who died at birth ; to these they add their old rags (perhaps the cloths used for their menses ?) ; they bring all these impurities to the cross-ways and *burn them* there, singing impure songs, saying : "To-day is a great day ! There is no taboo any more ! If you prohibit anything, it will be an insult to the rain ; it will not fall." The smoke of all that they have burnt constitutes a religious offering : now the country will be pure and the rain will fall. The conception prevailing among the Malulekes is somewhat different from that of the Rongas.

(1) I have published an account of the Venda traditions connected with Luvimbi or Raluvimbi in *The S. A Journal of Science*, April 1921, where more details will be found concerning this personage.

774 Having traced the broad lines of our classification let us now see
771 how far the Thongs conceptions are animistic, animatic or dynamistic.

1) Individual ideas.

In a certain year, the *mintjhopfa* trees (p. 19) did not bear fruit. A Rikatla boy, named Zinyao, took a stick and walked through the bush, belabouring all the ntjhopfa shrubs, scolding them because they had not done their duty. An ethnographer, anxious to penetrate into the mysteries of primitive souls, might infer from this fact that Thongas believe in the personality of trees, and that each tree possesses a spirit; this would however be absolutely false. Zinyao was doing the same thing as a little boy who hits the table against which he has knocked his head, or as a little girl who breaks her doll because she is angry with it. The same boy, who was evidently endowed with a strongly animistic tendency, once saw a big moth fall to the ground; a hen at once ran towards it and devoured it. Zinyao watched very attentively, and I heard him muttering to himself: "The Son-of-Moth goes to the Son-of-Hen, yonder, and asks him to pay a fine, because, says he, I have been eaten by you there on the earth." If this reflection were taken seriously, it would mean that, to the Thonga mind, each animal has a soul which continues to exist after death, and even that wrongs done to an animal during its earthly life must be repaired in the after world. This conclusion would be absolutely erroneous. No one seriously believes in a continued existence of animals after death; and, as to a final judgment, there is no idea of it, even as regards human beings, who are believed to be immortal! These were the *personal views* of Zinyao.

I would place in the same category the description of the fight between the moon and the sun, as given by Spoon (p. 307). The same informant on another occasion gave me an eloquent and graphic account of the battle of the water near the lake of Rikatla, when the rain has been falling for many days: "In the hollow there is a papyrus marsh which becomes filled with water; at a quarter of an hour's distance the lake itself is swollen by the rain; there is a canal which joins marsh and lake; so the waters flow into that canal from both sides; they meet in the middle and fight: but the water from the papyrus marsh comes with greater force, and after a while it overcomes the other current and makes its way triumphantly to the lake!" These individual ideas are either animatic (ideas of trees, of sun and moon, of water,

lightning), or animistic (Son-of-the-Moth). But they are not of much 771
importance. They belong to the same category as the description given 774
by the Psalmist of the sun as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, or to that of Homer comparing the break of the day to a young damsel with rosy fingers. This is poetry, mere personification of natural objects, or forces, and not beliefs. The poetical tendency is very marked amongst primitive races. It may be that ideas of this kind were more firmly held in former times, if the tribe has really passed through a more mythological phase, a hypothesis for which there are some grounds.

2) Collective beliefs.

The beliefs of the Thongas which deserve to be called by that name 771
because they are universal and express themselves in important rites and 769
customs, are the following :

1. The human soul continues its existence after death, when it is 775
endowed with new powers which make it an object of awe and fear. *The spirits of the ancestors* are the main objects of religious worship. They form the principal category of spirits (psikwembu).

2. Although the spirits of the departed generally have nothing to [789]
do with people other than their descendants, some of them, especially *those belonging to foreign tribes*, can take possession of living men and cause troubles which must be cured by a process of exorcism. This is the second category of spirits.

3. Some individuals have the power of magically unsheathing them- 774
selves during the night, and their spirit goes out to torment, or to kill 754
and eat other people. These are *the wizards* (baloyi) ; this third cate- 791
gory of spirits accomplish their wicked deeds when separated from the body, but their body is still living and they re-enter it. These three beliefs are distinctly animistic.

4. There is in man, and in a few large animals, a semi-spiritual 771
principle, the *nuru*, which escapes from the body when the individual is 774
killed in war, or in hunting, and through which the dead man, or animal, 828
avenges himself or itself on the murderer. What is the relation between the nuru and the shadow (sitjhuti)? This is not stated. The nuru seems to be of a more material nature, as it can enter a root, and it remains attached to the corpse and the bones of the person or animal killed. This category of spiritual enemies, probably invented under the influence of fear and remorse, has no connection with ordinary people,

771 and only troubles those who have killed, rendering them, as is generally
774 believed, insane. — The nuru belief seems to be a compromise between
828 Animism and Dynamism. (See p. 77-80.)

5. There are in plants, animals, stones, hidden virtues which can be
789 either useful or harmful to man. Medicine-men (tinanga) possess a more or less esoteric knowledge of such, and magicians (bangoma), endowed with special powers, can acquire a control over these virtues and use them in medical art, or in magic. — This is true Dynamism.

6. Certain natural objects, such as the sea, the bush fire, are sometimes vaguely personified. — This is Animatism.

772 7. But above them all is Heaven, Tilo, which is sometimes looked on as a real being, sometimes as an impersonal power, a number of mysterious superstitions finding their explanation in this strange and perhaps obsolete notion of Heaven. — This is more than Animatism and seems to be a vague theistic, even monotheistic, idea.

771 The essential difference between Animism and Dynamism seems to
774 me clear. But it is by no means absolute. We shall often meet with rites which belong to both domains, or bear an intermediate character. In the following chapters the exact nature and influence of these various kinds of spirits and impersonal forces will be studied, and I hope that an explanation of all the facts concerning them will throw more light on the subject and show that, at any rate, Thonga Animism is very different from the Animism of the Dutch East Indies, for instance, where men speak of thousands of spirits of the earth, air, water, mountains and trees ; very different also from the fetichism met with in other Bantu tribes of Central and Western Africa.

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82 Before leaving this chapter, in which I have tried to sketch what I have
789 called by the rather pretentious term of The Natural Philosophy of the Bantus, and as a preparation for the explanation of the religious and dynamistic rites described in the following chapters, I think it advisable to set forth the principles which seem to underlie most of these rites, and which may be called the *axioms of primitive mentality*.

As regards what are commonly called *magic rites* I contend that they are in no sense purely arbitrary but that they rest on certain definite principles. These axioms of primitive mentality are what anthropologists fittingly call collective representations, viz., everybody believes

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CHAPTER II

RELIGION.

About the end of the XVIIIth century, a Portuguese military commander visited the Bay, and, after having spent a year and eight months in the country, sent to the Prelate of Mozambique a very curious report on the cultivation, trade and civilisation of the land (p. 141). The following sentence is found in his report : — "All the inhabitants are Hottentots, and have no religion." That he should have had erroneous ideas concerning the distinction between Bantu and Hottentot tribes is but natural ; the ethnology of South Africa was not yet known. But that, after such a long sojourn amongst the Natives, he should have declared that these people had no religion seems indeed strange! I can, however, understand the error, and excuse it. Amongst the Thongas there are no temples, no special day set apart for worship, no priest class, in fact, nothing external to attract attention to their religion. Even if he had been present at any of the religious ceremonies, the visitor might very well have mistaken them for ordinary family gatherings, as he would not have noticed anything like religious awe in the offering of the sacrifice, stolen by the *batukulu* (I. p. 162), in the prayer cut short amidst laughter, or in the songs, which would be of the usual type, perhaps even of a somewhat obscene character. Yet, notwithstanding all this, how real is the *Ancestrolatry*, the Religion of the Thongas, of, in fact, all the South African Bantus! How frequent and manifold are its manifestations! This is *the first, and most perceptible of their religious intuitions*, and any European who has stayed in their villages, learnt their language, and tried to understand their customs, will have had an opportunity of familiarizing himself with this religion. But there is a *second set of religious intuitions*, less

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771 easy to perceive. In the quartz of the South African veldt, miners, in their investigations, sometimes strike a reef : they crush the hard stone, wash it, apply to it certain chemical tests and find there is gold in the reef. This is similar to an experience which I once had when conversing with Thonga natives. Quite unexpectedly I heard them speaking of *Heaven*, not as a kind of impersonal being, but as a king, endowed with great power and omniscience, who must be feared by thieves, because he knows them. Persevering in my inquiries, I discovered this second set of religious intuitions, quite distinct from the first, viz., the *Deistic Conception of Heaven*. I intend now to describe these two parts of the Thonga religious system. Later on we may discuss their relation to each other. "System" is perhaps too big a word, for no Native philosopher or theologian has ever classified this somewhat confused mass of religious ideas, and we must not look for anything logical and organic. We may even meet with contradictions, conflicting statements... While trying to bring some order into the subject, I will endeavour at the same time to give a faithful and reverent explanation of Native ideas.[1]

A. ANCESTROLATRY.

I. *The Ancestor-Gods (Psikwembu).*

1) The name of the ancestor-gods.

769 Any man who has departed this earthly life, becomes a
776 *shikwembu*, a god. We shall show, later on, that to translate
193 "shikwembu" by god (with a small "g") is by no means incorrect. The word is indeed interesting, but unhappily no light is thrown on it by etymology. It belongs to the shi-psi class, the class of instruments. Take the verb "famba" to walk ; put the prefix "shi" in front of it, and change the final "a" into "o" and you obtain "shifambo" — "the thing with which one walks!" So shikwembu would mean "the thing with which one *kwemba*." Only this

[1] [For complete discussion of Thonga religion, see pp. 372-450, category 116.-- Analyst]

encroach upon the right of the *regular priest*, which is a great 783
taboo ; secondly, they kill a man who loses all restraint in sexual 769
relations ; when any one yields to that sin, people say : "The 776
gods will lead him into the thick bush and kill him there." To other sins they are quite indifferent. Mboza even asserted, with a sadness which reminded me of the complaints of Asaph in Ps. LXXII, that men of bad habits do not fall ill or meet with misfortune ; the cough only attacks the good ; wizards bewitch them and do not go to the bad fellows, "for the gods see that they are not worth anything!"

In conclusion, I should say that what is wanting in the conception of the ancestor-gods, as compared with the God of higher religions, is both transcendence and the moral attributes.

III. *General Characteristics of Ancestrolatry.*

If I had to characterise Thonga ancestrolatry, I would say : 771

It is a *spiritualistic* religion, in the sense that no idols are adored ; there is neither idolatry nor fetichism in it. Spirits and spirits alone are worshipped.

It is an *animistic* religion, as defined in the preceding chapter, the categories of spirit gods being numerous, and these spirits being worshipped in order to win their favour, and propitiated when they are angry.

Though consisting essentially of offerings and prayers, which are distinctly religious acts, *it is mingled with magic* to a considerable extent.

It is a *particularistic family* religion, each family having its own particular gods. We may also see in it the beginings of a *particularistic national* religion (the great mhamba).

It is a *social* religion, its prescriptions being aimed at keeping alive and strengthening the hierarchy, which is the main feature of the social order.

It is an *unsacerdotal* religion, there being no sacerdotal order, but at the same time the priesthood of the elder brother is strictly enforced.

It is a *non-moral* religion, by which I do not mean that it is *immoral*, i. e. opposed to the laws of morality, but that it has no, or at least very

little, connection with the moral conduct of the individual. It has no moral prescriptions except those which insure the observance of the hierarchical order in the family. It neither promises reward nor threatens punishment after death. 771

Consequently it is purely *eudemonistic*, the religious ceremonies having as their sole aim material benefits connected with the terrestrial life, e. g. abundance, health, peace, and good sleep!

It is *unphilosophical*, that is to say, it does not attempt to answer the great problems about the origin and purpose of the world and human existence. These questions of causality and finality are absolutely beyond its horizon.

It is essentially *ritualistic*, and leaves very little place for true religious feeling. Adoration is practically non-existent. However, elements of *personal religion* are not altogether wanting. Some expressions in the liturgical prayers reveal humility and trust, e. g. "Death doth not come to the man who is prayed for, but only to the one who trusts in his own strength" (p. 393) ; thankfulness for escape from danger is sometimes expressed in a spontaneous and genuine way ; and may not also the sacrifice of bitterness (p. 391) be actuated by a real and touching feeling of dependency ; the old formula of invocation and the sacramental word *tsu*, now inexplicable, seem to show that there was, even in former times, such a thing as *self dedication*, and some aspiration towards a real communion between the worshipper and his gods. (See Appendix III on Personal Religion amongst Thongas.)

Animism is generally spoken of as a *religion of fear*. Applied to Thonga ancestrolatry, this statement would be an exaggeration. There is indeed no deep love for the ancestor-gods in the hearts of the Thongas; how could it be so when these "psikwembu" are so jealous, and show so little love themselves? But there is no perpetual fear. The attitude is rather that of *indifference*. Natives ask for one thing only : that they may live in peace, and that their gods may interfere with them as little as possible.

B. THE CONCEPTION OF HEAVEN.

When studying the classic tragedies of Greece, and more especially those of Aeschylus and Sophocles, one is led to the conclusion that the gods of Olympus, in whom may be recognised, more or less distinctly, the personification of the forces of Nature, 771 772

or heroes glorified by apotheosis, were not the only beings in whom that intellectually gifted people believed, nor the sole objects of their veneration. Higher than Olympus, and dwelling in the more remote heavens, a mysterious divinity looks down upon mankind, a divinity wiser and nobler than the capricious Zeus, or the voluptuous Artemis ; sometimes this being is called Nemesis, the avenger, inexorable fate, and sometimes it is a god more human and more moral in character. But this Supreme Being is vaguely conceived, and its form is, as it were, closely veiled, In the religion of the Thongas we meet with a similar phenomenon. Above the gods whom the common people know, worship, and call by name, there exists a power which to the majority remains ill-defined and which they express by the word *Heaven* (Tilo). This word *Tilo*, which, in the ordinary language, is used to designate the blue sky (p. 304), contains a far deeper and more comprehensive meaning. I shall not attempt to throw complete light on these ideas, which are so dim in the Native mind. But the reader who studies carefully the facts and customs which I am just about to describe, will certainly be convinced that there really exist two parallel series of religious ideas in the Thonga Religion. We have already dealt with those which first manifest themselves to the observer. Let us now consider the others ; they are not less interesting, nor less picturesque ; they are indeed perhaps deeper than those of the ordinary Ancestrolatry. This belief is in such an embryonic state that it very easily escapes observation. As already pointed out, it is a vein, a reef of gold, which has been discovered through some fortuitous circumstance, and must be worked with great care.

I. *The definition of Heaven.*

Tilo is a grand word ; it comes from the same root as *Zulu*, the honoured name of a great and powerful tribe.

"Before you came to teach us that there is an All-Good Being, a Father in Heaven, we already knew there was a Heaven, but did not know there was anyone in it." Such was the declaration

"Balungwana ba tlanga henhla" — "The balungwana are at play 772
up there." Or it is they who are singing in heaven when there is a 776
prolonged roar of thunder, saying : "wuwu-wuwu!" 821

When some one passes along the road, they dispute up above as to who he may be. One says : "It is so and so," and the others contradict him. Then they spit on the traveller, who is quite astonished to see some saliva on his hand. He mistakes it for rain, and looks up to the sky to see where the rain is coming from. The balungwana then have a chance to see his face, and the one who has guessed rightly says to the others : "You see! I was right."

In Bilen I heard of a man who prevented children from picking 772
the beautiful red flowers of Tecoma capensis, telling them that the 776
balungwana wanted them for dresses. The same individual believed that these little men would bring oxen to him.

The Rongas say that a little man fell on the hill of Lourenço Marques, near the house of Sithini, the son of Mashaken, just before the famous war between Mozila and Mawewe (I. p. 28), the rival claimants to the kingdom of Gaza, and that this dwarf came as a presage of the troubles which were to follow. "Lots of folk saw him" said Charlie in 1895 ; (he was then a man of some forty years of age). "We were too young to be allowed to look at him ; the Whites took him and carried him off to Mozambique." — Heaven is therefore inhabited. This is generally admitted, but the idea, from all that one can gather, remains very vague.

C. CONCLUDING REMARKS ON THONGA RELIGION.

I. *The Origin of the Conception of Heaven.*

Ancestrolatry forms a clear, well-defined religion, with its theology 771
(i. e., the ideas as regards the psikwembu), its sacrifices, and its prayers. 772
The dim, mysterious ideas about Heaven, incorporated in or rather 776
lying behind some of the most extraordinary rites of the tribe, bear a 171
very different character. There is something incoherent, vague and

771 unexpected in them, and it would seem that, bearing as they do an
772 essentially deistic character, and accompanied by no true worship, they
776 might as well be absent from the horizon of the Thonga mind.

However, when we study other Bantu tribes, we come to exactly
171 the opposite conclusion, i. e., that it would be indeed strange if no religious ideas of this kind were found amongst our tribe. In fact, this occurrence of a double set of religious ideas is universal amongst Bantus. They all believe in a kind of Supreme Being, an All-Father, who bears many different names, *Nzame* amongst the Fan and a great number of West African tribes, *Nyambe* amongst the Ba-Rotsi, *Leza* in some Zambezi and Rhodesian districts, *Mulungu* amongst fifteen East African tribes (1), *Unkulunkulu* in Zululand, *Nungungulu* round Inhambane, and *Mudimo* amongst the Ba-Sutho, etc., etc. The Thonga *Tilo* is, most likely, one of these names. The word probably comes from the root *ulu*, high, elevated, and *ilu*, heaven, which the Rev. P. Sacleux has found with that meaning amongst Central or West African tribes. (*Mulu*, amongst the Bembas ; *Liulu*, in Kimbundu ; *Diulu*, in Luba ; *Wilu*, in Luyi ; *Egulu* in Ganda ; *Idjulu*, amongst the Tongas of Zambezi, etc.). This root, with the personal prefix, has given birth to the term *Mugulu*, designating God in Tabwa and *Mukuru* in Herero. It may be that Mukuru is rather related to the *Unkulunkulu* of the Zulus, the Great One. (See Mgr. Le Roy, "La Religion des Primitifs," 1909, p. 498.)

In the South African tribes, however, the conception of the Supreme Being is not nearly so precise as in most parts of Central Africa. The Thonga Tilo, although sometimes invoked, is hardly a being, but seems rather to be a personification of Nature. Is this the original conception of the Supreme Being, or is it rather a transformation of this? I abstained, in *Les Ba-Ronga*, from expressing any definite opinion on this point. Further study has now led me to believe that the latter conclusion is the more probable, and that ideas concerning Heaven were more definite in former times. This, at any rate, is also the conviction of intelligent elderly Natives, who are able to remember the former ideas held by the tribe. They say : "As regards death, people now commonly affirm that it is caused by witchcraft, whilst formerly they attributed it to the agency of Heaven." Let us also notice the name of the dwarfs who are believed to inhabit Heaven, the *balungwana*. This word is a

(1) Comp. J. Torrend's *Comparative Grammar of the S. A. Bantu Languages*, p. 68.

diminutive of *Mulungu, balungu*, by which are designated, amongst the 771
Zulus and Thongas, White people of every description, whether 772
Europeans or Asiatics. Could the inhabitants of Heaven have been 776
called "balungwana," on account of their resemblance to the Whites? It
would hardly seem probable, for the name of the balungwana, and the 171
ideas connected with them, were in existence long before White people were generally known, or had settled in the country. It is much more reasonable to suppose that the name of these mythical beings, as also that by which the Whites are designated, is a derivative of some other pre-existent term ; and what should this be if not the famous vocable "Mulungu," which stands for God, the One Supreme God, in so many of the Bantu dialects of East Africa, from Lake Victoria Nyanza to the Zambesi, to Senna and Quilimane? I should be inclined to think that the tribes in the neighbourhood of Delagoa were also acquainted with this name, which is so widely known, and that it has, in the course of centuries, disappeared from their theology, only leaving, as a last trace, the term balungwana, applied to the heavenly beings who occasionally descend to earth, and balungu, designating that superior race whose wisdom has always impressed the Blacks as supernatural. If this hypothesis were confirmed, we should have the right to conclude that the idea of Heaven, such as it is described in this chapter, is the disfigured remnant of a higher and monotheistic conception, held by the primitive Bantus before their dispersion, which has evolved in various ways amongst the different tribes.

II. *The Antiquity of Ancestrolatry.*

Ancestor Worship seems, on the other hand, to be an extremely 171
ancient religion amongst mankind. There have been discovered of late 769
years sepulchres of prehistoric date, which seem to show that the funeral rites of the first races were very similar to those practised by the Bantus of the present day. In comparing the burial of Sokis (I. p. 139) with that of a human being of the Mousterian age, whose remains were recently discovered by Hauser in the celebrated "Abri du Moustier" (Dordogne) (1) I noticed the following resemblances :

(1) See my paper "Deux enterrements à 20,000 ans de distance." *Anthropos*, 1900, I. v. Comp. also *L'homme préhistorique*. January, 1909.

787 *timpfu*, a non-castrated ram : the sons of the royal family, the
825 *sòyevelɛ*! (bana ba-ku-psalwa). 3) Another *Shikwela*, astragalus of the ram sacrified during the Sikororo war, the one whose psanyi was used for the sprinkling of the Nkuna army ; it designates the enemy, and is watched with special attention when casting the bones in connection with military affairs. 4) *Noni wa timpfu*, an old sheep, the widow of the chief. 5) *Nhombela ya timpfu*, a young sheep, the girls of the royal family. As regards the wife of the chief, she is represented by the astragalus of the female mhala antelope.

787 In one of his sets of bones Mankhelu also had two objects
177 taken *from an ox*. One was an oval-shaped smooth bone, two
771 inches long, the other, one of its hoofs decorated on one of its three sides with triangular marks (See plate). Both represent the *Nkuna* tribe, whose totem is the buffalo. (Comp. I. p. 364.) But this is a custom borrowed from the Sutho-Pedis. I never saw bones corresponding to totems used in Thonga divination ; the idea of totem is altogether absent from the minds of the Thongas when not influenced by their Pedi neighbours.

787 In addition to those of the domestic animals, there are a number
825 of astragalus, or other bones, taken from *wild animals*.

First from *antelopes* : the male *mhala*, *tsombe ra mhala*, means the chief, and the female mhala, his wife ; the male mhunti, *tsombe ra mhunti*, *mhunti ya matlhari*, the duiker of the weapons, means fighting men, and the female mhunti, called *mbiri*, means women of loose character : *mbiri ya ku tola*, *ñwashifamba ni mafura eku rimen*, the woman who smears herself with grease and ochre, even when she goes to her field (thus trying to attract the attention of men). The *nhlangu* (reed buck), wandering about during the night, means wizards, as these cast their spells by night. Mankhelu had only the astragalus of the female in his set. The *mbalala* antelope dwells in the forest ; it does not like to come out in the plains ; its astragalus therefore designates the chief who rests in his hut and does not expose himself to the toil and the heat of the day.

The astragalus of the *ngolube ya ku dya marambo*, *yi tjela mitshi yi ralarala*, *yi languta hi matlhelo*, the wild boar which eats bones,

APPENDIX V (See p. 536).

The Murimi Movement, an attempt on the part of the Thonga Tribe to get rid of witchcraft.

In the year 1913 (or 1914) the members of one of the Hlengwe clans living near the Sabie River, in the extreme north of the Thonga territory, seeing that the crops were bad, game wanting, and that even honey was scarce, contributed each of them a small sum of money, collected £ 10 and sent messengers to Myali, the Kalanga god who dwells in a cave in Machonaland, in order to regain prosperity. They were well received by the priests of Myali, who introduced them to the god they serve. They had to pass through a tunnel, with a big rock hanging over their heads. On the other side of this tunnel there was a kind of amphitheatre of rocks, enclosing a very clean and well-swept space. A voice from the rocks above greeted them in Zulu : "Good morning, my children", and they were given a pouch full of tobacco with the following instructions : "When you reach your home, take a snuff of this tobacco ; then go to your gardens, blow your noses and spread the nasal mucus in the soil ; henceforth you will have abundant harvests." The Hlengwe messengers returned home and began to use the precious drug, but this tobacco of Murimi, as it was called, had a marvellous fate. It found purchasers throughout the Thonga tribe, and during four years all the Thonga clans performed the new rite, the rite of Murimi, in the conviction that a new era had set in in which there would be no more famine and in which witchcraft, that great enemy of humanity, which causes disease, robs, and kills, would be expelled for ever. 754 776 771

Who is this Myali? He is the same personage who is called Ñwali in other parts of the country, the same also as Ra-Luvimbi, the god of the Ba-Venda, to whom they pray to obtain rain (See p. 321). His sacred cave is in the Matoppo hills, in the midst of that extraordinary desert of rocks in which Cecil Rhodes chose the spot for his grave, some fifteen miles further south. Mr Eliott, who was Native Commissioner in this region, told me that the description of the cave given above was exact. I will not discuss here the origin of the cult of Myali, called also Mlimo, a term probably corresponding to the Sutho Modimo, which would seem to have been transformed into Murimi when it was adopted by the Thongas. This is a most interesting subject to which I would draw the attention of our Rhodesian colleagues. Myali has med-

754 iums, consecrated girls (bampouka) set apart from their youth to be-
776 come the wives of his priests ; the rite of the magical tobacco, which is
771 a fecundation rite, is unknown in South African ancestrolatry. Every-
thing would appear to suggest that this cult is of foreign origin. A fact which is worthy of special notice is this : *Myali is the enemy of wizards.* If anyone guilty of witchcraft approaches his cave, he will be struck dead, and his priests will have nothing to do with witchcraft cases.

I cannot explain in detail how the new cult spread from the Hlengwe country down to the Maputju region, thus creating in the Thonga tribe a unity which has but seldom been attained. Certain individuals appear to have availed themselves of the new belief to do a profitable piece of business. They bought a part of the original tobacco of Murimi, mixed it with ordinary tobacco and went to the chiefs offering to let their subjects snuff the miraculous drug. I happened to meet one of these prophets of Murimi, who also called himself Murimi and who had been arrested by the Portuguese Administrator of Morakwen, as the Authorities seem to have feared at a certain moment that the agitation caused by this movement might have a political character. This particular Murimi appeared to be a very simple type of man. He was half lame, his arms were crooked, and he told me that his reason for fighting the wizards was that it was they who had reduced him to that miserable condition ; he was convinced that his efforts to combat them were very beneficial to the country. But notwithstanding these altruistic inclinations, he did not neglect his own interests ; anyone admitted to snuff the tobacco had to give the chief a fowl or a "nkinyenta", i. e. 500 reis, then of the value of I s. 6d, and Murimi received a considerable share of the fee.

Wonderful rumours preceded the distributor of tobacco. It was said that he had been emprisoned by one of the Administrators, further north, but had suffered nothing through this infringement of his liberty; the following night he had been miraculously transported to the bed of the Commandant, whilst the latter had taken his place in the gaol! He was now approaching the town of Lourenço Marques in the form of a gigantic dragon before whom everyone fled!

754 The following is the description of the manner in which the Murimi
771 rite was performed in the Matalane region, some 15 miles north of Lourenço Marques. The chief Magebeza summons all his subjects to assemble early in the morning in a forest (Sept. 1916). His counsellors are present and bring with them the lame prophet holding in his hands a sala shell containing the tobacco. A woman comes and, kneels down in front of him; she holds out her open hand, palm upwards. Murimi takes

hold of one of the fingers in order that the hand may remain well open, 754
pours a little tobacco into it and asks : "Are you a witch?" She an- 771
swers: "No!" — "Then," says the prophet, "snuff!" The woman draws up all the precious tobacco into her nose, taking care not to let the least particle fall on the ground. If she carries a baby on her back, she puts a little of the powder into his nostrils, and if she is pregnant, she rubs her hypogastrium on both sides with the drug in order to "let the child who is inside snuff." Another woman comes; she answers in a hesitating manner, which does not escape the prophet; she may go so far as to say : "I do not know ; perhaps I am a witch". Murimi looks at her with terrible eyes : "Take care," he says, "cast away your witchcraft immediately. If you do not do so, this goat's skin in which you are carrying your child will come to life again and belabour your breasts with its hoofs! And the day you begin to cast your spells again, you will be split in two (handjuka hi le makari)!" The worst case is when a woman who is a witch accepts the tobacco without confessing her evil deeds. Then, such was the rumour, the tobacco poured into her hand would suddenly increase in quantity, and upon that sign, Murimi would give her hand a blow from beneath, throwing all the tobacco over her shoulder, and the woman would fall to the ground unable to get up again and on the point of splitting in two.

When all the subjects had passed through the trial, Ndonga, one of the counsellors, addressed the throng in these words : "Now witchcraft is destroyed! You have all cast it far away. But let it not come back again. If any of you has *psipoko* (pl. of shipoko, p. 488) kill them, cut them in pieces with your axes or with your big knives, and let them not come back, because, if they do so, it would be a great calamity for you. They would beg you: 'Mother! give me something to eat' and if you should do so, you would die" He added: "A new era has begun. You have no longer anything to fear from wizards. If one of them approaches you to bewitch you, he will immediately split in two. Murimi has cut off the wings of the baloyi. They will not be able to come to do harm to you during the night. Henceforth we are free from the calamities which caused us to suffer so greatly."

This is the first part of the rite, which aims at destroying witchcraft for ever. But it has also a second aim, the bringing in of a new prosperity, a golden age in which everyone will have plenty to eat, in which even, according to some, death will no longer exist. The second part of the rite is connected with this great hope.

Whilst Murimi proceeded with the examination of the people, another

754 counsellor, Phayindi, was preparing "the leaves"; these are the large
771 bracts protecting mealie-cobs which he has torn from the stem and in the centre of which he has placed a little of the tobacco. These are now lying on the ground, and each woman must go to fetch one and return home with her husband. Keeping silent all the while, she takes a little pot full of water, pours a little of the drug into it and carries it to the threshold of the hut, where both husband and wife wash their hands and feet. She must not enter the hut herself; the husband enters, and carefully places the pot in the back part of the hut. The woman then sets out for her gardens, carrying the leaf. She follows the boundaries of each field, digging in the ground here and there, throws into the hole a little mucus from her nose, which is still full of the tobacco, and covers it with earth. She keeps to the end the largest field, in which there may be a-nkuhlu tree (p. 18), the mafureira tree which is apparently preferred by Murimi. She digs a little hole at the foot of this tree and buries the leaf in it, in such a way that only the middle of the leaf which contains the tobacco will be covered with earth; both ends will remain visible. Thus the fields are "fattened (nonisa)" for ever. But if the mistress of the field should again begin to practise witchcraft, the leaf will come out of the soil and fly up to the chief's village, where the guilty woman will have to redeem it by paying a fine of £ 1.. Having finished performing the fecundation rite, the woman claps her hands and says: "Murimi! I ask thee to help me here in my gardens in order that I may have a plentiful harvest and become fat!". She then returns home, and leans her hoe against the sacred tree of the village. Her husband, who has waited for her, again washes her feet with the lustral water and the injunction of silence is removed.

These are the rites of the first day. But now begins a sacred period which lasts from ten to fifteen days, and is marked by three strong taboos. The labour taboo; no work is allowed in the fields until agricultural occupations are resumed by the collective tilling of the chief's field. The sexual taboo; at the end of the period the great wife will smear her hut with clay and have relations with her husband the following night; next day the other women will do the same, but woe to the one who should precede the great wife (I p. 324). The travelling taboo; travelling is forbidden during these days and everyone must stay at home till the chief has cancelled the prohibition by himself undertaking a journey.

This is still not the end. Those who have snuffed the tobacco of

Murimi constitute in some sort a new humanity; they have been *initiated* into a new life; they must abstain from relations with those who do not belong to their society, and observe peculiar rules which will distinguish them from the uninitiated. If a man has not snuffed whilst his wife has done so, she must not allow him to have conjugal relations with her; if he was away from the country when Murimi passed, the husband must go to the capital and snuff there, a little of the tobacco having been preserved for those who were absent. He will be subject to the law of silence until he has ritually washed his hands and feet. (This is a form of the kunga rite as observed in the initiation ceremonies. (See I, p. 124.) If strangers pass through the village, no food will be offered to them unless they have snuffed, at any rate no food coming from the fields which have been "treated (daha)" with the drug. The following are some of the taboos regulating the life of the initiated. Language taboos: the word *fole*, which means tobacco, must only be used to designate the tobacco of Murimi; ordinary tobacco must be called by a new word, *shilandi*. The word *mpfula*, rain, is prohibited and must be replaced by *magayisa*, (which means a party of boys going to work). Alimentary taboos: no special food is prohibited, but certain articles of diet must be eaten according to new rules. This is particularly the case for the fruit of the nsala tree (p. 16). The shell must be broken in such a way that it forms two halves; the eater must lie on his belly, place the upper half of the shell on the soil, suck out the pulp round the stones to his heart's content and put all the stones back into the first half of the shell; when he has finished, he must place the second half over the first and deposit the fruit thus reconstituted at the foot of the tree, saying: "Murimi!" in order to show his gratefulness to his new god. If there are many ripe sala fruits on the stem, one must be left for Murimi. When digging sweet potatoes, sticks must be used rather than the hoe for the first ten days, during which tilling the ground with hoes is taboo; later on the hoe may be used, but one potato must be left in the earth as the share of Murimi. There are a number of other less important taboos to be observed; the stem of the cuscuta must not be employed to tie the bundle of dead wood gathered in the bush for fuel, because the cuscuta is the mat of Murimi. Certain kinds of snakes, the big Varan lizard, the tortoise and the small turtledove called shivambalane must not be killed. Should a hunter kill a shivambalane by mistake, he must place it on the branch of a tree, saying: "Murimi!". Above all, the initiated, the members of the new humanity, delivered from the fears of witchcraft by the all-powerful Murimi, must invoke him upon every

754 occasion. At the conclusion of their speeches they pronounce his name. Though no special offering is made except the sweet potato and the sala
771 fruit just referred to, and no special ceremony of worship is performed, Murimi has clearly become the object of adoration of his devotees and is much nearer their hearts and consciences than the ancestor-gods.

A year or two went by and the Thongas were obliged to confess that the produce of the fields in the meagre sand of their hills was not richer than in former years. People died just as before ; the great salvation which the worshippers of Murimi had expected did not come, and the tribe understood vaguely that it had been the victim of a gigantic hoax. At least when the question was put to the devotees of the new cult : "What about Murimi?" they smiled and did not answer a word, and very soon Murimi was forgotten.

754 It might be thought that this strange movement was the result of Euro-
771 pean influence ; it bears a strongly monotheistic character, and Murimi is certainly very different from the ancestor-gods and from Tilo, Heaven,
776 and much more akin to the Christian God. It must however be observed that very little information was given about this god, who was to a certain extent identified with his prophets, the latter being named Murimi as well as himself. But setting aside the small part played by Murimi, we are forced to recognise that the new rite is essentially and authentically Bantu. It is directly connected with witchcraft, the old Thonga animistic belief ; we have already met, in connection with the treatment of smallpox, with the idea of destroying witchcraft by means of a collective confession and repudiation (p. 465). The taboos accompanying the new rite are those we have everywhere found in the marginal periods or when an initiation was taking place. The Murimi Movement is thus a genuine creation of primitive Thonga mentality. Changes are taking place so rapidly that it is probably the last. I am glad therefore to have had an opportunity of witnessing it and of publishing the record of such an interesting event. Further details will be found in a paper which appeared in *Le Journal de Psychologie normale et pathologique*. 15 Décembre 1924. Paris.

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the story of Ñwali, for instance, it is said that, when he lived, 773
stones were not yet hard, and so the implements of the first men left their impression on the rocks (Comp. I. p. 22). But they are in the first place the *creators of mankind*, as we shall notice.

I believe that the *origin of man* preoccupies the Bantu mind much more than the origin of the world as a whole. They can live their whole life without being troubled by this question, which has perplexed so many hearts in other lands. Only a few particularly serious spirits, the religious geniuses of the tribe, search eagerly for light on this subject. I have met with one of these. His name was Rangane, and he came from the Maluleke district. When quite a young boy he often asked his mother who it was who had made heaven and earth. She told him : "It is Khudjwana, but he died long ago. Even the place where he was buried is unknown." This did not satisfy the curiosity of the child : so she sent him to the old men to question them. They answered by the myth of the reed which we shall explain later on, saying : "All men came from a reed." This also failed to satisfy the thirst of this inquiring soul, desirous of knowing whence everything proceeds, and he told me how gladly surprised he was when, having come to Pretoria for work, he heard a convert say that God had created everything and teaching the Christian explanation of the world. I remember that his face beamed with joy when he told his story. But such earnest, philosophical natures are very rare amongst Natives, and Rangane was an exception. He died when still at the beginning of his course of study ; and he was vastly superior to most of his comrades as regards religious perception.

II. *The celestial world.*

(THONGA ASTRONOMY).

If Thongas do not bother much about the origin of heaven, and 772
of its lights, what are their ideas concerning them?

Heaven (tilo, dji-ma) is for them an immense solid vault which rests on the earth. The point where heaven touches the earth

772 is called *bugimamusi*, a curious word of the bu-ma class, the prefix *bu* meaning a place, viz., the place where the women can lean their pestles against the vault, (whilst everywhere else pestles must be leant against a wall or a tree). This expression is sometimes further explained by the following words : "Lomu ba kandjaka na ba khisamile" — "Where women pound their mealies on their knees ;" they cannot stand erect, or their pestles would strike against the vault! This vault rests on the earth, which is often called *libala*, viz., the great plain. On what does the earth itself rest? This question does not seem to trouble the Thonga mind and I never heard an answer to it. In this respect it may be said, in excuse for the African Natives, that the ancient Greeks, with all their intellectual ability, were not much in advance of them. Some people escape the difficulty by asserting that the earth is infinite, viz., that it is endlessly prolonged downwards and has no bottom. — In the next chapter we shall see that *Tilo*, heaven, is, for the Thongas, not only the material firmament which rests on the earth, but a spiritual principle which plays a considerable part in the religious conceptions of the tribe.

772 The *sun* (dambu, dji-ma) is never personified, nor worshipped.
821 This word is perhaps related to Nyambe of the Ba-Rotse, Nzambi of the Vili, and a number of other similar words which are names of God. But if there was ever a time when the sun was regarded as a personal being, the notion has now entirely faded away. On the seashore, in the Makaneta district, according to Mboza, people believe that the sun emerges from the water. The reflection of light which remains on the sea, after the appearance of the sun, is considered as a kind of source of light from which the sun emerges and renews itself every morning : it is "cut out from the provision of fire," adheres to heaven, follows its course and *dies* in the West. To-morrow another sun will come out from the "provision," and so on. But others object to this explanation and assert that the sun passes under the earth and comes back the following day : so there is only one sun. To this theory the first retort that the earth having no bottom, the sun cannot pass under it !

000 The dawn is called *mpundju* ; then comes *tlhabela sana*, the

821 which is also met with in *nyeleti* (star) and in the names of certain rivers. (I. p. 36.) At the present time there is no trace of worship or of mythological conceptions in connection with it. Natives see in its spots a woman carrying a shirundju basket or a bundle of sticks, but they do not attach to that image more importance than we do when we talk of the man in the moon.

821 527 241 I have described (I. p. 52) how the new moon is received with exclamations of joy : in the villages the first person who sees it shouts : "Kengelekezeeee,"—"the Crescent! the Crescent!" and this word is passed on from one village to another, and dancers rejoice because they will have moonlight to illuminate their feasts! Such is, at least, the reason now given by the Rongas for this custom. There were perhaps other ideas connected with the new moon in former times. — According to a Nkuna informant the day of the new moon is a *shimusi*, a day of rest. It is taboo to till the fields and cut the roots of the trees with a hoe. The moon must be left to become firm (tiyela). It is still tender as a new born child. Destroying winds might

821 blow and hail fall if this taboo were transgressed. — The 787 appearance of the crescent was also carefully examined, says the 828 same informant. If its horns were turned towards the earth, this showed that there was nothing to fear, all the dangers contained in this month had been poured out : "mafumo ma hangalakile" — "the assagais were dispersed." On the contrary, if the horns were turned towards heaven, this showed that the moon was full of weapons and misfortunes. — The new moon is of great importance in the customs connected with exorcism and possession, as every exorcist must undergo the *haza* purification at each new moon (Chapter III). Moreover Thongas, like many civilised people, also believe that some persons at this time have an attack of madness which is called *rihuhe ra ñhweti*, the lunar madness.

● 772 821 When the first quarter appears, the moon is said to *thwaza*, a Zulu word which corresponds to *tjhama* in Thonga, and is very much used in the terminology of possession. Eight days later, it is said to *basa*, to be white or brilliant ; full moon is said to *sima* or to *lata batjongwana*, to put the little children to bed, because when it rises, it finds them already sleeping on their mats.

The wane is called *ku shwela dambo* : the moon is then found by the rising sun to be still in the sky, not having yet dipped below the horizon. When, at last, it disappears, it is *munyama*, the obscurity; the moon is said *to fa*, to have died. Is this meant figuratively, as is often the case with the word ku fa, or do the Thongas really think that each moon dies and is replaced by a new moon? It is difficult to say ; most of them believe in an actual destruction and a new creation of the moon each month (Timotheo), and this would explain why they have the same word for moon and month ; they evidently identify the two ideas. Some, however, told me that they believed it to be the same celestial body which appeared anew each month. 772 821

Spoon, who is endowed with a very vivid imagination, believed that the sun and the moon have a race each month : the moon when it first appears is not yet firm (a yi si tiyela), like a new born child, so its light is feeble ; it is dominated by the sun ; but it grows and fights. When it is full, the sun sees "that now it is the moon!" : it is something to be reckoned with! During the second half of the month, as it decreases, it lingers in the sky and the sun soon overtakes it again and compels it to pass behind. Then the moon is entirely vanquished! How far these were Spoon's personal explanations or generally accepted ideas, I could not say. The term *shwela*, applied to the last quarter and meaning : "to be surprised in the morning" (See Ch. III), seems to convey a similar idea, and it is probable that Spoon rightly interpreted the ancient ideas of the tribe.

Each moon, being new, bears a special name. These names of the months, or moons, are now almost completely forgotten, at least in the Southern clans. This is indeed curious, when we think of the custom of presenting little children to the moon and telling them the name of their month (I. p. 53). This rite ought to have prevented the names from becoming obsolete. In the Northern clans they have been better preserved, and one of my colleagues, the Rev. H. Berthoud, succeeded in identifying them more or less. His attempt to revive the nomenclature for use among civilised Natives did not, however, succeed any better than the attempt of the scientists of the French Revolution. 772 805 821

192 Amongst the Ba-Ronga those[1] which are still known are : *Nhlangula*,
805 the month in which the flowers are swept (hlangula) from the
trees, probably October, when all the minkuhlu, minkanye, etc.,
821 blossom ; *Ñwendjamhala*, the month in which the antelope
mhala, brings forth its young (November?) ; *Mawuwana*, when
the *tihuhlu* (p. 18) are plucked, because the people shout :
"Wuwana! wuwana!" in their joy at having plenty of almonds
to suck, corresponds to December. *Hukuri* is said to be the
month when the fruits of the *nkwakwa* (p. 17) are ripe (December
also?). *Ndjati*, or *ndjata*, viz., I am coming, is the time of *nwebo*,
when everyone is in his fields eating the new cobs of mealies, and if
you call a person he will answer : "I will come directly! Have
patience! I am busy here!" "This may be January or February.
Sunguti is also one of the summer months. *Sibamesoko*, the moon
which closes the paths, also called *Dwebindlela* or *Sibandlela*, is
easy to identify : it is February, the time when the grass grows so
high that it hides the paths leading to the nkanye trees. This is the
end of the bukanye time (I. p. 397). *Nyenyana*, *Nywenywankulu*
are the months of the birds (nyanyana), when one spends all
one's time in chasing the winged marauders from the fields
of sorghum and millet (March. April). *Mudashini*, viz., what
am I to eat? is the month when you have harvested so many
different kinds of food that you do not know which to choose :
this is the time directly after harvest, May or June. *Khotabushika*,
viz., when winter comes, probably June or July.

●772 The *stars* are called *tinyeleti* (yin-tin) and play a remarkably
821 small part in the ideas of the tribe. The modern theory according
to which all religions started from the worship of stars, finds no
confirmation at all in the South African Bantu tribes.

821 It is taboo to try to count the stars. If any one attempts
784 to do so people will say to him : "Keep quiet or you will wet the
861 hut during the night!" Counting stars represents the torments
of the soul! If a child has been deprived of food as a punishment
for an offence, his parents will tell him, when he goes to sleep :
"Go and count the stars," viz., "you will feel hungry and not be
able to go to sleep ; you will be as unhappy as if you had to count
the stars."

1 [names of moons -- Analyst]

I never heard a distinction made between fixed stars and 821
planets. They are all called tinyeleti. The best-known is 772
Venus, which bears many names. Not knowing that the evening 881
and morning star are one and the same, they have given it different names. The evening star is *Gumbashilalelo*, the one which steals the evening meal, because it appears when people are eating it, or *khwekhweti*, the brilliant star, or *Nkata wa hweti*, the moon's husband (as the two are often seen close together); the morning star is called *Ngongomela*, or *Khwezu*, and is greatly lauded as the herald of day. It gives the warriors the signal for starting on a war-like expedition: the warriors can easily kill their enemies under cover of the darkness, and the sun will soon appear and help them to complete their victory. Travellers also start on their journey when they see it: the dawn will soon be here! Lit by its light, candidates for circumcision leave the village of the chief to go to the house of initiation. According to one of my informants (I. p. 75) there is a profound and mystic idea in this custom: Ngongomela announces the day; so little boys must be conducted by the morning star when they abandon their childhood and all its ignorance to enter the adult life with all its knowledge. It leads them from darkness into the light! So Venus plays a great part in Thonga customs. It is the great star. Notice the feminine suffix *eti* in one of its names. It may have been personified in former times.

The *Pleiades* are the only constellation which bears a name 821
in Thonga. They call it *shirimelo*, the one which announces 772
the tilling season, because, in fact, in the lands situated in the Tropic of Cancer, it rises in July or August, when tilling is resumed. I have not heard of any other constellation known to the Natives. They have no notion whatever of constellations: their mind does not seem to have tried to group the stars, or to have seen figures of animals, or objects, in the sky; their imagination in this domain is very poor, and they remain far behind the Oriental nations in this respect.

Falling stars are looked on as a bad omen. When they see 821
one falling towards a certain point of the horizon, Natives think 787
that a Chief must have died in the country towards which the 789

821 star is directing its course, and they have a formula of incantation
787 to get rid of the misfortune attending this phenomenon. They
789 say : "Thu! Thu! Nkulunkulu ndjuwee, famba psa ku u nga fa u ku bi." — "You great thing, go away alone (without me, leaving me behind) and die and disappear entirely." This is more an imprecation (shiruketelo) than an incantation. The syllable *thu* indicates, and accompanies, the emission of a little saliva. It is different from the sacramental *tsu*, employed to invoke the spirits of the ancestors : it is an insult. It is spitting *at* something, not an act of respect and an offering, like *tsu* (1). This is the Ronga formula ; the one used in Northern clans has the same meaning : "*Rura, rura weshe*" (Move, move alone!).

821 *Comets* greatly impress the imagination of the Thongas ;
787 they are called *shimusana*, or *nyeleti ya musana*, the star of dust, or *nyeleti ya nkila*, the star with a tail, and when they appear they also mean the death of a chief. People say : "See ! A chief has died, but they have not yet published the mourning" (I. p. 414). The star which is said to have appeared the year of the death of Manukosi was probably a comet. (See Report of the S.A.A.A.S. 1905, Vol. III, p. 232.)

772 These few superstitions and observations comprise all the Astronomy of the Thongas. The sidereal world is almost entirely outside the range of their preoccupations.

III. *Cosmographic and Meteorological Phenonomena.*

1) The Wind.

821 The wind is called *moya*, an interesting word which means
822 also spirit (the human breath and the spiritual part of man), and is applied to the acting, living agent, or to the smell, or taste, of some objects. For instance it is said of an alcoholic beverage

861 (1) They spit at a child who is causing an unpleasant smell, saying to him : "Thu! u ya tinyela matjimba." — "Go away to ease yourself." Should you do this to a
578 person older than yourself, he will say to you : "What ! you make *thu* to me (wa ndji tjhuka), you want me to ease myself !"

845 What is the connection between abnormal births of human
772. beings and the rain-fall? I think it can be found in the
771 conception of Heaven which has inspired so many curious rites, and which I shall explain in the next chapter. So it is possible that, after all, the mbelele rite has a religious idea at its base.

b) *Rain charms.*

789 The removal of the corpses of abnormal children from dry
177 ground and their burial near the river probably sometimes proves ineffective to produce rain. So Bantu magicians have invented a great many charms to obtain the greatly desired showers, and the power of the rain-makers is enormous. Our tribe does not seem to have developed this art as much as others. The Sutho-Pedis are masters in this domain and Mankhelu, who had been taught by them and had become a great and renowned rain-maker, revealed all his secrets to me. He possessed the drug and used it frequently, he said, having often been called in by Sutho chiefs dwelling in far distant districts, as far off as Pretoria. He assured me that he had met with so much success that these chiefs had given him oxen, horses, a waggon, precious beads, etc.! Where had he found this marvellous drug? At Rivimbi (in Venda ; Luvimbi), a country north of Spelonken, not far from the Limpopo and to which he went, as far as I could make out, in 1865 or 1866. The Luvimbi people are the descendants of Luvimbi, (1) a chief of the old times (as old as Nkuna, says Mankhelu) who, after his death, went to heaven and became king of heaven ; he still exists there as a spirit, hearing and knowing everything that is done on earth. This Luvimbi is probably the same whom the Vendas call the first man, and concerning whom they have a number of traditions which I shall mention a little later.

776 and those of still-born children or those who died at birth; to these they add their old
783 rags (perhaps the cloths used for their menses?); they bring all these impurities to the cross-ways and *burn them* there, singing impure songs, saying: "To-day is a great day!
789 There is no taboo any more! If you prohibit anything, it will be an insult to the rain;
821 it will not fall." The smoke of all that they have burnt constitutes a religious offering: now the country will be pure and the rain will fall. The conception prevailing among
183 the Malulekes is somewhat different from that of the Rongas.

(1) I have published an account of the Venda traditions connected with Luvimbi or Raluvimbi in *The S. A Journal of Science*, April 1921, where more details will be found concerning this personage.

771 and only troubles those who have killed, rendering them, as is generally
774 believed, insane. — The nuru belief seems to be a compromise between
828 Animism and Dynamism. (See p. 77-80.)

5. There are in plants, animals, stones, hidden virtues which can be
789 either useful or harmful to man. Medicine-men (tinanga) possess a more or less esoteric knowledge of such, and magicians (bangoma), endowed with special powers, can acquire a control over these virtues and use them in medical art, or in magic. — This is true Dynamism.

6. Certain natural objects, such as the sea, the bush fire, are sometimes vaguely personified. — This is Animatism.

772 7. But above them all is Heaven, Tilo, which is sometimes looked on as a real being, sometimes as an impersonal power, a number of mysterious superstitions finding their explanation in this strange and perhaps obsolete notion of Heaven. — This is more than Animatism and seems to be a vague theistic, even monotheistic, idea.

771 The essential difference between Animism and Dynamism seems to
774 me clear. But it is by no means absolute. We shall often meet with rites which belong to both domains, or bear an intermediate character. In the following chapters the exact nature and influence of these various kinds of spirits and impersonal forces will be studied, and I hope that an explanation of all the facts concerning them will throw more light on the subject and show that, at any rate, Thonga Animism is very different from the Animism of the Dutch East Indies, for instance, where men speak of thousands of spirits of the earth, air, water, mountains and trees ; very different also from the fetichism met with in other Bantu tribes of Central and Western Africa.

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82 Before leaving this chapter, in which I have tried to sketch what I have
789 called by the rather pretentious term of The Natural Philosophy of the Bantus, and as a preparation for the explanation of the religious and dynamistic rites described in the following chapters, I think it advisable to set forth the principles which seem to underlie most of these rites, and which may be called the *axioms of primitive mentality*.

As regards what are commonly called *magic rites* I contend that they are in no sense purely arbitrary but that they rest on certain definite principles. These axioms of primitive mentality are what anthropologists fittingly call collective representations, viz., everybody believes

little, connection with the moral conduct of the individual. It has no moral prescriptions except those which insure the observance of the hierarchical order in the family. It neither promises reward nor threatens punishment after death. 771

Consequently it is purely *eudemonistic*, the religious ceremonies having as their sole aim material benefits connected with the terrestrial life, e. g. abundance, health, peace, and good sleep!

It is *unphilosophical*, that is to say, it does not attempt to answer the great problems about the origin and purpose of the world and human existence. These questions of causality and finality are absolutely beyond its horizon.

It is essentially *ritualistic*, and leaves very little place for true religious feeling. Adoration is practically non-existent. However, elements of *personal religion* are not altogether wanting. Some expressions in the liturgical prayers reveal humility and trust, e. g. "Death doth not come to the man who is prayed for, but only to the one who trusts in his own strength" (p. 393) ; thankfulness for escape from danger is sometimes expressed in a spontaneous and genuine way ; and may not also the sacrifice of bitterness (p. 391) be actuated by a real and touching feeling of dependency ; the old formula of invocation and the sacramental word *tsu*, now inexplicable, seem to show that there was, even in former times, such a thing as *self dedication*, and some aspiration towards a real communion between the worshipper and his gods. (See Appendix III on Personal Religion amongst Thongas.)

Animism is generally spoken of as a *religion of fear*. Applied to Thonga ancestrolatry, this statement would be an exaggeration. There is indeed no deep love for the ancestor-gods in the hearts of the Thongas; how could it be so when these "psikwembu" are so jealous, and show so little love themselves? But there is no perpetual fear. The attitude is rather that of *indifference*. Natives ask for one thing only : that they may live in peace, and that their gods may interfere with them as little as possible.

B. THE CONCEPTION OF HEAVEN.

When studying the classic tragedies of Greece, and more especially those of Aeschylus and Sophocles, one is led to the conclusion that the gods of Olympus, in whom may be recognised, more or less distinctly, the personification of the forces of Nature, 771 772

or heroes glorified by apotheosis, were not the only beings in whom that intellectually gifted people believed, nor the sole objects of their veneration. Higher than Olympus, and dwelling in the more remote heavens, a mysterious divinity looks down upon mankind, a divinity wiser and nobler than the capricious Zeus, or the voluptuous Artemis ; sometimes this being is called Nemesis, the avenger, inexorable fate, and sometimes it is a god more human and more moral in character. But this Supreme Being is vaguely conceived, and its form is, as it were, closely veiled, In the religion of the Thongas we meet with a similar phenomenon. Above the gods whom the common people know, worship, and call by name, there exists a power which to the majority remains ill-defined and which they express by the word *Heaven* (Tilo). This word *Tilo*, which, in the ordinary language, is used to designate the blue sky (p. 304), contains a far deeper and more comprehensive meaning. I shall not attempt to throw complete light on these ideas, which are so dim in the Native mind. But the reader who studies carefully the facts and customs which I am just about to describe, will certainly be convinced that there really exist two parallel series of religious ideas in the Thonga Religion. We have already dealt with those which first manifest themselves to the observer. Let us now consider the others ; they are not less interesting, nor less picturesque ; they are indeed perhaps deeper than those of the ordinary Ancestrolatry. This belief is in such an embryonic state that it very easily escapes observation. As already pointed out, it is a vein, a reef of gold, which has been discovered through some fortuitous circumstance, and must be worked with great care. 772 771

I. *The definition of Heaven.*

Tilo is a grand word ; it comes from the same root as *Zulu*, the honoured name of a great and powerful tribe. 772

"Before you came to teach us that there is an All-Good Being, a Father in Heaven, we already knew there was a Heaven, but did not know there was anyone in it." Such was the declaration

of one of the most intelligent women of our congregation at 772
Lourenço Marques, who was also the best acquainted with all the ancient Ba-Ronga customs. Timotheo Mandlati said to me, on the other hand : "Our fathers all believed that life existed in Heaven" (butomi byi kone tilwen). It is quite certain that, according to the ideas of the Thongas, as well as to those of many other tribes, Heaven was a *place* ; a place much to be desired, where was to be found that which is so seldom met with on earth, namely rest. Hence a song, which is to be found in [539]
a very similar form amongst the Zulus (1), and even amongst the Ba-Sutho, and runs thus :

(Solo) Bukali bya ngoti !
(Tutti) Nha ndji yahliya ngoti, ndji ya Tilwen !
Ndji ya kuma ku wisa !
(Solo) What a rare thing is string !
(Tutti) Oh ! how I should love to plait a string, and go up to Heaven, I would go there to find rest !

An old refrain which has come down through the ages, and has in no wise been inspired by the Christian religion : it is pure, authentic Bantu! Thus the warriors, when threatening their adversaries, and hurling defiance from one troop to another, say : "Make ready your string, and climb up to Heaven, there is no place for you here below. Here you will find nothing but misfortune" (I. p. 472) (2).

Thongas, however, never declare as a belief that men go to Heaven after death. They become "psikwembu," and we have already seen where their abode is. Nevertheless Viguet told me the story of a Hlengwe, whom he knew in times long gone by, in the Bilen country, who used to address the people in mysterious tones as follows :

(1) "Who could make a cord, whereby to go to Heaven ?" Such is the Zulu version given by Callaway.

(2) When a bone-thrower has decided that his consultant must make an offering, he often tells him, looking towards heaven : "Go, make the offering and say : It is good if I overcome the people who are below by the country which is afar." The people who are below are the wizards. The country which is afar is heaven. Another version is as follows : "It is good if I overcome the people who are below and reach the country which is far away." In the first case Heaven is considered as possessing a power greater than that of wizards ; in the second it means evidently the place of rest.

Though you eat plenty of fat and of honey, and drink plenty of beer, the day will come when you will say "Huku-huku" (fall on your back, i. e. die); people will say "Woo" (i. e. mourn you), and ask you: "Where are you going?" Then answer: "I am going to Ngundju-ya-mapsele, the Source-of-Grace, to the place where the oxen are herded by vultures (because there is no hatred and no death there), where the mosquito is killed with a stick (because everything is so flourishing and big there), where the fowl dies from fat (because there is no disease nor dearth in that blessed land) — to Heaven!" 772

This Hlengwe had either heard these words in his home or had invented them himself.

But Tilo is something more than a place. It is a *power* which acts and manifests itself in various ways. It is sometimes called *Hosi*, Lord. But this power is generally regarded as something entirely impersonal. Thongas appear to think that Heaven regulates and presides over certain great cosmic phenomena to which men must, willingly or unwillingly, submit, more especially those of a sudden and unexpected nature, by which I mean above all rain, storms, and, in human affairs, death, convulsions and the birth of twins. From this idea spring certain very characteristic customs, which I shall proceed to describe briefly.

It is Heaven that afflicts children with those terrible and mysterious *convulsions*, which carry them off without their having been really ill, in a manner of speaking... "He is ill from Heaven" — "A ni Tilo," said an old Native doctor to me in a low tone, referring to a case of this description. So Heaven is the great nombo (infantile disease), (I. p. 48), whilst diarrhea is the small nombo. [753]

But more than this, *it is Heaven which kills and makes live.* Hence the frequent expression: "Heaven loved him," when someone has escaped some deadly danger, or is particularly prosperous, and "Heaven hated him," when he has been very unfortunate, or has died.

The same idea is expressed in the following dirge. 772 539

Wa hi kanganyisa, Tshabane!
Hi yingeli Tilo, dji ku dja buya nininini!
Hi kumi babanuna babiri, ba famba ba hlahluba Tilo.
Wa nga yingela psa bambe, u ta yingela ni psa ku!

772
539

You deceive us, Tshabane!
We have heard Heaven thunder... The roaring will soon come.
We have seen two men who were going to throw the bones with reference to Heaven...
Doubtless you have heard tell of the misfortunes of others:
You will hear them talking of your own!

Enigmatic words, but, with the help of the Natives, I have unravelled their meaning: — You are deceiving us, Tshabane, you who are trying to reassure us. We have heard Heaven. A storm has burst, there was a sudden downpour, a flash of lightning; Heaven has struck! It has killed some one. Two men passed by, terrified; they went to consult the Lones, to try and find means to ward off these strokes of Heaven. Useless! If you have seen the sorrow of those who mourn, do not imagine that you will escape. It will soon be your turn!

Another song which contains a similar allusion to Heaven as the power which kills, has already been quoted when describing the customs of widowhood (I. p. 207). "What shall we say to thee! King!"

The tale of "the Road to Heaven" (See *Les Chants et les Contes des Ba-Ronga*, p. 237) is also very significant in this respect. It tells the story of a young girl, who, having broken her jar, and fearing a scolding from her mother, *climbs up her string* and goes to Heaven. (Always the same idea of shelter from all evils.) (1) There she finds a village; a child is given to her, because she is so gentle and obedient. Her sister tries to do the same thing. But she is ill-tempered and wicked. Heaven explodes (baleka), kills her (by lightning), and her bones are blown right to her parents' house. In the tale of the Adventures of Bonawasi (Ch. & C. p. 295) Heaven intervenes to endow a young Native with peculiar wisdom, by means of which he gets the better of the Governor of the town. Possibly some idea of the God of the Europeans may have found its way into the composition of this tale, in which may be recognized certain traces of foreign influence. But this is assuredly not the

171 (1) The mention of this string is perhaps due to a tradition common in other African tribes. According to the Ba-Rotse, Leza, God, who dwelt on earth, ascended to Heaven one day by a spider's web. Several human beings tried to climb up the same way, but fell and failed in the attempt. (Comp. A. Jalla, *Foi et Vie*, Oct. 1910.)

case in respect to the story of Ñwahungukuri, which I have published in *Les Ba-Ronga*, p. 312, and in which Heaven is credited with the full knowledge of a hidden crime committed by a murderer. This idea is so far from being an innovation due to European influence that thoughtful Natives all agree that, in former times, it was more usual to attribute death to the power of Heaven. It was a common saying that "Heaven has fallen (ku we Tilo) on such and such a village." Nowadays it is rather the gods, or the wizards, who are believed to cause death. 772 539 [761]

But this belief in Heaven has not only inspired these sayings, songs, and tales ; it has also given rise to curious customs, a description of which will throw more light on this conception of the Thongas. Their existence proves that we are not here dealing with the "animatic" invention of some person gifted with a vivid imagination (p. 366), but with a true tribal belief.

II. *Customs Connected with the Conception of Heaven.*

1) Heaven, Twins and Rain.

This power, which causes lightning and death, also presides, in a very special way, at the *birth of twins*, so much so that the mother is called by the name of "Tilo," — "Heaven," — and the children "Bana ba Tilo," — "Children of Heaven" (1). Now the arrival of two or three babies at the same time is looked upon by the Thongas as a great misfortune, a defilement in respect of which very special rites must be performed. I give the details of these rites as practised in the Zihlahla, Nondwane, and Nkuna clans, as they were described to me by Tobane, Mboza, Mankhelu, etc. 845 772

Twins (hahla, or bandjwa, dji-ma) are now both allowed to live. But in former times, one of them, the one which appeared to be the feebler, was always put to death, being left to die of 845 847 766

(1) In our school at Lourenço Marques there was a charming young girl, who was named Nwana-wa-Tilo, Daughter of Heaven, because she had a twin brother.

Special precautions are taken in respect to twins when they 845
pay a mourning visit. One of the grave-diggers meets them at the 765
entrance of the village and says: "Do not fear, Children of Heaven." He then puts some ashes on their heads and on their fontanelles. This is done because twins are feeble (ma ni bushapu) and the defilement might affect them more than other children. They must therefore be protected by smearing the middle of the head, and the "extremity of the tree of life," viz., the fontanelle, with a preventive. The mother also undergoes a similar treatment. She must prostrate herself near the hut of the deceased, at the place where the wall has been pierced to make an exit for the corpse. Then the grave-digger brings some live embers in a broken pot, pours a little water on to them, and dips his fingers into the water; he then presses both his hands against the woman's belly and brings them round her waist, pressing them all the while against the skin, until they meet on the spine; thus she is "cured inside" (dahiwa ndjen). This will prevent her from suffering from internal troubles, to which she, having given birth to Tilo, Heaven, is particularly liable. (Comp. I. p. 151) (1).

From this brief description of the customs connected with twins 845
in most of the Thonga clans, it may be seen that their explanation [783]
is twofold: 1) The birth of twins is a death, consequently a 772
defilement, indeed the worst of all defilements. Hence the 789
purificatory rites which bear the character of *passage rites*: the mother is secluded and passes through a period of isolation, after which she is again admitted to society after a painful "casting away of her misfortune." 2) But the cause of the defilement is not an ordinary death, but Heaven. *She is Heaven*; she is said to have

(1) Another category of persons bearing a special relation to Heaven are the 184
albinos. Cases of albinism are not frequent amongst South African Natives, yet they
are sometimes met with. They are called in Thonga *Khalandlati*, a word which 826
means literally *charcoal-lightning*. It is believed that they have been burnt (hisa) by
lightning in their mother's womb before their birth. "Ba tlalile, a ba wupfanga, ba 772
bengiwi hi tilo," viz. "they are uncomplete beings, they are not ripe, they have been
hated by Heaven"; these are the terms in which they are described. They are not 845
however regarded as taboo (yila), they merely inspire disgust (nyenya) (p. 83). As
regards women suffering from this kind of disgrace, other women do not smear themselves
with the same ochre as they, lest they should give birth to albinos; they do not drink
from the same cup. Men do not marry them, and in this respect they are classed with
kper women and witches, who are also looked on as repugnant.

845 *made Heaven* (a hambi Tilo), to have *carried Heaven* (a rwi Tilo), to
772 have *ascended to Heaven* (a khandjiyi Tilo). This connection
established between her and Heaven is clearly seen in the *rain*
789 *customs* previously described. Notice that the day following the
766 birth of twins is a *shimusi*, i. e. a day of rest. Nobody tills the ground, fearing that it would prevent rain from falling. When the *mbelele* takes place in Nondwane and Zihlahlà (p. 318), the half naked women who are sent to clean the wells take with them a mother of twins. This is no doubt in order to show them where the graves of twins are. But there is also another reason. In the sacred wood of Libombo there is a hole into which the woman is put ; her sisters then pour on to her the water which they have drawn from all the wells, till the hole is half full, and the water comes up to her breasts. This will cause the rain to fall. Why is this? No doubt because, the woman of Heaven being wet, Heaven itself will be wet. Spoon did not give this explanation himself, but, when I suggested it to him, he accepted it readily. For the same reason the graves of twins are watered. In certain cases water is poured on the graves of the ancestors also, because rain is attributed both to them and to Heaven, and this watering the graves is meant to induce either Heaven or the ancestor-gods to cause rain to fall. Hence again the precaution taken of burying twins in damp places, and of exhuming them in times of drought if they have been buried in dry ground (1).

845 The connection between twins and Heaven, so clearly to
772 be seen in these customs, appears again in respect to thunder-
storms, which, as we shall see, are another manifestation of Heaven.
821 When lightning threatens a village, people say to a twin : "Help us!
789 You are a Child of Heaven! You can therefore cope with Heaven (mi kota Tilo), it will hear you when you speak." So the child

845 (1) In other clans this law is extended to children prematurely born, even though they
761 are not twins, and even to children who have not had the cotton string tied round their waist or who have cut their upper teeth first. On the other hand, among the Nkunas
772 no special connection seems to be established between twins and Heaven. These differences may be explained by the fact that all these abnormal cases were ascribed to
766 Heaven in former times, and the connection has been preserved in the various clans in respect to one or the other of these categories. Note that, in the song of the widows (I. p. 207), the king Heaven appears to have caused the death of the husband ; this is another proof that Heaven was formerly considered the most frequent cause of death.

goes out of the hut and prays to Heaven in the following words : 845
"Go away! Do not annoy us! We are afraid. Go and roar far 772
away." When the thunderstorm has ended, the child is 821
thanked (1). His mother can also help in the same way, for has 789
she not ascended to Heaven? "She can speak with it, she is at it (or in it) — a li ku djone." (Spoon.)

We find in these rites a striking instance of the combination of the three forms of magic which have been explained above (p. 368). Heaven, rain, lightning, the mother of twins and the twins themselves form a connected whole. Action brought to bear on the mother of twins will therefore have its effect on Heaven ; this is *communionist magic*. This action consists in pouring water over her, (not only in plunging her into a lake). According to the principle of *imitative magic*, Heaven will thus be watered and will pour rain upon the earth. The act of the twin in commanding the lightning to spare the country is a case of *verbal magic*. All this would be logical enough and the conclusions perfectly legitimate if only the premisses were true!

Customs regarding twins vary from one clan to another. While 845
in one tribe they are put to death, in others their advent is considered an event of great happiness. This is the case in *Tembe and Maputju*, where women are said to wish for twins, and, if certain mothers have enjoyed this piece of good fortune, others ask them for some of the fat with which they have smeared their bodies, hoping by the use of the same ointment to obtain a like happy result. The hut is never burnt. The mother gives birth to the twins behind the hut (fukwen, I. p. 37). When it is time for her to re-enter her domicile, a hole is made in the wall at the back. The husband is excluded from the hut till the day of presentation to the moon (a ceremony which, in these clans, is not omitted in the case of twins). When he is again admitted, his wife strikes his legs with a stick, in order "to cure him" (ku mu

(1) Mrs. Junod, who was for years a missionary amongst the Fañ or Pahouin of 171
the French Congo, told me that, one day, after a tornado, the rainbow suddenly appeared in the sky. One of her female pupils at once ran to her, and hid her face in her schoolmistress' lap. On asking the reason of this fear the teacher was told that this girl was a twin, and twins dare not look at the rainbow. So the connection between Heaven and twins exists also in this tribe of Western Africa.

845 daha). Striking is frequently one of the rites of aggregation.
184 (See Van Gennep, *Rites de Passage*, p. 55). Let us remember that the Tembe clan is of Northern origin (I. p. 23) and has retained some customs which are different from those of the other Thongas (1).

2) Heaven and the "Nunu."

136 The following is a very extraordinary custom, and one which,
241 in many respects, greatly resembles those I have already described.
845 There is to be found, on the shores of Delagoa Bay, a small Coleoptera belonging to the Alcides genus of the Cucurlionidæ
● 772 family. It has a proboscis-shaped mouth, a very hard carapace
825 of half a centimetre in length, brown, and marked on each elytron with two longitudinal white bands. The Blacks call it the *nunu*. It is a scourge to the fields of beans and maize (much as cockchafers are with us). In December or January, when these insects begin to swarm, the chief men of the country order the diviners to throw the bones, and send the women to pick the "nunu" off the bean stalks. They gather them in "sala" shells. Then they choose (probably by casting lots) *a woman who has given birth to twins.*

(1) Amongst *the Hereros* a multiple birth is the happiest event which could possibly occur ! The Rev. E. Dannert published in the *Capetown Folklore Journal* an account of the customs practised on such occasions by the Natives of this tribe, which occupies the Western side of Southern Africa, at about the same latitude as the Thongas. The father and mother are condemned to complete silence, under penalty of bringing a curse on those who speak to them. All the members of the tribe are convened and bring their cattle with them. The twins' family has to appear before the whole assembly, and is received with lamentations. Each individual must present himself to the parents, and make them a gift of beads, or other ornaments, in return for which the father and mother purify them by means of a certain powder. After this the father has the right of going from village to village, and claiming an ox from each one, as a kind of ransom. He becomes quite a rich man. This is the *kunga rite*, which we have also met with on many occasions amongst the Thongas (I. p. 124.). How can this diversity between the customs of the Hereros and those of most of the Thongas be explained? No doubt by this vague mysterious idea of Heaven, which is behind the religious conceptions of these tribes and in which all these rites originated. This celestial power, when it manifests itself, stupefies the Natives, for it causes "a death," entails a curse. With the Thongas it is the mother and children who are the objects of this malediction, hence the purifying ceremonies imposed upon them. With the Hereros, it is the whole tribe which is affected. The family into which the twins are born has been distinguished and honoured by this heavenly visitation, and collects for itself the fines which all must pay to regain the celestial favour !

One of her daughters, who is one of the twins, is told to throw 241
the whole "catch" of insects into the neighbouring lake. She is 845
accompanied by a woman of mature age, and, without speaking a 772
word, must go straight to the lake in question. Behind her 825
marches the whole crowd of women, arms, waists and heads covered with grass, carrying branches of the big-leaved manioc, which they wave from side to side, and singing the following song, which has been composed for this occasion :

> Nunu, muka! Hi da mabele!
> Nunu, go away! That we may eat mealies!

The twin throws her little calabash into the water without turning round (for she is not allowed to look behind). Then the savage yells are raised louder than ever, and the women sing their impure songs (ta ku ruketela), which they would never dare to utter on ordinary occasions, and which are reserved for these ceremonies, rain seeking and "nunu" hunting.

On that day, as during the mbelele, woe to the man who walks 241
along the paths! He is pitilessly attacked by these viragos, who 772
push him to one side, or even maltreat him, and none of his fellows 579
will go to his assistance. They all keep out of the way, for they 825
well know what would be in store for them, should they meet the savage crowd! So they mostly stay quietly at home in their huts!

The "nunu" is not always thrown into the water. Sometimes, to get rid of the plague, or rather to conjure it away, they start out in a band, armed with sticks, to throw these destructive insects on to neighbouring lands. It would seem that the men are mixed up in these underhand tricks, for it is said that this way of handing over the "nunu" to neighbours, often leads to pitched battles, in which sticks are wielded to some purpose, and blows rain thick and heavy! The people of Rikatla, citizens of Nondwane, used to make a present of their pseudo-cockchafers to the inhabitants of the district of Makunyule, belonging to the Mabota clan. But the true 825
way of conjuring away the "nunu" is to drown them in the lake, 772
and this custom, in common with the preceding ones, certainly has some connection with the notion of Heaven, the appearance of these pests being caused by that mysterious power, which

825 presides over all unaccountable and unavoidable phenomena of the
772 atmosphere and of the life of the fields, or of human existence.

We have seen how the two sets of religious customs play their part side by side in the rites of rain-making. A similar coincidence may be noticed here. The removal of the "nunu," a rite which originated in the conception of Heaven, corresponds to the sacrifice of the chief in the Maluleke country, who gathers his sons together to pray to his ancestor-gods for the destruction of the vermin (psidi) which eat the mealies and endanger the harvest (p. 404).

3) Heaven, Storms and Robbers.

772 The most characteristic manifestation of Heaven is in the
821 storm. According to the statement of the credulous Natives, after
789 the women have finished cleaning the wells, and have watered the graves of twins, clouds appear, a whirlwind arises, and "Heaven
627 begins to thunder" — "Tilo dji djuma." — I have already described Thonga ideas about thunder and the lightning bird (p. 313), and the powerful charm made from the flesh, feathers and urine of this marvellous creature! There is still another use made of this extraordinary drug. It is a powerful aid in *tracing thieves*! The magician who possesses this powder of Heaven, (Ñwagwalen of Shikhabele in the Mabota clan), when called upon to point out the thief, acts in the following way. Suppose some one finds that some valuable article has disappeared from his hut, he will say to his near relatives, to those whom he suspects of having committed the larceny : "Take care! If you don't confess, we will go to Ñwagwalen, who lives at Shikhabele!" This threat may possibly be sufficient to elicit an avowal. If not, the individual who has been wronged goes to the diviner, and asks his assistance ; the latter takes his "bag of tricks," his drugs, and his big black stick, i. e., the stick which he was carrying when he dug in the earth and found the urine of the bird, or the bird itself. A notch has been made in the stick, to show the depth of the hole in which he has discovered Heaven. Carrying these charms, he goes to find the chief. An audience being granted, he cries aloud : "O Chief! a theft has been

committed! Now, no one ought ever to rob me. What shall I do!" Then the Chief assembles his subjects and invites the guilty one to confess. If all deny it, Ñwagwalen starts off, with all his apparatus, for the place where the theft was committed, and "treats it medicinally" (a dahela mbangu). He spreads out his drugs, raises his stick in the air, and addresses Heaven as follows : 772 821 789 627

> We, Tilo, hi wene u ka ni mahlu, u bonaka busiku ni nhlekanhi!
> Ba tekile psa nga ba kaneta! Tana u ba komba ba psha!
> Oh Heaven, thou it is who hast eyes which see as well by night as by day...
> They have stolen my goods, and they deny it! Come and discover them; may they be consumed!

Then the clouds begin to gather, and, towards evening, the storm breaks. Lightning strikes the thief in his hut, and causes the stolen articles to reappear. — "I saw this happen at Hoñwana," declared Spoon, "but of late years such occurrences have been less frequent."

According to Camilla, the guilty person is sometimes punished by a terrible attack of vermin, of which he is unable to rid himself ; or he is confronted with several palm leaves, which, by a kind of supernatural judgment, turn into snakes, if he be truly guilty of having stolen the missing property.

The intervention of Heaven in the matter of detecting thieves is also an accepted fact in Khosen. My colleague, the Rev. A. Grandjean, told me of the following significant custom. When there is a storm, those who have missed any belongings go and stand at the door of the hut of the suspected thief, and it is quite possible that the inmate, terrified by the thunder, may throw out the stolen articles.

It may be concluded, from these perfectly authenticated customs, that the Natives attribute to Heaven the power of *omniscience*, more especially in respect to the detection of theft. The basket of bones is never consulted for this purpose. Moreover as Heaven guarantees property and makes people afraid to steal, it acts as a kind of *moralising influence*. [626]

I have also been told by witnesses from the Nkuna region that into the composition of the charm used to protect gardens against thieves, (p. 30) there enters a little powder obtained by burning a 789 772

789 stem which has been struck by lightning, i. e. by Heaven ; or the
772 magician will burn branches of the same tree in the garden itself and bring them near to the stalks in order that these may be surrounded by the smoke emanating from them. If a thief enters the ga.den with evil intentions, "Tilo dji ta mu dlaya, i. e. Heaven will kill him."

4) Heaven and the Balungwana.

772 In 1894, as previously stated, locusts, which had not been
825 seen for some fifty years, made their appearance on the shores of
776 Delagoa Bay, and also in Natal and the Transvaal. The popular imagination was, naturally, greatly stirred by this unusual phenomenon, which was at first greeted with smiles and astonishment, but which, later on, was the cause of endless lamentation. I was one day walking up the hill of Lourenço Marques with an old man, the counsellor of one of the sub-chiefs of Tembe, a thoughtful and intelligent person, when he said to me, with great earnestness, in a low voice, as if referring to some important event : "Have you not heard that in Maputju two dwarfs (psimhu-ñwanyana) fell from Heaven ; a little man and a little woman. They came to say to the people : "Do not kill the grasshoppers! They belong to us!" This counsellor only repeated what all thought and were saying in all the native villages ; these grasshoppers, arriving unexpectedly from on high, were a manifestation of Heaven, just like the lightning, rain, twins, or the nunu, and these celestial beings had come to announce it to men.

772 But belief in the existence of *special personages* in Heaven
776 did not originate in connection with these terribly destructive
821 insects. The idea had been familiar, for a long time past, to the Rongas, and probably to all the Thongas. These personages were not only described as dwarfs, but also as balungwana (p. 352). They were said to fall from Heaven at the time of the great rains. Thus, Timoteo Mandlati told me people had seen some of them appear, a long time ago, in the Nkuna country, and that they had gone back to heaven in a cloud ; they live in celestial space, and when it thunders without any rain falling, the Nkunas say :

"Balungwana ba tlanga henhla" — "The balungwana are at play 772
up there." Or it is they who are singing in heaven when there is a 776
prolonged roar of thunder, saying : "wuwu-wuwu!" 821

When some one passes along the road, they dispute up above as to who he may be. One says : "It is so and so," and the others contradict him. Then they spit on the traveller, who is quite astonished to see some saliva on his hand. He mistakes it for rain, and looks up to the sky to see where the rain is coming from. The balungwana then have a chance to see his face, and the one who has guessed rightly says to the others : "You see! I was right."

In Bilen I heard of a man who prevented children from picking 772
the beautiful red flowers of Tecoma capensis, telling them that the 776
balungwana wanted them for dresses. The same individual believed that these little men would bring oxen to him.

The Rongas say that a little man fell on the hill of Lourenço Marques, near the house of Sithifi, the son of Mashaken, just before the famous war between Mozila and Mawewe (I. p. 28), the rival claimants to the kingdom of Gaza, and that this dwarf came as a presage of the troubles which were to follow. "Lots of folk saw him" said Charlie in 1895 ; (he was then a man of some forty years of age). "We were too young to be allowed to look at him ; the Whites took him and carried him off to Mozambique." — Heaven is therefore inhabited. This is generally admitted, but the idea, from all that one can gather, remains very vague.

C. CONCLUDING REMARKS ON THONGA RELIGION.

I. *The Origin of the Conception of Heaven.*

Ancestrolatry forms a clear, well-defined religion, with its theology 771
(i. e., the ideas as regards the peikwembu), its sacrifices, and its prayers. 772
The dim, mysterious ideas about Heaven, incorporated in or rather 776
lying behind some of the most extraordinary rites of the tribe, bear a 171
very different character. There is something incoherent, vague and

771 unexpected in them, and it would seem that, bearing as they do an
772 essentially deistic character, and accompanied by no true worship, they
776 might as well be absent from the horizon of the Thonga mind.

171 However, when we study other Bantu tribes, we come to exactly the opposite conclusion, i. e., that it would be indeed strange if no religious ideas of this kind were found amongst our tribe. In fact, this occurrence of a double set of religious ideas is universal amongst Bantus. They all believe in a kind of Supreme Being, an All-Father, who bears many different names, *Nzame* amongst the Fan and a great number of West African tribes, *Nyambe* amongst the Ba-Rotsi, *Leza* in some Zambezi and Rhodesian districts, *Mulungu* amongst fifteen East African tribes (1), *Unkulunkulu* in Zululand, *Nungungulu* round Inhambane, and *Mudimo* amongst the Ba-Sutho, etc., etc. The Thonga *Tilo* is, most likely, one of these names. The word probably comes from the root *ulu*, high, elevated, and *ilu*, heaven, which the Rev. P. Sacleux has found with that meaning amongst Central or West African tribes. (*Mulu*, amongst the Bembas ; *Liulu*, in Kimbundu ; *Diulu*, in Luba ; *Wilu*, in Luyi ; *Egulu* in Ganda ; *Idjulu*, amongst the Tongas of Zambezi, etc.). This root, with the personal prefix, has given birth to the term *Mugulu*, designating God in Tabwa and *Mukuru* in Herero. It may be that Mukuru is rather related to the *Unkulunkulu* of the Zulus, the Great One. (See Mgr. Le Roy, "La Religion des Primitifs," 1909, p. 498.)

In the South African tribes, however, the conception of the Supreme Being is not nearly so precise as in most parts of Central Africa. The Thonga Tilo, although sometimes invoked, is hardly a being, but seems rather to be a personification of Nature. Is this the original conception of the Supreme Being, or is it rather a transformation of this? I abstained, in *Les Ba-Ronga*, from expressing any definite opin[illegible] this point. Further study has now led me to believe that [illegible]tter conclusion is the more probable, and that ideas concerning Heaven [illegible]ere more definite in former times. This, at any rate, is also the conviction of intelligent elderly Natives, who are able to remember the former ideas held by the tribe. They say : "As regards death, people now commonly affirm that it is caused by witchcraft, whilst formerly they attributed it to the agency of Heaven." Let us also notice the name of the dwarfs who are believed to inhabit Heaven, the *balungwana*. This word is a

(1) Comp. J. Torrend's *Comparative Grammar of the S. A. Bantu Language*, p. 68.

diminutive of *Mulungu, balungu*, by which are designated, amongst the 771
Zulus and Thongas, White people of every description, whether 772
Europeans or Asiatics. Could the inhabitants of Heaven have been
called "balungwana," on account of their resemblance to the Whites? It 776
would hardly seem probable, for the name of the balungwana, and the 171
ideas connected with them, were in existence long before White people were generally known, or had settled in the country. It is much more reasonable to suppose that the name of these mythical beings, as also that by which the Whites are designated, is a derivative of some other pre-existent term ; and what should this be if not the famous vocable "Mulungu," which stands for God, the One Supreme God, in so many of the Bantu dialects of East Africa, from Lake Victoria Nyanza to the Zambesi, to Senna and Quilimane? I should be inclined to think that the tribes in the neighbourhood of Delagoa were also acquainted with this name, which is so widely known, and that it has, in the course of centuries, disappeared from their theology, only leaving, as a last trace, the term balungwana, applied to the heavenly beings who occasionally descend to earth, and balungu, designating that superior race whose wisdom has always impressed the Blacks as supernatural. If this hypothesis were confirmed, we should have the right to conclude that the idea of Heaven, such as it is described in this chapter, is the disfigured remnant of a higher and monotheistic conception, held by the primitive Bantus before their dispersion, which has evolved in various ways amongst the different tribes.

II. *The Antiquity of Ancestrolatry.*

Ancestor Worship seems, on the other hand, to be an extremely 171
ancient religion amongst mankind. There have been discovered of late 769
years sepulchres of prehistoric date, which seem to show that the funeral rites of the first races were very similar to those practised by the Bantus of the present day. In comparing the burial of Sokis (I. p. 139) with that of a human being of the Mousterian age, whose remains were recently discovered by Hauser in the celebrated "Abri du Moustier" (Dordogne) (1) I noticed the following resemblances :

(1) See my paper "Deux enterrements à 20,000 ans de distance." *Anthropos*, 1909, I. v. Comp. also *L'homme préhistorique*. January, 1909.

171 1) In both cases, the corpse was treated with great, even affectionate
769 care, protected against the earth, and provided with a pillow.

2) The legs and arms had been bent towards the body, a custom widespread amongst primitive races, and directly due to the belief in an after-life.

3) The deceased is regarded as sleeping : hence the pillow provided for him.

4) His after-life is believed to be an exact continuation of his existence on earth. Hence the fact that the articles which he was accustomed to use are put on to, or inside, his grave, the mats, rugs, mug in one case, and silex or "coups de poing" in the other.

5) If the rites performed for Sokis may be explained by the hypothesis that he has become a *shikwembu*, a god endowed with divine powers, if they are in truth acts of worship, it is but reasonable to suppose that the same religious conceptions gave birth to the similar rites of the Mousterian Primitives. The Mousterian Age is one of the first periods of the Quaternary. Some palaeontologists believe it to be anterior to the last glacial period, and think that the dwellers in la Dordogne lived 20,000, even 50,000 years ago! They possessed, then, a religion, and this religion was probably Ancestrolatry.

III. *The Relation between Ancestrolatry and the Conception of Heaven.*

769 The conclusion which may be drawn from the two preceding
772 paragraphs is that both Ancestor Worship and the Conception of a
776 Supreme Being are of very ancient date, and the question naturally arises as to which is the older. I do not pretend here to be able to supply a solution to this great problem, but merely to draw the attention of my readers to the following facts.

1) When questioned as to the relative antiquity of their two sets of religious ideas, Thongas reply that they are unable to give an answer. Their conception of Heaven is so impersonal that they cannot draw any comparison between the two. Their neighbours, the Swazis and the Zulus, however, are very decided upon this point. The Rev. W. Challis, in *The East and the West* of July, 1908, summarises their statements as follows :

"Long ago a great and noble Bantu king was in the habit of climbing a twin-peaked mountain at daybreak, there to intercede with the Great Great One (Unkulunkulu) on behalf of his people. His son, who succeeded him, was afraid to draw near to the Great God whom his father worshipped, so he called upon the spirit of his father to intercede for him and his people before the Creator of all. Gradually each head of a house adopted this method of approaching God, until each family had its own ancestral spirits as mediators first, then merely as beings who brought good or bad luck, and who needed to be propitiated by sacrifice and constant flattery and attention. But God is not in their thoughts now ; only a vague tradition among the old men survives as to the existence of the Great Great One." 769 772 776

The Zulus affirm, so Callaway says, that the same proceeding took place amongst their ancestors. This seems to be a phenomenon similar to the adoration of saints in medieval times, after a period when religion had had a much purer and more transcendental character.

2) A second fact, which points in the same direction, is the contrast which exists in the conception of the ancestral spirits. On the one hand they are but men, who may be insulted (as was often the case with the saints to whom reference has just been made ; take, for instance, the incident of the striking of the image of St Antony of Padua by a worshipper, because the saint had not helped him to recover some lost property) ; on the other hand they are endowed with the qualities of omnipresence, omniscience and omnipotence in their relations with their descendants. It would seem as if the idea of divinity, which was not originally connected with the spirits of the departed, had been applied to them in an awkward and merely external fashion.

3) It is wonderful to notice how easily the idea of the Christian God is accepted by the Bantus. They have scarcely any difficulty in believing that this is the real God to whom worship is due. Livingstone long ago remarked this, and the truth of it has been confirmed by Miss Kingsley, for one, in regard to the Northern Bantus, and also by most of those who have endeavoured to win over these tribes to Christianity. It seems as if one were telling them an old story, with which they had been quite familiar but had now half forgotten. In regard to the Thongas I believe the psychological process to be as follows. When they hear of the *Shikwembu*, who is *in Heaven*, there at once takes place in their minds a coalescence, or reunion of the two main characteristics of their two religions ; — their *shikwembu* is personal but not transcendental ; their *Heaven* is transcendental but not personal.

769 God, the real God who is preached to them, is both personal and
772 transcendental ; it is as if two different kinds of electricity suddenly
776 came in contact with each other in their minds and produced a flash of light... The result is decisive. The two ideas can no longer be kept apart. When the Native has adopted the living God of Christianity, he either understands Him more and more fully, and is able to find great joy and satisfaction of soul in his new religion, or he abandons Him, and becomes godless, if he is unwilling to accept the morality of a true Christian life ; he very seldom returns to Ancestrolatry, nor to his former deistic and naturalistic conceptions. This is another proof that the knowledge of the one and only God, who reigns over all, was indeed sleeping in his heart and conscience, no doubt as a result of the ancient monotheistic conceptions of the Bantus.

The evolution of mankind has been a long one! Even if the Bantus formerly had the idea of God, this would not go to prove anything as regards the primitive religion of humanity. This question is entirely beyond the range of the present work, and even Science may perhaps never be able to answer it. I can therefore leave it out of consideration.

My last observation has shown the caducity of the Thonga religion. It is not able to stand before the advance of the higher revealed religions, Mohammedanism and Christianity. Hence the facility with which Thongas are converted to one or other of these beliefs. This fact is of considerable importance in respect to the future of the tribe, and it will be necessary for us to consider it in our Conclusion.

(See also *Some additional remarks on the idea of the Supreme Being and on Ancestor-worship in relation to Religious History*. App. IV.)

153 773 Some of these people are able to repeat a tale lasting five or ten minutes after having heard it twice or thrice only. It is to be wondered at therefore that they have so few traditions, or rather that these traditions do not reach further back in history. In fact, when you inquire into what they know of the past, you find first, a story about their origin which bears a strongly mythical character ; secondly, traditions more or less legendary about the migrations of the various clans ; thirdly, genealogies of the royal family containing eight to ten names, and fourthly, historical narratives which go back as far as the beginning of the 19th century, and which give the impression of true historical facts. History, amongst the Thongas, begins only one hundred years ago. What took place before that is almost entirely forgotten. This fact shows that, even amongst races possessing a good memory, before the introduction of a system of writing traditions regarding the ancient past can hardly be relied upon.

A. Prehistoric Period.

773 1) *The story of man's origin* is this. The first human beings emerged from reeds. Each tribe came into this world with its present characteristics. For instance the Ba-Bvesha, who are great blacksmiths, knew how to forge their iron picks from the first day. They "came out" holding them. The Ba-Ronga group calls the first ancestors of humanity Likalahumba and Nsilambowa, viz. the one who brings a glowing cinder in a shell (the man) and the one who grinds vegetables (the woman). The Ba-Djonga call them Gwambe and Dzabana. Another story universally believed tells us how death came amongst men by the fault of the chameleon (See Part VI). All these stories are purely mythical and form part of the African Genesis which is met with in most tribes.

123 2) *Legends about the ancient migrations* of the various clans. Almost every clan pretends to have come from afar and, strange to say, they came from all the points of the compass. Two of their clans, without doubt, come from the north, the Ba-ka-

173 Baloyi and the Tembe. The Ba-ka-Baloyi, they say, came down the valley of the Limpopo in very remote times ; they came in such numbers that they opened out a wide track as wide as a wagon road : "It is the old, old road of Gwambe, the first man on earth who emerged from the reed. So well was the road trodden that to this day the grass has not grown over it." Many Thongas pretend to have seen it, white and straight, stretching from the northern bank of the Limpopo and going southwards through the desert, just like the road over which Attila passed ! At a certain place, near a rivulet where the Ba-Loyi rested, one can still see in the rock the print of the mortars of the women. "The stones at that time were not yet hardened, and they retained the marks made by the mortars in that old expedition, the marks also of the hemp pipes of the men and of their *matshuba*." (The *matshuba* are the little holes hollowed out by the Natives in four rows, as required in their favourite game called *tshuba*. See Part II, Chap. II.)

According to some of the Native historians, the Ba-Loyi came from the Ba-Nyai country along with the Ba-Nwanati, who also belonged to the Nyai or Kalanga race. They went southwards by that wonderful old road till they reached the sea coast not far from the mouth of the Limpopo. The sight of the sea, that broad unknown river, filled them with great fear. The Ba-Loyi felt they could not remain in such a dangerous neighbourhood and advised the whole party to go back to the north. In the meantime, however, their Nwanati friends had discovered a fruit not common on the African high veld, but very common on the sandy plains of the coast. In shape it was round, about the size of an orange, with a hard outer shell. When broken it was found to contain a number of stones, each wrapped in a delicate, strongly scented pulp, of which the Natives prepare an excellent dish. This fruit is called *makwakwa*. "We shall remain here to break open our *makwakwa*" said the Ba-Nwanati, and they bade farewell to the Ba-Loyi, who started back to their present abode. Hence the name Makwakwa now given to those Nwanatis.

173 The Nwanatis included the Makwakwas of Khambane and the
173 Malulekes. These latter separated from their brethren and

173 returned north, to the country of the Ba-Loyi, led by their ancestor,
793 Mashakatsi. This man, who was a great hunter, saw that he could easily defeat the Ba-Nyai who were settled in those parts, and brought back his followers with him. He became the founder of the dynasty of Maluleke. (For further details about these legends, see Addresses and Papers of the Joint Meeting of British and South African Associations for the Advancement of Science, Johannesburg 1905.)

As regards the Tembe clan, it is said to have come down as far as Delagoa Bay from the Kalanga country by the Nkomati river on a floating island of papyrus, and to have crossed the Tembe river and settled to the south of the Bay. An old saying alludes to this arrival and to the conquest of the country :

Phandje, phandje ra nala—Tembe kulu a wela.

As the palm leaf with its numerous feelers—so did the ancestor Tembe when he crossed.

He placed his sons in all the districts of the plain to govern in his name. The Tembe people, when they greet each other, sometimes use the salutation Nkalanga, i. e. man of the north or of the Kalanga country, and there is little doubt that, notwithstanding the legendary traits in this tradition, the fact itself of the northern origin of these clans is true. In the course of time the chiefs of Matutwen and Maputju, descendants of Tembe, became independent.

173 Most of the other clans point to Zululand or to Swaziland as having been their first abode, which they left to invade the low country of the coast. Mpfumu and Matjolo are both sons of Nhlaruti, who is said to have been the first invader ; from him sprang their two clans which have become independent of and even hostile to each other. The Nondwane families point to the
[764] neighbourhood of Komati Port as being the place from which they came. There were successive invasions of a peaceful character. These people still turn the face of their dead to the west, because the clan came from the Lebombo hills, and this rite proves that the tradition is well founded. The Nkuna, Khosa, and Hlabi clans also claim the same western or south-western origin. Amongst the Ba-Nkuna, some old men say they know

173 the precise place in Zululand whence their forefather Nkuna started and declare that they still have relatives there.

The Hlanganus and Hlengwes seem to have no tradition of this kind. The only one I heard about the Hlengwes is this. Tshauke, their first king, took as his wife the daughter of another chief belonging to the Sono tribe. The Sonos knew how to cook their food, the Hlengwes did not: they were still ignorant of fire and used to eat their porridge raw. The son of Tshauke stole a glowing cinder from the Sonos and brought it home in a big shell. The Sonos were angry and declared war on the Hlengwes; but these latter, having gained new strength because they had been eating cooked food, won the victory. The son of Tshauke was then named Shioki-sha-humba-he who brings fire in a shell. This tradition is connected with the name of the first man, Likala-humba, which we have just explained, and it evidently bears a legendary character.

173 372 773

A similar story is told about the Shiburi clan (between the Olifant and Nkomati rivers). The old inhabitants of that country were the Masilanes and Nshongos. Once, at a very remote period, a man of the Shiburi clan, who was a Pedi and dwelt in Mabulanen, at the foot of the Drakensberg Mountains, pursued an eland which he had wounded and killed it in the territory of the Masilanes. He returned home to call his countrymen to cut it in pieces and to eat it according to the custom of hunters. These people then roasted the meat and handed over some of it to the Masilanes. The Masilanes used to eat meat raw as they did not know the use of fire. They found that cooked meat was much better than raw meat and told the Shiburis: "You are more intelligent than we are; we will serve you henceforth!" They therefore decided to get rid of their own chief. The Shiburis lighted a big fire, dug a hole and put the glowing embers into it. Then a mat was spread over the mouth of the hole and the chief was asked to sit upon it. He fell into the pit and died, and the Shiburis became the masters of the country. They abandoned their costume (the musubelo, viz. the piece of skin fastened between the legs as used by the Pedis) their language and their marriage laws, married Masilane girls and became true Thongas (Mabuyandlela).

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

APPENDIX V (See p. 226)

593 858 177 797 As an example of *the absolute obedience due to the father*, I may quote the testimony of the Rev. Calvin Maphophe, one of the Native ministers of the Swiss Mission, now living in Lourenço Marques. It illustrates vividly the painful conflict which takes place in the heart of a Bantu boy when he is faced with the dilemma of either obeying a heathen father who forbids him to become a Christian, or going against the paternal will and joining the Church.

One day one of the little shepherds belonging to Maphophe's village in the Spelonken brought to his comrades an astonishing piece of news. He had gone to the missionary station and heard a white man say that there is a God in heaven and that this God created all things. His words were received with absolute incredulity by the company of [773] boys herding the goats ; they answered : "It is an impossibility! Do we not know that the first man and woman came out of a reed ?" However young Matsivi (this was the name of Calvin Maphophe) and his brother Shihosi wished to set their minds at rest about the matter and they began to attend the service on Sundays. They were so struck by the message heard in the little church that they decided to learn more of this extraordinary teaching of the White people, and every Sunday they went to the Station. One of the men of the tribe informed their father that they were assiduous attendants at the Christian services. Maphophe called together all the men of his village and summoned the two boys before this tribunal. Pointing his finger at them he said : "These boys have dared to go to the White people and hear things which are dangerous to us. We do not wish them to become insane! Take it to heart both of you. It is over. Henceforth you must never go again to the village of the Whites. If you disobey, you will be beaten."

The two boys were terribly moved by their father's words. It is a recognised principle in the Bantu tribe that a child who wishes to do right must obey his father, and they were anxious to behave well... But the attraction they felt for the new teaching was too great. They solved the problem by running away from their home. This is not the place to tell the end of the story. It may be found in a little pamphlet "Le Pasteur Calvin Mapopé" published by the headquarters of the Swiss Romande Mission (2, Chemin des Cèdres, Lausanne).

539 For texts of folktales, see category 116, pp. 226-275.
773

000 In the first chapter, I shall try to record the ideas of the Thongas on Nature and Man ; this is what might be called their *Natural Philosophy*, if the term were not somewhat pretentious. In the second, their distinctively *religious notions and rites* will be explained. In the third I shall describe the manifold manifestations of their *Magic*, in which I include the Practice of Medicine, Witchcraft, Possession and Divination. In the fourth, the question of *Morality and Taboo* will be considered.

CHAPTER I

Conceptions of the Thongas regarding Nature and Man.

A. CONCEPTIONS REGARDING NATURE.

I. *Origin of the World.*

773 "What is it that created Heaven and Earth? — Nature!" This proverb or riddle, already quoted (p. 180), is perhaps the only answer given by the Thongas to the problem of creation. *Ntumbululu*, the word I translate by Nature, comes from *ku tumbulula*, to happen, to be formed. It does not convey any clear idea of a Creation. The sense of causality is very little developed amongst most of the Thongas. So they are contented with this rather pantheistic notion, beyond which many very educated scientists of our age will not go, that Nature created the world, and they do not search further. Some say that the originator of Heaven and Earth is Rivimbi, or Kudjwana, or Ñwari. The first two of these names are the Venda or Pedi names of the first human beings ; Ñwali or Myali is a god of the Ba-Nyai whose legend has spread amongst the Northern clans of the Thongas, especially the Hlengwes and the Malulekes. It is possible that the tribes from which these names have been borrowed, truly believe these personages to have created the world. In

the story of Ñwali, for instance, it is said that, when he lived, 773
stones were not yet hard, and so the implements of the first men left their impression on the rocks (Comp. I. p. 22). But they are in the first place the *creators of mankind*, as we shall notice.

I believe that the *origin of man* preoccupies the Bantu mind much more than the origin of the world as a whole. They can live their whole life without being troubled by this question, which has perplexed so many hearts in other lands. Only a few particularly serious spirits, the religious geniuses of the tribe, search eagerly for light on this subject. I have met with one of these. His name was Rangane, and he came from the Maluleke district. When quite a young boy he often asked his mother who it was who had made heaven and earth. She told him : "It is Khudjwana, but he died long ago. Even the place where he was buried is unknown." This did not satisfy the curiosity of the child : so she sent him to the old men to question them. They answered by the myth of the reed which we shall explain later on, saying : "All men came from a reed." This also failed to satisfy the thirst of this inquiring soul, desirous of knowing whence everything proceeds, and he told me how gladly surprised he was when, having come to Pretoria for work, he heard a convert say that God had created everything and teaching the Christian explanation of the world. I remember that his face beamed with joy when he told his story. But such earnest, philosophical natures are very rare amongst Natives, and Rangane was an exception. He died when still at the beginning of his course of study ; and he was vastly superior to most of his comrades as regards religious perception.

II. *The celestial world.*

(Thonga astronomy).

If Thongas do not bother much about the origin of heaven, and 772
of its lights, what are their ideas concerning them?

Heaven (tilo, dji-ma) is for them an immense solid vault which rests on the earth. The point where heaven touches the earth

823 Transvaal at Komati Poort (a place known to all), was the same as
815 the Nkomati which enters the sea near Morakwen, northwards of Lourenço Marques, at a distance of 60 miles from Komati Poort. It must be said, in excuse for them, that in Morakwen the river is called Morako (locative Morakwen) and thus many people have never been aware of the identity of the two!

If you wish to impress Natives greatly with your knowledge, tell them the names of all the countries of Thongaland in their geographical order, as you may have learnt them in conversation, or by studying the map. They will be amazed, and say : "What a wonderful traveller you are, knowing so many spots so far distant from each other!" The teaching of Geography in the schools tends, of course, to alter this state of things.

3) Earthquakes and Rainbows.

823 Earthquakes are not frequent in this part of the world ; so they are rarely spoken of. Thongas have, however, a name for them, *shimbeti*. They do not give any explanation of them and believe that they are perhaps caused by the gods. I remember having once heard a mysterious sound accompanied by a slight tremor of the soil. It was during the Boer war and was, I think, caused by the blowing up of a bridge somewhere on the other side of the range. All the Natives covered their heads with their hands and seemed greatly impressed.

821 The *rainbow* is called *shikwangulatilo*, viz., the one which
778 removes the danger from the sky. Notice the stem *kwangula*, to inaugurate, which we have already met with, when dealing with pottery (p. 117). The sky after rain is compared to a new pot, from which the *nkangu* must be removed. But this is merely an expression. No one can say what the danger is that is thus removed ; it is probable that the tribe had more precise ideas on the subject in former times, and that these have become obsolete. In some of the northern clans (Nkhabelane, Mathiye, Shiburi, Mongwe) the rainbow is called the Bow of Nyandziyo. Nyandziyo is said to be a man of the olden times who made the

rainbow; he dwells in heaven and the rainbow is his bow. He it is who taught men the use of the bow. 773 821

The two great phenomena which mostly impress South Africans are lightning and rain, and of these you hear wonderful and endless stories!

4) Lightning.

This is called *lihati* (li-tin), and is said to be caused by a bird called *ndlati* (yi-tin). These two words, etymologically speaking, seem to be related to each other. They possess the feminine suffix *ti* which is met with in the forms *eti, ati, oti*. This bird is also called *nkuku wa tilo* amongst the Ba-Ronga, the cock of heaven, or *psele dja tilo*, the hen of heaven, and magicians know how to determine its sex when the bird has fallen. 821 825

The thunder is attributed either to the bird itself or, more frequently, to Heaven. The proper expression for "It thunders" is: "Tilo dji djuma" — "Heaven roars."

In the Northern clans those who practise magical arts add many other particulars to the story, some of which may have been borrowed from the Pedi magicians, who seem to possess a more complete explanation of the phenomenon. According to them, the *ndlati* (Pedi, *dali*) is a bird of four colours, green, red, black and white, which lives in the mountains, by preference at the confluence of rivers. The medicine-men of former times knew its hiding place and had even found the eggs of the bird in a nest floating on the water. When a thunderstorm breaks, the bird flies to heaven into the clouds; there may be scores of them, but one only will be dangerous (lebya) and cause death. It rushes down to the ground, striking a tree on its way, tearing its bark and its wood, and throwing it down; or it falls on a hut and burns it, or on a man and kills him. Having reached the soil, the bird can be caught, and I heard people seriously assert that four of these birds, unable to fly away, had been found the previous year in Sikororo country. Or the bird enters the ground, to a depth of two to three feet, and either remains there in its own form, or (this is the most common saying) deposits its urine (murundju), 821 825 795

825 They come up to him and wonder how he got there. By this rite
777 he has prevented the misfortune which the antelope would have caused to the travellers."

B. CONCEPTIONS REGARDING MAN.

I. *The origin of man.*

773 While the Thonga mind is very little puzzled by the question of the creation of heaven and earth, the origin of man preoccupies it more deeply. I must now enter into some details as to the story of human origin which has been already mentioned (I. p. 21). It contains two parts : the creation of man and the cause of death.

1) The creation of man.

The first human beings came out of the *lihlanga*, the reed, as some say, or the *nhlanga*, the marsh of reeds, according to others. These two versions seem to answer to two different conceptions. The first is that one man and one woman suddenly came out of one reed, which exploded (baleka), and there they were! According to the second, men of different tribes emerged from a marsh of reeds, each tribe already having its peculiar costume, implements and customs. So when you ask about the origin of the iron hoe amongst the Vendas, who possessed it before the Thongas, you will be told : "The Vendas emerged from the marsh of reeds holding them" (1).

The first man and woman are called in the Northern clans

177 (1) I believe the first version to be the true Thonga one. It may be that the idea that all races came out of the marsh of reeds is an alteration of the primitive conception under Nyai influence. The Ba-Nyai say that all men emerged from a big hole, the hole of Myali or Nwari, in the earth, at a time when stones and rocks were still so soft that foot-prints remained marked on them. It has been supposed that the myth of the reed is simply an allusion to a physiological phenomenon, but I do not believe this.

Gwambe and Dzabana. No special story is told of these ancestors of mankind, but their names are still used under certain circumstances. When expelling a disease, in the *hondlola* rite, the medicine man says: "Go away to Gwambe and Dzabana," an expression used concurrently with this: "Go away to Shiburi and Nkhabelane," viz., to the extremity of the land, a long way off; again, when many tales have been told and folks are going to sleep, these tales are also sent away back to Gwambe and Dzabana (p. 212). Why? Perhaps because they are the old, old people, and the tales which are so ancient belong to them! At any rate, by this kind of incantation story-tellers aim at preventing the hearers' sleep from being disturbed by the remembrance of the marvellous things they have been told. In the legends relating to old migrations the "Road of Gwambe" (1) is mentioned. When the ancient peoples passed along it, the earth was not yet solid, so they left the print of their feet, of their mortars, etc., in the rocks, where they are still to be seen on the edge of a river called Hlantsabuhlalu. (Nyai idea? I. p. 22.) 773

In the Ronga clans, these two ancestors of mankind are called *Likalahumba* and *Nsilambowa*. The first name means: the one who brought a glowing cinder in a shell, viz., the originator of fire, (Compare the Hlengwe tradition, I. p. 24). Nsilambowa, the name of the woman, means the one who grinds vegetables. The first human beings, according to these names, were those who 773 825

(1) What is the connection between this *Gwambe* and the name of *Ma-Gwamba* commonly given to the Thongas of Spelonken (I. p. 19)? It is difficult to say. According to some, there is still a clan descended from Gwambe, the first man, whose chief calls himself Gwambe. The Ba-Venda, when they saw the Thonga merchants bringing their goods from Delagoa Bay or Inhambane, called them Makwapa, Balungwana ba Kwapen, the little White people from Kwapa or Gwamba country, viz., those who bring clothes, beads bought from the Whites. It seems certain that there exists a Gwamba clan somewhere in Gazaland, not far from the Chopi border. A story is told of this Gwamba chief, who sent messengers to Modjadji to obtain rain from her. On their return they refused to cooperate in gathering fuel for their fire and died on the road, where their graves are still to be seen. Other informants give a totally different version of the origin of the term Ma-Gwamba: Gwambe was a chief dwelling on the banks of the Oliphant, near the Dunduli villages; his men, while on a journey, said to the Vendas: "We people of Gwambe even accept old women," viz., if they receive us well, we call them our wives to please them! Hence the name they were given. Still other explanations might be found and I think there is no real connection between Gwambe, the first man, and the Ma-Gwamba. 101

773 introduced fire and the culinary art into the world! This idea is
826 interesting and seems to show that, to the Native mind, the cooking of food is the pursuit which differentiates man from the animals.

177 In the clans of Maluleke and Spelonken there is a third tradition
773 relating to the first man, but it has certainly been borrowed from the Venda or Pedi tribes. They say the first man was *Rivimbi* and his son *Khudjana* (name transformed into Hobyana according to Thonga phonetics). The Thongas only say that Hobyana is the creator of Heaven and Earth and the first ancestor of the race. But the Vendas and Pedis have a number of traditions about these two heroes (1).

2) The cause of death.

773 When the first human beings emerged from the marsh of
826 reeds, the chief of this marsh sent the Chameleon (Lumpfana)
761 to them, with this message: "Men will die, but they will rise again." The Chameleon started walking slowly, according to his habit. Then the big lizard with the blue head, the Galagala, was sent to tell men: "You shall die and rot." Galagala started with his swift gait and soon passed Lumpfana. He delivered his message, and when Lumpfana arrived with his errand, men said to him: "You are too late. We have already

773 (1) Here is one of the most curious of these traditions, a strange story indeed,
when we reflect that these two personages are the great gods who created the uni-
776 verse! Once, in olden times, Khudjana planted a big pole in the earth, and passed spokes through it, right to the top. Rivimbi having climbed up, Khudjana took out
177 the lower spokes and went home. His father being unable to get down, the son stole the food prepared for him and ate it at his ease. Then he again put the spokes in their places and the old man came home. But when he wished to have his meal, he found that nothing was left. His wife then gave him Khudjana's portion!

There is great confusion amongst these traditions. According to Mankhelu this Rivimbi, or Luvimbi, is the same as the great rain-maker to whose descendants he went to obtain the rain medicine (p. 320). He is not only the creator of the earth, but the protector of all men, who are his sons. So, if some one wishes to harm a man who is not guilty, the Vendas say to him: "Do not kill Luvimbi's man." If you steal a partridge caught in a trap which was not set by you, they say: "Luvimbi, who stands on that tree, sees you." He would seem to be a superior being, a god (shikwembu), even the chief of gods, endowed with omnipresence and omniscience. Moreover there is a relation between Rivimbi and Nwali, the Ba-Nyai god, who is represented either as father or son of Rivimbi, or identical with him. It may be that the Rivimbi tradition, which is both Pedi and Venda and seems to refer definitely to a first ancestor who has become the great god, has been mixed with the Nwali tradition, which is Nyai, so that ideas of different origins have been intermingled.

accepted another message." That is why men are subject to death. 773 825

This myth is so strongly believed that shepherds, when they see a chameleon climbing slowly up a tree, begin to tease it, and, when it opens its mouth, throw a pinch of tobacco into it, and are greatly amused to see the poor thing change colour, passing from green to orange, and from orange to black, in agony, to the great delight of the little boys; they thus avenge themselves on the chameleon! (p. 339). 761

The same story is told amongst the Zulus, and other myths of a similar character are found all over Africa, especially amongst the Ba-Rotsi (1). It would be an interesting study to collect them all, and thus to compile the African Genesis. We should probably find that the origin of man and death are the two great subjects on which the imagination of the Bantus has tried to throw some light, and that, though the moral element is strangely lacking in these myths, yet there is a striking resemblance between them and the Biblical story, where an answer to the same questions is given. 171 773

II. *The various human races.*

Have Bantus a clear idea of the human race? What they call *banhu* in Thonga, *bantu* in Zulu, evidently means "black people," the first inhabitants of the country. The Zulus are regarded, owing to their military ability, as a superior race, not however to such an extent as they themselves believe to be the case! Whatever may be their hostility or repugnance to their fellow blacks, they know that they belong to the same species. I am not sure that they hold this idea regarding White people, who are not *banhu* but *balungu*. 609 829

What is the origin of this word? As it is also used in Zulu (abelungo), the etymology suggested is the verb *ku lunga*, to be right, good. White people would then be correct, nice people, to

(1) Compare *Fol et Vie*. Oct. 1910. Les Origines. A. Jalla.

[about the original cause of death. See p. 350, cat. 116-Analyt]

609 the Native (1). However complimentary to us this explanation
829 may be, I very much doubt its accuracy. Firstly, Black people have not generally such a good opinion of us. They admit our superiority in intelligence, but unfortunately have not always found that White people behaved correctly in their dealings with them. Secondly, when we compare the word balungu with *Ñwalungu*, North, *balungwana*, inhabitants of Heaven, (see Chapter II), and with *Mulungu*, the great name for God in Central Africa, we are led to suppose that there may have been ancient mythological traditions, now forgotten, relating to White people, when they were not yet well known.

773 To account for the superiority of the White race, Mankhelu
829 assured me he had heard the following story many years ago, told by his grandfather in the village of Shiluvane, long before the arrival of the missionaries. When Ñwali created the first man, from whom both Whites and Blacks are descended, they were all naked. Gwambe slept with his sister, an act which had been forbidden, and she had a child. Since that time children are born; but this was not the intention of Ñwali, who wished to create adult human beings only! The Gwambe (first ancestor) of the White people showed respect to his father, who was naked, whilst the Gwambe of the Blacks did not; hence the deterioration (onhakala) of the Blacks. "We were fools and have been deprived of everything, and Ñwali said: You Blacks shall wear down your nails to the quick by digging the earth to find food!" As already pointed out, Mankhelu had not the slightest trace of the critical sense. This is evidently the Biblical story very curiously transformed. The idea of an original fault committed by the Black race in the beginning having resulted in the inferior position it now occupies, is, however, met with in many parts of Africa, and is probably autochthonous amongst the Thongas.

"Balungu ba hlulwa hi lifu ntsena" has become a kind of proverb, quoted by Natives when they see the marvels of

(1) Others say that their forefather named the White people *balungu* because they were clean (lungu having also that meaning). "They are always clean though they do not wash their bodies! They have no dirt." But these explanations are not quite satisfactory.

civilisation and means : "White people are only overcome by 773
death." I once heard a little boy muttering it when I was playing 829
the harmonium.

Their notions regarding the several European races are very 609
crude. Once when I asked one of them if he knew whence the Whites came, he told me : "The Portuguese came from the sea, the Boers from the mountains." — "And we, missionaries, who are neither Portuguese nor Boers?" — "You come from Heaven," he answered with a charming smile!

Pikinini, who knew how to converse with the cock, once told me what the Bilen people think of the Whites. It was just after the deportation of Gungunyana :

— "Gungunyana is dead. The Portuguese have eaten him!"

— "How is that?"

— "Certainly! The Portuguese eat human flesh. Every one knows it. They have no legs ; they are fishes (tinhlampfi). They have a tail instead of legs. They live in water."

— "Then how do they manage to fight with you and to beat you if they are fishes and have no legs?"

— "Ho! Those who come to fight against us are the young men ; they have legs. They take us and put us all in a steamer which goes far away, far away. This steamer reaches a large rock which is surrounded by water on all sides. This is their country. We are taken out and placed on an island, whilst the soldiers go and fire shots to announce to the great White men-fishes that we have arrived. They choose one of us and make a little cut in his little finger to see if he is fat enough ; if not, he is put into a big basket full of ground-nuts which he must eat in order to become fat. When he is fat enough, they place him in a big, elongated pot of the size of a man, and red-hot. We know these particulars because a man, Ngomongomo, gave us the full explanation. He had been caught, but on the road his gods helped him ; he was covered with an eruption of pimples which was so disgusting that he was left in the island, and brought back here. He saw everything. We first refused to believe that. Now we know that it is the truth!"

Evidently Pikinini was in earnest and these absurd ideas were

themselves so far removed from the animal world as is the case amongst more civilised races. 826

Another point on which Thongas see a resemblance between man and the animal is this : they believe that both possess the *nuru* (I. p. 478 ; II, p. 77-80). It is true that the nuru is only found in some animals : the eland, the ndakazi antelope, the elephant, the hippopotamus, etc. We shall have to consider this superstition again when dealing with Thonga Animism. 774

Is this idea of identity between man and the animal pushed so far as a belief that men can transform themselves into animals, and vice-versa? It is certain that in tales men are often changed into hyenas, lions, etc. (See Dukuli, *Les Ba-Ronga*, p. 283 and the story of the Ogre Ziniko (p. 256).) But these are purely fictitious. The theory is by no means generally accepted. In the ordinary course of life such transformations would not be considered possible. But they are certainly thoroughly believed in in the domain of magic. Magicians claim that they can fly through the air, with their axes, transform themselves into the lightning bird and so kill their enemy. But it is the wizards (baloyi) who are considered to possess this power par excellence, especially the faculty of changing human beings into beasts to make them work on their behalf. These ideas will be studied in Chapter III. 826 791

I have already mentioned the bird which "stops travellers" (I. p. 339) ; amongst Mammalia a certain Antelope is the object of the same superstitious fear. This is the little red *magulwe* (or *shipene*) whose astragalus bone is employed in divination under the name of malumbi (See Part VI. Letter D). — "When it crosses the road, in front of a travelling party," says Mankhelu, "the leader of the company stops his comrades, goes forward, sits down alone at the spot where the antelope passed, and pours his magical powder into the footprints of the animal. Then he shouts to his companions to come and follow him. Having walked for some time, he takes off all his clothing, and lies down quite naked, as if he were dead. The others continue their march forward. After a while, he jumps to his feet and, making a circuit through the bush, outruns them, without being noticed, and sits down on the road, further on. 826 777

774 But although Natives locate the psychic faculties in the different
763 organs, they certainly believe in an independent psychic principle, in a *soul*. On this point, however, their ideas are most confused. They call it *moya*, spirit, and in the Ronga clans, *hika*, breath (the plurai mahika, in the expression "ku ba ni mahika," means to be out of breath). This is the vital principle of man, and when a person is dying, his relatives sit near him "waiting for the departure of breath" (langusela ku suka ka hika). "The spirit has gone," — "moya wu sukile," they say, when death has come. They have no theory as regards the way the breath goes out of the body, nor do they stop the nostrils or the mouth to prevent its escape (1).

774 A third name for soul is *ntjhuti* (mu-mi), or *shitjhuti* (Ro.), *ndjuti* (Dj.) *shadow*. It seems to apply more especially to the departed soul rather than to the psychic principle of the living. I have been assured that one cannot dream of the shintjuti of any one still alive, but only if he is dead. The shadow, as such, is not subject to many taboos or superstitious fears. They do not fear to tread on the shadow of a chief, for instance. It may even be questioned if they identify the material shadow with the shitjhuti, the spiritual part of man which separates from his body at death (2). At any rate many think that it is the shitjhuti which becomes shikwembu, the ancestor god.

In former times Thongas feared to look at their own reflection in a pool. They seem to have passed that stage now. The reason was perhaps that they thought their spiritual principle to be

775 (1) A Native of Botshabelo, near Middleburg, Transvaal, asserted in my hearing
826 that in this part of the Sutho nation it was believed that the human soul escaped from the body at death in the form of a Copris beetle. The grave is not filled up with earth until a Copris has been seen in the neighbourhood; and if a hawk appears at the same time the satisfaction is still greater; the beetle has transformed itself into a hawk and the soul has in truth found its way out. Strange to say, when these Ba-Sutho give a patient medicine and see that it has had the desired effect, they say: "It has agreed with the Copris;" whilst if the patient dies they say: "The Copris has refused the medicine."

774 (2) In the following story a direct relation is established between the real shadow and the vital principle. A Ronga magician, Shidzabelane, used to show his supernatural power in the following way: he slept on the ground and ordered a mortar to be placed on his chest and three women to pound mealies in it. This seemed to make no impression on him (a fact which can easily be explained if he was in a state of catalepsy). But it suddenly occurred to one of these women that he had perhaps passed into his shadow, so she hit the shadow with her pestle. The magician at once rose, crying out; he had really left his body and entered into his shadow!

identical with their image. This notion seems to be at the root of 774
the fear they show of being photographed, as we shall see directly.

We see therefore that Thongas are not at all dogmatic on this subject. The soul is at the same time the breath, viz., something of the nature of the wind, the shadow, the image, the external likeness, or fashion of man as opposed to his flesh.

Whatever may be the original notion, they consider the human being as double and capable of unsheathing itself on certain occasions ; their conception on this point may throw more light on their ideas concerning the nature of the soul.

Some believe that the *unsheathing* always takes place during the night and that the soul comes back when its owner awakes ; this is, par excellence, the case in regard to witches, who unsheath by their magical power and bewitch people during the night, as we shall see. But, though the belief is not universal, some think that all souls go away (or die) during sleep. I heard a boy earnestly praying one evening that his soul might come back to him next morning! This is a kind of physiological normal unsheathing which is attended with no bad results. But a pathological unsheathing also exists, and is very dangerous. It may be caused by the photograph of a man being taken. Ignorant Natives [609]
instinctively object to being photographed. They say : "These White people want to steal us (pepula) and take us with them, far away into lands which we do not know, and we shall remain only incomplete beings." When shown the magic lantern, you hear them pitying the men shown on the pictures, and saying : "That is how they ill-treat us when they take our photographs! (1)"

But the great and dangerous parting of soul and body, which 774
causes certain death, is that which wizards operate by their magic 754
charms. We shall study these strange conceptions in Chapter 761
III. They firmly believe that such is the result of witchcraft ; so, when some one is dying, and the divinatory bones have revealed that the disease was caused by a certain *noyi* (witch or wizard), the

(1) The following reflection well illustrates the superstitious fear which Natives have of likenesses of the dead. Before the 1894 war broke out, I had gone to show the magic lantern in remote heathen villages, and people accused me of having caused the disturbance by bringing to life again (pfusha) men who had died long ago.

754 magician shuts him in with the dying man in the hut and gives him
774 the following command : "Bring back the spirit which you have taken and hidden somewhere." Some magicians, who are more
761 powerful than the wizards, pretend to be able to find the stolen spirit and so to restore the patient to health. In cases of epilepsy, or of any psychic trouble attended with unconsciousness, when the sick person returns to his senses, they triumph : have they not brought back the soul? But they say that this must be done in haste. No time must be lost!

775 Lastly, the final unsheathing of personality takes place at death. The body becomes rotten, but the shadow goes away and continues its life as a god, shikwembu. The belief in the continuation of life after death is universal, being at the base of Ancestrolatry, which is the religion of the tribe. We shall study the ideas relating to the future life when dealing with the gods.

What Thongas can absolutely not understand is the resurrection of the body. "Mbuti yi fa, yi bola ; homu yi fa, yi bola ; munhu a fa, a bola!" — "The goat dies and rots, the ox dies and rots, man dies and rots!" answers the sceptical Thonga when he hears the story of the resurrection.

On the whole their ideas of future life are not so very different from those of the ancient Greeks, who believed that the human soul went after death to the realm of shadows.

787 *Dreams* are not generally liked by the Thongas. If something
828 they happened to dream really takes place, it "disgusts" them (nyenyetsa). When a man has seen a woman several times in his dreams, especially if she was pregnant, he will consult the bones. If he dreams that he has relations with her, he may go next day and hit her with a stick. He leaves the stick on the ground and goes away without a word. According to Mboza, this is done to get rid of the obsession, and to prevent the dream from becoming reality. That is the reason, I suppose, why a Christian boy once said to his missionary : "I dream of many people, but I keep quiet!" Amongst Thongas dreams do not seem to play the great part which the animistic theory attributes to them in the formation of primitive beliefs.

Conclusion of Chapter I. Classification of Thonga Conceptions of Nature and Man.

During the World Missionary Conference at Edinburgh, the question of the various religions was discussed one day in connection with the preaching of the missionary message. Speakers frequently mentioned Animism in their discourses. In the gallery which was reserved for missionaries' wives, a lady wrote a few words on a slip of paper and passed it to a gentleman who happened to be sitting not far from her : — "Can you tell me what animistic religions are?" was the question it contained. Unfortunately the answer given by the gentleman is unknown. He probably felt somewhat embarrassed... The lady was quite right in putting the question, as few people really understand what is meant by this term! It is not so easy to give at a moment's notice, a thorough and adequate definition of its meaning on a slip of paper. 774 i

The South African tribes are regarded as animistic in their beliefs. They belong to that section of mankind which is said to profess the animistic religion. But in what does their Animism consist? Since Tylor first invented the word Animism and defined it as "the belief in spiritual beings," it has acquired a wonderful popularity, but it has been used so indiscriminately that it has lost very much of its definiteness and it has been necessary for modern Anthropology to restrict its meaning in order to maintain scientific precision.

Animism according to Prof. Marett (*The Threshold of Religion*, p. 15.) implies not merely the attribution of personality and will, but of "soul or spirit." He terms *Animatism* conceptions according to which natural objects are endowed with personality and will only, but not with a distinct existence as spirits. In as far as the power attributed to natural objects is not clearly personified, but conceived of as a more or less independent energy, or virtue, we are dealing with *Dynamism* and not Animism. To these distinctions I would add another, which is essential. When speaking with savages or semi-primitive men, you sometimes hear them expressing ideas, giving explanations which are purely *personal*, whilst others of their notions are *collective*. When we wish to ascertain the conceptions of a tribe as a whole, we must lay much more stress on this latter kind ; they are generally incorporated in rites and customs which every one accepts ; they are really *beliefs*, whilst those of the first category are merely *ideas* springing from the imagination of the savage.

774 Having traced the broad lines of our classification let us now see
771 how far the Thonga conceptions are animistic, animatic or dynamistic.

I) Individual ideas.

In a certain year, the *mintjhopfa* trees (p. 19) did not bear fruit. A Rikatla boy, named Zinyao, took a stick and walked through the bush, belabouring all the ntjhopfa shrubs, scolding them because they had not done their duty. An ethnographer, anxious to penetrate into the mysteries of primitive souls, might infer from this fact that Thongas believe in the personality of trees, and that each tree possesses a spirit; this would however be absolutely false. Zinyao was doing the same thing as a little boy who hits the table against which he has knocked his head, or as a little girl who breaks her doll because she is angry with it. The same boy, who was evidently endowed with a strongly animistic tendency, once saw a big moth fall to the ground; a hen at once ran towards it and devoured it. Zinyao watched very attentively, and I heard him muttering to himself: "The Son-of-Moth goes to the Son-of-Hen, yonder, and asks him to pay a fine, because, says he, I have been eaten by you there on the earth." If this reflection were taken seriously, it would mean that, to the Thonga mind, each animal has a soul which continues to exist after death, and even that wrongs done to an animal during its earthly life must be repaired in the after world. This conclusion would be absolutely erroneous. No one seriously believes in a continued existence of animals after death; and, as to a final judgment, there is no idea of it, even as regards human beings, who are believed to be immortal! These were the *personal views* of Zinyao.

I would place in the same category the description of the fight between the moon and the sun, as given by Spoon (p. 307). The same informant on another occasion gave me an eloquent and graphic account of the battle of the water near the lake of Rikatla, when the rain has been falling for many days: "In the hollow there is a papyrus marsh which becomes filled with water; at a quarter of an hour's distance the lake itself is swollen by the rain; there is a canal which joins marsh and lake; so the waters flow into that canal from both sides; they meet in the middle and fight: but the water from the papyrus marsh comes with greater force, and after a while it overcomes the other current and makes its way triumphantly to the lake!" These individual ideas are either animatic (idea of trees, of sun and moon, of water,

lightning), or animistic (Son-of-the-Moth). But they are not of much 771
importance. They belong to the same category as the description given 774
by the Psalmist of the sun as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, or to that of Homer comparing the break of the day to a young damsel with rosy fingers. This is poetry, mere personification of natural objects, or forces, and not beliefs. The poetical tendency is very marked amongst primitive races. It may be that ideas of this kind were more firmly held in former times, if the tribe has really passed through a more mythological phase, a hypothesis for which there are some grounds.

2) Collective beliefs.

The beliefs of the Thongas which deserve to be called by that name 771
because they are universal and express themselves in important rites and 769
customs, are the following :

1. The human soul continues its existence after death, when it is 775
endowed with new powers which make it an object of awe and fear. *The spirits of the ancestors* are the main objects of religious worship. They form the principal category of spirits (psikwembu).

2. Although the spirits of the departed generally have nothing to [789]
do with people other than their descendants, some of them, especially *those belonging to foreign tribes*, can take possession of living men and cause troubles which must be cured by a process of exorcism. This is the second category of spirits.

3. Some individuals have the power of magically unsheathing them- 774
selves during the night, and their spirit goes out to torment, or to kill 754
and eat other people. These are *the wizards* (baloyi) ; this third cate- 791
gory of spirits accomplish their wicked deeds when separated from the body, but their body is still living and they re-enter it. These three beliefs are distinctly animistic.

4. There is in man, and in a few large animals, a semi-spiritual 771
principle, the *nuru*, which escapes from the body when the individual is 774
killed in war, or in hunting, and through which the dead man, or animal, 828
avenges himself or itself on the murderer. What is the relation between the nuru and the shadow (sitjhuti)? This is not stated. The nuru seems to be of a more material nature, as it can enter a root, and it remains attached to the corpse and the bones of the person or animal killed. This category of spiritual enemies, probably invented under the influence of fear and remorse, has no connection with ordinary people,

771 and only troubles those who have killed, rendering them, as is generally
774 believed, insane. — The nuru belief seems to be a compromise between
828 Animism and Dynamism. (See p. 77-80.)

5. There are in plants, animals, stones, hidden virtues which can be
789 either useful or harmful to man. Medicine-men (tinanga) possess a more or less esoteric knowledge of such, and magicians (bangoma), endowed with special powers, can acquire a control over these virtues and use them in medical art, or in magic. — This is true Dynamism.

6. Certain natural objects, such as the sea, the bush fire, are sometimes vaguely personified. — This is Animatism.

772 7. But above them all is Heaven, Tilo, which is sometimes looked on as a real being, sometimes as an impersonal power, a number of mysterious superstitions finding their explanation in this strange and perhaps obsolete notion of Heaven. — This is more than Animatism and seems to be a vague theistic, even monotheistic, idea.

771 The essential difference between Animism and Dynamism seems to
774 me clear. But it is by no means absolute. We shall often meet with rites which belong to both domains, or bear an intermediate character. In the following chapters the exact nature and influence of these various kinds of spirits and impersonal forces will be studied, and I hope that an explanation of all the facts concerning them will throw more light on the subject and show that, at any rate, Thonga Animism is very different from the Animism of the Dutch East Indies, for instance, where men speak of thousands of spirits of the earth, air, water, mountains and trees ; very different also from the fetichism met with in other Bantu tribes of Central and Western Africa.

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82 Before leaving this chapter, in which I have tried to sketch what I have
789 called by the rather pretentious term of The Natural Philosophy of the Bantus, and as a preparation for the explanation of the religious and dynamistic rites described in the following chapters, I think it advisable to set forth the principles which seem to underlie most of these rites, and which may be called the *axioms of primitive mentality*.

As regards what are commonly called *magic rites* I contend that they are in no sense purely arbitrary but that they rest on certain definite principles. These axioms of primitive mentality are what anthropologists fittingly call collective representations, viz., everybody believes

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

764 775 two levels, the higher, the large hole, gives access to the smaller, the circular ovoid grave. The first is called *the square* (hubo) of the deceased, the second is *his hut* (yindlu or shinyatu). He will dwell in the hut, but come out from it and sit in his square underground, just as he did when living in his village (1). (Elias.)

764 787 When the grave has been duly dug, the diggers call the relatives to inspect their work, and show them that their deceased relation has been well cared for. The lower grave, being excavated in the wall of the higher, forms a kind of vault. It seems as if it were considered necessary that the earth which will protect the head should not be disturbed. When all the mourners have come at the call of the diggers, it sometimes happens that the vault of the grave falls in. This is a very bad sign. The cause of the accident is this ; either the person who has bewitched the deceased is present or, amongst the assistants, there is one who has been guilty of " matlulana " against him (2)! The grave is a *mondjo*, a magical means of divination.

III. *The burial.*

764 761 The diggers may be four in number, but they are generally only two ; the master of the mourning (nwinyi wa nkosi), who is the brother next to the deceased, and another younger near relative, for instance a son. Both must be married, because married people alone can get rid of the defilement of death by the " lahla khombo, " which we shall explain later. Should an unmarried son be asked to undertake the work of burial, he

(1) In some clans of the North there is only one hole and no excavation at the side. But what I have described here is the rule amongst the Ba-Ronga, except where civilisation has already modified the old custom.

(2) On this point Mboza and Elias did not agree. Mboza said that the falling in of the grave can only be caused by the presence of the wizard who killed the deceased. Elias asserts that the same accident happens if one of those present has *tjemakanya* the deceased, viz. crossed his way, that is to say has had sexual relations with the same woman as the deceased. (This is matlulana). As the hut of the deceased knew this man, so his new hut in the ground recognises and reveals him !

765 closing of the hut is therefore replaced by what is called the *beer of*
782 *the mourning* (byala bya nkosi). All the relatives, brothers, brothers-in-law, nephews, etc., bring a goat, or half a sovereign, or a sovereign, to the master of the mourning, the heir of the village. That individual must give them back as much as he receives from them; a goat for a goat, (timbuti ti labana), a sovereign for a sovereign, and all the animals are killed according to rule. There were fourteen of them at a certain gathering held in the Nkuna capital to mourn one of the wives of the chief Shiluvane in 1905. A sacrifice is offered ; the men sit on one side, the women on the other ; the *kokwane*, viz. the maternal uncle of the deceased, takes the *psanyi* and squeezes it on them all while praying, or rather insulting the gods who have afflicted them with such a bereavement. All rub their chests with this green liquid and add their insults to those of the priest.

[775] According to Viguet, this is the first occasion on which the deceased is treated as a god and prayed to : "Look! You have left the village without a head to lead it! Keep them! Bless them and increase them." The *batukulu* then come to take that portion of the victim which has been put aside for the gods. It does not appear that they steal it, as is the case amongst the Ba-Ronga.

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765 Such is the story of the mourning. Here are some technical expressions in connexion with it : Hamba nkosi, to conduct the mourning. Djila nkosi, to utter mourning lamentations. Daha nkosi, to treat it by purification ceremonies. Kota nkosi, to cope with it. Nkosi wu wupfa, it ripens. Nkosi wu hela, it comes to an end. A wu boli, it does not get rotten, viz. it is always possible to pay a mourning visit.

The name of the deceased when quoted is often preceded by the word "Matjuwa," exactly as with *feu* in French and *late* in English. In the Northern clans the expression employed is "Sira" which means grave : Grave so and so.

769 The bones of the dead are never disinterred. It is a taboo ; grave is respected and women do not dare to till the ground over it. Often one comes across a small thick bush in the midst of mealie gardens, and one sees broken pots under the branches. It is an old grave. Later on, when no one remembers who has been buried there, agriculture regains its sway. If a bush fire has reached the sacred wood and damaged it, the person who lit it must atone by sacrificing a fowl in order to "quench" (timula) it.

REMARKS ABOUT DEATH AND BURIAL

761 These very complicated funeral rites of the Thongas clearly show the existence of three great intuitions in their minds :

783 1) Man is immortal and becomes a god through death.

775 2) There is extreme danger attached to the defilement which accompanies death. This uncleanness contaminates the community and can only be removed by collective purification.

3) The social group, being diminished by death, must be reinforced by special means (family gatherings, choice of a successor, etc.). Hence three categories of rites : *religious, purificatory* and *social*.

On the other hand some of the rites we have described present unmistakably the character of *passage rites*, because death also means a passage : for the deceased, passage from the world of the living to the world of the dead ; for his relations, passage from one phase of life to another.

764 Separation from terrestrial life is symbolised for the deceased by the
775 rite of piercing the wall of the hut in order to solemnise, as it were, his official departure from his former dwelling. I should consider also as a separation rite the custom of cutting through all his garments and mats, in order to make them "draw the last breath." To effect aggregation to the new world, the grave-diggers prepare for him an underground hut and square place, they place him in his new dwelling in a sitting position (if such is the true explanation of the folding of the limbs), they direct his eyes towards the cardinal point whence his
765 ancestors have come. I have sometimes had the impression that even
775 in these rites, the idea of a marginal period, or of a period of transition, was not lacking ; the deceased is not prayed to prior to the great family gatherings, which take place three, six, or twelve months after the death. Then his hut is crushed or closed. It would seem that he has gone

775 through an evolution towards deity, as his corpse was decaying in the
765 grave, and the closing of his hut, with the placing of his shield before the door, might well mean his definite incorporation into the world of the dead, and also a means of preventing him from returning to this world and bringing misfortune to his relatives.

765 As regards the relatives, they separate from the former phase by the
783 cutting of the hair, putting out the old fire, leaving off their clothing and wearing mourning attire. A very distinct period of margin then begins, marked by the sexual taboos accompanying it, and they are aggregated again to the ordinary world and to the new phase of their life by all the ceremonies which I have explained at length. Here, however, as the seclusion was caused by a certain most dreaded defilement, the aggregation rites all bear the character of removal of uncleanness: uncleanness of the food, of the gardens, of the bereaved, chiefly grave-diggers and widows, of the whole community, which is cleansed by the sexual rite of hlamba ndjaka, etc.

797 If classification were equivalent to understanding, we might say that
761 we have fairly well understood the complicated Thonga rites which accompany death... But who can boast of having fully understood so profound and mysterious a subject? Death is the great shadow which hovers over life and chills the human heart. Outside of an enlightened faith, it is, and remains, the King of Terrors. Never more than at the graveside did I pity my poor black brethren, wondering how they tried to calm their hearts and overcome their sorrow. There is something profoundly touching in their most absurd rites, because, after all, they are all imposed by a craving for life and purity. Will my readers allow me to conclude this subject by a personal reminiscence? The day I attended the burial of Sokis, when his relatives had finished filling in the grave, they asked me to lead them in worship. Bantu heathenism is so poor, it feels itself so weak that it readily accepts the help of a higher religion. So I tried to turn the eyes of my hearers away from the underground hut, and to fix them on the eternal dwellings of the Father's house. Then Sokis's youngest brother took the nkanye twig and performed the heathen religious ceremony, calling his ancestors to come and bless them and entreating the deceased to leave them in peace. The contrast between these two prayers made at the same grave was indeed striking. And, whatever we may think, even if we had no religious convictions at all, should we not earnestly desire that, for these people, the bright comforting Christian hope may dispel the darkness of their thoughts and the sufferings involved in their rites?

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This is a wise method of procedure ; the old deposed chief becomes responsible for the welfare of the new one! Thus many *doors*, or provinces, were formed, and each of the petty chiefs founded a house and had his *shibongo*, his laudatory name. There were the Mazwayas Masinga, the main branch, near Morakwen ; the Mazwayas Tjakame, not far from them ; the Mazwayas Hlewane, Mazwayas Matinana, Mazwayas Makaneta, etc. As the complicated law of succession frequently leads to disorders, as we shall see, the main branch lost its paramount power and became secondary. The kingship passed to the Matinana branch. However the Masingas retained their authority in their own jurisdiction, and it would be taboo to place a member of a younger branch over them. The religious regard for hierarchical order prevents such an offence from being committed. Lately, as a consequence of the war of 1904, the Hlewane branch has in its turn supplanted the Matinana. Thus, from all these facts, it appears that two hundred years ago the population of Nondwane was already composed of three different and successive strata. Since then, the situation has become even more complex. A great number of immigrants has settled in the country during the last century, coming in groups and asking the Mazwaya chiefs and headmen to receive them. This is a very frequent occurrence amongst Thongas. They leave their clan, either because they want change, or because an accusation of witchcraft has induced them to flee, and they settle in another country. When I was living in Rikatla, one of the outside districts of the Mazwaya country, before the war of 1894, the hosana was Muzila, a young man of the reigning family ; but there were very few Mazwayas under him. He had as induna a Tembe man, called Mandjia, whose father, Mankhere, had come long ago to Rikatla and was so well known that people used to call the district : "Ka Mankhere," "at Mankhere's." Another village belonged to Hamunde, a Djonga from the Shiburi country. A third had been built by people from the Manyisa clan, Nwamangele being their headman. So the population of the estuary of the Nkomati, which, at that time, had reached the number of six to eight thousand, became very mixed. However the country continued to be called

000 smoke, and rub the incisions with the powder. They will then be able to aim straight (See Annotatio 15). The powder specially prepared from the tendons of slain enemies will be spread on the paths during future wars ; foes marching on it unknowingly will suddenly become unable to walk and will easily be killed.

The Zulus are said to have the same customs as the Pedis.

726 I cannot guarantee that all the Thonga clans observe all these
789 customs.[1] The Nkuna magicians, in olden times, before they were
278 influenced by their Pedi neighbours, used to dissect the tendons
751 of the back (riringa) of the slain enemy, which they smeared
826 with his medulla and hung to the shields of the warriors... Enemies seeing these shields would "tjemeka nhlana" — "have their backs broken," a figurative expression which means to be terror stricken. A part of the body was also preserved and mixed with the war-medicine ; the idea which underlies this custom being evidently this : when you have eaten the flesh of your enemies, you have absorbed all their strength and they are unable to do you any further harm (1). We have seen that the "mbhulo," the "nyokwekulu," all the powerful "medicines of the country" carefully kept in each clan, contain a little human flesh. These drugs are used as protective war medicines ; most probably owing to the same principle.

II. *The treatment of the slayers.*

727 To have killed an enemy on the battle-field entails an immense
775 glory for the slayers ; but that glory is fraught with great danger.

266 (1) This custom is the only remnant of anthropophagy remaining amongst the Thongas, and I wonder if this superstition is not the true explanation of the origin of cannibalism. Where cannibalism still prevails, as amongst the Faŭ of the Congo, I am told that the bodies eaten are generally those of hostile clans, or occasionally that of a wife (who belongs to another clan according to the laws of exogamy). Is it not probable that, in the beginning, these feasts had a ritual and military value similar to that which we find in the administering of the war-medicine in South African tribes? In the course of time, the Faŭ acquired a taste for human flesh and ate it for their own pleasure. Dealing with anthropophagy, I must not forget that it occurred in several instances in South Africa after the devastation brought about by the Zulu expeditions of 1820-1830. In Zoutpansberg, in the mountains of Drakensberg, Natives reduced to starvation began to eat their fellow men. This also happened in the Bokhakha during the reign of Queen Male. (See Part IV.)

[See pp. 476-477 -- Analyst]

727 They have killed... So they are exposed to the mysterious and
775 deadly influence of the *nuru* and must consequently undergo a
828 medical treatment. What is the *nuru* ? *Nuru* is the spirit of the
783 slain which tries to take its revenge on the slayer. It haunts him
789 and may drive him into insanity : his eyes swell, protrude and
761 become inflamed. He will go out of his mind, be attacked by giddiness (ndzululwan) and the thirst for blood may lead him to fall upon members of his own family and to stab them with his assagay. To prevent such misfortunes, a special medication is required : the slayers must *lurulula tiyimpi ta bu*, take away the nuru of their sanguinary expedition. (Lurulula comes from nuru, plur. miluru (1).

In what does this treatment consist ? The slayers must remain for some days at the capital. They are taboo. They put on old clothes, eat with special spoons because their hands are

764 (1) We met with the notion of *nuru* for the first time à propos of the rite of
775 luma (p. 400) ; we shall find it again when dealing with hunting customs (Part IV).
761 The nuru is to be feared not only in the case of slain enemies but in connexion with any human corpse. As a proof, I may quote the following curious story which Spoon told me and of the truth of which he was fully convinced. A traveller died under the great fig-tree of Likombo (near Rikatla). He had climbed on to the tree and fallen on his own stick, which he had planted in the ground. He was not buried, as no one knew him. So his corpse fell into decomposition on the spot; his skull became white. Later on a bush fire burnt all the grass and the skull was
764 seen for years "saying mpha" (it was shining), the teeth "saying bva" (descriptive
775 adverb, same meaning). One day the boys of Libombo went to pick wild figs from
755 the tree and again saw the skull. Spoon was one of them. The fire had just passed
789 by again. "We beat it with our sticks and amused ourselves by rolling it over like a ball. We did not know it was a human skull... When we got home we began to be
761 seized by the drunkenness of nuru, the disease of those who have killed a man. During the night we were delirious (hanta-hanteka), our eyes swelled and were full of exudations (malanga), the four of us, Tsukela, Tlabin, Sibakuze and myself. Next morning my uncle went to the fig-tree and saw that we had killed a man there! The medicine-man who understands the treatment of nuru, Dudela, who had been a slayer in war, called us to his village. We stood in a line before him ; he poured a little of his powder into the hands of each one of us, took a little in his mouth, rubbed his forehead. Then he insulted us saying ; "You will die! Who began beating that skull ?" Each of us denied having given the first blow. Then he said : "Take care! Do not go there any more nor near that nkuhlu tree where another corpse has been burnt under the leaves! Go away."

514 When a man has murdered another in a scuffle, he can replace this nuru medicine
789 by his own urine. He must drink a little of it and rub his forehead with it. The giddiness will pass away. If the murder has been committed from a distance, as with
775 a gun, the nuru is not so much to be feared, as the enemy was far away. A little of the medicine will be sufficient to treat the murderer. Spoon is ignorant of the composition of the nuru drug.
626
761

727 enemy died later on, after his return to his home. Makhani did not
828 know this. One day he became suddenly delirious and rushed about
789 all over the village trying to stab his own people. "Oho!" said these
783 who saw him, "it is because the man he wounded has died!" They at once called the magician who possessed the nuru medicine, a man of the Mapsanganye clan, who came with his calabash. In this calabash there was a carved stick cut from a tree called shiralala, the extremity of which must always remain plunged in the medicine. The magician dipped this stick into a mixture made of honey and the drug, and passed it over the lips of Makhani, who seized it with his tongue, sucking it as the magician moved it from right to left, and licking his lips. A drop of the medicine was then put into each ear, on each upper eye-lid, and below the sternum. He was then cured and, taking a lighted torch, he threw it in the direction of the enemy's country with threatening words: "A ba fe, bafo, ba bola i. e. Let them die, the enemies, let them rot. I will kill still others!" Every day he had to go to the pool and wash his body, treating himself with the tintebe powder.

727 During the weeks following the battle heroes do not only
301 wear the tintebe, besides these miluru amulets, they have the
703 right to wear certain trophies. These are in the first place
554 antelope or goat's horns pierced at the base; they thread a string through the hole thus made and tie them round their necks (See illustrations, p. 33 and 453). They also make necklaces of small pieces of wood, notched in a peculiar manner and burnt in the fire; a hole is made through these and they are strung together like beads and worn round the neck. Sometimes these necklaces are made so long that they are worn as a bandoleer. I recollect seeing the Matjolo warriors returning from their expedition of February 1895: they came to show themselves off to the Whites at Lourenço Marques, gloriously proud of having massacred defenceless women and children whom they had surprised in the early hours of the morning! People threw them pieces of silver which they converted into brandy! (1)

727 (1) The terrible malediction which rests on those who have killed an enemy
775 is well illustrated by the following story which the Rev. C. Maphophe told me of an
761 event that had taken place not long ago in the Shishongi country (Manyisa district). A man of the Ndzindzi family had killed a Ndjao during one of Gungunyana's expedi-

J. SOME REMARKS ABOUT WAR RITES.

177 726 The war rites of the Thongas, whatever may be their origin — and they seem to be a mixture of old Thonga and new Zulu customs, — form a very interesting and complete whole.

The most noticeable are the *national rites*. In war time, the very 643 existence of the clan is threatened, because the chief, the central and 726 vital cell of this organism, is in danger. Hence the readiness of all the warriors to answer to the first call of the *shipalapala*, and to gather 829 round him, "building the circle," which protects him, the whole clan forming a single village and binding itself by the striking ceremonies of *guba* and by patriotic songs, to die for him. Notice that most of the *guba* songs extol the chief. All these customs in which the individual or collective courage is stimulated, the *guba* and the *gila*, are national or social rites directed towards the salvation of the clan. They owe their origin to the national idea.

But war also brings dangers to every warrior. Hence the *protective* rites of sprinkling the mukhumbi with the war-medicine of the clan, or of giving each man some of it to swallow. The rite is inspired by the notion *similia similibus curantur*, the idea being that the warrior, having eaten a small portion of the enemy, will become invulnerable to his blows.

But other rites, especially the war taboos, seem to owe their origin to the *idea of passage*.

726 The *whole clan* enters upon a special phase as soon as war has been 829 decided upon by the chief, "who gives it" to his warriors. Hence the 834 taboos observed at home, many of which are exactly the same as those of the circumcision school and of the period of mourning. We notice the same contrast already so often mentioned : certain sexual prohibitions are removed (*e. g.* a queen will enter quite naked into the mukhumbi!)

727 775 761 time (before 1890). Three persons of that family died. The bones were consulted and the diviner asked : "Have you not shin a Ndzao?" They answered : "Yes." — "Then," said the bone-thrower "you will all die as this man has followed you." The bones showed that, in order to avoid the destruction of their family, the Ndzindzin had to offer a girl to the ghost of the shin, a living sacrifice. This girl would not be allowed to marry, or even to be courted by boys. Should she have relations with a man it would be necessary to replace her by another. Thus the angry ghost would be propitiated.

the ant-eater was sleeping. Attacked by the dog, the sambana 224
begins to burrow deeper into the earth; it reaches the spot where the hunter has dug his hole and tries to escape through this; but seeing that a man is waiting for it there, it suddenly turns back and returns to the opening of its burrow, where it is easily killed, notwithstanding the hard scales which cover its body.

Conclusion on the nuru idea and the lurulula rite.

I once asked old Makhani, the hunter who had suffered from an 775
attack of insanity because he had slain an enemy: "What is the nuru?" He burst out laughing, and this was the only answer I could get from him. I suppose an uneducated peasant of any European country would do the same if he were abruptly asked: "What is the soul?" An ethnologist, however, cannot rest satisfied with this avowal of ignorance or this utter want of interest. He must try to find an explanation, and some sort of an explanation is always likely to be found when we are dealing with beliefs which are not purely individual but which belong to a community.

The *nuru* (pl. miluru)—to sum up all the above accounts (see also I. 769
p. 478)—is a peculiar power possessed by man and by several wild 775
animals in virtue of which they avenge themselves on the person who 783
has killed them. This power resides in their body and appears to pass 825
out of it through their nostrils with their last breath. The fact of having killed a person or an animal *possessing the nuru* places the slayer in a state of dangerous contamination. It would sometimes appear as if the nuru had entered into him and remained sleeping in him, ready to awake in certain circumstances (I. p. 400). The danger connected with the nuru must be overcome by a special treatment; if this is not done, the nuru will cause an attack of madness and may even do great harm to the family of the slayer or hunter.

Let us try to go a step further in our analysis by putting the following 769
question: What is the relation between the *nuru* and the *shikwembu*, 775
first in relation to man, and secondly, as regards animals?

As regards man, we know that, for the Bantus, every human being at his death turns into a *shikwembu* and becomes an ancestor-god for his descendants and a hostile spirit as regards his former enemies. The shikwembu, roughly speaking, is the ghost of a deceased person. This

769 notion is clearly animistic. The shikwembu, as we shall see in the
775 VIth. Part, is a personal spirit to which prayers are addressed and offerings presented. The *nuru* is not personal. It is a power, an influence, a force of Nature. This is not a distinctly animistic idea. It belongs rather to the domain of Dynamism (See Part VI, Chapter I). Moreover any deceased person becomes a shikwembu, whilst the term nuru is used only in the case of a slain enemy, or in relation to strangers who died in a foreign country and were not properly buried. It is consequently clear that these two words nuru and shikwembu have not the same meaning ; they cannot be employed one for the other.

On the other hand there is a resemblance between the two ideas. Thongas believe that any shikwembu of a hostile tribe, and not only the shikwembu of an enemy slain in battle, can take possession of a man of their tribe and cause a disease very similar to that of the nuru at the outset (although it develops into something very different later on). This disease is a possession in the full sense of the word, and must be treated by exorcism, as we shall see in the Chapter on Possessions. Thus it is also clear that there is a similarity between the action of the nuru and of a hostile shikwembu. In the story told concerning slayers (I. p. 481, Note) we met with a typical case of nuru, ending in a sacrifice offered to the slain enemy. Undoubtedly the two ideas are connected, though not identical.

775 As regards wild beasts, the question does not arise, at least amongst
825 the Thongas. Despite the green snake found between the horns of the Kodoe, which my Maputju informant called its shikwembu, animals do not turn into shikwembu. They have only the nuru.

It would be interesting to know what the ideas of other Bantu tribes on the subject are, and I would urge students of African anthropology to inquire if the root *luru* exists in other Bantu languages and what its significance is. In his book on the *Ila-speaking people*, the Rev. Ed. W. Smith does not mention the exact corresponding term ; but he describes hunting rites which bear a close analogy to those we have met amongst the Thongas. I may mention specially the two following facts (Compare his Vol. I, p. 167 and II, p. 136). 1) When a hunter has killed an elephant and has "climbed" its body, a prayer is addressed to Leza, the Supreme Being, to the ancestral spirits (mizhimo) and to the ghost (muzhimo) of the deceased elephant. These are the words of this last prayer : "O spirit, have you no brothers and fathers who will come to be killed? Go and fetch them!" Here we meet with a tribe

which definitely believes that the animal becomes a shikwembu (muzhimu). 2) When a person commits a murder, the ghost of the deceased takes possession of the murderer, at least temporarily. Possession, amongst the Ba-Ila, is thus directly connected with murder. So far for the Ba-Ila. It is to be hoped that information as to other tribes will throw further light on the problem of the relation between nuru and ghost. 775 825

Considering the question only as it involves the Thongas I come to the following provisional conclusion: The nuru idea is no doubt very ancient, dating perhaps from a time when Animism was not yet clearly distinguished from Dynamism, and when man was not even greatly differenciated from the animal. It originated in the instinctive fear which primitive man felt after shedding the blood of his fellow men and of certain particularly redoutable wild animals. This blood must be avenged (Compare the old saying of Genesis IV, 10: The voice of thy brother's blood cries unto me from the ground. The vendetta custom which is so wide-spread is a further consequence of this natural feeling). Hence a peculiar remorse and the conviction that purification is necessary to remove the contamination involved or the malediction incurred. This remorse is absent in the case of domestic animals. For this reason the buffalo has no nuru; as my informant said: "The buffalo is an ox." Why does the shedding of ox-blood cause no fear? Probably because oxen are considered as the lawful property of their owner, who has the right of killing them, whilst the men of another tribe and the animals of the bush do not belong to him. 775 783 825

The *lurulula rite* above all is a *protective* rite aimed at the removal of this dangerous nuru. This is proved etymologically by the fact that this verb is a doubly reversive derivative. It comes from the root *luru* to which is added twice the reversive suffix *ula* which means to remove, to take away (Compare my Shangaan Grammar § 208). The blowing over (huhutela), which is a part of the rite, means the same thing. It is a magical proceeding which is often employed in order to combat hostile spirits or influences. But the lurulula has still another meaning for the professional hunters who so eagerly practise it: It is *a means of identification of the hunter with the animal world*, so that he will be able to live in its midst without being noticed and so kill more game. As my Ronga informant says: "By this operation the hunter takes upon himself the defilement of the animal (its smell, its nature) so that the other hippopotami, when they see him, mistake him for one of themselves; this man will therefore have great courage and will not run away when 224 775 783 825

224 they come to him," For this reason hunters strongly assert that should
775 he neglect to perform the rite he will have no success in his future
783 hunting expeditions. A third aim, at least in the case of hippopotamus-
825 hunting, is to overcome the charms of the wizards who ride upon them.

When studying these old hunting rites I had the impression of living for some hours in close contact with primitive humanity, at a time when man, owing to the elementary character of the weapons at his disposal, was almost on the same level as the wild beast and was obliged to display an enormous amount of courage, skill and endurance in order to assert his domination over the animal world and to make it serve his purposes. Since the discovery of gun powder and modern weapons a new era has set in for the hunter. Did not old Viguet assert that now, when an elephant is killed by means of a gun, the nuru is no longer to be feared? Hunting has become for the Bantu of to-day an amusing sport, more profitable indeed but by no means so interesting!

II. *Psinyama-nyamana. The flesh of small animals.*

136 This word which comes from the well-known Bantu word
262 nyama, meat, is a triple diminutive, obtained by the reduplication of the stem, the prefix *psi*, and the suffix *ana*. It means all kinds of food derived from animals of small size, of which the Thongas are very fond.

Anything in any way resembling meat is welcome to them. Amongst Mammalia they specially enjoy certain kinds of rodents, not the domestic rats, but field mice called maphephe and mabuti which boys catch in their traps. Civet cats (nsimba, yi-tin) and wild cats (goya, dji-ma) are not frequently seen near the villages.

136 As regards birds, they eat them all with the few exceptions
222 which I shall shortly mention, from the tiniest sparrow to ducks
262 and Guinea fowls, which they manage to snare. They have no aversion to the lower types of animal : they collect the *matomane*, large caterpillars belonging to a species of Saturnidae called Cirina similis (Dist), which are found in families on the nkanye tree, during October. By the exercise of a gentle pressure on the hideous creatures, the inside is squeezed out, and the rest is thrown

to the sacrifice of the black victim and to the mbelele rite of purification of the land, which are characteristic Thonga customs, it seems that another old Thonga way of obtaining rain was the *tjeba fishing* which I described on p. 86. When the whole clan had gone to catch the barbels in the almost dried up ponds, a thunderstorm would come and rain would fall. This was especially the case with certain small lakes such as Malangotiba in Nondwane, and that in Nsime near Morakwen, because battles had taken place on their borders and the enemies' corpses had been thrown into the water. So these lakes had become "great sacred woods" (ntimu). I suppose the spirits of the deceased, which were certainly "gods of bitterness," (see next chapter), were supposed to prevent the rain, and the *tjeba* either appeased them or made them powerless.

To sum up this very complicated subject, I would say rain rites belong to three different categories: 1) The religious rites connected with ancestor worship (black offering, visit to the sacred woods, old songs and sometimes offering of a human victim). 2) Rites of purification of the land, those which are derived from the mysterious relations established between the power of Heaven and abnormal births (mbelele, cleaning of wells by women accompanied by the mother of twins); these present some features of the ordinary passage rites, either because the fall of rain inaugurates a new season, or because drought is a calamity comparable with death and attended with contamination. 3) The magic rites, in which sea charms play the most important part.

Hail, shihangu (Dj.), mabyana, lit. little stones (Ro.), is frequent in Thongaland; according to Mboza, it is not the object of any peculiar superstitions. Amongst the Pedis the day on which it has fallen must be kept as a sabbath. It is taboo to till the fields on that day.

IV. *The Inorganic World.*

Water is called *mati*, a noun of the bu-ma class, the class of liquids, employed only in the plural form. Notice the suffix *ti*, which seems to show that, at a period when mythological

774 But although Natives locate the psychic faculties in the different
763 organs, they certainly believe in an independent psychic principle, in a *soul*. On this point, however, their ideas are most confused. They call it *moya*, spirit, and in the Ronga clans, *hika*, breath (the plural mahika, in the expression "ku ba ni mahika," means to be out of breath). This is the vital principle of man, and when a person is dying, his relatives sit near him "waiting for the departure of breath" (langusela ku suka ka hika). "The spirit has gone," — "moya wu sukile," they say, when death has come. They have no theory as regards the way the breath goes out of the body, nor do they stop the nostrils or the mouth to prevent its escape (1).

774 A third name for soul is *ntjhuti* (mu-mi), or *shitjhuti* (Ro.), *ndjuti* (Dj.) *shadow*. It seems to apply more especially to the departed soul rather than to the psychic principle of the living. I have been assured that one cannot dream of the shintjuti of any one still alive, but only if he is dead. The shadow, as such, is not subject to many taboos or superstitious fears. They do not fear to tread on the shadow of a chief, for instance. It may even be questioned if they identify the material shadow with the shitjhuti, the spiritual part of man which separates from his body at death (2). At any rate many think that it is the shitjhuti which becomes shikwembu, the ancestor god.

In former times Thongas feared to look at their own reflection in a pool. They seem to have passed that stage now. The reason was perhaps that they thought their spiritual principle to be

775 (1) A Native of Bonkubele, near Middelburg, Transvaal, asserted in my hearing
825 that in this part of the Sotho nation it was believed that the human soul escaped from the body at death in the form of a Copris beetle. The grave is not filled up with earth until a Copris has been seen in the neighbourhood; and if a hawk appears at the same time the satisfaction is still greater; the beetle has transformed itself into a hawk and the soul has in truth found its way out. Strange to say, when these Ba-Sotho give a patient medicine and see that it has had the desired effect, they say: "It has agreed with the Copris;" whilst if the patient dies they say: "The Copris has refused the medicine."

774 (2) In the following story a direct relation is established between the real shadow and the vital principle. A Ronga magician, Shikhubelane, used to show his supernatural power in the following way: he slept on the ground and ordered a mortar to be placed on his chest and three women to pound maize in it. This seemed to make no impression on him (a fact which can easily be explained if he was in a state of catalepsy). But it suddenly occurred to one of these women that he had perhaps passed into his shadow, so she hit the shadow with her pestle. The magician at once rose, crying out: he had really left his body and entered into his shadow!

754 magician shuts him in with the dying man in the hut and gives him
774 the following command : "Bring back the spirit which you have taken and hidden somewhere." Some magicians, who are more
761 powerful than the wizards, pretend to be able to find the stolen spirit and so to restore the patient to health. In cases of epilepsy, or of any psychic trouble attended with unconsciousness, when the sick person returns to his senses, they triumph : have they not brought back the soul? But they say that this must be done in haste. No time must be lost!

775 Lastly, the final unsheathing of personality takes place at death. The body becomes rotten, but the shadow goes away and continues its life as a god, shikwembu. The belief in the continuation of life after death is universal, being at the base of Ancestrolatry, which is the religion of the tribe. We shall study the ideas relating to the future life when dealing with the gods.

What Thongas can absolutely not understand is the resurrection of the body. "Mbuti yi fa, yi bola ; homu yi fa, yi bola ; munhu a fa, a bola!" — "The goat dies and rots, the ox dies and rots, man dies and rots!" answers the sceptical Thonga when he hears the story of the resurrection.

On the whole their ideas of future life are not so very different from those of the ancient Greeks, who believed that the human soul went after death to the realm of shadows.

787 *Dreams* are not generally liked by the Thongas. If something
828 they happened to dream really takes place, it "disgusts" them (nyenyetsa). When a man has seen a woman several times in his dreams, especially if she was pregnant, he will consult the bones. If he dreams that he has relations with her, he may go next day and hit her with a stick. He leaves the stick on the ground and goes away without a word. According to Mboza, this is done to get rid of the obsession, and to prevent the dream from becoming reality. That is the reason, I suppose, why a Christian boy once said to his missionary : "I dream of many people, but I keep quiet!" Amongst Thongas dreams do not seem to play the great part which the animistic theory attributes to them in the formation of primitive beliefs.

lightning), or animistic (Son-of-the-Moth). But they are not of much 771
importance. They belong to the same category as the description given 774
by the Psalmist of the sun as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, or to that of Homer comparing the break of the day to a young damsel with rosy fingers. This is poetry, mere personification of natural objects, or forces, and not beliefs. The poetical tendency is very marked amongst primitive races. It may be that ideas of this kind were more firmly held in former times, if the tribe has really passed through a more mythological phase, a hypothesis for which there are some grounds.

2) Collective beliefs.

The beliefs of the Thongas which deserve to be called by that name 771
because they are universal and express themselves in important rites and 769
customs, are the following :

1. The human soul continues its existence after death, when it is 775
endowed with new powers which make it an object of awe and fear. *The spirits of the ancestors* are the main objects of religious worship. They form the principal category of spirits (psikwembu).

2. Although the spirits of the departed generally have nothing to [789]
do with people other than their descendants, some of them, especially *those belonging to foreign tribes*, can take possession of living men and cause troubles which must be cured by a process of exorcism. This is the second category of spirits.

3. Some individuals have the power of magically unsheathing them- 774
selves during the night, and their spirit goes out to torment, or to kill 754
and eat other people. These are *the wizards* (baloyi) ; this third cate- 791
gory of spirits accomplish their wicked deeds when separated from the body, but their body is still living and they re-enter it. These three beliefs are distinctly animistic.

4. There is in man, and in a few large animals, a semi-spiritual 771
principle, the *nuru*, which escapes from the body when the individual is 774
killed in war, or in hunting, and through which the dead man, or animal, 828
avenges himself or itself on the murderer. What is the relation between the nuru and the shadow (sitjhuti)? This is not stated. The nuru seems to be of a more material nature, as it can enter a root, and it remains attached to the corpse and the bones of the person or animal killed. This category of spiritual enemies, probably invented under the influence of fear and remorse, has no connection with ordinary people,

The Gods of the Bush, Psikwembu psa Nhoba, are also especially dreaded. There is a little song which is sung as a welcome to travellers who reach their home safely : 776 484 533

> Shikwembu sha nhoba shi etlele !
> Shi etlele, banhwanyana !
> Amadikeo-dikeo-dikeo !
> The god of the bush has remained asleep !
> He has remained asleep, young girls !
> Hurrah ! hurrah ! hurrah !

The spirits of the departed who wander about in the bush, not having been properly buried, try to attack innocent travellers. You are fortunate to escape their anger! For this reason they often say to a relative who is starting out on a journey : "Go with your god," viz., the special ancestor-god who can protect you against the dangers of the bush. 769 776 784

I have also heard mention of *Shikwembu sha tihanye*, the god of quarrels. When an offering prescribed by the bones and presented to a certain ancestor-god has not had the desired result, people say : "This god is a god of quarrels. Let us make an offering to the others so that they may scold him." 776 769

3) The Abode of the Ancestor-Gods and their Mode of Life.

Ideas on these two points are very confused, even contradictory. Some say that the departed go to a great village *under the earth*, a village where everything is white (or pure, "ku basa"); there they till the fields, reap great harvests, and live in abundance, and they take of this abundance to give to their descendants on earth. They have also a great many cattle. The place where they live seems to be a kind of Hades or Paradise (1). But it would seem, when we consider the funeral rites, that the deceased, on the contrary, 775 776 787

(1) The Ba-Ila (see Smith and Dale, *The Ila-speaking people*, II p. 119) believe that the ghosts go *Kwiuse*, to the East, to Chilenga, the Creator. But they have the same contradictory ideas as the Thongas concerning the abode of their deceased ancestors. 171

Amongst the Natives of Barotseland, on the Zambezi, it is said that the dead go to Nyambe, the God of Heaven. They pierce the lobe of their ears and make other incisions in their bodies as a sign that they belong to Nyambe. When they die and reach the end of the earth at the great river Walamba (the Styx of the Zambezian tribes) the ferryman who conveys the dead to the other bank looks at them to see if

775 remains *in his grave*. Is not his grave his house (I. p. 137)? Does
776 he not sit on his square, where his mats have been unrolled? Thus
the life of the shikwembu seems to be the exact continuation of his
787 earthly existence. That such is the idea is proved by the two bones which represent the gods in the set of divinatory bones : 1) the astragalus or nail of an ant-bear, because ant-bears live in the earth, and come out only during the night ; 2) the astragalus of an antelope, found in the excrement of a hyena ; the hyena ate the antelope, and swallowed the bone, which came to light again ; in the same way the gods have been buried in the ground, and reveal themselves later on. (Compare Ch. III. D.) A third idea, more or less intermediate between the other two, is that the gods reside *in the sacred woods*, and there lead their family life in human form, parents and children, even little children, who are carried on their mothers' shoulders. Mboza went so far as to say that they are married and bring forth children, as children are seen on their mothers' backs. Here again, we find the life of the other world regarded as the exact reproduction of this terrestrial existence.

4) The Sacred Woods.

764 These are vast, almost impenetrable thickets, in which the
769 ancient chiefs have been buried ; they are called *ntimu*, (mu-mi)
cemeteries. Every clan owns one or more of these burying places.
778 The ntimu is reserved for the men of the royal family, those who have been the owners of the land. They are buried in different sections of the forest, "according to their villages," in such a way that the wood represents separate cemeteries, corresponding to the

171 they bear the marks, and only in that case does he take them to Nyambe (See *Ames primitives*, Th. Burnier, Paris Mission, 102, Boulevard Arago).

The Ba-Chopi believe that their ancestor-gods dwell in rivers. They have no fear of the graves where the deceased have been buried, and even till the ground over them, asserting that the bones alone remain in the earth, the ghosts themselves having departed into the river where they are heard singing, dancing, and playing on antelope horns. When the chiefs make a national offering, they mix the meat with water when they present it to their gods, and the one officiating turns his eyes towards the river when he prays. He places the part of the victim which has been cut out for the gods on the bank of the river, and everybody goes home. The gods come when all have gone and take the offering. It is taboo to remain on the spot and to be seen by them!

193 conceptions were still current, it was considered as a feminine principle. This supposition is confirmed by the fact that *rivers* (nambu. pl. milambu) also have the feminine termination (I. p. 36, Note). I find the following names of rivers ending in *ti* : Nkomati, Nfoloti (Umbelosi), Ñwebeti, Shalati, Timbati ; the termination *etsi*, *edzi*, may be another form of the same suffix (Ñwanetsi, Ntsatsi, Shingwedzi, Madzi, etc.). A very curious fact, which shows the same conception, is that the river which crosses the territory of the Tembe clan is called Mi-Tembe. I first thought this to be a plural form of the mu-mi class ; but it is more natural to explain this *mi* as the feminine prefix (1) which means daughter of, as Migogwe, etc. (I. p. 352).

823 784 824 789 133 *Crossing rivers* is subject to a curious rule. It is taboo to bathe in the stream before crossing it ; taboo also for the traveller to cook his food on the hither side of the river ; he must first cross, and then take his meal. This rule is still universally observed by waggon trekkers in South Africa. In this case there may be a reason for the taboo : South African rivers are apt to be swollen in a moment by sudden rain, and the crossing made impossible for days : the traveller therefore makes haste ; he will have plenty of time to stop on the other side! When the river is dangerous, a Thonga will first chew (phora) a little of his *ndjao*, the root of a juncus, which is supposed to increase courage and to ensure victory over hostile influences. (See Part VI.)

823 769 776 782 Some *Lakes* and *Rivers* are believed to be inhabited by spirits, but not in the ordinary fetichistic way, in which a special spiritual being is incorporated with the natural object ; these spirits are *paikwembo*, spirits of the deceased ancestors of the owners of the land, and are propitiated by their descendants. Should another clan have invaded the territory where these lakes are, and crocodiles threaten the fishermen, (p. 88) they will call some one belonging to the clan of the old possessors of the country and ask him to make an offering to appease *his* gods. This is the ordinary course, and the more closely we search the more completely these lake and

(1) A number of river names have the prefix *li* or *ri*, especially those which are of Sotho origin : Lebvubye. Ritabi (Letaba) Ritshindjele (Letsitele), Rimbelule (Lepalala, Olifant). Others begin with *ñwa*, *mu*, and may be ancient names of men.

845 What is the connection between abnormal births of human
772 beings and the rain-fall? I think it can be found in the
771 conception of Heaven which has inspired so many curious rites, and which I shall explain in the next chapter. So it is possible that, after all, the mbelele rite has a religious idea at its base.

b) *Rain charms.*

789 The removal of the corpses of abnormal children from dry
177 ground and their burial near the river probably sometimes proves ineffective to produce rain. So Bantu magicians have invented a great many charms to obtain the greatly desired showers, and the power of the rain-makers is enormous. Our tribe does not seem to have developed this art as much as others. The Sutho-Pedis are masters in this domain and Mankhelu, who had been taught by them and had become a great and renowned rain-maker, revealed all his secrets to me. He possessed the drug and used it frequently, he said, having often been called in by Sutho chiefs dwelling in far distant districts, as far off as Pretoria. He assured me that he had met with so much success that these chiefs had given him oxen, horses, a waggon, precious beads, etc.! Where had he found this marvellous drug? At Rivimbi (in Venda : Luvimbi), a country north of Spelonken, not far from the Limpopo and to which he went, as far as I could make out, in 1865 or 1866. The Luvimbi people are the descendants of Luvimbi, (1) a chief of the old times (as old as Nkuna, says Mankhelu) who, after his death, went to heaven and became king of heaven ; he still exists there as a spirit, hearing and knowing everything that is done on earth. This Luvimbi is probably the same whom the Vendas call the first man, and concerning whom they have a number of traditions which I shall mention a little later.

776 and those of still-born children or those who died at birth ; to these they add their old
783 rags (perhaps the cloths used for their menses?) ; they bring all these impurities to the
789 cross-ways and *burn them* there, singing impure songs, saying : "To-day is a great day! There is no taboo any more! If you prohibit anything, it will be an insult to the rain;
821 it will not fall." The smoke of all that they have burnt constitutes a religious offering : now the country will be pure and the rain will fall. The conception prevailing among
183 the Malelekes is somewhat different from that of the Rongas.

(1) I have published an account of the Venda traditions connected with Luvimbi or Raluvimbi in *The S. A Journal of Science*, April 1921, where more details will be found concerning this personage.

river spirits become identified with ancestor-gods. In my investigations I found one case, however, where a special spirit, a kind of Nature spirit seemed to be invoked. This was on the sea shore, in the northern part of Nondwane, at a place called Mahilane, where there are two great rocks on the beach. When the great waves dash against them, with a fearful roar, people go and sacrifice (hahla); they pray thus: "Tsu! Oh sea! Let vessels be wrecked, and steamers also, and let their riches come to us and help us." In former times, a young girl was sometimes exposed there as a prey, or an offering to the power of Mahilane. Now this is exactly what is done in the sacred woods for the ancestor gods and, in fact, Mboza asserts that: "When abandoning the girl, the officiant says: You, Psikwembo, ancestor-gods, drive on the sea that it may wreck vessels."

When urged to speak with more precision, my informant answered: "Mahilane and the sea are one and the same thing (ntshumu mũwe). When the sea is roaring people exclaim: 'Mahilane roars'! Near the island of Shefin, where two branches of the Nkomati river meet in the estuary, people say: 'Makaneta is roaring'. Here it is Makaneta and no longer Mahilane."

This information is extremely interesting. As regards Makaneta, we know him perfectly well; he is the ancestor of Mboza and descendant of Mazwaya (I. p. 360). This ancestor-god begins to be confused with a natural phenomenon taking place in the country where he lived. The religious fear of the spirit of the deceased mingles with the awe inspired by the roaring of the sea to such an extent that both notions coincide in the imagination of the savage. We here note the exact point where *an ancestral spirit evolves into a Nature spirit*, and this instance proves, in the clearest possible manner, that the conception of the ancestor spirit preceded that of the Nature spirit. Here, at any rate, Ancestrolatry is anterior to both Fetichism and Naturism. These later forms of the belief can be easily accounted for by the development of Ancestrolatry: the reverse process would be much more difficult to explain.

The sea, with its immensity and its wonderful power, deeply impresses the Thongas dwelling near it. They do not however tell many stories about it, nor did I hear of any explanation

773 introduced fire and the culinary art into the world! This idea is
826 interesting and seems to show that, to the Native mind, the cooking of food is the pursuit which differentiates man from the animals.

177 In the clans of Maluleke and Spelonken there is a third tradition
773 relating to the first man, but it has certainly been borrowed from the Venda or Pedi tribes. They say the first man was *Rivimbi* and his son *Khudjana* (name transformed into Hobyana according to Thonga phonetics). The Thongas only say that Hobyana is the creator of Heaven and Earth and the first ancestor of the race. But the Vendas and Pedis have a number of traditions about these two heroes (1).

2) The cause of death.

773 When the first human beings emerged from the marsh of
826 reeds, the chief of this marsh sent the Chameleon (Lumpfana)
761 to them, with this message: "Men will die, but they will rise again." The Chameleon started walking slowly, according to his habit. Then the big lizard with the blue head, the Galagala, was sent to tell men: "You shall die and rot." Galagala started with his swift gait and soon passed Lumpfana. He delivered his message, and when Lumpfana arrived with his errand, men said to him: "You are too late. We have already

773 (1) Here is one of the most curious of these traditions, a strange story indeed,
776 when we reflect that these two personages are the great gods who created the universe! Once, in olden times, Khudjana planted a big pole in the earth, and passed
177 spokes through it, right to the top. Rivimbi having climbed up, Khudjana took out the lower spokes and went home. His father being unable to get down, the son stole the food prepared for him and ate it at his ease. Then he again put the spokes in their places and the old man came home. But when he wished to have his meal, he found that nothing was left. His wife then gave him Khudjana's portion!

There is great confusion amongst these traditions. According to Mankhelu this Rivimbi, or Luvimbi, is the same as the great rain-maker to whose descendants he went to obtain the rain medicine (p. 320). He is not only the creator of the earth, but the protector of all men, who are his sons. So, if some one wishes to harm a man who is not guilty, the Vendas say to him: "Do not kill Luvimbi's man." If you steal a partridge caught in a trap which was not set by you, they say: "Luvimbi, who stands on that tree, sees you." He would seem to be a superior being, a god (shikwembu), even the chief of gods, endowed with omnipresence and omniscience. Moreover there is a relation between Rivimbi and Nwali, the Ba-Nyai god, who is represented either as father or son of Rivimbi, or identical with him. It may be that the Rivimbi tradition, which is both Pedi and Venda and seems to refer definitely to a first ancestor who has become the great god, has been mixed with the Nwali tradition, which is Nyai, so that ideas of different origins have been intermingled.

771 easy to perceive. In the quartz of the South African veldt, miners, in their investigations, sometimes strike a reef : they crush the hard stone, wash it, apply to it certain chemical tests and find there is gold in the reef. This is similar to an experience which I once had when conversing with Thonga natives. Quite unexpectedly I heard them speaking of *Heaven*, not as a kind of impersonal being, but as a king, endowed with great power and omniscience, who must be feared by thieves, because he knows them. Persevering in my inquiries, I discovered this second set of religious intuitions, quite distinct from the first, viz., the *Deistic Conception of Heaven*. I intend now to describe these two parts of the Thonga religious system. Later on we may discuss their relation to each other. "System" is perhaps too big a word, for no Native philosopher or theologian has ever classified this somewhat confused mass of religious ideas, and we must not look for anything logical and organic. We may even meet with contradictions, conflicting statements... While trying to bring some order into the subject, I will endeavour at the same time to give a faithful and reverent explanation of Native ideas.[1]

A. ANCESTROLATRY.

1. *The Ancestor-Gods (Psikwembu).*

1) The name of the ancestor-gods.

769 Any man who has departed this earthly life, becomes a
● 776 *shikwembu*, a god. We shall show, later on, that to translate
193 "shikwembu" by god (with a small "g") is by no means incorrect. The word is indeed interesting, but unhappily no light is thrown on it by etymology. It belongs to the shi-psi class, the class of instruments. Take the verb "famba" to walk ; put the prefix "shi" in front of it, and change the final "a" into "o" and you obtain "shifambo" — "the thing with which one walks!" So shikwembu would mean "the thing with which one *kwemba*." Only this

[1] [For complete discussion of Thonga religion, see pp. 372-450, category 116.-- Analyst]

stem *kwemba* is never used, and its meaning is unknown. There is another form, *nkwembu*, of the class mu-mi, very rarely used, and having the same meaning, and the word *bukwembu*, the abstract noun derived from the same root. Bukwembu is the "power which creates life and death, which gives riches, or which makes poor," says Viguet. In Pedi the ancestor-gods are called *badimo*, a word which seems to be related to *Khedimo* (above, in heaven). But I have heard this connection doubted (1). In Zulu the etymology of *indhlozi* and *itongo*, employed to designate the ancestor-gods, is also unknown, which is a pity, as it would have been interesting to see if the stem from which they come also means above. Is it not strange that in these three closely-connected languages the terms used for the spirits, about which they have exactly the same ideas, are absolutely without any linguistic relation? In Sutho, these spirits belong to the class "mu-ba," the class of persons, which seems natural. In Zulu their two names are of the class yin-tin and dji-ma, respectively; in Thonga they belong to the shi-psi class. This dissimilarity is indeed curious.

769 776 193 [171]

2) Categories of Ancestor-Gods.

Since every human being becomes a shikwembu after death, there are consequently many categories of these. What is the fate of little children? If they die in infancy no religious ceremony is performed over their grave, nor are any prayers offered to them. The twig rite (I. p. 142) only begins for children who have died at the age of puberty. Infants are, however, seen in the sacred woods amongst the adult gods. This is one of the points about

[766] 776 769

(1) The Vendas call the ancestor-gods *badzimo*, which is evidently the same word as the Sutho badimo. The Rev. Th. Schwellnus told me he thought that the etymology of this word was the verb dzima (in Thonga tima) which means to extinguish (Timula tora means to quench the thirst). The badzimo would thus be those who bring relief, who remove anguish. As this stem dzimo under various forms is wide-spread amongst the Bantu tribes to designate the ancestor-gods, it would be interesting to know if the corresponding verb dzima also exists and if this etymology is clearly established. The word *ntimu*, sacred wood, in Thonga, may perhaps come from the same root.

776 which there is no very clear explanation ; doubtless the matter did
769 not seem worthy of inquiry!

The two great categories of gods are *those of the family*, and *those of the country*, the latter being those of the reigning family. They lo not differ as regards their nature. In national calamities those of the country are invoked, whilst, for purely family matters, those of the family are called upon.

769 Moreover, each family has two sets of gods, those *on the father's side* and *those on the mother's*, those of "kweru" and those of
776 "bakokwana" (I. p. 268). They are equal in dignity. Both can
602 be invoked, and the divinatory bones are always called on to decide to which the offering must be made. It would seem, however, as if the gods of the mother's side were more tender-hearted and more popular than those of the father's. The reason for this is, perhaps, that relations are easier with the family of the mother than with that of the father. It is also just possible that it is a relic of the matriarchal period, when the ancestors of the mother alone were known, and consequently invoked. At any rate, the part played by batukulu nephews in the offerings shows that they are the true representatives of the gods, not of those of their father, but of their mother.

776 Two other categories of gods, which I have sometimes heard
769 mentioned, are the *Gods of assagais* (psikwembu psa matlhari) and *the Gods of bitterness* (psa shibiti). The former are those who
766 have been killed in battle ; the latter are those who have been drowned, killed by a wild beast, or who have committed suicide, or the pregnant woman who has been buried without being cut open (I. p. 166). In most of these cases, as is evident, the corpse has not been buried with the due rites and ceremonies ; the deceased has not been properly cared for : hence his bitterness ; or, as in the case of the pregnant woman, something has been buried without having first breathed its last breath (I. p. 140). In the case of the suicide, the poor man who hanged himself was full of sadness : "The great bitterness is the rope", said Mboza. In most of these cases no one was present at the death! These gods are therefore angry, and are the most to be feared.

000 The *Gods of the Bush, Psikwembu psa Nhoba*, are also especially

The Gods of the Bush, Psikwembu psa Nhoba, are also especially dreaded. There is a little song which is sung as a welcome to travellers who reach their home safely : 776

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> Shikwembu sha nhoba shi etlele !
> Shi etlele, banhwanyana !
> Amadikeo-dikeo-dikeo !
> The god of the bush has remained asleep !
> He has remained asleep, young girls !
> Hurrah ! hurrah ! hurrah !

The spirits of the departed who wander about in the bush, not having been properly buried, try to attack innocent travellers. You are fortunate to escape their anger! For this reason they often say to a relative who is starting out on a journey : "Go with your god," viz., the special ancestor-god who can protect you against the dangers of the bush. 769 776 784

I have also heard mention of *Shikwembu sha tihanye*, the god of quarrels. When an offering prescribed by the bones and presented to a certain ancestor-god has not had the desired result, people say : "This god is a god of quarrels. Let us make an offering to the others so that they may scold him." 769

3) The Abode of the Ancestor-Gods and their Mode of Life.

Ideas on these two points are very confused, even contradictory. Some say that the departed go to a great village *under the earth*, a village where everything is white (or pure, "ku basa") ; there they till the fields, reap great harvests, and live in abundance, and they take of this abundance to give to their descendants on earth. They have also a great many cattle. The place where they live seems to be a kind of Hades or Paradise (1). But it would seem, when we consider the funeral rites, that the deceased, on the contrary, 775 776 787

(1) The Ba-Ila (see Smith and Dale, *The Ila-speaking people*, II p. 119) believe that the ghosts go *Kasiwa*, to the East, to Chilenga, the Creator. But they have the same contradictory ideas as the Thongas concerning the abode of their deceased ancestors. 171

Amongst the Natives of Barotseland, on the Zambezi, it is said that the dead go to Nyambe, the God of Heaven. They pierce the lobe of their ears and make other incisions in their bodies as a sign that they belong to Nyambe. When they die and reach the end of the earth at the great river Walamba (the Styx of the Zambezian tribes) the ferryman who conveys the dead to the other bank looks at them to see if

775 remains *in his grave*. Is not his grave his house (I. p. 137)? Does
776 he not sit on his square, where his mats have been unrolled? Thus
the life of the shikwembu seems to be the exact continuation of his
787 earthly existence. That such is the idea is proved by the two
bones which represent the gods in the set of divinatory bones :
1) the astragalus or nail of an ant-bear, because ant-bears live in
the earth, and come out only during the night ; 2) the astragalus
of an antelope, found in the excrement of a hyena ; the hyena ate
the antelope, and swallowed the bone, which came to light again ;
in the same way the gods have been buried in the ground, and
reveal themselves later on. (Compare Ch. III. D.) A third idea,
more or less intermediate between the other two, is that the gods
reside *in the sacred woods*, and there lead their family life in
human form, parents and children, even little children, who are
carried on their mothers' shoulders. Mboza went so far as to say
that they are married and bring forth children, as children are seen
on their mothers' backs. Here again, we find the life of the other
world regarded as the exact reproduction of this terrestrial
existence.

4) The Sacred Woods.

764 These are vast, almost impenetrable thickets, in which the
769 ancient chiefs have been buried ; they are called *ntimu*, (mu-mi)
cemeteries. Every clan owns one or more of these burying places.
778 The ntimu is reserved for the men of the royal family, those who
have been the owners of the land. They are buried in different
sections of the forest, "according to their villages," in such a way
that the wood represents separate cemeteries, corresponding to the

171 they bear the marks, and only in that case does he take them to Nyambe (See *Ames primitives*, Th. Burnier, Paris Mission, 102, Boulevard Arago).

The Ba-Chopi believe that their ancestor-gods dwell in rivers. They have no fear of the graves where the deceased have been buried, and even till the ground over them, asserting that the bones alone remain in the earth, the ghosts themselves having departed into the river where they are heard singing, dancing, and playing on antelope horns. When the chiefs make a national offering, they mix the meat with water when they present it to their gods, and the one officiating turns his eyes towards the river when he prays. He places the part of the victim which has been cut out for the gods on the bank of the river, and everybody goes home. The gods come when all have gone and take the offering. It is taboo to remain on the spot and to be seen by them!

769 there. It is inculcated, and kept alive, by the truly terrifying tales
778 which are told concerning them. These are related in the evening,
538 in low tones, and with frightened looks, and the feeling of awe is
776 fed and maintained by these legends. I intend to narrate here those I heard from various informants ; these stories will illustrate better than any philosophical explanation the ideas of the Natives concerning their gods. Those connected with the Libombo wood are the most typical. I owe them to Spoon and the aged Nkolele. I will begin with those which are of most ancient origin, and whose legendary character is most unmistakable.

539 One day a woman was passing close by the forest of Libombo : she
776 plucked a sala (p. 16) from a tree and ate it, after which she went to till
769 her garden. On another occasion, just as she was cracking another sala against the trunk of a tree before eating it, she saw that the fruit, instead of having a stone inside, was filled with small vipers. She threw it away, but the vipers said to her : "Go on! Eat away! Haven't we seen you every day picking sala? And these sala are ours, and not yours. What shall we gods have to eat? Have we not made this tree to grow?" And she went home and died, because she had been cursed by the gods.

Another woman was passing by the forest on a rainy day, and saw a child, who had climbed a tree, and was eating berries. She approached the child and said : "Give me some of those berries!" The boy made no reply, so she began to pick some for herself. When she had picked enough, she said : "Are you going on picking berries in such a rain as this! Where is your mother?" He still remained silent. She felt sorry for the child, thinking he was indeed to be pitied : — "Come," said she, "and let me carry you on my back." So she went up to the tree, and lifted down the child, and tied him on her back with her shawl ; then, putting her conical basket on her head, she started for home. On arriving at her hut, she saw that a fire had been lighted on account of the rain. — "Put on some more wood," said she, "for the sake of this little one, whom I found on the road eating berries." She untied the shawl, and tried to place the child on her hips, but he refused to be moved, and clung to her back, where he kept quite still. The folks said to the woman : "Put him down on the ground, so that he can go and warm himself near the embers." He refused. Then they said to him : "Get down!" But he still refused to move. Then the villagers said to the woman : "Didn't you pass by the Libombo forest?" — "Yes! I did," she replied, "and there I found this child gathering berries, and

brought him along with me." — "This is no child! It is a god!" they 539
cried ; "a child never has a hard head like this one has. And look at his 776
legs! What strength! How ever did you come to think it was a child?"
—"But," said she, "I certainly thought it was a child — and can it 769
be a god?" — They sent for magicians, who threw the bones. At once the magicians knew what was wrong : — "Ha! Hé! You found him at Libombo, did you not?" They tried to remove him by force, but he clung still more closely to the woman's back, stiffening his legs round her waist, and his arms around her neck. They tried to unclench his hands, but it was impossible! Then they begged her to go back to Libombo, and implore the owners of the forest to set her free from this child. She took her basket, and returned to the tree where she had found him. The guardian of the forest soon appeared. It was Makundju, the ancestor of Nkolele. He inveighed against the woman and those who accompanied her, saying : — "When you find fruit in the forest, do not pick it! If it be maize, leave it alone, or, if you pick it, spare at least one ear. If your chicken flies into the wood, do not go after it. If your goat runs away into it, you must not follow it. We are worn out, we folks of Libombo, with offering sacrifices for you passers-by... Your troubles are the consequences of the sins (psihono) you commit in this place." A white hen was caught, and sacrificed on behalf of the woman. Emitting the "tsu" the priest said : "Behold our ox, by which we present our petition. Let this god leave her back. She did not do it on purpose. She thought it was a child ; she did not know it was a god. Which way can people go henceforth if you, gods, put obstacles in the way?" While this sacrifice was being offered, the being suddenly left her back, disappeared, and no one knew how, or whither he went. As for the woman, she trembled violently and died...

A man once defied the prohibition of cutting dry wood in the forest. Suddenly he was pelted from behind with kwakwa and sala fruits. It was the gods. He tried to fly, but was unable to find the path out of the thicket. He was lost, and tired of wandering about he let his bundle of faggots fall. Then the gods allowed him to find his way out again, but, when he found himself in the open, he perceived that he was carrying nothing, even his axe had been taken from him.

Sometimes the gods made themselves heard ; when they were 776
especially happy they played on trumpets, sang and danced. 778
Passers-by often tried to get a glimpse of them, but the noise

776 ceased at once, and would commence again suddenly right behind
778 the listeners. The people of the country know quite well whence this music comes, and, at Libombo, they can even report the song which is heard in this forest. It is a great pity that I was not able to obtain the music of this ode of the gods! I can, however, give the words, which will probably be found to smack considerably of the earth, earthy! —

> With ground- nuts and onions, nté, nté, nté!
> Make a good sauce in the pan!

However, here are one or two facts of quite recent occurrence, showing that the age of sacred wood miracles is not yet over, or that, at least, the religious awe still survives in some faithful hearts!

Spoon assured me that he saw on one occasion a whole herd of goats in the forest, while he was picking tihuhlu nuts. He ran to tell his grandfather, Nkolele, and to ask if he might appropriate them. Nkolele reproved him with bitter words: "Unhappy man! Don't dare to touch them! They belong to the gods! Don't even speak of them! It is taboo! (gaa yila)."

The young folks of Libombo used to blaspheme in their hearts, saying: "There are no gods." "But," added Spoon, "we very soon saw that there were some, when they killed one of us, named Mapfindlen. He was walking along the path, singing and jumping, when he trod on a snake, which he had not seen, and hurt it. During the night the gods came to him. He began to scratch himself all over his body. He saw them against the wall: they were like snakes, and they said: 'Thou hast hurt us!' No one else saw them. His mother tried to quiet him, but he shrieked, and said to her: 'Leave me alone! The gods are killing me because I trod on them! Help!' They threw the bones. The diviner said: 'This comes from your household gods! Has he not trodden on a snake?' His parents procured an offering, and sacrificed to the gods, trying to propitiate them; but the gods were angry and Mapfindlen died."

The following is the most recent of the stories. It was related to me by the hero himself, Nkolele, the aged priest of Libombo.

After the war of 1894-1895, the Portuguese Authorities established a camp at Morakwen, and decided to build a town there. To do this it became necessary to widen the primitive pathway which led to Lourenço Marques, and Natives had to cede trees and grass lands, to the extent of several metres on each side of the path ; then a fine road was built of some 20 kilometres in length. This road passed close by the sacred wood, as it had been decided to follow the line of the pathway, which skirted this wood for a distance of about half a mile. Amongst many other trees was one huge mahogany, under whose shade I have frequently passed, which sent out a low branch, right over the path ; it was necessary to cut off this branch, and the people living in the neighbourhood were intrusted with the job. "When they began the work," said Nkolele to me, on the 28th November, 1895, "I went to see what they were doing with the mahogany tree. As I was seated the gods came to me, saying : 'What are you doing here? You ought to have stayed at home.' I fell backwards unconscious, and remained in that state for four days. I couldn't eat : they had closed my mouth. I could not speak! My people picked me up and carried me home. My relatives and my children were all summoned : the villagers said : 'Our medicine-man has left us! He is dead!' Then my eldest son went to offer a sacrifice in the sacred wood. He let loose a fowl, which flew away and never returned ; he prayed : 'Oh! my ancestors! Here is my ox. Do not slay my father!' Then I got up. Ah! It was he, who saved me, Ngelenwana, my eldest son! I looked around and said : 'What have all these people come here for?' They were terror stricken. Then they told me that the gods of Libombo were angry with me. The gods said to me (doubtless by means of the bones) : 'Take an ox-cock' (meaning an ox, an animal for sacrifice, which may be a cock), 'and go to your brother Shihubane. Let him give you a fowl, and go and sacrifice. Why did you go there? You ought to have stayed at home, and have sent your children.' I did not go any more by the big road. I go by the path through the marshes, and never by the avenue made by the Whites. Now I can go that way, for I have sacrificed, and the gods have said : 'He has asked our pardon by means of his gifts."

Is there not something significant and touching about this tale? Civilisation penetrates irresistibly, crushing everything in its way, and cutting remorselessly, perhaps unwittingly, through the edge of the sacred wood! And there, under the mahogany

776 tree, the aged priest, the guardian of its traditions, swoons away
778 and asks forgiveness for having been an involuntary witness of the sacrilege!

These stories are by no means restricted to the Libombo sacred wood. Similar tales are told of all the forests. Mboza says :

A woman was imprudent enough to cut some dry branches in the sacred wood of Masinge, near Morakwen. She at once heard an unusual voice : bi... bi... and received blows. She ran-away home leaving her garment in the bush. Having arrived home, she asked her husband to go and fetch it, but he refused, from fear. Nkomuza, the guardian of the forest, went to fetch it, but they had to reward him with a bottle of wine.

An older story about the same forest runs as follows :— In olden times the gods were frequently seen marching in file, going to draw water from the well. They had their own road. They were of short stature, the women carrying babies in the *ntehe*, but, strange to say, with the feet up and the head downwards! A man, called Mishimhongo, built his village near to the forest. The gods, angry with him, entered his huts while he was busy with all his people working in the fields. Only a little child remained in the village, and the gods wrapped him up in a mat, and hid him somewhere behind the huts. Then they went to the garden and shouted : "Mishimhongo! There are visitors in your village." The man looked to see who was calling him, but saw no one. He went home, and found that the child had disappeared. In the evening the gods came and said to him : "Look behind the huts. But move at once ; do not remain near our road! If you do so, we shall kill you and your child." The poor man needed no second warning!

Not far from this place, in the Nkanyen district, is the sacred wood of Tlhatlha. An enormous pot is said to have been placed there long ago, a marvellous pot which possesses the faculty of locomotion. It can move as far as that village yonder (half a mile). But though it may have arrived only yesterday at the spot where you see it, it is quite hidden in the grass and shrubs, as if it had been there for years! It takes its walk from one end of the graves to the other. It is taboo to touch it! When the Portuguese tried to establish a camp there, they heard strange noises during the night, drums, trumpets, etc. The Landis (Natives) said to them : "Take care! There are gods here." So they removed their camp to Morakwen. (Mboza.)

The wood of Tembe, called Mudlomadlomana, is very celebrated.

It is said that, in olden days, there was an anchor there, and before 776
sacrificing, the priest always used to lift it up, and let it fall to the 778
ground, saying: "Shawan! (I salute thee) Tembe!" If the sacrifice was acceptable the sound of a trumpet: "bvé... bvé...," was heard, far away in the depths of the woods, but no form was ever seen. This anchor also possessed extraordinary powers. When the country was at war with its neighbours, and matters did not go well with Tembe, the anchor would move off by itself into the Matjolo district. This was the portent of some terrible catastrophe!

No one ever penetrated very far into the sacred wood of [789]
Tryini, of the Matjolo clan, for it was said that any one doing so would be lost, and unable to find his way out. When the people of Matjolo were in need of rain, they took a young man of the country into the wood, and there abandoned him. The gods accepted their offering, and the young man, struck with paralysis, was unable to follow in their retreat those who had led him to martyrdom! He saw them going away, but remained behind to be devoured by the gods. The others hastened to sacrifice and returned home; they were forbidden to look behind them. Once home, they told how they had seen on the ground, in the wood, foot-prints of adults, and even of little ones who must have been old enough to crawl on their hands and knees! Often, they say, they brought back the rain with them!

According to all these stories, it is evident that, in the Thonga 769
mind, the ancestor-gods dwell in the sacred woods, and lead a life 776
there in the earth, and occasionally outside, very similar to the 778
terrestrial one. Mankhelu had, however, another idea, which is 789
difficult to reconcile with this representation. On his forked magic pole he had a long shining grey branch of a climbing shrub called *ñwabola*. This has enormous thorns, which are supposed to have the power of calling the precious things which are far away, and of gathering them in the hut: money, oxen, girls to marry, etc., and also the ancestor-gods: "When they pass through the country, coming from our old domicile, near the Limpopo, they are caught by the thorns, and settle here to bless us." This idea that the gods fly through the air, is very rarely met 769
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769 with. I never heard it said that the gods were in heaven, not-
776 withstanding the Sutho term badimo, which is believed by some to mean those who are above.

5. Relations between Ancestor-gods and their living descendants.

769 The apparitions of ancestor-gods in a human form in the
776 sacred woods are not of frequent occurrence. The gods reveal
825 themselves to their descendants by other and more common
753 means; first, by their appearance *in the form of animals*, such as the Mantis (p. 335) or more often as little bluish green snakes called *shihundje* (p. 340). These charming and harmless reptiles are frequently seen in the huts, crawling in the thatch of the roof, or along the reeds of the walls (1). Natives never touch them, thinking that they are some of their gods who have come to pay them a visit. It is taboo to kill them. If a disease breaks out in the village the bones may reveal that some one in the hut has hurt the gods, and a sacrifice will be required in order to appease them. They also appear in the form of the large grey puff-adder (shiphyahla) (2).

769 Secondly, the ancestor-gods communicate with the living
776 *in their dreams*. If some one dreams of one of his dead relatives,
787 he is very much frightened, and consults the bones, in order

769 (1) This is the story which I heard from one of my informants of the Khosa
825 country: All his family was once assembled together for a marriage feast. The people were playing on the village square and enjoying themselves. The old woman had remained in the hut, and suddenly they saw two little green snakes crawling along the reeds of the wall. They were much afraid, and at once called the headman. He came in, saw the snakes, and said: "Do not fear! These are our ancestor-gods! They have come to share in our feast."

(2) Describing to me a sacrifice at which he officiated either in September or October 1895, the old priest Nkolele told me as a fact the following story, which I will now quote word for word:

"I myself went into the wood with the offering I had prepared for the gods, and then *it came out*. It was a snake; it was the father of Makundju, the Master of the Forest, Mombo-wa-ndlopfu, Elephant's-Face. He came out and circled round all those present. The women rushed away terrified. But he had only come to thank us. He didn't come to bite us. He thanked us saying: 'Thank you! Thank you! So you are still there, my children! You came to load me with presents, and to

to know exactly what the god desires of him (Viguet). If the apparition was painful, if the god came as an enemy, fighting, the dreamer, when he awakes, will take some tobacco, or a small piece of cloth, and hang it somewhere in the reeds of the wall, near the door, as an offering. Or possibly the god has ordered him to give him something to drink. He will then buy a bottle of ginor wine, and pour a little outside the door; whatever remains he will drink with his companions. If the dream takes place during a journey and the ancestor-god seems to be happy, the traveller will throw some tobacco on the ground when he awakes and say: "I had prayed thee to help me on my road; thou hast come indeed! Help me to go further." But if the ancestor-god has an angry look and tells him: "Why do you not give me a piece of calico print? You have forgotten me"—the traveller will fetch a piece and tie it round a tree and say: "When I return home after making money, I will give thee some." 769 776 787

But the great means by which the will of the gods is revealed is the *set of divinatory bones*, which are cast on every occasion, and are called the "Bula," the Word. Does this mean the Word of the gods? Not precisely, but in most cases the diviner thinks he owes his divinatory power to a dead relative, who used to cast lots himself, and who transmitted his spirit of interpretation to him. Whatever may be the real explanation, the fact remains that it is by means of the bones that Thongas believe they know what their gods think and wish, and this is the reason, as we shall

being me fruit! 'Tis well!'"— He came to thank us for our chicken. Even if one only kills a chicken, he is quite content. For him, it has just the same value as an ox. It was an enormous viper, as thick as my leg, down there (he pointed to his ankle). It came close up to me, and kept quite still, never biting me. I looked at it. It said: 'Thank you! So you are still there, my grandson!'" 769 825

— "But," said I to Nkolele, "what you are telling me, is it really fact, or just fancy?"

— "Undoubted fact! These are great truths! After that I prayed, and said: 'Thou, Mombo-wa-Ndlopfu, the Master of this land, thou who hast given it to thy son Makundju; Makundju gave it to his son Hati; Hati gave it to Makhumbi; Makhumbi gave it to Kinini; Kinini gave it to Mikabyana; Mikabyana gave it to Mawatle... ('Mawatle gave it to me, his son' is here understood)... Look upon my offering. Is it not a beautiful one? And here am I, left all alone. If I had not brought this with me, who would have given you anything? Is it not just so? I ask of thee, my ancestor, I ask of thee all the trees; the palm trees for building, the trunks which can be hollowed out for canoes; and let it be that these trunks shall not fall on the people and crush them, when they go to cut them down, even those in the marsh.'"

787 see, why divination plays such an important part in their life.
769 It is of the utmost importance to know what their gods think
776 and do, as the very existence of the village, and of the clan, and the welfare of every member of the clan depends on them. Is not Łukwembo, Divinity "the power of killing or of making alive, of enriching or of making poor?" Natives believe firmly in these two opposite actions of their gods. They are the masters of everything: earth, fields, trees, rain, men, children, even of baloyi, wizards! They have full control over all these objects or persons.

769 The gods can *bless*: if the trees bear plenty of fruit, it is because
776 they have made it grow (I. p. 414); if the crops are plentiful, it is because they forced wizards to increase them, or hindered them
777 from spoiling them (I. p. 396); if you come across a pot of palm wine, it is your god who has sent you that windfall (p. 44). When Mboza escaped from the Morakwen battle, one of his relatives exclaimed on his return home: "The gods of Makaneta have still been with you!" (Psikwembu psa ka Makaneta psa ha ku yimelele.) Often when a man has narrowly escaped drowning, or spraining his ankle on a stump which has caught his foot, he will say: "The gods have saved me."

769 But they can also *curse*, and bring untold misfortune on their
776 descendants. If the rain fails, it is owing to their anger; if a tree
789 falls on you, they have directed its fall; if a crocodile bites you, the gods have sent it; if your child has fever and is delirious, they are
753 in him, tormenting his soul; if your wife is sterile, they have prevented her from childbearing; perhaps the gods of your mother have done this, because you had not given your maternal uncle the *tjhumba* part of the lobolo, which he has the right to claim (I. p. 267); in fact any disease, any calamity may come from them. There are, of course, other sources of misfortune: the baloyi, for instance, or Heaven, and the bones will show who has caused the mischief; but the ancestor-gods are certainly the most powerful spiritual agency acting on man's life. Hence the necessity of propitiating them by prayers and sacrifices.

gatherings, after a death, the elder brother entreats the gods to bless the family, to prevent bad feeling, or strife, to give wisdom and strength to the new headman, that he may be successful in his rule over the village (1). 782

When some great misfortune is the occasion for this religious act being performed, the petition is preceded, or followed, by a regular *insulting* of the gods. There are two words used to designate this curious part of the prayer : *holobela*, or *holobisa*, to scold the gods, or *rukatela*, the actual word for "to insult." There is an instance of this strangely impertinent manner of addressing the gods in the sacrifice for the sick nephew (p. 396). These insults are generally uttered while the priest is squeezing the psanyi over the shoulders of his subordinates.

The last part of the prayer is *its sudden termination*, when one of the uterine nephews puts a portion of the victim into the officiant's mouth, thus "cutting his oration" (tjema). This is a true part of the ritual. When the victim is a hen, it is the gizzard, which has been half roasted during the long prayer, that is used for this purpose. The priest eats it, and so is the first to partake of the flesh of the offering.

Prayers to the ancestors do not show very much religious feeling, and are, at any rate, absolutely devoid of awe. Whilst 782 769

(1) *Music* plays no part in Thonga religious ritual. During the preparation of the offering those present often sing, but these songs are those which accompany the ordinary dances and bear no religious character. I only once heard of a true sacred chant. Mungomane, the distinguished dancer and musician who made his living by the exercise of his art in the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques (p. 187) told me that when he presided over the worship in his village, he used to *sing his prayer*. He gave me the words, but unfortunately not the notes. They are worth quoting : 781 533 776

"Let the meat not stick in your throats ! Eat, you chiefs, you ancestor-gods... They are coming (the oxen) ; they see me, whilst I mourn you, my father and my mother, whilst I remain outside, where I receive life from you, who are below ; I remain, I am a miserable wretch.

"The oxen are slain ! Slay the oxen ! Here they are. I mourn you. Let us eat them together, you father and mother. Give me life and give it also to my children. Let us eat these oxen which I possess, but I possess them for you. Let us not suffer from complaints of the chest here in our home.

"This is the song by which we accompany you, as you return below. Let us remain in good health."

At a given moment the uterine nephew answered by saying :

"I magnify you, my father ! You shall see me, father and mother !"

And all those present, seeing that they would have plenty of meat to eat, joined in a chorus of praise, clapping their hands.

782 sacrificing, the Natives laugh, talk in loud tones, dance, sing
769 obscene songs, even interrupt the prayer with their remarks,
781 and insult each other about family matters. The officiant himself
533 sits on the seat designated by the bones, and speaks in a monotonous manner, looking straight in front of him with utter indifference.
776 There is nothing in his demeanour which denotes fear. An exception must perhaps be made in the case of those members of the Makaringe family who clapped their hands during the prayer in the same manner as when saluting "bakonwana" (p. 402). They have as much respect for the ancestor-gods as for their relatives-in-law, and that is, indeed, saying much. I have heard that in the Maputju country people kneel down during the prayer. In Nondwane women alone kneel, whilst the men sit on their heels, the customary attitude in worship (1). If the gods were actually old people, still living, they could not be addressed with more familiarity. This leads us finally to consider in what the divinity of the ancestor-gods consists.

d) The Divine Nature of the Ancestor-Gods.

776 I have brought together in a preceding paragraph (p. 372-386)
769 all that the Natives say about their gods. Now let us return to them, after having studied the religious ritual, and ask : What

(1) The Ma-Lemba, that curious tribe settled amongst the Thongas and Vendas of Spelonken which has certain Semitic customs (I p. 73) are much more respectful towards their ancestor-gods. They have prayer meetings at which the old men of many families assemble together ; one of them, he who knows the ancestors best, leads the others in prayer, "quoting all their mountains" viz. all the sacred hills where the ancestors have been buried, and at the end of each sentence they all answer : "hundjiii..." When the prayer is finished, they each raise an arm and say : "Amen !" This is one of the customs borrowed by them from the Semitic populations with which they came into contact in former times. When they heard Christians pronouncing the same word to conclude their prayers, they were very much astonished. One of them told me ; "This shows that we were Christians formerly and have become back-sliders." One of their formulae when praying is as follows. "You, so and so and so, help us and enable us to reach Mudzimu." Mudzimu is the name by which they designate the Supreme Being in whom they believe and of whom they say : "All that you eat, it is Mudzimu who gives it to you!" If a child refuses to obey, they say to him : "Mudzimu will see you !" For them the ancestor-gods are but intermediaries between themselves and Mudzimu. They often call themselves Basilamusi, Moslems, and claim that there were Moslems belonging to their tribes (A ba ri ba ka hina).

do all these ceremonies reveal as to the conceptions of the Thongas concerning the ancestral spirits which they worship? A striking contrast exists in their ideas. On the one hand, the ancestor-gods are *true gods*, endowed with the attributes of divinity, whilst, on the other, they seem to be merely *human beings*, exactly on the same level as their worshippers. 776 769

1) *They are divine*! When an old decrepit man or woman dies, he at once becomes a god : he has entered the domain of infinity. The Thongas have no very clear idea of infinity. They have, however, a technical term for it : "lepsi nga yiki helo (Dj.), or mbangu (Ro.)" — "that which does not reach the point where it ends." This idea has certainly been extented to the shades which have attained the rank of psikwembu. The psikwembu are *omnipresent*. As Mankelu says : "For them there is no such thing as distance (a psi na kule) ; they are everywhere present (psi kone hikwaku). They are like heaven, the sun and the moon. There is no place where it can be said that the moon is not." The notion of *omnipresence* is perhaps that which has been understood most clearly. *Omniscience* is also believed in : the gods know what their descendants do, though they may be separated from them, perhaps dwelling in distant lands. *Omnipotence* results from the fact that they control everything in the life of their descendants. They are superior to wizards in this respect. As regards their connection with Heaven, I have never heard the point discussed. Natives do not philosophise. Thus the ancestral spirits are true gods endowed with divine attributes.

2) *They are still, however, only men*! They are not transcendent beings before whom miserable sinners tremble and offer prayers. The attitude of the worshippers, which I have just described, the freedom they show in insulting their gods, indicates that they consider them as exactly on the same level as themselves. This human nature of the gods is clearly shown by two facts : the limits of their power and their want of moral character. The domain in which they exercise their power is limited, being only *that of their own family* ; they watch over their descendants, bless or punish them, but they are absolutely indifferent to other men, and do not trouble about their affairs more than they did when still alive

776 on earth. I have nothing to fear or to hope from my neighbour's
769 gods, if I do not belong to the same "shibongo" (I. p. 360). The gods of the royal family are invoked on behalf of the whole country, and have power to give rain to the land ; but it is the chief and his uncles who must approach and sacrifice to them. I have no right to do so. It is true that an exception seems to be made in the case of the gods of bitterness, or of the bush, who attack the traveller, although he belongs to another family. But this is indeed only an exceptional case, it being their kinsfolk, who neglected to bury them, who are most exposed to their wrath.

Another proof that they are men is this : although as gods they have acquired these divine ontological powers, they have made no real moral progress. They are not better than they were as men. Their *character* is that of suspicious old people, who resent any want of respect, or attention, on the part of their descendants. They wish to be thought of, and presented with offerings. It would seem that they are not actually in need of anything, for they live in abundance, but they exact a punctual observance of the duties of their descendants in regard to them. They must *luma*, eat the first fruits, and have their share of the tobacco leaves and also of the ground tobacco. They are jealous,
783 and avenge themselves when forgotten (1). The only sin which
769 seems to be deserving of punishment is to neglect them. There are, however, two other faults which they strongly condemn, and
776 for which they may even kill their descendants : the first is any serious *transgression against the law of hierarchy* (as we saw, when dealing with the sacrifice of reconciliation) ; they punish especially the young man, even though he be the chief, who dares thus to

539 (1) In a very interesting tale, which is unique, and which I owe to Camilla and have published in *Les Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, p. 264, we hear of the people of Mashaken, near Lourenço Marques forgetting for many years to make offerings to their gods. Famine ensues. The men go to the marsh to cut sugar canes. They are unable to break them, and the gods chase them away. The women, who come to a place where honey is flowing from a tree, try to take the combs, but their hands break off and remain fixed to the spot ! The bones order Sabulana, a young girl, to go to the sacred wood to sacrifice. She enters the forest and sees the gods assembled. They say to her : "Tell your people that they have sinned, because they have tilled the ground and harvested without presenting us with any offerings. Now we are glad, because they have come to invoke us." This story was told me as a tale, not as a legend of the sacred woods.

encroach upon the right of the *regular priest*, which is a great 783
taboo ; secondly, they kill a man who loses all restraint in sexual 769
relations ; when any one yields to that sin, people say : "The 776
gods will lead him into the thick bush and kill him there." To other sins they are quite indifferent. Mboza even asserted, with a sadness which reminded me of the complaints of Asaph in Ps. LXXII, that men of bad habits do not fall ill or meet with misfortune ; the cough only attacks the good ; wizards bewitch them and do not go to the bad fellows, "for the gods see that they are not worth anything!"

In conclusion, I should say that what is wanting in the conception of the ancestor-gods, as compared with the God of higher religions, is both transcendence and the moral attributes.

III. *General Characteristics of Ancestrolatry.*

If I had to characterise Thonga ancestrolatry, I would say : 771

It is a *spiritualistic* religion, in the sense that no idols are adored ; there is neither idolatry nor fetichism in it. Spirits and spirits alone are worshipped.

It is an *animistic* religion, as defined in the preceding chapter, the categories of spirit gods being numerous, and these spirits being worshipped in order to win their favour, and propitiated when they are angry.

Though consisting essentially of offerings and prayers, which are distinctly religious acts, *it is mingled with magic* to a considerable extent.

It is a *particularistic family* religion, each family having its own particular gods. We may also see in it the beginings of a *particularistic national* religion (the great mhamba).

It is a *social* religion, its prescriptions being aimed at keeping alive and strengthening the hierarchy, which is the main feature of the social order.

It is an *unsacerdotal* religion, there being no sacerdotal order, but at the same time the priesthood of the elder brother is strictly enforced.

It is a *non-moral* religion, by which I do not mean that it is *immoral*, i. e. opposed to the laws of morality, but that it has no, or at least very

789 stem which has been struck by lightning, i. e. by Heaven ; or the
772 magician will burn branches of the same tree in the garden itself and bring them near to the stalks in order that these may be surrounded by the smoke emanating from them. If a thief enters the ga. den with evil intentions, "Tilo dji ta mu dlaya, i. e. Heaven will kill him."

4) Heaven and the Balungwana.

772 In 1894, as previously stated, locusts, which had not been
825 seen for some fifty years, made their appearance on the shores of
776 Delagoa Bay, and also in Natal and the Transvaal. The popular imagination was, naturally, greatly stirred by this unusual phenomenon, which was at first greeted with smiles and astonishment, but which, later on, was the cause of endless lamentation. I was one day walking up the hill of Lourenço Marques with an old man, the counsellor of one of the sub-chiefs of Tembe, a thoughtful and intelligent person, when he said to me, with great earnestness, in a low voice, as if referring to some important event : "Have you not heard that in Maputju two dwarfs (psimhu-ñwanyana) fell from Heaven ; a little man and a little woman. They came to say to the people : "Do not kill the grasshoppers! They belong to us!" This counsellor only repeated what all thought and were saying in all the native villages ; these grasshoppers, arriving unexpectedly from on high, were a manifestation of Heaven, just like the lightning, rain, twins, or the nunu, and these celestial beings had come to announce it to men.

772 But belief in the existence of *special personages* in Heaven
776 did not originate in connection with these terribly destructive
821 insects. The idea had been familiar, for a long time past, to the Rongas, and probably to all the Thongas. These personages were not only described as dwarfs, but also as balungwana (p. 352). They were said to fall from Heaven at the time of the great rains. Thus, Timoteo Mandlati told me people had seen some of them appear, a long time ago, in the Nkuna country, and that they had gone back to heaven in a cloud ; they live in celestial space, and when it thunders without any rain falling, the Nkunas say :

"Balungwana ba tlanga henhla" — "The balungwana are at play up there." Or it is they who are singing in heaven when there is a prolonged roar of thunder, saying : "wuwu-wuwu!" 772 776 821

When some one passes along the road, they dispute up above as to who he may be. One says : "It is so and so," and the others contradict him. Then they spit on the traveller, who is quite astonished to see some saliva on his hand. He mistakes it for rain, and looks up to the sky to see where the rain is coming from. The balungwana then have a chance to see his face, and the one who has guessed rightly says to the others : "You see! I was right."

In Bilen I heard of a man who prevented children from picking the beautiful red flowers of Tecoma capensis, telling them that the balungwana wanted them for dresses. The same individual believed that these little men would bring oxen to him. 772 776

The Rongas say that a little man fell on the hill of Lourenço Marques, near the house of Sithini, the son of Mashaken, just before the famous war between Mozila and Mawewe (I. p. 28), the rival claimants to the kingdom of Gaza, and that this dwarf came as a presage of the troubles which were to follow. "Lots of folk saw him" said Charlie in 1895 ; (he was then a man of some forty years of age). "We were too young to be allowed to look at him ; the Whites took him and carried him off to Mozambique." — Heaven is therefore inhabited. This is generally admitted, but the idea, from all that one can gather, remains very vague.

C. CONCLUDING REMARKS ON THONGA RELIGION.

I. *The Origin of the Conception of Heaven.*

Ancestrolatry forms a clear, well-defined religion, with its theology (i. e., the ideas as regards the psikwembu), its sacrifices, and its prayers. The dim, mysterious ideas about Heaven, incorporated in or rather lying behind some of the most extraordinary rites of the tribe, bear a very different character. There is something incoherent, vague and 771 772 776 171

771 unexpected in them, and it would seem that, bearing as they do an
772 essentially deistic character, and accompanied by no true worship, they
776 might as well be absent from the horizon of the Thonga mind.

171 However, when we study other Bantu tribes, we come to exactly the opposite conclusion, i. e., that it would be indeed strange if no religious ideas of this kind were found amongst our tribe. In fact, this occurrence of a double set of religious ideas is universal amongst Bantus. They all believe in a kind of Supreme Being, an All-Father, who bears many different names, *Nzame* amongst the Fan and a great number of West African tribes, *Nyambe* amongst the Ba-Rotsi, *Leza* in some Zambezi and Rhodesian districts, *Mulungu* amongst fifteen East African tribes (1), *Unkulunkulu* in Zululand, *Nungungulu* round Inhambane, and *Mudimo* amongst the Ba-Sutho, etc., etc. The Thonga *Tilo* is, most likely, one of these names. The word probably comes from the root *ulu*, high, elevated, and *ilu*, heaven, which the Rev. P. Sacleux has found with that meaning amongst Central or West African tribes. (*Mulu*, amongst the Bembas ; *Liulu*, in Kimbundu ; *Diulu*, in Luba ; *Wilu*, in Luyi ; *Egulu* in Ganda ; *Idjulu*, amongst the Tongas of Zambezi, etc.). This root, with the personal prefix, has given birth to the term *Mugulu*, designating God in Tabwa and *Mukuru* in Herero. It may be that Mukuru is rather related to the *Unkulunkulu* of the Zulus, the Great One. (See Mgr. Le Roy, "La Religion des Primitifs," 1909, p. 498.)

In the South African tribes, however, the conception of the Supreme Being is not nearly so precise as in most parts of Central Africa. The Thonga Tilo, although sometimes invoked, is hardly a being, but seems rather to be a personification of Nature. Is this the original conception of the Supreme Being, or is it rather a transformation of this? I abstained, in *Les Ba-Ronga*, from expressing any definite opinion on this point. Further study has now led me to believe that the latter conclusion is the more probable, and that ideas concerning Heaven were more definite in former times. This, at any rate, is also the conviction of intelligent elderly Natives, who are able to remember the former ideas held by the tribe. They say : "As regards death, people now commonly affirm that it is caused by witchcraft, whilst formerly they attributed it to the agency of Heaven." Let us also notice the name of the dwarfs who are believed to inhabit Heaven, the *balungwana*. This word is a

(1) Comp. J. Torrend's *Comparative Grammar of the S. A. Bantu Languages*, p. 68.

diminutive of *Mulungu*, *balungu*, by which are designated, amongst the Zulus and Thongas, White people of every description, whether Europeans or Asiatics. Could the inhabitants of Heaven have been called "balungwana," on account of their resemblance to the Whites? It would hardly seem probable, for the name of the balungwana, and the ideas connected with them, were in existence long before White people were generally known, or had settled in the country. It is much more reasonable to suppose that the name of these mythical beings, as also that by which the Whites are designated, is a derivative of some other pre-existent term ; and what should this be if not the famous vocable "Mulungu," which stands for God, the One Supreme God, in so many of the Bantu dialects of East Africa, from Lake Victoria Nyanza to the Zambesi, to Senna and Quilimane? I should be inclined to think that the tribes in the neighbourhood of Delagoa were also acquainted with this name, which is so widely known, and that it has, in the course of centuries, disappeared from their theology, only leaving, as a last trace, the term balungwana, applied to the heavenly beings who occasionally descend to earth, and balungu, designating that superior race whose wisdom has always impressed the Blacks as supernatural. If this hypothesis were confirmed, we should have the right to conclude that the idea of Heaven, such as it is described in this chapter, is the disfigured remnant of a higher and monotheistic conception, held by the primitive Bantus before their dispersion, which has evolved in various ways amongst the different tribes.

II. *The Antiquity of Ancestrolatry.*

Ancestor Worship seems, on the other hand, to be an extremely ancient religion amongst mankind. There have been discovered of late years sepulchres of prehistoric date, which seem to show that the funeral rites of the first races were very similar to those practised by the Bantus of the present day. In comparing the burial of Sokis (I. p. 139) with that of a human being of the Mousterian age, whose remains were recently discovered by Hauser in the celebrated "Abri du Moustier" (Dordogne) (1) I noticed the following resemblances :

(1) See my paper "Deux enterrements à 20,000 ans de distance." *Anthropos*, 1900, I. v. Comp. also *L'homme préhistorique*. January, 1909.

171 1) In both cases, the corpse was treated with great, even affectionate
769 care, protected against the earth, and provided with a pillow.

2) The legs and arms had been bent towards the body, a custom widespread amongst primitive races, and directly due to the belief in an after-life.

3) The deceased is regarded as sleeping : hence the pillow provided for him.

4) His after-life is believed to be an exact continuation of his existence on earth. Hence the fact that the articles which he was accustomed to use are put on to, or inside, his grave, the mats, rugs, mug in one case, and silex or "coups de poing" in the other.

5) If the rites performed for Sokis may be explained by the hypothesis that he has become a *shikwembu*, a god endowed with divine powers, if they are in truth acts of worship, it is but reasonable to suppose that the same religious conceptions gave birth to the similar rites of the Mousterian Primitives. The Mousterian Age is one of the first periods of the Quaternary. Some palaeontologists believe it to be anterior to the last glacial period, and think that the dwellers in la Dordogne lived 20,000, even 50,000 years ago! They possessed, then, a religion, and this religion was probably Ancestrolatry.

III. *The Relation between Ancestrolatry and the Conception of Heaven.*

769 The conclusion which may be drawn from the two preceding
772 paragraphs is that both Ancestor Worship and the Conception of a
776 Supreme Being are of very ancient date, and the question naturally arises as to which is the older. I do not pretend here to be able to supply a solution to this great problem, but merely to draw the attention of my readers to the following facts.

1) When questioned as to the relative antiquity of their two sets of religious ideas, Thongas reply that they are unable to give an answer. Their conception of Heaven is so impersonal that they cannot draw any comparison between the two. Their neighbours, the Swazis and the Zulus, however, are very decided upon this point. The Rev. W. Challis, in *The East and the West* of July, 1908, summarises their statements as follows :

"Long ago a great and noble Bantu king was in the habit of climbing a twin-peaked mountain at daybreak, there to intercede with the Great Great One (Unkulunkulu) on behalf of his people. His son, who succeeded him, was afraid to draw near to the Great God whom his father worshipped, so he called upon the spirit of his father to intercede for him and his people before the Creator of all. Gradually each head of a house adopted this method of approaching God, until each family had its own ancestral spirits as mediators first, then merely as beings who brought good or bad luck, and who needed to be propitiated by sacrifice and constant flattery and attention. But God is not in their thoughts now ; only a vague tradition among the old men survives as to the existence of the Great Great One." 769 772 776

The Zulus affirm, so Callaway says, that the same proceeding took place amongst their ancestors. This seems to be a phenomenon similar to the adoration of saints in medieval times, after a period when religion had had a much purer and more transcendental character.

2) A second fact, which points in the same direction, is the contrast which exists in the conception of the ancestral spirits. On the one hand they are but men, who may be insulted (as was often the case with the saints to whom reference has just been made ; take, for instance, the incident of the striking of the image of St Antony of Padua by a worshipper, because the saint had not helped him to recover some lost property) ; on the other hand they are endowed with the qualities of omnipresence, omniscience and omnipotence in their relations with their descendants. It would seem as if the idea of divinity, which was not originally connected with the spirits of the departed, had been applied to them in an awkward and merely external fashion.

3) It is wonderful to notice how easily the idea of the Christian God is accepted by the Bantus. They have scarcely any difficulty in believing that this is the real God to whom worship is due. Livingstone long ago remarked this, and the truth of it has been confirmed by Miss Kingsley, for one, in regard to the Northern Bantus, and also by most of those who have endeavoured to win over these tribes to Christianity. It seems as if one were telling them an old story, with which they had been quite familiar but had now half forgotten. In regard to the Thongas I believe the psychological process to be as follows. When they hear of the *Shikwembu*, who is *in Heaven*, there at once takes place in their minds a coalescence, or reunion of the two main characteristics of their two religions ; — their *shikwembu* is personal but not transcendental ; their *Heaven* is transcendental but not personal.

769 God, the real God who is preached to them, is both personal and
772 transcendental ; it is as if two different kinds of electricity suddenly
came in contact with each other in their minds and produced a flash
776 of light... The result is decisive. The two ideas can no longer be kept apart. When the Native has adopted the living God of Christianity, he either understands Him more and more fully, and is able to find great joy and satisfaction of soul in his new religion, or he abandons Him, and becomes godless, if he is unwilling to accept the morality of a true Christian life ; he very seldom returns to Ancestrolatty, nor to his former deistic and naturalistic conceptions. This is another proof that the knowledge of the one and only God, who reigns over all, was indeed sleeping in his heart and conscience, no doubt as a result of the ancient monotheistic conceptions of the Bantus.

The evolution of mankind has been a long one! Even if the Bantus formerly had the idea of God, this would not go to prove anything as regards the primitive religion of humanity. This question is entirely beyond the range of the present work, and even Science may perhaps never be able to answer it. I can therefore leave it out of consideration.

My last observation has shown the caducity of the Thonga religion. It is not able to stand before the advance of the higher revealed religions, Mohammedanism and Christianity. Hence the facility with which Thongas are converted to one or other of these beliefs. This fact is of considerable importance in respect to the future of the tribe, and it will be necessary for us to consider it in our Conclusion.

(See also *Some additional remarks on the idea of the Supreme Being and on Ancestor-worship in relation to Religious History.* App. IV.)

000 a medical course be open to educated Natives, if not a complete University course, at least such instruction as would allow them to treat their fellow men in a scientific manner, the medicine-men being gradually prevented from practising their very questionable art.

B. POSSESSION.

753 The curious psychic phenomenon which I am now about to describe belongs to the domain of medecine ; it is "the disease," or rather the "madness of the gods" (bubabyi bya psikwembu). But at the same time it bears a distinctly religious character, the spirits which are believed to cause the disease being *psikwembu*, spirits of deceased people, to whom worship will be addressed. On the other hand, the rites connected with the treatment of this kind of madness are definitely magical, and those who have suffered from it often become recognised magicians, claiming to possess supernatural powers.

This is a very interesting subject from the point of view of psychology and psychiatry. Phenomena of possession exist amongst most uncivilised races, even amongst more advanced peoples, and it would be useful to compare the manifestations of this disease amongst Bantus with those met with in other parts of the world. I shall however leave this task to professionals, and only try faithfully and clearly to describe and, if possible, to understand, the facts which I witnessed myself. This disease has spread enormously amongst the Thongas in the last fifty years. It is said to have been previously very rare, or even unknown ; since that time it has become quite an epidemic, although it is at the present moment rather on the decrease. Possession is more frequent amongst the Ba-Ronga than in the Northern clans.

1. *The Spirits which Cause the Disease.*

763 Strange to say, the gods or spirits which are credited with
776 the power of possessing people, are not the ancestors of the Thongas themselves, the ancestor-gods, but Zulu spirits and those

758 of the Ba-Ndjao tribe, who inhabit the country beyond the Sabie,
7% as far as the neighbourhood of Beira. It appears that the possessions which first occurred were due to the Zulu and Ngoni spirits ; possibly they coincided with the invasion of the warriors of Manukosi, and with the ever-increasing exodus of young men who go to work in the diamond mines at Kimberley, or the gold mines at Johannesburg, or Natal, and travel through territory occupied by Zulus. As regards the Ba-Ndjao spirits they are sometimes called *amandiki*, and are said to have followed the Thonga and Ngoni soldiers of Gungunyana, who established themselves for some years at Mosapa, right in the middle of the Ndjao country, to the North of the Sabie, and who, later on, came down again from that mountainous region into the fertile plain of Bilene. (Lower Limpopo.) On the other hand, when the war of 1894 to 1895 compelled the Northern Ba-Ronga, those from Mabota, Zihlahla and Nondwane to flee, they took with them, so the story goes, the gods who had possessed them, and "scattered" them so thoroughly in the countries of the North that, when they returned to their own homes, they were no longer molested by these *psikwembu*. That is what I was told by a Native. We must carefully note, at the outset, these two ideas : the tormenting spirits are the *manes of strangers* and not of the people of the country, and they frequently attack Thongas who happen to be travelling in such countries, and follow them in their further migrations (1).

The Ndjao possessions appear to be worse than the Zulu. "Bundjao bya karata" — "the Ndjao possession is painful." If the incantations used are in Zulu for Zulu possessions, they are in the Ndjao language when such are caused by Ndjao spirits, and those who suffer from this affliction are known by the large white beads which they wear in their hair. Sometimes they have merely a short string of small beads, hanging down somewhere from the head. I well remember on the banks of a stream, in a

(1) However, in the case of Mholombo, the spirit was an old Tembe chief, a true ancestor, and in that of Nwakhahwana there was a throng of occupants, amongst them her own son, Manuel, who had died some time before. In the case of Mbozi it was also a Ronga, but he had died in a foreign country (See later).

wooded valley called Nhlalalene, where we had made a halt during one of our journeyings, seeing a good-looking young woman wearing one of these curious ornaments. I was struck with the sight, and asked my companion why she was thus decorated. — "She invokes the spirits of the Ba-Ndjao," was the reply.

II. *Beginning and Diagnosis of the Disease.*

I have carefully studied the story of many cases of possession amongst the Ba-Ronga (See *Bulletin de la Société Neuchâteloise de Géographie*. Tome X, p. 388). Most of them began by a distinct crisis, in which the patient was unconscious, but this does not seem to have been brought about by any previous nervous trouble. A woman of the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques, *Ñwashinhwana*, fled from her home and threw herself into the Bay. The contact with the cold water restored her to her senses, after which the bones declared that she had *psikwembu*. Another, *Mholombo*, heard a voice calling her during a dream ; it was the possessing spirit, which revealed itself later on as a chief long since dead. I will now give full details of the case of *Mboza*, who was himself possessed at one time, and later on became a regular exorcist. After having worked in Kimberley for some time, he returned home in good health. Soon afterwards, however, he became lame for six months. He attributed his difficulty in walking to rheumatism (shifambo). There was some improvement in his condition, but he began to feel other symptoms ; he lost his appetite and almost entirely ceased to eat. Here is his testimony : "One day, having gone with another young man to gather juncus, in order to manufacture a mat, the psikwembu suddenly started in me" (ndji sunguleka ~~ki psikwembu~~ psikañwe). I came back home, trembling in all my limbs. I entered the hut, but suddenly I rose to my feet and began to attack the people of the village ; then I ran away, followed by my friends, who seized me, and at once the spirits were scattered (hangalaka). When I became conscious again, I was told I had hurt a *khehla* (a man with the wax crown (I. p. 129), and had struck other people on their backs :

APPENDIX V (See p. 536).

The Murimi Movement, an attempt on the part of the Thonga Tribe to get rid of witchcraft.

In the year 1913 (or 1914) the members of one of the Hlengwe clans living near the Sabie River, in the extreme north of the Thonga territory, seeing that the crops were bad, game wanting, and that even honey was scarce, contributed each of them a small sum of money, collected £ 10 and sent messengers to Myali, the Kalanga god who dwells in a cave in Machonaland, in order to regain prosperity. They were well received by the priests of Myali, who introduced them to the god they serve. They had to pass through a tunnel, with a big rock hanging over their heads. On the other side of this tunnel there was a kind of amphitheatre of rocks, enclosing a very clean and well-swept space. A voice from the rocks above greeted them in Zulu : "Good morning, my children", and they were given a pouch full of tobacco with the following instructions : "When you reach your home, take a snuff of this tobacco ; then go to your gardens, blow your noses and spread the nasal mucus in the soil ; henceforth you will have abundant harvests." The Hlengwe messengers returned home and began to use the precious drug, but this tobacco of Murimi, as it was called, had a marvellous fate. It found purchasers throughout the Thonga tribe, and during four years all the Thonga clans performed the new rite, the rite of Murimi, in the conviction that a new era had set in in which there would be no more famine and in which witchcraft, that great enemy of humanity, which causes disease, robs, and kills, would be expelled for ever.

Who is this Myali? He is the same personage who is called Ñwali in other parts of the country, the same also as Ra-Luvimbi, the god of the Ba-Venda, to whom they pray to obtain rain (See p. 321). His sacred cave is in the Matoppo hills, in the midst of that extraordinary desert of rocks in which Cecil Rhodes chose the spot for his grave, some fifteen miles further south. Mr Eliott, who was Native Commissioner in this region, told me that the description of the cave given above was exact. I will not discuss here the origin of the cult of Myali, called also Mlimo, a term probably corresponding to the Sutho Modimo, which would seem to have been transformed into Murimi when it was adopted by the Thongas. This is a most interesting subject to which I would draw the attention of our Rhodesian colleagues. Myali has med-

754 iums, consecrated girls (bampouka) set apart from their youth to be-
776 come the wives of his priests ; the rite of the magical tobacco, which is
771 a fecundation rite, is unknown in South African ancestrolatry. Everything would appear to suggest that this cult is of foreign origin. A fact which is worthy of special notice is this : *Myali is the enemy of wizards.* If anyone guilty of witchcraft approaches his cave, he will be struck dead, and his priests will have nothing to do with witchcraft cases.

I cannot explain in detail how the new cult spread from the Hlengwe country down to the Maputju region, thus creating in the Thonga tribe a unity which has but seldom been attained. Certain individuals appear to have availed themselves of the new belief to do a profitable piece of business. They bought a part of the original tobacco of Murimi, mixed it with ordinary tobacco and went to the chiefs offering to let their subjects snuff the miraculous drug. I happened to meet one of these prophets of Murimi, who also called himself Murimi and who had been arrested by the Portuguese Administrator of Morakwen, as the Authorities seem to have feared at a certain moment that the agitation caused by this movement might have a political character. This particular Murimi appeared to be a very simple type of man. He was half lame, his arms were crooked, and he told me that his reason for fighting the wizards was that it was they who had reduced him to that miserable condition ; he was convinced that his efforts to combat them were very beneficial to the country. But notwithstanding these altruistic inclinations, he did not neglect his own interests ; anyone admitted to snuff the tobacco had to give the chief a fowl or a "nkinyenta", i. e. 500 reis, then of the value of I s. 6d, and Murimi received a considerable share of the fee.

Wonderful rumours preceded the distributor of tobacco. It was said that he had been emprisoned by one of the Administrators, further north, but had suffered nothing through this infringement of his liberty ; the following night he had been miraculously transported to the bed of the Commandant, whilst the latter had taken his place in the gaol! He was now approaching the town of Lourenço Marques in the form of a gigantic dragon before whom everyone fled!

754 The following is the description of the manner in which the Murimi
771 rite was performed in the Matalane region, some 15 miles north of Lourenço Marques. The chief Magebeza summons all his subjects to assemble early in the morning in a forest (Sept. 1916). His counsellors are present and bring with them the lame prophet holding in his hands a sala shell containing the tobacco. A woman comes and, kneels down in front of him; she holds out her open hand, palm upwards. Murimi takes

754 occasion. At the conclusion of their speeches they pronounce his name.
Though no special offering is made except the sweet potato and the sala
771 fruit just referred to, and no special ceremony of worship is performed, Murimi has clearly become the object of adoration of his devotees and is much nearer their hearts and consciences than the ancestor-gods.

A year or two went by and the Thongas were obliged to confess that the produce of the fields in the meagre sand of their hills was not richer than in former years. People died just as before; the great salvation which the worshippers of Murimi had expected did not come, and the tribe understood vaguely that it had been the victim of a gigantic hoax. At least when the question was put to the devotees of the new cult: "What about Murimi?" they smiled and did not answer a word, and very soon Murimi was forgotten.

754 It might be thought that this strange movement was the result of Euro-
771 pean influence; it bears a strongly monotheistic character, and Murimi is certainly very different from the ancestor-gods and from Tilo, Heaven,
776 and much more akin to the Christian God. It must however be observed that very little information was given about this god, who was to a certain extent identified with his prophets, the latter being named Murimi as well as himself. But setting aside the small part played by Murimi, we are forced to recognise that the new rite is essentially and authentically Bantu. It is directly connected with witchcraft, the old Thonga animistic belief; we have already met, in connection with the treatment of smallpox, with the idea of destroying witchcraft by means of a collective confession and repudiation (p. 465). The taboos accompanying the new rite are those we have everywhere found in the marginal periods or when an initiation was taking place. The Murimi Movement is thus a genuine creation of primitive Thonga mentality. Changes are taking place so rapidly that it is probably the last. I am glad therefore to have had an opportunity of witnessing it and of publishing the record of such an interesting event. Further details will be found in a paper which appeared in *Le Journal de Psychologie normale et pathologique*. 15 Décembre 1924. Paris.

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585 782 769 performs the religious rite (hahla). He takes between his first finger and thumb a small quantity of the half digested grass which has been taken from the paunch of the animal, makes a little ball of it, touches his tongue with it and emits a sound resembling " tsu "... as if he were slightly spitting. This is the customary sacramental act in most of the sacrifices. (See Part VI.) He stands behind the wedding pair and, looking straight in front of him towards them, speaks to the gods, that is to say to the spirits of his ancestors, and says : " My fathers, my grandfathers (he calls them by their names) look! To-day my child is leaving me. She enters the wedded life (bukatin). Look at her, accompany her where she will live. May she also found a village, may she have many children (mu nyikan timbeleko), may she be happy, good and just. May she be on good terms with those with whom she will be ". Here it may happen that a brother of the bridegroom will interrupt and say : " Yes, we will live peacefully with her if she does her duty well and does not worry her husband ". The old man goes on with his patriarchal prayer without taking any notice of the interruption and everybody listens quietly and attentively. This prayer which he pronounces with his eyes wide open and in a most natural manner is sometimes very long. When the people have had enough of it and wish him to stop, they send a young man to cut a piece of meat and to put it into the old man's mouth. Thus they " cut " his prayer and he keeps still. The person officiating must be the first to partake of the meat of the sacrifice.

f) The symbolical belt.

585 777 825 The astragalus (nhlolo) of the right leg of the sacrificed goat has been carefully kept. All along the belly they cut a strip of skin reaching as far as the neck and up to the chin, which is cut so as to form a kind of pocket at the end of the strip. The astragalus is put into this pocket and the father ties the belt around the waist of the young woman. He must not look at her face to face in doing this. On the contrary, she must turn her

585 back to him. This is doubtless done to wish her good luck and
777 so that she may have many descendants. Natives have a special
825 veneration for the astragalus bone which is also used in the divinatory system.

5) The tlhoma, departure of the bride for the conjugal dwelling.

585 If the lobolo business has been duly concluded, the bride will start on the following day for the conjugal dwelling, accompanied by her friends. (1) The next day, she will be joined by the women of her village, who will help her to erect the wood pile (ku koroka shigiyane). They will all go together into the bush to cut a large quantity of branches, and will pile them up between two poles covered with ochre in the bride's village. Each of the husband's relations will take one of these logs during the following months. It is, it seems, a symbolic present from one family to the other.

As for the wood cutters, they take their leave and go home. But what a surprise! Here is the bride going with them! Her sisters are taking her home again! The husband entreats, but in vain! He pursues the woman who, two days before, became his legal wife. To no purpose! He offers her a present to induce her to stay with him. She refuses... This was foreseen ; she must go to her mother to fetch her basket (shihundju), her mat, her spoon and other utensils which make up her small trousseau. A last lesson must also be given to the husband : " If we have given you our daughter, do not believe that we have had enough of her! (hi kolile). She is very precious to us and we take her back! "

Patience! To morrow she will come back accompanied by one young girl only who helps to carry her furniture. This

(1) It is *taboo* for the bride's parents to keep their daughter in their village when the lobolo has been entirely delivered ; because, should the bride die with them, they would have to return all the cattle, whilst if she dies in the husband's village, the consequences will not be so dreadful (See Part I. Ch. II. C.).

606 these bukoñwana rules would cause death. Yet they are religiously kept as necessary to ensure normal relations between the two families.

We have already seen the taboos which must be observed during the betrothal period (p. 106). Later on, during the gatherings which take place *before marriage*, other taboos are imposed.

606 802 201 584 784 1. In the discussion concerning the lobola, when oxen are counted, the bridegroom's parents must never offer eight head of cattle, because one of them will be killed for the feast, and so eight means only seven. *Seven* is counted by raising, one after the other, the five fingers of the left hand and the thumb and index-finger of the right. In raising the index-finger, they might point it at the bakoñwana, and this would be a mortal offence. To point at anyone with the index-finger is as bad as bewitching him. It is done only in anger, and all the preceding discussions might be nullified if such an imprudence were committed.

2. Should one of the oxen be frightened by the shouts of joy with which the arrival of the herd is greeted and by the sham-fight of the lobola day, and run away home, it is taboo. The ox has seen that something is wrong and has consequently fled. Even should they succeed in bringing it back, "timpfalo ti tjukile," the conscience (or the diaphragm) has been stirred!

584 825 777 784 3. If one of the oxen has no horns (homu ya mhulu), or only abortive horns, psa yila : *bukoñwana byi ta pfumala timpsalu*, viz., the relations with relatives-in-law will have no tenderness, because such an ox moves its head to and fro as it wanders in the night ; it is abnormal. The bride's family will not accept it.

4. Should the lobolo consist of hoes, and should the rain fall on them while they are being carried to the bakoñwana, it is taboo. The lobolo must not be brought in a wet condition, otherwise the new relations will be spoilt (bukoñwana byi ta tshipa) ; the young people will not be able to marry.

5. Do not bring with you tobacco in the leaf when going *bukwen* as a fiancé, bring only ground tobacco, or misfortune will happen. Later on, when you have married your wife, it is allowable.

6. Never eat zebra or reedbuck's meat when staying with your parents-in-law. Should they kill one of these animals while

584 825 777 784 you are there, or on the road, have nothing to do with it. The zebra is *mbalamberi*, an animal of two colours; moreover it has no horns. The same holds good for the giraffe. It has two colours, it has too long bowels. Psa yila! The reedbuck cries: "Dzoo." It is a witch: a mukoñwana must not eat it. For the same reason a sheep without horns is never given to bakoñwana.

7. When you go with women to the parents of your fiancée for a *shiwalo*, viz., to bring them beer, should one of the jugs fall to the ground, psa yila! Return home!

606 609 784 618 825 177 8. From a Thonga of the Maputju country I once heard that it was a great taboo in that district for a man to drink milk with his parents-in-law; let us say rather to *eat* milk, as Natives always take it in its solid form, i. e. curdled. This man was a Christian; he had given up many heathen customs and had gone so far as to partake of milk with his mother-in-law, but, the people all round were very much shocked at his conduct. Pushing my inquiry further, I heard that the milk taboo was observed not only with bakoñwana, but with all the inhabitants of the country who did not belong to one's clan; curdled milk was to be eaten only with people bearing the same family name. In other words, it is forbidden to eat milk *in any village where one can take a wife*. In a very interesting paper published in the *South African Journal of Science*, 1925, p. 481, Mrs A. W. Hoernlé says that this custom is wide-spread amongst many Bantu tribes of Central and South Africa, and explains it by the very intimate relationship which is thought to exist between human beings and cattle. The oxen are one with the clan to which they belong, and only members of that clan can partake of the milk of their cows. I never met with this idea in the other parts of the Thonga tribe, and I may remark that, as the Maputju clan is settled very near to the Zulus and has been more or less "zuluised", this custom might very well have been borrowed from its neighbours. Further researches will show whether the other Thonga clans have preserved what seems to be a very old Bantu idea, or at any rate traces of it. This is quite possible.

584 777 784 9. Do not build a hut for your wife before you have married her. Mankhelu says: "Even if you have plenty of money to lobola, if you make such a blunder your wife will be taken from you.

777 784 from you... In the same manner, do not prepare the skin for the child before it is born. Your wife would not bring forth a human being. Should you transgress this rule, you would bring misfortune on yourself (wa tihlolela, wa singita), and on your family. If you go to Moneri (the missionary) and ask him for a skin for this purpose before the birth of your child, he will tell you it is so." Note the deep-rooted conviction of the old heathen, who appeals to the authority of the missionary to strengthen the taboo!

585 784 777 262 10. Later on, when you are married, you must avoid eating honey with your wife for a whole year, till she has had a child. The bride is allowed to eat honey at her parent's home, but not in her new domicile and with her husband. The husband can eat it in the bush, but he must wash his hands when he comes back, lest his wife should notice it. She would run home if she knew of it. We have already met with this prohibition in the tjekela visit, and heard the reason for it : honey flows ; the bride would go! The explanation now given is this : honey is too sweet, and your bride is too sweet also. (Is it not your honey-moon or honey-year ?) The two things do not go together. (Psa yalana, they hate each other.) A third reason is this : Bees, when they have eaten their honey, fly away from the hive. So would your wife do... After a year this misfortune is no longer to be feared.

606 581 This last idea is very curious. It shows that the bukoñwana taboos *decrease in severity as time passes*. The strained relations between the son-in-law and his wife's mother also become easier. He begins to call her mamana, and she calls him ñwana. This transformation even goes so far that in some cases a mukoñwana can go and dwell in his parents-in-law's village, especially if he has children and if the children are grown up. And this fact gives us the natural explanation of these curious rules.

Marriage, as we have seen, is not an individual affair in the collective stage of family life. It is a contract made between two groups, which enter by it into a special relation towards each other. This relation is fraught with danger, because the interests of both groups are involved ; a bride and bridegroom are inspired with a mutual feeling of fear, knowing that an

484 comes to ask for his property! What cunning displayed in confusing the real issue and evading payment! (1)

Travelling consequently plays a great part in the life of these tribes, and it is no wonder that it is subject to many rules and that many taboos must be observed on the road in order to succeed in these expeditions.

I may mention first the four following taboos.

484 A traveller must not *take salt* with him when he goes either to
777 pay a visit, or to hunt, or on a business trip, or else he will not
784 succeed in his object; he must avoid *sharpening assagais* on the road; this would rouse his enemies and "awaken thorns" on the path; he must take care *not to pluck milaia leaves*, those used for weaving baskets: it would be an insult to the people on whom he is calling. Let him cut these leaves when returning, or else he will find trouble in the village to which he goes, lamentations, shoutings, disgusting sights. When he finds on the road people occupied in *digging a grave*, he must go at once and help them for a while. If he neglects this duty, he will take upon himself the misfortune (titekela khombo). He will not succeed in his purpose. Should he be in the village when some person dies, he must take part in the purification of the inmates.

825 There are some kinds of animals which bring bad luck to the
777 traveller. In order to "keep the road clean" (basisa ndlela), he
484 must beware of the *mampfana bird*, a kind of crane called "the preventer of the journey" (sibaliyendjo (Ro) shitsinyariendjo (Dj). Should this bird fly across the road, with wide-spread wings, it would be enough to make the party return home: there is danger of death before them and the "mampfana" comes to warn them

609 (1) One day one of my neighbours, named Mandjia, was arranging to start for
484 Bilese to "follow his goods" (landja bukosi); he came and requested me to give him a letter. "What for? Your debtors do not know how to read and I do not know anything about your affairs." — "It does not matter," said he. "The important point is that I should have a paper in my hand. They will be afraid. They will think that I come from the White people with their authority." I did not like to refuse a small favour to a neighbour; on the other hand I was somwhat reluctant to help him in a none too moral plan, so I gave him a letter addressed to the Portuguese Intendant of these countries in which I stated that I knew him. It was a kind of pass... What use did he make of it? The fact remains that he came back with his oxen, and I believe the sight of the mysterious paper was not without influence in the transactions which ended in the recovery of his property!

825 that the road is not "clean" (Viguet). The flesh of this bird is
777 used in the preparation of the charms carried by travellers. There
484 are also two mammals which give the same warning : the duyker
782 antelope (mhunti) and the polecat (mangobo). Should a boy going to Johannesburg meet with any of these three animals, he will go to his kokwana (grandfather) and ask him for help ; the old man will then take a mouthful of beer or water and project it towards the traveller (to make "phaa") with the following prayer addressed to the ancestor-gods : "You, so and so, look to this child who wants to travel! Bless him in his journey! May the Spirit of the bush (Shikwembo sha nhoba) remain asleep."

517 The *discussion of affairs* (ku khanela timhaka) on the square of
461 the village also fills many an hour in a man's life.

On the whole, men have but little to do. We can fairly estimate at three months the time required for the work which they have to do for the village and for the community. The remaining months are devoted to pastimes and pleasure (1).

III. *Games of adults.*

000 Having already described boys' and girls' games (p. 66 and 172), I now proceed to those of the adults, as forming an important part of the Life of the Village.

462 (1) Much has been said and written about the division of village work between men and women in the Bantu kraal. I shall try to show in the Practical Conclusions, No. V that civilisation is bound to produce great changes in this region. But, as already pointed out, it is certain that to the Natives themselves their system appears perfectly natural and that the women do not at all complain of their fate. The following charming story which is told by a Moravian missionary, The Rev. Th. Bachmann, who lived for a long time amongst the Wa-Niks, between Lake Tanganyika and Nyasa gives fresh proof of this assertion :

000 One day, as the rain was pouring down, I saw Walusangano returning from his garden with his wife, Leya. The wife was walking in front with a big bundle of wood on her head. On the wood was a basket containing maize, cucumbers and beans, as well as the hoe. On her back Leya was carrying her youngest child. The other children followed and the father brought up the rear-guard, carrying only an open umbrella. We were greatly shocked at this sight, and I thought it my duty to intervene on behalf of the women. On Sunday night, at public worship, I spoke of what I had seen in the most expressive terms possible. But my speech did not make the impression I expected. The men looked very much embarrassed ; the women indignant.

The following week, at sunset, I was under my veranda, watching the lightning and

CHAPTER II

THE LIFE HISTORY OF THE CHIEF.

A. BIRTH AND YOUTH.

(Information received from Tobane, and applying specially to Ronga clans).

643 844 When the principal wife of a reigning chief, she who is called "the wife of the country" (nsati wa tiko), perceives that she will in due course present her lord with an heir, she is sent away from the capital into one of the provinces, under pretext of illness. It must not be whispered abroad that she is pregnant, for, from this moment, every precaution must be taken to hide the future chief. Thus, should the event occur in the country of Mpfumo, the expectant mother might be sent into the province of Phulane.

The infant comes into the world ; should it prove to be a boy, the fact is kept a secret. Only the most renowned doctors of the country, those attached to the royal family, those who are "the strength of the land" (le' ti yimisaka tiko), are assembled to watch the birth ; they prepare, with special care, the *milombyana* (p. 48). When the queen goes out carrying her child on her back, she covers it with a piece of cloth to prevent anyone seeing whether it is a boy or a girl! She even dresses it in girl's clothing, because it is dangerous (psa henyanya), it is taboo to say in a loud voice : "This child will be a chief." Such an imprudent declaration would bring him bad luck (singita), just in the same way as would male clothing. (Mankhelu.)

643 777

The royal offspring grows, unrecognised, and is weaned in the same way as other children. The mother returns to the capital, the child remaining in the village where it was born.

643 857 However, specially appointed persons watch over him and report of his well being to his father. His youthful playmates are taught to respect him ; he is surrounded in his games by a miniature court, from which he chooses his favourites (tinxekwa) : some of his companions act as counsellors and reprimand those who do not treat him with due respect. They play at court... also at soldiers ; the juvenile troop wage war with the wasps, and also with the boys of the adjoining villages.

643 787 777 751 782 When the child reaches boyhood, the bones are consulted, and sacrifices offered in order to ascertain from the gods whether it be well to take him to the capital. Should the answer be in the negative, there is nothing to do but wait. When the dice declare the propitious moment to have arrived, the transfer is effected and the boy taken to his father. This is a great occasion for the counsellors who have watched over the boy and who thenceforward supervise his education. They feast themselves well (ba fumisana), kill goats, perhaps even an ox, and offer a sacrifice to proclaim to the gods the return to the capital of the heir to the throne ; to his ankle is tied the astragalus of a slaughtered goat, as a protective amulet.

643 881 836 At puberty the boy undergoes, in the same manner as his companions, all the ceremonial rites usual at that period. The principal doctors of the country treat him, in order that henceforth he may be a man (ba mu yimisa a ba wanuna), having full right to enter into the sexual relations of gangisa (p. 97). Care is taken, however, to attach to his person comrades of riper age, who will prevent him giving way to excesses, (suka banhwanyana la bakulu ba ta mu gema, ba mu sibela ku kula), which would arrest his growth and render him small and feeble. He thus lives in relative continence, participating in the play and in the work of boys of his own age, and looking after the herds. At times he gives a feast, when his father happens to have presented him with an ox with which to make merry.

643 588 595 Now we see him arrived at manhood, at the age when the Blacks take a wife. If his father is still living, the young man is not allowed to marry officially. He may certainly lobola, viz., contract regular marriage in the usual way, and possibly

726 As regards the *order of the march*, the battalions of the young
701 men, stationed on either side of the entrance, go first ; they
643 form the advanced guard, the post of greatest danger. The scouts, tinhlori (Dj.) tinhloli (Ro.), go in front ; each company has its leader to whom these scouts bring reports. It is the duty of the young men to surround the position to be carried and to make the assault. The two sides of the circle then follow, and lastly the chest of the army, forming the rear guard. The chief thus brings up the rear, protected by the battalions of veterans. But generally the chief does not go to battle ; he remains at home.

726 During the campaign, *the whole clan is subjected to many taboos.*
784 Those who remain at home must *keep quiet* (rula). No noise
777 must be heard in the villages. The women must not close the
722 doors of the huts. It is taboo : their husbands might meet with "bitterness" (shibiti). They might lack strength to run away. Fire must be lit in the huts in the evening, in order that the warriors may "have light" where they are. It is taboo to omit this precaution. Work in the fields must be more or less suspended ; women may attend to it in the morning only, before the heat of the day, while the air is still fresh. "Then, if a warrior has stepped on a thorn, the thorn will be cool (titimeta) ; if he has knocked against a stump, the stump will be quiet and not hurt him. (Mboza.)" Old men who remain at home must keep watch, and if they see a messenger coming, they follow him to the chief.
765 Should he bring bad news, they do not inform the women, as it is
726 taboo to mourn over warriors killed in war before the return of the
834 army. A fine is imposed upon those who contravene this law.
777 It is taboo also to have sexual relations as long as the army is on the
784 war-path. This would cause thorns to hurt the warriors and they would be defeated. (Mankhelu.)

722 According to Mankhelu, the mukhumbi may be again formed after arriving in the proximity of the hostile army. The
643 battalions will be sent one after the other by the great ndjuna who
726 will watch the progress of the fight. If he sees his men giving way, he "pours" (tshelela) new companies to help those who are fighting until they rush the position (gwabula) and put the enemy to flight. Then the pursuit begins. The dust flies up

539 days he did not see it, but one day, at sunset, he took his canoe and
791 went on to the river. He took a red piece of cotton ; this was reflected
825 at the bottom of the river. The hippopotamus saw it there and came up to see what was the matter. The hunter fired at it ; he fired a second time. And lo! there on its back was the one who rides upon it! One of the balls pierced him whilst the other pierced the hippopotamus. The animal rushed towards the hunter, but he fired a third time and killed it. Next morning they found the hippopotamus floating on the water, dead. In the village also a man had died during the night, and they were mourning there. The hunter had said to the people : 'I have killed a man who was on the hippopotamus.' And on one side of the river people were eating meat whilst on the other side people were crying. But they did not lodge a complaint against him ; no action can be taken in such a case."

224 As regards *the elephant (ndlopfu)* it was the favourite object of
777 the chase, because killing one of these large beasts meant not only abundance of meat but also wealth on account of the ivory. Madyashikulu used to bring the tusks to Manukosi (Gungunyana's grandfather) who returned some of them to him, and with the money thus obtained the hunter could buy a wife. There are different systems of lurulula in the case of the elephant. The hunter takes a little of the tintebe powder (the charm of the slayers) pierces the eye of the beast, mixes the vitreum with the powder, adds drugs prepared from the end of the trunk and the tail and uses this mixture to overcome the nuru. A phisa of the Maputju country employed another method. He cut a piece of meat from the foreleg, cooked it, anointed it with powder from the calabash of the slayers, chewed it and began to blow it over the animal after having "climbed it." He then crept over the elephant in the same way as described above in the case of the hippopotamus, holding his gun in his hand the whole time. His comrades used to anoint him with a white medicine round both eyes. When he had returned home the treatment was continued by the administration of two vapour baths (mahungulo). He had to expose his body to the steam produced first by a decoction of various twigs, secondly by another decoction prepared from medicinal roots mixed with pieces of meat taken from a goat and from the elephant

itself. Afterwards he had to drink the broth and eat the meat. 224
The aim of the treatment was to enable him to kill more elephants. 777
In the case of the elephant as well as of the hippopotamus the chief 643
of the country has to perform the lurulula as well as the hunter "because he is the chief of all the animals of the country and he would be unable to govern it successfully if he did not do this."

The *rhinoceros (shibetshana)* is not common in Thongaland ; a 224
few of these animals are found in the extreme south of the Maputju 825
country. The same rules were observed when the hunters had succeeded in killing one ; but this is no easy task because, as Muvumbi said, the rhinoceros is terribly wild, as it has no "mapfalo." The mapfalo is a piece of cartilage which is found in all animals between the ribs, beneath the sternum ; it is the diaphragm ; it is also the seat of fear or of the conscience. It is this particular cartilage which throbs in the case of great fear. The rhinoceros has no mapfalo ; therefore it fears nothing and rushes savagely upon the hunter. Its meat is so delicious that when a man has tasted it he no longer wishes to drink water!

I never heard mention of the lurulula in connection with the 224
lion (*nghala* (Djo.), *ndjau* (Ro.). To avoid being mauled by lions 782
the hunters put into their mouths a little of every kind of food 825
mixed with their powerful drugs and spit it out to the four winds in order to appease the ancestor-gods of the country. Then if they meet with a lion, the wild beast, instead of rushing upon them, will look at them quietly, its saliva dropping from its mouth, and will do them no harm.

Strange to say the *buffalo* (nyari) has no nuru, and when I asked 825
why this was, my Maputju informant told me : "The buffalo is an ox." This answer may perhaps help us to understand something more about the nuru idea.

The statement regarding the *zebra* (mhangwa) is more curious still. "Mhangwa a yi lubiwi! Yi ni mabala ; i nala ; a yi ngeni hosin" viz. "No tax is paid for the zebra ; it is an animal with many colours (stripes) ; it is an enemy ; it must not enter the village of the chief." We have met with the same prohibition in connection with the village of the parents-in-law (I. p. 250).

As regards the *crocodile (ngwenya)* also called *shiwutlani-*

136 try to fly; but they soon fall to the ground and you see them
222 running towards each other and shedding their slender transparent
262 wings, so that they remain on the spot, like worms, creeping slowly along, unable to defend themselves, an easy prey for the birds and the *shinana* toads, which have a grand feast on the happy day when winged termites appear! Those which happen to emerge where the hole has been dug, try to escape by flying, but are prevented from doing so by the covering of leaves. They at once fall heavily to the bottom and roll into the pot, which may become quite full in a few hours. The owner of the trap then comes and makes a splendid sauce with its contents! This kind of termite is not met with on the Coast.

I cannot enter into details as to all these more or less questionable foods. (See I, p. 65, the mention of the Shitambéla beetle.)

262 Although the caterpillars, coleoptera, larvae, and locusts are universally appreciated, there are other "meats" which appeal to certain individuals or clans, but are disdainfully eschewed by others. For instance the boa is eaten with great gusto by the Rongas and disliked by the Nkunas. The same is true of the big varan lizard. The tortoise is generally eaten, but the Mpfumu boys, who esteem themselves more civilised, reject it. On inquiring why some persons or clans exclude certain kinds of meats which other persons or clans consider delectable, we find that there are two different reasons for this, between which it is important to differentiate. The exclusion is due either to a *nyenya*, viz., disgust, or to a *yila*, viz., a taboo.

1) Owing to *disgust*, some people refuse to eat *pork*: "their hearts fear it," probably because pigs are modern and some people are not yet accustomed to eat their flesh. Zulus reject every
262 kind of fish (nhlampfi) from the same feeling of disgust. Snails
●777 are despised by all the Thongas; it is true that the snail of the
825 country (Natica Wesseliana) is not very tempting, its shell being of a transparent green and its flesh reddish; moreover it is said to "singita," viz., to bring bad luck to any one meeting with it on the way.

262 But the flesh of some other animals is abstained from, even
825 dreaded, because they *yila*, they are taboo. Thongas have no

C. UTENSILS.

Nature, which has provided the Ba-Ronga with skins of animals for clothing, and with poles, reeds, grasses and fibrous barks for their habitations, has also favoured them with several exceedingly useful trees of which they have not been slow to take advantage. Of these the most valuable is the *milala* palm, *(Hyphaene crinita)* used for nearly all basket-work; next comes the *nkuhlu (Trichilia emetica)* whose wood is particularly serviceable for all descriptions of carving. She has also deposited in their plains beds of clay, of more or less desirable quality, which they use for making pottery. I shall begin with the latter. 824

I. *Pottery.*

An excellent clay is to be found at Shibindji, in the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques, a district close to Morakwen, and the people of this place — they are the same who abstain from eating any animal liver (I. p. 364) — are the potters who supply the whole country. They are said to be the masters (benyi) of the art. But clay is found in many other places, in Shifukundju, Mpatshiki, etc. It is said that the clay of Muweri, near Lemon Island, on the Lower Nkomati, is even better than that of Shibindji. So the art of the potter does not belong to a single family, and is not hereditary. Any one may learn it and practise it. Pottery amongst the Thongas is essentially woman's province. Is this because earthenware utensils are principally used in the kitchen, where woman's sway is paramount and indisputed? Possibly; in any case it is so. 134 323 323

Let us suppose then that the mother of a family wishes to renew, or to add to her stocks of pots, large and small. She starts out for the marshes, picks up in the well-known hollow several clods of clay and returns to the village carrying them on her head. No one salutes her: everyone pretends not to see her, 323 777

323 doubtless to avoid bringing any ill luck to the venture! She
777 buries the clay at the foot of a tree to keep it moist, and only takes it out of its hiding-place on the day on which she has decided to start the work.

323 Let us see by means of some photographs, taken by the greatly regretted A. Borel, how Meta, a Shibindji girl, married in Rikatla, proceeds in her work. Placing a broken piece of an old pot in the

Fashioning the pots. *Phot. A. Borel*

mortar, she pounds it until it is reduced to small fragments, the size of a grain of maize: these she mixes with her clay, adding water and sand, and kneads the whole together until she has made it into a very soft ball. She makes a hole in this, a wide opening which she enlarges by degrees, hollowing it out more and more and
323 gradually giving it the shape she wishes. I have already alluded
352 to the clever way in which the Blacks trace the circumference of a circle on the ground (I. p. 126); the same natural instinct enables them to model perfect spheres. It is astonishing to see the beautiful symmetry of these utensils, although these pots are fashioned without the aid of a wheel or measuring instrument of any kind.

painted a brilliant brown, which is done with a decoction of the 323
bark of the mangrove (nkapa) and of the nkanye, boiled with a 386
kind of creeper (mahlehlwa), which has a sticky sap. Such is the primitive method followed in the manufacture of all Native pottery.

The process of firing being often unsuccessful, taboos are 323
plentiful in the manufacture. When women collect the clay, 777

The furnace ready. *Phot. A. Borel.*

only one of them digs and gives it to the others; should each make haste to dig for herself, this would bring mishap: the pots would break. If no accident happens and the firing is successful, these women will say: "She who dug the other day has a lucky hand (a ni boko dja hombe). Let her dig again another time." When the clay has been hidden in the ground, at the foot of a tree, it is also taboo to tread on the spot, when walking through the village. When the heap of wood is ready, the potteress will call a little child, an innocent creature, to set fire to the furnace. She shows it where to place the glowing ember,

323 and, if the result of the firing is good, she will always call the same
777 child on future occasions (1).

787 If all these precautions prove useless, and the woman sees that she is not succeeding, she will go so far as to consult the bones, and, if they so order, she will make an offering to her gods, gods of the father, gods of the mother, or possessing gods (Part VI), if she is a spirit-possessed woman, as the bones may

323

Result of the firing. *Phot. A. Borel.*

787 declare. People will say to her : "You manufacture pots and sell them and do not give anything to your gods : that will not do!" So she will offer a piece of clothing, a coin, etc., at the altar *(gandjelo)*.

323 (1) Meta, the Rikatla potteress has entirely given up the manufacture of pottery of
476 late years. All her pots cracked, because, she said, she was the only woman practising this art in the country. In her former home, everybody made pots and in this way the potteresses "strengthened each other (tiyisana)." Moreover when a pot was heard cracking in the furnace, somebody ran to the hut and collected a little of the dust on the floor and threw it into the other pots, and this prevented them from being spoiled. It was too far for Meta to run to her former home to get the dust—so she gave up her trade! The case of poor Meta is a good illustration of the collective character of industrial pursuits amongst primitive peoples.

322 through the ages. The specimen in the illustration[1] was bought
352 from a young man, a traveller, on the road; the bird's claws,
● 777 beads and other articles tied all round it, doubtless hunting trophies, are plainly to be seen. He had the advantage of literally

Thonga statuettes.
(One third of the natural size.)

resting on his laurels, and naively believed they would bring him good luck while sleeping.

532 The Thonga artist has even dared to portray the *human form*,
481 and the result of his audacity, however grotesque, is not without
322 originality, and even a certain characteristic style, which may be recognised in all their statuettes. More often they content themselves with carving a man's head, with his crown, on the top of their walking sticks. I here give[2] an illustration of Mankhelu's stick, which was a very old one, dating from 1850,

[1] [The Thonga pillow -- See p. 128, No. 8. -- Analyst]

[2] [p. 133]

"You see! Stones also grow!" Another Native geologist, who 823
had heard the European story of creation, coming from the Coast, a country of sand and sand only, and visiting the Drakensberg Mountains near Shiluvane, was amazed by the enormous cliffs of the Mamotswiri and gave vent to the following reflection : "No wonder we have no stones in our sandy land. When God created the earth, he used them all to build these mountains!"

Fossils are rare in Thongaland, where sand covers almost the 136
whole country. There is however in the southern part of the 823
Maputju region an outcrop of cretaceous rock which belongs to the 777
Gault and which contains ammonites, Nautillus etc. Natives call them *nsongo stones* and are very much afraid of them. They say that "these stones with ribs" can walk. They bring bad luck (singita). Should a child pick up one of these fossils and bring it into the village, he will fall ill ; he must therefore undergo a special treatment.

Crystal greatly pleases the Natives. It is rare in South Africa. 135
When magicians can secure a white or a black crystal they generally 301
wear it round their necks together with the claws, or teeth, of wild animals, or with their little skin bags which they use as amulets. For this reason I once had the good fortune to be able to exchange a crystal I had brought from Switzerland for one of these charms!

The *earth* (misaba) is also a great and important thing. First 823
because it is identified with the people dwelling on it, with the clan. 695
Tiko, the land, means both the soil and the people. Further than 787
this, the earth is the chief (I. p. 382) ; hence many laws : e. g. the tusk of the elephant which fell on the earth when the beast was killed, belongs to the chief, etc. (p. 57). The most solemn oath is that which is taken with earth (ku funga u hahla hi misaba). Should a man be accused of stealing or of being a wizard, if he puts a little earth in his mouth, says *tsu*, and declares : "I do not know anything about it," those who care for his safety will look for a medicine-man to treat him : it is a *mondjo* (a magical method of divination. See Chapter III). The same thing is done when an oath has been taken by sucking a piece of iron.

A curious superstition regarding the earth is this : after moving 823
from one country to another, you should for some days mix with

137 in the case of the Hibiscus genus. Its name is *Ntjhesi*; there
824 are the Ntjhesi of the hill (Hibiscus surratensis, etc.), the Ntjhensi
757 of the nyaka, another species found in Morakwen in the black
earth; and there is the *shitjhesinyana sha ntlhaba*, double dimin-
815 utive of ntjhesi, the Sida cordifolia, a pretty little Malvacea, a near relative of the Hibiscus, very much used in treating children's complaints, a panacea for babies, as it cures their vomiting, headache, wounds and internal troubles!

137 I find the same correct connection established between two
824 Anonaceae shrubs, the Artabotrys brachypetala, called *Ntiti*, and
815 the Art. Monteiroae, called *Shintitane*, little Ntiti, of the same genus, but a shrub of a very different appearance.

However there is, of course, no anatomical study at the base of this classification: so their ideas of genus are not always, scientifically speaking, correct. They call any parasite *Phakama*, whatever may be its form, and have a superstitious fear of them, especially of the larger ones, growing on other trees, such as the nkanye and nkuhlu: "Phakama dja singita!" (1)

137 *Nkushe* means sea-weed, either the true algae, as Lagarosiphon muscoides, or other plants growing in water and belonging to totally different families, such as Urticularia stellaris, found in the same locality. *Nkaka*, or *Nkakana*, is the little Cucumber already described (p. 14), whilst *Nkaka wa tjhobo* is a Convolvulvus (Ipomea cairica). The *Shirimbyati*, one of the names most employed, designates first the Helichrysum parviflorum, a yellow Composita which covers the sandy dunes, and blossoms during the winter; but *Shirimbyati sha tjhune*, the male one, is Gnaphalium stenophyllum, and *Shirimbyati sha mutju*, the one of the forest, an Indigofera belonging to the Leguminosae family; these three plants have in common small hard leaves: hence the same name is given to them, although they are by no means related botanically speaking. So shirimbyati corresponds to our word heath, which is applied to many forms of evergreen undergrowth.

777 (1) "The parasite stem *singita*," i. e. is of bad omen. They do not say *yila*, is
824 taboo, though some rules apply to it similar to those concerning the tree struck by lightning. One does not warm oneself at its fire; its wood is not employed to cook
753 food, for fear lest men should suffer from hydrocele.

136 birth to the big green moth with long tails, the Queen Moth. The
815 reason why butterflies, though plentiful in Thongaland, have so little attracted the attention of Natives is, no doubt, the fact that they do not in any way contribute to their food. I have told the story of a woman who tried to force a child to eat a butterfly. (I. p. 445.)

136 *Coleoptera*. The general term for Coleoptera is *Shifufununu*, and it especially applies to the big Tenebrionidae (Psammodes
825 Bertoloni), called *shifufununu sha paripari* (p. 68) and to the large
● 777 black Carabidae of the Anthia genus which abound on the roads in spring ; one of them, marked with small depressions on the elytra is, for that reason, called the small-pox shifufununu (sha nyedzane). Travelling once with a grown-up Thonga we saw a black Carabida which had four white spots on the back. It was the charming Eccoptoptera mutilloides. I saw him trace a circle round it in the sand saying : "To-day I shall eat to my heart's content!" — "Namunhla ndji ta shura!" — "What are you doing?" I said. — "Oh! This is the *Shurwa-shurwane*," he answered. "When you meet it it is a sign that you will have plenty to eat!" He was mistaken! The real shurwa-shurwane is the Mutilla, a kind of apterous wasp, which has also four white spots on its back, and the beetle we met was so similar to it that he mistook it for a Mutilla ; is it not called mutilloides, pseudo-mutilla? (1)
136 — The Copridæ are called *Gadlen* (dji-ma) and these strange
[753] dung-eaters, which are extremely abundant in the country, are thought to be under the command of the wizards who can introduce
825 them into your body to kill you. The pretty Cerambycidæ,
262 with their long horns, are the *Ñwahomurikotjo*, the ox of Rikotcho, or, according to a truer etymology, the ox with horns bent backwards (kotjeka). Children sing an incantation before them, clapping their hands (I, p. 68). Their big white larvae, the *Shipungwana*, dig channels in the stems of nkanye, nkuhlu, mphesa, etc., and are readily eaten as well as the *Shimhukuta*, the

(1) This custom reminds one of the action of Swiss children when they send the ladybird to heaven, to ask God to give them fine weather to-morrow, or of their saying that crushing a golden Carabus on the road will cause rain to fall. Certain Coleoptera are of good omen everywhere! Only, if in Europe they foretell fine weather, in Africa they announce a good meal. The difference is significant!

136 larva of a large Calandra which swarms in the stems of the palm
825 trees of the marsh (p. 4). The *Shitambela*, a big Buprestida
262 (Sternocera Orissa) is roasted by the shepherds and eaten after they have torn off its elytra.

136 *Hymenoptera.* *Wasps* are called *Mupfi* or *Mupfu* (mu-mi),
755 and are divided into four different classes : the *Mupfu* proper (Belonogaster), the *Tlatlanhongana*, the *Bamaandlopfu*, a grey species, and the *Mumpfundlopfu*, a large black species which burrows in the soil. When someone has been stung by a wasp, the others laugh at him. If he resents being made fun of, they say to him : "Be not angry ; we do this to help you." They are really trying to divert his attention from the pain in order to
136 comfort him. *Bees* are called *Nyoshi* (yin-tin) and are greatly
262 appreciated for their honey (p. 44). Natives know the males
815 (*djongwe*, dji-ma) the larvae *(shipungwa)*, which they eat with as much pleasure as the honey itself. They call the honeycombs *hahla* (dji-ma) or *shihlenga*, the wax *mumpfu* (mu-mi) and the
136 pollen brought by the bees, *nsindjo*. The curious *Mbonga* (yin-tin)
825 *Bee* is worth special mention, owing to the superstitions which are current regarding it, and the part it plays in certain rites (I. p. 390). This species, which does not sting, digs a narrow passage of two or three feet deep in the soil and excavates a hole of one or two feet broad where it builds its round nest. Natives say that nobody knows what the mbonga does with the earth which it digs out of the cavity in which it makes its nest. No heap of earth is ever seen in the vicinity. The hole is continued under the nest and has no end. It probably extends to subterranean pools where the insects go to drink, — as it is said that no one has ever seen a mbonga drinking from the lake or the well, as the other bees do. Moreover the entrance to a mbonga nest is invisible to the majority of people. It is only certain families who can see it and consequently dig out the precious honey (1). For all these reasons the mbonga is

777 (1) The Libombo family was one of those "which the mbonga loves" (randja). Elias who belongs to it told me that he once paid a visit to one of his neighbours who had just cleaned his village; he discovered a mbonga hole and said to his friend: "There is a mbonga nest in your village." But the man was unable to find it. Elias then dug as deep as his shoulders and found the nest all surrounded by "calabashes" full of honey. He says that when rain falls the little bees cover the entrance of

136 surrounded with a certain mystery, and this is no doubt why its
825 honey is used in the manufacture of the *nyokwekulu*. Its scientific name is Trigona togoensis, var. Junodi (Friese).

136 Amongst the *Mollusca*, a great many are eaten : the *Mbatsana*
262 (yin-tin) of the sea (bivalve shells), *Likatla* (li-tin) of the lakes, and the *Hwaru* (yi-tin), oysters of the Tembe shore. The land
454 snails are called *Humba* (yi-tin) ; the big ones (Achatina Lamar-
787 kiana) are used as safes for the deposit of pounds sterling and are often buried in the huts ; hence the expression *Humba ya bupfundji*, shell of riches! The smaller ones, resembling our snails (Aerope caffra), are rarer and it is considered a bad omen to meet with them on the road. — "Where you go you will hear cries of mourning!" Their name is *Shikumbukwane*. The slugs are called *Holokompfa* (yin-tin) and the smaller snails, *Shihumbanyana*, diminutive of *humba*.

136 *Fish* all have names, but having never dwelt in the close vicinity
825 of the sea, I have not learnt them. I know the *Mfungwe* (yi-tin). the fish whose mouth ends in a saw, the *Mangapfi* (dji-ma), the
262 name of a kind of hawk given to the flying fish of Delagoa Bay, the *Nhempfane* (yi-tin) found in the fresh water ponds, the *Ntima* (yi-tin) the barbel, the black fish which must not be eaten by lovers before their marriage (I, p. 107).

136 *Amphibia*. *Ntlambya* (mu-mi) is the ordinary frog (Rana oxy-rhynca) whose young are known and called *Shilungula* ; another black species is the *Rebya* (dji-ma) ; the tree-frogs are called *Shilungwalungwana* (Rappia marmorata and argus) ; the toad *Kele* (dji-ma), Bufo regularis ; the famous Breviceps mossambicus is *Shinana* (I. p. 87) the great warrior of the tales (p. 221).

136 *Reptilia*. There are many kinds of *Lizards*. The common
825 kind found in the houses, under the verandas is the *Mponondjo* (mu-mi) (Mabuia striata), ; the Lygodactylus capensis, found on the hills, is the *Nkolombya* (mu-mi) ; the little Agama

777 the hole with their wings to prevent water from inundating the nest. When it lasts too long they quickly go down to close the entrance of the nest ; the water then leaks down the pipe which descends into the interior of the earth. He added : "If a man does not belong to a family which "knows" the mbonga and if he happens to find a nest he will meet with misfortune ; one of his relatives will die. The bees will bring him ill-luck (singita)."

825 *Shipyahla* (Ro.), *Mhiri* (yin-tin, Dj.) is the big, lazy, grey puff adder,
136 which creeps along the ground, and is one of the most venomous kinds, together with the *Mhamba* (yin-tin), a slender species, very swift and often found on trees. "When you meet a mhiri," say the Nkunas, "throw a little earth on it and you will soon see
[752] its brother!" Of course magicians have plenty of drugs to cure snake bites. For this purpose they use the head of the adder roasted and pulverised. *Shibatlankombe*, (Naja nigricollis), "the one which carves a spoon" is the name of a species which
[262] curves its neck till it looks like a spoon. The *Hhlaru* (yin-tin) is the boa. It is eaten. Another member of the Clapidae family is the *Likure*, a pretty greyish violet species (Causus Lichtensteinii).
[769] Amongst the harmless snakes are those little blue ones, *Shihundje* (Dendrophis subcarinatus), which are considered as emissaries of the ancestor spirits. I shall mention them again later on. The *Nsoma* (yin-tin), very common and harmless, is probably Dispholidus typus. Some small ones, not larger than worms, but hard and shining like metal, are called *Tumbi-tumbi*, because they hide (tumba) in the sand. One of them seems to be Xenocalamus bicolor.

825 There are also the legendary snakes of the Thongas. On the
777 Coast they speak of the *Buwumati*, which dwells in the lakes and is invisible. It is only heard crying "bu-wu-bu-wu" when rain is falling, and its voice is as loud as that of an antelope. If it shows itself to a traveller, it is a very bad sign. The story is told of a man who came back from consulting a bone-thrower. He saw the buwumati lying on the ground, its coils extending to a great distance, closing all the passages. He retraced his steps, but after three days he died. In the Transvaal, this dreadful snake is called *Shimhemhemhe*, the name being an imitation of its cry.
825 This superstition is perhaps of Pedi origin, but it has been accepted by the Nkunas. The shimhemhemhe dwells in certain dark woody ravines on the slopes of the Drakensberg mountains. If anyone imprudently penetrates there, the snake pursues him, creeping along the branches above, and bites him on the top of the head. A man met with it once on the way to Thabina; he saw it on the road, its head raised, a shining head of two colours. There

circulation (p. 63-76). I shall have to content myself with giving the names of some Mammalia and relating some superstitions concerning them. 136

Edentata : two kinds are known, the *Mpandjana* (yin-tin), the ant-bear, which is covered with hair, and the *Kwara* (dji-ma) which has scales. The only Cetacea known is the *Nkomu* (yin-tin), the whale.

Solipedes : *Mangwa* (yin-tin) means zebra, and this term is sometimes applied to horses ; this latter animal is called *Hanshi* (dji-ma), evidently a corruption of the English word. *Mbongolo* (yin-tin), donkey. *Mula* or *Mewula*, mule.

Pachyderma : *Ngulube* (yin-tin), wild boar and also, by extension, domesticated pig. *Mpfubu* (yin-tin), hippopotamus.

Ruminantia : *Homu* (yin-tin), ox. *Nyari* (yin-tin), buffalo. *Hamba* (yin-tin, Ro.), *Nyimpfu* (yin-tin, Dj.), sheep. *Mbuti* (yin-tin), goat. *Mhalamhala* (yin-tin), sable antelope, Hippotragus niger. *Mhala* (yin-tin) (Zulu impala). *Mhumti* (yin-tin), duiker *Hongonyi* (yin-tin), gnu. *Mangulwe* (mu-ba). *Mhetlwa* (yin-tin), water buck. *Nhlangu* (yin-tin), reed buck. *Mhofu* (yin-tin), eland, *Nhutlwa* (yin-tin), giraffe, etc.

Proboscidea : *Ndlopfu* (yin-tin), elephant.

Rodentia : *Mpfundla* (mu-mi), hare, *Nhlolo* (yin-tin), rabbit. *Khondlo* (dj -ma), mouse. *Vondo* (dj -ma), *Phephe* (dj-ma), *Ngole* (yin-tin), etc.

Insectivora : *Shitlulandlela*, mole, lit. the one which crosses the road ; it is a bad omen for a mole to cross your path. *Tjukunyana*, a brownish mole which digs its burrows just below the surface of the ground. Hence the fact that a bracelet made of its skin is employed as medicine against the Filaria, a parasite which makes its way under the skin! 136 777 825 755

Carnivora : *Nsimba* (yin-tin), civet cat. *Shipakana*, cat. *Mbyana* (yin-tin), dog. *Mhisi* (yin-tin), hyena. *Hlolwa*, *Nhlati* (mu-ba), fox. *Yingwe* (yin-tin), leopard. *Ndjau* (Ro.), *nghala* (Dj.), lion, etc. 136

Chiroptera : *Tangadana* (dji-ma, Ro.), *Mangadyana*, (mu-ba. Dj.), bat.

Primates : *Mfene* (yin-tin), baboon. *Habu* (yin-tin), monkey.

themselves so far removed from the animal world as is the case 826
amongst more civilised races.

Another point on which Thongas see a resemblance between 774
man and the animal is this : they believe that both possess the *nuru* (I. p. 478 ; II, p. 77-80). It is true that the nuru is only found in some animals : the eland, the ndakazi antelope, the elephant, the hippopotamus, etc. We shall have to consider this superstition again when dealing with Thonga Animism.

Is this idea of identity between man and the animal pushed 826
so far as a belief that men can transform themselves into animals, 791
and vice-versa? It is certain that in tales men are often changed into hyenas, lions, etc. (See Dukuli, *Les Ba-Ronga*, p. 283 and the story of the Ogre Ziniko (p. 256).) But these are purely fictitious. The theory is by no means generally accepted. In the ordinary course of life such transformations would not be considered possible. But they are certainly thoroughly believed in in the domain of magic. Magicians claim that they can fly through the air, with their axes, transform themselves into the lightning bird and so kill their enemy. But it is the wizards (baloyi) who are considered to possess this power par excellence, especially the faculty of changing human beings into beasts to make them work on their behalf. These ideas will be studied in Chapter III.

I have already mentioned the bird which "stops travellers" 826
(I. p. 339) ; amongst Mammalia a certain Antelope is the object of 777
the same superstitious fear. This is the little red *magulwe* (or *shipene*) whose astragalus bone is employed in divination under the name of malumbi (See Part VI. Letter D). — "When it crosses the road, in front of a travelling party," says Mankhelu, "the leader of the company stops his comrades, goes forward, sits down alone at the spot where the antelope passed, and pours his magical powder into the footprints of the animal. Then he shouts to his companions to come and follow him. Having walked for some time, he takes off all his clothing, and lies down quite naked, as if he were dead. The others continue their march forward. After a while, he jumps to his feet and, making a circuit through the bush, outruns them, without being noticed, and sits down on the road, further on.

825 They come up to him and wonder how he got there. By this rite
777 he has prevented the misfortune which the antelope would have caused to the travellers."

B. CONCEPTIONS REGARDING MAN.

I. *The origin of man.*

773 While the Thonga mind is very little puzzled by the question of the creation of heaven and earth, the origin of man preoccupies it more deeply. I must now enter into some details as to the story of human origin which has been already mentioned (I. p. 21). It contains two parts : the creation of man and the cause of death.

1) The creation of man.

The first human beings came out of the *lihlanga*, the reed, as some say, or the *nhlanga*, the marsh of reeds, according to others. These two versions seem to answer to two different conceptions. The first is that one man and one woman suddenly came out of one reed, which exploded (baleka), and there they were! According to the second, men of different tribes emerged from a marsh of reeds, each tribe already having its peculiar costume, implements and customs. So when you ask about the origin of the iron hoe amongst the Vendas, who possessed it before the Thongas, you will be told : "The Vendas emerged from the marsh of reeds holding them" (1).

The first man and woman are called in the Northern clans

177 (1) I believe the first version to be the true Thonga one. It may be that the idea that all races came out of the marsh of reeds is an alteration of the primitive conception under Nyai influence. The Ba-Nyai say that all men emerged from a big hole, the hole of Myali or Ñwari, in the earth, at a time when stones and rocks were still so soft that foot-prints remained marked on them. It has been supposed that the myth of the reed is simply an allusion to a physiological phenomenon, but I do not believe this.

787 see, why divination plays such an important part in their life.
769 It is of the utmost importance to know what their gods think
776 and do, as the very existence of the village, and of the clan, and the welfare of every member of the clan depends on them. Is not Lukwembo, Divinity "the power of killing or of making alive, of enriching or of making poor?" Natives believe firmly in these two opposite actions of their gods. They are the masters of everything: earth, fields, trees, rain, men, children, even of baloyi, wizards! They have full control over all these objects or persons.

769 The gods can *bless*: if the trees bear plenty of fruit, it is because
776 they have made it grow (I. p. 414); if the crops are plentiful, it is because they forced wizards to increase them, or hindered them
777 from spoiling them (I. p. 396); if you come across a pot of palm wine, it is your god who has sent you that windfall (p. 44). When Mboza escaped from the Morakwen battle, one of his relatives exclaimed on his return home: "The gods of Makaneta have still been with you!" (Psikwembu psa ka Makaneta psa ha ku yimelele.) Often when a man has narrowly escaped drowning, or spraining his ankle on a stump which has caught his foot, he will say: "The gods have saved me."

769 But they can also *curse*, and bring untold misfortune on their
776 descendants. If the rain fails, it is owing to their anger; if a tree
789 falls on you, they have directed its fall; if a crocodile bites you, the gods have sent it; if your child has fever and is delirious, they are
753 in him, tormenting his soul; if your wife is sterile, they have prevented her from childbearing; perhaps the gods of your mother have done this, because you had not given your maternal uncle the *tjhumba* part of the lobolo, which he has the right to claim (I. p. 267); in fact any disease, any calamity may come from them. There are, of course, other sources of misfortune: the baloyi, for instance, or Heaven, and the bones will show who has caused the mischief; but the ancestor-gods are certainly the most powerful spiritual agency acting on man's life. Hence the necessity of propitiating them by prayers and sacrifices.

No special use is made of the *bones* of the victim, except, as we shall see later, in offerings on behalf of those possessed. The only part kept is the *astragalus*, or the *psirungulo* just described, which are tied to the person on whose behalf the sacrifice has been made, probably to insure for him a permanent blessing from the gods. 782 777

It must be observed that the sacrificial ritual, as well as the medical art, lays great stress on the *sex* of the offerings. As a rule, there must be opposition between the sex of the victim and that of the person for whom, or to whom, the sacrifice is made. A woman is prayed for by means of a he-goat or a cock, and a man by a she-goat or a hen. 782 755 562

What is the reason of this rule? — "Psi yaka muti," says my informant. "It builds up the village." As a village can only grow and multiply by the union of the male and the female element, so in order to succeed in any pursuit it is necessary to unite both sexes. This principle is universally applied : when a girl is ill, a boy will bring her medicine, and vice-versa. The rule is also followed in another case. It may be that a mhamba has been wrongly performed and threatens to bring misfortune instead of appeasing the gods. This mhamba must consequently be "quenched, timula" "so that it may keep quiet and cool down, because it might cause annoyance and overcome them" (Mboza). This will be done by offering a mhamba of the opposite sex, which will correct the first. So if a female nkanye twig has been employed in the funeral ceremony, when the ritual ought to have been performed with a twig taken from a male stem, the ceremony will be repeated with a male twig in order to quench the first mhamba.

The last observation to be made about the gifts presented to the ancestor-gods is that the *psirungulo*, viz. the part of the victim which is tied to the person for whose sake it has been sacrificed, must be attached to the left part of the body if this person belongs to the female, to the right if to the male sex ; moreover in the sacrifices offered to maternal gods, the attachment is always done on the left side, whatever may be the sex of the person. Why is this? Because the left side belongs to the woman, the right to the man. We have seen that this is the case in the hut (I. p. 187). 782 562

764 would answer : " How can you propose such a thing to me ? Am I not immature (mbisi, properly raw) ? I am not yet ripe! Is defilement of death not there ? With whom could I wash it away ? " (Viguet). The first digger is also called " the one of the head, " the second, " the one of the feet, " because one of them will carry the corpse by the head, the other by the feet. Women may also bury a corpse upon occasion.

764 So the grave-diggers go back to the hut and begin to wrap the corpse in his rugs and in his mat (ku tjimba). They stitch the mat twice (to prevent it from slipping ?) (Viguet). They generally wait till sunset to perform the burial. When the time has come, they make a hole in the wall of the hut on the right side, as the husband dwells in the right half of the house, the wife in the left half. The corpse must not be carried out of the hut by the door, but by that artificial opening (1). So he leaves the hut head foremost (2). They sometimes stop up their noses with the leaves of a bush called ngupfana, which has a strong scent, in order not to perceive the smell of death (moya wa lifu). They march slowly, without a word, men and women following them silently. The " one of the head " goes down to the first level, 764 the one of the feet follows him. They have already put in the 778 place for the head a piece of wood, a piece of a branch of *nkanye*, 769 their sacred tree, one foot long and three inches broad, to be used as a pillow. At the bottom, on the soil, they stretch some old rugs. They lay the corpse down (3) on its left side, the head on the pillow. The grave has been dug in such a way that its long axis is directed towards that cardinal point whence the ancestors came, so that the deceased, having his head slightly

(1) In the Hlabi clans, the corpse is carried through the door, but the plaster on both sides of the door (marimba) is beaten and falls down. It will be repaired later on. In the Northern clans the hut of the deceased is not so strongly tabooed as amongst the Ba-Ronga. When it has been purified it will be used again.

(2) Comparative Ethnography : In Switzerland it is a common saying that a corpse must leave the house feet foremost.

764 (3) The Ba-Ngoni place their dead in the grave in the sitting position, a knife in 513 their hands, as they are a race of murderers! (Viguet). It may be that the reclining position given to the corpse by the Ba-Ronga, is the result of an evolution. At any rate, this is not the true sleeping position, as Natives generally do not bend their limbs when sleeping.

643 301 them. But they were disappointed in their hope: Shiluvane kept both the ritlatla and the power and bequeathed them to his son, Muhlaba, as we shall see. Legends are current about the ritlatla. It is said to be able to move of its own will. "This piece of metal is indeed a wonderful thing," wrote a young Nkuna, to me "because when it is buried in the soil, as black people are in the habit of doing with their treasures, a piece of iron must be put inside it to prevent it from going away; if this precaution is not taken, the ritlatla may leave the place where it was and go somewhere else. In the space of one year, it may go as far as the Masetana spruit (about one mile)."

643 Another royal property of the Nkuna family was an *elephant's tusk*, which vanquished enemies had brought as a token of their submission.

643 302 787 In Nondwana, the old chief Papele who preceded Maphunga and lived in the middle of the last century, wore a *kind of chignon* or bun made by plaiting his hair, which was a sign of royalty (shifoko). But this custom has passed away. There was also *a long stick* which was kept exposed to the smoke of the royal fire in the sacred hut of *nyokwekulu*, which I shall describe presently, and which was called *ntjobo* and also *mhamba*, viz., offering; this was evidently of religious value to the clan, and was taken outside when the army assembled. It possessed the power of becoming invisible to enemies. Moreover this magical stick was very useful because it warned the clan when some danger was threatening. The ntjobo was then put into a fire; if it did not burn, this showed that the clan had nothing to fear from its enemies; if it burned, it meant that the clan would be attacked and defeated. Then another stick would be prepared and put into the fire with the hope that it would resist it.

643 778 We shall speak in Part VI of another sacred *mhamba* which most of the Thonga clans possessed, made of the nails and hair of the deceased chiefs in the Tembe clan, and of the dried skin of their faces in the Shirindja clan. It was used as a means of propitiation in national calamities. In the Khosen country, the chief also possessed the *mhamba*. This was a mysterious object which the clan had always possessed, from time immemorial, from the beginning

643 "when the Ba-Khosa had emerged from the reed" (See Vol. II,
604 Part VI, III). Nobody might see it except the chief, who kept it
778 hidden somewhere in a hole amongst the rocks. His uterine nephew alone (ntukulu) knew the place, and when it was necessary to use it in order to pray to the deceased chiefs, the chief and his nephew alone were permitted to approach the hiding place ; those
643 who accompanied them had to stop at a distance. This mhamba
778 is lost. Even the chief Ntshongi, who was the paramount chief of
789 the Ba-Khosa at the beginning of this century, had never seen it. It had been taken by his predecessor Mavabaze and had disappeared during the political troubles of the Gungunyana's war. Thus it is impossible to say of what it consisted, and this will probably never be known. There is no doubt however, that it was used for the same purpose as the mhamba of the Tembe and Shirindja. Its magical and religious power came from the fact that it was anointed with the "nsila" of the deceased chiefs. On the death of a chief, his "nsila" i. e. the layer of filth resting on his body, was taken away and the mhamba was rubbed with it. This gave the reigning
[769] chief the power to influence his ancestor-gods, in accordance with the magic principle : the part influences the whole. It is said that in former times the Khosa chief Shihanyisane having ill-treated his two younger brothers, Malashwane and Shalati, these two men succeeded in taking the chieftainship away from him with the aid of the Ñwamba clan. Eventually Shihanyisane made peace with his brothers and gave over the mhamba to Malashwane : a proof that this mysterious object was in truth considered as the most important attribute of chieftainship.

643 These regalia are not indeed very imposing to the eye. Thonga
789 royalty had no brilliant insignia... But it had more than that!
751 Each clan possessed a special medicine whose magical virtues were greatly esteemed ; its possession made the chief invincible, the warriors invulnerable, the country unconquerable. This powerful charm is called *mbhulo* (Dj.), *mphulo* (Ro.).

Amongst the Nkunas, the mbhulo is called *Ñwantikalala*. It is kept by those belonging to the Mushwane house, and a man called Papalati is responsible for it. It consists of four calabashes, two male and two female (medicines are considered as having sex,

has been pulled up and the sand nicely smoothed down, so that any traces of a thief would easily be seen. He will possibly be recognised at once by the trackers, owing to some peculiarity in the marks on the sand, the foot-print of each individual being more or less known ; clever detectives can even ascertain the height and gait of a man from the length of his stride! If there are no peculiar marks in the foot-prints, the trackers will follow them and reach the village where the thief lives. They will perhaps take him by surprise in his hut. If the matter cannot be settled by the headman of the village and has to be brought before the chief, the guilty party will be fined as much as two, three or even five pounds sterling (Tobane) (1).

When detectives have been unable to trace a thief, they assume a philosophical attitude and say : "Only wait. A man who has stolen will steal again, and you will catch him another time!"

Revolt against the decisions of the chief's hubo is very rare. Should any person take the part of a condemned man and encourage him to oppose the decision of the Court, he will be beaten with a shambock on the square of the capital. "U onhi hubo," "he has spoilt the Court!" Moreover he may have to pay a fine of £ 2. (Mankhelu.)

Answer to some of Professor Frazer's questions on Government. There are no separate chiefs for war and peace. But in time of war the great induna, who is the Commander-in-chief of the army, directs all military operations. — The chief is never required to marry his own sister or daughter. The only similar case of which I have heard, is that of a hunter who must have sexual relations with his daughter before going on a hunting trip (Part IV). — The king's mother does not hold any special office.— The chief does not keep any portion of his deceased predecessor excepting the nails and hair used for the mhamba (See page 386 and part VI)

(1) The following interesting couplet in two sentences aptly describes the thief :
Shikhungwa rendjelezane ? — The crown on the hat nicely rounded ?
Mangwhe a yaha ritsha... — The hawk burns his claws...
The thief is like a crown on the top of a hat. He is a lazy person, he attitudinises and will not work. Evil will befall him, as with a hawk who tries to snatch the meat that is roasting and burns his claws !

821 which had caused the flash of lightning, and flies away back to
825 the mountains. The magician who understands the "treatment
791 of Heaven" comes and digs at the spot ; there he finds a kind of gelatinous substance which solidifies after a little time. I possess a little of this curious drug given to me by a Pedi magician, by name Mudjumi ; it resembles a piece of chalk, and is considered very valuable on account of its rareness, and because it is used in the manufacture of the wonderful medicine of Heaven. Should a village have been struck by lightning, the magician of Heaven will come and dig out this foreign body ; if he finds it, the taboo is removed. If he does not, the whole village must move to another place. In the same way, it is taboo to warm oneself at a fire made of the wood of a tree that has been struck by lightning, or to use it as fuel.

The flute of Heaven.
Drawn by J. Weare.

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Happily this dreadful bird can be prevented from killing and burning by magical means. Both the Pedi Mudjumi and the Thonga Makasane possessed the enchanted flute, by which they could force Heaven — or the bird of Heaven — to spare them. Mudjumi having sold me his flute, I can describe it at length. It is made of a hollow bone five inches long, covered with Varan skin, filled at its larger extremity with a black substance like wax. Inside, to keep it clean, there is a vulture's feather. The bone is said to have been taken from the ndlati bird ; the wax substance was made from powder obtained by drying up and pulverising a little of the heart, the eye, the bones, the feathers, and the flesh of the bird. In the wax are embedded three seeds of Abrus precatorius, the "lucky bean" well-known in South Africa, a round seed of a splendid coral colour with a black spot, very much used in Thonga magic. This addition of Abrus precatorius intensifies the sound of the flute and enables it to reach heaven.

When travelling through the country, you may come across a tree round which a rag has been tied, evidently for some religious purpose. One's first idea would be that this tree is worshipped, but this is by no means the case. The tree is probably that which the divinatory bones have singled out as the one around which the village should be built, and the offering of this rag is made to the spirits of the ancestors, exactly as is done when the rag is placed near the grave, or at the door of the little hut built on it, in the case of those possessed. (See I. p. 141 and later on Chapter III). The tree is only sacred on account of this association. I have sometimes called the *Nkanye* a sacred tree, and the Thongas call it the king of trees, but it is not so in itself, or in virtue of any Nature spirit dwelling in it ; anybody can cut it without transgressing a taboo ; it is venerated because it provides the tribe with the national beer, and because its branches are used as pillows for the dead and its twigs as *mhamba* in the funeral service (I. p. 138). The religious and social *luma*, to which the bukanyi is subject (I. p. 397), is observed from fear of the ancestral spirits and not because the tree itself is in any way worshipped. In fact I never met with any worship offered to a plant as such. 824 769 778

VI. *The Animal World.*

Plants, *psimili or psa-ku-mila*, things which grow (ku mila), are distinguished from animals, called *psibandjana*, or *psihari*, which are said to *kula*, become great, and not *mila*. 815 136 825

The knowledge possessed by the Thongas with regard to animals is extensive. They give names to all the larger ones, especially, of course, to those which are eaten, but also to some which are smaller, insignificant and useless.

The *Annelida* are called by the generic name of *tinyokana*, diminutive of *nyoka* (yin-tin), snake ; leeches, *ntjundju* (mumi) ; lumbrics, *nshikwa* (yin-tin), both those living in the earth and parasites in the intestines of children.

Amongst *Myriapoda* the Julidese are called *Khongoloti* (dji-ma) ; the Millepedes, *Ndlandlalati* (yin-tin). When one of these has stung a Native, you will see him swallow a little earth, and a

775 remains *in his grave*. Is not his grave his house (I. p. 137)? Does
776 he not sit on his square, where his mats have been unrolled? Thus
the life of the shikwembu seems to be the exact continuation of his
787 earthly existence. That such is the idea is proved by the two bones which represent the gods in the set of divinatory bones : 1) the astragalus or nail of an ant-bear, because ant-bears live in the earth, and come out only during the night ; 2) the astragalus of an antelope, found in the excrement of a hyena ; the hyena ate the antelope, and swallowed the bone, which came to light again ; in the same way the gods have been buried in the ground, and reveal themselves later on. (Compare Ch. III. D.) A third idea, more or less intermediate between the other two, is that the gods reside *in the sacred woods*, and there lead their family life in human form, parents and children, even little children, who are carried on their mothers' shoulders. Mboza went so far as to say that they are married and bring forth children, as children are seen on their mothers' backs. Here again, we find the life of the other world regarded as the exact reproduction of this terrestrial existence.

4) The Sacred Woods.

764 These are vast, almost impenetrable thickets, in which the
769 ancient chiefs have been buried ; they are called *ntimu*, (mu-mi)
cemeteries. Every clan owns one or more of these burying places.
778 The ntimu is reserved for the men of the royal family, those who have been the owners of the land. They are buried in different sections of the forest, "according to their villages," in such a way that the wood represents separate cemeteries, corresponding to the

171 they bear the marks, and only in that case does he take them to Nyambe (See *Ames primitives*, Th. Burnier, Paris Mission, 102, Boulevard Arago).

The Ba-Chopi believe that their ancestor-gods dwell in rivers. They have no fear of the graves where the deceased have been buried, and even till the ground over them, asserting that the bones alone remain in the earth, the ghosts themselves having departed into the river where they are heard singing, dancing, and playing on antelope horns. When the chiefs make a national offering, they mix the meat with water when they present it to their gods, and the one officiating turns his eyes towards the river when he prays. He places the part of the victim which has been cut out for the gods on the bank of the river, and everybody goes home. The gods come when all have gone and take the offering. It is taboo to remain on the spot and to be seen by them!

villages of the living. No woman, and no uterine nephew is buried in the official cemeteries. 764 769

These woods are taboo. It is forbidden to gather fuel there, to cut down any tree, or to allow the bush fire to enter them. Should anyone have imprudently set fire to the grass in the neighbourhood, and be unable to extinguish the blaze, and should the fire thus pass over a grave, he must provide a goat for sacrifice, in order to "extinguish" (timula) the sacred wood. All entry is strictly prohibited except to the guardian of the wood (mutameli wa ntimu), the priest, who is the descendant of the gods of the forest. He goes there from time to time, to offer the sacrifices. He penetrates into the dense foliage by a narrow path, hardly perceptible. I have often visited one of the most celebrated woods, that of Libombo, two miles east of the Rikatla station. The old Libombo chiefs were buried there, and Nkolele, the proprietor of the forest, was very proud of it. He asserted that Mahazule, the chief of Nondwane, belonging to the reigning family of Mazwaya, whose forefathers had conquered the land of Nondwane, feared the spot and, in order to avoid it, took a circuitous route to Lourenço-Marques, or, if forced to take that road, stopped near the wood to pay his respects to the old chiefs buried there. I did not see anything remarkable in that wood. Forcing my way through the bushes, brambles, and creepers I at length came to a sort of tumulus, but very slightly raised, on which were to be seen some dried leaves of maize, the remains of offerings placed there some time previously. The young man who acted as my guide — considerably against his inclination, I fancy, — turned away his face, with a terrified expression, when we came upon this grave. In another spot I found some other tombs. Snakes thrive, naturally, in these thickets, where they are undisturbed, but I did not see any on that occasion. No mausoleum has been built over any of these venerated sepulchres ; a few pieces of old blackened pottery were all we saw — the remnants of the jugs and plates belonging to the deceased, which were broken on the spot after his death. 778

The dread in which these sacred woods are held by the Natives is certainly not due to any unusual objects they may have seen 769 778 538

769 there. It is inculcated, and kept alive, by the truly terrifying tales
778 which are told concerning them. These are related in the evening,
538 in low tones, and with frightened looks, and the feeling of awe is
776 fed and maintained by these legends. I intend to narrate here those I heard from various informants ; these stories will illustrate better than any philosophical explanation the ideas of the Natives concerning their gods. Those connected with the Libombo wood are the most typical. I owe them to Spoon and the aged Nkolele. I will begin with those which are of most ancient origin, and whose legendary character is most unmistakable.

539 One day a woman was passing close by the forest of Libombo : she
776 plucked a sala (p. 16) from a tree and ate it, after which she went to till
769 her garden. On another occasion, just as she was cracking another sala against the trunk of a tree before eating it, she saw that the fruit, instead of having a stone inside, was filled with small vipers. She threw it away, but the vipers said to her : "Go on! Eat away! Haven't we seen you every day picking sala? And these sala are ours, and not yours. What shall we gods have to eat? Have we not made this tree to grow?" And she went home and died, because she had been cursed by the gods.

Another woman was passing by the forest on a rainy day, and saw a child, who had climbed a tree, and was eating berries. She approached the child and said : "Give me some of those berries!" The boy made no reply, so she began to pick some for herself. When she had picked enough, she said : "Are you going on picking berries in such a rain as this! Where is your mother?" He still remained silent. She felt sorry for the child, thinking he was indeed to be pitied : — "Come," said she, "and let me carry you on my back." So she went up to the tree, and lifted down the child, and tied him on her back with her shawl ; then, putting her conical basket on her head, she started for home. On arriving at her hut, she saw that a fire had been lighted on account of the rain. — "Put on some more wood," said she, "for the sake of this little one, whom I found on the road eating berries." She untied the shawl, and tried to place the child on her hips, but he refused to be moved, and clung to her back, where he kept quite still. The folks said to the woman : "Put him down on the ground, so that he can go and warm himself near the embers." He refused. Then they said to him : "Get down!" But he still refused to move. Then the villagers said to the woman : "Didn't you pass by the Libombo forest?" — "Yes! I did," she replied, "and there I found this child gathering berries, and

brought him along with me." — "This is no child! It is a god!" they 539
cried ; "a child never has a hard head like this one has. And look at his 776
legs! What strength! How ever did you come to think it was a child?"
—"But," said she, "I certainly thought it was a child — and can it 769
be a god?" — They sent for magicians, who threw the bones. At once the magicians knew what was wrong : — "Ha! Hé! You found him at Libombo, did you not?" They tried to remove him by force, but he clung still more closely to the woman's back, stiffening his legs round her waist, and his arms around her neck. They tried to unclench his hands, but it was impossible! Then they begged her to go back to Libombo, and implore the owners of the forest to set her free from this child. She took her basket, and returned to the tree where she had found him. The guardian of the forest soon appeared. It was Makundju, the ancestor of Nkolele. He inveighed against the woman and those who accompanied her, saying : — "When you find fruit in the forest, do not pick it! If it be maize, leave it alone, or, if you pick it, spare at least one ear. If your chicken flies into the wood, do not go after it. If your goat runs away into it, you must not follow it. We are worn out, we folks of Libombo, with offering sacrifices for you passers-by... Your troubles are the consequences of the sins (psihono) you commit in this place." A white hen was caught, and sacrificed on behalf of the woman. Emitting the "tsu" the priest said : "Behold our ox, by which we present our petition. Let this god leave her back. She did not do it on purpose. She thought it was a child ; she did not know it was a god. Which way can people go henceforth if you, gods, put obstacles in the way?" While this sacrifice was being offered, the being suddenly left her back, disappeared, and no one knew how, or whither he went. As for the woman, she trembled violently and died...

A man once defied the prohibition of cutting dry wood in the forest. Suddenly he was pelted from behind with kwakwa and sala fruits. It was the gods. He tried to fly, but was unable to find the path out of the thicket. He was lost, and tired of wandering about he let his bundle of faggots fall. Then the gods allowed him to find his way out again, but, when he found himself in the open, he perceived that he was carrying nothing, even his axe had been taken from him.

Sometimes the gods made themselves heard ; when they were 776
especially happy they played on trumpets, sang and danced. 778
Passers-by often tried to get a glimpse of them, but the noise

776 ceased at once, and would commence again suddenly right behind
778 the listeners. The people of the country know quite well whence this music comes, and, at Libombo, they can even report the song which is heard in this forest. It is a great pity that I was not able to obtain the music of this ode of the gods! I can, however, give the words, which will probably be found to smack considerably of the earth, earthy! —

With ground- nuts and onions, nté, nté, nté!
Make a good sauce in the pan!

However, here are one or two facts of quite recent occurrence, showing that the age of sacred wood miracles is not yet over, or that, at least, the religious awe still survives in some faithful hearts!

Spoon assured me that he saw on one occasion a whole herd of goats in the forest, while he was picking tihuhlu nuts. He ran to tell his grandfather, Nkolele, and to ask if he might appropriate them. Nkolele reproved him with bitter words : "Unhappy man! Don't dare to touch them! They belong to the gods! Don't even speak of them! It is taboo! (psa yila)."

The young folks of Libombo used to blaspheme in their hearts, saying: "There are no gods." "But," added Spoon, "we very soon saw that there were some, when they killed one of us, named Mapfindlen. He was walking along the path, singing and jumping, when he trod on a snake, which he had not seen, and hurt it. During the night the gods came to him. He began to scratch himself all over his body. He saw them against the wall : they were like snakes, and they said : 'Thou hast hurt us!' No one else saw them. His mother tried to quiet him, but he shrieked, and said to her : 'Leave me alone! The gods are killing me because I trod on them! Help!' They threw the bones. The diviner said : 'This comes from your household gods! Has he not trodden on a snake?' His parents procured an offering, and sacrificed to the gods, trying to propitiate them ; but the gods were angry and Mapfindlen died."

The following is the most recent of the stories. It was related to me by the hero himself, Nkolele, the aged priest of Libombo.

After the war of 1894-1895, the Portuguese Authorities established a camp at Morakwen, and decided to build a town there. To do this it became necessary to widen the primitive pathway which led to Lourenço Marques, and Natives had to cede trees and grass lands, to the extent of several metres on each side of the path ; then a fine road was built of some 20 kilometres in length. This road passed close by the sacred wood, as it had been decided to follow the line of the pathway, which skirted this wood for a distance of about half a mile. Amongst many other trees was one huge mahogany, under whose shade I have frequently passed, which sent out a low branch, right over the path ; it was necessary to cut off this branch, and the people living in the neighbourhood were intrusted with the job. "When they began the work," said Nkolele to me, on the 28th November, 1895, "I went to see what they were doing with the mahogany tree. As I was seated the gods came to me, saying : 'What are you doing here? You ought to have stayed at home.' I fell backwards unconscious, and remained in that state for four days. I couldn't eat : they had closed my mouth. I could not speak! My people picked me up and carried me home. My relatives and my children were all summoned : the villagers said : 'Our medicine-man has left us! He is dead!' Then my eldest son went to offer a sacrifice in the sacred wood. He let loose a fowl, which flew away and never returned ; he prayed : 'Oh! my ancestors! Here is my ox. Do not slay my father!' Then I got up. Ah! It was he, who saved me, Ngelenwana, my eldest son! I looked around and said : 'What have all these people come here for?' They were terror stricken. Then they told me that the gods of Libombo were angry with me. The gods said to me (doubtless by means of the bones) : 'Take an ox-cock' (meaning an ox, an animal for sacrifice, which may be a cock), 'and go to your brother Shihubane. Let him give you a fowl, and go and sacrifice. Why did you go there? You ought to have stayed at home, and have sent your children.' I did not go any more by the big road. I go by the path through the marshes, and never by the avenue made by the Whites. Now I can go that way, for I have sacrificed, and the gods have said : 'He has asked our pardon by means of his gifts."

Is there not something significant and touching about this tale? Civilisation penetrates irresistibly, crushing everything in its way, and cutting remorselessly, perhaps unwittingly, through the edge of the sacred wood! And there, under the mahogany

776 tree, the aged priest, the guardian of its traditions, swoons away
778 and asks forgiveness for having been an involuntary witness of the sacrilege!

These stories are by no means restricted to the Libombo sacred wood. Similar tales are told of all the forests. Mboza says :

A woman was imprudent enough to cut some dry branches in the sacred wood of Masinge, near Morakwen. She at once heard an unusual voice : bi... bi... and received blows. She ran away home leaving her garment in the bush. Having arrived home, she asked her husband to go and fetch it, but he refused, from fear. Nkomuza, the guardian of the forest, went to fetch it, but they had to reward him with a bottle of wine.

An older story about the same forest runs as follows : — In olden times the gods were frequently seen marching in file, going to draw water from the well. They had their own road. They were of short stature, the women carrying babies in the *ntehe*, but, strange to say, with the feet up and the head downwards! A man, called Mishimhongo, built his village near to the forest. The gods, angry with him, entered his huts while he was busy with all his people working in the fields. Only a little child remained in the village, and the gods wrapped him up in a mat, and hid him somewhere behind the huts. Then they went to the garden and shouted : "Mishimhongo! There are visitors in your village." The man looked to see who was calling him, but saw no one. He went home, and found that the child had disappeared. In the evening the gods came and said to him : "Look behind the huts. But move at once ; do not remain near our road! If you do so, we shall kill you and your child." The poor man needed no second warning!

Not far from this place, in the Nkanyen district, is the sacred wood of Tlhatlha. An enormous pot is said to have been placed there long ago, a marvellous pot which possesses the faculty of locomotion. It can move as far as that village yonder (half a mile). But though it may have arrived only yesterday at the spot where you see it, it is quite hidden in the grass and shrubs, as if it had been there for years! It takes its walk from one end of the graves to the other. It is taboo to touch it! When the Portuguese tried to establish a camp there, they heard strange noises during the night, drums, trumpets, etc. The Landis (Natives) said to them : "Take care! There are gods here." So they removed their camp to Morakwen. (Mboza.)

The wood of Tembe, called Mudlomadlomana, is very celebrated.

It is said that, in olden days, there was an anchor there, and before sacrificing, the priest always used to lift it up, and let it fall to the ground, saying: "Shawan! (I salute thee) Tembe!" If the sacrifice was acceptable the sound of a trumpet: "bvé... bvé...," was heard, far away in the depths of the woods, but no form was ever seen. This anchor also possessed extraordinary powers. When the country was at war with its neighbours, and matters did not go well with Tembe, the anchor would move off by itself into the Matjolo district. This was the portent of some terrible catastrophe! 776 778

No one ever penetrated very far into the sacred wood of Tryini, of the Matjolo clan, for it was said that any one doing so would be lost, and unable to find his way out. When the people of Matjolo were in need of rain, they took a young man of the country into the wood, and there abandoned him. The gods accepted their offering, and the young man, struck with paralysis, was unable to follow in their retreat those who had led him to martyrdom! He saw them going away, but remained behind to be devoured by the gods. The others hastened to sacrifice and returned home; they were forbidden to look behind them. Once home, they told how they had seen on the ground, in the wood, foot-prints of adults, and even of little ones who must have been old enough to crawl on their hands and knees! Often, they say, they brought back the rain with them! [789]

According to all these stories, it is evident that, in the Thonga mind, the ancestor-gods dwell in the sacred woods, and lead a life there in the earth, and occasionally outside, very similar to the terrestrial one. Mankhelu had, however, another idea, which is difficult to reconcile with this representation. On his forked magic pole he had a long shining grey branch of a climbing shrub called *ñwabola*. This has enormous thorns, which are supposed to have the power of calling the precious things which are far away, and of gathering them in the hut: money, oxen, girls to marry, etc., and also the ancestor-gods: "When they pass through the country, coming from our old domicile, near the Limpopo, they are caught by the thorns, and settle here to bless us." This idea that the gods fly through the air, is very rarely met 769 776 778 789 769 776

782 1) *Individual and family offerings* — those which concern a man or his family alone, — and *national offerings* — those which concern the whole clan.

2) The *simple offerings* called *gandjela*, and the *sacramental ones*, accompanied by the famous *tsu* which constitutes them a *hahla* (Ro.) or a *phahla* (Dj.).

3) Offerings attended with *bloodshed*, and those where no victim is killed.

4) The *regular offerings*, made at certain dates, or in connection with definite events in the life of the family or of the clan, and those made in *special* circumstances.

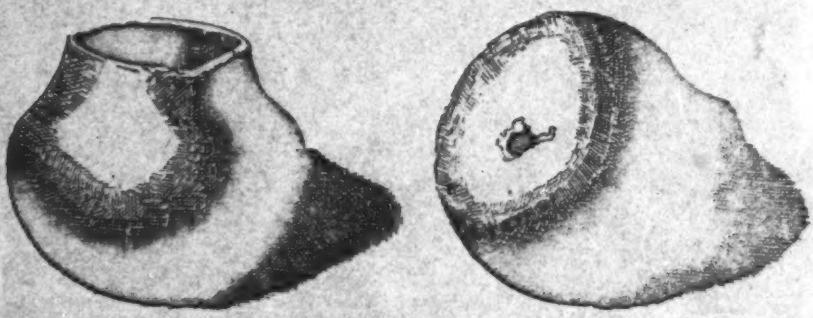
a) *Individual and Family Offerings.*

Simple Offerings (Gandjela).

782 Here the ritual is reduced to its minimum. The offering is
778 made by the father of the family at the gandjelo, the altar, or place of worship. This is, as has already been pointed out, a little pot, placed at the right side of the entrance to the village, or under the tree designated by the bones (I. p. 320) (1). In some cases, especially if the headman is a medicine-man or magician, the gandjelo consists of a forked branch planted in the ground, either inside his hut, or in the very middle of the square. Such was the case in the village of Mankhelu (See illustration I. p. 5). His gandjelo was a branch of *nkonola* (or *nkonono*) ; this tree, the *mpfilu* and *shisalala* are the only trees which are used for the purpose. He had removed the bark in some places, and smeared the stems with his black powders, so that there were two dark rings of about 3 inches wide on the branch. A lot of curious things were to be seen hanging from the lateral branches : bags

621 (1) If there are people of different clans inhabiting the same village owing to the fact that foreigners have "kondza" i. e, have put themselves under the authority of the
771 headman (I. p. 433), there will be a central gandjelo, the altar of the master of the village, at the foot of the sacred tree where offerings will be made for himself and his
782 relatives ; but people of the other clans will have their own altars which will be placed near the main entrance, on the spot where the representatives of each of these clans assemble when discussing their own affairs.

full of roots, calabashes of different sizes, containing the precious drugs, pieces of the *ñwabola* shrub (p. 383), etc. When he had earned some money or acquired something by accident, Mankhelu used to put these objects near the stem, and leave them there for the night in order to inform his gods of his good fortune. At the foot of the branch the earth was smeared with black clay, forming a circle with a little furrow traced round the outside of it. Men who are not so important as this great *ñanga*, are contented with the



Sokis' mug. The altar of primitive mankind.

small pot I described before. This can be placed on the grave, if it happens to be near the village.

In the case of Sokis (I. p. 139) it was the *deceased's own mug* which was used, pierced at the bottom in order to allow the beer to sink easily into the ground, when an offering was made to the recently deceased by his relatives (1).

Regular offerings are brought to the altar by the headman. When he has finished preparing his *tobacco* for use, he carefully puts aside some leaves of it, and places them near the pot. When he has ground the tobacco for snuff he puts two little spoonsful

(1) I had the good fortune to obtain this mug, which may well be called the altar of primitive humanity! I offered Sokis' wife a small pig in exchange for it. She was quite willing to accept the bargain, but her sister-in-law made objections, doubtless fearing that the deceased might be angry... The widow answered her thus: "When he was living you refused him beer often enough! You may do the same now, and accept the little pig." Thanks to the common-sense view taken by Sokis' wife I am now in possession of this precious pierced mug, and in a position to give its facsimile in the accompanying plate.

following way. The bones are consulted, and a special pot, called 782
phokolo, is buried just below the surface of the ground, in the middle of a clean spot well hidden in a dense thicket of thorny shrubs. The victim, a black ram without any white spot, is brought there, and killed in accordance with the ceremonial rites. The grass of the paunch is squeezed over the pot, so that the green liquid drips into it, and the blood is spread all over the ground. Four furrows have been dug in the form of a cross with the pot as a centre, and pointing towards the four cardinal points. Little girls ("who are not yet wise," i. e. they are not yet informed regarding sexual matters) are sent to fetch water and fill the pot until it overflows into the furrows. This being done, they go back to their mothers. The *mbelele* rite will immediately follow (p. 318). This phokolo sacrifice is the religious act in connection with ancestrolatry, the mbelele being actuated by entirely different ideas. The phokolo rite is replaced in the Nkuna clan by the official visit to the graves, accompanied by an old mourning song, and the custom of beating the mounds with sticks ; (whether to awaken the gods or to show them the dissatisfaction of the worshippers, I do not know). In many sacred woods, a living *human victim* is offered to the gods, as already mentioned (p. 383). The phokolo rite is a regular sacrifice attended with bloodshed.

In the case of war threatening the country, another offering is 721
made which is called *Mhamba ya Burena, the Offering of Valour.* 782
The general of the army chooses a thorn, a large thorn taken from a munga tree (the Accacia horrida), not a crooked one ; he sucks it without biting it, and emits his saliva saying : "Tsu! You, the ancestor-gods, so and so and so, enemies wish to take your country! Give us valour! May we stab them with this thorn, with the assegai! (Ñwi, psikwembu, man, man, man. Yimpi yi ta, yi ta teka tiko djenu! Hi nyikan burena, hi ba tlhaba hi mutwa lo, hi tlhari!)" This offering resembles the offering of the thorn made by the headman, but it has an entirely different meaning, and it is probable that the kind of thorn employed is different.

Another national act of worship, which recalls the rite of 778
the nkanye twig in funeral ceremonies, is performed with the 782
aid of the *great mhamha*, to which I have already referred

778 (I. p. 386). This is a most curious object, the mhamba par excel-
782 lence, in the Tembe and Zihlahla clans. It is so highly venerated that people fear to call it by its own name, and refer to it as hlengwe, riches. According to the description of Hlekisa, (a Tembe Native), it consists of the nails and hair of the deceased chiefs. When a chief dies, the more or less imperishable portions of his body, such as the nails and the hair of his head and beard, are carefully cut, kneaded together with the dung of the oxen which have been killed at his death, and a kind of pellet is thus made. This is bound round with thongs of hide. When another chief dies, a second pellet is made and added to the first, and so on down through centuries. The mhamba of the Tembe clan is at the present time about one foot in length, says my informant, who is a cousin of the man to whose custody this sacred relic has been committed, and who has seen it often. The guardian must be of a particularly calm temperament, and must not be given to the use of strong language, nor to intoxication. The chief gives him money or perhaps a wife, for his trouble, because of the responsibility which he has undertaken towards the country. He keeps the mhamba in a hut specially built for the purpose, at the back of his own village. Whenever he is called upon to use it for a religious purpose, he must abstain from sexual relations for a whole month. The sacrifice then performed will consist of a goat, slaughtered in the usual way, but consecrated without the ordinary tsu. The tsu is replaced by the mhamba, which the officiant will brandish in the same way as the nkanye twig (I. p. 142) in the funeral ceremony, tracing circles in the air, and invoking the gods. — This object is wrapped in great mystery. Mboza thinks that the *ntjobo* of the Nondwane, kept in the sacred hut of nyokwekulu (I. p. 386), the national medicine, was the same thing, but most people were ignorant of what it consisted. At any rate the same law applied to both : it was looked on as the greatest calamity for it to fall into the hands of enemies in time of war. When the clan is forced to seek refuge in flight, the keeper of the mhamba is the first to flee. The whole army stands between the guardian of the precious amulet of the clan and the enemy. It is more than its flag, and will not be taken until all the warriors have been killed

or dispersed. — It is said that once during the war between Tembe and Maputju, the latter succeeded in gaining possession of the mhamba ; a terrible drought ensued, for the gods of Maputju were irritated, as they were of the same family as those of Tembe (I. p. 329). Not knowing what to do with it, the Maputjus at length cut open a goat between the hind legs, and introduced the mhamba into its body. They then led the goat to the river which marks the boundary of the Tembe country, and threw it into the water. Hlekisa's grandfather, a Tembe man, who had settled in Maputju, was asked to lead the goat. — Thus the rightful owners recovered their mhamba. (Is there not a striking resemblance between this story and that of the capture of the ark of the covenant by the Philistines?) 778 782.

The mhamba of the Zihlahla country used to be kept by a man named Petshela, who carried it with him from place to place, when fleeing, refusing to trust it to the care of any save his own children. Is it still in existence, since the clan was deprived of its independence? In Nondwane the national amulet was in the care of the Godhlela family, as already mentioned in I. p. 388, and this function was hereditary.

The story *of the great mhamba of the Shirindja clan* (between Nondwane and Manyisa) is even more impressive than those told about the palladium of Tembe and Zihlahla. The man who revealed these mysteries to me did so somewhat reluctantly, saying that those who give information about them may die! In this clan the mhamba consists of *the skin of the faces of the deceased chiefs.* As soon as a chief is dead, the great nanga Manketwana removes the skin from his forehead down to his chin and spreads it on the ground, the edges being fixed down by sticks all round in order that it shall dry without shrivelling. He also cuts off the fingers. The whole is then handed over to an old woman who no longer has sexual relations, the wife of one of the sub-chiefs. She adds this skin to those of the ancient chiefs and keeps the bundle in a special hut, the hut of the mhamba, built behind the principal hut of the new chief, in which she sleeps. No one is allowed to enter it ; married men in particular must not do so ; and a woman only if the child she carries on her shoulders has not yet passed through

778 the ceremony of tying the cotton string (I. p. 56. Sexual relations
782 have been prohibited to her from the birth of her child up to the performance of this rite. She is consequently pure). The chief may penetrate into it, but only if he has abstained from intercourse with his wives for a whole week. Mankentwane himself must observe this law, otherwise the "medicine, muri" would be spoiled and lose all its virtue. (The sexual taboo, in this case, is evidently dictated by the fact that the mhamba is directly connected with military matters, as we shall see. Compare I. p. 470.) In this sacred hut the old woman constantly keeps up a fire which is maintained with the logs of a certain tree, called shibondjwane, cut by the subjects at the command of the chief. Now and again she exposes the skins to the rays of the sun in order to kill the worms which attack them. Should enemies invade the country, she escapes, carrying the bundle in a mat. If they come up with her, she at once disappears (nyumba) leaving the mat on the spot. As soon as an enemy has taken hold of it, he becomes insane ; he begins to wander about in the bush, unable to return home. When the war is over, the old woman goes to the place where she left the mhamba ; if she does not immediately find it there, her heart is not in the least troubled. The bones are thrown, and reveal where the mhamba has been put by the enemy. Two days
778 do not elapse before it is found! The great mhamba is used first
782 of all for the preparation of military expeditions. A small portion
726 of the fingers and of the faces is cut off and these pieces are mixed with the other war charms ; a pill is made and placed on a piece of broken pottery over a fire in the sacred wood. All the warriors pass by one after the other and expose their assegais, their legs, and their faces to the smoke ; finally the great ñanga puts the fire out and the army is ready to start. But the Shirindja mhamba also plays a great part in the National religious ceremonies, as in the other clans (1).

171 (1) It is interesting to compare the Thonga *great mhamba* with two objects found amongst other Bantu tribes. The first of these is the *byiri* of the Pahuins of the French
778 Congo. This is a most powerful fetish consisting of a skull kept in a box in the huts of these people, in a dark corner; it is used as a means of obtaining wealth and of discovering wizards. In former times it is said to have been the skull of the father of the owner of the hut which had been dug up by him and smeared with drugs. In

2) The Main Elements of Ancestor Worship.

The sequence of the religious ceremonies in a typical sacrifice, like that performed at the crushing of the hut, is as follows : 769 782

1) The bones are first consulted, and reveal to what god, when, how, and by whom the sacrifice must be made.

2) The officiant, who is as a rule the eldest male member of the family, comes and presides over the sacrifice.

3) The victims are brought by those who have either been designated, or who have volunteered to provide them.

4) They are killed by the uterine nephews, the goats or sheep by piercing the heart, the hens by cutting the throat. Sometimes the face of the goat is directed to a certain point of the horizon.

5) The victim bleats, or if it is a hen, jumps about on the ground in its agony. At each thrust of the assagay, or of the

order to secure this much desired object as soon as possible, the son would go so far as to poison his father. Now, according to the testimony of Mr. F. Grébert (*Au Gabon*, p. 154), the byeri is not necessarily the skull of an ancestor. Any skull can be used, either that of a traveller found dead on the caravan route or even the skull of a man belonging to a foreign clan who has been assassinated. The byeri, whatever may be its origin, acts by its own power and no longer on account of its connection with the spirit of an ancestor. It is a true fetish, a material, magical object which is able to kill or to enrich in virtue of its own power. The Thonga mhamba is not a fetish. Its power is never dissociated from the spirits of the old chiefs whose nails, hair or faces have been used to produce it. Whatever action it may have is due to the fact that these nails, hair or faces influence the dead chiefs to whom they belonged, according to the magic principle that the part acts on the whole. The origin of the byeri is certainly ancestor-worship, but here ancestrolatry has evolved into fetichism, and I conclude from these facts that Thonga ancestrolatry is simpler, more spiritualistic and must therefore be more ancient than the present Pahuin system. 171 778

Amongst the Ba-Ganda (see Rev. J. Roscoe, *the Baganda*) there are powerful gods who have their priests and mediums, and are worshipped according to a complicated ritual, one of them being the war-god Kibuka. They have their temples, in which there is a sacred shrine placed on a stool. The shrine of Kibuka was secured and sent to the Museum of Ethnology at Cambridge, and it was found to contain, together with other objects, a bag with a human jawbone, the male organ and a decorated umbilical cord. This is a proof that the god Kibuka is an ancestor-god, whatever may be the splendour to which his worship has attained in the course of time. And here again we are in presence of what seems to be a later form of ancestrolatry, most probably evolved in consequence of the development of the social system of the Baganda. They form a nation with a powerful royal family, more than one thousand years old. With them the spirits of the dead kings hover round their jawbones, just as they are influenced by their nails, hair or faces amongst the Thongas, who would seem to be in a less advanced stage of evolution.

782 whom they sometimes pray in the hut (See App. IV). Amongst
593 Thongas the wife does not adopt the gods of her husband's
793 family (1).

The beginnings of the *constitution of a sacerdotal caste* may be seen in the fact that in each clan, the mhamba, the sacred object used by the royal family to invoke its gods, or the drug on which national invulnerability depends, is entrusted to the care of a certain man, whose office is hereditary. As soon as the political tie becomes stronger, and the power of the paramount chief greater, the religious acts which are performed at the capital gain in importance, and the person who officiates becomes a kind of high priest. Should this evolution continue, it is easy to see how a sacerdotal class may be formed at the expense of the primitive family worship, which thus increasingly loses its importance. Amongst the Thongas this has not yet taken place, and their religious system seems to correspond to a very ancient state of things ; it is in all probability the pure form of primitive Ancestrolatry.

b) The Thonga Conception of the Offerings.

782 With the help of new information obtained since writing the
778 first edition of this book, I think it now possible to attain to a fuller
789 understanding of the meaning of this great Thonga word *mhamba* which I have translated either by offering or by sacrifice, in connection with the killing of a victim. Under this designation come objects of two distinct categories : articles of food, clothing, etc. which are of immediate service to human existence and which are *given* to the ancestor-gods, and magic or magico-religious objects which are not given but only employed in the act of worship. The aim is the same, whatever may be the nature of the object, viz. to obtain the favour and help of the ancestor-gods, but in the first case the officiant adresses himself to living, conscious

(1) There seems to be a profound difference between Thongas and Suthos on this point. The Rev. P. Ramseyer assured me on very good evidence that in Basutoland "a wife takes the family name (seboko) of her husband and abandons her *midimo*." The midimo, says my informant, are not only the *badimo* proper, i. e. the ancestor-gods, but all the supernatural powers in which a given clan trusts, the totem, the spirit (moea) of hail, of rain, of lightning, of disease. A Sutho woman can become a Tebele by marriage, though this seldom actually happens.

spirits, endowed with intelligence, feelings and will, and tries to induce them to respond to his needs, whilst, in the second case he trusts that his offering will act on them magically, i. e. automatically, according to the principles of magic explained above. Let us consider these two kinds of mhamba more closely.

1) *The gifts*. As regards their nature these are indeed most varied, consisting in the first place of *domestic animals*, the ox, goat, fowl, which are only used by subjects, the sheep being the offering proper to the chief (p. 50). Pigs are not accepted for the altar, neither are antelopes, or other kinds of game. I have never heard of any offering consisting of the flesh of wild beasts. The victim is generally killed, but there are cases of its being consecrated *living*. If a living hen or goat is given to the gods, (a ring sometimes being attached to the leg of the fowl), it is taboo henceforth to kill or sell it; if it dies, it must not be eaten, and it must also be replaced by another (1). Another kind of living offering is the *human sacrifice* made in certain sacred woods in order to obtain rain, but this is rarely resorted to. "The victim wanders about in the forest till he dies," says Mboza; "the gods take him."

The most common kind of offering is *the produce of the fields*, chiefly the Kafir Corn in the official luma, but also other cereals, sorghum maize, likoro (p. 11), various kinds of pumpkins. Ground nuts are never offered. But the ancestor-gods appreciate drinks, not only the national beer, but also the wine of the Whites. They like narcotics as well as intoxicants, and tobacco is one of the gifts most frequently made to them.

Clothing, especially handkerchiefs of various designs (these designs being often prescribed by the bones) is often offered, even ornaments, e. g. the bracelet in the sacrifice for the uterine nephew (p. 396); but it is the sick boy who wears it, probably instead of the gods.

Lastly one sometimes finds on the graves "wealth, hlengwe,"

(1) I have heard of two cases of a *living human offering* in the Bilen and Manyisa regions. A girl had been consecrated to the ancestor-gods; she was therefore a mhamba. In the first case a goat had been given to them also, as a living mhamba. The girl died, and the goat ought to have been burnt together with all her belongings, but her parents presented it to Christian Natives, who were free from the fear of the ancestor-gods.

782 *Shimantji* is the term used for left ; its etymology is unknown.
562 *Shinene* means right ; it also indicates nice, good, true. In this as in many other instances the male sex has arrogated to itself the better part!

782 2) *The magical objects used in worship.* First of all comes *the*
789 *great mhamba*, the nails, hair or faces of deceased chiefs. We are evidently dealing here with a case of *communionist magic.* I
778 explain in the same way the use of roots brought to light by a river which has washed away the ground (p. 387), but it may be that this is also an instance of *imitative magic* : the roots were hidden in the soil and have come to light ; in the same way the ancestor-gods have been buried in the ground and have again come forth to bless or curse their descendants. The curious astragalus bone of an antelope which had been swallowed by a hyena and found later in its stools and which Mankhelu employed to represent the gods in his divinatory set of bones, would favour this second explanation. In fact most of these objects are supposed to act in virtue of the principle of similarity : the nkanye twig, because this venerated tree will ensure respect to the person, living or dead, for whom it is used ; the piece of charcoal, because the enemy will be reduced to impotence just as the piece of wood has been consumed by fire ; the thorn employed by the general of the army, because the warriors will be able to pierce their opponents and kill them, etc. Is the number of magic objects used in this connection limited to those I have mentioned? I do not think so. It is probable that some others may be found in the various parts of the tribe. I even have proof that new objets of a magic character are still invented by worshippers who are gifted with special imaginative powers. My old friend Mankhelu was telling me the particulars of the battle of Nov. 1901, during the Sikororo war (I. p. 513), when suddenly jumping to his feet and taking a small bundle of grass, he said : "Listen! I will show you the mhamba I made when the enemy rushed on us. I took a bundle of grass like those which women use for binding their sticks, and feverishly separated the blades, saying : 'Let them fail to surround us, or decoy us!' Then I scattered them in all directions and said : 'Let them be so dispersed, carried off and destroyed!' And this is exactly what happened.

On my return from the battle I showed all the army how I had 782
prayed." The old general's spontaneous appeal to the gods on 789
behalf of his country in its hour of supreme danger is indeed 778
worthy of notice, and also furnishes a proof that ancestor-worship is still a living force and has not become a mere matter of ritual amongst those who practise it. This prayer of the Nkuna general, this exclamation of an anguished soul in the presence of a great danger, may be regarded as *verbal magic*, as it is not expressedly addressed to the gods, and the same may be said of the formula employed to cancel an oath in the offering of reconciliation, the mention of the gods being absent in this case also. All these acts, however, are mhamba. They are in reality accomplished with the idea that the gods hear and see what is said and done and will be induced to deliver their worshippers.

The magic character of these rites is most marked in the cases of communionist magic ; those which are classed under imitative magic may perhaps be more properly called *symbols*, or at least some of them (1).

Elias Libombo once came to me and said : "My brother, Klass, 787
died. He was *the mhamba of the Libombos*. Now his younger 793

(1) But what is a *symbol* in religion, and what is the difference between the symbol and the magic rite? I cannot treat this important subject here in all the necessary detail and length. Let us take only one instance. The offering of incense which took place every evening in the Temple of Jerusalem and which is also widespread in certain branches of the Christian Church is regarded as a symbol. The perfumed smoke which ascends towards heaven corresponds to the prayers of the worshippers, which are thought of as ascending to God and pleasing Him, just as the agreeable smell of incense gratifies the nostrils of the man who perceives it. But in the Hebrew religion it is not thought that incense conveys prayers to God in some actual and magical fashion. It is a symbol. Psychologically speaking this use of incense is probably to be explained in the following manner : The material representation of a religious act (or a religious truth) tends to induce in the worshipper a stronger faith in the efficacy of the act or the reality of the truth. His soul thus finds satisfaction in the performance of the symbolic act through which he feels himself brought into closer communion with his God. It is easy to understand that in the course of the religious evolution, a higher conception of God should have caused the magic act to evolve into the symbol, and that the symbol itself should be abandoned or reduced to a minimum when the idea of God has become perfectly spiritualised and communion with the Father who is in Heaven is realized without any external and intermediary means. A comparison of the great mhamba with the relics of saints or other relics used in certain religions would probably show a similar type of evolution.

Some scientists believe that religious evolution contained a *preanimistic phase*, in which the worship of spirits had not yet come into existence, and in which primitive man employed only magic means to influence the supernatural powers. This

756 Another rite, which is observed after the hondlola only, is
783 the *haza*, viz., the monthly purification of the exorcist. He
821 fills his gobo calabash with a decoction made of the roots of the mphesu and ntjebe trees, drinks the whole, tickles his throat with a feather and vomits the medicine. "A tibasisa ndjen" — "he purifies his inside." This is done at every new moon. The connection between the possessed and the moon, which was first established by the fact that he had *thwaza*[1] as well as the moon, is maintained and intensified by this rite.

2) Propitiatory rites.

751 Besides these protective drugs, the exorcised wears a necklace
756 made of little pieces of a creeper called *mayambatju*, tied together with a munganazi string. See the second necklace in the
782 illustration. This is intended *to calm his gods*, and to scatter
158 them when they desire to come upon him with violence. This is indeed a great danger ; the exorcised is liable to nervous attacks of a dangerous nature, especially during the first few weeks following the exorcism. Perhaps his song is heard in the distance. Then suddenly he is seized with madness, and furiously assaults his neighbours with the small hatchet, or the assagay used in the dances. People run away ; or, on the contrary, they collect and begin to clap their hands, and make their infuriated companion dance and sing his own song. This may help to dispel the spirits, and calm him down. Sometimes, feeling uneasy, foreseeing a crisis, the poor man himself asks them to sing. But he may also be led, in his frenzy, to the bush, far away, unconscious, quite mad, tearing his clothes and his skin with the thorns. This often happened to Ñwashinhwana. Her husband then followed her, and, when the crisis was over, saw her fall down exhausted and brought her home ; there, having returned to her senses, she became very sad and wept bitterly. So, in order to avoid being tormented, the exorcised propitiate their spirits ; they worship them, in truth, and this gives birth to *a new religion* totally different from ancestrolatry, which has its rites and its duties.

756 As already pointed out, the exorcised has *his own altar* in his
778 hut. It is the forked branch, round which a circle of raised clay
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[1] [See p. 495 -- Analyst]

is carefully maintained, and regularly smeared. He puts his 756
offerings there, principally tobacco. The snuff box is deposited 778
there. Does he want snuff? He enters the hut clapping his 782
hands, saluting his spirits, and, taking the box, throws a pinch of it at the foot of the branch, and says: "You! Ngoni, you see that I have not stolen! I first gave you your share." His wife will do the same. This is a "mhamba." — When ready to undertake a journey, he will come to the altar, sit on his ankles (a woman will kneel down) and take leave of the spirits. Holding his assagay, and his manono root, he says: "Good-bye, Ba-Ngoni! This hut is yours; keep it well! I go to such and such a place," and asks them to bless his journeying. On his return he will inform the spirits that he has succeeded in his trip. If he is sick, and the bones have revealed that the disease has been caused by the spirits, he again comes to the altar, and says: "You! Ba-Ngoni, why are you angry with me?" These acts of worship are not only performed at the altar. Wherever he may be, before drinking beer, the exorcised will pour out a little for his spirits. He will also throw a little food for them before eating. This will be *a daily worship*, much more constant and individual than the rites of ancestrolatry, a real communion with the spirits who, after having tormented the exorcist, have become his benefactors, giving him the power of healing others and thus of making money! There is much more religiosity in the exorcised than in ordinary people.

3) Development of subliminal faculties.

All these nervous crises, natural or provoked, the double 756
psychological existence which is fostered by them, the regular 158
participation in the exorcism of others, generally greatly injure 791
the mind of the exorcised; they have an extraordinary look, something wild about them, as if they were not in their right senses. They may be heard sometimes groaning, or emitting a sudden cry without any reason. This nervous instability may pass away and they may return to their normal state, but it may be that if they possess those strange mental powers, which modern psychology

gatherings, after a death, the elder brother entreats the gods to bless the family, to prevent bad feeling, or strife, to give wisdom and strength to the new headman, that he may be successful in his rule over the village (1). 782

When some great misfortune is the occasion for this religious act being performed, the petition is preceded, or followed, by a regular *insulting* of the gods. There are two words used to designate this curious part of the prayer : *holobela*, or *holobisa*, to scold the gods, or *rukatela*, the actual word for "to insult." There is an instance of this strangely impertinent manner of addressing the gods in the sacrifice for the sick nephew (p. 396). These insults are generally uttered while the priest is squeezing the psanyi over the shoulders of his subordinates.

The last part of the prayer is *its sudden termination*, when one of the uterine nephews puts a portion of the victim into the officiant's mouth, thus "cutting his oration" (tjema). This is a true part of the ritual. When the victim is a hen, it is the gizzard, which has been half roasted during the long prayer, that is used for this purpose. The priest eats it, and so is the first to partake of the flesh of the offering.

Prayers to the ancestors do not show very much religious feeling, and are, at any rate, absolutely devoid of awe. Whilst 782 769

(1) *Music* plays no part in Thonga religious ritual. During the preparation of the offering those present often sing, but these songs are those which accompany the ordinary dances and bear no religious character. I only once heard of a true sacred chant. Mungomane, the distinguished dancer and musician who made his living by the exercise of his art in the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques (p. 187) told me that when he presided over the worship in his village, he used to *sing his prayer*. He gave me the words, but unfortunately not the notes. They are worth quoting : 781 533 776

"Let the meat not stick in your throats ! Eat, you chiefs, you ancestor-gods... They are coming (the oxen) ; they see me, whilst I mourn you, my father and my mother, whilst I remain outside, where I receive life from you, who are below ; I remain, I am a miserable wretch.

"The oxen are slain ! Slay the oxen ! Here they are. I mourn you. Let us eat them together, you father and mother. Give me life and give it also to my children. Let us eat these oxen which I possess, but I possess them for you. Let us not suffer from complaints of the chest here in our home.

"This is the song by which we accompany you, as you return below. Let us remain in good health."

At a given moment the uterine nephew answered by saying:

"I magnify you, my father ! You shall see me, father and mother !"

And all those present, seeing that they would have plenty of meat to eat, joined in a chorus of praise, clapping their hands.

782 sacrificing, the Natives laugh, talk in loud tones, dance, sing
769 obscene songs, even interrupt the prayer with their remarks,
781 and insult each other about family matters. The officiant himself
533 sits on the seat designated by the bones, and speaks in a monotonous manner, looking straight in front of him with utter indifference.
776 There is nothing in his demeanour which denotes fear. An exception must perhaps be made in the case of those members of the Makaringe family who clapped their hands during the prayer in the same manner as when saluting "bakoñwana" (p. 402). They have as much respect for the ancestor-gods as for their relatives-in-law, and that is, indeed, saying much. I have heard that in the Maputju country people kneel down during the prayer. In Nondwane women alone kneel, whilst the men sit on their heels, the customary attitude in worship (1). If the gods were actually old people, still living, they could not be addressed with more familiarity. This leads us finally to consider in what the divinity of the ancestor-gods consists.

d) The Divine Nature of the Ancestor-Gods.

776 I have brought together in a preceding paragraph (p. 372-386)
769 all that the Natives say about their gods. Now let us return to them, after having studied the religious ritual, and ask : What

(1) The Ma-Lemba, that curious tribe settled amongst the Thongas and Vendas of Spelonken which has certain Semitic customs (I p. 73) are much more respectful towards their ancestor-gods. They have prayer meetings at which the old men of many families assemble together; one of them, he who knows the ancestors best, leads the others in prayer, "quoting all their mountains" viz. all the sacred hills where the ancestors have been buried, and at the end of each sentence they all answer : "hundjiii..." When the prayer is finished, they each raise an arm and say : "Amen !" This is one of the customs borrowed by them from the Semitic populations with which they came into contact in former times. When they heard Christians pronouncing the same word to conclude their prayers, they were very much astonished. One of them told me; "This shows that we were Christians formerly and have become back-sliders." One of their formulae when praying is as follows. "You, so and so and so, help us and enable us to reach Mudzimu." Mudzimu is the name by which they designate the Supreme Being in whom they believe and of whom they say : "All that you eat, it is Mudzimu who gives it to you!" If a child refuses to obey, they say to him : "Mudzimu will see you !" For them the ancestor-gods are but intermediaries between themselves and Mudzimu. They often call themselves Basilamusi, Moslems, and claim that there were Moslems belonging to their tribes (A ba ri ba ka hina).

APPENDIX III (See p. 428).

On Personal Religion amongst the Thongas.

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The following facts prove that though ancestor-worship is above all a collective and ritual affair, religious acts of a personal and individual character are not wanting.

A young man of the Hobyana family told me that when he was still a boy, he was employed by his father to convey travellers over the river in a boat. He was accused by his brothers of stealing the money paid to him for this service. His brothers did not like him; they took from him the money which he received from the travellers and accused him of keeping it for himself and of deceiving the owner of the boat. One evening, as he was returning home after his day's work, he heard a great noise in the village ; people were speaking of him in angry tones. A Portuguese official had passed through the country some time before and had shown him kindness. He decided to run away and seek refuge amongst the Whites. The night was pitch dark when he arrived on the borders of a great plain. He felt very lonely and was seized by a terrible fear of this great, empty space which he had to cross. Then "another heart" told him to pray to the ancestor-gods to help him in his anguish. He remembered how his father used to *hahla*, and thought of saying "tsu." But he did not dare to pronounce the sacramental syllable. A feeling of shame (tingana) prevented him from doing so. However, he kneeled down, put the parcel containing his clothes under his left arm, crossed his hands before his breast and joined them (fumbarela). He decided not to address his prayer to his paternal ancestors, those of the Hobyana family, as it was his father and his brothers who were ill-treating him, but rather to those of his mother. One of these maternal ancestors bore a special relation to him, as his parents had named him after this ancestor, who had died without posterity and whose name they wished to "revive" (pfusha) in this way. The boy prayed as follows : "You, my ancestor-god, after whom I have been named, save me and lead me where I am going." While pronouncing these words, he kept his eyes towards the East, where the moon was just rising, and, adds the boy, "I felt a great peace and joy in my heart and continued my journey."

Another boy of the Mashaba family, going for the first time to work in Johannesburg, was suddenly seized by fear in the railway carriage,

remembering that he had been told that the mines were full of water and that boys working underground contracted fatal diseases. Overcome by the idea that he was going to his death, he jumped out of the train at the third station after Komati Poort and began to walk in the direction of Barberton through the desert. Feeling tired, he lay down and tried to sleep. But he heard antelopes running about quite near him, saying "mpfi! mpfi!" — "If these animals were hyenas," thought he, "I should be lost." Then the idea came to him that he ought to call upon the paikwembu to help him, which he did without pronouncing the official tsu, saying: "My gods! Help me! Save me from dangers and from wild beasts! Keep me alive!" 781 769

One of my pupils of the Khosa clan had a great affection for his mother. He said that she frequently prayed in her hut when he was sick, asking the paikwembu to heal him (p. 412). She used to offer them a little of a special mealie pap, prepared with particular care, and to throw a pinch of ground tobacco on the threshold of the hut in the morning. When she was tilling her garden and felt very tired and unwell, she used to pray "according to what her heart instructed her to say."

An Inhambane boy told me that, when travellers cross the Inharrime drift, many take a little water in their mouths, say tsu, and pray to their ancestor-gods to take care of them in this dangerous passage. Though his father and mother were still living and it is the custom not to hahla before their death, he said tsu, as the others did.

At the Morakwen drift the river Nkomati is very broad, and when the South wind begins to blow in fury the ferryman who rows travellers across to the opposite side runs great danger. One of his relatives told me that when this happens, he spits out a little saliva (as an offering of bitterness) and says: "Tsu! Do not hate me! These heads are not mine," meaning: "The children I convey do not belong to me, and I should have a great responsibility towards their parents if they perished in the river." Another witness assured me that this ferryman also begged all those in the canoe to join in his prayer and to entreat their own ancestor-gods to save them.

A Native of the Manyisa country added: "Individual prayer undoubtedly exists! During the heat of battle, a warrior, feeling himself in great danger, will kneel down, plant his shield in front of him and invoke his ancestor-gods. Some have remained in this position so long that the enemy have been able to stab them while they were still kneeling."

Such spontaneous appeals to the ancestor-gods do certainly occur,

and this shows that ancestrolatry, notwithstanding its strongly ritualistic character, sometimes affords religious souls real help and relief. 781

When asked what they wish to obtain by their ancestor-worship, Thongas often answer : *Butomi*. This word comes from the adjective *ntomi*, to which is prefixed *bu*, the prefix of abstraction. *Ntomi* designates a man who is in good health, and butomi means above all *good health* ; but it has also a wider connotation and may well be translated by *life*. Life for the greater number is merely good health, plenty to eat, the possession of many children, material blessings ; but for the finer types it means something more ; it is the full happiness, to which they vaguely aspire and from which the moral element is not altogether absent. At least such is the impression I sometimes had when I heard them speak about butomi. 769

APPENDIX IV (See p. 450).

Additional Remarks on the idea of the Supreme Being and on Ancestor-worship amongst Bantus in relation to the History of Religion.

Much new light has been thrown of late years on the subject of the relation between ancestrolatry and the belief in a Supreme Being, a subject which remains one of the greatest problems of the History of Religion. In the paragraph which I devoted to this question in my first edition and which is reproduced in the second (p. 448), I refrained from attempting a definite solution of the problem of the order of priority of these two beliefs. I still believe that it is safer to maintain an attitude of reserve on the subject, as such a solution ought to take into account not only Bantus, of whom I know something, but the whole of primitive humanity. I should like only to add a few remarks which have been suggested to me by a comparison with some other Bantu tribes, and to put forward tentatively an explanation which may be applicable to the Bantu domain.

As already pointed out, the belief in a Supreme Being is found in various forms amongst all the Bantus, but it is perhaps nowhere more clearly defined than amongst the Ba-Ila, so minutely described by the Rev. Ed. W. Smith in his book, already quoted, on the Ba-Ila speaking people. *Leza* is designated by a number of typical praise-names : the Creator, the Moulder, the Constructor, the One who has no end, the Guardian the Giver, the One who gives and who causes to rot, the

787 Amongst the Ba-Ronga the ill-omen is not considered so serious.
782 Later on, when the child loses his first teeth, he must not
856 let them fall out hap-hazard anywhere. He must take the fallen tooth, go to the ash-heap, put his finger into the hole and say : "Kokwa, kokwa, ndji hwe hobe !" (Grandfather, grandfather, give me a grain of maize !) Then he throws the tooth over his shoulder on to the ashes and goes home without looking backward. Should he look backward, his grandfather (the spirit of the departed ?) would not give him a new tooth (1). This custom is no longer taboo and is disappearing.

856 When a younger brother cuts his teeth, they are considered
163 as pushing away or pulling out the teeth of the elder, as the younger brother comes into the world, as a rule, three years after the elder.

As regards *hair*, the first cutting is accompanied by the following
302 custom : the mother sprinkles some drops of her milk on the
856 forehead and on the occiput of the child ; then she cuts his hair and throws it away in the midst of thick grass. When she cuts her own hair, she always leaves a lock on both sides of the head for the amusement of the child, till he is able to walk.

853 Nursing women very often anoint themselves with ochre. This is said to be in order to prevent their husbands from having relations with them.

These rites are not considered as very important. But there are three others which are most punctiliously observed, and which divide the nursing period into three subperiods : the presentation to the moon, after three months, the tying of the cotton string, after one year, and the weaning ceremonies at the close of the period.

4) The presentation to the moon (ku yandla).

821 The appearance of the new moon is always received with cheers by the Ba-Ronga. The first person who sees it shouts :

(1) Comparative Ethnography : I remember quite well that, when I was a boy, we were told in Neuchâtel that we must not let a broken tooth get lost, lest it should be found by a dog and a dog's tooth would grow in its stead !

851 a grown up child (1). The expression *fuya ñwana* confirms our explanation. This custom is not a protective rite : the physician has nothing to do with it ; it is really an act by which the new-born child becomes a regular member of the community. The strict prohibition of renewed conception before this rite has been accomplished is evidently dictated by the feeling that another child must not appear before this one has been duly received into the family.

6) The weaning.

862 856 A whole year, even more, will elapse after the *boha puri* before the little one can be weaned. He will learn to speak and to walk, and it is only when his intelligence is sufficiently developed to allow him to run small errands that the date of the weaning will be fixed. When his parents can send him to the next hut to ask for snuff and see him coming back holding the tobacco, they say : "Now the time has come !"

The rite of weaning is accomplished in the following manner in Nondwane. (Mboza).

862 824 First of all, the father looks for a young *ntjopfa* tree which has only one root. The ntjopfa is an anonacea bush, which colonists sometimes call the wild custard. (Its fruit is very much like custard fruit and it is said that the true cultivated custard can be grafted on it). The root of this tree is said to have the property of making people forget. The mother cooks a pot of Kafir corn in which she has put the medicine. This 862 will help the child to forget the breast. But the great act is the 782 *hondlola* which takes place under the direction of the physician. 755 The mother pounds some mealies, pours water on them and adds some leaven ; in this way she makes a little light beer (buputju). She keeps a little of the bran of the pounded mealies. The doctor comes, kills a chicken and sprinkles this bran with the blood and *hahla*, viz. offers a regular sacrifice. He prays to the spirits of his own family and asks those of the child's family to

(1) This word *khuna* is also employed to designate boys who have not yet gone through the circumcision school. *Bukhuna* is the despicable state of uncircumcision. The state of a child before the ceremony of *boha puri* is another kind of bukhuna.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

862 join with them in blessing the little one. The beak of the sacrificed
783 hen, one of the claws and one of the feathers (psirungulo) will be
755 tied together round the child's neck. A mat is spread on the ground ; the child is laid on it and greased with oil and powder brought by the physician. Then he is smeared and rubbed with the bran. The particles which fall on the mat are called *timhore*. They are gathered by the mother who makes a ball of them. In the meantime the father looks for the nest of a certain kind of large ant which is common in the bush. It lives in the earth, but the opening of its hole is tolerably large. There the mother goes at sunset. She introduces the ball into the hole so that the ant will be obliged to take all the *timhore* into the nest. Then she returns home without looking behind her. It is taboo ; should she transgress this rule, she would bring back disease to her child.

This rite is the ordinary *hondlola rite* which is performed in this or in a similar way at the close of any serious disease as the conclusion of the treatment, with the view of taking away the defilement of disease. After having *hondlola*, the physician asks for the payment of his fees. For a child he will ask ten shillings or five coins of five hundred reis (1).

854 This hondlola reveals to us the true conception of the nursing period held by the Natives. For them these three first years of the child's life are a period of disease ; so many perils threaten the little one's well-being that he can hardly be considered healthy. He is during the whole time under the supervision of the physician, who takes leave of the little patient on the day of the weaning.

854 This view of infancy accounts also for some other taboos. It
789 is *yila* for instance to say of a child who is particularly fat : Wa tika, he is heavy : this would bring mishap to him. One must say : A kota ribye, he is like a stone! It is taboo also in Shiluvane to make use before a child of the word *mfene*, baboon. There is a disease which is called by that name and it would come upon him. One must say : the thing which inhabits the hills, and so on...

(1) In the Mpfumu clan the rite of weaning is somewhat different. I have published in " Les Ba-Ronga " a description of it given by Tobane. It seems that the elements of the cotton string rite and of the broken pot rite are mixed with the proper weaning rite. I think that the description of Mboza is more trustworthy.

585 girls, the stout women with strong arms, go and look for the
578 heroine of the day, who is hidden in a hut in one of the neighbouring villages, and who has not yet been seen. At last they succeed in finding her. She refuses to come. The viragos seize her and pull her out by force. Everybody assembles. She is covered with a large cloth which hides her from the gaze of the bystanders. Surrounded on all sides, she sets forward to the village, the crowd forming a kind of procession. " Let us accompany her, then we shall return home " sing the women who bring her. (A hi mu tjekeleni, hi ta muka). This song of the *tjeka*, the only one which is peculiar to the wedding day, is the prelude to a most strange duel.

The bridegroom's family stands on one side, that of the bride on the other, and then begins the exchange of equivocal compliments.

"Ha!" cry the groomsmen to the bride, "as you are becoming the wife of our brother and coming into our village, try and leave all your vices outside. Do not steal any longer! Forsake your bad ways and become a good girl! "

To this the bride's relatives shout in return :

" You have nothing to boast about! Stop wearying the people! She is far too good for you! Does not everybody know the wild pranks of your son and the dishonour of your family! "

And they go on in this way, at first in joke, but often speaking seriously. They sometimes even go so far as to bombard each other with the half digested matter which has been extracted from the goat's stomach, but, if anyone goes too far and exceeds the recognized limit of insult, the old people will tell him to be quiet.
585 These proceedings however are looked upon as a game and are
535 accompanied with a particular dance called *khana* which consists in jumping first on one leg and then on the other, gesticulating at the same time.

e) The religious act.

585 The procession reaches the hut of the bride's mother, where
782 the goat was killed. Mats are stretched outside. The bride and
769 groom sit down on the finest of these. It is now that the father

585 782 769 performs the religious rite (hahla). He takes between his first finger and thumb a small quantity of the half digested grass which has been taken from the paunch of the animal, makes a little ball of it, touches his tongue with it and emits a sound resembling " tsu "... as if he were slightly spitting. This is the customary sacramental act in most of the sacrifices. (See Part VI.) He stands behind the wedding pair and, looking straight in front of him towards them, speaks to the gods, that is to say to the spirits of his ancestors, and says : " My fathers, my grandfathers (he calls them by their names) look! To-day my child is leaving me. She enters the wedded life (bukatin). Look at her, accompany her where she will live. May she also found a village, may she have many children (mu nyikan timbeleko), may she be happy, good and just. May she be on good terms with those with whom she will be ". Here it may happen that a brother of the bridegroom will interrupt and say : " Yes, we will live peacefully with her if she does her duty well and does not worry her husband ". The old man goes on with his patriarchal prayer without taking any notice of the interruption and everybody listens quietly and attentively. This prayer which he pronounces with his eyes wide open and in a most natural manner is sometimes very long. When the people have had enough of it and wish him to stop, they send a young man to cut a piece of meat and to put it into the old man's mouth. Thus they " cut " his prayer and he keeps still. The person officiating must be the first to partake of the meat of the sacrifice.

f) The symbolical belt.

585 777 825 The astragalus (nhlolo) of the right leg of the sacrificed goat has been carefully kept. All along the belly they cut a strip of skin reaching as far as the neck and up to the chin, which is cut so as to form a kind of pocket at the end of the strip. The astragalus is put into this pocket and the father ties the belt around the waist of the young woman. He must not look at her face to face in doing this. On the contrary, she must turn her

765 less out of shape. In the end they brought axes and chopped all round, about half way up the cone, and with loud shouts brought the destroyed hut level with the ground. Everything belonging to it will be left there to rot. No one dares to remove or to burn this ruin. It is a taboo (1).

The men were satisfied. They had succeeded : "The mourning had not overcome them," (nkosi a wu ba hlulanga), as would have been the case had one of them met with an accident during the operation. Some pots full of water were brought and they washed their hands and their faces conscientiously. They retired a while and all the members of the family, the women included, came and settled themselves as shown on the accompanying illustration of the scene. In front of the crushed hut *(1)*, in the space between it and the small hut of the first widow *(3)*, the old men sat down *(4)*, near them the *batukulu*, viz. the uterine nephews of the deceased *(5)*, their wives, and a few old women *(6)*. The other men *(10)* and women of mature age *(9)* took their places between the neighbouring huts, leaving a wide place for the dance.

765 The brother of the deceased, Fenis, brought on his shoulders a
782 young goat. Two hens and a cock were provided, in all two male and two female offerings. Some branches covered with leaves were spread before the heaps of poles *(2)*, and the *batukulu* began to kill the victims. One of them took the cock by the legs, his brother held the head and cut the neck half through. At each cut of the knife, all the women uttered their *mikulungwana* (piercing cries). He threw the fowl down, still alive and panting. They did the same with the three fowls, everybody laughing and amused at seeing them jump before they died. Then one of the *batukulu* seized the goat by one of the forelegs, lifted it up as high as he could, and planted an assagai under its shoulders, trying to reach the heart. The face of the goat was turned towards the North (2). At once more mikulugwane! The animal was crying

(1) In a neighbouring district, one of our evangelists built a chapel near the ruin of the chief Gwaba. For months it was impossible to remove that ugly decaying roof : those on the spot were opposed to it and the chieftainess of the Mabota district gave permission only because the evangelist was connected with White people.

(2) I suppose the Manyibane family came from the North, and they wanted the goat to cry in this direction to call the spirits of the ancestors to the sacrifice.

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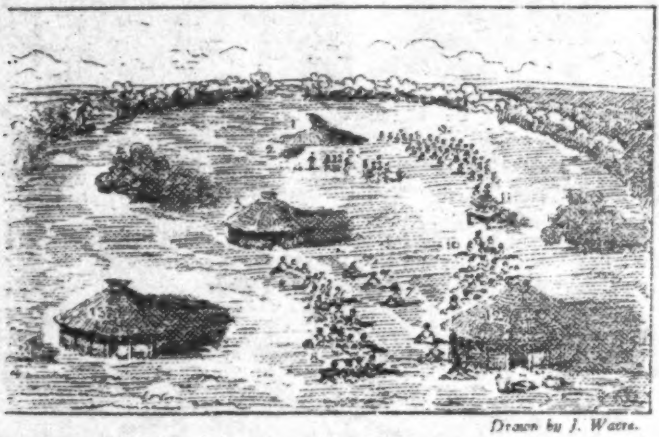
pitifully ; its agony lasted five minutes at least and the whole time the women were shouting with pleasure, because it is necessary that a victim should cry! In the groups, men and women were discussing where and how the sacrificer ought to introduce the blade in order to kill the goat more quickly. His wife came and



Drawn by J. Watts.

The ceremony of crushing down the hut.

1. Deceased's hut, crushed down. 2. Heap et pous. 3. Provisional hut of the widow. 4. Sacrificer. 5. Uterine nephews. 6. Wives of the uterine nephews. 7. Dancers. 8. Women clapping their hands. 9. Other women. 10. Men. 11. Henhouse. 12. Hut of the younger brother. 13. Hut of the tall woman who danced. 14. A "shigiyane", wood pile built by her daughter-in-law's relatives.

helped him, and not until after ten minutes, at least, did they succeed.

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Then, while the batukulu and the old men were busy with the victims, cutting them up and squeezing the psanyi (half digested grass) out of the bowels, the other mourners began to sing and to dance. First an elderly woman, of a very clear complexion and a mephistophelean face, very tall, with a curiously licentious smile, came into the middle of the place, opened her arms wide and *suma*, began to sing. Together with her song she performed a strange mimicry with her thighs. This mimicry took on a more and more lascivious character ; it became a regular

765 535 831 womb dance, so immoral (Annotatio 9)[1] that the men dropped their eyes, as if they feared that she would take off all her clothing. But the other women seemed thoroughly to enjoy this horrible performance, and encouraged her by clapping their hands and beating their drums. The words of her songs were also of a very questionable character. She described an adulterous woman going during the night from one hut to another, seeking for lovers, knocking on the walls (to attract the notice of the men ?).

> The walls of the huts have deceived her fellow-women when she goes knocking on them...

Another old woman, of at least seventy years of age, followed her, and running with a mincing gait through the place, uttered words of the same kind.

This seems very immoral indeed. Let us remember however that, in the opinion of the Thongas, these songs, which are taboo in ordinary life, are specially appropriate to the mourning period "These women have been uncovered by the death of their husband," said Mboza. "There is no longer any restraint on them. They are full of bitterness when they perform these lascivious dances." The reason is perhaps deeper, as it is not only the widows who sing these words ; we are still in a marginal period, the period of mourning, and these phases of life are marked for the Bantus by this strange contrast : prohibition of sexual intercourse and a shameless outpouring of impure words and gesticulations (Annotatio 10).[2]

765 782 But in the meantime the *batukulu* had finished their work. They had already distributed the various parts of the victim according to rule, to the visitors, who would eat them on their way home, not in the village ; it is taboo. They had put aside one shoulder, the lungs and one of the hoofs for the sacrifice. Relatives had made a provision of *psanyi*. An old man then took a pill made of the *psanyi*, that found in the smallest stomach, called shihlakahla. He pressed it against his lips, took into his mouth a little of the liquid squeezed from it and spit it out again with the sacramental *tsu*. He then proceeded to pray : "You, Manyiban, you have left us. People used to say you were a

1 [See p. 517 in these categories or in 116--Analyst]

2 [See pp. 517-518 in these categories or in 116--Analyst]

765 wizard (a clever man who could overcome death). In what has
782 your witchcraft resulted ? Are you not dead! You have left us in peace. Go to Tlotlomane ; let Tlotlomane go to X ; let X go to Y, etc. (He utters the names of the ancestors.) Call each other to come here and look. Are we not gathered together ? Here is so and so. The batukulu also are here. Accept this offering and may we live peacefully together : visit each other (Annotatio 11)[1]. Even if they do not come to pay me visits, let them come to Fenis ; he is their father now. And you, Mugwanu, you remain at the head of the village. You are their headman now. Do not scatter your people. Cultivate good relations with each other."

765 But a woman suddenly stands up and interrupts him : "Bring
593 everything to the light," she says! The old priest stops. She
578 goes on : "They say I am a Muchopi" (a woman of dissolute manners). The mikulungwane are heard on all sides. It is a family drama which we are attending! This woman is the daughter of the deceased ; Manyibane has sold her to pay off his debts ; he has not kept the lobola money to buy a wife for one of her brothers ; that is the reason why they hate her. They do not receive her in the village. She pours out her grievances before them in this family gathering, when they are praying to their ancestors. It is the favourable time! She goes on : "Is it my fault ? Did I not obey our father ? I have not fled away. Now what am I to do ? He alone received me here! You despise me. Say everything! Do not hide it!"

Her interruption has lasted five minutes at least and she goes back to her place very angry. Sometimes relatives who have serious complaints to make against their kinsfolk choose this precise moment to vent their anger and leave the gathering with violent words. In such a case, it is said : "The mourning has overcome this family."

765 The old priest is a little disconcerted. He speaks at random,
782 always calling his Tlotlomane. The whole scene is perfectly natural, but the participants do not show the slightest religious awe. Suddenly one of the batukulu rises, takes a bottle of wine which has been also brought there as an offering, pours a

[1] [See p. 518 in these categories or in 66 - Analyst]

765 782 604 little of it into a glass and raises it to the lips of the old man. "He cuts his prayer" and while all the attention of the public is concentrated upon this act (which belongs also to the ritual, as the priest must be the first to partake of the offering), the wives of the batukulu rush towards the shoulders, lungs and hoofs of the goats and the bottle of wine, seize them and run away towards the west. They have stolen the meat of the sacrifice! At once all stand up and follow them laughing, shouting and pelting them with the *psonyi*, which they had kept for this purpose. The thieves hide themselves behind some bush and eat the meat. Uterine nephews are representatives of the gods, as we shall see later on, and they assert their right by stealing the offering and eating it up.

This ceremony is highly characteristic as it embodies some of the principal ideas of the Thongas in the domain of religion, social life and taboo. It was worth while describing it, and we shall refer to it later on, when dealing with sacrifices and the position of the uterine nephews in the family.

765 292 554 825 The crushing down of the hut is not performed in exactly the same manner amongst the Ba-Ronga. In the clans *South of the Bay*, they only *close* it (pfala yindlu). They dig holes in front of the door, into which they insert poles of the bush called *nhleba*, tying thorny branches horizontally to them. The shield of the deceased is placed against the door. The religious rite then takes place and from the skins of the sacrificed goats strips are cut, which the widows will have to wear *en bandoulière* during the following months of their widowhood. The astragalus bones are kept and hung round the neck. The gall-bladder is also preserved and fixed in the hair of the new master of the village as a sign of his new position.

765 596 In the *district of Makaneta*, on the estuary of the Nkomati, the ceremony comprises two successive acts. First there is also a *provisory closing* of the hut, which can take place one month after the death and is accompanied by the family gathering and the religious ceremony. One year later, when the inheritance is adjudicated, the hut is crushed down, but only if it belonged to a headman of the village and if the kraal is obliged to move in

[765] consequence of the death. If it be the hut of one of the subor-
596 dinates, the roof is simply lifted off and thrown away into the
787 bush.

766 Another very significant rite in connexion with the closing of the hut is accomplished on the death of the master of the village. A branch is cut from the tree of the village, the tree which was revealed by the divinatory bones as the one near which the headman had to build (See Part II Ch. II) ; half of the branch is placed across the great gate of the village, which is then closed and another gate opened, at some distance, in the fence ; the other half is put over the door of the crushed hut.

765 There seem to be great variations in the performance of these
428 ceremonies everywhere. I believe, without being able to vouch for it, that when two family gatherings take place during this last period of the mourning, the first is held to proclaim the new master of the village and the second to distribute the inheritance amongst the heirs-at-law. At any rate these two important acts take place at the gatherings. As the inheritance consists mainly of live stock — human stock, the wives of the deceased, I shall describe the adjudication when treating of the fate of widows.

2) Family rites in the Northern clans.

765 A month after the burial, there is a first gat[illegible] of the grave-
574 diggers. They are invited by the widows t[illegible] feast. This beer is called : "the beer of the hyenas," as the hyenas also dig graves! No equivocal compliment is intended, the widows merely meaning to thank these men for their services.

765 In the northern clans, *yindlu a yi yili*, the hut is not taboo.
782 It can be slept in again after the five days of the Great Mourning. The plaster of the doorposts is repaired, and a new crown is put on the top when the hut again finds an owner (1). The feast of the

766 (1) The hut of a leper alone is considered irremediably tabooed as the sufferer is buried in it. They dig a hole into which he is pushed by means of sticks. The roof is crushed down over him.

765 782 closing of the hut is therefore replaced by what is called the *beer of the mourning* (byala bya nkosi). All the relatives, brothers, brothers-in-law, nephews, etc., bring a goat, or half a sovereign, or a sovereign, to the master of the mourning, the heir of the village. That individual must give them back as much as he receives from them, a goat for a goat, (timbuti ti labana), a sovereign for a sovereign, and all the animals are killed according to rule. There were fourteen of them at a certain gathering held in the Nkuna capital to mourn one of the wives of the chief Shiluvane in 1905. A sacrifice is offered ; the men sit on one side, the women on the other ; the *kokwane*, viz. the maternal uncle of the deceased, takes the *paanyi* and squeezes it on them all while praying, or rather insulting the gods who have afflicted them with such a bereavement. All rub their chests with this green liquid and add their insults to those of the priest.

[775] According to Viguet, this is the first occasion on which the deceased is treated as a god and prayed to : "Look! You have left the village without a head to lead it! Keep them! Bless them and increase them." The *batukulu* then come to take that portion of the victim which has been put aside for the gods. It does not appear that they steal it, as is the case amongst the Ba-Ronga.

* * *

765 Such is the story of the mourning. Here are some technical expressions in connexion with it : Hamba nkosi, to conduct the mourning. Djila nkosi, to utter mourning lamentations. Daha nkosi, to treat it by purification ceremonies. Kota nkosi, to cope with it. Nkosi wu wupfa, it ripens. Nkosi wu hela, it comes to an end. A wu boli, it does not get rotten, viz. it is always possible to pay a mourning visit.

The name of the deceased when quoted is often preceded by the word "Matjuwa," exactly as with *feu* in French and *late* in English. In the Northern clans the expression employed is "Sira" which means grave : Grave so and so.

5) Sterility.

842/782 In the Northern clans, when a woman does not conceive, a special sacrifice is offered, very similar to the one made by the Rongas on the day of the conclusion of the marriage. A goat is killed; a long piece, one foot in width, is cut from the skin of the animal in the ventral region, and three openings are made, one for the head and the two others for the arms. The three openings converge to a point where the astragalus bone of the goat is fixed to a strap. The sterile woman puts on this skin; the astragalus will be seen on her breast. She will also fix the gall-bladder in her hair and wear these ornaments for a time. To the mind of the Thongas, it seems evident that children are given by the gods; hence the idea of a sacrifice in case of sterility. But in addition to the religious rite, native doctors have many drugs to militate against this misfortune (1). The special porridge cooked for a sterile woman (mhika, shimhiko) is called *shiboleko* amongst the Ba-Ronga. The poor woman is despised.

586 Sterility can be a cause of divorce; the husband has the right of sending his wife home. But generally the parents of the woman find a *nhlampsa*, viz. a younger girl, and give her to the husband as a second wife.

6) Pregnancy and Miscarriage.

843 A special treatment is followed for the first pregnancy when the breasts begin to swell, a condition which is called *munyama* (darkness). The physician makes small incisions near the breast and on the legs, and draws out a little blood. The pregnant woman also drinks a decoction for the same purpose, i. e. to

(1) A Pedi man told me that in his tribe the first thing to do was to ascertain if sterility were due to the husband or to the wife. For this purpose a little bit of the clothing of the husband and of the wife was cut off and placed near a spider's nest. This spider is a kind of nygala of enormous size. If the spider took the piece of the husband's clothing down to its nest, it meant that he was in fault, and vice versa.

768
782 The first of the ceremonies of this day[1] is the sacrifice on the grave. The master of the mourning takes a pot of beer, and followed by the crowd, especially by the *batukulu*, goes to the place where the deceased has been buried. He stops there and prays : "See this jar of beer! We bring it to thee ; we have gathered to tear to pieces the mourning. We beseech thee that this ceremony may be performed in peace and good understanding." Then he pours a little of the drink into the cup which is on the grave, the same which the deceased used when alive. One *ntukulu* then takes the jar, which is still almost full, and drinks the contents with the other *batukulu*. This has been done calmly. But this act has made the *batukulu* bolder. They become troublesome. As soon as the crowd has come back from the grave, they steal another pot of beer. They insult the masters of the village. They say : "Why! You have never sent us any notice about the decisions concerning the mourning! We are tired! We will go and take our wives with us!" But some of the old men go to them and say : "Be good! Do not spoil the feast!"

By the end of the afternoon all the relatives assemble near the door of the mortuary hut, and bring the goats which they have given for the feast. Here the true sacrifice, the living offering, is made, very much in the same style as that described when treating of the crushing down of the hut (p. 158). The old man who prays, says : "See us here! We have come together to conclude our mourning. May there be no noise, no misunderstanding, no anger amongst the *batukulu*! This is our ox (the goat). It has been provided by so and so. Many others have been brought. See! You have died as a great chief!" At this very moment a *ntukulu* rises and begins to insult the old man who is praying : "You have no concern for us! Why do you leave us out ? You do not give us our wives! You are killing us!" And the other *batukulu* join in chorus. The end of the sacrifice and of the prayer is always the same in these big, religious, family gatherings of the Ba-Ronga : the *batukulu* steal the part of the victim set apart for the gods. The throng pursues them laughing, and pelts them with balls of *psanyi*.

1 [i.e., the day of the adjudication of the inheritance -- Analyst]

783 village itself, which must carry out the collective purification of
768 *hlamba ndjaka*.

I must further mention a new custom which is spreading
587 amongst the Ba-Ronga in the neighbourhood of Lourenço
609 Marques. When a widow objects to becoming the wife of the legal
611 inheritor, she goes home and adopts another husband. There are plenty of men of other tribes, coming from Inhambane, Quelimane, Mozambique, who have no wife. They accept the proposal of the widow and go to live in her village. They are generally despised and called by the insulting name of *mugomo*, a Zulu word meaning an empty iron oil-tin. They are as hard and unfeeling as such a tin! If children are born, they belong to the family of the deceased husband, who paid the lobolo.

587 Sometimes also a widow chooses a nephew who is still a child. She gives him food as if she were his wife, but she lives with another man whom she loves. It even happens that she may choose a girl, the daughter of another wife of the deceased. (Annotatio 13.)[1]

C. OLD AGE AND DEATH

888 An old woman, having in some sort gone out from the sexual
782 community, enjoys some privileges which are taboo for her sisters who are still capable of childbearing. She is allowed to put on the clothing of the widows ; contamination of death is not so dangerous for her. She can proceed to the purification of the village, in certain cases of epidemic, and of the weapons of the warriors in war time (Part III). After the sacrifice of the black ram for rain, old women and small girls alone are allowed to eat the flesh of the victim.

462 But old and decrepit women are despised. As long as they
888 can still till their land, they are treated with consideration, but when they have lost all their strength and must be fed by their children, they are looked upon as troublesome burdens. I must say that, as long as she still has an atom of vigour, a Thonga woman goes to her field and tills it. During all her life time

1 [See pp. 518-519 in these categories or in III — Analyst]

764/ inhabitants of the kraal. One of them, the saluter (mulosi), goes
604 to meet them and offers them a shilling. They keep silence.
578 He tells them the news of the village. They do not answer.
754 He leaves them and comes a second time with a fresh present. Then they consent to tell the news of their home, but they do not enter the village. The same man returns to them a third time with £ 1 ; they refuse to accept it. He adds 10/. (£ 1.10 is considered the normal sum to be paid as a kind of fine by the widower to the parents of the deceased.) They refuse again : this is an insult! Happily the *ntukulu* is there ; he will act as mediator between the two families. The visitors summoned him on their arrival and he has been sitting with them the whole time ; is he not the son of their sister ? But before he went to them, his father has given him his instructions : "Tell them that I have not eaten your mother." The *ntukulu*, as we shall see, is very free with his maternal uncles. He has the right of teasing them, even insulting them. Seeing that they do not accept the money, he stands and gives vent to his grief, throws sand at them, tries to drive them away, weeps. "No! Father has not killed mother! He is not a wizard! She died a natural death!" They see his tears, and then consent to enter the village.

764 In front of the mortuary hut, all the belongings of the deceased
768 wife have been piled up, together with the straw crown of the hut :
595 her pots, plates, baskets, spoons, mortars, etc. The brothers
782 break everything. Should there be any new implements amongst
[578] them, they will perhaps give them to their nieces. Then they lift up the roof of the hut and throw it into the bush. They pick all the plaster from the walls and throw it away where they threw the roof. The sacrifice is then accomplished amidst the ruins of the destroyed hut. Whilst it is being prepared, the women of both families insult each other. The female relatives of the deceased say to the women of the village : "You have killed her because she was a splinter in your eyes" (shilabi). The others answer : "Have you seen us kill her ? Perhaps people do not die with you ?" The *bukwele*, the special jealousy which almost always exists between co-wives, explains how it is possible for them to address such amenities to each other. But the victim is

764 prepared, all the limbs cut off, the portion of the gods set apart.
782 The elder brother of the deceased woman prays in these words :
768 "My sister, go in peace, be not angry ; because we love you, we
595 have come to mourn you to-day. Do not say we have not mourned you. Go to so and so (father, grandfather, etc.), call them here, give us good sleep and good health, etc." The batukulu appropriate the offering and the mourning ends in laughter, dancing and drinking. The neighbours come and take part in the rejoicings.

When they return home, the mourners spend all the mahloko money in buying wine. They sometimes become quite intoxicated. Afterwards both families begin to visit each other again.
764 This custom of the mahloko fine is so strong that converts
768 still adhere to it. But they usually send the money to the wife's family when informing them of the death, and no other ceremony is performed.

In the Northern clans the mahloko are also paid, but it seems that the family of the widower considers that it has the right to claim the repayment of the whole lobolo, when the deceased wife has left no child to compensate for the loss. In Nondwane, though we are still in Ronga territory, when the woman dies
765 shortly after marriage the lobolo must be repaid. Further north
782 the procedure is as follows : the deceased woman is buried by her husband according to the ordinary rules ; one year elapses and a special feast is celebrated, similar to the "beer of mourning" (page 164), in the village of the wife's parents, where both families gather together and provide the necessary victims. It commences with a sacrifice in which the father of the deceased wife squeezes the *psanyi* of the goat on to those present, all the time insulting the gods who have killed his child and made trouble between the two families. He ends with words addressed to the widower's relations : "I cleanse you from your misfortune." The widower's father does the same thing, insulting also his own gods, and every one rubs his body with the green liquid squeezed from the *psanyi*. Then prayer for new blessings is offered and the sacrifice is made, as
765 customary, and the actual discussion as to claims takes place. Each family takes possession of a hut, the widower's family assembling

588 A young man who has the courage to think of marrying a near relation is regarded as a wizard. *A lowa*, he bewitches! This term, which is applied only to actual witches, is not too strong to designate his action. He was not allowed to *gangisa* her, and now he wants to take her as his wife! But this word lowa, or loya, is used here in another sense: "Bushaka byi lowa hi tihomu" (the blood relationship is bewitched by the oxen). "Bumamana byi lowa" (the mother relationship is bewitched). (Viguet.) Those who consent to such an act must be prayed for publicly and anointed with psanyi (the grass found in the bowels of a sacrificed goat.)

588 782 So the young man goes to his uncle, the father of the girl, to announce his intention of marrying her; he must *be homu*, beat an ox, viz. bring an ox with him as a first step to appease his uncle. This ox is said to "open the hut." The ox may be only a goat, the goat which will be used for the sacrifice, — because a religious ceremony is necessary. All the relatives assemble on a certain day in the girl's village. The wedding pair are inside the hut, the goat is killed, the offering prepared, the psanyi put aside. Then the bridegroom and the bride are called outside and made to sit on the same mat; the man's leg is passed over the girl's leg; (this is done to "kill the shame" *ku dlaya tingana*); they are both anointed with the green liquid of the psanyi; the skin of the goat is then taken, a hole is cut in its middle and it is put on the heads of the two cousins. Through the opening the liver of the animal is handed down to them, quite raw. They must tear it with their teeth. It must not be cut with a knife; this is taboo. They have to bite it, to pull vigourously on both sides so as really to tear it, and then they must eat it. Shibindji, liver, means also patience, determination. "You have acted with strong determination! Now eat the liver! Eat it in the full light of day, not in the dark! It will be a mhamba, an offering to the gods (Cana)." The priest of the family will then say: "You, our gods, so and so, look! We have done it in the daylight. It has not been done by stealth. Bless them, give them children." Should this sacrifice not be made, misfortune would indeed come upon them and the woman would remain childless. When the prayer is ended, those present take all the solid psanyi, put

588 it on the wife's head and say to her : "Go and bear children."
782 *In the Ronga clans* the *dlaya shilongo* is somewhat different. The bridegroom must first give £ 1 to the father ; this is over and above the lobolo, of course. Both families provide a goat. These goats are killed without the assistance of the uterine nephews, in front of the hut of the girl's mother. The grandfather prays to the gods of the girl's father : "So be it! They have decided to marry each other ; you, gods of the boy and the girl, unite them together so that they do not hate each other ; let them not remind each other that they are brother and sister ; let their union not be spoilt by such remembrances, nor by other people saying to them: "You have been guilty of witchcraft! You have married your relative!" By this prayer a general notification is given to everybody, and the feeling of shame is removed. Afterwards the officiating relative continues, exhorting the new wife, telling her all that she must do for her husband, mentioning all the details of her conjugal duties with such realism that she begins to cry. The bridegroom bows his head in shame. The preacher goes on till somebody puts a piece of meat into his mouth to stop the exhortation!

The whole country has gathered to see the proceedings and to eat the meat. The wedding pair do not partake of it, because *the goats have been sacrificed for them* (ba hahlela bone). The relatives go home, roasting on the way the joint of meat they have received so as to eat it before reaching their village.

602 The aim of the *dlaya shilongo* is lawfully to kill one kind of relationship and to replace it by another, because the two are not compatible. However, in the case of inheritance of a rarana, for instance, when a blood relative has to change his relationship and to become a relative by marriage, he can inherit without any rite being performed, if there is no nearer legal heir ; in this case it is said : "Bushaka byi ta pfuka — the blood relationship will be revived." It will be strengthened by the new marriage relationship.

588 In the case of marriage with the great mukoñwana, this rite
607 is also performed, as previously mentioned (p. 244). The wedding pair are also covered with the goat's skin. This goat is

604 611 597 *(pfusha muti) by means of a ntukulu.* Should he see that he has no children, that his village is in danger of "dying," he will take his unmarried sister to his village and refuse to accept the lobolo for her. He will say to her : "Do not fear! If you die, I will bury you!" This duty falls in the first place to the husband ; but the brother is ready to fulfil it. She will have lovers, and perhaps give birth to a son. As she has not been lobola, this child belongs to the mother's family, according to the great rule of Native law. The uncle will appropriate this male offspring of his family, who will bear the *shibongo* of his kokwana. A uterine nephew, adopted under these circumstances, can save the family of his mother from extinction.

2) Rights of the uterine nephew.

604 782 The attitude of the ntukulu wa shisati (the uterine nephew) to his malume is quite peculiar. "Ntukulu i hosi, a nyenyela hikwapsu ku malume." — "The uterine nephew is a chief! He takes any liberty he likes with his maternal uncle" (Mboza). These prerogatives of uterine nephews with regard to relatives on their mother's side, their bamalume and bakokwana, appear clearly in the religious ceremonies. We have seen the prominent part which batukulu take in these rites. "Ba yima mahlwen ka psikwembu" — "they stand before the gods, in their stead" (Viguet). They must be the servants of the altar, and the consumers of the offering. In the great sacrifice for rain, as accomplished in the Northern clans, an offering of beer is made, together with the sacrifice of the black victim. (See Part VI.) It is the uterine niece of the chief who must fetch the mealies from the granary, pour them into the pot, take the first handful to crush it in the mortar, give the first blow with the pestle, and begin each of the complicated acts of the brewing. When the black victim is brought, some one puts an assagay into her hand and helps her to stab the animal. She it is who "gives over to the gods" (nyiketa psikwembu). The same thing happens in the great family gatherings : one ntukulu holds the leg, another the

604 782 assagay. The batukulu dispose of the portion of the limbs offered to the gods. They *cut* the prayer and, at that moment they steal the meat or the beer of the sacrifice and run away with them. Why is this? "Because a ntukulu does not fear the saliva of his malume" (Mboza). They live in such intimacy with them that they can eat that which was reserved for the gods (1) (See p. 162).

604 The ntukulu *also takes precedence* in some other rites ; in the circumcision school the uterine nephew of the chief is at the head of the circumcised. In the *luma milomo* (page 146) he starts the purifying ceremony, and "gives to the others" (nyiketa) the use of the food of the deceased.

604 But it is especially in the question of the inheritance that he 428 shows himself in his characteristic aspect. Father-right has 178 set in and is strongly supported by the lobola custom. Therefore the sons of the deceased have the sole right to the property of their father, wives as well as implements. The batukulu, however, the uterine nephews, refuse to be left out! You will find them everywhere, trying to get something for themselves. They were already planning with the malume's wives to take them as spouses after the death of their husband. Remember how they teased the whole fámily, on the day of the distribution of the widows (page 208). When the implements were distributed, they came and claimed their *tjhumba* (a technical expression, it would seem, which means precisely this kind of claim lodged by a malume or a ntukulu). They were given the small assagay, the big one remaining for the son. In this way *ba nyiketa pfindla, they give over the inheritance to the legal heirs.* This is a most vivid representation of a right which no longer exists, having in fact become

769 602 (1) Some ethnographers have supposed that ancestral worship only began when the father took command of the family and consequently did not exist in the period of mother-right. This seems to me absolutely false. The spirits of the mother's family are invoked as well as the father's ancestors, and the special place of the uterine nephews in worship down to this day is best explained in this way: before the gods of the father were known and prayed to, those of the mother were worshipped, and consequently the batukulu held a special position in the ritual. When the ancestors on the father's side made their appearance in the Bantu Pantheon, beside those on the mother's side, or after the institution of father right, the batukulu preserved that special position.

361 air circulate, is the goats' kraal (19). It may be placed somewhere
231 else, behind the huts, for instance ; or sometimes goats are tethered
351 every night by the leg to sticks round the hubo. The pigs are
343 never kept on the hubo, but always behind the hut : they are newcomers in the Thonga village and have hardly yet won their "droit de cité." Let us salute, as we pass by, the tree (25) which
361 is, as we shall see, the mystical stem of the village. We may perhaps
824 see, hanging upon it, a piece of clothing offered to the gods, or at its
782 base a broken pot which is the *gandjelo*, the altar of the village.
351 The gandjelo is often placed, by preference, among the poles of the main entrance on the right. The village tree, which has a ritual significance, is not to be confounded with the trees of the hubo (26), which are but *mindjuti*, shade-trees, under which the inhabitants are fond of sitting.

361 So we reach the main hut which faces the gate. This is the
595 dwelling of the headman. In hut 3 lives his second wife, in 4, his third and in 5 his fourth. 2 is called *shilubelo*. Great personages, men owning a large kraal, like to build such a hut, which is smaller than the ordinary ones and where no woman sleeps. It is the headman's own hut, where people *luba*, viz., pay their homage to him ; a kind of office of the master of the village! He may sleep in it and summon his wives to come to him there. But he generally prefers to sleep in his wives' huts, one month in each, according to the polygamic custom.

361 Behind 4 and 10 is a *mhala*, a shed for the implements. It is
343 built, like the goats' kraal, without plaster walls, and is smaller
351 than a hut. There may be three or four of these in the village.
596 The headman and his wives occupy the back of the village. At the sides live his younger brothers, one, who has two wives, in 7 and 8, two others, those who have but one wife each, in 9 and in 10 respectively. In 11 lives a married son ; in 12 it may be a nephew, son of the headman's sister, or a son-in-law ; (see
361 page 252). 13 might be the hut of a stranger (mulubeti), who has
574 asked permission to stay with the headman of the village, as he
783 wished to be under his protection. The case is not frequent, but may occur, and in order to be received into the mystic unity of the community, this man will have to "hlamba ndjaka" (See page 153), together with all the inhabitants of the kraal.

621 10) Having closed the village in this way, she *performs a sacrifice.*
595 She sips a mouthful of water from a tumbler, spitting out a
782 portion of it (phahla) towards the people ; then she washes her hands, and throws a little of the water towards them in order *to give them* the village. This act is accompanied by the following words : "Be not tied by the village! Bring forth children ; live and be happy and get everything. You gods, see! I have no bitterness in my heart. It is pure. I was angry because my husband abandoned me, he said I was not his wife ; he loved his younger wives. Now, this is finished in my heart. We shall have friendly relations together..." The prayer being concluded, the headman goes to the main entrance, pushes the thorny branch aside, and opens the village.

621 11) The last act is the *khangula*, the *inauguration ceremony.*
574 Beer is prepared, neighbours are invited and they all drink together, the neighbours coming *to see the new village* (ku bona muti).

As regards the old one, when the moving has been accomplished through the back door widened for the purpose, one of the inhabitants closes the main entrance with a branch. Hence comes the expression which is applied to a village all of whose inmates have died, and which has, on that account, disappeared : "Those people have all died and there was not even one left to close the gate."

II. *In the Ba-Ronga Clans.*

621 The sequence of rites for the removal of a village is very
787 much the same as in the Northern clans.

824 1) The headman examines some spots and consults the bones :
765 "Must I built at such and such a tree ?"

2) When the tree has been designated, he goes to it and places at its foot his furniture (nyundju) and his instrument of worship, his altar, (a pot, a jar, see Part VI). The altar may be placed at the main entrance later on, if the bones so order it. As already mentioned, there will be a mystic relation between him and that tree. He must never cut it down. If any of the branches should be

621 789 824 gathered in a heap. The headman, on the advice of the medicine man, cuts from certain very vigorous trees such as the nkanye and the ntjondjo, two branches which can live when transplanted. He digs holes on both sides of the entrance and puts the branches into them. Across the gateway, he buries a third branch of the ntjopfa tree, "which causes oblivion" (p. 58): this will be smeared with special drugs in order to increase its efficacy ; it is intended to prevent the baloyi, witches and people speaking bad words. (lit "with bad lips"), from thinking about the village and spoiling it.

621 833 789 7) On the evening of that day, the headman and his principal wife have intercourse in their hut and, at dawn, while it is still dark, they go and wash their hands at the main entrance. Mboza does not say that all the other couples must do the same, or trample on the spot. In Nondwane this is sufficient and the rite does not apply to the other couples. But at Manyisa, midway between Lourenço Marques and Khosen, where the Djonga customs are sometimes met with, all the couples must have relations, one after the other, according to order of precedence. It is deemed so important to keep the due order in this "giving to each other the right of resuming sexual life" that, should an elder brother have been absent when the village moved, on his return he must undergo a special treatment in a neighbouring village, during a few days, to avoid any bad consequences resulting from having been unlawfully "preceded" (rangeliwa).

621 789 782 756 8) After the night during which this sexual rite has taken place, at daybreak, all the dried grass is piled in front of the main hut and burnt ritually. The headman throws into the fire a special medicinal pill in order to *give the village over* to his people (nyiketa muti). They all warm their bodies at the blaze, and go and set fire to all the other heaps of dried grass which they made when clearing the soil.

9) The medicine man comes on that same day, and sprinkles the fence with his drugs, in order to protect the village against bush fires, wizards and disease. He walks all round the fence saying : "Happy village! May misfortune not enter here! These are my drugs!" — He starts from one of the poles of the main

621 entrance and finishes his walk at the other, hanging upon it the
789 branch with which he has been sprinkling.

10) Then he sacrifices a hen. A young man accompanying
782 him cuts its throat ; the doctor plucks some feathers from the
756 neck, sacrifices in the ordinary way and invokes his gods : "You used to treat villages (daha miti) with these drugs and I do the same. I do not act of my own wisdom ; you have given it to me. Bless this place, etc." Then he plucks a feather from the hen's right wing, and suspends it at the main entrance or in the main hut, inside, over the door, according to the directions given by the bones. This is the *shirungulo* (see Part VI) and the act is called : "to tie the village" (tjimba muti).

621 Amongst the Rongas, there are some other *buhlapfa taboos*. It
372 is not allowable to light any fire in a village until it is completely
784 built. During the whole building period, cooking is done outside the fence ; crushing mealies in the mortars and dancing are also
789 prohibited. Whistling (ku ba noti) is forbidden, as it might call
198 the wizards inside the village before it has been protected by the charms.

621 If a man has many wives, he may build a second village for
595 himself and establish one of them there. A grown-up son, the son of the woman, will represent the headman in that village, but the law of "tying the village" will also be observed in this case. The headman will perform the act with this woman, and preside at the burning of the dried grass and of the medicinal pill, by which he *gives* the village to the inhabitants.

When a younger brother, or a son, leaves the headman and founds a village for himself (tihambela muti), he does it according to the same laws as those observed at the regular moving of a village.

III. *Some remarks on the rules of moving.*

621 Let us now analyse the two parallel sequences of rites which we have just described, and which complete each other. It is easy to discover amongst them three series of rites, social, protective and passage rites.

825 that the road is not "clean" (Viguet). The flesh of this bird is
777 used in the preparation of the charms carried by travellers. There
484 are also two mammals which give the same warning : the duyker
782 antelope (mhunti) and the polecat (mangobo). Should a boy going to Johannesburg meet with any of these three animals, he will go to his kokwana (grandfather) and ask him for help ; the old man will then take a mouthful of beer or water and project it towards the traveller (to make "phaa") with the following prayer addressed to the ancestor-gods : "You, so and so, look to this child who wants to travel! Bless him in his journey! May the Spirit of the bush (Shikwembo sha nhoba) remain asleep."

517 The *discussion of affairs* (ku khanela timhaka) on the square of
461 the village also fills many an hour in a man's life.

On the whole, men have but little to do. We can fairly estimate at three months the time required for the work which they have to do for the village and for the community. The remaining months are devoted to pastimes and pleasure (1).

III. *Games of adults.*

000 Having already described boys' and girls' games (p. 66 and 172), I now proceed to those of the adults, as forming an important part of the Life of the Village.

462 (1) Much has been said and written about the division of village work between men and women in the Bantu kraal. I shall try to show in the Practical Conclusions, No. V that civilisation is bound to produce great changes in this region. But, as already pointed out, it is certain that to the Natives themselves their system appears perfectly natural and that the women do not at all complain of their fate. The following charming story which is told by a Moravian missionary, The Rev. Th. Bachmann, who lived for a long time amongst the Wa-Nika, between Lake Tanganyika and Nyassa gives fresh proof of this assertion :

000 One day, as the rain was pouring down, I saw Walusangano returning from his garden with his wife, Leya. The wife was walking in front with a big bundle of wood on her head. On the wood was a basket containing maize, cucumbers and beans, as well as the hoe. On her back Leya was carrying her youngest child. The other children followed and the father brought up the rear-guard, carrying only an open umbrella. We were greatly shocked at this sight, and I thought it my duty to intervene on behalf of the women. On Sunday night, at public worship, I spoke of what I had seen in the most expressive terms possible. But my speech did not make the impression I expected. The men looked very much embarrassed ; the women indignant.

The following week, at sunset, I was under my veranda, watching the lightning and

643 857 However, specially appointed persons watch over him and report of his well being to his father. His youthful playmates are taught to respect him ; he is surrounded in his games by a miniature court, from which he chooses his favourites (tinxekwa) ; some of his companions act as counsellors and reprimand those who do not treat him with due respect. They play at court... also at soldiers ; the juvenile troop wage war with the wasps, and also with the boys of the adjoining villages.

643 787 777 751 782 When the child reaches boyhood, the bones are consulted, and sacrifices offered in order to ascertain from the gods whether it be well to take him to the capital. Should the answer be in the negative, there is nothing to do but wait. When the dice declare the propitious moment to have arrived, the transfer is effected and the boy taken to his father. This is a great occasion for the counsellors who have watched over the boy and who thenceforward supervise his education. They feast themselves well (ba fumisana), kill goats, perhaps even an ox, and offer a sacrifice to proclaim to the gods the return to the capital of the heir to the throne ; to his ankle is tied the astragalus of a slaughtered goat, as a protective amulet.

643 881 836 At puberty the boy undergoes, in the same manner as his companions, all the ceremonial rites usual at that period. The principal doctors of the country treat him, in order that henceforth he may be a man (ba mu yimisa a ba wanuma), having full right to enter into the sexual relations of gangisa (p. 97). Care is taken, however, to attach to his person comrades of riper age, who will prevent him giving way to excesses, (suka banhwanyana la bakulu ba ta mu gema, ba mu sibela ku kula), which would arrest his growth and render him small and feeble. He thus lives in relative continence, participating in the play and in the work of boys of his own age, and looking after the herds. At times he gives a feast, when his father happens to have presented him with an ox with which to make merry.

643 588 595 Now we see him arrived at manhood, at the age when the Blacks take a wife. If his father is still living, the young man is not allowed to marry officially. He may certainly lobola, viz., contract regular marriage in the usual way, and possibly

644 When they have chosen it—it must be the stem of a nkonono
789 tree—they cut it and bring it back to the capital. In front walks the master of the ceremonies, Godlela, and behind him four men carrying the shiphandje. Those who accompany them have the right of entering the villages and stealing fowls. Woe to those who meet with this troop! They will be relieved of all they carry, "because the forked branch of the great medicine of the chief is taboo."

644 The sacred branch having duly reached the capital, Godlela
789 proceeds to the second operation, the *burning of the drugs.*
826 Mboza saw the magician take pieces of skin cut from buffaloes,
237 lions, hyenas, elans, panthers, snakes of various kinds and, last but not least, from the bodies of men, enemies killed in the wars: part of the skin of the forehead, the heart, the diaphragm, the nails, a finger, some ears... All these are roasted
644 in a large pot. On some mats are spread various magical roots
789 cut into small pieces; these are also thrown into the pot. The chief and all the sub-chiefs approach and, with hollow reeds, inhale and swallow the vapour and the smoke which emanates from it (1).

The preparation of the great medicine having been sucessfully accomplished, the great drum (nhumburi) of the capital is brought on to the square, and everybody dances, even women, who take assagais in their hands and sing: "We are thankful if we die (hi tlangela ku fa)" viz., "The country is in security, our invincible medicine is ready! We shall not be killed by enemies
644 but will die a natural death." Before extinguishing the fire which
789 was used to roast the medicines, Godlela takes a little water,
782 pours it on the glowing embers and, when it vaporises with the customary sound, he emits the sacramental *tsu* and prays to his gods, the departed spirits of the Tlhaltha family, as doctors always do, in order to obtain their blessing on the nyokwekulu.

618 (1) The Hlewane sub-clan, which revolted many times against the legal chief and succeeded by its intrigues in provoking the war of 1894, after which it became the reigning family of Nondwane, used to abstain from participating in this "swallowing of the smoke," because, in former years, it had been defeated by Maphunga's people and some of its men killed; their flesh had been used in the concoction of the nyokwekulu. So they feared to go and inhale the odour of their fellow clansmen.

262 643 527 which is not eaten, and rub their faces with it. But *no religious ceremony is performed*. It is the same for the *fuma*, a paste made with the contents of the kwakwa fruit, a kind of Strychnos very similar to the nsala, but of a different taste. The ceremony was even more simple than with the almonds ; the chief used to send a little of this paste to each village saying : "Let this be the first bite you swallow : the new year has come!" (Luman, ku tlhese nguba.) No powder was used in connexion with it. The magical drug was used, on the other hand, when the luma of pumpkin leaves took place.

II. *The luma of the Kafir corn.*

262 643 782 769 796 The great, the official luma, amongst the Ronga clans, is that performed for the Kafir corn (mabele). The great wife of the chief grinds the first grains of Kafir corn reaped in the fields. She cooks the flour in a pot and pours into it some of the royal powder kept in the calabash, so as to make a *shimhimbi* (See page 42). The chief takes a little of the food and offers it to the spirits of his ancestors, at the main entrance of the royal kraal. He prays to them in the following terms : "Here has the new year come! Precede us, you gods, and luma, so that, for us also, Kafir corn shall help our body, that we may become fat, not thin, that the witches may increase the corn, make it to be plentiful, so that, even if there is only a small field, big baskets may be filled! (Nguba hi yoléyi! Rangan ñwine, mi luma, ñwi Psikwembu! Na hine, mabele ma tjhama amirin yeru psinene, hi kuluka hi nga wondji. Abaloyi ba yandjisa, psi tala ngopfu, nambi shi shisiñwanyana shi shiñwe, a ku tale tingula!)"

262 643 796 554 609 After this religious ceremony everyone luma in turn, the chief first, then the sub-chiefs, then the counsellors, then the warriors who have killed enemies in battle, then the headmen of the kraals who have all been summoned to the capital. Should one of the headmen be prevented from coming by illness, his younger brother will not precede him. He will bring him the *shimhimbi* in a leaf ; the elder will take it, and, after him, the other brothers. Women do not eat the magic powder. Neither do strangers,

262 even those who are settled in the clan. They have their own
643 medicine and luma for themselves, though they must not do it
609 before the chief of the country.
796

III. *The luma of bukanye and the great national feast.*

137 The most characteristic of all these ceremonies connected with
273 the first fruits is the luma of bukanyi. Tobane has given me a
796 circumstantial description of this feast and it deserves to be
824 reproduced in all its details, as being a typical manifestation of Bantu national life.

The *nkanye* (1) is a large tree, one of the finest in the country. Its botanical name is Sclerocarya caffra (Sond); it is generally known amongst the English of Natal as the Kafir plum.

It bears fruit of the size of a greengage, which when ripe is a beautiful golden yellow and has a strong flavour of turpentine and a penetrating odour. It is a dioecian tree, the male bearing bunches of flowers while the female has single flowers. The Natives are quite aware of this; they cut down the male plants but take care to keep a few in each district to fecundate the female. The fruit — the kanye — begins to ripen in the month of January and falls to the ground. The odour is perceptible everywhere, and it is then that the principal men of the country approach the chief and say to him: "The time has come to luma."

In the luma of the bukanye it is easy to discover four consecutive ceremonies:

a) The luma of the gods and of the chief.

262 The first ripe makanye are gathered and pressed at the capital,
782 and the sour liquor thus obtained is poured out on the tomb
of the deceased chiefs in the sacred wood; they are invoked to
273 bless this new year and the feast which is about to be celebrated.
796

(1) Nkanye, plural minkanye, is the tree in question. Kanye, plural makanye, is the fruit of this tree; bukanye is the drink made from this fruit. In the same way the wild apricot tree is called mphimbi, plural mimphimbi. The fruit himbi, plural mahimbi; the drink made from the fruit, buhimbi.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

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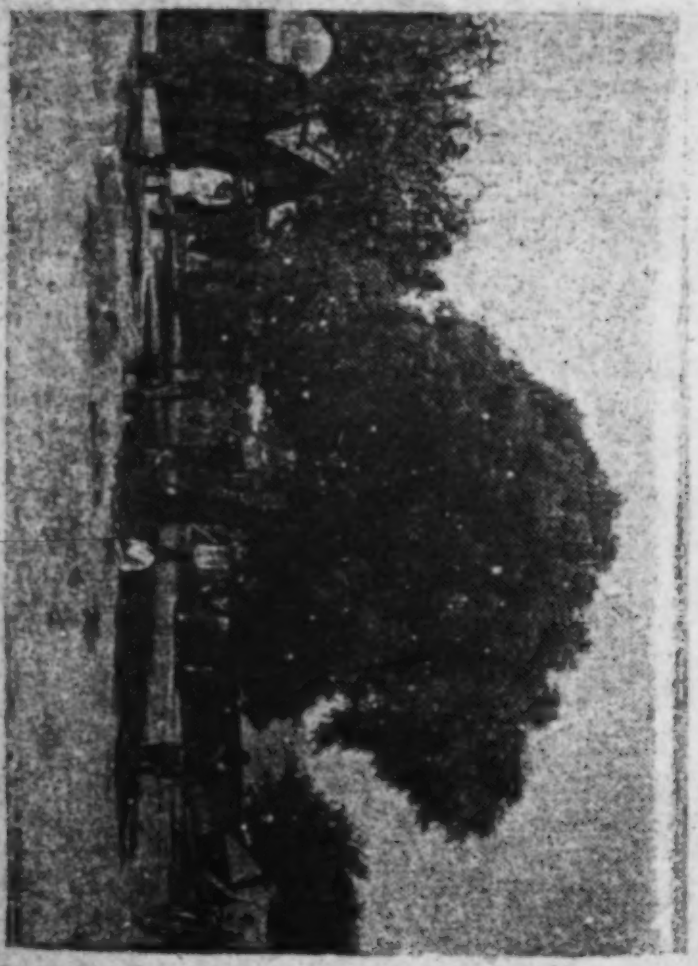
Nkolele, the sub-chief of Libombo, used on this occasion to pronounce the following prayer : "This is the new year. Let us



The Mayor of Bief (16 km North of Lourenço Marques)

not kill each other! Let us eat peacefully! (Hi yo ngube! Hi nga dlayane! A hi nwenen ha hombe!)" Here is another

262 formula : "May this bukanyi do no harm! May we not slay each
782 other under its influence. May it cause no serious quarrels."
796 They are afraid that, during the general intoxication which will
273 shortly prevail, quarrels will arise, some of which may terminate fatally. During the whole month of bukanye drinking, all business is at a standstill, just as with us all bankruptcy proceedings and all prosecutions for debt are held in abeyance for two weeks during the New Year holidays!

The gods having luma first, the bones are consulted. Should the throw be propitious, the chief will luma next ; thus the opening ceremony of the feast is concluded.

b) The luma of the army.

796 The young people are now assembled to clean up the public
273 square and all the roads ; the ball room must be prepared! The women of the capital start out early in the morning, beating the *pibubutwana*, that is to say sounding the call that is produced by striking the lips (bu-bu-bu-bu), and they go all over the country gathering the golden fruit ; this is piled up in an enormous heap on the public square and the brew is proceeded with in the following manner. The makanye are pierced (tshunya) with a pointed wooden splinter ; the stone falls covered with a transparent white pulp into the jar ; into this jar is also squeezed out with the fingers all the juice which remains in the pulp adhering to the skin ; this is continued until the jar is half full, when the stones are taken out, and on the following day the pressing is resumed until the jar is full. On the third day the beer has sufficiently fermented to be pungent and agreeable to the taste and is ready for consumption. Empty barrels are easily procurable in the environs of Lourenço Marques. The women of the capital brew ten or fifteen huge casks of the precious liquor! This accomplished, the second ceremony begins.

796 A convocation of the entire male portion of the tribe is held in
273 the capital, but the first to respond to the call must be the men,
789 the warriors of the army, who come in full array, with all their
701 ornaments, and carrying their small play shields. One cask of

262 eats freely in his house according to his good pleasure. Formerly
821 we used to take the oxen of the man who had dared to steal the
796 new year."

Conclusion on the luma rite.

796 All these luma rites[1] of first fruits seem to have primarily a *religious*
782 *origin*. The Bantus do not feel that they dare enjoy the products of
534 the soil unless they have first given a portion of them to their gods. Is it not these gods who make the cereals grow? Have they not the power even of controlling the wizards who bewitch the fields? These rites are also evidently dictated by the *sense of hierarchy*. A subject must not precede his chief nor a younger brother the elder in the use of the new harvest, else they would kill those in authority. Such an act is against order. We shall see that, even when the seeds are sown, the elders must take precedence. But the custom seems also to have been actuated by the idea of *passage*. There is a passage from one year to another. For the Thongas, I think the new year begins
865 twice every year: it begins when tilling recommences, in July, August,
796 when the heat returns. This is the hlobo. It begins a second time at
789 harvest, and then there is passage from the food of the last year to the food of this year. This is the nguba (Ro.) or ñwaka (Dj.). Though the luma rites do not bear all the characteristics of a true passage rite, like those of circumcision or moving, we may observe in the luma of bukanye a kind of marginal period of general licence, when the ordinary laws are more or less suspended. The taking of a first mouthful probably signifies the aggregation to the new period, the magical powder used on this occasion being a protective measure to shield them from the calamities of this unknown year... And after all, is it not that feeling of fear which so easily takes possession of the heart of man when entering on a new state and starting something fresh, which has led the savage to surround the use of the first fruit with so many ritual precautions?

IV. *Taxation.*

643 The chief governs (fuma). *Fuma* means to command, but also to live in plenty, to be rich. The subject (nandja, follower) obeys; he follows the chief who marches before him just as the

1 [See pp. 394-404 in these categories c. in 116--Analyst]

684 VI.) If found guilty, he will have to pay an extra fine of two
782 oxen (1).
584 When the abducted woman is an unmarried girl, the matter
836 is not serious. No trouble is entailed, provided she does not become pregnant. In the latter case, the seducer can say: "Ndji dlele ku dya: I have killed to eat," viz. "I am ready to lobola the girl" (p. 97). If the girl does not consent, the man is free. But if the man does not wish to marry the girl by paying a full lobolo, whilst the girl and her relatives want him to do so, he will have to pay as much as £ 30 and an ox. "He has spoilt his cause!" His own relatives will be arrested and forced to pay. They are responsible for him and will scold him severely. (Mankhelu).

683 *Fighting ending in blows.* The wounded man runs to the
649 square of the capital and shows himself. The assailants will have to pay a fine of £ 8, three for the chief and five for the victim, or of two oxen, one for the chief and one for the plaintiff. (Mankhelu).

682 *Murder.* A distinction is made between involuntary murder,
672 which is an accident (mhango, Dj.), and a deliberate assassination.

In the case of *involuntary murder*, Mankhelu describes the proceedings as follows:—Should you have killed a man by accident in a hunting trip, for instance, you will try to arrange matters directly with his relatives, if you were good friends; your relatives will give them a girl. You dare not offer your own daughter, because they may refuse her, on account of their bad feelings! The same objection will not be made if your people provide the girl. They will accompany her with ten hoes and an ox, saying: "This is fat to smear our daughter." The notion which is at the base of this custom is not that a human person is the natural compensation for another human person, but that you give the diminished family a means of making good its loss. In fact as soon as the girl has born a child to the relatives of the deceased, she is free. If these men wish to keep her as their wife, they must

(1) The neighbouring Chopi tribe, on the contrary, leaves the husband to arrange matters as he likes. Formerly he used to kill the adulterer. But cases of adultery are never brought before the chief.

727 "hot" and from special plates (mireko) and broken pots. They are
783 forbidden to drink water. Their food must be cold. The chief
834 kills oxen for them (yi ba lumisa hi tihomu); but if the meat
761 were hot it would make them swell internally "because they are hot themselves, they are defiled (ba na nsila)." If they ate hot food, the defilement would enter into them. "They are black (ntima). This black must be removed" (Mankhelu). During all this time sexual relations are absolutely forbidden to them.
727 They must not go home to their wives. In former times the
304 Ba-Ronga used to tatoo them with special marks from one eyebrow to the other. Dreadful medicines were introduced into the incisions and there remained pimples "which gave them the appearance of a buffulo when it frowns" (1).

789 After some days a medicine-man comes to purify them (ku ba
727 phutula), "to remove their black." There seem to be various
783 means of doing it, according to Mankhelu. Seeds of all kinds are put into a broken pot and roasted, together with drugs and *psanyi* of a goat. The slayers inhale the smoke which emanates from the pot. They put their hands into the mixture and rub their limbs with it (ba tilula) especially the joints.

789 Viguet describes this last act thus :—Pieces of medicinal roots
727 are put into the broken pot and roasted. They inhale the smoke.
782 Then cow's milk is poured into the pot on the embers and, when it boils, they have to put their fingers into it, one hand after the other, and pass them across their lips emitting the sacramental : "tsu" (which proves that it is a sacrifice to the gods, a religious act). Afterwards they say : "Phee! phee!" — viz.,
789 phephela phansi, (Dj. tikela hansi), "Go down, sink." This
727 means : "May you go deep into the earth, you, my enemy and
783 not come back to torment me." The last part of the treatment consists in rubbing the biceps, the legs, and the whole body with this milk. The medicinal embers are carefully collected, and reduced to a powder ; this will be put into small bags of skin called *tintebe* which the slayer will wear round his neck. They contain

578 (1) Hence an expression which is still in common use. When a Ronga wants to defy some one he says to him : "You are a coward! If you say you can tackle me come and kiss my forehead."

[Yes, the slayers returned from battle — Analyst]

765 way that all the men can see her pudenda which is
535 much tabooed (that is, sinful)."]
831
834 "Annotatio undecima (P. 161). Hic, mulier paulo dilutiore
765 colore magnaque statura addit: 'Hi kundjana, id est:
782 coeamus!' "

[Note 11 (page 161). Here a woman with a slightly lighter color and of large stature, adds: Hi kundjana, that is, "let us have intercourse!"]

841 "Annotatio duodecima (P. 187). Hæc sunt ipsissima verba, quibus Makhelu mulieris menstruansis taboo (id est nefas) describit. Mulier menstruans est res, quæ imprimis 'yila' est. Per sex dies 'yila,' id est, nefas est. Septimo die transit flumen ad se lavandam. Octavo ei nondum licet cum marito suo coire; forte enim sanguis pudendis ad hæret, eà insciente. Magis 'refrigescit.' (Verbo phula menstruans mulier comparatur cum aula a foco remota).

Si, ante id tempus, maritus cum uxore cœat, ægrotus fiat, veretrum retro ita recedat ut vir urinam reddere non possit et, brevi tempore, moriatur. Talem vitæ exitum multi habuerunt. Radicibus arboris cui nomen est mayilana vel mulieris menstruantis vestis particulà, a medico ad levem pulverem redactà, quæ ægro bibenda est, morbus sanari potest. Aegrotus multum sanguinis reddet, et veretro exeunte, salvus est."

[Note 12 (page 187). These are the very words with which Makhelu [sic] describes the taboo (that is, the sin) of the menstruating woman. A menstruating woman is something which is, first of all, yila. For six days she is yila, that is to say, taboo. On the seventh day, the flow that cleanses her passes over. On the eighth day she is not yet allowed to have intercourse with her husband; for perhaps some blood is still sticking to her pudenda without her knowledge. She "cools down" even more so. (By the word phula the menstruating woman is compared to the pot removed from the stove.)

841 If the husband should have sexual intercourse with his wife
834 before this time, he will be taken sick, his private parts will
756 decay to such an extent that the man would no longer be able to pass urine and would die within a brief period of time. Many have had such an end to their life. The sick man can be cured by a liquid containing the roots of the tree that is called mayilana or by a particle of the menstruating woman's dress, reduced to a light powder by the medicine man. The sick man loses a lot of blood; after his penis is able to pass water again, the man is well again.

follows : the nuts are thoroughly dried (womisa), and slightly 252
pounded in a mortar so as to remove the thin peel which covers 303
them ; they are then winnowed, and ground into a kind of flour ; this flour is put into a pot with a little water and cooked ; the fat is then collected in a big shell of Achatina and kept for external use. The residue is called *bubindje*.

I do not mention all the other fruits, more or less succulent, 137
which serve the Natives for food. One must be terribly famished 222
to enjoy them. I may just specify the *pfilu* (dji-ma), Vangueria infausta, a kind of insipid medlar ; the *tjhopfa* (dji-ma), fruit of the *ntjhopfa* tree, which I could never muster courage enough to taste, and the *bungu* (dji-ma) sometimes dignified with the title of the Kafir orange. This latter is the fruit of one of the varieties of the india-rubber tree, which grows along the shores of Delagoa Bay. (Landolphia Kirkii.) In the Morakwen forest grow the ntjhole shrubs from which the *tintjole* berries are picked during the summer.

The *muhlu* or water tree bears a berry called *tihlu*, which has an agreeable taste. The *mphimbi* bears the *mahimbi*, a large round fruit similar in form to an apricot with a double stone. Both these fruits are used to prepare a drink, and we shall mention them when treating of Thonga drinks.

*

* *

There are a few taboos to mention in connection with trees. 782
It is considered dangerous to cut the trunk of any large tree. 824
Should you wish to make a mortar of a nkanye, first smear some of the bark with certain drugs and also burn them at the foot of the tree before cutting it down. Should you want to cut down a nkwenga or a mahogany-tree, nhlapfuta (Ro.), shene (Dj.), to make a canoe, the master of the forest must first offer a sacrifice to the spirits of his ancestors who have been buried there. If you omit this precaution, you will be unable to find again the tree you have chosen.

231 Native goats are very small and frequently attacked by a disease called ndlwabane which decimates whole herds. They are not tended with sufficient care, although a special hut (mhala) is sometimes built to protect them from the rain.

Goats are killed by piercing the heart : this is at any rate the ritual way of killing them (I. p. 158). The officiating person stands on the right of the animal and stabs it in the left side, holding the left leg. The animal suffers acutely ; goats are however often slaughtered by cutting the throat, not from any feelings of compassion, but in order to prevent them crying too long, as "this would surely bring many people on the spot and you would have to share the meat with them!" (Mboza.)

231 782 If the ox plays an important part in *social life*, the goat seems to be specially reserved for sacrifices, that is to say for *religious usages*. This ritual use entitles us to suppose that, as millet seems to be the oldest cereal, the goat is the most ancient domestic animal amongst the Thongas, and, no doubt, amongst all South African Bantus.

The gall bladder, the astragalus, the half digested grass found in its intestines, strips made of its skin, all play a special part in the ceremonies and superstitious practices of the tribe previously mentioned. The gall bladder (nyongwa) is fixed in the hair of the person in whose honour the goat was slaughtered. The astragalus (nhlolo) is fastened to the wrist, the ankle or the waist as a means of protection. The *psanyi* (half digested grass) is taken from the shihlakahla stomach, and is used in connection with the invocation of the gods in the sacrifices. (See Part VI, Compare also I. p. 111, 160-162.)

136 231 643 782 *Sheep*, hamba, yin-tin, (Ro.) nyimpfu, yin-tin, (Dj.) are scarce in our tribe, and are mostly without wool. The wool sheep is called *shitlapu*. It is not taboo for subjects to possess sheep, but this animal is connected in a special manner with the chiefs. Its astragalus designates royal personages in the set of divinatory bones. It is used in the national sacrifices, those offered to the chief's ancestors at the capital. (See Part VI.) Let us remind the reader that its skin is used to carry a child in case of *bovumba* (I. p. 194).

The *pig*, as previously mentioned, is a new comer in the Bantu village. Its name, *nguluve*, means the wild pig. Most villages, however, possess one or two. They are never slaughtered in connection with sacrifices. 231

Poultry (tihuku) is the most common of all live stock. Not a village is without its fowl house (shihahlu); these are generally fashioned like a small hut and perched on piles to protect the poultry during the night from snakes. (See illustration I. p. 312.) 235 343

When a hen and her brood of young chickens have to be cared for, a much smaller hut is built on the ground, but the utmost precaution is taken to keep it almost hermetically sealed, as the mhamba (a long green snake, very venomous) and the shipyahla (Echnida arietans, a large viper resembling the puff-adder) do great execution amongst fowls! As cows are not bred for milking purposes, neither are chickens raised for the sake of their eggs. In fact Thongas consider it a sheer waste to eat eggs and always allow the hens to hatch them out. Hens are wilder than they are with us and often make their nests in the open country, returning some fine day with a flourishing young family. The breed is of very small size and the eggs are tiny: it would require at least two to equal the weight of one ordinary egg such as are for sale in the European markets; it is therefore evidently more advantageous to hatch eggs than to eat them! If, by any chance, a hen dies on the nest from the bite of a snake, the Natives will willingly devour the half hatched or three quarters addled eggs; the more developed the chicken, the greater their appreciation of the delicacy, for, says the Thonga, "i nyama!" — "this is meat!" Fowls are extensively used as timhamba, viz., sacrificial offerings. The throat is cut; a little of the down plucked off the neck is dipped into the blood, and brought close to the mouth for the performance of the *tsu* rite, one of the smaller feathers of the wing (shihluwa), one of the claws, and the beak are tied together and fastened to the wrist, ankle or neck of the person for the sake of whom the offering has been made. (Part VI.) [136] 235 262 235 782

Thongas assert that they have always possessed fowls. "They 235

itself. Afterwards he had to drink the broth and eat the meat. 224
The aim of the treatment was to enable him to kill more elephants. 777
In the case of the elephant as well as of the hippopotamus the chief 643
of the country has to perform the lurulula as well as the hunter "because he is the chief of all the animals of the country and he would be unable to govern it successfully if he did not do this."

The *rhinoceros (shibetshana)* is not common in Thongaland ; a 224
few of these animals are found in the extreme south of the Maputju 825
country. The same rules were observed when the hunters had succeeded in killing one ; but this is no easy task because, as Muvumbi said, the rhinoceros is terribly wild, as it has no "mapfalo." The mapfalo is a piece of cartilage which is found in all animals between the ribs, beneath the sternum ; it is the diaphragm ; it is also the seat of fear or of the conscience. It is this particular cartilage which throbs in the case of great fear. The rhinoceros has no mapfalo ; therefore it fears nothing and rushes savagely upon the hunter. Its meat is so delicious that when a man has tasted it he no longer wishes to drink water!

I never heard mention of the lurulula in connection with the 224
lion (*nghala* (Djo.), *ndjau* (Ro.). To avoid being mauled by lions 782
the hunters put into their mouths a little of every kind of food 825
mixed with their powerful drugs and spit it out to the four winds in order to appease the ancestor-gods of the country. Then if they meet with a lion, the wild beast, instead of rushing upon them, will look at them quietly, its saliva dropping from its mouth, and will do them no harm.

Strange to say the *buffalo* (nyari) has no nuru, and when I asked 825
why this was, my Maputju informant told me : "The buffalo is an ox." This answer may perhaps help us to understand something more about the nuru idea.

The statement regarding the *zebra* (mhangwa) is more curious still. "Mhangwa a yi lubiwi! Yi ni mabala ; i nala ; a yi ngeni hosin" viz. "No tax is paid for the zebra ; it is an animal with many colours (stripes) ; it is an enemy ; it must not enter the village of the chief." We have met with the same prohibition in connection with the village of the parents-in-law (I. p. 250).

As regards the *crocodile (ngwenya)* also called *shiwutlani-*

low, the fish is imprisoned between the reeds and the bank. 226
The construction of this trap is governed by strict laws : no 834
sexual relation is allowed during the five or six weeks of the fishing. The owner of the shibaba must cut the first reed. Women must not approach the spot. On the day of inauguration there is also a luma ceremony similar to that for the nhangu.

But the most curious fishing custom is the *tjeba*. "Ku tjeba" 226
means to kill fish in company in lakes which are drying up. At the end of the winter most of the small lakes scattered all over Thongaland, get smaller on account of the drought, and the fish they contain, consisting mostly of carp and barbel, are obliged to congregate in much smaller spaces. Natives take advantage of this and the whole country-side is summoned to go and tjeba, on a certain day, as it is important to be as numerous as possible in order to ensure success. The chief orders all his men to make *shiranga*, a kind of conical basket, a foot and a half high, whose upper end is open and wide enough to admit the hand. The shiranga must be very strong ; the tree used for the purpose is called ntjangari. When the shiranga are ready, a messenger is 202
sent to all the villages, crying : 226
626

> Kho ! Khoooo ! Hobe ! Hobeee ! U yala nsateeee ! Na nsati a randja nyamooo ! A randja mihlubeee ! Kho ! Hobe !
> You hate your wife ! Your wife also is fond of flesh food ! She is fond of the flesh of the tail of fishes !

Every male member of the tribe must answer to this summons by going to the shore. Should he refuse the call, he is blamed and despised, and his companions will sing to him a mocking song :

> U yala ku tjeba, nyatihwaku !
> You refuse to fish, nyatihwaku (1).

In the evening his wife will scold him, on seeing that he brings no fish home! She will punish him by giving him mealie pap without any sauce!

Before the throng enters the lake, someone must *make an* 226
offering ; he must be a descendant of the inhabitants of the country, 782

(1) Nyatihwaku is a formula of insult (I. p. 445).

226 not necessarily a member of the reigning family. He does not
782 perform the full sacramental *tsu* ; he merely spits without having put anything into his mouth, and says : "Let fish abound! Let them not hide in the mud! Let there be enough of them to
226 satisfy every one." Then all the men, quite naked, throw themselves into the lake, which is only one or two feet deep ; they put their shiranga into the water and hold it firmly down on the bottom ; a fish has perhaps been caught ; it is heard flapping

The tjeba fishing. *Phot. A. Borel.*

about inside the basket. The lucky fisherman seizes it through the opening. He carries a wooden pin to which a string is attached ; this string is called by the technical name of *ntjungwa*. He passes the pin through the gills of the fish and ties it on his string. Then he goes on fishing. All his companions do the same. The frightened fish scatter in all directions : but on all sides the shiranga fall over them, and the men have soon made a good haul. When they have reached the extremity of the lake, they come back shouting the following words : "Phindu-na-ye!" —"Come back, following them!" They are allowed when tired to come out of the water and rest in the rays of the sun. The more pertinacious, however, remain in as long as they like. When

when

226 the fishing is finished, they all sit down and compare their catches.
651 Perhaps an enormous barbel has been caught, "the king of the lake," as these fish sometimes attain a very large size. "Woo! a dle ñhwakwe!" — "Oh! he has killed his mother," say the men, making fun of the fortunate fisherman! But the chief sends an induna who levies the tax. Each fisherman unties one fish from his string and gives it to him.

226 The tjeba fishing is practised all over Thongaland, in Ronga
782 territory, where such ponds are numerous in the sandy hollows, amongst the Hlabis, and in the neighbourhood of rivers where there are lagoons which dry up, as far as the Maluleke country. Should there be crocodiles in the pond, which may very well happen when the lake is connected with the Limpopo or the Nkomati, the religious ceremony is more important on account of the danger incurred. Then the bones are thrown and declare who must make the offering in order to secure adequate protection from the ancestor-gods. The officiator enters the lake first, and, plunging his shiranga into the water, says : "If you are here, crocodile, go away! you hyena, do not bite." Amongst the Maluleke, a man of the Ba-Nyai tribe must perform the religious ceremony, as the Ba-Nyai were in the country before the Thongas. He must go first and catch a fish, bring it out alive, and then, surrounded by his fellow Ba-Nyai, offer it to his ancestor-gods. Then he throws it back into the water. The Thonga chief, having ordered his men to keep silence, then makes the following proclamation in a loud voice : "Let the fish abound, and kill them all, but do not bewitch each other!"

226 The Hlengwes have a very curious custom which I have already
825 explained when discussing the Bantu notion of sexual relations
834 (I. p. 189). When they *tjeba* they take a little boy and a little girl, and lay them down together under a lion's skin, as if they were husband and wife, during all the time that they are fishing. The children keep quiet, — so the fish will also keep quiet and not swim away. When the fishing is concluded, these children are "awakened," and are given a part of the catch : they are praised and thanked, as they are supposed to have secured the fish by their action... or rather by their inaction! This very significant

132 than any other. The life of every individual, and consequently
731 of the whole clan, is threatened. Famine will certainly follow,
789 as cereals can only be sown during these two months and famine means not only suffering and anguish, but often death, in a primitive tribe which is totally ignorant of trade with out-lying countries, and does not possess any means of conveyance for food bought in other lands. No wonder therefore that the imagination of the South African Native has invented ways and means of regularising the rainfall, and that rites, and charms, and all the powers of magic have been resorted to with a view to ensuring the precious rain to the tribe at the right time.

789 These methods may be classified in two categories : the rites which aim at removing the causes which are believed to prevent rain and the charms by which the rain is made to fall, irrespective of any preventing cause.

a) *The causes which prevent rainfall and the rites by which they are removed.*

821 The general view is that rain comes *from the gods* : "Psikwembu
789 psi nisa mpfula" — "the spirits of the ancestors cause rain to fall."
782 So, should the spring showers not come in due time, the first idea will be to offer a sacrifice to the ancestor-gods, especially if the bones consulted have revealed that the anger of the gods is the real
[533] cause. Men will go to the sacred wood where the ancestors have been buried, sing there an ancient mourning song (I suppose No. 15, page 286, is used for the purpose), and some of them will beat the graves with sticks. As regards the sacrifice, it consists of a black victim, or it may even be the offering of a living human being to the gods ; these rites will be described later on.

Or it may be that a certain individual, *a wizard*, endowed with magical power, or rather possessing enchanted drugs, prevents the rain from falling (a siba mpfula) through wickedness, or hatred of his countrymen. This is a rarer occurrence.

000 But the terrible calamity of drought is brought into direct

193 conceptions were still current, it was considered as a feminine principle. This supposition is confirmed by the fact that *rivers* (nambu. pl. milambu) also have the feminine termination (I. p. 36, Note). I find the following names of rivers ending in *ti* : Nkomati, Nfoloti (Umbelosi), Ñwebeti, Shalati, Timbati ; the termination *etsi*, *edzi*, may be another form of the same suffix (Ñwanetsi, Ntsatsi, Shingwedzi, Madzi, etc.). A very curious fact, which shows the same conception, is that the river which crosses the territory of the Tembe clan is called Mi-Tembe. I first thought this to be a plural form of the mu-mi class ; but it is more natural to explain this *mi* as the feminine prefix (1) which means daughter of, as Migogwe, etc. (I. p. 352).

823 *Crossing rivers* is subject to a curious rule. It is taboo to bathe
784 in the stream before crossing it ; taboo also for the traveller to
824 cook his food on the hither side of the river ; he must first cross,
789 and then take his meal. This rule is still universally observed by
133 waggon trekkers in South Africa. In this case there may be a reason for the taboo : South African rivers are apt to be swollen in a moment by sudden rain, and the crossing made impossible for days : the traveller therefore makes haste ; he will have plenty of time to stop on the other side! When the river is dangerous, a Thonga will first chew (phora) a little of his *ndjao*, the root of a juncus, which is supposed to increase courage and to ensure victory over hostile influences. (See Part VI.)

823 Some *Lakes* and *Rivers* are believed to be inhabited by spirits,
769 but not in the ordinary fetichistic way, in which a special spiritual
776 being is incorporated with the natural object ; these spirits are *psikwembo*, spirits of the deceased ancestors of the owners of the
782 land, and are propitiated by their descendants. Should another clan have invaded the territory where these lakes are, and crocodiles threaten the fishermen, (p. 88) they will call some one belonging to the clan of the old possessors of the country and ask him to make an offering to appease *his* gods. This is the ordinary course, and the more closely we search the more completely these lake and

(1) A number of river names have the prefix *li* or *ri*, especially those which are of Sutho origin : Lebvubye. Ritabi (Letaba) Ritshindjele (Letsitele), Rimbelule (Lepalula, Olifant). Others begin with *ñwa*, *ma*, and may be ancient names of men.

river spirits become identified with ancestor-gods. In my investigations I found one case, however, where a special spirit, a kind of Nature spirit seemed to be invoked. This was on the sea shore, in the northern part of Nondwane, at a place called Mahilane, where there are two great rocks on the beach. When the great waves dash against them, with a fearful roar, people go and sacrifice (hahla); they pray thus: "Tsu! Oh sea! Let vessels be wrecked, and steamers also, and let their riches come to us and help us." In former times, a young girl was sometimes exposed there as a prey, or an offering to the power of Mahilane. Now this is exactly what is done in the sacred woods for the ancestor gods and, in fact, Mboza asserts that: "When abandoning the girl, the officiant says: You, Psikwembo, ancestor-gods, drive on the sea that it may wreck vessels."

When urged to speak with more precision, my informant answered: "Mahilane and the sea are one and the same thing (ntshumu muñwe). When the sea is roaring people exclaim: 'Mahilane roars'! Near the island of Shefin, where two branches of the Nkomati river meet in the estuary, people say: 'Makaneta is roaring'. Here it is Makaneta and no longer Mahilane."

This information is extremely interesting. As regards Makaneta, we know him perfectly well; he is the ancestor of Mboza and descendant of Mazwaya (I. p. 360). This ancestor-god begins to be confused with a natural phenomenon taking place in the country where he lived. The religious fear of the spirit of the deceased mingles with the awe inspired by the roaring of the sea to such an extent that both notions coincide in the imagination of the savage. We here note the exact point where *an ancestral spirit evolves into a Nature spirit*, and this instance proves, in the clearest possible manner, that the conception of the ancestor spirit preceded that of the Nature spirit. Here, at any rate, Ancestrolatry is anterior to both Fetichism and Naturism. These later forms of the belief can be easily accounted for by the development of Ancestrolatry: the reverse process would be much more difficult to explain.

The *sea*, with its immensity and its wonderful power, deeply impresses the Thongas dwelling near it. They do not however tell many stories about it, nor did I hear of any explanation

II. *The Means of Propitiation. Offerings and Sacrifices.*

It is no wonder, since these spirits are so terrible, that their descendants have sought means of propitiating them. The study of these rites is very interesting, and will throw more light on the ideas of the Bantus concerning their ancestor-gods. Some of these means of propitiation bear a magical character. For instance, when Mankhelu wished to induce the gods to sleep and leave him in peace, he took roots which had been brought to light naturally by a swollen river that had washed away the ground The reason is clear ; the gods are in the earth, therefore things found in the earth can influence them. So he cut these roots in small pieces, cooked them with the flesh of a goat, and drank the broth ; the assagai which killed the goat had been first smeared with a powder made of these roots. He fastened the astragalus of the goat on his ankle, on the right side if the god to be propitiated belonged to his father's family, and on the left if it was one of his mother's ancestors. If the propitiatory ceremony was performed for a woman, the astragalus was tied with a strap "en bandouillère" round her body. 769 782 789

We shall often see such *magic acts* performed in the ancestor worship of the Thongas. This is in keeping with their general conception of Nature, as already explained (p. 369), and with the magic principles or axioms of primitive mentality. But to the magic element is added the religious ; the officiant is aware that he intends to influence living, conscious and superior beings, therefore he has recourse above all to specifically *religious means*, viz., to offerings and prayers. He presents to his gods what he calls a *mhamba*, and not *miri*, charms or medicines similar to those employed in magic proper. We shall understand more fully what the word mhamba means when we have described the various kinds of offerings.

1) Classification of Offerings.

These offerings are much more complicated and varied than they at first seem. The following principles of classification may be applied to them : 782

782 1) *Individual and family offerings* — those which concern a man or his family alone, — and *national offerings* — those which concern the whole clan.

2) The *simple offerings* called *gandjela*, and the *sacramental ones*, accompanied by the famous *tsu* which constitutes them a *hahla* (Ro.) or a *phahla* (Dj.).

3) Offerings attended with *bloodshed*, and those where no victim is killed.

4) The *regular offerings*, made at certain dates, or in connection with definite events in the life of the family or of the clan, and those made in *special* circumstances.

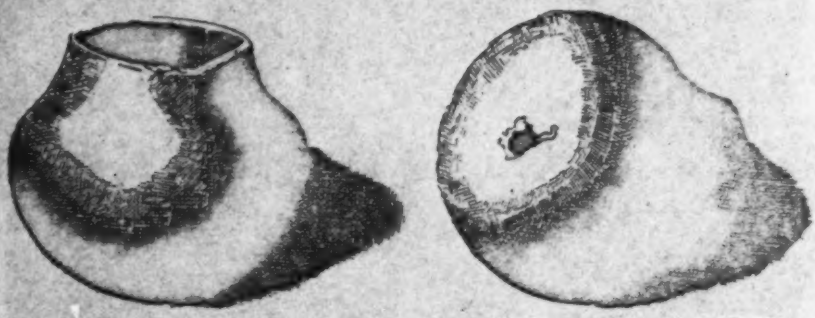
a) *Individual and Family Offerings.*

Simple Offerings (Gandjela).

782 Here the ritual is reduced to its minimum. The offering is
778 made by the father of the family at the gandjelo, the altar, or place of worship. This is, as has already been pointed out, a little pot, placed at the right side of the entrance to the village, or under the tree designated by the bones (I. p. 320) (1). In some cases, especially if the headman is a medicine-man or magician, the gandjelo consists of a forked branch planted in the ground, either inside his hut, or in the very middle of the square. Such was the case in the village of Mankhelu (See illustration I. p. 5). His gandjelo was a branch of *nkonola* (or *nkonono*) ; this tree, the *mpfilu* and *shisalala* are the only trees which are used for the purpose. He had removed the bark in some places, and smeared the stems with his black powders, so that there were two dark rings of about 3 inches wide on the branch. A lot of curious things were to be seen hanging from the lateral branches : bags

621 (1) If there are people of different clans inhabiting the same village owing to the fact that foreigners have "kondza" i. e, have put themselves under the authority of the
778 headman (I. p. 433), there will be a central gandjelo, the altar of the master of the village, at the foot of the sacred tree where offerings will be made for himself and his
782 relatives ; but people of the other clans will have their own altars which will be placed near the main entrance, on the spot where the representatives of each of these clans assemble when discussing their own affairs.

full of roots, calabashes of different sizes, containing the precious drugs, pieces of the *ñwabola* shrub (p. 383), etc. When he had earned some money or acquired something by accident, Mankhelu used to put these objects near the stem, and leave them there for the night in order to inform his gods of his good fortune. At the foot of the branch the earth was smeared with black clay, forming a circle with a little furrow traced round the outside of it. Men who are not so important as this great *ñanga*, are contented with the



Sokis' mug. The altar of primitive mankind.

small pot I described before. This can be placed on the grave, if it happens to be near the village.

In the case of Sokis (I. p. 139) it was the *deceased's own mug* which was used, pierced at the bottom in order to allow the beer to sink easily into the ground, when an offering was made to the recently deceased by his relatives (1).

Regular offerings are brought to the altar by the headman. When he has finished preparing his *tobacco* for use, he carefully puts aside some leaves of it, and places them near the pot. When he has ground the tobacco for snuff he puts two little spoonsful

(1) I had the good fortune to obtain this mug, which may well be called the altar of primitive humanity! I offered Sokis' wife a small pig in exchange for it. She was quite willing to accept the bargain, but her sister-in-law made objections, doubtless fearing that the deceased might be angry... The widow answered her thus: "When he was living you refused him beer often enough! You may do the same now, and accept the little pig." Thanks to the common-sense view taken by Sokis' wife I am now in possession of this precious pierced mug, and in a position to give its facsimile in the accompanying plate.

782 into the pot, one for the paternal, the other for the maternal gods, saying as he does so :

Fole hi ledji! Tlanganan mi djaha, mi nga ndji hobilise loko ndji djaha fole, mi ku ndji mi tjona.

Here is some tobacco! Come all of you and take a pinch, and do not be angry with me when I snuff, nor say that I deprive you of your share.

Having made his offering, the headman must return to his seat, on the hubo, without looking behind him : this is a taboo.

Another way of gandjela is the offering of a piece of cloth (nturu), which may be tied at the entrance, or to the tree of the village (p. 333). Liquids also are poured into the gandjelo (I. p. 341) : beer, when a beer feast is to take place ; wine, when it has been bought at the neighbouring store ; palm-wine, when the big pot called gandjelo (see p. 43 for the explanation of this word in this particular connection) has been filled, and the precious drink has been brought to the village.

Occasional offerings are made, for instance, in a case of *shirwalo* (I. p. 406) when relatives-in-law have brought jars of beer. A little of the beer is first offered to the gods in order that the pots may not get broken during the return journey. Another case is after a dream, in which the gods have asked for such and such an offering to be made (p. 385).

Sacramental Offerings or Ku Hahla (Ro.), Phahla (Dj.).

782 These are of much greater importance than the simple ones
787 and also differ from them in two ways, viz., they are always ordered by the divinatory bones, and accompanied by the sacramental *tsu*. The bones are first consulted, and give many indications, e. g., what must be the nature of the offering ; to which god it must be consecrated ; in what place the act of worship must be performed, (in the hut, behind it, at the door, in the square, in the sacred wood, or in the bush). When the ceremony

takes place over the grave the bones reveal whether the officiant must stand at the head or at the foot. (See Chap. III, D. for the consultation of the bones). 782 787

The Offering of Bitterness. There is a progressive character in the offerings, according to the value of the gift accompanying the *tsu*. In some cases, all that is given to the gods is the small amount of saliva emitted in pronouncing the sacramental sound. These offerings are called "Offerings of Bitterness" (ku hahla hi shibiti), and form a most curious category. They are generally presented by a headman who is overwhelmed with sorrow, and deprived of everything. "He shows his misery by offering nothing but his saliva. He leans his head upon his shoulder with a look of profound sadness. His heart is bitter! He has nothing! He therefore does not try to win over his gods by presenting rich gifts to them. He wishes rather to gain their blessing by this appearance of abject misery. And they will indeed have pity on him!" (Mboza). This is certainly touching! But this kind of offering, though showing more individual piety than others, must only be made ritually, i. e., by order of the bones. The sacrifice of bitterness may be resorted to when no evil has as yet fallen on the village, as a preventive against misfortune. 782

The Offering of Charcoal. When a headman is in great difficulties, (quarrels in his village, disease amongst his people), the bones may order him to *hahla* with a piece of charcoal. He takes an extinct charcoal, puts it to his lips, utters the *tsu* and adds :

Akhwari! i. e. Smoothly! You, so and so. What you want is this. Abupsayi! i. e. Gently! This is fire! This is the mouth of the lion! Let what troubles me come to an end, etc.

The Offering of Earth. Earth is the offering of the chiefs, because they are the masters of the soil (I. p. 405). It can, however, also be used by subjects on various occasions. When the bones have not revealed that the disease was sent by the ancestor-gods, when they have not said that it was the work of wizards, then it is caused by "the earth, misaba" i. e. by some unknown people of the land (bhanu ba misaba). The bones say : "Go and seek the navel of the earth." The navel of the earth is the ant-heap. The officiant then takes a piece of termite nest and *hahla* with it. He 782 787

782 addresses his prayer to his ancestor-gods in order to be delivered
787 from his enemies.

The Offering of a Thorn (Mhamba ya Mutwa). This is also called *ku hahla ka shihlahla*, the sacrifice of the forest. The headman has seen that misfortune has fallen on his village ; all his people die, the village is about to disappear, to become merely a part of the bush. He goes to the forest, picks up a thorn there and accomplishes the religious act by sucking the thorn, and emitting his saliva. Then he returns to the forest and places the thorn where the bones have ordered him.

782 *The Offering of Contempt (Mhamba ya Litsaniwa).* We have
783 already seen a case in which this offering is made. It is a compo-
824 nent part of the burial ritual (I. p. 142) and we have called it the rite of the twig. But it can be performed on other occasions also. In certain clans (Nkuna-Khosa, Hlengwe) it does not take place at the burial, but is of common use when someone wishes *to avoid contempt*, to be well received by those to whom he goes ; for instance when he goes to his debtors and fears that they may despise him and perhaps refuse to accept his claim, or when a young man goes to woo a girl and is afraid that she may not look favourably on his suit. The religious act is performed as follows. The officiant cuts a twig of the nkanye tree. We have often mentioned this tree, whose fruits are used to prepare the famous bukanye beer ; it is everywhere regarded as the best of trees, and highly valued. It is dioecious, as we have seen (I. p. 397). The twig must come from a female stem, if a man *hahla* for himself, from a male stem if a woman does so. The officiant bites the extremity of the twig till he has drawn a little of the sap into his mouth ; then he emits that sap together with his saliva, and proceeds to his prayer.

789 *The Offering of the Fig Tree (Mhamba ya Hlulawumbe).* This
782 tree is called shihlampfana or hlulawumbe. It frequently grows
824 as a parasite on another tree ; or surrounds it, growing close to its stem, and in this way kills it. If a man has enemies, if there are people who hate him, he digs up a bit of the root of this fig tree and uses it in making his prayer. These troublesome persons will be choked, destroyed, just like the stem close to which the hlulawumbe grows. (Hlulawumbe means to overcome others).

hlulawumbe grows, (Hlulawumbe means to overcome others) (1). 000

Offerings of the Medicine-men. The Native physicians are, as 782
has already been pointed out, very pious. Their art having been 756
handed down to them by their forefathers, as a family secret, they 484
always implore the blessing of their ancestors on their various treatments. This is done by true offerings, performed with the *tsu* and a liturgical prayer. In Vol. I. p. 55, the religious ceremony which accompanies the monthly vapour bath administered to infants was described ; a religious rite takes place also in the hondola of the weaning (I. p. 59). These are typical cases. Another offering of the same nature is made on behalf of the man who is about to *start out on a journey*, for instance to Johannesburg. The doctor, having prepared the protective drugs in a pot, brings them to the entrance of the traveller's hut, and calls his "patient,"; then, taking a little of the decoction in his mouth, he spits it at him with the sacramental *tsu*, and prays in the following words :

Akhwari! Abusayi! Ndji hlaya psolepso! Khongelwa a nga dlawi. Ku dlawa phalaburena! Khombo a dji suke, dji ya ka Shiburi, dji ya ka Nkhabelane! A a fambe psinene, a kandjetela balala, mitwa mi yetlele, ku yetlela ni tindjau. A a ye nwa mati ya kone, ma mu tjhabisa hi djo thuka ledji.

Gently! Smoothly! I say so. Death does not come to him for whom prayer is made ; death only comes to him who trusts in his own strength! Let misfortune depart, let it go to Shiburi, and Nkhabelane (2). Let him travel safely ; let him trample on his enemies ; let thorns sleep, let lions sleep ; let him drink water wherever he goes, and let that water make him happy, by the strength of this leaf (viz., of my medicinal herbs).

(1) I may mention here another religious ceremony which is also called a nhamba, 135
though I am not sure that a regular prayer is offered. It is the *Offering of a Stone.* Stones are almost totally lacking in Thongaland. But on the Swazi border, in the 823
Lebombo hills, there are porphyrous rocks, and when a Native passes a certain spot, 782
on the Eastern road, he picks up a stone, spits on it, touches both his knees with it 484
and throws it on a heap made of the stones thrown by those who passed before him. This heap of stones is called *shitlhone.* This rite is said to be performed in order to call a blessing on the journey ; thus the traveller will find a favourable reception in the villages and be given plenty of food. This custom is wide-spread in many other tribes.

(2) The extremity of the land (Comp. I, p. 55).

782 To these words is generally added an invocation to the medicine-
756 man's gods, who are entreated to bless the drugs they have given
to their descendant, and to join with the traveller's gods in order
484 to insure his success in this undertaking. The decoction is then used to wash the body of the young man. He will pay the fee on his return home.

224 *Offerings of Hunters.* This is called *byalwa bya ngenge*; the beer
782 of ngenge. This beer is made of maize grains which have been crushed but not softened by long steeping in water, as is generally
273 done in brewing ; they are then reduced to flour ; some water is poured on this and it is offered in that form by the head hunter, all his companions standing near him. They must start at once ; there is therefore no time to brew proper beer.

484 *Offerings of Travellers.* These also have their particular mhamba,
782 which is called *Lehika*. It consists of water alone which the officiant takes in his mouth and spits out, saying : "*Pff*!" (amongst the Hlengwes : "*Phaaa*"). "My ancestor-gods! May I find no difficulty
578 on my road, etc." This *water offering* is also made by a headman
782 whose village is troubled by endless disputes. The way of bringing them to an end is not clear. So he entreats his gods to "open the road, pfula ndlela," so that all hearts may be relieved. This will help him to "herd his village, ku byisa muti." The idea of finding a road clearly accounts for the fact that this offering is made under two sets of circumstances so different from one another. Why water is used to attain this end I do not know.

The offerings hitherto described bear a more or less individual character. Let us now consider those which are in direct relation to the life of the family.

782 *Regular Family Sacrifices.* We have seen these performed in
842 connection with the most important events in life. At the *weaning* (I. p. 58, this might however be termed a medical sacrifice), *on the marriage day*, either publicly, as amongst the Ronga clans (I. p. 110), or privately, by the bride's father alone, as is the custom amongst the Nkunas (I. p. 118). The gods are entreated to give the newly married woman "timbeleko," births, i. e., children, as it seems that the power of begetting depends directly
000 on the gods. Regular acts of worship are performed also at the

Regular acts of worship are performed also at the *burial* (I. p. 142), at the *crushing of the hut* (I. p. 158-163), on the 782
days of *mahloko* (I. p. 215), and at the *adjudication of the inheritance* 765
(I. p. 208). 262

I have already mentioned the stringent taboo in regard to the victims killed in these sacrifices. The portions distributed amongst the different relations must not be eaten either in the village of the deceased, or in those of the various visitors. This meat must be roasted on the road, and eaten on the spot, and it is likewise taboo to season it in any way. The inhabitants of the deceased's village can eat the meat boiled, but it is prohibited to add ground-nuts to the broth.

These are the great family sacrifices, in which the uterine 782
nephews play their curious part, and on the occasion of which family matters are brought up and settled. They play a most important part in the life of the family, and I have therefore described them at length, when treating of the social life of the tribe, as religion and social life are here intimately united. There is therefore no need for me to add much more regarding them here. With their clearly established and typical ritual they form the most definite and settled element of the religious life of the tribe.

Rangane asserts that another offering is regularly performed in the Maluleke district. On the first occasion of the *cooking of the new mealies*, each headman prepares a little of the flour, takes a spoonful of it, and throws it away, praying at the same time to the Ba-Nyai spirits, i. e., the gods of the Ba-Nyai, who have been conquered by the Malulekes. He calls this "magandjelo ya ku ñwantseka," i. e., "sacrifice tasted and thrown away." This is evidently to propitiate the gods, who were the first owners of the country and who might harm or destroy the invaders. Compare p. 377 the respect shown by Mahazule to the Libombo sacred wood, and also the curious request of the Samaritans, II Kings. XVII.

Special Family Sacrifices. By these, I mean particularly those 782
offered *in cases of disease*. The bones having revealed that the 755
disease is caused by the gods (and not by wizards, nor by Heaven, nor by contamination, which are three other possibilities), and also that it comes from such and such a god, a god of bitterness, or a god

782 of the paternal or the maternal line, now indicate the nature of
755 the offering which must be made, the place, and sometimes even the person who must make it. Here is the detailed description, given by Viguet, of a sacrifice made for a ntukulu, a uterine nephew, who is ill : — "Suppose," says Viguet, "that I am the sick child. The bones have said that an offering must be made to the gods of our *bakokwana* (mother's family) ; so we go to our maternal relatives, to my *malume*, and ask him to perform the sacrifice. The offering may consist of a hen or an ornament like a bracelet. If it is a hen, my malume will kill it in accordance with the ceremonial rite, take a few of the feathers of the neck, which have been soiled by the blood, put them to his mouth, and spit on them, making *tsu* (the blood of the victim thus mingles with the saliva of the priest), and say (bulabulela) :

You, our gods, and you so and so, here is our mhamba (offering)! Bless this child, and make him live and grow ; make him rich, so that when we visit him, he may be able to kill an ox for us... You are useless, you gods ; you only give us trouble! For, although we give you offerings, you do not listen to us! We are deprived of everything! You, so and so (naming the god, to whom the offering must be addressed in accordance with the decree pronounced by the bones, i. e., the god who was angry, and who induced the other gods to come and do harm to the village, by making the child ill), you are full of hatred! You do not enrich us! All those who succeed, do so by the help of their gods! — Now we have made you this gift! Call your ancestors so and so ; call also the gods of this sick boy's father, because his father's people did not steal his mother : these people, of such and such a clan, came in the daylight (to lobola the mother). So come here to the altar! Eat and distribute amongst yourselves our ox (the hen!) according to your wisdom.

Then the priest takes a feather from one of the wings, a claw of the left foot and the beak, and after tying them together, attaches them to the left wrist or left ankle of the child, or to his neck, passing the string over the shoulder and under the left arm ; (all is on the left side, because it is an offering to the gods of the mother's family ; it would be on the right side if it were to the

gods of the father). These parts of the victim are called *psirungulo*, the religious amulet. 782 755

When the offering consists of a bracelet, the bones having so ordered, the priest will pour consecrated beer over it, and say his prayer. The bracelet will then be fastened to the child's foot. He may not remove it, nor exchange it for anything else: it belongs to the gods.

This description, given by Viguet, is typical of sacrifices offered in the case of disease. In the Maluleke clan the sacrifice made for a sick person is as follows. The headman takes beer, which has been specially prepared for the gods and is very much diluted, the beer called *byala bosila*, and a twig of male nkanye. He orders the patient to sit near the altar, and after dipping the twig into the beer, sucks it and says the following words:

Phaa! (this word corresponds to tsu): this is byala bosila, you Makhima! Take it and convey it to your father Mashakadzi; call each other and come here together to drink! Let all disease depart! Heal this man!

I must also mention the sacrifice performed in the curious ceremony of *dlaya shilongo*, in the case of marriage between near relatives (I. p. 258), and will now proceed to describe two others, viz., the sacrifice on behalf of the son who has just returned from Johannesburg, and the sacrifice of reconciliation.

When a young man, who has been absent from home for a long time, *returns to his village*, he cannot be received again into the community without special precautions being taken. If there has been a death in the kraal he must be purified from the collective contamination before eating the food of the village. This is the luma milomo (I. p. 146), and is connected with the defilement from death. Some of the provisions of the deceased, kept in a pot and diluted with hot water, must be poured between his two great toes, and he must afterwards rub them together. But, before this, a religious act is performed. Before the boy, who is on the return journey, is allowed to enter his native village, he has to stay for a short time just outside, while his father, seated at the main entrance, cuts open the neck of a hen, which he has 782 783 484

782 previously selected, and throws it on the boy's luggage. The
783 victim leaps about (phuphumela) in its agony. The officiant then
484 plucks out some of the bloodstained feathers, pronounces the tsu, and says :

> Here is your son. He has returned home safely, because you have accompanied him! Perhaps he has brought back pounds sterling with him to lobola. Perhaps he will now take a wife! I do not know. The great thing is that he is healthy, and you have brought him back safely.

782 *The Offering of Reconciliation.* One of the most curious of
578 the religious acts performed in connection with the family is
593 called *ku hahlela madjieta*, viz., to perform a sacramental act in connection with the madjieta. *Djieta* (dji-ma) means a *rash oath*, or an oath *with imprecation*. If two brothers quarrel, and the younger believing himself to be the injured one, breaks off all connection with his brother, he may say to the latter in his anger : "Never will I speak to you again, or come any more to your village!" This is a djieta. To give greater weight to the imprecation, the angry brother will put his nail beneath one of his incisor teeth, push it from within outwards and say : "U ta kota u *ñwoo* psi nga yentshekanga!" This probably means : "May you die if this does not happen," viz. if I do not keep my oath. Or he will pinch up the skin below his eye, and pull it out, saying : "U ta kota wao *hum*!" (Same meaning). The two men may remain for years without the slightest intercourse with each other. But if a serious disease should break out in the village of the younger, and the bones order him to make an offering, he is at once in a difficulty. He has no right to present it himself, for, according to the great law of priesthood in ancestrolatry, it is his elder brother who must do it for him. The bones, on being again consulted, give the response : — "There is something in the way. You two have tied a knot. Untie it first, then offer the sacrifice." The younger brother will then go to the elder, and say : "I have sinned in swearing that I would never come again to your village. Let us hahlela djieta, i. e., accomplish the sacrificial act, which will

cancel the rash oath (1). The elder will scold him severely, but will eventually accept his excuses. This meeting for confession and reconciliation is called ku hahlela madjieta, even if no other act, no *tsu*, or prayer, is performed. — The reconciliation may, however, be celebrated in a more solemn manner by a ceremony, which is attended by the elder members of the family. The brother who pronounced the imprecation prepares a decoction of a special herb, called mudahomu, and pours it into a sala shell. Everyone assembles on the square, and the two former enemies sit in the midst, on the bare ground. The offender raises the shell to his lips, sips the decoction, spits it out with the customary tsu, and says : "This is our djieta. We pronounced it, because our hearts were bitter. To-day it must come to an end. It is right that we make peace." The other brother, the offended one, then takes the shell, and after going through the same rite of the tsu, says : "I was justly angry, because it was he who first offended me! But let it be ended to-day ; let us eat out of the same spoon, drink out of the same cup, and be friends again." Then he breaks the shell, and they drink and enjoy themselves together.

782 578 593

In the Northern clans this offering is called *byalwa bya huwa, the beer of noise* (on account of the noise made by those who quarelled). It is considered as necessary, not only to reconcile the estranged brothers, but as a protection against wizards. Wizards might be encouraged to bewitch these men, thinking that, if one of them met with misfortune, people would say that his brother had cast a spell over him ; the wizards would then have an opportunity of killing him without fear of being discovered! The offering consists of *many sorts of cereals*, mealies, millet, sorgho taken from the granaries of all those who have fought ; two handfuls of the

[754]

(1) See also my article on "The Sacrifice of Reconciliation" amongst the Ba-Ronga (*South African Journal of Science*, February 1911). The djieta is any rash oath, and not only one pronounced against a brother. If a man swears that he will never enter a pool again (because he has been stung), or a river (because he has been followed by a crocodile), it is likewise a *djieta*. Should he find it necessary to enter this lake or this river again, he must first hahlela djieta, i. e. cancel his oath by a sacramental act. This is not necessarily a prayer to his gods, but only an invocation addressed to the imprecation itself: "You djieta, I said I would enter this lake no more, but I want to *tjeka* (p. 86) and to eat fish! Don't cause me to suffer for it." Then he takes some water in his hands, and throws it into the pool.

578 grains are brought to the altar and thrown on to it and the brothers
782 who wish to be reconciled recount their grievances. The offering,
593 though called beer of noise, is not really beer at all, (the cereals offered are not ground nor cooked). However, as my informant said, it is truly beer, as these raw cereals *represent* beer. Natives do not think that they have said anything contradictory in expressing themselves in this way! Notice the fact that these cereals are collected from all the granaries (Tembe). In the same manner the members of the whole family must be reconciled.

782 The same offering is resorted to in *cases of protracted births*
846 (I. p. 40) when it is known that the woman in labour lived on bad terms with another woman. The latter will be called ; she will
578 take a little water in her mouth and spit it out against the hypogastrium of the other, saying *phaa* with the following words : "The angry words which we have spoken must come to an end. May you find help. (Lepsi hi nga bulabula psi fanele ku hela, u pfuneka)". This prayer will not be accompanied by an invocation of the ancestor-gods of either of these women. A similar ceremony is performed when the bones have revealed that delay in parturition or in the child's taking the maternal breast is due to the *bitterness* of its parents in their previous relations. The diviner will tell the father "Hahlela shibiti, make an offering on account of bitterness." This will be performed in the hut. The father will come, and without putting anything into his mouth he will say *tsu* and add the following words : "Let her give birth to the child! What I had (in my heart) I have left! Let us be united again. (A a beleke! Lepsi ndji nga na psu ndji psi tjikile! Hi tlhangana kambe)." In this case the offering is also called an offering of bitterness, though it is very different from the one previously described under that name.

782 *Offering of "the Big millet" (mabele makuku).* The millet (mabele or ñwahuba) is the smallest of the cereals cultivated by the Thongas ; this offering, however, is called "big" on account of its importance and its character. It is a true *thanksgiving offering*. When the family has special cause for rejoicing, for instance if there has been serious illness and the patient has recovered, all its members are called together for the offering of the "big millet."

Let us remember that this cereal is probably the most ancient known to the Thongas. If a daughter is living far away at her husband's home, she must come and bring him with her, because an ox will be killed, if possible, or at any rate a goat. A preliminary ceremony is performed to announce (hlehleleta) to the ancestor-gods that an ox is prepared for them. If the cause of the rejoicing is the safe return of a son who has been absent for a long time, working at Kimberley, for instance, his gun is brought to the altar and also the living ox, and the officiant thanks his gods by offering "byala bosila, ground beer". (See later). When the true beer is brewed, i. e. some days later, the second ceremony takes place, all being present ; the ox is killed, and the offering of the animal and of the millet beer is made, the *psanyi* of the victim being poured on to the altar, and also a little of the beer. During the prayer of thanksgiving the women shout their mikulungwana after each sentence of which they particularly approve. This is one of the rare offerings not dictated by fear or misfortune. 782

Before passing to the next topic, the National Offerings, I wish to quote a graphic description of a religious ceremony performed near the Shiluvane Mission Station by the Makaringe family, and attended by 200 members of this sub-clan. These Makaringes live amongst the Nkunas, but belong to the clan of Ba-ka- Baloyi, settled near the confluence of the Olifant and the Limpopo. I owe this description to the Rev. A. Jaques, together with the photograph which accompanies it. I do not know to what category this offering belongs. No particularly sad event had happened to account for it, so that it is quite possible that it was also a thanksgiving offering. I will let the Rev. A. Jaques describe the event :

"In January 1924 I had the opportunity of attending a sacrifice of the Makaringes. The ceremony took place on the graves of their ancestors, on the hill which is at the foot of the Marobunye mountain. Those present numbered about 200.

A first libation of beer was made on the spot where the old men knew the graves to be. The chief of the clan, the old induna Mugwaleni, officiated. Squatting on his heels, he held in his hands the twig of a female nkanye ; this he put into his mouth and spat twice, producing the sacramental sound tsu. Then he poured out some beer, invoking the

782 ancestor-gods. All the members of the clan squatting in a circle round him clapped their hands in cadence, the palms slightly curved, in such a way that the clapping produces a hollow noise. This is the respectful manner of saluting the bakoñwana, the wife's parents and the mpselekulobye, (a term which designates the father and mother of a son-in-law or of a daughter-in-law). This way of saluting intimates the respect shown to the ancestors.

Then the victim (in this case a cow) was killed. A young man tried to

Photo A. Jaques.

The sacrifice offered by the Makaringe family to its ancestor-gods in Shiluvane (January 1924).

pierce its heart with an assegai. (Curiously enough I have observed that the Thongas always stab the animal on the right side.) But on this occasion the ill-directed weapon struck the breast plate, and the badly-tempered iron was bent aside. It was a painful sight, but happily somebody knocked the animal down with an axe.

When it had been cut open, the second sacrifice took place. Someone brought on a plate the portion reserved for the spirits, consisting of a piece of the ear, of the tongue, of the forelegs, of one of the hindlegs, of the heart, of the liver, of the bowels and all the grass contained in the first stomach.

The circle is again formed and those present take up the same positions. Mugwaleni seizes each of the portions one after the other and places them on the ground, addressing himself to the dead; he calls them by their names, speaking to them in a familiar manner and begs for

782 their protection : "May the harvest be plentiful ; may the cattle multiply ; may all our wives become pregnant." He uses by preference negative expressions : "Be not angry against us ; may the cows not slip their calves ; may our wives have no miscarriages, etc." In the meantime the people continue the same clapping of hands (called ku diya or ku losa gupsi, gupsi expressing exactly the hollow sound produced by the curved hands).

Notwithstanding this ritual clapping of hands, not much respect is shown by those present. They chat and joke whilst the chief of the clan is praying. A little tobacco has been spread as a libation on the graves and all help themselves to it. The influence of European ideas can be noticed ; a man cries : "Take off your hats!" and most of the men obey, showing that they are conscious that this is a religious ceremony worthy of respect.

As soon as the ceremony is over, they begin to dance. Immediately the clapping changes. It is now done with the hands held flat. It is chiefly the women, especially the old ones, who dance. Gabaze, the principal wife of the Nkuna chief Muhlaba, who is a Makaringe, the sister of Mugwaleni, makes herself conspicuous by her contortions. These are the ordinary dances.

They eat the roasted meat ; they drink the beer brought by the women. The portions offered to the manes are eaten as well as the rest, and I did not observe that they were reserved to special persons. The skin of the victim is cut into small strips which the men tie round the right wrist, the women round the left."

b) *National Offerings.*

782 These are those offered at the capital, to the ancestors of the
769 chief, but on behalf of the whole clan, because the gods of the
796 reigning family have control over the clan, just as the chief has
554 over the families of his subjects.

The regular national offering is the *luma* of the first fruits, their consecration, which I have described at length as one of the principal manifestations of the National life (I. p. 396-406). The Bantu conception of hierarchy is clearly illustrated by this custom : the gods must be the first to enjoy the produce of the new year, then the chief, the sub-chiefs, the counsellors, the

782 headmen, then the younger brothers in order of age. There
769 is a stringent taboo directed against the person who precedes
796 his superiors in the enjoyment of the first fruits, this law being
554 applicable to Kafir corn or bukanye in certain clans, and also to sorghum, pumpkin leaves and beer, etc., in others (1).

834 The sexual taboo is also enforced. Those who contravene this
782 law are said to "destroy the efficacity of the offering, nyumbisa mhamba." At the Ngoni Court, where sexual excesses were prevalent (see I. Annotatio 14) it is said that the chiefs used to remain continent for a fortnight at the time of luma. The reason of this taboo is probably the fact that the luma signifies the entering upon a new year, a new season, and is thus a rite of passage.

782 The religious meaning of the rite is clear : the gods, if deprived of the right they possess by virtue of their hierarchical position, would avenge themselves by threatening the harvest ; so they must be given their share first.

In the Maluleke clan, in which the customs seem to have been influenced by the Ba-Nyai, there is also a regular offering at the capital, when *the crops are still growing*. Rangane describes it as follows : "When the chief sees that the Kafir corn is threatened by the vermin in the fields, he says : "Perhaps the masters of the country (i. e. my ancestors who are dead) are angry ; perhaps I have not worshipped them fittingly." He summons the sons of the royal family (mangalakana) from all parts of the country, prepares beer, and selects a goat for the sacrifice ; they assemble around the graves with the sons and the uterine nephews, where they worship, and then, after eating all that is to be eaten, they return."

The special national offerings are those in connection with rain. If the rain falls at the right season, the sacrifice will not be made ; but should it fail to do so, the whole ritual will be gone through. This sacrifice for rain, is, as has already been mentioned (p. 318) called *phokolo* amongst the Bilen clans, and is performed in the

(1) Amongst the Malulekes a *second luma* is necessary after harvest, when brewing the first beer. It seems that the sub-chiefs or even headmen, settled in districts far away from the capital, can obtain a special license to perform the luma ceremony on their own account, but they must first apply for this permission, and after having finished, they must forward the chief's share to him.

following way. The bones are consulted, and a special pot, called 782
phokolo, is buried just below the surface of the ground, in the middle of a clean spot well hidden in a dense thicket of thorny shrubs. The victim, a black ram without any white spot, is brought there, and killed in accordance with the ceremonial rites. The grass of the paunch is squeezed over the pot, so that the green liquid drips into it, and the blood is spread all over the ground. Four furrows have been dug in the form of a cross with the pot as a centre, and pointing towards the four cardinal points. Little girls ("who are not yet wise," i. e. they are not yet informed regarding sexual matters) are sent to fetch water and fill the pot until it overflows into the furrows. This being done, they go back to their mothers. The *mbelele* rite will immediately follow (p. 318). This phokolo sacrifice is the religious act in connection with ancestrolatry, the mbelele being actuated by entirely different ideas. The phokolo rite is replaced in the Nkuna clan by the official visit to the graves, accompanied by an old mourning song, and the custom of beating the mounds with sticks ; (whether to awaken the gods or to show them the dissatisfaction of the worshippers, I do not know). In many sacred woods, a living *human victim* is offered to the gods, as already mentioned (p. 383). The phokolo rite is a regular sacrifice attended with bloodshed.

In the case of war threatening the country, another offering is 721
made which is called *Mhamba ya Burena, the Offering of Valour.* 782
The general of the army chooses a thorn, a large thorn taken from a munga tree (the Accacia horrida), not a crooked one ; he sucks it without biting it, and emits his saliva saying : "Tsu! You, the ancestor-gods, so and so and so, enemies wish to take your country! Give us valour! May we stab them with this thorn, with the assegai! (Ñwi, psikwembu, man, man, man. Yimpi yi ta, yi ta teka tiko djenu! Hi nyikan burena, hi ba tlhaba hi mutwa lo, hi tlhari!)" This offering resembles the offering of the thorn made by the headman, but it has an entirely different meaning, and it is probable that the kind of thorn employed is different.

Another national act of worship, which recalls the rite of 778
the nkanye twig in funeral ceremonies, is performed with the 782
aid of the *great mhamha*, to which I have already referred

778 (I. p. 386). This is a most curious object, the mhamba par excel-
782 lence, in the Tembe and Zihlahla clans. It is so highly venerated that people fear to call it by its own name, and refer to it as hlengwe, riches. According to the description of Hlekisa, (a Tembe Native), it consists of the nails and hair of the deceased chiefs. When a chief dies, the more or less imperishable portions of his body, such as the nails and the hair of his head and beard, are carefully cut, kneaded together with the dung of the oxen which have been killed at his death, and a kind of pellet is thus made. This is bound round with thongs of hide. When another chief dies, a second pellet is made and added to the first, and so on down through centuries. The mhamba of the Tembe clan is at the present time about one foot in length, says my informant, who is a cousin of the man to whose custody this sacred relic has been committed, and who has seen it often. The guardian must be of a particularly calm temperament, and must not be given to the use of strong language, nor to intoxication. The chief gives him money or perhaps a wife, for his trouble, because of the responsibility which he has undertaken towards the country. He keeps the mhamba in a hut specially built for the purpose, at the back of his own village. Whenever he is called upon to use it for a religious purpose, he must abstain from sexual relations for a whole month. The sacrifice then performed will consist of a goat, slaughtered in the usual way, but consecrated without the ordinary tsu. The tsu is replaced by the mhamba, which the officiant will brandish in the same way as the nkanye twig (I. p. 142) in the funeral ceremony, tracing circles in the air, and invoking the gods. — This object is wrapped in great mystery. Mboza thinks that the *ntjobo* of the Nondwane, kept in the sacred hut of nyokwekulu (I. p. 386), the national medicine, was the same thing, but most people were ignorant of what it consisted. At any rate the same law applied to both : it was looked on as the greatest calamity for it to fall into the hands of enemies in time of war. When the clan is forced to seek refuge in flight, the keeper of the mhamba is the first to flee. The whole army stands between the guardian of the precious amulet of the clan and the enemy. It is more than its flag, and will not be taken until all the warriors have been killed

or dispersed. — It is said that once during the war between Tembe and Maputju, the latter succeeded in gaining possession of the mhamba ; a terrible drought ensued, for the gods of Maputju were irritated, as they were of the same family as those of Tembe (I. p. 329). Not knowing what to do with it, the Maputjus at length cut open a goat between the hind legs, and introduced the mhamba into its body. They then led the goat to the river which marks the boundary of the Tembe country, and threw it into the water. Hlekisa's grandfather, a Tembe man, who had settled in Maputju, was asked to lead the goat. — Thus the rightful owners recovered their mhamba. (Is there not a striking resemblance between this story and that of the capture of the ark of the covenant by the Philistines?) 778 782

The mhamba of the Zihlahla country used to be kept by a man named Petshela, who carried it with him from place to place, when fleeing, refusing to trust it to the care of any save his own children. Is it still in existence, since the clan was deprived of its independence? In Nondwane the national amulet was in the care of the Godhlela family, as already mentioned in I. p. 388, and this function was hereditary.

The story *of the great mhamba of the Shirindja clan* (between Nondwane and Manyisa) is even more impressive than those told about the palladium of Tembe and Zihlahla. The man who revealed these mysteries to me did so somewhat reluctantly, saying that those who give information about them may die! In this clan the mhamba consists of *the skin of the faces of the deceased chiefs.* As soon as a chief is dead, the great ñanga Manketwana removes the skin from his forehead down to his chin and spreads it on the ground, the edges being fixed down by sticks all round in order that it shall dry without shrivelling. He also cuts off the fingers. The whole is then handed over to an old woman who no longer has sexual relations, the wife of one of the sub-chiefs. She adds this skin to those of the ancient chiefs and keeps the bundle in a special hut, the hut of the mhamba, built behind the principal hut of the new chief, in which she sleeps. No one is allowed to enter it ; married men in particular must not do so ; and a woman only if the child she carries on her shoulders has not yet passed through

778 the ceremony of tying the cotton string (I. p. 56. Sexual relations
782 have been prohibited to her from the birth of her child up to the performance of this rite. She is consequently pure). The chief may penetrate into it, but only if he has abstained from intercourse with his wives for a whole week. Mankentwane himself must observe this law, otherwise the "medicine, muri" would be spoiled and lose all its virtue. (The sexual taboo, in this case, is evidently dictated by the fact that the mhamba is directly connected with military matters, as we shall see. Compare I. p. 470.) In this sacred hut the old woman constantly keeps up a fire which is maintained with the logs of a certain tree, called shibondjwane, cut by the subjects at the command of the chief. Now and again she exposes the skins to the rays of the sun in order to kill the worms which attack them. Should enemies invade the country, she escapes, carrying the bundle in a mat. If they come up with her, she at once disappears (nyumba) leaving the mat on the spot. As soon as an enemy has taken hold of it, he becomes insane ; he begins to wander about in the bush, unable to return home. When the war is over, the old woman goes to the place where she left the mhamba ; if she does not immediately find it there, her heart is not in the least troubled. The bones are thrown, and reveal where the mhamba has been put by the enemy. Two days
778 do not elapse before it is found! The great mhamba is used first
782 of all for the preparation of military expeditions. A small portion
726 of the fingers and of the faces is cut off and these pieces are mixed with the other war charms ; a pill is made and placed on a piece of broken pottery over a fire in the sacred wood. All the warriors pass by one after the other and expose their assegais, their legs, and their faces to the smoke ; finally the great ñanga puts the fire out and the army is ready to start. But the Shirindja mhamba al[illegible] plays a great part in the National religious ceremonies, as i[illegible] other clans (1).

171 (1) It is interesting to compare the Thonga *great mhamba* with two objects found amongst other Bantu tribes. The first of these is the *byiri* of the Pahuins of the French
778 Congo. This is a most powerful fetish consisting of a skull kept in a box in the huts of these people, in a dark corner; it is used as a means of obtaining wealth and of discovering wizards. In former times it is said to have been the skull of the father of the owner of the hut which had been dug up by him and smeared with drugs. In

2) The Main Elements of Ancestor Worship.

The sequence of the religious ceremonies in a typical sacrifice, like that performed at the crushing of the hut, is as follows : 769 782

1) The bones are first consulted, and reveal to what god, when, how, and by whom the sacrifice must be made.

2) The officiant, who is as a rule the eldest male member of the family, comes and presides over the sacrifice.

3) The victims are brought by those who have either been designated, or who have volunteered to provide them.

4) They are killed by the uterine nephews, the goats or sheep by piercing the heart, the hens by cutting the throat. Sometimes the face of the goat is directed to a certain point of the horizon.

5) The victim bleats, or if it is a hen, jumps about on the ground in its agony. At each thrust of the assagay, or of the

order to secure this much desired object as soon as possible, the son would go so far as to poison his father. Now, according to the testimony of Mr. F. Grébert (*Au Gabon*, p. 154), the byeri is not necessarily the skull of an ancestor. Any skull can be used, either that of a traveller found dead on the caravan route or even the skull of a man belonging to a foreign clan who has been assassinated. The byeri, whatever may be its origin, acts by its own power and no longer on account of its connection with the spirit of an ancestor. It is a true fetish, a material, magical object which is able to kill or to enrich in virtue of its own power. The Thonga mhamba is not a fetish. Its power is never dissociated from the spirits of the old chiefs whose nails, hair or faces have been used to produce it. Whatever action it may have is due to the fact that these nails, hair or faces influence the dead chiefs to whom they belonged, according to the magic principle that the part acts on the whole. The origin of the byeri is certainly ancestor-worship, but here ancestrolatry has evolved into fetichism, and I conclude from these facts that Thonga ancestrolatry is simpler, more spiritualistic and must therefore be more ancient than the present Pahuin system. 171 778

Amongst the Ba-Ganda (see Rev. J. Roscoe, *the Baganda*) there are powerful gods who have their priests and mediums, and are worshipped according to a complicated ritual, one of them being the war-god Kibuka. They have their temples, in which there is a sacred shrine placed on a stool. The shrine of Kibuka was secured and sent to the Museum of Ethnology at Cambridge, and it was found to contain, together with other objects, a bag with a human jawbone, the male organ and a decorated umbilical cord. This is a proof that the god Kibuka is an ancestor-god, whatever may be the splendour to which his worship has attained in the course of time. And here again we are in presence of what seems to be a later form of ancestrolatry, most probably evolved in consequence of the development of the social system of the Baganda. They form a nation with a powerful royal family, more than one thousand years old. With them the spirits of the dead kings hover round their jawbones, just as they are influenced by their nails, hair or faces amongst the Thongas, who would seem to be in a less advanced stage of evolution.

782 knife, the uterine nephews utter their cries of joy (1). This
769 is their way of consenting (pfumela) or answering, for they accept the offering on behalf of the gods (2). The whole crowd joins in these manifestations of joy.

6) The victim is cut open, and one limb, or small pieces of each limb, are put aside for the gods ; the half digested grass, *psanyi*, found in the intestines, especially in the *shihlakahla* stomach, is carefully put aside.

7) The priest takes a little of the psanyi mixed with the blood of the victim, puts it to his lips, emits a little saliva, and spits out the whole, pronouncing the *tsu*, this being the means of consecrating the offering, or, as we may say, despatching it to the gods.

8) He pronounces the prayer — occasionally interrupted by some member of the family, who has a complaint to make.

9) In certain cases of special misfortune, whilst praying he squeezes the green liquid contained in the psanyi over his hearers, who rub their bodies with it.

10) One of the nephews "cuts his prayer" (i. e. brings it to an end) by taking in his mouth a little of the consecrated beer or wine, or part of the hen's gizzard.

11) The uterine nephews steal the offering and run away, followed by the throng, who throw pellets of psanyi at them. They eat the portion of the gods.

12) Should the offering have been made on behalf of a particular individual, the astragalus of the goat, or some portions of the hen are tied to him and worn for a time on the left or right side of the body : the left if the offering was made to the maternal ancestors, the right if it was made to the paternal gods.

Let us examine more closely some of these acts, so that we may better understand the elements of this ceremony.

(1) Amongst the Ba Nyai they clap their hands and shout: "Ndiyo!" — "all right."

782 (2) It is not necessary to add more about the part played by the uterine nephews in
604 the sacrifice, for it has been explained in detail in Vol. I, p. 269 when treating of the family system. The two great reasons for their taking such a prominent part in the religious ritual seem to be the following : 1) during the life of their maternal uncle, and also of all their mother's family, they were on very intimate terms with them, "even eating from the same piece of food, not fearing their saliva." Therefore they now eat the flesh of the victim instead of the ancestor-gods of their mother. 2) Maternal relatives have a special religious duty towards their nephews. They act as their priests

a) The Priesthood.

The Thongas have no sacerdotal caste, but, as has already been pointed out, the right of officiating in religious ceremonies is strictly confined to *the eldest brother*. All offerings must be made through him. To supplant him is a great taboo, and would entail the malediction of the gods, and even the death of the offender. There are, however, some minor offerings which anyone is allowed to make to his gods ; for instance, a lover who has been jilted, may, after having consulted the bones, give something to his god in order to obtain his aid in regaining the favour of the girl he loves. But, as a rule, no one must *hahla*, or even *gandjela*, before the death of his parents. If, after their death, their son should happen to dream of them, he must offer worship to the deceased by pouring some ground tobacco on to his wooden pillow, this being the commencement of his religious functions : "he begins to learn to gandjela" (Rangane), and, if he is the eldest, he may in course of time become the priest of the whole family. I heard, however, a man from Tembe assert that he had *hahla* when his father was still living, but in this case he had been designated by the bones. A little child may even perform the office if the bones order it ; his father will then hold him in his arms and pray in his stead. The bones often call on *women* to pronounce the prayer, especially the elder sister ; there is no anti-feminism in Thonga religion. In the *luma* ceremony, however, it must always be a man, the chief himself, who is the principal officiant. The wives of the clansmen naturally cannot take a prominent part in the offerings made for the clan, being themselves members of another clan and having their own ancestor-gods, to

782 793 593 [562]

(I. p. 268), offerings being frequently made to the gods of the mother's family through the agency of the maternal uncle. Hence the fact that uterine nephews take such a peculiar part in the ritual of the worship.

782 604

I must add that according to information just received from the Rev. A. Jaques, in the Northern clans uterine nephews do not steal the portion of the offerings put apart for the ancestor-gods. It seems that this custom, which I believe to be ancient, is met with essentially amongst the Ronga clans, where the special term *mupsyana* (an old Bantu word corresponding to *um-tshana* in Xosa and *mochana* in Sutho) has also been preserved to designate the uterine nephew, whilst it has fallen into disuse in the Northern clans. (Compare I. p. 162, 232, 498.)

782 whom they sometimes pray in the hut (See App. IV). Amongst
593 Thongas the wife does not adopt the gods of her husband's
793 family (1).

The beginnings of the *constitution of a sacerdotal caste* may be seen in the fact that in each clan, the mhamba, the sacred object used by the royal family to invoke its gods, or the drug on which national invulnerability depends, is entrusted to the care of a certain man, whose office is hereditary. As soon as the political tie becomes stronger, and the power of the paramount chief greater, the religious acts which are performed at the capital gain in importance, and the person who officiates becomes a kind of high priest. Should this evolution continue, it is easy to see how a sacerdotal class may be formed at the expense of the primitive family worship, which thus increasingly loses its importance. Amongst the Thongas this has not yet taken place, and their religious system seems to correspond to a very ancient state of things ; it is in all probability the pure form of primitive Ancestrolatry.

b) The Thonga Conception of the Offerings.

782 With the help of new information obtained since writing the
778 first edition of this book, I think it now possible to attain to a fuller
789 understanding of the meaning of this great Thonga word *mhamba* which I have translated either by offering or by sacrifice, in connection with the killing of a victim. Under this designation come objects of two distinct categories : articles of food, clothing, etc. which are of immediate service to human existence and which are *given* to the ancestor-gods, and magic or magico-religious objects which are not given but only employed in the act of worship. The aim is the same, whatever may be the nature of the object, viz. to obtain the favour and help of the ancestor-gods, but in the first case the officiant adresses himself to living, conscious

(1) There seems to be a profound difference between Thongas and Suthos on this point. The Rev. P. Ramseyer assured me on very good evidence that in Basutoland "a wife takes the family name (seboko) of her husband and abandons her *midimo*." The midimo, says my informant, are not only the *badimo* proper, i. e. the ancestor-gods, but all the supernatural powers in which a given clan trusts, the totem, the spirit (moea) of hail, of rain, of lightning, of disease. A Sutho woman can become a Tebele by marriage, though this seldom actually happens.

spirits, endowed with intelligence, feelings and will, and tries to induce them to respond to his needs, whilst, in the second case he trusts that his offering will act on them magically, i. e. automatically, according to the principles of magic explained above. Let us consider these two kinds of mhamba more closely.

1) *The gifts.* As regards their nature these are indeed most varied, consisting in the first place of *domestic animals*, the ox, goat, fowl, which are only used by subjects, the sheep being the offering proper to the chief (p. 50). Pigs are not accepted for the altar, neither are antelopes, or other kinds of game. I have never heard of any offering consisting of the flesh of wild beasts. The victim is generally killed, but there are cases of its being consecrated *living*. If a living hen or goat is given to the gods, (a ring sometimes being attached to the leg of the fowl), it is taboo henceforth to kill or sell it; if it dies, it must not be eaten, and it must also be replaced by another (1). Another kind of living offering is the *human sacrifice* made in certain sacred woods in order to obtain rain, but this is rarely resorted to. "The victim wanders about in the forest till he dies," says Mbora; "the gods take him."

The most common kind of offering is *the produce of the fields*, chiefly the Kafir Corn in the official luma, but also other cereals, sorghum maize, likoro (p. 11), various kinds of pumpkins. Ground nuts are never offered. But the ancestor-gods appreciate drinks, not only the national beer, but also the wine of the Whites. They like narcotics as well as intoxicants, and tobacco is one of the gifts most frequently made to them.

Clothing, especially handkerchiefs of various designs (these designs being often prescribed by the bones) is often offered, even ornaments, e. g. the bracelet in the sacrifice for the uterine nephew (p. 396); but it is the sick boy who wears it, probably instead of the gods.

Lastly one sometimes finds on the graves "wealth, hlengwe,"

(1) I have heard of two cases of a *living human offering* in the Bilen and Manyiss regions. A girl had been consecrated to the ancestor-gods; she was therefore a mhamba. In the first case a goat had been given to them also, as a living mhamba. The girl died, and the goat ought to have been burnt together with all her belongings, but her parents presented it to Christian Natives, who were free from the fear of the ancestor-gods.

782 elephants' tusks or hippopotamus teeth. (Nkolele). I never heard of any money being consecrated to the ancestor-gods, but generally speaking it may be said that most of the things which rejoice the heart of a human being may be placed on the altar and employed to win the favour of the ancestral spirits.

But what is *the actual value of these gifts*? All things considered, it must be confessed that it is very small. The sacrificing Jew made a burnt offering : he burnt the victim in order that Jehovah might be gratified with the smoke of the roasting flesh, which ascended to heaven! Nothing of this sort is met with amongst the Thongas. When the offering is a living one, there is actually a certain element of self-denial, in that the sacrificer renounces the possibility of eating it or selling it ; but the bones rarely order such offerings. Generally the offerings cost nothing. Thongas present their gods with a goat, but they eat it themselves. From each limb a small piece is cut ; this is enough for the gods, and the uterine nephews will steal even that. If the bones have ordered the sacrifice of an ox, it may happen that the officiating headman, having none to offer, will go to one of his neighbours who possesses an old, dry oxhide, and cut a small piece from it; this will serve as his ox. As for fowls, a feather or the bones are placed on the altar, but the meat is eaten by the people ; only, whether it be a fowl or a goat which is sacrificed, the animal must be in perfect condition ; it is not stated if this is in honour of the gods or for the satisfaction of the eaters. The same thing happens with regard to cereals. The bones frequently prescribe a mhamba called *byala bosila*. What is this? It is prepared as follows. The officiant takes a handful of maize grains and softens them by steeping them for a time in water. Then he stirs the mixture, takes a little in his mouth and exits his tsu. He may even content himself with the scum produced by this stirring. Nobody would eat byala bosila nor dare to offer it to a visitor. The particles of bran which remain in the sieve when beer is brewed are also quite good enough for the gods. But observe, said my informant, that thus no one, not even the poorest, will ever want for a mhamba to offer to his gods.

How is this to be explained? Mboza assured me that it was done to *deceive* (kanganyisa) the spirits of the ancestors, as if they

were still the wretched old people from whom the grandchildren used to steal their food (I. p. 132). But I doubt the truth of this explanation. The valueless nature of the offerings is rather due to the fact that Natives know perfectly well that the gods neither eat nor take what is offered to them, and that it is devoured by the fowls running about the place. When telling the story of the theophany described on p. 384, the old priest Nkolele made the following remark : "Even if one only kills a chicken, the god is quite content, for, to him, it has the same value as an ox." This seems to be the true explanation. The gods do not ask for real food, or wealth ; they only regard the "mhamba" as a token of love from their descendants, and a sign that these have not forgotten them, but will do their duty towards them (1). If this be the case, the offerings, which have little material worth, acquire a real religious or spiritual value. But it must be confessed that, although this may really have been the original idea, the chief anxiety of the worshippers now-a-days is to observe exactly the details of the *prescribed ritual*. This is what makes an offering acceptable, and not the disposition of the heart towards the gods.... It is possible that an offering may be refused by the gods. A worshipper may be "overcome" by his mhamba, and will then return home shivering, having only increased the anger of the spirits. Therefore, let the rules of the ritual be well observed, and especially the indications of the divinatory bones.

Some features of this ritual are most interesting, especially the *fsu* so often mentioned, by which the offering is consecrated. What does it mean? The Natives themselves are unable to explain it, so we are reduced to mere supposition. It consists in an emission of saliva, generally mixed with something from the victim : some of the short feathers of the neck soiled with blood, in the case of a fowl, or a little psanyi also kneaded with blood, in that of a goat. But in the offering of bitterness (p. 391) there is

(1) In Chinese Ancestrolatry the same thing occurs. Worshippers do not offer their ancestors real money, etc., but paper representations, which they burn for the ancestors, thinking that the spirits of the various articles will enter the other world, and be accepted by the spirits of the deceased. Probably Bantu worshippers are unconsciously influenced by a similar idea.

782 merely saliva ; this, however, is a true "hahla," and this fact shows that the saliva is a gift, the *personal gift of the worshipper*. He first gives his gods something emanating from himself, mingling it with the blood or psanyi of the victim, and only then does he approach them. So there seems to be a deep meaning underlying this sacramental act, though most of the worshippers are not aware of it (a circumstance which unhappily occurs in all religions) ; though unconscious, it exists and has given rise to the rite ; the gift of oneself is necessary to obtain the favour of the Divinity. — What is the intention in adding the blood and psanyi? Is there any meaning in the *choice of the blood* which is mixed with saliva in order to despatch the offering to the gods (sungulisa mhamba)? Is the blood (ngati) regarded as containing the life of the animal, as was the case amongst the Jews, who used it in sacrifices "to cover the soul" or the sins of the worshipper (hence the idea of atonement)? There is no sign of a similar conception among the Thongas. It is true that they prefer to resort to sacrifices with blood in cases of misfortune, disease and death, when some idea of guilt may be entertained. The moral element, however, if it ever really existed, has entirely disappeared from the actual horizon of ancestrolatry.

782 783 On the other hand, the use of the *psanyi*, the half digested grass found in the shihlakahla stomach, is easier to explain. It is evidently a means of purification for the family, if not exactly from sin, at least from misfortune (khombo) ; hence their custom of washing their bodies with the green liquid extracted from it, a religious ceremony which to us seems very disgusting, but to the Natives quite clean, their ideas about dung being very different from ours (p. 38). A large ball of psanyi is put on the head of the bride after the dlaya shilongo ceremony (I. p. 257) in order to remove the dangers of consanguineous marriage, and so make it easier for her to have children. Pellets of this substance are thrown too at the uterine nephews, when they run away after stealing the offering (I. p. 162) ; or on to the roof of the deceased's hut, when this is officially closed, with the aim of removing the danger of death ; the slaughtered goat has thus to contribute to the restoration of peace and happiness to the family.

No special use is made of the *bones* of the victim, except, as we shall see later, in offerings on behalf of those possessed. The only part kept is the *astragalus*, or the *psirungulo* just described, which are tied to the person on whose behalf the sacrifice has been made, probably to insure for him a permanent blessing from the gods. 782 777

It must be observed that the sacrificial ritual, as well as the medical art, lays great stress on the *sex* of the offerings. As a rule, there must be opposition between the sex of the victim and that of the person for whom, or to whom, the sacrifice is made. A woman is prayed for by means of a he-goat or a cock, and a man by a she-goat or a hen. 782 755 562

What is the reason of this rule? — "Psi yaka muti," says my informant. "It builds up the village." As a village can only grow and multiply by the union of the male and the female element, so in order to succeed in any pursuit it is necessary to unite both sexes. This principle is universally applied : when a girl is ill, a boy will bring her medicine, and vice-versa. The rule is also followed in another case. It may be that a mhamba has been wrongly performed and threatens to bring misfortune instead of appeasing the gods. This mhamba must consequently be "quenched, timula" "so that it may keep quiet and cool down, because it might cause annoyance and overcome them" (Mboza). This will be done by offering a mhamba of the opposite sex, which will correct the first. So if a female nkanye twig has been employed in the funeral ceremony, when the ritual ought to have been performed with a twig taken from a male stem, the ceremony will be repeated with a male twig in order to quench the first mhamba.

The last observation to be made about the gifts presented to the ancestor-gods is that the *psirungulo*, viz. the part of the victim which is tied to the person for whose sake it has been sacrificed, must be attached to the left part of the body if this person belongs to the female, to the right if to the male sex ; moreover in the sacrifices offered to maternal gods, the attachment is always done on the left side, whatever may be the sex of the person. Why is this? Because the left side belongs to the woman, the right to the man. We have seen that this is the case in the hut (I. p. 187). 782 562

782 *Shimantji* is the term used for left ; its etymology is unknown.
562 *Shinene* means right ; it also indicates nice, good, true. In this as in many other instances the male sex has arrogated to itself the better part!

782 2) *The magical objects used in worship.* First of all comes *the*
789 *great mhamba*, the nails, hair or faces of deceased chiefs. We are
778 evidently dealing here with a case of *communionist magic.* I explain in the same way the use of roots brought to light by a river which has washed away the ground (p. 387), but it may be that this is also an instance of *imitative magic* : the roots were hidden in the soil and have come to light ; in the same way the ancestor-gods have been buried in the ground and have again come forth to bless or curse their descendants. The curious astragalus bone of an antelope which had been swallowed by a hyena and found later in its stools and which Mankhelu employed to represent the gods in his divinatory set of bones, would favour this second explanation. In fact most of these objects are supposed to act in virtue of the principle of similarity : the nkanye twig, because this venerated tree will ensure respect to the person, living or dead, for whom it is used ; the piece of charcoal, because the enemy will be reduced to impotence just as the piece of wood has been consumed by fire ; the thorn employed by the general of the army, because the warriors will be able to pierce their opponents and kill them, etc. Is the number of magic objects used in this connection limited to those I have mentioned? I do not think so. It is probable that some others may be found in the various parts of the tribe. I even have proof that new objets of a magic character are still invented by worshippers who are gifted with special imaginative powers. My old friend Mankhelu was telling me the particulars of the battle of Nov. 1901, during the Sikororo war (I. p. 513), when suddenly jumping to his feet and taking a small bundle of grass, he said : "Listen! I will show you the mhamba I made when the enemy rushed on us. I took a bundle of grass like those which women use for binding their sticks, and feverishly separated the blades, saying : 'Let them fail to surround us, or decoy us!'. Then I scattered them in all directions and said : 'Let them be so dispersed, carried off and destroyed!' And this is exactly what happened.

On my return from the battle I showed all the army how I had 782
prayed." The old general's spontaneous appeal to the gods on 789
behalf of his country in its hour of supreme danger is indeed 778
worthy of notice, and also furnishes a proof that ancestor-worship is still a living force and has not become a mere matter of ritual amongst those who practise it. This prayer of the Nkuna general, this exclamation of an anguished soul in the presence of a great danger, may be regarded as *verbal magic*, as it is not expressedly addressed to the gods, and the same may be said of the formula employed to cancel an oath in the offering of reconciliation, the mention of the gods being absent in this case also. All these acts, however, are mhamba. They are in reality accomplished with the idea that the gods hear and see what is said and done and will be induced to deliver their worshippers.

The magic character of these rites is most marked in the cases of communionist magic; those which are classed under imitative magic may perhaps be more properly called *symbols*, or at least some of them (1).

Elias Libombo once came to me and said: "My brother, Klass, 787
died. He was *the mhamba of the Libombos*. Now his younger 793

(1) But what is a *symbol* in religion, and what is the difference between the symbol and the magic rite? I cannot treat this important subject here in all the necessary detail and length. Let us take only one instance. The offering of incense which took place every evening in the Temple of Jerusalem and which is also widespread in certain branches of the Christian Church is regarded as a symbol. The perfumed smoke which ascends towards heaven corresponds to the prayers of the worshippers, which are thought of as ascending to God and pleasing Him, just as the agreeable smell of incense gratifies the nostrils of the man who perceives it. But in the Hebrew religion it is not thought that incense conveys prayers to God in some actual and magical fashion. It is a symbol. Psychologically speaking this use of incense is probably to be explained in the following manner: The material representation of a religious act (or a religious truth) tends to induce in the worshipper a stronger faith in the efficacy of the act or the reality of the truth. His soul thus finds satisfaction in the performance of the symbolic act through which he feels himself brought into closer communion with his God. It is easy to understand that in the course of the religious evolution, a higher conception of God should have caused the magic act to evolve into the symbol, and that the symbol itself should be abandoned or reduced to a minimum when the idea of God has become perfectly spiritualised and communion with the Father who is in Heaven is realized without any external and intermediary means. A comparison of the great mhamba with the relics of saints or other relics used in certain religions would probably show a similar type of evolution.

Some scientists believe that religious evolution contained a *preanimistic phase*, in which the worship of spirits had not yet come into existence, and in which primitive man employed only magic means to influence the supernatural powers. This

787 brother will be so called." Nkolele, the father of these two men,
793 was the Libombo mhamba before them. This is another meaning of this great word mhamba. Klass was neither a gift made to the ancestor-gods of the Libombos, nor a magic object employed to win their favour, but he was the elder member of the family, the one who was the official and indispensable intermediary between all the Libombos and their gods. For this reason he was a mhamba. This leads me to propose the following definition of the word : *A mhamba is any object or act or even person which is used to establish a bond between the gods and their worshippers.*

Having thus analysed all the elements contained in the Thonga mhamba, we may safely conclude that its spiritual and religious value cannot be denied. Whatever place ritual may hold in the ceremonies of ancestrolatry, whatever mixture of devotional and magic elements may be found in them, the offering is not a mere external gift which appeases the gods by its material value, nor a simple means of coercion which forces them to submit to the will of the worshipper. By means of the mhamba the Thonga really aims at entering into relationship with those powerful spirits who control his life (1).

may be true, but as regards Bantus, they have long outgrown this stage. Even when they have recourse to magic processes in order to influence their ancestor-gods, these have a distinctive character, different from that of the ordinary magic which they practise when they wish to affect the impersonal forces of Nature. Everything done in order to obtain the favour of the ancestor-gods is a *mhamba*, not a *muri*, as I have already pointed out.

782 (1) Religious and magic practices are more or less mingled in Thonga ritual and it
789 is evident that the smaller the degree of magic contained in a rite, the more genuine
755 religious feeling there will be in it. I owe to my Venda informant the description of a sacrifice performed in his tribe for a sick child, where the two elements are combined to an extraordinary extent. It is called *the offering of the goat with clothes* (mbudzi ya u dzwindza).

A goat is provided. It is placed before a basin of water mixed with certain drugs and forced to drink, to drink till it is fully distended, and dies. It is then skinned and cut open. The large intestine is extracted from the body, and a part of it is cut off and stitched up at one end so as to form a kind of pouch. From each limb a bit of meat is taken, and a provision of the seeds of various cereals, brought to the spot together with drugs. All these different kinds of food are introduced into the pouch, the process of filling it being accompanied by prayers to the ancestor-god. The officiant, whilst proceeding with his task, puts seeds into the goat's intestine with one hand, and, with the other, takes other seeds and places them apart. These he will keep carefully in order to sow them later on. And continually he prays: "Eat your fill and be satisfied, and leave us some for our use." Thus the ancestor-god has been fed, well and duly stuffed. The pouch is then stitched at its other end. But now the ancestor-god must be clothed

c) *Prayers.*

The act of prayer is called *khongota* (Ro.), *khongela* (Dj.) 782
(the same word being also employed to mean "supplicate"); or *bulabulela*, to speak to, or scold the gods; *bukutjela* means a long, meandering prayer in which the officiant says the same thing over and over again. I have given twenty-two different forms of prayer when describing the manifold religious acts of the Thongas: two prayers of medicine men (I. 55, II. 393); those pronounced on the day of marriage (I. p. 111); of death, with the nkanye twig (I. p. 142); in the ceremony of crushing down the hut (I. 161); at the distribution of the widows (I. 208); at the death of a sister (I. 216); in the ceremony of killing the tie of consanguinity (I. 258); on journeys (I. p. 340. II. p. 394, 398); on offering the first fruits (I. 396); before the tjeba fishing (II. p. 87); when sneezing (II. 361); on offering tobacco at the altar (II. p. 390); for a sick nephew (II. p. 396); at the sacrifice of reconciliation (II. p. 399); at the worship of the Makaringe family (II. p. 403);

also! A strap is cut from the goat's skin and the sacrificer winds it all round the 782
pouch. Carrying the offering with him he now goes to the grave of the grandfather, digs, and lays the pouch in the earth parallel to the body beneath; he then prays again: 789
"We worship you, grandfather! And we have clothed you. This is your food. Eat and be full and be contented. And leave us food, plenty of food that we also 755
may be contented, and bless the sick child."

Let us try to analyse this rite according to the ideas of magic which we have explained, p. 369. We are dealing here with the ancestor-god complexus. A goat is provided, a gift made. This is religion. This goat has now become one of the possessions of the ancestor-god, a part of him. Henceforth the goat represents the god and an action performed upon it will be at the same time performed on the god. The goat is filled with water to quench the thirst of the god. A pouch is made of the intestine, a part of the animal which will now represent the whole, and food is introduced into it to feed the god. All these acts are instances of *communionist magic*, and the prayer which accompanies them is the religious element of the sacrifice. Some seeds are put apart to be sown later on. As they belonged to the provision made for the offering, these seeds partake of the nature of the whole of that provision; they have entered into the ancestor-god complexus; they are therefore particularly suitable for sowing, since the blessing of the powerful god will rest upon them. This is communionist magic again, whilst the filling up of the goat with water and food and the clothing its intestine with a strap may be regarded as *imitative magic*. The placing of the pouch in the grave facing the same way as the body of the ancestor once more signifies the identity of both, and the sacrificer is definitely persuaded that by all these rites he has really exercised a strong and compelling influence on his god (See my paper on "Some Features of the Religion of the Ba-Venda" *S. A. Journal of Science*, April 1921).

782 in the offering of charcoal (II. p. 391); of valour (II. p. 405); see also Mankhelu's prayers before the battle (II. p. 418), and Nkolele's invocation in the Libombo wood (II. p. 384).

Most of these prayers have an *extremely liturgical* character; all know what must be said on each occasion of regular sacrifice; the personal element is almost totally wanting. Here are the principal parts of a typical prayer.

After the consecration of the offering with the sacramental *tsu*, a kind of *dedication*, the officiant sometimes begins with the words: "Abusayi! Akhwari!", or "Ibusayi! Ikhwari!" These words mean: Gently! Smoothly! They are pronounced with a gentle intonation as if to express deep feeling. According to Mboza the worshipper wishes to say: "I am not angry with you!" "It is the *tisola* of the heathen," said the same informant. Tisola, in the Christian language of the Thongas, means to humble or condemn oneself in asking for forgiveness.

Then comes the *invocation*. If the sacrifice is on behalf of a sick person, the god to whom the offering is made, he having been designated by the bones as the cause of the misfortune, is called, and asked to bring thither all the other gods whom he had induced to aid him in punishing the patient; or the priest may call first his own father, and entreat him to go and bring his grandfather, the latter to bring his progenitor, and so on till the last named. The ancestors in the main line are then sent to call all the great-uncles, and all the deceased of collateral lines. Or, if praying for the welfare of the country, the officiant will address his remotest ancestor first, because it was he who gave the land to his descendants, and then proceed to call the son and grandson of this ancient founder of the dynasty, continuing the succession of generations until he reaches his own father. It seems as if it were desired to have as many gods as possible present at the ceremony. The gods of the father's family may also be summoned, if the sacrifice is made to the gods of the mother's (p. 396).

The *petition* follows the invocation, and this naturally differs with circumstances. At the luma sacrifice (January) the priest asks the gods to increase the produce of the fields. At the family

gatherings, after a death, the elder brother entreats the gods to bless the family, to prevent bad feeling, or strife, to give wisdom and strength to the new headman, that he may be successful in his rule over the village (1). 782

When some great misfortune is the occasion for this religious act being performed, the petition is preceded, or followed, by a regular *insulting* of the gods. There are two words used to designate this curious part of the prayer : *holobela*, or *holobisa*, to scold the gods, or *rukatela*, the actual word for "to insult." There is an instance of this strangely impertinent manner of addressing the gods in the sacrifice for the sick nephew (p. 396). These insults are generally uttered while the priest is squeezing the psanyi over the shoulders of his subordinates.

The last part of the prayer is *its sudden termination*, when one of the uterine nephews puts a portion of the victim into the officiant's mouth, thus "cutting his oration" (tjema). This is a true part of the ritual. When the victim is a hen, it is the gizzard, which has been half roasted during the long prayer, that is used for this purpose. The priest eats it, and so is the first to partake of the flesh of the offering.

Prayers to the ancestors do not show very much religious feeling, and are, at any rate, absolutely devoid of awe. Whilst 782 769

(1) *Music* plays no part in Thonga religious ritual. During the preparation of the offering those present often sing, but these songs are those which accompany the ordinary dances and bear no religious character. I only once heard of a true sacred chant. Mungomane, the distinguished dancer and musician who made his living by the exercise of his art in the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques (p. 187) told me that when he presided over the worship in his village, he used to *sing his prayer*. He gave me the words, but unfortunately not the notes. They are worth quoting : 781 533 776

"Let the meat not stick in your throats ! Eat, you chiefs, you ancestor-gods... They are coming (the oxen) ; they see me, whilst I mourn you, my father and my mother, whilst I remain outside, where I receive life from you, who are below ; I remain, I am a miserable wretch.

"The oxen are slain ! Slay the oxen ! Here they are. I mourn you. Let us eat them together, you father and mother. Give me life and give it also to my children. Let us eat these oxen which I possess, but I possess them for you. Let us not suffer from complaints of the chest here in our home.

"This is the song by which we accompany you, as you return below. Let us remain in good health."

At a given moment the uterine nephew answered by saying :

"I magnify you, my father ! You shall see me, father and mother !"

And all those present, seeing that they would have plenty of meat to eat, joined in a chorus of praise, clapping their hands.

782 sacrificing, the Natives laugh, talk in loud tones, dance, sing
769 obscene songs, even interrupt the prayer with their remarks,
781 and insult each other about family matters. The officiant himself
533 sits on the seat designated by the bones, and speaks in a monotonous manner, looking straight in front of him with utter indifference.
776 There is nothing in his demeanour which denotes fear. An exception must perhaps be made in the case of those members of the Makaringe family who clapped their hands during the prayer in the same manner as when saluting "bakonwana" (p. 402). They have as much respect for the ancestor-gods as for their relatives-in-law, and that is, indeed, saying much. I have heard that in the Maputju country people kneel down during the prayer. In Nondwane women alone kneel, whilst the men sit on their heels, the customary attitude in worship (1). If the gods were actually old people, still living, they could not be addressed with more familiarity. This leads us finally to consider in what the divinity of the ancestor-gods consists.

d) *The Divine Nature of the Ancestor-Gods.*

776 I have brought together in a preceding paragraph (p. 372-386)
769 all that the Natives say about their gods. Now let us return to them, after having studied the religious ritual, and ask : What

(1) The Ma-Lemba, that curious tribe settled amongst the Thongas and Vendas of Spelonken which has certain Semitic customs (I p. 73) are much more respectful towards their ancestor-gods. They have prayer meetings at which the old men of many families assemble together ; one of them, he who knows the ancestors best, leads the others in prayer, "quoting all their mountains" viz. all the sacred hills where the ancestors have been buried, and at the end of each sentence they all answer : "hundjiii..." When the prayer is finished, they each raise an arm and say : "Amen !" This is one of the customs borrowed by them from the Semitic populations with which they came into contact in former times. When they heard Christians pronouncing the same word to conclude their prayers, they were very much astonished. One of them told me ; "This shows that we were Christians formerly and have become back-sliders." One of their formulae when praying is as follows. "You, so and so and so, help us and enable us to reach Mudzimu." Mudzimu is the name by which they designate the Supreme Being in whom they believe and of whom they say : "All that you eat, it is Mudzimu who gives it to you !" If a child refuses to obey, they say to him : "Mudzimu will see you !" For them the ancestor-gods are but intermediaries between themselves and Mudzimu. They often call themselves Basilamusi, Moslems, and claim that there were Moslems belonging to their tribes (A ba ri ba ka hina).

756 evident consciousness of his talent and powers that he explained to me the uses of his medicines.

278 But the most distinguished medicine-man I ever met was old
756 *Mankhelu*, who may be looked upon as one of the masters of the profession in the Thonga tribe. "It is no play, what I am
789 doing! I have beaten an ox (i. e. made a present of an ox)
782 to my maternal uncle Hlomendhlen! I even gave him two oxen, and he taught me his medical art! He led me everywhere, showing me all his drugs." So Mankhelu became a regular ñanga, in addition to being a diviner, a master of the art of throwing bones, a rain-maker, a counsellor, and general of the army. His whole family shared his professional character, and helped him in his work. Every year, at the time of bukanye, the drugs had to be renewed. His wives went all over the bush to dig out the medicinal roots and to collect them in their *lihlelo* baskets (p. 123). On their return home the bones were consulted to find out who was to cut the roots in pieces (gemela). This having been done, they pounded them in their mortars ; a portion of this material was dried outside, and reduced to powder without having been cooked ; these were the *male medicines*. The other portion was roasted in pieces of broken pots, burnt until it was like charcoal, ground and made into a black powder ; these were the *female medicines*. The whole village assembled and inhaled the smoke through reeds during the operation. A goat was killed and a sacrifice performed ; the liquid contained in the *psanyi* (p. 410) was squeezed on the burning drugs to put them out ; a little bukanye beer was also used for the same purpose. In the meantime Mankhelu said "*tsu*," and addressed this prayer to his gods, and especially to the ancestor who had taught him his science :

"You! so and so! Let these drugs of yours rise (pfuka, i. e. find new strength). Let people come from the Zulus, from Mosilekatse, from Mpfumu! Let them think of our leaves (matluka, the common name for drugs). Let them bring elephant tusks, marriageable girls, etc. Let them dream of us!"

756 This operation of renewing the drugs aims at giving them
278 new strength. Mankhelu said : "We let our drugs *luma* for
787

seeing grains of Kafir corn, which are of a dark colour. Grains of 751
mealies are softened in water, pierced through and made into 755
necklaces which patients wear round their necks, whilst the spikes of Kafir corn, which are to be found in every hut fixed to the reeds of the roof as seeds for the next season, are carefully taken away and hidden somewhere in the bush during the whole time of the epidemic. Should the malignant form of small-pox develop 755
notwithstanding all these precautions, the headman will shake his 782
head and tell the parents of the patient : "Hahlani! — Make an 783
offering." But in this particular hahla no real offering will be made, and the prayer will not be addressed to the ancestor-gods. The principal words of this prayer are : "Mavuzane, dhlula!" These are Zulu expressions which correspond in Ronga to : "Mabutise, tlula!" i. e. "Questioner, pass on your way!" Who is this Questioner? It is small-pox itself, Nyedzana, which is more or less personified and looked on as a real and terrible visitor coming at given intervals to examine the country and search for sinners. The great sin which Questioner especially wishes to discover is *buloyi*, murder by witchcraft. Let the patient then confess the acts of bewitchment which he has committed, and he will be spared. If he conceals them, small-pox will kill him. Suppose that the patient so seriously ill is a grown-up woman, the wife of one of the men of the village. Her parents will first be called. The headman and all the inmates of the village will attend the meeting in the hut. "Confess your guilt!" they will all say to the woman. She may answer : "No! I am not a witch" *(A ndi noyi!)* They insist : "Do not hide anything." And under the strain of their questions she may say : "Yes! I am a walker in the night! I have eaten so-and-so! I have eaten my own child!" If the patient is a little child, his father will have to make the confession in his stead. He will take the infant in his arms and say : "Mavuzane dhlula! Questioner, pass on your way! Yes! We are baloyi. I have taught my child to eat human bodies! But we will not persist in our bad doings! Go away and leave us in peace!" (1).

(1) We have here one of the cases in which an impersonal force of Nature is treated as 782
if it were a personal being endowed with superhuman power, and invoked. The prayer

755 When the disease has run its course, and the pustules have dried
783 up, a day is appointed on which the marginal period will come to an end, and the clan return to its regular life. This return is marked by the special *Reintegration and Purification rites*, which aim at removing the defilement acquired by the disease. The main purificatory rite, that which regularly closes a marginal period, is *the smearing of all the huts* with a new layer of clay, either mixed with cow's dung or not. The old ground is for ever covered. It is a way of saying : "Behold, the former things are passed away, everything has become new." On the morning of that day, every patient must go and wash his body *on the road*, as if to pour all the filth of the disease on to it. Moreover, the ashes found in the fire-places inside the huts, the necklaces of mealie grains, the implements used by the people who have been seriously ill, sometimes their garments, the ochre with which they anointed themselves, all the things which were employed in connection with the scourge, are collected and thrown indiscriminately on to the large paths, preferably on the places where two roads cross each other, a rite which is by no means altruistic, and still less antiseptic! We shall see shortly how it is to be explained.

828 *Nervous diseases* are peculiarly feared by Natives. *Melancholia*
755 is believed to be caused by those spirits of possession which will form the subject of the next paragraph. *Idiocy* has no remedy ; nothing can be done with an idiot : "It is death! It has found him!" (Mankhelu). *Delirium* (mihahamo) is cured by *Mbulula khutla*. The patient must enter the hole from which clay is taken for smearing the huts, and is washed with a decoction of the drug when in this hole. Moreover a stick of the same tree is cut and kept in the roof of the hut, and the person who sleeps with the patient will take it every night and place it near his head. "Thus we kill delirium." (Mankhelu). — Another form of insanity is called *rihuhe*, "the disease which comes from far away with the winds" — "ri pfa timhehwen" (Mankhelu). A drug is prepared with the *shiromo* root, mixed with the lung of a sheep and the blood

782 to Small-Pox (with capital letters) may be compared with that pronounced when an imprecation has been uttered or when someone wishes to cancel his oath (p. 399).

756 Another rite, which is observed after the hondlola only, is
783 the *haza*, viz., the monthly purification of the exorcist. He
821 fills his gobo calabash with a decoction made of the roots of the mphesu and ntjebe trees, drinks the whole, tickles his throat with a feather and vomits the medicine. "A tibasisa ndjen" — "he purifies his inside." This is done at every new moon. The connection between the possessed and the moon, which was first established by the fact that he had *thwaza*[1] as well as the moon, is maintained and intensified by this rite.

2) Propitiatory rites.

751 Besides these protective drugs, the exorcised wears a necklace
756 made of little pieces of a creeper called *mayambatju*, tied together with a munganazi string. See the second necklace in the
782 illustration. This is intended *to calm his gods*, and to scatter
158 them when they desire to come upon him with violence. This is indeed a great danger ; the exorcised is liable to nervous attacks of a dangerous nature, especially during the first few weeks following the exorcism. Perhaps his song is heard in the distance. Then suddenly he is seized with madness, and furiously assaults his neighbours with the small hatchet, or the assagay used in the dances. People run away ; or, on the contrary, they collect and begin to clap their hands, and make their infuriated companion dance and sing his own song. This may help to dispel the spirits, and calm him down. Sometimes, feeling uneasy, foreseeing a crisis, the poor man himself asks them to sing. But he may also be led, in his frenzy, to the bush, far away, unconscious, quite mad, tearing his clothes and his skin with the thorns. This often happened to Ñwashinhwana. Her husband then followed her, and, when the crisis was over, saw her fall down exhausted and brought her home ; there, having returned to her senses, she became very sad and wept bitterly. So, in order to avoid being tormented, the exorcised propitiate their spirits ; they worship them, in truth, and this gives birth to *a new religion* totally different from ancestrolatry, which has its rites and its duties.

756 As already pointed out, the exorcised has *his own altar* in his
778 hut. It is the forked branch, round which a circle of raised clay
782

1 [See p. 495 -- Analyst]

is carefully maintained, and regularly smeared. He puts his 756
offerings there, principally tobacco. The snuff box is deposited 778
there. Does he want snuff? He enters the hut clapping his 782
hands, saluting his spirits, and, taking the box, throws a pinch of it at the foot of the branch, and says: "You! Ngoni, you see that I have not stolen! I first gave you your share." His wife will do the same. This is a "mhamba." — When ready to undertake a journey, he will come to the altar, sit on his ankles (a woman will kneel down) and take leave of the spirits. Holding his assagay, and his manono root, he says: "Good-bye, Ba-Ngoni! This hut is yours; keep it well! I go to such and such a place," and asks them to bless his journeying. On his return he will inform the spirits that he has succeeded in his trip. If he is sick, and the bones have revealed that the disease has been caused by the spirits, he again comes to the altar, and says: "You! Ba-Ngoni, why are you angry with me?" These acts of worship are not only performed at the altar. Wherever he may be, before drinking beer, the exorcised will pour out a little for his spirits. He will also throw a little food for them before eating. This will be *a daily worship*, much more constant and individual than the rites of ancestrolatry, a real communion with the spirits who, after having tormented the exorcist, have become his benefactors, giving him the power of healing others and thus of making money! There is much more religiosity in the exorcised than in ordinary people.

3) Development of subliminal faculties.

All these nervous crises, natural or provoked, the double 756
psychological existence which is fostered by them, the regular 158
participation in the exorcism of others, generally greatly injure 791
the mind of the exorcised; they have an extraordinary look, something wild about them, as if they were not in their right senses. They may be heard sometimes groaning, or emitting a sudden cry without any reason. This nervous instability may pass away and they may return to their normal state, but it may be that if they possess those strange mental powers, which modern psychology

832 hut and tie the bag round his neck. What remains of the *timhoroia*
783 will be used to smear the hut. Then all the girls will love him ;
783 or in the case of a girl, she will soon be asked in marriage.
584 This ceremony is a characteristic *hondlola*, the same which is performed on the weaning day (see page 59) and after any serious disease ; it is a rite of removal of impurity. (Notice the termination ola, ula, ulula in these verbs ; it means generally to undo, to take away).

832 If the love charms do not obtain the desired result, the angry
754 boy will perhaps try to avenge himself. He will take a fowl, or
262 perhaps only an egg, treat it with special drugs and give it to the girl in order to bewitch her. This kind of witchcraft is called *ku dambikela*. (See the Chapter on Witchcraft, Part VI). The girl will give birth not to a child, but to an animal, a pigeon, or a snake. Or her genitalia will be changed and take the appearance of the male organ. This is one of the causes why eggs and fowls are taboo for girls.

Let us now hear from Tobane the description of the marriage rites amongst the Mpfumo clan. We shall afterwards see how the customs differ in other Ronga and Thonga clans.

II. *Marriage ceremonies of the Mpfumo clan.*

1) The betrothal (Buta).

584 When a young man has made up his mind to get married, and when he is in possession of the necessary lobola (1) cattle, he starts, one fine day, with two or three of his friends to look for a wife in the villages. He puts on his most brilliant ornaments and his most precious skins. Here they are, arriving in the village

583 1) *Ku lobola* means to buy in marriage. *Ku lobola* (a factitive derivative of the verb) is said of a father who claims a sum of money from his daughter's suitor. *Lobolo* or *ndjobolo* or *bukwe* (wealth) is the sum paid, the oxen, the hoes, or the pounds sterling. We shall use these words, which are employed in Thonga as well as in Zulu and ought to be adopted as technical ethnographic terms. I use the verb for the act of paying and the noun for the sum itself.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

763 Some ethnographers have adopted the "embryonic explanation" to account for this custom, which is found all through primitive humanity, from the Mousterian age down to the first inhabitants of Egypt, and amongst a great many uncivilised tribes all over the earth (1). They say: "Primitive man placed the corpse in the attitude of the child before birth because he believed that death is but a new birth, the beginning of a new life..." I asked Viguet if he thought this to be the true original [843] explanation. He told me he did not know. He would not deny it. But there is one fact which prevents its acceptance; the Thongas have never done any dissection, and are ignorant of the position of the foetus in the womb. So probably are all primitive peoples. This kind of knowledge came much later in the evolution of mankind. The intention of this rite is more probably to place a dying man in the sitting position which a Thonga generally adopts when in his hut, as the grave is *but a hut in the earth* and he is meant to continue his life in it exactly as before. All the other burial rites confirm this explanation, as we shall see.

Manyibane is dead... In some districts they see that he does not die with *closed hands*. It is taboo, because then the children of the dead will quarrel (Viguet). They close his eyes and take away all his clothes. In the Mpfumo clan, they *wash the body*. Afterwards they cover him with an old rug. No one cries. Lamentations are absolutely prohibited before the burial is over; it is taboo. It would "break the back" of the men who have to perform the funeral rites.

764 761 783 Should there be *strangers* in the village when the death takes place, they will run away quickly to avoid defilement; otherwise they would have to take part in all the purifying ceremonies of the following days.

372 Without delay, the *fire* which was burning in the funeral hut is removed and carried out into the square. It must be carefully kept alight. This is a taboo. Should there be rain, it must be protected. All the inhabitants must use this fire during the next five days. It will be put out by the doctor, with sand or water, on the day of the dispersion of the mourners. He will then

(1) See my paper in *Anthropos* Sept. 1910: "Two burials at twenty thousand years distance."

764 light a new one, and everyone will take from it embers to kindle
761 his own fire in the different huts. It is one of the conditions of the purification of the village.

783 The same day young people are sent to all the relatives in
262 the neighbourhood to announce the death. Even the relations who are absent far away, in Johannesburg, must be informed; this is done in the following way. Someone takes a handful of grass, lights it and, when it is on fire, throws it in the direction of the absent one, saying: "Your brother, here, is dead. Do not fear. May your enemies (viz. your white employers) have consideration and love for you, that you may find sleep and health."

II. *The grave.*

764 The men of the village then go out to dig the grave. They choose a place behind the hut of the deceased or somewhere further off in the little forest which generally surrounds the village; or in the *ntimu*, the sacred wood, if he were one of the guardians of the forest (1), one belonging to the elder branch of the family.

First of all the diggers see that a tree is near the grave on which to hang some of the belongings of the deceased (those which will be kept but will have to be purified); they dig a hole of about six feet in length, four in width, and two and half or three deep. This first hole can be dug with ordinary hoes. Then, at the side of it, they excavate a second hole, more or less circular in form, using for this a light wooden board, generally the rim of an old basket. The sides of the hole are well smoothed by means of this instrument. In the Northern clans they sometimes smear it with mud taken from the river; they also put a reed beside the corpse, and grass, which grew in water, is spread at the bottom of the grave (2). So the grave, is in a way, double. It presents

(1) In the Southern clans the grave of the husband or the wife is dug in front of the hut in which they were living (as this hut is to be abandoned); in the case of a child, he will be buried at the side of the hut (as, in this case, the hut will not be destroyed.) The grave is surrounded by a fence made of sticks and plastered with clay. Thus people will remember where the corpse has been buried.

(2) Compare this custom with the rite of burying little children and twins in wet soil.

764 769 we may remain in peace. He did not leave us in anger. Let us mourn him gently, in peace. Let us help each other to mourn him well, even our parents-in-law from amongst whom he has taken his wife." It may be that he forgets to say something which ought to be said; then some of his hearers remind him quietly of the omission and he adds the words to his prayer.

764 *The wailing* (ku djila nkosi). As soon as he has finished praying, those present commence crying; the wailing begins. The women get to their feet and shout loudly, throwing themselves on the ground. The wife of the deceased cries more than any one else: "I remain alone in the lonely plain (libalen). Where have you gone? You have left me." The wailing generally starts on a very high note and finishes a little lower, expressing the pain of the heart in a touching, penetrating manner. Here is one of these sentences, which can hardly be called a song. I heard it in 1893 at the burial of a young woman who was found drowned in the lake of Rikatla.

O my mother! O my mother! You have left me, where have you gone?! (1)

The parents-in-law lament over their daughter, the new widow. Everyone then begins to lament over his own relations who have recently died. The brothers weep together without shouting. They say: "You have gone first. We shall soon follow you, because there is attraction in death."

It is during the mourning that pots, handles of assagais, etc. are broken over the grave.

761 Let us stop a little while at this point.

783 765 We have seen enough already to observe that, for the Thongas, death (lifu) is not only a sad event, a great cause of pain on account of the bereavement, but a dreadful contaminating power which puts all objects and people in the neighbourhood of the deceased, all his relatives, even those dwelling far away, working in Johannesburg for instance, into a state of uncleanness. This uncleanness is very dangerous indeed. It kills, if not properly treated. All are not affected in the same way. There are concentric circles round the deceased: the widows are the

(1) See for the notes of this song Part V. Ch. III. B.

765 inner circle and will undergo a very rigorous purification ; the grave
~~783~~ diggers come next ; then the inhabitants of the bereaved village, the
761 relations residing in other villages, even the relatives of the wives of the
834 deceased. All these being unclean are placed beyond the pale of
839 society : "Muti wu tjumile," "the village is dark," is the technical expression. This marginal period lasts longer for those who are most affected ; one year and more for the widows, one month for the village, five or six days only for the mourners from outside. But there are many taboos in connexion with this period. Sexual relations are severely prohibited amongst married people, but the *gangisa* is not so strongly objected to, at any rate in some districts. We shall also meet with the aggregation rites by which re-entry into the ordinary mode of life is secured. The funeral rites may last for one year and are very complex. There are three great moments in the sequence of these rites : 1) *The Great Mourning* which lasts a few days, just after the burial, generally only five days. Here the purification is essentially medical and aims at cleansing the persons and the objects which were directly in contact with the deceased. 2) *The sexual rites* which tend to purify the collective life of the village by the removal of its defilement. 3) *The family rites*, consisting in gatherings of all the relatives, and accompanied by religious ceremonies. These seem to aim at restoring the life of the family, viz. of the social group, which has been diminished by the death of one of its members.

768 This general sequence is found in all the clans. But the rites themselves differ greatly ; I shall try to depict these differences clearly. My information is more complete as regards the Ronga clans, but I owe to Viguet some entirely new and very interesting material regarding the Hlabi rites.

IV. *The Great Mourning of the first five days.*

1) The Great Mourning amongst the Ba-Ronga.

764 Just after the burial, all the inhabitants of the village go to
783 the lake or the river to bathe. The grave-diggers nibble a
[824] *ndjao*, the root of a juncus which has magical power. Special rites will then be performed for the widows. We shall describe

764 them in the next chapter. When they come back from the
783 pool, one of the men climbs on the hut and removes from its top the crown of woven grass, which was its glory during the life of its master. The hut participates in the general state of uncleanness of all his belongings. This crown will be put before the door to close it, and no one will dare to enter any more till the day of the crushing of the hut.

In the Mpfumo clans, that first evening, the grave diggers have some preliminary purification rites to go through: 1) a *hondla*, viz. an ablution with leaves of the nkuhlu tree which have been crushed in a mortar with some water; 2) in former times they used to make a pipe with the shell of a raw sala, place in it an ember and a little hen's dung, and *smoke* this disgusting mixture.

765 From that first day, the grave diggers and the widows, when
783 eating, must use special spoons *(psihanti)* made from old broken calabashes. It is taboo for them to take food with their fingers from the common plate during the five days of the Great Mourning.

The night comes. All the widows sleep in the open, their huts, which belonged to the deceased, being taboo. If it rains, they sleep in the other huts of the village.

765 On the following day, the *doctor* comes and proceeds to
755 the medical purification of the widows and of the grave-diggers. This will consist in three successive *vapour baths*, on
783 the first, third and fifth day after death. These *mahungulo* are administered in the same way as the one I have already described in connection with the infantile rites (p. 55). But the drugs boiled in the pot and the pills burnt in the fire are considered very powerful, especially those of the first day, so much so that the pot in which they have been prepared must be broken on the grave. The two grave-diggers and the first widow must be exposed together to this particularly powerful disinfectant, the widow keeping on her old clothing during the operation. The second and third bath, those provided for the other widows, are not so strong, and the pot can be kept. In the case of these the widow does not enter together with the grave-diggers. These rites, as

765 783 302

well as the obligation of using special spoons, refer only to the diggers and the widows.

Other rites must be performed by the whole community.

First the *cutting of the hair*, which must be complete for the widows and the near relations. Men sometimes cut only one strand on each side, women cut from the forehead to the nape of the neck. The operation is performed either by the doctor or by anybody who is familiar with it, and the instrument used is either an iron razor or a bit of glass. They say this shaving is an act of respect for the dead, also a sign of sadness and a means of preventing the *mayiha*, the impression of the hair standing on end from fear of death. Should mourners forget to cut their hair, they might lose their senses, and become delirious (hahama).

765 783 604

Then they put on *malopa*, viz. pieces of dark blue cotton cloth which have been used for a long time amongst the Ba-Ronga. The first widow must have them before she enters the enclosure of the second vapour bath.

A third general rite is the *luma milomo*, the purification of the food of the deceased. This is not a medicinal operation, but it seems that, by this act, every relative removes from himself the danger which is in the contaminated food. The word *luma*, which we shall often find in the Thonga ritual, means originally to bite (like a dog) or to cause violent, internal pain (colic or pains of labour). But in the ritual terminology it means to accomplish certain rites in relation to some given food in order to remove the danger which is attached to it. The *milomo* are seeds of each kind of cereal which the deceased had in his storehouses. Some beans, grains of maize, kaffir corn, kaffir peas, etc., are cooked and poured into one of the baskets (lihlelo) of the deceased. The *ntukulu*, viz. the uterine nephew, the son of the sister of the deceased, is first called. It is he who must begin the rite and this is so important that, when people go to pay their mourning visit, they always take with them a girl or a boy who is a " ntukulu " of the one they mourn. The child stands before the pot, his feet together. The master of the mourning, (in this case, the first widow) kneels before him, takes a few drops from the pot, and some of the cooked food which remains at the bottom, and pours

765 this between his great toes. He bends his body and rubs the
783 two great toes against one another. Then he turns his back to
604 the place and goes away. He must not look behind : it is taboo. Then the other relatives say : " Let us all go and *luma milomo.* " He has given them the right to do so.

765 A little of the *milomo* is carefully kept in a pot for months.
783 When relatives who were absent on the day of the death come back from Johannesburg or from elsewhere, they must perform this ceremony before entering the village and eating any food in it. " Ba yila muti " — " they are taboo to the village." The rule applies only to relatives. Other people may very well eat from the deceased's store of food without any harm, as its contamination is dangerous only to his family. Another variety of this rite consists in preparing light beer with the mealies of the dead and taking first one mouthful which must be spat out on the right side, then a second one on the left side, after which one is allowed to drink.

765 The *gardens* of the deceased must also be purified, and this is
783 done by the rite called *baninga mabele*, to give light to the mealies.
415 The widows and all the female relatives go to his fields holding an old and empty *shikutja*. The shikutja is the hard shell of a sala fruit, the size of an orange, in which has been kept the provision of vegetable *tihuhlu* fat (see Part IV) and which is still impregnated with it. The women set fire to it and walk through the gardens holding it up and illuminating the fields. This is perhaps in relation to the idea that death means darkness, and that its contamination is " black " (ntima) so long as the cleansing has not taken place.

765 During the five days of the Great Mourning, relatives and
574 friends come to pay the *official mourning visit* (1). They enter the village, the women shouting their lamentations (mikulungwana). Some one leads them to the grave and they walk round it uttering cries of mourning, taking leave of the deceased. At the burial of Sokis, I heard a woman saying with a trembling voice : " Goodbye! You have gone! Do not forget us. Remember Mulalen."

(1) This visit can be paid one, two, or three months later on, because, as they say, " nkosi a psi boli, " — " the mourning does not get rotten." But it is only during the five days that dances take place.

765 533 The other is a curious apostrophe to the wizards who were believed to have bewitched the deceased, and means : " Good bye, wizard! Good bye, wizard! You will kill people. You come to kill people, you come during the night. "

765 783 But the *closing day* arrives at last, the *day of the sprinkling* (shuba). When the grave-diggers have well perspired in their vapour bath, the doctor takes the pot in which the medicine is still boiling. All the women sit down with their children on their backs, the men stand in a line, holding their assagais and sticks in their hands. The doctor sprinkles his decoction over them all with a branch covered with leaves. The children cry because the burning drops hurt them. The women try to hide behind each other. The men gesticulate as if striking enemies with their assagais ; this is to show that their arms are strong and that they can now go to the war, as it would have been taboo for them to join the army before this purification had taken place. Should a man be absent from home, his sticks are also brought to the sprinkling to be purified (1). Then the doctor goes with his pot, sprinkling all the village, the huts, the doors, the backs of the roofs, the fence, the belongings of the deceased which are kept to be distributed amongst the heirs. After this operation, the village is pure as far as material things are concerned. The contamination which had fallen on all of them by reason of their owner's death is removed. Before the sprinkling it would have been dangerous to remove anything. Now if any one should have left anything in the kraal before the death, he can come and recover it. This is the act by which " the mourning is scattered " (hangalasa nkosi).

765 292 Visitors go home, having put on their *malopa*, if they are Ba-Ronga ; strings of milala palm leaves round their heads, their necks, arms, and legs, if they belong to Northern clans. The custom of wearing a white handkerchief round the head is spreading. If a goat is killed, every one wears a bracelet made of its skin round the wrist, and the widow and the principal grave-digger

(1) In the Northern clans, says Viguet, a little of this mixture is kept to sprinkle, visitors during the following days, because " they are taboo for the things of the village, not having been cleansed : " (ba yila pai le mutin, hikuba a ba basisiwanga.)

765 put strings, made from the same skin, over their breasts. The
292 widow adds new strings when other goats are killed during the mourning visits which will take place later on, and until the adjudication of the inheritance. It is a sign that her husband is dead (a feliwile).

2) The Great Mourning in the Northern clans.

765 The foregoing is the sequence of the rites of the Great Mourning
783 in the Ronga clans. In the Northern clans, according to Viguet, the same elements are found, but in another form.

825 As soon as the mourning lamentations begin, the grave-diggers
278 send some men to fetch the *tinyele*, which are bits of skin taken from the soles of elephants' feet. These are burnt on charcoal, together with cocks' dung, and the mourners come and inhale the smoke with reeds, when they are tired of wailing. The *tinyele* are considered to be a powerful medicine. It is taboo to eat or even to snuff before having inhaled this smoke.

765 That first night, everyone sleeps in the open, and the
783 grave-diggers are not allowed to use their mats. They must cut grass to cover them for fear that their impurity might contaminate the mats. As usual, sexual relations are suspended between married people, but the *bugango* is not taboo in the Northern clans, as girls (psigango) are not wives (basati). When, on the following days, visitors come to the mourning, they go straight to the grave with a small basket of mealies and spread them over it saying. "Go! Die! You have left us." This spreading of mealies is a *mhamba*, an offering. Then the doctor comes. It seems that his operations last only three days. There are no vapour baths properly speaking, but the doctor burns his powders together with bits of bark in broken pots, and all the mourners come and inhale the smoke through reeds, as they did on the first day.

The *purification of the food* is performed by a rite which corresponds with the *lumisa milomo* of the Rongas. The doctor

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

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783

cooks the mealie pap together with a certain drug. He prepares "bupsa bya muri," the medicinal porridge. The grave-diggers make a ball of this food, while it is still hot, and act as if they were throwing some of it into their mouths, but in reality they throw it over their shoulders. Then they put some more porridge into their mouths and eat it. The master of the mourning then takes the food and goes all over the village to perform this ceremony for all present. This is done also for the visitors arriving during the following days. Under no other condition would they be allowed to eat food in the village!

As regards the purification of the food for relatives who may come for a visit later on, after the Great Mourning, it is obtained by the rite called *mafularela*. "Fularela" means to turn one's back to another person. The day the absent one comes back to the mortuary village, the master of the mourning, the woman who has begun the *hlamba ndjaka* (see later on), takes one of the big wooden spoons which are used to distribute the porridge ; she pours water into it and puts salt into the water. Then she puts into it a glowing cinder. The water partly evaporates. She then kneels down in front of the new comer, turning her back to him, passes the spoon round her waist from left to right and afterwards gives it to him to drink; this ceremony removes the *yila* of the food. Should it not be performed the food would cause disease or even death to the returning relative.

The master of the mourning, or of the death (nwinyi wa rifu), the wife of the deceased or the grave-digger who held the head in the burial, accomplishes a second act of purification or of strengthening for all the mourners ; it is called the *nganganya*. The doctor takes a bulb of a big Lilliacea called *gonu'a* (Crinum Forbesii), crushes it, adds to it some medecine and warms it on a stone which has been heated in the fire. The operation then begins with the infants. The grave-digger covers his fingers with this substance and, standing behind the child, puts the fingers of both hands into its umbilicus and brings them round its waist, pressing them firmly against the skin until they meet again on the spine. Should a child not yet have had the string tied round his loins (boha puri, see page 56), the strap of its ntehe alone will be

765 anointed with the medicine. As regards adults, the operation of
783 *maganyo* is performed as follows ; the master of the mourning
516 passes his hand down from the knee to the toes. This rite[1] is evidently in connexion with the act of walking, which is thus purified, and with standing upright (yima), which means health and strength.

765 *Cutting the hair* is also a medicinal act amongst the Hlabis.
783 The physician takes a broken pot, pours into it water and a
302 purifying powder, washes the head of the deceased's wife with this preparation and cuts her hair with a razor. Everyone takes a little of the mixture and washes his own head, and they then shave each other. The hair is thrown away into the bush, not on the grave.

765 The Great Mourning is concluded by the *phunga*, the sprinkling,
783 corresponding to the Ronga *shuba*, which is performed exactly in
177 the same way while the water is still boiling. The doctor sprinkles
231 a whole potful on the people ; then he pours fresh water into the pot and sprinkles the doors, the back part of the kraals of the oxen and of the goats. —"How about the pigs ?" I asked Viguet. He laughed heartily! —"The pigs? They are nothing ! They have come from the White people They are so new to the country that lately the Pedis killed them outside the villages and the men only ate their flesh!" The pig has no part in the Bantu ritual!

V. *Sexual rites of purification.*

765 This is a most curious and mysterious subject and, to understand
783 it thoroughly, it is necessary to penetrate deeply into the Bantu mind and to forget our own conceptions of conjugal life. I hope
834 none of my readers will be shocked by ceremonies which are evidently performed with the greatest earnestness and are a real aspiration toward purity, purity as it is conceived by a tribe still plunged in the dim notions of collective morality.

1 [among the Northern clans --Analyst]

765 These rites are somewhat different in the Hlabi and Ronga clans.
783 They are called in the Northern clans *hlamba ndjaka*, in the
834 Southern *lahla khombo*. I will begin with the description of the first, as being the most characteristic. Viguet, who has seen them practised, and who took part in them himself, gave me a graphic description of them.

Ndjaka means two things. Firstly, the objects left by the deceased, which will pass to his heirs in the course of time. The heirs are called *badyi ba ndjaka*, the eaters of the ndjaka. But *ndjaka* also signifies the frightful malediction accompanying death : "it is something which kills a great many men." Therefore the *ndjaka* must be washed away ; *hlamba* means precisely to wash away.

This malediction or dangerous impurity contaminates objects, which must be cleansed by the sprinkling (phunga) as we have seen ; but it affects still more deeply the village as a whole, the *muti*, the organism which is at the base of all Thonga society, and which has a life of its own, a collective life. That life must be purified. During the whole mourning, and even during the last days of the deceased, when death was threatening, all sexual relations have been forbidden. Why ? Because the village was in a state of contamination... "Muti wu tjumile." It cannot return to the ordinary course of life without a special collective purification.

765 Let us see how this is managed on a particularly serious occasion,
783 when the headman or other great personage dies. Some weeks
835 after the burial, all the married people of the village assemble, the men apart, the women apart. They discuss in what order the different couples must proceed to the purifying act. They question each other to know if each one has duly observed the law of continence. Should one of them confess that he has sinned (dyoha), he will have to take the lead. Should he have sinned and not confess it, he will be very guilty. But he himself will suffer for his bad action ; he has stolen the inheritance (a yibe ndjaka), and it will not be wonderful if he begins to cough, grows thin and dies of consumption! If there has been no transgression of the law, then the master of the mourning will have to begin. He goes out of the village with his wife

765 to the bush. There they have sexual relations in the ritual
783 fashion, viz. s. n. i. (See Annotatio 2)[1] They come back by
833 separate ways. The woman has taken with her a pot full of water; she goes straight with it to a certain spot, which has been decided upon during the discussion, either in front of the main entrance of the village or at the door of the hut. There she washes her hands which contain "their impurity" (thyaka ra bona). All the other couples do the same, each woman coming in her turn to cleanse her impurity at the same place. When this is over, the men also come to this spot and stamp on the ground. Sticks belonging to absent young men, or a piece of clothing of a girl who happens to be away from home, are also brought to this spot and are purified. The same is done to the straps of the ntehe of the infant, as we have seen, but he is not allowed to be present, as it might cause his death. When the purifying act is finished in all its phases, men and women go to the river and bathe; the men higher up, the women lower down. (Annotatio 6)[2]

Such is the *hlamba ndjaka* amongst the Thongas of the North, when the life of the village has been deeply affected by the death of an important member of the community. The rite is performed with less publicity when a child dies. Then the act takes place, not outside, in the bush, but inside the hut, as it is a private mourning. Should the husband have had regular intercourse with his wife before this purification has been carried out, it is a very great sin. His wife will go and confess their fault to one of the women of the village. This woman will tell it to her husband's mother, who will have to find the remedy. The guilty husband must not eat at all... If he eats, he will have eaten the contamination of death (u mitile rifu). The *hlamba ndjaka* of the whole village will have to take place. (Annotatio 7)[1]

765 The hlamba ndjaka concerns first of all the inhabitants of the
783 mortuary village, but it sometimes extends to the parents of the
595 women of that village, who dwell, of course, in other places. If the first wife of a man dies, his second wife, the one with whom the widower has begun the purifying operation at home, will have to go to her own parents *to give them water* (ku ha mati), as they say, viz, to cleanse them. She takes with her in a pot a portion of the

1 [See p. 516 in these categories or in 116--Analyst]
2 [See p. 677 in these categories or in 116--Analyst]

765 water used for the purification, arriving early in the morning in the
783 neighbourhood of the paternal kraal, and calls her mother. Then
595 she washes her hands on the spot and all her relatives will come and stamp on the ground. This is considered a great duty which a married daughter ought never to forget, otherwise she is said to have turned her back on her parents (a ba fularelile). They will be angry with her and not visit her for at least a year (Annotatio 8).[1] The woman who has done this is called "the one who has cleansed the inheritance" (muhlantsi wa ndjaka). She has taken upon her the contamination, but she will not suffer from it, because she belongs to another family, and the contamination of death is dangerous more especially to the people who are of the same blood as the deceased. This woman will assuredly be praised and even rewarded with two hoes. When she goes to her relatives "to give them water," she will make a present of these two hoes to her father, who will say: "All right! You have cleansed those people." Then she will have the right of adorning herself with the bracelets of her deceased co-wife! Old women no longer having sexual intercourse are allowed to appropriate the old clothing of a deceased woman.

765 The Ba-Ronga do not know the expression hlamba ndjaka.
783 They have a corresponding rite, performed in the same manner,
833 which they call *lahla khombo*. *Khombo* means misfortune, *lahla*, to throw away. It is the medicine of death (muri wa lifu), said Magingi, an old heathen of Rikatla. It is also said "to heal the mourning" (daha nkosi). This rite more especially concerns the grave-diggers. The one who carried the legs of the deceased begins. The sexual relations take place very early in the morning. When his wife comes back, she washes her hands at the door of her hut, and all the inhabitants of the village come and stamp on the wet place; then they enter the hut. The doctor comes and prepares a steam bath for the man. Then the second grave-digger performs his *lahla khombo*, and the same gathering of all the members of the community takes place before his hut. Afterwards the village is pure. But if the grave-diggers are cleansed, the widows are not yet purified, and we shall see that, for them, the *lahla khombo* will last much longer.

1 [See p. 617 In these categories cp in 116 - Analyst]

765 783 834 A man who transgresses the law of continence before the lahla khombo is said in Ronga to have "crossed the village" (a tjemakanya muti). He has taken the mourning (nkosi), the misfortune (khombo) upon himself. He will have sores all over his body and will begin to cough (consumption).

Amongst the Rongas, it seems also that the *bugango* is prohibited in mortuary villages during the marginal period. The men even [115] prevent boys going to the villages to see their girls, says Mbekwa, an old inhabitant of Nondwane.

VI. *Family rites.*

765 After two or three months, a first gathering of the whole family of the deceased takes place. Amongst the Ba-Ronga its function is to close or break down the mortuary hut. Amongst the Northern clans, no relation is established between this family gathering and the fate of the hut. But everywhere its principal aim seems to be to restore the family whose head has been removed by death, and which must be reorganised.

1) Amongst the Ba-Ronga.

For the Ba-Ronga the habitation of the deceased is tabooed. It is a *shira* (grave), as well as the place in which he has been buried and, for this reason, it must be destroyed. But this destruction is not accomplished at once. Some time must elapse (1), two, three, nine months, before the family gathering takes place. I witnessed it near Rikatla on December 15th 1907 and can therefore describe this rite in detail.

Manyibane had died five or six months previously. He was

(1) At any rate, such is the old law. But nowadays the Rongas sometimes crush the hut at once during the five days to save trouble. This was done in the case of Sokis.

769 The bones of the dead are never disinterred. It is a taboo; grave is respected and women do not dare to till the ground over it. Often one comes across a small thick bush in the midst of mealie gardens, and one sees broken pots under the branches. It is an old grave. Later on, when no one remembers who has been buried there, agriculture regains its sway. If a bush fire has reached the sacred wood and damaged it, the person who lit it must atone by sacrificing a fowl in order to "quench" (timula) it.

REMARKS ABOUT DEATH AND BURIAL

761 These very complicated funeral rites of the Thongas clearly show the existence of three great intuitions in their minds:

783 1) Man is immortal and becomes a god through death.

775 2) There is extreme danger attached to the defilement which accompanies death. This uncleanness contaminates the community and can only be removed by collective purification.

3) The social group, being diminished by death, must be reinforced by special means (family gatherings, choice of a successor, etc.). Hence three categories of rites: *religious*, *purificatory* and *social*.

On the other hand some of the rites we have described present unmistakably the character of *passage rites*, because death also means a passage: for the deceased, passage from the world of the living to the world of the dead; for his relations, passage from one phase of life to another.

764 Separation from terrestrial life is symbolised for the deceased by the
775 rite of piercing the wall of the hut in order to solemnise, as it were, his official departure from his former dwelling. I should consider also as a separation rite the custom of cutting through all his garments and mats, in order to make them "draw the last breath." To effect aggregation to the new world, the grave-diggers prepare for him an underground hut and square place, they place him in his new dwelling in a sitting position (if such is the true explanation of the folding of the limbs), they direct his eyes towards the cardinal point whence his
765 ancestors have come. I have sometimes had the impression that even
775 in these rites, the idea of a marginal period, or of a period of transition, was not lacking; the deceased is not prayed to prior to the great family gatherings, which take place three, six, or twelve months after the death. Then his hut is crushed or closed. It would seem that he has gone

775 through an evolution towards deity, as his corpse was decaying in the
765 grave, and the closing of his hut, with the placing of his shield before the door, might well mean his definite incorporation into the world of the dead, and also a means of preventing him from returning to this world and bringing misfortune to his relatives.

765 As regards the relatives, they separate from the former phase by the
783 cutting of the hair, putting out the old fire, leaving off their clothing and wearing mourning attire. A very distinct period of margin then begins, marked by the sexual taboos accompanying it, and they are aggregated again to the ordinary world and to the new phase of their life by all the ceremonies which I have explained at length. Here, however, as the seclusion was caused by a certain most dreaded defilement, the aggregation rites all bear the character of removal of uncleanness: uncleanness of the food, of the gardens, of the bereaved, chiefly grave-diggers and widows, of the whole community, which is cleansed by the sexual rite of hlamba ndjaka, etc.

797 If classification were equivalent to understanding, we might say that
761 we have fairly well understood the complicated Thonga rites which accompany death... But who can boast of having fully understood so profound and mysterious a subject? Death is the great shadow which hovers over life and chills the human heart. Outside of an enlightened faith, it is, and remains, the King of Terrors. Never more than at the graveside did I pity my poor black brethren, wondering how they tried to calm their hearts and overcome their sorrow. There is something profoundly touching in their most absurd rites, because, after all, they are all imposed by a craving for life and purity. Will my readers allow me to conclude this subject by a personal reminiscence? The day I attended the burial of Sokis, when his relatives had finished filling in the grave, they asked me to lead them in worship. Bantu heathenism is so poor, it feels itself so weak that it readily accepts the help of a higher religion. So I tried to turn the eyes of my hearers away from the underground hut, and to fix them on the eternal dwellings of the Father's house. Then Sokis's youngest brother took the nkanye twig and performed the heathen religious ceremony, calling his ancestors to come and bless them and entreating the deceased to leave them in peace. The contrast between these two prayers made at the same grave was indeed striking. And, whatever we may think, even if we had no religious convictions at all, should we not earnestly desire that, for these people, the bright comforting Christian hope may dispel the darkness of their thoughts and the sufferings involved in their rites?

843 754 to hinder the child from growing and to put in its place, by means of her enchantments, a snake, a hare, a quail or an antelope!

834 846 [886] After the birth, owing to possible contamination by the lochia, sexual intercourse is prohibited till the rite of tying the cotton string (p. 56) has taken place. It is then allowed, but conception must be avoided till weaning, when relations are resumed in the normal way, and this goes on till the time when the woman is no longer able to bring forth children. I know of no special rules in connection with the menopause.

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831 But, amongst Bantus, sexual relations are not an individual affair, as amongst nations more advanced in evolution. There is a mysterious relation between them and the collective life of the community. Hence the fact that, on certain given occasions, they are recommended, even ordered, or prohibited.

1) Cases of recommendation.

833 783 587 829 Sexual relations must take place on two principal occasions : when the inmates of a village abandon it and go elsewhere to found a new one, and when the widows perform the painful rite of "lahla khombo" (to cast away misfortune). We shall see, when studying these customs, that sexual relations have here a twofold signification : 1) they "consolidate" the little community in its new abode, viz. they strengthen its structure by confirming the authority of its chief ; 2) they provide the principal means of getting rid of all contamination, especially of the defilement connected with death. (Annotatio 13.)[1]

2) Cases of prohibition.

834 784 581 829 753 Married people are not considered as being in a state of defilement, as mourners are, for example. Yet this class of persons, called "ba-kukhila," constitute a danger for those members of the community who are in a weak state of health. They must not come in contact with the circumcised, because in that case their wounds would not heal properly.

1 [See pp. 518-519 in these categories or in V6--Analyst]

846 A demonstration of joy takes place at the birth of any subsequent
851 child, but the kunga is only performed for the first-born. It does not seem that in the case of the first-born child, as in the case of bowumba (see p. 125) the gifts of kunga are subject to any taboo.

8) Loss of children.

766 A woman who loses an infant (wa ku felwa) is deeply contam-
783 inated with the defilement of death. She must bury it herself
834 without aid from her husband. Next day, she goes behind the
853 hut, kneels down and draws off her own milk on to the ground. She does this until the secretion has ceased. This is taboo; her milk is polluted; no drop of it must fall in the gardens. She must avoid crossing the fields and going to the storehouses to fetch food.
864 Until she has been "put right again (busetela)," she eats with a spoon. To use a spoon is a bad omen for a woman, because it reminds her of death. That is the reason why men adopt this civilized custom more readily than women. During her mourning, no sexual relations are allowed. When menstruation begins again, she first keeps silent, and does not tell her husband. Only on the second or third occasion does she inform him of the fact. He can then purify her; this is done in the same way as in the case of widows. (See p. 154.) Then he buys new clothing for her and she resumes her ordinary mode of life. Everybody seeing her with this new attire will know that "she has been repaired." Should any one else than the husband give her this clothing, the latter will be greatly offended and accuse her of having relations with a lover.

765 A man does not put on *malopa*, mourning clothing, for a child
586 who was not yet of age. The woman alone does so. However a husband is always grieved at the death of his child and a sad event like this often leads to dreadful results. He will begin to think that his wife is a witch and has eaten her own child by her magical powers. Such an accusation is almost sure to end in a divorce.

A woman who has *lost many children*, three or four, is considered

837 684 692 The woman is questioned, and confesses when, where, and how many times he has sinned with her. If he denies this, the object taken from the hut is exhibited. The adulterer is condemned by the chief to pay a *whole lobolo*, £ 15 to £ 20, as much as is necessary to buy a wife. He is rebuked before the whole assembly. "If you had taken a girl, it would not have mattered at all. Why did you abduct a married woman ? Do you not know that it breeds endless trouble at court (tindaba) ?"

The counsellor of the deceived husband goes to the counsellor of the lover to claim the money. The latter must go to the guilty man. The parents of the adulterer insult their son : "You see! All this money lost now! If only you had lobola a wife with it!" They must help him to find it at once, because this is a law universally recognised : the price of adultery must be forthcoming. (Nandju wa bumbuye a wu pfumali). The poor man will have to pay ; he will even have to add a hoe to "drive away" (hlongola) the counsellor, who keeps it for his reward!

837 684 783 753 608 Why is adultery so strongly prohibited and punished ? Not at all from any moral consideration of purity or chastity, but for two other reasons. First a social one. Adultery with a married woman is a theft, because she is owned by a master. She is not punished herself, except when the watcher finds her out and gives himself the pleasure of thrashing her to his heart's content. The whole punishment falls on the man ; he is the thief. But there is also a physical reason for it : the *matlulana*! We have already met with this word. *Tlulana* means to jump over each other, to compete with each other. In the sexual domain it is said of two men who have relations with the same woman. "They have met [826] together in one life through the blood of that woman ; they have drunk from the same pool" (Viguet). This establishes between them a most curious mutual dependence : should one of them be ill, the other must not visit him ; the patient might die. If he runs a thorn into his foot, the other must not help him to extract it ; it is taboo ; the wound would not heal. If he dies, his rival must not be present at his mourning or he would himself die (See page 137). Should he even be the actual son (sometimes it happens that a son commits adultery with one of the younger wives

837 of his father, which is considered as *biha*, very bad), he must not
684 take any part in the burial, though he might be the regular "master
783 of the mourning." Relatives will drive him away because they
578 have pity on him, they know what misfortune threatens him. It is
182 a terrible taboo! There are medicines to remove this contamin-
626 ation; the *yila* is removed by them, but the *biha* (bad action)
753 remains! However in the case of the disease called *mpondjo*, (which I believe to be the lupus), medicines are of no avail; should a man visit his rival, who is suffering from it, he will die. We have also been the terrible complications which are believed to take place at the birth of children, when there has been a question of adultery. (P. 40.)

836 These great taboos show that there is a deep feeling amongst the Thongas that promiscuity of any kind is a bad and a dangerous thing. Even in the case of *gangisa*, boys are censured when two of them court the same girl.

10) Divorce.

586 Adultery is one of the causes of divorce. The guilty woman, instead of obeying her legitimate husband and helping him to get his compensation, may choose to go to her lover and live with him. This leads to an immediate divorce. The husband goes to the parents of the unfaithful wife and claims his lobolo. They have perhaps no money to give. However they will try to get it as soon as possible, even if it is by the dissolution of the marriage of their own son; they will perhaps send back his young wife to her parents and claim the lobolo paid for her, in order to meet the claim of the angry husband (See Part II). It would seem easier to go to the thief and claim from him the lobola for the adulteress whom he has stolen (tlhuba). But a thief is not a reliable man! If he has stolen, it proves that he had nothing (1). (See Appendix VIII.)

Divorce frequently takes place for more trivial reasons, for

548 (1) Women of low morals are called in Ronga gwababana, prostitute. There are plenty of them all round Lourenço Marques, where morality has sunk to a very low level; but this is the result of degeneration.

586 mere incompatibility of temper. Heathen men are often hard
362 to their wives. They refuse to give them money to buy
378 clothing. "They are stones," said one of these men to me. "Though you scratch a stone with your nail, the nail will break and the stone will remain!" On the other hand, the women are by no means sweet, obedient creatures ; therefore quarrelling often takes place. When she thinks she is persecuted (shanisa), the wife *runs home*. This is her great weapon. The husband heaves a sigh of relief... But very soon he becomes aware of his misfortune. No food, no cooked meal in the evening! His companions share their own food with him for some days, but they will not consent to feed him long. He will have to go modestly, humbly to his parents-in-law and ask his wife to return. Then they enquire into the matter, and he perhaps receives a good scolding. It may be that the domestic life will improve, both fearing the renewal of the conflict. It may however be that the situation will grow worse and worse, and then it will lead to divorce, viz. the husband will claim his money and, when he gets it back, the marriage is dissolved (ku dlawa ka bukati).

An accusation of witchcraft may also cause divorce, especially after the death of a child ; so also can sterility, as we have seen, p. 190. Gross selfishness on the part of the husband may lead to it ; many tales tell the story of a man who in time of famine succeeded in killing an antelope, kept the meat for himself and did not give any to his wife and children. The wife noticed it and, when the famine came to an end, she invited all her relatives to a beer feast. Then she shewed them the bones of the antelope, telling them how badly her husband had treated her ; her parents took her home together with the children. Sometimes the conclusion of the tale is that the man even lost his lobolo money, as a punishment for his evil deed! (See *Grammaire Ronga*, page 202. *Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, page 260.)

11) Widowhood.

783 When a man dies all his relatives are contaminated by the
765 defilement of death, as we have seen (Page 143). There are concentric circles around him, some people being more affected

783 than others. The wives form the first circle, especially the first
765 wife. They have therefore to perform peculiar purifying cerem-
562 onies which throw great light on the profound feelings of the Thongas regarding life and nature. On the other hand they are the property of the husband's family and they are part of his belongings. How are they to be distributed amongst his heirs ? This is a very delicate matter. It is more or less regulated by the tribal law. Hence there are two series of rites to consider, in the customs relating to widows : 1) The rites of purification, 2) the laws of distribution.

783 Let us describe first the fate of the great wife amongst the
765 Rongas (See for supplementary details : The fate of widows amongst the Ba-Ronga. S.A.A.A.S. 1909).

a) *The first day.* Manyibane is dead! — a sad event for his wife. She is called to inspect his grave. She assists silently at his funeral. But as soon as the younger brother of the deceased has finished praying, she bursts into tears and cries aloud! Her parents cry also : "Our child has fallen into misfortune! Now the cold has come for her! She will learn to know the cold water!" This is an allusion to the kind of life which the new widow will have to lead. Every morning she must go to the lake or the pool, with her companions, to have her whole body washed till the days of purification are completed.

783 The first of these purifying rites is performed just after the
765 burial. The widow, surrounded by other women, goes to the
575 pool and there all must wash their bodies. Most of them return home at once. But the widow remains there with *other widows* who have lost their husbands in former years. They form a *secret society* which assembles only to receive new members into its ranks. Nobody must see the strange rites performed by them. It is a *Ngoma* (the same word as for the circumcision school). However, the mysterious company takes possession of the great road (gondjwen), and every one must take care not to pass along it at that time, for great misfortune might overtake the imprudent one who should approach too near and catch a glimpse of the proceedings. A wise man, on seeing the suspicious group

783 of mourning women sitting on the main road, prudently stops and
765 makes a long detour to avoid the place... What is done at this
575 meeting ? One of the widows makes an incision with a knife or a
787 bit of glass in the skin of the new member of the society, in the inguinal region on the left side, "where the husband was resting." If the blood flows freely, it is a good sign. The women are satisfied ; they say there was a good understanding between husband and wife ; if the blood does not flow it is a bad omen. Then one of them lights a little fire with a handful of dry grass ; this grass has been torn from the roof of the deceased's hut. A little excrement from a cock (not a hen!) is then thrown into the fire, and the widow must expose both hands to the smoke. Afterwards she must extinguish the fire with her own water. Should she be unable to do this, it is a further proof that she has not been faithful to her husband and that she has killed him by her adulteries. These rites are very similar to the first circumcision rites, the incision performed recalling the ablation of the foreskin, and the exposure to the smoke, the jumping over the fire. These are great taboos. Evidently they are initiation rites, accompanying the passage from one condition to another. Why does the ceremony take place on the main road ? Because later on the contamination of death will attach itself to travellers passing that spot, and the mourners themselves will get rid of it in this way.

783 After that, the company returns home. The other widows
765 take every bit of clothing from their companion, and tie a reed or a
575 palm thread around her waist with some broad leaves attached
292 to it. With this scanty garment, they bring her home. She walks surrounded by them. Someone warns the men to leave the road as they are not allowed to see the procession. They hide themselves in their huts. The widow is led to her hut, the hut of the great wife which has now been uncrowned. She must accomplish *the last crossing of the hut*. Entering through the door, she shouts loudly : "My husband! My husband! You have left me alone! What am I to do ?" Then she goes out, not by the door but by the hole which has been made in the wall to carry the corpse to the grave. Behind the hut her friends are waiting for her and give her back her old clothing, which has been

783 washed in the pool and which she will wear again for two days (1).
765 b) *The following days of the Great Mourning.* Without delay a new hut, a small provisional hut, is built in front of the mortuary one. Here the great wife will stay during the whole of her widowhood; the space between this and the old hut is more or less taboo and most of the possessions of the deceased are placed there, under the roof near the door on the outside. (See illustration p. 159.)

The other widows do not leave their huts, but they participate in the other purifying acts, the vapour baths and the general sprinkling of the fifth day. As regards the vapour baths, however, the first wife is associated with the grave-diggers, viz. she must be exposed to the strongest medicinal smoke, while the inferior wives are cleansed with weaker drugs. They all put on the *malopa* and eat with spoons during the whole year of widowhood.

587 c) *Provisional decision regarding the fate of the widows.* A few
595 days after the Great Mourning, a fresh gathering takes place, not
728 in connection with the defilement of death, which is now provision-
768 ally cleansed, but *to settle provisionally the fate of the widows.* The
604 sisters of the deceased have to play a special part in this gathering. They will lead the discussion with the widows about their new husbands. It is indeed a happy custom to let women decide on the subject. Not that they have unrestricted power in the matter. The law has provided a certain rule for the distribution and this is seldom departed from. However, some liberty is allowed in its application, and modifications can better be made if proposed by female intermediaries. Should the husband possess a harem (tshengwe), that is at least five wives, they will most likely be given to the following heirs. The great wife, being "the pole of the

575 (1) *Widowers* also form a similar society and undergo the same rites; but just as it
783 was only the great wife who was subject to these laws, to the exclusion of the little wives, so it is only when he has lost his first wife that a man is initiated into the
765 widowers' society. After having buried her (he holds her head) he goes to the pool, washes himself, and another widower comes and makes the incision in him in the inguinal region. Then he throws aways his *shifado* (Annotatio 1.) and also carries out the same crossing of the hut in tears. These three acts constitute the actual widower's mourning: the vapour baths and *tahla khombo* are part of his purification as being the principal grave-digger.

1[See category 116 --Analyst]

587 live in the village, the family council will certainly object strongly
395 to her wish, as her departure would mean that the village would
428 cease to exist. But in the case of the younger widows it is quite
768 possible that an exception to the ordinary law would be allowed if they insisted upon choosing another husband (1).

After all, this is but a preliminary consultation, and the men who are rejoicing at the idea of getting new wives will perhaps be badly deceived later on, as we shall see. However the man provisionally chosen as the future husband of a widow, will at once pay visits to her, "march to her" (ku mu fambela), according to the technical expression.

765 d) *The casting away of misfortune.* But before any new and
783 happy life can begin for the widows, they have still to go through a
833 very hard trial. They must perform the *lahla khombo*, the throwing away of the malediction of death, and this is much more difficult for them than for the grave-diggers or the other members of the village. The main point in this strange act of purification is this ; before a widow can become the wife of her new husband, she must have sexual intercourse with another man whom she deceives. Should she succeed in freeing herself from him so that the act keeps its ritual character, s. n. i. (see Annotatio 2), this man will take on himself the malediction of death, and she will be purified. On the contrary, should the man accomplish the whole act, the widow has failed and will return home with shame and in despair! Here is a description of this sad expedition of the widows. It takes place a few days after the gathering just described. The men of the village send the widows away, telling them : "Go and scatter (hangalasa) the malediction through the country and get rid of it before some other misfortune happens to us."

(1) What would happen should the widow choose a husband outside her husband's family? To the mind of a heathen woman the idea would never occur. But suppose a Christian widow, having only married suitors, refuses to become their wife, her conscience forbidding her to contract a polygamic union. Her case would be very hard indeed, as I do not think her wish would be taken into consideration by heathen relatives. It would have to be brought before the White magistrate, who would probably try to help the widow. I think that, even if the woman consented to submit such family matters to the European court, she would have to give the *lobola* or her children back to her brothers-in-law, and that might be an impossibility for her. It would be interesting to know how Native Commissioners proceed in such cases.

2 [See p. 516 in these categories or in 1K -- Analysed]

765 783 833 With their conical baskets on their heads they all go, each accompanied by a friend who will act as witness. They pay a visit to some distant relative and try to flirt with the men of the village. Their aim is clearly understood ; morals are so dissolute that it is not difficult for them to attain their desire. (But the purifying act is useless unless interrupted abruptly before its completion). If the widow succeeds, she is full of joy, and comes back saying : "I have coped with the mourning, I have overcome it." Should she not succeed, she has then been "overcome by the mourning." This is a serious condition, which can only be dealt with by special medicines. The man who has unconsciously purified a widow and who becomes aware of it, will also have recourse to the *ñanga* to get rid of the pollution of death (1). The widows endeavour to come back all together ; they stand by the main entrance of the village and announce their success with the *mikulungwana* shouts, which mean at the same time joy and sorrow. Everyone meets them there, and they form a procession to the grave to tell the deceased what has happened : "You have left us in the open field ; we have had to go through a painful trial ; it would not have been so if you had not left us!" But, after all, this is a day of rejoicing, and the men, the heirs to the widows, are particularly pleased. The same day the widows put on a new undergarment and complete their purification by another steam bath.

At this time the mourning is said *to have ripened* (wupfile). The widow's hair has grown again. What remains is to *kill the mourning* (dlaya nkosi). This is done by the man who "marches to" or visits the widow. In the evening, he is allowed into her hut ; they make a fire in it, put into the fire two pills of a purifying medicine, and expose their limbs to the smoke. Then they put it out with their own water, after which they can have sexual relations without harm. A certain time must, however, elapse before the adjudication of the inheritance takes place.

(1) He may also avoid the danger of being killed by the contamination of death in the following manner : Supposing that the woman who tries to seduce him is a widow, he tears off a little piece of her most intimate undergarment before the act. Later on he asks a ñanga to prepare a medicine into which this bit of clothing will be introduced. Then he covers himself with a blanket, burns the medicinal pill on a live charcoal and inhales the smoke. He is safe, and the woman also has been cleansed.

124 The description I have given of the *lahla khombo*, translating
178 exactly the narratives of Mbozà, Elias, and an old widower called
~~164~~ Magingi, refers to the rite as it was performed in the normal
~~783~~ fashion some twenty years ago amongst the Ba-Ronga. Now
765 customs are changing. There is, all around the town of Lourenço Marques, an agglomeration of Natives coming from many tribes. Immorality there has become terrible owing especially to alcoholic excesses, a free and enormous sale of adulterated wine taking place in this region. The widows are sure to find there a hundred men for each of them, when they wish to cast away their defilement. But in this promiscuity the poison of syphilis makes terrible ravages. According to our medical missionary, 90 % of the
783 Natives are contaminated by this disease. When the men up
765 country saw that their wives came back ritually purified but
178 physically contaminated, they began themselves to accomplish the necessary act. This has become the general custom to such an
833 extent that, when a widow goes to Majlangalen, (such is the name of that hell of drunkenness and immorality), it is now said of her : "She will refuse to stay with her legal heirs!" However the law of the *lahla khombo nhoben*, to cast away the malediction in the bush, remains inexorable in the three cases where the defilement is considered as being of the worst kind : if the
[845] husband died of phthisis or of leprosy, or if the woman has had twins.

Old widows who can find no lovers may be purified by means of drugs.

765 e) *The year of widowhood*. Though the widows have found
587 new husbands, they still remain in the old kraal. They must accomplish there "a full hoe," viz. a whole year of ploughing. In their new fields they leave the dry sticks of the mealies of the year before, in such a way that everybody passing by will know at once that this is the field of a widow. But what they harvest this year will belong to the new husband. They have now the right to *fambelana*, viz. to go to each other. The suitor brings clothing to the woman, and the woman pays him visits with jars of beer. They belong more or less to each other. But the marriage of the inherited woman is not absolutely settled. Her

768 taboo. Those who have received a wife go home rejoicing. When he has reached home, the fortunate husband kills a fowl or even a goat to make a fitting reception for his new wife. This is the end of the long period of widowhood, in which it is easy to discover the whole sequence of the passage rites.

783 Such is the old normal way of reinstating a widow in society.
765 But there are special cases where the rites are slightly different. If a widow is old and cannot expect to deceive a man, she simply buys medicines which are supposed to cleanse her.

The case of the wife of Sokis (see page 139, footnote) was more difficult. She had a baby, and sexual relations were consequently prohibited. Moreover the man who legally inherited her was in Johannesburg and could not provide for her purification. One of the grave-diggers took his place and "ran for her" (tjutjumela). This is a different expression for *fambela*. As far as I could understand, this man had ritual relations with his own wife in order to *lahla khombo*, to be purified himself. Then he tied the cotton string (boha nshale) round the waist of the widow. A sick widow will also be treated by *tjutjumela*. The grave-digger possesses the means of cleansing them, having gone through the mourning together with them.

These attenuated processes of purification seem the rule amongst the *Northern clans*. According to Viguet, the widows must also go to the bush (hula ni nhoba) to meet with a man who will free them of the defilement of death. The man who performs this act is called the *shikomho* of the widows. There are certain individuals who make a real business of this. Knowing drugs with which to cleanse themselves (ku tirulula), they claim a reward for their help... The widows remove their mourning attire (bracelets of strings on that occasion), and return home adorned with beads.
768 In the Djonga dialect the adjudication of the inheritance is called
783 *pandja ndjaka*. It is not accompanied by a sacrifice. There seem to be some differences in the ideas of the Rongas and of the Northern clans. For the former the defilement of death contaminates the hut to a greater extent. This must be destroyed, and the widow has to undergo the very hard casting away of misfortune (lahla khombo). For the latter the impurity rests more on the

783 village itself, which must carry out the collective purification of
768 *hlamba ndjaka*.

I must further mention a new custom which is spreading
587 amongst the Ba-Ronga in the neighbourhood of Lourenço
609 Marques. When a widow objects to becoming the wife of the legal
611 inheritor, she goes home and adopts another husband. There are plenty of men of other tribes, coming from Inhambane, Quelimane, Mozambique, who have no wife. They accept the proposal of the widow and go to live in her village. They are generally despised and called by the insulting name of *mugomo*, a Zulu word meaning an empty iron oil-tin. They are as hard and unfeeling as such a tin! If children are born, they belong to the family of the deceased husband, who paid the lobolo.

587 Sometimes also a widow chooses a nephew who is still a child. She gives him food as if she were his wife, but she lives with another man whom she loves. It even happens that she may choose a girl, the daughter of another wife of the deceased. (Annotatio 13.)[1]

C. OLD AGE AND DEATH

888 An old woman, having in some sort gone out from the sexual
782 community, enjoys some privileges which are taboo for her sisters who are still capable of childbearing. She is allowed to put on the clothing of the widows ; contamination of death is not so dangerous for her. She can proceed to the purification of the village, in certain cases of epidemic, and of the weapons of the warriors in war time (Part III). After the sacrifice of the black ram for rain, old women and small girls alone are allowed to eat the flesh of the victim.

462 But old and decrepit women are despised. As long as they
888 can still till their land, they are treated with consideration, but when they have lost all their strength and must be fed by their children, they are looked upon as troublesome burdens. I must say that, as long as she still has an atom of vigour, a Thonga woman goes to her field and tills it. During all her life time

1 [See pp. 518-519 in these categories or in 116 — Analyst]

361 air circulate, is the goats' kraal (19). It may be placed somewhere
231 else, behind the huts, for instance ; or sometimes goats are tethered
331 every night by the leg to sticks round the hubo. The pigs are
343 never kept on the hubo, but always behind the hut : they are newcomers in the Thonga village and have hardly yet won their "droit de cité." Let us salute, as we pass by, the tree (25) which
361 is, as we shall see, the mystical stem of the village. We may perhaps
824 see, hanging upon it, a piece of clothing offered to the gods, or at its
782 base a broken pot which is the *gandjelo*, the altar of the village.
351 The gandjelo is often placed, by preference, among the poles of the main entrance on the right. The village tree, which has a ritual significance, is not to be confounded with the trees of the hubo (26), which are but *mindjuti*, shade-trees, under which the inhabitants are fond of sitting.

361 So we reach the main hut which faces the gate. This is the
595 dwelling of the headman. In hut 3 lives his second wife, in 4, his third and in 5 his fourth. 2 is called *shilubelo*. Great personages, men owning a large kraal, like to build such a hut, which is smaller than the ordinary ones and where no woman sleeps. It is the headman's own hut, where people *luba*, viz., pay their homage to him; a kind of office of the master of the village! He may sleep in it and summon his wives to come to him there. But he generally prefers to sleep in his wives' huts, one month in each, according to the polygamic custom.

361 Behind 4 and 10 is a *mhala*, a shed for the implements. It is
343 built, like the goats' kraal, without plaster walls, and is smaller
331 than a hut. There may be three or four of these in the village.
596 The headman and his wives occupy the back of the village. At the sides live his younger brothers, one, who has two wives, in 7 and 8, two others, those who have but one wife each, in 9 and in 10 respectively. In 11 lives a married son; in 12 it may be a nephew, son of the headman's sister, or a son-in-law; (see
361 page 252). 13 might be the hut of a stranger (mulubeti), who has
574 asked permission to stay with the headman of the village, as he
783 wished to be under his protection. The case is not frequent, but may occur, and in order to be received into the mystic unity of the community, this man will have to "hlamba ndjaka" (See page 153).
together with all the inhabitants of the kraal.

621/831 all this is done in fun. It is a great day of rejoicing for the "tinamu", who tease each other as much as they like. A man may be wanting in respect even to his great mukoñwana on these days!

621/756/351/789 6) When the huts are ready, the *fence* is built. The family doctor is summoned. The medicine man throws leaves or stones treated with his drugs along the circular line, where the headman intends to place the branches which will form the future fence of the village. This being done, the men erect the fence.

7) Special precautions are taken for *the main entrance*. Poles are erected on both sides, but before they are put in place, the doctor pours medicine into the holes in the ground and also smears the poles with it at the bottom and at the top. Mankhelu used to bury a black stone, taken out of the river, at the gate. This stone had also been smeared with drugs. "In this way, I prevent enemies from entering. Those who come to try their charms against us (ku hi ringa hi maringo) will be attacked by disease and go and die in their houses."

783/834/621 8) The building is finished. Nothing remains to be done but to *ripen the village* (wupfisa muti). Men and women assemble in two separate groups and ask each other if they have been continent during the whole "buhlapfa". If one of them confesses to having sinned, he has stolen the village from the headman; the whole work is spoiled and must be recommenced elsewhere. If all the members of the community have behaved well, they proceed to a purifying ceremony exactly similar to the *hlamba ndjaka* which takes place during the mourning ceremonies. Each couple has sexual relations according to a fixed order of precedence, one every night, and they all go to trample on the spot where the women wash their hands. The principal wife is the last to perform these rites.

621/595 9) Then comes the *drawing to himself of the village by the headman* (kokotela muti). At dawn, after the night when she has had her ritual sexual relations with the headman, his principal wife takes his shield and his assagais and stands at the main entrance, everyone being present. Outside is a thorny branch prepared for the occasion. In her martial attire, she drags this branch to the entrance and closes it.

182 mourning over the dead. The inner connexion existing between these
621 three events is that, in all of them, there is a passage. Hence the
183 resemblance of the rites. This striking similarity is, to my mind, the
829 best proof that the passage rites constitute a peculiar category. When a headman has decided to move, he leaves his old kraal, he *separates* from it, not by the ordinary gate, but by a special opening made at the back of the village. He is not allowed to return to it again. Then, for him and for all his people, begins a *marginal period* of one month or more, the buhlapfa (notice the prefix *bu* which indicates a period here, as in busahana [page 42]). We see the village, during these few weeks, put beyond the pale of society. The ordinary laws are suspended, (licencious songs), and many special taboos are enforced (prohibition of sexual relations, fire taboo, water taboo, etc.), just as in the period of mourning; at last the village returns to the ordinary course of life by a final act of purification, the mysterious *hlamba ndjaka*, which seems to be the most powerful means of cleansing the collective life. This last ceremony shows that, here, the marginal period has been instituted on account of the uncleaness, the impurity of the old village. Let us remember that in most cases the village has been moved on account of death! All the adult members of the social organism take part in the cleansing (at least in the Northern clans) and so the village begins a new and purified life. No one can deny the deep significance of all these rites and the mystic conception of the Thonga village.

C. THE HEADMAN AND THE ORGANISATION OF THE VILLAGE.

596 Each village thus possesses its superior (hosi), its master. He
576 is called *mumumzane* or *numzane*, a curious expression which is
621 also employed in Zulu; it means owner of a kraal, gentleman,
618 and is often used in saluting grown up men. We have seen the mystic relation between the headman and his *muti*. The village, the muti, is the primitive social organism. The clan (tiko), which is the gathering of all the *miti*, reproduces all the features of the
622 village life on a large scale. So the *numzane* corresponds to the
596 *hosi*, chief of the tribe. Both certainly possess great authority,

727 They have killed... So they are exposed to the mysterious and
775 deadly influence of the *nuru* and must consequently undergo a
828 medical treatment. What is the *nuru* ? *Nuru* is the spirit of the
783 slain which tries to take its revenge on the slayer. It haunts him
789 and may drive him into insanity : his eyes swell, protrude and
761 become inflamed. He will go out of his mind, be attacked by giddiness (ndzululwan) and the thirst for blood may lead him to fall upon members of his own family and to stab them with his assagay. To prevent such misfortunes, a special medication is required : the slayers must *lurulula tiyimpi ta bu*, take away the nuru of their sanguinary expedition. (Lurulula comes from nuru, plur. miluru (1).

In what does this treatment consist ? The slayers must remain for some days at the capital. They are taboo. They put on old clothes, eat with special spoons because their hands are

764 (1) We met with the notion of *nuru* for the first time à propos of the rite of
775 luma (p. 400) ; we shall find it again when dealing with hunting customs (Part IV).
761 The nuru is to be feared not only in the case of slain enemies but in connexion with any human corpse. As a proof, I may quote the following curious story which Spoon told me and of the truth of which he was fully convinced. A traveller died under the great fig-tree of Libombo (near Rikatla). He had climbed on to the tree and fallen on his own stick, which he had planted in the ground. He was not buried, as no one knew him. So his corpse fell into decomposition on the spot; his skull became white. Later on a bush fire burnt all the grass and the skull was
764 seen for years "saying mpha" (it was shining), the teeth "saying bva" (descriptive
775 adverb, same meaning). One day the boys of Libombo went to pick wild figs from the tree and again saw the skull. Spoon was one of them. The fire had just passed
755 by again. "We beat it with our sticks and amused ourselves by rolling it over like a
789 ball. We did not know it was a human skull... When we got home we began to be seized by the drunkenness of nuru, the disease of those who have killed a man. During
761 the night we were delirious (hanta-hanteka), our eyes swelled and were full of exudations (malanga), the four of us, Tsukela, Tlabin, Sibakuze and myself. Next morning my uncle went to the fig-tree and saw that we had killed a man there! The medicine-man who understands the treatment of nuru, Dudela, who had been a slayer in war, called us to his village. We stood in a line before him ; he poured a little of his powder into the hands of each one of us, took a little in his mouth, rubbed his forehead. Then he insulted us saying : "You will die! Who began beating that skull ?" Each of us denied having given the first blow. Then he said : "Take care ! Do not go there any more nor near that nkuhlu tree where another corpse has been burnt under the leaves! Go away."

514 When a man has murdered another in a scuffle, he can replace this nuru medicine
789 by his own urine. He must drink a little of it and rub his forehead with it. The giddiness will pass away. If the murder has been committed from a distance, as with
775 a gun, the nuru is not so much to be feared, as the enemy was far away. A little of the medicine will be sufficient to treat the murderer. Spoon is ignorant of the compo-
626 sition of the nuru drug.
761

727 "hot" and from special plates (mireko) and broken pots. They are
783 forbidden to drink water. Their food must be cold. The chief
834 kills oxen for them (yi ba lumisa hi tihomu); but if the meat
761 were hot it would make them swell internally "because they are hot themselves, they are defiled (ba na nsila)." If they ate hot food, the defilement would enter into them. "They are black (ntima). This black must be removed" (Mankhelu). During all this time sexual relations are absolutely forbidden to them.
727 They must not go home to their wives. In former times the
304 Ba-Ronga used to tatoo them[1] with special marks from one eyebrow to the other. Dreadful medicines were introduced into the incisions and there remained pimples "which gave them the appearance of a buffulo when it frowns" (1).

789 After some days a medicine-man comes to purify them (ku ba
727 phutula), "to remove their black." There seem to be various
783 means of doing it, according to Mankhelu. Seeds of all kinds are put into a broken pot and roasted, together with drugs and *psanyi* of a goat. The slayers inhale the smoke which emanates from the pot. They put their hands into the mixture and rub their limbs with it (ba tilula) especially the joints.

789 Viguet describes this last act thus :—Pieces of medicinal roots
727 are put into the broken pot and roasted. They inhale the smoke.
782 Then cow's milk is poured into the pot on the embers and, when it boils, they have to put their fingers into it, one hand after the other, and pass them across their lips emitting the sacramental : "tsu" (which proves that it is a sacrifice to the gods, a religious act). Afterwards they say : "Phee! phee!" — viz.,
789 phephela phansi, (Dj. tikela hansi), "Go down, sink." This
727 means : "May you go deep into the earth, you, my enemy and
783 not come back to torment me." The last part of the treatment consists in rubbing the biceps, the legs, and the whole body with this milk. The medicinal embers are carefully collected, and reduced to a powder ; this will be put into small bags of skin called *tintebe* which the slayer will wear round his neck. They contain

578 (1) Hence an expression which is still in common use. When a Ronga wants to defy some one he says to him : "You are a coward ! If you say you can tackle me come and kiss my forehead."

1[i.e., the slayers returned from battle--Analyst]

789 the medicine of the slayers of men. At bukanye time they can
727 use it to *luma*, viz., to season the first calabash they drink (See
828 page 400). For this purpose it is as good as the great mbhulo,
783 "the medicine of the country," provided by the chief, and it will prevent them attacking their own people under the influence of drink. The *tintebe* will also be helpful in future battles. The insanity which threatens those who shed blood might begin early. So, on the battle-field itself, just after their deed, warriors are given a preventive dose of the medicine by those who have killed on previous occasions and who wear tintebe.

789 The period of seclusion having been concluded by the final
783 purification, all the implements (mizilo) used by the slayers
727 during these days, and their old garments, are tied together and hung by a string to a tree, at some distance from the capital, where they are left to rot (1).

Having reached their homes, the slayers have still to complete the cure by chewing a piece of root called monungwane every morning and evening, and spitting it out in the direction of the rising or the setting sun with the same exclamation : "Phee! phee!" — "Go down, sink!" The piece of root is tied to the assagay (2).

727 The description of the rites performed for the treatment of the slayers
828 applies especially to the Northern clans. But the following narrative
789 of an old man named Makhani from the Rikatla region shows that
783 similar customs were also in existence amongst the Ba-Ronga. This man had wounded an enemy in a battle; the wound proved fatal and the

(1) I had the good luck to find those which were used for the purification of the slayers after the Mooudi fight during the Sikororo war and they are now in the Ethnographical Museum of Neuchâtel. They consist of half a dozen old calabashes, a pair of sandals, etc.

171 (2) Purification customs for the warriors are somewhat different amongst the Pedis. After the Mooudi battle, the slayers of Maaghe's yimpi had to undergo the following medicinal treatment : the heart of the slain having been torn out, the muscles of their faces sliced off, their limbs amputated, all these portions of human flesh mixed with drugs and ox-flesh were cooked in a pot, the assagais being used to stir the horrible broth. This was poured into a flat basket which it is taboo to touch ; some one drew it with a curved assagay as far as the middle of the square. Then the slayers, having been previously white-washed with clay, advanced on their knees, and, with vociferations or cries imitating vultures, caught a piece of meat in their teeth, not touching it with their hands. Their wives are said to participate in this meal, as being also contaminated by the defilement of their glorious husbands.

727 enemy died later on, after his return to his home. Makhani did not
828 know this. One day he became suddenly delirious and rushed about
789 all over the village trying to stab his own people. "Oho!" said those
783 who saw him, "it is because the man he wounded has died!" They at once called the magician who possessed the nuru medicine, a man of the Mapsanganye clan, who came with his calabash. In this calabash there was a carved stick cut from a tree called shiralala, the extremity of which must always remain plunged in the medicine. The magician dipped this stick into a mixture made of honey and the drug, and passed it over the lips of Makhani, who seized it with his tongue, sucking it as the magician moved it from right to left, and licking his lips. A drop of the medicine was then put into each ear, on each upper eye-lid, and below the sternum. He was then cured and, taking a lighted torch, he threw it in the direction of the enemy's country with threatening words: "A ba fe, bafo, ba bola i. e. Let them die, the enemies, let them rot. I will kill still others!" Every day he had to go to the pool and wash his body, treating himself with the tintebe powder.

727 During the weeks following the battle heroes do not only
301 wear the tintebe, besides these miluru amulets, they have the
703 right to wear certain trophies. These are in the first place
554 antelope or goat's horns pierced at the base; they thread a string through the hole thus made and tie them round their necks (See illustrations, p. 33 and 453). They also make necklaces of small pieces of wood, notched in a peculiar manner and burnt in the fire; a hole is made through these and they are strung together like beads and worn round the neck. Sometimes these necklaces are made so long that they are worn as a bandoleer. I recollect seeing the Matjolo warriors returning from their expedition of February 1895: they came to show themselves off to the Whites at Lourenço Marques, gloriously proud of having massacred defenceless women and children whom they had surprised in the early hours of the morning! People threw them pieces of silver which they converted into brandy! (1)

727 (1) The terrible malediction which rests on those who have killed an enemy
775 is well illustrated by the following story which the Rev. C. Maphophe told me of an
761 event that had taken place not long ago in the Shishongi country (Manyisa district). A man of the Ndzindzi family had killed a Ndjao during one of Gungunyana's expedi-

726 On the other hand sexual relations, which are allowed in ordinary
829 life, become taboo. This period of fighting seems really to be
considered as a marginal period for the whole tribe.
834 It is so par excellence *for the warriors* and I think that many of the rites imposed upon them are to be explained in this way. As we saw, the period of margin is generally preceded by separation rites. (See page 74.) Some of these, which are very characteristic, are performed when the army starts : the leave-taking from the General with wild shouts, the custom of swallowing a piece of meat without touching it with the hands and taking an emetic afterwards, that of jumping over the ntjhopfa branch, the medicine of oblivion! etc. The triumphant return, the partaking of the meat of the oxen which have been taken, may be the aggregation ceremonies, viz., the acts by which the warriors return to their ordinary life.

726 Passage rites are still more distinct *in the case of the slayers* ; but
829 their condition is worse, as it implies the idea of defilement following
upon murder and is attended with the danger proceeding from the *nuru*.
304 They are "hot" (an expression which also applies to the tabooed woman
782 during her menses etc.); they are "black" (an epithet which also desig-
783 nates the grave-diggers, the bereaved mother, etc.). Hence a *seclusion* much more complete, a true period of margin with many alimentary and sexual (1) taboos. Possibly the incisions on the brow are an old kind of tatooing in connexion with this marginal period, similar to the inguinal incision of the widows (p. 201). The purification rites are of the same kind as those of the mourners, and particularly of the grave-diggers. The return to society, after their seclusion, is marked by rites of separation from the marginal period, which no doubt aim at getting rid of the defilement connected therewith. (Exposure of the *mizilo* outside the village in the bush.) Is it not striking to notice the correspondence between these rites in their peculiar sequence and those of the circumcision school, of mourning, of moving a village ?

See, as a conclusion to Part III, Practical Conclusions, No. VI : "The New era and the Future of the South African Tribe."

834 (1) The sexual taboos are so severe that, after the Mooudi battle, one of the slayers
727 took great offence at a man who dared to touch his food, as the man was living in his home and had relations with his wife. The slayer was afraid that this contact might cause his own death or bring misfortune to his family.

Latin Notes for Medical Men and Ethnographers

291 "Annotatio prima (P. 40).--'Shifado' quo quisque Thonga
845 extremum penem vestit, spheroides excavataque res est;
848 quod tegimentum ex iis, quae ad pudorem et munditiem perti-
881 nent, postulatur. Si quis schifado suum amisit, ei dedecoriest."

Note 1 (page 40). Shifado, with which every Thonga covers the end of his penis, is a spherical and hollowed-out object; this covering is demanded from those who are concerned with decency and cleanliness. If anyone has lost his schifado [sic] he is disgraced.

"Olim apud Thonga, qui a populo Zulo illum morem acceperunt, viri, quod linguà 'mbayi' id est fistulam quandam ex foliis textis palmae quae 'milala' dicitur, ferre solebant.

[At one time among the Thonga, who took over this custom from the Zulu people, the men used to wear what in their language is called mbayi, that is, some kind of tube made of palm leaves woven together which is called milala.]

"Ultima 'mbayi' anno 1895 vel 1896 post Christum natum visa sunt. Quod shifado ex parvae cucurbitae cortice aut duro et excavato accurateque polito ligno factum, summo veretro affixum, minime incommode ferre videntur."

[The last mbayi were seen in the year 1895 or 1896. Because the shifado is made of the rind of a small gourd or of hard, hollowed-out and carefully polished wood, and attached at the top of the private parts, it seems that it can be worn with the minimum of discomfort.]

833 "Annotatio secunda (P. 56). S. n. i, sc. semine non im-
851 misso. Ad hoc, marito sperma foras spargendum est (a nga
842 mu weleri): hic est coitus rite factus et quasi lustralis. Inde,
765 uxor in manus utriusque sordes (thyaka ra bona) sumit, qui-
783 bus umbilicum illinit."

[Note 2 (page 56). S. n. i., that is, the semen has not been injected. Moreover the husband must eject his sperms outside of the body (a nga mu weleri): this is the coitus properly executed and, as it were, lustral. Then the wife takes in her hands the filth of both (thyaka ra bona) and smears the navel with it.]

"Annotatio tertia (P. 57). Corpus infimum pueri ex adverso et a tergo peni pater tangit.

[Note 3 (page 57). The father touches with his penis the lowest part of the boy's body from the front and from behind.]

831 "Annotatio quarta (P. 88). Hae sunt formulae:
881 Shana khololwane ma ri tiba le'ri onhaka milebe?
Novistisne avem quae labra minora laedit?

832 Sometimes the girls measure their labia with small sticks
836 and boast of their length to their companions and even to their
304 bridegrooms. The girls follow these perverse practices for
881 no other reason than for the sake of their future husband.
171 Among the Ba-Pedi the husband may, if he thinks that his bride has not sufficiently stretched her labia, send her home and demand his bulls back. The girls keep a pot full of food ready and cover it with a lid. In the evening the boys come to the girls and give them a small gift in order to be admitted. In the house they sit down on the floor and watch the girls eating from a pot with their fingers. The girls whose milebe are four digits long eat using four fingers: they are bakulu, that is, adult, and they enjoy their lovers. Or they use only three fingers and sometimes two. The young girls eat with the palms of their hands.]

765 "Annotatio sexta (P. 154). Seu quis per ætatem iam pro-
783 vectam imbecillior factus erit, sive qualibet de causa tam
833 impotens ut sperma emittere non possit (a nga kumi mati), ceteri viri quid fiat sciscitabuntur. Quod si utique parum procedit, tota inhibetur cærimonia. Qui vero se invicem eodem ritu miscere debebant, iis ritum conficere non fas est. Ille jejunio, per quinque dies, prout res postulat, artissime utetur, cui medicinæ ad rem accommodatæ exquirentur.

[Note 6 (page 154). If someone should have become feeble because of advanced age, or if for some reason he should be so impotent that he cannot emit sperms (a nga kumi mati), other men ask what should be done. For if it proceeds quite insufficiently, the whole ceremony is held up. And those who should have had intercourse in turn in the same ritual fashion are not permitted to complete the rite. He [the impotent man] has to fast very strictly for five days as the situation requires and the remedies appropriate to the situation will be sought.]

843 "Annotatio septima (P. 154). Nocens maritus uxorque sui
834 purgandi causâ alium ritum peragent. Uxor mariti suaque
841 pudenda veste intima et inquinatissima tergebit, quam postea comburet.

Ambo, ad ignem accedentes, caput manusque calefacient. Inde cinerem collectum mulier adipe miscet, quo mariti artus illinit, digitis bracchiis cruribusque tractis, quod 'lula' dicitur. Postea, noctibus duabus sequentibus, coibunt. Si maritus, non cum uxore sua, sed cum puella quadam ex alio vico, stupri consuetudinem junxerit, huic fossorium donabitur, ut ritum 'lula' perfectum veniat.

[Note 7 (page 154). If the husband and the wife are guilty of an offense, they perform another rite for the sake of purging themselves. The wife will cover her husband's and

1:Junod--518-519 M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

765 "Annotatio tertia decima (P. 213). Cærimoniis purification-
783 is, ubi res genitales primas obtinent partes, ita explicatis,
833 quaeramus quid significent ritus illi.
587 Mors est res quæ imprimis homines contaminat. Omnia polluit quae tangit, non homines tantum ipsos sed etiam quæ mortui fuerunt.

Apud homines, propinqui mors vitæ fontes imprimis afficit, id est membrorum succos qui vitam creant. Itaque et mulieris succi vaginales et viri succi spermatici tollendi sunt: in coitu autem, sub legibus certis sunt tollendi.

Cum vidua lustratur, aut a peregrino aut a novo marito purificatur.

1) Ut recta viduæ purificatio fiat, abrumpendus est coitus, et vir, antequam semen emittat, repellendus; vir erit tum contaminatus at mulier purgata. Vir si in coitu feminam eludentem animadverterit, eam viduam esse et ipsum occidere velle intelleget, tum comites vocat qui, mulierem apprehendentes, dum vir in sinum ejus semen emiterit, vi continebunt; mulier tum polluta manebit; quod querebat, non habebit. Vir contra erit sine damno: contaminatus non erit. [519]

2) Cum purificatio a novo efficitur marito, tum ambo in casam se includunt. Res agitur permagna: tabacum ne hauriant! Medicamenta potant singularia. Tum toties cœunt deinceps quoties vir ferre valet, decies et sæpius si potest. Sed toties vir semen extrinsecus emittit: 'bayisanyana ba fanela ku huma, i.e. amovendi sunt pueri (spermatozoa), ' ut dicit unus ex eis qui me de his rebus certiorem fecerunt. Nunc sunt fontes vitæ apud virum purgati, quod fieri necesse erat, cum esset et ipse contaminatione impurus. Mulier quoque pura est, haud dubie medicamentorum beneficio quæ, antequam coirent, potaverunt ambo.

Quæ interpretatio ritum recte explicat cum ab impuris hominibus perpetratur. Sed cum a puris parentibus perpetratur, ut de 'boha puri' agitur (p. 56), tum res alio modo est explananda. Pater et mater cingulum infantis e lino xylino factum genitalibus succis inlinunt, ut infans eorum vitalibus succis corroboretur et in vitam gentis ita recipiatur.

These physiological conceptions, though they may be absolutely false from the scientific point of view, certainly proceed from deep intuitions regarding the mystery of life. I insist on the fact that they are not derived from religious ideas. It is a mistake to attempt to explain the whole life of the Bantus by their religion alone, as many writers are inclined to do. These sexual practices are not more religious than those prophylactic measures which we ourselves employ to preserve ourselves from tuberculosis or small pox. They

765 are dictated by a special notion of contagion which is admittedly
723 false, scientifically speaking."
833 [Note 13 (page 213). After we have thus explained the cere-
587 monies of purification in which genital matters play the primary role, we shall inquire into the significance of these rites.

Death is something that contaminates men above all. It pollutes everything that it touches, not men themselves only, but also the things that belonged to a dead person.

Among men, the death of a relative affects first of all the sources of life, that is to say, the juices of the limbs that create life. Therefore both the vaginal juices of a woman and the man's spermatic fluid must be removed: in coitus, however, they must be removed according to certain rules:

When a widow purifies herself, she is purified by a stranger or by a new husband.

1) In order that the purification of the widow proceeds correctly, the intercourse must be broken off and the man must be pushed back before he ejaculates his semen; then the man will be contaminated and the woman will be purged. If the man notices that the woman is trying to evade him during coitus he realizes that she is a widow and that she wants him to perish. Immediately he calls his companions who, seizing the woman, will hold her by force while the man ejects his semen into her vagina; in that case the woman will remain polluted and what she wanted she will not have. The man, on the other hand, will be without blame: he will not be contaminated. [519]

2) When the purification is effected by the new husband, then both seclude themselves in the house. One matter is urged particularly strongly: that they do not smoke any tobacco! They drink curious medicines. Then they have intercourse as many times in a row as the man can last, ten times and more if he is able. But as many times as they have intercourse the man ejaculates his semen externally: bayisanyana ba fanela ku huma, that is, "the children (spermatozoa) must be removed," as one of those who informed me about these things said. Now the sources of life of the man are purged, something which had to be done while he was impure with contamination. The woman is also pure, doubtless on account of the medicines which they drank together before they had sexual intercourse.

This interpretation explains the rite correctly, provided it is carried out by impure men. But when it is executed by pure parents, as when it is concerned with the boha puri (page 56), then the matter must be explained in a different

765 fashion. The father and mother smear the infant's girdle
783 made of cotton flax with their genital juices so that the infant
833 becomes invigorated by their vital juices and thus may be
587 received into the life of the tribe.

These physiological conceptions, though they may be absolutely false from the scientific point of view, certainly proceed from deep intuitions regarding the mystery of life. I insist on the fact that they are not derived from religious ideas. It is a mistake to attempt to explain the whole life of the Bantus by their religion alone, as many writers are inclined to do. These sexual practices are not more religious than those prophylactic measures which we ourselves employ to preserve ourselves from tuberculosis or small pox. They are dictated by a special notion of contagion which is admittedly false, scientifically speaking.]

595 "Annotatio quarta decima (P. 285). Doctori G. Liengmei,
833 nostro medico, cum sæpe curaret viros qui medicinam
842 petebant qua infantes procrearent, fassi sunt se singulis noctibus cum tribus vel quatuor uxoribus coire. (A monogamis quibusdam audivimus uxorem adeo fatigari ut noctu exiret laboratum ut a marito evaderet.) Cum medicus eos hortaretur ut quinque dies concubitu omnino abstinerent, nunquam id concedere potuerunt. Volebant enim facultatem generandi recuperare libidine non omissa. Dicuntur etiam cum vires cupiditatibus nondum pares esse videantur, remedia quædam adhibere sive ut venerem excitent sive ut uxores prægnantes fiant. Duplex fit medicatio. Primum secti testiculi hirci—(quod animal fatigari negatur, mbuti a yi karali)—cum plurimis herbis mixti coquuntur et a viro eduntur. Deinde alias herbas collectas in cerevisiam injicit. Tantum aiunt esse effectum ut viro qui non amplius duas uxores habeat, non sit ea re [520] utendum, ne, illis non sufficientibus, cum aliorum uxoribus stuprum committat, quod ei sit offensioni.

Viri casti, ut in loco Mpfumo videre licet, in sua casa dormiunt et interdum uxorem quam cupiunt ad se vocant. Plerique tamen, lege sibi imposita, ne discordia inter uxores erumpat, mensem unum in casa singularum uxorum vicissim agunt.

Qui plures habent uxores aliis etiam medicaments utuntur ad libidinem excitandam. Quorum unum putant ad effectum maxime valere: Medicus, cum se ipse curavit, in locum montium secedit, quo cynocephali feminæ urinam menstruali sanguine mixtam emittere solent. Quod manet in saxis et fœdissimam diffundit odorem, medicus excipiens coquit, et ex eo magnas conficit pillas quas emptoribus vendit. Hi eas

the ant-eater was sleeping. Attacked by the dog, the sambana 224
begins to burrow deeper into the earth; it reaches the spot where the hunter has dug his hole and tries to escape through this; but seeing that a man is waiting for it there, it suddenly turns back and returns to the opening of its burrow, where it is easily killed, notwithstanding the hard scales which cover its body.

Conclusion on the nuru idea and the lurulula rite.

I once asked old Makhani, the hunter who had suffered from an 775
attack of insanity because he had slain an enemy: "What is the nuru?" He burst out laughing, and this was the only answer I could get from him. I suppose an uneducated peasant of any European country would do the same if he were abruptly asked: "What is the soul?" An ethnologist, however, cannot rest satisfied with this avowal of ignorance or this utter want of interest. He must try to find an explanation, and some sort of an explanation is always likely to be found when we are dealing with beliefs which are not purely individual but which belong to a community.

The *nuru* (pl. miluru)—to sum up all the above accounts (see also I. 769
p. 478)—is a peculiar power possessed by man and by several wild 775
animals in virtue of which they avenge themselves on the person who 783
has killed them. This power resides in their body and appears to pass 825
out of it through their nostrils with their last breath. The fact of having killed a person or an animal *possessing the nuru* places the slayer in a state of dangerous contamination. It would sometimes appear as if the nuru had entered into him and remained sleeping in him, ready to awake in certain circumstances (I. p. 400). The danger connected with the nuru must be overcome by a special treatment; if this is not done, the nuru will cause an attack of madness and may even do great harm to the family of the slayer or hunter.

Let us try to go a step further in our analysis by putting the following 769
question: What is the relation between the *nuru* and the *shikwembu*, 775
first in relation to man, and secondly, as regards animals?

As regards man, we know that, for the Bantus, every human being at his death turns into a *shikwembu* and becomes an ancestor-god for his descendants and a hostile spirit as regards his former enemies. The shikwembu, roughly speaking, is the ghost of a deceased person. This

which definitely believes that the animal becomes a shikwembu 776
(muzhimu). 2) When a person commits a murder, the ghost of the 825
deceased takes possession of the murderer, at least temporarily. Possession, amongst the Ba-Ila, is thus directly connected with murder. So far for the Ba-Ila. It is to be hoped that information as to other tribes will throw further light on the problem of the relation between nuru and ghost.

Considering the question only as it involves the Thongas I come 775
to the following provisional conclusion: The nuru idea is no doubt 783
very ancient, dating perhaps from a time when Animism was not 825
yet clearly distinguished from Dynamism, and when man was not even greatly differenciated from the animal. It originated in the instinctive fear which primitive man felt after shedding the blood of his fellow men and of certain particularly redoutable wild animals. This blood must be avenged (Compare the old saying of Genesis IV, 10: The voice of thy brother's blood cries unto me from the ground. The vendetta custom which is so wide-spread is a further consequence of this natural feeling). Hence a peculiar remorse and the conviction that purification is necessary to remove the contamination involved or the malediction incurred. This remorse is absent in the case of domestic animals. For this reason the buffalo has no nuru; as my informant said: "The buffalo is an ox." Why does the shedding of ox-blood cause no fear? Probably because oxen are considered as the lawful property of their owner, who has the right of killing them, whilst the men of another tribe and the animals of the bush do not belong to him.

The *lurulula rite* above all is a *protective* rite aimed at the removal of 224
this dangerous nuru. This is proved etymologically by the fact that 775
this verb is a doubly reversive derivative. It comes from the root *luru* 783
to which is added twice the reversive suffix *ula* which means to remove, 826
to take away (Compare my Shangaan Grammar § 208). The blowing over (huhutela), which is a part of the rite, means the same thing. It is a magical proceeding which is often employed in order to combat hostile spirits or influences. But the lurulula has still another meaning for the professional hunters who so eagerly practise it: It is *a means of identification of the hunter with the animal world*, so that he will be able to live in its midst without being noticed and so kill more game. As my Ronga informant says: "By this operation the hunter takes upon himself the defilement of the animal (its smell, its nature) so that the other hippopotami, when they see him, mistake him for one of themselves; this man will therefore have great courage and will not run away when

224 they come to him." For this reason hunters strongly assert that should
775 he neglect to perform the rite he will have no success in his future
783 hunting expeditions. A third aim, at least in the case of hippopotamus-
825 hunting, is to overcome the charms of the wizards who ride upon them.

When studying these old hunting rites I had the impression of living for some hours in close contact with primitive humanity, at a time when man, owing to the elementary character of the weapons at his disposal, was almost on the same level as the wild beast and was obliged to display an enormous amount of courage, skill and endurance in order to assert his domination over the animal world and to make it serve his purposes. Since the discovery of gun powder and modern weapons a new era has set in for the hunter. Did not old Viguet assert that now, when an elephant is killed by means of a gun, the nuru is no longer to be feared? Hunting has become for the Bantu of to-day an amusing sport, more profitable indeed but by no means so interesting!

II. *Psinyama-nyamana. The flesh of small animals.*

136 This word which comes from the well-known Bantu word
262 nyama, meat, is a triple diminutive, obtained by the reduplication of the stem, the prefix *psi*, and the suffix *ana*. It means all kinds of food derived from animals of small size, of which the Thongas are very fond.

Anything in any way resembling meat is welcome to them. Amongst Mammalia they specially enjoy certain kinds of rodents, not the domestic rats, but field mice called maphephe and mabuti which boys catch in their traps. Civet cats (nsimba, yi-tin) and wild cats (goya, dji-ma) are not frequently seen near the villages.

136 As regards birds, they eat them all with the few exceptions
222 which I shall shortly mention, from the tiniest sparrow to ducks
262 and Guinea fowls, which they manage to snare. They have no aversion to the lower types of animal : they collect the *matomane*, large caterpillars belonging to a species of Saturnidae called Cirina similis (Dist), which are found in families on the nkanye tree, during October. By the exercise of a gentle pressure on the hideous creatures, the inside is squeezed out, and the rest is thrown

But the terrible calamity of drought is brought into direct
relation with some physiological phenomena which no one would 789
have thought of in this connection : the miscarriage of women 821
when the foetus has not been dealt with according to rule, the 843
birth of twins, the death of children not yet received into the tribe 845
by the ceremony of *boha puri* (I. p. 56) and not buried in wet 766
ground ; these are the great natural causes which prevent rain 171
from falling! I have met with this conception all over the
Thonga tribe. I found it also amongst the Pedis of the Transvaal, who firmly believe it, and it would be most interesting to know if Suthos, Zulus, and Hottentots have the same superstitions. Let me quote the *ipsissima verba* of Mankhelu, the great 789
medicine-man of the Nkuna Court. I shall never forget the 821
earnest tone of his voice, his deep conviction, when he uttered 843
to me the following words, as a kind of revelation : "When a 783
woman has had a miscarriage, when she has let her blood flow secretly and has buried the abortive child in an unknown place, it is enough to make the burning winds blow, and to dry up all the land : the rain can no longer fall, because the country is no longer right (tiko a ra ha lulami). Rain fears that spot. It must stop at that very place and can go no further. This woman has been very guilty. She has spoilt the country of the chief, because she has hidden blood which had not yet properly united to make a human being. That blood is taboo! What she has done is taboo. It causes starvation."

"What then must be done?" — "The chief will collect his men and ask them : 'Are you in a normal state?' (lit. are you right?). They answer : 'Such and such a woman was pregnant but nobody knows what she has brought forth.' This woman will be arrested and told to go and show us where she has put it. The earth is dug up ; the hole is sprinkled with a decoction made of two drugs prepared in a special pot, the *mbendula* and *nyangale* ; the woman herself must wash her body every day with that medicine. Then a little of the earth taken from the hole will be scraped up and thrown into the river ; water drawn from the river will be poured into the hole : the country will be well again, and then the rain will come.

"Moreover, we, the medicine-men, after having sent old

789 women to the river to throw away the contaminated earth, order
821 them to make a ball of that earth, and to bring it back to us in
843 the early morning. We grind it, we put it into a pot where it
783 must remain for five days, and then we prepare the great drug to sprinkle the land. The medicine is put into oxen horns and they go to all the drifts, to the boundaries of the country, on the borders of the Ñwebeti and of the Thabina rivers, on the road to Sibila's country, to Diskop (Leydsdorp); they must not however cross rivers. Our neighbours do the same on their own side. One of the girls digs the earth, the others dip a stick into the horn and sprinkle the drug into the hole. We also sprinkle the road on which these women have trodden, when they had their blood; we remove the misfortune caused by these women on the roads. The country is pure again. Rain can fall."

This is the purifying rite in the Nkuna clan. Mankhelu asserts that the Pedis do the same. He did not know if the custom existed amongst other Thonga clans. But Viguet described the same custom to me as being in force on the borders of the Limpopo, under the name of *mbelele*. The bones having revealed that the country is impure, the chief orders the mbelele: it is a period of mourning (nkosi) for the land. First the *phokolo*, or sacrifice of the black victim is performed (See Part VI). Then the women assemble. They must remove all their clothing, only putting some grass round their loins and, with a peculiar skipping step, singing a special song: "Mpfula nana" — "rain fall," — they go to all the spots where children prematurely born have been buried in dry ground, on the hills, take away what they find in the broken pots and collect all that impure matter in a secret place, so that children may see nothing of what they are doing. Water is poured on these graves in order to "quench them (timula)." On the evening of the same day they go and bury these impurities; this is
[183 done in the mud, near the river. No man must approach during
831] this operation: the women would have the right to strike the imprudent one and ask him questions on the obscene formulae of circumcision; the man would answer in the most impure words he could find, as all language taboos are suspended on that day; nakedness even is no longer taboo, "because," says Viguet,

"it is the law of the country!" Every one consents to the suspension of the ordinary laws! (1)

Amongst the Rongas, I did not hear of any connection between prematurely born children and rain. When the mbelele rite is performed, a mother of twins must lead the procession of women who draw water and pour it on the graves of the twins in order to secure the rain. They also clean all the wells (kuha tinhlobo), digging them afresh and removing any filth in the water. It may be that the corpse of a twin, if it has been buried in dry ground, will be dug out of its grave and buried again near the river, or they will go in procession and pour water on the grave. This will influence Heaven, which is killing the earth by the terrible heat of the sun. The burning October winds will cease and the rain will fall.

There is something mysterious about all these customs. Considered merely as ideas regarding Nature and natural phenomena, I believe their essential meaning to be this : — there are some cases of human birth which are taboo. While any birth is taboo, owing to the lochia, that of children prematurely born is doubly dangerous. Abnormal children, such as twins, children who have died before the "boha puri" rite (I. p. 56), in some clans also children who cut their upper teeth first, share this noxious character. They are a calamity for the whole land as they are connected with the mysterious power of Heaven, and so prevent the rain from falling. The great remedy for the evil, the only means of counteracting this influence, is to bury these children in wet ground. Should this not have been done, the chief must order these little corpses to be exhumed and buried near the river : this is the aim and object of the mbelele. If wet, these graves will cause no harm (2).

How did these extraordinary conceptions first originate ?

(1) This rite of *mbelele* shows striking analogies with the Passage rites which we have already often met with in Thonga customs. This is a special period, a mourning period for the land, says Viguet, a marginal period which, as such, is accompanied by obscene manifestations, both in speech and in absence of clothing.

(2) In the Maluleke clan, as previously mentioned, these three categories of children must be *cremated*, and foreigners dying in the midst of the clan are also burnt after their death, from fear that they might belong to one of these categories and so prevent the rain from falling, if they were buried in dry ground. The mbelele rite there is called *nkelenkele*. Rangane describes it as follows : — Women collect the bones of twins,

845 What is the connection between abnormal births of human
772 beings and the rain-fall? I think it can be found in the
791 conception of Heaven which has inspired so many curious rites, and which I shall explain in the next chapter. So it is possible that, after all, the mbelele rite has a religious idea at its base.

b) *Rain charms.*

789 The removal of the corpses of abnormal children from dry
177 ground and their burial near the river probably sometimes proves ineffective to produce rain. So Bantu magicians have invented a great many charms to obtain the greatly desired showers, and the power of the rain-makers is enormous. Our tribe does not seem to have developed this art as much as others. The Sutho-Pedis are masters in this domain and Mankhelu, who had been taught by them and had become a great and renowned rain-maker, revealed all his secrets to me. He possessed the drug and used it frequently, he said, having often been called in by Sutho chiefs dwelling in far distant districts, as far off as Pretoria. He assured me that he had met with so much success that these chiefs had given him oxen, horses, a waggon, precious beads, etc.! Where had he found this marvellous drug? At Rivimbi (in Venda : Luvimbi), a country north of Spelonken, not far from the Limpopo and to which he went, as far as I could make out, in 1865 or 1866. The Luvimbi people are the descendants of Luvimbi, (1) a chief of the old times (as old as Nkuna, says Mankhelu) who, after his death, went to heaven and became king of heaven ; he still exists there as a spirit, hearing and knowing everything that is done on earth. This Luvimbi is probably the same whom the Vendas call the first man, and concerning whom they have a number of traditions which I shall mention a little later.

776 and those of still-born children or those who died at birth; to these they add their old
783 rags (perhaps the cloths used for their menses?); they bring all these impurities to the cross-ways and *burn them* there, singing impure songs, saying: "To-day is a great day!
789 There is no taboo any more! If you prohibit anything, it will be an insult to the rain;
821 it will not fall." The smoke of all that they have burnt constitutes a religious offering: now the country will be pure and the rain will fall. The conception prevailing among
183 the Maluleke is somewhat different from that of the Rongas.

(1) I have published an account of the Venda traditions connected with Luvimbi or Raluvimbi in *The S. A Journal of Science*, April 1921, where more details will be found concerning this personage.

to the sacrifice of the black victim and to the mbelele rite of purification of the land, which are characteristic Thonga customs, it seems that another old Thonga way of obtaining rain was the *tjeba fishing* which I described on p. 86. When the whole clan had gone to catch the barbels in the almost dried up ponds, a thunderstorm would come and rain would fall. This was especially the case with certain small lakes such as Malangotiba in Nondwane, and that in Nsime near Morakwen, because battles had taken place on their borders and the enemies' corpses had been thrown into the water. So these lakes had become "great sacred woods" (ntimu). I suppose the spirits of the deceased, which were certainly "gods of bitterness," (see next chapter), were supposed to prevent the rain, and the *tjeba* either appeased them or made them powerless.

To sum up this very complicated subject, I would say rain rites belong to three different categories: 1) The religious rites connected with ancestor worship (black offering, visit to the sacred woods, old songs and sometimes offering of a human victim). 2) Rites of purification of the land, those which are derived from the mysterious relations established between the power of Heaven and abnormal births (mbelele, cleaning of wells by women accompanied by the mother of twins); these present some features of the ordinary passage rites, either because the fall of rain inaugurates a new season, or because drought is a calamity comparable with death and attended with contamination. 3) The magic rites, in which sea charms play the most important part.

Hail, shihangu (Dj.), mabyana, lit. little stones (Ro.), is frequent in Thongaland; according to Mboza, it is not the object of any peculiar superstitions. Amongst the Pedis the day on which it has fallen must be kept as a sabbath. It is taboo to till the fields on that day.

IV. *The Inorganic World.*

Water is called *mati*, a noun of the bu-ma class, the class of liquids, employed only in the plural form. Notice the suffix *ti*, which seems to show that, at a period when mythological

undergo a number of ceremonies of a social rather than of a physiological character. 561 827

But, in addition to these conceptions of human life, which determine so many acts and customs, there are at least *five physiological phenomena* which are believed to be attended with defilement, and which call for special precautions and rites : the menstrual flow, the lochia, disease, death and the birth of twins. To protect individuals, the family, or the clan, against these dangerous defilements, is one of the main preoccupations of any adult Thonga ; and to gain this end they submit to endless ceremonies of purification, and observe innumerable taboos ; thus it is plain that these physiological conceptions, absolutely unscientific and wrong as they are, play an immense part in their lives and cause them any amount of unnecessary trouble. 783

I need not deal at length with these five greatly dreaded physiological events. As regards menses, the subject has been treated in Vol. I, p. 187. (Compare Vol. II, p. 47) ; as regards lochia, see Vol. I, p. 43 ; concerning disease, we shall hear further in our third chapter. The tremendous contaminating power of death has been shown in the explanation of funeral rites, and the birth of twins will be studied more closely in the next chapter. The importance of these facts in the system of taboos will also be explained in Chap. IV.

The sexual act, though not considered as attended with contamination in the same manner as the five other physiological facts just referred to, is, however, subject to very characteristic restrictions. I have already explained them when dealing with conjugal life (I. p. 188). It will, however, perhaps not be superfluous to treat of this question again, considering it in its physiological aspect and in relation to the Bantu conception of Nature, and giving at the same time precise references to all the cases hitherto met with. 827 834 783

Let us first remark that, as some of my informants said, the sexual act when indulged in before marriage, by boys and girls in their gangisa (I. p. 150) has quite another bearing than when accomplished by married people. It would seem that it is not the physical act in itself which is attended with all these taboos,

827 but the act in as far as it is a regular manifestation of the
834 collective life of the family ; in this case only does it have its
783 terrible repercussion on the life of the community. Married people who have regular sexual relations, "who are hot," constitute a danger in the three following connections.

1) They are dangerous to those *individual members of the community* who are in a weak state of health and in whom disease would gain new strength if they entered into contact with married people. This is true of the master of the village when he is seriously ill (I. p. 133), of the mother who has given birth to a baby (I. p. 43), of the baby itself which is considered as "being not yet firm," (and sexual relations are forbidden to its parents until they have tied the cotton string round its loins) (I. p. 45, 58) ; of circumcised boys (I. p. 80, 93) ; of convalescents, who must not tread on the same paths as married folk or, if they do so, must tie round their ankles a root of the *sungi* juncus as a protection against the emanation, or perspiration (nyuku) which married people have left in their footprints or on the grass. During their whole convalescence sexual relations have been strictly forbidden to them (Ch. III. B. III. 4).

2) Sexual relations constitute a danger *to the community itself* as a whole, when its existence is threatened. They are prohibited in time of epidemic. Mboza, having heard that a proclamation had been issued in Lourenço Marques on account of an epidemic, was convinced that the object of the decree was to suspend sexual relations amongst the White community! The same law applies to all marginal periods, because these are critical times in which the life of the community is threatened. This is the case during the Great Mourning (I. p. 150). Mourners must *keep quiet ;* if not, there might be quarrels, the mourning might "overcome them." Again when moving the village to another place (I. p. 320), the same rule must be observed.

3) Married people again are taboo in certain operations or pursuits, the success of which would be endangered if they took part in them or if they indulged in their ordinary relations. It must not be a married person who sets fire to the furnace in which

the potteress fires her pots (1) (p. 115). Why is this so? No 834
doubt because if married people, who are hot, did it, the fire would 783
become uncontrollable and all the pots would crack. The same 827
reason explains why sexual relations are so strongly prohibited in hunting and fishing. The game or fish would be so wild that it would be impossible to catch it ; big game would probably kill the hunters (p. 61).

This conception of the sexual act explains why certain functions in the ritual must be performed by young children, still without knowledge of sexual matters, or by old women past the time of childbearing and consequently belonging to the asexual class (I. p. 466).

How is it possible to explain, on the other hand, that this act, so severely prohibited on so many occasions, should be the great purifying act by which the community gets rid of the defilement of death and returns to normal life? We have seen that this is the case after the death of an important person in the village as well as when the village itself moves to another place, probably in consequence of defilement by the loss of some of its members. Notice that the sexual act, in order to obtain the desired result, must be accomplished in the ritual fashion, i. e. s. n. i. (I. Annotatio 2 and 13). It would seem that, in the Thonga mind, death defiles not 834
only the belongings of the deceased, his implements, his assegais, 783
even his fire, but also his parents, even the parents of his wife, and 761
above all, those secretions of the genital organs which are the very 827
fountain of their life, and through which the community is maintained and multiplied. They must be cleansed in order that the social group may re-enter upon a normal state. The ceremonies which we have described (I. p. 152-156 and 320-328) are highly significant. Each couple must perform the rite in turn and all must participate in a collective lustration which takes

(1) According to the Rev. Ed. W. Smith the same rule is observed in the smelting operations of the Ba-Ila. A little boy and a little girl are put into the kiln when it is about a foot high and they must crack a bean in their mouths and swallow it. We have here a very good example of Bantu primitive philosophy. The innocence or, as we may say, the *coolness*, of the little ones will prevent the flame from being too fierce and spoiling the whole operation, whilst the slow cracking of the bean will ensure the success of the smelting process (Smith and Dale, *The Ila-Speaking People*, I. p. 205).

834 place at a given spot and according to a given order of precedence.
783 This will bring about the definite restoration of the village and a new and pure life will henceforth be possible.

761 I ought perhaps to offer some excuse for having dwelt at some
827 length on a subject which is generally left alone as indelicate. I hope however that my readers will agree with me that all these physiological conceptions and all these strange customs, far from being of a lascivious or licentious character, denote, on the contrary, a deep and earnest conception of life and an aspiration towards purity which it is most interesting to observe. They are at the same time amongst the most striking manifestations of Bantu Dynamism.

827 Beside these great principles of Thonga physiology, I may
576 mention a few other ideas relating to the various secretions of the human body.

578 *Spitting* (ku thuka) is a sign of want of respect, as we have seen (p. 310). It is especially prohibited in the presence of people who are eating, and if any one should spit, they will insult the culprit, saying to him : "Eat your own shikohlolo!" — When some one expectorates, others present will cover the phlegm with sand, not on account of taboo, but from disgust.

826 *Blood* (ngati, yin-tin) is also instinctively covered with sand, as
791 soon as it has been shed. This is a taboo, because wizards might use it to bewitch you! The charms of the wizards are commonly called *tingati*, bloods.

827 As regards *sweat* (nyuku, mu-mi), although I cannot assert that the idea is universal, I think it is conceived as coming from outside and falling on men like the dew (mbere) on the grass. When they enter a place which is close, Natives say : "There is sweat here." The etymology of this word is *ku nyuka*, to melt.

Excrement (matjimba) is looked upon as disgusting, but there is no taboo in connection with it.

Yawning (yahlamula) is attended with no superstition.

Hiccough (shitikwane) is not feared in children, but very much so in the case of sick people.

Belching (bisa) is sometimes considered as the result of having been bewitched, especially if the patient becomes thin. Magicians

gods of the father). These parts of the victim are called *psirungulo*, the religious amulet. 782 755

When the offering consists of a bracelet, the bones having so ordered, the priest will pour consecrated beer over it, and say his prayer. The bracelet will then be fastened to the child's foot. He may not remove it, nor exchange it for anything else : it belongs to the gods.

This description, given by Viguet, is typical of sacrifices offered in the case of disease. In the Maluleke clan the sacrifice made for a sick person is as follows. The headman takes beer, which has been specially prepared for the gods and is very much diluted, the beer called *byala bosila*, and a twig of male nkanye. He orders the patient to sit near the altar, and after dipping the twig into the beer, sucks it and says the following words :

Phaa! (this word corresponds to tsu) : this is byala bosila, you Makhima! Take it and convey it to your father Mashakadzi ; call each other and come here together to drink! Let all disease depart! Heal this man!

I must also mention the sacrifice performed in the curious ceremony of *dlaya shilongo*, in the case of marriage between near relatives (I. p. 258), and will now proceed to describe two others, viz., the sacrifice on behalf of the son who has just returned from Johannesburg, and the sacrifice of reconciliation.

When a young man, who has been absent from home for a long time, *returns to his village*, he cannot be received again into the community without special precautions being taken. If there has been a death in the kraal he must be purified from the collective contamination before eating the food of the village. This is the luma milomo (I. p. 146), and is connected with the defilement from death. Some of the provisions of the deceased, kept in a pot and diluted with hot water, must be poured between his two great toes, and he must afterwards rub them together. But, before this, a religious act is performed. Before the boy, who is on the return journey, is allowed to enter his native village, he has to stay for a short time just outside, while his father, seated at the main entrance, cuts open the neck of a hen, which he has 782 783 484

782 previously selected, and throws it on the boy's luggage. The
783 victim leaps about (phuphumela) in its agony. The officiant then
484 plucks out some of the bloodstained feathers, pronounces the tsu, and says :

> Here is your son. He has returned home safely, because you have accompanied him! Perhaps he has brought back pounds sterling with him to lobola. Perhaps he will now take a wife! I do not know. The great thing is that he is healthy, and you have brought him back safely.

782 *The Offering of Reconciliation.* One of the most curious of
578 the religious acts performed in connection with the family is
593 called *ku hahlela madjieta*, viz., to perform a sacramental act in connection with the madjieta. *Djieta* (dji-ma) means a *rash oath;* or an oath *with imprecation.* If two brothers quarrel, and the younger believing himself to be the injured one, breaks off all connection with his brother, he may say to the latter in his anger : "Never will I speak to you again, or come any more to your village!" This is a djieta. To give greater weight to the imprecation, the angry brother will put his nail beneath one of his incisor teeth, push it from within outwards and say : "U ta kota u *ñwoo* psi nga yentshekanga!" This probably means : "May you die if this does not happen," viz. if I do not keep my oath. Or he will pinch up the skin below his eye, and pull it out, saying : "U ta kota wao *hum*!" (Same meaning). The two men may remain for years without the slightest intercourse with each other. But if a serious disease should break out in the village of the younger, and the bones order him to make an offering, he is at once in a difficulty. He has no right to present it himself, for, according to the great law of priesthood in ancestrolatry, it is his elder brother who must do it for him. The bones, on being again consulted, give the response :— "There is something in the way. You two have tied a knot. Untie it first, then offer the sacrifice." The younger brother will then go to the elder, and say : "I have sinned in swearing that I would never come again to your village. Let us hahlela djieta, i. e., accomplish the sacrificial act, which will

782 merely saliva ; this, however, is a true "hahla," and this fact shows that the saliva is a gift, the *personal gift of the worshipper*. He first gives his gods something emanating from himself, mingling it with the blood or psanyi of the victim, and only then does he approach them. So there seems to be a deep meaning underlying this sacramental act, though most of the worshippers are not aware of it (a circumstance which unhappily occurs in all religions) ; though unconscious, it exists and has given rise to the rite ; the gift of oneself is necessary to obtain the favour of the Divinity. — What is the intention in adding the blood and psanyi? Is there any meaning in the *choice of the blood* which is mixed with saliva in order to despatch the offering to the gods (sungulisa mhamba)? Is the blood (ngati) regarded as containing the life of the animal, as was the case amongst the Jews, who used it in sacrifices "to cover the soul" or the sins of the worshipper (hence the idea of atonement)? There is no sign of a similar conception among the Thongas. It is true that they prefer to resort to sacrifices with blood in cases of misfortune, disease and death, when some idea of guilt may be entertained. The moral element, however, if it ever really existed, has entirely disappeared from the actual horizon of ancestrolatry.

782 On the other hand, the use of the *psanyi*, the half digested
783 grass found in the shihlakahla stomach, is easier to explain. It is evidently a means of purification for the family, if not exactly from sin, at least from misfortune (khombo) ; hence their custom of washing their bodies with the green liquid extracted from it, a religious ceremony which to us seems very disgusting, but to the Natives quite clean, their ideas about dung being very different from ours (p. 38). A large ball of psanyi is put on the head of the bride after the dlaya shilongo ceremony (I. p. 257) in order to remove the dangers of consanguineous marriage, and so make it easier for her to have children. Pellets of this substance are thrown too at the uterine nephews, when they run away after stealing the offering (I. p. 162) ; or on to the roof of the deceased's hut, when this is officially closed, with the aim of removing the danger of death ; the slaughtered goat has thus to contribute to the restoration of peace and happiness to the family.

776 on earth. I have nothing to fear or to hope from my neighbour's
769 gods, if I do not belong to the same "shibongo" (I. p. 360). The gods of the royal family are invoked on behalf of the whole country, and have power to give rain to the land ; but it is the chief and his uncles who must approach and sacrifice to them. I have no right to do so. It is true that an exception seems to be made in the case of the gods of bitterness, or of the bush, who attack the traveller, although he belongs to another family. But this is indeed only an exceptional case, it being their kinsfolk, who neglected to bury them, who are most exposed to their wrath.

Another proof that they are men is this : although as gods they have acquired these divine ontological powers, they have made no real moral progress. They are not better than they were as men. Their *character* is that of suspicious old people, who resent any want of respect, or attention, on the part of their descendants. They wish to be thought of, and presented with offerings. It would seem that they are not actually in need of anything, for they live in abundance, but they exact a punctual observance of the duties of their descendants in regard to them. They must *luma*, eat the first fruits, and have their share of the tobacco leaves and also of the ground tobacco. They are jealous,
783 and avenge themselves when forgotten (1). The only sin which
769 seems to be deserving of punishment is to neglect them. There are, however, two other faults which they strongly condemn, and
776 for which they may even kill their descendants : the first is any serious *transgression against the law of hierarchy* (as we saw, when dealing with the sacrifice of reconciliation) ; they punish especially the young man, even though he be the chief, who dares thus to

539 (1) In a very interesting tale, which is unique, and which I owe to Camilla and have published in *Les Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, p. 264, we hear of the people of Mashaken, near Lourenço Marques forgetting for many years to make offerings to their gods. Famine ensues. The men go to the marsh to cut sugar canes. They are unable to break them, and the gods chase them away. The women, who come to a place where honey is flowing from a tree, try to take the combs, but their hands break off and remain fixed to the spot ! The bones order Sabulana, a young girl, to go to the sacred wood to sacrifice. She enters the forest and sees the gods assembled. They say to her : "Tell your people that they have sinned, because they have tilled the ground and harvested without presenting us with any offerings. Now we are glad, because they have come to invoke us." This story was told me as a tale, not as a legend of the sacred woods.

encroach upon the right of the *regular priest*, which is a great 783
taboo ; secondly, they kill a man who loses all restraint in sexual 769
relations ; when any one yields to that sin, people say : "The 776
gods will lead him into the thick bush and kill him there." To other sins they are quite indifferent. Mboza even asserted, with a sadness which reminded me of the complaints of Asaph in Ps. LXXII, that men of bad habits do not fall ill or meet with misfortune ; the cough only attacks the good ; wizards bewitch them and do not go to the bad fellows, "for the gods see that they are not worth anything!"

In conclusion, I should say that what is wanting in the conception of the ancestor-gods, as compared with the God of higher religions, is both transcendence and the moral attributes.

III. *General Characteristics of Ancestrolatry.*

If I had to characterise Thonga ancestrolatry, I would say : 771

It is a *spiritualistic* religion, in the sense that no idols are adored ; there is neither idolatry nor fetichism in it. Spirits and spirits alone are worshipped.

It is an *animistic* religion, as defined in the preceding chapter, the categories of spirit gods being numerous, and these spirits being worshipped in order to win their favour, and propitiated when they are angry.

Though consisting essentially of offerings and prayers, which are distinctly religious acts, *it is mingled with magic* to a considerable extent.

It is a *particularistic family* religion, each family having its own particular gods. We may also see in it the beginings of a *particularistic national* religion (the great mhamba).

It is a *social* religion, its prescriptions being aimed at keeping alive and strengthening the hierarchy, which is the main feature of the social order.

It is an *unsacerdotal* religion, there being no sacerdotal order, but at the same time the priesthood of the elder brother is strictly enforced.

It is a *non-moral* religion, by which I do not mean that it is *immoral*, i. e. opposed to the laws of morality, but that it has no, or at least very

845 starvation, or strangled by a rope. It was buried in a broken
847 pot, like other infants (I. p. 165), just below the surface of the
766 ground, a hole being left for the air to enter, so that the "spirit (moya) may go out," in order that, for the mother also, the "spirit may get out," may be able to fly out and not close (the passages), this being a primary condition of her having other children (1).

845 But even the death of one of the twins is not considered sufficient
756 to remove the curse. Directly after birth a particular doctor is
783 sent for, who keeps the drugs needed in such a case. Shimhuntana and Manganyele were the medicine-men who were capable of dealing with the twin defilement in the district of Lebombo, and Ñwashihuhuri of the Matimela family in the Zihlahla clan. They were held only to be surpassed by the medicine-man who treated cases of leprosy. The mother has to leave the village immediately, and they build for her a miserable little hut behind the others, where she goes to live with her twins. Her former hut is burnt with all her possessions.

In *Zihlahla*, all the women assemble that same day and start out in all directions, North, South, East and West to draw water in old calabashes from all the lakes and wells of the neighbourhood. They go skipping along, and singing

"Mbelele! Mbelele! Let rain fall"

This is the mbelele song (p. 318).

Then they return. The mother is seated with her two babes in her arms. They throw the water over her, intoning all the while the same monotonous refrain. This ceremony is to begin the removal of the "misfortune of twin birth, which is a death," (khombo dja lihahla, dji nga lifu). To complete the purification the magician gives to the father and mother a certain drug, which is kept in the Matimela family. The mother will put some of this into the little milombyana calabash, containing the diet-drink of newly born infants.

In *Khosen* the purification is performed by the medicine-man

(1) Even if a child dies at the age of ten days or more, if it is buried in the ground, its grave must be quite shallow; for if it were buried too deep the mother would have no other children.

alone (See *Les Ba-Ronga*, p. 414). He pours his drugs into one of the pots brought by the women, adds to them the psanyi of the goat sacrificed for the occasion, and pours all the contents on to the shoulders of the mother, who holds the babes in her lap. After this he pours from some other pot, which contains pure water, and the woman conscientiously washes herself and her children all the while. Until her purification no inhabitant of the village is allowed to eat anything, and the following day it is taboo to work in the fields, for this would prevent the rain from falling. 845 756 783

Amongst the *Nkunas*, the mother of twins sits at the entrance of the hut, and the drug is poured over the roof above the doorway; it leaks through the thatch on to her, and thus both the mother and the hut are purified at the same time.

This preliminary purification being thus accomplished, the woman goes to live in "her shelter," outside the village. She is absolutely shut off from all the other inhabitants. She has her own pots, axe, mortar, pestle, and does all her own cooking. Nobody even pays her a visit, and people only speak to her from a distance. Her children see no one but her. To each is allotted one breast, always the same. To help her in the nursing of twins the mother must "buy" a girl, to whom the care of one of the children is committed. This is a law. It is taboo for a girl, even should she be the elder sister, to "play" with a twin. The payment of £ 1 or ten shillings removes this taboo and the defilement (shisila) connected with it. 845 853 [671] [784]

Women fear that, if they touch anything belonging to the mother of twins, if they smear themselves with her provision of fat, or if the defiled one smears herself with their fat, they will also incur the dreadful misfortune of giving birth to twins. For this reason it is taboo for a mother of twins to draw water except at a certain spot. She must select one place and always go there. When she returns from drawing water, she must pay attention to the little wreath of grass which she wears on her head to help her balance her pot; it must not be thrown away with those used by other women, for fear that they also should become contaminated (tekela). 845 784

845 All these regulations[1] clearly show that, for the time being, the
184 mother of twins, like the widow, (I. p. 200) is regarded as outside
783 the pale of society. But her defilement is worse than that of the widow ; so, in order to be purified from it, the rite of *lahla khombo* (casting away the malediction) through which she must pass is much more severe. According to Mboza she must "deceive" four men one after the other, in the bush, all of whom will die. She hears that so and so says *djoo-djoo*, viz., becomes livid, that his body swells, that he is dead! She knows the reason. He has taken her defilement! Perhaps the fourth does not die but only becomes consumptive. These men have been pointed out to her by the divinatory bones. Each time she succeeds in performing the purification ceremony described in I. p. 205, she informs her medicine-man, who "prepares for her a vapour bath." Afterwards, she goes to reside at her parents' house, has relations with a lover, and gives birth to another child. Then her purification is complete, and her husband goes with 10/- to fetch her, and bring her home. The lover completed the removal of the "buhahla" i. e. the condition in which a mother of twins is. He has washed her (hlampsa). A new hut will be built for her, furnished with new utensils, and the ordinary family life will begin afresh.

845 As regards the twins themselves, they do not pass through
853 the ceremony of presentation to the moon (I. p. 52) as other children do. They are weaned earlier ; immediately after the reappearance of the menses the mother begins her *lahla khombo*, which at the same time is a *lumula*, a weaning of the children. They are then fed with goat's milk.

845 Twins are not liked by other people. They are looked upon as bad characters. When the little ones begin to crawl, and chance to go towards the other huts, people throw cinders at them and drive them away, saying : "These are children of Heaven. Be off! You annoy us!" If any ordinary child has a particularly bad disposition, they often say : "You are naughty! You are just like a twin!" — "Hahla dja karata" — "Twins are troublesome" is another common saying ; and if a child is really exceptionally difficult to deal with, people say : "It is a twin! You cannot do anything with it! (A dji koteki!)"

[1] [See pp. 433-435, Cat. 116 -- Analyst]

Special precautions are taken in respect to twins when they 845
pay a mourning visit. One of the grave-diggers meets them at the 765
entrance of the village and says: "Do not fear, Children of Heaven." He then puts some ashes on their heads and on their fontanelles. This is done because twins are feeble (ma ni bushapu) and the defilement might affect them more than other children. They must therefore be protected by smearing the middle of the head, and the "extremity of the tree of life," viz., the fontanelle, with a preventive. The mother also undergoes a similar treatment. She must prostrate herself near the hut of the deceased, at the place where the wall has been pierced to make an exit for the corpse. Then the grave-digger brings some live embers in a broken pot, pours a little water on to them, and dips his fingers into the water; he then presses both his hands against the woman's belly and brings them round her waist, pressing them all the while against the skin, until they meet on the spine; thus she is "cured inside" (dahiwa ndjen). This will prevent her from suffering from internal troubles, to which she, having given birth to Tilo, Heaven, is particularly liable. (Comp. I. p. 151) (1).

From this brief description of the customs connected with twins 845
in most of the Thonga clans, it may be seen that their explanation [783]
is twofold: 1) The birth of twins is a death, consequently a 772
defilement, indeed the worst of all defilements. Hence the 789
purificatory rites which bear the character of *passage rites*: the mother is secluded and passes through a period of isolation, after which she is again admitted to society after a painful "casting away of her misfortune." 2) But the cause of the defilement is not an ordinary death, but Heaven. *She is Heaven*; she is said to have

(1) Another category of persons bearing a special relation to Heaven are the 184
albinos. Cases of albinism are not frequent amongst South African Natives, yet they
are sometimes met with. They are called in Thonga *Khalandlati*, a word which 826
means literally *charcoal-lightning*. It is believed that they have been burnt (hisa) by
lightning in their mother's womb before their birth. "Ba tlalile, a ba wupfanga, ba 772
hengiwi hi tilo," viz. "they are uncomplete beings, they are not ripe, they have been
hated by Heaven"; these are the terms in which they are described. They are not 845
however regarded as taboo (yila), they merely inspire disgust (nyenya) (p. 83). As
regards women suffering from this kind of disgrace, other women do not smear themselves
with the same ochre as they, lest they should give birth to albinos; they do not drink
from the same cup. Men do not marry them, and in this respect they are classed with
leper women and witches, who are also looked on as repugnant.

seeing grains of Kafir corn, which are of a dark colour. Grains of 751
mealies are softened in water, pierced through and made into 755
necklaces which patients wear round their necks, whilst the spikes
of Kafir corn, which are to be found in every hut fixed to the reeds
of the roof as seeds for the next season, are carefully taken away and
hidden somewhere in the bush during the whole time of the
epidemic. Should the malignant form of small-pox develop 755
notwithstanding all these precautions, the headman will shake his 782
head and tell the parents of the patient : "Hahlani! — Make an 783
offering." But in this particular hahla no real offering will be
made, and the prayer will not be addressed to the ancestor-gods.
The principal words of this prayer are : "Mavuzane, dhlula!"
These are Zulu expressions which correspond in Ronga to :
"Mabutise, tlula!" i. e. "Questioner, pass on your way!" Who is
this Questioner? It is small-pox itself, Nyedzana, which is more or
less personified and looked on as a real and terrible visitor coming
at given intervals to examine the country and search for sinners.
The great sin which Questioner especially wishes to discover is
baloyi, murder by witchcraft. Let the patient then confess the
acts of bewitchment which he has committed, and he will be
spared. If he conceals them, small-pox will kill him. Suppose
that the patient so seriously ill is a grown-up woman, the wife of one
of the men of the village. Her parents will first be called. The
headman and all the inmates of the village will attend the meeting
in the hut. "Confess your guilt!" they will all say to the woman.
She may answer : "No! I am not a witch" *(A ndi noyi!)* They
insist : "Do not hide anything." And under the strain of their
questions she may say : "Yes! I am a walker in the night! I have
eaten so-and-so! I have eaten my own child!" If the patient is a
little child, his father will have to make the confession in his stead.
He will take the infant in his arms and say : "Mavuzane dhlula!
Questioner, pass on your way! Yes! We are baloyi. I have
taught my child to eat human bodies! But we will not persist in
our bad doings! Go away and leave us in peace!" (1).

(1) We have here one of the cases in which an impersonal force of Nature is treated as 782
if it were a personal being endowed with superhuman power, and invoked. The prayer

755 When the disease has run its course, and the pustules have dried
783 up, a day is appointed on which the marginal period will come to an end, and the clan return to its regular life. This return is marked by the special *Reintegration and Purification rites*, which aim at removing the defilement acquired by the disease. The main purificatory rite, that which regularly closes a marginal period, is *the smearing of all the huts* with a new layer of clay, either mixed with cow's dung or not. The old ground is for ever covered. It is a way of saying : "Behold, the former things are passed away, everything has become new." On the morning of that day, every patient must go and wash his body *on the road*, as if to pour all the filth of the disease on to it. Moreover, the ashes found in the fire-places inside the huts, the necklaces of mealie grains, the implements used by the people who have been seriously ill, sometimes their garments, the ochre with which they anointed themselves, all the things which were employed in connection with the scourge, are collected and thrown indiscriminately on to the large paths, preferably on the places where two roads cross each other, a rite which is by no means altruistic, and still less antiseptic! We shall see shortly how it is to be explained.

828 *Nervous diseases* are peculiarly feared by Natives. *Melancholia*
755 is believed to be caused by those spirits of possession which will form the subject of the next paragraph. *Idiocy* has no remedy ; nothing can be done with an idiot : "It is death! It has found him!" (Mankhelu). *Delirium* (mihahamo) is cured by *Mbulula khutla*. The patient must enter the hole from which clay is taken for smearing the huts, and is washed with a decoction of the drug when in this hole. Moreover a stick of the same tree is cut and kept in the roof of the hut, and the person who sleeps with the patient will take it every night and place it near his head. "Thus we kill delirium." (Mankhelu). — Another form of insanity is called *rihuhe*, "the disease which comes from far away with the winds" — "ri pfa timhehwen" (Mankhelu). A drug is prepared with the *shiromo* root, mixed with the lung of a sheep and the blood

782 to Small-Pox (with capital letters) may be compared with that pronounced when an imprecation has been uttered or when someone wishes to cancel his oath (p. 399).

828 then fixed across the hole in such a way that he will be unable to
758 withdraw it. When he wishes to walk he is obliged to drag along the heavy log. He very soon loses his strength, being ill-fed, and covered with vermin, and dies in a terrible condition.

*

* *

757 In our study of these various treatments, we have met with about twenty different prescriptions of Native physicians, containing, in all, some 40 to 50 different drugs, to be made use of in various ways : outward application, inhalation, fumigation, infusion, decoction, inoculation, manducation of carbonised or pulverised drugs, etc. We are then entitled to assert that, up to a certain point, the Blacks do possess an *ars medica*. To complete our review of medical matters, I must further mention a few curious practices of the Thonga doctors, which forcibly remind us of those to which our own practitioners sometimes have recourse.

Let us begin with *cupping*. A full account of this will be found in the story of the "Gambadeur de la Plaine" (*Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, page 357) where a young girl resuscitates a buffalo by performing this operation. She proceeds as follows. Water is boiled and in it is placed the packet of roots required ; a spot in the temporal region is carefully washed, and a few incisions are made with a razor (likari). A particular horn (nhluku ya ku lumeka), which is open at both ends, is placed over the incisions and the operator, putting his mouth to the horn, draws in his breath, causing the blood to flow freely. The wound is then exposed to the vapour emanating from the boiling *shitsimbo* packet, and smeared with a particular ointment, kept in a calabash.

[783] The next in order of the practices which we are noticing, is the *phungulo* (Dj.), or *hungulo* (Ro.), a kind of *Turkish or vapour bath*, which is administered in certain complaints and also after the funeral rites, in order to remove the contamination of death (I. p. 145). A circular enclosure is made, with a screen of matting, in the middle of which the patient is placed, and, close by him,

757 cautery is done *with the foot*. This is undoubtedly a curious proceeding! Kōkolo gave me a detailed description of it. A hoe is made red-hot; an obliging individual lends his foot, a foot which has rarely been encased in a shoe and possesses a sole with a skin like leather! This natural sole is rubbed with the leaves of a plant called *Shungwe*, which has been chewed and mixed in the palm of the hand with saliva and grease. For the same purpose Mankhelu employed a fat containing among other ingredients, the following drugs: *Hlampfura* and *Ñwambula-wamitwa*. Then the obliging operator places his foot on the red-hot hoe and, with a quick movement, plants it on the spot to be cauterised, the patient being hardly able to bear the contact. As for the owner of the foot, the horny sole is apparently so thick that he feels no pain at all. This is the remedy for the *shitjebe blood*, probably pleurisy.

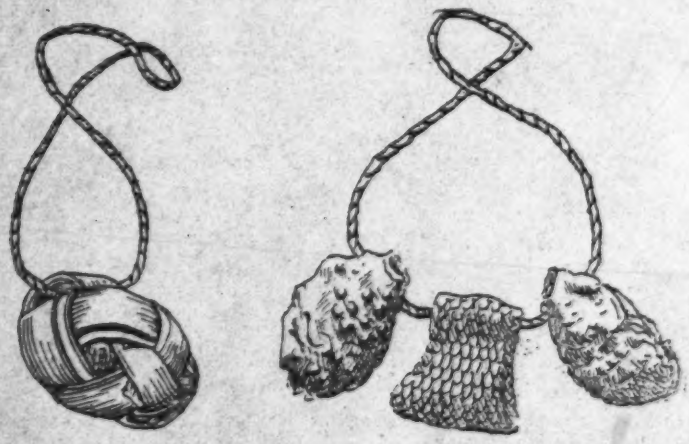
755 783 The last practice to be noticed, the one by which the doctor gives his patient a clean bill of health, is the *hondlola* or *hondla* (Ro.) or *horola* (Dj.); it is a ceremony of purification, performed *after the cure is effected*, to remove the defilement (nsila) of disease. "In this way," says Mankhelu, "we disperse (hulurisa) the blood which has made the patient ill, so that it cannot return to him violently." The hondla is obligatory after all serious diseases and after weaning. I have described how it is performed in this latter case (I. p. 59). According to Mankhelu, a sacrifice is always made in connection with the hondlola. In the case of adults, a goat is slaughtered. The doctor having carefully taken a piece of each limb of the goat, prays "by means of them" to his gods, saying:

> You so and so! This is my ox which I have slaughtered... Give me strength (ndji thwasane matimba) that I may cure this man. I have no other drugs! I do not add any others to those which you gave me. So give me strength; accept me with both hands, that I may be able to cure.

The psanyi of the goat is then mixed with various drugs, especially the *Shireti* and the powder of the calabashes. The patient, sitting on a mat, rubs his whole body (tihorola) vigorously with this psanyi; all the particles (timhore, or timhorola, or

timbhorola) which fall on the mat are carefully gathered together, 783
and the bones are consulted to know where they must be thrown 755
(See Letter D). This is the *tumba* rite, following the hondlola. The bones may perhaps have indicated a hole in the trunk of a tree, or the river, or the mud of the marsh, or an ants' nest, or the entrance to a molehill. The physician takes the timbhorola in a piece of broken pot, or sala shell, and introduces them into the hole, which he closes with a little clay ; he has with him water in a little calabash, of which he takes a sip and says : "Tsuu! or

[751]



Fowa and timfisa, medico-magical amulets.

pheuuu! Let the misfortune remain here." On the way home no looking back is allowed : this is taboo. Should the tumba be made in an ants' nest, and should the ants themselves close the hole, this is a very good sign! The bones may perhaps order the particles contained in the sala shell to be placed in another kind of ants' nest, made of grass ; the ñanga will go during the day and prepare a place for the shell. In the evening, when it is dark, he will put the shell into the hole without looking back towards it. The ants will take all the timbhorola down into their nest, and so "the misfortune will remain with them." (Mboza.) — The 751
hondlola rite is generally accompanied by the preparation of 755
protective amulets (timfisa). The nails and hair of the patient are 783
cut, put into small bags of lizard skin and tied round his neck.

751 One frequently meets people wearing this ornament, which also
755 aims at making the cure permanent. Sometimes the nails are those
from one hand and foot only. The *psirungulo* i. e. the astragalus
783 of the slaughtered goat, or the beak, claws and some feathers of the hen (p. 410) are also tied round the neck of the patient. This is the *religious amulet*, whilst the lizard bag is the *medico-magical* one. Convalescents are moreover provided with the *fowa*, a kind of rattle, consisting of a root called *sungi* (there is no connection between this word and the sungi of the circumcision school, I. p. 77) contained in a kind of round box made of palm leaf which is tied round the ankle. This is intended to protect them against the perspiration of those who have sexual relations (p. 358). They sometimes wear a little piece of reed filled with a protective powder, as do also nursing mothers during the whole nursing period (1) (I. p. 48).

[527] The hondlola rite also marks the moment when sexual relations, which had been suspended during the disease, are resumed. Celebrating as it does the victory over disease, the day of hondlola
756 is regarded as a fête-day. Beer is prepared as a mark of gratitude to the doctor and "to rejoice his heart." It is also the day of reckoning ; the physician must be paid. This individual has not, however, waited until now to ask for a "refresher." From the commencement of the case it has been necessary to *pfula hwama*, that is to say, to lift the cover of the medicine wallet by means of sixpence or a shilling. At times he has been very anxious to change the medicine, in order to produce a greater effect ; on such

751 (1) I may here mention two other articles which are frequently worn by Thonga Natives: one is the dried seed-pod of the flower of the large Protea bush (sugar bush) which is so common on the slopes of the Drakensberg. It looks like a hard brownish cone, all covered with concentric layers of little square ledges. This cures *vertigo*. Why? No doubt because when it is turned round rapidly, it makes the spectator giddy. It is hung round the neck with a string. This curious remedy is brought back from the Barberton mountains by those who go to work in the Transvaal. The second is a bracelet often seen round little children's wrists, and is made from the skin of a kind of tawny mole, called *tju'unyana*, which digs its burrows almost on the level of the ground. You can see the earth a little raised all along its track. The *Filaria* parasite, which is often met with in our tribe, also creeps under the skin in a similar way (p. 343). See illustration No. 5. These are two new instances of the principle "similia similibus curantur." Bags filled with snake powder are also often worn as a preventive.

village is at once removed. Leprosy is called *nhlulabadahi*, the disease which is stronger than the doctors. It is very much dreaded ; lepers are not, however, segregated ; they live in the village with other people and even attend beer-parties, but they bring their own mugs, whilst every other guest receives a drinking utensil from the master of the village. 758

Another disease which is believed to be contagious is "possession" by the *Bandjao spirits*. Should you pick up on the road some object which belonged to one of the possessed, his madness will jump to you (tlulela). — Epilepsy is also dreaded on that account. A nursing woman must not see any one suffering from an attack of this disease, or the child which is on her shoulders will become epileptic. 753 828

Speaking of the conception of disease, I must remind the reader of the fact that *sexual relations* between the inhabitants of the village are believed to aggravate the condition of the patient dwelling in it (I. p. 133, II. p. 358), and are consequently forbidden during epidemics and in any case of serious illness. Hence the precautions which convalescents must take of wearing the *sungi*, as we have just seen. 753 834

4) The special rites which mark the end of an illness throw much light on the Thonga conception of disease. A serious illness constitutes a marginal period either for the individual concerned, or, in the case of an epidemic, for the community, and the hondlola rite is the method by which the patient is reintegrated into society ; it clearly has the character of a passage rite. The rubbing with psanyi, the removal of the defilement of disease, the throwing away of the "timbhorola," the cutting of nails and hair, all these are rites of separation from the period of disease, whilst the feast of the hondlola day, and the resuming of sexual relations (1) are rites of reintegration. In the disease of possession, as we shall see it is the reintegration into the society of spirit-possessed persons and amounts to an initiation. 753 783 184 756

(1) We often hear of a Christian woman, who has gone to a heathen medicine-man for treatment, having sexual intercourse with him. We generally attribute this fact to immorality alone, but it was probably a part of the treatment, at the precise moment when sexual taboos were removed.

753 In the case of an epidemic, it is the whole clan which passes
184 through the marginal period, and all its members have to perform
755 the reintegration rites, by means of which they re-inter upon
783 normal life.

But these rites have another meaning as well. They aim at "dispersing the disease." In the hondlola proper, the particles which have fallen on the mat during the rubbing operation are cast away into an ants' nest; this is the *tumba*, which corresponds to the throwing away of all the "nsila", i. e. the "filth" of the small-pox patients at a cross-roads. In this case the body of the patient is also washed at that spot; this is likewise done at the conclusion of measles. The same idea underlies all these customs, that by their means the patient or clan will *definitely get rid of the disease*. Disease forms an organic whole, an important element of which consists of the dried perspiration of the patient, the dirt covering his skin, the implements he has used during his confinement, the dust of his hut, etc. All these are thrown either into an ants' nest to be disposed of there by the insects, or on to the road to be trampled under foot by travellers. The latter, by coming into contact with this filth, will at the same time take upon themselves the disease which it represents and carry it away into far distant countries. Thus the request of the medicine man will be granted, (I. p. 55, II. p. 393): "Let the bad blood go to Nkhabelene, to Shiburi... to the ends of the earth." I do not think that in this apparently hostile act of throwing the dust of a contaminated hut on to the road Thongas are actuated by the wish that travellers should be infected with the disease. Their principal aim is to disperse the contagion according to the principles of communionist and imitative magic. It is however dangerous to tread upon it. It is one of those "makhumo" which can cause disease.

000 The medical system of the Bantus is mingled to such an extent with superstition and error that very little reliance can be placed upon it. The question which I put at the beginning of this section is therefore very difficult to answer. What is the duty of the White Government in regard to the Native quacks? The ideal would be to replace them by fully qualified, civilised doctors. As this is impossible, let medical missionaries at least be encouraged, and their number increased, and

756 Another rite, which is observed after the hondlola only, is
the *haza*, viz., the monthly purification of the exorcist. He
783 fills his gobo calabash with a decoction made of the roots of the
821 mphesu and ntjebe trees, drinks the whole, tickles his throat
with a feather and vomits the medicine. "A tibasisa ndjen"
— "he purifies his inside." This is done at every new moon.
The connection between the possessed and the moon, which was
first established by the fact that he had *thwaza*[1] as well as the
moon, is maintained and intensified by this rite.

2) Propitiatory rites.

751 Besides these protective drugs, the exorcised wears a necklace
756 made of little pieces of a creeper called *mayambatju;* tied together
with a munganazi string. See the second necklace in the
782 illustration. This is intended *to calm his gods*, and to scatter
158 them when they desire to come upon him with violence. This is
indeed a great danger ; the exorcised is liable to nervous attacks of
a dangerous nature, especially during the first few weeks following
the exorcism. Perhaps his song is heard in the distance. Then
suddenly he is seized with madness, and furiously assaults his
neighbours with the small hatchet, or the assagay used in the
dances. People run away ; or, on the contrary, they collect and
begin to clap their hands, and make their infuriated companion
dance and sing his own song. This may help to dispel the spirits,
and calm him down. Sometimes, feeling uneasy, foreseeing a
crisis, the poor man himself asks them to sing. But he may also
be led, in his frenzy, to the bush, far away, unconscious, quite
mad, tearing his clothes and his skin with the thorns. This often
happened to Ñwashinhwana. Her husband then followed her,
and, when the crisis was over, saw her fall down exhausted and
brought her home ; there, having returned to her senses, she
became very sad and wept bitterly. So, in order to avoid being
tormented, the exorcised propitiate their spirits ; they worship
them, in truth, and this gives birth to *a new religion* totally different
from ancestrolatry, which has its rites and its duties.

756 As already pointed out, the exorcised has *his own altar* in his
778 hut. It is the forked branch, round which a circle of raised clay
782

[1] [Sec p. 495 -- Analyst]

II. *The sexual and language taboos of the sungi.*

881 The whole sungi is taboo to every uninitiated person and
831 especially to women. A woman who has seen the " shondlo ",
834 viz. the leaves which the circumcised put over their wound,
784 and which form their only clothing, must be killed. But taboos abound for everybody. The sexual taboos are most noteworthy. Sexual intercourse is strictly prohibited to all inmates, men as well as shepherds ; breaking this law would kill the circumcised. Therefore the men must not go home, or at least as seldom as possible, during these three months. Married people in the village may have sexual relations ; but there must be no noise, no quarrels between jealous co-wives ; because, if they insult each other and if this is known in the sungi, the shepherds will come one evening and plunder that village. Strange to say, in the meantime obscene language is permitted and even recommended— a contrast which we shall often meet with during the marginal periods. Some of the formulae contain expressions which are taboo at other times ; when the women bring the food to the sungi, the shepherds who receive it from their hands are allowed to address them with as many unchaste words as they like. The mothers themselves have the right of singing obscene songs when they pound the mealies for the sungi.

192 As regards language, there are also special expressions used
881 during the school which are either archaic or foreign ; for instance, all orders are given in a tongue which is neither Thonga nor Sutho: Tshai goma, Go to the table ; Thari, Eat ; Khedi, Smear with white clay, etc. Often actions are not designated by the ordinary word, but by unusual terms. For instance, the daily smearing of the bodies with clay is called : " to eat sheep's fat. " To put on the leaves of the shondlo is " to eat sheep's flesh. " To be beaten with the mbuti sticks is " to drink goat's milk. " Evidently the aim of this terminology is to increase the impression of mystery which the rites must convey to the uninitiated.

866 As regards the rites of the marginal period, they are calculated
881 to give the candidates the impression that they are new men,

584 On the appointed day, they go and sit outside the village of
574 the fiancé and cough to announce their presence. The same strange proceedings begin, but this time it is the damsels who make difficulties and the young men must beg and entreat them to enter first the village, then the hut, and then to sit on the mats and to accept food. Each of the groomsmen is most attentive to the girl he chose at the preceding meeting and, to obtain her good will, he generally gives her a fowl or the equivalent in money. In the early morning the visitors rise, go and get water, warm it a little and pour it into basins before the doors of the huts, so that, on that day, the inhabitants of the village will make their ablutions with water fetched by them. Then they go and do feminine work, acting as servants of the fiancé's parents. Thus they remove the ashes from the fire-place and throw them on the ash-heap close by; they cut the wood for the young men's mothers and light the several fires of the village. They pretend to leave when the sun sets, but no one will hear of it, and they must spend another night. At last, on the following day, they go home, accompanied by the young men and again, at parting, knot grasses together. On the day of the *koroka* definite arrangements are made for the wedding.

3) Taboos of the betrothal period.

584 The two families which enter into relation with each other by
574 marriage must observe many taboos (See Part II). Here are some
784 of those which are enforced during the visits of *tjekela* and *koroka*:

1) The visitors must not eat all the mealie corn on the spike;
262 they must leave a few grains on it.

2) They must not tear off the leaves which are round the spike. When they have eaten all the corn, they rearrange these leaves in such a way that the cob seems not to have been touched.

3) They must not "make a hole in the pot" (bobota hotjo), viz. they leave a portion of the liquid in the beer pot, they do not empty it entirely.

4) It is forbidden to return home in rain when one has gone

584 to *tjekela*. You must wait for fine weather, otherwise it is an
574 insult to the future father-in-law.
784 5) If, during the visit, you eat monkey nuts, you must not
262 take off the thin skin which covers the kernel.

6) The suitor—the owner of the oxen—must not eat black fish that day. Only his friends have the right to do so. These fish, a kind of barbel, are to be found in the lakes (as that of Rikatla) and in the Nkomati river. The suitor will not partake of them for fear lest the girl he wishes to marry should slip through his hands like a fish. Moreover this fish is black: it might bring darkness, unhappiness.

7) Neither must he eat honey during his visit, because honey like the black fish, is slippery... Honey flows...

8) He is also forbidden to eat fowls, because cocks and hens scratch the soil with their claws, scattering it about; thus the marriage "might be scattered (hangalasa bukati) before it is ripe". In the Tembe clans, formerly, any solid food was taboo until the families had killed an ox for the feasts.

These taboos are not the proper taboos of a marginal period, as if the betrothal were considered as one of these periods. They are family taboos, belonging to the category of those dictated by the mutual distrust of two allied families.

585 The wedding feast consists of two parts: the *lobola feast*, viz. all the ceremonies connected with the remittance of the lobolo which takes place at the bride's village, and the *tlhoma*, viz. the bringing the bride to the bridegroom's village. Should the lobolo have been entirely paid at once, these two ceremonies will follow each other without much delay. If the sum of money or the number of oxen is not complete, the *tlhoma* will very probably be postponed.

4) Lobola feast.

a) Preparations.

585 On both sides, the friends are informed that the feast is close
273 at hand. The bride's family in particular must prepare in good time, as they have to provide the beer which will be consumed in

says : "Nsati wa mabele u nga nabele loko u nge na bukosi." — "Do not covet a woman with large breasts if you have no money..." This does not mean that she will cost more, but her father, knowing that she will not want for suitors, will not consent to let her go unless the full lobolo is paid at once. On the other hand a girl with an elongated face is admired more than one who is too broad-faced. Of the first they say : "She is pretty, she resembles an antelope" (a kota mhala) ; of the second : "She is chubby-cheeked, she is like a sow." A light complexion is preferred to a very dark one, because the white or yellow races are regarded as superior, and a Native laying claim to any European or Asiatic blood is proud of it. Parents, who also have their say in the question of marriage, insist on two other points ; the working capacity of the girl, and the absence of any witchcraft blot in the family. Should her mother have been convicted of being a witch, the girl will be feared. However, every girl finds a husband in the land where polygamy flourishes. If he be slow in coming, she will apply to her doctor, who will prepare the *love charms*, which will make her "appear," so that she will be noticed by the boys (See page 100). If even that does not succeed, she has other means at her disposal and may go herself to make proposals to a man (wopsana). He is seduced by her, and constitutes himself a thief who has *tlhuba*, viz. "taken in marriage by abduction" (See page 119). The parents will claim the lobolo and he must pay it. Marriage and childbearing remain the only carreer to which a Thonga woman can look forward. Hence a number of special feminine taboos which are very curious.

2) Special feminine taboos.

Some of them concern girls *before childbearing* and cease after parturition. In the Tembe and Maputju clans, girls must not eat pork, because pigs root nervously with their noses ; the future child would also move its head from one side to the other, when on the verge of birth, and this would make delivery difficult. Other

Other

animals are taboo for girls : the *hare* because it is too cunning ;
262 and the antelope *nhlengane*. This antelope raises the foot when
823 it hears a noise ; hence the idea that its leg is hollow and that
784 it perceives the sound through it. The child would do the same,
562 if its mother were to eat the meat of the nhlengane. It would be unable to hear with its ears, only with its hands!

The *legs* of fowls (tibias) are also taboo for all women, because the hen scatters the sand... So are the *hoofs of oxen*, and *pigs' feet*. A woman eating them would walk too much... She would go everywhere to look for husbands!

784 It is taboo for a girl to *walk amongst pumpkin plants* (maranga),
562 to pluck the fruits. She is only allowed to pluck those which can
824 be reached from outside. Were she to transgress this law, she
751 would emit a bad odour, and no boy would court her. Her mother, having no fear of being despised, can walk amongst the pumpkins. A second taboo relative to pumpkins is this : unmarried women must cut a "pumpkin nose" (nhompfu) viz. the end of the stem, and fix it at their waist when plucking the pumpkins, lest they get abcesses in certain regions of their body.

784 It is taboo for them to eat cooked *oxen blood* (bubendje).
262 The following taboos apply also to *married women*. They are
562 not allowed to eat what is called *nkopfu*, viz. some parts of the
843 bowels which are cooked together with the stomach of the ox. "It would spoil the child inside." The *testicles*, which are generally given to the uterine nephew when the meat is distributed according to the laws, and the *underlip* of any animal are also forbidden to them. So is also the *tongue*... because it is reserved for old people as a mark of respect! The *rectum* (gobana) is taboo for women and children. Children might make unseemly noises from the rectum! Women must abstain from *porcupine* and *monkeys' flesh* ; all their offspring would resemble these animals. Such cases have happened, it is said! Women must not eat *eggs* ; they would run a double danger : their child might be born bald and remain so ; or they might be like a hen, which runs in all directions when laying an egg. They would have no peace in child bearing! (See also page 101.)

Nubile girls, during their "tiwheti," must not *approach the*

Nubile girls during their "tiwheti" must approach the *oxen kraal* and look at them. The cattle might suffer, be attacked
284 by a bad cough (mukhulwane), get thin! This taboo is instituted
826 to protect the oxen, not the human inhabitants of the village, as D.
562 Kidd says is the case amongst the Zulus. (Part IV. Ch. I. E.)
262 When women have passed the time of child-bearing, most of
[886] the taboos cease, and they can eat monkeys and porcupine if they wish!

3) The first year of married life.

581 I shall not return to the subject of marriage rites, which have
562 been fully explained in the preceding chapter. Let me say that, though a Thonga woman cannot imagine life without marriage (ku kandja bukati), she does not enter on the new state with any enthusiasm. Her parents have warned her that she will be illtreated, accused of witchcraft and adultery, etc. Her sisters bewail her fate on her wedding day in song. The fact that she has been paid for, though it does not constitute an actual sale, puts her in an inferior position (See Part II).

562 During the first year, she has no *ndangu*, viz. no fire-place of
264 her own. She cooks for her mother-in-law. During the three
585 first weeks the husband eats with her and with the girl who accompanied her to her new home. Afterwards, he goes back to eat with the men. In some places it would seem that the husband eats with her the whole year, until she has her own pot (hlembeto).

4) Husband and wife.

593 What are the relations between husband and wife after the
571 honey-moon? Of course they vary very much according to
517 the character of both. As a rule however, the married people
+ have very little intimacy with each other; the man remains with his companions on the "bandla," the village square where they meet, and only occasionally comes into the "ndangu," the reed enclosure of the fire-place, which is the true domain of the

843 754 to hinder the child from growing and to put in its place, by means of her enchantments, a snake, a hare, a quail or an antelope!

834 846 [886] After the birth, owing to possible contamination by the lochia, sexual intercourse is prohibited till the rite of tying the cotton string (p. 56) has taken place. It is then allowed, but conception must be avoided till weaning, when relations are resumed in the normal way, and this goes on till the time when the woman is no longer able to bring forth children. I know of no special rules in connection with the menopause.

*

* *

831 But, amongst Bantus, sexual relations are not an individual affair, as amongst nations more advanced in evolution. There is a mysterious relation between them and the collective life of the community. Hence the fact that, on certain given occasions, they are recommended, even ordered, or prohibited.

1) Cases of recommendation.

833 783 587 829 Sexual relations must take place on two principal occasions : when the inmates of a village abandon it and go elsewhere to found a new one, and when the widows perform the painful rite of "lahla khombo" (to cast away misfortune). We shall see, when studying these customs, that sexual relations have here a twofold signification : 1) they "consolidate" the little community in its new abode, viz. they strengthen its structure by confirming the authority of its chief ; 2) they provide the principal means of getting rid of all contamination, especially of the defilement connected with death. (Annotatio 13.)[1]

2) Cases of prohibition.

834 784 581 829 753 Married people are not considered as being in a state of defilement, as mourners are, for example. Yet this class of persons, called "ba-ku-khila," constitute a danger for those members of the community who are in a weak state of health. They must not come in contact with the circumcised, because in that case their wounds would not heal properly.

1 [See pp. 518-519 in these categories or in V6--Analyst]

834 They must not enter the hut of a person dangerously ill; this would
784 hasten his death. People who are just recovering from a disease, when
381 they walk about on the paths, must tie around their ankles the root
829 called sungi, which will protect them against the perspiration or
753 emanation left by married people in their footprints, because, as one of my informants said, "ba-ku-khila ba hisa," viz. married people are hot.

834 Moreover not only individuals but the whole social life would be
836 endangered if sexual relations took place when the community itself is
581 in a critical position. They are prohibited therefore in wartime, during
829 the whole duration of hunting parties, and also during the marginal periods. Strange to say, this law does not apply so severely to unmarried boys and girls amusing themselves according to the "shigango" custom (p. 97). It seems that it is not the act in itself which is tabooed, but the act in as much as it is accomplished by regularly married people; in this case only has it a bearing on the life of the community.

What is the reason of these prohibitions? "Married people are hot." What does this aphorism mean? The following rite may help us to understand it.

831 In the Malulele country, when the whole population enters a lake
834 to kill fish according to the tjeba custom (Part IV. Chap. I), a little boy
326 and a little girl are chosen and laid down under a lion's skin, as if they were husband and wife, and told to remain very quiet during all the time
829 the grown up people are fishing. Not knowing anything about sexual
789 intercourse, they will obey; then the fish also will keep quiet and
771 will be killed easily. Why? Because there is in the sexual act something wild, fierce, passionate which, according to the law of correspondance which is at the base of all Bantu magic, has an influence on the hostile forces: these will be excited and more difficult to overcome: enemies in battle, the animals of the bush during hunting and fishing parties, disease, danger of contamination at death and during the marginal periods. Life is, so to speak accelerated by the sexual act, and this acceleration is communicated to the whole of Nature. Therefore: Keep quiet, be continent!

This profound conception of life also explains why so often certain actions must be accomplished by children, not yet able to have sexual relations, or by old women who no longer practise them.

Let us remark that all these rites do not belong to Animism, properly speaking, but to Dynamism (Part VI. Chap. I), which plays a part almost as important as Animism in Bantu primitive philosophy.

606 these bukoñwana rules would cause death. Yet they are religiously kept as necessary to ensure normal relations between the two families.

We have already seen the taboos which must be observed during the betrothal period (p. 106). Later on, during the gatherings which take place *before marriage*, other taboos are imposed.

606 802 201 584 784 1. In the discussion concerning the lobola, when oxen are counted, the bridegroom's parents must never offer eight head of cattle, because one of them will be killed for the feast, and so eight means only seven. *Seven* is counted by raising, one after the other, the five fingers of the left hand and the thumb and index-finger of the right. In raising the index-finger, they might point it at the bakoñwana, and this would be a mortal offence. To point at anyone with the index-finger is as bad as bewitching him. It is done only in anger, and all the preceding discussions might be nullified if such an imprudence were committed.

2. Should one of the oxen be frightened by the shouts of joy with which the arrival of the herd is greeted and by the sham-fight of the lobola day, and run away home, it is taboo. The ox has seen that something is wrong and has consequently fled. Even should they succeed in bringing it back, "timpfalo ti tjukile," the conscience (or the diaphragm) has been stirred!

584 825 777 784 3. If one of the oxen has no horns (homu ya mhulu), or only abortive horns, psa yila: *bukoñwana byi ta pfumala timpsalu*, viz., the relations with relatives-in-law will have no tenderness, because such an ox moves its head to and fro as it wanders in the night; it is abnormal. The bride's family will not accept it.

4. Should the lobolo consist of hoes, and should the rain fall on them while they are being carried to the b[illegible]ana, it is taboo. The lobolo must not be brought in a w[illegible]on, otherwise the new relations will be spoilt (bukoñwana by[illegible] tshipa); the young people will not be able to marry.

5. Do not bring with you tobacco in the leaf when going *bukwen* as a fiancé, bring only ground tobacco, or misfortune will happen. Later on, when you have married your wife, it is allowable.

6. Never eat zebra or reedbuck's meat when staying with your parents-in-law. Should they kill one of these animals while

584 you are there, or on the road, have nothing to do with it. The
825 zebra is *mbalamberi*, an animal of two colours; moreover it has no
777 horns. The same holds good for the giraffe. It has two colours,
784 it has too long bowels. Psa yila! The reedbuck cries: "Dzoo." It is a witch: a mukoñwana must not eat it. For the same reason a sheep without horns is never given to bakoñwana.

7. When you go with women to the parents of your fiancée for a *shiwala*, viz., to bring them beer, should one of the jugs fall to the ground, psa yila! Return home!

606 8. From a Thonga of the Maputju country I once heard that it
609 was a great taboo in that district for a man to drink milk with
784 his parents-in-law; let us say rather to *eat* milk, as Natives
618 always take it in its solid form, i. e. curdled. This man was a
825 Christian; he had given up many heathen customs and had gone
177 so far as to partake of milk with his mother-in-law, but, the people all round were very much shocked at his conduct. Pushing my inquiry further, I heard that the milk taboo was observed not only with bakoñwana, but with all the inhabitants of the country who did not belong to one's clan; curdled milk was to be eaten only with people bearing the same family name. In other words, it is forbidden to eat milk *in any village where one can take a wife*. In a very interesting paper published in the *South African Journal of Science*, 1925, p. 481, Mrs A. W. Hoernlé says that this custom is wide-spread amongst many Bantu tribes of Central and South Africa, and explains it by the very intimate relationship which is thought to exist between human beings and cattle. The oxen are one with the clan to which they belong, and only members of that clan can partake of the milk of their cows. I never met with this idea in the other parts of the Thonga tribe, and I may remark that, as the Maputju clan is settled very near to the Zulus and has been more or less "zuluised", this custom might very well have been borrowed from its neighbours. Further researches will show whether the other Thonga clans have preserved what seems to be a very old Bantu idea, or at any rate traces of it. This is quite possible.

584 9. Do not build a hut for your wife before you have married
777 her. Mankhelu says: "Even if you have plenty of money
784 to lobola, if you make such a blunder your wife will be taken from you.

777 784 from you... In the same manner, do not prepare the skin for the child before it is born. Your wife would not bring forth a human being. Should you transgress this rule, you would bring misfortune on yourself (wa tihlolela, wa singita), and on your family. If you go to Moneri (the missionary) and ask him for a skin for this purpose before the birth of your child, he will tell you it is so." Note the deep-rooted conviction of the old heathen, who appeals to the authority of the missionary to strengthen the taboo!

585 784 777 262 10. Later on, when you are married, you must avoid eating honey with your wife for a whole year, till she has had a child. The bride is allowed to eat honey at her parent's home, but not in her new domicile and with her husband. The husband can eat it in the bush, but he must wash his hands when he comes back, lest his wife should notice it. She would run home if she knew of it. We have already met with this prohibition in the tjekela visit, and heard the reason for it: honey flows; the bride would go! The explanation now given is this: honey is too sweet, and your bride is too sweet also. (Is it not your honey-moon or honey-year?) The two things do not go together. (Psa yalana, they hate each other.) A third reason is this: Bees, when they have eaten their honey, fly away from the hive. So would your wife do... After a year this misfortune is no longer to be feared.

606 581 This last idea is very curious. It shows that the bukoñwana taboos *decrease in severity as time passes*. The strained relations between the son-in-law and his wife's mother also become easier. He begins to call her mamana, and she calls him ñwana. This transformation even goes so far that in some cases a mukoñwana can go and dwell in his parents-in-law's village, especially if he has children and if the children are grown up. And this fact gives us the natural explanation of these curious rules.

Marriage, as we have seen, is not an individual affair in the collective stage of family life. It is a contract made between two groups, which enter by it into a special relation towards each other. This relation is fraught with danger, because the interests of both groups are involved; a bride and bridegroom are inspired with a mutual feeling of fear, knowing that an

247 (L.), with its white or pink blossoms, which have spread all over
331 the coast.

Having now finished our first general inspection, let us add some details about the huts and the open places in the village.

342 The hut, the construction of which we shall describe later on,
784 (Part IV) has an opening (nyangwa) of variable dimensions closed by a door. In some parts of the Gaza country it is so small that one must positively crawl to enter it. Everywhere one must at any rate stoop low (korama). As regards the *threshhold* (ntjandja wa shipfalo), it is not taboo to step over it. The headman's threshhold however is dreaded because it was treated with medicines when the hut was built, so it is taboo to sit on it ; these powerful medicines might do harm and
342 even cause death. In the middle of the black clay floor is a
354 kind of raised circle, in the centre of which fire is occasionally lighted in winter on account of the cold. It is the interior *shitiko*. Cooking may be done here if it rains ; glowing embers sometimes remain on it during the night and numberless babies have been burnt to death by falling into the fire while their mothers were
513 sleeping. On the left, on entering, is the sleeping place (shilawo)
853 of the wife, on the right that of the husband. They both however
841 generally spread their mats on the right and sleep beside each other. It is only during the tabooed periods (menses, nursing), that the husband must keep to his own particular side (p. 188).

353 The back of the hut is generally occupied by the big basket (ngula) in which clothing and seeds are kept. This spot is called *mfungwe*. In the roof *(lwangu)* are fixed or suspended various articles : ears of sorghum or millet, cobs to be used as seed at the next sowing, assagais, sticks and knobkerries etc., and against the walls one frequently observes rough drawings made with white clay, or, in the vicinity of towns, chromos of Queen Victoria, Edward VII, or Don Carlos, as the case may be!

361 The hubo and the bandla differ from each other. *Bandla* is
351 a Zulu word which has supplanted the Ronga term *shisiso*, viz.,
562 "the place where one finds shelter from the wind." Men light a small fire there to warm themselves. They also eat together

621 396 nature of that social unit, the Thonga *muti*. I shall give the sequence of these rites first in the Northern clans, according to the description of Viguet, and secondly amongst the Ba-Ronga, according to Mboza.

I. *In the Northern clans.*

621 1) The headman goes first to examine some spots where he 787 would like to build. He *breaks small twigs* from various trees 784 and brings them home.

2) The bones are consulted and help in *making a choice*. The 833 twigs are placed on a mat one after the other. When the stone of the *kanye* (see Part VI) falls in a certain way in front of one of the twigs, this shows that the tree from which it has been broken is the one near which the hut of the headman must be built.

3) Building material is collected. When everything is ready to proceed to the construction of the huts, the headman goes with his principal wife to the spot chosen. They leave the old village for ever ; they must not return to it any more. In the evening they have *sexual relations* in the new place and in the morning they tie together some tufts of living grass. Next day all the people of the old village must come and step upon this grass. This rite is called to *tie the village* (boha muti).

621 4) Then begins the period, of about one month, called *buhlapfa*, 595 time of moving, which has its laws. Two great taboos dominate 784 it : 1) Sexual relations are absolutely prohibited. Should any 834 one transgress this law, he has sinned gravely against the headman ; he has stolen the village (yiba muti). The headman will be ill, perhaps paralysed. The guilty woman will also be punished : she will not be able to bear children again ; she will be "tied by the village" (bohiwa hi muti). The culprits have "crossed the way of the master of the village" (tjemakanya). Strange to say, the headman himself is bound by this law. He must have no relations *with his younger wives*, because the village belongs to the principal spouse. Should such a transgression be discovered, the work

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of building will be stopped at once and the little community will find another place to which to move! Moreover the guilty woman will have to ask the principal wife for forgiveness. 2) A second great taboo is this : — No one must wash his body during the whole "buhlapfa", as this might cause the rain to fall and it would interfere with the building operations.

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5. The building of the huts begins immediately, each man making the circular wall first. When all the walls are ready,

Carrying a roof.

the *roofs are carried* from the old village to the new by all the men together. They lift each roof on to their shoulders, after having removed the old grass, and go out of the village, not by the main entrance, but by one of the back gates which has been widened for the purpose. A broad road has been prepared through the bush. They follow it, marching as fast as they can, and singing the obscene songs which are reserved for special occasions (see Part VI). In these they insult the women who accompany them, carrying the baskets, the mortars, the pestles. "The village is broken in pieces, so are the ordinary laws. The insults which are taboo are now allowed" (Mboza). This suspension of morality in speech is only allowed on the day when roofs are carried to the new village. Some days later, again, the women will take their revenge when they smear the floor of the huts ; then they too will sing their songs, insulting the men. But

621 entrance and finishes his walk at the other, hanging upon it the
789 branch with which he has been sprinkling.

782 10) Then he sacrifices a hen. A young man accompanying
756 him cuts its throat ; the doctor plucks some feathers from the neck, sacrifices in the ordinary way and invokes his gods : "You used to treat villages (daha miti) with these drugs and I do the same. I do not act of my own wisdom ; you have given it to me. Bless this place, etc." Then he plucks a feather from the hen's right wing, and suspends it at the main entrance or in the main hut, inside, over the door, according to the directions given by the bones. This is the *shirungulo* (see Part VI) and the act is called : "to tie the village" (tjimba muti).

621 Amongst the Rongas, there are some other *buhlapfa taboos*. It
372 is not allowable to light any fire in a village until it is completely
787 built. During the whole building period, cooking is done outside the fence ; crushing mealies in the mortars and dancing are also
789 prohibited. Whistling (ku ba noti) is forbidden, as it might call
198 the wizards inside the village before it has been protected by the charms.

621 If a man has many wives, he may build a second village for
595 himself and establish one of them there. A grown-up son, the son of the woman, will represent the headman in that village, but the law of "tying the village" will also be observed in this case. The headman will perform the act with this woman, and preside at the burning of the dried grass and of the medicinal pill, by which he *gives* the village to the inhabitants.

When a younger brother, or a son, leaves the headman and founds a village for himself (tihambela muti), he does it according to the same laws as those observed at the regular moving of a village.

III. *Some remarks on the rules of moving.*

621 Let us now analyse the two parallel sequences of rites which we have just described, and which complete each other. It is easy to discover amongst them three series of rites, social, protective and passage rites.

484 comes to ask for his property! What cunning displayed in confusing the real issue and evading payment! (1)

Travelling consequently plays a great part in the life of these tribes, and it is no wonder that it is subject to many rules and that many taboos must be observed on the road in order to succeed in these expeditions.

I may mention first the four following taboos.

484 A traveller must not *take salt* with him when he goes either to
777 pay a visit, or to hunt, or on a business trip, or else he will not
784 succeed in his object; he must avoid *sharpening assagais* on the road; this would rouse his enemies and "awaken thorns" on the path; he must take care *not to pluck milala leaves*, those used for weaving baskets: it would be an insult to the people on whom he is calling. Let him cut these leaves when returning, or else he will find trouble in the village to which he goes, lamentations, shoutings, disgusting sights. When he finds on the road people occupied in *digging a grave*, he must go at once and help them for a while. If he neglects this duty, he will take upon himself the misfortune (titekela khombo). He will not succeed in his purpose. Should he be in the village when some person dies, he must take part in the purification of the inmates.

825 There are some kinds of animals which bring bad luck to the
777 traveller. In order to "keep the road clean" (basisa ndlela), he
484 must beware of the *mampfana bird*, a kind of crane called "the preventer of the journey" (sibaliyendjo (Ro) shitsinyariendjo (Dj). Should this bird fly across the road, with wide-spread wings, it would be enough to make the party return home: there is danger of death before them and the "mampfana" comes to warn them

609 (1) One day one of my neighbours, named Mandjia, was arranging to start for
484 Bilene to "follow his goods" (landja bukosi); he came and requested me to give him a letter. "What for? Your debtors do not know how to read and I do not know anything about your affairs." — "It does not matter," said he. "The important point is that I should have a paper in my hand. They will be afraid. They will think that I come from the White people with their authority." I did not like to refuse a small favour to a neighbour; on the other hand I was somewhat reluctant to help him in a none too moral plan, so I gave him a letter addressed to the Portuguese Intendant of these countries in which I stated that I knew him. It was a kind of pass... What use did he make of it? The fact remains that he came back with his oxen, and I believe the sight of the mysterious paper was not without influence in the transactions which ended in the recovery of his property!

574 travellers be refused the customary hospitality in a village and
609 incur misfortune later on, the chief will make the people of that village responsible and they will have to pay a fine. In Gungunyana's country, warriors were sent to plunder such a village. Lack of hospitality, however, is not considered as a taboo (yila), because "it does not kill ;" it is a bad action (biha).

Now-a-days, customs are beginning to change ; hundreds of young men (magaisa) coming from the towns after working there, pass through the country, and it would be impossible to put them up and feed them all. They sleep on the *bandla* and cook food for themselves, occasionally buying some mealies or a hen from the inhabitants. Moreover they have plenty of money and they can pay !

609 It must also be added that, if they dispense hospitality liberally,
618 the Thongas can be very hard on people who do not belong to
761 their special clan. Feelings of humanity are sometimes strangely deficient. I heard of a [illegible] of the Manyisa district who had fallen down near the lake of Rikatla, unable to proceed further on account of a bad wound received while working on the railway at Lourenço Marques. Nobody took pity on him because he was of another clan, and he would have died there if a Christian woman, named Lois, had not received him in her village and nursed him. Fear of death and its contamination may partly explain this want of compassion for strangers.

784 As already mentioned, it was formerly taboo to enter the village square wearing boots. These boots consist of sandals
643 made by the hunters for their long trips through the thorny
677 bush. They were not allowed on the hubo. A subject was not permitted to sit on a mortar or on anything else ; the chief alone could do so, and it was considered a sign of pride to sit on anything but the bare ground!

609 The habit of offering a concubine to passers-by is never met with amongst the Rongas as it is in other tribes. Now-a-days
177 dissolute women may offer themselves. But they have learnt
574 from white men this new kind of immorality.

On the fate of the Thonga Village, see Practical Conclusions. V.

789 of most people! This honey comes from below. It is a hidden,
825 a mysterious thing. A little of it is added to the drug and the
787 mixture is poured into a double horn, viz., two horns whose large ends are firmly fixed to each other, the point where they meet being carefully covered with dung, which acts as glue. A hole has been made in the upper horn and the drug is introduced through this. It is a great means of divination. When war is imminent, the nyokwekulu begins to ferment, and exudes through the hole : "It knows all about war." So the country can prepare for it. No wonder that this powerful medicine is preserved with superstitious awe and the greatest care.

643 A place of honour is reserved for the magical horn in the
595 hut of the first wife of the chief. In the middle of the hearth
372 a perpetual fire burns ; it must never be allowed to go out ; it
824 is taboo. The wood used for it must be that of a tree found on the sea shore, and called ntjobori. The Makaneta sub-clan must furnish it regularly. It is taboo to take embers from this fireplace, which is called the royal fire, the medicinal fire (ndjilo wa buhosi, wa muri). Should the principal wife let the fire go out, then Godlela must be called on to light it again, rubbing together two sticks of a shrub called ntjopfa. The fire produced by burning this shrub is considered dangerous. It is taboo to cut its branches or to use them for the purpose of warming oneself ; the genitalia are said to swell when this law is transgressed (See Part IV). But Godlela does not fear; has he not his drugs to protect himself ? He can and must use ntjopfa to re-light the nyokwekulu fire, and he will be given a good reward for his work! The ntjobori, in burning, produces an abundant smoke which leaves a deposit on the horn, on the forked branch and on all the calabashes containing the provision of powder.

643 The queen Mimpanyanhoba who was in charge of the
372 nyokwekulu had no sexual relations with the chief on that account.
595 I do not know if absolute continence is always enforced on the
784 keeper of the sacred fire, as was the case for the Roman Vestal Virgins. But I have been told by Mboza that this woman prevented her co-wives from coming near her hut ; it was taboo.

643 The grass of the roof of this hut must never be removed, though
784 it may rot owing to the rains. It is taboo. One simply puts
356 a layer of new grass over the old one, a thing which is rarely done in the case of ordinary roofs.

643 In case of war, should the clan be obliged to leave the country,
789 a special little hut is hastily built in the bush and the precious medicine is deposited therein. There is no fear that the enemy
722 will take it, either Whites or Natives, because this hut also has the attribute of invisibility. This happened during the war of 1894 (1). In the case of the *mhamba* of the Tembe and Zihlahla clans it is different; the man who keeps it must run away with it and with the chief.

643 Such are the laws of the mphulo. This great medicine may
789 certainly be regarded as a part of the regalia, and the most important part. It is, for the chief and sub-chiefs, a means of strengthening their authority, as will be seen in the description of the luma rite. On the other hand the mphulo is a collective possession, the powerful magic means by which the clan resists its enemies or conquers them. It occupies the very centre of the national life.

789 In the Manyisa clan the war-medicine is called *mabophe*, and is
726 kept by a man called Chikiza, who belongs to the Ntjeko clan, not
643 to the royal family. He is said to have inherited it from his
787 forefathers. The medicine however belongs to the chief. It is administered as follows. The *ñanga* prepares small heaps of wood on the road, pours a little of the drug over them, sets fire to them and the warriors tread on the embers and extinguish the fire with their feet. This makes them invulnerable or at least protects them against fatal wounds. When they are ready to start for battle, the bones are thrown, and give the following intimation:
643 "Do not kill the first enemy you meet with, but catch him alive, be
789 it a man or a woman, and bring him to the chief." The chief, accompanied by some indumas, must stab him outside the royal
726 kraal; the body of the deceased enemy will then be cut open, and

(1) In the Nondwane the nyokwekulu is still kept by the heir of Maphunga, Magomanyana. The new chief, the usurper, tried to find it, but Godlela refused to give it to him. Thus Mubvesha has no *mphulo*.

643 619 seems to have been particularly feared. He had even bought poison from white people and is said to have killed his rival, Musongi, chief of the Maputju clan, with whom he fought the battle of Malangotiba in 1870. He sent a woman of bad life to Maputju. The woman succeeded in winning the confidence of the king and poured this poison into his glass. Nowadays the Ronga chiefs have been taught by the Authorities to sit in council when discussing matters.

643 The two principal prerogatives of the chief are the right of *luma* and taxation.

III. *The right of luma, and the first fruits rites.*

181 241 We come to a set of rites which might be dealt with when considering the Agricultural life, but I prefer to describe them here, as they provide us with a typical illustration of the constitution of the clan ; they are highly characteristic of the Bantu community, a community which is essentially agricultural in its pursuits, animistic in its beliefs, and hierarchic as regards its social and national life.

643 262 784 527 241 We have already met with the word *luma* and noticed that its ordinary meaning is *to bite* ; its ritual sense is to *remove the injurious character of a given food by a certain ceremony*. The luma is a necessity before eating the flesh of certain wild beasts, as we shall see when studying the laws of hunting (See Part IV). But it is of still more importance, and one of the great laws of the clan, that the official luma shall take place before the subjects eat the products of the new year. There seem to be two ideas at the root of this strange taboo :

1) To eat certain kinds of food is dangerous for one's health, and the first mouthful taken must be seasoned with the royal drug.

2) The gods, the chief, and elder brothers, have a prior right to enjoy the products of the soil. To precede them in doing this is a sin which would bring them misfortune. The hierarchy must be absolutely respected.

726 As regards the *order of the march*, the battalions of the young
701 men, stationed on either side of the entrance, go first ; they
643 form the advanced guard, the post of greatest danger. The scouts, tinhlori (Dj.) tinhloli (Ro.), go in front ; each company has its leader to whom these scouts bring reports. It is the duty of the young men to surround the position to be carried and to make the assault. The two sides of the circle then follow, and lastly the chest of the army, forming the rear guard. The chief thus brings up the rear, protected by the battalions of veterans. But generally the chief does not go to battle ; he remains at home.

726 During the campaign, *the whole clan is subjected to many taboos.*
784 Those who remain at home must *keep quiet* (rula). No noise
777 must be heard in the villages. The women must not close the
722 doors of the huts. It is taboo : their husbands might meet with "bitterness" (shibiti). They might lack strength to run away. Fire must be lit in the huts in the evening, in order that the warriors may "have light" where they are. It is taboo to omit this precaution. Work in the fields must be more or less suspended ; women may attend to it in the morning only, before the heat of the day, while the air is still fresh. "Then, if a warrior has stepped on a thorn, the thorn will be cool (titimeta) ; if he has knocked against a stump, the stump will be quiet and not hurt him. (Mboza.)" Old men who remain at home must keep watch, and if they see a messenger coming, they follow him to the chief.
765 Should he bring bad news, they do not inform the women, as it is
726 taboo to mourn over warriors killed in war before the return of the
834 army. A fine is imposed upon those who contravene this law.
777 It is taboo also to have sexual relations as long as the army is on the
784 war-path. This would cause thorns to hurt the warriors and they would be defeated. (Mankhelu.)

722 According to Mankhelu, the mukhumbi may be again formed after arriving in the proximity of the hostile army. The
643 battalions will be sent one after the other by the great ndjuna who
726 will watch the progress of the fight. If he sees his men giving way, he "pours" (tshelela) new companies to help those who are fighting until they rush the position (gwabula) and put the enemy to flight. Then the pursuit begins. The dust flies up

784 For additional taboos connected with animals and with hunting see pp. 63-71.

343 or in small storehouses hung to the branches of trees (mfunge). When the harvest has been plentiful and all the storehouses have been filled, then begins the happy time of winter, of beer drinking, *bumanga* playing, (I. p. 431) paying visits, etc.

II. *Agricultural taboos.*

241 784 The first category of agricultural taboos are those previously mentioned, which spring from the idea of *hierarchy* : the prohibition to sow pumpkin seeds before the elder members of the family, the prohibition to enjoy the first-fruits (Kafir corn, bukanye, etc.) before the gods, the chief, the headman, and the elder brothers have *luma* (I, p. 394). Others belong to the *special feminine taboos*, (girls not allowed to walk amongst the pumpkins, to pluck their fruit or to pick their leaves without certain precautions, I. p. 184). Another category is that of *shimusi*. Certain days are proclaimed by the chief, or fixed by custom, as sabbath days, on which no one is allowed to till the soil. In Ñwamba, when there has been a little rain, it is taboo for the people of the clan to work in the fields ; they must remain 241 at home. Amongst the Nkunas the day on which the new 754 moon appears is also shimusi. The moon must be left to "become 784 firm" (tiyela, hola) ; to cut roots while it is still "soft" is taboo : it 821 would cause strong winds and hail. Complete rest is also customary in Khosen the day following the birth of twins. (See Part VI. Chap. II). Some other taboos are due to the fear of *wizards* : it is forbidden to whistle in the fields after having sown or until the mealies are grown. This would call the "baloyi" and endanger the harvest.

241 784 It is a taboo for a woman to remain in a standing position when she borrows a living ember (woka) from people cooking their food in their gardens ; she must sit down when she takes the ember. Should she break this law, it would cause the mealies of the owners of that garden to be burnt (psha) ; the women has "crossed their gardens" (tjemakanya). However she does this, they

will call her on the day they begin to sow, and she will have to sow the first seed; thus she will prevent all the seeds from "burning." 241 784

But the most stringent taboos are connected with the *threshing of the cereals*. This work is exclusively done by women, and it is taboo for the men to approach the threshing floor. The Makanetas, who cultivate rice extensively, cut the ears and pile them into heaps in their own huts and not on the threshing floor. When the grain is dry, they thresh it by trampling on it. Should any woman pass by, it is taboo to speak to her. If she enters the hut and helps for a little while with the work, then the taboo is removed and you, the owners of the rice, can talk to her. — "Should you do so without that condition being fulfilled, this person would *take your rice* and leave you nothing but the husks (mataha). Should a relative, dwelling in the neighbouring district, come and see you whilst you are threshing rice, don't give her any part of your harvest: let her crush it in the mortar and take it away husked, lest you lose all your grain and keep the husks only! The husks of the rice which you give to your relative must remain with you." (Mboza). The same applies to Kafir corn. To allow a relative from outside to pluck ears from your garden, to thresh them and take them home means to "spoil your corn" (onha mabele). When you are threshing Kafir corn, let the visitor first take the pestle and help you before you speak to her.

As regards *tree culture*, it was formerly considered a taboo to plant foreign kinds, such as bananas, oranges, etc. When Mboza planted the first mango trees in Morakwen, people told him: "You will die! You have called misfortune on yourself (u tihlolele), and other people will eat your fruit!" I heard this taboo explained in Shiluvane as follows. When a man has been obliged to move, and leaves trees planted by him in his old village, people passing near the ruins shake their heads and say: "Look at those trees! They have chased away the master of the village." These two testimonies are interesting, and fitly illustrate the origin of a taboo. The desolation of a ruin has been connected with the presence of new trees, as they have often been noticed together. Hence the idea that the trees are 245 784 824

245 the cause of the desolation. Planting new trees is consequently
784 a taboo! Nowadays however, this superstition has died out,
824 and one may see a great number of mango, orange, lemon (1), and pho-pho trees in Thonga fields, on the Coast as well as in Zoutpansberg.

[351] Natives do not generally fence their gardens. Stealing is
685 therefore very easy and it is no wonder that they have recourse to
789 magical means to protect themselves. Here are some of them; they are characteristic instances of Bantu magic.

The *rihehlo*. This consists of a kind of mysterious influence exerted on the thief by throwing a magical powder into his footprints or by taking a little of the earth found in these footprints and treating it with the drugs. The inhabitants of the village where the thief lives will be seized by disease; this will induce them to come to the owners of the garden to confess their fault and pay a fine. Then the magician who had furnished the drug will give them a counter-drug and they will be healed! Amongst the Pedis, the magician anoints with his drugs the stem from which a cob has been stolen. Then the thief will feel intolerable suffering in his little finger and come to the village of the people whom he has robbed crying: "I have stolen!" He pays the fine, receives in exchange the counter-drug and the pain ceases! (Spelonken)

The tinhlamalala. This is the name of the central nervules of the leaves of the Hyphaene palm tree. They are like little snakes, very slender, and flexible. To make the resemblance still greater, the owner of a field makes a knot at the extremity of the rod: this represents the head of the snake. Then he looks for the dried skin which has been cast off by a real snake; he reduces this to ashes, makes a powder with these ashes and anoints the rods. He weaves the rods together to form a kind of crown and places it on one of the mealies stems in his garden. When the thief

137 (1) The lemon tree is called mbomu (mu-mi). This seems to be a Native word and the tree also may be indigenous in the country. It grows wild on the banks of the Lower Nkomati to such an extent that there is an island in the river, some distance above Morakwen, which is called Ilha dos Limões, Lemon Island. The lemons are of large size and their rind resembles that of the orange.

137 4) The *ntjopfa* (mu-mi), the wild custard tree, employed to
372 light the sacred fire of nyokwekulu (I. p. 388). It is taboo to use it for ordinary purposes, or to warm oneself at its embers. Medicine-men alone are allowed to make ntjopfa fire, having drugs to prevent the disease caused by its use.

372 Dealing with fire taboos, I may add that it is taboo to use
784 branches of a tree which has been struck by lightning ; taboo also to keep alight the fire of a deceased person after the conclusion of the great mourning. It must be ritually extinguished (I. p. 135). In case of misfortune also (khombo), if the bones order it, the old fire must be put out and a new fire be lighted on the central fire-place of the first wife by means of the wooden flint. Each woman will go and take an ember from it and start her own fire again. These laws show that in the eyes of the Bantus there is an intimate connection between fire and the life of the village. When death or misfortune contaminates the community, fire is affected also, and it must be destroyed if the village is to resume its normal life.

372 Gungunyana used to levy a tax on fire : he ordered all the
651 fires of his kingdom to be extinguished at a certain time, and sent messengers to relight them by means of embers procured from the royal kraal. Each village had to pay a tax for the new fire. It seems that this kind of royal right was exercised in the old times by the famous Monomotapa king. Nothing of the kind is met with amongst the more modest Thonga chiefs.

372 The manner of producing fire with the wooden flint is as follows. A dry branch of the tree is secured, from half an inch to an inch thick, and cut into two pieces, each of about 18 inches in length ; one half is called the wife (nsati), the other half, the husband (nuna). The first piece, the female, is laid on the ground and a notch is made in it with a knife ; the notch is cut in two movements : first on the upper part of the wood, secondly on the side of it. The male is then somewhat rounded, inserted perpendicularly in the notch, held firmly between the palms of the hands and made to revolve by a rapid motion of the hands from top to bottom. The operator having reached the bottom of

of the bush are also burnt as soon as the grass dries up, so as to obtain fresh grass as early as possible in the spring. In autumn, after the harvest, oxen are allowed to wander about in the gardens, where they eat the mealies and millet and sorghum stems, and find better grass. 231

The Thongas castrate most of their bulls ; however they keep one or two in each herd for breeding purposes. Strange to say, these beasts are generally very tame ; they are hardly any wilder than the castrated oxen. However, the boys sharpen their horns and excite the bulls of different herds to fight. They pour live ants on their foreheads to irritate them. They give them names ; e. g. Makonyama, the one who threatens on both sides, — Mombomakhele, the one who has curly hair on his head, the terrible one, — Ntlhontlha-ba-tsha, shisa-sha-munga, the one who beats the fire... people are burnt by the sparks as by embers of the mimosa tree, — Mabala-ya-tilo, the "stripes of heaven," — Mabata-bata, the one with many spots, etc. Many of these names are suggested by the colouring of the animals (1). I never heard songs in praise of the cattle similar to those found amongst the Ba-Sutho for instance. It does not seem that oxen have at any time played such an important part in the tribal life of the Thongas as is the case amongst Zulus or Suthos. 231 552

Women, especially those of childbearing age and having sexual relations, are not allowed to take care of oxen. It is taboo. When they require dung to smear the huts, they send little children or girls whose menses have not yet begun or who are at any rate unmarried, to fetch it from the oxen kraal. When oxen are sick, they are entrusted to the care of little girls, who must sometimes stay with them as long as two months without returning home. We have already met with these feminine taboos concerning oxen (I. p. 184) and seen that these prohibitions are based on the idea that the menstrual blood is as dangerous for oxen as for 231 562 841 784

(1) Native cattle are by no means of pure breed. There are many races which have been crossed : a small race with short horns and another with large lyre-shaped horns, probably brought from the Transvaal to the coast of Delagoa Bay. Madagascar oxen, with their strange prominence on the back, resembling zebus, have also been imported in great numbers into Lourenço Marques for butcher's purposes. Possibly some have been used for breeding.

231 men having relations with women during menstruation (I. p. 187).
562 Should a drop of it fall in the cattle kraal, this would endanger the
841 health of the whole herd. Women are even prohibited from
784 passing through a herd of oxen ; they must go round it, because otherwise the death of the calves would ensue. Amongst the Ba-Ngoni this taboo is so strong that a woman guilty of having transgressed against it was put to death (1).

231 The object of oxen-breeding is not milk but the acquisition
262 of *wealth* ; oxen mean wealth to the Native, a means of purchasing
556 girls and of thus increasing his family. Oxen are also bred for food, the meat being highly appreciated and divided amongst all the members of the family according to the strict rules previously explained (I. p. 329). The slaughtering is done by piercing the heart with an assagai, a painful and sometimes very protracted operation. This occurs at marriage feasts, at other family and national gatherings, at the sacrifice for rain (Part VI), and on special occasions, once a year for instance, when a headman wishes to feast his people. All, even neighbours who are not relatives and travellers, are welcome to the feast. Natives have wonderful olfactory powers. They seem to smell out the *lisuna*, viz., the peculiar odour of the meat, a mile off, and when an ox has been killed you see them emerging from the bush on all sides!

234 As regards *milk*, it certainly plays a part in the food of villages which are fortunate enough to possess a well-filled oxen kraal. The *milking* of the cows presents difficulties unknown in Europe! African cows have not yet learned to submit tamely to this operation! The calf must always be allowed to suck a few mouthfuls, then a boy pulls it away from the teat and the cow consents to be milked. Should a cow be too wild, they pass a string through its

241 (1) We meet here with an interesting instance of a superstition having no scientific
462 basis whatever, which is nevertheless productive of good results. Women must keep apart from oxen. Since the plough was introduced amongst South African Natives, they have been quick to notice that it is a very useful instrument, and have adopted it in many places. The plough has to be drawn by oxen and men alone are allowed to drive them. Thus women are relieved of the heavy work of tilling the fields which had been allotted to them by immemorial custom. It is probable that further knowledge will free the Natives from their old fear and from the taboo which resulted from it ; yet the idea that everything connected with oxen belongs to the domain of man will remain and thus real social progress will have been obtained through an absurd superstition !

224 dance over the carcase of his victim! Another was Mubandane, a
554 relation of Mboza, who lived in Nondwana. As is customary with
791 many Natives of the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques, he hunted elephants for a Portuguese trader, named Fonseca, who provided him with guns and powder. When ready to undertake his hunting trip to the north of Gazaland (Mosapa), he had to undergo a purification (hlambo). His medicine-man cooked a pot full of his drugs, washed him with the froth and poured the contents of the pot on the roof, over the entrance of the hunter's hut. Mubandane had then to stoop and enter his hut, the water leaking through the grass and falling on his shoulders. These words were pronounced by the medicine-man, during this ritual entry into the hut: "Go and be happy! Though the rain fall on you, though the dew make you wet, when you sleep, you will be everywhere as in a hut; everywhere it will be like home (kaya). You will have taken your hut with you, you will enter it in a wet state!"

224 Other maphisa were the hippopotamus hunters settled on the
784 banks of the Nkomati river, whose customs I shall describe later on.

In connection with their *hunting trips*, these professional hunters are subject to many taboos. As we have just seen, they must undergo a purification before starting, and also be inoculated in the wrists with special drugs, the most important being those of the tintebe (I. p. 479) the same which are used by the slayers of enemies in battle. Another favourite medicine for hunters is made from the piece of meat which is found between the heart and the lungs of big animals. In some cases they have to prepare themselves for their expedition by daily ablutions and by absolute continence for a certain number of days. The sacrifice of a fowl is also sometimes made before starting. It is taboo for adults to eat the meat of this fowl; it might endanger the success of the expedition. Little children may eat it: "they are quiet" (i. e. they have no sexual relations), and so the hunting will not be spoilt. When all these preparations are finished, the hunters start with their rattles, singing special songs, the songs of the hunters (Part V).

The trip itself may last for months, and constitutes a kind of

marginal period during which the maphisa must use protective medicines against the dangers of the bush, and keep certain rules. 224 784

As a protection they carry their charms, especially the *ndjao*, the root of a certain juncus which is used on many other occasions. As regards the taboos which they must observe, I will first mention those applying to travellers in general, especially the *salt taboo* (I. p. 339). Should they take salt with them, this would "precede them" (rangela), and they would kill no game. It will be soon enough to look for salt when they have killed. But the great taboo of these hunting trips is the *sexual taboo*. This was already imposed before starting and it must be observed Phroughout the expedition. The necessity of avoiding anything connected with sexual relations is so great that maphisa will take with them to cook their food little boys under marriageable age. What is the reason of this prohibition? I have explained it in dealing with the Thonga idea of sexual relations (I. p. 189). If the hunters transgress the law, the big animals will be so wild that it will be impossible to approach them ; they will furiously attack the men who have sinned, because they know them, and woe upon them! So much so that if the hunters see an elephant or a hippopotamus in obstinate pursuit of one of their number, they will begin to insult him for having spoilt the whole trip by his misbehaviour, and send him home. 224 784 834 825

The law of continence is also binding on *the hunters' wives* at home. It is true that when the absence of their husbands is prolonged for a very long time they may become unfaithful to them and the men, on their return, will find babies waiting for them which are not their true children. This will cause them no unhappiness, as these babies none the less belong to them, their wives having been duly bought, and the time for fear is now passed, as they have returned home safely. The fact that these men welcome the children born during their absence caused me to think that hunters' wives were not subject to the sexual taboo as their husbands are. But further inquiry has shown that this is not true. Old Makhani assured me that incontinence on the part of the wife at home would have as a consequence that the husband would be attacked and killed by wild beasts far away in the desert. 224 784 837 851 752

224 784 These women must moreover observe certain rules in their everyday life. They must smear the floor of their huts only early in the morning or late in the evening, viz. at that time of day when their husbands are not busy hunting ; then all will go well with them. Thus the behaviour of the wife has its effect on her husband's fate. Sometimes she will take a plate, fill it with attractive food, call her children and distribute it to them in order that the husband, when passing through the villages in the far-distant country may be well treated by the inhabitants of the land. Should a death occur in the hunter's village during his absence, it is very dangerous for him! It was for this reason that Makhani was attacked by a buffalo which injured his skull! Those at home must expose themselves to vapour baths (mahungulo, I. p. 145) in the early morning and late in the evening, as in the case of smearing the hut.

The aim of these practices is in the first place to protect the hunter against the fury of wild animals ; but it is also to make him a man of the bush through and through. Mboza said : "The hunter must forget everything about home. Were he to have relations with women, his charms would get heated, whilst they must remain cool (titimeta). He must himself become a man of the bush (wa nhoba), similar to the animals which are found there. In this way, they will not fear him, nor will he fear them. If he sees a lion devouring an antelope, he will dare to approach it, kneel before it, clasp his hands and say : 'You, lion! give me some meat, that I may eat ; I am hungry!' The lion goes slowly away and leaves the antelope to him!" When they have killed enough game, the maphisa cut the meat into strips, which they take home. When they return they stop at the main entrance of the village. The headman comes to them, greets them and offers a hen in sacrifice on their behalf, to thank his ancestor-gods for having saved them from death. Should one of them have died during the journey, they fire a volley on arrival and are not allowed to enter before having undergone the purification rites.

Hunters must not give meat to eat to people "who are bad" (la'ba bihiki), i. e. to their wife just after a birth, to women during

menstruation, to persons in a state of defilement. This would 224
"spoil their gun." When they go to attend the burial of a relative, 784
they fire a shot upon reaching the mortuary village. Thus the ball which was in the gun at the time of the relative's death will be expelled ; was it not contaminated? Moreover the hunter will wash his gun ; without these precautions the weapon would not kill anything in future.

These maphisa are very jealous of each other. Some of them 224
try to destroy the power of a rival by securing a part of an animal 789
killed by him ; they subject the meat to a treatment which was not explained to me ; they then bury for instance a bone thus smeared ; after which they are convinced that their rival will no longer be able to dispute game with them. Therefore when a hunter distributes meat to other people, he keeps for himself a little piece of each limb in order to prevent a possible enemy from "going away with his meat."

Let me now pass in review the *more important kinds of big game*, 224
and I will reproduce as literally as possible the information gathered from Thongas of all parts of the country with regard to each of them. Some of my readers, upon reading these extraordinary statements, will no doubt exclaim : "What does all this mean? Are these actual facts or pure imagination or folklore?" All three elements are certainly represented in these stories, but I think it would be useless to take much trouble to distinguish between the three. My endeavour is not to produce a scientific zoological treatise but to find in these accounts a means of penetrating more deeply into Bantu mentality ; and there is no doubt that the study of hunting rites has a great deal to teach us on this subject.

The *eland* (*mhofu*, Oreas canna) is a splendid beast, highly 224
coveted but dangerous to kill. Viguet says : "It possesses the 825
nuru. When you kill it, it is taboo to walk round its body. Go straight to its head, and there, in the hair of the forehead, you will find a louse ; take it. Then dig in the earth where the head has fallen : you will find a root tehre ; cut it off and bring it home together with the louse. Then you are safe!" (—Other people add : "Remove its eye before cutting it open, if you wish to escape the

immediately after these acts, he sets off with his sons ; they close 224
the drift where the beasts leave the river by placing a canoe across the track. The hippopotami are in the neighbouring forest, busy feeding, and perhaps ravaging the fields. When they return to the river, they stop in front of the canoe which obstructs their retreat : the first assagai is then thrown at them. It has been smeared over with the Strophantus powder. The animal rushes into the water ; when it reappears on the other side, it is pierced by a second assagai. These assagais are arranged in such a way that the blade, which is provided with hooks at the sides, is not firmly fixed to the handle ; moreover a long string is twined round the handle connecting it with the blade. So, when the hippopotamus enters the river, the assagai which is planted in its skin is separated from the handle, which remains floating and acts as a buoy ; the string unwinds and the handle follows the animal as it retreats, showing in which direction it has gone.

As soon as the assagai is thrown, somebody runs to the hunter's 224
village to inform his wife. The woman must at once shut herself 784
up in the hut and remain perfectly quiet. She lights a fire and 789
keeps it burning the whole time. A little child brings her her pipe
(old Ronga women are great pipe smokers). She must neither [276]
eat nor drink ; or, if she is very thirsty, the child will bring her some water. In any case she must not crush her mealies; she must not go out of the hut except to satisfy her natural wants. Why ? Because if she were to move to and fro in the village, this would induce the hippopotamus to rush wildly upon her husband and possibly kill him. Moreover the fact that she remains confined within the circular walls of the hut will have as a consequence that the wild beast will be in some sort imprisoned in a small space ; it will not be able to run far away and escape.

We find here a characteristic instance of the two kinds of magic which we shall explain later on : the communionist magic according to which the different parts of a whole act and react on each other (the great wife, whose life is in close connection with her husband's life, saves him by her quiet demeanour) and the imitative magic according to which like acts on like or produces like (the confinement of the woman within the

224 walls of the hut prevents the hippopotamus from escaping from the
784 circle formed by the canoes on the river. (Similar customs are found
789 amongst many primitive peoples. See Part VI. Ch. I.)

224 Then all the hunters of the village are called ; they enter the canoe and follow the beast. To facilitate the pursuit, they replace the floating handle of the assagai by a *male*, viz., the big nervule of the leaf of the mimale palm tree, resembling a pole of 30 feet in length. As soon as this species of pole is fixed, somebody informs the woman at home that she can come out of the hut. But let her be prudent, as victory is not yet won. The hippopotamus will come to the surface to breathe : an assagai will be thrown into its nostrils and later a second ; it will be no longer able to close its nose when plunging and will be drowned. But it may attack the hunters furiously, instigated by the spirits of baloyi (wizards) which are riding on it "just as men ride on a horse!" The fight will perhaps last a long time!

When the hippopotamus has at last been killed, songs of rejoicing burst out on all sides ; the hunters bring their canoes together and row in the direction of the village, singing the whole time special songs which are called *nyangamela*. The peculiar cries of the women are heard on the hill, their "mikulungwana." They come to the shore to meet the men. The great wife, having now been entirely set free, comes dancing and singing. The carcase is left on the sand till low tide (the tide is perceptible for a long distance in the Lower Nkomati river). Then all the hunters assemble to proceed to the two great hunters' rites, the lurulula and the luma.

First the *lurulula*. I have obtained a more precise description of this rite from two new informants. The beast is laid on its back, and its forelegs are pulled out on both sides, so as to separate them from each other. The hunter who has killed the beast takes his *ndjao* root, chews it, together with the butimba medicine, blows pieces of it into his hands, closes his eyes and introduces himself, creeping on his belly, between the forelegs ; he then creeps along the side of the hippopotamus, anointing it with the medicine which is in his hands. When he reaches the hindleg, he squeezes it with both hands, does the same to the other hindleg, creeps

totems, and do not exclude certain meats from their diet on account of totemic fears. But they proclaim as taboo some animals: amongst them four kinds of birds, the hawk, the vulture, the crow and the stork, because they are used by magicians to prepare powerful charms; the toad, because when teased its "urine" (murundju) oozes out and is dangerous, causing itch, as is generally believed; a kind of Tenebrionida beetle (Psammodes Bertoloni), called *shifufunu sha paripari*, because it strikes the ground with its abdomen, making a noise represented by the word *baribarr*. I could not discover the particular danger feared by the Natives in connection with this beetle, but there must be one; hence the yila. We have already met with the special feminine taboos as regards food (I. p. 183). Women abstain from certain animals, or parts of animals, fearing an evil effect on parturition. Amongst the Nkunas, women are also afraid of the meat of the leopard, the civet-cat, of any animal with paws (psa marubo); they only eat animals which have hoofs (psa masondjo). "The former are wild beasts, things of the hubo (I. p. 311), with a bad smell, food for men" (Mankhelu). 262 826

The comparison of *nyenyá* and *yila* is interesting, as it may help to explain the origin of certain taboos, which is a very important subject indeed. The nyenya is the feeling of disgust which induces a person to abstain from a given food; in the yila there is, in addition, the dread of a supposed danger connected with the consumption of this food. Thus there is a great difference between the two: the idea of danger does not exist in the nyenya. However, it is quite possible that what was merely a nyenya has evolved, in the course of time, into a real yila or taboo, in which the disgust is no longer the mere individual repulsion for a distasteful food, but has become a social matter, a characteristic custom of a clan, or of a group. 262 784

Let me quote two instances which came under my personal notice. Amongst my servants was a young man belonging to the Ngoni clan. The Ba-Ngoni, being of Zulu origin, do not eat fish. Sometimes the cook put shrimps into the ground nut sauce: this was a treat to all the boys, as they are very fond of shrimps and the addition greatly improved the flavour of the dish. But our Ngoni boy, having smelt the "lisuna," used to inquire about the sauce, and if he heard that there

262 were shrimps in it, he disdainfully refused to take his share. — "We
784 are Ba-Ngoni! We do not eat fish," he said with disgust. First, shrimps are not fish ; he was "plus royaliste que le roi!" Second, he did not abstain from the sauce because it had an unpleasant flavour ; it was more tasty than ever! But the *social idea* dictated his attitude. He boasted of belonging to a superior race. He was not like these wretched Ba-Thonga who eat fish! It would be lowering himself to partake of such a meal, so he preferred to fast.

I witnessed the same scene when we were distributing cakes to our school children in Lourenço Marques. One of the girls was the daughter of a pure Ronga woman and an Indian Mussulman. She inquired if the cakes had been cooked with lard. The cakes were excellent, and she found them so, nevertheless she refused to eat them if they contained lard, because her father was not allowed to eat pork. It is evident that there is but one step from this clan repulsion, which is still a nyenya, to a definite taboo. Let the boy or girl *fear* that some evil will happen to them, because they have transgressed a sacred rule, and the nyenya will become a yila. Let it be admitted by them that the transgression of the rule may bring death to the family or the clan, and the primitive individual feeling of disgust will be transformed into the most severe collective taboo. I can quote no instance in proof of this evolution, as we have no knowledge of the past history of the taboos. From the psychological point of view, however, this process is quite within the range of possibility.

III. *Fishing.*

226 There are no particular restrictions to fishing so long as it is
821 carried on by *hooks*. Any one can go with his boat on the river, the lake, or the sea, and throw his line into the water. The fisherman will then say : "Thu! (not the sacramental tsu, but only an onomatopœia describing the fall of the hook into the water). You! my hook! they eat to their heart's content, people who dwell yonder, where they pound their mealies kneeling down (bugimamusi), there where the khwekhwe and the mhulu are, etc. (names of different kinds of fish)." Afterwards the fisher throws a pinch of tobacco on the spot where his hook

fell, not as an offering to the gods, but in order to help his hook 226
to see (hanyanyisa), to awaken it and "give it eyes to catch." This 821
sentence referring to the place "where people pound their mealies standing, or kneeling down," is an allusion to a curious cosmographic notion, which we shall explain later on (Part VI. Chap. I). Seeing the sky reflected in the water, the fisherman thinks of the ends of the earth, where heaven rests on the ground, and where women are obliged to kneel down when crushing their mealies, lest their pestles hit the sky!

There are three other principal methods of fishing, and, as they 226
are more or less of a collective nature, they are regulated by 784
laws and attended with taboos : the nhangu, the shibaba and the tjeba.

The *nhangu* is a triangular enclosure made of sticks stuck in the sand on the seashore. This enclosure has an opening looking seaward. The tide covers the nhangu, bringing with it all kinds of denizens of the sea, big lobsters, shrimps of all sizes, fish, etc ; when it retires, all these creatures are imprisoned in the nhangu, and try to find their way out through the opening ; this however is closed, and the fishers collect their catch, which is sometimes considerable. A man who wishes to build a nhangu must pay a tax to the chief of the country. During the operation he must observe the law of silence ; if anyone should speak to him, he must not answer. When the nhangu is ready he goes straight to his hut, and washes his hands, and then he can speak again. Should he transgress this taboo, the fish will rush about wildly in the trap and he will be unable to catch it. This is not a *kunga* proper (I. p. 124) but only another application of the rule imposed for example on the wife of the hippopotamus-hunter (II. p. 69). On the day of inauguration, (khangula), all the inhabitants have the right to come and partake of the result of the first fishing. This is a *luma*, the luma of the nhangu. The owner of the trap is not allowed to take a single fish home that day. Everything must be consumed on the spot.

The *shibaba* is another kind of trap, made of woven reeds, 226
which is placed on the banks of a river, of the Nkomati, for 834
instance, near the sea, within the tidal reach ; when the tide is

342 The *sill* consists simply of a piece of wood (ntjandja wa shipfalo) laid flat on the ground, with one edge raised so that the door cannot be opened outwards. It must always open inwards, doubtless with a view to facilitate the exclusion of unwelcome visitors by the simple expedient of sitting with one's back against
● 784 it. The threshold is not attended with taboos, excepting that of
342 the principal hut of the master of the village, beneath which

The Thonga hut. *Phot. A. Borel.*

protective drugs have been placed at the foundation of his village. It is taboo to sit on it (this may cause disease), but not to tread on
177 it. Most huts are now fitted with padlocks which are, of course,
414 of European origin. The palm wood doors are only seen in the districts where the mimale palm grows.

342 A number of small sticks are stuck in the straw crown at the top of the hut, and certainly add to the picturesque appearance of these constructions. It would seem that they are put there to hinder birds from perching on the huts, and more especially to avoid any chance visit during the night from screech-owls (ma-kuñhunu) and other nocturnal fowl, which might alight on

533 Of course the colonists, who only knew "Kitchen Kafir,"
539 could not understand the complaint of the Nkuna boy!

The *song of the crab* is more tragic! (Tune No. 10). In a deep minor key a man cries for help! He went to hunt the big crabs which dwell in the mud of the mangrove forest, or on the sea-shore. He followed one ; the animal hastily hid itself in its hole. The imprudent hunter tried to catch it there ; he put his arm into the hole and attempted to pull the crab out. But the crustacean seized his finger in its claws so firmly that the man could not get free. He remained tightly held down, fixed to the ground. The tide is rising; soon it will cover him! And he cries :

> Yo-o! Lomo tjukeni ku na mani ? — Hala yi khomi litiho !
> Alas! - On the shore is there some one ? — The crab has caught me by the finger !

This is almost dramatic poetry and the scene is worthy of a true literary description.

533 The *erotic style* is cultivated by boys and girls on different
832 occasions though it must be said that love, as we understand it,
539 plays but little part in Thonga life. Boys in love generally express their feelings to the accompaniment of the unicord harp (see Chap. III) in the evening in the neighbourhood of the village of their beloved one ; I have never been able to catch the words of these songs, which are said to be sometimes very long, and are sung in a very loud voice ; they are not precisely chaste, according to one of our Native ministers, who considered that the use of the unicord harp ought to be forbidden to Christian boys! But here is a *love song* probably composed by a girl who was not allowed to marry the boy of her choice :

> To-morrow, to-morrow, my mother, I will start,
> To-morrow, father, I will start,
> I will start with an axe ;
> With this axe I will cut the stump,
> The stump on which my friend has hurt his leg,
> My friend whose belt of tails hangs from his waist,
> The one for whom I draw my legs out of the way. (1)

784 (1) Perhaps an allusion to the fact that it is taboo to pass over any one's outstretched
516 legs. She draws in her legs to give him the means of passing and coming to sit beside her.

192 Amongst the Ba-Ronga those[1] which are still known are : *Nhlangula*,
806 the month in which the flowers are swept (hlangula) from the trees, probably October, when all the minkuhlu, minkanye, etc.,
821 blossom ; *Ñwendjamhala*, the month in which the antelope mhala, brings forth its young (November?) ; *Mawuwana*, when the *tihuhlu* (p. 18) are plucked, because the people shout : "Wuwana! wuwana!" in their joy at having plenty of almonds to suck, corresponds to December. *Hukuri* is said to be the month when the fruits of the *nkwakwa* (p. 17) are ripe (December also?). *Ndjati*, or *ndjata*, viz., I am coming, is the time of *nwebo*, when everyone is in his fields eating the new cobs of mealies, and if you call a person he will answer : "I will come directly! Have patience! I am busy here!" "This may be January or February. *Sunguti* is also one of the summer months. *Sibamesoko*, the moon which closes the paths, also called *Dwebindlela* or *Sibandlela*, is easy to identify : it is February, the time when the grass grows so high that it hides the paths leading to the nkanye trees. This is the end of the bukanye time (I. p. 397). *Nyenyana*, *Nywenywankulu* are the months of the birds (nyanyana), when one spends all one's time in chasing the winged marauders from the fields of sorghum and millet (March. April). *Mudashini*, viz., what am I to eat? is the month when you have harvested so many different kinds of food that you do not know which to choose : this is the time directly after harvest, May or June. *Khotabushika*, viz., when winter comes, probably June or July.

772 The *stars* are called *tinyeleti* (yin-tin) and play a remarkably
821 small part in the ideas of the tribe. The modern theory according to which all religions started from the worship of stars, finds no confirmation at all in the South African Bantu tribes.

821 It is taboo to try to count the stars. If any one attempts
784 to do so people will say to him : "Keep quiet or you will wet the hut during the night!" Counting stars represents the torments
861 of the soul! If a child has been deprived of food as a punishment for an offence, his parents will tell him, when he goes to sleep : "Go and count the stars," viz., "you will feel hungry and not be able to go to sleep ; you will be as unhappy as if you had to count the stars."

[1] [names of moons -- Analyst]

193 conceptions were still current, it was considered as a feminine principle. This supposition is confirmed by the fact that *rivers* (nambu. pl. milambu) also have the feminine termination (I. p. 36, Note). I find the following names of rivers ending in *ti* : Nkomati, Nfoloti (Umbelosi), Ñwebeti, Shalati, Timbati ; the termination *etsi*, *edzi*, may be another form of the same suffix (Ñwanetsi, Ntsatsi, Shingwedzi, Madzi, etc.). A very curious fact, which shows the same conception, is that the river which crosses the territory of the Tembe clan is called Mi-Tembe. I first thought this to be a plural form of the mu-mi class ; but it is more natural to explain this *mi* as the feminine prefix (1) which means daughter of, as Migogwe, etc. (I. p. 352).

823 *Crossing rivers* is subject to a curious rule. It is taboo to bathe
784 in the stream before crossing it ; taboo also for the traveller to
824 cook his food on the hither side of the river ; he must first cross,
789 and then take his meal. This rule is still universally observed by
133 waggon trekkers in South Africa. In this case there may be a reason for the taboo : South African rivers are apt to be swollen in a moment by sudden rain, and the crossing made impossible for days : the traveller therefore makes haste ; he will have plenty of time to stop on the other side! When the river is dangerous, a Thonga will first chew (phora) a little of his *ndjao*, the root of a juncus, which is supposed to increase courage and to ensure victory over hostile influences. (See Part VI.)

823 Some *Lakes* and *Rivers* are believed to be inhabited by spirits,
769 but not in the ordinary fetichistic way, in which a special spiritual
776 being is incorporated with the natural object ; these spirits are
782 *psikwembo*, spirits of the deceased ancestors of the owners of the land, and are propitiated by their descendants. Should another clan have invaded the territory where these lakes are, and crocodiles threaten the fishermen, (p. 88) they will call some one belonging to the clan of the old possessors of the country and ask him to make an offering to appease *his* gods. This is the ordinary course, and the more closely we search the more completely these lake and

(1) A number of river names have the prefix *li* or *ri*, especially those which are of Sutho origin : Lebvubye. Ritabi (Letaba) Ritshindjele (Letsitele), Rimbelule (Lepalula, Olifant). Others begin with *ñwa*, *ma*, and may be ancient names of men.

823 regarding its confines and the shore on the other side. Some
791 magicians claim to have gone and stayed for some time down in the depths : to have "crossed the sea" is for them a kind of diploma, which gives them the right of exercising their art. (See Chapter III.)

823 The *tide* (byaela) is considered to be caused by a whale (nkomu) which alternately swallows and vomits the sea-water : this is the common idea. Some Natives, however, connect it with the moon, having noticed that the tide is higher at full moon and at the wane.

The sea must be feared : it is jealous. "When some one is taken away by the great wave, do not shout! Do not exclaim : 'He is lost!', else you will never see him again. On the contrary, if you say : 'All right, let him go', then the returning wave will bring him back." These are the assertions of Spoon. And old Makhani expressed his approval by nodding his head!

372 "It is the same with *fire*," Spoon also remarked. There was
784 a terrible bush fire in Rikatla on the 18th of September 1908. As always happens at the end of winter, the bush was absolutely dry. A leper woman, tilling her fields, wished to cook a little manioc. The fire leapt to the weeds which she had gathered and from these to the bush. Two huts were burnt. "It is their own fault," said Spoon, "when the bush fire comes you must put it out quietly. If you make any noise, if you shout, it comes straight at you. That is what happened. In the first village people fought calmly and succeeded in saving their huts. At Jeck's village, they cried out. The fire leapt on to a hut, the small hut of the son. The mother cried : 'Yo! yo! Where shall I put my child?' She went on crying out until the hut was burnt to the ground. So the fire leapt on to the big hut and burnt it. She has only herself to blame!" (1)

823 The origin of *stones* is absolutely unknown. Pikinini, a Nkuna boy, who was endowed with an extraordinary imagination, once drew my attention to the stratification of a large dolomite boulder on which different concentric layers were visible, and said to me :

[521] (1) Silence is always recommended to prevent misfortune : in the case of war (I. p. 470) women at home must keep silent ; likewise when the husband is hunting hippopotami (p. 69), when a child is seized with convulsions owing to the power of *tilo* (heaven). See also my remarks on the kunga rite. (I. p. 124).

The Gods of the Bush, Psikwembu psa Nhoba, are also especially dreaded. There is a little song which is sung as a welcome to travellers who reach their home safely : 776

484

533

> Shikwembu sha nhoba shi etlele !
> Shi etlele, banhwanyana !
> Amadikeo-dikeo-dikeo !
> The god of the bush has remained asleep !
> He has remained asleep, young girls !
> Hurrah ! hurrah ! hurrah !

The spirits of the departed who wander about in the bush, not having been properly buried, try to attack innocent travellers. You are fortunate to escape their anger! For this reason they often say to a relative who is starting out on a journey : "Go with your god," viz., the special ancestor-god who can protect you against the dangers of the bush. 769 776 784

I have also heard mention of *Shikwembu sha tihanye*, the god of quarrels. When an offering prescribed by the bones and presented to a certain ancestor-god has not had the desired result, people say : "This god is a god of quarrels. Let us make an offering to the others so that they may scold him." 776 769

3) The Abode of the Ancestor-Gods and their Mode of Life.

Ideas on these two points are very confused, even contradictory. Some say that the departed go to a great village *under the earth*, a village where everything is white (or pure, "ku basa") ; there they till the fields, reap great harvests, and live in abundance, and they take of this abundance to give to their descendants on earth. They have also a great many cattle. The place where they live seems to be a kind of Hades or Paradise (1). But it would seem, when we consider the funeral rites, that the deceased, on the contrary, 775 776 787

(1) The Ba-Ila (see Smith and Dale, *The Ila-speaking people*, II p. 119) believe that the ghosts go *Kwiwe*, to the East, to Chilenga, the Creator. But they have the same contradictory ideas as the Thongas concerning the abode of their deceased ancestors. 171

Amongst the Natives of Barotseland, on the Zambezi, it is said that the dead go to Nyambe, the God of Heaven. They pierce the lobe of their ears and make other incisions in their bodies as a sign that they belong to Nyambe. When they die and reach the end of the earth at the great river Walamba (the Styx of the Zambezian tribes) the ferryman who conveys the dead to the other bank looks at them to see if

alone (See *Les Ba-Ronga*, p. 414). He pours his drugs into one of the pots brought by the women, adds to them the psanyi of the goat sacrificed for the occasion, and pours all the contents on to the shoulders of the mother, who holds the babes in her lap. After this he pours from some other pot, which contains pure water, and the woman conscientiously washes herself and her children all the while. Until her purification no inhabitant of the village is allowed to eat anything, and the following day it is taboo to work in the fields, for this would prevent the rain from falling. 845 756 783

Amongst the *Nkunas*, the mother of twins sits at the entrance of the hut, and the drug is poured over the roof above the doorway; it leaks through the thatch on to her, and thus both the mother and the hut are purified at the same time.

This preliminary purification being thus accomplished, the woman goes to live in "her shelter," outside the village. She is absolutely shut off from all the other inhabitants. She has her own pots, axe, mortar, pestle, and does all her own cooking. Nobody even pays her a visit, and people only speak to her from a distance. Her children see no one but her. To each is allotted one breast, always the same. To help her in the nursing of twins the mother must "buy" a girl, to whom the care of one of the children is committed. This is a law. It is taboo for a girl, even should she be the elder sister, to "play" with a twin. The payment of £ 1 or ten shillings removes this taboo and the defilement (shisila) connected with it. 845 853 [671] [784]

Women fear that, if they touch anything belonging to the mother of twins, if they smear themselves with her provision of fat, or if the defiled one smears herself with their fat, they will also incur the dreadful misfortune of giving birth to twins. For this reason it is taboo for a mother of twins to draw water except at a certain spot. She must select one place and always go there. When she returns from drawing water, she must pay attention to the little wreath of grass which she wears on her head to help her balance her pot; it must not be thrown away with those used by other women, for fear that they also should become contaminated (tekela). 845 784

751 the disease, and it is the *batukulu* of the chief, his nephews, the sons of his sisters, who are sent to procure it. Are they not the favourites of their maternal uncle? (I. p. 222). Nobody could suspect them of bringing misfortune into the village of their *bakokwana*! The particular ntukulu who must render this service to the country is designated by the bones. The bones also indicate the village of the neighbouring clan to which he must go to fetch the virus. The serous fluid is taken from old people or from children, who have no sexual intercourse ; we already know the reason for this. The ntukulu inoculates himself and his comrades and returns home ; when their pustules are ripe, they inoculate all the members of the clan who have not yet suffered [784] from the disease.[1] From this day begins for the whole clan a distinct marginal period, with all the taboos accompanying the critical phases of the life of the community. No one is allowed to wash his body. Absolute continence is imposed on all. Salt is prohibited, as it is said to make the blood flow more quickly in the body and it may cause the wounds to become sore.

164 But in addition to the ordinary taboos, some other measures are
751 taken which are dictated by the special nature of small-pox. This
755 disease, amongst Black people, manifests itself in two forms, which may be called the white and the black. The former is much milder than the latter. In it the pustules are large, superficial, scattered all over the body and well separated from each other ; the skin is discoloured over them and becomes whitish ; they soon dry up and do not leave deep marks. In the second form, which is the confluent and haemorrhagic type of the disease, the pustules are small, black, continuous with each other, and full of blood ; they soon discharge a nasty fluid ; fever is high and death may intervene.
751 The whole aim of the treatment is to promote the mild, white form
755 of small-pox and to prevent the black form. It is therefore taboo to eat any meat containing blood, which is black and must therefore be avoided. On the contrary, fish meat is allowed because it is white and contains no dark blood. Another device of Native doctors to obtain this result is to place before the eyes of their patients grains of mealies, which are white like the desired pustules and are also similar to them in form, and to prevent their

[1] [Small-pox--analyst]

2: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

p. 573

CHAPTER IV

Taboo and Morality.

If we take the trouble to make a careful study of the life of so-called savages, we very soon notice that, instead of being free from all law and restraint, as superficial observers believe, their life is, on the contrary, subject to a great number of rules and prohibitions, by which primitive man is held captive in the bonds of custom and tradition. These prohibitions are of two principal kinds. Those which are most obvious are *the taboos*, which we have met with on each page of these two volumes. They play an immense part in the behaviour of the raw Native. But, in addition to these, there are other restraints which seem to spring from a totally different set of ideas, *the moral principles*. The relation between the taboo and moral notions is very difficult to determine. It is at the present time one of the most debated questions of Anthropology ; I shall try to show what the state of things is in that phase of human development to which the Thongas of South Africa have attained. 183 784 577

A. THE TABOO.

I ventured to give a provisional definition of the *yila*, or *taboo*, of the Thongas, when we met with the first interdiction of this type, Vol. I. page 37 : "Any object, act, or person that implies a danger for the individual or for the community, and that must consequently be avoided, this object, act or person being under a kind of ban." After explaining hundreds of taboos, I do not feel that this definition needs any alteration. Its main element is this : 784

784 the object, act or person tabooed constitutes a danger (1) ; it must therefore be avoided.

I. *Classification of Taboos.*

Let us now sum up our study of taboos by attempting to classify them.

The most primitive of all are those which are called by Modern Ethnographers *the sympathetic taboos*, those which man instinctively observes in order to preserve his life and avoid suffering. To touch a burning ember or a fire, is taboo. Thongas sometimes use the word yila for such prohibitions : they say for instance "psa yila" for a little child to play with a knife. But this category of taboos, which impose themselves on man with a certain self-evidence, play no special part in Thonga customs.

1) The first category on which I would dwell is that of the *physiological taboos.*

a) First, those connected with *defilement*. When dealing with physiological ideas (p. 357), we noticed that there were five or six physiological phenomena which are considered to be attended with special danger, because they are the great [illegible]*ts of defilement* : the menstrual flow, the lochia, disease, death and the birth of twins. Those who have been defiled by one or other of these agencies are taboo ; they are subject to a number of interdictions, in order that fatal contagion may be avoided ; in most cases, they have to pass through a marginal period, at the end of which they are again received into society. Hence a great many taboos, which I would call the *physiological taboos proper*. The *sexual taboos*, and the *special feminine taboos* (I. p. 184) naturally belong to this category, in which I would also include the *military taboos* in connection with the slayers (I. p. 478), and those underlying the strange *hunting rites* (p. 77), as all these seem to proceed from the

(1) The word *yila* very closely corresponds to the term taboo so widely used in Anthropology. In current speech it is sometimes employed in a wider sense, in cases where the notion of danger is not clearly present, but this is certainly an extension of the meaning. In fact the *yila proper* exactly answers to the definition just given.

idea of defilement through death. *Adultery* is taboo because the 784
husband fears "the bad bloods" by which his wife may have been contaminated through her misconduct. In as far as respect for the *totem* is considered necessary for the maintenance of the health of the clansman, I would also include the taboos of this order in the physiological category ; these are, however, very few in number amongst the Thongas (I. p. 366).

b) Another variety of the same category are *the taboos connected* 561
with growth or *change of condition*, or *with the various initiations* 784
through which a Native may be called on to pass. The whole life of primitive man consists, as has already been stated, in a succession of stages ; he must proceed from one to the other through ceremonies in connection with which a number of taboos are to be noticed. The individual who ascends from an inferior stage to a superior one, always passes through a marginal period by which he is separated from the former and received into the latter. In this case the seclusion is not due to defilement properly speaking ; it is connected with the idea of *growth*. Hence the taboos of *tying the cotton string*, (I. p. 56), *weaning* (I. p. 58), when passing from infancy to childhood, *puberty*, when entering upon adult life through circumcision, *marriage* (p. 124), when being received into the group of married people ; initiation into the society of the possessed, and into the profession of magician, or diviner, is attended with similar taboos.

All the taboos of this category seem to have been actuated by the idea of danger accompanying ritual impurity, or passage from one condition to another.

2) A second category of taboos, much less numerous, are the 821
cosmic taboos. Nature prohibits certain acts ; if they are 784
committed, rain will not fall, and the community will suffer. The prohibition of cutting the roots at the new moon (p. 306), of tilling the fields when a shower falls in the morning (p. 28), of warming oneself at a fire of parasitic plants and at the ntjhopfa (p. 18), and some agricultural taboos belong to this category. Some of the most severe physiological taboos, those connected with twins and with unlawfully buried children, become cosmic, inasmuch as they prevent rain from falling (p. 317).

784 3) A third kind of taboos are those I call *taboos of prevision*. Foresight is dangerous on certain occasions : Do not build your hut before you are married! (I. p. 251). Do not prepare the ntehe before the birth of your child (I. p. 46), nor your ngula basket before harvest! The travellers' taboos (I. p. 339) might also be included in this class.

4) A fourth category comprises the manifold *social taboos*, *viz.*, those actions which are prohibited because they would be dangerous to the social order. Exogamous laws (I. p. 256), hlonipha customs, viz., the tabooing of certain words by the chief (I. p. 384), and especially the curious taboos to be observed in the intercourse of allied families (I. p. 250), are social. The taboos connected with the moving of a village (I. p. 320) are physiological in so far as they are actuated by the fear of defilement, and social in so far as they aim at maintaining the life of the social organism, which is the *muti*. But those which chiefly bear the character of social taboos are those connected with the idea of *hierarchy*. We have met with them in the ceremonies of the first fruits (1) (I. p. 394) and in the rules of sowing: It is taboo to "precede" a chief or an elder brother in agricultural operations, sowing or harvesting!

5) This leads us to a fifth category : the *religious taboos*. The ancestor-gods, being the elders of the actual members of the family, must be treated as hierarchically superior ; hence the religious taboo of luma: the interdiction of eating the new crop before having presented the gods with the first fruits ; the prohibition of infringing the sacerdotal rights of an elder brother (p. 398) is a taboo of the same kind. We here observe the intimate connection between social and religious life in Ancestrolatry. Forgetfulness in fulfilling duties towards the gods (p. 426), and killing green snakes (p. 384) are also religious taboos.

195 784 6) I include in a sixth category the *language taboos*, ku ruketela, viz., the use of obscene expressions not allowed in ordinary life.

(1) The *luma* taboos are social and religious; but they also belong to the first variety of physiological taboos in so far as they are actuated by the fear of defilement (food of a deceased person, Vol. I. p. 146) ; to the second variety in so far as they are connected with a change of condition : first use of a new crop (I. p. 394), of a new meat (p. 71), of a new implement (p. 117), or fishing trap (p. 85). (Notice the relation between khangula , to inaugurate, and luma).

The words designating the sexual act and the various parts of the genital organs are *yila*; but there are substitutes for them, euphemisms which may be used in their stead. When a child employs such words, people scold him, and say to him : "Psa yila! Do you think we are cleaning the wells?" This remark is due to the fact that the language taboos are suspended during the marginal periods and especially during the "mourning of the land," when the rains are delayed and people try to cause them to fall by the rite of cleaning the wells (p. 318). The language taboos are related to the social taboos ; to use obscene words leads to the destruction of social order, and this is allowed only when that order is actually destroyed, for instance during the mbelele rite (p. 318), during the time of moving the village (I. p. 321), and during mourning ceremonies (I. p. 160). 195 784

These six categories, although they are not absolutely distinct, form a convenient method of classifying the taboos.

II. *Some remarks on the taboos.*

1) What is the *origin of taboos*? It is not impossible to trace it in a number of cases. The *hlonipha taboos*, for instance, are proclaimed by the chiefs under certain special circumstances (I. p. 384). The taboo concerning *the planting of new fruit trees* is explained by the coincidence of the desolation of a ruined village with the presence of such trees (p. 29). Such coincidences, amounting to bad omens, have no doubt given birth to numerous taboos. If misfortune has followed a certain act two or three times, a hasty generalisation is made by the primitive mind : post hoc ergo propter hoc! So the act is tabooed. 784 152

This is due to the fact that with primitive people, as with children, *the emotional element predominates over the rational*, and when unfortunate events have happened or are feared, disease, drought, death, when the mind is in a state of terror, anxiety, or merely of nervous expectation, the reasoning faculties are disturbed, and a distinctive mental phenomenon shows itself, called by the French philosopher Renouvier the *intellectual vertigo* (le

784 vertige intellectuel). Prof. Raoul Allier, in his valuable book on
152 *La Psychologie de la Conversion chez les peuples non civilisés* (Vol. I. p. 250-260), ably describes the psychological process which takes place in the soul of the savage. Suppose some event to have happened which has caused a deep emotion in the tribe, the arrival for instance of the first Europeans with a number of unknown objects which arouse fear in the Native population. This emotion may perhaps subside and eventually be forgotten, and the tribe will accustom itself to the presence of the new comers ; but if some great misfortune supervenes, for instance if a serious epidemic breaks out, a new emotion will be produced throughout the country. This will remind the people of the emotion previously experienced on the arrival of the Europeans, and, in the disturbed state of mind thus created, the association established between the two emotions will be extended to the two facts which gave birth to these emotions, and the tribe will declare that the first fact is the cause of the second. Europeans and everything they brought with them will henceforth be considered as taboo. This is utterly illogical and the conclusion absurd. Yet this is what actually happens amongst people whose reasoning faculties are but little developed. These observations help us greatly in our understanding of primitive mentality and many taboos may be psychologically explained in this way. Most of them, however, are inexplicable. They originate in the animistic or dynamistic collective representations of the tribe (p. 368) and these representations are instinctive, unconscious and consequently unaccountable.

784 2) How are they *enforced*? In as far as taboos have been
626 proclaimed by conscious agents, their transgression will meet with punishment by those agents. A chief will sue a subject
753 using a hlonipha word. The gods will punish those who transgress the law of hierarchy, who pass all bounds in incontinence, who forget their duties towards them (p. 426). But, in most cases, the decree is not enforced by a conscious agent. The *taboo avenges itself directly*. Consumption, swelling of the legs, the impossibility of passing water, disease of one kind or another will follow the transgression, or the children will be covered with an eruption of pimples.

3) How are taboos *dealt with?* 784

Happily the danger of taboos can be removed, otherwise 789
life would be almost impossible! The medicine-men have the necessary drugs to protect their poor fellow-men against the misfortune (khombo) which is always threatening them! Is not the whole arsenal of magic at their disposal? Rites in great numbers provide the necessary protection, especially the *luma rite*, which is the proper method of avoiding the special dangers connected with the *first use* of anything. The wish to obtain protection against all these dangers explains the immense influence of the medicine-men, of those who know the preventive drugs to be used against defilement and misfortune.

It is impossible to attain to a true knowledge of the taboos 784
without studying the laws of *their suspension*. Taboos are sometimes suspended. The chief, for instance, is above them, at any rate above some of them, being himself a magical being, a tabooed personage (I. p. 382). The collectivity has a still greater power over them and can cancel them. There are times when all these prohibitions, or at least some of them, are withdrawn; these are the marginal periods, when we behold the strange spectacle that ordinary taboos are suspended (language taboos, relatives-in-law taboos), whilst others are enforced (sexual taboos). I have often drawn attention to this curious phenomenon.

B. MORAL RESTRAINTS.

But taboos are not the only kind of restraint to which primitive 183
Bantus submit themselves. The following statements have been 604
collected from old or young informants who were urged to express their inner feelings on this question:

1) The maternal uncle must provide the ntehe for the first child of his sister. However this is not *yila*, it is a *nau*, a law, and if it is transgressed no direct harm will follow. (I. p. 46.)

2) Men and women do not bathe in the same spot in the lake 183
of Rikatla. Why? Not on account of a yila, but on account of 834

fault of Bantu religion is that it is non-moral, that of Bantu morality is that it is non-religious. No supreme legislator has ordained it. Hence the want of the idea of the absolute in the dictates of the Bantu conscience. 577 183

Nevertheless, the rudiments of morality are present in the Thonga conscience, the feeling of duty, the sense of right and wrong, and these are independent of the essentially self-interested idea of taboo.

C. RELATION BETWEEN TABOO, SACREDNESS AND MORALITY.

Some modern Ethnographers see in the taboo idea the origin of that of the sacred, and of morality. Amongst South African Bantus, the idea of sacredness is not a prominent one. It may be said that the person of the chief is sacred to them, being set apart; the law of hierarchy, the right of precedence belonging to the elder brother is also sacred, and this conception is very closely allied to that of taboo, though it does not necessarily contain the idea of danger. But if sacredness has been in certain cases a natural development of taboo, I do not think this is the case with moral ideas. 784 577 183

In some cases, morality distinctly preceded taboo; speaking of theft, we have just seen the taboo conception grafted on to a

succeed in persuading their comrades to a unanimous refusal of obedience, and as soon as they feel themselves thus agreed they will oppose their Principal apparently with a good conscience, despite his most persuasive arguments and all the patience that he may display. Morally speaking, they are clearly wrong; religiously also; the principles which they have themselves adopted indubitably condemn them. Yet they will maintain their resistance as long as they can face their master with a united front. But if the Principal is clever enough to take one or two of them — the most sensible — apart, and convince them, then the charm is broken. Feeling themselves divided, the pupils at once come to the conclusion that they are wrong, and they readily submit to the will of their superior. Such events may take place in other colleges, and amongst other races, I am afraid, but the difference is that amongst Bantus, just emerging from the state of collectivism, where morality depended not on the laws of a clearly conceived, holy God, but on the will of the community, the feeling of being right or wrong is above all determined by the attitude of the group. (See my paper on The Magic Conception of Nature amongst Bantus. *South African Journal of Science*. Nov. 1920).

784 primitive moral idea ; we have also met with a taboo evolving from
577 a notion of disgust (nyenya) (p. 83) ; or of decency (p. 580). I do
183 not assert that it could be proved that the moral restriction in all cases preceded the taboo prohibition. There is on the other hand no ground for asserting that the moral ideas are a natural development of original taboos ; these two sets of ideas seem to be parallel in the domain of conduct, just as Ancestrolatry and the idea of an All-Father are in religion.

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796 "We drink the bukanye anew! Who would have thought that
273 we should drink again from this cup", viz., "that we should have
789 escaped all the dangers of war" (Hi nwa nkanyi lomu'mpsa! Afa
701 hi nga hlayi epsaku hi ta'nwa ntcheko lo kambe).

After this, the casks are distributed to the other warriors, who drink to their hearts' content. The addition of the black powder is not absolutely necessary in their case. They can luma without it. Then the war circle is formed and the principal counsellors harangue the assembled warriors, giving them the following advice : "Drink in peace (ha hombe). Let no one spoil this bukanye by transfixing his brother with his assagai. Go and drink in your villages. Do not pick quarrels with strangers passing through the country, etc." The gathering then disperses.

c) The luma in the village.

796 The preparatory luma is accomplished. The *yila* has been
273 removed. Now comes the third act : the drinking in the villages.
786 The women who remained at home while the men-slayers went to luma at the bidding of the chief, have gathered large quantities of makanye. The tree is to be found extensively all over the country, as no female plant is ever cut down ; there is one or more in every field, and every one possesses such a tree, as every one owns a field ; when all the trees in the gardens have been stripped of fruit, the women pass to the trees growing in the bush far from the villages.

But here also everything must be done in right order of precedence ; the petty chief of such a district must commence to luma in the presence of his subjects, and not until after he has done so can the people drink freely in the villages. From this moment, however, there is no further restriction. Drinking continues day and night, night and day! When the supply is finished in one village, they go to the next. These feasts are the saturnalia, the bacchanalia, the carnival of the tribe! During these weeks some individuals are in a continuous state of semi-intoxication. Orgies on all sides, songs and dances! The younger men run along the paths, with a more or less unsteady

796 gait, brandishing sticks with pieces of red cloth attached as
273 pennants. They are in search of full barrels! It must be said
786 that the inebriety produced by the bukanye is of a rather mild type, as this Native beer contains very little alcohol; but the quantity absorbed is so enormous that it ends by going to their heads: this is more especially so with the bukanye brewed from a species of nkanye called *nunge*, which appears to be stronger and more intoxicating.

796 How far does sexual licence go during the bukanye? Not to
273 the point of general promiscuity, as amongst the Ba-Pedi after the
833 circumcision school. However many cases of adultery occur.
786 Men and women forget the elementary rules of condvet. They attend to the wants of nature in the same places, which is taboo under ordinary circumstances: "Nau a wa ha tiyi,"—"the law is no longer in force."

796 Still, in the midst of all this carnival, the payment of the tax
273 must not be forgotten... This is the time to carry to the chief
643 the liquor which is flowing so freely on all sides, but of which
651 he claims the lion's share. Each petty chief sends his people to the capital with brimming jars. This is termed "lumisa hosi," supplying the chief with new wine. The women do not enter the capital at once, but go to one of the counsellors, who promptly abstracts a couple of jars for his own use. The chief returns one or two jars to the carriers, as they have come a long way and are doubtless thirsty; the remainder will be kept to refresh the very numerous guests at the Court; any coming from afar will spend the night and not return until the next day. I have seen a company of these women carrying baskets
539 full of makanye to Muzila. How graceful was the Indian file winding its way along the path and singing, amongst others, the following chorus: (See for further particulars *Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, page 46.)

Chwe! Chwe! Hi laba shimungu — Leshi ka — Le tilwen!
Chwe! Chwe! Shimungu hi mani? — Hi Mzila! — Hi Mzila!
Hi! Hi! We seek the hawk! — Who soars — In the sky!
Hi! Hi! Who is the hawk? — It is Mzila! — It is Mzila!

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

844 787 843 enclosure. This is done to protect the woman from indiscreet onlookers. Should there be enough bush to hide her, mats are not used. A big wooden mortar is given to her to lean against during her pains. The whole place is called by a special term *fukwen* or *busaken* (the nest). Should the birth be difficult, the divinatory bones will probably be consulted and the woman will be removed to another place, inside the hut or somewhere else.

844 The baby may be born without any help, but as a rule the midwives consider it their duty to submit their patient to a *long and painful manipulation*, to a regular kneading, performed with the hands, sometimes even with the feet, in order, as they say, to obtain the expulsion of the child and of the after-birth all at once. They sometimes succeed in this feat ! They also often hurt the mother severely. The midwives think that they must be very rough, and have no pity at all on the poor woman. Sometimes the mother loses all her natural feelings in this painful process. I have heard of cases of her refusing to let the child come to the light, biting her helpers, running away. Hence perhaps the attitude adopted by the midwives. The mother must not *fahla ñwana*, viz. break down the child, a technical expression to designate unhappy births.

During the whole labour, it is taboo (1) for the mother to eat or to drink anything ; she would kill the child if she did so. Of course no man must attend the birth ; neither must girls come near. A newly married woman may be allowed to enter the enclosure in order to "be taught." It is also forbidden for the female relations of the woman, her sisters, even her mother to come *fukwen* ; they might be ashamed if their relative behaved badly and "broke her child." They will not come till the following day, when they hear that everything has gone smoothly ; then the father will kill a hen for them.

(1) We translate by taboo the Thonga word *ylla* which means everything prohibited. I beg to give the following provisional definition of this term, which will be found from the first to the last page of this book : Any object, any act, any person that implies a danger to the individual or to the community and that must consequently be avoided, this object, act or person being under a kind of ban. As often as possible, I shall add the explanation which Natives give of these taboos.

844 As soon as the child has made his appearance one of the
846 midwives ties the *umbilical cord* (likabana) near the navel and cuts it about three inches from it. The little sore is anointed with a kind of fat ; the bit of cord remaining with the baby is attended to with great care : it generally falls off at the end of the first week, and this is the signal for the end of the period of confinement.

The after-birth, the *placenta*, is also looked for with much anxiety : it is called *yindlu ya ñwana*, the "house of the child," or *hlalu*. When it is delayed too long, the midwives begin to fear "because the blood which is inside has not all come out and will kill the mother." In the Khosa clan, should the placenta not come at once, the woman is told to stand on her feet, her body half bent forward, and all the midwives begin to move their index fingers from right to left, emitting at the same time the following sound : tswi-tswi-tswi-tswi. This is said to help the placenta to come. The placenta is generally buried deep behind the hut on the spot where the birth has taken place ; but some prefer to bury it inside the house, fearing the dogs might unearth it, which is taboo.

The child is then washed with water. This water is thrown away as being polluted by the blood of the birth, which is taboo.

553 *Naming the child*. On the day of birth or on one of the following
787 days the child receives his name (bito). There are four principal ways of choosing this.

1) Often the parents give their offspring *the name of a chief* as Musongi, Makasana, Muzila, etc. It flatters their vanity !

2) But frequently the parents like to recall a name of the old times (pfusha bito dja khale), the name of one of the ancestors, because it is a good thing to remember them. They go so far as to consult the bones. A name is proposed, and if the bones in falling do not give a favourable indication, another is tried till they feel sure that the die "has spoken" (1).

553 3) Or it may be that somebody asks the favour of giving his
608

(1) The Christian Natives like to ask their missionary to choose the name, perhaps for a similar reason.

551 for girls and boys. *Nhwanin* is a girl's name, as it means "girl" and *Nwandjise* a boy's name as it means "boy" (1).

553 All these birth-names are abandoned later on, generally at
881 the circumcision school, or at the age of puberty, in the clans
787 where the custom of circumcising has disappeared; boys and girls then choose new names. Men and women who undergo initiation adopt a new name. So do those subjected to the treatment for possession; these take the name of their pretended possessor when he has made himself known. I refer the reader to Appendix II for further information regarding Thonga names.

845 *Premature Birth.* When a child is born prematurely and is very small and delicate, he is wrapped in the leaves of the castor-oil plant and put into a big pot, which is then exposed to the heat of the sun. This is a true incubator, and the treatment is said to be attended with success (Tobane).

845 *Protracted Births and Illegitimate Births.* There would seem to be
848 no relation between these; but to the Thonga mind, on the contrary, a protracted and difficult birth proves that the child is not legitimate. This conviction is so strong that when a woman knows that the child which she is going to bear is not the son of her husband (nuna) but of a lover (mbuye), she will admit this secretly to the principal midwife, in order to spare herself the pains of a difficult birth, as it is taboo to bear a "child of adultery" hiding the fact; it would cause the mother untold suffering.

Therefore, if the delivery lasts too long, the midwife will begin to have doubts as to the legitimacy of the child. The first thing she will do is to send word to the husband. He knows
845 what it means. He takes in his *shifodo* (2) a little of his *semen*,
848 mixes it with water in a shell of sala (the big round fruit of the
291 Strychnos) and the woman drinks it. It may be that then the child will "feel his father," if the husband is really his father, and that this will bring the birth to a prompt conclusion; but

(1) I know of an exception to this rule. The son of the Mabota chief was named Nhwanin, a girl's name, in order to deceive the malevolent powers which had killed his brothers and sisters.

(2) See Annotatio I at the end of the volume in the collection of Latin notes written for medical men and ethnographers.

1 [See p. 516 in these categories or in 116 -- Analyst]

845 848 if this result is not attained, it is a proof that the child is really illegitimate and the midwife will force the woman to confess her guilt and the name of her lover. Should she have had many and hide the names of some of them "the womb will refuse" (khuri dji ta yala) and the birth will be possible only when the confession is complete.

848 787 Should an illegitimate child be born without this delay, he will come to the light with his hands closed and refuse to take the breast. This will give the midwife an opportunity of extorting a confession from the mother. These women practise a special kind of divination : they take a broken pot, put pumpkin seeds into it and place it on the fire. If the seeds, instead of burning to a cinder, explode with a noise, it is a proof that the woman is guilty. Each explosion means a lover, and all their names must be revealed. (Tobane.) This confession is strictly private. The midwives will consider it a professional duty not to divulge the secret to anyone, even the father. But the mother must confess, as it is absolutely necessary that the true father of a child be known on the day of its birth.

848 837 789 It is taboo for the lover of the woman to come to the door of the hut after the birth of the illegitimate child as long as the umbilical cord has not fallen off. The child would die. Even later on, should the mother be sitting on the threshold of the hut with the baby in her arms, and the man pass along the street in front of them, one of the midwives will go (has she not heard the confession ?) and take between her fingers a pinch of sand from the footprints of the lover, and, without a word, will throw it on the fontanella of the baby. If the husband happens to be present, he will know by witnessing this act that he is not the true father. I do not think he will be very angry. The child is his and, if it is a girl, nobody else will "eat the oxen !" For him this is the main consideration !

845 847 As regards the birth of twins, we shall study later on the strange customs which accompany it : in olden times one of the children was killed ; except in such a case, no child is ever put to death wilfully on the day of its birth.

853 grandmother, by name Mishidohi, who had an adult son and had had no other child since, prepared light beer and other appropriate food and succeeded in secreting milk in her own breast ; so the child was saved !

856 826 A child during these first months of its existence is regarded as a very weak creature. "I mati !" i. e. "It is nothing but water !" Hence perhaps the curious idea that a baby, just like a new born animal, is able to swim, at any rate it cannot be drowned : it floats on the water. When a woman carrying a little child on her back crosses a river and is in danger of being swept away by the stream, people shout to her from the shore : "Untie the 'ntehe' and let the baby cross. Think of yourself, the little one will follow all right." They say: "Psa yila, it is taboo that a baby should sink." Note the curious use of the word "yila" in this sentence.

3) Dentition.

856 364 351 As soon as the child has cut the two lower and upper incisors, the mother takes a white bead (tjambu) and ties it to one of the child's hairs above the forehead. This white bead is said to help the other teeth to come out normally. If this precaution were not taken, the child would not become intelligent ; he would shiver instead of smiling ; he would bring forward his lips and his tongue to prevent the air from getting into his mouth ! When all the teeth are duly cut, the bead is removed and thrown away *talen*, viz. on the *tala*. The *tala* is the ash-heap, the place behind the hut on which everyone throws ashes and dirt. It plays a great part in the customs of the Thongas and other South African Bantus.

195 The teeth (tinyo-menyo) of the children are called figuratively *hobe*. The *hobe* (pl. *tihobe*) means the grain of pounded maize which is white and very similar to a tooth. Hence the expression : "A humi hobe," "he has got out a grain of maize," employed to indicate the cutting of the teeth.

787 766 856 When a child cuts his upper teeth first, it is a bad omen. In the Northern clans and especially amongst the Ba-Pedi, it is a great taboo. At his death the child must be buried in wet soil.

787 Amongst the Ba-Ronga the ill-omen is not considered so serious.
782 Later on, when the child loses his first teeth, he must not
856 let them fall out hap-hazard anywhere. He must take the fallen tooth, go to the ash-heap, put his finger into the hole and say : "Kokwa, kokwa, ndji hwe hobe !" (Grandfather, grandfather, give me a grain of maize !) Then he throws the tooth over his shoulder on to the ashes and goes home without looking backward. Should he look backward, his grandfather (the spirit of the departed ?) would not give him a new tooth (1). This custom is no longer taboo and is disappearing.

856 When a younger brother cuts his teeth, they are considered
163 as pushing away or pulling out the teeth of the elder, as the younger brother comes into the world, as a rule, three years after the elder.

As regards *hair*, the first cutting is accompanied by the following
302 custom : the mother sprinkles some drops of her milk on the
856 forehead and on the occiput of the child ; then she cuts his hair and throws it away in the midst of thick grass. When she cuts her own hair, she always leaves a lock on both sides of the head for the amusement of the child, till he is able to walk.

853 Nursing women very often anoint themselves with ochre. This is said to be in order to prevent their husbands from having relations with them.

These rites are not considered as very important. But there are three others which are most punctiliously observed, and which divide the nursing period into three subperiods : the presentation to the moon, after three months, the tying of the cotton string, after one year, and the weaning ceremonies at the close of the period.

4) The presentation to the moon (ku yandla).

821 The appearance of the new moon is always received with cheers by the Ba-Ronga. The first person who sees it shouts :

(1) Comparative Ethnography : I remember quite well that, when I was a boy, we were told in Neuchâtel that we must not let a broken tooth get lost, lest it should be found by a dog and a dog's tooth would grow in its stead !

764 two levels, the higher, the large hole, gives access to the smaller,
775 the circular ovoid grave. The first is called *the square* (hubo) of the deceased, the second is *his hut* (yindlu or shinyatu). He will dwell in the hut, but come out from it and sit in his square underground, just as he did when living in his village (1). (Elias.)

764 When the grave has been duly dug, the diggers call the relatives
787 to inspect their work, and show them that their deceased relation has been well cared for. The lower grave, being excavated in the wall of the higher, forms a kind of vault. It seems as if it were considered necessary that the earth which will protect the head should not be disturbed. When all the mourners have come at the call of the diggers, it sometimes happens that the vault of the grave falls in. This is a very bad sign. The cause of the accident is this ; either the person who has bewitched the deceased is present or, amongst the assistants, there is one who has been guilty of " matlulana " against him (2)! The grave is a *mondjo*, a magical means of divination

III. *The burial.*

764 The diggers may be four in number, but they are generally
761 only two ; the master of the mourning (nwinyi wa nkosi), who is the brother next to the deceased, and another younger near relative, for instance a son. Both must be married, because married people alone can get rid of the defilement of death by the " lahla khombo, " which we shall explain later. Should an unmarried son be asked to undertake the work of burial, he

(1) In some clans of the North there is only one hole and no excavation at the side. But what I have described here is the rule amongst the Ba-Ronga, except where civilisation has already modified the old custom.

(2) On this point Mboza and Elias did not agree. Mboza said that the falling in of the grave can only be caused by the presence of the wizard who killed the deceased. Elias asserts that the same accident happens if one of those present has *tjemakenya* the deceased, viz. crossed his way, that is to say has had sexual relations with the same woman as the deceased. (This is matlulana). As the hut of the deceased knew this man, so his new hut in the ground recognises and reveals him !

[765] consequence of the death. If it be the hut of one of the subor-
596 dinates, the roof is simply lifted off and thrown away into the
787 bush.
766 Another very significant rite in connexion with the closing of the hut is accomplished on the death of the master of the village. A branch is cut from the tree of the village, the tree which was revealed by the divinatory bones as the one near which the headman had to build (See Part II Ch. II) ; half of the branch is placed across the great gate of the village, which is then closed and another gate opened, at some distance, in the fence ; the other half is put over the door of the crushed hut.

765 There seem to be great variations in the performance of these
428 ceremonies everywhere. I believe, without being able to vouch for it, that when two family gatherings take place during this last period of the mourning, the first is held to proclaim the new master of the village and the second to distribute the inheritance amongst the heirs-at-law. At any rate these two important acts take place at the gatherings. As the inheritance consists mainly of live stock — human stock, the wives of the deceased, I shall describe the adjudication when treating of the fate of widows.

2) Family rites in the Northern clans.

765 A month after the burial, there is a first gathering of the grave-
574 diggers. They are invited by the widows to a beer-feast. This beer is called : "the beer of the hyenas," as the hyenas also dig graves! No equivocal compliment is intended, the widows merely meaning to thank these men for their services.

765 In the northern clans, *yindlu a yi yili*, the hut is not taboo.
782 It can be slept in again after the five days of the Great Mourning. The plaster of the doorposts is repaired, and a new crown is put on the top when the hut again finds an owner (1). The feast of the

766 (1) The hut of a leper alone is considered irremediably tabooed as the sufferer is buried in it. They dig a hole into which he is pushed by means of sticks. The roof is crushed down over him.

783 of mourning women sitting on the main road, prudently stops and
765 makes a long detour to avoid the place... What is done at this
575 meeting ? One of the widows makes an incision with a knife or a
787 bit of glass in the skin of the new member of the society, in the inguinal region on the left side, "where the husband was resting." If the blood flows freely, it is a good sign. The women are satisfied ; they say there was a good understanding between husband and wife ; if the blood does not flow it is a bad omen. Then one of them lights a little fire with a handful of dry grass ; this grass has been torn from the roof of the deceased's hut. A little excrement from a cock (not a hen!) is then thrown into the fire, and the widow must expose both hands to the smoke. Afterwards she must extinguish the fire with her own water. Should she be unable to do this, it is a further proof that she has not been faithful to her husband and that she has killed him by her adulteries. These rites are very similar to the first circumcision rites, the incision performed recalling the ablation of the foreskin, and the exposure to the smoke, the jumping over the fire. These are great taboos. Evidently they are initiation rites, accompanying the passage from one condition to another. Why does the ceremony take place on the main road ? Because later on the contamination of death will attach itself to travellers passing that spot, and the mourners themselves will get rid of it in this way.

783 After that, the company returns home. The other widows
765 take every bit of clothing from their companion, and tie a reed or a
575 palm thread around her waist with some broad leaves attached
292 to it. With this scanty garment, they bring her home. She walks surrounded by them. Someone warns the men to leave the road as they are not allowed to see the procession. They hide themselves in their huts. The widow is led to her hut, the hut of the great wife which has now been uncrowned. She must accomplish *the last crossing of the hut*. Entering through the door, she shouts loudly : "My husband! My husband! You have left me alone! What am I to do ?" Then she goes out, not by the door but by the hole which has been made in the wall to carry the corpse to the grave. Behind the hut her friends are waiting for her and give her back her old clothing, which has been

787 village," must remain in it and belongs to the younger brother (1)
595 who becomes the master of the kraal. The second goes to the
428 second brother, the third to the third, the fourth to the *ntukulu*,
768 viz. to the son of the sister of the deceased. The fifth will then
604 become the wife of one of the sons of the deceased. This may appear shocking, and is really shocking even to the ideas of the Natives ; but let it be remembered that she is the youngest of all ; she was taken when the father was already old, and the first son is perhaps older than she. As regards the elder wives, the first and second especially, no one would think of keeping them for the son! Incestuous relations are very rare amongst the
[835] Ba-Ronga. Even in this case, the feelings of both parties are more or less respected. The men advise the son to begin to play with the young widow, to ask her jocularly for tobacco, and he gradually accustoms himself to consider her no longer as a mother (mamana) but as a wife (nsati).

587 Of course the general rule is apt to be very much altered
595 according to circumstances. Should the deceased be the youngest
428 of the family, his elder brother may inherit the first wife. But
768 this is not the regular procedure.

The distribution having thus been decided on, the sisters of the deceased call the widows and say to them : "You so and so, you shall give food to so and so (phamela manyana)." But then the struggle begins. One of the widows, being old, may altogether refuse to have anything to do with any of her brothers-in-law. She may say : "I am taking my young son as a husband" which means : I do not want to be the wife of anybody. Or she will say : "I choose the big tree of the village where my late husband has built his hut." This answer may mean two things. Either I do not leave this kraal and I will stay here without a husband ; or, on the contrary : I consent to be the wife of the man who becomes the headman of the village, viz. the eldest of the younger brothers. Another will say : "I love my *ntukulu* so and so." Should, however, the first wife desire to go to a man who does not

(1) Amongst the Ba-Ronga, an elder brother of the deceased cannot inherit a widow. It is taboo. He is a father to her, not a husband. He sometimes takes the lead in the discussion, having no personal interest in the matter. (See Part II).

final fate will not be known before the last and most important act : the adjudication of the inheritance.

f) *The day of the adjudication of the inheritance.* This is a most typical ceremony prepared for with great care, because the day is full of surprises and dangers. Every precaution is taken to avoid misunderstanding, and to bring the mourning to a peaceful and satisfactory conclusion. It is winter time ; the mealies have been collected from the fields of the widows, the small cobs called *makunula* have been set carefully apart, as they have to be used especially to prepare the beer for the feast. The council of the family is again assembled and decides that the time has come. The divinatory bones are consulted. Should they be favourable, the ceremony can take place. The bones are again asked a number of questions : Who must take the mealies from the granary and put them in the pot to soften them in water ? (first operation of native beer making). A newly married woman who has had only one child is chosen by preference. Then it is asked how long this softening must continue ; who is to shout her *mikulungwane* to accompany the work ; who will have to get the mealies out ; which woman must give the first blow in the mortar to pound the softened mealies, etc.

All the relatives assemble in the mortuary village. One year has elapsed since the death, and the bitter feelings of mourning have passed. Nobody will miss the feast, certainly not the *batukulu*, viz., the nephews, sons of the sisters of the deceased. Some may be disappointed this day, but one of these nephews may return home richer than when he left! Most of the relatives arrive before the great day, to help in the preparation of the beer. When the woman designated by the bones has given the first blow, all her companions start at once pounding with vigour : "Che-ghe-ghe-ghe," and they sing songs of mourning. This is one of these songs, and a very significant one :

> Hi nlo, hi nlo! Hi'ta ku yini ku we, Hosi ndjina ? –
> We are weeping, we are weeping! What shall we say to thee, King!

This king is without doubt Heaven, the more or less personal being who kills or gives life, and whom we shall often meet with in these pages.

361 he or she has finished the meal, will have eaten a little of all
596 that has been cooked on all the fires. It is impossible to
264 imagine a more perfect communism than this as regards food!
476 I myself witnessed this custom of the evening meal in Spoon Libombo's village in Rikatla. Amongst the inhabitants of the kraal there were two blind male adults, the wife of one of them being half blind herself; the wife of the other was an old woman who could hardly till a few square yards of mealies and groundnuts, and keep the birds and the hens away from them. Spoon's wife and the wife of another man of the village alone were healthy and able to work normally. So the whole burden rested on their shoulders, as the share the other women could take in the feeding of the men was necessarily small. However I never heard Spoon grumble; being the headman, he made it a point of honour that all the people dwelling with him should have enough to eat. Everybody who has lived with South African Natives has admired their wonderful readiness to share any food they may have with those present. Even children are much superior in this respect to White children. I attribute this virtue to the community of food which reigns in the Bantu village, and which is certainly one of the most attractive features of Kafir socialism. Village life has not taught the Thongas merely bad habits.

B. MOVING A VILLAGE AND FOUNDING A NEW ONE.

621 Large kraals similar to the one shown in our illustration
754 were more numerous in former times than now. It is rare to
596 meet with such a number of huts and so many people under one headman. Why? Because, say my informants, the superstition of witchcraft has considerably increased in later times. Suppose the wife of one of the younger brothers should
[787] die; the divinatory bones reveal that this death is due to a witch; they go so far as to designate one of the wives of the headman as guilty. No common life is any longer possible. The widower will move elsewhere and build a fence around his

621 754 596 own huts to protect them against would-be-witches. In this way many villages are broken up by fear of witchcraft. Generally speaking the Thonga village cannot long remain of any considerable size ; it tends to fall to pieces.

But there are other causes which may destroy the village and the idyllic life of the small community. The death of the headman, and lightning striking the village, are the two main causes which may bring about this event.

765 596 621 787 *Death of the headman.* There is a mystic tie between this man and the social organism which is under him. Should he die, the village dies also... It is not abandoned at once. The whole year of mourning will elapse before the moving. But as soon as the widows and property have been distributed, the successor of the deceased will go and found his own village and the old one will remain a ruin (rumbi). Should any one else die, his hut will merely be thrown into the bush and the village will not be abandoned. But should these deaths increase, then the divinatory bones may order the place to be deserted, as it is defiled and dangerous.

821 756 787 621 If *lightning* strikes the hubo, it is a very bad omen. The medicine man who has the power to "treat the place struck by lightning" is called in. Should he be able to exhume from the ground the mysterious bird which causes lightning, or at least the coagulated urine which it has deposited, and which is called Heaven (See Part VI), the people are allowed to stay. But if he does not discover it deep down in the soil, the village must move, as the presence of the mysterious power of Heaven inside the circle of huts would bring disaster. This is a taboo.

621 787 596 Another cause of moving is the *exhaustion of the gardens.* When the fields are "tired" (karala) and do not produce sufficient food for the inhabitants, they leave the place and look for pastures new. In that case the bones will be consulted. Sometimes, even, the village may be transported elsewhere for the sole reason that the people are tired of the place and want to change. If the bones confirm their wishes, they will move.

621 596 *The founding of a new village* is the occasion of most interesting and characteristic rites, which afford us a new [illegible]

621/396 nature of that social unit, the Thonga *muti*. I shall give the sequence of these rites first in the Northern clans, according to the description of Viguet, and secondly amongst the Ba-Ronga, according to Mboza.

I. *In the Northern clans.*

621 1) The headman goes first to examine some spots where he
787 would like to build. He *breaks small twigs* from various trees
784 and brings them home.

2) The bones are consulted and help in *making a choice*. The
833 twigs are placed on a mat one after the other. When the stone of the *kuwe* (see Part VI) falls in a certain way in front of one of the twigs, this shows that the tree from which it has been broken is the one near which the hut of the headman must be built.

3) Building material is collected. When everything is ready to proceed to the construction of the huts, the headman goes with his principal wife to the spot chosen. They leave the old village for ever ; they must not return to it any more. In the evening they have *sexual relations* in the new place and in the morning they tie together some tufts of living grass. Next day all the people of the old village must come and step upon this grass. This rite is called to *tie the village* (boha muti).

621 4) Then begins the period, of about one month, called *buhlapfa*,
595 time of moving, which has its laws. Two great taboos dominate
784 it : 1) Sexual relations are absolutely prohibited. Should any
834 one transgress this law, he has sinned gravely against the headman ; he has stolen the village (yiba muti). The headman will be ill, perhaps paralysed. The guilty woman will also be punished : she will not be able to bear children again ; she will be "tied by the village" (bohiwa hi muti). The culprits have "crossed the way of the master of the village" (tjemakanya). Strange to say, the headman himself is bound by this law. He must have no relations *with his younger wives*, because the village belongs to the principal spouse. Should such a transgression be discovered, the work

621 10) Having closed the village in this way, she *performs a sacrifice.*
595 She sips a mouthful of water from a tumbler, spitting out a
782 portion of it (phahla) towards the people ; then she washes her hands, and throws a little of the water towards them in order *to give them* the village. This act is accompanied by the following words : "Be not tied by the village! Bring forth children ; live and be happy and get everything. You gods, see! I have no bitterness in my heart. It is pure. I was angry because my husband abandoned me, he said I was not his wife ; he loved his younger wives. Now, this is finished in my heart. We shall have friendly relations together..." The prayer being concluded, the headman goes to the main entrance, pushes the thorny branch aside, and opens the village.

621 11) The last act is the *khangula*, the *inauguration ceremony.*
574 Beer is prepared, neighbours are invited and they all drink together, the neighbours coming *to see the new village* (ku bona muti).

As regards the old one, when the moving has been accomplished through the back door widened for the purpose, one of the inhabitants closes the main entrance with a branch. Hence comes the expression which is applied to a village all of whose inmates have died, and which has, on that account, disappeared : "Those people have all died and there was not even one left to close the gate."

II. *In the Ba-Ronga Clans.*

621 The sequence of rites for the removal of a village is very
787 much the same as in the Northern clans.
824 1) The headman examines some spots and consults the bones :
765 "Must I built at such and such a tree ?"

2) When the tree has been designated, he goes to it and places at its foot his furniture (nyumdju) and his instrument of worship, his altar, (a pot, a jar, see Part VI). The altar may be placed at the main entrance later on, if the bones so order it. As already mentioned, there will be a mystic relation between him and that tree. He must never cut it down. If any of the branches should be

643 857 However, specially appointed persons watch over him and report of his well being to his father. His youthful playmates are taught to respect him ; he is surrounded in his games by a miniature court, from which he chooses his favourites (tinxekwa) ; some of his companions act as counsellors and reprimand those who do not treat him with due respect. They play at court... also at soldiers ; the juvenile troop wage war with the wasps, and also with the boys of the adjoining villages.

643 787 When the child reaches boyhood, the bones are consulted, and sacrifices offered in order to ascertain from the gods whether it be well to take him to the capital. Should the answer be in 777 the negative, there is nothing to do but wait. When the dice 751 declare the propitious moment to have arrived, the transfer is effec- 782 ted and the boy taken to his father. This is a great occasion for the counsellors who have watched over the boy and who thenceforward supervise his education. They feast themselves well (ba fumisana), kill goats, perhaps even an ox, and offer a sacrifice to proclaim to the gods the return to the capital of the heir to the throne ; to his ankle is tied the astragalus of a slaughtered goat, as a protective amulet.

643 881 836 At puberty the boy undergoes, in the same manner as his companions, all the ceremonial rites usual at that period. The principal doctors of the country treat him, in order that henceforth he may be a man (ba mu yimisa a ba wanuna), having full right to enter into the sexual relations of gangisa (p. 97). Care is taken, however, to attach to his person comrades of riper age, who will prevent him giving way to excesses, (suka banhwanyana la bakulu ba ta mu gema, ba mu sibela ku kula), which would arrest his growth and render him small and feeble. He thus lives in relative continence, participating in the play and in the work of boys of his own age, and looking after the herds. At times he gives a feast, when his father happens to have presented him with an ox with which to make merry.

643 588 595 Now we see him arrived at manhood, at the age when the Blacks take a wife. If his father is still living, the young man is not allowed to marry officially. He may certainly lobola, viz., contract regular marriage in the usual way, and possibly

643 301 them. But they were disappointed in their hope : Shiluvane kept both the ritlatla and the power and bequeathed them to his son, Muhlaba, as we shall see. Legends are current about the ritlatla. It is said to be able to move of its own will. "This piece of metal is indeed a wonderful thing," wrote a young Nkuna, to me "because when it is buried in the soil, as black people are in the habit of doing with their treasures, a piece of iron must be put inside it to prevent it from going away; if this precaution is not taken, the ritlatla may leave the place where it was and go somewhere else. In the space of one year, it may go as far as the Masetana spruit (about one mile)."

643 Another royal property of the Nkuna family was an *elephant's tusk*, which vanquished enemies had brought as a token of their submission.

643 302 787 In Nondwana, the old chief Papele who preceded Maphunga and lived in the middle of the last century, wore a *kind of chignon* or bun made by plaiting his hair, which was a sign of royalty (shifoko). But this custom has passed away. There was also *a long stick* which was kept exposed to the smoke of the royal fire in the sacred hut of *nyokwekulu*, which I shall describe presently, and which was called *ntjobo* and also *mhamba*, viz., offering; this was evidently of religious value to the clan, and was taken outside when the army assembled. It possessed the power of becoming invisible to enemies. Moreover this magical stick was very useful because it warned the clan when some danger was threatening. The ntjobo was then put into a fire; if it did not burn, this showed that the clan had nothing to fear from its enemies ; if it burned, it meant that the clan would be attacked and defeated. Then another stick would be prepared and put into the fire with the hope that it would resist it.

643 778 We shall speak in Part VI of another sacred *mhamba* which most of the Thonga clans possessed, made of the nails and hair of the deceased chiefs in the Tembe clan, and of the dried skin of their faces in the Shirindja clan. It was used as a means of propitiation in national calamities. In the Khosen country, the chief also possessed the *mhamba*. This was a mysterious object which the clan had always possessed, from time immemorial, from the beginning

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

643 789 The royal drug, having been burnt, is reduced to powder and this powder is poured into the calabashes. The forked branch is planted in the sacred hut, which I shall shortly describe, and the calabashes hung upon it. Each sub-chief receives a calabash and takes it to his kraal, where it will help the district in which he reigns to perform the *luma* ceremony. But the greater part of the powder remains at the capital. There it will be used not only for the luma, and for the sprinkling of the warriors (see Chapter IV), but also for two other purposes : 1) for the protection of the country by means of the wooden pegs ; 2) for the filling up of the magical horn.

1) *The wooden pegs* (timhiko). A certain day is fixed for planting the forked branch in the house where the great medicine is kept. Then the doctor, accompanied by some members of the royal family, steals out secretly during the night and goes to the cross-ways, to the strategic points on the borders of the Mazwaya territory. It is taboo for anyone to meet with the party. He plants wooden pegs, and smears them with the powder. As soon as they have been smeared, they become invisible. No one can see them nor tear them out except Godlela. They do not rot. White ants do not attack them. The country is fenced by them.

Should there be any dispute as regards the boundaries of the country, Godhlela will be called. At once the pegs which were invisible appear ; they come out as much as a foot above the ground. If a hostile army was approaching, it will turn back at once, seized with fear at the sight of these pegs.

789 825 787 2) *The magical horn*. The remainder of the powder is mixed with a special kind of honey, the honey made by the small black bee called *mbonga*. This bee makes a large spherical nest deep in the ground. Natives have a number of superstitions regarding it. They say the mbonga honey may be eaten by anybody, but it is only members of certain families who can see the nest and dig for it. For other people it is invisible. (See Part VI.) The Ngwetsa family, in Rikatla, was one of the favoured ones! It must be said that the hole through which the mbonga bees penetrate into the soil is in truth very small and escapes the notice

789 of most people! This honey comes from below. It is a hidden,
823 a mysterious thing. A little of it is added to the drug and the
787 mixture is poured into a double horn, viz., two horns whose large ends are firmly fixed to each other, the point where they meet being carefully covered with dung, which acts as glue. A hole has been made in the upper horn and the drug is introduced through this. It is a great means of divination. When war is imminent, the nyokwekulu begins to ferment, and exudes through the hole : "It knows all about war." So the country can prepare for it. No wonder that this powerful medicine is preserved with superstitious awe and the greatest care.

643 A place of honour is reserved for the magical horn in the
595 hut of the first wife of the chief. In the middle of the hearth
372 a perpetual fire burns ; it must never be allowed to go out ; it
824 is taboo. The wood used for it must be that of a tree found on the sea shore, and called ntjobori. The Makaneta sub-clan must furnish it regularly. It is taboo to take embers from this fireplace, which is called the royal fire, the medicinal fire (ndjilo wa buhosi, wa muri). Should the principal wife let the fire go out, then Godlela must be called on to light it again, rubbing together two sticks of a shrub called ntjopfa. The fire produced by burning this shrub is considered dangerous. It is taboo to cut its branches or to use them for the purpose of warming oneself ; the genitalia are said to swell when this law is transgressed (See Part IV). But Godlela does not fear ; has he not his drugs to protect himself ? He can and must use ntjopfa to re-light the nyokwekulu fire, and he will be given a good reward for his work! The ntjobori, in burning, produces an abundant smoke which leaves a deposit on the horn, on the forked branch and on all the calabashes containing the provision of powder.

643 The queen Mimpanyanhoba who was in charge of the
372 nyokwekulu had no sexual relations with the chief on that account.
595 I do not know if absolute continence is always enforced on the
784 keeper of the sacred fire, as was the case for the Roman Vestal Virgins. But I have been told by Mboza that this woman prevented her co-wives from coming near her hut ; it was taboo.

643 The grass of the roof of this hut must never be removed, though
784 it may rot owing to the rains. It is taboo. One simply puts
356 a layer of new grass over the old one, a thing which is rarely done in the case of ordinary roofs.

643 In case of war, should the clan be obliged to leave the country,
184 a special little hut is hastily built in the bush and the precious
722 medicine is deposited therein. There is no fear that the enemy will take it, either Whites or Natives, because this hut also has the attribute of invisibility. This happened during the war of 1894 (1). In the case of the *mhamba* of the Tembe and Zihlahla clans it is different; the man who keeps it must run away with it and with the chief.

643 Such are the laws of the mphulo. This great medicine may
789 certainly be regarded as a part of the regalia, and the most important part. It is, for the chief and sub-chiefs, a means of strengthening their authority, as will be seen in the description of the luma rite. On the other hand the mphulo is a collective possession, the powerful magic means by which the clan resists its enemies or conquers them. It occupies the very centre of the national life.

789 In the Manyisa clan the war-medicine is called *mabophe*, and is
726 kept by a man called Chikiza, who belongs to the Ntjeko clan, not
643 to the royal family. He is said to have inherited it from his
787 forefathers. The medicine however belongs to the chief. It is administered as follows. The *ñanga* prepares small heaps of wood on the road, pours a little of the drug over them, sets fire to them and the warriors tread on the embers and extinguish the fire with their feet. This makes them invulnerable or at least protects them against fatal wounds. When they are ready to start for battle, the bones are thrown, and give the following intimation:
643 "Do not kill the first enemy you meet with, but catch him alive, be
789 it a man or a woman, and bring him to the chief." The chief,
726 accompanied by some indumas, must stab him outside the royal kraal; the body of the deceased enemy will then be cut open, and

(1) In the Nondwane the nyokwekulu is still kept by the heir of Maphunga, Magomanyana. The new chief, the usurper, tried to find it, but Godlela refused to give it to him. Thus Mubvesha has no *mphulo*.

789 the fat collected in order to mix it with the war medicine, the flesh
726 being left to the dogs to eat and destroy.

In some clans, chiefs possess *other personal charms* which are
643 very much dreaded and called *psitjemba*. So, in the Maluleke
789 clan, each of the children of the ancient chief Mashakadzi received
237 from him one of these psitjemba. It consists of a part of the skull of a child, the top of the head, where the pulse is seen beating at the fontanella. This has been smeared with the vitreous humour taken from the eyes of lions or elephants, and powders made from the skins of wild beasts. The possession of this charm gives the chief a supernatural power. If, being irritated with you, he invokes his gods by sucking it and emits the sacramental tsu, he can call on any wild beast he likes to kill you... He has sacrified with the psitjemba ; you will die!

643 Some chiefs of the Northern clans used to *swallow one of the*
787 *stones* found in the stomach of a crocodile. It is said that
825 crocodiles, when cut open, are found to contain a certain number of stones, as they are supposed to eat one each year, when the rainy season comes on. One of them is chosen and smeared with special medicines and swallowed by the chief. Natives firmly believe that this stone remains in the body of the chief, and that it is "his head, his life" (Viguet). When it is passed in his stools the first time, this is a premonitory warning. When it occurs a second time, it is a clear announcement that the chief is about to die. So chiefs can always know when their time is near. In other clans the crocodile stone is replaced by what is called *ndjalama*. Amongst Nkunas this word designates a kind of bright copper button, which the Pedis of the Palaora mine used to make and sell. But ndjalama also means large sized beads. Whatever it is, some chiefs swallowed the ndjalama and were warned by it of their death. This object, as well as the crocodile stone, is taboo for subjects to swallow. They would die. It is "buloyi bya hosi" — "the magical power of the chief."

643 On account of these powerful and dangerous charms possessed
619 by them, chiefs of different clans regarded it as a taboo to stay in each other's company ; they were afraid lest they might be killed by the magical power of their colleagues. Maphunga

681 When goats have damaged somebody's garden, there is no
685 fine to pay. The shepherds are whipped and the matter is
643 thus concluded. Should the father of the boys, however, take their part and protect them with his weapons, he will be summoned to the tribunal of the chief and have to pay a fine of £ 5 or two or three goats.

643 Thonga Natives who have but a few head of cattle, are
231 accustomed to entrust them to the care of neighbours possessing
686 a large herd, in order to spare themselves the trouble of finding herding boys. There are some laws regulating this matter. If the owner of the cow, or the pig, or the goat, gives money in advance to the master of the large herd, all the calves, pigs, and kids, which may be born revert to him. But if he has not paid anything, the master of the herd is entitled to choose one pig out of the first litter ; or he can keep the third or fourth calf or kid. If it be a hen, one of its chickens will belong to the man who took care of it. Should the owner forget to remit the due reward, there will be trouble (pongwe). When he goes to take his cattle back, the master of the herd will keep one head for himself, and, if a dispute arises, both will go to the chief, at least if the matter is important, if the animal in question, for instance, is an ox.

If an ox incorporated with another man's herd dies, the master of the herd will inform the owner in order that he may go and dispose of the meat. Should he be living too far off, the ox will be eaten on the spot and the skin will be sent to the owner.
231 Suppose the master of the herd pretends that the ox is dead, but
685 has only put it with another herd, and sent a skin to the owner to deceive him, it is a case of theft, which will be judged as such.

3) Criminal cases.

684 *Adultery.* Our tribe punishes adultery very severely indeed,
787 at least when the woman is married. The fine is a full lobolo.
837 (See page 197.) Amongst the Nkunas if the accused man denies his guilt when questioned indoors, the bones are consulted, or even the magicians who practise the "vumisa" divination. (Part

682 procedure. They are in advance of many tribes. The same
627 cannot be asserted when dealing with witchcraft!

Witchcraft (Buloyi). To the Thonga mind this is one of the
754 greatest crimes which a man can commit. It is equivalent to
683 assassination, even worse than murder, as a dim idea of anthro-
787 pophagy is added to the simple charge of killing. A wizard
694 kills human beings to eat their flesh. We shall study the conceptions of *buloyi* later on (Part VI) from a psychological point of view. Here it is mentioned only in as far as it gives rise to judicial cases. This particular crime being committed in great secrecy during the night, and in most instances even unconsciously, the Bantu tribunal uses two or three magical methods for discovering it. These *methods of inquiry*, which civilised nations have long ago abandoned, are :

1) *Divination by casting lots*. The objects used in our tribe for this purpose are the magic bones, the astragalus of goats, antelopes, etc, and shells, which I intend to study in a special chapter. When they have designated (ku ba, to beat) the wizard or witch (noyi) who has killed such and such a person, they are consulted a second time. If they confirm their verdict, the relatives of the deceased go to the chief and lodge their complaint. The accusation becomes official and is now in the hands of the tribunal.

2) The chief sends the plaintiff and accused to the magician who proceeds to the *divination by questioning* them and working himself up into an ecstatic condition (vumisa).

683 3) Should the accused be again designated and should he
695 deny his crime, he may request to be submitted to the *ordeal*,
824 viz, the trial by the solaneous plant called mondjo. If the drug
787 intoxicates him, his guilt is confirmed for the third time and the
754 tribunal will condemn him. The punishment for *buloyi* is death, either by hanging, or by empaling, or by drowning in the river, if the wizard was in the habit of perpetrating his murders by sending crocodiles to kill his victims.

[177 681] Nowadays Native chiefs dare not put to death suspected witches. Since the Ba-Ronga have been under the jurisdiction of the Whites, the *death penalty* has been abolished. On the other hand, under

643 754 787 789 and Part VI). — To protect and to prolong his life, diviners sometimes call together the whole clan in order to discover and eventually arrest those who might bewitch and kill the chief. This gathering is called *nyiwa* (See Part VI). — As for rain making, it is in the hands of the proper rain doctors (Nkuna) or is done by the ceremonies of *mbelele* (Part VI). — He is not held responsible for public calamities. — If his bodily or mental powers fail, the tinduna discuss matters in his stead and he is not deposed.

643 769 Chiefs are never worshipped during life time. After death, they are deified for their own family, who worship them, but not for their subjects. — They are not supposed to turn into wild beasts after their death. — The custom of appointing mock kings does not exist. Only on the death of a chief can one of his relatives be nominated to take his place, and watch over his property until the adjudication of the inheritance.

243 their mealies with the small pimples of their tattooing (tinhleke ta Ba-Ronga). If maize is the most appreciated cereal, it is certainly not the most ancient known to the tribe. Owing to its modernity, no doubt, it is not subject to any taboo. It is sown and harvested
[252] without any rite. At Christmas time, when the first cobs are edible, people joyfully feast on the new crop. They cook some of them in the ashes, but they allow the rest to ripen and dry upon
[626] the stalks. Although no taboo prevents any owner of a field from eating the first mealies whenever it suits him, Mboza asserts that people who have obtained green mealies before the other inhabitants of the village, do not precede them in the enjoyment of this much appreciated food : "It would cause jealousy amongst them." This reason is perhaps at the bottom of the luma taboo (I, p. 394). Moreover they fear lest they might have to share their good luck with all their friends !

243 Next in importance comes the *mabele*, plur. of bele, dji-ma
273 (Ro.), ñwahuba (Dj.), the *millet* or *Kafir corn*. This is the well-known millet which we give to birds in cages, small, round, blackish grains which grow on a stem 3 to 5 feet high, in elongated cylindrical ears. Kafir corn is pounded, or ground, and may be eaten in the form of flour. But its main use is to provide the
243 yeast for the Kafir beer. As already pointed out (I. p. 42) the
825 mabele is one of the oldest cereals known to the Thongas. It is the ritual cereal, that used for the "shimhimbi," the dish offered to the confined mother or prepared for the luma ceremony. Its seeds undergo a certain treatment before being sown : the sub-chief blows upon them after having taken a small piece of a certain root in his mouth ; this root obtained from a kind of juncus found in the mountains, is supposed to have the power of keeping the ants away from the seeds. He distributes the seeds thus treated amongst his people, and every one mixes some of them with his own supply. Men of the reigning family alone possess
243 this root. Later on, when the time for sowing has come, it is
787 taboo for subjects to precede their chiefs or sub-chiefs in sowing mabele. The bones are consulted. Should the "madjuma" fall showing their mouths (see Part VI), it is the answer of the gods. They say: "Yes! this is the proper time! The mabele will do well!"

The horoscope is all the more satisfactory if the astragalus of the sheep is in the positive position, showing that the chiefs are happy and prosperous. At harvest time, Kafir corn is subject to the luma taboo, as explained in detail in a preceding chapter. All these rites prove the antiquity of the cereal. 243 787

The *sorghum*, (*maphila*, plur. of phila, dji-ma), is also extensively cultivated all through Thongaland. There are many kinds of sorghum : the *phila* proper, with reddish and white grains, the *timba*, whose stem has a sweet taste and is enjoyed almost as much as sugar cane, the *shikombe*, whose ears are curved, the *ntjyaka*, with a particularly elongated ear and the *djabana* with white seeds. The last has a somewhat bitter taste and is consequently spared by the birds, which are so fond of the other kinds of cereals that people have to stay in their gardens for months together to scare them away. 243

Rice (*mpunga*, mu-mi) is met with in a few districts only, notably on the Lower Nkomati, where the tide provides a natural irrigation, and in some depressions of the coast belt, especially near Rikatla. I could not say when it was introduced amongst the Thongas. In Shiluvane, its cultivation was entirely unknown in 1890, when it was brought thither by Lourenço Marques Natives. However a storekeeper told me that rice had been extensively cultivated in the country between 1870 and 1880. As it is subject to certain taboos (see later on) it may be that it is older than one would at first suspect.

In some places another cereal is cultivated, the *likoro* (probably Eleusine indica).

II. *Vegetables.*

Three Leguminosae play a considerable part in the feeding of the tribe : the ground nut, Kafir pea and Kafir bean. 244

a) The ground-nut, (Arachis hypogea), (rumane plur. marumane or tinumane (1) (Ro.), timanga (Dj.), is extensively cultivated,

(1) Rumane (cl. dji-ma) can form its plural either by prefixing *ma* which is the regular way, or by prefixing *tin*, which is exceptional. In the second case, the *n* of the prefix causes the initial *r* to permute into *n*.

323 and, if the result of the firing is good, she will always call the same
777 child on future occasions (1).

787 If all these precautions prove useless, and the woman sees that she is not succeeding, she will go so far as to consult the bones, and, if they so order, she will make an offering to her gods, gods of the father, gods of the mother, or possessing gods (Part VI), if she is a spirit-possessed woman, as the bones may

323

Result of the firing. *Phot. A. Borel.*

787 declare. People will say to her : "You manufacture pots and sell them and do not give anything to your gods : that will not do!" So she will offer a piece of clothing, a coin, etc., at the altar *(gandjelo)*.

323 (1) Meta, the Rikatla potteress has entirely given up the manufacture of pottery of
476 late years. All her pots cracked, because, she said, she was the only woman practising this art in the country. In her former home, everybody made pots and in this way the potteresses "strengthened each other (tiyisana)." Moreover when a pot was heard cracking in the furnace, somebody ran to the hut and collected a little of the dust on the floor and threw it into the other pots, and this prevented them from being spoiled. It was too far for Meta to run to her former home to get the dust—so she gave up her trade! The case of poor Meta is a good illustration of the collective character of industrial pursuits amongst primitive peoples.

On their way back, they had carefully to watch a certain bird called *Juwati*, fish-eater; if this bird flew in the right direction, homeward, it was a hopeful sign. If it emitted its cry *kwekweru-kweru*, (kweru means at home), or if it settled on the crown of a hut, then the travellers were happy and shouted their joyful *mikulungwane*. On the contrary, if any member of the company had died on the road, another bird, the *magudjwana*, would come and perch on the crown, with a tired air and drooping head... Then there were tears instead of shouts of joy! 437 787 825

These great commercial expeditions were superseded later on by the *trade in skins* which the Ba-Ronga conducted, bartering them in the interior for powder or other European produce. I knew one Native who organised regular expeditions to Bilene, where he bought the skins of civet-cats with which the Zulu warriors delight to deck themselves. Thence he went into the hill country of the Swazis, or Zulus, to sell his merchandise. It was reported that he obtained scores of oxen in exchange for his precious nsimba skins. The last time, however, the venture did not turn out well, and it has not been attempted again. 439

Native trade, fifty years ago, consisted also in selling *wax*, and *rubber*, and tons of *nkampfi* (mafureira almonds) to the business houses at Delagoa, (the supply of ivory was exhausted years ago), but this trade has fallen off almost entirely. My impression is that Native commerce has greatly diminished during the last fifty years. So the fact is evident that civilisation, which at first gave a decided stimulus to the commercial spirit of the Thongas, has latterly almost entirely destroyed their trade. How has this been done?

One reason for this decrease in Native commerce may be found in the advent of a large number of Asiatics, Banyans from Goa and Bombay, who are past masters in the art of shopkeeping, and who set up in business wherever they consider there is a sufficient population to warrant the venture. Living very cheaply (rice and curry are their staple food), in any kind of shanty, selling at enormous profits, keen at making bargains, these people 439 563

½ [L.C., Traders--analyst]

821 which is also met with in *nyeleti* (star) and in the names of certain rivers. (I. p. 36.) At the present time there is no trace of worship or of mythological conceptions in connection with it. Natives see in its spots a woman carrying a shirundju basket or a bundle of sticks, but they do not attach to that image more importance than we do when we talk of the man in the moon.

821 I have described (I. p. 52) how the new moon is received
527 with exclamations of joy : in the villages the first person who
241 sees it shouts : "Kengelekezeeee,"—"the Crescent! the Crescent!" and this word is passed on from one village to another, and dancers rejoice because they will have moonlight to illuminate their feasts! Such is, at least, the reason now given by the Rongas for this custom. There were perhaps other ideas connected with the new moon in former times. — According to a Nkuna informant the day of the new moon is a *shimusi*, a day of rest. It is taboo to till the fields and cut the roots of the trees with a hoe. The moon must be left to become firm (tiyela). It is still tender as a new born child. Destroying winds might
821 blow and hail fall if this taboo were transgressed. — The
787 appearance of the crescent was also carefully examined, says the
828 same informant. If its horns were turned towards the earth, this showed that there was nothing to fear, all the dangers contained in this month had been poured out : "mafumo ma hangalakile" — "the assagais were dispersed." On the contrary, if the horns were turned towards heaven, this showed that the moon was full of weapons and misfortunes. — The new moon is of great importance in the customs connected with exorcism and possession, as every exorcist must undergo the *haza* purification at each new moon (Chapter III). Moreover Thongas, like many civilised people, also believe that some persons at this time have an attack of madness which is called *rihuhe ra ñhweti*, the lunar madness.

772 When the first quarter appears, the moon is said to *thwaza*,
821 a Zulu word which corresponds to *tjhama* in Thonga, and is very much used in the terminology of possession. Eight days later, it is said to *basa*, to be white or brilliant ; full moon is said to *sima* or to *lata batjongwana*, to put the little children to bed, because when it rises, it finds them already sleeping on their mats.

I never heard a distinction made between fixed stars and 821
planets. They are all called tinyeleti. The best-known is 772
Venus, which bears many names. Not knowing that the evening 881
and morning star are one and the same, they have given it different names. The evening star is *Gumbashilalelo*, the one which steals the evening meal, because it appears when people are eating it, or *khwekhweti*, the brilliant star, or *Nkata wa hweti*, the moon's husband (as the two are often seen close together); the morning star is called *Ngongomela*, or *Khwezu*, and is greatly lauded as the herald of day. It gives the warriors the signal for starting on a war-like expedition: the warriors can easily kill their enemies under cover of the darkness, and the sun will soon appear and help them to complete their victory. Travellers also start on their journey when they see it: the dawn will soon be here! Lit by its light, candidates for circumcision leave the village of the chief to go to the house of initiation. According to one of my informants (I. p. 75) there is a profound and mystic idea in this custom: Ngongomela announces the day; so little boys must be conducted by the morning star when they abandon their childhood and all its ignorance to enter the adult life with all its knowledge. It leads them from darkness into the light! So Venus plays a great part in Thonga customs. It is the great star. Notice the feminine suffix *eti* in one of its names. It may have been personified in former times.

The *Pleiades* are the only constellation which bears a name 821
in Thonga. They call it *shirimelo*, the one which announces 772
the tilling season, because, in fact, in the lands situated in the Tropic of Cancer, it rises in July or August, when tilling is resumed. I have not heard of any other constellation known to the Natives. They have no notion whatever of constellations: their mind does not seem to have tried to group the stars, or to have seen figures of animals, or objects, in the sky; their imagination in this domain is very poor, and they remain far behind the Oriental nations in this respect.

Falling stars are looked on as a bad omen. When they see 821
one falling towards a certain point of the horizon, Natives think 787
that a Chief must have died in the country towards which the 789

821 star is directing its course, and they have a formula of incantation
787 to get rid of the misfortune attending this phenomenon. They
789 say : "Thu! Thu! Nkulunkulu ndjuwee, famba psa ku u nga fa u ku bi." — "You great thing, go away alone (without me, leaving me behind) and die and disappear entirely." This is more an imprecation (shiruketelo) than an incantation. The syllable *thu* indicates, and accompanies, the emission of a little saliva. It is different from the sacramental *tsu*, employed to invoke the spirits of the ancestors : it is an insult. It is spitting *at* something, not an act of respect and an offering, like *tsu* (1). This is the Ronga formula ; the one used in Northern clans has the same meaning : "*Rura, rura weshe*" (Move, move alone!).

821 *Comets* greatly impress the imagination of the Thongas ;
787 they are called *shimusana*, or *nyeleti ya musana*, the star of dust, or *nyeleti ya nkila*, the star with a tail, and when they appear they also mean the death of a chief. People say : "See ! A chief has died, but they have not yet published the mourning" (I. p. 414). The star which is said to have appeared the year of the death of Manukosi was probably a comet. (See Report of the S.A.A.A.S. 1905, Vol. III, p. 232.)

772 These few superstitions and observations comprise all the Astronomy of the Thongas. The sidereal world is almost entirely outside the range of their preoccupations.

III. *Cosmographic and Meteorological Phenonomena.*

1) The Wind.

821 The wind is called *moya*, an interesting word which means
822 also spirit (the human breath and the spiritual part of man), and is applied to the acting, living agent, or to the smell, or taste, of some objects. For instance it is said of an alcoholic beverage

861 (1) They spit at a child who is causing an unpleasant smell, saying to him : "Thu! u ya tisyela matjimba." — "Go away to ease yourself." Should you do this to a
578 person older than yourself, he will say to you : "What ! you make *thu* to me (wa ndji tjhuka), you want me to ease myself !"

"You see! Stones also grow!" Another Native geologist, who 823
had heard the European story of creation, coming from the Coast, a country of sand and sand only, and visiting the Drakensberg Mountains near Shiluvane, was amazed by the enormous cliffs of the Mamotswiri and gave vent to the following reflection : "No wonder we have no stones in our sandy land. When God created the earth, he used them all to build these mountains!"

Fossils are rare in Thongaland, where sand covers almost the 136
whole country. There is however in the southern part of the 823
Maputju region an outcrop of cretaceous rock which belongs to the 777
Gault and which contains ammonites, Nautillus etc. Natives call them *nsongo stones* and are very much afraid of them. They say that "these stones with ribs" can walk. They bring bad luck (singita). Should a child pick up one of these fossils and bring it into the village, he will fall ill ; he must therefore undergo a special treatment.

Crystal greatly pleases the Natives. It is rare in South Africa. 135
When magicians can secure a white or a black crystal they generally 301
wear it round their necks together with the claws, or teeth, of wild animals, or with their little skin bags which they use as amulets. For this reason I once had the good fortune to be able to exchange a crystal I had brought from Switzerland for one of these charms!

The *earth* (misaba) is also a great and important thing. First 823
because it is identified with the people dwelling on it, with the clan. 695
Tiko, the land, means both the soil and the people. Further than 787
this, the earth is the chief (I. p. 382) ; hence many laws : e. g. the tusk of the elephant which fell on the earth when the beast was killed, belongs to the chief, etc. (p. 57). The most solemn oath is that which is taken with earth (ku funga u hahla hi misaba). Should a man be accused of stealing or of being a wizard, if he puts a little earth in his mouth, says *tsu*, and declares : "I do not know anything about it," those who care for his safety will look for a medicine-man to treat him : it is a *mondjo* (a magical method of divination. See Chapter III). The same thing is done when an oath has been taken by sucking a piece of iron.

A curious superstition regarding the earth is this : after moving 823
from one country to another, you should for some days mix with

136 surrounded with a certain mystery, and this is no doubt why its
825 honey is used in the manufacture of the *nyokwekulu*. Its scientific name is Trigona togoensis, var. Junodi (Friese).

136 Amongst the *Mollusca*, a great many are eaten : the *Mbatsana*
262 (yin-tin) of the sea (bivalve shells), *Likatla* (li-tin) of the lakes, and the *Hwaru* (yi-tin), oysters of the Tembe shore. The land
454 snails are called *Humba* (yi-tin) ; the big ones (Achatina Lamar-
787 kiana) are used as safes for the deposit of pounds sterling and are often buried in the huts ; hence the expression *Humba ya bupfundji*, shell of riches! The smaller ones, resembling our snails (Aerope caffra), are rarer and it is considered a bad omen to meet with them on the road. — "Where you go you will hear cries of mourning!" Their name is *Shikumbakwane*. The slugs are called *Holokompfa* (yin-tin) and the smaller snails, *Shihumbanyana*, diminutive of *humba*.

136 *Fish* all have names, but having never dwelt in the close vicinity
825 of the sea, I have not learnt them. I know the *Mfangwe* (yi-tin).
262 the fish whose mouth ends in a saw, the *Mangapfi* (dji-ma), the name of a kind of hawk given to the flying fish of Delagoa Bay, the *Nhempfane* (yi-tin) found in the fresh water ponds, the *Ntima* (yi-tin) the barbel, the black fish which must not be eaten by lovers before their marriage (I, p. 107).

136 *Amphibia*. *Ntlambya* (mu-mi) is the ordinary frog (Rana oxy-rhynca) whose young are known and called *Shilungula* ; another black species is the *Rebya* (dji-ma) ; the tree-frogs are called *Shilungwalungwana* (Rappia marmorata and argus) ; the toad *Kele* (dji-ma), Bufo regularis ; the famous Breviceps mossambicus is *Shiwana* (I. p. 87) the great warrior of the tales (p. 221).

136 *Reptilia*. There are many kinds of *Lizards*. The common
825 kind found in the houses, under the verandas is the *Mponondjo* (mu-mi) (Mabuia striata), ; the Lygodactylus capensis, found on the hills, is the *Nkolombya* (mu-mi) ; the little Agama

777 the hole with their wings to prevent water from inundating the nest. When it lasts too long they quickly go down to close the entrance of the nest ; the water then leaks down the pipe which descends into the interior of the earth. He added : "If a man does not belong to a family which "knows" the mbonga and if he happens to find a nest he will meet with misfortune ; one of his relatives will die. The bees will bring him ill-luck (*singita*)."

aculeata, which runs on the sand, *Shipyindji* or *Shihonokamahlo*, 136
the one which gazes at you ; the large gheko, Agama atricollis, 825
with a head of which the grey colour can change into blue, *Galagala* or *Phululu* (dji-ma) (I. p. 173) the grey one, which hides itself in dark places, in hollow stems or under roofs is the *Hokokuana* (dji-ma) (Hemidactylus grenatus) ; it is said that when this lizard sucks at the breast of a human being, it is impossible to remove it, and the only means of getting rid of it is to go and suckle a dog!

But the most curious lizard of these countries, that which most 136
strikes the Native imagination is the Chameleon (Chameleon 825
Petersii), *Lumpfana* (dji-ma). Herd boys throw ground tobacco 789
into its mouth to avenge themselves for the bad turn it did mankind when it lingered on the road and came too late to bring the message of eternal life (as we shall learn in a moment). It is used by certain magicians to discover thieves. They smear a chameleon with a drug which makes it turn white and then let it go : "Then the thief, wherever he may be, also turns white, and if he does not confess his theft, he dies!"

The flesh of none of these lizards is eaten, but that of the big 136
Varan which lives near the rivers, *Kwahle* (dji-ma), is considered 825
a delicacy. The kwahle is said to be very hard to kill. About 262
Crocodiles (*nguenya*, yin-tin) all sorts of stories are told. When 787
one of them has been killed, the contents of its stomach are carefully preserved ; Thongas assert that each year, when the rains begin, crocodiles swallow a stone, so that their age can be known by counting them. These stones are taboo ; for a subject to swallow them is a cause of death, but one of them is chosen, treated with certain drugs and swallowed by the chief to warn him of his death, as we have already seen (I, p. 393). Crocodile stones play an important part in divination. (See Part VI. Ch. III. D).

Tortoises, whose generic name is *Mfutju* (yin-tin), are eaten and also used in the divinatory art, as we shall see. Some lake tortoises are called *Gamba* (dji-ma) and sea tortoises *Hasi* (dji-ma).

Snakes (nyoka, yin-tin) are generally dreaded and considered 825
dangerous, although many kinds are quite harmless. The 136

754 magician shuts him in with the dying man in the hut and gives him
774 the following command : "Bring back the spirit which you have taken and hidden somewhere." Some magicians, who are more
761 powerful than the wizards, pretend to be able to find the stolen spirit and so to restore the patient to health. In cases of epilepsy, or of any psychic trouble attended with unconsciousness, when the sick person returns to his senses, they triumph : have they not brought back the soul? But they say that this must be done in haste. No time must be lost!

775 Lastly, the final unsheathing of personality takes place at death. The body becomes rotten, but the shadow goes away and continues its life as a god, shikwembu. The belief in the continuation of life after death is universal, being at the base of Ancestrolatry, which is the religion of the tribe. We shall study the ideas relating to the future life when dealing with the gods.

What Thongas can absolutely not understand is the resurrection of the body. "Mbuti yi fa, yi bola ; homu yi fa, yi bola ; munhu a fa, a bola!" — "The goat dies and rots, the ox dies and rots, man dies and rots!" answers the sceptical Thonga when he hears the story of the resurrection.

On the whole their ideas of future life are not so very different from those of the ancient Greeks, who believed that the human soul went after death to the realm of shadows.

787 *Dreams* are not generally liked by the Thongas. If something
828 they happened to dream really takes place, it "disgusts" them (nyenyetsa). When a man has seen a woman several times in his dreams, especially if she was pregnant, he will consult the bones. If he dreams that he has relations with her, he may go next day and hit her with a stick. He leaves the stick on the ground and goes away without a word. According to Mboza, this is done to get rid of the obsession, and to prevent the dream from becoming reality. That is the reason, I suppose, why a Christian boy once said to his missionary : "I dream of many people, but I keep quiet!" Amongst Thongas dreams do not seem to play the great part which the animistic theory attributes to them in the formation of primitive beliefs.

The Gods of the Bush, Psikwembu psa Nhoba, are also especially dreaded. There is a little song which is sung as a welcome to travellers who reach their home safely : 776 484 533

> Shikwembu sha nhoba shi etlele !
> Shi etlele, banhwanyana !
> Amadikeo-dikeo-dikeo !
> The god of the bush has remained asleep !
> He has remained asleep, young girls !
> Hurrah ! hurrah ! hurrah !

The spirits of the departed who wander about in the bush, not having been properly buried, try to attack innocent travellers. You are fortunate to escape their anger! For this reason they often say to a relative who is starting out on a journey : "Go with your god," viz., the special ancestor-god who can protect you against the dangers of the bush. 769 776 784

I have also heard mention of *Shikwembu sha tihanye*, the god of quarrels. When an offering prescribed by the bones and presented to a certain ancestor-god has not had the desired result, people say : "This god is a god of quarrels. Let us make an offering to the others so that they may scold him." 776 769

3) The Abode of the Ancestor-Gods and their Mode of Life.

Ideas on these two points are very confused, even contradictory. Some say that the departed go to a great village *under the earth*, a village where everything is white (or pure, "ku basa") ; there they till the fields, reap great harvests, and live in abundance, and they take of this abundance to give to their descendants on earth. They have also a great many cattle. The place where they live seems to be a kind of Hades or Paradise (1). But it would seem, when we consider the funeral rites, that the deceased, on the contrary, 775 776 787

(1) The Ba-Ila (see Smith and Dale, *The Ila-speaking people*, II p. 119) believe that the ghosts go *Kwiwa*, to the East, to Chilenga, the Creator. But they have the same contradictory ideas as the Thongas concerning the abode of their deceased ancestors. 171

Amongst the Natives of Barotseland, on the Zambezi, it is said that the dead go to Nyambe, the God of Heaven. They pierce the lobe of their ears and make other incisions in their bodies as a sign that they belong to Nyambe. When they die and reach the end of the earth at the great river Walamba (the Styx of the Zambezian tribes) the ferryman who conveys the dead to the other bank looks at them to see if

775 remains *in his grave*. Is not his grave his house (I. p. 137)? Does
776 he not sit on his square, where his mats have been unrolled? Thus
the life of the shikwembu seems to be the exact continuation of his
787 earthly existence. That such is the idea is proved by the two
bones which represent the gods in the set of divinatory bones :
1) the astragalus or nail of an ant-bear, because ant-bears live in
the earth, and come out only during the night ; 2) the astragalus
of an antelope, found in the excrement of a hyena ; the hyena ate
the antelope, and swallowed the bone, which came to light again ;
in the same way the gods have been buried in the ground, and
reveal themselves later on. (Compare Ch. III. D.) A third idea,
more or less intermediate between the other two, is that the gods
reside *in the sacred woods*, and there lead their family life in
human form, parents and children, even little children, who are
carried on their mothers' shoulders. Mboza went so far as to say
that they are married and bring forth children, as children are seen
on their mothers' backs. Here again, we find the life of the other
world regarded as the exact reproduction of this terrestrial
existence.

4) The Sacred Woods.

764 These are vast, almost impenetrable thickets, in which the
769 ancient chiefs have been buried ; they are called *ntimu*, (mu-mi)
cemeteries. Every clan owns one or more of these burying places.
778 The ntimu is reserved for the men of the royal family, those who
have been the owners of the land. They are buried in different
sections of the forest, "according to their villages," in such a way
that the wood represents separate cemeteries, corresponding to the

171 they bear the marks, and only in that case does he take them to Nyambe (See *Ames primitives*, Th. Burmer, Paris Mission, 102, Boulevard Arago).

The Ba-Chopi believe that their ancestor-gods dwell in rivers. They have no fear of the graves where the deceased have been buried, and even till the ground over them, asserting that the bones alone remain in the earth, the ghosts themselves having departed into the river where they are heard singing, dancing, and playing on antelope horns. When the chiefs make a national offering, they mix the meat with water when they present it to their gods, and the one officiating turns his eyes towards the river when he prays. He places the part of the victim which has been cut out for the gods on the bank of the river, and everybody goes home. The gods come when all have gone and take the offering. It is taboo to remain on the spot and to be seen by them!

769 with. I never heard it said that the gods were in heaven, not-
776 withstanding the Sutho term badimo, which is believed by some to mean those who are above.

5. Relations between Ancestor-gods and their living descendants.

769 The apparitions of ancestor-gods in a human form in the
776 sacred woods are not of frequent occurrence. The gods reveal
825 themselves to their descendants by other and more common means; first, by their appearance *in the form of animals*, such
753 as the Mantis (p. 335) or more often as little bluish green snakes called *shihundje* (p. 340). These charming and harmless reptiles are frequently seen in the huts, crawling in the thatch of the roof, or along the reeds of the walls (1). Natives never touch them, thinking that they are some of their gods who have come to pay them a visit. It is taboo to kill them. If a disease breaks out in the village the bones may reveal that some one in the hut has hurt the gods, and a sacrifice will be required in order to appease them. They also appear in the form of the large grey puff-adder (shiphyahla) (2).

769 Secondly, the ancestor-gods communicate with the living
776 *in their dreams*. If some one dreams of one of his dead relatives,
787 he is very much frightened, and consults the bones, in order

769 (1) This is the story which I heard from one of my informants of the Khosa
825 country: All his family was once assembled together for a marriage feast. The people were playing on the village square and enjoying themselves. The old women had remained in the hut, and suddenly they saw two little green snakes crawling along the reeds of the wall. They were much afraid, and at once called the headman. He came in, saw the snakes, and said: "Do not fear! These are our ancestor-gods! They have come to share in our feast."

(2) Describing to me a sacrifice at which he officiated either in September or October 1895, the old priest Nkolele told me as a fact the following story, which I will now quote word for word;

"I myself went into the wood with the offering I had prepared for the gods, and then *it came out*. It was a snake; it was the father of Makundju, the Master of the Forest, Mombo-wa-ndlopfu, Elephant's-Face. He came out and circled round all those present. The women rushed away terrified. But he had only come to thank us. He didn't come to bite us. He thanked us saying: 'Thank you! Thank you! So you are still there, my children! You came to load me with presents, and to

to know exactly what the god desires of him (Viguet). If the apparition was painful, if the god came as an enemy, fighting, the dreamer, when he awakes, will take some tobacco, or a small piece of cloth, and hang it somewhere in the reeds of the wall, near the door, as an offering. Or possibly the god has ordered him to give him something to drink. He will then buy a bottle of ginor wine, and pour a little outside the door; whatever remains he will drink with his companions. If the dream takes place during a journey and the ancestor-god seems to be happy, the traveller will throw some tobacco on the ground when he awakes and say: "I had prayed thee to help me on my road; thou hast come indeed! Help me to go further." But if the ancestor-god has an angry look and tells him: "Why do you not give me a piece of calico print? You have forgotten me"—the traveller will fetch a piece and tie it round a tree and say: "When I return home after making money, I will give thee some." 769 776 787

But the great means by which the will of the gods is revealed is the *set of divinatory bones*, which are cast on every occasion, and are called the "Bula," the Word. Does this mean the Word of the gods? Not precisely, but in most cases the diviner thinks he owes his divinatory power to a dead relative, who used to cast lots himself, and who transmitted his spirit of interpretation to him. Whatever may be the real explanation, the fact remains that it is by means of the bones that Thongas believe they know what their gods think and wish, and this is the reason, as we shall

bring me fruit! T'is well!' — He came to thank us for our chicken. Even if one only kills a chicken, he is quite content. For him, it has just the same value as an ox. It was an enormous viper, as thick as my leg, down there (he pointed to his ankle). It came close up to me, and kept quite still, never biting me. I looked at it. It said: 'Thank you! So you are still there, my grandson!'" 769 825

— "But," said I to Nkolele, "what you are telling me, is it really fact, or just fancy?"

— "Undoubted fact! These are great truths! After that I prayed, and said: 'Thou, Mombo-wa-Ndlopfu, the Master of this land, thou who hast given it to thy son Makundju; Makundju gave it to his son Hati; Hati gave it to Makhumbi; Makhumbi gave it to Kinini; Kinini gave it to Mikabyana; Mikabyana gave it to Mawatle... ('Mawatle gave it to me, his son' is here understood)... Look upon my offering. Is it not a beautiful one? And here am I, left all alone. If I had not brought this with me, who would have given you anything? Is it not just so? I ask of thee, my ancestor, I ask of thee all the trees; the palm trees for building, the trunks which can be hollowed out for canoes; and let it be that these trunks shall not fall on the people and crush them, when they go to cut them down, over there in the marsh.'"

787 see, why divination plays such an important part in their life.
769 It is of the utmost importance to know what their gods think
776 and do, as the very existence of the village, and of the clan, and the welfare of every member of the clan depends on them. Is not Łukwembo, Divinity "the power of killing or of making alive, of enriching or of making poor?" Natives believe firmly in these two opposite actions of their gods. They are the masters of everything : earth, fields, trees, rain, men, children, even of baloyi, wizards! They have full control over all these objects or persons.

769 The gods can *bless* : if the trees bear plenty of fruit, it is because
776 they have made it grow (I. p. 414) ; if the crops are plentiful, it is because they forced wizards to increase them, or hindered them
777 from spoiling them (I. p. 396) ; if you come across a pot of palm wine, it is your god who has sent you that windfall (p. 44). When Mboza escaped from the Morakwen battle, one of his relatives exclaimed on his return home : "The gods of Makaneta have still been with you!" (Psikwembu psa ka Makaneta psa ha ku yimelele.) Often when a man has narrowly escaped drowning, or spraining his ankle on a stump which has caught his foot, he will say : "The gods have saved me."

769 But they can also *curse*, and bring untold misfortune on their
776 descendants. If the rain fails, it is owing to their anger ; if a tree
789 falls on you, they have directed its fall ; if a crocodile bites you, the gods have sent it ; if your child has fever and is delirious, they are
753 in him, tormenting his soul ; if your wife is sterile, they have prevented her from childbearing ; perhaps the gods of your mother have done this, because you had not given your maternal uncle the *tjhumba* part of the lobolo, which he has the right to claim (I. p. 267) ; in fact any disease, any calamity may come from them. There are, of course, other sources of misfortune : the baloyi, for instance, or Heaven, and the bones will show who has caused the mischief ; but the ancestor-gods are certainly the most powerful spiritual agency acting on man's life. Hence the necessity of propitiating them by prayers and sacrifices.

782 into the pot, one for the paternal, the other for the maternal gods, saying as he does so :

Fole hi ledji! Tlanganan mi djaha, mi nga ndji hobilise loko ndji djaha fole, mi ku ndji mi tjona.

Here is some tobacco! Come all of you and take a pinch, and do not be angry with me when I snuff, nor say that I deprive you of your share.

Having made his offering, the headman must return to his seat, on the hubo, without looking behind him : this is a taboo.

Another way of gandjela is the offering of a piece of cloth (nturu), which may be tied at the entrance, or to the tree of the village (p. 333). Liquids also are poured into the gandjelo (I. p. 341) : beer, when a beer feast is to take place ; wine, when it has been bought at the neighbouring store ; palm-wine, when the big pot called gandjelo (see p. 43 for the explanation of this word in this particular connection) has been filled, and the precious drink has been brought to the village.

Occasional offerings are made, for instance, in a case of *shirwalo* (I. p. 406) when relatives-in-law have brought jars of beer. A little of the beer is first offered to the gods, in order that the pots may not get broken during the return journey. Another case is after a dream, in which the gods have asked for such and such an offering to be made (p. 385).

Sacramental Offerings or Ku Hahla (Ro.), Phahla (Dj.).

782 These are of much greater importance than the simple ones
787 and also differ from them in two ways, viz., they are always ordered by the divinatory bones, and accompanied by the sacramental *tsu*. The bones are first consulted, and give many indications, e. g., what must be the nature of the offering ; to which god it must be consecrated ; in what place the act of worship must be performed, (in the hut, behind it, at the door, in the square, in the sacred wood, or in the bush). When the ceremony

takes place over the grave the bones reveal whether the officiant must stand at the head or at the foot. (See Chap. III, D. for the consultation of the bones). 782 787

The Offering of Bitterness. There is a progressive character in the offerings, according to the value of the gift accompanying the *tsu*. In some cases, all that is given to the gods is the small amount of saliva emitted in pronouncing the sacramental sound. These offerings are called "Offerings of Bitterness" (ku hahla hi shibiti), and form a most curious category. They are generally presented by a headman who is overwhelmed with sorrow, and deprived of everything. "He shows his misery by offering nothing but his saliva. He leans his head upon his shoulder with a look of profound sadness. His heart is bitter! He has nothing! He therefore does not try to win over his gods by presenting rich gifts to them. He wishes rather to gain their blessing by this appearance of abject misery. And they will indeed have pity on him!" (Mboza). This is certainly touching! But this kind of offering, though showing more individual piety than others, must only be made ritually, i. e., by order of the bones. The sacrifice of bitterness may be resorted to when no evil has as yet fallen on the village, as a preventive against misfortune. 782

The Offering of Charcoal. When a headman is in great difficulties, (quarrels in his village, disease amongst his people), the bones may order him to *hahla* with a piece of charcoal. He takes an extinct charcoal, puts it to his lips, utters the *tsu* and adds :

Akhwari! i. e. Smoothly! You, so and so. What you want is this. Abupsayi! i. e. Gently! This is fire! This is the mouth of the lion! Let what troubles me come to an end, etc.

The Offering of Earth. Earth is the offering of the chiefs, because they are the masters of the soil (I. p. 405). It can, however, also be used by subjects on various occasions. When the bones have not revealed that the disease was sent by the ancestor-gods, when they have not said that it was the work of wizards, then it is caused by "the earth, misaba" i. e. by some unknown people of the land (bhanu-ba misaba). The bones say : "Go and seek the navel of the earth." The navel of the earth is the ant-heap. The officiant then takes a piece of termite nest and *hahla* with it. He 782 787

782 addresses his prayer to his ancestor-gods in order to be delivered
787 from his enemies.

The Offering of a Thorn (Mhamba ya Mutwa). This is also called *ku hahla ka shihlahla*, the sacrifice of the forest. The headman has seen that misfortune has fallen on his village ; all his people die, the village is about to disappear, to become merely a part of the bush. He goes to the forest, picks up a thorn there and accomplishes the religious act by sucking the thorn, and emitting his saliva. Then he returns to the forest and places the thorn where the bones have ordered him.

782 *The Offering of Contempt (Mhamba ya Litsañwa).* We have
788 already seen a case in which this offering is made. It is a compo-
824 nent part of the burial ritual (I. p. 142) and we have called it the rite of the twig. But it can be performed on other occasions also. In certain clans (Nkuna-Khosa, Hlengwe) it does not take place at the burial, but is of common use when someone wishes *to avoid contempt*, to be well received by those to whom he goes ; for instance when he goes to his debtors and fears that they may despise him and perhaps refuse to accept his claim, or when a young man goes to woo a girl and is afraid that she may not look favourably on his suit. The religious act is performed as follows. The officiant cuts a twig of the nkanye tree. We have often mentioned this tree, whose fruits are used to prepare the famous bukanye beer ; it is everywhere regarded as the best of trees, and highly valued. It is dioecious, as we have seen (I. p. 397). The twig must come from a female stem, if a man *hahla* for himself, from a male stem if a woman does so. The officiant bites the extremity of the twig till he has drawn a little of the sap into his mouth ; then he emits that sap together with his saliva, and proceeds to his prayer.

789 *The Offering of the Fig Tree (Mhamba ya Hlulawumbe).* This
782 tree is called shihlampfana or hlulawumbe. It frequently grows
824 as a parasite on another tree ; or surrounds it, growing close to its stem, and in this way kills it. If a man has enemies, if there are people who hate him, he digs up a bit of the root of this fig tree and uses it in making his prayer. These troublesome persons will be choked, destroyed, just like the stem close to which the hlulawumbe grows. (Hlulawumbe means to overcome others).

On my return from the battle I showed all the army how I had 782
prayed." The old general's spontaneous appeal to the gods on 789
behalf of his country in its hour of supreme danger is indeed 778
worthy of notice, and also furnishes a proof that ancestor-worship is still a living force and has not become a mere matter of ritual amongst those who practise it. This prayer of the Nkuna general, this exclamation of an anguished soul in the presence of a great danger, may be regarded as *verbal magic*, as it is not expressedly addressed to the gods, and the same may be said of the formula employed to cancel an oath in the offering of reconciliation, the mention of the gods being absent in this case also. All these acts, however, are mhamba. They are in reality accomplished with the idea that the gods hear and see what is said and done and will be induced to deliver their worshippers.

The magic character of these rites is most marked in the cases of communionist magic ; those which are classed under imitative magic may perhaps be more properly called *symbols*, or at least some of them (1).

Elias Libombo once came to me and said : "My brother, Klass, 787
died. He was *the mhamba of the Libombos*. Now his younger 793

(1) But what is a *symbol* in religion, and what is the difference between the symbol and the magic rite? I cannot treat this important subject here in all the necessary detail and length. Let us take only one instance. The offering of incense which took place every evening in the Temple of Jerusalem and which is also widespread in certain branches of the Christian Church is regarded as a symbol. The perfumed smoke which ascends towards heaven corresponds to the prayers of the worshippers, which are thought of as ascending to God and pleasing Him, just as the agreeable smell of incense gratifies the nostrils of the man who perceives it. But in the Hebrew religion it is not thought that incense conveys prayers to God in some actual and magical fashion. It is a symbol. Psychologically speaking this use of incense is probably to be explained in the following manner: The material representation of a religious act (or a religious truth) tends to induce in the worshipper a stronger faith in the efficacy of the act or the reality of the truth. His soul thus finds satisfaction in the performance of the symbolic act through which he feels himself brought into closer communion with his God. It is easy to understand that in the course of the religious evolution, a higher conception of God should have caused the magic act to evolve into the symbol, and that the symbol itself should be abandoned or reduced to a minimum when the idea of God has become perfectly spiritualised and communion with the Father who is in Heaven is realized without any external and intermediary means. A comparison of the great mhamba with the relics of saints or other relics used in certain religions would probably show a similar type of evolution.

Some scientists believe that religious evolution contained a *preanimistic phase*, in which the worship of spirits had not yet come into existence, and in which primitive man employed only magic means to influence the supernatural powers. This

787 brother will be so called." Nkolele, the father of these two men,
793 was the Libombo mhamba before them. This is another meaning of this great word mhamba. Klass was neither a gift made to the ancestor-gods of the Libombos, nor a magic object employed to win their favour, but he was the elder member of the family, the one who was the official and indispensable intermediary between all the Libombos and their gods. For this reason he was a mhamba. This leads me to propose the following definition of the word : *A mhamba is any object or act or even person which is used to establish a bond between the gods and their worshippers.*

Having thus analysed all the elements contained in the Thonga mhamba, we may safely conclude that its spiritual and religious value cannot be denied. Whatever place ritual may hold in the ceremonies of ancestrolatry, whatever mixture of devotional and magic elements may be found in them, the offering is not a mere external gift which appeases the gods by its material value, nor a simple means of coercion which forces them to submit to the will of the worshipper. By means of the mhamba the Thonga really aims at entering into relationship with those powerful spirits who control his life (1).

may be true, but as regards Bantus, they have long outgrown this stage. Even when they have recourse to magic processes in order to influence their ancestor-gods, these have a distinctive character, different from that of the ordinary magic which they practise when they wish to affect the impersonal forces of Nature. Everything done in order to obtain the favour of the ancestor-gods is a *mhamba*, not a *muri*, as I have already pointed out.

782 (1) Religious and magic practices are more or less mingled in Thonga ritual and it
789 is evident that the smaller the degree of magic contained in a rite, the more genuine religious feeling there will be in it. I owe to my Venda informant the description of
755 a sacrifice performed in his tribe for a sick child, where the two elements are combined to an extraordinary extent. It is called *the offering of the goat with clothes* (mbudzi ya u dzwindisa).

A goat is provided. It is placed before a basin of water mixed with certain drugs and forced to drink, to drink till it is fully distended, and dies. It is then skinned and cut open. The large intestine is extracted from the body, and a part of it is cut off and stitched up at one end so as to form a kind of pouch. From each limb a bit of meat is taken, and a provision of the seeds of various cereals, brought to the spot together with drugs. All these different kinds of food are introduced into the pouch, the process of filling it being accompanied by prayers to the ancestor-god. The officiant, whilst proceeding with his task, puts seeds into the goat's intestine with one hand, and, with the other, takes other seeds and places them apart. These he will keep carefully in order to sow them later on. And continually he prays: "Eat your fill and be satisfied, and leave us some for our use." Thus the ancestor-god has been fed, well and duly stuffed. The pouch is then stitched at its other end. But now the ancestor-god must be clothed

we have just studied, they are attributed either to Heaven or to evil spirits or to the winds. The name of the *wutleka* disease is worthy of notice. This word comes from *wutla*, which means to rob, to seize ; wutleka, the qualificative derivative (Thonga Grammar § 196) means the condition of something taken away. This would seem to be a passive meaning, as if the patient had been robbed by some agent. However, Mankhelu explains the term by saying : "The patient has stolen the *rirabi*" — "a wutle rirabi". *Rirabi* is very closely allied to a word meaning stick ; the old doctor says it is the name of the disease. If this etymology be correct the patient would be considered as having taken the disease by a kind of robbery. But Native etymology must always be accepted with caution. 753 827

All these names show how unprecise is the pathological knowledge of the Thongas.

2) As regards the *causes of diseases*, Thongas are groping in the grossest superstition. When a medical man wishes to treat a disease, he first tries to diagnose its cause. The Bantu ñanga does the same, only the difference is that he takes very little notice of the physical symptoms. There is no auscultation, no palpation, no examination of the secretions, blood, saliva, or urine, as these are disgusting and must be covered with sand as soon as possible! The great means of diagnosing a disease is the throwing of bones. There are three great causes of disease : the spirits of the gods, the wizards and the makhumo, defilement from death or from impure persons. A fourth less common cause is Heaven. The bones will reveal by the way in which they fall which is the one to be combated. 753 787

3) Their ideas of *contagion* are not much in advance of their other pathological conceptions. The two most dreaded diseases in this respect are consumption (lifuba) and leprosy (nhlokonho). *Consumption* is by no means a new ailment due to civilisation, though it has increased enormously since Thonga boys have gone to the towns. A proof that it has been known for a long time is to be found in its great importance in the ritual. To the Thonga mind it is caused by the *makhumo*, i. e., the contamination of death, or the defilement resulting from contact with a woman in 753 164 751

wash himself with it ; or he must take the basin on his knees, suck 755
in a little of this foam between his lips and spit it out in the direction of the four winds, saying *tsu*, evidently as a preliminary means of propitiating the possessing spirits, which will be invoked and entreated to reveal themselves in the following rite.

In the case of Mboza, the calabash came as the second phase of the treatment, the first being the drum performance.

1) The drum performance (gongondjela).

This extraordinary rite reminds one of the witches' sabbaths 755
of medieval times by the infernal din and uproar through which 787
the possessed will have to pass. However, notwithstanding the external resemblance, it is totally different, having nothing to do with witchcraft proper, and being only a "medical practice" in the eyes of the Thongas. — A strange medical practice, indeed, devised rather to kill than to heal the patient!

In the first place the bones must be consulted to find out in what spot the sabbath should be held. If the bone which represents the patient falls in the middle of all the rest, this shows that the tambourines, or "tom-toms," must be beaten in the interior of the hut itself. If the bone falls on the outer edge, the sabbath must be in the doorway ; if it falls further to one side, beyond all the others, the treatment must take place on the village square (hubyen) ; if it rolls still further off, and if the astragalus of the roaming gazelle is also separated from the rest, this shows that the meeting must take place in the bush, quite away from the village. If the bones remain silent, revealing nothing, then the throwing will be continued behind the hut, or on the square, until they speak. It is also necessary that the four shells Oliva, and Cypraea, which form part of the set of bones, should fall on their backs, exposing their crack or mouth. This signifies that the possessing gods, the spirits, will come out ; there will be an egress for them, whilst if, on the contrary, the shells fall differently, shewing their convex sides, the diviner will say : "Ma tikarata ntsena" — "all your trouble is in vain :" the sabbath

755 will have no effect ; no means of egress for the gods will be found!
787 (Compare Letter D. Divination). But a way will soon be found to get over this difficulty, and it will not be long before the sabbath is in full swing.

755 In the hut, right in the middle, the patient is seated. Dejected, with downcast eyes, and fixed expression, he waits... Everyone throughout the country knows that to-day, to-night, on the appearance of the new moon, the strange and terrible exorcism will begin. All those who have once been possessed will officiate. The director of the ceremony, the *gobela*, who has been appointed by the bones, holds his tambourine, made of the skin of the big varan lizard stretched over a circular wooden frame. (See Illustration p. 124, No. 9.) In the calm quiet of the evening air the first blow is struck. It reverberates, and is heard afar off on all sides ; it penetrates the thickets and reaches the neighbouring villages, where it inspires a strange emotion, a transcendent delight born of curiosity, malice, and I know not what feeling of unconscious satisfaction. All rush in the direction of the well-known sound ; each one hurries to the hut of the possessed ; all desire to take part in this struggle, this conflict with the invisible world.

They all assemble, some with tambourines, others with large tin cases picked up on the outskirts of the town (tins in which kerosine oil is sold in Lourenço Marques), still others with calabashes, filled with small objects, which do duty as rattles (ndjele, yin-tin) ; and now, crowding round the patient, they begin their hideous din, striking, brandishing, shaking their various instruments of torture with all their might and main. Some lightly touch the head or ears of the unfortunate sufferer. It is a frightful hubbub, which continues, with but short interruptions, during the whole night, or until the performers in this fantastic concert are compelled to stop from sheer fatigue.

755 But this is merely the orchestra, the accompaniment. That
533 which is most essential is the *singing*, the human voice, the *chorus of exorcists*, a short refrain, following on a still shorter solo, repeated a hundred or a thousand times, always with the same object in view, toward which all strive seriously and persistently, namely to compel the spiritual being, the mysterious possessing spirit which

all the people clapping their hands (wombela), to encourage him, as an accompaniment. — The *horns and hoofs* will be carefully kept, and placed on the roof of the hut, just over the door (shiranwin) by which the afflicted one enters, evidently to protect the abode from malign influences. — The *astragalus* will be tied, together with the strips, on the sternum of the patient. — The *bones* of the goat are the objects of special care. They must not be broken to eat the marrow, but burnt in the shade of a large tree, where it is "cool." So the possessing spirit will also be cool (titimela) and not too wild. Sometimes they are preserved in a special pot, and burnt on the day of the hondlola. 755

The period of convalescence[1] then begins. It lasts one year, and is a distinct marginal period, as clearly appears from the fact that sexual relations are absolutely forbidden during that phase, and until the hondlola. It is also, more or less, a period of apprenticeship, as the possessed will become an exorcist himself, if his magical powers become sufficiently developed. He accompanies the gobela everywhere, assists him in his cures, and so learns the art of exorcism. The apprentice will also have to practise the rites of protection, which I shall shortly describe, and which are obligatory during the whole period of convalescence, and even later. 758 834 756

4) The final purification of the hondlola and investing with amulets (timfisa).

As we saw, the hondlola, the removal of defilement of disease, is necessary at the close of any illness. So, when a possessed person is regarded as healed, he will have to pass through this rite. It can however only be carried out on the one condition that the possessed husband, or wife, has remained in a state of continence during the period of convalescence. In order to know if they have obeyed this law, a fowl will be placed on the head of the patient. If he, or she, has been continent according to order, the bird will remain quiet; it will not fly away, even should someone approach and pass close by. If it flies off making a great noise, the angry exorcist will also take his leave, saying: 755 758 787

1 [For the individual whose spirit was possessed — Analyst]

755 "You have sinned and, in so doing, have marred the efficacy of all
758 my medicines (mi honile miri)." On the other hand, if the rule
●787 has been properly observed, the bird will remain quite still, when it will be stabbed with a knife and its blood will be used in connection with the hondlola friction. Afterwards the fowl will be plucked and eaten by the village folk, but neither the patient, nor his spouse, nor the exorcist-in-chief will be allowed to partake of it. Thenceforth the husband and wife are permitted to live together as in the past.

755 The hondlola rites seem particularly complicated in cases of possession. Their sequence was as follows in that of Mboza. 1) He had to pay £ 1 to Ñwatshulu, as a reward for his medical attendance. He gave him the money, together with a pot of beer. 2) Then the doctor took his *gobo* calabash, stirred the medicine in order to make it froth abundantly, invoking his gods all the time, and saying : "Awake, you who spit on the road, you, Zulus, who have ears capable of hearing, etc... 3) Then he shouted : "Mboza! Eat!" The exorcised had to kneel down and swallow the froth. 4) The exorcist took mafureira fat, mixed it in his hand with medicinal powder, smeared and rubbed the body of the convalescent, from the knees to the feet, the arms, the chest, the belly, and the head. 5) He cut the nails of the hands and feet with a knife, and also a little of the hair on the forehead, and put the whole into the timfisa bags (p. 471) together with medicinal powder. 6) Then followed the ordinary hondlola friction. A pellet (shibuwu) had been prepared by crushing roots of the *bamhuntane* and *shilewana* trees in a mortar, and a hen had been killed. Mboza sat on a mat and the doctor rubbed his whole body with the pellet. He gathered the *timhora*, the particles fallen on the mat, mixed them with the blood of the hen, and again rubbed the patient. 7) Fresh timhora fell on the mat. They were gathered up a second time. Some were put into the amulet bags, the remainder were made into a ball, which was not thrown away as in ordinary diseases, but carefully placed at the back of the hut, where the forked branch was to be planted.

●●● Let us remember that, in the case of the exorcised, the hondlola

result if hostile feelings already existed between two persons (1). 754

Jealousy alone is sufficient to give rise to the suspicion even without a word having been uttered (2).

The fact of a woman having lost many children is also a reason [761] for suspecting her of being a witch, as the death of a baby is constantly considered as having been caused by its own mother, who wished "to eat it." The fact of belonging to a family of baloyi is also an indication to the same effect, buloyi being hereditary, as we have seen.

But a mere suspicion is not sufficient to warrant action being 754 taken against the suspected noyi. An objective proof, a piece of 787 convincing evidence is required, and this the magicians are asked to supply. The patient's relatives go *to the diviner* who will cast the 791 bones and discover whether the disease is due to witchcraft or not. This consultation is secret, and is merely preliminary. There are, in the sets of bones employed in Thonga divination, some which,

(1) The evangelist Silas G. was one day speaking to Saul N., an elder of his Church, about Church contributions and said: "So and so does not pay his dues. It would be good to show him his duty." Saul answered: "I do not wonder; that man has a bad wife and you are sure to fail in your duty when you have a bad wife." — "No", said Silas. "Everyone ought to pay his contribution. You, for example, would certainly do your duty even if you had a bad wife!" — "Nevertheless I maintain that a wife who behaves badly takes away her husband's courage. Look at your own case, Silas. Your wife does harm to your work as an evangelist. Did she not say the other day when she saw my baby: 'How fat it is! It is like a pumpkin!'" On hearing these words Silas starts! They are an accusation of buloyi. To say that the baby was as fat as a pumpkin showed that the woman who used these words was ready to eat its body during the night; the evangelist's wife was a noyi! An enquiry was at once started to ascertain if she had really pronounced these words, and the whole little Church was upset. Finally the elder was blamed for having brought an accusation of buloyi, which is forbidden in the Native Congregations, and he resigned his office. The evangelist and his wife "became thin" owing to the mental suffering caused by the insinuation of the elder.

(2) I had amongst my evangelists a very active and intelligent man who cultivated large gardens and was well provided with everything. His neighbours began to suspect him for this reason. He said to them: "We ought not to work on Sundays," and this increased their suspicions. "It is evident", they said, "that *he is not alone!* How does he manage to have such splendid harvests when he does not work on Sundays? Surely he has others to till for him. He takes our backs and uses them to cultivate his big fields. And the reason why he has such wonderful crops is that he has taken our own mealies from our gardens by his witchcraft" — "But," said others, "you cannot complain! Mealies are plentiful in your gardens too!" — "No," answered the enemies of the evangelist. "Though you see mealies in our gardens, they are no longer mealies; they have been taken away by him." They meant that, just as a bewitched person is no longer normal but has been emptied of his viscera, so the cereals had been robbed of their virtue by buloyi.

754 represent the *baloyi*, in particular the astragalus of the reedbuck, or
787 of the duiker, the small antelope which rambles about during
791 the night, just at the time when witches are at work. Should this bone fall in a certain way near the bone representing the patient, or near his amulets, which have been placed on the mat, this shows that his disease is the result of buloyi. The name of the noyi will be sought, and perhaps ascertained, on that first day, but the parents of the victim will never venture to accuse him merely on the testimony of the bones. The next step will be to go to the *mungoma*, the magician who "smells out" the *baloyi*.

The magician employs various means to find out a noyi.

a) *The Enchanted Horn.*

754 In the Murchison Range there is a magician who possesses an
791 enchanted horn, into which he introduces a short twig smeared with an anti-baloyi medicine. Persons suspected of having killed by witchcraft must try to pull the twig out of the horn. The noyi will be unable to do this, though he may declare, like the others : "I have not killed." Amongst the Nkunas, the magician who has succeeded in finding out a wizard, takes his coat and hangs it on a tree as a trophy.

b) *The Enchanted Flute.*

When some one dies and his relatives think he has been bewitched, they can call a certain mungoma who "treats the grave" with his drugs. If he thinks that he has discovered the noyi, he gives to the bereaved a small flute, telling him to go and play on it in the neighbourhood. This helps not only to detect the wizard but to punish him ; he will die. This rite is called "to play on the little flute (ku yimbelela shinangana) for somebody."

d) *The smelling-out procedure.*

754 But should it be desirable to ascertain the name of the noyi,
695 in order to punish him (for instance, in a case of death, where
787 nothing remains but to avenge oneself on the murderer), the mungoma will proceed to the *shinusa divination*, the regular smelling-out. This can be done in two ways, either by questioning or by ecstasy.

1) *Smelling-out by questioning.* The relatives of the bewitched come to the shinusa, pay him £ 1, and ask him to find out the murderer. He makes them sit down in a half-circle, and, facing them, begins to put questions to them. They always answer by the word *mamoo*, which means yes, in the language of *bungoma*. Hence the Zulu term *vumisa* viz., "to make somebody say yes," applied to this ceremony. The *mamoo* is cool or warm, doubtful or convinced, and the clever diviner easily perceives every shade of meaning in this perpetual *mamoo*. He is well aware of all the disputes and hatred between the people and, in his investigation, he draws nearer and nearer to the man of whom the consulting party is thinking. Their *mamoo* becomes bolder. The questions are more precise. At last, when he feels himself in agreement with the consultants, the *mungoma* pronounces the name and lets his tail fall. He is bathed in perspiration after the great strain, and remains silent, as if he were indeed infallible ; he has triumphantly "smelt out" the culprit. Next day, relatives of the patient go to the kraal of the noyi, waving branches, dance before him, and say : "So you are killing us!" The accused keeps silent. Then he says : "All right. We shall come to-morrow and also consult our *mungoma*." Both parties then go to another diviner. The performance of "smelling out" is again gone through, and very likely the verdict of the second *mungoma* will confirm that of the first ; the augurs know that they must not contradict each other if they wish to maintain their authority, and the terrible tail falls on the head of the accused. As soon as proof and counterproof have been obtained, the case becomes a judicial one. The plaintiff brings the matter before the chief, who will not condemn until the

754 guilt of the pretended noyi is confirmed by ordeal, the trial by the
695 famous philter called *mondjo*.
787 2) *Smelling-out by ecstasy* partakes more or less of the character of the rera nyiwa. All the people have been assembled in the Capital. The chief wishes to collect together all the baloyi of the land. The diviner arrives, decked out with amulets and all the insignia of his power. In his hands he carries his magical

Photo D. Lanoir.

Smelling-out a wizard.

tail, by way of a whip, and an assagay. He begins to dance, the crowd seated all round him, clapping their hands (wombela), and singing a chorus peculiar to the occasion :

> Nwashengana khale ! Famba u ya teka, u ya teka, mungoma !
> Beautiful dancer of slender figure ! Seek for it, seek for it, diviner !

He goes on dancing ; like Pythia of old he falls into a condition of extreme nervous excitement, ecstasy, inspiration. He brandishes his tail, dilates his nostrils, inhales the air on all sides, as if to smell out the spot from whence the evil influence has emanated, then takes to his heels in a certain direction, the assembly

754 still clapping their hands and singing. He approaches a hut,
695 enters, and triumphantly plants his assagay in one corner. A hole
is dug in that spot and — just where so and so places his wooden
787 pillow when retiring to rest for the night — there are discovered
a small gourd full of blood, packets of suspicious objects connected
with enchantment, and perhaps a snake. It is quite possible
that the diviner may have previously hidden these articles;
nevertheless he carries them exultingly away; they are the
wizards' weapons, the "bloods" (tingati) which they throw over
their victims at night.

The shinusa returns to the village of the chief, who is veryangry,
and orders him to go and show these objects to their owner.
Then the magician, making a sign to the crowd to stop singing,
will go and throw the articles in front of the occupant of the
hut to put him to shame before the whole assembly. The
mysterious charms, and the noyi's gourd, must in every case be
consumed by fire, and then the sickness and deaths in the village
should cease.

e) *The Mondjo ordeal.*

754 As already pointed out, the final and supreme method of
695 unmasking baloyi is the *mondjo ordeal*. This is a legal procedure
ordered by the chief, a true method of obtaining information in a
criminal case. This custom calls to mind the judgment of God in
the Middle Ages (ordeal is derived from "urtheil," judgment); it is
practised by the majority of the Bantu tribes, varying from one
tribe to another, but everywhere it has the same end in view,
namely the discovery of the casters of spells by the imposition of an
ordeal which is supposed to be fatal to such as are guilty.

This ordeal is called amongst the Ba-Ronga (as also from one
end of the Thonga tribe to the other) *drinking the mondjo* (ku nwa
[137] mondjo). The mondjo is a plant of the Solaneae family, probably
a Datura, which possesses intoxicating properties. With it a
special magician prepares a beverage which is to act as a means of
revelation. It can be resorted to by any individual accused of
witchcraft, or of any other crime. A woman accused of adultery,

754 The Thonga tribe really suffers from the results of the witchcraft superstition and this explains a curious magico-religious movement which took place in the years 1914-1917, in which the tribe made a serious and touching attempt to free itself from this scourge. The story of "The Murimi Movement" will be found in Appendix V.

I have already explained how I think Government can and must interfere in order to check this terrible superstition. (I. p. 445.) But its eradication will only be possible under a twofold influence, the increase of the scientific spirit, which will conquer and destroy the absurdities of the animistic magical conceptions involved in these practices, and the Christian Religion, the Religion of Love and of Light, which banishes fear and hatred.

D. DIVINATION.

787 Divinatory practices are extremely common amongst Thongas. Surrounded by so many evil influences, having very little or no scientific knowledge, possessing no notion of a God capable of illumining the path of their life, they try to obtain directions by the various methods of divination which they have invented, and it must be confessed that they have reached a high degree of proficiency in this domain. The anxiety to know the future lies at the foundation both of omens and divinatory practices. Let us first briefly consider the former.

I. *Omens.*

These are of two kinds ; some objects are ill-omened, they *singita* or *hlolela*, foretell bad luck ; others are favourable and announce happiness and, more especially, plenty of meat!

their idea that wizards certainly exist, since they are even mentioned in the Bible! Of course those who are further advanced see the absurdity of the witchcraft theory, but a great many do not. As a proof of this I may quote this letter addressed by a young convert to his father from Johannesburg: "If the Lord agrees with it, I shall return home in the month of February; expect me that month. I entreat you not to tell anyone, less they bewitch me by preparing (lit. placing) snakes for me (ba ndji bekela tinyoka)."

Amongst the first we have already noticed *falling stars* (p. 309) ; 787
the snail (p. 338) : should you meet with it on the road, you will soon hear that one of your relatives has died ; *the stem of cuscuta* (yendje-yendje) ; (1) there are families, however, for which this is not of bad omen, but for other people it foretells misfortune ; *the mbonga bee* belongs to the same class (p. 337) ; the various kinds of *mistletoe* are also of bad omen. So also is the *puff-adder* (p. 340), the *likure* (p. 340), a greyish slender snake : if it blows upon you, or bites you, you will grow thin and turn grey, like the animal itself ; the long-legged bird *shitshinyariendjo* foretells misfortune on the road (I. p. 339) as do also the *buwumati* snake and the *nkangu bird*.

Other objects are of good omen ; the beetle *Eccopteptera* and the *Mutilla* (p. 336), and especially the beetle *Bombolosi*, belonging to the Curculionidae family, a curious insect which drops to the ground and counterfeits death when touched or frightened ; it is the symbol of riches. Natives hang it on a string at their door ; I have heard of others hanging it in their hair ; but in this case it is said to be placed there to eat lice!

All these superstitions are believed in more or less seriously. But, in order to know their fate and what they must do to avoid misfortune, Thongas have recourse to true methods of divination. Amongst these mantic practices some are simple and some more elaborate.

II. *Less important Means of Divination.*

(1) Amongst these I may mention first the *pshapsha*, which 524
corresponds to our "drawing lots" and is performed exactly 787
in the same way by placing pieces of grass or sticks of different length between the fingers, and pulling out one of them, having

(1) The cuscuta sometimes covers large patches of ground on the sandy hills of 137
Thongaland ; as is well-known, it has a regular root, but afterwards becomes a parasite 824
on the vegetables to which it attaches itself, whilst its stem and root die. This fact 787
has been noticed by the Natives, and has given the cuscuta a special value in their eyes. When they happen to find a plant which still retains its stem and root, magicians make use of these, especially in their exorcism rites. But this stem, which is so rare, is a bad omen for ordinary people.

524 first decided to act in such and such a way if the longer or the
787 shorter grass be drawn. This is more or less a game and is employed mostly by children.

787 2) Another more serious method of divination is the *mondjo*, the enchanted philter, used as a regular means of procedure to obtain evidence in Court (I. p. 443), especially to discover wizards and adulterous women. It has been described at full length in the preceding paragraph.

3) A third is the *divination by ecstasy* which is employed by the magician when "smelling out" wizards. The old men assert that, in former times, there were diviners who could guess anything when in that peculiar psychological state in which the subliminal faculties may develop to a marvellous extent. Hendrick, a very old Native of Khosen, said to me, speaking of one of these *shinusa* (the term by which these diviners are known) : "He used to travel all through the land, practising his art in the villages. He was able to describe minutely a goat which he had never seen ; or if somebody had buried something in a certain place to test him, he would go straight to the spot and say : 'Dig in the earth here, and you will find it.' Viguet also asserted that there were formerly true and trustworthy diviners in the Hlabi clans, and I myself heard trustworthy witnesses assert that a certain diviner who had been called into a village near Rikatla actually discovered some pounds sterling which had been hidden by their owner, who was no longer in the country.

4 & 5) A young man of the Mabota clan described to me two other methods of divination employed by his father, old Tumben (I. p. 531). One was called the *Small Mug* (shintjekwana). The diviner took a wooden mug in his left hand and held it by the handle. He placed in it an antelope's or goat's horn, and with his right hand he struck his right leg, putting the question to which he wanted an answer. He would say : "Is the matter really as I say?" If he had guessed rightly, the horn began to move to and fro ; if not, it remained quiet. Tumben also consulted the oracles by means of the *Small Calabash* (nhungubane). This calabash had some rags hanging from its neck, and a string was passed round it by which he held it dandling from the thumb of his left hand. He

lifted that hand and with his right hand struck his right hip, 787
meanwhile putting questions to the magical calabash, and calling it by the name he had given to it, viz., Nkoshi-wa-tihomu. To signify agreement, the calabash answered by means of the rags, which moved in all directions. Thereupon he said: "Keep quiet!" and the calabash remained quiet. — "He astonished us greatly, our father," added my informant! "His divinatory power came from the fact that certain incisions had been made in his hand and a special medicine inoculated into them. He had been taught by a man called Shitakule. Those who have not been initiated cannot consult the calabash; the rags do not move for them, neither does the horn in the small mug."

All these are primitive means of divination. We now come to the more elaborate, the famous divinatory bones. But before entering upon this most curious and interesting subject, I will describe the *Hakati*, which is based on the same ideas, but, being very much more simple, affords a useful introduction to the study of the bones.

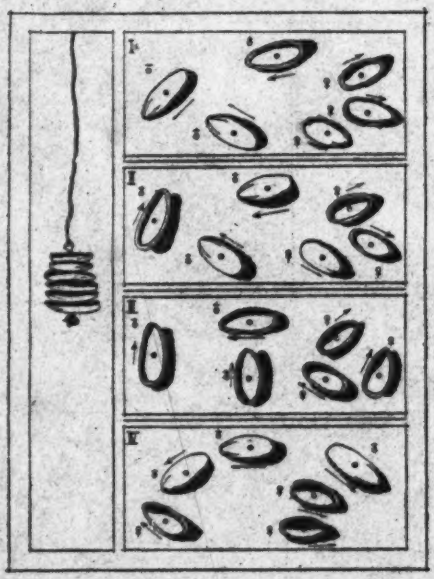
III. *The Hakati.*

Hakati (yin-tin) is the name given to the stone of a fruit growing in the desert. This stone is oval-shaped, and is cut in two so as to form two pointed cupules with a small notch at each extremity. These extremities are both called *nomu*, mouth, though there is undoubtedly an anterior part, that which is pointed, and a posterior part, that which is blunt. Six of these cupules constitute a whole set. Three are male (♂), three female (♀), the former being distinguished merely by their larger size. In the set which I possess, some cupules have been marked with brands of different kinds. These marks do not appear to have any significance, except that they help the diviner to recognise such and such a shell at once. The six shells are pierced through in the middle so that they can be passed through a string and hung round the neck. (See the left side of the accompanying plate.)

The hakati is mostly employed in Hlengweland (Gaza), and seems to have been invented by the Ndjao tribe; the Ba-Ronga and

787 Thongas of other clans found it there during the hunting expeditions, and brought it back with them. It is used mostly by hunters to obtain directions and predictions in regard to their undertakings. Some also employ them for their domestic affairs (psa muti), but they are hardly sufficient for this purpose.

I have given an illustration of four cases which Spoon explained to me. The shells are thrown on a mat and two main things must be considered in the interpretation : the *direction* towards which they look and the *side* on which they fall, whether on their back, in the negative position, showing the concave side of the shell, or on their "legs," in the positive position, showing the convex side of the shell.



The Hakati.

No. 1. Two female shells on their backs looking to the right : the women have remained asleep in the village. One of them (♂ shell on her legs) is working. The male shell on the top is the hunter who starts in the early morning, and pursues the elephant (the ♂ shell to the right) with his gun (the ♂ shell at the bottom)... The hunter is on his back : he has missed the elephant, which runs away, being on its legs! The signs are unfavourable!

No. 2. Same scene : Women asleep at home ; early morning. But here the hunter is on his legs and the elephant on its back : the beast will be killed! The signs are favourable!

No. 3. A case of disease. Everybody on their backs, males and females! A very bad case, with no hope! They hardly breathe!

No. 4. Another case of disease. On the left, three shells ; the shell in the middle is the patient ; that at the bottom, in the negative position, is his grief, his mouth wide open, moaning ; that on the top is a female

one, a woman who caused his disease, either by bewitching him, or because he had an unlawful connection with her. On the right three other shells : that at the top, the male one, is a friend going out of the village to fetch a remedy ; the two others, female, are two women opening their mouths, not to lament, but to laugh! They laugh at the man who was silly enough to expose himself to such a disgrace! 787

Those who practise the hakati art must also be initiated. They must bury their shells in the earth on the road, and when some one passes by on the path they unearth one shell, a male one if the passer-by be a man, a female one if it be a woman, (See later).

IV. *The Divinatory bones (Bula).*

The hakati shells are regarded as more or less childish. The divinatory bones, on the contrary, constitute an admirable system of divination and play a considerable part in the life of the tribe. They are called *nhlolo* (yin-tin), which is their little name ; the great one is *bula*, evidently the same word as *ku bula*, to speak, i. e. the *Word* with a capital letter, the Revelation! I remember old Maselesele, a Nkuna diviner, telling me : "You Christians believe in your Bible. Our Bible is much better than yours! It is the divinatory bones!" 787 791

I was initiated into the knowledge of this wonderful art by many masters. The first was *Spoon* (I. p. 4) ; he was only a beginner, and his set of bones was not complete ; but he understood the rules perfectly well and all that he told me was confirmed by subsequent study. The second was *Maselesele*, the old Nkuna just referred to, a blind man who knew his bones by the mere touch, and had a true veneration for them. Unhappily for this poor Nkuna, his hut was burnt during the Sikororo war (I. p. 512) and the precious basket containing his bones was destroyed. — "Why did they not warn you of the fate they were about to undergo?," I asked Maselesele one day. "They might have ordered you to save them if they knew everything!" He could find no answer to this remark, but his faith was absolutely unshakable. Such was also the case with *Mankhelu*, who had

787 practised the art all his life, and was attached to his divinatory
791 bones by every fibre of his being. His set was the most complete I ever saw, containing as many as 64 objects. He even had two sets, one contained in a leathern basket, the other in a kind of net with small meshes ; the first he called the Father and the second the Son. The Father always remained at home, whilst he took the Son with him on his travels (1). I spent many hours with him, trying fully to understand his teaching, and he took great trouble to initiate me, concealing nothing from me, wondering sometimes at his own readiness to do so, and saying: "This thing I would not have told my own son." I had thus an opportunity of penetrating into the depths of the Bantu mind, which has perhaps invented nothing more elaborate or more typical than this divinatory system. Of course no sensible person would for a moment believe in the objective value of these practices. *Astragalomancy* has no more real value than Cheiromancy, Necromancy and all the other "mancies." But I am obliged to admit that the Thonga system is far more ingenious than any other that I have met with, and that it answers admirably to the wants of the Natives, comprehending all the elements of their life, and photographing them, so to speak, in such a manner that indications and directions can be obtained for all possible cases.

I have explained Spoon's art in detail in "Les Ba-Ronga." I will here confine myself to Mankhelu's revelations, which were more complete, as the old man was one of the masters of the diviner's profession as well as of that of the medicine-man.

1) The objects composing the set of divinatory bones.

787 These may be divided into two kinds : the *bones* properly
825 speaking, most of which are *astragalus bones*, and the various objects which are *not bones*. I shall now enumerate them, always

(1) I heard of another bone-thrower from Tembe who had also two baskets of bones; the first was called the basket of the chiefs, the second the basket of the subjects; the first was used in criminal cases to discover wizards: they were bones which "killed," and when they had accomplished their purpose, the diviner left them to rest for a whole week, using in the meantime the second basket. He then washed them, and they were ready to be used again.

giving the Native name of the object, as these names are technical 787
and form quite a special vocabulary which seems to have an 825
archaic character.

a) Amongst the bones some belong to *domestic animals*, goats and sheep, and consequently represent the *people dwelling in the village* :

Five astragalus of *he-goats* : 1) *Mbulwa*, the astragalus of an old castrated he-goat, the old man. 2) *Mbulwana* (diminutive of mbulwa), a he-goat not so old : men of ripe age. 3) *Shivimbiri*, a non-castrated he-goat : men in their prime. 4) *Shivimbidjana* (diminutive of the preceding), a non-castrated younger he-goat : young men of sixteen to twenty. 5) *Morisana wa timbuti shi-añwa-mafi*, the astragalus of a kid which is still a suckling : little boys, goatherds.

Six astragalus of she-goats : 1) *Gosha nkata wa mbulwa*, the old woman no longer capable of childbearing (1). 2) *Mihlangwana ya bukati, shinyuki sha timbuti*, a ripe woman still at the childbearing age, one who still smears her body with ochre. 3) *Ntibulana* (from tibula, to bring forth a child for the first time, I. p. 192) young married women, having had only one child. 4) *Nhombela*, a she-goat before parturition : girls practising the *gangisa* (I. p. 97), running about during the night but not yet married. 5) *Nhombe-djana* and *nhombedjana yo-añwa-mafi*, little goat and suckling goat : girls still without sexual knowledge, or babies at the breast.

The goats, here as everywhere else, stand for the subjects. The *sheep* indicate the chiefs. There are five astragalus of sheep : 1) *Hamba, nuna wa noni*, a castrated ram, the chief and the old men of the royal family. 2) *Shikwela sha timpfu* or *Khuna ra*

(1) This, like most of the bones, has a long story. When Mankhelu was emprisoned by the old Boer Government for having strangled a pretended wizard (I. p. 444), and condemned to death, a diviner consulted the bones for him, and advised him to draw the image of a Native village on the earth and to pray every day to his ancestor-gods on his mother's side, asserting that they would deliver him, and that, when he returned home, he should sacrifice a goat to them. He added : "If people offer you a cow on the road, refuse." Mankhelu was indeed released, owing to petitions made in his favour, and, on his way home, everybody came to welcome him. In one village, the people wanted to give him a cow, but he refused it. When he reached his kraal, one of the wives of his maternal uncle appeared with twenty jars of beer, five baskets of mealies and three goats. He sacrificed one of these, and the astragalus became the gosha of his set... He cannot look at it without a thrill of the heart!

787 825 *timpfu*, a non-castrated ram : the sons of the royal family, the εὐγενεῖς! (bana ba-ku-psalwa). 3) Another *Shikwela*, astragalus of the ram sacrified during the Sikororo war, the one whose psanyi was used for the sprinkling of the Nkuna army ; it designates the enemy, and is watched with special attention when casting the bones in connection with military affairs. 4) *Noni wa timpfu*, an old sheep, the widow of the chief. 5) *Nhombela ya timpfu*, a young sheep, the girls of the royal family. As regards the wife of the chief, she is represented by the astragalus of the female mhala antelope.

787 177 771 In one of his sets of bones Mankhelu also had two objects taken *from an ox*. One was an oval-shaped smooth bone, two inches long, the other, one of its hoofs decorated on one of its three sides with triangular marks (See plate). Both represent the *Nkuna* tribe, whose totem is the buffalo. (Comp. I. p. 364.) But this is a custom borrowed from the Sutho-Pedis. I never saw bones corresponding to totems used in Thonga divination ; the idea of totem is altogether absent from the minds of the Thongas when not influenced by their Pedi neighbours.

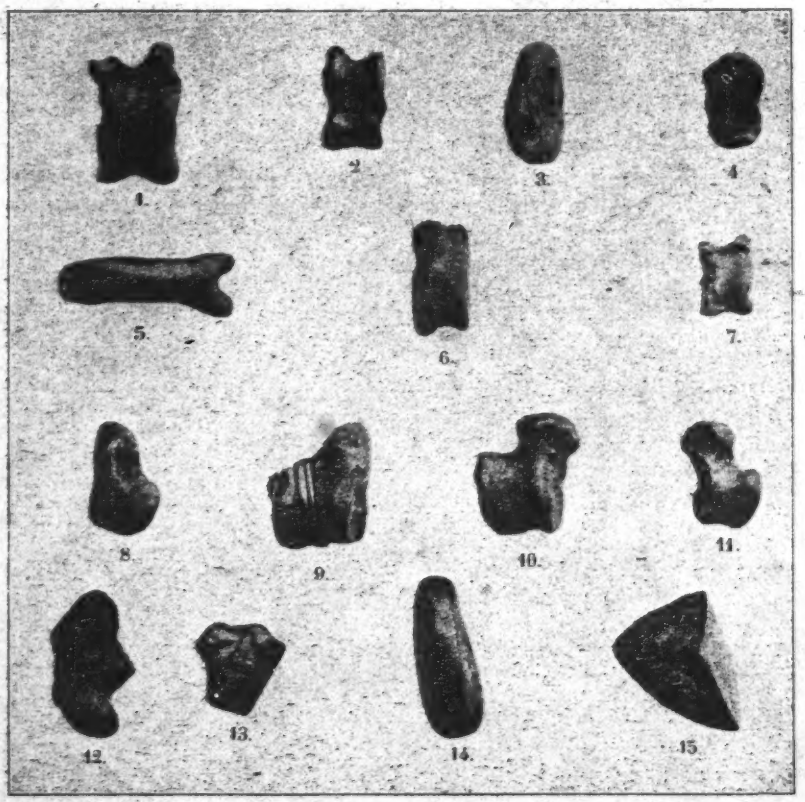
787 825 In addition to those of the domestic animals, there are a number of astragalus, or other bones, taken from *wild animals*.

First from *antelopes* : the male *mhala*, *tsombe ra mhala*, means the chief, and the female mhala, his wife ; the male mhunti, *tsombe ra mhunti*, *mhunti ya matlhari*, the duiker of the weapons, means fighting men, and the female mhunti, called *mbiri*, means women of loose character : *mbiri ya ku tola, ñwashifamba ni mafura eku rimen*, the woman who smears herself with grease and ochre, even when she goes to her field (thus trying to attract the attention of men). The *nhlangu* (reed buck), wandering about during the night, means wizards, as these cast their spells by night. Mankhelu had only the astragalus of the female in his set. The *mbalala* antelope dwells in the forest ; it does not like to come out in the plains ; its astragalus therefore designates the chief who rests in his hut and does not expose himself to the toil and the heat of the day.

The astragalus of the *ngolube ya ku dya marambo, yi tjela mitshi yi ralarala, yi languta hi matlhelo*, the wild boar which eats bones,

787 which digs holes, which looks about on all sides, is the medicine-
825 man who searches for roots to prepare his drugs. The female wild pig is the medicine man's wife.

Three astragalus of a very different form come from *baboons*, *nuna wa mfene*, the male baboon, *nsati wa mfene*, the female



Objects specially worthy of note in Mankhelu's set of divinatory bones.

1. Mbalala antelope ♂. +. 2. Ram —. 3. Mhala antelope ♂ ×. 4. Reed buck ♀ :. 5. Phalanx of a Lion +. 6. Astragalus found in the dejecta of a hyena: Ancestor-god. 7. Malumbi +. 8. Ant-bear +. 9. Hyena +. 10. Leopard +. 11. Baboon +. 12. Kanye stone +. 13. Kanye: part of twig +. 14. Ox. 15. Ox hoof.

baboon, *nhombela ya mfene*, the young baboon. They symbolise the *village*, because baboons never move from their chosen spot. "You never see the ruins of their habitations; though men may

787 build in their neighbourhood, these apes do not leave permanently,
825 you will see them coming back again next spring."

The following bones are asexual. There is only one of each kind in the set and it is not indicated whether it is male or female : the phalanx of a *lion* (ndjao), either male or female, taken either from the fore leg or from the hind leg, either on the left or on the right side. The lion is the chief of wild animals, so its phalanx represents the chief of the tribe, par excellence. It also designates White people, who are regarded as being as rich as kings! The astragalus of the *leopard, yingwe, shidya mafura*, the beast which eats fat and eats no grass, is also alone of its kind, the male only being taken ; it represents those who can choose their food, the rich, not the poor and wretched, "the chiefs and you White people," says Mankhelu! The *hyena, mhisi*, stands for the counsellors, the sycophants, the parasites ; they resemble the hyena, which follows the lion and the panther to eat the remains of their feasts, crunching the bones of a prey which it was not strong enough to kill! But the astragalus of the hyena also represents the wizards, because they eat the flesh of people whom they steal ; the ancestor-gods, because the hyena remains hidden in its hole during the day, like the psikwembu in their graves ; the chief himself, in as much as the chief also "eats" his subjects, and you cannot follow him and recover your property any more than you can a hyena!

The astragalus of the *ant-bear* (mhandjela), which digs the holes in which porcupines live, has also many meanings : the ancestor-gods, because they dwell in the earth and never come out in the day-time ; the power of death, because it digs the grave ; the chief himself, because ant-bears eat earth, and the chief also puts it to his mouth when sacrificing. He has the right to do so, when saying *tsu*, because the earth is his ; it belonged to his ancestors before him and he calls to them by its means (I. p. 405). Spoon used one of the claws of the ant-bear, instead of its astragalus.

A very curious bone is the one called *Shikwembu*, ancestor-god. It is a mhala astragalus found in the excrement of a hyena ; a most uncommon discovery, made by Mankhelu when on his way to Swaziland. The bone is worn down : it has evidently been bitten

by sharp teeth. I have explained (p. 376) how fittingly this bone was chosen to represent the spirits of the departed. They also have been swallowed by the earth, as the astragalus by the hyena, but return again to light and life in a new and divine existence! 787 825

The last astragalus of the set is the *malumbi*, the astragalus of the *shipene* or *mangulwe* antelope ; it is also asexual : *shirombe sha matiko, malumbyana wa tintibo, ntsinyarendjo*! the miserable of the land, the little antelope with white spots, the one which stops travellers (p. 347)! It plays a special part in the divinatory system, representing everything which is violent (leba) : the chief, the enemy, and especially the mysterious power of Heaven. For that reason it is watched with great attention by those who cast bones in connection with rain. When it falls in the "mild" position, it means that "the eye of Heaven is open, the knot is untied, the mouth of Heaven is open, rain will fall!" Then Mankhelu will make the offering (mhamba) for rain ; first the four leaves, then, if this is not sufficient, and if the chief requires it, the sacrifice of the black ram (p. 322, 316).

I include in the category of bones the pieces of *Tortoise shell*, *mfutju*, four of which are found in Mankhelu's basket : *mbulwa wa mfutju*, the adult male tortoise, *nsati*, *ntibula ya mfutju*, the young tortoise. According to the way in which they fall, these objects designate peace or misfortune for the village, prosperity or starvation (1).

b) The second category comprises the objects which are not bones or parts of the body of an animal. The most conspicuous are the *sea-shells* (djuma, dji-ma) belonging to two different genera : the *Oliva* shells, representing the attributes of the male, assagais, virile courage, etc., the *Cypraea* shells, corresponding to the attributes of the female, baskets, pots, pregnancy, births, oxen for lobola, etc. 787

There are besides two *kanye stones* of an abnormal form, one

(1) One day, when travelling through heavy rain, Mankhelu found a tortoise and obtained one of his divinatory bones from it. Soon afterwards he came upon an animal (I did not catch its name) which had just died, and ate it. Some time later he was offered a big he-goat in a village. So when the tortoise falls together with the astragalus of that animal, it is a sign that plenty of meat will be forthcoming!

787 found by a woman, the *female nkanye*, the other by a man, the *male nkanye*. These abnormal stones are very rare. They represent the vegetable world, especially *medicines, drugs*. They are supplemented by a little piece of nkanye twig, *nhombela ya nkanye*, the girl of nkanye, which was cut by a girl of Mankhelu's village on a certain day when he went to his "bakokwana" (to the relatives of his mother) to make a sacrifice. Being their uterine nephew, he had special rights and took the opportunity of enriching his divinatory set with their assistance.

Two *stones* are also to be found in the basket : the first is *ribye ra ngwenya* or *shimidjya sha ngwenya*, a stone found in the stomach of a crocodile ; these stones are generally of a dark colour, and frequently represent mourning, defilement (khumo, nsila) ; the second is *ribye ra dayiman*, the diamond stone, not a real diamond unhappily, but a stone with a striking design, found on the road, or in distant lands, by a traveller. It means luck, money, riches brought from foreign countries, gold which is extracted from the soil, in the same way as was this stone. I have shown in the accompanying plate (p. 545) the most curious and rare of the contents of Mankhelu's basket. In that of Maselesele there were also two pieces of white china, which represented the Whites ; another Nkuna diviner had chosen the shuttle of a sewing-machine for the same purpose. But these are new-comers in the basket, and are not met with in the old sets.

Comparing the explanations of the old Nkuna Mankhelu, who had been initiated long before and was an experienced diviner, with those of Spoon who belonged to the Coast clans, and was still a beginner in the art, I found a remarkable agreement between them. There are, however, some differences which can be explained by the wonderful imagination of the diviners. For instance, the wild pig indicated for Spoon the ancestor-gods, because they dwell in the sacred woods and dig the earth, and also old relatives who are on the eve of becoming gods ; the duiker meant the wizard because it also walks during the night, and the traveller because it rarely rests.

Though the bones have a fixed and definite meaning, they can also designate other objects if it is possible to establish a connection

between the animal and these objects, and we know how quick the 787
Bantu mind is at discovering such relations between men and animals.

2) The Consultation of the divinatory bones and the rules for their interpretation.

I owe to a Tembe informant the following full description of the 787
sequence of acts performed in a consultation of the divinatory 755
bones. Suppose one of the inmates of the village to have been 791
suddenly taken ill. The people who dwell in the same hut will at once go to the headman, even if it is night-time ; he will come, inspect the patient, and, having convinced himself of the seriousness of the case, he will start immediately for the diviner's village, not forgetting to take with him the necklace of the patient with his protective amulets (timfisa p. 471) ; if the man did not wear timfisa, the headman will replace these by some roots of a common plant, the tjeke, p. 14, or even of a common grass, the ntlangi ; these roots will be rubbed against his forehead and against his chest and will then be called his *ntjuleko*. Having reached the diviner's village, the consultant briefly states the object of his visit. A mat is unrolled and the ntjuleko placed on it, somewhere at the side ; the diviner takes all his bones in his hand, holds them firmly, and having chewed a little piece of a magic root, (1) spits on them and throws them on to the mat, saying with emphasis : "Mhamoo!" Those attending the consultation answer in the same tone : "Hizwaa! Si ya vuma!" — "Yes! We are agreed." This throwing is only preliminary. By spitting over his bones the diviner wishes to awaken them (pfusha) to make them see (hanyanyisa). He then passes them to the consultant, who will himself throw them throughout the whole consultation, the diviner only holding his little stick and pointing to them in order to explain their significance.

In the first place the consultant takes the necklace of the patient 787
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(1) Manthelu used for this purpose the bulb of a Liliacea called shirungulu, which has an agreeable scent.

787 or the above-mentioned roots, and rubs three or four bones against
755 them. These objects having been in close contact with the patient and containing his "nsila," the exudation of his body, establish a connection between him and the bones. The bones will then "know him" and throughout the operation these astragalus, which have been, so to speak, anointed with the "nsila" of the patient, will be watched with special interest; if they are "doubtful," hesitating (gome), the diviner will also have doubts about the revelations made by the others (1).

The consultant throws the bones for the first time, the diviner having asked: "What about the patient?" If the bones fall in a manner which corresponds to the state of the patient, all is well. The diviner will show with his stick that this correspondence exists. It is a proof that the bones have really awakened and are disposed to speak. The question is then put a second time in order that the first reply may be confirmed.

The way is now open for further inquiries; in the first place, what is the cause of the disease? Does it come from the ancestor-gods? From a male ancestor-god? From one on the paternal side? From great-grandfather so and so? From great-grandmother so and so? When the bones answer in the negative, another name is tried, and so the consultation proceeds by a process of elimination; the names of deceased great-uncles, parents, uncles, even of a son who may have died quite young are pronounced successively. If the ancestor-god who caused the disease is not found in the paternal line, then the same questions are put regarding the maternal ancestors, the bakokwana, the diviner himself suggesting to the consultant the names which are to be mentioned. It may be that the bones, which are often thrown two or three times for each name, will designate one of the ancestors. Then begins another series of questions. Why is the god angry? Is it because the patient has neglected his duties towards him? What does he ask for in order that he may be appeased? Goat's flesh? Clothing? Beer? Mealies? Who shall bring (tamela)

(1) If the diviner or his client consults for himself, he rubs these bones against his own forehead and his chest before throwing them on to the mat, and the connection is thus established.

787 the offering? The headman? An adult? A child? A certain
755 relation who is on bad terms with the patient and has sworn never to enter his village again? If the latter is designated he will have to come, after having first made the offering of reconciliation (described p. 398). The bones must likewise designate the person who will have to stab the victim, as also the person who will say tsu and pronounce the prayer. This may be a baby, and, in

Consulting the bones. Phot. A. Burd.

that case, his father will take him in his arms and pray instead of him. Women are often designated, as we saw on p. 411.

But it may happen that the bones do not agree that the disease has been caused by an ancestor-god at all. The consultation then takes another turn. Was it caused by a wizard? By a witch? Is it so and so? Or so and so? If no affirmative answer is given there then remains still another alternative. Has the patient been contaminated by the defilement of the bush (the dust of conta-

787 minated huts thrown down at crossroads) or of the footprints
755 (mitila, p. 478)?

Such is the procedure followed in a consultation regarding disease. It will be modified according to circumstances, when the advice of the bones is asked for in other difficulties.

If from the beginning there is no correspondance whatever between the manner in which the bones have fallen and the case for which they are consulted, if they "refuse to speak," the diviner will perhaps roll up his mat and leave the hut ; he will then try to throw the bones on the square, or in the bush, or behind the hut, and the consultation will be continued there till a clear answer is given.

787 In order to see if the bones have really consented to speak, three or four things are specially examined : the *side* on which the bones have fallen, the *direction* towards which they look, their *disposition* or the position they have taken in regard to each other, and the *relation* of the male and the female bones towards each other, viz., are all the male or all the female bones on the same side? Each object can fall on two sides, all of them having a *convex* and a *concave* side. If they fall so as to show the convex side (bukhatsha position), they are said *to be full* (ku tala), or *to stand on their legs* and to *march forward* (ku famba) ; this is the *positive side*, which I indicate by + ; if they fall showing their concave side (lwandla position) they are *empty* (ku pshya, image of a lake which has dried up), or lie *on their back* : this is the *negative position* which I indicate by —. In the first case, the person or principal represented by the bones is happy (tjaka), at peace (rula), active, marching, powerful ; in the second he is tired (karala), ashamed (tingana), powerless, dying (fa). Astragalus of goats, and sheep on their convex side, show that the inhabitants of the village, or the chief, are in good health and good spirits, working, succeeding ; if on their concave side, they show that those persons are lying ill or dying. On the other hand, the astragalus of the ant-bear in the positive position indicates that the digger is digging a grave, that the ancestor-gods are awake and probably ready to punish, etc. So it would not be correct to call the convex the favourable, and the concave the unfavourable side. The first is the *active*

●787 position, the second the *passive* one. Most of the astragalus may fall not only on these two principal sides, but also on the right or on the left side. The right side is called *ntjumba*, and is somewhat convex. Mankhelu explained to me its meaning by himself imitating the position (See the accompanying plate). He sits with his shield protecting him, with *his chest full*, ready to

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Phot. H. A. Junod

Mankhelu imitating the "ntjumba" position.

787 spit (like a cat), and his assagay lifted ready to be thrown ; this is the position of hostility, of anger. The left side is called *dzuuri*, or *minkono*, viz., the elbows ; it is somewhat concave. It is the position of a man half leaning on his elbows, *his chest empty*, enjoying life and not threatening others, the assagay being turned towards the soil (See the next plate). These two positions, which I represent by ×, the sign of multiplication, for *ntjumba*, and :, the sign of division, for *minkono*, are rarely met with. Spoon knew nothing of them. They belong to a more elaborate art. In fact

787 the two first positions are by far the most common. Let us see what is the meaning of some of the divinatory objects in these different positions :

Baboon +, the village is firm ; no ruins! Baboon —, the village is destroyed ; disease or death ; that which you eat does not remain inside : dysentery.

Ancestor-god +, the gods are happy and thankful. Ancestor-

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Phot. H. A. Junod.

Mankhelu imitating the "minkono" position.

787 god —, they sleep ; there is nothing to fear ; ×, they are angry, they speak in a low voice ; : , they speak mildly.

Kanye +, the drugs have their eyes open (the two kernels inside the nkanye stone have been removed, and it appears to have two eyes, which are visible in the positive position and hidden in the negative) ; the drugs help, cure. Kanye —, the eyes of the drugs are closed ; the medicine-man will not succeed.

Crocodile stone +, the country is at peace, the village is happy,

787 no misfortune. Crocodile stone —, the crocodile is hidden in the water, it waits for you and will kill you : starvation, death, defilement.

Tortoise-shells +, the village is smeared with ochre ; every one perspires agreeably, walking slowly as tortoises do when they come out to enjoy the rain, and eat grass. People drink beer, and have plenty to eat. Tortoise-shell —, misfortune in the village ; everything looks black (the concave side of the tortoise-shell is rough and more or less black). Nothing is cared for on the square ; the grass grows there ; disorder, death, starvation. The tortoises are hidden in their holes.

Female sea-shells +, the rivers are full ; pregnancy takes its normal course ; the wealth which comes by the sea in the steamers is well protected. Female sea-shells —, the rivers are empty ; birth is imminent, either favourable or otherwise ; there has been a wreck at sea, and you will find riches on the shore!

Male sea-shells +, the assagais are in good condition ; men succeed in their undertakings. Male sea-shells —, the assagais are broken ; the army will be defeated.

Sea-shells in the negative position, showing their opening, also mean a mouth open to laugh or to cry : if all are in this position, it means lamentation, because when all the people open their mouths together, it is always to lament ; when two or three only show their teeth, it means laughter, as people never laugh all together, but only a few at a time!

While the side on which the bones fall must be considered before all else in the interpretation, the *direction* in which they look is also very important, as it reveals the intentions and movements of all the personages represented ; their *arrangement* shows the relation between these persons ; moreover if all, or most, of the astragalus of the same sex fall in the same position, this is a sign to be particularly noted for the following reason. If a woman is ill and you wish to receive directions as to what to do for her, you cast the bones ; if the she-goat falls on the negative side, this proves that the Word is speaking; but if all the other feminine astragalus show their concave side also then no doubt remains ; the Word is really speaking ; a valuable confirmation has been given!

3) Some cases of astragalomancy.

787 My informants explained to me a certain number of cases which will illustrate the system of astragalomancy better than anything else. I have published illustrations of seven of these in an article in the *Bulletin IX of the Society of Geography of Neuchâtel*. They were given to me by Spoon. I shall here re-publish one of them, the case of the sick mother, and two new ones, much more complex, which I owe to Mankhelu.

These three cases will be sufficient to illustrate the divinatory system. Let me give, as a preliminary, the two following instances :

Prediction of rain : Ram × and Mhala ×, the chief is full of confidence ; the He-goats, the headmen are glad and thankful ; Mbalala +, the chief is happy ; it will be wet in the forest! Tortoises —, there is black everywhere ; the soil is dark on account of the rain. Olivas +, all the huts are closed because nobody dares to go out lest he be soaked! Baboons +, the village will have plenty to eat. If Baboon were —, the rain would be accompanied by bad winds, which would break down the mealies and bring starvation.

The place where the tinhhovela (the dirt which falls from the body of a convalescent during the hondlola rite, p. 471) *must be thrown*. Here the diviner proceeds by questions, in order to obtain the directions required. He asks : "In the river?" and throws the bones ; if the astragalus of the patient falls in the + position, Male Tortoise also, while the female astragalus are on their elbows, playing, smiling ; if the Lion is — (the bad bloods have been overcome) ; if Hyena is — (the disease which kills is vanquished), if the Ant-bear is — (the gods sleep), and the female Tortoises are +, meaning that women will soon be able to smear their bodies with ochre, then the answer is : yes. If this is not the case, he asks : "Into an ants'nest?" and again throws the bones, until the answer is positive.

The chiefs always consult the bones in order to know if the time has come *to sow the seeds* of pumpkins and millet. If all the Sea-Shells fall showing their mouths (yahlama), and the astragalus of the ram and ewe are in the + position, then you may sow.

See, p. 483, how the bones are consulted in order to obtain directions *in the rites of exorcism*, and, p. 525, how they help to *discover the wizards*.

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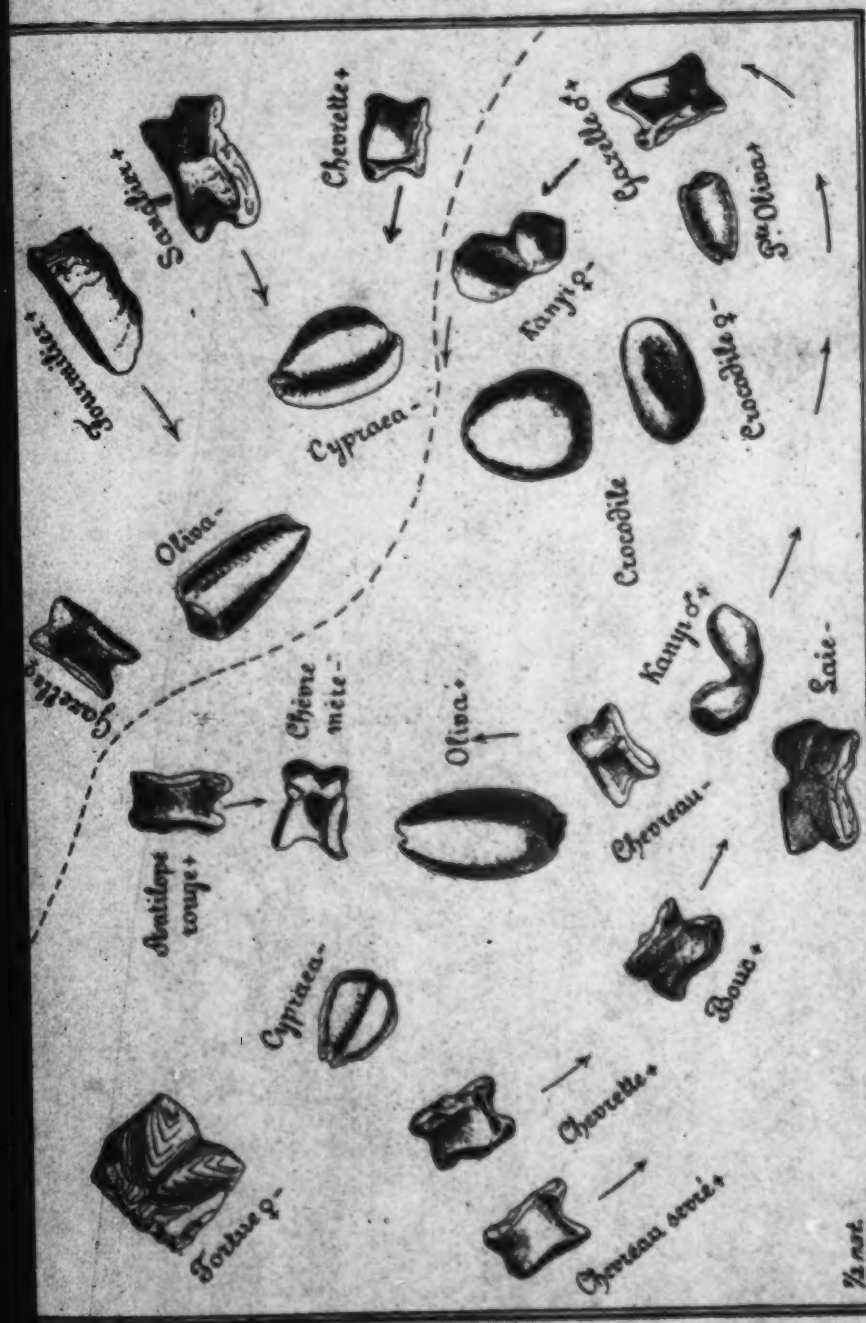

Reproduced from "Les Ba Ronga."

The case of the sick mother.

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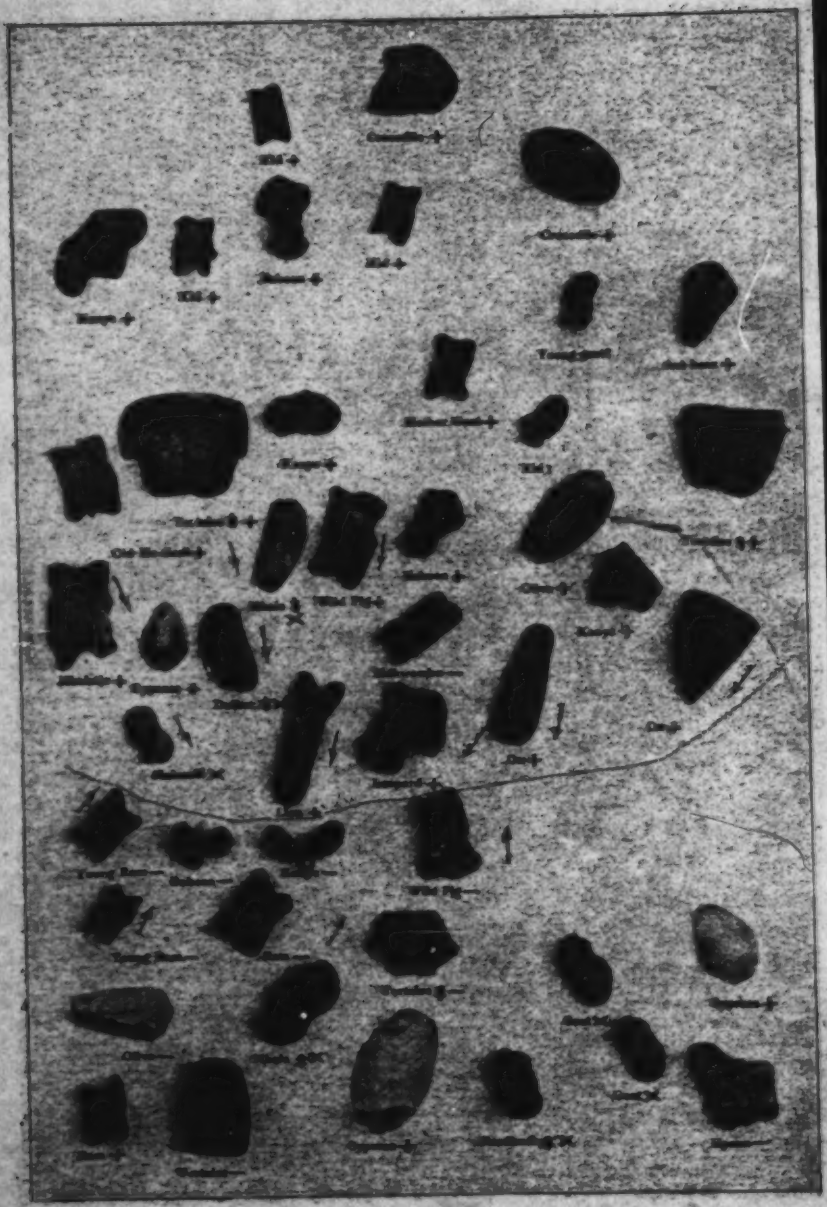

(One third of the natural size)

The Indian of Nimach

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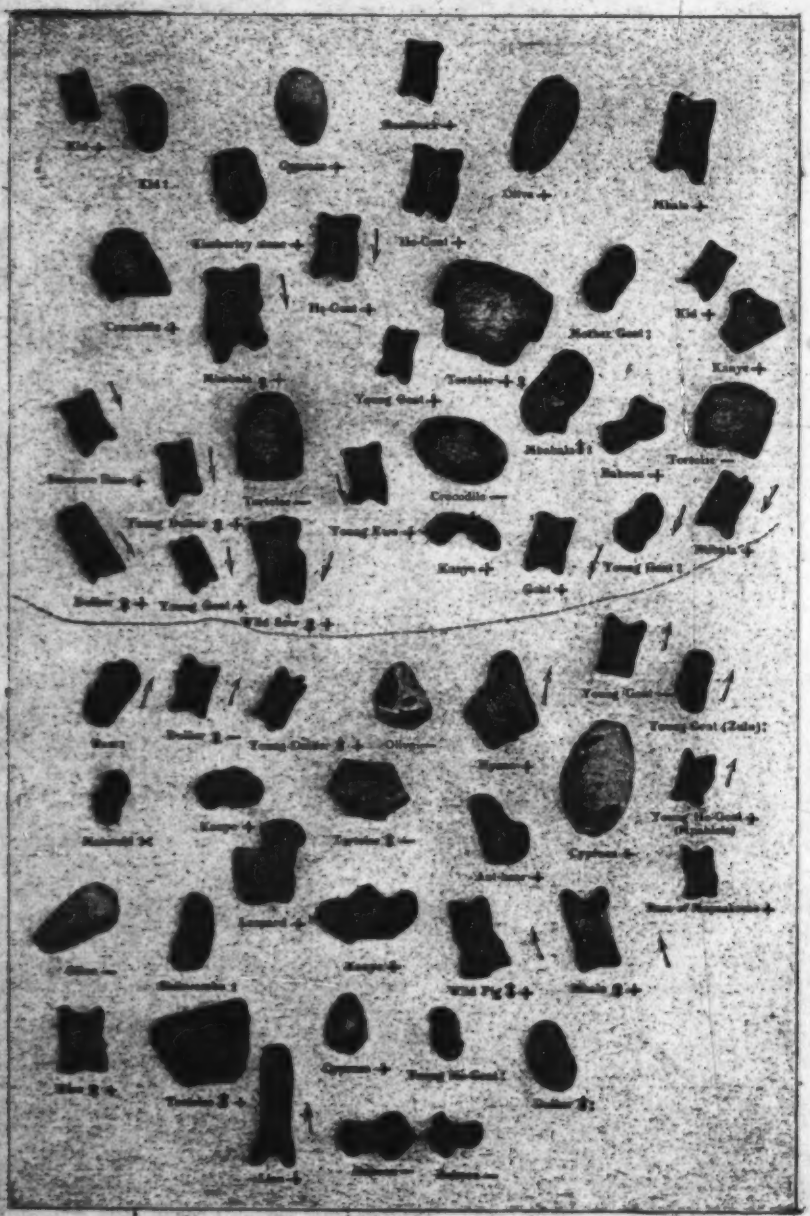

(One third of natural size).

Prophecy of a Migration.

a) *The case of the sick mother* (p. 557).

787 755 In the centre we see *She-Goat* —; the mother is sick, on her back! Above, the red Antelope, Malumbi + and below, Oliva +, are looking towards her ; these are the malignant influences which have thrown her into this state. *Cypraea* — wide-open, on her left, shows that she is suffering from dysentery! On the extreme left we see *Weaned Kid* + and *Young Goat* + on their legs, walking ; they are going towards *He-goat*, the father, who is also +, not quite discouraged, and pointing toward the *kanye*, the medicine by which he hopes to cure his wife. By so doing he keeps in check *Wild Sow* — the ancestor-god, who is thus prevented from adding his hostile influence to those already active. Near him is *Kid* — a young boy on his back, quite in despair, who keeps close to his mother. The father, having spoken with his children, starts for the bush, following the three arrows shown at the bottom of the plate. On the right, we see *Gazelle, Duiker* + ; this is he again returning from his walk as a traveller (the duiker, being always on his legs, often represents travellers). He holds the drug he has dug up *(Kanye —)*. But this kanye stone is on the bad side ; itwas difficult to find the roots, which penetrated into the soil, as do the two protuberances of the stone! Moreover two *Crocodiles' stones* speak of death, and the little *Oliva* + looks at the father in a hostile manner. The bones of the upper part, on the right, contain no encouragement whatever. *Wild Pig* + is an old relative coming to pay a visit to the sick woman ; he is accompanied by a girl, *Young She-Goat*, below him, who also goes towards the village with lamentations, shown by the open *Cypraea* in front of her ; on the top, *Ant-bear* + comes to dig the grave! Near him *Duiker* — is on its back, without strength, whilst *Tortoise* —, in the left hand corner, is also lying on her back ; no agreeable perspiration, no peace, no happiness.

The bones here give a triple revelation ; they depict the actual position, show its cause, and indicate its course and the remedy ; the disease is serious, but there is ground for hope if the father finds the right drug. If the astragalus of the He-Goat had been on its back, and that of the Wild Sow on its legs, directed against the patient, the case would have been hopeless.

b) *The battle of Moudi* (p. 558).

On the 6th of November, 1901, when the hostile army of Sikororo was signalled (I. p. 513), Mankhelu, seized with a terrible dread, consulted his bones. The Word spoke with such precision that one would be tempted to believe that the message was touched up post eventum. But Mankhelu asserts that many witnesses were present and testify to the prophecy of the victory which occurred the following day. 787

The bones fell in two lots, first, those on the upper two thirds of the plate, on the side of the diviner, and consequently representing his own army : complete victory! Second, those in the lower third of the plate, representing the enemy : absolute rout! I have separated these two parts with dots. Let us look at the lower part first. Three Rams on their backs : the chiefs killed ; the Ram is Rios, the acting chief of the Sikororo clan, the great enemy. Yesterday a ram was sacrificed to ask the gods to give victory. Its astragalus was taken and added to the other bones, to represent Rios ; here he is, dead on the battle-field! Close by, Wild Pig and Kanye are also on their backs : their medicine-man has been unable to protect them. Baboon is —, the village of Sikororo is destroyed! Tortoises —, no peace in that village, they are black! No resplendent ochre, but darkness and misfortune for them! Female Mhala ×, the women have their chests full of grief ; they cry. See all the female astragalus on their backs, or on their sides, in dreadful misfortune. Oliva —, the weapons broken, powerless. Two Cyprea +, no laughter, faces dark! Hyena —, Titus, a Pedi Christian who acted as counsellor to the chief, the sycophant of Rios, has been killed. See, in the left corner, at the bottom, Ram +. This is old Sikororo, the chief who dwelt in the mountains and had not given his consent to the treacherous attack. He is alone, unaware of what has been done by Rios, the chief regent. The Nkunas will not interfere with the good old man.

On the Nkuna side, Lion and Malumbi are in the foreground ; the one + the other ×, viz. full of courage : they represent the superior powers : you, Ba-Moneri (the missionaries), who helped us in that terrible hour! Leopard +, the sons of the chief are also running furiously towards the enemy. Ox +, the totem of the Nkuna clan is in good order ; he is safe. Shikwembu sleeps ; the ancestor-gods are not anxious about us ; they rest peacefully. Wild Pig +, the medicine-man who sprinkled the army is happy ; all his drugs (Kanye +) are

787 acting, they have their eyes open. Look behind Malumbi ; all the troops of warriors, Mhunti, Mhala, are in the ntjumba position, in high spirits, and their arms (Oliva +) are all strong and victorious ; the guns will not miss fire. Behind them, the kids and young goats, little boys and girls, are playing, quietly leaning on their elbows (minkono position). The chief (Mbabala +) who remained at home, is happy, as is also the old He-goat, his uncle, who did not take part in the battle. Ant-bear +, the ancestor-god of the village, is also quiet ; the two Tortoises + warm themselves in the rays of the sun ; the women still smear their bodies with fat and ochre!

The battle of the 6th of November, 1901, was a great event for the Nkuna tribe. For me it proved a wonderful opportunity of witnessing some of the most curious customs of the tribe. I owe to it this consultation, the narrative of Mankhelu's mhamba (p. 418) and the knowledge of many military rites (I. p. 476).

c) *Prophecy of a Migration* (p. 559).

On the day of the renewal of his drugs, which was a feast for his whole village (p. 454), Mankhelu threw his bones, which promised marvellous things : a throng of distinguished visitors were about to come and make their submission to him and increase his power ; princes, rich people laden with wealth! As Mankhelu was residing on the Mission farm, he said to me one day : "Be happy, my missionary, you will have new tenants who will increase the value of your farm! They are preparing their loads now... My god, Shiluvane, has revealed this to me. They will come before the tilling season begins. If they do not come I will give you an ox!" Some months later, no one having appeared on the horizon, I inquired from my old friend as to my ox. With a good-natured laugh he said : "Look! I will show you how the bones lied to me," and he placed his sixty-two bones on the mat as they had fallen on that day.

Once more we have the two halves, which I have separated by the dotted line ; in the lower part the migrating clan arriving, in the upper, Mankhelu's village welcoming it. Two Baboons —, the village is ruined, they leave it ; their chiefs are Lion, who is +, in good health, and Ram : laughing, smiling, playing. Malumbi is ×; his chest is full, because he is running away ; he is a powerful man, but he is out of breath. Near Ram we have his daughter Duiker ♀ on her back : he offers her in

marriage. She will even give us a child (young male Duiker near her!) The child will be a boy, as he is surrounded by Tortoise ♂ and the male shell Oliva. These chiefs may have been dispossessed of their own country; this is shown by the Ram of Mapsakomo; this astragalus was taken after a sacrifice made at the death of Mapsakomo, the rival of Muhlaba, who died of anger when his right to the chieftainship of the Nkuna clan was forfeited (I. p. 412). Young He-Goat, in front of him, also proves the foreign origin of the visitors; it is an astragalus which Mankhelu obtained in the Mpahlela district, South of the Oliphant. Young goat, playing, indicates the same thing, its astragalus having come from Swaziland. In front of her is another Young goat —; this is a girl who is offered to us in marriage, perhaps a second, perhaps the same as Duiker ♀; at any rate the prediction is confirmed. This Young goat is called that of *ringela bovumba*, because its astragalus has been taken from the animal sacrificed in the rite of removing the malediction of bovumba (I. p. 194). It may perhaps indicate that the misfortune of these noble strangers will also be removed when they come and dwell with us! Hyena is in the + position: they are cunning people; nobody will dare to run after them! They keep firm hold of what they possess or have stolen! Leopard +: they are rich people, living on fat and flesh. The two Cypraea +, indicate the sea and the wealth brought into the country by the steamers, which they carry with them! One might think that they were White people! Wild Pig +, they have their medicine-man and their drugs (Kanye +); their children (young He-goat: and Duiker ♂) play and dance! Their women (Mhala + Ewe +) are covered with ochre as shown by Tortoise +. Their gods, Shikwembu and Ant-bear +, are with them and have "given them the road"; they are pointing in the same direction. "Look at Ewe, the old woman, the widow of the chiefs! What has she hanging round her neck? — Oliva, a crocodile-tooth, an amulet well smeared with protective drugs?" Such is the procession of the new-comers. 787

In the upper half, we see the village of Mankhelu welcoming the new-comers; the young children and the women run in front (Duiker ♀+, Young Duiker +, Young Goats + and Young Ewe +, Ntibula +); they are curious, they are anxious to see who the visitors are. Behind them come the old people: Mbabala ♀+, the wife of the chief; the chief himself, Muhlaba, Mbabala ♂:, is on his elbows, quiet and smiling, in no way fearing this peaceful invasion, whilst his mother, Mother-Goat, comes also, dancing. Baboon +; does not this show that the village is secure? Mankhelu himself is represented by three bones: Ram +

787 and two He-Goats +. He comes with dignity to meet the arrivals. Behind, in the village itself (at the top of the plate), boys (kids) play beneath the shade of the trees (kanye); two women are killing each other's lice! i. e. Reedbuck and Cypraea, the female sea-shell! etc. One of the Tortoises is —, showing its black side. But this is not a sign of disease or defilement; the village has been cleaned, the black soil is visible everywhere because it has been well swept and the huts also have been smeared afresh. The black colour also indicates that the bush has been burnt; it prophesies the time when these strangers will come, when the bush-fire has reduced all the grass to ashes, in September or October, at the end of the winter The Tortoise in front of He-Goat is +; this is the face of Mankhelu, radiant with joy. "Mahlwen ka mbulwa ku nyuka!" — "on the face of the old man there is sweet perspiration." His drugs are all right (kanye +, means both drugs and shade). Crocodile is —, the rivers are low; this confirms the forecast of the time of the arrival. The Kimberley stone is +; the earth is solid, firm. Oliva +, the sky is clear, we are happy! When we rise in the morning we look towards the East! etc.

—"Wonderful!" said I to Mankhelu. "Only they did not come!" — "Never mind," he answered. — "Then the bones have deceived you!" — "Not at all! If it is not this year, it will be next year! Moreover, we diviners are not afraid of being told that our bones lie. When, later on, our prophecies are fulfilled, then people wonder! They are convinced. And after all, if the Word lies, it is not my fault!" — "How is that?" — "We do not put our ideas into them (a hi ti rumeteli); we merely interpret them; it is they who speak!" — "Then they have a power in themselves?" — "No! the power is in the chest of the diviner." Such was the conversation with which the demonstration closed. I shall return to it presently.

4) The initiation of the diviners.

791 Astragalomancy is not an esoteric art; every one in the tribe knows the bones, and their significance, and all the men attend the consultations and help in the interpretation. However, every one is not a diviner and an initiation is necessary to become a fully qualified practitioner. If a young man feels that he has the qualities of perspicuity and shrewdness necessary for the practice of the art, he begins by collecting the astragalus one after

791 than is at present the case. It may be so, as the hondlola by which they pass from apprenticeship to mastership is a true rite of integration, by which they enter upon a new condition and acquire a special position. At every new moon henceforth they will have to wash their bones ritually in order to remove the defilement of the preceding month, after which they will smear them with psanyi.

When a diviner finds that he is not successful in his forecasts, he consults another member of the fraternity, who tells him to offer such and such a victim to an ancestor-god who was himself a bone-thrower, and who is supposed to have given the bones to his unsuccessful descendant. The spirit of interpretation of the deceased will then enter into the supplicant.

In order to attract customers, Mankhelu kept a little pellet of black grease amongst his bones. When he arrived at a place to practise his art, he took a little of this grease and placed it on a glowing cinder, arranging the bones all round, and the smoke which rose from the fat acted as a summons to the people. "So I saw one coming from this direction with an ox, another from another direction with a goat, and made good profit!"

Women may also become bone-throwers, but this is a rare occurrence.

5) The importance of the divinatory bones.

787 From all the foregoing information it may easily be gathered that the
791 art of bone-throwing is by no means child's play, nor mere quackery by which astute sooth-sayers deceive their credulous fellows. It is a true art which the diviners practise *in all sincerity*, themselves believing that they receive objective revelations through its means. This sincerity is attested by many proofs.

1) The fact, already mentioned, that it is not a secret, esoteric art, but that all know its rules and take part in the interpretation.

2) The confidence which diviners have in the power of their bones, and the strong attachment which they profess for their divinatory basket (1). Each of their astragalus bears a name which reminds them

(1) The conversation, just referred to, which I had with Mankhelu after his explanation of the unfulfilled prophecy, is very striking in this respect. It concluded as follows : — "Mankhelu," I said to him, "you see that your bones deceive you ! They

787 of the person who gave it to them, the circumstances in which it was
791 found, and some of the triumphs of their career. Their whole life is connected with these bones, which they truly love and to which they are bound by all the fibres of their hearts!

Of course diviners are *shrewd*! Their interpretation does not proceed from mathematic evidence, but from their extraordinary powers of imagination. Tortoise in the negative position may at the same time mean black earth, death, defilement, a well-swept village, the burnt bush, according to the requirements of the case ; but this is fair play and everyone approves of their ingenuity ; it is not a conscious attempt to deceive. It is evident that the predictions often remain unfulfilled, as in the case of Mankhelu's prophecy. Or the exact reverse of the forecast happens. One of my evangelists, Filipi Mabemane, when still a heathen, went to consult a Matjolo diviner regarding the birth of a child which was shortly to take place. "It will be a boy, and he will live" was the answer. Actually, it was a girl and she died! So many people are more or less sceptical and say : "Tinhlolo i ntlhangana na pso!" — "The bones tell the truth when by chance it so happens!" However their faith is not impaired for long! The anxiety to know the future is so great that they consult anew, but not the same diviner. People say : "Psa mu hlula," — "He has been overcome," and go to another! Qualified doctors sometimes experience similar treatment even amongst the Whites! Viguet once quarelled with a bone-thrower. The man of art contended that he always told the truth. "What did you tell me?" said Viguet. "You told me that I should get plenty of oxen and goats. Where are they? And why did you not tell me : 'Hanya, hanya, hanya... Live, live, live... there will come a day when something will happen and we shall quarrel!'" But the sceptics are rare. Faith in the bones is blind, but it is great!

How is this confidence, which both diviners and their customers have in the divinatory bones, to be explained?

are old, dry, dead things which cannot help you! Come to the light of the true Revelation of Jesus Christ." — "You are right, Moneri," answered my friend. "I am old! I cannot use my bones any more, as I no longer travel for trade or feasting! I shall have to come to the Church by and by." — "If that is so, let me have your basket ; it interests me very much. I will pay for it." — "He! Moneri! Impossible!" — "Why? At any rate sell me the Son, if you wish to keep the Father!" — "No! I want to keep the Son." — "Then give me the Father!" — "Never!" said he quite scandalised. — "You see that your heart is still in it, old chap!" — "Yes. When a child has dysentery, can I leave it so? Must I not consult the bones to know what drug to give?..." I did not succeed that day in buying either Son or Father. However, the diviner died some years later and his heirs consented to sell me one of his sets, which is now in my possession.

787 Does it come from a *religious belief*? It is not easy to say definitely to
791 what extent the divinatory art rests on religion. On the one hand, the power of interpretation of the bones comes from the ancestor-gods who were bone-throwers themselves, and they are invoked to give or to revive this power. Mankhelu even told me that the prophecy of the arrival of the strangers had been inspired in him by his deceased father Shiluvane. But the Bula, the Word, is not generally looked on as being the utterance of the ancestor-gods. The bones are, in a certain sense, *superior to the gods* whose intentions they disclose. The Bula is the revelation of a more or less impersonal power, independent of the gods.

787 It is undeniable that the divinatory art is *essentially magical*; it rests
789 on those universal axioms of primitive mentality which are deeply engrained in the Bantu mind (p. 368) and this is sufficient to account
791 for the indisputable value which it possesses in the eyes of the Thongas. Like replaces like. By virtue of mere external similarity one object can signify another. Thus human beings are represented by animals which resemble them in a certain point. The reedbuck which wanders during the night stands for the wizards who do the same; the hyena, which eats the remains of the lion's feast, is the parasite who follows the chief, etc. Thus there are representative and represented objects. But like also acts on like: in some mysterious way the fate of the representative object will be the fate of the object represented. There is no doubt that diviners sometimes claim not only the power to form a diagnosis, to discover causes and give advice, but to influence the course of events themselves and determinate certain results. Mankhelu believed that he had contributed to the defeat of the Sikororo tribe when the bones so vividly depicted the rout of their army. If imitative magic controls the divinatory art, the part played by communionist magic is equally great. The part represents the whole. The astragalus, which is but a small bone, represents the whole body, and its fate prophecies the fate of the entire animal or person represented by it. The Native mind has a much profounder conception of the unity of the animal and human worlds than we have. Spoon once said to me mysteriously: "The astragalus of the goat truly represents the people of the village, because these animals live in the village; they know us, they know what is in us." Observe also how the consultant takes the amulets of the patient and rubs them against the bones in order that they may be able to speak the truth about him. These amulets contain the nails and hair of the patient if they have been tied round his neck in the hondlola ceremony. Moreover they are covered with his "nsila," the exudation of his body,

the material representation of his personality. By this contact the patient has in a way become a part of the "complexus Bula" and what happens to the bones will also happen to him ; what is said by the bones will henceforth apply directly to him. This magic conception of Nature is probably the profound and secret reason why the diviners believe so firmly in their art. 787 789 791

On the other hand, this art is so perfect that bone-throwers can derive very great satisfaction from the practice of it. It must be born in mind that, in fact, all the elements of Native life are represented by the objects contained in the basket of divinatory bones. It is a resumé of their whole social order, of all their institutions, and the bones, when they fall, provide them with an instantaneous picture of all that may befall them. This system is so elaborate that I do not hesitate to say that, together with their language, their folklore, their lobola customs and their burial rites, it is the product of their psychic life which shows most intelligence. If the premises of divination are accepted, astragalomancy seems to me vastly superior to cheiromancy and all the other systems which have been invented by us. It is also superior to the divination by four tablets of ivory or wood practised by a certain number of South African tribes, a description of which will be found in Appendix VI (1). 787 181

But if this system of divination is a proof of great intelligence, it must be confessed that *its results*, as shown in the psychic life of the tribe, 787 155 182

(1) There are some grounds for thinking that divination by astragalus bones is very old in the history of mankind. The Greeks practised *astragalomancy*. In a paper to which I shall refer in App. VI, the Rev. N. Roberts mentions the temple of Dodone, in which, according to Cicero, there was a large brass basin with the statue of a man upon it, and this man held in his hands a whip with three straps from which hung small astragalus bones. When these bones were set in motion by the wind, they struck against the basin and the sounds thus produced had a prophetic character. This was astragalomancy, but of a very different kind from that just described. Aristotle makes frequent allusions to the astragalus bone and says, inter alia, that one of its sides, named *coon*, represents the figure 6 ; another, named *chion*, the figure 1, etc. This shows that in his time the astragalus bone was already identified with the dice. The dice, also called *αστραγαλος* in Greek is simply an astragalus bone whose sides have been cut so as to form a perfect cube. We find traces of the use of the astragalus even further back in the past. Angelo Mosso, quoted by the same author, asserts that he found many astragalus in Italy, where they were used in connection with primitive religion as far back as the neolithic period. The discovery in the lake of Neuchâtel of a collection of more than thirty astragalus in the lake dwellers' station of Auvernier may be a proof that these bones did in truth play a part in the customs of primitive humanity. If this is so, then the Bantus have preserved the astragalus as they did the wooden pillow of the old Egyptians, the ancestrolatry of the Mousterians and the "mbaya" (p. 93) of the Libyans. The astragalus is still employed in play to represent cattle by Swiss children in the Canton of Valais, and I am told that the South African Boers have the same custom, and call these bones dol-osse.

787 are most *deplorable*. These practices kill in ovo any serious attempt at
155 the use of reason or experience in practical life. Native doctors might
182 have arrived at a useful and beneficent knowledge of the medicinal virtues of vegetables, if they had studied them carefully. But why should they trouble themselves with study, when a single cast of the bones at once tells them what root must be taken to cure the disease? (Compare my account of diagnosis, p. 475). Further, the bones annihilate the moral conscience, or, at any rate, they prevent any healthy development of this precious faculty. When overtaken by misfortune the Bantu might be moved to introspection to review his conduct, and see what wrong actions he had committed. From this self-examination, moral progress might result. But such trouble is useless! The bones are thrown. They reveal that misfortune was caused by such and such spiritual influences, wizards, gods, defilement, Heaven, that it must be combated by such and such means, — a drug, or a packet of drugs, a victim, male or female, offered by so and so, in such and such a manner. This is all-sufficient and the conscience remains dormant (1) as does the reason. I am convinced that, however high the degree of astuteness engendered by the divinatory bones may be, they have been extremely detrimental to the intellectual and moral welfare of the Natives.

This leads us to our last chapter, in which the questions of Taboo and Morality will be considered.

(1) Wishing to know if the bones were sometimes used to obtain moral guidance, I once asked Mankhelu: "As you throw your bones on every occasion, would you consult them when going to a beer party? There might be trouble, perhaps quarrels, blows... If you wish to avoid these would the bones tell you to abstain from the party?" He laughed heartily. "No!" said he. "If I saw that the men were drinking too much I should leave before they were quite drunk." I have some doubts if he would really have done so, but it remains clear that the bones have nothing to do with morality!

782 addresses his prayer to his ancestor-gods in order to be delivered
787 from his enemies.

The Offering of a Thorn (Mhamba ya Mutwa). This is also called *ku hahla ka shihlahla*, the sacrifice of the forest. The headman has seen that misfortune has fallen on his village ; all his people die, the village is about to disappear, to become merely a part of the bush. He goes to the forest, picks up a thorn there and accomplishes the religious act by sucking the thorn, and emitting his saliva. Then he returns to the forest and places the thorn where the bones have ordered him.

782 *The Offering of Contempt (Mhamba ya Litsanwa).* We have
783 already seen a case in which this offering is made. It is a compo-
824 nent part of the burial ritual (I. p. 142) and we have called it the rite of the twig. But it can be performed on other occasions also. In certain clans (Nkuna-Khosa, Hlengwe) it does not take place at the burial, but is of common use when someone wishes *to avoid contempt*, to be well received by those to whom he goes ; for instance when he goes to his debtors and fears that they may despise him and perhaps refuse to accept his claim, or when a young man goes to woo a girl and is afraid that she may not look favourably on his suit. The religious act is performed as follows. The officiant cuts a twig of the nkanye tree. We have often mentioned this tree, whose fruits are used to prepare the famous bukanye beer ; it is everywhere regarded as the best of trees, and highly valued. It is dioecious, as we have seen (I. p. 397). The twig must come from a female stem, if a man *hahla* for himself, from a male stem if a woman does so. The officiant bites the extremity of the twig till he has drawn a little of the sap into his mouth ; then he emits that sap together with his saliva, and proceeds to his prayer.

789 *The Offering of the Fig Tree (Mhamba ya Hlulawumbe).* This
782 tree is called shihlampfana or hlulawumbe. It frequently grows
824 as a parasite on another tree ; or surrounds it, growing close to its stem, and in this way kills it. If a man has enemies, if there are people who hate him, he digs up a bit of the root of this fig tree and uses it in making his prayer. These troublesome persons will be choked, destroyed, just like the stem close to which the hlulawumbe grows. (Hlulawumbe means to overcome others).

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

553 608 name to the new-born child ; a friend of the family may do so, but it is also often a traveller who happens to be in the village to whom this privilege is accorded. He will "*name himself in the child*" (ku titshula ka ñwana). This fact will establish a special relation between this person and the child, a relation which bears some resemblance to that of a godfather to his godson. Once a year he will come and give "his name" (viz. the child) presents. When the child is able to travel, the mother will go with him to pay a visit to his "friend in name" (mabitokulobye).

553 4) A fourth way of naming new-born children is to choose a name having some connection with the *circumstances of the birth*. Should a child have seen the light when his mother was travelling, he will be called *Ndlelen* viz. "on the way," "on the road ;" should the birth have taken place under a tree, the name of that tree will be chosen, put in the locative case, and you will meet many Thongas called Nkanyen (under the terebinth), Nkwakwen (under the Strychnos), Nkuwen (under the fig-tree), etc. ; or Mpfulen (in the rain), Marumbin (in the ruins), Mawewe, if the child is born during the war waged by the chief of that name, etc. When General Beyers was over-running Zoutpansberg with his commando, the Natives, admiring the swiftness of his movements, named many children after him (1).

551 The names of the Thongas are the same for the two sexes. There are only two which cannot be employed indiscriminately

553 789 (1) In the case of *bonwaka*, viz. if a woman has lost many children (see Part. I. Ch. II. 8), should she give birth to a new one, a name will be chosen which will protect the new-born infant against the fate of his elder brothers and sisters. I know a boy who was born under such circumstances. His grandfather *Shona* named him after himself in order to bring him good luck. The Rev. H Gaye, in an article entitled : "Des noms propres chez les Ba-Ronga" (*Bulletin de la Société Neuchâteloise de Géographie*, 1920) quotes an interesting instance of such a name. A boy was called *Nyamengobe*, viz. their meat. His elders had died and it was thought that they had been eaten by wizards. When this boy came into the world, his parents had abandoned all hope of keeping him alive and said : "It is their meat, the meat which the wizards will eat!" But they evidently thought that this name would be a protection to the child, perhaps because wizards would see that their evil tricks were known, and would fear to be discovered, if they killed it. Such names are called : "names of misery" (mabito ya bujwana, ya ku titjetja), as Binana or Binolifu, "the one who hiccoughs death :" whenever he sends his hiccoughs, he spreads death.

862 join with them in blessing the little one. The beak of the sacrificed
782 hen, one of the claws and one of the feathers (psirungulo) will be
755 tied together round the child's neck. A mat is spread on the ground ; the child is laid on it and greased with oil and powder brought by the physician. Then he is smeared and rubbed with the bran. The particles which fall on the mat are called *timhore*. They are gathered by the mother who makes a ball of them. In the meantime the father looks for the nest of a certain kind of large ant which is common in the bush. It lives in the earth, but the opening of its hole is tolerably large. There the mother goes at sunset. She introduces the ball into the hole so that the ant will be obliged to take all the *timhore* into the nest. Then she returns home without looking behind her. It is taboo ; should she transgress this rule, she would bring back disease to her child.

This rite is the ordinary *hondlola rite* which is performed in this or in a similar way at the close of any serious disease as the conclusion of the treatment, with the view of taking away the defilement of disease. After having *hondlola*, the physician asks for the payment of his fees. For a child he will ask ten shillings or five coins of five hundred reis (1).

854 This hondlola reveals to us the true conception of the nursing period held by the Natives. For them these three first years of the child's life are a period of disease ; so many perils threaten the little one's well-being that he can hardly be considered healthy. He is during the whole time under the supervision of the physician, who takes leave of the little patient on the day of the weaning.

854 This view of infancy accounts also for some other taboos. It
789 is *yila* for instance to say of a child who is particularly fat : Wa tika, he is heavy : this would bring mishap to him. One must say : A kota ribye, he is like a stone! It is taboo also in Shiluvane to make use before a child of the word *mfene*, baboon. There is a disease which is called by that name and it would come upon him. One must say : the thing which inhabits the hills, and so on...

(1) In the Mpfumu clan the rite of weaning is somewhat different. I have published in " Lee Ba-Ronga " a description of it given by Tobane. It seems that the elements of the cotton string rite and of the broken pot rite are mixed with the proper weaning rite. I think that the description of Mboza is more trustworthy.

1) The custom of the erotic dream (Tilorela).

881 When a young man has noticed for the first time an emissio
195 seminis, he is said to have become an adult (a kulile, a thombile)
757 to have "drunk the nkanye." The nkanye is the tree from which the bukanye is made. It is prepared for the great feast of the new year. *To drink the nkanye* is an euphemism to designate the entrance into a new phase of life, into the age of puberty. According to Mboza, the lad must go early in the morning to wash his body, and that is all. But Tobane says that, in the Mpfumo clan, the family doctor is called; in a broken pot, he roasts pieces of skin of all the beasts of the veldt, together with some half digested grass taken from the stomach of a goat (psanyi). The boy must eat a little of this medicine and rub all his joints with it. This will strengthen him so that, when he has relations with girls, he will not be overcome (gemiwa) by them. This rite, which is very similar to the rite of the broken pot performed for infants, is connected with the "gangisa," the sexual habits of young people which begin at the time of puberty, as we shall see later on.

881 At this time also, the boy begins to wear the very primitive
291 clothing called *shifado* (sha ku siba, the thing with which one
177 closes, see Annotatio 1). In former times they wore only the *mbayi*,
789 a small cylindrical or conical object of woven palm leaves, which
832 was the national dress of the Thongas; the *shifado* seems to be of Zulu origin. It is very much valued as preventing contact with the earth, as a protection against ants and an aid to continence; the lads who do not wear it are blamed and accused of being *ba-nato*. The word *nato* means a magical medicine by means of which men of low morals throw men or women into a deep sleep during the night, enter the huts of other people and commit adultery with their wives.

2) The piercing of the ears (Ku tjunya, (Ro.), boshela. (Dj.).

881 This also takes place at this period. There are two ways of
304 performing it, either by an actual piercing of the lower lobe
177 with a thorn, or by cutting it with a knife. The first method

1 [See p. 516 In these categories or in 116 --Analyst]

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

834 784 381 829 753 They must not enter the hut of a person dangerously ill ; this would hasten his death. People who are just recovering from a disease, when they walk about on the paths, must tie around their ankles the root called sungi, which will protect them against the perspiration or emanation left by married people in their footprints, because, as one of my informants said, "ba-ku-khila ba hisa," viz. married people are hot.

834 836 381 829 Moreover not only individuals but the whole social life would be endangered if sexual relations took place when the community itself is in a critical position. They are prohibited therefore in wartime, during the whole duration of hunting parties, and also during the marginal periods. Strange to say, this law does not apply so severely to unmarried boys and girls amusing themselves according to the "shigango" custom (p. 97). It seems that it is not the act in itself which is tabooed, but the act in as much as it is accomplished by regularly married people ; in this case only has it a bearing on the life of the community.

What is the reason of these prohibitions ? "Married people are hot." What does this aphorism mean ? The following rite may help us to understand it.

831 834 226 829 789 771 In the Malulcke country, when the whole population enters a lake to kill fish according to the tjeba custom (Part IV. Chap. I), a little boy and a little girl are chosen and laid down under a lion's skin, as if they were husband and wife, and told to remain very quiet during all the time the grown up people are fishing. Not knowing anything about sexual intercourse, they will obey ; then the fish also will keep quiet and will be killed easily. Why ? Because there is in the sexual act something wild, fierce, passionate which, according to the law of correspondance which is at the base of all Bantu magic, has an influence on the hostile forces ; these will be excited and more difficult to overcome : enemies in battle, the animals of the bush during hunting and fishing parties, disease, danger of contamination at death and during the marginal periods. Life is, so to speak accelerated by the sexual act, and this acceleration is communicated to the whole of Nature. Therefore : Keep quiet, be continent!

This profound conception of life also explains why so often certain actions must be accomplished by children, not yet able to have sexual relations, or by old women who no longer practise them.

Let us remark that all these rites do not belong to Animism, properly speaking, but to Dynamism (Part VI. Chap. I), which plays a part almost as important as Animism in Bantu primitive philosophy.

843 remove the blood. The Thongas think that, as the menses are suspended, the blood accumulates in the body and must be taken away.

Pregnancy is not considered as a tabooed period. As we have just seen, sexual relations are allowed during that time, even recommended as favourable to the growth of the child. However, in view of the impending birth, some special taboos have been added to those which apply to all women.

A pregnant woman *must not drink water when standing up*. She must kneel down, otherwise the water would fall violently on the head of the child and hurt it!

843 It is taboo for her to *wrap her body* in too much clothing.
845 She must keep her belly bare and never throw her dress (kapulane) over her shoulders, lest the baby come to the light with its head covered with membranes, a complication which is very much dreaded by Thonga women.

She must not take *the sauce* of her porridge *too hot*. The child might be scalded inside and have black spots when born.

It is also taboo to *prepare the ntehe before the birth*, as no one knows what will happen. The child might die!

843 The future mother must not eat *pigeon's meat*, because pigeons
825 have no blood in the muscles of their breast. She would have no milk herself wherewith to nurse the baby. Nor must she even *look at a monkey*, lest she "take to herself" (tekela) the form of the animal and the child be like it!

A woman, in the beginning of pregnancy, must not visit a sick person. The latter might die.

843 As regards women dying during pregnancy, see page 166.
766 *Miscarriages* are very much feared amongst South Africans,
731 not for themselves, but because they are accompanied by an
789 uncontrolled effusion of a blood which is a terrible taboo. The
826 discharged foetus must be buried in wet soil, otherwise the rain will not fall; the country having been polluted will be dried up by hot winds. A strange rite called *mhelele* is performed in times of drought, when all the graves of children born prematurely and buried on the hill are searched, and their contents thrown into the mud, near the river. We shall discuss in Part VI the

A woman who has lost many children, three or four, is considered as being in a special position, called *bowumba*, and there are many rules to be observed in order to deal with this "state of bereavement." Should a child be born after the death of many elder brothers, he must be carried in a *ntehe* made of a sheep's skin instead of an antelope or goat skin. (See p. 46.) To carry him in an ordinary ntehe is taboo. Should it be a boy, the mother will put girl's clothing on it, and vice-versa. The mother's breast will be smeared with a special medicine, because they are "breasts of the dead (mabele ya bafi)." The child, if it lives, will be weaned as early as possible and be taken to its grandmother. Two curious rites are also practised to protect it against bad luck. The first is the *kunga* ; the second, *rangela bowumba*, seems to belong rather to the Northern clans.

765 854 761 844 [862]

The *kunga* rite which we have already met many times (see p. 124) is also performed in the case of a mother who has given birth to a new child whilst in the state of bowumba. To neglect it is a taboo. The bereaved mother keeps silent before her visitors until they have deposited their gifts at her feet and have thus "opened her mouth." Old women having no means to buy a present take a bit of grass and fix it in her hair. Then she consents to speak. She gathers all the bracelets thus obtained and puts them on the ntehe, carrying them everywhere with her.

789 761 854 844

Another rite is observed in the Northern clans. The child whose elder brothers and sisters have died is taken by the mother to the village of her own parents. There it is buried in the ash-heap up to its neck. Then somebody runs to the village, takes a handful of grains of maize and throws them on the child. Afterwards it is dug up, washed, smeared with ochre and brought home. This rite is called *rangela bowumba*, viz. to *precede* bowumba, to cut it, to treat it : the bowumba will not now come as it has been "preceded". It will be deceived, it will no longer desire the baby, as the baby has been thrown away together with all the refuse of the village on to the ash-heap. It is no longer able to eat mealies, even if it is given grains of mealies ; it is dead! Let the bowumba take no notice of it! (This description of the "rangela bowumba" was given to me by an old Thonga from Spelonken. Mankhelu, my Nkuna informant, called this rite

789 761

789 "*ringela bowumba,*" from the verb ringa, to try ; it is the attempt
761 to bring some influence to bear on the misfortune of the bereaved mother.)

9) ADULTERY.

837 Amongst the Thongas *true* adultery for a *man*, married or
595 unmarried (bumbuye), consists in committing sin with a married woman. Should he have relations with a girl, it leads to no consequences at all. Nobody will blame him, if the girl does not conceive. Should she have a child, he will only be forced to marry her ; she will become his second wife. His first wife will not at all resent his bad conduct. Sometimes she will herself get him the girl he wants. There is nothing in her heart like the jealous dignity of a European spouse! She will keep all her capacity for jealousy (bukwele) for the time when the second wife comes to the village, and shares with her the affection of their common husband! Adultery with an unmarried woman is nothing more than "gangisa."

837 But should a man have abducted a *married woman*, a woman
684 who has a master (ñwinyi), who has been paid for, then the
692 matter becomes very serious. The husband is very skilful at discovering her misdoing. As soon as he begins to have doubts about the fidelity of his wife, he chooses a friend and asks him to watch her. She is very cunning, her lover also ; but the friend is on the watch and some time perhaps, catches them in the bush, when she goes to gather fuel, or near the pool, where she draws her water. He comes back to the husband and informs him that he has caught them in the very act. Then the husband tells his wife that proof has been obtained and that she had better go at once to her lover and take something from his hut ; she obeys, and comes back with his blanket or any other object. This is "la pièce à conviction." The husband goes with it to the counsellor who is in charge of his village ; together they apply to the chief. The chief sends the counsellor who is responsible for the village of the lover to summon him. The confrontation takes place and the story of the case is investigated.

621 831 all this is done in fun. It is a great day of rejoicing for the "tinamu", who tease each other as much as they like. A man may be wanting in respect even to his great mukoñwana on these days!

621 756 337 789 6) When the huts are ready, the *fence* is built. The family doctor is summoned. The medicine man throws leaves or stones treated with his drugs along the circular line, where the headman intends to place the branches which will form the future fence of the village. This being done, the men erect the fence.

7) Special precautions are taken for *the main entrance*. Poles are erected on both sides, but before they are put in place, the doctor pours medicine into the holes in the ground and also smears the poles with it at the bottom and at the top. Mankhelu used to bury a black stone, taken out of the river, at the gate. This stone had also been smeared with drugs. "In this way, I prevent enemies from entering. Those who come to try their charms against us (ku hi ringa hi maringo) will be attacked by disease and go and die in their houses."

783 834 621 8) The building is finished. Nothing remains to be done but to *ripen the village* (wupfisa muti). Men and women assemble in two separate groups and ask each other if they have been continent during the whole "buhlapfa". If one of them confesses to having sinned, he has stolen the village from the headman; the whole work is spoiled and must be recommenced elsewhere. If all the members of the community have behaved well, they proceed to a purifying ceremony exactly similar to the *hlamba ndjaka* which takes place during the mourning ceremonies. Each couple has sexual relations according to a fixed order of precedence, one every night, and they all go to trample on the spot where the women wash their hands. The principal wife is the last to perform these rites.

621 595 9) Then comes the *drawing to himself of the village by the headman* (kokotela muti). At dawn, after the night when she has had her ritual sexual relations with the headman, his principal wife takes his shield and his assagais and stands at the main entrance, everyone being present. Outside is a thorny branch prepared for the occasion. In her martial attire, she drags this branch to the entrance and closes it.

621 824 765 troublesome and he should wish to remove them, he must ask some one else to do it. On the day of his death, or rather when his hut is crushed down, a branch of that tree will be put on the place where the threshhold was, and another used to close the main entrance of the village, a new entrance being then made through the fence and used as the gate during the rest of the mourning period.

621 833 3) He has sexual relations on the new spot on the first night with his principal wife ; in this way he will *fuya muri*, viz. "possess this tree," and also *fuya muti*, "possess the village." The Ronga *fuya* corresponds here also to the *boha* of the Northern clans (Compare boha puri and fuya ñwana, page 57). If someone precedes him in sexual intercourse, he is guilty ; he has "preceded the village" (rangela muti). By this act the headman has definitely left the old village. The others can go back to it to fetch what remains ; for him it is taboo.

621 831 834 342 4) The same day, all the inhabitants come and move all the roofs, if it is possible to do this in one day. One hut is rapidly built to afford shelter to the inhabitants, in case of rain. The first roof to be transported is that of the hut of the principal wife. This is also done to the accompaniment of obscene songs. These songs are not allowed when only one hut is transported, which may happen when some one goes to live in another village.

It is definitely a custom which goes with the moving of a whole village.

5) The following day two huts are erected, one for the men, the other for the women, because they must not sleep together. "They are still in the bush ; it is buhlapfa ; the village is not yet firm." Those who break this law cause injury to the headman. The bones will soon reveal that "he has been preceded as regards the village ; (a rangeliwile muti)." All the huts are smeared twice ; the women begin to sleep in them, but not the men. The fence and the main entrance must first be prepared.

621 789 6) The *main entrance* (mharana). The men pull up the grass all the way from the back hut to the place where the main entrance must be, so as to make a road all through the village. All the dried plants weeded out during this operation are carefully

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

621 789 824 gathered in a heap. The headman, on the advice of the medicine man, cuts from certain very vigorous trees such as the nkanye and the ntjondjo, two branches which can live when transplanted. He digs holes on both sides of the entrance and puts the branches into them. Across the gateway, he buries a third branch of the ntjopfa tree, "which causes oblivion" (p. 58): this will be smeared with special drugs in order to increase its efficacy ; it is intended to prevent the baloyi, witches and people speaking bad words. (lit "with bad lips"), from thinking about the village and spoiling it.

621 833 789 7) On the evening of that day, the headman and his principal wife have intercourse in their hut and, at dawn, while it is still dark, they go and wash their hands at the main entrance. Mboza does not say that all the other couples must do the same, or trample on the spot. In Nondwane this is sufficient and the rite does not apply to the other couples. But at Manyisa, midway between Lourenço Marques and Khosen, where the Djonga customs are sometimes met with, all the couples must have relations, one after the other, according to order of precedence. It is deemed so important to keep the due order in this "giving to each other the right of resuming sexual life" that, should an elder brother have been absent when the village moved, on his return he must undergo a special treatment in a neighbouring village, during a few days, to avoid any bad consequences resulting from having been unlawfully "preceded" (rangeliwa).

621 789 782 756 8) After the night during which this sexual rite has taken place, at daybreak, all the dried grass is piled in front of the main hut and burnt ritually. The headman throws into the fire a special medicinal pill in order to *give the village over* to his people (nyiketa muti). They all warm their bodies at the blaze, and go and set fire to all the other heaps of dried grass which they made when clearing the soil.

9) The medicine man comes on that same day, and sprinkles the fence with his drugs, in order to protect the village against bush fires, wizards and disease. He walks all round the fence saying : "Happy village! May misfortune not enter here! These are my drugs!" — He starts from one of the poles of the main

621 entrance and finishes his walk at the other, hanging upon it the
789 branch with which he has been sprinkling.

782 10) Then he sacrifices a hen. A young man accompanying
him cuts its throat ; the doctor plucks some feathers from the
756 neck, sacrifices in the ordinary way and invokes his gods : "You used to treat villages (daha miti) with these drugs and I do the same. I do not act of my own wisdom ; you have given it to me. Bless this place, etc." Then he plucks a feather from the hen's right wing, and suspends it at the main entrance or in the main hut, inside, over the door, according to the directions given by the bones. This is the *shirungulo* (see Part VI) and the act is called : "to tie the village" (tjimba muti).

621 Amongst the Rongas, there are some other *buhlapfa taboos*. It
372 is not allowable to light any fire in a village until it is completely
784 built. During the whole building period, cooking is done outside the fence ; crushing mealies in the mortars and dancing are also
789 prohibited. Whistling (ku ba noti) is forbidden, as it might call
198 the wizards inside the village before it has been protected by the charms.

621 If a man has many wives, he may build a second village for
595 himself and establish one of them there. A grown-up son, the son of the woman, will represent the headman in that village, but the law of "tying the village" will also be observed in this case. The headman will perform the act with this woman, and preside at the burning of the dried grass and of the medicinal pill, by which he *gives* the village to the inhabitants.

When a younger brother, or a son, leaves the headman and founds a village for himself (tihambela muti), he does it according to the same laws as those observed at the regular moving of a village.

III. *Some remarks on the rules of moving.*

621 Let us now analyse the two parallel sequences of rites which we have just described, and which complete each other. It is easy to discover amongst them three series of rites, social, protective and passage rites.

621 1) *Social rites.* The muti, as we have seen, is a little organised
596 community having its own laws, amongst which the most important
833 seems to be the law of hierarchy. The elder brother is the undisputed
768 master and no one can supersede him. He is the owner of the village. No one must "steal it" from him. Should any one do so, the whole community would suffer and no children would be born ; the life of the organism would be deeply affected. That is the reason why the headman must go first with his principal wife to have relations with her in the new village, and thus *take possession* of it or *tie* it. For this same reason, when the headman dies, the village *must* move. It is taboo to remain in it. Until the inheritance has been distributed, it is still *his home* (kwa kwe) ; but as soon as this ceremony has taken place, the villagers must go away, and close the door with a thorny branch. The part played by the
621 principal wife in all these ceremonies is most remarkable. It is
595 absolutely imperative that the headman should "tie the village" with her,
562 and not with another of his spouses. Should she be very old, the law
768 must be observed all the same ; should she be ill, and unable to have sexual
764 relations, the village simply cannot be moved. In the Northern clans we see her taking the shield and the assagai, closing the village and "giving it" to the inmates, even performing a sacrifice and praying to the gods. It is very rare to see a woman presiding at a public religious ceremony ; but she is the owner of the village as well as the headman. Moving is imperative when she dies as well as after the death of the headman. The main gate must also be closed and a new entrance made in the fence to be used during the year of mourning ; in the case of her death, this opening must be made on the left of the regular *mharana*, whilst, when the husband dies, it is made on the right side ; just as in the hut, when the corpse is removed for burial. (See page 138.)

351 2) *Protective rites.* These are those which concern the fence. This
789 fence does not afford material protection. The branches dry up very
621 soon and, in the case of a bush-fire, for instance, they would do more harm than good. It is a spiritual protection, a barrier of charms, of magic influences, to prevent the entrance of wizards and of all the hostile powers of the bush. We shall understand this better when treating of witchcraft superstitions. (Part VI.)

182 3) *Passage rites.* The reader will have been surprised to observe
621 amongst the ceremonies of the moving of villages, many features
829 which we have already met with in the circumcision school, or in the mourning customs. At first sight there seems to be no relation whatever between the moving of a village, the initiation of boys and the

524 protect himself. He tries to close the access to his position by drawing the line *f*, *g*. But, arrived at *g*, he comes to the end of his saliva (a helela), and A. who started at *h*, having arrived at *i*, turns round the point *g*, where his enemy has stopped miserably, and, going on, *j*, *k*, reaches the opening *d* and triumphantly ends his campaign in *e*!

But E. of the opposite camp has noticed a gate in the barrier X. Q. The saliva has dried there. He quickly carries his blow-pipe across the battle field, squirting all the time, and passes through the opening Y. He draws the line *l*, *m*, *n*, *o* and so destroys the part Q. Y. of the fortification X. Q. Should B. be quick enough, he might prevent him accomplishing his plan by drawing the line *p*. *q*... And so on! Young men, even men of ripe age, take an immense delight in these saliva battles. But the saliva must be blackish... It must be *ntjutju* saliva, viz., saliva produced by hemp, and not the ordinary white saliva, called *matjafula*. Should one of the players try to supplement the blackish by the white, he would be disqualified... His enemy would seize him by the forehead, and force him to lift his head and stop his attack. Should he go on, however, the other would say : "What ? You come to me with matjafula!" This may lead to quarrels, even to blows... The hemp-pipe falls down and it all ends in cordial laughter.

276 861 789 This hemp-smoking custom becomes a passion with many young men. To cure them their parents break the pipe, take a little of the soot which is found inside, and mix it with their food without their being aware of it. When this has been done three times, it is said to fill them with disgust for hemp... Similia similibus curantur... We shall often meet with this medical principle in the Thonga superstitions.

524 171 The most interesting game played by men, a game which fascinates them and which is certainly more refined than hemp-smoking, is the *tshuba*. It is at the same time one of the most widespread games of mankind. Mr. Stewart Culin says, in the Report of the Smithsonian Institute for 1893 and 1894, that it is played under the same name by the American Negroes, and that it is but a variety of the *mancala*, the national game of Africa,

643 "when the Ba-Khosa had emerged from the reed" (See Vol. II,
604 Part VI, III). Nobody might see it except the chief, who kept it
778 hidden somewhere in a hole amongst the rocks. His uterine nephew alone (ntukulu) knew the place, and when it was necessary to use it in order to pray to the deceased chiefs, the chief and his nephew alone were permitted to approach the hiding place ; those
643 who accompanied them had to stop at a distance. This mhamba
778 is lost. Even the chief Ntshongi, who was the paramount chief of
789 the Ba-Khosa at the beginning of this century, had never seen it. It had been taken by his predecessor Mavabaze and had disappeared during the political troubles of the Gungunyana's war. Thus it is impossible to say of what it consisted, and this will probably never be known. There is no doubt however, that it was used for the same purpose as the mhamba of the Tembe and Shirindja. Its magical and religious power came from the fact that it was anointed with the "nsila" of the deceased chiefs. On the death of a chief, his "nsila" i. e. the layer of filth resting on his body, was taken away and the mhamba was rubbed with it. This gave the reigning
[769] chief the power to influence his ancestor-gods, in accordance with the magic principle : the part influences the whole. It is said that in former times the Khosa chief Shihanyisane having ill-treated his two younger brothers, Malashwane and Shalati, these two men succeeded in taking the chieftainship away from him with the aid of the Ñwamba clan. Eventually Shihanyisane made peace with his brothers and gave over the mhamba to Malashwane : a proof that this mysterious object was in truth considered as the most important attribute of chieftainship.

643 These regalia are not indeed very imposing to the eye. Thonga
789 royalty had no brilliant insignia... But it had more than that!
751 Each clan possessed a special medicine whose magical virtues were greatly esteemed ; its possession made the chief invincible, the warriors invulnerable, the country unconquerable. This powerful charm is called *mbhulo* (Dj.), *mphulo* (Ro.).

Amongst the Nkunas, the mbhulo is called *Ñwantikalala*. It is kept by those belonging to the Mushwane house, and a man called Papalati is responsible for it. It consists of four calabashes, two male and two female (medicines are considered as having sex,

643 789 751 see Part VI) called Madyakakulu, Ñwahondyane, Mbengatamilomu, Masemane. The bones are always consulted to ascertain which calabash (nhungubane) must be employed. The uses of this medicine are as follows. Every year it is mixed with the first fruits in the ceremony of *luma*, which will be described later on. In war time the mbhulo is employed to "fence the country." Envoys go to all the drifts on the boundary, take stones out of the river, smear them with the magical powder and place them on the roads, at the crossways ; should enemies invade the country, they will be deprived of their strength. The weapons also are sprinkled with a decoction made of this royal medicine, as we shall see, and it is given to the chief to prevent disease. The father of Papalati was accused of having sold some of this powerful national drug to the Pedi chief Sikororo, an act which amounted to high treason. 643 687

643 I have been fortunate enough to be informed of all the rites connected with the royal medicine in the Mazwaya clan. There, it is called *nyokwekulu*, a word which is probably derived from the verb ku nyuka, to melt. Let Mboza tell us, with awe and profound conviction, of the marvels of this wonderful drug. He was present at its preparation in the year 1893, before the war scattered the clan and destroyed its military power.

644 789 Each year the nyokwekulu is renewed. Its exact composition is known only to one man, Godlela, the royal magician and priest, to whom the care of preparing it is entrusted. This man belongs to the house, or sub-clan, of Tlhatlha. He is very much feared. Nobody dares to dispute with him, and he has the right of cursing even the chief. His function is *hereditary*. His father Malubatilo was in charge of the nyokwekulu before him. The law of succession is this ; when the elder brother dies, the position is held by his younger brother. The headmen of the tribe box his ears and say to him : "You will be the master of the medicine! Take great care of it." When all the brothers are dead, it passes to the sons.

So, when the right time of the year has come, the chief consults the bones. The first thing to do is to send messengers all over the country to find a *forked branch*, a "shiphandje," to which the calabash containing the medicines will be hung.

644 789 When they have chosen it—it must be the stem of a nkonono tree—they cut it and bring it back to the capital. In front walks the master of the ceremonies, Godlela, and behind him four men carrying the shiphandje. Those who accompany them have the right of entering the villages and stealing fowls. Woe to those who meet with this troop! They will be relieved of all they carry, "because the forked branch of the great medicine of the chief is taboo."

644 789 826 237 The sacred branch having duly reached the capital, Godlela proceeds to the second operation, the *burning of the drugs*. Mboza saw the magician take pieces of skin cut from buffaloes, lions, hyenas, elans, panthers, snakes of various kinds and, last but not least, from the bodies of men, enemies killed in the wars: part of the skin of the forehead, the heart, the diaphragm, the nails, a finger, some ears... All these are roasted 644 789 in a large pot. On some mats are spread various magical roots cut into small pieces; these are also thrown into the pot. The chief and all the sub-chiefs approach and, with hollow reeds, inhale and swallow the vapour and the smoke which emanates from it (1).

The preparation of the great medicine having been sucessfully accomplished, the great drum (nhumburi) of the capital is brought on to the square, and everybody dances, even women, who take assagais in their hands and sing: "We are thankful if we die (hi tlangela ku fa)" viz., "The country is in security, our invincible medicine is ready! We shall not be killed by enemies 644 789 782 but will die a natural death." Before extinguishing the fire which was used to roast the medicines, Godlela takes a little water, pours it on the glowing embers and, when it vaporises with the customary sound, he emits the sacramental *tsu* and prays to his gods, the departed spirits of the Tlhaltha family, as doctors always do, in order to obtain their blessing on the nyokwekulu.

618 (1) The Hlewane sub-clan, which revolted many times against the legal chief and succeeded by its intrigues in provoking the war of 1894, after which it became the reigning family of Nondwane, used to abstain from participating in this "swallowing of the smoke," because, in former years, it had been defeated by Maphunga's people and some of its men killed; their flesh had been used in the concoction of the nyokwekulu. So they feared to go and inhale the odour of their fellow clansmen.

643 789 The royal drug, having been burnt, is reduced to powder and this powder is poured into the calabashes. The forked branch is planted in the sacred hut, which I shall shortly describe, and the calabashes hung upon it. Each sub-chief receives a calabash and takes it to his kraal, where it will help the district in which he reigns to perform the *luma* ceremony. But the greater part of the powder remains at the capital. There it will be used not only for the luma, and for the sprinkling of the warriors (see Chapter IV), but also for two other purposes : 1) for the protection of the country by means of the wooden pegs ; 2) for the filling up of the magical horn.

1) *The wooden pegs* (timhiko). A certain day is fixed for planting the forked branch in the house where the great medicine is kept. Then the doctor, accompanied by some members of the royal family, steals out secretly during the night and goes to the cross-ways, to the strategic points on the borders of the Mazwaya territory. It is taboo for anyone to meet with the party. He plants wooden pegs, and smears them with the powder. As soon as they have been smeared, they become invisible. No one can see them nor tear them out except Godlela. They do not rot. White ants do not attack them. The country is fenced by them.

Should there be any dispute as regards the boundaries of the country, Godhlela will be called. At once the pegs which were invisible appear ; they come out as much as a foot above the ground. If a hostile army was approaching, it will turn back at once, seized with fear at the sight of these pegs.

789 825 787 2) *The magical horn.* The remainder of the powder is mixed with a special kind of honey, the honey made by the small black bee called *mbonga*. This bee makes a large spherical nest deep in the ground. Natives have a number of superstitions regarding it. They say the mbonga honey may be eaten by anybody, but it is only members of certain families who can see the nest and dig for it. For other people it is invisible. (See Part VI.) The Ngwetsa family, in Rikatla, was one of the favoured ones! It must be said that the hole through which the mbonga bees penetrate into the soil is in truth very small and escapes the notice

789 of most people! This honey comes from below. It is a hidden,
823 a mysterious thing. A little of it is added to the drug and the
787 mixture is poured into a double horn, viz., two horns whose large ends are firmly fixed to each other, the point where they meet being carefully covered with dung, which acts as glue. A hole has been made in the upper horn and the drug is introduced through this. It is a great means of divination. When war is imminent, the nyokwekulu begins to ferment, and exudes through the hole: "It knows all about war." So the country can prepare for it. No wonder that this powerful medicine is preserved with superstitious awe and the greatest care.

643 A place of honour is reserved for the magical horn in the
595 hut of the first wife of the chief. In the middle of the hearth
372 a perpetual fire burns; it must never be allowed to go out; it
824 is taboo. The wood used for it must be that of a tree found on the sea shore, and called ntjobori. The Makaneta sub-clan must furnish it regularly. It is taboo to take embers from this fireplace, which is called the royal fire, the medicinal fire (ndjilo wa buhosi, wa muri). Should the principal wife let the fire go out, then Godlela must be called on to light it again, rubbing together two sticks of a shrub called ntjopfa. The fire produced by burning this shrub is considered dangerous. It is taboo to cut its branches or to use them for the purpose of warming oneself; the genitalia are said to swell when this law is transgressed (See Part IV). But Godlela does not fear; has he not his drugs to protect himself? He can and must use ntjopfa to re-light the nyokwekulu fire, and he will be given a good reward for his work! The ntjobori, in burning, produces an abundant smoke which leaves a deposit on the horn, on the forked branch and on all the calabashes containing the provision of powder.

643 The queen Mimpanyanhoba who was in charge of the
372 nyokwekulu had no sexual relations with the chief on that account.
595 I do not know if absolute continence is always enforced on the
784 keeper of the sacred fire, as was the case for the Roman Vestal Virgins. But I have been told by Mboza that this woman prevented her co-wives from coming near her hut; it was taboo.

643 The grass of the roof of this hut must never be removed, though
784 it may rot owing to the rains. It is taboo. One simply puts
356 a layer of new grass over the old one, a thing which is rarely done in the case of ordinary roofs.

643 In case of war, should the clan be obliged to leave the country,
184 a special little hut is hastily built in the bush and the precious
722 medicine is deposited therein. There is no fear that the enemy will take it, either Whites or Natives, because this hut also has the attribute of invisibility. This happened during the war of 1894 (1). In the case of the *mhamba* of the Tembe and Zihlahla clans it is different; the man who keeps it must run away with it and with the chief.

643 Such are the laws of the mphulo. This great medicine may
789 certainly be regarded as a part of the regalia, and the most important part. It is, for the chief and sub-chiefs, a means of strengthening their authority, as will be seen in the description of the luma rite. On the other hand the mphulo is a collective possession, the powerful magic means by which the clan resists its enemies or conquers them. It occupies the very centre of the national life.

789 In the Manyisa clan the war-medicine is called *mabophe*, and is
726 kept by a man called Chikiza, who belongs to the Ntjeko clan, not
643 to the royal family. He is said to have inherited it from his
787 forefathers. The medicine however belongs to the chief. It is administered as follows. The *ñanga* prepares small heaps of wood on the road, pours a little of the drug over them, sets fire to them and the warriors tread on the embers and extinguish the fire with their feet. This makes them invulnerable or at least protects them against fatal wounds. When they are ready to start for battle, the bones are thrown, and give the following intimation :
643 "Do not kill the first enemy you meet with, but catch him alive, be
789 it a man or a woman, and bring him to the chief." The chief, accompanied by some indumas, must stab him outside the royal
726 kraal ; the body of the deceased enemy will then be cut open, and

(1) In the Nondwane the nyokwekulu is still kept by the heir of Maphunga, Magomanyana. The new chief, the usurper, tried to find it, but Godlela refused to give it to him. Thus Mubvesha has no *mphulo*.

789/726 the fat collected in order to mix it with the war medicine, the flesh being left to the dogs to eat and destroy.

In some clans, chiefs possess *other personal charms* which are 643/789/237 very much dreaded and called *psitjemba*. So, in the Maluleke clan, each of the children of the ancient chief Mashakadzi received from him one of these psitjemba. It consists of a part of the skull of a child, the top of the head, where the pulse is seen beating at the fontanelle. This has been smeared with the vitreous humour taken from the eyes of lions or elephants, and powders made from the skins of wild beasts. The possession of this charm gives the chief a supernatural power. If, being irritated with you, he invokes his gods by sucking it and emits the sacramental tsu, he can call on any wild beast he likes to kill you... He has sacrified with the psitjemba ; you will die!

643/787/825 Some chiefs of the Northern clans used to *swallow one of the stones* found in the stomach of a crocodile. It is said that crocodiles, when cut open, are found to contain a certain number of stones, as they are supposed to eat one each year, when the rainy season comes on. One of them is chosen and smeared with special medicines and swallowed by the chief. Natives firmly believe that this stone remains in the body of the chief, and that it is "his head, his life" (Viguet). When it is passed in his stools the first time, this is a premonitory warning. When it occurs a second time, it is a clear announcement that the chief is about to die. So chiefs can always know when their time is near. In other clans the crocodile stone is replaced by what is called *ndjalama*. Amongst Nkunas this word designates a kind of bright copper button, which the Pedis of the Palaora mine used to make and sell. But ndjalama also means large sized beads. Whatever it is, some chiefs swallowed the ndjalama and were warned by it of their death. This object, as well as the crocodile stone, is taboo for subjects to swallow. They would die. It is "buloyi bya hosi" — "the magical power of the chief."

643/619 On account of these powerful and dangerous charms possessed by them, chiefs of different clans regarded it as a taboo to stay in each other's company ; they were afraid lest they might be killed by the magical power of their colleagues. Maphunga

262 formula : "May this bukanyi do no harm! May we not slay each
782 other under its influence. May it cause no serious quarrels."
796 They are afraid that, during the general intoxication which will
273 shortly prevail, quarrels will arise, some of which may terminate fatally. During the whole month of bukanye drinking, all business is at a standstill, just as with us all bankruptcy proceedings and all prosecutions for debt are held in abeyance for two weeks during the New Year holidays!

The gods having luma first, the bones are consulted. Should the throw be propitious, the chief will luma next ; thus the opening ceremony of the feast is concluded.

b) The luma of the army.

796 The young people are now assembled to clean up the public
273 square and all the roads ; the ball room must be prepared! The women of the capital start out early in the morning, beating the *pibubutwana*, that is to say sounding the call that is produced by striking the lips (bu-bu-bu-bu), and they go all over the country gathering the golden fruit ; this is piled up in an enormous heap on the public square and the brew is proceeded with in the following manner. The makanye are pierced (tshunya) with a pointed wooden splinter ; the stone falls covered with a transparent white pulp into the jar ; into this jar is also squeezed out with the fingers all the juice which remains in the pulp adhering to the skin ; this is continued until the jar is h[illegible] when the stones are taken out, and on the following day t[illegible]ng is resumed until the jar is full. On the third day the beer has sufficiently fermented to be pungent and agreeable to the taste and is ready for consumption. Empty barrels are easily procurable in the environs of Lourenço Marques. The women of the capital brew ten or fifteen huge casks of the precious liquor! This accomplished, the second ceremony begins.

796 A convocation of the entire male portion of the tribe is held in
273 the capital, but the first to respond to the call must be the men,
789 the warriors of the army, who come in full array, with all their
701 ornaments, and carrying their small play shields. One cask of

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beer is selected, into which is thrown the black powder, the great medicine of the land, called in this case *buhlungu bya miluru*, the powder of the miluru. The nuru, plur. miluru, is the mysterious spiritual influence which a man or a beast killed by the assagais can exert on the slayer, making him lose his head and commit acts of folly, or, at least, have red eyes (shenga mahlo). We shall again meet with this curious conception when

Bukanye drinking near Antitha. (Portuguese East Africa.) Phot. A. Hand.

studying the rites of the army and of hunting. All those who are proudly conscious of having killed a man in war must first drink the new beer which has been medicated to keep them from killing any of their compatriots during the ensuing weeks of the bukanye. They approach one after the other, the chief also, if he be a man-slayer. Each of them receives a small calabash, (nacheka, p. 50) full of the fermented liquid. He jumps and runs in the direction of the entrance, drinks a mouthful, spits it out with fur and says: "Father and mother! May I live! May I hold the calabash! Even to morrow! For ever!" People laugh. He is very happy! Others sing and dance the war dance:

796 "We drink the bukanye anew! Who would have thought that
273 we should drink again from this cup", viz., "that we should have
789 escaped all the dangers of war" (Hi nwa nkanyi lomu'mpsa! Afa
701 hi nga hlayi epsaku hi ta nwa ntcheko lo kambe).

After this, the casks are distributed to the other warriors, who drink to their hearts' content. The addition of the black powder is not absolutely necessary in their case. They can luma without it. Then the war circle is formed and the principal counsellors harangue the assembled warriors, giving them the following advice : "Drink in peace (ha hombe). Let no one spoil this bukanye by transfixing his brother with his assagai. Go and drink in your villages. Do not pick quarrels with strangers passing through the country, etc." The gathering then disperses.

c) The luma in the village.

796 The preparatory luma is accomplished. The *yila* has been
273 removed. Now comes the third act : the drinking in the villages.
786 The women who remained at home while the men-slayers went to luma at the bidding of the chief, have gathered large quantities of makanye. The tree is to be found extensively all over the country, as no female plant is ever cut down ; there is one or more in every field, and every one possesses such a tree, as every one owns a field ; when all the trees in the gardens have been stripped of fruit, the women pass to the trees growing in the bush far from the villages.

But here also everything must be done in right order of precedence ; the petty chief of such a district must commence to luma in the presence of his subjects, and not until after he has done so can the people drink freely in the villages. From this moment, however, there is no further restriction. Drinking continues day and night, night and day! When the supply is finished in one village, they go to the next. These feasts are the saturnalia, the bacchanalia, the carnival of the tribe! During these weeks some individuals are in a continuous state of semi-intoxication. Orgies on all sides, songs and dances! The younger men run along the paths, with a more or less unsteady

539 There is quite a collection of these carriers' songs praising the chiefs. Mzila (or Muzila), whom we saw a short time back scaring sparrows, is here compared to the mythical lightning bird, to the hawk that swoops down from the clouds. (See Part VI.) Why does he not once for all annihilate the sparrows which pillage his fields of sorghum ? But this is poetry! and there is often a wide gap between poetry and reality!

d) The feasting of the chief in the villages.

796 The fourth and final act of the bukanye feasting in which, as we
273 have seen, the chief plays a prominent part, is the *nsungi* which
643 may be called the "fin de saison" orgy. The chief now returns the visits of his subjects and casks of beer are prepared for him in every village. Dancing and singing are in full swing. He is fêted and acclaimed! But the makanye are getting over-ripe ; a new month, a new moon is at hand, which is called *sibandlela* "she who closes the roads ;" the paths leading to the foot of the trees become almost impassable, owing to the grass which grows to an incredible height during the rains prevailing at this season. The fine weather is over. Winter is knocking at the door.

796 Amongst the Nkunas the luma ceremony called "to eat the
789 new year" (dyaka ñwaka) is performed with a special pumpkin
643 (kwembe) cooked at the capital together with the medicine used
262 for rain-making. The chief first eats of it in the evening and
821 makes the sign of a cross on the big drum, which is then beaten to call the people in his village. Then all the men come, bringing the little horns in which they keep the rain medicine (See Part VI). They eat a little and smear the rim of these horns with the medicine ; the horns also must "eat the new year." Then everybody can enjoy the products of the harvest. Should anyone precede the chief, this would be fatal to the latter or make him ill... Such is the testimony of Mankhelu. I suspect these rites to have been influenced by the proximity of the Ba-Pedi. "Now we have no longer any first fruits' feast (mulumo)," says Mankhelu with some melancholy. "White people have killed it. Everybody

262 eats freely in his house according to his good pleasure. Formerly
821 we used to take the oxen of the man who had dared to steal the
796 new year."

Conclusion on the luma rite.

796 All these luma rites[1] of first fruits seem to have primarily a *religious*
782 *origin*. The Bantus do not feel that they dare enjoy the products of
534 the soil unless they have first given a portion of them to their gods. Is it not these gods who make the cereals grow ? Have they not the power even of controlling the wizards who bewitch the fields ? These rites are also evidently dictated by the *sense of hierarchy*. A subject must not precede his chief nor a younger brother the elder in the use of the new harvest, else they would kill those in authority. Such an act is against order. We shall see that, even when the seeds are sown, the elders must take precedence. But the custom seems also to have been actuated by the idea of *passage*. There is a passage from one year to another. For the Thongas, I think the new year begins
805 twice every year : it begins when tilling recommences, in July, August,
796 when the heat returns. This is the hlobo. It begins a second time at
789 harvest, and then there is passage from the food of the last year to the food of this year. This is the nguba (Ro.) or ñwaka (Dj.). Though the luma rites do not bear all the characteristics of a true passage rite, like those of circumcision or moving, we may observe in the luma of bukanye a kind of marginal period of general licence, when the ordinary laws are more or less suspended. The taking of a first mouthful probably signifies the aggregation to the new period, the magical powder used on this occasion being a protective measure to shield them from the calamities of this unknown year... And after all, is it not that feeling of fear which so easily takes possession of the heart of man when entering on a new state and starting something fresh, which has led the savage to surround the use of the first fruit with so many ritual precautions ?

IV. *Taxation.*

643 The chief governs (fuma). *Fuma* means to command, but also to live in plenty, to be rich. The subject (nandja, follower) obeys ; he follows the chief who marches before him just as the

1 [See pp. 394-404 in these categories c.f. in 116-Analysis]

685 721 *Theft* (ku yiba) is universally condemned, not so much for its immoral character as for the fact that it renders a normal social life impossible. The notion of *individual property*, though it is not developed as in more civilised nations, is nevertheless at the base of the whole Bantu system. The Bantus are agriculturists. They believe that the products of their labour belong to them and that no one else is entitled to appropriate them. The notion of property is in direct relation to work accomplished. (Compare Part IV.)

685 574 202 To steal growing mealies is not usual. A thief breaks off the cob, whilst the master of the field first uproots the stalk and then takes the cobs. If a friend of his who happens to be travelling passes through his gardens and wants to eat a cob, he is quite welcome to do so. He also uproots the stalk, puts it on one side of the road or leans it against a tree and draws a line on the ground from the place where the stalk grew to the spot where he has put it. Perhaps the owner of the field will discover the uprooted stalk after a whole month. If he inquires who has helped himself to his mealies, his friend will say to him : "Did you not see the line ?" And they will laugh over it (hlekelelana). A thief acting hastily would not have had time to draw the line!

685 789 There are certain magical drugs with which people smear mealie stalks (see Part IV) and they assert that, if any one tries to penetrate into their garden to steal, he will have his hand caught and will not be able to get rid of the plant! For some reason or another, these magical methods do not always work. So the injured person has recourse to the tribunal.

685 343 Should the thief be caught in the very act, there is no difficulty! His own field will be taken by the owner of the stolen mealies and he will have to pay a fine of one ox, otherwise the matter will be brought before the Court, and the only difference will be that the fine will be of two or three oxen, one of which will remain in the hands of the chief. (Mankhelu.) If the thief has been clever enough to avoid being caught, if he has stolen from a store hut, Natives are clever detectives and he will probably be discovered. These store huts are generally built in the middle of the field, or in the little bush which surrounds the village ; the grass all around

643 and Part VI). — To protect and to prolong his life, diviners
754 sometimes call together the whole clan in order to discover and
787 eventually arrest those who might bewitch and kill the chief. This
789 gathering is called *nyiwa* (See Part VI). — As for rain making, it is in the hands of the proper rain doctors (Nkuna) or is done by the ceremonies of *mbelele* (Part VI). — He is not held responsible for public calamities. — If his bodily or mental powers fail, the tinduna discuss matters in his stead and he is not deposed.

643 Chiefs are never worshipped during life time. After death,
769 they are deified for their own family, who worship them, but not for their subjects. — They are not supposed to turn into wild beasts after their death. — The custom of appointing mock kings does not exist. Only on the death of a chief can one of his relatives be nominated to take his place, and watch over his property until the adjudication of the inheritance.

535 703 An extraordinary war spirit comes over them all..." And every one having witnessed these performances in the Thonga or Zulu mukhumbi will confess that they are wonderfully impressive. It is a mixture of dramatic, epic and lyric poetry, three literary *genres* which are still confounded, the whole being enhanced by a deep, wild music and subject to the laws of a certain artistic style.

703 643 726 The fighting instincts are excited to the highest pitch by these patriotic choruses and dramatic representations. Thus should the troops be slow in making a start, the young men go dancing to the chief and beg him to "grant them permission" to go forth and slay, or rather to "give them men" to slaughter (ku nyika). The Native idea appears to be that the chief holds the lives of the enemies in his hands; without his permission they cannot go forward, but this once given, they rush enthusiastically to the fray. They even go so far as to taunt him with being an old woman, a coward, because he will not let them go at once (1).

When the excitement has reached the culminating point, and it has been definitely decided to fight, the time has arrived for the magic treatment by which the warriors will be rendered invulnerable.

G. ADMINISTERING THE WAR-MEDICINE.

726 177 789 751 This custom is probably of ancient origin, but I have reason to believe that, amongst the Ba-Ronga, it was practised without any great formality until the advent of the Zulu influence, when it was brought into much greater prominence and invested with more solemnity. "Drinking the war-medicine" took place on several occasions during the revolt of 1894 to 1895. At *Zihlahla* this potion was administered to all warriors before the rebel attack

(1) Gungunyana, on one occasion, when his warriors were importuning him with similar requests, sent the more ardent spirits to wage war unarmed against the wild beasts, and I was told they actually succeeded in capturing a leopard alive and brought it back to the chief!

726 on the town of the 14th October 1894 ; also prior to the ambuscade
789 in the outskirts of Lourenço Marques, on the 7th January 1895,
751 and before the battle of Morakwen, the 2nd February following. According to my informant, the chief doctor of the army prepared the medicine in a huge dish with leaves and roots cut into slices. These ingredients possessed an effervescent quality ; the medicine-man stirred up the decoction and with it sprinkled the whole army formed in a circle. After this every warrior was fully persuaded that he was invulnerable, that the bullets would be deflected on either side of him, or, even should they hit him, they would be flattened against his body and fall harmless to the ground. The charm could only be broken by the warrior turning his back to the foe. Then the bullets might pass through him. I have met with very intelligent Natives who were perfectly convinced of this fact, although open to reasonable argument on all other points. They told me that certain Natives who were bowled over by grapeshot, picked themselves up after the fight, came to life again, or rather regained consciousness and then, with their fingers, extracted the bullets, which had all remained imbedded in the skin!

A *Nondwane* warrior described to me, in the following terms, the administering of the magic potion, as it was done on the 7th January 1895 before the battle of Morakwen. The whole army was assembled at Nkanyen, on the bank of the Nkomati. It was there that the magician prepared the medicine, with two young girls as assistants. While he was brewing the mixture and making it froth, the soldiers, formed in a semi-circle, looked on, standing erect, poising their assagais on a level with their
726 heads. Then a *ntjhopfa* was cut down (the shrub of oblivion,
789 often employed by Native doctors and of which we have already
751 noted the use in other ceremonials) and a branch laid across the
824 road. The several battalions were called up, one after the other, and every man had to jump over the branch and take a mouthful of the medicine, which he spat out again, pronouncing the sacramental *tsu* which accompanies the offerings made to the gods : he subsequently went off, running and dancing and getting ready to go forth and kill. When each one had taken his share of the medicine and it was all finished, the doctor said to them : "Now I

726 have given you all my strength ; go and slay." They crossed the
789 river at night and having reached the left bank, at a point about ten
751 kilometers from the Portuguese camp at Morakwene, they were made to observe the strictest silence for a long time. Then they felt that valour (burena) had taken possession of them!

Amongst the Ba-Nkuna the war-medicine is also administered under the form of *sprinkling*. This sprinkling may take place in time of peace, when danger threatens. The chief kills a black ox and the army, summoned to the capital, is sprinkled and eats the flesh of the ox. This will make the country ready for any eventuality. But the ceremony is much more serious when war is at hand. Then the "great medicine of the country," carefully kept in the calabashes of the Court magicians, is mixed with *psanyi* of slaughtered sheep and with white sand taken from the river. During the night, the mukhumbi is formed and all the men sit down, their heads bowed over their knees,
726 their eyes closed, in perfect silence. Then one of the queens,
789 an old woman who no longer has any sexual relations, enters
751 the circle, absolutely naked. She dips a leafy branch into the
562 magical infusion and marches all round, inside and outside, sprinkling all the warriors and muttering the following words : "Kill them, break their pots, kill their dogs, catch their chief, bring him here, bring so-and-so and so-and-so." The warriors tremble with emotion. They pray to their gods in a low tone : "Save me! Help me!" But none of them dares to raise his eyes! They know quite well that they would die!

It is extremely important that the officiating woman should be old and have had no sexual relations for a long time, or "the assagais would lose their strength ; the masculine weapons would become blind and the feminine weapons alone would see... The woman would have untied the knot of the assagai ; she would cross the way (tjemakanya) of the great medicine... She must be a quiet woman (a rula)". (Mankhelu).

726 Similar customs exist in *Maputju*, where the medicine is called
789 "the medicine of hatred,"—that which dispels all natural feeling
828 and makes a man capable of killing his fellow-man! I give the particulars of this curious medical treatment as I have them from

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one of the Natives of the country : there are no fewer than seven acts in this grand performance of "preparation for battle."

a) In the first place when the chief foresees that a campaign is imminent, he has water drawn, and all the necessary ingredients gathered together : then he goes into retirement for one month, during which he is busy preparing the medicine with the magician who knows all about the recipe.

b) At the end of this time the entire army is summoned to the capital. A bull is brought out before the assembled soldiers and the chief strikes it on the head with a stick : this infuriates the animal, which must be caught and thrown down by the men unarmed ; the chief then approaches and kills it with an axe. They dismember the carcase, cutting off the flesh in strips, which they cook in a large battered pot, stirring it with their assagais and pouring into it at the same time "the medicine of hatred."

c) On this day the army is mustered and formed in a circle. The Commander-in-Chief takes the meat, cuts it into small pieces and mixes with it certain human ingredients : a finger taken from a hostile petty chief killed in battle has been carefully preserved ; the dried up phalange is scraped and the bone-dust thus obtained is mixed with the medicine. This additional ingredient is to prevent any feeling of remorse, any prickings of conscience : "ku susa lipfalo," literally "to remove the diaphragm," the seat of the conscience, according to Ronga ideas. (See later on a more probable explanation of this rite.) The Commander-in-Chief takes the pieces of meat thus seasoned and throws them into the mouths of the soldiers, who must not touch them with their hands. The food must be received between the teeth ; any meat falling to the ground is picked up by the children.

d) On the following day, the whole army proceeds to a large lake (the lake of Shika, near the village of Nhlampfukazi) to be treated with another medicine, an emetic. This is placed on a skin in the middle of the lake : the skin is withdrawn, leaving the particles of the drug floating on the water ; each warrior must stoop down and swallow a mouthful of the emetic. He will vomit yesterday's meat : "fear will be thrown up and valour will remain"

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(ku hlantiwile butoya, ku sele burena). The chief having meanwhile taken up his position on a neighbouring hill, the several regiments rush towards him, surround him and beg to be sent as soon as possible to fight and to slay.

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e) But, before this can be done, the chief returns to the capital, the army following him. A double trial has still to be undergone. A large broom is made of small branches of trees soaked in fat from sheep's tails and is then set on fire. The chief walks round carrying his flaming torch, passing it rapidly before the faces of the warriors formed in a circle. Some of the helmets catch fire and the wearers are promptly ordered to fall out of the ranks. The chief addresses them in angry tones : "Deliver up to me," he says, "the charms you are concealing! 'Tis only I, the chief, who may possess enchanted drugs. You certainly have some, as your plumes took fire... Look at the other warriors ; the feathers on their heads are not burnt!" This trial is probably a means of frightening suspected traitors or of expelling wizards (baloyi).

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f) All shields are now "presented" all round the circle. The chief bends back the point of an assagai and with it strikes each shield, but not with sufficient force to pierce it... This "consecration" of the shields will doubtless make them a more secure protection against the enemy's weapons.

g) Lastly the series is closed by the "aspersion." A mortar is produced in which some leaves are soaking ; these are stirred round in water and the chief sprinkles the whole army. This is the final ceremony. The chief remains at home : the warriors thus fortified and protected against all dangers start on their expedition.

This last act only is performed in the clans of Shirindja, Ñwamba and Zihlahla.

H. ON THE WAR PATH. THE BATTLE. STRATEGY. PANICS. RETURN HOME.

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The *mukhumbi* has been "built" for the last time. Proclamations have all been issued. Nothing remains but to start.

This *starting of the army* (ku thethwa) is also done according to

000 smoke, and rub the incisions with the powder. They will then be able to aim straight (See Annotatio 15). The powder specially prepared from the tendons of slain enemies will be spread on the paths during future wars ; foes marching on it unknowingly will suddenly become unable to walk and will easily be killed.

The Zulus are said to have the same customs as the Pedis.

726 I cannot guarantee that all the Thonga clans observe all these
789 customs.[1] The Nkuna magicians, in olden times, before they were
278 influenced by their Pedi neighbours, used to dissect the tendons
751 of the back (riringa) of the slain enemy, which they smeared
826 with his medulla and hung to the shields of the warriors... Enemies seeing these shields would "tjemeka nhlana" — "have their backs broken," a figurative expression which means to be terror stricken. A part of the body was also preserved and mixed with the war-medicine ; the idea which underlies this custom being evidently this : when you have eaten the flesh of your enemies, you have absorbed all their strength and they are unable to do you any further harm (1). We have seen that the "mbhulo," the "nyokwekulu," all the powerful "medicines of the country" carefully kept in each clan, contain a little human flesh. These drugs are used as protective war medicines ; most probably owing to the same principle.

II. *The treatment of the slayers.*

727 To have killed an enemy on the battle-field entails an immense
775 glory for the slayers ; but that glory is fraught with great danger.

266 (1) This custom is the only remnant of anthropophagy remaining amongst the Thongas, and I wonder if this superstition is not the true explanation of the origin of cannibalism. Where cannibalism still prevails, as amongst the Faß of the Congo, I am told that the bodies eaten are generally those of hostile clans, or occasionally that of a wife (who belongs to another clan according to the laws of exogamy). Is it not probable that, in the beginning, these feasts had a ritual and military value similar to that which we find in the administering of the war-medicine in South African tribes? In the course of time, the Faß acquired a taste for human flesh and ate it for their own pleasure. Dealing with anthropophagy, I must not forget that it occurred in several instances in South Africa after the devastation brought about by the Zulu expeditions of 1820-1830. In Zoutpansberg, in the mountains of Drakensberg, Natives reduced to starvation began to eat their fellow men. This also happened in the Bokhakha during the reign of Queen Male. (See Part IV.)

1[See pp. 476-477 -- Analyst]

727 They have killed... So they are exposed to the mysterious and
775 deadly influence of the *nuru* and must consequently undergo a
828 medical treatment. What is the *nuru* ? *Nuru* is the spirit of the
783 slain which tries to take its revenge on the slayer. It haunts him
789 and may drive him into insanity : his eyes swell, protrude and
761 become inflamed. He will go out of his mind, be attacked by giddiness (ndzululwan) and the thirst for blood may lead him to fall upon members of his own family and to stab them with his assagay. To prevent such misfortunes, a special medication is required : the slayers must *lurulula tiyimpi ta bu*, take away the nuru of their sanguinary expedition. (Lurulula comes from nuru, plur. miluru (1).

In what does this treatment consist ? The slayers must remain for some days at the capital. They are taboo. They put on old clothes, eat with special spoons because their hands are

764 (1) We met with the notion of *nuru* for the first time à propos of the rite of
775 luma (p. 400) ; we shall find it again when dealing with hunting customs (Part IV). The nuru is to be feared not only in the case of slain enemies but in connexion
761 with any human corpse. As a proof, I may quote the following curious story which Spoon told me and of the truth of which he was fully convinced. A traveller died under the great fig-tree of Libombo (near Rikatla). He had climbed on to the tree and fallen on his own stick, which he had planted in the ground. He was not buried, as no one knew him. So his corpse fell into decomposition on the spot; his skull became white. Later on a bush fire burnt all the grass and the skull was
764 seen for years "saying mpha" (it was shining), the teeth "saying bva" (descriptive
775 adverb, same meaning). One day the boys of Libombo went to pick wild figs from the tree and again saw the skull. Spoon was one of them. The fire had just passed
755 by again. "We beat it with our sticks and amused ourselves by rolling it over like a
789 ball. We did not know it was a human skull... When we got home we began to be seized by the drunkenness of nuru, the disease of those who have killed a man. During
761 the night we were delirious (hanta-hanteka), our eyes swelled and were full of exudations (malanga), the four of us, Tsukela, Tlabin, Sibakuze and myself. Next morning my uncle went to the fig-tree and saw that we had killed a man there ! The medicine-man who understands the treatment of nuru, Dudela, who had been a slayer in war, called us to his village. We stood in a line before him ; he poured a little of his powder into the hands of each one of us, took a little in his mouth, rubbed his forehead. Then he insulted us saying : "You will die ! Who began beating that skull ?" Each of us denied having given the first blow. Then he said : "Take care ! Do not go there any more nor near that nkuhlu tree where another corpse has been burnt under the leaves ! Go away."

514 When a man has murdered another in a scuffle, he can replace this nuru medicine
789 by his own urine. He must drink a little of it and rub his forehead with it. The giddiness will pass away. If the murder has been committed from a distance, as with
775 a gun, the nuru is not so much to be feared, as the enemy was far away. A little of the medicine will be sufficient to treat the murderer. Spoon is ignorant of the composition of the nuru drug.
626
761

727 "hot" and from special plates (mireko) and broken pots. They are
783 forbidden to drink water. Their food must be cold. The chief
834 kills oxen for them (yi ba lumisa hi tihomu); but if the meat
761 were hot it would make them swell internally "because they are hot themselves, they are defiled (ba na nsila)." If they ate hot food, the defilement would enter into them. "They are black (ntima). This black must be removed" (Mankhelu). During all this time sexual relations are absolutely forbidden to them.
727 They must not go home to their wives. In former times the
304 Ba-Ronga used to tatoo them[1] with special marks from one eyebrow to the other. Dreadful medicines were introduced into the incisions and there remained pimples "which gave them the appearance of a buffulo when it frowns" (1).

789 After some days a medicine-man comes to purify them (ku ba
727 phutula), "to remove their black." There seem to be various
783 means of doing it, according to Mankhelu. Seeds of all kinds are put into a broken pot and roasted, together with drugs and *psanyi* of a goat. The slayers inhale the smoke which emanates from the pot. They put their hands into the mixture and rub their limbs with it (ba tilula) especially the joints.

789 Viguet describes this last act thus :—Pieces of medicinal roots
727 are put into the broken pot and roasted. They inhale the smoke.
782 Then cow's milk is poured into the pot on the embers and, when it boils, they have to put their fingers into it, one hand after the other, and pass them across their lips emitting the sacramental : "tsu" (which proves that it is a sacrifice to the gods, a religious act). Afterwards they say : "Phee! phee!" — viz.,
789 phephela phansi, (Dj. tikela hansi), "Go down, sink." This
727 means : "May you go deep into the earth, you, my enemy and
783 not come back to torment me." The last part of the treatment consists in rubbing the biceps, the legs, and the whole body with this milk. The medicinal embers are carefully collected, and reduced to a powder ; this will be put into small bags of skin called *tintebe* which the slayer will wear round his neck. They contain

578 (1) Hence an expression which is still in common use. When a Ronga wants to defy some one he says to him : "You are a coward! If you say you can tackle me come and kiss my forehead."

1[ie, the slayers returned from battle--Analyst]

789 the medicine of the slayers of men. At bukanye time they can
727 use it to *luma*, viz., to season the first calabash they drink (See
828 page 400). For this purpose it is as good as the great mbhulo,
783 "the medicine of the country," provided by the chief, and it will prevent them attacking their own people under the influence of drink. The *tintebe* will also be helpful in future battles. The insanity which threatens those who shed blood might begin early. So, on the battle-field itself, just after their deed, warriors are given a preventive dose of the medicine by those who have killed on previous occasions and who wear tintebe.

789 The period of seclusion having been concluded by the final
783 purification, all the implements (mizilo) used by the slayers
727 during these days, and their old garments, are tied together and hung by a string to a tree, at some distance from the capital, where they are left to rot (1).

Having reached their homes, the slayers have still to complete the cure by chewing a piece of root called monungwane every morning and evening, and spitting it out in the direction of the rising or the setting sun with the same exclamation : "Phee! phee!" — "Go down, sink!" The piece of root is tied to the assagay (2).

727 The description of the rites performed for the treatment of the slayers
828 applies especially to the Northern clans. But the following narrative
789 of an old man named Makhani from the Rikatla region shows that
783 similar customs were also in existence amongst the Ba-Ronga. This man had wounded an enemy in a battle ; the wound proved fatal and the

(1) I had the good luck to find those which were used for the purification of the slayers after the Moondi fight during the Sikororo war and they are now in the Ethnographical Museum of Neuchâtel. They consist of half a dozen old calabashes, a pair of sandals, etc.

171 (2) Purification customs [illegible] warriors are somewhat different amongst the Pedis. After the Moondi battle, the slayers of Maaghe's yimpi had to undergo the following medicinal treatment : the heart of the slain having been torn out, the muscles of their faces sliced off, their limbs amputated, all these portions of human flesh mixed with drugs and ox-flesh were cooked in a pot, the assagais being used to stir the horrible broth. This was poured into a flat basket which it is taboo to touch ; some one drew it with a curved assagay as far as the middle of the square. Then the slayers, having been previously white-washed with clay, advanced on their knees, and, with vociferations or cries imitating vultures, caught a piece of meat in their teeth, not touching it with their hands. Their wives are said to participate in this meal, as being also contaminated by the defilement of their glorious husbands.

727 enemy died later on, after his return to his home. Makhani did not
828 know this. One day he became suddenly delirious and rushed about
789 all over the village trying to stab his own people. "Oho!" said those
783 who saw him, "it is because the man he wounded has died!" They at once called the magician who possessed the nuru medicine, a man of the Mapsanganye clan, who came with his calabash. In this calabash there was a carved stick cut from a tree called shiralala, the extremity of which must always remain plunged in the medicine. The magician dipped this stick into a mixture made of honey and the drug, and passed it over the lips of Makhani, who seized it with his tongue, sucking it as the magician moved it from right to left, and licking his lips. A drop of the medicine was then put into each ear, on each upper eye-lid, and below the sternum. He was then cured and, taking a lighted torch, he threw it in the direction of the enemy's country with threatening words: "A ba fe, bafo, ba bola i. e. Let them die, the enemies, let them rot. I will kill still others!" Every day he had to go to the pool and wash his body, treating himself with the tintebe powder.

727 During the weeks following the battle heroes do not only
301 wear the tintebe, besides these miluru amulets, they have the
703 right to wear certain trophies. These are in the first place
534 antelope or goat's horns pierced at the base; they thread a string through the hole thus made and tie them round their necks (See illustrations, p. 33 and 453). They also make necklaces of small pieces of wood, notched in a peculiar manner and burnt in the fire; a hole is made through these and they are strung together like beads and worn round the neck. Sometimes these necklaces are made so long that they are worn as a bandoleer. I recollect seeing the Matjolo warriors returning from their expedition of February 1895: they came to show themselves off to the Whites at Lourenço Marques, gloriously proud of having massacred defenceless women and children whom they had surprised in the early hours of the morning! People threw them pieces of silver which they converted into brandy! (1)

727 (1) The terrible malediction which rests on those who have killed an enemy
775 is well illustrated by the following story which the Rev. C. Maphophe told me of an
event that had taken place not long ago in the Shihongi country (Manyisa district).
761 A man of the Ndzindzi family had killed a Ndjao during one of Gungunyana's expedi-

245 the cause of the desolation. Planting new trees is consequently
784 a taboo! Nowadays however, this superstition has died out,
824 and one may see a great number of mango, orange, lemon (1), and pho-pho trees in Thonga fields, on the Coast as well as in Zoutpansberg.

[351] Natives do not generally fence their gardens. Stealing is
685 therefore very easy and it is no wonder that they have recourse to magical means to protect themselves. Here are some of them ;
789 they are characteristic instances of Bantu magic.

The *rihehlo*. This consists of a kind of mysterious influence exerted on the thief by throwing a magical powder into his footprints or by taking a little of the earth found in these footprints and treating it with the drugs. The inhabitants of the village where the thief lives will be seized by disease ; this will induce them to come to the owners of the garden to confess their fault and pay a fine. Then the magician who had furnished the drug will give them a counter-drug and they will be healed! Amongst the Pedis, the magician anoints with his drugs the stem from which a cob has been stolen. Then the thief will feel intolerable suffering in his little finger and come to the village of the people whom he has robbed crying : "I have stolen!" He pays the fine, receives in exchange the counter-drug and the pain ceases! (Spelonken)

The tinhlamalala. This is the name of the central nervules of the leaves of the Hyphaene palm tree. They are like little snakes, very slender, and flexible. To make the resemblance still greater, the owner of a field makes a knot at the extremity of the rod : this represents the head of the snake. Then he looks for the dried skin which has been cast off by a real snake ; he reduces this to ashes, makes a powder with these ashes and anoints the rods. He weaves the rods together to form a kind of crown and places it on one of the mealies stems in his garden. When the thief

137 (1) The lemon tree is called mbomu (mu-mi). This seems to be a Native word and the tree also may be indigenous in the country. It grows wild on the banks of the Lower Nhomati to such an extent that there is an island in the river, some distance above Morakwen, which is called Ilha dos Limões, Lemon Island. The lemons are of large size and their rind resembles that of the orange.

enters the field, the tinhlamalala at once transform themselves 685
into small snakes which also bear the name of tinhlamalala. 789
(Notice the correspondence of names: a curious instance of verbal magic.) These snakes rush towards the thief, who runs away, seized with terror. Should he take the stolen cobs with him instead of throwing them on to the ground, the tinhlamalala would follow him to his village! This dreadful powder was prepared by a Nkuna named Ñwadjokwane and the people of his village used to inoculate themselves with the drug ; in this way they had nothing to fear from the snakes.

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Answers to some of Professor Frazer's questions on Agriculture. 241

There are no special ceremonies at the clearance of land for cultivation ; no grafting, nor artificial fertilisation of fruit trees is practised. (They think that trees fecundate each other by means of their roots. See, later on, paragraph on Thonga Botany). They do not believe that a deity animates the crops, only that baloyi (wizards) can increase or diminish the product of the fields (See Part VI). As regards the rite of driving away the vermin from the fields, we shall describe it in Part VI. There are no superstitions about the last corn cut, and no special ceremony practised on the harvest field. Except the rule of silence which must be kept by women threshing rice and Kafir corn, there are no special regulations for persons engaged in agricultural operations, and no sexual taboos. The plough, the hoe, the pestle and the winnowing basket are not used in ceremonial purifications or to avoid dangers.

*

* *

As regards Agriculture, it cannot be said that the Thonga tribe is in a very backward stage. Thongas, as well as most of

menstruation, to persons in a state of defilement. This would 224
"spoil their gun." When they go to attend the burial of a relative, 784
they fire a shot upon reaching the mortuary village. Thus the ball which was in the gun at the time of the relative's death will be expelled ; was it not contaminated? Moreover the hunter will wash his gun ; without these precautions the weapon would not kill anything in future.

These maphisa are very jealous of each other. Some of them 224
try to destroy the power of a rival by securing a part of an animal 789
killed by him ; they subject the meat to a treatment which was not explained to me ; they then bury for instance a bone thus smeared ; after which they are convinced that their rival will no longer be able to dispute game with them. Therefore when a hunter distributes meat to other people, he keeps for himself a little piece of each limb in order to prevent a possible enemy from "going away with his meat."

Let me now pass in review the *more important kinds of big game,* 224
and I will reproduce as literally as possible the information gathered from Thongas of all parts of the country with regard to each of them. Some of my readers, upon reading these extraordinary statements, will no doubt exclaim: "What does all this mean? Are these actual facts or pure imagination or folklore?" All three elements are certainly represented in these stories, but I think it would be useless to take much trouble to distinguish between the three. My endeavour is not to produce a scientific zoological treatise but to find in these accounts a means of penetrating more deeply into Bantu mentality ; and there is no doubt that the study of hunting rites has a great deal to teach us on this subject.

The *eland* (*mhofu,* Oreas canna) is a splendid beast, highly 224
coveted but dangerous to kill. Viguet says : "It possesses the 825
nuru. When you kill it, it is taboo to walk round its body. Go straight to its head, and there, in the hair of the forehead, you will find a louse ; take it. Then dig in the earth where the head has fallen : you will find a root tehre ; cut it off and bring it home together with the louse. Then you are safe!" (—Other people add : "Remove its eye before cutting it open, if you wish to escape the

224 825 water, and Natives point to them saying: "The mapseko!" *Pseko* is the name given to old pots employed in connection with the cooking operations (to cook, ku pseka); they are turned upside down in the fire-place and the pots containing the food are placed on top of them. The backs of the hippopotami are like these inverted old black pots and that is why these animals are called after them. It would be dangerous to call them by their own name; they might become angry if they knew that they had been noticed...

224 789 I owe to Mboza a graphic description of the rules of hippopotamus hunting. There are a few villages, near the Nkomati or other rivers, whose inhabitants are regular hippopotamus hunters, and possess the special science, or art, called *butimba*; the hunters themselves are called *batimba*. This science is hereditary: it is taught by the father to his sons. These men possess a peculiar drug, the *mbangulwa*; when the hunter is inoculated with this, he acquires a special power over the hippopotami: should he wound one of them, the beast will not be able to go very far, and it will be possible to follow it and quickly find it. But this inoculation makes the man very dangerous to his fellows: should he beat any one, that person will be at once seized by a disease which will prevent his passing water or stools.

224 835 This is the manner in which these batimba hunt. During the day, the hunter fishes, watching the movements of the hippopotami all the time. When he sees that the propitious moment has come and is ready to undertake hunting operations lasting a month, he first calls his own daughter to his hut and has sexual relations with her. This incestuous act, which is strongly taboo in ordinary life, has made him into a "murderer": he has killed something at home; he has acquired the courage necessary for doing great deeds on the river! Henceforth he will have no sexual relations with his wives during the whole campaign.

224 [789] Before starting he calls his principal wife, the one to whose care the butimba magic drug is committed, and both expose their bodies to the smoke of a medicinal pill. On the same night,

immediately after these acts, he sets off with his sons ; they close 224
the drift where the beasts leave the river by placing a canoe across the track. The hippopotami are in the neighbouring forest, busy feeding, and perhaps ravaging the fields. When they return to the river, they stop in front of the canoe which obstructs their retreat : the first assagai is then thrown at them. It has been smeared over with the Strophantus powder. The animal rushes into the water ; when it reappears on the other side, it is pierced by a second assagai. These assagais are arranged in such a way that the blade, which is provided with hooks at the sides, is not firmly fixed to the handle ; moreover a long string is twined round the handle connecting it with the blade. So, when the hippopotamus enters the river, the assagai which is planted in its skin is separated from the handle, which remains floating and acts as a buoy ; the string unwinds and the handle follows the animal as it retreats, showing in which direction it has gone.

As soon as the assagai is thrown, somebody runs to the hunter's 224
village to inform his wife. The woman must at once shut herself 784
up in the hut and remain perfectly quiet. She lights a fire and 789
keeps it burning the whole time. A little child brings her her pipe
(old Ronga women are great pipe smokers). She must neither [276]
eat nor drink ; or, if she is very thirsty, the child will bring her some water. In any case she must not crush her mealies; she must not go out of the hut except to satisfy her natural wants. Why ? Because if she were to move to and fro in the village, this would induce the hippopotamus to rush wildly upon her husband and possibly kill him. Moreover the fact that she remains confined within the circular walls of the hut will have as a consequence that the wild beast will be in some sort imprisoned in a small space ; it will not be able to run far away and escape.

We find here a characteristic instance of the two kinds of magic which we shall explain later on : the communionist magic according to which the different parts of a whole act and react on each other (the great wife, whose life is in close connection with her husband's life, saves him by her quiet demeanour) and the imitative magic according to which like acts on like or produces like (the confinement of the woman within the

224 walls of the hut prevents the hippopotamus from escaping from the
784 circle formed by the canoes on the river. (Similar customs are found
789 amongst many primitive peoples. See Part VI. Ch. I.)

224 Then all the hunters of the village are called ; they enter the canoe and follow the beast. To facilitate the pursuit, they replace the floating handle of the assagai by a *male*, viz., the big nervule of the leaf of the mimale palm tree, resembling a pole of 30 feet in length. As soon as this species of pole is fixed, somebody informs the woman at home that she can come out of the hut. But let her be prudent, as victory is not yet won. The hippopotamus will come to the surface to breathe : an assagai will be thrown into its nostrils and later a second ; it will be no longer able to close its nose when plunging and will be drowned. But it may attack the hunters furiously, instigated by the spirits of baloyi (wizards) which are riding on it "just as men ride on a horse!" The fight will perhaps last a long time!

When the hippopotamus has at last been killed, songs of rejoicing burst out on all sides ; the hunters bring their canoes together and row in the direction of the village, singing the whole time special songs which are called *nyangamela*. The peculiar cries of the women are heard on the hill, their "mikulungwana." They come to the shore to meet the men. The great wife, having now been entirely set free, comes dancing and singing. The carcase is left on the sand till low tide (the tide is perceptible for a long distance in the Lower Nkomati river). Then all the hunters assemble to proceed to the two great hunters' rites, the lurulula and the luma.

First the *lurulula*. I have obtained a more precise description of this rite from two new informants. The beast is laid on its back, and its forelegs are pulled out on both sides, so as to separate them from each other. The hunter who has killed the beast takes his *ndjao* root, chews it, together with the butimba medicine, blows pieces of it into his hands, closes his eyes and introduces himself, creeping on his belly, between the forelegs ; he then creeps along the side of the hippopotamus, anointing it with the medicine which is in his hands. When he reaches the hindleg, he squeezes it with both hands, does the same to the other hindleg, creeps

is used by mourners hanging on the reeds where the hippopotamus had been cut open. These people had put them there to mourn their hippopotamus. As regards the hunter, he was given a reward of £ 6." 825 539 791

Second story. "A phisa called Shitjobeke from Matlotlo was called and shown where the hippopotamus used to emerge from the river. He went there during the night and saw its master on its back. He told him: 'So it is your hippopotamus which ravages the gardens. Hold it firm! I am going to kill it.' The wizard answered: 'I beseech you, Khosa, do not kill it; I will not come any more to spoil the mealies!' The hunter let him go and went away. Next evening the animal came out again, its master on its back. The hunter possessed a drug by which he could kindle the lights on the back of the hippopotamus. He saw the wizard and said: 'My friend, now hold it fast. I am firing! If you do not hold it I will kill you.' He fired and the master went away. The hunter remained on the spot fearing that the wizard might come back and ressuscitate it. Next day he told the chiefs to come and cut it open. He performed the lurulula; he blew his ndjao over the legs, the belly, the chest, and the ears; then they turned the beast over on the other side, and he did the same thing. They cut off the tail and gave it to him: the hunter uses this as a medicine; he will mix it with other drugs and this will help him against the wizards; they will no longer be able to come to him during the night and make him dream of hippopotami; it will also give him the power of killing other hippopotami. Then they cooked the meat of the chest, which is a tit-bit. The divinatory bones showed who was to roast it and eat the first mouthful and then distribute their portions to the others. The bones often say also: 'If it is the meat of a male hippopotamus do not eat it in the village, eat it at such and such a place...'" [789]

Third story. "There was another hunter, Mundjindji, of the Nyoka clan. His father had been killed by Heaven (lightning), because he possessed charms which he had got from the Ba-Sutho. This man used to dig up the corpses of the dead; he dissected the skin of their foreheads and killed, (with the drugs thus obtained,) the boys who came back from the mines (magaisa). The Commandant (Portuguese Administrator) arrested him, and he was imprisoned in Lourenço Marques. He said: 'They are telling lies about me,' and he was released. However he killed some more people and was imprisoned for one month. Even now he is still doing it. He is a 'phisa.' They called him in to get rid of a hippopotamus which was annoying them. It was the Commandant who called him. He went to hunt it. For many

301 Beads are merely an ornament and have no ritual v[illegible] except
789 the large white ones used by people possessed by the Ba-Ndjao spirits. (Part VI.)

B. HABITATION.

342 While there has been such a rapid change in Thonga customs regarding dress, — so rapid that in these last fifty years they have changed more in that respect than during the fifty preceding centuries —, in the field of architecture the tribe appears to have stood still ; their huts are built precisely as they were in ancient times. It is true that it is easier to put on a jacket and trousers than to alter the style of one's house : besides it must be admitted that the Thonga hut possesses several advantages. It is comparatively easy to construct, cool in the hot weather, perfectly watertight in the rainy season and is fairly ingeniously contrived.

That which is called *yindlu* (yin-tin) properly speaking, is more especially the *roof* of the hut (lwango, dji-ma) ; for it is the roof which is the most troublesome to make. A strange fact too, and one which appears paradoxical, is that, in the construction (ku yaka) of the house, they begin with the roof!

[341] The Thonga architect — and every man is his own in that
335 country — gathers together a few hundred straight sticks, one
342 to one and a half inches in width and from three to ten feet in length. He digs a hole in the ground, a yard and a half in diameter and 16 inches deep, in which he arranges his sticks in a circle, points downwards, at the bottom of the hole, and supported in such a manner that they lie at an angle of 45 degrees with the ground. Any one of these sticks will thus be at about a right angle with the opposite one, and all together they form, as it were, a huge conical basket with its point in the hole. To fasten all the sticks together, he ties them to round hoops (something like cask hoops) made of bent branches. These hoops (balelo, dji-ma) are concentric, very small at the bottom, and getting gradually larger as the work progresses. Any spaces which remain between the sticks first arranged are filled up, one after the other, with

and five tens, and three tens, and five, and two. This system of 802
numeration is clearly decimal, and is in direct relation with the ten fingers of the hands ; this is proved by the fact that, when counting, Natives generally use their fingers. They start with the little finger of the left hand, *one* ; then the little finger and the third finger, *two* ; these two and the second, *three* ; these three and the index, *four* ; these four and the thumb, *five* ; they then add the fingers of the right hand, beginning with the thumb : five plus one, five plus two, five plus three, five plus four. *Ten* is shown by clapping both hands ; notice that five, the left hand with the thumb separated from the four other fingers, imitates the Romrn sign of V, and ten, the two hands joined, with the fingers crossing each other, make an X, the Roman sign for 10! This shows that our system of numbers, of which we are justly proud, probably began in the same way as amongst most of the Bantu tribes!

On the other hand it must be said that, if this system has not reached a higher development, the cause lies in the fact that Thongas do not wish, or do not *take the trouble* to deal with high figures. They very soon declare that a number is : "tjandjabahlayi (Dj.) or hlulabakonti (Ro.)" viz., "the one which passes the capacity of reckoners." When Gungunyana made a raid into the Ntimane district and stole the oxen there, his men tried to count the cattle, but, having experienced much difficulty in the operation, they said to their king : "It is tjandjabahlayi!" — "They are innumerable!" There were a few hundreds of them (1).

More than that! Bantus have not attained to *any precision* in 805
counting the hours of the day, for instance, because there was no necessity for doing so in the primitive state. Consider how greatly our habit of always consulting our watches has contributed to create a sense of precision in us and to introduce it into our lives. For the Bantus, the sun is the only watch, and that great time-keeper is all sufficient for them. Do they wish to make an appointment for the following day? They point to a place in the

(1) As regards *counting men*, in former times this was positively prohibited. If any 802
one, seeing a throng assembled on the hubo, wanted to know the number of people 789
present, they would say to him : "What! You are counting us? Whom do you want to do away with?" (Shana wa hi akonta, u ta hi pumba na?)

meaning than tra-la-la) "They are starving at Ntimane, siloyi..." 533
He was journeying from the Ntimane country, near Khosen, and having heard that the crops had failed, went muttering this great news all down the river! Perhaps the song was not of his own composition, but was an old refrain which had been preserved on account of its catching tune.

Mrs Audéoud, during her long journeys on the Maputju river, [461]
noted down many of the tunes, Nos. 19-22, some in two or even three parts, curiously harmonised. The Native sailors seek in this way to vary the monotony of rowing, punting or towing the boat. No doubt a great many more such tunes could be collected.

VII. *Incantations.*

Children, as we saw, (I. p. 68), are fond of singing curious little melodies to various animals: to the big *galagala* lizard, to the *chameleon*, to the *crab* with one claw, to the *owl*. The tune of the words addressed to the owl is No. 36.[*] The boys of Rikatla used to salute our ox-waggon, when it appeared on the plain, with song No. 35:[*] "Gweymanâo! — here are the oxen", they said running all round the span, the girls following them and lifting up the babies in their arms, to show them the strange machine and the long-horned oxen walking slowly, with impassive looks, through the little black throng.

Incantations of a more serious type are the *songs of exorcism*, 533
performed to the accompaniment of rattles, big tins and drums, 789
close to the ears of the person supposed to be possessed, in order to induce the spirit to reveal its name and to "come out". No. 37[*] is one of the most celebrated songs of this category, and has really a great deal of character. I shall speak of it again when dealing with possession.

VIII. *Songs accompanying tales and games.*

As we shall see, little songs are very frequently introduced 533
into the tales to embellish them, and are generally repeated 538
three or four times over, as if the narrator wished to exhaust

[*] [Errata: read 31 for 36; read 30 for 35; read 32 for 37.-- Analyst]

I never heard a distinction made between fixed stars and 821
planets. They are all called tinyeleti. The best-known is 772
Venus, which bears many names. Not knowing that the evening 881
and morning star are one and the same, they have given it different names. The evening star is *Gumbashilalelo*, the one which steals the evening meal, because it appears when people are eating it, or *khwekhweti*, the brilliant star, or *Nkata wa hweti*, the moon's husband (as the two are often seen close together); the morning star is called *Ngongomela*, or *Khwezu*, and is greatly lauded as the herald of day. It gives the warriors the signal for starting on a war-like expedition: the warriors can easily kill their enemies under cover of the darkness, and the sun will soon appear and help them to complete their victory. Travellers also start on their journey when they see it: the dawn will soon be here! Lit by its light, candidates for circumcision leave the village of the chief to go to the house of initiation. According to one of my informants (I. p. 75) there is a profound and mystic idea in this custom: Ngongomela announces the day; so little boys must be conducted by the morning star when they abandon their childhood and all its ignorance to enter the adult life with all its knowledge. It leads them from darkness into the light! So Venus plays a great part in Thonga customs. It is the great star. Notice the feminine suffix *eti* in one of its names. It may have been personified in former times.

The *Pleiades* are the only constellation which bears a name 821
in Thonga. They call it *shirimelo*, the one which announces 772
the tilling season, because, in fact, in the lands situated in the Tropic of Cancer, it rises in July or August, when tilling is resumed. I have not heard of any other constellation known to the Natives. They have no notion whatever of constellations: their mind does not seem to have tried to group the stars, or to have seen figures of animals, or objects, in the sky; their imagination in this domain is very poor, and they remain far behind the Oriental nations in this respect.

Falling stars are looked on as a bad omen. When they see 821
one falling towards a certain point of the horizon, Natives think 787
that a Chief must have died in the country towards which the 789

821 star is directing its course, and they have a formula of incantation
787 to get rid of the misfortune attending this phenomenon. They
789 say : "Thu! Thu! Nkulunkulu ndjuwee, famba psa ku u nga fa u ku bi." — "You great thing, go away alone (without me, leaving me behind) and die and disappear entirely." This is more an imprecation (shiruketelo) than an incantation. The syllable *thu* indicates, and accompanies, the emission of a little saliva. It is different from the sacramental *tsu*, employed to invoke the spirits of the ancestors : it is an insult. It is spitting *at* something, not an act of respect and an offering, like *tsu* (1). This is the Ronga formula ; the one used in Northern clans has the same meaning : "*Rura, rura weshe*" (Move, move alone!).

821 *Comets* greatly impress the imagination of the Thongas ;
787 they are called *shimusana*, or *nyeleti ya musana*, the star of dust, or *nyeleti ya nkila*, the star with a tail, and when they appear they also mean the death of a chief. People say : "See ! A chief has died, but they have not yet published the mourning" (I. p. 414). The star which is said to have appeared the year of the death of Manukosi was probably a comet. (See Report of the S.A.A.A.S. 1905, Vol. III, p. 232.)

772 These few superstitions and observations comprise all the Astronomy of the Thongas. The sidereal world is almost entirely outside the range of their preoccupations.

III. *Cosmographic and Meteorological Phenonomena.*

1) The Wind.

821 The wind is called *moya*, an interesting word which means
822 also spirit (the human breath and the spiritual part of man), and is applied to the acting, living agent, or to the smell, or taste, of some objects. For instance it is said of an alcoholic beverage

861 (1) They spit at a child who is causing an unpleasant smell, saying to him : "Thu! u ya tinyela matjimba." — "Go away to ease yourself." Should you do this to a
578 person older than yourself, he will say to you : "What ! you make *thu* to me (wa ndji tjhuka), you want me to ease myself !"

821 which had caused the flash of lightning, and flies away back to
825 the mountains. The magician who understands the "treatment
791 of Heaven" comes and digs at the spot ; there he finds a kind of gelatinous substance which solidifies after a little time. I possess a little of this curious drug given to me by a Pedi magician, by name Mudjumi ; it resembles a piece of chalk, and is considered very valuable on account of its rareness, and because it is used in the manufacture of the wonderful medicine of Heaven. Should a village have been struck by lightning, the magician of Heaven will come and dig out this foreign body ; if he finds it, the taboo is removed. If he does not, the whole village must move to another place. In the same way, it is taboo to warm oneself at a fire made of the wood of a tree that has been struck by lightning, or to use it as fuel.

The flute of Heaven.
Drawn by J. Weare.

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Happily this dreadful bird can be prevented from killing and burning by magical means. Both the Pedi Mudjumi and the Thonga Makasane possessed the enchanted flute, by which they could force Heaven — or the bird of Heaven — to spare them. Mudjumi having sold me his flute, I can describe it at length. It is made of a hollow bone five inches long, covered with Varan skin, filled at its larger extremity with a black substance like wax. Inside, to keep it clean, there is a vulture's feather. The bone is said to have been taken from the ndlati bird ; the wax substance was made from powder obtained by drying up and pulverising a little of the heart, the eye, the bones, the feathers, and the flesh of the bird. In the wax are embedded three seeds of Abrus precatorius, the "lucky bean" well-known in South Africa, a round seed of a splendid coral colour with a black spot, very much used in Thonga magic. This addition of Abrus precatorius intensifies the sound of the flute and enables it to reach heaven.

reach heaven. The magician, seeing the thunderstorm approaching, climbs up the hill without any fear, blows in his flute : psee... psee... psee..., and shouts : "You! Heaven! Go further! I have nothing against you! I do not fight against you!" He may add in a threatening tone : "If you are sent by my enemies against me, I will cut you open with this knife of mine." The thunderstorm will then pass away! 821 791 789

This invocation to Heaven is curious, and we shall better understand it when studying the part played by Heaven in Thonga religion. Here I am merely considering the superstition as an attempt at explaining a natural phenomenon. And we may well ask : how is it possible for such absurdities to be believed, and firmly believed, by men who are not at all devoid of a sense of observation? The idea that lightning is a bird comes perhaps from the fact that its movements in falling from above resemble the evolutions of a bird in the air. After all the phenomenon is so sudden that this explanation could easily be accepted by the imagination of the savage. As regards the statements about the coagulated urine of the bird, I must admit that I was unable to understand on what they could be based, until I saw some samples of fulgurites found where lightning had struck the ground ; the heat of the electric current vitrifies the sand, forming a kind of pipe, which enters the soil, where it ramifies to a certain depth. These fulgurites, though not perfectly answering to the description given by Native magicians, may have been the natural substratum upon which Bantu imagination built up all the other superstitions. 821

5) The problem of rain and the way Thongas deal with it.

All over the earth the question of rainfall is of primary importance, but this is especially the case in Subtropical Africa, even more than anywhere else. Rain may not fall during seven months, from April to October, and nobody worries about it. But if it fails in November and December, at the beginning of the rainy season, it is a dreadful misfortune, a calamity more serious 132 731 789

132 than any other. The life of every individual, and consequently
731 of the whole clan, is threatened. Famine will certainly follow,
as cereals can only be sown during these two months and famine
789 means not only suffering and anguish, but often death, in a primitive tribe which is totally ignorant of trade with out-lying countries, and does not possess any means of conveyance for food bought in other lands. No wonder therefore that the imagination of the South African Native has invented ways and means of regularising the rainfall, and that rites, and charms, and all the powers of magic have been resorted to with a view to ensuring the precious rain to the tribe at the right time.

789 These methods may be classified in two categories : the rites which aim at removing the causes which are believed to prevent rain and the charms by which the rain is made to fall, irrespective of any preventing cause.

a) *The causes which prevent rainfall and the rites by which they are removed.*

821 The general view is that rain comes *from the gods* : "Psikwembu
789 psi nisa mpfula" — "the spirits of the ancestors cause rain to fall."
782 So, should the spring showers not come in due time, the first idea will be to offer a sacrifice to the ancestor-gods, especially if the bones consulted have revealed that the anger of the gods is the real
[533] cause. Men will go to the sacred wood where the ancestors have been buried, sing there an ancient mourning song (I suppose No. 15, page 286, is used for the purpose), and some of them will beat the graves with sticks. As regards the sacrifice, it consists of a black victim, or it may even be the offering of a living human being to the gods ; these rites will be described later on.

Or it may be that a certain individual, *a wizard*, endowed with magical power, or rather possessing enchanted drugs, prevents the rain from falling (a siba mpfula) through wickedness, or hatred of his countrymen. This is a rarer occurrence.

100 But the terrible calamity of drought is brought into direct

But the terrible calamity of drought is brought into direct
relation with some physiological phenomena which no one would 789
have thought of in this connection : the miscarriage of women 821
when the foetus has not been dealt with according to rule, the 843
birth of twins, the death of children not yet received into the tribe 845
by the ceremony of *boha puri* (I. p. 56) and not buried in wet 766
ground ; these are the great natural causes which prevent rain 171
from falling! I have met with this conception all over the
Thonga tribe. I found it also amongst the Pedis of the Transvaal, who firmly believe it, and it would be most interesting to know if Suthos, Zulus, and Hottentots have the same superstitions. Let me quote the *ipsissima verba* of Mankhelu, the great 789
medicine-man of the Nkuna Court. I shall never forget the 821
earnest tone of his voice, his deep conviction, when he uttered 843
to me the following words, as a kind of revelation : "When a 783
woman has had a miscarriage, when she has let her blood flow secretly and has buried the abortive child in an unknown place, it is enough to make the burning winds blow, and to dry up all the land : the rain can no longer fall, because the country is no longer right (tiko a ra ha lulami). Rain fears that spot. It must stop at that very place and can go no further. This woman has been very guilty. She has spoilt the country of the chief, because she has hidden blood which had not yet properly united to make a human being. That blood is taboo! What she has done is taboo. It causes starvation."

"What then must be done?" — "The chief will collect his men and ask them : 'Are you in a normal state?' (lit. are you right?). They answer : 'Such and such a woman was pregnant but nobody knows what she has brought forth.' This woman will be arrested and told to go and show us where she has put it. The earth is dug up ; the hole is sprinkled with a decoction made of two drugs prepared in a special pot, the *mbendula* and *nyangale* ; the woman herself must wash her body every day with that medicine. Then a little of the earth taken from the hole will be scraped up and thrown into the river ; water drawn from the river will be poured into the hole : the country will be well again, and then the rain will come.

"Moreover, we, the medicine-men, after having sent old

789 women to the river to throw away the contaminated earth, order
821 them to make a ball of that earth, and to bring it back to us in
843 the early morning. We grind it, we put it into a pot where it
783 must remain for five days, and then we prepare the great drug to sprinkle the land. The medicine is put into oxen horns and they go to all the drifts, to the boundaries of the country, on the borders of the Ñwebeti and of the Thabina rivers, on the road to Sibila's country, to Diskop (Leydsdorp); they must not however cross rivers. Our neighbours do the same on their own side. One of the girls digs the earth, the others dip a stick into the horn and sprinkle the drug into the hole. We also sprinkle the road on which these women have trodden, when they had their blood; we remove the misfortune caused by these women on the roads. The country is pure again. Rain can fall."

This is the purifying rite in the Nkuna clan. Mankhelu asserts that the Pedis do the same. He did not know if the custom existed amongst other Thonga clans. But Viguet described the same custom to me as being in force on the borders of the Limpopo, under the name of *mbelele*. The bones having revealed that the country is impure, the chief orders the mbelele: it is a period of mourning (nkosi) for the land. First the *phokolo*, or sacrifice of the black victim is performed (See Part VI). Then the women assemble. They must remove all their clothing, only putting some grass round their loins and, with a peculiar skipping step, singing a special song: "Mpfula nana" — "rain fall," — they go to all the spots where children prematurely born have been buried in dry ground, on the hills, take away what they find in the broken pots and collect all that impure matter in a secret place, so that children may see nothing of what they are doing. Water is poured on these graves in order to "quench them (timula)." On the evening of the same day they go and bury these impurities; this is
[783 done in the mud, near the river. No man must approach during
831] this operation: the women would have the right to strike the imprudent one and ask him questions on the obscene formulae of circumcision; the man would answer in the most impure words he could find, as all language taboos are suspended on that day; nakedness even is no longer taboo, "because," says Viguet,

"it is the law of the country!" Every one consents to the suspension of the ordinary laws! (1)

Amongst the Rongas, I did not hear of any connection between prematurely born children and rain. When the mbelele rite is performed, a mother of twins must lead the procession of women who draw water and pour it on the graves of the twins in order to secure the rain. They also clean all the wells (kuha tinhlobo), digging them afresh and removing any filth in the water. It may be that the corpse of a twin, if it has been buried in dry ground, will be dug out of its grave and buried again near the river, or they will go in procession and pour water on the grave. This will influence Heaven, which is killing the earth by the terrible heat of the sun. The burning October winds will cease and the rain will fall.

There is something mysterious about all these customs. Considered merely as ideas regarding Nature and natural phenomena, I believe their essential meaning to be this : — there are some cases of human birth which are taboo. While any birth is taboo, owing to the lochia, that of children prematurely born is doubly dangerous. Abnormal children, such as twins, children who have died before the "boha puri" rite (I. p. 56), in some clans also children who cut their upper teeth first, share this noxious character. They are a calamity for the whole land as they are connected with the mysterious power of Heaven, and so prevent the rain from falling. The great remedy for the evil, the only means of counteracting this influence, is to bury these children in wet ground. Should this not have been done, the chief must order these little corpses to be exhumed and buried near the river : this is the aim and object of the mbelele. If wet, these graves will cause no harm (2).

How did these extraordinary conceptions first originate ?

(1) This rite of *mbelele* shows striking analogies with the Passage rites which we have already often met with in Thonga customs. This is a special period, a mourning period for the land, says Viguet, a marginal period which, as such, is accompanied by obscene manifestations, both in speech and in absence of clothing.

(2) In the Maluleke clan, as previously mentioned, these three categories of children must be *cremated*, and foreigners dying in the midst of the clan are also burnt after their death, from fear that they might belong to one of these categories and so prevent the rain from falling, if they were buried in dry ground. The mbelele rite there is called *nkelenkele*. Rangane describes it as follows : — Women collect the bones of twins,

845 What is the connection between abnormal births of human
792 beings and the rain-fall? I think it can be found in the
787 conception of Heaven which has inspired so many curious rites, and which I shall explain in the next chapter. So it is possible that, after all, the mbelele rite has a religious idea at its base.

b) *Rain charms.*

789 The removal of the corpses of abnormal children from dry
177 ground and their burial near the river probably sometimes proves ineffective to produce rain. So Bantu magicians have invented a great many charms to obtain the greatly desired showers, and the power of the rain-makers is enormous. Our tribe does not seem to have developed this art as much as others. The Sutho-Pedis are masters in this domain and Mankhelu, who had been taught by them and had become a great and renowned rain-maker, revealed all his secrets to me. He possessed the drug and used it frequently, he said, having often been called in by Sutho chiefs dwelling in far distant districts, as far off as Pretoria. He assured me that he had met with so much success that these chiefs had given him oxen, horses, a waggon, precious beads, etc.! Where had he found this marvellous drug? At Rivimbi (in Venda : Luvimbi), a country north of Spelonken, not far from the Limpopo and to which he went, as far as I could make out, in 1865 or 1866. The Luvimbi people are the descendants of Luvimbi, (1) a chief of the old times (as old as Nkuna, says Mankhelu) who, after his death, went to heaven and became king of heaven ; he still exists there as a spirit, hearing and knowing everything that is done on earth. This Luvimbi is probably the same whom the Vendas call the first man, and concerning whom they have a number of traditions which I shall mention a little later.

776 and those of still-born children or those who died at birth; to these they add their old
783 rags (perhaps the cloths used for their menses?); they bring all these impurities to the
789 cross-ways and *burn them* there, singing impure songs, saying: "To-day is a great day! There is no taboo any more! If you prohibit anything, it will be an insult to the rain;
821 it will not fall." The smoke of all that they have burnt constitutes a religious offering: now the country will be pure and the rain will fall. The conception prevailing among
183 the Malulekes is somewhat different from that of the Rongas.

(1) I have published an account of the Venda traditions connected with Luvimbi or Raluvimbi in *The S. A Journal of Science*, April 1921, where more details will be found concerning this personage.

which I shall mention a little later. They all invoke him to obtain rain, asserts Mankhelu, even Modjadji, the great queen who has acquired such fame: she does not pretend to be superior to Luvimbi; she owes her rain-making power to him! His successors have kept the famous recipe for rainmaking. Mankhelu visited them. He brought with him "bukosi," viz., riches, and they gave him horns full of the drug. One of them is in my possession; it seems to be the horn of a he-goat. These people manufacture the rain-producing medicine on an extensive scale. Baskets are seen in their huts, full of the ingredients of which it is composed. Strange to say, these ingredients all come *from the sea*; as far as I could identify them from Mankhelu's description, they are: sea-urchins, (shinana sha mitwa), sea-weeds (pindja ra lwandle, lit. rope of the sea), bones of whales, or sea-fish, bivalve sea-shells, pieces of wood from wrecked vessels run aground, etc. All these are roasted and, when the process is sufficiently advanced, sea-water is poured on them to cool them (timula). They are then pulverised and "salted" with another drug called "shinyuke," something black which I could not identify. The powder so obtained is put into the horns, half of which are dipped into sheep's fat and so become female drugs. Having been given the four horns, two male and two female, Mankhelu was told that these would retain their virtue for ever; when he saw that their contents were nearly finished, he could always prepare a fresh supply by roasting marine products, but he would have to grind a little of the original drug with the new powder in order to *pfusha*, viz., to raise its strength, according to the universal practice of Bantu medicine-men. The original drug is the well-spring (shihlobo). Should any one try to manufacture the drug himself, using exactly the same ingredients, he would meet with total failure, as the virtue of the drug is derived from two sources: the produce of the sea, and the power of the first inventor, Luvimbi.

Having returned with the precious charm, when summoned by any chief to act as rain-maker, Mankhelu employed it in the following way.

He first asked the chief to kill a black goat or sheep (a he-goat, or a ram, if the bones said so); the head, at any rate, had

789 to be black. The heart was pierced with a puncheon and the blood flowed. He carefully washed the horns with the blood and smeared them later on (horola) with the "psanyi" found in the intestines of the animal. Then he took his *ntsiko*, viz., the two pieces of wood which served as his flint, poured a little of the powder into the notch of the female stick and made fire by the rapid friction described on p. 34. In the meantime Mankhelu prayed as follows : "Here are the drugs, Rivimbi of Tsome (Rivimbi's father)! Give us rain." Then he invoked his own gods, saying : "Go to Rivimbi for me and come along here all of you to make the rain fall." This performance is a "mhamba," a means of calling the gods, especially Rivimbi, "the master of this mhamba." After a while the wood began to burn ; leaves of the "nembe-nembe" bush (Cassia petersiana) were placed on it and a black smoke rose and ascended to heaven. Then the clouds appeared and soon the thunderstorm broke. A feather of the ndlati bird of lightning was placed amongst the leaves as a protection against thunderbolts.

Mankhelu was absolutely convinced of the efficacy of this means of rain-making, and there seems to be more sense in this rite than in many others. To use the sea to cause rain to [821] fall, is not after all so absurd! I would not assert that Natives have a clear idea as to the formation of clouds, *mapapa* (Dj.), *matlabi* (Ro.), and know that the water from above comes from the water below, but at any rate they know that the sea is water and rain is [822] also water. To obtain rain by smoke rising from burning sea products is a procedure which is in keeping with one of the most common beliefs of primitive man, that like produces like, a belief which has found its expression in the famous principle of the old physicians : "Similia similibus curantur."

When practising his rain-making art at home, Mankhelu proceeded with less ceremonial pomp. After having consulted his bones, he took four leaves of the tjeke plant (p. 14), smeared them with the magical powder and exposed them to the rays of the burning sun. As soon as these leaves were fully dry, "Heaven began to roar" and the rain came.

[177] The great rain medicine is of Pedi or Venda origin. In addition

In addition

to the sacrifice of the black victim and to the mbelele rite of 789
purification of the land, which are characteristic Thonga customs, 823
it seems that another old Thonga way of obtaining rain was the 715
tjeba fishing which I described on p. 86. When the whole clan had gone to catch the barbels in the almost dried up ponds, a thunderstorm would come and rain would fall. This was especially the case with certain small lakes such as Malangotiba in Nondwane, and that in Nsime near Morakwen, because battles had taken place on their borders and the enemies' corpses had been thrown into the water. So these lakes had become "great sacred woods" (ntimu). I suppose the spirits of the deceased, which were certainly "gods of bitterness," (see next chapter), were supposed to prevent the rain, and the *tjeba* either appeased them or made them powerless.

To sum up this very complicated subject, I would say rain 789
rites belong to three different categories: 1) The religious rites 769
connected with ancestor worship (black offering, visit to the 783
sacred woods, old songs and sometimes offering of a human victim). 2) Rites of purification of the land, those which are derived from the mysterious relations established between the power of Heaven and abnormal births (mbelele, cleaning of wells by women accompanied by the mother of twins); these present some features of the ordinary passage rites, either because the fall of rain inaugurates a new season, or because drought is a calamity comparable with death and attended with contamination. 3) The magic rites, in which sea charms play the most important part.

Hail, shihangu (Dj.), mabyana, lit. little stones (Ro.), is frequent 132
in Thongaland; according to Mboza, it is not the object of any peculiar superstitions. Amongst the Pedis the day on which it has fallen must be kept as a sabbath. It is taboo to till the fields on that day.

IV. *The Inorganic World.*

Water is called *mati*, a noun of the bu-ma class, the class of 193
liquids, employed only in the plural form. Notice the suffix *ti*, which seems to show that, at a period when mythological

193 conceptions were still current, it was considered as a feminine principle. This supposition is confirmed by the fact that *rivers* (nambu. pl. milambu) also have the feminine termination (I. p. 36, Note). I find the following names of rivers ending in *ti* : Nkomati, Nfoloti (Umbelosi), Ñwebeti, Shalati, Timbati ; the termination *etsi*, *edzi*, may be another form of the same suffix (Ñwanetsi, Ntsatsi, Shingwedzi, Madzi, etc.). A very curious fact, which shows the same conception, is that the river which crosses the territory of the Tembe clan is called Mi-Tembe. I first thought this to be a plural form of the mu-mi class ; but it is more natural to explain this *mi* as the feminine prefix (1) which means daughter of, as Migogwe, etc. (I. p. 352).

823 *Crossing rivers* is subject to a curious rule. It is taboo to bathe
784 in the stream before crossing it ; taboo also for the traveller to
824 cook his food on the hither side of the river ; he must first cross, and then take his meal. This rule is still universally observed by
789 waggon trekkers in South Africa. In this case there may be a
133 reason for the taboo : South African rivers are apt to be swollen in a moment by sudden rain, and the crossing made impossible for days : the traveller therefore makes haste ; he will have plenty of time to stop on the other side! When the river is dangerous, a Thonga will first chew (phora) a little of his *ndjao*, the root of a juncus, which is supposed to increase courage and to ensure victory over hostile influences. (See Part VI.)

823 Some *Lakes* and *Rivers* are believed to be inhabited by spirits,
769 but not in the ordinary fetichistic way, in which a special spiritual
776 being is incorporated with the natural object ; these spirits are *puikwembo*, spirits of the deceased ancestors of the owners of the
782 land, and are propitiated by their descendants. Should another clan have invaded the territory where these lakes are, and crocodiles threaten the fishermen, (p. 88) they will call some one belonging to the clan of the old possessors of the country and ask him to make an offering to appease *his* gods. This is the ordinary course, and the more closely we search the more completely these lake and

(1) A number of river names have the prefix *li* or *ri*, especially those which are of Sutho origin : Lebvubye. Ritabi (Letaba) Ritshindjele (Letsitele), Rimbelule (Lepalula, Olifant). Others begin with *ñwa*, *ma*, and may be ancient names of men.

aculeata, which runs on the sand, *Shipyindji* or *Shihonokamahlo*, 136
the one which gazes at you ; the large gheko, Agama atricollis, 825
with a head of which the grey colour can change into blue, *Galagala* or *Phululu* (dji-ma) (I. p. 173) the grey one, which hides itself in dark places, in hollow stems or under roofs is the *Hokokwana* (dji-ma) (Hemidactylus grenatus) ; it is said that when this lizard sucks at the breast of a human being, it is impossible to remove it, and the only means of getting rid of it is to go and suckle a dog!

But the most curious lizard of these countries, that which most 136
strikes the Native imagination is the Chameleon (Chameleon 825
Petersii), *Lumpfana* (dji-ma). Herd boys throw ground tobacco 789
into its mouth to avenge themselves for the bad turn it did mankind when it lingered on the road and came too late to bring the message of eternal life (as we shall learn in a moment). It is used by certain magicians to discover thieves. They smear a chameleon with a drug which makes it turn white and then let it go : "Then the thief, wherever he may be, also turns white, and if he does not confess his theft, he dies!"

The flesh of none of these lizards is eaten, but that of the big 136
Varan which lives near the rivers, *Kwahle* (dji-ma), is considered 825
a delicacy. The kwahle is said to be very hard to kill. About 262
Crocodiles (*ngwenya*, yin-tin) all sorts of stories are told. When 787
one of them has been killed, the contents of its stomach are carefully preserved ; Thongas assert that each year, when the rains begin, crocodiles swallow a stone, so that their age can be known by counting them. These stones are taboo ; for a subject to swallow them is a cause of death, but one of them is chosen, treated with certain drugs and swallowed by the chief to warn him of his death, as we have already seen (I, p. 393). Crocodile stones play an important part in divination. (See Part VI. Ch. III. D).

Tortoises, whose generic name is *Mfutju* (yin-tin), are eaten and also used in the divinatory art, as we shall see. Some lake tortoises are called *Gamba* (dji-ma) and sea tortoises *Hasi* (dji-ma).

Snakes (nyoka, yin-tin) are generally dreaded and considered 825
dangerous, although many kinds are quite harmless. The 136

lightning), or animistic (Son-of-the-Moth). But they are not of much 771
importance. They belong to the same category as the description given 774
by the Psalmist of the sun as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, or to that of Homer comparing the break of the day to a young damsel with rosy fingers. This is poetry, mere personification of natural objects, or forces, and not beliefs. The poetical tendency is very marked amongst primitive races. It may be that ideas of this kind were more firmly held in former times, if the tribe has really passed through a more mythological phase, a hypothesis for which there are some grounds.

2) Collective beliefs.

The beliefs of the Thongas which deserve to be called by that name 771
because they are universal and express themselves in important rites and 769
customs, are the following :

1. The human soul continues its existence after death, when it is 775
endowed with new powers which make it an object of awe and fear. *The spirits of the ancestors* are the main objects of religious worship. They form the principal category of spirits (psikwembu).

2. Although the spirits of the departed generally have nothing to [789]
do with people other than their descendants, some of them, especially *those belonging to foreign tribes*, can take possession of living men and cause troubles which must be cured by a process of exorcism. This is the second category of spirits.

3. Some individuals have the power of magically unsheathing them- 774
selves during the night, and their spirit goes out to torment, or to kill 754
and eat other people. These are *the wizards* (baloyi) ; this third cate- 791
gory of spirits accomplish their wicked deeds when separated from the body, but their body is still living and they re-enter it. These three beliefs are distinctly animistic.

4. There is in man, and in a few large animals, a semi-spiritual 771
principle, the *nuru*, which escapes from the body when the individual is 774
killed in war, or in hunting, and through which the dead man, or animal, 828
avenges himself or itself on the murderer. What is the relation between the nuru and the shadow (sit)huti)? This is not stated. The nuru seems to be of a more material nature, as it can enter a root, and it remains attached to the corpse and the bones of the person or animal killed. This category of spiritual enemies, probably invented under the influence of fear and remorse, has no connection with ordinary people,

771 and only troubles those who have killed, rendering them, as is generally
774 believed, insane. — The nuru belief seems to be a compromise between
828 Animism and Dynamism. (See p. 77-80.)

5. There are in plants, animals, stones, hidden virtues which can be
789 either useful or harmful to man. Medicine-men (tinanga) possess a more or less esoteric knowledge of such, and magicians (bangoma), endowed with special powers, can acquire a control over these virtues and use them in medical art, or in magic. — This is true Dynamism.

6. Certain natural objects, such as the sea, the bush fire, are sometimes vaguely personified. — This is Animatism.

772 7. But above them all is Heaven, Tilo, which is sometimes looked on as a real being, sometimes as an impersonal power, a number of mysterious superstitions finding their explanation in this strange and perhaps obsolete notion of Heaven. — This is more than Animatism and seems to be a vague theistic, even monotheistic, idea.

771 The essential difference between Animism and Dynamism seems to
774 me clear. But it is by no means absolute. We shall often meet with rites which belong to both domains, or bear an intermediate character. In the following chapters the exact nature and influence of these various kinds of spirits and impersonal forces will be studied, and I hope that an explanation of all the facts concerning them will throw more light on the subject and show that, at any rate, Thonga Animism is very different from the Animism of the Dutch East Indies, for instance, where men speak of thousands of spirits of the earth, air, water, mountains and trees; very different also from the fetichism met with in other Bantu tribes of Central and Western Africa.

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82 Before leaving this chapter, in which I have tried to sketch what I have
789 called by the rather pretentious term of The Natural Philosophy of the Bantus, and as a preparation for the explanation of the religious and dynamistic rites described in the following chapters, I think it advisable to set forth the principles which seem to underlie most of these rites, and which may be called the *axioms of primitive mentality*.

As regards what are commonly called *magic rites* I contend that they are in no sense purely arbitrary but that they rest on certain definite principles. These axioms of primitive mentality are what anthropologists fittingly call collective representations, viz., everybody believes

them. Whatever may be their origin, they form a part of the mental make up of every Native. A careful study of the rites reveals at least three such axioms: Like acts on like and produces like; the part represents the whole and acts on the whole; the spoken wish produces the desired result. 82 789

1) *Like acts on like and produces like.* All the elements of Nature are dependent on each other, and if there is a similarity between two of them, they are at once brought into a special relation with each other and begin to influence each other. The application of this principle is universal, in the religious as well as in the dynamistic domain. The Native mind is extremely quick at perceiving a similarity between the most heterogeneous objects or phenomena, and immediately establishes a causal relation between them. We have already met with scores of instances of this law. *Colour* acts on colour; black sheep and black smoke produce a black cloud full of rain (p. 318). *Form* produces a similar form; a necklace of maize grains round the neck of a small-pox patient produces an eruption of small, transparent, pustules which are not dangerous, in place of the large, thick, deadly ones. (See Chapter III. A.) *Disintegration* produces disintegration; the chewing of a bean ensures the melting of the iron ore in the kiln (p. 359). *A certain state of mind* produces a similar condition in living beings, and even in material phenomena; the continence of little children ensures control over the flame of the furnace (p. 115) whilst the passion of married people accelerates disease, and increases the fury of wild beasts, (p. 61) etc. (1)

This kind of magic has been called *imitative magic.* A corollary of this principle is that the image or object representing a thing is in close relation with the thing itself, and any action performed on the image will have its repercussion on the thing represented.

(1) To show how far this action of like on like can go, let me quote this final example which I gave in my paper on *The Magic Conception of Nature amongst Bantus (South African Journal of Science*, Nov. 1920). A magician has had the good luck to discover a crow's nest full of young. He climbs up the tree, and ties all the little birds together by their feet. The mother crow, however, is not at a loss to deliver her progeny. She brings each day a leaf taken from different trees, and places it in the nest. The magician keeps watch. He climbs the tree, looks at the leaf, and recognizes the tree from which it has been taken. He then goes and digs up a piece of root from that tree. After a few days he will have collected quite a bundle of different roots. By that time the little crows will be free, the string which bound them having given way, or having rotted, and the magician will possess a medicine of first rate quality. By means of it he will be able to free any patient from any disease or worry by which he is held fast. 825 955

82 2) *The portion of a complexus acts on the whole.* The elements of
789 Nature are considered as forming complexuses in which the component parts are united in such a manner that they react on each other. The body forms such a complexus ; an isolated organ can therefore act on the whole body or replace it. (See the case of the trumpet of heaven (p. 314) which is the femur of the bird of lightning and which is used to expel the thunderstorm). But there are much more complicated complexuses, for instance the village, muti. When death strikes its chief or any of its members, everything is contaminated (I. p. 143). Material contact is of paramount importance here ; but more spiritual considerations are also taken into account in establishing these complexuses. Why is it the first wife of the hunter who must shut herself up in the hut in order to save her husband from the fury of the hippopotamus (p. 69)? Because she is united to him by a mysterious tie, being the lawful, true wife (I. p. 284). The community of life is more complete between her and her husband than between the hunter and his minor wives. For this reason, I prefer to call this form of magic *communionist magic* rather than sympathetic magic, the term generally employed. In many magic rites imitative magic and communionist magic are combined.

3) *The words in which a wish is emphatically expressed produce the desired result.* Primitive man in the hierarchic form of his social group, is accustomed to command and to be obeyed. He attaches great importance to his word, and intends natural forces to accomplish his will as well as his subordinates. This may be one of the reasons for the prevalence of this kind of magic, which has inspired incantations, imprecations, etc. There are no doubt other reasons, and the forms of verbal magic are numerous.

It is evident that we cannot assign any scientific value to any of these axioms of primitive mentality. They are absolutely false. It is not true in actual life that like produces like, that the part acts on the whole, and that the expressed wish produces the desired result. The magic rite may be attended with some objective result in as much as its performance gives the performer greater confidence in himself, thus producing an auto-suggestion favourable to the success of the operation. Moreover the magician develops certain subliminal powers which are not yet well understood but which are real and may be effective (especially in the domain of divination). But magic rites are utterly irrational ; they are doomed to disappear before the advance of Civilization and Science.

It is said that, in olden days, there was an anchor there, and before 776
sacrificing, the priest always used to lift it up, and let it fall to the 778
ground, saying: "Shawan! (I salute thee) Tembe!" If the sacrifice was acceptable the sound of a trumpet: "bvé... bvé...," was heard, far away in the depths of the woods, but no form was ever seen. This anchor also possessed extraordinary powers. When the country was at war with its neighbours, and matters did not go well with Tembe, the anchor would move off by itself into the Matjolo district. This was the portent of some terrible catastrophe!

No one ever penetrated very far into the sacred wood of [789]
Tryini, of the Matjolo clan, for it was said that any one doing so would be lost, and unable to find his way out. When the people of Matjolo were in need of rain, they took a young man of the country into the wood, and there abandoned him. The gods accepted their offering, and the young man, struck with paralysis, was unable to follow in their retreat those who had led him to martyrdom! He saw them going away, but remained behind to be devoured by the gods. The others hastened to sacrifice and returned home; they were forbidden to look behind them. Once home, they told how they had seen on the ground, in the wood, foot-prints of adults, and even of little ones who must have been old enough to crawl on their hands and knees! Often, they say, they brought back the rain with them!

According to all these stories, it is evident that, in the Thonga 769
mind, the ancestor-gods dwell in the sacred woods, and lead a life 776
there in the earth, and occasionally outside, very similar to the 778
terrestrial one. Mankhelu had, however, another idea, which is 789
difficult to reconcile with this representation. On his forked magic pole he had a long shining grey branch of a climbing shrub called *ñwabola*. This has enormous thorns, which are supposed to have the power of calling the precious things which are far away, and of gathering them in the hut: money, oxen, girls to marry, etc., and also the ancestor-gods: "When they pass through the country, coming from our old domicile, near the Limpopo, they are caught by the thorns, and settle here to bless us." This idea that the gods fly through the air, is very rarely met 769
776

787 see, why divination plays such an important part in their life.
769 It is of the utmost importance to know what their gods think
776 and do, as the very existence of the village, and of the clan, and the welfare of every member of the clan depends on them. Is not Łukwembo, Divinity "the power of killing or of making alive, of enriching or of making poor?" Natives believe firmly in these two opposite actions of their gods. They are the masters of everything: earth, fields, trees, rain, men, children, even of baloyi, wizards! They have full control over all these objects or persons.

769 The gods can *bless*: if the trees bear plenty of fruit, it is because
776 they have made it grow (I. p. 414); if the crops are plentiful, it is because they forced wizards to increase them, or hindered them
777 from spoiling them (I. p. 396); if you come across a pot of palm wine, it is your god who has sent you that windfall (p. 44). When Mboza escaped from the Morakwen battle, one of his relatives exclaimed on his return home: "The gods of Makaneta have still been with you!" (Psikwembu psa ka Makaneta psa ha ku yimelele.) Often when a man has narrowly escaped drowning, or spraining his ankle on a stump which has caught his foot, he will say: "The gods have saved me."

769 But they can also *curse*, and bring untold misfortune on their
776 descendants. If the rain fails, it is qwing to their anger; if a tree
● 789 falls on you, they have directed its fall; if a crocodile bites you, the
753 gods have sent it; if your child has fever and is delirious, they are in him, tormenting his soul; if your wife is sterile, they have prevented her from childbearing; perhaps the gods of your mother have done this, because you had not given your maternal uncle the *tjhumba* part of the lobolo, which he has the right to claim (I. p. 267); in fact any disease, any calamity may come from them. There are, of course, other sources of misfortune: the baloyi, for instance, or Heaven, and the bones will show who has caused the mischief; but the ancestor-gods are certainly the most powerful spiritual agency acting on man's life. Hence the necessity of propitiating them by prayers and sacrifices.

II. *The Means of Propitiation. Offerings and Sacrifices.*

It is no wonder, since these spirits are so terrible, that their descendants have sought means of propitiating them. The study of these rites is very interesting, and will throw more light on the ideas of the Bantus concerning their ancestor-gods. Some of these means of propitiation bear a magical character. For instance, when Mankhelu wished to induce the gods to sleep and leave him in peace, he took roots which had been brought to light naturally by a swollen river that had washed away the ground The reason is clear ; the gods are in the earth, therefore things found in the earth can influence them. So he cut these roots in small pieces, cooked them with the flesh of a goat, and drank the broth ; the assagai which killed the goat had been first smeared with a powder made of these roots. He fastened the astragalus of the goat on his ankle, on the right side if the god to be propitiated belonged to his father's family, and on the left if it was one of his mother's ancestors. If the propitiatory ceremony was performed for a woman, the astragalus was tied with a strap "en bandouillère" round her body. 769 782 789

We shall often see such *magic acts* performed in the ancestor worship of the Thongas. This is in keeping with their general conception of Nature, as already explained (p. 369), and with the magic principles or axioms of primitive mentality. But to the magic element is added the religious ; the officiant is aware that he intends to influence living, conscious and superior beings, therefore he has recourse above all to specifically *religious means*, viz., to offerings and prayers. He presents to his gods what he calls a *mhamba*, and not *miri*, charms or medicines similar to those employed in magic proper. We shall understand more fully what the word mhamba means when we have described the various kinds of offerings.

1) Classification of Offerings.

These offerings are much more complicated and varied than they at first seem. The following principles of classification may be applied to them : 782

782 addresses his prayer to his ancestor-gods in order to be delivered
787 from his enemies.

The Offering of a Thorn (Mhamba ya Mutwa). This is also called *ku hahla ka shihlahla*, the sacrifice of the forest. The headman has seen that misfortune has fallen on his village ; all his people die, the village is about to disappear, to become merely a part of the bush. He goes to the forest, picks up a thorn there and accomplishes the religious act by sucking the thorn, and emitting his saliva. Then he returns to the forest and places the thorn where the bones have ordered him.

782 *The Offering of Contempt (Mhamba ya Litsañwa).* We have
788 already seen a case in which this offering is made. It is a compo-
824 nent part of the burial ritual (I. p. 142) and we have called it the rite of the twig. But it can be performed on other occasions also. In certain clans (Nkuna-Khosa, Hlengwe) it does not take place at the burial, but is of common use when someone wishes *to avoid contempt*, to be well received by those to whom he goes ; for instance when he goes to his debtors and fears that they may despise him and perhaps refuse to accept his claim, or when a young man goes to woo a girl and is afraid that she may not look favourably on his suit. The religious act is performed as follows. The officiant cuts a twig of the nkanye tree. We have often mentioned this tree, whose fruits are used to prepare the famous bukanye beer ; it is everywhere regarded as the best of trees, and highly valued. It is dioecious, as we have seen (I. p. 397). The twig must come from a female stem, if a man *hahla* for himself, from a male stem if a woman does so. The officiant bites the extremity of the twig till he has drawn a little of the sap into his mouth ; then he emits that sap together with his saliva, and proceeds to his prayer.

789 *The Offering of the Fig Tree (Mhamba ya Hlulawumbe).* This
782 tree is called shihlampfana or hlulawumbe. It frequently grows
824 as a parasite on another tree ; or surrounds it, growing close to its stem, and in this way kills it. If a man has enemies, if there are people who hate him, he digs up a bit of the root of this fig tree and uses it in making his prayer. These troublesome persons will be choked, destroyed, just like the stem close to which the hlulawumbe grows. (Hlulawumbe means to overcome others).

782 whom they sometimes pray in the hut (See App. IV). Amongst
593 Thongas the wife does not adopt the gods of her husband's
793 family (1).

The beginnings of the *constitution of a sacerdotal caste* may be seen in the fact that in each clan, the mhamba, the sacred object used by the royal family to invoke its gods, or the drug on which national invulnerability depends, is entrusted to the care of a certain man, whose office is hereditary. As soon as the political tie becomes stronger, and the power of the paramount chief greater, the religious acts which are performed at the capital gain in importance, and the person who officiates becomes a kind of high priest. Should this evolution continue, it is easy to see how a sacerdotal class may be formed at the expense of the primitive family worship, which thus increasingly loses its importance. Amongst the Thongas this has not yet taken place, and their religious system seems to correspond to a very ancient state of things ; it is in all probability the pure form of primitive Ancestrolatry.

b) The Thonga Conception of the Offerings.

782 With the help of new information obtained since writing the
778 first edition of this book, I think it now possible to attain to a fuller
789 understanding of the meaning of this great Thonga word *mhamba* which I have translated either by offering or by sacrifice, in connection with the killing of a victim. Under this designation come objects of two distinct categories : articles of food, clothing, etc. which are of immediate service to human existence and which are *given* to the ancestor-gods, and magic or magico-religious objects which are not given but only employed in the act of worship. The aim is the same, whatever may be the nature of the object, viz. to obtain the favour and help of the ancestor-gods, but in the first case the officiant adresses himself to living, conscious

(1) There seems to be a profound difference between Thongas and Suthos on this point. The Rev. P. Ramseyer assured me on very good evidence that in Basutoland "a wife takes the family name (seboko) of her husband and abandons her *midimo*." The midimo, says my informant, are not only the *badimo* proper, i. e. the ancestor-gods, but all the supernatural powers in which a given clan trusts, the totem, the spirit (moea) of hail, of rain, of lightning, of disease. A Sutho woman can become a Tebele by marriage, though this seldom actually happens.

spirits, endowed with intelligence, feelings and will, and tries to 782
induce them to respond to his needs, whilst, in the second case he 778
trusts that his offering will act on them magically, i. e. automatically, 789
according to the principles of magic explained above. Let us consider these two kinds of mhamba more closely.

1) *The gifts*. As regards their nature these are indeed most 782
varied, consisting in the first place of *domestic animals*, the ox, goat, fowl, which are only used by subjects, the sheep being the offering proper to the chief (p. 50). Pigs are not accepted for the altar, neither are antelopes, or other kinds of game. I have never heard of any offering consisting of the flesh of wild beasts. The victim is generally killed, but there are cases of its being consecrated *living*. If a living hen or goat is given to the gods, (a ring sometimes being attached to the leg of the fowl), it is taboo henceforth to kill or sell it ; if it dies, it must not be eaten, and it must also be replaced by another (1). Another kind of living offering is the *human sacrifice* made in certain sacred woods in order to obtain rain, but this is rarely resorted to. "The victim wanders about in the forest till he dies," says Mboza ; "the gods take him."

The most common kind of offering is *the produce of the fields*, chiefly the Kafir Corn in the official luma, but also other cereals, sorghum maize, likoro (p. 11), various kinds of pumpkins. Ground nuts are never offered. But the ancestor-gods appreciate drinks, not only the national beer, but also the wine of the Whites. They like narcotics as well as intoxicants, and tobacco is one of the gifts most frequently made to them.

Clothing, especially handkerchiefs of various designs (these designs being often prescribed by the bones) is often offered, even ornaments, e. g. the bracelet in the sacrifice for the uterine nephew (p. 396) ; but it is the sick boy who wears it, probably instead of the gods.

Lastly one sometimes finds on the graves "wealth, hlengwe,"

(1) I have heard of two cases of a *living human offering* in the Bilen and Manyisa regions. A girl had been consecrated to the ancestor-gods ; she was therefore a mhamba. In the first case a goat had been given to them also, as a living mhamba. The girl died, and the goat ought to have been burnt together with all her belongings, but her parents presented it to Christian Natives, who were free from the fear of the ancestor-gods.

782 *Shimantji* is the term used for left ; its etymology is unknown.
562 *Shinene* means right ; it also indicates nice, good, true. In this as in many other instances the male sex has arrogated to itself the better part!

782 2) *The magical objects used in worship*. First of all comes *the*
789 *great mhamba*, the nails, hair or faces of deceased chiefs. We are
778 evidently dealing here with a case of *communionist magic*. I explain in the same way the use of roots brought to light by a river which has washed away the ground (p. 387), but it may be that this is also an instance of *imitative magic* : the roots were hidden in the soil and have come to light ; in the same way the ancestor-gods have been buried in the ground and have again come forth to bless or curse their descendants. The curious astragalus bone of an antelope which had been swallowed by a hyena and found later in its stools and which Mankhelu employed to represent the gods in his divinatory set of bones, would favour this second explanation. In fact most of these objects are supposed to act in virtue of the principle of similarity : the nkanye twig, because this venerated tree will ensure respect to the person, living or dead, for whom it is used ; the piece of charcoal, because the enemy will be reduced to impotence just as the piece of wood has been consumed by fire ; the thorn employed by the general of the army, because the warriors will be able to pierce their opponents and kill them, etc. Is the number of magic objects used in this connection limited to those I have mentioned? I do not think so. It is probable that some others may be found in the various parts of the tribe. I even have proof that new objets of a magic character are still invented by worshippers who are gifted with special imaginative powers. My old friend Mankhelu was telling me the particulars of the battle of Nov. 1901, during the Sikororo war (I. p. 513), when suddenly jumping to his feet and taking a small bundle of grass, he said : "Listen! I will show you the mhamba I made when the enemy rushed on us. I took a bundle of grass like those which women use for binding their sticks, and feverishly separated the blades, saying : 'Let them fail to surround us, or decoy us!' Then I scattered them in all directions and said : 'Let them be so dispersed, carried off and destroyed!' And this is exactly what happened.

On my return from the battle I showed all the army how I had 782
prayed." The old general's spontaneous appeal to the gods on 789
behalf of his country in its hour of supreme danger is indeed 778
worthy of notice, and also furnishes a proof that ancestor-worship is still a living force and has not become a mere matter of ritual amongst those who practise it. This prayer of the Nkuna general, this exclamation of an anguished soul in the presence of a great danger, may be regarded as *verbal magic*, as it is not expressedly addressed to the gods, and the same may be said of the formula employed to cancel an oath in the offering of reconciliation, the mention of the gods being absent in this case also. All these acts, however, are mhamba. They are in reality accomplished with the idea that the gods hear and see what is said and done and will be induced to deliver their worshippers.

The magic character of these rites is most marked in the cases of communionist magic; those which are classed under imitative magic may perhaps be more properly called *symbols*, or at least some of them (1).

Elias Libombo once came to me and said: "My brother, Klass, 787
died. He was *the mhamba of the Libombos*. Now his younger 793

(1) But what is a *symbol* in religion, and what is the difference between the symbol and the magic rite? I cannot treat this important subject here in all the necessary detail and length. Let us take only one instance. The offering of incense which took place every evening in the Temple of Jerusalem and which is also widespread in certain branches of the Christian Church is regarded as a symbol. The perfumed smoke which ascends towards heaven corresponds to the prayers of the worshippers, which are thought of as ascending to God and pleasing Him, just as the agreeable smell of incense gratifies the nostrils of the man who perceives it. But in the Hebrew religion it is not thought that incense conveys prayers to God in some actual and magical fashion. It is a symbol. Psychologically speaking this use of incense is probably to be explained in the following manner: The material representation of a religious act (or a religious truth) tends to induce in the worshipper a stronger faith in the efficacy of the act or the reality of the truth. His soul thus finds satisfaction in the performance of the symbolic act through which he feels himself brought into closer communion with his God. It is easy to understand that in the course of the religious evolution, a higher conception of God should have caused the magic act to evolve into the symbol, and that the symbol itself should be abandoned or reduced to a minimum when the idea of God has become perfectly spiritualised and communion with the Father who is in Heaven is realized without any external and intermediary means. A comparison of the great mhamba with the relics of saints or other relics used in certain religions would probably show a similar type of evolution.

Some scientists believe that religious evolution contained a *preanimistic phase*, in which the worship of spirits had not yet come into existence, and in which primitive man employed only magic means to influence the supernatural powers. This

787 brother will be so called." Nkolele, the father of these two men,
793 was the Libombo mhamba before them. This is another meaning of this great word mhamba. Klass was neither a gift made to the ancestor-gods of the Libombos, nor a magic object employed to win their favour, but he was the elder member of the family, the one who was the official and indispensable intermediary between all the Libombos and their gods. For this reason he was a mhamba. This leads me to propose the following definition of the word : *A mhamba is any object or act or even person which is used to establish a bond between the gods and their worshippers.*

Having thus analysed all the elements contained in the Thonga mhamba, we may safely conclude that its spiritual and religious value cannot be denied. Whatever place ritual may hold in the ceremonies of ancestrolatry, whatever mixture of devotional and magic elements may be found in them, the offering is not a mere external gift which appeases the gods by its material value, nor a simple means of coercion which forces them to submit to the will of the worshipper. By means of the mhamba the Thonga really aims at entering into relationship with those powerful spirits who control his life (1).

may be true, but as regards Bantus, they have long outgrown this stage. Even when they have recourse to magic processes in order to influence their ancestor-gods, these have a distinctive character, different from that of the ordinary magic which they practise when they wish to affect the impersonal forces of Nature. Everything done in order to obtain the favour of the ancestor-gods is a *mhamba*, not a *muri*, as I have already pointed out.

782 (1) Religious and magic practices are more or less mingled in Thonga ritual and it
● 789 is evident that the smaller the degree of magic contained in a rite, the more genuine
755 religious feeling there will be in it. I owe to my Venda informant the description of a sacrifice performed in his tribe for a sick child, where the two elements are combined to an extraordinary extent. It is called *the offering of the goat with clothes* (mbudzi ya u dzwindise).

A goat is provided. It is placed before a basin of water mixed with certain drugs and forced to drink, to drink till it is fully distended, and dies. It is then skinned and cut open. The large intestine is extracted from the body, and a part of it is cut off and stitched up at one end so as to form a kind of pouch. From each limb a bit of meat is taken, and a provision of the seeds of various cereals, brought to the spot together with drugs. All these different kinds of food are introduced into the pouch, the process of filling it being accompanied by prayers to the ancestor-god. The officiant, whilst proceeding with his task, puts seeds into the goat's intestine with one hand, and, with the other, takes other seeds and places them apart. These he will keep carefully in order to sow them later on. And continually he prays: "Eat your fill and be satisfied, and leave us some for our use." Thus the ancestor-god has been fed, well and duly stuffed. The pouch is then stitched at its other end. But now the ancestor-god must be clothed

c) *Prayers.*

The act of prayer is called *khongota* (Ro.), *khongela* (Dj.) 782
(the same word being also employed to mean "supplicate"); or *bulabulela*, to speak to, or scold the gods; *bukutjela* means a long, meandering prayer in which the officiant says the same thing over and over again. I have given twenty-two different forms of prayer when describing the manifold religious acts of the Thongas: two prayers of medicine men (I. 55, II. 393); those pronounced on the day of marriage (I. p. 111); of death, with the nkanye twig (I. p. 142); in the ceremony of crushing down the hut (I. 161); at the distribution of the widows (I. 208); at the death of a sister (I. 216); in the ceremony of killing the tie of consanguinity (I. 258); on journeys (I. p. 340. II. p. 394, 398); on offering the first fruits (I. 396); before the tjeba fishing (II. p. 87); when sneezing (II. 361); on offering tobacco at the altar (II. p. 390); for a sick nephew (II. p. 396); at the sacrifice of reconciliation (II. p. 399); at the worship of the Makaringe family (II. p. 403);

also! A strap is cut from the goat's skin and the sacrificer winds it all round the 782
pouch. Carrying the offering with him he now goes to the grave of the grandfather, digs, and lays the pouch in the earth parallel to the body beneath; he then prays again: 789
"We worship you, grandfather! And we have clothed you. This is your food. Eat and be full and be contented. And leave us food, plenty of food that we also 755
may be contented, and bless the sick child."

Let us try to analyse this rite according to the ideas of magic which we have explained, p. 369. We are dealing here with the ancestor-god complexus. A goat is provided, a gift made. This is religion. This goat has now become one of the possessions of the ancestor-god, a part of him. Henceforth the goat represents the god and an action performed upon it will be at the same time performed on the god. The goat is filled with water to quench the thirst of the god. A pouch is made of the intestine, a part of the animal which will now represent the whole, and food is introduced into it to feed the god. All these acts are instances of *communionist magic*, and the prayer which accompanies them is the religious element of the sacrifice. Some seeds are put apart to be sown later on. As they belonged to the provision made for the offering, these seeds partake of the nature of the whole of that provision; they have entered into the ancestor-god complexus; they are therefore particularly suitable for sowing, since the blessing of the powerful god will rest upon them. This is communionist magic again, whilst the filling up of the goat with water and food and the clothing its intestine with a strap may be regarded as *imitative magic*. The placing of the pouch in the grave facing the same way as the body of the ancestor once more signifies the identity of both, and the sacrificer is definitely persuaded that by all these rites he has really exercised a strong and compelling influence on his god (See my paper on "Some Features of the Religion of the Ba-Venda" *S. A. Journal of Science*, April 1921).

Special precautions are taken in respect to twins when they 845
pay a mourning visit. One of the grave-diggers meets them at the 765
entrance of the village and says: "Do not fear, Children of Heaven." He then puts some ashes on their heads and on their fontanelles. This is done because twins are feeble (ma ni bushapu) and the defilement might affect them more than other children. They must therefore be protected by smearing the middle of the head, and the "extremity of the tree of life," viz., the fontanelle, with a preventive. The mother also undergoes a similar treatment. She must prostrate herself near the hut of the deceased, at the place where the wall has been pierced to make an exit for the corpse. Then the grave-digger brings some live embers in a broken pot, pours a little water on to them, and dips his fingers into the water; he then presses both his hands against the woman's belly and brings them round her waist, pressing them all the while against the skin, until they meet on the spine; thus she is "cured inside" (dahiwa ndjen). This will prevent her from suffering from internal troubles, to which she, having given birth to Tilo, Heaven, is particularly liable. (Comp. I. p. 151) (1).

From this brief description of the customs connected with twins 845
in most of the Thonga clans, it may be seen that their explanation [783]
is twofold: 1) The birth of twins is a death, consequently a 772
defilement, indeed the worst of all defilements. Hence the 789
purificatory rites which bear the character of *passage rites*: the mother is secluded and passes through a period of isolation, after which she is again admitted to society after a painful "casting away of her misfortune." 2) But the cause of the defilement is not an ordinary death, but Heaven. *She is Heaven*; she is said to have

(1) Another category of persons bearing a special relation to Heaven are the 184
albinos. Cases of albinism are not frequent amongst South African Natives, yet they
are sometimes met with. They are called in Thonga *Khalandlati*, a word which 826
means literally *charcoal-lightning*. It is believed that they have been burnt (hisa) by
lightning in their mother's womb before their birth. "Ba tlalile, a ba wupfanga, ba 772
bengiwi hi tilo," viz. "they are uncomplete beings, they are not ripe, they have been
hated by Heaven"; these are the terms in which they are described. They are not 845
however regarded as taboo (yila), they merely inspire disgust (nyenya) (p. 83). As
regards women suffering from this kind of disgrace, other women do not smear themselves
with the same ochre as they, lest they should give birth to albinos; they do not drink
from the same cup. Men do not marry them, and in this respect they are classed with
leper women and witches, who are also looked on as repugnant.

845 *made Heaven* (a hambi Tilo), to have *carried Heaven* (a rwi Tilo), to
772 have *ascended to Heaven* (a khandjiyi Tilo). This connection
established between her and Heaven is clearly seen in the *rain*
789 *customs* previously described. Notice that the day following the
766 birth of twins is a *shimusi*, i. e. a day of rest. Nobody tills the ground, fearing that it would prevent rain from falling. When the *mbelele* takes place in Nondwane and Zihlahla (p. 318), the half naked women who are sent to clean the wells take with them a mother of twins. This is no doubt in order to show them where the graves of twins are. But there is also another reason. In the sacred wood of Libombo there is a hole into which the woman is put ; her sisters then pour on to her the water which they have drawn from all the wells, till the hole is half full, and the water comes up to her breasts. This will cause the rain to fall. Why is this? No doubt because, the woman of Heaven being wet, Heaven itself will be wet. Spoon did not give this explanation himself, but, when I suggested it to him, he accepted it readily. For the same reason the graves of twins are watered. In certain cases water is poured on the graves of the ancestors also, because rain is attributed both to them and to Heaven, and this watering the graves is meant to induce either Heaven or the ancestor-gods to cause rain to fall. Hence again the precaution taken of burying twins in damp places, and of exhuming them in times of drought if they have been buried in dry ground (1).

845 The connection between twins and Heaven, so clearly to
772 be seen in these customs, appears again in respect to thunder-
storms, which, as we shall see, are another manifestation of Heaven.
821 When lightning threatens a village, people say to a twin : "Help us!
789 You are a Child of Heaven! You can therefore cope with Heaven (mi kota Tilo), it will hear you when you speak." So the child

845 (1) In other clans this law is extended to children prematurely born, even though they
761 are not twins, and even to children who have not had the cotton string tied round their waist or who have cut their upper teeth first. On the other hand, among the Nkunas
772 no special connection seems to be established between twins and Heaven. These differences may be explained by the fact that all these abnormal cases were ascribed to
766 Heaven in former times, and the connection has been preserved in the various clans in respect to one or the other of these categories. Note that, in the song of the widows (l. p. 207), the king Heaven appears to have caused the death of the husband; this is another proof that Heaven was formerly considered the most frequent cause of death.

goes out of the hut and prays to Heaven in the following words : 845
"Go away! Do not annoy us! We are afraid. Go and roar far 772
away." When the thunderstorm has ended, the child is 821
thanked (1). His mother can also help in the same way, for has 789
she not ascended to Heaven? "She can speak with it, she is at it (or in it) — a li ku djone." (Spoon.)

We find in these rites a striking instance of the combination of the three forms of magic which have been explained above (p. 368). Heaven, rain, lightning, the mother of twins and the twins themselves form a connected whole. Action brought to bear on the mother of twins will therefore have its effect on Heaven ; this is *communionist magic*. This action consists in pouring water over her, (not only in plunging her into a lake). According to the principle of *imitative magic*, Heaven will thus be watered and will pour rain upon the earth. The act of the twin in commanding the lightning to spare the country is a case of *verbal magic*. All this would be logical enough and the conclusions perfectly legitimate if only the premisses were true!

Customs regarding twins vary from one clan to another. While 845
in one tribe they are put to death, in others their advent is considered an event of great happiness. This is the case in *Tembe and Maputju*, where women are said to wish for twins, and, if certain mothers have enjoyed this piece of good fortune, others ask them for some of the fat with which they have smeared their bodies, hoping by the use of the same ointment to obtain a like happy result. The hut is never burnt. The mother gives birth to the twins behind the hut (fukwen, I. p. 37). When it is time for her to re-enter her domicile, a hole is made in the wall at the back. The husband is excluded from the hut till the day of presentation to the moon (a ceremony which, in these clans, is not omitted in the case of twins). When he is again admitted, his wife strikes his legs with a stick, in order "to cure him" (ku mu

(1) Mrs. Junod, who was for years a missionary amongst the Fañ or Pahouin of 171
the French Congo, told me that, one day, after a tornado, the rainbow suddenly appeared in the sky. One of her female pupils at once ran to her, and hid her face in her schoolmistress' lap. On asking the reason of this fear the teacher was told that this girl was a twin, and twins dare not look at the rainbow. So the connection between Heaven and twins exists also in this tribe of Western Africa.

825 presides over all unaccountable and unavoidable phenomena of the
772 atmosphere and of the life of the fields, or of human existence.

We have seen how the two sets of religious customs play their part side by side in the rites of rain-making. A similar coincidence may be noticed here. The removal of the "nunu," a rite which originated in the conception of Heaven, corresponds to the sacrifice of the chief in the Maluleke country, who gathers his sons together to pray to his ancestor-gods for the destruction of the vermin (psidi) which eat the mealies and endanger the harvest (p. 404).

3) Heaven, Storms and Robbers.

772 The most characteristic manifestation of Heaven is in the
821 storm. According to the statement of the credulous Natives, after the women have finished cleaning the wells, and have watered
●789 the graves of twins, clouds appear, a whirlwind arises, and "Heaven
627 begins to thunder" — "Tilo dji djuma." — I have already described Thonga ideas about thunder and the lightning bird (p. 313), and the powerful charm made from the flesh, feathers and urine of this marvellous creature! There is still another use made of this extraordinary drug: It is a powerful aid in *tracing thieves*! The magician who possesses this powder of Heaven, (Ñwagwalen of Shikhabele in the Mabota clan), when called upon to point out the thief, acts in the following way. Suppose some one finds that some valuable article has disappeared from his hut, he will say to his near relatives, to those whom he suspects of having committed the larceny: "Take care! If you don't confess, we will go to Ñwagwalen, who lives at Shikhabele!" This threat may possibly be sufficient to elicit an avowal. If not, the individual who has been wronged goes to the diviner, and asks his assistance; the latter takes his "bag of tricks," his drugs, and his big black stick, i. e., the stick which he was carrying when he dug in the earth and found the urine of the bird, or the bird itself. A notch has been made in the stick, to show the depth of the hole in which he has discovered Heaven. Carrying these charms, he goes to find the chief. An audience being granted, he cries aloud: "O Chief! a theft has been

committed! Now, no one ought ever to rob me. What shall I do!" Then the Chief assembles his subjects and invites the guilty one to confess. If all deny it, Ñwagwalen starts off, with all his apparatus, for the place where the theft was committed, and "treats it medicinally" (a dahela mbangu). He spreads out his drugs, raises his stick in the air, and addresses Heaven as follows : 772 821 789 627

> We, Tilo, hi wene u ka ni mahlu, u bonaka busiku ni nhlekanhi!
> Ba tekile psa nga ba kaneta! Tana u ba kofnba ba psha!
> Oh Heaven, thou it is who hast eyes which see as well by night as by day...
> They have stolen my goods, and they deny it! Come and discover them; may they be consumed!

Then the clouds begin to gather, and, towards evening, the storm breaks. Lightning strikes the thief in his hut, and causes the stolen articles to reappear. — "I saw this happen at Hoñwana," declared Spoon, "but of late years such occurrences have been less frequent."

According to Camilla, the guilty person is sometimes punished by a terrible attack of vermin, of which he is unable to rid himself; or he is confronted with several palm leaves, which, by a kind of supernatural judgment, turn into snakes, if he be truly guilty of having stolen the missing property.

The intervention of Heaven in the matter of detecting thieves is also an accepted fact in Khosen. My colleague, the Rev. A. Grandjean, told me of the following significant custom. When there is a storm, those who have missed any belongings go and stand at the door of the hut of the suspected thief, and it is quite possible that the inmate, terrified by the thunder, may throw out the stolen articles.

It may be concluded, from these perfectly authenticated customs, that the Natives attribute to Heaven the power of *omniscience*, more especially in respect to the detection of theft. The basket of bones is never consulted for this purpose. Moreover as Heaven guarantees property and makes people afraid to steal, it acts as a kind of *moralising influence*. [626]

I have also been told by witnesses from the Nkuna region that into the composition of the charm used to protect gardens against thieves, (p. 30) there enters a little powder obtained by burning a 789 772

789 stem which has been struck by lightning, i. e. by Heaven ; or the
772 magician will burn branches of the same tree in the garden itself and bring them near to the stalks in order that these may be surrounded by the smoke emanating from them. If a thief enters the garden with evil intentions, "Tilo dji ta mu dlaya, i. e. Heaven will kill him."

4) Heaven and the Balungwana.

772 In 1894, as previously stated, locusts, which had not been
825 seen for some fifty years, made their appearance on the shores of
776 Delagoa Bay, and also in Natal and the Transvaal. The popular imagination was, naturally, greatly stirred by this unusual phenomenon, which was at first greeted with smiles and astonishment, but which, later on, was the cause of endless lamentation. I was one day walking up the hill of Lourenço Marques with an old man, the counsellor of one of the sub-chiefs of Tembe, a thoughtful and intelligent person, when he said to me, with great earnestness, in a low voice, as if referring to some important event : "Have you not heard that in Maputju two dwarfs (psimhu-ñwanyana) fell from Heaven ; a little man and a little woman. They came to say to the people : "Do not kill the grasshoppers! They belong to us!" This counsellor only repeated what all thought and were saying in all the native villages ; these grasshoppers, arriving unexpectedly from on high, were a manifestation of Heaven, just like the lightning, rain, twins, or the nunu, and these celestial beings had come to announce it to men.

772 But belief in the existence of *special personages* in Heaven
776 did not originate in connection with these terribly destructive
821 insects. The idea had been familiar, for a long time past, to the Rongas, and probably to all the Thongas. These personages were not only described as dwarfs, but also as balungwana (p. 352). They were said to fall from Heaven at the time of the great rains. Thus, Timoteo Mandlati told me people had seen some of them appear, a long time ago, in the Nkuna country, and that they had gone back to heaven in a cloud ; they live in celestial space, and when it thunders without any rain falling, the Nkunas say :

2: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga
p. 451

CHAPTER III

MAGIC

Without pretending here to give definitions applicable to all the primitive races, well knowing how difficult the subject is, yet, I think I ought at the beginning of this Chapter to explain as clearly as possible the distinction which I draw between Religion, Magic and Science, as they are represented amongst the South African tribes. 789

I include under the term *Religious* all the rites, practices, conceptions or feelings which presuppose the belief in personal or semi-personal spirits endowed with the attributes of Deity, and with which man tries to enter into relation, either to win their assistance or to avert their anger, essentially by means of offerings and prayers.

Under *Magic* I include all the rites, practices, and conceptions which aim at dealing with hostile, neutral, or favourable influences, either impersonal forces of Nature, or living men acting as wizards, or personal spirits, whether ancestor-gods or the hostile ghosts which are supposed to take possession of their victims, these rites and practices being inspired by the magic principles explained above (p. 368). I recognise two kinds of magic: *White magic*, by which man tries to protect himself against these influences, or turn them to his advantage, and *Black magic*, by which man attempts to make use of these forces against his fellows.

I call *Scientific* all the rites, practices, and conceptions which are inspired by a true observation of facts. I include in this category certain medical treatments, ideas as to botany and zoology, etc.

These different elements are intermingled in practice to such an extent that, as explained in the preceeding Chapter, Religion is largely adulterated with Magic. On the other hand, Magic often admits religious elements (see Possession), and the true domain of Science is invaded on all sides by conceptions of a magical character. This will be shown by the study of the four subjects which I include in the Chapter on Magic, viz.: Medical Art, Possession, Witchcraft and Divination.

The confusion between these three domains also accounts for the composite character of those individuals who practise the medical, or magical art. The medicine-man (ñanga) is far from being purely a man of science, he partakes more or less of the nature of the magician,

789 and prays to the ancestors who transmitted their charms to him. The magician (mungoma) is sometimes a kind of priest when he undertakes to exorcise the spirits of possession. The diviner (wa bula), whose art is entirely based on magical conceptions, occasionally prays to his ancestor-gods to help him in throwing the bones which he has received from them. I am convinced that the three domains are essentially distinct, and that the Thongas have a dim perception of this distinction. But they grade into each other with the greatest ease, and I shall try to follow these gradations, faithfully endeavouring not to alter the original ideas, whilst trying to explain them intelligibly.

A. MEDICAL ART.

756 The medicinal practices of the South African Bantus are very interesting from the ethnographic point of view, but their study has also a practical importance. In all civilised lands the medical profession is subject to restrictions; the candidate must pass examinations showing that he is capable of treating his future patients. Nothing of this kind is to be found amongst the Thongas. The only qualification of the doctor is that of having inherited some recipes from one of his ancestors, and of using them with more or less success on voluntary patients. Should steps be taken by Colonial Governments to stop, or at any rate to regularise, the action of the medicine-men?

A precise knowledge of their practices is necessary in order to come to a conclusion on this point. Missionaries have also a great interest in this study. They have all noticed how often their converts, when sickness overcomes them, abandon the Mission Station and run to their quacks, sometimes brusquely interrupting a treatment which had been prescribed to them by a fully trained medical missionary. The result is almost sure to be the eventual loss of their health and of their faith. Let us, therefore, try to understand the Native medical art and see how far we can trust its representatives.

I. *The Medicine-men.*

I came across a good many *ñanga* (yin-tin), the technical name given to Native physicians. They are all very proud of their

756 evident consciousness of his talent and powers that he explained to me the uses of his medicines.

278 But the most distinguished medicine-man I ever met was old
756 *Mankhelu*, who may be looked upon as one of the masters of the profession in the Thonga tribe. "It is no play, what I am
789 doing! I have beaten an ox (i. e. made a present of an ox)
782 to my maternal uncle Hlomendhlen! I even gave him two oxen, and he taught me his medical art! He led me everywhere, showing me all his drugs." So Mankhelu became a regular ñanga, in addition to being a diviner, a master of the art of throwing bones, a rain-maker, a counsellor, and general of the army. His whole family shared his professional character, and helped him in his work. Every year, at the time of bukanye, the drugs had to be renewed. His wives went all over the bush to dig out the medicinal roots and to collect them in their *lihlelo* baskets (p. 123). On their return home the bones were consulted to find out who was to cut the roots in pieces (gemela). This having been done, they pounded them in their mortars ; a portion of this material was dried outside, and reduced to powder without having been cooked ; these were the *male medicines*. The other portion was roasted in pieces of broken pots, burnt until it was like charcoal, ground and made into a black powder ; these were the *female medicines*. The whole village assembled and inhaled the smoke through reeds during the operation. A goat was killed and a sacrifice performed ; the liquid contained in the *psanyi* (p. 410) was squeezed on the burning drugs to put them out ; a little bukanye beer was also used for the same purpose. In the meantime Mankhelu said "*tsu*," and addressed this prayer to his gods, and especially to the ancestor who had taught him his science :

"You! so and so! Let these drugs of yours rise (pfuka, i. e. find new strength). Let people come from the Zulus, from Mosilekatse, from Mpfumu! Let them think of our leaves (matluka, the common name for drugs). Let them bring elephant tusks, marriageable girls, etc. Let them dream of us!"

756 This operation of renewing the drugs aims at giving them
278 new strength. Mankhelu said : "We let our drugs *luma* for
787

the new year ; we raise our calabashes, so that the new season 278
may not be too difficult for us... This will consolidate our home ; 756
bad coughs will not attack us too severely. It will shut out the
wind ; we shall no longer be very ill, because these are new 789
drugs. As regards the old ones, they have been contaminated (khuma) by the misfortunes of last year. They are mad (hungukile). A new rain falls ; let there be also new drugs, and we can undertake our journeys to sell our goods." So the ñanga removed a little of the old powder from each calabash ; he threw this on the path at a crossway ; then he washed the calabashes at the same spot : "Misfortune is thus thrown away. Passers-by will take it with them as it has been thrown out there by us." Then the new powder was added to the remainder of the old, which was "raised" by it.

In order to throw more light on the nature of Mankhelu's 756
art, let me briefly mention *the roots* (rimetju), or *the leaves* (tluka, 789
ri-ma), or, to use the great, the generic name, *the drugs* (muri, 278
mu-mi) which composed the marvellous powder of the calabashes. 824
He was not a man of one drug. He claimed to be a universal physician, so he mixed together all kinds of drugs, being sure that, in this way, they would certainly be effective in any case brought to him. Here is the description given by him.

Ntjebe : that by which we find strength to trample on our enemies ; we trample also on the winds which spoil the mealies ; we drive out the bad cold (or wind) which has come to us and made us cough. (Notice the triple use of this drug).

Shikuku : that which tramples on misfortune.

Mpoñwana wa burisi matuba-tubana : vanquisher of the enemy and of misfortune.

Shinano : that which induces the enemies to sleep ; you hang some leaves of it on your shield and they are overcome by drowsiness, they do not see you coming towards them.

Nembe-nembe. By it you reach your enemy while he still sleeps and kill him before he can defend himself.

Mpetshu wa milomo : that of the lips! It overcomes the curses and the assagais of the others!

756 *Rihinga ra ndlela* : a root found on the path ; it helps you to go
789 on, though others may seek to hinder you in your progress.

278 *Shivunge* : that which attracts patients to the doctor.

824 *Nandjiyane* : that which makes his words agreeable, so that patients will like them ; (from ku nandjiya, to be agreeable).

Mvakazi, phuphuma ra matlhari : that which is used to make the slayers vomit the main drug of the *tintebe* (I. p. 479).

Mbendjula : that which strengthens all the other drugs.

These are the principal trees, or plants, used for the preparation of the powder. They must be *salted* by the addition of the *sea*, viz., of the medicines taken from the sea, which Mankhelu uses to cause rain to fall (p. 321).

The sexual character of the drugs is essential. The female are used principally for sprinkling the army and the assagais, the male for treating diseases. We find here again the law of opposition of sexes ; the military domain is the male domain par excellence : it must be treated by means of female drugs. On the contrary, when slaughtering a she-goat for the sacrifice, a little of the male drugs must be placed in its mouth and the weapon used to kill it must be smeared with the same, and vice-versa for the he-goat. "To act otherwise is taboo. All the ñanga do this" (p. 417).

755 There may be some true scientific elements in Thonga medical
757 practice. Experiments have been made in using certain roots to cure certain diseases, and tradition has handed down some prescriptions from father to son. Why should there not be effective curative properties in plants of their country just as in the Cinchona bark, or in Castor oil seeds? And why should they not have discovered them?
756 However the Native ñanga is by no means a scientific man, and the best,
789 the most renowned, are perhaps the least scientific. Those who treat only one complaint, and only know one drug, are perhaps those most resembling real physicians ; they act on the results of experiment. But the line between science and superstition is very soon crossed, and the medical art passes with the greatest ease into the domain of magic, all the more so as the difference between Science and Magic is not perceived. *Muri*, which means originally tree, plant, medicinal herb, is at the same time any means of producing any effect, natural or super-

natural, on any influence, hostile or favourable, personal or impersonal (1). That is why the *ntjebe* shrub helps Mankhelu to attain three objects at the same time : cure a bad cough, protect the mealies, and rout the enemy. 756 789

The question has often been put : Are these medicine-men sincere? or are they mere quacks living on the stupidity of the patients whom they deceive? I am convinced, after having listened to their talk, that most of them thoroughly believe in the value of their drugs ; this does not prevent them from occasionally using tricks in order to impress their patients with their miraculous power. One of my pupils, who had accompanied a ñanga for a long time, wishing to enter the profession himself, and had thus had an opportunity to watch his master in his medical work, assured me that, as a rule, the man administered his drugs honestly and in good faith ; but if somebody came suffering from toothache and asked for relief, the doctor first procured a little worm found in the berry of a solaneous shrub called rulane. This he placed in a pot filled with boiling water. The patient had then to inhale the vapour from the pot, his head being covered with a cloth. When the inhalation was over the ñanga took a piece of charcoal and rubbed his forehead with it ; he did the same all round his eyes and told him : "Now your eyes are open and you will be able to see what it was that caused your suffering." He emptied the pot and the little white worm appeared at the bottom, resembling the caries of a decaying tooth : "This is what they had brought on you" the ñanga would add." ("They" evidently means the wizards.) This is clearly a trick pure and simple. But, according to my informant, it was also a medical treatment, because the aim of the trick was to convince the patient that he had been cured. It was thus what we should call a means of suggestion. If, after that, the suffering did not cease, the ñanga would tell his patient that he had not paid enough to effect the cure, that his ancestor-gods (those of the ñanga, who had given him his drugs) were angry at receiving such a small fee, etc. The trick of making patients believe that a harmful object has been extracted from their body is frequently used. We have 755 756

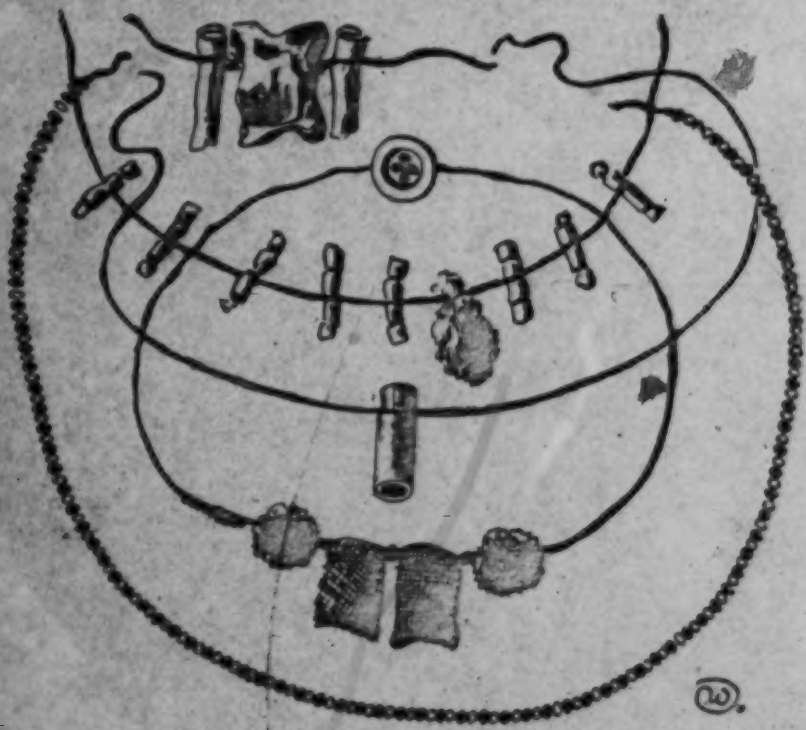
(1) The following story, which I owe to one of my colleagues, fittingly illustrates the ideas held by most of the Thongas concerning *muri*, remedy. A man of the Libombo clan found a bottle filled with a white salt which he at once recognized as being most probably a *muri*. He picked up the bottle and kept it carefully in his hut. One day, feeling unwell, he thought the occasion had come to use his precious drug. His wife bade him be careful, but he secretly swallowed a good dose. Was it not a *muri* ? He was poisoned, and would have died if my colleague had not succeeded in saving him by means of an antidote.

756 Henceforth he will lead a special life, characterised by protective
184 and propitiatory rites, which tend to the development of his subliminal faculties.

1) Protective rites.

756 As soon as he was "born again" in the thwaza ceremony,
751 but to a still higher degree later on, after being elevated to the dignity of the magician, the exorcised, having entered the myster-
789 ious world of those endowed with powers, becomes the butt of all his colleagues in the magical arts ; first the baloyi, the witches, who *try* him, to see if he is able to discover their evil deeds, and secondly the other magicians, who are annoyed at seeing a rival ready to dispute their practice with them. So he must be continually on his guard ; in the evening, especially, he must protect himself against their nightly charms. The great protective medicine is a pellet made of the powder of many roots, which have been burned and bound together with fat taken from the bowels of a goat. The first of these roots comes from a tree called *mabophe*, found in the Bilen country. This has the power of tying (bopha, in Zulu, means to tie) the knees of the wizards who come during the night, so that they will be found in the morning, stark naked, in the hut of the exorcised. The *nulu* root seems to be used for the same purpose ; the *nsala*, which also enters into the composition of the protective pellets, rather aims at ensuring the success of the treatment undertaken by the new gobela ; as its fruits are plentiful (p. 16), so will the possessed come in great numbers to the doctor. The pellet is used for medical treatment, but the same drugs are also kept in the form of powder, in a piece of reed, or in the calabashes hanging from the forked pole. Every night the exorcised swallows a pinch, and throws another pinch on the fire in his hut. This will prevent enemies from entering, or make them prisoners. Before eating, he must also protect himself by chewing (phora) a little of the *manono*, a kind of antiseptic or anti-witchcraft root as big as a stick, which he always carries with him ; this is the special *luma* (I. p. 146) of the exorcised. Who knows if his food has not been poisoned by the malpractices of his rivals?

When undertaking a journey, he must always chew his *ndjao*, the juncus root which has often been mentioned and which "cleans roads;" this is "his shield," because the ndjao knows and tries (djinga) everything, and overcomes the hostility of man and things. It is the universal remedy against any hostile influence. So, after having chewed, he spits on his stick, rubs it and starts on



Protective amulets worn by exorcised.

his journey, saying: "The road is ripe (wupfile), let us go!" — The astragalus will be the principal charm that the possessed will have to wear, and will be tied round his neck between two little amulet bags or reeds.

The exorcised leads a life of constant fighting against evil spiritual influences. These protective rites are observed all through the year of convalescence.

Another rite, which is observed after the hondlola only, is

158 transported into the realm of divinity, thus giving rise to the true gods
753 and the devils. Possessing spirits are not worse than ancestor-gods. They all are non-moral. They can bless and curse, and their moral character is not taken into account at all.

2) The progress of modern psychology gives an explanation of many of these phenomena. The disease of the personality which manifests itself in the presence of a double psychological consciousness is well-known ; the hypnotic suggestion which the tambourine players unconsciously exert on their victims, sufficiently explains the origin of the disease, and the kind of life led by the exorcised is well calculated to develop their mediumistic faculties. So many of the so-called miracles of possession are easily accounted for. It would however be going too far to exclude, a priori, any possibility of external spiritual influences in
[797] those phenomena. There is one very striking fact which is a source of great wonder to the Natives. These patients, as soon as they put themselves under Christian influence, are healed at once and for ever. We have, amongst our converts, exorcists who had acquired great fame, and who recount, with glowing eyes, how they have been delivered from their terrible anguish by their new faith. For, whatever success they may have obtained in their career of exorcists, their condition was a disease, a painful disease, and they are extremely glad to have been delivered from it. This fact must certainly be remembered when trying to arrive at an explanation of possession.

C. WITCHCRAFT.

789 I have pointed out, in an article published in the Report of
754 the S. A. A. A. S., of 1906, how little comprehension most White people have of this important but difficult subject. A confusion is almost always made between the *witches* and the *witch-doctors*. The French word *sorcier* and the English term *sorcerer*, indiscriminately used for those who cast spells and for magicians, lead to the same misconception. In order to avoid errors it is, I think, imperative first of all clearly to distinguish between *Black Magic* and *White Magic*. The adjectives black and white are not employed in this connection amongst South African Natives, but Thongas certainly do make the distinction and possess different terms for each. Black magic is called *Buloyi* ; it consists of the

criminal magical practices by which wizards and witches bewitch 789
innocent folk. Buloyi is a crime. White Magic is called *Bungoma*, 754
and means the magical operations of those who combat evil influences and use their powers for the benefit, and not for the ruin, of their countrymen. The *mungoma* (magician) is consequently the great enemy of the *noyi* (caster of spells). It may be that the power of both is at bottom of the same nature. But the use they make of it is entirely opposed, the one exerting it in the interests of Society, the other against it. We shall therefore have to deal with these two categories of persons in two separate paragraphs.

I. *Black Magic (Buloyi)*.

Buloyi, an abstract noun of the bu-ma class, as well as *noyi* [192]
(pl. *baloyi*), is derived from the verb *ku loya* (Ro.), *lowa* (Dj.), to bewitch. This word is very interesting. It seems to have been known already in the Ur-Bantu (Comp. Meinhof, *Grundriss*, p. 173) and exists in Swaheli, Herero, Xosa, Sutho, Thonga, etc. Strange to say, the stem is absent in Zulu, where it is replaced by *thakata*. In Thonga its most common meaning is to bewitch. But the word is also applied to the act of a man who marries his near cousin (I. p. 258). Moreover Nkolele, describing to me the sacrifice in the sacred wood, and speaking of the *ntukulu* who prepares to steal the offering, said : "Here is the *noyi*, ready to come and steal the beer..." I also heard the crocodile stone, used by the chief as a charm to protect his life, called *buloyi bya hosi*, the magical power of the chief (I. p. 393) ; these instances show that the word loya is sometimes, though rarely, used in a more general sense. Its technical meaning, however, is and remains : to injure or kill by enchantment. Who are these baloyi, and what crime do they perpetrate?

1) The Baloyi.

The *baloyi*, or people possessing the evil eye, are numerous 754
in each tribe. Their power is hereditary, but, strange to say, it is transmitted by the mother and not by the father. Therefore

754 on the spot, unable to withdraw his hand from the cob! But, what is even more curious, the baloyi of one country assemble and form an army and go to fight with the baloyi of another, in order to deprive them of their mealies and carry them away to their own fields. For instance, in 1900, there was a great war between the baloyi of Mpfumu, near Lourenço Marques, and those of the peninsula of Inyack, at the entrance of Delagoa Bay. That year the Kafir beans were plentiful at Mpfumu, and this was explained by the fact that the Mpfumu baloyi had won the victory over their Inyack enemies. They owed their success to the following trick. They gathered a large number of seeds of the little cucumber, called nkakana, and made with them a kind of enormous ladder, which was suspended midway between sky and sea ; upon it they crossed the 20 or 30 miles of the bay of Delagoa and stole all the Kafir beans of Inyack (1). If a tempest has uprooted trees and broken branches, people are sure to say that the "army (yimpi) of the baloyi" has passed in the shape of a terrific storm during the night.

754 789 *b)* But the great crime of the baloyi is that of *killing*. They are murderers, and all the more to be feared as they act unconsciously, without being seen or known. Two motives inspire their crimes — hatred and jealousy. If one of them has been offended, he is sure to revenge himself by putting his enemy to death. During the night he escapes from his hut (as we have seen above), opens his wings and flies directly to the dwelling of the man he hates. But the habitation of this man is well protected ; all round it there is a spiritual fence made up of charms, various

(1) On one of these expeditions to the Inyak Islands the baloyi of the Movumbi district wished to buy food from their colleagues beyond the Bay. A certain woman, who was a great noyi, took her daughter-in-law with her, but the latter was not a noyi. However she was led through the air, along the nkakana ladder, to the village of Magilankinsin, a headman of Inyak. This man refused to accept her, as she was ignorant of the buloyi art, and sent her back home. In the meantime the husband, Midlalen, noticed that his wife was not sleeping in the hut. When she reappeared in the morning he asked her : "Where have you been ?" — "To Inyaka." — "Indeed !" — "Yes ! I saw everything there." — "How did you go ?" — "I do not know." — "How did you return ?" — "I do not know." — "Have you seen Magilankinsin ?" — "Yes !" The husband suggested that his mother had played this trick by means of her buloyi and chased her away from his village. Mboza told the story as absolutely authentic, and added "these events occurred some ten years ago."

medicines which close the kraal against any invasion of witches. 754
What must he do in order to perpetrate his crime? He has first
made an agreement with another noyi residing in that village, who 789
has made an opening in this spiritual fence, similar to one of the small holes in the material one! He then gets into the kraal, tries to penetrate into the hut by the door, finds it closed, beats on it and, being unable to enter that way, flies to the crown of the hut and descends through it into the abode of the enemy, calmly sleeping on his mat. Then he proceeds to the bewitching operation, and the poor bewitched man is condemned to die! "O loyiwile," — "he has been bewitched ;" "ku sa ntjhuti ntsena," — "only his shadow remains." They also say that only the "ntjhumbu," the corpse, has been left, his true self having been stolen and eaten. He is sometimes called *ntungulu*, a word used to designate a wasp whose nest has been destroyed, and which flies about disconcerted, not knowing where to go, unable to sting, because it has no home... The heart of the bewitched has been stolen and put somewhere in a hole or a cavern (mhakwen). "Ba mu pepulile," they have ravished him, (like a feather taken away by the wind). He will get up in the morning, and die some days later, but what will die will be only his shadow. He himself was killed during that frightful night. He is already eaten! Or he will become mad (lihlanyi) and people will say : "The living have had the better of him" — "Ba mu kotile bahanyi." Here we find again, in an even more mysterious form, the idea of the duality of the human personality. How it is possible for a man who has still some days or months to live to be regarded as already entirely eaten up, I do not pretend to explain. Such is however the Native idea. One of my informants tried to overcome the difficulty by saying that what the noyi takes with him to eat is the inside, the bowels ; the outward frame alone remains, and the man will soon die! Most of the Natives, when the absurdity of the idea is pointed out to them, laugh and say nothing.

In order to attain his criminal ends, the noyi may resort to 754
various means ; he may point at his enemy *with the index finger*, which is a common method of bewitching in many nations. If, later on, you are overtaken by misfortune, you will remember

III. *The Method of dealing with Wizards.*

754 All the power of the magicians is resorted to in order to check
756 the enchantments of the baloyi. Their drugs are used with two
791 objects, — protection and cure, the cure consisting mainly in the disclosure of the wizard.

1) Protective methods.

789 The village, as we have seen, (I. p. 311) is well protected with
754 *anti-baloyi drugs*. The fence itself, the main entrance and the threshold of the headman's hut, have been magically treated when first built. But the magician, when he thinks it necessary, "revives" the drugs by burning his powder in a little fire on the road which enters the village. This protects the main entrance, and he does the same at the threshold of the headman's hut. The smoke will keep the wizards away. Stones, daubed with the powder, are placed in all directions to close the openings.

"These medicines act wonderfully," says Mankhelu. "Should a *noyi* succeed in entering the hut, the power of the smoke will be such that he will at once be revealed. The *noyi* will suddenly be seen there without any clothing, apparently dreaming, seeing nothing, knowing nothing. If it is a woman, I shall call her husband and show him his wife... 'What are you doing here?' he will say to her. She will not utter a word. Then I shall say to him : 'Look here, my friend... I might be hard on you. But I have pity. Do not allow your wife to do anything of the kind again. Pay me one or two oxen, and I will keep silent.' He will consent. Then I beat the woman with my stick. She awakes, and, quite ashamed of being in another hut without any clothing, she will fly away home!" Such is the testimony of Mankhelu, and he is certain of having succeeded more than once!!

Mboza asserted to me that he had witnessed a similar case

789 in Muthiyane (near Rikatla). A woman had been thus "surprised
754 by the rising sun" (shwela, p. 307). She was stark naked and had something red, like fire, on both shoulders ; these were the remnants of her wings. Having been overcome by the magical drugs she had been unable to reabsorb these wings into her flesh, and part of them remained outside. Every one ran away at this sight, and the chief ordered the woman to be shut up in her hut.

Some magicians used to fight the baloyi by *running through the bush during the night* and catching them as they flew by with their wings of fire. Note how Mholombo prevented two wizards from killing a woman (p. 500), and how the exorcised protect themselves by means of the mabophe drug, and by swallowing their nulu powder (p. 496). 1/2

2) Method of disclosing the Baloyi.

754 But should all the protective medicines which surround the village, together with those which have been swallowed by the inhabitants, or by which they have been inoculated, remain without effect, and should a serious case of illness occur, one of those evils which are generally attributed to the baloyi, the first thing to do is to *detect* the culprit.

Who may he be? The patient's relatives have most probably already some idea on this point, because, at the beginning of most buloyi cases, something happens which arouses *suspicion*, and this is a very important point to be noted if we wish to find the psychological explanation of these customs. Perhaps there has been a quarrel between two persons, and one of them, in his anger, has said to the other : "N'ta ku bona" i. e. "I shall see you." On hearing this the people immediately say : "This man is a noyi. He has revealed by daylight his crimes of the night." The man himself had perhaps not the slightest idea of such a thing. The same conclusion will be drawn if he points to another person with his index finger (I. p. 250). An imprudent word which at first sight would appear quite innocent may have the same

1/2 [For futher information on methods of dealing with wizards see pp. 525-535 -- Analyst]

787 Does it come from a *religious belief*? It is not easy to say definitely to
791 what extent the divinatory art rests on religion. On the one hand, the power of interpretation of the bones comes from the ancestor-gods who were bone-throwers themselves, and they are invoked to give or to revive this power. Mankhelu even told me that the prophecy of the arrival of the strangers had been inspired in him by his deceased father Shiluvane. But the Bula, the Word, is not generally looked on as being the utterance of the ancestor-gods. The bones are, in a certain sense, *superior to the gods* whose intentions they disclose. The Bula is the revelation of a more or less impersonal power, independent of the gods.

787 It is undeniable that the divinatory art is *essentially magical*; it rests
789 on those universal axioms of primitive mentality which are deeply engrained in the Bantu mind (p. 368) and this is sufficient to account
791 for the indisputable value which it possesses in the eyes of the Thongas. Like replaces like. By virtue of mere external similarity one object can signify another. Thus human beings are represented by animals which resemble them in a certain point. The reedbuck which wanders during the night stands for the wizards who do the same; the hyena, which eats the remains of the lion's feast, is the parasite who follows the chief, etc. Thus there are representative and represented objects. But like also acts on like: in some mysterious way the fate of the representative object will be the fate of the object represented. There is no doubt that diviners sometimes claim not only the power to form a diagnosis, to discover causes and give advice, but to influence the course of events themselves and determinate certain results. Mankhelu believed that he had contributed to the defeat of the Sikororo tribe when the bones so vividly depicted the rout of their army. If imitative magic controls the divinatory art, the part played by communionist magic is equally great. The part represents the whole. The astragalus, which is but a small bone, represents the whole body, and its fate prophecies the fate of the entire animal or person represented by it. The Native mind has a much profounder conception of the unity of the animal and human worlds than we have. Spoon once said to me mysteriously: "The astragalus of the goat truly represents the people of the village, because these animals live in the village; they know us, they know what is in us." Observe also how the consultant takes the amulets of the patient and rubs them against the bones in order that they may be able to speak the truth about him. These amulets contain the nails and hair of the patient if they have been tied round his neck in the hondlola ceremony. Moreover they are covered with his "nsila," the exudation of his body,

the material representation of his personality. By this contact the patient has in a way become a part of the "complexus Bula" and what happens to the bones will also happen to him ; what is said by the bones will henceforth apply directly to him. This magic conception of Nature is probably the profound and secret reason why the diviners believe so firmly in their art. 787 789 791

On the other hand, this art is so perfect that bone-throwers can derive very great satisfaction from the practice of it. It must be born in mind that, in fact, all the elements of Native life are represented by the objects contained in the basket of divinatory bones. It is a resumé of their whole social order, of all their institutions, and the bones, when they fall, provide them with an instantaneous picture of all that may befall them. This system is so elaborate that I do not hesitate to say that, together with their language, their folklore, their lobola customs and their burial rites, it is the product of their psychic life which shows most intelligence. If the premises of divination are accepted, astragalomancy seems to me vastly superior to cheiromancy and all the other systems which have been invented by us. It is also superior to the divination by four tablets of ivory or wood practised by a certain number of South African tribes, a description of which will be found in Appendix VI (1). 787 181

But if this system of divination is a proof of great intelligence, it must be confessed that *its results*, as shown in the psychic life of the tribe, 787 155 182

(1) There are some grounds for thinking that divination by astragalus bones is very old in the history of mankind. The Greeks practised *astragalomancy*. In a paper to which I shall refer in App. VI, the Rev. N. Roberts mentions the temple of Dodone, in which, according to Cicero, there was a large brass basin with the statue of a man upon it, and this man held in his hands a whip with three straps from which hung small astragalus bones. When these bones were set in motion by the wind, they struck against the basin and the sounds thus produced had a prophetic character. This was astragalomancy, but of a very different kind from that just described. Aristotle makes frequent allusions to the astragalus bone and says, inter alia, that one of its sides, named *coon*, represents the figure 6 ; another, named *chion*, the figure 1, etc. This shows that in his time the astragalus bone was already identified with the dice. The dice, also called *αστραγαλος* in Greek is simply an astragalus bone whose sides have been cut so as to form a perfect cube. We find traces of the use of the astragalus even further back in the past. Angelo Mosso, quoted by the same author, asserts that he found many astragalus in Italy, where they were used in connection with primitive religion as far back as the neolithic period. The discovery in the lake of Neuchâtel of a collection of more than thirty astragalus in the lake dwellers' station of Auvernier may be a proof that these bones did in truth play a part in the customs of primitive humanity. If this is so, then the Bantus have preserved the astragalus as they did the wooden pillow of the old Egyptians, the ancestrolatry of the Mousterians and the "mbaya" (p. 93) of the Libyans. The astragalus is still employed in play to represent cattle by Swiss children in the Canton of Valais, and I am told that the South African Boers have the same custom, and call these bones dol-ose.

3) How are taboos *dealt with?* 784

Happily the danger of taboos can be removed, otherwise life would be almost impossible! The medicine-men have the 789 necessary drugs to protect their poor fellow-men against the misfortune (khombo) which is always threatening them! Is not the whole arsenal of magic at their disposal? Rites in great numbers provide the necessary protection, especially the *luma rite*, which is the proper method of avoiding the special dangers connected with the *first use* of anything. The wish to obtain protection against all these dangers explains the immense influence of the medicine-men, of those who know the preventive drugs to be used against defilement and misfortune.

It is impossible to attain to a true knowledge of the taboos 784 without studying the laws of *their suspension*. Taboos are sometimes suspended. The chief, for instance, is above them, at any rate above some of them, being himself a magical being, a tabooed personage (I. p. 382). The collectivity has a still greater power over them and can cancel them. There are times when all these prohibitions, or at least some of them, are withdrawn; these are the marginal periods, when we behold the [illegible]ge spectacle that ordinary taboos are suspended (language taboos, relatives-in-law taboos), whilst others are enforced (sexual taboos). I have often drawn attention to this curious phenomenon.

B. MORAL RESTRAINTS.

But taboos are not the only kind of restraint to which primitive 183 Bantus submit themselves. The following statements have been 604 collected from old or young informants who were urged to express their inner feelings on this question:

1) The maternal uncle must provide the ntehe for the first child of his sister. However this is not *yila*, it is a *nau*, a law, and if it is transgressed no direct harm will follow. (I. p. 46.)

2) Men and women do not bathe in the same spot in the lake 183 of Rikatla. Why? Not on account of a yila, but on account of 834

towards the fence into the pits. My informant asserts that the 224
result was sometimes marvellous ; the pits were soon full and the 476
animals coming behind ran over their comrades and escaped ; the men followed closely and stabbed the antelopes in the neck. But this of course meant the wholesale destruction of game. Happily a stop has been put to this kind of hunting.

Nowadays Natives use *iron traps* which they buy in the European 224
stores, some of which are quite sufficiently strong to catch a duiker 824
or a wild pig. They smear them with another charm, the *buriba*, a kind of brownish moss growing on the roots of a tree called shivumbunkanye. It also is said to have the power of "making the game forget."

I have described some other traps when dealing with boys' games.

Everybody was allowed to hunt in the good old times when the 224
White authorities had not yet introduced so many restrictive 554
regulations. Ordinary hunters are called bahloti or bazingeli 791
(Zulu term). But there were others who had made a kind of trade of hunting, regular, professional hunters, who were called *phisa* (pl. maphisa). They were not satisfied to kill an occasional antelope near their village, but they undertook big expeditions to the great deserts of the Hlengwe country where game was plentiful and where the most precious of all, i. e., elephants, abounded. It cannot be said that the maphisa formed a definite class in the tribe like the bone-throwers, for instance. I never heard of a true initiation taking place prior to their becoming maphisa. Yet they were known and recognized as a kind of superior caste and were very proud of their name of maphisa. They claimed a special power over big game owing to the mysterious rites which they practised; thus they partook more or less of the nature of magicians. I have come across some of them and heard marvellous stories about others. Old Madyashikulu of the Nhlongo clan, whom I met in the Ntimane country, near Antioka, boasted that he could pick out an elephant in a herd and force it to come and fall down at the foot of the tree up which he had climbed. He had then only to stab it from his retreat, and kill it ; after which he came down from the tree to

224 dance over the carcase of his victim! Another was Mubandane, a
554 relation of Mboza, who lived in Nondwana. As is customary with
791 many Natives of the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques, he hunted elephants for a Portuguese trader, named Fonseca, who provided him with guns and powder. When ready to undertake his hunting trip to the north of Gazaland (Mosapa), he had to undergo a purification (hlambo). His medicine-man cooked a pot full of his drugs, washed him with the froth and poured the contents of the pot on the roof, over the entrance of the hunter's hut. Mubandane had then to stoop and enter his hut, the water leaking through the grass and falling on his shoulders. These words were pronounced by the medicine-man, during this ritual entry into the hut: "Go and be happy! Though the rain fall on you, though the dew make you wet, when you sleep, you will be everywhere as in a hut; everywhere it will be like home (kaya). You will have taken your hut with you, you will enter it in a wet state!"

224 Other maphisa were the hippopotamus hunters settled on the
784 banks of the Nkomati river, whose customs I shall describe later on.

In connection with their *hunting trips*, these professional hunters are subject to many taboos. As we have just seen, they must undergo a purification before starting, and also be inoculated in the wrists with special drugs, the most important being those of the tintebe (I. p. 479) the same which are used by the slayers of enemies in battle. Another favourite medicine for hunters is made from the piece of meat which is found between the heart and the lungs of big animals. In some cases they have to prepare themselves for their expedition by daily ablutions and by absolute continence for a certain number of days. The sacrifice of a fowl is also sometimes made before starting. It is taboo for adults to eat the meat of this fowl; it might endanger the success of the expedition. Little children may eat it: "they are quiet" (i. e. they have no sexual relations), and so the hunting will not be spoilt. When all these preparations are finished, the hunters start with their rattles, singing special songs, the songs of the hunters (Part V).

The trip itself may last for months, and constitutes a kind of

-825 791 The reader must certainly have noticed the curious connection established by Mboza between hippopotami and wizards. As we shall see when studying the witchcraft theory, wizards are supposed to have the power of *sending* wild animals to kill their victims. Here the idea is somewhat different. In the three stories which I have collected and of which I give a literal translation, the wizards have become the masters of the hippopotami and ride upon them during the night : they are the maleficent agents who induce these animals to play havoc in the gardens of the people. Two of the stories are supposed to have taken place in the Khosen country, the other lower down on the river, at a spot called Shihahlu. Let us begin with this one.

825 791 539 *First story.* "The wizards put a bit into the mouth of the hippopotamus and climb upon it. You cannot get the animal unless you first get its master. The 'phisa' knows the wizard because he possesses drugs more powerful than those of the wizard. At Shihahlu there was a hippopotamus which ventured to come out of the river even in daylight; it came on to the road and frightened the women passing there who had gone to buy food on account of the famine. They threw away their baskets in fear. The beast used also to go and plunder the fields. The chiefs called a very clever hunter and showed him where the hippopotamus used to come out of the river. This man, who was from Sihhahlu, swallowed his medicine and put on a great many amulets (timfisa) made of varan skin; he also took his tail, the tail of a young hippopotamus, went during the night to that spot and saw the beast ; there was fire on its back ; this fire belongs to the wizard. (Where do these lights come from? I do not know. Perhaps it is the work of the Devil!) The hunter returned home. Another day he went again and heard a noise in the water ; the hippopotamus came out of the river and the hunter saw rings round its ears and bracelets round its legs. He shot it and it died. Then he went to tell the chiefs. They came, and sure enough they found four bracelets on each leg and six rings on each ear. I saw them myself. It had put on all its ornaments ; but it was very thin because it was made to work hard for its master. We went to eat the meat of the hippopotamus which was thus adorned (longile)... During the night cries of mourning were heard on the Lombye rivulet. It was the masters of the hippopotamus who were mourning over it, and the next morning we found pieces of the blue cotton print which

is used by mourners hanging on the reeds where the hippopotamus had been cut open. These people had put them there to mourn their hippopotamus. As regards the hunter, he was given a reward of £ 6." 825 539 791

Second story. "A phisa called Shitjobeke from Matlotlo was called and shown where the hippopotamus used to emerge from the river. He went there during the night and saw its master on its back. He told him: 'So it is your hippopotamus which ravages the gardens. Hold it firm! I am going to kill it.' The wizard answered: 'I beseech you, Khosa, do not kill it; I will not come any more to spoil the mealies!' The hunter let him go and went away. Next evening the animal came out again, its master on its back. The hunter possessed a drug by which he could kindle the lights on the back of the hippopotamus. He saw the wizard and said: 'My friend, now hold it fast. I am firing! If you do not hold it I will kill you.' He fired and the master went away. The hunter remained on the spot fearing that the wizard might come back and ressuscitate it. Next day he told the chiefs to come and cut it open. He performed the lurulula; he blew his ndjao over the legs, the belly, the chest, and the ears; then they turned the beast over on the other side, and he did the same thing. They cut off the tail and gave it to him: the hunter uses this as a medicine; he will mix it with other drugs and this will help him against the wizards; they will no longer be able to come to him during the night and make him dream of hippopotami; it will also give him the power of killing other hippopotami. Then they cooked the meat of the chest, which is a tit-bit. The divinatory bones showed who was to roast it and eat the first mouthful and then distribute their portions to the others. The bones often say also: 'If it is the meat of a male hippopotamus do not eat it in the village, eat it at such and such a place...' [789]

Third story. "There was another hunter, Mundjindji, of the Nyoka clan. His father had been killed by Heaven (lightning), because he possessed charms which he had got from the Ba-Sutho. This man used to dig up the corpses of the dead; he dissected the skin of their foreheads and killed, (with the drugs thus obtained,) the boys who came back from the mines (magaisa). The Commandant (Portuguese Administrator) arrested him, and he was imprisoned in Lourenço Marques. He said: 'They are telling lies about me,' and he was released. However he killed some more people and was imprisoned for one month. Even now he is still doing it. He is a 'phisa.' They called him in to get rid of a hippopotamus which was annoying them. It was the Commandant who called him. He went to hunt it. For many

539 days he did not see it, but one day, at sunset, he took his canoe and
791 went on to the river. He took a red piece of cotton ; this was reflected
825 at the bottom of the river. The hippopotamus saw it there and came up to see what was the matter. The hunter fired at it ; he fired a second time. And lo! there on its back was the one who rides upon it! One of the balls pierced him whilst the other pierced the hippopotamus. The animal rushed towards the hunter, but he fired a third time and killed it. Next morning they found the hippopotamus floating on the water, dead. In the village also a man had died during the night, and they were mourning there. The hunter had said to the people : 'I have killed a man who was on the hippopotamus.' And on one side of the river people were eating meat whilst on the other side people were crying. But they did not lodge a complaint against him ; no action can be taken in such a case."

224 As regards *the elephant (ndlopfu)* it was the favourite object of
797 the chase, because killing one of these large beasts meant not only abundance of meat but also wealth on account of the ivory. Madyashikulu used to bring the tusks to Manukosi (Gungunyana's grandfather) who returned some of them to him, and with the money thus obtained the hunter could buy a wife. There are different systems of lurulula in the case of the elephant. The hunter takes a little of the tintebe powder (the charm of the slayers) pierces the eye of the beast, mixes the vitreum with the powder, adds drugs prepared from the end of the trunk and the tail and uses this mixture to overcome the nuru. A phisa of the Maputju country employed another method. He cut a piece of meat from the foreleg, cooked it, anointed it with powder from the calabash of the slayers, chewed it and began to blow it over the animal after having "climbed it." He then crept over the elephant in the same way as described above in the case of the hippopotamus, holding his gun in his hand the whole time. His comrades used to anoint him with a white medicine round both eyes. When he had returned home the treatment was continued by the administration of two vapour baths (mahungulo). He had to expose his body to the steam produced first by a decoction of various twigs, secondly by another decoction prepared from medicinal roots mixed with pieces of meat taken from a goat and from the elephant

rainbow; he dwells in heaven and the rainbow is his bow. He it is who taught men the use of the bow. 773 821

The two great phenomena which mostly impress South Africans are lightning and rain, and of these you hear wonderful and endless stories!

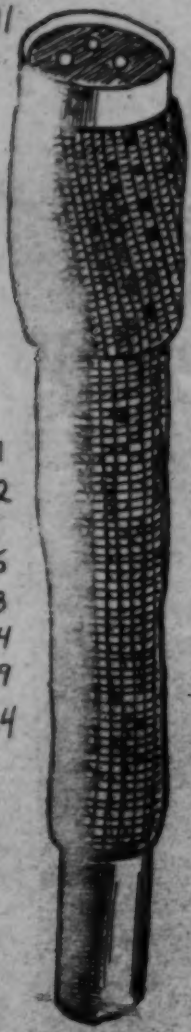
4) Lightning.

This is called *lihati* (li-tin), and is said to be caused by a bird called *ndlati* (yi-tin). These two words, etymologically speaking, seem to be related to each other. They possess the feminine suffix *ti* which is met with in the forms *eti*, *ati*, *oti*. This bird is also called *nkuku wa tilo* amongst the Ba-Ronga, the cock of heaven, or *psele dja tilo*, the hen of heaven, and magicians know how to determine its sex when the bird has fallen. 821 125

The thunder is attributed either to the bird itself or, more frequently, to Heaven. The proper expression for "It thunders" is: "Tilo dji djuma" — "Heaven roars."

In the Northern clans those who practise magical arts add many other particulars to the story, some of which may have been borrowed from the Pedi magicians, who seem to possess a more complete explanation of the phenomenon. According to them, the *ndlati* (Pedi, *dali*) is a bird of four colours, green, red, black and white, which lives in the mountains, by preference at the confluence of rivers. The medicine-men of former times knew its hiding place and had even found the eggs of the bird in a nest floating on the water. When a thunderstorm breaks, the bird flies to heaven into the clouds; there may be scores of them, but one only will be dangerous (lebya) and cause death. It rushes down to the ground, striking a tree on its way, tearing its bark and its wood, and throwing it down; or it falls on a hut and burns it, or on a man and kills him. Having reached the soil, the bird can be caught, and I heard people seriously assert that four of these birds, unable to fly away, had been found the previous year in Sikororo country. Or the bird enters the ground, to a depth of two to three feet, and either remains there in its own form, or (this is the most common saying) deposits its urine (murundju), 821 825 775

821 which had caused the flash of lightning, and flies away back to
825 the mountains. The magician who understands the "treatment
791 of Heaven" comes and digs at the spot ; there he finds a kind of gelatinous substance which solidifies after a little time. I possess a little of this curious drug given to me by a Pedi magician, by name Mudjumi ; it resembles a piece of chalk, and is considered very valuable on account of its rareness, and because it is used in the manufacture of the wonderful medicine of Heaven. Should a village have been struck by lightning, the magician of Heaven will come and dig out this foreign body ; if he finds it, the taboo is removed. If he does not, the whole village must move to another place. In the same way, it is taboo to warm oneself at a fire made of the wood of a tree that has been struck by lightning, or to use it as fuel.



The flute of Heaven.
Drawn by J. Weare.

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Happily this dreadful bird can be prevented from killing and burning by magical means. Both the Pedi Mudjumi and the Thonga Makasane possessed the enchanted flute, by which they could force Heaven — or the bird of Heaven — to spare them. Mudjumi having sold me his flute, I can describe it at length. It is made of a hollow bone five inches long, covered with Varan skin, filled at its larger extremity with a black substance like wax. Inside, to keep it clean, there is a vulture's feather. The bone is said to have been taken from the ndlati bird ; the wax substance was made from powder obtained by drying up and pulverising a little of the heart, the eye, the bones, the feathers, and the flesh of the bird. In the wax are embedded three seeds of Abrus precatorius, the "lucky bean" well-known in South Africa, a round seed of a splendid coral colour with a black spot, very much used in Thonga magic. This addition of Abrus precatorius intensifies the sound of the flute and enables it to reach heaven.

reach heaven. The magician, seeing the thunderstorm approaching, climbs up the hill without any fear, blows in his flute: psee... psee... psee..., and shouts: "You! Heaven! Go further! I have nothing against you! I do not fight against you!" He may add in a threatening tone: "If you are sent by my enemies against me, I will cut you open with this knife of mine." The thunderstorm will then pass away! 821 791 789

This invocation to Heaven is curious, and we shall better understand it when studying the part played by Heaven in Thonga religion. Here I am merely considering the superstition as an attempt at explaining a natural phenomenon. And we may well ask: how is it possible for such absurdities to be believed, and firmly believed, by men who are not at all devoid of a sense of observation? The idea that lightning is a bird comes perhaps from the fact that its movements in falling from above resemble the evolutions of a bird in the air. After all the phenomenon is so sudden that this explanation could easily be accepted by the imagination of the savage. As regards the statements about the coagulated urine of the bird, I must admit that I was unable to understand on what they could be based, until I saw some samples of fulgurites found where lightning had struck the ground; the heat of the electric current vitrifies the sand, forming a kind of pipe, which enters the soil, where it ramifies to a certain depth. These fulgurites, though not perfectly answering to the description given by Native magicians, may have been the natural substratum upon which Bantu imagination built up all the other superstitions. 821

5) The problem of rain and the way Thongas deal with it.

All over the earth the question of rainfall is of primary importance, but this is especially the case in Subtropical Africa, even more than anywhere else. Rain may not fall during seven months, from April to October, and nobody worries about it. But if it fails in November and December, at the beginning of the rainy season, it is a dreadful misfortune, a calamity more serious 132 731 789

823 regarding its confines and the shore on the other side. Some
791 magicians claim to have gone and stayed for some time down in the depths : to have "crossed the sea" is for them a kind of diploma, which gives them the right of exercising their art. (See Chapter III.)

828 The *tide* (byaela) is considered to be caused by a whale (nkomu) which alternately swallows and vomits the sea-water : this is the common idea. Some Natives, however, connect it with the moon, having noticed that the tide is higher at full moon and at the wane.

The sea must be feared : it is jealous. "When some one is taken away by the great wave, do not shout! Do not exclaim : 'He is lost!', else you will never see him again. On the contrary, if you say : 'All right, let him go', then the returning wave will bring him back." These are the assertions of Spoon. And old Makhani expressed his approval by nodding his head!

372 "It is the same with *fire*," Spoon also remarked. There was
784 a terrible bush fire in Rikatla on the 18th of September 1908. As always happens at the end of winter, the bush was absolutely dry. A leper woman, tilling her fields, wished to cook a little manioc. The fire leapt to the weeds which she had gathered and from these to the bush. Two huts were burnt. "It is their own fault," said Spoon, "when the bush fire comes you must put it out quietly. If you make any noise, if you shout, it comes straight at you. That is what happened. In the first village people fought calmly and succeeded in saving their huts. At Jeck's village, they cried out. The fire leapt on to a hut, the small hut of the son. The mother cried : 'Yo! yo! Where shall I put my child?' She went on crying out until the hut was burnt to the ground. So the fire leapt on to the big hut and burnt it. She has only herself to blame!" (1)

823 The origin of *stones* is absolutely unknown. Pikinini, a Nkuna boy, who was endowed with an extraordinary imagination, once drew my attention to the stratification of a large dolomite boulder on which different concentric layers were visible, and said to me :

[521] (1) Silence is always recommended to prevent misfortune : in the case of war (I, p. 470) women at home must keep silent ; likewise when the husband is hunting hippopotami (p. 69), when a child is seized with convulsions owing to the power of *tilo* (heaven). See also my remarks on the kunga rite. (I, p. 124).

themselves so far removed from the animal world as is the case amongst more civilised races. 826

Another point on which Thongas see a resemblance between man and the animal is this : they believe that both possess the *nuru* (I. p. 478 ; II, p. 77-80). It is true that the nuru is only found in some animals : the eland, the ndakazi antelope, the elephant, the hippopotamus, etc. We shall have to consider this superstition again when dealing with Thonga Animism. 774

Is this idea of identity between man and the animal pushed so far as a belief that men can transform themselves into animals, and vice-versa? It is certain that in tales men are often changed into hyenas, lions, etc. (See Dukuli, *Les Ba-Ronga*, p. 283 and the story of the Ogre Ziniko (p. 256).) But these are purely fictitious. The theory is by no means generally accepted. In the ordinary course of life such transformations would not be considered possible. But they are certainly thoroughly believed in in the domain of magic. Magicians claim that they can fly through the air, with their axes, transform themselves into the lightning bird and so kill their enemy. But it is the wizards (baloyi) who are considered to possess this power par excellence, especially the faculty of changing human beings into beasts to make them work on their behalf. These ideas will be studied in Chapter III. 826 791

I have already mentioned the bird which "stops travellers" (I. p. 339) ; amongst Mammalia a certain Antelope is the object of the same superstitious fear. This is the little red *magulwe* (or *shipene*) whose astragalus bone is employed in divination under the name of malumbi (See Part VI. Letter D). — "When it crosses the road, in front of a travelling party," says Mankhelu, "the leader of the company stops his comrades, goes forward, sits down alone at the spot where the antelope passed, and pours his magical powder into the footprints of the animal. Then he shouts to his companions to come and follow him. Having walked for some time, he takes off all his clothing, and lies down quite naked, as if he were dead. The others continue their march forward. After a while, he jumps to his feet and, making a circuit through the bush, outruns them, without being noticed, and sits down on the road, further on. 826 777

834 place at a given spot and according to a given order of precedence.
783 This will bring about the definite restoration of the village and a new and pure life will henceforth be possible.

761 I ought perhaps to offer some excuse for having dwelt at some
827 length on a subject which is generally left alone as indelicate. I hope however that my readers will agree with me that all these physiological conceptions and all these strange customs, far from being of a lascivious or licentious character, denote, on the contrary, a deep and earnest conception of life and an aspiration towards purity which it is most interesting to observe. They are at the same time amongst the most striking manifestations of Bantu Dynamism.

827 Beside these great principles of Thonga physiology, I may
576 mention a few other ideas relating to the various secretions of the human body.

578 *Spitting* (ku thuka) is a sign of want of respect, as we have seen (p. 310). It is especially prohibited in the presence of people who are eating, and if any one should spit, they will insult the culprit, saying to him : "Eat your own shikohlolo!" — When some one expectorates, others present will cover the phlegm with sand, not on account of taboo, but from disgust.

826 *Blood* (ngati, yin-tin) is also instinctively covered with sand, as
791 soon as it has been shed. This is a taboo, because wizards might use it to bewitch you! The charms of the wizards are commonly called *tingati*, bloods.

827 As regards *sweat* (nyuku, mu-mi), although I cannot assert that the idea is universal, I think it is conceived as coming from outside and falling on men like the dew (mbere) on the grass. When they enter a place which is close, Natives say : "There is sweat here." The etymology of this word is *ku nyuka*, to melt.

Excrement (matjimba) is looked upon as disgusting, but there is no taboo in connection with it.

Yawning (yahlamula) is attended with no superstition.

Hiccough (shitikwane) is not feared in children, but very much so in the case of sick people.

Belching (bisa) is sometimes considered as the result of having been bewitched, especially if the patient becomes thin. Magicians

lightning), or animistic (Son-of-the-Moth). But they are not of much 771
importance. They belong to the same category as the description given 774
by the Psalmist of the sun as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, or to that of Homer comparing the break of the day to a young damsel with rosy fingers. This is poetry, mere personification of natural objects, or forces, and not beliefs. The poetical tendency is very marked amongst primitive races. It may be that ideas of this kind were more firmly held in former times, if the tribe has really passed through a more mythological phase, a hypothesis for which there are some grounds.

2) Collective beliefs.

The beliefs of the Thongas which deserve to be called by that name 771
because they are universal and express themselves in important rites and 769
customs, are the following :

1. The human soul continues its existence after death, when it is 775
endowed with new powers which make it an object of awe and fear. *The spirits of the ancestors* are the main objects of religious worship. They form the principal category of spirits (psikwembu).

2. Although the spirits of the departed generally have nothing to [789]
do with people other than their descendants, some of them, especially *those belonging to foreign tribes*, can take possession of living men and cause troubles which must be cured by a process of exorcism. This is the second category of spirits.

3. Some individuals have the power of magically unsheathing them- 774
selves during the night, and their spirit goes out to torment, or to kill 754
and eat other people. These are *the wizards* (baloyi) ; this third cate- 791
gory of spirits accomplish their wicked deeds when separated from the body, but their body is still living and they re-enter it. These three beliefs are distinctly animistic.

4. There is in man, and in a few large animals, a semi-spiritual 771
principle, the *nuru*, which escapes from the body when the individual is 774
killed in war, or in hunting, and through which the dead man, or animal, 828
avenges himself or itself on the murderer. What is the relation between the nuru and the shadow (sitjhuti)? This is not stated. The nuru seems to be of a more material nature, as it can enter a root, and it remains attached to the corpse and the bones of the person or animal killed. This category of spiritual enemies, probably invented under the influence of fear and remorse, has no connection with ordinary people,

is carefully maintained, and regularly smeared. He puts his 756
offerings there, principally tobacco. The snuff box is deposited 778
there. Does he want snuff? He enters the hut clapping his 782
hands, saluting his spirits, and, taking the box, throws a pinch of it at the foot of the branch, and says: "You! Ngoni, you see that I have not stolen! I first gave you your share." His wife will do the same. This is a "mhamba." — When ready to undertake a journey, he will come to the altar, sit on his ankles (a woman will kneel down) and take leave of the spirits. Holding his assagay, and his manono root, he says: "Good-bye, Ba-Ngoni! This hut is yours; keep it well! I go to such and such a place," and asks them to bless his journeying. On his return he will inform the spirits that he has succeeded in his trip. If he is sick, and the bones have revealed that the disease has been caused by the spirits, he again comes to the altar, and says: "You! Ba-Ngoni, why are you angry with me?" These acts of worship are not only performed at the altar. Wherever he may be, before drinking beer, the exorcised will pour out a little for his spirits. He will also throw a little food for them before eating. This will be *a daily worship*, much more constant and individual than the rites of ancestrolatry, a real communion with the spirits who, after having tormented the exorcist, have become his benefactors, giving him the power of healing others and thus of making money! There is much more religiosity in the exorcised than in ordinary people.

3) Development of subliminal faculties.

All these nervous crises, natural or provoked, the double 756
psychological existence which is fostered by them, the regular 158
participation in the exorcism of others, generally greatly injure 791
the mind of the exorcised; they have an extraordinary look, something wild about them, as if they were not in their right senses. They may be heard sometimes groaning, or emitting a sudden cry without any reason. This nervous instability may pass away and they may return to their normal state, but it may be that if they possess those strange mental powers, which modern psychology

756 calls subliminal, and which are more or less dormant in every
158 individual, these faculties will suddenly develop and the exorcised
791 will become a real magician. A faculty of *second sight* may reveal itself. Or he will become a *diviner*, either by ecstasy or by bone throwing (See Letter D). Or he will be a *wonder-worker*, a *prophet*, etc. Mholombo, who was an extraordinarily acute woman, had possessed all these gifts. She could discover wizards ; one night, crossing the Mabota country, she met one of the indunas of the chief accompanied by two other men, leading his own wife to the marsh, in order to eat her. They were acting in their capacity of wizards (See Letter C). Mholombo knew them at once and said to them : "No use eating her. Her meat is bitter sour." Terrified, the wizards fled, and confessed their guilt next morning! I have related in the *Bulletin de la Société Neuchâteloise de Géographie*, of 1910, how she received divinatory bones from her possessing spirit, prophesied the arrival of missionaries, showed up the man who had stolen £ 8 to the Mpfumo chief, was given the power to cross the Nkomati river by walking on the water, etc. By this same power Shidzabalane was able to leave his body, and to go and dwell in his own shadow (p. 362). Reference will again be made to the profession of magician when dealing with witchcraft.

4) The society of the exorcised.

756 If the power of an exorcised person becomes very great, if he succeeds in his cures, all his *mathwaza* join him, and he becomes the founder of a school. He starts new rites, discovers more powerful drugs, and so attracts patients to himself from all parts. We have seen that five or six schools existed northward of Lourenço Marques, in the Mabota and Nondwane countries. Mboza might have started a new one, as he had already cured two patients.

Each school of exorcists celebrates *an annual feast*, in winter, at the close of the harvest season, a feast to which all the disciples of the master are summoned. This is the rite of the *renewal of the drugs*, which we have already noticed as a medical practice in the

754 that baloyi are more or less subject to the ancestral gods. It may happen also that if somebody shows kindness to a noyi, this noyi will take him under his protection, and prevent his comrades from doing harm to his friend. But these are rare occurrences, and the baloyi are, and remain, criminals in the view of the Thongas.

Stealing, killing, enslaving are the principal crimes of these maleficent beings. But they can also cause any other species of harm to their infortunate victims. I have told the story of a young man who complained to me of having been deprived by the tricks of a noyi aunt of the power of having sexual intercourse with his wife; she was pregnant and the witch wished to act on the offspring in such a way as to change it into a snake, a hare, a quail, or a duiker, so that the mother should die on the day of the birth. (I. p. 187.)

II. *White Magic and Magicians.*

1) Distinction between Magicians and Wizards.

754 As previously stated, the power which the magicians claim to
791 possess is perhaps not essentially different from that of the baloyi.
756 They even sometimes boast that they are themselves baloyi, baloyi more powerful than the ordinary witches, and that they are thus able to discover them and baffle all their tricks. So Mathuza, one of the most celebrated Ronga witch-doctors, used to say: "I am the great Noyi! I am the one who kills. I can fly. So I know them all and I disclose them." But magicians differ absolutely from wizards in four ways, at least:

1) Their activity is not secret, nocturnal and more or less unconscious. They act openly, in the light, during the day, and do not hide their magical powers; on the contrary, they make a show of them, covering themselves with any number of charms; most of them wear "tingoya" and smear themselves with ochre (p. 100).

2) They all undergo a preparation, or pass through an initiation, differing according to the different kinds of magic they practise.

So they possess, so to speak, letters patent, either because they have been received into the society of their fellow-magicians (as is the case with medicine-men, exorcists, and throwers of bones), or because they have found new and powerful drugs during a sojourn, real or pretended, in the sea, the desert, or elsewhere. 754 791 756

3) Whilst baloyi are said to use *tingati* (blood) poisons, the magicians employ *miri*, i. e., medicinal herbs or objects, drugs which, however, are all thought to possess special powers. I do not say "supernatural" powers, as the notion conveyed by this word cannot exist in any definite form amongst people who have hardly a true conception of Nature. The stronger the miri, the stronger the magician. — In addition to their drugs, they certainly believe themselves endowed with personal power due to the development of their faculties of second sight, etc., which they also attribute to the spirits (ancestor-gods) from whom they have inherited their drugs.

4) The last point of difference but by no means the least important, is this: magicians are the supporters and upholders of the social order, and not criminals attempting to destroy it. They foretell the future, cure diseases, prevent misfortune of all kinds, fight against baloyi, and are regularly consulted by the Native Court for the detection of wizards.

Between the unconscious baloyi whose crimes are purely imaginary and the bangoma who use their magical powers for the benefit of those who have recourse to them, there certainly exists another category, i. e. wicked individuals who kill their fellow-men by means of real poisons or by criminal practices and do this quite consciously, either to avenge themselves on their enemies or to help others to get rid of those whom they hate. Such acts may be called ku loya, by an extended use of the term; but there is another word to designate these crimes, the word *ku dambika*, which we already met with when speaking of the jilted lover who wishes to play an evil trick on the girl who despised him (I. p. 101). In the neighbourhood of Rikatla, there was a man who claimed to be a noyi of this type, and to have at the same time the power of "treating" (daha) buloyi. He was a Mu-Sutho, a stranger. Wishing to kill an enemy, a Ronga of the country asked his help; 754 791

754 the magician bade him first bring a sheep ; this he slew, took part
791 of its fat, and smeared with it and with some very black drugs a root of the ntjhopfa tree (I. p. 58). This fat and these drugs were to give to the root the power of "taking away" the heart of the enemy ; the magician buried it in the road and assured his client that when the root was rotten his enemy would be dead. This root was discovered later on, owing to a revelation given by the bones, and the man who had consulted the magician had to pay a fine of £ 1. No doubt such conscious acts of witchcraft exist, but this is not the typical loya.

2) Various categories of magicians.

756 Some magicians specialise in one division of the immense domain
791 of magic, but others claim to practise the magic arts in all their diversity.

1) Those whose activity bears a less magical character. These are the *ñanga* (yin-tin), or *ba-muri*, whom we met with when dealing with the medical art (Compare Chapter I. the Medicine-men).

2) Those who have passed through the ceremony of exorcism and have become exorcists. They are called *gobela*, and the character of their initiation has been sufficiently explained in Chapter II.

3) Those called *mungoma*, magicians proper, who have divinatory powers and can perform wonders, fight the baloyi, cause rain to fall, influence Heaven, etc., even if there has been no exorcism episode in their previous career.

4) Those whose principal qualification is the power to detect baloyi, and who are called for that reason *shinusa*, "smellers-out."

5) The bone-throwers *(ba-bula)*, whom we shall describe in Chapter IV.

The priests, *ba ku hahla*, do not enter into any of these categories, their specific activity being of a totally different character ; they have recourse to Religion and not to Magic.

3) Some Thonga Magicians.

On calling to mind the various magicians with whom I came in contact, I observe that very few limited themselves to the medical art alone ; *Sam Ngwetsa* and *Kokolo* alone did this. The aim of the magician is to combine as many branches of the business as possible. — *Mankhelu*, with his forked branch, was a medicine-man of the highest rank, owing to his calabashes containing a mixture of all the most powerful drugs, salted with Rivimbi's sea charms. He was a magician, being a rain-maker, a detector of baloyi, and, in particular, a successful bone-thrower, but he seemed to be entirely ignorant of the art of exorcism. — *Makasana*, on the contrary, a Thonga from the Leydenburg district, had acquired his power after passing through the ordeal of exorcism and had obtained the drugs of his exorcist. This had made him into a regular *mungoma*. Round his neck he wore three necklaces of half transparent yellow beads, between which were small square lizard-skin bags, timfisa, containing : 1) drugs against snake bites ; 2) charms against the baloyi ; 3) the *maringo ya tilo*, the charms of Heaven. Birds' claws and a crocodile's tooth also hung round his neck ; his hair was pulled out, the *tingoya* radiating in all directions, and in the very middle, on the top of his head, he wore a little chain, in the form of a narrow turban, to which a brass cartridge was fixed ; this was his snuff box, resting comfortably on his thick thatch! Possessing all these drugs Makasana was at the same time exorcist, witch-doctor, medicine-man, and magician of Heaven. The last qualification was perhaps his principal one ; he told me that he had to fight against his colleagues, who wished to test him by means of their own charms. — "At noon," he said, "when the sky is quite clear, I see a little cloud appearing over my head, quite black. The lightning bird is in it, and wants to kill me, having been sent by one of my enemies. Then I pour a little of the medicine of Heaven into the palm of my hand ; when I see the bird moving its wings and ready to rush down upon me, I blow a little of my drug towards the cloud and the bird will come and fall down powerless quite close to me. Then I take it, and cut

756 it in half. I take a little of the heart, and of the eyes, I crush the
791 bones, I make a powder with all these ingredients, and this is my great medicine. With one of the bones I make a flute ; I put a little powder into it, and, when a thunderstorm breaks, I go outside without danger and conjure the lightning by playing on my flute, etc." (p. 314).

Mathuza, the magician of Nondwane to whom I have just alluded, was essentially a detector of baloyi. — So was also *Ñwashihandjime*, the great Nkuna magician, a splendid creature, tall, his eyes beaming with a kind of supernatural light. I once saw him, after having performed the "smelling out" rite, point out a woman with the tail he always carried with him, an enormous tail fixed on a handle richly decorated with beads and copper wire.
[825] This tail, which is one of the most common attributes of the mungoma, is generally *a gnu tail*. It is said that when a mother gnu has dropped her offspring, she beats it (phyita) with her tail and thus gives the new-born gnu the necessary strength to walk and follow its mother. Hence the peculiar magic use of the gnu tail. In its very middle are hidden certain drugs which possess a revelatory virtue ; the magician puts his nose right amongst the hair before pronouncing his sentence and beating (phyita) the noyi. Ñwashihandjime is said to have disappeared from his village for months, and to have come back from the desert emaciated but full of new magical powers. I once tried to draw his attention to things more spiritual than his art and his drugs. He gazed at me with wild eyes, as if unable to follow my demonstration ; suddenly he emitted a cry very similar to a hiccough and turned his back.
[827] (Hiccoughing is a well-known symptom, showing either that one has been bewitched by "mitisa," or that one possesses magical power).

At the station of Shiluvane I once made an inventory of the charms of another Nkuna magician. In his hair the man wore a brass bracelet and some rings, and a necklace with a sixpence attached, all these objects having been inherited from his father, who was himself a mungoma ; moreover he hung round his neck a little piece of the skin of a goat, which had been sacrificed after the death of his father ; in this way he tried to acquire and keep

the power of his initiator and of his god. Two panther's claws were fixed on his head, pointing towards each other, as if they wished to catch something ; this helped him to go and seize (to ba) the wizard in the *vumisa* rite, which I shall now describe. Two empty goats' bladders swung amidst his crop of tingoya as he walked, an unmistakable sign that he had cured patients and received goats as a reward. The noise they made in hitting against each other "called other goats to come to him." From his neck hung two crocodile's teeth, a piece of buffalo's horn, "psiboho psa nga" — "that which ties me, viz., makes me firm ;" another horn which had been broken by a bullet and in which he kept the *nulu* medicine (p. 496), the root of a white sea-weed, used to produce the foam of the *gobo* rite in the exorcism, and a goat's horn full of a powder which cures the "burwa" disease. The burwa is the strong Westerly wind in Shiluvane (I. p. 18) which the baloyi are said to use for bewitching through the ears. He rubbed the patient with the horn and placed it near one ear, then near the other, and could cure the bewitched in that way. Another drug, called "rishwala," helped him to acquire many wives, and to have many children ; a cock's spur was also worn in order to give him "courage and weight." This mungoma, who called at Shiluvane on the 28th of June 1899, sold me a "kaross" (a rug) made of skins of rock rabbits, the work of the Ba-Pedi, worth £ 6. He had earned it by the practice of his art.

I here give the picture of a true Ronga *gobela*, from Tembe, who once passed through Rikatla with two assistants ; he was on a tour to exorcise the possessed of the land. He had a terrifying appearance with all his military and magical attire, his big snake skins, and his gnu tail ; he hardly condescended to pronounce a word, maintaining all the time a most dignified demeanour. He was, before all else, an exorcist.

These few descriptions are sufficient to illustrate the composite character of the magicians. There is no end to their charms and their tricks, but they are certainly in earnest as regards the practice of their art, and are convinced that they are very useful and powerful personages.

III. *The Method of dealing with Wizards.*

754 All the power of the magicians is resorted to in order to check
756 the enchantments of the baloyi. Their drugs are used with two
objects, — protection and cure, the cure consisting mainly in the
791 disclosure of the wizard.

1) Protective methods.

789 The village, as we have seen, (I. p. 311) is well protected with
754 *anti-baloyi drugs*. The fence itself, the main entrance and the threshold of the headman's hut, have been magically treated when first built. But the magician, when he thinks it necessary, "revives" the drugs by burning his powder in a little fire on the road which enters the village. This protects the main entrance, and he does the same at the threshold of the headman's hut. The smoke will keep the wizards away. Stones, daubed with the powder, are placed in all directions to close the openings.

"These medicines act wonderfully," says Mankhelu. "Should a *noyi* succeed in entering the hut, the power of the smoke will be such that he will at once be revealed. The *noyi* will suddenly be seen there without any clothing, apparently dreaming, seeing nothing, knowing nothing. If it is a woman, I shall call her husband and show him his wife... 'What are you doing here?' he will say to her. She will not utter a word. Then I shall say to him : 'Look here, my friend... I might be hard on you. But I have pity. Do not allow your wife to do anything of the kind again. Pay me one or two oxen, and I will keep silent.' He will consent. Then I beat the woman with my stick. She awakes, and, quite ashamed of being in another hut without any clothing, she will fly away home!" Such is the testimony of Mankhelu, and he is certain of having succeeded more than once!!

Mboza asserted to me that he had witnessed a similar case

2: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

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A Ronga "gobela." Phot. A. Bonel.

result if hostile feelings already existed between two persons (1). 754

Jealousy alone is sufficient to give rise to the suspicion even without a word having been uttered (2).

The fact of a woman having lost many children is also a reason [761] for suspecting her of being a witch, as the death of a baby is constantly considered as having been caused by its own mother, who wished "to eat it." The fact of belonging to a family of baloyi is also an indication to the same effect, buloyi being hereditary, as we have seen.

But a mere suspicion is not sufficient to warrant action being 754 taken against the suspected noyi. An objective proof, a piece of 787 convincing evidence is required, and this the magicians are asked to supply. The patient's relatives go *to the diviner* who will cast the 791 bones and discover whether the disease is due to witchcraft or not. This consultation is secret, and is merely preliminary. There are, in the sets of bones employed in Thonga divination, some which,

(1) The evangelist Silas G. was one day speaking to Saul N., an elder of his Church, about Church contributions and said: "So and so does not pay his dues. It would be good to show him his duty." Saul answered: "I do not wonder; that man has a bad wife and you are sure to fail in your duty when you have a bad wife." — "No", said Silas. "Everyone ought to pay his contribution. You, for example, would certainly do your duty even if you had a bad wife!" — "Nevertheless I maintain that a wife who behaves badly takes away her husband's courage. Look at your own case, Silas. Your wife does harm to your work as an evangelist. Did she not say the other day when she saw my baby: 'How fat it is! It is like a pumpkin!'" On hearing these words Silas starts! They are an accusation of buloyi. To say that the baby was as fat as a pumpkin showed that the woman who used these words was ready to eat its body during the night; the evangelist's wife was a noyi! An enquiry was at once started to ascertain if she had really pronounced these words, and the whole little Church was upset. Finally the elder was blamed for having brought an accusation of buloyi, which is forbidden in the Native Congregations, and he resigned his office. The evangelist and his wife "became thin" owing to the mental suffering caused by the insinuation of the elder.

(2) I had amongst my evangelists a very active and intelligent man who cultivated large gardens and was well provided with everything. His neighbours began to suspect him for this reason. He said to them: "We ought not to work on Sundays," and this increased their suspicions. "It is evident", they said, "that *he is not alone!* How does he manage to have such splendid harvests when he does not work on Sundays? Surely he has others to till for him. He takes our backs and uses them to cultivate his big fields. And the reason why he has such wonderful crops is that he has taken our own mealies from our gardens by his witchcraft" — "But," said others, "you cannot complain! Mealies are plentiful in your gardens too!" — "No," answered the enemies of the evangelist. "Though you see mealies in our gardens, they are no longer mealies; they have been taken away by him." They meant that, just as a bewitched person is no longer normal but has been emptied of his viscera, so the cereals had been robbed of their virtue by buloyi.

754 represent the *baloyi*, in particular the astragalus of the reedbuck, or
787 of the duiker, the small antelope which rambles about during
the night, just at the time when witches are at work. Should
● 791 this bone fall in a certain way near the bone representing the patient, or near his amulets, which have been placed on the mat, this shows that his disease is the result of buloyi. The name of the noyi will be sought, and perhaps ascertained, on that first day, but the parents of the victim will never venture to accuse him merely on the testimony of the bones. The next step will be to go to the *mungoma*, the magician who "smells out" the *baloyi*.

The magician employs various means to find out a noyi.

a) *The Enchanted Horn.*

754 In the Murchison Range there is a magician who possesses an
791 enchanted horn, into which he introduces a short twig smeared with an anti-baloyi medicine. Persons suspected of having killed by witchcraft must try to pull the twig out of the horn. The noyi will be unable to do this, though he may declare, like the others : "I have not killed." Amongst the Nkunas, the magician who has succeeded in finding out a wizard, takes his coat and hangs it on a tree as a trophy.

b) *The Enchanted Flute.*

When some one dies and his relatives think he has been bewitched, they can call a certain mungoma who "treats the grave" with his drugs. If he thinks that he has discovered the noyi, he gives to the bereaved a small flute, telling him to go and play on it in the neighbourhood. This helps not only to detect the wizard but to punish him ; he will die. This rite is called "to play on the little flute (ku yimbelela shinangana) for somebody."

one, a woman who caused his disease, either by bewitching him, or because he had an unlawful connection with her. On the right three other shells : that at the top, the male one, is a friend going out of the village to fetch a remedy ; the two others, female, are two women opening their mouths, not to lament, but to laugh! They laugh at the man who was silly enough to expose himself to such a disgrace! 787

Those who practise the hakati art must also be initiated. They must bury their shells in the earth on the road, and when some one passes by on the path they unearth one shell, a male one if the passer-by be a man, a female one if it be a woman, (See later).

IV. *The Divinatory bones (Bula).*

The hakati shells are regarded as more or less childish. The divinatory bones, on the contrary, constitute an admirable system of divination and play a considerable part in the life of the tribe. They are called *nhlolo* (yin-tin), which is their little name ; the great one is *bula*, evidently the same word as *ku bula*, to speak, i. e. the *Word* with a capital letter, the Revelation! I remember old Maselesele, a Nkuna diviner, telling me : "You Christians believe in your Bible. Our Bible is much better than yours! It is the divinatory bones!" 787 791

I was initiated into the knowledge of this wonderful art by many masters. The first was *Spoon* (I. p. 4) ; he was only a beginner, and his set of bones was not complete ; but he understood the rules perfectly well and all that he told me was confirmed by subsequent study. The second was *Maselesele*, the old Nkuna just referred to, a blind man who knew his bones by the mere touch, and had a true veneration for them. Unhappily for this poor Nkuna, his hut was burnt during the Sikororo war (I. p. 512) and the precious basket containing his bones was destroyed. — "Why did they not warn you of the fate they were about to undergo?," I asked Maselesele one day. "They might have ordered you to save them if they knew everything!" He could find no answer to this remark, but his faith was absolutely unshakable. Such was also the case with *Mankhelu*, who had

787 practised the art all his life, and was attached to his divinatory
791 bones by every fibre of his being. His set was the most complete I ever saw, containing as many as 64 objects. He even had two sets, one contained in a leathern basket, the other in a kind of net with small meshes ; the first he called the Father and the second the Son. The Father always remained at home, whilst he took the Son with him on his travels (1). I spent many hours with him, trying fully to understand his teaching, and he took great trouble to initiate me, concealing nothing from me, wondering sometimes at his own readiness to do so, and saying: "This thing I would not have told my own son." I had thus an opportunity of penetrating into the depths of the Bantu mind, which has perhaps invented nothing more elaborate or more typical than this divinatory system. Of course no sensible person would for a moment believe in the objective value of these practices. *Astragalomancy* has no more real value than Cheiromancy, Necromancy and all the other "mancies." But I am obliged to admit that the Thonga system is far more ingenious than any other that I have met with, and that it answers admirably to the wants of the Natives, comprehending all the elements of their life, and photographing them, so to speak, in such a manner that indications and directions can be obtained for all possible cases.

I have explained Spoon's art in detail in "Les Ba-Ronga." I will here confine myself to Mankhelu's revelations, which were more complete, as the old man was one of the masters of the diviner's profession as well as of that of the medicine-man.

1) The objects composing the set of divinatory bones.

787 These may be divided into two kinds : the *bones* properly
825 speaking, most of which are *astragalus bones*, and the various objects which are *not bones*. I shall now enumerate them, always

(1) I heard of another bone-thrower from Tembe who had also two baskets of bones; the first was called the basket of the chiefs, the second the basket of the subjects; the first was used in criminal cases to discover wizards: they were bones which "killed," and when they had accomplished their purpose, the diviner left them to rest for a whole week, using in the meantime the second basket. He then washed them, and they were ready to be used again.

between the animal and these objects, and we know how quick the 787
Bantu mind is at discovering such relations between men and animals.

2) The Consultation of the divinatory bones and the rules for their interpretation.

I owe to a Tembe informant the following full description of the 787
sequence of acts performed in a consultation of the divinatory 755
bones. Suppose one of the inmates of the village to have been 791
suddenly taken ill. The people who dwell in the same hut will at once go to the headman, even if it is night-time ; he will come, inspect the patient, and, having convinced himself of the seriousness of the case, he will start immediately for the diviner's village, not forgetting to take with him the necklace of the patient with his protective amulets (timfisa p. 471) ; if the man did not wear timfisa, the headman will replace these by some roots of a common plant, the tjeke, p. 14, or even of a common grass, the ntlangi; these roots will be rubbed against his forehead and against his chest and will then be called his *ntjuleko*. Having reached the diviner's village, the consultant briefly states the object of his visit. A mat is unrolled and the ntjuleko placed on it, somewhere at the side ; the diviner takes all his bones in his hand, holds them firmly, and having chewed a little piece of a magic root, (1) spits on them and throws them on to the mat, saying with emphasis : "Mhamoo!" Those attending the consultation answer in the same tone : "Hizwaa! Si ya vuma!" — "Yes! We are agreed." This throwing is only preliminary. By spitting over his bones the diviner wishes to awaken them (pfusha) to make them see (hanyanyisa). He then passes them to the consultant, who will himself throw them throughout the whole consultation, the diviner only holding his little stick and pointing to them in order to explain their significance.

In the first place the consultant takes the necklace of the patient 787
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(1) Mankhelu used for this purpose the bulb of a Liliacea called shirungulu, which has an agreeable scent.

787 position, the second the *passive* one. Most of the astragalus may fall not only on these two principal sides, but also on the right or on the left side. The right side is called *ntjumba*, and is somewhat convex. Mankhelu explained to me its meaning by himself imitating the position (See the accompanying plate). He sits with his shield protecting him, with *his chest full*, ready to

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Phot. H. A. Junod.

Mankhelu imitating the "ntjumba" position.

787 spit (like a cat), and his assagay lifted ready to be thrown ; this is the position of hostility, of anger. The left side is called *dzwari*, or *minkono*, viz., the elbows ; it is somewhat concave. It is the position of a man half leaning on his elbows, *his chest empty*, enjoying life and not threatening others, the assagay being turned towards the soil (See the next plate). These two positions, which I represent by ×, the sign of multiplication, for *ntjumba*, and :, the sign of division, for *minkono*, are rarely met with. Spoon knew nothing of them. They belong to a more elaborate art. In fact

787 the two first positions are by far the most common. Let us see what is the meaning of some of the divinatory objects in these different positions :

Baboon +, the village is firm ; no ruins! Baboon —, the village is destroyed ; disease or death ; that which you eat does not remain inside : dysentery.

Ancestor-god +, the gods are happy and thankful. Ancestor-

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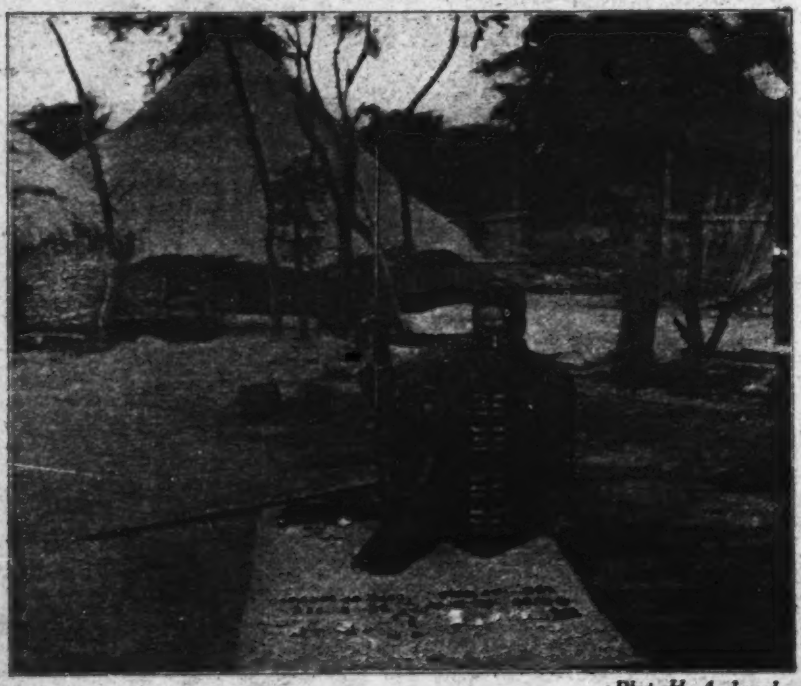

Phot. H. A. Junod.

Mankhelu imitating the "minkoso" position.

787 god —, they sleep ; there is nothing to fear ; ×, they are angry, they speak in a low voice ; : , they speak mildly.

Kanye +, the drugs have their eyes open (the two kernels inside the nkanye stone have been removed, and it appears to have two eyes, which are visible in the positive position and hidden in the negative) ; the drugs help, cure. Kanye —, the eyes of the drugs are closed ; the medicine-man will not succeed.

Crocodile stone +, the country is at peace, the village is happy,

787 and two He-Goats +. He comes with dignity to meet the arrivals. Behind, in the village itself (at the top of the plate), boys (kids) play beneath the shade of the trees (kanye) ; two women are killing each other's lice! i. e. Reedbuck and Cypraea, the female sea-shell! etc. One of the Tortoises is —, showing its black side. But this is not a sign of disease or defilement ; the village has been cleaned, the black soil is visible everywhere because it has been well swept and the huts also have been smeared afresh. The black colour also indicates that the bush has been burnt ; it prophesies the time when these strangers will come, when the bush-fire has reduced all the grass to ashes, in September or October, at the end of the winter The Tortoise in front of He-Goat is + ; this is the face of Mankhelu, radiant with joy. "Mahlwen ka mbulwa ku nyuka!" — "on the face of the old man there is sweet perspiration." His drugs are all right (kanye +, means both drugs and shade). Crocodile is —, the rivers are low ; this confirms the forecast of the time of the arrival. The Kimberley stone is + ; the earth is solid, firm. Oliva +, the sky is clear, we are happy! When we rise in the morning we look towards the East! etc.

—"Wonderful!" said I to Mankhelu. "Only they did not come!" — "Never mind," he answered. — "Then the bones have deceived you!" — "Not at all! If it is not this year, it will be next year! Moreover, we diviners are not afraid of being told that our bones lie. When, later on, our prophecies are fulfilled, then people wonder! They are convinced. And after all, if the Word lies, it is not my fault!" — "How is that?" — "We do not put our ideas into them (a hi ti rumeteli) ; we merely interpret them ; it is they who speak!" — "Then they have a power in themselves?" — "No! the power is in the chest of the diviner." Such was the conversation with which the demonstration closed. I shall return to it presently.

4) The initiation of the diviners.

● 791 Astragalomancy is not an esoteric art ; every one in the tribe knows the bones, and their significance, and all the men attend the consultations and help in the interpretation. However, every one is not a diviner and an initiation is necessary to become a fully qualified practitioner. If a young man feels that he has the qualities of perspicuity and shrewdness necessary for the practice of the art, he begins by collecting the astragalus one after

another. This is a long job. Spoon told me that, having once been annoyed by a forecast made by a diviner, he thought: "I might as well consult the bones myself!" So he picked up the astragalus of a goat in a hut. He obtained others when hunting; on the road to Johannesburg he saw a curious stone, which became the lucky stone in his set. When he had ten astragalus, he began to throw them for his comrades, giving them advice in their love affairs! Then he consulted his bones before going to hunt and noticed that, when the astragalus of the duiker fell in the negative position, he killed game. But he was still an apprentice; he had not the right to receive money, but only bracelets which hung on the string of his basket (1). When the apprentice has earned enough of these bracelets, he goes to an old practitioner, gives them to him as a fee, and asks to be initiated, so that he may become a master himself. Shishakane, in the Movumbi district, and Ñwahoñwana, in the Mabota clan, were those to whom such applications were made. The following are the ceremonies of initiation amongst the Ba-Ronga. 791

The master takes all the bones collected by the apprentice, kills a fowl, introduces them into the body (2), and cooks the whole. Then the candidate eats the fowl, returns home with his bones and buries the astragalus on the road, at the entrance of the village. He hides himself at that spot, to watch. When a woman passes, he exhumes a female astragalus; when a man, a male one; the he-goat, in the case of a man of ripe age, the kid, in that of a boy, etc. In this way all his bones are said to "have returned to him." Then he again calls on the master. The old man orders him to close his eyes and places before him all his bones in a line; the candidate must recognise them all by touch and take them all up one after the other, pronouncing the name of each. The examination evidently aims at ascertaining if he knows them thoroughly. Having successfully passed through the trial, the

(1) The divinatory basket of Spoon is shown on the plate p. 124 No. 2.

(2) I suppose that he adds his own bones to those of the applicant, in order that their divinatory virtue may enter the bones of the candidate. This is the rule followed in the Nkuna initiation. See later.

791 new diviner must undergo a hondlola, a long ablution with nkuhlu leaves, after which he is initiated ; he has the right of asking payment in cash, up to the sum of three pence. For a shilling, he will consent to throw the bones all day until they have revealed everything.

Amongst the Nkunas the initiation is somewhat different ; the apprentice does not practise his art until he has earned a goat. He practises in foreign villages, where he is not known and where people believe that he has already been initiated. Having succeeded, he brings the animal to his master and will then "have his bones cooked for him" (a ta psekeriwa bula). One of the forelegs and the diaphragm are put in a pot together with a root called banga. The set of bones of the master and that of the apprentice are added to them, and the whole is cooked. When the meat is done, the contents of the pot are poured into a lihlelo basket, and both suck in the broth with their lips. They then eat the meat, which has been cut into pieces, without touching it with their hands, seizing it with their teeth alone, "the same as vultures do, which scent meat from far away." The heart of one of these birds has been cooked with the other drugs "so that the new diviner will be able to dream of things which are far away and go straight to them." He will be able to go and guess anything at once without fear or hesitation.

The bones have remained in the lihlelo basket, and another drug is used to wash them ; this is the bark of a tree called *mbandjwa*. The new diviner must then show his powers of divination : all his astragalus being mixed with those of the master, he must pick them out without a mistake, calling them by the name he has given them. If he fails, the trial must be gone through again later ; he returns home and the bones are given a rest ; he then comes another day and the two sets are again dipped, this time into beer ; the beer is drunk by both the master and the apprentice, the bones are washed and thrown, and the latter must now pick them out again. He will probably succeed, and so becomes a master. But the old diviner gives him one of the bones of his own set, which will "reign over the set of the initiated." This bone will always be considered first ; it is the *father* and *mother* of the set.

If the other bones indicate a bad omen, the new diviner will not be troubled so long as the king of the set shows a good one. If, on the other hand, the king is in the — position, or in the × position, the young man will fear to give a favourable prophecy. 791

The diviner (wa bula) is in most cases at the same time a ñanga, a medicine-man, and he will probably initiate the candidate into the knowledge of his drugs also. "Because," said Mankhelu, "to possess the Word alone is of little use : you need also the *mbhulo*, the magic medicines." The price paid to the initiator was formerly 80 hoes, or a wife, and the initiated, when calling at the village of his master, used to sleep in the hut of this woman. Being in possession of these new qualifications the newly-qualified diviner has the right of *planting his magic forked branch* (shiphandje. See Illustration I. p. 5 and II. p. 495). This rite is subject to many rules, which the initiator teaches his pupil ; the latter must dig a certain quantity of white sand in a deep pool, and bury it in his hut where he intends placing the branch. This will then be "planted in the abyss" (shidziba). Should the hut burn, or should enemies set fire to it, water will spring from the depths and prevent the shipandje from being consumed. Moreover a sacrifice is made to the ancestors who transmitted their drugs to the initiator, and the psanyi of the slaughtered sheep is used to smear the branch. An intimate relation remains between the old doctor and his pupil. When the former dies, the latter must "raise," or "awaken his drugs" by a number of ceremonies which aim at removing the defilement brought upon them by this death. These are rules which apply to medicine-men as well as to diviners.

The forked pole is both the laboratory and the altar (it is also called gandjelo, p. 388) and also the museum of the magician. He hangs to it his calabashes of drugs, his basket of bones, the psirungulo (part of the victims preserved as religious amulets, p. 472) and any valuable objects that he may possess. When Mankhelu had made some money by his bone-throwing or his medical practice, he used to leave the coins during the night at the foot of the branch, in order to inform his gods of his success!

I am unable to say whether, in former times, the diviners *formed a class* apart within the tribe, better defined, more close and secret

791 than is at present the case. It may be so, as the hondlola by which they pass from apprenticeship to mastership is a true rite of integration, by which they enter upon a new condition and acquire a special position. At every new moon henceforth they will have to wash their bones ritually in order to remove the defilement of the preceding month, after which they will smear them with psanyi.

When a diviner finds that he is not successful in his forecasts, he consults another member of the fraternity, who tells him to offer such and such a victim to an ancestor-god who was himself a bone-thrower, and who is supposed to have given the bones to his unsuccessful descendant. The spirit of interpretation of the deceased will then enter into the supplicant.

In order to attract customers, Mankhelu kept a little pellet of black grease amongst his bones. When he arrived at a place to practise his art, he took a little of this grease and placed it on a glowing cinder, arranging the bones all round, and the smoke which rose from the fat acted as a summons to the people. "So I saw one coming from this direction with an ox, another from another direction with a goat, and made good profit!"

Women may also become bone-throwers, but this is a rare occurrence.

5) The importance of the divinatory bones.

787 From all the foregoing information it may easily be gathered that the
791 art of bone-throwing is by no means child's play, nor mere quackery by which astute sooth-sayers deceive their credulous fellows. It is a true art which the diviners practise *in all sincerity*, themselves believing that they receive objective revelations through its means. This sincerity is attested by many proofs.

1) The fact, already mentioned, that it is not a secret, esoteric art, but that all know its rules and take part in the interpretation.

2) The confidence which diviners have in the power of their bones, and the strong attachment which they profess for their divinatory basket (1). Each of their astragalus bears a name which reminds them

(1) The conversation, just referred to, which I had with Mankhelu after his explanation of the unfulfilled prophecy, is very striking in this respect. It concluded as follows : — "Mankhelu," I said to him, "you see that your bones deceive you ! They

787 of the person who gave it to them, the circumstances in which it was
791 found, and some of the triumphs of their career. Their whole life is connected with these bones, which they truly love and to which they are bound by all the fibres of their hearts!

Of course diviners are *shrewd*! Their interpretation does not proceed from mathematic evidence, but from their extraordinary powers of imagination. Tortoise in the negative position may at the same time mean black earth, death, defilement, a well-swept village, the burnt bush, according to the requirements of the case ; but this is fair play and everyone approves of their ingenuity ; it is not a conscious attempt to deceive. It is evident that the predictions often remain unfulfilled, as in the case of Mankhelu's prophecy. Or the exact reverse of the forecast happens. One of my evangelists, Filipi Mabemane, when still a heathen, went to consult a Matjolo diviner regarding the birth of a child which was shortly to take place. "It will be a boy, and he will live" was the answer. Actually, it was a girl and she died! So many people are more or less sceptical and say : "Tinhlolo i ntlhangana na pso!" — "The bones tell the truth when by chance it so happens!" However their faith is not impaired for long! The anxiety to know the future is so great that they consult anew, but not the same diviner. People say : "Psa mu hlula," — "He has been overcome," and go to another! Qualified doctors sometimes experience similar treatment even amongst the Whites! Viguet once quarelled with a bone-thrower. The man of art contended that he always told the truth. "What did you tell me?" said Viguet. "You told me that I should get plenty of oxen and goats. Where are they? And why did you not tell me : 'Hanya, hanya, hanya... Live, live, live... there will come a day when something will happen and we shall quarrel!' " But the sceptics are rare. Faith in the bones is blind, but it is great!

How is this confidence, which both diviners and their customers have in the divinatory bones, to be explained?

are old, dry, dead things which cannot help you ! Come to the light of the true Revelation of Jesus Christ." — "You are right, Moneri," answered my friend. "I am old! I cannot use my bones any more, as I no longer travel for trade or feasting ! I shall have to come to the Church by and by." — "If that is so, let me have your basket ; it interests me very much. I will pay for it." — "He ! Moneri ! Impossible !" — "Why ? At any rate sell me the Son, if you wish to keep the Father !" — "No ! I want to keep the Son." — "Then give me the Father !" — "Never !" said he quite scandalised. — "You see that your heart is still in it, old chap !" — "Yes. When a child has dysentery, can I leave it so ? Must I not consult the bones to know what drug to give ?..." I did not succeed that day in buying either Son or Father. However, the diviner died some years later and his heirs consented to sell me one of his sets, which is now in my possession.

787 Does it come from a *religious belief*? It is not easy to say definitely to
791 what extent the divinatory art rests on religion. On the one hand, the power of interpretation of the bones comes from the ancestor-gods who were bone-throwers themselves, and they are invoked to give or to revive this power. Mankhelu even told me that the prophecy of the arrival of the strangers had been inspired in him by his deceased father Shiluvane. But the Bula, the Word, is not generally looked on as being the utterance of the ancestor-gods. The bones are, in a certain sense, *superior to the gods* whose intentions they disclose. The Bula is the revelation of a more or less impersonal power, independent of the gods.

787 It is undeniable that the divinatory art is *essentially magical* ; it rests
789 on those universal axioms of primitive mentality which are deeply engrained in the Bantu mind (p. 368) and this is sufficient to account
791 for the indisputable value which it possesses in the eyes of the Thongas. Like replaces like. By virtue of mere external similarity one object can signify another. Thus human beings are represented by animals which resemble them in a certain point. The reedbuck which wanders during the night stands for the wizards who do the same ; the hyena, which eats the remains of the lion's feast, is the parasite who follows the chief, etc. Thus there are representative and represented objects. But like also acts on like : in some mysterious way the fate of the representative object will be the fate of the object represented. There is no doubt that diviners sometimes claim not only the power to form a diagnosis, to discover causes and give advice, but to influence the course of events themselves and determinate certain results. Mankhelu believed that he had contributed to the defeat of the Sikororo tribe when the bones so vividly depicted the rout of their army. If imitative magic controls the divinatory art, the part played by communionist magic is equally great. The part represents the whole. The astragalus, which is but a small bone, represents the whole body, and its fate prophecies the fate of the entire animal or person represented by it. The Native mind has a much profounder conception of the unity of the animal and human worlds than we have. Spoon once said to me mysteriously : "The astragalus of the goat truly represents the people of the village, because these animals live in the village ; they know us, they know what is in us." Observe also how the consultant takes the amulets of the patient and rubs them against the bones in order that they may be able to speak the truth about him. These amulets contain the nails and hair of the patient if they have been tied round his neck in the hondlola ceremony. Moreover they are covered with his "nsila," the exudation of his body,

the material representation of his personality. By this contact the patient has in a way become a part of the "complexus Bula" and what happens to the bones will also happen to him ; what is said by the bones will henceforth apply directly to him. This magic conception of Nature is probably the profound and secret reason why the diviners believe so firmly in their art. 787 789 791

On the other hand, this art is so perfect that bone-throwers can derive very great satisfaction from the practice of it. It must be born in mind that, in fact, all the elements of Native life are represented by the objects contained in the basket of divinatory bones. It is a resumé of their whole social order, of all their institutions, and the bones, when they fall, provide them with an instantaneous picture of all that may befall them. This system is so elaborate that I do not hesitate to say that, together with their language, their folklore, their lobola customs and their burial rites, it is the product of their psychic life which shows most intelligence. If the premises of divination are accepted, astragalomancy seems to me vastly superior to cheiromancy and all the other systems which have been invented by us. It is also superior to the divination by four tablets of ivory or wood practised by a certain number of South African tribes, a description of which will be found in Appendix VI (1). 787 181

But if this system of divination is a proof of great intelligence, it must be confessed that *its results*, as shown in the psychic life of the tribe, 787 156 182

(1) There are some grounds for thinking that divination by astragalus bones is very old in the history of mankind. The Greeks practised *astragalomancy*. In a paper to which I shall refer in App. VI, the Rev. N. Roberts mentions the temple of Dodone, in which, according to Cicero, there was a large brass basin with the statue of a man upon it, and this man held in his hands a whip with three straps from which hung small astragalus bones. When these bones were set in motion by the wind, they struck against the basin and the sounds thus produced had a prophetic character. This was astragalomancy, but of a very different kind from that just described. Aristotle makes frequent allusions to the astragalus bone and says, inter alia, that one of its sides, named *coon*, represents the figure 6 ; another, named *chion*, the figure 1, etc. This shows that in his time the astragalus bone was already identified with the dice. The dice, also called *αστραγαλος* in Greek is simply an astragalus bone whose sides have been cut so as to form a perfect cube. We find traces of the use of the astragalus even further back in the past. Angelo Mosso, quoted by the same author, asserts that he found many astragalus in Italy, where they were used in connection with primitive religion as far back as the neolithic period. The discovery in the lake of Neuchâtel of a collection of more than thirty astragalus in the lake dwellers' station of Auvernier may be a proof that these bones did in truth play a part in the customs of primitive humanity. If this is so, then the Bantus have preserved the astragalus as they did the wooden pillow of the old Egyptians, the ancestrolatry of the Mousterians and the "mbaya" (p. 93) of the Libyans. The astragalus is still employed in play to represent cattle by Swiss children in the Canton of Valais, and I am told that the South African Boers have the same custom, and call these bones dol-osse.

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which he acts in a strange manner, hears voices calling him and often runs amok, the Sotho bone-thrower learns his art in the same quiet manner as any other craft and completes his training not by any public ceremonial but by a private strengthening consisting of drinking water in which the bones have been cooked together with the blood of a cock to make him wakeful and clever. There is no objection to people practising their profession long before they have completed their training, so that doctors range from the novice to the renowned diviner of long standing. The profession, though open to all, is usually inherited from a relative; but there is an increasing number of men to-day who become doctors for the money they make out of it and without undergoing any extensive training.

The doctor associated with the new cult of possession that has within the past thirty years spread over the Lowveld from the east resembles in his methods the Zulu–Xhosa doctor. He is possessed by spirits who talk through him and order him to throw bones and guide him in the use of medicines, and he uses all manner of wonderful tricks. But he undergoes no initiation other than that of all possessed people. The cult is confined largely to women who, during possession, speak in a foreign tongue, said to be Thobolo or Kgalaka, but in reality a kind of gibberish. Possession takes the form of dancing to the accompaniment of tambourines, rattles and a special kind of drum beat, initiation into which is believed to cure the ailment which accompanied the first manifestations of the possessing spirit. These spirits are always those of relatives, usually on the mother's side, in contrast to the foreign spirits who are thought to possess Shangana–Tonga who have the same cult. Only a few of those who are possessed ever become doctors and then only when the possessing spirit was a doctor. They are the only class of Sotho doctor who receives inspiration direct from the spirits.

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A class of doctor that does not belong to the Sotho culture yet is indispensable to Lowveld Sotho society, who is seldom or never a Sotho yet has a place in Sotho life, is the *mokome* or Shangana–Tonga smeller-out. He divines chiefly by the head without much use of bones, is able to find things that have been hidden, and is the final judge or smeller-out of witches.

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The doctor is not, in the minds of most people, clearly distinguished

a) The Priesthood.

The Thongas have no sacerdotal caste, but, as has already been 782
pointed out, the right of officiating in religious ceremonies is 798
strictly confined to *the eldest brother*. All offerings must be made 593
through him. To supplant him is a great taboo, and would entail the malediction of the gods, and even the death of the offender. There are, however, some minor offerings which anyone is allowed to make to his gods ; for instance, a lover who has been jilted, may, after having consulted the bones, give something to his god in order to obtain his aid in regaining the favour of the girl he loves. But, as a rule, no one must *hahla*, or even *gandjela*, before the death of his parents. If, after their death, their son should happen to dream of them, he must offer worship to the deceased by pouring some ground tobacco on to his wooden pillow, this being the commencement of his religious functions : "he begins to learn to gandjela" (Rangane), and, if he is the eldest, he may in course of time become the priest of the whole family. I heard, however, a man from Tembe assert that he had *hahla* when his father was still living, but in this case he had been designated by the bones. A little child may even perform the office if the bones order it ; his father will then hold him in his arms and pray in his stead. The bones often call on *women* to [562]
pronounce the prayer, especially the elder sister ; there is no anti-feminism in Thonga religion. In the *luma* ceremony, however, it must always be a man, the chief himself, who is the principal officiant. The wives of the clansmen naturally cannot take a prominent part in the offerings made for the clan, being themselves members of another clan and having their own ancestor-gods, to

(I. p. 268), offerings being frequently made to the gods of the mother's family through 782
the agency of the maternal uncle. Hence the fact that uterine nephews take such a 604
peculiar part in the ritual of the worship.

I must add that according to information just received from the Rev. A. Jaques, in the Northern clans uterine nephews do not steal the portion of the offerings put apart for the ancestor-gods. It seems that this custom, which I believe to be ancient, is met with essentially amongst the Ronga clans, where the special term *mupsyuna* (an old Bantu word corresponding to *um-tshana* in Xosa and *mochana* in Sutho) has also been preserved to designate the uterine nephew, whilst it has fallen into disuse in the Northern clans. (Compare I. p. 162, 232, 498.)

782 whom they sometimes pray in the hut (See App. IV). Amongst
593 Thongas the wife does not adopt the gods of her husband's
793 family (1).

The beginnings of the *constitution of a sacerdotal caste* may be seen in the fact that in each clan, the mhamba, the sacred object used by the royal family to invoke its gods, or the drug on which national invulnerability depends, is entrusted to the care of a certain man, whose office is hereditary. As soon as the political tie becomes stronger, and the power of the paramount chief greater, the religious acts which are performed at the capital gain in importance, and the person who officiates becomes a kind of high priest. Should this evolution continue, it is easy to see how a sacerdotal class may be formed at the expense of the primitive family worship, which thus increasingly loses its importance. Amongst the Thongas this has not yet taken place, and their religious system seems to correspond to a very ancient state of things ; it is in all probability the pure form of primitive Ancestrolatry.

b) The Thonga Conception of the Offerings.

782 With the help of new information obtained since writing the
778 first edition of this book, I think it now possible to attain to a fuller
789 understanding of the meaning of this great Thonga word *mhamba* which I have translated either by offering or by sacrifice, in connection with the killing of a victim. Under this designation come objects of two distinct categories : articles of food, clothing, etc. which are of immediate service to human existence and which are *given* to the ancestor-gods, and magic or magico-religious objects which are not given but only employed in the act of worship. The aim is the same, whatever may be the nature of the object, viz. to obtain the favour and help of the ancestor-gods, but in the first case the officiant adresses himself to living, conscious

(1) There seems to be a profound difference between Thongas and Suthos on this point. The Rev. P. Ramseyer assured me on very good evidence that in Basutoland "a wife takes the family name (seboko) of her husband and abandons her *midimo*." The midimo, says my informant, are not only the *badimo* proper, i. e. the ancestor-gods, but all the supernatural powers in which a given clan trusts, the totem, the spirit (moea) of hail, of rain, of lightning, of disease. A Sutho woman can become a Tebele by marriage, though this seldom actually happens.

On my return from the battle I showed all the army how I had 782
prayed." The old general's spontaneous appeal to the gods on 789
behalf of his country in its hour of supreme danger is indeed 778
worthy of notice, and also furnishes a proof that ancestor-worship is still a living force and has not become a mere matter of ritual amongst those who practise it. This prayer of the Nkuna general, this exclamation of an anguished soul in the presence of a great danger, may be regarded as *verbal magic*, as it is not expressedly addressed to the gods, and the same may be said of the formula employed to cancel an oath in the offering of reconciliation, the mention of the gods being absent in this case also. All these acts, however, are mhamba. They are in reality accomplished with the idea that the gods hear and see what is said and done and will be induced to deliver their worshippers.

The magic character of these rites is most marked in the cases of communionist magic; those which are classed under imitative magic may perhaps be more properly called *symbols*, or at least some of them (1).

Elias Libombo once came to me and said: "My brother, Klass, 787
died. He was *the mhamba of the Libombos*. Now his younger 793

(1) But what is a *symbol* in religion, and what is the difference between the symbol and the magic rite? I cannot treat this important subject here in all the necessary detail and length. Let us take only one instance. The offering of incense which took place every evening in the Temple of Jerusalem and which is also widespread in certain branches of the Christian Church is regarded as a symbol. The perfumed smoke which ascends towards heaven corresponds to the prayers of the worshippers, which are thought of as ascending to God and pleasing Him, just as the agreeable smell of incense gratifies the nostrils of the man who perceives it. But in the Hebrew religion it is not thought that incense conveys prayers to God in some actual and magical fashion. It is a symbol. Psychologically speaking this use of incense is probably to be explained in the following manner: The material representation of a religious act (or a religious truth) tends to induce in the worshipper a stronger faith in the efficacy of the act or the reality of the truth. His soul thus finds satisfaction in the performance of the symbolic act through which he feels himself brought into closer communion with his God. It is easy to understand that in the course of the religious evolution, a higher conception of God should have caused the magic act to evolve into the symbol, and that the symbol itself should be abandoned or reduced to a minimum when the idea of God has become perfectly spiritualised and communion with the Father who is in Heaven is realized without any external and intermediary means. A comparison of the great mhamba with the relics of saints or other relics used in certain religions would probably show a similar type of evolution.

Some scientists believe that religious evolution contained a *preanimistic phase*, in which the worship of spirits had not yet come into existence, and in which primitive man employed only magic means to influence the supernatural powers. This

787 brother will be so called." Nkolele, the father of these two men,
793 was the Libombo mhamba before them. This is another meaning of this great word mhamba. Klass was neither a gift made to the ancestor-gods of the Libombos, nor a magic object employed to win their favour, but he was the elder member of the family, the one who was the official and indispensable intermediary between all the Libombos and their gods. For this reason he was a mhamba. This leads me to propose the following definition of the word : *A mhamba is any object or act or even person which is used to establish a bond between the gods and their worshippers.*

Having thus analysed all the elements contained in the Thonga mhamba, we may safely conclude that its spiritual and religious value cannot be denied. Whatever place ritual may hold in the ceremonies of ancestrolatry, whatever mixture of devotional and magic elements may be found in them, the offering is not a mere external gift which appeases the gods by its material value, nor a simple means of coercion which forces them to submit to the will of the worshipper. By means of the mhamba the Thonga really aims at entering into relationship with those powerful spirits who control his life (1).

may be true, but as regards Bantus, they have long outgrown this stage. Even when they have recourse to magic processes in order to influence their ancestor-gods, these have a distinctive character, different from that of the ordinary magic which they practise when they wish to affect the impersonal forces of Nature. Everything done in order to obtain the favour of the ancestor-gods is a *mhamba*, not a *muri*, as I have already pointed out.

782 (1) Religious and magic practices are more or less mingled in Thonga ritual and it
789 is evident that the smaller the degree of magic contained in a rite, the more genuine religious feeling there will be in it. I owe to my Venda informant the description of
755 a sacrifice performed in his tribe for a sick child, where the two elements are combined to an extraordinary extent. It is called *the offering of the goat with clothes* (mbudzi ya u dzwindisa).

A goat is provided. It is placed before a basin of water mixed with certain drugs and forced to drink, to drink till it is fully distended, and dies. It is then skinned and cut open. The large intestine is extracted from the body, and a part of it is cut off and stitched up at one end so as to form a kind of pouch. From each limb a bit of meat is taken, and a provision of the seeds of various cereals, brought to the spot together with drugs. All these different kinds of food are introduced into the pouch, the process of filling it being accompanied by prayers to the ancestor-god. The officiant, whilst proceeding with his task, puts seeds into the goat's intestine with one hand, and, with the other, takes other seeds and places them apart. These he will keep carefully in order to sow them later on. And continually he prays: "Eat your fill and be satisfied, and leave us some for our use." Thus the ancestor-god has been fed, well and duly stuffed. The pouch is then stitched at its other end. But now the ancestor-god must be clothed

262 643 527 which is not eaten, and rub their faces with it. But *no religious ceremony is performed*. It is the same for the *fuma*, a paste made with the contents of the kwakwa fruit, a kind of Strychnos very similar to the nsala, but of a different taste. The ceremony was even more simple than with the almonds ; the chief used to send a little of this paste to each village saying : "Let this be the first bite you swallow : the new year has come!" (Luman, ku tlhese nguba.) No powder was used in connexion with it. The magical drug was used, on the other hand, when the luma of pumpkin leaves took place.

II. *The luma of the Kafir corn.*

262 643 782 769 796 The great, the official luma, amongst the Ronga clans, is that performed for the Kafir corn (mabele). The great wife of the chief grinds the first grains of Kafir corn reaped in the fields. She cooks the flour in a pot and pours into it some of the royal powder kept in the calabash, so as to make a *shimhimbi* (See page 42). The chief takes a little of the food and offers it to the spirits of his ancestors, at the main entrance of the royal kraal. He prays to them in the following terms : "Here has the new year come! Precede us, you gods, and luma, so that, for us also, Kafir corn shall help our body, that we may become fat, not thin, that the witches may increase the corn, make it to be plentiful, so that, even if there is only a small field, big baskets may be filled! (Nguba hi yoleyi! Rangan ñwine, mi luma, ñwi Psikwembu! Na hine, mabele ma tjhama amirin yeru psinene, hi kuluka hi nga wondji. Abaloyi ba yandjisa, psi tala ngopfu, nambi shi shisi-ñwanyana shi shiñwe, a ku tale tingula!)"

262 643 796 554 609 After this religious ceremony everyone luma in turn, the chief first, then the sub-chiefs, then the counsellors, then the warriors who have killed enemies in battle, then the headmen of the kraals who have all been summoned to the capital. Should one of the headmen be prevented from coming by illness, his younger brother will not precede him. He will bring him the *shimhimbi* in a leaf ; the elder will take it, and, after him, the other brothers. Women do not eat the magic powder. Neither do strangers,

262 even those who are settled in the clan. They have their own
643 medicine and luma for themselves, though they must not do it
609 before the chief of the country.
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III. *The luma of bukanye and the great national feast.*

137 The most characteristic of all these ceremonies connected with
273 the first fruits is the luma of bukanyi. Tobane has given me a
796 circumstantial description of this feast and it deserves to be
824 reproduced in all its details, as being a typical manifestation of Bantu national life.

The *nkanye* (1) is a large tree, one of the finest in the country. Its botanical name is Sclerocarya caffra (Sond); it is generally known amongst the English of Natal as the Kafir plum.

It bears fruit of the size of a greengage, which when ripe is a beautiful golden yellow and has a strong flavour of turpentine and a penetrating odour. It is a dioecian tree, the male bearing bunches of flowers while the female has single flowers. The Natives are quite aware of this; they cut down the male plants but take care to keep a few in each district to fecundate the female. The fruit — the kanye — begins to ripen in the month of January and falls to the ground. The odour is perceptible everywhere, and it is then that the principal men of the country approach the chief and say to him: "The time has come to luma."

In the luma of the bukanye it is easy to discover four consecutive ceremonies:

a) The luma of the gods and of the chief.

262 The first ripe makanye are gathered and pressed at the capital,
782 and the sour liquor thus obtained is poured out on the tomb of the deceased chiefs in the sacred wood; they are invoked to
273 bless this new year and the feast which is about to be celebrated.
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(1) Nkanye, plural minkanye, is the tree in question. Kanye, plural makanye, is the fruit of this tree; bukanye is the drink made from this fruit. In the same way the wild apricot tree is called mphimbi, plural mimphimbi. The fruit himbi, plural mahimbi; the drink made from the fruit, buhimbi.

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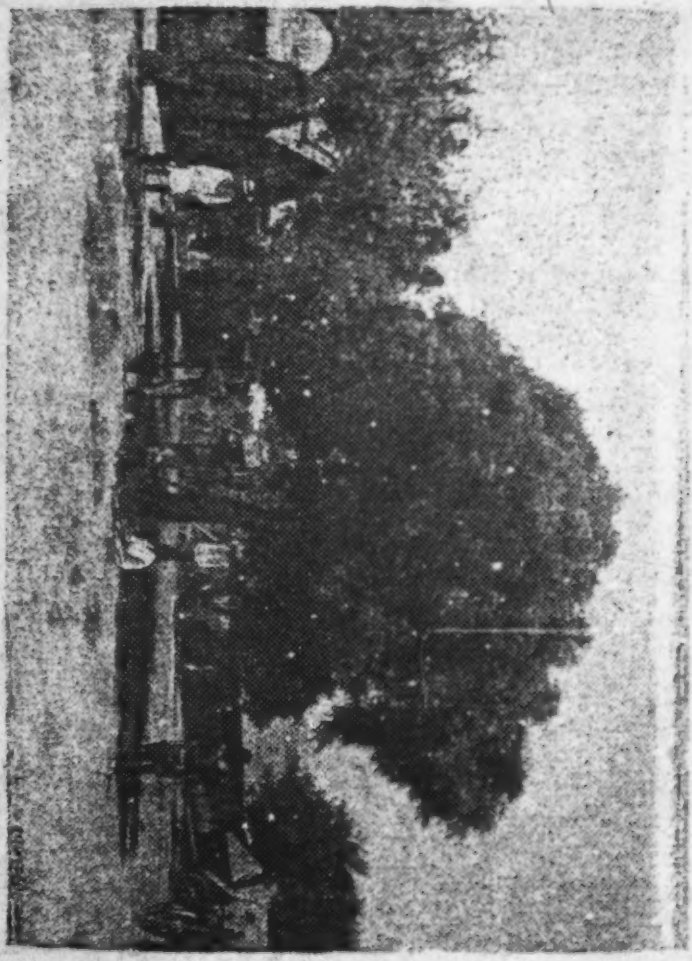
Nkolele, the sub-chief of Libombo, used on this occasion to pronounce the following prayer : "This is the new year. Let us



The "Nkuye" of Ribal", (16 miles North of Lourenço-Marques). Phot. P. Berthoud.

not kill each other! Let us eat peacefully! (Hi yo nguba! Hi nga dlayane! A hi nwenen ha hombe!)" Here is another

262 formula : "May this bukanyi do no harm! May we not slay each
782 other under its influence. May it cause no serious quarrels."
796 They are afraid that, during the general intoxication which will
273 shortly prevail, quarrels will arise, some of which may terminate fatally. During the whole month of bukanye drinking, all business is at a standstill, just as with us all bankruptcy proceedings and all prosecutions for debt are held in abeyance for two weeks during the New Year holidays!

The gods having luma first, the bones are consulted. Should the throw be propitious, the chief will luma next ; thus the opening ceremony of the feast is concluded.

b) The luma of the army.

796 The young people are now assembled to clean up the public
273 square and all the roads ; the ball room must be prepared! The women of the capital start out early in the morning, beating the *psibubutwana*, that is to say sounding the call that is produced by striking the lips (bu-bu-bu-bu), and they go all over the country gathering the golden fruit ; this is piled up in an enormous heap on the public square and the brew is proceeded with in the following manner. The makanye are pierced (tshunya) with a pointed wooden splinter ; the stone falls covered with a transparent white pulp into the jar ; into this jar is also squeezed out with the fingers all the juice which remains in the pulp adhering to the skin ; this is continued until the jar is half full, when the stones are taken out, and on the following day the pressing is resumed until the jar is full. On the third day the beer has sufficiently fermented to be pungent and agreeable to the taste and is ready for consumption. Empty barrels are easily procurable in the environs of Lourenço Marques. The women of the capital brew ten or fifteen huge casks of the precious liquor! This accomplished, the second ceremony begins.

796 A convocation of the entire male portion of the tribe is held in
273 the capital, but the first to respond to the call must be the men,
789 the warriors of the army, who come in full array, with all their
701 ornaments, and carrying their small play shields. One cask of

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

796 beer is selected, into which is thrown the black powder, the
273 great medicine of the land, called in this case *buhlungu bya*
789 *miluru*, the powder of the miluru. The nuru, plur. miluru, is
701 the mysterious spiritual influence which a man or a beast killed
761 by the assagais can exert on the slayer, making him lose his head and commit acts of folly, or, at least, have red eyes (shenga mahlo). We shall again meet with this curious conception when

Bukanye drinking near Antioka. (Portuguese East Africa.) *Phot. A. Burd.*

studying the rites of the army and of hunting. All those who are proudly conscious of having killed a man in war must first drink the new beer which has been medicated to keep them from killing any of their compatriots during the ensuing weeks of the bukanye. They approach one after the other, the chief also, if he be a man-slayer. Each of them receives a small calabash, (ntcheko, p. 50) full of the fermented liquid. He jumps and runs in the direction of the entrance, drinks a mouthful, spits it out with *tsu* and says: "Father and mother! May I live! May I hold the calabash! Even to morrow! For ever!" People laugh. He is very happy! Others sing and dance the war dance:

796 "We drink the bukanye anew! Who would have thought that
273 we should drink again from this cup", viz., "that we should have
789 escaped all the dangers of war" (Hi nwa nkanyi lomu'mpsa! Afa
701 hi nga hlayi epsaku hi ta nwa ntcheko lo kambe).

After this, the casks are distributed to the other warriors, who drink to their hearts' content. The addition of the black powder is not absolutely necessary in their case. They can luma without it. Then the war circle is formed and the principal counsellors harangue the assembled warriors, giving them the following advice : "Drink in peace (ha hombe). Let no one spoil this bukanye by transfixing his brother with his assagai. Go and drink in your villages. Do not pick quarrels with strangers passing through the country, etc." The gathering then disperses.

c) The luma in the village.

796 The preparatory luma is accomplished. The *yila* has been
273 removed. Now comes the third act : the drinking in the villages.
786 The women who remained at home while the men-slayers went to luma at the bidding of the chief, have gathered large quantities of makanye. The tree is to be found extensively all over the country, as no female plant is ever cut down ; there is one or more in every field, and every one possesses such a tree, as every one owns a field ; when all the trees in the gardens have been stripped of fruit, the women pass to the trees growing in the bush far from the villages.

But here also everything must be done in right order of precedence ; the petty chief of such a district must commence to luma in the presence of his subjects, and not until after he has done so can the people drink freely in the villages. From this moment, however, there is no further restriction. Drinking continues day and night, night and day! When the supply is finished in one village, they go to the next. These feasts are the saturnalia, the bacchanalia, the carnival of the tribe! During these weeks some individuals are in a continuous state of semi-intoxication. Orgies on all sides, songs and dances! The younger men run along the paths, with a more or less unsteady

796 gait, brandishing sticks with pieces of red cloth attached as
273 pennants. They are in search of full barrels! It must be said
786 that the inebriety produced by the bukanye is of a rather mild type, as this Native beer contains very little alcohol ; but the quantity absorbed is so enormous that it ends by going to their heads : this is more especially so with the bukanye brewed from a species of nkanye called *nunge*, which appears to be stronger and more intoxicating.

796 How far does sexual licence go during the bukanye ? Not to
273 the point of general promiscuity, as amongst the Ba-Pedi after the circumcision school. However many cases of adultery occur.
833 Men and women forget the elementary rules of condvet. They
786 attend to the wants of nature in the same places, which is taboo under ordinary circumstances : "Nau a wa ha tiyi,"—"the law is no longer in force."

796 Still, in the midst of all this carnival, the payment of the tax
273 must not be forgotten... This is the time to carry to the chief the liquor which is flowing so freely on all sides, but of which
643 he claims the lion's share. Each petty chief sends his people
651 to the capital with brimming jars. This is termed "lumisa hosi," supplying the chief with new wine. The women do not enter the capital at once, but go to one of the counsellors, who promptly abstracts a couple of jars for his own use. The chief returns one or two jars to the carriers, as they have come a long way and are doubtless thirsty ; the remainder will be kept to refresh the very numerous guests at the Court ; any coming from afar will spend the night and not return until the next day. I have seen a company of these women carrying baskets
539 full of makanye to Muzila. How graceful was the Indian file winding its way along the path and singing, amongst others, the following chorus : (See for further particulars *Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, page 46.)

Chwe! Chwe! Hi laba shimungu — Leshi ka — Le tilwen!
Chwe! Chwe! Shimungu hi mani? — Hi Mzila! — Hi Mzila!
Hi! Hi! We seek the hawk! — Who soars — In the sky!
Hi! Hi! Who is the hawk? — It is Mzila! — It is Mzila!

539 There is quite a collection of these carriers' songs praising the chiefs. Mzila (or Muzila), whom we saw a short time back scaring sparrows, is here compared to the mythical lightning bird, to the hawk that swoops down from the clouds. (See Part VI.) Why does he not once for all annihilate the sparrows which pillage his fields of sorghum ? But this is poetry! and there is often a wide gap between poetry and reality!

d) The feasting of the chief in the villages.

796 273 643 The fourth and final act of the bukanye feasting in which, as we have seen, the chief plays a prominent part, is the *nsungi* which may be called the "fin de saison" orgy. The chief now returns the visits of his subjects and casks of beer are prepared for him in every village. Dancing and singing are in full swing. He is fêted and acclaimed! But the makanye are getting over-ripe ; a new month, a new moon is at hand, which is called *sibandlela* "she who closes the roads ;" the paths leading to the foot of the trees become almost impassable, owing to the grass which grows to an incredible height during the rains prevailing at this season. The fine weather is over. Winter is knocking at the door.

796 789 643 262 821 Amongst the Nkunas the luma ceremony called "to eat the new year" (dyaka ñwaka) is performed with a special pumpkin (kwembe) cooked at the capital together with the medicine used for rain-making. The chief first eats of it in the evening and makes the sign of a cross on the big drum, which is then beaten to call the people in his village. Then all the men come, bringing the little horns in which they keep the rain medicine (See Part VI). They eat a little and smear the rim of these horns with the medicine ; the horns also must "eat the new year." Then everybody can enjoy the products of the harvest. Should anyone precede the chief, this would be fatal to the latter or make him ill... Such is the testimony of Mankhelu. I suspect these rites to have been influenced by the proximity of the Ba-Pedi. "Now we have no longer any first fruits' feast (mulumo)," says Mankhelu with some melancholy. "White people have killed it. Everybody

262 eats freely in his house according to his good pleasure. Formerly
821 we used to take the oxen of the man who had dared to steal the
796 new year."

Conclusion on the luma rite.

796 All these luma rites[1] of first fruits seem to have primarily a *religious*
782 *origin*. The Bantus do not feel that they dare enjoy the products of
554 the soil unless they have first given a portion of them to their gods. Is it not these gods who make the cereals grow? Have they not the power even of controlling the wizards who bewitch the fields? These rites are also evidently dictated by the *sense of hierarchy*. A subject must not precede his chief nor a younger brother the elder in the use of the new harvest, else they would kill those in authority. Such an act is against order. We shall see that, even when the seeds are sown, the elders must take precedence. But the custom seems also to have been actuated by the idea of *passage*. There is a passage from one year to another. For the Thongas, I think the new year begins
805 twice every year: it begins when tilling recommences, in July, August,
796 when the heat returns. This is the hlobo. It begins a second time at
789 harvest, and then there is passage from the food of the last year to the food of this year. This is the nguba (Ro.) or ñwaka (Dj.). Though the luma rites do not bear all the characteristics of a true passage rite, like those of circumcision or moving, we may observe in the luma of bukanye a kind of marginal period of general licence, when the ordinary laws are more or less suspended. The taking of a first mouthful probably signifies the aggregation to the new period, the magical powder used on this occasion being a protective measure to shield them from the calamities of this unknown year... And after all, is it not that feeling of fear which so easily takes possession of the heart of man when entering on a new state and starting something fresh, which has led the savage to surround the use of the first fruit with so many ritual precautions?

IV. *Taxation.*

643 The chief governs (fuma). *Fuma* means to command, but also to live in plenty, to be rich. The subject (nandja, follower) obeys; he follows the chief who marches before him just as the

1 [See pp. 394-404 in these categories c. in 116-Analysis]

782 their protection : "May the harvest be plentiful ; may the cattle multiply ; may all our wives become pregnant." He uses by preference negative expressions : "Be not angry against us ; may the cows not slip their calves ; may our wives have no miscarriages, etc." In the meantime the people continue the same clapping of hands (called ku diya or ku losa gupsi, gupsi expressing exactly the hollow sound produced by the curved hands).

Notwithstanding this ritual clapping of hands, not much respect is shown by those present. They chat and joke whilst the chief of the clan is praying. A little tobacco has been spread as a libation on the graves and all help themselves to it. The influence of European ideas can be noticed ; a man cries : "Take off your hats!" and most of the men obey, showing that they are conscious that this is a religious ceremony worthy of respect.

As soon as the ceremony is over, they begin to dance. Immediately the clapping changes. It is now done with the hands held flat. It is chiefly the women, especially the old ones, who dance. Gabaze, the principal wife of the Nkuna chief Muhlaba, who is a Makaringe, the sister of Mugwaleni, makes herself conspicuous by her contortions. These are the ordinary dances.

They eat the roasted meat ; they drink the beer brought by the women. The portions offered to the manes are eaten as well as the rest, and I did not observe that they were reserved to special persons. The skin of the victim is cut into small strips which the men tie round the right wrist, the women round the left."

b) *National Offerings.*

782 These are those offered at the capital, to the ancestors of the
769 chief, but on behalf of, the whole clan, because the gods of the
796 reigning family have control over the clan, just as the chief has
554 over the families of his subjects.

The regular national offering is the *luma* of the first fruits, their consecration, which I have described at length as one of the principal manifestations of the National life (I. p. 396-406). The Bantu conception of hierarchy is clearly illustrated by this custom : the gods must be the first to enjoy the produce of the new year, then the chief, the sub-chiefs, the counsellors, the

782 headmen, then the younger brothers in order of age. There
769 is a stringent taboo directed against the person who precedes
796 his superiors in the enjoyment of the first fruits, this law being
554 applicable to Kafir corn or bukanye in certain clans, and also to sorghum, pumpkin leaves and beer, etc., in others (1).

834 The sexual taboo is also enforced. Those who contravene this
782 law are said to "destroy the efficacity of the offering, nyumbisa mhamba." At the Ngoni Court, where sexual excesses were prevalent (see I. Annotatio 14) it is said that the chiefs used to remain continent for a fortnight at the time of luma. The reason of this taboo is probably the fact that the luma signifies the entering upon a new year, a new season, and is thus a rite of passage.

782 The religious meaning of the rite is clear : the gods, if deprived of the right they possess by virtue of their hierarchical position, would avenge themselves by threatening the harvest ; so they must be given their share first.

In the Maluleke clan, in which the customs seem to have been influenced by the Ba-Nyai, there is also a regular offering at the capital, when *the crops are still growing*. Rangane describes it as follows : "When the chief sees that the Kafir corn is threatened by the vermin in the fields, he says : "Perhaps the masters of the country (i. e. my ancestors who are dead) are angry ; perhaps I have not worshipped them fittingly." He summons the sons of the royal family (mangalakana) from all parts of the country, prepares beer, and selects a goat for the sacrifice ; they assemble around the graves with the sons and the uterine nephews, where they worship, and then, after eating all that is to be eaten, they return."

The special national offerings are those in connection with rain. If the rain falls at the right season, the sacrifice will not be made ; but should it fail to do so, the whole ritual will be gone through. This sacrifice for rain, is, as has already been mentioned (p. 318) called *phokolo* amongst the Bilen clans, and is performed in the

(1) Amongst the Maluleke a *second luma* is necessary after harvest, when brewing the first beer. It seems that the sub-chiefs or even headmen, settled in districts far away from the capital, can obtain a special license to perform the luma ceremony on their own account, but they must first apply for this permission, and after having finished, they must forward the chief's share to him.

775 through an evolution towards deity, as his corpse was decaying in the
765 grave, and the closing of his hut, with the placing of his shield before the door, might well mean his definite incorporation into the world of the dead, and also a means of preventing him from returning to this world and bringing misfortune to his relatives.

765 As regards the relatives, they separate from the former phase by the
783 cutting of the hair, putting out the old fire, leaving off their clothing and wearing mourning attire. A very distinct period of margin then begins, marked by the sexual taboos accompanying it, and they are aggregated again to the ordinary world and to the new phase of their life by all the ceremonies which I have explained at length. Here, however, as the seclusion was caused by a certain most dreaded defilement, the aggregation rites all bear the character of removal of uncleanness: uncleanness of the food, of the gardens, of the bereaved, chiefly grave-diggers and widows, of the whole community, which is cleansed by the sexual rite of hlamba ndjaka, etc.

797 If classification were equivalent to understanding, we might say that
761 we have fairly well understood the complicated Thonga rites which accompany death... But who can boast of having fully understood so profound and mysterious a subject? Death is the great shadow which hovers over life and chills the human heart. Outside of an enlightened faith, it is, and remains, the King of Terrors. Never more than at the graveside did I pity my poor black brethren, wondering how they tried to calm their hearts and overcome their sorrow. There is something profoundly touching in their most absurd rites, because, after all, they are all imposed by a craving for life and purity. Will my readers allow me to conclude this subject by a personal reminiscence? The day I attended the burial of Sokis, when his relatives had finished filling in the grave, they asked me to lead them in worship. Bantu heathenism is so poor, it feels itself so weak that it readily accepts the help of a higher religion. So I tried to turn the eyes of my hearers away from the underground hut, and to fix them on the eternal dwellings of the Father's house. Then Sokis's youngest brother took the nkanye twig and performed the heathen religious ceremony, calling his ancestors to come and bless them and entreating the deceased to leave them in peace. The contrast between these two prayers made at the same grave was indeed striking. And, whatever we may think, even if we had no religious convictions at all, should we not earnestly desire that, for these people, the bright comforting Christian hope may dispel the darkness of their thoughts and the sufferings involved in their rites?

714 heavily or stamped his feet on the ground, it sounded like the tread of an elephant.

714 This costume is a warm one, and the warrior carries a sort of
321 bone curry-comb, made of the rib of an ox, shaped and sharpened,
302 which he uses to scrape the perspiration from his face and body, when taking violent exercice or indulging in the dances descriptive of his prowess. Such is the native pocket-handkerchief!

714 The several component parts of the war-dress are kept in a little hut raised on poles, near the owner's dwelling, and are carefully looked after, being frequently dusted and exposed to the sun to preserve them from moths and weevils. A complete uniform is worth several pounds sterling!

713 *Arms* among the Ba-Ronga are of a very primitive kind, those
411 of most ancient date being doubtless the *club* (nhonga) and the *knobkerrie* (gungwe) (1) of which two specimens are given in the accompanying illustration (No. 4). The Native never journeys without his stick, using it to kill snakes, should any cross his path, and should fortune smile on him, to knock over any quail that may rise at his feet. In quarrels or in war time this *nhonga* can be a dangerous weapon. The stick with the fluted head comes, I am told, from Bilen, and it seems that this style is in great favour in Gaza. It may have a phallic significance.

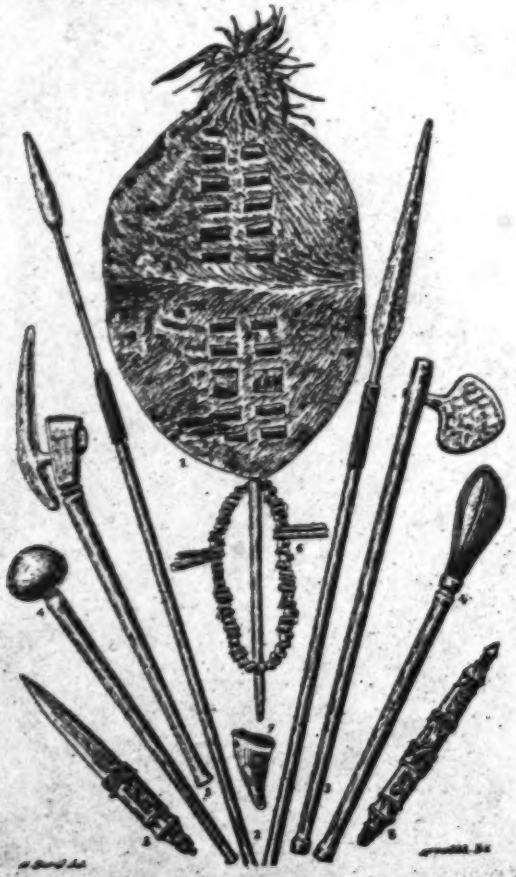
But the most formidable weapon of the South African Black is the *assagai* (tlhari, fumo (No. 2), of which there are two kinds; the larger (likhalo) consisting of a sharp, pointed, double edged steel blade, fixed on to a stick with iron or brass wire, and the smaller (tindjombi) with a blade of the size of our arrow-head, fastened to the handle with strips of bark or of palm leaves. The former is for hand-to-hand combat, and the warrior never releases his hold of it, while the latter—of which three or four may be held in the hand when entering the fight—are thrown at the enemy from a distance (2). The length of the large assagai on the right of the illustration is as follows: Blade 14 inches; binding of iron

797 (1) These sticks were given to me as dentistry fees for the extraction of decayed
713 teeth!

(2) I once had an opportunity to observe the effects of the assagai. A young evangelist of our Mission was surprised on the railway line by some Zihlahla warriors

713
4/11

wire, 4 ½ inches and handle 34 ½ inches. The small one, on the left, measures: blade 7 in., iron stem adjoining blade 7 in., binding



Thonga weapons.

1. Shield; 2. Assagais; 3. Battle axes; 4. Knobkerries; 5. Dagger; 6 and 7. Necklace and little horn worn by men sleepers.

797
713

in ambush during the 1894 war, and was transfixed at one blow. (7 th January 1895). He had fallen on his knees and the wretches struck him in the back; the assagai was only prevented from going right through his body by a note book which he was carrying in the breast pocket of his coat.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

APPENDIX V (See p. 226)

593 858 177 797 As an example of *the absolute obedience due to the father*, I may quote the testimony of the Rev. Calvin Maphophe, one of the Native ministers of the Swiss Mission, now living in Lourenço Marques. It illustrates vividly the painful conflict which takes place in the heart of a Bantu boy when he is faced with the dilemma of either obeying a heathen father who forbids him to become a Christian, or going against the paternal will and joining the Church.

One day one of the little shepherds belonging to Maphophe's village in the Spelonken brought to his comrades an astonishing piece of news. He had gone to the missionary station and heard a white man say that there is a God in heaven and that this God created all things. His words were received with absolute incredulity by the company of [773] boys herding the goats ; they answered : "It is an impossibility! Do we not know that the first man and woman came out of a reed ?" However young Matsivi (this was the name of Calvin Maphophe) and his brother Shihosi wished to set their minds at rest about the matter and they began to attend the service on Sundays. They were so struck by the message heard in the little church that they decided to learn more of this extraordinary teaching of the White people, and every Sunday they went to the Station. One of the men of the tribe informed their father that they were assiduous attendants at the Christian services. Maphophe called together all the men of his village and summoned the two boys before this tribunal. Pointing his finger at them he said : "These boys have dared to go to the White people and hear things which are dangerous to us. We do not wish them to become insane! Take it to heart both of you. It is over. Henceforth you must never go again to the village of the Whites. If you disobey, you will be beaten."

The two boys were terribly moved by their father's words. It is a recognised principle in the Bantu tribe that a child who wishes to do right must obey his father, and they were anxious to behave well... But the attraction they felt for the new teaching was too great. They solved the problem by running away from their home. This is not the place to tell the end of the story. It may be found in a little pamphlet "Le Pasteur Calvin Mapopé" published by the headquarters of the Swiss Romande Mission (2, Chemin des Cèdres, Lausanne).

164 bi-monthly *biyeketa* nor the powder of the reed can do anything to
751 prevent them. The habit of always carrying water in the calabash and
177 of never emptying it entirely is harmful. Dr Garin, our medical missionary, examined some of these milombyana calabashes with the microscope and found them full of bacteria of all kinds. It is a splendid *milieu de culture* for them. This milombyana custom is however hard to eradicate as the principle is deeply rooted in the Thonga mind : "The child grows by means of medicine" and even Christian converts respect it. They will relinquish it when a clearer notion of medical science has entered their heads — a time which is still remote, I fear!

000 From the missionary point of view, let us notice the analogy between the rite of the broken pot and Christian baptism as administered to children by most of the Churches. Natives readily accept a ceremony of benediction for the little ones, be it baptism proper or presentation with laying on of hands. But the heathen baptism is a baptism of smoke, and not of water — and is in relation to merely external dangers, while the Christian rite represents the purification of the soul from its sin and the new and pure life. Whatever may be the difference between the two customs, we find in the animistic rite a point of analogy which may help us to explain the spiritual sacrament and its deep significance.

II. ON CIRCUMCISION (See p. 94).

177 What judgment are we to pass on this custom to which some tribes
797 still cling with great pertinacity ? The teaching of endurance and of hunting has certainly some value, but these rites as a whole have very little worth and are useless in the new economy of South Africa. The obcene language allowed during the Ngoma certainly tends to pervert the mind of the boys and constitutes an immoral preparation for sexual life.

Have we nothing to learn from the Ngoma ? More than two hundred thousand children of black South Africa are now attending our schools... more or less regularly. Hundreds of young men are boarding in our Normal Institutions. Do we always succeed in this great educational work ? Its results are not entirely satisfactory, because most of the children do not stay long enough in the school to be properly taught. As soon as they have acquired some knowledge of reading and writing, they leave and go to the towns to earn money.

177 Whatever the teacher may say, they escape... I must confess that we do not control them as well as the Father of the Circumcision... The Ngoma shows us however that strict discipline is quite possible with Native boys and that we must deal with them without any touch of harshness, of course, but with a firm hand. When the inmates of our institutions complain that the sauce of their porridge is not savoury enough, we might remind them of the food their heathen comrades are eating in the Ngoma!

881 There is a striking resemblance between Bantu circumcision, Jewish circumcision and Christian baptism.

In Jewish circumcision, the same physical operation was performed, but it was performed on infants. It had undoubtedly also the meaning of a purification, a removal of pollution and an introduction into the holy nation. In the course of time, the idea was spiritualised and circumcision meant the removal of sin. But it had a strongly religious character: Jahvé marked his chosen people by their circumcision. This religious element is wanting in the Ngoma of the Thongas and the Suthos, where the national significance alone remains.

As regards baptism, the great difference between the heathen and the Christian rite is evidently this. Christian baptism is not only a religious but also a moral rite. In its normal form, which is the immersion of adult catechumens, it represents in a striking manner the washing away of sin and the admission to the Church of Christ; it is a rite of passage; separation from the old life of sin, marginal period of instruction, admission into a holy community...

The Ngoma has no such spiritual and moral idea attached to it, but it has been inspired by the same deep and true sense of the necessity in the evolution of man, of a progress consisting in the renunciation of a miserable past and the introduction into a higher life. This idea is one of those rays of light which we are happy to discover amidst the darkness of heathendom, one of those "points d'attache" to which we can link the truths of spiritual religion.

177 797 881 What ought to be the attitude of the Government and of Missions towards this custom? As regards Governments, they could not immediately suppress the circumcision schools, though they have often been asked to do so, but it would seem that they might use their influence in checking them. As for the Mission, it has naturally fought against this school of heathenism, but not always with success; boys, even Christian boys, are wonderfully attracted by it and many have left their

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

177 spelling-books for the formulæ of Manhengwane. Strange to say, it
797 frequently happens that girls refuse to marry men who have not passed
through this initiation! These facts, together with the legitimate wish
881 to give African Christianity a true national character, have suggested to
some missionaries the idea of establishing *Christian Circumcision Schools*. In a special meeting at the Conference of Le Zoute, September 1926, Canon Lucas of the Universities Mission told his colleagues the results of an experiment of this kind at his station of Masasi. The missionary himself took control of all proceedings. The boys began by entering the church, the elders representing the old men of the tribe. They were circumcised in the camp which had been previously blessed and the operation was performed by a qualified Native who had been trained by medical men. The parents of the boys were waiting outside the camp, dancing. When all the boys had been circumcised, they were told by the manager of the camp that this was done to incorporate them into the tribe, and the parents again engaged in a big dance. The men remained on the spot and proceeded to the erection of the buildings of the camp where the circumcised were kept for some weeks, and carefully treated till all of them were healed. During this period of seclusion, they received instead of the obscene formulæ, teaching bearing on seven subjects : truth, honour, purity, abstinence from drink, humility, love of one's neighbour and duties toward God. They had also to pass through various physical trials, and, at the end, they were exhorted to do penance for their past sins. Their hair was cut, and burnt together with their clothing and all the camp buildings. The parents were then summoned and danced the whole night, the men mysteriously bringing new clothing for the initiated. The boys then went to church, and, answering a question put by the missionary, they said : "I ask of God that I may be a righteous man." A special blessing was then given to them. An interesting fact is that the heathen population approved of this Christian Circumcision School and accepted it as an equivalent to the old. Some heathen parents even sent their sons to it! Seven hundred boys have already been received in it and Canon Lucas has gained an enormous influence over them! I only
000 mention this attempt to "sublimate" the circumcision rites. Some missionaries are strongly opposed to this new departure, which they regard as a dangerous mixture of Christian ideas and heathen rites. Without expressing a definite opinion on the subject, I would insist on the point just mentioned : the real, genuine rite of passage of Christianity is baptism, and the African Church might perhaps be satisfied with

797/177 *d) Mission work*, now so wide-spread all over the country, leads to the same result. It infuses a new moral and religious ideal into the minds of the people. The old customs, the sacred superstitions, many articles of the Native code, are rejected by the converts. They remain generally very submissive to the authority of their chief, pay their taxes, join the army, but, should the Authorities summon a "nyiwa," a gathering of the clan to smell out the witches, should statute labour be ordered for a Sunday, etc., their conscience does not allow them to obey. On the other hand Native converts, under their white missionary, generally form a Church, which sometimes becomes a kind of *imperium in imperio*, subject to its own laws. This is the necessary consequence of bad, or immoral, heathen customs (beer-drinking, lobola, polygamy) which the Christian ideal cannot tolerate. A deep gulf is thus created between Christians and heathens, and this also weakens the tribal life.

The causes which have brought about this change will probably increase in power in the course of time. The process of individualisation will go on; so consequently will this process of destruction of the tribal tie, and we may confidently look forward to a moment when the clan will have lost its political cohesion and its members have become independent of any Native Authority.

006 *e) Loss of the political sense.* How are we to regard this possibility? It may present certain advantages over the old state of things, but, to my mind, it entails a distinct and most regrettable loss for the Natives. The political sense, with the sense of responsibility, will have disappeared, and this sense is one of the most precious aids towards the building of character. Look at a gathering of old-fashioned indunas discussing a question affecting the welfare of the tribe under the guidance of their chief; compare it with an assembly of half civilised Natives in a Town location, a low class tea-meeting, for instance, of men with no respect for any one, addicted to drink and immorality, having rejected the authority of White missionaries because they believe themselves to be so much better informed! There was in the first gathering a dignity, a sense of duty, which you will hardly find in the second...

It is no use for us white men to curse the degenerate Native or to weep over the disappearance of the old restraints. Let us rather confess that we are in a great measure responsible for these results. We have interfered with the Bantu clan by taking away its independence; we have deprived it of one of its character building features, political

158 transported into the realm of divinity, thus giving rise to the true gods
758 and the devils. Possessing spirits are not worse than ancestor-gods. They all are non-moral. They can bless and curse, and their moral character is not taken into account at all.

2) The progress of modern psychology gives an explanation of many of these phenomena. The disease of the personality which manifests itself in the presence of a double psychological consciousness is well-known ; the hypnotic suggestion which the tambourine players unconsciously exert on their victims, sufficiently explains the origin of the disease, and the kind of life led by the exorcised is well calculated to develop their mediumistic faculties. So many of the so-called miracles of possession are easily accounted for. It would however be going too far to exclude, a priori, any possibility of external spiritual influences in
[797] those phenomena. There is one very striking fact which is a source of great wonder to the Natives. These patients, as soon as they put themselves under Christian influence, are healed at once and for ever. We have, amongst our converts, exorcists who had acquired great fame, and who recount, with glowing eyes, how they have been delivered from their terrible anguish by their new faith. For, whatever success they may have obtained in their career of exorcists, their condition was a disease, a painful disease, and they are extremely glad to have been delivered from it. This fact must certainly be remembered when trying to arrive at an explanation of possession.

C. WITCHCRAFT.

789 I have pointed out, in an article published in the Report of
754 the S. A. A. A. S., of 1906, how little comprehension most White people have of this important but difficult subject. A confusion is almost always made between the *witches* and the *witch-doctors*. The French word *sorcier* and the English term *sorcerer*, indiscriminately used for those who cast spells and for magicians, lead to the same misconception. In order to avoid errors it is, I think, imperative first of all clearly to distinguish between *Black Magic* and *White Magic*. The adjectives black and white are not employed in this connection amongst South African Natives, but Thongas certainly do make the distinction and possess different terms for each. Black magic is called *Buloyi* ; it consists of the

606 these bukoñwana rules would cause death. Yet they are religiously kept as necessary to ensure normal relations between the two families.

We have already seen the taboos which must be observed during the betrothal period (p. 106). Later on, during the gatherings which take place *before marriage*, other taboos are imposed.

606 1. In the discussion concerning the lobola, when oxen are counted,
802 the bridegroom's parents must never offer eight head of cattle,
281 because one of them will be killed for the feast, and so eight means
584 only seven. *Seven* is counted by raising, one after the other, the
784 five fingers of the left hand and the thumb and index-finger of the right. In raising the index-finger, they might point it at the bakoñwana, and this would be a mortal offence. To point at anyone with the index-finger is as bad as bewitching him. It is done only in anger, and all the preceding discussions might be nullified if such an imprudence were committed.

2. Should one of the oxen be frightened by the shouts of joy with which the arrival of the herd is greeted and by the sham-fight of the lobola day, and run away home, it is taboo. The ox has seen that something is wrong and has consequently fled. Even should they succeed in bringing it back, "timpfalo ti tjukile," the conscience (or the diaphragm) has been stirred!

584 3. If one of the oxen has no horns (homu ya mhulu), or only
825 abortive horns, psa yila : *bukoñwana byi ta pfumala timpsalu*,
777 viz., the relations with relatives-in-law will have no tenderness,
784 because such an ox moves its head to and fro as it wanders in the night ; it is abnormal. The bride's family will not accept it.

4. Should the lobolo consist of hoes, and should the rain fall on them while they are being carried to the bakoñwana, it is taboo. The lobolo must not be brought in a wet condition, otherwise the new relations will be spoilt (bukoñwana byi ta tshipa) ; the young people will not be able to marry.

5. Do not bring with you tobacco in the leaf when going *bukwen* as a fiancé, bring only ground tobacco, or misfortune will happen. Later on, when you have married your wife, it is allowable.

6. Never eat zebra or reedbuck's meat when staying with your parents-in-law. Should they kill one of these animals while

192 carefully studied. They correspond to a phase of human development when language is still living and creating new expressions, enriching itself by means of vocables invented on all sides. Let me remind the reader of what I said in Vol. I, Appendix II about *nxoko*. This expression was invented by an old Thonga of Rikatla, a blind man of 70 or 80, who expressed by this exclamation his satisfaction at finding himself in good company. The word seemed so much to the point that it became famous. The inventor was surnamed Nxoko and created the verb ku *nxoka*, to be happy, even to *nxokela*, the relative derivative, to be happy in a certain place. Certainly such linguistic phenomena can do much to explain the origin of language. Even lofty spiritual terms have been derived from these exclamations, springing from the childish mind of the Natives. So *phati-phati*, the shining of a fat ox, has given rise to *ku phatima* and *kwetsi-kwetsi*, the brilliancy of a bottle, to *ku kwetsima*, both verbs which were chosen as best expressing the idea of sanctity or purity (in its positive sense). Did not Max Muller conjecture that the root of *Deus*, a word which has played such a great part in the evolution of mankind, originally came from the exclamation *Devar* to which our Aryan forefathers gave vent when contemplating the sky? Devar was probably nothing but a descriptive adverb.

It is to be feared that books and book language will destroy this most interesting mode of speech, so much used by those Natives who are true Bantus, and the genius of the race will certainly suffer from this loss. Let Europeans, in this as in so many other domains, try to *understand* the Native in order not to spoil him !

E. THE NUMERALS, AND THE WANT OF AN ARITHMETICAL SENSE.

802 Compared to the thousands of descriptive adverbs, Numerals make a poor show indeed in the Thonga Grammar! The Thongas possess only seven : *ñwe*, one ; *biri*, two ; *raru*, three ; which are declined like adjectives ; *mune*, four ; *ntlhanu*, five, *khume*, ten ; *dzana*, a hundred, which are nouns. With these seven words they must express all numbers. The process is very complicated indeed. Nine hundred and eighty seven will have to be rendered as follows : five hundred, and four hundred,

and five tens, and three tens, and five, and two. This system of numeration is clearly decimal, and is in direct relation with the ten fingers of the hands ; this is proved by the fact that, when counting, Natives generally use their fingers. They start with the little finger of the left hand, *one* ; then the little finger and the third finger, *two* ; these two and the second, *three* ; these three and the index, *four* ; these four and the thumb, *five* ; they then add the fingers of the right hand, beginning with the thumb : five plus one, five plus two, five plus three, five plus four. *Ten* is shown by clapping both hands ; notice that five, the left hand with the thumb separated from the four other fingers, imitates the Romen sign of V, and ten, the two hands joined, with the fingers crossing each other, make an X, the Roman sign for 10! This shows that our system of numbers, of which we are justly proud, probably began in the same way as amongst most of the Bantu tribes!

On the other hand it must be said that, if this system has not reached a higher development, the cause lies in the fact that Thongas do not wish, or do not *take the trouble* to deal with high figures. They very soon declare that a number is : "tjandjabahlayi (Dj.) or hlulabakonti (Ro.)" viz., "the one which passes the capacity of reckoners." When Gungunyana made a raid into the Ntimane district and stole the oxen there, his men tried to count the cattle, but, having experienced much difficulty in the operation, they said to their king : "It is tjandjabahlayi!" — "They are innumerable!" There were a few hundreds of them (1).

More than that! Bantus have not attained to *any precision* in counting the hours of the day, for instance, because there was no necessity for doing so in the primitive state. Consider how greatly our habit of always consulting our watches has contributed to create a sense of precision in us and to introduce it into our lives. For the Bantus, the sun is the only watch, and that great time-keeper is all sufficient for them. Do they wish to make an appointment for the following day? They point to a place in the

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to be astonished that this faculty has remained undeveloped. To pretend however that it is altogether wanting would be erroneous. I can give many proofs that it exists, and sometimes manifests itself in an interesting way.

First, in the game called *nyengeli-nyengeli mune.* The players 524
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turns his back, and the other player, pointing to the first group of two, asks: "Nyengeli nyengeli mune?" i.e: "How many stones are there?" The one whose back is turned replies: "Take one away and place it elsewhere," specifying where. The same thing is done with the second, and so on. Certain groups have eventually more stones than others. When a group is entirely scattered, the guesser says: "Makua ntsikitane," meaning "There are no more." The questioner then passes rapidly from group to group, over and over again, and the guesser must state how many stones each group contains. The game requires a considerable effort of memory.

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Having a remarkable bent for this work, he developed his gift, 805
acquired fame, and was consulted by all those who wished to know their age, or the date of some event. This increased his powers. He took a great delight in these consultations and, working at his subject every day, aided by his wonderful memory he could recite the whole chronology without the slightest hesitation. I give it in Appendix I* and it is worthy of publication, not only as a proof of the possibility of a development in arithmetic amongst raw Natives, but also for its contents, as a contribution to the history of the Northern Transvaal.

We come to the same conclusion when teaching our pupils 803
arithmetic in our missionary schools. This is certainly the 163
branch of study in which they are the least proficient, and their teachers will all confess to having sometimes despaired of their mathematical faculty. However, when taught European numeration, English or Portuguese, most of them learn the four rules, and many attain to the Weights and Measures, and the Rule of Three. I saw a class of young Natives successfully studying Algebra in Lovedale, and they are not altogether incapable of Arithmetic. However they succeed better when the effort is one of memory, and this explains why they are much more at their ease when learning the English Weights and Measures, entailing complicated operations of reduction, than when put to the metric system which seems so much more simple and rational. The English system requires a perfect committal to memory of the relation between the various measures, yards, feet and inches, gallons, pints, gills, pounds, ounces and grains, and, these being once mastered, all the work becomes purely mechanical. This is what Natives like, whilst in the metric system there is one idea pervading the whole and a certain minimum of reasoning is necessary for its use : the necessity for this minimum explains the unpopularity of the metric system amongst the Native pupils, and the difficulty increases ten times when they come to problems, and have to solve them without having been told whether addition or substraction is necessary! So arithmetic, when workable by means of the memory, seems to them an easy and agreeable study ; when it requires reasoning, it is a painful occupation. If

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Shinangana had been trained, would he have been a genius in that 803
kind of mathematics where the power of reasoning is needed? 163
It is impossible to say, but it may be noticed that all his achievements were, after all, but masterpieces of memory, and that reasoning had very little to do with them.

The conclusion of our observations is then as follows : in the Bantu mind the literary sense is infinitely more developed than the mathematical. This is probably the case in all uncivilised or half civilised races, but amongst the South Africans it is strikingly apparent.

F. THE LITERARY SENSE OF THE THONGAS.

Let us look more closely into this literary faculty which the 521
Thonga grammar has already revealed to us. It not only consists 537
in the possession of a well constructed language, denoting powers of classification, combination, co-ordination and graphic description, but also shows itself in the poetic expression of their feelings, in a remarkable power of comparison, and in a rich folklore.

The *facility of expression*, amongst the Thongas, is very great. Any one, man or woman, is at any time ready to speak, and speaks correctly with the greatest ease. In this respect, the race is perhaps more advanced than many civilised peoples. There is nothing like the timidity you so often meet with amongst the peasants or workmen of our own lands, who, though they have had a full course of primary education, would be totally unable to deliver an address. A Native can always stand up and say what he thinks on any given question. Even if he has not thought much about it, he can speak! Finding words is no difficulty to him. Knowledge will perhaps be lacking, but fluency of speech never! This ease of elocution has evidently been acquired through a long experience in the discussion of public affairs on the *hubo*, where, as we saw (I, p. 436), every one has the right of expressing his opinion. This habit has developed literary ability,

262 eats freely in his house according to his good pleasure. Formerly
821 we used to take the oxen of the man who had dared to steal the
796 new year."

Conclusion on the luma rite.

796 All these luma rites[1] of first fruits seem to have primarily a *religious*
782 *origin*. The Bantus do not feel that they dare enjoy the products of
534 the soil unless they have first given a portion of them to their gods. Is it not these gods who make the cereals grow ? Have they not the power even of controlling the wizards who bewitch the fields ? These rites are also evidently dictated by the *sense of hierarchy*. A subject must not precede his chief nor a younger brother the elder in the use of the new harvest, else they would kill those in authority. Such an act is against order. We shall see that, even when the seeds are sown, the elders must take precedence. But the custom seems also to have been actuated by the idea of *passage*. There is a passage from one year to another. For the Thongas, I think the new year begins
805 twice every year : it begins when tilling recommences, in July, August,
796 when the heat returns. This is the hlobo. It begins a second time at
789 harvest, and then there is passage from the food of the last year to the food of this year. This is the nguba (Ro.) or ñwaka (Dj.). Though the luma rites do not bear all the characteristics of a true passage rite, like those of circumcision or moving, we may observe in the luma of bukanye a kind of marginal period of general licence, when the ordinary laws are more or less suspended. The taking of a first mouthful probably signifies the aggregation to the new period, the magical powder used on this occasion being a protective measure to shield them from the calamities of this unknown year... And after all, is it not that feeling of fear which so easily takes possession of the heart of man when entering on a new state and starting something fresh, which has led the savage to surround the use of the first fruit with so many ritual precautions ?

IV. *Taxation.*

643 The chief governs (fuma). *Fuma* means to command, but also to live in plenty, to be rich. The subject (nandja, follower) obeys ; he follows the chief who marches before him just as the

1 [See pp. 394-404 in these categories or in 116-1 analysis]

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numeration is clearly decimal, and is in direct relation with the ten fingers of the hands ; this is proved by the fact that, when counting, Natives generally use their fingers. They start with the little finger of the left hand, *one* ; then the little finger and the third finger, *two* ; these two and the second, *three* ; these three and the index, *four* ; these four and the thumb, *five* ; they then add the fingers of the right hand, beginning with the thumb : five plus one, five plus two, five plus three, five plus four. *Ten* is shown by clapping both hands ; notice that five, the left hand with the thumb separated from the four other fingers, imitates the Romen sign of V, and ten, the two hands joined, with the fingers crossing each other, make an X, the Roman sign for 10! This shows that our system of numbers, of which we are justly proud, probably began in the same way as amongst most of the Bantu tribes!

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† [See pp. 585-587 -- Analyst]

The dawn is called mpundju; then comes thabela sana, the 805
time when the rays of the sun (sana) are piercing ; *hisa ka sana*, 821
when they are burning ; *nhlekanhi*, the middle of the sky, or *shitakataka*, the maximum point of the heat ; then *ndjenga* (Dj.), or *lihungu* (Ro.), the afternoon, the time when the sun goes down (renga) ; *ku pela* or *ku hlwa*, when it reaches the horizon, and *mpimabayeni* (Dj.) the twilight, literally "the time when you do not easily recognize strangers coming to your village because it grows dark." These are the divisions of the day (siku). Then comes the night (busiku).

Eclipses do not seem to have ever much impressed the 821
imagination of the Thongas. At any rate, they never caused panics (Mboza). When, warned that an eclipse will take place, they see that, indeed, the sun or moon is "turning dark" (dji yentsha ntima), Natives are more struck with wonder at the supernatural knowledge of the White people, than with fear of the phenomenon itself.

I have already dealt with the notion of the *year*, (lembe, dji-ma), 806
which is very vague ; it begins at two different periods : that of 821
tilling and that of harvesting the first fruits (I, p. 396, II, p. 20). Thongas do not make any difference between a solar and a lunar year, their knowledge of months being very imperfect, as we shall shortly see.

Before leaving the source of light, I may add that the *light* 821
itself is called *ku bonekisa* (Ro.), or *ku bonakala* (Dj.), litt. that 822
which makes to appear. Of course Natives have no explanation to give of it. Moonlight is called by another name, viz. *ñweti*, connected with hweti, moon. *Colours* are very imperfectly perceived, at least if we are to base our judgment on the vocabulary. *Ntima* means both black and dark blue. *Libungu* is carmine, red, purple, and also yellow. Yellow is not perceived as a distinct colour. *Psuka* is the tinge of dawn, and of the rising sun. *Nkushe*, which means sea-weed, is applied to the *blue* sky ; *nkwalala* is grey, *lihlaza* (Ro.) is green, the green of grass in the spring, and the [231]
corresponding term in Djonga is *rilambyana*, that which makes dogs howl. Very green grass has this effect on Native dogs.

The *moon* (ñhweti (Dj.), hweti (Ro.) cl. yi-tin), was perhaps 821
personified in former times, as it bears the feminine suffix *eti*,

The wane is called *ku shwela dambo* : the moon is then found by the rising sun to be still in the sky, not having yet dipped below the horizon. When, at last, it disappears, it is *munyi*, the obscurity; the moon is said *to fa*, to have died. Is this meant figuratively, as is often the case with the word ku fa, or do the Thongas really think that each moon dies and is replaced by a new moon? It is difficult to say ; most of them believe in an actual destruction and a new creation of the moon each month (Timotheo), and this would explain why they have the same word for moon and month ; they evidently identify the two ideas. Some, however, told me that they believed it to be the same celestial body which appeared anew each month. 772 821

Spoon, who is endowed with a very vivid imagination, believed that the sun and the moon have a race each month : the moon when it first appears is not yet firm (a yi si tiyela), like a new born child, so its light is feeble ; it is dominated by the sun ; but it grows and fights. When it is full, the sun sees "that now it is the moon!" : it is something to be reckoned with! During the second half of the month, as it decreases, it lingers in the sky and the sun soon overtakes it again and compels it to pass behind. Then the moon is entirely vanquished! How far these were Spoon's personal explanations or generally accepted ideas, I could not say. The term *shwela*, applied to the last quarter and meaning : "to be surprised in the morning" (See Ch. III), seems to convey a similar idea, and it is probable that Spoon rightly interpreted the ancient ideas of the tribe.

Each moon, being new, bears a special name. These names of the months, or moons, are now almost completely forgotten, at least in the Southern clans. This is indeed curious, when we think of the custom of presenting little children to the moon and telling them the name of their month (I. p. 53). This rite ought to have prevented the names from becoming obsolete. In the Northern clans they have been better preserved, and one of my colleagues, the Rev. H. Berthoud, succeeded in identifying them more or less. His attempt to revive the nomenclature for use among civilised Natives did not, however, succeed any better than the attempt of the scientists of the French Revolution. 772 805 821

192 Amongst the Ba-Ronga those[1] which are still known are : *Nhlangula*,
805 the month in which the flowers are swept (hlangula) from the
821 trees, probably October, when all the minkuhlu, minkanye, etc., blossom ; *Ñwendjamhala*, the month in which the antelope mhala, brings forth its young (November?) ; *Mawuwana*, when the *tihuhlu* (p. 18) are plucked, because the people shout : "Wuwana! wuwana!" in their joy at having plenty of almonds to suck, corresponds to December. *Hukuri* is said to be the month when the fruits of the *nkwakwa* (p. 17) are ripe (December also?). *Ndjati*, or *ndjata*, viz., I am coming, is the time of *nwebo*, when everyone is in his fields eating the new cobs of mealies, and if you call a person he will answer : "I will come directly! Have patience! I am busy here!" "This may be January or February. *Sunguti* is also one of the summer months. *Sibamesoko*, the moon which closes the paths, also called *Dwebindlela* or *Sibandlela*, is easy to identify : it is February, the time when the grass grows so high that it hides the paths leading to the nkanye trees. This is the end of the bukanye time (I. p. 397). *Nyenyana*, *Nywenywankulu* are the months of the birds (nyanyana), when one spends all one's time in chasing the winged marauders from the fields of sorghum and millet (March. April). *Mudashini*, viz., what am I to eat? is the month when you have harvested so many different kinds of food that you do not know which to choose : this is the time directly after harvest, May or June. *Khotabushika*, viz., when winter comes, probably June or July.

772 The *stars* are called *tinyeleti* (yin-tin) and play a remarkably
821 small part in the ideas of the tribe. The modern theory according to which all religions started from the worship of stars, finds no confirmation at all in the South African Bantu tribes.

821. It is taboo to try to count the stars. If any one attempts
784 to do so people will say to him : "Keep quiet or you will wet the
861 hut during the night!" Counting stars represents the torments of the soul! If a child has been deprived of food as a punishment for an offence, his parents will tell him, when he goes to sleep : "Go and count the stars," viz., "you will feel hungry and not be able to go to sleep ; you will be as unhappy as if you had to count the stars."

[1] [names of moons -- Analyst]

815 For information on Thonga zoological knowledge and classification, see pp. 333-348, category 116.

which has lost its strength that its "moya" has gone. It is also the 821
moya which gives their potency to medical charms. 822

Another word for wind is *mheho*. Strong winds are called *shidzedze*. When they break trees and damage the mealies they are attributed to baloyi, wizards, who fight during the night, quarelling over the cobs.

One frequently hears about *timheho ta mune*, the four winds. 821
They are called : *Ñwalungu*, the north wind, (a curious word 823
perhaps connected with Balungu, the White men ; see later on) ; 132
Nyingitima (Ro.), or *Djonga* (Dj.), the South wind ; *Mupfanyaka*, the one coming from the plain of the black earth, the West Wind ; *Mfenya*, the sea breeze, coming from the East. Sailors who are great connoisseurs in this domain distinguish further the South Westerly wind, which they call *Mfenyakulu*, the great Mfenya. In Shiluvane, the West wind, which sometimes blows with great violence, coming down from the mountains of the Transvaal Plateau, is called *Burwa*, place of habitation of the Ba-Rwa (bu, locative prefix indicating a country). (Compare I. p. 18). Two other terms of the bu-ma class, also applied to East and West in all the clans, are : *Busha*, the spot where the sun rises (ku sha), the East, and *Bupeladambu*, the spot where the sun sets, the West. So there is no doubt that the Thongas possess the idea of the four cardinal points.

2) Native Geography.

The geographical notions of the tribe are, on the other hand, 823
very scanty. As a rule, they do not think it possible to know a 815
country, or place, where they have not travelled. Every one must compile his own geography. Hunters, and men engaged in commercial journeys, had some knowledge of the Spelonken (Bvesha), of Pietermaritzburg (Umgungundhlovu), of Kimberley (Dayiman), and now practically every grown-up Thonga has been to Johannesburg (Nkamben). But those who have always remained at home, women especially, show gross ignorance regarding their own country. I met some who were totally ignorant of the fact that the Nkomati River, which leaves the

823 Transvaal at Komati Poort (a place known to all), was the same as
815 the Nkomati which enters the sea near Morakwen, northwards of Lourenço Marques, at a distance of 60 miles from Komati Poort. It must be said, in excuse for them, that in Morakwen the river is called Morako (locative Morakwen) and thus many people have never been aware of the identity of the two!

If you wish to impress Natives greatly with your knowledge, tell them the names of all the countries of Thongaland in their geographical order, as you may have learnt them in conversation, or by studying the map. They will be amazed, and say : "What a wonderful traveller you are, knowing so many spots so far distant from each other!" The teaching of Geography in the schools tends, of course, to alter this state of things.

3) Earthquakes and Rainbows.

923 Earthquakes are not frequent in this part of the world ; so they are rarely spoken of. Thongas have, however, a name for them, *shimbeti*. They do not give any explanation of them and believe that they are perhaps caused by the gods. I remember having once heard a mysterious sound accompanied by a slight tremor of the soil. It was during the Boer war and was, I think, caused by the blowing up of a bridge somewhere on the other side of the range. All the Natives covered their heads with their hands and seemed greatly impressed.

821 The *rainbow* is called *shikwangulatilo*, viz., the one which
778 removes the danger from the sky. Notice the stem *kwangula*, to inaugurate, which we have already met with, when dealing with pottery (p. 117). The sky after rain is compared to a new pot, from which the *nkangu* must be removed. But this is merely an expression. No one can say what the danger is that is thus removed ; it is probable that the tribe had more precise ideas on the subject in former times, and that these have become obsolete. In some of the northern clans (Nkhabelane, Mathiye, Shiburi, Mongwe) the rainbow is called the Bow of Nyandziyo. Nyandziyo is said to be a man of the olden times who made the

your food a little of the earth of the country which you have left ; 823
this will provide the transition between the old and the new domicile (See I. p. 49).

Metals known to the tribe before the coming of the Whites 135
were few. (See page 137). *Nhumbu* or *nsimbi*, iron, *nsuku*, copper, and *ntchopfa*, a name applied to all white metals (tin, silver, etc.) are the only Native names for metals. There is no word for gold.

V. *The Vegetable World. Thonga Botany.*

While Bantus possess a very limited knowledge of Astronomy, 815
Geography, Mineralogy, etc., while their ideas in these domains are in no way deserving of the name of Science, they are much more advanced as regards Plants. Here it is quite allowable to speak of a Science, a rudimentary Science, no doubt, but a true, precise knowledge which has been transmitted from past ages and which denotes a real power of observation.

The Delagoa flora is not very rich. I have succeeded in 137
collecting between four and five hundred different kinds in a 124
herbarium which I sent many years ago for classification to the 815
Herbier Boissier in Geneva. In February 1893, before forwarding the second lot of exsiccata, I gathered together some Natives of Rikatla in the hut which I had pompously styled a Museum and, having promised them 1 s. each if they consented to remain till the end of the examination, I submitted the dried plants to them, asking them their names, their uses, etc. The result of the inquiry was marvellous. My areopagus did not seem to be a very choice one : an old woman, as dry as my exsiccata and smoking her pipe, another with ochre-smeared hair, a young one, with a baby on her shoulder, an elderly one-eyed man named Hamunde, my milkman. After them came the young chief Muzila, walking 815
slowly, swinging the tails of his belt. This chief, notwithstanding 756
his social rank, showed gross ignorance of botany ; but some of the 824
others knew the name of almost every plant ; had I had a *ñanga*, a medicine-man, amongst them, I am sure I should have obtained

the names of all the specimens of the collection, for they are the great connoisseurs in this domain, their drugs being almost entirely obtained from the vegetable world. 815 756 824

A study of these names undoubtedly proves that Natives have the notion of the *genus*. This had been denied ; it seems that, when naming animals, Bantus distinguish correctly between species, but do not classify species into genera. In Botany it is not so. Under the same name they bring together forms which are sometimes widely different, but which belong to the same genus. Here are some of these names. 137 815 824

Tsuna means fern and applies to the Acrostichum tenuifolium, which climbs up the palm trees in the marsh, as well as to the few other kinds of Filicea found in the district of Lourenço Marques ; *gonhwa* is the name for Liliaceae, many kinds of which blossom in the spring : the Crinum Forbesii, with its big white and pink flower, and other kinds forming a bowl at the extremity of the stem ; there are five kinds of Commelina in my collection, which were called *Nkompfana*, both those with blue flowers, and the yellow ; a certain Papillionaceae genus, the Eriosema, is called *Rongole*. All the Strigae, a genus of the Scrophulariaceae family, are known under the name of *Shitshinyambita*, those which prevent the pot from boiling, as they are believed to have this effect when put into the fire. The Lobeliae are called *Shilawana*, etc.

The notion of the *genus* is so truly present that Thongas distinguish between various species in the same genus. So the tree called *Nkahlu*, an Apocynea, the Tabaernaemontana ventricosa, a valuable tree whose sap is used as a styptic, and whose roots are used to make a decoction for lung complaints, has a congener, found in the palm-tree marsh, the Voacanga Dregei, which is called *Nkahlutjobo*, nkahlu of the marsh. The two genera are very closely akin to each other. 815 137 824 757

Cognate species found in various regions are thus distinguished by the mention of their habitat, either the hill (ntlhaba), or the black earth (nyaka), or the forest (mutju). There is the *Muhlu wa ntlhaba*, of the hill, and *Muhlu-tjhobo*, of the marsh (Secamone sp. tree of the Asclepiadaceae family). This is even more striking

137 in the case of the Hibiscus genus. Its name is *Ntjhesi* ; there
824 are the Ntjhesi of the hill (Hibiscus surratensis, etc.), the Ntjhensi
757 of the nyaka, another species found in Morakwen in the black
earth ; and there is the *shitjhesinyana sha ntlhaba*, double dimin-
815 utive of ntjhesi, the Sida cordifolia, a pretty little Malvacea,
a near relative of the Hibiscus, very much used in treating children's complaints, a panacea for babies, as it cures their vomiting, headache, wounds and internal troubles!

137 I find the same correct connection established between two
824 Anonaceae shrubs, the Artabotrys brachypetala, called *Ntiti*, and
815 the Art. Monteiroae, called *Shintitane*, little Ntiti, of the same genus, but a shrub of a very different appearance.

However there is, of course, no anatomical study at the base of this classification : so their ideas of genus are not always, scientifically speaking, correct. They call any parasite *Phakama*, whatever may be its form, and have a superstitious fear of them, especially of the larger ones, growing on other trees, such as the nkanye and nkuhlu : "Phakama dja singita!" (1)

137 *Nkushe* means sea-weed, either the true algae, as Lagarosiphon muscoides, or other plants growing in water and belonging to totally different families, such as Urticularia stellaris, found in the same locality. *Nkaka*, or *Nkakana*, is the little Cucumber already described (p. 14), whilst *Nkaka wa tjhobo* is a Convolvulus (Ipomea cairica). The *Shirimbyati*, one of the names most employed, designates first the Helichrysum parviflorum, a yellow Composita which covers the sandy dunes, and blossoms during the winter ; but *Shirimbyati sha tjhune*, the male one, is Gnaphalium stenophyllum, and *Shirimbyati sha mutju*, the one of the forest, an Indigofera belonging to the Leguminosae family ; these three plants have in common small hard leaves : hence the same name is given to them, although they are by no means related botanically speaking. So shirimbyati corresponds to our word heath, which is applied to many forms of evergreen undergrowth.

777 (1) "The parasite stem *singita*," i. e. is of bad omen. They do not say *vila*, is
824 taboo, though some rules apply to it similar to those concerning the tree struck by lightning. One does not warm oneself at its fire ; its wood is not employed to cook
753 food, for fear lest men should suffer from hydrocele.

The want of an enlightened botanical sense is further seen in the following fact : three different kinds of Vernonia, though belonging to the same genus, are called by different names, as if the Thongas had altogether failed to perceive their relation. The Vernonia cinerea is called *Ntshontshongori* ; the V. Perotteti, *Nkukulashibuya* (the plant with which one sweeps the threshing floor) ; the V. Tigna, *Hlunguhlungu*. 137

Another case of one and the same name applied to plants of different families having merely an external resemblance is the following : the *Ndjiba* is a Leguminosa tree of large proportions, Apalatoa delagoensis (Schinz), and the *Shindjibana*, viz., the little Ndjiba, is a small shrub with leaves somewhat similar to those of the Ndjiba. Its scientific name is Synaptolepis Oliveriana and it belongs to the Thymeleaceae family.

It is no wonder that the notion of genus, though existant, has not always been correctly and universally applied. Thongas have no idea of the anatomy of plants ; they have never dissected a flower, and are totally ignorant of the presence of male and female elements in it. They know, however, that these sexual differences exist. They have noticed, for instance, amongst the nkanye stems, which are of a dioecious species, that some are male and some female, and they carefully preserve some of the male stems in order to fecundate the female ones ; but they believe that this fecundation takes place through the roots of the trees! 815 824

Thus, when the name of a plant can be explained, we see that, in naming it, *its external characters, or its uses*, have alone been considered. For instance the beautiful yellow Sterculiacea, Melhania Forbesii, is called *Muhlwadambu*, Setting Sun, because its deep colour is similar to that of the sun when dipping below the horizon. A certain plant whose seeds explode when crushed is the *Buputwana*, because, "it says bu-bu-bu." A climbing Composita with juicy stem is the *Kamele*, "the one which is pressed," (kama) to squeeze out its juice, which is said to have a medicinal value. A Euphorbiacea whose fruit is eaten by the partridges (Fluggea obovata) is the *Midyañhwari*, partridges' food. Those named after their uses are, for instance, *Nkukulashibuya*, the one which sweeps the threshing floor (Vernonia Perotteti) ; *Nhlangulaba-* 137 815 824

137 *tjongwana*, the one employed to wipe little children when dirty! (This plant is tomentous and answers well for the purpose); *Psekamafura*, a large tree (Casearia Junodi, Schinz), a tree whose fuel is particularly good for melting mafureira fat (p. 18), etc. The Asparagus bearst he name of *Nkwangulatilo*, the same as that of the rainbow. When asked why this is so, Natives say that it is because the colour of the asparagus leaves resembles that of the rainbow, but another explanation which seems to me more probable is this: it is because this plant is given as a medicine to little children to prevent the roaring of thunder from "tearing out their diaphragm (handjula lipfalo)."

The great use of the vegetable world is to provide men with food and medicine. If plants bear names and have been carefully studied by the Bantus this is, in the first place, because they are useful in these two respects. We have already considered Thonga vegetarian food (p. 9-19), and I shall devote some pages to the medical art in Chapter III.

In Appendix II, I give a list of Thonga botanical names with their scientific equivalents. These plants have been identified by Dr. Schinz, who published a flora of Delagoa Bay in the "Bulletin de l'Herbier Boissier," No. 10, 1900.

The conclusion reached from this study of Thonga names of plants is that the vegetable world has been the subject of a true and, in a certain sense, scientific observation on their part. Their botanical knowledge can be compared with that of our forefathers of two or three hundred years ago, before Botany became a true science, when plants were still named from their external characteristics, and studied as medicinal herbs; I would even say that this knowledge, though of an inferior type, is more general amongst Thongas than, for instance, amongst the European peasantry; a fact which shows that their powers of observation and scientific study are not inferior to those of other more advanced races.

Do plants play a part in Thonga religion? (1)

When travelling through the country, you may come across

(1) The Vendas plant the bulbs of an Amaryllida which they call Lohome near the stone which they use as an altar. See *S. A. Journal of Science*, Vol. XVII, p. 215.

When travelling through the country, you may come across a tree round which a rag has been tied, evidently for some religious purpose. One's first idea would be that this tree is worshipped, but this is by no means the case. The tree is probably that which the divinatory bones have singled out as the one around which the village should be built, and the offering of this rag is made to the spirits of the ancestors, exactly as is done when the rag is placed near the grave, or at the door of the little hut built on it, in the case of those possessed. (See I. p. 141 and later on Chapter III). The tree is only sacred on account of this association. I have sometimes called the *Nkanye* a sacred tree, and the Thongas call it the king of trees, but it is not so in itself, or in virtue of any Nature spirit dwelling in it ; anybody can cut it without transgressing a taboo ; it is venerated because it provides the tribe with the national beer, and because its branches are used as pillows for the dead and its twigs as *mhamba* in the funeral service (I. p. 138). The religious and social *luma*, to which the bukanyi is subject (I. p. 397), is observed from fear of the ancestral spirits and not because the tree itself is in any way worshipped. In fact I never met with any worship offered to a plant as such. 824 769 778

VI. *The Animal World.*

Plants, *psimili or psa-ku-mila*, things which grow (ku mila), are distinguished from animals, called *psibandjana*, or *psihari*, which are said to *kula*, become great, and not *mila*. 815 136 825

The knowledge possessed by the Thongas with regard to animals is extensive. They give names to all the larger ones, especially, of course, to those which are eaten, but also to some which are smaller, insignificant and useless.

The *Annelida* are called by the generic name of *tinyokana*, diminutive of *nyoka* (yin-tin), snake ; leeches, *ntjundju* (mumi) ; lumbrics, *nshikwa* (yin-tin), both those living in the earth and parasites in the intestines of children.

Amongst *Myriapoda* the Julideae are called *Khongoloti* (dji-ma) ; the Millepedes, *Ndlandlalati* (yin-tin). When one of these has stung a Native, you will see him swallow a little earth, and a

815 mouthful of water after it, to prevent swelling. "The milleped
136 will die at once and you will not suffer much, because you have
826 been wiser than it (u yi rangelile butlharin)."

The same precaution is taken with regard to Scorpions, *shiphame* (Dj.), *mubalane* (Ro.). Other Arachnida are Spiders (*pume* (dji-ma) *ripe* (dji-ma), Ticks *(shikalana)*, and the Itch *(shinwayana)*, which Thongas know but too well without being aware that it is caused by a microscopic animal. To this group probably belongs the *maroda*, a parasite met with in the huts of Bilen and other remote parts of the country, whose bite causes actual disease.

The *insect world*, so richly represented in Tropical countries (1) is pretty well known, though many of its representatives are of no practical use to the Natives.

Orthoptera. Acridius peregrinus, the locust which ravages the fields, is called *humbi* (yin-tin) in Ronga and *ndjiya* (yin-tin) in Djonga. (See p. 81). The first "clouds" which appeared greatly impressed the Natives when they were seen at the beginning of the war of 1894. I heard some one say that this phenomenon had been foretold by a "mulungwana," a little man fallen from heaven to announce this calamity which threatened the land. (See next Chapter). Other Acridians are called *mhera* (yin-tin); the larvae of locusts, which abound at certain times in the gardens, are the *hondje* (yin-tin). The Pamphygus, a fat, heavy, grey locust, the female apterous, are called *phuphu* (dji-ma). The Grillus is *Shiyendlwa* (shi- psi), and is eaten by some. But the best known Orthoptera are those of the Mantidae family whose representatives are numerous in the country. They are called *Ñwambyevu* (Dj.) or *Ñwambyevulane* (Ro.), viz., the one which cuts the hair, probably on account of its claws, which move like
825 scissors. This insect plays a great part in the superstitions of the
769 Bushmen, who worship it. Amongst the Thongas there is a similar custom ; young shepherds, when they meet with a Mantis,

(1) See my publications on the Entomology of Delagoa Bay; I. *Coleoptera*, in collaboration with Dr. Bugnion ; II *Orthoptera*, by Dr. A. von Schulthess Rechberg ; III *Hemiptera* by Prof. Montandon in the "Bulletin de la Société vaudoise des Sciences Naturelles." XXV, p. 132-220; IV), *Lepidoptera*, "Bulletin de la Société Neuchâteloise des Sciences Naturelles" Tome XXVII, p. 177-250.

tear out a little hair from the skins of their belt and offer it to the insect saying : "Take, Grandfather!" They say that in old times they were looked on as gods (psikwembu), or rather emissaries of the ancestor-gods, just like the little green snakes (Chapter II) ; their name was Mahulwahulwane, and when one of them entered a hut, no one interfered with it, as it was thought that perhaps some god had come to pay a visit to his descendants. These ideas regarding Mantidae seem to be now disappearing and the offering made to them is merely a little children's game. Another Orthoptera is the *Shipfalapfapfa*, an onomatopoeia, describing a flying locust, and the *Shishirikoko*, a large species which emits saliva through its thorax. When it flies the Thongas say to it : "Go to the place where people eat meat!"

Hemiptera. Bugs are well, too well, known in Thongaland, having taken up their abode in most of the huts, where they are tolerated. They are called *Nsiketi* (yin-tin) and the wild bugs *Nsiketi ya nhoba*, bug of the bush. Lice, *Nhwala* (yin-tin), are regarded as vermin, and often as the result of bewitchment, especially when seen swarming on children. Many Aphidae (grubs) cause an exudation on certain shrubs, a kind of wax, the *Mubodi*, which is used for the manufacture of the black crowns (I, p. 130) ; others are called *Shibungubungu*, the red ones, probably a kind of cochineal.

Neuroptera. *Diptera*. The equivalent of these names of flies is *Nhongana* (yin-tin). Mosquitoes are called *Busuna* and fleas *Butseka*, with the prefix *bu* which here means a collection, a great number. *Busokoti*, a similar word, designates ants. The big gad-flies are the *Bawa* (dji-ma). The Libellulidae are called *Mungutane* (mu-ba) and the Termitideae *Muhlwa* (mu-mi).

Lepidoptera. Butterflies and moths are designated by a single word, *Phaphalati* (Dj. Notice the feminine suffix), or *Phaphatane* (Ro.) (dji-ma), and their caterpillars by the term *Hukwa* (yin-tin) or *Tomane* (dji-ma), this last word especially applying to the large Saturnidae caterpillars which are eaten by the Natives (p. 80). The relation between the caterpillar and the butterfly is not generally known ; only once did I find a boy who knew that a certain white cocoon, used as an ornament in dances (p. 102) gave

136 birth to the big green moth with long tails, the Queen Moth. The
815 reason why butterflies, though plentiful in Thongaland, have so little attracted the attention of Natives is, no doubt, the fact that they do not in any way contribute to their food. I have told the story of a woman who tried to force a child to eat a butterfly. (I. p. 445.)

136 *Coleoptera.* The general term for Coleoptera is *Shifufununu*, and it especially applies to the big Tenebrionidae (Psammodes
825 Bertoloni), called *shifufununu sha paripari* (p. 68) and to the large
777 black Carabidae of the Anthia genus which abound on the roads in spring ; one of them, marked with small depressions on the elytra is, for that reason, called the small-pox shifufununu (sha nyedzane). Travelling once with a grown-up Thonga we saw a black Carabida which had four white spots on the back. It was the charming Eccoptoptera mutilloides. I saw him trace a circle round it in the sand saying : "To-day I shall eat to my heart's content!" — "Namunhla ndji ta shura!" — "What are you doing?" I said. — "Oh! This is the *Shurwa-shurwane*," he answered. "When you meet it it is a sign that you will have plenty to eat!" He was mistaken! The real shurwa-shurwane is the Mutilla, a kind of apterous wasp, which has also four white spots on its back, and the beetle we met was so similar to it that he mistook it for a Mutilla ; is it not called mutilloides, pseudo-mutilla? (1)
136 — The Copridæ are called *Gadlen* (dji-ma) and these strange
[753] dung-eaters, which are extremely abundant in the country, are thought to be under the command of the wizards who can introduce
825 them into your body to kill you. The pretty Cerambycidæ,
262 with their long horns, are the *Ñwahomurikotjo*, the ox of Rikotcho, or, according to a truer etymology, the ox with horns bent backwards (kotjeka). Children sing an incantation before them, clapping their hands (I, p. 68). Their big white larvae, the *Shipungwana*, dig channels in the stems of nkanye, nkuhlu, mphesa, etc., and are readily eaten as well as the *Shimhukuta*, the

(1) This custom reminds one of the action of Swiss children when they send the ladybird to heaven, to ask God to give them fine weather to-morrow, or of their saying that crushing a golden Carabus on the road will cause rain to fall. Certain Coleoptera are of good omen everywhere! Only, if in Europe they foretell fine weather, in Africa they announce a good meal. The difference is significant!

136 larva of a large Calandra which swarms in the stems of the palm
825 trees of the marsh (p. 4). The *Shitambela*, a big Buprestida
262 (Sternocera Orissa) is roasted by the shepherds and eaten after they have torn off its elytra.

136 *Hymenoptera*. *Wasps* are called *Mupfi* or *Mupfu* (mu-mi),
755 and are divided into four different classes : the *Mupfu* proper (Belonogaster), the *Tlatlanhongana*, the *Bamaandlopfu*, a grey species, and the *Mumpfundlopfu*, a large black species which burrows in the soil. When someone has been stung by a wasp, the others laugh at him. If he resents being made fun of, they say to him : "Be not angry ; we do this to help you." They are really trying to divert his attention from the pain in order to
136 comfort him. *Bees* are called *Nyoshi* (yin-tin) and are greatly
262 appreciated for their honey (p. 44). Natives know the males
815 (*djongwe*, dji-ma) the larvae *(shipungwa)*, which they eat with as much pleasure as the honey itself. They call the honeycombs *hahla* (dji-ma) or *shihlenga*, the wax *mumpfu* (mu-mi) and the
136 pollen brought by the bees, *nsindjo*. The curious *Mbonga* (yin-tin)
825 *Bee* is worth special mention, owing to the superstitions which are current regarding it, and the part it plays in certain rites (I. p. 390). This species, which does not sting, digs a narrow passage of two or three feet deep in the soil and excavates a hole of one or two feet broad where it builds its round nest. Natives say that nobody knows what the mbonga does with the earth which it digs out of the cavity in which it makes its nest. No heap of earth is ever seen in the vicinity. The hole is continued under the nest and has no end. It probably extends to subterranean pools where the insects go to drink, — as it is said that no one has ever seen a mbonga drinking from the lake or the well, as the other bees do. Moreover the entrance to a mbonga nest is invisible to the majority of people. It is only certain families who can see it and consequently dig out the precious honey (1). For all these reasons the mbonga is

777 (1) The Libombo family was one of those "which the mbonga loves" (randja). Elias who belongs to it told me that he once paid a visit to one of his neighbours who had just cleaned his village; he discovered a mbonga hole and said to his friend: "There is a mbonga nest in your village." But the man was unable to find it. Elias then dug as deep as his shoulders and found the nest all surrounded by "calabashes" full of honey. He says that when rain falls the little bees cover the entrance of

826 Monkeys are thought to be degenerate human beings, who have lost the habit of working and tilling fields, and thus fallen into their present miserable condition.

815 The collection of Native names of animals which I have compiled
192 is interesting ; first from the linguistic point of view, for purposes of comparison. Bantu philology needs such lists of words on which to base its conclusions. Let me point out that there seems to be a great uniformity in the various South African dialects as regards the names of large animals, the root being the same although the names have been differentiated by the regular phonetic permutations (1) ; names of trees, on the contrary, vary very much, even from one Thonga clan to the other. But these names also interest us as throwing some light on the Bantu conceptions of Nature. The notion of *genus* is not so marked as amongst plants. It is not, however, absent. The different kinds of ducks are called *sekwa*, sekwa-nyari, sekwa-mhala, the word sekwa being a true genus name. The notion of *order* may even be discovered in the classification of mammalia made by Mankhelu when he said : "Women eat only the flesh of animals having *hoofs*, and not that of animals having *paws*" (p. 83).

193 It is curious to inquire to which of the grammatical classes these names belong. Most of them are of the *yin-tin* class, the animal class proper. Torrend makes a connection between the prefix *tin* and the stem *psala*, to beget, to bring forth, and this may be correct. But many are of the *dji-ma* class, which often contains objects forming groups ; animals roaming in companies, as well as the regiments of the army (mabotshu, mabandla, I. p. 456), frequently belong to this class. (Sekwa, duck ; sowa, sparrow ; khoti, vulture ; hanshi, the horse of White people, of the cavalry, etc.). Some mammalia have the personal prefix *ba* for the plural. The mu-ba prefixes are always employed in tales when the animal is personified ; in the few cases here referred to, however, *ba* is used without any idea of personifying the animal ; the bat, the fox and a kind of red antelope (mangulwe) are designated in this way, and I

(1) Compare the names in my list with the Zulu and Nyandja names collected by Miss Werner in the *Revue d'Ethnographie et de Sociologie*. Jan. April 1911.

193 am really unable to give any reason for the fact. A few other names of animals begin with *bu*, the singular prefix in the bu-ma class, which has evidently a collective meaning. *Busuna* is the immense number of mosquitoes which one hears buzzing in the night during the rainy season, whilst one mosquito is *nsuna*, pl. tinsuna; *busukoti* is the crowd of ants swarming in the ants' nest, whilst *nsukoti*, (cl. yin-tin) is one ant, etc.

Phot. A. Burd.

Gebuza, whose nose was torn off by a hyena.

815 Thus, amongst the Bantus, scientific knowledge of animals is still in a very primitive stage and may be compared to that possessed, for instance, by the author of Leviticus.

825 On the other hand, the animal world is not in their eyes so far removed from man as it is with us. Man lives in close connection with the animals, not only when he hunts them and tries to transform himself into "a thing of the bush" (p. 79), but even in ordinary life, and considers them as very similar to himself. For instance, some Thongas believe that animals have a *language*, and try to speak to them. I have already mentioned Pikinini; he was a boy from the Bilen country who stayed with me for a time at Shiluvane, having left Bilene after the defeat of Gungunyana. As he

609 accepted as facts by the majority of his countrymen in Bilen. Is it not strange to notice that, whilst a great number of Europeans think of the Blacks as being all cannibals, these savages, on the other hand, believe exactly the same thing of us! Of course a closer contact with White people has already led them to a truer knowledge of what we really are, and they have discovered that, after all, there is not such a great difference between the various human races!

In former times the Thongas would seem to have believed that all White people, not only the Portuguese, dwelt in water. They were said to have eyes in front and behind and to see on all sides, so that it was impossible to escape from them. They used to kidnap Black people and take them away.

III. *The human body.*

1) Ideas of Anatomy.

815 The Thongas have never made an anatomic study of a human
826 corpse. They have a riddle to this effect: "Ku pfura ndjilo mungema? — Ba lahla munhu wa ku fa." — "A fire of live coals? — They bury a dead man." As you never put your hand in the fire, so you would not touch a corpse. Nor have they ever made a post mortem examination! What they know of the human body is entirely derived from the inductions they have drawn from oxen, pigs and game which they cut open. Considering that the source of their knowledge is so indirect, one wonders that they have learnt so much of the human physical structure.

192 Having taught a little anatomy to the students of our Institute,
826 I can bear testimony that they have names for most of the bones of the skeleton. *Pala* (dji-ma) means skull; *lihlaya* (li-ti), maxillary bone; *tinyo*, pl. menyo, teeth; *tshuri* (dji-ma), molar tooth (same word as mortar); *litlatla*, clavicle; *likhongotlo*, spine; *khatla* (dji-ma), shoulder blade; *shintjintji*, sternum; *shikangana*, extremity of the sternum; *libambo*, rib; (they believe there are *ten* ribs on each side!); *shikukwana*, humerus; *nkono* (mu-mi), cubitus;

771 and only troubles those who have killed, rendering them, as is generally
774 believed, insane. — The nuru belief seems to be a compromise between
828 Animism and Dynamism. (See p. 77-80.)

5. There are in plants, animals, stones, hidden virtues which can be
789 either useful or harmful to man. Medicine-men (tinanga) possess a more or less esoteric knowledge of such, and magicians (bangoma), endowed with special powers, can acquire a control over these virtues and use them in medical art, or in magic. — This is true Dynamism.

6. Certain natural objects, such as the sea, the bush fire, are sometimes vaguely personified. — This is Animatism.

772 7. But above them all is Heaven, Tilo, which is sometimes looked on as a real being, sometimes as an impersonal power, a number of mysterious superstitions finding their explanation in this strange and perhaps obsolete notion of Heaven. — This is more than Animatism and seems to be a vague theistic, even monotheistic, idea.

771 The essential difference between Animism and Dynamism seems to
774 me clear. But it is by no means absolute. We shall often meet with rites which belong to both domains, or bear an intermediate character. In the following chapters the exact nature and influence of these various kinds of spirits and impersonal forces will be studied, and I hope that an explanation of all the facts concerning them will throw more light on the subject and show that, at any rate, Thonga Animism is very different from the Animism of the Dutch East Indies, for instance, where men speak of thousands of spirits of the earth, air, water, mountains and trees : very different also from the fetichism met with in other Bantu tribes of Central and Western Africa.

*

* *

82 Before leaving this chapter, in which I have tried to sketch what I have
789 called by the rather pretentious term of The Natural Philosophy of the Bantus, and as a preparation for the explanation of the religious and dynamistic rites described in the following chapters, I think it advisable to set forth the principles which seem to underlie most of these rites, and which may be called the *axioms of primitive mentality*.

As regards what are commonly called *magic rites* I contend that they are in no sense purely arbitrary but that they rest on certain definite principles. These axioms of primitive mentality are what anthropologists fittingly call collective representations, viz., everybody believes

2: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

them. Whatever may be their origin, they form a part of the mental make up of every Native. A careful study of the rites reveals at least three such axioms: Like acts on like and produces like; the part represents the whole and acts on the whole; the spoken wish produces the desired result.

1) *Like acts on like and produces like.* All the elements of Nature are dependent on each other, and if there is a similarity between two of them, they are at once brought into a special relation with each other and begin to influence each other. The application of this principle is universal, in the religious as well as in the dynamistic domain. The Native mind is extremely quick at perceiving a similarity between the most heterogeneous objects or phenomena, and immediately establishes a causal relation between them. We have already met with scores of instances of this law. *Colour* acts on colour; black sheep and black smoke produce a black cloud full of rain (p. 318). *Form* produces a similar form; a necklace of maize grains round the neck of a small-pox patient produces an eruption of small, transparent, pustules which are not dangerous, in place of the large, thick, deadly ones. (See Chapter III. A.) *Disintegration* produces disintegration; the chewing of a bean ensures the melting of the iron ore in the kiln (p. 359). *A certain state of mind* produces a similar condition in living beings, and even in material phenomena; the continence of little children ensures control over the flame of the furnace (p. 115) whilst the passion of married people accelerates disease, and increases the fury of wild beasts, (p. 61) etc. (1)

This kind of magic has been called *imitative magic.* A corollary of this principle is that the image or object representing a thing is in close relation with the thing itself, and any action performed on the image will have its repercussion on the thing represented.

(1) To show how far this action of like on like can go, let me quote this final example which I gave in my paper on *The Magic Conception of Nature amongst Bantus (South African Journal of Science*, Nov. 1920). A magician has had the good luck to discover a crow's nest full of young. He climbs up the tree, and ties all the little birds together by their feet. The mother crow, however, is not at a loss to deliver her progeny. She brings each day a leaf taken from different trees, and places it in the nest. The magician keeps watch. He climbs the tree, looks at the leaf, and recognizes the tree from which it has been taken. He then goes and digs up a piece of root from that tree. After a few days he will have collected quite a bundle of different roots. By that time the little crows will be free, the string which bound them having given way, or having rotted, and the magician will possess a medicine of first rate quality. By means of it he will be able to free any patient from any disease or worry by which he is held fast.

82 789 2) *The portion of a complexus acts on the whole.* The elements of Nature are considered as forming complexuses in which the component parts are united in such a manner that they react on each other. The body forms such a complexus ; an isolated organ can therefore act on the whole body or replace it. (See the case of the trumpet of heaven (p. 314) which is the femur of the bird of lightning and which is used to expel the thunderstorm). But there are much more complicated complexuses, for instance the village, muti. When death strikes its chief or any of its members, everything is contaminated (I. p. 143). Material contact is of paramount importance here ; but more spiritual considerations are also taken into account in establishing these complexuses. Why is it the first wife of the hunter who must shut herself up in the hut in order to save her husband from the fury of the hippopotamus (p. 69)? Because she is united to him by a mysterious tie, being the lawful, true wife (I. p. 284). The community of life is more complete between her and her husband than between the hunter and his minor wives. For this reason, I prefer to call this form of magic *communionist magic* rather than sympathetic magic, the term generally employed. In many magic rites imitative magic and communionist magic are combined.

3) *The words in which a wish is emphatically expressed produce the desired result.* Primitive man in the hierarchic form of his social group, is accustomed to command and to be obeyed. He attaches great importance to his word, and intends natural forces to accomplish his will as well as his subordinates. This may be one of the reasons for the prevalence of this kind of magic, which has inspired incantations, imprecations, etc. There are no doubt other reasons, and the forms of verbal magic are numerous.

It is evident that we cannot assign any scientific value to any of these axioms of primitive mentality. They are absolutely false. It is not true in actual life that like produces like, that the part acts on the whole, and that the expressed wish produces the desired result. The magic rite may be attended with some objective result in as much as its performance gives the performer greater confidence in himself, thus producing an auto-suggestion favourable to the success of the operation. Moreover the magician develops certain subliminal powers which are not yet well understood but which are real and may be effective (especially in the domain of divination). But magic rites are utterly irrational ; they are doomed to disappear before the advance of Civilisation and Science.

821

821 ETHNOMETEOROLOGY--ideas about night and day, dawn and twilight, rising and setting of the sun, phases of the moon, eclipses, solstices and equinoxes, and the succession of seasons; notions about heavenly bodies (e.g., sun, moon, stars, constellations, planets, comets, meteorites); ideas about meteorological phenomena (e.g., clouds and fog, frosts and drought, rain and snow, ice, hail and sleet, winds and whirlwinds, storms, thunder and lightning, rainbow, parhelion and aurora); associated behavior patterns (e.g., greeting the dawn, dispelling an eclipse); etc. See also:

Climate 138
Navigation 602
Reaction to disasters 731
Magical weather control 780
Ordering of time 808
Cosmology 772
Nature spirits and gods 778
Omens and astrology 787
Development of scientific astronomy and meteorology 816
Association of lunation with menstruation . . 841

846 751 825 278 856 them till they burn. The smoke then rises, and he exposes the child to it for a long time : the body, face, nose and mouth. The baby begins to cry ; he sneezes, he coughs ; this is just what is wanted. Then the doctor takes what remains of the pieces of skin, grinds them, makes a powder, mixes it with *tihuhlu* (1) grease of the year before last and consequently hard enough to make an ointment. With this ointment he rubs the whole body of the child, especially the joints, which he extends gently in order to assist the baby's growth.

846 751 853 All this fumigation and manipulation is intended to act as a preventive. Having been thus exposed to all external dangers, dangers which are represented by the beasts of the bush, the child may go out of the hut. He is now able "to cross the foot prints of wild beasts" (tjemakanya mitila) without harm. Snakes will not bite him, at any rate their bite will not hurt him ; lions will not kill him. The remainder of the powder is put into a little bit of reed closed at both ends, which the mother has to carry with her during the whole nursing period in order to continue the treatment.

846 755 753 921 This rite of the broken pot is also the great preventive remedy against the much dreaded ailment of babies, *convulsions*. If a child suffers from this, they will say : "a tlalile shirengelen," viz. "he did not find any help in the broken pot" and the parents will go to another doctor whose drugs are more powerful, to have the child once more exposed to the smoke. It may even be that a grown-up man will undergo this treatment again, if he has been ill with convulsions, but, in this case, the broken pot with its pieces of skin is put on the head of the patient, which has been first covered with a wisp of cuscuta (hare dja yendjeyendje). The great aim of all the medication of children by the "milombyana" is also to fight against convulsions, as we shall see (2).

(1) The tihuhlu are the seeds of the ukuhlu tree known under the name of mafureira. They are oleaginous and the fat (mafura) obtained from them is very much used for external applications amongst the Thongas.

(2) In *Savage Childhood* p. 12, Dudley Kidd describes this "baptism of smoke" amongst Zulus. Some dirt is scraped from the father's body and is mixed with other drugs in order to impart to the child his ancestral spirit. Another ingredient

842 The Thonga child is always received into this world with great joy by the whole family. If it is a girl, it means oxen to buy a wife for one of the sons later on ; therefore it means increase not only in the wealth but in the number of the members of the family. If it is a boy, there is no direct material enrichment, but the clan has been strengthened and the name of the father is glorified and perpetuated. In the case of the birth of a first-born child (ñwana wa matibula), a special ceremony is performed at the end of the first week. When the grandmother has smeared the hut, she goes home, summons all the female relatives, sometimes as many as ten or fifteen ; they take with them food, ochre and fat prepared for this purpose. Two or three men accompany them. They enter the village of the child executing a special dance called *khana*, and singing the following song (which is the proper song to glorify a first-born) :

846 539 851 603

I celebrate my pot which has done *ngelebendje*...

They compare the child with a pot of clay which has gone through the firing process. It has been tried as one always tries a pot by letting it fall to the ground ; but it is not shattered, because it has not cracked in the furnace, it has kept intact ! This is what is meant by the descriptive adverb ngelebendje.

846 Then they smear the baby, the mother, the father, everybody in the village with ochre. It is a great feast. A goat will be killed, if possible, because the father and mother have "found a village" (kuma muti) by the child, they have "grown roots" (mila mitju). This is a law, but its omission is not taboo. When the grandparents do not perform this ceremony, it is an insult to the parents of the child, but no evil consequence will follow.

851 603

765 is a meteorite ground to fine powder. It is interesting to compare this use of the meteorite with the fact that, amongst the Thonga, this fumigation is intended to prevent convulsions. Convulsions, as we shall see (Part VI. Chap. II. B) are caused by the mysterious power of Heaven. The meteorite has fallen from Heaven. Thus the baptism of smoke aims at bringing the child under the influence of the two main elements of Bantu religion : the ancestor gods and Heaven.

753 827

787 Amongst the Ba-Ronga the ill-omen is not considered so serious.
782 Later on, when the child loses his first teeth, he must not
856 let them fall out hap-hazard anywhere. He must take the fallen tooth, go to the ash-heap, put his finger into the hole and say : "Kokwa, kokwa, ndji hwe hobe !" (Grandfather, grandfather, give me a grain of maize !) Then he throws the tooth over his shoulder on to the ashes and goes home without looking backward. Should he look backward, his grandfather (the spirit of the departed ?) would not give him a new tooth (1). This custom is no longer taboo and is disappearing.

856 When a younger brother cuts his teeth, they are considered
163 as pushing away or pulling out the teeth of the elder, as the younger brother comes into the world, as a rule, three years after the elder.

As regards *hair*, the first cutting is accompanied by the following
302 custom : the mother sprinkles some drops of her milk on the
856 forehead and on the occiput of the child ; then she cuts his hair and throws it away in the midst of thick grass. When she cuts her own hair, she always leaves a lock on both sides of the head for the amusement of the child, till he is able to walk.

853 Nursing women very often anoint themselves with ochre. This is said to be in order to prevent their husbands from having relations with them.

These rites are not considered as very important. But there are three others which are most punctiliously observed, and which divide the nursing period into three subperiods : the presentation to the moon, after three months, the tying of the cotton string, after one year, and the weaning ceremonies at the close of the period.

4) The presentation to the moon (ku yandla).

821 The appearance of the new moon is always received with cheers by the Ba-Ronga. The first person who sees it shouts :

(1) Comparative Ethnography : I remember quite well that, when I was a boy, we were told in Neuchâtel that we must not let a broken tooth get lost, lest it should be found by a dog and a dog's tooth would grow in its stead !

821 "Kengelekezeeeee !" and this exclamation is repeated from one village to another. *Kenge* is the descriptive adverb which means the form of the crescent of the moon. Each "moon," or month, is considered as being a new one, the old one having died, and there were special names for each month of the year (See Part VI).

[841] As soon as the mother of the child has resumed her menses
856 (the menses are called tinwheti, months) and this happens as
828 a rule on the third month after the delivery amongst Thonga
821 women, she takes her garments, washes them, puts on new
852 clothing and then proceeds to the ceremony of the *yandla*. The child must be "given his month." This is done in the following way. The day the new moon appears, the mother takes with her a torch or merely a brand from the fire and the grandmother follows her carrying the child : both go to the ash-heap behind the hut. There the mother throws the burning stick towards the moon and the grandmother flings the child into the air saying : "This is your moon !" (hweti ya ku hi yoleyo) : then she puts the child on to the ashes. The little one cries and rolls over in the dirt on the ash-heap. Then his mother snatches him up (wutla), nurses him, and they go home.

This ceremony, which is certainly a rite of passage, is said to "open the chest of the child" otherwise "his ears would die," he would remain stupid. When a child is not intelligent, it is usual to say to him : You have not been shown your moon ! (1)

852 Therefore the *yandla* means a progress made by the child,
846 the entrance into a new phase of his existence. The fact is
854 emphasised by the three following changes which take place on the day of the yandla : 1) Henceforth his father is allowed to take the child in his arms. Up to that day, this was taboo, as the child being continually with his mother was perhaps polluted by the dangerous blood following the birth ; but now she has washed her clothing and has been purified by the reappearance of the menses ; so the danger no longer exists. 2) It is now

(1) However the name of the child's month is soon forgotten and is never afterwards recalled. This seems to show that the custom is dying out, as well as the knowledge of the names of the various months.

851 remain there till it falls to pieces. After this operation the
766 child is "grown up" and three things are allowed which were
833 taboo before :

1) The child, if he dies, can be buried on the hill, in dry soil. Before the *boha puri* he would have been buried in wet soil, near the river, as is customary with twins and children who have cut their upper teeth first.

2) He can participate in the strange purification called *hlamba ndjaka* which takes place after the death of one of the inhabitants of the village (See ceremonies of death).

852 3) The parents can again have conjugal intercourse, though
766 they must avoid conception till the child is weaned. Before this
839 ceremony it was absolutely prohibited, and should they have
821 sinned in this respect and the mother have conceived, they would
842 be very guilty! It is a dangerous taboo! They would have "stolen" the child, stolen it from the law (yiba nawen). The child would not have "entered the law." It would be useless to tie the string round him in order to repair the evil done. Should he live long, should he even become an old man, he will have to be buried in wet soil, otherwise the rain would be prevented from falling.

Amongst the Malulekes and the Hlengwes such children are even burnt after their death. We shall speak later on about the mysterious relation established by the Thongas between these children, their burial, and the rain.

853 Amongst the Ba-Ronga this rite is called *boha nshale* (to tie
854 the cotton) and can be performed in the same way or even more simply by the father (Annotatio 3).[1] Parents, when they have duly tied the string on the little one, are said to have *fuya ñwana*, viz. taken possession of the child.

Amongst them again, another thing is then allowed which was taboo before. The child can be carried on the shoulders without ntehe by the arms alone (hi minkono).

851 It is clear that the tying of the cotton string means the official reception of the child into the family, even into human society. Before that, he was hardly considered as a human being, he was *shilo* (a thing), *khuna* (an incomplete being). Now he is *nkulu*,

1 [See p. 516 in these categories or in 116 - Analyst]

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

881/561 schools during two consecutive years. The first is called *bulika*, the second *buhwira*. Thongas have only the first, and it is the one described in the following pages.

I was never fortunate enough to penetrate into a lodge, as it is a great taboo. I tried once to obtain admittance, near Shiluvane, but in vain. But the rites have been described to me with such a wealth of detail that I seemed to have lived for three months with the candidates ! (1)

A French anthropologist, Mr A. van Gennep, published some years ago a book on *Les Rites de Passage* (Paris. Nourry 1909) which throws a great deal of light on these mysterious customs. He shows that a great number of rites have been inspired by the idea of passage from one place to another, and that all the rites belonging to this category present the same general features : in the first place the separation from the old state of things is symbolised by certain rites which he calls separation rites ; then begins a period of margin, where the individual or the group concerned is secluded from society and submitted to a number of taboos or rites ; thirdly, at the close of this period, the persons who have been tabooed are again received into the community as regular members by the aggregation rites. This classification applies perfectly to the Circumcision rites, which are a Rite of Passage par excellence, and I shall now try to explain them briefly in their natural sequence. For more details see *Zidji*, a South African novel which I published in 1910 (Foyer solidariste, Saint-Blaise, Switzerland) where a more elaborate description will be found.

3) The three series of rites of circumcision.

a) Separation rites.

821/881 The circumcision school (Ngoma) is held every fourth or fifth year, and all the boys from ten to sixteen are sent to it by their

(1) A young colleague of mine, the Rev. A. Jaquies was more fortunate than I and even succeeded in taking some photographs in the Masume Valley, near Shiluvane, This was a Pedi school, but, as stated above, there is no great difference between Pedi and Thonga " Sungi. " These pictures are of great interest, and I am grateful to my friend for allowing me to reproduce them here.

821/881/304 parents. Some may escape, but if they happen to be at hand on the next occasion, they will be included by consent or by force. Even an adult member of the tribe can be compelled to go through the initiation, if he is found in the country in an uncircumcised state. The *time of year* chosen for the opening of the school is a month during which the morning star appears, in winter. *Ngongomela*, Venus, is the herald of the day. She precedes the sun, so she must lead the boys to their new life, from darkness to the light! (Valdo)

643/881 One day all the candidates are gathered in the capital ; for this school is the business of the chief, and has been arranged by the council of the headmen (tinduna) over which he presides ; he has the supervision of it, and will receive the fees from the initiated later on. Boys circumcised four years ago must also attend the whole school as shepherds (barisi, psitjiba), namely as servants of the men and watchers over the candidates. They have already partly built the lodge outside the village, in a remote place, not too far away however, because the women must bring food each day for all the inmates of the " yard of mysteries ".

881 After having slept in the capital, early in the morning, when Ngongomela rises in the East, the band of the uncircumcised *goes out* from the inhabited world to the wilderness, to the lodge. This is the first separation rite. The second is this : they find on the road a fire made of strongly scented wood ; when they smell the smoke, they must jump over it. This rite is called : Tlula ritsa, to jump over the firebrand.

533/881 Later on, when still at some distance from the newly built lodge, they hear a great noise, a song accompanied by the beating of drums and blowing of antelope horns. They must not understand the meaning of the words which are sung by the host of shepherds and the men, as it would frighten them too much :

The little boy cries ! Bird of the winter !

881 Here they are halted. Eight of them are chosen and told to go forward. Each one is given an assagai, and they are pushed between the singers, who hold sticks and stand facing each other

621 own huts to protect them against would-be-witches. In this way
754 many villages are broken up by fear of witchcraft. Generally
596 speaking the Thonga village cannot long remain of any considerable size ; it tends to fall to pieces.

But there are other causes which may destroy the village and the idyllic life of the small community. The death of the headman, and lightning striking the village, are the two main causes which may bring about this event.

765 *Death of the headman.* There is a mystic tie between this man
596 and the social organism which is under him. Should he die,
621 the village dies also... It is not abandoned at once. The whole
787 year of mourning will elapse before the moving. But as soon as the widows and property have been distributed, the successor of the deceased will go and found his own village and the old one will remain a ruin (rumbi). Should any one else die, his hut will merely be thrown into the bush and the village will not be abandoned. But should these deaths increase, then the divinatory bones may order the place to be deserted, as it is defiled and dangerous.

821 If *lightning* strikes the hubo, it is a very bad omen. The
756 medicine man who has the power to "treat the place struck by
787 lightning" is called in. Should he be able to exhume from the
621 ground the mysterious bird which causes lightning, or at least the coagulated urine which it has deposited, and which is called Heaven (See Part VI), the people are allowed to stay. But if he does not discover it deep down in the soil, the village must move, as the presence of the mysterious power of Heaven inside the circle of huts would bring disaster. This is a taboo.

621 Another cause of moving is the *exhaustion of the gardens.* When
787 the fields are "tired" (karala) and do not produce sufficient food
596 for the inhabitants, they leave the place and look for pastures new. In that case the bones will be consulted. Sometimes, even, the village may be transported elsewhere for the sole reason that the people are tired of the place and want to change. If the bones confirm their wishes, they will move.

621 *The founding of a new village* is the occasion of most interesting
596 and characteristic rites, which afford us a new [illegible]

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

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of building will be stopped at once and the little community will find another place to which to move! Moreover the guilty woman will have to ask the principal wife for forgiveness. 2) A second great taboo is this : — No one must wash his body during the whole "buhlapfa", as this might cause the rain to fall and it would interfere with the building operations.

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5. The building of the huts begins immediately, each man making the circular wall first. When all the walls are ready,

Carrying a roof.

the *roofs are carried* from the old village to the new by all the men together. They lift each roof on to their shoulders, after having removed the old grass, and go out of the village, not by the main entrance, but by one of the back gates which has been widened for the purpose. A broad road has been prepared through the bush. They follow it, marching as fast as they can, and singing the obscene songs which are reserved for special occasions (see Part VI). In these they insult the women who accompany them, carrying the baskets, the mortars, the pestles. "The village is broken in pieces, so are the ordinary laws. The insults which are taboo are now allowed" (Mboza). This suspension of morality in speech is only allowed on the day when roofs are carried to the new village. Some days later, again, the women will take their revenge when they smear the floor of the huts ; then they too will sing their songs, insulting the men. But

539 There is quite a collection of these carriers' songs praising the chiefs. Mzila (or Muzila), whom we saw a short time back scaring sparrows, is here compared to the mythical lightning bird, to the hawk that swoops down from the clouds. (See Part VI.) Why does he not once for all annihilate the sparrows which pillage his fields of sorghum ? But this is poetry! and there is often a wide gap between poetry and reality!

d) The feasting of the chief in the villages.

796 273 643 The fourth and final act of the bukanye feasting in which, as we have seen, the chief plays a prominent part, is the *nsungi* which may be called the "fin de saison" orgy. The chief now returns the visits of his subjects and casks of beer are prepared for him in every village. Dancing and singing are in full swing. He is fêted and acclaimed! But the makanye are getting over-ripe ; a new month, a new moon is at hand, which is called *sibandlela* "she who closes the roads ;" the paths leading to the foot of the trees become almost impassable, owing to the grass which grows to an incredible height during the rains prevailing at this season. The fine weather is over. Winter is knocking at the door.

796 789 643 262 831 Amongst the Nkunas the luma ceremony called "to eat the new year" (dyaka ñwaka) is performed with a special pumpkin (kwembe) cooked at the capital together with the medicine used for rain-making. The chief first eats of it in the evening and makes the sign of a cross on the big drum, which is then beaten to call the people in his village. Then all the men come, bringing the little horns in which they keep the rain medicine (See Part VI). They eat a little and smear the rim of these horns with the medicine ; the horns also must "eat the new year." Then everybody can enjoy the products of the harvest. Should anyone precede the chief, this would be fatal to the latter or make him ill... Such is the testimony of Mankhelu. I suspect these rites to have been influenced by the proximity of the Ba-Pedi. "Now we have no longer any first fruits' feast (mulumo)," says Mankhelu with some melancholy. "White people have killed it. Everybody

262 eats freely in his house according to his good pleasure. Formerly
821 we used to take the oxen of the man who had dared to steal the
796 new year."

Conclusion on the luma rite.

796 All these luma rites[1] of first fruits seem to have primarily a *religious*
782 *origin*. The Bantus do not feel that they dare enjoy the products of
557 the soil unless they have first given a portion of them to their gods. Is it not these gods who make the cereals grow ? Have they not the power even of controlling the wizards who bewitch the fields ? These rites are also evidently dictated by the *sense of hierarchy*. A subject must not precede his chief nor a younger brother the elder in the use of the new harvest, else they would kill those in authority. Such an act is against order. We shall see that, even when the seeds are sown, the elders must take precedence. But the custom seems also to have been actuated by the idea of *passage*. There is a passage from one year to another. For the Thongas, I think the new year begins
805 twice every year : it begins when tilling recommences, in July, August,
796 when the heat returns. This is the hlobo. It begins a second time at
789 harvest, and then there is passage from the food of the last year to the food of this year. This is the nguba (Ro.) or ñwaka (Dj.). Though the luma rites do not bear all the characteristics of a true passage rite, like those of circumcision or moving, we may observe in the luma of bukanye a kind of marginal period of general licence, when the ordinary laws are more or less suspended. The taking of a first mouthful probably signifies the aggregation to the new period, the magical powder used on this occasion being a protective measure to shield them from the calamities of this unknown year... And after all, is it not that feeling of fear which so easily takes possession of the heart of man when entering on a new state and starting something fresh, which has led the savage to surround the use of the first fruit with so many ritual precautions ?

IV. *Taxation.*

643 The chief governs (fuma). *Fuma* means to command, but also to live in plenty, to be rich. The subject (nandja, follower) obeys ; he follows the chief who marches before him just as the

1 [See pp. 394-404 in these categories c. in 116--Analyst]

Its first cousin, the *kwakwa* (dji-ma), is of the same shape and size, but, when ripening, becomes quite an orange yellow; it is never eaten uncooked. The pulp surrounding the stones is prepared in a certain way and made into strips (nhasa, yi-tin), which are hung on the trees to dry or over the fire to be smoked; this is what is called *nfuma*. Once the *nfuma* is dried, it can be pounded and made into a flour much valued when the storehouses are empty, and the new season has not yet begun. 222 252

The sala and the kwakwa are two species of the genus Strychnos (Strychnos spinosa and ungasha) which furnishes chemists and poisoners with the well-known drug strychnine. Does the fruit contain any proportion of this substance? I do not know. It has never been known to kill any one, although it may be the cause of many intestinal troubles which naturally result when the Natives, having no more maize or sweet potatoes, live on nothing but this particular fruit. Strange to say, the kwakwa stones are credited with the power of attracting lightning; the old women say that, when making *nfuma*, these large white stones must never be allowed to lie in a heap in the open air: lightning would surely strike the village were any such imprudence committed. It is a taboo. 222 137 821

I have already described the *nkanye* (mu-mi), (Sclerocarya caffra, Kafir plum), which is certainly the most highly valued of all the trees in Thongaland (I. p. 398). The fruit is used primarily and essentially for the brewing of bukanye, by pressing the pulp, but the kernels of the stones of the nkanye are also much appreciated; they are very oleaginous and a modicum of oil may be obtained by merely squeezing them between the fingers! They are called *mongo*, and the saying is that they are food for kings, for the stones are very hard, the kernels very small and it is hard work to obtain even a small quantity! Not that there is any lack of stones! Heaps, which have been thrown away at the time of the famous bukanye brewing, are to be found in the vicinity of all villages, but the cracking is the difficulty. For this a stone must be sought, far and wide, and small hollows must be made in it of a size to fit the circular nkanye stones; these are then inserted in the sockets and cracked by a sharp skilful blow with another stone, 222 252

343 or in small storehouses hung to the branches of trees (mfunge). When the harvest has been plentiful and all the storehouses have been filled, then begins the happy time of winter, of beer drinking, *bunanga* playing, (I. p. 431) paying visits, etc.

II. *Agricultural taboos.*

241 The first category of agricultural taboos are those previously
784 mentioned, which spring from the idea of *hierarchy* : the prohibition to sow pumpkin seeds before the elder members of the family, the prohibition to enjoy the first-fruits (Kafir corn, bukanye, etc.) before the gods, the chief, the headman, and the elder brothers have *luma* (I, p. 394). Others belong to the *special feminine taboos*, (girls not allowed to walk amongst the pumpkins, to pluck their fruit or to pick their leaves without certain precautions, I. p. 184). Another category is that of *shimusi*. Certain days are proclaimed by the chief, or fixed by custom, as sabbath days, on which no one is allowed to till the soil. In Ñwamba, when there has been a little rain, it is taboo for the people of the clan to work in the fields ; they must remain
241 at home. Amongst the Nkunas the day on which the new
754 moon appears is also shimusi. The moon must be left to "become
784 firm" (tiyela, hola) ; to cut roots while it is still "soft" is taboo : it
821 would cause strong winds and hail. Complete rest is also customary in Khosen the day following the birth of twins. (See Part VI. Chap. II). Some other taboos are due to the fear of *wizards* : it is forbidden to whistle in the fields after having sown or until the mealies are grown. This would call the "baloyi" and endanger the harvest.

241 It is a taboo for a woman to remain in a standing position when
784 she borrows a living ember (woka) from people cooking their food in their gardens ; she must sit down when she takes the ember. Should she break this law, it would cause the mealies of the owners of that garden to be burnt (psha) ; the women has "crossed their gardens" (tjemakanya). If however she does this, they

177 attain to the happy state of drunkenness in which they so much
273 delight, and which is not allowed by the regulations of the Compounds.

A number of other drinks have been invented by the South African Natives, but the foregoing are the principal.

See in the Practical Conclusions, I, at the end of the Volume, my remarks on "Alcoholism and the South African Tribe."

E. LIVE STOCK BREEDING.

I. *Oxen.*

231 Oxen were plentiful in Thongaland before the Zulu invasion; the Ba-Ngoni warriors stole and killed them wholesale. They have never been so numerous since then, and in 1910 they were fewer than ever, owing to cattle plague and to Texas Fever, which has destroyed the herds in the Transvaal and in the greater part of the Lourenço Marques district. Oxen are not the property of chiefs only. Any *numzane* can possess a kraal, *ranga* dji-ma (Ro.), *shibaya* (Dj.), where he keeps not only his own cattle but those entrusted to his care. Having plenty of boys to herd them, he readily accepts the cows which his neighbours ask him to look after, all the more so as the milk will be his, and he will be given one of the calves, according to custom (I. p. 440). Much care is taken of the welfare of the cattle: the herding-boys are expected to lead them to pasture in the
[821] morning, when the dew is still on the grass; during the five or six winter months hardly any rain falls, but heavy morning dew replaces it, moistening the grass, and Natives firmly believe that it makes the cattle fat. So it is said that the oxen must go out early and "eat the dew." (Compare the tale of Piti, *Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, p. 156.) Moreover the best kinds of grass, those which are the most nourishing, are well known, and the boys are sent to the places where they grow. Parts

262 were shrimps in it, he disdainfully refused to take his share. — "We
784 are Ba-Ngoni! We do not eat fish," he said with disgust. First, shrimps are not fish ; he was "plus royaliste que le roi!" Second, he did not abstain from the sauce because it had an unpleasant flavour ; it was more tasty than ever! But the *social idea* dictated his attitude. He boasted of belonging to a superior race. He was not like these wretched Ba-Thonga who eat fish! It would be lowering himself to partake of such a meal, so he preferred to fast.

I witnessed the same scene when we were distributing cakes to our school children in Lourenço Marques. One of the girls was the daughter of a pure Ronga woman and an Indian Mussulman. She inquired if the cakes had been cooked with lard. The cakes were excellent, and she found them so, nevertheless she refused to eat them if they contained lard, because her father was not allowed to eat pork. It is evident that there is but one step from this clan repulsion, which is still a nyenya, to a definite taboo. Let the boy or girl *fear* that some evil will happen to them, because they have transgressed a sacred rule, and the nyenya will become a yila. Let it be admitted by them that the transgression of the rule may bring death to the family or the clan, and the primitive individual feeling of disgust will be transformed into the most severe collective taboo. I can quote no instance in proof of this evolution, as we have no knowledge of the past history of the taboos. From the psychological point of view, however, this process is quite within the range of possibility.

III. *Fishing*.

226 There are no particular restrictions to fishing so long as it is
821 carried on by *hooks*. Any one can go with his boat on the river, the lake, or the sea, and throw his line into the water. The fisherman will then say : "Thu! (not the sacramental tsu, but only an onomatopœia describing the fall of the hook into the water). You! my hook! they eat to their heart's content, people who dwell yonder, where they pound their mealies kneeling down (bugimamusi), there where the khwekhwe and the mhulu are, etc. (names of different kinds of fish)." Afterwards the fisher throws a pinch of tobacco on the spot where his hook

fell, not as an offering to the gods, but in order to help his hook 226
to see (hanyanyisa), to awaken it and "give it eyes to catch." This 821
sentence referring to the place "where people pound their mealies standing, or kneeling down," is an allusion to a curious cosmographic notion, which we shall explain later on (Part VI. Chap. I). Seeing the sky reflected in the water, the fisherman thinks of the ends of the earth, where heaven rests on the ground, and where women are obliged to kneel down when crushing their mealies, lest their pestles hit the sky!

There are three other principal methods of fishing, and, as they 226
are more or less of a collective nature, they are regulated by 784
laws and attended with taboos : the nhangu, the shibaba and the tjeba.

The *nhangu* is a triangular enclosure made of sticks stuck in the sand on the seashore. This enclosure has an opening looking seaward. The tide covers the nhangu, bringing with it all kinds of denizens of the sea, big lobsters, shrimps of all sizes, fish, etc ; when it retires, all these creatures are imprisoned in the nhangu, and try to find their way out through the opening ; this however is closed, and the fishers collect their catch, which is sometimes considerable. A man who wishes to build a nhangu must pay a tax to the chief of the country. During the operation he must observe the law of silence ; if anyone should speak to him, he must not answer. When the nhangu is ready he goes straight to his hut, and washes his hands, and then he can speak again. Should he transgress this taboo, the fish will rush about wildly in the trap and he will be unable to catch it. This is not a *kunga* proper (I. p. 124) but only another application of the rule imposed for example on the wife of the hippopotamus-hunter (II. p. 69). On the day of inauguration, (khangula), all the inhabitants have the right to come and partake of the result of the first fishing. This is a *luma*, the luma of the nhangu. The owner of the trap is not allowed to take a single fish home that day. Everything must be consumed on the spot.

The *shibaba* is another kind of trap, made of woven reeds, 226
which is placed on the banks of a river, of the Nkomati, for 834
instance, near the sea, within the tidal reach ; when the tide is

772 is called *buginamusi*, a curious word of the bu-ma class, the prefix *bu* meaning a place, viz., the place where the women can lean their pestles against the vault, (whilst everywhere else pestles must be leant against a wall or a tree). This expression is sometimes further explained by the following words : "Lomu ba kandjaka na ba khisamile" — "Where women pound their mealies on their knees ;" they cannot stand erect, or their pestles would strike against the vault! This vault rests on the earth, which is often called *libala*, viz., the great plain. On what does the earth itself rest? This question does not seem to trouble the Thonga mind and I never heard an answer to it. In this respect it may be said, in excuse for the African Natives, that the ancient Greeks, with all their intellectual ability, were not much in advance of them. Some people escape the difficulty by asserting that the earth is infinite, viz., that it is endlessly prolonged downwards and has no bottom. — In the next chapter we shall see that *Tilo*, heaven, is, for the Thongas, not only the material firmament which rests on the earth, but a spiritual principle which plays a considerable part in the religious conceptions of the tribe.

772 The *sun* (dambu, dji-ma) is never personified, nor worshipped.
821 This word is perhaps related to Nyambe of the Ba-Rotse, Nzambi of the Vili, and a number of other similar words which are names of God. But if there was ever a time when the sun was regarded as a personal being, the notion has now entirely faded away. On the seashore, in the Makaneta district, according to Mboza, people believe that the sun emerges from the water. The reflection of light which remains on the sea, after the appearance of the sun, is considered as a kind of source of light from which the sun emerges and renews itself every morning : it is "cut out from the provision of fire," adheres to heaven, follows its course and *dies* in the West. To-morrow another sun will come out from the "provision," and so on. But others object to this explanation and assert that the sun passes under the earth and comes back the following day : so there is only one sun. To this theory the first retort that the earth having no bottom, the sun cannot pass under it !

000 The dawn is called *mpundju* ; then comes *tlhabela sana*, the

The dawn is called mpundju; then comes thabela sana, the 805
time when the rays of the sun (sana) are piercing ; *hisa ka sana*, 821
when they are burning ; *nhlekanhi*, the middle of the sky, or *shitakataka*, the maximum point of the heat ; then *ndjenga* (Dj.), or *lihungu* (Ro.), the afternoon, the time when the sun goes down (renga) ; *ku pela* or *ku hlwa*, when it reaches the horizon, and *mpimabayeni* (Dj.) the twilight, literally "the time when you do not easily recognize strangers coming to your village because it grows dark." These are the divisions of the day (siku). Then comes the night (busiku).

Eclipses do not seem to have ever much impressed the 821
imagination of the Thongas. At any rate, they never caused panics (Mboza). When, warned that an eclipse will take place, they see that, indeed, the sun or moon is "turning dark" (dji yentsha ntima), Natives are more struck with wonder at the supernatural knowledge of the White people, than with fear of the phenomenon itself.

I have already dealt with the notion of the *year*, (lembe, dji-ma), 805
which is very vague ; it begins at two different periods : that of 821
tilling and that of harvesting the first fruits (I, p. 396, II, p. 20). Thongas do not make any difference between a solar and a lunar year, their knowledge of months being very imperfect, as we shall shortly see.

Before leaving the source of light, I may add that the *light* 821
itself is called *ku bonekisa* (Ro.), or *ku bonakala* (Dj.), litt. that 822
which makes to appear. Of course Natives have no explanation to give of it. Moonlight is called by another name, viz. *nweti*, connected with hweti, moon. *Colours* are very imperfectly perceived, at least if we are to base our judgment on the vocabulary. *Ntima* means both black and dark blue. *Libungu* is carmine, red, purple, and also yellow. Yellow is not perceived as a distinct colour. *Psuka* is the tinge of dawn, and of the rising sun. *Nkushe*, which means sea-weed, is applied to the *blue* sky ; *nkwalala* is grey, *lihlaza* (Ro.) is green, the green of grass in the spring, and the [231]
corresponding term in Djonga is *rilambyana*, that which makes dogs howl. Very green grass has this effect on Native dogs.

The *moon* (ñhweti (Dj.), hweti (Ro.) cl. yi-tin), was perhaps 821
personified in former times, as it bears the feminine suffix *eti*,

821 which is also met with in *nyeleti* (star) and in the names of certain rivers. (I. p. 36.) At the present time there is no trace of worship or of mythological conceptions in connection with it. Natives see in its spots a woman carrying a shirundju basket or a bundle of sticks, but they do not attach to that image more importance than we do when we talk of the man in the moon.

821 I have described (I. p. 52) how the new moon is received
527 with exclamations of joy : in the villages the first person who
241 sees it shouts : "Kengelekezeeee,"—"the Crescent! the Crescent!" and this word is passed on from one village to another, and dancers rejoice because they will have moonlight to illuminate their feasts! Such is, at least, the reason now given by the Rongas for this custom. There were perhaps other ideas connected with the new moon in former times. — According to a Nkuna informant the day of the new moon is a *shimusi*, a day of rest. It is taboo to till the fields and cut the roots of the trees with a hoe. The moon must be left to become firm (tiyela). It is still tender as a new born child. Destroying winds might
821 blow and hail fall if this taboo were transgressed. — The
787 appearance of the crescent was also carefully examined, says the
828 same informant. If its horns were turned towards the earth, this showed that there was nothing to fear, all the dangers contained in this month had been poured out : "mafumo ma hangalakile" — "the assagais were dispersed." On the contrary, if the horns were turned towards heaven, this showed that the moon was full of weapons and misfortunes. — The new moon is of great importance in the customs connected with exorcism and possession, as every exorcist must undergo the *haza* purification at each new moon (Chapter III). Moreover Thongas, like many civilised people, also believe that some persons at this time have an attack of madness which is called *rihuhe ra ñhweti*, the lunar madness.

772 When the first quarter appears, the moon is said to *thwaza*,
821 a Zulu word which corresponds to *tjhama* in Thonga, and is very much used in the terminology of possession. Eight days later, it is said to *basa*, to be white or brilliant ; full moon is said to *sima* or to *lata batjongwana*, to put the little children to bed, because when it rises, it finds them already sleeping on their mats.

The wane is called *ku shwela dambo* : the moon is then found by the rising sun to be still in the sky, not having yet dipped below the horizon. When, at last, it disappears, it is *munyama*, the obscurity; the moon is said *to fa*, to have died. Is this meant figuratively, as is often the case with the word ku fa, or do the Thongas really think that each moon dies and is replaced by a new moon? It is difficult to say ; most of them believe in an actual destruction and a new creation of the moon each month (Timotheo), and this would explain why they have the same word for moon and month ; they evidently identify the two ideas. Some, however, told me that they believed it to be the same celestial body which appeared anew each month. 772 821

Spoon, who is endowed with a very vivid imagination, believed that the sun and the moon have a race each month : the moon when it first appears is not yet firm (a yi si tiyela), like a new born child, so its light is feeble ; it is dominated by the sun ; but it grows and fights. When it is full, the sun sees "that now it is the moon!" : it is something to be reckoned with! During the second half of the month, as it decreases, it lingers in the sky and the sun soon overtakes it again and compels it to pass behind. Then the moon is entirely vanquished! How far these were Spoon's personal explanations or generally accepted ideas, I could not say. The term *shwela*, applied to the last quarter and meaning : "to be surprised in the morning" (See Ch. III), seems to convey a similar idea, and it is probable that Spoon rightly interpreted the ancient ideas of the tribe.

Each moon, being new, bears a special name. These names of the months, or moons, are now almost completely forgotten, at least in the Southern clans. This is indeed curious, when we think of the custom of presenting little children to the moon and telling them the name of their month (I. p. 53). This rite ought to have prevented the names from becoming obsolete. In the Northern clans they have been better preserved, and one of my colleagues, the Rev. H. Berthoud, succeeded in identifying them more or less. His attempt to revive the nomenclature for use among civilised Natives did not, however, succeed any better than the attempt of the scientists of the French Revolution. 772 805 821

192 Amongst the Ba-Ronga those[1] which are still known are : *Nhlangula*,
805 the month in which the flowers are swept (hlangula) from the
trees, probably October, when all the minkuhlu, minkanye, etc.,
821 blossom ; *Ñwendjamhala*, the month in which the antelope
mhala, brings forth its young (November?) ; *Mawuwana*, when
the *tihuhlu* (p. 18) are plucked, because the people shout :
"Wuwana! wuwana!" in their joy at having plenty of almonds
to suck, corresponds to December. *Hukuri* is said to be the
month when the fruits of the *nkwakwa* (p. 17) are ripe (December
also?). *Ndjati*, or *ndjata*, viz., I am coming, is the time of *nwebo*,
when everyone is in his fields eating the new cobs of mealies, and if
you call a person he will answer : "I will come directly! Have
patience! I am busy here!" "This may be January or February.
Sunguti is also one of the summer months. *Sibamesoko*, the moon
which closes the paths, also called *Dwebindlela* or *Sibandlela*, is
easy to identify : it is February, the time when the grass grows so
high that it hides the paths leading to the nkanye trees. This is the
end of the bukanye time (I. p. 397). *Nyenyana*, *Nywenywankulu*
are the months of the birds (nyanyana), when one spends all
one's time in chasing the winged marauders from the fields
of sorghum and millet (March. April). *Mudashini*, viz., what
am I to eat? is the month when you have harvested so many
different kinds of food that you do not know which to choose :
this is the time directly after harvest, May or June. *Khotabushika*,
viz., when winter comes, probably June or July.

772 The *stars* are called *tinyeleti* (yin-tin) and play a remarkably
821 small part in the ideas of the tribe. The modern theory according
to which all religions started from the worship of stars, finds no
confirmation at all in the South African Bantu tribes.

821 It is taboo to try to count the stars. If any one attempts
784 to do so people will say to him : "Keep quiet or you will wet the
hut during the night!" Counting stars represents the torments
861 of the soul! If a child has been deprived of food as a punishment
for an offence, his parents will tell him, when he goes to sleep :
"Go and count the stars," viz., "you will feel hungry and not be
able to go to sleep ; you will be as unhappy as if you had to count
the stars."

[1] [names of moons -- Analyst]

I never heard a distinction made between fixed stars and 821
planets. They are all called tinyeleti. The best-known is 772
Venus, which bears many names. Not knowing that the evening 881
and morning star are one and the same, they have given it different names. The evening star is *Gumbashilalelo*, the one which steals the evening meal, because it appears when people are eating it, or *khwekhweti*, the brilliant star, or *Nkata wa hweti*, the moon's husband (as the two are often seen close together); the morning star is called *Ngongomela*, or *Khwezu*, and is greatly lauded as the herald of day. It gives the warriors the signal for starting on a war-like expedition: the warriors can easily kill their enemies under cover of the darkness, and the sun will soon appear and help them to complete their victory. Travellers also start on their journey when they see it: the dawn will soon be here! Lit by its light, candidates for circumcision leave the village of the chief to go to the house of initiation. According to one of my informants (I. p. 75) there is a profound and mystic idea in this custom: Ngongomela announces the day; so little boys must be conducted by the morning star when they abandon their childhood and all its ignorance to enter the adult life with all its knowledge. It leads them from darkness into the light! So Venus plays a great part in Thonga customs. It is the great star. Notice the feminine suffix *eti* in one of its names. It may have been personified in former times.

The *Pleiades* are the only constellation which bears a name 821
in Thonga. They call it *shirimelo*, the one which announces 772
the tilling season, because, in fact, in the lands situated in the Tropic of Cancer, it rises in July or August, when tilling is resumed. I have not heard of any other constellation known to the Natives. They have no notion whatever of constellations: their mind does not seem to have tried to group the stars, or to have seen figures of animals, or objects, in the sky; their imagination in this domain is very poor, and they remain far behind the Oriental nations in this respect.

Falling stars are looked on as a bad omen. When they see 821
one falling towards a certain point of the horizon, Natives think 787
that a Chief must have died in the country towards which the 789

821 star is directing its course, and they have a formula of incantation
787 to get rid of the misfortune attending this phenomenon. They
789 say : "Thu! Thu! Nkulunkulu ndjuwee, famba psa ku u nga fa u ku bi." — "You great thing, go away alone (without me, leaving me behind) and die and disappear entirely." This is more an imprecation (shiruketelo) than an incantation. The syllable *thu* indicates, and accompanies, the emission of a little saliva. It is different from the sacramental *tsu*, employed to invoke the spirits of the ancestors : it is an insult. It is spitting *at* something, not an act of respect and an offering, like *tsu* (1). This is the Ronga formula ; the one used in Northern clans has the same meaning : "*Rura, rura weshe*" (Move, move alone!).

821 *Comets* greatly impress the imagination of the Thongas ;
787 they are called *shimusana*, or *nyeleti ya musana*, the star of dust, or *nyeleti ya nkila*, the star with a tail, and when they appear they also mean the death of a chief. People say : "See ! A chief has died, but they have not yet published the mourning" (I. p. 414). The star which is said to have appeared the year of the death of Manukosi was probably a comet. (See Report of the S.A.A.A.S. 1905, Vol. III, p. 232.)

772 These few superstitions and observations comprise all the Astronomy of the Thongas. The sidereal world is almost entirely outside the range of their preoccupations.

III. *Cosmographic and Meteorological Phenonomena.*

1) The Wind.

821 The wind is called *moya*, an interesting word which means
822 also spirit (the human breath and the spiritual part of man), and is applied to the acting, living agent, or to the smell, or taste, of some objects. For instance it is said of an alcoholic beverage

861 (1) They spit at a child who is causing an unpleasant smell, saying to him : "Thu! u ya tisyela matjimba." — "Go away to ease yourself." Should you do this to a
578 person older than yourself, he will say to you : "What ! you make *thu* to me (wa ndji tjheka), you want me to ease myself !"

which has lost its strength that its "moya" has gone. It is also the 821
moya which gives their potency to medical charms. 822

Another word for wind is *mheho*. Strong winds are called *shidzedze*. When they break trees and damage the mealies they are attributed to baloyi, wizards, who fight during the night, quarelling over the cobs.

One frequently hears about *timheho ta mune*, the four winds. 821
They are called : *Ñwalungu*, the north wind, (a curious word 823
perhaps connected with Balungu, the White men ; see later on) ; 132
Nyingitimu (Ro.), or *Djonga* (Dj.), the South wind ; *Mupfanyaka*, the one coming from the plain of the black earth, the West Wind ; *Mfenya*, the sea breeze, coming from the East. Sailors who are great connoisseurs in this domain distinguish further the South Westerly wind, which they call *Mfenyakulu*, the great Mfenya. In Shiluvane, the West wind, which sometimes blows with great violence, coming down from the mountains of the Transvaal Plateau, is called *Burwa*, place of habitation of the Ba-Rwa (bu, locative prefix indicating a country). (Compare I. p. 18). Two other terms of the bu-ma class, also applied to East and West in all the clans, are : *Busha*, the spot where the sun rises (ku sha), the East, and *Bupeladambu*, the spot where the sun sets, the West. So there is no doubt that the Thongas possess the idea of the four cardinal points.

2) Native Geography.

The geographical notions of the tribe are, on the other hand, 823
very scanty. As a rule, they do not think it possible to know a 815
country, or place, where they have not travelled. Every one must compile his own geography. Hunters, and men engaged in commercial journeys, had some knowledge of the Spelonken (Bvesha), of Pietermaritzburg (Umgungundhlovu), of Kimberley (Dayiman), and now practically every grown-up Thonga has been to Johannesburg (Nkamben). But those who have always remained at home, women especially, show gross ignorance regarding their own country. I met some who were totally ignorant of the fact that the Nkomati River, which leaves the

823 Transvaal at Komati Poort (a place known to all), was the same as
815 the Nkomati which enters the sea near Morakwen, northwards of Lourenço Marques, at a distance of 60 miles from Komati Poort. It must be said, in excuse for them, that in Morakwen the river is called Morako (locative Morakwen) and thus many people have never been aware of the identity of the two!

If you wish to impress Natives greatly with your knowledge, tell them the names of all the countries of Thongaland in their geographical order, as you may have learnt them in conversation, or by studying the map. They will be amazed, and say : "What a wonderful traveller you are, knowing so many spots so far distant from each other!" The teaching of Geography in the schools tends, of course, to alter this state of things.

3) Earthquakes and Rainbows.

823 Earthquakes are not frequent in this part of the world ; so they are rarely spoken of. Thongas have, however, a name for them, *shimbeti*. They do not give any explanation of them and believe that they are perhaps caused by the gods. I remember having once heard a mysterious sound accompanied by a slight tremor of the soil. It was during the Boer war and was, I think, caused by the blowing up of a bridge somewhere on the other side of the range. All the Natives covered their heads with their hands and seemed greatly impressed.

821 The *rainbow* is called *shikwangulatilo*, viz., the one which
778 removes the danger from the sky. Notice the stem *kwangula*, to inaugurate, which we have already met with, when dealing with pottery (p. 117). The sky after rain is compared to a new pot, from which the *nkangu* must be removed. But this is merely an expression. No one can say what the danger is that is thus removed ; it is probable that the tribe had more precise ideas on the subject in former times, and that these have become obsolete. In some of the northern clans (Nkhabelane, Mathiye, Shiburi, Mongwe) the rainbow is called the Bow of Nyandziyo. Nyandziyo is said to be a man of the olden times who made the

rainbow ; he dwells in heaven and the rainbow is his bow. He it is who taught men the use of the bow. 773 821

The two great phenomena which mostly impress South Africans are lightning and rain, and of these you hear wonderful and endless stories!

4) Lightning.

This is called *lihati* (li-tin), and is said to be caused by a bird called *ndlati* (yi-tin). These two words, etymologically speaking, seem to be related to each other. They possess the feminine suffix *ti* which is met with in the forms *eti*, *ati*, *oti*. This bird is also called *nkuku wa tilo* amongst the Ba-Ronga, the cock of heaven, or *psele dja tilo*, the hen of heaven, and magicians know how to determine its sex when the bird has fallen. 821 825

The thunder is attributed either to the bird itself or, more frequently, to Heaven. The proper expression for "It thunders" is : "Tilo dji djuma" — "Heaven roars."

In the Northern clans those who practise magical arts add many other particulars to the story, some of which may have been borrowed from the Pedi magicians, who seem to possess a more complete explanation of the phenomenon. According to them, the *ndlati* (Pedi, *dali*) is a bird of four colours, green, red, black and white, which lives in the mountains, by preference at the confluence of rivers. The medicine-men of former times knew its hiding place and had even found the eggs of the bird in a nest floating on the water. When a thunderstorm breaks, the bird flies to heaven into the clouds ; there may be scores of them, but one only will be dangerous (lebya) and cause death. It rushes down to the ground, striking a tree on its way, tearing its bark and its wood, and throwing it down ; or it falls on a hut and burns it, or on a man and kills him. Having reached the soil, the bird can be caught, and I heard people seriously assert that four of these birds, unable to fly away, had been found the previous year in Sikororo country. Or the bird enters the ground, to a depth of two to three feet, and either remains there in its own form, or (this is the most common saying) deposits its urine (murundju), 821 825 795

821 which had caused the flash of lightning, and flies away back to
825 the mountains. The magician who understands the "treatment
791 of Heaven" comes and digs at the spot ; there he finds a kind of gelatinous substance which solidifies after a little time. I possess a little of this curious drug given to me by a Pedi magician, by name Mudjumi ; it resembles a piece of chalk, and is considered very valuable on account of its rareness, and because it is used in the manufacture of the wonderful medicine of Heaven. Should a village have been struck by lightning, the magician of Heaven will come and dig out this foreign body ; if he finds it, the taboo is removed. If he does not, the whole village must move to another place. In the same way, it is taboo to warm oneself at a fire made of the wood of a tree that has been struck by lightning, or to use it as fuel.

The flute of Heaven.
Drawn by J. Weare.

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Happily this dreadful bird can be prevented from killing and burning by magical means. Both the Pedi Mudjumi and the Thonga Makasane possessed the enchanted flute, by which they could force Heaven — or the bird of Heaven — to spare them. Mudjumi having sold me his flute, I can describe it at length. It is made of a hollow bone five inches long, covered with Varan skin, filled at its larger extremity with a black substance like wax. Inside, to keep it clean, there is a vulture's feather. The bone is said to have been taken from the ndlati bird ; the wax substance was made from powder obtained by drying up and pulverising a little of the heart, the eye, the bones, the feathers, and the flesh of the bird. In the wax are embedded three seeds of Abrus precatorius, the "lucky bean" well-known in South Africa, a round seed of a splendid coral colour with a black spot, very much used in Thonga magic. This addition of Abrus precatorius intensifies the sound of the flute and enables it to reach heaven.

reach heaven. The magician, seeing the thunderstorm approaching, climbs up the hill without any fear, blows in his flute: psee... psee... psee..., and shouts: "You! Heaven! So further! I have nothing against you! I do not fight against you!" He may add in a threatening tone: "If you are sent by my enemies against me, I will cut you open with this knife of mine." The thunderstorm will then pass away! 821 791 789

This invocation to Heaven is curious, and we shall better understand it when studying the part played by Heaven in Thonga religion. Here I am merely considering the superstition as an attempt at explaining a natural phenomenon. And we may well ask: how is it possible for such absurdities to be believed, and firmly believed, by men who are not at all devoid of a sense of observation? The idea that lightning is a bird comes perhaps from the fact that its movements in falling from above resemble the evolutions of a bird in the air. After all the phenomenon is so sudden that this explanation could easily be accepted by the imagination of the savage. As regards the statements about the coagulated urine of the bird, I must admit that I was unable to understand on what they could be based, until I saw some samples of fulgurites found where lightning had struck the ground; the heat of the electric current vitrifies the sand, forming a kind of pipe, which enters the soil, where it ramifies to a certain depth. These fulgurites, though not perfectly answering to the description given by Native magicians, may have been the natural substratum upon which Bantu imagination built up all the other superstitions. 821

5) The problem of rain and the way Thongas deal with it.

All over the earth the question of rainfall is of primary importance, but this is especially the case in Subtropical Africa, even more than anywhere else. Rain may not fall during seven months, from April to October, and nobody worries about it. But if it fails in November and December, at the beginning of the rainy season, it is a dreadful misfortune, a calamity more serious 132 731 789

132 than any other. The life of every individual, and consequently
731 of the whole clan, is threatened. Famine will certainly follow,
789 as cereals can only be sown during these two months and famine means not only suffering and anguish, but often death, in a primit.ve tribe which is totally ignorant of trade with out-lying countries, and does not possess any means of conveyance for food bought in other lands. No wonder therefore that the imagination of the South African Native has invented ways and means of regularising the rainfall, and that rites, and charms, and all the powers of magic have been resorted to with a view to ensuring the precious rain to the tribe at the right time.

789 These methods may be classified in two categories : the rites which aim at removing the causes which are believed to prevent rain and the charms by which the rain is made to fall, irrespective of any preventing cause.

a) *The causes which prevent rainfall and the rites by which they are removed.*

821 The general view is that rain comes *from the gods* : "Psikwembu
789 psi nisa mpfula" — "the spirits of the ancestors cause rain to fall."
782 So, should the spring showers not come in due time, the first idea will be to offer a sacrifice to the ancestor-gods, especially if the bones consulted have revealed that the anger of the gods is the real
[533] cause. Men will go to the sacred wood where the ancestors have been buried, sing there an ancient mourning song (I suppose No. 15, page 286, is used for the purpose), and some of them will beat the graves with sticks. As regards the sacrifice, it consists of a black victim, or it may even be the offering of a living human being to the gods ; these rites will be described later on.

Or it may be that a certain individual, *a wizard*, endowed with magical power, or rather possessing enchanted drugs, prevents the rain from falling (a siba mpfula) through wickedness, or hatred of his countrymen. This is a rarer occurrence.

100 But the terrible calamity of drought is brought into direct

But the terrible calamity of drought is brought into direct relation with some physiological phenomena which no one would have thought of in this connection : the miscarriage of women when the foetus has not been dealt with according to rule, the birth of twins, the death of children not yet received into the tribe by the ceremony of *boha puri* (I. p. 56) and not buried in wet ground ; these are the great natural causes which prevent rain from falling! I have met with this conception all over the Thonga tribe. I found it also amongst the Pedis of the Transvaal, who firmly believe it, and it would be most interesting to know if Suthos, Zulus, and Hottentots have the same superstitions. Let me quote the *ipsissima verba* of Mankhelu, the great medicine-man of the Nkuna Court. I shall never forget the earnest tone of his voice, his deep conviction, when he uttered to me the following words, as a kind of revelation : "When a woman has had a miscarriage, when she has let her blood flow secretly and has buried the abortive child in an unknown place, it is enough to make the burning winds blow, and to dry up all the land : the rain can no longer fall, because the country is no longer right (tiko a ra ha lulami). Rain fears that spot. It must stop at that very place and can go no further. This woman has been very guilty. She has spoilt the country of the chief, because she has hidden blood which had not yet properly united to make a human being. That blood is taboo! What she has done is taboo. It causes starvation."

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"What then must be done?" — "The chief will collect his men and ask them : 'Are you in a normal state?' (lit. are you right?). They answer : 'Such and such a woman was pregnant but nobody knows what she has brought forth.' This woman will be arrested and told to go and show us where she has put it. The earth is dug up ; the hole is sprinkled with a decoction made of two drugs prepared in a special pot, the *mbendula* and *nyangale* ; the woman herself must wash her body every day with that medicine. Then a little of the earth taken from the hole will be scraped up and thrown into the river ; water drawn from the river will be poured into the hole : the country will be well again, and then the rain will come.

"Moreover, we, the medicine-men, after having sent old

789 women to the river to throw away the contaminated earth, order
821 them to make a ball of that earth, and to bring it back to us in
843 the early morning. We grind it, we put it into a pot where it
783 must remain for five days, and then we prepare the great drug to sprinkle the land. The medicine is put into oxen horns and they go to all the drifts, to the boundaries of the country, on the borders of the Ñwebeti and of the Thabina rivers, on the road to Sibila's country, to Diskop (Leydsdorp); they must not however cross rivers. Our neighbours do the same on their own side. One of the girls digs the earth, the others dip a stick into the horn and sprinkle the drug into the hole. We also sprinkle the road on which these women have trodden, when they had their blood; we remove the misfortune caused by these women on the roads. The country is pure again. Rain can fall."

This is the purifying rite in the Nkuna clan. Mankhelu asserts that the Pedis do the same. He did not know if the custom existed amongst other Thonga clans. But Viguet described the same custom to me as being in force on the borders of the Limpopo, under the name of *mbelele*. The bones having revealed that the country is impure, the chief orders the mbelele : it is a period of mourning (nkosi) for the land. First the *phokolo*, or sacrifice of the black victim is performed (See Part VI). Then the women assemble. They must remove all their clothing, only putting some grass round their loins and, with a peculiar skipping step, singing a special song : "Mpfula nana" — "rain fall," — they go to all the spots where children prematurely born have been buried in dry ground, on the hills, take away what they find in the broken pots and collect all that impure matter in a secret place, so that children may see nothing of what they are doing. Water is poured on these graves in order to "quench them (timula)." On the evening of the same day they go and bury these impurities ; this is
[813 done in the mud, near the river. No man must approach during
831] this operation : the women would have the right to strike the imprudent one and ask him questions on the obscene formulae of circumcision ; the man would answer in the most impure words he could find, as all language taboos are suspended on that day ; nakedness even is no longer taboo, "because," says Viguet,

"it is the law of the country!" Every one consents to the suspension of the ordinary laws! (1) [183

Amongst the Rongas, I did not hear of any connection between prematurely born children and rain. When the mbelele rite is performed, a mother of twins must lead the procession of women who draw water and pour it on the graves of the twins in order to secure the rain. They also clean all the wells (kuha tinhlobo), digging them afresh and removing any filth in the water. It may be that the corpse of a twin, if it has been buried in dry ground, will be dug out of its grave and buried again near the river, or they will go in procession and pour water on the grave. This will influence Heaven, which is killing the earth by the terrible heat of the sun. The burning October winds will cease and the rain will fall.

There is something mysterious about all these customs. Considered merely as ideas regarding Nature and natural phenomena, I believe their essential meaning to be this : — there are some cases of human birth which are taboo. While any birth is taboo, owing to the lochia, that of children prematurely born is doubly dangerous. Abnormal children, such as twins, children who have died before the "boha puri" rite (I. p. 56), in some clans also children who cut their upper teeth first, share this noxious character. They are a calamity for the whole land as they are connected with the mysterious power of Heaven, and so prevent the rain from falling. The great remedy for the evil, the only means of counteracting this influence, is to bury these children in wet ground. Should this not have been done, the chief must order these little corpses to be exhumed and buried near the river : this is the aim and object of the mbelele. If wet, these graves will cause no harm (2).

How did these extraordinary conceptions first originate ?

(1) This rite of *mbelele* shows striking analogies with the Passage rites which we have already often met with in Thonga customs. This is a special period, a mourning period for the land, says Viguet, a marginal period which, as such, is accompanied by obscene manifestations, both in speech and in absence of clothing.

(2) In the Maluleke clan, as previously mentioned, these three categories of children must be *cremated*, and foreigners dying in the midst of the clan are also burnt after their death, from fear that they might belong to one of these categories and so prevent the rain from falling, if they were buried in dry ground. The mbelele rite there is called *ndzelenkele*. Rangane describes it as follows : — Women collect the bones of twins,

895 What is the connection between abnormal births of human
772 beings and the rain-fall? I think it can be found in the
771 conception of Heaven which has inspired so many curious rites, and which I shall explain in the next chapter. So it is possible that, after all, the mbelele rite has a religious idea at its base.

b) *Rain charms.*

789 The removal of the corpses of abnormal children from dry
177 ground and their burial near the river probably sometimes proves ineffective to produce rain. So Bantu magicians have invented a great many charms to obtain the greatly desired showers, and the power of the rain-makers is enormous. Our tribe does not seem to have developed this art as much as others. The Sutho-Pedis are masters in this domain and Mankhelu, who had been taught by them and had become a great and renowned rain-maker, revealed all his secrets to me. He possessed the drug and used it frequently, he said, having often been called in by Sutho chiefs dwelling in far distant districts, as far off as Pretoria. He assured me that he had met with so much success that these chiefs had given him oxen, horses, a waggon, precious beads, etc.! Where had he found this marvellous drug? At Rivimbi (in Venda : Luvimbi), a country north of Spelonken, not far from the Limpopo and to which he went, as far as I could make out, in 1865 or 1866. The Luvimbi people are the descendants of Luvimbi, (1) a chief of the old times (as old as Nkuna, says Mankhelu) who, after his death, went to heaven and became king of heaven ; he still exists there as a spirit, hearing and knowing everything that is done on earth. This Luvimbi is probably the same whom the Vendas call the first man, and concerning whom they have a number of traditions which I shall mention a little later.

776 and those of still-born children or those who died at birth; to these they add their old
783 rags (perhaps the cloths used for their menses?); they bring all these impurities to the
789 cross-ways and *burn them* there, singing impure songs, saying: "To-day is a great day! There is no taboo any more! If you prohibit anything, it will be an insult to the rain;
821 it will not fall." The smoke of all that they have burnt constitutes a religious offering: now the country will be pure and the rain will fall. The conception prevailing among
183 the Malulekes is somewhat different from that of the Rongas.

(1) I have published an account of the Venda traditions connected with Luvimbi or Raluvimbi in *The S. A Journal of Science*, April 1921, where more details will be found concerning this personage.

789 to be black. The heart was pierced with a puncheon and the blood flowed. He carefully washed the horns with the blood and smeared them later on (horola) with the "psanyi" found in the intestines of the animal. Then he took his *ntsiko*, viz., the two pieces of wood which served as his flint, poured a little of the powder into the notch of the female stick and made fire by the rapid friction described on p. 34. In the meantime Mankhelu prayed as follows : "Here are the drugs, Rivimbi of Tsome (Rivimbi's father)! Give us rain." Then he invoked his own gods, saying : "Go to Rivimbi for me and come along here all of you to make the rain fall." This performance is a "mhamba," a means of calling the gods, especially Rivimbi, "the master of this mhamba." After a while the wood began to burn ; leaves of the "nembe-nembe" bush (Cassia petersiana) were placed on it and a black smoke rose and ascended to heaven. Then the clouds appeared and soon the thunderstorm broke. A feather of the ndlati bird of lightning was placed amongst the leaves as a protection against thunderbolts.

Mankhelu was absolutely convinced of the efficacy of this means of rain-making, and there seems to be more sense in this rite than in many others. To use the sea to cause rain to [821] fall, is not after all so absurd! I would not assert that Natives have a clear idea as to the formation of clouds, *mapapa* (Dj.), *matlabi* (Ro.), and know that the water from above comes from the water below, but at any rate they know that the sea is water and rain is [822] also water. To obtain rain by smoke rising from burning sea products is a procedure which is in keeping with one of the most common beliefs of primitive man, that like produces like, a belief which has found its expression in the famous principle of the old physicians : "Similia similibus curantur."

When practising his rain-making art at home, Mankhelu proceeded with less ceremonial pomp. After having consulted his bones, he took four leaves of the tjeke plant (p. 14), smeared them with the magical powder and exposed them to the rays of the burning sun. As soon as these leaves were fully dry, "Heaven began to roar" and the rain came.

[177] The great rain medicine is of Pedi or Venda origin. In addition

845 *made Heaven* (a hambi Tilo), to have *carried Heaven* (a rwi Tilo), to
772 have *ascended to Heaven* (a khandjiyi Tilo). This connection
789 established between her and Heaven is clearly seen in the *rain customs* previously described. Notice that the day following the
766 birth of twins is a *shimusi*, i. e. a day of rest. Nobody tills the ground, fearing that it would prevent rain from falling. When the *mbelele* takes place in Nondwane and Zihlahla (p. 318), the half naked women who are sent to clean the wells take with them a mother of twins. This is no doubt in order to show them where the graves of twins are. But there is also another reason. In the sacred wood of Libombo there is a hole into which the woman is put ; her sisters then pour on to her the water which they have drawn from all the wells, till the hole is half full, and the water comes up to her breasts. This will cause the rain to fall. Why is this? No doubt because, the woman of Heaven being wet, Heaven itself will be wet. Spoon did not give this explanation himself, but, when I suggested it to him, he accepted it readily. For the same reason the graves of twins are watered. In certain cases water is poured on the graves of the ancestors also, because rain is attributed both to them and to Heaven, and this watering the graves is meant to induce either Heaven or the ancestor-gods to cause rain to fall. Hence again the precaution taken of burying twins in damp places, and of exhuming them in times of drought if they have been buried in dry ground (1).

845 The connection between twins and Heaven, so clearly to
772 be seen in these customs, appears again in respect to thunder-
821 storms, which, as we shall see, are another manifestation of Heaven.
789 When lightning threatens a village, people say to a twin : "Help us! You are a Child of Heaven! You can therefore cope with Heaven (mi kota Tilo), it will hear you when you speak." So the child

845 (1) In other clans this law is extended to children prematurely born, even though they
761 are not twins, and even to children who have not had the cotton string tied round their waist or who have cut their upper teeth first. On the other hand, among the Nkunas
772 no special connection seems to be established between twins and Heaven. These differences may be explained by the fact that all these abnormal cases were ascribed to
766 Heaven in former times, and the connection has been preserved in the various clans in respect to one or the other of these categories. Note that, in the song of the widows (i. p. 207), the king Heaven appears to have caused the death of the husband; this is another proof that Heaven was formerly considered the most frequent cause of death.

goes out of the hut and prays to Heaven in the following words : 845
"Go away! Do not annoy us! We are afraid. Go and roar far 772
away." When the thunderstorm has ended, the child is 821
thanked (1). His mother can also help in the same way, for has 789
she not ascended to Heaven? "She can speak with it, she is at it (or in it) — a li ku djone." (Spoon.)

We find in these rites a striking instance of the combination of the three forms of magic which have been explained above (p. 368). Heaven, rain, lightning, the mother of twins and the twins themselves form a connected whole. Action brought to bear on the mother of twins will therefore have its effect on Heaven ; this is *communionist magic*. This action consists in pouring water over her, (not only in plunging her into a lake). According to the principle of *imitative magic*, Heaven will thus be watered and will pour rain upon the earth. The act of the twin in commanding the lightning to spare the country is a case of *verbal magic*. All this would be logical enough and the conclusions perfectly legitimate if only the premisses were true!

Customs regarding twins vary from one clan to another. While 845
in one tribe they are put to death, in others their advent is considered an event of great happiness. This is the case in *Tembe and Maputju*, where women are said to wish for twins, and, if certain mothers have enjoyed this piece of good fortune, others ask them for some of the fat with which they have smeared their bodies, hoping by the use of the same ointment to obtain a like happy result. The hut is never burnt. The mother gives birth to the twins behind the hut (fukwen, I. p. 37). When it is time for her to re-enter her domicile, a hole is made in the wall at the back. The husband is excluded from the hut till the day of presentation to the moon (a ceremony which, in these clans, is not omitted in the case of twins). When he is again admitted, his wife strikes his legs with a stick, in order "to cure him" (ku mu

(1) Mrs. Junod, who was for years a missionary amongst the Fañ or Pahouin of 171
the French Congo, told me that, one day, after a tornado, the rainbow suddenly appeared in the sky. One of her female pupils at once ran to her, and hid her face in her schoolmistress' lap. On asking the reason of this fear the teacher was told that this girl was a twin, and twins dare not look at the rainbow. So the connection between Heaven and twins exists also in this tribe of Western Africa.

825 presides over all unaccountable and unavoidable phenomena of the
772 atmosphere and of the life of the fields, or of human existence.

We have seen how the two sets of religious customs play their part side by side in the rites of rain-making. A similar coincidence may be noticed here. The removal of the "nunu," a rite which originated in the conception of Heaven, corresponds to the sacrifice of the chief in the Maluleke country, who gathers his sons together to pray to his ancestor-gods for the destruction of the vermin (psidi) which eat the mealies and endanger the harvest (p. 404).

3) Heaven, Storms and Robbers.

772 The most characteristic manifestation of Heaven is in the
821 storm. According to the statement of the credulous Natives, after the women have finished cleaning the wells, and have watered
789 the graves of twins, clouds appear, a whirlwind arises, and "Heaven
627 begins to thunder" — "Tilo dji djuma." — I have already described Thonga ideas about thunder and the lightning bird (p. 313), and the powerful charm made from the flesh, feathers and urine of this marvellous creature! There is still another use made of this extraordinary drug. It is a powerful aid in *tracing thieves*! The magician who possesses this powder of Heaven, (Ñwagwalen of Shikhabele in the Mabota clan), when called upon to point out the thief, acts in the following way. Suppose some one finds that some valuable article has disappeared from his hut, he will say to his near relatives, to those whom he suspects of having committed the larceny : "Take care! If you don't confess, we will go to Ñwagwalen, who lives at Shikhabele!" This threat may possibly be sufficient to elicit an avowal. If not, the individual who has been wronged goes to the diviner, and asks his assistance ; the latter takes his "bag of tricks," his drugs, and his big black stick, i. e., the stick which he was carrying when he dug in the earth and found the urine of the bird, or the bird itself. A notch has been made in the stick, to show the depth of the hole in which he has discovered Heaven. Carrying these charms, he goes to find the chief. An audience being granted, he cries aloud : "O Chief! a theft has been

committed! Now, no one ought ever to rob me. What shall I do!" Then the Chief assembles his subjects and invites the guilty one to confess. If all deny it, Ñwagwalen starts off, with all his apparatus, for the place where the theft was committed, and "treats it medicinally" (a dahela mbangu). He spreads out his drugs, raises his stick in the air, and addresses Heaven as follows : 772 821 789 627

> We, Tilo, hi wene u ka ni mahlu, u bonaka busiku ni nhlekanhi!
> Ba tekile psa nga ba kaneta! Tana u ba komba ba psha!
> Oh Heaven, thou it is who hast eyes which see as well by night as by day...
> They have stolen my goods, and they deny it! Come and discover them; may they be consumed!

Then the clouds begin to gather, and, towards evening, the storm breaks. Lightning strikes the thief in his hut, and causes the stolen articles to reappear. — "I saw this happen at Hoñwana," declared Spoon, "but of late years such occurrences have been less frequent."

According to Camilla, the guilty person is sometimes punished by a terrible attack of vermin, of which he is unable to rid himself ; or he is confronted with several palm leaves, which, by a kind of supernatural judgment, turn into snakes, if he be truly guilty of having stolen the missing property.

The intervention of Heaven in the matter of detecting thieves is also an accepted fact in Khosen. My colleague, the Rev. A. Grandjean, told me of the following significant custom. When there is a storm, those who have missed any belongings go and stand at the door of the hut of the suspected thief, and it is quite possible that the inmate, terrified by the thunder, may throw out the stolen articles.

It may be concluded, from these perfectly authenticated customs, that the Natives attribute to Heaven the power of *omniscience*, more especially in respect to the detection of theft. The basket of bones is never consulted for this purpose. Moreover as Heaven guarantees property and makes people afraid to steal, it acts as a kind of *moralising influence*. [626]

I have also been told by witnesses from the Nkuna region that into the composition of the charm used to protect gardens against thieves, (p. 30) there enters a little powder obtained by burning a 789 772

789 stem which has been struck by lightning, i. e. by Heaven ; or the
772 magician will burn branches of the same tree in the garden itself and bring them near to the stalks in order that these may be surrounded by the smoke emanating from them. If a thief enters the garden with evil intentions, "Tilo dji ta mu dlaya, i. e. Heaven will kill him."

4) Heaven and the Balungwana.

772 In 1894, as previously stated, locusts, which had not been
825 seen for some fifty years, made their appearance on the shores of
776 Delagoa Bay, and also in Natal and the Transvaal. The popular imagination was, naturally, greatly stirred by this unusual phenomenon, which was at first greeted with smiles and astonishment, but which, later on, was the cause of endless lamentation. I was one day walking up the hill of Lourenço Marques with an old man, the counsellor of one of the sub-chiefs of Tembe, a thoughtful and intelligent person, when he said to me, with great earnestness, in a low voice, as if referring to some important event : "Have you not heard that in Maputju two dwarfs (psimhu-ñwanyana) fell from Heaven ; a little man and a little woman. They came to say to the people : "Do not kill the grasshoppers! They belong to us!" This counsellor only repeated what all thought and were saying in all the native villages ; these grasshoppers, arriving unexpectedly from on high, were a manifestation of Heaven, just like the lightning, rain, twins, or the nunu, and these celestial beings had come to announce it to men.

772 But belief in the existence of *special personages* in Heaven
776 did not originate in connection with these terribly destructive
821 insects. The idea had been familiar, for a long time past, to the Rongas, and probably to all the Thongas. These personages were not only described as dwarfs, but also as balungwana (p. 352). They were said to fall from Heaven at the time of the great rains. Thus, Timoteo Mandlati told me people had seen some of them appear, a long time ago, in the Nkuna country, and that they had gone back to heaven in a cloud ; they live in celestial space, and when it thunders without any rain falling, the Nkunas say :

"Balungwana ba tlanga henhla" — "The balungwana are at play up there." Or it is they who are singing in heaven when there is a prolonged roar of thunder, saying : "wuwu-wuwu!"

When some one passes along the road, they dispute up above as to who he may be. One says : "It is so and so," and the others contradict him. Then they spit on the traveller, who is quite astonished to see some saliva on his hand. He mistakes it for rain, and looks up to the sky to see where the rain is coming from. The balungwana then have a chance to see his face, and the one who has guessed rightly says to the others : "You see! I was right."

In Bilen I heard of a man who prevented children from picking the beautiful red flowers of Tecoma capensis, telling them that the balungwana wanted them for dresses. The same individual believed that these little men would bring oxen to him.

The Rongas say that a little man fell on the hill of Lourenço Marques, near the house of Sithini, the son of Mashaken, just before the famous war between Mozila and Mawewe (I. p. 28), the rival claimants to the kingdom of Gaza, and that this dwarf came as a presage of the troubles which were to follow. "Lots of folk saw him" said Charlie in 1895 ; (he was then a man of some forty years of age). "We were too young to be allowed to look at him ; the Whites took him and carried him off to Mozambique." — Heaven is therefore inhabited. This is generally admitted, but the idea, from all that one can gather, remains very vague.

C. CONCLUDING REMARKS ON THONGA RELIGION.

I. *The Origin of the Conception of Heaven.*

Ancestrolatry forms a clear, well-defined religion, with its theology (i. e., the ideas as regards the psikwembu), its sacrifices, and its prayers. The dim, mysterious ideas about Heaven, incorporated in or rather lying behind some of the most extraordinary rites of the tribe, bear a very different character. There is something incoherent, vague and

756 Another rite, which is observed after the hondlola only, is
the *kaza*, viz., the monthly purification of the exorcist. He
788 fills his gobo calabash with a decoction made of the roots of the
821 mphesu and ntjebe trees, drinks the whole, tickles his throat
with a feather and vomits the medicine. "A tibasisa ndjen"
— "he purifies his inside." This is done at every new moon.
The connection between the possessed and the moon, which was
first established by the fact that he had *thwaza*[1] as well as the
moon, is maintained and intensified by this rite.

2) Propitiatory rites.

751 Besides these protective drugs, the exorcised wears a necklace
756 made of little pieces of a creeper called *mayambatju*, tied together
with a munganazi string. See the second necklace in the
782 illustration. This is intended *to calm his gods*, and to scatter
168 them when they desire to come upon him with violence. This is
indeed a great danger; the exorcised is liable to nervous attacks of
a dangerous nature, especially during the first few weeks following
the exorcism. Perhaps his song is heard in the distance. Then
suddenly he is seized with madness, and furiously assaults his
neighbours with the small hatchet, or the assagay used in the
dances. People run away; or, on the contrary, they collect and
begin to clap their hands, and make their infuriated companion
dance and sing his own song. This may help to dispel the spirits,
and calm him down. Sometimes, feeling uneasy, foreseeing a
crisis, the poor man himself asks them to sing. But he may also
be led, in his frenzy, to the bush, far away, unconscious, quite
mad, tearing his clothes and his skin with the thorns. This often
happened to Nwashinhwana. Her husband then followed her,
and, when the crisis was over, saw her fall down exhausted and
brought her home; there, having returned to her senses, she
became very sad and wept bitterly. So, in order to avoid being
tormented, the exorcised propitiate their spirits; they worship
them, in truth, and this gives birth to *a new religion* totally different
from ancestrolatry, which has its rites and its duties.

756 As already pointed out, the exorcised has *his own altar* in his
778 hut. It is the forked branch, round which a circle of raised clay
782

[1] [See p. 495 -- Analyst]

idea of defilement through death. *Adultery* is taboo because the 784
husband fears "the bad bloods" by which his wife may have been contaminated through her misconduct. In as far as respect for the *totem* is considered necessary for the maintenance of the health of the clansman, I would also include the taboos of this order in the physiological category ; these are, however, very few in number amongst the Thongas (I. p. 366).

b) Another variety of the same category are *the taboos connected* 561
with growth or change of condition, or *with the various initiations* 784
through which a Native may be called on to pass. The whole life of primitive man consists, as has already been stated, in a succession of stages ; he must proceed from one to the other through ceremonies in connection with which a number of taboos are to be noticed. The individual who ascends from an inferior stage to a superior one, always passes through a marginal period by which he is separated from the former and received into the latter. In this case the seclusion is not due to defilement properly speaking ; it is connected with the idea of *growth*. Hence the taboos of *tying the cotton string*, (I. p. 56), *weaning* (I. p. 58), when passing from infancy to childhood, *puberty*, when entering upon adult life through circumcision, *marriage* (p. 124), when being received into the group of married people ; initiation into the society of the possessed, and into the profession of magician, or diviner, is attended with similar taboos.

All the taboos of this category seem to have been actuated by the idea of danger accompanying ritual impurity, or passage from one condition to another.

2) A second category of taboos, much less numerous, are the 821/784
cosmic taboos. Nature prohibits certain acts ; if they are committed, rain will not fall, and the community will suffer. The prohibition of cutting the roots at the new moon (p. 306), of tilling the fields when a shower falls in the morning (p. 28), of warming oneself at a fire of parasitic plants and at the ntjhopfa (p. 18), and some agricultural taboos belong to this category. Some of the most severe physiological taboos, those connected with twins and with unlawfully buried children, become cosmic, inasmuch as they prevent rain from falling (p. 317).

881 the chief must not be used by him to buy a wife. This would pollute the village (makhuma). It would cause unfortunate births (timbeleko) and ruin the life of the people.

The chameleon procession is performed in the villages of the main headmen of the tribe during the few following days till, at last, the ochre of the initiated is removed and they return home definitely.

SOME REMARKS ON THE CIRCUMCISION SCHOOL

177 881 741 822 881 The square form of the sungi sheds, so different from the circular form adopted by the Bantus for their homes and implements, might be the trace of a Semitic influence. But, on the whole, all these rites are closely connected together and their sequence is quite easy to understand.

The Ngoma is truly a puberty rite, but not a sexual initiation. The suspension of conjugal relations, and the prevalence of licentious language might give the idea that it is in direct relation with the sexual life. But these two phenomena are met with on other occasions, as we shall see, and seem to be characteristic occurrences in most of the marginal periods. Moreover boys of ten and twelve and men of twenty-five or more can occasionally be admitted to the sungi, and this proves that the school has nothing to do with marriage, properly speaking. Neither is the Ngoma a pure act of aggregation to a definite clan. Boys of one clan often go to the sungi of another chief to be initiated ; they do not become his subjects by so doing. Even Thongas sometimes enter into Sutho lodges and Ma-Lemba have a special place in them. It is true that the Ngoma is the business of the chief. Only those who are really chiefs have the right to build a lodge. But though the initiated are exhorted to become good subjects of their chief, the intention of the circumcision school is rather to introduce the little boy *into manhood*, to cleanse him from the *bukhuma* (p. 58) to make him a thoughtful adult member of the community.

(See practical conclusion on Circumcision Rites at the end of Vol. I.)

II. *Other Puberty Rites.*

881 178 The Ngoma has disappeared in most of the Thonga clans, but there are a few other puberty rites which have been preserved all through the tribe.

The dawn is called Mpundju; then comes Hhabela sana, the 805
time when the rays of the sun (sana) are piercing ; *hisa ka sana*, 821
when they are burning ; *nhlekanhi*, the middle of the sky, or *shitakataka*, the maximum point of the heat ; then *ndjenga* (Dj.), or *lihungu* (Ro.), the afternoon, the time when the sun goes down (renga) ; *ku pela* or *ku hlwa*, when it reaches the horizon, and *mpimabayeni* (Dj.) the twilight, literally "the time when you do not easily recognize strangers coming to your village because it grows dark." These are the divisions of the day (siku). Then comes the night (busiku).

Eclipses do not seem to have ever much impressed the 821
imagination of the Thongas. At any rate, they never caused panics (Mboza). When, warned that an eclipse will take place, they see that, indeed, the sun or moon is "turning dark" (dji yentsha ntima). Natives are more struck with wonder at the supernatural knowledge of the White people, than with fear of the phenomenon itself.

I have already dealt with the notion of the *year*, (lembe, dji-ma), 805
which is very vague ; it begins at two different periods : that of 821
tilling and that of harvesting the first fruits (I, p. 396, II, p. 20). Thongas do not make any difference between a solar and a lunar year, their knowledge of months being very imperfect, as we shall shortly see.

Before leaving the source of light, I may add that the *light* 821
itself is called *ku bonekisa* (Ro.), or *ku bonakala* (Dj.), litt. that 822
which makes to appear. Of course Natives have no explanation to give of it. Moonlight is called by another name, viz. *ñweti*, connected with hweti, moon. *Colours* are very imperfectly perceived, at least if we are to base our judgment on the vocabulary. *Ntima* means both black and dark blue. *Libungu* is carmine, red, purple, and also yellow. Yellow is not perceived as a distinct colour. *Psuka* is the tinge of dawn, and of the rising sun. *Nkushe*, which means sea-weed, is applied to the *blue* sky ; *nkwalala* is grey, *lihlaza* (Ro.) is green, the green of grass in the spring, and the [231]
corresponding term in Djonga is *rilambyana*, that which makes dogs howl. Very green grass has this effect on Native dogs.

The *moon* (ñhweti (Dj.), hweti (Ro.) cl. yi-tin), was perhaps 821
personified in former times, as it bears the feminine suffix *eti*,

821 star is directing its course, and they have a formula of incantation
787 to get rid of the misfortune attending this phenomenon. They
789 say : "Thu! Thu! Nkulunkulu ndjuwee, famba psa ku u nga fa u ku bi." — "You great thing, go away alone (without me, leaving me behind) and die and disappear entirely." This is more an imprecation (shiruketelo) than an incantation. The syllable *thu* indicates, and accompanies, the emission of a little saliva. It is different from the sacramental *tsu*, employed to invoke the spirits of the ancestors : it is an insult. It is spitting *at* something, not an act of respect and an offering, like *tsu* (1). This is the Ronga formula ; the one used in Northern clans has the same meaning : "*Rura, rura weshe*" (Move, move alone!).

821 *Comets* greatly impress the imagination of the Thongas ;
787 they are called *shimusana*, or *nyeleti ya musana*, the star of dust, or *nyeleti ya nkila*, the star with a tail, and when they appear they also mean the death of a chief. People say : "See ! A chief has died, but they have not yet published the mourning" (I. p. 414). The star which is said to have appeared the year of the death of Manukosi was probably a comet. (See Report of the S.A.A.A.S. 1905, Vol. III, p. 232.)

772 These few superstitions and observations comprise all the Astronomy of the Thongas. The sidereal world is almost entirely outside the range of their preoccupations.

III. *Cosmographic and Meteorological Phenonomena.*

1) The Wind.

821 The wind is called *moya*, an interesting word which means
822 also spirit (the human breath and the spiritual part of man), and is applied to the acting, living agent, or to the smell, or taste, of some objects. For instance it is said of an alcoholic beverage

861 (1) They spit at a child who is causing an unpleasant smell, saying to him : "Thu! u ya tinyela matjimba." — "Go away to ease yourself." Should you do this to a
578 person older than yourself, he will say to you : "What ! you make *thu* to me (wa ndji tjhuka), you want me to ease myself !"

which has lost its strength that its "moya" has gone. It is also the moya which gives their potency to medical charms. 821 822

Another word for wind is *mheho*. Strong winds are called *shidzedze*. When they break trees and damage the mealies they are attributed to baloyi, wizards, who fight during the night, quarelling over the cobs.

One frequently hears about *timheho ta mune*, the four winds. They are called: *Ñwalungu*, the north wind, (a curious word perhaps connected with Balungu, the White men; see later on); *Nyingitima* (Ro.), or *Djonga* (Dj.), the South wind; *Mupfanyaka*, the one coming from the plain of the black earth, the West Wind; *Mfenya*, the sea breeze, coming from the East. Sailors who are great connoisseurs in this domain distinguish further the South Westerly wind, which they call *Mfenyakulu*, the great Mfenya. In Shiluvane, the West wind, which sometimes blows with great violence, coming down from the mountains of the Transvaal Plateau, is called *Burwa*, place of habitation of the Ba-Rwa (bu, locative prefix indicating a country). (Compare I. p. 18). Two other terms of the bu-ma class, also applied to East and West in all the clans, are: *Busha*, the spot where the sun rises (ku sha), the East, and *Bupeladambu*, the spot where the sun sets, the West. So there is no doubt that the Thongas possess the idea of the four cardinal points. 821 823 132

2) Native Geography.

The geographical notions of the tribe are, on the other hand, very scanty. As a rule, they do not think it possible to know a country, or place, where they have not travelled. Every one must compile his own geography. Hunters, and men engaged in commercial journeys, had some knowledge of the Spelonken (Bvesha), of Pietermaritzburg (Umgungundhlovu), of Kimberley (Dayiman), and now practically every grown-up Thonga has been to Johannesburg (Nkamben). But those who have always remained at home, women especially, show gross ignorance regarding their own country. I met some who were totally ignorant of the fact that the Nkomati River, which leaves the 823 815

789 to be black. The heart was pierced with a puncheon and the blood flowed. He carefully washed the horns with the blood and smeared them later on (horola) with the "psanyi" found in the intestines of the animal. Then he took his *ntsiko*, viz., the two pieces of wood which served as his flint, poured a little of the powder into the notch of the female stick and made fire by the rapid friction described on p. 34. In the meantime Mankhelu prayed as follows: "Here are the drugs, Rivimbi of Tsome (Rivimbi's father)! Give us rain." Then he invoked his own gods, saying: "Go to Rivimbi for me and come along here all of you to make the rain fall." This performance is a "mhamba," a means of calling the gods, especially Rivimbi, "the master of this mhamba." After a while the wood began to burn; leaves of the "nembe-nembe" bush (Cassia petersiana) were placed on it and a black smoke rose and ascended to heaven. Then the clouds appeared and soon the thunderstorm broke. A feather of the ndlati bird of lightning was placed amongst the leaves as a protection against thunderbolts.

Mankhelu was absolutely convinced of the efficacy of this means of rain-making, and there seems to be more sense in this rite than in many others. To use the sea to cause rain to [821] fall, is not after all so absurd! I would not assert that Natives have a clear idea as to the formation of clouds, *mapapa* (Dj.), *matlabi* (Ro.), and know that the water from above comes from the water below, but at any rate they know that the sea is water and rain is [822] also water. To obtain rain by smoke rising from burning sea products is a procedure which is in keeping with one of the most common beliefs of primitive man, that like produces like, a belief which has found its expression in the famous principle of the old physicians: "Similia similibus curantur."

When practising his rain-making art at home, Mankhelu proceeded with less ceremonial pomp. After having consulted his bones, he took four leaves of the tjeke plant (p. 14), smeared them with the magical powder and exposed them to the rays of the burning sun. As soon as these leaves were fully dry, "Heaven began to roar" and the rain came.

[177] The great rain medicine is of Pedi or Venda origin. In addition

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

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in the pieces of clothing which have all been brought and which must be thrown into the grave. "Everything must *hefemula*, breathe its last, just the same as the deceased," said Spoon. "It is taboo." No iron must be put into the grave. Iron, black iron, is *ndjoba*; it is dangerous to the deceased, because it does not decay as quickly as the corpse, the rugs and the mats... It must not be buried. Copper and brass still less! Because they do not even change colour. "These would call Death to the village because they remain shining; they would shine for Death and point out other people of the kraal saying: Kill!" (Viguet) Copper and brass bracelets as well as white snuff boxes are called *nhlale*, not *ndjoba* (1).

It is interesting to notice how the different belongings of the dead are dealt with, and where they are put. There are two categories. Some must disappear with the deceased, some will be kept.

To the first category belong above all his rugs; they are wrapped round his body. He sleeps in them; they must not be tied, however, because it is taboo to tie a corpse; the spirit, *shikwemba*, would become angry at being imprisoned and would cause evil (2). The mats are spread in the first hole, as well as the old jackets and trousers, because there the deceased will come and sit on them, when he goes out of his hut to rest in his square. The earthen pots, especially the old ones, are broken on the grave afterwards "to show anger against death" (Elias). The mug, which is one of them, may be occasionally put on the grave, pierced at the bottom, and offerings of beer will be poured into it later on for the dead. All these perishables are to die with him. They are called his filth (thyaka ra yena). Objects of the first category are sometimes burnt in the Northern clans.

(1) It is sometimes a matter of discussion to know what is *ndjoba* and what is not. I saw the digger tear off the buttons from the trousers of Sokis, when he was cutting them through, and throw them out of the grave. An old woman, thinking perhaps that they were not of such an incorruptible nature as iron, put them in again, and again he threw them out.

(2) It would even seem that no knot must enter a grave. Two bits of skin tied together and forming the clothing of Sokis round the loins were first untied and then thrown into the grave.

805 sky, and say: "We shall meet when the sun has reached that spot." It may be in the morning, at the time "when the rays of the sun begin to pierce" (tlhaba-sana); at noon, nhlekanhin "when the sun is in the middle of its course;" in the afternoon, *hi mfenya*, say the Rongas "when the sea breeze comes up", as is the case almost every day; or "when the sun is going down" (ndjenga) (1). It must be added that the sun is rarely hidden in these lands of light.

As regards the counting of days, they have special names for to-morrow (mundjuku), the day after to-morrow (mundlwana), and the three following days; for the third day, pambari; the fourth, wo dlankambane, viz., the one when the travellers going on a business journey break the plate in order to be obliged to come home (p. 144); for the fifth, wa tiki- tiki. Tolo, is yesterday; tolwen, the day before yesterday; tolwen wa hase, the day preceding the day before yesterday; ñanwaka, this year; hashau, next year; nweshemu, last year; ñwaka lowo, the year before last. One hardly counts days, or years, beyond this point (2).

802 One occasion on which arithmetical skill, or at least the faculty of addition, is specially required, is the counting of the lobolo, when this consists of hoes. Then the tens are carefully piled up separately, the whole family witnessing the operation, but this can hardly be called a mathematical achievement.

So, on the whole, opportunities of using the arithmetical

823 (1) If this use of the sun as a means of fixing the time inevitably leads to a want of precision, it has on the other hand, created a wonderful sense of direction amongst the Natives. They never lose sight of the North, they always know where the sun rises and sets, and this is no doubt the secret of their instinct. When travelling with them, it is not necessary to consult the compass; I would rather put my fate in their hands, knowing that they will not make any mistakes as regards direction (they will certainly make many as regards distance), as they say their *hearts* (timbilu, the same word employed for genius and instinct), viz., their subconscious powers, help them better than our instruments in the midst of the African bush; not to mention their knowledge of native paths. These powers have been cultivated by the constant observation of the sun.

(2) In my Grammaire Ronga, another list of names of the days following to-day is given, containing as many as 7. This seems to be the Ronga version, whilst that here given is the Djonga. However, in neither case is the list in constant and common use. It is known only to certain individuals who look on it more or less as a curiosity. To count days further than the day after to-morrow is quite unusual.

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823 Transvaal at Komati Poort (a place known to all), was the same as
815 the Nkomati which enters the sea near Morakwen, northwards of Lourenço Marques, at a distance of 60 miles from Komati Poort. It must be said, in excuse for them, that in Morakwen the river is called Morako (locative Morakwen) and thus many people have never been aware of the identity of the two!

If you wish to impress Natives greatly with your knowledge, tell them the names of all the countries of Thongaland in their geographical order, as you may have learnt them in conversation, or by studying the map. They will be amazed, and say : "What a wonderful traveller you are, knowing so many spots so far distant from each other!" The teaching of Geography in the schools tends, of course, to alter this state of things.

3) Earthquakes and Rainbows.

823 Earthquakes are not frequent in this part of the world ; so they are rarely spoken of. Thongas have, however, a name for them, *shimbeti*. They do not give any explanation of them and believe that they are perhaps caused by the gods. I remember having once heard a mysterious sound accompanied by a slight tremor of the soil. It was during the Boer war and was, I think, caused by the blowing up of a bridge somewhere on the other side of the range. All the Natives covered their heads with their hands and seemed greatly impressed.

821 The *rainbow* is called *shikwangulatilo*, viz., the one which
778 removes the danger from the sky. Notice the stem *kwangula*, to inaugurate, which we have already met with, when dealing with pottery (p. 117). The sky after rain is compared to a new pot, from which the *nkangu* must be removed. But this is merely an expression. No one can say what the danger is that is thus removed ; it is probable that the tribe had more precise ideas on the subject in former times, and that these have become obsolete. In some of the northern clans (Nkhabelane, Mathiye, Shiburi, Mongwe) the rainbow is called the Bow of Nyandziyo. Nyandziyo is said to be a man of the olden times who made the

to the sacrifice of the black victim and to the mbelele rite of purification of the land, which are characteristic Thonga customs, it seems that another old Thonga way of obtaining rain was the *tjeba fishing* which I described on p. 86. When the whole clan had gone to catch the barbels in the almost dried up ponds, a thunderstorm would come and rain would fall. This was especially the case with certain small lakes such as Malangotiba in Nondwane, and that in Nsime near Morakwen, because battles had taken place on their borders and the enemies' corpses had been thrown into the water. So these lakes had become "great sacred woods" (ntimu). I suppose the spirits of the deceased, which were certainly "gods of bitterness," (see next chapter), were supposed to prevent the rain, and the *tjeba* either appeased them or made them powerless.

To sum up this very complicated subject, I would say rain rites belong to three different categories: 1) The religious rites connected with ancestor worship (black offering, visit to the sacred woods, old songs and sometimes offering of a human victim). 2) Rites of purification of the land, those which are derived from the mysterious relations established between the power of Heaven and abnormal births (mbelele, cleaning of wells by women accompanied by the mother of twins); these present some features of the ordinary passage rites, either because the fall of rain inaugurates a new season, or because drought is a calamity comparable with death and attended with contamination. 3) The magic rites, in which sea charms play the most important part.

Hail, shihangu (Dj.), mabyana, lit. little stones (Ro.), is frequent in Thongaland; according to Mboza, it is not the object of any peculiar superstitions. Amongst the Pedis the day on which it has fallen must be kept as a sabbath. It is taboo to till the fields on that day.

IV. *The Inorganic World.*

Water is called *mati*, a noun of the bu-ma class, the class of liquids, employed only in the plural form. Notice the suffix *ti*, which seems to show that, at a period when mythological

193 conceptions were still current, it was considered as a feminine principle. This supposition is confirmed by the fact that *rivers* (nambu. pl. milambu) also have the feminine termination (I. p. 36, Note). I find the following names of rivers ending in *ti* : Nkomati, Nfoloti (Umbelosi), Ñwebeti, Shalati, Timbati ; the termination *etsi*, *edzi*, may be another form of the same suffix (Ñwanetsi, Ntsatsi, Shingwedzi, Madzi, etc.). A very curious fact, which shows the same conception, is that the river which crosses the territory of the Tembe clan is called Mi-Tembe. I first thought this to be a plural form of the mu-mi class ; but it is more natural to explain this *mi* as the feminine prefix (1) which means daughter of, as Migogwe, etc. (I. p. 352).

823 *Crossing rivers* is subject to a curious rule. It is taboo to bathe
784 in the stream before crossing it ; taboo also for the traveller to
824 cook his food on the hither side of the river ; he must first cross,
789 and then take his meal. This rule is still universally observed by
133 waggon trekkers in South Africa. In this case there may be a reason for the taboo : South African rivers are apt to be swollen in a moment by sudden rain, and the crossing made impossible for days : the traveller therefore makes haste ; he will have plenty of time to stop on the other side! When the river is dangerous, a Thonga will first chew (phora) a little of his *ndjao*, the root of a juncus, which is supposed to increase courage and to ensure victory over hostile influences. (See Part VI.)

823 Some *Lakes* and *Rivers* are believed to be inhabited by spirits,
769 but not in the ordinary fetichistic way, in which a special spiritual
776 being is incorporated with the natural object ; these spirits are
782 *psikwembo*, spirits of the deceased ancestors of the owners of the land, and are propitiated by their descendants. Should another clan have invaded the territory where these lakes are, and crocodiles threaten the fishermen, (p. 88) they will call some one belonging to the clan of the old possessors of the country and ask him to make an offering to appease *his* gods. This is the ordinary course, and the more closely we search the more completely these lake and

(1) A number of river names have the prefix *li* or *ri*, especially those which are of Sutho origin : Lebvubye. Ritabi (Letaba) Ritshindjele (Letsitele), Rimbelule (Lepelule, Olifant). Others begin with *ñwa*, *ma*, and may be ancient names of men.

river spirits become identified with ancestor-gods. In my investigations I found one case, however, where a special spirit, a kind of Nature spirit seemed to be invoked. This was on the sea shore, in the northern part of Nondwane, at a place called Mahilane, where there are two great rocks on the beach. When the great waves dash against them, with a fearful roar, people go and sacrifice (hahla); they pray thus: "Tsu! Oh sea! Let vessels be wrecked, and steamers also, and let their riches come to us and help us." In former times, a young girl was sometimes exposed there as a prey, or an offering to the power of Mahilane. Now this is exactly what is done in the sacred woods for the ancestor gods and, in fact, Mboza asserts that: "When abandoning the girl, the officiant says: You, Psikwembo, ancestor-gods, drive on the sea that it may wreck vessels." 823 769 776 782

When urged to speak with more precision, my informant answered: "Mahilane and the sea are one and the same thing (ntshumu munwe). When the sea is roaring people exclaim: 'Mahilane roars'! Near the island of Shefin, where two branches of the Nkomati river meet in the estuary, people say: 'Makaneta is roaring'. Here it is Makaneta and no longer Mahilane." 823 776 769

This information is extremely interesting. As regards Makaneta, we know him perfectly well; he is the ancestor of Mboza and descendant of Mazwaya (I. p. 360). This ancestor-god begins to be confused with a natural phenomenon taking place in the country where he lived. The religious fear of the spirit of the deceased mingles with the awe inspired by the roaring of the sea to such an extent that both notions coincide in the imagination of the savage. We here note the exact point where *an ancestral spirit evolves into a Nature spirit*, and this instance proves, in the clearest possible manner, that the conception of the ancestor spirit preceded that of the Nature spirit. Here, at any rate, Ancestrolatry is anterior to both Fetichism and Naturism. These later forms of the belief can be easily accounted for by the development of Ancestrolatry: the reverse process would be much more difficult to explain.

The *sea*, with its immensity and its wonderful power, deeply impresses the Thongas dwelling near it. They do not however tell many stories about it, nor did I hear of any explanation 823

823 regarding its confines and the shore on the other side. Some
791 magicians claim to have gone and stayed for some time down in the depths : to have "crossed the sea" is for them a kind of diploma, which gives them the right of exercising their art. (See Chapter III.)

828 The *tide* (byaela) is considered to be caused by a whale (nkomu) which alternately swallows and vomits the sea-water : this is the common idea. Some Natives, however, connect it with the moon, having noticed that the tide is higher at full moon and at the wane.

The sea must be feared : it is jealous. "When some one is taken away by the great wave, do not shout! Do not exclaim : 'He is lost!', else you will never see him again. On the contrary, if you say : 'All right, let him go', then the returning wave will bring him back." These are the assertions of Spoon. And old Makhani expressed his approval by nodding his head!

372 "It is the same with *fire*," Spoon also remarked. There was
784 a terrible bush fire in Rikatla on the 18th of September 1908. As always happens at the end of winter, the bush was absolutely dry. A leper woman, tilling her fields, wished to cook a little manioc. The fire leapt to the weeds which she had gathered and from these to the bush. Two huts were burnt. "It is their own fault," said Spoon, "when the bush fire comes you must put it out quietly. If you make any noise, if you shout, it comes straight at you. That is what happened. In the first village people fought calmly and succeeded in saving their huts. At Jeck's village, they cried out. The fire leapt on to a hut, the small hut of the son. The mother cried : 'Yo! yo! Where shall I put my child?' She went on crying out until the hut was burnt to the ground. So the fire leapt on to the big hut and burnt it. She has only herself to blame!" (1)

823 The origin of *stones* is absolutely unknown. Pikinini, a Nkuna boy, who was endowed with an extraordinary imagination, once drew my attention to the stratification of a large dolomite boulder on which different concentric layers were visible, and said to me :

[521] (1) Silence is always recommended to prevent misfortune : in the case of war (I, p. 470) women at home must keep silent ; likewise when the husband is hunting hippopotami (p. 69), when a child is seized with convulsions owing to the power of *tilo* (heaven). See also my remarks on the kunga rite. (I, p. 124).

"You see! Stones also grow!" Another Native geologist, who 823
had heard the European story of creation, coming from the Coast, a country of sand and sand only, and visiting the Drakensberg Mountains near Shiluvane, was amazed by the enormous cliffs of the Mamotswiri and gave vent to the following reflection: "No wonder we have no stones in our sandy land. When God created the earth, he used them all to build these mountains!"

Fossils are rare in Thongaland, where sand covers almost the 136
whole country. There is however in the southern part of the 823
Maputju region an outcrop of cretaceous rock which belongs to the 777
Gault and which contains ammonites, Nautillus etc. Natives call them *nsongo stones* and are very much afraid of them. They say that "these stones with ribs" can walk. They bring bad luck (singita). Should a child pick up one of these fossils and bring it into the village, he will fall ill; he must therefore undergo a special treatment.

Crystal greatly pleases the Natives. It is rare in South Africa. 135
When magicians can secure a white or a black crystal they generally 301
wear it round their necks together with the claws, or teeth, of wild animals, or with their little skin bags which they use as amulets. For this reason I once had the good fortune to be able to exchange a crystal I had brought from Switzerland for one of these charms!

The *earth* (misaba) is also a great and important thing. First 823
because it is identified with the people dwelling on it, with the clan. 695
Tiko, the land, means both the soil and the people. Further than 787
this, the earth is the chief (I. p. 382); hence many laws: e. g. the tusk of the elephant which fell on the earth when the beast was killed, belongs to the chief, etc. (p. 57). The most solemn oath is that which is taken with earth (ku funga u hahla hi misaba). Should a man be accused of stealing or of being a wizard, if he puts a little earth in his mouth, says *tsu*, and declares: "I do not know anything about it," those who care for his safety will look for a medicine-man to treat him: it is a *mondjo* (a magical method of divination. See Chapter III). The same thing is done when an oath has been taken by sucking a piece of iron.

A curious superstition regarding the earth is this: after moving 823
from one country to another, you should for some days mix with

your food a little of the earth of the country which you have left ; 823
this will provide the transition between the old and the new domicile (See I. p. 49).

Metals known to the tribe before the coming of the Whites 135
were few. (See page 137). *Nhumbu* or *nsimbi*, iron, *nsuku*, copper, and *ntchopfa*, a name applied to all white metals (tin, silver, etc.) are the only Native names for metals. There is no word for gold.

V. *The Vegetable World. Thonga Botany.*

While Bantus possess a very limited knowledge of Astronomy, 815
Geography, Mineralogy, etc., while their ideas in these domains are in no way deserving of the name of Science, they are much more advanced as regards Plants. Here it is quite allowable to speak of a Science, a rudimentary Science, no doubt, but a true, precise knowledge which has been transmitted from past ages and which denotes a real power of observation.

The Delagoa flora is not very rich. I have succeeded in 137
collecting between four and five hundred different kinds in a 124
herbarium which I sent many years ago for classification to the 815
Herbier Boissier in Geneva. In February 1893, before forwarding the second lot of exsiccata, I gathered together some Natives of Rikatla in the hut which I had pompously styled a Museum and, having promised them 1 s. each if they consented to remain till the end of the examination, I submitted the dried plants to them, asking them their names, their uses, etc. The result of the inquiry was marvellous. My areopagus did not seem to be a very choice one : an old woman, as dry as my exsiccata and smoking her pipe, another with ochre-smeared hair, a young one, with a baby on her shoulder, an elderly one-eyed man named Hamunde, my milkman. After them came the young chief Muzila, walking 815
slowly, swinging the tails of his belt. This chief, notwithstanding 756
his social rank, showed gross ignorance of botany ; but some of the 824
others knew the name of almost every plant ; had I had a *ñanga*, a medicine-man, amongst them, I am sure I should have obtained

hlulawumbe grows, (Hlulawumbe means to overcome others) (1). 000

Offerings of the Medicine-men. The Native physicians are, as 782
has already been pointed out, very pious. Their art having been 756
handed down to them by their forefathers, as a family secret, they 484
always implore the blessing of their ancestors on their various treatments. This is done by true offerings, performed with the *tsu* and a liturgical prayer. In Vol. I. p. 55, the religious ceremony which accompanies the monthly vapour bath administered to infants was described ; a religious rite takes place also in the hondola of the weaning (I. p. 59). These are typical cases. Another offering of the same nature is made on behalf of the man who is about to *start out on a journey*, for instance to Johannesburg. The doctor, having prepared the protective drugs in a pot, brings them to the entrance of the traveller's hut, and calls his "patient,"; then, taking a little of the decoction in his mouth, he spits it at him with the sacramental *tsu*, and prays in the following words :

Akhwari! Abusayi! Ndji hlaya psolepso! Khongelwa a nga dlawi. Ku dlawa phalaburena! Khombo a dji suke, dji ya ka Shiburi, dji ya ka Nkhabelane! A a fambe psinene, a kandjetela balala, mitwa mi yetlele, ku yetlela ni tindjau. A a ye nwa mati ya kone, ma mu tjhabisa hi djo tluka ledji.

Gently! Smoothly! I say so. Death does not come to him for whom prayer is made ; death only comes to him who trusts in his own strength! Let misfortune depart, let it go to Shiburi, and Nkhabelane (2). Let him travel safely ; let him trample on his enemies ; let thorns sleep, let lions sleep ; let him drink water wherever he goes, and let that water make him happy, by the strength of this leaf (viz., of my medicinal herbs).

(1) I may mention here another religious ceremony which is also called a mhamba, 135
though I am not sure that a regular prayer is offered. It is the *Offering of a Stone.* 823
Stones are almost totally lacking in Thongaland. But on the Swazi border, in the 782
Lebombo hills, there are porphyreous rocks, and when a Native passes a certain spot, 484
on the Estatuen road, he picks up a stone, spits on it, touches both his knees with it and throws it on a heap made of the stones thrown by those who passed before him. This heap of stones is called *shittlane.* This rite is said to be performed in order to call a blessing on the journey ; thus the traveller will find a favourable reception in the villages and be given plenty of food. This custom is wide-spread in many other tribes.

(2) The extremity of the land (Comp. I, p. 55).

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

only employed when three or four children have died in previous years and the mother is in the state of destitution called *kuxumba*. (Chap. II.)

The ntehe is arranged in such a way that the legs of the animal are used as straps, the forelegs are tied around the neck, the hindlegs around the waist and the child is in that way held well against his mother's shoulders. He can either show his head outside his ntehe or be entirely covered by it. This way of carrying babies is very convenient : mother and child get so accustomed to it that a baby, when you lift it, stretches out its legs at once at right angles with its body in order to sit on its mother's back ; and the mother can easily do all her work, even till her fields with the baby on her back in its ntehe !

2) The diet during the nursing period.

The child is nursed by the mother. He is allowed to take the breast at any time. There is nothing like a diet regulation amongst Natives and they would deem it cruelty to refuse the breast to a crying child.

There are some customs relating to the *milk*. When a mother has to leave her child for a short time, she squeezes a few drops of her milk on his neck in order to prevent him feeling thirsty. When she has been absent for more than one day (this can only happen when the child is able to eat some solid food) and returns home, before nursing the child again she heats a bit of broken pot in the fire and squeezes into it a little milk from each breast. The liquid evaporates. The reason of the custom is this : the mother's milk has grown cold ; it must be warmed again ; otherwise the child will be constipated. This is a taboo (1). When a baby bites the teat, it is regarded as naughtiness and the mother scratches its forehead as a punishment.

Mothers not having enough milk use a kind of shrub called

(1) Compare with the Zulu milk charms described by D. Kidd, *Savage Childhood*, page 38.

853 834 *neta* as a medecine. The shrub, which is an Euphorbiacea, contains milky sap. It is a treatment based on the principle : Similia similibus curantur.

751 The Thongas believe that milk alone would never suffice to
278 make a child grow : *Ñwana a ku la hi miri, the child grows by*
753 *medicine*, such is the adage which is universally met with. When
854 you see a woman carrying a child on her back, you will notice hanging to the *ntehe* the reed (lihlanga) containing the black powder which protects against the dangers of the bush, and a little calabash half filled with water. This water is not pure water, it is the medicine called *milombyana*. This word is the plural and diminutive form of *nombo*, which means baby's ailment. There is a great *nombo*, convulsions, also called *tilo*, heaven, because this complaint is brought into a mysterious connection with the influence of Heaven (See Part VI). There is a small *nombo* ; this is the infantile diarrhea which so often troubles little children ; but both diseases are supposed to be caused by the *nyoka*, the intestinal parasite, the worm or snake (nyoka means both) which is in every child and must always be combated because, if unchecked, it will pass from the bowels to the stomach ; it will come and beat the fontanella (1) and will finally penetrate the chest. Then the little one will turn up his eyes, be seized by
[278] convulsions and die. Happily there are some drugs which have a
751 wonderful effect on this dangerous guest ! One of my neighbours,
757 who was a convert in Rikatla, gave me their names. The first is a
854 very common Protacea (?) with large husks called the Dlanyoka, "the one which kills worms." Mixed with the roots of a Leguminacea called *Ñwamahlanga* and with two other plants found near the sea, it forces the worm to keep quiet. These drugs are boiled and the decoction is carefully poured into a special little pot called *hlembetwana ya milombyana* which will be kept in the hut. Every morning the mother will warm the pot a little, pour some of its contents into a shell of sala and give the child a

757 (1) Tjako-tjako, the fontanella, plays a great part in the diagnosis of children's
826 doctors and they often cover it with black wax. When the child hiccoughs, his mother or somebody else will blow on the fontanella to prevent vomiting. This will "make his heart stand" (yimisa mbilu).

851 a grown up child (1). The expression *fuya ñwana* confirms our explanation. This custom is not a protective rite : the physician has nothing to do with it ; it is really an act by which the new-born child becomes a regular member of the community. The strict prohibition of renewed conception before this rite has been accomplished is evidently dictated by the feeling that another child must not appear before this one has been duly received into the family.

6) The weaning.

862 A whole year, even more, will elapse after the *boha puri* before
856 the little one can be weaned. He will learn to speak and to walk, and it is only when his intelligence is sufficiently developed to allow him to run small errands that the date of the weaning will be fixed. When his parents can send him to the next hut to ask for snuff and see him coming back holding the tobacco, they say : "Now the time has come !"

The rite of weaning is accomplished in the following manner in Nondwane. (Mboza).

862 First of all, the father looks for a young *ntjopfa* tree which
824 has only one root. The ntjopfa is an anonacea bush, which colonists sometimes call the wild custard. (Its fruit is very much like custard fruit and it is said that the true cultivated custard can be grafted on it). The root of this tree is said to have the property of making people forget. The mother cooks a pot of Kafir corn in which she has put the medicine. This
862 will help the child to forget the breast. But the great act is the
782 *hondlola* which takes place under the direction of the physician.
755 The mother pounds some mealies, pours water on them and adds some leaven ; in this way she makes a little light beer (buputju). She keeps a little of the bran of the pounded mealies. The doctor comes, kills a chicken and sprinkles this bran with the blood and *hahla*, viz. offers a regular sacrifice. He prays to the spirits of his own family and asks those of the child's family to

(1) This word *khungi* is also employed to designate boys who have not yet gone through the circumcision school. *Bukhuna* is the despicable state of uncircumcision. The state of a child before the ceremony of *boha puri* is another kind of bukhuna.

881 is the old Thonga custom, and has been preserved by the women
304 in its original form, at least amongst the Ba-Ronga ; they frequently
177 pass a ring through the small opening thus produced. The second was practised by the Zulu-Ngonis, and was adopted by the Thonga men in order to resemble their conquerors. The result is an ugly hole. This is not a law imposed by the chief ; it is however universally observed. When a lad does not pierce his ears, his comrades mock him, saying. " U toya ! " " You are a coward! We shall put a spoonful of porridge in this big ear of yours! " (Viz. It will hold food because it is not pierced!)

881 The operation is performed in the winter by a man who
304 knows how to do it. Before it is begun, the boy bites the *ndjao*,
824 the root of a kind of juncus which is considered the best means
833 of strengthening the virile force. The doctor introduces into the hole a small piece of reed ; he takes it out every day to wash the wound and puts it in again to keep the hole open. As long as the ear is not healed, the lad must eat his food without salt : he must not go about in the kraals and partake of the porridge of other people, because this food might have been prepared by women having intercourse with their husbands (ba ku khila) and this would make him very ill (1). He must also keep away from girls. When he is healed, he takes away the piece of hard reed and replaces it by a pretty white object.

304 Some Thongas tatoo themselves, or used to do so formerly,
178 but this custom is disappearing and is now preserved only by women. We shall describe it in the chapter on the evolution of the woman, as well as the *hleta* custom, the pointing of the teeth.

It is probable that in former times the taboo character of these various ceremonies was more marked that now. At present they are merely a *shihila sha tiko*, a custom of the country.

(1) This alimentary taboo, as well as the interdiction of sexual relations, were of intercourse with married people, clearly shows that the piercing of the ears is a ritual passage. (p. 74).

765 inner circle and will undergo a very rigorous purification ; the grave
783 diggers come next ; then the inhabitants of the bereaved village, the
761 relations residing in other villages, even the relatives of the wives of the
834 deceased. All these being unclean are placed beyond the pale of
829 society : "Muti wu tjumile," "the village is dark," is the technical expression. This marginal period lasts longer for those who are most affected ; one year and more for the widows, one month for the village, five or six days only for the mourners from outside. But there are many taboos in connexion with this period. Sexual relations are severely prohibited amongst married people, but the *gangisa* is not so strongly objected to, at any rate in some districts. We shall also meet with the aggregation rites by which re-entry into the ordinary mode of life is secured. The funeral rites may last for one year and are very complex. There are three great moments in the sequence of these rites : 1) *The Great Mourning* which lasts a few days, just after the burial, generally only five days. Here the purification is essentially medical and aims at cleansing the persons and the objects which were directly in contact with the deceased. 2) *The sexual rites* which tend to purify the collective life of the village by the removal of its defilement. 3) *The family rites*, consisting in gatherings of all the relatives, and accompanied by religious ceremonies. These seem to aim at restoring the life of the family, viz. of the social group, which has been diminished by the death of one of its members.

768 This general sequence is found in all the clans. But the rites themselves differ greatly ; I shall try to depict these differences clearly. My information is more complete as regards the Ronga clans, but I owe to Viguet some entirely new and very interesting material regarding the Hlabi rites.

IV. *The Great Mourning of the first five days.*

1) The Great Mourning amongst the Ba-Ronga.

764 Just after the burial, all the inhabitants of the village go to
783 the lake or the river to bathe. The grave-diggers nibble a
[824] *ndjao*, the root of a juncus which has magical power. Special rites will then be performed for the widows. We shall describe

765 the headman of a large village in the Shifimbatlelo district (18 miles North of Lourenço Marques). His son Mugwanu had been chosen to take his place, but Manyibane had a younger brother, called Fenis, who had taken care of the village in the meantime. All the relatives were assembled. Groups were formed under all the trees. At 4. 30 p. m. the men began to gather near the old black-roofed hut ; one of them, an elderly man, took between [324] his teeth a piece of a root of a special juncus, called *sungi*, bit off a little of it and, after having chewed this substance, rubbed both his legs with it (evidently to find courage and strength for the work he was undertaking) and penetrated into the old hut. He came back bringing with him a dozen beautiful white eggs!.. The hen did not know that the habitation of the deceased was a tabooed grave, and had laid her eggs in this convenient refuge! Then all the men approached and began to pull out the poles of the wall, digging on both sides of each pole ; some of them lifted the roof so as to make room enough for the poles to be pulled out. This work was accomplished with great care ; the earth was carefully placed in a pot and slowly poured out some distance away ; the poles were gently laid down in front of the entrance, on the top of the door, which had been previously placed there, thus forming a regular heap. These precautions are taken out of respect for the deceased. It would be an insult to him to do otherwise, and a relation guilty of such an offence "would at once be seized by colic, the disease of the wolves (masule)." Some boys, clad in European dress, threw the poles violently on the ground. Spoon laughed : "They know the *shilungo*, the ways of the White men," he said. "They have lost their respect!"

765 When all the poles were removed and there remained only
342 the reeds of the wall, the men jumped on the roof. The roof is a big conical basket made of sticks tied together and covered with grass. It at once sank down under their weight. But they wished to flatten the cone, to crush it down to the level of the
765 soil. Therefore some of the men pulled the sticks out of the roof to lessen the resistance ; some kicked it in order to break the sticks. They could not succeed ; the cone was still there more or

Other

animals are taboo for girls : the *hare* because it is too cunning ; and the antelope *nhlengane*. This antelope raises the foot when it hears a noise ; hence the idea that its leg is hollow and that it perceives the sound through it. The child would do the same, if its mother were to eat the meat of the nhlengane. It would be unable to hear with its ears, only with its hands!

262 823 784 562

The *legs* of fowls (tibias) are also taboo for all women, because the hen scatters the sand... So are the *hoofs of oxen*, and *pigs' feet*. A woman eating them would walk too much... She would go everywhere to look for husbands!

784 562 824 757

It is taboo for a girl to *walk amongst pumpkin plants* (maranga), to pluck the fruits. She is only allowed to pluck those which can be reached from outside. Were she to transgress this law, she would emit a bad odour, and no boy would court her. Her mother, having no fear of being despised, can walk amongst the pumpkins. A second taboo relative to pumpkins is this : unmarried women must cut a "pumpkin nose" (nhompfu) viz. the end of the stem, and fix it at their waist when plucking the pumpkins, lest they get abcesses in certain regions of their body.

784 262 562 843

It is taboo for them to eat cooked *oxen blood* (bubendje). The following taboos apply also to *married women*. They are not allowed to eat what is called *nkopfu*, viz. some parts of the bowels which are cooked together with the stomach of the ox. "It would spoil the child inside." The *testicles*, which are generally given to the uterine nephew when the meat is distributed according to the laws, and the *underlip* of any animal are also forbidden to them. So is also the *tongue*... because it is reserved for old people as a mark of respect! The *rectum* (gobana) is taboo for women and children. Children might make unseemly noises from the rectum! Women must abstain from *porcupine* and *monkeys' flesh* ; all their offspring would resemble these animals. Such cases have happened, it is said! Women must not eat *eggs* ; they would run a double danger : their child might be born bald and remain so ; or they might be like a hen, which runs in all directions when laying an egg. They would have no peace in child bearing! (See also page 101.)

Nubile girls, during their "tiwheti," must not *approach the*

361 air circulate, is the goats' kraal (19). It may be placed somewhere
231 else, behind the huts, for instance ; or sometimes goats are tethered
337 every night by the leg to sticks round the hubo. The pigs are
343 never kept on the hubo, but always behind the hut : they are newcomers in the Thonga village and have hardly yet won their "droit de cité." Let us salute, as we pass by, the tree (25) which
361 is, as we shall see, the mystical stem of the village. We may perhaps
824 see, hanging upon it, a piece of clothing offered to the gods, or at its
782 base a broken pot which is the *gandjelo*, the altar of the village.
351 The gandjelo is often placed, by preference, among the poles of the main entrance on the right. The village tree, which has a ritual significance, is not to be confounded with the trees of the hubo (26), which are but *mindjuti*, shade-trees, under which the inhabitants are fond of sitting.

361 So we reach the main hut which faces the gate. This is the
595 dwelling of the headman. In hut 3 lives his second wife, in 4, his third and in 5 his fourth. 2 is called *shilubelo*. Great personages, men owning a large kraal, like to build such a hut, which is smaller than the ordinary ones and where no woman sleeps. It is the headman's own hut, where people *luba*, viz., pay their homage to him; a kind of office of the master of the village! He may sleep in it and summon his wives to come to him there. But he generally prefers to sleep in his wives' huts, one month in each, according to the polygamic custom.

361 Behind 4 and 10 is a *mhala*, a shed for the implements. It is
343 built, like the goats' kraal, without plaster walls, and is smaller
351 than a hut. There may be three or four of these in the village.
596 The headman and his wives occupy the back of the village. At the sides live his younger brothers, one, who has two wives, in 7 and 8, two others, those who have but one wife each, in 9 and in 10 respectively. In 11 lives a married son; in 12 it may be a nephew, son of the headman's sister, or a son-in-law; (see page 252). 13 might be the hut of a stranger (mulubeti), who has
361 asked permission to stay with the headman of the village, as he
574 wished to be under his protection. The case is not frequent, but
783 may occur, and in order to be received into the mystic unity of the community, this man will have to "hlamba ndjaka" (See page 153).

together with all the inhabitants of the kraal.

621 595 782 10) Having closed the village in this way, she *performs a sacrifice*. She sips a mouthful of water from a tumbler, spitting out a portion of it (phahla) towards the people ; then she washes her hands, and throws a little of the water towards them in order *to give them* the village. This act is accompanied by the following words : "Be not tied by the village! Bring forth children ; live and be happy and get everything. You gods, see! I have no bitterness in my heart. It is pure. I was angry because my husband abandoned me, he said I was not his wife ; he loved his younger wives. Now, this is finished in my heart. We shall have friendly relations together..." The prayer being concluded, the headman goes to the main entrance, pushes the thorny branch aside, and opens the village.

621 574 11) The last act is the *khangula*, the *inauguration ceremony*. Beer is prepared, neighbours are invited and they all drink together, the neighbours coming *to see the new village* (ku bona muti).

As regards the old one, when the moving has been accomplished through the back door widened for the purpose, one of the inhabitants closes the main entrance with a branch. Hence comes the expression which is applied to a village all of whose inmates have died, and which has, on that account, disappeared : "Those people have all died and there was not even one left to close the gate."

II. *In the Ba-Ronga Clans.*

621 787 The sequence of rites for the removal of a village is very much the same as in the Northern clans.

824 765 1) The headman examines some spots and consults the bones : "Must I built at such and such a tree ?"

2) When the tree has been designated, he goes to it and places at its foot his furniture (nyundju) and his instrument of worship, his altar, (a pot, a jar, see Part VI). The altar may be placed at the main entrance later on, if the bones so order it. As already mentioned, there will be a mystic relation between him and that tree. He must never cut it down. If any of the branches should be

621 824 765 troublesome and he should wish to remove them, he must ask some one else to do it. On the day of his death, or rather when his hut is crushed down, a branch of that tree will be put on the place where the threshhold was, and another used to close the main entrance of the village, a new entrance being then made through the fence and used as the gate during the rest of the mourning period.

621 833 3) He has sexual relations on the new spot on the first night with his principal wife ; in this way he will *fuya muri*, viz. "possess this tree," and also *fuya muti*, "possess the village." The Ronga *fuya* corresponds here also to the *boha* of the Northern clans (Compare boha puri and fuya ñwana, page 57). If someone precedes him in sexual intercourse, he is guilty ; he has "preceded the village" (rangela muti). By this act the headman has definitely left the old village. The others can go back to it to fetch what remains ; for him it is taboo.

621 831 834 342 4) The same day, all the inhabitants come and move all the roofs, if it is possible to do this in one day. One hut is rapidly built to afford shelter to the inhabitants, in case of rain. The first roof to be transported is that of the hut of the principal wife. This is also done to the accompaniment of obscene songs. These songs are not allowed when only one hut is transported, which may happen when some one goes to live in another village.

It is definitely a custom which goes with the moving of a whole village.

5) The following day two huts are erected, one for the men, the other for the women, because they must not sleep together. "They are still in the bush ; it is buhlapfa ; the village is not yet firm." Those who break this law cause injury to the headman. The bones will soon reveal that "he has been preceded as regards the village ; (a rangeliwile muti)." All the huts are smeared twice ; the women begin to sleep in them, but not the men. The fence and the main entrance must first be prepared.

621 789 6) The *main entrance* (mharana). The men pull up the grass all the way from the back hut to the place where the main entrance must be, so as to make a road all through the village. All the dried plants weeded out during this operation are carefully

621 gathered in a heap. The headman, on the advice of the medicine
789 man, cuts from certain very vigorous trees such as the nkanye
824 and the ntjondjo, two branches which can live when transplanted. He digs holes on both sides of the entrance and puts the branches into them. Across the gateway, he buries a third branch of the ntjopfa tree, "which causes oblivion" (p. 58): this will be smeared with special drugs in order to increase its efficacy ; it is intended to prevent the baloyi, witches and people speaking bad words. (lit "with bad lips"), from thinking about the village and spoiling it.

621 7) On the evening of that day, the headman and his principal
833 wife have intercourse in their hut and, at dawn, while it is still
789 dark, they go and wash their hands at the main entrance. Mboza does not say that all the other couples must do the same, or trample on the spot. In Nondwane this is sufficient and the rite does not apply to the other couples. But at Manyisa, midway between Lourenço Marques and Khosen, where the Djonga customs are sometimes met with, all the couples must have relations, one after the other, according to order of precedence. It is deemed so important to keep the due order in this "giving to each other the right of resuming sexual life" that, should an elder brother have been absent when the village moved, on his return he must undergo a special treatment in a neighbouring village, during a few days, to avoid any bad consequences resulting from having been unlawfully "preceded" (rangeliwa).

621 8) After the night during which this sexual rite has taken
789 place, at daybreak, all the dried grass is piled in front of the main hut and burnt ritually. The headman throws into the
782 fire a special medicinal pill in order to *give the village over* to his
756 people (nyiketa muti). They all warm their bodies at the blaze, and go and set fire to all the other heaps of dried grass which they made when clearing the soil.

9) The medicine man comes on that same day, and sprinkles the fence with his drugs, in order to protect the village against bush fires, wizards and disease. He walks all round the fence saying : "Happy village! May misfortune not enter here! These are my drugs!" — He starts from one of the poles of the main

789 of most people! This honey comes from below. It is a hidden,
823 a mysterious thing. A little of it is added to the drug and the
787 mixture is poured into a double horn, viz., two horns whose large ends are firmly fixed to each other, the point where they meet being carefully covered with dung, which acts as glue. A hole has been made in the upper horn and the drug is introduced through this. It is a great means of divination. When war is imminent, the nyokwekulu begins to ferment, and exudes through the hole : "It knows all about war." So the country can prepare for it. No wonder that this powerful medicine is preserved with superstitious awe and the greatest care.

643 A place of honour is reserved for the magical horn in the
595 hut of the first wife of the chief. In the middle of the hearth
372 a perpetual fire burns ; it must never be allowed to go out ; it
824 is taboo. The wood used for it must be that of a tree found on the sea shore, and called ntjobori. The Makaneta sub-clan must furnish it regularly. It is taboo to take embers from this fireplace, which is called the royal fire, the medicinal fire (ndjilo wa buhosi, wa muri). Should the principal wife let the fire go out, then Godlela must be called on to light it again, rubbing together two sticks of a shrub called ntjopfa. The fire produced by burning this shrub is considered dangerous. It is taboo to cut its branches or to use them for the purpose of warming oneself ; the genitalia are said to swell when this law is transgressed (See Part IV). But Godlela does not fear ; has he not his drugs to protect himself ? He can and must use ntjopfa to re-light the nyokwekulu fire, and he will be given a good reward for his work! The ntjobori, in burning, produces an abundant smoke which leaves a deposit on the horn, on the forked branch and on all the calabashes containing the provision of powder.

643 The queen Mimpanyanhoba who was in charge of the
372 nyokwekulu had no sexual relations with the chief on that account.
595 I do not know if absolute continence is always enforced on the
784 keeper of the sacred fire, as was the case for the Roman Vestal Virgins. But I have been told by Mboza that this woman prevented her co-wives from coming near her hut ; it was taboo.

262 even those who are settled in the clan. They have their own
643 medicine and luma for themselves, though they must not do it
609 before the chief of the country.
796

III. *The luma of bukanye and the great national feast.*

137 The most characteristic of all these ceremonies connected with
273 the first fruits is the luma of bukanyi. Tobane has given me a
796 circumstantial description of this feast and it deserves to be
824 reproduced in all its details, as being a typical manifestation of Bantu national life.

The *nkanye* (1) is a large tree, one of the finest in the country. Its botanical name is Sclerocarya caffra (Sond); it is generally known amongst the English of Natal as the Kafir plum.

It bears fruit of the size of a greengage, which when ripe is a beautiful golden yellow and has a strong flavour of turpentine and a penetrating odour. It is a dioecian tree, the male bearing bunches of flowers while the female has single flowers. The Natives are quite aware of this; they cut down the male plants but take care to keep a few in each district to fecundate the female. The fruit — the kanye — begins to ripen in the month of January and falls to the ground. The odour is perceptible everywhere, and it is then that the principal men of the country approach the chief and say to him: "The time has come to luma."

In the luma of the bukanye it is easy to discover four consecutive ceremonies:

a) The luma of the gods and of the chief.

262 The first ripe makanye are gathered and pressed at the capital,
782 and the sour liquor thus obtained is poured out on the tomb of the deceased chiefs in the sacred wood; they are invoked to
273 bless this new year and the feast which is about to be celebrated.
796

(1) Nkanye, plural miakanye, is the tree in question. Kanye, plural makanye, is the fruit of this tree; bukanye is the drink made from this fruit. In the same way the wild apricot tree is called mphimbi, plural mimphimbi. The fruit himbi, plural mahimbi; the drink made from the fruit, buhimbi.

682 procedure. They are in advance of many tribes. The same
627 cannot be asserted when dealing with witchcraft!

Witchcraft (Buloyi). To the Thonga mind this is one of the
754 greatest crimes which a man can commit. It is equivalent to
683 assassination, even worse than murder, as a dim idea of anthro-
787 pophagy is added to the simple charge of killing. A wizard
694 kills human beings to eat their flesh. We shall study the conceptions of *buloyi* later on (Part VI) from a psychological point of view. Here it is mentioned only in as far as it gives rise to judicial cases. This particular crime being committed in great secrecy during the night, and in most instances even unconsciously, the Bantu tribunal uses two or three magical methods for discovering it. These *methods of inquiry*, which civilised nations have long ago abandoned, are :

1) *Divination by casting lots*. The objects used in our tribe for this purpose are the magic bones, the astragalus of goats, antelopes, etc, and shells, which I intend to study in a special chapter. When they have designated (ku ba, to beat) the wizard or witch (noyi) who has killed such and such a person, they are consulted a second time. If they confirm their verdict, the relatives of the deceased go to the chief and lodge their complaint. The accusation becomes official and is now in the hands of the tribunal.

2) The chief sends the plaintiff and accused to the magician who proceeds to the *divination by questioning* them and working himself up into an ecstatic condition (vumisa).

683 3) Should the accused be again designated and should he
695 deny his crime, he may request to be submitted to the *ordeal*,
824 viz, the trial by the solaneous plant called mondjo. If the drug
787 intoxicates him, his guilt is confirmed for the third time and the
754 tribunal will condemn him. The punishment for *buloyi* is death, either by hanging, or by empaling, or by drowning in the river, if the wizard was in the habit of perpetrating his murders by sending crocodiles to kill his victims.

[177 681] Nowadays Native chiefs dare not put to death suspected witches. Since the Ba-Ronga have been under the jurisdiction of the Whites, the *death penalty* has been abolished. On the other hand, under

726 on the town of the 14th October 1894 ; also prior to the ambuscade
789 in the outskirts of Lourenço Marques, on the 7th January 1895,
751 and before the battle of Morakwen, the 2nd February following.
According to my informant, the chief doctor of the army prepared the medicine in a huge dish with leaves and roots cut into slices. These ingredients possessed an effervescent quality ; the medicine-man stirred up the decoction and with it sprinkled the whole army formed in a circle. After this every warrior was fully persuaded that he was invulnerable, that the bullets would be deflected on either side of him, or, even should they hit him, they would be flattened against his body and fall harmless to the ground. The charm could only be broken by the warrior turning his back to the foe. Then the bullets might pass through him. I have met with very intelligent Natives who were perfectly convinced of this fact, although open to reasonable argument on all other points. They told me that certain Natives who were bowled over by grapeshot, picked themselves up after the fight, came to life again, or rather regained consciousness and then, with their fingers, extracted the bullets, which had all remained imbedded in the skin!

A *Nondwane* warrior described to me, in the following terms, the administering of the magic potion, as it was done on the 7th January 1895 before the battle of Morakwen. The whole army was assembled at Nkanyen, on the bank of the Nkomati. It was there that the magician prepared the medicine, with two young girls as assistants. While he was brewing the mixture and making it froth, the soldiers, formed in a semi-circle, looked on, standing erect, poising their assagais on a level with their
726 heads. Then a *ntjhopfa* was cut down (the shrub of oblivion,
789 often employed by Native doctors and of which we have already
751 noted the use in other ceremonials) and a branch laid across the
824 road. The several battalions were called up, one after the other, and every man had to jump over the branch and take a mouthful of the medicine, which he spat out again, pronouncing the sacramental *tsu* which accompanies the offerings made to the gods : he subsequently went off, running and dancing and getting ready to go forth and kill. When each one had taken his share of the medicine and it was all finished, the doctor said to them : "Now I

244 being of every day use in the Thonga culinary art, in which it provides the fatty principles. This curious Papillonacea, after having blossomed, elongates the peduncle of the flower, which enters the ground, and the seed grows in the soil, well protected against the rays of the sun. Its taste is delicious, either prepared [754] as a sauce to season mealie flour, or roasted. When there are no nuts inside the shells, which often happens, Thongas call the empty shells *mabvobo*. They say: "The ground nuts have refused" — "Ma yalile marumane." But this is a euphemism. They mean that the *baloyi*, the wizards, have refused to let them grow or, rather, have stolen them from their shells during the night (See Part VI).

244 824 *b)* Another Leguminosa frequently cultivated is the *nyume* (yi-tin (Ro.), *ndlowu*, yi-tin, (Dj.), the *Kafir pea*. This also grows in the earth, like the ground nut. It is much coarser than the European pea, but is twice or three times as large and very nourishing. This vegetable is subject to very curious taboos amongst the Rongas. Whilst all other seeds are sown in one and the same garden, this must be planted in a separate patch, and the tinyume field must be shut off from the others by a fence of thorns. Men [753] are allowed to plant them, but, as soon as they have grown a little, only women can enter the field. Should a man imprudently do so, he would transgress a severe taboo. The danger is twofold: firstly the man himself would be punished; he would get a hydrocele. But the owners of the field would also suffer: the crops would fail. They would reproach the transgressor with these words: "You have taken away (hungula) the strength of our peas!" In order to prevent any such mischance, the husband of the woman who owns the field goes and treats (daha) it in the following manner: he throws his assagay across the field, in the direction of the four cardinal points. Then the danger is removed and men can pass through the plot. It might be supposed that this taboo was of the same kind as that which rested on bananas, for instance, when they were still new in the country and feared on that account. But it would not seem that the Kafir pea is a recent innovation in Thonga agriculture. It has been known for a long time. Another taboo in connection with Kafir peas is this:

during the first year of her married life a woman is not allowed to plant them. 244 824

Amongst the Ba-Pedi of the Transvaal the planting of Kafir peas is taboo. They are said to prevent rain and to cause intense and injurious heat.

c) The Kafir bean, mbawen, yi-tin, (Ro.), nyawa, yi-tin, (Dj.), is a small round brownish seed, with a pleasant flavour, eaten either green or dry. I do not know of any taboo in regard to it. 244

Vegetables of other families also contribute to the food of the Thongas.

Sweet potatoes (nhlata, mu-mi) cultivated either in the sand of the hills or in the richer nyaka of the marshes, are a great resource, especially when they are farinaceous and not too watery. Their leaves (matsimbo) are also used as a vegetable.

Pumpkins also constitute one of the chief articles of diet of the Blacks, from one end of Africa to the other. They are of several kinds : the *ranga* (dji-ma) and *gawana* (dji-ma) of medium size, the *shilutana*, small, sometimes pear-shaped, the *khalabatla* (djima), huge water melons, with white or pink pulp and black pips, which are eaten both cooked and uncooked. Pumpkins are not grown for their fruit alone, as the leaves of certain kinds, especially the ranga, are excellent eating, and make a very good substitute for spinach. The flowers also are greatly appreciated by the Natives. Some kinds of pumpkins are used to make gourds and calabashes. (See I. p. 50.) 415 824

There are some taboos to be mentioned in connection with the *ranga*, which seems to be the oldest kind of pumpkin known to the Bantus (1). We have seen (I. p. 184) that girls are not allowed to walk amongst the leaves and must take special precautions when plucking them. It is taboo to plant any kind of pumpkin before the Chief and the sub-chief. They are subject to the law of hierarchy in the same way as Kafir corn. The prohibition is so conscientiously observed that, should an old man keep the people waiting and be too slow in planting his 244 753 824

(1) See in Meinhof, *Grundriss einer Lautlehre der Bantusprachen*, p. 183, the different forms of this word, which was *langa* in Ur-Bantu. Compare Torrend, *Comparative Grammar of the South African Languages*, p. 89.

244 pumpkins, another will go to the field and plant some seeds in
753 it without the old man's knowledge ; then people will venture to
824 plant in their own gardens. Transgression of this taboo is said to be punished by lumbago.

222 There are, besides, many wild plants which the housewives
824 collect and of which they make excellent dishes : the *tjeke*, a
828 kind of Chenopodiacea, which is also used as a medicine to induce forgetfulness ; the *nkakana*, a pretty plant of the Cucurbitaceae family, which climbs up the dried stems of maize after the harvest, and of which they eat the leaves and also the pretty little oval pointed fruit.

137 *Tomatoes* (shimati) are also found growing round the villages,
285 where they propagate themselves, and seem to prosper the better the less they are cared for : the Natives take them to Lourenço Marques for sale in very original baskets made of a single palm leaf, with the follicles artistically twisted. I am unable to say when they were introduced. There is a agreeable kind of small tomato which grows wild in Khosen, about the size of a cherry.

244 Natives also cultivate a kind of *onion* (nyala, yi-tin), smaller than the European varieties, which they very much appreciate in their sauces.

249 *The sugar cane* (moba, mu-mi) is never grown in large plantations, but you find it on the Coast, as well as in Zoutpansberg, cultivated on a small scale, either for eating, or for preparing the strong *shiwayawaya* drink, which I shall describe later on.

245 The *pine-apple* (lalasi, dji-ma) has spread as far as the Bilene country and must be of ancient date ; it differs considerably from the Natal pine-apple, being longer, coarser and not so sweet. In many villages large plantations are to be seen.

249 *Tobacco* (fole, dji-ma) is also wide-spread and seems to have been cultivated for a long time. A curious fact is that its cultivation is the business of the men, and women have nothing to do with it. Amongst the Ba-Ronga it is sown first in a damp spot in the marsh, in a special little garden called *shibibi*, and, when it has grown a little, is planted out (simeka) on the hill, near the villages. When nearly ripe the lower leaves are first

follows : the nuts are thoroughly dried (womisa), and slightly 252
pounded in a mortar so as to remove the thin peel which covers 303
them ; they are then winnowed, and ground into a kind of flour ; this flour is put into a pot with a little water and cooked ; the fat is then collected in a big shell of Achatina and kept for external use. The residue is called *bubindje*.

I do not mention all the other fruits, more or less succulent, 137
which serve the Natives for food. One must be terribly famished 222
to enjoy them. I may just specify the *pfilu* (dji-ma), Vangueria infausta, a kind of insipid medlar ; the *tjhopfa* (dji-ma), fruit of the *ntjhopfa* tree, which I could never muster courage enough to taste, and the *bungu* (dji-ma) sometimes dignified with the title of the Kafir orange. This latter is the fruit of one of the varieties of the india-rubber tree, which grows along the shores of Delagoa Bay. (Landolphia Kirkii.) In the Morakwen forest grow the ntjhole shrubs from which the *tintjole* berries are picked during the summer.

The *muhlu* or water tree bears a berry called *tihlu*, which has an agreeable taste. The *mphimbi* bears the *mahimbi*, a large round fruit similar in form to an apricot with a double stone. Both these fruits are used to prepare a drink, and we shall mention them when treating of Thonga drinks.

*

* *

There are a few taboos to mention in connection with trees. 782
It is considered dangerous to cut the trunk of any large tree. 824
Should you wish to make a mortar of a nkanye, first smear some of the bark with certain drugs and also burn them at the foot of the tree before cutting it down. Should you want to cut down a nkwenga or a mahogany-tree, nhlapfuta (Ro.), shene (Dj.), to make a canoe, the master of the forest must first offer a sacrifice to the spirits of his ancestors who have been buried there. If you omit this precaution, you will be unable to find again the tree you have chosen.

will call her on the day they begin to sow, and she will have to 241
sow the first seed; thus she will prevent all the seeds from 784
"burning."

But the most stringent taboos are connected with the *threshing of the cereals*. This work is exclusively done by women, and it is taboo for the men to approach the threshing floor. The Makanetas, who cultivate rice extensively, cut the ears and pile them into heaps in their own huts and not on the threshing floor. When the grain is dry, they thresh it by trampling on it. Should any woman pass by, it is taboo to speak to her. If she enters the hut and helps for a little while with the work, then the taboo is removed and you, the owners of the rice, can talk to her. — "Should you do so without that condition being fulfilled, this person would *take your rice* and leave you nothing but the husks (mataha). Should a relative, dwelling in the neighbouring district, come and see you whilst you are threshing rice, don't give her any part of your harvest: let her crush it in the mortar and take it away husked, lest you lose all your grain and keep the husks only! The husks of the rice which you give to your relative must remain with you." (Mboza). The same applies to Kafir corn. To allow a relative from outside to pluck ears from your garden, to thresh them and take them home means to "spoil your corn" (onha mabele). When you are threshing Kafir corn, let the visitor first take the pestle and help you before you speak to her.

As regards *tree culture*, it was formerly considered a taboo 245
to plant foreign kinds, such as bananas, oranges, etc. When 784
Mboza planted the first mango trees in Morakwen, people told 824
him: "You will die! You have called misfortune on yourself (u tihlolele), and other people will eat your fruit!" I heard this taboo explained in Shiluvane as follows. When a man has been obliged to move, and leaves trees planted by him in his old village, people passing near the ruins shake their heads and say: "Look at those trees! They have chased away the master of the village." These two testimonies are interesting, and fitly illustrate the origin of a taboo. The desolation of a ruin has been connected with the presence of new trees, as they have often been noticed together. Hence the idea that the trees are

245 the cause of the desolation. Planting new trees is consequently
784 a taboo! Nowadays however, this superstition has died out,
824 and one may see a great number of mango, orange, lemon (1),
and pho-pho trees in Thonga fields, on the Coast as well as in Zoutpansberg.

[351] Natives do not generally fence their gardens. Stealing is
therefore very easy and it is no wonder that they have recourse to
685 magical means to protect themselves. Here are some of them ;
789 they are characteristic instances of Bantu magic.

The *rihehlo*. This consists of a kind of mysterious influence exerted on the thief by throwing a magical powder into his footprints or by taking a little of the earth found in these footprints and treating it with the drugs. The inhabitants of the village where the thief lives will be seized by disease ; this will induce them to come to the owners of the garden to confess their fault and pay a fine. Then the magician who had furnished the drug will give them a counter-drug and they will be healed! Amongst the Pedis, the magician anoints with his drugs the stem from which a cob has been stolen. Then the thief will feel intolerable suffering in his little finger and come to the village of the people whom he has robbed crying : "I have stolen!" He pays the fine, receives in exchange the counter-drug and the pain ceases! (Spelonken)

The tinhlamalala. This is the name of the central nervules of the leaves of the Hyphaene palm tree. They are like little snakes, very slender, and flexible. To make the resemblance still greater, the owner of a field makes a knot at the extremity of the rod : this represents the head of the snake. Then he looks for the dried skin which has been cast off by a real snake ; he reduces this to ashes, makes a powder with these ashes and anoints the rods. He weaves the rods together to form a kind of crown and places it on one of the mealies stems in his garden. When the thief

137 (1) The lemon tree is called mbomu (mu-mi). This seems to be a Native word and the tree also may be indigenous in the country. It grows wild on the banks of the Lower Nkomati to such an extent that there is an island in the river, some distance above Morakwen, which is called Ilha dos Limões, Lemon Island. The lemons are of large size and their rind resembles that of the orange.

202 crocodiles.) For the Mavundjas: *Kahlamba ntjhaba yo nonoha!*
618 (The big mountain, difficult to climb.) (1)

224 I have already described the part of a slain animal which is to
643 be given to the chief, when speaking of the prerogatives of the
825 master of the country (I. p. 406). Here are some supplementary
845 details: The general idea is that he must receive that part of the body which was in contact with the soil, because the chief is the owner of the soil. In the case of smaller antelopes however he does not claim anything. For the eland he requires, in addition to the ordinary tribute, half of the *bofu* i. e. of the paunch of fat which is found round the heart of this animal and which is believed to possess precious medicinal properties (especially for new-born children born with a membrane round the head). As regards
224 buffaloes and other
643 big animals, should they be killed far away from home, their meat is cut into strips (mishakatsu) and two bundles are brought back to the chief; it is also the rule that the head of any beast of great size should be eaten on the bandla, the meeting-place of the men in the capital.

Buffalo hunter with his victim.

224 So far I have described hunting with assegais, sticks and dogs.
● 824 But Thongas possess another method of killing big animals, a method which is perhaps more ancient and which has sometimes proved very useful. This is the *marindji trap*, i. e. a large pit dug in the earth, covered with branches and full of pointed stakes upon which the animal falls and impales itself. These stakes are made

(1) The Pedis have the same custom. The Ba-Khaba cry: "Haratsha! Mugoni! We"! This expression comes from the verb *ratsha*, to cross a river on a tree trunk, as the Khaba clan is said to have been held back in its ancient migrations by a swollen river and to have *ratsha* it successfully. The remembrance of this feat of their ancestors has remained and has given rise to this rallying cry. Other Pedis say: '*Sioandja khomo*," viz., "the killer will be given an ox for his reward."

224 of the very hard wood of the ntjenga tree, a sort of mimosa shrub,
824 and are anointed with a powder called *tjulu*. This is a deadly poison ; it is obtained from a shrub which has very pretty flowers and grows abundantly in the forests near the sea, the Strophanthus petersianus. Should an elephant fall into the game pit and succeed in escaping, it will soon die from the poisoned wound.

The marindji trap was already known to the Honwanas, three or four centuries ago, before they possessed any iron weapon. They used to kill elephants in this way and, being unable to dismember them, they made a fire all round the beast to cook it on the spot!

224 In order "to make the game forget," viz., to circumvent its
844 wariness (djibata), certain magical charms are used in connection with the trap. The fence which surrounds it is smeared over with a powder made from a human placenta. A hunter's wife carefully preserves the afterbirth of her child ; she bakes it on the evening of the day of delivery, hides it during the following day, dries it the next evening, puts it between two pieces of a broken pot, and hangs it from the roof. When the father returns from his hunting trip, he makes a powder of it, mixes it with other drugs, and uses it to smear the fence of the trap, also his arrows, or his gun. Should an antelope be wounded by a projectile covered with this drug, it is sure to fall at once! This powerful medicine is called *ndzedzena* and is deemed so important that a hunter's wife who loses the afterbirth must pay a fine of one hoe ; the hunter will try to obtain the placenta of another woman ; it is therefore not necessary that the afterbirth be that of his own wife (Viguet).

224 Game pits are not common in Thongaland ; they were still used
476 some years ago in the South of the Maputju country and in the Hlengwe territory, but I never came across any myself. At a more remote period they were employed for the most profitable collective hunting the Thongas ever attempted. All the members of the clan were summoned ; they built a strong fence as much as two kilometers in length, leaving about ten openings at equal distances ; at each of these gates was dug a game pit. In the afternoon the men assembled and prepared torches which they lighted in the evening ; and with loud shouts they chased the game

towards the fence into the pits. My informant asserts that the 224
result was sometimes marvellous ; the pits were soon full and the 476
animals coming behind ran over their comrades and escaped ; the men followed closely and stabbed the antelopes in the neck. But this of course meant the wholesale destruction of game. Happily a stop has been put to this kind of hunting.

Nowadays Natives use *iron traps* which they buy in the European 224
stores, some of which are quite sufficiently strong to catch a duiker 824
or a wild pig. They smear them with another charm, the *butiba*, a kind of brownish moss growing on the roots of a tree called shivumbunkanye. It also is said to have the power of "making the game forget."

I have described some other traps when dealing with boys' games.

Everybody was allowed to hunt in the good old times when the 224
White authorities had not yet introduced so many restrictive 554
regulations. Ordinary hunters are called bahloti or bazingeli 791
(Zulu term). But there were others who had made a kind of trade of hunting, regular, professional hunters, who were called *phisa* (pl. maphisa). They were not satisfied to kill an occasional antelope near their village, but they undertook big expeditions to the great deserts of the Hlengwe country where game was plentiful and where the most precious of all, i. e., elephants, abounded. It cannot be said that the maphisa formed a definite class in the tribe like the bone-throwers, for instance. I never heard of a true initiation taking place prior to their becoming maphisa. Yet they were known and recognized as a kind of superior caste and were very proud of their name of maphisa. They claimed a special power over big game owing to the mysterious rites which they practised; thus they partook more or less of the nature of magicians. I have come across some of them and heard marvellous stories about others. Old Madyashikulu of the Nhlongo clan, whom I met in the Ntimane country, near Antioka, boasted that he could pick out an elephant in a herd and force it to come and fall down at the foot of the tree up which he had climbed. He had then only to stab it from his retreat, and kill it ; after which he came down from the tree to

shorter sticks, which are pushed in here and there as the building 335
proceeds, and the architect ends by obtaining a sort of enormous, 342
pointed hat lying on its apex, all the branches and sticks composing it being solidly tied together with strips of a very resistant bark, that of the bulolo Hibiscus (p. 33) or of other trees. It is now only necessary to turn the big cone over, and place it on a wall, and there you have the typical Thonga hut.

The *wall* is built with stakes, about four feet in length above the ground, planted at intervals along the circumference of a circle which the architect traces with wonderful accuracy in the sand. He then takes two flexible branches and fastens them to the stakes, at a height of one foot above the ground, the whole way round the wall, one on the inside, the other on the outside. Between these branches and in the spaces from stake to stake are inserted reeds of the same height, completing the wall : the reeds are firmly fastened to the supporting branches by a band passing alternately over and underneath them. The same operation is repeated half way up the wall (two feet above the ground), and again at three quarters of the height (three feet). The wall is now ready to put on its large conical hat, which will fit it perfectly : a cone on a cylinder!

Placing the roof in position (ku tlakula yindlu), the next 342
procedure, requires the display of considerable muscular energy. 476
All the men of the village are convened for the job : their strong arms raise the monumental basket and place it triumphantly on the wall. Beer is then given to the helpers, and a little jollification ensues ; the equivalent of the "fête du petit sapin enrubanné" which the carpenters celebrate in Switzerland when they have completed the roof of a house.

The roof must now be *covered* (fulela) *with a thatch* (byanyi) 342
to make it impermeable to the heavy rains of the wet season, [824]
and it is here that considerable ingenuity is displayed in the method adopted. The Thonga pulls up by the roots, in the low lands on the borders of the lakes, a kind of very wide grass (luhlwa), which attains a height of one and a half to two feet : this he separates into small bunches which he lays side by side on the ground and ties together, one by one, with his

C. UTENSILS.

Nature, which has provided the Ba-Ronga with skins of animals 824
for clothing, and with poles, reeds, grasses and fibrous barks for their habitations, has also favoured them with several exceedingly useful trees of which they have not been slow to take advantage. Of these the most valuable is the *milala* palm, *(Hyphaene crinita)* used for nearly all basket-work; next comes the *nkuhlu (Trichilia emetica)* whose wood is particularly serviceable for all descriptions of carving. She has also deposited in their plains beds of clay, of more or less desirable quality, which they use for making pottery. I shall begin with the latter.

I. *Pottery.*

An excellent clay is to be found at Shibindji, in the neighbour- 134
hood of Lourenço Marques, a district close to Morakwen, and the 323
people of this place — they are the same who abstain from eating any animal liver (I. p. 364) — are the potters who supply the whole country. They are said to be the masters (benyi) of the art. But clay is found in many other places, in Shifukundju, Mpatshiki, etc. It is said that the clay of Muweri, near Lemon Island, on the Lower Nkomati, is even better than that of Shibindji. So the art of the potter does not belong to a single 323
family, and is not hereditary. Any one may learn it and practise it. Pottery amongst the Thongas is essentially woman's province. Is this because earthenware utensils are principally used in the kitchen, where woman's sway is paramount and indisputed? Possibly; in any case it is so.

Let us suppose then that the mother of a family wishes to 323
renew, or to add to her stocks of pots, large and small. She 777
starts out for the marshes, picks up in the well-known hollow several clods of clay and returns to the village carrying them on her head. No one salutes her: everyone pretends not to see her,

821 which had caused the flash of lightning, and flies away back to
825 the mountains. The magician who understands the "treatment
791 of Heaven" comes and digs at the spot ; there he finds a kind of gelatinous substance which solidifies after a little time. I possess a little of this curious drug given to me by a Pedi magician, by name Mudjumi ; it resembles a piece of chalk, and is considered very valuable on account of its rareness, and because it is used in the manufacture of the wonderful medicine of Heaven. Should a village have been struck by lightning, the magician of Heaven will come and dig out this foreign body ; if he finds it, the taboo is removed. If he does not, the whole village must move to another place. In the same way, it is taboo to warm oneself at a fire
821 made of the wood of a tree that has been struck
372 by lightning, or to use it as fuel.

The flute of Heaven.
Drawn by J. Weare.

825 Happily this dreadful bird can be prevented
778 from killing and burning by magical means. Both
534 the Pedi Mudjumi and the Thonga Makasane
789 possessed the enchanted flute, by which they could
824 force Heaven — or the bird of Heaven — to spare them. Mudjumi having sold me his flute, I can describe it at length. It is made of a hollow bone five inches long, covered with Varan skin, filled at its larger extremity with a black substance like wax. Inside, to keep it clean, there is a vulture's feather. The bone is said to have been taken from the ndlati bird ; the wax substance was made from powder obtained by drying up and pulverising a little of the heart, the eye, the bones, the feathers, and the flesh of the bird. In the wax are embedded three seeds of Abrus precatorius, the "lucky bean" well-known in South Africa, a round seed of a splendid coral colour with a black spot, very much used in Thonga magic. This addition of Abrus precatorius intensifies the sound of the flute and enables it to reach heaven.

193 conceptions were still current, it was considered as a feminine principle. This supposition is confirmed by the fact that *rivers* (nambu. pl. milambu) also have the feminine termination (I. p. 36, Note). I find the following names of rivers ending in *ti* : Nkomati, Nfoloti (Umbelosi), Ñwebeti, Shalati, Timbati ; the termination *etsi*, *edzi*, may be another form of the same suffix (Ñwanetsi, Ntsatsi, Shingwedzi, Madzi, etc.). A very curious fact, which shows the same conception, is that the river which crosses the territory of the Tembe clan is called Mi-Tembe. I first thought this to be a plural form of the mu-mi class ; but it is more natural to explain this *mi* as the feminine prefix (1) which means daughter of, as Migogwe, etc. (I. p. 352).

823 784 824 789 133 *Crossing rivers* is subject to a curious rule. It is taboo to bathe in the stream before crossing it ; taboo also for the traveller to cook his food on the hither side of the river ; he must first cross, and then take his meal. This rule is still universally observed by waggon trekkers in South Africa. In this case there may be a reason for the taboo : South African rivers are apt to be swollen in a moment by sudden rain, and the crossing made impossible for days : the traveller therefore makes haste ; he will have plenty of time to stop on the other side! When the river is dangerous, a Thonga will first chew (phora) a little of his *ndjao*, the root of a juncus, which is supposed to increase courage and to ensure victory over hostile influences. (See Part VI.)

823 769 776 782 Some *Lakes* and *Rivers* are believed to be inhabited by spirits, but not in the ordinary fetichistic way, in which a special spiritual being is incorporated with the natural object ; these spirits are *psikwembo*, spirits of the deceased ancestors of the owners of the land, and are propitiated by their descendants. Should another clan have invaded the territory where these lakes are, and crocodiles threaten the fishermen, (p. 88) they will call some one belonging to the clan of the old possessors of the country and ask him to make an offering to appease *his* gods. This is the ordinary course, and the more closely we search the more completely these lake and

(1) A number of river names have the prefix *li* or *ri*, especially those which are of Sutho origin : Lebvubye. Ritabi (Letaba) Ritshindjele (Letsitele), Rimbelule (Lepalula, Olifant). Others begin with *ñwa*, *ma*, and may be ancient names of men.

your food a little of the earth of the country which you have left ; 823
this will provide the transition between the old and the new domicile (See I. p. 49).

Metals known to the tribe before the coming of the Whites 135
were few. (See page 137). *Nhumbu* or *nsimbi*, iron, *nsuku*, copper, and *ntchopfa*, a name applied to all white metals (tin, silver, etc.) are the only Native names for metals. There is no word for gold.

V. *The Vegetable World. Thonga Botany.*

While Bantus possess a very limited knowledge of Astronomy, 815
Geography, Mineralogy, etc., while their ideas in these domains are in no way deserving of the name of Science, they are much more advanced as regards Plants. Here it is quite allowable to speak of a Science, a rudimentary Science, no doubt, but a true, precise knowledge which has been transmitted from past ages and which denotes a real power of observation.

The Delagoa flora is not very rich. I have succeeded in 137
collecting between four and five hundred different kinds in a 124
herbarium which I sent many years ago for classification to the 815
Herbier Boissier in Geneva. In February 1893, before forwarding the second lot of exsiccata, I gathered together some Natives of Rikatla in the hut which I had pompously styled a Museum and, having promised them 1 s. each if they consented to remain till the end of the examination, I submitted the dried plants to them, asking them their names, their uses, etc. The result of the inquiry was marvellous. My areopagus did not seem to be a very choice one : an old woman, as dry as my exsiccata and smoking her pipe, another with ochre-smeared hair, a young one, with a baby on her shoulder, an elderly one-eyed man named Hamunde, my milkman. After them came the young chief Muzila, walking 815
slowly, swinging the tails of his belt. This chief, notwithstanding 756
his social rank, showed gross ignorance of botany ; but some of the 824
others knew the name of almost every plant ; had I had a *ñanga*, a medicine-man, amongst them, I am sure I should have obtained

the names of all the specimens of the collection, for they are the great connoisseurs in this domain, their drugs being almost entirely obtained from the vegetable world. 815 756 824

A study of these names undoubtedly proves that Natives have the notion of the *genus*. This had been denied ; it seems that, when naming animals, Bantus distinguish correctly between species, but do not classify species into genera. In Botany it is not so. Under the same name they bring together forms which are sometimes widely different, but which belong to the same genus. Here are some of these names. 137 815 824

Tsuna means fern and applies to the Acrostichum tenuifolium, which climbs up the palm trees in the marsh, as well as to the few other kinds of Filicea found in the district of Lourenço Marques ; *gonhwa* is the name for Liliaceae, many kinds of which blossom in the spring : the Crinum Forbesii, with its big white and pink flower, and other kinds forming a bowl at the extremity of the stem ; there are five kinds of Commelina in my collection, which were called *Nkomptfana*, both those with blue flowers, and the yellow ; a certain Papillionaceae genus, the Eriosema, is called *Rongole*. All the Strigae, a genus of the Scrophulariaceae family, are known under the name of *Shitshinyambita*, those which prevent the pot from boiling, as they are believed to have this effect when put into the fire. The Lobeliae are called *Shilawana*, etc.

The notion of the *genus* is so truly present that Thongas distinguish between various species in the same genus. So the tree called *Nkahlu*, an Apocynea, the Tabaernaemontana ventricosa, a valuable tree whose sap is used as a styptic, and whose roots are used to make a decoction for lung complaints, has a congener, found in the palm-tree marsh, the Voacanga Dregei, which is called *Nkahlutjobo*, nkahlu of the marsh. The two genera are very closely akin to each other. 815 137 824 757

Cognate species found in various regions are thus distinguished by the mention of their habitat, either the hill (ntlhaba), or the black earth (nyaka), or the forest (mutju). There is the *Muhlu wa ntlhaba*, of the hill, and *Muhlu-tjhobo*, of the marsh (Secamone sp. tree of the Asclepiadaceae family). This is even more striking

137 in the case of the Hibiscus genus. Its name is *Ntjhesi* ; there
824 are the Ntjhesi of the hill (Hibiscus surratensis, etc.), the Ntjhensi
757 of the nyaka, another species found in Morakwen in the black
815 earth ; and there is the *shitjhesinyana sha ntlhaba*, double diminutive of ntjhesi, the Sida cordifolia, a pretty little Malvacea, a near relative of the Hibiscus, very much used in treating children's complaints, a panacea for babies, as it cures their vomiting, headache, wounds and internal troubles!

137 I find the same correct connection established between two
824 Anonaceae shrubs, the Artabotrys brachypetala, called *Ntiti*, and
815 the Art. Monteiroae, called *Shintitane*, little Ntiti, of the same genus, but a shrub of a very different appearance.

However there is, of course, no anatomical study at the base of this classification : so their ideas of genus are not always, scientifically speaking, correct. They call any parasite *Phakama*, whatever may be its form, and have a superstitious fear of them, especially of the larger ones, growing on other trees, such as the nkanye and nkuhlu : "Phakama dja singita!" (1)

137 *Nkushe* means sea-weed, either the true algae, as Lagarosiphon muscoides, or other plants growing in water and belonging to totally different families, such as Urticularia stellaris, found in the same locality. *Nkaka*, or *Nkakana*, is the little Cucumber already described (p. 14), whilst *Nkaka wa tjhobo* is a Convolvulvus (Ipomea cairica). The *Shirimbyati*, one of the names most employed, designates first the Helichrysum parviflorum, a yellow Composita which covers the sandy dunes, and blossoms during the winter ; but *Shirimbyati sha tjhune*, the male one, is Gnaphalium stenophyllum, and *Shirimbyati sha mutju*, the one of the forest, an Indigofera belonging to the Leguminosae family ; these three plants have in common small hard leaves : hence the same name is given to them, although they are by no means related botanically speaking. So shirimbyati corresponds to our word heath, which is applied to many forms of evergreen undergrowth.

777 (1) "The parasite stem *singita*," i. e. is of bad omen. They do not say *yila*, is
824 taboo, though some rules apply to it similar to those concerning the tree struck by lightning. One does not warm oneself at its fire ; its wood is not employed to cook
753 food, for fear lest men should suffer from hydrocele.

The want of an enlightened botanical sense is further seen in the following fact : three different kinds of Vernonia, though belonging to the same genus, are called by different names, as if the Thongas had altogether failed to perceive their relation. The Vernonia cinerea is called *Ntshontshongori* ; the V. Perotteti, *Nkukulashibuya* (the plant with which one sweeps the threshing floor) ; the V. Tigna, *Hlunguhlungu*. 137

Another case of one and the same name applied to plants of different families having merely an external resemblance is the following : the *Ndjiba* is a Leguminosa tree of large proportions, Apalatoa delagoensis (Schinz), and the *Shindjibana*, viz., the little Ndjiba, is a small shrub with leaves somewhat similar to those of the Ndjiba. Its scientific name is Synaptolepis Oliveriana and it belongs to the Thymeleaceae family.

It is no wonder that the notion of genus, though existant, has not always been correctly and universally applied. Thongas have no idea of the anatomy of plants ; they have never dissected a flower, and are totally ignorant of the presence of male and female elements in it. They know, however, that these sexual differences exist. They have noticed, for instance, amongst the nkanye stems, which are of a dioecious species, that some are male and some female, and they carefully preserve some of the male stems in order to fecundate the female ones ; but they believe that this fecundation takes place through the roots of the trees! 815 824

Thus, when the name of a plant can be explained, we see that, in naming it, *its external characters, or its uses*, have alone been considered. For instance the beautiful yellow Sterculiacea, Melhania Forbesii, is called *Muhlwadambu*, Setting Sun, because its deep colour is similar to that of the sun when dipping below the horizon. A certain plant whose seeds explode when crushed is the *Buputwana*, because, "it says bu-bu-bu." A climbing Composita with juicy stem is the *Kamele*, "the one which is pressed," (kama) to squeeze out its juice, which is said to have a medicinal value. A Euphorbiacea whose fruit is eaten by the partridges (Fluggea obovata) is the *Midyañhwari*, partridges' food. Those named after their uses are, for instance, *Nkukulashibuya*, the one which sweeps the threshing floor (Vernonia Perotteti) ; *Nhlangulaba-* 137 815 824

137 *tjongwana*, the one employed to wipe little children when dirty!
815 (This plant is tomentous and answers well for the purpose); *Psekamafura*, a large tree (Casearia Junodi, Schinz), a tree whose
824 fuel is particularly good for melting mafureira fat (p. 18), etc. The Asparagus bearst he name of *Nkwangulatilo*, the same as that of the rainbow. When asked why this is so, Natives say that it is because the colour of the asparagus leaves resembles that of the rainbow, but another explanation which seems to me more probable is this : it is because this plant is given as a medicine to little children to prevent the roaring of thunder from "tearing out their diaphragm (handjula lipfalo)."

815 The great use of the vegetable world is to provide men with food and medicine. If plants bear names and have been carefully
824 studied by the Bantus this is, in the first place, because they are useful in these two respects. We have already considered Thonga vegetarian food (p. 9-19), and I shall devote some pages to the medical art in Chapter III.

In Appendix II, I give a list of Thonga botanical names with their scientific equivalents. These plants have been identified by Dr. Schinz, who published a flora of Delagoa Bay in the "Bulletin de l'Herbier Boissier," No. 10, 1900.

The conclusion reached from this study of Thonga names of plants is that the vegetable world has been the subject of a true and, in a certain sense, scientific observation on their part. Their botanical knowledge can be compared with that of our forefathers of two or three hundred years ago, before Botany became a true science, when plants were still named from their external characteristics, and studied as medicinal herbs ; I would even say that this knowledge, though of an inferior type, is more general amongst Thongas than, for instance, amongst the European peasantry ; a fact which shows that their powers of observation and scientific study are not inferior to those of other more advanced races.

Do plants play a part in Thonga religion? (1)

000 When travelling through the country, you may come across

(1) The Vendas plant the bulbs of an Amaryllida which they call Lobome near the stone which they use as an altar. See *S. A. Journal of Science*, Vol. XVII, p. 215.

When travelling through the country, you may come across a tree round which a rag has been tied, evidently for some religious purpose. One's first idea would be that this tree is worshipped, but this is by no means the case. The tree is probably that which the divinatory bones have singled out as the one around which the village should be built, and the offering of this rag is made to the spirits of the ancestors, exactly as is done when the rag is placed near the grave, or at the door of the little hut built on it, in the case of those possessed. (See I. p. 141 and later on Chapter III). The tree is only sacred on account of this association. I have sometimes called the *Nkanye* a sacred tree, and the Thongas call it the king of trees, but it is not so in itself, or in virtue of any Nature spirit dwelling in it ; anybody can cut it without transgressing a taboo ; it is venerated because it provides the tribe with the national beer, and because its branches are used as pillows for the dead and its twigs as *mhamba* in the funeral service (I. p. 138). The religious and social *luma*, to which the bukanyi is subject (I. p. 397), is observed from fear of the ancestral spirits and not because the tree itself is in any way worshipped. In fact I never met with any worship offered to a plant as such. 824 769 778

VI. *The Animal World.*

Plants, *psimili or psa-ku-mila*, things which grow (ku mila), are distinguished from animals, called *psibandjana*, or *psihari*, which are said to *kula*, become great, and not *mila*. 815 136 825

The knowledge possessed by the Thongas with regard to animals is extensive. They give names to all the larger ones, especially, of course, to those which are eaten, but also to some which are smaller, insignificant and useless.

The *Annelida* are called by the generic name of *tinyokana*, diminutive of *nyoka* (yin-tin), snake ; leeches, *ntjundju* (mumi) ; lumbrics, *nshikwa* (yin-tin), both those living in the earth and parasites in the intestines of children.

Amongst *Myriapoda* the Julideae are called *Khongoloti* (dji-ma) ; the Millepedes, *Ndlandlalati* (yin-tin). When one of these has stung a Native, you will see him swallow a little earth, and a

782 addresses his prayer to his ancestor-gods in order to be delivered
787 from his enemies.

The Offering of a Thorn (Mhamba ya Mutwa). This is also called *ku hahla ka shihlahla*, the sacrifice of the forest. The headman has seen that misfortune has fallen on his village ; all his people die, the village is about to disappear, to become merely a part of the bush. He goes to the forest, picks up a thorn there and accomplishes the religious act by sucking the thorn, and emitting his saliva. Then he returns to the forest and places the thorn where the bones have ordered him.

782 *The Offering of Contempt (Mhamba ya Litsañwa).* We have
788 already seen a case in which this offering is made. It is a compo-
824 nent part of the burial ritual (I. p. 142) and we have called it the rite of the twig. But it can be performed on other occasions also. In certain clans (Nkuna-Khosa, Hlengwe) it does not take place at the burial, but is of common use when someone wishes *to avoid contempt*, to be well received by those to whom he goes ; for instance when he goes to his debtors and fears that they may despise him and perhaps refuse to accept his claim, or when a young man goes to woo a girl and is afraid that she may not look favourably on his suit. The religious act is performed as follows. The officiant cuts a twig of the nkanye tree. We have often mentioned this tree, whose fruits are used to prepare the famous bukanye beer ; it is everywhere regarded as the best of trees, and highly valued. It is dioecious, as we have seen (I. p. 397). The twig must come from a female stem, if a man *hahla* for himself, from a male stem if a woman does so. The officiant bites the extremity of the twig till he has drawn a little of the sap into his mouth ; then he emits that sap together with his saliva, and proceeds to his prayer.

789 *The Offering of the Fig Tree (Mhamba ya Hlulawumbe).* This
782 tree is called shihlampfana or hlulawumbe. It frequently grows
824 as a parasite on another tree ; or surrounds it, growing close to its stem, and in this way kills it. If a man has enemies, if there are people who hate him, he digs up a bit of the root of this fig tree and uses it in making his prayer. These troublesome persons will be choked, destroyed, just like the stem close to which the hlulawumbe grows. (Hlulawumbe means to overcome others).

the new year ; we raise our calabashes, so that the new season 278
may not be too difficult for us... This will consolidate our home ; 756
bad coughs will not attack us too severely. It will shut out the 789
wind ; we shall no longer be very ill, because these are new drugs. As regards the old ones, they have been contaminated (khuma) by the misfortunes of last year. They are mad (hungukile). A new rain falls ; let there be also new drugs, and we can undertake our journeys to sell our goods." So the ñanga removed a little of the old powder from each calabash ; he threw this on the path at a crossway ; then he washed the calabashes at the same spot : "Misfortune is thus thrown away. Passers-by will take it with them as it has been thrown out there by us." Then the new powder was added to the remainder of the old, which was "raised" by it.

In order to throw more light on the nature of Mankhelu's 756
art, let me briefly mention *the roots* (rimetju), or *the leaves* (tluka, 789
ri-ma), or, to use the great, the generic name, *the drugs* (muri, 278
mu-mi) which composed the marvellous powder of the calabashes. 824
He was not a man of one drug. He claimed to be a universal physician, so he mixed together all kinds of drugs, being sure that, in this way, they would certainly be effective in any case brought to him. Here is the description given by him.

Ntjebe : that by which we find strength to trample on our enemies ; we trample also on the winds which spoil the mealies ; we drive out the bad cold (or wind) which has come to us and made us cough. (Notice the triple use of this drug).

Shikuku : that which tramples on misfortune.

Mpoñwana wa burisi matuba-tubana : vanquisher of the enemy and of misfortune.

Shinano : that which induces the enemies to sleep ; you hang some leaves of it on your shield and they are overcome by drowsiness, they do not see you coming towards them.

Nembe-nembe. By it you reach your enemy while he still sleeps and kill him before he can defend himself.

Mpetshu wa milomo : that of the lips! It overcomes the curses and the assagais of the others!

756 *Rihinga ra ndlela* : a root found on the path ; it helps you to go
789 on, though others may seek to hinder you in your progress.

278 *Shivunge* : that which attracts patients to the doctor.

824 *Nandjiyane* : that which makes his words agreeable, so that patients will like them ; (from ku nandjiya, to be agreeable).

Mvakazi, phuphuma ra matlhari : that which is used to make the slayers vomit the main drug of the *tintebe* (I. p. 479).

Mbendjula : that which strengthens all the other drugs.

These are the principal trees, or plants, used for the preparation of the powder. They must be *salted* by the addition of the *sea*, viz., of the medicines taken from the sea, which Mankhelu uses to cause rain to fall (p. 321).

The sexual character of the drugs is essential. The female are used principally for sprinkling the army and the assagais, the male for treating diseases. We find here again the law of opposition of sexes ; the military domain is the male domain par excellence : it must be treated by means of female drugs. On the contrary, when slaughtering a she-goat for the sacrifice, a little of the male drugs must be placed in its mouth and the weapon used to kill it must be smeared with the same, and vice-versa for the he-goat. "To act otherwise is taboo. All the ñanga do this" (p. 417).

755 There may be some true scientific elements in Thonga medical
757 practice. Experiments have been made in using certain roots to cure certain diseases, and tradition has handed down some prescriptions from father to son. Why should there not be effective curative properties in plants of their country just as in the Cinchona bark, or in Castor oil seeds? And why should they not have discovered them?
756 However the Native ñanga is by no means a scientific man, and the best,
789 the most renowned, are perhaps the least scientific. Those who treat only one complaint, and only know one drug, are perhaps those most resembling real physicians ; they act on the results of experiment. But the line between science and superstition is very soon crossed, and the medical art passes with the greatest ease into the domain of magic, all the more so as the difference between Science and Magic is not perceived. *Muri*, which means originally tree, plant, medicinal herb, is at the same time any means of producing any effect, natural or super-

Amongst the first we have already noticed *falling stars* (p. 309) ; 787
the snail (p. 338) : should you meet with it on the road, you will soon hear that one of your relatives has died ; *the stem of cuscuta* (yendje-yendje) ; (1) there are families, however, for which this is not of bad omen, but for other people it foretells misfortune ; *the mbonga bee* belongs to the same class (p. 337) ; the various kinds of *mistletoe* are also of bad omen. So also is the *puff-adder* (p. 340), the *likure* (p. 340), a greyish slender snake : if it blows upon you, or bites you, you will grow thin and turn grey, like the animal itself ; the long-legged bird *shitshinyariendjo* foretells misfortune on the road (I. p. 339) as do also the *buwumati* snake and the *nkangu bird*.

Other objects are of good omen ; the beetle *Eccopteptera* and the *Mutilla* (p. 336), and especially the beetle *Bombolosi*, belonging to the Curculionidae family, a curious insect which drops to the ground and counterfeits death when touched or frightened ; it is the symbol of riches. Natives hang it on a string at their door ; I have heard of others hanging it in their hair ; but in this case it is said to be placed there to eat lice!

All these superstitions are believed in more or less seriously. But, in order to know their fate and what they must do to avoid misfortune, Thongas have recourse to true methods of divination. Amongst these mantic practices some are simple and some more elaborate.

II. *Less important Means of Divination.*

1) Amongst these I may mention first the *pshapsha*, which 524
corresponds to our "drawing lots" and is performed exactly 787
in the same way by placing pieces of grass or sticks of different length between the fingers, and pulling out one of them, having

(1) The cuscuta sometimes covers large patches of ground on the sandy hills of 187
Thongaland ; as is well-known, it has a regular root, but afterwards becomes a parasite 824
on the vegetables to which it attaches itself, whilst its stem and root die. This fact
has been noticed by the Natives, and has given the cuscuta a special value in their 787
eyes. When they happen to find a plant which still retains its stem and root, magicians make use of these, especially in their exorcism rites. But this stem, which is so rare, is a bad omen for ordinary people.

846 As regards *the child*, the umbilical cord is anointed every day ;
853 he begins to take the breast and drink the "*milombyana*," the great medicine which we shall describe later on.

During these days many taboos must be observed :

The *husband* is not allowed to enter the hut on any pretext ; this is not on account of his being unclean, quite the contrary. A birth does not contaminate the father amongst the Ba-Thonga as it does in other tribes. He is not obliged to undergo any medication. His exclusion from the conjugal hut is due entirely to the fact that his wife is polluted by the blood of the lochia, and he would run the greatest danger to himself if he came near.

846 *All married people* are also excluded (bakhili) viz. all those
854 who have regular sexual intercourse. Should they touch the child, he would die. If however a woman wishes very much to go and see the new-born, she must abstain from relations with her husband during two days. Then she can be admitted into the hut. On the other hand young girls are welcome in the hut, but they must not kiss the baby during these first days. "It is not yet firm ; it is only water," as they say ; later on, when it begins to laugh and to play, they may kiss it. Even the father may do so then ; when he comes back from a journey, he holds it in his arms and kisses it on the temple. Supposing that the
846 umbilical cord has now fallen off normally, the confinement period will be at an end. This termination is marked by two rites.

The mother of the delivered woman will have *to smear with clay the floor of the hut*. This is the great cleansing act which brings to an end a marginal period. It takes away all the dangerous blood, and the husband as well as all the other dwellers in the village will be allowed to enter the hut.

846 The second act is *the rite of the broken pot* (ku tjibelela shi-
751 rengelen, viz. to make fire under the shirengele, the bit of broken
278 pot used for the purpose). This is a medical treatment and a
825 religious ceremony combined. It is performed by the family doctor on the threshold of the hut in the following way : he puts into this piece of broken pottery pieces of skin of all the beasts of the bush : antelopes, wild cats, elephants, hippopotami, rats, civet cats, hyenas, elands and snakes of dangerous kinds, and roasts

846 751 them till they burn. The smoke then rises, and he exposes the child to it for a long time : the body, face, nose and mouth. The baby begins to cry ; he sneezes, he coughs ; this is just what is 825 278 wanted. Then the doctor takes what remains of the pieces of skin, grinds them, makes a powder, mixes it with *tihuhlu* (1) 856 grease of the year before last and consequently hard enough to make an ointment. With this ointment he rubs the whole body of the child, especially the joints, which he extends gently in order to assist the baby's growth.

846 751 853 All this fumigation and manipulation is intended to act as a preventive. Having been thus exposed to all external dangers, dangers which are represented by the beasts of the bush, the child may go out of the hut. He is now able "to cross the foot prints of wild beasts" (tjemakanya mitila) without harm. Snakes will not bite him, at any rate their bite will not hurt him ; lions will not kill him. The remainder of the powder is put into a little bit of reed closed at both ends, which the mother has to carry with her during the whole nursing period in order to continue the treatment.

846 755 763 821 This rite of the broken pot is also the great preventive remedy against the much dreaded ailment of babies, *convulsions*. If a child suffers from this, they will say : "a tlalile shirengelen," viz. "he did not find any help in the broken pot" and the parents will go to another doctor whose drugs are more powerful, to have the child once more exposed to the smoke. It may even be that a grown-up man will undergo this treatment again, if he has been ill with convulsions, but, in this case, the broken pot with its pieces of skin is put on the head of the patient, which has been first covered with a wisp of cuscuta (hare dja yendjeyendje). The great aim of all the medication of children by the "milombyana" is also to fight against convulsions, as we shall see (2).

(1) The tihuhlu are the seeds of the ukuhlu tree known under the name of mafurire. They are oleaginous and the fat (mafura) obtained from them is very much used for external applications amongst the Thongas.

(2) In *Savage Childhood* p. 12, Dudley Kidd describes this "baptism of smoke" amongst Zulus. Some dirt is scraped from the father's body and is mixed with other drugs in order to impart to the child his ancestral spirit. Another ingredient

846 For any subsequent children, the feast will be reduced to the
851 presentation by the grandmother of a basket of food to "*tlangela*
603 *ñwana*," viz. to "celebrate the child."

III. *The Nursing Period.*

853 The little child has been taken out of the confinement hut (humesha busahanen). He is now allowed to go outside. The nursing period then begins and will last two and a half or three years; but before we study the rites which mark it, let us consider the manner in which the baby is carried and his diet during this period.

A South-African woman with her child in the ntehe.

1) The Ntehe.

854 A little child is not carried by his mother in her arms, but in a softened skin which is called *ntehe*. The preparation of the ntehe is subject to many prescribed customs.

The first of these is this: the ntehe must not be looked out before the birth of the child, or it would bring misfortune. This is a taboo which I might call a "taboo of prevision." Some other taboos of this kind are met with in our tribe.

[604] For a first-born child, the skin must be provided by the maternal uncle. This is a rule, but the custom is not tabooed (1). The father may also prepare it, if necessary.

The ntehe must not be a sheep skin.

825 That is taboo. Let them take the skin of a duiker (blue
854 antelope), of a goat or of a mhala (impala). Sheep skins are

(1) Though the term taboo generally means a prohibition, I take the liberty of using it in a positive sense: A custom is taboo or is tabooed when its transgression is a taboo.

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854 only employed when three or four children have died in previous
825 years and the mother is in the state of destitution called *buwumba*. (Chap. II.)

854 The ntehe is arranged in such a way that the legs of the animal are used as straps, the forelegs are tied around the neck, the hindlegs around the waist and the child is in that way held well against his mother's shoulders. He can either show his head outside his ntehe or be entirely covered by it. This way of carrying babies is very convenient : mother and child get so accustomed to it that a baby, when you lift it, stretches out its legs at once at right angles with its body in order to sit on its mother's back ; and the mother can easily do all her work, even till her fields with the baby on her back in its ntehe !

853 ## 2) The diet during the nursing period.

The child is nursed by the mother. He is allowed to take the breast at any time. There is nothing like a diet regulation amongst Natives and they would deem it cruelty to refuse the breast to a crying child.

There are some customs relating to the *milk*. When a mother has to leave her child for a short time, she squeezes a few drops of her milk on his neck in order to prevent him feeling thirsty. When she has been absent for more than one day (this can only happen when the child is able to eat some solid food) and returns home, before nursing the child again she heats a bit of broken pot in the fire and squeezes into it a little milk from each breast. The liquid evaporates. The reason of the custom is this : the mother's milk has grown cold ; it must be warmed again ; otherwise the child will be constipated. This is a taboo (1). When a baby bites the teat, it is regarded as naughtiness and the mother scratches its forehead as a punishment.

853 Mothers not having enough milk use a kind of shrub called
824

(1) Compare with the Zulu milk charms described by D. Kidd, *Savage Childhood*, page 38.

585 performs the religious rite (hahla). He takes between his first
782 finger and thumb a small quantity of the half digested grass which
769 has been taken from the paunch of the animal, makes a little ball of it, touches his tongue with it and emits a sound resembling " tsu "... as if he were slightly spitting. This is the customary sacramental act in most of the sacrifices. (See Part VI.) He stands behind the wedding pair and, looking straight in front of him towards them, speaks to the gods, that is to say to the spirits of his ancestors, and says : " My fathers, my grandfathers (he calls them by their names) look! To-day my child is leaving me. She enters the wedded life (bukatin). Look at her, accompany her where she will live. May she also found a village, may she have many children (mu nyikan timbeleko), may she be happy, good and just. May she be on good terms with those with whom she will be ". Here it may happen that a brother of the bridegroom will interrupt and say : " Yes, we will live peacefully with her if she does her duty well and does not worry her husband ". The old man goes on with his patriarchal prayer without taking any notice of the interruption and everybody listens quietly and attentively. This prayer which he pronounces with his eyes wide open and in a most natural manner is sometimes very long. When the people have had enough of it and wish him to stop, they send a young man to cut a piece of meat and to put it into the old man's mouth. Thus they " cut " his prayer and he keeps still. The person officiating must be the first to partake of the meat of the sacrifice.

f) The symbolical belt.

585 The astragalus (nhlolo) of the right leg of the sacrificed goat
777 has been carefully kept. All along the belly they cut a strip
825 of skin reaching as far as the neck and up to the chin, which is cut so as to form a kind of pocket at the end of the strip. The astragalus is put into this pocket and the father ties the belt around the waist of the young woman. He must not look at her face to face in doing this. On the contrary, she must turn her

585 back to him. This is doubtless done to wish her good luck and
777 so that she may have many descendants. Natives have a special
825 veneration for the astragalus bone which is also used in the divinatory system.

5) The tlhoma, departure of the bride for the conjugal dwelling.

585 If the lobolo business has been duly concluded, the bride will start on the following day for the conjugal dwelling, accompanied by her friends. (1) The next day, she will be joined by the women of her village, who will help her to erect the wood pile (ku koroka shigiyane). They will all go together into the bush to cut a large quantity of branches, and will pile them up between two poles covered with ochre in the bride's village. Each of the husband's relations will take one of these logs during the following months. It is, it seems, a symbolic present from one family to the other.

As for the wood cutters, they take their leave and go home. But what a surprise! Here is the bride going with them! Her sisters are taking her home again! The husband entreats, but in vain! He pursues the woman who, two days before, became his legal wife. To no purpose! He offers her a present to induce her to stay with him. She refuses... This was foreseen ; she must go to her mother to fetch her basket (shihundju), her mat, her spoon and other utensils which make up her small trousseau. A last lesson must also be given to the husband : " If we have given you our daughter, do not believe that we have had enough of her! (hi kolile). She is very precious to us and we take her back! "

Patience! To morrow she will come back accompanied by one young girl only who helps to carry her furniture. This

(1) It is taboo for the bride's parents to keep their daughter in their village when the lobolo has been entirely delivered ; because, should the bride die with them, they would have to return all the cattle, whilst if she dies in the husband's village, the consequences will not be so dreadful (See Part I. Ch. II. C.).

765 put strings, made from the same skin, over their breasts. The
292 widow adds new strings when other goats are killed during the mourning visits which will take place later on, and until the adjudication of the inheritance. It is a sign that her husband is dead (a feliwile).

2) The Great Mourning in the Northern clans.

765 The foregoing is the sequence of the rites of the Great Mourning
783 in the Ronga clans. In the Northern clans, according to Viguet, the same elements are found, but in another form.
825 As soon as the mourning lamentations begin, the grave-diggers
278 send some men to fetch the *tinyele*, which are bits of skin taken from the soles of elephants' feet. These are burnt on charcoal, together with cocks' dung, and the mourners come and inhale the smoke with reeds, when they are tired of wailing. The *tinyele* are considered to be a powerful medicine. It is taboo to eat or even to snuff before having inhaled this smoke.

765 That first night, everyone sleeps in the open, and the
783 grave-diggers are not allowed to use their mats. They must cut grass to cover them for fear that their impurity might contaminate the mats. As usual, sexual relations are suspended between married people, but the *bugango* is not taboo in the Northern clans, as girls (psigango) are not wives (basati). When, on the following days, visitors come to the mourning, they go straight to the grave with a small basket of mealies and spread them over it saying. "Go! Die! You have left us." This spreading of mealies is a *mhamba*, an offering. Then the doctor comes. It seems that his operations last only three days. There are no vapour baths properly speaking, but the doctor burns his powders together with bits of bark in broken pots, and all the mourners come and inhale the smoke through reeds, as they did on the first day.

The *purification of the food* is performed by a rite which corresponds with the *lumisa milomo* of the Rongas. The doctor

765 little of it into a glass and raises it to the lips of the old man. "He
782 cuts his prayer" and while all the attention of the public is
604 concentrated upon this act (which belongs also to the ritual, as the priest must be the first to partake of the offering), the wives of the batukulu rush towards the shoulders, lungs and hoofs of the goats and the bottle of wine, seize them and run away towards the west. They have stolen the meat of the sacrifice! At once all stand up and follow them laughing, shouting and pelting them with the *psanyi*, which they had kept for this purpose. The thieves hide themselves behind some bush and eat the meat. Uterine nephews are representatives of the gods, as we shall see later on, and they assert their right by stealing the offering and eating it up.

This ceremony is highly characteristic as it embodies some of the principal ideas of the Thongas in the domain of religion, social life and taboo. It was worth while describing it, and we shall refer to it later on, when dealing with sacrifices and the position of the uterine nephews in the family.

765 The crushing down of the hut is not performed in exactly
292 the same manner amongst the Ba-Ronga. In the clans *South of*
554 *the Bay*, they only *close* it (pfala yindlu). They dig holes in
825 front of the door, into which they insert poles of the bush called *nhleha*, tying thorny branches horizontally to them. The shield of the deceased is placed against the door. The religious rite then takes place and from the skins of the sacrificed goats strips are cut, which the widows will have to wear *en bandoulière* during the following months of their widowhood. The astragalus bones are kept and hung round the neck. The gall-bladder is also preserved and fixed in the hair of the new master of the village as a sign of his new position.

765 In the *district of Makaneta*, on the estuary of the Nkomati,
596 the ceremony comprises two successive acts. First there is also a *provisory closing* of the hut, which can take place one month after the death and is accompanied by the family gathering and the religious ceremony. One year later, when the inheritance is adjudicated, the hut is crushed down, but only if it belonged to a headman of the village and if the kraal is obliged to move in

says : "Nsati wa mabele u nga nabele loko u nge na bukosi." — "Do not covet a woman with large breasts if you have no money..." This does not mean that she will cost more, but her father, knowing that she will not want for suitors, will not consent to let her go unless the full lobolo is paid at once. On the other hand a girl with an elongated face is admired more than one who is too broad-faced. Of the first they say : "She is pretty, she resembles an antelope" (a kota mhala) ; of the second : "She is chubby-cheeked, she is like a sow." A light complexion is preferred to a very dark one, because the white or yellow races are regarded as superior, and a Native laying claim to any European or Asiatic blood is proud of it. Parents, who also have their say in the question of marriage, insist on two other points ; the working capacity of the girl, and the absence of any witchcraft blot in the family. Should her mother have been convicted of being a witch, the girl will be feared. However, every girl finds a husband in the land where polygamy flourishes. If he be slow in coming, she will apply to her doctor, who will prepare the *love charms*, which will make her "appear," so that she will be noticed by the boys (See page 100). If even that does not succeed, she has other means at her disposal and may go herself to make proposals to a man (wopsana). He is seduced by her, and constitutes himself a thief who has *tlhuba*, viz. "taken in marriage by abduction" (See page 119). The parents will claim the lobolo and he must pay it. Marriage and childbearing remain the only carreer to which a Thonga woman can look forward. Hence a number of special feminine taboos which are very curious.

2) Special feminine taboos.

Some of them concern girls *before childbearing* and cease after parturition. In the Tembe and Maputju clans, girls must not eat pork, because pigs root nervously with their noses ; the future child would also move its head from one side to the other, when on the verge of birth, and this would make delivery difficult. Other

Other

animals are taboo for girls : the *hare* because it is too cunning ;
262 and the antelope *nhlengane*. This antelope raises the foot when
823 it hears a noise ; hence the idea that its leg is hollow and that
784 it perceives the sound through it. The child would do the same,
562 if its mother were to eat the meat of the nhlengane. It would be unable to hear with its ears, only with its hands!

The *legs* of fowls (tibias) are also taboo for all women, because the hen scatters the sand... So are the *hoofs of oxen*, and *pigs' feet*. A woman eating them would walk too much... She would go everywhere to look for husbands!

784 It is taboo for a girl to *walk amongst pumpkin plants* (maranga),
562 to pluck the fruits. She is only allowed to pluck those which can
824 be reached from outside. Were she to transgress this law, she
751 would emit a bad odour, and no boy would court her. Her mother, having no fear of being despised, can walk amongst the pumpkins. A second taboo relative to pumpkins is this : unmarried women must cut a "pumpkin nose" (nhompfu) viz. the end of the stem, and fix it at their waist when plucking the pumpkins, lest they get abcesses in certain regions of their body.

784 It is taboo for them to eat cooked *oxen blood* (bubendje).
262 The following taboos apply also to *married women*. They are
562 not allowed to eat what is called *nkopfu*, viz. some parts of the
843 bowels which are cooked together with the stomach of the ox. "It would spoil the child inside." The *testicles*, which are generally given to the uterine nephew when the meat is distributed according to the laws, and the *underlip* of any animal are also forbidden to them. So is also the *tongue*... because it is reserved for old people as a mark of respect! The *rectum* (gobana) is taboo for women and children. Children might make unseemly noises from the rectum! Women must abstain from *porcupine* and *monkeys' flesh* ; all their offspring would resemble these animals. Such cases have happened, it is said! Women must not eat *eggs* ; they would run a double danger : their child might be born bald and remain so ; or they might be like a hen, which runs in all directions when laying an egg. They would have no peace in child bearing! (See also page 101.)

Nubile girls, during their "tiwheti," must not *approach the*

Nubile girls during their "tiwheti" must approach the *oxen kraal* and look at them. The cattle might suffer, be attacked
284 by a bad cough (mukhulwane), get thin! This taboo is instituted
825 to protect the oxen, not the human inhabitants of the village, as D.
562 Kidd says is the case amongst the Zulus. (Part IV. Ch. I. E.)
262 When women have passed the time of child-bearing, most of
[886] the taboos cease, and they can eat monkeys and porcupine if they wish!

3) The first year of married life.

581 I shall not return to the subject of marriage rites, which have
562 been fully explained in the preceding chapter. Let me say that, though a Thonga woman cannot imagine life without marriage (ku kandja bukati), she does not enter on the new state with any enthusiasm. Her parents have warned her that she will be illtreated, accused of witchcraft and adultery, etc. Her sisters bewail her fate on her wedding day in song. The fact that she has been paid for, though it does not constitute an actual sale, puts her in an inferior position (See Part II).

562 During the first year, she has no *ndangu*, viz. no fire-place of
264 her own. She cooks for her mother-in-law. During the three
585 first weeks the husband eats with her and with the girl who accompanied her to her new home. Afterwards, he goes back to eat with the men. In some places it would seem that the husband eats with her the whole year, until she has her own pot (hlembeto).

4) Husband and wife.

593 What are the relations between husband and wife after the
571 honey-moon? Of course they vary very much according to
517 the character of both. As a rule however, the married people have very little intimacy with each other; the man remains with his companions on the "bandla," the village square where they meet, and only occasionally comes into the "ndangu," the reed enclosure of the fire-place, which is the true domain of the

843 remove the blood. The Thongas think that, as the menses are suspended, the blood accumulates in the body and must be taken away.

Pregnancy is not considered as a tabooed period. As we have just seen, sexual relations are allowed during that time, even recommended as favourable to the growth of the child. However, in view of the impending birth, some special taboos have been added to those which apply to all women.

A pregnant woman *must not drink water when standing up*. She must kneel down, otherwise the water would fall violently on the head of the child and hurt it!

843 It is taboo for her to *wrap her body* in too much clothing.
845 She must keep her belly bare and never throw her dress (kapulane) over her shoulders, lest the baby come to the light with its head covered with membranes, a complication which is very much dreaded by Thonga women.

She must not take *the sauce* of her porridge *too hot*. The child might be scalded inside and have black spots when born.

It is also taboo to *prepare the ntche before the birth*, as no one knows what will happen. The child might die!

843 The future mother must not eat *pigeon's meat*, because pigeons
825 have no blood in the muscles of their breast. She would have no milk herself wherewith to nurse the baby. Nor must she even *look at a monkey*, lest she "take to herself" (tekela) the form of the animal and the child be like it!

A woman, in the beginning of pregnancy, must not visit a sick person. The latter might die.

843 As regards women dying during pregnancy, see page 166.
766 *Miscarriages* are very much feared amongst South Africans,
731 not for themselves, but because they are accompanied by an
789 uncontrolled effusion of a blood which is a terrible taboo. The
826 discharged foetus must be buried in wet soil, otherwise the rain will not fall; the country having been polluted will be dried up by hot winds. A strange rite called *mbelele* is performed in times of drought, when all the graves of children born prematurely and buried on the hill are searched, and their contents thrown into the mud, near the river. We shall discuss in Part VI the

606 these bukoñwana rules would cause death. Yet they are religiously kept as necessary to ensure normal relations between the two families.

We have already seen the taboos which must be observed during the betrothal period (p. 106). Later on, during the gatherings which take place *before marriage*, other taboos are imposed.

606 1. In the discussion concerning the lobola, when oxen are counted,
802 the bridegroom's parents must never offer eight head of cattle,
201 because one of them will be killed for the feast, and so eight means
584 only seven. *Seven* is counted by raising, one after the other, the
784 five fingers of the left hand and the thumb and index-finger of the right. In raising the index-finger, they might point it at the bakoñwana, and this would be a mortal offence. To point at anyone with the index-finger is as bad as bewitching him. It is done only in anger, and all the preceding discussions might be nullified if such an imprudence were committed.

2. Should one of the oxen be frightened by the shouts of joy with which the arrival of the herd is greeted and by the sham-fight of the lobola day, and run away home, it is taboo. The ox has seen that something is wrong and has consequently fled. Even should they succeed in bringing it back, "timpfalo ti tjukile," the conscience (or the diaphragm) has been stirred!

584 3. If one of the oxen has no horns (homu ya mhulu), or only
825 abortive horns, psa yila : *bukoñwana byi ta pfumala timpsalu*,
777 viz., the relations with relatives-in-law will have no tenderness,
784 because such an ox moves its head to and fro as it wanders in the night ; it is abnormal. The bride's family will not accept it.

4. Should the lobolo consist of hoes, and should the rain fall on them while they are being carried to the bakoñwana, it is taboo. The lobolo must not be brought in a wet condition, otherwise the new relations will be spoilt (bukoñwana byi ta tshipa) ; the young people will not be able to marry.

5. Do not bring with you tobacco in the leaf when going *bukwen* as a fiancé, bring only ground tobacco, or misfortune will happen. Later on, when you have married your wife, it is allowable.

6. Never eat zebra or reedbuck's meat when staying with your parents-in-law. Should they kill one of these animals while

584 you are there, or on the road, have nothing to do with it. The
825 zebra is *mbalamberi*, an animal of two colours; moreover it has no
777 horns. The same holds good for the giraffe. It has two colours,
784 it has too long bowels. Psa yila! The reedbuck cries: "Dzoo." It is a witch: a mukoñwana must not eat it. For the same reason a sheep without horns is never given to bakoñwana.

7. When you go with women to the parents of your fiancée for a *shirwalo*, viz., to bring them beer, should one of the jugs fall to the ground, psa yila! Return home!

606 8. From a Thonga of the Maputju country I once heard that it
609 was a great taboo in that district for a man to drink milk with
784 his parents-in-law; let us say rather to *eat* milk, as Natives
618 always take it in its solid form, i. e. curdled. This man was a
825 Christian; he had given up many heathen customs and had gone
177 so far as to partake of milk with his mother-in-law, but, the people all round were very much shocked at his conduct. Pushing my inquiry further, I heard that the milk taboo was observed not only with bakoñwana, but with all the inhabitants of the country who did not belong to one's clan: curdled milk was to be eaten only with people bearing the same family name. In other words, it is forbidden to eat milk *in any village where one can take a wife*. In a very interesting paper published in the *South African Journal of Science*, 1925, p. 481, Mrs A. W. Hoernlé says that this custom is wide-spread amongst many Bantu tribes of Central and South Africa, and explains it by the very intimate relationship which is thought to exist between human beings and cattle. The oxen are one with the clan to which they belong, and only members of that clan can partake of the milk of their cows. I never met with this idea in the other parts of the Thonga tribe, and I may remark that, as the Maputju clan is settled very near to the Zulus and has been more or less "zuluised", this custom might very well have been borrowed from its neighbours. Further researches will show whether the other Thonga clans have preserved what seems to be a very old Bantu idea, or at any rate traces of it. This is quite possible.

584 9. Do not build a hut for your wife before you have married
777 her. Mankhelu says: "Even if you have plenty of money
784 to lobola, if you make such a blunder your wife will be taken from you.

484 comes to ask for his property! What cunning displayed in confusing the real issue and evading payment! (1)

Travelling consequently plays a great part in the life of these tribes, and it is no wonder that it is subject to many rules and that many taboos must be observed on the road in order to succeed in these expeditions.

I may mention first the four following taboos.

484 A traveller must not *take salt* with him when he goes either to
777 pay a visit, or to hunt, or on a business trip, or else he will not
784 succeed in his object ; he must avoid *sharpening assagais* on the road ; this would rouse his enemies and "awaken thorns" on the path ; he must take care *not to pluck milala leaves*, those used for weaving baskets : it would be an insult to the people on whom he is calling. Let him cut these leaves when returning, or else he will find trouble in the village to which he goes, lamentations, shoutings, disgusting sights. When he finds on the road people occupied in *digging a grave*, he must go at once and help them for a while. If he neglects this duty, he will take upon himself the misfortune (titekela khombo). He will not succeed in his purpose. Should he be in the village when some person dies, he must take part in the purification of the inmates.

825 There are some kinds of animals which bring bad luck to the
777 traveller. In order to "keep the road clean" (basisa ndlela), he
484 must beware of the *mampfana bird*, a kind of crane called "the preventer of the journey" (sibaliyendjo (Ro) shitsinyariendjo (Dj). Should this bird fly across the road, with wide-spread wings, it would be enough to make the party return home : there is danger of death before them and the "mampfana" comes to warn them

609 (1) One day one of my neighbours, named Mandjia, was arranging to start for
484 Bilene to "follow his goods" (landja bukosi) ; he came and requested me to give him a letter. "What for? Your debtors do not know how to read and I do not know anything about your affairs." — "It does not matter," said he. "The important point is that I should have a paper in my hand. They will be afraid. They will think that I come from the White people with their authority." I did not like to refuse a small favour to a neighbour; on the other hand I was somwhat reluctant to help him in a none too moral plan, so I gave him a letter addressed to the Portuguese Intendant of these countries in which I stated that I knew him. It was a kind of pass... What use did he make of it? The fact remains that he came back with his oxen, and I believe the sight of the mysterious paper was not without influence in the transactions which ended in the recovery of his property!

825 that the road is not "clean" (Viguet). The flesh of this bird is
777 used in the preparation of the charms carried by travellers. There
484 are also two mammals which give the same warning : the duyker
782 antelope (mhunti) and the polecat (mangobo). Should a boy going to Johannesburg meet with any of these three animals, he will go to his kokwana (grandfather) and ask him for help ; the old man will then take a mouthful of beer or water and project it towards the traveller (to make "phaa") with the following prayer addressed to the ancestor-gods : "You, so and so, look to this child who wants to travel! Bless him in his journey! May the Spirit of the bush (Shikwembo sha nhoba) remain asleep."

517 The *discussion of affairs* (ku khanela timhaka) on the square of
461 the village also fills many an hour in a man's life.

On the whole, men have but little to do. We can fairly estimate at three months the time required for the work which they have to do for the village and for the community. The remaining months are devoted to pastimes and pleasure (1).

III. *Games of adults.*

000 Having already described boys' and girls' games (p. 66 and 172), I now proceed to those of the adults, as forming an important part of the Life of the Village.

462 (1) Much has been said and written about the division of village work between men and women in the Bantu kraal. I shall try to show in the Practical Conclusions, No. V that civilisation is bound to produce great changes in this region. But, as already pointed out, it is certain that to the Natives themselves their system appears perfectly natural and that the women do not at all complain of their fate. The following charming story which is told by a Moravian missionary, The Rev. Th. Bachmann, who lived for a long time amongst the Wa-Nika, between Lake Tanganyika and Nyassa gives fresh proof of this assertion :

000 One day, as the rain was pouring down, I saw Walusangano returning from his garden with his wife, Leya. The wife was walking in front with a big bundle of wood on her head. On the wood was a basket containing maize, cucumbers and beans, as well as the hoe. On her back Leya was carrying her youngest child. The other children followed and the father brought up the rear-guard, carrying only an open umbrella. We were greatly shocked at this sight, and I thought it my duty to intervene on behalf of the women. On Sunday night, at public worship, I spoke of what I had seen in the most expressive terms possible. But my speech did not make the impression I expected. The men looked very much embarrassed ; the women indignant.

The following week, at sunset, I was under my veranda, watching the lightning and

171 names which they also call *seboko*, the same word as shibongo ; but most of these names are names of animals, and are called by the technical term *muthupu*, totem ; the animal is the emblem 000 or totem of the group. The Pedi clans are totemic. This means that, not only do they glorify themselves by comparing themselves with an animal and taking its name, but they think that there is a mysterious vital connection between it and their social group. I cannot give here all the facts I collected amongst them on the subject. They were published in *Le Globe*, the organ of the Geneva Geographical Society, Volume LXIII, under the following title : *Le Totemisme chez les Thongas, les Pédis et les Vendas*. Let me merely mention the following details. The Khahas of the Shiluvane valley have the small grey antelope, called duyker, as totem. They salute each other in these words : "Goni! Phudi!" *Goni* is probably the name of an old ancestor, the same as Nkuna for the Ba-Nkuna ; but *phudi* means duyker. They consider it taboo to make a *ntehe* of its skin for their children. Some of them do not eat the flesh of that antelope, fearing that their children would become idiotic, or be covered with boils. They will not sit near a man of another clan who is handling the skin of a duyker. The Mashilas (Sekukuni's people), who have the porcupine as totem, say : "It is taboo even to tread on its dung; the soles of the feet would become sore." Many clans are afraid to kill the animal which is their totem ; this is not a law enforced by the chiefs ; the totem itself punishes them if they trangress it. However, nowhere did I find the idea that they are descended from the totem. They say : "The old people noticed that the flesh of such and such an animal made the people of their clan ill ; so they proclaimed it taboo." Amongst the Vendas, or at any rate amongst certain Venda clans (Ba-Laudzi, Ba-Ngwe, Ba-Shidzibe) the totem is connected with the ancestor-gods. At his death, each member of the clan is transformed into the animal venerated by his clan and joins his congeners in the sacred wood where they live.

618 Nothing of this kind is met with amongst the Thongas. The 33 Thonga clans are *atotemic*. Many men bear the name of animals, 835 but this is merely a means of glorifying themselves ; there is no taboo with regard to the flesh, skin, or dung of that animal. I have

618 539 178 when she goes to the fields, the cat escapes from its kraal, enters the hut, puts on the war ornaments of the husband, dances and sings. Children, attracted by the noise, discover it and inform the master of the village of the strange dancer they have seen... He goes and kills it. At that very moment Titishan falls to the ground, in her garden. She says : "I have been killed at home." She asks her husband to accompany her, with the corpse of the cat wrapped in a mat, to her parents' village. All her relatives attend. They severely reproach their daughter for having insisted on taking the animal. The mat is unrolled and, as soon as they see the dead cat, they all fall lifeless to the ground, one after the other. The Clan-of-the-Cat is destroyed and the husband returns home after having closed the gate of the village with a branch (See Page 323) : "Their life was in the cat."

Folk-tales are very ancient, and this one is by no means unique of its kind. (Compare Jacottet's "Treasury of the Ba-Sutho Lore," Morija 1908, Masilo punished for having eaten zebra's meat.) It shows that the totemic idea existed in former times, in those primitive periods of evolution which some Bantu tribes have now outgrown.

618 178 325 4) A fourth fact tends to show that a mystic relation between an animal and a clan existed in former times. There is, in the north of the Transvaal, a kind of antelope called by the Natives *Shidyanaman*. It is taboo to kill it : "If a Nkuna does so, his family will die during the year, his wife, his children, his own head. Should he kill one by mistake, he must cry with a loud voice and shout : — Yoo! Shana n'ta da na mane! Alack! with whom shall I eat it ?" Mankhelu says it is taboo to eat its flesh, but the taboo is removed by this formula. The Ba-Nkuna do not know how to explain this custom. It may be a relic of former totemic ideas. However Mankhelu does not call the shidyanaman a ntshupu, a totem, and these customs may perhaps be connected with the *nuru* superstition (Comp. Ch. IV and Part IV, hunting customs). But even supposing that the Thongas have gone through the totemic phase, the present clans have entirely forgotten these ancient beliefs.

643 789 The royal drug, having been burnt, is reduced to powder and this powder is poured into the calabashes. The forked branch is planted in the sacred hut, which I shall shortly describe, and the calabashes hung upon it. Each sub-chief receives a calabash and takes it to his kraal, where it will help the district in which he reigns to perform the *luma* ceremony. But the greater part of the powder remains at the capital. There it will be used not only for the luma, and for the sprinkiing of the warriors (see Chapter IV), but also for two other purposes : 1) for the protection of the country by means of the wooden pegs ; 2) for the filling up of the magical horn.

1) *The wooden pegs* (timhiko). A certain day is fixed for planting the forked branch in the house where the great medicine is kept. Then the doctor, accompanied by some members of the royal family, steals out secretly during the night and goes to the cross-ways, to the strategic points on the borders of the Mazwaya territory. It is taboo for anyone to meet with the party. He plants wooden pegs, and smears them with the powder. As soon as they have been smeared, they become invisible. No one can see them nor tear them out except Godlela. They do not rot. White ants do not attack them. The country is fenced by them.

Should there be any dispute as regards the boundaries of the country, Godhlela will be called. At once the pegs which were invisible appear ; they come out as much as a foot above the ground. If a hostile army was approaching, it will turn back at once, seized with fear at the sight of these pegs.

789 825 787 2) *The magical horn.* The remainder of the powder is mixed with a special kind of honey, the honey made by the small black bee called *mbonga*. This bee makes a large spherical nest deep in the ground. Natives have a number of superstitions regarding it. They say the mbonga honey may be eaten by anybody, but it is only members of certain families who can see the nest and dig for it. For other people it is invisible. (See Part VI.) The Ngwetsa family, in Rikatla, was one of the favoured ones! It must be said that the hole through which the mbonga bees penetrate into the soil is in truth very small and escapes the notice

789 of most people! This honey comes from below. It is a hidden,
823 a mysterious thing. A little of it is added to the drug and the
787 mixture is poured into a double horn, viz., two horns whose large ends are firmly fixed to each other, the point where they meet being carefully covered with dung, which acts as glue. A hole has been made in the upper horn and the drug is introduced through this. It is a great means of divination. When war is imminent, the nyokwekulu begins to ferment, and exudes through the hole : "It knows all about war." So the country can prepare for it. No wonder that this powerful medicine is preserved with superstitious awe and the greatest care.

643 A place of honour is reserved for the magical horn in the
595 hut of the first wife of the chief. In the middle of the hearth
372 a perpetual fire burns ; it must never be allowed to go out ; it
824 is taboo. The wood used for it must be that of a tree found on the sea shore, and called ntjobori. The Makaneta sub-clan must furnish it regularly. It is taboo to take embers from this fireplace, which is called the royal fire, the medicinal fire (ndjilo wa buhosi, wa muri). Should the principal wife let the fire go out, then Godlela must be called on to light it again, rubbing together two sticks of a shrub called ntjopfa. The fire produced by burning this shrub is considered dangerous. It is taboo to cut its branches or to use them for the purpose of warming oneself ; the genitalia are said to swell when this law is transgressed (See Part IV). But Godlela does not fear ; has he not his drugs to protect himself ? He can and must use ntjopfa to re-light the nyokwekulu fire, and he will be given a good reward for his work! The ntjobori, in burning, produces an abundant smoke which leaves a deposit on the horn, on the forked branch and on all the calabashes containing the provision of powder.

643 The queen Mimpanyanhoba who was in charge of the
372 nyokwekulu had no sexual relations with the chief on that account.
595 I do not know if absolute continence is always enforced on the
784 keeper of the sacred fire, as was the case for the Roman Vestal Virgins. But I have been told by Mboza that this woman prevented her co-wives from coming near her hut ; it was taboo.

789 the fat collected in order to mix it with the war medicine, the flesh
726 being left to the dogs to eat and destroy.

In some clans, chiefs possess *other personal charms* which are
643 very much dreaded and called *psitjemba*. So, in the Maluleke
789 clan, each of the children of the ancient chief Mashakadzi received
237 from him one of these psitjemba. It consists of a part of the skull of a child, the top of the head, where the pulse is seen beating at the fontanella. This has been smeared with the vitreous humour taken from the eyes of lions or elephants, and powders made from the skins of wild beasts. The possession of this charm gives the chief a supernatural power. If, being irritated with you, he invokes his gods by sucking it and emits the sacramental tsu, he can call on any wild beast he likes to kill you... He has sacrified with the psitjemba ; you will die!

643 Some chiefs of the Northern clans used to *swallow one of the*
787 *stones* found in the stomach of a crocodile. It is said that
825 crocodiles, when cut open, are found to contain a certain number of stones, as they are supposed to eat one each year, when the rainy season comes on. One of them is chosen and smeared with special medicines and swallowed by the chief. Natives firmly believe that this stone remains in the body of the chief, and that it is "his head, his life" (Viguet). When it is passed in his stools the first time, this is a premonitory warning. When it occurs a second time, it is a clear announcement that the chief is about to die. So chiefs can always know when their time is near. In other clans the crocodile stone is replaced by what is called *ndjalama*. Amongst Nkunas this word designates a kind of bright copper button, which the Pedis of the Palaora mine used to make and sell. But ndjalama also means large sized beads. Whatever it is, some chiefs swallowed the ndjalama and were warned by it of their death. This object, as well as the crocodile stone, is taboo for subjects to swallow. They would die. It is "buloyi bya hosi" — "the magical power of the chief."

643 On account of these powerful and dangerous charms possessed
619 by them, chiefs of different clans regarded it as a taboo to stay in each other's company ; they were afraid lest they might be killed by the magical power of their colleagues. Maphunga

643 651 In the Northern clans it seems that these payments in kind called *shirwalo* (carrying of beer, from ku rwala, to carry), are expected from all those who are not hunters and bring no meat to the capital.

643 651 224 825 2. The right of the chief *over wild beasts killed in hunting* is not the same for all game. Rhinoceros is not taxed ; it is even taboo to bring its meat to the chief. On the contrary when a man has killed a wild buffalo, an elan, a giraffe or an antelope, he must first cut some joints for the chief. If it is a panther or a lion, he must give up the skin ; if an elephant, the tusk which scratched the soil when it fell belongs to the chief ; it is "the tusk of the soil," and the chief is "the soil." The other tusk is for the hunter (ndlayi). In the Maputju country, it was even forbidden to kill elephants. Ngwanazi, the chief who was deported in 1896, had reserved the monopoly of elephant hunting for himself and his warriors. The hippopotamus is taxed more heavily than any other beast. The hunter who has succeeded in killing one has not the right of cutting it open. Should he do so, it would be considered a serious offence. He might be put to death. (Mankhelu.) He must at once send word to the capital, and the men of the Court will come immediately and cut up the animal, taking half the joints to the chief. As for the crocodile, it must also be opened by the men of the Court, because it contains many things such as marvellous stones used in magic, and bracelets of the women whom it has devoured. The chief appropriates what he pleases amongst these objects.

643 466 3. *Statute labour* is one of the main revenues of the royal kraal. In some cases, subjects must come to the capital, led by their sub-chiefs, and till a field for the chief or rather for the queen who has been bought with the nation's money. In Nondwane, which is a large country, each of the sub-clans must till a field for the wives of the chief in its own territory. For instance, in each of the districts of Mapulangu, Bandi, Manuel, Maghebeza, Malwan, Hlangunyingin, the chief Mubvesha possessed a royal field which his subjects weeded and harvested every year, and the sub-chief Habele, who was in charge of those districts, had to gather the mealies and carry them to the capital. This official tilling is done

714 held by his chief Mahazule. He approached us, a giant of 6 ft. in height, decked out in a costume which was certainly grotesque, but of which I at once caught the general idea ; he had evidently tried to resemble a wild animal and had succeeded admirably in the attempt. Such is most likely the origin of the war costume in mankind! As for Charley, he was thoroughly delighted to note the terrorising effect produced by his appearance on the youngsters and folk of weak nerves.

He was, admittedly, the handsomest warrior in our locality, and condescended on one occasion to allow us to photograph him, when he explained in detail the several component parts of his costume, which, as a whole, was certainly formidable! The photograph was a failure, but the get-up has remained imprinted on my memory.

714 To begin with the top ; the head was decorated with three
825 plumes of long slender feathers, taken from a bird called *sakabonyi*, the widow bird, which is only to be found in the mountains ; sometimes the feathers of other birds are added (magalu, mafukwana); one of these plumes is worn in the centre, the others one on each side, and all three are fixed on to a conical helmet (shintlontlo) trimmed with ostrich feathers. This helmet is set on a kind of toque of another skin, which is held in place by a chin-strap. This style of head gear makes the head look about twice the natural size, and, to give it a still more ferocious appearance, it is adorned here and there with porcupine quills.

714 Round his neck Charley wore a necklace of plaited thongs
301 of black calf skin (tinkocho). Armlets of long white ox hairs,
825 carefully selected from the tail, ornamented his biceps, and garters of a similar make were on the calves of his legs.

The belt around his loins was very rich, the beautiful skin of a civet cat (nsimba), with its fine yellow stripes, hanging down in front to the middle of his thighs, and small antelopes' skins behind (madjobo ya nhlengane). Finally, to complete the wild animal appearance, calves and ankles were covered with bracelets of large black seeds, which come from the North (timbavu), each seed being as large as a cherry. The size of the legs is thus considerably increased and conveys the idea of a pachyderm ; when he jumped

243 their mealies with the small pimples of their tattooing (tinhleke ta Ba-Ronga). If maize is the most appreciated cereal, it is certainly not the most ancient known to the tribe. Owing to its modernity, no doubt, it is not subject to any taboo. It is sown and harvested [252] without any rite. At Christmas time, when the first cobs are edible, people joyfully feast on the new crop. They cook some of them in the ashes, but they allow the rest to ripen and dry upon [626] the stalks. Although no taboo prevents any owner of a field from eating the first mealies whenever it suits him, Mboza asserts that people who have obtained green mealies before the other inhabitants of the village, do not precede them in the enjoyment of this much appreciated food : "It would cause jealousy amongst them." This reason is perhaps at the bottom of the luma taboo (I, p. 394). Moreover they fear lest they might have to share their good luck with all their friends !

243 Next in importance comes the *mabele*, plur. of bele, dji-ma 273 (Ro.), ñwahuba (Dj.), the *millet* or *Kafir corn*. This is the well-known millet which we give to birds in cages, small, round, blackish grains which grow on a stem 3 to 5 feet high, in elongated cylindrical ears. Kafir corn is pounded, or ground, and may be eaten in the form of flour. But its main use is to provide the 243 yeast for the Kafir beer. As already pointed out (I. p. 42) the 825 mabele is one of the oldest cereals known to the Thongas. It is the ritual cereal, that used for the "shimhimbi," the dish offered to the confined mother or prepared for the luma ceremony. Its seeds undergo a certain treatment before being sown : the sub-chief blows upon them after having taken a small piece of a certain root in his mouth ; this root obtained from a kind of juncus found in the mountains, is supposed to have the power of keeping the ants away from the seeds. He distributes the seeds thus treated amongst his people, and every one mixes some of them with his own supply. Men of the reigning family alone possess 243 this root. Later on, when the time for sowing has come, it is 787 taboo for subjects to precede their chiefs or sub-chiefs in sowing mabele. The bones are consulted. Should the "madjuma" fall showing their mouths (see Part VI), it is the answer of the gods. They say: "Yes! this is the proper time! The mabele will do well!"

202 618 crocodiles.) For the Mavundjas: *Kahlamba ntjhaba yo nonoha!* (The big mountain, difficult to climb.) (1)

224 643 825 845 I have already described the part of a slain animal which is to be given to the chief, when speaking of the prerogatives of the master of the country (I. p. 406). Here are some supplementary details: The general idea is that he must receive that part of the body which was in contact with the soil, because the chief is the owner of the soil. In the case of smaller antelopes however he does not claim anything. For the eland he requires, in addition to the ordinary tribute, half of the *bofu* i. e. of the paunch of fat which is found round the heart of this animal and which is believed to possess precious medicinal properties (especially for new-born children born with a membrane round the head). As regards buffaloes and other big animals, should they be killed far away from home, their meat is cut into strips (mishakatsu) and two bundles are brought back to the chief; it is also the rule that the head of any beast of great size should be eaten on the bandla, the meeting-place of the men in the capital.

224 643

Buffalo hunter with his victim.

224 824 So far I have described hunting with assegais, sticks and dogs. But Thongas possess another method of killing big animals, a method which is perhaps more ancient and which has sometimes proved very useful. This is the *marindji trap*, i. e. a large pit dug in the earth, covered with branches and full of pointed stakes upon which the animal falls and impales itself. These stakes are made

(1) The Pedis have the same custom. The Ba-Khaha cry: "Haratsha! Mugoni! We"! This expression comes from the verb *ratsha*, to cross a river on a tree trunk, as the Khaha clan is said to have been held back in its ancient migrations by a swollen river and to have *ratsha* it successfully. The remembrance of this feat of their ancestors has remained and has given rise to this rallying cry. Other Pedis say: '*Sioandja khomo*," viz., "the killer will be given an ox for his reward."

marginal period during which the maphisa must use protective medicines against the dangers of the bush, and keep certain rules. 224 784

As a protection they carry their charms, especially the *ndjao*, the root of a certain juncus which is used on many other occasions. As regards the taboos which they must observe, I will first mention those applying to travellers in general, especially the *salt taboo* (I. p. 339). Should they take salt with them, this would "precede them" (rangela), and they would kill no game. It will be soon enough to look for salt when they have killed. But the great taboo of these hunting trips is the *sexual taboo*. This was already imposed before starting and it must be observed Phroughout the expedition. The necessity of avoiding anything connected with sexual relations is so great that maphisa will take with them to cook their food little boys under marriageable age. What is the reason of this prohibition? I have explained it in dealing with the Thonga idea of sexual relations (I. p. 189). If the hunters transgress the law, the big animals will be so wild that it will be impossible to approach them ; they will furiously attack the men who have sinned, because they know them, and woe upon them! So much so that if the hunters see an elephant or a hippopotamus in obstinate pursuit of one of their number, they will begin to insult him for having spoilt the whole trip by his misbehaviour, and send him home. 224 784 834 825

The law of continence is also binding on *the hunters' wives* at home. It is true that when the absence of their husbands is prolonged for a very long time they may become unfaithful to them and the men, on their return, will find babies waiting for them which are not their true children. This will cause them no unhappiness, as these babies none the less belong to them, their wives having been duly bought, and the time for fear is now passed, as they have returned home safely. The fact that these men welcome the children born during their absence caused me to think that hunters' wives were not subject to the sexual taboo as their husbands are. But further inquiry has shown that this is not true. Old Makhani assured me that incontinence on the part of the wife at home would have as a consequence that the husband would be attacked and killed by wild beasts far away in the desert. 224 784 837 851 752

menstruation, to persons in a state of defilement. This would 224
"spoil their gun." When they go to attend the burial of a relative, 784
they fire a shot upon reaching the mortuary village. Thus the ball which was in the gun at the time of the relative's death will be expelled; was it not contaminated? Moreover the hunter will wash his gun; without these precautions the weapon would not kill anything in future.

These maphisa are very jealous of each other. Some of them 224
try to destroy the power of a rival by securing a part of an animal 789
killed by him; they subject the meat to a treatment which was not explained to me; they then bury for instance a bone thus smeared; after which they are convinced that their rival will no longer be able to dispute game with them. Therefore when a hunter distributes meat to other people, he keeps for himself a little piece of each limb in order to prevent a possible enemy from "going away with his meat."

Let me now pass in review the *more important kinds of big game,* 224
and I will reproduce as literally as possible the information gathered from Thongas of all parts of the country with regard to each of them. Some of my readers, upon reading these extraordinary statements, will no doubt exclaim: "What does all this mean? Are these actual facts or pure imagination or folklore?" All three elements are certainly represented in these stories, but I think it would be useless to take much trouble to distinguish between the three. My endeavour is not to produce a scientific zoological treatise but to find in these accounts a means of penetrating more deeply into Bantu mentality; and there is no doubt that the study of hunting rites has a great deal to teach us on this subject.

The *eland* (*mhofu,* Oreas canna) is a splendid beast, highly 224
coveted but dangerous to kill. Viguet says: "It possesses the 825
nuru. When you kill it, it is taboo to walk round its body. Go straight to its head, and there, in the hair of the forehead, you will find a louse; take it. Then dig in the earth where the head has fallen: you will find a root tehre; cut it off and bring it home together with the louse. Then you are safe!" (—Other people add: "Remove its eye before cutting it open, if you wish to escape the

224 825 danger of nuru.")— "Having reached home, you ask the medicine-man to prepare a charm with the root and the louse : he will *lurulula* you, viz., free you from the *nuru*. Should you omit this treatment you may lose your senses, be unable to find the way home or, when you are back, you may forget everything about your hunting trip. People will say to you : 'U ni nyanyunyu', — 'you are cracked' ; you act as if you had killed an eland and had not been *lurulula*, delivered from its nuru!"

Hunters assert that there is not the slightest doubt about the presence of this root into which the nuru has entered. Even if no tree grows near the spot where the eland has fallen, the root will still be there and the hunter will find it, at least if it is really he who killed the animal. Should another hunter falsely pretend to have killed it and try to claim it, he will never find the root, even if he should dig all over the ground for ten days!

Another rule in connection with the eland is this ; should one of these animals have been killed whilst you were bringing your wife home, you must cut off a piece of its skin and make a bracelet of it, which you tie round your wrist. Then you can eat your meal with your wife. To-morrow go with her to an ant-hill and fix this piece of skin to it with two wooden pegs, one on either side. In the middle between the two pegs, set fire to the skin by means of a burning brand. You are then saved. You have *lurulula* yourselves. If you do not take this precaution, your child will be miserable : it will dry up, viz., be so thin that all its tendons will become visible. — Never let your children eat eland's meat until they have been inoculated with a preventive drug! The danger associated with the eland for the hunter's family is so great that people say : "Married people ought to abstain from killing it and leave it to bachelors." In fact everything connected with this beast is dangerous. When you follow its tracks, if you see that it is tired and that saliva has fallen from its mouth, take care not to tread on it. It is taboo : you will be seized by an irresistible sleep. The reason of these dangers is that the eland has a pouch of fat round its heart called *bufu* (same root as mhofu, the name of the eland). This fat, to which I have already alluded,) is a very remarkable substance! Hence all these rules!

On the other hand, should an eland be found dead, transfixed, no nuru need be feared. 224 825

We have already met with the *ndakazi antelope* taboos. Amongst the Nkunas (I. p. 366) this ndakazi, or shidyanaman, must not be killed intentionally lest the hunter and his whole family should shortly die. We have seen how the danger can be avoided when the antelope has been unintentionally killed. The hunter must place his head between his hands, as if in despair, and shout : "Ho! mamana! ndji ta dya na man" i. e. "Alack! my mother! With whom shall I eat it?" By this cry the nuru can be overcome and the possession of the meat assured. Otherwise if a hunter neglects this precaution and comes home with the tail to summon people to help him to carry the eland's meat, they will find that the body of the animal has disappeared.

Clever hunters know a second way of attaining the same end ; it is to dig in the soil near the nose (the same as in the case of the eland) and cut off the root you find there : "This root has received the nuru of the animal. When you have finished cutting off the limbs of the ndakazi, you dispose of the dung (psanyi) found in the bowels, handling it with this root. In former times hunters used to throw the limbs in all directions : this would 'spread' (hangalasa) the nuru" (Mankhelu). Amongst the Hlabis, the ndakazi is called *hingakaya*, viz., closing the way home. It is not taboo to kill it, but the hunter must shout, when throwing the assagai : "Kaya! Mawako!" i. e. "May I return home!" If the antelope is swifter than the man and runs away (with a sound like kha!) the hunter will be lost in the bush : the animal will have *hinga kaya* viz., closed the way home. It will be necessary to *lurulula* the hunter, whether he has killed the antelope or not.

A third big antelope concerning which tales abound is the *kodoe* (*gantla*, Strepsiceros kudu), which is not uncommon in the Maputju country where I gathered the following information. The man who told me these stories, Movumbi, had a great admiration for the kodoe, whom he called the elephant's brother ; he said that the old males had between their horns a green snake which dwells there and warns them when there is any danger threatening them. This snake is their shikwembu (protective

224 genius ?) It is taboo to kill one of these old males : the hunter
825 who committed this fault would never kill another kodoe. It is taboo also to kill a young one first ; one must begin with a female ; later on the hunter may try for a male. He must not, however, kill it at once but only wound it ; the kodoe must not fall on the spot ; it must run away and the hunter must follow it for a long time, perhaps two days : "two days, it is all right." Should he find it resting on the ground, he must not shoot it in that position, but whistle in order to make it stand up ; then only he may shoot. The nuru of the kodoe enters a root, as in the case of the eland and the ndakazi. The protective medicine prepared from this root, powdered and mixed with fat, is employed as an ointment beneath the eyes, and behind the ears and the knees in order to "strengthen the bones." This is the lurulula rite in the case of the kodoe. There is also a *luma*, rite of the first mouthful (see later on). It is performed by eating ritually a piece of the muscle which lies between the heart and the lungs, and which is the chief hunters' medicine (p. 60).

There do not seem to be any special laws in regard to the other antelopes except the *duiker* (*mhunti* Cephalophus grimmi). The first duiker killed by a hunter must not be eaten by him ; it must be left for his parents. Should he transgress this rule, "his heart would be disgusted" and he would lose any further interest in hunting. When a duiker falls first into a game pit it is necessary to "blow over it" (huhutela) ; if this precaution is neglected, the pit will not catch anything in future. According to Madyashikulu the operation is performed as follows. The hunter chews a little of the magic root of the kind of juncus called *ndjao* which, as we have already stated, plays a great part in Thonga ritual, and blows pieces of it over the duiker all round its body on both sides, ending with the head ; the aim of the operation would seem to be in some way to collect the nuru which is distributed over the whole body, and to convey it into the head in order to let it come out through the nostrils. If the rite is properly accomplished the game pit will succeed in catching any number of buffaloes, gnus, antelopes, etc., whilst if the precaution is neglected no other animal will be obtained henceforth. In this case the "huhutela" is performed

not so much to prevent an attack of insanity as to guarantee further success in hunting. Should the hunter have killed a duiker after a long pursuit, the dog which started the chase must also be lurulula. The hunter cuts off one of the hoofs of the duiker, makes a notch in the cleft of the hoof and blows the ndjao into it : then he buries the hoof, calls the dog and shows it the place where it has been buried. The dog will then scratch, find the hoof and run away with it. This lurulula will help both the hunter and the dog to become greater adepts in hunting, the dog learning to follow the trail and the hunter identifying himself so much with bush life and bush animals that these will not be afraid of him and he will be able to approach them.

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825

We now pass to the three largest animals of the country, those which could hardly be killed except by the collaboration of a considerable body of men ; they are also the three beasts which are "climbed" i. e. on the carcase of which the hunter climbs to perform the lurulula rite; these are the hippopotamus, the elephant and the rhinoceros.

There are a certain number of herds of *hippopotami* (mpfubu) in the lower part of the Nkomati river, from the Khosen country down to the sea. Natives have noticed that these herds consist of eight to ten females with a single male. When a female is just about to give birth to a young one she emigrates to some lonely creek ; if the young one is a female, she returns with it to the herd ; if it is a male, she leaves it in the creek and joins the herd alone, but comes every day to feed her offspring. Should she take it to the herd at once, the old male would kill it immediately, as the master of a herd is terribly jealous and tolerates no other male near him. The young male grows alone ; when he feels himself strong enough to attempt the venture, he goes to the herd and engages his father in battle ; he will probably be chased away, mauled, half killed ; but he will come again the following years till he succeeds in overcoming the old bull, who will in his turn fly with one of his old faithful females and found a new herd, or perhaps die miserably. These herds always keep to the same region. When a canoe passes through these dangerous spots, the backs of the hippopotami are seen from far off emerging from the

224 825 water, and Natives point to them saying: "The mapseko!" *Pseko* is the name given to old pots employed in connection with the cooking operations (to cook, ku pseka); they are turned upside down in the fire-place and the pots containing the food are placed on top of them. The backs of the hippopotami are like these inverted old black pots and that is why these animals are called after them. It would be dangerous to call them by their own name; they might become angry if they knew that they had been noticed...

224 789 I owe to Mboza a graphic description of the rules of hippopotamus hunting. There are a few villages, near the Nkomati or other rivers, whose inhabitants are regular hippopotamus hunters, and possess the special science, or art, called *butimba*; the hunters themselves are called *batimba*. This science is hereditary: it is taught by the father to his sons. These men possess a peculiar drug, the *mbangulwa*; when the hunter is inoculated with this, he acquires a special power over the hippopotami: should he wound one of them, the beast will not be able to go very far, and it will be possible to follow it and quickly find it. But this inoculation makes the man very dangerous to his fellows: should he beat any one, that person will be at once seized by a disease which will prevent his passing water or stools.

224 835 This is the manner in which these batimba hunt. During the day, the hunter fishes, watching the movements of the hippopotami all the time. When he sees that the propitious moment has come and is ready to undertake hunting operations lasting a month, he first calls his own daughter to his hut and has sexual relations with her. This incestuous act, which is strongly taboo in ordinary life, has made him into a "murderer": he has killed something at home; he has acquired the courage necessary for doing great deeds on the river! Henceforth he will have no sexual relations with his wives during the whole campaign.

224 [789] Before starting he calls his principal wife, the one to whose care the butimba magic drug is committed, and both expose their bodies to the smoke of a medicinal pill. On the same night,

825 791 The reader must certainly have noticed the curious connection established by Mboza between hippopotami and wizards. As we shall see when studying the witchcraft theory, wizards are supposed to have the power of *sending* wild animals to kill their victims. Here the idea is somewhat different. In the three stories which I have collected and of which I give a literal translation, the wizards have become the masters of the hippopotami and ride upon them during the night : they are the maleficent agents who induce these animals to play havoc in the gardens of the people. Two of the stories are supposed to have taken place in the Khosen country, the other lower down on the river, at a spot called Shihahlu. Let us begin with this one.

825 791 539 *First story.* "The wizards put a bit into the mouth of the hippopotamus and climb upon it. You cannot get the animal unless you first get its master. The 'phisa' knows the wizard because he possesses drugs more powerful than those of the wizard. At Shihahlu there was a hippopotamus which ventured to come out of the river even in daylight; it came on to the road and frightened the women passing there who had gone to buy food on account of the famine. They threw away their baskets in fear. The beast used also to go and plunder the fields. The chiefs called a very clever hunter and showed him where the hippopotamus used to come out of the river. This man, who was from Sihhahlu, swallowed his medicine and put on a great many amulets (timfisa) made of varan skin; he also took his tail, the tail of a young hippopotamus, went during the night to that spot and saw the beast ; there was fire on its back ; this fire belongs to the wizard. (Where do these lights come from? I do not know. Perhaps it is the work of the Devil!) The hunter returned home. Another day he went again and heard a noise in the water ; the hippopotamus came out of the river and the hunter saw rings round its ears and bracelets round its legs. He shot it and it died. Then he went to tell the chiefs. They came, and sure enough they found four bracelets on each leg and six rings on each ear. I saw them myself. It had put on all its ornaments ; but it was very thin because it was made to work hard for its master. We went to eat the meat of the hippopotamus which was thus adorned (longile)... During the night cries of mourning were heard on the Lombye rivulet. It was the masters of the hippopotamus who were mourning over it, and the next morning we found pieces of the blue cotton print which

is used by mourners hanging on the reeds where the hippopotamus had been cut open. These people had put them there to mourn their hippopotamus. As regards the hunter, he was given a reward of £ 6." 825 539 791

Second story. "A phisa called Shitjobeke from Matlotlo was called and shown where the hippopotamus used to emerge from the river. He went there during the night and saw its master on its back. He told him : 'So it is your hippopotamus which ravages the gardens. Hold it firm! I am going to kill it.' The wizard answered : 'I beseech you, Khosa, do not kill it ; I will not come any more to spoil the mealies!' The hunter let him go and went away. Next evening the animal came out again, its master on its back. The hunter possessed a drug by which he could kindle the lights on the back of the hippopotamus. He saw the wizard and said : 'My friend, now hold it fast. I am firing! If you do not hold it I will kill you.' He fired and the master went away. The hunter remained on the spot fearing that the wizard might come back and ressuscitate it. Next day he told the chiefs to come and cut it open. He performed the lurulula ; he blew his ndjao over the legs, the belly, the chest, and the ears ; then they turned the beast over on the other side, and he did the same thing. They cut off the tail and gave it to him : the hunter uses this as a medicine ; he will mix it with other drugs and this will help him against the wizards ; they will no longer be able to come to him during the night and make him dream of hippopotami ; it will also give him the power of killing other hippopotami. Then they cooked the meat of the chest, which is a tit-bit. The divinatory bones showed who was to roast it and eat the first mouthful and then distribute their portions to the others. The bones often say also : 'If it is the meat of a male hippopotamus do not eat it in the village, eat it at such and such a place..." [789]

Third story. "There was another hunter, Mundjindji, of the Nyoka clan. His father had been killed by Heaven (lightning), because he possessed charms which he had got from the Ba-Sutho. This man used to dig up the corpses of the dead ; he dissected the skin of their foreheads and killed, (with the drugs thus obtained,) the boys who came back from the mines (magaisa). The Commandant (Portuguese Administrator) arrested him, and he was imprisoned in Lourenço Marques. He said : 'They are telling lies about me,' and he was released. However he killed some more people and was imprisoned for one month. Even now he is still doing it. He is a 'phisa.' They called him in to get rid of a hippopotamus which was annoying them. It was the Commandant who called him. He went to hunt it. For many

539 days he did not see it, but one day, at sunset, he took his canoe and
791 went on to the river. He took a red piece of cotton ; this was reflected
825 at the bottom of the river. The hippopotamus saw it there and came up to see what was the matter. The hunter fired at it ; he fired a second time. And lo! there on its back was the one who rides upon it! One of the balls pierced him whilst the other pierced the hippopotamus. The animal rushed towards the hunter, but he fired a third time and killed it. Next morning they found the hippopotamus floating on the water, dead. In the village also a man had died during the night, and they were mourning there. The hunter had said to the people : 'I have killed a man who was on the hippopotamus.' And on one side of the river people were eating meat whilst on the other side people were crying. But they did not lodge a complaint against him ; no action can be taken in such a case."

224 As regards *the elephant (ndlopfu)* it was the favourite object of
777 the chase, because killing one of these large beasts meant not only abundance of meat but also wealth on account of the ivory. Madyashikulu used to bring the tusks to Manukosi (Gungunyana's grandfather) who returned some of them to him, and with the money thus obtained the hunter could buy a wife. There are different systems of lurulula in the case of the elephant. The hunter takes a little of the tintebe powder (the charm of the slayers) pierces the eye of the beast, mixes the vitreum with the powder, adds drugs prepared from the end of the trunk and the tail and uses this mixture to overcome the nuru. A phisa of the Maputju country employed another method. He cut a piece of meat from the foreleg, cooked it, anointed it with powder from the calabash of the slayers, chewed it and began to blow it over the animal after having "climbed it." He then crept over the elephant in the same way as described above in the case of the hippopotamus, holding his gun in his hand the whole time. His comrades used to anoint him with a white medicine round both eyes. When he had returned home the treatment was continued by the administration of two vapour baths (mahungulo). He had to expose his body to the steam produced first by a decoction of various twigs, secondly by another decoction prepared from medicinal roots mixed with pieces of meat taken from a goat and from the elephant

itself. Afterwards he had to drink the broth and eat the meat. 224
The aim of the treatment was to enable him to kill more elephants. 777
In the case of the elephant as well as of the hippopotamus the chief 643
of the country has to perform the lurulula as well as the hunter "because he is the chief of all the animals of the country and he would be unable to govern it successfully if he did not do this."

The *rhinoceros (shibetshana)* is not common in Thongaland ; a 224
few of these animals are found in the extreme south of the Maputju 825
country. The same rules were observed when the hunters had succeeded in killing one ; but this is no easy task because, as Muvumbi said, the rhinoceros is terribly wild, as it has no "mapfalo." The mapfalo is a piece of cartilage which is found in all animals between the ribs, beneath the sternum ; it is the diaphragm ; it is also the seat of fear or of the conscience. It is this particular cartilage which throbs in the case of great fear. The rhinoceros has no mapfalo ; therefore it fears nothing and rushes savagely upon the hunter. Its meat is so delicious that when a man has tasted it he no longer wishes to drink water!

I never heard mention of the lurulula in connection with the 224
lion (*nghala* (Djo.), *ndjau* (Ro.). To avoid being mauled by lions 782
the hunters put into their mouths a little of every kind of food 825
mixed with their powerful drugs and spit it out to the four winds in order to appease the ancestor-gods of the country. Then if they meet with a lion, the wild beast, instead of rushing upon them, will look at them quietly, its saliva dropping from its mouth, and will do them no harm.

Strange to say the *buffalo* (nyari) has no nuru, and when I asked 825
why this was, my Maputju informant told me : "The buffalo is an ox." This answer may perhaps help us to understand something more about the nuru idea.

The statement regarding the *zebra* (mhangwa) is more curious still. "Mhangwa a yi lubiwi! Yi ni mabala ; i nala ; a yi ngeni hosin" viz. "No tax is paid for the zebra ; it is an animal with many colours (stripes) ; it is an enemy ; it must not enter the village of the chief." We have met with the same prohibition in connection with the village of the parents-in-law (I. p. 250).

As regards the *crocodile (ngwenya)* also called *shiwutlani-*

●825 *mintjeko*, the one who seizes even the calabashes (he is not satisfied with seizing the woman who goes to the river to draw water, but takes her calabashes also), I heard of a medicine-man in the Rikotjo country who knew the manner of blowing over it (huhutela). There are a number of stories told of crocodiles, for instance the story of a man who was caught by one of these terrible saurians and dragged into a creek where the crocodile intended to eat him later on. The half-dead man came to his senses, saw the sky through the dense reeds in which he had been left by his captor and eventually managed to escape!

There is still a great deal of picturesque Bantu lore to be gathered by listening to hunters telling their stories round the fire when travelling with them through the desert. I will add only two in connection with two smaller animals.

224 The *honey-eater*, *shinwabulombane* (Mellivora ratel) is a kind of
825 badger which lives on wild honey. It is said to proceed in the following way. It collects the honey from the hollow trunk where the bees have built their hive and takes it to a little distance. Should you have noticed it preparing its store, do not take the honey at once, but wait till it has finished its work. Then attack it ; this is however very dangerous, because the honey-eater has a special method of defending itself ; it rushes upon its enemy and tries to seize his testicles and tear them out with its claws. The honey-eater does not fear to attack even buffaloes by creeping under their body and serving them in this evil fashion ; afterwards it carefully buries the testicles... The hunter takes a branch of a very hard and thorny mimosa (the nkaya), and so keeps the animal at a distance and pierces it with his assagai. But the honey-eater has the faculty of swelling up and hardening its skin so much that it is very difficult to thrust an assagai through it. When the hunter has succeeded in killing it, the skin must go to the chief.

224 The *ant-eater (mpandana or sambane)* digs large holes in the ground. This is the method used by hunters to kill it. They send their dog into the hole, which is horizontal. The animal is inside, sleeping behind a protective wall of earth ; the dog pierces this wall and attacks it in its retreat. In the mean time the hunter digs a hole from above, some distance in front of the spot where

the ant-eater was sleeping. Attacked by the dog, the sambana 224
begins to burrow deeper into the earth; it reaches the spot where the hunter has dug his hole and tries to escape through this; but seeing that a man is waiting for it there, it suddenly turns back and returns to the opening of its burrow, where it is easily killed, notwithstanding the hard scales which cover its body.

Conclusion on the nuru idea and the lurulula rite.

I once asked old Makhani, the hunter who had suffered from an 775
attack of insanity because he had slain an enemy: "What is the nuru?" He burst out laughing, and this was the only answer I could get from him. I suppose an uneducated peasant of any European country would do the same if he were abruptly asked: "What is the soul?" An ethnologist, however, cannot rest satisfied with this avowal of ignorance or this utter want of interest. He must try to find an explanation, and some sort of an explanation is always likely to be found when we are dealing with beliefs which are not purely individual but which belong to a community.

The *nuru* (pl. miluru)—to sum up all the above accounts (see also I. 769
p. 478)—is a peculiar power possessed by man and by several wild 775
animals in virtue of which they avenge themselves on the person who 783
has killed them. This power resides in their body and appears to pass 825
out of it through their nostrils with their last breath. The fact of having killed a person or an animal *possessing the nuru* places the slayer in a state of dangerous contamination. It would sometimes appear as if the nuru had entered into him and remained sleeping in him, ready to awake in certain circumstances (I. p. 400). The danger connected with the nuru must be overcome by a special treatment; if this is not done, the nuru will cause an attack of madness and may even do great harm to the family of the slayer or hunter.

Let us try to go a step further in our analysis by putting the following 769
question: What is the relation between the *nuru* and the *shikwembu*, 775
first in relation to man, and secondly, as regards animals?

As regards man, we know that, for the Bantus, every human being at his death turns into a *shikwembu* and becomes an ancestor-god for his descendants and a hostile spirit as regards his former enemies. The shikwembu, roughly speaking, is the ghost of a deceased person. This

769 notion is clearly animistic. The shikwembu, as we shall see in the
775 VIth. Part, is a personal spirit to which prayers are addressed and offerings presented. The *nuru* is not personal. It is a power, an influence, a force of Nature. This is not a distinctly animistic idea. It belongs rather to the domain of Dynamism (See Part VI, Chapter I). Moreover any deceased person becomes a shikwembu, whilst the term nuru is used only in the case of a slain enemy, or in relation to strangers who died in a foreign country and were not properly buried. It is consequently clear that these two words nuru and shikwembu have not the same meaning ; they cannot be employed one for the other.

On the other hand there is a resemblance between the two ideas. Thongas believe that any shikwembu of a hostile tribe, and not only the shikwembu of an enemy slain in battle, can take possession of a man of their tribe and cause a disease very similar to that of the nuru at the outset (although it develops into something very different later on). This disease is a possession in the full sense of the word, and must be treated by exorcism, as we shall see in the Chapter on Possessions. Thus it is also clear that there is a similarity between the action of the nuru and of a hostile shikwembu. In the story told concerning slayers (I. p. 481, Note) we met with a typical case of nuru, ending in a sacrifice offered to the slain enemy. Undoubtedly the two ideas are connected, though not identical.

775 As regards wild beasts, the question does not arise, at least amongst
825 the Thongas. Despite the green snake found between the horns of the Kodoe, which my Maputju informant called its shikwembu, animals do not turn into shikwembu. They have only the nuru.

It would be interesting to know what the ideas of other Bantu tribes on the subject are, and I would urge students of African anthropology to inquire if the root *luru* exists in other Bantu languages and what its significance is. In his book on the *Ila-speaking people*, the Rev. Ed. W. Smith does not mention the exact corresponding term ; but he describes hunting rites which bear a close analogy to those we have met amongst the Thongas. I may mention specially the two following facts (Compare his Vol. I, p. 167 and II, p. 136). 1) When a hunter has killed an elephant and has "climbed" its body, a prayer is addressed to Leza, the Supreme Being, to the ancestral spirits (mizhimo) and to the ghost (muzhimo) of the deceased elephant. These are the words of this last prayer : "O spirit, have you no brothers and fathers who will come to be killed? Go and fetch them!" Here we meet with a tribe

which definitely believes that the animal becomes a shikwembu 775
(muzhimu). 2) When a person commits a murder, the ghost of the 825
deceased takes possession of the murderer, at least temporarily. Possession, amongst the Ba-Ila, is thus directly connected with murder. So far for the Ba-Ila. It is to be hoped that information as to other tribes will throw further light on the problem of the relation between nuru and ghost.

Considering the question only as it involves the Thongas I come 775
to the following provisional conclusion: The nuru idea is no doubt 783
very ancient, dating perhaps from a time when Animism was not 825
yet clearly distinguished from Dynamism, and when man was not even greatly differenciated from the animal. It originated in the instinctive fear which primitive man felt after shedding the blood of his fellow men and of certain particularly redoutable wild animals. This blood must be avenged (Compare the old saying of Genesis IV, 10[a]: The voice of thy brother's blood cries unto me from the ground. The vendetta custom which is so wide-spread is a further consequence of this natural feeling). Hence a peculiar remorse and the conviction that purification is necessary to remove the contamination involved or the malediction incurred. This remorse is absent in the case of domestic animals. For this reason the buffalo has no nuru; as my informant said: "The buffalo is an ox." Why does the shedding of ox-blood cause no fear? Probably because oxen are considered as the lawful property of their owner, who has the right of killing them, whilst the men of another tribe and the animals of the bush do not belong to him.

The *lurulula rite* above all is a *protective* rite aimed at the removal of 224
this dangerous nuru. This is proved etymologically by the fact that 775
this verb is a doubly reversive derivative. It comes from the root *luru* 783
to which is added twice the reversive suffix *ula* which means to remove, 825
to take away (Compare my Shangaan Grammar § 208). The blowing over (huhutela), which is a part of the rite, means the same thing. It is a magical proceeding which is often employed in order to combat hostile spirits or influences. But the lurulula has still another meaning for the professional hunters who so eagerly practise it: It is *a means of identification of the hunter with the animal world*, so that he will be able to live in its midst without being noticed and so kill more game. As my Ronga informant says: "By this operation the hunter takes upon himself the defilement of the animal (its smell, its nature) so that the other hippopotami, when they see him, mistake him for one of themselves; this man will therefore have great courage and will not run away when

224 they come to him," For this reason hunters strongly assert that should
775 he neglect to perform the rite he will have no success in his future
783 hunting expeditions. A third aim, at least in the case of hippopotamus-
825 hunting, is to overcome the charms of the wizards who ride upon them.

When studying these old hunting rites I had the impression of living for some hours in close contact with primitive humanity, at a time when man, owing to the elementary character of the weapons at his disposal, was almost on the same level as the wild beast and was obliged to display an enormous amount of courage, skill and endurance in order to assert his domination over the animal world and to make it serve his purposes. Since the discovery of gun powder and modern weapons a new era has set in for the hunter. Did not old Viguet assert that now, when an elephant is killed by means of a gun, the nuru is no longer to be feared? Hunting has become for the Bantu of to-day an amusing sport, more profitable indeed but by no means so interesting!

II. *Psinyama-nyamana. The flesh of small animals.*

136 This word which comes from the well-known Bantu word
262 nyama, meat, is a triple diminutive, obtained by the reduplication of the stem, the prefix *psi*, and the suffix *ana*. It means all kinds of food derived from animals of small size, of which the Thongas are very fond.

Anything in any way resembling meat is welcome to them. Amongst Mammalia they specially enjoy certain kinds of rodents, not the domestic rats, but field mice called maphephe and mabuti which boys catch in their traps. Civet cats (nsimba, yi-tin) and wild cats (goya, dji-ma) are not frequently seen near the villages.

136 As regards birds, they eat them all with the few exceptions
222 which I shall shortly mention, from the tiniest sparrow to ducks
262 and Guinea fowls, which they manage to snare. They have no aversion to the lower types of animal : they collect the *matomane*, large caterpillars belonging to a species of Saturnidae called Cirina similis (Dist), which are found in families on the nkanye tree, during October. By the exercise of a gentle pressure on the hideous creatures, the inside is squeezed out, and the rest is thrown

136 try to fly; but they soon fall to the ground and you see them
222 running towards each other and shedding their slender transparent
262 wings, so that they remain on the spot, like worms, creeping slowly along, unable to defend themselves, an easy prey for the birds and the *shinana* toads, which have a grand feast on the happy day when winged termites appear! Those which happen to emerge where the hole has been dug, try to escape by flying, but are prevented from doing so by the covering of leaves. They at once fall heavily to the bottom and roll into the pot, which may become quite full in a few hours. The owner of the trap then comes and makes a splendid sauce with its contents! This kind of termite is not met with on the Coast.

I cannot enter into details as to all these more or less questionable foods. (See I, p. 65, the mention of the Shitambela beetle.)

262 Although the caterpillars, coleoptera, larvae, and locusts are universally appreciated, there are other "meats" which appeal to certain individuals or clans, but are disdainfully eschewed by others. For instance the boa is eaten with great gusto by the Rongas and disliked by the Nkunas. The same is true of the big varan lizard. The tortoise is generally eaten, but the Mpfumu boys, who esteem themselves more civilised, reject it. On inquiring why some persons or clans exclude certain kinds of meats which other persons or clans consider delectable, we find that there are two different reasons for this, between which it is important to differentiate. The exclusion is due either to a *nyenya*, viz., disgust, or to a *yila*, viz., a taboo.

1) Owing to *disgust*, some people refuse to eat *pork*: "their hearts fear it," probably because pigs are modern and some people are not yet accustomed to eat their flesh. Zulus reject every
262 kind of fish (nhlampfi) from the same feeling of disgust. Snails
777 are despised by all the Thongas; it is true that the snail of the
825 country (Natica Wesseliana) is not very tempting, its shell being of a transparent green and its flesh reddish; moreover it is said to "singita," viz., to bring bad luck to any one meeting with it on the way.

262 But the flesh of some other animals is abstained from, even
826 dreaded, because they *yila*, they are taboo. Thongas have no

totems, and do not exclude certain meats from their diet on account of totemic fears. But they proclaim as taboo some animals: amongst them four kinds of birds, the hawk, the vulture, the crow and the stork, because they are used by magicians to prepare powerful charms; the toad, because when teased its "urine" (murundju) oozes out and is dangerous, causing itch, as is generally believed; a kind of Tenebrionida beetle (Psammodes Bertoloni), called *shifufunu sha paripari*, because it strikes the ground with its abdomen, making a noise represented by the word *baribarr*. I could not discover the particular danger feared by the Natives in connection with this beetle, but there must be one; hence the yila. We have already met with the special feminine taboos as regards food (I. p. 183). Women abstain from certain animals, or parts of animals, fearing an evil effect on parturition. Amongst the Nkunas, women are also afraid of the meat of the leopard, the civet-cat, of any animal with paws (psa marubo); they only eat animals which have hoofs (psa masondjo). "The former are wild beasts, things of the hubo (I. p. 311), with a bad smell, food for men" (Mankhelu). 262 826

The comparison of *nyenya* and *yila* is interesting, as it may help to explain the origin of certain taboos, which is a very important subject indeed. The nyenya is the feeling of disgust which [illegible]ces a person to abstain from a given food; in the yila there is, [illegible]ion, the dread of a supposed danger connected with the consumption of this food. Thus there is a great difference between the two: the idea of danger does not exist in the nyenya. However, it is quite possible that what was merely a nyenya has evolved, in the course of time, into a real yila or taboo, in which the disgust is no longer the mere individual repulsion for a distasteful food, but has become a social matter, a characteristic custom of a clan, or of a group. 262 784

Let me quote two instances which came under my personal notice. Amongst my servants was a young man belonging to the Ngoni clan. The Ba-Ngoni, being of Zulu origin, do not eat fish. Sometimes the cook put shrimps into the ground nut sauce: this was a treat to all the boys, as they are very fond of shrimps and the addition greatly improved the flavour of the dish. But our Ngoni boy, having smelt the "bouse," used to inquire about the sauce, and if he heard that there

when

226 the fishing is finished, they all sit down and compare their catches.
651 Perhaps an enormous barbel has been caught, "the king of the lake," as these fish sometimes attain a very large size. "Woo! a dle ñhwakwe!" — "Oh! he has killed his mother," say the men, making fun of the fortunate fisherman! But the chief sends an induna who levies the tax. Each fisherman unties one fish from his string and gives it to him.

226 The tjeba fishing is practised all over Thongaland, in Ronga
782 territory, where such ponds are numerous in the sandy hollows, amongst the Hlabis, and in the neighbourhood of rivers where there are lagoons which dry up, as far as the Maluleke country. Should there be crocodiles in the pond, which may very well happen when the lake is connected with the Limpopo or the Nkomati, the religious ceremony is more important on account of the danger incurred. Then the bones are thrown and declare who must make the offering in order to secure adequate protection from the ancestor-gods. The officiator enters the lake first, and, plunging his shiranga into the water, says : "If you are here, crocodile, go away! you hyena, do not bite." Amongst the Maluleke, a man of the Ba-Nyai tribe must perform the religious ceremony, as the Ba-Nyai were in the country before the Thongas. He must go first and catch a fish, bring it out alive, and then, surrounded by his fellow Ba-Nyai, offer it to his ancestor-gods. Then he throws it back into the water. The Thonga chief, having ordered his men to keep silence, then makes the following proclamation in a loud voice : "Let the fish abound, and kill them all, but do not bewitch each other!"

226 The Hlengwes have a very curious custom which I have already
825 explained when discussing the Bantu notion of sexual relations
839 (I. p. 189). When they *tjeba* they take a little boy and a little girl, and lay them down together under a lion's skin, as if they were husband and wife, during all the time that they are fishing. The children keep quiet, — so the fish will also keep quiet and not swim away. When the fishing is concluded, these children are "awakened," and are given a part of the catch : they are praised and thanked, as they are supposed to have secured the fish by their action... or rather by their inaction! This very significant

rite may explain why sexual relations are prohibited during all 226
important hunting and fishing operations. With their magic 825
conception of Nature, Bantus do not separate the domain of man 834
from the animal world ; human actions have their immediate effect amongst animals. So if men and women keep strict control over themselves, hippopotami, fish or elephants will not be so wild, and hunters will have more success!

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* *

Meat is either boiled (pseka), or roasted (wosha). When 252
boiled, the broth is called *muru*, (Ro.) or *sheshebo*, (Dj.) the same name that is given to monkey nut sauce or any other seasoning. When roasted, it is either placed on the embers, or skewered on sticks (lihanga) and exposed to the heat of the fire.

The blood of animals (bubendje) is also eaten by most men. 262
However, many fear it (tshaba), not on account of a yila, as if it were taboo, but rather from individual loathing. There are no special laws to be observed as regards bones. The meat of sacrifices, offered in the funeral rites, must be eaten *on the road*, not in the mortuary nor in the guests' villages, as we have already seen.

Meat is welcome, and eagerly sought after in time of famine 262
(ndlala). Should the October rains fail, or the crops be destroyed 731
by grasshoppers, as has been, alas, frequently the case since the [136]
first appearance of these pests in August 1894 (1), the Natives are bereft of every resource (2). They dig up all the edges of the

(1) Just at the commencement of the war between the Natives and the Portuguese, grasshoppers arrived in thick clouds in the district of Lourenço Marques. They had not been seen for a great number of years: old folk only recollected having seen them in bygone times. Since then the scourge has never entirely disappeared. The coincidence of their coming and the beginning of hostilities struck the Blacks very forcibly; they often said, at the sight of the grasshoppers: "They announce the armies of Gungunyane."

(2) Here is a pretty couplet with reference to famine:

Nkondjo wa nhlongana shipopokwana ?

— Lembe ra ndlala a he ngume kusuhe !

The traces of the little antelope (nhlongana) (which one sees in the desert a long way from its lair) recall the year of famine, when one does not stay near home ; (one must go a long way to search for food). See also the several allusions to the year of famine in *Les Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, p. 158, 160 et seq.

On their way back, they had carefully to watch a certain bird called *kwati*, fish-eater ; if this bird flew in the right direction, homeward, it was a hopeful sign. If it emitted its cry *kwekweru-kweru*, (kweru means at home), or if it settled on the crown of a hut, then the travellers were happy and shouted their joyful *mikulungwane*. On the contrary, if any member of the company had died on the road, another bird, the *magudjwana*, would come and perch on the crown, with a tired air and drooping head... Then there were tears instead of shouts of joy!

These great commercial expeditions were superseded later on by the *trade in skins* which the Ba-Ronga conducted, bartering them in the interior for powder or other European produce. I knew one Native who organised regular expeditions to Bilene, where he bought the skins of civet-cats with which the Zulu warriors delight to deck themselves. Thence he went into the hill country of the Swazis, or Zulus, to sell his merchandise. It was reported that he obtained scores of oxen in exchange for his precious nsimba skins. The last time, however, the venture did not turn out well, and it has not been attempted again.

Native trade, fifty years ago, consisted also in selling *wax*, and *rubber*, and tons of *nkampfi* (mafureira almonds) to the business houses at Delagoa, (the supply of ivory was exhausted years ago), but this trade has fallen off almost entirely. My impression is that Native commerce has greatly diminished during the last fifty years. So the fact is evident that civilisation, which at first gave a decided stimulus to the commercial spirit of the Thongas, has latterly almost entirely destroyed their trade. How has this been done?

One reason for this decrease in Native commerce may be found in the advent of a large number of Asiatics, Banyans from Goa and Bombay, who are past masters in the art of shopkeeping, and who set up in business wherever they consider there is a sufficient population to warrant the venture. Living very cheaply (rice and curry are their staple food), in any kind of shanty, selling at enormous profits, keen at making bargains, these people

rainbow; he dwells in heaven and the rainbow is his bow. He it is who taught men the use of the bow. 773 821

The two great phenomena which mostly impress South Africans are lightning and rain, and of these you hear wonderful and endless stories!

4) Lightning.

This is called *lihati* (li-tin), and is said to be caused by a bird called *ndlati* (yi-tin). These two words, etymologically speaking, seem to be related to each other. They possess the feminine suffix *ti* which is met with in the forms *eti, ati, oti*. This bird is also called *nkuku wa tilo* amongst the Ba-Ronga, the cock of heaven, or *psele dja tilo*, the hen of heaven, and magicians know how to determine its sex when the bird has fallen. 821 825

The thunder is attributed either to the bird itself or, more frequently, to Heaven. The proper expression for "It thunders" is: "Tilo dji djuma" — "Heaven roars."

In the Northern clans those who practise magical arts add many other particulars to the story, some of which may have been borrowed from the Pedi magicians, who seem to possess a more complete explanation of the phenomenon. According to them, the *ndlati* (Pedi, *dali*) is a bird of four colours, green, red, black and white, which lives in the mountains, by preference at the confluence of rivers. The medicine-men of former times knew its hiding place and had even found the eggs of the bird in a nest floating on the water. When a thunderstorm breaks, the bird flies to heaven into the clouds; there may be scores of them, but one only will be dangerous (lebya) and cause death. It rushes down to the ground, striking a tree on its way, tearing its bark and its wood, and throwing it down; or it falls on a hut and burns it, or on a man and kills him. Having reached the soil, the bird can be caught, and I heard people seriously assert that four of these birds, unable to fly away, had been found the previous year in Sikororo country. Or the bird enters the ground, to a depth of two to three feet, and either remains there in its own form, or (this is the most common saying) deposits its urine (murundju), 821 825 795

821 which had caused the flash of lightning, and flies away back to
825 the mountains. The magician who understands the "treatment
791 of Heaven" comes and digs at the spot; there he finds a kind of gelatinous substance which solidifies after a little time. I possess a little of this curious drug given to me by a Pedi magician, by name Mudjumi; it resembles a piece of chalk, and is considered very valuable on account of its rareness, and because it is used in the manufacture of the wonderful medicine of Heaven. Should a village have been struck by lightning, the magician of Heaven will come and dig out this foreign body; if he finds it, the taboo is removed. If he does not, the whole village must move to another place. In the same way, it is taboo to warm oneself at a fire made of the wood of a tree that has been struck by lightning, or to use it as fuel.

The flute of Heaven.
Drawn by J. Weare.

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Happily this dreadful bird can be prevented from killing and burning by magical means. Both the Pedi Mudjumi and the Thonga Makasane possessed the enchanted flute, by which they could force Heaven — or the bird of Heaven — to spare them. Mudjumi having sold me his flute, I can describe it at length. It is made of a hollow bone five inches long, covered with Varan skin, filled at its larger extremity with a black substance like wax. Inside, to keep it clean, there is a vulture's feather. The bone is said to have been taken from the ndlati bird; the wax substance was made from powder obtained by drying up and pulverising a little of the heart, the eye, the bones, the feathers, and the flesh of the bird. In the wax are embedded three seeds of Abrus precatorius, the "lucky bean" well-known in South Africa, a round seed of a splendid coral colour with a black spot, very much used in Thonga magic. This addition of Abrus precatorius intensifies the sound of the flute and enables it to reach heaven.

When travelling through the country, you may come across a tree round which a rag has been tied, evidently for some religious purpose. One's first idea would be that this tree is worshipped, but this is by no means the case. The tree is probably that which the divinatory bones have singled out as the one around which the village should be built, and the offering of this rag is made to the spirits of the ancestors, exactly as is done when the rag is placed near the grave, or at the door of the little hut built on it, in the case of those possessed. (See I. p. 141 and later on Chapter III). The tree is only sacred on account of this association. I have sometimes called the *Nkanye* a sacred tree, and the Thongas call it the king of trees, but it is not so in itself, or in virtue of any Nature spirit dwelling in it ; anybody can cut it without transgressing a taboo ; it is venerated because it provides the tribe with the national beer, and because its branches are used as pillows for the dead and its twigs as *mhamba* in the funeral service (I. p. 138). The religious and social *luma*, to which the bukanyi is subject (I. p. 397), is observed from fear of the ancestral spirits and not because the tree itself is in any way worshipped. In fact I never met with any worship offered to a plant as such. 824 769 778

VI. *The Animal World.*

Plants, *psimili or psa-ku-mila*, things which grow (ku mila), are distinguished from animals, called *psibandjana*, or *psihari*, which are said to *kula*, become great, and not *mila*. 815 136 825

The knowledge possessed by the Thongas with regard to animals is extensive. They give names to all the larger ones, especially, of course, to those which are eaten, but also to some which are smaller, insignificant and useless.

The *Annelida* are called by the generic name of *tinyokana*, diminutive of *nyoka* (yin-tin), snake ; leeches, *ntjundju* (mumi) ; lumbrics, *nhikwa* (yin-tin), both those living in the earth and parasites in the intestines of children.

Amongst *Myriapoda* the Julidese are called *Khongoloti* (dji-ma) ; the Millepedes, *Ndlandlalati* (yin-tin). When one of these has stung a Native, you will see him swallow a little earth, and a

815 mouthful of water after it, to prevent swelling. "The milleped
136 will die at once and you will not suffer much, because you have
825 been wiser than it (u yi rangelile butlharin)."

The same precaution is taken with regard to Scorpions, *shiphame* (Dj.), *mubalane* (Ro.). Other Arachnida are Spiders (*pume* (dji-ma) *ripe* (dji-ma), Ticks *(shikalana)*, and the Itch *(shinwayana)*, which Thongas know but too well without being aware that it is caused by a microscopic animal. To this group probably belongs the *maroda*, a parasite met with in the huts of Bilen and other remote parts of the country, whose bite causes actual disease.

The *insect world*, so richly represented in Tropical countries (1) is pretty well known, though many of its representatives are of no practical use to the Natives.

Orthoptera. Acridius peregrinus, the locust which ravages the fields, is called *humbi* (yin-tin) in Ronga and *ndjiya* (yin-tin) in Djonga. (See p. 81). The first "clouds" which appeared greatly impressed the Natives when they were seen at the beginning of the war of 1894. I heard some one say that this phenomenon had been foretold by a "mulungwana," a little man fallen from heaven to announce this calamity which threatened the land. (See next Chapter). Other Acridians are called *mhera* (yin-tin); the larvae of locusts, which abound at certain times in the gardens, are the *hondje* (yin-tin). The Pamphygus, a fat, heavy, grey locust, the female apterous, are called *phuphu* (dji-ma). The Grillus is *Shiyendhwa* (shi- psi), and is eaten by some. But the best known Orthoptera are those of the Mantidae family whose representatives are numerous in the country. They are called *Ñwambyevu* (Dj.) or *Ñwambyevulane* (Ro.), viz., the one which cuts the hair, probably on account of its claws, which move like
825 scissors. This insect plays a great part in the superstitions of the
769 Bushmen, who worship it. Amongst the Thongas there is a similar custom ; young shepherds, when they meet with a Mantis,

(1) See my publications on the Entomology of Delagoa Bay; I. *Coleoptera*, in collaboration with Dr. Bugnion ; II *Orthoptera*, by Dr. A. von Schulthess Rechberg ; III *Hemiptera* by Prof. Montandon in the "Bulletin de la Société vaudoise des Sciences Naturelles." XXV, p. 132-220; IV), *Lepidoptera*, "Bulletin de la Société Neuchâteloise des Sciences Naturelles" Tome XXVII, p. 177-250.

tear out a little hair from the skins of their belt and offer it to the insect saying : "Take, Grandfather!" They say that in old times they were looked on as gods (psikwembu), or rather emissaries of the ancestor-gods, just like the little green snakes (Chapter II) ; their name was Mahulwahulwane, and when one of them entered a hut, no one interfered with it, as it was thought that perhaps some god had come to pay a visit to his descendants. These ideas regarding Mantidae seem to be now disappearing and the offering made to them is merely a little children's game. Another Orthoptera is the *Shipfalapfapfa*, an onomatopoeia, describing a flying locust, and the *Shishirikoko*, a large species which emits saliva through its thorax. When it flies the Thongas say to it : "Go to the place where people eat meat!"

Hemiptera. Bugs are well, too well, known in Thongaland, having taken up their abode in most of the huts, where they are tolerated. They are called *Nsiketi* (yin-tin) and the wild bugs *Nsiketi ya nhoba*, bug of the bush. Lice, *Nhwala* (yin-tin), are regarded as vermin, and often as the result of bewitchment, especially when seen swarming on children. Many Aphidae (grubs) cause an exudation on certain shrubs, a kind of wax, the *Mubodi*, which is used for the manufacture of the black crowns (I, p. 130) ; others are called *Shibungubungu*, the red ones, probably a kind of cochineal.

Neuroptera. *Diptera*. The equivalent of these names of flies is *Nhongana* (yin-tin). Mosquitoes are called *Busuna* and fleas *Butseka*, with the prefix *bu* which here means a collection, a great number. *Busokoti*, a similar word, designates ants. The big gad-flies are the *Bawa* (dji-ma). The Libellulidae are called *Mungutane* (mu-ba) and the Termitideae *Muhlwa* (mu-mi).

Lepidoptera. Butterflies and moths are designated by a single word, *Phaphalati* (Dj. Notice the feminine suffix), or *Phaphatane* (Ro.) (dji-ma), and their caterpillars by the term *Hukwa* (yin-tin) or *Tomane* (dji-ma), this last word especially applying to the large Saturnidae caterpillars which are eaten by the Natives (p. 80). The relation between the caterpillar and the butterfly is not generally known ; only once did I find a boy who knew that a certain white cocoon, used as an ornament in dances (p. 102) gave

136 birth to the big green moth with long tails, the Queen Moth. The
815 reason why butterflies, though plentiful in Thongaland, have so little attracted the attention of Natives is, no doubt, the fact that they do not in any way contribute to their food. I have told the story of a woman who tried to force a child to eat a butterfly. (I. p. 445.)

136 *Coleoptera.* The general term for Coleoptera is *Shifufunumu*, and it especially applies to the big Tenebrionidae (Psammodes
826 Bertoloni), called *shifufunumu sha paripari* (p. 68) and to the large
777 black Carabidae of the Anthia genus which abound on the roads in spring ; one of them, marked with small depressions on the elytra is, for that reason, called the small-pox shifufunumu (sha nyedzane). Travelling once with a grown-up Thonga we saw a black Carabida which had four white spots on the back. It was the charming Eccoptoptera mutilloides. I saw him trace a circle round it in the sand saying : "To-day I shall eat to my heart's content!" — "Namunhla ndji ta shura!" — "What are you doing?" I said. — "Oh! This is the *Shurwa-shurwane*," he answered. "When you meet it it is a sign that you will have plenty to eat!" He was mistaken! The real shurwa-shurwane is the Mutilla, a kind of apterous wasp, which has also four white spots on its back, and the beetle we met was so similar to it that he mistook it for a Mutilla ; is it not called mutilloides, pseudo-mutilla? (1)
136 — The Copridæ are called *Gadlen* (dji-ma) and these strange
[753] dung-eaters, which are extremely abundant in the country, are thought to be under the command of the wizards who can introduce
825 them into your body to kill you. The pretty Cerambycidæ,
262 with their long horns, are the *Ñwahomurikotjo*, the ox of Rikotcho, or, according to a truer etymology, the ox with horns bent backwards (kotjeka). Children sing an incantation before them, clapping their hands (I, p. 68). Their big white larvae, the *Shipungwana*, dig channels in the stems of nkanye, nkuhlu, mphesa, etc., and are readily eaten as well as the *Shimhukuta*, the

(1) This custom reminds one of the action of Swiss children when they send the ladybird to heaven, to ask God to give them fine weather to-morrow, or of their saying that crushing a golden Carabus on the road will cause rain to fall. Certain Coleoptera are of good omen everywhere! Only, if in Europe they forstell fine weather, in Africa they announce a good meal. The difference is significant!

136 larva of a large Calandra which swarms in the stems of the palm
825 trees of the marsh (p. 4). The *Shitambela*, a big Buprestida
262 (Sternocera Orissa) is roasted by the shepherds and eaten after they have torn off its elytra.

136 *Hymenoptera*. *Wasps* are called *Mupfi* or *Mupfu* (mu-mi),
755 and are divided into four different classes : the *Mupfu* proper (Belonogaster), the *Tlatlanhongana*, the *Bamaandlopfu*, a grey species, and the *Mumpfundlopfu*, a large black species which burrows in the soil. When someone has been stung by a wasp, the others laugh at him. If he resents being made fun of, they say to him : "Be not angry ; we do this to help you." They are really trying to divert his attention from the pain in order to
136 comfort him. *Bees* are called *Nyoshi* (yin-tin) and are greatly
262 appreciated for their honey (p. 44). Natives know the males
815 (*djongwe*, dji-ma) the larvae *(shipungwa)*, which they eat with as much pleasure as the honey itself. They call the honeycombs *hahla* (dji-ma) or *shihlenga*, the wax *mumpfu* (mu-mi) and the
136 pollen brought by the bees, *nsindjo*. The curious *Mbonga* (yin-tin)
825 *Bee* is worth special mention, owing to the superstitions which are current regarding it, and the part it plays in certain rites (I. p. 390). This species, which does not sting, digs a narrow passage of two or three feet deep in the soil and excavates a hole of one or two feet broad where it builds its round nest. Natives say that nobody knows what the mbonga does with the earth which it digs out of the cavity in which it makes its nest. No heap of earth is ever seen in the vicinity. The hole is continued under the nest and has no end. It probably extends to subterranean pools where the insects go to drink, — as it is said that no one has ever seen a mbonga drinking from the lake or the well, as the other bees do. Moreover the entrance to a mbonga nest is invisible to the majority of people. It is only certain families who can see it and consequently dig out the precious honey (1). For all these reasons the mbonga is

777 (1) The Libombo family was one of those "which the mbonga loves" (randja). Elias who belongs to it told me that he once paid a visit to one of his neighbours who had just cleaned his village; he discovered a mbonga hole and said to his friend: "There is a mbonga nest in your village." But the man was unable to find it. Elias then dug as deep as his shoulders and found the nest all surrounded by "calabashes" full of honey. He says that when rain falls the little bees cover the entrance of

136 surrounded with a certain mystery, and this is no doubt why its
825 honey is used in the manufacture of the *nyokwekulu*. Its scientific name is Trigona togoensis, var. Junodi (Friese).

136 Amongst the *Mollusca*, a great many are eaten : the *Mbatsana*
262 (yin-tin) of the sea (bivalve shells), *Likatla* (li-tin) of the lakes,
454 and the *Hwaru* (yi-tin), oysters of the Tembe shore. The land snails are called *Humba* (yi-tin) ; the big ones (Achatina Lamar-
787 kiana) are used as safes for the deposit of pounds sterling and are often buried in the huts ; hence the expression *Humba ya bupfundji*, shell of riches! The smaller ones, resembling our snails (Aerope caffra), are rarer and it is considered a bad omen to meet with them on the road. — "Where you go you will hear cries of mourning!" Their name is *Shikumbukwane*. The slugs are called *Holokompfa* (yin-tin) and the smaller snails, *Shihumbanyana*, diminutive of *humba*.

136 *Fish* all have names, but having never dwelt in the close vicinity
825 of the sea, I have not learnt them. I know the *Mfungwe* (yi-tin). the fish whose mouth ends in a saw, the *Mangapfi* (dji-ma), the
262 name of a kind of hawk given to the flying fish of Delagoa Bay, the *Nhempfane* (yi-tin) found in the fresh water ponds, the *Ntima* (yi-tin) the barbel, the black fish which must not be eaten by lovers before their marriage (I, p. 107).

136 *Amphibia*. *Ntlambya* (mu-mi) is the ordinary frog (Rana oxy-rhynca) whose young are known and called *Shilungula* ; another black species is the *Rebya* (dji-ma) ; the tree-frogs are called *Shilungwalungwana* (Rappia marmorata and argus) ; the toad *Kele* (dji-ma), Bufo regularis ; the famous Breviceps mossambicus is *Shinana* (I. p. 87) the great warrior of the tales (p. 221).

136 *Reptilia*. There are many kinds of *Lizards*. The common
825 kind found in the houses, under the verandas is the *Mponondjo* (mu-mi) (Mabuia striata), ; the Lygodactylus capensis, found on the hills, is the *Nkolombya* (mu-mi) ; the little Agama

777 the hole with their wings to prevent water from inundating the nest. When it lasts too long they quickly go down to close the entrance of the nest ; the water then leaks down the pipe which descends into the interior of the earth. He added : "If a man does not belong to a family which "knows" the mbonga and if he happens to find a nest he will meet with misfortune ; one of his relatives will die. The bees will bring him ill-luck (singita)."

aculeata, which runs on the sand, *Shipyindji* or *Shihonokamahlo*, 136
the one which gazes at you ; the large gheko, Agama atricollis, 825
with a head of which the grey colour can change into blue, *Galagala* or *Phululu* (dji-ma) (I. p. 173) the grey one, which hides itself in dark places, in hollow stems or under roofs is the *Hokokwana* (dji-ma) (Hemidactylus grenatus) ; it is said that when this lizard sucks at the breast of a human being, it is impossible to remove it, and the only means of getting rid of it is to go and suckle a dog!

But the most curious lizard of these countries, that which most 136
strikes the Native imagination is the Chameleon (Chameleon 825
Petersii), *Lumpfana* (dji-ma). Herd boys throw ground tobacco 789
into its mouth to avenge themselves for the bad turn it did mankind when it lingered on the road and came too late to bring the message of eternal life (as we shall learn in a moment). It is used by certain magicians to discover thieves. They smear a chameleon with a drug which makes it turn white and then let it go : "Then the thief, wherever he may be, also turns white, and if he does not confess his theft, he dies!"

The flesh of none of these lizards is eaten, but that of the big 136
Varan which lives near the rivers, *Kwahle* (dji-ma), is considered 825
a delicacy. The kwahle is said to be very hard to kill. About 262
Crocodiles (*ngwenya*, yin-tin) all sorts of stories are told. When 787
one of them has been killed, the contents of its stomach are carefully preserved ; Thongas assert that each year, when the rains begin, crocodiles swallow a stone, so that their age can be known by counting them. These stones are taboo ; for a subject to swallow them is a cause of death, but one of them is chosen, treated with certain drugs and swallowed by the chief to warn him of his death, as we have already seen (I, p. 393). Crocodile stones play an important part in divination. (See Part VI. Ch. III. D).

Tortoises, whose generic name is *Mfutju* (yin-tin), are eaten and also used in the divinatory art, as we shall see. Some lake tortoises are called *Gamba* (dji-ma) and sea tortoises *Hasi* (dji-ma).

Snakes (nyoka, yin-tin) are generally dreaded and considered 825
dangerous, although many kinds are quite harmless. The 136

825 *Shipyahla* (Ro.), *Mhiri* (yin-tin, Dj.) is the big, lazy, grey puff adder,
136 which creeps along the ground, and is one of the most venomous kinds, together with the *Mhamba* (yin-tin), a slender species, very swift and often found on trees. "When you meet a mhiri," say the Nkunas, "throw a little earth on it and you will soon see
[752] its brother!" Of course magicians have plenty of drugs to cure snake bites. For this purpose they use the head of the adder roasted and pulverised. *Shibatlankombe*, (Naja nigricollis), "the one which carves a spoon" is the name of a species which
[262] curves its neck till it looks like a spoon. The *Hhlaru* (yin-tin) is the boa. It is eaten. Another member of the Clapidae family is the *Likure*, a pretty greyish violet species (Causus Lichtensteinii).
[769] Amongst the harmless snakes are those little blue ones, *Shihundje* (Dendrophis subcarinatus), which are considered as emissaries of the ancestor spirits. I shall mention them again later on. The *Nsoma* (yin-tin), very common and harmless, is probably Dispholidus typus. Some small ones, not larger than worms, but hard and shining like metal, are called *Tumbi-tumbi*, because they hide (tumba) in the sand. One of them seems to be Xenocalamus bicolor.

825 There are also the legendary snakes of the Thongas. On the
777 Coast they speak of the *Buwumati*, which dwells in the lakes and is invisible. It is only heard crying "bu-wu-bu-wu" when rain is falling, and its voice is as loud as that of an antelope. If it shows itself to a traveller, it is a very bad sign. The story is told of a man who came back from consulting a bone-thrower. He saw the buwumati lying on the ground, its coils extending to a great distance, closing all the passages. He retraced his steps, but after three days he died. In the Transvaal, this dreadful snake is called *Shimhemhemhe*, the name being an imitation of its cry.
825 This superstition is perhaps of Pedi origin, but it has been accepted by the Nkunas. The shimhemhemhe dwells in certain dark woody ravines on the slopes of the Drakensberg mountains. If anyone imprudently penetrates there, the snake pursues him, creeping along the branches above, and bites him on the top of the head. A man met with it once on the way to Thabina; he saw it on the road, its head raised, a shining head of two colours. There

was no end to its body. He tried to avoid it by making a long circuit ; he reached home, but died because he had seen the snake which it is death to see! 825

Birds (Tinyanyana, yin-tin). As I have made no regular collection of birds, I cannot here give the scientific names corresponding to the vernacular ones. These are very numerous, and they are not always the same in the different clans. Here is the list which I made by questioning the pupils of my school who came from all parts of Thongaland : (1) 136

Palmipeda. *Sekwa* (dji-ma) duck. *Sekwanyari, Sekwamhala, Shikukubi,* (Mal. Kho.). *Ñwafamben* (Mal. Nku.). *Shihlakahlcka, Lingubi* (Mal.). *Shiyankaken, Tutwana,* (Mpf. Bil.). *Ngululwana* (yin-tin), (Mpf.).

Long-legged birds. (Tinyanyana ta psikokoko). *Kukolwe* (Mpf. Bil. Mal.). *Munyangana, Ñwantjangantjangana* (mu-ba) (Mpf.). *Makhondjwawa, Gumba* (dji-ma), *Mayiwabembe, Tshebane* (Mal.). *Mugalandlopfu* (Mpf. Mal.) ; *Tshembyana* (Mal.). *Tjololwane* (Mal. Mpf.). *Yindwa, Randjane,* (Kho. Mal.). *Ñwamahlanga* (Mpf.). *Mampfana,* or *Shisibaliyendjo* (I. p. 339).

Gallinacea. *Huku,* domestic hen. *Nkuku* (mu-mi cock. *Hwari* (yin-tin) partridge. *Mhangelane* (yin-tin), Guinea fowl. *Shitjatjatja* (Mpf. Nku.). *Nkungu* (Mpf.). *Matjyatjyana* (Nku.). *Teentana, or keenkana* (dji-ma), quail, (Mpf.). *Nkwahla,* (Mpf. Kho.). *Hukumati,* (Mpf. Nku.). *Mangoko* (Mal.). *Makokwe,* or *Makwekwe* (Mpf.). *Hlokoyo* (Mal.). *Shibotshe* (Mal.). *Djyedjyedjye,* (Mal.). *Ndjendjenle* (Mal.). *Ndura,* (Nku.). *Ngukulukwana* (Nku.), or *Shitiwitiwi* (Mpf.). *Nkulunkulu* (Mpf. Kho.) a splendid bird, red, green and blue, called the bird of the chiefs, because chiefs used to adorn themselves with its feathers ; it is the Gallirex porphyreolophus.

Pigeons. *Tuba* (dji-ma), pigeon. *Shibambalana,* or *bombokonyi* (Mpf.) ; same as *Mbabawanyi* (Nku. Mal.). *Gororotwana* (Mpf.) corresponds to *Gugurwana* (Mal. Kho.). *Nyakungufe* (Mpf.) corresponds to *Kopolo,* or *Mangobolo* (Nku. Mal.). *Ngalane* or *Shidjwapepe* (Mal.).

(1) Abbrev. Mal. = Maluleke ; Kho. = Khosa, Antioka ; Nku. = Nkuna ; Mpf. = Mpfumo ; Bil. = Bilene ; Spel. = Spelonken.

136 Sparrows. *Mbawulwane* (yin-tin), (Mpf.) or *Mbeulwane* (Kho. Nku.) swallow. *Psikidyana* (Spel. Mal.). *Tinhwana* (Mpf. Bil.). *Tinkata* (Kho.). *Nkapa* (mu-mi) (Mpf.). *Nsongwana*, (Mpf.). *Nhlekwana*, *Tshamatisa*, *Shindjengeletana* (Mpf. Nku.). *Nadwangafolen* (mu-ba) (Mpf.). *Ñwamutjalatana* (mu-ba) (Mpf.). *Lidjadjana*, (Spel. Mal.). *Timhatana* (Mpf.). *Tinhelwa* (Mpf.). *Ngodzi* (Spel. Mal.). *Khwezu*, *Kololwana*, etc., *Sowa* (dji-ma), sparrow.

Creepers, *Gongondjwane*, lit. the one who knocks. *Shitjemahangala* (Mal.). *Munywane* (Mal.). *Ngobo* (Nku). *Hokwe*, *Ndhlazi*, *Nkoro*.

Rapaces. *Gama* (dji-ma) eagle. *Khoti* (dji-ma) vulture. *Shikotana*, *Mangapfi*, *Shimungu*, *Shihununu*, (Mpf.), or *Khukhunu* (Kho. Mal.). *Shikotlwane*, *Hwati*, *Fukwana* (dji-ma). —*Manhengana*, etc.

Runners. *Yintjya* (yin-tin), ostrich.

●825 Some birds are the objects of superstitious ideas. First, the mythical lightning bird whose story has been told p. 313. Then the Mampfana, the one who stops travellers (I. p. 339), and the Nhlalala. The *Nhlalala* is the honey-bird. It is a little sparrow of a greyish colour. When a traveller crosses the uninhabited country, it calls his attention by emitting short and repeated cries ; it jumps from one branch to another and does not rest until it has induced the traveller to follow it. It then leads him to a hollow stem where bees have gathered honey. The fortunate wayfarer can eat to his heart's content and afterwards gives the bird the wax. If he desires to be shown a second tree, he has only to burn the wax : the nhlalala not having had its full share of the treat will lead him to another stem, hoping for another chance ; there is so much honey in the second spot that you will certainly leave some for your kind guide! Such are some of the stories told by a boy named Pikinini about the honey-bird.

224 *Mammalia*. My information, on this subject, is far from complete. One ought to join a Native hunting party, and hear the hunters tell their mighty deeds round the fire in the evening, if one wishes to acquire all their knowledge and learn all their queer ideas about the beasts of the bush, which they have carefully observed, and regarding which a great number of stories are in circulation (p. 63-76).

circulation (p. 63-76). I shall have to content myself with giving the names of some Mammalia and relating some superstitions concerning them. 136

Edentata : two kinds are known, the *Mpandjana* (yin-tin), the ant-bear, which is covered with hair, and the *Kwara* (dji-ma) which has scales. The only Cetacea known is the *Nkomu* (yin-tin), the whale.

Solipedes : *Mangwa* (yin-tin) means zebra, and this term is sometimes applied to horses ; this latter animal is called *Hanshi* (dji-ma), evidently a corruption of the English word. *Mbongolo* (yin-tin), donkey. *Mula* or *Mewula*, mule.

Pachyderma : *Ngulube* (yin-tin), wild boar and also, by extension, domesticated pig. *Mpfubu* (yin-tin), hippopotamus.

Ruminantia : *Homu* (yin-tin), ox. *Nyari* (yin-tin), buffalo. *Hamba* (yin-tin, Ro.), *Nyimpfu* (yin-tin, Dj.), sheep. *Mbuti* (yin-tin), goat. *Mhalamhala* (yin-tin), sable antelope, Hippotragus niger. *Mhala* (yin-tin) (Zulu impala). *Mhunti* (yin-tin), duiker *Hongonyi* (yin-tin), gnu. *Mangulwe* (mu-ba). *Mhetlwa* (yin-tin), water buck. *Nhlangu* (yin-tin), reed buck. *Mhofu* (yin-tin), eland, *Nhutlwa* (yin-tin), giraffe, etc.

Proboscidea : *Ndlopfu* (yin-tin), elephant.

Rodentia : *Mpfundla* (mu-mi), hare, *Nhlolo* (yin-tin), rabbit. *Khondlo* (dj -ma), mouse. *Vondo* (dj -ma), *Phephe* (dj-ma), *Ngole* (yin-tin), etc.

Insectivora : *Shitlulandlela*, mole, lit. the one which crosses the road ; it is a bad omen for a mole to cross your path. *Tjukunyana*, a brownish mole which digs its burrows just below the surface of the ground. Hence the fact that a bracelet made of its skin is employed as medicine against the Filaria, a parasite which makes its way under the skin! 136 777 825 755

Carnivora : *Nsimba* (yin-tin), civet cat. *Shipakana*, cat. *Mbyana* (yin-tin), dog. *Mhini* (yin-tin), hyena. *Hlolwa*, *Nhlati* (mu-ba), fox. *Yingwe* (yin-tin), leopard. *Ndjau* (Ro.), *nghala* (Dj.), lion, etc. 136

Chiroptera : *Tangadana* (dji-ma, Ro.), *Mangadyana*, (mu-ba. Dj.), bat.

Primates : *Mfene* (yin-tin), baboon. *Habu* (yin-tin), monkey.

826 Monkeys are thought to be degenerate human beings, who have lost the habit of working and tilling fields, and thus fallen into their present miserable condition.

815 The collection of Native names of animals which I have compiled
192 is interesting ; first from the linguistic point of view, for purposes of comparison. Bantu philology needs such lists of words on which to base its conclusions. Let me point out that there seems to be a great uniformity in the various South African dialects as regards the names of large animals, the root being the same although the names have been differentiated by the regular phonetic permutations (1) ; names of trees, on the contrary, vary very much, even from one Thonga clan to the other. But these names also interest us as throwing some light on the Bantu conceptions of Nature. The notion of *genus* is not so marked as amongst plants. It is not, however, absent. The different kinds of ducks are called *sekwa*, sekwa-nyari, sekwa-mhala, the word sekwa being a true genus name. The notion of *order* may even be discovered in the classification of mammalia made by Mankhelu when he said : "Women eat only the flesh of animals having *hoofs*, and not that of animals having *paws*" (p. 83).

193 It is curious to inquire to which of the grammatical classes these names belong. Most of them are of the *yin-tin* class, the animal class proper. Torrend makes a connection between the prefix *tin* and the stem *psala*, to beget, to bring forth, and this may be correct. But many are of the *dji-ma* class, which often contains objects forming groups ; animals roaming in companies, as well as the regiments of the army (mabotshu, mabandla, I. p. 456), frequently belong to this class. (Sekwa, duck ; sowa, sparrow ; khoti, vulture ; hanshi, the horse of White people, of the cavalry, etc.). Some mammalia have the personal prefix *ba* for the plural. The mu-ba prefixes are always employed in tales when the animal is personified ; in the few cases here referred to, however, *ba* is used without any idea of personifying the animal ; the bat, the fox and a kind of red antelope (mangulwe) are designated in this way, and I

(1) Compare the names in my list with the Zulu and Nyandja names collected by Miss Werner in the *Revue d'Ethnographie et de Sociologie*. Jan. April 1911.

193 am really unable to give any reason for the fact. A few other names of animals begin with *bu*, the singular prefix in the bu-ma class, which has evidently a collective meaning. *Busuna* is the immense number of mosquitoes which one hears buzzing in the night during the rainy season, whilst one mosquito is *nsuna*, pl. tinsuna; *busukoti* is the crowd of ants swarming in the ants' nest, whilst *nsukoti*, (cl. yin-tin) is one ant, etc.

Phot. A. Bord.

Gebuza, whose nose was torn off by a hyena.

815 Thus, amongst the Bantus, scientific knowledge of animals is still in a very primitive stage and may be compared to that possessed, for instance, by the author of Leviticus. 825 On the other hand, the animal world is not in their eyes so far removed from man as it is with us. Man lives in close connection with the animals, not only when he hunts them and tries to transform himself into "a thing of the bush" (p. 79), but even in ordinary life, and considers them as very similar to himself. For instance, some Thongas believe that animals have a *language*, and try to speak to them. I have already mentioned Pikinini; he was a boy from the Bilene country who stayed with me for a time at Shiluvane, having left Bilene after the defeat of Gungunyana. As he

825 was working one day together with some little Pedi boys, I heard him talking volubly. Evidently he did not expect any answer from his helpers, who knew Thonga but imperfectly :

— "What are you saying?" I asked him. — "Oh! I am speaking to the cock." — "What do you mean?" — "I am asking it if it knows what is going on in our country, at Gungunyana. It answers that it does. This cock is a clever cock. It is a man. When cocks do not know what one asks them, they say *hwi* (descriptive adverb meaning to keep quiet)." — "Are there any other beasts to which one can talk?" — "Certainly, those which belong [765] to the village." — "Dogs?" — "No! Pigeons! When someone dies in the village, the headman must go and gather together all the pigeons, giving them some water or some food, and tell them about the death. Then they begin to coo ; they are satisfied to have been informed, treated like people of the home. If this precaution is omitted, the pigeons will leave the village in the afternoon and never return (1). This happened to a Ngoni of Bilen."

Enchanted animals can also speak, for instance a hyena which has been sent by a wizard. In Rikatla there was a man named Gebuza whose face was entirely disfigured, his nose having been torn off by a hyena ; his story was told as follows. Once a hyena entered the village in the early morning when every one was still asleep. It saluted the people saying :

— "Good morning, you people." — "Good morning" answered the people in the hut. — "Give me fire" demanded the hyena. — "Open the door and take an ember" they said. — "No, open it yourselves!" Gebuza opened the door and the hyena seized his nose in its teeth, and bit it off. This is one of the countless wizard stories. With the exception of these instances I do not think the Natives, as a rule, believe that animals have a language, or that men can speak with them. They do not, however, feel

(1) A curious resemblance may be noted here. Amongst French Swiss peasants and in parts of England and of Germany, when the master of the farm dies the bees must be officially informed of the fact, and some one goes to the bee hives and tells them what has happened; misfortune would otherwise befall them.

themselves so far removed from the animal world as is the case 826
amongst more civilised races.

Another point on which Thongas see a resemblance between 774
man and the animal is this : they believe that both possess the nuru (I. p. 478 ; II, p. 77-80). It is true that the nuru is only found in some animals : the eland, the ndakazi antelope, the elephant, the hippopotamus, etc. We shall have to consider this superstition again when dealing with Thonga Animism.

Is this idea of identity between man and the animal pushed 826
so far as a belief that men can transform themselves into animals, 791
and vice-versa? It is certain that in tales men are often changed into hyenas, lions, etc. (See Dukuli, *Les Ba-Ronga*, p. 283 and the story of the Ogre Ziniko (p. 256).) But these are purely fictitious. The theory is by no means generally accepted. In the ordinary course of life such transformations would not be considered possible. But they are certainly thoroughly believed in in the domain of magic. Magicians claim that they can fly through the air, with their axes, transform themselves into the lightning bird and so kill their enemy. But it is the wizards (baloyi) who are considered to possess this power par excellence, especially the faculty of changing human beings into beasts to make them work on their behalf. These ideas will be studied in Chapter III.

I have already mentioned the bird which "stops travellers" 825
(I. p. 339) ; amongst Mammalia a certain Antelope is the object of 777
the same superstitious fear. This is the little red *magulwe* (or *shipene*) whose astragalus bone is employed in divination under the name of malumbi (See Part VI. Letter D). — "When it crosses the road, in front of a travelling party," says Mankhelu, "the leader of the company stops his comrades, goes forward, sits down alone at the spot where the antelope passed, and pours his magical powder into the footprints of the animal. Then he shouts to his companions to come and follow him. Having walked for some time, he takes off all his clothing, and lies down quite naked, as if he were dead. The others continue their march forward. After a while, he jumps to his feet and, making a circuit through the bush, outruns them, without being noticed, and sits down on the road, further on.

825 They come up to him and wonder how he got there. By this rite
777 he has prevented the misfortune which the antelope would have caused to the travellers."

B. CONCEPTIONS REGARDING MAN.

I. *The origin of man.*

773 While the Thonga mind is very little puzzled by the question of the creation of heaven and earth, the origin of man preoccupies it more deeply. I must now enter into some details as to the story of human origin which has been already mentioned (I. p. 21). It contains two parts : the creation of man and the cause of death.

1) The creation of man.

The first human beings came out of the *lihlanga*, the reed, as some say, or the *nhlanga*, the marsh of reeds, according to others. These two versions seem to answer to two different conceptions. The first is that one man and one woman suddenly came out of one reed, which exploded (baleka), and there they were! According to the second, men of different tribes emerged from a marsh of reeds, each tribe already having its peculiar costume, implements and customs. So when you ask about the origin of the iron hoe amongst the Vendas, who possessed it before the Thongas, you will be told : "The Vendas emerged from the marsh of reeds holding them" (1).

The first man and woman are called in the Northern clans

177 (1) I believe the first version to be the true Thonga one. It may be that the idea that all races came out of the marsh of reeds is an alteration of the primitive conception under Nyai influence. The Ba-Nyai say that all men emerged from a big hole, the hole of Myali or Nwari, in the earth, at a time when stones and rocks were still so soft that foot-prints remained marked on them. It has been supposed that the myth of the reed is simply an allusion to a physiological phenomenon, but I do not believe this.

Gwambe and Dzabana. No special story is told of these ancestors 773
of mankind, but their names are still used under certain circumstances. When expelling a disease, in the *hondlola* rite, the medicine man says: "Go away to Gwambe and Dzabana," an expression used concurrently with this: "Go away to Shiburi and Nkhabelane," viz., to the extremity of the land, a long way off; again, when many tales have been told and folks are going to sleep, these tales are also sent away back to Gwambe and Dzabana (p. 212). Why? Perhaps because they are the old, old people, and the tales which are so ancient belong to them! At any rate, by this kind of incantation story-tellers aim at preventing the hearers' sleep from being disturbed by the remembrance of the marvellous things they have been told. In the legends relating to old migrations the "Road of Gwambe" (1) is mentioned. When the ancient peoples passed along it, the earth was not yet solid, so they left the print of their feet, of their mortars, etc., in the rocks, where they are still to be seen on the edge of a river called Hlantsabuhlalu. (Nyai idea? I. p. 22.)

In the Ronga clans, these two ancestors of mankind are called 773
Likalahumba and *Nsilambowa.* The first name means: the one 825
who brought a glowing cinder in a shell, viz., the originator of fire, (Compare the Hlengwe tradition, I. p. 24). Nsilambowa, the name of the woman, means the one who grinds vegetables. The first human beings, according to these names, were those who

(1) What is the connection between this *Gwambe* and the name of *Ma-Gwamba* 101
commonly given to the Thongas of Spelonken (I. p. 19)? It is difficult to say. According to some, there is still a clan descended from Gwambe, the first man, whose chief calls himself Gwambe. The Ba-Venda, when they saw the Thonga merchants bringing their goods from Delagoa Bay or Inhambane, called them Makwapa, Balungwana ba Kwapa, the little White people from Kwapa or Gwamba country, viz., those who bring clothes, beads bought from the Whites. It seems certain that there exists a Gwamba clan somewhere in Gazaland, not far from the Chopi border. A story is told of this Gwamba chief, who sent messengers to Modjadji to obtain rain from her. On their return they refused to cooperate in gathering fuel for their fire and died on the road, where their graves are still to be seen. Other informants give a totally different version of the origin of the term Ma-Gwamba: Gwambe was a chief dwelling on the banks of the Oliphant, near the Dunduli villages; his men, while on a journey, said to the Vendas: "We people of Gwambe even accept old women," viz., if they receive us well, we call them our wives to please them! Hence the name they were given. Still other explanations might be found and I think there is no real connection between Gwambe, the first man, and the Ma-Gwamba.

773 introduced fire and the culinary art into the world! This idea is
826 interesting and seems to show that, to the Native mind, the cooking of food is the pursuit which differentiates man from the animals.

177 In the clans of Maluleke and Spelonken there is a third tradition
773 relating to the first man, but it has certainly been borrowed from the Venda or Pedi tribes. They say the first man was *Rivimbi* and his son *Khudjana* (name transformed into Hobyana according to Thonga phonetics). The Thongas only say that Hobyana is the creator of Heaven and Earth and the first ancestor of the race. But the Vendas and Pedis have a number of traditions about these two heroes (1).

2) The cause of death.

773 When the first human beings emerged from the marsh of
826 reeds, the chief of this marsh sent the Chameleon (Lumpfana)
761 to them, with this message: "Men will die, but they will rise again." The Chameleon started walking slowly, according to his habit. Then the big lizard with the blue head, the Galagala, was sent to tell men: "You shall die and rot." Galagala started with his swift gait and soon passed Lumpfana. He delivered his message, and when Lumpfana arrived with his errand, men said to him: "You are too late. We have already

773 (1) Here is one of the most curious of these traditions, a strange story indeed, when we reflect that these two personages are the great gods who created the uni-
776 verse! Once, in olden times, Khudjana planted a big pole in the earth, and passed spokes through it, right to the top. Rivimbi having climbed up, Khudjana took out
177 the lower spokes and went home. His father being unable to get down, the son stole the food prepared for him and ate it at his ease. Then he again put the spokes in their places and the old man came home. But when he wished to have his meal, he found that nothing was left. His wife then gave him Khudjana's portion!

There is great confusion amongst these traditions. According to Mankhelu this Rivimbi, or Luvimbi, is the same as the great rain-maker to whose descendants he went to obtain the rain medicine (p. 320). He is not only the creator of the earth, but the protector of all men, who are his sons. So, if some one wishes to harm a man who is not guilty, the Vendas say to him: "Do not kill Luvimbi's man." If you steal a partridge caught in a trap which was not set by you, they say: "Luvimbi, who stands on that tree, sees you." He would seem to be a superior being, a god (shikwembu), even the chief of gods, endowed with omnipresence and omniscience. Moreover there is a relation between Rivimbi and Nwali, the Ba-Nyai god, who is represented either as father or son of Rivimbi, or identical with him. It may be that the Rivimbi tradition, which is both Pedi and Venda and seems to refer definitely to a first ancestor who has become the great god, has been mixed with the Nwali tradition, which is Nyai, so that ideas of different origins have been intermingled.

accepted another message." That is why men are subject to death. 773 825

This myth is so strongly believed that shepherds, when they see a chameleon climbing slowly up a tree, begin to tease it, and, when it opens its mouth, throw a pinch of tobacco into it, and are greatly amused to see the poor thing change colour, passing from green to orange, and from orange to black, in agony, to the great delight of the little boys ; they thus avenge themselves on the chameleon! (p. 339). 761

The same story[1] is told amongst the Zulus, and other myths of a similar character are found all over Africa, especially amongst the Ba-Rotsi (1). It would be an interesting study to collect them all, and thus to compile the African Genesis. We should probably find that the origin of man and death are the two great subjects on which the imagination of the Bantus has tried to throw some light, and that, though the moral element is strangely lacking in these myths, yet there is a striking resemblance between them and the Biblical story, where an answer to the same questions is given. 171 773

II. *The various human races.*

Have Bantus a clear idea of the human race? What they call *banhu* in Thonga, *bantu* in Zulu, evidently means "black people," the first inhabitants of the country. The Zulus are regarded, owing to their military ability, as a superior race, not however to such an extent as they themselves believe to be the case! Whatever may be their hostility or repugnance to their fellow blacks, they know that they belong to the same species. I am not sure that they hold this idea regarding White people, who are not *banhu* but *balungu*. 609 829

What is the origin of this word? As it is also used in Zulu (abelungo), the etymology suggested is the verb *ku lunga*, to be right, good. White people would then be correct, nice people, to

(1) Compare *Foi et Vie*. Oct. 1910. Les Origines. A. Jalla.

1 [about the original cause of death. See p. 350, cat. 116-Analyst]

774 But although Natives locate the psychic faculties in the different
763 organs, they certainly believe in an independent psychic principle, in a *soul*. On this point, however, their ideas are most confused. They call it *moya*, spirit, and in the Ronga clans, *hika*, breath (the plurai mahika, in the expression "ku ba ni mahika," means to be out of breath). This is the vital principle of man, and when a person is dying, his relatives sit near him "waiting for the departure of breath" (langusela ku suka ka hika). "The spirit has gone," — "moya wu sukile," they say, when death has come. They have no theory as regards the way the breath goes out of the body, nor do they stop the nostrils or the mouth to prevent its escape (1).

774 A third name for soul is *ntjhuti* (mu-mi), or *shitjhuti* (Ro.), *ndjuti* (Dj.) *shadow*. It seems to apply more especially to the departed soul rather than to the psychic principle of the living. I have been assured that one cannot dream of the shintjuti of any one still alive, but only if he is dead. The shadow, as such, is not subject to many taboos or superstitious fears. They do not fear to tread on the shadow of a chief, for instance. It may even be questioned if they identify the material shadow with the shitjhuti, the spiritual part of man which separates from his body at death (2). At any rate many think that it is the shitjhuti which becomes shikwembu, the ancestor god.

In former times Thongas feared to look at their own reflection in a pool. They seem to have passed that stage now. The reason was perhaps that they thought their spiritual principle to be

775 (1) A Native of Bethabelo, near Middleburg, Transvaal, asserted in my hearing
826 that in this part of the Sutho nation it was believed that the human soul escaped from the body at death in the form of a Copris beetle. The grave is not filled up with earth until a Copris has been seen in the neighbourhood; and if a hawk appears at the same time the satisfaction is still greater; the beetle has transformed itself into a hawk and the soul has in truth found its way out. Strange to say, when these Ba-Sutho give a patient medicine and see that it has had the desired effect, they say: "It has agreed with the Copris;" whilst if the patient dies they say: "The Copris has refused the medicine."

774 (2) In the following story a direct relation is established between the real shadow and the vital principle. A Ronga magician, Shidzabelane, used to show his supernatural power in the following way: he slept on the ground and ordered a mortar to be placed on his chest and three women to pound mealies in it. This seemed to make no impression on him (a fact which can easily be explained if he was in a state of catalepsy). But it suddenly occurred to one of these women that he had perhaps passed into his shadow, so she hit the shadow with her pestle. The magician at once rose, crying out; he had really left his body and entered into his shadow!

2: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

them. Whatever may be their origin, they form a part of the mental make up of every Native. A careful study of the rites reveals at least three such axioms: Like acts on like and produces like; the part represents the whole and acts on the whole; the spoken wish produces the desired result. 82 789

1) *Like acts on like and produces like.* All the elements of Nature are dependent on each other, and if there is a similarity between two of them, they are at once brought into a special relation with each other and begin to influence each other. The application of this principle is universal, in the religious as well as in the dynamistic domain. The Native mind is extremely quick at perceiving a similarity between the most heterogeneous objects or phenomena, and immediately establishes a causal relation between them. We have already met with scores of instances of this law. *Colour* acts on colour; black sheep and black smoke produce a black cloud full of rain (p. 318). *Form* produces a similar form; a necklace of maize grains round the neck of a small-pox patient produces an eruption of small, transparent, pustules which are not dangerous, in place of the large, thick, deadly ones. (See Chapter III. A.) *Disintegration* produces disintegration; the chewing of a bean ensures the melting of the iron ore in the kiln (p. 359). *A certain state of mind* produces a similar condition in living beings, and even in material phenomena; the continence of little children ensures control over the flame of the furnace (p. 115) whilst the passion of married people accelerates disease, and increases the fury of wild beasts, (p. 61) etc. (1)

This kind of magic has been called *imitative magic.* A corollary of this principle is that the image or object representing a thing is in close relation with the thing itself, and any action performed on the image will have its repercussion on the thing represented.

(1) To show how far this action of like on like can go, let me quote this final example which I gave in my paper on *The Magic Conception of Nature amongst Bantus (South African Journal of Science,* Nov. 1920). A magician has had the good luck to discover a crow's nest full of young. He climbs up the tree, and ties all the little birds together by their feet. The mother crow, however, is not at a loss to deliver her progeny. She brings each day a leaf taken from different trees, and places it in the nest. The magician keeps watch. He climbs the tree, looks at the leaf, and recognizes the tree from which it has been taken. He then goes and digs up a piece of root from that tree. After a few days he will have collected quite a bundle of different roots. By that time the little crows will be free, the string which bound them having given way, or having rotted, and the magician will possess a medicine of first rate quality. By means of it he will be able to free any patient from any disease or worry by which he is held fast. 825 755

769 with. I never heard it said that the gods were in heaven, not-
776 withstanding the Sutho term badimo, which is believed by some to mean those who are above.

5. Relations between Ancestor-gods and their living descendants.

769 The apparitions of ancestor-gods in a human form in the
776 sacred woods are not of frequent occurrence. The gods reveal themselves to their descendants by other and more common
825 means; first, by their appearance *in the form of animals*, such
753 as the Mantis (p. 335) or more often as little bluish green snakes called *shihundje* (p. 340). These charming and harmless reptiles are frequently seen in the huts, crawling in the thatch of the roof, or along the reeds of the walls (1). Natives never touch them, thinking that they are some of their gods who have come to pay them a visit. It is taboo to kill them. If a disease breaks out in the village the bones may reveal that some one in the hut has hurt the gods, and a sacrifice will be required in order to appease them. They also appear in the form of the large grey puff-adder (shiphyahla) (2).

769 Secondly, the ancestor-gods communicate with the living
776 *in their dreams*. If some one dreams of one of his dead relatives,
787 he is very much frightened, and consults the bones, in order

769 (1) This is the story which I heard from one of my informants of the Khosen country: All his family was once assembled together for a marriage feast. The
825 people were playing on the village square and enjoying themselves. The old women had remained in the hut, and suddenly they saw two little green snakes crawling along the reeds of the wall. They were much afraid, and at once called the headman. He came in, saw the snakes, and said: "Do not fear! These are our ancestor-gods! They have come to share in our feast."

(2) Describing to me a sacrifice at which he officiated either in September or October 1895, the old priest Nkolele told me as a fact the following story, which I will now quote word for word:

"I myself went into the wood with the offering I had prepared for the gods, and then *it came out*. It was a snake; it was the father of Makundju, the Master of the Forest, Mombo-wa-ndlopfu, Elephant's-Face. He came out and circled round all those present. The women rushed away terrified. But he had only come to thank us. He didn't come to bite us. He thanked us saying: 'Thank you! Thank you! So you are still there, my children! You came to load me with presents, and to

to know exactly what the god desires of him (Viguet). If the apparition was painful, if the god came as an enemy, fighting, the dreamer, when he awakes, will take some tobacco, or a small piece of cloth, and hang it somewhere in the reeds of the wall, near the door, as an offering. Or possibly the god has ordered him to give him something to drink. He will then buy a bottle of ginor wine, and pour a little outside the door ; whatever remains he will drink with his companions. If the dream takes place during a journey and the ancestor-god seems to be happy, the traveller will throw some tobacco on the ground when he awakes and say : "I had prayed thee to help me on my road ; thou hast come indeed! Help me to go further." But if the ancestor-god has an angry look and tells him : "Why do you not give me a piece of calico print? You have forgotten me"—the traveller will fetch a piece and tie it round a tree and say : "When I return home after making money, I will give thee some." 769 776 787

But the great means by which the will of the gods is revealed is the *set of divinatory bones*, which are cast on every occasion, and are called the "Bula," the Word. Does this mean the Word of the gods? Not precisely, but in most cases the diviner thinks he owes his divinatory power to a dead relative, who used to cast lots himself, and who transmitted his spirit of interpretation to him. Whatever may be the real explanation, the fact remains that it is by means of the bones that Thongas believe they know what their gods think and wish, and this is the reason, as we shall

bring me fruit! T'is well!' — He came to thank us for our chicken. Even if one only kills a chicken, he is quite content. For him, it has just the same value as an ox. It was an enormous viper, as thick as my leg, down there (he pointed to his ankle). It came close up to me, and kept quite still, never biting me. I looked at it. It said : 'Thank you! So you are still there, my grandson!'" 769 825

— "But," said I to Nkolele, "what you are telling me, is it really fact, or just fancy?"

— "Undoubted fact! These are great truths! After that I prayed, and said : 'Thou, Mombo-wa-Ndlopfu, the Master of this land, thou who hast given it to thy son Makundju ; Makundju gave it to his son Hati ; Hati gave it to Makhumbi ; Makhumbi gave it to Kinini ; Kinini gave it to Mikabyana ; Mikabyana gave it to Mawatle... ('Mawatle gave it to me, his son' is here understood)... Look upon my offering. Is it not a beautiful one? And here am I, left all alone. If I had not brought this with me, who would have given you anything? Is it not just so? I ask of thee, my ancestor, I ask of thee all the trees ; the palm trees for building, the trunks which can be hollowed out for canoes ; and let it be that these trunks shall not fall on the people and crush them, when they go to cut them down, even those in the marsh.'"

845 daha). Striking is frequently one of the rites of aggregation.
184 (See Van Gennep, *Rites de Passage*, p. 55). Let us remember that the Tembe clan is of Northern origin (I. p. 23) and has retained some customs which are different from those of the other Thongas (1).

2) Heaven and the "Nunu."

136 The following is a very extraordinary custom, and one which,
241 in many respects, greatly resembles those I have already described.
845 There is to be found, on the shores of Delagoa Bay, a small Coleoptera belonging to the Alcides genus of the Cucurlionidæ
772 family. It has a proboscis-shaped mouth, a very hard carapace
825 of half a centimetre in length, brown, and marked on each elytron with two longitudinal white bands. The Blacks call it the *nunu*. It is a scourge to the fields of beans and maize (much as cockchafers are with us). In December or January, when these insects begin to swarm, the chief men of the country order the diviners to throw the bones, and send the women to pick the "nunu" off the bean stalks. They gather them in "sala" shells. Then they choose (probably by casting lots) *a woman who has given birth to twins.*

(1) Amongst *the Hereros* a multiple birth is the happiest event which could possibly occur ! The Rev. E. Dannert published in the *Capetown Folklore Journal* an account of the customs practised on such occasions by the Natives of this tribe, which occupies the Western side of Southern Africa, at about the same latitude as the Thongas. The father and mother are condemned to complete silence, under penalty of bringing a curse on those who speak to them. All the members of the tribe are convened and bring their cattle with them. The twins' family has to appear before the whole assembly, and is received with lamentations. Each individual must present himself to the parents, and make them a gift of beads, or other ornaments, in return for which the father and mother purify them by means of a certain powder. After this the father has the right of going from village to village, and claiming an ox from each one, as a kind of ransom. He becomes quite a rich man. This is the *kunga rite*, which we have also met with on many occasions amongst the Thongas (I. p. 124.). How can this diversity between the customs of the Hereros and those of most of the Thongas be explained? No doubt by this vague mysterious idea of Heaven, which is behind the religious conceptions of these tribes and in which all these rites originated. This celestial power, when it manifests itself, stupefies the Natives, for it causes "a death," entails a curse. With the Thongas it is the mother and children who are the objects of this malediction, hence the purifying ceremonies imposed upon them. With the Hereros, it is the whole tribe which is affected. The family into which the twins are born has been distinguished and honoured by this heavenly visitation, and collects for itself the fines which all must pay to regain the celestial favour !

One of her daughters, who is one of the twins, is told to throw 241
the whole "catch" of insects into the neighbouring lake. She is 845
accompanied by a woman of mature age, and, without speaking a 772
word, must go straight to the lake in question. Behind her
marches the whole crowd of women, arms, waists and heads 825
covered with grass, carrying branches of the big-leaved manioc, which they wave from side to side, and singing the following song, which has been composed for this occasion :

> Nunu, muka! Hi da mabele!
> Nunu, go away! That we may eat mealies!

The twin throws her little calabash into the water without turning round (for she is not allowed to look behind). Then the savage yells are raised louder than ever, and the women sing their impure songs (ta ku ruketela), which they would never dare to utter on ordinary occasions, and which are reserved for these ceremonies, rain seeking and "nunu" hunting.

On that day, as during the mbelele, woe to the man who walks 241
along the paths! He is pitilessly attacked by these viragos, who 772
push him to one side, or even maltreat him, and none of his fellows
will go to his assistance. They all keep out of the way, for they 579
well know what would be in store for them, should they meet the 825
savage crowd! So they mostly stay quietly at home in their huts!

The "nunu" is not always thrown into the water. Sometimes, to get rid of the plague, or rather to conjure it away, they start out in a band, armed with sticks, to throw these destructive insects on to neighbouring lands. It would seem that the men are mixed up in these underhand tricks, for it is said that this way of handing over the "nunu" to neighbours, often leads to pitched battles, in which sticks are wielded to some purpose, and blows rain thick and heavy! The people of Rikatla, citizens of Nondwane, used to make a present of their pseudo-cockchafers to the inhabitants of the district of Makunyule, belonging to the Mabota clan. But the true 825
way of conjuring away the "nunu" is to drown them in the lake, 772
and this custom, in common with the preceding ones, certainly has some connection with the notion of Heaven, the appearance of these pests being caused by that mysterious power, which

825 presides over all unaccountable and unavoidable phenomena of the
772 atmosphere and of the life of the fields, or of human existence.

We have seen how the two sets of religious customs play their part side by side in the rites of rain-making. A similar coincidence may be noticed here. The removal of the "nunu," a rite which originated in the conception of Heaven, corresponds to the sacrifice of the chief in the Maluleke country, who gathers his sons together to pray to his ancestor-gods for the destruction of the vermin (psidi) which eat the mealies and endanger the harvest (p. 404).

3) Heaven, Storms and Robbers.

772 The most characteristic manifestation of Heaven is in the
821 storm. According to the statement of the credulous Natives, after the women have finished cleaning the wells, and have watered
789 the graves of twins, clouds appear, a whirlwind arises, and "Heaven
627 begins to thunder" — "Tilo dji djuma." — I have already described Thonga ideas about thunder and the lightning bird (p. 313), and the powerful charm made from the flesh, feathers and urine of this marvellous creature! There is still another use made of this extraordinary drug. It is a powerful aid in *tracing thieves*! The magician who possesses this powder of Heaven, (Ñwagwalen of Shikhabele in the Mabota clan), when called upon to point out the thief, acts in the following way. Suppose some one finds that some valuable article has disappeared from his hut, he will say to his near relatives, to those whom he suspects of having committed the larceny : "Take care! If you don't confess, we will go to Ñwagwalen, who lives at Shikhabele!" This threat may possibly be sufficient to elicit an avowal. If not, the individual who has been wronged goes to the diviner, and asks his assistance ; the latter takes his "bag of tricks," his drugs, and his big black stick, i. e., the stick which he was carrying when he dug in the earth and found the urine of the bird, or the bird itself. A notch has been made in the stick, to show the depth of the hole in which he has discovered Heaven. Carrying these charms, he goes to find the chief. An audience being granted, he cries aloud : "O Chief! a theft has been

789 stem which has been struck by lightning, i. e. by Heaven ; or the
772 magician will burn branches of the same tree in the garden itself and bring them near to the stalks in order that these may be surrounded by the smoke emanating from them. If a thief enters the ga.den with evil intentions, "Tilo dji ta mu dlaya, i. e. Heaven will kill him."

4) Heaven and the Balungwana.

772 In 1894, as previously stated, locusts, which had not been
825 seen for some fifty years, made their appearance on the shores of
776 Delagoa Bay, and also in Natal and the Transvaal. The popular imagination was, naturally, greatly stirred by this unusual phenomenon, which was at first greeted with smiles and astonishment, but which, later on, was the cause of endless lamentation. I was one day walking up the hill of Lourenço Marques with an old man, the counsellor of one of the sub-chiefs of Tembe, a thoughtful and intelligent person, when he said to me, with great earnestness, in a low voice, as if referring to some important event : "Have you not heard that in Maputju two dwarfs (psimhu-ñwanyana) fell from Heaven ; a little man and a little woman. They came to say to the people : "Do not kill the grasshoppers! They belong to us!" This counsellor only repeated what all thought and were saying in all the native villages ; these grasshoppers, arriving unexpectedly from on high, were a manifestation of Heaven, just like the lightning, rain, twins, or the nunu, and these celestial beings had come to announce it to men.

772 But belief in the existence of *special personages* in Heaven
776 did not originate in connection with these terribly destructive
821 insects. The idea had been familiar, for a long time past, to the Rongas, and probably to all the Thongas. These personages were not only described as dwarfs, but also as balungwana (p. 352). They were said to fall from Heaven at the time of the great rains. Thus, Timoteo Mandlati told me people had seen some of them appear, a long time ago, in the Nkuna country, and that they had gone back to heaven in a cloud ; they live in celestial space, and when it thunders without any rain falling, the Nkunas say :

consider in the choice of his wife is that she should not belong to a 754
family of witches. The accusation: "You are a noyi"[1] is the [578]
gravest insult which one man can utter to another (1).

The activity of the baloyi is almost entirely nocturnal. For this reason they are sometimes called by the euphemism: "ba busiku" — "the men of night." In fact, they possess the faculty of getting out of themselves at night time; they have large wings, and, after having left their huts by the crown of grass which covers the top, or by the closed door, they fly through the air and betake themselves to their horrible work.

As they are active in the darkness of night a connection is [825]
established between them and nocturnal birds, especially *owls* (kuhunu). When the sinister cry of this bird is heard, men take a torch upon which they have spit out of their mouths a little ndjao powder, and chase away the creature. Baloyi are also identified with the little moving lights sometimes seen in the marshes, the will-o'-the-wisps, the fires of the night (mindjilo ya busiku), the belief being that these fires are either the baloyi themselves, or that they are sent by the baloyi as a threat (2). We have seen (p. 720) that the wizards who ride on hippopotami during the night are credited with the power of producing flames similar to lamps.

Two questions here arise. Does the Native mind imagine that 000

(1) Thongas are extremely sensitive in regard to a possible suspicion that they are baloyi. When I proposed to my pupils in the Shiluvane Institution that they should move up for the bad season to the sanatorium which we had set up in the mountains, in order to avoid the dangers of fever in the Low Country, not wishing to abandon their comfortable accomodation at the station, they made great difficulties. I therefore said to them: "But if your devoted teacher, Miss So and So, catches the fever, on account of the heat and moisture of the malarial climate, will you not be responsible for whatever may happen?" This remark caused quite a commotion amongst the pupils. "What?" they said. "We are then baloyi! We have the power of killing people by witchcraft!"

(2) One of my informants says: "We are walking peacefully along the path at night-time, chatting pleasantly with our companions. Suddenly a will-o'-the-wisp appears. We at once stop on seeing this terrible object, for one of us must be the culprit. It cannot arise from any other cause. We organise a meeting for confession (rerela nyiwa, see below), and thus rebuke the noyi who is amongst us. Sometimes people who see the fires of the night trample on the ground, take a pinch of earth between their fingers and put it to their mouths (khabuta)." (This may be a kind of "mhamba" similar to that described on page 391, aimed at obtaining protection against the "enemies of the earth.")

[1] [literally "caster of spells" -- see pp. 504 ff., cat. 116 - Analyst]

756 it in half. I take a little of the heart, and of the eyes, I crush the
791 bones, I make a powder with all these ingredients, and this is my great medicine. With one of the bones I make a flute ; I put a little powder into it, and, when a thunderstorm breaks, I go outside without danger and conjure the lightning by playing on my flute, etc." (p. 314).

Mathuza, the magician of Nondwane to whom I have just alluded, was essentially a detector of baloyi. — So was also *Ñwashihandjime*, the great Nkuna magician, a splendid creature, tall, his eyes beaming with a kind of supernatural light. I once saw him, after having performed the "smelling out" rite, point out a woman with the tail he always carried with him, an enormous tail fixed on a handle richly decorated with beads and copper wire.
[825] This tail, which is one of the most common attributes of the mungoma, is generally *a gnu tail*. It is said that when a mother gnu has dropped her offspring, she beats it (phyita) with her tail and thus gives the new-born gnu the necessary strength to walk and follow its mother. Hence the peculiar magic use of the gnu tail. In its very middle are hidden certain drugs which possess a revelatory virtue ; the magician puts his nose right amongst the hair before pronouncing his sentence and beating (phyita) the noyi. Ñwashihandjime is said to have disappeared from his village for months, and to have come back from the desert emaciated but full of new magical powers. I once tried to draw his attention to things more spiritual than his art and his drugs. He gazed at me with wild eyes, as if unable to follow my demonstration ; suddenly he emitted a cry very similar to a hiccough and turned his back.
[827] (Hiccoughing is a well-known symptom, showing either that one has been bewitched by "mitisa," or that one possesses magical power).

At the station of Shiluvane I once made an inventory of the charms of another Nkuna magician. In his hair the man wore a brass bracelet and some rings, and a necklace with a sixpence attached, all these objects having been inherited from his father, who was himself a mungoma ; moreover he hung round his neck a little piece of the skin of a goat, which had been sacrificed after the death of his father ; in this way he tried to acquire and keep

787 practised the art all his life, and was attached to his divinatory
791 bones by every fibre of his being. His set was the most complete I ever saw, containing as many as 64 objects. He even had two sets, one contained in a leathern basket, the other in a kind of net with small meshes ; the first he called the Father and the second the Son. The Father always remained at home, whilst he took the Son with him on his travels (1). I spent many hours with him, trying fully to understand his teaching, and he took great trouble to initiate me, concealing nothing from me, wondering sometimes at his own readiness to do so, and saying: "This thing I would not have told my own son." I had thus an opportunity of penetrating into the depths of the Bantu mind, which has perhaps invented nothing more elaborate or more typical than this divinatory system. Of course no sensible person would for a moment believe in the objective value of these practices. *Astragalomancy* has no more real value than Cheiromancy, Necromancy and all the other "mancies." But I am obliged to admit that the Thonga system is far more ingenious than any other that I have met with, and that it answers admirably to the wants of the Natives, comprehending all the elements of their life, and photographing them, so to speak, in such a manner that indications and directions can be obtained for all possible cases.

I have explained Spoon's art in detail in "Les Ba-Ronga." I will here confine myself to Mankhelu's revelations, which were more complete, as the old man was one of the masters of the diviner's profession as well as of that of the medicine-man.

1) The objects composing the set of divinatory bones.

787 These may be divided into two kinds : the *bones* properly
825 speaking, most of which are *astragalus bones*, and the various objects which are *not bones*. I shall now enumerate them, always

(1) I heard of another bone-thrower from Tembe who had also two baskets of bones; the first was called the basket of the chiefs, the second the basket of the subjects; the first was used in criminal cases to discover wizards: they were bones which "killed," and when they had accomplished their purpose, the diviner left them to rest for a whole week, using in the meantime the second basket. He then washed them, and they were ready to be used again.

giving the Native name of the object, as these names are technical 787
and form quite a special vocabulary which seems to have an 825
archaic character.

a) Amongst the bones some belong to *domestic animals*, goats and sheep, and consequently represent the *people dwelling in the village* :

Five astragalus of *he-goats* : 1) *Mbulwa*, the astragalus of an old castrated he-goat, the old man. 2) *Mbulwana* (diminutive of mbulwa), a he-goat not so old : men of ripe age. 3) *Shivimbiri*, a non-castrated he-goat : men in their prime. 4) *Shivimbidjana* (diminutive of the preceding), a non-castrated younger he-goat : young men of sixteen to twenty. 5) *Morisana wa timbuti shi-añwa-mafi*, the astragalus of a kid which is still a suckling : little boys, goatherds.

Six astragalus of she-goats : 1) *Gosha nkata wa mbulwa*, the old woman no longer capable of childbearing (1). 2) *Mihlangwana ya bukati, shinyuki sha timbuti*, a ripe woman still at the childbearing age, one who still smears her body with ochre. 3) *Ntibulana* (from tibula, to bring forth a child for the first time, I. p. 192) young married women, having had only one child. 4) *Nhombela*, a she-goat before parturition : girls practising the *gangisa* (I. p. 97), running about during the night but not yet married. 5) *Nhombedjana* and *nhombedjana yo-añwa-mafi*, little goat and suckling goat : girls still without sexual knowledge, or babies at the breast.

The goats, here as everywhere else, stand for the subjects. The *sheep* indicate the chiefs. There are five astragalus of sheep : 1) *Hamba, nuna wa noni*, a castrated ram, the chief and the old men of the royal family. 2) *Shikwela sha timpfu* or *Khuna ra*

(1) This, like most of the bones, has a long story. When Mankhelu was imprisoned by the old Boer Government for having strangled a pretended wizard (I. p. 444), and condemned to death, a diviner consulted the bones for him, and advised him to draw the image of a Native village on the earth and to pray every day to his ancestor-gods on his mother's side, asserting that they would deliver him, and that, when he returned home, he should sacrifice a goat to them. He added : "If people offer you a cow on the road, refuse." Mankhelu was indeed released, owing to petitions made in his favour, and, on his way home, everybody came to welcome him. In one village, the people wanted to give him a cow, but he refused it. When he reached his kraal, one of the wives of his maternal uncle appeared with twenty jars of beer, five baskets of mealies and three goats. He sacrificed one of these, and the astragalus became the *gosha* of his set... He cannot look at it without a thrill of the heart !

787 825 *timpfu*, a non-castrated ram : the sons of the royal family, the *sòyeveis*! (bana ba-ku-psalwa). 3) Another *Shikwela*, astragalus of the ram sacrified during the Sikororo war, the one whose psanyi was used for the sprinkling of the Nkuna army ; it designates the enemy, and is watched with special attention when casting the bones in connection with military affairs. 4) *Noni wa timpfu*, an old sheep, the widow of the chief. 5) *Nhombela ya timpfu*, a young sheep, the girls of the royal family. As regards the wife of the chief, she is represented by the astragalus of the female mhala antelope.

787 177 771 In one of his sets of bones Mankhelu also had two objects taken *from an ox*. One was an oval-shaped smooth bone, two inches long, the other, one of its hoofs decorated on one of its three sides with triangular marks (See plate). Both represent the *Nkuna* tribe, whose totem is the buffalo. (Comp. I. p. 364.) But this is a custom borrowed from the Sutho-Pedis. I never saw bones corresponding to totems used in Thonga divination ; the idea of totem is altogether absent from the minds of the Thongas when not influenced by their Pedi neighbours.

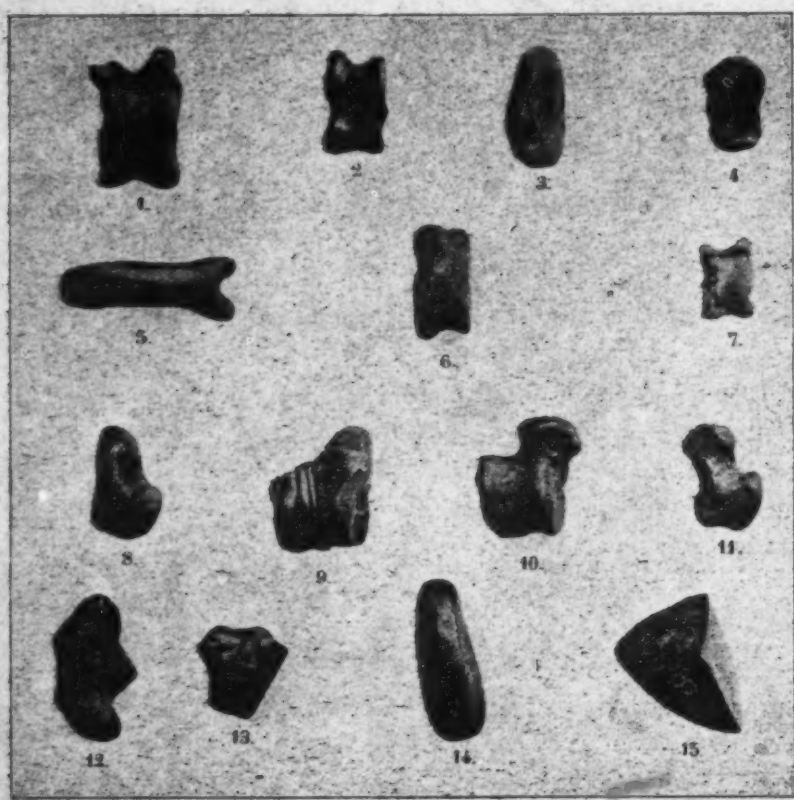
787 825 In addition to those of the domestic animals, there are a number of astragalus, or other bones, taken from *wild animals*.

First from *antelopes* : the male *mhala*, *tsombe ra mhala*, means the chief, and the female mhala, his wife ; the male mhunti, *tsombe ra mhunti*, *mhunti ya matlhari*, the duiker of the weapons, means fighting men, and the female mhunti, called *mbiri*, means women of loose character : *mbiri ya ku tola, ñwashifamba ni mafura eku rimen*, the woman who smears herself with grease and ochre, even when she goes to her field (thus trying to attract the attention of men). The *nhlangu* (reed buck), wandering about during the night, means wizards, as these cast their spells by night. Mankhelu had only the astragalus of the female in his set. The *mbalala* antelope dwells in the forest ; it does not like to come out in the plains ; its astragalus therefore designates the chief who rests in his hut and does not expose himself to the toil and the heat of the day.

The astragalus of the *ngolube ya ku dya marambo, yi tjela mitshi yi ralarala, yi languta hi matlhelo*, the wild boar which eats bones,

787 which digs holes, which looks about on all sides, is the medicine-
825 man who searches for roots to prepare his drugs. The female wild pig is the medicine man's wife.

Three astragalus of a very different form come from *baboons*, *nuna wa mfene*, the male baboon, *nsati wa mfene*, the female



Objects specially worthy of note in Mankhelu's set of divinatory bones.

1. Mhala antelope ♂. +. 2. Ram —. 3. Mhala antelope ♂ ×. 4. Reed buck ♀ :. 5. Phalanx of a Lion +. 6. Astragalus found in the dejecta of a hyena: Ancestor-god. 7. Malumbi +. 8. Ant-bear +. 9. Hyena +. 10. Leopard +. 11. Baboon +. 12. Kanye stone +. 13. Kanye: part of twig +. 14. Ox. 15. Ox hoof.

baboon, *nhombela ya mfene*, the young baboon. They symbolise the *village*, because baboons never move from their chosen spot. "You never see the ruins of their habitations; though men may

787 build in their neighbourhood, these apes do not leave permanently,
825 you will see them coming back again next spring."

The following bones are asexual. There is only one of each kind in the set and it is not indicated whether it is male or female : the phalanx of a *lion* (ndjao), either male or female, taken either from the fore leg or from the hind leg, either on the left or on the right side. The lion is the chief of wild animals, so its phalanx represents the chief of the tribe, par excellence. It also designates White people, who are regarded as being as rich as kings! The astragalus of the *leopard*, *yingwe*, *shidya mafura*, the beast which eats fat and eats no grass, is also alone of its kind, the male only being taken ; it represents those who can choose their food, the rich, not the poor and wretched, "the chiefs and you White people," says Mankhelu! The *hyena*, *mhisi*, stands for the counsellors, the sycophants, the parasites ; they resemble the hyena, which follows the lion and the panther to eat the remains of their feasts, crunching the bones of a prey which it was not strong enough to kill! But the astragalus of the hyena also represents the wizards, because they eat the flesh of people whom they steal ; the ancestor-gods, because the hyena remains hidden in its hole during the day, like the psikwembu in their graves ; the chief himself, in as much as the chief also "eats" his subjects, and you cannot follow him and recover your property any more than you can a hyena!

The astragalus of the *ant-bear* (mhandjela), which digs the holes in which porcupines live, has also many meanings : the ancestor-gods, because they dwell in the earth and never come out in the day-time ; the power of death, because it digs the grave ; the chief himself, because ant-bears eat earth, and the chief also puts it to his mouth when sacrificing. He has the right to do so, when saying *tsu*, because the earth is his ; it belonged to his ancestors before him and he calls to them by its means (I. p. 405). Spoon used one of the claws of the ant-bear, instead of its astragalus.

A very curious bone is the one called *Shikwembu*, ancestor-god. It is a mhala astragalus found in the excrement of a hyena ; a most uncommon discovery, made by Mankhelu when on his way to Swaziland. The bone is worn down : it has evidently been bitten

by sharp teeth. I have explained (p. 376) how fittingly this bone was chosen to represent the spirits of the departed. They also have been swallowed by the earth, as the astragalus by the hyena, but return again to light and life in a new and divine existence! 787 825

The last astragalus of the set is the *malumbi*, the astragalus of the *shipene* or *mangulwe* antelope ; it is also asexual : *shirombe sha matiko, malumbyana wa tintibo, ntsinyarendjo*! the miserable of the land, the little antelope with white spots, the one which stops travellers (p. 347)! It plays a special part in the divinatory system, representing everything which is violent (leba) : the chief, the enemy, and especially the mysterious power of Heaven. For that reason it is watched with great attention by those who cast bones in connection with rain. When it falls in the "mild" position, it means that "the eye of Heaven is open, the knot is untied, the mouth of Heaven is open, rain will fall!" Then Mankhelu will make the offering (mhamba) for rain ; first the four leaves, then, if this is not sufficient, and if the chief requires it, the sacrifice of the black ram (p. 322, 316).

I include in the category of bones the pieces of *Tortoise shell*, *mfutju*, four of which are found in Mankhelu's basket : *mbulwa wa mfutju*, the adult male tortoise, *nsati*, *ntibula ya mfutju*, the young tortoise. According to the way in which they fall, these objects designate peace or misfortune for the village, prosperity or starvation (1).

b) The second category comprises the objects which are not bones or parts of the body of an animal. The most conspicuous are the *sea-shells* (djuma, dji-ma) belonging to two different genera : the *Oliva* shells, representing the attributes of the male, assagais, virile courage, etc., the *Cypraea* shells, corresponding to the attributes of the female, baskets, pots, pregnancy, births, oxen for lobola, etc. 787

There are besides two *kanye stones* of an abnormal form, one

(1) One day, when travelling through heavy rain, Mankhelu found a tortoise and obtained one of his divinatory bones from it. Soon afterwards he came upon an animal (I did not catch its name) which had just died, and ate it. Some time later he was offered a big he-goat in a village. So when the tortoise falls together with the astragalus of that animal, it is a sign that plenty of meat will be forthcoming!

853 824 *neta* as a medecine. The shrub, which is an Euphorbiacea, contains milky sap. It is a treatment based on the principle : Similia similibus curantur.

751 278 753 854 The Thongas believe that milk alone would never suffice to make a child grow : *Ñwana a ku̱la hi miri, the child grows by medicine*, such is the adage which is universally met with. When you see a woman carrying a child on her back, you will notice hanging to the *ntehe* the reed (lihlanga) containing the black powder which protects against the dangers of the bush, and a little calabash half filled with water. This water is not pure water, it is the medicine called *milombyana*. This word is the plural and diminutive form of *nombo*, which means baby's ailment. There is a great *nombo*, convulsions, also called *tilo*, heaven, because this complaint is brought into a mysterious connection with the influence of Heaven (See Part VI). There is a small *nombo* ; this is the infantile diarrhea which so often troubles little children ; but both diseases are supposed to be caused by the *nyoka*, the intestinal parasite, the worm or snake (nyoka means both) which is in every child and must always be combated because, if unchecked, it will pass from the bowels to the stomach ; it will come and beat the fontanella (1) and will finally penetrate the chest. Then the little one will turn up his eyes, be seized by [278] 751 convulsions and die. Happily there are some drugs which have a wonderful effect on this dangerous guest ! One of my neighbours, who was a convert in Rikatla, gave me their names. The first is a 757 834 very common Protacea (?) with large husks called the Dlanyoka, "the one which kills worms." Mixed with the roots of a Leguminacea called *Ñwamahlanga* and with two other plants found near the sea, it forces the worm to keep quiet. These drugs are boiled and the decoction is carefully poured into a special little pot called *hlambetwana ya milombyana* which will be kept in the hut. Every morning the mother will warm the pot a little, pour some of its contents into a shell of sala and give the child a

757 826 (1) Tjuka-tjuka, the fontanelle, plays a great part in the diagnosis of children's diseases and they often cover it with black wax. When the child hiccoughs, his mother or somebody else will blow on the fontanelle to prevent vomiting. This will "make his heart stand" (yimisa mbilu).

853 grandmother, by name Mishidohi, who had an adult son and had had no other child since, prepared light beer and other appropriate food and succeeded in secreting milk in her own breast ; so the child was saved !

856 826 A child during these first months of its existence is regarded as a very weak creature. "I mati !" i. e. "It is nothing but water !" Hence perhaps the curious idea that a baby, just like a new born animal, is able to swim, at any rate it cannot be drowned : it floats on the water. When a woman carrying a little child on her back crosses a river and is in danger of being swept away by the stream, people shout to her from the shore : "Untie the 'ntehe' and let the baby cross. Think of yourself, the little one will follow all right." They say: "Psa yila, it is taboo that a baby should sink." Note the curious use of the word "yila" in this sentence.

3) Dentition.

856 364 351 As soon as the child has cut the two lower and upper incisors, the mother takes a white bead (tjambu) and ties it to one of the child's hairs above the forehead. This white bead is said to help the other teeth to come out normally. If this precaution were not taken, the child would not become intelligent ; he would shiver instead of smiling ; he would bring forward his lips and his tongue to prevent the air from getting into his mouth ! When all the teeth are duly cut, the bead is removed and thrown away *talen*, viz. on the *tala*. The *tala* is the ash-heap, the place behind the hut on which everyone throws ashes and dirt. It plays a great part in the customs of the Thongas and other South African Bantus.

195 The teeth (tinyo-menyo) of the children are called figuratively *hobe*. The *hobe* (pl. *tihobe*) means the grain of pounded maize, which is white and very similar to a tooth. Hence the expression : "A humi hobe," "he has got out a grain of maize," employed to indicate the cutting of the teeth.

787 766 856 When a child cuts his upper teeth first, it is a bad omen. In the Northern clans and especially amongst the Ba-Pedi, it is a great taboo. At his death the child must be buried in wet soil.

843 remove the blood. The Thongas think that, as the menses are suspended, the blood accumulates in the body and must be taken away.

Pregnancy is not considered as a tabooed period. As we have just seen, sexual relations are allowed during that time, even recommended as favourable to the growth of the child. However, in view of the impending birth, some special taboos have been added to those which apply to all women.

A pregnant woman *must not drink water when standing up*. She must kneel down, otherwise the water would fall violently on the head of the child and hurt it!

843 It is taboo for her to *wrap her body* in too much clothing.
845 She must keep her belly bare and never throw her dress (kapulane) over her shoulders, lest the baby come to the light with its head covered with membranes, a complication which is very much dreaded by Thonga women.

She must not take *the sauce* of her porridge *too hot*. The child might be scalded inside and have black spots when born.

It is also taboo to *prepare the ntehe before the birth*, as no one knows what will happen. The child might die!

843 The future mother must not eat *pigeon's meat*, because pigeons
825 have no blood in the muscles of their breast. She would have no milk herself wherewith to nurse the baby. Nor must she even *look at a monkey*, lest she "take to herself" (tekela) the form of the animal and the child be like it!

A woman, in the beginning of pregnancy, must not visit a sick person. The latter might die.

843 As regards women dying during pregnancy, see page 166.
766 *Miscarriages* are very much feared amongst South Africans,
731 not for themselves, but because they are accompanied by an
789 uncontrolled effusion of a blood which is a terrible taboo. The
826 discharged foetus must be buried in wet soil, otherwise the rain will not fall; the country having been polluted will be dried up by hot winds. A strange rite called *nhelele* is performed in times of drought, when all the graves of children born prematurely and buried on the hill are searched, and their contents thrown into the mud, near the river. We shall discuss in Part VI the

837 684 692 The woman is questioned, and confesses when, where, and how many times he has sinned with her. If he denies this, the object taken from the hut is exhibited. The adulterer is condemned by the chief to pay a *whole lobolo*, £ 15 to £ 20, as much as is necessary to buy a wife. He is rebuked before the whole assembly. "If you had taken a girl, it would not have mattered at all. Why did you abduct a married woman ? Do you not know that it breeds endless trouble at court (tindaba) ?"

The counsellor of the deceived husband goes to the counsellor of the lover to claim the money. The latter must go to the guilty man. The parents of the adulterer insult their son : "You see! All this money lost now! If only you had lobola a wife with it!" They must help him to find it at once, because this is a law universally recognised : the price of adultery must be forthcoming. (Nandju wa bumbuye a wu pfumali). The poor man will have to pay ; he will even have to add a hoe to "drive away" (hlongola) the counsellor, who keeps it for his reward!

837 684 783 753 608 Why is adultery so strongly prohibited and punished ? Not at all from any moral consideration of purity or chastity, but for two other reasons. First a social one. Adultery with a married woman is a theft, because she is owned by a master. She is not punished herself, except when the watcher finds her out and gives himself the pleasure of thrashing her to his heart's content. The whole punishment falls on the man ; he is the thief. But there is also a physical reason for it : the *matlulana*! We have already met with this word. *Tlulana* means to jump over each other, to compete with each other. In the sexual domain it is said of two men who have relations with the same woman. "They have met [826] together in one life through the blood of that woman ; they have drunk from the same pool" (Viguet). This establishes between them a most curious mutual dependence : should one of them be ill, the other must not visit him ; the patient might die. If he runs a thorn into his foot, the other must not help him to extract it ; it is taboo ; the wound would not heal. If he dies, his rival must not be present at his mourning or he would himself die (See page 137). Should he even be the actual son (sometimes it happens that a son commits adultery with one of the younger wives

524 but one stone, a poor *tshonga*, he says : "I have only caught women!"

524 Fighting and hunting are great sports for Natives ; hence the
127 popularity of the tshuba game. It has become such a passion
461 with the men that they neglect all their duties to indulge in it, and it has been necessary, in certain Christian villages, to prohibit the tshuba altogether, as the whole male population was abandoning its work for the game!

461 The *evening games* are happily not so dangerous for the moral
538 well-being of the village. Women who have worked the whole
517 day now have their innings. This is the *tha* par excellence, the most refined amusement, the story telling. It takes place at
826 eventide. It is taboo to *tha* in the middle of the day. Those who should transgress the law would become bald (!), and persons affected with loss of hair are commonly and jocosely accused of having told tales at midday. So, when the moon shines, when all the work of the day is ended, all the inhabitants assemble at one of the firesides to amuse themselves. They rarely gather together on the hubo for that purpose, as the square is reserved
524 for the discussion of matters of importance or for dances. The diversions at first consist of a parlour game, which is also known amongst Europeans, *guessing the charcoal piece (mhumhana)*. Two sides are formed opposite each other, women on one side, men on the other. One of the women, holding a piece of charcoal, puts it into the hands of one of the other partners, saying : "Dana, u shura ñwanaaaa'nga," (eat and be satisfied, my child). Then both present their closed hands to the other side saying : "Mhumha!" The man opposite must guess in which hand the charcoal is hidden. He flips one of the four hands with his finger saying : "Give me! Here it is!" If he has guessed rightly, he has won, and then proceeds in his turn to hide the charcoal in the hand of one of his own side. When they have had enough of this game and wish to finish it in the proper manner, *they pull their fingers* and make them crack *(ku ba tindjwati)*. Each of them pulls a finger in turn. The first who is unable to produce a sound is expelled from his side. Then those who have been beaten make faces, as ugly or funny as they can, at their victors ; these must

644 When they have chosen it—it must be the stem of a nkonono
789 tree—they cut it and bring it back to the capital. In front walks the master of the ceremonies, Godlela, and behind him four men carrying the shiphandje. Those who accompany them have the right of entering the villages and stealing fowls. Woe to those who meet with this troop! They will be relieved of all they carry, "because the forked branch of the great medicine of the chief is taboo."

644 The sacred branch having duly reached the capital, Godlela
789 proceeds to the second operation, the *burning of the drugs.*
826 Mboza saw the magician take pieces of skin cut from buffaloes,
237 lions, hyenas, elans, panthers, snakes of various kinds and, last but not least, from the bodies of men, enemies killed in the wars: part of the skin of the forehead, the heart, the diaphragm, the nails, a finger, some ears... All these are roasted
644 in a large pot. On some mats are spread various magical roots
789 cut into small pieces; these are also thrown into the pot. The chief and all the sub-chiefs approach and, with hollow reeds, inhale and swallow the vapour and the smoke which emanates from it (1).

The preparation of the great medicine having been sucessfully accomplished, the great drum (nhumburi) of the capital is brought on to the square, and everybody dances, even women, who take assagais in their hands and sing: "We are thankful if we die (hi tlangela ku fa)" viz., "The country is in security, our invincible medicine is ready! We shall not be killed by enemies
644 but will die a natural death." Before extinguishing the fire which
789 was used to roast the medicines, Godlela takes a little water,
782 pours it on the glowing embers and, when it vaporises with the customary sound, he emits the sacramental *tsu* and prays to his gods, the departed spirits of the Tlhaltha family, as doctors always do, in order to obtain their blessing on the nyokwekulu.

618 (1) The Hlewane sub-clan, which revolted many times against the legal chief and succeeded by its intrigues in provoking the war of 1894, after which it became the reigning family of Nondwane, used to abstain from participating in this "swallowing of the smoke," because, in former years, it had been defeated by Maphunga's people and some of its men killed; their flesh had been used in the concoction of the nyokwekulu. So they feared to go and inhale the odour of their fellow clansmen.

644 our hammocks, which we had fixed to the roof inside a hut placed at our disposal for the night, we were trying to sleep when, about 4 a. m., we were awakened by an extraordinary sound; it was in a very high key, words sung, shouted, volubly and monotonously, in fact a most peculiar and never-to-be-forgotten musical production! Further sleep was impossible, and for more than half an hour we were obliged to submit to this ear-splitting performance:

"Yethi (Bayete), we hosi, wene shitlangu sho ringana tilo, mathathala i tinyeleti, nkungu wa shone i hweti! We! nkandji wa ku wona, ku baleka minambyana!" — "Bahete! O chief! You shield us as heaven! The marks of this shield are like the stars! You who trample dry ground so that rivers at once spring forth!"

644 826 It was the *mbongi wa ku pfusha*, the herald sounding the reveille; an individual who has "the chest well developed," as they say in Ronga, which does not mean that he is sound in the wind and possesses healthy lungs, but that he is a man of great eloquence. In our tribe the chest (pectus) is held to be the seat of knowledge 644 and of the gift of oratory! Every morning, before sunrise, this royal flatterer comes to the door of the chief's hut and sings the glorious deeds of his ancestors, recalling their names and acts of prowess; to these praises, he adds a general disparagement (sandja) of the chief himself, referring to him as a coward, a child in comparison with his father, his grandfather and all his noble deceased progeniters. "Lead us to battle! Show us what you can do!" And the chief must be awakened every day by this strange concert, which sometimes lasts for hours!

The flatterer likes to accompany his chief when he goes to visit the Whites. In front of the offices of the Municipal Council of Lourenço Marques, I once witnessed the arrival of Sigaole, chief of Matjolo, who came thither to look at Gungunyana, taken prisoner by the Portuguese in January 1896; his *mbongi* was among his following. This was an old man, named Mabobo. Dressed up in a jacket, by no means too clean, and with a cap on his head, he yelled the praises of the royal family of Matjolo; this was in Zulu and doubtless in a special terminology.

682 lobola. Viguet explains that this is done according to the old
338 saying of Native law : "Ñwombekazi a yi ambi nandju" viz. "a
826 cow which has calved is not used to pay a fine ; the calf pays it."
672 (See page 217.) He adds that the ten hoes sent with the girl pay for the ribs of the murdered man. (The Ba-Thonga believe that the human body has only ten ribs!) A case of involuntary homicide
682 is generally not brought before the chief, as the law is well known
643 and no one would try to evade his duty. Should however the
672 murderer not have been on good terms with the deceased, the matter will be discussed before the Court.

If the murder was *deliberate*, it is punished by death.
682 At least such was the law in former times, when Natives still
672 possessed the power of condemning to death. Now the fine is also the remittance of a woman. But owing to the existing hatred, and from fear of being obliged to lobola the relative of the murderer, the family of the deceased does not take the girl. She is sold by her parents and only the money is remitted to the plaintiff. (Mankhelu.)

682 Amongst the Ba-Ronga, when a near relative of the murdered
627 man wishes to avenge himself by killing the assassin, his people prevent him from doing so, in order to bring the matter before the chief. When a man called Mashabe was killed by the son of Gigiseka, Maphunga's brother, the murderer, had to pay £ 20. The fine may be as much as £ 25, but the idea is also to help the bereaved family to acquire a new spouse and, through her, new members. As for the murderer, he is regarded with scorn, and despised by the whole community. For a whole week, he must eat apart. He is unclean. So, at the time of luma bukanye, (page 400), he must also take miluru medicine together with the warriors who have killed enemies; but he does not drink it boastfully, extolling his deed! People say of him : "Look at the murderer!" (Mboza.)

The vendetta, the savage custom which makes it incumbent on the relations of a murdered man to avenge his death themselves at all costs and by any means, is absolutely absent from Thonga custom. It may be said that, as regards punishment of murder, they have reached quite a civilised stage in their judicial

000 smoke, and rub the incisions with the powder. They will then be able to aim straight (See Annotatio 15). The powder specially prepared from the tendons of slain enemies will be spread on the paths during future wars ; foes marching on it unknowingly will suddenly become unable to walk and will easily be killed.

The Zulus are said to have the same customs as the Pedis.

726 I cannot guarantee that all the Thonga clans observe all these
789 customs.[1] The Nkuna magicians, in olden times, before they were
278 influenced by their Pedi neighbours, used to dissect the tendons
751 of the back (riringa) of the slain enemy, which they smeared
826 with his medulla and hung to the shields of the warriors... Enemies seeing these shields would "tjemeka nhlana" — "have their backs broken," a figurative expression which means to be terror stricken. A part of the body was also preserved and mixed with the war-medicine ; the idea which underlies this custom being evidently this : when you have eaten the flesh of your enemies, you have absorbed all their strength and they are unable to do you any further harm (1). We have seen that the "mbhulo," the "nyokwekulu," all the powerful "medicines of the country" carefully kept in each clan, contain a little human flesh. These drugs are used as protective war medicines ; most probably owing to the same principle.

II. *The treatment of the slayers.*

727 To have killed an enemy on the battle-field entails an immense
775 glory for the slayers ; but that glory is fraught with great danger.

266 (1) This custom is the only remnant of anthropophagy remaining amongst the Thongas, and I wonder if this superstition is not the true explanation of the origin of cannibalism. Where cannibalism still prevails, as amongst the Fan of the Congo, I am told that the bodies eaten are generally those of hostile clans, or occasionally that of a wife (who belongs to another clan according to the laws of exogamy). Is it not probable that, in the beginning, these feasts had a ritual and military value similar to that which we find in the administering of the war-medicine in South African tribes? In the course of time, the Fan acquired a taste for human flesh and ate it for their own pleasure. Dealing with anthropophagy, I must not forget that it occurred in several instances in South Africa after the devastation brought about by the Zulu expeditions of 1820-1830. In Zoutpensberg, in the mountains of Drakensberg, Natives reduced to starvation began to eat their fellow men. This also happened in the Bokhakha during the reign of Queen Mala. (See Part IV.)

[See pp. 476-477 -- Analyst]

533 fight, when returned from battle, as well as those sung during the march of the troop. I give the striking music of some of these in the next chapter. Tune 24 is the "Sabela nkosi" the great Mpfumo song, also adopted by other clans. Tune 25, with its splendid change from the minor to the major key, is the Tembe and Maputju classical war song. No. 29 is an old Nkuna war song, dating as far back as 1820, before the Zulu invasion ; No. 27 is the principal modern Nkuna song, and
535 No. 28 the Nkuna equivalent to the Ronga *Giraffe song*. These old chants are sung to the accompaniment of the military dance, which consists in trampling on the ground, while rhythmically brandishing the assagais, lifting them first to the right, then to the left, bending them sideways, then downwards, as if to pierce (I. p. 463). They are certainly wonderfully fine compositions.

533 I include in the same category the laudatory song of the *mbongi*
826 (I. p. 424), a branch of literature in which Court poets display
644 considerable imagination and an extraordinary gift for unbounded hyperbole. All the important chiefs have their mbongi and it is required of the man holding this office that he should have a good chest (shifuba), the chest being to the Thongas the seat of eloquence (as it was to the ancient Romans : Pectus est quod oratorem facit!). The elucubrations of these poet laureates sometimes last a very long time and may have real poetic value.

614 As we saw (I. p. 361) each clan and even each family
553 possesses its own laudatory phrase ; this is the *shibongo*, a word which generally means family name, but which etymologically signifies the formula by which the clan or family glorifies (bonga) itself. These formulae are usually short and often contain archaic expressions or allusions to unknown facts which make them very difficult to understand. I have given some of those from the Ronga territory. Here are two others, collected by the Rev. A. Jaques amongst the Transvaal Thongas, who seem to cultivate this custom more than the coast clans ; they are perhaps encouraged to do so by their Pedi neighbours, who are very fond of these formulae, called by them *mireto*.

who are beaten in the contest having to pay a forfeit which they 538
redeem by telling a tale. So the tale is the conclusion of the 517
game, the object of the whole entertainment. I have often seen exactly the same order followed in a European company playing parlour games.

This interesting scene may be witnessed from one end of the tribe to the other : "This is their evening prayer" said one of our converts to me, a woman who was also a clever story-teller, i. e. as we Christians have our worship every night before going to sleep, so the heathen gladden their hearts by their tales. Everywhere story-telling (ku tha psihitana) is considered the most refined and most pleasing of the games. The tales are called *shihetana* or *nsingo* (mu-mi) in Ronga, *ntyeketo* (mu-mi) or *nkaringana* (mu-mi) in the Northern clans.

Story-tellers are of all ages and of both sexes. I have heard 538
little girls of ten amusing their play-mates with tales. Those I have collected were told by young girls of eighteen (Nkulunkulu and Ñwanawatilo), young men of twenty, (Khwezu, Maganyele, Simeon Makwakwa), and men of thirty and forty (Spoon, Jim Tandane) ; but the majority come from adult women, the most skillful being Shigiyane-Camilla, Sofia Midomingo, Martha and Lois. Some only know one tale, and repeat it on every occasion, like Jim Tandane, who used to narrate the story of an ogre, Ñwatlakulalambimbi, with such gusto that he was surnamed after his hero! But others can recite six, ten or twenty tales. Shigiyane, for instance, could entertain the company for many nights with her tales, some of which were very long. (See for instance "The little hated one," 24 pages, "Mubia, an ogre tale," 19 pages, in my *Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*). This woman's memory was wonderful, and the graceful manner in which she told her stories was no less astonishing. Nkulukulu had heard *her* tale ("The girl and the whale") only once in the Maputju country, and she had memorised it immediately with the little songs which enliven it.

Strange to say, there is a curious precaution to be observed in 538
connection with story-telling : it is taboo to devote oneself to 461
this occupation at noon ; it must remain an evening entertainment ; 826
if this rule is not followed, the transgressor will become bald!

609 accepted as facts by the majority of his countrymen in Bilen. Is it not strange to notice that, whilst a great number of Europeans think of the Blacks as being all cannibals, these savages, on the other hand, believe exactly the same thing of us! Of course a closer contact with White people has already led them to a truer knowledge of what we really are, and they have discovered that, after all, there is not such a great difference between the various human races!

In former times the Thongas would seem to have believed that all White people, not only the Portuguese, dwelt in water. They were said to have eyes in front and behind and to see on all sides, so that it was impossible to escape from them. They used to kidnap Black people and take them away.

III. *The human body.*

1) Ideas of Anatomy.

815 The Thongas have never made an anatomic study of a human
826 corpse. They have a riddle to this effect: "Ku pfura ndjilo mungema? — Ba lahla munhu wa ku fa." — "A fire of live coals? — They bury a dead man." As you never put your hand in the fire, so you would not touch a corpse. Nor have they ever made a post mortem examination! What they know of the human body is entirely derived from the inductions they have drawn from oxen, pigs and game which they cut open. Considering that the source of their knowledge is so indirect, one wonders that they have learnt so much of the human physical structure.

192 Having taught a little anatomy to the students of our Institute,
826 I can bear testimony that they have names for most of the bones of the skeleton. *Pala* (dji-ma) means skull; *lihlaya* (li-ti), maxillary bone; *tinyo*, pl. menyo, teeth; *tshuri* (dji-ma), molar tooth (same word as mortar); *litlatla*, clavicle; *likhongotlo*, spine; *khatla* (dji-ma), shoulder blade; *shintjintji*, sternum; *shikangana*, extremity of the sternum; *libambo*, rib; (they believe there are *ten* ribs on each side!); *shikukwana*, humerus; *nkono* (mu-mi), cubitus;

ñwalihlanga, (mu-ba) femur ; *lihandja*, tibia ; they seem to know 192
nothing of the radius and the peroneus ; *guywa-guywana*, rotula ; 826
nhlolo, astragalus ; other bones are called by the name of the region, or the organ, to which they belong : the bone of the pelvis, *nyongwa* (yin-tin), the hip ; the wrist bones, *hlakala* ; those of the palm, *shipapa* ; those of the fingers, *litiho* ; those of the toes, *shikuñwana* ; those of the ankle, *shirendje* ; of the sole, *nkondjo* (mu-mi) ; the thumb is called *khudju* (dji-ma), and the big toe, *the great shikuñwana*.

The different organs are also known : *byongwe* (bu-ma) (Dj.) *boingwe* (Ro.) is the brain ; *tihlo*, pl. *mahlo*, the eye ; *ndlebe* (yin-tin), the ear ; *nhompfu* (yin-tin), the nose ; *nomo*, pl. *milomo*, the lips and the mouth ; *lidjimi*, the tongue ; *nkolo* (mu-mi), the throat ; they know that there are two pipes, one for food, the other for air, but they are not sure which is in front and which behind ! *Hahu* (dji-ma), (Ro.), *phaphu* (Dj.), lungs ; *shidyelo*, the stomach ; *mbilu* (yin-tin), the heart ; *shibindji*, the liver ; *libengo*, the spleen ; *lipfalo*, the diaphragm ; *rumbu* (dji-ma), the bowels, including the male internal genitalia ; external genitalia of man and woman are taboo ; *yinso* (yin-tin) means kidneys ; *nhlonge* (yin-tin), skin ; *nwala* (mu-mi) nail ; *nsisi* (mu-mi), hair, etc.

But on pushing the inquiry somewhat further, we begin to notice a gross ignorance of important facts. The one word [843]
nsiha (mu-mi) means nerves, tendons, ligaments, veins and arteries ; *nyimba* is the uterus, but also means pregnancy. Natives seem to think that a new nyimba is created at each pregnancy. They know nothing of the glands and I never discovered a name for the pancreas.

2) Physiological notions.

For this reason it is obvious that they cannot know what really 827
happens in the body, and the marvellous and complicated system of our physical life. The mystery of the nervous system is entirely unknown, as is also the way in which blood (*ngati*, yin-tin) is formed from food, the digestive process, the circulation of the blood and the action of the air upon it, etc. We must not be

834 place at a given spot and according to a given order of precedence.
783 This will bring about the definite restoration of the village and a new and pure life will henceforth be possible.

761 I ought perhaps to offer some excuse for having dwelt at some
827 length on a subject which is generally left alone as indelicate. I hope however that my readers will agree with me that all these physiological conceptions and all these strange customs, far from being of a lascivious or licentious character, denote, on the contrary, a deep and earnest conception of life and an aspiration towards purity which it is most interesting to observe. They are at the same time amongst the most striking manifestations of Bantu Dynamism.

827 Beside these great principles of Thonga physiology, I may
576 mention a few other ideas relating to the various secretions of the human body.

578 *Spitting* (ku thuka) is a sign of want of respect, as we have seen (p. 310). It is especially prohibited in the presence of people who are eating, and if any one should spit, they will insult the culprit, saying to him : "Eat your own shikohlolo!" — When some one expectorates, others present will cover the phlegm with sand, not on account of taboo, but from disgust.

● 826 *Blood* (ngati, yin-tin) is also instinctively covered with sand, as
791 soon as it has been shed. This is a taboo, because wizards might use it to bewitch you! The charms of the wizards are commonly called *tingati*, bloods.

827 As regards *sweat* (nyuku, mu-mi), although I cannot assert that the idea is universal, I think it is conceived as coming from outside and falling on men like the dew (mbere) on the grass. When they enter a place which is close, Natives say : "There is sweat here." The etymology of this word is *ku nyuka*, to melt.

Excrement (matjimba) is looked upon as disgusting, but there is no taboo in connection with it.

Yawning (yahlamula) is attended with no superstition.

Hiccough (shitikwane) is not feared in children, but very much so in the case of sick people.

Belching (bisa) is sometimes considered as the result of having been bewitched, especially if the patient becomes thin. Magicians

also belch, to show the mysterious power hidden within them. 827

When any one *sneezes* it is the signal for bestowing upon him good wishes : "Butomi ni burongo!" — "Life and sleep!" The sneezer himself may begin to pray as follows : "Bupsayi! Bukwari! (two liturgical words of invocation to the gods) I pray to you! I have no anger against you! Be with me, and let me sneeze! Let me know sleep and let me know life, that I may go by the road, that I may find an antelope (dead in the bush), that I may take it on my shoulders ; or that I may go and kill 'ndlopfu bukene,' an elephant, (viz., meet with a girl and obtain her favour), etc. Now I say it is enough, you my nose!"

Cutting the *hair* has been referred to already (I, p. 146, II. p. 99). 826 In Tembe and Nondwane there is a curious superstition regarding hair : it is taboo to throw it away without precaution, otherwise a bird called *makhondjwana*, or *ñwantshekuto*, might find it and line its nest with it, and your hair would not grow any more!

IV. *The human soul.*

Thongas have a quantity of names to designate the *psychic* 826
faculties and generally locate them in various organs of the body. 828
Patience resides in the liver, and the identification is so complete that there is but one word to express both the organ and the virtue : *shibindji*! *Hatred* is located in the spleen, and both are called *libengo* (from ku benga, to hate). *Mbilu*, the heart, is the seat of *genius* and intellectual gifts. A man expert in certain arts and crafts has been taught by his heart. From the heart come the decisions of the will : a heathen cannot be converted to Christianity because his heart has not yet told him to be so (mbilu a yi si hlaya). To have a good heart implies kindness, compassion. The chest, *shifuba*, not the lungs, is the seat of intelligence and eloquence (as pectus in Latin). A dumb man is a man "whose chest is dead." The diaphragm either *lipfalo*, sing., or *timpfalo*, plur., or *mapfalo*, is the conscience ; its contractions are identical with qualms of conscience (p. 75). The head and the bowels do not seem to be the seat of any special faculty.

Special precautions are taken in respect to twins when they 845
pay a mourning visit. One of the grave-diggers meets them at the 765
entrance of the village and says: "Do not fear, Children of Heaven." He then puts some ashes on their heads and on their fontanelles. This is done because twins are feeble (ma ni bushapu) and the defilement might affect them more than other children. They must therefore be protected by smearing the middle of the head, and the "extremity of the tree of life," viz., the fontanelle, with a preventive. The mother also undergoes a similar treatment. She must prostrate herself near the hut of the deceased, at the place where the wall has been pierced to make an exit for the corpse. Then the grave-digger brings some live embers in a broken pot, pours a little water on to them, and dips his fingers into the water; he then presses both his hands against the woman's belly and brings them round her waist, pressing them all the while against the skin, until they meet on the spine; thus she is "cured inside" (dahiwa ndjen). This will prevent her from suffering from internal troubles, to which she, having given birth to Tilo, Heaven, is particularly liable. (Comp. I. p. 151) (1).

From this brief description of the customs connected with twins 845
in most of the Thonga clans, it may be seen that their explanation [783]
is twofold: 1) The birth of twins is a death, consequently a 772
defilement, indeed the worst of all defilements. Hence the 789
purificatory rites which bear the character of *passage rites*: the mother is secluded and passes through a period of isolation, after which she is again admitted to society after a painful "casting away of her misfortune." 2) But the cause of the defilement is not an ordinary death, but Heaven. *She is Heaven*; she is said to have

(1) Another category of persons bearing a special relation to Heaven are the 184
albinos. Cases of albinism are not frequent amongst South African Natives, yet they 826
are sometimes met with. They are called in Thonga *Khalandlati*, a word which 772
means literally *charcoal-lightning*. It is believed that they have been burnt (hisa) by 845
lightning in their mother's womb before their birth. "Ba tlalile, a ba wupfanga, ba bengiwi hi tilo," viz. "they are uncomplete beings, they are not ripe, they have been hated by Heaven"; these are the terms in which they are described. They are not however regarded as taboo (yila), they merely inspire disgust (nyenya) (p. 83). As regards women suffering from this kind of disgrace, other women do not smear themselves with the same ochre as they, lest they should give birth to albinos; they do not drink from the same cup. Men do not marry them, and in this respect they are classed with leper women and witches, who are also looked on as repugnant.

231 857 867 "cut the road" from the goats (tjemetela) to keep them away from the gardens. They safely reach the little plain where nothing but hard Gramineae grow. There the boys begin to play, having handed over the charge of the goats to the youngest of the party. The little chap gets tired of watching; little by little the whole herd goes back to the forbidden garden and eats greedily of the savoury stems of the mealies! After a while, the boys discover that the goats are gone. They run after them, and bring them back. But the mistress of the garden passes near by, coming back from the well with her pitcher on her head. She sees the harm done, inspects the traces of the goats, knows by them which herd has plundered her field, uproots some of the spoiled stems and with great clamour goes to the village of the guilty boys and throws down the mealies right before the hut of the father. No compensation is claimed in such a case, generally, but the father will thrash the boys when they come back; or should there be a recurrence of the offence, the husband of the owner of the garden will himself administer a correction to the careless goatherds.

827 857 Boys herding the goats have certain customs. When one of them emits a certain unseemly sound from the rectum, the others say to him: "Fakisa!" He must answer: "Cita munyakanya goben." (I have let out my wind by the rectum). This formula, which is Zulu, is secret. If he does not know it, they beat him and make him look after the goats till the end of the day. Should another boy reveal the answer to the uninitiated, they will punish him in the same way.

2) Stealing.

685 857 What were they doing when the goats escaped? They had probably themselves succeeded in stealing some sweet potatoes and were roasting them on a little fire, well hidden in the velt. Or they had discovered in the bush a broken pot, an old disused and perforated mortar, which some one had placed there to attract bees. And indeed there was honey inside. They had stolen it.. Goatherds are regular thieves and known as such.

606 be banished from their thoughts. They obey that conviction when
835 practising the avoidance rites.

The wife of the brother-in-law, the Great Mukonwana.

607 This particular respect is even more marked in the relations of a man with the wife of his wife's brother. Indeed the avoidance is pushed further than with the mother-in-law. A Native of the Ndjao tribe (which has the same customs as the Thonga tribe in this respect) described to me vividly the extraordinary marks of fear that these two persons show each other when they meet on the road. The story will be told when speaking of the Ba-Ndjao. Here are some other marks of this extraordinary respect.

607 The wife's brother's wife must always keep her breasts covered
834 in the village of her husband's sister's husband. Only when she has had a child is she permitted to "open her clothing;" but then she must fix a leaf in her hair (as if to show that she does not forget the special reserve which she is bound to maintain). (Khosen region.)

607 When a man travels with his great mukonwana and they have to
576 cross a river, they will avoid entering the same boat. It may
827 happen to anyone to emit an unseemly sound from the rectum; but if the great mukonwana is present, she looks on this as a grave offence. A fine must be paid to her, a hoe, for instance. If the guilty man has nothing to give her, he at once breaks a twig from a tree and presents it to her as a token that the proper fine will be forthcoming in due time! He must never use words of insult in her presence, even if he addresses them to another person.

607 If he loses his temper before her she will go to the old people of
844 her husband's village and tell them: "He has insulted me." On the other hand the great mukonwana is bound to go and assist the wife of this man when she gives birth to a child. At least this is the rule in the Khosa clan and also in Maputju. The two women live on very good terms with each other; they are

607 *tinhombe*. The man himself, when he visits his relatives-in-law, has the right of sleeping in the hut of the great mukonwana. We have seen that, during the first months after his marriage, he is received in the hut of his mother-in-law. Why is this? Because the oxen

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nhlolo, astragalus ; other bones are called by the name of the region, or the organ, to which they belong : the bone of the pelvis, *nyongwa* (yin-tin), the hip ; the wrist bones, *hlakala* ; those of the palm, *shipapa* ; those of the fingers, *litiho* ; those of the toes, *shikuñwana* ; those of the ankle, *shirendje* ; of the sole, *nkondjo* (mu-mi) ; the thumb is called *khudju* (dji-ma), and the big toe, *the great shikuñwana*.

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2) Physiological notions.

For this reason it is obvious that they cannot know what really 827
happens in the body, and the marvellous and complicated system of our physical life. The mystery of the nervous system is entirely unknown, as is also the way in which blood (*ngati*, yin-tin) is formed from food, the digestive process, the circulation of the blood and the action of the air upon it, etc. We must not be

827 surprised at this ignorance ; our forefathers, three hundred years ago, were not much more advanced than the Natives are now.

On the other hand, Bantus, and especially Thongas, have a number of physiological ideas, which are pure superstitions, being devoid of any scientific foundation, but are, nevertheless, firmly believed and give rise to a number of practices, rites, and purifications. This is a most interesting subject and its study throws much light on the condition of primitive man. I have tried to explain these physiological conceptions in an article published in "La Revue d'Ethnographie et de Sociologie, Mai 1910." It is not possible to enter into all the details here, and I am obliged to refer the reader to that article for more particulars. However my description of the Life of the Tribe would not be complete if this subject were entirely omitted ; so I will rapidly give a general idea of this curious Native physiology.

661 In the Thonga mind, human life is composed of a certain number
851 of periods which follow each other, each having its particular
827 character.

As we have seen in the Evolution of man (Part I), *the first period* (busahana) extends from birth to the fall of the umbilical cord ; the baby is in a state of contamination owing to the lochia and must not be touched ; from the eighth or ninth day till the weaning takes place, is *the nursing period*, divided into two or three sub-periods by the presentation to the moon and the tying of the cotton string. The child has been progressively received into human society. Up to this day he has been considered as under treatment, because a child is not a complete healthy human being ; he is but *water* (mati), not yet firm ; he is always threatened with disease and so he must continually drink his *milombyana*. The *hondlola* ceremony closes this period and, by the act of weaning, he enters into the *childhood* period. (I. p. 59).

561 Infancy is a *bukhuna*, a state of incompleteness fraught with
827 a certain defilement. Childhood is also a bukhuna, and this contemptible inferiority must be removed by the circumcision rites, the significance of which is both physiological and social. When they wish to marry, viz., *to pass from the class of unmarried to that of married people*, young men and women must again

undergo a number of ceremonies of a social rather than of a physiological character. 561 827

But, in addition to these conceptions of human life, which determine so many acts and customs, there are at least *five physiological phenomena* which are believed to be attended with defilement, and which call for special precautions and rites : the menstrual flow, the lochia, disease, death and the birth of twins. To protect individuals, the family, or the clan, against these dangerous defilements, is one of the main preoccupations of any adult Thonga ; and to gain this end they submit to endless ceremonies of purification and observe innumerable taboos ; thus it is plain that these physiological conceptions, absolutely unscientific and wrong as they are, play an immense part in their lives and cause them any amount of unnecessary trouble. 783

I need not deal at length with these five greatly dreaded physiological events. As regards menses, the subject has been treated in Vol. I, p. 187. (Compare Vol. II, p. 47) ; as regards lochia, see Vol. I, p. 43 ; concerning disease, we shall hear further in our third chapter. The tremendous contaminating power of death has been shown in the explanation of funeral rites, and the birth of twins will be studied more closely in the next chapter. The importance of these facts in the system of taboos will also be explained in Chap. IV.

The sexual act, though not considered as attended with contamination in the same manner as the five other physiological facts just referred to, is, however, subject to very characteristic restrictions. I have already explained them when dealing with conjugal life (I. p. 188). It will, however, perhaps not be superfluous to treat of this question again, considering it in its physiological aspect and in relation to the Bantu conception of Nature, and giving at the same time precise references to all the cases hitherto met with. 827 834 783

Let us first remark that, as some of my informants said, the sexual act when indulged in before marriage, by boys and girls in their gingisa (I. p. 150) has quite another bearing than when accomplished by married people. It would seem that it is not the physical act in itself which is attended with all these taboos,

827 but the act in as far as it is a regular manifestation of the
834 collective life of the family; in this case only does it have its
783 terrible repercussion on the life of the community. Married people who have regular sexual relations, "who are hot," constitute a danger in the three following connections.

1) They are dangerous to those *individual members of the community* who are in a weak state of health and in whom disease would gain new strength if they entered into contact with married people. This is true of the master of the village when he is seriously ill (I. p. 133), of the mother who has given birth to a baby (I. p. 43), of the baby itself which is considered as "being not yet firm," (and sexual relations are forbidden to its parents until they have tied the cotton string round its loins) (I. p. 45, 58); of circumcised boys (I. p. 80, 93); of convalescents, who must not tread on the same paths as married folk or, if they do so, must tie round their ankles a root of the *sungi* juncus as a protection against the emanation, or perspiration (nyuku) which married people have left in their footprints or on the grass. During their whole convalescence sexual relations have been strictly forbidden to them (Ch. III. B. III. 4).

2) Sexual relations constitute a danger *to the community itself* as a whole, when its existence is threatened. They are prohibited in time of epidemic. Mboza, having heard that a proclamation had been issued in Lourenço Marques on account of an epidemic, was convinced that the object of the decree was to suspend sexual relations amongst the White community! The same law applies to all marginal periods, because these are critical times in which the life of the community is threatened. This is the case during the Great Mourning (I. p. 150). Mourners must *keep quiet;* if not, there might be quarrels, the mourning might "overcome them." Again when moving the village to another place (I. p. 320), the same rule must be observed.

3) Married people again are taboo in certain operations or pursuits, the success of which would be endangered if they took part in them or if they indulged in their ordinary relations. It must not be a married person who sets fire to the furnace in which

the potteress fires her pots (1) (p. 115). Why is this so? No 834
doubt because if married people, who are hot, did it, the fire would 783
become uncontrollable and all the pots would crack. The same 827
reason explains why sexual relations are so strongly prohibited in hunting and fishing. The game or fish would be so wild that it would be impossible to catch it ; big game would probably kill the hunters (p. 61).

This conception of the sexual act explains why certain functions in the ritual must be performed by young children, still without knowledge of sexual matters, or by old women past the time of childbearing and consequently belonging to the asexual class (I. p. 466).

How is it possible to explain, on the other hand, that this act, so severely prohibited on so many occasions, should be the great purifying act by which the community gets rid of the defilement of death and returns to normal life? We have seen that this is the case after the death of an important person in the village as well as when the village itself moves to another place, probably in consequence of defilement by the loss of some of its members. Notice that the sexual act, in order to obtain the desired result, must be accomplished in the ritual fashion, i. e. s. n. i. (I. Annotatio 2 and 13). It would seem that, in the Thonga mind, death defiles not 834
only the belongings of the deceased, his implements, his assegais, 783
even his fire, but also his parents, even the parents of his wife, and 761
above all, those secretions of the genital organs which are the very 827
fountain of their life, and through which the community is maintained and multiplied. They must be cleansed in order that the social group may re-enter upon a normal state. The ceremonies which we have described (I. p. 152-156 and 320-328) are highly significant. Each couple must perform the rite in turn and all must participate in a collective lustration which takes

(1) According to the Rev. Ed. W. Smith the same rule is observed in the smelting operations of the Ba-Ila. A little boy and a little girl are put into the kiln when it is about a foot high and they must crack a bean in their mouths and swallow it. We have here a very good example of Bantu primitive philosophy. The innocence or, as we may say, the coolness, of the little ones will prevent the flame from being too fierce and spoiling the whole operation, whilst the slow cracking of the bean will ensure the success of the smelting process (Smith and Dale, *The Ila-Speaking People*, I. p. 205).

834 place at a given spot and according to a given order of precedence.
783 This will bring about the definite restoration of the village and a new and pure life will henceforth be possible.

761 I ought perhaps to offer some excuse for having dwelt at some
827 length on a subject which is generally left alone as indelicate. I hope however that my readers will agree with me that all these physiological conceptions and all these strange customs, far from being of a lascivious or licentious character, denote, on the contrary, a deep and earnest conception of life and an aspiration towards purity which it is most interesting to observe. They are at the same time amongst the most striking manifestations of Bantu Dynamism.

827 Beside these great principles of Thonga physiology, I may
576 mention a few other ideas relating to the various secretions of the human body.

578 *Spitting* (ku thuka) is a sign of want of respect, as we have seen (p. 310). It is especially prohibited in the presence of people who are eating, and if any one should spit, they will insult the culprit, saying to him : "Eat your own shikohlolo!" — When some one expectorates, others present will cover the phlegm with sand, not on account of taboo, but from disgust.

826 *Blood* (ngati, yin-tin) is also instinctively covered with sand, as
791 soon as it has been shed. This is a taboo, because wizards might use it to bewitch you! The charms of the wizards are commonly called *tingati*, bloods.

827 As regards *sweat* (nyuku, mu-mi), although I cannot assert that the idea is universal, I think it is conceived as coming from outside and falling on men like the dew (mbere) on the grass. When they enter a place which is close, Natives say : "There is sweat here." The etymology of this word is *ku nyuka*, to melt.

Excrement (matjimba) is looked upon as disgusting, but there is no taboo in connection with it.

Yawning (yahlamula) is attended with no superstition.

Hiccough (shitikwane) is not feared in children, but very much so in the case of sick people.

Belching (bisa) is sometimes considered as the result of having been bewitched, especially if the patient becomes thin. Magicians

also belch, to show the mysterious power hidden within them. 827

When any one *sneezes* it is the signal for bestowing upon him good wishes : "Butomi ni burongo!" — "Life and sleep!" The sneezer himself may begin to pray as follows : "Bupsayi! Bukwari! (two liturgical words of invocation to the gods) I pray to you! I have no anger against you! Be with me, and let me sneeze! Let me know sleep and let me know life, that I may go by the road, that I may find an antelope (dead in the bush), that I may take it on my shoulders; or that I may go and kill 'ndlopfu bukene,' an elephant, (viz., meet with a girl and obtain her favour), etc. Now I say it is enough, you my nose!"

Cutting the *hair* has been referred to already (I, p. 146, II. p. 99). 826
In Tembe and Nondwane there is a curious superstition regarding hair : it is taboo to throw it away without precaution, otherwise a bird called *makhondjwana*, or *ñwantshekuto*, might find it and line its nest with it, and your hair would not grow any more!

IV. *The human soul.*

Thongas have a quantity of names to designate the *psychic* 826
faculties and generally locate them in various organs of the body. 828
Patience resides in the liver, and the identification is so complete that there is but one word to express both the organ and the virtue : *shibindji*! *Hatred* is located in the spleen, and both are called *libengo* (from ku benga, to hate). *Mbilu*, the heart, is the seat of *genius* and intellectual gifts. A man expert in certain arts and crafts has been taught by his heart. From the heart come the decisions of the will : a heathen cannot be converted to Christianity because his heart has not yet told him to be so (mbilu a yi si hlaya). To have a good heart implies kindness, compassion. The chest, *shifuba*, not the lungs, is the seat of intelligence and eloquence (as pectus in Latin). A dumb man is a man "whose chest is dead." The diaphragm either *lipfalo*, sing., or *timpfalo*, plur., or *mapfalo*, is the conscience ; its contractions are identical with qualms of conscience (p. 75). The head and the bowels do not seem to be the seat of any special faculty.

occasions he has been presented with a chicken as an encouragment; 756
but on the day of the hondlola, when his skill is joyfully affirmed, and the cure an accomplished fact, accounts must be definitely settled with the ñanga, who will henceforth discontinue his visits.

III. *Conception of Disease.*

The preceding details make it possible for us to understand the 753
conceptions which underlie these rites and ceremonies. Possessing as they do so few and such inaccurate notions regarding Anatomy or Physiology, it is not surprising that correct pathological knowledge is absolutely non-existent amongst South African Bantus. In fact this knowledge is both superficial and superstitious. I shall try to prove this by a study of the *names* given to the diseases, the causes to which they are attributed, the *notion* of contagion, and the ideas underlying the *rites which mark the end of a disease.*

1) As regards the method of *naming diseases*, it is most childish. 753
Thongas call the complaint from which they suffer by the name 827
of the organ affected ; for instance "I have a foot, I have a hand, I have a neck" (ndji ni nenge, boko, nkolo) means "I have a pain in my foot, my hand or my neck." These curious expressions doubtless arise from the fact that no notice is taken of the existence of any particular organ until something goes wrong with it. "He has a head" means "He is mad." For "I have a headache," the expression "ndji yingela nhloko," meaning "I feel my head," would generally be used. Very often one hears complaints of "a blood" (ngati) which moves from spot to spot, finally taking up its abode in the side or in the stomach, or elsewhere. This is an idea similar to that of the morbid humours of olden days. There are then as many diseases as there are organs, and we are often asked for remedies for the "nape of the neck complaint," or for the "inside trouble." This latter might be gastritis, congestion of the liver, or dysentery, and we should often be wholly at a loss how to prescribe were it not for the highly picturesque, and often particularly appropriate, imagery used by the patients, or by their friends, in describing the various symptoms ; for instance when

753 a sufferer from "inside trouble" says that "it bites" (luma),
827 we know that it is a case of intestinal colic. But it becomes somewhat puzzling when a patient declares that he suffers from an intestinal worm which passes from his stomach into his neck and returns through his lungs, when it does not happen to take a fancy to remain in his head! "It makes a sound like *pfie...pfie...*," said an old man to me when describing this animal, which plays an important part in the medical science of the Natives (1). (I. p. 48.)

[164] There are, however, certain technical terms which are used to designate some diseases ; thus *mukuhlwana* means cough and the mucous catarrh of the throat and nose. The ordinary *mbukulu* seems to be tonsilitis, while the special *mbukulu* is an affliction accompanied by fever, vertigo, delirium and madness, which is generally attributed to the malign influences of the spirits of the departed. — Hydrocele *(masangu, or masenge)* is wide-spread and well-known, as is also bilharzia, a form of haematuria called *shinyalu* or *ndjundjwane*, which appears in severe forms and is due to a special parasite. Rheumatism is called *shifambo*, the runner, as it moves from spot to spot. Syphilis, imported long ago by Europeans, is universally known, and is, alas, so general in the neighbourhood of the town of Lourenço Marques that almost all Natives suffer from it. The Natives call it *buba* (probably from bubo). Gonorrhea is of more recent importation, and dates — according to my informant Tobane — from the time of the construction of the Pretoria Railway ; it is called *shikandjameti*, the disease which crushes the villages.

The eruptive diseases are perhaps those best recognized by the Natives. *Shintshinana* is the name for measles, but seems also applicable to scarlet fever. Small-pox is called *nyedzana*, and, as regards psychic or nervous troubles, the treatment of which

(1) I may here mention that the tape worm and the lumbric, both called *tinyokana*, small snakes, are very common amongst Natives, and are well known to them. They even think that these worms are necessary for digestion. An old woman had asked one of my colleagues to give her a vermifuge, and the drug had been successful. But she came back to ask him to give her another medicine to prevent all the inhabitants from escaping. Some of them must remain in her body "because," as the old woman said, "who would eat my food afterwards" ?

we have just studied, they are attributed either to Heaven or to 753
evil spirits or to the winds. The name of the *wutleka* disease 827
is worthy of notice. This word comes from *wutla*, which means to rob, to seize; wutleka, the qualificative derivative (Thonga Grammar § 196) means the condition of something taken away. This would seem to be a passive meaning, as if the patient had been robbed by some agent. However, Mankhelu explains the term by saying: "The patient has stolen the *rirabi*" — "a wutle rirabi". *Rirabi* is very closely allied to a word meaning stick; the old doctor says it is the name of the disease. If this etymology be correct the patient would be considered as having taken the disease by a kind of robbery. But Native etymology must always be accepted with caution.

All these names show how unprecise is the pathological knowledge of the Thongas.

2) As regards the *causes of diseases*, Thongas are groping in 753
the grossest superstition. When a medical man wishes to treat a 787
disease, he first tries to diagnose its cause. The Bantu ñanga does the same, only the difference is that he takes very little notice of the physical symptoms. There is no auscultation, no palpation, no examination of the secretions, blood, saliva, or urine, as these are disgusting and must be covered with sand as soon as possible! The great means of diagnosing a disease is the throwing of bones. There are three great causes of disease: the spirits of the gods, the wizards and the makhumo, defilement from death or from impure persons. A fourth less common cause is Heaven. The bones will reveal by the way in which they fall which is the one to be combated.

3) Their ideas of *contagion* are not much in advance of their 753
other pathological conceptions. The two most dreaded diseases 164
in this respect are consumption (lifuba) and leprosy (nhlokonho). 751
Consumption is by no means a new ailment due to civilisation, though it has increased enormously since Thonga boys have gone to the towns. A proof that it has been known for a long time is to be found in its great importance in the ritual. To the Thonga mind it is caused by the *makhumo*, i. e., the contamination of death, or the defilement resulting from contact with a woman in

756 it in half. I take a little of the heart, and of the eyes, I crush the
791 bones, I make a powder with all these ingredients, and this is my great medicine. With one of the bones I make a flute ; I put a little powder into it, and, when a thunderstorm breaks, I go outside without danger and conjure the lightning by playing on my flute, etc." (p. 314).

Mathuza, the magician of Nondwane to whom I have just alluded, was essentially a detector of baloyi. — So was also *Ñwashihandjime*, the great Nkuna magician, a splendid creature, tall, his eyes beaming with a kind of supernatural light. I once saw him, after having performed the "smelling out" rite, point out a woman with the tail he always carried with him, an enormous tail fixed on a handle richly decorated with beads and copper wire.
[825] This tail, which is one of the most common attributes of the mungoma, is generally *a gnu tail*. It is said that when a mother gnu has dropped her offspring, she beats it (phyita) with her tail and thus gives the new-born gnu the necessary strength to walk and follow its mother. Hence the peculiar magic use of the gnu tail. In its very middle are hidden certain drugs which possess a revelatory virtue ; the magician puts his nose right amongst the hair before pronouncing his sentence and beating (phyita) the noyi. Ñwashihandjime is said to have disappeared from his village for months, and to have come back from the desert emaciated but full of new magical powers. I once tried to draw his attention to things more spiritual than his art and his drugs. He gazed at me with wild eyes, as if unable to follow my demonstration ; suddenly he emitted a cry very similar to a hiccough and turned his back.
[827] (Hiccoughing is a well-known symptom, showing either that one has been bewitched by "mitisa," or that one possesses magical power).

At the station of Shiluvane I once made an inventory of the charms of another Nkuna magician. In his hair the man wore a brass bracelet and some rings, and a necklace with a sixpence attached, all these objects having been inherited from his father, who was himself a mungoma ; moreover he hung round his neck a little piece of the skin of a goat, which had been sacrificed after the death of his father ; in this way he tried to acquire and keep

821 "Kengelekezeeeee !" and this exclamation is repeated from one village to another. *Kenge* is the descriptive adverb which means the form of the crescent of the moon. Each "moon," or month, is considered as being a new one, the old one having died, and there were special names for each month of the year (See Part VI).

[841] 856 828 821 852 As soon as the mother of the child has resumed her menses (the menses are called tinwheti, months) and this happens as a rule on the third month after the delivery amongst Thonga women, she takes her garments, washes them, puts on new clothing and then proceeds to the ceremony of the *yandla*. The child must be "given his month." This is done in the following way. The day the new moon appears, the mother takes with her a torch or merely a brand from the fire and the grandmother follows her carrying the child : both go to the ash-heap behind the hut. There the mother throws the burning stick towards the moon and the grandmother flings the child into the air saying : "This is your moon !" (hweti ya ku hi yoleyo) : then she puts the child on to the ashes. The little one cries and rolls over in the dirt on the ash-heap. Then his mother snatches him up (wutla), nurses him, and they go home.

This ceremony, which is certainly a rite of passage, is said to "open the chest of the child" otherwise "his ears would die," he would remain stupid. When a child is not intelligent, it is usual to say to him : You have not been shown your moon ! (1)

852 846 854 Therefore the *yandla* means a progress made by the child, the entrance into a new phase of his existence. The fact is emphasised by the three following changes which take place on the day of the yandla : 1) Henceforth his father is allowed to take the child in his arms. Up to that day, this was taboo, as the child being continually with his mother was perhaps polluted by the dangerous blood following the birth ; but now she has washed her clothing and has been purified by the reappearance of the menses ; so the danger no longer exists. 2) It is now

(1) However the name of the child's month is soon forgotten and is never afterwards recalled. This seems to show that the custom is dying out, as well as the knowledge of the names of the various months.

726 have given you all my strength ; go and slay." They crossed the
789 river at night and having reached the left bank, at a point about ten
751 kilometers from the Portuguese camp at Morakwene, they were made to observe the strictest silence for a long time. Then they felt that valour (burena) had taken possession of them!

Amongst the Ba-Nkuna the war-medicine is also administered under the form of *sprinkling*. This sprinkling may take place in time of peace, when danger threatens. The chief kills a black ox and the army, summoned to the capital, is sprinkled and eats the flesh of the ox. This will make the country ready for any eventuality. But the ceremony is much more serious when war is at hand. Then the "great medicine of the country," carefully kept in the calabashes of the Court magicians, is mixed with *psanyi* of slaughtered sheep and with white sand taken from the river. During the night, the mukhumbi is formed and all the men sit down, their heads bowed over their knees,
726 their eyes closed, in perfect silence. Then one of the queens,
789 an old woman who no longer has any sexual relations, enters
751 the circle, absolutely naked. She dips a leafy branch into the
562 magical infusion and marches all round, inside and outside, sprinkling all the warriors and muttering the following words : "Kill them, break their pots, kill their dogs, catch their chief, bring him here, bring so-and-so and so-and-so." The warriors tremble with emotion. They pray to their gods in a low tone : "Save me! Help me!" But none of them dares to raise his eyes! They know quite well that they would die!

It is extremely important that the officiating woman should be old and have had no sexual relations for a long time, or "the assagais would lose their strength ; the masculine weapons would become blind and the feminine weapons alone would see... The woman would have untied the knot of the assagai ; she would cross the way (tjemakanya) of the great medicine... She must be a quiet woman (a rula)". (Mankhelu).

726 Similar customs exist in *Maputju*, where the medicine is called
789 "the medicine of hatred,"—that which dispels all natural feeling
828 and makes a man capable of killing his fellow-man! I give the particulars of this curious medical treatment as I have them from

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one of the Natives of the country : there are no fewer than seven acts in this grand performance of "preparation for battle."

a) In the first place when the chief foresees that a campaign is imminent, he has water drawn, and all the necessary ingredients gathered together : then he goes into retirement for one month, during which he is busy preparing the medicine with the magician who knows all about the recipe.

b) At the end of this time the entire army is summoned to the capital. A bull is brought out before the assembled soldiers and the chief strikes it on the head with a stick : this infuriates the animal, which must be caught and thrown down by the men unarmed ; the chief then approaches and kills it with an axe. They dismember the carcase, cutting off the flesh in strips, which they cook in a large battered pot, stirring it with their assagais and pouring into it at the same time "the medicine of hatred."

c) On this day the army is mustered and formed in a circle. The Commander-in-Chief takes the meat, cuts it into small pieces and mixes with it certain human ingredients : a finger taken from a hostile petty chief killed in battle has been carefully preserved ; the dried up phalange is scraped and the bone-dust thus obtained is mixed with the medicine. This additional ingredient is to prevent any feeling of remorse, any prickings of conscience : "ku susa lipfalo," literally "to remove the diaphragm," the seat of the conscience, according to Ronga ideas. (See later on a more probable explanation of this rite.) The Commander-in-Chief takes the pieces of meat thus seasoned and throws them into the mouths of the soldiers, who must not touch them with their hands. The food must be received between the teeth ; any meat falling to the ground is picked up by the children.

d) On the following day, the whole army proceeds to a large lake (the lake of Shika, near the village of Nhlampfukazi) to be treated with another medicine, an emetic. This is placed on a skin in the middle of the lake : the skin is withdrawn, leaving the particles of the drug floating on the water ; each warrior must stoop down and swallow a mouthful of the emetic. He will vomit yesterday's meat : "fear will be thrown up and valour will remain"

727 They have killed... So they are exposed to the mysterious and
775 deadly influence of the *nuru* and must consequently undergo a
828 medical treatment. What is the *nuru* ? *Nuru* is the spirit of the
783 slain which tries to take its revenge on the slayer. It haunts him
789 and may drive him into insanity : his eyes swell, protrude and
761 become inflamed. He will go out of his mind, be attacked by giddiness (ndzululwan) and the thirst for blood may lead him to fall upon members of his own family and to stab them with his assagay. To prevent such misfortunes, a special medication is required : the slayers must *lurulula tiyimpi ta bu*, take away the nuru of their sanguinary expedition. (Lurulula comes from nuru, plur. miluru (1).

In what does this treatment consist ? The slayers must remain for some days at the capital. They are taboo. They put on old clothes, eat with special spoons because their hands are

764 (1) We met with the notion of *nuru* for the first time à propos of the rite of
775 luma (p. 400) ; we shall find it again when dealing with hunting customs (Part IV).
761 The nuru is to be feared not only in the case of slain enemies but in connexion with any human corpse. As a proof, I may quote the following curious story which Spoon told me and of the truth of which he was fully convinced. A traveller died under the great fig-tree of Libombo (near Rikatla). He had climbed on to the tree and fallen on his own stick, which he had planted in the ground. He was not buried, as no one knew him. So his corpse fell into decomposition on the spot; his skull became white. Later on a bush fire burnt all the grass and the skull was
764 seen for years "saying mpha" (it was shining), the teeth "saying bva" (descriptive
775 adverb, same meaning). One day the boys of Libombo went to pick wild figs from the tree and again saw the skull. Spoon was one of them. The fire had just passed
755 by again. "We beat it with our sticks and amused ourselves by rolling it over like a
789 ball. We did not know it was a human skull... When we got home we began to be seized by the drunkenness of nuru, the disease of those who have killed a man. During
761 the night we were delirious (hanta-hanteka), our eyes swelled and were full of exudations (malanga), the four of us, Tsukela, Tlabin, Sibakuze and myself. Next morning my uncle went to the fig-tree and saw that we had killed a man there! The medicine-man who understands the treatment of nuru, Dudela, who had been a slayer in war, called us to his village. We stood in a line before him ; he poured a little of his powder into the hands of each one of us, took a little in his mouth, rubbed his forehead. Then he insulted us saying : "You will die! Who began beating that skull?" Each of us denied having given the first blow. Then he said : "Take care! Do not go there any more nor near that nkuhlu tree where another corpse has been burnt under the leaves! Go away."

514 When a man has murdered another in a scuffle, he can replace this nuru medicine
789 by his own urine. He must drink a little of it and rub his forehead with it. The giddiness will pass away. If the murder has been committed from a distance, as with
775 a gun, the nuru is not so much to be feared, as the enemy was far away. A little of the medicine will be sufficient to treat the murderer. Spoon is ignorant of the compo-
626 sition of the nuru drug.
761

789 the medicine of the slayers of men. At bukanye time they can
727 use it to *luma*, viz., to season the first calabash they drink (See
828 page 400). For this purpose it is as good as the great mbhulo,
783 "the medicine of the country," provided by the chief, and it will prevent them attacking their own people under the influence of drink. The *tintebe* will also be helpful in future battles. The insanity which threatens those who shed blood might begin early. So, on the battle-field itself, just after their deed, warriors are given a preventive dose of the medicine by those who have killed on previous occasions and who wear tintebe.

789 The period of seclusion having been concluded by the final
783 purification, all the implements (mizilo) used by the slayers
727 during these days, and their old garments, are tied together and hung by a string to a tree, at some distance from the capital, where they are left to rot (1).

Having reached their homes, the slayers have still to complete the cure by chewing a piece of root called monungwane every morning and evening, and spitting it out in the direction of the rising or the setting sun with the same exclamation: "Phee! phee!" — "Go down, sink!" The piece of root is tied to the assagay (2).

727 The description of the rites performed for the treatment of the slayers
828 applies especially to the Northern clans. But the following narrative
789 of an old man named Makhani from the Rikatla region shows that
783 similar customs were also in existence amongst the Ba-Ronga. This man had wounded an enemy in a battle; the wound proved fatal and the

(1) I had the good luck to find those which were used for the purification of the slayers after the Mooudi fight during the Sikororo war and they are now in the Ethnographical Museum of Neuchâtel. They consist of half a dozen old calabashes, a pair of sandals, etc.

171 (2) Purification customs for the warriors are somewhat different amongst the Pedis. After the Mooudi battle, the slayers of Maaghe's yimpi had to undergo the following medicinal treatment: the heart of the slain having been torn out, the muscles of their faces sliced off, their limbs amputated, all these portions of human flesh mixed with drugs and ox-flesh were cooked in a pot, the assagais being used to stir the horrible broth. This was poured into a flat basket which it is taboo to touch; some one drew it with a curved assagay as far as the middle of the square. Then the slayers, having been previously white-washed with clay, advanced on their knees, and, with vociferations or cries imitating vultures, caught a piece of meat in their teeth, not touching it with their hands. Their wives are said to participate in this meal, as being also contaminated by the defilement of their glorious husbands.

727 enemy died later on, after his return to his home. Makhani did not
828 know this. One day he became suddenly delirious and rushed about
789 all over the village trying to stab his own people. "Oho!" said those
783 who saw him, "it is because the man he wounded has died!" They at once called the magician who possessed the nuru medicine, a man of the Mapsangamye clan, who came with his calabash. In this calabash there was a carved stick cut from a tree called shiralala, the extremity of which must always remain plunged in the medicine. The magician dipped this stick into a mixture made of honey and the drug, and passed it over the lips of Makhani, who seized it with his tongue, sucking it as the magician moved it from right to left, and licking his lips. A drop of the medicine was then put into each ear, on each upper eye-lid, and below the sternum. He was then cured and, taking a lighted torch, he threw it in the direction of the enemy's country with threatening words: "A ba fe, bafo, ba bola i. e. Let them die, the enemies, let them rot. I will kill still others!" Every day he had to go to the pool and wash his body, treating himself with the tintebe powder.

727 During the weeks following the battle heroes do not only
301 wear the tintebe, besides these miluru amulets, they have the
703 right to wear certain trophies. These are in the first place
534 antelope or goat's horns pierced at the base; they thread a string through the hole thus made and tie them round their necks (See illustrations, p. 33 and 453). They also make necklaces of small pieces of wood, notched in a peculiar manner and burnt in the fire; a hole is made through these and they are strung together like beads and worn round the neck. Sometimes these necklaces are made so long that they are worn as a bandoleer. I recollect seeing the Matjolo warriors returning from their expedition of February 1895: they came to show themselves off to the Whites at Lourenço Marques, gloriously proud of having massacred defenceless women and children whom they had surprised in the early hours of the morning! People threw them pieces of silver which they converted into brandy! (1)

727 (1) The terrible malediction which rests on those who have killed an enemy
775 is well illustrated by the following story which the Rev. Maphophe told me of an
761 event that had taken place not long ago in the Shishongo country (Manyisa district). A man of the Ndzindzi family had killed a Ndjao during one of Gungunyana's expedi-

244 pumpkins, another will go to the field and plant some seeds in
753 it without the old man's knowledge ; then people will venture to
824 plant in their own gardens. Transgression of this taboo is said to be punished by lumbago.

222 There are, besides, many wild plants which the housewives
824 collect and of which they make excellent dishes : the *tjeke*, a
828 kind of Chenopodiacea, which is also used as a medicine to induce forgetfulness ; the *nkakana*, a pretty plant of the Cucurbitaceae family, which climbs up the dried stems of maize after the harvest, and of which they eat the leaves and also the pretty little oval pointed fruit.

137 *Tomatoes* (shimati) are also found growing round the villages,
285 where they propagate themselves, and seem to prosper the better the less they are cared for : the Natives take them to Lourenço Marques for sale in very original baskets made of a single palm leaf, with the follicles artistically twisted. I am unable to say when they were introduced. There is a agreeable kind of small tomato which grows wild in Khosen, about the size of a cherry.

244 Natives also cultivate a kind of *onion* (nyala, yi-tin), smaller than the European varieties, which they very much appreciate in their sauces.

249 *The sugar cane* (moba, mu-mi) is never grown in large plantations, but you find it on the Coast, as well as in Zoutpansberg, cultivated on a small scale, either for eating, or for preparing the strong *shiwayawaya* drink, which I shall describe later on.

245 The *pine-apple* (lalasi, dji-ma) has spread as far as the Bilene country and must be of ancient date ; it differs considerably from the Natal pine-apple, being longer, coarser and not so sweet. In many villages large plantations are to be seen.

249 *Tobacco* (fole, dji-ma) is also wide-spread and seems to have been cultivated for a long time. A curious fact is that its cultivation is the business of the men, and women have nothing to do with it. Amongst the Ba-Ronga it is sown first in a damp spot in the marsh, in a special little garden called *shibibi*, and, when it has grown a little, is planted out (simeka) on the hill, near the villages. When nearly ripe the lower leaves are first

821 which is also met with in *nyeleti* (star) and in the names of certain rivers. (I. p. 36.) At the present time there is no trace of worship or of mythological conceptions in connection with it. Natives see in its spots a woman carrying a shirundju basket or a bundle of sticks, but they do not attach to that image more importance than we do when we talk of the man in the moon.

821 I have described (I. p. 52) how the new moon is received
527 with exclamations of joy : in the villages the first person who
241 sees it shouts : "Kengelekezeeee,"—"the Crescent! the Crescent!" and this word is passed on from one village to another, and dancers rejoice because they will have moonlight to illuminate their feasts! Such is, at least, the reason now given by the Rongas for this custom. There were perhaps other ideas connected with the new moon in former times. — According to a Nkuna informant the day of the new moon is a *shimusi*, a day of rest. It is taboo to till the fields and cut the roots of the trees with a hoe. The moon must be left to become firm (tiyela). It is still tender as a new born child. Destroying winds might
821 blow and hail fall if this taboo were transgressed. — The
787 appearance of the crescent was also carefully examined, says the
828 same informant. If its horns were turned towards the earth, this showed that there was nothing to fear, all the dangers contained in this month had been poured out : "mafumo ma hangalakile" — "the assagais were dispersed." On the contrary, if the horns were turned towards heaven, this showed that the moon was full of weapons and misfortunes. — The new moon is of great importance in the customs connected with exorcism and possession, as every exorcist must undergo the *haza* purification at each new moon (Chapter III). Moreover Thongas, like many civilised people, also believe that some persons at this time have an attack of madness which is called *rihuhe ra ñhweti*, the lunar madness.

772 When the first quarter appears, the moon is said to *thwaza*,
821 a Zulu word which corresponds to *tjhama* in Thonga, and is very much used in the terminology of possession. Eight days later, it is said to *basa*, to be white or brilliant ; full moon is said to *sima* or to *lata batjongwana*, to put the little children to bed, because when it rises, it finds them already sleeping on their mats.

also belch, to show the mysterious power hidden within them. 827

When any one *sneezes* it is the signal for bestowing upon him good wishes : "Butomi ni burongo!" — "Life and sleep!" The sneezer himself may begin to pray as follows : "Bupsayi! Bukwari! (two liturgical words of invocation to the gods) I pray to you! I have no anger against you! Be with me, and let me sneeze! Let me know sleep and let me know life, that I may go by the road, that I may find an antelope (dead in the bush), that I may take it on my shoulders; or that I may go and kill 'ndlopfu bukene,' an elephant, (viz., meet with a girl and obtain her favour), etc. Now I say it is enough, you my nose!"

Cutting the *hair* has been referred to already (I, p. 146, II. p. 99). 826
In Tembe and Nondwane there is a curious superstition regarding hair : it is taboo to throw it away without precaution, otherwise a bird called *makhondjwana*, or *ñwantshekuto*, might find it and line its nest with it, and your hair would not grow any more!

IV. *The human soul.*

Thongas have a quantity of names to designate the *psychic* 826
faculties and generally locate them in various organs of the body. 828
Patience resides in the liver, and the identification is so complete that there is but one word to express both the organ and the virtue : *shibindji*! *Hatred* is located in the spleen, and both are called *libengo* (from ku benga, to hate). *Mbilu*, the heart, is the seat of *genius* and intellectual gifts. A man expert in certain arts and crafts has been taught by his heart. From the heart come the decisions of the will : a heathen cannot be converted to Christianity because his heart has not yet told him to be so (mbilu a yi si hlaya). To have a good heart implies kindness, compassion. The chest, *shifuba*, not the lungs, is the seat of intelligence and eloquence (as pectus in Latin). A dumb man is a man "whose chest is dead." The diaphragm either *lipfalo*, sing., or *timpfalo*, plur., or *mapfalo*, is the conscience ; its contractions are identical with qualms of conscience (p. 75). The head and the bowels do not seem to be the seat of any special faculty.

754 magician shuts him in with the dying man in the hut and gives him
774 the following command : "Bring back the spirit which you have taken and hidden somewhere." Some magicians, who are more
761 powerful than the wizards, pretend to be able to find the stolen spirit and so to restore the patient to health. In cases of epilepsy, or of any psychic trouble attended with unconsciousness, when the sick person returns to his senses, they triumph : have they not brought back the soul? But they say that this must be done in haste. No time must be lost!

775 Lastly, the final unsheathing of personality takes place at death. The body becomes rotten, but the shadow goes away and continues its life as a god, shikwembu. The belief in the continuation of life after death is universal, being at the base of Ancestrolatry, which is the religion of the tribe. We shall study the ideas relating to the future life when dealing with the gods.

What Thongas can absolutely not understand is the resurrection of the body. "Mbuti yi fa, yi bola ; homu yi fa, yi bola ; munhu a fa, a bola!" — "The goat dies and rots, the ox dies and rots, man dies and rots!" answers the sceptical Thonga when he hears the story of the resurrection.

On the whole their ideas of future life are not so very different from those of the ancient Greeks, who believed that the human soul went after death to the realm of shadows.

787 *Dreams* are not generally liked by the Thongas. If something
828 they happened to dream really takes place, it "disgusts" them (nyenyetsa). When a man has seen a woman several times in his dreams, especially if she was pregnant, he will consult the bones. If he dreams that he has relations with her, he may go next day and hit her with a stick. He leaves the stick on the ground and goes away without a word. According to Mboza, this is done to get rid of the obsession, and to prevent the dream from becoming reality. That is the reason, I suppose, why a Christian boy once said to his missionary : "I dream of many people, but I keep quiet!" Amongst Thongas dreams do not seem to play the great part which the animistic theory attributes to them in the formation of primitive beliefs.

lightning), or animistic (Son-of-the-Moth). But they are not of much 771
importance. They belong to the same category as the description given 774
by the Psalmist of the sun as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, or to that of Homer comparing the break of the day to a young damsel with rosy fingers. This is poetry, mere personification of natural objects, or forces, and not beliefs. The poetical tendency is very marked amongst primitive races. It may be that ideas of this kind were more firmly held in former times, if the tribe has really passed through a more mythological phase, a hypothesis for which there are some grounds.

2) Collective beliefs.

The beliefs of the Thongas which deserve to be called by that name 771
because they are universal and express themselves in important rites and 769
customs, are the following :

1. The human soul continues its existence after death, when it is 775
endowed with new powers which make it an object of awe and fear. *The spirits of the ancestors* are the main objects of religious worship. They form the principal category of spirits (psikwembu).

2. Although the spirits of the departed generally have nothing to [789]
do with people other than their descendants, some of them, especially *those belonging to foreign tribes*, can take possession of living men and cause troubles which must be cured by a process of exorcism. This is the second category of spirits.

3. Some individuals have the power of magically unsheathing them- 774
selves during the night, and their spirit goes out to torment, or to kill 754
and eat other people. These are *the wizards* (baloyi) ; this third cate- 791
gory of spirits accomplish their wicked deeds when separated from the body, but their body is still living and they re-enter it. These three beliefs are distinctly animistic.

4. There is in man, and in a few large animals, a semi-spiritual 771
principle, the nuru, which escapes from the body when the individual is 774
killed in war, or in hunting, and through which the dead man, or animal, 828
avenges himself or itself on the murderer. What is the relation between the nuru and the shadow (sitjhuti)? This is not stated. The nuru seems to be of a more material nature, as it can enter a root, and it remains attached to the corpse and the bones of the person or animal killed. This category of spiritual enemies, probably invented under the influence of fear and remorse, has no connection with ordinary people,

771 and only troubles those who have killed, rendering them, as is generally
774 believed, insane. — The nuru belief seems to be a compromise between
828 Animism and Dynamism. (See p. 77-80.)

5. There are in plants, animals, stones, hidden virtues which can be
789 either useful or harmful to man. Medicine-men (tinanga) possess a more or less esoteric knowledge of such, and magicians (bangoma), endowed with special powers, can acquire a control over these virtues and use them in medical art, or in magic. — This is true Dynamism.

6. Certain natural objects, such as the sea, the bush fire, are sometimes vaguely personified. — This is Animatism.

772 7. But above them all is Heaven, Tilo, which is sometimes looked on as a real being, sometimes as an impersonal power, a number of mysterious superstitions finding their explanation in this strange and perhaps obsolete notion of Heaven. — This is more than Animatism and seems to be a vague theistic, even monotheistic, idea.

771 The essential difference between Animism and Dynamism seems to
774 me clear. But it is by no means absolute. We shall often meet with rites which belong to both domains, or bear an intermediate character. In the following chapters the exact nature and influence of these various kinds of spirits and impersonal forces will be studied, and I hope that an explanation of all the facts concerning them will throw more light on the subject and show that, at any rate, Thonga Animism is very different from the Animism of the Dutch East Indies, for instance, where men speak of thousands of spirits of the earth, air, water, mountains and trees; very different also from the fetichism met with in other Bantu tribes of Central and Western Africa.

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82 Before leaving this chapter, in which I have tried to sketch what I have
789 called by the rather pretentious term of The Natural Philosophy of the Bantus, and as a preparation for the explanation of the religious and dynamistic rites described in the following chapters, I think it advisable to set forth the principles which seem to underlie most of these rites, and which may be called the *axioms of primitive mentality*.

As regards what are commonly called *magic rites* I contend that they are in no sense purely arbitrary but that they rest on certain definite principles. These axioms of primitive mentality are what anthropologists fittingly call collective representations, viz., everybody believes

755 When the disease has run its course, and the pustules have dried
783 up, a day is appointed on which the marginal period will come to an end, and the clan return to its regular life. This return is marked by the special *Reintegration and Purification rites*, which aim at removing the defilement acquired by the disease. The main purificatory rite, that which regularly closes a marginal period, is *the smearing of all the huts* with a new layer of clay, either mixed with cow's dung or not. The old ground is for ever covered. It is a way of saying : "Behold, the former things are passed away, everything has become new." On the morning of that day, every patient must go and wash his body *on the road*, as if to pour all the filth of the disease on to it. Moreover, the ashes found in the fire-places inside the huts, the necklaces of mealie grains, the implements used by the people who have been seriously ill, sometimes their garments, the ochre with which they anointed themselves, all the things which were employed in connection with the scourge, are collected and thrown indiscriminately on to the large paths, preferably on the places where two roads cross each other, a rite which is by no means altruistic, and still less antiseptic! We shall see shortly how it is to be explained.

●828 *Nervous diseases* are peculiarly feared by Natives. *Melancholia*
755 is believed to be caused by those spirits of possession which will form the subject of the next paragraph. *Idiocy* has no remedy ; nothing can be done with an idiot : "It is death! It has found him!" (Mankhelu). *Delirium* (mihahamo) is cured by *Mbulula khutla*. The patient must enter the hole from which clay is taken for smearing the huts, and is washed with a decoction of the drug when in this hole. Moreover a stick of the same tree is cut and kept in the roof of the hut, and the person who sleeps with the patient will take it every night and place it near his head. "Thus we kill delirium." (Mankhelu). — Another form of insanity is called *rihuhe*, "the disease which comes from far away with the winds" — "ri pfa timhehwen" (Mankhelu). A drug is prepared with the *shiromo* root, mixed with the lung of a sheep and the blood

782 to Small-Pox (with capital letters) may be compared with that pronounced when an imprecation has been uttered or when someone wishes to cancel his oath (p. 399).

found inside its heart. All these things are burnt in a broken pot, 828
and made into a medicinal powder. The patient is brought to the 755
broken pot; a cut is made in his head, so that it bleeds abundantly until the pot is filled with blood; the blood boils in the pot, it solidifies and is burnt. The ñanga takes it and buries it in an ant's nest, according to the timula rite described below. The wound of the patient is filled with the medicine; he eats the meat, he sleeps: — "If you have been equal to the occasion, he will be cured; you have given him lots of sleep. — You have killed the *rihuhe*" (Mankhelu). The *wutleka* disease means both the *convulsions* of little children generally explained by the agency of Heaven, called Tilo (p. 431), and epilepsy. The great remedy for the latter disease, which greatly terrifies the Natives, is provided by monkeys and baboons. Pieces of their skin and their excrement are roasted in a broken pot. Some pieces of lion's skin are added; when the powder is prepared, the limbs of the patient are smeared with it; his body is also sprinkled with a decoction made of these drugs, or an ointment is prepared from them and applied to the head, the fingers, and all the limbs, which are then pulled with some force (olola). The patient is laid down and leaves of the hlampfura tree (Kigelia pinnata) are put on his head: — "He sleeps, he passes water, he evacuates stools, he is cured!" But to confirm the healing, a very curious ceremony is performed which reminds one of the rite of the scapegoat, so often met with amongst primitives. The doctor makes the image of a monkey (habu) with a kind of grass called *muhulane*; this image is smeared with the drugs just described, and fastened to a long rope; a little boy must then drag the dummy out of the village, and all his comrades hit him with sticks, saying: "Go away! Go away!" He runs until he reaches a tree far away in the bush. All the boys hang the figure to it, and it remains there swinging in the wind. The disease has thus been expelled.

When folly is accompanied by great excitement, and there is 828
danger of the people of the village being mishandled by the sufferer, 758
he is prevented from doing harm by means of fetters. These consist of a log of wood pierced through by a lozenge-shaped hole into which the foot of the madman is introduced; a wooden bolt is

128 then fixed across the hole in such a way that he will be unable to
758 withdraw it. When he wishes to walk he is obliged to drag along the heavy log. He very soon loses his strength, being ill-fed, and covered with vermin, and dies in a terrible condition.

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757 In our study of these various treatments, we have met with about twenty different prescriptions of Native physicians, containing, in all, some 40 to 50 different drugs, to be made use of in various ways : outward application, inhalation, fumigation, infusion, decoction, inoculation, manducation of carbonised or pulverised drugs, etc. We are then entitled to assert that, up to a certain point, the Blacks do possess an *ars medica*. To complete our review of medical matters, I must further mention a few curious practices of the Thonga doctors, which forcibly remind us of those to which our own practitioners sometimes have recourse.

Let us begin with *cupping*. A full account of this will be found in the story of the "Gambadeur de la Plaine" (*Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, page 357) where a young girl resuscitates a buffalo by performing this operation. She proceeds as follows. Water is boiled and in it is placed the packet of roots required ; a spot in the temporal region is carefully washed, and a few incisions are made with a razor (likari). A particular horn (nhluku ya ku lumeka), which is open at both ends, is placed over the incisions and the operator, putting his mouth to the horn, draws in his breath, causing the blood to flow freely. The wound is then exposed to the vapour emanating from the boiling *shitsimbo* packet, and smeared with a particular ointment, kept in a calabash.

[783] The next in order of the practices which we are noticing, is the *phungulo* (Dj.), or *hungulo* (Ro.), a kind of *Turkish or vapour bath*, which is administered in certain complaints and also after the funeral rites, in order to remove the contamination of death (I. p. 145). A circular enclosure is made, with a screen of matting, in the middle of which the patient is placed, and, close by him,

village is at once removed. Leprosy is called *nhlulabadahi*, the disease which is stronger than the doctors. It is very much dreaded ; lepers are not, however, segregated ; they live in the village with other people and even attend beer-parties, but they bring their own mugs, whilst every other guest receives a drinking utensil from the master of the village. 758

Another disease which is believed to be contagious is "possession" by the *Bandjao spirits*. Should you pick up on the road some object which belonged to one of the possessed, his madness will jump to you (tlulela). — Epilepsy is also dreaded on that account. A nursing woman must not see any one suffering from an attack of this disease, or the child which is on her shoulders will become epileptic. 753 828

Speaking of the conception of disease, I must remind the reader of the fact that *sexual relations* between the inhabitants of the village are believed to aggravate the condition of the patient dwelling in it (I. p. 133, II. p. 358), and are consequently forbidden during epidemics and in any case of serious illness. Hence the precautions which convalescents must take of wearing the *sungi*, as we have just seen. 753 834

4) The special rites which mark the end of an illness throw much light on the Thonga conception of disease. A serious illness constitutes a marginal period either for the individual concerned, or, in the case of an epidemic, for the community, and the hondlola rite is the method by which the patient is reintegrated into society ; it clearly has the character of a passage rite. The rubbing with psanyi, the removal of the defilement of disease, the throwing away of the "timbhorola," the cutting of nails and hair, all these are rites of separation from the period of disease, whilst the feast of the hondlola day, and the resuming of sexual relations (1) are rites of reintegration. In the disease of possession, as we shall see it is the reintegration into the society of spirit-possessed persons and amounts to an initiation. 753 783 184 755

(1) We often hear of a Christian woman, who has gone to a heathen medicine-man for treatment, having sexual intercourse with him. We generally attribute this fact to immorality alone, but it was probably a part of the treatment, at the precise moment when sexual taboos were removed.

754 Two questions here arise. Does the Native mind imagine that
828 a true unsheathing of the personality takes place when the baloyi go on their nocturnal expedition, or that they leave the hut themselves, in their entirety, in their ordinary persons? As far as I could make out, the Sutho theory is different from the Thonga. The Ba-Sutho say that the wizard goes altogether, soul and body. Nothing remains on the mat when he has departed for his nocturnal ride! He casts spells over the other inhabitants of the hut, and they sleep so heavily that they notice nothing. The Thongas tell a different story. According to them, the noyi is but a part of the personality. When he flies away, his "ntjhuti," his shadow, remains behind, lying on the mat. But it is not the true body that remains. It appears as such only to the foolish non-initiated. In reality what remains is a *wild beast*, with which the noyi has chosen to identify himself. This fact was disclosed to me by the following striking confession of S. Gana, a very intelligent Nkuna. "Suppose," he said, "my father is a noyi and I am not. I wish to marry a certain girl whom I love. My father knows that she is a noyi, because they all know each other, and he tells me: 'Don't do that! She is *clever*; you will repent!' However, I persist in my idea. He urges me to abandon the plan, and threatens me with great misfortune. I marry her. One night, my father enters my hut and awakens me. He says to me: 'What did I tell you! Look! Your wife has gone!' I look at her place and find her sleeping calmly — 'No. Here she is.' — 'That is not she! She is away! Take this assagai and stab her. — 'No, father, I dare not.' — 'Do as I say!' And he puts the assagai into my hand and makes me strike her violently in her leg. A cry, the cry of a wild beast, is heard, and a hyena appears in the place of my wife, a hyena which deposits its faeces in its fear, and escapes from the hut, howling. My father gives me some powder to swallow so that I shall be able to recognise the baloyi and their ways and habits. He leaves me — trembling greatly from fear — and goes home. When the sun is about to rise, I hear a noise like that of the wind in the branches, and suddenly something falls down from the top of the hut beside me. It is my wife. She lies sleeping, but her leg shows a wound, the wound that had been made in the hyena!"

From this dramatic story it must be inferred that, according to the idea of the Ba-Thonga, there is a true unsheathing of the personality when the noyi goes about its nightly work. 754 828

A second question arises, which is this. As the baloyi lead a double existence, a day-light existence in which they are merely men, and a nightly existence, in which they perform their work as witches, are they aware, during the day, of what they have done during the night? In other words, are they conscious of their doings as witches? The question is difficult to answer, as there seems to be no clear idea on this point in the Native mind. The old, genuine view is that a noyi *does not know what he is doing*; he is not even aware that he is a noyi until he has been revealed as such by the methods which will be explained later. Therefore he is unconscious. His nightly activity is unknown to him when he returns to his ordinary daily life. For instance, my informants assure me that a man may have sent a crocodile to kill another, during his noyi existence, but that he will be the first to show sympathy to the poor sufferer, and to deplore this sad accident. And he will be amazed when the diviner points him out as having caused the death by his buloyi, of which he was in entire ignorance. But those baloyi who have long practised their horrible tricks would seem to be aware and even proud of their doings, and therefore more or less conscious of their double life. Some of them go even further; they renounce their evil deeds and become magicians, using the knowledge they have acquired to baffle the enchantments of other baloyi, as we shall see.

But let us hear what the dreadful acts are which they commit in their baloyi form.

2) The Crimes of the Baloyi.

(a) The baloyi are in the first place *thieves*. This is the least criminal aspect of their activity. They steal mostly mealies or the products of the fields. They empty the ground-nuts of their contents (p. 12). The magicians have a kind of medicine with which they plaster their mealie cobs in the gardens, and the noyi, when he wants to tear them from the stalk, remains a prisoner 754

765 inner circle and will undergo a very rigorous purification ; the grave
783 diggers come next ; then the inhabitants of the bereaved village, the
761 relations residing in other villages, even the relatives of the wives of the
834 deceased. All these being unclean are placed beyond the pale of
829 society : "Muti wu tjumile," "the village is dark," is the technical expression. This marginal period lasts longer for those who are most affected ; one year and more for the widows, one month for the village, five or six days only for the mourners from outside. But there are many taboos in connexion with this period. Sexual relations are severely prohibited amongst married people, but the *gangisa* is not so strongly objected to, at any rate in some districts. We shall also meet with the aggregation rites by which re-entry into the ordinary mode of life is secured. The funeral rites may last for one year and are very complex. There are three great moments in the sequence of these rites : 1) *The Great Mourning* which lasts a few days, just after the burial, generally only five days. Here the purification is essentially medical and aims at cleansing the persons and the objects which were directly in contact with the deceased. 2) *The sexual rites* which tend to purify the collective life of the village by the removal of its defilement. 3) *The family rites*, consisting in gatherings of all the relatives, and accompanied by religious ceremonies. These seem to aim at restoring the life of the family, viz. of the social group, which has been diminished by the death of one of its members.

768 This general sequence is found in all the clans. But the rites themselves differ greatly ; I shall try to depict these differences clearly. My information is more complete as regards the Ronga clans, but I owe to Viguet some entirely new and very interesting material regarding the Hlabi rites.

IV. *The Great Mourning of the first five days.*

1) The Great Mourning amongst the Ba-Ronga.

764 Just after the burial, all the inhabitants of the village go to
783 the lake or the river to bathe. The grave-diggers nibble a
[824] *ndjao*, the root of a juncus which has magical power. Special rites will then be performed for the widows. We shall describe

581 says : "Nsati wa mabele u nga nabele loko u nge na bukosi."
832 — "Do not covet a woman with large breasts if you have no money..." This does not mean that she will cost more, but her father, knowing that she will not want for suitors, will not consent to let her go unless the full lobolo is paid at once. On the other hand a girl with an elongated face is admired more than one who is too broad-faced. Of the first they say : "She is pretty, she resembles an antelope" (a kota mhala) ; of the second : "She is
832 chubby-cheeked, she is like a sow." A light complexion is preferred
186 to a very dark one, because the white or yellow races are regarded
734 as superior, and a Native laying claim to any European or Asiatic
581 blood is proud of it. Parents, who also have their say in the
824 question of marriage, insist on two other points ; the working capacity of the girl, and the absence of any witchcraft blot in the family. Should her mother have been convicted of being a witch,
581 the girl will be feared. However, every girl finds a husband in the
583 land where polygamy flourishes. If he be slow in coming, she will apply to her doctor, who will prepare the *love charms*, which will make her "appear," so that she will be noticed by the boys (See page 100). If even that does not succeed, she has other means at her disposal and may go herself to make proposals to a man (wopsana). He is seduced by her, and constitutes himself a thief who has *tlhuba*, viz. "taken in marriage by abduction" (See page 119). The parents will claim the lobolo and he must pay it. Marriage and childbearing remain the only carreer to which a Thonga woman can look forward. Hence a number of special feminine taboos which are very curious.

2) Special feminine taboos.

262
845 Some of them concern girls *before childbearing* and cease after
784 parturition. In the Tembe and Maputju clans, girls must not eat
562 pork, because pigs root nervously with their noses ; the future child
825 would also move its head from one side to the other, when on the verge of birth, and this would make delivery difficult. Other

843 754 to hinder the child from growing and to put in its place, by means of her enchantments, a snake, a hare, a quail or an antelope!

834 846 [886] After the birth, owing to possible contamination by the lochia, sexual intercourse is prohibited till the rite of tying the cotton string (p. 56) has taken place. It is then allowed, but conception must be avoided till weaning, when relations are resumed in the normal way, and this goes on till the time when the woman is no longer able to bring forth children. I know of no special rules in connection with the menopause.

*

* *

831 But, amongst Bantus, sexual relations are not an individual affair, as amongst nations more advanced in evolution. There is a mysterious relation between them and the collective life of the community. Hence the fact that, on certain given occasions, they are recommended, even ordered, or prohibited.

1) Cases of recommendation.

833 783 587 829 Sexual relations must take place on two principal occasions : when the inmates of a village abandon it and go elsewhere to found a new one, and when the widows perform the painful rite of "lahla khombo" (to cast away misfortune). We shall see, when studying these customs, that sexual relations have here a twofold signification : 1) they "consolidate" the little community in its new abode, viz. they strengthen its structure by confirming the authority of its chief ; 2) they provide the principal means of getting rid of all contamination, especially of the defilement connected with death. (Annotatio 13.)[1]

2) Cases of prohibition.

834 784 581 829 753 Married people are not considered as being in a state of defilement, as mourners are, for example. Yet this class of persons, called "ba-ku-khila," constitute a danger for those members of the community who are in a weak state of health. They must not come in contact with the circumcised, because in that case their wounds would not heal properly.

1 [See pp. 518-519 in these categories or in V6--Analyst]

834 They must not enter the hut of a person dangerously ill ; this would
784 hasten his death. People who are just recovering from a disease, when
581 they walk about on the paths, must tie around their ankles the root
829 called sungi, which will protect them against the perspiration or
753 emanation left by married people in their footprints, because, as one of my informants said, "ba-ku-khila ba hisa," viz. married people are hot.

834 Moreover not only individuals but the whole social life would be
836 endangered if sexual relations took place when the community itself is
581 in a critical position. They are prohibited therefore in wartime, during
829 the whole duration of hunting parties, and also during the marginal periods. Strange to say, this law does not apply so severely to unmarried boys and girls amusing themselves according to the "shigango" custom (p. 97). It seems that it is not the act in itself which is tabooed, but the act in as much as it is accomplished by regularly married people ; in this case only has it a bearing on the life of the community.

What is the reason of these prohibitions ? "Married people are hot." What does this aphorism mean ? The following rite may help us to understand it.

831 In the Maluleke country, when the whole population enters a lake
834 to kill fish according to the tjeba custom (Part IV. Chap. I), a little boy
226 and a little girl are chosen and laid down under a lion's skin, as if they
829 were husband and wife, and told to remain very quiet during all the time
789 the grown up people are fishing. Not knowing anything about sexual
771 intercourse, they will obey ; then the fish also will keep quiet and will be killed easily. Why ? Because there is in the sexual act something wild, fierce, passionate which, according to the law of correspondance which is at the base of all Bantu magic, has an influence on the hostile forces ; these will be excited and more difficult to overcome : enemies in battle, the animals of the bush during hunting and fishing parties, disease, danger of contamination at death and during the marginal periods. Life is, so to speak accelerated by the sexual act, and this acceleration is communicated to the whole of Nature. Therefore : Keep quiet, be continent!

This profound conception of life also explains why so often certain actions must be accomplished by children, not yet able to have sexual relations, or by old women who no longer practise them.

Let us remark that all these rites do not belong to Animism, properly speaking, but to Dynamism (Part VI. Chap. I), which plays a part almost as important as Animism in Bantu primitive philosophy.

621 596 833 768 1) *Social rites.* The muti, as we have seen, is a little organised community having its own laws, amongst which the most important seems to be the law of hierarchy. The elder brother is the undisputed master and no one can supersede him. He is the owner of the village. No one must "steal it" from him. Should any one do so, the whole community would suffer and no children would be born ; the life of the organism would be deeply affected. That is the reason why the headman must go first with his principal wife to have relations with her in the new village, and thus *take possession* of it or *tie* it. For this same reason, when the headman dies, the village *must* move. It is taboo to remain in it. Until the inheritance has been distributed, it is still *his home* (kwa kwe) ; but as soon as this ceremony has taken place, the villagers must go away, and close the door with a thorny branch. The part played by the principal wife in all these ceremonies is most remarkable. It is absolutely imperative that the headman should "tie the village" with her, and not with another of his spouses. Should she be very old, the law must be observed all the same ; should she be ill, and unable to have sexual relations, the village simply cannot be moved. In the Northern clans we see her taking the shield and the assagai, closing the village and "giving it" to the inmates, even performing a sacrifice and praying to the gods. It is very rare to see a woman presiding at a public religious ceremony ; but she is the owner of the village as well as the headman. Moving is imperative when she dies as well as after the death of the headman. The main gate must also be closed and a new entrance made in the fence to be used during the year of mourning ; in the case of her death, this opening must be made on the left of the regular *mharana*, whilst, when the husband dies, it is made on the right side ; just as in the hut, when the corpse is removed for burial. (See page 138.)

621 595 562 768 764

351 789 621 2) *Protective rites.* These are those which concern the fence. This fence does not afford material protection. The branches dry up very soon and, in the case of a bush-fire, for instance, they would do more harm than good. It is a spiritual protection, a barrier of charms, of magic influences, to prevent the entrance of wizards and of all the hostile powers of the bush. We shall understand this better when treating of witchcraft superstitions. (Part VI.)

182 621 829 3) *Passage rites.* The reader will have been surprised to observe amongst the ceremonies of the moving of villages, many features which we have already met with in the circumcision school, or in the mourning customs. At first sight there seems to be no relation whatever between the moving of a village, the initiation of boys and the

182 mourning over the dead. The inner connexion existing between these
621 three events is that, in all of them, there is a passage. Hence the
783 resemblance of the rites. This striking similarity is, to my mind, the
829 best proof that the passage rites constitute a peculiar category. When a headman has decided to move, he leaves his old kraal, he *separates* from it, not by the ordinary gate, but by a special opening made at the back of the village. He is not allowed to return to it again. Then, for him and for all his people, begins a *marginal period* of one month or more, the buhlapfa (notice the prefix *bu* which indicates a period here, as in busahana [page 42]). We see the village, during these few weeks, put beyond the pale of society. The ordinary laws are suspended, (licencious songs), and many special taboos are enforced (prohibition of sexual relations, fire taboo, water taboo, etc.), just as in the period of mourning; at last the village returns to the ordinary course of life by a final act of purification, the mysterious *hlamba ndjaka*, which seems to be the most powerful means of cleansing the collective life. This last ceremony shows that, here, the marginal period has been instituted on account of the uncleaness, the impurity of the old village. Let us remember that in most cases the village has been moved on account of death! All the adult members of the social organism take part in the cleansing (at least in the Northern clans) and so the village begins a new and purified life. No one can deny the deep significance of all these rites and the mystic conception of the Thonga village.

C. THE HEADMAN AND THE ORGANISATION OF THE VILLAGE.

596 Each village thus possesses its superior (hosi), its master. He
576 is called *mumumzane* or *numzane*, a curious expression which is
621 also employed in Zulu; it means owner of a kraal, gentleman,
618 and is often used in saluting grown up men. We have seen the mystic relation between the headman and his *muti*. The village, the muti, is the primitive social organism. The clan (tiko), which is the gathering of all the *miti*, reproduces all the features of the
622 village life on a large scale. So the *numzane* corresponds to the
596 *hosi*, chief of the tribe. Both certainly possess great authority,

J. SOME REMARKS ABOUT WAR RITES.

177 726 The war rites of the Thongas, whatever may be their origin — and they seem to be a mixture of old Thonga and new Zulu customs, — form a very interesting and complete whole.

643 726 829 The most noticeable are the *national rites*. In war time, the very existence of the clan is threatened, because the chief, the central and vital cell of this organism, is in danger. Hence the readiness of all the warriors to answer to the first call of the *shipalapala*, and to gather round him, "building the circle," which protects him, the whole clan forming a single village and binding itself by the striking ceremonies of *guba* and by patriotic songs, to die for him. Notice that most of the *guba* songs extol the chief. All these customs in which the individual or collective courage is stimulated, the *guba* and the *gila*, are national or social rites directed towards the salvation of the clan. They owe their origin to the national idea.

But war also brings dangers to every warrior. Hence the *protective* rites of sprinkling the mukhumbi with the war-medicine of the clan, or of giving each man some of it to swallow. The rite is inspired by the notion *similia similibus curantur*, the idea being that the warrior, having eaten a small portion of the enemy, will become invulnerable to his blows.

But other rites, especially the war taboos, seem to owe their origin to the *idea of passage*.

726 829 834 The *whole clan* enters upon a special phase as soon as war has been decided upon by the chief, "who gives it" to his warriors. Hence the taboos observed at home, many of which are exactly the same as those of the circumcision school and of the period of mourning. We notice the same contrast already so often mentioned : certain sexual prohibitions are removed (e. g. a queen will enter quite naked into the mukhumbi!)

727 775 761 tions (before 1890). Three persons of that family died. The bones were consulted and the diviner asked : "Have you not slain a Ndjao?" They answered: "Yes." — "Then," said the bone-thrower "you will all die as this man has followed you." The bones showed that, in order to avoid the destruction of their family, the Ndzindzis had to offer a girl to the ghost of the slain, a living sacrifice. This girl would not be allowed to marry, or even to be courted by boys. Should she have relations with a man it would be necessary to replace her by another. Thus the angry ghost would be propitiated.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

726 On the other hand sexual relations, which are allowed in ordinary
829 life, become taboo. This period of fighting seems really to be
834 considered as a marginal period for the whole tribe.

It is so par excellence *for the warriors* and I think that many of the rites imposed upon them are to be explained in this way. As we saw, the period of margin is generally preceded by separation rites. (See page 74.) Some of these, which are very characteristic, are performed when the army starts : the leave-taking from the General with wild shouts, the custom of swallowing a piece of meat without touching it with the hands and taking an emetic afterwards, that of jumping over the ntjhopfa branch, the medicine of oblivion! etc. The triumphant return, the partaking of the meat of the oxen which have been taken, may be the aggregation ceremonies, viz., the acts by which the warriors return to their ordinary life.

726 Passage rites are still more distinct *in the case of the slayers* ; but
829 their condition is worse, as it implies the idea of defilement following
304 upon murder and is attended with the danger proceeding from the *nuru*.
182 They are "hot" (an expression which also applies to the tabooed woman
783 during her menses etc.); they are "black" (an epithet which also designates the grave-diggers, the bereaved mother, etc.). Hence a *seclusion* much more complete, a true period of margin with many alimentary and sexual (1) taboos. Possibly the incisions on the brow are an old kind of tatooing in connexion with this marginal period, similar to the inguinal incision of the widows (p. 201). The purification rites are of the same kind as those of the mourners, and particularly of the grave-diggers. The return to society, after their seclusion, is marked by rites of separation from the marginal period, which no doubt aim at getting rid of the defilement connected therewith. (Exposure of the *mizilo* outside the village in the bush.) Is it not striking to notice the correspondence between these rites in their peculiar sequence and those of the circumcision school, of mourning, of moving a village ?

See, as a conclusion to Part III, Practical Conclusions, No. VI : "The New era and the Future of the South African Tribe."

834 (1) The sexual taboos are so severe that, after the Mooudi battle, one of the slayers
727 took great offence at a man who dared to touch his food, as the man was living in his home and had relations with his wife. The slayer was afraid that this contact might cause his own death or bring misfortune to his family.

177 skin (djobo, dji-ma), covered with hair or fur, or even the entire
291 skin of a civet cat, or antelope. The nsimba skins are in great demand, but are rather expensive, and the majority of the Ba-Ronga men wear merely two pieces of ox hide (mabebe), one in front and the other behind. Small boys often content themselves with one in front only. The young men prefer to wear them rather full, something like a petticoat! The *shifado* (Vol. I. Annotatio I) is worn with the belt of tails. This "sphaerula" is made either of carved wood or plaited milala leaves, or of a small calabash just the size required. When it is fixed in place, raw Natives consider that they have satisfied all the exigences of decency. Although much more decent than the *mbaya*, this garment of tails, or pieces of skin, is still a trifle incomplete...

Sandals of ox hide (tintango) are also an old article of dress; they were used by hunters and travellers. They belong to the bush and it is taboo to bring them into the hubo (I. p. 355).

At the present time European costume is tending to supplant the belt of tails. The first step consists in adopting the *ladula*, a piece of stuff hanging down from the loins as far as the knees. This style of garment was still worn in 1910 by most of the young heathen round Lourenço Marques; it was sometimes combined with the madjobo, which were still in use. But men, and especially youngsters, soon aspire to something better: trousers and jackets! (1). However ungainly the Native may appear when duly arrayed in coat and trousers, there is nothing he covets more than these garments. As they cannot all afford complete suits, they often have to be satisfied with such odds and ends as they can get from the Banyans, or pick up from their European masters. One sees them gravely walking about in worn-out long frock coats, the trousers being conspicuous by their absence. Others think themselves very fortunate if they can manage to get hold of a very much patched waistcoat with which to adorn

829 (1) The taste for European fabrics is said by thoughtful Natives to have been the cause of the loss of their independence. They support this somewhat surprising theory by the following argument: "Without this," said one of them to me, pulling the flap of my coat, "the Whites would never have conquered us! In our wars with them there have always been some of us who would not give up these stuffs, and so made alliance with the Europeans. We were divided, and thus our power of resistance was broken."

accepted another message." That is why men are subject to death. 773 825

This myth is so strongly believed that shepherds, when they see a chameleon climbing slowly up a tree, begin to tease it, and, when it opens its mouth, throw a pinch of tobacco into it, and are greatly amused to see the poor thing change colour, passing from green to orange, and from orange to black, in agony, to the great delight of the little boys ; they thus avenge themselves on the chameleon! (p. 339). 761

The same story[1] is told amongst the Zulus, and other myths of a similar character are found all over Africa, especially amongst the Ba-Rotsi (1). It would be an interesting study to collect them all, and thus to compile the African Genesis. We should probably find that the origin of man and death are the two great subjects on which the imagination of the Bantus has tried to throw some light, and that, though the moral element is strangely lacking in these myths, yet there is a striking resemblance between them and the Biblical story, where an answer to the same questions is given. 171 773

II. *The various human races.*

Have Bantus a clear idea of the human race? What they call *banhu* in Thonga, *bantu* in Zulu, evidently means "black people," the first inhabitants of the country. The Zulus are regarded, owing to their military ability, as a superior race, not however to such an extent as they themselves believe to be the case! Whatever may be their hostility or repugnance to their fellow blacks, they know that they belong to the same species. I am not sure that they hold this idea regarding White people, who are not *banhu* but *balungu*. 609 829

What is the origin of this word? As it is also used in Zulu (abelungo), the etymology suggested is the verb *ku lunga*, to be right, good. White people would then be correct, nice people, to

(1) Compare *Foi et Vie*. Oct. 1910. Les Origines. A. Jalla.

1 [about the original cause of death. See p. 350, cat. 116-Analyt]

609 the Native (1). However complimentary to us this explanation
829 may be, I very much doubt its accuracy. Firstly, Black people have not generally such a good opinion of us. They admit our superiority in intelligence, but unfortunately have not always found that White people behaved correctly in their dealings with them. Secondly, when we compare the word balungu with *Ñwalungu*, North, *balunguxna*, inhabitants of Heaven, (see Chapter II), and with *Mulungu*, the great name for God in Central Africa, we are led to suppose that there may have been ancient mythological traditions, now forgotten, relating to White people, when they were not yet well known.

773 To account for the superiority of the White race, Mankhelu
829 assured me he had heard the following story many years ago, told by his grandfather in the village of Shiluvane, long before the arrival of the missionaries. When Ñwali created the first man, from whom both Whites and Blacks are descended, they were all naked. Gwambe slept with his sister, an act which had been forbidden, and she had a child. Since that time children are born; but this was not the intention of Ñwali, who wished to create adult human beings only! The Gwambe (first ancestor) of the White people showed respect to his father, who was naked, whilst the Gwambe of the Blacks did not; hence the deterioration (onhakala) of the Blacks. "We were fools and have been deprived of everything, and Ñwali said: You Blacks shall wear down your nails to the quick by digging the earth to find food!" As already pointed out, Mankhelu had not the slightest trace of the critical sense. This is evidently the Biblical story very curiously transformed. The idea of an original fault committed by the Black race in the beginning having resulted in the inferior position it now occupies, is, however, met with in many parts of Africa, and is probably autochthonous amongst the Thongas.

"Balungu ba hlulwa hi lifu ntsena" has become a kind of proverb, quoted by Natives when they see the marvels of

(1) Others say that their forefather named the White people *balungu* because they were *clean* (lunga having also that meaning). "They are always clean though they do not wash their bodies! They have no dirt." But these explanations are not quite satisfactory.

civilisation and means : "White people are only overcome by 773
death." I once heard a little boy muttering it when I was playing 829
the harmonium.

Their notions regarding the several European races are very 609
crude. Once when I asked one of them if he knew whence the Whites came, he told me : "The Portuguese came from the sea, the Boers from the mountains." — "And we, missionaries, who are neither Portuguese nor Boers?" — "You come from Heaven," he answered with a charming smile!

Pikinini, who knew how to converse with the cock, once told me what the Bilen people think of the Whites. It was just after the deportation of Gungunyana :

— "Gungunyana is dead. The Portuguese have eaten him!"

— "How is that?"

— "Certainly! The Portuguese eat human flesh. Every one knows it. They have no legs ; they are fishes (tinhlampfi). They have a tail instead of legs. They live in water."

— "Then how do they manage to fight with you and to beat you if they are fishes and have no legs?"

— "Ho! Those who come to fight against us are the young men ; they have legs. They take us and put us all in a steamer which goes far away, far away. This steamer reaches a large rock which is surrounded by water on all sides. This is their country. We are taken out and placed on an island, whilst the soldiers go and fire shots to announce to the great White men-fishes that we have arrived. They choose one of us and make a little cut in his little finger to see if he is fat enough ; if not, he is put into a big basket full of ground-nuts which he must eat in order to become fat. When he is fat enough, they place him in a big, elongated pot of the size of a man, and red-hot. We know these particulars because a man, Ngomongomo, gave us the full explanation. He had been caught, but on the road his gods helped him ; he was covered with an eruption of pimples which was so disgusting that he was left in the island, and brought back here. He saw everything. We first refused to believe that. Now we know that it is the truth!"

Evidently Pikinini was in earnest and these absurd ideas were

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

II. *The sexual and language taboos of the sungi.*

881 The whole sungi is taboo to every uninitiated person and
831 especially to women. A woman who has seen the " shondlo ",
834 viz. the leaves which the circumcised put over their wound,
784 and which form their only clothing, must be killed. But taboos abound for everybody. The sexual taboos are most noteworthy. Sexual intercourse is strictly prohibited to all inmates, men as well as shepherds ; breaking this law would kill the circumcised. Therefore the men must not go home, or at least as seldom as possible, during these three months. Married people in the village may have sexual relations ; but there must be no noise, no quarrels between jealous co-wives ; because, if they insult each other and if this is known in the sungi, the shepherds will come one evening and plunder that village. Strange to say, in the meantime obscene language is permitted and even recommended— a contrast which we shall often meet with during the marginal periods. Some of the formulae contain expressions which are taboo at other times ; when the women bring the food to the sungi, the shepherds who receive it from their hands are allowed to address them with as many unchaste words as they like. The mothers themselves have the right of singing obscene songs when they pound the mealies for the sungi.

192 As regards language, there are also special expressions used during the school which are either archaic or foreign ; for instance,
881 all orders are given in a tongue which is neither Thonga nor Sutho: Tshai goma, Go to the table ; Thari, Eat ; Khedi, Smear with white clay, etc. Often actions are not designated by the ordinary word, but by unusual terms. For instance, the daily smearing of the bodies with clay is called : " to eat sheep's fat. " To put on the leaves of the shondlo is " to eat sheep's flesh. " To be beaten with the mbuti sticks is " to drink goat's milk. " Evidently the aim of this terminology is to increase the impression of mystery which the rites must convey to the uninitiated.

866 As regards the rites of the marginal period, they are calculated
881 to give the candidates the impression that they are new men,

192/881 These formulae are so characteristic that they provide the principal pass words by which the circumcised recognize each other. Should I want to know if a man is initiated, I should say to him : " *Mashindla bya ndjako*, the beast which must be opened from behind. " If he answers at once : " Ngwenya, the

Phot. A. Bassel

Cutting open a crocodile near the Nhamati river.

crocodile," I know that he has been circumcised. But he must add the following words : " khekeretana wa mufagu " i. e. " the knife which circumcises."

831/881 There are also some obscene formulae which refer to certain diseases of women, of which not a word is told outside the Ngoma. Some others are so ugly that I can give them only in Latin (Annotatio quarta). Even the formulae of the crocodile

[See p. 516 in these categories or in 116 -- analyst]

831/881 and of the hippopotamus are by no means poetic descriptions of these big animals similar to those contained in the book of Job. The first alludes to the manner in which the male crocodile copulates with his female. And the second tells the story of a virgin girl whom the young boys violate in order to open the way to the grown up men who will follow them. Impure allusions are found everywhere in this teaching of the circumcision school.

When the instructor has finished, he lifts his stick with a certain gesture and all the boys shout at once: "Zithari!" Viguet told me that that exclamation meant: "They are as long as that" and that it was an obscene allusion. The old men take great delight in being flattered and, if the boys wish to add to their pleasure, they will say: "When you spit, the wind from your mouth would kill enemies at the other end of the country!"

As is plain from these quotations, the teaching of the Ngoma is quite trivial, and the formulae are rather a collection of esoteric words than a true intellectual training.

533/881 *The songs* of the Ngoma have no deeper meaning. We have seen already the song of the Elephant and of the Winter-bird... Every morning, just after they wake, the circumcised sing for a long time the following words, which they repeat also when coming back from hunting trips.

Sing your song, bird of the morn
Mafé-é-é-é!

The melody is rude, wild but very impressive. Mafé-é-é-é must mean: "We are the initiated, we are the men!"

224/881/868 *Hunting*. Hunting is the only useful thing taught in the Ngoma. Boys go almost every day to the velt and become very clever in catching game. They beat the bush, sometimes climb hills and chase all the game to the top, killing it there with their assagais, knobkerries, etc. Near Shiluvane they even attack the Mamotsuiri mountain once during their three months. All the men of the country are summoned to take part in the big expedition, which requires real strategic skill.

881 To sum up the rites of this marginal period of the Circumcision school, this is the programme of a day in the sungi. The shepherds

836 of rattles, they sometimes stay with them till late in the night.
832 They bring them small presents, articles of clothing or other things, and thus obtain permission to have intercourse with them. Mboza described to me a very immoral meeting which sometimes takes place in these huts in connection with the *milebe* habit, and which is connected with this gangisa. It is impossible to give the details here. (Annotatio 5.)[1]

836 The gangisa custom is, from our point of view, very immoral.
831 Amongst Natives it is not censured at all, and it would be more accurate to speak of *amorality* then of *immorality*, amongst them, on this particular point. A boy who has no such flirt, no *shigango*, is laughed at as a coward; a girl who refuses to accept such advances is accused of being malformed. However Mboza told me he had never had a shigango himself and the abuse in this respect is not approved of by old people. In Manyisa, I heard of a young chief who was leading all the lads to gangisa and forcing the girls to accept them. The extent of this evil depends very much
[644] on the character of the boys and girls. I may add that, as regards the young people of the capital, they are not allowed to practise the gangisa because they belong to the royal family and are closely watched.

When they become Christians, Natives readily accept our standard of morality, but cases of fornication are very frequent amongst converts, so much so that this has been rightly called the African sin! I mention this fact, but I must say on the other hand that thousands of pupils in our Native Institutions lead a very moral and continent life and do not seem to find any great difficulty in doing so.

839 If the gangisa spoils the whole life of the young heathen, it is
177 only just to add that they do not practise two vices which are prevalent amongst certain civilised nations, onanism and sodomy. These immoral customs were entirely unknown in the Thonga tribe before the coming of civilisation. Unhappily it is no longer so now, as we shall see in Appendix III on unnatural vice in Johannesburg.

836 Comparing the habits of the Pedis and the Thongas we observe
837 this strange fact: amongst the Thongas the unmarried girl is

1 [See p.517 in these categories or in 116 --Analyst]

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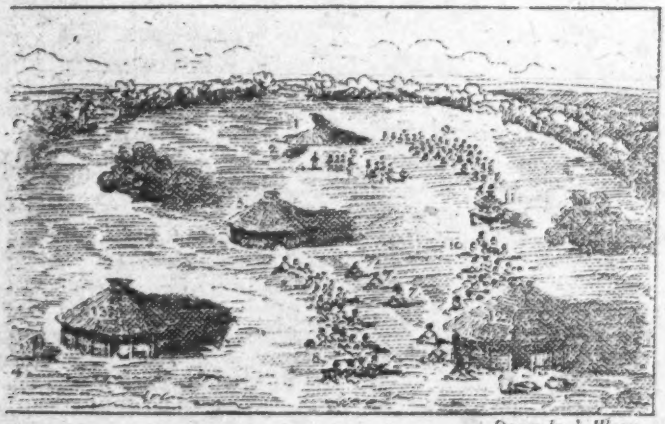
pitifully ; its agony lasted five minutes at least and the whole time the women were shouting with pleasure, because it is necessary that a victim should cry! In the groups, men and women were discussing where and how the sacrificer ought to introduce the blade in order to kill the goat more quickly. His wife came and



Drawn by J. Wavre.

The ceremony of crushing down the hut.

1. Deceased's hut, crushed down. 2. Heap of pots. 3. Provisional hut of the widow. 4. Sacrificer. 5. Uterine nephews. 6. Wives of the uterine nephews. 7. Dancers. 8. Women clapping their hands. 9. Other women. 10. Men. 11. Henhouse. 12. Hut of the younger brother. 13. Hut of the tall woman who danced. 14. A "shigiyane", wood pile built by her daughter-in-law's relatives.

helped him, and not until after ten minutes, at least, did they succeed.

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Then, while the batukulu and the old men were busy with the victims, cutting them up and squeezing the psanyi (half digested grass) out of the bowels, the other mourners began to sing and to dance. First an elderly woman, of a very clear complexion and a mephistophelean face, very tall, with a curiously licentious smile, came into the middle of the place, opened her arms wide and *suma*, began to sing. Together with her song she performed a strange mimicry with her thighs. This mimicry took on a more and more lascivious character ; it became a regular

765 535 831 womb dance, so immoral (Annotatio 9)[1] that the men dropped their eyes, as if they feared that she would take off all her clothing. But the other women seemed thoroughly to enjoy this horrible performance, and encouraged her by clapping their hands and beating their drums. The words of her songs were also of a very questionable character. She described an adulterous woman going during the night from one hut to another, seeking for lovers, knocking on the walls (to attract the notice of the men ?).

> The walls of the huts have deceived her fellow-women when she goes knocking on them...

Another old woman, of at least seventy years of age, followed her, and running with a mincing gait through the place, uttered words of the same kind.

This seems very immoral indeed. Let us remember however that, in the opinion of the Thongas, these songs, which are taboo in ordinary life, are specially appropriate to the mourning period "These women have been uncovered by the death of their husband," said Mboza. "There is no longer any restraint on them. They are full of bitterness when they perform these lascivious dances." The reason is perhaps deeper, as it is not only the widows who sing these words ; we are still in a marginal period, the period of mourning, and these phases of life are marked for the Bantus by this strange contrast : prohibition of sexual intercourse and a shameless outpouring of impure words and gesticulations (Annotatio 10).[2]

765 782 But in the meantime the *batukulu* had finished their work. They had already distributed the various parts of the victim according to rule, to the visitors, who would eat them on their way home, not in the village ; it is taboo. They had put aside one shoulder, the lungs and one of the hoofs for the sacrifice. Relatives had made a provision of *psanyi*. An old man then took a pill made of the *psanyi*, that found in the smallest stomach, called shihlakahla. He pressed it against his lips, took into his mouth a little of the liquid squeezed from it and spit it out again with the sacramental *tsu*. He then proceeded to pray : "You, Manyiban, you have left us. People used to say you were a

1 [See p. 517 in these categories or in 116--Analyst]

2 [See pp. 517-518 in these categories or in 116--Analyst]

843 754 to hinder the child from growing and to put in its place, by means of her enchantments, a snake, a hare, a quail or an antelope!

834 846 [886] After the birth, owing to possible contamination by the lochia, sexual intercourse is prohibited till the rite of tying the cotton string (p. 56) has taken place. It is then allowed, but conception must be avoided till weaning, when relations are resumed in the normal way, and this goes on till the time when the woman is no longer able to bring forth children. I know of no special rules in connection with the menopause.

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831 But, amongst Bantus, sexual relations are not an individual affair, as amongst nations more advanced in evolution. There is a mysterious relation between them and the collective life of the community. Hence the fact that, on certain given occasions, they are recommended, even ordered, or prohibited.

1) Cases of recommendation.

833 783 587 829 Sexual relations must take place on two principal occasions : when the inmates of a village abandon it and go elsewhere to found a new one, and when the widows perform the painful rite of "lahla khombo" (to cast away misfortune). We shall see, when studying these customs, that sexual relations have here a twofold signification : 1) they "consolidate" the little community in its new abode, viz. they strengthen its structure by confirming the authority of its chief ; 2) they provide the principal means of getting rid of all contamination, especially of the defilement connected with death. (Annotatio 13.)[1]

2) Cases of prohibition.

834 784 581 829 753 Married people are not considered as being in a state of defilement, as mourners are, for example. Yet this class of persons, called "ba-ku-khila," constitute a danger for those members of the community who are in a weak state of health. They must not come in contact with the circumcised, because in that case their wounds would not heal properly.

1 [See pp. 518-519 in these categories or in V6--Analyst]

834 784 581 829 753 They must not enter the hut of a person dangerously ill ; this would hasten his death. People who are just recovering from a disease, when they walk about on the paths, must tie around their ankles the root called sungi, which will protect them against the perspiration or emanation left by married people in their footprints, because, as one of my informants said, "ba-ku-khila ba hisa," viz. married people are hot.

834 836 581 829 Moreover not only individuals but the whole social life would be endangered if sexual relations took place when the community itself is in a critical position. They are prohibited therefore in wartime, during the whole duration of hunting parties, and also during the marginal periods. Strange to say, this law does not apply so severely to unmarried boys and girls amusing themselves according to the "shigango" custom (p. 97). It seems that it is not the act in itself which is tabooed, but the act in as much as it is accomplished by regularly married people ; in this case only has it a bearing on the life of the community.

What is the reason of these prohibitions ? "Married people are hot." What does this aphorism mean ? The following rite may help us to understand it.

831 834 226 829 789 771 In the Malulcke country, when the whole population enters a lake to kill fish according to the tjeba custom (Part IV. Chap. I), a little boy and a little girl are chosen and laid down under a lion's skin, as if they were husband and wife, and told to remain very quiet during all the time the grown up people are fishing. Not knowing anything about sexual intercourse, they will obey ; then the fish also will keep quiet and will be killed easily. Why ? Because there is in the sexual act something wild, fierce, passionate which, according to the law of correspondance which is at the base of all Bantu magic, has an influence on the hostile forces ; these will be excited and more difficult to overcome : enemies in battle, the animals of the bush during hunting and fishing parties, disease, danger of contamination at death and during the marginal periods. Life is, so to speak accelerated by the sexual act, and this acceleration is communicated to the whole of Nature. Therefore : Keep quiet, be continent!

This profound conception of life also explains why so often certain actions must be accomplished by children, not yet able to have sexual relations, or by old women who no longer practise them.

Let us remark that all these rites do not belong to Animism, properly speaking, but to Dynamism (Part VI. Chap. I), which plays a part almost as important as Animism in Bantu primitive philosophy.

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of building will be stopped at once and the little community will find another place to which to move! Moreover the guilty woman will have to ask the principal wife for forgiveness. 2) A second great taboo is this : — No one must wash his body during the whole "buhlapfa", as this might cause the rain to fall and it would interfere with the building operations.

5. The building of the huts begins immediately, each man making the circular wall first. When all the walls are ready,

Carrying a roof.

the *roofs are carried* from the old village to the new by all the men together. They lift each roof on to their shoulders, after having removed the old grass, and go out of the village, not by the main entrance, but by one of the back gates which has been widened for the purpose. A broad road has been prepared through the bush. They follow it, marching as fast as they can, and singing the obscene songs which are reserved for special occasions (see Part VI). In these they insult the women who accompany them, carrying the baskets, the mortars, the pestles. "The village is broken in pieces, so are the ordinary laws. The insults which are taboo are now allowed" (Mboza). This suspension of morality in speech is only allowed on the day when roofs are carried to the new village. Some days later, again, the women will take their revenge when they smear the floor of the huts ; then they too will sing their songs, insulting the men. But

621 all this is done in fun. It is a great day of rejoicing for the
831 "tinamu", who tease each other as much as they like. A man may be wanting in respect even to his great mukonwana on these days!

621 6) When the huts are ready, the *fence* is built. The family
756 doctor is summoned. The medicine man throws leaves or
351 stones treated with his drugs along the circular line, where the headman intends to place the branches which will form the future
789 fence of the village. This being done, the men erect the fence.

7) Special precautions are taken for *the main entrance*. Poles are erected on both sides, but before they are put in place, the doctor pours medicine into the holes in the ground and also smears the poles with it at the bottom and at the top. Mankhelu used to bury a black stone, taken out of the river, at the gate. This stone had also been smeared with drugs. "In this way, I prevent enemies from entering. Those who come to try their charms against us (ku hi ringa hi maringo) will be attacked by disease and go and die in their houses."

783 8) The building is finished. Nothing remains to be done
834 but to *ripen the village* (wupfisa muti). Men and women assemble
621 in two separate groups and ask each other if they have been continent during the whole "buhlapfa". If one of them confesses to having sinned, he has stolen the village from the headman; the whole work is spoiled and must be recommenced elsewhere. If all the members of the community have behaved well, they proceed to a purifying ceremony exactly similar to the *hlamba ndjaka* which takes place during the mourning ceremonies. Each couple has sexual relations according to a fixed order of precedence, one every night, and they all go to trample on the spot where the women wash their hands. The principal wife is the last to perform these rites.

621 9) Then comes the *drawing to himself of the village by the headman*
595 (kokotela muti). At dawn, after the night when she has had her ritual sexual relations with the headman, his principal wife takes his shield and his assagais and stands at the main entrance, everyone being present. Outside is a thorny branch prepared for the occasion. In her martial attire, she drags this branch to the entrance and closes it.

621 824 765 troublesome and he should wish to remove them, he must ask some one else to do it. On the day of his death, or rather when his hut is crushed down, a branch of that tree will be put on the place where the threshhold was, and another used to close the main entrance of the village, a new entrance being then made through the fence and used as the gate during the rest of the mourning period.

621 833 3) He has sexual relations on the new spot on the first night with his principal wife ; in this way he will *fuya muri*, viz. "possess this tree," and also *fuya muti*, "possess the village." The Ronga *fuya* corresponds here also to the *boha* of the Northern clans (Compare boha puri and fuya ñwana, page 57). If someone precedes him in sexual intercourse, hê is guilty ; he has "preceded the village" (rangela muti). By this act the headman has definitely left the old village. The others can go back to it to fetch what remains ; for him it is taboo.

621 831 834 342 4) The same day, all the inhabitants come and move all the roofs, if it is possible to do this in one day. One hut is rapidly built to afford shelter to the inhabitants, in case of rain. The first roof to be transported is that of the hut of the principal wife. This is also done to the accompaniment of obscene songs. These songs are not allowed when only one hut is transported, which may happen when some one goes to live in another village.

It is definitely a custom which goes with the moving of a whole village.

5) The following day two huts are erected, one for the men, the other for the women, because they must not sleep together. "They are still in the bush ; it is buhlapfa ; the village is not yet firm." Those who break this law cause injury to the headman. The bones will soon reveal that "he has been preceded as regards the village ; (a rangeliwile muti)." All the huts are smeared twice ; the women begin to sleep in them, but not the men. The fence and the main entrance must first be prepared.

621 789 6) The *main entrance* (mharana). The men pull up the grass all the way from the back hut to the place where the main entrance must be, so as to make a road all through the village. All the dried plants weeded out during this operation are carefully

Latin Notes for Medical Men and Ethnographers

291 "Annotatio prima (P. 40).--'Shifado' quo quisque Thonga
845 extremum penem vestit, spheroides excavataque res est;
848 quod tegimentum ex iis, quae ad pudorem et munditiem perti-
881 nent, postulatur. Si quis schifado suum amisit, ei dedecoriest."

Note 1 (page 40). Shifado, with which every Thonga covers the end of his penis, is a spherical and hollowed-out object; this covering is demanded from those who are concerned with decency and cleanliness. If anyone has lost his schifado [sic] he is disgraced.

"Olim apud Thonga, qui a populo Zulo illum morem acceperunt, viri, quod linguà 'mbayi' id est fistulam quandam ex foliis textis palmae quae 'milala' dicitur, ferre solebant.

[At one time among the Thonga, who took over this custom from the Zulu people, the men used to wear what in their language is called mbayi, that is, some kind of tube made of palm leaves woven together which is called milala.]

"Ultima 'mbayi' anno 1895 vel 1896 post Christum natum visa sunt. Quod shifado ex parvae cucurbitae cortice aut duro et excavato accurateque polito ligno factum, summo veretro affixum, minime incommode ferre videntur."

[The last mbayi were seen in the year 1895 or 1896. Because the shifado is made of the rind of a small gourd or of hard, hollowed-out and carefully polished wood, and attached at the top of the private parts, it seems that it can be worn with the minimum of discomfort.]

833 "Annotatio secunda (P. 56). S. n. i, sc. semine non im-
851 misso. Ad hoc, marito sperma foras spargendum est (a nga
842 mu weleri): hic est coitus rite factus et quasi lustralis. Inde,
765 uxor in manus utriusque sordes (thyaka ra bona) sumit, qui-
783 bus umbilicum illinit."

[Note 2 (page 56). S. n. i., that is, the semen has not been injected. Moreover the husband must eject his sperms outside of the body (a nga mu weleri): this is the coitus properly executed and, as it were, lustral. Then the wife takes in her hands the filth of both (thyaka ra bona) and smears the navel with it.]

"Annotatio tertia (P. 57). Corpus infimum pueri ex adverso et a tergo peni pater tangit.

[Note 3 (page 57). The father touches with his penis the lowest part of the boy's body from the front and from behind.]

831 "Annotatio quarta (P. 88). Hae sunt formulae:
881 Shana khololwane ma ri tiba le'ri onhaka milebe?
Novistisne avem quae labra mincra laedit?

831 —I mbolo ya shuburu.
881 —Penis est incircumcisi viri.
Banhwanyana ba ka Makwakwa ba kundja na ba hlanamile. N'yini?
Puellæ ex regione Makwakwa manibus apertis coeunt. Quid significant hæc verba?
—I mahlehlwa.
—Est semen mahlehwa.
(Hlehlwa is the seed of a creeper growing along the ground; this seed [517] is of the same size as a two shilling piece and possesses, in its central part, two hooks standing up.)
[Note 4 (page 88): these are the formulae:
Shana khololwane ma ri tiba le'ri onhaka milebe?
Do you know the bird that injures the labia minora?
—I mbolo ya shuburu.
It is the penis of an uncircumcised man.
Banhwanyana ba ka Makwakwa ba kundja na ba hlanamile. N'yini?
The girls from the region of Makwakwa have intercourse with open hands. What do these words mean?
—I mahlehlwa.
—Mahlehwa is the semen.
(Hlehlwa is the seed of a creeper growing along the ground; this seed [517] is of the same size as a two shilling piece and possesses, in its central part, two hooks standing up.)]
832 "Annotatio quinta (P. 98. 182). Externorum genitalium
836 minora labra verbo milebe (singul. nebe) designantur, quæ
304 puellæ adeo trahere solent ut ea usque ad quinque, decem,
881 etiam quindecim centimetra extendant. Quæ labra nonnunquam
171 parvis baculis metiuntur, eorum longitudine, apud comites suas, immo apud sponsos, gloriantes. Istis pravis moribus enim nihil aliud puellæ sequuntur nisi futuri mariti gratiam, cui apud Ba-Pedi, si sponsam suam labra non satis extendisse arbitratur, eam domum dimittere et boves suos reposcere licet. Puellæaululam pulmenti plenam parant quam operculo claudunt. Ad quas pueri vespere veniunt et stipem dant ut admittantur. In casae solo considunt et puellas cenantes spectant dum digitos in aululam demittunt. Puellæ quarum milebe quatuor digitos longa sunt, quatuor digitis usæ comedunt: bakulu, sunt, i.e. adultæ, et lætantur amatores. Aut tribus tantum, duobus aliquando utantur. Adolescentulæ cavis manibus cenant.
[Note 5 (pages 98 and 182). The labia minora of the outer genitals are called by the word milebe (singular nebe), and the girls are in the habit of pulling them so much that they extend from five or ten to as many as fifteen centimeters.

843 her own pudenda with a much befouled intimate garment which
834 she afterwards burns.
841 Going to the fire they both warm their head and their hands. Then the woman mixes the ashes she has collected with fat and smears it over her husband's limbs, rubbing along his fingers, his arms, and his legs, which is called lula. Afterwards, in the two nights following, they will have intercourse. If the husband has had sexual intercourse not with his wife but with some girl from another village from lustful desire he will be given a fossorium so that the rite lula will come to its completion.]

765 "Annotatio octava (P. 155). Si mulieris parentes procul
783 habitant, maritus eius comes itineris erit, quacum superiore
833 nocte coibit, ad aquæ lustrali vim novam dandam."
595 [Note 8 (page 155). If the woman's parents live far away, her husband will be her companion on the way and he will have sexual intercourse with her the night before in order to give the lustral water new power.]

765 "Annotatio nona (P. 160). Faciebat dum 'Khunye khunye';
535 quibus verbis significatur coitus (khunyeta)."
831 [Note 9 (page 160). She was saying Khunye, khunye during
834 this time; these words signify coitus (khunyeta).

"Annotatio decima (P. 160). Carminum, morum temporis marginalis natura eo obscenior est quo nobilior defunctus fuit. Viguetus narrat: [518] 'Duce vel uno ex principibus mortuo, luctuque consueto præterito, luctum privatum, ad quem boves immolentur, celebrari. Carnem ad baculos humi fixos alligari; homines inde mulierem vocare, eamque posteriorem vestem exuere juberi, neque ullam vestem nisi anteriorem habere quam, si velit, exuere ei liceat. Eam, postea, divaricaturam esse ad unam ex carnis particulis dentibus apprehendendam ita prominentem ut omnes viri eius pudenda videant, quod plerumque 'taboo' (id est nefas) sit.'"

[Note 10 (page 160). The nature of the songs, a custom of the marginal period, is the more obscene the greater the nobility of the deceased person was. Viguet relates: [518] "When the leader or one of the chiefs is dead and the usual mourning has passed, they stage a private mourning at which bulls are sacrificed. They tie the flesh to poles fixed in the ground; then the men call a woman and order her to take off the clothes on her back and they do not allow her to have any clothes on except the one in front which, if she wants to, she may also take off. Then she must seize one of the bits of meat with her teeth, bending forward in such a

765 ~~835~~ way that all the men can see her pudenda which is
~~831~~ much tabooed (that is, sinful)."]
834 "Annotatio undecima (P. 161). Hic, mulier paulo dilutiore
765 colore magnaque statura addit: 'Hi kundjana. id est:
782 coeamus!' "

[Note 11 (page 161). Here a woman with a slightly lighter color and of large stature, adds: Hi kundjana, that is, "let us have intercourse!"]

841 "Annotatio duodecima (P. 187). Hæc sunt ipsissima verba, quibus Makhelu mulieris menstruansis taboo (id est nefas) describit. Mulier menstruans est res, quæ imprimis 'yila' est. Per sex dies 'yila,' id est, nefas est. Septimo die transit flumen ad se lavandam. Octavo ei nondum licet cum marito suo coire; forte enim sanguis pudendis ad hæret, eà insciente. Magis 'refrigescit.' (Verbo phula menstruans mulier comparatur cum aula a foco remota).

Si, ante id tempus, maritus cum uxore cœat, ægrotus fiat, veretrum retro ita recedat ut vir urinam reddere non possit et, brevi tempore, moriatur. Talem vitæ exitum multi habuerunt. Radicibus arboris cui nomen est mayilana vel mulieris menstruantis vestis particulà, a medico ad levem pulverem redactà, quæ ægro bibenda est, morbus sanari potest. Aegrotus multum sanguinis reddet, et veretro exeunte, salvus est."

[Note 12 (page 187). These are the very words with which Makhelu [sic] describes the taboo (that is, the sin) of the menstruating woman. A menstruating woman is something which is, first of all, yila. For six days she is yila, that is to say, taboo. On the seventh day, the flow that cleanses her passes over. On the eighth day she is not yet allowed to have intercourse with her husband; for perhaps some blood is still sticking to her pudenda without her knowledge. She "cools down" even more so. (By the word phula the menstruating woman is compared to the pot removed from the stove.)

841 If the husband should have sexual intercourse with his wife
834 before this time, he will be taken sick, his private parts will
756 decay to such an extent that the man would no longer be able to pass urine and would die within a brief period of time. Many have had such an end to their life. The sick man can be cured by a liquid containing the roots of the tree that is called mayilana or by a particle of the menstruating woman's dress, reduced to a light powder by the medicine man. The sick man loses a lot of blood; after his penis is able to pass water again, the man is well again.

The stump is perhaps some ill-disposed person whose opposition the energetic maid is determined to overcome! 533 832

As a counterpart, here is the *complaint of a jilted lover*, who gives vent to his annoyance with the girl and her family : 539

> Refuse me if you will, girl!
> The grains of maize you eat in your village are human eyes!
> The tumblers from which you drink are human skulls!
> The manioc roots you eat are human tibia!
> The sweet potatoes are human fingers!
> Refuse me, if you will, girl!

The vexation of a jilted lover is of short duration. He has the money, he is sure to find a girl! But it would be erroneous to think Native lovers or husbands are not capable of deep and lasting affection. I know of a case, near Shiluvane, in which a Nkuna committed suicide because his wife had deceived him, and had relations with another man. 831

See, I. p. 286, the song in which the *despised wife* gives vent to her anger : her husband has plucked her little pumpkin and given it to the wife he preferred. No doubt the *bukwele*, the special feeling of jealousy existing between co-wives, has inspired more than one song which could find no equivalent in our own literature! 533

Mourning songs are numerous ; they are sung just after the burial. They are touching ; note the simple cry : 533 765 539

> Mamane! You have left us! whither have you gone?

The tune (No. 14) is striking : a very high and prolonged note, followed by double crochets sounded very rapidly and ending in another long note with a short sharp conclusion, like a cry of anguish.

One of those present rises and sings, as if he were playing the part of the bereaved :

> A ba ndji ya!ange-ke lepai?
> Have they not hated me, treating me in this way?

All the throng of the mourners answer :

> Ba ku yalile, wene, wa ka manyana!
> They have hated you, son of so and so!

789 women to the river to throw away the contaminated earth, order
821 them to make a ball of that earth, and to bring it back to us in
843 the early morning. We grind it, we put it into a pot where it
783 must remain for five days, and then we prepare the great drug to sprinkle the land. The medicine is put into oxen horns and they go to all the drifts, to the boundaries of the country, on the borders of the Ñwebeti and of the Thabina rivers, on the road to Sibila's country, to Diskop (Leydsdorp); they must not however cross rivers. Our neighbours do the same on their own side. One of the girls digs the earth, the others dip a stick into the horn and sprinkle the drug into the hole. We also sprinkle the road on which these women have trodden, when they had their blood; we remove the misfortune caused by these women on the roads. The country is pure again. Rain can fall."

This is the purifying rite in the Nkuna clan. Mankhelu asserts that the Pedis do the same. He did not know if the custom existed amongst other Thonga clans. But Viguet described the same custom to me as being in force on the borders of the Limpopo, under the name of *mbelele*. The bones having revealed that the country is impure, the chief orders the mbelele: it is a period of mourning (nkosi) for the land. First the *phokolo*, or sacrifice of the black victim is performed (See Part VI). Then the women assemble. They must remove all their clothing, only putting some grass round their loins and, with a peculiar skipping step, singing a special song: "Mpfula nana" — "rain fall," — they go to all the spots where children prematurely born have been buried in dry ground, on the hills, take away what they find in the broken pots and collect all that impure matter in a secret place, so that children may see nothing of what they are doing. Water is poured on these graves in order to "quench them (timula)." On the evening of the same day they go and bury these impurities; this is
[183 done in the mud, near the river. No man must approach during
831] this operation: the women would have the right to strike the imprudent one and ask him questions on the obscene formulae of circumcision; the man would answer in the most impure words he could find, as all language taboos are suspended on that day; nakedness even is no longer taboo, "because," says Viguet,

"it is the law of the country!" Every one consents to the suspension of the ordinary laws! (1)

Amongst the Rongas, I did not hear of any connection between prematurely born children and rain. When the mbelele rite is performed, a mother of twins must lead the procession of women who draw water and pour it on the graves of the twins in order to secure the rain. They also clean all the wells (kuha tinhlobo), digging them afresh and removing any filth in the water. It may be that the corpse of a twin, if it has been buried in dry ground, will be dug out of its grave and buried again near the river, or they will go in procession and pour water on the grave. This will influence Heaven, which is killing the earth by the terrible heat of the sun. The burning October winds will cease and the rain will fall.

There is something mysterious about all these customs. Considered merely as ideas regarding Nature and natural phenomena, I believe their essential meaning to be this : — there are some cases of human birth which are taboo. While any birth is taboo, owing to the lochia, that of children prematurely born is doubly dangerous. Abnormal children, such as twins, children who have died before the "boha puri" rite (I. p. 56), in some clans also children who cut their upper teeth first, share this noxious character. They are a calamity for the whole land as they are connected with the mysterious power of Heaven, and so prevent the rain from falling. The great remedy for the evil, the only means of counteracting this influence, is to bury these children in wet ground. Should this not have been done, the chief must order these little corpses to be exhumed and buried near the river : this is the aim and object of the mbelele. If wet, these graves will cause no harm (2).

How did these extraordinary conceptions first originate ?

(1) This rite of *mbelele* shows striking analogies with the Passage rites which we have already often met with in Thonga customs. This is a special period, a mourning period for the land, says Viguet, a marginal period which, as such, is accompanied by obscene manifestations, both in speech and in absence of clothing.

(2) In the Maluleke clan, as previously mentioned, these three categories of children must be *cremated*, and foreigners dying in the midst of the clan are also burnt after their death, from fear that they might belong to one of these categories and so prevent the rain from falling, if they were buried in dry ground. The mbelele rite there is called *nkelenkele*. Rangane describes it as follows : — Women collect the bones of twins,

1) The custom of the erotic dream (Tilorela).

881 When a young man has noticed for the first time an emissio
195 seminis, he is said to have become an adult (a kulile, a thombile)
751 to have "drunk the nkanye." The nkanye is the tree from which the bukanye is made. It is prepared for the great feast of the new year. *To drink the nkanye* is an euphemism to designate the entrance into a new phase of life, into the age of puberty. According to Mboza, the lad must go early in the morning to wash his body, and that is all. But Tobane says that, in the Mpfumo clan, the family doctor is called; in a broken pot, he roasts pieces of skin of all the beasts of the veldt, together with some half digested grass taken from the stomach of a goat (psanyi). The boy must eat a little of this medicine and rub all his joints with it. This will strengthen him so that, when he has relations with girls, he will not be overcome (gemiwa) by them. This rite, which is very similar to the rite of the broken pot performed for infants, is connected with the "gangisa," the sexual habits of young people which begin at the time of puberty, as we shall see later on.

At this time also, the boy begins to wear the very primitive
881 clothing called *shifado* (sha ku siba, the thing with which one
291 closes, see Annotatio I)[1]. In former times they wore only the *mbayi*,
177 a small cylindrical or conical object of woven palm leaves, which
789 was the national dress of the Thongas; the *shifado* seems to be of
832 Zulu origin. It is very much valued as preventing contact with the earth, as a protection against ants and an aid to continence; the lads who do not wear it are blamed and accused of being *ba-nato*. The word *nato* means a magical medicine by means of which men of low morals throw men or women into a deep sleep during the night, enter the huts of other people and commit adultery with their wives.

2) The piercing of the ears (Ku tjunya, (Ro.), boshela. (Dj.).

881 This also takes place at this period. There are two ways of
304 performing it, either by an actual piercing of the lower lobe
177 with a thorn, or by cutting it with a knife. The first method

1 [See p. 516 in these categories or in 116 -- Analyst]

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

3) The Gangisa.

832 When a boy has gone through the puberty rites, he is grown
836 up and is allowed to practise the *gangisa*. This word comes
882 from *ganga*, which means " to choose a lover." Each girl is asked by the boys to choose one of them ; they *make them choose* (gangisa, factitive derivative). I once observed some boys—they were still very young—flirting round three or four girls just like bees round ripe plums, running after them, and saying repeatedly : " Choose me! Choose me! " There is a special blue cotton print with a large white pattern which is called " gangisa ntombi " viz. to make a girl choose, as it is offered by the lover to the damsel of
836 his choice in order to obtain her favour. When a girl has made
848 her choice, her boy plays with her like husband and wife, first
684 building little huts, etc. but later on in a less platonic fashion. In fact nothing is prohibited in the relations between young people
[837] of the two sexes. A married woman is sacred amongst the Thongas, but an unmarried girl is not. However, she must not become pregnant. (1) If this happens, the parents will say to the lover : "You have spoiled our daughter, you must buy her in marriage." If he refuses, the child will belong to the family of the girl. Excesses in gangisa are condemned. A boy who commits them is said to be an adulterer (a ni bupse) ; of a girl they say : " She will lose her head (a ta ba singe). "

882 As the unmarried boys and girls live in special huts, the *lao*
836 of the boys and the *nhanga* of the girls, at the entrance of the village, it is easy for them to meet during the night. During the day, they generally behave themselves becomingly. But when the lads pay visits to their girls, who sing to the accompaniment

(1) When a girl becomes pregnant, having had relations with her lover inside her parents' village, it is very serious; it is taboo. The boy will have to find a goat, to kill it during the night in the girl's kraal, and to rise very early; then both the boy and the girl, quite naked, must go round the village and sprinkle the fence from inside with a special decoction. None must come out of the huts to look at them. This will prevent the inhabitants from contracting the disease called mukuhlwane (cough, lung complaint) which would otherwise attack them. Moreover the guilty boy will have to pay a fine of £ 5 in [illegible] of the [illegible].

836 of rattles, they sometimes stay with them till late in the night.
832 They bring them small presents, articles of clothing or other things, and thus obtain permission to have intercourse with them. Mboza described to me a very immoral meeting which sometimes takes place in these huts in connection with the *milebe* habit, and which is connected with this gangisa. It is impossible to give the details here. (Annotatio 5.)[1]

836 The gangisa custom is, from our point of view, very immoral.
831 Amongst Natives it is not censured at all, and it would be more accurate to speak of *amorality* then of *immorality*, amongst them, on this particular point. A boy who has no such flirt, no *shigango*, is laughed at as a coward; a girl who refuses to accept such advances is accused of being malformed. However Mboza told me he had never had a shigango himself and the abuse in this respect is not approved of by old people. In Manyisa, I heard of a young chief who was leading all the lads to gangisa and forcing the girls to accept them. The extent of this evil depends very much
[644] on the character of the boys and girls. I may add that, as regards the young people of the capital, they are not allowed to practise the gangisa because they belong to the royal family and are closely watched.

When they become Christians, Natives readily accept our standard of morality, but cases of fornication are very frequent amongst converts, so much so that this has been rightly called the African sin! I mention this fact, but I must say on the other hand that thousands of pupils in our Native Institutions lead a very moral and continent life and do not seem to find any great difficulty in doing so.

839 If the gangisa spoils the whole life of the young heathen, it is
177 only just to add that they do not practise two vices which are prevalent amongst certain civilised nations, onanism and sodomy. These immoral customs were entirely unknown in the Thonga tribe before the coming of civilisation. Unhappily it is no longer so now, as we shall see in Appendix III on unnatural vice in Johannesburg.

836 Comparing the habits of the Pedis and the Thongas we observe
837 this strange fact: amongst the Thongas the unmarried girl is

1 [See p.517 in these categories or in 116 --Analysis]

1. *Love charms.*

832 584 If a boy has not been successful in his " gangisa ", if he is despised by the girls and has no chance of being accepted, a special rite is performed to help him to find a wife. The Ba-Ronga do not know the love-philter as such, but they have a substitute for it ; the old village cock is put on the lad's head and kept there for a long time ; the cock scratches him with his claws ; he is then allowed to go. The boy will now succeed ; he will be like the cock, who never lacks spouses! (Mboza).

Other charms are used for girls, especially a certain medicine which produces an abundant lather when boiled in water. The physician washes the girl's body with it, after which she will " appear " (a ta boneka) to the eyes of would-be suitors (Tobane).

755 832 584 Should however a girl not find a husband in the lawful way, she has another means at her disposal—marriage by abduction, and thus no one, or hardly any one, remains unmarried amongst the Thongas. Mankhelu, who was a great doctor, treated this " complaint of singleness " with more seriousness! He used his strongest medicines to heal the boy or the girl who was unable to find a partner in life. This is the treatment followed by him. He takes a she-goat, in the case of a boy, a he-goat in that of girl, and anoints it with fat mixed with his precious medicinal powder ; he rubs the animal (hondla) from the mouth to the tail, stretches out all its limbs and kills it. No prayer is offered, but the *psanyi* (the half digested grass which is found in the stomach) is carefully collected. The boy is then called, enters his own hut, spreads a mat on the ground, sits on it quite naked and rubs his whole body with this substance. " A tihorola, a tihurulula " says Mankhelu. He rubs away from himself all his filth. When he has finished, he coughs to call the doctor, who comes and gathers into a pot all the " timhorola," the particles which have fallen on the mat ; he takes a portion of this and squeezes it into a small bag of lizard-skin so as to make a *shitjungulu* or amulet. The sister must come after sunset without any clothing into the boy's

832 hut and tie the bag round his neck. What remains of the *timhoroia*
~~733~~ will be used to smear the hut. Then all the girls will love him ;
783 or in the case of a girl, she will soon be asked in marriage.
584 This ceremony is a characteristic *hondlola*, the same which is performed on the weaning day (see page 59) and after any serious disease ; it is a rite of removal of impurity. (Notice the termination ola, ula, ulula in these verbs ; it means generally to undo, to take away).

832 If the love charms do not obtain the desired result, the angry
754 boy will perhaps try to avenge himself. He will take a fowl, or
262 perhaps only an egg, treat it with special drugs and give it to the girl in order to bewitch her. This kind of witchcraft is called *ku dambikela*. (See the Chapter on Witchcraft, Part VI). The girl will give birth not to a child, but to an animal, a pigeon, or a snake. Or her genitalia will be changed and take the appearance of the male organ. This is one of the causes why eggs and fowls are taboo for girls.

Let us now hear from Tobane the description of the marriage rites amongst the Mpfumo clan. We shall afterwards see how the customs differ in other Ronga and Thonga clans.

II. *Marriage ceremonies of the Mpfumo clan.*

1) The betrothal (Buta).

584 When a young man has made up his mind to get married, and when he is in possession of the necessary lobola (1) cattle, he starts, one fine day, with two or three of his friends to look for a wife in the villages. He puts on his most brilliant ornaments and his most precious skins. Here they are, arriving in the village

583 1) *Ku lobola* means to buy in marriage. *Ku lobola* (a factitive derivative of the verb) is said of a father who claims a sum of money from his daughter's suitor. *Lobolo* or *ndjobolo* or *bukoat* (wealth) is the sum paid, the oxen, the hoes, or the pounds sterling. We shall use these words, which are employed in Thonga as well as in Zulu and ought to be adopted as technical ethnographic terms. I use the verb for the act of paying and the noun for the sum itself.

3) Pointing of the teeth (Ku hleta).

304 881 This custom is also dying out. It used to be incumbent on all the girls. Now many do not observe it. They have seen that teeth deformed in this way decay more quickly. The operation is performed on the incisors, and girls must keep their mouths closed for two or three days, not showing their teeth to anybody.

Near Rikatla, the hleta custom was still in force in the heathen villages in 1910. It gives the girls a kind of canine aspect.

4) The milebe custom.

304 881 832 171 This is very wide-spread all over South Africa. Though it has disappeared now amongst most of the Ronga clans, it is still practised in the Manyisa country, over the whole of Bilen and in the Northern clans, amongst the Zulus, the Pedi-Suthos, etc. It is probably the origin of the famous "Hottentot apron," which some ethnographers thought to be a congenital malformation, and which is merely the result of this custom (Annotatio 5)[1]. It is a very ugly habit, very immoral from our point of view, fixing the imagination of the girl on sexual relations, but amongst the Thongas it is upheld as being quite the right thing.

B. MARRIAGE AND CONJUGAL LIFE

1) Conditions of Marriage

581 832 In the primitive Bantu tribe every girl gets married, some, however, sooner than others. Suitors prefer pretty girls to ugly ones! But what is their standard of beauty ? The ideal is tall stature, strong limbs and well developed breasts. A proverb

1 [See p.517 in these categories or in the Analysis]

581 says : "Nsati wa mabele u nga nabele loko u nge na bukosi."
832 — "Do not covet a woman with large breasts if you have no money..." This does not mean that she will cost more, but her father, knowing that she will not want for suitors, will not consent to let her go unless the full lobolo is paid at once. On the other hand a girl with an elongated face is admired more than one who is too broad-faced. Of the first they say : "She is pretty, she resembles an antelope" (a kota mhala) ; of the second : "She is
832 chubby-cheeked, she is like a sow." A light complexion is preferred
186 to a very dark one, because the white or yellow races are regarded
754 as superior, and a Native laying claim to any European or Asiatic
581 blood is proud of it. Parents, who also have their say in the
829 question of marriage, insist on two other points ; the working capacity of the girl, and the absence of any witchcraft blot in the family. Should her mother have been convicted of being a witch,
581 the girl will be feared. However, every girl finds a husband in the
583 land where polygamy flourishes. If he be slow in coming, she will apply to her doctor, who will prepare the *love charms*, which will make her "appear," so that she will be noticed by the boys (See page 100). If even that does not succeed, she has other means at her disposal and may go herself to make proposals to a man (wopsana). He is seduced by her, and constitutes himself a thief who has *tlhuba*, viz. "taken in marriage by abduction" (See page 119). The parents will claim the lobolo and he must pay it. Marriage and childbearing remain the only carreer to which a Thonga woman can look forward. Hence a number of special feminine taboos which are very curious.

2) Special feminine taboos.

262
845 Some of them concern girls *before childbearing* and cease after
784 parturition. In the Tembe and Maputju clans, girls must not eat
562 pork, because pigs root nervously with their noses ; the future child
825 would also move its head from one side to the other, when on the verge of birth, and this would make delivery difficult. Other

576 is not as if they were trying to raise their hats, as they do not wear
609 any. The explanation of the gesture is this, according to a Transvaal Native : the Boers taught black people to point to heaven, when saluting a white man, with this meaning : I compare you with the One who is above!

576 In the Northern clans, salutations are generally accompanied
201 by a clapping of hands (omba mandla). Men beat their hands against each other, placing them parallel to each other ; women do the same, placing them crosswise or at right angles. Amongst the Ba-Pedi this salutation with the hands is performed in a somewhat different manner ; when a Pedi enters the hubo, and wishes to greet a gathering of men, he claps his hands before his breast ; but when he salutes only one person, he bows down and claps his hands at the height of his knees, either on the right side or on the left. Amongst the Ba-Ronga, clapping the hands is a sign of thankfulness ; they say as they do so : *I khani mambo*, which probably means : "I dance before you, Sir." ("Mambo"
576 means chief in the Ndjao language.) In Djonga the proper word for thanking is *nkomo*. The etymology of this word seems to be : "I homu," "it is an ox." If anyone gives me a hen, he presents it to me saying : "Take my chick." When he brings a goat he says : "This is my hen." In both cases I answer : "Nkomo," "it is an ox!" The Thonga etiquette requires that the giver depreciate his gift and that the receiver magnify it! Another less polite way of thanking is this : *Yengetan*!, — "do it again," or *ni mundjuku*, — "and also to-morrow!"

576 Thongas used not to *shake hands* in former times. Now-a-days
177 the civilised Natives have adopted the European fashion, but this kind of familiarity is not approved of by the old folks, especially by the chiefs. Natives, when they shake hands, often do it in two movements : first they catch the four fingers and then slide on to the thumb. I do not know where they have
832 learnt to do this! *Kissing* was formerly entirely unknown. A good mother would occasionally wipe her baby's nose, but this can hardly be called a kiss. When they saw the custom adopted by the Europeans, they said laughingly : "Look at these people! They suck each other! They eat each other's saliva and dirt!"

832 576 593 152 572 Even a husband never kissed his wife. On coming back from a journey, a man would hardly greet his wife; she would see him passing through the village, prepare food for him, and when it was cooked, she would come and salute him by presenting it to him. But if he has a good friend in the village, and if this friend sees him coming back after a long absence, their meeting will be much more touching. The friend will go to the main entrance of the village, exclaim: "Ha-Ha," take his parcel from his hands, put his arms round his shoulders (a ku mu buso hi mandla), remove the perspiration from his face, and pat him gently, saying: "Your ancestor-gods have their eyes open! They have worked well! They have brought you back."

574 609 622 *Hospitality*. When strangers enter a village, men sit on the *bandla*, and women go further on and sit on the *hubo*; they remain quietly there till the people of the village come and salute them (losa). Should the inhabitants delay too long, the visitors move on, saying: "These people are not good." But this is very rare. Generally the master of the village comes to them, inquiring who they are, whence they come, where they are going, and asks them: "Do you wish to spend the night here?" If they say: "Yes," the headman will empty one of his huts by putting two of his wives together, and will himself sleep with the visitors. Should there still be food, he will give them some. If not, he says: 574 "*Ndlala*!" "Starvation!" After a little while, a mat is unrolled 609 and the official ceremony of "djungulisana" takes place. This is a 622 very amusing custom. The headman sits together with his hosts and enquires about the news of their home. One of the 203 visitors begins in a monotonous tone and pours forth volubly 195 a flow of words with a peculiar cadence and almost without taking breath. His interlocutor interrupts him after each sentence, with "Ahina, hina," that is to say "Indeed, indeed!" till the whole skein is unwound; the two men finish with a longer "*Hina*," the inhabitants of the hut adding an emphatic "*khani*," a heartfelt "thank you;" then the master of the village begins to relate his own news in the same tone. It is impossible to 574 imagine anything more curious than this "mélopée" in two parts. 609 This law of hospitality is general all over the tribe. Should

831 —I mbolo ya shuburu.
881 —Penis est incircumcisi viri.

Banhwanyana ba ka Makwakwa ba kundja na ba hlanamile. N'yini?

Puellæ ex regione Makwakwa manibus apertis coeunt. Quid significant hæc verba?

—I mahlehlwa.

—Est semen mahlehwa.

(Hlehlwa is the seed of a creeper growing along the ground; this seed [517] is of the same size as a two shilling piece and possesses, in its central part, two hooks standing up.)

[Note 4 (page 88): these are the formulae:

Shana khololwane ma ri tiba le'ri onhaka milebe?

Do you know the bird that injures the labia minora?

—I mbolo ya shuburu.

It is the penis of an uncircumcised man.

Banhwanyana ba ka Makwakwa ba kundja na ba hlanamile. N'yini?

The girls from the region of Makwakwa have intercourse with open hands. What do these words mean?

—I mahlehlwa.

—Mahlehwa is the semen.

(Hlehlwa is the seed of a creeper growing along the ground; this seed [517] is of the same size as a two shilling piece and possesses, in its central part, two hooks standing up.)]

832 "Annotatio quinta (P. 98. 182). Externorum genitalium
836 minora labra verbo milebe (singul. nebe) designantur, quæ
304 puellæ adeo trahere solent ut ea usque ad quinque, decem,
881 etiam quindecim centimetra extendant. Quæ labra nonnunquam
171 parvis baculis metiuntur, eorum longitudine, apud comites suas, immo apud sponsos, gloriantes. Istis pravis moribus enim nihil aliud puellæ sequuntur nisi futuri mariti gratiam, cui apud Ba-Pedi, si sponsam suam labra non satis extendisse arbitratur, eam domum dimittere et boves suos reposcere licet. Puellæaululam pulmenti plenam parant quam operculo claudunt. Ad quas pueri vespere veniunt et stipem dant ut admittantur. In casae solo considunt et puellas cenantes spectant dum digitos in aululam demittunt. Puellæ quarum milebe quatuor digitos longa sunt, quatuor digitis usæ comedunt: bakulu, sunt, i.e. adultæ, et lætantur amatores. Aut tribus tantum, duobus aliquando utantur. Adolescentulæ cavis manibus cenant.

[Note 5 (pages 98 and 182). The labia minora of the outer genitals are called by the word milebe (singular nebe), and the girls are in the habit of pulling them so much that they extend from five or ten to as many as fifteen centimeters.

832 Sometimes the girls measure their labia with small sticks
836 and boast of their length to their companions and even to their
304 bridegrooms. The girls follow these perverse practices for
881 no other reason than for the sake of their future husband.
171 Among the Ba-Pedi the husband may, if he thinks that his bride has not sufficiently stretched her labia, send her home and demand his bulls back. The girls keep a pot full of food ready and cover it with a lid. In the evening the boys come to the girls and give them a small gift in order to be admitted. In the house they sit down on the floor and watch the girls eating from a pot with their fingers. The girls whose milebe are four digits long eat using four fingers: they are bakulu, that is, adult, and they enjoy their lovers. Or they use only three fingers and sometimes two. The young girls eat with the palms of their hands.]

765 "Annotatio sexta (P. 154). Seu quis per ætatem iam pro-
783 vectam imbecillior factus erit, sive qualibet de causa tam
833 impotens ut sperma emittere non possit (a nga kumi mati), ceteri viri quid fiat sciscitabuntur. Quod si utique parum procedit, tota inhibetur cærimonia. Qui vero se invicem eodem ritu miscere debebant, iis ritum conficere non fas est. Ille jejunio, per quinque dies, prout res postulat, artissime utetur, cui medicinæ ad rem accommodatæ exquirentur.

[Note 6 (page 154). If someone should have become feeble because of advanced age, or if for some reason he should be so impotent that he cannot emit sperms (a nga kumi mati), other men ask what should be done. For if it proceeds quite insufficiently, the whole ceremony is held up. And those who should have had intercourse in turn in the same ritual fashion are not permitted to complete the rite. He [the impotent man] has to fast very strictly for five days as the situation requires and the remedies appropriate to the situation will be sought.]

843 "Annotatio septima (P. 154). Nocens maritus uxorque sui
834 purgandi causà alium ritum peragent. Uxor mariti suaque
841 pudenda veste intima et inquinatissima tergebit, quam postea comburet.

Ambo, ad ignem accedentes, caput manusque calefacient. Inde cinerem collectum mulier adipe miscet, quo mariti artus illinit, digitis bracchiis cruribusque tractis, quod 'lula' dicitur. Postea, noctibus duabus sequentibus, coibunt. Si maritus, non cum uxore sua, sed cum puella quadam ex alio vico, stupri consuetudinem junxerit, huic fossorium donabitur, ut ritum 'lula' perfectum veniat.

[Note 7 (page 154). If the husband and the wife are guilty of an offense, they perform another rite for the sake of purging themselves. The wife will cover her husband's and

302 The use of ochre is, however, not restricted to nursing mothers
538 or magicians : it is the special province of young marriageable girls, wishing to attract attention : their brilliant skin shines like a
832 mirror, setting off to perfection the white of their eyes and the black of their hair, which is sometimes made flossy by means of antimony or ground charcoal. A quaint saying puts it thus ;

> Shindzingeri pundjene ? -Banhwanyana tolan !...
> What says the pretty bird with the coral neck that sings in the grass ?
> It says : Girls, anoint yourselves with ochre ! (if you wish to be as beautiful as it is).

177 Another ornament, of ancient date, is the *bracelet*. There
301 are several kinds : 1) the big heavy copper rings, called *masindana*, which greatly resemble those of the lake-dwellers, having a similar rather oval shape with an opening for slipping them over the wrist ; 2) the modern bracelets, called *busenga*, which the Rongas first bought in Natal, and which the Ma-Lemba introduced in the Northern clans ; they are made of iron wire twined round a ring of hide ; 3) the *mafowa* are more ancient, being made of seeds strung on thongs of skin, and are wound several times round the leg. This is an ornament for either dance or war.
301 The mafowa are sometimes made of the silvery cocoons of Argema Mimosae, the Queen Moth, which are found on nkanye trees, emptied of the chrysalis which is inside and filled with grains of millet which rattle when dancing!

301 *Beads* (nkarara) are evidently of later date ; they were introduced
439 by the Whites in the XVIth century, when the Portuguese were already in regular communication with Delagoa Bay and trafficked with the Natives, exchanging glassware for gold and ivory. Glass fascinated the Blacks : its brightness and transparency pleased
539 them immensely. An old song echoes their simple transports of delight :

> E ! Bashabi ! Batatana ba shabile ; ba buya ni shintshirimana sha balungoooo !..
> Hi ! Here come the buyers ! Our fathers return with their purchases ; they bring back with them the beautiful glittering things which the Whites sell !...

301 "A few years ago an ordinary glass bottle was thought a wonder by the people in the interior," said Timoteo Mandlati to me.

(He was a Nkuna from Shiluvane.) It is not strange therefore 301
that they became enamoured of beads. They give them special 832
names, according to colour and size, and succeed in turning them to very good account. The chief ornament the women make, (beadwork is exclusively done by the women), is the *mugangu* (No. 2), used in love-making (gangisa) ; it is a kind of crown of blue beads with red chevrons, worn by girls when they wish to beautify themselves. Some are wide and some narrow ; the beads are strung on threads which are crossed and knotted as the work proceeds : no canvas foundation is used. The bead necklace 301
is called *shihekisana*. Bead bracelets on the wrist are *shibolisa*, and on the ankles *maluwada*. Beads are also used in making large and heavy belts (mugadzi), weighing one to two pounds, and very much appreciated as an ornament when dancing. In the same way calabashes (No. 5) are covered with beads, bags made of hide (No. 4), bottles and even baskets. This bead work calls for a 276
good deal of patience. One of the things which the Ronga most 301
dearly loves to have decorated with beads is his tobacco pouch, (ngulana, No. 3), which is for him not only a means of satisfying his passion for taking snuff, but also one of his most prized ornaments. I do not now refer to the carved ebony tobacco box, worn *en bandoulière*, but to the article consisting of eight or nine large seeds, hollowed out, in which is kept the powder which stimulates the brain. Each of these seeds (which come from another country) is closed with a small piece of reed ; when one is walking they rattle against each other, producing a most delightful sound! The first thing a man will say to a friend on 576
meeting him, will be : "Fole?" — "Tobacco?" and before 276
anything further is said, each will indulge in a pinch. The same act of politeness is essential before beginning any discussion. The Thonga does not smoke the calumet of peace, but uses for a like purpose the many receptacled tobacco pouch, decorated with beads, which hangs from the belt at his hip. He takes from it a pinch of snuff, which he offers to his opponent ; the latter takes another pinch and proceedings then commence under the happiest auspices. Hearts are not far from concord... when noses have already fraternised!

533 Of course the colonists, who only knew "Kitchen Kafir,"
539 could not understand the complaint of the Nkuna boy!

The *song of the crab* is more tragic! (Tune No. 10). In a deep minor key a man cries for help! He went to hunt the big crabs which dwell in the mud of the mangrove forest, or on the sea-shore. He followed one ; the animal hastily hid itself in its hole. The imprudent hunter tried to catch it there ; he put his arm into the hole and attempted to pull the crab out. But the crustacean seized his finger in its claws so firmly that the man could not get free. He remained tightly held down, fixed to the ground. The tide is rising; soon it will cover him! And he cries :

> Yo-o! Lomo tjukeni ku na mani? — Hala yi khomi litiho!
> Alas! - On the shore is there some one? — The crab has caught me by the finger!

This is almost dramatic poetry and the scene is worthy of a true literary description.

533 The *erotic style* is cultivated by boys and girls on different
832 occasions though it must be said that love, as we understand it,
539 plays but little part in Thonga life. Boys in love generally express their feelings to the accompaniment of the unicord harp (see Chap. III) in the evening in the neighbourhood of the village of their beloved one ; I have never been able to catch the words of these songs, which are said to be sometimes very long, and are sung in a very loud voice ; they are not precisely chaste, according to one of our Native ministers, who considered that the use of the unicord harp ought to be forbidden to Christian boys! But here is a *love song* probably composed by a girl who was not allowed to marry the boy of her choice :

> To-morrow, to-morrow, my mother, I will start,
> To-morrow, father, I will start,
> I will start with an axe ;
> With this axe I will cut the stump,
> The stump on which my friend has hurt his leg,
> My friend whose belt of tails hangs from his waist,
> The one for whom I draw my legs out of the way. (1)

784 (1) Perhaps an allusion to the fact that it is taboo to pass over any one's outstretched
516 legs. She draws in her legs to give him the means of passing and coming to sit beside her.

The stump is perhaps some ill-disposed person whose opposition the energetic maid is determined to overcome! 533 832

As a counterpart, here is the *complaint of a jilted lover*, who gives vent to his annoyance with the girl and her family : 539

> Refuse me if you will, girl!
> The grains of maize you eat in your village are human eyes!
> The tumblers from which you drink are human skulls!
> The manioc roots you eat are human tibia!
> The sweet potatoes are human fingers!
> Refuse me, if you will, girl!

The vexation of a jilted lover is of short duration. He has the money, he is sure to find a girl! But it would be erroneous to think Native lovers or husbands are not capable of deep and lasting affection. I know of a case, near Shiluvane, in which a Nkuna committed suicide because his wife had deceived him, and had relations with another man. 831

See, I. p. 286, the song in which the *despised wife* gives vent to her anger : her husband has plucked her little pumpkin and given it to the wife he preferred. No doubt the *bukwele*, the special feeling of jealousy existing between co-wives, has inspired more than one song which could find no equivalent in our own literature! 533

Mourning songs are numerous ; they are sung just after the burial. They are touching ; note the simple cry : 533 765 539

> Mamane! You have left us! whither have you gone?

The tune (No. 14) is striking : a very high and prolonged note, followed by double crochets sounded very rapidly and ending in another long note with a short sharp conclusion, like a cry of anguish.

One of those present rises and sings, as if he were playing the part of the bereaved :

> A ba ndji ya'ange-ke lepai?
> Have they not hated me, treating me in this way?

All the throng of the mourners answer :

> Ba ku yalile, wene, wa ka manyana!
> They have hated you, son of so and so!

5) The tying of the cotton string.

854 When the child "tiyelanyana" viz. "becomes a little firm,"
857 the mother, having to plough her fields and to cook the food, begins to seat him on the sandy soil, after having made a kind of hole of about five inches in depth. We have seen Thonga babies already sitting at the age of two months. But this "dumping" hardly meets all the requirements, and the mother looks for a girl to help her to take care of the baby (wa ku tlanga na ye, to play with him). She puts the child in the charge of an elder sister or a cousin ; a girl of five to ten is quite strong enough for the purpose. I have often admired the patience of these miniature nurses, sometimes not very much bigger than the child they carry, with their very troublesome babies.

852 But very soon the child begins to crawl (kasa) and this is the
715 time when a very striking rite is performed. This rite seems to be practised all over the tribe, but it has more importance in the Northern clans than amongst the Ba-Ronga. I shall here give the description of Viguet, who belonged to the Tsungu clan and had emigrated to the Spelonken. My readers must forgive me if I cannot tell the story with all its details and if I am obliged to write some of them in Latin (1).

851 These are the ipsissima verba of my informant : "This is a
833 great law amongst the Thongas. When a child begins to crawl,
766 even before, the *puri* is tied round his waist. The *puri* is a
842 cotton (2) string. Father and mother fix the day ; if they forget to do so, their parents, (the grandparents) will remind them of the law. They must have sexual intercourse, but in such a way that the mother will not become pregnant, s. n. i. (Annotatio 2)[1]. The mother will have to take in her hands "their filth" (thyaka ra bona) smear the string with it and tie it round the child. It will

(1) A more complete description of this rite and of some others related to the taboos, of the Thongas will be found in the Revue d'Ethnographie et de Sociologie, Oct. 1910, Paris.

(2) There are plants of cotton probably subspontaneous in the Low Country of the Transvaal of Delagoa Bay.

1 [See p. 616 in these categories or in 116 - Analyst]

851 remain there till it falls to pieces. After this operation the
766 child is "grown up" and three things are allowed which were
833 taboo before :

1) The child, if he dies, can be buried on the hill, in dry soil. Before the *boha puri* he would have been buried in wet soil, near the river, as is customary with twins and children who have cut their upper teeth first.

2) He can participate in the strange purification called *hlamba ndjaka* which takes place after the death of one of the inhabitants of the village (See ceremonies of death).

852 3) The parents can again have conjugal intercourse, though
766 they must avoid conception till the child is weaned. Before this
833 ceremony it was absolutely prohibited, and should they have
821 sinned in this respect and the mother have conceived, they would
842 be very guilty! It is a dangerous taboo! They would have "stolen" the child, stolen it from the law (yiba nawen). The child would not have "entered the law." It would be useless to tie the string round him in order to repair the evil done. Should he live long, should he even become an old man, he will have to be buried in wet soil, otherwise the rain would be prevented from falling.

Amongst the Malulekes and the Hlengwes such children are even burnt after their death. We shall speak later on about the mysterious relation established by the Thongas between these children, their burial, and the rain.

852 Amongst the Ba-Ronga this rite is called *boha nshale* (to tie
854 the cotton) and can be performed in the same way or even more simply by the father (Annotatio 3).[1] Parents, when they have duly tied the string on the little one, are said to have *fuya nwana*, viz. taken possession of the child.

Amongst them again, another thing is then allowed which was taboo before. The child can be carried on the shoulders without ntehe by the arms alone (hi minkono).

851 It is clear that the tying of the cotton string means the official reception of the child into the family, even into human society. Before that, he was hardly considered as a human being, he was *shilo* (a thing), *khuna* (an incomplete being). Now he is *nkulu*,

1 [See p. 516 in these categories or in 116 - Analyst]

881 is the old Thonga custom, and has been preserved by the women
304 in its original form, at least amongst the Ba-Ronga ; they frequently
177 pass a ring through the small opening thus produced. The second was practised by the Zulu-Ngonis, and was adopted by the Thonga men in order to resemble their conquerors. The result is an ugly hole. This is not a law imposed by the chief ; it is however universally observed. When a lad does not pierce his ears, his comrades mock him, saying. " U toya ! " " You are a coward! We shall put a spoonful of porridge in this big ear of yours! " (Viz. It will hold food because it is not pierced!)

881 The operation is performed in the winter by a man who
304 knows how to do it. Before it is begun, the boy bites the *ndjao*,
824 the root of a kind of juncus which is considered the best means of strengthening the virile force. The doctor introduces into
833 the hole a small piece of reed ; he takes it out every day to wash the wound and puts it in again to keep the hole open. As long as the ear is not healed, the lad must eat his food without salt : he must not go about in the kraals and partake of the porridge of other people, because this food might have been prepared by women having intercourse with their husbands (ba ku khila) and this would make him very ill (1). He must also keep away from girls. When he is healed, he takes away the piece of hard reed and replaces it by a pretty white object.

304 Some Thongas tatoo themselves, or used to do so formerly,
178 but this custom is disappearing and is now preserved only by women. We shall describe it in the chapter on the evolution of the woman, as well as the *kleta* custom, the pointing of the teeth.

It is probable that in former times the taboo character of these various ceremonies was more marked that now. At present they are merely a *shihila sha tiko*, a custom of the country.

(1) This alimentary taboo, as well as the interdiction of sexual relations, [illegible] intercourse with married people, clearly shows that the piercing of the ears is a ritual passage. (p. 74).

765 These rites are somewhat different in the Hlabi and Ronga clans.
783 They are called in the Northern clans *hlamba ndjaka*, in the
834 Southern *lohla khombo*. I will begin with the description of the first, as being the most characteristic. Viguet, who has seen them practised, and who took part in them himself, gave me a graphic description of them.

Ndjaka means two things. Firstly, the objects left by the deceased, which will pass to his heirs in the course of time. The heirs are called *badyi ba ndjaka*, the eaters of the ndjaka. But *ndjaka* also signifies the frightful malediction accompanying death: "it is something which kills a great many men." Therefore the *ndjaka* must be washed away; *hlamba* means precisely to wash away.

This malediction or dangerous impurity contaminates objects, which must be cleansed by the sprinkling (phunga) as we have seen; but it affects still more deeply the village as a whole, the *muti*, the organism which is at the base of all Thonga society, and which has a life of its own, a collective life. That life must be purified. During the whole mourning, and even during the last days of the deceased, when death was threatening, all sexual relations have been forbidden. Why? Because the village was in a state of contamination... "Muti wu tjumile." It cannot return to the ordinary course of life without a special collective purification.

765 Let us see how this is managed on a particularly serious occasion,
783 when the headman or other great personage dies. Some weeks
835 after the burial, all the married people of the village assemble, the men apart, the women apart. They discuss in what order the different couples must proceed to the purifying act. They question each other to know if each one has duly observed the law of continence. Should one of them confess that he has sinned (dyoha), he will have to take the lead. Should he have sinned and not confess it, he will be very guilty. But he himself will suffer for his bad action; he has stolen the inheritance (a yibe ndjaka), and it will not be wonderful if he begins to cough, grows thin and dies of consumption! If there has been no transgression of the law, then the master of the mourning will have to begin. He goes out of the village with his wife

765 to the bush. There they have sexual relations in the ritual
783 fashion, viz. s. n. i. (See Annotatio 2)[1] They come back by
833 separate ways. The woman has taken with her a pot full of water; she goes straight with it to a certain spot, which has been decided upon during the discussion, either in front of the main entrance of the village or at the door of the hut. There she washes her hands which contain "their impurity" (thyaka ra bona). All the other couples do the same, each woman coming in her turn to cleanse her impurity at the same place. When this is over, the men also come to this spot and stamp on the ground. Sticks belonging to absent young men, or a piece of clothing of a girl who happens to be away from home, are also brought to this spot and are purified. The same is done to the straps of the ntehe of the infant, as we have seen, but he is not allowed to be present, as it might cause his death. When the purifying act is finished in all its phases, men and women go to the river and bathe; the men higher up, the women lower down. (Annotatio 6)[2]

Such is the *hlamba ndjaka* amongst the Thongas of the North, when the life of the village has been deeply affected by the death of an important member of the community. The rite is performed with less publicity when a child dies. Then the act takes place, not outside, in the bush, but inside the hut, as it is a private mourning. Should the husband have had regular intercourse with his wife before this purification has been carried out, it is a very great sin. His wife will go and confess their fault to one of the women of the village. This woman will tell it to her husband's mother, who will have to find the remedy. The guilty husband must not eat at all... If he eats, he will have eaten the contamination of death (u mitile rifu). The *hlamba ndjaka* of the whole village will have to take place. (Annotatio 7)[2]

765 The hlamba ndjaka concerns first of all the inhabitants of the
783 mortuary village, but it sometimes extends to the parents of the
595 women of that village, who dwell, of course, in other places. If the first wife of a man dies, his second wife, the one with whom the widower has begun the purifying operation at home, will have to go to her own parents *to give them water* (ku ha mati), as they say, viz. to cleanse them. She takes with her in a pot a portion of the

1 [See p. 676 in these categories or in 116--Analyst]
2 [See p. 677 in these categories or in 116--Analyst]

765 water used for the purification, arriving early in the morning in the
783 neighbourhood of the paternal kraal, and calls her mother. Then
595 she washes her hands on the spot and all her relatives will come and stamp on the ground. This is considered a great duty which a married daughter ought never to forget, otherwise she is said to have turned her back on her parents (a ba fularelile). They will be angry with her and not visit her for at least a year (Annotatio 8).[1] The woman who has done this is called "the one who has cleansed the inheritance" (muhlantsi wa ndjaka). She has taken upon her the contamination, but she will not suffer from it, because she belongs to another family, and the contamination of death is dangerous more especially to the people who are of the same blood as the deceased. This woman will assuredly be praised and even rewarded with two hoes. When she goes to her relatives "to give them water," she will make a present of these two hoes to her father, who will say: "All right! You have cleansed those people." Then she will have the right of adorning herself with the bracelets of her deceased co-wife! Old women no longer having sexual intercourse are allowed to appropriate the old clothing of a deceased woman.

765 The Ba-Ronga do not know the expression hlamba ndjaka.
783 They have a corresponding rite, performed in the same manner,
833 which they call *lahla khombo*. *Khombo* means misfortune, *lahla* to throw away. It is the medicine of death (muri wa lifu), said Magingi, an old heathen of Rikatla. It is also said "to heal the mourning" (daha nkosi). This rite more especially concerns the grave-diggers. The one who carried the legs of the deceased begins. The sexual relations take place very early in the morning. When his wife comes back, she washes her hands at the door of her hut, and all the inhabitants of the village come and stamp on the wet place; then they enter the hut. The doctor comes and prepares a steam bath for the man. Then the second grave-digger performs his *lahla khombo*, and the same gathering of all the members of the community takes place before his hut. Afterwards the village is pure. But if the grave-diggers are cleansed, the widows are not yet purified, and we shall see that, for them, the *lahla hkombo* will last much longer.

1 [See p. 517 In these categories or in 116 - Analyst]

595 lady of the hut. The first wife is certainly the most respected; she is called the "great one" (nsati lwe' nkulu); those who are taken in marriage afterwards being the "little wives." She is the true wife and acts as such in some old rites, those which accompany widowhood and the foundation of the village, as we shall see.

When speaking of divorce, we shall notice the principal causes of quarrel between married people and how they are dealt with.

As regards conjugal relations, I have explained them as fully as was possible to me in the paper already quoted (*Revue d'ethnologie et de sociologie*, Paris. Ernest Leroux, 1910, p. 143-151). This paper however being now very difficult to obtain, I am obliged to treat this subject here also, as it is of paramount importance. No one could pretend to know the life of an African tribe if he were ignorant of these facts. I do not give them to satisfy mere curiosity, but because they play an immense part in the social life of the Bantus and reveal to us some of their most characteristic physiological ideas.

833 It is generally asserted that Bantus, especially the men, have the sexual instinct very strongly developed. This is true to a certain extent. Polygamy has increased it enormously. In a royal kraal like that of Gungunyana, the excesses were awful. (See Annotatio 14). But even amongst monogamists the indulgence in sexual relations is sometimes very great. We often heard women pounding their mealies in the middle of the night in order to escape from the assiduities of their husbands. However this statement must not be exaggerated. Amongst Bantus as amongst other races there are great differences between individuals in this domain and I have already pointed to the fact that hundreds, and even thousands of young and grown up men can remain continent for months and years in the Institutions and the Compounds of South Africa.

The fact that heathens also submit themselves readily to the prohibition of sexual intercourse during more or less protracted periods for the welfare of the community shows that even in the primitive state Bantus are capable of exercising control over themselves in that domain.

1 [See p. 519 in these categories or in 116--Analyst]

843 754 to hinder the child from growing and to put in its place, by means of her enchantments, a snake, a hare, a quail or an antelope!

834 After the birth, owing to possible contamination by the lochia, sexual intercourse is prohibited till the rite of tying the cotton 846 string (p. 56) has taken place. It is then allowed, but conception [886] must be avoided till weaning, when relations are resumed in the normal way, and this goes on till the time when the woman is no longer able to bring forth children. I know of no special rules in connection with the menopause.

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831 But, amongst Bantus, sexual relations are not an individual affair, as amongst nations more advanced in evolution. There is a mysterious relation between them and the collective life of the community. Hence the fact that, on certain given occasions, they are recommended, even ordered, or prohibited.

1) Cases of recommendation.

833 Sexual relations must take place on two principal occasions : when 783 the inmates of a village abandon it and go elsewhere to found a new one, and when the widows perform the painful rite of "lahla khombo" 587 (to cast away misfortune). We shall see, when studying these customs, 829 that sexual relations have here a twofold signification : 1) they "consolidate" the little community in its new abode, viz. they strengthen its structure by confirming the authority of its chief ; 2) they provide the principal means of getting rid of all contamination, especially of the defilement connected with death. (Annotatio 13.)[1]

2) Cases of prohibition.

834 Married people are not considered as being in a state of defilement, as 784 mourners are, for example. Yet this class of persons, called "ba-ku- 581 khila," constitute a danger for those members of the community who 829 are in a weak state of health. They must not come in contact with the 753 circumcised, because in that case their wounds would not heal properly.

1 [See pp. 518-519 in these categories or in v6--Analyst]

587 393 428 768 live in the village, the family council will certainly object strongly to her wish, as her departure would mean that the village would cease to exist. But in the case of the younger widows it is quite possible that an exception to the ordinary law would be allowed if they insisted upon choosing another husband (1).

After all, this is but a preliminary consultation, and the men who are rejoicing at the idea of getting new wives will perhaps be badly deceived later on, as we shall see. However the man provisionally chosen as the future husband of a widow, will at once pay visits to her, "march to her" (ku mu fambela), according to the technical expression.

765 783 833 d) *The casting away of misfortune.* But before any new and happy life can begin for the widows, they have still to go through a very hard trial. They must perform the *lahla khombo*, the throwing away of the malediction of death, and this is much more difficult for them than for the grave-diggers or the other members of the village. The main point in this strange act of purification is this ; before a widow can become the wife of her new husband, she must have sexual intercourse with another man whom she deceives. Should she succeed in freeing herself from him so that the act keeps its ritual character, s. n. i. (see Annotatio 2), this man will take on himself the malediction of death, and she will be purified. On the contrary, should the man accomplish the whole act, the widow has failed and will return home with shame and in despair! Here is a description of this sad expedition of the widows. It takes place a few days after the gathering just described. The men of the village send the widows away, telling them : "Go and scatter (hangalasa) the malediction through the country and get rid of it before some other misfortune happens to us."

(1) What would happen should the widow choose a husband outside her husband's family? To the mind of a heathen woman the idea would never occur. But suppose a Christian widow, having only married sisters, refuses to become their wife, her conscience forbidding her to contract a polygamic union. Her case would be very hard indeed, as I do not think her wish would be taken into consideration by heathen relatives. It would have to be brought before the White magistrate, who would probably try to help the widow. I think that, even if the woman consented to submit such family matters to the European court, she would have to give the *lobola* or her children back to her brothers-in-law, and that might be an impossibility for her. It would be interesting to know how Native Commissioners proceed in such cases.

2 [See p. 516 in these categories as in 18K -- Analysed]

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

765 783 833 With their conical baskets on their heads they all go, each accompanied by a friend who will act as witness. They pay a visit to some distant relative and try to flirt with the men of the village. Their aim is clearly understood ; morals are so dissolute that it is not difficult for them to attain their desire. (But the purifying act is useless unless interrupted abruptly before its completion). If the widow succeeds, she is full of joy, and comes back saying : "I have coped with the mourning, I have overcome it." Should she not succeed, she has then been "overcome by the mourning." This is a serious condition; which can only be dealt with by special medicines. The man who has unconsciously purified a widow and who becomes aware of it, will also have recourse to the *ñanga* to get rid of the pollution of death (1). The widows endeavour to come back all together ; they stand by the main entrance of the village and announce their success with the *mikulungwana* shouts, which mean at the same time joy and sorrow. Everyone meets them there, and they form a procession to the grave to tell the deceased what has happened : "You have left us in the open field ; we have had to go through a painful trial ; it would not have been so if you had not left us!" But, after all, this is a day of rejoicing, and the men, the heirs to the widows, are particularly pleased. The same day the widows put on a new undergarment and complete their purification by another steam bath.

At this time the mourning is said *to have ripened* (wupfile). The widow's hair has grown again. What remains is to *kill the mourning* (dlaya nkosi). This is done by the man who "marches to" or visits the widow. In the evening, he is allowed into her hut : they make a fire in it, put into the fire two pills of a purifying medicine, and expose their limbs to the smoke. Then they put it out with their own water, after which they can have sexual relations without harm. A certain time must, however, elapse before the adjudication of the inheritance takes place.

(1) He may also avoid the danger of being killed by the contamination of death in the following manner : Supposing that the woman who tries to seduce him is a widow, he tears off a little piece of her most intimate undergarment before the act. Later on he asks a ñanga to prepare a medicine into which this bit of clothing will be introduced. Then he covers himself with a blanket, burns the medicinal pill on a live charcoal and inhales the smoke. He is safe, and the woman also has been cleansed.

124 The description I have given of the *lahla khombo*, translating
178 exactly the narratives of Mbozá, Elias, and an old widower called
164 Magingi, refers to the rite as it was performed in the normal
783 fashion some twenty years ago amongst the Ba-Ronga. Now
765 customs are changing. There is, all around the town of Lourenço Marques, an agglomeration of Natives coming from many tribes. Immorality there has become terrible owing especially to alcoholic excesses, a free and enormous sale of adulterated wine taking place in this region. The widows are sure to find there a hundred men for each of them, when they wish to cast away their defilement. But in this promiscuity the poison of syphilis makes terrible ravages. According to our medical missionary, 90 % of the
783 Natives are contaminated by this disease. When the men up
765 country saw that their wives came back ritually purified but
178 physically contaminated, they began themselves to accomplish the necessary act. This has become the general custom to such an
833 extent that, when a widow goes to Majlangalen, (such is the name of that hell of drunkenness and immorality), it is now said of her : "She will refuse to stay with her legal heirs!" However the law of the *lahla khombo nhoben*, to cast away the malediction in the bush, remains inexorable in the three cases where the defilement is considered as being of the worst kind : if the
[845] husband died of phthisis or of leprosy, or if the woman has had twins.

Old widows who can find no lovers may be purified by means of drugs.

765 e) *The year of widowhood*. Though the widows have found
587 new husbands, they still remain in the old kraal. They must accomplish there "a full hoe," viz. a whole year of ploughing. In their new fields they leave the dry sticks of the mealies of the year before, in such a way that everybody passing by will know at once that this is the field of a widow. But what they harvest this year will belong to the new husband. They have now the right to *fambelana*, viz. to go to each other. The suitor brings clothing to the woman, and the woman pays him visits with jars of beer. They belong more or less to each other. But the marriage of the inherited woman is not absolutely settled. Her

621 396 nature of that social unit, the Thonga *muti*. I shall give the sequence of these rites first in the Northern clans, according to the description of Viguet, and secondly amongst the Ba-Ronga, according to Mboza.

I. *In the Northern clans.*

621 787 1) The headman goes first to examine some spots where he would like to build. He *breaks small twigs* from various trees and brings them home.

784 833 2) The bones are consulted and help in *making a choice*. The twigs are placed on a mat one after the other. When the stone of the *kanye* (see Part VI) falls in a certain way in front of one of the twigs, this shows that the tree from which it has been broken is the one near which the hut of the headman must be built.

3) Building material is collected. When everything is ready to proceed to the construction of the huts, the headman goes with his principal wife to the spot chosen. They leave the old village for ever ; they must not return to it any more. In the evening they have *sexual relations* in the new place and in the morning they tie together some tufts of living grass. Next day all the people of the old village must come and step upon this grass. This rite is called to *tie the village* (boha muti).

621 595 784 834 4) Then begins the period, of about one month, called *buhlapfa*, time of moving, which has its laws. Two great taboos dominate it : 1) Sexual relations are absolutely prohibited. Should any one transgress this law, he has sinned gravely against the headman ; he has stolen the village (yiba muti). The headman will be ill, perhaps paralysed. The guilty woman will also be punished : she will not be able to bear children again ; she will be "tied by the village" (bohiwa hi muti). The culprits have "crossed the way of the master of the village" (tjemakanya). Strange to say, the headman himself is bound by this law. He must have no relations *with his younger wives*, because the village belongs to the principal spouse. Should such a transgression be discovered, the work

621 824 765 troublesome and he should wish to remove them, he must ask some one else to do it. On the day of his death, or rather when his hut is crushed down, a branch of that tree will be put on the place where the threshhold was, and another used to close the main entrance of the village, a new entrance being then made through the fence and used as the gate during the rest of the mourning period.

621 833 3) He has sexual relations on the new spot on the first night with his principal wife ; in this way he will *fuya muri*, viz. "possess this tree," and also *fuya muti*, "possess the village." The Ronga *fuya* corresponds here also to the *boha* of the Northern clans (Compare boha puri and fuya ñwana, page 57). If someone precedes him in sexual intercourse, he is guilty ; he has "preceded the village" (rangela muti). By this act the headman has definitely left the old village. The others can go back to it to fetch what remains ; for him it is taboo.

621 831 834 342 4) The same day, all the inhabitants come and move all the roofs, if it is possible to do this in one day. One hut is rapidly built to afford shelter to the inhabitants, in case of rain. The first roof to be transported is that of the hut of the principal wife. This is also done to the accompaniment of obscene songs. These songs are not allowed when only one hut is transported, which may happen when some one goes to live in another village.

It is definitely a custom which goes with the moving of a whole village.

5) The following day two huts are erected, one for the men, the other for the women, because they must not sleep together. "They are still in the bush ; it is buhlapfa ; the village is not yet firm." Those who break this law cause injury to the headman. The bones will soon reveal that "he has been preceded as regards the village ; (a rangeliwile muti)." All the huts are smeared twice ; the women begin to sleep in them, but not the men. The fence and the main entrance must first be prepared.

621 789 6) The *main entrance* (mharana). The men pull up the grass all the way from the back hut to the place where the main entrance must be, so as to make a road all through the village. All the dried plants weeded out during this operation are carefully

621 789 824 gathered in a heap. The headman, on the advice of the medicine man, cuts from certain very vigorous trees such as the nkanye and the ntjondjo, two branches which can live when transplanted. He digs holes on both sides of the entrance and puts the branches into them. Across the gateway, he buries a third branch of the ntjopfa tree, "which causes oblivion" (p. 58): this will be smeared with special drugs in order to increase its efficacy ; it is intended to prevent the baloyi, witches and people speaking bad words. (lit "with bad lips"), from thinking about the village and spoiling it.

621 833 789 7) On the evening of that day, the headman and his principal wife have intercourse in their hut and, at dawn, while it is still dark, they go and wash their hands at the main entrance. Mboza does not say that all the other couples must do the same, or trample on the spot. In Nondwane this is sufficient and the rite does not apply to the other couples. But at Manyisa, midway between Lourenço Marques and Khosen, where the Djonga customs are sometimes met with, all the couples must have relations, one after the other, according to order of precedence. It is deemed so important to keep the due order in this "giving to each other the right of resuming sexual life" that, should an elder brother have been absent when the village moved, on his return he must undergo a special treatment in a neighbouring village, during a few days, to avoid any bad consequences resulting from having been unlawfully "preceded" (rangeliwa).

621 789 782 756 8) After the night during which this sexual rite has taken place, at daybreak, all the dried grass is piled in front of the main hut and burnt ritually. The headman throws into the fire a special medicinal pill in order to *give the village over* to his people (nyiketa muti). They all warm their bodies at the blaze, and go and set fire to all the other heaps of dried grass which they made when clearing the soil.

9) The medicine man comes on that same day, and sprinkles the fence with his drugs, in order to protect the village against bush fires, wizards and disease. He walks all round the fence saying : "Happy village! May misfortune not enter here! These are my drugs!" — He starts from one of the poles of the main

621 1) *Social rites.* The muti, as we have seen, is a little organised
596 community having its own laws, amongst which the most important
833 seems to be the law of hierarchy. The elder brother is the undisputed
768 master and no one can supersede him. He is the owner of the village. No one must "steal it" from him. Should any one do so, the whole community would suffer and no children would be born ; the life of the organism would be deeply affected. That is the reason why the headman must go first with his principal wife to have relations with her in the new village, and thus *take possession* of it or *tie* it. For this same reason, when the headman dies, the village *must* move. It is taboo to remain in it. Until the inheritance has been distributed, it is still *his home* (kwa kwe) ; but as soon as this ceremony has taken place, the villagers must go away, and close the door with a thorny branch. The part played by the
621 principal wife in all these ceremonies is most remarkable. It is
595 absolutely imperative that the headman should "tie the village" with her,
562 and not with another of his spouses. Should she be very old, the law
768 must be observed all the same ; should she be ill, and unable to have sexual
764 relations, the village simply cannot be moved. In the Northern clans we see her taking the shield and the assagai, closing the village and "giving it" to the inmates, even performing a sacrifice and praying to the gods. It is very rare to see a woman presiding at a public religious ceremony ; but she is the owner of the village as well as the headman. Moving is imperative when she dies as well as after the death of the headman. The main gate must also be closed and a new entrance made in the fence to be used during the year of mourning ; in the case of her death, this opening must be made on the left of the regular *mharana*, whilst, when the husband dies, it is made on the right side ; just as in the hut, when the corpse is removed for burial. (See page 138.)

351 2) *Protective rites.* These are those which concern the fence. This
789 fence does not afford material protection. The branches dry up very
621 soon and, in the case of a bush-fire, for instance, they would do more harm than good. It is a spiritual protection, a barrier of charms, of magic influences, to prevent the entrance of wizards and of all the hostile powers of the bush. We shall understand this better when treating of witchcraft superstitions. (Part VI.)

182 3) *Passage rites.* The reader will have been surprised to observe
621 amongst the ceremonies of the moving of villages, many features which we have already met with in the circumcision school, or in the
829 mourning customs. At first sight there seems to be no relation whatever between the moving of a village, the initiation of boys and the

796 gait, brandishing sticks with pieces of red cloth attached as
273 pennants. They are in search of full barrels! It must be said
786 that the inebriety produced by the bukanye is of a rather mild type, as this Native beer contains very little alcohol ; but the quantity absorbed is so enormous that it ends by going to their heads : this is more especially so with the bukanye brewed from a species of nkanye called *nunge*, which appears to be stronger and more intoxicating.

796 How far does sexual licence go during the bukanye ? Not to
273 the point of general promiscuity, as amongst the Ba-Pedi after the circumcision school. However many cases of adultery occur.
833 Men and women forget the elementary rules of condvet. They
786 attend to the wants of nature in the same places, which is taboo under ordinary circumstances : "Nau a wa ha tiyi,"—"the law is no longer in force."

796 Still, in the midst of all this carnival, the payment of the tax
273 must not be forgotten... This is the time to carry to the chief
643 the liquor which is flowing so freely on all sides, but of which he claims the lion's share. Each petty chief sends his people
651 to the capital with brimming jars. This is termed "lumisa hosi," supplying the chief with new wine. The women do not enter the capital at once, but go to one of the counsellors, who promptly abstracts a couple of jars for his own use. The chief returns one or two jars to the carriers, as they have come a long way and are doubtless thirsty ; the remainder will be kept to refresh the very numerous guests at the Court ; any coming from afar will spend the night and not return until the next day. I have seen a company of these women carrying baskets
539 full of makanye to Muzila. How graceful was the Indian file winding its way along the path and singing, amongst others, the following chorus : (See for further particulars *Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, page 46.)

Chwe! Chwe! Hi laba shimungu — Leshi ka — Le tilwen!
Chwe! Chwe! Shimungu hi mani? — Hi Mzila! — Hi Mzila!
Hi! Hi! We seek the hawk! — Who soars — In the sky!
Hi! Hi! Who is the hawk? — It is Mzila! — It is Mzila!

Latin Notes for Medical Men and Ethnographers

291 "Annotatio prima (P. 40).--'Shifado' quo quisque Thonga
845 extremum penem vestit, spheroides excavataque res est;
848 quod tegimentum ex iis, quae ad pudorem et munditiem perti-
881 nent, postulatur. Si quis schifado suum amisit, ei dedecoriest."

Note 1 (page 40). Shifado, with which every Thonga covers the end of his penis, is a spherical and hollowed-out object; this covering is demanded from those who are concerned with decency and cleanliness. If anyone has lost his schifado [sic] he is disgraced.

"Olim apud Thonga, qui a populo Zulo illum morem acceperunt, viri, quod linguà 'mbayi' id est fistulam quandam ex foliis textis palmae quae 'milala' dicitur, ferre solebant.

[At one time among the Thonga, who took over this custom from the Zulu people, the men used to wear what in their language is called mbayi, that is, some kind of tube made of palm leaves woven together which is called milala.]

"Ultima 'mbayi' anno 1895 vel 1896 post Christum natum visa sunt. Quod shifado ex parvae cucurbitae cortice aut duro et excavato accurateque polito ligno factum, summo veretro affixum, minime incommode ferre videntur."

[The last mbayi were seen in the year 1895 or 1896. Because the shifado is made of the rind of a small gourd or of hard, hollowed-out and carefully polished wood, and attached at the top of the private parts, it seems that it can be worn with the minimum of discomfort.]

833 "Annotatio secunda (P. 56). S. n. i, sc. semine non im-
851 misso. Ad hoc, marito sperma foras spargendum est (a nga
842 mu weleri): hic est coitus rite factus et quasi lustralis. Inde,
765 uxor in manus utriusque sordes (thyaka ra bona) sumit, qui-
783 bus umbilicum illinit."

[Note 2 (page 56). S. n. i., that is, the semen has not been injected. Moreover the husband must eject his sperms outside of the body (a nga mu weleri): this is the coitus properly executed and, as it were, lustral. Then the wife takes in her hands the filth of both (thyaka ra bona) and smears the navel with it.]

"Annotatio tertia (P. 57). Corpus infimum pueri ex adverso et a tergo peni pater tangit.

[Note 3 (page 57). The father touches with his penis the lowest part of the boy's body from the front and from behind.]

831 "Annotatio quarta (P. 88). Hae sunt formulae:
881 Shana khololwane ma ri tiba le'ri onhaka milebe?
Novistisne avem quae labra minora laedit?

832 Sometimes the girls measure their labia with small sticks
836 and boast of their length to their companions and even to their
304 bridegrooms. The girls follow these perverse practices for
881 no other reason than for the sake of their future husband.
171 Among the Ba-Pedi the husband may, if he thinks that his bride has not sufficiently stretched her labia, send her home and demand his bulls back. The girls keep a pot full of food ready and cover it with a lid. In the evening the boys come to the girls and give them a small gift in order to be admitted. In the house they sit down on the floor and watch the girls eating from a pot with their fingers. The girls whose milebe are four digits long eat using four fingers: they are bakulu, that is, adult, and they enjoy their lovers. Or they use only three fingers and sometimes two. The young girls eat with the palms of their hands.]

765 "Annotatio sexta (P. 154). Seu quis per ætatem iam pro-
783 vectam imbecillior factus erit, sive qualibet de causa tam
833 impotens ut sperma emittere non possit (a nga kumi mati), ceteri viri quid fiat sciscitabuntur. Quod si utique parum procedit, tota inhibetur cærimonia. Qui vero se invicem eodem ritu miscere debebant, iis ritum conficere non fas est. Ille jejunio, per quinque dies, prout res postulat, artissime utetur, cui medicinæ ad rem accommodatæ exquirentur.

[Note 6 (page 154). If someone should have become feeble because of advanced age, or if for some reason he should be so impotent that he cannot emit sperms (a nga kumi mati), other men ask what should be done. For if it proceeds quite insufficiently, the whole ceremony is held up. And those who should have had intercourse in turn in the same ritual fashion are not permitted to complete the rite. He [the impotent man] has to fast very strictly for five days as the situation requires and the remedies appropriate to the situation will be sought.]

843 "Annotatio septima (P. 154). Nocens maritus uxorque sui
834 purgandi causà alium ritum peragent. Uxor mariti suaque
841 pudenda veste intima et inquinatissima tergebit, quam postea comburet.

Ambo, ad ignem accedentes, caput manusque calefacient. Inde cinerem collectum mulier adipe miscet, quo mariti artus illinit, digitis bracchiis cruribusque tractis, quod 'lula' dicitur. Postea, noctibus duabus sequentibus, coibunt. Si maritus, non cum uxore sua, sed cum puella quadam ex alio vico, stupri consuetudinem junxerit, huic fossorium donabitur, ut ritum 'lula' perfectum veniat.

[Note 7 (page 154). If the husband and the wife are guilty of an offense, they perform another rite for the sake of purging themselves. The wife will cover her husband's and

843 her own pudenda with a much befouled intimate garment which
834 she afterwards burns.
841 Going to the fire they both warm their head and their hands. Then the woman mixes the ashes she has collected with fat and smears it over her husband's limbs, rubbing along his fingers, his arms, and his legs, which is called lula. Afterwards, in the two nights following, they will have intercourse. If the husband has had sexual intercourse not with his wife but with some girl from another village from lustful desire he will be given a fossorium so that the rite lula will come to its completion.]

765 "Annotatio octava (P. 155). Si mulieris parentes procul
783 habitant, maritus eius comes itineris erit, quacum superiore
833 nocte coibit, ad aquæ lustrali vim novam dandam."
595 [Note 8 (page 155). If the woman's parents live far away, her husband will be her companion on the way and he will have sexual intercourse with her the night before in order to give the lustral water new power.]

765 "Annotatio nona (P. 160). Faciebat dum 'Khunye khunye;
535 quibus verbis significatur coitus (khunyeta)."
831 [Note 9 (page 160). She was saying Khunye, khunye during
834 this time; these words signify coitus (khunyeta).

"Annotatio decima (P. 160). Carminum, morum temporis marginalis natura eo obscenior est quo nobilior defunctus fuit. Viguetus narrat: [518] 'Duce vel uno ex principibus mortuo, luctuque consueto præterito, luctum privatum, ad quem boves immolentur, celebrari. Carnem ad baculos humi fixos alligari; homines inde mulierem vocare, eamque posteriorem vestem exuere juberi, neque ullam vestem nisi anteriorem habere quam, si velit, exuere ei liceat. Eam, postea, divaricaturam esse ad unam ex carnis particulis dentibus apprehendendam ita prominentem ut omnes viri eius pudenda videant, quod plerumque 'taboo' (id est nefas) sit.'"

[Note 10 (page 160). The nature of the songs, a custom of the marginal period, is the more obscene the greater the nobility of the deceased person was. Viguet relates: [518] "When the leader or one of the chiefs is dead and the usual mourning has passed, they stage a private mourning at which bulls are sacrificed. They tie the flesh to poles fixed in the ground; then the men call a woman and order her to take off the clothes on her back and they do not allow her to have any clothes on except the one in front which, if she wants to, she may also take off. Then she must seize one of the bits of meat with her teeth, bending forward in such a

765 "Annotatio tertia decima (P. 213). Cærimoniis purification-
783 is, ubi res genitales primas obtinent partes, ita explicatis,
833 quaeramus quid significent ritus illi.
587 Mors est res quæ imprimis homines contaminat. Omnia polluit quae tangit, non homines tantum ipsos sed etiam quæ mortui fuerunt.

Apud homines, propinqui mors vitæ fontes imprimis afficit, id est membrorum succos qui vitam creant. Itaque et mulieris succi vaginales et viri succi spermatici tollendi sunt: in coitu autem, sub legibus certis sunt tollendi.

Cum vidua lustratur, aut a peregrino aut a novo marito purificatur.

1) Ut recta viduæ purificatio fiat, abrumpendus est coitus, et vir, antequam semen emittat, repellendus; vir erit tum contaminatus at mulier purgata. Vir si in coitu feminam eludentem animadverterit, eam viduam esse et ipsum occidere velle intelleget, tum comites vocat qui, mulierem apprehendentes, dum vir in sinum ejus semen emiterit, vi continebunt; mulier tum polluta manebit; quod querebat, non habebit. Vir contra erit sine damno: contaminatus non erit. [519]

2) Cum purificatio a novo efficitur marito, tum ambo in casam se includunt. Res agitur permagna: tabacum ne hauriant! Medicamenta potant singularia. Tum toties cœunt deinceps quoties vir ferre valet, decies et sæpius si potest. Sed toties vir semen extrinsecus emittit: 'bayisanyana ba fanela ku huma, i.e. amovendi sunt pueri (spermatozoa),' ut dicit unus ex eis qui me de his rebus certiorem fecerunt. Nunc sunt fontes vitæ apud virum purgati, quod fieri necesse erat, cum esset et ipse contaminatione impurus. Mulier quoque pura est, haud dubie medicamentorum beneficio quæ, antequam coirent, potaverunt ambo.

Quæ interpretatio ritum recte explicat cum ab impuris hominibus perpetratur. Sed cum a puris parentibus perpetratur, ut de 'boha puri' agitur (p. 56), tum res alio modo est explananda. Pater et mater cingulum infantis e lino xylino factum genitalibus succis inlinunt, ut infans eorum vitalibus succis corroboretur et in vitam gentis ita recipiatur.

These physiological conceptions, though they may be absolutely false from the scientific point of view, certainly proceed from deep intuitions regarding the mystery of life. I insist on the fact that they are not derived from religious ideas. It is a mistake to attempt to explain the whole life of the Bantus by their religion alone, as many writers are inclined to do. These sexual practices are not more religious than those prophylactic measures which we ourselves employ to preserve ourselves from tuberculosis or small pox. They

765 are dictated by a special notion of contagion which is admittedly
723 false, scientifically speaking."
833 [Note 13 (page 213). After we have thus explained the cere-
587 monies of purification in which genital matters play the primary role, we shall inquire into the significance of these rites.

Death is something that contaminates men above all. It pollutes everything that it touches, not men themselves only, but also the things that belonged to a dead person.

Among men, the death of a relative affects first of all the sources of life, that is to say, the juices of the limbs that create life. Therefore both the vaginal juices of a woman and the man's spermatic fluid must be removed: in coitus, however, they must be removed according to certain rules:

When a widow purifies herself, she is purified by a stranger or by a new husband.

1) In order that the purification of the widow proceeds correctly, the intercourse must be broken off and the man must be pushed back before he ejaculates his semen; then the man will be contaminated and the woman will be purged. If the man notices that the woman is trying to evade him during coitus he realizes that she is a widow and that she wants him to perish. Immediately he calls his companions who, seizing the woman, will hold her by force while the man ejects his semen into her vagina; in that case the woman will remain polluted and what she wanted she will not have. The man, on the other hand, will be without blame: he will not be contaminated. [519]

2) When the purification is effected by the new husband, then both seclude themselves in the house. One matter is urged particularly strongly: that they do not smoke any tobacco! They drink curious medicines. Then they have intercourse as many times in a row as the man can last, ten times and more if he is able. But as many times as they have intercourse the man ejaculates his semen externally: bayisanyana ba fanela ku huma, that is, "the children (spermatozoa) must be removed," as one of those who informed me about these things said. Now the sources of life of the man are purged, something which had to be done while he was impure with contamination. The woman is also pure, doubtless on account of the medicines which they drank together before they had sexual intercourse.

This interpretation explains the rite correctly, provided it is carried out by impure men. But when it is executed by pure parents, as when it is concerned with the boha puri (page 56), then the matter must be explained in a different

765 fashion. The father and mother smear the infant's girdle
783 made of cotton flax with their genital juices so that the infant
833 becomes invigorated by their vital juices and thus may be
587 received into the life of the tribe.

These physiological conceptions, though they may be absolutely false from the scientific point of view, certainly proceed from deep intuitions regarding the mystery of life. I insist on the fact that they are not derived from religious ideas. It is a mistake to attempt to explain the whole life of the Bantus by their religion alone, as many writers are inclined to do. These sexual practices are not more religious than those prophylactic measures which we ourselves employ to preserve ourselves from tuberculosis or small pox. They are dictated by a special notion of contagion which is admittedly false, scientifically speaking.]

595 "Annotatio quarta decima (P. 285). Doctori G. Liengmei,
833 nostro medico, cum sæpe curaret viros qui medicinam
842 petebant qua infantes procrearent, fassi sunt se singulis noctibus cum tribus vel quatuor uxoribus coire. (A monogamis quibusdam audivimus uxorem adeo fatigari ut noctu exiret laboratum ut a marito evaderet.) Cum medicus eos hortaretur ut quinque dies concubitu omnino abstinerent, nunquam id concedere potuerunt. Volebant enim facultatem generandi recuperare libidine non omissa. Dicuntur etiam cum vires cupiditatibus nondum pares esse videantur, remedia quædam adhibere sive ut venerem excitent sive ut uxores prægnantes fiant. Duplex fit medicatio. Primum secti testiculi hirci—(quod animal fatigari negatur, mbuti a yi karali)—cum plurimis herbis mixti coquuntur et a viro eduntur. Deinde alias herbas collectas in cerevisiam injicit. Tantum aiunt esse effectum ut viro qui non amplius duas uxores habeat, non sit ea re [520] utendum, ne, illis non sufficientibus, cum aliorum uxoribus stuprum committat, quod ei sit offensioni.

Viri casti, ut in loco Mpfumo videre licet, in sua casa dormiunt et interdum uxorem quam cupiunt ad se vocant. Plerique tamen, lege sibi imposita, ne discordia inter uxores erumpat, mensem unum in casa singularum uxorum vicissim agunt.

Qui plures habent uxores aliis etiam medicaments utuntur ad libidinem excitandam. Quorum unum putant ad effectum maxime valere: Medicus, cum se ipse curavit, in locum montium secedit, quo cynocephali feminæ urinam menstruali sanguine mixtam emittere solent. Quod manet in saxis et fœdissimam diffundit odorem, medicus excipiens coquit, et ex eo magnas conficit pillas quas emptoribus vendit. Hi eas-

595 in cerevisiam injiciunt.
833 Quod medicamentum ad gravia vulnera curanda quoque
842 conferunt, et liberis praebent cum caput ut cynocephali jactant."

[Note 14 (page 285). Doctor G. Liengmei, our physician, often took care of men who asked for medicine that would produce children. They confessed to him that they often slept with three or four wives in one single night. (From some monogamous men we heard that a wife would get so tired that she would go out at night to work just to escape from her husband.) When the doctor told them to abstain altogether from intercourse for five days they were never able to agree to that. For they wanted to regain their generative faculty without giving up their lust. They are said to employ certain remedies even when their powers no longer appear equal to their desires, either in order to excite their sexual desire or to make their wives pregnant. There is a two-fold remedy. First, a man cuts the testicles off a goat--(this animal does not tire, it is asserted, mbuti a yi karali)--and boils them mixed with numerous herbs; then he eats them. Next he collects other herbs and puts them into his beer. They claim that this has such an effect that the man who has no more than two wives should not use this remedy [520] lest, because his own would not be enough for him, he should commit fornication with the wives of others, which would be a grave offense on his part.

595 Virtuous men such as one can find in the village of Mpfumo sleep in their own houses and call for the wife whom they desire. Most of them have imposed upon themselves the law not to let any discord break out among their wives: therefore they spend one month in turn in the house of a particular wife.

595 Those who have several wives use still other remedies to
756 excite their sexual desire. Of these remedies they believe
833 one to be particularly effective: The medicine man, after
278 he has rested, retreats into the hills where the female baboons are wont to emit their urine mixed with the menstrual blood. That which remains on the rocks and which gives off an abominable smell the medicine man takes up and boils; from this he makes large pills that he sells to all buyers. The latter put them into their beer.

They also use this remedy to cure grave wounds, and they give it to their children when they shake their heads like baboons.]

000 Annotatio quinta decima (P. 477). Veretro fabricatur pulvis, cuius effectus mirabilis est. Qui, bellatorum carpis

II. *The sexual and language taboos of the sungi.*

881 The whole sungi is taboo to every uninitiated person and
831 especially to women. A woman who has seen the " shondlo ",
834 viz. the leaves which the circumcised put over their wound,
784 and which form their only clothing, must be killed. But taboos abound for everybody. The sexual taboos are most noteworthy. Sexual intercourse is strictly prohibited to all inmates, men as well as shepherds ; breaking this law would kill the circumcised. Therefore the men must not go home, or at least as seldom as possible, during these three months. Married people in the village may have sexual relations ; but there must be no noise, no quarrels between jealous co-wives ; because, if they insult each other and if this is known in the sungi, the shepherds will come one evening and plunder that village. Strange to say, in the meantime obscene language is permitted and even recommended— a contrast which we shall often meet with during the marginal periods. Some of the formulae contain expressions which are taboo at other times ; when the women bring the food to the sungi, the shepherds who receive it from their hands are allowed to address them with as many unchaste words as they like. The mothers themselves have the right of singing obscene songs when they pound the mealies for the sungi.

192 As regards language, there are also special expressions used
881 during the school which are either archaic or foreign ; for instance, all orders are given in a tongue which is neither Thonga nor Sutho: Tshai goma, Go to the table ; Thari, Eat [illegible]i, Smear with white clay, etc. Often actions are not de[illegible] by the ordinary word, but by unusual terms. For instance, the daily smearing of the bodies with clay is called : " to eat sheep's fat. " To put on the leaves of the shondlo is " to eat sheep's flesh. " To be beaten with the mbuti sticks is " to drink goat's milk. " Evidently the aim of this terminology is to increase the impression of mystery which the rites must convey to the uninitiated.

866 As regards the rites of the marginal period, they are calculated
881 to give the candidates the impression that they are new men,

888 In time of war, old people die in great numbers. During moments of panic, they are hidden in the wood, in the palm-tree swamps, while all the able-bodied population run away. They are killed by the enemy, who spares no one (it is the law of war), or they die in their hiding-places of misery and hunger!

As may be seen, the eve of life is very sad for the poor Thonga. There are however children who, to the end, show much devotion to their parents. The most to be pitied are those who fall to the charge of remote nephews or cousins. They can only repeat in a broken voice the sad refrain : " Ba hi shanisa! " — " They treat us very badly! "

G. DEATH

1. *The last days.*

763 Manyibane, the headman of a big village near Rikatla, is
513 dangerously ill. The men of his kraal, his friends, have come
834 to inquire about the illness (kamba shinyonga) and have learned
761 that it is serious. They issue this order to all the inhabitants : " Thulan psilawen! " — " Keep each of you in his sleeping place, (viz. the men to the right of the hut, the women to the left) and have no more relations. It is taboo! The man would die! " Should visitors come, they are not allowed to enter the village. They must have kept " pure " for two days at least. Two sticks are planted on either side of the door of the hut, and a third is put over them so as to close the entrance. " It is the way black people have of making their proclamation, " says Mboza. " Everybody will know that a dying man is there and nobody will come in. " Should another man of the village have had relations with the same woman as the patient, he is doubly prohibited from seeing him, because the patient would break out into perspiration and die immediately. This is the great law of *matlulana*, as we shall see.

754 Of course the *ñanga* (doctor) has been called already. He

765 inner circle and will undergo a very rigorous purification ; the grave
783 diggers come next ; then the inhabitants of the bereaved village, the
761 relations residing in other villages, even the relatives of the wives of the
834 deceased. All these being unclean are placed beyond the pale of
839 society : "Muti wu tjumile," "the village is dark," is the technical expression. This marginal period lasts longer for those who are most affected ; one year and more for the widows, one month for the village, five or six days only for the mourners from outside. But there are many taboos in connexion with this period. Sexual relations are severely prohibited amongst married people, but the *gangisa* is not so strongly objected to, at any rate in some districts. We shall also meet with the aggregation rites by which re-entry into the ordinary mode of life is secured. The funeral rites may last for one year and are very complex. There are three great moments in the sequence of these rites : 1) *The Great Mourning* which lasts a few days, just after the burial, generally only five days. Here the purification is essentially medical and aims at cleansing the persons and the objects which were directly in contact with the deceased. 2) *The sexual rites* which tend to purify the collective life of the village by the removal of its defilement. 3) *The family rites*, consisting in gatherings of all the relatives, and accompanied by religious ceremonies. These seem to aim at restoring the life of the family, viz. of the social group, which has been diminished by the death of one of its members.

768 This general sequence is found in all the clans. But the rites themselves differ greatly ; I shall try to depict these differences clearly. My information is more complete as regards the Ronga clans, but I owe to Viguet some entirely new and very interesting material regarding the Hlabi rites.

IV. *The Great Mourning of the first five days.*

1) The Great Mourning amongst the Ba-Ronga.

764 Just after the burial, all the inhabitants of the village go to
783 the lake or the river to bathe. The grave-diggers nibble a
[824] *ndjao*, the root of a juncus which has magical power. Special rites will then be performed for the widows. We shall describe

765 anointed with the medicine. As regards adults, the operation of
783 *maganyo* is performed as follows ; the master of the mourning
516 passes his hand down from the knee to the toes. This rite[1] is evidently in connexion with the act of walking, which is thus purified, and with standing upright (yima), which means health and strength.

765 *Cutting the hair* is also a medicinal act amongst the Hlabis.
783 The physician takes a broken pot, pours into it water and a
302 purifying powder, washes the head of the deceased's wife with this preparation and cuts her hair with a razor. Everyone takes a little of the mixture and washes his own head, and they then shave each other. The hair is thrown away into the bush, not on the grave.

765 The Great Mourning is concluded by the *phunga*, the sprinkling,
783 corresponding to the Ronga *shuba*, which is performed exactly in
177 the same way while the water is still boiling. The doctor sprinkles
231 a whole potful on the people ; then he pours fresh water into the pot and sprinkles the doors, the back part of the kraals of the oxen and of the goats. —"How about the pigs ?" I asked Viguet. He laughed heartily! —"The pigs? They are nothing ! They have come from the White people They are so new to the country that lately the Pedis killed them outside the villages and the men only ate their flesh!" The pig has no part in the Bantu ritual!

V. *Sexual rites of purification.*

765 This is a most curious and mysterious subject and, to understand
783 it thoroughly, it is necessary to penetrate deeply into the Bantu mind and to forget our own conceptions of conjugal life. I hope
834 none of my readers will be shocked by ceremonies which are evidently performed with the greatest earnestness and are a real aspiration toward purity, purity as it is conceived by a tribe still plunged in the dim notions of collective morality.

1 [among the Northern clans --Analyst]

765 These rites are somewhat different in the Hlabi and Ronga clans.
783 They are called in the Northern clans *hlamba ndjaka*, in the
834 Southern *lahla khombo*. I will begin with the description of the first, as being the most characteristic. Viguet, who has seen them practised, and who took part in them himself, gave me a graphic description of them.

Ndjaka means two things. Firstly, the objects left by the deceased, which will pass to his heirs in the course of time. The heirs are called *badyi ba ndjaka*, the eaters of the ndjaka. But *ndjaka* also signifies the frightful malediction accompanying death: "it is something which kills a great many men." Therefore the *ndjaka* must be washed away; *hlamba* means precisely to wash away.

This malediction or dangerous impurity contaminates objects, which must be cleansed by the sprinkling (phunga) as we have seen; but it affects still more deeply the village as a whole, the *muti*, the organism which is at the base of all Thonga society, and which has a life of its own, a collective life. That life must be purified. During the whole mourning, and even during the last days of the deceased, when death was threatening, all sexual relations have been forbidden. Why? Because the village was in a state of contamination... "Muti wu tjumile." It cannot return to the ordinary course of life without a special collective purification.

765 Let us see how this is managed on a particularly serious occasion,
783 when the headman or other great personage dies. Some weeks
835 after the burial, all the married people of the village assemble, the men apart, the women apart. They discuss in what order the different couples must proceed to the purifying act. They question each other to know if each one has duly observed the law of continence. Should one of them confess that he has sinned (dyoha), he will have to take the lead. Should he have sinned and not confess it, he will be very guilty. But he himself will suffer for his bad action; he has stolen the inheritance (a yibe ndjaka), and it will not be wonderful if he begins to cough, grows thin and dies of consumption! If there has been no transgression of the law, then the master of the mourning will have to begin. He goes out of the village with his wife

765 783 834 A man who transgresses the law of continence before the lahla khombo is said in Ronga to have "crossed the village" (a tjemakanya muti). He has taken the mourning (nkosi), the misfortune (khombo) upon himself. He will have sores all over his body and will begin to cough (consumption).

Amongst the Rongas, it seems also that the *bugango* is prohibited in mortuary villages during the marginal period. The men even [115] prevent boys going to the villages to see their girls, says Mbekwa, an old inhabitant of Nondwane.

VI. *Family rites.*

765 After two or three months, a first gathering of the whole family of the deceased takes place. Amongst the Ba-Ronga its function is to close or break down the mortuary hut. Amongst the Northern clans, no relation is established between this family gathering and the fate of the hut. But everywhere its principal aim seems to be to restore the family whose head has been removed by death, and which must be reorganised.

1) Amongst the Ba-Ronga.

For the Ba-Ronga the habitation of the deceased is tabooed. It is a *shira* (grave), as well as the place in which he has been buried and, for this reason, it must be destroyed. But this destruction is not accomplished at once. Some time must elapse (1), two, three, nine months, before the family gathering takes place. I witnessed it near Rikatla on December 15th 1907 and can therefore describe this rite in detail.

Manyibane had died five or six months previously. He was

(1) At any rate, such is the old law. But nowadays the Rongas sometimes crush the hut at once during the five days to save trouble. This was done in the case of Sokie.

843 754 to hinder the child from growing and to put in its place, by means of her enchantments, a snake, a hare, a quail or an antelope!

834 846 [886] After the birth, owing to possible contamination by the lochia, sexual intercourse is prohibited till the rite of tying the cotton string (p. 56) has taken place. It is then allowed, but conception must be avoided till weaning, when relations are resumed in the normal way, and this goes on till the time when the woman is no longer able to bring forth children. I know of no special rules in connection with the menopause.

*

* *

831 But, amongst Bantus, sexual relations are not an individual affair, as amongst nations more advanced in evolution. There is a mysterious relation between them and the collective life of the community. Hence the fact that, on certain given occasions, they are recommended, even ordered, or prohibited.

1) Cases of recommendation.

833 783 587 829 Sexual relations must take place on two principal occasions : when the inmates of a village abandon it and go elsewhere to found a new one, and when the widows perform the painful rite of "lahla khombo" (to cast away misfortune). We shall see, when studying these customs, that sexual relations have here a twofold signification : 1) they "consolidate" the little community in its new abode, viz. they strengthen its structure by confirming the authority of its chief ; 2) they provide the principal means of getting rid of all contamination, especially of the defilement connected with death. (Annotatio 13.)[1]

2) Cases of prohibition.

834 784 581 829 753 Married people are not considered as being in a state of defilement, as mourners are, for example. Yet this class of persons, called "ba-ku-khila," constitute a danger for those members of the community who are in a weak state of health. They must not come in contact with the circumcised, because in that case their wounds would not heal properly.

1 [See pp. 518-519 in these categories or in 46--Analyst]

834 784 581 829 753 They must not enter the hut of a person dangerously ill ; this would hasten his death. People who are just recovering from a disease, when they walk about on the paths, must tie around their ankles the root called sungi, which will protect them against the perspiration or emanation left by married people in their footprints, because, as one of my informants said, "ba-ku-khila ba hisa," viz. married people are hot.

834 836 581 829 Moreover not only individuals but the whole social life would be endangered if sexual relations took place when the community itself is in a critical position. They are prohibited therefore in wartime, during the whole duration of hunting parties, and also during the marginal periods. Strange to say, this law does not apply so severely to unmarried boys and girls amusing themselves according to the "shigango" custom (p. 97). It seems that it is not the act in itself which is tabooed, but the act in as much as it is accomplished by regularly married people ; in this case only has it a bearing on the life of the community.

What is the reason of these prohibitions ? "Married people are hot." What does this aphorism mean ? The following rite may help us to understand it.

831 834 226 829 789 771 In the Maluleke country, when the whole population enters a lake to kill fish according to the tjeba custom (Part IV. Chap. I), a little boy and a little girl are chosen and laid down under a lion's skin, as if they were husband and wife, and told to remain very quiet during all the time the grown up people are fishing. Not knowing anything about sexual intercourse, they will obey ; then the fish also will keep quiet and will be killed easily. Why ? Because there is in the sexual act something wild, fierce, passionate which, according to the law of correspondance which is at the base of all Bantu magic, has an influence on the hostile forces ; these will be excited and more difficult to overcome : enemies in battle, the animals of the bush during hunting and fishing parties, disease, danger of contamination at death and during the marginal periods. Life is, so to speak accelerated by the sexual act, and this acceleration is communicated to the whole of Nature. Therefore : Keep quiet, be continent!

This profound conception of life also explains why so often certain actions must be accomplished by children, not yet able to have sexual relations, or by old women who no longer practise them.

Let us remark that all these rites do not belong to Animism, properly speaking, but to Dynamism (Part VI. Chap. I), which plays a part almost as important as Animism in Bantu primitive philosophy.

we shall discuss in Part VI the
843 origin of this extraordinary idea. A woman who has had a
834 miscarriage is impure for three months at least. Menstruation
841 must have taken place two or three times and have cleansed her before her husband can have any sexual relation with her. (Compare Annotatio 7,[1] which applies to the transgression of this rule.)

7) Parturition.

846 We have described, when treating of birth, the many taboos
753 which accompany parturition. The *busahana* period, from the moment of delivery till the fall of the umbilical cord, is very much dreaded. When a woman is suffering from *shilumi* (a disease which sometimes follows delivery, probably owing to a displacement of the organs) she must not enter the hut of a woman who has been confined. The ailment would "jump over to her" (tlulela). There is however a way of preventing contagion. The visitor must take the piece of clothing which she uses as a girdle and throw it to the patient, and the patient throws back her own girdle to the visitor. Then she can enter : "They have acted according to the law, there is no more *yila*."

846 A mother must not drink any milk from the birth of the child
851 until its presentation to the moon. Afterwards she is allowed to drink only milk from cows which have calved many times.

The rite of *kunga* is performed in the case of a first-born child. This child is called *ñwana wa matibula*, the child by which the woman has *tibula*, viz. has become a mother. The etymology of this word *tibula* (Zulu zibula) is not known. When people come to greet the baby, its parents will not allow them to take it in their arms. They must pay something for permission to do so, even a brother, a sister, or a grandmother. The father is not subject to this rule ; "the child is his, belongs to him." Nowadays this ceremony means only that these people are happy to receive the new born child amongst them. There is no taboo in it. But it is certainly related to the fact that in giving birth to a child for the first time, the woman has passed from womanhood to motherhood.

1 [See p. 517 in these categories or in 116-Ans Not]

841 A demonstration of joy takes place at the birth of any subsequent
831 child, but the kunga is only performed for the first-born. It does not seem that in the case of the first-born child, as in the case of bowumba (see p. 125) the gifts of kunga are subject to any taboo.

8) Loss of children.

766 A woman who loses an infant (wa ku felwa) is deeply contam-
783 inated with the defilement of death. She must bury it herself
834 without aid from her husband. Next day, she goes behind the
833 hut, kneels down and draws off her own milk on to the ground. She does this until the secretion has ceased. This is taboo; her milk is polluted; no drop of it must fall in the gardens. She must avoid crossing the fields and going to the storehouses to fetch food.
864 Until she has been "put right again (busetela)," she eats with a spoon. To use a spoon is a bad omen for a woman, because it reminds her of death. That is the reason why men adopt this civilized custom more readily than women. During her mourning, no sexual relations are allowed. When menstruation begins again, she first keeps silent, and does not tell her husband. Only on the second or third occasion does she inform him of the fact. He can then purify her; this is done in the same way as in the case of widows. (See p. 154.) Then he buys new clothing for her and she resumes her ordinary mode of life. Everybody seeing her with this new attire will know that "she has been repaired." Should any one else than the husband give her this clothing, the latter will be greatly offended and accuse her of having relations with a lover.

765 A man does not put on *malopa*, mourning clothing, for a child
586 who was not yet of age. The woman alone does so. However a husband is always grieved at the death of his child and a sad event like this often leads to dreadful results. He will begin to think that his wife is a witch and has eaten her own child by her magical powers. Such an accusation is almost sure to end in a divorce.

A woman who has *lost many children*, three or four, is considered

606 side. She does the same. Then you sit down according to
[376] men's fashion, crossing your legs. She also sits down bending
834 her legs, and putting one knee over the other as women do; then
576 both parties salute each other, you, as a man, clapping your hands against each other, holding them parallel, and the woman holding hers at right angles. 'Then you begin to talk...."

Suppose the son-in-law has had the good luck to reach the village of his wife's relatives without having met his mother-in-law, but sees her sitting somewhere near a hut. This is dreadful. She looks at him and at once covers her breasts with her cloth. He himself turns his eyes aside. I saw in Natal a curious photograph representing the scene. Amongst the Zulus the avoidance of the mother-in-law is perhaps more marked than in any other tribe; the man is shown in the picture hiding his face
606 with his shield. Should the mother-in-law be taking her meal
576 when her son-in-law arrives unexpectedly, she throws away the mouthful she was eating, and he does the same.— Suppose then that he has entered the village without seeing her; then the tinamu, his wife's sisters, come hastily to meet him. They take his sticks, joking with him meanwhile and put them in his mother-in-law's hut. This hut is his; he has the right of staying in it during his whole visit. They spread a mat on the ground, and bring him food. They chat with him. Then the mother-in-law comes in her turn, but she dares not enter the hut. She sits down outside and, without seeing him, salutes him, saying: "Good morning, son of so and so." She must not pronounce his name. He answers in the same style, and must also say: "Daughter of so and so." Should he call her by her name it would be a breach of etiquette and his wife would be angry and say: "How dare you? Did she not bring me forth? Rather say: Mother!" During the first years of his married life, the son-in-law never eats with his wife's mother.

607 This peculiar behaviour is the rule, not only towards the wife's mother, but also towards her sisters.

606 In the course of years there is a *lessening* of this terrible taboo.
431 In the Maputju clan, the son-in-law will provide an ox as soon as
576 possible and he will "communicate" (tlhangana) with her, partaking

606 be banished from their thoughts. They obey that conviction when
835 practising the avoidance rites.

The wife of the brother-in-law, the Great Mukonwana.

607 This particular respect is even more marked in the relations of a man with the wife of his wife's brother. Indeed the avoidance is pushed further than with the mother-in-law. A Native of the Ndjao tribe (which has the same customs as the Thonga tribe in this respect) described to me vividly the extraordinary marks of fear that these two persons show each other when they meet on the road. The story will be told when speaking of the Ba-Ndjao. Here are some other marks of this extraordinary respect.

607 The wife's brother's wife must always keep her breasts covered
834 in the village of her husband's sister's husband. Only when she has had a child is she permitted to "open her clothing;" but then she must fix a leaf in her hair (as if to show that she does not forget the special reserve which she is bound to maintain). (Khosen region.)

607 When a man travels with his great mukonwana and they have to
576 cross a river, they will avoid entering the same boat. It may
827 happen to anyone to emit an unseemly sound from the rectum; but if the great mukonwana is present, she looks on this as a grave offence. A fine must be paid to her, a hoe, for instance. If the guilty man has nothing to give her, he at once breaks a twig from a tree and presents it to her as a token that the proper fine will be forthcoming in due time! He must never use words of insult in her presence, even if he addresses them to another person.

607 If he loses his temper before her she will go to the old people of
844 her husband's village and tell them: "He has insulted me." On the other hand the great mukonwana is bound to go and assist the wife of this man when she gives birth to a child. At least this is the rule in the Khosa clan and also in Maputju. The two women live on very good terms with each other; they are

607 *tinhombe*. The man himself, when he visits his relatives-in-law, has the right of sleeping in the hut of the great mukonwana. We have seen that, during the first months after his marriage, he is received in the hut of his mother-in-law. Why is this? Because the oxen

621 396 nature of that social unit, the Thonga *muti*. I shall give the sequence of these rites first in the Northern clans, according to the description of Viguet, and secondly amongst the Ba-Ronga, according to Mboza.

I. *In the Northern clans.*

621 787 784 1) The headman goes first to examine some spots where he would like to build. He *breaks small twigs* from various trees and brings them home.

833 2) The bones are consulted and help in *making a choice*. The twigs are placed on a mat one after the other. When the stone of the *kanye* (see Part VI) falls in a certain way in front of one of the twigs, this shows that the tree from which it has been broken is the one near which the hut of the headman must be built.

3) Building material is collected. When everything is ready to proceed to the construction of the huts, the headman goes with his principal wife to the spot chosen. They leave the old village for ever ; they must not return to it any more. In the evening they have *sexual relations* in the new place and in the morning they tie together some tufts of living grass. Next day all the people of the old village must come and step upon this grass. This rite is called to *tie the village* (boha muti).

621 595 784 834 4) Then begins the period, of about one month, called *buhlapfa*, time of moving, which has its laws. Two great taboos dominate it : 1) Sexual relations are absolutely prohibited. Should any one transgress this law, he has sinned gravely against the headman ; he has stolen the village (yiba muti). The headman will be ill, perhaps paralysed. The guilty woman will also be punished : she will not be able to bear children again ; she will be "tied by the village" (bohiwa hi muti). The culprits have "crossed the way of the master of the village" (tjemakanya). Strange to say, the headman himself is bound by this law. He must have no relations *with his younger wives*, because the village belongs to the principal spouse. Should such a transgression be discovered, the work

621 831 all this is done in fun. It is a great day of rejoicing for the "tinamu", who tease each other as much as they like. A man may be wanting in respect even to his great mukoñwana on these days!

621 756 337 789 6) When the huts are ready, the *fence* is built. The family doctor is summoned. The medicine man throws leaves or stones treated with his drugs along the circular line, where the headman intends to place the branches which will form the future fence of the village. This being done, the men erect the fence.

7) Special precautions are taken for *the main entrance*. Poles are erected on both sides, but before they are put in place, the doctor pours medicine into the holes in the ground and also smears the poles with it at the bottom and at the top. Mankhelu used to bury a black stone, taken out of the river, at the gate. This stone had also been smeared with drugs. "In this way, I prevent enemies from entering. Those who come to try their charms against us (ku hi ringa hi maringo) will be attacked by disease and go and die in their houses."

783 834 621 8) The building is finished. Nothing remains to be done but to *ripen the village* (wupfisa muti). Men and women assemble in two separate groups and ask each other if they have been continent during the whole "buhlapfa". If one of them confesses to having sinned, he has stolen the village from the headman; the whole work is spoiled and must be recommenced elsewhere. If all the members of the community have behaved well, they proceed to a purifying ceremony exactly similar to the *hlamba ndjaka* which takes place during the mourning ceremonies. Each couple has sexual relations according to a fixed order of precedence, one every night, and they all go to trample on the spot where the women wash their hands. The principal wife is the last to perform these rites.

621 595 9) Then comes the *drawing to himself of the village by the headman* (kokotela muti). At dawn, after the night when she has had her ritual sexual relations with the headman, his principal wife takes his shield and his assagais and stands at the main entrance, everyone being present. Outside is a thorny branch prepared for the occasion. In her martial attire, she drags this branch to the entrance and closes it.

621 824 765 troublesome and he should wish to remove them, he must ask some one else to do it. On the day of his death, or rather when his hut is crushed down, a branch of that tree will be put on the place where the threshhold was, and another used to close the main entrance of the village, a new entrance being then made through the fence and used as the gate during the rest of the mourning period.

621 833 3) He has sexual relations on the new spot on the first night with his principal wife ; in this way he will *fuya muri*, viz. "possess this tree," and also *fuya muti*, "possess the village." The Ronga *fuya* corresponds here also to the *boha* of the Northern clans (Compare boha puri and fuya ñwana, page 57). If someone precedes him in sexual intercourse, he is guilty ; he has "preceded the village" (rangela muti). By this act the headman has definitely left the old village. The others can go back to it to fetch what remains ; for him it is taboo.

621 831 834 342 4) The same day, all the inhabitants come and move all the roofs, if it is possible to do this in one day. One hut is rapidly built to afford shelter to the inhabitants, in case of rain. The first roof to be transported is that of the hut of the principal wife. This is also done to the accompaniment of obscene songs. These songs are not allowed when only one hut is transported, which may happen when some one goes to live in another village.

It is definitely a custom which goes with the moving of a whole village.

5) The following day two huts are erected, one for the men, the other for the women, because they must not sleep together. "They are still in the bush ; it is buhlapfa ; the village is not yet firm." Those who break this law cause injury to the headman. The bones will soon reveal that "he has been preceded as regards the village ; (a rangeliwile muti)." All the huts are smeared twice ; the women begin to sleep in them, but not the men. The fence and the main entrance must first be prepared.

621 789 6) The *main entrance* (mharana). The men pull up the grass all the way from the back hut to the place where the main entrance must be, so as to make a road all through the village. All the dried plants weeded out during this operation are carefully

643 On his death, his son Gwaba was put in his place. But he was
362 deported by the Portuguese and his sister, Midambuze, filled the
582 position. Consequently she was not lobola, but chose a husband for herself, a man of common origin (a titlhuba nuna). Her son may succeed her ; in this case only can a uterine nephew of a chief take his place.

643 At Gungunyana's court queens played a great part. This
834 seems to be in accordance with the Zulu custom. After the death
847 of Chaka's mother, sexual relations were taboo for the whole tribe during one year, and children conceived during that time were put to death by order of the chief! (See Colenso : Ten weeks in Natal.)

643 I know of no case in which a foreigner became chief of a clan through having married one of its princesses. He can become hosana, but the true hosana will be his wife and he himself will be but a prince consort. I have heard of two instances in which this happened.

726 As regards the *order of the march*, the battalions of the young
701 men, stationed on either side of the entrance, go first ; they
643 form the advanced guard, the post of greatest danger. The scouts, tinhlori (Dj.) tinhloli (Ro.), go in front ; each company has its leader to whom these scouts bring reports. It is the duty of the young men to surround the position to be carried and to make the assault. The two sides of the circle then follow, and lastly the chest of the army, forming the rear guard. The chief thus brings up the rear, protected by the battalions of veterans. But generally the chief does not go to battle ; he remains at home.

726 During the campaign, *the whole clan is subjected to many taboos.*
784 Those who remain at home must *keep quiet* (rula). No noise
777 must be heard in the villages. The women must not close the
722 doors of the huts. It is taboo : their husbands might meet with "bitterness" (shibiti). They might lack strength to run away. Fire must be lit in the huts in the evening, in order that the warriors may "have light" where they are. It is taboo to omit this precaution. Work in the fields must be more or less suspended ; women may attend to it in the morning only, before the heat of the day, while the air is still fresh. "Then, if a warrior has stepped on a thorn, the thorn will be cool (titimeta) ; if he has knocked against a stump, the stump will be quiet and not hurt him. (Mboza.)" Old men who remain at home must keep watch, and if they see a messenger coming, they follow him to the chief.
765 Should he bring bad news, they do not inform the women, as it is
726 taboo to mourn over warriors killed in war before the return of the
834 army. A fine is imposed upon those who contravene this law.
777 It is taboo also to have sexual relations as long as the army is on the
784 war-path. This would cause thorns to hurt the warriors and they would be defeated. (Mankhelu.)

722 According to Mankhelu, the mukhumbi may be again formed after arriving in the proximity of the hostile army. The
643 battalions will be sent one after the other by the great ndjuna who
726 will watch the progress of the fight. If he sees his men giving way, he "pours" (tahelela) new companies to help those who are fighting until they rush the position (gwabula) and put the enemy to flight. Then the pursuit begins. The dust flies up

727 "hot" and from special plates (mireko) and broken pots. They are
783 forbidden to drink water. Their food must be cold. The chief
834 kills oxen for them (yi ba lumisa hi tihomu); but if the meat
761 were hot it would make them swell internally "because they are hot themselves, they are defiled (ba na nsila)." If they ate hot food, the defilement would enter into them. "They are black (ntima). This black must be removed" (Mankhelu). During all this time sexual relations are absolutely forbidden to them.
727 They must not go home to their wives. In former times the
304 Ba-Ronga used to tatoo them[1] with special marks from one eyebrow to the other. Dreadful medicines were introduced into the incisions and there remained pimples "which gave them the appearance of a buffulo when it frowns" (1).

789 After some days a medicine-man comes to purify them (ku ba
727 phutula), "to remove their black." There seem to be various
783 means of doing it, according to Mankhelu. Seeds of all kinds are put into a broken pot and roasted, together with drugs and *psanyi* of a goat. The slayers inhale the smoke which emanates from the pot. They put their hands into the mixture and rub their limbs with it (ba tilula) especially the joints.

789 Viguet describes this last act thus :—Pieces of medicinal roots
727 are put into the broken pot and roasted. They inhale the smoke.
782 Then cow's milk is poured into the pot on the embers and, when it boils, they have to put their fingers into it, one hand after the other, and pass them across their lips emitting the sacramental : "tsu" (which proves that it is a sacrifice to the gods, a religious act). Afterwards they say : "Phee! phee!" — viz.,
789 phephela phansi, (Dj. tikela hansi), "Go down, sink." This
727 means : "May you go deep into the earth, you, my enemy and
783 not come back to torment me." The last part of the treatment consists in rubbing the biceps, the legs, and the whole body with this milk. The medicinal embers are carefully collected, and reduced to a powder ; this will be put into small bags of skin called *tintebe* which the slayer will wear round his neck. They contain

578 (1) Hence an expression which is still in common use. When a Ronga wants to defy some one he says to him : "You are a coward! If you say you can tackle me come and kiss my forehead."

[Ra, the slayers returned from battle — Analyst]

J. SOME REMARKS ABOUT WAR RITES.

177 726 The war rites of the Thongas, whatever may be their origin — and they seem to be a mixture of old Thonga and new Zulu customs, — form a very interesting and complete whole.

The most noticeable are the *national rites*. In war time, the very existence of the clan is threatened, because the chief, the central and vital cell of this organism, is in danger. Hence the readiness of all the warriors to answer to the first call of the *shipalapala*, and to gather round him, "building the circle," which protects him, the whole clan forming a single village and binding itself by the striking ceremonies of *guba* and by patriotic songs, to die for him. Notice that most of the *guba* songs extol the chief. All these customs in which the individual or collective courage is stimulated, the *guba* and the *gila*, are national or social rites directed towards the salvation of the clan. They owe their origin to the national idea.

643 726 829

But war also brings dangers to every warrior. Hence the *protective* rites of sprinkling the mukhumbi with the war-medicine of the clan, or of giving each man some of it to swallow. The rite is inspired by the notion *similia similibus curantur*, the idea being that the warrior, having eaten a small portion of the enemy, will become invulnerable to his blows.

But other rites, especially the war taboos, seem to owe their origin to the *idea of passage*.

726 829 834 The *whole clan* enters upon a special phase as soon as war has been decided upon by the chief, "who gives it" to his warriors. Hence the taboos observed at home, many of which are exactly the same as those of the circumcision school and of the period of mourning. We notice the same contrast already so often mentioned : certain sexual prohibitions are removed (e. g. a queen will enter quite naked into the mukhumbi!)

727 775 761 tions (before 1890). Three persons of that family died. The bones were consulted and the diviner asked : "Have you not slain a Ndjao?" They answered : "Yes." — "Then," said the bone-thrower "you will all die as this man has followed you." The bones showed that, in order to avoid the destruction of their family, the Ndzindzis had to offer a girl to the ghost of the slain, a living sacrifice. This girl would not be allowed to marry, or even to be courted by boys. Should she have relations with a man it would be necessary to replace her by another. Thus the angry ghost would be propitiated.

726 On the other hand sexual relations, which are allowed in ordinary
829 life, become taboo. This period of fighting seems really to be
834 considered as a marginal period for the whole tribe.

It is so par excellence *for the warriors* and I think that many of the rites imposed upon them are to be explained in this way. As we saw, the period of margin is generally preceded by separation rites. (See page 74.) Some of these, which are very characteristic, are performed when the army starts: the leave-taking from the General with wild shouts, the custom of swallowing a piece of meat without touching it with the hands and taking an emetic afterwards, that of jumping over the ntjhopfa branch, the medicine of oblivion! etc. The triumphant return, the partaking of the meat of the oxen which have been taken, may be the aggregation ceremonies, viz., the acts by which the warriors return to their ordinary life.

726 Passage rites are still more distinct *in the case of the slayers*; but
829 their condition is worse, as it implies the idea of defilement following
304 upon murder and is attended with the danger proceeding from the *nuru*.
182 They are "hot" (an expression which also applies to the tabooed woman
783 during her menses etc.); they are "black" (an epithet which also designates the grave-diggers, the bereaved mother, etc.). Hence a *seclusion* much more complete, a true period of margin with many alimentary and sexual (1) taboos. Possibly the incisions on the brow are an old kind of tatooing in connexion with this marginal period, similar to the inguinal incision of the widows (p. 201). The purification rites are of the same kind as those of the mourners, and particularly of the grave-diggers. The return to society, after their seclusion, is marked by rites of separation from the marginal period, which no doubt aim at getting rid of the defilement connected therewith. (Exposure of the *mizilo* outside the village in the bush.) Is it not striking to notice the correspondence between these rites, their peculiar sequence and those of the circumcision school, of mourning, of moving a village?

See, as a conclusion to Part III, Practical Conclusions, No. VI: "The New era and the Future of the South African Tribe."

834 (1) The sexual taboos are so severe that, after the Mooudi battle, one of the slayers
727 took great offence at a man who dared to touch his food, as the man was living in his home and had relations with his wife. The slayer was afraid that this contact might cause his own death or bring misfortune to his family.

832 Sometimes the girls measure their labia with small sticks
836 and boast of their length to their companions and even to their
304 bridegrooms. The girls follow these perverse practices for
881 no other reason than for the sake of their future husband.
171 Among the Ba-Pedi the husband may, if he thinks that his bride has not sufficiently stretched her labia, send her home and demand his bulls back. The girls keep a pot full of food ready and cover it with a lid. In the evening the boys come to the girls and give them a small gift in order to be admitted. In the house they sit down on the floor and watch the girls eating from a pot with their fingers. The girls whose milebe are four digits long eat using four fingers: they are bakulu, that is, adult, and they enjoy their lovers. Or they use only three fingers and sometimes two. The young girls eat with the palms of their hands.]

765 "Annotatio sexta (P. 154). Seu quis per ætatem iam pro-
783 vectam imbecillior factus erit, sive qualibet de causa tam
833 impotens ut sperma emittere non possit (a nga kumi mati), ceteri viri quid fiat sciscitabuntur. Quod si utique parum procedit, tota inhibetur cærimonia. Qui vero se invicem eodem ritu miscere debebant, iis ritum conficere non fas est. Ille jejunio, per quinque dies, prout res postulat, artissime utetur, cui medicinæ ad rem accommodatæ exquirentur.

[Note 6 (page 154). If someone should have become feeble because of advanced age, or if for some reason he should be so impotent that he cannot emit sperms (a nga kumi mati), other men ask what should be done. For if it proceeds quite insufficiently, the whole ceremony is held up. And those who should have had intercourse in turn in the same ritual fashion are not permitted to complete the rite. He [the impotent man] has to fast very strictly for five days as the situation requires and the remedies appropriate to the situation will be sought.]

843 "Annotatio septima (P. 154). Nocens maritus uxorque sui
834 purgandi causâ alium ritum peragent. Uxor mariti suaque
841 pudenda veste intima et inquinatissima tergebit, quam postea comburet.

Ambo, ad ignem accedentes, caput manusque calefacient. Inde cinerem collectum mulier adipe miscet, quo mariti artus illinit, digitis bracchiis cruribusque tractis, quod 'lula' dicitur. Postea, noctibus duabus sequentibus, coibunt. Si maritus, non cum uxore sua, sed cum puella quadam ex alio vico, stupri consuetudinem junxerit, huic fossorium donabitur, ut ritum 'lula' perfectum veniat.

[Note 7 (page 154). If the husband and the wife are guilty of an offense, they perform another rite for the sake of purging themselves. The wife will cover her husband's and

843 her own pudenda with a much befouled intimate garment which
834 she afterwards burns.
841 Going to the fire they both warm their head and their hands. Then the woman mixes the ashes she has collected with fat and smears it over her husband's limbs, rubbing along his fingers, his arms, and his legs, which is called lula. Afterwards, in the two nights following, they will have intercourse. If the husband has had sexual intercourse not with his wife but with some girl from another village from lustful desire he will be given a fossorium so that the rite lula will come to its completion.]

765 "Annotatio octava (P. 155). Si mulieris parentes procul
783 habitant, maritus eius comes itineris erit, quacum superiore
833 nocte cubit, ad aquæ lustrali vim novam dandam."

505 [Note 8 (page 155). If the woman's parents live far away, her husband will be her companion on the way and he will have sexual intercourse with her the night before in order to give the lustral water new power.]

765 "Annotatio nona (P. 160). Faciebat dum 'Khunye khunye';
535 quibus verbis significatur coitus (khunyeta)."

831 [Note 9 (page 160). She was saying Khunye, khunye during
834 this time; these words signify coitus (khunyeta).

"Annotatio decima (P. 160). Carminum, morum temporis marginalis natura eo obscenior est quo nobilior defunctus fuit. Viguetus narrat: [518] 'Duce vel uno ex principibus mortuo, luctuque consueto præterito, luctum privatum, ad quem boves immolentur, celebrari. Carnem ad baculos humi fixos alligari; homines inde mulierem vocare, eamque posteriorem vestem exuere juberi, neque ullam vestem nisi anteriorem habere quam, si velit, exuere ei liceat. Eam, postea, divaricaturam esse ad unam ex carnis particulis dentibus apprehendendam ita prominentem ut omnes viri eius pudenda videant, quod plerumque 'taboo' (id est nefas) sit.'"

[Note 10 (page 160). The nature of the songs, a custom of the marginal period, is the more obscene the greater the nobility of the deceased person was. Viguet relates: [518] "When the leader or one of the chiefs is dead and the usual mourning has passed, they stage a private mourning at which bulls are sacrificed. They tie the flesh to poles fixed in the ground; then the men call a woman and order her to take off the clothes on her back and they do not allow her to have any clothes on except the one in front which, if she wants to, she may also take off. Then she must seize one of the bits of meat with her teeth, bending forward in such a

765
~~835~~
~~811~~ way that all the men can see her pudenda which is
834 much tabooed (that is, sinful)."]

"Annotatio undecima (P. 161). Hic, mulier paulo dilutiore
765 colore magnaque statura addit: 'Hi kundjana. id est:
792 coeamus!' "

[Note 11 (page 161). Here a woman with a slightly lighter color and of large stature, adds: Hi kundjana, that is, "let us have intercourse!"]

841 "Annotatio duodecima (P. 187). Hæc sunt ipsissima verba, quibus Makhelu mulieris menstruansis taboo (id est nefas) describit. Mulier menstruans est res, quæ imprimis 'yila' est. Per sex dies 'yila,' id est, nefas est. Septimo die transit flumen ad se lavandam. Octavo ei nondum licet cum marito suo coire; forte enim sanguis pudendis ad hæret, eà insciente. Magis 'refrigescit.' (Verbo phula menstruans mulier comparatur cum aula a foco remota).

Si, ante id tempus, maritus cum uxore cœat, ægrotus fiat, veretrum retro ita recedat ut vir urinam reddere non possit et, brevi tempore, moriatur. Talem vitæ exitum multi habuerunt. Radicibus arboris cui nomen est mayilana vel mulieris menstruantis vestis particulâ, a medico ad levem pulverem redactâ, quæ ægro bibenda est, morbus sanari potest. Aegrotus multum sanguinis reddet, et veretro exeunte, salvus est."

[Note 12 (page 187). These are the very words with which Makhelu [sic] describes the taboo (that is, the sin) of the menstruating woman. A menstruating woman is something which is, first of all, yila. For six days she is yila, that is to say, taboo. On the seventh day, the flow that cleanses her passes over. On the eighth day she is not yet allowed to have intercourse with her husband; for perhaps some blood is still sticking to her pudenda without her knowledge. She "cools down" even more so. (By the word phula the menstruating woman is compared to the pot removed from the stove.)

841 If the husband should have sexual intercourse with his wife
834 before this time, he will be taken sick, his private parts will
756 decay to such an extent that the man would no longer be able to pass urine and would die within a brief period of time. Many have had such an end to their life. The sick man can be cured by a liquid containing the roots of the tree that is called mayilana or by a particle of the menstruating woman's dress, reduced to a light powder by the medicine man. The sick man loses a lot of blood; after his penis is able to pass water again, the man is well again.

marginal period during which the maphisa must use protective medicines against the dangers of the bush, and keep certain rules. 224 784

As a protection they carry their charms, especially the *ndjao*, the root of a certain juncus which is used on many other occasions. As regards the taboos which they must observe, I will first mention those applying to travellers in general, especially the *salt taboo* (I. p. 339). Should they take salt with them, this would "precede them" (rangela), and they would kill no game. It will be soon enough to look for salt when they have killed. But the great taboo of these hunting trips is the *sexual taboo*. This was already imposed before starting and it must be observed Phroughout the expedition. The necessity of avoiding anything connected with sexual relations is so great that maphisa will take with them to cook their food little boys under marriageable age. What is the reason of this prohibition? I have explained it in dealing with the Thonga idea of sexual relations (I. p. 189). If the hunters transgress the law, the big animals will be so wild that it will be impossible to approach them ; they will furiously attack the men who have sinned, because they know them, and woe upon them! So much so that if the hunters see an elephant or a hippopotamus in obstinate pursuit of one of their number, they will begin to insult him for having spoilt the whole trip by his misbehaviour, and send him home. 224 784 834 825

The law of continence is also binding on *the hunters' wives* at home. It is true that when the absence of their husbands is prolonged for a very long time they may become unfaithful to them and the men, on their return, will find babies waiting for them which are not their true children. This will cause them no unhappiness, as these babies none the less belong to them, their wives having been duly bought, and the time for fear is now passed, as they have returned home safely. The fact that these men welcome the children born during their absence caused me to think that hunters' wives were not subject to the sexual taboo as their husbands are. But further inquiry has shown that this is not true. Old Makhani assured me that incontinence on the part of the wife at home would have as a consequence that the husband would be attacked and killed by wild beasts far away in the desert. 224 784 837 851 752

fell, not as an offering to the gods, but in order to help his hook 226
to see (hanyanyisa), to awaken it and "give it eyes to catch." This 821
sentence referring to the place "where people pound their mealies standing, or kneeling down," is an allusion to a curious cosmographic notion, which we shall explain later on (Part VI. Chap. I). Seeing the sky reflected in the water, the fisherman thinks of the ends of the earth, where heaven rests on the ground, and where women are obliged to kneel down when crushing their mealies, lest their pestles hit the sky!

There are three other principal methods of fishing, and, as they 226
are more or less of a collective nature, they are regulated by 784
laws and attended with taboos : the nhangu, the shibaba and the tjeba.

The *nhangu* is a triangular enclosure made of sticks stuck in the sand on the seashore. This enclosure has an opening looking seaward. The tide covers the nhangu, bringing with it all kinds of denizens of the sea, big lobsters, shrimps of all sizes, fish, etc ; when it retires, all these creatures are imprisoned in the nhangu, and try to find their way out through the opening ; this however is closed, and the fishers collect their catch, which is sometimes considerable. A man who wishes to build a nhangu must pay a tax to the chief of the country. During the operation he must observe the law of silence ; if anyone should speak to him, he must not answer. When the nhangu is ready he goes straight to his hut, and washes his hands, and then he can speak again. Should he transgress this taboo, the fish will rush about wildly in the trap and he will be unable to catch it. This is not a *kunga* proper (I. p. 124) but only another application of the rule imposed for example on the wife of the hippopotamus-hunter (II. p. 69). On the day of inauguration, (khangula), all the inhabitants have the right to come and partake of the result of the first fishing. This is a *luma*, the luma of the nhangu. The owner of the trap is not allowed to take a single fish home that day. Everything must be consumed on the spot.

The *shibaba* is another kind of trap, made of woven reeds, 226
which is placed on the banks of a river, of the Nkomati, for 834
instance, near the sea, within the tidal reach ; when the tide is

low, the fish is imprisoned between the reeds and the bank. 226
The construction of this trap is governed by strict laws : no 834
sexual relation is allowed during the five or six weeks of the fishing. The owner of the shibaba must cut the first reed. Women must not approach the spot. On the day of inauguration there is also a luma ceremony similar to that for the nhangu.

But the most curious fishing custom is the *tjeba*. "Ku tjeba" 226
means to kill fish in company in lakes which are drying up. At the end of the winter most of the small lakes scattered all over Thongaland, get smaller on account of the drought, and the fish they contain, consisting mostly of carp and barbel, are obliged to congregate in much smaller spaces. Natives take advantage of this and the whole country-side is summoned to go and tjeba, on a certain day, as it is important to be as numerous as possible in order to ensure success. The chief orders all his men to make *shiranga*, a kind of conical basket, a foot and a half high, whose upper end is open and wide enough to admit the hand. The shiranga must be very strong ; the tree used for the purpose is called ntjangari. When the shiranga are ready, a messenger is 202
sent to all the villages, crying : 226
626

> Kho ! Khoooo ! Hobe ! Hobeee ! U yala nsateeee ! Na nsati a randja nyamooo ! A randja mihlubeee ! Kho ! Hobe !
> You hate your wife ! Your wife also is fond of flesh food ! She is fond of the flesh of the tail of fishes !

Every male member of the tribe must answer to this summons by going to the shore. Should he refuse the call, he is blamed and despised, and his companions will sing to him a mocking song :

> U yala ku tjeba, nyaňhwaku !
> You refuse to fish, nyaňhwaku (1).

In the evening his wife will scold him, on seeing that he brings no fish home! She will punish him by giving him mealie pap without any sauce!

Before the throng enters the lake, someone must *make an* 226
offering ; he must be a descendant of the inhabitants of the country, 782

(1) Nyaňhwaku is a formula of insult (I. p. 445).

when

226 the fishing is finished, they all sit down and compare their catches.
651 Perhaps an enormous barbel has been caught, "the king of the lake," as these fish sometimes attain a very large size. "Woo! a dle ñhwakwe!" — "Oh! he has killed his mother," say the men, making fun of the fortunate fisherman! But the chief sends an induna who levies the tax. Each fisherman unties one fish from his string and gives it to him.

226 The tjeba fishing is practised all over Thongaland, in Ronga
782 territory, where such ponds are numerous in the sandy hollows, amongst the Hlabis, and in the neighbourhood of rivers where there are lagoons which dry up, as far as the Maluleke country. Should there be crocodiles in the pond, which may very well happen when the lake is connected with the Limpopo or the Nkomati, the religious ceremony is more important on account of the danger incurred. Then the bones are thrown and declare who must make the offering in order to secure adequate protection from the ancestor-gods. The officiator enters the lake first, and, plunging his shiranga into the water, says: "If you are here, crocodile, go away! you hyena, do not bite." Amongst the Maluleke, a man of the Ba-Nyai tribe must perform the religious ceremony, as the Ba-Nyai were in the country before the Thongas. He must go first and catch a fish, bring it out alive, and then, surrounded by his fellow Ba-Nyai, offer it to his ancestor-gods. Then he throws it back into the water. The Thonga chief, having ordered his men to keep silence, then makes the following proclamation in a loud voice: "Let the fish abound, and kill them all, but do not bewitch each other!"

226 The Hlengwes have a very curious custom which I have already
825 explained when discussing the Bantu notion of sexual relations
834 (I. p. 189). When they *tjeba* they take a little boy and a little girl, and lay them down together under a lion's skin, as if they were husband and wife, during all the time that they are fishing. The children keep quiet, — so the fish will also keep quiet and not swim away. When the fishing is concluded, these children are "awakened," and are given a part of the catch: they are praised and thanked, as they are supposed to have secured the fish by their action... or rather by their inaction! This very significant

rite may explain why sexual relations are prohibited during all 226
important hunting and fishing operations. With their magic 825
conception of Nature, Bantus do not separate the domain of man 834
from the animal world ; human actions have their immediate effect amongst animals. So if men and women keep strict control over themselves, hippopotami, fish or elephants will not be so wild, and hunters will have more success!

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* *

Meat is either boiled (pseka), or roasted (wosha). When 252
boiled, the broth is called *muru*, (Ro.) or *sheshebo*, (Dj.) the same name that is given to monkey nut sauce or any other seasoning. When roasted, it is either placed on the embers, or skewered on sticks (lihanga) and exposed to the heat of the fire.

The blood of animals (bubendje) is also eaten by most men. 262
However, many fear it (tshāba), not on account of a yila, as if it were taboo, but rather from individual loathing. There are no special laws to be observed as regards bones. The meat of sacrifices, offered in the funeral rites, must be eaten *on the road*, not in the mortuary nor in the guests' villages, as we have already seen.

Meat is welcome, and eagerly sought after in time of famine 262
(ndlala). Should the October rains fail, or the crops be destroyed 731
by grasshoppers, as has been, alas, frequently the case since the [136]
first appearance of these pests in August 1894 (1), the Natives are bereft of every resource (2). They dig up all the edges of the

(1) Just at the commencement of the war between the Natives and the Portuguese, grasshoppers arrived in thick clouds in the district of Lourenço Marques. They had not been seen for a great number of years: old folk only recollected having seen them in bygone times. Since then the scourge has never entirely disappeared. The coincidence of their coming and the beginning of hostilities struck the Blacks very forcibly; they often said, at the sight of the grasshoppers: "They announce the armies of Gungunyana."

(2) Here is a pretty couplet with reference to famine:

Nkondjo wa nhlengana shipopokwana ?

— Lembe ra ndlala a he ngume kusuhe !

The traces of the little antelope (nhlengana) (which one sees in the desert a long way from its lair) recall the year of famine, when one does not stay near home ; (one must go a long way to search for food). See also the several allusions to the year of famine in *Les Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, p. 158, 160 et seq.

undergo a number of ceremonies of a social rather than of a physiological character. 561 827

But, in addition to these conceptions of human life, which determine so many acts and customs, there are at least *five physiological phenomena* which are believed to be attended with defilement, and which call for special precautions and rites : the menstrual flow, the lochia, disease, death and the birth of twins. To protect individuals, the family, or the clan, against these dangerous defilements, is one of the main preoccupations of any adult Thonga ; and to gain this end they submit to endless ceremonies of purification,and observe innumerable taboos ; thus it is plain that these physiological conceptions, absolutely unscientific and wrong as they are, play an immense part in their lives and cause them any amount of unnecessary trouble. 783

I need not deal at length with these five greatly dreaded physiological events. As regards menses, the subject has been treated in Vol. I, p. 187. (Compare Vol. II, p. 47) ; as regards lochia, see Vol. I, p. 43 ; concerning disease, we shall hear further in our third chapter. The tremendous contaminating power of death has been shown in the explanation of funeral rites, and the birth of twins will be studied more closely in the next chapter. The importance of these facts in the system of taboos will also be explained in Chap. IV.

The sexual act, though not considered as attended with contamination in the same manner as the five other physiological facts just referred to, is, however, subject to very characteristic restrictions. I have already explained them when dealing with conjugal life (I. p. 188). It will, however, perhaps not be superfluous to treat of this question again, considering it in its physiological aspect and in relation to the Bantu conception of Nature, and giving at the same time precise references to all the cases hitherto met with. 827 834 783

Let us first remark that, as some of my informants said, the sexual act when indulged in before marriage, by boys and girls in their gangisa (I. p. 150) has quite another bearing than when accomplished by married people. It would seem that it is not the physical act in itself which is attended with all these taboos,

827 but the act in as far as it is a regular manifestation of the
834 collective life of the family ; in this case only does it have its
783 terrible repercussion on the life of the community. Married people who have regular sexual relations, "who are hot," constitute a danger in the three following connections.

1) They are dangerous to those *individual members of the community* who are in a weak state of health and in whom disease would gain new strength if they entered into contact with married people. This is true of the master of the village when he is seriously ill (I. p. 133), of the mother who has given birth to a baby (I. p. 43), of the baby itself which is considered as "being not yet firm," (and sexual relations are forbidden to its parents until they have tied the cotton string round its loins) (I. p. 45, 58) ; of circumcised boys (I. p. 80, 93) ; of convalescents, who must not tread on the same paths as married folk or, if they do so, must tie round their ankles a root of the *sungi* juncus as a protection against the emanation, or perspiration (nyuku) which married people have left in their footprints or on the grass. During their whole convalescence sexual relations have been strictly forbidden to them (Ch. III. B. III. 4).

2) Sexual relations constitute a danger *to the community itself* as a whole, when its existence is threatened. They are prohibited in time of epidemic. Mboza, having heard that a proclamation had been issued in Lourenço Marques on account of an epidemic, was convinced that the object of the decree was to suspend sexual relations amongst the White community! The same law applies to all marginal periods, because these are critical times in which the life of the community is threatened. This is the case during the Great Mourning (I. p. 150). Mourners must *keep quiet;* if not, there might be quarrels, the mourning might "overcome them." Again when moving the village to another place (I. p. 320), the same rule must be observed.

3) Married people again are taboo in certain operations or pursuits, the success of which would be endangered if they took part in them or if they indulged in their ordinary relations. It must not be a married person who sets fire to the furnace in which

the potteress fires her pots (1) (p. 115). Why is this so? No 834
doubt because if married people, who are hot, did it, the fire would 783
become uncontrollable and all the pots would crack. The same 827
reason explains why sexual relations are so strongly prohibited in hunting and fishing. The game or fish would be so wild that it would be impossible to catch it ; big game would probably kill the hunters (p. 61).

This conception of the sexual act explains why certain functions in the ritual must be performed by young children, still without knowledge of sexual matters, or by old women past the time of childbearing and consequently belonging to the asexual class (I. p. 466).

How is it possible to explain, on the other hand, that this act, so severely prohibited on so many occasions, should be the great purifying act by which the community gets rid of the defilement of death and returns to normal life? We have seen that this is the case after the death of an important person in the village as well as when the village itself moves to another place, probably in consequence of defilement by the loss of some of its members. Notice that the sexual act, in order to obtain the desired result, must be accomplished in the ritual fashion, i. e. s. n. i. (I. Annotatio 2 and 13). It would seem that, in the Thonga mind, death defiles not 834
only the belongings of the deceased, his implements, his assegais, 783
even his fire, but also his parents, even the parents of his wife, and 761
above all, those secretions of the genital organs which are the very 827
fountain of their life, and through which the community is maintained and multiplied. They must be cleansed in order that the social group may re-enter upon a normal state. The ceremonies which we have described (I. p. 152-156 and 320-328) are highly significant. Each couple must perform the rite in turn and all must participate in a collective lustration which takes

(1) According to the Rev. Ed. W. Smith the same rule is observed in the smelting operations of the Ba-Ila. A little boy and a little girl are put into the kiln when it is about a foot high and they must crack a bean in their mouths and swallow it. We have here a very good example of Bantu primitive philosophy. The innocence or, as we may say, the *coolness*, of the little ones will prevent the flame from being too fierce and spoiling the whole operation, whilst the slow cracking of the bean will ensure the success of the smelting process (Smith and Dale, *The Ila-Speaking People*, I. p. 205).

834 place at a given spot and according to a given order of precedence.
783 This will bring about the definite restoration of the village and a new and pure life will henceforth be possible.

761 I ought perhaps to offer some excuse for having dwelt at some
827 length on a subject which is generally left alone as indelicate. I hope however that my readers will agree with me that all these physiological conceptions and all these strange customs, far from being of a lascivious or licentious character, denote, on the contrary, a deep and earnest conception of life and an aspiration towards purity which it is most interesting to observe. They are at the same time amongst the most striking manifestations of Bantu Dynamism.

827 Beside these great principles of Thonga physiology, I may
576 mention a few other ideas relating to the various secretions of the human body.

578 *Spitting* (ku thuka) is a sign of want of respect, as we have seen (p. 310). It is especially prohibited in the presence of people who are eating, and if any one should spit, they will insult the culprit, saying to him : "Eat your own shikohlolo!" — When some one expectorates, others present will cover the phlegm with sand, not on account of taboo, but from disgust.

826 *Blood* (ngati, yin-tin) is also instinctively covered with sand, as
791 soon as it has been shed. This is a taboo, because wizards might use it to bewitch you! The charms of the wizards are commonly called *tingati*, bloods.

827 As regards *sweat* (nyuku, mu-mi), although I cannot assert that the idea is universal, I think it is conceived as coming from outside and falling on men like the dew (mbere) on the grass. When they enter a place which is close, Natives say : "There is sweat here." The etymology of this word is *ku nyuka*, to melt.

Excrement (matjimba) is looked upon as disgusting, but there is no taboo in connection with it.

Yawning (yahlamula) is attended with no superstition.

Hiccough (shitikwane) is not feared in children, but very much so in the case of sick people.

Belching (bisa) is sometimes considered as the result of having been bewitched, especially if the patient becomes thin. Magicians

782 headmen, then the younger brothers in order of age. There
769 is a stringent taboo directed against the person who precedes
796 his superiors in the enjoyment of the first fruits, this law being
554 applicable to Kafir corn or bukanye in certain clans, and also to sorghum, pumpkin leaves and beer, etc., in others (1).

834 The sexual taboo is also enforced. Those who contravene this
782 law are said to "destroy the efficacity of the offering, nyumbisa mhamba." At the Ngoni Court, where sexual excesses were prevalent (see I. Annotatio 14) it is said that the chiefs used to remain continent for a fortnight at the time of luma. The reason of this taboo is probably the fact that the luma signifies the entering upon a new year, a new season, and is thus a rite of passage.

782 The religious meaning of the rite is clear : the gods, if deprived of the right they possess by virtue of their hierarchical position, would avenge themselves by threatening the harvest ; so they must be given their share first.

In the Maluleke clan, in which the customs seem to have been influenced by the Ba-Nyai, there is also a regular offering at the capital, when *the crops are still growing*. Rangane describes it as follows : "When the chief sees that the Kafir corn is threatened by the vermin in the fields, he says : "Perhaps the masters of the country (i. e. my ancestors who are dead) are angry ; perhaps I have not worshipped them fittingly." He summons the sons of the royal family (mangalakana) from all parts of the country, prepares beer, and selects a goat for the sacrifice ; they assemble around the graves with the sons and the uterine nephews, where they worship, and then, after eating all that is to be eaten, they return."

The special national offerings are those in connection with rain. If the rain falls at the right season, the sacrifice will not be made ; but should it fail to do so, the whole ritual will be gone through. This sacrifice for rain, is, as has already been mentioned (p. 318) called *phokolo* amongst the Bilen clans, and is performed in the

(1) Amongst the Malulekes a *second luma* is necessary after harvest, when brewing the first beer. It seems that the sub-chiefs or even headmen, settled in districts far away from the capital, can obtain a special license to perform the luma ceremony on their own account, but they must first apply for this permission, and after having finished, they must forward the chief's share to him.

village is at once removed. Leprosy is called *nhlulabadahi*, the disease which is stronger than the doctors. It is very much dreaded ; lepers are not, however, segregated ; they live in the village with other people and even attend beer-parties, but they bring their own mugs, whilst every other guest receives a drinking utensil from the master of the village. 758

Another disease which is believed to be contagious is "possession" by the *Bandjao spirits*. Should you pick up on the road some object which belonged to one of the possessed, his madness will jump to you (tlulela). — Epilepsy is also dreaded on that account. A nursing woman must not see any one suffering from an attack of this disease, or the child which is on her shoulders will become epileptic. 753 828

Speaking of the conception of disease, I must remind the reader of the fact that *sexual relations* between the inhabitants of the village are believed to aggravate the condition of the patient dwelling in it (I. p. 133, II. p. 358), and are consequently forbidden during epidemics and in any case of serious illness. Hence the precautions which convalescents must take of wearing the *sungi*, as we have just seen. 753 834

4) The special rites which mark the end of an illness throw much light on the Thonga conception of disease. A serious illness constitutes a marginal period either for the individual concerned, or, in the case of an epidemic, for the community, and the hondlola rite is the method by which the patient is reintegrated into society ; it clearly has the character of a passage rite. The rubbing with psanyi, the removal of the defilement of disease, the throwing away of the "timbhorola," the cutting of nails and hair, all these are rites of separation from the period of disease, whilst the feast of the hondlola day, and the resuming of sexual relations (1) are rites of reintegration. In the disease of possession, as we shall see it is the reintegration into the society of spirit-possessed persons and amounts to an initiation. 753 783 184 755

(1) We often hear of a Christian woman, who has gone to a heathen medicine-man for treatment, having sexual intercourse with him. We generally attribute this fact to immorality alone, but it was probably a part of the treatment, at the precise moment when sexual taboos were removed.

all the people clapping their hands (wombela), to encourage him, as an accompaniment. — The *horns and hoofs* will be carefully kept, and placed on the roof of the hut, just over the door (shirañwin) by which the afflicted one enters, evidently to protect the abode from malign influences. — The *astragalus* will be tied, together with the strips, on the sternum of the patient. — The *bones* of the goat are the objects of special care. They must not be broken to eat the marrow, but burnt in the shade of a large tree, where it is "cool." So the possessing spirit will also be cool (titimela) and not too wild. Sometimes they are preserved in a special pot, and burnt on the day of the hondlola. 755

The period of convalescence[1] then begins. It lasts one year, and is a distinct marginal period, as clearly appears from the fact that sexual relations are absolutely forbidden during that phase, and until the hondlola. It is also, more or less, a period of apprenticeship, as the possessed will become an exorcist himself, if his magical powers become sufficiently developed. He accompanies the gobela everywhere, assists him in his cures, and so learns the art of exorcism. The apprentice will also have to practise the rites of protection, which I shall shortly describe, and which are obligatory during the whole period of convalescence, and even later. 758 834 756

4) The final purification of the hondlola and investing with amulets (timfisa).

As we saw, the hondlola, the removal of defilement of disease, is necessary at the close of any illness. So, when a possessed person is regarded as healed, he will have to pass through this rite. It can however only be carried out on the one condition that the possessed husband, or wife, has remained in a state of continence during the period of convalescence. In order to know if they have obeyed this law, a fowl will be placed on the head of the patient. If he, or she, has been continent according to order, the bird will remain quiet ; it will not fly away, even should someone approach and pass close by. If it flies off making a great noise, the angry exorcist will also take his leave, saying : 755 758 787

[1] [For the individual whose spirit was possessed — Analyst]

3) How are taboos *dealt with?* 784

Happily the danger of taboos can be removed, otherwise life would be almost impossible! The medicine-men have the 789 necessary drugs to protect their poor fellow-men against the misfortune (khombo) which is always threatening them! Is not the whole arsenal of magic at their disposal? Rites in great numbers provide the necessary protection, especially the *luma rite*, which is the proper method of avoiding the special dangers connected with the *first use* of anything. The wish to obtain protection against all these dangers explains the immense influence of the medicine-men, of those who know the preventive drugs to be used against defilement and misfortune.

It is impossible to attain to a true knowledge of the taboos 784 without studying the laws of *their suspension*. Taboos are sometimes suspended. The chief, for instance, is above them, at any rate above some of them, being himself a magical being, a tabooed personage (I. p. 382). The collectivity has a still greater power over them and can cancel them. There are times when all these prohibitions, or at least some of them, are withdrawn; these are the marginal periods, when we behold the strange spectacle that ordinary taboos are suspended (language taboos, relatives-in-law taboos), whilst others are enforced (sexual taboos). I have often drawn attention to this curious phenomenon.

B. MORAL RESTRAINTS.

But taboos are not the only kind of restraint to which primitive 183 Bantus submit themselves. The following statements have been 604 collected from old or young informants who were urged to express their inner feelings on this question :

1) The maternal uncle must provide the ntehe for the first child of his sister. However this is not *yila*, it is a *nau*, a law, and if it is transgressed no direct harm will follow. (I. p. 46.)

2) Men and women do not bathe in the same spot in the lake 183 of Rikatla. Why? Not on account of a yila, but on account of 834

183 *shitshabo*, viz., fear, or respect (1). There is no danger in transgressing this law of decency, but to do so is condemned.

834 3) When a young man has transgressed the taboo of *matlulana* (I. p. 197), having had sexual relations with the same woman as another man, he is not allowed to attend the burial of his rival. It is a taboo. However, if the deceased is his own father, the culprit can be treated with drugs, and so fulfil his duty of grave-digger, being protected against the dangers of his condition : "The *yila* has been removed, but the *biha* remains." *Biha* means that which is bad.

183 So there are three domains, besides the yila, in which the
577 Native is conscious of the restraints imposed upon him : law or custom, respect or decency, and duty or *fanelo*. To these might be added a fourth, the disgust for a certain food (p. 83). The great difference between the taboo and the other prohibitions is that the transgression of the latter is not necessarily attended with danger (2).

Let us consider more closely the idea of *fanelo*, or duty.

192 Fanelo comes from *ku fana*, to be alike ; fanela is what is
183 seemly, becoming. This is not as yet a very high notion of
577 morality. The moral sense, however, certainly exists and this is proved by three facts :

1) The richness of the vocabulary expressive of moral ideas. There are more words applicable to the negative side of the idea and signifying *bad*, than to the positive, signifying *good* ; a phenomenon which may be observed in most primitive languages, even in our French patois. *Ku biha* means to be bad, morally speaking, and to be ugly, esthetically speaking. The distinctiveness of the two domains exists, however, in the mind of the Native. He says : "behile mbilu" — "is bad in his heart," or "behile liso" — "is ugly as regards his face." *Shibi*, the derivative noun of the verb ku

(1) I have heard the mixed bathing of men and women also called a yila, but it is a special kind of yila, *the yila of tshabisa*, the taboo of respect or decency.

(2) I would not, however, insist too strongly on the distinctiveness of these five domains. Theft and murder are prohibited on account of *duty*, but they become taboo if the culprit is discovered, because they will bring punishment upon him. The moral wrong of these acts was perceived *before* their dangerous character, and we have here an instance of a taboo grafted on a moral, or social, prohibition.

787 village, must remain in it and belongs to the younger brother (1)
595 who becomes the master of the kraal. The second goes to the
428 second brother, the third to the third, the fourth to the *ntukulu*,
768 viz. to the son of the sister of the deceased. The fifth will then
604 become the wife of one of the sons of the deceased. This may appear shocking, and is really shocking even to the ideas of the Natives ; but let it be remembered that she is the youngest of all ; she was taken when the father was already old, and the first son is perhaps older than she. As regards the elder wives, the first and second especially, no one would think of keeping them for the son ! Incestuous relations are very rare amongst the
[835] Ba-Ronga. Even in this case, the feelings of both parties are more or less respected. The men advise the son to begin to play with the young widow, to ask her jocularly for tobacco, and he gradually accustoms himself to consider her no longer as a mother (mamana) but as a wife (nsati).

587 Of course the general rule is apt to be very much altered
595 according to circumstances. Should the deceased be the youngest
428 of the family, his elder brother may inherit the first wife. But
768 this is not the regular procedure.

The distribution having thus been decided on, the sisters of the deceased call the widows and say to them : "You so and so, you shall give food to so and so (phamela manyana)." But then the struggle begins. One of the widows, being old, may altogether refuse to have anything to do with any of her brothers-in-law. She may say : "I am taking my young son as a husband" which means : I do not want to be the wife of anybody. Or she will say : "I choose the big tree of the village where my late husband has built his hut." This answer may mean two things. Either : I do not leave this kraal and I will stay here without a husband ; or, on the contrary : I consent to be the wife of the man who becomes the headman of the village, viz. the eldest of the younger brothers. Another will say : "I love my *ntukulu* so and so." Should, however, the first wife desire to go to a man who does not

(1) Amongst the Ba-Ronga, an elder brother of the deceased cannot inherit a widow. It is taboo. He is a father to her, not a husband. He sometimes takes the lead in the discussion, having no personal interest in the matter. (See Part II).

604 that I intend to treat it more fully later on in a special paragraph, when considering the traces of older forms of family life amongst the Thongas.

601 The true malume is the mother's full brother. But all her half brothers are also bamalume in the second degree; so are also the brothers of the true malume.

605 What about the *children of the malume*, my cousins, or rather my
835 cross-cousins, sons and daughters of my mother's brothers, viz.
582 Shaputa and Marangen as opposed to Madonge and Misaben? In Zulu, Sutho, Pedi there is a special term to indicate this relation, (mzala, motsoala, mudzwala, muzwala). And the main feature of the family system in those tribes is that a cousin has a prior right to marry the daughter of his maternal uncle, his mzala. Amongst the Thongas there is nothing of the kind. The special term does not exist except in the Maputju clan, at the Southern extremity of Thonga territory, where it is met with in the form of *ntale* (corresponding to mzala, according to the law of phonetic permutation) (1) or *shitale* (when preceded by the prefix shi).
605 But the right of marrying this cousin is not recognized in the
835 Thonga tribe. One can play with her, steal some object from
582 her in fun, but never take her as a wife. Such a breach of the
602 custom would be punished by the chief. Later on, when the special relation of cross-cousins has been more or less forgotten, marriage could take place between them, but, at any rate, the ceremony of dlaya shilongo (see p. 256) would be performed, in order to "kill" the previous relationship and to replace it by the new relation of husband and wife.

This being so, how do cross-cousins behave towards each other in the Thonga system? As regards the daughter of their maternal uncle, the relationship is somewhat different for Misaben, a boy, and for Madonge, a girl. To Misaben the boy, Shaputa, his cousin, is mamana and she will call him son, ñwana, because, as we have seen, Shaputa is a potential wife for Mboza, father of Misaben, and Mboza calls her nkata, nsati, namu. To Madonge,

605 (1) They also employ the cognate form *muxali*, which is more akin to the Zulu regular term, and this tends to show that the Maputjus have borrowed this expression from their Zulu neighbours of Northern Amatongaland.

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of its meat with all his relatives-in-law. Then both will be allowed to eat together. Until that present was made, it would have been impossible. In this clan, a future son-in-law does not eat at all with his bakoñwana until the marriage is concluded, and this rule is sometimes observed till he has given "the ox for communicating together." Amongst the Zulus it is said that a mother-in-law will never eat with her daughter's husband. In the Khosa clan the custom of lessening the avoidance taboo by offering a present to the mother-in-law also exists. The son-in-law will one day bring a plate of food to her with his gift put on top of it. She will accept it and eat together with him. Then it will be possible for these two persons to "djungulisana" i. e. to tell each other the news of the day when visiting each other's village. But when this monotonous recital is finished and concluded, as is customary, by clapping both hands, this must be done with care, and not in a hurried fashion, as when speaking to an ordinary person, but slowly and respectfully.

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What is the reason of this extraordinary conduct of the son-in-law towards his wife's mother ? The Khosa Native who gave me this last information said : "A wise man will carefully observe the bukoñwana rules, because, if he hurts his parents-in-law by infringing them, they will not give him his tinamu as wives." This is true, but the same may be said of all the taboos of the bukoñwana, and the mother-in-law is not the principal person to be consulted on the question. Another more profound reason was once alluded to by an old Thonga, of Spelonken, Abraham Mabanyisi, who said to me : "I fear my mother-in-law because I shall never marry her : Such a thing has never been seen." This statement has been confirmed since by information gathered in the Maputju clan. Notice the almost reflex action of the mother-in-law in covering her breasts when she sees her son-in-law coming unexpectedly. It shows that there is a sexual element in the behaviour of the woman and also in that of the man, who hides his face in order not to see her in her half nakedness. Dr. Rivers, who has met exactly the same rites of avoidance amongst the Melanesians, supposes that they are dictated by a more or less unconscious desire on the part of both these persons to fight against the temptation to have sexual relations with each other. Bantus also, in the course of the evolution of the family, have come to the deep conviction that such intercourse is bad and must

be banished from their thoughts. They obey that conviction when practising the avoidance rites.

The wife of the brother-in-law, the Great Mukoñwana.

This particular respect is even more marked in the relations of a man with the wife of his wife's brother. Indeed the avoidance is pushed further than with the mother-in-law. A Native of the Ndjao tribe (which has the same customs as the Thonga tribe in this respect) described to me vividly the extraordinary marks of fear that these two persons show each other when they meet on the road. The story will be told when speaking of the Ba-Ndjao. Here are some other marks of this extraordinary respect. The wife's brother's wife must always keep her breasts covered in the village of her husband's sister's husband. Only when she has had a child is she permitted to "open her clothing;" but then she must fix a leaf in her hair (as if to show that she does not forget the special reserve which she is bound to maintain). (Khosen region.)

When a man travels with his great mukoñwana and they have to cross a river, they will avoid entering the same boat. It may happen to anyone to emit an unseemly sound from the rectum; but if the great mukoñwana is present, she looks on this as a grave offence. A fine must be paid to her, a hoe, for instance. If the guilty man has nothing to give her, he at once breaks a twig from a tree and presents it to her as a token that the proper fine will be forthcoming in due time! He must never use words of insult in her presence, even if he addresses them to another person. If he loses his temper before her she will go to the old people of her husband's village and tell them: "He has insulted me." On the other hand the great mukoñwana is bound to go and assist the wife of this man when she gives birth to a child. At least this is the rule in the Khosa clan and also in Maputju. The two women live on very good terms with each other; they are *tinhombe*. The man himself, when he visits his relatives-in-law, has the right of sleeping in the hut of the great mukoñwana. We have seen that, during the first months after his marriage, he is received in the hut of his mother-in-law. Why is this? Because the oxen

607 of the lobolo are still in the hands of the father-in-law. But later on these oxen are used to provide a wife for one of the sons, and the woman thus obtained is the great mukoñwana; therefore her hut belongs in a certain sense to the man with whose oxen she was bought. When he arrives, he may first be "shown" (komba) the mother-in-law's hut and rest there for a while, but at once the hut of the great mukoñwana will be prepared and he will move into it for the night; of course the mistress of the house has gone elsewhere, and it is the tinamu who will sleep in her hut to keep him company. (However should the visitor have not yet paid the lobolo, he will not be received in this hut. It may happen that his bakoñwana will say to him: "Where is your hut? Sleep outside!")

607 835 582 Why do the relations of a man with the wife of his brother-in-law resemble so greatly his relations with his wife's mother? Let us remember that this man is the potential husband of the daughter of the first, just as he is the actual husband of the daughter of the second. It is probable that the great principle that "a man must not marry a woman and her mother" dictates this extraordinary fear and avoidance in both cases. But, in the case of the wife of the brother-in-law, there is still another élement: "The oxen!" This woman has been acquired by the oxen paid by the man to obtain his wife, and this explains the uneasiness which characterises their relation.

This second reason is perhaps more readily recognised by the Thongas than the first; they sometimes tell you that it is the only reason. But I think they are wrong, and that the same deep feeling that to marry a woman and her mother is incestuous is certainly at the base of these taboos. I may mention two facts in proof of this:

a) Once when I asked a woman of the Maputju country if her husband would be allowed to marry the wife of his brother-in-law, she seemed extremely shocked by the idea and exclaimed: "What are you thinking of? Marry his mother!" To her it would be incest, as much so as if the man had sexual relations with his own mother.

b) The wife of the brother-in-law is not the only great mukoñwana. The wives of his brothers, and of his sons and grandsons are all classed under that term. Why is this? Because a man has a prior right to marry not only the daughter of this special woman but all the daughters of his bakoñwana, and all these women, who are their mothers, are conse-

607 quently his potential mothers. He avoids them all, not on account
835 of the lobolo oxen, which he did not actually pay for their daughters,
582 but because it is intolerable to think that he might have relations with a woman and her mother.

607 But no doubt the fact that oxen have been paid by the man,
586 oxen by means of which his great mukoñwana was bought, is
835 the principal cause of the fear which they both feel towards each other. These oxen have created a sort of interdependence between them. Mboza says : "Should my home be disturbed by quarrels, should my wife Nsabula leave me and run away to her parents, or should she die without children, I shall go and claim my oxen... But the oxen have been employed to buy a wife for my brother-in-law, (Maphunga for Mahangale). If Gogwe has no other means at his disposal he must separate the pair Maphunga-Mahangale, cancel their marriage, send Maphunga home and claim the money from her parents. Or I might myself take Maphunga as my wife, and in either of these cases the marriage Maphunga-Mahangale would be annulled."

Thus it may happen that Mboza may marry his great mukoñwana, though such a union is really incestuous, according to the deep moral feeling of the tribe. This is truly terrible!

587 But does this ever really happen ? I have put this question to
607 many Thongas, in the various clans of the tribe, and remarked that there are differences amongst them.

Amongst the Nkunas of Shiluvane it is an absolute impossibility. Another woman is offered to meet the claim of the son-in-law who has lost his wife. This is called : "Ku hingakanya ntjandja", i. e. "to put a log across the road." The woman offered may be a little girl, still at the breast of her mother, or even a little boy. This is your wife, his parents will say to the son-in-law, and he must be content to know that, as this male baby will no doubt have a sister in the course of the two following years, the girl to be born will replace his wife. "Ntjandja a ba tluli" i. e. "One does not jump over the log." The man will not persist in his claim, and will not insist on taking the great mukonwana to replace his wife.

Amongst the Khosas and Bilas, such a marriage can take place

587 to find another woman. Maphunga may perhaps have a daughter
607 who will do. Or Mbekwa may have a married son whose daughter can also be offered. If the great mukoñwana is only pregnant, the child about to be born is quite enough *ku hingakanya ntjandja*, to put a log across the road and an end to the claim. But the child will perhaps be a boy... not a girl. Never mind! Mboza will wait patiently for a girl ; Shaputa will be born ; he will wait again until she is of age, then he will marry her and she will *pfusha yindlu ya rarana*, viz. raise up the house of her aunt Nsabula (1). Naturally if matters take this course, Gogwe will have to pay the lobola of the girl who has taken the place of the deceased. Nowadays it is not very difficult : he will work, or send one of his sons to work, for the money.

c) The tinamu.

607 When a man goes bukoñwanen, his heart is full of mixed feelings. He trembles lest he may meet the two terrible bakoñwana whom he wishes to avoid ; but, on the other hand, he is greatly rejoiced at the idea that his *tinamu* will welcome him with hearty laughter and jokes and make much of him. Who are these tinamu ? They belong to three categories, which correspond to three kinds of *bulamu*. First of all *the younger sisters of the wife*.
607 *Namu*, plur. *tinamu*, in Ronga, *balamo* in Djonga, comes from the
835 archaic verb *ɣalama*, which means to *follow*, to come after. My tinamu are those who follow my wife, who have been born after her, her younger sisters in particular. They are my *presumptive* wives, therefore I can play with them with the greatest freedom ; I eat together with them from the same plate. They go so far as to smear my face with ashes (tota hi nkuma) and afterwards wash it with water. I have the right to pat their shoulders gently, to snatch something from their hands, to force them to give me something to eat ; and, if they refuse, I will say to them : "How dare you stint me, you, my wives!" They go

(1) One more fact. If Mahungala has taken another wife besides Maphunga, his daughter born of this second wife cannot be used to meet the claim of the widower.

607 so far as to sleep in the hut of my great mukonwana together with
~~835~~ me (p. 242). Nevertheless sexual relations are not allowed.
595 Should a man commit this sin, and should his sister-in-law
582 become pregnant, he will have to pay a fine, or rather he will go to his father-in-law and say : (Viguet) "Ndi dlele ku dya"-"I have killed in order to eat" which means : I have committed a bad action but with the intention of repairing my wrong by marrying the girl. He brings five hoes when he makes the announcement and will remit the remainder of the lobolo later on. A younger sister when married to the same husband as the elder, is called *nhlampsa* of the latter. This term comes probably from hlampsa, to wash, because she washes the dishes of her sister and works more or less as her servant.

607 The right of marrying one's wife's sisters is by no means an
582 obligation. I am not in any way forced to do so, if I do not like
595 them. Most probably, even if I wished to marry them all, I should not have enough oxen to "lobola" them all. On the other hand, the bakonwana are not obliged to give them to me. If I am not a good husband to my wife, if she complains that I illtreat her, her parents will not consent to receive my oxen for her sisters. Should my tinamu marry other men, of course the peculiar bulamu relations will cease. I can no longer allow myself the intimacy I previously had with them. But if they have children by these men, they will call me tatana and I shall call them bana, because I might have been their father, having a prior right of marrying their mothers.

607 My wife's elder sisters are not tinamu to me ; they are
582 bakonwana. Why so ? Because when I married my wife, her elder sisters were already married, according to the law that an elder sister must always marry before the younger. A father would never consent to give away the younger before the elder. Therefore I have never had the opportunity of playing with my wife's elder sisters and considering them as possible wives.

607 By extension the term namu is also applied to my wife's
595 younger brothers. They are bakonwana, in fact (p. 238). Their daughters are my potential wives. However, the relations I have with them are easier than with the elder brothers and

607 with the father of my wife, as these are her natural protectors.
835 In this first category is included the daughter of my wife's
595 brother (Shaputa versus Mboza). With her the relations are perhaps even more free than with my wife's younger sisters. I call her *nsati*. The intimacy is so great that I can hold her breasts (tamele mabele). I can do so even in the presence of my wife, who is her paternal aunt. She will be pleased to see that I am disposed to avail myself of my right to marry her, because her niece will thus become her nhlampsa, she will hlampsela rarana, i. e. become a second wife by the side of her father's sister. But I dare not take such a liberty with the girl if her father is on the spot and sees me. I probably do not possess the oxen to pay for her, and the father looks chiefly to the oxen.

As already pointed out, all the girls belonging to my bakoñwana are in the same position towards me. I can marry them all... if I am rich enough to "lobola" them. The grand-daughter of my wife's brother is a namu, a nsati. She will probably be a baby whilst I am a grown-up man. Never mind! If I meet her, a little girl on her mother's back, I go and take her in my arms, and
602 say to her : "Good morning, my wife!" As regards my wife's
607 cousins, those whose father is a brother of my wife's father and
835 who bear the same family name as my wife, they are also tinamu,
595 but here a distinction must be made. Should the father of one of these girls be younger than my wife's father, I can marry her ; but should he be older I must not do so. Why is this? Because the girl, belonging to an elder branch of my wife's family, takes precedence of my wife ; she is her "hosi", her chief. On the other hand my wife, being my first wife, is the mistress of the house ; this cousin of hers ought therefore to obey her. But she is her chief! That would not be right. The natural family relations would be disturbed.. Such a union is not taboo (a psi yili) but it must be avoided.

835 The *second category of tinamu* includes those women whom I
595 might marry, not on account of the prior right of a group to the
607 women of another group, but because I might *inherit them*. They are the wives of my elder brothers. If their husbands die, I am their legal heir. Relations with them are easy. We joke together, but there is more reserve towards these tinamu than towards those

835 of the first category. Sexual intercourse with them is a great taboo,
595 and a man daring to commit such a sin would be likened to a
607 wizard: he has killed his brother. This is the sin called matlulana (App. VI). My younger brother's wives are not tinamu ; we call each other ñwingi. I do not inherit them except in extraordinary cases when the deceased has no brother younger than himself.

602 There is still a *third kind of bulamu*. I also call tinamu the
835 cousins of my wife who are the daughters of my wife's mother's
582 sisters. These girls do not belong to my wife's clan ; they bear the family name of their father. Therefore I have no right to inherit them : "A hi delani ndjaka," i. e. "we do not inherit from each other." The relations with these tinamu are agreeable, but there is no hope of marriage between us.

2) Relations on the Husband's side.

607 So far we have considered the relation of Mboza with his wife's family. But what about Nsabula and her position towards her husband's relatives ? Nsabula calls Masuluke and Nsengamuñwe *ñwingi*, and the term is reciprocal. It implies great respect. As we saw, the young bride must work a whole year for her mother-in-law. The same respect is shown by Nsabula to Djan, Sam, Fos, her husband's elder brothers. They are also *ñwingi* to each other. "Should I send her to call Djan," says Mboza, "she will kneel down before him and say : 'My father! Mboza calls you!' or : 'Ñwamasuluke (Masuluke's son), you are wanted with us." She will not dare to address him by name. This extraordinary respect is reciprocal. Djan will consider Nsabula as his inferior, but he will never play with her. On the other hand, Komatane, Mboza's younger brother, is only a *namu* to Nsabula. Both will joke together and even occasionally smear each other with ashes. So will Sam, Fos, Mboza and Komatane with Mihlakaza, the wife of their elder brother. Thus we note
607 this law : a woman will generally respect the elder brothers of her
835 husband (benji), and hold very free intercourse with his younger
595 brothers (tinamu), and vice-versa. A man will keep away from

607 his younger brother's wives (bengi) and play with those of his elder
835 brothers (tinamu). Why tis here this difference ? Because, as
we saw, the wife of an elder brother is a possible wife for all
595 his younger brothers, as they have the right of inheriting
582 her, should this man die. On the contrary, an elder brother inherits his younger brother's wife only under quite exceptional circumstances. One does not marry a ñwingi! This would be an insult to one's wife. Nsabula would leave Mboza if Mboza were to marry Magugu, Komatane's wife, because they have been accustomed to call each other ñwingi.

607 To a wife, her husband's elder sister is also a ñwingi (Ndjibari to Nsabula). The husband's younger sister is a namu or *nhombe*, and two tinhombe have very free relations, just as in the case of the tinamu. This freedom exists between female tinamu as well as between tinamu of different sexes.

606 There is a final term to be mentioned : *bakhoti* or *bakhoti-kulobye*, in Ronga, *basevele* in Djonga, a reciprocal term by which the parents of a husband and wife call each other.

593 How far is a woman incorporated in her husband's family ?
769 She belongs to it till her death, provided the lobolo oxen have been paid, but she does not accept the ancestor-gods of her parents-in-law as being her gods. She keeps her own gods, and prayers are frequently addressed to them by her father or by her brothers in favour of her children. In this respect Thongas differ widely from the old Aryan peoples, where a woman had to adopt the religion of her husband's clan when she married.

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606 Before leaving the subject of relations with parents-in-law, and in order to show to what extent the uneasiness and fear which characterises them are carried, I will briefly mention the taboos of the bukoñwana, which play such a great part in Bantu family life. Let me say that most of these taboos (psiyilayilana, small prohibitions), are not so severe as those connected with sexual relations, disease and death. It is not believed that a breach of

586 wives at once. The custom of marrying a wife's tinhlampsa is
582 approved of; it is however not very frequently observed in Thonga
607 families at the present time.

Other women to whom a man has a special right are his relatives
595 on the mother's side, as we have seen; to take a wife from the family in which the father found the mother is recommended and approved of as long as she is not too near a relative.

2) The right of inheritance.

587 The second class of cases does not concern unmarried women
835 whom I mean to lobola, but widows whom I may inherit after
768 the death of their husband. Those whom I may eventually inherit
595 are generally called by me *namu* or *nsati*, and I have very free
582 relations with them, but as already pointed out this liberty never goes so far as to allow of sexual intercourse (p. 247). "Ndi nga da," viz. "I can eat, inherit by prior right" *my elder brother's widow*: she is my regular legacy. As regards my younger brother's widow, I can only marry her if she is old and no longer able to bear children. But if she is still a childbearing woman, to take her is very much against the feelings of the tribe. The reason of the prohibition is this, says Viguet: suppose that this widow of my younger brother already has children. I take her, and have a child by her. The child takes precedence of the first children of its mother: he is their *hosi*, because I, myself, the father, am the elder brother of the deceased. On the other hand, he is *ndjisana* of his other brothers, because he was born after them by the same mother. This is impossible; it runs counter to the most elementary notions of the family. In exceptional cases, however, when no one else can claim my younger brother's widow, I may take her.

587 Next to my true tinamu comes *the widow of my maternal uncle*.
768 If he had many, one might be alloted to me in the distribution.
595 But of course, in this as in all other cases of inherited women, the
582 children born of our union would belong to the family who paid the lobolo, and not to me. I have, in a sense, only the usufruct of the property. She will till the fields for me and serve me with

582 Though laying much stress on this very important difference
595 we must notice, nevertheless, that there is a certain correspondence
835 between the rights of men and women in this respect. A man has a preferential right to his wife's younger sisters, and to the daughters of his wife's brothers, be these men younger or older than his wife. He is a potential husband for all these tinamu. It results from this fact, that, as regards a woman, she is also a potential wife for all her husband's younger brothers, who can inherit her and are also called tinamu by her, and for the sons of her husband's sisters, be they older or younger than her husband.

601 Another feature of these early Australian forms of society
582 is that all the persons belonging to a given generation call each other brothers (or sisters), and call the preceding generation fathers and mothers and the following generation sons indiscriminately. We may compare with this classificatory system the Thonga custom of calling all the father's wives and all the mother's sisters mothers; and all the father's brothers fathers. But this is not necessarily a trace of group marriage. As we have seen before, the meaning of kinship terms is very often extended to other people as a sign of respect or of love; the Thongas, nevertheless, know perfectly well the difference existing between the technical use of these terms and their wider connotation. There is something natural in these appellations. When we call such and such a person Father Morton, Mother Fuller, Brother James or Sister Agnes, no one would take this to be a relic of the group marriage phase! On this point my conclusion would therefore be: certain customs may be considered as traces of this old system, but it is not absolutely necessary to explain them by this hypothesis. The preference accorded to a wife's sisters, or nieces, may very well owe its origin to the following cause: when a group has ascertained that its women are well treated in another group, it welcomes new alliances with that group, thinking that, in this dreadful lottery of marriage, the guarantee given by a previous happy union is not to be despised!

583 (See page 109). Every male member of the group has his say in
835 the matter.
593 2) Brothers will always be ready to help a poor relative to
618 lobola : they work for their group.

3) The acquired wife is their presumptive spouse, though they cannot have sexual relations with her (matlulana). They will inherit her if the husband dies, according to the laws which I have explained in the preceding paragraphs.

583 4) Children will belong to the father, live with him, bear his
593 shibongo (family name), and owe him obedience : boys will
611 strengthen this group, girls will be lobota (factitive of lobola—
618 sold in marriage) for his profit. Father-right rests on the lobola. This is so plain that any child born of a woman who has not been paid for belongs to the mother's family, bears her shibongo name and will live in the malume's village. In Appendix VII, I relate the story of Spoon Libombo as an instance of this primordial law. This is the reason why, when the question is discussed, men insist so much on the preservation of the lobola. They say : "Who will guarantee us the possession of our children if lobola is suppressed ?"

So the lobola is by no means a purchase made by the husband, and still less a present given to the wife's parents.

1) Advantages of the lobola custom.

583 In the primitive collective stage of society the custom has
593 certainly *great advantages* : 1) It strengthens the family, I mean
586 the patriarchal family, the right of the father. 2) It marks the difference between a legitimate and an illegitimate marriage and, in this sense, takes the place of an official marriage register. 3) It puts hindrances in the way of dissolving the matrimonial union, as a wife cannot definitely leave her husband without her group returning the lobola. Therefore it obliges the married pair to have a certain regard one for the other.

However, these advantages must not be exaggerated. Marriages

685 has been pulled up and the sand nicely smoothed down, so that
343 any traces of a thief would easily be seen. He will possibly be
51 recognised at once by the trackers, owing to some peculiarity in the
625 marks on the sand, the foot-print of each individual being more or less known; clever detectives can even ascertain the height and gait of a man from the length of his stride! If there are no peculiar marks in the foot-prints, the trackers will follow them and reach the village where the thief lives. They will perhaps take him by surprise in his hut. If the matter cannot be settled by the headman of the village and has to be brought before the chief, the guilty party will be fined as much as two, three or even five pounds sterling (Tobane) (1).

When detectives have been unable to trace a thief, they assume a philosophical attitude and say: "Only wait. A man who has stolen will steal again, and you will catch him another time!"

643 *Revolt against the decisions of the chief's hubo* is very rare. Should
687 any person take the part of a condemned man and encourage him to oppose the decision of the Court, he will be beaten with a shambock on the square of the capital. "U onhi hubo," "he has spoilt the Court!" Moreover he may have to pay a fine of £ 2. (Mankhelu.)

643 *Answer to some of Professor Frazer's questions on Government.*
835 There are no separate chiefs for war and peace. But in time
224 of war the great induna, who is the Commander-in-chief of the
701 army, directs all military operations. — The chief is never required to marry his own sister or daughter. The only similar case of which I have heard, is that of a hunter who must have sexual relations with his daughter before going on a hunting trip (Part IV).

643 — The king's mother does not hold any special office. —
778 The chief does not keep any portion of his deceased predecessor excepting the nails and hair used for the mhamba (See page 386 and part VI)

538 (1) The following interesting couplet in two sentences aptly describes the thief:
Shishlungwa rendjeletane? — The crown on the hut nicely rounded?
Mangutlu a paha ritibe... — The hawk burns his claws...
The thief is like a crown on the top of a hut. He is a lazy person, he attitudinises and will not work. Evil will befall him, as with a hawk who tries to snatch the meat that is roasting and burns his claws!

APPENDIX VI (See p. 265)

The story of Paulus K., illustrating the matlulana superstition and the Thonga horror of polyandry.

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One of my pupils, who was already a married man of, perhaps, thirty-two years of age, once came to me, very much distressed, to confess a fault which seemed to weigh very heavy on his conscience. On a day of feasting he had drunk too freely and had commited adultery with the wife of his elder brother Guga. He fought with himself for years, not daring to avow an action which seemed to him not merely ordinary adultery but an incestuous act. He finally wrote to his brother: "Though I know that we shall not be able to love each other any more as before, though it pains me so much to separate from you, I will confess! Please forgive me, as I intended to commit suicide on account of my fault!"

The special gravity of the fault consisted in two circumstances: 1) She was his brother's wife and he was now unable to visit his brother when ill, to take part in his burial, or to maintain friendly relations with him. 2) Guga was his elder brother. This made the case still worse.

The letter of Paulus to his fellow evangelists is touching: "I have no right to stay in your assembly, because I have been overcome by the Enemy and committed adultery with my elder brother's wife. I have been long prevented (from confessing) by the Enemy's power. Now I have wept before Jesus that He may help me to pierce the abscess... Satan came and said to me: 'Will you not be ashamed to confess such a thing before men?' I nearly retreated. But at sunrise I made haste to write to you, and now I feel peace and joy. It seems to me that I am going to receive the Spirit of God."

APPENDIX VII (See p. 279)

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The story of Spoon Libombo, showing that, when the lobolo has not been paid or has been returned, the children belong to the mother's and not to the father's family.

Spoon was the son of Shibaninge, a woman of the Libombo family, and of Khobete of the Mazwaya family, who had lobola Shibaninge.

224 826 water, and Natives point to them saying: "The mapseko!" *Pseko* is the name given to old pots employed in connection with the cooking operations (to cook, ku pseka); they are turned upside down in the fire-place and the pots containing the food are placed on top of them. The backs of the hippopotami are like these inverted old black pots and that is why these animals are called after them. It would be dangerous to call them by their own name; they might become angry if they knew that they had been noticed...

224 789 I owe to Mboza a graphic description of the rules of hippopotamus hunting. There are a few villages, near the Nkomati or other rivers, whose inhabitants are regular hippopotamus hunters, and possess the special science, or art, called *butimba*; the hunters themselves are called *batimba*. This science is hereditary: it is taught by the father to his sons. These men possess a peculiar drug, the *mbangulwa*; when the hunter is inoculated with this, he acquires a special power over the hippopotami: should he wound one of them, the beast will not be able to go very far, and it will be possible to follow it and quickly find it. But this inoculation makes the man very dangerous to his fellows: should he beat any one, that person will be at once seized by a disease which will prevent his passing water or stools.

224 835 This is the manner in which these batimba hunt: During the day, the hunter fishes, watching the movements of the hippopotami all the time. When he sees that the propitious moment has come and is ready to undertake hunting operations lasting a month, he first calls his own daughter to his hut and has sexual relations with her. This incestuous act, which is strongly taboo in ordinary life, has made him into a "murderer": he has killed something at home; he has acquired the courage necessary for doing great deeds on the river! Henceforth he will have no sexual relations with his wives during the whole campaign.

224 [789] Before starting he calls his principal wife, the one to whose care the butimba magic drug is committed, and both expose their bodies to the smoke of a medicinal pill. On the same night,

3) The Gangisa.

832 When a boy has gone through the puberty rites, he is grown
836 up and is allowed to practise the *gangisa*. This word comes
882 from *ganga*, which means " to choose a lover." Each girl is asked by the boys to choose one of them ; they *make them choose* (gangisa, factitive derivative). I once observed some boys—they were still very young—flirting round three or four girls just like bees round ripe plums, running after them, and saying repeatedly : " Choose me! Choose me! " There is a special blue cotton print with a large white pattern which is called " gangisa ntombi " viz. to make a girl choose, as it is offered by the lover to the damsel of
836 his choice in order to obtain her favour. When a girl has made
848 her choice, her boy plays with her like husband and wife, first
684 building little huts, etc. but later on in a less platonic fashion. In fact nothing is prohibited in the relations between young people
[837] of the two sexes. A married woman is sacred amongst the Thongas, but an unmarried girl is not. However, she must not become pregnant. (1) If this happens, the parents will say to the lover : "You have spoiled our daughter, you must buy her in marriage." If he refuses, the child will belong to the family of the girl. Excesses in gangisa are condemned. A boy who commits them is said to be an adulterer (a ni bupse) ; of a girl they say : " She will lose her head (a ta ba singe). "

882 As the unmarried boys and girls live in special huts, the *lao*
836 of the boys and the *nhanga* of the girls, at the entrance of the village, it is easy for them to meet during the night. During the day, they generally behave themselves becomingly. But when the lads pay visits to their girls, who sing to the accompaniment

(1) When a girl becomes pregnant, having had relations with her lover inside her parents' village, it is very serious; it is taboo. The boy will have to find a goat, to kill it during the night in the girl's kraal, and to rise very early; then both the boy and the girl, quite naked, must go round the village and sprinkle the fence from inside with a special decoction. None must come out of the huts to look at them. This will prevent the inhabitants from contracting the disease called mukuhlwane (cough, lung complaint) which would otherwise attack them. Moreover the guilty boy will have to pay a fine of £ 5 in [illegible] of the [illegible] of the [illegible].

836/832 of rattles, they sometimes stay with them till late in the night. They bring them small presents, articles of clothing or other things, and thus obtain permission to have intercourse with them. Mboza described to me a very immoral meeting which sometimes takes place in these huts in connection with the *milebe* habit, and which is connected with this gangisa. It is impossible to give the details here. (Annotatio 5.)[1]

836/831 The gangisa custom is, from our point of view, very immoral. Amongst Natives it is not censured at all, and it would be more accurate to speak of *amorality* then of *immorality*, amongst them, on this particular point. A boy who has no such flirt, no *shigango*, is laughed at as a coward; a girl who refuses to accept such advances is accused of being malformed. However Mboza told me he had never had a shigango himself and the abuse in this respect is not approved of by old people. In Manyisa, I heard of a young chief who was leading all the lads to gangisa and forcing the girls to accept them. The extent of this evil depends very much [644] on the character of the boys and girls. I may add that, as regards the young people of the capital, they are not allowed to practise the gangisa because they belong to the royal family and are closely watched.

When they become Christians, Natives readily accept our standard of morality, but cases of fornication are very frequent amongst converts, so much so that this has been rightly called the African sin! I mention this fact, but I must say on the other hand that thousands of pupils in our Native Institutions lead a very moral and continent life and do not seem to find any great difficulty in doing so.

839/177 If the gangisa spoils the whole life of the young heathen, it is only just to add that they do not practise two vices which are prevalent amongst certain civilised nations, onanism and sodomy. These immoral customs were entirely unknown in the Thonga tribe before the coming of civilisation. Unhappily it is no longer so now, as we shall see in Appendix III on unnatural vice in Johannesburg.

836/837 Comparing the habits of the Pedis and the Thongas we observe this strange fact: amongst the Thongas the unmarried girl is

1 [See p.517 in these categories or in 116 --Analysis]

836 837 quite free and the married woman is taboo. Amongst the Pedis it is just the reverse ; girls are absolutely prohibited from having any sexual relation before their marriage and, on the contrary, after marriage a woman who has had children can have intercourse with other men than her husband. I shall try to explain this difference when dealing with Pedi customs. (Part II. Chap. I. G.)

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000 In his book on Kafir Socialism, Dudley Kidd has laid great stress on the fact that the mental development of the African Native is arrested at the time of puberty, and has tried to find remedies for this inferiority. It may be said that the vivacity of mind, the rapidity of comprehension, which is sometimes wonderful amongst the younger boys, decreases when they reach the age of fifteen or sixteen. Cases can even be recorded amongst them of an arrest or slackening in the development of the psychical faculties at the period of puberty. But this is by no means the rule. In all our Institutions we have pupils who show great zeal for study and increased intellectual power between sixteen and twenty. I may say that Dr Mac Vicar of Lovedale concluded as I do, that this assertion of D. Kidd is very much exaggerated.

D. MARRIAGE

582 [178] According to the old Thonga idea it was only when a boy was fully grown that he could think of marriage. In former times lads used to enjoy their youth in carelessness and pleasure, going to dance in all the villages, till they were twenty five years old. Nowadays boys marry very early. Money to lobola is obtained more readily and " gangisa " is not as easy as it used to be, two reasons which have advanced the marriage age in the present generation.

584 574 836 bored air, they enter. Mats are brought and unrolled before them ; this is the act of hospitality par excellence. They remain standing as if they had no wish whatever to sit down. The girls entreat them to rest, and finally they consent to accept the hospitality offered them with such insistence.

The parents of the fiancée then come, squat near them and ask news of their home. They answer, and inquire about the health of their hosts. This is the *djungulisana*, the exchange of greetings which always takes place when a visitor is received. Soon however large pots of well prepared food are brought. " No ", say the young men. " We have eaten at home, we are not hungry. " The same comedy is gone through again ; the masters of the place insist, the guests refuse systematically according to the Native laws of civility—or incivility! The night, however, has come ; the young men have consented after all to partake of the feast. The old people retire to their huts to sleep ; the young girls remain. The custom requires them to spend the whole night with the young men, according to the law of the *shigango* previously spoken of. The bridegroom's shangwane chooses the bride's shangwane and all the other boys choose their girl. But the fiancée hides behind her friends and takes no part in these games.

584 574 In the early morning the young men go to bathe and the girls, their amphoras on their heads, go to fetch water from the lake. On their return they perform another act of hospitality towards their visitors, namely, they throw water down their backs. The boys wash the whole of their bodies, after which the girls anoint them with fat. The day is spent in a pleasant *far niente*. The fiancé and his friends sit in the shade in the square, clad in all their ornaments. They hum songs, they amuse themselves by swaying to and fro as they sit ; the little girls keep them company. Meanwhile the elder girls prepare savoury food for them and go to the fields. Towards evening, the visitors ask to see the parents, to take leave of them ; but the old people send the following message : " No, you shall not see us. We cannot consent to your going away, we have hardly seen you. Spend another night with us. " They must make up their mind to stay a little longer.

585 time it is for good! At last! "Ba mu tlhomile!" that is to say: her parents have duly settled her in her home.

In Nondwane this last surprise is spared the bridegroom. The bride comes to his home on the day of the marriage with her two mats, accompanied by a young girl only, and some days later the mother and female relations bring the rest of her trousseau and erect the wood pile. The young bride, when she has definitely accepted her fate and consented to stay, is called *ntlhoñwa* (Ro.) *nhlomi* (Dj.) (the one who has been brought to her husband). During the first week, she will fill all the pots of the people of the village so that when they awake they will find water for their ablutions and say: "We have found a bride! (He kumi ntlhoñwa!)"; she will remove all the ashes from the fire-places, and smear all the huts.

The first night when she sleeps in the hut with her husband, she may refuse to allow him his conjugal rights. The bridegroom then goes to his father and asks him what he ought to do under the circumstances. The father says: "Give her sixpence or a shilling." Then she consents! (Mboza).

III. *Marriage customs in other Ronga clans.*

The description which we have just given may be considered as typical, but there are many variations to be noticed amongst the clans.

584 In the *Maputju* country, South of Delagoa Bay, there are two 836 informal visits, one of the fiancé, one of the fiancée, to each 374 other's village (ku bona muti). This visit is very short, and they do not accept any food from their hosts. Then the *tjekela* of the boys (the betrothal visit) takes place. They behave in a very dignified manner, do not accept any food the first day and consent to eat on the following day only after having been presented with a gift of 10/ or £ 1! During this visit the girls put 500 reis or sixpence at the bottom of the pots which they fill with water for the ablutions of the boys, otherwise the visitors would say: "The water is too cold. We cannot use it." Sexual

584 relations between boys and girls during these visits were not
836 allowed in former times. Nowadays they are indulged in, and it
574 may be that the fiancé will ask his fiancée to give herself to him " to test her love " (ku kamba lirandju). If she refuses, the whole affair may be compromised.

584 When the girls go to *tjekela* in their turn, they also observe
574 great formality. Money must be given at least ten times to obtain their consent :

1) They refuse to enter the village.
2) To leave the square and go to the hut.
3) To cross the door of the hut.
4) To sit down on the mats. When the other girls consent, the fiancée remains standing.
5) She consents to sit down when given a shilling.
6) They refuse to answer the greetings.
7) When the others have answered, the fiancée still refuses to do so.
8) They do not consent to give news of their home.
9, 10) They still make difficulties about accepting food.

It may be that the fiancé goes to work in the mines during this period, probably in order to complete his lobolo. When he comes back, a special ceremony is performed which is called *hlomula mutwa*, to remove the thorn. The girls pay him a visit. He sits down amidst his companions, having fixed in his hair a long white thorn made of bone. The shangwane of the fiancée (chief bridesmaid) approaches him, dancing, and removes it. This is a way of saluting him on his return, it means the removal of the fatigue and the sufferings he has undergone, of the thorns which have wounded him.

585 The concluding ceremonies of *thloma* and of the *shigiyane* are also more developed in the Maputju country and in Nondwane.

This is the custom in *Nondwane*. Girls accompany the new bride to the conjugal home. They go to the bush to which she has fled, capture her there, and bring her to her husband with songs of mourning (hi ku djila nwana). " Where are you going ? You go to a husband whose heart is jealous! You will bring a

834 784 387 829 753 They must not enter the hut of a person dangerously ill ; this would hasten his death. People who are just recovering from a disease, when they walk about on the paths, must tie around their ankles the root called sungi, which will protect them against the perspiration or emanation left by married people in their footprints, because, as one of my informants said, "ba-ku-khila ba hisa," viz. married people are hot.

834 836 387 829 Moreover not only individuals but the whole social life would be endangered if sexual relations took place when the community itself is in a critical position. They are prohibited therefore in wartime, during the whole duration of hunting parties, and also during the marginal periods. Strange to say, this law does not apply so severely to unmarried boys and girls amusing themselves according to the "shigango" custom (p. 97). It seems that it is not the act in itself which is tabooed, but the act in as much as it is accomplished by regularly married people ; in this case only has it a bearing on the life of the community.

What is the reason of these prohibitions? "Married people are hot." What does this aphorism mean ? The following rite may help us to understand it.

831 834 226 829 789 771 In the Malukeke country, when the whole population enters a lake to kill fish according to the tjeba custom (Part IV. Chap. I), a little boy and a little girl are chosen and laid down under a lion's skin, as if they were husband and wife, and told to remain very quiet during all the time the grown up people are fishing. Not knowing anything about sexual intercourse, they will obey ; then the fish also will keep quiet and will be killed easily. Why ? Because there is in the sexual act something wild, fierce, passionate which, according to the law of correspondance which is at the base of all Bantu magic, has an influence on the hostile forces ; these will be excited and more difficult to overcome : enemies in battle, the animals of the bush during hunting and fishing parties, disease, danger of contamination at death and during the marginal periods. Life is, so to speak accelerated by the sexual act, and this acceleration is communicated to the whole of Nature. Therefore : Keep quiet, be continent!

This profound conception of life also explains why so often certain actions must be accomplished by children, not yet able to have sexual relations, or by old women who no longer practise them.

Let us remark that all these rites do not belong to Animism, properly speaking, but to Dynamism (Part VI. Chap. I), which plays a part almost as important as Animism in Bantu primitive philosophy.

937 of his father, which is considered as *biha*, very bad), he must not
684 take any part in the burial, though he might be the regular "master
783 of the mourning." Relatives will drive him away because they
378 have pity on him, they know what misfortune threatens him. It is
782 a terrible taboo! There are medicines to remove this contamin-
626 ation; the *gila* is removed by them, but the *biha* (bad action)
753 remains! However in the case of the disease called *mpondja*, (which I believe to be the lupus), medicines are of no avail; should a man visit his rival, who is suffering from it, he will die. We have also seen the terrible complications which are believed to take place at the birth of children, when there has been a question of adultery. (P. 40.)

836 These great taboos show that there is a deep feeling amongst the Thongas that promiscuity of any kind is a bad and a dangerous thing. Even in the case of *gangisa*, boys are censured when two of them court the same girl.

10) Divorce.

586 Adultery is one of the causes of divorce. The guilty woman, instead of obeying her legitimate husband and helping him to get his compensation, may choose to go to her lover and live with him. This leads to an immediate divorce. The husband goes to the parents of the unfaithful wife and claims his lobolo. They have perhaps no money to give. However they will try to get it as soon as possible, even if it is by the dissolution of the marriage of their own son; they will perhaps send back his young wife to her parents and claim the lobolo paid for her, in order to meet the claim of the angry husband (See Part II). It would seem easier to go to the thief and claim from him the lobola for the adulteress whom he has stolen (tlhuba). But a thief is not a reliable man! If he has stolen, it proves that he had nothing (!). (See Appendix VIII.)

Divorce frequently takes place for more trivial reasons, for

548 (1) Women of low morals are called in Ronga gwalubana, prostitute. There are plenty of them all round Lourenço Marques, where morality has sunk to a very low level; but this is the result of degeneration.

643 857 However, specially appointed persons watch over him and report of his well being to his father. His youthful playmates are taught to respect him ; he is surrounded in his games by a miniature court, from which he chooses his favourites (tinxekwa) : some of his companions act as counsellors and reprimand those who do not treat him with due respect. They play at court... also at soldiers ; the juvenile troop wage war with the wasps, and also with the boys of the adjoining villages.

643 787 777 751 782 When the child reaches boyhood, the bones are consulted, and sacrifices offered in order to ascertain from the gods whether it be well to take him to the capital. Should the answer be in the negative, there is nothing to do but wait. When the dice declare the propitious moment to have arrived, the transfer is effected and the boy taken to his father. This is a great occasion for the counsellors who have watched over the boy and who thenceforward supervise his education. They feast themselves well (ba fumisana), kill goats, perhaps even an ox, and offer a sacrifice to proclaim to the gods the return to the capital of the heir to the throne ; to his ankle is tied the astragalus of a slaughtered goat, as a protective amulet.

643 881 836 At puberty the boy undergoes, in the same manner as his companions, all the ceremonial rites usual at that period. The principal doctors of the country treat him, in order that henceforth he may be a man (ba mu yimisa a ba wanuna), having full right to enter into the sexual relations of gangisa (p. 97). Care is taken, however, to attach to his person comrades of riper age, who will prevent him giving way to excesses, (suka banhwanyana la bakulu ba ta mu gema, ba mu sibela ku kula), which would arrest his growth and render him small and feeble. He thus lives in relative continence, participating in the play and in the work of boys of his own age, and looking after the herds. At times he gives a feast, when his father happens to have presented him with an ox with which to make merry.

643 538 595 Now we see him arrived at manhood, at the age when the Blacks take a wife. If his father is still living, the young man is not allowed to marry officially. He may certainly lobola, viz., contract regular marriage in the usual way, and possibly

684 VI.) If found guilty, he will have to pay an extra fine of two
782 oxen (1).
584 When the abducted woman is an unmarried girl, the matter
836 is not serious. No trouble is entailed, provided she does not become pregnant. In the latter case, the seducer can say: "Ndji dlele ku dya: I have killed to eat," viz. "I am ready to lobola the girl" (p. 97). If the girl does not consent, the man is free. But if the man does not wish to marry the girl by paying a full lobolo, whilst the girl and her relatives want him to do so, he will have to pay as much as £ 30 and an ox. "He has spoilt his cause!" His own relatives will be arrested and forced to pay. They are responsible for him and will scold him severely. (Mankhelu).

683 *Fighting ending in blows.* The wounded man runs to the
649 square of the capital and shows himself. The assailants will have to pay a fine of £ 8, three for the chief and five for the victim, or of two oxen, one for the chief and one for the plaintiff. (Mankhelu).

682 *Murder.* A distinction is made between involuntary murder,
672 which is an accident (mhango, Dj.), and a deliberate assassination.

In the case of *involuntary murder*, Mankhelu describes the proceedings as follows:—Should you have killed a man by accident in a hunting trip, for instance, you will try to arrange matters directly with his relatives, if you were good friends; your relatives will give them a girl.. You dare not offer your own daughter, because they may refuse her, on account of their bad feelings! The same objection will not be made if your people provide the girl. They will accompany her with ten hoes and an ox, saying: "This is fat to smear our daughter." The notion which is at the base of this custom is not that a human person is the natural compensation for another human person, but that you give the diminished family a means of making good its loss. In fact as soon as the girl has born a child to the relatives of the deceased, she is free. If these men wish to keep her as their wife, they must

(1) The neighbouring Chopi tribe, on the contrary, leaves the husband to arrange matters as he likes. Formerly he used to kill the adulterer. But cases of adultery are never brought before the chief.

831 —I mbolo ya shuburu.
881 —Penis est incircumcisi viri.

Banhwanyana ba ka Makwakwa ba kundja na ba hlanamile. N'yini?

Puellæ ex regione Makwakwa manibus apertis coeunt. Quid significant hæc verba?

—I mahlehlwa.

—Est semen mahlehwa.

(Hlehlwa is the seed of a creeper growing along the ground; this seed [517] is of the same size as a two shilling piece and possesses, in its central part, two hooks standing up.)

[Note 4 (page 88): these are the formulae:

Shana khololwane ma ri tiba le'ri onhaka milebe?

Do you know the bird that injures the labia minora?

—I mbolo ya shuburu.

It is the penis of an uncircumcised man.

Banhwanyana ba ka Makwakwa ba kundja na ba hlanamile. N'yini?

The girls from the region of Makwakwa have intercourse with open hands. What do these words mean?

—I mahlehlwa.

—Mahlehwa is the semen.

(Hlehlwa is the seed of a creeper growing along the ground; this seed [517] is of the same size as a two shilling piece and possesses, in its central part, two hooks standing up.)]

832 "Annotatio quinta (P. 98. 182). Externorum genitalium
836 minora labra verbo milebe (singul. nebe) designantur, quæ
304 puellæ adeo trahere solent ut ea usque ad quinque, decem,
881 etiam quindecim centimetra extendant. Quæ labra nonnunquam
171 parvis baculis metiuntur, eorum longitudine, apud comites suas, immo apud sponsos, gloriantes. Istis pravis moribus enim nihil aliud puellæ sequuntur nisi futuri mariti gratiam, cui apud Ba-Pedi, si sponsam suam labra non satis extendisse arbitratur, eam domum dimittere et boves suos reposcere licet. Puellæ aululam pulmenti plenam parant quam operculo claudunt. Ad quas pueri vespere veniunt et stipem dant ut admittantur. In casae solo considunt et puellas cenantes spectant dum digitos in aululam demittunt. Puellæ quarum milebe quatuor digitos longa sunt, quatuor digitis usæ comedunt: bakulu, sunt, i.e. adultæ, et lætantur amatores. Aut tribus tantum, duobus aliquando utantur. Adolescentulæ cavis manibus cenant.

[Note 5 (pages 98 and 182). The labia minora of the outer genitals are called by the word milebe (singular nebe), and the girls are in the habit of pulling them so much that they extend from five or ten to as many as fifteen centimeters.

832 Sometimes the girls measure their labia with small sticks
836 and boast of their length to their companions and even to their
304 bridegrooms. The girls follow these perverse practices for
881 no other reason than for the sake of their future husband.
171 Among the Ba-Pedi the husband may, if he thinks that his bride has not sufficiently stretched her labia, send her home and demand his bulls back. The girls keep a pot full of food ready and cover it with a lid. In the evening the boys come to the girls and give them a small gift in order to be admitted. In the house they sit down on the floor and watch the girls eating from a pot with their fingers. The girls whose milebe are four digits long eat using four fingers: they are bakulu, that is, adult, and they enjoy their lovers. Or they use only three fingers and sometimes two. The young girls eat with the palms of their hands.]

765 "Annotatio sexta (P. 154). Seu quis per ætatem iam pro-
783 vectam imbecillior factus erit, sive qualibet de causa tam
833 impotens ut sperma emittere non possit (a nga kumi mati), ceteri viri quid fiat sciscitabuntur. Quod si utique parum procedit, tota inhibetur cærimonia. Qui vero se invicem eodem ritu miscere debebant, iis ritum conficere non fas est. Ille jejunio, per quinque dies, prout res postulat, artissime utetur, cui medicinæ ad rem accommodatæ exquirentur.

[Note 6 (page 154). If someone should have become feeble because of advanced age, or if for some reason he should be so impotent that he cannot emit sperma (a nga kumi mati), other men ask what should be done. For if it proceeds quite insufficiently, the whole ceremony is held up. And those who should have had intercourse in turn in the same ritual fashion are not permitted to complete the rite. He [the impotent man] has to fast very strictly for five days as the situation requires and the remedies appropriate to the situation will be sought.]

843 "Annotatio septima (P. 154). Nocens maritus uxorque sui
834 purgandi causâ alium ritum peragent. Uxor mariti suaque
841 pudenda veste intima et inquinatissima tergebit, quam postea comburet.

Ambo, ad ignem accedentes, caput manusque calefacient. Inde cinerem collectum mulier adipe miscet, quo mariti artus illinit, digitis bracchiis cruribusque tractis, quod 'lula' dicitur. Postea, noctibus duabus sequentibus, coibunt. Si maritus, non cum uxore sua, sed cum puella quadam ex alio vico, stupri consuetudinem junxerit, huic fossorium donabitur, ut ritum 'lula' perfectum veniat.

[Note 7 (page 154). If the husband and the wife are guilty of an offense, they perform another rite for the sake of purging themselves. The wife will cover her husband's and

845 848 if this result is not attained, it is a proof that the child is really illegitimate and the midwife will force the woman to confess her guilt and the name of her lover. Should she have had many and hide the names of some of them "the womb will refuse" (khuri dji ta yala) and the birth will be possible only when the confession is complete.

848 787 Should an illegitimate child be born without this delay, he will come to the light with his hands closed and refuse to take the breast. This will give the midwife an opportunity of extorting a confession from the mother. These women practise a special kind of divination : they take a broken pot, put pumpkin seeds into it and place it on the fire. If the seeds, instead of burning to a cinder, explode with a noise, it is a proof that the woman is guilty. Each explosion means a lover, and all their names must be revealed. (Tobane.) This confession is strictly private. The midwives will consider it a professional duty not to divulge the secret to anyone, even the father. But the mother must confess, as it is absolutely necessary that the true father of a child be known on the day of its birth.

848 837 789 It is taboo for the lover of the woman to come to the door of the hut after the birth of the illegitimate child as long as the umbilical cord has not fallen off. The child would die. Even later on, should the mother be sitting on the threshold of the hut with the baby in her arms, and the man pass along the street in front of them, one of the midwives will go (has she not heard the confession ?) and take between her fingers a pinch of sand from the footprints of the lover, and, without a word, will throw it on the fontanella of the baby. If the husband happens to be present, he will know by witnessing this act that he is not the true father. I do not think he will be very angry. The child is his and, if it is a girl, nobody else will "eat the oxen !" For him this is the main consideration !

845 847 As regards the birth of twins, we shall study later on the strange customs which accompany it : in olden times one of the children was killed ; except in such a case, no child is ever put to death wilfully on the day of its birth.

3) The Gangisa.

832 836 882 When a boy has gone through the puberty rites, he is grown up and is allowed to practise the *gangisa*. This word comes from *ganga*, which means " to choose a lover." Each girl is asked by the boys to choose one of them ; they *make them choose* (gangisa, factitive derivative). I once observed some boys—they were still very young—flirting round three or four girls just like bees round ripe plums, running after them, and saying repeatedly : " Choose me! Choose me! " There is a special blue cotton print with a large white pattern which is called " gangisa ntombi " viz. to make a girl choose, as it is offered by the lover to the damsel of 836 his choice in order to obtain her favour. When a girl has made 848 her choice, her boy plays with her like husband and wife, first 684 building little huts, etc. but later on in a less platonic fashion. In fact nothing is prohibited in the relations between young people [837] of the two sexes. A married woman is sacred amongst the Thongas, but an unmarried girl is not. However, she must not become pregnant. (1) If this happens, the parents will say to the lover : "You have spoiled our daughter, you must buy her in marriage." If he refuses, the child will belong to the family of the girl. Excesses in gangisa are condemned. A boy who commits them is said to be an adulterer (a ni bupse) ; of a girl they say : " She will lose her head (a ta ba singe). "

882 836 As the unmarried boys and girls live in special huts, the *lao* of the boys and the *nhanga* of the girls, at the entrance of the village, it is easy for them to meet during the night. During the day, they generally behave themselves becomingly. But when the lads pay visits to their girls, who sing to the accompaniment

(1) When a girl becomes pregnant, having had relations with her lover inside her parents' village, it is very serious; it is taboo. The boy will have to find a goat, to kill it during the night in the girl's kraal, and to rise very early; then both the boy and the girl, quite naked, must go round the village and sprinkle the fence from inside with a special decoction. None must come out of the huts to look at them. This will prevent the inhabitants from contracting the disease called mukuhlwane (cough, lung complaint) which would otherwise attack them. Moreover the guilty boy will have to pay a fine of £ 5 in [illegible] of the kraals.

836 of rattles, they sometimes stay with them till late in the night.
832 They bring them small presents, articles of clothing or other things, and thus obtain permission to have intercourse with them. Mboza described to me a very immoral meeting which sometimes takes place in these huts in connection with the *milebe* habit, and which is connected with this gangisa. It is impossible to give the details here. (Annotatio 5.)[1]

836 The gangisa custom is, from our point of view, very immoral.
831 Amongst Natives it is not censured at all, and it would be more accurate to speak of *amorality* then of *immorality*, amongst them, on this particular point. A boy who has no such flirt, no *shigango*, is laughed at as a coward ; a girl who refuses to accept such advances is accused of being malformed. However Mboza told me he had never had a shigango himself and the abuse in this respect is not approved of by old people. In Manyisa, I heard of a young chief who was leading all the lads to gangisa and forcing the girls to accept them. The extent of this evil depends very much
[644] on the character of the boys and girls. I may add that as regards the young people of the capital, they are not allowed to practise the gangisa because they belong to the royal family and are closely watched.

When they become Christians, Natives readily accept our standard of morality, but cases of fornication are very frequent amongst converts, so much so that this has been rightly called the African sin! I mention this fact, but I must say on the other hand that thousands of pupils in our Native Institutions lead a very moral and continent life and do not seem to find any great difficulty in doing so.

839 If the gangisa spoils the whole life of the young heathen, it is
177 only just to add that they do not practise two vices which are prevalent amongst certain civilised nations, onanism and sodomy. These immoral customs were entirely unknown in the Thonga tribe before the coming of civilisation. Unhappily it is no longer so now, as we shall see in Appendix III on unnatural vice in Johannesburg.

836 Comparing the habits of the Pedis and the Thongas we observe
837 this strange fact : amongst the Thongas the unmarried girl is

1 [See p.517 in these categories or in 116 -- Analysis]

836 quite free and the married woman is taboo. Amongst the Pedis
837 it is just the reverse ; girls are absolutely prohibited from having any sexual relation before their marriage and, on the contrary, after marriage a woman who has had children can have intercourse with other men than her husband. I shall try to explain this difference when dealing with Pedi customs. (Part II. Chap. I. G.)

* * *

000 In his book on Kafir Socialism, Dudley Kidd has laid great stress on the fact that the mental development of the African Native is arrested at the time of puberty, and has tried to find remedies for this inferiority. It may be said that the vivacity of mind, the rapidity of comprehension, which is sometimes wonderful amongst the younger boys, decreases when they reach the age of fifteen or sixteen. Cases can even be recorded amongst them of an arrest or slackening in the development of the psychical faculties at the period of puberty. But this is by no means the rule. In all our Institutions we have pupils who show great zeal for study and increased intellectual power between sixteen and twenty. I may say that Dr Mac Vicar of Lovedale concluded as I do, that this assertion of D. Kidd is very much exaggerated.

D. MARRIAGE

582 According to the old Thonga idea it was only when a boy was
[178] fully grown that he could think of marriage. In former times lads used to enjoy their youth in carelessness and pleasure, going to dance in all the villages, till they were twenty five years old. Nowadays boys marry very early. Money to lobola is obtained more readily and " gangisa " is not as easy as it used to be, two reasons which have advanced the marriage age in the present generation.

789 "*ringela bowumba*," from the verb ringa, to try ; it is the attempt
761 to bring some influence to bear on the misfortune of the bereaved mother.)

9) ADULTERY.

~~837~~ 395 Amongst the Thongas *true* adultery for a *man*, married or unmarried (bumbuye), consists in committing sin with a married woman. Should he have relations with a girl, it leads to no consequences at all. Nobody will blame him, if the girl does not conceive. Should she have a child, he will only be forced to marry her ; she will become his second wife. His first wife will not at all resent his bad conduct. Sometimes she will herself get him the girl he wants. There is nothing in her heart like the jealous dignity of a European spouse! She will keep all her capacity for jealousy (bukwele) for the time when the second wife comes to the village, and shares with her the affection of their common husband. Adultery with an unmarried woman is nothing more than "gangisa."

837 But should a man have abducted a *married woman*, a woman
684 who has a master (ñwinyi), who has been paid for, then the
692 matter becomes very serious. The husband is very skilful at discovering her misdoing. As soon as he begins to have doubts about the fidelity of his wife, he chooses a friend and asks him to watch her. She is very cunning, her lover also ; but the friend is on the watch and some time perhaps, catches them in the bush, when she goes to gather fuel, or near the pool, where she draws her water. He comes back to the husband and informs him that he has caught them in the very act. Then the husband tells his wife that proof has been obtained and that she had better go at once to her lover and take something from his hut ; she obeys, and comes back with his blanket or any other object. This is "la pièce à conviction." The husband goes with it to the counsellor who is in charge of his village ; together they apply to the chief. The chief sends the counsellor who is responsible for the village of the lover to summon him. The confrontation takes place and the story of the case is investigated.

837 684 692 The woman is questioned, and confesses when, where, and how many times he has sinned with her. If he denies this, the object taken from the hut is exhibited. The adulterer is condemned by the chief to pay a *whole lobolo*, £ 15 to £ 20, as much as is necessary to buy a wife. He is rebuked before the whole assembly. "If you had taken a girl, it would not have mattered at all. Why did you abduct a married woman ? Do you not know that it breeds endless trouble at court (tindaba) ?"

The counsellor of the deceived husband goes to the counsellor of the lover to claim the money. The latter must go to the guilty man. The parents of the adulterer insult their son : "You see! All this money lost now! If only you had lobola a wife with it!" They must help him to find it at once, because this is a law universally recognised : the price of adultery must be forthcoming. (Nandju wa bumbuye a wu pfumali). The poor man will have to pay ; he will even have to add a hoe to "drive away" (hlongola) the counsellor, who keeps it for his reward!

837 684 783 753 608 Why is adultery so strongly prohibited and punished ? Not at all from any moral consideration of purity or chastity, but for two other reasons. First a social one. Adultery with a married woman is a theft, because she is owned by a master. She is not punished herself, except when the watcher finds her out and gives himself the pleasure of thrashing her to his heart's content. The whole punishment falls on the man ; he is the thief. But there is also a physical reason for it : the *matlulana*! We have already met with this word. *Tlulana* means to jump over each other, to compete with each other. In the sexual domain it is said of two men who have relations with the same woman. "They have met [826] together in one life through the blood of that woman ; they have drunk from the same pool" (Viguet). This establishes between them a most curious mutual dependence : should one of them be ill, the other must not visit him ; the patient might die. If he runs a thorn into his foot, the other must not help him to extract it ; it is tabéo ; the wound would not heal. If he dies, his rival must not be present at his mourning or he would himself die (See page 137). Should he even be the actual son (sometimes it happens that a son commits adultery with one of the younger wives

837 of his father, which is considered as *biha*, very bad), he must not
684 take any part in the burial, though he might be the regular "master
783 of the mourning." Relatives will drive him away because they
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604 with his friends. The malume comes back and is angry. But when he hears that the trick has been played by his mupsyana, he shrugs his shoulders and says : "Oh it is all right if it is the ntukulu who has done it ! A shi biwi ntukulu! The nephew must never be beaten!" When another day the nephew comes again, the malume says : "You starved us to death the other day!" — "Is there any more food handy that I may do it again ?" answers the boy. The sons of the malume seem to have
605 less patience with their cousin than their father has. When the cousin goes definitely beyond the limits of their endurance, they will chase him out of the village saying : "Go away, you dog!" The niece is sometimes as troublesome as the nephew. If she is married and pays a visit to her malume with her husband, she will leave the latter comfortably settled in the malume's hut and search the whole village to discover pots of beer, which she will bring to him as if she were the mistress of the home. She may even catch a fowl and give it to him.

604 Sometimes the malume himself points to one of his wives and
837/587 says to the ntukulu : "This is your wife. Let her feast you well!" The woman much enjoys the situation, which she finds quite entertaining. She makes a feast for the ntukulu and calls him *nkata*, husband. It will sometimes go so far that the nephew will say to the uncle : "Please make haste and die that I may have your wife!" — "Do you intend to kill me with a gun ?" says the malume... But all this talking is a mere joke. The nephew can take many liberties with this aunt, especially in the Ronga clans. He will never however have relations with her during the life of her husband. Should he do so, he will have to pay the high fine due for a true adultery. Possibly he will inherit her when the malume dies, but she will not be his full property : she will only be given (nyika) to him, and the children will eventually belong to the malume's male relatives. All over the tribe this right of inheriting a malume's wife is recognized. In the Northern clans she is called *kokwana* ; in Ronga territory she is called kokwana by her nieces only, but her nephews call her *nsati* (wife), and this term seems also to be an old feature of the relationship system. This relation of malume and mupsyana is so important

I. *Original promiscuity.*

582 As regards the idea that promiscuity prevailed originally—a supposition which is combated by some scientists (see W. H. R. Rivers, "On the origin of the classificatory system of relationship," Anthropological Essays), I see no trace of it amongst the Thongas. Amongst the Pedis, there is one day when free intercourse is allowed all through the clans ; it is the closing day of the second circumcision school. But this custom can be explained on a totally different basis.

II. *Group marriage.*

178 As regards *group marriage*, we may see a remnant of the system
582 in the fact that a man has a special preferential right to certain
595 women of his wife's family, the tinamu. His son will also consider
837 it peculiarly appropriate to take a wife from his mother's clan, the one into which his father married.

The tinamu custom might be explained in that way. There is however a very marked difference between the group-marriage system and the Thonga family law. Amongst Australian aborigenes, whilst a man of a group has the right of marrying all the women of the other group, a woman of the other group has the same right to marry all the men of the first. Amongst the Thongas it is absolutely taboo for a married woman to have relations with anybody except her own husband. Polygamy exists and is approved of, but polyandry is strongly censured and considered a disgusting custom. The main reason for this is no doubt the *matlulana* superstition, which bears all the character of a very ancient idea in the Thonga system. The story of P. K. which I relate in Appendix IV, will show how deeply the sin of polyandry is felt (1).

(1) It is true that the Ba-Pedi who are neighbours of the Thongas, have a kind of polyandry (See page 99). But this has nothing to do with group marriage, and the wives of a rich man whom he allows to have intercourse with other men, choose their lovers as they like and not according to a law of preferential right binding two groups.

681 When goats have damaged somebody's garden, there is no
685 fine to pay. The shepherds are whipped and the matter is
643 thus concluded. Should the father of the boys, however, take their part and protect them with his weapons, he will be summoned to the tribunal of the chief and have to pay a fine of £ 5 or two or three goats.

643 Thonga Natives who have but a few head of cattle, are
231 accustomed to entrust them to the care of neighbours possessing
686 a large herd, in order to spare themselves the trouble of finding herding boys. There are some laws regulating this matter. If the owner of the cow, or the pig, or the goat, gives money in advance to the master of the large herd, all the calves, pigs, and kids, which may be born revert to him. But if he has not paid anything, the master of the herd is entitled to choose one pig out of the first litter ; or he can keep the third or fourth calf or kid. If it be a hen, one of its chickens will belong to the man who took care of it. Should the owner forget to remit the due reward, there will be trouble (pongwe). When he goes to take his cattle back, the master of the herd will keep one head for himself, and, if a dispute arises, both will go to the chief, at least if the matter is important, if the animal in question, for instance, is an ox.

If an ox incorporated with another man's herd dies, the master of the herd will inform the owner in order that he may go and dispose of the meat. Should he be living too far off, the ox will be eaten on the spot and the skin will be sent to the owner.
231 Suppose the master of the herd pretends that the ox is dead, but
685 has only put it with another herd, and sent a skin to the owner to deceive him, it is a case of theft, which will be judged as such.

3) Criminal cases.

684 *Adultery*. Our tribe punishes adultery very severely indeed,
787 at least when the woman is married. The fine is a full lobolo.
(See page 197.) Amongst the Nkunas if the accused man denies
837 his guilt when questioned indoors, the bones are consulted, or even the magicians who practise the "nisa" divination. (Part

marginal period during which the maphisa must use protective medicines against the dangers of the bush, and keep certain rules. 224 784

As a protection they carry their charms, especially the *ndjao*, the root of a certain juncus which is used on many other occasions. As regards the taboos which they must observe, I will first mention those applying to travellers in general, especially the *salt taboo* (I. p. 339). Should they take salt with them, this would "precede them" (rangela), and they would kill no game. It will be soon enough to look for salt when they have killed. But the great taboo of these hunting trips is the *sexual taboo*. This was already imposed before starting and it must be observed Phroughout the expedition. The necessity of avoiding anything connected with sexual relations is so great that maphisa will take with them to cook their food little boys under marriageable age. What is the reason of this prohibition? I have explained it in dealing with the Thonga idea of sexual relations (I. p. 189). If the hunters transgress the law, the big animals will be so wild that it will be impossible to approach them ; they will furiously attack the men who have sinned, because they know them, and woe upon them! So much so that if the hunters see an elephant or a hippopotamus in obstinate pursuit of one of their number, they will begin to insult him for having spoilt the whole trip by his misbehaviour, and send him home. 224 784 834 825

The law of continence is also binding on *the hunters' wives* at home. It is true that when the absence of their husbands is prolonged for a very long time they may become unfaithful to them and the men, on their return, will find babies waiting for them which are not their true children. This will cause them no unhappiness, as these babies none the less belong to them, their wives having been duly bought, and the time for fear is now passed, as they have returned home safely. The fact that these men welcome the children born during their absence caused me to think that hunters' wives were not subject to the sexual taboo as their husbands are. But further inquiry has shown that this is not true. Old Makhani assured me that incontinence on the part of the wife at home would have as a consequence that the husband would be attacked and killed by wild beasts far away in the desert. 224 784 837 851 752

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

551 609 of the white man. M. Torre do Valle has given a list of nicknames of the merchants and other inhabitants of Lourenço Marques in his Diccionario Shironga-Portuguez. It is well worth consulting, and the only thing wanting is a photograph of the white man and an explanation of the name ; it would be a splendid illustration of Native wit!

551 576 618 So far we have spoken only of *personal* names and nicknames. But, beside these, every man possesses his clan name, or surname, viz., the name of the first of his known ancestors. Grown up men prefer being addressed by this name, which is *shibongo*, viz. the name by which they are "glorified." This subject is treated in Part III (p. 360).

APPENDIX III (See p. 98)

Unnatural Vice in the Johannesburg Compounds.

838 548 588 In January 1915 one of my colleagues passing near one of the Johannesburg Compounds, saw a big company of Natives singing and walking in the direction of another Compound where a great dance was taking place. Amongst them there were a number of women. My colleague asked his Native evangelist how it was possible that so many women should be walking about in that part of the world, where the feminine element is very small. The man told him : "They are not women! They are *tinkhontshana*, boys who have placed on their chests the breasts of women carved in wood, and who are going to the dance in order to play the part of women. To-night when they return to their dormitories, their 'husbands' will have to give them 10/, and only on that condition will the tinkhontshana remove their breasts and comply with the desire of their husbands." I sent for this evangelist who knew everything about the inner life of the Compounds and asked him about it ; this is the information I received :

Unnatural vice (bukhontshana) has become a regular institution in the Compounds. The word *nkhontshana* seems to come from the Ngoni, a Zulu dialect spoken in the Limpopo plain. The nkhontshana is the boy used by another man to satisfy his lust, and the man is called his *nuna*, husband. When a gang of new workers arrives in a Compound, the Native induna, who has the supervision of the Compound, and the Native policemen, who have their rooms at the

838 entrance of the yard, come and "humutsha" i. e. make proposals to the
548 younger ones, not only to little boys (there are only a few of these) but
588 also to boys up to the age of twenty and more. If these lads consent to become their bakhontshana, they will be treated with greater kindness than the others. Their husbands will give them 10/ to woo them (buta) and will choose for them easy occupations, as, for instance, sweeping the dormitories, whilst the others will have to go to the hard underground work. Those who have not been chosen on their arrival by the policemen will probably receive a similar proposal from their older companions in the mine, and these men will then help them in the difficult task of "be hole" i. e. digging their hole. But the "husband" will have not only to woo this peculiar kind of *nati* (wife) ; he must also *lobola* her, and a feast sometimes takes place when as much as £ 25 is put on the ground, a goat is killed and a real contract made which binds the nkhontshana to his master for the whole time he remains in the Compounds. The elder brother of the boy will receive the money in this disgusting parody of the Bantu marriage.

Sometimes the husband pays his nkhontshana at the end of each month as much as £ 1.10 and this represents a big increase in the earnings of the boy.

What happens when the contract is broken ? The "husband" claims the money remitted by him. If the boy refuses to return it the matter may be brought before the Compound Manager, who generally dismisses the plaintiff, saying : "If the boy does not love you any more, let him go."

839 The cause of the evil is not difficult to detect : it is the segregation
548 of the Native miners in these enormous conglomerations of males, far
588 from home, far from their wives, a most abnormal condition of life for men who have always enjoyed the freedom of the African bush. When prostitutes were allowed to live near the Compounds, unnatural vice was not so common ; when they were driven out, bukhontshana at once increased enormously, and thus the disappearance of one evil brought a new one in its train. On the other hand, my informant asserted that Thongas (Matshanganas, as they are called in Johannesburg) had never much frequented the haunts of prostitution, from fear of venereal diseases. They prefered a nkhontshana ; the danger was not so great! As the word nkontshana comes from the Bilen country, the home of the Matshanganas, it might be thought that this vice was known and practised amongst Natives before it took on such extensive proportions in the Compounds. There is an old Thonga song which

936 of rattles, they sometimes stay with them till late in the night.
832 They bring them small presents, articles of clothing or other things, and thus obtain permission to have intercourse with them. Mboza described to me a very immoral meeting which sometimes takes place in these huts in connection with the *milebe* habit, and which is connected with this gangisa. It is impossible to give the details here. (Annotatio 5.)[2]

836 The gangisa custom is, from our point of view, very immoral.
831 Amongst Natives it is not censured at all, and it would be more accurate to speak of *amorality* then of *immorality*, amongst them, on this particular point. A boy who has no such flirt, no *shigango*, is laughed at as a coward; a girl who refuses to accept such advances is accused of being malformed. However Mboza told me he had never had a shigango himself and the abuse in this respect is not approved of by old people. In Manyisa, I heard of a young chief who was leading all the lads to gangisa and forcing the girls to accept them. The extent of this evil depends very much
[644] on the character of the boys and girls. I may add that, as regards the young people of the capital, they are not allowed to practise the gangisa because they belong to the royal family and are closely watched.

When they become Christians, Natives readily accept our standard of morality, but cases of fornication are very frequent amongst converts, so much so that this has been rightly called the African sin! I mention this fact, but I must say on the other hand that thousands of pupils in our Native Institutions lead a very moral and continent life and do not seem to find any great difficulty in doing so.

839 If the gangisa spoils the whole life of the young heathen, it is
177 only just to add that they do not practise two vices which are prevalent amongst certain civilised nations, onanism and sodomy. These immoral customs were entirely unknown in the Thonga tribe before the coming of civilisation. Unhappily it is no longer so now, as we shall see in Appendix III on unnatural vice in Johannesburg.

836 Comparing the habits of the Pedis and the Thongas we observe
837 this strange fact: amongst the Thongas the unmarried girl is

1 [See p.517 in these categories or in 116 --Analyst]

838 entrance of the yard, come and "humutsha" i. e. make proposals to the
548 younger ones, not only to little boys (there are only a few of these) but
588 also to boys up to the age of twenty and more. If these lads consent to become their bakhontshana, they will be treated with greater kindness than the others. Their husbands will give them 10/ to woo them (buta) and will choose for them easy occupations, as, for instance, sweeping the dormitories, whilst the others will have to go to the hard underground work. Those who have not been chosen on their arrival by the policemen will probably receive a similar proposal from their older companions in the mine, and these men will then help them in the difficult task of "be hole" i. e. digging their hole. But the "husband" will have not only to woo this peculiar kind of *nsati* (wife) ; he must also *lobola* her, and a feast sometimes takes place when as much as £ 25 is put on the ground, a goat is killed and a real contract made which binds the nkhontshana to his master for the whole time he remains in the Compounds. The elder brother of the boy will receive the money in this disgusting parody of the Bantu marriage.

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839 says: "You, nkhontshana, get up, the cocks are crowing, be not
177 surprised by the rising sun." This song warns the girl who has gone
548 during the night to sleep in the lao, the boys' hut, that she had better
588 run away at once lest she should be found in a place where she ought not to be. But it is a girl who is meant here and not a Johannesburg nkhontshana! No! Greek heathenism knew this refinement of immorality and indulged in it, but Bantu heathenism, whatever may be its corruption, never dreamed of it. Even to-day, though it is said to have penetrated into some parts (as in the Maputju country), the Native kraal feels a real abhorrence of it. I was told the following story. A man, in Bilen, had married a woman; he came to the Rand and took his wife's brother as his nkhontshana. When he returned home, his parents-in-law were very angry with him; they gave him back the lobolo money and took their daughter from him, saying: "You are a hyena! You are a wizard! You might as well sin with your mother-
839 in-law!" Unnatural vice was taught to the South African Bantus by
177 men of a foreign race; it first invaded the prisons; now it is raging in these big Native miners' settlements, where it is deflouring the Bantu youth. For if it does not immediately destroy their physical strength, this perversion of one of the most essential functions of man corrupts the sources of moral stamina and endangers the foundations of Bantu social life.

Is there no remedy for this terrible evil?

The worst aspect of the situation is that the immense majority of the Natives themselves do not consider this sin as of any importance
839 at all. They speak of it with laughter. I was told that it is severely
684 prohibited by law and that any boy found guilty of bukhontshana is
548 condemned to twelve months' imprisonment. But it is extremely difficult to bring the evidence necessary for conviction. The indunas and Native policemen enter into a conspiration of silence, being themselves the first and greatest sinners in this respect. Happily the Mission is fighting the evil as energetically as possible and the Compound Managers help its agents to secure separate dormitories, where a certain number of boys can find a refuge against contamination. A few hundreds or thousands escape in this way, but what is that in comparison with the tens of thousands who are exposed to this frightful temptation in the Compounds fittingly spoken of, by a wise South African statesman, as the University of crime?

839 My informant, who was perfectly acquainted with the circumstances
548 of life in the Compounds, mentioned the following measures which he

839
548

thought might be useful in the repression of this vice. Prohibit the use of curtains enclosing two beds, this being an unmistakable sign that Bukhontshana is practised behind them. Arrange the beds so that they do not touch each other. (I hear that some Mining Companies have spent and are still spending large sums of money to secure this end, but the actual sleeping accommodation ought to be entirely transformed if the Companies are determined effectively to check the evil.) Introduce a strict watch during the night. Put in electric light everywhere in order to illuminate the dormitories at any time when required. I do not know how far such measures would be effective. The only conclusion I would offer on this painful subject is this. As white civilisation is responsible for the introduction and the frightful development of this vice amongst the Natives, the Whites must not remain indifferent in the face of an iniquity which threatens the very life of the South African Tribe.

821 "Kengelekezeeeee !" and this exclamation is repeated from one village to another. *Kenge* is the descriptive adverb which means the form of the crescent of the moon. Each "moon," or month, is considered as being a new one, the old one having died, and there were special names for each month of the year (See Part VI).

[841] 856 828 821 852 As soon as the mother of the child has resumed her menses (the menses are called tinwheti, months) and this happens as a rule on the third month after the delivery amongst Thonga women, she takes her garments, washes them, puts on new clothing and then proceeds to the ceremony of the *yandla*. The child must be "given his month." This is done in the following way. The day the new moon appears, the mother takes with her a torch or merely a brand from the fire and the grandmother follows her carrying the child : both go to the ash-heap behind the hut. There the mother throws the burning stick towards the moon and the grandmother flings the child into the air saying : "This is your moon !" (hweti ya ku hi yoleyo) : then she puts the child on to the ashes. The little one cries and rolls over in the dirt on the ash-heap. Then his mother snatches him up (wutla), nurses him, and they go home.

This ceremony, which is certainly a rite of passage, is said to "open the chest of the child" otherwise "his ears would die," he would remain stupid. When a child is not intelligent, it is usual to say to him : You have not been shown your moon ! (1)

852 846 854 Therefore the *yandla* means a progress made by the child, the entrance into a new phase of his existence. The fact is emphasised by the three following changes which take place on the day of the yandla : 1) Henceforth his father is allowed to take the child in his arms. Up to that day, this was taboo, as the child being continually with his mother was perhaps polluted by the dangerous blood following the birth ; but now she has washed her clothing and has been purified by the reappearance of the menses ; so the danger no longer exists. 2) It is now

(1) However the name of the child's month is soon forgotten and is never afterwards recalled. This seems to show that the custom is dying out, as well as the knowledge of the names of the various months.

But in the Northern clans a characteristic rite has been preserved, or borrowed from the Sutho-Pedis, who attach great importance to it. It is called *khomba*, or *yisa matin*, to lead to the water, and is performed in the following manner. The girl, when she thinks that the time of nubility is near, chooses an adoptive mother, possibly in a neighbouring village. She works for her, and helps her in gathering her fuel. When the day has come, she runs away from her village and goes to this adoptive mother "to weep near her" (a rilela ka yena). These are distinct separation rites. She says : "Ndji khombile" — "I am of age." Then will begin a *seclusion period* of one month. Three or four girls receive the initiation together. They are shut up in a hut, and when they come out, must always wear over their face a veil consisting of a very dirty and greasy cloth. Every morning they are led to the pool, and their whole body is immersed in the water as far as the neck. Other initiated girls or women accompany them singing obscene songs, and drive away with sticks any man who happens to be on the road, as no man is allowed to see a girl during this period. If a man happens to come near the group, the women ask him the secret formulae of the circumcision school, not the long ones but the short ones, probably those which contain licentious words. Should he be unable to answer, they beat him. It is said that a man who sees a girl during this month becomes blind! When the cortege of women accompanying the initiated has returned home, the nubile girls are imprisoned in the hut. They are teased, pinched, scratched by the adoptive mothers or by other women ; they must also listen to the licentious songs which are sung to them. Though they are trembling from cold, being still wet, they are not allowed to come near the fire. They are also instructed in sexual matters, and told that they must never reveal anything about the blood of the menses to a man. They are also exhorted to be very polite to every grown up person, and must salute everybody entering the hut, even those passing before the door, by clapping their hands. Sometimes the wind moves some dead leaves ; they mistake this noise for the sound of steps and salute reverently!

At the end of the month the adoptive mother brings the girl

* * *

841 Let us consider first how conjugal relations are regulated in normal circumstances.

Every month during her "tihweti" the woman is taboo and no intercourse is allowed. This is one of the severest taboos. Should a husband infringe this law, his health would fail, and, should he be called to go to war, "his knees would shake," he would tremble and be unable to fight (1). As regards the woman, these days constitute a real marginal period during which she is absolutely secluded from her husband. She must keep to the left half of the hut and not trepass across the centre line. If she wants snuff, she is not allowed to go to her husband in the part in which he lies; she must send a child to fetch the tobacco she wants! During these days she sleeps on a special mat and puts on special clothes, the old ones which she brought with her for this purpose on the day she first came to the conjugal dwelling. When cooking, she must not touch the mealie meal with her hands, but with a spoon. A rich man who has plenty of spouses, and therefore plenty of food, will not touch the pot of the tabooed wife! At the end of the period, she smears the floor of the hut and puts on her ordinary clothing. (Annotatio 12)[1]. This is evidently the aggregation rite by which the woman returns to everyday life.

843 754 Normal relations continue during the first year of married life. Should the wife become pregnant, they are not suspended. It would even seem that they are rather recommended, as is shown by the following story: A young man once complained to me that he had been bewitched by his maternal aunt. The result of the spell she had cast over him was that he was no longer able to have sexual intercourse with his wife; and he was very angry, as he asserted that the aim of his aunt, in doing this, had been to prevent the successful issue of the pregnancy. She wanted

(1) The woman during her tihweti is also taboo for other persons. I heard of the case of a child who suffered from a hernia in the scrotum five days after birth. People said that it was the fault of certain women who had taken it in their arms during menstruation.

1 [See p. 518 in these categories or in 116—Analyst]

we shall discuss in Part VI the
843 origin of this extraordinary idea. A woman who has had a
834 miscarriage is impure for three months at least. Menstruation
841 must have taken place two or three times and have cleansed her before her husband can have any sexual relation with her. (Compare Annotatio 7,[1] which applies to the transgression of this rule.)

7) Parturition.

846 We have described, when treating of birth, the many taboos
753 which accompany parturition. The *busahana* period, from the moment of delivery till the fall of the umbilical cord, is very much dreaded. When a woman is suffering from *shilumi* (a disease which sometimes follows delivery, probably owing to a displacement of the organs) she must not enter the hut of a woman who has been confined. The ailment would "jump over to her" (tlulela). There is however a way of preventing contagion. The visitor must take the piece of clothing which she uses as a girdle and throw it to the patient, and the patient throws back her own girdle to the visitor. Then she can enter : "They have acted according to the law, there is no more *yila*."

846 A mother must not drink any milk from the birth of the child
851 until its presentation to the moon. Afterwards she is allowed to drink only milk from cows which have calved many times.

The rite of *kunga* is performed in the case of a first-born child. This child is called *ñwana wa matibula*, the child by which the woman has *tibula*, viz. has become a mother. The etymology of this word *tibula* (Zulu zibula) is not known. When people come to greet the baby, its parents will not allow them to take it in their arms. They must pay something for permission to do so, even a brother, a sister, or a grandmother. The father is not subject to this rule ; "the child is his, belongs to him." Nowadays this ceremony means only that these people are happy to receive the new born child amongst them. There is no taboo in it. But it is certainly related to the fact that in giving birth to a child for the first time, the woman has passed from womanhood to motherhood.

1 [See p. 517 in these categories or in 116 - Analyse]

247 (L.), with its white or pink blossoms, which have spread all over
351 the coast.

Having now finished our first general inspection, let us add some details about the huts and the open places in the village.

342 The hut, the construction of which we shall describe later on,
784 (Part IV) has an opening (nyangwa) of variable dimensions closed by a door. In some parts of the Gaza country it is so small that one must positively crawl to enter it. Everywhere one must at any rate stoop low (korama). As regards the *threshhold* (ntjandja wa shipfalo), it is not taboo to step over it. The headman's threshhold however is dreaded because it was treated with medicines when the hut was built, so it is taboo to sit on it ; these powerful medicines might do harm and
342 even cause death. In the middle of the black clay floor is a
354 kind of raised circle, in the centre of which fire is occasionally lighted in winter on account of the cold. It is the interior *shitiko*. Cooking may be done here if it rains ; glowing embers sometimes remain on it during the night and numberless babies have been burnt to death by falling into the fire while their mothers were
513 sleeping. On the left, on entering, is the sleeping place (shilawo)
853 of the wife, on the right that of the husband. They both however
841 generally spread their mats on the right and sleep beside each other. It is only during the tabooed periods (menses, nursing), that the husband must keep to his own particular side (p. 188).

353 The back of the hut is generally occupied by the big basket (ngula) in which clothing and seeds are kept. This spot is called *mfungwe*. In the roof *(lwangu)* are fixed or suspended various articles : ears of sorghum or millet, cobs to be used as seed at the next sowing, assagais, sticks and knobkerries etc., and against the walls one frequently observes rough drawings made with white clay, or, in the vicinity of towns, chromos of Queen Victoria, Edward VII, or Don Carlos, as the case may be!

361 The hubo and the bandla differ from each other. *Bandla* is
351 a Zulu word which has supplanted the Ronga term *shisiso*, viz.,
562 "the place where one finds shelter from the wind." Men light a small fire there to warm themselves. They also eat together

832 Sometimes the girls measure their labia with small sticks
836 and boast of their length to their companions and even to their
304 bridegrooms. The girls follow these perverse practices for
881 no other reason than for the sake of their future husband.
171 Among the Ba-Pedi the husband may, if he thinks that his bride has not sufficiently stretched her labia, send her home and demand his bulls back. The girls keep a pot full of food ready and cover it with a lid. In the evening the boys come to the girls and give them a small gift in order to be admitted. In the house they sit down on the floor and watch the girls eating from a pot with their fingers. The girls whose milebe are four digits long eat using four fingers: they are bakulu, that is, adult, and they enjoy their lovers. Or they use only three fingers and sometimes two. The young girls eat with the palms of their hands.]

765 "Annotatio sexta (P. 154). Seu quis per ætatem iam pro-
783 vectam imbecillior factus erit, sive qualibet de causa tam
833 impotens ut sperma emittere non possit (a nga kumi mati), ceteri viri quid fiat sciscitabuntur. Quod si utique parum procedit, tota inhibetur cærimonia. Qui vero se invicem eodem ritu miscere debebant, iis ritum conficere non fas est. Ille jejunio, per quinque dies, prout res postulat, artissime utetur, cui medicinæ ad rem accommodatæ exquirentur.

[Note 6 (page 154). If someone should have become feeble because of advanced age, or if for some reason he should be so impotent that he cannot emit sperms (a nga kumi mati), other men ask what should be done. For if it proceeds quite insufficiently, the whole ceremony is held up. And those who should have had intercourse in turn in the same ritual fashion are not permitted to complete the rite. He [the impotent man] has to fast very strictly for five days as the situation requires and the remedies appropriate to the situation will be sought.]

843 "Annotatio septima (P. 154). Nocens maritus uxorque sui
834 purgandi causà alium ritum peragent. Uxor mariti suaque
841 pudenda veste intima et inquinatissima tergebit, quam postea comburet.

Ambo, ad ignem accedentes, caput manusque calefacient. Inde cinerem collectum mulier adipe miscet, quo mariti artus illinit, digitis bracchiis cruribusque tractis, quod 'lula' dicitur. Postea, noctibus duabus sequentibus, coibunt. Si maritus, non cum uxore sua, sed cum puella quadam ex alio vico, stupri consuetudinem junxerit, huic fossorium donabitur, ut ritum 'lula' perfectum veniat.

[Note 7 (page 154). If the husband and the wife are guilty of an offense, they perform another rite for the sake of purging themselves. The wife will cover her husband's and

765 way that all the men can see her pudenda which is
835 much tabooed (that is, sinful).'']
834 "Annotatio undecima (P. 161). Hic, mulier paulo dilutiore
765 colore magnaque statura addit: 'Hi kundjana. id est:
792 coeamus!' "

[Note 11 (page 161). Here a woman with a slightly lighter color and of large stature, adds: Hi kundjana, that is, "let us have intercourse!"]

841 "Annotatio duodecima (P. 187). Hæc sunt ipsissima verba, quibus Makhelu mulieris menstruansis taboo (id est nefas) describit. Mulier menstruans est res, quæ imprimis 'yila' est. Per sex dies 'yila,' id est, nefas est. Septimo die transit flumen ad se lavandam. Octavo ei nondum licet cum marito suo coire; forte enim sanguis pudendis ad hæret, eà insciente. Magis 'refrigescit.' (Verbo phula menstruans mulier comparatur cum aula a foco remota).

Si, ante id tempus, maritus cum uxore cœat, ægrotus fiat, veretrum retro ita recedat ut vir urinam reddere non possit et, brevi tempore, moriatur. Talem vitæ exitum multi habuerunt. Radicibus arboris cui nomen est mayilana vel mulieris menstruantis vestis particulà, a medico ad levem pulverem redactà, quæ ægro bibenda est, morbus sanari potest. Aegrotus multum sanguinis reddet, et veretro exeunte, salvus est."

[Note 12 (page 187). These are the very words with which Makhelu [sic] describes the taboo (that is, the sin) of the menstruating woman. A menstruating woman is something which is, first of all, yila. For six days she is yila, that is to say, taboo. On the seventh day, the flow that cleanses her passes over. On the eighth day she is not yet allowed to have intercourse with her husband; for perhaps some blood is still sticking to her pudenda without her knowledge. She "cools down" even more so. (By the word phula the menstruating woman is compared to the pot removed from the stove.)

841 If the husband should have sexual intercourse with his wife
834 before this time, he will be taken sick, his private parts will
756 decay to such an extent that the man would no longer be able to pass urine and would die within a brief period of time. Many have had such an end to their life. The sick man can be cured by a liquid containing the roots of the tree that is called mayilana or by a particle of the menstruating woman's dress, reduced to a light powder by the medicine man. The sick man loses a lot of blood; after his penis is able to pass water again, the man is well again.

843 her own pudenda with a much befouled intimate garment which
834 she afterwards burns.
841 Going to the fire they both warm their head and their hands. Then the woman mixes the ashes she has collected with fat and smears it over her husband's limbs, rubbing along his fingers, his arms, and his legs, which is called lula. Afterwards, in the two nights following, they will have intercourse. If the husband has had sexual intercourse not with his wife but with some girl from another village from lustful desire he will be given a fossorium so that the rite lula will come to its completion.]

765 "Annotatio octava (P. 155). Si mulieris parentes procul
783 habitant, maritus eius comes itineris erit, quacum superiore
833 nocte coibit, ad aquæ lustrali vim novam dandam."
505 [Note 8 (page 155). If the woman's parents live far away, her husband will be her companion on the way and he will have sexual intercourse with her the night before in order to give the lustral water new power.]

765 "Annotatio nona (P. 160). Faciebat dum 'Khunye khunye';
535 quibus verbis significatur coitus (khunyeta)."
831 [Note 9 (page 160). She was saying Khunye, khunye during
834 this time; these words signify coitus (khunyeta).

"Annotatio decima (P. 160). Carminum, morum temporis marginalis natura eo obscenior est quo nobilior defunctus fuit. Viguetus narrat: [518] 'Duce vel uno ex principibus mortuo, luctuque consueto præterito, luctum privatum, ad quem boves immolentur, celebrari. Carnem ad baculos humi fixos alligari; homines inde mulierem vocare, eamque posteriorem vestem exuere juberi, neque ullam vestem nisi anteriorem habere quam, si velit, exuere ei liceat. Eam, postea, divaricaturam esse ad unam ex carnis particulis dentibus apprehendendam ita prominentem ut omnes viri eius pudenda videant, quod plerumque 'taboo' (id est nefas) sit.' "

[Note 10 (page 160). The nature of the songs, a custom of the marginal period, is the more obscene the greater the nobility of the deceased person was. Viguet relates: [518] "When the leader or one of the chiefs is dead and the usual mourning has passed, they stage a private mourning at which bulls are sacrificed. They tie the flesh to poles fixed in the ground; then the men call a woman and order her to take off the clothes on her back and they do not allow her to have any clothes on except the one in front which, if she wants to, she may also take off. Then she must seize one of the bits of meat with her teeth, bending forward in such a

of the bush are also burnt as soon as the grass dries up, so as to obtain fresh grass as early as possible in the spring. In autumn, after the harvest, oxen are allowed to wander about in the gardens, where they eat the mealies and millet and sorghum stems, and find better grass. 231

The Thongas castrate most of their bulls ; however they keep one or two in each herd for breeding purposes. Strange to say, these beasts are generally very tame ; they are hardly any wilder than the castrated oxen. However, the boys sharpen their horns and excite the bulls of different herds to fight. They pour live ants on their foreheads to irritate them. They give them names ; e. g. Makonyama, the one who threatens on both sides, — Mombomakhele, the one who has curly hair on his head, the terrible one, — Ntlhontlha-ba-tsha, shisa-sha-munga, the one who beats the fire... people are burnt by the sparks as by embers of the mimosa tree, — Mabala-ya-tilo, the "stripes of heaven," — Mabata-bata, the one with many spots, etc. Many of these names are suggested by the colouring of the animals (1). I never heard songs in praise of the cattle similar to those found amongst the Ba-Sutho for instance. It does not seem that oxen have at any time played such an important part in the tribal life of the Thongas as is the case amongst Zulus or Suthos. 231 552

Women, especially those of childbearing age and having sexual relations, are not allowed to take care of oxen. It is taboo. When they require dung to smear the huts, they send little children or girls whose menses have not yet begun or who are at any rate unmarried, to fetch it from the oxen kraal. When oxen are sick, they are entrusted to the care of little girls, who must sometimes stay with them as long as two months without returning home. We have already met with these feminine taboos concerning oxen (I. p. 184) and seen that these prohibitions are based on the idea that the menstrual blood is as dangerous for oxen as for 231 562 841 784

(1) Native cattle are by no means of pure breed. There are many races which have been crossed : a small race with short horns and another with large lyre-shaped horns, probably brought from the Transvaal to the coast of Delagoa Bay. Madagascar oxen, with their strange prominence on the back, resembling zebus, have also been imported in great numbers into Lourenço Marques for butcher's purposes. Possibly some have been used for breeding.

231 men having relations with women during menstruation (I. p. 187).
562 Should a drop of it fall in the cattle kraal, this would endanger the
841 health of the whole herd. Women are even prohibited from
784 passing through a herd of oxen ; they must go round it, because otherwise the death of the calves would ensue. Amongst the Ba-Ngoni this taboo is so strong that a woman guilty of having transgressed against it was put to death (1).

231 The object of oxen-breeding is not milk but the acquisition
262 of *wealth* ; oxen mean wealth to the Native, a means of purchasing
556 girls and of thus increasing his family. Oxen are also bred for food, the meat being highly appreciated and divided amongst all the members of the family according to the strict rules previously explained (I. p. 329). The slaughtering is done by piercing the heart with an assagai, a painful and sometimes very protracted operation. This occurs at marriage feasts, at other family and national gatherings, at the sacrifice for rain (Part VI), and on special occasions, once a year for instance, when a headman wishes to feast his people. All, even neighbours who are not relatives and travellers, are welcome to the feast. Natives have wonderful olfactory powers. They seem to smell out the *lisuna*, viz., the peculiar odour of the meat, a mile off, and when an ox has been killed you see them emerging from the bush on all sides!

234 As regards *milk*, it certainly plays a part in the food of villages which are fortunate enough to possess a well-filled oxen kraal. The *milking* of the cows presents difficulties unknown in Europe! African cows have not yet learned to submit tamely to this operation! The calf must always be allowed to suck a few mouthfuls, then a boy pulls it away from the teat and the cow consents to be milked. Should a cow be too wild, they pass a string through its

241 (1) We meet here with an interesting instance of a superstition having no scientific
462 basis whatever, which is nevertheless productive of good results. Women must keep apart from oxen. Since the plough was introduced amongst South African Natives, they have been quick to notice that it is a very useful instrument, and have adopted it in many places. The plough has to be drawn by oxen and men alone are allowed to drive them. Thus women are relieved of the heavy work of tilling the fields which had been allotted to them by immemorial custom. It is probable that further knowledge will free the Natives from their old fear and from the taboo which resulted from it ; yet the idea that everything connected with oxen belongs to the domain of man will remain and thus real social progress will have been obtained through an absurd superstition !

nostrils and so keep it quiet during the whole operation. The milk is generally taken in a large wooden bowl. It is very seldom consumed as a liquid, but is *eaten* when thickened by coagulation. The fresh milk is poured into a calabash with an opening at the bottom closed by a cork : a certain quantity of whey has been kept in the calabash and this causes the fresh milk to curdle at once. When curdled but not yet set, it is called *shitjubi* and is eaten with spoons by men and women. But it is left to decompose : the whey *(mulaza)* soon separates from the thick part, which becomes entirely solid and is then called *ntjhwamba*. The cork at the bottom of the calabash is removed, the *mulaza* flows out freely and is drunk by the men and herd boys. The *ntjhwamba* is put into a plate and each man or woman, not having her *tihweti* (I. p. 187), approaches and takes a spoonful of it. A woman during menstruation must never drink milk, nor during her confinement or until her child has been presented to the moon (I. p. 52).

The milk of the first week after a cow has calved is taboo. It must not be mixed with other cows' milk, because the umbilical cord of the calf has not yet fallen off. It can, however, be boiled and consumed by children, as they do not count! After that milk is never boiled : not that there is any taboo to fear, but it is not customary. Natives do not give any clear reason for these milk taboos. They have no objection to selling their milk to strangers; on the contrary, they are so eager to make money out of it that they often add water to it, and any European having had dealings with them in milk matters would have his story to tell!

Goat's milk is left for the herd boys ; men do not touch it.

II. *Other domestic animals.*

Besides oxen, the Ba-Ronga breed *goats* (mbuti, yin-tin), the care of which is relegated to the small boys (I. p. 62). Practically every one possesses one or more goats, whilst oxen are much more rarely met with.

842 The Thonga child is always received into this world with great joy by the whole family. If it is a girl, it means oxen to buy a wife for one of the sons later on ; therefore it means increase not only in the wealth but in the number of the members of the family. If it is a boy, there is no direct material enrichment, but the clan has been strengthened and the name of the father is
846 glorified and perpetuated. In the case of the birth of a first-born
539 child (ñwana wa matibula), a special ceremony is performed at the
851 end of the first week. When the grandmother has smeared the
603 hut, she goes home, summons all the female relatives, sometimes as many as ten or fifteen ; they take with them food, ochre and fat prepared for this purpose. Two or three men accompany them. They enter the village of the child executing a special dance called *khana*, and singing the following song (which is the proper song to glorify a first-born) :

I celebrate my pot which has done *ngelebendje*...

They compare the child with a pot of clay which has gone through the firing process. It has been tried as one always tries a pot by letting it fall to the ground ; but it is not shattered, because it has not cracked in the furnace, it has kept intact ! This is what is meant by the descriptive adverb ngelebendje.

846 Then they smear the baby, the mother, the father, everybody
851 in the village with ochre. It is a great feast. A goat will be
603 killed, if possible, because the father and mother have "found a village" (kuma muti) by the child, they have "grown roots" (mila mitju). This is a law, but its omission is not taboo. When the grandparents do not perform this ceremony, it is an insult to the parents of the child, but no evil consequence will follow.

765 is a meteorite ground to fine powder. It is interesting to compare this use of the meteorite with the fact that, amongst the Thongas, this fumigation is intended to prevent
753 convulsions. Convulsions, as we shall see (Part VI. Chap. II. B) are caused by the
821 mysterious power of Heaven. The meteorite has fallen from Heaven. Thus the baptism of smoke aims at bringing the child under the influence of the two main elements of Bantu religion : the ancestor gods and Heaven.

5) THE TYING OF THE COTTON STRING.

854 When the child "tiyelanyana" viz. "becomes a little firm,"
857 the mother, having to plough her fields and to cook the food, begins to seat him on the sandy soil, after having made a kind of hole of about five inches in depth. We have seen Thonga babies already sitting at the age of two months. But this "dumping" hardly meets all the requirements, and the mother looks for a girl to help her to take care of the baby (wa ku'tlanga na ye, to play with him). She puts the child in the charge of an elder sister or a cousin ; a girl of five to ten is quite strong enough for the purpose. I have often admired the patience of these miniature nurses, sometimes not very much bigger than the child they carry, with their very troublesome babies.

852 But very soon the child begins to crawl (kasa) and this is the
715 time when a very striking rite is performed. This rite seems to be practised all over the tribe, but it has more importance in the Northern clans than amongst the Ba-Ronga. I shall here give the description of Viguet, who belonged to the Tsungu clan and had emigrated to the Spelonken. My readers must forgive me if I cannot tell the story with all its details and if I am obliged to write some of them in Latin (1).

851 These are the ipsissima verba of my informant : "This is a
833 great law amongst the Thongas. When a child begins to crawl,
766 even before, the *puri* is tied round his waist. The *puri* is a
842 cotton (2) string. Father and mother fix the day ; if they forget to do so, their parents, (the grandparents) will remind them of the law. They must have sexual intercourse, but in such a way that the mother will not become pregnant, s. n. i. (Annotatio 2).[1] The mother will have to take in her hands "their filth" (thyaka ra hona) smear the string with it and tie it round the child. It will

(1) A more complete description of this rite and of some others related to the taboos, of the Thongas will be found in the Revue d'Ethnographie et de Sociologie, Oct. 1910, Paris.

(2) There are plants of cotton probably subspontaneous in the Low Country of the Transvaal of Delagoa Bay.

1 [See p. 516 in these categories or in 116--Analyst]

851 remain there till it falls to pieces. After this operation the
766 child is "grown up" and three things are allowed which were
833 taboo before :

1) The child, if he dies, can be buried on the hill, in dry soil. Before the *boha puri* he would have been buried in wet soil, near the river, as is customary with twins and children who have cut their upper teeth first.

2) He can participate in the strange purification called *hlamba ndjaka* which takes place after the death of one of the inhabitants of the village (See ceremonies of death).

852 3) The parents can again have conjugal intercourse, though
766 they must avoid conception till the child is weaned. Before this
833 ceremony it was absolutely prohibited, and should they have
831 sinned in this respect and the mother have conceived, they would
842 be very guilty! It is a dangerous taboo! They would have "stolen" the child, stolen it from the law (yiba nawen). The child would not have "entered the law." It would be useless to tie the string round him in order to repair the evil done. Should he live long, should he even become an old man, he will have to be buried in wet soil, otherwise the rain would be prevented from falling.

Amongst the Malulekes and the Hlengwes such children are even burnt after their death. We shall speak later on about the mysterious relation established by the Thongas between these children, their burial, and the rain.

852 Amongst the Ba-Ronga this rite is called *boha nshale* (to tie
854 the cotton) and can be performed in the same way or even more simply by the father (Annotatio 3).[2] Parents, when they have duly tied the string on the little one, are said to have *fuya nwana*, viz. taken possession of the child.

Amongst them again, another thing is then allowed which was taboo before. The child can be carried on the shoulders without ntehe by the arms alone (hi minkono).

851 It is clear that the tying of the cotton string means the official reception of the child into the family, even into human society. Before that, he was hardly considered as a human being, he was *shilo* (a thing), *khuna* (an incomplete being). Now he is *nkulu*,

2 [See p. 516 in these categories or in 116 - Analyst]

862 603 The very day of his weaning, the child must leave the village of his parents and go to stay with his grandparents. A little mat and a few clothes have been prepared for him and the grandmother comes to take him. If he is the first-born, he must go to the parents of the mother ; the second child will be received by the parents of the father. Sometimes father and mother accompany their offspring themselves, during the night, to make the separation easier. It is a sad day for them as well as for the child! The following day the parents go again to see how the little one has stood their absence. They do not enter the village. They remain hidden in the little copse and look at their child through the branches! He must not see his mother, otherwise he would cry... A touching scene indeed!

862 Should the weaned child be obliged to stay with his parents, the mother will smear her breast with Jamaica pepper (biribiri) so that he may lose his taste for the maternal milk as quickly as possible.

862 842 753 The act of weaning is called *lumula*. It comes from the verb *luma* to bite, followed by the reversive suffix *ula* which means to take away, to undo (like *un* in undo). The mother as well as the child are said to have *lumuka* viz. to be in that state when weaning has been accomplished. This word is pronounced with a curious smile, because the act of weaning is in direct relation with the sexual life. As we have seen, sexual intercourse is absolutely prohibited before the tying of the cotton string, viz. for one year after the birth. Afterwards it is allowed, but the mother must not conceive another child before she has weaned the one she is nursing. The law is even more stringent : she must not conceive before her milk has entirely passed away (phya mabelen), after the weaning ceremony, because if she became pregnant, that would "cross the way of the weaned child" (tjemakanya ñwana), cut "his road" (tjemela), "go beforehand" (rangela) ; he would become thin, paralysed, with big holes below the shoulders. He must first be firm (tiyela), then a new pregnancy will not be able to cause him to suffer from dysentery or other ailments!

Often the parents do not observe this very hard law! If they

862 842 see that conception has taken place before the child is weaned, they will hasten the ceremony. But they will be severely judged by the old people. Should the little one be sick, the husband will be scolded by the parents of the mother. They will say : "A djambeli ñwana," he has caused damage to the child! If a man forces his wife to transgress the law, she will run during the night to the hut of her husband's father to tell him. Actually this is a very rare occurrence. Children follow each other regularly at an interval of two and a half or three years, and seldom is the law transgressed which says : A mother must nurse her child during three "hoes," viz. three ploughing seasons.

B. CHILDHOOD

591 861 857 The infant, shiputja (Ro.) shihlangi (Dj.) is on the way to become a boy, mufana. During the first years of this period, which extends from the third to the fourteenth year, he stays with his grandparents. They do not give him much "education." He grows at Mother Nature's good pleasure. And as Nature is not always synonymous with morality, he sometimes commits bad actions. Sometimes also, fearing chastisement for a particularly wicked deed, he flees from the kraal of the grandparents and goes home, where the paternal hand will hold him a little more firmly. But the father does not bother much with these little boys and they enjoy an immense amount of liberty. These years are perhaps the happiest of their whole life. They spend their time in the following occupations : herding the goats, stealing, catching game, learning the science of the velt, playing.

1) Herding the goats.

231 Just as the Kaffir corn is the old Thonga cereal which is used alone in the rites, so the goat is the domestic animal par excellence, no doubt the first which the tribe knew and that which is always employed in the sacrifices. Goats are very common ; everybody

595 which, in this country, decimate so many herds! Every three
592 years, theirs wives bear children. If they are boys, it is an
361 honour; the village will not lack heirs, neither will the father
556 lack arms to help and to defend him! If they are girls, it means
842 wealth; oxen will come to the family! Their brothers will not lack wives, for the sisters will be sold to provide for the brothers. Meanwhile, the huts are erected, large and small, that of the head of the family being the largest, the *malao*, those of the boys the least well kept.

Let us consider a Ronga favoured by fate, as was Gidja, of the country of Libombo, near Rikatla. His village numbered not less than twenty-four huts, with beautiful shady trees behind; notice the enclosure for the cattle and for the goats on the central place, that for the pigs behind the houses... There are cocks and hens pecking about everywhere, dogs wandering around in search of something to steal, for they receive hardly any food; a crowd of youngsters leading the cattle, and everywhere the noise of the pestles crushing the daily mealies in the large mortars. He walks about proudly in his favoured enclosure, contemplating his prosperity with pleasure. Young men are ready to do the work he gives them to do. He will treat them with beer brewed by his wives. And often the people of the neighbouring villages will join his people for dances and games on the fine square, which is surrounded and enclosed on all sides by huts.

595 And, above all things, in the evening, each of his wives will
556 bring him the pot which she has cooked for him. This is the
574 essential matrimonial duty of the wife. Not one will fail in it. Gidja, the lord of six or seven pots of mealies seasoned with a sauce of monkey nuts, will feast and be satiated (shura) every day, and that means much, for the inner capacity of a Thonga is something wonderful.

He will become large and stout, and shining, which in South Africa is a sure sign of wealth and nobility. The stouter he gets the more will he be respected. But it can easily be imagined that he cannot alone empty all these pots over which he reigns supreme. He feasts his children, but others too come to pay him visits at the evening hour when they know him to be surround-

5) Sterility.

842/782 In the Northern clans, when a woman does not conceive, a special sacrifice is offered, very similar to the one made by the Rongas on the day of the conclusion of the marriage. A goat is killed; a long piece, one foot in width, is cut from the skin of the animal in the ventral region, and three openings are made, one for the head and the two others for the arms. The three openings converge to a point where the astragalus bone of the goat is fixed to a strap. The sterile woman puts on this skin; the astragalus will be seen on her breast. She will also fix the gall-bladder in her hair and wear these ornaments for a time. To the mind of the Thongas, it seems evident that children are given by the gods; hence the idea of a sacrifice in case of sterility. But in addition to the religious rite, native doctors have many drugs to militate against this misfortune (1). The special porridge cooked for a sterile woman (mhika, shimhiko) is called *shiboleko* amongst the Ba-Ronga. The poor woman is despised.

586 Sterility can be a cause of divorce; the husband has the right of sending his wife home. But generally the parents of the woman find a *nhlampsa*, viz. a younger girl, and give her to the husband as a second wife.

6) Pregnancy and Miscarriage.

843 A special treatment is followed for the first pregnancy when the breasts begin to swell, a condition which is called *munyama* (darkness). The physician makes small incisions near the breast and on the legs, and draws out a little blood. The pregnant woman also drinks a decoction for the same purpose, i. e. to

(1) A Pedi man told me that in his tribe the first thing to do was to ascertain if sterility were due to the husband or to the wife. For this purpose a little bit of the clothing of the husband and of the wife was cut off and placed near a spider's nest. This spider is a kind of mygala of enormous size. If the spider took the piece of the husband's clothing down to its nest, it meant that he was in fault, and vice versa.

765 fashion. The father and mother smear the infant's girdle
783 made of cotton flax with their genital juices so that the infant
833 becomes invigorated by their vital juices and thus may be
587 received into the life of the tribe.

These physiological conceptions, though they may be absolutely false from the scientific point of view, certainly proceed from deep intuitions regarding the mystery of life. I insist on the fact that they are not derived from religious ideas. It is a mistake to attempt to explain the whole life of the Bantus by their religion alone, as many writers are inclined to do. These sexual practices are not more religious than those prophylactic measures which we ourselves employ to preserve ourselves from tuberculosis or small pox. They are dictated by a special notion of contagion which is admittedly false, scientifically speaking.]

595 "Annotatio quarta decima (P. 285). Doctori G. Liengmei,
833 nostro medico, cum sæpe curaret viros qui medicinam
842 petebant qua infantes procrearent, fassi sunt se singulis noctibus cum tribus vel quatuor uxoribus coire. (A monogamis quibusdam audivimus uxorem adeo fatigari ut noctu exiret laboratum ut a marito evaderet.) Cum medicus eos hortaretur ut quinque dies concubitu omnino abstinerent, nunquam id concedere potuerunt. Volebant enim facultatem generandi recuperare libidine non omissa. Dicuntur etiam cum vires cupiditatibus nondum pares esse videantur, remedia quædam adhibere sive ut venerem excitent sive ut uxores prægnantes fiant. Duplex fit medicatio. Primum secti testiculi hirci—(quod animal fatigari negatur, mbuti a yi karali)—cum plurimis herbis mixti coquuntur et a viro eduntur. Deinde alias herbas collectas in cerevisiam injicit. Tantum aiunt esse effectum ut viro qui non amplius duas uxores habeat, non sit ea re [520] utendum, ne, illis non sufficientibus, cum aliorum uxoribus stuprum committat, quod ei sit offensioni.

Viri casti, ut in loco Mpfumo videre licet, in sua casa dormiunt et interdum uxorem quam cupiunt ad se vocant. Plerique tamen, lege sibi imposita, ne discordia inter uxores erumpat, mensem unum in casa singularum uxorum vicissim agunt.

Qui plures habent uxores aliis etiam medicaments utuntur ad libidinem excitandam. Quorum unum putant ad effectum maxime valere: Medicus, cum se ipse curavit, in locum montium secedit, quo cynocephali feminæ urinam menstruali sanguine mixtam emittere solent. Quod manet in saxis et fœdissimam diffundit odorem, medicus excipiens coquit, et ex eo magnas conficit pillas quas emptoribus vendit. Hi eas

595 in cerevisiam injiciunt.
833 Quod medicamentum ad gravia vulnera curanda quoque
842 conferunt, et liberis praebent cum caput ut cynocephali jactant."

[Note 14 (page 285). Doctor G. Liengmei, our physician, often took care of men who asked for medicine that would produce children. They confessed to him that they often slept with three or four wives in one single night. (From some monogamous men we heard that a wife would get so tired that she would go out at night to work just to escape from her husband.) When the doctor told them to abstain altogether from intercourse for five days they were never able to agree to that. For they wanted to regain their generative faculty without giving up their lust. They are said to employ certain remedies even when their powers no longer appear equal to their desires, either in order to excite their sexual desire or to make their wives pregnant. There is a two-fold remedy. First, a man cuts the testicles off a goat--(this animal does not tire, it is asserted, mbuti a yi karaki)--and boils them mixed with numerous herbs; then he eats them. Next he collects other herbs and puts them into his beer. They claim that this has such an effect that the man who has no more than two wives should not use this remedy [520] lest, because his own would not be enough for him, he should commit fornication with the wives of others, which would be a grave offense on his part.

595 Virtuous men such as one can find in the village of Mpfumo sleep in their own houses and call for the wife whom they desire. Most of them have imposed upon themselves the law not to let any discord break out among their wives: therefore they spend one month in turn in the house of a particular wife.

595 Those who have several wives use still other remedies to
756 excite their sexual desire. Of these remedies they believe
833 one to be particularly effective: The medicine man, after
278 he has rested, retreats into the hills where the female baboons are wont to emit their urine mixed with the menstrual blood. That which remains on the rocks and which gives off an abominable smell the medicine man takes up and boils; from this he makes large pills that he sells to all buyers. The latter put them into their beer.

They also use this remedy to cure grave wounds, and they give it to their children when they shake their heads like baboons.]

000 Annotatio quinta decima (P. 477). Veretro fabricatur pulvis, cuius effectus mirabilis est. Qui, bellatorum carpis

782 To these words is generally added an invocation to the medicine-
756 man's gods, who are entreated to bless the drugs they have given to their descendant, and to join with the traveller's gods in order
484 to insure his success in this undertaking. The decoction is then used to wash the body of the young man. He will pay the fee on his return home.

224 *Offerings of Hunters.* This is called *byalwa bya ngenge*; the beer
782 of ngenge. This beer is made of maize grains which have been crushed but not softened by long steeping in water, as is generally
273 done in brewing ; they are then reduced to flour ; some water is poured on this and it is offered in that form by the head hunter, all his companions standing near him. They must start at once ; there is therefore no time to brew proper beer.

484 *Offerings of Travellers.* These also have their particular mhamba,
782 which is called *Lehika*. It consists of water alone which the officiant takes in his mouth and spits out, saying : "*Pff*!" (amongst the Hlengwes : "*Phaaa*"). "My ancestor-gods! May I find no difficulty
578 on my road, etc." This *water offering* is also made by a headman
782 whose village is troubled by endless disputes. The way of bringing them to an end is not clear. So he entreats his gods to "open the road, pfula ndlela," so that all hearts may be relieved. This will help him to "herd his village, ku byisa muti." The idea of finding a road clearly accounts for the fact that this offering is made under two sets of circumstances so different from one another. Why water is used to attain this end I do not know.

The offerings hitherto described bear a more or less individual character. Let us now consider those which are in direct relation to the life of the family.

782 *Regular Family Sacrifices.* We have seen these performed in
842 connection with the most important events in life. At the *weaning* (I. p. 58, this might however be termed a medical sacrifice), *on the marriage day*, either publicly, as amongst the Ronga clans (I. p. 110), or privately, by the bride's father alone, as is the custom amongst the Nkunas (I. p. 118). The gods are entreated to give the newly married woman "timbeleko," births, i. e., children, as it seems that the power of begetting depends directly
000 on the gods. Regular acts of worship are performed also at the

refused to communicate his secret. He belonged to the Chopi 757
tribe. The Ba-Pedi forbid sexual relations to lepers.

A nursing woman who has no milk must take a certain 853
Euphorbiacea shrub called *nete*, containing a milky juice, crush it in the mortar, cook it in water and drink it. When a cow refuses to feed her calf Natives smear the calf with the *ribvumbara* herb, which has a pleasant odour. The cow smells this, and allows the calf to suck.

The treatment of *sterility* has already been described (I. p. 190) 842
Mankhelu tried to cure it by digging a root of *Nembe-nembe* 278
and one of *Nhlangowume* ; he cooked both together, and ordered the woman to eat them during a period of six days, mixing them with her food. This drug was considered as "closing her" (pfala), so that she would no longer have her "tihweti, "and thus be enabled to conceive. In the meantime, she had to undergo the horola or hondlola rite, which I shall describe presently.

Small-pox, nyedzane, was on several occasions introduced by the 164
Whites, or by the Zulu armies on their return from their Northern raids. There have been at least five or six epidemics in the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques during the last fifty years.

I had the opportunity of witnessing the last in 1918 in Rikatla and 751
thus obtained first-hand information on the way Natives treat this disease and on their strange ideas concerning it. I published a detailed account of these in the S. A. *Journal of Science*, July 1919, and will give here a description of the most important of these *customs connected with small-pox amongst the Ba-Ronga*. When small-pox has invaded the country and reached the borders of the territory of a clan, the headmen assemble at the chief's residence and decide to proceed to the general inoculation of the population. This is a remedy which they have long been accustomed to use. They have noticed that the disease is milder when produced by inoculation with the virus than when it *hahela*, i. e. flies to the person. (There is some truth in this assertion ; the protection afforded however is not very effective, and severe and even fatal cases often follow the inoculation. It does not always secure immunity from a second attack.) The virus is provided by the people of a neighbouring clan who have already been attacked by

on live embers, a pot containing leaves which are supposed to 757
possess medicinal properties. A second mat is then spread over the top of the enclosure, thus shutting the patient up in a sort of small hut. The smoke from the live embers makes him cough terribly. The hot vapour from the pot induces profuse perspiration from every pore, and the victim of this treatment is left for a very considerable time in this intensely uncomfortable condition! When, at length, the remedy is supposed to have had sufficient time to act efficaciously, the mats are removed. The patient suddenly finds himself in the open air, absolutely dripping with perspiration. I saw a man remain in this condition, in the chill of the evening, apparently risking inflamation of the lungs. The doctor rubs his cheeks, or some other parts of his body, with either a white or a black powder. Such is the Thonga Turkish bath, which is frequently referred to in their folklore. — The [753]
phungulo is administered in most cases where ritual defilement is feared, or is believed to have caused the disease. The kind of poisoning caused by the impurities connected with death, menses, lochia, etc., manifests itself by swelling of the joints, of the hands and feet, pains in the bones, etc. This vapour bath is also resorted [842]
to in order to cure married people who do not succeed in having children. The physician makes for them a shitsimbo packet of the following roots : *Nhlangawume, Mpoñwana, Ritiyi* ; he cooks this in the pot inside the mat enclosure ; and into the fire, under the pot, he puts part of the flesh of the goat which has been sacrificed for the occasion, in particular the uterus. This flesh has been previously smeared with drugs. So, by means either of the vapour, or of the smoke, the medicine enters the patients. "Ba wupfa," — "they ripen" or "are cooked." When the mat is removed, a pot full of cold water is poured over them and extinguishes the phungulo which has "cooked them." They will have to take home the meat, and cook it in their hut together with the packet of roots. Another packet is put into the pot in which they keep their beer.

A third practice, quite as old as the foregoing, is the *tlhema* or *cautery*. This may be done with a packet of roots, which are heated and applied to the part affected. But, as a general rule,

881 to pronounce the formulae or to sing the songs of the sungi. Don't reveal a word of them to anybody ; if a boy does so he will be strangled! " etc.

That same day the women bring porridge with sauce flavourings and the shepherds are no longer allowed to use insulting words when they receive the pots from their hands.

IV. *The Chameleon procession.*

553 881 All these are evidently aggregation rites. But the greatest of all is the procession of the initiated into the capital of the chief which takes place on the day of the closing of the sungi and on the following day. Covered with ochre, marching on mats which have been spread on the ground so that they do not touch the dust with their feet, they advance slowly, bowed to the ground, stretching out first one leg and then the other, with a sudden brisk motion, trying to imitate the gait of the chameleon, the wise, the prudent. They are men who think, and no longer boys without intelligence! Then they all sit in the central place of the capital, silent, with their heads still bent, and the sisters and mothers who have come from all the different villages must go and recognize them. Each woman brings with her a bracelet or a shilling or any small present and searches for her boy amongst the throng. When she thinks she has found him, she kisses him on the cheek and gives him the present. The boys have two sticks in their hands. One stick bears some short lateral branches on which the boys will hang the bracelets (busenga). The other is smaller and, when the mother has discovered her son and has kissed him, he strikes her, a soft blow if it is his mother or his grandmother, a much harder one if it is his sister, and utters the new name which he has chosen.

In answer to this demonstration, the mother begins to dance and to sing the praises of her son! This is the typical aggregation rite called *kunga*, the breaking of silence, which we shall meet with more than once in the passage rites of the tribe. These bracelets are all given in to the chief, who will distribute them amongst the old women. It would be taboo to give them to childbearing women. According to the same idea the fees paid by the boys to

763 Some ethnographers have adopted the "embryonic explanation" to account for this custom, which is found all through primitive humanity, from the Mousterian age down to the first inhabitants of Egypt, and amongst a great many uncivilised tribes all over the earth (1). They say: "Primitive man placed the corpse in the attitude of the child before birth because he believed that death is but a new birth, the beginning of a new life..." I asked Viguet if he thought this to be the true original [843] explanation. He told me he did not know ; he would not deny it. But there is one fact which prevents its acceptance ; the Thongas have never done any dissection, and are ignorant of the position of the foetus in the womb. So probably are all primitive peoples. This kind of knowledge came much later in the evolution of mankind. The intention of this rite is more probably to place a dying man in the sitting position which a Thonga generally adopts when in his hut, as the grave is *but a hut in the earth* and he is meant to continue his life in it exactly as before. All the other burial rites confirm this explanation, as we shall see.

Manyibane is dead... In somé districts they see that he does not die with *closed hands*. It is taboo, because then the children of the dead will quarrel (Viguet). They close his eyes and take away all his clothes. In the Mpfumo clan, they *wash the body*. Afterwards they cover him with an old rug. No one cries. Lamentations are absolutely prohibited before the burial is over ; it is taboo. It would " break the back " of the men who have to perform the funeral rites.

764 Should there be *strangers* in the village when the death takes
761 place, they will run away quickly to avoid defilement ; otherwise
783 they would have to take part in all the purifying ceremonies of the following days.

372 Without delay, the *fire* which was burning in the funeral hut is removed and carried out into the square. It must be carefully kept alight. This is a taboo. Should there be rain, it must be protected. All the inhabitants must use this fire during the next five days. It will be put out by the doctor, with sand or water, on the day of the dispersion of the mourners. He will then

(1) See my paper in *Anthropos* Sept. 1910 : "Two burials at twenty thousand years distance."

Other

animals are taboo for girls : the *hare* because it is too cunning ;
262 and the antelope *nhlengane*. This antelope raises the foot when
823 it hears a noise ; hence the idea that its leg is hollow and that
784 it perceives the sound through it. The child would do the same,
562 if its mother were to eat the meat of the nhlengane. It would be unable to hear with its ears, only with its hands!

The *legs* of fowls (tibias) are also taboo for all women, because the hen scatters the sand... So are the *hoofs of oxen*, and *pigs' feet*. A woman eating them would walk too much... She would go everywhere to look for husbands!

784 It is taboo for a girl to *walk amongst pumpkin plants* (maranga),
562 to pluck the fruits. She is only allowed to pluck those which can
824 be reached from outside. Were she to transgress this law, she
757 would emit a bad odour, and no boy would court her. Her mother, having no fear of being despised, can walk amongst the pumpkins. A second taboo relative to pumpkins is this : unmarried women must cut a "pumpkin nose" (nhompfu) viz. the end of the stem, and fix it at their waist when plucking the pumpkins, lest they get abcesses in certain regions of their body.

784 It is taboo for them to eat cooked *oxen blood* (bubendje).
262 The following taboos apply also to *married women*. They are
562 not allowed to eat what is called *nkopfu*, viz. some parts of the
843 bowels which are cooked together with the stomach of the ox. "It would spoil the child inside." The *testicles*, which are generally given to the uterine nephew when the meat is distributed according to the laws, and the *underlip* of any animal are also forbidden to them. So is also the *tongue*... because it is reserved for old people as a mark of respect! The *rectum* (gobana) is taboo for women and children. Children might make unseemly noises from the rectum! Women must abstain from *porcupine* and *monkeys' flesh* ; all their offspring would resemble these animals. Such cases have happened, it is said! Women must not eat *eggs* ; they would run a double danger : their child might be born bald and remain so ; or they might be like a hen, which runs in all directions when laying an egg. They would have no peace in child bearing! (See also page 101.)

Nubile girls, during their "tiwheti," must not *approach the*

* * *

841 Let us consider first how conjugal relations are regulated in normal circumstances.

Every month during her "tihweti" the woman is taboo and no intercourse is allowed. This is one of the severest taboos. Should a husband infringe this law, his health would fail, and, should he be called to go to war, "his knees would shake," he would tremble and be unable to fight (1). As regards the woman, these days constitute a real marginal period during which she is absolutely secluded from her husband. She must keep to the left half of the hut and not trepass across the centre line. If she wants snuff, she is not allowed to go to her husband in the part in which he lies; she must send a child to fetch the tobacco she wants! During these days she sleeps on a special mat and puts on special clothes, the old ones which she brought with her for this purpose on the day she first came to the conjugal dwelling. When cooking, she must not touch the mealie meal with her hands, but with a spoon. A rich man who has plenty of spouses, and therefore plenty of food, will not touch the pot of the tabooed wife! At the end of the period, she smears the floor of the hut and puts on her ordinary clothing. (Annotatio 12)[1]. This is evidently the aggregation rite by which the woman returns to everyday life.

843 754 Normal relations continue during the first year of married life. Should the wife become pregnant, they are not suspended. It would even seem that they are rather recommended, as is shown by the following story: A young man once complained to me that he had been bewitched by his maternal aunt. The result of the spell she had cast over him was that he was no longer able to have sexual intercourse with his wife; and he was very angry, as he asserted that the aim of his aunt, in doing this, had been to prevent the successful issue of the pregnancy. She wanted

(1) The woman during her tihweti is also taboo for other persons. I heard of the case of a child who suffered from a hernia in the scrotum five days after birth. People said that it was the fault of certain women who had taken it in their arms during menstruation.

1 [See p. 518 in these categories or in 116—Analyst]

843 754 to hinder the child from growing and to put in its place, by means of her enchantments, a snake, a hare, a quail or an antelope!

834 846 [886] After the birth, owing to possible contamination by the lochia, sexual intercourse is prohibited till the rite of tying the cotton string (p. 56) has taken place. It is then allowed, but conception must be avoided till weaning, when relations are resumed in the normal way, and this goes on till the time when the woman is no longer able to bring forth children. I know of no special rules in connection with the menopause.

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* *

831 But, amongst Bantus, sexual relations are not an individual affair, as amongst nations more advanced in evolution. There is a mysterious relation between them and the collective life of the community. Hence the fact that, on certain given occasions, they are recommended, even ordered, or prohibited.

1) Cases of recommendation.

833 783 587 829 Sexual relations must take place on two principal occasions : when the inmates of a village abandon it and go elsewhere to found a new one, and when the widows perform the painful rite of "lahla khombo" (to cast away misfortune). We shall see, when studying these customs, that sexual relations have here a twofold signification : 1) they "consolidate" the little community in its new abode, viz. they strengthen its structure by confirming the authority of its chief ; 2) they provide the principal means of getting rid of all contamination, especially of the defilement connected with death. (Annotatio 13.)[1]

2) Cases of prohibition.

834 784 581 829 753 Married people are not considered as being in a state of defilement, as mourners are, for example. Yet this class of persons, called "ba-ku-khila," constitute a danger for those members of the community who are in a weak state of health. They must not come in contact with the circumcised, because in that case their wounds would not heal properly.

1 [See pp. 518-519 in these categories or in V6--Analyst]

5) Sterility.

842 782 In the Northern clans, when a woman does not conceive, a special sacrifice is offered, very similar to the one made by the Rongas on the day of the conclusion of the marriage. A goat is killed; a long piece, one foot in width, is cut from the skin of the animal in the ventral region, and three openings are made, one for the head and the two others for the arms. The three openings converge to a point where the astragalus bone of the goat is fixed to a strap. The sterile woman puts on this skin; the astragalus will be seen on her breast. She will also fix the gall-bladder in her hair and wear these ornaments for a time. To the mind of the Thongas, it seems evident that children are given by the gods; hence the idea of a sacrifice in case of sterility. But in addition to the religious rite, native doctors have many drugs to militate against this misfortune (1). The special porridge cooked for a sterile woman (mhika, shimhiko) is called *shiboleko* amongst the Ba-Ronga. The poor woman is despised.

586 Sterility can be a cause of divorce; the husband has the right of sending his wife home. But generally the parents of the woman find a *nhlampsa*, viz. a younger girl, and give her to the husband as a second wife.

6) Pregnancy and Miscarriage.

843 A special treatment is followed for the first pregnancy when the breasts begin to swell, a condition which is called *munyama* (darkness). The physician makes small incisions near the breast and on the legs, and draws out a little blood. The pregnant woman also drinks a decoction for the same purpose, i. e. to

(1) A Pedi man told me that in his tribe the first thing to do was to ascertain if sterility were due to the husband or to the wife. For this purpose a little bit of the clothing of the husband and of the wife was cut off and placed near a spider's nest. This spider is a kind of mygala of enormous size. If the spider took the piece of the husband's clothing down to its nest, it meant that he was in fault, and vice versa.

843 remove the blood. The Thongas think that, as the menses are suspended, the blood accumulates in the body and must be taken away.

Pregnancy is not considered as a tabooed period. As we have just seen, sexual relations are allowed during that time, even recommended as favourable to the growth of the child. However, in view of the impending birth, some special taboos have been added to those which apply to all women.

A pregnant woman *must not drink water when standing up*. She must kneel down, otherwise the water would fall violently on the head of the child and hurt it!

843 It is taboo for her to *wrap her body* in too much clothing.
845 She must keep her belly bare and never throw her dress (kapulane) over her shoulders, lest the baby come to the light with its head covered with membranes, a complication which is very much dreaded by Thonga women.

She must not take *the sauce* of her porridge *too hot*. The child might be scalded inside and have black spots when born.

It is also taboo to *prepare the ntche before the birth*, as no one knows what will happen. The child might die!

843 The future mother must not eat *pigeon's meat*, because pigeons
825 have no blood in the muscles of their breast. She would have no milk herself wherewith to nurse the baby. Nor must she even *look at a monkey*, lest she "take to herself" (tekela) the form of the animal and the child be like it!

A woman, in the beginning of pregnancy, must not visit a sick person. The latter might die.

843 As regards women dying during pregnancy, see page 166.
766 *Miscarriages* are very much feared amongst South Africans,
731 not for themselves, but because they are accompanied by an
789 uncontrolled effusion of a blood which is a terrible taboo. The
826 discharged foetus must be buried in wet soil, otherwise the rain will not fall; the country having been polluted will be dried up by hot winds. A strange rite called *mbelele* is performed in times of drought, when all the graves of children born prematurely and buried on the hill are searched, and their contents thrown into the mud, near the river. We shall discuss in Part VI the

we shall discuss in Part VI the

843 origin of this extraordinary idea. A woman who has had a
834 miscarriage is impure for three months at least. Menstruation
841 must have taken place two or three times and have cleansed her before her husband can have any sexual relation with her. (Compare Annotatio 7,[1] which applies to the transgression of this rule.)

7) Parturition.

846 We have described, when treating of birth, the many taboos
753 which accompany parturition. The *busahana* period, from the moment of delivery till the fall of the umbilical cord, is very much dreaded. When a woman is suffering from *shilumi* (a disease which sometimes follows delivery, probably owing to a displacement of the organs) she must not enter the hut of a woman who has been confined. The ailment would "jump over to her" (tlulela). There is however a way of preventing contagion. The visitor must take the piece of clothing which she uses as a girdle and throw it to the patient, and the patient throws back her own girdle to the visitor. Then she can enter : "They have acted according to the law, there is no more *ytla*."

846 A mother must not drink any milk from the birth of the child
851 until its presentation to the moon. Afterwards she is allowed to drink only milk from cows which have calved many times.

The rite of *kunga* is performed in the case of a first-born child. This child is called *nwana wa matibula*, the child by which the woman has *tibula*, viz. has become a mother. The etymology of this word *tibula* (Zulu zibula) is not known. When people come to greet the baby, its parents will not allow them to take it in their arms. They must pay something for permission to do so, even a brother, a sister, or a grandmother. The father is not subject to this rule ; "the child is his, belongs to him." Nowadays this ceremony means only that these people are happy to receive the new born child amongst them. There is no taboo in it. But it is certainly related to the fact that in giving birth to a child for the first time, the woman has passed from womanhood to motherhood.

1 [See p. 617 in these categories or in 116-Anotat]

832 Sometimes the girls measure their labia with small sticks
836 and boast of their length to their companions and even to their
304 bridegrooms. The girls follow these perverse practices for
881 no other reason than for the sake of their future husband.
171 Among the Ba-Pedi the husband may, if he thinks that his bride has not sufficiently stretched her labia, send her home and demand his bulls back. The girls keep a pot full of food ready and cover it with a lid. In the evening the boys come to the girls and give them a small gift in order to be admitted. In the house they sit down on the floor and watch the girls eating from a pot with their fingers. The girls whose milebe are four digits long eat using four fingers: they are bakulu, that is, adult, and they enjoy their lovers. Or they use only three fingers and sometimes two. The young girls eat with the palms of their hands.]

765 "Annotatio sexta (P. 154). Seu quis per ætatem iam pro-
783 vectam imbecillior factus erit, sive qualibet de causa tam
833 impotens ut sperma emittere non possit (a nga kumi mati), ceteri viri quid fiat sciscitabuntur. Quod si utique parum procedit, tota inhibetur cærimonia. Qui vero se invicem eodem ritu miscere debebant, iis ritum conficere non fas est. Ille jejunio, per quinque dies, prout res postulat, artissime utetur, cui medicinæ ad rem accommodatæ exquirentur.

[Note 6 (page 154). If someone should have become feeble because of advanced age, or if for some reason he should be so impotent that he cannot emit sperms (a nga kumi mati), other men ask what should be done. For if it proceeds quite insufficiently, the whole ceremony is held up. And those who should have had intercourse in turn in the same ritual fashion are not permitted to complete the rite. He [the impotent man] has to fast very strictly for five days as the situation requires and the remedies appropriate to the situation will be sought.]

843 "Annotatio septima (P. 154). Nocens maritus uxorque sui
834 purgandi causâ alium ritum peragent. Uxor mariti suaque
841 pudenda veste intima et inquinatissima tergebit, quam postea comburet.

Ambo, ad ignem accedentes, caput manusque calefacient. Inde cinerem collectum mulier adipe miscet, quo mariti artus illinit, digitis bracchiis cruribusque tractis, quod 'lula' dicitur. Postea, noctibus duabus sequentibus, coibunt. Si maritus, non cum uxore sua, sed cum puella quadam ex alio vico, stupri consuetudinem junxerit, huic fossorium donabitur, ut ritum 'lula' perfectum veniat.

[Note 7 (page 154). If the husband and the wife are guilty of an offense, they perform another rite for the sake of purging themselves. The wife will cover her husband's and

843 her own pudenda with a much befouled intimate garment which
834 she afterwards burns.
841 Going to the fire they both warm their head and their hands. Then the woman mixes the ashes she has collected with fat and smears it over her husband's limbs, rubbing along his fingers, his arms, and his legs, which is called lula. Afterwards, in the two nights following, they will have intercourse. If the husband has had sexual intercourse not with his wife but with some girl from another village from lustful desire he will be given a fossorium so that the rite lula will come to its completion.]

765 "Annotatio octava (P. 155). Si mulieris parentes procul
783 habitant, maritus eius comes itineris erit, quacum superiore
833 nocte coibit, ad aquæ lustrali vim novam dandam."
595 [Note 8 (page 155). If the woman's parents live far away, her husband will be her companion on the way and he will have sexual intercourse with her the night before in order to give the lustral water new power.]

765 "Annotatio nona (P. 160). Faciebat dum 'Khunye khunye';
535 quibus verbis significatur coitus (khunyeta)."
831 [Note 9 (page 160). She was saying Khunye, khunye during
834 this time; these words signify coitus (khunyeta).

"Annotatio decima (P. 160). Carminum, morum temporis marginalis natura eo obscenior est quo nobilior defunctus fuit. Viguetus narrat: [518] 'Duce vel uno ex principibus mortuo, luctuque consueto præterito, luctum privatum, ad quem boves immolentur, celebrari. Carnem ad baculos humi fixos alligari; homines inde mulierem vocare, eamque posteriorem vestem exuere juberi, neque ullam vestem nisi anteriorem habere quam, si velit, exuere ei liceat. Eam, postea, divaricaturam esse ad unam ex carnis particulis dentibus apprehendendam ita prominentem ut omnes viri eius pudenda videant, quod plerumque 'taboo' (id est nefas) sit.'"

[Note 10 (page 160). The nature of the songs, a custom of the marginal period, is the more obscene the greater the nobility of the deceased person was. Viguet relates: [518] "When the leader or one of the chiefs is dead and the usual mourning has passed, they stage a private mourning at which bulls are sacrificed. They tie the flesh to poles fixed in the ground; then the men call a woman and order her to take off the clothes on her back and they do not allow her to have any clothes on except the one in front which, if she wants to, she may also take off. Then she must seize one of the bits of meat with her teeth, bending forward in such a

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga
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PRACTICAL CONCLUSIONS

I. ON THE RITES OF INFANCY (P. 36-61).

853 The rule that a mother "must plough for her child three hoes" is
585 excellent. It is undoubtedly a splendid preparation for future life to
177 have been fed during three years on mother's milk. Will it be possible to maintain this law under the new conditions of civilized life which are being adopted more and more throughout the tribes? Let us notice that this provision, though it was inspired partly in the interest of the child itself, is dictated mainly by a superstition concerning the lochia secretion, which is regarded as highly noxious and as keeping the mother in an unclean state for a long time. This superstition will not withstand the test of science and will pass away. On the other hand, polygamy was invented and flourishes partly on account of this law. A husband separated from the wife who is nursing a child wishes to have other women at his disposal. Polygamy is doomed to pass also. For both these reasons, it is to be feared that this healthy custom will not be maintained in the future. This is a pity, and we ought to do our best to encourage its continuance.

843 Many young married Natives leave their homes and go to Johannes-
177 burg to the mines for one or two years as soon as they see that their wife is pregnant. This is certainly on account of the above rule; but this desertion of the conjugal home is hardly to be approved.

164 As regards the whole medical treatment characteristic of this period,
751 which is considered more or less as a disease, it has no value at all.
177 The big intestinal worm is, of course, merely a product of Native imagination. The children sometimes suffer from lombrics, but not more than white children. Convulsions are frequent as a result of malaria and dysentery, and neither the ever present *milombyana* nor the

But the terrible calamity of drought is brought into direct relation with some physiological phenomena which no one would have thought of in this connection : the miscarriage of women when the foetus has not been dealt with according to rule, the birth of twins, the death of children not yet received into the tribe by the ceremony of *boha puri* (I. p. 56) and not buried in wet ground ; these are the great natural causes which prevent rain from falling! I have met with this conception all over the Thonga tribe. I found it also amongst the Pedis of the Transvaal, who firmly believe it, and it would be most interesting to know if Suthos, Zulus, and Hottentots have the same superstitions. Let me quote the *ipsissima verba* of Mankhelu, the great medicine-man of the Nkuna Court. I shall never forget the earnest tone of his voice, his deep conviction, when he uttered to me the following words, as a kind of revelation : "When a woman has had a miscarriage, when she has let her blood flow secretly and has buried the abortive child in an unknown place, it is enough to make the burning winds blow, and to dry up all the land : the rain can no longer fall, because the country is no longer right (tiko a ra ha lulami). Rain fears that spot. It must stop at that very place and can go no further. This woman has been very guilty. She has spoilt the country of the chief, because she has hidden blood which had not yet properly united to make a human being. That blood is taboo! What she has done is taboo. It causes starvation."

789 821 843 845 766 171 789 821 843 783

"What then must be done?" — "The chief will collect his men and ask them : 'Are you in a normal state?' (lit. are you right?). They answer : 'Such and such a woman was pregnant but nobody knows what she has brought forth.' This woman will be arrested and told to go and show us where she has put it. The earth is dug up ; the hole is sprinkled with a decoction made of two drugs prepared in a special pot, the *mbendula* and *nyangale* ; the woman herself must wash her body every day with that medicine. Then a little of the earth taken from the hole will be scraped up and thrown into the river ; water drawn from the river will be poured into the hole : the country will be well again, and then the rain will come.

"Moreover, we, the medicine-men, after having sent old

789 women to the river to throw away the contaminated earth, order
821 them to make a ball of that earth, and to bring it back to us in
843 the early morning. We grind it, we put it into a pot where it
783 must remain for five days, and then we prepare the great drug to sprinkle the land. The medicine is put into oxen horns and they go to all the drifts, to the boundaries of the country, on the borders of the Ñwebeti and of the Thabina rivers, on the road to Sibila's country, to Diskop (Leydsdorp); they must not however cross rivers. Our neighbours do the same on their own side. One of the girls digs the earth, the others dip a stick into the horn and sprinkle the drug into the hole. We also sprinkle the road on which these women have trodden, when they had their blood; we remove the misfortune caused by these women on the roads. The country is pure again. Rain can fall."

This is the purifying rite in the Nkuna clan. Mankhelu asserts that the Pedis do the same. He did not know if the custom existed amongst other Thonga clans. But Viguet described the same custom to me as being in force on the borders of the Limpopo, under the name of *mbelele*. The bones having revealed that the country is impure, the chief orders the mbelele: it is a period of mourning (nkosi) for the land. First the *phokolo*, or sacrifice of the black victim is performed (See Part VI). Then the women assemble. They must remove all their clothing, only putting some grass round their loins and, with a peculiar skipping step, singing a special song: "Mpfula nana" — "rain fall," — they go to all the spots where children prematurely born have been buried in dry ground, on the hills, take away what they find in the broken pots and collect all that impure matter in a secret place, so that children may see nothing of what they are doing. Water is poured on these graves in order to "quench them (timula)." On the evening of the same day they go and bury these impurities; this is
[183 done in the mud, near the river. No man must approach during
831] this operation: the women would have the right to strike the imprudent one and ask him questions on the obscene formulae of circumcision; the man would answer in the most impure words he could find, as all language taboos are suspended on that day; nakedness even is no longer taboo, "because," says Viguet,

"it is the law of the country!" Every one consents to the suspension of the ordinary laws! (1)

Amongst the Rongas, I did not hear of any connection between prematurely born children and rain. When the mbelele rite is performed, a mother of twins must lead the procession of women who draw water and pour it on the graves of the twins in order to secure the rain. They also clean all the wells (kuha tinhlobo), digging them afresh and removing any filth in the water. It may be that the corpse of a twin, if it has been buried in dry ground, will be dug out of its grave and buried again near the river, or they will go in procession and pour water on the grave. This will influence Heaven, which is killing the earth by the terrible heat of the sun. The burning October winds will cease and the rain will fall.

There is something mysterious about all these customs. Considered merely as ideas regarding Nature and natural phenomena, I believe their essential meaning to be this : — there are some cases of human birth which are taboo. While any birth is taboo, owing to the lochia, that of children prematurely born is doubly dangerous. Abnormal children, such as twins, children who have died before the "boha puri" rite (I. p. 56), in some clans also children who cut their upper teeth first, share this noxious character. They are a calamity for the whole land as they are connected with the mysterious power of Heaven, and so prevent the rain from falling. The great remedy for the evil, the only means of counteracting this influence, is to bury these children in wet ground. Should this not have been done, the chief must order these little corpses to be exhumed and buried near the river : this is the aim and object of the mbelele. If wet, these graves will cause no harm (2).

How did these extraordinary conceptions first originate ?

(1) This rite of *mbelele* shows striking analogies with the Passage rites which we have already often met with in Thonga customs. This is a special period, a mourning period for the land, says Viguet, a marginal period which, as such, is accompanied by obscene manifestations, both in speech and in absence of clothing.

(2) In the Maluleke clan, as previously mentioned, these three categories of children must be *cremated*, and foreigners dying in the midst of the clan are also burnt after their death, from fear that they might belong to one of these categories and so prevent the rain from falling, if they were buried in dry ground. The mbelele rite there is called *mbelenkele*. Rangane describes it as follows : — Women collect the bones of twins,

ñwalihlanga, (mu-ba) femur ; *lihandja*, tibia ; they seem to know 192
nothing of the radius and the peroneus ; *guywa-guywana*, rotula ; 826
nhlolo, astragalus ; other bones are called by the name of the region, or the organ, to which they belong : the bone of the pelvis, *nyongwa* (yin-tin), the hip ; the wrist bones, *hlakala* ; those of the palm, *shipapa* ; those of the fingers, *litiho* ; those of the toes, *shikuñwana* ; those of the ankle, *shirendje* ; of the sole, *nkondjo* (mu-mi) ; the thumb is called *khudju* (dji-ma), and the big toe, *the great shikuñwana*.

The different organs are also known : *byongwe* (bu-ma) (Dj.) *bongwe* (Ro.) is the brain ; *tihlo*, pl. *mahlo*, the eye ; *ndlebe* (yin-tin), the ear ; *nhompfu* (yin-tin), the nose ; *nomo*, pl. *milomo*, the lips and the mouth ; *lidjimi*, the tongue ; *nkolo* (mu-mi), the throat ; they know that there are two pipes, one for food, the other for air, but they are not sure which is in front and which behind! *Hahu* (dji-ma), (Ro.), *phaphu* (Dj.), lungs ; *shidyelo*, the stomach ; *mbilu* (yin-tin), the heart ; *shibindji*, the liver ; *libengo*, the spleen ; *lipfalo*, the diaphragm ; *rumbu* (dji-ma), the bowels, including the male internal genitalia ; external genitalia of man and woman are taboo ; *yinso* (yin-tin) means kidneys ; *nhlonge* (yin-tin), skin ; *nwala* (mu-mi) nail ; *nsisi* (mu-mi), hair, etc.

But on pushing the inquiry somewhat further, we begin to notice a gross ignorance of important facts. The one word [843] *nsiha* (mu-mi) means nerves, tendons, ligaments, veins and arteries ; *nyimba* is the uterus, but also means pregnancy. Natives seem to think that a new nyimba is created at each pregnancy. They know nothing of the glands and I never discovered a name for the pancreas.

2) Physiological notions.

For this reason it is obvious that they cannot know what really 827
happens in the body, and the marvellous and complicated system of our physical life. The mystery of the nervous system is entirely unknown, as is also the way in which blood (*ngati*, yin-tin) is formed from food, the digestive process, the circulation of the blood and the action of the air upon it, etc. We must not be

FIRST PART

THE LIFE OF THE INDIVIDUAL

CHAPTER I

THE EVOLUTION OF A MAN FROM BIRTH TO DEATH

A. INFANCY

1. *The day of Birth.*

844 When a new member of the tribe is expected, when the mother begins to feel the pangs of childbirth (ku luñwa), the father sends word to the midwives of the neighbourhood and all of them come at once. They are called *tinsungakati* (1). Every woman having some experience in this department is a midwife, no special training being required for the qualification (2).

The *place chosen* for the delivery (phuluka) is generally the back of the hut (mahosi) where the pregnant woman lives. Some mats are brought and hung up in such a way as to form a smal

193 (1) This word is interesting. Its termination *ati* is the proper feminine suffix whi is found in nati, wife, hulukati, female elephant, Nkomati, the river of that nam the rivers being considered as female by the Thongas.

(2) Amongst certain Thonga clans, especially the Khosas of Magude, there is a person who is bound to come and assist the woman in childbirth : this is the mukoñwana lo' nkulu of her husband i. e. the woman who has been bought with her husband's oxen. The woman in labour leans her head on this woman's chest, whilst the other midwives help her in parturition. When the Rev. F. Paillard went to assist a woman during labour, the "mukoñwana lo' nkulu" told him : "You have taken my place." See Part II. Ch. I. B. 3).

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

844 787 845 enclosure. This is done to protect the woman from indiscreet onlookers. Should there be enough bush to hide her, mats are not used. A big wooden mortar is given to her to lean against during her pains. The whole place is called by a special term *fukwen* or *busaken* (the nest). Should the birth be difficult, the divinatory bones will probably be consulted and the woman will be removed to another place, inside the hut or somewhere else.

844 The baby may be born without any help, but as a rule the midwives consider it their duty to submit their patient to a *long and painful manipulation*, to a regular kneading, performed with the hands, sometimes even with the feet, in order, as they say, to obtain the expulsion of the child and of the after-birth all at once. They sometimes succeed in this feat ! They also often hurt the mother severely. The midwives think that they must be very rough, and have no pity at all on the poor woman. Sometimes the mother loses all her natural feelings in this painful process. I have heard of cases of her refusing to let the child come to the light, biting her helpers, running away. Hence perhaps the attitude adopted by the midwives. The mother must not *fahla ñwana*, viz. break down the child, a technical expression to designate unhappy births.

During the whole labour, it is taboo (1) for the mother to eat or to drink anything ; she would kill the child if she did so. Of course no man must attend the birth ; neither must girls come near. A newly married woman may be allowed to enter the enclosure in order to "be taught." It is also forbidden for the female relations of the woman, her sisters, even her mother to come *fukwen* ; they might be ashamed if their relative behaved badly and "broke her child." They will not come till the following day, when they hear that everything has gone smoothly ; then the father will kill a hen for them.

(1) We translate by taboo the Thonga word *ytla* which means everything prohibited. I beg to give the following provisional definition of this term, which will be found from the first to the last page of this book : Any object, any act, any person that implies a danger to the individual or to the community and that must consequently be avoided, this object, act or person being under a kind of ban. As often as possible, I shall add the explanation which Natives give of these taboos.

844 846 As soon as the child has made his appearance one of the midwives ties the *umbilical cord* (likabana) near the navel and cuts it about three inches from it. The little sore is anointed with a kind of fat ; the bit of cord remaining with the baby is attended to with great care : it generally falls off at the end of the first week, and this is the signal for the end of the period of confinement.

The after-birth, the *placenta*, is also looked for with much anxiety : it is called *yindlu ya ñwana*, the "house of the child," or *hlalu*. When it is delayed too long, the midwives begin to fear "because the blood which is inside has not all come out and will kill the mother." In the Khosa clan, should the placenta not come at once, the woman is told to stand on her feet, her body half bent forward, and all the midwives begin to move their index fingers from right to left, emitting at the same time the following sound : tswi-tswi-tswi-tswi. This is said to help the placenta to come. The placenta is generally buried deep behind the hut on the spot where the birth has taken place ; but some prefer to bury it inside the house, fearing the dogs might unearth it, which is taboo.

The child is then washed with water. This water is thrown away as being polluted by the blood of the birth, which is taboo.

553 787 *Naming the child*. On the day of birth or on one of the following days the child receives his name (bito). There are four principal ways of choosing this.

1) Often the parents give their offspring *the name of a chief* as Musongi, Makasana, Muzila, etc. It flatters their vanity !

2) But frequently the parents like to recall a name of the old times (pfusha bito dja khale), the name of one of the ancestors, because it is a good thing to remember them. They go so far as to consult the bones. A name is proposed, and if the bones in falling do not give a favourable indication, another is tried till they feel sure that the die "has spoken" (1).

553 608 3) Or it may be that somebody asks the favour of giving his

(1) The Christian Natives like to ask their missionary to choose the name, perhaps for a similar reason.

A woman who has lost many children, three or four, is considered as being in a special position, called *bowumba*, and there are many rules to be observed in order to deal with this "state of bereavement." Should a child be born after the death of many elder brothers, he must be carried in a *ntehe* made of a sheep's skin instead of an antelope or goat skin. (See p. 46.) To carry him in an ordinary ntehe is taboo. Should it be a boy, the mother will put girl's clothing on it, and vice-versa. The mother's breast will be smeared with a special medicine, because they are "breasts of the dead (mabele ya bafi)." The child, if it lives, will be weaned as early as possible and be taken to its grandmother. Two curious rites are also practised to protect it against bad luck. The first is the *kunga* ; the second, *rangela bowumba*, seems to belong rather to the Northern clans.

765 854 764 844 [862]

The *kunga* rite which we have already met many times (see p. 124) is also performed in the case of a mother who has given birth to a new child whilst in the state of bowumba. To neglect it is a taboo. The bereaved mother keeps silent before her visitors until they have deposited their gifts at her feet and have thus "opened her mouth." Old women having no means to buy a present take a bit of grass and fix it in her hair. Then she consents to speak. She gathers all the bracelets thus obtained and puts them on the ntehe, carrying them everywhere with her.

789 761 854 844

Another rite is observed in the Northern clans. The child whose elder brothers and sisters have died is taken by the mother to the village of her own parents. There it is buried in the ash-heap up to its neck. Then somebody runs to the village, takes a handful of grains of maize and throws them on the child. Afterwards it is dug up, washed, smeared with ochre and brought home. This rite is called *rangela bowumba*, viz. to *precede* bowumba, to cut it, to treat it : the bowumba will not now come as it has been "preceded". It will be deceived, it will no longer desire the baby, as the baby has been thrown away together with all the refuse of the village on to the ash-heap. It is no longer able to eat mealies, even if it is given grains of mealies ; it is dead! Let the bowumba take no notice of it! (This description of the "rangela bowumba" was given to me by an old Thonga from Spelonken. Mankhelu, my Nkuna informant, called this rite

789 761

606 be banished from their thoughts. They obey that conviction when
835 practising the avoidance rites.

The wife of the brother-in-law, the Great Mukonwana.

607 This particular respect is even more marked in the relations of a man with the wife of his wife's brother. Indeed the avoidance is pushed further than with the mother-in-law. A Native of the Ndjao tribe (which has the same customs as the Thonga tribe in this respect) described to me vividly the extraordinary marks of fear that these two persons show each other when they meet on the road. The story will be told when speaking of the Ba-Ndjao. Here are some other marks of this extraordinary respect.

607 The wife's brother's wife must always keep her breasts covered
834 in the village of her husband's sister's husband. Only when she has had a child is she permitted to "open her clothing;" but then she must fix a leaf in her hair (as if to show that she does not forget the special reserve which she is bound to maintain). (Khosen region.)

607 When a man travels with his great mukonwana and they have to
576 cross a river, they will avoid entering the same boat. It may
827 happen to anyone to emit an unseemly sound from the rectum; but if the great mukonwana is present, she looks on this as a grave offence. A fine must be paid to her, a hoe, for instance. If the guilty man has nothing to give her, he at once breaks a twig from a tree and presents it to her as a token that the proper fine will be forthcoming in due time! He must never use words of insult in her presence, even if he addresses them to another person.

607 If he loses his temper before her she will go to the old people of
844 her husband's village and tell them: "He has insulted me." On the other hand the great mukonwana is bound to go and assist the wife of this man when she gives birth to a child. At least this is the rule in the Khosa clan and also in Maputju. The two women live on very good terms with each other; they are

607 *tinhombe*. The man himself, when he visits his relatives-in-law, has the right of sleeping in the hut of the great mukonwana. We have seen that, during the first months after his marriage, he is received in the hut of his mother-in-law. Why is this? Because the oxen

CHAPTER II

THE LIFE HISTORY OF THE CHIEF.

A. BIRTH AND YOUTH.

(Information received from Tobane, and applying specially to Ronga clans).

643/844 When the principal wife of a reigning chief, she who is called "the wife of the country" (nsati wa tiko), perceives that she will in due course present her lord with an heir, she is sent away from the capital into one of the provinces, under pretext of illness. It must not be whispered abroad that she is pregnant, for, from this moment, every precaution must be taken to hide the future chief. Thus, should the event occur in the country of Mpfumo, the expectant mother might be sent into the province of Phulane.

The infant comes into the world ; should it prove to be a boy, the fact is kept a secret. Only the most renowned doctors of the country, those attached to the royal family, those who are "the strength of the land" (le' ti yimisaka tiko), are assembled to watch the birth ; they prepare, with special care, the *milombyana* (p. 48). When the queen goes out carrying her child on her back, she covers it with a piece of cloth to prevent anyone seeing whether it is a boy or a girl! She even dresses it in girl's clothing, because it is dangerous (psa henyanya), it is taboo to say in a loud voice : "This child will be a chief." Such an imprudent declaration would bring him bad luck (singita), just in the same way as would male clothing. (Mankhelu.)

643/777

The royal offspring grows, unrecognised, and is weaned in the same way as other children. The mother returns to the capital, the child remaining in the village where it was born.

nostrils and so keep it quiet during the whole operation. The milk is generally taken in a large wooden bowl. It is very seldom consumed as a liquid, but is *eaten* when thickened by coagulation. The fresh milk is poured into a calabash with an opening at the bottom closed by a cork : a certain quantity of whey has been kept in the calabash and this causes the fresh milk to curdle at once. When curdled but not yet set, it is called *shitjubi* and is eaten with spoons by men and women. But it is left to decompose : the whey *(mulaza)* soon separates from the thick part, which becomes entirely solid and is then called *ntjhwamba*. The cork at the bottom of the calabash is removed, the *mulaza* flows out freely and is drunk by the men and herd boys. The *ntjhwamba* is put into a plate and each man or woman, not having her *tihweti* (I. p. 187), approaches and takes a spoonful of it. A woman during menstruation must never drink milk, nor during her confinement or until her child has been presented to the moon (I. p. 52).

The milk of the first week after a cow has calved is taboo. It must not be mixed with other cows' milk, because the umbilical cord of the calf has not yet fallen off. It can, however, be boiled and consumed by children, as they do not count! After that milk is never boiled : not that there is any taboo to fear, but it is not customary. Natives do not give any clear reason for these milk taboos. They have no objection to selling their milk to strangers ; on the contrary, they are so eager to make money out of it that they often add water to it, and any European having had dealings with them in milk matters would have his story to tell!

Goat's milk is left for the herd boys ; men do not touch it.

II. *Other domestic animals.*

Besides oxen, the Ba-Ronga breed *goats* (mbuti, yin-tin), the care of which is relegated to the small boys (I. p. 62). Practically every one possesses one or more goats, whilst oxen are much more rarely met with.

224 of the very hard wood of the ntjenga tree, a sort of mimosa shrub,
824 and are anointed with a powder called *tjulu*. This is a deadly poison ; it is obtained from a shrub which has very pretty flowers and grows abundantly in the forests near the sea, the Strophanthus petersianus. Should an elephant fall into the game pit and succeed in escaping, it will soon die from the poisoned wound.

The marindji trap was already known to the Honwanas, three or four centuries ago, before they possessed any iron weapon. They used to kill elephants in this way and, being unable to dismember them, they made a fire all round the beast to cook it on the spot!

224 In order "to make the game forget," viz., to circumvent its
844 wariness (djibata), certain magical charms are used in connection with the trap. The fence which surrounds it is smeared over with a powder made from a human placenta. A hunter's wife carefully preserves the afterbirth of her child ; she bakes it on the evening of the day of delivery, hides it during the following day, dries it the next evening, puts it between two pieces of a broken pot, and hangs it from the roof. When the father returns from his hunting trip, he makes a powder of it, mixes it with other drugs, and uses it to smear the fence of the trap, also his arrows, or his gun. Should an antelope be wounded by a projectile covered with this drug, it is sure to fall at once! This powerful medicine is called *ndzedzena* and is deemed so important that a hunter's wife who loses the afterbirth must pay a fine of one hoe ; the hunter will try to obtain the placenta of another woman ; it is therefore not necessary that the afterbirth be that of his own wife (Viguet).

224 Game pits are not common in Thongaland ; they were still used
476 some years ago in the South of the Maputju country and in the Hlengwe territory, but I never came across any myself. At a more remote period they were employed for the most profitable collective hunting the Thongas ever attempted. All the members of the clan were summoned ; they built a strong fence as much as two kilometers in length, leaving about ten openings at equal distances ; at each of these gates was dug a game pit. In the afternoon the men assembled and prepared torches which they lighted in the evening ; and with loud shouts they chased the game

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

844 787 843 enclosure. This is done to protect the woman from indiscreet onlookers. Should there be enough bush to hide her, mats are not used. A big wooden mortar is given to her to lean against during her pains. The whole place is called by a special term *fukwen* or *busaken* (the nest). Should the birth be difficult, the divinatory bones will probably be consulted and the woman will be removed to another place, inside the hut or somewhere else.

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During the whole labour, it is taboo (1) for the mother to eat or to drink anything ; she would kill the child if she did so. Of course no man must attend the birth ; neither must girls come near. A newly married woman may be allowed to enter the enclosure in order to "be taught." It is also forbidden for the female relations of the woman, her sisters, even her mother to come *fukwen* ; they might be ashamed if their relative behaved badly and "broke her child." They will not come till the following day, when they hear that everything has gone smoothly ; then the father will kill a hen for them.

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551 for girls and boys. *Nhwanin* is a girl's name, as it means "girl" and *Nwandjise* a boy's name as it means "boy" (1).

553 All these birth-names are abandoned later on, generally at
881 the circumcision school, or at the age of puberty, in the clans
787 where the custom of circumcising has disappeared; boys and girls then choose new names. Men and women who undergo initiation adopt a new name. So do those subjected to the treatment for possession; these take the name of their pretended possessor when he has made himself known. I refer the reader to Appendix II for further information regarding Thonga names.

845 *Premature Birth.* When a child is born prematurely and is very small and delicate, he is wrapped in the leaves of the castor-oil plant and put into a big pot, which is then exposed to the heat of the sun. This is a true incubator, and the treatment is said to be attended with success (Tobane).

845 *Protracted Births and Illegitimate Births.* There would seem to be
848 no relation between these; but to the Thonga mind, on the contrary, a protracted and difficult birth proves that the child is not legitimate. This conviction is so strong that when a woman knows that the child which she is going to bear is not the son of her husband (nuna) but of a lover (mbuye), she will admit this secretly to the principal midwife, in order to spare herself the pains of a difficult birth, as it is taboo to bear a "child of adultery" hiding the fact: it would cause the mother untold suffering.

Therefore, if the delivery lasts too long, the midwife will begin to have doubts as to the legitimacy of the child. The first thing she will do is to send word to the husband. He knows
845 what it means. He takes in his *shifado* (2) a little of his *semen*,
848 mixes it with water in a shell of sala (the big round fruit of the
291 Strychnos) and the woman drinks it. It may be that then the child will "feel his father," if the husband is really his father, and that this will bring the birth to a prompt conclusion; but

(1) I know of an exception to this rule. The son of the Mabota chief was named Nhwanin, a girl's name, in order to deceive the malevolent powers which had killed his brothers and sisters.

(2) See Annotatio 1 at the end of the volume in the collection of Latin notes written for medical men and ethnographers.[1]

1 [see p. 516 in these categories or in 116 -- Analyst]

845/848 if this result is not attained, it is a proof that the child is really illegitimate and the midwife will force the woman to confess her guilt and the name of her lover. Should she have had many and hide the names of some of them "the womb will refuse" (khuri dji ta yala) and the birth will be possible only when the confession is complete.

848/787 Should an illegitimate child be born without this delay, he will come to the light with his hands closed and refuse to take the breast. This will give the midwife an opportunity of extorting a confession from the mother. These women practise a special kind of divination : they take a broken pot, put pumpkin seeds into it and place it on the fire. If the seeds, instead of burning to a cinder, explode with a noise, it is a proof that the woman is guilty. Each explosion means a lover, and all their names must be revealed. (Tobane.) This confession is strictly private. The midwives will consider it a professional duty not to divulge the secret to anyone, even the father. But the mother must confess, as it is absolutely necessary that the true father of a child be known on the day of its birth.

848/837/789 It is taboo for the lover of the woman to come to the door of the hut after the birth of the illegitimate child as long as the umbilical cord has not fallen off. The child would die. Even later on, should the mother be sitting on the threshold of the hut with the baby in her arms, and the man pass along the street in front of them, one of the midwives will go (has she not heard the confession ?) and take between her fingers a pinch of sand from the footprints of the lover, and, without a word, will throw it on the fontanella of the baby. If the husband happens to be present, he will know by witnessing this act that he is not the true father. I do not think he will be very angry. The child is his and, if it is a girl, nobody else will "eat the oxen !" For him this is the main consideration !

845/847 As regards the birth of twins, we shall study later on the strange customs which accompany it : in olden times one of the children was killed ; except in such a case, no child is ever put to death wilfully on the day of its birth.

581 832 says: "Nsati wa mabele u nga nabele loko u nge na bukosi." — "Do not covet a woman with large breasts if you have no money..." This does not mean that she will cost more, but her father, knowing that she will not want for suitors, will not consent to let her go unless the full lobolo is paid at once. On the other hand a girl with an elongated face is admired more than one who is too broad-faced. Of the first they say: "She is pretty, she resembles an antelope" (a kota mhala); of the second: "She is 832 chubby-cheeked, she is like a sow." A light complexion is preferred 186 to a very dark one, because the white or yellow races are regarded 734 as superior, and a Native laying claim to any European or Asiatic 581 blood is proud of it. Parents, who also have their say in the 824 question of marriage, insist on two other points: the working capacity of the girl, and the absence of any witchcraft blot in the family. Should her mother have been convicted of being a witch, 581 the girl will be feared. However, every girl finds a husband in the 583 land where polygamy flourishes. If he be slow in coming, she will apply to her doctor, who will prepare the *love charms*, which will make her "appear," so that she will be noticed by the boys (See page 100). If even that does not succeed, she has other means at her disposal and may go herself to make proposals to a man (wopsana). He is seduced by her, and constitutes himself a thief who has *tlhubo*, viz. "taken in marriage by abduction" (See page 119). The parents will claim the lobolo and he must pay it. Marriage and childbearing remain the only carreer to which a Thonga woman can look forward. Hence a number of special feminine taboos which are very curious.

2) Special feminine taboos.

262 845 Some of them concern girls *before childbearing* and cease after 784 parturition. In the Tembe and Maputju clans, girls must not eat 562 pork, because pigs root nervously with their noses; the future child 825 would also move its head from one side to the other, when on the verge of birth, and this would make delivery difficult. Other

843 remove the blood. The Thongas think that, as the menses are suspended, the blood accumulates in the body and must be taken away.

Pregnancy is not considered as a tabooed period. As we have just seen, sexual relations are allowed during that time, even recommended as favourable to the growth of the child. However, in view of the impending birth, some special taboos have been added to those which apply to all women.

A pregnant woman *must not drink water when standing up*. She must kneel down, otherwise the water would fall violently on the head of the child and hurt it!

843 It is taboo for her to *wrap her body* in too much clothing.
845 She must keep her belly bare and never throw her dress (kapulane) over her shoulders, lest the baby come to the light with its head covered with membranes, a complication which is very much dreaded by Thonga women.

She must not take *the sauce* of her porridge *too hot*. The child might be scalded inside and have black spots when born.

It is also taboo to *prepare the ntehe before the birth*, as no one knows what will happen. The child might die!

843 The future mother must not eat *pigeon's meat*, because pigeons
825 have no blood in the muscles of their breast. She would have no milk herself wherewith to nurse the baby. Nor must she even *look at a monkey*, lest she "take to herself" (tekela) the form of the animal and the child be like it!

A woman, in the beginning of pregnancy, must not visit a sick person. The latter might die.

843 As regards women dying during pregnancy, see page 166.

766 *Miscarriages* are very much feared amongst South Africans,
731 not for themselves, but because they are accompanied by an
789 uncontrolled effusion of a blood which is a terrible taboo. The
826 discharged foetus must be buried in wet soil, otherwise the rain will not fall; the country having been polluted will be dried up by hot winds. A strange rite called *mbelele* is performed in times of drought, when all the graves of children born prematurely and buried on the hill are searched, and their contents thrown into the mud, near the river. We shall discuss in Part VI the

124 The description I have given of the *lahla khombo*, translating
178 exactly the narratives of Mbozá, Elias, and an old widower called
164 Magingi, refers to the rite as it was performed in the normal
783 fashion some twenty years ago amongst the Ba-Ronga. Now
765 customs are changing. There is, all around the town of Lourenço Marques, an agglomeration of Natives coming from many tribes. Immorality there has become terrible owing especially to alcoholic excesses, a free and enormous sale of adulterated wine taking place in this region. The widows are sure to find there a hundred men for each of them, when they wish to cast away their defilement. But in this promiscuity the poison of syphilis makes terrible ravages. According to our medical missionary, 90 % of the
783 Natives are contaminated by this disease. When the men up
765 country saw that their wives came back ritually purified but
178 physically contaminated, they began themselves to accomplish the necessary act. This has become the general custom to such an
833 extent that, when a widow goes to Majlangalen, (such is the name of that hell of drunkenness and immorality), it is now said of her : "She will refuse to stay with her legal heirs!" However the law of the *lahla khombo nhoben*, to cast away the malediction in the bush, remains inexorable in the three cases where the defilement is considered as being of the worst kind : if the
[845] husband died of phthisis or of leprosy, or if the woman has had twins.

Old widows who can find no lovers may be purified by means of drugs.

765 e) *The year of widowhood.* Though the widows have found
587 new husbands, they still remain in the old kraal. They must accomplish there "a full hoe," viz. a whole year of ploughing. In their new fields they leave the dry sticks of the mealies of the year before, in such a way that everybody passing by will know at once that this is the field of a widow. But what they harvest this year will belong to the new husband. They have now the right to *fambelana*, viz. to go to each other. The suitor brings clothing to the woman, and the woman pays him visits with jars of beer. They belong more or less to each other. But the marriage of the inherited woman is not absolutely settled. Her

Latin Notes for Medical Men and Ethnographers

291 "Annotatio prima (P. 40).--'Shifado' quo quisque Thonga
845 extremum penem vestit, spheroides excavataque res est;
848 quod tegimentum ex iis, quae ad pudorem et munditiem perti-
881 nent, postulatur. Si quis schifado suum amisit, ei dedecoriest."

Note 1 (page 40). Shifado, with which every Thonga covers the end of his penis, is a spherical and hollowed-out object; this covering is demanded from those who are concerned with decency and cleanliness. If anyone has lost his schifado [sic] he is disgraced.

"Olim apud Thonga, qui a populo Zulo illum morem acceperunt, viri, quod linguâ 'mbayi' id est fistulam quandam ex foliis textis palmae quae 'milala' dicitur, ferre solebant.

[At one time among the Thonga, who took over this custom from the Zulu people, the men used to wear what in their language is called mbayi, that is, some kind of tube made of palm leaves woven together which is called milala.]

"Ultima 'mbayi' anno 1895 vel 1896 post Christum natum visa sunt. Quod shifado ex parvae cucurbitae cortice aut duro et excavato accurateque polito ligno factum, summo veretro affixum, minime incommode ferre videntur."

[The last mbayi were seen in the year 1895 or 1896. Because the shifado is made of the rind of a small gourd or of hard, hollowed-out and carefully polished wood, and attached at the top of the private parts, it seems that it can be worn with the minimum of discomfort.]

833 "Annotatio secunda (P. 56). S. n. i, sc. semine non im-
851 misso. Ad hoc, marito sperma foras spargendum est (a nga
842 mu weleri): hic est coitus rite factus et quasi lustralis. Inde,
765 uxor in manus utriusque sordes (thyaka ra bona) sumit, qui-
783 bus umbilicum illinit."

[Note 2 (page 56). S. n. i., that is, the semen has not been injected. Moreover the husband must eject his sperms outside of the body (a nga mu weleri): this is the coitus properly executed and, as it were, lustral. Then the wife takes in her hands the filth of both (thyaka ra bona) and smears the navel with it.]

"Annotatio tertia (P. 57). Corpus infimum pueri ex adverso et a tergo peni pater tangit.

[Note 3 (page 57). The father touches with his penis the lowest part of the boy's body from the front and from behind.]

831 "Annotatio quarta (P. 88). Hae sunt formulae:
881 Shana kholoiwane ma ri tiba le'ri onhaka milebe?
Novistisne avem quae labra minora laedit?

202 crocodiles.) For the Mavundjas: *Kahlamba ntjhaba yo nonoha!*
618 (The big mountain, difficult to climb.) (1)

224 I have already described the part of a slain animal which is to
643 be given to the chief, when speaking of the prerogatives of the
825 master of the country (I. p. 406). Here are some supplementary
845 details: The general idea is that he must receive that part of the body which was in contact with the soil, because the chief is the owner of the soil. In the case of smaller antelopes however he does not claim anything. For the eland he requires, in addition to the ordinary tribute, half of the *bofu* i. e. of the paunch of fat which is found round the heart of this animal and which is believed to possess precious medicinal properties (especially for new-born children born with a membrane round the
224 head). As regards
643 buffaloes and other big animals, should they be killed far away from home, their meat is cut into strips (mishakatsu) and two bundles are brought back to the chief; it is also the rule that the head of any beast of great size should be eaten on the bandla, the meeting-place of the men in the capital.

Buffalo hunter with his victim.

224 So far I have described hunting with assegais, sticks and dogs.
824 But Thongas possess another method of killing big animals, a method which is perhaps more ancient and which has sometimes proved very useful. This is the *marindji trap*, i. e. a large pit dug in the earth, covered with branches and full of pointed stakes upon which the animal falls and impales itself. These stakes are made

(1) The Pedis have the same custom. The Ba-Khaha cry: "Haratsha! Mugoni! We"! This expression comes from the verb *ratsha*, to cross a river on a tree trunk, as the Khaha clan is said to have been held back in its ancient migrations by a swollen river and to have *ratsha* it successfully. The remembrance of this feat of their ancestors has remained and has given rise to this rallying cry. Other Pedis say: "*Stoandja khomo*," viz., "the killer will be given an ox for his reward."

But the terrible calamity of drought is brought into direct
relation with some physiological phenomena which no one would 789
have thought of in this connection : the miscarriage of women 821
when the foetus has not been dealt with according to rule, the 843
birth of twins, the death of children not yet received into the tribe 845
by the ceremony of *boha puri* (I. p. 56) and not buried in wet 766
ground ; these are the great natural causes which prevent rain 171
from falling! I have met with this conception all over the
Thonga tribe. I found it also amongst the Pedis of the Transvaal, who firmly believe it, and it would be most interesting to know if Suthos, Zulus, and Hottentots have the same superstitions. Let me quote the *ipsissima verba* of Mankhelu, the great 789
medicine-man of the Nkuna Court. I shall never forget the 821
earnest tone of his voice, his deep conviction, when he uttered 843
to me the following words, as a kind of revelation : "When a 783
woman has had a miscarriage, when she has let her blood flow secretly and has buried the abortive child in an unknown place, it is enough to make the burning winds blow, and to dry up all the land : the rain can no longer fall, because the country is no longer right (tiko a ra ha lulami). Rain fears that spot. It must stop at that very place and can go no further. This woman has been very guilty. She has spoilt the country of the chief, because she has hidden blood which had not yet properly united to make a human being. That blood is taboo! What she has done is taboo. It causes starvation."

"What then must be done?" — "The chief will collect his men and ask them : 'Are you in a normal state?' (lit. are you right?). They answer : 'Such and such a woman was pregnant but nobody knows what she has brought forth.' This woman will be arrested and told to go and show us where she has put it. The earth is dug up ; the hole is sprinkled with a decoction made of two drugs prepared in a special pot, the *mbendula* and *nyangale* ; the woman herself must wash her body every day with that medicine. Then a little of the earth taken from the hole will be scraped up and thrown into the river ; water drawn from the river will be poured into the hole : the country will be well again, and then the rain will come.

"Moreover, we, the medicine-men, after having sent old

"it is the law of the country!" Every one consents to the suspension of the ordinary laws! (1) [183 831

Amongst the Rongas, I did not hear of any connection between prematurely born children and rain. When the mbelele rite is performed, a mother of twins must lead the procession of women who draw water and pour it on the graves of the twins in order to secure the rain. They also clean all the wells (kuha tinhlobo), digging them afresh and removing any filth in the water. It may be that the corpse of a twin, if it has been buried in dry ground, will be dug out of its grave and buried again near the river, or they will go in procession and pour water on the grave. This will influence Heaven, which is killing the earth by the terrible heat of the sun. The burning October winds will cease and the rain will fall. 789 821 843 783 845

There is something mysterious about all these customs. Considered merely as ideas regarding Nature and natural phenomena, I believe their essential meaning to be this : — there are some cases of human birth which are taboo. While any birth is taboo, owing to the lochia, that of children prematurely born is doubly dangerous. Abnormal children, such as twins, children who have died before the "boha puri" rite (I. p. 56), in some clans also children who cut their upper teeth first, share this noxious character. They are a calamity for the whole land as they are connected with the mysterious power of Heaven, and so prevent the rain from falling. The great remedy for the evil, the only means of counteracting this influence, is to bury these children in wet ground. Should this not have been done, the chief must order these little corpses to be exhumed and buried near the river : this is the aim and object of the mbelele. If wet, these graves will cause no harm (2).

How did these extraordinary conceptions first originate ? 000

(1) This rite of *mbelele* shows striking analogies with the Passage rites which we have already often met with in Thonga customs. This is a special period, a mourning period for the land, says Viguet, a marginal period which, as such, is accompanied by obscene manifestations, both in speech and in absence of clothing. 766 783

(2) In the Maluleke clan, as previously mentioned, these three categories of children must be *cremated*, and foreigners dying in the midst of the clan are also burnt after their death, from fear that they might belong to one of these categories and so prevent the rain from falling, if they were buried in dry ground. The mbelele rite there is called *mbelenkele*. Ranganne describes it as follows: — Women collect the bones of twins, 789 821 183

What is the connection between abnormal births of human beings and the rain-fall? I think it can be found in the conception of Heaven which has inspired so many curious rites, and which I shall explain in the next chapter. So it is possible that, after all, the mbelele rite has a religious idea at its base.

b) *Rain charms.*

The removal of the corpses of abnormal children from dry ground and their burial near the river probably sometimes proves ineffective to produce rain. So Bantu magicians have invented a great many charms to obtain the greatly desired showers, and the power of the rain-makers is enormous. Our tribe does not seem to have developed this art as much as others. The Sutho-Pedis are masters in this domain and Mankhelu, who had been taught by them and had become a great and renowned rain-maker, revealed all his secrets to me. He possessed the drug and used it frequently, he said, having often been called in by Sutho chiefs dwelling in far distant districts, as far off as Pretoria. He assured me that he had met with so much success that these chiefs had given him oxen, horses, a waggon, precious beads, etc.! Where had he found this marvellous drug? At Rivimbi (in Venda : Luvimbi), a country north of Spelonken, not far from the Limpopo and to which he went, as far as I could make out, in 1865 or 1866. The Luvimbi people are the descendants of Luvimbi, (1) a chief of the old times (as old as Nkuna, says Mankhelu) who, after his death, went to heaven and became king of heaven ; he still exists there as a spirit, hearing and knowing everything that is done on earth. This Luvimbi is probably the same whom the Vendas call the first man, and concerning whom they have a number of traditions which I shall mention a little later.

and those of still-born children or those who died at birth ; to these they add their old rags (perhaps the cloths used for their menses?) ; they bring all these impurities to the cross-ways and burn them there, singing impure songs, saying : "To-day is a great day ! There is no taboo any more ! If you prohibit anything, it will be an insult to the rain ; it will not fall." The smoke of all that they have burnt constitutes a religious offering : now the country will be pure and the rain will fall. The conception prevailing among the Maluleke is somewhat different from that of the Rongas.

(1) I have published an account of the Venda traditions connected with Luvimbi or Raluvimbi in *The S. A Journal of Science*, April 1921, where more details will be found concerning this personage.

578 grains are brought to the altar and thrown on to it and the brothers
782 who wish to be reconciled recount their grievances. The offering,
593 though called beer of noise, is not really beer at all, (the cereals offered are not ground nor cooked). However, as my informant said, it is truly beer, as these raw cereals *represent* beer. Natives do not think that they have said anything contradictory in expressing themselves in this way! Notice the fact that these cereals are collected from all the granaries (Tembe). In the same manner the members of the whole family must be reconciled.

782 The same offering is resorted to in *cases of protracted births* (I. p. 40) when it is known that the woman in labour lived on bad
846 terms with another woman. The latter will be called ; she will
575 take a little water in her mouth and spit it out against the hypogastrium of the other, saying *phaa* with the following words : "The angry words which we have spoken must come to an end. May you find help. (Lepsi hi nga bulabula psi fanele ku hela, u pfuneka)". This prayer will not be accompanied by an invocation of the ancestor-gods of either of these women. A similar ceremony is performed when the bones have revealed that delay in parturition or in the child's taking the maternal breast is due to the *bitterness* of its parents in their previous relations. The diviner will tell the father "Hahlela shibiti, make an offering on account of bitterness." This will be performed in the hut. The father will come, and without putting anything into his mouth he will say *tsu* and add the following words : "Let her give birth to the child! What I had (in my heart) I have left! Let us be united again. (A a beleke! Lepsi ndji nga na psu ndji psi tjikile! Hi tlhangana kambe)." In this case the offering is also called an offering of bitterness, though it is very different from the one previously described under that name.

782 *Offering of "the Big millet" (mabele makuku).* The millet (mabele or ñwahuba) is the smallest of the cereals cultivated by the Thongas ; this offering, however, is called "big" on account of its importance and its character. It is a true *thanksgiving offering.* When the family has special cause for rejoicing, for instance if there has been serious illness and the patient has recovered, all its members are called together for the offering of the "big millet."

case in respect to the story of Ñwahungukuri, which I have published in *Les Ba-Ronga*, p. 312, and in which Heaven is credited with the full knowledge of a hidden crime committed by a murderer. This idea is so far from being an innovation due to European influence that thoughtful Natives all agree that, in former times, it was more usual to attribute death to the power of Heaven. It was a common saying that "Heaven has fallen (ku we Tilo) on such and such a village." Nowadays it is rather the gods, or the wizards, who are believed to cause death. 772 539 [761]

But this belief in Heaven has not only inspired these sayings, songs, and tales; it has also given rise to curious customs, a description of which will throw more light on this conception of the Thongas. Their existence proves that we are not here dealing with the "animatic" invention of some person gifted with a vivid imagination (p. 366), but with a true tribal belief.

II. *Customs Connected with the Conception of Heaven.*

1) Heaven, Twins and Rain.

This power, which causes lightning and death, also presides, in a very special way, at the *birth of twins*, so much so that the mother is called by the name of "Tilo," — "Heaven," — and the children "Bana ba Tilo," — "Children of Heaven" (1). Now the arrival of two or three babies at the same time is looked upon by the Thongas as a great misfortune, a defilement in respect of which very special rites must be performed. I give the details of these rites as practised in the Zihlahla, Nondwane, and Nkuna clans, as they were described to me by Tobane, Mboza, Mankhelu, etc. 845 772

Twins (hahla, or bandjwa, dji-ma) are now both allowed to live. But in former times, one of them, the one which appeared to be the feebler, was always put to death, being left to die of 845 847 766

(1) In our school at Lourenço Marques there was a charming young girl, who was named Nwana-wa-Tilo, Daughter of Heaven, because she had a twin brother.

845 starvation, or strangled by a rope. It was buried in a broken
847 pot, like other infants (I. p. 165), just below the surface of the
766 ground, a hole being left for the air to enter, so that the "spirit (moya) may go out," in order that, for the mother also, the "spirit may get out," may be able to fly out and not close (the passages), this being a primary condition of her having other children (1).

845 But even the death of one of the twins is not considered sufficient
756 to remove the curse. Directly after birth a particular doctor is
783 sent for, who keeps the drugs needed in such a case. Shimhuntana and Manganyele were the medicine-men who were capable of dealing with the twin defilement in the district of Lebombo, and Ñwashihuhuri of the Matimela family in the Zihlahla clan. They were held only to be surpassed by the medicine-man who treated cases of leprosy. The mother has to leave the village immediately, and they build for her a miserable little hut behind the others, where she goes to live with her twins. Her former hut is burnt with all her possessions.

In *Zihlahla*, all the women assemble that same day and start out in all directions, North, South, East and West to draw water in old calabashes from all the lakes and wells of the neighbourhood. They go skipping along, and singing

"Mbelele ! Mbelele ! Let rain fall"

This is the mbelele song (p. 318).

Then they return. The mother is seated with her two babes in her arms. They throw the water over her, intoning all the while the same monotonous refrain. This ceremony is to begin the removal of the "misfortune of twin birth, which is a death," (khombo dja lihahla, dji nga lifu). To complete the purification the magician gives to the father and mother a certain drug, which is kept in the Matimela family. The mother will put some of this into the little milombyana calabash, containing the diet-drink of newly born infants.

In *Khosen* the purification is performed by the medicine-man

(1) Even if a child dies at the age of ten days or more, if it is buried in the ground, its grave must be quite shallow ; for if it were buried too deep the mother would have no other children.

alone (See *Les Ba-Ronga*, p. 414). He pours his drugs into 845
one of the pots brought by the women, adds to them the psanyi 756
of the goat sacrificed for the occasion, and pours all the contents 783
on to the shoulders of the mother, who holds the babes in her lap. After this he pours from some other pot, which contains pure water, and the woman conscientiously washes herself and her children all the while. Until her purification no inhabitant of the village is allowed to eat anything, and the following day it is taboo to work in the fields, for this would prevent the rain from falling.

Amongst the *Nkunas*, the mother of twins sits at the entrance of the hut, and the drug is poured over the roof above the doorway; it leaks through the thatch on to her, and thus both the mother and the hut are purified at the same time.

This preliminary purification being thus accomplished, the 845
woman goes to live in "her shelter," outside the village. She 853
is absolutely shut off from all the other inhabitants. She has her own pots, axe, mortar, pestle, and does all her own cooking. Nobody even pays her a visit, and people only speak to her from a distance. Her children see no one but her. To each is allotted one breast, always the same. To help her in the nursing of twins [671]
the mother must "buy" a girl, to whom the care of one of the children is committed. This is a law. It is taboo for a girl, even [784]
should she be the elder sister, to "play" with a twin. The payment of £ 1 or ten shillings removes this taboo and the defilement (shisila) connected with it.

Women fear that, if they touch anything belonging to the 845
mother of twins, if they smear themselves with her provision 784
of fat, or if the defiled one smears herself with their fat, they will also incur the dreadful misfortune of giving birth to twins. For this reason it is taboo for a mother of twins to draw water except at a certain spot. She must select one place and always go there. When she returns from drawing water, she must pay attention to the little wreath of grass which she wears on her head to help her balance her pot; it must not be thrown away with those used by other women, for fear that they also should become contaminated (tekela).

845 All these regulations,[1] clearly show that, for the time being, the
184 mother of twins, like the widow, (I. p. 200) is regarded as outside
783 the pale of society. But her defilement is worse than that of the widow ; so, in order to be purified from it, the rite of *lahla khombo* (casting away the malediction) through which she must pass is much more severe. According to Mboza she must "deceive" four men one after the other, in the bush, all of whom will die. She hears that so and so says *djoo-djoo*, viz., becomes livid, that his body swells, that he is dead! She knows the reason. He has taken her defilement! Perhaps the fourth does not die but only becomes consumptive. These men have been pointed out to her by the divinatory bones. Each time she succeeds in performing the purification ceremony described in I. p. 205, she informs her medicine-man, who "prepares for her a vapour bath." Afterwards, she goes to reside at her parents' house, has relations with a lover, and gives birth to another child. Then her purification is complete, and her husband goes with 10/- to fetch her, and bring her home. The lover completed the removal of the "buhahla" i. e. the condition in which a mother of twins is. He has washed her (hlampsa). A new hut will be built for her, furnished with new utensils, and the ordinary family life will begin afresh.

845 As regards the twins themselves, they do not pass through
853 the ceremony of presentation to the moon (I. p. 52) as other children do. They are weaned earlier ; immediately after the reappearance of the menses the mother begins her *lahla khombo*, which at the same time is a *lumula*, a weaning of the children. They are then fed with goat's milk.

845 Twins are not liked by other people. They are looked upon as bad characters. When the little ones begin to crawl, and chance to go towards the other huts, people throw cinders at them and drive them away, saying : "These are children of Heaven. Be off! You annoy us!" If any ordinary child has a particularly bad disposition, they often say : "You are naughty! You are just like a twin!" — "Hahla dja karata" — "Twins are troublesome" is another common saying ; and if a child is really exceptionally difficult to deal with, people say : "It is a twin! You cannot do anything with it! (A dji koteki!)"

[1] [See pp. 433-435, Cat. 116 -- Analyst]

Special precautions are taken in respect to twins when they pay a mourning visit. One of the grave-diggers meets them at the entrance of the village and says: "Do not fear, Children of Heaven." He then puts some ashes on their heads and on their fontanelles. This is done because twins are feeble (ma ni bushapu) and the defilement might affect them more than other children. They must therefore be protected by smearing the middle of the head, and the "extremity of the tree of life," viz., the fontanelle, with a preventive. The mother also undergoes a similar treatment. She must prostrate herself near the hut of the deceased, at the place where the wall has been pierced to make an exit for the corpse. Then the grave-digger brings some live embers in a broken pot, pours a little water on to them, and dips his fingers into the water; he then presses both his hands against the woman's belly and brings them round her waist, pressing them all the while against the skin, until they meet on the spine; thus she is "cured inside" (dahiwa ndjen). This will prevent her from suffering from internal troubles, to which she, having given birth to Tilo, Heaven, is particularly liable. (Comp. I. p. 151) (1).

From this brief description of the customs connected with twins in most of the Thonga clans, it may be seen that their explanation is twofold: 1) The birth of twins is a death, consequently a defilement, indeed the worst of all defilements. Hence the *purificatory rites* which bear the character of *passage rites*: the mother is secluded and passes through a period of isolation, after which she is again admitted to society after a painful "casting away of her misfortune." 2) But the cause of the defilement is not an ordinary death, but Heaven. *She is Heaven*; she is said to have

(1) Another category of persons bearing a special relation to Heaven are the *albinos*. Cases of albinism are not frequent amongst South African Natives, yet they are sometimes met with. They are called in Thonga *Khalandlati*, a word which means literally *charcoal-lightning*. It is believed that they have been burnt (hisa) by lightning in their mother's womb before their birth. "Ba tlalile, a ba wupfanga, ba bengiwi hi tilo," viz. "they are uncomplete beings, they are not ripe, they have been hated by Heaven"; these are the terms in which they are described. They are not however regarded as taboo (yila), they merely inspire disgust (nyenya) (p. 83). As regards women suffering from this kind of disgrace, other women do not smear themselves with the same ochre as they, lest they should give birth to albinos; they do not drink from the same cup. Men do not marry them, and in this respect they are classed with leper women and witches, who are also looked on as repugnant.

845 *made Heaven* (a hambi Tilo), to have *carried Heaven* (a rwi Tilo), to
772 have *ascended to Heaven* (a khandjiyi Tilo). This connection
789 established between her and Heaven is clearly seen in the *rain customs* previously described. Notice that the day following the
766 birth of twins is a *shimusi*, i. e. a day of rest. Nobody tills the ground, fearing that it would prevent rain from falling. When the *mbelele* takes place in Nondwane and Zihlahla (p. 318), the half naked women who are sent to clean the wells take with them a mother of twins. This is no doubt in order to show them where the graves of twins are. But there is also another reason. In the sacred wood of Libombo there is a hole into which the woman is put ; her sisters then pour on to her the water which they have drawn from all the wells, till the hole is half full, and the water comes up to her breasts. This will cause the rain to fall. Why is this? No doubt because, the woman of Heaven being wet, Heaven itself will be wet. Spoon did not give this explanation himself, but, when I suggested it to him, he accepted it readily. For the same reason the graves of twins are watered. In certain cases water is poured on the graves of the ancestors also, because rain is attributed both to them and to Heaven, and this watering the graves is meant to induce either Heaven or the ancestor-gods to cause rain to fall. Hence again the precaution taken of burying twins in damp places, and of exhuming them in times of drought if they have been buried in dry ground (1).

845 The connection between twins and Heaven, so clearly to
772 be seen in these customs, appears again in respect to thunder-
821 storms, which, as we shall see, are another manifestation of Heaven.
789 When lightning threatens a village, people say to a twin : "Help us! You are a Child of Heaven! You can therefore cope with Heaven (mi kota Tilo), it will hear you when you speak." So the child

845 (1) In other clans this law is extended to children prematurely born, even though they
761 are not twins, and even to children who have not had the cotton string tied round their waist or who have cut their upper teeth first. On the other hand, among the Nkunas
772 no special connection seems to be established between twins and Heaven. These differences may be explained by the fact that all these abnormal cases were ascribed to
766 Heaven in former times, and the connection has been preserved in the various clans in respect to one or the other of these categories. Note that, in the song of the widows (l. p. 207), the king Heaven appears to have caused the death of the husband; this is another proof that Heaven was formerly considered the most frequent cause of death.

goes out of the hut and prays to Heaven in the following words : 845
"Go away! Do not annoy us! We are afraid. Go and roar far 772
away." When the thunderstorm has ended, the child is 821
thanked (1). His mother can also help in the same way, for has 789
she not ascended to Heaven? "She can speak with it, she is at it (or in it) — a li ku djone." (Spoon.)

We find in these rites a striking instance of the combination of the three forms of magic which have been explained above (p. 368). Heaven, rain, lightning, the mother of twins and the twins themselves form a connected whole. Action brought to bear on the mother of twins will therefore have its effect on Heaven ; this is *communionist magic*. This action consists in pouring water over her, (not only in plunging her into a lake). According to the principle of *imitative magic*, Heaven will thus be watered and will pour rain upon the earth. The act of the twin in commanding the lightning to spare the country is a case of *verbal magic*. All this would be logical enough and the conclusions perfectly legitimate if only the premisses were true!

Customs regarding twins vary from one clan to another. While 845
in one tribe they are put to death, in others their advent is considered an event of great happiness. This is the case in *Tembe and Maputju*, where women are said to wish for twins, and, if certain mothers have enjoyed this piece of good fortune, others ask them for some of the fat with which they have smeared their bodies, hoping by the use of the same ointment to obtain a like happy result. The hut is never burnt. The mother gives birth to the twins behind the hut (fukwen, I. p. 37). When it is time for her to re-enter her domicile, a hole is made in the wall at the back. The husband is excluded from the hut till the day of presentation to the moon (a ceremony which, in these clans, is not omitted in the case of twins). When he is again admitted, his wife strikes his legs with a stick, in order "to cure him" (ku mu

(1) Mrs. Junod, who was for years a missionary amongst the Fañ or Pahouin of 171
the French Congo, told me that, one day, after a tornado, the rainbow suddenly appeared in the sky. One of her female pupils at once ran to her, and hid her face in her schoolmistress' lap. On asking the reason of this fear the teacher was told that this girl was a twin, and twins dare not look at the rainbow. So the connection between Heaven and twins exists also in this tribe of Western Africa.

845 daha). Striking is frequently one of the rites of aggregation.
184 (See Van Gennep, *Rites de Passage*, p. 55). Let us remember that the Tembe clan is of Northern origin (I. p. 23) and has retained some customs which are different from those of the other Thongas (1).

2) Heaven and the "Nunu."

136 The following is a very extraordinary custom, and one which,
241 in many respects, greatly resembles those I have already described.
845 There is to be found, on the shores of Delagoa Bay, a small
772 Coleoptera belonging to the Alcides genus of the Cucurlionidæ
825 family. It has a proboscis-shaped mouth, a very hard carapace of half a centimetre in length, brown, and marked on each elytron with two longitudinal white bands. The Blacks call it the *nunu*. It is a scourge to the fields of beans and maize (much as cockchafers are with us). In December or January, when these insects begin to swarm, the chief men of the country order the diviners to throw the bones, and send the women to pick the "nunu" off the bean stalks. They gather them in "sala" shells. Then they choose (probably by casting lots) *a woman who has given birth to twins.*

(1) Amongst *the Hereros* a multiple birth is the happiest event which could possibly occur! The Rev. E. Dannert published in the *Capetown Folklore Journal* an account of the customs practised on such occasions by the Natives of this tribe, which occupies the Western side of Southern Africa, at about the same latitude as the Thongas. The father and mother are condemned to complete silence, under penalty of bringing a curse on those who speak to them. All the members of the tribe are convened and bring their cattle with them. The twins' family has to appear before the whole assembly, and is received with lamentations. Each individual must present himself to the parents, and make them a gift of beads, or other ornaments, in return for which the father and mother purify them by means of a certain powder. After this the father has the right of going from village to village, and claiming an ox from each one, as a kind of ransom. He becomes quite a rich man. This is the *kunga rite*, which we have also met with on many occasions amongst the Thongas (I. p. 124.). How can this diversity between the customs of the Hereros and those of most of the Thongas be explained? No doubt by this vague mysterious idea of Heaven, which is behind the religious conceptions of these tribes and in which all these rites originated. This celestial power, when it manifests itself, stupefies the Natives, for it causes "a death," entails a curse. With the Thongas it is the mother and children who are the objects of this malediction, hence the purifying ceremonies imposed upon them. With the Hereros, it is the whole tribe which is affected. The family into which the twins are born has been distinguished and honoured by this heavenly visitation, and collects for itself the fines which all must pay to regain the celestial favour!

One of her daughters, who is one of the twins, is told to throw 241
the whole "catch" of insects into the neighbouring lake. She is 845
accompanied by a woman of mature age, and, without speaking a 772
word, must go straight to the lake in question. Behind her 825
marches the whole crowd of women, arms, waists and heads covered with grass, carrying branches of the big-leaved manioc, which they wave from side to side, and singing the following song, which has been composed for this occasion :

> Nunu, muka! Hi da mabele!
> Nunu, go away! That we may eat mealies!

The twin throws her little calabash into the water without turning round (for she is not allowed to look behind). Then the savage yells are raised louder than ever, and the women sing their impure songs (ta ku ruketela), which they would never dare to utter on ordinary occasions, and which are reserved for these ceremonies, rain seeking and "nunu" hunting.

On that day, as during the mbelele, woe to the man who walks 241
along the paths! He is pitilessly attacked by these viragos, who 772
push him to one side, or even maltreat him, and none of his fellows 579
will go to his assistance. They all keep out of the way, for they 825
well know what would be in store for them, should they meet the savage crowd! So they mostly stay quietly at home in their huts!

The "nunu" is not always thrown into the water. Sometimes, to get rid of the plague, or rather to conjure it away, they start out in a band, armed with sticks, to throw these destructive insects on to neighbouring lands. It would seem that the men are mixed up in these underhand tricks, for it is said that this way of handing over the "nunu" to neighbours, often leads to pitched battles, in which sticks are wielded to some purpose, and blows rain thick and heavy! The people of Rikatla, citizens of Nondwane, used to make a present of their pseudo-cockchafers to the inhabitants of the district of Makunyule, belonging to the Mabota clan. But the true 825
way of conjuring away the "nunu" is to drown them in the lake, 772
and this custom, in common with the preceding ones, certainly has some connection with the notion of Heaven, the appearance of these pests being caused by that mysterious power, which

844 846 As soon as the child has made his appearance one of the midwives ties the *umbilical cord* (likabana) near the navel and cuts it about three inches from it. The little sore is anointed with a kind of fat ; the bit of cord remaining with the baby is attended to with great care : it generally falls off at the end of the first week, and this is the signal for the end of the period of confinement.

The after-birth, the *placenta*, is also looked for with much anxiety : it is called *yindlu ya ñwana*, the "house of the child," or *hlalu*. When it is delayed too long, the midwives begin to fear "because the blood which is inside has not all come out and will kill the mother." In the Khosa clan, should the placenta not come at once, the woman is told to stand on her feet, her body half bent forward, and all the midwives begin to move their index fingers from right to left, emitting at the same time the following sound : tswi-tswi-tswi-tswi. This is said to help the placenta to come. The placenta is generally buried deep behind the hut on the spot where the birth has taken place ; but some prefer to bury it inside the house, fearing the dogs might unearth it, which is taboo.

The child is then washed with water. This water is thrown away as being polluted by the blood of the birth, which is taboo.

553 787 *Naming the child*. On the day of birth or on one of the following days the child receives his name (bito). There are four principal ways of choosing this.

1) Often the parents give their offspring *the name of a chief* as Musongi, Makasana, Muzila, etc. It flatters their vanity !

2) But frequently the parents like to recall a name of the old times (pfusha bito dja khale), the name of one of the ancestors, because it is a good thing to remember them. They go so far as to consult the bones. A name is proposed, and if the bones in falling do not give a favourable indication, another is tried till they feel sure that the die "has spoken" (1).

553 608 3) Or it may be that somebody asks the favour of giving his

(1) The Christian Natives like to ask their missionary to choose the name, perhaps for a similar reason.

II. *The first week ; Confinement Period.*

846 From the day of birth till the moment when the umbilical
733 cord falls, seven days may elapse : this forms a special period
853 called *busahana*, which is the period of confinement for both mother and child. It will be concluded by the special ceremony of the child's first outing, marked by the rite of the broken pot. During these seven or eight days, *the mother* is restricted to a special diet, and this is a true "marginal period" for her. She is absolutely outside the pale of society. The diet is prescribed by the family doctor, who knows how to treat children, and consists of a special dish prepared with Kafir corn (1) (mabele) and called *shimhimbi*, with which special medicines have been mixed. The aim of this medication (khwebela busahana) is twofold : first to expel the unclean blood which follows the birth, and which is a very great taboo, and secondly to stimulate the production of the milk. This food is cooked in a special pot (shikhwebelo sha busahana) and is eaten not with the hands, as some particles of the unclean blood might enter it and cause the mother to become phthisic, but with a special spoon.

846 Both the pot and the spoon will be fastened over the entrance of the hut, inside (shirangen sha nyangwa), at the end of this period of seclusion.

A fowl is also killed during these first days, a hen if the child is a girl, a cock if it is a boy. Some medicinal powder is poured into the broth, and the mother drinks it and eats part of the meat, the husband eating the remainder. This little luxury is indulged in as it helps the mother to recover her strength sooner ; she is attended to by her own mother, who has been summoned as soon as the birth has been satisfactorily effected, and who helps her to feed the child.

262 (1) This use of Kafir corn in this and other old rites proves the antiquity of this cereal. It is probably the first which was known to the Natives. Maize is quite a modern food amongst the Thongas, though the time of its introduction is not known. See Part IV.

846/853 As regards *the child*, the umbilical cord is anointed every day; he begins to take the breast and drink the "*milombyana*," the great medicine which we shall describe later on.

During these days many taboos must be observed:

The *husband* is not allowed to enter the hut on any pretext; this is not on account of his being unclean, quite the contrary. A birth does not contaminate the father amongst the Ba-Thonga as it does in other tribes. He is not obliged to undergo any mediation. His exclusion from the conjugal hut is due entirely to the fact that his wife is polluted by the blood of the lochia, and he would run the greatest danger to himself if he came near.

846/854 *All married people* are also excluded (bakhili) viz. all those who have regular sexual intercourse. Should they touch the child, he would die. If however a woman wishes very much to go and see the new-born, she must abstain from relations with her husband during two days. Then she can be admitted into the hut. On the other hand young girls are welcome in the hut, but they must not kiss the baby during these first days. "It is not yet firm; it is only water," as they say; later on, when it begins to laugh and to play, they may kiss it. Even the father may do so then; when he comes back from a journey, he holds it in his arms and kisses it on the temple. Supposing that the 846 umbilical cord has now fallen off normally, the confinement period will be at an end. This termination is marked by two rites.

The mother of the delivered woman will have *to smear with clay the floor of the hut*. This is the great cleansing act which brings to an end a marginal period. It takes away all the dangerous blood, and the husband as well as all the other dwellers in the village will be allowed to enter the hut.

846/751/278/825 The second act is *the rite of the broken pot* (ku tjibelela shirengelen, viz. to make fire under the shirengele, the bit of broken pot used for the purpose). This is a medical treatment and a religious ceremony combined. It is performed by the family doctor on the threshold of the hut in the following way: he puts into this piece of broken pottery pieces of skin of all the beasts of the bush: antelopes, wild cats, elephants, hippopotami, rats, civet cats, hyenas, elands and snakes of dangerous kinds, and roasts

846 751 them till they burn. The smoke then rises, and he exposes the child to it for a long time : the body, face, nose and mouth. The baby begins to cry ; he sneezes, he coughs ; this is just what is 825 wanted. Then the doctor takes what remains of the pieces of 278 skin, grinds them, makes a powder, mixes it with *tihuhlu* (1) 856 grease of the year before last and consequently hard enough to make an ointment. With this ointment he rubs the whole body of the child, especially the joints, which he extends gently in order to assist the baby's growth.

846 751 All this fumigation and manipulation is intended to act as a preventive. Having been thus exposed to all external dangers, 853 dangers which are represented by the beasts of the bush, the child may go out of the hut. He is now able "to cross the foot prints of wild beasts" (tjemakanya mitila) without harm. Snakes will not bite him, at any rate their bite will not hurt him ; lions will not kill him. The remainder of the powder is put into a little bit of reed closed at both ends, which the mother has to carry with her during the whole nursing period in order to continue the treatment.

846 755 This rite of the broken pot is also the great preventive remedy against the much dreaded ailment of babies, *convulsions*. If a 763 child suffers from this, they will say : "a tlalile shirengelen," 821 viz. "he did not find any help in the broken pot" and the parents will go to another doctor whose drugs are more powerful, to have the child once more exposed to the smoke. It may even be that a grown-up man will undergo this treatment again, if he has been ill with convulsions, but, in this case, the broken pot with its pieces of skin is put on the [illegible] the patient, which has been first covered with a wisp of [illegible] are dja yendjeyendje). The great aim of all the medication of children by the "milombyana" is also to fight against convulsions, as we shall see (2).

(1) The tihuhlu are the seeds of the tihuhlu tree known under the name of mafurairai. They are oleaginous and the fat (mafura) obtained from them is very much used for external applications amongst the Thongas.

(2) In *Savage Childhood* p. 12, Dudley Kidd describes this "baptism of smoke" amongst Zulus. Some dirt is scraped from the father's body and is mixed with other drugs in order to impart to the child his ancestral spirit. Another ingredient

842 The Thonga child is always received into this world with great joy by the whole family. If it is a girl, it means oxen to buy a wife for one of the sons later on ; therefore it means increase not only in the wealth but in the number of the members of the family. If it is a boy, there is no direct material enrichment, but the clan has been strengthened and the name of the father is glorified and perpetuated. In the case of the birth of a first-born child (ñwana wa matibula), a special ceremony is performed at the end of the first week. When the grandmother has smeared the hut, she goes home, summons all the female relatives, sometimes as many as ten or fifteen ; they take with them food, ochre and fat prepared for this purpose. Two or three men accompany them. They enter the village of the child executing a special dance called *khana*, and singing the following song (which is the proper song to glorify a first-born) :

846 533 851 603

I celebrate my pot which has done *ngelebendje*...

They compare the child with a pot of clay which has gone through the firing process. It has been tried as one always tries a pot by letting it fall to the ground ; but it is not shattered, because it has not cracked in the furnace, it has kept intact ! This is what is meant by the descriptive adverb ngelebendje.

846 851 603 Then they smear the baby, the mother, the father, everybody in the village with ochre. It is a great feast. A goat will be killed, if possible, because the father and mother have "found a village" (kuma muti) by the child, they have "grown roots" (mila mitju). This is a law, but its omission is not taboo. When the grandparents do not perform this ceremony, it is an insult to the parents of the child, but no evil consequence will follow.

765 753 831 is a meteorite ground to fine powder. It is interesting to compare this use of the meteorite with the fact that, amongst the Thongas, this fumigation is intended to prevent convulsions. Convulsions, as we shall see (Part VI. Chap. II. B) are caused by the mysterious power of Heaven. The meteorite has fallen from Heaven. Thus the baptism of smoke aims at bringing the child under the influence of the two main elements of Bantu religion : the ancestor gods and Heaven.

846 For any subsequent children, the feast will be reduced to the
851 presentation by the grandmother of a basket of food to "*tlangela*
603 *ñwana*," viz. to "celebrate the child."

III. *The Nursing Period.*

853 The little child has been taken out of the confinement hut (humesha busahanen). He is now allowed to go outside. The nursing period then begins and will last two and a half or three years; but before we study the rites which mark it, let us consider the manner in which the baby is carried and his diet during this period.

A South-African woman with her child in the ntehe.

1) The Ntehe.

854 A little child is not carried by his mother in her arms, but in a softened skin which is called *ntehe*. The preparation of the ntehe is subject to many prescribed customs.

The first of these is this: the ntehe must not be looked out before the birth of the child, or it would bring misfortune. This is a taboo which I might call a "taboo of prevision." Some other taboos of this kind are met with in our tribe.

[604] For a first-born child, the skin must be provided by the maternal uncle. This is a rule, but the custom is not tabooed (1). The father may also prepare it, if necessary.

The ntehe must not be a sheep skin.
825 That is taboo. Let them take the skin of a duiker (blue
854 antelope), of a goat or of a mhala (impala). Sheep skins are

(1) Though the term taboo generally means a prohibition, I take the liberty of using it in a positive sense: A custom is taboo or is tabooed when its transgression is a taboo.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

821 "Kengelekezeeeee!" and this exclamation is repeated from one village to another. *Kenge* is the descriptive adverb which means the form of the crescent of the moon. Each "moon," or month, is considered as being a new one, the old one having died, and there were special names for each month of the year (See Part VI).

[841] 856 828 821 852 As soon as the mother of the child has resumed her menses (the menses are called tinwheti, months) and this happens as a rule on the third month after the delivery amongst Thonga women, she takes her garments, washes them, puts on new clothing and then proceeds to the ceremony of the *yandla*. The child must be "given his month." This is done in the following way. The day the new moon appears, the mother takes with her a torch or merely a brand from the fire and the grandmother follows her carrying the child: both go to the ash-heap behind the hut. There the mother throws the burning stick towards the moon and the grandmother flings the child into the air saying: "This is your moon!" (hweti ya ku hi yoleyo): then she puts the child on to the ashes. The little one cries and rolls over in the dirt on the ash-heap. Then his mother snatches him up (wutla), nurses him, and they go home.

This ceremony, which is certainly a rite of passage, is said to "open the chest of the child" otherwise "his ears would die," he would remain stupid. When a child is not intelligent, it is usual to say to him: You have not been shown your moon! (1)

852 Therefore the *yandla* means a progress made by the child, the entrance into a new phase of his existence. The fact is 846 854 emphasised by the three following changes which take place on the day of the yandla: 1) Henceforth his father is allowed to take the child in his arms. Up to that day, this was taboo, as the child being continually with his mother was perhaps polluted by the dangerous blood following the birth; but now she has washed her clothing and has been purified by the reappearance of the menses; so the danger no longer exists. 2) It is now

(1) However the name of the child's month is soon forgotten and is never afterwards recalled. This seems to show that the custom is dying out, as well as the knowledge of the names of the various months.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

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CHAPTER II

THE EVOLUTION OF A WOMAN FROM BIRTH TO DEATH

Essay of a Ronga girl on the subject.

124 In July 1897, the School Inspector gave to the big girls of the Swiss Mission school at Lourenço Marques the following subject for an examination in composition: "The life of a Ronga woman." This is the translation of one of the pupils' essays on the life of their country women:

"When a girl is born amongst the Ba-Ronga, people come and 846 congratulate the mother and say: "A ma buyeni mati," that is 302 to say: "Let the water come!" When the time is at hand when 854 she will come out of the hut, ochre is crushed for her and a calabash full of the fat of *nkuhlu* almond is prepared, and the two ingredients are mixed and smeared over her.

"Her curly hair is stretched out in corkscrew fashion, and ochre is put on it to transform it into a kind of rats' tails. (This is the operation called *hora ngoya*.) The mother also smears herself with ochre, and puts on her head a crown of small strings (shikupu) (1). Then, when the child lets her head fall on account of the weakness of her neck, a plaited string, which is just the right size for a necklace, is tied round her throat. 'Thus,' they say, 'her nape will be strengthened.'

854 "A small calabash with medicine is given her to drink; they also prepare for her a small pot of the medicine, and they say it

(1) I have heard this custom explained as follows: the mothers amuse the children by shaking their heads; the small strings dance about and make the babies laugh. This can only be true of infants already two or three months old.

843 754 to hinder the child from growing and to put in its place, by means of her enchantments, a snake, a hare, a quail or an antelope!

834 846 [886] After the birth, owing to possible contamination by the lochia, sexual intercourse is prohibited till the rite of tying the cotton string (p. 56) has taken place. It is then allowed, but conception must be avoided till weaning, when relations are resumed in the normal way, and this goes on till the time when the woman is no longer able to bring forth children. I know of no special rules in connection with the menopause.

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* *

831 But, amongst Bantus, sexual relations are not an individual affair, as amongst nations more advanced in evolution. There is a mysterious relation between them and the collective life of the community. Hence the fact that, on certain given occasions, they are recommended, even ordered, or prohibited.

1) Cases of recommendation.

833 783 587 829 Sexual relations must take place on two principal occasions : when the inmates of a village abandon it and go elsewhere to found a new one, and when the widows perform the painful rite of "lahla khombo" (to cast away misfortune). We shall see, when studying these customs, that sexual relations have here a twofold signification : 1) they "consolidate" the little community in its new abode, viz. they strengthen its structure by confirming the authority of its chief ; 2) they provide the principal means of getting rid of all contamination, especially of the defilement connected with death. (Annotatio 13.)[1]

2) Cases of prohibition.

834 784 581 829 753 Married people are not considered as being in a state of defilement, as mourners are, for example. Yet this class of persons, called "ba-ku-khila," constitute a danger for those members of the community who are in a weak state of health. They must not come in contact with the circumcised, because in that case their wounds would not heal properly.

1 [See pp. 518-519 in these categories or in v6--Analyst]

we shall discuss in Part VI the
843 origin of this extraordinary idea. A woman who has had a
834 miscarriage is impure for three months at least. Menstruation
841 must have taken place two or three times and have cleansed her before her husband can have any sexual relation with her. (Compare Annotatio 7,[1] which applies to the transgression of this rule.)

7) Parturition.

846 We have described, when treating of birth, the many taboos
753 which accompany parturition. The *busahana* period, from the moment of delivery till the fall of the umbilical cord, is very much dreaded. When a woman is suffering from *shilumi* (a disease which sometimes follows delivery, probably owing to a displacement of the organs) she must not enter the hut of a woman who has been confined. The ailment would "jump over to her" (tlulela). There is however a way of preventing contagion. The visitor must take the piece of clothing which she uses as a girdle and throw it to the patient, and the patient throws back her own girdle to the visitor. Then she can enter : "They have acted according to the law, there is no more *yila*."

846 A mother must not drink any milk from the birth of the child
851 until its presentation to the moon. Afterwards she is allowed to drink only milk from cows which have calved many times.

The rite of *kunga* is performed in the case of a first-born child. This child is called *nwana wa matibula*, the child by which the woman has *tibula*, viz. has become a mother. The etymology of this word *tibula* (Zulu zibula) is not known. When people come to greet the baby, its parents will not allow them to take it in their arms. They must pay something for permission to do so, even a brother, a sister, or a grandmother. The father is not subject to this rule ; "the child is his, belongs to him." Nowadays this ceremony means only that these people are happy to receive the new born child amongst them. There is no taboo in it. But it is certainly related to the fact that in giving birth to a child for the first time, the woman has passed from womanhood to motherhood.

1 [See p. 517 in these categories or in 116 - Analysis]

846 A demonstration of joy takes place at the birth of any subsequent
831 child, but the kunga is only performed for the first-born. It does not seem that in the case of the first-born child, as in the case of bowumba (see p. 125) the gifts of kunga are subject to any taboo.

8) Loss of children.

766 A woman who loses an infant (wa ku felwa) is deeply contam-
783 inated with the defilement of death. She must bury it herself
834 without aid from her husband. Next day, she goes behind the
853 hut, kneels down and draws off her own milk on to the ground. She does this until the secretion has ceased. This is taboo ; her milk is polluted ; no drop of it must fall in the gardens. She must avoid crossing the fields and going to the storehouses to fetch food.
864 Until she has been "put right again (busetela)," she eats with a spoon. To use a spoon is a bad omen for a woman, because it reminds her of death. That is the reason why men adopt this civilized custom more readily than women. During her mourning, no sexual relations are allowed. When menstruation begins again, she first keeps silent, and does not tell her husband. Only on the second or third occasion does she inform him of the fact. He can then purify her ; this is done in the same way as in the case of widows. (See p. 154.) Then he buys new clothing for her and she resumes her ordinary mode of life. Everybody seeing her with this new attire will know that "she has been repaired." Should any one else than the husband give her this clothing, the latter will be greatly offended and accuse her of having relations with a lover.

765 A man does not put on *malopa*, mourning clothing, for a child
586 who was not yet of age. The woman alone does so. However a husband is always grieved at the death of his child and a sad event like this often leads to dreadful results. He will begin to think that his wife is a witch and has eaten her own child by her magical powers. Such an accusation is almost sure to end in a divorce.

A woman who has *lost many children*, three or four, is considered

845 848 if this result is not attained, it is a proof that the child is really illegitimate and the midwife will force the woman to confess her guilt and the name of her lover. Should she have had many and hide the names of some of them "the womb will refuse" (khuri dji ta yala) and the birth will be possible only when the confession is complete.

848 787 Should an illegitimate child be born without this delay, he will come to the light with his hands closed and refuse to take the breast. This will give the midwife an opportunity of extorting a confession from the mother. These women practise a special kind of divination : they take a broken pot, put pumpkin seeds into it and place it on the fire. If the seeds, instead of burning to a cinder, explode with a noise, it is a proof that the woman is guilty. Each explosion means a lover, and all their names must be revealed. (Tobane.) This confession is strictly private. The midwives will consider it a professional duty not to divulge the secret to anyone, even the father. But the mother must confess, as it is absolutely necessary that the true father of a child be known on the day of its birth.

848 837 789 It is taboo for the lover of the woman to come to the door of the hut after the birth of the illegitimate child as long as the umbilical cord has not fallen off. The child would die. Even later on, should the mother be sitting on the threshold of the hut with the baby in her arms, and the man pass along the street in front of them, one of the midwives will go (has she not heard the confession ?) and take between her fingers a pinch of sand from the footprints of the lover, and, without a word, will throw it on the fontanella of the baby. If the husband happens to be present, he will know by witnessing this act that he is not the true father. I do not think he will be very angry. The child is his and, if it is a girl, nobody else will "eat the oxen !" For him this is the main consideration !

845 847 As regards the birth of twins, we shall study later on the strange customs which accompany it : in olden times one of the children was killed ; except in such a case, no child is ever put to death wilfully on the day of its birth.

643 362 582 On his death, his son Gwaba was put in his place. But he was deported by the Portuguese and his sister, Midambuze, filled the position. Consequently she was not lobola, but chose a husband for herself, a man of common origin (a titlhuba nuna). Her son may succeed her ; in this case only can a uterine nephew of a chief take his place.

643 834 849 At Gungunyana's court queens played a great part. This seems to be in accordance with the Zulu custom. After the death of Chaka's mother, sexual relations were taboo for the whole tribe during one year, and children conceived during that time were put to death by order of the chief! (See Colenso : Ten weeks in Natal.)

643 I know of no case in which a foreigner became chief of a clan through having married one of its princesses. He can become hosana, but the true hosana will be his wife and he himself will be but a prince consort. I have heard of two instances in which this happened.

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case in respect to the story of Ñwahungukuri, which I have published in *Les Ba-Ronga*, p. 312, and in which Heaven is credited with the full knowledge of a hidden crime committed by a murderer. This idea is so far from being an innovation due to European influence that thoughtful Natives all agree that, in former times, it was more usual to attribute death to the power of Heaven. It was a common saying that "Heaven has fallen (ku we Tilo) on such and such a village." Nowadays it is rather the gods, or the wizards, who are believed to cause death. 772 539 [761]

But this belief in Heaven has not only inspired these sayings, songs, and tales; it has also given rise to curious customs, a description of which will throw more light on this conception of the Thongas. Their existence proves that we are not here dealing with the "animatic" invention of some person gifted with a vivid imagination (p. 366), but with a true tribal belief.

II. *Customs Connected with the Conception of Heaven.*

1) Heaven, Twins and Rain.

This power, which causes lightning and death, also presides, in a very special way, at the *birth of twins*, so much so that the mother is called by the name of "Tilo," — "Heaven," — and the children "Bana ba Tilo," — "Children of Heaven" (1). Now the arrival of two or three babies at the same time is looked upon by the Thongas as a great misfortune, a defilement in respect of which very special rites must be performed. I give the details of these rites as practised in the Zihlahla, Nondwane, and Nkuna clans, as they were described to me by Tobane, Mboza, Mankhelu, etc. 845 772

Twins (hahla, or bandjwa, dji-ma) are now both allowed to live. But in former times, one of them, the one which appeared to be the feebler, was always put to death, being left to die of 845 847 766

(1) In our school at Lourenço Marques there was a charming young girl, who was named Nwana-wa-Tilo, Daughter of Heaven, because she had a twin brother.

845 starvation, or strangled by a rope. It was buried in a broken
847 pot, like other infants (l. p. 165), just below the surface of the
766 ground, a hole being left for the air to enter, so that the "spirit (moya) may go out," in order that, for the mother also, the "spirit may get out," may be able to fly out and not close (the passages), this being a primary condition of her having other children (1).

845 But even the death of one of the twins is not considered sufficient
756 to remove the curse. Directly after birth a particular doctor is
783 sent for, who keeps the drugs needed in such a case. Shimhuntana and Manganyele were the medicine-men who were capable of dealing with the twin defilement in the district of Lebombo, and Ñwashihuhuri of the Matimela family in the Zihlahla clan. They were held only to be surpassed by the medicine-man who treated cases of leprosy. The mother has to leave the village immediately, and they build for her a miserable little hut behind the others, where she goes to live with her twins. Her former hut is burnt with all her possessions.

In *Zihlahla*, all the women assemble that same day and start out in all directions, North, South, East and West to draw water in old calabashes from all the lakes and wells of the neighbourhood. They go skipping along, and singing

"Mbelele ! Mbelele ! Let rain fall"

This is the mbelele song (p. 318).

Then they return. The mother is seated with her two babes in her arms. They throw the water over her, intoning all the while the same monotonous refrain. This ceremony is to begin the removal of the "misfortune of twin birth, which is a death," (khombo dja lihahla, dji nga lifu). To complete the purification the magician gives to the father and mother a certain drug, which is kept in the Matimela family. The mother will put some of this into the little milombyana calabash, containing the diet-drink of newly born infants.

In *Khosen* the purification is performed by the medicine-man

(1) Even if a child dies at the age of ten days or more, if it is buried in the ground, its grave must be quite shallow ; for if it were buried too deep the mother would have no other children.

551 for girls and boys. *Ñhwanin* is a girl's name, as it means "girl" and *Nwandjise* a boy's name as it means "boy" (1).

553 All these birth-names are abandoned later on, generally at
881 the circumcision school, or at the age of puberty, in the clans
787 where the custom of circumcising has disappeared; boys and girls then choose new names. Men and women who undergo initiation adopt a new name. So do those subjected to the treatment for possession; these take the name of their pretended possessor when he has made himself known. I refer the reader to Appendix II for further information regarding Thonga names.

845 *Premature Birth.* When a child is born prematurely and is very small and delicate, he is wrapped in the leaves of the castor-oil plant and put into a big pot, which is then exposed to the heat of the sun. This is a true incubator, and the treatment is said to be attended with success (Tobane).

845 *Protracted Births and Illegitimate Births.* There would seem to be
848 no relation between these; but to the Thonga mind, on the contrary, a protracted and difficult birth proves that the child is not legitimate. This conviction is so strong that when a woman knows that the child which she is going to bear is not the son of her husband (nuna) but of a lover (mbuye), she will admit this secretly to the principal midwife, in order to spare herself the pains of a difficult birth, as it is taboo to bear a "child of adultery" hiding the fact: it would cause the mother untold suffering.

Therefore, if the delivery lasts too long, the midwife will begin to have doubts as to the legitimacy of the child. The first thing she will do is to send word to the husband. He knows
845 what it means. He takes in his *shifado* (2) a little of his *semen*,
848 mixes it with water in a shell of sala (the big round fruit of the Strychnos) and the woman drinks it. It may be that then the
291 child will "feel his father," if the husband is really his father, and that this will bring the birth to a prompt conclusion; but

(1) I know of an exception to this rule. The son of the Mabota chief was named Ñhwanin, a girl's name, in order to deceive the malevolent powers which had killed his brothers and sisters.

(2) See Annotatio 1 at the end of the volume in the collection of Latin notes written for medical men and ethnographers.

1 [see p. 516 in these categories or in 116 -- Analyst]

845 If this result is not attained, it is a proof that the child is really
848 illegitimate and the midwife will force the woman to confess her guilt and the name of her lover. Should she have had many and hide the names of some of them "the womb will refuse" (khuri dji ta yala) and the birth will be possible only when the confession is complete.

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787 will come to the light with his hands closed and refuse to take the breast. This will give the midwife an opportunity of extorting a confession from the mother. These women practise a special kind of divination : they take a broken pot, put pumpkin seeds into it and place it on the fire. If the seeds, instead of burning to a cinder, explode with a noise, it is a proof that the woman is guilty. Each explosion means a lover, and all their names must be revealed. (Tobane.) This confession is strictly private. The midwives will consider it a professional duty not to divulge the secret to anyone, even the father. But the mother must confess, as it is absolutely necessary that the true father of a child be known on the day of its birth.

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837 of the hut after the birth of the illegitimate child as long as the
789 umbilical cord has not fallen off. The child would die. Even later on, should the mother be sitting on the threshold of the hut with the baby in her arms, and the man pass along the street in front of them, one of the midwives will go (has she not heard the confession ?) and take between her fingers a pinch of sand from the footprints of the lover, and, without a word, will throw it on the fontanella of the baby. If the husband happens to be present, he will know by witnessing this act that he is not the true father. I do not think he will be very angry. The child is his and, if it is a girl, nobody else will "eat the oxen!" For him this is the main consideration !

845 As regards the birth of twins, we shall study later on the
847 strange customs which accompany it : in olden times one of the children was killed ; except in such a case, no child is ever put to death wilfully on the day of its birth.

3) The Gangisa.

832 When a boy has gone through the puberty rites, he is grown
836 up and is allowed to practise the *gangisa*. This word comes
882 from *ganga*, which means "to choose a lover." Each girl is asked by the boys to choose one of them; they *make them choose* (gangisa, factitive derivative). I once observed some boys—they were still very young—flirting round three or four girls just like bees round ripe plums, running after them, and saying repeatedly: "Choose me! Choose me!" There is a special blue cotton print with a large white pattern which is called "gangisa ntombi" viz. to make a girl choose, as it is offered by the lover to the damsel of
836 his choice in order to obtain her favour. When a girl has made
848 her choice, her boy plays with her like husband and wife, first
684 building little huts, etc. but later on in a less platonic fashion. In fact nothing is prohibited in the relations between young people
[837] of the two sexes. A married woman is sacred amongst the Thongas, but an unmarried girl is not. However, she must not become pregnant. (1) If this happens, the parents will say to the lover: "You have spoiled our daughter, you must buy her in marriage." If he refuses, the child will belong to the family of the girl. Excesses in gangisa are condemned. A boy who commits them is said to be an adulterer (a ni bupse); of a girl they say: "She will lose her head (a ta ba singe)."

882 As the unmarried boys and girls live in special huts, the *loo*
836 of the boys and the *nhanga* of the girls, at the entrance of the village, it is easy for them to meet during the night. During the day, they generally behave themselves becomingly. But when the lads pay visits to their girls, who sing to the accompaniment

(1) When a girl becomes pregnant, having had relations with her lover inside her parents' village, it is very serious; it is taboo. The boy will have to find a goat, to kill it during the night in the girl's kraal, and to rise very early; then both the boy and the girl, quite naked, must go round the village and sprinkle the fence from inside with a special decoction. None must come out of the huts to look at them. This will prevent the inhabitants from contracting the disease called mukuhlwane (cough, lung complaint) which would otherwise attack them. Moreover the guilty boy will have to pay a fine of £ 5 in cows of the son of the lobola.

Latin Notes for Medical Men and Ethnographers

291 "Annotatio prima (P. 40). --'Shifado' quo quisque Thonga
845 extremum penem vestit, spheroides excavataque res est;
848 quod tegimentum ex iis, quae ad pudorem et munditiem perti-
881 nent, postulatur. Si quis schifado suum amisit, ei dedecoriest."

Note 1 (page 40). Shifado, with which every Thonga covers the end of his penis, is a spherical and hollowed-out object; this covering is demanded from those who are concerned with decency and cleanliness. If anyone has lost his schifado [sic] he is disgraced.

"Olim apud Thonga, qui a populo Zulo illum morem acceperunt, viri, quod linguà 'mbayi' id est fistulam quandam ex foliis textis palmae quae 'milala' dicitur, ferre solebant.

[At one time among the Thonga, who took over this custom from the Zulu people, the men used to wear what in their language is called mbayi, that is, some kind of tube made of palm leaves woven together which is called milala.]

"Ultima 'mbayi' anno 1895 vel 1896 post Christum natum visa sunt. Quod shifado ex parvae cucurbitae cortice aut duro et excavato accurateque polito ligno factum, summo veretro affixum, minime incommode ferre videntur."

[The last mbayi were seen in the year 1895 or 1896. Because the shifado is made of the rind of a small gourd or of hard, hollowed-out and carefully polished wood, and attached at the top of the private parts, it seems that it can be worn with the minimum of discomfort.]

833 "Annotatio secunda (P. 56). S. n. i, sc. semine non im-
851 misso. Ad hoc, marito sperma foras spargendum est (a nga
842 mu weleri): hic est coitus rite factus et quasi lustralis. Inde,
765 uxor in manus utriusque sordes (thyaka ra bona) sumit, qui-
783 bus umbilicum illinit."

[Note 2 (page 56). S. n. i., that is, the semen has not been injected. Moreover the husband must eject his sperms outside of the body (a nga mu weleri): this is the coitus properly executed and, as it were, lustral. Then the wife takes in her hands the filth of both (thyaka ra bona) and smears the navel with it.]

"Annotatio tertia (P. 57). Corpus infimum pueri ex adverso et a tergo peni pater tangit.

[Note 3 (page 57). The father touches with his penis the lowest part of the boy's body from the front and from behind.]

831 "Annotatio quarta (P. 88). Hae sunt formulae:
881 Shana khololwane ma ri tiba le'ri onhaka milebe?
Novistisne avem quae labra minora laedit?

842 The Thonga child is always received into this world with great joy by the whole family. If it is a girl, it means oxen to buy a wife for one of the sons later on ; therefore it means increase not only in the wealth but in the number of the members of the family. If it is a boy, there is no direct material enrichment, but the clan has been strengthened and the name of the father is glorified and perpetuated. In the case of the birth of a first-born child (ñwana wa matibula), a special ceremony is performed at the end of the first week. When the grandmother has smeared the hut, she goes home, summons all the female relatives, sometimes as many as ten or fifteen ; they take with them food, ochre and fat prepared for this purpose. Two or three men accompany them. They enter the village of the child executing a special dance called *khana*, and singing the following song (which is the proper song to glorify a first-born) :

846 533 851 603

I celebrate my pot which has done *ngelebendje*...

They compare the child with a pot of clay which has gone through the firing process. It has been tried as one always tries a pot by letting it fall to the ground ; but it is not shattered, because it has not cracked in the furnace, it has kept intact ! This is what is meant by the descriptive adverb ngelebendje.

846 851 603 Then they smear the baby, the mother, the father, everybody in the village with ochre. It is a great feast. A goat will be killed, if possible, because the father and mother have "found a village" (kuma muti) by the child, they have "grown roots" (mila mitju). This is a law, but its omission is not taboo. When the grandparents do not perform this ceremony, it is an insult to the parents of the child, but no evil consequence will follow.

755 753 821 is a meteorite ground to fine powder. It is interesting to compare this use of the meteorite with the fact that, amongst the Thongas, this fumigation is intended to prevent convulsions. Convulsions, as we shall see (Part VI. Chap. II. B) are caused by the mysterious power of Heaven. The meteorite has fallen from Heaven. Thus the baptism of smoke aims at bringing the child under the influence of the two main elements of Bantu religion : the ancestor gods and Heaven.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

846 For any subsequent children, the feast will be reduced to the
851 presentation by the grandmother of a basket of food to "*tlangela*
603 *ñsuma*," viz. to "celebrate the child."

III. *The Nursing Period.*

853 The little child has been taken out of the confinement hut (*humesha busahanen*). He is now allowed to go outside. The nursing period then begins and will last two and a half or three years; but before we study the rites which mark it, let us consider the manner in which the baby is carried and his diet during this period.

A South-African woman with her child in the ntehe.

1) The Ntehe.

854 A little child is not carried by his mother in her arms, but in a softened skin which is called *ntehe*. The preparation of the ntehe is subject to many prescribed customs.

The first of these is this: the *ntehe* must not be looked out before the birth of the child, or it would bring misfortune. This is a taboo which I might call a "taboo of prevision." Some other taboos of this kind are met with in our tribe.

[604] For a first-born child, the skin must be provided by the maternal uncle. This is a rule, but the custom is not tabooed (1). The father may also prepare it, if necessary.

The ntehe must not be a sheep skin.

825 That is taboo. Let them take the skin of a duiker (blue
854. antelope), of a goat or of a nhala (impala). Sheep skins are

(1) Though the term taboo generally means a prohibition, I take the liberty of using it in a positive sense: A custom is taboo or is tabooed when its transgression is a taboo.

5) THE TYING OF THE COTTON STRING.

854 When the child "tiyelanyana" viz. "becomes a little firm,"
857 the mother, having to plough her fields and to cook the food, begins to seat him on the sandy soil, after having made a kind of hole of about five inches in depth. We have seen Thonga babies already sitting at the age of two months. But this "dumping" hardly meets all the requirements, and the mother looks for a girl to help her to take care of the baby (wa ku tlanga na ye, to play with him). She puts the child in the charge of an elder sister or a cousin ; a girl of five to ten is quite strong enough for the purpose. I have often admired the patience of these miniature nurses, sometimes not very much bigger than the child they carry, with their very troublesome babies.

852 But very soon the child begins to crawl (kasa) and this is the
715 time when a very striking rite is performed. This rite seems to be practised all over the tribe, but it has more importance in the Northern clans than amongst the Ba-Ronga. I shall here give the description of Viguet, who belonged to the Tsungu clan and had emigrated to the Spelonken. My readers must forgive me if I cannot tell the story with all its details and if I am obliged to write some of them in Latin (1).

851 These are the ipsissima verba of my informant : "This is a
833 great law amongst the Thongas. When a child begins to crawl,
766 even before, the *puri* is tied round his waist. The *puri* is a
842 cotton (2) string. Father and mother fix the day ; if they forget to do so, their parents, (the grandparents) will remind them of the law. They must have sexual intercourse, but in such a way that the mother will not become pregnant, s. n. i. (Annotatio 2)[1]. The mother will have to take in her hands "their filth" (thyaka ra bona) smear the string with it and tie it round the child. It will

(1) A more complete description of this rite and of some others related to the taboos of the Thongas will be found in the Revue d'Ethnographie et de Sociologie, Oct. 1910, Paris.

(2) There are plants of cotton probably subspontaneous in the Low Country of the Transvaal of Delagoa Bay.

1 [See p. 676 in these categories or in 116 - Analyst]

851 remain there till it falls to pieces. After this operation the
766 child is "grown up" and three things are allowed which were
833 taboo before :

1) The child, if he dies, can be buried on the hill, in dry soil. Before the *boha puri* he would have been buried in wet soil, near the river, as is customary with twins and children who have cut their upper teeth first.

2) He can participate in the strange purification called *hlamba ndjaka* which takes place after the death of one of the inhabitants of the village (See ceremonies of death).

852 3) The parents can again have conjugal intercourse, though
766 they must avoid conception till the child is weaned. Before this
839 ceremony it was absolutely prohibited, and should they have
821 sinned in this respect and the mother have conceived, they would
842 be very guilty! It is a dangerous taboo! They would have "stolen" the child, stolen it from the law (yiba nawen). The child would not have "entered the law." It would be useless to tie the string round him in order to repair the evil done. Should he live long, should he even become an old man, he will have to be buried in wet soil, otherwise the rain would be prevented from falling.

Amongst the Malulekes and the Hlengwes such children are even burnt after their death. We shall speak later on about the mysterious relation established by the Thongas between these children, their burial, and the rain.

852 Amongst the Ba-Ronga this rite is called *boha nshale* (to tie
854 the cotton) and can be performed in the same way or even more simply by the father (Annotatio 3).[2] Parents, when they have duly tied the string on the little one, are said to have *fuya nwana*, viz. taken possession of the child.

Amongst them again, another thing is then allowed which was taboo before. The child can be carried on the shoulders without ntehe by the arms alone (hi minkono).

851 It is clear that the tying of the cotton string means the official reception of the child into the family, even into human society. Before that, he was hardly considered as a human being, he was *shilo* (a thing), *khuna* (an incomplete being). Now he is *nkulu*,

2 [See p. 516 in these categories or in 116 - Analyst]

851 a grown up child (1). The expression *fuya ñwana* confirms our explanation. This custom is not a protective rite : the physician has nothing to do with it ; it is really an act by which the new-born child becomes a regular member of the community. The strict prohibition of renewed conception before this rite has been accomplished is evidently dictated by the feeling that another child must not appear before this one has been duly received into the family.

6) The weaning.

862 A whole year, even more, will elapse after the *boha puri* before
856 the little one can be weaned. He will learn to speak and to walk, and it is only when his intelligence is sufficiently developed to allow him to run small errands that the date of the weaning will be fixed. When his parents can send him to the next hut to ask for snuff and see him coming back holding the tobacco, they say : "Now the time has come !"

The rite of weaning is accomplished in the following manner in Nondwane. (Mboza).

862 First of all, the father looks for a young *ntjopfa* tree which
824 has only one root. The ntjopfa is an anonacea bush, which colonists sometimes call the wild custard. (Its fruit is very much like custard fruit and it is said that the true cultivated custard can be grafted on it). The root of this tree is said to have the property of making people forget. The mother cooks a pot of Kafir corn in which she has put the medicine. This
862 will help the child to forget the breast. But the great act is the
782 *hondlola* which takes place under the direction of the physician.
755 The mother pounds some mealies, pours water on them and adds some leaven ; in this way she makes a little light beer (buputju). She keeps a little of the bran of the pounded mealies. The doctor comes, kills a chicken and sprinkles this bran with the blood and *hahla*, viz. offers a regular sacrifice. He prays to the spirits of his own family and asks those of the child's family to

(1) This word *khana* is also employed to designate boys who have not yet gone through the circumcision school. *Bukhana* is the despicable state of uncircumcision. The state of a child before the ceremony of *boha puri* is another kind of bukhana.

we shall discuss in Part VI the

843 origin of this extraordinary idea. A woman who has had a
834 miscarriage is impure for three months at least. Menstruation
841 must have taken place two or three times and have cleansed her before her husband can have any sexual relation with her. (Compare Annotatio 7,[1] which applies to the transgression of this rule.)

7) Parturition.

846 We have described, when treating of birth, the many taboos
753 which accompany parturition. The *busahana* period, from the moment of delivery till the fall of the umbilical cord, is very much dreaded. When a woman is suffering from *shilumi* (a disease which sometimes follows delivery, probably owing to a displacement of the organs) she must not enter the hut of a woman who has been confined. The ailment would "jump over to her" (tlulela). There is however a way of preventing contagion. The visitor must take the piece of clothing which she uses as a girdle and throw it to the patient, and the patient throws back her own girdle to the visitor. Then she can enter : "They have acted according to the law, there is no more *yila*."

846 A mother must not drink any milk from the birth of the child
851 until its presentation to the moon. Afterwards she is allowed to drink only milk from cows which have calved many times.

The rite of *kunga* is performed in the case of a first-born child. This child is called *ñwana wa matibula*, the child by which the woman has *tibula*, viz. has become a mother. The etymology of this word *tibula* (Zulu zibula) is not known. When people come to greet the baby, its parents will not allow them to take it in their arms. They must pay something for permission to do so, even a brother, a sister, or a grandmother. The father is not subject to this rule ; "the child is his, belongs to him." Nowadays this ceremony means only that these people are happy to receive the new born child amongst them. There is no taboo in it. But it is certainly related to the fact that in giving birth to a child for the first time, the woman has passed from womanhood to motherhood.

1 [See p. 517 in these categories or in 116 - Analysis]

841 A demonstration of joy takes place at the birth of any subsequent
837 child, but the kunga is only performed for the first-born. It does not seem that in the case of the first-born child, as in the case of bowumba (see p. 125) the gifts of kunga are subject to any taboo.

8) Loss of children.

766 A woman who loses an infant (wa ku felwa) is deeply contam-
783 inated with the defilement of death. She must bury it herself
834 without aid from her husband. Next day, she goes behind the
853 hut, kneels down and draws off her own milk on to the ground. She does this until the secretion has ceased. This is taboo ; her milk is polluted ; no drop of it must fall in the gardens. She must avoid crossing the fields and going to the storehouses to fetch food.
864 Until she has been "put right again (busetela)," she eats with a spoon. To use a spoon is a bad omen for a woman, because it reminds her of death. That is the reason why men adopt this civilized custom more readily than women. During her mourning, no sexual relations are allowed. When menstruation begins again, she first keeps silent, and does not tell her husband. Only on the second or third occasion does she inform him of the fact. He can then purify her ; this is done in the same way as in the case of widows. (See p. 154.) Then he buys new clothing for her and she resumes her ordinary mode of life. Everybody seeing her with this new attire will know that "she has been repaired." Should any one else than the husband give her this clothing, the latter will be greatly offended and accuse her of having relations with a lover.

765 A man does not put on *malopa*, mourning clothing, for a child
586 who was not yet of age. The woman alone does so. However a husband is always grieved at the death of his child and a sad event like this often leads to dreadful results. He will begin to think that his wife is a witch and has eaten her own child by her magical powers. Such an accusation is almost sure to end in a divorce.

A woman who has *lost many children*, three or four, is considered

Latin Notes for Medical Men and Ethnographers

291 "Annotatio prima (P. 40). --'Shifado' quo quisque Thonga
845 extremum penem vestit, spheroides excavataque res est;
848 quod tegimentum ex iis, quae ad pudorem et munditiem perti-
881 nent, postulatur. Si quis schifado suum amisit, ei dedecoriest."

Note 1 (page 40). Shifado, with which every Thonga covers the end of his penis, is a spherical and hollowed-out object; this covering is demanded from those who are concerned with decency and cleanliness. If anyone has lost his schifado [sic] he is disgraced.

"Olim apud Thonga, qui a populo Zulo illum morem acceperunt, viri, quod linguâ 'mbayi' id est fistulam quandam ex foliis textis palmae quae 'milala' dicitur, ferre solebant.

[At one time among the Thonga, who took over this custom from the Zulu people, the men used to wear what in their language is called mbayi, that is, some kind of tube made of palm leaves woven together which is called milala.]

"Ultima 'mbayi' anno 1895 vel 1896 post Christum natum visa sunt. Quod shifado ex parvae cucurbitae cortice aut duro et excavato accurateque polito ligno factum, summo veretro affixum, minime incommode ferre videntur."

[The last mbayi were seen in the year 1895 or 1896. Because the shifado is made of the rind of a small gourd or of hard, hollowed-out and carefully polished wood, and attached at the top of the private parts, it seems that it can be worn with the minimum of discomfort.]

833 "Annotatio secunda (P. 56). S. n. i, sc. semine non im-
851 misso. Ad hoc, marito sperma foras spargendum est (a nga
842 mu weleri): hic est coitus rite factus et quasi lustralis. Inde,
765 uxor in manus utriusque sordes (thyaka ra bona) sumit, qui-
783 bus umbilicum illinit."

[Note 2 (page 56). S. n. i., that is, the semen has not been injected. Moreover the husband must eject his sperms outside of the body (a nga mu weleri): this is the coitus properly executed and, as it were, lustral. Then the wife takes in her hands the filth of both (thyaka ra bona) and smears the navel with it.]

"Annotatio tertia (P. 57). Corpus infimum pueri ex adverso et a tergo peni pater tangit.

[Note 3 (page 57). The father touches with his penis the lowest part of the boy's body from the front and from behind.]

831 "Annotatio quarta (P. 88). Hae sunt formulae:
881 Shana khololwane ma ri tiba le'ri onhaka milebe?
Novistisne avem quae labra minora laedit?

marginal period during which the maphisa must use protective 224
medicines against the dangers of the bush, and keep certain rules. 784

As a protection they carry their charms, especially the *ndjao*, the root of a certain juncus which is used on many other occasions. As regards the taboos which they must observe, I will first mention those applying to travellers in general, especially the *salt taboo* (I. p. 339). Should they take salt with them, this would "precede them" (rangela), and they would kill no game. It will be soon enough to look for salt when they have killed. But the great 224
taboo of these hunting trips is the *sexual taboo*. This was already 784
imposed before starting and it must be observed Phroughout the 834
expedition. The necessity of avoiding anything connected with 825
sexual relations is so great that maphisa will take with them to cook their food little boys under marriageable age. What is the reason of this prohibition? I have explained it in dealing with the Thonga idea of sexual relations (I. p. 189). If the hunters transgress the law, the big animals will be so wild that it will be impossible to approach them ; they will furiously attack the men who have sinned, because they know them, and woe upon them! So much so that if the hunters see an elephant or a hippopotamus in obstinate pursuit of one of their number, they will begin to insult him for having spoilt the whole trip by his misbehaviour, and send him home.

The law of continence is also binding on *the hunters' wives* at 224
home. It is true that when the absence of their husbands is 784
prolonged for a very long time they may become unfaithful to 837
them and the men, on their return, will find babies waiting for 851
them which are not their true children. This will cause them no
unhappiness, as these babies none the less belong to them, their 752
wives having been duly bought, and the time for fear is now passed, as they have returned home safely. The fact that these men welcome the children born during their absence caused me to think that hunters' wives were not subject to the sexual taboo as their husbands are. But further inquiry has shown that this is not true. Old Makhani assured me that incontinence on the part of the wife at home would have as a consequence that the husband would be attacked and killed by wild beasts far away in the desert.

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821 "Kengelekezeeeee !" and this exclamation is repeated from one village to another. *Kenge* is the descriptive adverb which means the form of the crescent of the moon. Each "moon," or month, is considered as being a new one, the old one having died, and there were special names for each month of the year (See Part VI).

[841] 856 828 821 852 As soon as the mother of the child has resumed her menses (the menses are called tinwheti, months) and this happens as a rule on the third month after the delivery amongst Thonga women, she takes her garments, washes them, puts on new clothing and then proceeds to the ceremony of the *yandla*. The child must be "given his month." This is done in the following way. The day the new moon appears, the mother takes with her a torch or merely a brand from the fire and the grandmother follows her carrying the child : both go to the ash-heap behind the hut. There the mother throws the burning stick towards the moon and the grandmother flings the child into the air saying : "This is your moon !" (hweti ya ku hi yoleyo) : then she puts the child on to the ashes. The little one cries and rolls over in the dirt on the ash-heap. Then his mother snatches him up (wutla), nurses him, and they go home.

This ceremony, which is certainly a rite of passage, is said to "open the chest of the child" otherwise "his ears would die," he would remain stupid. When a child is not intelligent, it is usual to say to him : You have not been shown your moon ! (1)

852 846 854 Therefore the *yandla* means a progress made by the child, the entrance into a new phase of his existence. The fact is emphasised by the three following changes which take place on the day of the yandla : 1) Henceforth his father is allowed to take the child in his arms. Up to that day, this was taboo, as the child being continually with his mother was perhaps polluted by the dangerous blood following the birth ; but now she has washed her clothing and has been purified by the reappearance of the menses ; so the danger no longer exists. 2) It is now

(1) However the name of the child's month is soon forgotten and is never afterwards recalled. This seems to show that the custom is dying out, as well as the knowledge of the names of the various months.

852 [854] permissible to push him gently by his elbows and 3) to sing him songs to console him (khongota) when he cries. This was taboo before the presentation to the moon.

There is another custom which seems to be confounded sometimes with the yandla. It is also performed for small children and is called : *kulakulisa*. When a friend of the family passes through the village coming from afar, from Johannesburg for instance, he takes the new-born child in his arms, throws him up and says : "Kula-kula-kula, u ya tlhasa Johan." (Grow, grow, grow and reach Johannesburg.) This is a minor custom (nau nyana) ; it is more or less play and is not tabooed like the yandla.

854 278 751 852 After the yandla, a new therapeutic agent is added to the decoction of milombyana, the *biyeketa*. *Ku biyeketa* means : "to put inside an enclosure." Twice a month during the afternoon, when the moon is new and when it is full, the family doctor goes to the kraal of the baby, he lights a fire before the door of the hut and cooks his medicines with water in a pot till they boil. Then he draws the embers to one side of the pot and lays on them a big pill, a *mhula*. The *mhula* is made of fat from an ox paunch or from a goat's paunch mixed with medicinal powder. Then he places a mat on end so as to make a small round enclosure : mother and baby enter it, and he covers them with a piece of cotton cloth. They expose themselves to the steam which comes from the pot and to the smoke which emanates from the mhula. When both have copiously perspired and the emanation has come to an end, the mother tells the doctor to uncover them, and they emerge from the vapour bath. Then the doctor cuts both of them with a razor on the forehead, on the sternum, on the spine between the shoulders, on the elbow, on the wrist, on the knees and introduces a little of his medicinal powder into the small wounds. The pot with the hot decoction is then taken by the doctor behind the hut, the mother accompanying him. She pours a little of the water into his hands : he spits into it, uttering the sound *tsu* (which is the sacramental act in ordinary worship) and throws it on the child. The mother rubs the whole body of the little one with it ; in the meantime the doctor prays to his gods, viz. the spirits of his ancestors. Begining with the formula of invocation which doctors

852 always use, he says: "Abuśayi, akhwari! This is the child!
854 May he grow! May he become a man by means of this medicine
751 of mine! May his perspiration be good; may the impurity go away; may it go to Shiburi, to Nkhabelane! (1) May the child play well, be like his companions. This is not my first attempt! You have given me these drugs; may they protect him against disease so that nobody may say there is no power in them, etc." After this prayer the doctor takes the little child and goes back to the central place of the village. The mother stays and washes her own body with the decoction, praying also to her gods (but without the *tsu*, as this has been uttered by the "master of the drugs").

751 The treatment of the biyeketa is also called "hungulo dja
854 milombo," "the vapour bath for infantile diseases;" it is not a
177 curative, but a preventive; it aims at ascertaining if the child is
757 all right. If he has bad stools (a nga tlambi psinene) the mother will perhaps remember that she has forgotten to enclose him and she will call the doctor in at once. Should he fall sick, the biyeketa will not be performed again but the milombyana will be administered more frequently. However, it is of importance for the growth of the child. To neglect it is taboo! (2)

757 As for the cuts, sometimes they are followed by a second vapour
854 bath, as if the doctor wished to cause the medicine contained in the smoke to penetrate through them into the body, in which case he will only "close" them later on by introducing a healing powder into them. Children generally cry when they see the physician... They dread the pain of the cuts. When the mother goes to the doctor's village, she takes with her the wood, the mat and a pot of beer or a fowl in payment. The physician's charge for a biyeketa is sixpence to one shilling or a hen or a pot of beer.

(1) Viz. to the end of the world. These clans are far away to the north, outside the Ronga country.

(2) I hear that the converts generally have not abandoned the biyeketa, but they do not allow the doctor to perform the sacrificial act and to pray to the spirits. Sam Ngwetsa, the children's physician of Rikatla used to pray thus: "O Father of mercy! I pray thee! I do not pray the dead but thee only who art in heaven! Grant us to see this child in good health, standing firm, this little lamb!"

5) THE TYING OF THE COTTON STRING.

854 When the child "tiyelanyana" viz. "becomes a little firm,"
857 the mother, having to plough her fields and to cook the food, begins to seat him on the sandy soil, after having made a kind of hole of about five inches in depth. We have seen Thonga babies already sitting at the age of two months. But this "dumping" hardly meets all the requirements, and the mother looks for a girl to help her to take care of the baby (wa ku tlanga na ye, to play with him). She puts the child in the charge of an elder sister or a cousin ; a girl of five to ten is quite strong enough for the purpose. I have often admired the patience of these miniature nurses, sometimes not very much bigger than the child they carry, with their very troublesome babies.

852 But very soon the child begins to crawl (kasa) and this is the
715 time when a very striking rite is performed. This rite seems to be practised all over the tribe, but it has more importance in the Northern clans than amongst the Ba-Ronga. I shall here give the description of Viguet, who belonged to the Tsungu clan and had emigrated to the Spelonken. My readers must forgive me if I cannot tell the story with all its details and if I am obliged to write some of them in Latin (1).

851 These are the ipsissima verba of my informant : "This is a
833 great law amongst the Thongas. When a child begins to crawl,
766 even before, the *puri* is tied round his waist. The *puri* is a
842 cotton (2) string. Father and mother fix the day ; if they forget to do so, their parents, (the grandparents) will remind them of the law. They must have sexual intercourse, but in such a way that the mother will not become pregnant, s. n. i. (Annotatio 2).[1] The mother will have to take in her hands "their filth" (thyaka ra bona) smear the string with it and tie it round the child. It will

(1) A more complete description of this rite and of some others related to the taboos of the Thongas will be found in the Revue d'Ethnographie et de Sociologie, Oct. 1910, Paris.

(2) There are plants of cotton probably subspontaneous in the Low Country of the Transvaal of Delagoa Bay.

1 [See p. 576 in these categories or in 116--Analyst]

851 remain there till it falls to pieces. After this operation the
766 child is "grown up" and three things are allowed which were
833 taboo before :

1) The child, if he dies, can be buried on the hill, in dry soil. Before the *boha puri* he would have been buried in wet soil, near the river, as is customary with twins and children who have cut their upper teeth first.

2) He can participate in the strange purification called *hlamba ndjaka* which takes place after the death of one of the inhabitants of the village (See ceremonies of death).

852 3) The parents can again have conjugal intercourse, though
766 they must avoid conception till the child is weaned. Before this
833 ceremony it was absolutely prohibited, and should they have
821 sinned in this respect and the mother have conceived, they would
842 be very guilty! It is a dangerous taboo! They would have "stolen" the child, stolen it from the law (yiba nawen). The child would not have "entered the law." It would be useless to tie the string round him in order to repair the evil done. Should he live long, should he even become an old man, he will have to be buried in wet soil, otherwise the rain would be prevented from falling.

Amongst the Malulekes and the Hlengwes such children are even burnt after their death. We shall speak later on about the mysterious relation established by the Thongas between these children, their burial, and the rain.

852 Amongst the Ba-Ronga this rite is called *boha nshale* (to tie
854 the cotton) and can be performed in the same way or even more simply by the father (Annotatio 3).[1] Parents, when they have duly tied the string on the little one, are said to have *fuya ñwana*, viz. taken possession of the child.

Amongst them again, another thing is then allowed which was taboo before. The child can be carried on the shoulders without ntehe by the arms alone (hi minkono).

851 It is clear that the tying of the cotton string means the official reception of the child into the family, even into human society. Before that, he was hardly considered as a human being, he was *shilo* (a thing), *khuna* (an incomplete being). Now he is *nkulu*,

1 [See p. 516 in these categories or in 116 - Analyst]

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[Information on circumcision will be filed under category 881, Puberty and Initiation --analyst]

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II. *The first week ; Confinement Period.*

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From the day of birth till the moment when the umbilical cord falls, seven days may elapse : this forms a special period called *busahana*, which is the period of confinement for both mother and child. It will be concluded by the special ceremony of the child's first outing, marked by the rite of the broken pot. During these seven or eight days, *the mother* is restricted to a special diet, and this is a true "marginal period" for her. She is absolutely outside the pale of society. The diet is prescribed by the family doctor, who knows how to treat children, and consists of a special dish prepared with Kafir corn (1) (mabele) and called *shimhimbi*, with which special medicines have been mixed. The aim of this medication (khwebela busahana) is twofold : first to expel the unclean blood which follows the birth, and which is a very great taboo, and secondly to stimulate the production of the milk. This food is cooked in a special pot (shikhwebelo sha busahana) and is eaten not with the hands, as some particles of the unclean blood might enter it and cause the mother to become phthisic, but with a special spoon.

846

Both the pot and the spoon will be fastened over the entrance of the hut, inside (shirangen sha nyangwa), at the end of this period of seclusion.

A fowl is also killed during these first days, a hen if the child is a girl, a cock if it is a boy. Some medicinal powder is poured into the broth, and the mother drinks it and eats part of the meat, the husband eating the remainder. This little luxury is indulged in as it helps the mother to recover her strength sooner ; she is attended to by her own mother, who has been summoned as soon as the birth has been satisfactorily effected, and who helps her to feed the child.

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(1) This use of Kafir corn in this and other old rites proves the antiquity of this cereal. It is probably the first which was known to the Natives. Maize is quite a modern food amongst the Thongas, though the time of its introduction is not known. See Part IV.

846 As regards *the child*, the umbilical cord is anointed every day ;
853 he begins to take the breast and drink the "*milombyana*," the great medicine which we shall describe later on.

During these days many taboos must be observed :

The *husband* is not allowed to enter the hut on any pretext ; this is not on account of his being unclean, quite the contrary. A birth does not contaminate the father amongst the Ba-Thonga as it does in other tribes. He is not obliged to undergo any medication. His exclusion from the conjugal hut is due entirely to the fact that his wife is polluted by the blood of the lochia, and he would run the greatest danger to himself if he came near.

846 *All married people* are also excluded (bakhili) viz. all those
854 who have regular sexual intercourse. Should they touch the child, he would die. If however a woman wishes very much to go and see the new-born, she must abstain from relations with her husband during two days. Then she can be admitted into the hut. On the other hand young girls are welcome in the hut, but they must not kiss the baby during these first days. "It is not yet firm ; it is only water," as they say ; later on, when it begins to laugh and to play, they may kiss it. Even the father may do so then ; when he comes back from a journey, he holds it in his arms and kisses it on the temple. Supposing that the
846 umbilical cord has now fallen off normally, the confinement period will be at an end. This termination is marked by two rites.

The mother of the delivered woman will have *to smear with clay the floor of the hut*. This is the great cleansing act which brings to an end a marginal period. It takes away all the dangerous blood, and the husband as well as all the other dwellers in the village will be allowed to enter the hut.

846 The second act is *the rite of the broken pot* (ku tjibelela shi-
751 rengelen, viz. to make fire under the shirengele, the bit of broken
278 pot used for the purpose). This is a medical treatment and a
825 religious ceremony combined. It is performed by the family doctor on the threshold of the hut in the following way : he puts into this piece of broken pottery pieces of skin of all the beasts of the bush : antelopes, wild cats, elephants, hippopotami, rats, civet cats, hyenas, elands and snakes of dangerous kinds, and roasts

846 751 825 278 856 them till they burn. The smoke then rises, and he exposes the child to it for a long time : the body, face, nose and mouth. The baby begins to cry ; he sneezes, he coughs ; this is just what is wanted. Then the doctor takes what remains of the pieces of skin, grinds them, makes a powder, mixes it with *tihuhlu* (1) grease of the year before last and consequently hard enough to make an ointment. With this ointment he rubs the whole body of the child, especially the joints, which he extends gently in order to assist the baby's growth.

846 751 853 All this fumigation and manipulation is intended to act as a preventive. Having been thus exposed to all external dangers, dangers which are represented by the beasts of the bush, the child may go out of the hut. He is now able "to cross the foot prints of wild beasts" (tjemakanya mitila) without harm. Snakes will not bite him, at any rate their bite will not hurt him ; lions will not kill him. The remainder of the powder is put into a little bit of reed closed at both ends, which the mother has to carry with her during the whole nursing period in order to continue the treatment.

846 755 753 821 This rite of the broken pot is also the great preventive remedy against the much dreaded ailment of babies, *convulsions*. If a child suffers from this, they will say : "a tlalile shirengelen," viz. "he did not find any help in the broken pot" and the parents will go to another doctor whose drugs are more powerful, to have the child once more exposed to the smoke. It may even be that a grown-up man will undergo this treatment again, if he has been ill with convulsions, but, in this case, the broken pot with its pieces of skin is put on the head of the patient, which has been first covered with a wisp of cuscuta (hare dja yendjeyendje). The great aim of all the medication of children by the "milombyana" is also to fight against convulsions, as we shall see (2).

(1) The tihuhlu are the seeds of the nkuhlu tree known under the name of mafuzeira. They are oleaginous and the fat (mafura) obtained from them is very much used for external applications amongst the Thongas.

(2) In *Savage Childhood* p. 12, Dudley Kidd describes this "baptism of smoke" amongst Zulus. Some dirt is scraped from the father's body and is mixed with other drugs in order to impart to the child his ancestral spirit. Another ingredient

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846 For any subsequent children, the feast will be reduced to the
851 presentation by the grandmother of a basket of food to "*tlangela*
603 *ñwana*," viz. to "celebrate the child."

III. *The Nursing Period.*

853 The little child has been taken out of the confinement hut (humesha busahanen). He is now allowed to go outside. The nursing period then begins and will last two and a half or three years; but before we study the rites which mark it, let us consider the manner in which the baby is carried and his diet during this period.

A South-African woman with her child in the ntehe.

1) The Ntehe.

854 A little child is not carried by his mother in her arms, but in a softened skin which is called *ntehe*. The preparation of the ntehe is subject to many prescribed customs.

The first of these is this: the ntehe must not be looked out before the birth of the child, or it would bring misfortune. This is a taboo which I might call a "taboo of prevision." Some other taboos of this kind are met with in our tribe.

[604] For a first-born child, the skin must be provided by the maternal uncle. This is a rule, but the custom is not tabooed (1). The father may also prepare it, if necessary.

The ntehe must not be a sheep skin.
825 That is taboo. Let them take the skin of a duiker (blue
854 antelope), of a goat or of a mhala (impala). Sheep skins are

(1) Though the term taboo generally means a prohibition, I take the liberty of using it in a positive sense: A custom is taboo or is tabooed when its transgression is a taboo.

only employed when three or four children have died in previous years and the mother is in the state of destitution called *buwumba*. (Chap. II.)

The ntehe is arranged in such a way that the legs of the animal are used as straps, the forelegs are tied around the neck, the hindlegs around the waist and the child is in that way held well against his mother's shoulders. He can either show his head outside his ntehe or be entirely covered by it. This way of carrying babies is very convenient : mother and child get so accustomed to it that a baby, when you lift it, stretches out its legs at once at right angles with its body in order to sit on its mother's back ; and the mother can easily do all her work, even till her fields with the baby on her back in its ntehe !

2) The diet during the nursing period.

The child is nursed by the mother. He is allowed to take the breast at any time. There is nothing like a diet regulation amongst Natives and they would deem it cruelty to refuse the breast to a crying child.

There are some customs relating to the *milk*. When a mother has to leave her child for a short time, she squeezes a few drops of her milk on his neck in order to prevent him feeling thirsty. When she has been absent for more than one day (this can only happen when the child is able to eat some solid food) and returns home, before nursing the child again she heats a bit of broken pot in the fire and squeezes into it a little milk from each breast. The liquid evaporates. The reason of the custom is this : the mother's milk has grown cold ; it must be warmed again ; otherwise the child will be constipated. This is a taboo (1). When a baby bites the teat, it is regarded as naughtiness and the mother scratches its forehead as a punishment.

Mothers not having enough milk use a kind of shrub called

(1) Compare with the Zulu milk charms described by D. Kidd, *Savage Childhood*, page 38.

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853 824 *neta* as a medecine. The shrub, which is an Euphorbiacea, contains milky sap. It is a treatment based on the principle : Similia similibus curantur.

751 278 753 854 The Thongas believe that milk alone would never suffice to make a child grow : *Ñwana a kula hi miri, the child grows by medicine*, such is the adage which is universally met with. When you see a woman carrying a child on her back, you will notice hanging to the *ntehe* the reed (lihlanga) containing the black powder which protects against the dangers of the bush, and a little calabash half filled with water. This water is not pure water, it is the medicine called *milombyana*. This word is the plural and diminutive form of *nombo*, which means baby's ailment. There is a great *nombo*, convulsions, also called *tilo*, heaven, because this complaint is brought into a mysterious connection with the influence of Heaven (See Part VI). There is a small *nombo* ; this is the infantile diarrhea which so often troubles little children ; but both diseases are supposed to be caused by the *nyoka*, the intestinal parasite, the worm or snake (nyoka means both) which is in every child and must always be combated because, if unchecked, it will pass from the bowels to the stomach ; it will come and beat the fontanella (1) and will finally penetrate the chest. Then the little one will turn up his eyes, be seized by [278] convulsions and die. Happily there are some drugs which have a 751 wonderful effect on this dangerous guest ! One of my neighbours, 757 who was a convert in Rikatla, gave me their names. The first is a 854 very common Protacea (?) with large hooks called the Dlanyoka, "the one which kills worms." Mixed with the roots of a Leguminacea called *Ñwamahlanga* and with two other plants found near the sea, it forces the worm to keep quiet. These drugs are boiled and the decoction is carefully poured into a special little pot called *hlembetwana ya milombyana* which will be kept in the hut. Every morning the mother will warm the pot a little, pour some of its contents into a shell of sala and give the child a

757 826 (1) Tjuba-tjuba, the fontanelle, plays a great part in the diagnosis of children's diseases and they often cover it with black wax. When the child hiccoughs, his mother or somebody else will blow on the fontanelle to prevent vomiting. This will "make his heart stand" (yimisa mphilo).

856 mouthful to drink, then dip her finger into the medecine and let
751 two or three drops fall from it on the fontanella ; then she spits on
757 the lower part of the shell and presses it all along the sternum
854 of the baby as far as the navel. This is said to "nurse the child, to make him grow." Should he be sick, this treatment will be repeated many times a day. If he is well and goes about with his mother, she will pour the *milombyana* into the small calabash and give him a few sups from it from time to time.

The child must never drink ordinary water, but only the
853 *milombyana* decoction. It is a taboo. Should the mother travel
271 far from home and leave behind her the *milombyana* pot, she is
2/84 allowed to add some water to the calabash, but she must always leave a little of the decoction in the calabash before doing so. The mother herself is not allowed to drink the water of another country. She must only drink water from home and, if she is forced to travel, she must take a little powder from the reed each time she drinks, so that the child may become familiarised with that country (1). These laws must be kept during all the nursing period.

862 The child begins to eat *solid food* as soon as his teeth are cut, and when he is able to take it with his own hands. But some people do not like to give it to him too soon, as they say his stools become fetid. When later on he is able to go outside and to take care of himself, then he can eat any ordinary food.

853 If the mother dies during the nursing period, the little one is almost sure to follow her. The baby is fed with goat's or cow's milk, but the Natives do not know that they must add water to it ; sooner or later therefore the child dies of enteritis.

I have heard of some cases in which another woman has taken charge of the child, nursed him with her own milk and weaned him successfully ; her own child being older, she weaned him earlier than the usual time and nursed the other child in his

261 (1) A similar custom is observed in the case of moving from one country to another.
4/84 When a Rengu comes back from Kimberley having found a wife there, both bring with them a little of the earth of the place they are leaving, and the woman must eat a little of it every day in her porridge in order to accustom herself to her new abode. This earth provides the transition between the two domiciles!

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853

place. These women were wives of the same husband at Libombo near Rikatla and the foster mother claimed compensation for her deed. Another wonderful case is the following : a woman died shortly after the birth of her boy called Mayimbule ; the

415

Thonga calabashes

The stones are used for beans, medicinal powder (muthi), etc. The [illegible] (xanthoxylum) are employed for the calabashes. Those with the long necks are for calabashes used as bottles or for drinking.

853 grandmother, by name Mishidohi, who had an adult son and had had no other child since, prepared light beer and other appropriate food and succeeded in secreting milk in her own breast ; so the child was saved !

856 826 A child during these first months of its existence is regarded as a very weak creature. "I mati !" i. e. "It is nothing but water !" Hence perhaps the curious idea that a baby, just like a new born animal, is able to swim, at any rate it cannot be drowned : it floats on the water. When a woman carrying a little child on her back crosses a river and is in danger of being swept away by the stream, people shout to her from the shore : "Untie the 'ntehe' and let the baby cross. Think of yourself, the little one will follow all right." They say: "Psa yila, it is taboo that a baby should sink." Note the curious use of the word "yila" in this sentence.

3) Dentition.

856 364 351 As soon as the child has cut the two lower and upper incisors, the mother takes a white bead (tjambu) and ties it to one of the child's hairs above the forehead. This white bead is said to help the other teeth to come out normally. If this precaution were not taken, the child would not become intelligent ; he would shiver instead of smiling ; he would bring forward his lips and his tongue to prevent the air from getting into his mouth ! When all the teeth are duly cut, the bead is removed and thrown away *talen*, viz. on the *tala*. The *tala* is the ash-heap, the place behind the hut on which everyone throws ashes and dirt. It plays a great part in the customs of the Thongas and other South African Bantus.

195 The teeth (tinyo-menyo) of the children are called figuratively *hobe*. The *hobe* (pl. *tihobe*) means the grain of pounded maize which is white and very similar to a tooth. Hence the expression : "A humi hobe," "he has got out a grain of maize," employed to indicate the cutting of the teeth.

787 766 856 When a child cuts his upper teeth first, it is a bad omen. In the Northern clans and especially amongst the Ba-Pedi, it is a great taboo. At his death the child must be buried in wet soil.

787 Amongst the Ba-Ronga the ill-omen is not considered so serious.
782 Later on, when the child loses his first teeth, he must not
856 let them fall out hap-hazard anywhere. He must take the fallen tooth, go to the ash-heap, put his finger into the hole and say : "Kokwa, kokwa, ndji hwe hobe !" (Grandfather, grandfather, give me a grain of maize !) Then he throws the tooth over his shoulder on to the ashes and goes home without looking backward. Should he look backward, his grandfather (the spirit of the departed ?) would not give him a new tooth (1). This custom is no longer taboo and is disappearing.

856 When a younger brother cuts his teeth, they are considered
163 as pushing away or pulling out the teeth of the elder, as the younger brother comes into the world, as a rule, three years after the elder.

As regards *hair*, the first cutting is accompanied by the following
302 custom : the mother sprinkles some drops of her milk on the
836 forehead and on the occiput of the child ; then she cuts his hair and throws it away in the midst of thick grass. When she cuts her own hair, she always leaves a lock on both sides of the head for the amusement of the child, till he is able to walk.

853 Nursing women very often anoint themselves with ochre. This is said to be in order to prevent their husbands from having relations with them.

These rites are not considered as very important. But there are three others which are most punctiliously observed, and which divide the nursing period into three subperiods : the presentation to the moon, after three months, the tying of the cotton string, after one year, and the weaning ceremonies at the close of the period.

4) The presentation to the moon (ku yandla).

821 The appearance of the new moon is always received with cheers by the Ba-Ronga. The first person who sees it shouts :

(1) Comparative Ethnography : I remember quite well that, when I was a boy, we were told in Neuchâtel that we must not let a broken tooth get lost, lest it should be found by a dog and a dog's tooth would grow in its stead !

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846 A demonstration of joy takes place at the birth of any subsequent
831 child, but the kunga is only performed for the first-born. It does not seem that in the case of the first-born child, as in the case of bowumba (see p. 125) the gifts of kunga are subject to any taboo.

8) Loss of children.

766 A woman who loses an infant (wa ku felwa) is deeply contam-
783 inated with the defilement of death. She must bury it herself
834 without aid from her husband. Next day, she goes behind the
833 hut, kneels down and draws off her own milk on to the ground. She does this until the secretion has ceased. This is taboo ; her milk is polluted ; no drop of it must fall in the gardens. She must avoid crossing the fields and going to the storehouses to fetch food.
E64 Until she has been "put right again (busetela)," she eats with a spoon. To use a spoon is a bad omen for a woman, because it reminds her of death. That is the reason why men adopt this civilized custom more readily than women. During her mourning, no sexual relations are allowed. When menstruation begins again, she first keeps silent, and does not tell her husband. Only on the second or third occasion does she inform him of the fact. He can then purify her ; this is done in the same way as in the case of widows. (See p. 154.) Then he buys new clothing for her and she resumes her ordinary mode of life. Everybody seeing her with this new attire will know that "she has been repaired." Should any one else than the husband give her this clothing, the latter will be greatly offended and accuse her of having relations with a lover.

765 A man does not put on *malopa*, mourning clothing, for a child
586 who was not yet of age. The woman alone does so. However a husband is always grieved at the death of his child and a sad event like this often leads to dreadful results. He will begin to think that his wife is a witch and has eaten her own child by her magical powers. Such an accusation is almost sure to end in a divorce.

A woman who has *lost many children*, three or four, is considered

247 (L.), with its white or pink blossoms, which have spread all over
331 the coast.

Having now finished our first general inspection, let us add some details about the huts and the open places in the village.

342 The hut, the construction of which we shall describe later on,
784 (Part IV) has an opening (nyangwa) of variable dimensions closed by a door. In some parts of the Gaza country it is so small that one must positively crawl to enter it. Everywhere one must at any rate stoop low (korama). As regards the *threshhold* (ntjandja wa shipfalo), it is not taboo to step over it. The headman's threshhold however is dreaded because it was treated with medicines when the hut was built, so it is taboo to sit on it ; these powerful medicines might do harm and
342 even cause death. In the middle of the black clay floor is a
354 kind of raised circle, in the centre of which fire is occasionally lighted in winter on account of the cold. It is the interior *shitiko*. Cooking may be done here if it rains ; glowing embers sometimes remain on it during the night and numberless babies have been burnt to death by falling into the fire while their mothers were
513 sleeping. On the left, on entering, is the sleeping place (shilawo)
853 of the wife, on the right that of the husband. They both however
841 generally spread their mats on the right and sleep beside each other. It is only during the tabooed periods (menses, nursing), that the husband must keep to his own particular side (p. 188).

353 The back of the hut is generally occupied by the big basket (ngula) in which clothing and seeds are kept. This spot is called *mfungwe*. In the roof *(lwangu)* are fixed or suspended various articles : ears of sorghum or millet, cobs to be used as seed at the next sowing, assagais, sticks and knobkerries etc., and against the walls one frequently observes rough drawings made with white clay, or, in the vicinity of towns, chromos of Queen Victoria, Edward VII, or Don Carlos, as the case may be!

361 The hubo and the bandla differ from each other. *Bandla* is
351 a Zulu word which has supplanted the Ronga term *shisiso*, viz.,
562 "the place where one finds shelter from the wind." Men light a small fire there to warm themselves. They also eat together

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PRACTICAL CONCLUSIONS

I. ON THE RITES OF INFANCY (P. 36-61).

853 The rule that a mother "must plough for her child three hoes" is
595 excellent. It is undoubtedly a splendid preparation for future life to
177 have been fed during three years on mother's milk. Will it be possible to maintain this law under the new conditions of civilized life which are being adopted more and more throughout the tribes ? Let us notice that this provision, though it was inspired partly in the interest of the child itself, is dictated mainly by a superstition concerning the lochia secretion, which is regarded as highly noxious and as keeping the mother in an unclean state for a long time. This superstition will not withstand the test of science and will pass away. On the other hand, polygamy was invented and flourishes partly on account of this law. A husband separated from the wife who is nursing a child wishes to have other women at his disposal. Polygamy is doomed to pass also. For both these reasons, it is to be feared that this healthy custom will not be maintained in the future. This is a pity, and we ought to do our best to encourage its continuance.

843 Many young married Natives leave their homes and go to Johannes-
177 burg to the mines for one or two years as soon as they see that their wife is pregnant. This is certainly on account of the above rule ; but this desertion of the conjugal home is hardly to be approved.

164 As regards the whole medical treatment characteristic of this period,
751 which is considered more or less as a disease, it has no value at all.
177 The big intestinal worm is, of course, merely a product of Native imagination. The children sometimes suffer from lombrics, but not more than white children. Convulsions are frequent as a result of malaria and dysentery, and neither the ever present *milombyana* nor the

302 used to shave their beards). Young men sometimes let two or three of their curls grow on their forehead like horns! Others stretch out their curls and smear them with a gluey substance obtained from the nkanye tree. This is called *ku hoba misisi.*

302 As regards women, those who are nursing babies regularly
853 turn their hair into an ornament: the small curls are stretched out, smeared with fat and made to fall on the temples and on the occiput; they are then covered with ochre. This operation is called *ku hora misisi*, and the rats'tails thus produced are the *tingoya*; they are the characteristic ornament of women during the nursing period. Nursing women undoubtedly think the tingoya improve their appearance. "Look! She has *hora misisi*! How well it suits her!" people will say of a woman who has succeeded in altering her coiffure in this way. But this custom has also a ritual value (1).

Nursing women cover their whole body, their clothing, and their *ntehe* (I. p. 46) with *ochre*. The habit of anointing (tota) or smearing with ochre (tshumane) goes hand in hand with that of tingoya. This rather disgusting custom marks them as nursing, and is a protection (shisibelo) against the husband; so long as a woman covers herself with ochre, it is a sign that she will not
302 cohabit with him. They say also that ochre prevents the bad
855 smell resulting from childrens' unclean habits, and that it softens the ntehe and makes the baby grow (2). The skin of children is also covered with a coating of this pigment; some say it is done not so much with the object of beautifying the child as of hiding the dirt which the mothers are too lazy to remove! No wonder that, in these conditions, it has been found that this smearing with ochre fosters conjunctivitis and other diseases!

177 (1) The Ngoni taught the Northern Thongas another and more elaborate way of
302 curling the hair: the queens, wives of Gungunyana, transform their "thatch" into regular cylindrical chignons (shifoko), standing up like towers (I. p. 416). The Ba-Ronga have not adopted this custom, except, in some cases, the chiefs. (I. p. 386).

(2) It is very curious to observe that these two feminine modes of adornment, the tingoya and the ochre, have been adopted by the magicians, those who pretend to possess supernatural power in smelling out witches and treating possessed people (Part VI). They like to assume the appearance of women. People suffering from the Ba-Ndjao† possession especially use ochre. Their spirits order them to do so: they would torment their victims should the latter not obey.

† [i.e., spirit--analyst]

alone (See *Les Ba-Ronga*, p. 414). He pours his drugs into one of the pots brought by the women, adds to them the psanyi of the goat sacrificed for the occasion, and pours all the contents on to the shoulders of the mother, who holds the babes in her lap. After this he pours from some other pot, which contains pure water, and the woman conscientiously washes herself and her children all the while. Until her purification no inhabitant of the village is allowed to eat anything, and the following day it is taboo to work in the fields, for this would prevent the rain from falling. 845 756 783

Amongst the *Nkunas*, the mother of twins sits at the entrance of the hut, and the drug is poured over the roof above the doorway; it leaks through the thatch on to her, and thus both the mother and the hut are purified at the same time.

This preliminary purification being thus accomplished, the woman goes to live in "her shelter," outside the village. She is absolutely shut off from all the other inhabitants. She has her own pots, axe, mortar, pestle, and does all her own cooking. Nobody even pays her a visit, and people only speak to her from a distance. Her children see no one but her. To each is allotted one breast, always the same. To help her in the nursing of twins the mother must "buy" a girl, to whom the care of one of the children is committed. This is a law. It is taboo for a girl, even should she be the elder sister, to "play" with a twin. The payment of £ 1 or ten shillings removes this taboo and the defilement (shisila) connected with it. 845 853 [691] [784]

Women fear that, if they touch anything belonging to the mother of twins, if they smear themselves with her provision of fat, or if the defiled one smears herself with their fat, they will also incur the dreadful misfortune of giving birth to twins. For this reason it is taboo for a mother of twins to draw water except at a certain spot. She must select one place and always go there. When she returns from drawing water, she must pay attention to the little wreath of grass which she wears on her head to help her balance her pot; it must not be thrown away with those used by other women, for fear that they also should become contaminated (tekela). 845 784

845 All these regulations[1] clearly show that, for the time being, the
184 mother of twins, like the widow, (I. p. 200) is regarded as outside
783 the pale of society. But her defilement is worse than that of the widow ; so, in order to be purified from it, the rite of *lahla khombo* (casting away the malediction) through which she must pass is much more severe. According to Mboza she must "deceive" four men one after the other, in the bush, all of whom will die. She hears that so and so says *djoo-djoo*, viz., becomes livid, that his body swells, that he is dead! She knows the reason. He has taken her defilement! Perhaps the fourth does not die but only becomes consumptive. These men have been pointed out to her by the divinatory bones. Each time she succeeds in performing the purification ceremony described in I. p. 205, she informs her medicine-man, who "prepares for her a vapour bath." Afterwards, she goes to reside at her parents' house, has relations with a lover, and gives birth to another child. Then her purification is complete, and her husband goes with 10/- to fetch her, and bring her home. The lover completed the removal of the "buhahla" i. e. the condition in which a mother of twins is. He has washed her (hlampsa). A new hut will be built for her, furnished with new utensils, and the ordinary family life will begin afresh.

845 As regards the twins themselves, they do not pass through
853 the ceremony of presentation to the moon (I. p. 52) as other children do. They are weaned earlier ; immediately after the reappearance of the menses the mother begins her *lahla khombo*, which at the same time is a *lumula*, a weaning of the children. They are then fed with goat's milk.

845 Twins are not liked by other people. They are looked upon as bad characters. When the little ones begin to crawl, and chance to go towards the other huts, people throw cinders at them and drive them away, saying : "These are children of Heaven. Be off! You annoy us!" If any ordinary child has a particularly bad disposition, they often say : "You are naughty! You are just like a twin!" — "Hahla dja karata" — "Twins are troublesome" is another common saying ; and if a child is really exceptionally difficult to deal with, people say : "It is a twin! You cannot do anything with it! (A dji koteki!)"

[1] [See pp. 433-435, Cat. 116 -- Analyst]

refused to communicate his secret. He belonged to the Chopi 757
tribe. The Ba-Pedi forbid sexual relations to lepers.

A nursing woman who has no milk must take a certain 853
Euphorbiacea shrub called *nete*, containing a milky juice, crush it in the mortar, cook it in water and drink it. When a cow refuses to feed her calf Natives smear the calf with the *ribvumbara* herb, which has a pleasant odour. The cow smells this, and allows the calf to suck.

The treatment of *sterility* has already been described (I. p. 190) 842
Mankhelu tried to cure it by digging a root of *Nembe-nembe* 278
and one of *Nhlangowume* ; he cooked both together, and ordered the woman to eat them during a period of six days, mixing them with her food. This drug was considered as "closing her" (pfala), so that she would no longer have her "tihweti, "and thus be enabled to conceive. In the meantime, she had to undergo the horola or hondlola rite, which I shall describe presently.

Small-pox, nyedzane, was on several occasions introduced by the 164
Whites, or by the Zulu armies on their return from their Northern raids. There have been at least five or six epidemics in the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques during the last fifty years.

I had the opportunity of witnessing the last in 1918 in Rikatla and 751
thus obtained first-hand information on the way Natives treat this disease and on their strange ideas concerning it. I published a detailed account of these in the S. A. *Journal of Science*, July 1919, and will give here a description of the most important of these *customs connected with small-pox amongst the Ba-Ronga*. When small-pox has invaded the country and reached the borders of the territory of a clan, the headmen assemble at the chief's residence and decide to proceed to the general inoculation of the population. This is a remedy which they have long been accustomed to use. They have noticed that the disease is milder when produced by inoculation with the virus than when it *hahela*, i. e. flies to the person. (There is some truth in this assertion ; the protection afforded however is not very effective, and severe and even fatal cases often follow the inoculation. It does not always secure immunity from a second attack.) The virus is provided by the people of a neighbouring clan who have already been attacked by

846 853 As regards *the child*, the umbilical cord is anointed every day ; he begins to take the breast and drink the "*milombyana*," the great medicine which we shall describe later on.

During these days many taboos must be observed :

The *husband* is not allowed to enter the hut on any pretext ; this is not on account of his being unclean, quite the contrary. A birth does not contaminate the father amongst the Ba-Thonga as it does in other tribes. He is not obliged to undergo any medication. His exclusion from the conjugal hut is due entirely to the fact that his wife is polluted by the blood of the lochia, and he would run the greatest danger to himself if he came near.

846 854 *All married people* are also excluded (bakhili) viz. all those who have regular sexual intercourse. Should they touch the child, he would die. If however a woman wishes very much to go and see the new-born, she must abstain from relations with her husband during two days. Then she can be admitted into the hut. On the other hand young girls are welcome in the hut, but they must not kiss the baby during these first days. "It is not yet firm ; it is only water," as they say ; later on, when it begins to laugh and to play, they may kiss it. Even the father may do so then ; when he comes back from a journey, he holds it in his arms and kisses it on the temple. Supposing that the 846 umbilical cord has now fallen off normally, the confinement period will be at an end. This termination is marked by two rites.

The mother of the delivered woman will have *to smear with clay the floor of the hut*. This is the great cleansing act which brings to an end a marginal period. It takes away all the dangerous blood, and the husband as well as all the other dwellers in the village will be allowed to enter the hut.

846 751 278 825 The second act is *the rite of the broken pot* (ku tjibelela shirengelen, viz. to make fire under the shirengele, the bit of broken pot used for the purpose). This is a medical treatment and a religious ceremony combined. It is performed by the family doctor on the threshold of the hut in the following way : he puts into this piece of broken pottery pieces of skin of all the beasts of the bush : antelopes, wild cats, elephants, hippopotami, rats, civet cats, hyenas, elands and snakes of dangerous kinds, and roasts

846 For any subsequent children, the feast will be reduced to the
851 presentation by the grandmother of a basket of food to "*tlangela*
603 *ñwana*," viz. to "celebrate the child."

III. *The Nursing Period.*

853 The little child has been taken out of the confinement hut (humesha busahanen). He is now allowed to go outside. The nursing period then begins and will last two and a half or three years; but before we study the rites which mark it, let us consider the manner in which the baby is carried and his diet during this period.

A South-African woman with her child in the ntehe.

1) The Ntehe.

854 A little child is not carried by his mother in her arms, but in a softened skin which is called *ntehe*. The preparation of the ntehe is subject to many prescribed customs.

The first of these is this: the ntehe must not be looked out before the birth of the child, or it would bring misfortune. This is a taboo which I might call a "taboo of prevision." Some other taboos of this kind are met with in our tribe.

[604] For a first-born child the skin must be provided by the maternal uncle. This is a rule, but the custom is not tabooed (1). The father may also prepare it, if necessary.

825 The ntehe must not be a sheep skin.
854 That is taboo. Let them take the skin of a duiker (blue antelope), of a goat or of a mhala (impala). Sheep skins are

(1) Though the term taboo generally means a prohibition, I take the liberty of using it in a positive sense: A custom is taboo or is tabooed when its transgression is a taboo.

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854 only employed when three or four children have died in previous years and the mother is in the state of destitution called *buwumba*. (Chap. II.)

854 The ntehe is arranged in such a way that the legs of the animal are used as straps, the forelegs are tied around the neck, the hindlegs around the waist and the child is in that way held well against his mother's shoulders. He can either show his head outside his ntehe or be entirely covered by it. This way of carrying babies is very convenient : mother and child get so accustomed to it that a baby, when you lift it, stretches out its legs at once at right angles with its body in order to sit on its mother's back ; and the mother can easily do all her work, even till her fields with the baby on her back in its ntehe !

853 ## 2) The diet during the nursing period.

The child is nursed by the mother. He is allowed to take the breast at any time. There is nothing like a diet regulation amongst Natives and they would deem it cruelty to refuse the breast to a crying child.

There are some customs relating to the *milk*. When a mother has to leave her child for a short time, she squeezes a few drops of her milk on his neck in order to prevent him feeling thirsty. When she has been absent for more than one day (this can only happen when the child is able to eat some solid food) and returns home, before nursing the child again she heats a bit of broken pot in the fire and squeezes into it a little milk from each breast. The liquid evaporates. The reason of the custom is this : the mother's milk has grown cold ; it must be warmed again ; otherwise the child will be constipated. This is a taboo (1). When a baby bites the teat, it is regarded as naughtiness and the mother scratches its forehead as a punishment.

853 Mothers not having enough milk use a kind of shrub called

824 (1) Compare with the Zulu milk charms described by D. Kidd, *Savage Childhood*, page 38.

853 824 *neta* as a medecine. The shrub, which is an Euphorbiacea, contains milky sap. It is a treatment based on the principle: Similia similibus curantur.

751 278 753 854 The Thongas believe that milk alone would never suffice to make a child grow: *Ñwana a kula hi miri, the child grows by medicine*, such is the adage which is universally met with. When you see a woman carrying a child on her back, you will notice hanging to the *ntehe* the reed (lihlanga) containing the black powder which protects against the dangers of the bush, and a little calabash half filled with water. This water is not pure water, it is the medicine called *milombyana*. This word is the plural and diminutive form of *nombo*, which means baby's ailment. There is a great *nombo*, convulsions, also called *tilo*, heaven, because this complaint is brought into a mysterious connection with the influence of Heaven (See Part VI). There is a small *nombo*; this is the infantile diarrhea which so often troubles little children; but both diseases are supposed to be caused by the *nyoka*, the intestinal parasite, the worm or snake (nyoka means both) which is in every child and must always be combated because, if unchecked, it will pass from the bowels to the stomach; it will come and beat the fontanella (1) and will finally penetrate the chest. Then the little one will turn up his eyes, be seized by [278] convulsions and die. Happily there are some drugs which have a 751 wonderful effect on this dangerous guest! One of my neighbours, 757 who was a convert in Rikatla, gave me their names. The first is a 854 very common Protacea (?) with large husks called the Dlanyoka, "the one which kills worms." Mixed with the roots of a Leguminacea called *Ñwamahlanga* and with two other plants found near the sea, it forces the worm to keep quiet. These drugs are boiled and the decoction is carefully poured into a special little pot called *hlembetwana ya milombyana* which will be kept in the hut. Every morning the mother will warm the pot a little, pour some of its contents into a shell of sala and give the child a

757 826 (1) Tjaba-tjaba, the fontanella, plays a great part in the diagnosis of children's decions and they often cover it with black wax. When the child hiccoughs, his mother or somebody else will blow on the fontanella to prevent vomiting. This will "make his heart stand" (yimisa mbilo).

856 mouthful to drink, then dip her finger into the medecine and let
731 two or three drops fall from it on the fontanella ; then she spits on
757 the lower part of the shell and presses it all along the sternum
854 of the baby as far as the navel. This is said to "nurse the child, to make him grow." Should he be sick, this treatment will be repeated many times a day. If he is well and goes about with his mother, she will pour the *milombyana* into the small calabash and give him a few sups from it from time to time.

The child must never drink ordinary water, but only the
853 *milombyana* decoction. It is a taboo. Should the mother travel
271 far from home and leave behind her the *milombyana* pot, she is
2/84 allowed to add some water to the calabash, but she must always leave a little of the decoction in the calabash before doing so. The mother herself is not allowed to drink the water of another country. She must only drink water from home and, if she is forced to travel, she must take a little powder from the reed each time she drinks, so that the child may become familiarised with that country (1). These laws must be kept during all the nursing period.

862 The child begins to eat *solid food* as soon as his teeth are cut, and when he is able to take it with his own hands. But some people do not like to give it to him too soon, as they say his stools become fetid. When later on he is able to go outside and to take care of himself, then he can eat any ordinary food.

853 If the mother dies during the nursing period, the little one is almost sure to follow her. The baby is fed with goat's or cow's milk, but the Natives do not know that they must add water to it ; sooner or later therefore the child dies of enteritis.

I have heard of some cases in which another woman has taken charge of the child, nursed him with her own milk and weaned him successfully ; her own child being older, she weaned him earlier than the usual time and nursed the other child in his

261 (1) A similar custom is observed in the case of moving from one country to another.
4/84 When a Ronga comes back from Kimberley having found a wife there, both bring with them a little of the earth of the place they are leaving, and the woman must eat a little of it every day in her porridge in order to accustom herself to her new abode. This earth provides the transition between the two domiciles !

821 "Kengelekezeeeee!" and this exclamation is repeated from one village to another. *Kenge* is the descriptive adverb which means the form of the crescent of the moon. Each "moon," or month, is considered as being a new one, the old one having died, and there were special names for each month of the year (See Part VI).

[841] 856 828 821 832 As soon as the mother of the child has resumed her menses (the menses are called tinwheti, months) and this happens as a rule on the third month after the delivery amongst Thonga women, she takes her garments, washes them, puts on new clothing and then proceeds to the ceremony of the *yandla*. The child must be "given his month." This is done in the following way. The day the new moon appears, the mother takes with her a torch or merely a brand from the fire and the grandmother follows her carrying the child : both go to the ash-heap behind the hut. There the mother throws the burning stick towards the moon and the grandmother flings the child into the air saying : "This is your moon!" (hweti ya ku hi yoleyo) : then she puts the child on to the ashes. The little one cries and rolls over in the dirt on the ash-heap. Then his mother snatches him up (wutla), nurses him, and they go home.

This ceremony, which is certainly a rite of passage, is said to "open the chest of the child" otherwise "his ears would die," he would remain stupid. When a child is not intelligent, it is usual to say to him : You have not been shown your moon! (1)

852 Therefore the *yandla* means a progress made by the child, the entrance into a new phase of his existence. The fact is 846 834 emphasised by the three following changes which take place on the day of the yandla : 1) Henceforth his father is allowed to take the child in his arms. Up to that day, this was taboo, as the child being continually with his mother was perhaps polluted by the dangerous blood following the birth ; but now she has washed her clothing and has been purified by the reappearance of the menses ; so the danger no longer exists. 2) It is now

(1) However the name of the child's month is soon forgotten and is never afterwards recalled. This seems to show that the custom is dying out, as well as the knowledge of the names of the various months.

852 [854] permissible to push him gently by his elbows and 3) to sing him songs to console him (khongota) when he cries. This was taboo before the presentation to the moon.

There is another custom which seems to be confounded sometimes with the yandla. It is also performed for small children and is called : *kulakulisa*. When a friend of the family passes through the village coming from afar, from Johannesburg for instance, he takes the new-born child in his arms, throws him up and says : "Kula-kula-kula, u ya tlhasa Johan." (Grow, grow, grow and reach Johannesburg.) This is a minor custom (nau nyana) ; it is more or less play and is not tabooed like the yandla.

854 278 751 852 After the yandla, a new therapeutic agent is added to the decoction of milombyana, the *biyeketa*. *Ku biyeketa* means : "to put inside an enclosure." Twice a month during the afternoon, when the moon is new and when it is full, the family doctor goes to the kraal of the baby, he lights a fire before the door of the hut and cooks his medicines with water in a pot till they boil. Then he draws the embers to one side of the pot and lays on them a big pill, a *mhula*. The *mhula* is made of fat from an ox paunch or from a goat's paunch mixed with medicinal powder. Then he places a mat on end so as to make a small round enclosure : mother and baby enter it, and he covers them with a piece of cotton cloth. They expose themselves to the steam which comes from the pot and to the smoke which emanates from the mhula. When both have copiously perspired and the emanation has come to an end, the mother tells the doctor to uncover them, and they emerge from the vapour bath. Then the doctor cuts both of them with a razor on the forehead, on the sternum, on the spine between the shoulders, on the elbow, on the wrist, on the knees and introduces a little of his medicinal powder into the small wounds. The pot with the hot decoction is then taken by the doctor behind the hut, the mother accompanying him. She pours a little of the water into his hands : he spits into it, uttering the sound *tsu* (which is the sacramental act in ordinary worship) and throws it on the child. The mother rubs the whole body of the little one with it ; in the meantime the doctor prays to his gods, viz. the spirits of his ancestors. Begining with the formula of invocation which doctors

852 always use, he says: "Abutayi, akhwari! This is the child!
834 May he grow! May he become a man by means of this medicine
731 of mine! May his perspiration be good; may the impurity go away; may it go to Shiburi, to Nkhabelane! (1) May the child play well, be like his companions. This is not my first attempt! You have given me these drugs; may they protect him against disease so that nobody may say there is no power in them; etc." After this prayer the doctor takes the little child and goes back to the central place of the village. The mother stays and washes her own body with the decoction, praying also to her gods (but without the *tsu*, as this has been uttered by the "master of the drugs").

751 The treatment of the biyeketa is also called "hungulo dja
854 milombo," "the vapour bath for infantile diseases;" it is not a
177 curative, but a preventive; it aims at ascertaining if the child is
757 all right. If he has bad stools (a nga tlambi psinene) the mother will perhaps remember that she has forgotten to enclose him and she will call the doctor in at once. Should he fall sick, the biyeketa will not be performed again but the milombyana will be administered more frequently. However, it is of importance for the growth of the child. To neglect it is taboo! (2)

757 As for the cuts, sometimes they are followed by a second vapour
854 bath, as if the doctor wished to cause the medicine contained in the smoke to penetrate through them into the body, in which case he will only "close" them later on by introducing a healing powder into them. Children generally cry when they see the physician... They dread the pain of the cuts. When the mother goes to the doctor's village, she takes with her the wood, the mat and a pot of beer or a fowl in payment. The physician's charge for a biyeketa is sixpence to one shilling or a hen or a pot of beer.

(1) Viz. to the end of the world. These clans are far away to the north, outside the Ronga country.

(2) I hear that the converts generally have not abandoned the biyeketa, but they do not allow the doctor to perform the sacrificial act and to pray to the spirits. Sam Ngwetsa, the children's physician of Rikatla used to pray thus: "O Father of mercy! I pray thee! I do not pray the dead but thee only who art in heaven! Grant us to see this child in good health, standing firm, this little bush!"

5) THE TYING OF THE COTTON STRING.

854 When the child "tiyelanyana" viz. "becomes a little firm,"
857 the mother, having to plough her fields and to cook the food, begins to seat him on the sandy soil, after having made a kind of hole of about five inches in depth. We have seen Thonga babies already sitting at the age of two months. But this "dumping" hardly meets all the requirements, and the mother looks for a girl to help her to take care of the baby (wa ku tlanga na ye, to play with him). She puts the child in the charge of an elder sister or a cousin ; a girl of five to ten is quite strong enough for the purpose. I have often admired the patience of these miniature nurses, sometimes not very much bigger than the child they carry, with their very troublesome babies.

852 But very soon the child begins to crawl (kasa) and this is the
115 time when a very striking rite is performed. This rite seems to be practised all over the tribe, but it has more importance in the Northern clans than amongst the Ba-Ronga. I shall here give the description of Vigust, who belonged to the Tsungu clan and had emigrated to the Spelonken. My readers must forgive me if I cannot tell the story with all its details and if I am obliged to write some of them in Latin (1).

851 These are the ipissima verba of my informant : "This is a
833 great law amongst the Thongas. When a child begins to crawl,
766 even before, the *puri* is tied round his waist. The *puri* is a
842 cotton (2) string. Father and mother fix the day ; if they forget to do so, their parents, (the grandparents) will remind them of the law. They must have sexual intercourse, but in such a way that the mother will not become pregnant, s. n. i. (Annotatio 2)[1]. The mother will have to take in her hands "their filth" (thyaka ra bona) smear the string with it and tie it round the child. It will

(1) A more complete description of this rite and of some others related to the tribes of the Thongas will be found in the Revue d'Ethnographie et de Sociologie, Oct. 1910, Paris.

(2) There are plants of cotton probably subspontaneous in the Low Country of the Tembe of Delagoa Bay.

1 [See p. 576 in these categories or in 116--Analyst]

851 remain there till it falls to pieces. After this operation the
766 child is "grown up" and three things are allowed which were
833 taboo before :

1) The child, if he dies, can be buried on the hill, in dry soil. Before the *boha puri* he would have been buried in wet soil, near the river, as is customary with twins and children who have cut their upper teeth first.

2) He can participate in the strange purification called *hlamba ndjaka* which takes place after the death of one of the inhabitants of the village (See ceremonies of death).

852 3) The parents can again have conjugal intercourse, though
766 they must avoid conception till the child is weaned. Before this
833 ceremony it was absolutely prohibited, and should they have
821 sinned in this respect and the mother have conceived, they would
842 be very guilty! It is a dangerous taboo! They would have "stolen" the child, stolen it from the law (yiba nawen). The child would not have "entered the law." It would be useless to tie the string round him in order to repair the evil done. Should he live long, should he even become an old man, he will have to be buried in wet soil, otherwise the rain would be prevented from falling.

Amongst the Malulekes and the Hlengwes such children are even burnt after their death. We shall speak later on about the mysterious relation established by the Thongas between these children, their burial, and the rain.

852 Amongst the Ba-Ronga this rite is called *boha nshale* (to tie
854 the cotton) and can be performed in the same way or even more simply by the father (Annotatio 3). Parents, when they have duly tied the string on the little one, are said to have *fuya ñwana*, viz. taken possession of the child.

Amongst them again, another thing is then allowed which was taboo before. The child can be carried on the shoulders without ntehe by the arms alone (hi minkono).

851 It is clear that the tying of the cotton string means the official reception of the child into the family, even into human society. Before that, he was hardly considered as a human being, he was *shilo* (a thing), *khuna* (an incomplete being). Now he is *nkulu*,

2 [See p. 516 in these categories or in 116 - Analyst]

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862 join with them in blessing the little one. The beak of the sacrificed
783 hen, one of the claws and one of the feathers (psirungulo) will be
755 tied together round the child's neck. A mat is spread on the ground ; the child is laid on it and greased with oil and powder brought by the physician. Then he is smeared and rubbed with the bran. The particles which fall on the mat are called *timhore*. They are gathered by the mother who makes a ball of them. In the meantime the father looks for the nest of a certain kind of large ant which is common in the bush. It lives in the earth, but the opening of its hole is tolerably large. There the mother goes at sunset. She introduces the ball into the hole so that the ant will be obliged to take all the *timhore* into the nest. Then she returns home without looking behind her. It is taboo ; should she transgress this rule, she would bring back disease to her child.

This rite is the ordinary *hondlola rite* which is performed in this or in a similar way at the close of any serious disease as the conclusion of the treatment, with the view of taking away the defilement of disease. After having *hondlola*, the physician asks for the payment of his fees. For a child he will ask ten shillings or five coins of five hundred reis (1).

854 This hondlola reveals to us the true conception of the nursing period held by the Natives. For them these three first years of the child's life are a period of disease ; so many perils threaten the little one's well-being that he can hardly be considered healthy. He is during the whole time under the supervision of the physician, who takes leave of the little patient on the day of the weaning.

854 This view of infancy accounts also for some other taboos. It
789 is *yila* for instance to say of a child who is particularly fat : Wa tika, he is heavy : this would bring mishap to him. One must say : A kota ribye, he is like a stone! It is taboo also in Shiluvane to make use before a child of the word *mfene*, baboon. There is a disease which is called by that name and it would come upon him. One must say : the thing which inhabits the hills, and so on...

(1) In the Mpfumo clan the rite of weaning is somewhat different. I have published in "Les Ba-Ronga" a description of it given by Tobane. It seems that the elements of the cotton string rite and of the broken pot rite are mixed with the proper weaning rite. I think that the description of Mbona is more trustworthy.

766 pot is placed in the earth, the opening being half covered with a layer of ashes, in such a way that there remains a passage for the air. It is taboo to bury it otherwise, until it has passed through the rite of presentation to the moon (page 53). *An older child* is buried in the ordinary way, but with very few ceremonies. There is no religious act. The mother alone attends the funeral. The father digs the grave, but he does nothing else. He says : "We, holders of the assagai, do not bury such little ones. They are but water, they are but a womb, (nyimba) they are but a *ntehe*."
854 A father pays very little attention to little children. It is only when they begin to smile that he will show them some affection. Then it may be that he will press his little one against his breast and kiss its temple, especially when he returns home from a journey.

766 *In the case of suicide*, the corpse is buried according to ordinary rules. But the tree on which the man hanged himself is cut down. It is taboo : other people might commit suicide at the same place. Its wood is not used for fuel.

If a woman dies during pregnancy, she must be cut open to see what the sex of her child is. This must be done inside the grave, before the earth is covered in. As Mboza said : "The air (moya) must come out." He told me the story of a husband in the Mabota country who nearly fainted when obliged to perform this painful operation. But it is a great taboo, as the woman might become a god of bitterness (shikwembo sha shibiti), if buried without this precaution (See Part VI). In the Maluleke clan women who die pregnant, or in confinement, are cremated.

Lepers alone are buried in the hut. In Maputju the father and the mother are buried in front of the hut whilst the regular place in other parts of the Ronga territory is behind the hut, *mahosi*. The members of the reigning family are buried in the *ntimu*, the sacred wood which belongs to them. Every big family may have its *ntimu* and the men are buried there according to their villages; each village has its place and the place is called after the name of the headman of the village. So in the Lebombo sacred wood, there was "the village of Nkolele, to the south, the village of Shihubane, to the north, etc."

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CHAPTER II

THE EVOLUTION OF A WOMAN FROM BIRTH TO DEATH

Essay of a Ronga girl on the subject.

124 In July 1897, the School Inspector gave to the big girls of the Swiss Mission school at Lourenço Marques the following subject for an examination in composition: "The life of a Ronga woman." This is the translation of one of the pupils' essays on the life of their country women:

846 "When a girl is born amongst the Ba-Ronga, people come and
302 congratulate the mother and say: "A ma buyeni mati," that is
854 to say: "Let the water come!" When the time is at hand when she will come out of the hut, ochre is crushed for her and a calabash full of the fat of *nkuhlu* almond is prepared, and the two ingredients are mixed and smeared over her.

"Her curly hair is stretched out in corkscrew fashion, and ochre is put on it to transform it into a kind of rats' tails. (This is the operation called *hora ngoya*.) The mother also smears herself with ochre, and puts on her head a crown of small strings (shikupu) (1). Then, when the child lets her head fall on account of the weakness of her neck, a plaited string, which is just the right size for a necklace, is tied round her throat. 'Thus,' they say, 'her nape will be strengthened.'

854 "A small calabash with medicine is given her to drink; they also prepare for her a small pot of the medicine, and they say it

(1) I have heard this custom explained as follows: the mothers amuse the children by shaking their heads; the small strings dance about and make the babies laugh. This can only be true of infants already two or three months old.

854 is to lessen the dangers of growth (pumba nombo), so that the sickness should not be too bad. (These are the milombyana,

[142]

Phot. A. Burel

Girls with babies at Makulane
(Maputja country.)

854 (see page 48.) After her birth she is carried in the skin of a
~~863~~ gazelle (mhunti) which her mother ties round her neck and loins. When that skin has become too small, they get one of an antelope (mhala). She begins to walk ; when her mother sends her on an errand she is able to do it. She also begins to talk, and to know her father and mother. Then, when she has grown, they prepare for her a small pot of pounded and cooked mealies so that she may eat of it. After three years she is weaned and goes to stay for a time with her grandmother. After that she returns home.

857 "When she has learnt to walk, she is very fond of playing with
868 the shells of the sala. She cooks in them. Then, when she has done with them, she takes small pots and cooks little dinners. She also gets a small calabash, she goes to the lake to draw water and, on coming back, she gives it to her father so that he may wash his face. Here she is now gathering small bits of wood ; she makes small bundles of them and brings them home. Later on she will make heavier bundles.

"When she has grown up more, she will take charge of the work of her mother. She will do the work. But if the mother sees that she cannot do it all, she will help her. It may however be said that the mother needs no longer to crush her mealies,
583 neither to go to the well nor to the fireplace. When she is quite a grown up girl, the suitors come. If they are accepted, they bring the purchase money. They buy her (lobola) and do all they like. If she is prolific, she will bear many children. Now and then she returns to her parents' village, then she comes back to her husband. Her children grow. They go to get water, to cut her wood, to plough her fields. She goes with them. When they are
462 grown up, they get married. If amongst them there is a son, he goes to buy his wife. Thus she looks for a mother-in-law for her son. He will then be truly a man because he has got a mother-in-law! When her children are married, the mother again begins to do all her work. She steeps her mealies, crushes them to make flour, she cuts her wood, cooks her beer ; she prepares the light beer ; she smears the floor of her hut ; this is what she does till she is quite old.

888 "When she is quite old, they feed her. Her grandchildren are

1 [The following page is quoted from an essay by a native girl at the Swiss Mission school at Lourenço Marques -- Analyst]

A woman who has lost many children, three or four, is considered as being in a special position, called *bowumba*, and there are many rules to be observed in order to deal with this "state of bereavement." Should a child be born after the death of many elder brothers, he must be carried in a *ntehe* made of a sheep's skin instead of an antelope or goat skin. (See p. 46.) To carry him in an ordinary ntehe is taboo. Should it be a boy, the mother will put girl's clothing on it, and vice-versa. The mother's breast will be smeared with a special medicine, because they are "breasts of the dead (mabele ya bafi)." The child, if it lives, will be weaned as early as possible and be taken to its grandmother. Two curious rites are also practised to protect it against bad luck. The first is the *kunga* ; the second, *rangela bowumba*, seems to belong rather to the Northern clans.

765 854 ~~761~~ 844 [862]

The *kunga* rite which we have already met many times (see p. 124) is also performed in the case of a mother who has given birth to a new child whilst in the state of bowumba. To neglect it is a taboo. The bereaved mother keeps silent before her visitors until they have deposited their gifts at her feet and have thus "opened her mouth." Old women having no means to buy a present take a bit of grass and fix it in her hair. Then she consents to speak. She gathers all the bracelets thus obtained and puts them on the ntehe, carrying them everywhere with her.

789 761 854 844

Another rite is observed in the Northern clans. The child whose elder brothers and sisters have died is taken by the mother to the village of her own parents. There it is buried in the ash-heap up to its neck. Then somebody runs to the village, takes a handful of grains of maize and throws them on the child. Afterwards it is dug up, washed, smeared with ochre and brought home. This rite is called *rangela bowumba*, viz. to *precede* bowumba, to cut it, to treat it : the bowumba will not now come as it has been "preceded". It will be deceived, it will no longer desire the baby, as the baby has been thrown away together with all the refuse of the village on to the ash-heap. It is no longer able to eat mealies, even if it is given grains of mealies ; it is dead! Let the bowumba take no notice of it! (This description of the "rangela bowumba" was given to me by an old Thonga from Spelonken. Mankhelu, my Nkuna informant, called this rite

789 761

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854 2) *To soothe babies.* Should Mboza's son cry, his nurse will say :
551 "Miyela, Makaneta ñwa yindlu ya ntima," "Keep quiet Makaneta,
618 of the black hut." It may also happen that some one wishing to console himself in affliction will do the same. Notice these last words : "of the black hut." They mean : "You who belong to a village where the huts have had time to become black ; they have never been destroyed by enemies, as no enemy dares to attack your clan! So the roofs have blackened inside from the effects of the smoke and outside from those of the rain!" It is customary to add to the name of the ancestor words such as these, in order to flatter more highly the man you salute, or the baby you console.
551 Thus each clan has a *laudatory phrase* which is sometimes much
618 longer than the Makaneta one. Masinga is called "wa le hondjo-
576 sin," "the one who reigns over the red earth," (more fertile than the sand). The Matinanas or Ngomanes are lauded thus : "Nkandjetele wa ku woma, ku baleka minambyana" — "the one who tramples on a dry place, and rivers begin to flo[illegible] because he is so heavy, so powerful! (Compare p. 87.) A Ngomane man will address his paternal aunt with the same words, when offering her a present.

Here are some of the best known shibongo. Their meaning is sometimes unknown, as they often contain ancient and obsolete expressions :

Hoñwana : Ñwahomu ya ntima ñwa mu-Nondjwana, — The black ox of Nondjwana (or Nondwane).

Shirindja : Mudzunga ntima wa le dzungen, — Black South of the South ?

Mpfumo : Ba hlela misaba ba khabuta, — They winnow the sand ; they eat it. (The sand is so white in their country that it resembles mealies flour : they never lack food.)

Libombo : Libombo la Ndlopfu, — Elephant's face.

Nkuna : Ba homu! Ba nyari! ya makhwiri, Ñwashitjimba buraka, ba mahlwen ka ntima. — Those of the ox! Those of the buffalo, the buffalo with the large belly which rolls in the mud, the one with a black spot on the forehead!

Rikotjo : Ba Nyamasi, — Those of the nyamari tree.

Khosa : Ba ripanga ro sheka ba ntsindja, — Those of the keen

In their country there

524 are big nasty yellow-brown hornets (a kind of Belonogaster)
136 which build more or less circular nests, sometimes attaining to the size of a man's head. On a certain day the boys decide to make war on these enemies. They make shields with the leaves of the *pala* palm tree which they plait together.

524 They cut down branches, which they wave to protect themselves, and one of them goes and strikes a heavy blow on the wasps' nest! The irritated insects rush out on their assailants and sting them. The boys try to kill the wasps with their sticks or to crush them when they light on them. Sometimes, overcome by the pain, they run away; sometimes, resisting to the last, they kill and exterminate their winged enemies.

Besides this there are also *big battles between the shepherds* of the different flocks. The shepherds amuse themselves by taking one another's cattle. Those who are the strongest bring the stolen herd triumphantly back to the neighbourhood of their village, but they would never let it enter the kraal. The vanquished call to their help their elder brothers, who come to recover their property and, if they can, give the thieves a sound thrashing!

578 Insults and fights are frequent between the clans. The boys
862 of Mpfumu call out to those of Matjolo: "Forest gadders! Eaters
291 of snails and boas, of lizards and tortoises" (all of which are questionable food!) (In Ronga: Balala! Badi ba tihumba ni tinhlaru ni makhwahle ni tinfutchu). Those of Matjolo answer them: "Crowd of women that you are, clad in cotton material!" (Babasati! Matchimbamphela!), in reference to the fact that the inhabitants of Mpfumu, living near the town, some time ago replaced the belt of skins worn by the savages by a piece of cotton tied to the waist and hanging down to the knee (ladula).

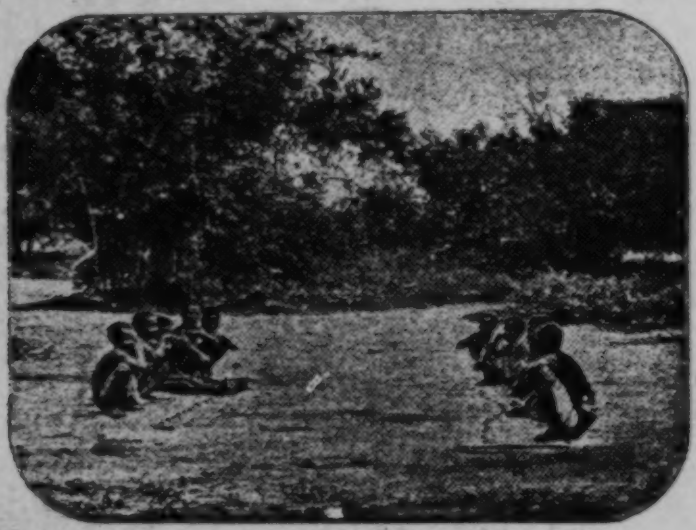
855 The custom of frightening children with imaginary beasts is
857 wide spread amongst the Thongas. The bogey man is called
538 *Shingomu-Ngomu* or else *Shikunkunumu*, and by this very expressive
861 word they designate a huge and mighty being who walks, swaying his big body from right to left, with a sound like *ngomu-ngomu*. The ogre is *Shitukulumukumba*, a word coming originally from the Zulus, which corresponds to the Ronga *Ñwambilutimhokora*, that is to say: "the one who has scales on the heart." He eats

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

855/538 human beings. These imaginary creatures play a large part in the native tales, especially the one who " has scales on the heart. " He feeds on vermin, lice and big white beetle larvae, which are his almonds (1).

855 When a child cries and cannot be comforted, someone goes and hides behind the hut and slaps his neck saying: "U-u-u," while

[524]



Boys trying to play Billiards
at Magudu's, near Antioka Station.

those remaining with the lamenting little one say to him: " Be quiet, listen! Shikunkununu is coming! "

857 There are also the *timbelembele*, a kind of terrible wasp which only exists in the imagination of children. When a boy does not dare to follow his companions up a tree which they have climbed, they shout to him: " Make haste! Here are the timbelembele coming to bite you! " And he is so frightened that he at once finds strength to climb.

(1) We shall given complete ogre tale in Part V.

302 used to shave their beards). Young men sometimes let two or three of their curls grow on their forehead like horns! Others stretch out their curls and smear them with a gluey substance obtained from the nkanye tree. This is called *ku hoba misisi*.
302 As regards women, those who are nursing babies regularly
853 turn their hair into an ornament: the small curls are stretched out, smeared with fat and made to fall on the temples and on the occiput; they are then covered with ochre. This operation is called *ku hora misisi*, and the rats'tails thus produced are the *tingoya*; they are the characteristic ornament of women during the nursing period. Nursing women undoubtedly think the tingoya improve their appearance. "Look! She has *hora misisi*! How well it suits her!" people will say of a woman who has succeeded in altering her coiffure in this way. But this custom has also a ritual value (1).

Nursing women cover their whole body, their clothing, and their *ntehe* (I. p. 46) with *ochre*. The habit of anointing (tota) or smearing with ochre (tshumane) goes hand in hand with that of tingoya. This rather disgusting custom marks them as nursing, and is a protection (shisibelo) against the husband; so long as a woman covers herself with ochre, it is a sign that she will not
302 cohabit with him. They say also that ochre prevents the bad
855 smell resulting from childrens' unclean habits, and that it softens the ntehe and makes the baby grow (2). The skin of children is also covered with a coating of this pigment; some say it is done not so much with the object of beautifying the child as of hiding the dirt which the mothers are too lazy to remove! No wonder that, in these conditions, it has been found that this smearing with ochre fosters conjunctivitis and other diseases!

177 (1) The Ngoni taught the Northern Thongas another and more elaborate way of
302 curling the hair: the queens, wives of Gungunyana, transform their "thatch" into regular cylindrical chignons (shifoko), standing up like towers (I. p. 416). The Ba-Ronga have not adopted this custom, except, in some cases, the chiefs. (I. p. 386).

(2) It is very curious to observe that these two feminine modes of adornment, the tingoya and the ochre, have been adopted by the magicians, those who pretend to possess supernatural power in smelling out witches and treating possessed people (Part VI). They like to assume the appearance of women. People suffering from the Ba-Ndjao[1] possession especially use ochre. Their spirits order them to do so: they would torment their victims should the latter not obey.

[1] [i.e., spirit--analyst]

846 751 them till they burn. The smoke then rises, and he exposes the child to it for a long time : the body, face, nose and mouth. The baby begins to cry ; he sneezes, he coughs ; this is just what is wanted. Then the doctor takes what remains of the pieces of skin, grinds them, makes a powder, mixes it with *tihuhlu* (1) grease of the year before last and consequently hard enough to make an ointment. With this ointment he rubs the whole body of the child, especially the joints, which he extends gently in order to assist the baby's growth.

825 278 856

846 751 853 All this fumigation and manipulation is intended to act as a preventive. Having been thus exposed to all external dangers, dangers which are represented by the beasts of the bush, the child may go out of the hut. He is now able "to cross the foot prints of wild beasts" (tjemakanya mitila) without harm. Snakes will not bite him, at any rate their bite will not hurt him ; lions will not kill him. The remainder of the powder is put into a little bit of reed closed at both ends, which the mother has to carry with her during the whole nursing period in order to continue the treatment.

846 755 763 821 This rite of the broken pot is also the great preventive remedy against the much dreaded ailment of babies, *convulsions*. If a child suffers from this, they will say : "Ntlalile shirengelen," viz. "he did not find any help in the broken pot" and the parents will go to another doctor whose drugs are more powerful, to have the child once more exposed to the smoke. It may even be that a grown-up man will undergo this treatment again, if he has been ill with convulsions, but, in this case, the broken pot with its pieces of skin is put on the head of the patient, which has been first covered with a wisp of cuscuta (hare dja yendjeyendje). The great aim of all the medication of children by the "milombyana" is also to fight against convulsions, as we shall see (2).

(1) The tihuhlu are the seeds of the ukuhlu tree known under the name of mafurira. They are oleaginous and the fat (mafura) obtained from them is very much used for external applications amongst the Thongas.

(2) In *Savage Childhood* p. 12, Dudley Kidd describes this "baptism of smoke" amongst Zulus. Some dirt is scraped from the father's body and is mixed with other drugs in order to impart to the child his ancestral spirit. Another ingredient

856 mouthful to drink, then dip her finger into the medecine and let
737 two or three drops fall from it on the fontanella ; then she spits on
757 the lower part of the shell and presses it all along the sternum
854 of the baby as far as the navel. This is said to "nurse the child, to make him grow." Should he be sick, this treatment will be repeated many times a day. If he is well and goes about with his mother, she will pour the *milombyana* into the small calabash and give him a few sups from it from time to time.

The child must never drink ordinary water, but only the
853 *milombyana* decoction. It is a taboo. Should the mother travel
271 far from home and leave behind her the *milombyana* pot, she is
484 allowed to add some water to the calabash, but she must always leave a little of the decoction in the calabash before doing so. The mother herself is not allowed to drink the water of another country. She must only drink water from home and, if she is forced to travel, she must take a little powder from the reed each time she drinks, so that the child may become familiarised with that country (1). These laws must be kept during all the nursing period.

862 The child begins to eat *solid food* as soon as his teeth are cut, and when he is able to take it with his own hands. But some people do not like to give it to him too soon, as they say his stools become fetid. When later on he is able to go outside and to take care of himself, then he can eat any ordinary food.

853 If the mother dies during the nursing period, the little one is almost sure to follow her. The baby is fed with goat's or cow's milk, but the Natives do not know that they must add water to it ; sooner or later therefore the child dies of enteritis.

I have heard of some cases in which another woman has taken charge of the child, nursed him with her own milk and weaned him successfully ; her own child being older, she weaned him earlier than the usual time and nursed the other child in his

261 (1) A similar custom is observed in the case of moving from one country to another.
484 When a Ronga comes back from Kimberley having found a wife there, both bring with them a little of the earth of the place they are leaving, and the woman must eat a little of it every day in her porridge in order to accustom herself to her new abode. This earth provides the transition between the two domiciles !

853 grandmother, by name Mishidohi, who had an adult son and had had no other child since, prepared light beer and other appropriate food and succeeded in secreting milk in her own breast ; so the child was saved !

856 826 A child during these first months of its existence is regarded as a very weak creature. "I mati !" i. e. "It is nothing but water !" Hence perhaps the curious idea that a baby, just like a new born animal, is able to swim, at any rate it cannot be drowned : it floats on the water. When a woman carrying a little child on her back crosses a river and is in danger of being swept away by the stream, people shout to her from the shore : "Untie the 'ntehe' and let the baby cross. Think of yourself, the little one will follow all right." They say: "Psa yila, it is taboo that a baby should sink." Note the curious use of the word "yila" in this sentence.

3) Dentition.

856 364 351 As soon as the child has cut the two lower and upper incisors, the mother takes a white bead (tjambu) and ties it to one of the child's hairs above the forehead. This white bead is said to help the other teeth to come out normally. If this precaution were not taken, the child would not become intelligent ; he would shiver instead of smiling ; he would bring forward his lips and his tongue to prevent the air from getting into his mouth ! When all the teeth are duly cut, the bead is removed and thrown away *talen*, viz. on the *tala*. The *tala* is the ash-heap, the place behind the hut on which everyone throws ashes and dirt. It plays a great part in the customs of the Thongas and other South African Bantus.

195 The teeth (tinyo-menyo) of the children are called figuratively *hobe*. The *hobe* (pl. *tihobe*) means the grain of pounded maize which is white and very similar to a tooth. Hence the expression : "A humi hobe," "he has got out a grain of maize," employed to indicate the cutting of the teeth.

787 766 856 When a child cuts his upper teeth first, it is a bad omen. In the Northern clans and especially amongst the Ba-Pedi, it is a great taboo. At his death the child must be buried in wet soil.

787 Amongst the Ba-Ronga the ill-omen is not considered so serious.
782 Later on, when the child loses his first teeth, he must not
856 let them fall out hap-hazard anywhere. He must take the fallen tooth, go to the ash-heap, put his finger into the hole and say: "Kokwa, kokwa, ndji hwe hobe !" (Grandfather, grandfather, give me a grain of maize !) Then he throws the tooth over his shoulder on to the ashes and goes home without looking backward. Should he look backward, his grandfather (the spirit of the departed ?) would not give him a new tooth (1). This custom is no longer taboo and is disappearing.

856 When a younger brother cuts his teeth, they are considered
163 as pushing away or pulling out the teeth of the elder, as the younger brother comes into the world, as a rule, three years after the elder.

As regards *hair*, the first cutting is accompanied by the following
302 custom: the mother sprinkles some drops of her milk on the
856 forehead and on the occiput of the child; then she cuts his hair and throws it away in the midst of thick grass. When she cuts her own hair, she always leaves a lock on both sides of the head for the amusement of the child, till he is able to walk.

853 Nursing women very often anoint themselves with ochre. This is said to be in order to prevent their husbands from having relations with them.

These rites are not considered as very important. But there are three others which are most punctiliously observed, and which divide the nursing period into three subperiods: the presentation to the moon, after three months, the tying of the cotton string, after one year, and the weaning ceremonies at the close of the period.

4) The presentation to the moon (ku yandla).

821 The appearance of the new moon is always received with cheers by the Ba-Ronga. The first person who sees it shouts:

(1) Comparative Ethnography: I remember quite well that, when I was a boy, we were told in Neuchâtel that we must not let a broken tooth get lost, lest it should be found by a dog and a dog's tooth would grow in its stead !

821 "Kengelekezeeeee!" and this exclamation is repeated from one village to another. *Kenge* is the descriptive adverb which means the form of the crescent of the moon. Each "moon," or month, is considered as being a new one, the old one having died, and there were special names for each month of the year (See Part VI).

[841] 856 828 821 852 As soon as the mother of the child has resumed her menses (the menses are called tinwheti, months) and this happens as a rule on the third month after the delivery amongst Thonga women, she takes her garments, washes them, puts on new clothing and then proceeds to the ceremony of the *yandla*. The child must be "given his month." This is done in the following way. The day the new moon appears, the mother takes with her a torch or merely a brand from the fire and the grandmother follows her carrying the child: both go to the ash-heap behind the hut. There the mother throws the burning stick towards the moon and the grandmother flings the child into the air saying: "This is your moon!" (hweti ya ku hi yoleyo): then she puts the child on to the ashes. The little one cries and rolls over in the dirt on the ash-heap. Then his mother snatches him up (wutla), nurses him, and they go home.

This ceremony, which is certainly a rite of passage, is said to "open the chest of the child" otherwise "his ears would die," he would remain stupid. When a child is not intelligent, it is usual to say to him: You have not been shown your moon! (1)

852 Therefore the *yandla* means a progress made by the child, the entrance into a new phase of his existence. The fact is 846 854 emphasised by the three following changes which take place on the day of the yandla: 1) Henceforth his father is allowed to take the child in his arms. Up to that day, this was taboo, as the child being continually with his mother was perhaps polluted by the dangerous blood following the birth; but now she has washed her clothing and has been purified by the reappearance of the menses; so the danger no longer exists. 2) It is now

(1) However the name of the child's month is soon forgotten and is never afterwards recalled. This seems to show that the custom is dying out, as well as the knowledge of the names of the various months.

851 a grown up child (1). The expression *fuya nwana* confirms our explanation. This custom is not a protective rite : the physician has nothing to do with it ; it is really an act by which the new-born child becomes a regular member of the community. The strict prohibition of renewed conception before this rite has been accomplished is evidently dictated by the feeling that another child must not appear before this one has been duly received into the family.

6) The weaning.

862 856 A whole year, even more, will elapse after the *boha puri* before the little one can be weaned. He will learn to speak and to walk, and it is only when his intelligence is sufficiently developed to allow him to run small errands that the date of the weaning will be fixed. When his parents can send him to the next hut to ask for snuff and see him coming back holding the tobacco, they say : "Now the time has come !"

The rite of weaning is accomplished in the following manner in Nondwane. (Mboza).

862 824 First of all, the father looks for a young *ntjopfa* tree which has only one root. The ntjopfa is an anonacea bush, which colonists sometimes call the wild custard. (Its fruit is very much like custard fruit and it is said that the true cultivated custard can be grafted on it). The root of this tree is said to have the property of making people forget. The mother cooks a pot of Kafir corn in which she has put the medicine. This 862 will help the child to forget the breast. But the great act is the 782 *hondlola* which takes place under the direction of the physician. 755 The mother pounds some mealies, pours water on them and adds some leaven ; in this way she makes a little light beer (buputju). She keeps a little of the bran of the pounded mealies. The doctor comes, kills a chicken and sprinkles this bran with the blood and *hahla*, viz. offers a regular sacrifice. He prays to the spirits of his own family and asks those of the child's family to

(1) This word *khuna* is also employed to designate boys who have not yet gone through the circumcision school. *Bukhuna* is the despicable state of uncircumcision. The state of a child before the ceremony of *boha puri* is another kind of bukhuna.

5) THE TYING OF THE COTTON STRING.

854 When the child "tiyelanyana" viz. "becomes a little firm,"
857 the mother, having to plough her fields and to cook the food, begins to seat him on the sandy soil, after having made a kind of hole of about five inches in depth. We have seen Thonga babies already sitting at the age of two months. But this "dumping" hardly meets all the requirements, and the mother looks for a girl to help her to take care of the baby (wa ku tlanga na ye, to play with him). She puts the child in the charge of an elder sister or a cousin ; a girl of five to ten is quite strong enough for the purpose. I have often admired the patience of these miniature nurses, sometimes not very much bigger than the child they carry, with their very troublesome babies.

852 But very soon the child begins to crawl (kasa) and this is the
115 time when a very striking rite is performed. This rite seems to be practised all over the tribe, but it has more importance in the Northern clans than amongst the Ba-Ronga. I shall here give the description of Viguet, who belonged to the Tsungu clan and had emigrated to the Spelonken. My readers must forgive me if I cannot tell the story with all its details and if I am obliged to write some of them in Latin (1).

851 These are the ipsissima verba of my informant : "This is a
833 great law amongst the Thongas. When a child begins to crawl,
766 even before, the *puri* is tied round his waist. The *puri* is a
842 cotton (2) string. Father and mother fix the day ; if they forget to do so, their parents, (the grandparents) will remind them of the law. They must have sexual intercourse, but in such a way that the mother will not become pregnant, s. n. i. (Annotatio 2)[1]. The mother will have to take in her hands "their filth" (thyaka ra bona) smear the string with it and tie it round the child. It will

(1) A more complete description of this rite and of some others related to the taboos of the Thongas will be found in the Revue d'Ethnographie et de Sociologie, Oct. 1910, Paris.

(2) There are plants of cotton probably subspontaneous in the Low Country of the Transvaal of Delagoa Bay.

1 [See p. 676 in these categories or in 116--Analyst]

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862 842 see that conception has taken place before the child is weaned, they will hasten the ceremony. But they will be severely judged by the old people. Should the little one be sick, the husband will be scolded by the parents of the mother. They will say : "A djambeli ñwana," he has caused damage to the child! If a man forces his wife to transgress the law, she will run during the night to the hut of her husband's father to tell him. Actually this is a very rare occurrence. Children follow each other regularly at an interval of two and a half or three years, and seldom is the law transgressed which says : A mother must nurse her child during three "hoes," viz. three ploughing seasons.

B. CHILDHOOD

591 861 857 The infant, shiputja (Ro.) shihlangi (Dj.) is on the way to become a boy, mufana. During the first years of this period, which extends from the third to the fourteenth year, he stays with his grandparents. They do not give him much "education." He grows at Mother Nature's good pleasure. And as Nature is not always synonymous with morality, he sometimes commits bad actions. Sometimes also, fearing chastisement for a particularly wicked deed, he flees from the kraal of the grandparents and goes home, where the paternal hand will hold him a little more firmly. But the father does not bother much with these little boys and they enjoy an immense amount of liberty. These years are perhaps the happiest of their whole life. They spend their time in the following occupations : herding the goats, stealing, catching game, learning the science of the velt, playing.

1) Herding the goats.

231 Just as the Kafir corn is the old Thonga cereal which is used alone in the rites, so the goat is the domestic animal par excellence, no doubt the first which the tribe knew and that which is always employed in the sacrifices. Goats are very common ; everybody

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possesses one or two. They are kept together in one of the villages and the sons of the master of the village or of the other proprietors must tend them. They "stay with the goats" (tjhama timbutin) till their tenth or eleventh year and afterwards they are promoted to the care of the oxen, supposing there are oxen in the village.

The young goatherds, with hardly anything on—a meagre

Photo: H.-A. Junod.

Boys herding goats on the Shilouane plain
(In the background, the Mazawati mountain).

belt of tails or bits of skin hanging from their loins, sometimes only in front, nothing behind,—go to the velt playing on their little trumpets, made of a bone or a reed. They pass by the gardens, and the goats look with one eye at the green mealies, the fresh leaves of the sweet potatoes which are not protected by stone walls, (there is hardly a stone all over the Thonga country) nor by barbed wire fences. But the boys are on the watch and

231 857 867 "cut the road" from the goats (tjemetela) to keep them away from the gardens. They safely reach the little plain where nothing but hard Gramineae grow. There the boys begin to play, having handed over the charge of the goats to the youngest of the party. The little chap gets tired of watching; little by little the whole herd goes back to the forbidden garden and eats greedily of the savoury stems of the mealies! After a while, the boys discover that the goats are gone. They run after them, and bring them back. But the mistress of the garden passes near by, coming back from the well with her pitcher on her head. She sees the harm done, inspects the traces of the goats, knows by them which herd has plundered her field, uproots some of the spoiled stems and with great clamour goes to the village of the guilty boys and throws down the mealies right before the hut of the father. No compensation is claimed in such a case, generally, but the father will thrash the boys when they come back; or should there be a recurrence of the offence, the husband of the owner of the garden will himself administer a correction to the careless goatherds.

827 857 Boys herding the goats have certain customs. When one of them emits a certain unseemly sound from the rectum, the others say to him: "Fakisa!" He must answer: "Cita munyakanya goben." (I have let out my wind by the rectum). This formula, which is Zulu, is secret. If he does not know it, they beat him and make him look after the goats till the end of the day. Should another boy reveal the answer to the uninitiated, they will punish him in the same way.

2) Stealing.

685 857 What were they doing when the goats escaped? They had probably themselves succeeded in stealing some sweet potatoes and were roasting them on a little fire, well hidden in the velt. Or they had discovered in the bush a broken pot, an old disused and perforated mortar, which some one had placed there to attract bees. And indeed there was honey inside. They had stolen it... Goatherds are regular thieves and known as such.

685 857 Generally speaking the elder boys send the younger to commit these thefts, and the plunder is enjoyed by the whole company. They threaten to beat them if they return empty-handed. A sad fate for the youngsters—blows on all sides ; blows from the owners of the fields if they are caught, blows from their comrades if they bring nothing back with them!

Here are one or two tricks employed by the little thieves. In order to take a water-melon (khalabatla) out of a field without being noticed by the women who are busy pulling up their ground nuts, they cut the stalk and fasten it to a piece of string. The other end of this is attached to the leg of the thief, who moves away slowly, drawing the water-melon after him. When he is out of reach of the women, he hastily puts it under his arm and makes off at top speed.

To catch a hen without its making a sound, they dig a little hole behind the huts of the village, and put a few grains of maize in it. The fowl puts its head into the hole to eat the grains, and immediately the little rascal who was watching from behind a bush, rushes out, seizes it by the neck and carries it off before it can utter a single cry!

672 685 The penalty when a boy is caught is a good whipping without a fine. "Psa batjongwana ! It is an action of little boys !" These minor thefts are not considered serious.

3) Catching game.

262 223 857 Hunger is the constant companion of these boys, who do not get enough to eat at home. It is true they ate to their heart's content (shura) yesterday evening, but this morning they had only a very scanty breakfast (fihluta). They try to satisfy their never satisfied appetite by catching game : not big game of course, as they have no real weapons, but birds, field-mice, eggs in the nests (the less fresh they are, the better, because there is more meat inside!) etc. To get birds they throw their sticks at them, and are very clever at killing a partridge as it rises heavily from the grass ; or they make traps with a flexible stick to which they tie a string with a bait. They bend the stick, set the trap by means

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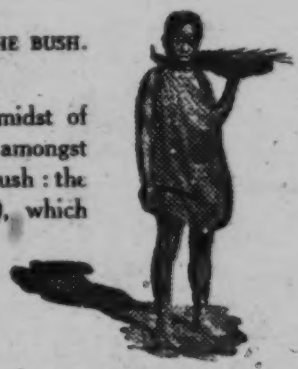
of a little bit of wood, and when the bird puts its beak into the bait, it is caught round the neck by the string. On the borders of the lake of Rikatla, boys used to catch even big birds with these traps. They set many kinds of snares. One is a cage made of sticks of palm marrows which shuts automatically when a bird enters and eats the grain by which it has been attracted. They sometimes build two walls of sticks planted in the soil and converging to the same point, where they reach a little door provided with the trap. Hares are sometimes caught in this way. They follow the wall, and when they go through the door, they tread on a hurdle which is connected with a bent rod : the rod springs back and the hare is caught.

4) Learning the science of the bush.



Phot. G. Liengme.
A Thonga boy.

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This life in the velt, always in the midst of Nature, develops the power of observation amongst the boys. They know everything in the bush : the big Psyche caterpillar (Eumeta cervina), which hangs from the nembe-nembe shrub, (Cassia petersiana) like a little bundle of sticks, and which they call *mahambanindlwane*, "the one who walks with his house;" the big Carabid beetle which appears with the first rain, the Anthia alveolata, marked with large hollows on the elytra and which is therefore named "the son of the smallpox." Indeed I found in Rikatla a boy who knew that a certain white cocoon found on the branches of the nkanye tree (Sclerocarya caffra) gives birth to the splendid green Queen Moth (Argema Mimosae). [262] Having collected beetles and butterflies extensively for years, I have had an opportunity of recognizing the power of observation of these boys, who were my best hunters! Of course they particularly appreciate things edible... especially the *shitambela*, a big Bupresta beetle which they roast and suck.

857 Learning, as they do, the native names of all these creatures and their habits, they certainly acquire a great amount of knowledge during these years.

5) PLAYING.

857 533 Sometimes the weather is bad ; it rains or it is dreadfully hot. Then the goatherd suffers, and his elder brother comfortably sitting in the hut trills this song :

> Far away, there where he is, he weeps, the little boy.
> The keeper of the goats and of the calves !

But the bad days are rare and the boys play more than they cry!

524 The *games* of the Thongas are very numerous and are played either during the day or in the evening, especially when the moon shines. I shall here only consider the boys' games, and speak of the girls' later on.

Ngulube yi da mimphobo. (The pig eats mealie cobs). One child plays the part of the pig ; crawling along, covered with a mortar and a piece of cloth, he goes from one hut to another followed by a troup of his friends, who clap their hands and sing the foregoing words. People give food to the pig. It is received by its friends. When they have visited all the yards, they assemble on the central place of the village and eat the food together. Sometimes the pig suddenly turns round and attacks his followers, who flee in terror.

The game of *nsema.* This is a disk of woven grass made by boys. They pick up sides. The nsema is set rolling by one side and the opponents must run towards it and pierce it with their sticks before it falls to the ground. It is not allowable to touch it when it has fallen (yi holile). This game goes on till the disk is quite spoilt (yi bolile). Then the two sides rush upon each other and exchange a sound cudgelling, after which they all go and bathe in the nearest pool without any ill-feeling.

There is another game played with this disk, the game of the *ndlopfa-ndlopfana* (that is to say " the little elephant"). A boy

In their country there

524 are big nasty yellow-brown hornets (a kind of Belonogaster)
136 which build more or less circular nests, sometimes attaining to the size of a man's head. On a certain day the boys decide to make war on these enemies. They make shields with the leaves of the *nala* palm tree which they plait together.

524 They cut down branches, which they wave to protect themselves, and one of them goes and strikes a heavy blow on the wasps' nest! The irritated insects rush out on their assailants and sting them. The boys try to kill the wasps with their sticks or to crush them when they light on them. Sometimes, overcome by the pain, they run away; sometimes, resisting to the last, they kill and exterminate their winged enemies.

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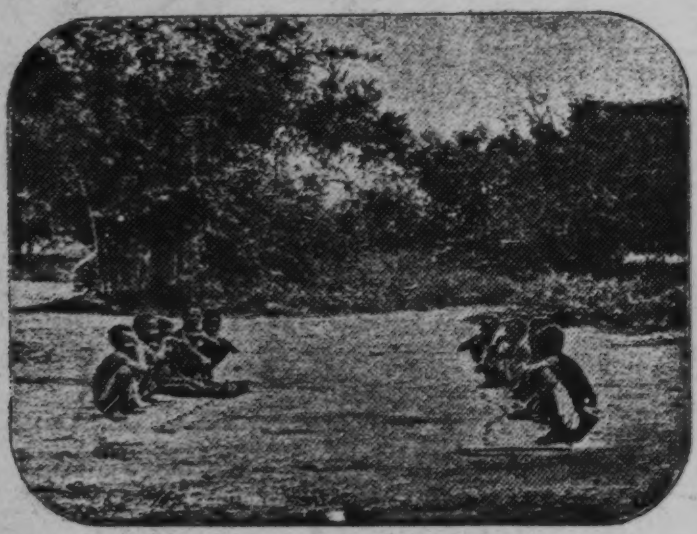
578 Insults and fights are frequent between the clans. The boys
262 of Mpfumu call out to those of Matjolo: " Forest gadders! Eaters
291 of snails and boas, of lizards and tortoises " (all of which are questionable food!) (In Ronga: Balala! Badi ba tihumba ni tinhlaru ni makhwahle ni tinfutchu). Those of Matjolo answer them: " Crowd of women that you are, clad in cotton material! " (Babasati! Matchimbamphela!), in reference to the fact that the inhabitants of Mpfumu, living near the town, some time ago replaced the belt of skins worn by the savages by a piece of cotton tied to the waist and hanging down to the knee (ladula).

855 The custom of frightening children with imaginary beasts is
857 wide spread amongst the Thongas. The bogey man is called
538 *Shingomu-Ngomu* or else *Shikunkunumu*, and by this very expressive
861 word they designate a huge and mighty being who walks, swaying his big body from right to left, with a sound like *ngomu-ngomu*. The ogre is *Shitukulumukumba*, a word coming originally from the Zulus, which corresponds to the Ronga *Ñwambilutimhokora*, that is to say: " the one who has scales on the heart. " He eats

855 538 human beings. These imaginary creatures play a large part in the native tales, especially the one who " has scales on the heart. " He feeds on vermin, lice and big white beetle larvae, which are his almonds (1).

855 When a child cries and cannot be comforted, someone goes and hides behind the hut and slaps his neck saying: "U-u-u," while

[524]



Boys trying to play Billiards
at Magudja's near Antioka Station.

those remaining with the lamenting little one say to him: " Be quiet, listen! Shikunkununu is coming! "

857 There are also the *timbelembele*, a kind of terrible wasp which only exists in the imagination of children. When a boy does not dare to follow his companions up a tree which they have climbed, they shout to him: " Make haste! Here are the timbelembele coming to bite you! " And he is so frightened that he at once finds strength to climb.

(1) We shall given complete ogre tale in Part V.

524 Thonga boys are so fond of games that they even try to imitate
177 those of the Europeans. In the accompanying illustration, they are seen sitting in two rows throwing some projectiles along the ground. I wondered what game this was, and was informed that these boys, having seen Portuguese officials playing billiards at the camp, had attempted to do the same, and this was the result!

C. THE AGE OF PUBERTY

I. *Circumcision rites.*

1) Spread and origin of circumcision amongst the Thongas.

857 As he grows up, the Thonga boy leaves the flock of goats and is entrusted with the care of the big cattle, oxen and cows,
881 when his father owns any. He becomes very proud, and tyran-
882 nises over his younger brothers; he calls himself their "hosi,"
866 their chief, and sends them to work for him; in Maputju, big boys went so far as to scorn water brought from the pool by women, and only to use water specially fetched by small boys. If they grow so important in their own eyes, the reason is that special rites are performed on them during this period, rites which are calculated to give them great self-confidence. Amongst these rites, some have a direct relation with the sexual life and some represent only the entrance upon manhood. Let us begin with a study of circumcision, then we will take the other puberty rites and the habit of *gangisa*.

881 In a great many Bantu tribes, the age of puberty is marked
304 by ceremonies of initiation, often accompanied by circumcision. There is little doubt that circumcision was practised throughout the Thonga tribes in former times. It is still current with those Thongas who emigrated into the Transvaal, and this is not a custom borrowed from the Pedi clans, which have all preserved circumcision. Though the Thongas often receive initiation in Pedi schools, in the Spelonken, they possess their own schools

854 (See page 48.) After her birth she is carried in the skin of a
863 gazelle (mhunti) which her mother ties round her neck and loins. When that skin has become too small, they get one of an antelope (mhala). She begins to walk ; when her mother sends her on an errand she is able to do it. She also begins to talk, and to know her father and mother. Then, when she has grown, they prepare for her a small pot of pounded and cooked mealies so that she may eat of it. After three years she is weaned and goes to stay for a time with her grandmother. After that she returns home.

857 "When she has learnt to walk, she is very fond of playing with
868 the shells of the sala. She cooks in them. Then, when she has done with them, she takes small pots and cooks little dinners. She also gets a small calabash, she goes to the lake to draw water and, on coming back, she gives it to her father so that he may wash his face. Here she is now gathering small bits of wood ; she makes small bundles of them and brings them home. Later on she will make heavier bundles.

"When she has grown up more, she will take charge of the work of her mother. She will do the work. But if the mother sees that she cannot do it all, she will help her. It may however be said that the mother needs no longer to crush her mealies,
583 neither to go to the well nor to the fireplace. When she is quite a grown up girl, the suitors come. If they are accepted, they bring the purchase money. They buy her (lobola) and do all they like. If she is prolific, she will bear many children. Now and then she returns to her parents' village, then she comes back to her husband. Her children grow. They go to get water, to cut her wood, to plough her fields. She goes with them. When they are
462 grown up, they get married. If amongst them there is a son, he goes to buy his wife. Thus she looks for a mother-in-law for her son. He will then be truly a man because he has got a mother-in-law! When her children are married, the mother again begins to do all her work. She steeps her mealies, crushes them to make flour, she cuts her wood, cooks her beer ; she prepares the light beer ; she smears the floor of her hut ; this is what she does till she is quite old.

888 "When she is quite old, they feed her. Her grandchildren are

1 [The following page is quoted from an essay by a native girl at the Swiss Mission school at Lourenço Marques -- Analyst]

888 sent to bring her food. When they are hungry, they stop on the way and eat it themselves. On their return they say: 'We have indeed given it to her.' In the morning they put a stick in her hand and help her to get out of her hut, so that she can warm herself in the sun.

"Then when the Ronga woman is quite old she begins to see no more and to hear no more. She falls into second childhood. All she does is to complain and to say, crying, that she is ill treated. And this is the end!"

The girl who wrote this essay was but emerging from childhood, and has consequently enlarged more especially upon the first phase of the life. The life of a woman is not very different from that of a man at that stage. Differences however come in later on, and we shall have to add some important facts relating to the fate of women before marriage, during the conjugal life, and in widowhood.

A. BEFORE MARRIAGE

I. *The Girls' games.*

857 As we have seen from the essay of the schoolgirl, Ronga girls
~~334~~ imitate the doings of their mothers, their cooking, their gathering
[868] of fuel, etc., just as the boys imitate the fighting and hunting of the
864 men. They also play with *dolls*, nursing them as they see the women nursing babies. These dolls are called *vule*. The origin of the game is as follows. A little girl asks her mother who is carrying a younger child on her shoulders: Mother, where did you find your baby? — Oh! I found it in the bush (ntlhaben). — Please bring me one also, mother. — All right!— Next day the mother plucks a sala in the bush, removes all the stones inside it, lets it dry and fixes it to the end of a stick. She pierces the upper part of the sphere, passes bits of string through the holes to imitate hair, smears them with ochre, ties a little clothing round

857 the stick and gives it to the girl! Or if the mother says: "I found
524 the baby in the banana grove," the father will cut a banana stem,
864 take the heart of the bulb and beat it so as to separate the fibres, which will then represent the hair of the baby; the girl will then play with it for a time.

Girls, like boys, have also special games.

524 First the *ntshengu -ntshengu*. A big girl takes the part of the mother and all the little ones hide behind her. She stretches out her arms to protect them against another girl, who is the thief and tries to take the children away. Notwithstanding the mother's efforts, all are taken one by one, and the stealing is done whilst they sing:

> Alack! Mother! Protect us, protect us!

The mother answers:

> All my children are taken, all will soon be taken,
> All will soon be taken, there, behind me.
>
> (Yo! Mamana! ntshengu-ntshengu! ba hela hi shiruba.

The capture being effected, all the children sit down in a row and cross their legs. To their right and left they dig small holes which represent wells or pots. The mother passes. She stretches out their legs and they allow her do this. Then she pretends to drink water from their pitchers and says: "My child, where did you find this water?" The child says: "Oh! I have drawn it over there, at the spring, under the banana trees, in the cool shade." Then comes the girl who plays the part of the thief. She tries to stretch out their legs. But the children refuse; they stiffen themselves. She tastes their water and enquires where they brought it from. "I drew it in a nasty hole full of frogs, mud and dirt." They add all the different remarks they can think of.

524 As the boys sing to the transport oxen when a wagon comes
136 along the road, so the girls address a kind of *incantation to a big*
533 *grey lizard* called *galagala*, which can turn its head blue at will. The lizard is found lying on a branch, warming itself in the rays

643 857 However, specially appointed persons watch over him and report of his well being to his father. His youthful playmates are taught to respect him ; he is surrounded in his games by a miniature court, from which he chooses his favourites (tinxekwa) : some of his companions act as counsellors and reprimand those who do not treat him with due respect. They play at court... also at soldiers ; the juvenile troop wage war with the wasps, and also with the boys of the adjoining villages.

643 787 777 751 782 When the child reaches boyhood, the bones are consulted, and sacrifices offered in order to ascertain from the gods whether it be well to take him to the capital. Should the answer be in the negative, there is nothing to do but wait. When the dice declare the propitious moment to have arrived, the transfer is effected and the boy taken to his father. This is a great occasion for the counsellors who have watched over the boy and who thenceforward supervise his education. They feast themselves well (ba fumisana), kill goats, perhaps even an ox, and offer a sacrifice to proclaim to the gods the return to the capital of the heir to the throne ; to his ankle is tied the astragalus of a slaughtered goat, as a protective amulet.

643 881 836 At puberty the boy undergoes, in the same manner as his companions, all the ceremonial rites usual at that period. The principal doctors of the country treat him, in order that henceforth he may be a man (ba mu yimisa a ba wanuna), having full right to enter into the sexual relations of gangisa (p. 97). Care is taken, however, to attach to his person comrades of riper age, who will prevent him giving way to excesses, (suka banhwanyana la bakulu ba ta mu gema, ba mu sibela ku kula), which would arrest his growth and render him small and feeble. He thus lives in relative continence, participating in the play and in the work of boys of his own age, and looking after the herds. At times he gives a feast, when his father happens to have presented him with an ox with which to make merry.

643 588 595 Now we see him arrived at manhood, at the age when the Blacks take a wife. If his father is still living, the young man is not allowed to marry officially. He may certainly lobola, viz., contract regular marriage in the usual way, and possibly

276 one rarely sees a Native with a pipe in his mouth, tobacco being almost exclusively used in the form of snuff. The only smokers in the country are the old women of Lourenço Marques, and the youthful dandies who try to imitate the Transvaal Boers!

532 Clay modelling is perhaps the art for which South Africans
●857 are best gifted. In all the tribes children amuse themselves by

A young Spelonken artist and his work. *Phot. J. Dutton.*

modelling oxen, human beings, wheels, even waggons, sometimes very cleverly. I knew a boy in Shiluvane who was a true artist and could copy anything he saw, for instance a white lady with her hat on (1). The accompanying plate shows one of these young artists, from Spelonken, with his handiwork.

(1) The same boy, without having received any special training, could cut out a frock, and used to make the dresses of all the brides of the congregation. He had a wonderful eye for form and would have made his mark, had he received a professional training. But he died from consumption contracted in the towns!

l: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

APPENDIX V (See p. 226)

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858
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797

As an example of *the absolute obedience due to the father*, I may quote the testimony of the Rev. Calvin Maphophe, one of the Native ministers of the Swiss Mission, now living in Lourenço Marques. It illustrates vividly the painful conflict which takes place in the heart of a Bantu boy when he is faced with the dilemma of either obeying a heathen father who forbids him to become a Christian, or going against the paternal will and joining the Church.

One day one of the little shepherds belonging to Maphophe's village in the Spelonken brought to his comrades an astonishing piece of news. He had gone to the missionary station and heard a white man say that there is a God in heaven and that this God created all things. His words were received with absolute incredulity by the company of [723] boys herding the goats ; they answered : "It is an impossibility! Do we not know that the first man and woman came out of a reed ?" However young Matsivi (this was the name of Calvin Maphophe) and his brother Shihosi wished to set their minds at rest about the matter and they began to attend the service on Sundays. They were so struck by the message heard in the little church that they decided to learn more of this extraordinary teaching of the White people, and every Sunday they went to the Station. One of the men of the tribe informed their father that they were assiduous attendants at the Christian services. Maphophe called together all the men of his village and summoned the two boys before this tribunal. Pointing his finger at them he said : "These boys have dared to go to the White people and hear things which are dangerous to us. We do not wish them to become insane! Take it to heart both of you. It is over. Henceforth you must never go again to the village of the Whites. If you disobey, you will be beaten."

The two boys were terribly moved by their father's words. It is a recognised principle in the Bantu tribe that a child who wishes to do right must obey his father, and they were anxious to behave well... But the attraction they felt for the new teaching was too great. They solved the problem by running away from their home. This is not the place to tell the end of the story. It may be found in a little pamphlet "Le Pasteur Calvin Mapopé" published by the headquarters of the Swiss Romande Mission (2, Chemin des Cèdres, Lausanne).

862 842 see that conception has taken place before the child is weaned, they will hasten the ceremony. But they will be severely judged by the old people. Should the little one be sick, the husband will be scolded by the parents of the mother. They will say: "A djambeli ñwana," he has caused damage to the child! If a man forces his wife to transgress the law, she will run during the night to the hut of her husband's father to tell him. Actually this is a very rare occurrence. Children follow each other regularly at an interval of two and a half or three years, and seldom is the law transgressed which says: A mother must nurse her child during three "hoes," viz. three ploughing seasons.

B. CHILDHOOD

591 861 857 The infant, shiputja (Ro.) shihlangi (Dj.) is on the way to become a boy, mufana. During the first years of this period, which extends from the third to the fourteenth year, he stays with his grandparents. They do not give him much "education." He grows at Mother Nature's good pleasure. And as Nature is not always synonymous with morality, he sometimes commits bad actions. Sometimes also, fearing chastisement for a particularly wicked deed, he flees from the kraal of the grandparents and goes home, where the paternal hand will hold him a little more firmly. But the father does not bother much with these little boys and they enjoy an immense amount of liberty. These years are perhaps the happiest of their whole life. They spend their time in the following occupations: herding the goats, stealing, catching game, learning the science of the velt, playing.

1) Herding the goats.

231 Just as the Kaffir corn is the old Thonga cereal which is used alone in the rites, so the goat is the domestic animal par excellence, no doubt the first which the tribe knew and that which is always employed in the sacrifices. Goats are very common; everybody

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136 which build more or less circular nests, sometimes attaining to the size of a man's head. On a certain day the boys decide to make war on these enemies. They make shields with the leaves of the *nala* palm tree which they plait together.

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524 protect himself. He tries to close the access to his position by drawing the line *f*, *g*. But, arrived at *g*, he comes to the end of his saliva (a helela), and A. who started at *h*, having arrived at *i*, turns round the point *g*, where his enemy has stopped miserably, and, going on, *j*, *k*, reaches the opening *d* and triumphantly ends his campaign in *e*!

But E. of the opposite camp has noticed a gate in the barrier X. Q. The saliva has dried there. He quickly carries his blow-pipe across the battle field, squirting all the time, and passes through the opening Y. He draws the line *l*, *m*, *n*, *o* and so destroys the part Q. Y. of the fortification X. Q. Should B. be quick enough, he might prevent him accomplishing his plan by drawing the line *p*. *q*... And so on! Young men, even men of ripe age, take an immense delight in these saliva battles. But the saliva must be blackish... It must be *ntjatju* saliva, viz., saliva produced by hemp, and not the ordinary white saliva, called *matjafula*. Should one of the players try to supplement the blackish by the white, he would be disqualified... His enemy would seize him by the forehead, and force him to lift his head and stop his attack. Should he go on, however, the other would say : "What ? You come to me with matjafula!" This may lead to quarrels, even to blows... The hemp-pipe falls down and it all ends in cordial laughter.

276 861 789 This hemp-smoking custom becomes a passion with many young men. To cure them their parents break the pipe, take a little of the soot which is found inside, and mix it with their food without their being aware of it. When this has been done three times, it is said to fill them with disgust for hemp... Similia similibus curantur... We shall often meet with this medical principle in the Thonga superstitions.

524 171 The most interesting game played by men, a game which fascinates them and which is certainly more refined than hemp-smoking, is the *tshuba*. It is at the same time one of the most widespread games of mankind. Mr. Stewart Culin says, in the Report of the Smithsonian Institute for 1893 and 1894, that it is played under the same name by the American Negroes, and that it is but a variety of the *mancala*, the national game of Africa,

192 Amongst the Ba-Ronga those[1] which are still known are : *Nhlangula*,
805 the month in which the flowers are swept (hlangula) from the
821 trees, probably October, when all the minkuhlu, minkanye, etc., blossom ; *Ñwendjamhala*, the month in which the antelope mhala, brings forth its young (November?) ; *Mawuwana*, when the *tihuhlu* (p. 18) are plucked, because the people shout : "Wuwana! wuwana!" in their joy at having plenty of almonds to suck, corresponds to December. *Hukuri* is said to be the month when the fruits of the *nkwakwa* (p. 17) are ripe (December also?). *Ndjati*, or *ndjata*, viz., I am coming, is the time of *nwebo*, when everyone is in his fields eating the new cobs of mealies, and if you call a person he will answer : "I will come directly! Have patience! I am busy here!" "This may be January or February. *Sunguti* is also one of the summer months. *Sibamesoko*, the moon which closes the paths, also called *Dwebindlela* or *Sibandlela*, is easy to identify : it is February, the time when the grass grows so high that it hides the paths leading to the nkanye trees. This is the end of the bukanye time (I. p. 397). *Nyenyana*, *Nywenywankulu* are the months of the birds (nyanyana), when one spends all one's time in chasing the winged marauders from the fields of sorghum and millet (March. April). *Mudashini*, viz., what am I to eat? is the month when you have harvested so many different kinds of food that you do not know which to choose : this is the time directly after harvest, May or June. *Khotabushika*, viz., when winter comes, probably June or July.

772 The *stars* are called *tinyeleti* (yin-tin) and play a remarkably
821 small part in the ideas of the tribe. The modern theory according to which all religions started from the worship of stars, finds no confirmation at all in the South African Bantu tribes.

821 It is taboo to try to count the stars. If any one attempts
784 to do so people will say to him : "Keep quiet or you will wet the
861 hut during the night!" Counting stars represents the torments of the soul! If a child has been deprived of food as a punishment for an offence, his parents will tell him, when he goes to sleep : "Go and count the stars," viz., "you will feel hungry and not be able to go to sleep ; you will be as unhappy as if you had to count the stars."

[1] [names of moons -- Analyst]

821 star is directing its course, and they have a formula of incantation
787 to get rid of the misfortune attending this phenomenon. They
789 say : "Thu! Thu! Nkulunkulu ndjuwee, famba psa ku u nga fa u ku bi." — "You great thing, go away alone (without me, leaving me behind) and die and disappear entirely." This is more an imprecation (shiruketelo) than an incantation. The syllable *thu* indicates, and accompanies, the emission of a little saliva. It is different from the sacramental *tsu*, employed to invoke the spirits of the ancestors : it is an insult. It is spitting *at* something, not an act of respect and an offering, like *tsu* (1). This is the Ronga formula ; the one used in Northern clans has the same meaning : "*Rura, rura weshe*" (Move, move alone!).

821 *Comets* greatly impress the imagination of the Thongas ;
787 they are called *shimusana*, or *nyeleti ya musana*, the star of dust, or *nyeleti ya nkila*, the star with a tail, and when they appear they also mean the death of a chief. People say : "See ! A chief has died, but they have not yet published the mourning" (I. p. 414). The star which is said to have appeared the year of the death of Manukosi was probably a comet. (See Report of the S.A.A.A.S. 1905, Vol. III, p. 232.)

772 These few superstitions and observations comprise all the Astronomy of the Thongas. The sidereal world is almost entirely outside the range of their preoccupations.

III. *Cosmographic and Meteorological Phenonomena.*

1) The Wind.

821 The wind is called *moya*, an interesting word which means
822 also spirit (the human breath and the spiritual part of man), and is applied to the acting, living agent, or to the smell, or taste, of some objects. For instance it is said of an alcoholic beverage

861 (1) They spit at a child who is causing an unpleasant smell, saying to him : "Thu! u ya tinyela matjimba." — "Go away to ease yourself." Should you do this to a
578 person older than yourself, he will say to you : "What ! you make *thu* to me (wa ndji tjhuka), you want me to ease myself !"

856 mouthful to drink, then dip her finger into the medecine and let
731 two or three drops fall from it on the fontanella ; then she spits on
757 the lower part of the shell and presses it all along the sternum
854 of the baby as far as the navel. This is said to "nurse the child, to make him grow." Should he be sick, this treatment will be repeated many times a day. If he is well and goes about with his mother, she will pour the *milombyana* into the small calabash and give him a few sups from it from time to time.

The child must never drink ordinary water, but only the
853 *milombyana* decoction. It is a taboo. Should the mother travel
271 far from home and leave behind her the *milombyana* pot, she is
284 allowed to add some water to the calabash, but she must always leave a little of the decoction in the calabash before doing so. The mother herself is not allowed to drink the water of another country. She must only drink water from home and, if she is forced to travel, she must take a little powder from the reed each time she drinks, so that the child may become familiarised with that country (1). These laws must be kept during all the nursing period.

862 The child begins to eat *solid food* as soon as his teeth are cut, and when he is able to take it with his own hands. But some people do not like to give it to him too soon, as they say his stools become fetid. When later on he is able to go outside and to take care of himself, then he can eat any ordinary food.

853 If the mother dies during the nursing period, the little one is almost sure to follow her. The baby is fed with goat's or cow's milk, but the Natives do not know that they must add water to it ; sooner or later therefore the child dies of enteritis.

I have heard of some cases in which another woman has taken charge of the child, nursed him with her own milk and weaned him successfully ; her own child being older, she weaned him earlier than the usual time and nursed the other child in his

261 (1) A similar custom is observed in the case of moving from one country to another.
484 When a Ronga comes back from Kimberley having found a wife there, both bring with them a little of the earth of the place they are leaving, and the woman must eat a little of it every day in her porridge in order to accustom herself to her new abode. This earth provides the transition between the two domiciles !

851 a grown up child (1). The expression *fuya ñwana* confirms our explanation. This custom is not a protective rite : the physician has nothing to do with it ; it is really an act by which the new-born child becomes a regular member of the community. The strict prohibition of renewed conception before this rite has been accomplished is evidently dictated by the feeling that another child must not appear before this one has been duly received into the family.

6) The weaning.

862 856 A whole year, even more, will elapse after the *boha puri* before the little one can be weaned. He will learn to speak and to walk, and it is only when his intelligence is sufficiently developed to allow him to run small errands that the date of the weaning will be fixed. When his parents can send him to the next hut to ask for snuff and see him coming back holding the tobacco, they say : "Now the time has come !"

The rite of weaning is accomplished in the following manner in Nondwane. (Mboza).

862 824 First of all, the father looks for a young *ntjopfa* tree which has only one root. The ntjopfa is an anonacea bush, which colonists sometimes call the wild custard. (Its fruit is very much like custard fruit and it is said that the true cultivated custard can be grafted on it). The root of this tree is said to have the property of making people forget. The mother cooks a pot of Kafir corn in which she has put the medicine. This 862 will help the child to forget the breast. But the great act is the 782 *hondlola* which takes place under the direction of the physician. 755 The mother pounds some mealies, pours water on them and adds some leaven ; in this way she makes a little light beer (buputju). She keeps a little of the bran of the pounded mealies. The doctor comes, kills a chicken and sprinkles this bran with the blood and *hahla*, viz. offers a regular sacrifice. He prays to the spirits of his own family and asks those of the child's family to

(1) This word *khuna* is also employed to designate boys who have not yet gone through the circumcision school. *Bukhuna* is the despicable state of uncircumcision. The state of a child before the ceremony of *boha puri* is another kind of bukhuna.

862 join with them in blessing the little one. The beak of the sacrificed
782 hen, one of the claws and one of the feathers (psirungulo) will be
755 tied together round the child's neck. A mat is spread on the ground ; the child is laid on it and greased with oil and powder brought by the physician. Then he is smeared and rubbed with the bran. The particles which fall on the mat are called *timhore*. They are gathered by the mother who makes a ball of them. In the meantime the father looks for the nest of a certain kind of large ant which is common in the bush. It lives in the earth, but the opening of its hole is tolerably large. There the mother goes at sunset. She introduces the ball into the hole so that the ant will be obliged to take all the *timhore* into the nest. Then she returns home without looking behind her. It is taboo ; should she transgress this rule, she would bring back disease to her child.

This rite is the ordinary *hondlola rite* which is performed in this or in a similar way at the close of any serious disease as the conclusion of the treatment, with the view of taking away the defilement of disease. After having *hondlola*, the physician asks for the payment of his fees. For a child he will ask ten shillings or five coins of five hundred reis (1).

854 This hondlola reveals to us the true conception of the nursing period held by the Natives. For them these three first years of the child's life are a period of disease ; so many perils threaten the little one's well-being that he can hardly be considered healthy. He is during the whole time under the supervision of the physician, who takes leave of the little patient on the day of the weaning.

854 This view of infancy accounts also for some other taboos. It
789 is *yila* for instance to say of a child who is particularly fat : Wa tika, he is heavy : this would bring mishap to him. One must say : A kota ribye, he is like a stone! It is taboo also in Shiluvane to make use before a child of the word *mfene*, baboon. There is a disease which is called by that name and it would come upon him. One must say : the thing which inhabits the hills, and so on...

(1) In the Mpfumu clan the rite of weaning is somewhat different. I have published in "Les Ba-Ronga" a description of it given by Tobane. It seems that the elements of the cotton string rite and of the broken pot rite are mixed with the proper weaning rite. I think that the description of Mboza is more trustworthy.

l: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

862/603 The very day of his weaning, the child must leave the village of his parents and go to stay with his grandparents. A little mat and a few clothes have been prepared for him and the grandmother comes to take him. If he is the first-born, he must go to the parents of the mother ; the second child will be received by the parents of the father. Sometimes father and mother accompany their offspring themselves, during the night, to make the separation easier. It is a sad day for them as well as for the child! The following day the parents go again to see how the little one has stood their absence. They do not enter the village. They remain hidden in the little copse and look at their child through the branches! He must not see his mother, otherwise he would cry... A touching scene indeed!

862 Should the weaned child be obliged to stay with his parents, the mother will smear her breast with Jamaica pepper (biribiri) so that he may lose his taste for the maternal milk as quickly as possible.

862/842/753 The act of weaning is called *lumula*. It comes from the verb *luma* to bite, followed by the reversive suffix *ula* which means to take away, to undo (like *un* in undo). The mother as well as the child are said to have *lumuka* viz. to be in that state when weaning has been accomplished. This word is pronounced with a curious smile, because the act of weaning is in direct relation with the sexual life. As we have seen, sexual intercourse is absolutely prohibited before the tying of the cotton string, viz. for one year after the birth. Afterwards it is allowed, but the mother must not conceive another child before she has weaned the one she is nursing. The law is even more stringent : she must not conceive before her milk has entirely passed away (phya mabelen), after the weaning ceremony, because if she became pregnant, that would "cross the way of the weaned child" (tjemakanya ñwana), cut "his road" (tjemela), "go beforehand" (rangela) ; he would become thin, paralysed, with big holes below the shoulders. He must first be firm (tiyela), then a new pregnancy will not be able to cause him to suffer from dysentery or other ailments!

Often the parents do not observe this very hard law! If they

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862 842 see that conception has taken place before the child is weaned, they will hasten the ceremony. But they will be severely judged by the old people. Should the little one be sick, the husband will be scolded by the parents of the mother. They will say : "A djambeli ñwana," he has caused damage to the child! If a man forces his wife to transgress the law, she will run during the night to the hut of her husband's father to tell him. Actually this is a very rare occurrence. Children follow each other regularly at an interval of two and a half or three years, and seldom is the law transgressed which says : A mother must nurse her child during three "hoes," viz. three ploughing seasons.

B. CHILDHOOD

591 861 857 The infant, shiputja (Ro.) shihlangi (Dj.) is on the way to become a boy, mufana. During the first years of this period, which extends from the third to the fourteenth year, he stays with his grandparents. They do not give him much "education." He grows at Mother Nature's good pleasure. And as Nature is not always synonymous with morality, he sometimes commits bad actions. Sometimes also, fearing chastisement for a particularly wicked deed, he flees from the kraal of the grandparents and goes home, where the paternal hand will hold him a little more firmly. But the father does not bother much with these little boys and they enjoy an immense amount of liberty. These years are perhaps the happiest of their whole life. They spend their time in the following occupations : herding the goats, stealing, catching game, learning the science of the velt, playing.

1) Herding the goats.

231 Just as the Kaffir corn is the old Thonga cereal which is used alone in the rites, so the goat is the domestic animal par excellence, no doubt the first which the tribe knew and that which is always employed in the sacrifices. Goats are very common ; everybody

854 862 (see page 48.) After her birth she is carried in the skin of a gazelle (mhunti) which her mother ties round her neck and loins. When that skin has become too small, they get one of an antelope (mhala). She begins to walk ; when her mother sends her on an errand she is able to do it. She also begins to talk, and to know her father and mother. Then, when she has grown, they prepare for her a small pot of pounded and cooked mealies so that she may eat of it. After three years she is weaned and goes to stay for a time with her grandmother. After that she returns home.

857 "When she has learnt to walk, she is very fond of playing with
868 the shells of the sala. She cooks in them. Then, when she has done with them, she takes small pots and cooks little dinners. She also gets a small calabash, she goes to the lake to draw water and, on coming back, she gives it to her father so that he may wash his face. Here she is now gathering small bits of wood ; she makes small bundles of them and brings them home. Later on she will make heavier bundles.

"When she has grown up more, she will take charge of the work of her mother. She will do the work. But if the mother sees that she cannot do it all, she will help her. It may however be said that the mother needs no longer to crush her mealies,
583 neither to go to the well nor to the fireplace. When she is quite a grown up girl, the suitors come. If they are accepted, they bring the purchase money. They buy her (lobola) and do all they like. If she is prolific, she will bear many children. Now and then she returns to her parents' village, then she comes back to her husband. Her children grow. They go to get water, to cut her wood, to plough her fields. She goes with them. When they are
462 grown up, they get married. If amongst them there is a son, he goes to buy his wife. Thus she looks for a mother-in-law for her son. He will then be truly a man because he has got a mother-in-law! When her children are married, the mother again begins to do all her work. She steeps her mealies, crushes them to make flour, she cuts her wood, cooks her beer ; she prepares the light beer ; she smears the floor of her hut ; this is what she does till she is quite old.

888 "When she is quite old, they feed her. Her grandchildren are

1 [the following page is quoted from an essay by a native girl at the Swiss Mission school at Lourenço Marques -- Analyst]

A woman who has lost many children, three or four, is considered as being in a special position, called *bowumba*, and there are many rules to be observed in order to deal with this "state of bereavement." Should a child be born after the death of many elder brothers, he must be carried in a *ntehe* made of a sheep's skin instead of an antelope or goat skin. (See p. 46.) To carry him in an ordinary ntehe is taboo. Should it be a boy, the mother will put girl's clothing on it, and vice-versa. The mother's breast will be smeared with a special medicine, because they are "breasts of the dead (mabele ya bafi)." The child, if it lives, will be weaned as early as possible and be taken to its grandmother. Two curious rites are also practised to protect it against bad luck. The first is the *kunga*; the second, *rangela bovumba*, seems to belong rather to the Northern clans.

765 854 761 844 [862]

The *kunga* rite which we have already met many times (see p. 124) is also performed in the case of a mother who has given birth to a new child whilst in the state of bowumba. To neglect it is a taboo. The bereaved mother keeps silent before her visitors until they have deposited their gifts at her feet and have thus "opened her mouth." Old women having no means to buy a present take a bit of grass and fix it in her hair. Then she consents to speak. She gathers all the bracelets thus obtained and puts them on the ntehe, carrying them everywhere with her.

789 761 854 844

Another rite is observed in the Northern clans. The child whose elder brothers and sisters have died is taken by the mother to the village of her own parents. There it is buried in the ash-heap up to its neck. Then somebody runs to the village, takes a handful of grains of maize and throws them on the child. Afterwards it is dug up, washed, smeared with ochre and brought home. This rite is called *rangela bowumba*, viz. to *precede* bowumba, to cut it, to treat it: the bowumba will not now come as it has been "preceded". It will be deceived, it will no longer desire the baby, as the baby has been thrown away together with all the refuse of the village on to the ash-heap. It is no longer able to eat mealies, even if it is given grains of mealies; it is dead! Let the bowumba take no notice of it! (This description of the "rangela bowumba" was given to me by an old Thonga from Spelonken. Mankhelu, my Nkuna informant, called this rite

789 761

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

888 sent to bring her food. When they are hungry, they stop on the way and eat it themselves. On their return they say: 'We have indeed given it to her.' In the morning they put a stick in her hand and help her to get out of her hut, so that she can warm herself in the sun.

"Then when the Ronga woman is quite old she begins to see no more and to hear no more. She falls into second childhood. All she does is to complain and to say, crying, that she is ill treated. And this is the end!"

The girl who wrote this essay was but emerging from childhood, and has consequently enlarged more especially upon the first phase of the life. The life of a woman is not very different from that of a man at that stage. Differences however come in later on, and we shall have to add some important facts relating to the fate of women before marriage, during the conjugal life, and in widowhood.

A. BEFORE MARRIAGE

I. *The Girls' games.*

857 As we have seen from the essay of the schoolgirl, Ronga girls
324 imitate the doings of their mothers, their cooking, their gathering
868 of fuel, etc., just as the boys imitate the fighting and hunting of the
864 men. They also play with *dolls*, nursing them as they see the women nursing babies. These dolls are called *vule*. The origin of the game is as follows. A little girl asks her mother who is carrying a younger child on her shoulders: Mother, where did you find your baby? — Oh! I found it in the bush (ntlhaben). — Please bring me one also, mother. — All right! — Next day the mother plucks a sala in the bush, removes all the stones inside it, lets it dry and fixes it to the end of a stick. She pierces the upper part of the sphere, passes bits of string through the holes to imitate hair, smears them with ochre, ties a little clothing round

857 the stick and gives it to the girl! Or if the mother says : "I found
524 the baby in the banana grove," the father will cut a banana stem,
864 take the heart of the bulb and beat it so as to separate the fibres, which will then represent the hair of the baby ; the girl will then play with it for a time.

Girls, like boys, have also special games.

524 First the *ntshengu -ntshengu*. A big girl takes the part of the mother and all the little ones hide behind her. She stretches out her arms to protect them against another girl, who is the thief and tries to take the children away. Notwithstanding the mother's efforts, all are taken one by one, and the stealing is done whilst they sing :

> Alack ! Mother ! Protect us, protect us !

The mother answers :

> All my children are taken, all will soon be taken,
> All will soon be taken, there, behind me.
>
> (Yo ! Mamana ! ntshengu-ntshengu ! ba hela hi shiruba .

The capture being effected, all the children sit down in a row and cross their legs. To their right and left they dig small holes which represent wells or pots. The mother passes. She stretches out their legs and they allow her do this. Then she pretends to drink water from their pitchers and says: "My child, where did you find this water ?" The child says : "Oh! I have drawn it over there, at the spring, under the banana trees, in the cool shade." Then comes the girl who plays the part of the thief. She tries to stretch out their legs. But the children refuse ; they stiffen themselves. She tastes their water and enquires where they brought it from. "I drew it in a nasty hole full of frogs, mud and dirt." They add all the different remarks they can think of.

524 As the boys sing to the transport oxen when a wagon comes
136 along the road, so the girls address a kind of *incantation to a big*
533 *grey lizard* called *galagala*, which can turn its head blue at will. The lizard is found lying on a branch, warming itself in the rays

524 177 Thonga boys are so fond of games that they even try to imitate those of the Europeans. In the accompanying illustration, they are seen sitting in two rows throwing some projectiles along the ground. I wondered what game this was, and was informed that these boys, having seen Portuguese officials playing billiards at the camp, had attempted to do the same, and this was the result!

C. THE AGE OF PUBERTY

I. *Circumcision rites.*

1) Spread and origin of circumcision amongst the Thongas.

857 As he grows up, the Thonga boy leaves the flock of goats and is entrusted with the care of the big cattle, oxen and cows, 881 when his father owns any. He becomes very proud, and tyran- 882 nises over his younger brothers; he calls himself their "hosi," 866 their chief, and sends them to work for him; in Maputju, big boys went so far as to scorn water brought from the pool by women, and only to use water specially fetched by small boys. If they grow so important in their own eyes, the reason is that special rites are performed on them during this period, rites which are calculated to give them great self-confidence. Amongst these rites, some have a direct relation with the sexual life and some represent only the entrance upon manhood. Let us begin with a study of circumcision, then we will take the other puberty rites and the habit of *gangisa*.

881 In a great many Bantu tribes, the age of puberty is marked 304 by ceremonies of initiation, often accompanied by circumcision. There is little doubt that circumcision was practised throughout the Thonga tribes in former times. It is still current with those Thongas who emigrated into the Transvaal, and this is not a custom borrowed from the Pedi clans, which have all preserved circumcision. Though the Thongas often receive initiation in Pedi schools, in the Spelonken, they possess their own schools

II. *The sexual and language taboos of the sungi.*

881 The whole sungi is taboo to every uninitiated person and
831 especially to women. A woman who has seen the " shondlo ",
834 viz. the leaves which the circumcised put over their wound,
784 and which form their only clothing, must be killed. But taboos abound for everybody. The sexual taboos are most noteworthy. Sexual intercourse is strictly prohibited to all inmates, men as well as shepherds ; breaking this law would kill the circumcised. Therefore the men must not go home, or at least as seldom as possible, during these three months. Married people in the village may have sexual relations ; but there must be no noise, no quarrels between jealous co-wives ; because, if they insult each other and if this is known in the sungi, the shepherds will come one evening and plunder that village. Strange to say, in the meantime obscene language is permitted and even recommended— a contrast which we shall often meet with during the marginal periods. Some of the formulae contain expressions which are taboo at other times ; when the women bring the food to the sungi, the shepherds who receive it from their hands are allowed to address them with as many unchaste words as they like. The mothers themselves have the right of singing obscene songs when they pound the mealies for the sungi.

192 As regards language, there are also special expressions used
881 during the school which are either archaic or foreign ; for instance, all orders are given in a tongue which is neither Thonga nor Sutho: Tshai goma, Go to the table ; Thari, Eat ; Khedi, Smear with white clay, etc. Often actions are not designated by the ordinary word, but by unusual terms. For instance, the daily smearing of the bodies with clay is called : " to eat sheep's fat. " To put on the leaves of the shondlo is " to eat sheep's flesh. " To be beaten with the mbuti sticks is " to drink goat's milk. " Evidently the aim of this terminology is to increase the impression of mystery which the rites must convey to the uninitiated.

866 As regards the rites of the marginal period, they are calculated
881 to give the candidates the impression that they are new men,

866/881 and that they must prove it by submitting manfully to all the trials of this hard and sometimes cruel initiation.

Every morning they smear their bodies with white clay. They are shining ; they have abandoned the darkness of childhood. When they have eaten their food they must pick up the crumbs which fall on the ground and throw them away in the pit near the fence, shouting some name in disdain, in an insulting manner, the name of one of the uncircumcised, of a *shuburu* (a term of contempt applied to boys before they pass through the school). This makes them realise their new position.

But the Ngoma " is the shield of buffalo's hide! It is the crocodile which bites !" The candidates must accept all the hardships of initiation. They are taught to suffer.

III. *The trials.*

881 There are six main trials : blows, cold, thirst, unsavoury food, punishment, death.

Blows. On the slightest pretext, they are severely beaten by the shepherds at the order of the men of the sungi. Every day they must sit round the Elephant and, holding a stick in their hands, lunge at it as if to pierce it, for more than an hour. They sing the following words :

Elephant keep still !

Men and shepherds dance round them singing :

The black cow kicks ! It kicks against the jog of the baboon !

They themselves represent the black cow which the boys are trying to milk, and kick the boys! In fact during this daily exercise round the Elephant—a rite which is considered as one of the most important of the Ngoma—, they beat the naked shoulders of the initiated as much as they like, not so as to bruise them, but quite enough to cause them pain.

When the boys do not eat quickly enough, they are beaten. Sometimes they are sent to catch certain birds of the size of sparrows which they must wrap in leaves, tying them in such

231 857 867 "cut the road" from the goats (tjemetela) to keep them away from the gardens. They safely reach the little plain where nothing but hard Graminease grow. There the boys begin to play, having handed over the charge of the goats to the youngest of the party. The little chap gets tired of watching ; little by little the whole herd goes back to the forbidden garden and eats greedily of the savoury stems of the mealies! After a while, the boys discover that the goats are gone. They run after them, and bring them back. But the mistress of the garden passes near by, coming back from the well with her pitcher on her head. She sees the harm done, inspects the traces of the goats, knows by them which herd has plundered her field, uproots some of the spoiled stems and with great clamour goes to the village of the guilty boys and throws down the mealies right before the hut of the father. No compensation is claimed in such a case, generally, but the father will thrash the boys when they come back ; or should there be a recurrence of the offence, the husband of the owner of the garden will himself administer a correction to the careless goatherds.

827 857 Boys herding the goats have certain customs. When one of them emits a certain unseemly sound from the rectum, the others say to him : "Fakisa !" He must answer : "Cita munyakanya goben." (I have let out my wind by the rectum). This formula, which is Zulu, is secret. If he does not know it, they beat him and make him look after the goats till the end of the day. Should another boy reveal the answer to the uninitiated, they will punish him in the same way.

2) Stealing.

685 857 What were they doing when the goats escaped ? They had probably themselves succeeded in stealing some sweet potatoes and were roasting them on a little fire, well hidden in the velt. Or they had discovered in the bush a broken pot, an old disused and perforated mortar, which some one had placed there to attract bees. And indeed there was honey inside. They had stolen it... Goatherds are regular thieves and known as such.

831/881 and of the hippopotamus are by no means poetic descriptions of these big animals similar to those contained in the book of Job. The first alludes to the manner in which the male crocodile copulates with his female. And the second tells the story of a virgin girl whom the young boys violate in order to open the way, to the grown up men who will follow them. Impure allusions are found everywhere in this teaching of the circumcision school.

When the instructor has finished, he lifts his stick with a certain gesture and all the boys shout at once: "Zithari!" Viguet told me that that exclamation meant: "They are as long as that" and that it was an obscene allusion. The old men take great delight in being flattered and, if the boys wish to add to their pleasure, they will say: "When you spit, the wind from your mouth would kill enemies at the other end of the country!"

As is plain from these quotations, the teaching of the Ngoma is quite trivial, and the formulae are rather a collection of esoteric words than a true intellectual training.

533/881 *The songs* of the Ngoma have no deeper meaning. We have seen already the song of the Elephant and of the Winter-bird... Every morning, just after they wake, the circumcised sing for a long time the following words, which they repeat also when coming back from hunting trips.

Sing your song, bird of the morn
Mafé-é-é-é!

The melody is rude, wild but very impressive. Mafé-é-é-é must mean: "We are the initiated, we are the men!"

224/881/868 *Hunting*. Hunting is the only useful thing taught in the Ngoma. Boys go almost every day to the velt and become very clever in catching game. They beat the bush, sometimes climb hills and chase all the game to the top, killing it there with their assagais, knobkerries, etc. Near Shiluvane they even attack the Mamotsuiri mountain once during their three months. All the men of the country are summoned to take part in the big expedition, which requires real strategic skill.

881 To sum up the rites of this marginal period of the Circumcision school, this is the programme of a day in the sungi. The shepherds

854 862 [1] (see page 48.) After her birth she is carried in the skin of a gazelle (mhunti) which her mother ties round her neck and loins. When that skin has become too small, they get one of an antelope (mhala). She begins to walk ; when her mother sends her on an errand she is able to do it. She also begins to talk, and to know her father and mother. Then, when she has grown, they prepare for her a small pot of pounded and cooked mealies so that she may eat of it. After three years she is weaned and goes to stay for a time with her grandmother. After that she returns home.

857 868 "When she has learnt to walk, she is very fond of playing with the shells of the sala. She cooks in them. Then, when she has done with them, she takes small pots and cooks little dinners. She also gets a small calabash, she goes to the lake to draw water and, on coming back, she gives it to her father so that he may wash his face. Here she is now gathering small bits of wood ; she makes small bundles of them and brings them home. Later on she will make heavier bundles.

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of the coast, antelopes leave well marked traces in the soil. A hunter starts at 8 a. m. and notices that the footprint is of a dark colour ; this shows that the morning dew has fallen into it ; therefore the footprint was made during the night, some hours before. If the edges of the print are sharply cut, this means that the animal passed in the early morning, when the sand was still a little wet and firm, whilst if the edges are irregular or have crumbled down, it is a sign that the print was made at noon, when the sand is quite dry and loose. The Rev. A. Aubert living in the Maputju country, who often questioned hunters on the subject, told me that these men had wonderful skill in drawing their conclusions at a glance, apparently without any reasoning process. It is evident that the reasoning process must have taken place at some period, but it has become almost instinctive : the sight of the footprint immediately gives the hunter the information required. They are even able, when on the track of two antelopes of the same kind, to state which are the footprints of the male and which those of the female, the latter being generally somewhat smaller. 151 224

When the soil is hard, or clayish, there may be more difficulty. The hunter will observe the depth of the footprint ; if it is deeply marked, this shows that the earth was wet and soft when the animal passed ; therefore it was in the early morning, just after the fall of the dew. Or he may notice that a stone has been displaced and turned upside down by the antelope's hoofs ; should the upper side of this stone be wet, the displacement took place before the dew fell. On the contrary, should it be dry, the stone has just been moved and the animal is not far off. The Rev. P. Resset, who was once led in an eland hunt by an experienced "phisa", told me that the man was all the time muttering volubly, talking to himself in a low voice, interpreting to himself all the signs he observed and drawing his conclusions without taking any heed of his white companion (1).

(1) Native children begin very early to learn the science of footprints. They notice the peculiar aspect of the footprint of all the inmates of the village and are soon able to recognize them. They even connect them with their respective ways of walking, which is indicated by the footprints being turned more or less outwards. 151 868

bition of those which are prejudicial to public health, whether on account of a too high percentage of alcohol, on account of their mode of manufacture, or on account of the physical and moral disorders which they produce." 733

These proposals were favourably received by the Committee for the Colonies, but no vote was taken on details, only a general resolution being passed. It is clear that these recommendations are intended for the whole Native population. In the domain of the Church we should go much further, as pointed out above.

II. On the Problem of Native Education.

The study which we have made of the Bantu Intellect in Part V has paved the way for a consideration of this great question, which is one of the most important features of the Native problem in South Africa. 871 177-87

The wild buffalo has been made prisoner! A yoke has been placed on its neck. — The savage mind of the Bantu is now being trained to civilised methods, and the Elementary School gathers in the goatherds of the bush, all over South Africa. More than 220,000 children are attending a course of instruction. The wild buffalo has bowed its neck to the yoke with wonderful readiness! It is one of the promising features of the present situation of the Black race that it has so quickly accepted the school. This acceptance proves its vitality; it understands that the acquisition of knowledge is, for it, the only way of adapting itself to altered circumstances. So, though primary education has nowhere yet been made compulsory, children are leaving their flocks and learning reading, writing, and arithmetic. This phenomenon is universal, and is to be observed not only in the towns, where big boys of twenty or thirty years of age crowd to the evening schools, patiently writing letters on slates with clumsy fingers, but in the most remote parts of the country, wherever a missionary or a Native teacher opens a school.

This spread of instruction is bound to have great results for the future of the race, and its intellectual development; it is therefore of the utmost importance that rational and wise methods should be adopted in the conduct of this work, in order to help rather than injure the Bantu mind. Unfortunately it cannot be said that such has always been the case in past times. To avoid mistakes and errors I beg to put forward the following suggestion as to the first principle of Native Education.

551 for girls and boys. *Nhwanin* is a girl's name, as it means "girl" and *Nwandjise* a boy's name as it means "boy" (1).

553 All these birth-names are abandoned later on, generally at the circumcision school, or at the age of puberty, in the clans 881 where the custom of circumcising has disappeared; boys and 787 girls then choose new names. Men and women who undergo initiation adopt a new name. So do those subjected to the treatment for possession; these take the name of their pretended possessor when he has made himself known. I refer the reader to Appendix II for further information regarding Thonga names.

845 *Premature Birth.* When a child is born prematurely and is very small and delicate, he is wrapped in the leaves of the castor-oil plant and put into a big ppt, which is then exposed to the heat of the sun. This is a true incubator, and the treatment is said to be attended with success (Tobane).

845 *Protracted Births and Illegitimate Births.* There would seem to be 848 no relation between these; but to the Thonga mind, on the contrary, a protracted and difficult birth proves that the child is not legitimate. This conviction is so strong that when a woman knows that the child which she is going to bear is not the son of her husband (nuna) but of a lover (mbuye), she will admit this secretly to the principal midwife, in order to spare herself the pains of a difficult birth, as it is taboo to bear a "child of adultery" hiding the fact: it would cause the mother untold suffering.

Therefore, if the delivery lasts too long, the midwife will begin to have doubts as to the legitimacy of the child. The first thing she will do is to send word to the husband. He knows 845 what it means. He takes in his *shifado* (2) a little of his *semen*, 848 mixes it with water in a shell of sala (the big round fruit of the 291 Strychnos) and the woman drinks it. It may be that then the child will "feel his father," if the husband is really his father, and that this will bring the birth to a prompt conclusion; but

(1) I know of an exception to this rule. The son of the Mabota chief was named Nhwanin, a girl's name, in order to deceive the malevolent powers which had killed his brothers and sisters.

(2) See Annotatio 1 at the end of the volume in the collection of Latin notes written for medical men and ethnographers[1]

1 [see p. 516 in these categories or in 116 -- Analyst]

524 Thonga boys are so fond of games that they even try to imitate
177 those of the Europeans. In the accompanying illustration, they are seen sitting in two rows throwing some projectiles along the ground. I wondered what game this was, and was informed that these boys, having seen Portuguese officials playing billiards at the camp, had attempted to do the same, and this was the result!

C. THE AGE OF PUBERTY

I. *Circumcision rites.*

1) Spread and origin of circumcision amongst the Thongas.

857 As he grows up, the Thonga boy leaves the flock of goats and is entrusted with the care of the big cattle, oxen and cows,
881 when his father owns any. He becomes very proud, and tyran-
882 nises over his younger brothers; he calls himself their "hosi,"
866 their chief, and sends them to work for him; in Maputju, big boys went so far as to scorn water brought from the pool by women, and only to use water specially fetched by small boys. If they grow so important in their own eyes, the reason is that special rites are performed on them during this period, rites which are calculated to give them great self-confidence. Amongst these rites, some have a direct relation with the sexual life and some represent only the entrance upon manhood. Let us begin with a study of circumcision, then we will take the other puberty rites and the habit of *gangisa*.

881 In a great many Bantu tribes, the age of puberty is marked
304 by ceremonies of initiation, often accompanied by circumcision. There is little doubt that circumcision was practised throughout the Thonga tribes in former times. It is still current with those Thongas who emigrated into the Transvaal, and this is not a custom borrowed from the Pedi clans, which have all preserved circumcision. Though the Thongas often receive initiation in Pedi schools, in the Spelonken, they possess their own schools

881 for the Nkunas near Leydsdorp. They have a special word for
304 the physical operation, *yimba*, (in Ronga *soka*) which is used together with *ngoma* (Sutho *goma*), the generic term for all the customs connected with it. (It must not be forgotten that the word *ngoma* is also used for other initiations, especially for the initiation of widows, as will be seen in Chap. II.)

881 Amongst the Ba-Ronga, circumcision was abandoned more
175 than a hundred years ago, before the arrival of Manukosi, and
304 they were called *Ba-butoya*, the cowards, by other Northern clans, who said they feared the sufferings of that cruel school. Mboza has seen some old Ronga men who had been circumcised probably at the begining of the XIXth Century. It is well known that somewhat later Chaka put a stop to the custom amongst the Zulus; it did not fit in with the new military system inaugurated by him. When the Ngoni general Manukosi invaded the plains of the Low Country, it is not surprising that circumcision disappeared in those clans also. The constant fighting which prevailed in those troubled times did not allow men to stay three consecutive months in a circumcision lodge. It was feared also that circumcised boys would be killed by the enemy, being unable to run away in case of an invasion.. But old men in the Bilen country assert that the *Ngoma* is a very old custom amongst the Thongas, and that it has long been practised by all their clans.

881 Is it possible to ascertain its *true origin* ? My informants,
177 Viguet especially, were convinced that the Ngoma was brought
563 to the tribes of the Northern Transvaal by the *Ma-Lemba*, and it
304 is a historical fact that, as regards the Ba-Venda of that country, the rite was adopted quite recently under the influence of the Ma-Lemba. These Ma-Lemba are a very curious people, living amongst the Thongas and the Suthos of Zoutpansberg, just like the Jews amongst the European nations, without a chief, without national unity, but with characteristic customs to which they adhere from generation to generation... They resemble the Jews in the fact that they do not eat flesh unless all the blood has been first carefully drained away. They dread eating blood above all else, and they shave at each new moon. They brought with them

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881/177/563 the metallurgic art and introduced domestic fowls into the country. All these facts tend to show that they have had intimate relations with Semitic peoples, and they themselves declare that they came from the North by sea and reached the coast after shipwreck. Now they practise circumcision with great assiduity and hold a special position in the lodges of the Spelonken. They are called there the masters of the Ngoma (1). Circumcision is wide-spread amongst Semitic nations, and one might be tempted to infer from these remarks that the custom has been taught to the Bantus by Semitic masters. This is certainly true as regards the Ba-Venda in the Spelonken (2).

In South Africa the Ngoma is much older than the arrival of the Ma-Lemba (which can be fixed some time during the XVIIIth century). What happened in Spelonken, through the agency of the Ma-Lemba, during the XIXth century, may have taken place at some earlier date in the case of other South African tribes, and the Semitic origin of the Ngoma is quite possible, though there is no proof at present extant.

2) General characteristics of the circumcision rites.

881/115 I am treating here of the rites as they are met with amongst the Thongas of Spelonken especially ; my informants on this point have been Viguet, who was initiated some 60 years ago, and Valdo, a much younger man, who went through the rites 30 years ago; both are from Spelonken. There Thonga and Bvesha (Sutho) candidates enter the same lodges. A boy named Pikinini revealed to me the secret formulae as they are recited amongst the Nkunas (Leydsdorp). 881 The rites certainly vary amongst the tribes and they seem to have been simplified in late years, but there is a general resemblance between them all. Pedis have two circumcision

(1) I note in a paper by the Rev. W. A. Norton on the puberty rites of the Basuto (S. A. *Journal of Science* March 1910) that, if a Bushman is in a lodge, he takes precedence amongst the Suthos and that there circumcision is derived from the Bushmen just as it is from the Ma-Lembain the Zoutpansberg.

(2) See my paper on the "Balemba of the Zoutpansberg" *Folklore*, Sept. 1908 and also, "*Zidji*," my South African novel. Chap. II. (Saint-Blaise, Foyer Solidariste).

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881/561 schools during two consecutive years. The first is called *bulika*, the second *buhwira*. Thongas have only the first, and it is the one described in the following pages.

I was never fortunate enough to penetrate into a lodge, as it is a great taboo. I tried once to obtain admittance, near Shiluvane, but in vain. But the rites have been described to me with such a wealth of detail that I seemed to have lived for three months with the candidates ! (1)

A French anthropologist, Mr A. van Gennep, published some years ago a book on *Les Rites de Passage* (Paris. Nourry 1909) which throws a great deal of light on these mysterious customs. He shows that a great number of rites have been inspired by the idea of passage from one place to another, and that all the rites belonging to this category present the same general features : in the first place the separation from the old state of things is symbolised by certain rites which he calls separation rites ; then begins a period of margin, where the individual or the group concerned is secluded from society and submitted to a number of taboos or rites ; thirdly, at the close of this period, the persons who have been tabooed are again received into the community as regular members by the aggregation rites. This classification applies perfectly to the Circumcision rites, which are a Rite of Passage par excellence, and I shall now try to explain them briefly in their natural sequence. For more details see *Zidji*, a South African novel which I published in 1910 (Foyer solidariste, Saint-Blaise, Switzerland) where a more elaborate description will be found.

3) The three series of rites of circumcision.

a) Separation rites.

821/881 The circumcision school (Ngoma) is held every fourth or fifth year, and all the boys from ten to sixteen are sent to it by their

(1) A young colleague of mine, the Rev. A. Jaques was more fortunate than I and even succeeded in taking some photographs in the Masume Valley, near Shiluvane. This was a Pedi school, but, as stated above, there is no great difference between Pedi and Thonga "Sungi." These pictures are of great interest, and I am grateful to my friend for allowing me to reproduce them here.

821 parents. Some may escape, but if they happen to be at hand on
881 the next occasion, they will be included by consent or by force.
304 Even an adult member of the tribe can be compelled to go through the initiation, if he is found in the country in an uncircumcised state. The *time of year* chosen for the opening of the school is a month during which the morning star appears, in winter. *Ngongomela*, Venus, is the herald of the day. She precedes the sun, so she must lead the boys to their new life, from darkness to the light! (Valdo)

643 One day all the candidates are gathered in the capital ; for this
881 school is the business of the chief, and has been arranged by the council of the headmen (tinduna) over which he presides ; he has the supervision of it, and will receive the fees from the initiated later on. Boys circumcised four years ago must also attend the whole school as shepherds (barisi, psitjiba), namely as servants of the men and watchers over the candidates. They have already partly built the lodge outside the village, in a remote place, not too far away however, because the women must bring food each day for all the inmates of the " yard of mysteries ".

881 After having slept in the capital, early in the morning, when Ngongomela rises in the East, the band of the uncircumcised *goes out* from the inhabited world to the wilderness, to the lodge. This is the first separation rite. The second is this : they find on the road a fire made of strongly scented wood ; when they smell the smoke, they must jump over it. This rite is called : Tlula ritsa, to jump over the firebrand.

533 Later on, when still at some distance from the newly built
881 lodge, they hear a great noise, a song accompanied by the beating of drums and blowing of antelope horns. They must not understand the meaning of the words which are sung by the host of shepherds and the men, as it would frighten them too much :

The little boy cries ! Bird of the winter !

881 Here they are halted. Eight of them are chosen and told to go forward. Each one is given an assagai, and they are pushed between the singers, who hold sticks and stand facing each other

752 in two rows, leaving a passage between them. They thus run the
881 gauntlet and receive a good whipping ; (the flagellation is often also a separation rite) ; having gone through this unexpected experience they are caught at the other end by four men and deprived of all their clothing. Their hair is also cut, (they must evidently sever themselves from all their past), and they are brought to eight stones and seated on them. These eight stones are not far from the entrance of the yard, in a spot called " the place of the crocodile ". Opposite them are eight other stones on which eight men are sitting. These men are called *Nyahambe*, the Lion-men. They have a fearful appearance, their heads being covered with lions' manes. As soon as the boy is seated on the stone facing the Lion-man, he receives a severe blow from behind ; he turns his head to see who struck him, and sees one of the shepherds laughing at him. The operator snatches his opportunity ; while the attention of the boy is diverted, he seizes the foreskin and cuts it in two movements, first the upper part (this is quickly done and does not cause very much pain), secondly the lower part and the string, a longer and much more painful operation. The surgeons now use an ordinary European knife ; formerly they had only native-made knives. Often the boy falls down unconscious ; they then throw a jar of cold water over him. All the circumcised receive rings of woven, very soft grass which they put on their wounds, tying them round the loins with a string (shondlo). Formerly they did not anoint the sore with medicaments : the boys used only to drink a decoction which is said to stop hemorrhage ; now they use paraffin externally.

881 The boy has now *crossed* (*wela*, like a boat across a river), a technical expression which shows clearly the character of this rite of passage. He is introduced into the lodge.

The removal of the foreskin, though it cannot have the high spiritual meaning of the Jewish circumcision, seems to me also distinctly a separation rite, this part of the body representing the ancient contemptible childish life from which the initiated emerges to-day.

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b) Marginal rites.

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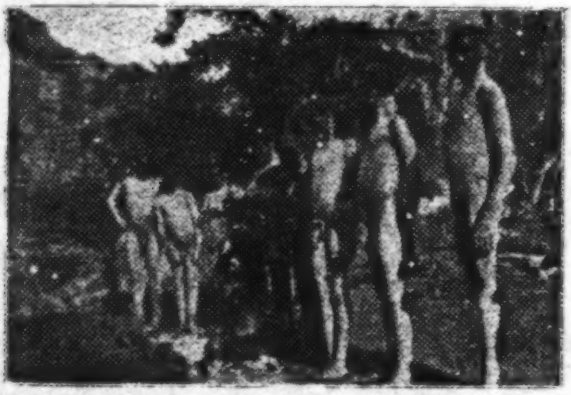
The newly circumcised boy is now to be three months secluded from society in the "yard of mysteries" called *sungi*. Let us first describe this lodge, and we shall see what his occupations will be during this time of trial.

1. *The Sungi.*

(See the accompanying plan of the lodge).

The whole sungi is surrounded by a high fence of thorny branches. This is a sign that all that goes on inside must be



Circumcised boys near Shiluvane. *Photo A. Jaques.*

kept secret. No one who is not initiated can be allowed to see it, especially women. This fence is extended at the entrance so as to form a long avenue by which one penetrates into the yard. Then the way of access continues between twelve poles arranged in pairs (2). The inmates alone have the right to take the road between the poles. Circumcised visitors (uncircumcised would not be admitted) go round them and cross the road five times so as to reach the men's entrance at the end (3).

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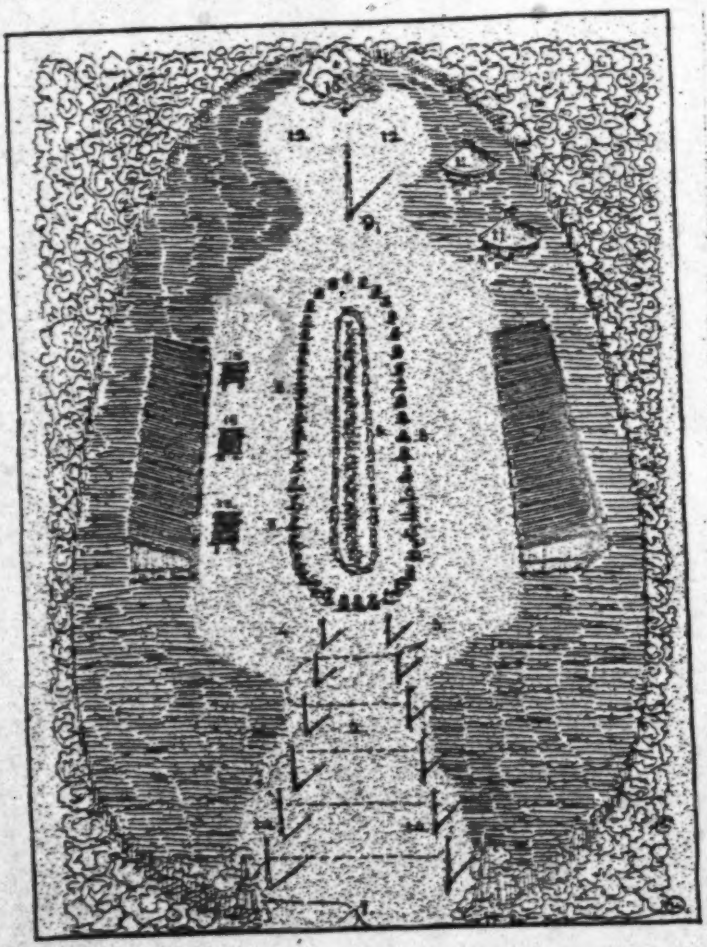
and not the candidates' gate, which is on the opposite side (4). Further on is the central court of the sungi, with the long fireplace built with stones and called the Elephant (5) round which the boys must sit (8), warming their right hips at the fire. The uterine



Plan of the circumcision lodge. *Drawn by J. Waure.*

[644] 881/349 nephew of the chief, the son of his sister, who takes precedence in all the rites, and who is the first to be circumcised, sits on a special stone with the others behind him. He is called the *Hwatye*. Near the fireside are the tables made of hurdles of reeds on which the porridge of the boys is served every day (15). The central court is occupied on both sides by two square sheds hastily and roughly built, the one on the right (7) being the hut of the shepherds and of the men, the one on the left (6) the hut of the circumcised. The soil is not smeared in these houses. Some of the men also sleep in separate huts behind (11). It is behind the Elephant that the big Mulagaru pole will be raised at the close of the school (9). Further at the back of the sungi is the place of the formulae where the boys are taught (12). A tree sometimes grows in the middle and the instructor climbs up it to impart his teaching (10)!

I have drawn this plan of the sungi with the help of Viguet. Having never seen it with my own eyes, I cannot guarantee that it does not omit many details... But it is correct as a whole.

881 The inmates of the lodge fall into three categories : 1. the " bukwera " viz. the troop of candidates who are to be initiated ; 2. the shepherds (barisi or psitjiba, the boys who light (tjibela) the fire of the Elephant) who waken the circumcised in the morning, accompany them on their hunting trips, watch them when they eat, etc. 3. The grown up men who have volunteered to come and stay in the sungi during the whole school. They eat the flesh of the animals killed by the bukwera, carve pestles, weave baskets, enjoy themselves, and form the council which looks after the well-being of the school. Amongst them are the so-called father and mother of the Ngoma, two men who are specially in charge of the school. The " father " has a difficult task ; he must keep discipline, administer punishment, etc. These two men are paid, as are also the Lion-men and the Manyabe. The Manyabe is the great doctor of the school. He has poured his charms on the fence to protect the lodge against wizards. He does not stay in the sungi, but can be called at any time to administer medicine to the boys who are unwell or whose wounds do not heal properly.

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II. *The sexual and language taboos of the sungi.*

881 The whole sungi is taboo to every uninitiated person and
831 especially to women. A woman who has seen the " shondlo ",
834 viz. the leaves which the circumcised put over their wound,
784 and which form their only clothing, must be killed. But taboos abound for everybody. The sexual taboos are most noteworthy. Sexual intercourse is strictly prohibited to all inmates, men as well as shepherds ; breaking this law would kill the circumcised. Therefore the men must not go home, or at least as seldom as possible, during these three months. Married people in the village may have sexual relations ; but there must be no noise, no quarrels between jealous co-wives ; because, if they insult each other and if this is known in the sungi, the shepherds will come one evening and plunder that village. Strange to say, in the meantime obscene language is permitted and even recommended— a contrast which we shall often meet with during the marginal periods. Some of the formulae contain expressions which are taboo at other times ; when the women bring the food to the sungi, the shepherds who receive it from their hands are allowed to address them with as many unchaste words as they like. The mothers themselves have the right of singing obscene songs when they pound the mealies for the sungi.

192 As regards language, there are also special expressions used
881 during the school which are either archaic or foreign ; for instance, all orders are given in a tongue which is neither Thonga nor Sutho: Tshai goma, Go to the table ; Thari, Eat ; Khedi, Smear with white clay, etc. Often actions are not designated by the ordinary word, but by unusual terms. For instance, the daily smearing of the bodies with clay is called : " to eat sheep's fat. " To put on the leaves of the shondlo is " to eat sheep's flesh. " To be beaten with the mbuti sticks is " to drink goat's milk. " Evidently the aim of this terminology is to increase the impression of mystery which the rites must convey to the uninitiated.

866 As regards the rites of the marginal period, they are calculated
881 to give the candidates the impression that they are new men,

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1 : Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga 81

Photo H. Gros. Dance of the shepherds and men of the Circumcision school. (Spelonken, 1886.)

866 and that they must prove it by submitting manfully to all the
881 trials of this hard and sometimes cruel initiation.

Every morning they smear their bodies with white clay. They are shining ; they have abandoned the darkness of childhood. When they have eaten their food they must pick up the crumbs which fall on the ground and throw them away in the pit near the fence, shouting some name in disdain, in an insulting manner, the name of one of the uncircumcised, of a *shuburu* (a term of contempt applied to boys before they pass through the school). This makes them realise their new position.

But the Ngoma " is the shield of buffalo's hide! It is the crocodile which bites !" The candidates must accept all the hardships of initiation. They are taught to suffer.

III. *The trials.*

881 There are six main trials : blows, cold, thirst, unsavoury food, punishment, death.

Blows. On the slightest pretext, they are severely beaten by the shepherds at the order of the men of the sungi. Every day they must sit round the Elephant and, holding a stick in their hands, lunge at it as if to pierce it, for more than an hour. They sing the following words :

Elephant keep still !

Men and shepherds dance round them singing :

The black cow kicks ! It kicks against the jug of the baboon !

They themselves represent the black cow which the boys are trying to milk, and kick the boys! In fact during this daily exercise round the Elephant—a rite which is considered as one of the most important of the Ngoma—, they beat the naked shoulders of the initiated as much as they like, not so as to bruise them, but quite enough to cause them pain.

When the boys do not eat quickly enough, they are beaten. Sometimes they are sent to catch certain birds of the size of sparrows which they must wrap in leaves, tying them in such

881 a clever way that the men will be unable to untie them. Should one of the men succeed in undoing the knots, the boy will get a good thrashing during the meal, and so on.

The unhappy boys who are ill and cannot take part in the hunting trips must be on their guard; when their comrades come back, much excited, they fall upon them with sticks and are allowed to beat them for not having come to help them.

[132] *Cold.* The months of June to August are the coldest of the South African winter and, during the night, the temperature falls to 41 Fah., or even lower. The boys lie naked in their shed,

Photo A. Jouve.

Circumcised boys sitting near the fire of "the Elephant"

heads turned towards the central court, and suffer bitterly from the cold. They are allowed to light fires in the court, but not near their feet, and it is said that one of the greatest trials of the Ngoma is that the head is warm and the feet cold. Moreover, they must always lie on their backs. Shepherds keep watch during the night and beat them if they lie on their side. No blanket is allowed, only light grass covers. The soil, not being smeared, swarms with a kind of white worm which bites severely during the night. Ashes are poured on the ground to kill them, but this is of but little use. In certain lodges, when there is a pool in the neighbourhood, the boys are led early in the morning into

881 the water and must remain in it a long time till the sun appears.
271 The shepherds prevent them from coming out. This is also said to help the wound to heal. (Valdo).

Thirst. It is absolutely forbidden to drink a drop of water during the whole initiation, and this taboo is said to be very painful. Boys sometimes succeed, during their hunting trips, in enticing their shepherds in one direction and in the meantime some of them escape and go to the river to drink. They will be severely punished if caught!

522 *Unsavoury food.* The law is that women, the mothers of the
881 circumcised, must bring plenty of porridge, twice as much as is required for the boys. Should one of them fail to do this she will be punished at a given time. They deposit their pots at some distance, so that they cannot catch any glimpse of the Ngoma, and shout : "Ha tsoo! We are burning." This means : "Our heads are sore from having carried our pots such a long way." Shepherds run to meet them and answer with a great many jokes in rather dubious taste : "We know what is burning with you, etc." Is not this the rule of the Ngoma ? The shepherds bring back with them the empty pots of the day before which the women take back to their homes. Should one of them have provided too little food, her pot will be filled with long grass, and when she goes home with her comrades, they will make fun of her. If she does not learn to do better, the "Mother of the Ngoma" will organise a punitive expedition to her village, and kill goats and fowls, and thus make her obey.

881 All the food is placed on the reed tables, and must be eaten by the boys without any seasoning. Should the indulgent mothers have brought some ground nut sauce, it will be confiscated and eaten by the men. When they hear the order : "Tshai goma," the candidates must rush to the tables, kneel down, and, at the word "Thari," seize the food with both hands and swallow it as quickly as possible. If they delay, they are beaten by the shepherds who superintend the meal. When one batch of boys has finished, they must rush to another table where other boys are still struggling with their heap of porridge and help them to finish their portions. Owing to this emulation, the meal does not last

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881 long. Sometimes, when game has been plentiful, one of the men comes and squeezes the half-digested grass found in the bowels of an antelope over the porridge, saying to the boys : " You must have something of the results of your hunting too! "

This diet nauseates them at first. They sometimes vomit right on the table. No matter, every particle of the porridge must be eaten all the same. When they are accustomed to the diet, they grow fat, and it is wonderful how their physical appearance sometimes improves during these few months.

Punishments. Blows are punishments for minor offences. Should some more serious fault have been committed, the father of the circumcision condemns the boy to "drink goat's milk." There is a shrub called " mbuti ; " the same word also means goat. Three sticks of it are taken. The boy must present his hands, put them against each other and separate the fingers. The sticks are introduced between the fingers and a strong man, taking both ends of the sticks in his hands, presses them together and lifts the poor boy, squeezing and half crushing his fingers.

[688] In former times, the boys who had tried to escape or who had revealed the secrets of the sungi to women, or to the uninitiated, were hanged on the last day of the school and burnt to ashes, together with all the contents of the lodge.

766 881 *Death.* The circumcised must also be prepared to die if their wound does not heal properly and if the Manyabe's medicine is not successful. Many of them have actually died. It is absolutely forbidden to mourn over them. The mother of the deceased is informed of his death by a notch cut in the edge of the pot in which she brings the food. She must not cry. The corpse is buried in a wet place, in a grave dug with sticks, as it would make people suspicious if the shepherds were to go to the village and fetch spades for this work.

IV. *The teaching of formulae.*

881 So the boys are taught endurance, obedience, manliness. But there is another side to the training of the Ngoma. It has sometimes been compared to a school, and it is true that there is some

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intellectual learning in it, though very scanty and insignificant. Every morning the candidates are brought together to the place of the formulae (nau-milau, law, prescription). There is a tree in the midst of this square. A special instructor, whose father has already exercised this function, climbs up the tree and begins to teach the boys. He says :

Little boys, do you hear me. I say...

Then come the words of the secret formulae which are a great taboo and which they must learn by heart, sentence after sentence. I have collected some of them, Thonga and Pedi. Here I will reproduce only the Thonga. They are partly incomprehensible, even to the initiated. The first is called *Manhengwana*. It is the name of a bird.

Masumanyana a nga suma...
The little bird has sung.
A nga suma tinghala ta timhingo...
It has stirred the handles of the lances which are like lions...
T'entsha ku ya tlhabana...
They pierce each other...
Manhengu. Manhengu bentshile. Bentsha tirula...
The bird... ? ?
Fula ngoma... Mukhubela wa hantana...
Forged at the lodge. Clouds come from all parts.
Milumbyana saben. Sabe khulu ra barimi.
Rivulets in the sand, forming the great Sabi.
Ntje-ntje bya ngulube... Bya shinana sha rila...
The running of the wild pig... Of the frog which cries...
Byi longolokile byi ya kamba ntjonga wa mbila.
They are walking in good order, they go to visit the mysterious hut.
Ba kuma byi ri busonga, songa bya timhiri ni timhamba...
They find it like the twisted rings of the adder.

These words, so far as they have a sense, seem to extol the Ngoma and its lodge. These assagais, which are like lions which are going to tear each other, represent the school which is starting, awakened by the bird of the winter. The clouds coming from all directions are the boys converging on the sungi from all parts of the country, like rivulets which join together to form a great river. The running of the wild pig is the life of the boy who was idling away his time till initiation made a man of him. The croaking of the frog (shinana) is his childish stupidity. The

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shinana is a strange animal indeed, a small Batracian which is able, when attacked, to swell considerably : then it becomes so hard that its enemies, even a cock with a sharp beak, cannot pierce it. The circumcised boy, before initiation, was a shinana before it swelled up. By the trials of the Ngoma, he will become like this frog, an invulnerable and untamable adversary. (1) In the last sentences we see the bukwera, the troup of the circumcised, penetrating into the mysterious hut, into the Ngoma, and wondering at the extraordinary wisdom which is found there. The laws, rites and trials are like the inextricable intermingling of many snakes.

The sungi is then celebrated again in the following sentences :

A mi ri i sungi...
Say, it is the lodge.
Hansi ka rona, i tleketleka,
On the ground, there is a disgusting smell,
Henhla ka rona i thulawula...
On the roof, it is elevated and beautiful...
Makomole i mhandje...
Its supports are poles...
Tinga hi hala n'djibalelo...
Long rods unite the poles... etc.

Nwatjabatjabane a nga tjabatjaba...
The heavy body which goes on heavily...
Shikari ka mipungu ni mihlanga...
Through the drifts and the reeds...
Masheka ya le ndjako, marumbu a wela ndjen.
Which must be cut open from behind, because its bowels fall down inside its body.
I ngwenya.
It is the crocodile.

Shiborekeketa mahlaluku makambaku...
The beast which opens the road to the drifts for the elephants...
A ta hi ku nwa ni ku hlamba...
It goes to drink and to bathe...
A mi ri mfubu ?
Do you not say, it is the hippopotamus ?

Nwatjabatjabane makandjya ka ku oma...
The beast which marches slowly on the dry ground...
Ku sa ku baleka nhlangasi,
And a marsh is formed by its heavy footsteps,
Ndlopfu, shibangamaphesa a nga riphembe, hi yona...
It is the elephant, the one who provides clothing (by the sale of its teeth) the one who brings wealth, it is he !

(1) Another explanation : The running to and fro of the wild pig describes the coming and going of the men who bring the boys to the "place of the crocodile," like pigs searching for their prey. The "Shinana" which cries is the little circumcised boy whose voice is hardly heard amidst all the noise of that terrible day. He is a small powerless thing, like the frog.

192 881 These formulae are so characteristic that they provide the principal pass words by which the circumcised recognize each other. Should I want to know if a man is initiated, I should say to him : " *Mashindla bya ndjako*, the beast which must be opened from behind. " If he answers at once : " Ngwenya, the

Phot. A. Bovel

Cutting open a crocodile near the Nkomati river.

crocodile," I know that he has been circumcised. But he must add the following words : " khekeretana wa mufagu " i. e. " the knife which circumcises."

831 881 There are also some obscene formulae which refer to certain diseases of women, of which not a word is told outside the Ngoma. Some others are so ugly that I can give them only in Latin (Annotatio quarta).[1] Even the formulae of the crocodile

1 [See p. 516 in these categories or in 116 -- analyst]

831 881 and of the hippopotamus are by no means poetic descriptions of these big animals similar to those contained in the book of Job. The first alludes to the manner in which the male crocodile copulates with his female. And the second tells the story of a virgin girl whom the young boys violate in order to open the way to the grown up men who will follow them. Impure allusions are found everywhere in this teaching of the circumcision school.

When the instructor has finished, he lifts his stick with a certain gesture and all the boys shout at once: "Zithari!" Viguet told me that that exclamation meant: "They are as long as that" and that it was an obscene allusion. The old men take great delight in being flattered and, if the boys wish to add to their pleasure, they will say: "When you spit, the wind from your mouth would kill enemies at the other end of the country!"

As is plain from these quotations, the teaching of the Ngoma is quite trivial, and the formulae are rather a collection of esoteric words than a true intellectual training.

533 881 *The songs* of the Ngoma have no deeper meaning. We have seen already the song of the Elephant and of the Winter-bird... Every morning, just after they wake, the circumcised sing for a long time the following words, which they repeat also when coming back from hunting trips.

Sing your song, bird of the morn
Mafé-é-é-é!

The melody is rude, wild but very impressive. Mafé-é-é-é must mean: "We are the initiated, we are the men!"

224 881 868 *Hunting*. Hunting is the only useful thing taught in the Ngoma. Boys go almost every day to the velt and become very clever in catching game. They beat the bush, sometimes climb hills and chase all the game to the top, killing it there with their assagais, knobkerries, etc. Near Shiluvane they even attack the Mamotsuiri mountain once during their three months. All the men of the country are summoned to take part in the big expedition, which requires real strategic skill.

881 To sum up the rites of this marginal period of the Circumcision school, this is the programme of a day in the sungi. The shepherds

881 awaken the boys very early. They sing for one hour the Winter-bird. Then they learn the formulae for one or two hours. Afterwards the order : "Tshayi goma" is given and they throw away the leaves of the day before and put on a new "shondlo." They go and sit round the Elephant and stab him for two hours till a shout is heard : the women bringing the food announce that they have come. The boys eat for the first time, and sing again to help digestion. At the command : "Khedi goma," they smear their bodies with white clay. The sun is already high in the sky when they start for their hunting trip. They come back at sunset, eat for the second time, stab the Elephant again for one hour and at the command "Khwerere, Mayise, Mafefo," they go to their beds on the dirty soil of their but.

c) Aggregation Rites.

I. *The Mulagaru.*

769 The first aggregation rite takes place many days before the
881 conclusion of the school. One morning, very early, the men and the shepherds raise a very big pole in the yard of the formulae and fix it into a hole. At its extremity is a man, half hidden in white hair (1). The boys are awakened and led by the shepherds into the yard. They are told to lie down on their backs, all their heads turned towards the pole, which is called *mulagaru*, and to say : "Good morning, grandfather." Then a voice comes from the top of the pole and says : "I greet you, my grand-children." They must remain a long time in that position in the biting cold of the morning, talking with the "grand-father." They are allowed even to complain of their sufferings and to ask permission to return home. But they still have to stay some days in the sungi. Every morning this ceremony will be repeated. It clearly means that the boys are being put into communication with the ancestor who represents the clan, that they are beginning to be admitted to the adult life of the tribe.

(1) In some circumcision schools this man is called kokwana Masinde, a name which is applied to old women.

881 A few days later, the great doctor administers to the boys a purifying medicine which they drink in a mouthful of beer. This rite seems to be rather a separation than an aggregation rite. We often find, when a marginal period comes to an end, separation rites taking place. They mean separation from the *marginal period* itself; for this also involved a kind of pollution which must be removed. Such is probably the aim of the medicine given by the Manyabe. On the other hand, this is also an aggregation rite, as the boys are allowed to drink again for the first time.

II. *The Mayiwayiwane dance.*

532 The second true aggregation
535 rite is called the Mayiwayiwane
881 dance. The *Mayiwayiwane* are a sort of masks which cover the whole of the upper part of the body, a kind of armour made of woven palm leaves; on the head, they are like a very high helmet protruding in front like a beak. The boys make these masks with the help of the shepherds and of the men and, in this disguise, must perform a special dance with high jumps before the women summoned on a certain day to attend. The boys must not be recognized. Should one of them let the mask fall, it would be a great misfortune, because women must not know who is dancing.
535 Moreover the initiated must appear before them as a kind of
581 supernatural beings and fill them with respect and awe. Therefore they must not fall when they dance. Should one of them totter and lose his equilibrium, the shepherds cover him

A Mayiwayiwane mask (1).

(1) This mask is that worn by Pedi boys during the second circumcision school. I cannot guarantee that the Mayiwayiwane mask is of exactly the same pattern.

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with a heap of grass and the men say : " He is dead !," because a circumcised boy cannot fall and live. One of the shepherds goes in haste to a village of the neighbouring tribe and buys a fowl ; this is killed and its blood is sprinkled over the grass ; the boy who fell escapes when the women have gone home, but the next day, when they come back to the spot, they see the blood and are convinced that, in very truth, one of the circumcised dies when he falls!

Sometimes a little child is taken from the arms of its mother and brought to the place where the boys are sitting hidden during the dance. They kiss him and smile at him, because he is innocent; he may see what women are not allowed to contemplate!

III. *The last day.*

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The last day is marked by the greatest and most difficult trial. During the whole preceding night, the boys are not allowed to sleep. Sleep is the last enemy they must overcome. They stab the Elephant and repeat the formulae till the morning. Then all the bits of skin remaining from the circumcising are picked up by the Manyabe ; he burns them, and makes them into a powder with which he smears the mulagaru pole. All the masks and grass mats are thrown on to the roof of the shed and, at dawn, the troop of circumcised, surrounded by the shepherds and men, is directed towards a pool and made to run to it without looking backwards ; (separation from the sungi, from the seclusion period). If they were to look at what is taking place behind them, their eyes would be pierced, and they would be blind for ever! Fire is set to the whole establishment by some of the men, and all the filth and ignorance of childhood is burnt in this great conflagration. The boys are led into the water, wash away the [302] white clay shouting : " I am a man," cut their hair (separation rite), anoint themselves with ochre, put on new clothing and are addressed by the father of the circumcision :

" You are no longer *shuburu*! Try now to behave like men. It would be unworthy of you to steal sweet potatoes in the fields as you used to do before. Now the Ngoma is closed and it is taboo

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881 to pronounce the formulae or to sing the songs of the sungi. Don't reveal a word of them to anybody ; if a boy does so he will be strangled! " etc.

That same day the women bring porridge with sauce flavourings and the shepherds are no longer allowed to use insulting words when they receive the pots from their hands.

IV. *The Chameleon procession.*

553 881 All these are evidently aggregation rites. But the greatest of all is the procession of the initiated into the capital of the chief which takes place on the day of the closing of the sungi and on the following day. Covered with ochre, marching on mats which have been spread on the ground so that they do not touch the dust with their feet, they advance slowly, bowed to the ground, stretching out first one leg and then the other, with a sudden brisk motion, trying to imitate the gait of the chameleon, the wise, the prudent. They are men who think, and no longer boys without intelligence! Then they all sit in the central place of the capital, silent, with their heads still bent, and the sisters and mothers who have come from all the different villages must go and recognize them. Each woman brings with her a bracelet or a shilling or any small present and searches for her boy amongst the throng. When she thinks she has found him, she kisses him on the cheek and gives him the present. The boys have two sticks in their hands. One stick bears some short lateral branches on which the boys will hang the bracelets (busenga). The other is smaller and, when the mother has discovered her son and has kissed him, he strikes her, a soft blow if it is his mother or his grandmother, a much harder one if it is his sister, and utters the new name which he has chosen.

In answer to this demonstration, the mother begins to dance and to sing the praises of her son! This is the typical aggregation rite called *kunga*, the breaking of silence, which we shall meet with more than once in the passage rites of the tribe. These bracelets 843 are all given in to the chief, who will distribute them amongst the 888 old women. It would be taboo to give them to childbearing women. According to the same idea the fees paid by the boys to

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881 the chief must not be used by him to buy a wife. This would pollute the village (makhuma). It would cause unfortunate births (timbeleko) and ruin the life of the people.

The chameleon procession is performed in the villages of the main headmen of the tribe during the few following days till, at last, the ochre of the initiated is removed and they return home definitely.

SOME REMARKS ON THE CIRCUMCISION SCHOOL

177 The square form of the sungi sheds, so different from the circular form
881 adopted by the Bantus for their homes and implements, might be the
341 trace of a Semitic influence. But, on the whole, all these rites are closely
822 connected together and their sequence is quite easy to understand.

The Ngoma is truly a puberty rite, but not a sexual initiation. The
881 suspension of conjugal relations, and the prevalence of licentious language might give the idea that it is in direct relation with the sexual life. But these two phenomena are met with on other occasions, as we shall see, and seem to be characteristic occurrences in most of the marginal periods. Moreover boys of ten and twelve and men of twenty-five or more can occasionally be admitted to the sungi, and this proves that the school has nothing to do with marriage, properly speaking. Neither is the Ngoma a pure act of aggregation to a definite clan. Boys of one clan often go to the sungi of another chief to be initiated ; they do not become his subjects by so doing. Even Thongas sometimes enter into Sutho lodges and Ma-Lemba have a special place in them. It is true that the Ngoma is the business of the chief. Only those who are really chiefs have the right to build a lodge. But though the initiated are exhorted to become good subjects of their chief, the intention of the circumcision school is rather to introduce the little boy *into manhood*, to cleanse him from the *bukhuna* (p. 58) to make him a thoughtful adult member of the community.

(See practical conclusion on Circumcision Rites at the end of Vol. I.)

II. *Other Puberty Rites.*

881 The Ngoma has disappeared in most of the Thonga clans, but
178 there are a few other puberty rites which have been preserved all through the tribe.

1) THE CUSTOM OF THE EROTIC DREAM (Tilorela).

881 195 751 When a young man has noticed for the first time an emissio seminis, he is said to have become an adult (a kulile, a thombile) to have "drunk the nkanye." The nkanye is the tree from which the bukanye is made. It is prepared for the great feast of the new year. *To drink the nkanye* is an euphemism to designate the entrance into a new phase of life, into the age of puberty. According to Mboza, the lad must go early in the morning to wash his body, and that is all. But Tobane says that, in the Mpfumo clan, the family doctor is called; in a broken pot, he roasts pieces of skin of all the beasts of the veldt, together with some half digested grass taken from the stomach of a goat (psanyi). The boy must eat a little of this medicine and rub all his joints with it. This will strengthen him so that, when he has relations with girls, he will not be overcome (gemiwa) by them. This rite, which is very similar to the rite of the broken pot performed for infants, is connected with the "gangisa," the sexual habits of young people which begin at the time of puberty, as we shall see later on.

881 291 177 789 832 At this time also, the boy begins to wear the very primitive clothing called *shifado* (sha ku siba, the thing with which one closes, see Annotatio I)[1]. In former times they wore only the *mbayi*, a small cylindrical or conical object of woven palm leaves, which was the national dress of the Thongas; the *shifado* seems to be of Zulu origin. It is very much valued as preventing contact with the earth, as a protection against ants and an aid to continence; the lads who do not wear it are blamed and accused of being *ba-nato*. The word *nato* means a magical medicine by means of which men of low morals throw men or women into a deep sleep during the night, enter the huts of other people and commit adultery with their wives.

2) THE PIERCING OF THE EARS (Ku tjunya, (Ro.), boshela. (Dj.).

881 304 177 This also takes place at this period. There are two ways of performing it, either by an actual piercing of the lower lobe with a thorn, or by cutting it with a knife. The first method

1 [See p. 516 in these categories or in 116 --Analyst]

881 is the old Thonga custom, and has been preserved by the women
304 in its original form, at least amongst the Ba-Ronga ; they frequently
177 pass a ring through the small opening thus produced. The second was practised by the Zulu-Ngonis, and was adopted by the Thonga men in order to resemble their conquerors. The result is an ugly hole. This is not a law imposed by the chief ; it is however universally observed. When a lad does not pierce his ears, his comrades mock him, saying. " U toya ! " " You are a coward! We shall put a spoonful of porridge in this big ear of yours! " (Viz. It will hold food because it is not pierced!)

881 The operation is performed in the winter by a man who
304 knows how to do it. Before it is begun, the boy bites the *ndjao*,
824 the root of a kind of juncus which is considered the best means of strengthening the virile force. The doctor introduces into
833 the hole a small piece of reed ; he takes it out every day to wash the wound and puts it in again to keep the hole open. As long as the ear is not healed, the lad must eat his food without salt : he must not go about in the kraals and partake of the porridge of other people, because this food might have been prepared by women having intercourse with their husbands (ba ku khila) and this would make him very ill (1). He must also keep away from girls. When he is healed, he takes away the piece of hard reed and replaces it by a pretty white object.

304 Some Thongas tatoo themselves, or used to do so formerly,
178 but this custom is disappearing and is now preserved only by women. We shall describe it in the chapter on the evolution of the woman, as well as the *hleta* custom, the pointing of the teeth.

It is probable that in former times the taboo character of these various ceremonies was more marked that now. At present they are merely a *shihila sha tiko*, a custom of the country.

(1) This alimentary taboo, as well as the interdiction of sexual relations, even of intercourse with married people, clearly shows that the piercing of the ears is a ritual passage. (p. 74).

524 put aside. She must be very clever and very quick in removing and replacing all the stones except one, because the ball will soon fall down and she must catch it in her hands. Should she take only one stone out of the hole, she has failed (a tjongolile) ; should she leave more than one stone outside of it, she has again failed (a hoshile). Should the ball fall to the ground, it is taboo. (psa yila)! She has lost her turn. If the ball falls on her body, it is not so bad. Her companions will say to her : "Gangasheta." Then she must throw the ball and catch it two or three times on the upper part of her hand, then again in her hand, and if she succeeds in this, she is allowed to go on. When she has been able to take all the stones from the hole without making any mistake, she has beaten her co-players (a ba mphyinshile).

525 Natives do not play for stakes as a rule, but, if two of them challenge each other, each claiming to be the best at the game, they may arrange that the one who loses must give a fowl to the winner.

The ordinary word for *play* is *ku tlanga*. But there is another word *ku tha*, which is used for the more refined games, the buhlolo, the mathakusana, the tshuba, the reciting of tales, riddles or proverbs (psitekatekisa) and guessing games (mhumhana). We shall describe these four last games when treating of the life of the village and literary life.

II. *Nubility customs.*

1) The Khomba rite.

881 When a girl comes of age, no special ceremony is performed amongst the Ba-Ronga. She is said, just like the boy, to have "drunk the nkanye" (page 95). She confesses to her mother that her menses *(tinwheti, viz. months)* have appeared for the first time, and the mother simply answers : "Hi ku kula"— "this means growth."

884 But in the Northern clans a characteristic rite has been preserved, or borrowed from the Sutho-Pedis, who attach great importance to it. It is called *khomba*, or *yisa matin*, to lead to the water, and is performed in the following manner. The girl, when she thinks that the time of nubility is near, chooses an adoptive mother, possibly in a neighbouring village. She works for her, and helps her in gathering her fuel. When the day has come, she runs away from her village and goes to this adoptive mother "to weep near her" (a rilela ka yena). These are distinct separation rites. She says : "Ndji khombile" — "I am of age." Then will begin a *seclusion period* of one month. Three or four girls receive the initiation together. They are shut up in a hut, and when they come out, must always wear over their face a veil consisting of a very dirty and greasy cloth. Every morning they are led to the pool, and their whole body is immersed in the water as far as the neck. Other initiated girls or women accompany them singing obscene songs, and drive away with sticks any man who happens to be on the road, as no man is allowed to see a girl during this period. If a man happens to come near the group, the women ask him the secret formulae of the circumcision school, not the long ones but the short ones, probably those which contain licentious words. Should he be unable to answer, they beat him. It is said that a man who sees a girl during this month becomes blind! When the cortege of women accompanying the initiated has returned home, the nubile girls are imprisoned in the hut. They are teased, pinched, scratched by the adoptive mothers or by other women ; they must also listen to the licentious songs which are sung to them. Though they are trembling from cold, being
881 still wet, they are not allowed to come near the fire. They are
841 also instructed in sexual matters, and told that they must never reveal anything about the blood of the menses to a man. They are also exhorted to be very polite to every grown up person, and must salute everybody entering the hut, even those passing before the door, by clapping their hands. Sometimes the wind moves some dead leaves ; they mistake this noise for the sound of steps and salute reverently!

881 At the end of the month the adoptive mother brings the girl

881 home to her true mother. She also presents her with a pot of beer. A feast takes place on this occasion and the kunga rite is performed, just as for the circumcised boy on the day of his aggregation (page 93). Little presents will be brought by the girl to her adoptive mother who will distribute them to old women. If the initiated girl has been already bought by lobola, the mother goes with her to her future husband and says to him: "She is grown up." He will give her a present of £ 1., and the veil will be taken away. These last rites distinctly mean the aggregation of the girl to adult society, and all this khomba custom is a very good example of a passage rite, the passage being from the asexual to the sexual group.

881 178 The Pedi-Sutho clans of the Transvaal also practise this rite, which they call *khoba*. In addition they have the *bale*, the initiation school for girls, corresponding to the circumcision school of the boys. The Nkuna clan of the Thongas is said to have practised it also in former times, but the *bale* has entirely disappeared all through the Thonga tribe.

There are three other customs more or less related to nubility: tattooing, the pointing of the teeth and the milebe custom.

2) Tattooing (Tlhabela tinhlanga).

304 There have been different methods of tattooing amongst the Thongas. In former times, in the Northern clans, the Ba-Thonga used to disfigure themselves by making very big black pimples on the forehead, the nose, and the cheeks. Hence the name of *Knobneusen* which they received from the Boers in Spelonken. Even the men were tattooed, but they shewed only one line of pimples down the middle of the face, from the forehead to the chin. Women had, in addition, two horizontal lines on the forehead and three on each cheek. It was a custom of the primitive population and is still observed by the Ba-Chopi. The invaders of the XVth or XVIth century adopted it because they were mocked by their subjects, who said: "Flat noses are not

304 right!" When the Ba-Ngoni of the XIXth century came, they submitted themselves to the custom, not from fear of mockery, but to hide their Zulu nationality. Chaka had sent his impis to kill them and, as they were recognised by the absence of pimples, they began to tattoo themselves. When the danger was passed,

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Phot. H.-A. Junod.
Tattooed women of the Nkuna clan.

they ceased to perform the operation. They began in their turn to mock the Thongas who had followed their example.

304 881 Amo gst the Ba-Ronga it is not certain that the big black pimples ever existed. In former times men used to make two lines of small pimples on both sides of the body, extending from the nipple and from the shoulders downwards. Now the custom

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304/881 is dying out; it is practised only by women, undoubtedly in connection with nubility or with marriage. But the tattooing of the face has disappeared almost entirely. What remains is the tattooing of the shoulders and of the epigastric and hypogastric regions.

The operation is painful; girls sometimes cry and must be forced to submit to it. The patterns are triangular. Four triangles are first drawn on the shoulders on both sides; the upper triangles meeting with the lower ones at their apex, so as to leave a square place, not tattooed, in the middle of the back. This drawing is made with ochre; the skin is caught up and lifted with a little iron hook all along the line and slightly cut with a razor All the incisions must be of the same size. The blood oozes out and is stopped by the ochre, which is profusely spread over the small wounds. Tattooing of the back is not very painful. It is more so on the anterior part of the body. These four triangles are also drawn under the breasts, leaving a square place of which the navel occupies the exact centre. But between the two upper triangles two others are introduced, forming a conical shaped pyramid whose point comes between the breasts.

Such is the ordinary arrangement of the tattoo pimples in Nondwane, but it varies considerably according to the clans, as the two adjoining plates clearly show. The two Nkuna women whom I photographed at Shiluvane in 1900, have only two lines of pimples, forming a right angle under their right breast. The Rev. Alex. Jaques has kindly sent me two other photographs of tatooed Tembe girls taken in August 1926 and Mrs. Jaques has drawn an enlarged figure of the marks which shows plainly the patterns adopted in that part of the country. I reproduce them in a second illustration. Here the four triangles are distinctly seen.

304/881/178 The freshly tattooed girl hides herself for a week, after which she shows herself to her boy (shigango), who will kill a fowl for her to congratulate her. He says: "It is pretty to tattoo yourself. Otherwise your belly would be like the belly of a fish, or of a white person!" The time of healing is considered as a disease (perhaps as a marginal period). It is taboo to put salt in the food during

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

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these days, or to go to the village to eat the food of other people (just as it is for boys who pierce their ears). Girls prepare themselves for the operation by eating a special food which soften-

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Phot. A. Junod.

Tattooed women of the Tsonga clan.

the skin of the belly (nsbyala khuri). All these rules tend to show that, in former times, tattooing had a deep meaning, a ritual value which has more or less disappeared. Mboza told me : "It is not a regular taboo (yila), but only a custom (shihila) of the country."

3) Pointing of the teeth (Ku hleta).

304 881 This custom is also dying out. It used to be incumbent on all the girls. Now many do not observe it. They have seen that teeth deformed in this way decay more quickly. The operation is performed on the incisors, and girls must keep their mouths closed for two or three days, not showing their teeth to anybody.

Near Rikatla, the hleta custom was still in force in the heathen villages in 1910. It gives the girls a kind of canine aspect.

4) The milebe custom.

304 881 832 171 This is very wide-spread all over South Africa. Though it has disappeared now amongst most of the Ronga clans, it is still practised in the Manyisa country, over the whole of Bilen and in the Northern clans, amongst the Zulus, the Pedi-Suthos, etc. It is probably the origin of the famous "Hottentot apron," which some ethnographers thought to be a congenital malformation, and which is merely the result of this custom (Annotatio 5)[1]. It is a very ugly habit, very immoral from our point of view, fixing the imagination of the girl on sexual relations, but amongst the Thongas it is upheld as being quite the right thing.

B. MARRIAGE AND CONJUGAL LIFE

1) Conditions of Marriage

581 832 In the primitive Bantu tribe every girl gets married, some, however, sooner than others. Suitors prefer pretty girls to ugly ones! But what is their standard of beauty ? The ideal is tall stature, strong limbs and well developed breasts. A proverb

1 [See p. 517 in these categories or in the Analyse]

643 857 However, specially appointed persons watch over him and report of his well being to his father. His youthful playmates are taught to respect him ; he is surrounded in his games by a miniature court, from which he chooses his favourites (tinxekwa) : some of his companions act as counsellors and reprimand those who do not treat him with due respect. They play at court... also at soldiers ; the juvenile troop wage war with the wasps, and also with the boys of the adjoining villages.

643 787 777 751 782 When the child reaches boyhood, the bones are consulted, and sacrifices offered in order to ascertain from the gods whether it be well to take him to the capital. Should the answer be in the negative, there is nothing to do but wait. When the dice declare the propitious moment to have arrived, the transfer is effected and the boy taken to his father. This is a great occasion for the counsellors who have watched over the boy and who thenceforward supervise his education. They feast themselves well (ba fumisana), kill goats, perhaps even an ox, and offer a sacrifice to proclaim to the gods the return to the capital of the heir to the throne ; to his ankle is tied the astragalus of a slaughtered goat, as a protective amulet.

643 881 836 At puberty the boy undergoes, in the same manner as his companions, all the ceremonial rites usual at that period. The principal doctors of the country treat him, in order that henceforth he may be a man (ba mu yimisa a ba wanuna), having full right to enter into the sexual relations of gangisa (p. 97). Care is taken, however, to attach to his person comrades of riper age, who will prevent him giving way to excesses, (suka banhwanyana la bakulu ba ta mu gema, ba mu sibela ku kula), which would arrest his growth and render him small and feeble. He thus lives in relative continence, participating in the play and in the work of boys of his own age, and looking after the herds. At times he gives a feast, when his father happens to have presented him with an ox with which to make merry.

643 588 595 Now we see him arrived at manhood, at the age when the Blacks take a wife. If his father is still living, the young man is not allowed to marry officially. He may certainly lobola, viz., contract regular marriage in the usual way, and possibly

APPENDIX II (See p. 40)

On Thonga names, nicknames and surnames.

553 As an illustration of the way in which the Thongas change their names, I give the story of those of Mboza and Elias.

Mboza was called at his birth "Mulamule," after his paternal uncle. The whole name was, in Zulu: "Mulamula nkwinzi izilwako," viz., "the man who calms the bull which fights." At about the age of sixteen, he changed it to Mahubula. At that time he was trying to collect divinatory bones in order to become a diviner. He had called one of these bones "Hubula," and after that his comrades began to apply the name to him. He was seized by the "folly of gods." (Part. VI). When he was cured of this pretended possession, the spirit which made itself known called itself Mboza. This was the name of a man of his village, his own nephew, who had gone to Johannesburg and had died there. When he became a Christian, and was baptised, 177 Mboza kept his name. Most of the Natives like to take another name 553 on that occasion, the name of a disciple or of a prophet. We are not very ready to comply with their wish, as we have already too many Daniels, Jonas and Petros, and Mboza probably yielded to this argument.

551 *Elias* was called "Shifenyo" on the day of his birth, after a man who happened to pass through the village. This visitor was a kind of beggar who used to follow people carrying food to the chief, hoping to get something to eat. The child was of a good family, but they gave him the name of this low and despised individual, a truly democratic act! When he was older, one of his friends said to him: "Your name does not suit you. Call yourself *Spoon*." He adopted the new appellation, and the women of his village used to make fun of him saying: "Come along, we will distribute the food with this spoon!" 177 When baptised a Christian he became Elias, a somewhat onerous 551 name, especially as our Elias is not as strong and perfect as a prophet ought to be.... But Natives never shrink from assuming great names. They always feel themselves equal to them!

881 The names adopted at puberty by boys are very often European 177 ones. There are scores of Jims, Sams, Bobs, etc. They also adopt as 551 names European words or words of European origin, as: Spoon, Nglazi (glass) Komitshi (cup), Djass (jacket), Fulitshi (forage), Fifteen, etc.

Latin Notes for Medical Men and Ethnographers

291 "Annotatio prima (P. 40).--'Shifado' quo quisque Thonga
845 extremum penem vestit, spheroides excavataque res est;
848 quod tegimentum ex iis, quae ad pudorem et munditiem perti-
881 nent, postulatur. Si quis schifado suum amisit, ei dedecoriest."

Note 1 (page 40). Shifado, with which every Thonga covers the end of his penis, is a spherical and hollowed-out object; this covering is demanded from those who are concerned with decency and cleanliness. If anyone has lost his schifado [sic] he is disgraced.

"Olim apud Thonga, qui a populo Zulo illum morem acceperunt, viri, quod linguà 'mbayi' id est fistulam quandam ex foliis textis palmae quae 'milala' dicitur, ferre solebant.

[At one time among the Thonga, who took over this custom from the Zulu people, the men used to wear what in their language is called mbayi, that is, some kind of tube made of palm leaves woven together which is called milala.]

"Ultima 'mbayi' anno 1895 vel 1896 post Christum natum visa sunt. Quod shifado ex parvae cucurbitae cortice aut duro et excavato accurateque polito ligno factum, summo veretro affixum, minime incommode ferre videntur."

[The last mbayi were seen in the year 1895 or 1896. Because the shifado is made of the rind of a small gourd or of hard, hollowed-out and carefully polished wood, and attached at the top of the private parts, it seems that it can be worn with the minimum of discomfort.]

833 "Annotatio secunda (P. 56). S. n. i, sc. semine non im-
851 misso. Ad hoc, marito sperma foras spargendum est (a nga
842 mu weleri): hic est coitus rite factus et quasi lustralis. Inde,
765 uxor in manus utriusque sordes (thyaka ra bona) sumit, qui-
783 bus umbilicum illinit."

[Note 2 (page 56). S. n. i., that is, the semen has not been injected. Moreover the husband must eject his sperms outside of the body (a nga mu weleri): this is the coitus properly executed and, as it were, lustral. Then the wife takes in her hands the filth of both (thyaka ra bona) and smears the navel with it.]

"Annotatio tertia (P. 57). Corpus infimum pueri ex adverso et a tergo peni pater tangit.

[Note 3 (page 57). The father touches with his penis the lowest part of the boy's body from the front and from behind.]

831 "Annotatio quarta (P. 88). Hae sunt formulae:
881 Shana khololwane ma ri tiba le'ri onhaka milebe?
Novistisne avem quae labra minora laedit?

831 —I mbolo ya shuburu.
881 —Penis est incircumcisi viri.

Banhwanyana ba ka Makwakwa ba kundja na ba hlanamile. N'yini?

Puellæ ex regione Makwakwa manibus apertis coeunt. Quid significant hæc verba?

—I mahlehlwa.

—Est semen mahlehwa.

(Hlehlwa is the seed of a creeper growing along the ground; this seed [517] is of the same size as a two shilling piece and possesses, in its central part, two hooks standing up.)

[Note 4 (page 88): these are the formulae:

Shana khololwane ma ri tiba le'ri onhaka milebe?

Do you know the bird that injures the labia minora?

—I mbolo ya shuburu.

It is the penis of an uncircumcised man.

Banhwanyana ba ka Makwakwa ba kundja na ba hlanamile. N'yini?

The girls from the region of Makwakwa have intercourse with open hands. What do these words mean?

—I mahlehlwa.

—Mahlehwa is the semen.

(Hlehlwa is the seed of a creeper growing along the ground; this seed [517] is of the same size as a two shilling piece and possesses, in its central part, two hooks standing up.)]

832 "Annotatio quinta (P. 98. 182). Externorum genitalium
836 minora labra verbo milebe (singul. nebe) designantur, quæ
304 puellæ adeo trahere solent ut ea usque ad quinque, decem,
881 etiam quindecim centimetra extendant. Quæ labra nonnunquam
171 parvis baculis metiuntur, eorum longitudine, apud comites suas, immo apud sponsos, gloriantes. Istis pravis moribus enim nihil aliud puellæ sequuntur nisi futuri mariti gratiam, cui apud Ba-Pedi, si sponsam suam labra non satis extendisse arbitratur, eam domum dimittere et boves suos reposcere licet. Puellæaululam pulmenti plenam parant quam operculo claudunt. Ad quas pueri vespere veniunt et stipem dant ut admittantur. In casae solo considunt et puellas cenantes spectant dum digitos in aululam demittunt. Puellæ quarum milebe quatuor digitos longa sunt, quatuor digitis usæ comedunt: bakulu, sunt, i.e. adultæ, et lætantur amatores. Aut tribus tantum, duobus aliquando utantur. Adolescentulæ cavis manibus cenant.

[Note 5 (pages 98 and 182). The labia minora of the outer genitals are called by the word milebe (singular nebe), and the girls are in the habit of pulling them so much that they extend from five or ten to as many as fifteen centimeters.

832 Sometimes the girls measure their labia with small sticks
836 and boast of their length to their companions and even to their
304 bridegrooms. The girls follow these perverse practices for
881 no other reason than for the sake of their future husband.
171 Among the Ba-Pedi the husband may, if he thinks that his bride has not sufficiently stretched her labia, send her home and demand his bulls back. The girls keep a pot full of food ready and cover it with a lid. In the evening the boys come to the girls and give them a small gift in order to be admitted. In the house they sit down on the floor and watch the girls eating from a pot with their fingers. The girls whose milebe are four digits long eat using four fingers: they are bakulu, that is, adult, and they enjoy their lovers. Or they use only three fingers and sometimes two. The young girls eat with the palms of their hands.]

765 "Annotatio sexta (P. 154). Seu quis per ætatem iam pro-
783 vectam imbecillior factus erit, sive qualibet de causa tam
833 impotens ut sperma emittere non possit (a nga kumi mati), ceteri viri quid fiat sciscitabuntur. Quod si utique parum procedit, tota inhibetur cærimonia. Qui vero se invicem eodem ritu miscere debebant, iis ritum conficere non fas est. Ille jejunio, per quinque dies, prout res postulat, artissime utetur, cui medicinæ ad rem accommodatæ exquirentur.

[Note 6 (page 154). If someone should have become feeble because of advanced age, or if for some reason he should be so impotent that he cannot emit sperms (a nga kumi mati), other men ask what should be done, For if it proceeds quite insufficiently, the whole ceremony is held up. And those who should have had intercourse in turn in the same ritual fashion are not permitted to complete the rite. He [the impotent man] has to fast very strictly for five days as the situation requires and the remedies appropriate to the situation will be sought.]

843 "Annotatio septima (P. 154). Nocens maritus uxorque sui
834 purgandi causâ alium ritum peragent. Uxor mariti suaque
841 pudenda veste intima et inquinatissima tergebit, quam postea comburet.

Ambo, ad ignem accedentes, caput manusque calefacient. Inde cinerem collectum mulier adipe miscet, quo mariti artus illinit, digitis bracchiis cruribusque tractis, quod 'lula' dicitur. Postea, noctibus duabus sequentibus, coibunt. Si maritus, non cum uxore sua, sed cum puella quadam ex alio vico, stupri consuetudinem junxerit, huic fossorium donabitur, ut ritum 'lula' perfectum veniat.

[Note 7 (page 154). If the husband and the wife are guilty of an offense, they perform another rite for the sake of purging themselves. The wife will cover her husband's and

177 Whatever the teacher may say, they escape... I must confess that we do not control them as well as the Father of the Circumcision... The Ngoma shows us however that strict discipline is quite possible with Native boys and that we must deal with them without any touch of harshness, of course, but with a firm hand. When the inmates of our institutions complain that the sauce of their porridge is not savoury enough, we might remind them of the food their heathen comrades are eating in the Ngoma!

881 There is a striking resemblance between Bantu circumcision, Jewish circumcision and Christian baptism.

In Jewish circumcision, the same physical operation was performed, but it was performed on infants. It had undoubtedly also the meaning of a purification, a removal of pollution and an introduction into the holy nation. In the course of time, the idea was spiritualised and circumcision meant the removal of sin. But it had a strongly religious character: Jahvé marked his chosen people by their circumcision. This religious element is wanting in the Ngoma of the Thongas and the Suthos, where the national significance alone remains.

As regards baptism, the great difference between the heathen and the Christian rite is evidently this. Christian baptism is not only a religious but also a moral rite. In its normal form, which is the immersion of adult catechumens, it represents in a striking manner the washing away of sin and the admission to the Church of Christ; it is a rite of passage; separation from the old life of sin, marginal period of instruction, admission into a holy community...

The Ngoma has no such spiritual and moral idea attached to it, but it has been inspired by the same deep and true sense of the necessity in the evolution of man, of a progress consisting in the renunciation of a miserable past and the introduction into a higher life. This idea is one of those rays of light which we are happy to discover amidst the darkness of heathendom, one of those "points d'attache" to which we can link the truths of spiritual religion.

177 797 881 What ought to be the attitude of the Government and of Missions towards this custom? As regards Governments, they could not immediately suppress the circumcision schools, though they have often been asked to do so, but it would seem that they might use their influence in checking them. As for the Mission, it has naturally fought against this school of heathenism, but not always with success; boys, even Christian boys, are wonderfully attracted by it and many have left their

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spelling-books for the formulæ of Manhengwane. Strange to say, it frequently happens that girls refuse to marry men who have not passed through this initiation! These facts, together with the legitimate wish to give African Christianity a true national character, have suggested to some missionaries the idea of establishing *Christian Circumcision Schools*. In a special meeting at the Conference of Le Zoute, September 1926, Canon Lucas of the Universities Mission told his colleagues the results of an experiment of this kind at his station of Masasi. The missionary himself took control of all proceedings. The boys began by entering the church, the elders representing the old men of the tribe. They were circumcised in the camp which had been previously blessed and the operation was performed by a qualified Native who had been trained by medical men. The parents of the boys were waiting outside the camp, dancing. When all the boys had been circumcised, they were told by the manager of the camp that this was done to incorporate them into the tribe, and the parents again engaged in a big dance. The men remained on the spot and proceeded to the erection of the buildings of the camp where the circumcised were kept for some weeks, and carefully treated till all of them were healed. During this period of seclusion, they received instead of the obscene formulæ, teaching bearing on seven subjects : truth, honour, purity, abstinence from drink, humility, love of one's neighbour and duties toward God. They had also to pass through various physical trials, and, at the end, they were exhorted to do penance for their past sins. Their hair was cut, and burnt together with their clothing and all the camp buildings. The parents were then summoned and danced the whole night, the men mysteriously bringing new clothing for the initiated. The boys then went to church, and, answering a question put by the missionary, they said : "I ask of God that I may be a righteous man." A special blessing was then given to them. An interesting fact is that the heathen population approved of this Christian Circumcision School and accepted it as an equivalent to the old. Some heathen parents even sent their sons to it! Seven hundred boys have already been received in it and Canon Lucas has gained an enormous influence over them! I only mention this attempt to "sublimate" the circumcision rites. Some missionaries are strongly opposed to this new departure, which they regard as a dangerous mixture of Christian ideas and heathen rites. Without expressing a definite opinion on the subject, I would insist on the point just mentioned : the real, genuine rite of passage of Christianity is baptism, and the African Church might perhaps be satisfied with

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I never heard a distinction made between fixed stars and 821
planets. They are all called tinyeleti. The best-known is 772
Venus, which bears many names. Not knowing that the evening 881
and morning star are one and the same, they have given it different names. The evening star is *Gumbashilalelo*, the one which steals the evening meal, because it appears when people are eating it, or *khwekhweti*, the brilliant star, or *Nkata wa hweti*, the moon's husband (as the two are often seen close together); the morning star is called *Ngongomela*, or *Khwezu*, and is greatly lauded as the herald of day. It gives the warriors the signal for starting on a war-like expedition: the warriors can easily kill their enemies under cover of the darkness, and the sun will soon appear and help them to complete their victory. Travellers also start on their journey when they see it: the dawn will soon be here! Lit by its light, candidates for circumcision leave the village of the chief to go to the house of initiation. According to one of my informants (I. p. 75) there is a profound and mystic idea in this custom: Ngongomela announces the day; so little boys must be conducted by the morning star when they abandon their childhood and all its ignorance to enter the adult life with all its knowledge. It leads them from darkness into the light! So Venus plays a great part in Thonga customs. It is the great star. Notice the feminine suffix *eti* in one of its names. It may have been personified in former times.

The *Pleiades* are the only constellation which bears a name 821
in Thonga. They call it *shirimelo*, the one which announces 772
the tilling season, because, in fact, in the lands situated in the Tropic of Cancer, it rises in July or August, when tilling is resumed. I have not heard of any other constellation known to the Natives. They have no notion whatever of constellations: their mind does not seem to have tried to group the stars, or to have seen figures of animals, or objects, in the sky; their imagination in this domain is very poor, and they remain far behind the Oriental nations in this respect.

Falling stars are looked on as a bad omen. When they see 821
one falling towards a certain point of the horizon, Natives think 787
that a Chief must have died in the country towards which the 789

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

Thonga boys are so fond of games that they even try to imitate those of the Europeans. In the accompanying illustration, they are seen sitting in two rows throwing some projectiles along the ground. I wondered what game this was, and was informed that these boys, having seen Portuguese officials playing billiards at the camp, had attempted to do the same, and this was the result!

C. THE AGE OF PUBERTY

I. *Circumcision rites.*

1) Spread and origin of circumcision amongst the Thongas.

As he grows up, the Thonga boy leaves the flock of goats and is entrusted with the care of the big cattle, oxen and cows, when his father owns any. He becomes very proud, and tyrannises over his younger brothers; he calls himself their "hosi," their chief, and sends them to work for him; in Maputju, big boys went so far as to scorn water brought from the pool by women, and only to use water specially fetched by small boys. If they grow so important in their own eyes, the reason is that special rites are performed on them during this period, rites which are calculated to give them great self-confidence. Amongst these rites, some have a direct relation with the sexual life and some represent only the entrance upon manhood. Let us begin with a study of circumcision, then we will take the other puberty rites and the habit of *gangisa*.

In a great many Bantu tribes, the age of puberty is marked by ceremonies of initiation, often accompanied by circumcision. There is little doubt that circumcision was practised throughout the Thonga tribes in former times. It is still current with those Thongas who emigrated into the Transvaal, and this is not a custom borrowed from the Pedi clans, which have all preserved circumcision. Though the Thongas often receive initiation in Pedi schools, in the Spelonken, they possess their own schools

3) The Gangisa.

832 When a boy has gone through the puberty rites, he is grown
836 up and is allowed to practise the *gangisa*. This word comes
882 from *ganga*, which means " to choose a lover." Each girl is asked by the boys to choose one of them ; they *make them choose* (gangisa, factitive derivative). I once observed some boys—they were still very young—flirting round three or four girls just like bees round ripe plums, running after them, and saying repeatedly : " Choose me! Choose me! " There is a special blue cotton print with a large white pattern which is called " gangisa ntombi " viz. to make a girl choose, as it is offered by the lover to the damsel of
836 his choice in order to obtain her favour. When a girl has made
848 her choice, her boy plays with her like husband and wife, first
684 building little huts, etc. but later on in a less platonic fashion. In fact nothing is prohibited in the relations between young people
[837] of the two sexes. A married woman is sacred amongst the Thongas, but an unmarried girl is not. However, she must not become pregnant. (1) If this happens, the parents will say to the lover : "You have spoiled our daughter, you must buy her in marriage." If he refuses, the child will belong to the family of the girl. Excesses in gangisa are condemned. A boy who commits them is said to be an adulterer (a ni bupse) ; of a girl they say : " She will lose her head (a ta ba singe). "

882 As the unmarried boys and girls live in special huts, the *lao*
836 of the boys and the *nhanga* of the girls, at the entrance of the village, it is easy for them to meet during the night. During the day, they generally behave themselves becomingly. But when the lads pay visits to their girls, who sing to the accompaniment

(1) When a girl becomes pregnant, having had relations with her lover inside her parents' village, it is very serious; it is taboo. The boy will have to find a goat, to kill it during the night in the girl's kraal, and to rise very early; then both the boy and the girl, quite naked, must go round the village and sprinkle the fence from inside with a special decoction. None must come out of the huts to look at them. This will prevent the inhabitants from contracting the disease called mukuhlwane (cough, lung complaint) which would otherwise attack them. Moreover the guilty boy will have to pay a fine of £ 5 in cows of the cows of the tribe.

E. MATURE AGE

I. *The Bantu Ideal.*

581 554 562 885 The married man is called " he who has his home " (a ni le kwakwe) in opposition to the single man (nkhwenda). But let us say at once that the kind of individual called bachelor does not abound amongst the Bantus. Only the utterly wretched, invalids, and the weak-minded, are deprived of legal marriage, which for the black man is and remains the one object in life. It is through his wife and children that he becomes somebody in society. This fact does not appear during the first year of wedlock, for the newly married woman must cook at the fireplace of her mother-in-law. She is hardly more than a servant during a whole year ; she does not possess her own pot ; and this must be so because she does not yet eat the mealies of her own garden, having ploughed her fields in her former domicile the previous year. Her husband eats with her. He is not yet 595 a lord. But if he is rich, if he is the heir of an important man, he will not be long in buying a second and third wife.

These new marriages will be contracted like the first, but with less pomp. It may even happen that the feast is held in the husband's village, if he is middle-aged and is celebrating his fifth or sixth wedding.

595 342 556 592 361 For each new wife, he will build a hut. He has begun his village when building the house of his first wife, the great wife, (nsati lwe nkulu) as she is called, who will remain the principal one whatever may happen. While, without compass, he was drawing on the ground, with the marvellous instinct of the South African Native, the circumference of the circle on which the patched reed walls of his dwelling were to rise, while he was covering this circular wall with a conical roof, he was saying to himself : " I establish my home ; I inaugurate my village ". During the following years, the aim of his life will be to complete little by little another wider circle... When he has bought his

when he has brought his.

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second wife, he will build for her also a hut of the same type. But this second hut, the third, and the fourth which may come afterwards, will not be erected in a straight row like a street. They will form an arc, which will be prolonged so as to constitute first a semi-circle and then a complete circle, if a sufficient number of buildings are added. This is the ideal of the black man, to

Phot. H. Gous

Ndjakandjaka, a headman of Spekeaken, with his men.

become the lord and master of a complete circular village. Most of the men do not realise this ideal. Three or four huts, a wretched quarter of a circle is all that they attain to! Some, better armed for the struggle of life, or more favoured by circumstances, succeed in closing their circle. Their cattle, for which they have also built a circular enclosure right in the middle of the square of the village, multiply and are not carried off by peripneumonia and hematuria,

556 ed by so many good things! Sycophants are not lacking, "Good
595 evening, son of so and so!" they say. "You are one of the
574 great men of the country." And in return for these and other compliments, the magnanimous Gidja shares his feast with his admirers!

Strangers are crossing the country and inquire where they can be received. "Go to Gidja" they are told. "A ni tshengwe, a fuya tshengwe" viz. "he is the possessor of a harem! He is not killed by famine! He has beer to drink every day! He can give food to poor people. Even then, some of it remains on the plate and is eaten by little boys and dogs in the square. There is always abundance there." And the travellers come and enter (khuleka) his village, after which they will tell in their homes the story of the magnificence of Gidja and extol his hospitality.

Thus the man who has succeeded in life becomes famous, his advice will carry weight in the discussions in which he takes part; he will perhaps be even more esteemed than the chief himself, though he does not enjoy the special prestige which the royal family owes to the blood running in its veins.

Conclusion: the greatness of an African is before all else a matter of pots, and the matter of pots is closely connected with polygamy!

885 During these years of mature age the evolution of a man is not
554 marked by special ceremonies. There is one custom however which is common to all, and which marks an advance in their social position. It is that of fixing the wax ring.

II. *Fixing the wax ring.*

885 Amongst the South Africans, the crown is not the appanage of
177 royalty. All men having reached mature age have the right to
554 adorn themselves with it. It is true, it is not a diadem of precious
301 stones, but a large ring of wax. This custom seems to have a Zulu origin. The Ba-Sutho do not know it and the Ba-Thonga, who all practise it, have taken it from the conquering tribe which owes its fortune to the famous Chaka. This habit has spread all

885 over the country from Maputju to the borders of Gaza, but only
177 during the last hundred years. This black crown is called
554 *ngiyana* (Ro.) or *shidlodlo* (Dj.), and the crowning ceremony is called *khehla*. From this verb has come the term *makhehla*, a name given to all those who wear this ornament.

885 This ceremony is accomplished in the following way. At a
301 given time, the chief informs all the men of a certain age that
527 they must prepare their rings. The counsellors and the sons of the royal family who belong to this " class " must go to the capital. Several oxen are killed ; the back tendons are carefully preserved and made into strings. This being done, the master hairdressers, that is to say those who know how to fix these strange appendages, are called in.

They come, supplied with small sticks (tinhlamalala, the central nervures of the leaves of the milala palm-tree) which they plait together with these strings made of tendons so as to form the skeleton, the circular frame of the crown. These strings are drawn through the curly hair, all round the head, so as to fix the frame of the crown above the temples. The remaining hair on the sides and behind has been previously shaven. The chief possesses a provision of wax ; the wax which is preferred is not that of bees, but the rosy secretion of certain grubs which is found on some bushes, and which the young boys of the capital go and collect. This wax is mixed with different ingredients to make it black. It is fixed on the frame of sticks and shaped into a large round or oval ring, as black as jet, which can be made to shine brightly. When all is finished, they eat the flesh of the oxen, enjoy themselves, dance and celebrate this great occasion!

885 The more humble subjects crown themselves in their own
301 villages, where tonsorial artists come to adorn them. The poor go to the hairdresser, and do not use strings made of tendons (they have no ox to kill), but strings made of the fibres of a palm-tree, which are cheaper. It is said that nowadays palm-tree strings (bukuha) have almost entirely supplanted the others, the more so as they are not spoilt by the washing of the crown ; whilst, if the *ngiyana* is fixed with tendons, no water must fall on it, or it would soften.

Moreover the crown must be taken care of ; it can be spoilt

301 and knocked out of shape by a blow or if its owner goes through
885 thorny bushes. A *khehla* who has some self-respect will frequently
554 polish and repair this valuable ornament, for it is a sign of mature
482 age. He who has been ordered by the chief to wear it no longer
645 carries burdens on his head; his crown would be spoilt! He will
461 be accompanied by a boy who carries his parcels; he himself will only carry his stick or his assagai. He will at once be known as one of the mature men of the tribe. This is not to say that the mere fact of wearing the *ngiyana* gives the right of taking part in the important affairs of the country; the counsellors alone possess this right; but from amongst the "crowned," will be chosen the man who is sent to another chief to treat of political questions, for instance.

301 When the hair grows (for, though it is curly, it may become long), the crown rises with it and becomes more or less unsteady, which must be most uncomfortable! The best thing would be to cut the ornament off and then replace it. Mr. Mandjia, one of our neighbours at Rikatla, was probably too lazy to undertake this job, so he put a small red handkerchief between his skull and the crown to prevent it from wobbling.

765 At a certain time all the *ngiyana* disappeared from the land of
643 Nondwane. The chief Mapunga was dead! The loss, kept
554 secret for a year, had been made public, and the law requires all the
885 mature men to take off their crowns when the sovereign of the country is dead. They take the wax from the frame, and make a ball of it; this they fix on a little stick, and place this stick in the roof of their hut above the door. The frame is hung up quite close by, and they leave these objects there till the new chief orders his subjects to re-make their crowns. This shows clearly that the crowning custom is in close relation with the national life of the tribe. The "mokhehla" also form special battalions in the army.

178 Nowadays, however, this custom is not observed as religiously
854 as in bygone times. Life is harder, one must go and earn pounds sterling in the port of Lourenço Marques, or in the gold mines, and one can no longer indulge in a lazy life! It may therefore happen that a poor man will refuse to wear the crown, and say to

Nubile girls during their "tiweti" must approach the oxen kraal and look at them. The cattle might suffer, be attacked
284 by a bad cough (mukhulwane), get thin! This taboo is instituted
826 to protect the oxen, not the human inhabitants of the village, as D.
562 Kidd says is the case amongst the Zulus. (Part IV. Ch. I. E.)
262 When women have passed the time of child-bearing, most of
[886] the taboos cease, and they can eat monkeys and porcupine if they wish!

3) The first year of married life.

581 I shall not return to the subject of marriage rites, which have
562 been fully explained in the preceding chapter. Let me say that, though a Thonga woman cannot imagine life without marriage (ku kandja bukati), she does not enter on the new state with any enthusiasm. Her parents have warned her that she will be illtreated, accused of witchcraft and adultery, etc. Her sisters bewail her fate on her wedding day in song. The fact that she has been paid for, though it does not constitute an actual sale, puts her in an inferior position (See Part II).

562 During the first year, she has no *ndangu*, viz. no fire-place of
264 her own. She cooks for her mother-in-law. During the three
585 first weeks the husband eats with her and with the girl who accompanied her to her new home. Afterwards, he goes back to eat with the men. In some places it would seem that the husband eats with her the whole year, until she has her own pot (hlembeto).

4) Husband and wife.

593 What are the relations between husband and wife after the
571 honey-moon? Of course they vary very much according to
517 the character of both. As a rule however, the married people have very little intimacy with each other; the man remains with his companions on the "bandla," the village square where they meet, and only occasionally comes into the "ndangu," the reed enclosure of the fire-place, which is the true domain of the

843 754 to hinder the child from growing and to put in its place, by means of her enchantments, a snake, a hare, a quail or an antelope!

834 846 [886] After the birth, owing to possible contamination by the lochia, sexual intercourse is prohibited till the rite of tying the cotton string (p. 56) has taken place. It is then allowed, but conception must be avoided till weaning, when relations are resumed in the normal way, and this goes on till the time when the woman is no longer able to bring forth children. I know of no special rules in connection with the menopause.

* * *

831 But, amongst Bantus, sexual relations are not an individual affair, as amongst nations more advanced in evolution. There is a mysterious relation between them and the collective life of the community. Hence the fact that, on certain given occasions, they are recommended, even ordered, or prohibited.

1) Cases of recommendation.

833 783 587 829 Sexual relations must take place on two principal occasions : when the inmates of a village abandon it and go elsewhere to found a new one, and when the widows perform the painful rite of "lahla khombo" (to cast away misfortune). We shall see, when studying these customs, that sexual relations have here a twofold signification : 1) they "consolidate" the little community in its new abode, viz. they strengthen its structure by confirming the authority of its chief ; 2) they provide the principal means of getting rid of all contamination, especially of the defilement connected with death. (Annotatio 13.)[1]

2) Cases of prohibition.

834 784 581 829 753 Married people are not considered as being in a state of defilement, as mourners are, for example. Yet this class of persons, called "ba-ku-khila," constitute a danger for those members of the community who are in a weak state of health. They must not come in contact with the circumcised, because in that case their wounds would not heal properly.

1 [See pp. 518-519 in these categories or in V6--Analyst]

881 to pronounce the formulae or to sing the songs of the sungi. Don't reveal a word of them to anybody ; if a boy does so he will be strangled! " etc.

That same day the women bring porridge with sauce flavourings and the shepherds are no longer allowed to use insulting words when they receive the pots from their hands.

IV. *The Chameleon procession.*

553 881 All these are evidently aggregation rites. But the greatest of all is the procession of the initiated into the capital of the chief which takes place on the day of the closing of the sungi and on the following day. Covered with ochre, marching on mats which have been spread on the ground so that they do not touch the dust with their feet, they advance slowly, bowed to the ground, stretching out first one leg and then the other, with a sudden brisk motion, trying to imitate the gait of the chameleon, the wise, the prudent. They are men who think, and no longer boys without intelligence! Then they all sit in the central place of the capital, silent, with their heads still bent, and the sisters and mothers who have come from all the different villages must go and recognize them. Each woman brings with her a bracelet or a shilling or any small present and searches for her boy amongst the throng. When she thinks she has found him, she kisses him on the cheek and gives him the present. The boys have two sticks in their hands. One stick bears some short lateral branches on which the boys will hang the bracelets (busenga). The other is smaller and, when the mother has discovered her son and has kissed him, he strikes her, a soft blow if it is his mother or his grandmother, a much harder one if it is his sister, and utters the new name which he has chosen.

In answer to this demonstration, the mother begins to dance and to sing the praises of her son! This is the typical aggregation rite called *kunga*, the breaking of silence, which we shall meet with more than once in the passage rites of the tribe. These bracelets are all given in to the chief, who will distribute them amongst the old women. It would be taboo to give them to childbearing women. According to the same idea the fees paid by the boys to

178 554 his chief : " What shall I eat ? Will you feed me ? Must I not carry burdens on my head ? I do not know what to do with the ngiyana. " — " Tiko dji bolile, " say the old people shaking their heads, " A ke he na nao," that is to say : " The country is falling into decay, going to the dogs. There is no longer any law... " Oh! the good old times!

F. OLD AGE

888 The man however grows older, older. His hair and his beard turn white, the wrinkles deepen on his face. He stoops. His skin no longer shines with health and corpulence. His wives die and his glory fades. His crown loses the lustre of bygone times. If a branch scratches it, if a knock spoils it, he has not a shilling to pay the repairer! He is forsaken. He is less respected and often only a burden unwillingly supported. The children laugh at him. If the cook sends them to carry to the lonely grandfather his share of food in his leaky old hut, the young rascals are capable of eating it on the way and of depriving the old man of his meal, afterwards pretending that they have done what they were told! And when, between two huts, under shelter of the hedge of reeds, he warms his round-shouldered back in the rays of the setting sun, huddled there, quite weighed down by his years, lost in some senile dream, they point to the decrepit form and say to each other : " He! Shikhunkununu! " — " It is the bogeyman, the ogre! "

People of mature age show scarcely more consideration for old people than do the young ones. Lately in the district of Matjolo, an old man and an old woman, Kobole and Minyokwana, were forsaken by their children, who were moving to another part of the country. They were left in a miserable shed, merely a roof supported by some poles without any reeds to close in the wall. Some compassionate souls took pity on this poor wretched couple, who had fallen into second childhood and did not even know what they were saying.

888 In time of war, old people die in great numbers. During moments of panic, they are hidden in the wood, in the palm-tree swamps, while all the able-bodied population run away. They are killed by the enemy, who spares no one (it is the law of war), or they die in their hiding-places of misery and hunger!

As may be seen, the eve of life is very sad for the poor Thonga. There are however children who, to the end, show much devotion to their parents. The most to be pitied are those who fall to the charge of remote nephews or cousins. They can only repeat in a broken voice the sad refrain : " Ba hi shanisa! " — " They treat us very badly! "

G. DEATH

I. *The last days.*

763 Manyibane, the headman of a big village near Rikatla, is
513 dangerously ill. The men of his kraal, his friends, have come
834 to inquire about the illness (kamba shinyonga) and have learned
761 that it is serious. They issue this order to all the inhabitants : " Tlulan psilawen! " — " Keep each of you in his sleeping place, (viz. the men to the right of the hut, the women to the left) and have no more relations. It is taboo! The man would die! " Should visitors come, they are not allowed to enter the village. They must have kept " pure " for two days at least. Two sticks are planted on either side of the door of the hut, and a third is put over them so as to close the entrance. " It is the way black people have of making their proclamation, " says Mboza. " Everybody will know that a dying man is there and nobody will come in. " Should another man of the village have had relations with the same woman as the patient, he is doubly prohibited from seeing him, because the patient would break out into perspiration and die immediately. This is the great law of *matlulana*, as we shall see.

754 Of course the *ñanga* (doctor) has been called already. He

854 863 (see page 48.) After her birth she is carried in the skin of a gazelle (mhunti) which her mother ties round her neck and loins. When that skin has become too small, they get one of an antelope (mhala). She begins to walk ; when her mother sends her on an errand she is able to do it. She also begins to talk, and to know her father and mother. Then, when she has grown, they prepare for her a small pot of pounded and cooked mealies so that she may eat of it. After three years she is weaned and goes to stay for a time with her grandmother. After that she returns home.

857 868 "When she has learnt to walk, she is very fond of playing with the shells of the sala. She cooks in them. Then, when she has done with them, she takes small pots and cooks little dinners. She also gets a small calabash, she goes to the lake to draw water and, on coming back, she gives it to her father so that he may wash his face. Here she is now gathering small bits of wood ; she makes small bundles of them and brings them home. Later on she will make heavier bundles.

"When she has grown up more, she will take charge of the work of her mother. She will do the work. But if the mother sees that she cannot do it all, she will help her. It may however be said that the mother needs no longer to crush her mealies, 583 neither to go to the well nor to the fireplace. When she is quite a grown up girl, the suitors come. If they are accepted, they bring the purchase money. They buy her (lobola) and do all they like. If she is prolific, she will bear many children. Now and then she returns to her parents' village, then she comes back to her husband. Her children grow. They go to get water, to cut her wood, to plough her fields. She goes with them. When they are 462 grown up, they get married. If amongst them there is a son, he goes to buy his wife. Thus she looks for a mother-in-law for her son. He will then be truly a man because he has got a mother-in-law! When her children are married, the mother again begins to do all her work. She steeps her mealies, crushes them to make flour, she cuts her wood, cooks her beer ; she prepares the light beer ; she smears the floor of her hut ; this is what she does till she is quite old.

888 "When she is quite old, they feed her. Her grandchildren are

1 [The following page is quoted from an essay by a native girl at the Swiss Mission school at Lourenço Marques -- Analyst]

888 sent to bring her food. When they are hungry, they stop on the way and eat it themselves. On their return they say: 'We have indeed given it to her.' In the morning they put a stick in her hand and help her to get out of her hut, so that she can warm herself in the sun.

"Then when the Ronga woman is quite old she begins to see no more and to hear no more. She falls into second childhood. All she does is to complain and to say, crying, that she is ill treated. And this is the end!"

The girl who wrote this essay was but emerging from childhood, and has consequently enlarged more especially upon the first phase of the life. The life of a woman is not very different from that of a man at that stage. Differences however come in later on, and we shall have to add some important facts relating to the fate of women before marriage, during the conjugal life, and in widowhood.

A. BEFORE MARRIAGE

I. *The Girls' games.*

857 524 [868] 864 As we have seen from the essay of the schoolgirl, Ronga girls imitate the doings of their mothers, their cooking, their gathering of fuel, etc., just as the boys imitate the fighting and hunting of the men. They also play with *dolls*, nursing them as they see the women nursing babies. These dolls are called *vule*. The origin of the game is as follows. A little girl asks her mother who is carrying a younger child on her shoulders: Mother, where did you find your baby? — Oh! I found it in the bush (ntlhaben). — Please bring me one also, mother. — All right!— Next day the mother plucks a sala in the bush, removes all the stones inside it, lets it dry and fixes it to the end of a stick. She pierces the upper part of the sphere, passes bits of string through the holes to imitate hair, smears them with ochre, ties a little clothing round

783 village itself, which must carry out the collective purification of
768 *hlamba ndjaka*.

I must further mention a new custom which is spreading
587 amongst the Ba-Ronga in the neighbourhood of Lourenço
609 Marques. When a widow objects to becoming the wife of the legal
611 inheritor, she goes home and adopts another husband. There are plenty of men of other tribes, coming from Inhambane, Quelimane, Mozambique, who have no wife. They accept the proposal of the widow and go to live in her village. They are generally despised and called by the insulting name of *mugomo*, a Zulu word meaning an empty iron oil-tin. They are as hard and unfeeling as such a tin! If children are born, they belong to the family of the deceased husband, who paid the lobolo.

587 Sometimes also a widow chooses a nephew who is still a child. She gives him food as if she were his wife, but she lives with another man whom she loves. It even happens that she may choose a girl, the daughter of another wife of the deceased. (Annotatio 13.)[1]

C. OLD AGE AND DEATH

888 An old woman, having in some sort gone out from the sexual
782 community, enjoys some privileges which are taboo for her sisters who are still capable of childbearing. She is allowed to put on the clothing of the widows ; contamination of death is not so dangerous for her. She can proceed to the purification of the village, in certain cases of epidemic, and of the weapons of the warriors in war time (Part III). After the sacrifice of the black ram for rain, old women and small girls alone are allowed to eat the flesh of the victim.

462 But old and decrepit women are despised. As long as they
888 can still till their land, they are treated with consideration, but when they have lost all their strength and must be fed by their children, they are looked upon as troublesome burdens. I must say that, as long as she still has an atom of vigour, a Thonga woman goes to her field and tills it. During all her life time

1 [See pp. 518-519 in these categories or in 116 — Analyst]

462 888 she has contracted such an intimate union with Mother Earth that she cannot conceive existence away from her gardens, and she crawls to them with her hoe, by a kind of instinct, till she dies.

764 The death of the woman is accompanied by the same rites as the death of a man. I must mention, however, the custom of *mahloko*, which takes place when a woman dies while still in her prime. Mahloko comes from *nhloko*, head. The explanation of this technical word is this : the parents of the woman say : "Our head (viz. a person belonging to us) has died ; let us go to mourn her."

587 Let us first see how this mourning takes place *in the Ronga clans.*

578 If the two families were very friendly, the parents of the deceased will probably bring with them a little girl, saying : "This is our little green meat (mbuti), our little orange (rather sala, fruit of the nsala tree)." They offer her to the husband to take the place of the deceased wife, and a new contract will be made. The widower will then at once pay a first part of the lobolo, £ 5 for instance, and, in the course of time, he will marry his sister-in-law. But generally the visitors are angry, and the mahloko ceremony is very unpleasant. It may be that the deceased wife had not been entirely paid for. In that case her parents will come at the end of the mourning to "claim the herd" (ramela ntlhambi).

764 578 754 But though there may be no difficult lobola question in the way, uneasiness is felt, because the brothers of the deceased cannot help thinking that their sister has been killed by witchcraft. It was not yet time for her to die ; so she must have been bewitched by the husband's family, probably by her co-wives, who were jealous of her. When the Great Mourning took place, they hardly came to the mortuary village. One or two went to see their "head," and mourned her in their own kraal. To day, the day of mahloko, they assemble, and throw bones in order to know who will have to speak, who will receive the mahloko money, whether the money has been bewitched ? The whole company starts for the mortuary village, driving a goat before them. They sit down outside in the bush with dark looks ; there is no longer any hut to receive them... They have been noticed by the

601 tatana wa kokwana, father of grandfather, is never employed.
611 The great-grandfather and the great-great-grandfather are sometimes designated as follows: he who does not see his grandson when he has been sent by the women to bring him food; the boy eats it on the way and the old man does not notice it! (Page 132). These progenitors call Tobane *ntukulu*, grandson. He is the true ntukulu of Shitsimbo; to Tobane I, he is the *ntukulu wa shikandjatjolo*, "the one who sits on the knees;" to Nkwangwana, the *ntukulu wo shikandjamirombo*, a word which seems to mean "the one who sits on the toes." In Djonga there is one more of these curious expressions applied to batukulu, *ntukulu wa shinguhe*. "When he pronounces that name," says Gana, "my great-grandfather points near by; when he says *ntukulu wa shikandjatjolo*, he points further down." To understand this properly, we must imagine the following patriarchal scene: a very, very old man is sitting on the ground, holding his son (ñwana) in his arms, and with his grandson (ntukulu) on his thigh, his great-grandson (wa shikandjatjolo) on his knees and his great-great-grandson on his toes (1). The fact that these terms have become almost obsolete shows that the system of counting descent from the father is at any rate very old in our tribe. There must even have been a time when the ancestors in the paternal line were better known than now. The wives of these bakokwana are also bakokwana, in the same way as their husbands.

601 The father's sister is *rarana* (Ro.) *hahane* (Dj.). The two
604 words are the same, as *r* often changes into *h* in Thonga phonetics; the prefix of the first class, *mu* or *n*, now dropped, may have caused this change. Rarana approaches very closely to rara, father. It is employed in this form when it means *my* aunt. When we wish to say your aunt, his aunt, rarana becomes rarakati wa ku, rarakati

601 (1) There is another interpretation of these terms as applied to the grandparents:
888 *kokwana wo shinguhe*: he is poor, miserable! When an ox is killed in the village, they do not even send him his share; he is far away. *Kokwana wa shikandjatjolo*: he is almost blind. When he wants to see his great-grandson he calls him and tells him: "Sit down on my knees." *Kokwana wa shikandja-mirombo*: mirombo or mitjombo means the small ears of mealies used to prepare the beer of the offerings. This kokwana, the great-great-grandfather, is already almost like one of the ancestor-gods to whom sacrifices are made!